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# **Saudi-British Relations, 1939-1953**

**Shafi Aldamer**

**A Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in International  
Relations and Strategic Studies of the Middle East**

**University of Durham  
The Faculty of Social Sciences  
Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies  
2001**

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**17 SEP 2001**

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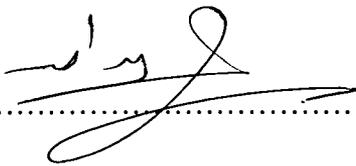
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I confirm that no part of the material offered has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or any other University.

Signed: ..........

## **Dedication**

To those, who through their thought, feeling, and love toward me had the most positive influence on the course of my life: To my uncle (who I sadly lost during the conduct of this research), Prince Abdullah Aldamer (God rest his soul in peace); to my aunt, Queen Sita Aldamer (God give her happy and long life); to my father, Prince Abdulrahman Aldamer (God restore his health and give him long life).

## Acknowledgments

It's sometimes difficult in a typical Middle Eastern culture, particularly that of the classical Arabian Peninsula, for someone to plainly express his sentiment towards a very close relative by the means of rhapsody. But, if the scope of such an expression involves genuine gratitude - particularly what I personally call 'the principled academic gratitude' - then such expression is a must. In such a case realities must be observed by documenting the deeds of those that deserve sincere acknowledgement. My gratitude goes to the one who succeeded in putting me into the direction of a wise man that 'knows that he does not know what he does not know', the one who induced me to love God, love science, love knowledge, love perseverance, and love success. The one who directed the lost high school student to the right way, the one who profoundly supported the undergraduate, the masters, and the PhD student by all means including that of imperative moral, thought, spiritual supports. Without his generous and continuous support I would not have achieved what I desired, and what he desired for me to achieve. My thanks - which cannot repay such a worthy debt - go with love, loyalty, and sincerity to my professor, friend, and brother: Mohammed Ibn Abdulrahman Aldamer.

Next to Mohammed, I am grateful to the entire membership of my family. Their care and support have brightened the difficult days during the undertaking of this research. Though I am in debt to all of them, some of them have supported me in a way that makes such a - moral - debt impossible to repay. I am grateful to my cousins: Albandari and Aljouharah daughters of King Khalid Bin Abdulaziz, Abdullah Bin Saad Alsaud, and to my other cousins: sons of my uncle Abdullah; and to my brothers: Fahad, Abdullah, Faisal, Bander, Abdulmuhsin, Khalid, Abdulaziz, and Hussam; and to my sisters: Aljazi and Sita.

I am also in debt to my supervisor, Professor Tim Niblock. Without Tim's support, encouragement, and guidance this thesis would definitely have been the poorer. In fact without his considered comments and sage advice such a major research might even have fallen short of reaching its main objective. On various occasions when I faced certain difficulties during the undertaking of this research I found Tim standing by my side in a way that made his support unforgettable. Indeed, I was one of the

most lucky researchers who was honoured to work under the supervision of one of the greatest scholars I have ever come across. My thanks go to Professor Niblock, whom I will be in debt to for the rest of my life.

I am also grateful to many scholars who contributed with vital advice. I should like to thank amongst them Professor Raymond Hinnebusch, Professor Peter Sluglett, Mr Charles Reynolds and Dr Gerd Nonneman, for their constructive advice particularly during the early stage of this research. My thanks also go to Mr Graham Patchett, who kindly proofread the manuscript of my thesis in terms of English language at its final stage.

The staff of certain institutions deserve my utmost gratitude. I am very grateful for the assistance of the archival staff at the Public Record Office at Kew, London. I am also thankful to the library staffs of the University of Durham, University of Exeter, School of Oriental and African Studies, and the British Library.

I would like to thank the kind and helpful members of the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (CMEIS), University of Durham, who created the excellent academic environment in which I was able to conduct my research, and who were indeed helpful when it came to dealing with University affairs that concerned me. In particular I am thankful to Professor Ewan Anderson, Professor Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Dr Emma Murphy, Dr Colin Turner, Mrs Barbara Farnworth, and Mrs Barbara Minto. I would like also to thank all my friends and colleagues at CMEIS and elsewhere, who successfully created the kind of social life that irrigated the dryness that usually exists during the seriousness of such an academic project.

February 2001

## Abstract

The present study attempts to understand the shift that occurred in Saudi-British relations by the year 1953. The tracing of such a shift is dealt with by investigating the development of these relations from 1939 and through to 1953.

The research is drawn upon a documentary diplomatic history method reinforced by an analytical approach. Within the framework of analysis, the Realism approach to international politics is selected. Certain assumptions that most of - classical and modern - Realists agreed upon are in use, specifically the state-centric assumption, the rationality assumption, the unitary assumption, the anarchic assumption, and the security assumption.

As is clear from existing secondary sources, Saudi Arabia and Britain enjoyed a kind of special relationship in the early 1940s, but by the last year of King Ibn Saud's reign (1953) these two states' relations had deteriorated into severe conflict. Though some existing sources have attempted to shed some light on that development, their findings are indeed modest. In fact, none of this literature has studied the topic from a purely Saudi-British perspective, nor has any of it explored and analysed the matter with the depth that it deserves.

By focusing on Saudi-British relations the chapters of this thesis are endeavouring to answer profoundly a variety of questions that affected the main course of these relations. By questioning the impact of certain issues on Saudi-Anglo relations - such that of Saudi-US relations, the security concept, the Saudi-Hashemite problem, and the frontier conflict - the thesis will address its main theme.

## *Introduction*

### **1. The Study Perspective**

At the beginning of World War Two, Britain was the only Great Power that had cordial, friendly, and close relations with Saudi Arabia. However, by mid-1953 the Saudi and the British governments were treating each other as foes. The explanation of this development provides the core theme of this study. Hence, the thesis seeks to explore and analyse the factors, the reasons, and the events that caused such a shift to occur. The theme will be dealt with by studying the broad context of Saudi-British relations from early 1939 through to November 1953.

#### **A. The Framework of Analysis**

In order to reach a satisfactory conclusion, a careful framework - that narrows the usual gap between academic theories and the reality of politicians' and diplomats' practices - will be used. The research draws upon a diplomatic history account reinforced by political analysis of the developments in Saudi-British relations.

Based primarily on archival documents the thesis is intended to study and examine the details of the developments of Saudi-British relations from early 1939 to November 1953. The study of the history of Saudi-British diplomatic interactions will be mostly based on the evidence obtained from the documents of both states leaders' correspondence, ambassadors' and foreign ministers' despatches, memoranda, minutes, etc.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the documentary diplomatic history method the study will apply the realism paradigm.<sup>2</sup> Particular attention will be given to certain assumptions that both classical and modern Realists (Neo-realists) adopt in their approach to international politics. In particular the following assumptions will be utilised:<sup>3</sup>

1. The state-centric assumption: States are the most important and dominant actors in international politics. Hence, the focus is on the behaviour of states

as the key unit of analysis rather than the behaviour of others such as international organisations or multinational corporations, etc.

2. The rationality assumption: International politics can be analysed on the basis that states are rational actors. Thus, it would be assumed that states would pragmatically calculate the costs of alternative courses of action and seek to maximise their own national interests and ultimately their power and capabilities. States may do so even without having certainty and sufficient information about alternative courses of action, and thus may miscalculate.

3. The unitary assumption: States can be conceptualised as unitary actors. Although foreign policy decisions may be taken by a number of individuals, states deal in the outside world as an incorporated unit. Connected to this assumption realists assume that as states rely on a single attitude in their foreign policy, the divisions of domestic politics are less important in explaining states' behaviour in the international arena.

4. The anarchic assumption: That the nature of the international system is anarchic. Anarchy should not be confused with chaos. On the contrary, anarchy may be coherent, with stability, order, and regulated forms of interaction between independent states. Its meaning according to the realist school is that there is no super-authority or international government above states that could manage and regulate interactions between sovereign units.

5. The security assumption: Security notions are always at the top of a state's agenda in international politics. Thus, states would seek to preserve and maximise security by all means such as strengthening their own capability or even seeking the support of other states to maintain their security or even to guarantee their survival. The priority of security matters does not necessarily neglect other interests which are not directly connected to security, such as maximising economic capabilities, but the assumption gives the security notion more importance.

At this stage, an indication of the most important features that concerned Saudi-British relations during 1939-1953 is desirable in order to lay a basis for the discussion of the study's theoretical framework. There were five outstanding features that characterised Saudi-British relations during the period under investigation. First, relations between Saudi Arabia and Britain were in fact relations between a small

state that was rising economically and a great power that was declining economically and politically - in particular from the end of World War Two (W.W.II) onwards.<sup>4</sup> Second, though the main states that were directly responsible for Anglo-Saudi relations were Saudi Arabia and Britain, other states - as this thesis will reveal - had a significant influence on the progress of this relationship. The most influential states in question were the USA from 1943 onwards, as well as the Hashemite States, particularly Jordan from 1946 onwards. Third, there were regional and international phenomena that occurred during this period and that were highly concerning to both Saudi Arabia and Britain, though in different degrees of importance. The cases in question were W.W.II and the Palestine issue. Fourth, Britain was the protector or the colonial power of some entities within the regional setting of Saudi Arabia, as was the case with India until 1947, and the Gulf Sheikdoms throughout the study period. Finally, King Abdulaziz (Ibn Saud) as the absolute monarch of Saudi Arabia - until November 1953, where this study ends - gave the foreign policy of his kingdom the stamp of his own unique personality in many ways. The significance of King Ibn Saud deserves further explanation.

Although, this study considers states as the dominant actor - and the key unit of analysis - that deals within the international system as an integrated unit, this does not run counter to the assertion that Ibn Saud constituted the vital figure who spoke for the Saudi State. Without harming or contradicting either the state-centric or the unitary assumptions, this study will focus on Ibn Saud's involvement. The concentration on Ibn Saud as the chief actor for the State of Saudi Arabia is - in fact - an enhancement of the realist model. Ibn Saud's political practices, in fact were themselves in natural harmony with realism.<sup>5</sup> As the warrior and the politician who founded the contemporary Saudi Kingdom - subsequent to long struggles - Ibn Saud naturally focused on security as a vital issue for the preservation of the state. Eventually, pragmatic rationality developed in Saudi Arabian foreign policy towards the great powers. Moreover, Ibn Saud's traditional styles of governance created the basis for Saudi Arabia constituting a unitary actor in foreign policy matters. Thus, as an absolute monarch - who ruled in a traditional Arabian Knight manner - all the foreign policies of the Kingdom were exclusively in the King's hands. He was the chief and central decision-maker for all the Kingdom's foreign policies. He did not

permit any of his officials to deal in any single aspect of the state's foreign affairs without his knowledge and instructions.<sup>6</sup>

Ultimately, significant effects flowed from Ibn Saud's dominance of Saudi Arabian foreign policy. First, Ibn Saud fashioned his own style in the diplomatic channels of contacts with Britain (as well as with the USA). Being the figure that primarily dealt with Britain, the King preferred, and became accustomed to, dealing with the British government through the British Ministers/Ambassadors in Saudi Arabia. In contrast with the Saudi Arabian Minister/Ambassador in London, the role of the British Ministers/Ambassadors in Jeddah was more significant.<sup>7</sup> Second, Ibn Saud's dominance produced a kind of ambiguity in distinguishing between the concept of King Ibn Saud as the head of the state and the state itself. This ambiguity was evident not only in Ibn Saud's personal point of view, but also in some of the British government's actions in dealing with him. Throughout this study it will become apparent that King Ibn Saud did not distinguish between himself and the state when he interacted with other states. In fact, it could be said that as a monarch and the founder of Saudi Arabia, the King considered himself and the state as a synonym.<sup>8</sup> Though it could be said that the British were to some extent able to distinguish between the two, still on various occasions they dealt with Saudi Arabia in a similar way - or at least not in contradiction - to Ibn Saud's belief. The British behaviour on such occasions reflected in Ibn Saud's dominance, as well as his traditional method of ruling. The absence of a central bureaucratic authority within a modern government in Saudi Arabia during Ibn Saud's reign made some of the British diplomats consider even the status of Ibn Saud - as a traditional ruler - as an alternative for a government. For instance, in 1941 the British Minister in Saudi Arabia, Mr Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, wrote that, "There is no Government as the word is understood elsewhere. King Ibn Saud is the Government".<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, this study, based on the foregoing realist assumptions, will consider the state as the main unit of analysis, and will consider King Ibn Saud as the main political performer within the State of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In most of the cases when the study refers to Ibn Saud, it will be referring to him as the head of the state and as the chief figure representing the Kingdom. Otherwise, a reference to the State of Saudi Arabia will be used.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the study will use the term 'government' separately from the reference to Ibn Saud. During Ibn Saud's reign, there was a kind of governmental body. Though it was

not a central authority and not coherently organised, some departments did exist. There was at least a Foreign Affairs Ministry that contained officials who worked under Ibn Saud's command. There was a (rather nominal) Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal, who carried out King Ibn Saud's instructions abroad. There were several counsellors or advisers who worked for Ibn Saud, etc.<sup>11</sup> When this thesis refers to some or all of those who worked with Ibn Saud, the terms that will be used are Ibn Saud's officials or the Saudi officials, etc.<sup>12</sup> However, when the term 'the Saudi government' is used, it will generally be referring to Ibn Saud and/or his officials acting through the existing departments.

## **B. The Research Questions**

In order to strengthen the focus of the study's theme, several research questions will be raised. With the assistance of the previously stated framework, the forthcoming set of questions should be solved by the time the research reaches its main conclusion. These questions will be categorised as main and sub-questions. The main questions will form fundamental parts of the study and the sub-questions will help to answer each of the main questions. Moreover, whereas the main questions will be targeting central aspects, some of the sub-questions will be left - comparatively - loose so they can interplay and interact freely with the other main aspects. The only exception from the categorisation of main and sub-questions will be the queries that concern the security aspect. As a fundamental concept in the study's approach, all the questions within the latter sphere will be treated as main questions.

First, was either state (Britain or Saudi Arabia) more responsible than the other for the deterioration of relations? Can the shift that occurred in relations be understood from this perspective? One of the main findings of a study on US-Saudi relations, 1933-1953, specified, that "Abd al-Aziz through the years worked carefully to draw in American political interest where only private American economic interests were engaged".<sup>13</sup> While this finding is an excellent aid for the course of this thesis, still it does not fully and specifically answer the questions. It does suggest, however, that it was Saudi Arabia which was the leading actor in strengthening US-Saudi ties. Thus, by looking at the issue from the perspective of US-Saudi relations, the answer would be clear: that Saudi Arabia did play a major role. But, looking at the issue from the

Saudi-British side, the matter still needs to be examined. One could argue that if Ibn Saud was the one who brought American political interests into Saudi Arabia, logically his efforts must have been made vis-à-vis British interests (or indeed to replace the British position in Saudi Arabia). While such an argument may be strong, it is not necessarily true. Sub-questions will be helpful in order to reach a satisfactory answer to the above questions: Did the King openly and frankly ask alternative powers to replace Britain? If so why did he choose to do so? Did his experience of the general outcome of Saudi-British interactions (that included both cooperative and conflict interactions) effect his decisions? If that was the case, was there any British responsibility in making Ibn Saud take this line? If Ibn Saud was behind the division, was his position constant throughout the period under examination or did it change? Were there any countering factors - that resulted from specific issues or timing - that made Ibn Saud either change his mind temporarily about shifting away from Britain or at least slowing the speed of the process of such a shift?

Second, was the deterioration of relations an effect of the development of Saudi relations with the United States of America? Can it be said that the positive progress of Saudi-US relations was a major, or indeed one of the main, factors that damaged Saudi-British relations? Sub-questions for this aspect will include: In comparison to Saudi-British relations, how did Saudi-US relations develop during the era in question, and in what framework?<sup>14</sup> How, when, and to what extent did it affect the main course of Saudi-British relations? What were the factors that made Saudi Arabia prefer the USA? Did increasing US involvement in Saudi Arabia bring about any confrontation between Britain and the USA in Saudi Arabia? If so, when and how? And in which directions did the wind of 'the British-US relations in Saudi Arabia' lead to? Did it help the course of Saudi-American relations or the course of Saudi-Anglo relations?

Third, was the deterioration of relations an effect of differences over regional issues? What was the impact of the main developments in the Palestine issue on Saudi-British relations? What was the impact of Ibn Saud's relations with the Hashemites? What was the impact of Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the British Gulf Protectorates, particularly from 1949 onwards? In regard to sub-questions, several will be introduced: Did British government policy take account of Ibn Saud's anxiety about

the Hashemites? What impact did the development of Saudi Arabia's dispute with Britain over the frontiers issue with the Gulf Sheikhdoms have on Saudi-British relations? Can the regional decline in Britain's influence, at that time, as well as the British government's determination in protecting what was left of its influence and prestige, explain the worsening of the conflict? Can the matter best be explained by Saudi Arabian determination to achieve territorial gains? Or can it be explained within the scope of British determination to pursue its interests?

Fourth, what was the impact of security concerns on the relationship between Britain and Saudi Arabia? How and when did this affect the course of Saudi-British relations? During the period under investigation, can the Saudi security concerns be characterised as an outcome of fears about the possibility of a security threat from other great powers? Or was it an outcome of Saudi Arabian anxiety over the possibility of regional threats? What was the impact of any of these concerns on Saudi-British relations? What were the fundamental security concerns that existed, from London's point of view, in connection with Saudi Arabia? Were concerns over Saudi Arabia set within the broader context of the global interests of the British Empire? If so, did such concerns decline relatively after the British withdrawal from India in 1947? If yes, what was the impact of this on Saudi-British relations? Did the British government's concerns regarding security issues - within the framework of Saudi-British relations - stem from the situation during W.W.II? If so, did the end of the war and the ultimate end of such concerns affect the pattern of Saudi-British relations?

Fifth, what was the impact of Britain's deteriorating economy and Saudi Arabia's economic growth have on the Saudi-Anglo relationship? How did these phenomena affect Anglo-Saudi relations, and in which direction and forms? Sub-questions on this should include: Did the increase of Saudi Arabian income from oil royalties after W.W.II lessen its need for close relations with Britain? In which aspect did it affect it? Did the decline in Britain's economy affect British-Saudi cooperation? If so, how and to what extent? Prior to Britain's economic decline and to the concurrent improvement of that of Saudi Arabia, what was the scope of their economic connection, and how did it influence their relations?

## C. The Literature Review

### I. The Primary Sources

Most of the research documents were collected from the Public Record Office (PRO) at Kew, London. All the records that relate to the study were consulted, but it has to be emphasised - for the benefit of similar future research - that nearly all the essential documents were in the files of the Foreign Office General Correspondence, particularly the political section FO 371. The good thing about the FO General Correspondence is not only its superb accessibility and order, but also its comprehensive collections. It contains almost the entire despatches, enclosures, reports, memorandums from the British Legation/Embassy in Jeddah, the Foreign Office outgoing despatches, minutes, etc., correspondence between the British government departments about Saudi Arabia, and above all the entire correspondence between the Saudi and the British authorities. In addition to the unpublished documentary sources, the study also benefited from published primary sources. Two published sources from the British records were the most useful, namely, **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953** by Archive Editions and **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961** by Jane Priestland.<sup>15</sup> Published US document sources that related to Saudi Arabia were also utilised. Worth mentioning among them are two remarkable collections by Ibrahim Al-Rashid: **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949** and **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud.**<sup>16</sup>

It has to be pointed out that the major difficulties that occurred during the period of this research were to be found mostly over the primary source issue.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, as has been noted by most archival researchers in general, and by scholars who conducted similar research to the present one in particular, the fundamental problem in foreign policy research usually lies in the primary source issue.<sup>18</sup> Amongst other difficulties that were encountered by this research, three cases in respect to primary sources were most notable.

The first major challenge concerned the lack of some (and not all) of the Saudi Arabian primary sources. Though all the Saudi government correspondence with the British government was to be found in the British records, still the home records of Saudi Arabia, that particularly concerning the Saudi views prior to the adoption of an external act, do not exist. Hence, while all Ibn Saud's correspondence with Britain was available in the files of the PRO, yet Ibn Saud's thoughts and discussions with his own officials in regard to the course of action that Saudi Arabia took in its foreign policy were almost nonexistent. The lack of such materials could be attributed to several realities. Apart from the external correspondence, King Ibn Saud did not write, or keep, a record of his firsthand views - in the form of minutes, memos, etc. - nor that of his conversations with his officials.<sup>19</sup> The lack of documented records in this particular case could be best explained in connection with the simplicity of the process of decision-making in Saudi Arabian foreign policy. The matter was simple when Saudi Arabia was about to conduct an action in the foreign sphere, particularly when the mastermind for such an occurrence was Ibn Saud himself.<sup>20</sup> Either King Ibn Saud directly took action based on his own unrecorded calculations and thoughts or, as became apparent during the investigation of this research, he talked to his counsellors before taking a final decision on a course of action.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the King's consultations with his counsellors took the form of un-recorded verbal conversations.<sup>22</sup> As the King did not keep records of his own thoughts he might have had the same reason for not recording his conversations with his officials. It could be said that the only records that Ibn Saud used to keep were his correspondence with foreign powers. This material was presumably kept because the King wanted to prove certain obligations by particular states with regard to the kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Thus, the keeping of the correspondence was principally intended as a vital tool to be used when needed.<sup>23</sup> The publications of the Saudi government's memorials in regard to the Buraimi issue in the mid-1950s - and the contents of such documents - confirm that such records existed.<sup>24</sup>

If it is assumed that Ibn Saud's keeping of such records was mainly intended as a guarantee or assurance against the possibility of certain actions by other states towards his kingdom, it could be also said in contrast that he would not reasonably keep records of his own thoughts and policies for the same purpose. Despite the logic of the foregoing argument, the researcher decided not to underestimate the possibility

of finding documents in Saudi Arabia itself that could invalidate this assertion. Attempts were made during fieldwork to locate relevant documentation in several documentation units that seemed likely to have such records. These attempts were carried out in a number of locations in Riyadh, such as the King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archive (ad-Darah), King Abdulaziz Library and King Fahad Library.<sup>25</sup> All these efforts were unproductive in terms of data, but further consolidated the previous argument. Beyond this difficulty, the issue became more complicated with the absence of any still-living Saudi personality who had been close to Ibn Saud during the occurrence of the events concerned. Unfortunately, by the time this study was carried out all the Saudi personalities that could have been interviewed as well-informed witnesses of the major developments of Ibn Saud's policies towards Britain had already passed away.<sup>26</sup> Thus, an attempt at interviews as an alternative was out of the question.

Nevertheless, the researcher endeavoured to overcome this difficulty by the utilisation of alternative tools. Full use of all the available documents was a major gateway. Though all sorts of related documents were used in regard to this matter, it should be noted that particular attention was given to Ibn Saud's communications with the British government, as well as to the observations of the British Ministers/Ambassadors in Jeddah. Hence, the utilisation of Ibn Saud's direct correspondence with the British government was useful in reading the King's views and the possible available actions that he might have taken in retrospect. The observations of the British diplomats in Saudi Arabia - to be found mainly in their despatches to the Foreign Office - were also constructive in providing insight.<sup>27</sup> The King's frequent correspondence with the British government, along with the close contacts between him and the British diplomats in Jeddah, were the major bases used for establishing the King's views. In addition to the usage of the available documents for this, other research means were also exploited, such as secondary sources and the researcher's analytic understanding of Ibn Saud.<sup>28</sup>

The second central difficulty in regard to the primary sources was faced as a result of the closure of some of the PRO files that concern the present study. Though the closure of some of the PRO files under the fifty years closure status can be comprehended, the closure of some files that passed such a restriction is difficult to

understand. If all the files that passed the period of the fifty years restriction were released on time, the present study would have benefited directly from the majority of the PRO resources up to 1950, leaving behind only about two unreleased files that concern the last two years of the period covered. However, the British government's practice of extending the restriction of any file that passed the fifty years, or even the thirty years, seems to be extensive. Among the methods used has been to place a file on 'permanent loan' to the departments which originated the file. Indeed, some files that relate to this study - and that included some from the 1940s and should have been released in the 1990s - were on permanent loan to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). When faced with such cases a prolonged correspondence took place between the researcher and the Library and Records Department at the FCO. In most cases this correspondence, which was time-consuming, usually ended without the researcher gaining any visible data.<sup>29</sup> The usual way of resolving such a difficulty was to concentrate the research efforts on all the files that might contain some of the restricted data. Usually, the effort in searching around such a file was satisfactory though it was certainly time-consuming.

The third noteworthy difficulty in relation to the primary sources was the treatment of the documents in the files of the PRO in general. The studying and the writing up of the contents of the documents are usually difficult tasks in comparison to the same efforts when dealing with secondary sources. Extensive efforts need to take place in studying massive numbers of documents in order to gain few facts. Moreover, in most of these cases it appeared that though the studying of a massive number of documents was needed in order to come out with a satisfactory result, the effort usually ended up with considering only a few of these studied documents as worthy of reference. In brief, the usual outcome of the studied documents might appear small when compared to the massive data that had to be investigated.

## II. The Secondary Sources

Before reviewing the secondary sources two matters ought to be illuminated. First, the current study is the first attempt that comprehensively covers Saudi-British relations from 1939 through to 1953.<sup>30</sup> Second, as the study mostly relied on archival documents, and as it was intended to be a reliable source for further studies, its

treatment of the secondary sources was cautious.<sup>31</sup> Although, the secondary sources that were used were trustworthy, problems arose due to a contradiction between secondary sources. The only exception here were the works on Saudi-US relations and those based on the US records. This exception was possible because of the extensive available literature that covers Saudi-US relations. The variety of sources on this topic made it possible to resolve any uncertainty by comparing several secondary sources.

Though this study is the first of its kind to cover Saudi-British relations from 1939 to 1953 in depth, previous works had touched on the topics that concerned Saudi Arabia and Britain in general. During the era prior to the one covered here, two remarkable works ought to be mentioned. The first is **The Birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud** by Gary Troeller.<sup>32</sup> Troeller's study covers Saudi-British relations up to the mid-1920s, giving an extensive historical account of the early stages of Ibn Saud's connections with Britain. The second study is **Britain and Saudi Arabia 1925-1939** by Clive Leatherdale.<sup>33</sup> As revealed in its title, Leatherdale's study deals with Anglo-Saudi relationship from the end of the era that was covered by the Troeller study until the point at which the current study begins. The other studies that dealt with the issues that involve Saudi Arabia and Britain were the extensive works on the frontier issue. Three studies focused on the issue, namely: **Eastern Arabian Frontiers** by John Kelly, **The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955** by Abdulrahman Al-Shamlan, and **Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert** by John Wilkinson.<sup>34</sup> Parts of these three studies dealt with the issue that the present study is dealing with as well, specifically the frontier dispute from 1949 onwards. Even so, it should be noted that the differences between these studies and the current study are significant. These writers dealt with the frontier issue from diverse viewpoints, and their linkage between the dispute and the nucleus of Saudi-British relations was generally weak. By focusing on the frontier dispute with strong emphasis on its relation to Saudi-British political ties this study will emphasise a dimension that has not been properly covered in previous studies, not just in its analytical process but also in the outcome of its findings.

Unlike the case of Saudi-British relations which suffers from the absence of any comprehensive secondary literature in the era from 1939 onwards, the Saudi-US case is rich. The most notable study that comes close - to some extent - to the idea of the present study, is Isadore Gold's doctoral dissertation; **The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power.**<sup>35</sup> With strong emphasis on US-Saudi relations, Gold touched on the diplomatic supremacy that shifted in Saudi Arabia from Britain to the USA. In a similar way to nearly all the studies that looked at this issue from the US-Saudi relations dimension, Gold's study almost repeated the 'stereotype' exaggeration of the American factor. The fundamental dissimilarity between the existing study and Gold's study stems from the dimension on which each study is organised. The current study looks into the issue primarily from an angle that has not been previously studied, namely the British-Saudi dimension. Hence, its expected outcome would vary from the previous studies. Among other literature on Saudi-US relations, Irvine Anderson's study **Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamic of Foreign Oil Policy 1933-1950** and Aaron Miller's **Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949** are both remarkable.<sup>36</sup> They both give a comprehensive account of the progress of US involvement in Saudi Arabia. Finally, it should be pointed out that this thesis has benefited greatly from the massive secondary sources that were available on Saudi-US relations and that were constructed on US primary sources.<sup>37</sup> The consultation of these sources together with the published US documents eliminated any need for turning directly to the US records.

#### **D. The Study Outlines**

Within this introductory chapter a brief look at the historical background of Saudi-British relations up to 1939 will be provided. Following that, the study will trace the shift that occurred, by studying the development of Saudi-British relations from early 1939 to November 1953 in five main chapters and a final conclusion.

The study's main theme, along with the adoption of the diplomatic history method, led the focus on a specific period of time in Saudi-British relations. Ultimately, the chronology of the period became the most appropriate technique in dividing the thesis

and its main chapters. In sequential order, each of the main chapters will focus on the development of Saudi-British relations during a certain period. Without deserting the aspects that concern the entire study, each chapter will focus within its period on the development of certain events. As each chapter focuses on a different era and examines certain events that took place within that limit, each of these chapters could hang by itself. However, this independence is not an absolute, as the study theme, framework, and questions tie these chapters strongly together as one coherent body. Hence, the relation between these chapters is strong, and usually these relations are stronger in regard to adjacent chapters. Likewise, it should be noted that, while some of the chapters will answer certain questions that are under consideration independently, full and precise answers to all the study's queries will be clearer when all these chapters are pulled together.

The first main chapter will study Saudi-British relations from early 1939 to the end of 1942. Generally, the chapter is an examination of Saudi-British relations and the phenomena that were affecting it before, during, and after the outbreak of W.W.II. The second chapter will examine Saudi-British relations, from the outset of 1943 through to the end of 1945. In general, the chapter will study Saudi Arabian interactions with Britain and the USA along with American and British rivalry in Saudi Arabia and the impact of these developments on Saudi-British relations. The third main chapter will focus on Saudi-British relations in 1946, 1947, and 1948. On the whole, the chapter will survey Saudi Arabian interactions with Britain and the USA and the impact of these interactions on Anglo-Saudi relations. Moreover, the chapter will study the Saudi-Hashemites issue, the Palestine question, the improvement of the Saudi Arabian economy, and the implications of these developments for Saudi-British relations. The fourth chapter will investigate Saudi-British relations from the beginning of 1949 to the end of 1951. Overall, the chapter will study Saudi-British relations alongside Saudi-US relations, the Saudi-British dispute over Saudi Arabia's southeast frontiers, the Saudi-Hashemites issue, and the implications of these subjects for the whole of Saudi-British relations. The last main chapter will study Saudi-British relations in 1952 and 1953. Mostly, the chapter will concentrate on the collapse of Saudi-British relations over the frontier dispute as being the last phase of a series of deteriorations that occurred in the progress of these relations.<sup>38</sup>

## 2. Historical Background

### A. The Diplomatic History of Saudi-British Relations up to 1930

According to Gary Troeller, “the first mention of British relations with the Wahhabis occurs with the rise of Wahhabi power in the Arabian Peninsula . . . in the early nineteenth century”.<sup>39</sup> However, the first well-known written document to be exchanged between the Saudi rulers and the British was a written declaration sent by *Imam* Abdullah Ibn Faisal to the British government on 21 April 1866. In that declaration *Imam* Abdullah assured the British government that he would not oppose or injure any British subjects in the Saudi territories or attack or injure the territories of those Arabs who were in alliance with the British.<sup>40</sup> After this declaration, Saudi-British contacts did not resume until the beginning of the twentieth century when Abdulaziz Ibn Abdulrahman Ibn Faisal Al Saud (Ibn Saud) re-established the (third) Saudi State.<sup>41</sup>

Soon after Ibn Saud took Riyadh in 1902, he initiated contacts with the British government. His aim was directed towards establishing a political link similar to those maintained by the Gulf Sheikdoms. The establishment of such a link was crucial for Ibn Saud, as he was in need of the British government’s recognition and support. Though there were other powers in the area to which Ibn Saud could have turned, he preferred Britain. There were possible reasons for this. First, he believed that Britain’s relations with the Gulf sheikhs had been in the interest of the rulers concerned.<sup>42</sup> Second, the British Empire was viewed as the greatest power in the Middle East, according to Ibn Saud’s calculations.<sup>43</sup> That power could protect Ibn Saud’s state against any threat, and supply it with subsidies and weapons. Finally, the British Empire was the only power in the area that had no direct interest in conquering any of Ibn Saud’s territories at that time.

At the end of 1903 Ibn Saud sent an envoy to Captain Prideaux, the British political agent in Bahrain. This envoy informed Prideaux that Ibn Saud had not given consideration to a Russian offer of establishing political relations with him, because he preferred the British. Although Ibn Saud’s envoy had made great efforts to

convince the British political agent of the importance of Britain establishing a political link with his master, he had to return to Riyadh without any commitment.<sup>44</sup> In 1906, Ibn Saud made three similar overtures to the British government, but all his overtures were turned down.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to Ibn Saud's efforts, some British officials tried without success to convince their government to establish a political link with Ibn Saud. In June 1906 the British Ambassador in Istanbul wrote to the Foreign Office about the importance of Ibn Saud, and the need for a friendly agreement with him. Similarly the British Resident in the Gulf, Sir Percy Cox, wrote to the 'British controlled' government of India in November 1906, advising it to establish a relation with Ibn Saud.<sup>46</sup> As it had been the policy of the British government to confine their interest and influence to the coasts of the Gulf at the beginning of the century, Ibn Saud's case was not considered despite all these efforts.<sup>47</sup>

Even, when Ibn Saud reached the Gulf Coast after his seizure of Al-Ahsa, in May 1913, the British government still did not decide on his case. At this time, the British government was very careful in its policy towards Ibn Saud, particularly as the establishment of any kind of relationship with him might have damaged London's relations with Istanbul. The British government "viewed Ibn Sa'ud as a figure of minimal importance in the context of general Anglo-Turkish relations".<sup>48</sup>

The British government policy towards Ibn Saud did not in fact change until Turkey declared war on the Allies on 30 October 1914.<sup>49</sup> The British government then embarked on a series of communications and negotiations with Ibn Saud, starting in December 1914. This culminated with the signing of the Anglo-Saudi Treaty on 26 December 1915.<sup>50</sup>

The Anglo-Saudi Treaty put an end to the traditional British policy of avoiding Ibn Saud. Thus, by its ratification, official connection - then relations - between Saudi Arabia and Britain commenced. Though it was clearly mentioned in the first article of the treaty that Britain recognised Ibn Saud as an independent ruler, the treaty gave the British government control over his country's external relations. In return, the treaty

gave Ibn Saud guaranteed aid against any external aggression.<sup>51</sup> In addition, Ibn Saud started receiving monthly subsidies and some light arms from Britain.<sup>52</sup>

The new Saudi-British relationship was not that of equals, rather it was a kind of imperial connection similar in many respects to the British government's link with the sheikhdoms of the Gulf.<sup>53</sup> There was no appointment of a British diplomat in Riyadh, or a Saudi diplomat in London. The channel of communication between Ibn Saud and the British government was through the High Commissioner in Iraq, Sir Percy Cox, and the political agent in Bahrain.<sup>54</sup>

Interactions between Ibn Saud and the British Empire and its protectorates increased dramatically after the Anglo-Saudi Treaty. Thus, in November 1916 a conference was held in Kuwait between Ibn Saud, the Sheikh of Kuwait, the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and the British government representative, Percy Cox.<sup>55</sup> In addition, Britain tried to fix Ibn Saud's boundaries with his northern neighbours: the Najd-Iraq frontier was settled in two stages, in 1922 and in 1925; the Najd-Kuwait frontier was fixed in December 1922, and the Najd-Transjordan one on 2 November 1925.<sup>56</sup>

During the Najd-Hijaz War (1924-1926) Britain chose to remain neutral in what it considered a religious war.<sup>57</sup> However, the result of this war was crucial to the history of Anglo-Saudi relations.<sup>58</sup> Following the end of the war, on 15 February 1926, Britain recognised the new political status of Ibn Saud as 'king of Hijaz, Sultan of Najd and its Dependencies'.<sup>59</sup>

Because of this new political order it became clear that the earlier Anglo-Saudi Treaty of 1915 was out of place, and therefore should be reconsidered. Therefore, the British government embarked on new negotiations with King Ibn Saud leading to the Treaty of Jeddah, which was reached on 20 May 1927.<sup>60</sup>

In the new treaty, which annulled the old one, Britain recognised the absolute independence of the dominions of Ibn Saud. In return Ibn Saud had to cooperate with the British government in the suppression of the slavery trade, to facilitate the pilgrimage of British subjects, and to maintain friendly relations with the Gulf Sheikhs.<sup>61</sup>

When Britain recognised the 'Kingdom of Hijaz, Sultanate of Najd and its Dependencies' in February 1926, the British Consul in Jeddah became London's representative to the new state.<sup>62</sup> However, after the ratification of the Jeddah Treaty the Foreign Office appointed Sir Andrew Ryan in May 1930 as the first British Minister to the 'Kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and its Dependencies'.<sup>63</sup> Ibn Saud appointed Mr Hafiz Wahba as the first Saudi Minister to London in the same year.<sup>64</sup>

## **B. Critical Issues of the 1930s Concerning Saudi-British Relations**

### **I. Palestine and Saudi-British Relations in the 1930s**

According to Clive Leatherdale, "Prior to the 1936 disturbances Ibn Saud had paid little attention to events in Palestine".<sup>65</sup> However, during the 1936 Palestinian strike King Ibn Saud became highly concerned about the Palestinian issue. Ibn Saud's awareness of the situation by then had motivated him - alongside his own population's encouragement - to prevent the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. In addition, Ibn Saud was asked by the Palestinian *mufti Hajj Amin Al-Husayni*, on 28 April 1936, to help in countering what Al-Husayni called "British Zionist policy" against the Arab nation.<sup>66</sup>

In April and again in June 1936, Ibn Saud contacted the British government explaining that he was in a difficult position in relation to the Palestine issue. Hence from one side he was being pressed by his own population and by the Arab nations to do something in favour of the Palestinians. From the other side he was obliged to maintain his good relations with the British government, who in this regard were seen as working against Palestinian interests.<sup>67</sup>

On 23 June 1936, Saudi Arabia suggested to Britain that it would use its influence to mediate between the British government and the Palestinians in order to bring an end to the 1936 strike. Ibn Saud suggested that Saudi Arabia would, with Iraq and Yemen, jointly make an appeal in order to make the Palestinians stop the "campaign of violence". The British government welcomed Ibn Saud's proposal enthusiastically.<sup>68</sup>

After successful contacts between Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Iraq, the heads of these States together with *Amir* Abdullah of Jordan, sent an appeal to the Palestinians on 10 October 1936. This appeal urged the Palestinians to restore order, to stop violence and to rely on the “good intentions” and cooperation of the British government.<sup>69</sup> When this appeal, supported by the Arab Higher Committee, ended the Palestinian strike successfully, the British government formally thanked Ibn Saud for his efforts in solving the dilemma.<sup>70</sup>

In November 1936 the British government formed the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Palestine. This Commission, which was also known by the name of its president, Lord Peel, started to investigate the situation in Palestine as soon as it was formed.<sup>71</sup> While the Royal Commission was working on its investigations in Palestine, Ibn Saud sent a proposal to the British government on 6 February 1937. Ibn Saud suggested four points which he believed should form part of the recommendations: to grant a complete amnesty in Palestine; to suspend Jewish immigration; to introduce legislation protecting Palestinian landowners; and to set up a constitutional Palestinian government.<sup>72</sup> On 28 March 1937, Ibn Saud again emphasised the need for the creation of a Palestinian national government in which the rights of minorities, including those of the Jews, would be protected under a national pact.<sup>73</sup>

In June 1937 the Royal Commission recommended the creation of a Jewish state and an Arab state in Palestine, with the Jerusalem area remaining under British administration. Ibn Saud and the Arab leaders rejected these proposals, and argued instead that one Palestinian State should be created.<sup>74</sup>

From this moment onward, it seems that Ibn Saud was not satisfied with the British government policy in Palestine. Without announcing his dissatisfaction to the public, he sent London several suggestions. One of these was his memorandum of 6 September 1937, in which he suggested a final settlement of this issue on a similar basis to the proposals he made at the beginning of 1937. On the same lines, Ibn Saud also sent the British government a letter on 15 January 1938, explaining the justice of granting the Arabs their rights in Palestine, and explaining further why the partition plan was unjust.<sup>75</sup>

The deteriorating situation in Palestine, along with the Arab world's condemnations of the Royal Commission's recommendation, led to the establishment of another British Royal Commission. This new Royal Commission recommended in October 1938 the abandonment of the previous partition plan.<sup>76</sup> In addition to this, the British government called for a conference on Palestine in order to reach a reasonable solution to its problem. This conference was to be held in London in early 1939.<sup>77</sup>

## II. The Hashemites and Saudi Arabia

The development of Saudi-British relations during the period that will be under extensive study in this thesis cannot be fully comprehended without taking into consideration the impact of Ibn Saud's anxiety about the Hashemites. Hence a look at the background of this issue is essential in order to examine its impact on Saudi-British relations.

Though the main rival of King Ibn Saud, King Hussein Bin Ali (the former King of Hijaz), died in June 1931 and also his son King Faisal of Iraq died in 1933, the Hashemites continued to be a problem for Ibn Saud.<sup>78</sup> The second son of Hussain Bin Ali, *Amir* Abdullah of Transjordan, was the surviving enemy in King Ibn Saud's eyes, particularly as Abdullah himself had fought battles against Ibn Saud before the Hashemites were pushed out of the Hijaz.<sup>79</sup>

Abdullah's attitude towards Ibn Saud before 1933 was hostile in general, particularly when he "refused to contemplate any act that would imply recognition of Ibn Saud", and when he was believed to be behind the Ibn Rifada tribal revolts in the north west of Hijaz in May 1932.<sup>80</sup>

Because of the fear of the possible negative impact of Abdullah-Ibn Saud's relations on Saudi-British relations, as Britain was responsible for Transjordan foreign relations, the British government urged both parties to sign a friendship treaty. In April 1933 Ibn Saud and Abdullah formally recognised the political status of each other and a treaty between them was signed in the summer of the same year.<sup>81</sup>

Despite the fact that Ibn Saud signed the 1933 treaty with Abdullah, he was always worried about any gain that the Hashemites could make in the Arab world. He thought that if the Hashemites became stronger, they could threaten his own security, particularly in the Hijaz. On various occasions, Ibn Saud's feelings in this respect were made apparent. For example, when there were strong rumours in 1936 that France was going to appoint a Hashemite monarchy in Syria, Ibn Saud "viewed the Syrian throne going to Abdullah, or any other Hashemite prince, as a hostile act and a threat to his independence".<sup>82</sup> Moreover, when the report of the Royal Commission on Palestine was made public on 22 June 1937, Ibn Saud was less worried about the partition of Palestine than about Abdullah being given full independence and being appointed as a king of both Jordan and the proposed new Palestinian State.<sup>83</sup> In addition, Ibn Saud was always anxious about Abdullah's Pan-Arab plans, in particular his ambitions for a Greater Syria.<sup>84</sup>

It always suited Ibn Saud, according to Leatherdale, to have "his personal rivals conspicuously under British control", particularly when "Abdullah's independence, if coupled with a British subsidy . . . would weaken Saudi Arabia's security".<sup>85</sup> In this respect Ibn Saud knew that, "it was only the British mandate which kept Abdullah's intrigues in check".<sup>86</sup> Ibn Saud's intention was to make sure that Jordan and Palestine were to remain under mandatory control in order to prevent Abdullah becoming king of Jordan or indeed king of Palestine.<sup>87</sup>

### III. The Saudi-British Dispute on the Arabian Southeast Frontier

Although Saudi-British relations continued towards the W.W.II era on a friendly basis, a dispute on the southeastern Saudi border erupted between Saudi Arabia and the British Gulf protectorates in the 1930s. Britain and Saudi Arabia tried to reach agreement about this dispute during several meetings between their governments' representatives in September 1934 and in April and November 1935.<sup>88</sup> Nonetheless the negotiations broke down and were suspended until after W.W.II, when the border dispute broke out again in 1949.<sup>89</sup> Although the frontier quarrel did not damage Saudi-British relations during this period, it was to have a significant impact on it during the 1950s, a matter, which this study will discuss in its last two main chapters.<sup>90</sup>

### **C. The Development of Saudi Arabia's Diplomatic History with other Powers than Britain Before 1939**

Ibn Saud's new political situation after 1926 opened the door for him to create relations with the rest of the world. In addition to his newly created relations in 1926 with, among others USSR, France and the Netherlands, Ibn Saud tried to build ties with other powers, such as the USA, Italy, and Germany. A brief look at the background of these developments is necessary in order to comprehend their later impact on Saudi-British relations.

Although Ibn Saud sought USA recognition in 1928, he did not receive that recognition until 1 May 1931.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, it was not until the American oil companies gained oil concessions in the country,<sup>92</sup> that the U.S. government signed a provisional agreement with Saudi Arabia on 7 November 1933 regarding its future diplomatic and consular representation.<sup>93</sup>

The US policy towards Saudi Arabia before W.W.II swung between two tendencies: its traditional policy of isolation and its newly developed economic interest in the region. Hence, due to its traditional policy it did not recognise Saudi Arabia until 1931, five years after the UK, USSR, and France had done so; and its new economic interest made it sign the 1933 agreement. Because of the dominance of the isolationist policy, the USA kept its relations with Saudi Arabia to a minimum up to the war period. So, despite the fact that it signed the 1933 diplomatic agreement, the first USA representative to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia did not arrive in Jeddah until after the beginning of W.W.II.<sup>94</sup>

Saudi-Italian relations began in February 1932, when Italy signed a Treaty of Friendship with the 'kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and its Dependencies'.<sup>95</sup> From 1934 onwards, when it embarked on consolidating its presence in the Red Sea, Italy strengthened its relations with Saudi Arabia. Examples could be seen in such dealings as Rome's offer to train a group of Saudi youths in aviation techniques in Italy, the expansion of the Italian Legation in 1935, the establishment of an Italian Air Mission in Jeddah, and the gift of six Italian airplanes to Saudi Arabia in 1936.<sup>96</sup>

Despite the outlook of the Saudi-Italian interactions, it should be noted that the Saudis were anxious about the strengthening of the Italy's power in the area.<sup>97</sup> Hence, by allowing their connections with Italy to increase, the Saudis were in fact endeavouring to prevent the potentiality of any kind of Italian aggression against the Kingdom.<sup>98</sup> Indeed, Italy's actions against the Arabs of Libya, and its obvious territorial ambitions in the area, had caused Ibn Saud to suspect the real intentions.<sup>99</sup> Despite, the Anglo-Italian Rome Agreement of 1927, Ibn Saud had regarded Britain as a guardian against any potential Italian hostility.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, the signing of the - new - Anglo-Italian Agreement on 16 April 1938, which was seen as a kind of collaboration accord between those two powers in the Middle East, had disappointed King Ibn Saud.<sup>101</sup> In fact, the Italian-British understanding in the Middle East was a matter of concern to Ibn Saud and eventually had an impact on his foreign policy.<sup>102</sup>

Ibn Saud's most significant diplomatic contacts with Germany occurred on 5 November 1937, when his personal secretary, Mr Yusuf Yassin, met - in Baghdad - the German Minister to Iraq, Dr Fritz Grobba. Saudi Arabia sought from that meeting to promote German help for the Arabs in regard to Palestine and to encourage Germany to open a Saudi-German diplomatic channel. After discussing the Palestinian problem, Yassin requested Grobba to ask his government for diplomatic support for the Arabs in this matter. Furthermore, Yassin stated that, "King Ibn Saud would greatly welcome having Germany send [a] diplomatic representative to Jidda [Jeddah]".<sup>103</sup>

At the time when Anglo-Italian correlation was increasing and the situation in Palestine was deteriorating, Saudi Arabia increased its contacts with Germany. In the spring of 1938 Khalid Al-Qarqani was sent by Ibn Saud to Berlin in order to conclude an arms deal, as well as to initiate closer ties with Germany. Though Al-Qarqani's mission failed to conclude an arms deal by August 1938, the question of Saudi-German diplomatic relations was kept open.<sup>104</sup>

On 29 September 1938 the German government decided to establish diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia. It requested the Saudi Minister in Cairo inform his government that the German Minister in Baghdad would be accredited to Saudi

Arabia as well.<sup>105</sup> The German government's decision had brought about major diplomatic interactions between Saudi Arabia and Germany on the eve of the war, as the following chapter will demonstrate.<sup>106</sup>

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the primary documents the study will also make use of - only reliable - secondary sources that are available. See the literature review in the following pages of this introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Several scholars had used the combinations of the diplomatic history and the realist model. See for example Kieft, David Owen. **British Foreign Policy and France, 1868-1880; A Study in Great Power Diplomacy (Russia, Germany, Egypt, Turkey)**. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1998, pp. 1-9. Also, see Hurrell, Andrew. **The United States and Latin America: Neorealism re-examined**. In Woods, Ngaire. **Explaining International Relations since 1945**. Oxford: Oxford University press, 1997, pp. 155-178. In addition a study on the nineteenth century Saudi-Anglo relations had applied the realist model. See Al-Nuaim, Mishary. **اصول التحليل السياسي السعودي: قراءة مختلفة لجدور العلاقة السعودية - البريطانية 1866-1800** (Political Analysis Foundation: various reading for the roots of the Saudi-British relations 1800-1866). In **مجلة دراسات الخليج والجزيرة العربية (Journal of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula Studies)**. Vol. 84, winter 1997, pp. 213-231. Though this study relies on the realism paradigm - as indicated in this chapter - it should be noted that such a conduct would not completely ignore the association of the ideological aspect to Saudi Arabian foreign policy over the Palestine issue. The purpose of this exception would be only for the sake of 'further understanding' for the development of the Saudi-British relations over this particular case. For more details, see section D of chapter three.

<sup>3</sup> The organisation of these assumptions was as a result of various readings about realism and neo-realism in several books including the following: Holsti, K. **International Politics: A Framework for Analysis**. Englewood Cliffs (new Jersey): Prentice Hall, 1995 (Seventh Edition), pp. 5-6. Also, Viotti, Paul & Kauppi, Mark. **International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism**. London: Allyn and Bacon, 1993 (Second Edition), pp. 5-7 & pp. 35-66. Also, Keohane, Robert. **Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond**. In Viotti, Paul & Kauppi, Mark. op. cit., pp. 186-196. Also, Brown, Michael & Lynn-Jones, Sean & Miller, Steven. **The Perils of Anarchy: Contemporary Realism and International Security**. London: The Mit Press, 1995, pp. ix-xiii. Also, Frankel, Benjamin. **Realism: Restatements and Renewal**. London: Frank Cass, 1996, pp. xiii-xx. Also, Buzan, Barry. **The Timeless Wisdom of realism**. In Smith, Steve & Booth Ken & Zalewski, Marysia. **International Theory: Positivism & Beyond**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 47-63. Also, Rosenau, James & Durfee, Mary. **Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World**. Oxford: Westview Press, 1995, pp. 9-29. Also, Dougherty, James & Pfaltzgraff, Robert. **Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey**. New York: Longman, 1997, pp-58-93.

<sup>4</sup> The main aspect of growth within the Saudi Arabian economy was the increase of its income from the oil royalty in the period from 1946 onwards. In addition, there was a growth of a relatively modest aspect of infrastructure development approximately during the same time that the oil production was increasing. In regard to Britain, the main aspect of economic decline that concerns this study was the deterioration of Britain's foreign aid as a tool of foreign politics after W.W.II. The political decline was mainly within the British Empire, in particular the withdrawal from India in 1947 (an early indication of further deterioration). See Chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>5</sup> Particularly, with the realist assumptions that are in use in this thesis.

<sup>6</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. **شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز (The Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz)**. Beirut: دار العلم للملايين, 1992, p. 369. It became a custom for Ibn Saud to give specific instructions to his officials when they undertook official missions abroad. See for example, King Ibn Saud's instructions to Prince Faisal before attending London Conference on Palestine in 1939. Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 770-774. As well as, King Ibn Saud's instructions to Crown Prince Saud before leaving for the USA in 1947. Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 775-781.

<sup>7</sup> As this thesis demonstrates through all its main chapters, Ibn Saud frequently contacted Britain diplomatically through the British Ministers/Ambassadors in Jeddah. Nevertheless, occasionally Ibn Saud instructed the Saudi Minister/Ambassador in London, Hafiz Wahba, to call on the Foreign Office, but that was usually when it was a less important issue or when the British Minister/Ambassador was not in Saudi Arabia (on leave) or when Wahba flew with instructions from Saudi Arabia.

<sup>8</sup> For a clear example see section E of chapter five. For Ibn Saud this synonymy was sometimes definable in both ways when any issue was in focus; that's to say: he is the state and the state is himself as well. It could be said that Ibn Saud's view of not distinguishing between his own position and the concept of the state was also reflected in his internal politics. This notion caused the King to deal within his kingdom's components in a very relaxed - and perhaps traditional - way. Hence, the land became his own property and he became the political father of the population. Thus he ruled them in a

simple personal way that allowed traditional personal contacts at all levels, and allowed him to take care of their needs, even if it would be at the expense of the state's poor economy. This - alongside other unique factors that relate to Ibn Saud and Saudi Arabia - could explain the King's popularity among the vast majority of his subjects, particularly from the mid-1930s onwards. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 835-836.

<sup>9</sup> From F. H. W Stonehewer-Bird (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, Review of the situation in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 20 March 1941, FO 371/27261.

<sup>10</sup> All the terms that normally refer to Saudi Arabia would be in use as a reference to the state, including the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia, the Kingdom, etc. Though Britain is a Kingdom as well, the use of the Kingdom - by itself as one noun - would be referring to Saudi Arabia; otherwise reference to Britain as a kingdom would be clarified in most cases with a second noun. The definition of the state in this study is the one that is generally recognised within social science. However, I define state as "a political entity that has a definite territory, permanent population, stable ruling authority, and should be independent and sovereign".

<sup>11</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 365-369. Also, see Ibid., pp. 1011-1014.

<sup>12</sup> Surely this is meant to be when a reference would be made without mentioning a particular official name. Otherwise, the personal name of such an official would do by itself.

<sup>13</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1984, p. 315.

<sup>14</sup> Though this study will look into the development of US-Saudi relations from 1939-1953, it must be stressed that it will not be covered in the same degree as Saudi-British relations. Beside, the point in covering the developments of Saudi Arabia relations with the USA is mainly to determine its impact on Saudi-British relations.

<sup>15</sup> King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996. Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992. Moreover, the study also used these Published sources: Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957. Farnham (UK): 1988. Saudi Arabia. Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955. Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955. Foreign Office Annual Reports from Arabia 1930-1960. Chippenham (England): Archive Editions: 1993. Tuson, P & Burdett, A. Records of Saudi Arabia: Primary Documents, 1902-1960. Oxford: Redwood Press Ltd, 1992. Tuson Penelope, & Quick Emma. Arabian Treaties: 1600-1960. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992. Hodgkin, E. Two Kings in Arabia: Sir Reader Bullard's Letters from Jeddah. Reading: Ithaca, 1993. Kamlah, Taysir. The Role of the Saudi-Hashemite Conflict in the loss of Palestine: From the British Foreign Office Documents. London: Al-Rafid Distributing & Publishing, 1996. There are many published titles but most of the documents that the study is based on are still in the Public Records Office. The answer is simply that no single collection of printed materials could cover all the required documents unless it concentrates on one narrow topic and a shorter period of time. For example, I found the first two works (King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953 and The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961) more useful - than the others - simply because the first one just concerned Ibn Saud's correspondence (though I must say it still could not cover all of them) and the second one concentrated on Buraimi in ten massive volumes and within a shorter period (i.e., eleven years) in comparison with Schofield and Blake collections (Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957). During my research at the Public Record Office (PRO) I compared the unpublished materials with these titles, I must say I was highly satisfied with Priestland, Jane collection (The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961). On the other hand, I was dissatisfied with Tuson, and Burdett, collection (Records of Saudi Arabia: Primary Documents, 1902-1960, I must say I could not see this collection until the latest stages of my research). The reason is simple as indicated earlier, Tuson and Burdett tried to cover all the documents that were related to Saudi Arabia in more than 58 years in a single title. In short, during my comparison of this title and what was available at the PRO, I found that this title was very selective indeed; approximately it does not even contain 10% of what is available. Nonetheless, these kinds of collections might still be useful for research that is not as specific as the current study; such as if someone was researching Saudi-Italian relations and wanted to consult the British record briefly, otherwise a researcher must think twice before relying on such collections.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980. Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of

**Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud.** Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1985. In addition, other published US documents were used such as; U.S. Department of State, **Foreign Relations of the United States: The Near East and Africa.** 1943. Also, Hurewitz, J C. **The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record.** London: Yale University Press, 1979. Moreover, other related published documents were also consulted, such as the German Documents that were captured and published by the Allies at the end of W.W.II, i.e. **Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945.** Series D.

<sup>17</sup> The following notes should not be taken as a discouragement for further similar study, but should be observed in the early plans of such study. Indeed, the benefit of such research is remarkable for Ph.D. students. Hence in addition to its original contribution to knowledge, such a study - in my opinion - is the best academic front that lets the student master his skills in the field of the academic research.

<sup>18</sup> See for example Leatherdale, Clive. **Britain and Saudi Arabia 1925-1939.** London: Frank Cass, 1983, pp 4-5. Also, Wilkinson, John. **Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert.** London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991, pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>19</sup> Though it should be mentioned that, in some cases Ibn Saud used to write down instructions for the Saudi officials' assignments abroad. See for example Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 775-781.

<sup>20</sup> Also, see section 1: A of this chapter.

<sup>21</sup> In most of these cases, Ibn Saud used to turn to his advisers for the sake of non-obligated recommendations. That is to say, Ibn Saud used to consult them in order to enhance his knowledge, as well as to achieve the best alternative among several policies that concerned a particular case, without necessarily putting most of the feedback that he got into practice. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 569. For example of such cases see Wahba, Hafiz. **خمسون عاما في جزيرة العرب (Fifty years in the Arabian Peninsula).** Cairo: مكتبة مصطفى البابی, 1960, pp. 108-109.

<sup>22</sup> This fact was observed in most of the cases that were researched in this study.

<sup>23</sup> This should be acknowledged beside the fact that Ibn Saud obviously would keep the texts of Saudi Arabian treaties and agreements with other states in safe places, hence providing a place for other importance correspondence to be saved as well.

<sup>24</sup> In addition, the same memorials do not give any indication about the existence of internal specific minutes of thoughts in regard to the policies that were externally taken during Ibn Saud's reign. See Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.** Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955. Also, Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia).** Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955.

<sup>25</sup> Despite the valuable collection of these units, no visible data result was obtained for this study. Moreover, it should be noted that the holding of King Abdulaziz Information and Document Center - at King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archive (ad-Darah) - was generally outstanding in regard to the internal history of Saudi Arabia, particularly, the collections of original documents on the local affairs of Saudi Arabia. In regards to the external correspondence of the Saudi government, particularly to the cases in relation to this study, the collections of all these units, is less comprehensive than that of the PRO. Hence, this study was mainly fed by the extensive Saudi correspondence that were founded in the PRO. The researcher is grateful for the help and the assistance of the staffs of ad-Darah, King Fahad Library, and King Abdulaziz Library.

<sup>26</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 366-369, & pp. 1012-1014.

<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it could be said that the uniqueness of Ibn Saud's practises in regard to Saudi Arabian foreign policy - as stated earlier - were tremendously helpful in countering this major difficulty. See section 1: A of this chapter.

<sup>28</sup> The use of the secondary sources was carefully kept within the limits indicated in the following section. See section 1: C: II of this chapter. The use of the current researcher's academic familiarity regarding Ibn Saud was also vigilant and conditional in not contradicting any of the evidence obtained. Besides, the researcher's task in this specific case was rather analytical than as a source. Though the researcher cannot consider himself as an expert nor a specialist in regard to Ibn Saud's political status (I believe this matter should be left to the readers' judgement), it is still worth mentioning the researcher's familiarity of such a topic. As a Saudi Arabian, whose upbringing was in an environment that shared the same location but not the same time as Ibn Saud, a basic knowledge about Ibn Saud was formulated prior to undergraduate studies. Benefiting, from uncountable conversations with various personalities that lived - and in most cases politically dealt with Ibn Saud - during the King's reign, a political opinion was continuously formulated during undergraduate as well as postgraduate academic life. Moreover, as a student of Political Science at undergraduate level and a student of Middle Eastern Politics at Master level, the researcher produced several essays that focused on Saudi Arabia in general and Ibn Saud in particular. Finally, it could be said that the undertaking of this particular research had

tremendously sharpened the researcher familiarity in regard to Ibn Saud's traditions in the determination of Saudi Arabian foreign policy during the last fifteen years of the King's reign. Before ending this note, it should be noted that the researcher was careful not to include any fundamental opinion into the pages of this thesis until the research had reached semi-final drafts.

<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, it should be mentioned that the librarian staff at the FCO, were helpful in most of the cases in giving verbal hints, in regard to some of these files contents or to directions in finding similar contents in open files at the PRO. The researcher is grateful for their help in such cases.

<sup>30</sup> It is worth mentioning that Professor Jamal Qasim of Ain Shams University (Cairo), had presented a paper to the conference on 'the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 100 years' (Riyadh 24-28 January 1999), entitled 'Saudi-British relations in the Arabian Gulf during King Abdulaziz reign'. In thirty-five pages Professor Qasim attempted to cover Saudi-British relations in regard to the Gulf, from 1902 to 1953. Though it might be said that paper had filled an empty gap - in such an important matter - in that conference, still this modest attempt cannot be considered as a comprehensive study in regard to Saudi-British relations as whole. The length of the period that was covered, the sources, the study theme, and the limit of its contents are indeed denying such character for that paper. See Qasim, Jamal. Saudi-British relations in the Arabian Gulf during King Abdulaziz reign. Paper presented to conference on 'the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 100 years', Riyadh 24-28 January 1999. Professor Qasim who is a distinguished scholar and writer in the Arab world is not blamed here, but in fact mentioned in order to acknowledge his work.

<sup>31</sup> The references for the secondary sources here include the sources under review within this section, as well as those listed in the thesis bibliography.

<sup>32</sup> Troeller, Gary. The Birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud. London: Frank Cass, 1987.

<sup>33</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit.

<sup>34</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987. Kelly, J. Eastern Arabian Frontiers. London: Faber and Faber, 1964. Wilkinson, John. Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991.

<sup>35</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit.

<sup>36</sup> Anderson, Irvine. Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamic of Foreign Oil Policy 1933-1950. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981. Miller, Aaron David. Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

<sup>37</sup> In addition to the reviewed secondary sources on the US-Saudi relations, the list goes on, for example see Grayson, Benson Lee. Saudi-American Relations. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America. Inc., 1982. Also, Al-Nairab, Mohammad. العلاقات السعودية الأمريكية (Saudi-American Relations). Cairo: مكتبة مدبولي, 1994. Also, Long, David. The United States and Saudi Arabia: Ambivalent Allies. London: Westview Press, 1985. Also, Hart, Parker. Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.

<sup>38</sup> For further details see the introduction of each chapter.

<sup>39</sup> Troeller, Gary. op. cit., p. 14.

<sup>40</sup> See the document in Tuson Penelope, & Quick Emma. Arabian Treaties: 1600-1960. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 17. Also, in Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 407. The mention of this well-known document, as an example, does not necessarily deny the other correspondences between the Saudi and the British in the nineteenth century. For the other correspondences see Al-Nuaim, Mishary. op. cit., pp. 213-231. Also, see Troeller, Gary. op. cit., pp. 14-15.

<sup>41</sup> Shortly after this declaration, a conflict for succession erupted between *Imam* Faisal Ibn Turki's sons (Abdullah and Saud). This conflict brought an end to the second Saudi State and forced the survivors of the Al Saud dynasty (Ibn Saud and his father) to seek exile in Kuwait from 1891 to 1902. See Troeller, Gary. op. cit., pp. 18-21. Also, see Al-Nuaim, Mishary. op. cit., pp. 229-230.

<sup>42</sup> Ibn Saud personally witnessed the benefit and the advantages of the Kuwaiti-British Treaty of 1899 during his exile in Kuwait. Also, see Qasim, Jamal. op. cit., p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Hamadi, Abdulkarim. Saudi Arabia's Territorial Limits: A Study in Law and Politics. Ph.D. Dissertation, Indiana University, 1981, p. 14. See also, Troeller, Gary. op. cit., pp. 21-22.

<sup>45</sup> Troeller, Gary. op. cit., p. 24. Furthermore, Ibn Saud did not give up the hope of establishing a link with the British government. Thus, he started building personal relations with some of the British officials, such as Captain W. H. I. Shakespeare, the Political Agent in Kuwait. His relations with Captain Shakespeare started during his visit to Kuwait in 1910 and lasted until 1914. During

Shakespeare's several informal visits (such as in 1911, May 1913 and July 1913), Ibn Saud appealed to him to convince the British government to consider his case. See *Ibid.*, pp. 36-39. See also, Lacey, Robert. **The Kingdom**. (Arabic edition) London: Interprint, 1987, pp. 67-78.

<sup>46</sup> Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 24. Also, Hamadi, Abdulkarim. *op. cit.*, p. 15. & p. 32.

<sup>47</sup> Particularly, when the Najd territories were limited to central Arabia before 1913. Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>48</sup> Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, pp. 35-36. It should be noted that at that time there were negotiations between the British government and the Turkish government regarding the Arabian Peninsula, over the delineation of their respective spheres of influence, which resulted in the signing of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29 July 1913. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. *op. cit.*, p. 327. & pp. 408-416. Also, Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, pp. 44-62.

<sup>49</sup> For the date only see Williams, Ann. **Britain and France in the Middle East and North Africa, 1914-1967**. London: Macmillan, 1968, p. 159. When Turkey joined the war with the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, etc.) against the Allies (Britain, France, Russia, Italy, USA, etc.) the traditional British policy of maintaining the Ottoman Empire collapsed overnight as Britain became at war with it. *Ibid.* Also, Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>50</sup> See Fitzsimons, M. A. **Empire by Treaty**. London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1965, p. 23. See also, Seton-Williams, M. V. **Britain and the Arab States: A survey of Anglo-Arab Relations, 1920-1948**. London: Luzac and Company, Ltd. 1948, pp. 289-290. & p. 182. See also, Lacey, Robert. *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79. The negotiations started when the British government sent Captain Shakespeare in December 1914, but because he died in the Jrrab battle between Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid in January 1915, the negotiations froze until December 1915. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

<sup>51</sup> See the full text of the treaty in Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, pp. 254-256.

<sup>52</sup> Ibn Saud continued to receive the monthly subsidies until terminated by the British government on 31 March 1924. See Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 18. & p. 33. See also, Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 101. & p. 216. See also, Sluglett, Peter & Farouk-Sluglett, Marion. **The Precarious Monarchy: Britain, Abd al-aziz Ibn Saud and the Establishment of the Kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and its Dependencies, 1925-1932**. In Niblock, Tim. **State, Society and Economy in Saudi Arabia**. London: Croom Helm, 1982, p. 50.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Saud's territories became "a veiled British protectorate" like that of the Gulf sheikhdoms and was agreed and promised not to enter "into any correspondence, agreements or Treaty with any Foreign Nation or Power". Sluglett, Peter & Farouk-Sluglett, Marion. *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50. Also, Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 255.

<sup>54</sup> The communication was with the former between 1915 and 1922, then with the latter until 1926. See Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197. Although Ibn Saud appointed a British subject, Dr Mann, as his personal representative in London in 1922, all his dispatches continued to go through Baghdad and Bahrain, because the appointment of Dr Mann was purely nominal. See *Ibid.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>55</sup> At this conference the attending Arab leaders promised cooperation with the British Empire. Seton-Williams, M. V. *op. cit.*, p. 182. See also, Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 188-189.

<sup>57</sup> Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>58</sup> Ibn Saud defeated the King of Hijaz 'Hussain Ibn Ali' and thus became "the King of Hijaz, and sultan of Najd and its dependencies" on 8 January 1926. See Seton-Williams, M. V. *op. cit.*, p. 187. Also, Williams, Ann. *op. cit.*, p. 160.

<sup>59</sup> It should be noted, that the British recognition of Ibn Saud's new political situation came after that of the USSR, France and Netherlands. Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 62. Also, Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 231. It should be also noted that the official name of Saudi Arabia was changing from time to time according to the expansions of the Kingdom, thus it was 'Sultanate of Najd and its Dependencies' up to January 1926 when it then changed to 'Kingdom of Hijaz, Sultanate of Najd and its Dependencies'. In November 1927 the name changed to 'Kingdom of Hijaz, Najd and its Dependencies' finally in September 1932 to 'Kingdom of Saudi Arabia'. Al-Damer, Shafi. **The Development of the Consultation Issue in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Master Dissertation, University of Exeter, September 1993, p. 12. & p. 21.

<sup>60</sup> Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 236.

<sup>61</sup> See Troeller, Gary. *op. cit.*, p. 236. Also, Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, pp. 380-381. This Treaty was to run for seven years, however, it was renewed in October 1936 for a further seven years. See *ibid.* p. 72.

<sup>62</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 84.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86. Reader Bullard, became the second British minister to Saudi Arabia (1937-1939). See *Ibid.*, p. 87.

- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 86-87. Also, Troeller, Gary. op. cit., p. 237.
- <sup>65</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 267.
- <sup>66</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. The Palestine Issue in Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy: 1936-1981. Ph.D. thesis, University of Exeter, 1989, pp. 135-136.
- <sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 137.
- <sup>68</sup> Kamlah, Taysir. op. cit., p. 16. Also, Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 269.
- <sup>69</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 138. Also, Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 271.
- <sup>70</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 139.
- <sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 139. Also, Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 273.
- <sup>72</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 143.
- <sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 144.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid., p. 139. Also, Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 274.
- <sup>75</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 140-143. & pp. 145-146.
- <sup>76</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 278.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., p. 279. Also, see section B of chapter one of this study.
- <sup>78</sup> Seton-Williams, M. V. op. cit., p. 186. Also, Brenchley, Frank. Britain and the Middle East: An Economic History 1945-87. London: Lester Crook Academic Publishing, 1989, p. 104.
- <sup>79</sup> Such as the battle of Turaba in 1919. See Wahba, Hafiz. op. cit., p. 128. Also, see Troeller, Gary. op. cit., pp. 142-143.
- <sup>80</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 122. Also, Wilson, Mary. King Abdullah, Britain and the Making of Jordan. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, p. 110. The exiled leader of the Belly Tribe, Hammed Ibn Rifada, who left Hijaz in 1928 after disagreement with Ibn Saud, entered northern Hijaz through Transjordan, with a group of rebels. Ibn Saud easily crushed the movement shortly after its outbreak in the northwestern towns of Hijaz. See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 557-560.
- <sup>81</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., pp. 122-123.
- <sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 284.
- <sup>83</sup> Kedourie, Elie. Great Britain and Palestine: The Turning Point. In Kedourie, Elie. Islam in the Modern World. London: Mansell, 1980, p. 144. & p. 150.
- <sup>84</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 282.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid., p. 275.
- <sup>86</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>88</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 65. & pp. 97-112.
- <sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 186.
- <sup>90</sup> See chapter four and chapter five of the current study. For the details of this dispute during the 1930s see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 55-155. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., pp. 221-250. Also, see Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 381-395. Also, see Foreign Office memorandum, Summary of previous negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government on the subject of the South-Eastern boundaries of Saudi Arabia, 15 November 1950, FO 371/82655. In Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 98-104.
- <sup>91</sup> Salamah, G. 1945 عام منذ السياسة الخارجية السعودية منذ عام 1945 (Saudi Foreign Policy Since 1945). Beirut: Arab Development Institution, 1980, p. 241. On 1 May 1931, the State Department asked Ibn Saud's Minister to London to communicate to his government that the USA would extend diplomatic recognition to the Kingdom of Hijaz and Najd and its Dependencies. Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., p. 26. See also, Grayson, Benson Lee. op. cit., p. 5. When Ibn Saud asked for US recognition in 1928, the State Department was not convinced of his importance. However some "American travelers, admirers, and businessmen . . . provided the most important sources of information on Ibn Saud and his Arabia . . . these men, particularly Rihani and Twitchell . . . helped to convince officials of the importance of Ibn Saud and the economic potential of his Kingdom". Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 23-24.
- <sup>92</sup> The U.S. economic involvement in Saudi Arabia started when Standard Oil of California (SOCAL) signed the oil concession agreement with the government of Saudi Arabia on 29 May 1933. See Brenchley, Frank. op. cit., p. 78. It should be noted that, "By November 1939 the concession was assigned to the California Arabian Standard Oil Company (CASOC), a subsidiary of SOCAL. In 1936, the Texas Oil Company became a half-partner in CASCO and in July an additional agreement was concluded establishing the California Texas Oil Company (CALTEX), a marketing subsidiary. SOCAL received a half interest in the Taxes Company's marketing operations east of Suez. In return Texas obtained a half interest in the Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), a Canadian subsidiary of

SOCAL. On 31 January 1944, CASCO changed its name to the Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO)". Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. xii.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., p. 225. In that agreement which was titled a "friendship agreement" there were also commercial, navigation and juridical protections for the USA companies. See Grayson, Benson Lee. op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>94</sup> See section F of chapter one.

<sup>95</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., pp. 293-294. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. 1939-1926: الملك عبدالعزيز والماتيا: (King Abdulaziz and Germany: 1926-1939). Beirut: دار امواج, 2000, pp. 135-136. Moreover, it should be noted that, in addition to the ordinary diplomatic contacts, high rank officials from both governments had interacted on several occasions, such as the Saudi officials visits to Italy in 1934 and in 1935. Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., pp. 293-294.

<sup>97</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 115-119.

<sup>98</sup> It should be noted that it was the Italians who were more responsible for the expansion of the Saudi-Italian ties. See Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>100</sup> See Ibid., pp. 115-117. The Anglo-Italian Agreement was signed on 11 March 1927, and was known as the Rome Agreement. See the Agreement in Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., pp. 379-380.

<sup>101</sup> See the text of the 1938 Agreement in Ibid., pp. 383-386. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 115-119.

<sup>102</sup> See section A of chapter one.

<sup>103</sup> From Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 9 November 1937, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 769-771. Leatherdale (see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 301) and others (i.e. Al-Anqari, see Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 151) mistakenly state that Yassin asked Grobba for arms for the Palestinians. It should be mentioned here that neither Grobba nor Yassin talked about arms during their meeting. See from Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 9 November 1937, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 769-771. However, while Yassin was in Baghdad he asked the representative of the Otto Wolff enterprise whether his firm could supply Saudi Arabia (and not Palestine) with 15,000 rifles for cash or on credit. See Wolffsohn, Michael. German-Saudi Arms Deals. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1985, p. 16. Wolffsohn correctly wrote that most sources "confuses German arms for Palestinians . . . with weapons the Saudis themselves wanted to buy . . . [because] at about the same time Palestinians did try to buy German arms which they hoped to smuggle into the British Mandate via Saudi Arabia". Ibid., pp. 15-17. Though Saudi Arabian probably did not see the necessity for the creation of a political - diplomatic - link with Germany until after the mid-1930s, it should be noted that there was a German trading representative who worked in Jeddah during 1930-1933. Furthermore, it should also be noted that in 1929 Saudi Arabia and Germany had signed a general friendship agreement. It seems that the purpose of the early Saudi-German contacts was mainly for trading purposes. Hence, when the global economic crisis of the 1930s shadowed the Saudi Arabian economy, all these efforts disposed quickly. In fact even the German Trade Office in Jeddah had to close down in 1933. See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 53-76. For further details of the Saudi-German relations see Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., pp. 20-21. Also, From Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 20 January 1938, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 781-782. More Saudi-German contacts occurred when the Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister, Fuad Hamza, visited Berlin in the period between 23 and 27 of August 1938. In his conversations with the German officials Hamza explained how Ibn Saud was neither politically nor economically free to act according to his political preference and therefore would not act against Britain. Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., pp. 21-22. Also, Memorandum of the head of Political Division, German Foreign Ministry, 27 August 1938, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 788-791. Hamza's explanation was not in Ibn Saud's interests, which is why Hamza was dismissed from Saudi-German contacts when Ibn Saud learned about this. See from Grobba to the Under State Secretary, German Foreign Ministry, 2 May 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 403-407.

<sup>105</sup> From the Director of the Political Department to the Foreign Policy Office of the Nazi Party, 29 September 1938, In Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, p. 793.

<sup>106</sup> See section A: II of chapter one.

## ***Chapter One: Close Relations, 1939-1942***

This chapter will study the development of Saudi-British relations from the outset of 1939 to the end of 1942. As the peak of cordial relations existed during this period, the chapter will attempt to highlight the foundations on which the strengthening of these relations was based. Certain subjects that were directly related to the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Britain will be carefully dealt with.

Saudi Arabian security concerns at the beginning of 1939 and the implications for the development of Saudi-British relations will be dealt with alongside Saudi Arabian relations with each of Germany and Italy. The Palestine issue and its association with Saudi-Anglo relations will be investigated. The consolidation of British and Saudi Arabian relations at the outbreak of the war will be examined. British assistance to Saudi Arabia and the question of the Saudi Kingdom's neutrality will both be researched. Before ending the chapter a brief look at Saudi-American relations will be provided.

### **A. Security Concerns and their Implications for Saudi Arabia's Foreign Relations**

By the first day of 1939, several decisions that were supposed to formulate a new approach for the foreign policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were already under consideration by its founder and leader, King Ibn Saud.<sup>1</sup> Two particular developments were behind the precise timing when the King launched his efforts on this. First, Saudi Arabia was just about to establish a new - formal - political relationship with Germany, as the German Minister in Baghdad, Dr Fritz Grobba, was preparing to visit the Kingdom for this particular purpose during the early months of that winter.<sup>2</sup> Second, the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister, *Amir Faisal*, was just about to leave the Kingdom in order to attend the London Conference on Palestine, an opportunity that allowed the King to enquire about his Kingdom's vital issues with the highest level of authority in London, the British Prime Minister.<sup>3</sup>

On 2 January 1939, the King of Saudi Arabia signed "a very important message" that was to be sent to the British Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. Neville Chamberlain.<sup>4</sup> It

could be argued that, at that particular time, Ibn Saud was - for the most part - keen to find out the extent to which he could rely on Britain over the Saudi Kingdom's security issues. In view of that, he was also attempting to detect the ideal extent - particularly that of a security nature - in which he should build the Kingdom's newborn relations with Germany upon.

As it happened, the King might have been in darkness on the scope of his Kingdom's relations with Britain at that specific time. Certain developments in the 1930s could be held responsible for the existence of this kind of gloominess in Ibn Saud's thinking. Indeed, the Saudi-British misunderstanding on the Kingdom's southeastern frontier, the Saudi-Hashemite frictions, and British policy on the Palestine issue, might have shaded negative impacts on Saudi-British relations.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, it could be argued that the conclusion of the 1938 Anglo-Italian Agreement was the most important occurrence, which caused Ibn Saud to be at such a standpoint by the beginning of 1939.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, it could be argued that this agreement had brought about the tendency for the King to consider the setting up of a new order with an alternative power - to Britain - for the assurance of the Kingdom's security. This was the case, when King Ibn Saud was inclined to suspect the British and the Italian intentions upon the conclusion of such an agreement.

There were certain reasons behind Ibn Saud's comprehension of this particular aspect. First, he knew that the Anglo-Italian agreement had covered issues that concerned the Red Sea States.<sup>7</sup> Second, while he was allowed by the British to see certain articles of the 1927 - Rome - agreement, he was denied to see any article of the new agreement.<sup>8</sup> Third, he was aware that the British officials, who were opposing cooperation with the Italians, were in apparent disagreement with their government's decisions over the endorsement of the 1938 agreement.<sup>9</sup> Fourth, he had witnessed visible signs of Anglo-Italian cooperation in the area, such as that which was conducted by the Italian Arabic propaganda, hence instead of the usual anti-British propaganda; the Italian - Arabic - Radio began transmitting material friendly to Britain. Broadly speaking, Ibn Saud feared the ultimate results of the Italian-British collaboration on the security of his Kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

## I. The Saudi Enquiry and the British Response

Faisal - who was given the responsibility of communicating Ibn Saud's correspondence to Chamberlain - left Saudi Arabia in the first week of January 1939, with the hope that he would reach London sooner rather than later. However, he did not arrive in London until 2 February. The prolongation of the discussions that took place between the Arab States' representative in Cairo - a meeting which was arranged so they could adopt a common policy on Palestine prior to their attendance of the London Conference - had in fact delayed Faisal's arrival until that particular day.<sup>11</sup> Due to the importance of Ibn Saud's message Faisal had to submit it to the British authorities on the same evening of his arrival in London.<sup>12</sup>

With stress on the Saudi-Anglo friendship, and with a reference to security matters, King Ibn Saud emphasised the importance of his message:

“you are fully alive to the danger points in the Near East generally, and in the Arab countries more particularly, and are aware of the strong ties and traditional friendship between us and the British Government, we thought of taking the opportunity of the presence of our son Faisal in London to convey to Your Excellency this important note, which we hope will receive all the consideration and attention which the present situation demands, and which the friendship of our two countries and their mutual interests require”.<sup>13</sup>

It was also explained that the Anglo-Italian Agreement had necessitated a case in which the British government were obliged to explain the implications of such accord to the Saudi government:

“At this moment, when Great Britain has taken a somewhat definite stand as a result of her undertakings in the Anglo-Italian Agreement, we think it imperative to approach the British Government on this matter, so as to come to a clear understanding”.<sup>14</sup>

To Chamberlain Ibn Saud explained that the note, which was “to shed some light on certain points and clarify others”, was written “in the hope that your [Chamberlain] reply will be such as to reassure us and definitely establish our exact position”.<sup>15</sup> The

most essential points that Ibn Saud needed “to come to understanding” with the British upon, were summarised by him as follows:

1. “To ascertain the opinion of the British Government in the case of an act of aggression committed against us, whether as a result of imperialistic designs, or because of our negative attitude towards certain powers, or for any other reason, unprovoked by us”.<sup>16</sup>
2. “To ascertain the opinion of the British Government on the question of a mutual agreement to consult each other from time to time on all events affecting the Arab countries”.<sup>17</sup>
3. “To agree not to introduce any change in the status quo of any Arabic speaking country which may adversely affect our interests, without first affording us an adequate opportunity to express our views”.<sup>18</sup>
4. “To agree on the definite stand which will be taken by both of us towards the effect which the policy of a third party may have on our common interests”.<sup>19</sup>
5. “To come to an agreement defining the exact meaning and extent of the Anglo-Italian Agreement, so far as it affects the Arab countries and limits the British Government’s freedom of action and the reaction which this may give rise to in the Arab countries generally”.<sup>20</sup>

More broadly it seems that Ibn Saud’s message to Chamberlain was intentionally aiming to achieve five main goals and one ultimate outcome. First, to find out about the British government stance on certain practical aspects of Saudi-British relations, such as mutual consultations. Second, to - indirectly - assure the British government of Saudi Arabia’s benevolent attitude towards Britain, during a critical time in which the Saudis were just about to start off a new political relationship with Germany. Third, to bring about a clear vision of the extent of protection that Britain was willing to undertake in case of any potential external threat to the security of Saudi Arabia. Fourth, to assure Saudi Arabia about the British government’s prospective attitude towards the status quo of some of the Middle East countries, in particular that of the Hashemites. Fifth, to lead to a clear-cut understanding of the latest Anglo-Italian agreement. Ultimately in Chamberlain’s reply the Saudis were expecting to find themselves on clearer ground in which they could determine the boundaries of the intended relations with the Germans.

Though the Saudis were hoping to get a quick response, Faisal did not in fact receive a reply until when he met Chamberlain on 23 March 1939.<sup>21</sup> In response to Ibn Saud's inquiries about the attitude of Britain, if Saudi Arabia was to be a victim of aggression, Chamberlain replied:

“As long as relations between Great Britain and the Arab countries remain as they are at present, it is difficult to envisage any aggression on Saudi Arabia by her neighbours. Nor can it be supposed that, leaving aside the possibility of a general war in which the position of Great Britain as a world power was being challenged, any European power would wantonly attack Saudi Arabia, especially as the Government of the United Kingdom have made it clear how deep is the interest that they take in the preservation by Saudi Arabia of her independence and integrity. The declarations of the Government on this subject correspond to one of the major interests of British Imperial policy, and I personally think that these declarations are sufficient by themselves to deter potential aggressors, (except, as I say, in the possible eventuality of a general challenge to Great Britain), since the nature of this policy and the grounds on which it is based must be apparent to the Governments of all other States”.<sup>22</sup>

The British Prime Minister welcomed the King's proposal for mutual consultations on matters affecting Arab countries by stating that:

“Your Majesty is aware that the Government of the United Kingdom desire at all time to obtain your views on such matters. They will welcome every opportunity to consult with your Majesty on all questions involving the common interests of the two countries”.<sup>23</sup>

In response to Ibn Saud's request of being “given an opportunity” of expressing his views before any change took place in the status quo of any Arabic countries, Chamberlain replied:

“So far as the Government of the United Kingdom can judge, there is no prospect (apart from Palestine . . . whose future status is now under discussion) of a change in the status of any Arabic-speaking country. But should the Arab countries at some future time desire closer union or some form of federation, Great Britain would consider this to be a question for

negotiation and decision among the Arab States themselves. Certainly the Government have no intention of taking any initiative in this question, more especially as it will scarcely be practicable for Palestine or Syria to participate in a federation for a considerable time. It is possible, however, that Your Majesty, in framing this question, was thinking less of federation than the future status of Transjordan. The Government of the United Kingdom cannot tie their hands in regard to a question for which they are responsible to the League of Nations, by giving undertakings about this question to third parties. But should the possibility arise of changes in Transjordan, they will certainly remember that any changes in a neighbouring territory of this kind must always be of especial interest and concern to Your Majesty and will take this factor into account in framing their policy".<sup>24</sup>

With respect to Ibn Saud's suggestion that Britain and Saudi Arabia "should decide beforehand on the attitude to be adopted towards a third State whose policy may affect" the Saudi-British "common interests",<sup>25</sup> Chamberlain replied that:

"The Government of the United Kingdom, while they would welcome mutual consultation on such points as may arise, feel that in view of the impossibility of foreseeing what action a third State may take in the future, it would be unwise and dangerous for the two Governments to attempt now to lay down a common policy to meet all eventualities".<sup>26</sup>

For a definition of the exact meaning and extent of the 1938 Anglo-Italian Agreement, Chamberlain replied that, "this Agreement is an agreement between Great Britain and Italy alone. No other power is asked to recognise or to be bound by it".<sup>27</sup> He added that:

"The relations between Great Britain and Saudi Arabia are therefore governed by their treaties and by their friendship alone, and the Anglo-Italian Agreement does not indicate the slightest pretension on the part of the Government of the United Kingdom to restrict the liberty of action of Saudi Arabia".<sup>28</sup>

Finally, the British Prime Minister did not end his letter to the Saudi Arabian King without making positive remarks on Saudi-Anglo relations:

“I would conclude by assuring Your Majesty . . . how highly the Government of the United Kingdom value the relations of confidence that so happily exist between Your Majesty and Great Britain. I have little doubt that Your Majesty will share my view, that this confidence and the clear community of interests that exist between our two countries are the best assurance for the maintenance of those good relations”.<sup>29</sup>

During discussions at the Foreign Office On 24 March *Amir* Faisal followed certain points in the Prime Minister’s reply with the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, and his Deputy, Sir Lancelot Oliphant. Evidently Faisal’s concerns were mostly directed to those of a security nature.<sup>30</sup> With reference to the Prime Minister’s reply, Faisal inquired “in what form, and how quickly Saudi Arabia might expect help should a situation arise in which the community of interests between Saudi Arabia, and Great Britain led to their being faced with a common enemy”<sup>31</sup>. Faisal did not receive a definite answer to this question, however he was told that this inquiry had to wait until the Foreign Office had in due course consulted the Air Ministry and the Admiralty.<sup>32</sup>

Referring to the phrase “potential aggressors”, - in the Prime Minister’s reply - Faisal asked if it was “the opinion of the Foreign Office that in the present unstable state of the world some form of aggression might be exercised against Saudi Arabia?”<sup>33</sup> On this, Oliphant told Faisal that:

“any act of aggression in the near future seemed very doubtful. Indeed, Herr Hitler’s recent activities could not have been welcome to those who had hitched their chariot to his star, and it was unlikely that any country which had done so would willingly undertake intensive activity in Arabia. But in Herr Hitler’s case it was no longer a question of dealing with a normal, logical man, and it was always possible that he might incite those whom he regarded as his friends to follow him even now. It might, however, be doubted whether Italy . . . would simultaneously show any aggressive action in the East”.<sup>34</sup>

Following the conclusion of the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister’s conversations in London, it was recorded at the Foreign Office that:

“Although the Emir Feisal [*Amir Faisal*] did not ask for a guarantee of a formal and binding character, it is evident from this conversation and from other reports that Ibn Saud attaches the greatest importance to the point whether he can count on material as well as moral support from H.M.G. in the case of aggression against Saudi Arabia”.<sup>35</sup>

The overall British government response seemed to be overly vague for the Saudi government. Apart from the warm terms in Chamberlain's letter - which in fact had caused Faisal to state to Oliphant that “it was very nice to see such friendly feeling put in black and white”<sup>36</sup> - and the positive response to the suggestion of mutual consultations, it could be said that the Saudis could not obtain clear-cut answers to their other queries. Indeed, as the foregoing pages have revealed, the British response was positive and clear on non-security matters, however when it came to security issues it was generally abstruse.

Despite the fact that the British had explained some of the aspects concerning Saudi Arabian security, still the Saudis did not get a straightforward solution for their security anxieties. In fact, the Saudi query on the most important issue, the Anglo-Italian agreement was almost left out of any forthcoming answer. Notwithstanding Chamberlain's assertion that aggression towards Saudi Arabia was unlikely, the British government's response as a whole - including Oliphant's reply to Faisal - cannot be regarded as a far-reaching assurance that completely satisfied the Saudis. Though the British response had stated that it would take Saudi Arabia's interests into consideration when any changes to the status quo took place in the Arab world, still Chamberlain did not admit the need for consulting the Saudis on “the future status of Transjordan”; a matter of high concern to Ibn Saud. Besides, Chamberlain had considered - at that time - the Saudi suggestion on forming an upcoming Saudi-British policy vis-à-vis any prospective negative policy that might be taken by a “third party” as inappropriate. Although, neither the Saudis nor the British had referred - while in London - to the recent Saudi-German contacts, yet the Saudis might have hoped that their recent contacts with London would possibly prevent any harmful impact of such a development on Saudi-British relations.<sup>37</sup>

All in all, it could be concluded that the outcome of the Saudi-British communication, was not that which the Saudis might have looked for. In fact, its upshot did not help the Saudis to identify a clear way in which they could count on Britain when it came to Saudi Arabian security. In other words, King Ibn Saud's hopes for a clear and precise British reply were not met, a matter that left the King on a vulnerable base for the establishment of his Kingdom's "exact position". Hence, a further Saudi slide in the direction that led to a search for an alternative partner was just a matter of time.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, the Saudi-British correspondence in the early months of 1939 did not form any obstacles for further developments on the Saudi-German diplomatic front; if not the contrary. Besides, one could say that Chamberlain's reference to the possibility of "a general challenge" to the "the position of Great Britain as a world power", may in fact have influenced Ibn Saud to consider the importance of friendly relations with Germany in case such a situation materialised.

## II. The Saudi-German Connections

In addition to fear of the Anglo-Italian Agreement, there were other motives which encouraged Saudi Arabia to create closer ties with Germany. The Saudi Arabian requirement for quality arms was driving a move towards Germany. This was the case, as Britain according to Sir Reader Bullard, the British Minister in Saudi Arabia then, "was an unsatisfactory supplier of arms, both in kind and in quantity".<sup>39</sup> The Saudis believed in the superiority of the quality of German weaponry. Hence, as they were about to form the new diplomatic relationship with Germany, they were also eager to acquire some quantities of German arms.<sup>40</sup>

In the period from 21 January to 18 February 1939, the German Minister to Iraq made a visit to Saudi Arabia. Though Grobba had come to Jeddah mainly to meet with King Ibn Saud, the German diplomat had to wait for twenty-two days before he was able to see the King. From their end the Saudis had explained to Grobba that Ibn Saud was extremely busy with pilgrimage affairs in Mecca.<sup>41</sup> However, it was apparent that the Saudis were tactically manoeuvring in order to win some time before the commencement of their obligated discussions with the Germans. Indeed, they were in need of some time until Faisal reached London to convey Ibn Saud's message to Chamberlain, and send the reply back home.<sup>42</sup> Such speculation can be supported by

Bullard's ability to meet Ibn Saud near Mecca on 27 January, while Grobba was not given a similar chance at that time. In Bullard's words, "Dr. Grobba seemed surprised and slightly annoyed when I mentioned that the King had asked me to meet him at Shumaisi on January 27<sup>th</sup>".<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, the end of the pilgrimage season had exhausted the Saudi excuse; hence by 11 February Ibn Saud meeting with Grobba became - diplomatically - a must.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, by that date Ibn Saud was not in the right position in order to prolong the time-wasting tactics. Indeed, despite the fact that he had not yet received Chamberlain's "critical" reply, Ibn Saud was still in no position to jeopardise the opening of his serious business with the Germans. Above and beyond, Ibn Saud might already have predicted - by that day - a kind of unenthusiastic reply from Chamberlain. Indeed, almost nine days had gone by, since Faisal had submitted - on 2 February - what Ibn Saud had considered - in writing - as an "important note", yet there were not any noticeable efforts, which could tell that his letter had been given "all consideration and attention".<sup>45</sup>

On 11 February 1939 Dr Grobba presented his credentials to King Ibn Saud as non-resident Minister to the Saudi Kingdom.<sup>46</sup> On the following day the Ibn Saud-Grobba discussions on Saudi-German relations had begun, which lasted until 18 February.<sup>47</sup> In addition to Ibn Saud's position which had caused him to slide further in the German direction, it should be noted that Grobba's enthusiasm - for the creation of Saudi-German political ties - was also reflected in the development of the Jeddah discussions.<sup>48</sup> The German diplomat's enthusiasm had in fact caused him to go all the way and to assure Ibn Saud that "Germany wanted Saudi-Arabia to be strong so as to be able to maintain her independence".<sup>49</sup>

Subsequent to his dialogue in Jeddah, Grobba reported to Berlin the success of his mission, and recommended an immediate consolidation of the newly created ties.<sup>50</sup> In his despatch to the Foreign Ministry on 18 February 1939 Grobba argued that the general impression of Ibn Saud being a British tool in the Middle East was "wrong".<sup>51</sup> In fact Ibn Saud felt that he was:

"Encircled and oppressed by England and has the desire to free himself from this encirclement if possible. Out of prudence he assumes a friendly attitude towards the British, but in the depths of his heart he hates them and complies with their desires only reluctantly".<sup>52</sup>

In the same despatch Grobba summarised the upshot of his conversation with the Saudi Arabian King as follows:

“Saudi Arabia and Germany have a common mortal enemy, namely the Jews, and that, moreover, both are defending themselves against British hostility . . . The common nature of their interests requires that the two countries cooperate . . . For Germany the aim is a strengthening of her position in the world by winning friends on whom she could rely even in wartime . . . The aim of . . . Saudi Arabia is the preservation of complete independence . . . [an objective which can be attained] only with outside help . . . therefore [Saudi Arabia is] turning to Germany to request her support, both moral support in case of possible foreign oppression and material aid by means of arms deliveries . . . She is offering Germany her sincere friendship in return and promises at least benevolent neutrality, if not more, in case of war”.<sup>53</sup>

In addition, Grobba reported that Saudi Arabia desired the conclusion of a friendship treaty, a commercial treaty, and an agreement on the exchange of goods produced in both countries. He also added that this “close cooperation with Germany which Saudi Arabia desires must be very discreet, so that it might not cause other countries to take countermeasures”.<sup>54</sup>

Trying to encourage his government to recognise the significance of close cooperation with Saudi Arabia, Grobba asked the Foreign Ministry - in the same despatch of 18 February - to consider the importance of Saudi Arabia strategically, politically, and economically.<sup>55</sup>

According to Grobba’s analysis Saudi Arabia was important strategically as it occupied most of the Arabian Peninsula. Thus its territory would be vital for Germany in case of war with Britain, “because England’s air and sea communications with Iraq and India pass along its borders and therefore can be threatened from here”.<sup>56</sup> Additionally, Grobba added that Saudi Arabia included the land of Hijaz, the important area that rose successfully against Turkey in World War One. On this, the German Minister reckoned that if close ties were established with Saudi Arabia this

vital area (Hijaz) could become useful for Germany and its friends in any war efforts.<sup>57</sup>

Grobba urged the Foreign Ministry to consider the importance of Ibn Saud's influence on other Arab and Muslim countries. Thus, "in case of war his attitude will be of immense interest for the entire Mohammedan world and will be decisive for many".<sup>58</sup> Grobba assumed that at the outbreak of war German diplomats "would be interned or expelled" in the other Arab countries. However, Saudi Arabia would "permit them to stay and even to carry on political activity . . . [in] which we can influence the other Arab and Mohammedan countries politically".<sup>59</sup>

Economically, Grobba stressed the importance of Saudi Arabia's oil in war and in peacetime. Additionally, he forecast a bright future for European goods in the market of Saudi Arabia, as the country's revenue would increase dramatically from oil income.<sup>60</sup>

At the conclusion of his report, Grobba asked his government for a quick decision about the rearmament of Saudi Arabia, as Ibn Saud was in a great hurry and a quick decision would make him recognise German confidence in him. Grobba indicated that if Germany delayed this matter Ibn Saud could indeed look for an alternative elsewhere.<sup>61</sup> The Minister argued that if the German government "neglect replying to Ibn Saud's proposals or simply reject them it would be a severe disappointment for Ibn Saud, especially in view of the confidence he has shown in us".<sup>62</sup> Grobba remarked that if this should happen, "it would be practically impossible for us ever again to undo the consequences. He [Ibn Saud] would surely turn away from us permanently".<sup>63</sup>

While their discussions were taking place, both Ibn Saud and Grobba informed Bullard, that the new Saudi-German relationship was not anti-British.<sup>64</sup> Grobba argued during a meeting with Bullard that the German government has "no object except to establish friendly relations with Saudi Arabia and to increase German exports [to her]".<sup>65</sup> Despite that, Bullard concluded in his despatch to the Foreign Office on 18 February 1939 "that the object of the German Government in appointing a representative to Saudi Arabia at this juncture is mainly anti-British".<sup>66</sup> As can be

seen from the Ibn Saud-Grobba conversations Bullard's speculation about the German government's intention's was true. The actual negotiations between Ibn Saud and Grobba were in direct opposition to British interests.<sup>67</sup> However, it should be noted that the British were not that much alarmed by Saudi-German contacts at this stage, nor even at later stages, when they believed that the Saudi-German contacts were mainly directed towards arms sales. In fact the British officials thought that it would be advantageous for Saudi Arabia to get hold of some German arms, particularly as Britain could not fulfil its requirement on this. Indeed, the British government admitted that it understood King Ibn Saud's "motives, and will continue to bear him the same friendship as before".<sup>68</sup>

The German Foreign Ministry was in no apparent hurry to reply to Grobba. Moreover, when the reply was received - two months later - on 18 April, it expressed the opposite of Grobba's views. The Under State Secretary, Woermann, stated that:

"Although we continue to place great value upon friendly relations with the Kingdom of Ibn Saud - we have given an open demonstration of this by accrediting you in Jidda [Jeddah] - nevertheless, . . . we have no interest in taking up closer ties with him".<sup>69</sup>

Moreover, Woermann stated that, "The question of arms deliveries to the Arabian Peninsula is . . . out of question", given that the German government does "not for the present think of undertaking any fundamental change in the policy . . . [that it has] hitherto followed in the Arabian Peninsula".<sup>70</sup>

Not being satisfied by the Foreign Ministry reply, Grobba wrote again to Woermann on 2 May.<sup>71</sup> He argued that the opportunity posed by Ibn Saud's hatred of the British should not be wasted, thus diverting his close ties from Britain to Germany. He told Woermann that, "I have gained the definite impression that he hates the British and is trying to extricate himself from their influence as far as possible",<sup>72</sup> stressed again his previous views of the importance of Saudi Arabia to Germany, and asked Woermann to reconsider the question of arms.<sup>73</sup>

It is apparent from the Ibn Saud-Grobba discussions and the Grobba-Woermann correspondence, that until May 1939, there was a split in the German side, with

Grobba supporting closer Saudi-German ties but Woermann opposing the move. However, being convinced by Grobba's despatch of 2 May and, because of the changing situation in the Middle East - particularly, as the British position was becoming stronger there - the German Foreign Ministry revised its previous decision of turning away from Ibn Saud.<sup>74</sup>

At beginning of summer 1939 one of the Royal Court consultants, Mr Khalid Al-Qarqani, made an official visit to Germany as King Ibn Saud's special envoy.<sup>75</sup> During his visit Al-Qarqani had several meetings with German officials, including the Foreign Minister, Joachim Ribbentrop, and the German Chancellor, Adolf Hitler. During their meeting on 8 June 1939, Al-Qarqani and Ribbentrop expressed the importance of Saudi-German relations, and acknowledged the mutual interests that tied Germany and the Arab world. In addition, Ibn Saud's special envoy expressed Saudi Arabia's desire in working closely with Germany, in order to strengthen the Kingdom's defensive capability against any potential external threat. In this regard, Al-Qarqani asked for German armoured cars and anti-aircraft guns, and requested German assistance in building a small rifle and munitions factory in Saudi Arabia. At the end of the meeting the German Foreign Minister expressed his government's agreement to collaborate on this matter and referred Al-Qarqani for further detailed negotiations to the head of the Political Division VII, Von Hentig.<sup>76</sup>

On 17 June 1939, Al-Qarqani met Hitler and handed him a letter from Ibn Saud.<sup>77</sup> In this personal letter Ibn Saud expressed his gratitude for the appointment of Grobba in Jeddah, a matter, which he believed would strengthen Saudi-German relations. Moreover, the King indicated that one of his "dearest wishes" was to see the ties of warm friendship between the Saudi and the German government extending to their "maximum".<sup>78</sup> During the subsequent conversation, Hitler stated that, "we entertain warm sympathies for Arabs for two reasons: 1) because we have no territorial aspirations in Arabia, and 2) because we have the same enemies . . . [as] we are jointly fighting the Jews".<sup>79</sup> The most important part of the conversation was Hitler's promise to give Saudi Arabia active assistance. Hence, after indicating that he was an admirer of King Ibn Saud's personality, Hitler said that he was willing to assist him genuinely.<sup>80</sup> Subsequently, the German government agreed to offer Saudi Arabia a credit of 1.5 million marks for the purchase of 8,000 rifles, 8 million rounds of

ammunitions, a small munitions factory to be built in Saudi Arabia, light anti-aircraft guns, and armoured cars.<sup>81</sup>

Despite the positive side of the Al-Qarqani mission, unexpected developments had in fact soured the mission's success, and thereafter the ultimate progress of Saudi-German ties. The press coverage, which had exaggerated Khalid's task in Berlin, was one of these developments. The second was, the frequent alteration in the German government attitude towards the delivery of the agreed arms to Saudi Arabia. The third was the general situation in Europe and the outbreak of World War Two.

The Al-Qarqani-Hitler meeting was the main event which had drawn the attention of the press to the Saudi-German link. On 18 June, the German official press broadcast a news item on the meeting.<sup>82</sup> Ultimately, the news became a suitable entry for mass media rumours and exaggerations. Most of the European press had dealt with the Al-Qarqani-Hitler meeting as a new orientation in the Saudi Arabian foreign policy towards closer ties and cooperation with Germany. Furthermore, the aim of the meeting was misrepresented as being directed against Britain interests.<sup>83</sup> At the peak of such a development the official German propaganda had even used the event as frontline publicity in its anti-British campaign.<sup>84</sup> Being alarmed by this development, Ibn Saud had telegraphed Al-Qarqani to request the German authority to bring the press coverage to a halt; otherwise he would consider the cancellation of the whole deal.<sup>85</sup> Nonetheless, by then it was impossible even for the German Foreign Ministry to suppress such coverage as the matter was getting out of its hands.<sup>86</sup>

By 20 July, King Ibn Saud had considered the exaggerated propaganda as a threat to his political position in general and to his relations with Britain in particular, therefore he asked Khalid to return to Saudi Arabia if the Germans did not speed up the completion of the arms deal.<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, Hentig promised Al-Qarqani a swift move in the completion of the arms transaction.<sup>88</sup> Additionally, the German government had also increased the proposed credit of 1.5 million marks to 6 million marks, and promised to give the Saudis a gift of four thousand rifles and ammunitions.<sup>89</sup> By doing so, it seems that the German government was manoeuvring to win Saudi Arabia to its side through the means of providing it with the needed arms. But the Germans were not willing to fulfil such arrangements without making

sure that the Saudi government would be either on their side, or at least not on their enemy's side. Therefore, further bargaining, which had caused Hentig to drop his previous promise of swift action, was on line.<sup>90</sup>

After questioning Saudi-British relations, Hentig told Al-Qarqani that the German government was inclined to believe that the Saudi government was acting alongside the British against the Axis.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, and in order to win German confidence, and so as to finalise the agreed arms deal, Saudi Arabia had to either sign a neutrality agreement with Germany, or agree to delay the arms transaction until when the international situation eased.<sup>92</sup>

By the beginning of August 1939, Ibn Saud became confident that the German government was using him and was intending to use him further. The propaganda campaign, and the new conditions on the already agreed arms deal, were clear signs. Furthermore, it became obvious that by raising the new bargains, the Germans were attempting to damage Saudi Arabian relations with Britain, a matter, which Ibn Saud was not agreeable to tolerate. Indeed, by then he was determined to protect his Kingdom's relations with Britain; particularly when he experienced - through the development of the Saudi-German connection - that such relations were irreplaceable. Nevertheless, because of the Kingdom's necessity for the German arms, the King had no choice but to look at the first option.<sup>93</sup>

Considerately, Ibn Saud exploited the conditions for the goodwill of Saudi-British relations and not the opposite, given that, he fully consulted the British government on this particular matter. In reply, the British government informed Ibn Saud that it was better for Saudi Arabia to remain neutral in the event of a war between the Great Powers.<sup>94</sup> In addition, the King was advised not to sign any formal agreement regarding neutrality with Germany, because the signing of such an agreement could be interpreted as an indication of his sympathies with the Axis.<sup>95</sup> Instead of signing such an agreement the British government advised King Ibn Saud to send an oral or informal message to the German government, telling them that:

“he does not agree that friendship for Great Britain is inconsistent with friendship for Germany or any other State, that his policy aims at friendship with all States alike, that he has signed no treaty of alliance with any great

Power and that so far as he is concerned the question of taking sides in any conflict between the Great Powers has not even arisen".<sup>96</sup>

When Al-Qarqani conveyed the King's views - which was similar to the British government advice - the German government then dropped its conditions for the arms transaction.<sup>97</sup> It seemed that the German government, which was facing an accelerating situation towards war with Britain, was not willing to lose its new ties with Saudi Arabia that easily.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, the outbreak of the war on 3 September 1939, had brought about a dramatic end to the Saudi-German arms deal, and according to Bullard "it is unlikely that any arms were delivered [to Saudi Arabia]".<sup>99</sup> The German government was not able to deliver the arms to Saudi Arabia by then, not just because of the difficulty of a sea shipment, but also because of German needs for all its produced arms.<sup>100</sup>

It could be said that the Saudi-German connections, particularly that of the second half of 1939, had provided King Ibn Saud with certain experience that evidently reflected the assessment of his Kingdom's policy towards Germany. Eventually, such experience had matured and contributed - alongside other factors - to the formalisation of a Saudi Arabian policy towards the development of the war.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, the Saudi policy, which was formulated by the first week of September 1939, was that of "benevolent neutrality".<sup>102</sup> In this way, such a policy was formally recognised as being neutral, but confidentially, was in fact sympathetic to the cause of the Allies.<sup>103</sup> Nonetheless, King Ibn Saud did not want to demonstrate any noticeable sign that would let the German government find out about the reality of the Kingdom's policy on this. Hence, he demonstrated the Kingdom's policy in a cautious way, in order not to bring the Saudi-German link to an entire end, just in case he might need it if the war developed in an unexpected direction. In due course, Saudi-German relations were not even broken off until after German defeat had become evident - at the end of the war - in 1945.<sup>104</sup>

At the opening of the war when Grobba was requested to leave Iraq, he applied to the Saudi government for permission to travel by land to Jeddah.<sup>105</sup> Fearing the possibility that Grobba was intending to resume the anti-Allies activities - including that of propaganda - from Jeddah, Ibn Saud was reluctant to allow him to come to the

Kingdom.<sup>106</sup> However, because he did not want to show any sign, which might let the Germans assume that he was acting against them, and because Grobba was formally accredited to Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud was forced to grant Grobba the necessary permission.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, the Saudis tried to make it difficult for Grobba to cross - through the northern land of Saudi Arabia - to Jeddah. With hopes that the German Foreign Ministry, would not allow Grobba to make such a journey, the Saudi government warned that; "the tribes on the route, excited by the talk of hostilities and particularly by the news that Iraq had entered the war, might make some regrettable mistake".<sup>108</sup> The German Foreign Ministry looked at the Saudi government warning in just the way that the Saudis wanted, hence, it considered Grobba's journey to Jeddah by land as a danger to his life, therefore Grobba was asked to travel directly to Berlin instead.<sup>109</sup>

In December 1939, once again the German government informed the Saudi government - through the Italian Legation in Jeddah - of its wish to send Grobba to Jeddah. In order to show the British that he was truly on their side, Ibn Saud sought their confidential consultation on this. The ultimate British reply was not in favour of opening the German Legation in Jeddah, as it was only meant to be an instrument of propaganda.<sup>110</sup> Ibn Saud was also reluctant at that time to let Germany open such a post. He was convinced that the Germans were going to use his Kingdom in order to fulfil their anti-Allies plans, a matter, which would not bring any thing, but trouble and intimidation to his state security. King Ibn Saud replied to the German government - through the Italian legation in Jeddah - that the recent international circumstances had made it difficult for him to consider the opening of the German Legation in Saudi Arabia, particularly when the attitude of his country was that of neutrality. At the same time, Ibn Saud informed the Germans that he would like to continue his cordial relations with them, and he would consider the opening of the Legation whenever the circumstances permit.<sup>111</sup>

### III. Saudi Arabia and Italy

Despite the fact that it was Italy which had alarmed Saudi Arabian security concerns, Saudi-Italian diplomatic relations remained intact throughout 1939. The Saudi government might have been considerate in keeping the formal relations ongoing as a

minimum measure to ensure the continuity of the least amount of friendship between the two States. Hence, such a minimum friendship could have been assessed as the means that might prevent any manner of Italian hostility against the Kingdom.<sup>112</sup>

Moreover, in order to avoid irritating the Italian government the Saudis had tried their best to avert any kind of major disagreement with the Italians. For example, when it became apparent in early 1939 that the small Italian Air Mission - which was training some Saudis pilots in Jeddah - was not that useful, the Saudi government was careful to end its operations without angering the Italian government.<sup>113</sup> On this, the Saudi government did not harshly dismiss the mission, nor did it ask for its immediate withdrawal. Instead, the Italians were told that due to a new arrangement with "an Egyptian civil aviation company" all the Saudi pilots were to be sent to Egypt "for further training".<sup>114</sup> Consequently, when the Italians realised that "there would be nothing for the air mission to do" they had to withdraw it by themselves.<sup>115</sup>

The only kind of plain protest that the Saudi government had conveyed to the Italians was the note that was sent to the Italian legation in Jeddah at the beginning of 1939. It was stated in that note that; "the Anglo-Italian Agreement was not to be regarded as binding on the Saudi Government".<sup>116</sup> Additionally, it was explained that Saudi Arabia did not agree and will not agree to any article that might bring any kind of limitations to its sovereignty and freedom. Hence, as the Saudi government was not a part of this agreement, and as it was in darkness of its actual text, any item that may relate to Saudi Arabia was therefore invalid.<sup>117</sup>

The Italian Minister in Jeddah, Signor Silitti, conveyed to the Saudi government in mid-February, what Bullard regarded as a "strong assurance".<sup>118</sup> Unexpectedly, Silitti had assured the Saudis that it was "the desire of the Italian Government that Saudi Arabia should be strong and independent".<sup>119</sup> Despite such assurance, King Ibn Saud was not so convinced about Italian intentions.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, the King's apprehension about the possibility of an Italian hostile move against the Kingdom was difficult to remove. As a matter of fact, Grobba - who did meet Ibn Saud in the same week as the Italian assurance was conveyed - realised that the King was "fearful of the Italians intentions on Hijaz, and the shores of the Red Sea".<sup>121</sup>

In spite of the fact that the Italians assurance did not change Ibn Saud's point of view, it seems that - at least - it caused the Saudis not to completely exclude Italy from the arms search.<sup>122</sup> On "very favourable terms" Saudi Arabia had signed an arms agreement with Italy in August 1939.<sup>123</sup> Unlike the unfulfilled arms agreement with Germany, Saudi Arabia started to receive the Italian arms in November 1939.<sup>124</sup>

By June 1940, when Italy formally declared war on the Allies, Saudi Arabia was already closer to Britain. Besides, the status of war between Italy and Britain was in fact a further consolidating factor in Saudi-British relations, as it brought the Saudi suspicion of the Anglo-Italian Agreement to an end. Even at such a stage, the Saudi government tried not to demonstrate any obvious acts that would make Italy realise the reality of the Saudi Arabian neutrality. In fact, even the situation of the Italian legation in Jeddah remained the same as before.<sup>125</sup>

Nevertheless, when a number of Italian warplanes bombed Bahrain and Dhahran oil fields on the night of 18-19 October 1940, the Saudi annoyance was difficult to hide.<sup>126</sup> On 20 October, the Saudi Foreign Minister delivered a strong protest to the Italian Minister in Jeddah. In response Silitti convincingly apologised and told Faisal that the Dhahran bombing was accidental. But still unsatisfied with the Italian Minister's apology, Faisal demanded an official apology from the Italian government, as well as a guarantee against any similar future accident.<sup>127</sup>

Though this incident did not affect the formality of Saudi Arabia's neutrality and though the Saudi government did not immediately alter the state of affairs for the Italian representation in Jeddah, Saudi cautiousness towards Italian movements in the area had increased more than ever before. Correspondingly, Saudi-Italian relations became chilly, culminating in the Italian legation in Jeddah being closed in February 1942.<sup>128</sup> Despite the fact the Italian legation had closed in 1942, it should be noted that, just as in the case of Saudi-German relations, Saudi Arabia did not formally break off diplomatic relations with Italy until March 1945.<sup>129</sup>

## B. The Palestine Issue and Saudi-British Relations

Though - up to 1939 - Ibn Saud was not generally satisfied with British policy in regard to Palestine, still he was willing to understand the constraints under which the British government operated.<sup>130</sup> It could be said that *Realpolitik* and its principles were the most acceptable explanations for Ibn Saud's perspective on this. A closer look at some of the Saudi-British communications on Palestine, during 1938, would clarify this case further.

On 19 May 1938 the British government sent Ibn Saud a message inquiring whether what it heard of Yusuf Yassin was true or not. Yusuf Yassin was alleged to have said in Damascus that King Ibn Saud would break off diplomatic relations with Britain unless the British acceded to the Arab demands in Palestine. Yassin was also alleged to have said that Ibn Saud would also cut off trade relations with Britain, and would supply the Palestinians with money and arms.<sup>131</sup>

Even before getting in touch with Yusuf Yassin, Ibn Saud sent an urgent message to Bullard in Jeddah denying the existence of such a "fabricated story".<sup>132</sup> He explained that no rational politician would think that Saudi Arabia should cut off its relations with Britain; instead he argued such an attempt would not be in the interest even of the Palestinians. The overall point of Ibn Saud's message was to give the impression that he would never consider such a step in relation to the Palestinian situation.<sup>133</sup>

Moreover, when the British government inquired on 1 June 1938 about the rumours that Ibn Saud was supplying the Palestinians with arms he replied, denying the allegation completely. He explained his policy regarding this issue as follows:<sup>134</sup>

"If I tell you that I do not have any reason which makes me fight the Jews, I would not be telling you the truth. If it were only the Jews who were involved in this issue I would sacrifice everything in order to prevent any Jewish gain in Palestine. However the responsibility in this issue is that of the British government, and not only the Jews. In addition to the mutual interests, which my country shares with Britain, we do have written friendship treaties. I believe that the best for the Arabs - for their present and future interests - is to

have a permanent friendship with Britain. If the people of Palestine listened to me they would have taken peaceful means as the only way of demanding their rights from Britain. I have received a lot of requests asking me to help and supply the revolution in Palestine. However I would assure you that I will not perpetrate any act which might shake my treaties with you".<sup>135</sup>

Though the impact of the Palestine issue on Saudi-British relations was controllable by realist values, yet it has to be said that ideological values were also noticeable in the orientation of Saudi Arabian foreign policy towards the same issue.<sup>136</sup> Such a matter put the whole issue into a dilemma position as far as the Saudis were concerned. Indeed, it was Britain that disappointed them on Palestine, but at the same time it was also Britain that they were looking to in regard to vital concerns, such as the preservation of the Kingdom's security.

The Palestine question was not omitted from Ibn Saud's important correspondence with Chamberlain in early 1939. It was stated, in the message that Faisal conveyed to Chamberlain before the opening of the London conference on Palestine, that:

"We confidently hope that the Palestine Question will be settled at the London Conference in such a way as will conserve the rights of the Arabs in their own country. This is one of the most important questions which exercise a potent influence on the relations of the British Government with the Muslims generally, and the Arabs more particularly".<sup>137</sup>

The British Prime Minister acknowledged this statement when he replied that:

"The Government of the United Kingdom fully realise the importance of this question in its effect not only on that country but also on relations between Great Britain and the whole Arab world. The Government of the United Kingdom are now considering the question of policy in the light of the Conference on Palestine".<sup>138</sup>

The London Conference began on the 7 February 1939 at St James's Palace with the presence of Palestinian and Jewish representatives. In addition to the Palestinian representatives Arab delegations came to the conference from Saudi Arabia, Egypt,

Transjordan, Iraq, and Yemen. Arabs and Jews refused to sit at the same table, thus British officials dealt with them separately during the conference.<sup>139</sup>

The conference, which aimed “to study the basis of a settlement by negotiations”, started to face difficulties during the third week.<sup>140</sup> The Arabs could not agree to more Jewish immigration and would not expect anything but its “complete cessation”. On the other side, the Jews would go no further than the 1937 Royal Commission proposal.<sup>141</sup> Thus, the conference came to an end without any constructive result on 17 March 1939.<sup>142</sup>

Keen to win Arab support when Europe was likely to slide into a war, the British government announced a new policy favouring the Arabs regarding Palestine. On 17 May 1939 the British government announced the White Paper on Palestine.<sup>143</sup> This proposal marked a turning point in British government policy towards Palestine. Rejecting the previous partition plan, the White Paper went some way towards meeting the major Arab demands on the issue of Jewish migration into Palestine, the future Palestinian state, and the restrictions of the sale of land to Jews.<sup>144</sup>

According to the White Paper, for five years the number of Jewish immigrants would not be more than 75,000, after that “no further Jewish emigration will be permitted unless the Arabs of Palestine are prepared to acquiesce in it”.<sup>145</sup> Moreover, the sale of land to Jews would be restricted, by prohibiting and regulating its transfers. Most importantly the British government announced its intention of giving Palestine independence within ten years. The change was to happen in gradual steps, starting with the appointment of heads of departments in the mandatory government from amongst the present Palestine population of Arabs and Jews, and ending with independence.<sup>146</sup>

The initial Arab reaction to the White Paper was mixed. The Egyptian Prime Minister, Mohammed Mahmmoud *Pasha*, thought that the Arabs should accept the proposal because refusing it would be an indirect help to Zionism. King Ibn Saud also agreed to the principle that the proposal should be accepted, as “it has some acceptable features, and as it was in the wrong for the Arabs to reject every offer that had been offered to them”.<sup>147</sup> However, at the end when it became apparent that the majority of

the Arabs were not in favour of such a proposal, no Arab state had formally approved it.<sup>148</sup> In spite of everything, according to Wahba, "Ibn Saud did not accept or reject the proposal, in fact he considered it as an open option, and endeavoured to convince the British government to bring it closer to the direction of Arab demands".<sup>149</sup> Though, the "immigration clauses of the white paper were not so enthusiastically received", still the "King expressed great satisfaction at the assurance that Palestine would never become a Jewish State".<sup>150</sup>

As Britain was concerned about the impact of its policy towards the Palestine question on its relations with the Arab world, it tried to follow a very careful policy in Palestine at the beginning of the war.<sup>151</sup> Since the implementation of the White Paper was the only way that could show that Britain was at least taking some of the Arab demands into consideration, the British government started to implement its first two points. Thus, it restricted Jewish immigration, and began to put the sale of land regulations into practice.<sup>152</sup>

Indeed, in spite of "the refusal of any Arab state to approve it, the 1939 British White Paper was the governing document for Palestine during the next six years".<sup>153</sup> The Foreign Office instructed British representatives all over the Middle East to indicate that Britain intended to implement the White Paper. The representatives were instructed to avoid over-mentioning this, but were asked to let the British actions in this regard speak for themselves.<sup>154</sup> The British government thought that if it repeatedly announced a desire to implement the White Paper its intention might be misunderstood, thus causing the Arab States to think that Britain's critical situation at the beginning of the war would make it give more concessions.<sup>155</sup>

From the summer of 1940, Palestine became a secondary issue to almost all parties concerned, as the development of the war fronts in Europe and elsewhere became the central point. Besides, Ibn Saud did not contact the British government during the war about Palestine. In this regard Ibn Saud did not wish to trouble the British government about the issue, nor did he attempt to raise any other potentially antagonistic issues such as his border dispute with the Gulf protectorates. In Ibn Saud's opinion, all these matters had to wait until when the war was over. It was stated, in the British legation review for 1940, that the:

“King realises and has advised Arab statesmen in surrounding countries that present efforts must be concentrated on winning the war, and that it is the duty of all Arabs to refrain from any action which might impede Britain’s effort. He has refused to consider joint action with neighbouring countries, a section of whose statesmen have thought that advantage should be taken of Britain’s present difficulties to further Arab aspirations”.<sup>156</sup>

### **C. The Consolidation of Saudi-British Relations at the Outbreak of the War**

The Saudis conferred with the British in August 1939 on the German request for a neutrality agreement sequenced positively for the course of Saudi-British relations. The initial constructive outcome was manifested within the contents of the British reply:

“His Majesty’s Government are most grateful for the opportunity of expressing their views upon the message from the German Government. This mark of confidence is a further signal proof of the friendship which the King has shown to His Majesty’s Government in so many ways in the past”<sup>157</sup>

Additionally, the King, who might have been looking to find out about the British government views on his Kingdom’s attitude towards the prospective war, was given an up-front answer. In this way, the British government advice for Saudi Arabia to maintain neutrality had made it clear to the King that his close ties with Britain may not necessarily jeopardise the security of his Kingdom if the war broke out.<sup>158</sup> Besides, the reply had made it easy for the King to see the differences between the German and the British governments’ policies towards the country. While he saw that the Germans were determined to use the immature Saudi-German relations for their own interests, he noticed from the genuine British reply that the latter were not even thinking to use their mature relations with Saudi Arabia for the same purposes. The British government statement on the propaganda case had clarified this as follow:

“His Majesty’s Government ask nothing better, as the Kings knows, than that he should maintain strict impartiality between all countries. He has, they understand, set his face resolutely against propaganda on behalf of foreign

governments, no matter what these governments may be. His Majesty's Government consider that this is a right and natural course for the King to pursue".<sup>159</sup>

There were no indications in that message, which required Saudi Arabia's involvement in the forthcoming war, other than, the "hope that in the event of actual hostilities he [Ibn Saud] would feel able to make it clear that in his view the victory of the Allied Powers was desirable in the interests of the Arab States".<sup>160</sup>

As King Ibn Saud was no longer in good faith with Germany by then, the opportunity of replying to such a fairly positive message was not wasted. Thus, he communicated to the British government almost all the correspondence "in which his envoy related the progress of the negotiations with the Germans".<sup>161</sup> Moreover, in a message - that was coincidentally received in London on the same day that the war was officially declared - on 3 September 1939, Ibn Saud assured the British government "that he would never give any undertaking or take any secret or open action with any . . . foreign government which might damage British interests or affect his relations with His Majesty's Government".<sup>162</sup>

In addition to the previously mentioned reasons, there were other reasons that had encouraged Ibn Saud to formulate the attitude of "benevolent neutrality". It could be said that the considerable military, economic, and political power that the British Empire enjoyed had influenced the Saudis - not just to maintain friendly relations with Britain, but also - to adopt such an attitude. Indeed, at that time the Saudi government comprehended that its interest was placed with that of Britain.<sup>163</sup>

As said by Bullard, "it is the pilgrimage that matters to Jedda [Jeddah] and indeed to Saudi Arabia as a whole, and for that the country is largely dependent on Great Britain".<sup>164</sup> Besides, it was British vessels, which not just carried the majority of the pilgrims, but also carried almost all the important commodities that Saudi Arabia consumed.<sup>165</sup> This all goes without the need to mention that the majority of the pilgrims originated from territories that were controlled by the British. Moreover, the British military presence in the area had made Britain almost the only suitable - friendly - power, which Saudi Arabia could rely on in the event of danger.

Furthermore, British political control in the countries that neighboured Saudi Arabia had caused the Saudi interests to be seen as tied in British hands. As a matter of fact, certain unsolved issues, such as that of the Saudi problem with the Hashemites, were still requiring a solution with the British government.<sup>166</sup> In fact, the Saudi-Hashemites issue had played a major role that influenced King Ibn Saud to be closer to the British - and the Allies - at that specific time. Further clarification of such an issue is vital, not just for further understanding of the consolidation of Saudi-British relations at that time, but also for the scope of this study.

King Ibn Saud's worries about the Hashemites were heartfelt in June 1939, when *Amir* Abdullah of Transjordan spread a rumour over the Middle East that he was about to be chosen - by the French - for the throne of Syria.<sup>167</sup> By that time, Ibn Saud was inclined to believe that the Hashemites were already "cherishing designs of encirclement against Saudi Arabia".<sup>168</sup> The King feared the worst when it came to Hashemite intentions and to the security of his Kingdom. He suspected that they "would first . . . [acquire] the Syrian throne . . . then do the same in Palestine, and perhaps the Hejaz [Hijaz]: and might even endeavour [through Iraq] to secure the Persian Gulf, and ultimately Nejd [Najd]".<sup>169</sup>

The Saudi-Hashemite issue was further worsened in August, when one of the chief supporters of Ibn Saud in Syria, Kamil Al-Qassab, passed to Riyadh certain letters that were written to the latter by Abdullah.<sup>170</sup> In these letters, which distrusted Ibn Saud's role as a monarch, Abdullah was intensely critical of the King's policy in respect to Hijaz.<sup>171</sup> Likewise, in the same month, a large number of pamphlets were posted from Bludan in Syria to various addresses in Hijaz. The printed circulars, which were purported to come from "The Party of Free Hejazis", had incited "the people of Hejaz to rise and throw off the yoke of their present oppressors".<sup>172</sup>

In opposition to the Hashemite intrigues, Ibn Saud approached the British as well as the French.<sup>173</sup> In order to curtail French sympathies for the Hashemites, Saudi Arabia decided to establish a legation in Paris. According to British sources, "It is more than probable that Ibn Saud's main object is to urge the claim of his family to the throne of Syria".<sup>174</sup> Nonetheless, King Ibn Saud explained to the British that:

“he did not want Syria or any thing else outside Saudi Arabia: he only feared lest addition of Syria to Trans-Jordan or Iraq should facilitate Hashemite [Hashemite] designs on the Hejaz or Najd: He wanted a balance of power in the Arab world. As long as no Hashemite ruled Syria, let the Syrians choose for themselves whether to remain under a mandate, or have a republic, or a King from outside”.<sup>175</sup>

It seems that Saudi-French contacts did not bring any confirmation of the Hashemite rumour. In fact, according to the British, Ibn Saud “must have been flattered when the French High Commissioner sounded Fuad Bey about making one of the King’s sons King of Syria”.<sup>176</sup> Still, the Saudis were waiting to get what they perhaps considered as an important response from the British government. Indeed, though the French role was vital when it came to the future of Syria, the British role was also vital when it came to Transjordan and the future of Abdullah’s status.

On 13 October 1939, the British Minister delivered an important statement to King Ibn Saud in Riyadh on this issue. It was stated that the British government:

“knows of no ground on which the Amir Abdullah could possibly suppose that he is likely to be chosen for the throne by the French Government. In these circumstances His Majesty’s Government hope that His Majesty will accept their advice not to worry himself further about a question which, as far as they know, has no reality . . . His Majesty’s Government wish to state emphatically that they have never expressed any views as to the suitability or unsuitability of . . . any . . . possible candidate”.<sup>177</sup>

The statement had also covered the questions of Abdullah’s letters and the Bludan pamphlets. The British government expressed “regret that propaganda directed against His Majesty still continue, e.g. the circulars posted from Bludan to persons in the Hejaz . . . this was mentioned to the French . . . [and] that such activities will cease”.<sup>178</sup> It was further stated that Abdullah’s action in writing the August letters, “was unwise and discourteous”.<sup>179</sup> The British statement concluded that; “His Majesty’s Government feel that His Majesty’s long friendship for His Majesty’s Government will enable him to realise that they entirely disapprove of attacks upon his dignity and will always do their best to stop such attacks”.<sup>180</sup>

On 29 October 1939, Bullard wrote to the Foreign Office, informing that "Ibn Saud showed great satisfaction at the statement".<sup>181</sup> In the Minister's own words:

"My impression that Ibn Saud was pleased with the statement was borne out by Shaikh Yusuf who informed me next day that the King had said that all he wanted was to be secure in his own possessions, and had expressed satisfaction at the statement I had made to him ("very pleased indeed" was the expression used)".<sup>182</sup>

Soon Ibn Saud saw a positive improvement in his case with the Hashemite. Indeed, as soon as the British government endeavoured to keep Abdullah's activities "in check", the latter had brought his anti-Saudi conduct to a standstill.<sup>183</sup> In effect, Abdullah had given assurances that he would not consider any anti-Saudi propaganda. He even wrote to Ibn Saud through the British, "that he had no knowledge of the pamphlets until the British Resident brought them to his notice".<sup>184</sup> Furthermore, Abdullah proposed to Ibn Saud that they should meet in order to improve their relations; however, the latter replied that "circumstances" did not allow for such a meeting.<sup>185</sup> It seems that King Ibn Saud had obtained all he wanted; as far as Abdullah's "childish indiscretions can be kept in check" by the British.<sup>186</sup>

The overall outcomes of the Saudi-Hashemite issue in 1939 were constructive for Saudi-Anglo relations. The good effect of the British government's performance in such an issue was to be reflected in improvements in relations. Even for the overall Saudi Arabian attitude towards the Allies, there was a gain. Next to the Kingdom's diplomatic representations in only Allied capitals, the establishment of a Saudi Arabian legation in Paris was viewed as positive.<sup>187</sup> On this, Bullard remarked, "it can hardly fail to be advantageous to the Allies that the only legations maintained by Ibn Saud abroad should all be in allied countries - Great Britain, France, Egypt and Iraq".<sup>188</sup>

In addition to British government action on the Saudi-Hashemite issue, Ibn Saud was also given assurances on an issue that concerned him at that time: the essential sea-lanes and shipments of goods to Saudi ports. On this it was conveyed to the

King that the British government would do its best to ensure the continuity of foodstuff shipments to the Kingdom, particularly those that came from or through India and Egypt.<sup>189</sup> Likewise, the British would do all they could in order to keep the sailing of Indian pilgrim ships as usual.<sup>190</sup>

All in all, gains that were directed towards the goodwill of the Saudi-British relationship were not that difficult to see. Subsequent to a visit to Riyadh Bullard remarked:

“I found the King not at all inclined to sit on the fence, waiting to see how the war in Europe would go, but outspoken in his sympathy for the Allies and anxious to do all he could to ensure that there should be nothing to prevent the Arabs . . . from co-operating with them”.<sup>191</sup>

By the last week of October 1939, Bullard was in no doubt about the sincerity of Ibn Saud’s stance. In fact, the British Minister was certain that the King was desiring and believing in a British victory. On a statement, in which the king had said, “When I heard that that battleship of yours had been sunk I felt as though one of my own sons had been drowned”,<sup>192</sup> the British Minister commented:

“It would be possible to belittle this statement as diplomatic exaggeration, or perhaps as the remark of a man whom a son more or less makes little difference, but I am sure that the utterance was genuine. The King has gone so far in supporting us that a blow to us is a blow to his own pride and honour. We must win, not only in our joint interests but to vindicate his reputation as a statesman; and he is cheerfully convinced that we shall win”.<sup>193</sup>

#### **D. The British Assistance to Saudi Arabia**

At the beginning of 1940 the British government was informed about Ibn Saud’s apprehension that the war might jeopardise the security of Saudi Arabia. With a reference to the potential for an Italian aggression against the Kingdom, the King requested “for assurance . . . and material assistance”.<sup>194</sup>

Due to the fact that the Anglo-Italian Agreement was still valid, the British government could not give Saudi Arabia a specific assurance against Italy.<sup>195</sup> Nonetheless, it was explained to the Saudi Arabian King that, "His Majesty's Government regarded his interests as their own".<sup>196</sup> Hence:

"For their own sakes they want him to maintain his present dominions, to retain his own power within those dominions, and in due course to pass on his power undiminished to his son. All their influence will always be exerted to these ends, for if things happened otherwise the ensuing confusion would be very dangerous for themselves and their policy . . . Their ultimate aims are the same as his, to preserve the independence and integrity of Saudi Arabia".<sup>197</sup>

Despite the fact that the British government was willing to assist Saudi Arabia financially, it was reluctant to furnish it with war materials.<sup>198</sup> In a dispatch to the new British Minister in Jeddah, Mr Hugh Stonehewer-Bird, on 31 January 1940, the Foreign Office concluded that:

"By comparison with most countries . . . Ibn Saud is in no danger of foreign attack. Unless therefore you [Stonehewer-Bird] have serious ground to think that his internal security is in danger owing to lack of arms, His Majesty's Government must continue for the present, with minor exceptions, to use war material at their disposal for countries nearer fighting line. His Majesty's Government are ready, however, to help Ibn Saud in financial sphere".<sup>199</sup>

Ultimately, it was agreed in February 1940 that the British government would finance Saudi Arabia with a subsidy of £200,000 during 1940.<sup>200</sup> Nonetheless, it became obvious at a later stage that the economic crisis that the Kingdom was facing required further financial assistance.

In the summer of 1940 the Saudi Arabian economy started to suffer badly from the consequences of the war. The economy as whole declined when the small free trading markets of Saudi Arabia's towns felt the consequence of the war, and also when government revenues declined. The disorder in the mechanism of the trading market occurred when the prices of commodities rose in response to the shortages of basic commodities, in particular rice and flour. The scarcity resulted from the falling numbers of shipments to the Middle East as whole. The market disorder multiplied

when the merchants' confidence fell and they started to withdraw their gold and cash from it.<sup>201</sup>

Government revenues started to diminish badly when the war hit the main sources of income: the pilgrimage revenue, the custom's revenues and the oil royalties. First, the number of pilgrims from the Islamic world had fallen to about half; from about 64,000 in 1939, to 37,000 in 1940.<sup>202</sup> Second, the government customs revenues had fallen as a result of the sharp cut in imports. Finally, the newly started oil royalties of 1939 had dropped just a few months after the beginning of oil exports, because of the shortages of the necessary production technology and the lack of sufficient crude oil shipments the quantity of oil production had been sharply reduced.<sup>203</sup>

While the economy was declining, Ibn Saud's needs were increasing rapidly. He was in need of immediate cash and foodstuffs in order to replace the shortages; otherwise there was a fear that the state might face political disorder. From the first week of August 1940 onward, the case of financial assistance for Saudi Arabia began to be taken more seriously at all levels in the British government. Indeed, by then the British Minister at Jeddah was convinced of the necessity of providing Saudi Arabia with further financial assistance. He wrote to the Foreign Office on 1 August that, "unless he [Ibn Saud] receives very considerable financial assistance he will be unable to pay his officials their salaries or to distribute the usual gifts to his tribesmen".<sup>204</sup> Stonehewer-Bird added, "As [you are] . . . aware it is only by means of this annual distribution of food and money that Ibn Saud is enabled to maintain order among his tribesmen".<sup>205</sup> Stonehewer-Bird suggested that the British government offer Ibn Saud a further amount of subsidies of £600,000 payable in instalments of £200,000 every two months.<sup>206</sup>

On realising the possible consequences of the Saudi Arabian economic crisis, the Foreign Office started to encourage the idea of assisting Saudi Arabia financially. A Foreign Office minute of August 1940, stated, "because Ibn Saud really needs the money and because a loan or subsidy is the only way by which we [the British government] can show our appreciation of Ibn Saud's continued friendship and loyalty".<sup>207</sup> In order to strengthen its argument, the Foreign Office referred to the suggestion made by the Chiefs of Staff Committee on 14 June 1940, which read, "Ibn

Saud should be encouraged in every way including “material” encouragement to a greater extent than heretofore to demonstrate his friendship to this country”.<sup>208</sup>

After considerable correspondence between the Foreign Office and the Treasury, the former convinced the latter on 4 October 1940 to offer Saudi Arabia immediate credit of £200,000 and thereafter £200,000 every two month, up to a total of £800,000.<sup>209</sup> The British government action, which was highly appreciated as it came at a “critical time” according to *Amir Faisal’s* acknowledgement, had by all means helped the King to maintain order and stability in his Kingdom.<sup>210</sup>

Nonetheless, during the first quarter of 1941 the Saudi government started to realise that the British government’s financial assistance was becoming harder and more complicated to obtain. First, the British government faced the problem of giving Saudi Arabia financial assistance in currency, as it was technically difficult to mint Riyals at that time. The Saudi government was disturbed to hear from the British government that the currency minting would take at least five months.<sup>211</sup> Second, the Foreign Office informed the Saudi government in March and in April 1941 that there are no plans at the time to increase the promised financial assistance of £800,00, which would be completed in April 1941.<sup>212</sup>

As a result of these developments, King Ibn Saud refrained from asking the British government for further help despite his urgent needs.<sup>213</sup> But instead he directed all his efforts towards obtaining financial credits from new channels: which were the Oil Company and the US government. He thought that he would get a result through the new channels, particularly when he had just received the loan of \$3 million from the Oil Company.<sup>214</sup>

However, in November 1941 the Foreign Office changed its point of view dramatically about financial assistance to Saudi Arabia. Thus it urged the Treasury to send immediately £250,000 to the Saudi government and to consider increasing the total amount of British financial assistance.<sup>215</sup> This dramatic change came as a result of two factors: first, the American government’s requests to the British government to help Saudi Arabia,<sup>216</sup> second, the British Minister at Jeddah, Stonehewer-Bird’s recommendation to his government to help Saudi Arabia immediately because of the

fear of comprehensive collapse of its regime - "a collapse whose consequences might well cost HMG more millions than those required to maintain it".<sup>217</sup>

Consequently, the Treasury agreed on 27 January 1942 to provide Saudi Arabia with £3,000,000 for 1942.<sup>218</sup> Initially, the Foreign Office thought the proposed amount too much, using the comparison with the previous year. However, in the end it agreed to the £3 million proposal, to help Ibn Saud's regime overcome a potential breakdown at this critical time.<sup>219</sup>

The impact of the British help was notable, particularly in assisting the Saudi government to maintain political order and preserve security. Moreover, such assistance caused Ibn Saud's attitude to become further favourable towards the British government. Examples of King Ibn Saud's stance was crowned by his open acknowledgement of his special relationship with Britain, in his *Hajj* speech in December 1942, when he thanked the British for their help:

"Indeed, if we compare the state of this country [Saudi Arabia] in the present world war with its state in the past world war, we can see how great is the difference. All this comes from the graciousness of God, and secondly, as a result of the help given by the friendly British Government".<sup>220</sup>

### **E. The Question of Saudi Arabia's Neutrality**

The question of Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the war was debated between the Foreign Office and the India Office in June 1940. This discussion came just a few days after Italy had declared war on the Allies. Before embarking on the details of the debate, it is necessary to look closely at the British government's policies towards the question of Saudi neutrality prior to June 1940.

When Ibn Saud consulted the British government in August 1939 regarding his neutrality in event of war between the Great Powers, he was advised to maintain a neutral position.<sup>221</sup> The Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, regarded Saudi neutrality to be to Britain's advantage in many ways. First, the Saudi territory would be of a little use to the British forces in the event of hostilities. Second, the Saudi armed support would be valueless to the British Empire, especially when it was small in number and

weak in equipment. Third, Saudi Arabia produces no important commodity which the British government could not obtain without “indulging in unneutral conduct”.<sup>222</sup>

In addition, the British Foreign Secretary thought that Ibn Saud would seek a price in return for a declaration of war against Germany. According to Halifax’s speculation, Ibn Saud could ask for arms and money supply, and he would also expect British forces to protect his state. Moreover, he would expect rewards of a different form in the event of the allies’ victory, including territory from some of his British-protected neighbours.<sup>223</sup>

In accordance with Halifax’s account it was concluded then, that “There seems . . . to be no reason at first sight why His Majesty’s Government should wish Ibn Saud to do anything but maintain his neutrality in the event of a general conflict”.<sup>224</sup> Hence, “so far as they [the British] could see, they would prefer Ibn Saud to remain neutral in a future conflict and yet keep in mind the possibility of persuading him to depart from neutrality should they find any reason”.<sup>225</sup>

Even with regard to a public declaration of Ibn Saud’s sympathies to the Allies, the British government preferred - in December 1939 - not to let Saudi Arabia announce its sympathies publicly, but “to let Ibn Saud’s attitude speak for itself, as we [the British] feel sure it will do in time”.<sup>226</sup> It was stated in a despatch from the Foreign Office to the British Legation in Jeddah that; “His Majesty’s Government needs little from him [Ibn Saud] at present, except that he should be strong in his own territory and adopt a general attitude of benevolent neutrality”.<sup>227</sup>

In June 1940 when Saudi Arabia offered to cooperate with Iraq in the event of an Italian attack on Iraq’s territories, the Foreign Office and the India Office had different points of view.<sup>228</sup> The Secretary for India, Mr Leopold Amery, argued that it was in British interests for Saudi Arabia to join the war for several reasons. First, Ibn Saud’s declaration of war against Italy would be most heartening in Iraq, Palestine, Syria and Egypt. Amery thought that Ibn Saud’s neutrality would be “most disheartening” to all the British friends in the area.<sup>229</sup> Second, the use of Saudi Arabian ports, coastal waters and land could be vital for British forces in the event of their attacking the Italians in Eritrea and the Red Sea.<sup>230</sup> Third, Saudi Arabia should

be on the British side in case the British forces were pushed out of Egypt, such that Britain's position in the Middle East would not be "gravely prejudiced". Fourth and most importantly, Ibn Saud's declaration of war with the Allies would have a great effect on Muslim opinion in India.<sup>231</sup> Amery's dispatch to Halifax concluded "we should welcome the earliest possible entry of Ibn Saud into the war on our side. After all, it would be a sign of confidence in our ultimate victory which would influence a wider world even than that of Islam".<sup>232</sup>

The Foreign Secretary had a different point of view. In a reply, Halifax refuted his colleague's arguments. Although Halifax agreed that Ibn Saud's declaration of war would have a heartening effect upon the other Arab countries, he did not agree that his neutrality was disheartening for them, because it was well known that Ibn Saud's attitude was pro-British.<sup>233</sup> Regarding the use of Saudi Arabia's ports, coastal waters and aerodromes, the Foreign Secretary argued that the service departments had never "appeared to attach any particular importance" to this issue.<sup>234</sup> Over the possibility of British forces being pushed out of Egypt, Halifax argued that if such a disaster happened it would mean the end of the British Empire in the Middle East and at that time even if Ibn Saud were on the British side that would make no difference. Halifax gave the fourth point regarding the effect of Ibn Saud's involvement upon the Muslims in India the fullest weight, stating that "if Indian opinion or Moslem opinion generally showed dangerous signs of veering away from us, we might have to reconsider our attitude towards Ibn Saud's neutrality on this account alone".<sup>235</sup>

The Foreign Secretary added that Saudi Arabia's "participation in the war would be a very nominal one", particularly when the country was poor and without resources.<sup>236</sup> In addition, Halifax still believed that Ibn Saud would ask for a price in return for joining the war, and that such a demand would include a substantial amount of subsidies, armed protection, territorial compensation, and a final solution to the Palestine issue.<sup>237</sup> Summing up his message to Amery, Halifax stated that:

"You will see from what I have written that I should be reluctant to go so far as to make it clear straight away that we should welcome the earliest possible entry of Ibn Saud into the war on our side. I do not underrate the advantages of such a move . . . but I still think that the disadvantages would be considerable and that it is not yet clear that they [the disadvantages] would be

outweighed by the advantages. I will, however, have the question carefully examined with the departments concerned".<sup>238</sup>

On 8 July 1940, a memorandum on the question of Saudi Arabia's neutrality was sent from the Foreign Office to the War Office Official Committee for Questions Concerning the Middle East.<sup>239</sup> It was stated in that memorandum, which included the Foreign Office-India Office correspondence, that:

"The problem might possibly be considered under two main heads; (a) the general effect on other Arabs and Moslems of Ibn Saud's entry into the war; and (b) the actual material assistance which could be derived from Ibn Saud's forces and from the use of his territory".<sup>240</sup>

On 10 July 1940 the Committee, which comprised representatives from the Colonial Office, Foreign Office, India Office, War Office, Treasury, Admiralty and Air Ministry, held a meeting on the matter concerned. After discussions the Committee's conclusion agreed with the Foreign Secretary, that at the present time and in the existing circumstances the disadvantages of Saudi Arabia's declaration of war would outweigh the advantages. However if circumstances changed the assistance which Ibn Saud may give "might be of value" for two future issues. The first would be to stop any Italian-Yemeni aggression against Aden. The second was that, in the event of trouble in Iraq it would be valuable to use a route from Kuwait to Amman through the north part of Saudi Arabia.<sup>241</sup>

The British Minister at Jeddah was informed on 24 July 1940 by a despatch from the Foreign Office about the conclusion, which had been reached by the War Office Official Committee for Questions Concerning the Middle East. It was stated in that message, "that no attempt should be made at the present time to induce Ibn Saud to enter the war as an ally" unless circumstances change.<sup>242</sup> It was added, "Meanwhile continuance of Ibn Saud's benevolent neutrality is of highest importance".<sup>243</sup> The Foreign Office also asked Stonehewer-Bird about his views whether there were any other steps, which might be taken to ensure this benevolent neutrality.<sup>244</sup> In his reply to the Foreign Office on 1 August 1940, Stonehewer-Bird stated that, "I entirely share the view that the disadvantages deriving from a declaration of war by Ibn Saud far outweigh any possible advantage".<sup>245</sup> He also added:

“The best way to ensure continuance of Ibn Saud’s benevolent neutrality is, I feel, to show him in every possible way that His Majesty’s Government have his interests at heart and will endeavour to ensure that he and his country suffer as little as possible from the consequences of war”.<sup>246</sup>

Though, it could be said that up to the summer of 1940 the majority of the British government departments were in agreement with the Foreign Office point of view on the question of Saudi Arabia’s neutrality, it has to be mentioned that some change would become noticeable later. Such a change could not have occurred without Saudi Arabia being given some strategic considerations. The proposal of Kuwait-Amman Route was the core point that provided the Kingdom with some kind of strategic importance.

Based on a rudimentary study by Captain Gerald De Gaury, the former Political Agent in Kuwait, and a note by the British Air Headquarters at Habbaniya (Iraq); the British Minister at Baghdad, Mr Basil Newton, suggested on 1 October 1940 the implementation of a “British right of way between Transjordan and Koweit [Kuwait] across Saudi Arabia”.<sup>247</sup>

In a detailed memorandum Newton argued that this route had a political, strategic and economic importance.<sup>248</sup> According to his account, the Iraqis always attempted to take advantage of Britain because Iraq believed that it was a vital link of communication between the Gulf and the Mediterranean. However, by establishing this new route the Iraqis would then realise how dependent they were on Britain, and not the opposite. In addition to the Iraqi dimension, Newton thought that the route would strengthen the British position throughout the Middle East. Strategically, the existence of the new route would deter any attempts to close or abstract the line of communication through Iraq. Furthermore, the route would be useful according to Newton “as an emergency route if the safety of Palestine . . . were in doubt”.<sup>249</sup> He pointed out that the route was the most direct between the Gulf and the Suez Canal. Newton argued that the short course of the route would save time and oil for both aeroplanes and motorcars. In addition, the route might be of value to transport oil from the fields in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and south of Iraq to Palestine and Egypt.<sup>250</sup>

Therefore, the British Minister in Iraq advised his government to obtain a right to establish this route due to its “great potential value”.<sup>251</sup> The right, in his point of view, “should include the use, development, and control of all methods of communication i.e. by land, air, pipe-line, telegraph etc”.<sup>252</sup>

Newton’s recommendation was carefully looked at in London. On 12 October 1940, the War Office considered the “sufficient potential value” of this new proposed route “as alternative or supplementary to the Basra-Baghdad-Haifa route”.<sup>253</sup> On that day, it was argued in a letter from the War Office to the Foreign Office that, “in view of the uncertainty of the situation in Iraq and Syria, it seems by no means certain that we would be able to rely on the Iraq route being available”.<sup>254</sup>

There is a little doubt, that the potential use of the proposed route would give Saudi Arabia more strategic importance in the eyes of British foreign policy makers. It would not just allow Saudi Arabia to play a more important role in the event that it joined the allies, but also it would cause the British government to give more weight to the value of such an alliance. As the following pages will reveal, the proposed route had set off a significant circumstance that changed the balance of the advantages and the disadvantages in such a question.

In November 1941 the British government appointed De Gaury as Political Officer at Riyadh, to be near Ibn Saud and to report to the British Legation in Jeddah. De Gaury discussed various topics and issues with Ibn Saud and his officials during his stay in Riyadh between 12 and 20 of November 1941; these discussions included issues of concern to both States in the Arab world. When De Gaury found out that Ibn Saud’s attitude was satisfactory in general for the British, he requested his government withdraw him from Riyadh.<sup>255</sup> De Gaury advised his government to let Ibn Saud declare war with the Allies’ without delay.<sup>256</sup>

According to De Gaury’s recommendation, the Chiefs of Staff Committee at the War Office (CSCWO) sent telegrams on 12 December 1941, to the Commander-in-Chief Middle East (CCME), and the Commander-in-Chief India (CCI), requesting their views on an open alliance with Ibn Saud. Based on the replies of the CCME and the CCI, the CSCWO recommended on 23 December 1941 that an open alliance be

agreed with Saudi Arabia.<sup>257</sup> The alliance would bring the following advantages, according to the CSCWO:

- “(1) The opportunity of developing an alternative land . . . [route] from Kuwait to Amman.
- (2) The more effective policing of Trans-Jordan-Iraqi-Saudi frontier and the Saudi-Yemen frontier.
- (3) The opportunity of developing and using aerodromes on the Saudi Arabia Persian Gulf coast and in northern Saudi Arabia.
- (4) The opportunity of developing air routes across Saudi Arabia.
- (5) Increased security against Axis activities in the Red Sea area.
- (6) A useful counter to Axis propaganda in the Moslem world.
- (7) An open declaration by Ibn Saud would have a steadying effect upon the attitude of Arab tribes in the Middle Euphrates and in southern Iraq and upon the Syrian nomad tribes with all of whom his influence is considerable”.<sup>258</sup>

It was concluded by the CSCWO that, in all, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages from the military point of view, especially as Ibn Saud’s request for arms in return for his declaration of war would not be great as his army was small in number.<sup>259</sup>

In addition to the military point of view, it became apparent to the Foreign Office by the end of December 1941, that “all the political authorities consulted”, including the government of India, “take the view that such a step by Ibn Saud would have an admirable effect” on the British “war efforts”.<sup>260</sup> The Foreign Office counsellor, Mr Charles Baxter, minuted on 31 December, that:

“It is evident . . . that both military and political experts are in favour of pursuing this suggestion and I do not suppose that the Foreign Office would wish to take any other view, though we may perhaps think that the advantages may have been rather over-estimated”.<sup>261</sup>

Subsequent to further consultations between the Foreign Office and the British diplomats in the Middle East, it was decided that Saudi Arabia should be invited “to declare a state of war against the Axis”.<sup>262</sup> On 9 February 1942, Stonehewer-Bird was asked to approach King Ibn Saud, and invite him to take such a step.<sup>263</sup>

On 25 February, the British Minister cabled the Foreign Office - from Riyadh - stating that; "After three long conversations with me and much anxious thought, Ibn Saud has decided that it is neither in his interest nor in that of His Majesty's Government for him . . . to declare war on the Axis".<sup>264</sup> Stonehewer-Bird summarised Ibn Saud's reasons as follow:

"(a) Interests of his own country. He is completely unprepared for war and a declaration of war might result in some immediate action by the enemy, e.g. bombing of one of his cities. His people would in this event immediately rise against him and he would have to go. Nor would his people stand for any warlike preparations made by us for his protection. His land was of two parts: The Nejd where wild men lived whom he could not hope to convince of the need for him to go to war when he was not threatened, and the Hejaz whose inhabitants would not forgive him and from whom he could expect no support if he exposed the Holy Land to the dangers of war. A delegation from Hejaz had recently visited him to express deep appreciation of his ability to keep the Holy Land free from the threat of war. (b) His Majesty's Government's interests. He did not agree that a declaration of war by him would have the effect His Majesty's Government expected. On the contrary, it would be interpreted not only by our enemies but by his enemies in the Moslem world as proof that he was merely the tool of the British who had betrayed Islam and exposed the Holy Land to danger in British interests only".<sup>265</sup>

The Foreign Office reacted positively to Ibn Saud's argument. On 28 February, Stonehewer-Bird received a telegram from London, stating; "There is much force in Ibn Saud's arguments and His Majesty's Government do not propose to re-open the question, anyway for the time being".<sup>266</sup>

Though Ibn Saud's lines of reasoning were forceful as they were given, it could be said that, at that time there was one more certain reason which could have caused him to be determined regarding Saudi Arabia's neutrality. However, the King was in no position to include such a reason among his explanations to the British Minister. This was the case when such a reason was related to the war theatre in the Middle East and to the possible changes in the balance of powers near Saudi Arabia.<sup>267</sup> As a matter of

fact, at the time when the British Minister was talking to the King in Riyadh the forces of Field Marshal Rommel were just within 70 miles of Alexandria.<sup>268</sup> Indeed, the King, who was fanatical in maintaining the security of his Kingdom from any threat, was in no mood to join the Allies when the possibility of a German invasion of Egypt was not that remote. In fact, it was noticed that the King was even prepared to revive his diplomatic link with the Germans as soon as they “occupied Suez”.<sup>269</sup>

Despite the fact that Ibn Saud did not join the war beside the Allies explicitly, he supported them implicitly by all means. Examples of his support to the Allies in general and to Britain in particular, were included in the British Legation - in Jeddah - report to the Foreign Office on events in Saudi Arabia during 1942:

“In many . . . ways Ibn Saud’s loyalty to His Majesty’s Government has been manifest throughout the year. He has frequently communicated to us information regarding the situation in Europe and elsewhere obtained from his agents abroad; he has given us two machines of his tiny air force in the hope that they would be useful for carrying passengers and mails; in the summer when the position was most critical in Egypt he ungrudgingly allowed the Middle East Command to take over without payment seventy-five cars and lorries for which he had paid and which he required most urgently himself; he has agreed to British and American aircraft crossing Saudi Arabia from the Middle East to Persian Gulf . . . [moreover] he has taken no important move without consulting His Majesty’s Government at every point. Indeed, Britain in all her long history can seldom have had such loyal support from a foreign power either in adversity or in success”.<sup>270</sup>

#### **F. Saudi Arabia and the United States of America**

Without the progressive development of the American oil interests in Saudi Arabia during the last two years of the 1930s, and without the continued pressure from American oilmen; the US government might not even have considered the situation of its diplomatic relations with the Kingdom at the end of that decade. This was the case, when the dominant US foreign policy makers were inclined to believe that up to 1937, the American interests did not deserve the establishment of a diplomatic representation.<sup>271</sup> In fact, it was concluded at the State Department, in May 1937, to

“let matters stand as they now are until such a time as American interests in Saudi Arabia have made further developments”.<sup>272</sup>

Nevertheless, the positive progress of the US oil interests in Saudi Arabia in 1938-1939 helped the efforts of the oil companies' executives in persuading the State Department to take affirmative steps. The discovery of oil of commercial quantities in 1938, the new additions to the CASOC (California Arabian Standard Oil Company) oil concession in May 1939, and the ultimate growth of American oil related businesses, caused the majority of the State Department officials to realise the necessity of safeguarding such increasing interests.<sup>273</sup>

Subsequent to the recommendation of the State Department, President Roosevelt approved on 30 June 1939 the accreditation of the US Minister in Cairo, Judge Bert Fish, as non-resident Minister to Saudi Arabia.<sup>274</sup> On 4 February 1940, Fish visited Jeddah and submitted his credentials to Ibn Saud.<sup>275</sup> Despite such a step, it could be said that the US government remained practically indifferent to Saudi-US ties. Even when the Kingdom faced the economic crises, it was Americans oilmen and individuals who had to convince Washington to be more concerned in regard to Saudi Arabia.

In April 1941, the chairman of Standard Oil of California (SOCAL), Mr James Moffett, submitted a formal proposal to President Roosevelt, requesting the establishment of US direct assistance to Saudi Arabia.<sup>276</sup> In that proposal Moffett urged, “Unless King Ibn Saud receive financial assistance at once there is grave danger that this . . . Kingdom cannot survive the present emergency”.<sup>277</sup> In addition to Moffett's proposal the US mining engineer, Mr K Twitchell, who was working in Saudi Arabia mines for Ibn Saud, also suggested to the US government in May 1941 that it should extend direct aid to Saudi Arabia.<sup>278</sup> Furthermore, upon Ibn Saud's request, Twitchell urged the US government to send an American agricultural mission to study the viability of developing the agricultural and water resources of Najd.<sup>279</sup>

The British government did not object to any efforts which would lead to direct US assistance to Saudi Arabia when it was informed about the idea by the US government.<sup>280</sup> In fact the British tried to encourage any tendency from the US

government in that direction, because of the need for American cooperation in the Middle East in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular.<sup>281</sup> British officials expressed the hope that the USA would become involved. Mr Nevile Butler, the Minister-Counsellor of the British Embassy in Washington, suggested in July 1941 that the US government give a loan to Saudi Arabia, which would let Ibn Saud realise that both the British and the Americans were his friends.<sup>282</sup>

Nevertheless, on 18 July 1941 Roosevelt instructed the State Department to “tell the British I hope they can take care of the King of Saudi Arabia. This is a little far afield for us”.<sup>283</sup> Despite objections by American Middle East diplomats about such a move, most of the US officials in Washington were in agreement with the President’s idea. In fact, the Secretary of the Navy, the head of Lend-Lease, and the Federal Loan Administration, all supported Roosevelt’s decision.<sup>284</sup> The decision confirmed the US’s policy at that time, that it regarded Saudi Arabia as being located in an area in which British interests were much greater than those of the US, especially in the political and the strategic aspects.<sup>285</sup>

Following the US government decision not to assist Saudi Arabia directly, but to leave such a task to the British government, American oil executives became more “active in encouraging fear and suspicion of British policy”.<sup>286</sup> For instance, on 27 November 1941, Mr Fred Davies of CASOC told the State Department that “his company would make further financial advances to Ibn Saud for the following year”, especially when, “his company desired to avoid, if possible, having the British be the only source of income to the King for fear that they would attempt to enact certain *quid pro quos*”.<sup>287</sup>

Subsequent to the US declaration of war in December 1941, the US government had further disclosed the supremacy of the British power over the area in which Saudi Arabia is located.<sup>288</sup> In early March 1942 the British and the US governments agreed to divide the world into three different zones, in which each of them would exercise its military responsibility:<sup>289</sup>

1. The Pacific area, where the USA would be the senior partner.
2. The Atlantic and Europe, where both would be responsible.

3. The 'middle area' which started from Singapore across India, the Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, where Britain would be the senior power.

Therefore, the defence of the Middle East - including Saudi Arabia - would be formally recognised as being under Britain military responsibility.<sup>290</sup>

It could be generally concluded that up to the end of 1942, Saudi-American relations remained insignificant, particularly when compared to that of Saudi-Anglo relations. Despite the fact that some interactions were visible between Saudi Arabia and the USA in 1942, such as the conclusion of a commercial and technical agreement on 22 April, the appointment of Mr James Moose as a resident consul at Jeddah on 1 May, the arrival of the proposed US agriculture mission on 10 May, the impact of the course of Saudi-American relations on Saudi-British relations was almost nonexistent.<sup>291</sup>

## Summary and Conclusions

It was apparent from their actions at the beginning of 1939 that the Saudis were very cautious when it came to the necessity of preserving the security of the Kingdom. Indeed, King Ibn Saud's apprehension about the consequences of the 1938 Anglo-Italian Agreement had caused him to consider the need for the creation of strong ties with Germany. Still, while he was considering that, the King did not fail to inquire about British perspective on Saudi Arabian security.

King Ibn Saud's anxiety over the security of his Kingdom had enabled Grobba, who was - like the King at that specific time of early 1939 - keen to create a strong Saudi-German link, to emerge from the Jeddah talks with a promising perspective for the new relations. Likewise, the ambiguous British response to the Saudi inquiry had led the Saudis to keep the progress of their connection with Germany ongoing. However, by the summer of 1939, it became evident to King Ibn Saud that the development of his new relations with the Germans was moving towards goals that were not compatible with his Kingdom's interests. The German government's abuse of certain aspects of the Saudi-German connection, such as the use of the Berlin talks for an anti-British propaganda campaign, had rather persuaded the King to reorient his efforts towards closer ties with Britain. Indeed, by September 1939, the King's experience of Saudi-German relations had led him to realise that Saudi-Anglo relations were in fact irreplaceable.

Though it was Italy which caused the Saudi security concerns, the Saudi government did not alter the status of the Italian representation in Jeddah during the first two years of the war. In fact the Saudis had avoided any action that could cause the Italians to consider any negative attitude towards the Kingdom. Despite the fact that Italy's entrance into the war against Britain had caused Saudi suspicions over the Anglo-Italian Agreement to become history, still the Saudis did not neglect the possibility of an Italian aggression against the Kingdom's territories. As a matter of fact, the accidental bombing of Dhahran oilfields by the Italians in October 1940 had made it difficult for the Saudis to forget about such a possibility. Though the Saudi government did not facilitate the opening of a German legation in Jeddah, and that the

Italian legation was closed in 1942, Saudi Arabia did not formally break its relations with either country. Perhaps as a precaution, just in case the war developed in unexpected directions, the Saudi government did not show the Axis any sign, but that which gave the impression that it would consider the opening of their legations in Jeddah at any appropriate stage.

Although ideological values were not unobserved in Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the Palestine issue, yet *realpolitik* values had kept the impact of the same issue under control as far as Saudi-British relations were concerned. Following the failure of the London Conference, the British government adopted a moderate proposal in order to solve the Palestine question. Despite the fact that the Arab countries did not formally approve the White Paper, still it could not be neglected that the British government had at least come closer to some of the Arab demands when it started to implement such a proposal. With the grave development of the war, King Ibn Saud had decided to refrain from any action that might obstruct Britain's war efforts, even if it was related to Palestine.

Beside the failure of the Saudi-German attempt to develop closer links, there were other causes that had helped the consolidation of Saudi-British relations at the outset of the war. The intention of the British government of not letting Saudi Arabia risk its security by entering into the war had caused the King not just to adopt benevolent neutrality, but also to further strengthen his Kingdom's friendship with Britain. Moreover, the realisation of the compatibility of the Saudi and the British interests was also accommodating further consolidation. Saudi Arabian reliance on the British Empire, particularly that which was related to pilgrimage affairs and the sea shipments as well as the British military and political presence in the area, were additional grounds that helped the course of Anglo-Saudi relations. Besides, the British government's swift action over Ibn Saud's anxiety about certain actions by the Hashemites had made the King put his faith in the goodwill of his Kingdom's relations with Britain. Likewise, the British government assurances about its intentions in maintaining the sea-lanes shipment that carried pilgrims and foodstuff were also heartfelt. Additionally, Britain assurance "to preserve the independence and integrity of Saudi Arabia", as well as the notable financial assistance which in fact

helped the Saudis preserve security and order during the crucial years of the war; were a practical reality that greatly eased the path of Saudi-Anglo relations.

There were three occasions during the period that was covered in this chapter in which the question of Saudi Arabian neutrality arose. The first occurred before the outbreak of the war in August 1939, when Ibn Saud consulted the British government regarding the German request to him to sign a formal agreement on his neutrality. The second arose when Saudi Arabia offered, in June 1940, to assist Iraq in case of an Italian attack. British officials brought up the third, in 1942. On the first two occasions the Foreign Office point of view was firm; that Saudi Arabia should remain neutral despite contrary views of other departments in the British government. However, in the third, the Foreign Office was influenced in considering that Saudi Arabia should declare war on the Axis. Despite the fact that the King did not express an obvious and an explicit indication that would reveal that he was ready "to declare a state of war against the Axis", he was approached by the British Minister to do so in February 1942. In response, the King had argued that it was neither in Saudi Arabian nor British interest that he should adhere to such an action. By doing so it was obvious that Ibn Saud was determined to keep his Kingdom away from all kind of risks that the war might bring, particularly when the development of the warfront in North Africa was not yet showing any signs of an Allied victory.

The discussions that took place within the British government in regard to King Ibn Saud's stance in the war, had confirmed the significance that Britain had given to Saudi Arabia. Indeed, there was a significant role for Saudi Arabia in regard to the preservation of security and order of the British Empire. Such an importance was not just related to that of a strategic concept, but also to that which was related to the impact of Ibn Saud's benevolent conduct on the British Empire Muslim populations.

Despite the accreditation of an American Minister to Saudi Arabia in 1940, Saudi-US relations remained insignificant. Though interested Americans were pushing the US government to give further consideration to Saudi-US relations, and though the British government was also encouraging such a move, the US government was in fact unwilling to do so. Such an attitude did not just weaken the development of

Saudi-US relations, but also enabled the progress of Saudi-British relations to stay free of any kind of obstruction.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The setting of this date was based on the fact that Ibn Saud's letter to Chamberlain was signed - after being printed - on 2 January 1939, a circumstance that reveals its final drafting must have been done by 1 January 1939. See from King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23268.

<sup>2</sup> See from the Director of the Political Department to the Foreign Policy Office of the Nazi Party, 29 September 1938, In **Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945**, Series D, Vol. V, p. 793. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. It should be noted that; on 27 December 1938, Fuad Hamza told the British Minister at Jeddah that, "the German Minister at Baghdad was coming to Jeddah". Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> See Hodgkin, E. **Two Kings in Arabia: Sir Reader Bullard's Letters from Jeddah**. Reading: Ithaca, 1993, p. 250.

<sup>4</sup> The responsibility of communicating the Ibn Saud-Chamberlain written correspondences was given solely to Prince Faisal to handle during the latter's visit to London. See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office (and enclosures), 9 January 1939, FO 371/23268. Also, see from King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, and reply March 1939, FO 371/23268. Also, see Foreign Office minutes, 23 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>5</sup> See the second section of the introductory chapter. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. **Britain and Saudi Arabia 1925-1939**. London: Frank Cass, 1983, p. 300. It should be noted, that there were certain other aspects which were not so helpful for the development of Saudi-British relations during the 1930s, such as that of Britain being an insufficient arms supplier to Saudi Arabia. See section A: II of this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> The Anglo-Italian Agreement was signed on 16 April 1938, but its full implementation was delayed until November 1939. See Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., pp. 297-298 & p. 314 & p. 383.

<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the agreement had referred to "Saudi Arabia and the Yemen by name". Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 294-295.

<sup>9</sup> In fact it had even led to the resignation of some of the members of the British government, such as the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, who resigned in February 1938. Ibid., p. 297.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 294-300.

<sup>11</sup> See Hodgkin, E. op. cit., p. 250. Also, see De Gaury, Gerald. **Faisal: King of Saudi Arabia**. London: Arthur Barker Ltd, 1966, pp. 61-62. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. **شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز (The Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz)**. Beirut: دار العلم للملايين, 1992, pp. 771-773. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office (and enclosures), 9 January 1939, FO 371/23268. Also, see from King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, and reply March 1939, FO 371/23268. Also, see Foreign Office minutes, 23 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, the Saudi Foreign Minister did not receive the British Prime Minister reply until 23 March 1939. See De Gaury, Gerald. op. cit., pp. 61-62. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 771-773. Also, see from King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, and reply March 1939, FO 371/23268. Also, see Foreign Office minutes, 23 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>13</sup> From King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23268.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Faisal did not discuss any fundamental issue regarding Saudi-British relations when the Prime Minister received him. However, with the full authority of Ibn Saud, Faisal did discuss and comment on some points in the Prime Minister's reply with both the Secretary of State (Halifax) and his Deputy (Sir L. Oliphant). Besides, it should be noted that *Amir* Faisal could not discuss or comment on any points of the reply with Chamberlain because he was not given an advance copy of the reply when he asked for it, a sign which meant that the Prime Minister did not want to be involved in the discussion. However Chamberlain told Faisal, as he was handing him the reply; that "if there were any points in it which he wished to discuss an opportunity would doubtless occur when he saw the Secretary of State". Foreign Office minutes, 23 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>22</sup> From the Prime Minister to King Abdulaziz, March 1939, FO 371/23268.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah (Bullard), 12 April 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Faisal was also told that he would receive an answer about this inquiry through Sir Reader Bullard at Jeddah later. Ibid. Also, Foreign Office minutes, 31 March 1939, FO 371/23269. However, it seems that this particular inquiry had not been followed up, either by Faisal or by Bullard. In fact Bullard wrote in the Jeddah Report for April 1939 that "The tension in Europe has revived Ibn Saud's fear for his own fate in case of a war, and he approached His Majesty's Government on the subject through his son Faisal, in London. It seems unlikely that any European power should wish to attack Saudi Arabia, but Ibn Saud seems to think it possible. His Majesty's Government have done their best to reassure him". From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, Jeddah report, 1 May 1939. From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, Jeddah Report for April 1939, 1 May 1939, in Jarman, Robert. **The Jeddah Diaries: 1919-1940**. Oxford: Archive Editions. 1990, p. 421. Moreover, nor was this inquiry followed up when Faisal met Bullard in Taif in June 1939, when mention of the subject occurred. See From Jeddah to the Foreign Office, Jeddah Report for June 1939, 1 July 1939, in Jarman, Robert. **The Jeddah Diaries: 1919-1940**. Oxford: Archive Editions. 1990, pp. 431-438.

<sup>33</sup> Foreign Office minutes, 24 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>34</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Bullard), 12 April 1939, FO 371/23269. Also, see Foreign Office minutes, 24 March 1939, FO 371/23269. In addition to Faisal's inquiries about the Prime Minister's reply, he inquired about further issues with the Deputy Under-Secretary of State on Kuwait and on the Sheikdoms of the Gulf. Regarding Kuwait, when Faisal asked "whether there was any likelihood of H. M. Government allowing its incorporation in Iraq" he was answered with "an emphatic negative". In reply to his inquiry about the situation in the Gulf Sheikdoms "he was assured that, far from it being the policy of H. M. Government to encroach upon the autonomy of the local Sheikhs, H. M. Government had always been most careful to preserve their autonomy". From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Bullard), 12 April 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>35</sup> Foreign Office minute, 31 March 1939, FO 371/23268. It was ironically admitted in January 1940, that the "Prime Minister's letter to Ibn Saud . . . [and statements to Faisal] contain broadest possible hints that His Majesty's Government would have to help Ibn Saud if attacked. But His Majesty's Government have hitherto refrained from being explicit. Main reason has been possible Italian suspicion that spirit of Middle Eastern Agreement was being violated". From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 23 January 1940, FO 371/24586.

<sup>36</sup> Foreign Office minutes, 24 March 1939, FO 371/23269.

<sup>37</sup> Yet it should be noted that Bullard was informed - and was aware - of the Saudi-German contacts. See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. Also, see Hodgkin, E. op. cit., pp. 251-253.

<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that by the time that the Saudis received the British response, the Saudi-German contact was already underway as the following pages will reveal.

<sup>39</sup> Bullard, Reader. **The Camels Must Go**. London: Faber and Faber, 1961, p. 212.

<sup>40</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. **1939-1926 الملك عبدالعزيز والمملكة العربية السعودية (King Abdulaziz and Germany: 1926-1939)**. Beirut: دار امواج, 2000, p. 136 & p. 201. It should be noted, that the Saudis had already used some kind of German arms, such as Mauser rifles, and they were pleased with their quality. Saudi Arabia was able to obtain these arms from German manufactures, but through Europeans commercial agents. See Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p.172.

<sup>42</sup> See section A: I of this chapter.

<sup>43</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. It should be also noted that though the Saudis had agreed on Grobba's visit to Jeddah in advance, they had wished - in January 1939 - that he did not come to Jeddah before they had heard from Chamberlain. However, because they were in such a position which would make it extremely difficult for them to explain to Grobba the reason why they did not want him to come at that particular time, they left the matter like that hoping that the German Minister did not make it to Jeddah until they got the British reply. As a last resort when Grobba's flight was just about to leave Baghdad for Jeddah they tried to postpone his trip by not

issuing the routine flight permission. According to Bullard "Although the application of Dr. Grobba for permission to make a direct flight to Jeddah was refused by the Saudi Government, he did in fact arrive in an aeroplane, on January 21st". Ibid. Beside the Palestine issue, King Ibn Saud concentrated on his comprehension of Italian aggression against Saudi Arabia, in his conversation with Bullard on 27 January 1939. The King explained to Bullard a new dimension of the potentiality of Italian aggression. He feared that the Italians were working though Yemen against the Saudi Kingdom. See Jeddah Report, January 1939, FO 37123271.

<sup>44</sup> See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. It should be also noted that Grobba was planning to go back to Baghdad as soon as possible, because he was supposed to meet with the Persian Crown Prince, when the latter passed through Iraq on his way to Egypt in that month. See Hodgkin, E. op. cit., p. 253.

<sup>45</sup> See section A: I of this chapter. Also, see from King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23268. It should be noted that in the original text - in Arabic - Ibn Saud described his letter to Chamberlain as; "رسالة هامة (*resalah hamah*)", which should be translated into English as 'strict and direct' translation was implemented as; "important letter". Nonetheless, the translator must have considered "note" as an exact synonym for "letter", a matter, which does not - and should not - underestimate the determined meaning. Besides, the original Arabic text was sent to London alongside the translated text. See Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> See Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 303. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. Hence, Jeddah remained without a permanent German diplomatic representation.

<sup>47</sup> See Ibid. Also, see from Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 18 February 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 800-810. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 175.

<sup>48</sup> Although Grobba - according to Bullard - was not a Nazi, he was still extremely enthusiastic about the creation of close political relations between Saudi Arabia and the German regime at that time. See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272. Also, see Hodgkin, E. op. cit., p. 253. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 169-171.

<sup>49</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 February 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>50</sup> See from Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 18 February 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 800-810.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Apparently the Saudis had insisted on making their contacts with the Germans discreet, because they did not want it to damage their relations with Britain at this stage. See Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> "rather . . . [than becoming in their] enemies [side]". Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 18 February 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> See also, Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 303.

<sup>68</sup> From Foreign Office to Admiralty, 22 August 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>69</sup> From the German Foreign Ministry to Grobba, 18 April 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 813-814.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> From Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 2 May 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 403-407.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> See Wolffsohn, Michael. German-Saudi Arms Deals. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1985, p. 27. Also, see Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII, 22 May 1939, in Documents on German

**Foreign Policy: 1918-1945.** Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 555-556. Also, see note 7 in from Grobba to German Foreign Ministry, 18 February 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. V, pp. 800-810. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 179-183.

<sup>75</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 305. Khalid Al-Qarqani (also known as Khalid Al-Hud) who was originally from Tripoli (of Libya) was one of King Ibn Saud's advisors at that time. It should also be noted that Khalid was considered as being a "pro-German". See Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> After some detailed discussions between Al-Qarqani and Hentig, the discussions were further elevated by the Al-Qarqani-Hitler meeting on 17 June. Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII, 20 June 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 685-686. See also, Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., p. 29. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 184-186. It should be noted that Khalid Al-Qarqani was continuously updating Ibn Saud about the development of his mission via telegrams. See for example Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>77</sup> See Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII, 20 June 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 743-744.

<sup>78</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 187 & p. 245. Also, Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>79</sup> Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII, 20 June 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 743-744. Showing his hatred of the Jews Hitler stated that he "would not rest until the last Jew left Germany". Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> See Ibid. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>81</sup> See Ibid., p. 188. Also, see Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII, 20 June 1939, in Documents on German Foreign Policy: 1918-1945. Series D, Vol. VI, pp. 743-744. Also, see the notes 7,8, and 9 in ibid. See also, Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>82</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 189.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., pp. 189-191. Also, see Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., pp. 30-31

<sup>84</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 189-191

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., pp. 189-190.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 192 & pp. 202-203. It should be noted that Al-Qarqani had done his best to deny all of the fabricated stories about his mission while he was in Berlin. Moreover, the Saudi government had also informed the British government about the nature of the misleading propaganda. See Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 192.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., pp. 193-195.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 194-195.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. Also, see from Foreign Office to Admiralty, 22 August 1939, FO 371/23272. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 306.

<sup>93</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 195-196.

<sup>94</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 August 1939, FO 371/23272. Also, see Section E of this Chapter.

<sup>95</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 August 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> See Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 309. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 196-197.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Bullard, Reader. op. cit., p. 213. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 309. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>100</sup> See Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., pp. 32-33. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 309. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271. It should be noted that on 13 September 1939 Ibn Saud instructed Khalid Al-Qarqani to return from Germany to Saudi Arabia immediately. See Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> See section C of this chapter.

<sup>102</sup> See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 218-224. Also, see Wolffsohn, Michael. op. cit., pp. 32-33.

<sup>105</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271. It seems that, Grobba could not find any means in which he could travel by air at that time.

<sup>106</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 218-219.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>109</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 218-220.

- <sup>110</sup> See Wahba, Hafiz. *خمسون عاما في جزيرة العرب (Fifty years in the Arabian Peninsula)*. Cairo: مكتبة مصطفى البابی, 1960, pp. 107-109. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 16 January 1940, FO 371/24586. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 223-224.
- <sup>111</sup> See Ibid. Also, see Wahba, Hafiz. op. cit., pp. 107-109. Also, see from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 21 January 1940, FO 371/24586.
- <sup>112</sup> Also, see section 2:C of the introductory chapter.
- <sup>113</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 136. According to Bullard at the beginning of 1939 the Italian Air Mission consisted of "an officer pilot instructor and five or six mechanics of various kinds . . . the Saudi Government provided only quarters and food; the Italian Government gave the mission their pay". Hodgkin, E. op. cit., p. 258. It should be noted, that the Saudis were not satisfied with the Air Mission, not just because of its poor training program, but also because the Italians airplanes, which Saudi Arabia received as a gift three years previously, were useless even for training purposes. See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 136. It should also be noted that the termination of the mission operations was, in fact, a final ending for the Saudi-Italian aviation cooperation, which had started in the mid-1930s. See section 2:C of the introductory chapter.
- <sup>114</sup> Hodgkin, E. op. cit., p. 258.
- <sup>115</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>116</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.
- <sup>117</sup> See Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., pp. 119-120.
- <sup>118</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 20 February 1939, FO 371/23272.
- <sup>119</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>120</sup> King Ibn Saud thought that the Italian Minister's approach was made only as a result of possible advice from Grobba; hence, in his point of view it did not demonstrate the real Italian intentions. See Ibid.
- <sup>121</sup> Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 148.
- <sup>122</sup> See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 20 February 1939, FO 371/23272.
- <sup>123</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 305. It should be noted that there was no reaction from the British government when the arms deal was announced in August 1939. In fact the British government may have preferred that Italy rather than the hostile Germany would supply the arms. See from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 1 September 1939, in Jarman, Robert. *The Jeddah Diaries*. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1990, p. 452.
- <sup>124</sup> See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589. Also, see Al-Semmari, Fahad. op. cit., p. 222. The arms, were valued at about £85,000 which was consistent with 11600 ammunition boxes, and 200 containers of various kind of rifles. See Ibid. Also, see from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.
- <sup>125</sup> See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Review of the situation in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 20 March 1941, FO 371/27261.
- <sup>126</sup> The air attack on Dhahran had cause some damage to some of the oil pipelines, but it did not cause any other losses. See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 19 October 1940, FO 371/24588. Mistakenly Leatherdale dated the bombing as December 1940. See Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 338. See also, Peterson, J. E. *Defending Arabia*. London: Croom Helm, 1986, p.52. Upon the air attack the Saudi Arabian government asked the British government - through the British Minister in Jeddah - to help identify the aircraft. From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 20 October 1940, FO 371/24588. Even before obtaining the British government's confirmation of the identity, Saudi Arabia reached the conclusion that the aircraft were Italian, as they had been heard over Abha (in the south-west of Saudi Arabia) and Laila (in the south east of Riyadh) on the same night of bombing. A matter, which meant that those aircraft had taken off and returned to Asmara, hence violating Saudi Arabian territory, See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 21 October 1940, FO 371/24588. The British government's reaction to this incident came in a message conveyed by Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Ibn Saud on 23 October 1940, which stated: "His Majesty's Government desire to express their sincere sympathy at recent outrageous attack by Italian aircraft against objective on Saudi Arabia territory. This deliberate violation of neutral territory is a further instance of Italian aggression against States with whom the Italian Government profess to maintain friendly relations". From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 22 October 1940, FO 371/24588.
- <sup>127</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 21 October 1940, FO 371/24588.

<sup>128</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, Annual Summary of Events in Saudi Arabia during 1942, 27 January 1943, FO 371/35155. Still, it should be noted that the Saudis did not frankly ask the Italians to leave Jeddah, but the war circumstances had made the Italians desert the legation by themselves. See *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> See section B of chapter two.

<sup>130</sup> The King's view on this was not concealed from the British government, in fact on several occasions the British officials were informed that Saudi Arabia realised the difficulty that they faced. For example see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, Jeddah Report for May 1939, 1 June 1939, in Jarman, Robert. *The Jeddah Diaries: 1919-1940.* Oxford: Archive Editions. 1990, p. 427. Also, see the following pages within this section.

<sup>131</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. *op. cit.*, p. 1092.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1093-1096. It should be noted that the King was in Riyadh at that particular time. See *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.* A similar additional message was also sent when Ibn Saud received Yassin's complete denial of such a rumour. See *Ibid.*, pp. 1095-1096.

<sup>134</sup> See *Ibid.*, pp. 1097-1102.

<sup>135</sup> Translated from *Ibid.*, p. 1100.

<sup>136</sup> For additional details See section D of chapter three. Indeed, this aspect became clearer after W.W.II. See *Ibid.* In December 1939, Bullard wrote that Ibn Saud "has shown himself a great ruler. No man who had not had a firm hold over himself as well as over his people could have steered the course in regard to Palestine which he has steered . . . the depths of his personal feelings could not be doubted by anyone who had seen him trying to suppress his tears at the wireless announcement of the hanging of an Arab for participation in the armed movement in Palestine; but he is not led away by his feelings but keeps his eyes fixed steadfastly on the main lines of the policy which he has adopted". From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 December 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>137</sup> From King Abdulaziz to Chamberlain, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23268.

<sup>138</sup> From the Prime Minister to King Abdulaziz, March 1939, FO 371/23268.

<sup>139</sup> De Gaury, Gerald. *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62. In addition to Faisal, the Saudi delegation to the conference consisted of: Prince Khalid bin Abdulaziz, Hafiz Wahba, and Fuad Hamza. See Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. *The Palestine Issue in Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy: 1936-1981.* Ph.D. thesis, University of Exeter, 1989, p. 147.

<sup>140</sup> De Gaury, Gerald. *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62. For the 1937 Royal Commission proposal see section 2: B: I of the introductory chapter.

<sup>142</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 279.

<sup>143</sup> Zweig, Ronald. *The Palestine Problem in the Context of Colonial Policy on the Eve of the Second World War.* In Kolinsky, Martin & Cohen, Michael. *Britain and the Middle East in the 1930s: Security Problems, 1935-39.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, p. 210.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 210.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>147</sup> Wahba, Hafiz. *op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.* Nevertheless, the king could not achieve this. See *Ibid.* Some researchers have wrongly concluded that Ibn Saud had formally rejected the proposal. For example see Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. *op. cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>150</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>151</sup> It should be pointed out that Harry St. John Philby's plan for Palestine had not been directly connected to Saudi-British relations. Moreover, the present research could not come across fundamental events, which would regard Philby as an important factor in Saudi-British relations, during 1939-1953. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the war, certain aspects of Saudi-British relations had affected Philby's existence in Saudi Arabia. For more clarification on this, a brief account of Philby's plan, and of his status and behaviour in the Kingdom is needed. During a meeting in London on 8 October 1939 Philby suggested to Dr Chaim Weizmann, the President of the World Zionist Organisation, "that in return for a subsidy of £20 million, paid to Ibn Saud, the Jews should take over western Palestine apart from a 'Vatican City' in the old city of Jerusalem; at the same time they should help with securing Arab unity and independence, which was attainable only under Ibn Saud". Monroe, Elizabeth. *Philby of Arabia.* Reading: Ithaca Press, 1998, p. 210. The scheme was 'good enough' for Weizmann; hence he had decided with Philby to make effort on it. Weizmann intended to seek Roosevelt's support, while Philby was supposed to attain Ibn Saud's consensus. On 8 January 1940,

Philby revealed the proposal to Ibn Saud, and added that Roosevelt "would ensure that Weizmann fulfil his promise". Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1137. Also, see Monroe, Elizabeth. op. cit., p. 211. The King's answer did not come immediately, instead he told Philby not to tell anyone about such a proposal, and to preserve complete silence. On 16 April, Philby wrote that, "Ibn Saud . . . still won't say yes and won't say no. The truth is that he himself is quite favourably inclined towards the proposal and is just thinking out how it can be worked without producing a howl of anger among certain Arab elements". Ibid. In May Philby once more raised the subject with Ibn Saud, and again no answer was attainable. Ibid., p. 212. It could be argued that Philby had misinterpreted the reason behind Ibn Saud's silence, in fact the King's quietness could be interpreted in a different way. In August 1943 when the US president's special envoy, Colonel Hoskins, enquired; whether Ibn Saud would consider meeting Weizmann or not the King replied in the negative. Moreover, it was expounded to the Colonel that, "Ibn Saud considers Dr. Weizman as his personal enemy for it was he who had the outrageous insolence to approach Ibn Saud and to ask him to be a traitor to his religion and his country. This approach was made in the first year of the war when Dr. Weizman sent a certain European [Philby] with a request that Ibn Saud should abandon the Arabs of Palestine in return for £20,000,000 to be guaranteed by President Roosevelt himself. The man dared to put this base suggestion to Ibn Saud and to suggest that the President would guarantee such a dishonourable proposal. Could anything be baser or more criminal than this?". From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 29 August 1943, Prem 4/28/3. If that was Ibn Saud's feeling towards Weizmann, how can his feeling towards Philby be defended? It could be said that the King might have felt the same towards Philby. But, still Philby's relation with Ibn Saud was not the same as that of Weizmann. Indeed, Philby was considered, as a friend, guest, and a permanent member of the King's private *majlis*, yet such a status should not be confused with that of a formal one. According to Wahba and Al-Zarkali Philby was never considered in Saudi Arabia to be anything but a businessman and a friend of Ibn Saud. See Wahba, Hafiz. op. cit., pp. 177-179. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1358-1361. In Al-Zarkali words "Philby had held no consultant position, nor any official or even a semi-official position in King Ibn Saud government". Ibid., p. 1137. In fact, when Philby published some articles on the Palestine issue - in 1937 - Ibn Saud had instructed the Kingdom's representatives in Cairo and in London to announce, that Philby was nothing to the King but a "personal friend", and a "businessman" in the country, hence "all his political opinions does not represent that of Ibn Saud at any rate". Ibid., pp. 1358-1389. Even though Philby did not hold a formal position, it should not be neglected that he was an active member of Ibn Saud's *majlis*. He used to comment on some world political affairs, particularly on that in current news, and on various occasions he has interred in a remarkable political debate with King Ibn Saud. Ibid., p. 1362. Nevertheless, Philby's attendance at the Ibn Saud *majlis* did not make him so well-informed about Saudi Arabian foreign policy. In fact most of the crucial issues were deliberately hidden from Philby. On various occasions, Al-Zarkali had observed "the King changing the subject of his talk as soon as he noted Philby's appearance". Ibid., p. 1358. In addition, to Philby's status in the Kingdom, the King used to think highly of him for certain reasons. Not just because of Philby's adoption of Islam, but also because of the Englishman's hatred of *Amir* Abdullah of Transjordan. See Ibid., 1361. Also, see Wahba, Hafiz. op. cit., p. 177. Moreover, Philby's presence among the attendees of the royal *majlis* might have been regarded as useful for differentiating analysis and comments on some of the war news, particularly as the man was representing a different kind of background to that of Ibn Saud's official consultants. Broadly speaking, Philby's condition might have caused the King to spare some time in order to judge the whole case. Whether Ibn Saud was inclined to tolerate Philby's action, or even to reconsider the basis of his existence in the Kingdom, action had to be taken at some stage. It was later to be noted that King Ibn Saud was no longer willing to bear Philby's residence in the Kingdom. Indeed, an additional matter that was related to the maintenance of Saudi-British relations had further encouraged Ibn Saud to keep Philby away from the country. This time it was Philby's political opinions on the early stages of the war, which had made the case. In addition to him being anti-war in general he was also critical of British government war policies. Philby's criticism of his own country was outrageous, particularly when he was doing so not just in front of members of the Saudi government, but also in front of almost all the foreign diplomats in Jeddah. Monroe, Elizabeth. op. cit., pp. 214-216. By July 1940 Philby's behaviour was not acceptable anymore, not just for the Saudis but also for the British. For instance, when he referred to the B.B.C. broadcasts as "contemptible rubbish" he was at once ordered to leave a dinner party at the British Legation. Moreover, in the same month Ibn Saud - who was already hoping for an Allied victory - had considered Philby's conduct as a danger to Saudi-British relations, particularly when the British might possibly believe that the latter was in anyway influencing Saudi Arabian policy. Ibid. When King Ibn Saud learnt that Philby was about to travel to the USA in order to carryout anti-British propaganda he asked the British government to do something

about it. Ultimately, on 3 August, when Philby reached Karachi on his way to the USA, he was arrested by the British authority, and shipped direct to Liverpool. Consequently, he was forced to remain in the UK until the war was over. Indeed, Philby did not return to Saudi Arabia until July 1945. See *Ibid.*, pp. 217-223. During the first year of his return, Philby seemed to be going back to his usual position in the King's *majlis*. To some extent he was able to join some kind of informal political discussions. Likewise, he was able to unofficially - as he was not included in the official list - travel with the King, during an official visit to Egypt in January 1946. See *Ibid.* pp. 225-226. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. *op. cit.*, p. 1362. Nevertheless, from mid-1946 onwards, Philby drifted away from King Ibn Saud's politics, and concentrated on his own businesses, travels, and writings. See Monroe, Elizabeth. *op. cit.*, pp. 225-271. Hence, during the remaining years of Ibn Saud's reign there was no noticeable occurrence, which can be comparable to the events of 1939-1940. See *Ibid.*

<sup>152</sup> Kamlah, Taysir. **The Role of the Saudi-Hashemite Conflict in the loss of Palestine: From the British Foreign Office Documents.** London: Al-Rafid Distributing & Publishing, 1996, p. 181. Consistent with the White Paper proposal the High Commissioner of Palestine was given "general powers to prohibit and regulate transfers of land". Zweig, Ronald. *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>153</sup> Rubin, Barry. **The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict.** Syracuse (New York): Syracuse University, 1981, p. 117.

<sup>154</sup> Kamlah, Taysir. *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>156</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Review of the situation in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 20 March 1941, FO 371/27261.

<sup>157</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 August 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>158</sup> See *Ibid.* Also, see from Foreign Office to Admiralty, 22 August 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>159</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 August 1939, FO 371/23272.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>163</sup> See Wahba, Hafiz. *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 310.

<sup>164</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>165</sup> See Wahba, Hafiz. *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 310. In Wahba's words; "if the British cease the shipment of the pilgrimages, how would Hijaz live?". Wahba, Hafiz. *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 108-109.

<sup>167</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.* It should be noted that the British government had assured Ibn Saud "about the Persian Gulf, where they had every intention of maintaining their position". *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1939, FO 371/23271. According to Yusuf Yassin, the Syrian national: Kamil Al-Qassab "had formally been in Saudi employ as Director of Education". *Ibid.*

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 24 October 1939, FO 371/23271. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.* It was also restated by Bullard that Ibn Saud's "interest in Syria was doubtless prompted in part by his desire to obtain French support for Amir Faisal as a candidate for the Syrian throne". From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 24 October 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>175</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Statement made to Ibn Saud at Riyadh by His Majesty's Minister on October 13th, 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1369.

<sup>186</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1939, FO 371/23271. It should be also noted that, Saudi Arabia supported the Allies' action in the Levant, when the British and the Free French troops started to enter Syria in June 1941. Ibn Saud was particularly pleased by General Catroux's (Free French) declaration on the abolition of the French mandate in Syria and Lebanon on 8 June 1941, and the establishment of republican regimes in these states. Moreover, he attached great importance to the supporting declaration from the British government on the same day. He offered his help if there were to be any negotiation between the Syrian nationalist leaders and the Allies, particularly as he knew most of them personally. In addition, the King had continued to monitor and to encourage the proposal of making Syria a republican state, thus cutting off any Hashemite attempt to make it otherwise. See Al-Mhafadhah, Ali. العلاقات الاردنية البريطانية (Jordanian-British Relations). Beirut: دار النهار, 1973, pp. 112-119. Also, see Foreign Office minute, 11 June 1941, FO 371/27261. Also, see from Riyadh (De Gaury) to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 13 November 1941, FO 371/27278. Also, see from Riyadh (De Gaury) to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 14 November 1941, FO 371/27278.

<sup>187</sup> "The first Saudi representative to be accredited to France, Fuad Bey Hamza, presented his letters on 4th November". From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589.

<sup>188</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>189</sup> From Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 24 October 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 30 January 1940, FO 371/24586. Also, see from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Review of the situation in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 20 March 1941, FO 371/27261. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 23 January 1940, FO 371/24586.

<sup>195</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>196</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Review of the situation in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 20 March 1941, FO 371/27261.

<sup>197</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 30 January 1940, FO 371/24586.

<sup>198</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 31 January 1940, FO 371/24586.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 5 February 1940, FO 371/24587. Also, see from Treasury to Foreign Office, 21 February 1940, FO 371/24587.

<sup>201</sup> Al-Nairab, Mohammad. العلاقات السعودية الامريكية (Saudi-American Relations). Cairo: مكتبة مدبولي, 1994, p. 136. Also, Miller, Aaron David. Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980, p. 35.

<sup>202</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 34. A further drop in the number of pilgrims in 1941 was evident. The British legation annual report for Saudi Arabia 1941, explained the case as follows: "The year opened with the poorest pilgrimage since the Hejaz-Nejd war. The loss of Javanese and Malays, who alone among pilgrims stay for long periods and spend freely, was especially serious from the standpoint of Saudi finances. The drop in revenue collected from pilgrims, both directly in the shape of quarantine dues and tax on travel by car or camel, and indirectly through taxation of those who had earned money through services to the pilgrims, necessitated frequent appeals [from the Saudis] to His Majesty's Government, the California Arabian Standard Oil Company and the United States Government for financial assistance". Summary of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1940, 22 July 1941, FO 371/31460.

<sup>203</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1984, pp. 111-112. Also, Al-Nairab, Mohammad. op. cit., pp. 136-137. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 34-35.

<sup>204</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 1 August 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Foreign Office Note On Telegram from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 1 August 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>208</sup> From Foreign Office to Treasury, 16 August 1940, FO 371/24590.

- <sup>209</sup> From Foreign Office to Treasury, 16 August 1940, FO 371/24590. Also, from Treasury to Foreign Office, 11 September 1940, FO 371/24590. Also, from Foreign Office to Treasury, 21 September 1940, FO 371/24590. Also, Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 4 October 1940, FO 371/24590. Though, the British government used to refer to the financial assistance to Saudi as credit in some of the cases, it should still be noted that Britain did not consider whatever it gave to Saudi Arabia - at that time - anything but a pure subsidy. In a despatch to Jeddah on 31 January, it was admitted that the British "have avoided speaking of "subsidy", as to do so seems more constant with Ibn Saud's self-respect. But His Majesty's Government have no illusion as to prospects of repayment". From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 31 January 1940, FO 371/24586.
- <sup>210</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 15 October 1940, FO 371/24590.
- <sup>211</sup> From Treasury to India Office, 4 February 1941, FO 371/27264. Also, from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 10 February 1941, FO 371/27264.
- <sup>212</sup> It should be noted that the Foreign Office was replying to Ibn Saud, when he asked in February 1941 for an additional loan of one million pounds sterling. See from India to Government of India, 9 February 1941, FO 371/27264. The payment of the previous years credit of £800,000 was continuing, the last of it (£200,000) was payable in April 1941, FO 371/27264. From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 6 March 1941 and from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 20 April 1941, FO 371/27264.
- <sup>213</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 2 June 1941, FO 371/27265.
- <sup>214</sup> From India Office to Government of India, 9 February 1941, FO 371/27264. From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 20 April 1941, FO 371/27265. From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 11 November 1941, FO 371/27266.
- <sup>215</sup> From Foreign Office to Treasury, 14 November 1941, FO 371/27266.
- <sup>216</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 44. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 8 October 1948, FO 371/68785.
- <sup>217</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 10 November 1941, FO 371/27266.
- <sup>218</sup> From Treasury to Foreign Office, 27 January 1942, FO 371/31451.
- <sup>219</sup> Foreign Office Minute, 9 February 1942, FO 371/31451. In the period between 1 February and 18 July 1942, correspondence took place between the British Minister at Jeddah, Stonehewer-Bird, and the Foreign Office, concerning the possibility of establishing a monetary system in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, because it was impossible to create any kind of banking system there, the conclusion proposed to let the British government pay in 'sovereigns' or in 'Maria Theresa dollars', as well as to supply the country directly with goods, and deducted the costs involved from the total of the annual financial assistance. The proposals took affect from July. From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 1 February and 31 March 1942, FO 371/31448. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 9 March 1942, FO 371/31451. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 8 July 1942, FO 371/31448. It should be noted that the British government did not tell Ibn Saud about the proposed £3 million until 15 August, to avoid being asked for it all at once. See from Treasury to Foreign Office, 15 August 1942, FO 371/31451.
- <sup>220</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. *op. cit.*, p. 109.
- <sup>221</sup> As discussed earlier, Ibn Saud was asked by Germany to declare his neutrality in return for furnishing him with German arms, see Section B: II of this chapter.
- <sup>222</sup> From Foreign Office to Admiralty, 22 August 1939, FO 371/23272.
- <sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>226</sup> From Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 7 December 1939, FO 371/23271.
- <sup>227</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 31 January 1940, FO 371/24586.
- <sup>228</sup> It should be noted that Saudi Arabia did not explicitly offer to declare war on the Axis; however, it offered to assist Iraq if necessary. According to the Foreign Office records the story of the Saudi offer was as follows: " When, early in June, 1940, Italy's entry into the war became imminent, the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs raised the question of the relevance to the situation of Article 4 of the Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance of 1936 and suggested that Saudi Arabia need not go to the assistance of Iraq if Iraq broke off relations with, or declared war on, Italy, but only if Italy actually committed an act of war against Iraq. But the Saudi Arabian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the *Amir* Faisal, sent a letter to the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs saying that Ibn Saud was prepared to co-operate with Iraq in all circumstances and to give a solemn pledge that, in the event of any misadventure occurring to Iraq, he would give all the help in his power". Foreign Office memorandum to War Cabinet Official Committee for Questions Concerning the Middle East, 8 July 1940, FO 371/24590. It should be noted that Saudi Arabia had signed a Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance

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with Iraq in April 1936, that "treaty was modelled on that between Saudi Arabia and the Yemen two years previously, containing similar provisions for the peaceful settlement of disputes and co-operation in resisting aggressions". Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 265.

<sup>229</sup> Ibn Saud would also be useful in this case to "coerce the Yemen". From India Office to Foreign Office, 25 June 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>230</sup> The use of land would be mainly for emergency aerodromes. Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> From Foreign Office to India Office, 1 July 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Foreign Office memorandum to the War Cabinet Official Committee for Questions Concerning the Middle East, 8 July 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> War Cabinet minute of the meeting of the Official Committee for Questions Concerning the Middle East, 10 July 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>242</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 24 July 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 1 August 1940, FO 371/24590.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> From Baghdad (Basil Newton) to Foreign Office, 1 October 1940, FO 371/24547. In January 1939 Captain Gerald De Gaury studied the possibility of making a direct route between Kuwait city and Amman across the North East of Saudi Arabia (100 miles in Kuwait territory, 900 miles in Saudi Arabia territory and 105 miles in Transjordan territory), see the details in Notes on the Kuwait-Amman Route, Captain G S De Gaury, January 1939, included in a despatch; from Baghdad (Basil Newton) to Foreign Office, 1 October 1940, FO 371/24547.

<sup>248</sup> Memorandum on the establishment of a British right of way between Kuwait and Transjordan, included in a despatch; from Baghdad (Basil Newton) to Foreign Office, 1 October 1940, FO 371/24547.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> From War Office to Foreign Office, 12 October 1940, FO 371/24547.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid. The War Office also requested a more detailed "reconnaissance" by military personal. Ultimately, the British government requested Ibn Saud's permission to let a British military party study the viability of the route. Ibid. On 24 November 1940, Ibn Saud agreed in principle about the visit of such a party. From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to General Headquarters Middle East, 24 November 1940, FO 371/24547.

<sup>255</sup> It should be noted the De Gaury also resided in Riyadh for the same purposes during the last two months of 1939. From Captain De Gaury to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 12-14 November 1941, FO 371/27278. Also, from Foreign Office to India Office, 19 September 1939, FO 371/23275. Also, Memorandum on Saudi Arabia, Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, 25 November 1941, in Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 103.

<sup>256</sup> From Captain De Gaury to Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird), 20 November 1941, FO 371/27278.

<sup>257</sup> See from Captain De Gaury to Mr. Stonehewer-Bird, 20 November 1941, FO 371/27278. Also, from Commander-in-Chief Middle East to War Office 17 December 1941, FO 371/27261. Also, from Commander-in-Chief India to War Office, 18 December 1941, FO 371/27261. Also, Memorandum by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 23 December 1941, FO 371/27261.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Foreign Office minutes, 31 December 1941, FO 371/31449.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 9 February 1942, FO 371/31449. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 4 January 1942, FO 371/31449. Also, from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 11 January 1942, FO 371/31449. Also, from Baghdad to Foreign Office, 15 January 1942, FO 371/31449. Also, from Cairo to Foreign Office, 23 January 1942, FO 371/31449.

<sup>263</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 9 February 1942, FO 371/31449.

<sup>264</sup> From Riyadh (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 25 February 1942, FO 371/31449.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 February 1942, FO 371/31449.

<sup>267</sup> Stonehewer-Bird had mentioned in a despatch to the Foreign Office on 11 January 1942, that the "Libyan campaign" might well influence Ibn Saud to be reluctant in declaring war on the Axis. However, for some reason, the British Minister did not include such analyses when he wrote to the Foreign Office in February. See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 11 January 1942, FO 371/31449.

<sup>268</sup> See Polk, William. The Arab World. London: Harvard University Press, 1981, p. 143. Also, see Haikal, Mohammed. ملفات السويس (the Suez Files). Cairo: مركز الاهرام, 1992, pp. 31-37. The German threat to the Middle East came to an end when Rommel was defeated in the El Alamein battle of October 1942. See Ibid. Also, see Al-Samadi, Riyadh. العلاقات الدولية في القرن العشرين (International Relations in the Twentieth Century). Beirut: المؤسسة الجامعية, 1986, p. 37.

<sup>269</sup> De Gaury believed that when the Saudis refused to open the German Legation in Jeddah in early 1940, "Grobba was told that he could open a Legation 'whenever the Germans occupied Suez'". De Gaury, Gerald. op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>270</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, Annual Summary of Events in Saudi Arabia during 1942, 27 January 1943, FO 371/35155. Indeed, King Ibn Saud had not shown any sign which could lead the British government to believe that he was acting against its interests. An apparent example of his attitude can be seen in his policy towards the events in Iraq in 1941. Indeed, the Saudi Arabian government did not recognise the new regime in Baghdad when the pro-Axis party gained power there under the leadership of Rashid Ali Al-Kailani on 2 April 1941. Moreover, when the new Iraqi regime formally asked for Ibn Saud's recognition and support, he refused to do so with an explanation that such an action would damage his good relations with Britain. When the Anglo-Indian troops crushed Al-Kailani's government in May 1941, Ibn Saud expressed to the British government "his pleasure at the happy termination of the Iraqi question and at the British Government's having restored the situation in Iraq as it was before . . . British Government action in this has been exactly right". From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 7 June 1941, FO 371/27261. Also, see Al-Mhafadhah, Ali. op. cit., p. 108. Also, see Vassiliev, A. تاريخ العربية السعودية (The History of Saudi Arabia). Moscow: دار التقدم, 1986, p. 391. Ibn Saud's policy towards the Al-Kailani regime in 1941 should not be confused with the Al-Kailani asylum case in September 1945. See section B of chapter two.

<sup>271</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 25-26.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., pp. 26-29. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 110-111. Rumours about German and Japanese activity in Saudi Arabia had also produced some concerns within the State Department in regard to the future of the US oil interests in the Kingdom. Though the Germans had nothing to do with the Saudi oil businesses, the rumour on Japanese activity was close to reality. See section B: II of this chapter. It is worth briefly noting the Saudi-Japanese contacts as follows: Saudi Arabia had never made contact with Japan until 1939, when the Japanese government sent its Minister in Cairo, M. Masayuki Yokoyama, accompanied by a secretary and an oil engineer, on an official mission to Jeddah. The objective of this mission in March 1939 was to negotiate a proposal for a treaty of friendship and commerce, and to seek oil concessions from Ibn Saud. Nonetheless, the Japanese Minister's visit, which lasted for three weeks, did not produce any visible result. See from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 29 & p. 227. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. op. cit., p. 305. Because Ibn Saud "believed that the Japanese . . . wanted territory and not just concessions" he "put his price extremely high with the deliberate object of making a Japanese deal impossible" for the oil concession. Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 111. Also, from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589. Moreover, "the Saudi Government refused the Minister's suggestion that they should sign the Anti-Comintern Pact on the grounds that communism was not a danger in [Saudi Arabia]". Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 111. Also, from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, Political Review of Events in Saudi Arabia in 1939, 18 July 1940, FO 371/24589. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 28.



- <sup>275</sup> Ibid. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 111. Apart from Judge Fish's visit to Jeddah, 1940 could be described as a quiet year in the diplomatic history of Saudi-US relations, a matter that reflected the lack of excitement in the development of Saudi-American relations in general.
- <sup>276</sup> Rubin, Barry. The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947. London: Frank Cass, 1980, p. 34. SOCAL was one of the two companies who owned CASOC, the holder of the Saudi concession. The other owner was Texas Oil Company. See Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. xii.
- <sup>277</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 34. Moreover, the proposal urged the US government to encourage the British government to increase its subsidies to Saudi Arabia. Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987, pp. 162-163.
- <sup>278</sup> From Twitchell to the Chief of Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, 15 May 1941. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 69-72. Karl S. Twitchell a mining engineer from Vermont had already played a role in the development of US interests in Saudi Arabia, such as his role in the oil concession in the early 1930s. See Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 16 & p. 221.
- <sup>279</sup> From Twitchell to the Chief of Division of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State, 15 May 1941. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 69-72.
- <sup>280</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 34. Also, Washington Embassy to Foreign Office, 29 May 1941, FO 371/27265.
- <sup>281</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 6 June 1941, FO 371/27265.
- <sup>282</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 35.
- <sup>283</sup> Roosevelt to Jones, 18 July 1941, FRUS 1941, 3:643, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 44.
- <sup>284</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., pp. 35-36.
- <sup>285</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 44.
- <sup>286</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 37. It should be noted that the US government was in a position to ask the British government to assist Saudi Arabia on its behalf, because the USA was helping the UK financially, including the existing USA lend-lease to Britain since 11 March 1941. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 27.
- <sup>287</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 37. It should be noted that in February 1941, the Oil Company granted Saudi Arabia a loan of \$3,000,000. See Memorandum on Saudi Arabia, 29 October 1941, in Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 97. See also, from India Office to Government of India, 9 February 1941, FO 371/27264.
- <sup>288</sup> Although the USA was helping the Allies from the beginning of the war, it did not declare war against the Axis until December 1941, when it declared war on Japan on 8 December, and on Germany and Italy on the 10th of the same month. See Al-Samadi, Riyadh. op. cit., p. 27 & p. 37.
- <sup>289</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 123.
- <sup>290</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>291</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 164. Also, Al-Nairab, Mohammad. op. cit., p. 129. Also, Seton-Williams, M V. op. cit., p. 192. Also, Hart, Parker. Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, pp. 28-30. It should be noted that, the new US Minister in Cairo, Mr. Alexander Kirk, had also submitted his letters of credence - as non-resident Minister - to King Ibn Saud 11 May 1942. However, in practice Moose was the one who handled Saudi-US relations after April 1942. Ibid., p. 15.

## ***Chapter Two: Towards Changing Relations, 1943-1945***

Together with the studying of the broad context of Saudi-British relations from early 1943 through to 1945, this chapter will also attempt to trace some of the factors that facilitated the occurrence of change in relations between Britain and Saudi Arabia. Within this course and in order to comprehend the subsequent developments that occurred in Anglo-Saudi relations, a number of subjects will be researched.

The expansion of Saudi-American relations will be investigated, starting from the lend-lease extension and through the increase of USA involvement in the Saudi Kingdom. A survey of the state of Saudi-Anglo ties will be provided, before comprehensively inspecting the developments and the implications of the Anglo-American rivalry over Saudi Arabia. Prior to the exploration of Ibn Saud's summits with each of Roosevelt and Churchill in 1945, Saudi Arabia's attitude to the Palestine issue will be looked at.

### **A. The Advancement of Saudi-US Relations, 1943-1945**

#### **I. The Lend Lease**

Unlike the situation in 1941, the US administration decided in February 1943 to extend direct aid to Saudi Arabia. Several reasons can be put forward for such a development. The strategic importance of Saudi Arabia's oil, the consequences of the US's entrance into war, and the continuity of the oilmen's efforts in persuading Washington about the importance of the Kingdom.<sup>1</sup>

When the US administration declined the arrangement of direct aid to Saudi Arabia in July 1941, the US strategists were not only acknowledging that the USA was a net oil exporter, but also that they did not appreciate "the extent of the Saudi [oil] fields".<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, matters began to change through to 1943, as the Saudis' oil "began to assume new importance in American war and postwar planning".<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, the Americans' interest in the Saudi Arabian "petroleum was heightened by a growing concern about the situation in the United States", regardless of "dramatic increases in [USA] domestic production and refining capacity, rising industrial and military

requirements in 1943 and anticipated increase for 1944 indicated the possibility of future shortages".<sup>4</sup> In response to this realization US officials urged the president to look at "the future of the United States with respect to oil", particularly as the USA "must have extra-territorial reserves to guard against the day when steadily increasing demand can no longer be met by . . . [its] domestic supply".<sup>5</sup>

The consequence of the USA's involvement in the war had brought the Saudi-American connection to further consideration in Washington. The "broadening" of the US "combat role in Europe and the Pacific" at the beginning of 1943, gave Saudi Arabia further importance.<sup>6</sup> Hence, it emphasised the importance of gaining the support and the goodwill of King Ibn Saud, as the strategic location of his Kingdom was considered by the Americans to be "vital air and supply links connecting North Africa and the Far East".<sup>7</sup> It was viewed at the Department of State that the "the King's prestige and the strategic location of his realm might aid substantially in prosecuting the war".<sup>8</sup>

The American oilmen's "arguments were clearly important in shaping the thinking of policy-makers", in particular, the arguments that emphasised the danger of increasing British influence in Saudi Arabia.<sup>9</sup> By the beginning "of 1943, the Department of State, led by the Division of Near Eastern Affairs [NE], . . . press for a more active American role in Saudi Arabia . . . officials were becoming more and more concerned about relations with the British in Saudi Arabia".<sup>10</sup> Indeed, by then "American perception of British intentions began to change. Eager to safeguard the American stake in Arabian oil, officials grew increasingly wary of Britain's predominant position in Saudi Arabia".<sup>11</sup>

On 9 January, the assistant secretary of state, Mr Dean Acheson, wrote to lend-lease administrator, Mr Edward Stettinius, "requesting that Saudi Arabia be declared eligible for lend-lease aid".<sup>12</sup> Acheson reminded Stettinius, that though Saudi Arabia was important to the USA, it was the only "major political unit" in the Middle East "not yet eligible for lend-lease".<sup>13</sup> On 11 of January, "Stettinius sent the department's request on to the president, recommending its acceptance".<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, on 18 February 1943, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order number 8926, which

declared that “the defence of Saudi Arabia is vital to the defense of the United States”.<sup>15</sup> By that declaration Saudi Arabia became eligible for lend-lease assistance.<sup>16</sup>

The extension of lend-lease to Saudi Arabia in 1943 was a crucial turning point not only for Saudi-US relations but also for Saudi-British relations. In fact, a new positive era in the history of Saudi-American relations had begun in that year, at the expense of Saudi-Anglo relations. Dr Clive Leatherdale, who researched Saudi-British relations from 1925 to 1939, agreed that “it is that year [1943], not 1933 when SOCAL won the Hasa concession, which marks the beginning of American political interest in Saudi Arabia, and the substitution of her predominance in Saudi affairs at the expense of that of Britain”.<sup>17</sup> Leatherdale emphasised that the “passing of the Lend-Lease Act provided the spur to American involvement” in Saudi Arabia, an involvement that was “less out of the short-term aims of winning the war, than with long-term aims with regards to the future”.<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the extension of lend-lease to Saudi Arabia, which was a substantial “step by the United States toward securing and preserving its stake in Arabia oil”, did also “indicate a significant shift in the American attitude toward Saudi Arabia”.<sup>19</sup>

In April 1943, the US Minister in Egypt, who was also credited to Saudi Arabia then, Mr Alexander Kirk, visited Riyadh especially to explain - to the Saudis - the details of the lend-lease programme.<sup>20</sup> Additional discussions - on the lend-lease - were held when General Patrick Hurley visited Riyadh in the last week of May. Hurley’s discussions with Ibn Saud and his officials included the urgent need for food supplies, communications (wireless stations and transportation machinery), and currency supplies (in gold and silver coin), etc.<sup>21</sup>

Within less than a year of the extension of the lend-lease, Saudi Arabia had received more than 15,000,000 Riyals in silver, along with “adequate supplies of foodstuffs, transport and essential commodities”, from the USA.<sup>22</sup> In 1944 the US government became an equal partner - on a fifty/fifty basis - to the British government in assisting Ibn Saud’s Kingdom.<sup>23</sup> In 1945 when Britain reduced its part of the assistances, the USA kept increasing the total amount of its assistances to the Kingdom.<sup>24</sup> The US direct aid for Saudi Arabia “continued into early 1946, beyond the general termination date for Lend Lease”.<sup>25</sup>

## II. The Ultimate Increase of USA Involvement in Saudi Arabia

As was to be expected after the extension of lend-lease, US-Saudi ties were enhanced considerably. The reality of such enhancement was even reflected at the diplomatic representation level, when the US government elevated the status of its representative in Jeddah, Mr James Moose, to the position of Minister Resident on 19 May 1943.<sup>26</sup> Though King Ibn Saud was welcoming the enrichment of the American-Saudi relationship, he was also careful to avoid any negative impact of such a development on Britain's attitude towards his Kingdom.

Prior to the Kirk visit of April 1943, King Ibn Saud approached the British for consultation on the meaning of the lend-lease, and "whether he should agree" to it or not.<sup>27</sup> According to the British account:

"The King has all along been reluctant to travel either fast or far along the road leading to closer contact with the United States. The United States Government is still rather an unknown quantity for him, and he is anxious concerning the possible repercussions of extensive American activities".<sup>28</sup>

In addition to the probability of King Ibn Saud's apprehension about the likelihood of negative implications of the lend-lease extension on his dominance, there seemed to be a further reason that motivated him to consult with the British. He might indeed have wanted the British government to know that Saudi Arabia still considered Britain as the main great power partner, despite the new American approach. This was the case when it was still obvious to the King that almost all the issues that were related to his Kingdom's security were tied to Britain. By all means, he was "most anxious to avoid the appearance of deserting His Majesty's Government in favour of the United States Government".<sup>29</sup> In its turn the British government, which in fact did not object to the new US attitude, reassured the Saudi government and advised it that the lend-lease was in the best interests of Saudi Arabia.<sup>30</sup>

Even at his discussion with Hurley in May 1943, Ibn Saud was careful not to let the event lead to any misunderstanding between Saudi Arabia and Britain. In reply to Ibn

Saud's request that the US government send the silver direct to Saudi Arabia, Hurley stated:

“The United States of America always send their products and the things the Allies need to Britain and Britain distributes them herself to the Allies . . . I myself have suggested to my Government that they should themselves undertake the distribution of this material to the Allied countries”.<sup>31</sup>

Fearing that this might harm Saudi-British relations if it was passed to the British by any chance, King Ibn Saud responded immediately - to General Hurley - by clarifying:

“We are not complaining about Britain, she is our friend, and her treatment of us is as friend to friend . . . but the development of the war in the Middle East recently and her own need of transport and supplies has obliged her to take certain measures. The truth is that Britain has done her duty and more than her duty but circumstances will not shape themselves according to our desire, and silver is one of those circumstances. Britain has found it impossible to let us have riyals we need because she has not got the silver”.<sup>32</sup>

It could be said that the only issue which was intentionally hidden from the British government was the Saudi inquiry on US government policy towards the countries of the Middle East, particularly that which was associated with King Ibn Saud's anxiety about the possibility of Hashemite intimidation against his Kingdom.<sup>33</sup>

When *Amir* Faisal and *Amir* Khalid (the second and the fourth sons of Ibn Saud) visited the USA in the autumn of 1943, King Ibn Saud was already suspecting his northern neighbours' intention towards the Saudi Kingdom. Indeed, the Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri Al-Said's *Pasha*, proposal of a union between the Fertile Crescent countries was seen in Riyadh as nothing but as *Amir* Abdullah's scheme of Greater Syria.<sup>34</sup> Eventually, such an issue became “the principal matter” that the Saudi visiting party discussed with the Americans in Washington at the opening of the talks on 1 November 1943.<sup>35</sup>

With his insistence that such a talk “would be held in strict confidence”, Faisal stated that King Ibn Saud was “very much interested in American policy in the Near East . . .

The King was not quite clear as to the trend of American policy with respect to some of the Arabic countries".<sup>36</sup> Explaining and enquiring about the matter that highly concerned Saudi Arabia, at that particular time, Faisal stated that:

"King Ibn Saud had information that the Hashimite family was trying to add to the territory under its control . . . [particularly as they were] working toward a union of Palestine, Iraq and Syria . . . The King . . . had the strong opinion that the Hashimite House was trying to surround Saudi Arabia and to strangle it. The King did not know the policy of the Allies with respect to the expansion of the Hashimite territories. If it was the policy of the Allies to support this expansions move, he could do nothing to stop it. Nevertheless, he would look upon such support with great regret".<sup>37</sup>

In response, Mr Adolph Berle, the Assistant Secretary of State, assured Faisal that the United States "had no interest in making dynastic alliance against his father or anyone else. Neither did the United States have any interest in furthering aggressive designs. Certainly it would have no part in any movement intended to encircle Saudi Arabia".<sup>38</sup> Berle further explained the core of the US policy by remarking "What we had at heart in the Middle East, as in other parts of the world, was building up a "Good Neighbor" policy, not only as between the United States and those countries, but also among those countries themselves".<sup>39</sup> In addition, Berle added that the US government "had no knowledge that any of the Allied powers were seeking any dynastic changes" in the area.<sup>40</sup> After remarking that he had understood the US policy on this issue, Faisal "hoped" that the US government "would continue to keep" Saudi Arabia "informed if any changes took place" in such a policy. In his turn Berle assured Faisal that the US government would keep the Saudi government updated.<sup>41</sup>

When the US government sought consent in November and December 1943 to establish a consulate at Dhahran, Ibn Saud replied that he "had no objection to the US Government appointing a commercial agent", but not a consul at Dhahran.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, Ibn Saud put a condition on the appointment of such an agent, stipulating that he should not interfere in the relations between the Saudi government and CASCO.<sup>43</sup>

Ibn Saud's rejection of the USA proposal of a consulate at this particular time was due to three reasons. First, he did not want the US government to interfere in his relations with the oil company. Second, he did not want to establish a precedent for any permanent representation in his country other than in Jeddah. Third, he thought that if he approved such a proposal he might damage his relations with Britain, which objected to any foreign posts in the Gulf.<sup>44</sup>

Ibn Saud's worries about the consul's interference in Saudi relations with the oil company receded later when he realised that the consulate's main work would be to look after American citizens' affairs (paper work, passports, etc), rather than concern itself with oil company matters. Ibn Saud also realised that even if he gave consent to the establishment of a US consulate in Dhahran no other state was likely to seek a similar situation, as the USA was the only country with such a large number of nationals in Dhahran. Thus Ibn Saud's own interests were not the problem. The main reason that kept him from giving his consent was the possible British objection. Thus when this question was raised again by the USA in February 1944 - with explanation of its urgent needs, particularly as the number of US citizens was increasing monthly - Ibn Saud confidentially sought the British government's advice.<sup>45</sup>

Both the British Legation at Jeddah and the Foreign Office agreed to the establishment of a US consulate at Dhahran, on the ground that the US was the only country with a large number of citizens and commercial interests there.<sup>46</sup> When the British government "advised Ibn Saud to accede" to the American request, Ibn Saud informed the US government of his consent.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, the US Legation at Jeddah started to set up a consulate at Dhahran, which was finally opened on 2 September 1944.<sup>48</sup>

In early 1945, the US president had approved in principle a huge assistance plan for Saudi Arabia. This plan, which was worked out by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee (SWNCC), included a massive infrastructure development programmes, military assistance, etc. Alongside such a plan SWNCC urged for the necessity of the "acquisition and construction" of a US airfield in Saudi Arabia.<sup>49</sup>

It was stated in the SWNCC paper of 7 February 1945 that the existence of a US air base at Dhahran would be a “deterrent to other nations which might consider aggression toward Saudi Arabia and her vast oil reserves in which American interests now hold a predominant concession”.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, it was illustrated that the acquisition of such a military airfield “is considered an urgent necessity for use in redeployment of US forces to the Far East and to increase the efficiency of present and contemplating military air transport through the Middle East”.<sup>51</sup>

The necessity behind such an airfield had been proposed in greater detail by the War Department and the Air Transport Command advised, a year earlier (in mid-1944). They argued that it would be in the American national interest to construct an airfield in Saudi Arabia, in order to:<sup>52</sup>

1. Facilitate the ferrying of planes to the Pacific theatre of operation.
2. Shorten the flying distance to Karachi.
3. Provide a necessary refuelling point.
4. Permit planes to carry more supplies.
5. Support the growing American oil facilities in the area.
6. Establish American aviation in and over Saudi Arabia in its own right.

According to Grafftey-Smith, Ibn Saud was not willing to accept the USA proposal of the Dhahran airfield without the British endorsement when the US government raised this question again in May 1945.<sup>53</sup> Ibn Saud was aware of a possible British objection; therefore he sought their opinion in this case. After recommendations by the British Chiefs of Staff, the British Minister at Jeddah was instructed to endorse the US request, and he therefore addressed a note to the Saudi Arabian government on 6 May 1945.<sup>54</sup> After gaining the British government’s support, a US delegation arrived in Saudi Arabia on 19 May and started negotiating an agreement about the airfield.<sup>55</sup> On 6 August 1945, agreement had been reached for the construction of the airfield. In the agreement the US government agreed to turn over the air base to Saudi Arabia at the end of a three-year operation period after the war.<sup>56</sup> The construction took place in less than a month, following the agreement.<sup>57</sup>

The construction of the Dhahran airfield marked the beginning of a strong US military involvement in and around Saudi Arabia. Moreover, it highlighted the importance of

Saudi Arabia to the USA. Although the British government endorsed the construction of the airfield, it could be argued that - in the long run - its creation was a disadvantage to the British interests in Saudi Arabia and an advantage to the American interests there, as it would facilitate more American involvement.

The advancement of the Saudi-American ties - that started by the extension of the lend-lease in early 1943 - was crowned before the end of 1945 by the opening of the Saudi Legation in Washington, in which the former Saudi Minister to Baghdad Asad Al-Faqih became the first Saudi Arabian Minister to the US.<sup>58</sup>

### **B. The State of the Anglo-Saudi Ties**

King Ibn Saud's consultations with the British were not only limited to issues that concerned USA involvement in the Kingdom, but also they included consultations on issues that concerned Saudi Arabia regionally. The King's anxiety and suspicion of the Hashemite activities were the subject of consultations between the Saudi and the British governments. Whether it was intended or not, such an attitude gave the Saudis the opportunity of being closer to the British government and its policies towards such concerns.

Though in accordance to the Saudi-British communications of 1939 mutual consultations were welcomed between both of them, Ibn Saud had requested a further confirmation on this.<sup>59</sup> In February 1943, King Ibn Saud inquired through the British legation in Jeddah; "whether His Majesty's Government welcome his consulting them on all details of his relations with . . . Arab states or whether they find such communications unnecessary and burdensome".<sup>60</sup> In a positive reply that re-welcomed any kind of consultation request from Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud was told that the British government "were at all times glad to have the benefit of . . . [his] views and advice on all Arab matters".<sup>61</sup>

Nuri Al-Said's proposal in early 1943 for an Arab unity that was supposed to be formed on a union between the Fertile Crescent countries was "regarded by Ibn Saud as a device to advance the fortunes of the Hashimite family, and . . . [was] in consequence very distasteful to him".<sup>62</sup> Though Ibn Saud admired the idea of Arab

unity, he was deeply opposed to any kind of exclusive union between the Levant States. Not just because of his fears that Hashemites' would dominate such a union, but also because such a union would eliminate the emergence of an independent Syrian State. Indeed, King Ibn Saud was "particularly interested in Syria, in the hope, possibly, that a strong and independent Syria will provide him with a useful ally against . . . [the Hashemite]".<sup>63</sup>

King Ibn Saud's suspicions of the Iraqi Prime Minister's proposal came at a time when the Saudi-Iraqi relations were deteriorating.<sup>64</sup> Incidents in and around the Saudi-Iraqi borders in which the Iraqi authority had mistreated Saudi tribesmen, and the "failure of the Iraqi Government to pay any attention to any of Ibn Saud's protests produced an angry outburst".<sup>65</sup> Moreover, when "considerable unrest amongst the Shammar [tribe] and people of Hail" occurred in the spring of 1943, the Saudis angrily suspected that it was "stirred up by Hashimite and Iraqi intriguers".<sup>66</sup> The attention and the help that the British government had provided the Saudis with in these cases, became a further consolidation to the course of the Saudi-British relations, and an encouragement for Ibn Saud in keeping the British fully consulted in all matters that were related to his position in regard to the development of the Arab unity projects.<sup>67</sup>

When the Prime Minister of Egypt, Pasha Mustafa Nahas joined efforts with Nuri Al-Said in a call for "Arab Congresses" to discuss the Arab unity project, Ibn Saud became restless. He wrote to the British government on 26 April, that "He trusts none of them", as they both were "playing their own hands and in order to strengthen their position in their countries, and he considers His Majesty's Government would be well advised to do the same".<sup>68</sup> In that message, King Ibn Saud explained that he:

"is as always, a sincere supporter of all legitimate Arab aspirations but he prefers to keep aloof from all these intrigues. He trusts only His Majesty's Government and he will only act in concert with them. If his Majesty's Government consider it advisable in genuine interests of all concerned, he is prepared to do what he can. He would in that case be prepared to take part in proposed conferences etc., provided . . . [that the British government] assure him that it would not be contrary to his interests".<sup>69</sup>

In a reply on 4 May, it was explained that the British government had made its view "plain" as in the British Foreign Secretary's statement in the House of Commons that:

"they would view with sympathy any movement among Arabs to promote their economic, cultural or political unity, but they consider that the initiative should come from the Arabs themselves. If the Arab Governments and leaders, wish to enter into discussions to work out a plan, His Majesty's Government would therefore have no objection".<sup>70</sup>

Nevertheless, it was also explained that the British government was in "doubt whether a conference is the most suitable method of approaching this problem".<sup>71</sup> In its opinion "much spade-work should first be done and that for this essential purpose confidential discussions through diplomatic or specially accredited agents would be more fitting, and they [HMG] have left the Iraqi Prime Minister in no doubt on this point".<sup>72</sup> It was added in the reply that the British government:

"would not wish to dissuade His Majesty [Ibn Saud] from taking such part as he thought fit in any discussions that may take place between Arab Governments and leaders. Indeed, they are confident that his participation would be as much in the interests of His Majesty's Government as of the Arabs themselves".<sup>73</sup>

When the idea of the full conference was discarded in favour of "confidential talks between Arab leaders", King Ibn Saud "consented to move".<sup>74</sup> In September he received an envoy from the Egyptian Prime Minister, and sent Yusuf Yassin for further talks with Nahas.<sup>75</sup> While the King had embarked on such a course he kept concentrating on building a unique relationship with the Syrian leaders. In addition to his efforts in supporting the independence of Syria, he made further efforts to make sure that the formation of an Arab organization did not weaken such independence.<sup>76</sup>

Throughout 1944 and into 1945, Ibn Saud "adhered closely to his policy of consulting His Majesty's Government on all matters relating to Arab affairs, particularly Arab unity".<sup>77</sup> The King's regional policy was carefully designed, particularly "to maintain his won position in the Arab world and accept domination by nobody . . . [and] to avoid the creation of a *bloc* of Arab States against him".<sup>78</sup> Consequently, Saudi Arabia did not sign the covenant of the Arab League on 22 March 1945 without some

reservations; among these reservation was the crucial one which insisted that “Syria and the Lebanon should continue as independent republics”.<sup>79</sup>

According to the British records, King Ibn Saud’s consultations with them were very rewarding for Saudi-British relations. The British diplomats in Jeddah regarded the King’s conduct as “evidence of his friendship and complete trust in His Majesty’s Government”.<sup>80</sup> As a matter of fact, such practises were considered as a clear sign of the cordiality of Saudi-British relations.<sup>81</sup>

The Saudis, who in fact desired such a consequence, were also appreciating the benefit of their counsels with the British. This was particularly the case when such counsels were related to Middle Eastern political entities that were linked in one way or another to Britain. Indeed, King Ibn Saud was fully aware of the meaning and the affect of the consultations on the British government policy towards his concerns. More than ever, he regarded Britain as the power of upper hand policy in the Middle East, and he regarded the Hashemites as nothing but a British satellite in the area. For instance, in a message to the British government in June 1943, Ibn Saud remarked, “that the present rulers of Iraq derive their authority, under God, from the British Government alone, and, leaning on the British Government, they have a strength that they would not otherwise possess”.<sup>82</sup> There is little doubt that such a dimension had caused Ibn Saud to ensure the continuity of cordial relations with Britain, whether through continuing consultations or otherwise. Hence, despite the fortification of the Saudi-American relations, the Saudi-Anglo remained therefore imperative.

In the same line of the British-Saudi consultations, it was Britain who advised the Saudi King at the end of February 1945, to become a founder member of the new world organisation, the United Nations (UN). Hence, with regard to the British government advice, Saudi Arabia declared war on the Axis and became a founder member of the UN in March 1945.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to the foregoing, other developments associated the progress of Saudi-British relations in the same era. Being satisfied with the Treaty of Jeddah, which was signed on 20 May 1927 and renewed on 3 October 1936, the Saudi government suggested giving it a more permanent character by making its renewal automatic at

the end of each seven years.<sup>84</sup> By the 3 October 1943 the agreement on the automatic renewal was in force when both governments exchanged notes on the matter.<sup>85</sup>

The British government continued financing Saudi Arabia throughout 1943. £2,700,000 was provided for purchasing supplies. In addition, further funds of 5,000,000 riyals and 400,000 sovereigns were forthcoming.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, food supplies, transport, and important commodities were regularly given during 1943 through the Middle East Supply Centre (MESCC)<sup>87</sup> in which not only the British government but also the USA government participated.<sup>88</sup>

In 1944, when the British government was considering a reduction to the amount of its subsidy to Saudi Arabia, the US government was - at the same time - considering an increase of the subsidy from its side.<sup>89</sup> As such a subject was concerning both of the British and the US governments, several discussions were held between their representatives about it. During talks at the MESCC headquarter in Cairo the Americans argued that "if the financial and economic stability of the country [Saudi Arabia] were to be maintained on a reasonable basis greater assistance was needed".<sup>90</sup> During further talks in London, in the spring of 1944, the US and the British governments agreed on the creation of a joint assistance programme, in which the subsidy would be shared equally.<sup>91</sup> Ultimately, they agreed on a joint supply programme for Saudi Arabia in that year.<sup>92</sup>

In addition to the joint assistance programme, the British and the Americans provided the Kingdom in 1944 with a joint "gift" of arms and military equipment. The Americans supplied "rifles, automatic weapons and transport", and Britain provided "heavy equipment such as armoured cars, anti-tank guns and mortars".<sup>93</sup> Instruction of the Saudi army personal in the use of these - arms and the equipment - was conducted by "an American and a British training team", which was established in Taif in June 1944.<sup>94</sup>

Britain's financial crisis during the last stages of the war was a major influence on its financial policy towards Saudi Arabia. In early 1945 when the Treasury proposed a reduction of Britain's share of the joint subsidies (with the US) from £2.5 million as

was given in 1944, to £1.25 million in 1945, the Foreign Office agreed immediately.<sup>95</sup> On that line a minute written by one of the Foreign Office economic advisers stated:

“In our present impoverished position . . . we are no longer able to use finance as one of the ordinary weapons in our diplomatic armoury. Subsidies and the like can only be used in the most exceptional circumstances. We are now the greatest debtor nation, and are at present dependent on others for a good deal of the food we eat”.<sup>96</sup>

The British government's proposal was communicated via its Embassy in Washington to the Department of State on 17 April 1945.<sup>97</sup> The need for the reductions was further justified by the Foreign Office by the improvement of Saudi Arabian revenues from oil and the pilgrimage.<sup>98</sup> London tried to invest every effort to persuade the US government to reduce its contribution in line with the British proposed share.<sup>99</sup> However, when the effort failed to preserve the principle of a full 50-50-basis subsidy, because the US government was calling for a higher contribution, the British then convinced the Americans to make any additional contributions in different forms and in separate programmes.<sup>100</sup>

Following the agreement between London and Washington on the amount of the Joint Subsidy Programme for 1945, they jointly communicated the matter to Saudi Arabia. It was indicated that the joint programme for 1945 would be in the region of \$10 million, which equated to £2.5 million.<sup>101</sup> For 1946, King Ibn Saud was advised - by the British government - to expect no financial or consumption subsidies from Britain, but instead services and technical advice would be provided.<sup>102</sup>

## **C. Anglo-American Quarrel over Saudi Arabia and its Implication for British Policy**

### **I. Troubled Relations**

Despite some kind of cooperation between the British and the Americans in Saudi Arabia, the Anglo-American relations in the Kingdom were also subjected to an extensive confrontation, as the following pages will illustrate.

American concerns regarding the danger of the British influence on the US interests in Saudi Arabia did not simply ease by the extension of the lend-lease in early 1943, but in fact, it went beyond.<sup>103</sup> With such increasing concerns signs of a forthcoming Anglo-American friction in the Kingdom were apparent even during 1943. For example, when the British government informed Saudi Arabia in April that any requests for military supplies “should be directed through London”, the State Department urgently instructed Moose to inform the British Minister in Jeddah that “the Saudis could make direct inquiries for arms under lend-lease through the American Legation”.<sup>104</sup>

Throughout the year, the concerns increased within the US government until it burst out at the highest level in early 1944. On 18 February President Roosevelt cabled Churchill about the need for a meeting on oil, particularly as there were rumours of the British eyeing the American reserves in Saudi Arabia.<sup>105</sup> In his turn, Churchill cabled Roosevelt on 20 February that “there is apprehension in some quarters here that the United States has a desire to deprive us of our oil assets in the Middle East”.<sup>106</sup> Two days later, the President responded that he was also worried about the rumour “that the British wish to horn in on Saudi Arabian oil reserves”.<sup>107</sup> Roosevelt added “we are not making sheep’s eyes at your oil fields in Iraq or Iran”.<sup>108</sup> On 4 March Churchill replied to Roosevelt’s message, saying “Thank you very much for your assurances about no sheep’s eyes at our oilfields at Iran and Iraq. Let me reciprocate by giving you fullest assurance that we have no thought of trying to horn in upon your interests or property in Saudi Arabia”.<sup>109</sup> The Churchill-Roosevelt correspondence, which emphasised the need for Anglo-American discussions about the Middle East oil at cabinet level, had also confirmed the two governments inclination in holding such talks as soon as possible.<sup>110</sup>

At the same time as Roosevelt and Churchill were corresponding, Moose was suspecting the activities of his British colleague in Jeddah, Mr Stanley Jordan.<sup>111</sup> Jordan’s plan of reforming the Saudi government’s financial system was the core point that worsened Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia at that time.

It was apparent by the outset of 1944 that “Saudi Arab currency requirements were getting increasingly out of hand; deficits grew despite increasing . . . subsidies”.<sup>112</sup>

According to Jordan “certain amount of extravagance and corruption” were the most accountable for such a problem.<sup>113</sup> In a report to the Foreign Office, Jordan warned that the Saudi government should “regulate its expenditure” in accordance “within the limits of its income”.<sup>114</sup> Otherwise, undesirable consequences will be “inevitable”.<sup>115</sup> The British Minister suggested that the Saudis should be “advised to take measures for the reorganisation of their finances and economy in order to avoid any crisis likely to arise from a drastic reduction, or indeed, a cessation of subsidies in the immediate post-war period which might threaten the internal stability of the country”.<sup>116</sup>

Jordan’s suggestion received a ‘listening ear’ in the Foreign Office; ultimately, he was requested to sound Ibn Saud about it.<sup>117</sup> Upon an audience, “Jordan’s view carried heavy weight with” King Ibn Saud, who in fact admitted a vital need for such a financial reform.<sup>118</sup> The King showed his desire in taking the British Minister’s suggestion by dismissing the Director of Mines and Public Works, Mr Nejib Salha, who was working for his own ends according to Jordan.<sup>119</sup> In accordance with Jordan’s plan, Ibn Saud asked for a British Sunni Moslem financial adviser in order to help Saudi Arabia improve its financial system, and a British Sunni Moslem military adviser in order to “train and establish” the Saudi Arabian “small army on sound of modern lines”.<sup>120</sup>

Jordan’s ideas about the reform of Saudi Arabia’s financial system brought him into direct conflict with the Americans. This was evident when Moose reported to the State Department about Jordan’s activities. In his report on 30 March 1944, Moose told the State Department that Jordan was trying to extend the British influence in Saudi Arabia by establishing control over its economic system. Such a move, according to the US Minister, was clear when Jordan persuaded Ibn Saud to accept a “British economic adviser and possibly a petroleum adviser”.<sup>121</sup> Moose also reported that Jordan was interfering directly in the internal affairs of Saudi Arabia by being responsible for the removal of the Saudi Director of Mines and Public Works, who was an advocate of closer American-Saudi ties.<sup>122</sup> Moose’s anxiety was taken seriously in Washington; on 3 April the State Department wrote to the US Legation at Jeddah, asking to be kept informed about Jordan’s activities. In addition the State Department assured Moose that it would “take all appropriate steps to safeguard vital American interests in Saudi Arabia”.<sup>123</sup>

The State Department tried to safeguard US interests in Saudi Arabia, when the Secretary of State, Mr Cordell Hull, submitted a memorandum proposed by the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs (NEA) to the US president in April 1944.<sup>124</sup> It was stated in the NEA memorandum that “it is . . . necessary . . . to extend additional financial and economic assistance to Saudi Arabia in order to safeguard adequately the American national interest in the great petroleum resources of that country”.<sup>125</sup> The State Department concluded that the US government should at least share the subsidy on an “over-all equal basis” with the British government in order to counter its political danger.<sup>126</sup>

Despite such tensions, preparations for the proposed Anglo-American discussion were already underway in London. It was stated in a preparation note - by the Eastern Department at the Foreign Office - that “American influence is bound to increase as compared with the British influence, and it seems probable that sooner or later the United States will become the foreign power most concerned with Saudi Arabia affairs”.<sup>127</sup> In view of that, the present period was considered as one of “transition”, and should be carried out “as painlessly as possible”.<sup>128</sup> It was predicted that the Americans would suspect any British activity in Saudi Arabia, such as providing military and financial advisers, as if the British were trying to exclude them from Saudi Arabia.<sup>129</sup> Ultimately, the British negotiators supposed to give the Americans “the definite impression” that the British government recognised the fact that the US would “become the foreign power with the largest commercial interest in Saudi Arabia”, and that the British would cooperate rather than oppose them in Saudi Arabia.<sup>130</sup> The note did, however, make it clear that “the Americans must recognise that we have a very large political interest in Saudi Arabia, particularly so long as Ibn Saud continues to hold his outstanding position among Arab leaders, and in the Islamic world”.<sup>131</sup> In relation to this, the note continued, “his [Ibn Saud] support is too important to us, in view of the large Muslim populations with which we have to deal”.<sup>132</sup>

The discussion meetings were held in London between 11 and 24 of April 1944. Mr Wallace Murray, the director of the NEA, headed the US delegation and Sir Maurice

Peterson, the deputy under-secretary of state, who was in charge of the Eastern Department at the Foreign Office, headed the British delegation.<sup>133</sup>

In a positive move at the commencement of the conversations, the participants “established that there was a general community of aims and outlook between the Foreign Office and the State Department in Middle Eastern questions”.<sup>134</sup> Furthermore, it was agreed that it “would be great advantage” for the British and the Americans to cooperate closely in their future policy in that region. Additionally, it was recognised “that the policy of His Majesty’s Government is inevitably influenced by their commitments for the administration and defence of certain territories in the area”.<sup>135</sup> Likewise, “it was recognised that the United States Government, like His Majesty’s Government, have economic interests in the Middle East which are bound to affect their policy”.<sup>136</sup> Ultimately, both party interests should not conflict, and that “Anglo-American relations in the area should be conducted on a basis of co-operation and mutual frankness”.<sup>137</sup>

In the special discussions on Saudi Arabia, both sides agreed that the US government was “principally concerned in the oil industry”.<sup>138</sup> They also agreed that:

“Relations with Saudi Arabia are of importance to the British commonwealth of nations because of its proximity to vital sea and air communications, in view of Ibn Saud’s special position as keeper of the Moslem Holy Places and on account of the pilgrimage which affects the large numbers of Moslems in the British Empire”.<sup>139</sup>

The British delegations gave assurances that “there was not and never had been any intention on the part of His Majesty’s Government to undermine or to prejudice American oil rights in Saudi Arabia”.<sup>140</sup> The positive atmosphere, which existed during these discussions, had caused the participants to reach agreements in principle on the creation of a joint assistance programme and a joint military mission.<sup>141</sup>

Despite the success of London discussions, friction between British and American diplomats continued on certain issues over Saudi Arabia. In fact, while the discussions were taking place in London, Moose and Jordan were still in conflict in Jeddah.<sup>142</sup> On

12 April, Moose informed the State Department that Jordan was still "pursuing a policy calculated to be detrimental to American interests in Saudi Arabia".<sup>143</sup>

When the Americans formally complained about the behaviour of the British Minister at Jeddah to the British government, the Foreign Office requested an explanation from Jordan about the allegations. In his reply to the Foreign Office on 12 May Jordan defended himself against the American criticisms by illustrating that he had cooperated with the Americans on various issues. He argued that he was responsible for greater British-American collaboration, including keeping his American colleague informed about the process of the British supply to Saudi Arabia.<sup>144</sup> Jordan's despatch to the Foreign Office gave the impression that he was cooperating fully with the Americans and that the only problem was the US misunderstanding of Britain's special position with Ibn Saud. He argued that the "preferential position which His Majesty's representatives enjoy in this country [Saudi Arabia] and to which the American object . . . we [the British] do enjoy Ibn Saud's confidence in larger measure than the US and this is anathema to them".<sup>145</sup> Despite Jordan's argument, the American criticisms kept on. In June 1944 Hull informed Halifax - the then British Ambassador in Washington - that the British Minister at Jeddah was doing his "best to injure the American Government's relations with the King".<sup>146</sup>

The Foreign Office sided with Jordan against the criticisms, arguing that Jordan was fully cooperating with his American colleague. The Foreign Office referred to the problem as a misunderstanding by the Americans of the "preferential position of His Majesty's representatives in Jeddah".<sup>147</sup> When London was informed that there was a plan to replace Moose with another diplomat (Colonel Eddy), the Foreign Office hoped that the new American Minister "will show more understanding of the position", and instructed Jordan to fully cooperate with his "American colleagues".<sup>148</sup>

When the British government was about to appoint the British Sunni Moslem financial adviser to Ibn Saud, the State Department took a stand against the appointment, particularly when there was a rumour that the proposed adviser, Mr Zahid Hussain, was to be paid by the British government.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, at a joint meeting between the State and the Treasury Departments' representatives in July, Murray argued that in order to safeguard the huge US interests in Saudi Arabia, the

British must not be allowed to implement any currency or banking reform alone.<sup>150</sup> In July 1944 Hull sent a message to Peterson, stating that:

“The reason it was proposed that the head of any financial mission or that a single financial adviser furnished to the Saudi Arabian Government be an American is that the preponderant interest in the Saudi Arabian economy is unquestionably American in character and will presumably remain so for many years to come”.<sup>151</sup>

When the British-US conflict about Saudi Arabia started to injure British-US relations in the Middle East, the British government temporarily dropped the question of the financial adviser.<sup>152</sup> Besides, the Foreign Office tried to cool the situation by assuring the State Department on 22 July that “we [the British government] have made it perfectly plain that we have no wish to oppose increased American influence in Saudi Arabia so long as it does not seek to crowd us out”.<sup>153</sup> However, the same correspondence continued, the Americans had to “realise that they cannot hope to achieve overnight quite the same position that we have built up over years”.<sup>154</sup>

Upon instructions from London and Washington, the new US Minister to Saudi Arabia, Colonel William Eddy, and Jordan held a meeting in Jeddah in the first week of September 1944.<sup>155</sup> The Eddy and Jordan convention was designed to “discuss the viewpoints of . . . [both] respective Governments with a view to laying a solid foundation for close and friendly collaboration in the future”.<sup>156</sup>

Eddy explained to his British colleague the US government “intentions with regard to Saudi Arabia”.<sup>157</sup> The US government was not prepared to accept the British government’s standards as a means of evaluating Saudi Arabia’s needs and requirements. According to Eddy, the British were not giving Ibn Saud sufficient assistance. He argued “if the King stated, as he had done with some vehemence, that the amounts allocated to his country were insufficient, was it not better to give him additional supplies rather than incur his displeasure and risk . . . his internal dissension”.<sup>158</sup> Unlike Britain, Eddy remarked that “the United States hoped to raise the standard of living in this country [Saudi Arabia] and assist it over its difficulties until such time as it could stand on its own feet”.<sup>159</sup> The US Minister added that his

government also intended to improve Saudi Arabia's infrastructure, such as those in the fields of communications, road building, agricultural development, etc.<sup>160</sup>

On the differences that were related to Saudi Arabia's financial system Eddy saw no problem in forming a joint American-British economic mission in the Kingdom. However, Jordan doubted the desirability of such a mission, and elucidated that the enclosure of non-Muslim advisers would be impracticable, particularly as the location of the majority of the Saudi financial institutions were in the Holy Cities. Eddy did not agree with Jordan, and argued that "entry into Mecca or Medina was not essential for . . . the reorganisation of the country's finance and economy . . . which would be administrated from Jedda. If it were necessary to employ inspectors to enter the Holy Cities these could be Moslem".<sup>161</sup>

It appeared to Jordan that, "the point at issue" between the US and the British governments was "much more profound than the question" of such a mission, according to him it was "rather a question of principle and appreciation".<sup>162</sup> On this Jordan pointed out to Eddy that:

"as the greatest Moslem power in the world we had a very close political interest in Saudi Arabia, that Ibn Saud had been extremely useful to us in the past, particularly during the years of war, and that anything which might detract from his position and influence would naturally be anathema to us".<sup>163</sup>

Although Eddy saw the force of Jordan's argument, he did not comment on it, but instead stressed that the Moslem world should be grateful for the US for improvement in Saudi Arabia.<sup>164</sup> By this stage of the conversation Jordan lost his enthusiasm in arguing the British case vis-à-vis what Eddy was saying. It looked as if the British diplomat became preoccupied by the thoughts that he reported to London afterwards.<sup>165</sup>

## II. British Considerations

In his report on the discussions to the Foreign Office, Jordan included a new kind of British thought. In what seemed to be a result of his conversation with Eddy, Jordan

brought about fresh considerations to the basis of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, as well as to the basis of Britain's assistance to the Saudi Kingdom.<sup>166</sup>

The British Minister thought that it would be "increasingly difficult, if not impossible" for the British government to continue the "policy of fifty/fifty" assistance programme to Saudi Arabia if the US government intended to do what Eddy said.<sup>167</sup> Jordan explained:

"At present, our financial responsibilities are limited to the agreed subsidised supply programme, which we [the British] had hoped would be progressively and eventually extinguished in the course of the next couple of years. As far as I can judge from Colonel Eddy's statements, however, the United States have no such intention and their policy of assistance to this country [Saudi Arabia] will spread over many years and is likely to become increasingly expensive for a considerable time ahead. Unless we are to be drawn into this spate of philanthropy I feel that we should put a limit to our financial responsibilities, or indeed cease any subsidy to this country, as soon as our present obligations are liquidated. Should we continue, it appears obvious to me that we can only do so as a junior partner towed along in the wake of the Americans, who will set the pace".<sup>168</sup>

Jordan emphasised that the "position of a junior partner being towed along in the wake of the Americans is, in my humble opinion, a very undignified one for His Majesty's Government to accept".<sup>169</sup> Besides, he argued that, while there was a reason to justify the profitability of the increasing American assistance to Saudi Arabia, there could be no equal reason for the British in doing so:

"If the Americans wish to sink millions of dollars in the desert sands of Saudi Arabia I do not think that we would be justified in endeavouring to prevent them from so doing since they will be taking billions out of the same sands in the form of oil, but I see no reason why we should be drawn into this vortex since we have little or nothing to gain from it".<sup>170</sup>

Therefore, Jordan suggested to the Foreign Office that "in the wider interests of Anglo-American collaboration we [the British] should abandon our present fifty/fifty policy and leave the United States to her own economic and philanthropic designs in

this country".<sup>171</sup> By following this course of action he believed that Britain had little to lose politically, economically and strategically. According to Jordan, Britain had little to lose:

"Politically, as long as the British Empire continues to harbour the majority of the world's Moslems and so long as our interests predominate in other Middle Eastern countries we must continue to be the predominant political factor in the mind of Ibn Saud or his successors".<sup>172</sup>

Economically, he thought that Britain would lose little, because "India is the traditional market for the scanty requirements of Saudi Arabia and it is unlikely . . . that the United States will be able to supplant that source of supply in the cheaper lines".<sup>173</sup> He concluded up, "True, America will probably become the chief supplier of mechanical equipment and motor transport", but in this case "she has [already] held" an advance "position for some time".<sup>174</sup>

Strategically, Jordan remarked that the British government should not "fear from the presence of increased United States participation in Saudi Arabian affairs, even though that country [Saudi Arabia] lies alongside our principle line of imperial communications".<sup>175</sup> He added to this:

"it is no doubt of considerable advantage to us that America should enlarge her interests in the Middle East. In case of another European conflagration she would have interests to protect in the Middle East and thus either directly or indirectly assist us in the protection of our interests in this part of the world".<sup>176</sup>

At the Foreign Office Jordan's suggestions were carefully assessed. There was a clear agreement with "Jordan's diagnosis of the situation that the Americans tend to view the question of aid to Saudi Arabia in quite a different light from" the British, "and that in consequence it may be difficult [for the British government] to maintain in the future the fifty-fifty basis on which the Anglo-American subsidy is at present given".<sup>177</sup> However, the Foreign Office was "most reluctant to abandon the fifty/fifty basis at this moment", particularly when it was viewed that "the next year will be vitally important in the Middle East", and when "it will be of great value" to the

British government “to retain Ibn Saud’s friendship during these important . . . times”.<sup>178</sup>

There was a disagreement with Jordan’s suggestion that Britain “shall necessarily continue to be the major factor in the mind of Ibn Saud or his successors irrespective of . . . [its] attitude to Saudi Arabia problems”.<sup>179</sup> In regard to this, it was contended that:

“it is very necessary and most important for British interests that we [the British government] should continue to maintain a friendly and sympathetic interest in Saudi Arabia and continue to ensure so far as possible that Ibn Saud uses his undoubted position of leadership among the Arabs in a way which will be conducive to our interests. It is no doubt true that the prestige of His Majesty’s Government does not depend entirely on the amount of the subsidy, and that their political influence will not necessarily be impaired by American expenditure on a vastly greater scale . . . [However] we might well lose our influence in Saudi Arabia if we ceased to give any assistance at all to Ibn Saud and thereby appeared to have lost interest in his country”.<sup>180</sup>

Therefore, the Foreign Office argued the importance of the continuity of British assistance to Saudi Arabia. Such an argument was put on next to the valuable help that King Ibn Saud provided Britain with during the war:

“He has throughout the war loyally exerted his influence . . . on our behalf. If Ibn Saud had not been favourable to us during the critical war years, we might certainly have expected to have much internal trouble among Arabs [and Muslims] . . . The valuable help which Ibn Saud rendered, at a time when it was by no means certain that we should succeed in holding the Middle East, may well have proved decisive, in view of the internal security commitment which might have been involved had local conditions been less favourable”.<sup>181</sup>

In accordance with all of that, the Foreign Office pursued the following policy:

1. The continuity of the fifty/fifty basis during 1944-1945.
2. If the USA desires to increase its assistance, the British should then persuade it to make the additional subsidy by a different means, such as developing Saudi Arabian agriculture and communications.

3. If it became impossible to maintain the fifty/fifty basis in the future, or if the Americans insisted in increasing their share, the British government then should maintain its subsidy at a fixed level with the explanation to Ibn Saud that the British "continue to wish him well and do not wish to stand in the way of his receiving increased help from America".<sup>182</sup>

It could be said that Jordan's radical point of view, of ending the British subsidies to Saudi Arabia at once, might have left "the United States to her own economic and philanthropic designs" in that country, and might possibly have ended the Anglo-American friction there as well.<sup>183</sup> Nonetheless, the moderate policy, which was pursued by the Foreign Office in regard to the assistance matter, had left the potentiality of such a friction to be on. As mentioned earlier, the British government tried first to persuade the Americans to reduce the total amount of the joint Anglo-American subsidies to Saudi Arabia.<sup>184</sup> Nevertheless, when this attempt failed, the British then - and in accordance to the Foreign Office foregoing policy - endeavoured with success in convincing the US government to provide any extra subsidy to the joint programme through different means.<sup>185</sup> Though such a policy had succeeded in keeping Britain's share of the "joint subsidy programme" on an equal basis to that of the USA - but obviously not on an equal basis to the total of the whole assistances - still such a policy did not eliminate the continuity of the American-Anglo trouble in Saudi Arabia.

As soon as Jordan's successor, Mr Laurence Grafftey-Smith, settled down in Jeddah, he was asked, on 6 March 1945, to put to the Foreign Office his "views and recommendations" over Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia.<sup>186</sup> In response on 17 March, Grafftey-Smith referred to the question of the "Sunni Moslem Financial Adviser", as the principal problematic issue still unsolved with the Americans.<sup>187</sup> Though, Grafftey-Smith admitted that he was "eager to establish a good working understanding with . . . [his] American colleague" in Jeddah, he also "ventured to make to the Secretary of State" not to abdicate Britain's political and military role in Saudi Arabia.<sup>188</sup> On these lines he stated that:

"We have recognised the considerable economic role to be played in Saudi Arabia by the Americans - (. . . in territory which is the spiritual metropolis of hundreds of millions of British Muslims. . .) - and now we look like abdicating

political and military influence as well, by accepting the American veto on this or that course of action here. If this process became habitual, we shall have just that much less credit left with Ibn Saud on which to draw when the moment comes for uncomfortable political decisions".<sup>189</sup>

Grafftey-Smith urged his government not to be indifferent to what happened to Saudi Arabia; "This is not Panama or San Salvador. We cannot remain indifferent to what happens to the Muslim Holy Places".<sup>190</sup> The British Minister did not think that such a view was - in any case - anti-American; "I do not think this point of view is either chauvinistically anti-American or unduly alarmist. We have interests in Arab goodwill which have nothing to do with oil-politics, but which can be gravely prejudiced by American indiscretion".<sup>191</sup>

Though on the whole Grafftey-Smith's argument could be seen as being driven by an objectivity that singly takes Britain's interests into the account, other elements could not be completely denied. In the same despatch to the Foreign Office, the Minister admitted that he - or indeed any other British diplomat in the area then - could not cope with the "new" American phenomena in Saudi Arabia. Being disturbed by the increasing American intervention Grafftey-Smith frankly admitted; "American economic imperialism in Saudi Arabia is a new phenomenon to me, and anything unfamiliar is apt to disturb".<sup>192</sup> Indeed, the speed of the development of American relations with Ibn Saud was impossible to grasp for a typical British diplomatic mind such as that of Grafftey-Smith. He wrote - on another occasion - on this; "to one who . . . last knew this territory in the days of King Hussein, the recent American invasion of the Arabian political and economic scene is a remarkable and somewhat disturbing phenomenon".<sup>193</sup> Describing the US determination for a policy of strong involvement in Saudi Arabia, Grafftey-Smith remarked:

"the tempo of the American advance upon Saudi Arabia greatly increased, and a new forcefulness informed their policy here. It would not, perhaps, be an over-simplification of this policy to describe it as pivoting on the consideration that nothing must be done to weaken, and everything must be done to strengthen, the American hold on Saudi Arabia oil. Whatever altruistic presentation the policy may have, and whatever by-products of value to

American interests it may breed, the oilfields at Dhahran explain it and, to the Americans, amply justify it".<sup>194</sup>

Apparently, the Foreign Office agreed with Grafftey-Smith that the British "must keep" their "end up vis-à-vis the Americans".<sup>195</sup> However, it was also admitted that "the fact remains that they are in Saudi Arabia for keeps and that we, for reasons of high policy (. . . [such as] the Russians . . .) are very glad to see them with a considerable stake in the Middle East. We must therefore be prepared to be accommodating at times".<sup>196</sup> But in any case - the Foreign Office informed Grafftey-Smith that - the financial adviser question was seen for the time being as "no worse than a drawn game. While [temporarily] giving up the idea of our own man, we did not agree to the appointment of an American".<sup>197</sup>

In the autumn of 1945, the Anglo-American relations over Saudi Arabia were further worsened by an American propaganda campaign. When the US media - in particular, magazine and newspaper - and officials in the USA criticised the British in October, as obstructing American oil interests in Saudi Arabia, Grafftey-Smith termed the accusations "mendacious" allegations.<sup>198</sup> Defending the British officials - in Saudi Arabia - Grafftey-Smith pronounced that; "American complaints about the lack of co-operation by British officials in Saudi Arabia are pathological in origin. Initiative [Initiative] in the aggregate has always come from them. They then consider our self-defence offensive and call for doormat co-operation".<sup>199</sup>

A further development in the same autumn had additionally persuaded the British government to reconsider the whole case of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia. It was King Ibn Saud's request, in early November, for a permanent British military mission - for the training of the Saudi Arabian Army - which reproduced such a consideration.<sup>200</sup> Thus, it could be said that the continuity of the unresolved financial adviser issue, the American criticism of the alleged British anti-American behaviour, and the Saudis latest request, had influenced London to reset the whole phenomena that related to Anglo-American tensions in Saudi Arabia.

In a memorandum of 30 November 1945 by Mr Thomas Wikeley, The Foreign Office official directly in charge of Saudi Arabia affairs, both British and US relations with

and in Saudi Arabia were assessed and compared.<sup>201</sup> Wikeley asserted that British interests in Saudi Arabia were political, strategic, and commercial. The “most important” interests were political, which could be divided into two main aspects: the first was “Ibn Saud’s political influence in the Arab world”, and the second was “the safety and comfort of British Moslem pilgrims”.<sup>202</sup> The first aspect, which is considered to be temporary as far as Ibn Saud was mortal, was explained as follows:

“Ibn Saud’s influence in the Middle East is very great, and it has been used consistently for a number of years in support of our policy. This happy position has come about principally because Ibn Saud is convinced that we are the only great Power who has the real interests of the Arabs at heart, and the only great Power who can be trusted not to abuse its strength where weak States are concerned. He has repeatedly said that only in association with the British can the Arabs hope to achieve a settled and prosperous life in future. He realizes of course that our motives are not purely altruistic, although he gives us credit for a considerable measure of altruism, but that the friendship of the Arabs is an essential requirement of our foreign policy. He therefore regards us as the only Power to which the Arabs can safely look for help and guidance until such time as they are strong enough to stand by themselves. This is the cardinal point of Ibn Saud’s foreign policy”.<sup>203</sup>

To this Wikeley added views that were in one way or another not exactly like that of the Foreign Office in the former year:

“These considerations of general policy have, in Ibn Saud’s mind, been reinforced during recent years by a powerful personal motive for keeping in with us, viz: the financial and other assistance we have been giving him since 1941. The fact that we are now unable to continue this assistance except on a very modest scale will no doubt have its effect on his mind, but it will not alter to any appreciable extent his general policy as explained in the preceding paragraph. Furthermore, the increase of his oil royalties and the probability that he will soon be receiving greatly increased revenue from the pilgrimage should operate to mitigate any disappointment which the cessation of our subsidy may cause him. We can, therefore, confidently expect that Ibn Saud will continue to exercise his political influence more or less in conformity with our wishes for as long as our attitude to the Arab states remains what it is”.<sup>204</sup>

On the second aspect of the British political interests in Saudi Arabia, Wikeley explained, that the safety of the pilgrimage was likely to be the only permanent political interest. In any case, it would not be difficult to ensure the proper treatment of the British pilgrimage particularly when this matter would concern all powers interested in the pilgrimage.<sup>205</sup>

Unlike views during the war, Wikeley considered the strategic interests, as insignificant; "Our strategic interests in Saudi Arabia are small. The country, indeed, lies across our lines of communication, but it offers no scope for improving those communications except perhaps by air".<sup>206</sup> Even air routes crossing Saudi Arabia are not very vital as far as it was only "alternative, and possibly shorter, routes than those already established to the North and South".<sup>207</sup> In addition the advancement of air warfare had almost abolished the importance of keeping Saudi Arabian tribes under proper control, as desert riders could quickly be caught by aircraft.<sup>208</sup>

According to Wikeley, there was a British commercial interest in the Saudi Arabian goods market. Nonetheless, this market "is small and it is unlikely to increase greatly in importance for some time to come".<sup>209</sup>

Regarding the US political interest, it was stated that "the Americans have no intrinsic political interest in Saudi Arabia at all".<sup>210</sup> However, oil as "the basis of American interest in the country, invariably has a political aspect".<sup>211</sup> The American oil interests should not worry the British government as far as it had been agreed that the US "should have carte blanche in regard to Saudi Arabian oil".<sup>212</sup> Nevertheless, a possible friction could occur in the future on the border between Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Sheikhdoms "where oil is suspected to exist in large quantities".<sup>213</sup>

Commercial motivation was the major American interest in Saudi Arabia, involving it in the "production of oil". As Wikeley suggested: "to this they [the Americans] attach the very greatest importance and from this spring, directly or indirectly, all their other interests in the country".<sup>214</sup> Nevertheless, as this field of commercial activity was solely the preserve of the Americans "there is therefore little likelihood of a clash in this sphere".<sup>215</sup> In the other field of commercial interests, which is the Saudi Arabia

market, competition was thought possible between British and American goods. But, because the market was small and therefore irrelevant “this should not cause much trouble”.<sup>216</sup>

Wikeley recognized the Americans strategic interests in Saudi Arabia. He illustrated that these interests were increasing with the construction of a US airfield at Dhahran and through a recent plan to build a telecommunications station as well.<sup>217</sup>

Wikeley asserted the frictions, which existed on specific subjects originated from the action of the Americans and the reaction of British. On this subject he stated:

“The divergencies of opinion which have arisen in the past over specific subjects (e.g. the . . . Financial Mission) derive essentially from the American desire to bring Ibn Saud more and more within their orbit and our fears that such a process may lead to the loss of his independence and, therefore, of his political utility to us”.<sup>218</sup>

Although a large quantity of Ibn Saud’s revenue was coming from the production of - the American managed - oil and although his future source of subsidies would be from the USA, he was unlikely to lose his independence to the Americans. According to Wikeley, Ibn Saud was “by nature and training of ruggedly independent character” and also he held the “trump card” of the possibility of oil concession cancellation.<sup>219</sup> Therefore, Wikeley asserted the British government did not need to be worried about the independence of Ibn Saud vis-à-vis the Americans.<sup>220</sup>

It was suggested that, in order to reinforce Ibn Saud’s resistance to the American encroachments, the British government should put in practice a long-term scheme of technical and services assistance. At that time there were two handy reinforcement schemes. The first was Ibn Saud’s request for a military mission and the second was a recent - British - proposal of offering Saudi Arabia a small civil aviation unit. In addition to the benefit to Saudi Arabia, Wikeley remarked that “it would certainly serve our essential political purpose of providing Ibn Saud with a prop against the Americans, of reassuring him regarding our intentions, and of mitigating any disappointment he may feel at the cessation of our subsidy”.<sup>221</sup>

American opposition to those schemes would be concerted unless the British could provide the necessary sugar to "sweeten the pill in some way or other".<sup>222</sup> In this sense Wikeley recommended that the British "should allow, and even encourage, the Americans to "penetrate" Saudi Arabia to their heart's content".<sup>223</sup> By adopting such a policy, "we can, therefore, offer to barter our Military Mission, and, if possible, our aviation scheme against their Financial Mission and all the other activities in which they apparently wish to indulge".<sup>224</sup>

On 11 December 1945, the memorandum was submitted to a special meeting at the Foreign Office between the British governments departments concerned with Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia. In this meeting various views were expressed "on the proposals formulated in the Foreign Office Memorandum".<sup>225</sup>

The Treasury representative, Mr Pinsent, welcomed the proposal of technical and services assistance to Saudi Arabia instead of consumption subsidies, as that would fit better with the British government position. He remarked:

"Not only would this be of greater ultimate value to Saudi Arabia, but it would accord better with our own position. We cannot afford to do much in the way of a direct subsidy, but we can and should make every effort to utilise our knowledge and experience of the Middle East to the mutual advantage of Saudi Arabia and ourselves".<sup>226</sup>

Pinsent stressed that Britain should also provide the Sunni Moslem financial adviser, "considering that the greatest service we could render Saudi Arabia would be to try to bring some order into the chaos of Saudi Arabia finances by the appointment of a financial adviser".<sup>227</sup> Into this he added "Not only have we much experience in this field, but we are the only Power who could provide a Moslem financial adviser of the requisite training and experience".<sup>228</sup> The adviser however, should be "a servant of Ibn Saud, who could and should oppose us if he considered it necessary (as in the case of the British financial adviser in Iraq)".<sup>229</sup> Moreover, Pinsent wished for consensus rather than conflict with the Americans over Saudi Arabia; "our relations . . . [should be] placed on a fresh footing. Instead of the confused jealousies and rivalries of the past, we should endeavour to reach an agreement whereby our joint efforts to assist Ibn Saud should be complementary and not conflicting".<sup>230</sup> To this end, he remarked,

“that we [the British] should invite the Americans to a general discussion” as soon as possible.<sup>231</sup>

Colonel Atkinson, as the War Office representative, welcomed the proposal of providing British Military Mission for Saudi Arabia and stated that the War Office “would be happy” to provide such a mission.<sup>232</sup> Likewise, the Ministry of Civil Aviation representative, Mr Dunnett, welcome the idea of offering Saudi Arabia a “civil aviation unit”. He further suggested that Ibn Saud should be informed as soon as possible about the scheme, in order to lay the foundations before a similar American proposal.<sup>233</sup>

Mr Mason of the Foreign Office agreed that they “should have a general discussion with the Americans regarding Saudi Arabia at an early date”.<sup>234</sup> He also believed that:

“the Americans are willing to admit our [the British] political and military pre-eminence in the Middle East. What they fear is that we may use our political and military position to thwart their commercial schemes. If we can allay their suspicions on this point we should have no difficulty in getting them to agree to our military mission in Saudi Arabia”.<sup>235</sup>

In conclusion, the meeting adopted the following resolutions, which became the basis of the British policy with regard to Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia:<sup>236</sup>

1. The Americans should be invited to a general discussion on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia.
2. American agreement should be obtained regarding the British Military Mission and the British civil aviation unit to Saudi Arabia.
3. The importance of an efficient - British - financial adviser to Ibn Saud should be stressed.

#### **D. Saudi Arabia's Attitude Towards the Palestine Issue prior to 1945**

According to the British record, “From September 1939 through 1944, Ibn Saud's attitude on the Palestine issue was carefully unprovocative”.<sup>237</sup> King Ibn Saud “preferred, and he advised all and sundry among the Arabs, to refrain from words or action embarrassing to Great Britain while at war and to trust in the integrity of His

Majesty's Government's undertaking in the White Paper of 1939".<sup>238</sup> On these lines, the King continued his policy in refraining from troubling the British government with such a controversial issue. Besides, when Ibn Saud saw the necessity of contacting the US government on Palestine in 1943; he did not do so without obtaining the British government consent.<sup>239</sup>

In early 1943, the Arab States - including Saudi Arabia - began to realize the extent of Zionist influence in the USA. The ever-increasing Jewish activities in America, including that of effective propaganda campaigns, were noticeably turning the whole political ground in that country for the benefit of Zionism. The danger that the Arabs realised was not just that which was related to the Zionist influence over American public opinion, but also to the Zionist influence over the US government.<sup>240</sup>

In February 1943, King Ibn Saud and other Arab leaders recognized the need to bring the US government into the true "picture" as they saw it. Subsequent to a Saudi inquiry, the British government replied, in March, that it "would raise no objection" if Saudi Arabia or any of the other Arab States wrote about their concerns directly to the US government.<sup>241</sup> Ultimately, when Ibn Saud received Kirk in mid-April, the latter was asked to bring the following to the attention of President Roosevelt:

"because of vast wealth at their disposal and their influence in . . . the United States Jews were steadily encroaching on Arabs. If this trend was allowed to continue it could only be expected that Jewish-Arab conflict would become more acute, which would be deplorable from Arab standpoint and would also cut across Allied war effort".<sup>242</sup>

Likewise, King Ibn Saud sent President Roosevelt a written message on 30 April 1943.<sup>243</sup> Again, Ibn Saud brought Roosevelt's attention to the core problem, but at this time with a further explanation:

"I have been alarmed, as have other Moslems and Arabs, because a group of Zionists are seizing the opportunity of this terrible crisis [WWII] to make extensive propaganda by which they seek on the one hand to mislead American public opinion and, on the other hand, to bring pressure upon the Allied Governments in these critical times in order to force them to go against the principles of right, justice and equity . . . By so doing the Jews seek to

compel the Allies to help them exterminate the peaceful Arabs settled in Palestine for thousands of years. They hope to evict this noble nation from its home and to install Jews from every horizon in this sacred Moslem Arab country. What a calamitous and infamous miscarriage of Justice would, God forbid, result from this world struggle, if the Allies should, at the end of their struggle, crown their victory by evicting the Arabs from their home in Palestine, substituting in their place vagrant Jews who have no ties with this country except an imaginary claim which, from the point of view of right and justice, has no grounds except what they invent through fraud and deceit".<sup>244</sup>

In replies to both of Ibn Saud's messages, Roosevelt repeated his desire that this issue be settled peacefully among Arabs and Jews.<sup>245</sup> The President also assured the King that no settlement would be reached without fully consulting the interested parties:

"it appears to me highly desirable that the Arabs and Jews interested in the question should come to a friendly understanding with respect to matters affecting Palestine through their own efforts prior to the termination of the war. I am glad of this opportunity, however, to reiterate my assurance that it is the view of the Government of the United States that, in any case, no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews".<sup>246</sup>

Roosevelt's philosophy in bringing about a "friendly understanding" between Arabs and Jews seemed to be a bit extreme compared to that of Ibn Saud. In August 1943 President Roosevelt sent his idea to King Ibn Saud via a special envoy, Colonel Harold Hoskins.<sup>247</sup> In Riyadh Hoskins enquired, whether the King "considers it advisable or useful to meet Dr. Weizmann . . . or any other person designated by the Jewish Agency".<sup>248</sup> It was explained to the King that, the purpose of such a meeting would be to seek out a "solution of basic problems affecting Palestine acceptable to both Arabs and Jews".<sup>249</sup> In reply, Ibn Saud pointed out that "his views regarding Palestine are the same as those expressed in his [previous messages] . . . to the President", All he wants "is to ensure that Arab rights in Palestine are not swallowed up by the Jews".<sup>250</sup> He trusts that the United States "will not, as a result of ignorance of the situation, be false to those ideals of justice and humanity for which she is

fighting and that she will not associate herself with Jewish attempt to obliterate Arab rights in Palestine".<sup>251</sup> He added that it would be "impossible" for him:

"to take part in solving [the] Palestine problem otherwise than by expressing his views and by giving his advice unless and until he has ascertained the views of interested parties who have authority in the matter. If the President wishes, Ibn Saud is prepared to approach the Arabs and ascertain their views and this might assist in reaching a solution".<sup>252</sup>

In respect to the proposed meeting, the King indicated that he did not "trust" Weizmann, and was not willing to hold any kind of discussions with him or even with any of his representatives.<sup>253</sup> It was expounded to Hoskins that:

"Ibn Saud considers Dr. Weizman as his personal enemy for it was he who had the outrageous insolence to approach Ibn Saud and to ask him to be a traitor to his religion and his country. This approach was made in the first year of the war when Dr. Weizman sent a certain European with request that Ibn Saud should abandon the Arabs of Palestine in return for £20,000,000 to be guaranteed by President Roosevelt himself. The man dared to put this base suggestion to Ibn Saud and to suggest that the President would guarantee such a dishonourable proposal. Could anything be baser or more criminal than this?"<sup>254</sup>

When Hoskins reported Ibn Saud's views to Roosevelt, the President "expressed full understanding of the reason for the King's refusal to meet with Weizman".<sup>255</sup> Roosevelt "also showed irritation that his name had been mentioned as a guarantor, for which, he said, there was no basis in fact".<sup>256</sup> In any case, it was apparent from Hoskins mission that Ibn Saud was "opposed to the idea of any Jewish state in Palestine", unless he was convinced "otherwise".<sup>257</sup> To this end, President Roosevelt did not lose all hope of finding a solution for the Palestine problem through King Ibn Saud. Nonetheless, the general outlook of Hoskins' mission had caused the President to delay his efforts on the King until the final days of the war.<sup>258</sup>

## E. The Leaders' Summits

### I. Ibn Saud's meeting with Roosevelt, 14 February 1945

On 12 February Ibn Saud and his party left Jeddah for the Great Bitter Lake - of the Suez Canal - on board the destroyer U.S.S. Murphy. Two days later the U.S.S. Murphy tied up alongside the U.S.S. Quincy at the Lake, thereafter Ibn Saud and Roosevelt held their historic meeting.<sup>259</sup> After establishing very friendly personal relations, the two heads of state concentrated on various topics including the Palestine problem, the problem of Syria and Lebanon, and the British attitude towards Saudi Arabia.<sup>260</sup>

According to the US President's closest adviser, Mr Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt was inspired "to talk to Ibn Saud about Palestine" in person.<sup>261</sup> Besides, he was "particularly interested in seeking Ibn Saud's assistance in resolving the problem of Palestine".<sup>262</sup> Nevertheless, the course of the discussion on this particular issue took a line that was closer to Ibn Saud's wishes rather than to that of Roosevelt's. Such a development was due because Roosevelt adapted a relaxed attitude during the conversation, where as Ibn Saud was more determined - as usual - to oppose any Jewish gain in Palestine.<sup>263</sup>

Perhaps because Roosevelt "had been repeatedly warned by his own experts" about the difficulty of altering Ibn Saud's views on Palestine, the President initiated the talk on this question as a humanitarian issue.<sup>264</sup> By doing so, the President might have believed that he could possibly succeed in softening the King's position. In this direction, Roosevelt asked Ibn Saud for "his advice" about the problem of Jewish refugees who had been driven from their home in Europe.<sup>265</sup> King Ibn Saud's reply was simple but firm:

"in his opinion, the Jews should return to live in the lands from which they were driven. The Jews whose homes were completely destroyed and who have no chance of livelihood in their homelands should be given living space in the Axis countries which oppressed them".<sup>266</sup>

Seemingly convinced by the King's response, Roosevelt remarked that "Poland might be considered a case in point. The Germans appear to have killed 3 million Polish Jews, by which count there should be space in Poland for the resettlement of many homeless Jews".<sup>267</sup> Subsequently Ibn Saud "expounded the case of the Arabs and their legitimate rights in their lands, and stated that the Arabs and the Jews could never cooperate neither in Palestine nor in any other country".<sup>268</sup> King Ibn Saud also called attention to "the increasing threat to the existence of the Arabs and the crisis which has resulted from continued Jewish immigration and the purchase of land by the Jews".<sup>269</sup> He also added that "the Arabs would choose to die rather than yield their lands to the Jews".<sup>270</sup> Stressing the importance that the Arabs gave to the US role, Ibn Saud stated that "the hope of the Arabs is based upon the word of honour of the Allies and upon the well-known love of justice of the United States, and upon the expectation that the United States will support them".<sup>271</sup>

In a positive reply, Roosevelt assured Ibn Saud that "he would do nothing to assist the Jews against the Arabs and would make no move hostile to the Arab people".<sup>272</sup> Roosevelt also reminded Ibn Saud that "it is impossible to prevent speeches and resolutions in Congress or in the press which may be made on any subject. His reassurance concerned his own future policy as Chief Executive of the United States Government".<sup>273</sup> It seemed that Roosevelt might "have been more convinced" by Ibn Saud's arguments "than vice versa, judging from the President's famous subsequent comment that he learned more about the Palestine problem in five minutes with the Saudi King than he might have from an exchange of several dozen letters".<sup>274</sup>

Though King Ibn Saud did not mention his anxiety of possible Hashemite intimidations, he did not miss the opportunity to mobilise the occasion for the purpose of the emergence of fully independent Levant States. Hence, after mentioning the importance of Syria and Lebanon to Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud asked what "would be the attitude of the United States Government in the event that France should continue to press intolerable demands upon Syria and the Lebanon".<sup>275</sup> Roosevelt replied "that the French Government had given him in writing their guarantee of the independence of Syria and the Lebanon and that he could at any time write to the French Government to insist they honour their word".<sup>276</sup> Roosevelt continued "in the event that the French should thwart the independence of Syria and the Lebanon, the United States

Government would give Syria and the Lebanon all possible support short of the use of force".<sup>277</sup>

The subject that involved the British attitude was discussed in strict confidentiality. This confidentiality had caused the Saudis and the Americans to omit such a subject from the "agreed memorandum of conversation", which was later passed to the British.<sup>278</sup> With a "smile" Ibn Saud could not agree more to Roosevelt's "jovial confidence about the English", when the latter said:

"We like the English, but we also know the English and the way they insist on doing good themselves. You and I want freedom and prosperity for our people and their neighbors after the war. How and by whose hand freedom and prosperity arrive concerns us but little. The English also work and sacrifice to bring freedom and prosperity to the world, but on the condition that it be brought by them and marked 'made in Britain'."<sup>279</sup>

In more serious manner, Ibn Saud fully used the British case - apparently - in order to encourage the Americans to further strengthen the Saudi-US partnership, as well as to ease the monopoly of the British sphere of influence in and around Saudi Arabia. Toward such objectives, King Ibn Saud stated:

"What am I to believe when the British tell me that my future is with them and not with America? They constantly say, or imply, that America's political interest in Saudi Arabia is a transitory war-interest; her aid as short-lived as lend-lease; that Saudi Arabia lies in a path bounded with sterling controls, connected by British communications; defended by the Royal Navy and Army; that my security and economic stability are bound up with British foreign policy; and that America, after the war, will return to her preoccupations in the Western Hemisphere. In short, they tell me that the joint 'partnership' in Saudi Arabia is temporary, and that Britain alone will continue as my partner in the future as in the early years of my reign. On the strength of this argument they seek a priority for Britain in Saudi Arabia. What am I to believe?"<sup>280</sup>

By using such an argument Ibn Saud was looking and hoping for a very profound answer, however, such a profundity was not fully met. But at least, Roosevelt presented - what could be regarded as - a reasonable response:

“plans for the post-war world envisage a decline of spheres of influence in favor of the Open Door; that the United States hopes the door of Saudi Arabia will be open for her and for other nations, with no monopoly by anyone; for only by free exchange of goods, services and opportunities can prosperity circulate to the advantage of free peoples”.<sup>281</sup>

Monitoring Ibn Saud’s immediate reaction to the reply, William Eddy recorded “The King expressed gratification over this prospect, but it was evident that he expected British pressure to continue as before to claim a sphere of influence around and over his country”.<sup>282</sup> Eddy also recorded his own thoughts on this subject, “This fear is no doubt well-grounded and will be dispelled when and if the United States gives material substance to plans for long range economic and political accords with Saudi Arabia to open up the Open Door”.<sup>283</sup>

Despite the fact that the Palestine issue was the most noticeable motive that encouraged the US President to seek a conference with the Saudi King, it could be not neglected that the summit had indeed reflected the increasing awareness in both states for the necessity of reinforcing their mutual relationship. Mr Aaron Miller, who researched Saudi-American relations from 1939 to 1949, illustrated that:

“Roosevelt’s conversations with the Saudi King seemed to reflect the United States’ growing awareness of its interests in Saudi Arabia - if not the entire Middle East. Similarly, for Ibn Saud the meeting held great significance. For the first time since the formal establishment of his Kingdom, Ibn Saud had journeyed beyond his borders in search of an ally to support . . . the political independence of Saudi Arabia”.<sup>284</sup>

## II. Ibn Saud’s meeting with Churchill, 17 February 1945

On 16 February King Ibn Saud and his party left the U.S.S Murphy at Ismailia for the Hotel du Lac in Fayoum - approximately 100 km south from Cairo - where the King had his meeting with Churchill the following day.<sup>285</sup> The Ibn Saud-Churchill

conversations, which were interrupted by lunch, started at 12.30 p.m. and ended at 3.30 p.m. Beside the King and the Prime Minister, the conversation was attended by Mr Anthony Eden, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr Stanley Jordan, the British Minister at Jeddah, Mr Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi Arabian Minister in London, and Sir Walter Smart from the British Embassy in Cairo.<sup>286</sup>

At the opening of the conversation, Churchill asked Ibn Saud for "information regarding his conversation with President Roosevelt".<sup>287</sup> Instead of briefing the Prime Minister verbally, the King handed out a copy of the memorandum of his conversation with Roosevelt; a copy that obviously did not include the Saudi-American conversation on Britain.<sup>288</sup> After reading the memorandum, Churchill commented "that President Roosevelt had expressed further views to him on the subject of Palestine", and that further compromise was necessary in order to reach a consistent solution for such a complicated issue.<sup>289</sup> In response Ibn Saud explained that:

"His position was very difficult. The Jews in Palestine were continuously increasing in number; they were even forming a sort of Government of their own, with a Prime Minister, a Foreign Minister and a Minister of Defence. They also had formed a military force of 30,000 men with modern arms and equipment. They had thus become a great danger to the Arabs. If it was only a question of Jews and Arab the Arabs would fight the Jews, and, even if they were not victorious, they would not mind because they would go to Paradise. He had continually counselled moderation to the Arabs in this question, but he feared that a clash might come and then he would be in great difficulty. He did not wish to get involved in such a conflict, which would also bring him into conflict with [the British]".<sup>290</sup>

In assurance, Churchill said that the British government "would not allow the Jews to attack the Arab with armed forces. We had control of the seas and could easily deprive them of supplies".<sup>291</sup> However, unlike the USA President, the British Prime Minister insisted that "the Jews must have a place to live in - that is to say, in Palestine".<sup>292</sup> Churchill clarified his view on this by saying that "He had never been in favour of Palestine being a National Home, but of a National Home in Palestine".<sup>293</sup>

Churchill hoped that “he might count on the assistance of His Majesty [Ibn Saud] to promote a definite and lasting settlement between the Jews and the Arabs”.<sup>294</sup>

Being unhappy about Churchill’s emphasis on the needs of a Jewish national home in Palestine, Ibn Saud tried to avoid answering Churchill’s request to him in promoting a settlement.<sup>295</sup> Thus instead of answering Churchill directly, Ibn Saud emphasised “the difficulty he would have restraining his own people if conflict occurred between the Jews and the Arabs”.<sup>296</sup>

Before concluding their talk on Palestine, Ibn Saud remarked “that he counted on the British friendship with the Arabs and on British justice”.<sup>297</sup> Ultimately, Churchill “assured him of . . . [the British] friendship with Arabs”.<sup>298</sup> But oddly the Prime Minister used the wrong argument, of the British-Arab friendship, as far as Ibn Saud was concerned. On this, Churchill “pointed out that . . . [the British] had done a lot for the Arabs since the last war in establishing Arab States in Iraq and Transjordan”.<sup>299</sup> Nonetheless, he also stated that “in the event of any decision being taken regarding Palestine, [the British government] . . . would keep Ibn Saud informed beforehand”.<sup>300</sup>

When the British Prime Minister “felt that he could not altogether satisfy Ibn Saud regarding Palestine” he turned the talk towards Syria and Lebanon.<sup>301</sup> However, before the end of the first session of talks, Ibn Saud once more raised the issue of Palestine, when he expressed his desire to talk about the immigration into Palestine and the sales of land there. However, the meeting was interrupted by lunch at that stage and neither leader returned to the issue of Palestine.<sup>302</sup> It could be that Ibn Saud felt that Churchill could not satisfy him on Palestine, thus he made no effort to return to the issue after lunch.<sup>303</sup>

Regarding Syria and Lebanon, Churchill said “we are determined to maintain the independence of Syria and Lebanon and to prevent the French from using force to upset this independence”.<sup>304</sup> At the same time, Churchill thought that it was necessary that Syria and Lebanon should conclude treaties with France, giving France some privileges.<sup>305</sup> Ibn Saud explained that there would be no problem in giving the French some privileges in education, culture, railways and commerce, but he thought that the French would demand more, on a par with the British position in Egypt and Iraq.<sup>306</sup>

Concluding this issue, Ibn Saud suggested that the British government “should ask the French to say exactly what they wanted in the way of privilege”.<sup>307</sup> Eden at this particular junction remarked that “the French had already been asked to formulate their requirements and we are waiting for their answer”.<sup>308</sup>

The Hashemite question was raised after lunch, when Churchill asked Ibn Saud if he wanted to discuss any other issue. After giving a brief of his relations with the Hashemite, Ibn Saud said that “he had every regard for them as descendants of the Prophet, but that, as we knew, the Amir Abdulla [Abdullah] was a talkative person and often said undesirable things”.<sup>309</sup> Ibn Saud remarked that at the present Abdullah’s intrigues seemed to be suppressed by the British, a matter which the King hoped would be lasting. At this point Churchill “expressed the hope that Transjordan would not make difficulty for Saudi Arabia”.<sup>310</sup>

### III. The Summits’ Outlook

Ibn Saud was an admirer of both leaders. He told Eddy sometime after when he returned to Saudi Arabia, that he had “never met the equal of the President in character, wisdom and gentility”.<sup>311</sup> Furthermore, he told Hafiz Wahba that “the high point of . . . [his] entire life is . . . [his] meeting with President Roosevelt”.<sup>312</sup> About the British Prime Minister, the King told Jordan during the journey to Ismailia that “he had always known that Mr Churchill was a great man and a great leader but now that he had met him he found him an even greater man than he had ever imagined”.<sup>313</sup>

With regard to the talks, Ibn Saud was more satisfied about his talk with Roosevelt than his talk with Churchill.<sup>314</sup> He compared both leaders’ attitudes during the talks, by saying to Eddy in less than a week after the summits that:

“The contrast between the President and Mr. Churchill is very great. Mr. Churchill speaks deviously, evades understanding, changes the subject to avoid commitment, forcing me repeatedly to bring him back to the point. The President seeks understanding in conversation; his effort is to make the two minds meet; to dispel darkness and shed light upon the issue”.<sup>315</sup>

In a private audience with King Ibn Saud in Jeddah on 20 February 1945 Eddy was asked to tell his government of the King's dissatisfaction over his conversation with Churchill. In a long oral statement, which Eddy paraphrased, the King described the details of his conversation regarding Palestine with Churchill as follows:

“Mr. Churchill opened the subject confidently wielding the big stick. Great Britain had supported and subsidised me for twenty years, and had made possible the stability of my reign by fending off potential enemies on my frontiers. Since Britain had seen me through difficult days, she is entitled now to request my assistance in the problem of Palestine where a strong Arab leader can restrain fanatical Arab elements, insist on moderation in Arab councils, and effect a realistic compromise with Zionism. Both sides must be prepared to make concessions and he looks to me to help prepare the Arab concessions”.<sup>316</sup>

Ibn Saud's paraphrased statement continued:

“I replied that, as he well knows, I have made no secret of my friendship and gratitude to Great Britain, a friend I have always been ready to help as I shall always help her and the Allies against their enemies. I told him, however, that what he proposes is not help to Britain or the Allies, but an act of treachery to the Prophet and all believing Muslims which would wipe out my honor and destroy my soul. I could not acquiesce in a compromise with Zionism much less take any initiative. Furthermore, I pointed out, that even in the preposterous event that I were willing to do so, it would not be a favor to Britain, since promotion of Zionism from any quarter must indubitably bring bloodshed, wide-spread disorder in the Arab lands, with certainly no benefit to Britain or anyone else. By this time Mr. Churchill had laid the big stick down . . . In turn I requested assurance that Jewish immigration to Palestine would be stopped. This Mr. Churchill refused to promise, though he assured me that he would oppose any plan of immigration which would drive the Arabs out of Palestine or deprive them of the means of livelihood there. I reminded him that the British and their allies would be making their own choice between (1) a friendly and peaceful Arab world, and (2) a struggle to the death between Arab and Jew if unreasonable immigration of Jews to Palestine is renewed. In any case, the formula must be one arrived at by and with Arab consent”.<sup>317</sup>

It was obvious that King Ibn Saud was more pleased with his conversation with Roosevelt on Palestine rather than his conversation on the same topic with Churchill. Not just in accordance to the King's complaint to the Americans, which was obvious, but also in accordance to the comparison of the two talks. Indeed, it was evidently clear that King Ibn Saud's meeting with President Roosevelt was more constructive than his meeting with the British Prime Minister. Roosevelt's promises and Churchill's demands might, indeed, have caused Ibn Saud to believe that the former would be more helpful in the future on this issue rather than the latter. Likewise, such a matter might have also caused Ibn Saud to believe that future dialogues - on this - would be more constructive with the Americans rather than with the British, particularly when it involved the highest level of authority. Ultimately, the King might have considered that the US government - rather than the British government - was the one who could possibly come to a full understanding on the Arabs rights in Palestine. Hence, this could explain why the Saudi King had thought of complaining to the Americans about his discussion with Churchill, rather than any vice versa attempt.

While the preceding phenomenon was obvious, it should be noted that at the same time as King Ibn Saud desired to strengthen his ties with American, he was also keen not to create any problem for his relations with the British. Such a course of action was further imperative as the Saudi Monarch could not obtain a profound American will to strengthen the Saudi-American commitments. Indeed, even if he was dissatisfied in his talks with Churchill over the Palestine issue, the King continued to recognise that his Kingdom's interests - particularly those concerning security - were still up to then tied to Britain rather than to the USA, as, for instance, the British government had managed to keep Ibn Saud comfortable vis-à-vis the possibility of Hashemite intimidation, such as that of Abdullah's of Transjordan.

## Summary and Conclusions

1943 marked the beginning of the real involvement of the United States of America in Saudi Arabian affairs. It was the extension of the lend-lease in February 1943 which initiated such a new chapter in the history of Saudi-American relations. In that year, Saudi Arabia started to receive direct aid from the US government, a permanent US legation that was headed by a minister was established in Jeddah, and several significant visits took place between the two states capitals. In the following years, US direct aid to the Kingdom increased, as did the posts of representation when a US consulate was established in Dhahran in 1944 and when a Saudi legation was established in Washington in the following year. In addition, a US strategic interest in the Kingdom was also created, in 1945, by the construction of an American airfield in Dhahran.

In 1944 America became an equal partner to Britain through the joint assistance program. Later when the USA increased its assistance to Saudi Arabia, Britain became a junior partner in the share of overall assistance that Saudi Arabia received from both countries. Britain failed to increase its financial assistance not just because of its own critical economic situation at the end of the war, but also because the Americans were willing to give more.

At the same time while US-Saudi ties were enhanced, King Ibn Saud paid special attention to his relations with Britain. Throughout the period covered in this chapter, the King succeeded in maintaining his Kingdom's special relationship with the United Kingdom. The association of the Saudi Arabian interests with Britain had persuaded the King to preserve the Saudi Kingdom's relations with the British Kingdom, particularly when the core of those interests were related to Saudi Arabia's security.

King Ibn Saud's methods in preserving his Kingdom's relations with Britain took many forms, but most notably he managed to keep the cordiality of the relations through the means of genuine consultations. In this regard, he did not just consult the British government over the Kingdom's relations with the USA, but he also consulted London on his Kingdom's regional policy. Ibn Saud's consultations with the British

government in regard to his fear of the Hashemite activities in the Arab unity schemes were beneficial for the course of Saudi-Anglo relations, as well as for the assurance of Saudi Arabia's security. In addition to this, Ibn Saud benefited from being closer to the British government's policy towards his regional concerns.

The gradually increasing American interests vis-à-vis the existing British interests placed both countries in a conflict over Saudi Arabia. The conflict which was first instigated by the anxieties of the American oilmen was further worsened by the British Minister's plans for the reform of Saudi Arabia's financial system in early 1944. Despite the fact that the US and the British governments had endeavoured to improve their relations in Saudi Arabia by means of discussions, their relations continued to conflict in that country. In spite of the fact that the American-Anglo relations over the Saudi kingdom were at odds, some kind of cooperation, such as that of the creation of a joint assistance program, could not be ignored. Interestingly, by the end of 1945 - as the next chapter will further illustrate - the continuity of the US-British intentions in Saudi Arabia caused the British government to reconsider its position not just in regard to US-British relations in Saudi Arabia but also in regard to the British policy towards Saudi Arabia.

The problem of the Palestine issue was raised in 1943 between the Saudi and the US governments. In response to the Saudi King's worries about the ever-increasing Zionist influence in the USA, the US president suggested resolving the Palestine problem through mutual understanding between the Arabs and the Jews. Roosevelt suggested to Ibn Saud to initiate direct talks with Weizmann, nevertheless, when the President's plan was not accepted, Roosevelt waited until the first opportunity of a personal conversation with the Saudi King. In his historic meeting with Ibn Saud, Roosevelt could not convince the Saudi monarch on the Palestine issue, in fact it was Roosevelt who was convinced by the Ibn Saud argument on the same topic.

In addition to the Palestine issue, several topics were discussed during Ibn Saud's meetings with each of Roosevelt and Churchill. Despite the fact that the Saudi king tried to mobilise his conversations with the American President for the benefit of the Saudi-American relations, it could be said that the President's conservative statement in this regard was not the deep answer that Ibn Saud was looking for. Therefore, the

King realised that his Kingdom's interests, particularly those of a security nature, were still linked to Britain. Yet, it was the head of the British government who did not satisfy Ibn Saud during the February 1945 talks in regard to the Palestine Issue.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the concentration on these particular reasons does not necessarily deny any other reasons that might have encouraged the US administration to extend lend-lease to Saudi Arabia. For example, the consent of the British government may have removed an obstacle in front of the US plan, as London did not object to such a plan when advised by Washington beforehand. See Miller, Aaron David. Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980, p. 70. Also, see from Washington to Foreign Office, 10 March 1943, FO 371/35153.

<sup>2</sup> Anderson, Irvine. Aramco the United States and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamic of Foreign Oil Policy 1933-1950. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981, p. 33.

<sup>3</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 62-63.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., pp. 36-37.

<sup>6</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>9</sup> Rubin, Barry. The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947. London: Frank Cass, 1980, pp. 37-38. Also, see Al-Ruwaithy, Abdulmuhsin. American and British Aid to Saudi Arabia, 1928-1945. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Texas At Austin, 1990, pp. 100-104.

<sup>10</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 63. Also, see Al-Ruwaithy, Abdulmuhsin. op. cit., pp. 105-106.

<sup>11</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 64. It was also anticipated that the British influence was increasing at the expense of the American Treasury, particularly as Britain was receiving lend-lease from the USA at that time. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987, p.165. Also, see Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., pp. 47-48. Also, see Rubin, Barry. op. cit., pp. 38-39.

<sup>12</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. Iraq became eligible for lend-lease aid on 1 May 1941, Turkey on 7 November 1941, Egypt on 11 November 1941, Iran on 10 March 1942, and Ethiopia on 7 December 1942. See Ibid., p. 65 & p. 242.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 65. It should be noted that, while the Saudi Arabian case was under consideration in Washington, the American oilmen did not cease their efforts. "On 8 February, the SOCAL executives" argued the US government to "extend direct lend-lease to Saudi Arabia", and on 11 February, they also "expressed concern about [the effects of] British advances to Ibn Saud and . . . on American oil interests". See Ibid., pp. 68-69. Also, see Al-Ruwaithy, Abdulmuhsin. op. cit., pp. 103-106.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States: The Near East and Africa, 1943, Vol. IV, p. 859, quoted in Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 165-166.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. Britain and Saudi Arabia 1925-1939. London: Frank Cass, 1983, p. 341.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 340.

<sup>19</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 70-71.

<sup>20</sup> From the US Minster, Cairo to the Secretary of State, 17 April 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part I. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 136-139. Also, see Al-Ruwaithy, Abdulmuhsin. op. cit., p. 108. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>21</sup> Memorandum on General Hurley's visit to Riyadh, 24-27 May 1943, FO 371/35154. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>24</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>25</sup> Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., p. 138.

<sup>26</sup> Grayson, Benson Lee. Saudi-American Relations. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, Inc., 1982, p. 20.

<sup>27</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283. Also, see from Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 19 March 1943, FO 371/35153.

<sup>28</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>29</sup> From Jeddah (Stonehewer-Bird) to Foreign Office, 19 March 1943, FO 371/35153.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>31</sup> Memorandum on General Hurley's visit to Riyadh, 24-27 May 1943, FO 371/35154.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. It should be noted that before the end of his visit, General Hurley discussed the possibility of opening an air route for the USA Air Force across the northern part of the Arabian peninsula. Ibn Saud gave his initial agreement to this. See Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> See Memorandums of Conversation, Department of State, 1 November 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 178-181.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>35</sup> Memorandums of Conversation, Department of State, 1 November 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 178-181.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 16 December 1943, FO 371/40265. Also, see Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 1 November 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 174.

<sup>43</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 16 December 1943, FO 371/40265.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. Also, Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 1 November 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 174. Also, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 9 February 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>45</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 9 February 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Also, From Foreign Office to Riyadh (Jordan), 24 February 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>47</sup> Foreign Office to Riyadh (Jordan), 24 February 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>48</sup> From the US Vice Consul, Dhahran to the Secretary of State, 20 December 1944. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 205-209. For further details on the Dhahran Consulate see Hart, Parker T. **Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, pp. 16-18 & pp. 31-33.

<sup>49</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 62. The idea for the Dhahran airfield was proposed as early as the beginning of 1944. Due to Ibn Saud's refusal of such an idea in 1944 and perhaps due to the indefinite plan by the Americans this issue was not implemented until 1945. Moreover, in his article; **Keeping the door open in Saudi Arabia: the United States and the Dhahran airfield, 1945/46.** James Gormly wrote: "On 29 July 1944, upon receiving instructions from Washington, American representative James S. Moose, Jr., suggested to Yusuf Yassin, acting Minister of Foreign Affairs that the United States build an air facility at Dhahran. The request quickly encountered difficulties: the Saudi wanted more exact plans and the British recommended that Ibn Saud reject the American proposal". Gormly, James. **Keeping the door open in Saudi Arabia: the United States and the Dhahran airfield, 1945/46.** In **Diplomatic History.** Vol. 4 (2), 1980, p. 193. Gormly continued ". . . British objection in 1944 were enough to keep American plans from implementation in Saudi Arabia". Ibid., p. 197. The British Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, (which was written by Mr. Jordan: the British Minister at

Jeddah then) stated the story as following: "The United States Government earlier in the year asked the King for permission to construct airfields at Riyadh, Jedda and Dhahran to facilitate their ferrying Service to the Far East, but he refused. The question of Dhahran airfield was again raised later, but the Americans do not for the moment appear to be pressing it". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546. In addition, it was stated in the British Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945; that "Ibn Saud (without informing His Majesty's Government) had refused to consider [the idea of the airfield] in 1944". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>50</sup> SWNCC 19 Annex B, p. 15, 890F. 51/2-745, quoted in Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>51</sup> SWNCC 19/1, 890F. 51/2-2245, quoted in Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>52</sup> Gormly, James. op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>53</sup> It was remarked in the British report for Saudi Arabia 1945, that "for British endorsement of the Dhahran project, Ibn Saud would certainly have refused it again, out of hand". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Gormly, James. op. cit., p. 198.

<sup>56</sup> Long, David. The United States and Saudi Arabia: Ambivalent Allies. London: Westview Press, 1985, p. 34. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 141. The agreement also includes the construction of emergency landing airfields at Lauqa and Hafr Al-Batin. See Long, David. op. cit., p. 34.

<sup>57</sup> Gormly, James. op. cit., p. 200. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 142.

<sup>58</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>59</sup> See section A: I of chapter one.

<sup>60</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 6 February 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 325.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. For the details of Syria independence see Hopwood, Derek. Syria 1945-1986. London: Unwin Hyman: 1989, pp. 22-30.

<sup>64</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 29 March 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 331.

<sup>65</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 29 March 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 331. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 April 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 333.

<sup>66</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 27 May 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 338-339.

<sup>67</sup> See Ibid. Also, see From Jeddah to Foreign Office (and enclosures), 10 June 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 340-344. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>68</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 335.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> From the Foreign office to Jeddah, 4 May 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 337.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. Also, from Nahas to Ibn Saud, 7 September 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 346-347. Also, from Ibn Saud to Nahas, 24 September 1943. In King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 348-349.

<sup>76</sup> See Ibid. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>78</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>79</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>80</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823

<sup>82</sup> From the Saudi government to the British government, 26 June 1943. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 342-344.

<sup>83</sup> Ibn Saud was very cautious when he was first asked by the British Minister at Jeddah on 26 February 1945 to declare war against the Axis in order to become a founder member of the new world organisation. "I found Ibn Saud quite disinclined to make declaration of war and by no means eager to join in [the] San Francisco Conference", Grafftey-Smith wrote. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 27 February 1945, FO 371/45542. Ibn Saud's scruples were due to the special situation of the holy places. He told Grafftey-Smith "that he felt he had no right to commit holy places to a state of war". Ibid. Although Grafftey-Smith suggested that he might exclude the holy places from the war declaration, the King's attitude remained cautious. At the end of his meeting with Ibn Saud, Grafftey-Smith was told that Saudi Arabia would consider a decision about joining the United Nations at a later date. The British government policy in this matter, as it was described by Churchill "was to make sure that. . . Ibn Saud was not left out in the cold, and to give him a chance to come in, but if he does not wish to do so, in no circumstances should we press him". From Churchill to the Foreign Secretary (Anthony Eden), 28 February 1945, FO 371/45542. On these lines Churchill sent Ibn Saud a telegram on 28 February stating: "We have no wish to press you to enter the war. Your proved loyalty to us requires no such declaration . . . we felt it our duty to make sure that your right now to enter the war and be represented at San Francisco was not being any way impeded. Therefore we have taken pains to remove any obstacles that might have been presented by other countries. These are all removed now". Ibid. Nonetheless, before receiving Churchill's telegram Ibn Saud had already made his decision on this matter. Thus after he consulted the *ulama*, he informed the British Legation in Jeddah that he would declare war on Germany and Japan as from 1 March 1945, with the exception of the two holy places. In a message in which Ibn Saud asked the British Minister at Jeddah to communicate to both the US and the British governments Ibn Saud stated: "Since the beginning of the World War we have sympathised with the cause of justice which the Allies are defending . . . We have felt that the interests of our country necessitate our being in a state of war with Germany and Japan as from March 1<sup>st</sup> 1945. We have decided to join the Allies in this war while excepting from this declaration the area comprising the two Holy Shrines. Because of their sanctity we reserve for them complete neutrality: they shall neither wage war nor shall war be waged against them, for the area in which they lie is one of peace and security for all its inhabitants and for all Muslims who proceed thither". From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 28 February 1945, FO 371/45542. On the first of March 1945, the State Department released Ibn Saud's message to the press, with the consequence that Saudi Arabia "was formally admitted as a United Nation". From the British Embassy at Washington to Foreign Office, 3 March 1945, FO 371/45542. Also, The USA Department of State, press release, 1 March 1945, FO 371/45542. On 5 April 1945, a Saudi Arabian delegation headed by *Amir* Faisal left Saudi Arabia for New York in order to attend the conferences on the formation of the UN. During the conferences meetings, which took place between 25 April and 25 June 1945, the Saudi delegation maintained close contact with the British delegation, as had been instructed by Ibn Saud. Finally on 2 October 1945 Saudi Arabia ratified the United Nations Charter, which had been signed by its delegation at the end of San Francisco conference on 25 June 1945. Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Also, Al-Samadi, Riyadh. *العلاقات الدولية في القرن العشرين (International Relations in the Twentieth Century)*. Beirut: المؤسسة الجامعية، 1986, p. 71.

<sup>84</sup> From Jeddah (Wall) to Foreign Office, 6 May 1943, FO 371/35160. Also the renewal of the Treaty would be automatic unless either party gave a six month notice of denunciation. Ibid. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah (Wikeley), 14 July 1943, FO 371/351160.

<sup>85</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 14 October 1943, FO 371/35160.

<sup>86</sup> It should be also noted, that the USA supplied Saudi Arabia at the end of 1943 with 8,000,000 Riyals under the lend-lease. Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>87</sup> The MESC was set up in Cairo in April 1941 and was attached to the British Minister of the State in Egypt. At the beginning the MESC was purely British, however from July 1943 it became a joint British-American organisation. The main objective of the MESC was "to organize and direct the economic and supply resources of the Middle East theatre. The original impetus behind the formation of the MESC had been to create a body that would have the power to allocate shipping resources, and especially to reduce demands for cargo space for consumer goods. The logic of events dictated that the MESC would eventually go much further: to transcend the strictly military dimension of their task by promoting regional production of war supplies and by treating the Middle East as a coherent economic market". Owendale, Ritchie. William Strang and the Permanent Under-Secretary's Committee. In Zametica, John. British Officials and British Foreign Policy 1945-50. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990, p. 230. Also, Brenchley, Frank. Britain and the Middle East: An Economic History 1945-87. London: Lester Crook Academic Publishing, 1989, p. 338.

<sup>88</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>89</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 16 February 1944, FO 371/40267. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Hurewitz, J C. op. cit., p. 702.

<sup>92</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546. It should be noted that, when this supply programme was communicated to Ibn Saud, he thought that the part, which concerned food supply, was not satisfactory and therefore he wrote to the British Prime Minister asking for further help. Nonetheless, when some of his request was met, he became satisfied with such a programme. See Ibid. Also, see from King Ibn Saud to the Prime Minister, 7 August 1944, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>93</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid. The training team completed its task and left Saudi Arabia "by the late spring of 1945". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 3 January 1945, FO 371/45545. In addition to the joint British US training facility at Taif, the British extended further training for the Saudi Arabian army. After a visit by the Saudi Arabian Defence Minister (Prince Mansour Ibn Abdulaziz) to Sudan at the end of 1944 Saudi Arabian soldiers were sent to different training workshops in Sudan and Egypt. Ibid. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. The training programme in Egypt and Sudan was completed in June 1946, in which five hundred and twelve Saudis passed it successfully. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 8 June 1946, FO 371/52826.

<sup>95</sup> Louis, Wm. Roger. The British Empire in the Middle East: 1945-1951. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 190.

<sup>96</sup> Minute by Hall-Patch, 23 May 1945, quoted in Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 190.

<sup>97</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1984, p. 208.

<sup>98</sup> From the Foreign Office to the British Embassy at Washington, February 1945, FO 371/45523.

<sup>99</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 209.

<sup>101</sup> Joint Note by the US and the British Ministers at Jeddah addressed to the Saudi Arabian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, 29 July 1945, FO 371/45528. Though Ibn Saud was not initially satisfied with the new programme, indeed he protested by writing to the British Prime Minister and the British Foreign Secretary, he accepted it later. He realised the financial difficulty facing Britain and found the additional American financial assistance satisfactory. Note to the Prime Minister, 16 November 1945, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>102</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Also, Record of the British Departments Representatives meeting on Anglo-American Relations in Saudi Arabia, 11 December 1945, FO 371/45543. Ibn Saud's general reaction towards this was in Grafftey-Smith's words "sympathetic and entirely friendly". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. It

should be noted that the Al-Kailani case did not harm Saudi-British relations. Just for clarification the Al-Kailani story was as follows: After the collapse of Germany Al-Kailani, who was under sentence of death as a war criminal by an Iraqi court for his act of revolution in 1941, made his way to Saudi Arabia. Entering Saudi Arabia as a Syrian journalist with a group of Syrian journalists, Mr. Rashid Ali Al-Kailani managed to reach Riyadh and revealed himself to Ibn Saud on 24 September 1945. Ibid. Asylum was recognised in Arab tradition for centuries, long before its recognition elsewhere. In that way a fugitive could seek asylum with a dignified and strong personality, and indeed a ruler. Al-Kailani was granted protection the moment he revealed himself to Ibn Saud as *zabin*. Alarmed by this development, Ibn Saud asked for an immediate meeting with the British Minister at Jeddah. Being aware of the Arab tradition - to some extent - Grafftey-Smith did not ask for the surrender of Al-Kailani to the British or to the Iraqi government during his meeting with the King on 26 September. However, he suggested that Ibn Saud treat him "hospitably for the period described by Beduin tradition and then put him over some frontier . . . [or] to some other Arab territory, such as Kuwait, and that sooner or later we [the British] might thus catch him". Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. Bright Levant. London: The Camelot Press Ltd, 1970, p. 275. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Grafftey-Smith's recommendation was not successful. Ibn Saud replied that it would be shameful if he became responsible for Al-Kailani's capture. Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. op. cit., p. 275. Moreover, Ibn Saud had also turned down an appeal from the British government for the surrender of Al-Kailani to the Regent of Iraq. Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Despite the fact, that Ibn Saud gave asylum and full protection to Al-Kailani, this was not considered by the British Minister at Jeddah or his government as an act against them, nor was it considered as a problem for Saudi-British relations. However, the British Minister at Jeddah considered it as "the greatest obstacle to an improvement in relations between Iraq and Saudi Arabia during 1945". Ibid. Though Al-Kailani lived for many years in Riyadh, his presence there did not create any threats to either the British or the Iraqi governments, in Grafftey-Smith words "I never heard that his presence in Ibn Saud's capital did us or the Iraqis any harm". Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. op. cit., p. 276.

<sup>103</sup> See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 134- 150.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>105</sup> Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 45. It should be noted that the US President's speculation was based on previous American anxieties, such as those of the oil companies executives worries (expressed in February 1943), and the US government concerns about the British plan for establishing a Saudi currency under British control in mid-1943 (a plan which the British government did not carry out). Ibid., pp. 39-40.

<sup>106</sup> Churchill to Roosevelt, 20 February 1944, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 101-102. Also, Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>107</sup> Roosevelt to Churchill, 22 February 1944. In Kimball, Warren. Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, Vol. II, p. 744. Also, see Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>109</sup> Churchill to Roosevelt, 4 March 1944. In Kimball, Warren. Churchill & Roosevelt: The Complete Correspondence. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984, Vol. III, p. 17. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 256. Also, Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>110</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 102.

<sup>111</sup> Jordan arrived in Jeddah on the 2 September 1943, as the new British Minister to Saudi Arabia (succeeding Mr. Stonehewer-Bird). Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1943, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 15 February 1944, FO 371/40283.

<sup>112</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 155.

<sup>113</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 31 December 1943, FO 371/40267.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 156.

<sup>115</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 31 December 1943, FO 371/40267.

<sup>116</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>117</sup> Foreign Office minute, 12 February 1944, FO 371/40267. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 16 February 1944, FO 371/40267.

<sup>118</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 157. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546. Also, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign

Office, 2 March 1944, FO 371/40267. Also, from Foreign Office to Treasury, 13 March 1944, FO 371/40267.

<sup>119</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 14 February 1944, FO 371/40267. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546.

<sup>120</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 2 March 1944, FO 371/40267. Also, from Foreign Office to Treasury, 13 March 1944, FO 371/40267.

<sup>121</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 109. Also, Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 46.

<sup>122</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>123</sup> Hull to Moose, 3 April 1944, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 109.

<sup>124</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110. The Division of Near Eastern Affairs, NE, became the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs, NEA in 1944. See *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>125</sup> NEA memorandum to Hull, 3 April 1944, quoted in *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110. Moreover, the State Department instigated arrangements for a special session at the - already proposed - oil talks in London on the subject of Saudi Arabia. *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Foreign Office note about Anglo-American discussions on Saudi Arabia, April 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> These activities according to the Foreign Office would not strengthen the British position in Saudi Arabia, but merely would maintain it. See *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see that in Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 110.

<sup>131</sup> Foreign Office note about Anglo-American discussions on Saudi Arabia, April 1944, FO 371/40265.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.* The note also outlined the details of the topics, which would be discussed with the Americans on Saudi Arabia, such as subsidies, arms, currency supply, financial advisers, etc. See *Ibid.*

<sup>133</sup> Hurewitz, J C. **The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record.** London: Yale University Press, 1979, pp. 700-704.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>143</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>144</sup> Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>145</sup> From Jordan to the Foreign Office, 12 May 1944, quoted in Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>146</sup> Memorandum of conversation between Hull and Halifax, 26 June 1944, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>147</sup> Foreign Office minutes, quoted in Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>148</sup> Foreign Office minutes, quoted in Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 53. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 25 August 1944, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 116. Also, see *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>149</sup> Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 51.

<sup>150</sup> Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 114-115.

<sup>151</sup> Hull to Winant, 1 July 1944 (Hull's message was transmitted through the USA ambassador in London), quoted in Miller, Aaron David. *op. cit.*, p. 115.

<sup>152</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1944, from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 27 January 1945, FO 371/45546. However, the British government readdressed the proposal of the financial adviser again in 1945. See section C: II of this chapter.

<sup>153</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington, 22 July 1944, quoted in Rubin, Barry. *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944, FO 371/40266. Eddy arrived in Jeddah on 1 September 1944. See *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. Although Jordan suggested abandoning the fifty/fifty policy, he suggested in the same report that he had considered the creation of two spheres of influence in Saudi Arabia: the Hijaz, which would be the British sphere; and the Najd, which would be the American. However, because each power would develop their part, Jordan thought this would not be in the British government's interests, particularly as the US might develop Najd on a larger scale than the British would do in Hijaz; a matter which could bring blame and criticism on the British government. Therefore, Jordan saw no reason but to carry out his suggestion of leaving the USA to be the only provider of assistance to Saudi Arabia. Ibid. However, before leaving Saudi Arabia to the Americans, Jordan suggested to his government that the frontiers between the Trucial Sheikdoms and Saudi Arabia should be delimited. Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. Besides, in Jordan's opinion, the US was only concerned about Saudi Arabia and not about the other Middle East countries. This assessment was based on the situation of Saudi Arabia, which - according to Jordan - was "entirely different" compared to other Middle Eastern countries due to the "considerable oil interests [in Saudi Arabia]" which America held. Therefore, Jordan thought that if the USA was determined to strengthen its position in the Kingdom, the British government "should not worry" as far as British influence was concerned in the rest of the Middle East. Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Jordan), October 1944, FO 371/40266.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. In response to Jordan's suggestion to delimit the frontiers between the Trucial Sheikdoms and Saudi Arabia, the Foreign Office indicated that it would be desirable to settle this important issue as soon as possible. However, because of the complexity of the situation at this particular time the Foreign Office thought that it would be wise to delay the matter until a more convenient time in the future (after the war). Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> See from Jeddah (Jordan) to Foreign Office, 6 September 1944, FO 371/40266.

<sup>184</sup> See section B of this chapter.

<sup>185</sup> See Ibid. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 209.

<sup>186</sup> From the Foreign Office to Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith), 6 March 1945, FO 371/45542. Grafftey-Smith succeeded Jordan as the British Minister to Saudi Arabia on 23 February 1945. See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>187</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 17 March 1945, FO 371/45543.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 18 April 1945, FO 371/45543.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid. Also, see the original draft of the same despatch: From Foreign Office to Jeddah, April 1945, FO 371/45543.

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- <sup>197</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 18 April 1945, FO 371/45543.
- <sup>198</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 22 October 1945, FO 371/45543.
- <sup>199</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>200</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 10 November 1945, FO 371/45543. Also, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 30 November 1945, FO 371/45543. The British thought that within such relations the Americans might indeed object to the British military training mission to Saudi Arabia. See the following pages of this section.
- <sup>201</sup> Foreign Office memorandum on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, 30 November 1945, 371/45543. Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 192.
- <sup>202</sup> Foreign Office memorandum on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, 30 November 1945, 371/45543.
- <sup>203</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>204</sup> The memorandum continued "Ibn Saud's political importance in the Arab world is personal to him and will not be automatically inherited by his successor. Our major political interest in Saudi Arabia will, accordingly, disappear on Ibn Saud's death". Ibid.
- <sup>205</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>206</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>207</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>208</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>209</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>210</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>211</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>212</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>213</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>214</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>215</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>216</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>217</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>218</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>219</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>220</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>221</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>222</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>223</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>224</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>225</sup> Record of meeting at the Foreign Office on Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia, 11 December 1945, FO 371/45543.
- <sup>226</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>227</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>228</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>229</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>230</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>231</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>232</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>233</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>234</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>235</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>236</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>237</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1945, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 February 1946, FO 371/52823.
- <sup>238</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>239</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 18 February 1943 In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 327-328.
- <sup>240</sup> See Ibid. Also, see from Foreign office to Jeddah, 4 March 1943. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 329-330.
- <sup>241</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>242</sup> From the US Minster, Cairo to the Secretary of State, 17 April 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1**. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications,

1980, pp. 136-139. It should be noted that Ibn Saud had sent Roosevelt a letter on 19 November 1938, in which the whole story of the Arab right over Palestine was explained at length. See Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. The Palestine Issue in Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy: 1936-1981. Ph.D. thesis, University of Exeter, 1989, pp. 154-156.

<sup>243</sup> From Ibn Saud to Roosevelt, 30 April 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 150-156.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> See from Roosevelt to Ibn Saud, 26 May 1943. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 158-159. Also, from Roosevelt to Ibn Saud, undated. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 157.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> From Jeddah (Wikeley) to Foreign Office, 9 August 1943, Prem 4/28/3. Also, see Al-Anqari, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 123-124. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز. Beirut: دار العلم للملايين, 1992, pp. 1138-1143.

<sup>248</sup> From Jeddah (Wikeley) to Foreign Office, 9 August 1943, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>249</sup> Hart, Parker T. op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>250</sup> From Jeddah (Wikeley) to Foreign Office, 29 August 1943, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid. Also see note: 151 of Chapter one.

<sup>255</sup> Hart, Parker T. op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> From Foreign Office to the Prime Minister, 9 November 1943, Prem 4/28/3. It should be noted here that there was cooperation between the US government and the British government on the Hoskins mission to Saudi Arabia. Roosevelt sought British government agreement on the visit, particularly as it concerned the Palestinian issue. Moreover, Hoskins visited London on 2 November 1943 to give the British government a detailed report on his visit to Saudi Arabia. Ibn Saud also informed the British government confidentially about the outcome of the Hoskins discussions. From Jeddah (Wikeley) to Foreign Office, 10 August 1943, Prem 4/28/3. Also, from the USA Embassy in London to Foreign Office, 29 October 1943, Prem 4/28/3. Also, Foreign Office to the Prime Minister, 2 November 1943, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>258</sup> From Foreign Office to the Prime Minister, 9 November 1943, Prem 4/28/3.

<sup>259</sup> From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 21 February 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 217-219. The initial idea of holding a meeting between Ibn Saud and Roosevelt surfaced in February 1944, and before the end of that year they had both already expressed their desire for one. However, the first official communication regarding the meeting occurred on 4 February 1945 when President Roosevelt invited Ibn Saud to a meeting at the Great Bitter Lake in Egypt. Hart, Parker T. op. cit., p. 39. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 128-129. Also, From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>260</sup> It should be noted that there was no agreed agenda for the conversations, thus before the meeting the two parties had not decided upon any certain item to be covered. However the meeting was open for both of the leaders to discuss any subject they may have thought necessary. See Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Roosevelt, as an annex to the Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542. Also, see from the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229. During their conversation Ibn Saud and Roosevelt were joined by Yusuf Yassin, the Deputy Foreign Minister and Private Secretary to Ibn Saud at that time, and William Eddy. See from the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 21 February 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim Saudi Arabia Enters the

**Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 217-219. Jordan recorded; "a very friendly relationship was quickly established. The King spoke of being the "twin" brother of the President, in years, in responsibility as Chief of State, and in physical disability. The President said, "But you are fortunate to still have the use of your legs to take you wherever you choose to go". The King replied, "It is you, Mr. President, who are fortunate. My legs grow feebler every year; with your more reliable wheel-chair you are assured that you will arrive". The President then said, "I have two of these chairs, which are also twins. Would you accept one as a personal gift from me?" The King said, "Gratefully. I shall use it daily and always recall affectionately the giver, my great and good friend . . .". From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>261</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1156. Various researchers had noted this. See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 237. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 130.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid. Also, Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1161.

<sup>265</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Roosevelt, as an annex to the Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid. It should be noted that this memorandum (which was later handed by Ibn Saud to Churchill upon their meeting in Fayoum) was worked out in English and Arabic by Yusuf Yassin and William Eddy, and approved by Ibn Saud and Roosevelt. See from the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 21 February 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 217-219.

<sup>267</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Roosevelt, as an annex to the Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid. At the conclusion of their talk on Palestine Ibn Saud told Roosevelt of his proposal to send "an Arab mission to America and England to expound the case of the Arabs and Palestine". President Roosevelt believed that "this was a very good idea because he thought many people in America and England are misinformed". Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 177-178.

<sup>275</sup> Memorandum of Conversation between Ibn Saud and Roosevelt, as an annex to the Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid. Regarding agricultural development in the Arab world in general, and in Saudi Arabia in particular, President Roosevelt "emphasised the need for developing water resources, to increase the land under cultivation . . . He expressed special interest in irrigation, tree planting and water power, which he hoped would be developed after the war in many countries including the Arab lands". Ibn Saud replied by thanking the President "for promoting agriculture so vigorously". However, he said that "he himself could not engage with any enthusiasm in the development of his country's agriculture and public works if this prosperity would be inherited by the Jews". Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid. Ibn Saud told Eddy later in the same day "Never have I heard the English so accurately described". Ibid. As mentioned previously, the official memorandum of conversation which was approved by Ibn Saud and Roosevelt did not include any subject regarding Britain, and that was - possibly - because Ibn Saud and Roosevelt were going to let the British see this memorandum.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>285</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to the Foreign Office, 21 February 1945, FO 371/45542. When Ibn Saud arrived at the Hotel du Lac in the afternoon of 16 February, King Farouk of Egypt accompanied by President Shukri al-Kuwatly of Syria paid him a visit. Ibid. The story of Churchill's invitation to Ibn Saud is as follows: During the Yalta conference on 9 February 1945, Churchill sent a telegram to Ibn Saud which stated "My dear friend I greatly desire you to meet the President of the United States who is also one of my most cherished friends. I'm coming to Egypt especially to see you after you have had your talks with him". From Prime Minister to Ibn Saud, 9 February 1945, 9 February 1945, FO 371/45542. From this telegram it seems that Churchill was not informed of the official American invitation to Ibn Saud (on 4 February). In addition the idea of meeting Ibn Saud probably did not come to Churchill until after he had discussed the subject with Roosevelt during the conference. Although Ibn Saud did not receive Churchill's telegram until he was already in conference with Roosevelt, he had been told orally before leaving Jeddah that Churchill would like to meet him in Egypt. William Eddy reported after Ibn Saud's departure from Jeddah on the 12 of February that "while I was visiting with the King alone in his cabin the first night on board, he told me that Mr. Jordan had told him that he would receive en route an invitation to meet Mr. Churchill after the meeting with Mr. Roosevelt". From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>286</sup> See Record of Conversation with King Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid. Also, Wahba, Hafiz. **خمسون عاما في جزيرة العرب (Fifty years in the Arabian Peninsula).** Cairo: مكتبة مصطفى البياي, 1960, p. 159.

<sup>290</sup> Record of Conversation with King Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid. In addition, Churchill argued that the Jews were advantageous to the Arabs "in cultivating desert areas in Palestine". Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> It should be noted that all quotes here are taken from: Ibid. However, Ibn Saud told Eddy on 20 of February 1945 that he answered Churchill as follows: "I replied that, as he well knows, I have made no secret of my friendship and gratitude to Great Britain, a friend I have always been ready to help as I shall always help her and the Allies against their enemies. I told him, however, that what he proposes is not help to Britain or the Allies, but an act of treachery to the Prophet and all believing Muslims which would wipe out my honor and destroy my soul. I could not acquiesce in a compromise with Zionism much less take any initiative. Furthermore, I pointed out, that even in the preposterous event that I were willing to do so, it would not be a favor to Britain, since promotion of Zionism from any quarter must indubitably bring bloodshed, wide-spread disorder in the Arab lands, with certainly no benefit to Britain or anyone else". From the US Minister at Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 22 February 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 221-222.

<sup>296</sup> Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> The evidence that Ibn Saud was not satisfied with his conversation with Churchill in regard to Palestine was made clear in Ibn Saud's talk with Eddy on 20 February 1945, See section E: III of this chapter. Ibn Saud told Eddy that when he requested Churchill's assurance on stopping Jewish immigration to Palestine "Churchill refused to promise, though he assured me [Ibn Saud] that he would oppose any plan of immigration which would drive the Arabs out of Palestine or deprive them of the means of livelihood there". From the US Minister at Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 22 February

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1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 221-222.

<sup>304</sup> Record of Conversation with King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud in Fayoum, 17 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> From the US Minister at Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> From Jeddah (Jordan) to the Foreign Office, 21 February 1945, FO 371/45542.

<sup>314</sup> This argument is supported by Laurence Grafftey-Smith when he wrote "The Roosevelt-Ibn Saud conversations might well have had an influence on later relations, for they were cordial and friendly". Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. op. cit., p. 251.

<sup>315</sup> From the US Minister, Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 3 March 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 224-229.

<sup>316</sup> From the US Minister at Jeddah to the Secretary of State, 22 February 1945. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part 1.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 221-222.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid.

### ***Chapter Three: Causes of Changing Relations, 1946-1948***

With special emphasis on some of the sources that have facilitated the occurrence of changing relations between Saudi Arabia and Britain, this chapter will attempt to discover the implications of several developments in the main conduct of Anglo-Saudi relations during 1946 and through to 1948. Within this perspective and in accordance with the research questions, theme, and framework, certain developments will be focused upon.

The end of the Anglo-American conflict in respect to Saudi Arabia and its impact on Saudi-British relations will be studied. The development of Saudi Arabian ties with both Britain and the USA will be examined alongside the improvement of Saudi economic income and King Ibn Saud's strategic thinking towards each of them. The Saudi-Hashemite problem and its impact will be comprehensively researched. The development of the Palestine Issue and its general implications will also be examined. Finally, the full panoply of Saudi-British strategic connections will be surveyed before reaching the chapter conclusion.

#### **A. The Improvement of Anglo-American Relations in Regard to Saudi Arabia**

The preceding chapter revealed that enhancing US-Saudi ties had led to tension between Britain and the USA over Saudi Arabia and that the discord had forced the British government to assess its policy in this regard. By the end of 1945 the British government had decided upon the implementation of a collaboration policy with the US government in respect to Saudi Arabia. The subsequent developments through 1946 and into 1947 led to full understanding, as the following pages will demonstrate.

As proposed by the British governments departmental special meeting at the Foreign Office on 11 December 1945,<sup>1</sup> the British Ambassador in Washington, Lord Halifax, was instructed on 22 December 1945 to invite the Americans for general talks on Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia.<sup>2</sup> Halifax was asked to "sound" the director of the NEA, Mr Loy Henderson, if he would be able to visit London for the talks. Alternatively, Halifax would be able to carry out the discussions in Washington, pending further detailed instructions from London. The Foreign Office

dispatch (to the British Embassy in Washington) underlined the objective of the proposed talks as follow:

“We are convinced that there is no valid reason for any serious differences of opinion between us and the Americans in regard to Saudi Arabia. Our respective interests in that country do not conflict, and we have a common interest in ensuring the stability and prosperity of the country. We know that Ibn Saud needs both British and American help, and the main object of the proposed talks would be to assign to each country the contribution it can best make towards the welfare of Saudi Arabia”.<sup>3</sup>

It was explained in that dispatch that though “a great measure of co-operation” between the State Department and the Foreign Office in Saudi Arabia “has been achieved” during recent years, still there had been “regrettable manifestations of jealousy and rivalry”.<sup>4</sup> Hence in order to avoid the occurrence of such contentions, “we should like now to place our relations with the Americans on a fresh and more satisfactory footing”.<sup>5</sup> In the future the British and the Americans, “must endeavour to regard [themselves] . . . and each other [in Saudi Arabia] as fellow workers on a common task”.<sup>6</sup> In order to achieve that, the British and the US governments should consult and inform each other before any of them “puts forward a scheme for assistance to the Saudi Arabian Government or receives a request for assistance from that Government”.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, it was illustrated that “in view of the [present] financial position” of Britain and the USA, it seems that Saudi Arabian financial requirements “should be provided mainly by the United States Government, especially as American interests are the only [one that derives] . . . profits from . . . [the] exploitation of Saudi Arabian oil”.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand British assistance to Saudi Arabia would “have to be largely limited to contributions to the provision of services and technical advice”.<sup>9</sup> The primary topics of the proposed talks would include - alongside the need for general understanding - the subjects of providing Saudi Arabia with a British financial adviser, and a British Military Mission.<sup>10</sup>

At the beginning of January 1946, when Halifax initially talked to Henderson, the question of the financial adviser abstracted a smooth arrangement for the proposed talks.<sup>11</sup> The NEA director was at once uncomfortable with the idea of the British

adviser. Halifax reported back to the Foreign Office Henderson's reaction on this particular matter, as follows:

"If the Americans are to furnish by far greater share of financial assistance to Ibn Saud, such a request would inevitably look like an attempt on the part of His Majesty's Government to obtain financial control without incurring financial sacrifice, and that the position would be rather hopelessly invidious one".<sup>12</sup>

On 9 January 1946, Halifax received a dispatch from the Foreign Office controverting Henderson's misunderstanding of British government intentions in regard to the financial adviser matter.<sup>13</sup> The Foreign Office message, which was to be explained to Henderson, stated:

"We are not seeking to control Saudi Arabian finance by means of such an appointment, and we very much hope that the Americans have no such intentions either. What we are anxious for is that Ibn Saud should be given disinterested technical advice on financial matters by the person best qualified to give it irrespective of nationality. This person should be Ibn Saud's own servant and under no obligation to any other party; we would even expect him, if he thought it necessary in Ibn Saud's interests, to oppose the wishes of his own government".<sup>14</sup>

When Halifax illustrated the contents of the message to Henderson on 19 January, the latter assured the Ambassador, "that he himself fully appreciated that . . . [the British] Government . . . [was] not seeking to control Saudi Arabian finance by the appointment of an Indian Sunni Moslem financial adviser".<sup>15</sup> However, "it was unfortunately true that others [within the US government] would never be brought to believe this".<sup>16</sup> Henderson argued that the appointment of such an adviser would be unfair not only to the USA, but also to Saudi Arabia and Britain. Exemplifying his argument, Henderson, stated that if such an adviser was "compelled to give financial advice to Ibn Saud which was displeasing . . . to any American interests . . . or was to the advantage of . . . [the British], it would inevitably be said that he was influenced by . . . [the British] Government".<sup>17</sup>

Despite the British government aspiration towards improving American-Anglo relations in regard to Saudi Arabia, it could be said that the issue of the British financial adviser was about to revive the conflict if it was to be pushed further. Indeed, this issue which had already delayed the preparations for the proposed talks was seen even by Halifax as the vehicle that could "greatly complicate . . . [British] relations with Americans over Saudi Arabia".<sup>18</sup> On the other hand it became apparent that Ibn Saud could be no longer in need of the services of such an adviser. On 23 January 1946, Grafftey-Smith wrote to the Foreign Office, explaining that Ibn Saud may well not accept a British financial adviser "if offered" one at the present time.<sup>19</sup> In his dispatch, the British Minister stated that the King's request which was "made in 1944 was wrung from him by circumstances which are no longer valid. He has not (repeat not) ever referred to the matter since".<sup>20</sup> Though, Grafftey-Smith's and Halifax's views alongside the American resistance could logically abandon the idea of the financial adviser, still the Foreign Office was not completely convinced in leaving it aside.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, the development of Anglo-American relations over Saudi Arabia in March 1946 could be considered as the decisive test that provided a resting place for the issue of the financial adviser as far as the Foreign Office was concerned. King Ibn Saud's rejection, on 21 March, of an American loan offer, was the cause of some irritation to British-US relations in Saudi Arabia.<sup>22</sup> Though the King's refusal was mainly due to the terms of the offer, the Americans suspected a British contribution over this.<sup>23</sup> When Eddy and Mr Richard Sanger, State Department Official in Charge of the Saudi Arabian desk, called upon the British Embassy in Jeddah in the last week of March, "it was at once apparent" to Grafftey-Smith that they both suspected the British over this development.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, Halifax cabled the Foreign Office on 29 March explaining that "It is clear that the State Department are not entirely able to dismiss the suspicion that [the] British . . . may have encouraged the King to refuse United States loan with some sort of alternative proposition of their own".<sup>25</sup>

No doubt that the Foreign Office, which was determined to improve Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia, had been faced with an untoward situation. Indeed, the American suspicion towards the British had occurred in a similar 'scenario' to the Henderson example of 19 January, but it happened even without the

engagement of a British financial advisor. It could be said that this development did not just end the idea of the British financial adviser, but also that it made the British government more determined to improve relations with the US government in Saudi Arabia.

From the first sign of American suspicions, Grafftey-Smith took the initiative and endeavoured to dispel their doubts, a step that was blessed and followed by the Foreign Office. Halifax was also asked to reassure the State Department about the goodwill of British government policy towards US interests in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the British government decided to let its benevolent policy in this regard speak for itself. Hence, practical steps identical to the Foreign office explanations to Halifax on 22 December 1945 were immediately put into action. Frankness with the Americans in regard to British government assistance schemes in Saudi Arabia was a core point in this approach. Thus, instructions in this concern were sent to Britain's representatives in both Jeddah and Washington.<sup>26</sup>

At the end of May 1946 - when the Saudi government was pressing the British government for a final reply in regard to the proposed British Military Mission - London took a constructive step. As the proposed US-British meeting had not yet been held, the British government informed the US government about the scheme and its details. On 9 July 1946, the British Embassy in Washington was informed that the US government had no objection to the British Military Mission to Saudi Arabia.<sup>27</sup> In a similar way the British government kept the US government informed about the other scheme regarding the British Civil Air Training Mission.<sup>28</sup>

Broadly speaking, the development of US-British relations in regard to Saudi Arabia had improved from April 1946 onwards. Moreover, the matters that concerned the British government and that were motivating it to press for American-British talks at the beginning of the year had become obsolete by the end of July 1946. Hence, it could be said that a special discussion on Saudi Arabia was not considered an urgent issue by the end of the summer. In fact such discussion was delayed until when talks between the Americans and the British regarding the Middle East as a whole, took place in Washington in October/November 1947.<sup>29</sup>

In Washington talks, which opened on 16 October and closed on 7 November 1947, the Americans and the British had reached a number of conclusions regarding the Middle East in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular.<sup>30</sup> The general conclusion in regard to the whole area stated that:

“ . . . the security of the Middle East . . . is vital to the security both of the United Kingdom and of the United States, and to world peace; that neither the U.K. nor the U.S. can implement a policy of this nature without the support of the other; and that each country should therefore cooperate with the other in the area, giving each other assistance and support and abjuring any sense of rivalry or desire for one country to replace the other”.<sup>31</sup>

In regard to Saudi Arabia the US and the British government representatives<sup>32</sup> had reached a conclusion on the following lines of understanding:

“The British Government regarded it as most important that their ties of friendship with King Ibn Saud should be maintained and further strengthened. Advantage might be taken of the friendship of King Ibn Saud for the purpose of arriving at regional security arrangements in the Middle East . . . At the same time the British Government looked with favour on the position which the United States had established for itself in the country and wished for the closest cooperation between themselves and the United States Government . . . The British and the American Government should keep each other closely informed regarding their respective policies and activities in Saudi Arabia”.<sup>33</sup>

The US-British understanding, which was finalised by the 1947 agreements, is advantageous for the general scope of their relations in Saudi Arabia. These agreements - if fully put into practice - would eliminate the usual rivalry that existed between them (in regard to Saudi Arabia), thus ending the potentiality of future trouble for both of them there. On the whole, it could be said that the improvement of Anglo-American relations over Saudi Arabia was rewarding if it was evaluated from the dimension of Britain's and the USA's mutual relations.

Nevertheless, the impact of this development on Saudi Arabian relations with both the USA and Britain could be assessed differently. Two outcomes of the US-British understanding could help clarify its main impact on Saudi-British relations as well as

on Saudi-US relations. First this development resulted in a gain for Saudi Arabia; as it asserted the importance of its security for both Britain and the USA, and as it facilitated the freedom of Saudi government preferences in choosing between either party for further cooperations.<sup>34</sup> Second, this agreement opened up the door for either the USA or Britain to penetrate Saudi Arabia economically, politically, militarily, etc. It could be said, that the broad result of this development would be advantageous to the power that is intending and capable in increasing its influence in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, such a development would be advantageous for the power that Saudi Arabia was wishing to increase and to strengthen its ties with. The pages of this chapter and the chapters to follow will reveal, that it was the USA who was willing, capable, and welcome to practise such a matter in Saudi Arabia. Hence, it could be concluded that this development would generally benefit the course of Saudi-American relations rather than the course of Saudi-Anglo relations.

## **B. Saudi Arabian Ties with Britain and the USA and King Ibn Saud's Strategies Towards each Country, 1946-1947**

### **I. Saudi-US Economic Ties**

From the end of 1945 onwards, Saudi-US economic ties advanced in scope and content. Thus in addition to the involvement of American oil companies, US financial institutions, such as the Export Import Bank, became involved in Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the US's economic interest intensified as more American commercial companies were drawn into the country.

Although Ibn Saud was keen to get closer economic ties with the USA at all levels, still his enthusiasm did not let him neglect risk factors. In March 1946, King Ibn Saud refused an offer of a US loan of \$25 million.<sup>35</sup> The King's refusal of the Export Import (EXIM) Bank loan was due to specific reasons. The bank's condition on having the right to call and control the oil royalties for the repayment was unacceptable. The conditional terms that would give the Bank the right to permit and check the purchases as well as the projects were undesirable.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, a religious reason was an obstacle, as Ibn Saud was unwilling to undertake a financial loan that clearly and plainly required the 'payment of interest'. Finally, the size of the loan,

which would force Saudi Arabia to fulfil a “long-term arrangements for repayment”, had also inclined the King to dislike taking on such a commitment.<sup>37</sup>

Apart from his diligence in avoiding unneeded obligations, Ibn Saud was seeking and welcoming further enhancement to Saudi-American economic links. Hence, shortly after the refusal of the March 1946 offer, the Saudis embarked on new negotiations with the Americans, hoping for less tough terms and conditions, for a loan of \$10 million.<sup>38</sup> The outcomes of the second negotiations were fruitful. On 9 August 1946, the Saudi Arabian Finance Minister, Mr Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman, and EXIM Bank officials concluded - in Washington - an agreement that was suitable for Saudi Arabia.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to the loan, the Saudi government also tried to convince the US Administration to finance a railway project, running from the eastern coast of the Kingdom to Riyadh. Despite the fact that the US government had provided a team of experts, who examined the visibility of the venture in 1946, the Saudi government was told - later - to fund the project from private sources.<sup>40</sup> Even though the US government was willing to provide the Kingdom with certain direct finance, and though it was supporting the involvement of the American private sector there, still the governmental economic tie between the USA and Saudi Arabia had some limits. The Saudi government, in its turn, was favouring full and exclusive economic ties with the USA, at all levels, official and non-official. During the Saudi Arabian Crown Prince's - Saud Bin Abdulaziz - visit to the USA in January 1947 the US officials were informed that Saudi Arabia desired to “turn exclusively” to the US in all aspects concerning the Kingdom's economy.<sup>41</sup>

American private companies provided the “principal expression” of US involvement in the Saudi Arabian economy.<sup>42</sup> Several American companies - such as Bechtel - had undertaken development projects in Saudi Arabia. As facilitated by the EXIM Bank loan, the increase of Saudi Arabian income thereafter, and the Saudi as well as the US governments desires, the Kingdom had provided opportunities for the American private sector to participate in. Almost all the projects of building the country's infrastructure - such as roads, airports, public building constructions, etc. - became exclusive to Americans companies.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, larger contracts were exclusively

handed to American firms. In October 1946 the Saudi government signed an agreement with TWA for the creation and the operation of a Saudi Arabian airline.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, in July 1947 the Saudi government signed a massive contract with the newly formed - Trans Arabian Pipeline Company (TAPLINE) to construct a pipeline from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean Sea.<sup>45</sup>

It could be said that the expansion of the American commercial enterprises was a major setback to the relatively smaller British interests in Saudi Arabia. For instance, in September 1946, the British firm, Gellatly and Hankey, lost a tender for Jeddah electricity, because the Saudi government preferred to hand it to the American Company, Bechtel.<sup>46</sup> In the same year when the Saudi government took the final decision in regard to the oil concession of the Saudi-Kuwaiti Neutral Zone, "it was not surprising" to see an oil company that "was acting in partnership with British interest" losing out to - for the benefit of - a company that was associated with American interest.<sup>47</sup>

Though the impact of the increasing American involvement in the Saudi economy was apparent to the British government by the autumn of 1946, the matter was no longer a gateway for US-British rivalry, as the UK government was already determined by mid-1946 to improve its relations with the US government in Saudi Arabia.<sup>48</sup> Whatsoever, it could be said that the increasing Saudi-US economic relations would have a long-term impact on Saudi-British relations, particularly, when the scale and the scope of the Saudi-US ties were developing in a newer and higher volume that were facilitated by the improvement of Saudi Arabian incomes, the Saudi as well as the US governments desires, and the beginning of a decline in the Saudi-British relations, etc.

## II. The Improvement of Saudi Arabian Income and its Further Impact on Relations with Britain as well as with the USA

As was predicted in the early 40's, the economy of Saudi Arabia started to improve after the end of W.W.II. Oil royalties were escalating steadily, as it reached the total of \$12 million in 1946, \$19 million in 1947, and \$40 million in 1948.<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, the income from pilgrimages was also increasing with the rise in the number of

pilgrims from overseas. Foreign pilgrims who visited Mecca were over 62,000 in 1946 and 1947 respectively, "a fifty percent increase" in comparison with 1945. Above and beyond, the number reached 93,000 in 1948, with estimation of the continuity of gradual increases thereafter.<sup>50</sup>

The rapid growth of Saudi Arabian income had weakened the necessity - that used to exist during wartime - for financial assistance. Consequently, the importance of the substance that used to be in the hands of Britain and the USA was severely lessened in the post-war era. For instance, the figure for Saudi Arabian income from oil royalties in 1946 had exceeded - and replaced - the sum of the joint US-British assistance programme to the Kingdom during 1945.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, Saudi government methods in funding its financial deficit had also changed in a way consistent with the increase of its income, and with the transformation of its desires and policies. Indeed, the strong prediction of a bright future for Saudi Arabian income - as early as 1946 - could explain why Ibn Saud was endeavouring to finance the Kingdom through means of loans from the USA, and why he was not pushing - keenly, as he used to do during the war period - for financial subsidies.

The alteration of the forms of the British-Saudi cooperation from that of direct financial assistance into that of technical cooperation - as the following pages will explain - can be further understood by Britain's economic difficulties at the end the war. However, the suppression of Saudi government financial needs, which abolished the vitality of its financial connection with Britain, could be further understood by the growth of Saudi Arabian income. Hence, the expansion of Saudi Arabian income could not be regarded as a helpful factor for the general progress of the Saudi-British relations.

Nevertheless, the growth of Saudi Arabian income could be seen as a helpful factor for Saudi-US relations, if the matter was to be analysed alongside other factors within Saudi-American ties. As revealed earlier, the increment of Saudi Arabian revenues, had facilitated the participation of the American private sector in the country, a matter that could bring about further American interests in the Kingdom. Hence, another

point could be added to the negative impact of this development on the general scope of Saudi-British relations.

### III. Saudi-British Ties

As was suggested in the Foreign Office memorandum of 30 November 1945, Britain had embarked from 1946 onwards on long-term technical assistance to Saudi Arabia.<sup>52</sup> By providing such assistance the British government was hoping to reassure Ibn Saud of its good intentions, and to mitigate any Saudi disappointment about the cessation of financial subsidies.<sup>53</sup> Britain did not want the cessation of the subsidies to affect its relations with Saudi Arabia. Particularly, when the matter was concerned “a country where all decisions reflect the moods of a most politically-minded potentate, [as] even the simplest economic developments are politically interpreted”.<sup>54</sup>

By May 1946, the British government was arranging for a military mission to be sent to Saudi Arabia in order to train and create the foundation of a Saudi army.<sup>55</sup> The provision of a military mission was viewed in London as an essential issue, particularly as it was “about the only form of assistance . . . [Britain] can contemplate offering to . . . Saudi Arabia” at that certain time.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the British Foreign Secretary, Mr Ernest Bevin, attached:

“great importance to the provision of this Mission, . . . as a valuable means of strengthening the British position in Saudi Arabia and as a material contribution towards the preservation of stable internal conditions in that country, with consequent benefit to the large number of British pilgrims who visit it and to the peace of the Middle East as a whole”.<sup>57</sup>

Additionally, the British also viewed that furnishing Saudi Arabia with such a mission would “represent a certain counter-weight to the growth of United States influence in Saudi Arabia . . . and would help to enhance . . . [Britain's] prestige in the Middle East as a whole”.<sup>58</sup>

In January 1947 the British Military Mission (BMM) was established in Taif and started its operations.<sup>59</sup> Gradually the mission gained the confidence and cooperation of the Saudi officers. During the first year of its operations, the BMM seemed to

satisfy the Saudis to some extent, particularly when it started to show some signs of its potentiality in “creating the foundations of a Saudi Arabian Army”.<sup>60</sup> However, in broader reach, the Saudi-Hashemite issue obscured the initial success of the BMM. Indeed, the works of the mission could be easily undervalued when looked at, alongside King Ibn Saud’s point of view - a vital opinion that touched the heart of Saudi-British relations - when the King compared Britain military cooperations with Hashemites and his Kingdom.<sup>61</sup>

In addition to the military mission, the British government offered to provide an air training team in order to instruct Saudi Arabian pilots.<sup>62</sup> It took the British government a long time to decide about the matter of the air-training mission, particularly when the Treasury was not totally in its favour.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, a small British Civil Air Training Mission of two training aircraft commenced training in Saudi Arabia in October 1947.<sup>64</sup> The British Civil Air Training Mission continued its operations beside the British Military Mission throughout 1948 into the early 1950s.<sup>65</sup>

Even if the positive impact of British technical assistance to Saudi Arabia can be doubted, particularly when analysed next to the other factors that were to overshadow Saudi-British relations from 1946 onward, it has to be said that with the absence of the usual British financial assistance, the technical assistance had - at least - kept the channels of cooperation between Britain and Saudi Arabia functioning. The maintenance of British-Saudi cooperation could be regarded as no less than a helpful factor that could prevent Saudi-British relations from a total - or even immediate - downfall.

#### V. Ibn Saud’s Views and Strategies on Saudi Arabian Relations with the US and Britain

The focus in the immediate pages will be on King Ibn Saud’s instructions to Prince Saud before the latter began an official visit to the USA as well as to Britain in the winter of 1947.<sup>66</sup> Particular focus will be on the instructions concerning Ibn Saud’s opinions and strategies towards Britain and the USA.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, the outcome of this procedure and its impact on Ibn Saud’s assessment will be analysed.

King Ibn Saud instructed Prince Saud to perform the dialogues in Washington within specific guidelines. Saud was to “assure the US President and the American officials . . . about Saudi Arabia’s sincere friendship . . . and of its determined desire to strengthen Saudi-US relations in all of the political and the economic fields”.<sup>68</sup> In addition, Saud was to disclose to the Americans, Ibn Saud’s delight and satisfaction as to the USA’s complete “departure from its previous policy of isolation and that Saudi Arabia is putting great expectations on US involvement in Middle Eastern politics”.<sup>69</sup> Emphasising the importance of this issue, Saud was told to convey King Ibn Saud’s “wishes that the USA’s political approach in this regard would be constantly lasting, hence Saudi Arabia could be assured on the stability of this strategy”.<sup>70</sup>

Regarding the convergence of US and Saudi policies in the Middle East, Saud was instructed to “assure the Americans about the Kings desire in collaborating with them, in all matters that lead to the stability of peace in the Middle East”.<sup>71</sup> With exceptions to the US policy towards the Palestine issue, Ibn Saud believed that there “should not be any political difficulties between the USA and Saudi Arabia in regard to the Middle East”.<sup>72</sup>

In respect to Ibn Saud’s views on Saudi-British relations, Saud was provided with a comprehensive account to be conveyed - only - to the Americans. The Prince was to introduce the King opinion on this subject to President Truman and the US administration officials, on the following careful lines:

“That since the foundation of our country, we were - and still are - loyal friends to Britain. Despite circumstances and occasions that occurred during a long period of time, in which we both [Britain and Saudi Arabia] had faced a variety of problems and troubles, still the broader lines of the policy of each of us towards the other remained generally friendly. We [the Saudis] had experienced the British and they had as well experienced us, we knew them and they knew us. Therefore dealing between us became manageable, and understanding became reachable. Everyone knows the sincerity of our cordial stance alongside Britain during its difficulties in the last war, and how we did not abnegate our friendship with it, during a time in which even Britain’s closest friends had let them down. Our *recherché* stance had caused the British

government to confess that it would never forget our attitude in these black days".<sup>73</sup>

Though Ibn Saud was already disappointed - by 1947 - with the British government, particularly in regard to its treatment of the Saudi-Hashemite relations - as this chapter will show - still the King's technique in representing such a matter to the US government was watchful. Ibn Saud's carefulness here could be interpreted as a covering measure against any negative reaction by the British government if such information were passed to London by any means. Indeed, the King, who was aware that the security of his country was still associated with Britain at that time, was very careful not to irritate London, particularly when the USA had not replaced Britain in this regard yet. Ultimately, exaggeration of British and Saudi Arabian friendship was evident in the representations, which Saud intended to press in Washington. The carefully designed introduction of Saudi-British relations goes on, in which, to some extent, certain contradictions could be observed:

"We are loyal friends to Britain. As well as that Britain is generally friendly with us, regardless of the existence of difficulties from time to time, and despite Britain's adoption of negative or even unfriendly stances in some of the cases in which our policies at odds with those of the Ashraf [Hashemites] . . . for instance".<sup>74</sup>

Nevertheless, the instructions, which were communicated by the Crown Prince to the Americans, explained that the King had experienced a change in Britain's attitude towards Saudi Arabia. According to Ibn Saud, this change could not be fully comprehended without putting the USA into the equation:

"The end of the war, and the entrance of an active and effective American role in the Middle East, had made us realise what could explain some of the changes in Britain traditional policy toward us. Everyone is aware that the British officials compete and contend with the activities of American politicians and businessmen . . . No doubt that Britain was cautious on the preservation of the Middle East within its political and economical sphere of influence. But the USA entrance [into the Middle East, and into Saudi Arabia in particular] by means of noticeable activities had aggravated British anxiety. Accordingly we [in Saudi Arabia] began to feel Britain's deflection from us,

into that of our enemies. We can therefore verify that without the USA's dynamic entrance into the Middle East, and without us [Saudi Arabia] becoming one of the first countries that the USA had intensified its political and economical relations with, Britain would not even consider deviating its traditional and cordial relations with us. Indication of this deflection had emerged in several forms. One of the principal signs was Britain deviation from the policy of a balance of power between us and our opponents, and its conduct in strengthening them by direct and indirect means".<sup>75</sup>

The instructions on this subject had concluded by insisting on the necessity of a comprehensive understanding between the Saudi and the US governments in case of radical changes in the Saudi-British relations; a matter which revealed that Ibn Saud was attempting to identify the range of policies and actions that the US government was willing to undertake in such circumstances. This particular action by Ibn Saud, which can be seen as 'testing' future USA policy in this regard, could be also seen as an 'all-inclusive' attempt. Hence in addition to its focus on the future of Saudi Arabian relations with Britain and the USA, it was also aiming to find out the range of direct policies and actions that the US government was willing to take in regard to the maintenance of Saudi Arabian security. On this it was stated in the 'carefully inscribed' instructions:

"As indicated we - still - consider Britain as our traditional friend. In addition, we do not want to adhere to any policy that would contradict with Britain. However, if critical circumstances have to force us to revise this policy - as because of our ties with the USA, and because of Britain's sponsorship of our enemies against us - we need to be in frank and plain advanced understanding with the Americans, particularly in regard to US government opinion on the necessity of agreement and alliance between Saudi Arabia and the USA in such a situation. Understanding between the US government and us on this concern, is a crucial issue. We need to know at the present time the degree to which the US government could agree upon in case of such circumstance".<sup>76</sup>

Unlike the comprehensive instructions on Saud's mission to the USA, the King did not instruct his son on equivalently fundamental issues in regard to the UK mission.<sup>77</sup> Accordingly, Saud's visit to Britain, which took place between 20 February and 1

March 1947, became less important in comparison to his visit to the USA.<sup>78</sup> The differences in Ibn Saud's views regarding Saudi Arabian ties with Britain and the USA, and Ibn Saud's desire to strengthen his ties with the Americans and not with the British, had become a neutral consideration to the performance of Saud's visits to each of the capitals; a further indication of the general course of Saudi Arabian relations with each of those World Powers.

In Washington the Saudi delegates could not get the precise and the ambitious reply that they were looking for; however indistinct US assurance was attained.<sup>79</sup> The US secretary of State, James Byrnes, assured Prince Saud and his companions, in mid-January 1947 that one of the principal policies of the USA in the Middle East was "to support the territorial integrity and political independence of Saudi Arabia".<sup>80</sup> In this regard the US government would "make sure that the principles of the United Nations Charter be fully applied to the countries of the Near East, including Saudi Arabia".<sup>81</sup> Hence, "King Ibn Saud could therefore depend upon the full active support of the United States in the United Nations in case any outside forces were to threaten or endeavor to undermine the integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia".<sup>82</sup>

The Americans were not convinced about the Saudi suspicions of the British government as siding with the Hashemites against Saudi Arabia or against any other countries in the Middle East. On this Byrnes illustrated that the US government had no "information causing it to believe that the British government was supporting [the Hashemites] . . . On the contrary, the US government believed that the British would not . . . desire developments that might disturb the status quo in the Near and Middle East".<sup>83</sup> Moreover, the US government informed the Saudi government at a later stage in 1947, that there were no indications that could even prove that the Hashemites were intending to harm "Saudi Arabia merely because King Ibn Saud continued to be friendly to the United States".<sup>84</sup>

The Saudi inputs and the ultimate American outputs had obviously provided King Ibn Saud with certain facts. The security of the Kingdom was - to some extent positively - assured, as the USA would support "the integrity and independence of Saudi Arabia". However, that assurance was not the exact or the expected one in accordance to Ibn Saud's opinion.<sup>85</sup> The USA assurance - which was obviously better than nothing - was

to be implemented indirectly, as it would be coming through the UN and according to its “principles” and “Charter”. Hence, such help might come after being diluted in the passageway of the international organisation, a matter that could be translated in Ibn Saud’s thoughts as a weak assurance.<sup>86</sup> Furthermore, it became a fact that the Americans were not sharing Ibn Saud’s opinions that the British were intending to harm Saudi Arabia by siding with the Hashemites, on the contrary a positive opinion about the British was explained to the Saudis. Ibn Saud’s point of view - that forms a fundamental part of his views in the instructions - which linked anti-Saudi Arabian attitude to the improvement of the Saudi-American ties, was also dismissed.<sup>87</sup>

It could be said that the differences of opinion between Saudi Arabia and the USA, alongside the weakness of the USA assurance, had left Ibn Saud with few options but to reconsider. Ibn Saud might have realised that it was still early for the US government to become fully associated with all matters that concern Saudi Arabia. Though, US-Saudi economic relations were increasing rapidly, still the King was realising that the US government could not yet fulfil the responsibility of becoming the sole protector which would insure the future of the Kingdom’s security. Ultimately, Ibn Saud might comprehend that if he wanted the US government to fulfil such a task he still needed to boost the Saudi-American interests, including additional enhancement to the already dashing tie in the economic sphere.

Though Ibn Saud was already disappointed with what he believed to be unfair British policies towards his case with the Hashemites, he was still left with no other choice but to try and work on Britain for his own national ends. Hence few tactics that included attempting to get a British assurance in regard to Saudi Arabia security were on the agenda of Saudi Arabia policy towards Britain. Moreover, Ibn Saud was struggling to win Britain to his side vis-à-vis what he believed to be a deflection from him towards the Hashemites. King Ibn Saud’s measures included efforts to improve Saudi-British relations by any means. Indeed, the upgrading of the Saudi-British diplomatic channels from that of Legations to that of Embassies in October 1947 cannot be understood if it was not measured from this perspective.<sup>88</sup>

### **C. The Saudi-Hashemite Contention and its Implications for Saudi-British Relations, 1946-1948**

When the British government was about to publicly announce its “decision to establish Trans-Jordan as a sovereign independent State”, Ibn Saud was presented on 14 January 1946, with “advance news of this intention”.<sup>89</sup> Along with the news, the British government “formerly assured [Ibn Saud] that the interests of Saudi Arabia would be borne in mind during the negotiation of an Anglo-Transjordan treaty”.<sup>90</sup>

Despite the British government promises - for the related Saudi Arabian interests - it could be said that the news by itself was disturbing. The Saudi monarch who used to prefer to have “his personal rivals conspicuously under British control”, was about to see the security of his Kingdom become exposed to - what he used to call - “Abdullah's intrigues”.<sup>91</sup> The preservation of Saudi Arabian security, which was a priority issue to Ibn Saud, must have been under careful consideration within the Saudi government immediate to the receipt of the news. At that particular time, the Saudis might have thought about all kind of reactions that they could possibly take, nevertheless, it could be said that their rational alternatives were in fact limited. King Ibn Saud, who “regards the Amir Abdullah [of Jordan], the head of Hashemites family, as his greatest enemy . . . [could not at that time] reasonably object to . . . [Abdullah] becoming King”;<sup>92</sup> or indeed, was not in a position to object to Jordan becoming independent.

In a memorandum to the British government on 18 January, Ibn Saud delicately - one may say reluctantly - welcomed the grant of independence to Jordan.<sup>93</sup> Nonetheless, the King expressed his worry of future Jordanian hostile activities towards Saudi Arabia, “especially if undertaken in cooperation with the Iraqi government”.<sup>94</sup> In this regard, Ibn Saud demanded “clear assurances that the change of status of Transjordan would not be allowed by . . . [the British government] to have such consequences”.<sup>95</sup>

In addition, Ibn Saud put forward certain territorial claims against Jordan. On this it was stated that, the “Hadda agreement of 1925, defining the frontier between Najd and Transjordan, was, by Article 14, valid only for so long as His Majesty's Government hold the mandate for Transjordan”.<sup>96</sup> Hence, the termination of the

mandate gave Saudi Arabia the “right to claim frontier modifications in consequence”.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, Saudi Arabia claims Aqaba and Maan, as those two towns were traditionally considered as a part of Hijaz, additionally Saudi Arabia claims a right to “a direct territorial” passageway into Syria.<sup>98</sup>

It could be said that the Saudi territorial claims, which were well thought out before being presented to the British government, were directed towards more than one goal. In addition to them being a gateway for purely territorial gains, these claims could be seen as a tactical measure that was aiming to weaken the emergence of Jordan.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, the timing of putting forward such claims could never have been better, with Britain reminded of its previous obligation to Saudi Arabia. Hence, by pushing forward such claims, while Britain was in the process of negotiations with Jordan, Ibn Saud may have optimistically thought that he could achieve the two goals - weaken the emerging Hashemite State, and gaining territories - at once. But, if the British left Jordan before settling the issue, Ibn Saud might have expected that the British government would at least - according to its promise of considering Saudi Arabian interests during the Jordanian-British negotiations - leave behind the basis for a settlement.

From this early stage of the development of the Saudi-Hashemites issue in 1946 it could be said that the impact of the Saudi-Hashemite issue on Saudi-British relations would mainly occur as a result of British government policies in regard to Saudi Arabian concerns. Indeed, Britain’s responses to Saudi Arabia’s request for “clear assurances” as well as to the Saudi’s territorial claims could impact on Saudi-British relations either positively or negatively, depending on the course of action that Britain might take.

The initial sign of a negative impact was noticeable by the spring of 1946. On 16 March, Ibn Saud sent a message to Grafftey-Smith pressing for a British reply to the Saudi memorandum of 18 January.<sup>100</sup> As the King was already losing his patience with the British government delay, the tone of the message was noticeably “excited”.<sup>101</sup> It could be said that the King, who was already - by that time - anticipating immediate proclamation of the Anglo-Jordanian treaty, was also under the impression that Britain might have neglected Saudi Arabian concerns. Moreover,

the King who was distantly watching the development of British-Jordanian negotiations was, by that time, noticing the incomparability of the ties that linked Britain with each of Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The well-equipped Jordanian - British made - Army, the Arab Legion - with over 8,000 officers by 1946 - was an evident sign of the advancement of Anglo-Jordanian ties.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, the continuity of the British financial subsidy - of about 2 million pounds annually - to Jordan was further evidence, at least in Ibn Saud point of view, of the close Anglo-Jordanian ties.<sup>103</sup> King Ibn Saud's point of view on this was explained to the US Minister to Saudi Arabia. After an audience with the King on 19 March, Eddy telegraphed the State Department, that Ibn Saud had expressed his "resentment against the British for keeping Abdulla supplied with trained troops and arms while at the same time keeping Saudi Arabia unarmed".<sup>104</sup>

On 22 March 1946, Britain and Jordan signed a treaty of Alliance and friendship. This treaty had terminated the 1928 Transjordan-Britain agreement and ended the British mandate on Jordan.<sup>105</sup> Ultimately, the Jordanian legislative Council held a meeting on 25 May 1946 in which it declared Jordan as an independent state and Abdullah as its King.<sup>106</sup> The Anglo-Jordanian treaty, which was announced before the Saudis received a response to their January memorandum, was unpopular - and could be considered as 'a bad fortune' - in Riyadh.<sup>107</sup>

Furthermore, when the British government responded to the Saudi Arabian King at a later stage, the feedback was not what the King had hoped for. Saudi Arabia was not given any "guarantees" against "aggression" by Hashemites. However, "a general assurance of British interest in friendly Saudi-Hashemite relations was conveyed".<sup>108</sup> Moreover, it became clear that, the British government did not care for the Saudi Arabian territorial claims.<sup>109</sup> The Saudis were "given no hope of British encouragement" on this issue, in fact they were informed that, "it was open to the Saudi Arabian and Transjordan Governments to reach a settlement of outstanding frontier questions by direct discussion, or by employing the methods laid down in the United Nations Charter for the peaceful settlement of disputes".<sup>110</sup> Ibn Saud resentment of the British government attitude was evident to Graffey-Smith who summarised it as follow:

“By their manner of withdrawing from their mandatory position in Transjordan His Majesty’s Government appeared to Ibn Saud to have unilaterally disengaged themselves from a specific treaty-relationship with himself and, as a result of their new detachment, to have left him to settle the thorniest of frontier problems with a sworn enemy of his person and dynasty”.<sup>111</sup>

King Ibn Saud who had been left to resolve his dispute directly with Abdullah still preferred to deal with the British government rather than dealing directly with the Jordanian government. Hence, in spite of Ibn Saud’s bitterness towards the British government response, he kept pressing for it to become associated “with the discussion of the developments resulting from their abandonment of the mandate”.<sup>112</sup> Yet, the British government “no less consistently, refused to have any part in such discussions”.<sup>113</sup> Nevertheless, a tactic by the Saudi government had persuaded the British government to agree to act - at least - as a channel of communication between Riyadh and Amman on this issue. The Saudi tactic, which had achieved this, was the refusal of the Saudi government “even to recognise a change in the diplomatic representation of Transjordan in . . . [Saudi Arabia], and insist on regarding . . . [the British] Minister as still protecting Transjordan interests”.<sup>114</sup> Hence, the British government had - at the end - no choice but to act as an intermediary between the Saudis and the Jordanians on this issue.

On 25 June 1946, the Saudi territorial claims were forwarded - by the British government - to the Jordanian government.<sup>115</sup> In a reply, the Jordanian Foreign Minister, Mr Samir Rifai wrote - to the British government - on 11 July, arguing that the present frontiers, which were inherited from the mandatory regime, are the final and acceptable frontiers for Jordan.<sup>116</sup> When the Jordanian government reply was conveyed to the Saudi government, the Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Faisal wrote back - to the British government - on 4 August, confirming the Saudi government rejection of “all that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Transjordan have expressed, and we persist in our claim”.<sup>117</sup>

By the end of August, the British government realised that, the negative impacts of the Saudi-Jordanian frontier dispute, would not only affect the already poor Saudi-

Jordanian relations but also would affect Saudi-British relations. Therefore, it became British policy to press the Saudis and the Jordanians to agree on holding direct talks between them on this subject.<sup>118</sup> The UK government efforts resulted in success, when both parties had agreed to make an informal and private exchange of views between the Saudi Foreign Minister and the Jordanian Foreign Minister, while both Ministers were attending "the Palestine Conference in London", in October 1946.<sup>119</sup> On 6 October, Faisal and Samir Rifai held a session of unsuccessful talks. Nevertheless, it was agreed to postpone the talks, until Faisal's proposed visit to Amman had taken place around the end of the year.<sup>120</sup>

In addition to the Saudi-Jordanian territorial dispute, Ibn Saud's nervousness about the Hashemites was increasing as signs of Abdullah's antagonistic activities were appearing, during the first year of Jordanian independence. Abdullah's propaganda in regard to the scheme of Greater Syria was a key issue. In particular the Jordanian King's declaration in the autumn of 1946 that, "the primary goal of his new Kingdom's foreign policy to be the establishment of a Greater Syria".<sup>121</sup>

It could be said that by the end of 1946, the Saudi-Hashemite case had overshadowed the Saudi-British relations. Though the signs of what the Saudis would regard as intimidating acts by the Hashemites were at a premature stage, it could be said that such acts were bound to bring about further harm to Saudi-British relations. But, most clearly, Britain's policies towards Jordan in 1946 - which included the emergence of Jordan as an independent State, British treatment of all the issues that related Jordan to Saudi Arabia, etc. - had brought about a negative impact on Saudi-British relations. A dispatch from the British Legation in Jeddah to the Foreign Office on 30 November, clarified this:

"The Saudi Arabian Government feel that in negotiating and signing the Treaty with Transjordan we have presented them with a fait accompli in which their own interests were involved but were not considered, and that, in this Treaty, we have given formal recognition to a situation which the Saudi Arabian Government have never accepted as more than a temporary arrangement, involving questions which they consider still outstanding between themselves and ourselves, namely their northern frontier and the question of a corridor into Syria. They consequently hold us responsible for

finding a solution for the problems existing in their relations with Transjordan".<sup>122</sup>

Being unsatisfied with the British government treatment of this case, and being more anxious of Abdullah's plans for Greater Syria - a scheme that could strengthen the Hashemites vis-à-vis the Saudis - Ibn Saud was reconsidering, by the end of 1946, the configuration of his policies. On one side, he was preparing - as this chapter explained previously - to turn the USA into a solo powerful patron for Saudi Arabia.<sup>123</sup> On the other side, he had considered making Faisal's visit to Amman a pure friendship visit, hence - at least - anti-Saudi propaganda could be avoided by maintaining a minimum friendship with Jordan. The question of the frontier was never mentioned during Faisal's visit to Jordan, which took place between 30 December 1946 and 1 January 1947. Faisal had explained to the Jordanians that King Ibn Saud had instructed him not to bring about any conflicting issue during what should be a pure friendship visit.<sup>124</sup>

Nevertheless, being unable to obtain a satisfactory security arrangement with the USA, as well as seeing no positive upshot to the diplomacy of Faisal's mission, King Ibn Saud considered going back to the British government on this subject.<sup>125</sup> With the intensification of Abdullah's propaganda on the Greater Syria plan, that included some anti-Saudi publicity, which was simultaneous to the negotiations of alliance between Iraq and Jordan in March-April, Ibn Saud was considering an appeal to the British government.<sup>126</sup> Besides, being inspired by the signing of a treaty of alliance between Iraq and Jordan on 14 April, Ibn Saud wrote to the British government.<sup>127</sup>

In his message to the British Foreign Secretary on 24 April 1947, the Saudi King re-explained the nature of his anxiety in regards to the Hashemite in general as well as his concern about the latest developments. Reintroducing this issue to the British, it was stated in that letter:

"As your Excellency knows, there . . . [have existed for] many years strained relations between us and the Hashemite [Hashemite] family, this, in spite of all our efforts to come to an understanding with them. But as you also know, our efforts have constantly been met with aloofness and coldness, and by malicious propaganda that was carried on against us".<sup>128</sup>

It was also explained in the King's letter that "The old activities about the project of Greater Syria are still carried on as strongly as ever".<sup>129</sup> Additionally, it was stressed that:

"The new military and political union between Transjordan and Iraq could not have been inspired by any intention of stopping outside aggression, but is in itself a beginning of an aggression against us and Syria as well. It aims at changing the *status quo*, a thing we can never tolerate under any circumstances".<sup>130</sup>

The main objective of Ibn Saud's message, which included - once again - a clear demand of a British guarantee and assurance, was in the conclusion of the dispatch:

"We . . . beg your Excellency to reconsider the question of the union between Iraq and Transjordan and assure us beyond any shadow of doubt that the British Government will never agree to any change in the Middle East, and to guarantee that no harm shall come to our country or our interests".<sup>131</sup>

On 6 of June, Bevin wrote back to Ibn Saud.<sup>132</sup> Bevin's letter did not bring about the assurance - or the guarantee - that Ibn Saud was looking for. Instead of giving assurance against any hostile act by the Hashemite, Bevin mentioned that Britain did not want to intervene directly or indirectly in the Greater Syria matter. Nonetheless, the letter brought about an explanation for the new treaty between Iraq and Jordan as it, "does not in fact amount to a union between . . . [them], but is very similar to the Treaty of 1936 between Saudi Arabia and Iraq. There seems no reason to think that it is directed against Saudi Arabia or against Syria".<sup>133</sup> In addition, Bevin stated that he believed that the policy of Iraq and Jordan was "not in any way directed against your Majesty or inspired by any intention to commit an act of aggression against neighbouring states".<sup>134</sup> As Britain desired the improvement of relations between Saudi Arabia and its Hashemite neighbours, Bevin advised for "personal discussion and direct negotiation", in which the differences could be settled "in a spirit of mutual goodwill".<sup>135</sup> Regarding the publication of the Abdullah White Paper on the Greater Syria scheme, - which came out after Ibn Saud had sent his letter to Bevin - the Foreign Secretary mentioned, to the Saudi Minister in London as he was handing him the reply, that the White Paper does not deserve "any particular attention".<sup>136</sup>

At this stage and as advised by Bevin, - and in order to show goodwill - the Saudi government initiated the reopening of the suspended frontier negotiations with the Jordanian government. On 8 June 1947 the Saudi Foreign Minister wrote to the Jordanian Foreign Minister, and invited him for direct discussions.<sup>137</sup> On 19 June Samir Rifai replied to Faisal accepting the reopening of negotiations.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, Faisal and Rifai carried out further correspondences until they scheduled the negotiations to be held in Jeddah in October 1947.<sup>139</sup> However, the proposed negotiations did not take place. The cancellation of the anticipated negotiations was not only because both Foreign Ministers were busy with other matters, such as the Palestinian question, at that time, but also because Saudi-Jordanian relations were deteriorating as Abdullah was escalating his plans and propaganda.<sup>140</sup>

Though Ibn Saud took Bevin's advice for the reopening of the suspended Saudi-Jordanian negotiations, still the King was not generally satisfied with the British Foreign Secretary's reply of 6 of June, as it did not bring about any British assurance and as it was not convincing on the subject of the Hashemites' activities. Thus the Saudi Minister in London was instructed to convey King Ibn Saud's dissatisfaction to the British government.<sup>141</sup> Hafiz Wahba called into the Foreign Office on 25 June 1947 and notified the head of the Eastern Department, Mr Charles Baxter, that Ibn Saud was not pleased with the contents of the reply. Wahba mentioned that the King could not agree with the Foreign Secretary's remarks about the intentions of the Hashemites, in fact Saudi Arabia was convinced that the alliance between Iraq and Jordan was ill intentioned. In reply Baxter expressed his sorrow that "Ibn Saud did not seem to like the terms of . . . Bevin's letter, but that, whatever Ibn Saud might think of the Hashemites, it was . . . [the British government's] genuine opinion that they were not planning any aggression against Saudi Arabia".<sup>142</sup>

Baxter's remarks were considered by Ibn Saud to be only an "interim reply", therefore he re-instructed Wahba to see Bevin on this matter.<sup>143</sup> When Wahba met Bevin on 23 July, he was told to convey to Ibn Saud that the British government "has no reason whatever to believe that there is any secret article of a military character in the Iraqi Transjordan treaty".<sup>144</sup> In addition, Bevin asked Wahba to inform Ibn Saud that the British government has continually impressed upon Abdullah its "desire that he

should develop closer relations with King Ibn Saud".<sup>145</sup> More importantly the Secretary of State reminded Wahba of the 14<sup>th</sup> of July statement in the House of Commons which illustrated that the British were not intervening in the Greater Syria issue and that the British government "attached prime importance to tranquillity and stability in the Middle East".<sup>146</sup>

No matter how the British responded, it seems that nothing would satisfy Ibn Saud, except a clear assurance. Despite the Foreign Office efforts, and despite the British government statement in the House of Commons, Ibn Saud's "obsession" in regard to his dilemma with the Hashemite was still unsolved.<sup>147</sup> Moreover, when Abdullah issued a proclamation in mid-August, a strong manifesto that called for the union of the Syrian territories, and when Abdullah sent an aggressive letter to the Syrian President, - a letter which Ibn Saud regarded as an ultimatum - Ibn Saud's anxieties were multiplied.<sup>148</sup>

At this junction Ibn Saud appealed to the British government - through its chargé d'affaires in Jeddah, Mr Clarke - and asked for "a categorical assurance that . . . [the British government] would not permit the Arab Legion to be used in any operation against Syria or any other Arab States".<sup>149</sup> In addition, Ibn Saud asked the British government to use its influence upon "Abdullah to persuade him to put an end to his constant provocative utterances and to military manoeuvres on the Syrian frontier".<sup>150</sup>

The British government reply to Ibn Saud came out on 5 September 1947. Yet again, the reply cannot be regarded as adequate for the King, as it did not contain the requested categorical assurance. Nonetheless, the Saudi King was assured that "His Majesty's Government will continue to use all their influence for the maintenance of stable and tranquil conditions in the Middle East".<sup>151</sup> The reason for not giving Ibn Saud "the categorical assurance . . . which he asked for" was - exclusively - explained to Clarke as "Transjordan is an independent State (notwithstanding . . . [the British-Jordanian] treaty relations and the special arrangements regarding the Arab Legion) and His Majesty's Government cannot undertake to speak on behalf of King Abdullah and his Army".<sup>152</sup> A further statement was conveyed to Ibn Saud - through the British Legation in Jeddah - on 25 October. This stated that:

“His Majesty's Government did not supply war material or lend their military personnel to any Arab State with the idea that they should be used against any other Arab State, but only in order to contribute to the internal security of the State in question or to the joint defence of the whole area against any possible aggression from outside. His Majesty's Government have no reason to believe that the military assistance which they have afforded to any Arab State is being used for any improper purpose”.<sup>153</sup>

Both statements seemed unsatisfactory to the King. In fact the last one had reached him when he was already anguished by his dilemma with the Hashemites. The unrest among tribes on the Saudi-Iraqi borders, which was causing some unneeded incidents, and the recent flight of members of the Al-Rashid family (the former rulers of Hail) to Iraq, were additional problems to this quandary.<sup>154</sup>

In a memorandum to the British government on 23 November, Ibn Saud expounded at great length his “thorny” history with the Hashemites.<sup>155</sup> In addition and on the recent developments, it was elucidated that the Saudis were not fearful of the Hashemites, “But the support of the British and their protection, and their grants of weapons and money to them, . . . is what frightens us”.<sup>156</sup> After indicating that the Hashemite “question touches . . . [the Saudi-British] relations” King Ibn Saud frankly added - in his memorandum - that “I’m anxious about my friendship with the British and I fear lest changing circumstances should introduce between us anything which might diminish . . . [this] relations”.<sup>157</sup> After restating some of the phrases of the 25 October statement - in particular the indications that Britain “did not give . . . weapons except for internal security and defence” - Ibn Saud inquired; “But is a threat to my frontiers, and the spread of intrigues, to be reckoned as legitimate measures of defence?”.<sup>158</sup> Additionally, Ibn Saud rationalised the British statement according to his point of view and his case:

“I see myself compelled to point out to the British that they have given a force to Iraq and Transjordan in order that they should help in preserving security and defend themselves against any other Power. Now if that force comes against me, then “there is no might and no power save [but] in God”.<sup>159</sup>

Though it was apparent that Ibn Saud was not yet fully assured by Britain, it could be said that he was already tired of pushing for British assurances at this time. Indeed, Ibn Saud's experience with the British on this issue - particularly during most of 1947 - had given him all the indications that they were not willing to provide Saudi Arabia with the exact assurance that it needed. Hence, at this stage he refrained from asking for assurances, but instead he demanded for equal treatment to that of the Hashemites. On this, Ibn Saud specified that as a "friend of the British . . . I think I'm entitled to claim at least equal treatment with that granted to the Ashraf [Hashemites], and to ask that they [the British] should give me help and weapons similar to what they have given to them [the Hashemites]".<sup>160</sup>

After some consultation with Mr Alan Trott, the then British Ambassador in Saudi Arabia, the British government concluded at the end of the year that the best reply to Ibn Saud's latest request was to offer him a kind of treaty similar to that with Jordan and Iraq. Thus the matter of an Anglo-Saudi treaty was under final consideration in London by the end of 1947.<sup>161</sup> Though Ibn Saud's request was the entry that allowed Britain to offer Saudi Arabia an alliance treaty in 1948, it should be noted that the request was not the only initiator of such an issue. Britain was already - by the autumn of 1947 - considering securing its position in the Middle East by setting up a network of alliances with the Arab States.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, Britain was already by the first week of November 1947, minded to include Saudi Arabia in such an arrangement. As indicated earlier, the British representatives at the Washington conference, which took place from 16 October to 7 November 1947, had already obtained American consent in including Saudi Arabia in the British "regional security arrangements in the Middle East".<sup>163</sup> Accordingly, it could be said that Britain had justified the fulfilment of Ibn Saud's request in accordance to criteria that fit better within its own objectives - ultimately interests - rather than the Saudi Arabian's.

At the same time as offering Saudi Arabia a treaty, Britain had also endeavoured to bring about reconciliation between Ibn Saud and Abdullah.<sup>164</sup> Though this chapter will deal later with the treaty proposal and its consequences, the implications of this proposal with the Hashemite issue will be dealt with in the current section.

Subsequent to the British government offer, Ibn Saud wrote back on 31 January 1948. In his message the King indicated that the British government had misunderstood his original intention. He explained that his earlier approach was intended "to deal with . . . the supply of new arms and military equipment . . . [on lines of what had been] given to neighbouring countries".<sup>165</sup> In addition the approach was based on the hope "that the British Government would use its good influence to preserve peace and mutual understanding with those of our neighbours who value them".<sup>166</sup>

In a despatch from the Foreign Office on 5 April, Britain's diplomatic representatives in Jeddah were asked to illustrate to Ibn Saud the objectives of the British offer within certain lines. Among other explanations it was printed in the Foreign Office despatch that:

"we hoped, by proposing a treaty similar to those with Iraq and Transjordan to convince Ibn Saud of our desire for equally close relations with him and our readiness to guarantee him assistance against external aggression. He has asked us to use our influence to preserve peace and understanding with his neighbours but he must realise that [we] . . . are no longer responsible for the foreign policies of Iraq and Transjordan. Apart from offering him a guarantee identical to that given to those countries, the only remaining way of responding to his request is for us to use our influence and our good offices to promote friendship between the Arab States. This we are very willing to do . . . and we should welcome his suggestions on the best method of furthering good relations between him and his neighbours, whether by arranging personal meetings or in any other way".<sup>167</sup>

When Mr Rogers, of the British Embassy at Jeddah, delivered the message to King Ibn Saud in Riyadh on 12 April, the King rambled on the British government treatment of the whole issue. During the audience Ibn Saud commented that he could not understand the British policies towards him and the Hashemites. The British government had told him "that they had guaranteed the Hashimites against aggression, but that without a treaty such as they had with the Hashimites they could not give such a guarantee to . . . [Saudi Arabia]".<sup>168</sup> Ibn Saud thought it was odd that, though he "had proved his friendship for His Majesty's Government in two wars, yet he had received no such guarantee".<sup>169</sup> At this junction the King clearly indicated that

he believed that the Hashemites hostilities against him could not have occurred unless they knew that Britain backed them. To Rogers Ibn Saud frankly said that:

“There was no one . . . who would support the Hashimites against himself, unless His Majesty’s Government encouraged them to do it. The Hashimites could do nothing without the support of His Majesty’s Government. In fact the treaties which they had with His Majesty’s Government were an encouragement to them to indulge in activities against himself”.<sup>170</sup>

The immediate British response to Ibn Saud’s remarks came out from Rodgers while he was in Riyadh. During the last day of his mission Rodgers stated to Yusuf Yassin that:

“His Majesty's Government had offered a treaty because they thought that the offer would be a proof of their sincerity. His Majesty [Ibn Saud] thought it inopportune. But to try to interpret that to mean that His Majesty's Government would support Iraq or Transjordan in an attack on Saudi Arabia was absurd. The treaties with those countries were defensive treaties, and His Majesty [Ibn Saud] had been offered a similar one. The fact that there was no formal treaty in no wise lessened His Majesty's Government's feelings towards His Majesty [Ibn Saud]”.<sup>171</sup>

According to Rodgers, Ibn Saud “ignored . . . [the British] hint about the possibility of a personal reconciliation with his traditional enemies”.<sup>172</sup> Nonetheless, in a memorandum to the British government on 17 April, Ibn Saud stated that he:

“has tried and is always trying to improve his relations with the Hashimites and has not initiated any hostility and has never thought of any aggression against any of them. But the position is that if they thought of hostility the British Government has maintained and is still maintaining a negative attitude towards . . . [us] this attitude, if it remains as it is, is a very discriminatory attitude”.<sup>173</sup>

Ibn Saud’s remarks about British ties with Jordan and Iraq, as being the basis that encouraged the Hashemites aggressive activities against Saudi Arabia, were completely ignored by the British government. It seems that the British government had looked at Rodgers statement to Yassin as a sufficient response, at this stage.<sup>174</sup>

On 28 April - the opening day of discussions on the proposed treaty, which Trott and General J Crocker, The British Commander-in-Chief Middle East Land Force (CCMELF), had carried out with the Saudis - Trott conveyed to Ibn Saud the British government's explicit desire for reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and the Hashemite States. Trott asked if Ibn Saud would agree to a meeting with Abdullah as a step towards a genuine appeasement.<sup>175</sup> Though Ibn Saud remarked that "he did not mind meeting anyone", he still could not understand how Britain was trying to persuade him to meet with Abdullah; without bothering to give a "guarantee" against the Hashemite "hostility".<sup>176</sup> Likewise, in a memorandum that was handed to Trott on 30 April, Ibn Saud wrote; that he "does not expect that there will be any outcome to the proposed meeting".<sup>177</sup> Particularly when Abdullah had "never . . . concealed his wishes for aggression against Syria and Hejaz".<sup>178</sup> Without directly re-asking for a British guarantee, Ibn Saud justified his rejection of the British proposition, as to its lacking of any explicit guarantee that could deter such an aggression.<sup>179</sup> Following the end of the Saudi-British talks, Trott noted on 2 May that:

"The chief burden of the King's remarks was always . . . [the subject of Transjordan and Iraq]: it has I fear become a permanent obsession with him. He has evidently been much disturbed by the thought that His Majesty's Government cannot guarantee him against either country: he regards their rulers as British puppets . . . he firmly believes that King Abdullah intends to annex the Hejaz [Hijaz] whenever he can and that the Regent of Iraq is helping his enemies of the Rashidi family and Shammer tribes".<sup>180</sup>

Moreover, the British Ambassador wrote that "I fear it will be of little use to continue . . . [the recent] discussions . . . unless something to satisfy . . . [Ibn Saud] can be found".<sup>181</sup> Trott suggested that:

"although we have already told the King most categorically that we cannot guarantee what we cannot control, and that the foreign policy of both of the Hashimite countries is not in our hands, it might perhaps be possible to find some formula to set the King's fears at rest. On military grounds it seems most unlikely that either country either could or would attack this country in the near future: and even a statement that we would use our best endeavours to

restrain those two countries if ever they did show signs of such aggression might be sufficient to reassure the King".<sup>182</sup>

Trott's recommendations were not considered in London, instead the British government kept pressing for its policy of reconciliation between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites.<sup>183</sup> Hence, during Faisal's visit to the British capital in mid-June 1948, the Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, Mr Michael Wright, explained the necessity for reconciliation between Ibn Saud and the Hashemites. Wright remarked that the British government is willing to mediate and arrange for a personal meeting between the three heads of States. Wright stressed the necessity for the establishment of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Jordan.<sup>184</sup> Nonetheless, on 17 June the surprising news of Ibn Saud's invitation to Abdullah reached London while Faisal and Wright's discussions were still on, a matter which meant that Abdullah and Ibn Saud did take the initiatives on their reconciliation by themselves and without a direct involvement from the British government.<sup>185</sup> So how did that happen?

Abdullah initiated the friendly atmosphere when he sent Ibn Saud a verbal message at the beginning of June. Abdullah told Fuad Hamza - who was representing Saudi Arabia in the meeting of the political committee of the Arab League at Amman then - that "there would be no objection raised by Transjordan authorities to the passage through Transjordan of any detachments of Saudi troops destined for Palestine".<sup>186</sup> Abdullah's message evoked a written reply from Ibn Saud on 11 June 1948.<sup>187</sup> The reply, which was written in a "friendly and conciliatory tone", was an expression of gratitude for Abdullah's message.<sup>188</sup> In addition, Ibn Saud "proposed" in that letter, that the Al-Saud and the Hashemite "families should endeavour to recover the early happy relations which had existed prior to the unfortunate events, which both sides regretted, which had led to a conflict between them".<sup>189</sup> Upon receiving the letter, Abdullah telegraphed Ibn Saud with an "acknowledgement" in which he stated that "the gratitude and pleasure which its [the letter] terms had caused . . . could only be expressed in the course of a personal visit at some convenient time".<sup>190</sup> Subsequently, King Ibn Saud replied to King Abdullah with a formal invitation for an immediate summit in Riyadh.<sup>191</sup>

No doubt that Ibn Saud invitation to Abdullah was a turning point in his policy towards the Hashemites. Indeed, this course of action was a "great surprise", not just to the British, but also to "Amir Faisal, who . . . clearly had no knowledge that it had been arranged".<sup>192</sup> If Ibn Saud was not willing to meet with Abdullah when he was frequently asked by the British - clearly up until the end of April - why did he change his mind within less than two months? Furthermore, why did Ibn Saud decide to reconcile directly with Abdullah and without involving the British?

Trott admitted that the "question why Ibn Saud suddenly decided to forget all his previous tirades against the Hashimite family and invite their senior representative to visit him is one which I find difficult to answer".<sup>193</sup> Nevertheless, Trott thought that some or all of the following considerations might have influenced Ibn Saud:

"(i) He knows, from several explicit statements from British sources, that his Majesty's Government are very anxious that such a reconciliation should take place . . . he takes a great deal of notice of everything we [the British] say and now that he feels that his relations with the Americans are going to be difficult he may be thinking that it will be prudent to improve his relations with us in any possible way.

(ii) . . . certain number of tribesmen have been clamouring to be sent to Palestine for some time, but hitherto the undeclared attitude of the Transjordan government has prevented their departure.

(iii) It may be that the King is feeling old, that he fears that Abdullah may survive him and take a firmer line about the Hejaz with the new Saudi King than he thought it politic to take with Ibn Saud. A reconciliation now would insure against that unpleasant contingency.

(iv) Hitherto Ibn Saud has been very sensitive about the inadequacy of his own army, especially when compared with that of Transjordan. But now that some of his army is in Palestine the King may feel that he is on more equal terms than previously: and he seems to have staged a parade of tribal riflemen which was designed to impress the visitor and may have succeeded in so doing.

(v) He may even have felt that if he staged a reconciliation he would be more likely to receive arms, ammunition, and instructors from us for his army, and eventually for his Air Force.

(vi) Most probably it was the Palestine struggle which marked the turning-point: Ibn Saud may have considered that King Abdullah was more likely to expand towards Palestine and Syria than towards the south, and I do not think that Ibn Saud would really care much if he did, as long as he left the Hejaz alone".<sup>194</sup>

Some of Trott's points are relatively accurate, but some are probably wrong. The relatively right points are taken as given; nonetheless the misguided points ought to be rationalised within the course of the present study. The second point, in which Trott thought that Saudi Arabia was in need of using Jordan as a passageway for its tribesmen troops, could be re-argued. It is true that the troops case was the key point which opened Ibn Saud-Abdullah friendly correspondences in June 1948, but its way to Palestine cannot be regarded as a main point that influenced the reconciliation. These troops never were sent to Palestine even after Abdullah agreed to them passing through Jordan. In fact they were stationed in the northern border of Saudi Arabia until July 1949.<sup>195</sup> The reason for stationing these troops in the north of Saudi Arabia is another matter. It could be because Ibn Saud was thinking that the Zionists might be winning in Palestine and they might cross Jordan into Saudi Arabia.<sup>196</sup> Or indeed, they could be stationed there to restrain Abdullah from thinking of making any kind of aggressive move towards Saudi Arabia, especially before June 1948.

It could be said that the most proper reference among Trott's line of reasoning was his reference to "the Palestine struggle" as being a principle cause for this "turning-point". However, the Ambassador's account for the entire point needs to be re-adjusted. Not the least, Trott was mistaken when he thought that Ibn Saud would not "care" about Abdullah expanding towards Palestine and Syria. In contrary, Ibn Saud was always worried about any Hashemite expansion. In fact, the Saudi ruler was constantly considering any Hashemite gains as a potential threat to his own throne, particularly in Hijaz. Therefore, Ibn Saud had opposed the possibility of Hashemite expansion towards Syria or even Palestine, as he - for example - did in 1936, 1937,<sup>197</sup> 1939,<sup>198</sup> and in 1947.<sup>199</sup>

But no doubt the developments in Palestine - particularly in May-June 1948 - were the most considerable factor that could explain the swift modification of Ibn Saud's

attitude towards Abdullah. Indeed, the development of events in Palestine could make any head of an Arab State reshuffle his political cards, at least at the regional level.<sup>200</sup> The new Saudi regional foreign policy, which had led to the reconciliation with Jordan, could be seen as a product of Saudi Arabian resentment to the Great Powers policy towards the Palestine question. To this point, it could be argued that the US's unqualified (unconditional) support for Zionism and its speedy recognition of the State of Israel on 15 May 1948, was a core concern.<sup>201</sup> Additionally it could be added that the establishment of Israel and the developments of the Israeli-Arab war had set Ibn Saud and Abdullah in an unexpected united alliance; vis-à-vis the threat of this common enemy.<sup>202</sup>

Moreover, the British government's stance and treatment of Ibn Saud's ever-increasing concerns in regard to the Hashemite could be also seen as a principle factor that influenced him to reconcile, at that particular time directly with Abdullah and without involving the British in such an issue. King Ibn Saud's experience with the British since the spring of 1946, could make him conclude - by June 1948 - that Britain would not grant his Kingdom the kind of assurances that he desired; not least that Ibn Saud was already deeming that the Hashemites association with Britain was motivating their anti-Saudi activities. Likewise, Ibn Saud was openly blaming the British government - by 1948 - for such a matter, as he was also secretly suspecting it as standing by the Hashemites side. By living through all that as well as seeing no light of hope through the end of the British tunnel, Ibn Saud may indeed have been orientated to implement a new strategy by the middle of 1948. Furthermore, Ibn Saud's increasing anxiety, in concert with what he perceived as growing Hashemite violence, might have caused him to decide upon ending this inertia whenever the circumstances permitted. Hence when the opportunity came about in June 1948, Ibn Saud did not waste any effort in trying to be friendly with Abdullah, and that resulted in what Trott titled "the most striking event".<sup>203</sup> All that goes without mentioning that Ibn Saud might also have thought that a direct personal reconciliation might be more successful than a reconciliation that involved a mediator.

During Abdullah's visit to Riyadh, which lasted for four days from 27 June 1948, Ibn Saud tried his best to make the occasion lead to a successful reconciliation.<sup>204</sup> No direct mention of the outstanding questions, between Saudi Arabia and Jordan, was

made. Instead, Ibn Saud told Abdullah repeatedly - and Abdullah agreed - that "everything which had been at issue between them was dead and forgotten".<sup>205</sup> They both understood that Ibn Saud would never go back to his territorial claims and Abdullah would never go back to his previous policy towards Saudi Arabia.<sup>206</sup> In order to make this understanding comprehensive, so it would include all the Hashemites, Abdullah's was supposed to let the Hashemites of Iraq end their outstanding questions with Saudi Arabia.<sup>207</sup> Besides, Ibn Saud took the opportunity of Abdullah's visit and sent a cordial letter to the Regent of Iraq, Abdulilah. In return, the King received a forthright letter from the Regent.<sup>208</sup>

At the conclusion of the visit, a joint declaration was announced. The introduction of the declaration stated that, "The first object of our meeting is our sincere desire to strengthen the links of brotherhood and to establish friendship between us and between our two peoples as long as the peoples and the House of God exist".<sup>209</sup> The declaration expressed the support of the two leaders for the Arab League and its efforts and determination of insuring the independence of Palestine.<sup>210</sup> Following the Ibn Saud-Abdullah meeting, Jordan and Saudi Arabia exchanged diplomatic representation.<sup>211</sup>

Despite the pleasing part of this reconciliation to the Saudi-Hashemites relations, it could be said that the foundations of such an appeasement were not totally invulnerable. Indeed, the swift 'gentlemen's agreement' which was led by the developments of certain events, could become vulnerable to the revival of previous events. Moreover, though the two Kings had agreed to end their direct differences, such as the Saudi claims and the Jordanian propaganda, still they did not clarify - or indeed mention - the other conflicting issues. For example, Abdullah's plans in regard to Greater Syria, which could bring the Saudi-Hashemite conflict back to the normal track were not discussed. Generally, it can be said, that though the rapprochement brings about a pleasant result to Ibn Saud's problem with the Hashemites, still the vague accord cannot be regarded as a final settlement.

As a final conclusion, it could be said, that the entire development of the Saudi-Hashemite contention - from 1946 and throughout 1948 - was negatively impacting on Saudi-British relations. Ironically, the negative side was not only apparent when

the Saudi-Hashemite controversy was at its peak, but was also there even when those two opponents were reaching a settlement. The impact - which was noticeable throughout the stages of this development - was wounding the principles of Saudi Arabian relations with Britain, particularly when such a negative impact was touching Saudi Arabian security concerns.<sup>212</sup>

#### **D. The Palestine Issue and its Impact on Saudi Arabian Relations with Britain and the USA, 1946-1948**

The outlook of the chapter hitherto, would imply that most of the post-war developments were generally enhancing the Saudi-US relations at the expense of Saudi-British relations. Nevertheless, the same epoch was not entirely free from an adverse development. The Palestine question could be regarded as a balancing factor against unrestricted advancement of Saudi-US relations. Though the development of this issue was not so helpful for the course of Saudi-British relations - as Britain's course of action was to some extent not pro-Arab, particularly in 1946 and 1947 - still the far worse impact of this development on Saudi Arabian relations with the USA was more noticeable.

The implications of the Palestine issue on Saudi Arabia's relations with Britain and the USA cannot be fully analysed without taking into account the formalisation of Saudi policy in this respect. Notably, there were two assumptions that had forged Saudi policy on such an issue.<sup>213</sup> First, ideological principle, particularly in relation to Islam and Arab Nationalism, had formed the foundations of Saudi Arabia's strong stand vis-à-vis the Zionist movement in Palestine. The ideology, which had instigated a common Arab policy, had involuntarily harmonised Saudi Arabia's policy alongside the policies of the other Arab states, even with those who were considered to be Saudi Arabia's opponents; i.e. the Hashemite states. The ideological creed had also activated negative sentiments against certain powers which had conducted pro-Zionist policies; i.e. mostly the USA and to some extent Britain. Second, *realpolitik* principles on the other hand, were forcing Saudi Arabia to employ a relaxed policy with regard to Britain and the USA, despite their pro-Zionist stances. Hence, in order to safeguard its vital relations with the USA, Saudi Arabia - as highlighted previously for example - desired further close ties. Moreover, the Saudi government conducted a reasonable

and a careful policy towards Britain in order to avoid a harmful impact that might threaten the security of the Kingdom. Though, it could be said that the general outlook of Saudi Arabian foreign policy was overbalanced by the rational mode. Yet, it could also be said that those two assumptions were swinging the Saudi approach whenever the Palestine issue was attached.

Despite the success of Ibn Saud's meeting with Roosevelt, the Saudi-US understanding in regard to Palestine was short-lived. King Ibn Saud's optimism for an adequate US policy towards Palestine began to disappear within less than two months of his conference with President Roosevelt. Shortly after Roosevelt's death on 12 April 1945, it became apparent that his successor, Harry Truman, was enthusiastic to implement a policy in "support for the aims of political Zionism".<sup>214</sup> When a number of US Ministers to Middle Eastern States briefed Truman at the White House on Palestine the advantages of a pro-Arab policy were highlighted. To this, Truman "summed up his position" with the well-known statement; "I am sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are serious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents".<sup>215</sup> In addition to Truman's policies the American Congressional debates became increasingly - by the beginning of 1946 - in favour of Zionist wishes.<sup>216</sup> The new US attitude, which was further exaggerated by the Zionist propaganda in the Middle East, was astonishing to Ibn Saud.<sup>217</sup> In reaction, the King wrote to the US President reminding him about his predecessor's promises. However, the Saudi King did not receive any positive response from the US President.<sup>218</sup>

Britain's attitude to Palestine was unsatisfactory too. The "evidences of the abandonment" of the White Paper policy, and the British government's "failure to stem the tide of Jewish immigration" into Palestine, had caused Ibn Saud to be more dissatisfied.<sup>219</sup> During a conversation with the British Ambassador in Cairo, Lord Killearn, on 14 January 1946, King Ibn Saud "delivers a friendly warning" about the British government's unfair policy towards the Palestinians.<sup>220</sup>

Saudi views on the whole issue became clear during the spring of 1946. On 9 March King Ibn Saud clarified his opinion to the visiting members of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, which called on Riyadh to look into the King's

observations.<sup>221</sup> During the talk Ibn Saud expounded that he was extremely attached to the Palestine question. The importance of this issue to him “is based on the fact that he is an Arab and a Muslim, prior to any other considerations”.<sup>222</sup> Moreover, the King elucidated that; “He and all the Arabs are friends of the Allies . . . In his view, it is in the Arabs and the Allies best interests to maintain friendship and consensus”.<sup>223</sup> Additionally, he stated that this issue, “which is concerning the Arabs and the Muslims in general, is also concerning him in particular”.<sup>224</sup> Nonetheless, “he is one of the Arabs [and the Muslims], and his view would be in accordance to their consensus”.<sup>225</sup>

Though during the presentation the King was repeating his resentment with the British government’s mistreatment of the whole issue, still he was careful to cite that his relations with Britain were “cordial” as it had been “historically” so as well.<sup>226</sup> According to the presentation, two subjects seemed to be the most important for Ibn Saud at that particular time; namely, Britain’s attitude towards the sale of Palestinian lands and Jewish immigration. At the end of his lecture to the members of the commission, the King summarised his opinion by concluding:

“If Britain cares for the maintenance of its cordial relations with the Arabs, it should instantly make an end to the [Jewish] immigration and to the sale of lands . . . just then and then only, it would be possible for the other problems in Palestine to be resolved”.<sup>227</sup>

Later when he learnt about the final findings of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, which was generally pro-Zionist, Ibn Saud was not in a position to repress his dissatisfaction. The committee reported on 20 April recommending the continuation of the mandate of Palestine, the admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine, and the rescission of the “land transfer limitations”.<sup>228</sup> In May several Saudi protests were conveyed to the US and the British governments. On 5 May Yassin protested to both countries’ diplomatic representatives in Jeddah.<sup>229</sup> Meanwhile, the diplomatic representatives of Saudi Arabia, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Egypt, were already delivering common protests in Washington and London.<sup>230</sup> Furthermore, on 28 June the Saudi government announced a statement that rejected all the recommendations of the committee.<sup>231</sup>

To some extent the British government was more considerate to the Arabs reactions. Particularly, when the Arabs received pledges that the British would not implement the commission recommendations before conversing with the Arabs and the Jews.<sup>232</sup> For such a purpose the British government arranged for a conference to be held in October 1946. Nevertheless, the London conference failed as a result of the US government position, which favoured the commission recommendations.<sup>233</sup>

On 4 October 1946, President Truman announced the immediate need of admission of the 100,000 Jews into Palestine, he also issued a statement supporting the Jewish Agency proposal for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. In reaction, Ibn Saud tried on two occasions to convince the US President to be fairer towards the Palestinian issue. Thus on 15 October and on 2 November Ibn Saud wrote to Truman in this regard. Nevertheless, Truman insisted on allowing at least 100,000 Jews into Palestine and also expressed his support of Zionism in Palestine.<sup>234</sup>

In reaction to developments in Palestine and in order to protect Arab Palestinian rights, the Arab States worked collectively within the framework of the Arab League. Several meetings were held in 1946 for this purpose, such as the Arab states representatives meeting in Egypt on 10 May, the Inshas meeting in Egypt on 28 May, and the Bludan meeting in Syria on 12 June. In all these meetings the Arab states issued statements supporting Arab rights in Palestine and denying Jewish rights there.<sup>235</sup>

When it became apparent to the British government in February 1947 that the mandate over Palestine was unworkable, it turned the whole issue to the UN. The British government decision over this came out when it realised that control of the flow of Jewish immigration and control of the internal unrest were impossible, and when the whole issue was damaging Britain relations with the Arab states. Thus, on 18 February the British government asked the UN Security Council to put the Palestinian issue for debate at the coming session of the General Assembly.<sup>236</sup>

The UN General Assembly held a special session on Palestine on 28 April. During this session the Arab states delegations from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt requested the immediate termination of the British mandate over Palestine and

the establishment of a Palestinian independent State. However, the Arab states demands were rejected and a UN Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) was set up during the UN General Assembly regular session on 15 May. UNSCOP's main job was to investigate and to report to the General Assembly on all issues related to Palestine.<sup>237</sup>

As they "had little confidence that reference to the United Nation would result in a decision favourable" to their wishes, Saudi Arabia and other Arab states urged Britain and USA to consider the Arabs demands. In July Saudi Arabia requested the British and the US governments to come to understanding with the Arabs on the future of Palestine as an independent state before the matter came up for another discussion in the UN General Assembly. Furthermore, in September, the Saudi government appealed to the British government to reconsider the Palestinian question "in the light of reason and justice".<sup>238</sup> Additionally, the Arab states had made efforts between themselves - within the frame of the Arab League - in order to foil any unfavourable plan in the UN. Special meetings for the Arab League on this purpose were held in Lebanon in September and in October 1947.<sup>239</sup>

Despite the Arab states efforts, the development of the issue took a direction (that was) contrary to their requirements. On 29 November 1947 the UN General Assembly adopted its famous resolution for the partition of Palestine.<sup>240</sup> All Arab states including Saudi Arabia publicly rejected this resolution at once. The Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister expressed the disappointment of his government and blamed the superpowers - including Britain and the USA - for the adoption of this resolution. Faisal's representations were made while the General Assembly session was still on:

"We have felt, like many others, the pressure exerted on various representatives . . . by some of the big powers so that the vote should be in favour of partition. My Government holds responsible those parties that hampered all means of cooperation and understanding".<sup>241</sup>

Nevertheless, Ibn Saud stated privately to the British that "although he was at one with the Arab states in their determination not to see the establishment of a Jewish state, he was equally determined not to let the Palestine problem embarrass his

relations with the British and American Governments”.<sup>242</sup> Assurances were also given that Saudi Arabia would not take any military action as long as the British government “remained responsible for law and order in Palestine”.<sup>243</sup> Likewise, comments were conveyed to the US government. King Ibn Saud told the US Minister in Jeddah, Mr J. Rives Childs,<sup>244</sup> that “although we [Saudi Arabia and the USA] differ enormously on the question of Palestine but we still have our own mutual interests and friendship to safeguard”.<sup>245</sup> Additionally, when a rumour came about (in the Arab world) that Saudi Arabia would cancel the oil concession agreement in protest at Western policies in Palestine, the Saudi government announced in a formal denial, that it would never threaten the Saudi-American Oil Company.<sup>246</sup>

Following the adoption of the UN resolution, the British and the US governments took different courses of action in regard to Palestine. While the USA was eager to support the partition resolution publicly, Britain maintained a neutral position towards both Arab rejections and Jewish demands for its implementation. Moreover, when the guerrilla war broke out - between Arabs and Jews - at the end of 1947, the British forces maintained a neutral position.<sup>247</sup> Furthermore, the British forces in Palestine had implemented a notable sea blockade against Jewish immigrants who were seeking to enter Palestine.<sup>248</sup> In contrast to the US government stance, it could be said that the British government attitude was generally helpful for the broad course of British-Arab relations at that particular time.

The dissimilarity between the US and the British governments’ involvement in the Palestine issue had caused the US Minister in Saudi Arabia to point out the likelihood of some changes to US-Saudi relations. In mid-January 1948, Childs wrote to the State Department warning that Ibn Saud “may be influenced to abandon hopes of close political relations with [the] U.S. and return to his previous policy of relying more particularly upon his relations with Great Britain”.<sup>249</sup>

On various occasions Ibn Saud hoped, and tried to convince, the US government to change its policy towards the Palestine issue. For example, during a conversation with the American Minister in Jeddah, on 21 February 1948, Ibn Saud argued that the Palestine partition should be set aside, as it was incompatible with Arab rights and interests.<sup>250</sup>

By early March 1948, it became apparent to the State Department that US support for the partition resolution had resulted in a serious decline of US influence, not only in Saudi Arabia, but also in the entire Middle East. Hence, the State Department considered the advantages of an alternative policy.<sup>251</sup> The new US policy was announced on 19 of March by the Secretary of State, General George Marshall, in which the US introduced a proposal to the Security Council. The proposal called for a temporary trusteeship under the UN over Palestine subsequent to the proposed British withdrawal.<sup>252</sup> Though the proposal was not as attractive as it should be, still any such positive action by the US administration would be regarded as a welcome relief in Riyadh. Immediately when Ibn Saud heard of the announcement he sent a telegram to the US Secretary of State in which he expressed his satisfaction with the American government decision on this.<sup>253</sup>

Nonetheless King Ibn Saud's contentment did not last for long. Just eleven minutes after the announcement of the establishment of the State of Israel on 15 May 1948, President Truman extended an immediate de facto recognition to the newly emerged Zionist State.<sup>254</sup> As the news of the US recognition of Israel had shocked Saudi Arabia, Ibn Saud sent the US government a letter on 21 May 1948, which was strong in language. It was stated in that letter that Ibn Saud "used to advise the Arabs to be patient but after what happened [in Palestine] . . . [he] thought the Arabs should do what they could . . . if the United State is challenging the Arabs right, . . . the Arabs prefer to die rather than to lose their rights".<sup>255</sup> Furthermore, Saudi officials started to criticise US government policy. Such a criticism was - in most cases - connected to the Saudis comparison with the appreciated British policy. For example, during conversations at the Foreign Office in June 1948, Faisal expressed to Wright the appreciation of Saudi Arabia and the entire Arab world for British government help over the Palestine question in the UN. Faisal further expressed his anger towards US's negative policy.<sup>256</sup>

There is a little doubt that Saudi Arabian annoyance at the US policy towards Palestine - in May 1948 - was driven by ideological rather than realist values. Such a fact was noticeable in the King's and his Foreign Affairs Minister's presentations. Nevertheless, realist principles were further effective on the Saudi policy in such a

course. As such principles were the factual force in Saudi Arabian foreign policy, Ibn Saud exercised extreme caution in his Kingdom's relations with the USA.<sup>257</sup> By the end of 1948 it became obvious that Saudi-US relations had got a bright future, particularly as it had not collapsed over the Palestine crisis. Childs remarked on 27 December 1948, that if ties between Saudi Arabia and the US were not broken over Palestine, "one can only imagine the extent of relations in normal period".<sup>258</sup>

Generally, it could be said that ideological and *realpolitik* principles and differences in British and the US policies towards Palestine were impacting on the orientation of Saudi Arabian foreign policy to some degree. In addition, it could also be said that the general development of the Palestinian issue did not bring Saudi-US relations to a complete halt nor did it bring about a helpful recovery to declining Saudi-British relations. Nevertheless, it could be concluded that the overall US government approach towards Palestine - particularly when compared with the British government's attitude - was at least a considerable reason to cause the Saudi government to slow the process of giving up its connection with Britain in favour of the growing Saudi-US connection.<sup>259</sup>

## **E. The Saudi-British Strategic Connections**

### **I. The Definition of the Security Concept by the end of 1947**

As previous chapters illustrated, Saudi Arabia had played a major role with regard to British security concerns during World War Two. Saudi Arabia's positive neutrality was considered - and treated - as a valuable asset for the British cause. The potentiality of a Saudi Arabian declaration of war alongside the Allies was not the only positive advantage, but so also was Ibn Saud's potential influence upon the British Empire's Muslim populations, particularly those in India. Indeed, Ibn Saud's influence was looked at as a comfortable instrument that could be mobilised for the purpose of security and order in the British Empire during the crucial period of the war.<sup>260</sup> Starting from this defined perspective and ending with the broader interests of the British Empire, the preceding two chapters also showed that Britain was ultimately considerate when the question came to the maintenance of Saudi Arabian security.<sup>261</sup>

However, the concept of the security in Britain's policy towards Saudi Arabia had altered to a degree by the fourth quarter of 1947, from that which directly involved solely the British Empire to that which concerned the general security of the Middle East. It could be said that the direct linkage between Saudi Arabia's stance and the security of the British Empire had started to shift from the end of the war onwards, as did the British government concept in linking the necessity for maintaining Saudi Arabian security and the security of the British Empire.

Certain developments give the impression of being the routes that made such a shift occur. Obviously the end of the war was one phenomenon which reduced the importance of Saudi Arabia's role for the security of the British Empire. Likewise, the same could be said with regard to Britain's withdrawal from India in the summer of 1947.<sup>262</sup> Additional developments had also further twisted the attachment of the security assumption in Britain's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia. The most remarkable was the emergence of the USSR as a new danger for the West and the ultimate formation of such a threat to the security of the Middle East in general.<sup>263</sup> Though Britain had to admit in February 1947 that its economic difficulties had put it in a situation where it had to end its economic and military assistance to Greece and Turkey, still London was determined to counter the USSR threat to the Middle East when it was possible.<sup>264</sup> The British government determination on this was enhanced by the Truman Doctrine, on the 12 March 1947, which extended US economic and military assistance to Greece and Turkey.<sup>265</sup> Further enrichment of Britain's attitude was apparent as it got into more common ground with the USA on the risky situation in the Middle East. The general security of the Middle East and the protection of the area from the danger of communism were considered, during the Anglo-American talks in Washington in the autumn of 1947 to be "vital" for the security of Britain and the USA.<sup>266</sup> Such a consideration was further legitimised by both governments' beliefs in the importance of maintaining Middle East security for "world peace".<sup>267</sup>

Despite the fact that Britain's policy towards the Saudi-Hashemite issue was not that successful by the fourth quarter of 1947, still the British government was considering it "as most important that their ties of friendship with King Ibn Saud should be maintained and further strengthened".<sup>268</sup> Within this perspective, the British

representatives at Washington talks had justified the advantages in including Saudi Arabia within Britain's regional security arrangements chain.<sup>269</sup> As explained earlier this precise policy was put into action when Ibn Saud had asked for similar assistance to that which had been given to the Hashemites.<sup>270</sup>

For Saudi Arabia the concept of security was still directly connected to the fundamental nature of the safety of the Saudi State. Furthermore, Saudi Arabian security concerns remained mostly hooked up to that of regional power intimidation.<sup>271</sup> As the current chapter has demonstrated the Saudi-Hashemite problem was the flame that instigated Ibn Saud's security unease in 1946-47.<sup>272</sup> In actual fact Ibn Saud's quandary with the Hashemites became a real dilemma by the end of 1947, as the British who were supposed to ensure the security of Saudi Arabia were somehow - at least in Ibn Saud's point of view - linked with the Hashemites. Such a dilemma was harmful to any beliefs that Ibn Saud might have had about Britain being the guardian of his Kingdom.

In spite of King Ibn Saud's umbrage at British government conduct, still he realised that he must deal with London for the sake of his Kingdom's security. Moreover, the King was enthusiastic to offset, or even replace, his British connection with an American one, but was, without any other alternative, compelled to deal with Britain.<sup>273</sup> Indeed, despite indications of further US involvement in the Middle East, such as The Truman Doctrine, and despite revised indications of that of Britain, such as the withdrawal from India, Ibn Saud still recognised that Britain, in spite of everything, was the Great Power which was circling his Kingdom. All this meant, without the need of re-mentioning that Ibn Saud's attempt, in the beginning of 1947, to secure a clear and precise American assurance for the security of the Kingdom, had by all means failed.<sup>274</sup>

## II. The Proposed Treaty and its Development in 1948

As mentioned earlier, Ibn Saud's request for military assistance on the same scale that was given to the Hashemites had been understood in London as if a defensive treaty with Britain would be acceptable to Saudi Arabia.<sup>275</sup> When the King first learnt about the British proposal he did not react; thus he waited until he received a draft of that

proposal.<sup>276</sup> On 28 January 1984 the Saudi government received a draft treaty, which was almost identical to the treaty just concluded between Iraq and Britain on 15 January 1948.<sup>277</sup>

Ibn Saud's complete refusal was clear in his memorandum to the British government on 31 January.<sup>278</sup> In fact the King's resentment at being offered a similar treaty to that of Iraq was even clearer. After mentioning that friendship and cooperation existed between Saudi Arabia and Britain despite the fact that there had been no treaties of alliance apart from the purely friendship treaty of Jeddah, Ibn Saud stated in the memorandum that:

“ . . . the treaty which has been produced to me is in no way different from the new Iraqi treaty. You know well that the political and social characteristics of our country . . . differ completely from the present position of Iraq and other countries. For that reason I see no possibility of discussing it”.<sup>279</sup>

Moreover, the King had re-emphasised the meaning of his previous approach, as it was not intended to deal with such a treaty, but was mainly aimed “to deal with . . . the preparation of means of defence for our country, and of the preservation of internal security, and that was to be done by the supply of new arms and military equipment”.<sup>280</sup>

Despite the evidence of Ibn Saud's refusal, it seems that the British were willing to push the treaty case further. Even, when Faisal told Trott that Saudi Arabia “did not want a treaty even if . . . [Britain] made treaties with all the other Arab countries”, the British Ambassador was still hopeful that the King might change his mind. In a despatch to the Foreign Office on 5 February, Trott commented; “I doubt if he [Faisal] was speaking in his father's name”.<sup>281</sup> Thus instead of suggesting closing the treaty file, Trott recommended to keep it open for further consideration.<sup>282</sup>

On 5 April 1948 the Foreign Office instructed the British Embassy in Jeddah to re-explain to King Ibn Saud the advantages of the proposed treaty.<sup>283</sup> In order to make the explanation more convincing the King had to be warned about the severity of the new international threat for the security of his Kingdom. According to the despatch, the “proposal of a formal treaty” was mainly motivated by:

“ . . . the need created by the increasingly tense international situation for all peace-loving states to consider political measures for protecting their common interests. Saudi Arabia's emergence as a major oil producing country has entirely altered her international position and has made her an obvious target for aggression in the event of war, while the nature of modern weapons has destroyed the value of distance and desert as a protection against attack by a great power. We are anxious to help Ibn Saud to guard against these dangers, but it will be impossible for us to do this effectively without making some preparations. We did not and do not want to impose any rigid formula on Ibn Saud, but only to find the best way of . . . preparations which may be required in Saudi Arabia in order to defend that country and the whole Middle Eastern area from aggression”.<sup>284</sup>

When Rogers made the communication at Riyadh on 12 April, Ibn Saud expressed his awareness of the danger of ‘political Communism’ to the Middle East in general.<sup>285</sup> Nevertheless, during the conversation with the British diplomat, the King did not indicate that the USSR was (or is) forming a direct military threat to his Kingdom. In his view, Political Communism could spread “like cholera, or a plague of locusts”, and indeed it might also “run over the Middle East”.<sup>286</sup> However, the King also explained that such a threat might be appealing to the other Middle Eastern countries, but not necessarily to Saudi Arabia. Public politics was the central element that forced the King to distinguish between the characteristic of his Kingdom and that of the others. On this, Ibn Saud explained that the circumstances in some of the other states had created “a class of professional politicians who were a blight [to the current situation]”.<sup>287</sup> The case of Saudi Arabia was distinct, because he did “all he could to promote the welfare of his people, and their education, but [had kept] them clear of politics . . . [therefor] there were no public politics in his Kingdom”.<sup>288</sup> Broadly speaking, a careful reading of the Rogers report on his visit to Riyadh would clarify that Ibn Saud was more concerned with regional politics rather than international, when it came to the security of Saudi Arabia. In fact Ibn Saud had concentrated most of his talks with the British diplomat - as mentioned earlier in this chapter - on the Hashemites rather than the Soviets. A matter, which indicates that the priority of the King’s security concerns were still mainly regional.<sup>289</sup>

Once more, the King had stressed that he was not in a position to conclude such a treaty with Britain. In fact he was surprised that the British government had not yet put this proposal aside.<sup>290</sup> In writing, the King had stressed that such a treaty would not do any good for him either for Britain or even any other Arab states. But, the “best way to give confidence to the Arabs is to assist them in strengthening themselves in their own countries and to provide them with arms”.<sup>291</sup> Nevertheless, in order to come in some way near to the British proposal, the King had said that he was prepared to arrange with the Arab States, through the Arab League, a united plan for cooperation with the USA and Britain on the following basis:

“a. Inviolability of the sovereignty of the Arab states and preservation of their territories from any occupation.

b. That they [the USA and Britain] should provide the necessary assistance to the Arab states, to each according to its needs and what is required to fulfil them.

c. Should war break out and any aggression be made against an Arab State, the Arab States should co-operate among themselves and co-operate with Britain and America by doing what the two parties agree upon to be necessary, at that time for their defence against aggression”.<sup>292</sup>

Ibn Saud’s proposal seems to be a further indication of his desire to strengthen the capability of his country, particularly in respect to arms and military utilities. But more importantly, the inclusion of the USA in such a proposal was in fact a new - additional - tactic to the King’s previous efforts in bringing the Americans to such a responsibility. Indeed, it was the USA rather than Britain whom the Saudi Monarch was looking forward to concluding a treaty with. On 16 April the King revealed the new proposal to the US Minister to Saudi Arabia, and added that a “Saudi treaty with . . . [USA is] more important . . . [to him] than one with Britain”.<sup>293</sup>

The US government was still some distance from fulfilling Ibn Saud’s minimum wishes on this. On the question of the general treaty, Childs conveyed - at a later stage - to Ibn Saud an off-putting reply from Washington: “While the United States Government can give no assurances whatsoever about this, they would be glad to be kept informed of the ideas of the Arab Governments on security matters of common interest to them”.<sup>294</sup> The US government was reluctant to go further on the subject of

the general treaty, because at that time there was not a clear approach towards all the Arab countries. According to the State Department the consideration of such a matter was difficult because with some exception in “the case of Saudi Arabia . . . the United States services had not as yet formulated any definite policy for the Middle East”.<sup>295</sup>

The British government reply to the Saudis proposal was conveyed during Crocker and Trott’s visit to Riyadh. On 28 April Trott read out the British communication to Ibn Saud:

“His Majesty's Government . . . do not, . . . consider that either Saudi Arabia or even all the Arab States together could defend themselves against attack by a Great Power long enough to enable British help to reach them in time, unless detailed preparations for such assistance are made in advance. Nor do they consider that the Arab States could raise, train and equip sufficiently large and modern armed forces to make them independent of outside aid for some time to come . . . [Moreover] If His Majesty's Government were now to guarantee Ibn Saud against aggression without making any detailed preparations to implement this promise, they would be acting dishonestly, since this guarantee would be worth nothing to Ibn Saud”.<sup>296</sup>

Reinforcing and amplifying those points the CCMEFLF, further explained - to the King - the nature and the scope of the likely Russian threat. Crocker remarked that such aggression could happen without any warning and that modern warfare would play a major role in it, such as the use of airborne forces. In such a case all the states of the area - including Iraq, Transjordan, Iran, and Saudi Arabia - must cooperate and work together with the help of the British and Allied forces. Crocker also explained that it would be impossible to deploy British or other Allied forces without prior preparation, indeed if a Russian attack happened it would be difficult to liberate any occupied territories otherwise.<sup>297</sup>

Despite the strength of the British arguments in regard to the threat of the Great Power, it soon became apparent to both Crocker and Trott that Ibn Saud “was clearly thinking more about a possible attack by his Hashimite [Hashemite] enemies than of the common danger from Soviet Russia”.<sup>298</sup> As the forgoing pages have illustrated, the King had spent most of his talks with the British officials on the Hashemites.

Among other points - on the Hashemites - Ibn Saud stated that "it was galling to him to see that the British had given arms to his enemies . . . but they could not even give him arms for training".<sup>299</sup> At this juncture the British Ambassador had to explain the reasons for the arms embargo. As instructed by the Foreign Office, Trott illustrated that:

"It is the policy of his Majesty's Government to refuse permission for the export of military material to any part of the Middle East, except under existing contracts, which have been undertaken as a result of our treaty obligations to certain Arab Governments, . . . this policy is essential to the maintenance of the . . . embargo . . . without which arms and ammunition would inevitably pour into Palestine for the Jews . . . our refusal to supply . . . [arms and] ammunition at present is dictated solely by our declared policy in respect of Palestine and that, once the situation in that country improves sufficiently to enable us to remove this embargo, we shall do our best to meet his requirements".<sup>300</sup>

According to Trott, on the whole Ibn Saud was not "very pleased with the message . . . [Besides] on hearing of the embargo . . . the King was obviously very put out".<sup>301</sup> In any case, Ibn Saud had instructed Yusuf Yassin to hold a comprehensive conversation with the British visitors regarding the proposed "detailed preparation".<sup>302</sup> Among other questions, Yassin asked Crocker, about what he "considered it necessary to do to ensure the protection of Saudi Arabia".<sup>303</sup> In reply, the CCMEFLF believed that two main matters should be dealt with. Firstly, the need to "build up the Saudi Arabian forces to the size and scale already recommended by the head of the B.M.M. [British Military Mission]".<sup>304</sup> Secondly, that the Saudi Arabian government should agree to consult with the British government on the facilities needed to enable the British forces to come to the assistance of Saudi Arabia in the event of aggression.<sup>305</sup> Crocker also explained that in the meantime it will be impossible to equip the Saudi forces with arms as far as the arms embargo is in place, however the British government would supply the arms required after the embargo had been lifted. When Yassin asked for an exact definition of the meaning of 'the facilities', Crocker explained that it "might include airfields sites, . . . accommodation and some form of joint defence consultation . . . [nonetheless] there was no thought of stationing forces in the country".<sup>306</sup>

In a second comprehensive discussion, the Saudi Defence Minister, *Amir Mansour* had joined Yassin and the British for a further session of tougher talks during which both parties were firm on their points of view; the British would not go further than Crocker had suggested and the Saudi's were asking for the building of larger forces than the proposed one and for the immediate lifting of the arms embargo (on Saudi Arabia). Nonetheless, in regard to the facilities Yassin mentioned during the discussions that Ibn Saud might agree about the facilities matter "but only on condition that it was kept secret and never published".<sup>307</sup>

As it was the only successful outcome of the April talks, Yassin's remark on Ibn Saud's possible agreement on the facilities matter was carefully considered at the Foreign Office.<sup>308</sup> On 25 May the Foreign Office wrote to Trott requesting him to follow the matter up with the Saudi government.<sup>309</sup> Six days later, the British Ambassador wrote back to the Foreign Office. In his dispatch Trott advised his government to work out the details of the strategic plan, and to send an inspection team of officers to study the feasibility of the project and to discuss matters with Ibn Saud.<sup>310</sup> By 14 July 1948 Ibn Saud had agreed in principle to the dispatch of the inspections party to study the details of the strategic facilities.<sup>311</sup> Nevertheless, - as the following chapter will reveal - further development before the end of 1948, in which the Saudi government had proposed a new Saudi-American-Anglo treaty, had delayed the mobilisation of the British expedition until 1949.<sup>312</sup>

## Summary and conclusions

The development of American-Anglo relations over Saudi Arabia had led, by the autumn of 1947, to a comprehensive understanding between the British and the US governments in that country. Undoubtedly the improvement of Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia - and the absence of the usual trouble - would help the general course of Saudi Arabian relations with the power which actually was intended, capable, and welcomed (by the Saudis) to increase its commitments in the Kingdom. Hence, it seems that, at the expense of Anglo-Saudi relations, the overall direction of this progress was rewarding the general conduct of Saudi-American relations.

Indeed, beside Saudi Arabian and US desires in strengthening their economic ties, it was apparent that the end of the US-British rivalry was also a boost for the increment of these ties. Moreover, the post-war improvement of Saudi Arabian income had also further increased American economic involvement in the Kingdom; at the same time it had ended the theories which used to relate Saudi Arabian financial needs to Britain.

Despite the fact that the British government had ceased its financial assistance to Saudi Arabia in 1945, the following year had witnessed the initiation of a modest British technical assistance to the Kingdom. Though the impact of this technical assistance on Saudi-British relations would not be the same as the usual financial assistance, and though the Hashemite issue had overshadowed the achievement of such assistance, its role in keeping the channel of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Britain open should not be ignored.

King Ibn Saud's desire in strengthening his Kingdom's strategic connections with the USA and not with the UK was obvious during Prince Saud's call on Washington and London at the beginning of 1947. Indeed, the King's instructions to the Crown Prince on this subject had made the issue clearer. In any case, because the US government response was not that which was expected at Ibn Saud's end, Saudi Arabia had been

left with no alternative but to work on Britain in order to insure the maintenance of its own security vis-à-vis any potential Hashemite aggression.

Nonetheless, it was also noticeable during the same period which this chapter has covered, that the Saudi-Hashemite dilemma had negatively impacted the demeanour of Saudi-British relations. Indeed, the independence of Jordan, and the revival of conflicting relations between Ibn Saud and Abdullah, had brought about certain difficulties in Saudi-British relations. The imperative for this had emerged when the British government first mishandled the Saudis' concerns during the process of Jordanian independence. Further intensification accrued from the manifestation of the Saudi-Jordanian frontier disagreement and Abdullah's plans and propaganda. In several attempts, Ibn Saud had endeavoured to obtain a clear British assurance against any Hashemite threat, however the King's goal remained unachievable.

Moreover, Ibn Saud's anxiety was not limited to what he recognised as a visible Hashemite threat, but also towards what he considered as a special relationship between the Hashemite States and Britain. The financial and the military assistance, which Britain was extending to the Hashemites was anathema for Ibn Saud, particularly when Saudi Arabia was not receiving equal treatment. When the King became almost pessimistic about getting any categorical assurance, he asked for equal treatment to that of the Hashemites. As in the case of the assurance, Saudi Arabia did not get what its King had asked for, however an unacceptable treaty was offered. When the British government failed to give Ibn Saud what he was looking for, and when certain circumstances allowed for a direct reconciliation with the Hashemites, Ibn Saud considered it without considering British participation - as a mediator - in such an event. Hence he blocked any positive British move in his dilemma with the Hashemite. The development of the Saud-Hashemite contention had caused Ibn Saud to question British policy towards his Kingdom. All in all, it could be said that the general look of this development was not helpful for the progress of Saudi-Anglo relations. In fact, it was the most harmful development that accrued to Saudi-British relations during the period covered in this chapter.

The developments in Palestine, and the policies of each of the US and British governments towards it, had some impact on Saudi Arabian foreign policy towards

both Britain and the USA. In 1946 and 1947 Saudi Arabia was dissatisfied with both States' policy towards Palestine. However, in 1948, as the US continued its pro-Jewish policy, and as Britain took a neutral position, the Arab States, including Saudi Arabia, started to feel the differences between US and British policies. This development resulted in Ibn Saud reconsidering, in 1948, the speed of his policy of giving up his British relations for his US relations, and to proceed on a rather slower basis than he previously intended. Hence, it could be said that the Palestine factor was the most visible which was not totally negative for the development of Saudi-British relations, particularly in 1948.

By the end of 1947, British security concerns had changed from that which was mainly attached to the security of the British Empire, to that which was associated with the security of the area as a whole, particularly against a Soviet threat. On the other hand, Saudi Arabian security concerns remained mainly connected to the security of the Kingdom itself, and against a regional threat rather than an international one. The concept of security for Saudi Arabia and Britain had put each of them on a different footing when they negotiated the proposed treaty in 1948. However, it seems that such differences did not completely erase the consideration of building strategic facilities in Saudi Arabia, particularly when such facilities were - to some extent - compatible with the fulfilment of the security requirements of each country. Nonetheless, until the end of 1948 Saudi Arabia remained outside any British defensive commitments.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> See Record of meeting at the Foreign Office on Anglo-American relations in regard to Saudi Arabia, 11 December 1945, FO 371/45543. Also, see section C: II of chapter two.
- <sup>2</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 22 December 1945, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 2 January 1946, FO 371/52801. Henderson gave Halifax initial acceptance of holding the talks in London. See Ibid. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 4 January 1946, FO 371/52801. When Henderson was asked on 19 January about a convenient time for his visit to London, he "suggested that about the third week in February would be a convenient time from his point of view". From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 18 January 1946, FO 371/52801. Nevertheless, Henderson visit to London for the proposed talks did not take place during 1946, as the following pages reveal.
- <sup>12</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 2 January 1946, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>13</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 9 January 1946, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 18 January 1946, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> From Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 23 January 1946, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Until 9 March 1946, the Foreign Office was still considering whether to include the financial adviser issue among the topics of the proposed discussions. See from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 9 March 1946, FO 371/52801.
- <sup>22</sup> From Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 21 March 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, from Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 30 March 1946, FO 371/52811.
- <sup>23</sup> The reasons behind Ibn Saud's rejection of this loan are explained within this chapter, see section B: I of this chapter.
- <sup>24</sup> From Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 30 March 1946, FO 371/52811.
- <sup>25</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 March 1946, FO 371/52811.
- <sup>26</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 29 March 1946, FO 371/52801. Also, see from Jeddah (Graftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 30 March 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 March 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 10 April 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 14 April 1946, FO 371/52811.
- <sup>27</sup> See from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 29 May 1946, FO 371/52801. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 9 July 1946, FO 371/52809. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 26 June 1946, FO 371/52809.
- <sup>28</sup> The British government usually kept the US government informed in such a matters either through the British Embassy in Washington or locally between the British and the US Legations in Jeddah. See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 29 March 1946, FO 371/52801. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 1 July 1946, FO 371/52830. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 14 July 1946, FO 371/52830.
- <sup>29</sup> See General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114. Also, see Memorandum on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.
- <sup>30</sup> See General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.
- <sup>31</sup> Memorandum on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.
- <sup>32</sup> Lord Inverchapel, the British Ambassador in Washington headed the British delegation; and Hon. Robert Lovett, Under Secretary of State headed the US delegation. The British group included: Mr

John Balfour, Minister at the British Embassy in Washington; Mr M Wright, Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office. The US group included: Mr Loy Henderson, the Director of the Office of Near Eastern and African Affairs; Mr George Kennan, the Director of the Policy planning Staff; Mr Raymond Hare, the Chief of the Division of South Asian Affairs (he became the USA Ambassador to Saudi Arabia in 1950). See General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.

<sup>33</sup> General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114. It was also stated that "the American group [representatives] observed that, all things considered, matters in Saudi Arabia seemed to be working quite well". Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> This was the case, though the Saudi government was not aware - at that exact time - of the Anglo-American understanding.

<sup>35</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 21 March 1946, FO 371/52811.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 25 March 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 March 1946, FO 371/52811.

<sup>38</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 25 March 1946, FO 371/52811. It should be mentioned that though the Oil Company officials were at the beginning the negotiators with the Saudis, the Oil Company was not going to offer the loan from its own sources, however it was going to arrange the loan from a US Bank. See Ibid. Also, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 13 April 1946, FO 371/52811. The negotiations went back at the end to the officials of the EXIM Bank.

<sup>39</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 13 August 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see Anderson, Irvine. Aramco, the United States, and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamic of Foreign Oil Policy 1933-1950. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981, p. 138. The loan was to be used mainly for the Saudi governments imports from the USA. The repayment of the credit was to be repaid by the Saudi government during a ten-year period. The payment of the interests was solved when the EXIM Bank and the Saudi negotiators agreed to cut some of the loan credit and keep it with the Bank in advance. They both agreed to call that a discount and not interest which was the equal of 3% per year for the ten year period for the loan. See from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 24 July 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 6 August 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 13 August 1946, FO 371/52811. It should be noted that "the loan . . . was not entirely a U.S. governmental affair; . . . [as it] was approved . . . on the basis of financial notes backed by ARAMCO". Gold, Isadore Jay. The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1984, p. 220.

<sup>40</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 2 September 1946, FO 371/52811. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 234. The story of the creation of Dammam-Riyadh railways is as follows: The project was a personal one of King Ibn Saud. When he travelled by train during his 1946 visit to Egypt, the king became convinced that railways were the most suitable conveyance for Saudi Arabia. See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. At the beginning he thought of constructing a railway running from Ras Tanura - through Hasa and Kharj - to Riyadh. As a result of King Ibn Saud's request a team of American experts examined the viability of the project. In July 1946 the head of the team, Mr Earl English, reported, advising against its construction. The report stressed that the project would be uneconomical, particularly when the cost was in the range of \$50 million and when the trains were just to carry goods one way from Ras Tanura Harbour to Riyadh (as the latter had no commodities to export). From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 2 September 1946, FO 371/52811. As the King personally was an admirer of the project, the matter was pushed further with the US government during the Saudi Finance Minister's visit to Washington in September 1946. Report on American Activities in Saudi Arabia, September 1946, FO 371/52805. By the end of September 1946, the US government reconsidered the railway project, particularly when it became evident that the project was a personal desire of King Ibn Saud. Therefore a new team of experts was sent again to Saudi Arabia in November 1946 to re-examine the project. From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 9 October 1946, FO 371/52811. Also Report on American Activities in Saudi Arabia during October 1946, FO 371/52805. In December 1946 the team reported, recommending that the starting point for the railway be Dammam instead of Ras Tanura. Additionally, the new study estimated the total cost of the project to be less than \$20 million. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 29 December 1946, FO 371/52811. Also Report on American Activities in Saudi Arabia during December 1946, FO 371/62091. Despite the fact that Ibn Saud was hoping that the project would be

entirely financed through the US government, the Saudi government had to finance it through different channels. At the end of 1947 when Aramco commenced constructing the Dammam-Riyadh Railways, the finance was drawn from part of the existing Export Import Bank loan. At a later stage, the project was financed from the oil royalties and from the project revenue as some part of it was completed and started operating before the completion of the full project in October 1951. Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Also, from the US Minister (Jeddah) to the Secretary of State, 17 April 1948, in: Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 168. Also, Al-Gosaibi G. حياة في الإدارة (A Life in Management), Beirut: المؤسسة العربية للدراسات، 1998, p. 106. Also, Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز (The Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz), Beirut: دار العلم للملايين، 1992, pp. 839-843. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 234.

<sup>41</sup> See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 233-234. Also see Hart, Parker. Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 43. Also, see Memorandum from Henderson to the Secretary of State, 18 February 1947. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 72-74. Saud conveyed to the US officials, Ibn Saud's desire to turn exclusively to the US for not only oil businesses but also in all matters concerning the economy of Saudi Arabia, such as loans and public work developments, etc. See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 228-233.

<sup>42</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 219.

<sup>43</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>44</sup> The Saudi Arabian airline at its formation consisted of five Dakota aircraft, which had already been acquired by the Saudi Arabian government. See Report on American Activities in Saudi Arabia, October 1946, FO 371/52805.

<sup>45</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 235. It should be noted that the US government had made every thing possible for the pipeline project to succeed, an example could be seen when the Department of Commerce granted the TAPLINE a license to ship 20,000 tons of steel for the construction of the pipeline, despite the restriction on US steel exports at that time. Middle East Journal Chronology, January, 1948.

<sup>46</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 224-225.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., P. 233. Also, see Childs J. Rives. Foreign Service Farewell. Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia. 1969, p. 155.

<sup>48</sup> This matter was elucidated in the preceding pages.

<sup>49</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 29 April 1948, FO 371/68785. Also see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>50</sup> See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>51</sup> The total sum of the joint US-British assistance programme to the Kingdom in 1945 was \$10 million. See Joint Note by the US and the British Ministers at Jeddah addressed to the Saudi Arabian Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, 29 July 1945, FO 371/45528.

<sup>52</sup> Foreign Office Memorandum on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, 30 November 1945, 371/45543.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095, the report also, in: Foreign Office Annual Reports from Arabia 1930-1960. Chippenham (England): Archive Editions: 1993, pp. 289-295.

<sup>55</sup> While the preparation for the mission - which was to be sent to Saudi Arabia - was under way by May 1946, still the Saudis - despite their inquiries - were not informed about the final British decision on this. At that time the British government - which was intending to improve its relations with the US government over Saudi Arabia - was consulting the US Administration about its intention. From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 29 May 1946, FO 371/52809. In fact the British government did not give the Saudi government a final reply until after the US government gave its

approval (of no objection) on 20 July 1946. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Prince Faisal, 20 July 1946, FO 371/52809.

<sup>56</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 29 May 1946, FO 371/52809.

<sup>57</sup> From Foreign Office to Treasury, 18 October 1946, FO 371/52810.

<sup>58</sup> Military Mission to Saudi Arabia, Secretary of State, 29 January 1947, FO 371/62078.

<sup>59</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. The story of the setting up of the British Military Mission in Saudi Arabia is as follows: Though, the idea of providing Saudi Arabia with a military mission became a fundamental part of British government policy in co-operating with Saudi Arabia from 1946 onward, it should be said that it was Ibn Saud who had initiated such an idea. In November 1945 Ibn Saud had asked the British government to provide his Kingdom with a military mission for the purpose of setting and training a Saudi Arabian Army. While the idea was under consideration in London, Ibn Saud pressed for a final reply in May 1946. As Britain was determined to improve its relations with the USA over Saudi Arabia at that time, London informed the US Administration about its intention. From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 29 May 1946, FO 371/52809. Following the approval of the US government, the Saudi government was informed on 20 July 1946, that a mission would be provided. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Prince Faisal, 20 July 1946, FO 371/52809. During the rest of 1946 the British and Saudi governments concentrated their efforts in order to set up the mission. In the period between the 8th and the 11th of September 1946 Major-General Oliver, Chief of General staff, Middle East Land Forces visited Saudi Arabia and negotiated with the Saudi Defence Minister, Prince Mansour, the detail of the proposed British Military Mission. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 15 September 1946, FO 371/52809. On 7 December 1946 Brigadier Baird who was to head the mission arrived in Jeddah in order to make the final arrangements for the establishment of the mission. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 16 December 1946, FO 371/52810. By the end of January 1947 the mission was in operation in Taif after it was successfully formed. Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1947, FO 371/62079. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>60</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1947, FO 371/62079. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>61</sup> See for example Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. *op. cit.*, p. 777. Also, see section C of this chapter.

<sup>62</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>63</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Though the Treasury was enthusiastic - in December 1945 - to provide Saudi Arabia with such a service, the continuity of Britain's economic decline had caused some reluctance within the Treasury.

<sup>64</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>65</sup> See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>66</sup> In the beginning of 1947 Prince Saud Bin Abdulaziz had paid an official visit to the USA as well as to Britain. Various pages of this chapter are dealing with Saud's tour in accordance with the nature of the issues that were brought up. For example the economic issue that Saud had dealt with in Washington had already been mentioned in the previous section, so other issues will be dealt with in the sections that contain them.

<sup>67</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. *op. cit.*, pp. 775-781.

<sup>68</sup> Translated from *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> The term of opponents here is mainly concerning the Hashemites. See *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> See *Ibid.* In fact the Crown Prince was instructed to leave the discussions in London to Fuad Hamza, with indications that the Saudi-British discussions would be on - relatively - less important topics. See *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Saud's visit to London became ceremonial. Many British officials including the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary entertained Saud during the visit. From Foreign Office (Baxter) to Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith), 17 March 1947, FO 371/62080. (In what seems like an attempt at bringing about some kind of political activity in this official visit) Saud was asked to convey a message from Ibn Saud. In that message, the King had extended his willingness to mediate in "the Anglo-Egyptian treaty dispute" which was at its peak at that time. It could be said that the only talk that can be considered as political and important that Saud had undertook in London, was the Prince's conversation with the British Foreign Secretary in regard to this message. See from Foreign Office to Cairo, 26 February 1947, FO 371/62942. At that time there was an Anglo-Egyptian dispute over the future of their treaty, in particular to the future of Sudan and the future of the British military extent in Egypt. Ibn Saud was concerned in solving this dispute because it involved Britain and an Arab State that was in good relations with Saudi Arabia. The British government was pleased with Ibn Saud's offer. However Saudi Arabian efforts on this subject became fruitless, as both the British and the Egyptian governments were not willing to give any concessions that could facilitate an agreement. See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>79</sup> See Hart, Parker. *op. cit.*, pp. 43-47. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. *op. cit.*, p. 228-229.

<sup>80</sup> FRUS, 1947, vol. 5, pp. 738-41, quoted in Hart, Parker. *op. cit.*, p. 44. In a memorandum that was submitted to the US president on 18 February 1947, it was reported that, "The Crown Prince was assured that the United States would support the integrity and independence of the countries of the Near East in the United Nations in the event their countries should be threatened by aggression". Memorandum for the President, 18 February 1947. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 73. Also, see Nadav, Safran. **Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security.** London: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 63.

<sup>81</sup> FRUS, 1947, vol. 5, pp. 738-41, quoted in Hart, Parker. *op. cit.*, pp. 44.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Hart, Parker. *op. cit.*, p. 44. It should be also noted that the Americans told the British government - through the American Embassy in London - that they were disturbed by a report from a Middle Eastern Capital in regards to Abdullah's plans for Great Syria. Nadav, Safran. *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64. Also Memorandum for the President, 18 February 1947. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 73. Also it should be noted, that Ibn Saud's suspicion of the British government as backing the Hashemites, came about when Abdullah was trying to give the impression that he was backed by Britain on his plan regarding Great Syria. Baxter stated that "the King [Abdullah] . . . prepared to give the impression, whenever it suits him, that he has our backing". Minute by Baxter, 25 April 1947, FO 371/61492, quoted in Louis, Wm. Roger. **The British Empire in the Middle East: 1945-1951.** Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 361.

<sup>84</sup> Hart, Parker. *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>85</sup> Particularly King Ibn Saud's opinion when the instructions for Saud were under preparation in Riyadh. Indeed, a 'frank and plain' reply to Ibn Saud's obvious instructions to his son, in which Saud could not report back to his father that it was not stated clearly in Washington, could have been the great hope that the King was waiting for.

<sup>86</sup> It became obvious in this thesis that King Ibn Saud was not so keen about the UN performance in such a case. The King, who subconsciously was acting and reacting in his Kingdom's foreign policy with a notable degree of harmony to most of the assumptions that the classic and neo-realists agreed upon, was a natural believer in the anarchism of the international system. Moreover, the rational Monarch was more concerned about his Kingdom's security in regard to external states. Also, see the main introduction to the thesis.

<sup>87</sup> It should be noted that Ibn Saud was unaware - by that time - of the improvement of American-British relations in regard to Saudi Arabia.

<sup>88</sup> The story of the elevation of the diplomatic representation between Saudi Arabia and Britain is as follows: On 17 July 1947 Saudi Arabia suggested through its Minister in London to the British government to raise the diplomatic representation from that of legations into Embassies. Mr Michael

Wright, the Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, ironically minuted on 21 of July that "in view of our close and friendly relations with Saudi Arabia and King Ibn Saud . . . there would seem to be a strong case for agreeing to the Saudi Arabian request". Foreign Office Minutes, 21 July 1947, FO 371/62096. By the end of October 1947 both government's approved the elevation proposal. Foreign Office Minutes, 15 October 1947, FO 371/62096. Also, Foreign Office Minutes, 27 October 1947, FO 371/62096. On 24 November 1947 Mr Alan Trott submitted the Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to King Ibn Saud. Ultimately Mr Hafiz Wahba submitted his Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to King George the Sixth in February 1948. From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 10 December 1947, FO 371/62096. It should be noted that Trott replaced Minister Grafftey-Smith, who in fact was transferred from Saudi Arabia in the spring of 1947. See Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. *op. cit.*, p. 285. Also, see From Foreign Office to the Buckingham Palace, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68778. The delay of Hafiz's submission was because he was travelling outside the UK until February 1940, see *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. The British Ambassador in Cairo, Lord Killearn conveyed this "advance news" to Ibn Saud, during the Saudi King's visit to Egypt then. See *Ibid.* Also, see Evans, Trefor. **The Killearn Diaries 1934-1946**. London: Sidgwick and Jackson. 1972, pp. 365-368.

<sup>90</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>91</sup> Leatherdale, Clive. **Britain and Saudi Arabia 1925-1939**. London: Frank Cass, 1983, p. 275.

<sup>92</sup> Foreign office Minute (by Baxter), 6 March 1946, FO 371/52573, quoted in Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 352.

<sup>93</sup> See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Grafftey-Smith (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* It should be noted that article 14 of the Hadda agreement states "This agreement will remain in force for so long as His Britannic Majesty's Government are entrusted with the mandate of Trans-Jordan". Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 378.

<sup>97</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.* Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 353.

<sup>99</sup> Certain facts about the Saudi territorial claims could indicate that the weakness of the new Hashemite State was intended. Indeed, if Saudi Arabia obtained the Port of Aqaba, Jordan would remain without a sea outlet. Moreover, if Saudi Arabia takes Maan over, the southern Jordanian strategic town, which used to be the head of the Hijaz railway, would give Saudi Arabia strategic gains in the expanse of Jordan. Though, the Saudi's did not give clear explanations for their claim regarding the passageway between Saudi Arabia and Syria, it might be said that Saudi Arabia was going to put at later stage formats that could weaken the Hashemites in general. Indeed, if Saudi Arabia insisted in a full right of passageway alongside the Iraqi-Jordanian frontier Iraq and Jordan would be cut off (separated) from each other. In conclusion, it should be stressed that the emergence of Jordan as a weak state could be regarded as a safeguarding measure against the possibility of direct Hashemite aggression against Saudi Arabia.

<sup>100</sup> From Jeddah (Grafftey-smith) to Foreign Office, 16 March 1946. In **King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence:1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 410.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 355. It should be noted that Britain continued its sponsorship of the Arab Legion throughout the period covered in this study. By 1956 the strength of the Arab Legion was in the region of 25,000 officers and men. *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> From the US Minister (Jeddah) to Department of State, 21 March 1946. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II**. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 34.

<sup>105</sup> Al-Mhafadhah, Ali. **العلاقات الاردنية البريطانية (Jordanian-British Relations)**. Beirut: دار النهار, 1973, p. 131.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135. Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 358.

<sup>107</sup> Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 359.

<sup>108</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>109</sup> In fact Britain was in complete disagreement with the Saudis claims. Though, the British government attitude on this was kept secret from the Saudi as well as the Hashemites, it is worth mentioning here. In a Foreign Office Memorandum dated 7 September 1946 it was stated that "we certainly do not want to see any change in the western frontier . . . between Transjordan and the Hijaz. The loss of the port of Aqaba to Transjordan would be a serious blow to that country and it would deprive it of its only outlet to the sea. Besides there may be strong strategic reasons why we want to keep that port in Transjordan". Foreign Office Memorandum, 7 September 1946, FO 371/52797. The British "Chiefs of Staff in particular attached importance to the potential value of Aqaba as a major port". Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 355.

<sup>110</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> It should be noted, that though the British government had initially told the Jordanians about the Saudi territorial claims, it did not officially write to them regarding it until June 1946. See from Amman (the British Legation) to Foreign Office, 17 July 1946, FO 371/52797.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* Also From the Jordanian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the British Minister in Amman, 15 July 1946, FO 371/52797. By that, the Jordanian government was regarding the Hadda agreement of 1925 to be in force between Saudi Arabia and Jordan. See *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> From the Saudi Minister for Foreign Affairs to the British Minister in Jeddah, 4 August 1946, FO 371/52797.

<sup>118</sup> Foreign Office Memorandum, 7 September 1946, FO 371/52797.

<sup>119</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 2 October 1946, FO 371/52797. Also From Palestine (Cunningham) to Foreign Office, 26 September 1946, FO 371/52797. It should be noted that the British government had clearly informed Ibn Saud at the beginning of October 1946 that they would not participate in the proposed conversations but would rather keep it between the Saudi and the Jordanian delegations. From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 2 October 1946, FO 371/52797.

<sup>120</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 October 1946, FO 371/52797. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 10 October 1946, FO 371/52797. Also, from Amman to Foreign Office, 10 October 1946, FO 371/52797. It seems that it was the Jordanians who were not so keen in making the London talk successful. During - the only one session of - the talk on 6 October, Samir told Faisal that, "he would not be able to do justice to the subject both on account of the fact that he was leaving England the next day and because he had not had an opportunity of studying the papers relating to the frontier". *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. *op. cit.*, p. 226. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Furthermore, signs of what Ibn Saud might understand as being connected with the Hashemite propaganda, started to appear in Hijaz, "protesting the discrimination practiced by the Saudis against the Hijazis and calling for overthrow of the Saudi regime". Gold, Isadore Jay. *op. cit.*, p. 227. Also, see from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 22 June 1946, FO 371/52828.

<sup>122</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 30 November 1946, FO 371/52835.

<sup>123</sup> Particularly, in accordance with King Ibn Saud's instruction to Prince Saud in January 1947. See section B: V of this chapter.

<sup>124</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 2 January 1947, FO 371/62080. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 January 1947, FO 371/62087. Following Faisal's visit, the boundary issue was, *de facto*, suspended, as both parties did not mention it until June 1947, when the Saudi government initiated the reopening of the suspended negotiations. See From the Saudi Foreign Minister to the Transjordan Foreign Minister, 8 June 1947, FO 371/62087.

<sup>125</sup> See section B: V of this chapter. Ibn Saud had realised that no matter how friendly he could be towards Abdullah at this stage, the latter would not put the Great Syria plan down, or indeed might not prevent the anti-Saudi propaganda that could accompany such a plan. In fact "Abdullah informed Faisal that he had no intention of abandoning his efforts to obtain greater Syria and had even asked for Ibn Saud's support and assistance to this end [!]" From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 January 1947, FO 371/62087.

<sup>126</sup> See from Ibn Saud to Bevin, 24 April 1947, FO 371/61493. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. It should be

noted that "the unification of Iraq and Transjordan . . . and Abdullah's claim to Syria, both of which Ibn Saud considers to be inspired by hostile intentions towards himself". From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 January 1947, FO 371/62087.

<sup>127</sup> Mostyn stated that the Iraqi-Transjordanian Treaty was signed on 4 May 1947. However, the annual report for 1947 on Saudi Arabia stated that the treaty was signed on the 14 April 1947. See Mostyn, Trevor **Major Political Events in Iran, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula: 1945-1990**. Oxford: Facts on File, 1991, p. 5. Also see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>128</sup> From Ibn Saud to Bevin, 24 April 1947, FO 371/61493. Additionally, Ibn Saud explained that he did not retaliate to the Hashemites propaganda because of his consideration for Britain's interests. On this Ibn Saud wrote: "It was only because of our consideration for British interests in the lands ruled by the Hashimite family that we have not dealt with the matter in a different way . . . we are quite capable of carrying on . . . a much stronger and more effective propaganda than . . . [them]. But only Britain's vital interests in these lands, as well as the strong ties of friendship existing between our countries [Saudi Arabia and Britain], that made us adhere to a quiet and peaceful policy". Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> See from Bevin to Ibn Saud, 6 June 1947, FO 371/61493.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid. In April 1936 Saudi Arabia and Iraq signed a "Treaty of Arab Brotherhood and Alliance". Despite the mentioning of "alliance", the treaty "was seen as little more than a gesture of sympathy between two Arab states". Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, pp. 267-268.

<sup>134</sup> From Bevin to Ibn Saud, 6 June 1947, FO 371/61493.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> It seems that the Foreign Secretary was regarding the White Paper as a foolish propaganda tool. Foreign Office minute, 5 June 1947, FO 371/61493. Also Conversation with Saudi Arabian Minister, 6 June 1947, FO 371/61493. Abdullah's publication of the White Paper in May 1947 caused Ibn Saud's anxieties to even go further. The White Paper discussed in detail the historical and the geographical basis of Jordan and Syria as one country. See Louis, Wm. Roger. *op. cit.*, p. 362.

<sup>137</sup> The negotiations would only concern the frontier dispute and related subjects to them. From The Saudi Foreign Minister to the Transjordan Foreign Minister, 8 June 1947, FO 371/62087. Unlike their correspondences in 1946, Faisal and Samir were addressing each other directly by the names, nevertheless these communications were transmitted through the British. See Ibid. Also, see from Foreign Office to Amman, 19 June 1947, FO 371/62087.

<sup>138</sup> From the Transjordan Foreign Minister to the Saudi Foreign Minister, 8 June 1947, FO 371/62087.

<sup>139</sup> From The Saudi Foreign Minister to the Transjordan Foreign Minister, 4 July 1947, FO 371/62087. Also From the Transjordan Foreign Minister to the Saudi Foreign Minister, 10 July 1947, FO 371/62087. Also From The Saudi Foreign Minister to the Transjordan Foreign Minister, 31 July 1947, FO 371/68765. Also From the Transjordan Foreign Minister to the Saudi Foreign Minister, 7 August 1947, FO 371/68765.

<sup>140</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>141</sup> Foreign Office minute, 25 June 1947, FO 371/61493. It should be noted, that it was unusual for Ibn Saud to deal with the British government in such a matter through the Saudi Minister in London (Wahba), as Ibn Saud always preferred to deal with the British government through its Minister in Jeddah. However, the reason for dealing with the British government through Wahba at this particular time was because the British Legation in Jeddah was without a minister. Grafftey-Smith left Jeddah in the spring of 1947 and Ambassador Trott did not submit his Letters of Credence until November 1947. See Grafftey-Smith, Laurence. *op. cit.*, p. 285. Also, From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 10 December 1947, FO 371/62096.

<sup>142</sup> Foreign Office minute, 25 June 1947, FO 371/61493. It should be noted that at the precise time when Wahba visited the Foreign Office, Bevin was on an overseas tour. See Foreign Office minute, 3 July 1947, FO 371/61494.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Note for the Secretary of State's conversation with the Saudi Arabian Minister, 23 July 1947, FO 371/61493.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. Also, Foreign Office minute, 17 July 1947, FO 371/61494.

<sup>147</sup> The British officials and diplomats used to - by the summer of 1947 - refer to Ibn Saud's case with the Hashemite as being an "obsession". For instance, it was stated in the 1947 annual report that "the consolidation and the growth of the power of the Hashimite family" had become a great fear that "governed all the King's political thinking, and appears indeed to have become an obsession with him". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Despite this being observed by the British still Ibn Saud's fear was not assuaged.

<sup>148</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>149</sup> Foreign Office Note on Greater Syria, 3 September 1947, FO 371/61495.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>151</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 5 September 1947, FO 371/61495.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. It seemed that this point was explained to Ibn Saud also, as Clark explained at a later stage that Ibn Saud had "failed to understand that, as an independent sovereign, King Abdullah was not subject to the control of His Majesty's Government". Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>153</sup> From Jeddah (Clarke) to Ibn Saud, 25 October 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112.

<sup>154</sup> Though the tribes disturbances could be justified according to various explanations, such as tribal wars and revenge, etc. Ibn Saud was inclined to believe that the Hashemites were motivating these tribes "to raise forays on the frontiers, to stop trade, and to threaten security". Memorandum from Ibn Saud, 23 November 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Also, see from Baghdad (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 23 August 1947, FO 371/61495. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Ibn Saud stated in the 23 November memorandum that, "Recently some of [the] Ashraf [Hashemite] have sent secret messengers to our country to play tricks with the minds of two young men of the house of Rashid. They deceived them with wiles and attracted them with inducement so that they went to Iraq . . . the only object of the Ashraf in seizing those two persons was to make use of them as stalking-horses for various evil persons of the tribes on our frontiers". Memorandum from Ibn Saud, 23 November 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Also, see from the US Minister (Jeddah) to Department of State, 10 December 1947. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II. Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 124-125. Also, see Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>155</sup> Memorandum from Ibn Saud, 23 November 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. Ibn Saud's use of the Islamic proverb - "لا حول ولا قوة الا بالله" (there is no might and no power save [but] in God)" - in this order means that if the Hashemite forces attacked Saudi Arabia then the matter will be a fact. Additionally, as Trott explained "the phrase is used for one who is forced to do an unpleasant thing contrary to his will". From Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112.

<sup>160</sup> Memorandum from Ibn Saud, 23 November 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. It should be noted that the assistance that Ibn Saud is referring to, is military and political aid rather than financial assistance; he means protection and military equipment, arms, etc. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Moreover, when the new British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Mr Alan Trott, submitted his letters of Credence to King Ibn Saud on 24 November 1947, the Hashemite was the "only" subject that the King spoke to the Ambassador about. Trott summarised's Ibn Saud whole argument - during this conversation - as it was "based on his contention that we [the British] had helped Hashimites more than him, and that we ought therefore to repair the omission and help him on the same scale as we had helped them". From Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Also, see from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 10 December 1947, FO 371/62096.

<sup>161</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Also From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 28 December 1947, FO 371/62096.

<sup>162</sup> See Devereux, David. The Formulation of British Defence Policy Towards the Middle East: 1948-56. London: Macmillan, 1990, pp. 15-24.

<sup>163</sup> General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114. Also see section A of this chapter.

<sup>164</sup> From the beginning of 1948 the British government was very concerned about reconciliation between King Ibn Saud and King Abdullah. On 8 February 1948 the Foreign Office wrote to the British Embassy in Jeddah and to the British Legation in Amman, asking for opinions on the best way and time of making a rapprochement between Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The Foreign Office idea of encouraging reconciliation between both monarchs was to urge for the reopening of frontier question negotiations and to urge for a personal meeting between Ibn Saud and Abdullah. See From Foreign Office to Amman, 8 February 1948, FO 371/68765. The British Ambassador in Saudi Arabia did not think that the right time had come yet for the reconciliation. Trott thought such arrangements would fail, just as the previous efforts had failed. Moreover, Trott thought that discussion of the frontier dispute was likely to be complicated and would cause more trouble. In addition, he thought that Ibn Saud would not accept any such approach at the present time. See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 11 February 1948, FO 371/68765. Unlike Trott, the British Minister in Amman, Sir Kirkbride, thought the present time was good for such a rapprochement, as it seems that Abdullah was ready for it. Kirkbride informed the Foreign Office that Abdullah had mentioned his readiness for reconciliation with Ibn Saud on more than one occasion. Kirkbride also informed the Foreign Office that he might be able to convince Abdullah to take the initiative. See from Amman to Foreign Office, 13 February 1948, FO 371/68765. From the feedback that the Foreign Office received, it became clear that Abdullah was ready for rapprochement while Ibn Saud was not yet ready. Therefore, the Foreign Office considered convincing Ibn Saud to make a rapprochement with Abdullah. Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Memorandum received from His Majesty King Ibn Saud, attached to: From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765.

<sup>166</sup> Memorandum received from His Majesty King Ibn Saud, attached to: From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765. It should be noted that the Saudi memorandum on 23 November, did not explicitly bring about the same hope - as indicated in the latest memorandum - that Britain should influence the Hashemites positively. See Memorandum from Ibn Saud, 23 November 1947, as Enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112.

<sup>167</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 5 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>168</sup> Report on visit to Riyadh, 12th-14th April 1948, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. Ibn Saud's statement to Rodgers goes on; "What did His Majesty's Government expect him to do if the Hashimites continued to carry on activities against him? For instance in the last fortnight detachments of the Iraqi army had appeared on his frontiers marking out airfields and sites for buildings; they had even penetrated the neutral zone. They [the Hashemite] had also been inciting Shammar in Iraq to make trouble for him". Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Report on visit to Riyadh, 12th-14th April 1948, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>172</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>173</sup> Copy in Translation of Ibn Saud Memorandum, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>174</sup> The British documents had failed to address such an issue, a matter that indicates that Ibn Saud remarks were not treated properly, or indeed were underestimated. See for example from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 15 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>175</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Also, Summary of Conversations, 28-30 April 1948, as enclosure in from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid. Also, Aide Memoire, 30 April 1948, as enclosure in from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>181</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 1 May 1948, FO 371/68767. The discussions that Trott was referring to were those concerning the treaty and the strategic facilities. See section E: II of this chapter.

<sup>182</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>183</sup> See for example Foreign Office Minute, 1 June 1948, as an Appendix to Discussion with the Amir Faisal, 1 June 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>184</sup> Minutes of a meeting between H.R.H the *Amir* Faisal of Saudi Arabia and Mr Wright, 14 June 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>185</sup> From Foreign Office to the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London, 19 June 1948, FO 371/68770. Also, from Amman to Foreign Office, 17 June 1948, FO 371/68770. Also, Draft Brief for the Secretary of State's meeting with *Amir* Faisal, June 1948, FO 371/68770. Faisal and the British officials who were in fact surprised about the news received it with satisfaction. *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 12 June 1948, FO 371/68768. During 1947 and 1948 the Saudi government gathered in the northern Saudi town of Al-Jauf traditional tribal troops. With a formal intention of sending those troops into Palestine, their numbers reached the region of 7000 men. Additionally, it was said that about 3000 Saudi troops were being mobilised in the winter of 1948 by the Saudi-Jordanian borders. See Dispatch of US Consul (Dhahran), July 1949, In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 213. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. **The Palestine Issue in Saudi Arabian Foreign Policy: 1936-1981.** Ph.D. thesis, University of Exeter, 1989, pp. 200-201. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 29 July 1948, FO 371/38788. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Trott (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505. Even without being asked for permission Abdullah informed the Saudis in April 1948 that he would not give his consent for any Saudi troops to pass through Jordan. Abdullah's message which was conveyed to the Saudi government through the British diplomats, in Amman and Jeddah, warned that if those troops attempted to pass through Jordan, the Jordanian army would fight them instead of fighting the Jews/Israelis. See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. *op. cit.*, pp. 1288-1289. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. *op. cit.*, pp. 200-201.

<sup>187</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 12 June 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 17 June 1948, FO 371/68770. Also, Draft Brief for the Secretary of State's meeting with *Amir* Faisal, June 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>192</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Trott (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>193</sup> Trott added "I have to admit that I did not expect it, and that I was very surprised when it took place. From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 11 July 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> Dispatch of US Consul (Dhahran), July 1949, In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 213. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. *op. cit.*, pp. 200-201. Al-Anqari stated the fact correctly, but wrongly (although it could be a typing mistake) stated that the troops were withdrawn in July 1948. See *Ibid.*

<sup>196</sup> Some time in 1947, Ibn Saud remarked to Childs that the Arabs fear "that once a Jewish state was created extending over most of Palestine there would be no holding back Jewish pressure for further *lebensraum*". Childs commented on Ibn Saud's remark by writing later in his book; **Foreign Service Farewell**, that, "the existing limits of Palestine were, in his [Ibn Saud] opinion, quite insufficient for that Jewish in-gathering which was the announced Zionist objective". Childs J. Rives. *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>197</sup> See section 2: B: II of the introductory chapter. Also, see Leatherdale, Clive. *op. cit.*, p. 284. Also, see Kedourie, Elie. **Great Britain and Palestine: The Turning Point.** In Kedourie, Elie. **Islam in the Modern World.** London: Mansell, 1980, p. 144. & p. 150.

<sup>198</sup> See section C of chapter one. Also, see Statement made to Ibn Saud at Riyadh by His Majesty's Minister on, 13 October 1939, FO 371/23271. Also, see from Jeddah (Bullard) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1939, FO 371/23271.

<sup>199</sup> See Ibn Saud's correspondences with the British government in 1947, as they are laid out within this section.

<sup>200</sup> For Abdullah as well, this reason could be countable in his new attitude towards Ibn Saud at that particular time. In addition, the engagement of the Arab legion in Palestine could be also considered as one of the potential motives in Abdullah's policy. Moreover, Kirkbride rationalised Abdullah's move - on 17 June 1948 - by stating that "The only ulterior motive which I can detect in King Abdullah's mind is to drive a wedge between the King, Abdel Aziz and Syrian Leaders". See from Amman to Foreign Office, 17 June 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>201</sup> See section D of this chapter. It could also be said, that Ibn Saud was not - at that time - so keen to ask for US help in his dilemma with the Hashemite. Ibn Saud dismissed the US factor, not just because he was aware, from his experience at the beginning of 1947, that the US government might not be ready to help, but also because of his - and the Arabs - dislike of the US government policy in Palestine, particularly in 1948.

<sup>202</sup> See section D of this chapter.

<sup>203</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Trott (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>204</sup> It could also be said that Abdullah had the same intention as that of Ibn Saud. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 July 1948, FO 371/68770. Also from Amman to Foreign Office, 6 July 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>205</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 6 July 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid., The outstanding issues between Iraq and Saudi Arabia at that time were: first - according to the Saudis - the cooperation between the Saudi and Iraqi frontier officers was not satisfactory; second, the Iraqi objection against Rashid Al-Kailani existence in Riyadh; third, the existence of the two members of the Al-Rashid family in Iraq. Regarding the frontier officer co-operation Ibn Saud asked Abdullah to request the Iraqis to cooperate on this. In regard to Al-Kailani Ibn Saud told Abdullah that he did not want Al-Kailani to stay in Saudi Arabia anymore, thus if Abdullah could have him, political asylum in Jordan would be better for Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Nevertheless, Abdullah explained the difficulty that he himself might face with the Iraqi government if he did so. With regard to Al-Rashid Ibn Saud asked Abdullah to make the Iraqis ensure that they would not be permitted to act against Saudi Arabia. Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1372-1374.

<sup>209</sup> Extract from Umm-al-Qura NO. 1217, 2 July 1948, as enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 July 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> From Amman to Foreign Office, 16 August 1948, FO 371/68770. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 December 1948, 371/68770. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Trott (Jeddah) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>212</sup> Also see section E: II of this chapter.

<sup>213</sup> Isadore Gold had also realised these two points. See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 236-237.

<sup>214</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 193-196. Also, Palmer, Alan **Who's Who in World Politics**. London: Routledge. 1996, p. 301. According to Parker Hart: As early as "April 20 [1945]" Truman was adapting a supportive policy for the aims of Zionism. See Hart, Parker. op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>215</sup> Eddy. F.D.R Meets Ibn Saud, p. 37, quoted in Ibid., pp. 41-42. Also, see Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 194.

<sup>216</sup> See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1223.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> See Ibid., pp. 1221-1224. Ibn Saud wrote to Truman on 23 August 1945, and 4 January 1946. See Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095.

<sup>220</sup> Evans, Trefor. op. cit., pp. 365-368.

<sup>221</sup> By that time the members of the commission had already toured several countries in and outside the Middle East. See Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1251-1259. The main task of the joint commission, which consisted of six Americans and six British, was to study the nature of the Palestine problem, and its associated subjects. Three members of the commission had toured most of the Arab world, which included Saudi Arabia. The mission to Riyadh consisted of Sir John Singleton, (UK) High Court Judge and the chairman of the mission, Reginald Manningham Buller, (UK) a Tory MP,

and Frank Buxton, (USA) the editor of Boston Herald. See *Ibid.* Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., pp. 397-398.

<sup>222</sup> Translated from Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1251-1259.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.* Most of Ibn Saud's presentation was devoted to Britain, and its involvement in Palestine. It could be said that Ibn Saud's concentration on Britain during this conversation might have been because he was unsatisfied with Britain at that particular time, not just in regard to Palestine, but also in regard to the Hashemites as well. See section C of this chapter. Equally, it could be said that the King might have done so because the important delegates of this particular mission were British. Furthermore, the King might have preferred not to criticise the US government - in details - in the presence of British politicians, particularly when his explanations might be seen in London, as a sign of weakness in his relations with the USA.

<sup>227</sup> Translated from Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1251-1259.

<sup>228</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.* Also, Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1263-1264. Al-Anqari added, that Yassin had also notified the American Legation that "the situation was made even worse by the alleged efforts of British diplomats to convince the Saudis that the proposal to admit 100,000 refugees had been pushed by the U.S. over the unsuccessful resistance of British members of the Commission". See Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 170. On 10 May Eddy reported to the State Department that Ibn Saud "said that he and his sons will die in battle before they will permit Palestine to receive major increments of Jewish immigration". Eddy to Secretary of State, 10 May 1946, quoted in Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 196.

<sup>230</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., pp. 1263-1264. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 171.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1264.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1283. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1946, from Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, 26 January 1947, FO 371/62095. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 2 October 1946, FO 371/52797.

<sup>234</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 195-196.

<sup>235</sup> See Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 171-176.

<sup>236</sup> Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 753. Also, Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 179.

<sup>237</sup> Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 179-180.

<sup>238</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Also, see Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 196-197.

<sup>239</sup> See Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 174-177.

<sup>240</sup> Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 754. It should be noted that on 26 September 1947 Britain announced its intention to withdraw from Palestine. *Ibid.*, p. 754.

<sup>241</sup> United Nations General Assembly Official Records, 2nd session, 128th Plenary Meeting, 29 November 1947, p. 1425. Also Umm Al-Qura, 26 December 1947, quoted in Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., p. 182 & p. 214.

<sup>242</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> Mr J. Rives Childs replaced Eddy as the US Minister to Saudi Arabia on 29 June 1946. Childs J. Rives. op. cit., p. 137. From Jeddah (Grafftey-Smith) to Foreign Office, Report on heads of Foreign Missions in Jeddah, 9 July 1946, FO 371/52831. It should be noted that Eddy was transferred from Jeddah to the State Department because his wife had suffered a mental breakdown, a matter that meant she should be treated in the USA. See *Ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> Childs to Marshall, 4 December 1947, quoted in Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 238.

<sup>246</sup> From Baghdad (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 24 December 1948, FO 371/68762. With a reference to his contention with the Hashemites, Ibn Saud explained this precise matter to Childs: "I shall be entirely at one with the Arab states as far as our dispute with Zionism is concerned. There is no difference of opinion among us on that score. I do desire, however, to make a distinction between such an attitude and the attempts being made by my antagonists in the Arab world to draw me into direct conflict politically or economically with the United States". From the US minister (Jeddah) to the State Department, 4 December 1947, In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World:**

**Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 114-117.

<sup>247</sup> See Owendale, Ritchie. op. cit., pp. 41-42. See also Rubin, Barry. **The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict.** Syracuse (New York): Syracuse University, 1981, p. 185.

<sup>248</sup> This sea blockade continued until the British forces withdraw on 14 May 1948. Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 188. British government neutrality, the sea blockade against new Jewish immigration, and the continuation of British government arms supply to some Arab states despite the arms embargo (these arms were not supposed to be used in Palestine and were delivered because of earlier commitments) had made some Arab leaders go all the way and state that Britain was working in favour of the Arab. Nuri Al-Said of Iraq told the Iraqi parliament "it became clear to us that Britain viewed with favour to Arab aims regarding Palestine". Ibid., p. 189. The British government policy gave it more respect in the Arab world at the beginning of 1948. For instance, though the Arab States were eager to fight the Jews in Palestine, they did not fight the Jews officially (by using their official armies) as they all promised to Britain as far as it was the mandatory. Thus the official Arab States armies did not enter Palestine until the mid-night of the 14th May 1948. See Owendale, Ritchie. op. cit., pp. 41-42. Also, see also Rubin, Barry. op. cit., p. 185.

<sup>249</sup> Childs to Marshall, 13 January 1948, quoted in Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 242. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. **Search for Security: Saudi Arabian Oil and American Foreign Policy, 1939-1949.** Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1980, pp. 191-192.

<sup>250</sup> From the US minister (Jeddah) to the State Department, 21 February 1948, In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 151.

<sup>251</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 193-194.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid., p. 194. Also Childs J. Rives. op. cit., pp. 150-151. Also Bullard, Reader. **Britain and the Middle East: From the Earliest Time to 1950.** London: Hutchinson House, 1951, p. 152.

<sup>253</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1285.

<sup>254</sup> Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 199. According to Aaron David Miller, the US President was in fact eager to support the Jews by all means. As Truman was pressured by US public opinion and by the supporters of the Jews among Congress members, he was going to do more for the Jewish interests, even if it was going to involve the US in the military crisis. However without the State and the Defence Department lobbying for the importance of Saudi oil, Truman might have done what he intended to do in this matter. See Ibid., p. 184 & p.199. The USSR also recognised Israel on 17 May 1948. Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 755. The British government did not recognise Israel until 29 January 1949, and its recognition was a de facto recognition. Ibid., p. 756. On 31 January 1949 the US extended a de jure recognition to Israel. Ibid., p. 756. The British government de jure recognition to Israel did not take place until April 1950. Bullard, Reader. op. cit., p. 157. Moreover, Bullard stated that following the USA and USSR recognition of Israel, the newly independent Jewish state had expressed a desire to maintain friendly relations with both of them. However, Israel did not express the same desire towards Britain, a matter that meant hostility, according to Bullard. At the same time Jewish propaganda was strongly criticising the British government for not helping the Jews during the last few months of the British mandate over Palestine. Ibid., pp. 153-156.

<sup>255</sup> Translated from Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. op. cit., p. 1290. Nonetheless, King Ibn Saud's direct protest to the US government did not go beyond this letter. See Ibid. Also, see Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 201. After the announcement of the creation of the State of Israel the Saudi troops entered Palestine as a part of the Egyptian forces. Nevertheless, the Saudi troop participation in Palestine was limited, as its number did not exceed 1,200 soldiers. See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 11 July 1948, FO 371/68788. Also, see Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 198-201. Despite the fact that Iraq implemented an oil embargo on the West shortly after the creation of Israel, Saudi Arabia did not participate in such an embargo. Saudi Arabia objected to the use of oil as a weapon, because it thought that such a course of action would bring about economic difficulties for the Arabs without seriously putting pressure on the West. Al-Anqari, Abdalrahman. op. cit., pp. 203-205.

<sup>256</sup> Minutes of a meeting between H.R.H the *Amir* Faisal of Saudi Arabia and Mr Wright, 4 June 1948, FO 371/68768. Faisal's comment was a reply to Wright's statement, in which the latter had said that the British government "had employed their influence to prevent the adoption of any measures unfair to the Arab countries. But for H.M.G's efforts the United Nations would have followed very unwise advice. H.M.G. had been able to persuade the United States Government to modify their policy". Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> See Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 201. Childs observed that the Hashemites rather than the Jews remained Ibn Saud's external anxiety. Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>258</sup> Childs to Secretary of State, 27 December 1948, quoted in Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., p. 202.

<sup>259</sup> Also see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 242. After analysing similar points, Gold Isadore Jay observed that "The Saudi never gave up their British connection as their relations grew closer to the United States". Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> See for example from India Office to Foreign Office, 25 June 1940. FO 371/24590. Also, From Foreign Office to India Office, 1 July 1940. FO 371/24590. Also see chapter one and two. Hence, it could be said that Britain was regarding Saudi Arabia's stance as an instrument to be used for the war effort and for the security of the British Empire whenever necessary.

<sup>261</sup> See chapter one and two.

<sup>262</sup> The transfer of power in India was on 15 August 1947. See Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., p. 477 & p. 754. Though that was the transparent case as it involved a direct linkage to British Empire security, such a matter should not be treated as an absolute. Indeed, even if Britain had withdrawn from India, it still did not entirely relinquish its responsibility in certain countries of the Middle East, in particular the cases of the Arab entities in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsular. Moreover, Ibn Saud's political influence in the Arab world and the potential advantage for its implementation by the British government was still viewed with some value in London, though such a value was considered to be more into the line of political interests rather than that of a pure security. See for example Foreign Office memorandum on Anglo-American relations in Saudi Arabia, 30 November 1945, FO 371/45543.

<sup>263</sup> See Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 166-175. Also see Rubin, Barry. The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1941-1947. London: Frank Cass, 1980, pp. 223-238.

<sup>264</sup> The announcement was made on 21 February. See Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., p. 753. Also, Miller, Aaron David. op. cit., pp. 175-178.

<sup>266</sup> See Memorandum on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> General Statement on Washington Talks on Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean, November 1947, FO 371/61114.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> See section C of this chapter.

<sup>271</sup> For example of Saudi Arabia anxiety prior to 1945 see section A of chapter one.

<sup>272</sup> See section C of this chapter.

<sup>273</sup> See section B: III of this chapter. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 221-222.

<sup>274</sup> See section B: III of this chapter.

<sup>275</sup> See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1947, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68779. Also from Jeddah to Foreign Office (Arab Differences: British Policy), 12 December 1947, FO 371/62112. Also Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

<sup>276</sup> See Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 243.

<sup>277</sup> Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505. Also see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765. Also see Proposed Defensive Treaty between UK and Saudi Arabia, (draft copy), FO 905178. When the Iraqi government signed the Treaty of Portsmouth with the British government on 15 January 1948, Iraqi nationals protested against it. According to both right and left Iraqi nationalists, the treaty brought about more British imperialism in Iraq. Particularly when the treaty provided the British with the right of sharing Iraqi air bases, establishing a Joint Defence Board, giving right to British transit, giving the British government more rights to interfere in Iraq affairs, etc. Forced by the protest, which resulted in massive riots in Iraq, the Regent issued statements on 21 January 1948 stating that "he would not ratify a treaty that did not fulfil the 'national aspirations' of the Iraqi people". Louis, Wm. Roger. op. cit., pp. 334-335. By the 28 January 1948, the news of the failure of the Portsmouth Treaty (the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty) had already reached Saudi Arabia. See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505. Also from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 31 January 1948, FO 371/68765.

<sup>278</sup> Memorandum received from His Majesty King Ibn Saud, attached to: From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> The message goes on "... and that must be in relationship with what the British Government has giving two neighbouring countries: and ... that the British Government would use its good influence to preserve peace and mutual understanding with those of our neighbours who value them". Ibid. As the

memorandum indicated that Ibn Saud was in no position to agree to the proposed British treaty, the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Trott, gave the following reasons which he believed made Ibn Saud refuse such a treaty at this juncture: 1) The short time between the announcement of the proposal and the submission of the draft, it took less than two months. 2) The similarity between the proposed draft and the text of the Portsmouth treaty. 3) Ibn Saud's reluctance to sign a long formal treaty. 4) Ibn Saud's advisers may have advised him against making such a treaty. 5) The protests of Iraqi nationals against their own government, and the aftermath of the Portsmouth treaty made Ibn Saud think that Arab public opinion was against such a treaty. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 2 February 1948, FO 371/68765.

<sup>281</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 5 February 1948, FO 371/68765.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 5 April 1948, FO 371/68767. It should be noted that the instructions had also requested the British Ambassador in Jeddah not to mention the subject of the arms when meeting with King Ibn Saud. However, if Ibn Saud raised the issue himself, the Ambassador would explain the difficulties created by the Palestine situation and by the embargo on the export of arms to Arab States. Ibid. On behalf of the British Ambassador, Mr Rogers of the British Embassy of Jeddah communicated the Foreign Office reply to Ibn Saud on 12 April 1948, see Report on visit to Riyadh, 12th-14th April 1948, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>284</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 5 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>285</sup> See Report on visit to Riyadh, 12th-14th April 1948, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid. Also, see Copy in Translation of Ibn Saud Memorandum, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid. Also, see Report on visit to Riyadh, 12th-14th April 1948, As enclosure in from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 April 1948, FO 371/68767. In b; Ibn Saud meant that the USA and Britain should provide the Arab States with arms and military assistance, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 15 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>293</sup> Indeed the King "desires most of all treaty with US [USA]". From the US minister (Jeddah) to the State Department, 19 April 1948, In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, p. 175. It should be noted that from the early stage of the treaty proposal the British government tried to keep the US government well informed on this matter. Thus in early January 1948 the British government had informed Washington, in advance, of its intention to negotiate a treaty with Saudi Arabia. See from Ministry of Defence to the J.S.M Washington, 16 February 1948, FO 371/68765. Moreover, when the Foreign Office sent the 5th of April statement to Ibn Saud, the British Ambassador was asked to confer with the US Minister in Jeddah before making this statement to Ibn Saud. From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 5 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Ibn Saud from his end also informed the US government about the British proposal. Nevertheless, Ibn Saud tried to mobilise this event in order to strengthen the Saudi American tie. Thus in early February 1948, Ibn Saud told the US government that the British were trying to disturb Saudi-American relations by this proposal, hence according to Ibn Saud the proposed treaty was aiming to detach Saudi Arabia from the US. Devereux, David. op. cit., p. 34. In April 1948, the State Department instructed the US Minister in Jeddah, to inform Ibn Saud that the US government "believes the British to be sincere in their desire to work out Treaty arrangements with the Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, as a contribution to the security of the Middle East". From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 15 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>294</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 15 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Also From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>297</sup> Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>298</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767. Moreover, According to Crocker "it was impossible . . . to bring him [Ibn Saud] to a consideration of defence against the larger danger of external aggression by a great power". Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>299</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767. By the 23rd of April 1948, the British government had received a demand (through the British mission in Taif) from the Saudi government for large quantities of ammunition and arms for use in training. Because of the British and American embargo on the export of arms to the Middle East at that time, the British government refused to supply Saudi Arabia with ammunitions and arms. From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 22 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>300</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 22 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Also see from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> This conversation was held in the morning of 29 April. See Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid. The head of the BMM recently had recommended a 3 year plan in order to train and equip a reasonable size of force, which would maintain internal security. See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>305</sup> Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768. Also, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767. Before Learning about Ibn Saud's rejection of the proposed treaty at the end of January 1948, there was some concern within the British government about obtaining strategic facilities in Saudi Arabia. In this regard the Ministry of Defence wrote to the Foreign Office on 26 January 1948, requesting to include articles in the new proposed treaty which would ensure that Britain would obtain strategic facilities in Saudi Arabia. From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 26 January 1948, FO 371/68765. Nonetheless when the proposed treaty was finally dropped in April, the British government kept trying its best to obtain these facilities as the end of April talks between the Saudis and the British had revealed. See Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: from Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>306</sup> Report on the Visit of the Commander-in-Chief, M.E.L.F to Saudi Arabia, as annex in: From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 24 May 1948, FO 371/68768.

<sup>307</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 May 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>308</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>309</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah (Trott), 25 May 1948, FO 371/68767. Also *Amir Faisal* was asked during his visit to London in June 1948, to convey to Ibn Saud if he could agree on the British government sending a small party of experts to study the proposed facilities. See Draft Brief for the Secretary of State's final meeting with *Amir Faisal*, June 1948, FO 371/68770.

<sup>310</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, FO 371/68768.

<sup>311</sup> From Foreign Office (Wright) to Leslie Hollis, 15 July 1948, FO 371/68770. Also see Devereux, David. op. cit., p.35.

<sup>312</sup> See Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.

## ***Chapter Four: Shifting Allegiances, 1949-1951***

This chapter will concentrate on the causes that furthered the changing relationship between Saudi Arabia and Britain during 1949, 1950 and 1951. The chapter will examine the mainstream of Saudi-British relations by focusing on particular developments that created a new trend in these relations.

Strategic issues that involved Saudi Arabia, Britain, and the USA will be studied along with the development of Anglo-Saudi military cooperations. The return of the Saudi-Hashemite problem and its impact will be examined. The frontier dispute and its implications to Saudi Arabian and British relations will be researched. Finally, the strengthening of US-Saudi ties and its impact on Saudi-British relations will be dealt with.

### **A. Strategic Issues, and the Status of Saudi-British Military Cooperation, 1949-1950**

#### **I. The Proposed Tripartite Treaty and its Consequences**

In November 1948 Ibn Saud proposed a defence treaty between Saudi Arabia, Britain, and the USA.<sup>1</sup> In principle, the proposal was in terms of alliance between these three States, during which Saudi Arabia would allow for the building of strategic facilities on its mainland. In return for those facilities, Britain and USA should provide at their own expense "all the arms and equipment required by Saudi Arabia".<sup>2</sup>

The King's proposal seems to be a further attempt to strengthen the military capability of his Kingdom as well as to bring about a firm strategic commitment between Saudi Arabia and the USA even if Britain was to be included. Indeed, it seems that this proposal was a hunt for US involvement, particularly when it had a built in criteria that clearly avoided the main reason that made the US government dismiss the April 1948 proposal, i.e. the enclosure of the other Arab States.<sup>3</sup>

Neither the British nor the US governments were enthused about the Saudi Arabian proposal.<sup>4</sup> The State Department's initial reaction was explained - exclusively - to the

British government in mid-January 1949.<sup>5</sup> The Americans “did not feel the proposed tripartite alliance would be practicable at this time and wish instead to continue co-operation with Saudi Arabia along the present lines which have [in their view] already brought substantial benefits to Saudi Arabia”.<sup>6</sup> Also it was explained - to the British - that though the American’s were still looking into the case, their response “will probably be in [the] negative”, particularly when the USA “general policy . . . [was still based on avoiding] such commitments”.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, the British had a similar idea to that of the Americans about the impracticability of the Saudi proposal. Though the British and the US governments were at the peak of cooperating and coordinating their defensive policies at that time, still the British were inclined to believe that the USA attachment to such a treaty could “militate against the negotiation of a pact in due course embracing all the Arab States”.<sup>8</sup> On this the British Chiefs of Staff considered that the “main disadvantage . . . is that the inclusion of the United States would involve considerable complications when . . . [Britain] reach the stage of trying to weld all . . . [its] separate treaties into one pact with all the Arab States”.<sup>9</sup> For that reason, “the interests of all three countries might best be served by a bipartite treaty between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia under which the United Kingdom would be able to obtain for the United States the facilities she needs”.<sup>10</sup> While the broader view within the British government was in line with of that of the Chiefs of Staff on the impracticability of the treaty, yet the general policy at that particular time did not seem to value a bipartite treaty with Saudi Arabia.<sup>11</sup>

Unlike the situation at the beginning of 1948, circumstances had diminished the British government’s passion in concluding a treaty with Saudi Arabia. Several reasons seemed to account for such a change. First, the sublimation of the Cold War and the USSR’s blockade of Berlin in the summer of 1948 seemed to compel the British government to give security priority to the heart of Europe rather to that of the Middle East.<sup>12</sup> Second, the preparation of the North Atlantic Pact and its associated developments, which preoccupied Britain’s thinking, had also made the British government reconsider the outline of the defence arrangements in the Middle East. Under these circumstances, Saudi Arabia had become secondary in line of importance to the States to its north, such as Greece, Turkey, and Iran, and presumably even the

Hashemite States.<sup>13</sup> Third, the British government was reluctant at that specific time to enter into such a treaty, which plainly required it to supply Saudi Arabia with a huge quantity of war materials.<sup>14</sup>

For his part, and as he was worrying about the delay and the return of the Hashemite trouble, King Ibn Saud pressed for an immediate reply to his proposal at the end of February.<sup>15</sup> Accordingly, the British government replied not just for itself but also on behalf of the USA. On 16 May 1949, Trott met Ibn Saud and handed him the reply, which stated:<sup>16</sup>

“as the Saudi Government will be aware His Majesty's Government and the United States Government have just launched themselves on the novel conception of the Atlantic Pact which represents a great landmark in American policy . . . [consequently] it is not possible to make any definite new commitments at this stage . . . the tripartite treaty proposal . . . presents some difficulties to H.M.G. and, . . . also to the United States Government”.<sup>17</sup>

Nonetheless, from its side the British government did not completely close the door on any strategic cooperation with Saudi Arabia. On this concern the message continued:

“In these circumstances there seem to be two possible alternatives before his Majesty's Government and the Saudi Arabian Government. [1] They can either leave things as they stand now relying on the background of friendly feelings between the two governments and such practical expressions of this friendship as it has been possible to provide by means of e.g. the British Military Mission and the British Civil Air Training Mission, but leaving the question of the precise form of the relationship between the two governments to be settled at some later date. [2] Or alternatively H.M.G. and the Saudi Arabian Government could proceed without any further general commitments on either side to more detailed examination of their joint strategic needs in Saudi Arabia by means of the dispatch of a small British reconnaissance party as H.M.G. had originally proposed”.<sup>18</sup>

It could be said that the indication of the first alternative on the possibility of a future arrangement between Saudi Arabia and Britain could not sound to Ibn Saud as a case

for consideration. Particularly when he was not so considerate to the previous British approach in this regard, and when his proposal was - more - targeting the USA rather than Britain. Nevertheless, Ibn Saud was more concerned about the possible advantages of the reconnaissance party visit, - an issue, which he had agreed upon in principle in 1948 - as it could at least provide a means to balance what he observed as unequal British treatment to his Kingdom and the Hashemite Kingdoms. Hence, he replied to Trott that he wished to give up the idea of a tripartite treaty at once, and to go on with the suggestion of sending a reconnaissance party to study the details of the strategic facilities.<sup>19</sup>

Upon the King's final agreement on this, the Saudi government made its view clear regarding the main task of the reconnaissance party.<sup>20</sup> Mr Fuad Hamza told Trott that Saudi Arabia did not want to build military bases which would be "expensive and might provoke Nationalist agitation".<sup>21</sup> But, Saudi Arabia needed to build and - exclusively - won three airfields, which should be constructed by Saudi labour with technical advice from British specialist. The Saudis would use these airfields as civil airfields during peacetime and by the Saudis, the American, and the British during actual wartime.<sup>22</sup>

The British Reconnaissance Party visited Saudi Arabia between the 7th and 19th of August 1949.<sup>23</sup> The party travelled by air throughout the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and visited more than seven possible locations for the proposed airfields.<sup>24</sup> Following its departure from Saudi Arabia, the reconnaissance party reported confidentially to the British government, that:<sup>25</sup>

1. As the Americans were very well established in Saudi Arabia, it seems that any development or construction of such airfields could not be carried out without Joint Anglo-American cooperation.
2. The most suitable locations to construct the new airfields would be at Duwaid (North), Hofuf (Hasa), and Riyadh.
3. If the aim of these new airfields was to defend the Western oil interests in Saudi Arabia, the existing airfields at Dhahran and Bahrain could do the job.

It took the British government sometime before they conveyed the final conclusion to the Saudi government in February 1950.<sup>26</sup> It was concluded that from the military

point of view there was no need to develop the proposed airfields in Saudi Arabia. However, minor improvements to the existing airfields in Dhahran and Jeddah would be recommended to be carried out by the Americans who were in fact in a better military working position than the British in these airfields.<sup>27</sup>

It could be said that the negative outcome of the reconnaissance party study was an additional cause for declining Saudi-British relations at that specific time; particularly when it came out at a crucial point in time in which not just the Hashemite issue but also the newly opened frontiers dispute were already hurting Anglo-Saudi relations. Moreover, it would not be surprising if Ibn Saud would look at the British government policy after this as an empty gesture. This was particularly so when despite positive expectations that he might have had about the reconnaissance party visit it had produced nothing. Moreover, it could be argued that such a negative result was likely to discourage the Saudis from requesting any further help from Britain in the future; subsequently blocking the way for the initiation of any prospective Saudi-British cooperation, or indeed for any improvement in their relations.

## II. The State of Anglo-Saudi Military Cooperation by 1950

In mid-January 1950, the British government approved the extension of the duration of the British Military Mission in Saudi Arabia for a further two years starting from 31 March 1950.<sup>28</sup> Despite the encouraging sound of this extension to the mission, it should be mentioned that a proposed plan of increasing and expanding its size was objected to and dismissed within the British government before this extension was approved.<sup>29</sup>

The proposal of the necessity of expanding the size of the mission came from the head of the BMM in January 1949. This proposal was strongly supported by the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, the War Office, and the Foreign Office during the period between January and October 1949.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, In November 1949, when the Treasury rejected such an idea, the Foreign Office did not challenge the decision on this.<sup>31</sup> In fact, the Foreign Office, by the end of 1949, did not consider the Treasury decision on this as inappropriate.<sup>32</sup> This indicates that the Foreign Office principles of supporting the proposal in the period before November-December 1949 had changed,

perhaps accordingly with the increment of tension between Saudi Arabia and Britain over the southeast frontiers of Saudi Arabia.

When the matter came to a proposal for reducing the size of the BMM in October 1950, the Foreign Office took a strong stand against such a plan. With the effective argument of the Foreign Office, the Treasury was successfully convinced of the importance of the continuity of the BMM works in Saudi Arabia as the only existing channel of cooperation between Britain and Saudi Arabia.<sup>33</sup> However, In September 1950, the small British Civil Air Training Mission was withdrawn from Saudi Arabia, as it had completed its three-year program by then.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, the withdrawal of the Civil Air Mission went through without that much concern from either Saudi Arabia or Britain, as the mission was relatively small.<sup>35</sup>

When the arms embargo was lifted in August 1949, the British government then decided to supply Saudi Arabia with the "limited" arms that were requested through the BMM in April 1948.<sup>36</sup> On 1 September 1949, the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia informed Ibn Saud that the requested arms were now available for supply.<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, due to the lack of availability of cash at that time the Saudi government preferred not to ask for immediate shipment of these arms.<sup>38</sup>

In mid-March 1950 Yusuf Yassin asked Trott if the British government would accept either of the following proposals for payment for the arms. The first proposal was to pay by instalment over three years. The second method was that the Saudi government would ask for the arms to be delivered in several shipments during which each would be paid in advance.<sup>39</sup> On 19 April 1950, the British government agreed with the second payment proposal.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, it took the Saudi Defence Ministry quite a long time before it secured the funds for the delivery of the arms. Thus, it was not until the beginning of October 1950 that the Saudi government sent the British government an advance payment for the first quantity. In the beginning of 1951, the arms started to reach Saudi Arabia.<sup>41</sup>

Some scholars were a little confused to see that while the state of Saudi-British relations was deteriorating, both states were still cooperating on arms sales.<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, the matter of arms sales seems to be clearer to understand if three

factors are taken into consideration. The first is that the arms request and the promises for its delivery did take a place a long time before the reopening of the frontier issue. Second, as an effect of the arms embargo, Saudi Arabia was at that time in needs of any arms, whatever channel they should come from, particularly when the Saudi government had not secured any arms deal from anywhere else by that time (from the USA for example). Third, despite the fact that Britain was facing a frontier dispute with Saudi Arabia at the same time the arms were being delivered it was still advantageous for the British government to maintain this minimal tie of cooperation as it did in the case of the continuity of the works of BMM. It should also be understood that the new arms would enhance the training programs of the BMM.

### **B. The Return of Ibn Saud's Anxiety About the Hashemites and its Impact on Saudi-British Relations, 1949-1951**

Despite the reconciliation between Ibn Saud and Abdullah during the past year, the Hashemites remained a problematic phenomenon for Ibn Saud. The first sign of worry for Ibn Saud occurred at the beginning of February 1949, when he heard a radio broadcast regarding a plan for unity between Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, Iraq, and Palestine.<sup>43</sup> On this subject Ibn Saud sent a message to the British government drawing its attention to the news. In his message, Ibn Saud connected this new scheme to the Greater Syrian scheme and pointed out that this new plan would bring nothing but trouble. Hence, he asked the British government to use its influence to suppress it.<sup>44</sup>

In June 1949 it became apparent to the Saudis that Abdullah was returning to his previous propaganda against Saudi Arabia. On 9 June, *Saut al Umma* Radio broadcast that King Abdullah had told a gathering of Palestinian refugees that he strongly understood their situation as he himself was "a refugee from the Hejaz, my country, which Ibn Saud raided and from which he drove us [the Hashemites Family]".<sup>45</sup> Abdullah added that he would "pray to the Lord and implore him to send me and my family back to our country and homes".<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, on 12 June, the same radio station broadcast that Abdullah had likened the Saudi occupation of Hijaz to the Israeli occupation of Palestine, during an address to a refugees delegation, and that Palestine "is not the only place which is occupied; my country, the Hijaz, is also

occupied".<sup>47</sup> When the leader of the delegation mentioned to Abdullah that it was the Jews who are the occupiers of the holy Arab and Muslim country, Abdullah replied, "I do not care who the occupiers happen to be; Palestine is not holier than Mecca, and the latter is occupied too".<sup>48</sup>

During an audience with Ibn Saud in Riyadh on 17 June, the King told Mr David Scott-Fox of the British Embassy that "Abdullah had not kept to the agreement which he had made last year".<sup>49</sup> After complaining about Abdullah's latest propaganda, Ibn Saud requested Scott-Fox to ask his government either to supply Saudi Arabia with sufficient arms so it could protect itself, or alternatively, provide Saudi Arabia with assurance against Hashemite aggression.<sup>50</sup> However, if Britain was not prepared to help Saudi Arabia in either of these cases then, Ibn Saud - as a friend - thought he had the right to ask the British government to explain to him what it had against him and why it was "discriminating against him in this way".<sup>51</sup>

The British government reply came in the form of a message. On 6 August the Foreign Office wrote to the British Ambassador at Jeddah; a message to be conveyed to Ibn Saud.<sup>52</sup> Regarding the British government assurance, it was stated in that message that:

"His Majesty's Government policy that Middle East countries should become increasingly strong and prosperous and should compose the differences which at present weaken them. His Majesty's Government are strongly opposed to the use of force by one Middle East country against another, and would naturally use all their influence to prevent any such happening".<sup>53</sup>

Despite the fact that this assurance showed that Britain was opposing the use of force by any Middle Eastern state against another, the general terms of the assurance still appeared to be unsatisfactory to Ibn Saud, particularly when it referred to the Middle East countries in general, and when it failed to address specifically the matter, which concerned Saudi Arabia, namely the dilemma over the Hashemites. Though Ibn Saud did not reply to the British government directly about whether he was satisfied with this assurance or not, his later actions in regard to the Hashemites showed that he was not that satisfied with it. At the end of August Ibn Saud wrote again to the British government asking it to prevent the Hashemite actions in regard to the plan for union

with Syria.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, Ibn Saud appealed, in November, to the USA for a guarantee for the security of Saudi Arabia against any Hashemite aggression.<sup>55</sup>

Unlike the British government, the US government took Ibn Saud's worries about the Hashemites more seriously. The State Department asked the Conference of the US representatives in the Middle East, which took place in November in Istanbul, to study Ibn Saud's fears of the Hashemites and to forward recommendations on that.<sup>56</sup> The Conference recommended that when the US Ambassador returned to Jeddah in December he should provide Ibn Saud with certain reassurances from the USA. In addition, the conference recommended that it would be helpful if the British government could echo these reassurances.<sup>57</sup> After some correspondence with the British government regarding the final form of these reassurances, the US Ambassador at Jeddah made the following statement to King Ibn Saud on 6 December 1949:<sup>58</sup>

“(a) Problems of Saudi Arabia were extensively discussed at the Istanbul Conference. It was agreed that our Ambassadors in neighbouring states will work to prevent any situation which might arise which would threaten Saudi Arabian integrity and would report immediately to Washington any such situations which might arise. They did not at present find any situation existing which would cause Saudi Arabia concern in the immediate or foreseeable future. They were all agreed it should be the continuing aim of United States Government to develop particularly close relations with Saudi Arabia. (b) With respect to His Majesty's concern about the 'encirclement' of Saudi Arabia, we have informed the British Government that one of the subjects discussed at Istanbul was the question of our traditionally close relationship with Saudi Arabia. It was brought out that the Saudi Arabian Government over a considerable period of time had expressed concern to United States Government over the possibility of aggression against it by one or more of its neighbours . . . The British Government has informed the United States Government that it gave an assurance to the Saudi Arabian Government in August that it would use its influence to prevent the use of force by one Middle East country against another. The United States Government has been further informed that the British Government policy remains exactly the same as at that time. On its part the United States Government desires to give an

assurance that it will continue to make clear to the Arab States concerned that it would be contrary to the policy of both governments and the stability of the area as well as inconsistent with the principles and purpose of the United Nations for any state to take aggressive measures against another".<sup>59</sup>

The explicit and precise terms of the US government assurance seemed to be satisfactory to Ibn Saud. Soon after this statement was delivered, Yusuf Yassin informed the US Minister that Ibn Saud "had been very pleased with it".<sup>60</sup> Indeed, King Ibn Saud was more pleased with the US part of the assurance than the British part, as the Saudis at any rate made no reference to the British part. Particularly when the British part was the same as the already noted August assurance.<sup>61</sup>

Ibn Saud's worries and suspicions about the British stand on the Hashemite issue and the newly emerged border dispute made the US Ambassador in Saudi Arabia realise that there had been some changes in Ibn Saud's external policy in December 1949. It became apparent to Childs that Ibn Saud was no longer relying on Britain, compared with five years ago. Likewise, it seemed to Childs, that Ibn Saud had lost confidence in Britain and now he considered the USA as the only world power on whom he could rely. The Hashemite issue seemed to be the strongest factor behind Ibn Saud's new attitude according to Childs' observations.<sup>62</sup>

In 1950 the Hashemites continued to be a problematic phenomenon for Ibn Saud. At the beginning of the year Ibn Saud tried by all means to prevent any possibility of Syrian unity with Iraq and/or Jordan. Ibn Saud's counter measures against any possibility of such unity even took the form of extending a loan of six million dollars to Syria on 31 January 1950, despite the critical shortage of cash Saudi Arabia was facing at that time.<sup>63</sup>

Saudi Arabia's loan to Syria brought about anxiety within the British government, as Ibn Saud was seen in London as directly interfering in Syria. During an audience with King Ibn Saud on 1 March 1950, Scott-Fox explained the British government's worries about such an intervention.<sup>64</sup> For his part, King Ibn Saud could not understand the motivation for the British government message in this regard. In fact, such a message had caused the King to grasp the importance that the British government

gave to the Hashemites and their interests. Whatever the case may be, without asking Scott-Fox about the basis of the British government worries, Ibn Saud tried to explain the danger of the Hashemites policies on his country.<sup>65</sup>

It could be said that the British message - of the 1<sup>st</sup> of March - had caused Ibn Saud to further suspect Britain as being on the Hashemite side. During a conversation in April with a high ranking US official, Mr George McGhee, Ibn Saud stated frankly that he did not trust the British government anymore in regard to the Hashemite issue.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, Ibn Saud's suspicions of the British government policy in regard to the Hashemites made him stop complaining and asking for British assurances in 1950. Instead, Ibn Saud concentrated his efforts over this issue on the US government and on new foreign policies within the Arab world. Nevertheless the Saudis had kept informing the British government from time to time about the Hashemites aggressive policy, but without any request for assurances.<sup>67</sup>

Instead of getting any help or assurances from Britain against the Hashemites, Ibn Saud tried to counter the Hashemites with a new alliance with Egypt. Thus when Jordan annexed the West Bank on 24 April 1950, all Saudi Arabian efforts against that was by working hand in hand with Egypt, within the framework of the Arab League.<sup>68</sup> The only mention to the British government about the Hashemites aggressive policy against Saudi Arabia was made in May. Yusuf Yassin told Trott on 24 May that the Saudi government is not happy about King Abdullah's invitation to the two Saudi dissidents of the Alrashid family during that month.<sup>69</sup>

Apart from Ibn Saud's fears of the existence of some Jordanian soldiers in the Levy Force, it could be said that his direct anxiety about the Hashemites was almost unapparent in 1951.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, Abdullah's usual propaganda was relatively quiet during the first seven months of the year. The absence of anti-Saudi propaganda was not because of any improvement in the Saudis-Hashemites relations, but because Abdullah was completely occupied with his peace negotiations with the Israelis.<sup>71</sup>

King Abdullah's assassination on 20 July 1951 brought about a new phase in Saudi-Hashemite relations.<sup>72</sup> Abdullah's death removed the main obstacles to rapprochement between the Saudis and the Hashemites. This was the case when

Abdullah's successors (Talal and then Hussain Bin Talal) dropped any notion of expansion, as they became "totally preoccupied by the struggle for the very survival of the Jordanian entity".<sup>73</sup> Hence, the project of Great Syria was totally abandoned and the Hashemites concern about the regaining of Hijaz was completely buried.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, Jordan moved closer than ever before in its relations and cooperation with the Arab States in general.<sup>75</sup>

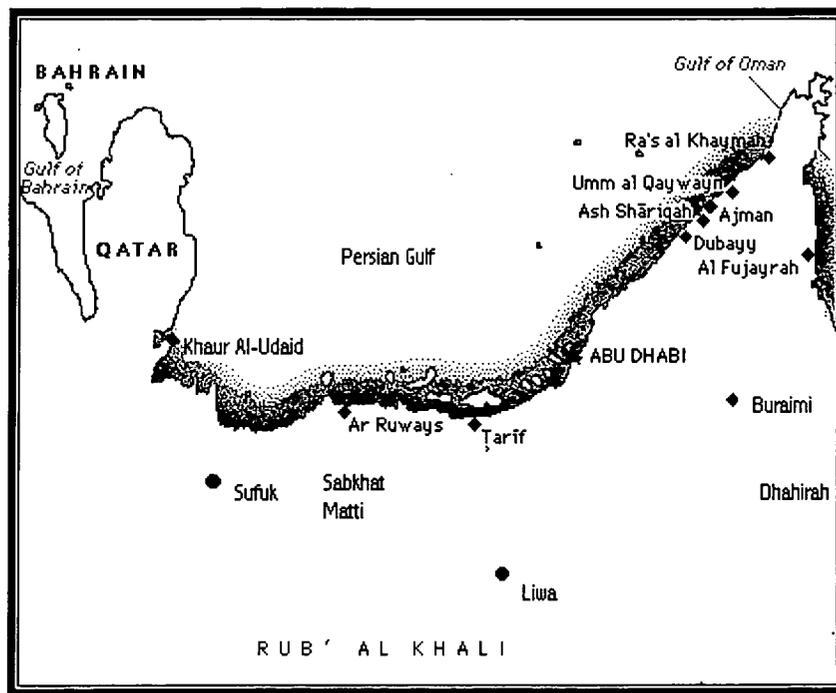
The death of Abdullah brought about a clear end to Ibn Saud's anxiety about the potentiality of the Hashemites direct threat to Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the end of such phenomenon came a little late for any recovery in Saudi-British relations. Indeed, by July 1951, other factors - including Ibn Saud's previous experience with the British government policy towards his anxiety regarding the Hashemites - such as the frontier issue, the impact of Saudi-US relations, etc., led to a cooling off in Saudi-British relations in general.

### **C. The Frontier Issue and its Complications for Saudi-British Relations, 1949-1951**

This thesis is not intended to study the complication of the frontier dispute at great length.<sup>76</sup> However, a clear vision of the frontier story is needed in order to understand the impact of this development on Saudi-British relations.<sup>77</sup>

#### **I. The Reopening of a Complicated Dispute**

It seems that it was the Saudis who were more accountable for the revival of the sleeping frontier dispute in 1949. By indulging in a variety of activities alongside its south-eastern frontiers, Saudi Arabia initiated events that led to the reopening of this issue. In the early days of February 1949, the Saudi government dispatched its agents to collect *Zakat* from tribes in and around Buraimi, Liwa, and Dhahirah areas (the southern sector of the disputed frontiers, see map one). At the same time, survey parties in Aramco - which was protected by Saudi guards - started to explore the northern part of the disputed area, in particular in the area south of Khaur Al-Udaid and west of Sabkhat Matti (see map one).<sup>78</sup>



**Map 1: The Disputed Area**

The first sign of protest against the Saudi activities came from the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Shakhbut Ibn Sultan, when he complained to the British Political Officer at Sharjah, Mr Patrick Stobart, on 9 March about the Saudis *Zakat* collectors' valuations of Abu Dhabi territories.<sup>79</sup> Moreover, the Iraq Petroleum and Associated Companies IPC - who had the oil concessions on the Gulf Protectorates - protested against Aramco activities and asked the British government to preserve the British oil companies' interests in the area.<sup>80</sup> While the British officials were debating in which way they would protest to the Saudi government, and in which way they might open the frontier dispute issue, the so-called 'Stobart incident' occurred. This incident forced both governments to re-open the frontier negotiations.<sup>81</sup>

The Political Officer at Sharjah, a Member of IPC, and a brother of the Ruler of Abu Dhabi - Sheikh Hazz'a - discovered on 21 April 1949 several Aramco camps in the area around Sufuk (see map one), an area which they considered as being a part of Abu Dhabi territories.<sup>82</sup> When Stobart protested to the head of Aramco camps, Mr John Holm, about working in Abu Dhabi territories, the latter replied "that their explorations were being conducted with the approval of the Saudi Government . . . [who] had sent with him an Emir [*Amir*] and 20 armed Saudi guards".<sup>83</sup> Besides, when Stobart protested to the *Amir* of the camps, *Amir* Hayif of the Ajman tribe, the

latter replied that he had been sent by the Saudi government in order to protect the survey parties and he could say nothing else.<sup>84</sup> On the following day when Stobart returned to the main camp in order to deliver a written protest, the Saudi guards disarmed his guards and held him captive. Hayif was thinking about sending Stobart and his guards as prisoners to Amir Ibn Jalawi in Al-Hasa with the charge of entering Saudi territories armed and without permission. Nevertheless, after some discussions, in which Aramco officials helped, Stobart's guards' rifles were returned and the political officer and his guards were set free and allowed to leave.<sup>85</sup>

Following the 'Stobart incident' the Saudi government sent a note to the British government. In that note the Saudis formally protested against Stobart's action, and insisted that Aramco activities were undoubtedly within Saudi Arabia territories. The note, which had asked for the opening of friendly discussions on the disputed frontier, also indicated that orders had been given to Aramco to withdraw temporarily from the disputed area until when a complete understanding had been achieved.<sup>86</sup> On 11 May, The British Embassy - at Jeddah - sent the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs a reply, which indicated that, the British government, "consider that complaint which the Saudi Arabian authorities have made against Mr Stobart's action is inadmissible. The locality in question is within the territory which His Majesty's Government recognise . . . as being under the sovereignty of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi".<sup>87</sup> Nevertheless, the same note expressed the British government's willingness to commence the proposed "friendly" discussions over the frontier question.<sup>88</sup>

Though King Ibn Saud might have been aware that activities alongside the disputed area would bring the unsolved issue to its old track, he was yet keen - at the same time - not to let such an issue completely damage his Kingdom's relations with Britain. It could be said that the King was not willing to risk these relations, particularly when he was in need of Britain at that time. Security issues that related Saudi Arabia to Britain were still vital, particularly when the King was still waiting for responses to the treaty proposal, and when the revival of the Hashemite problem had persuaded him to reconsider British assurances.

Prior to the 'Stobart incident' the King had already attempted to formulate a friendly background to relations with Britain, in case of a negative eruption in the frontier

dispute. On 18 April Ibn Saud sent the British government a friendly message in which he stressed the importance that Saudi Arabia was attaching to its friendship with Britain "both now and in the future".<sup>89</sup> Into the bargain, Ibn Saud's message had also emphasised that:

" . . . we like to express to Great Britain the fact that we wish to stand by her side, just as we have done in the past, and to reach agreement with her in all matters touching the strengthening of our relations on a sound, firm, and clear basis and to strengthen our friendship and our relations with her in such a way that the essential interests of both of us shall be guaranteed".<sup>90</sup>

Ibn Saud's message provoked a positive reply from London on 12 May in which the British government expressed its gratification in receiving Ibn Saud's "assurances of . . . friendship" and in return it "reciprocate these assurances".<sup>91</sup> Indeed, King Ibn Saud's caution seemed to be - at least - working, particularly when it kept Saudi-British relations relatively intact from the consequences of the first episode over the frontier question.

In preparation for the proposed discussions the British government sent the Saudi government a memorandum on 17 June 1949.<sup>92</sup> The memorandum explained that Britain wished to carry out the frontier discussion on/from the basis of the 1913-1914 Anglo-Turkish Convention. Moreover, on political aspects it was indicated that the British government had gained the impression that Ibn Saud may have thought that because Britain had "relinquished their position in India they were also prepared to withdraw from their long association with the Persian Gulf . . . His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have, however, no intention of withdrawing from their long association with and special position in the Persian Gulf".<sup>93</sup> When Scott-Fox presented the memorandum, Ibn Saud instructed Fuad Hamza to discuss its details with the British diplomat, a clear sign that the King did not want to involve himself in the details of the issue. However Ibn Saud briefly indicated to Scott-Fox, that his conquest of Hasa in 1913 was providing a suitable starting point for the negotiations, as he was not a part of the Anglo-Turkish Convention. Moreover, Ibn Saud stated that nothing had been done or would be done to put pressure on Britain's position in the Gulf, as Saudi Arabia "had done nothing which might suggest that they

[the Saudis] wish to exert any form of pressure on the British Government in order to drive them out of the Persian Gulf".<sup>94</sup>

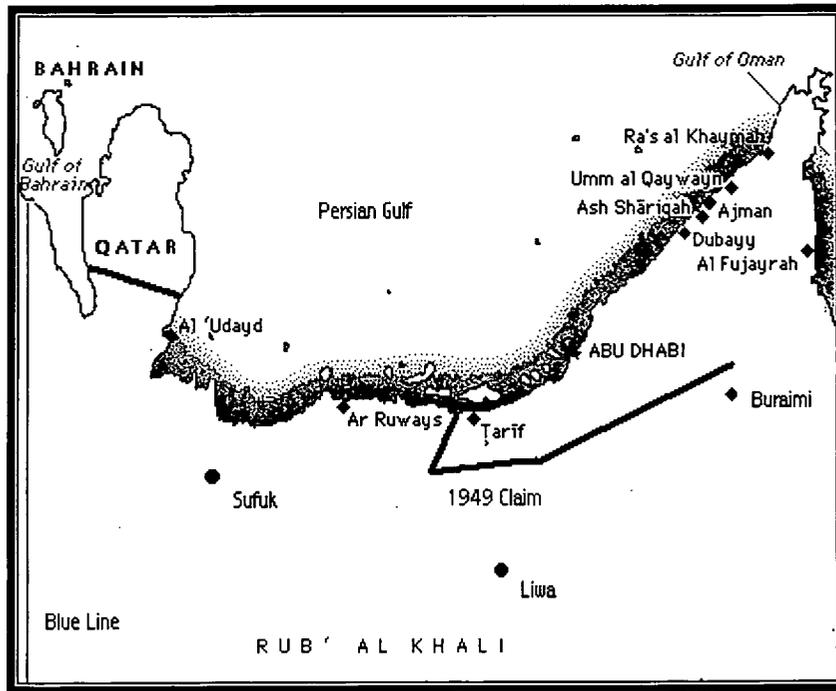
Initial discussion was held in August between Saudi and British representatives. Nevertheless, because of the position of each side about the basis for the negotiations, this meeting resulted in nothing. As the Saudis were referring to the tribal areas as the basis that should be considered for any frontier negotiations, the British representatives could not get a clear vision of the whole Saudi argument. Thus, the British representatives asked the Saudis for a clear written statement.<sup>95</sup>

On 14 October 1949, Saudi Arabia presented a comprehensive set of claims regarding the frontiers (see map two).<sup>96</sup> For the frontier between Saudi Arabia and Qatar the Saudi Arabian government statement indicated that it:

“starts from a point at the coast of Dohat Salwa at 24° 56' North . . . [then] the line runs due East until it intersects longitude 51° . . . [then] runs in a straight line . . . until it reaches the sea coast at latitude 24° 48' North”.<sup>97</sup>

For the frontier between Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia the statement state that it:

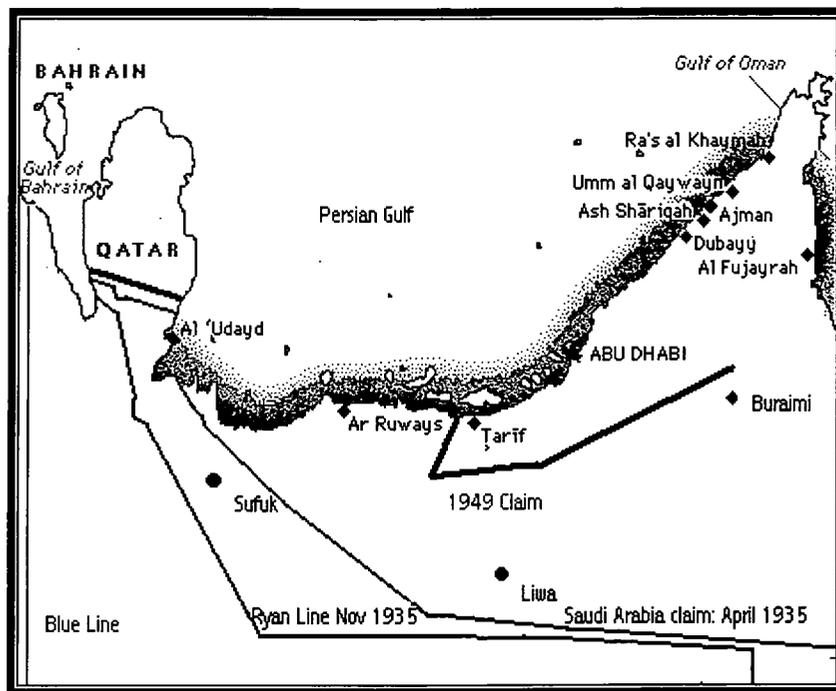
“starts from a point on the Persian Gulf . . . two kilometers east of Bandar Al Mirfa . . . [then] the boundary runs in a straight line to the South West until it reaches latitude 23° 56' North . . . [then] it runs due East till it intersects longitude 54° East . . . from that intersection it runs in a straight line as far as latitude 24° 25' North and longitude 55° 36' East”.<sup>98</sup>



**Map 2: Saudi Arabian Claim of October 1949**

For the rest of the southeastern frontier, the statement indicates that it would be resolved directly between Saudi Arabia and the other independent Sheikdoms. A clear reference to Oman. Thus, the Saudi government was informing the British government that it would not deal with it in regard to other lands, which were not considered to be a British protectorate.<sup>99</sup>

It became clear from the Saudi Arabian government claim - which exceeded any previous Saudi claims (see map three) - that the Saudis were putting forward a long-term objective, rather than a short term one, thus, indicating that the Saudi Arabian government was intending to enter into a comprehensive bargaining negotiation. These negotiations would be more based on the interests of Saudi Arabian territories than on any other factor even if it would have an impact on Saudi-British relations.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, the Saudi government continued formally mentioning (to the British government) its desire of preserving its relations with Britain from any sequence of misunderstanding on this issue.<sup>101</sup>



**Map 3: Previous Claims**

The British government response came out on 30 November completely rejecting the Saudi Arabian claim.<sup>102</sup> It was stated that the British government “have no option but to take up their position on the basis of the legal claim, namely the 'Blue Line' and the 'Violet Line' as defined by the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of the 29th July, 1913 and the 9th March, 1914”.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, the British government insisted that it was responsible for the other lands belonging to the Sultan of Muscat as the Sultan had asked Britain to represent him in any negotiations.<sup>104</sup>

The Saudi government replied on 10 December 1949.<sup>105</sup> In its note the Saudi government stated that it had the opinion that:

“the friendship which exists between them and the British Government cannot possibly be shaken in the solution of any problem as long as the guiding principle of the two parties remains the maintenance of friendship on the basis of justice and right”.<sup>106</sup>

However, the same note mentioned that the Saudi Arabian government would never return to the consideration of the ‘Blue Line and the Violet Line’. It also indicated, that the principle which its previous claim depended upon was that the territory claimed “is occupied by their subjects, on which they have jurisdiction and in which

their writ runs". Moreover, in this note the Saudi government suggested the establishment of a joint Committee to study the true state of the disputed area.<sup>107</sup>

Despite the Saudi government mentioning its desire to protect friendly Saudi-British relations during the frontier dispute, it became clear by the end of 1949 that these would suffer from what seemed to be the beginning of an extensive and a long-term conflict.

## II. The Continuity of the Frontier Issue in 1950, and the USA Role

During 1950 the frontier dispute did not help the course of Saudi-British relations; in fact it brought about increasingly declining relations. Much of the year was spent on correspondence between the Saudi and the British governments, communications that were not free from resentments and complaints of each party against the other. Moreover, the seemingly endless frontier dispute witnessed the initiation of a US role in 1950, a role that may possibly have further complicated Saudi-British relations whilst improving Saudi-US relations.

By the spring of 1950 the dispute was further worsened by the resumption of the disputed parties activities in the area. On 18 April the British government complained, on behalf of the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, against the activities of the Saudi's *Zakat* collectors in Liwa Oasis. On 11 May the Saudi government replied, rejecting the complaint and explaining that the *Zakat* collectors were merely doing their normal duties (as they had for years). The new element according to the Saudi government account was the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi's intervention in a matter which concerned only the Saudi government and its subjects.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, on 21 May 1950, the Saudi government objected to the operations of the (British) oil companies in the disputed area. The British government replied later, rejecting the Saudi complaint on the grounds that the operations were carried out in an area, which did not belong to Saudi Arabia.<sup>109</sup>

On 25 July, The British government sent a memorandum to the Saudi government explaining the British point of view on the frontier dispute.<sup>110</sup> After insisting that the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 1913-14 was the point on which the frontiers should be

considered, the British government explained in that memorandum, that the collection of the *Zakat* from the moving nomadic tribes did not constitute an adequate proof in international law of sovereign rights. On a positive note, the British government agreed in this memorandum, about the idea of (10 December 1949) forming a joint technical commission to study without any obligation the whole issue of the frontier dispute. British agreement on setting up such a commission was conditional on three defined points. First, "that pending and during the Commission's investigations both sides will abstain from any measures of pressure or inducement on persons or tribes who may be called upon to give evidence before the commission".<sup>111</sup> Second, "that the Commission should be empowered to discuss, as part of their general investigation, the situation in regard to Bureimi [Buraimi] and the areas claimed by the Sultan of Muscat".<sup>112</sup> Third, that "the Saudi Arabian Government are prepared to furnish detailed evidence in support of the claims east of the Blue and Violet lines of the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of 1913 and 1914 which they have put forward".<sup>113</sup>

In a detailed memorandum on 22 September the Saudi government replied to the British memorandum of 25 July.<sup>114</sup> In it the Saudi government argued that the British government's persistence in referring to the Anglo-Turkish Conventions would not bring any result, as Saudi Arabia had nothing to do with such a commitment. Nevertheless, the Saudi government expressed its satisfaction about the British government's agreement regarding the establishment of the joint technical commission. Moreover, the Saudi Arabian government agreed upon the first two conditions which the British government had asked for. However, the Saudi government could not agree about submitting detailed proof for its claims. On this, the Saudi government indicated that it:

"have been in possession of these places since olden times . . . [and therefore] cannot be requested to prove their sovereignty [on what it owns], and proofs are to be demanded only from him who claims ownership of what is not in his possession".<sup>115</sup>

In this tone the Saudi and the British government continued exchanging notes and memorandums regarding the proposed frontier commission until they finally agreed about its establishment in April 1951.<sup>116</sup> Nevertheless, this dialogue was not free of disagreement and conflict. Thus, without a successful American intervention, the

frontier commission proposal was about to be dropped by the British government in November 1950.<sup>117</sup>

The US government's role in the Saudi-British conflict over the frontier came about as a result of several attempts made by the Saudi government and the Arabian American Oil Company. The first attempt to initiate a US governmental role over the frontier issue came from the Saudis. In the summer of 1949 the Saudi government had asked the US government for help in bringing pressure on Britain. Nevertheless, the US Ambassador in Saudi Arabia rejected the Saudi attempt at that time.<sup>118</sup> Despite the American stand in 1949, the Saudi government and Aramco still had great expectations about a possible US role in this matter at future stages.<sup>119</sup> Therefore, Aramco executives made great efforts in 1950 to persuade the State Department to bring pressure on Britain in order to smooth its stand on the frontier issue. On these lines Aramco executives pressed the State Department, in April 1950, to persuade the British government to agree to direct negotiations between Ibn-Saud and the Sheikhs of the concerned Gulf Emirates.<sup>120</sup>

In May, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Mr Raymond Hare, suggested to Foreign Office officials that they should consider the idea of direct negotiations between the Saudis and the Gulf protectorate Sheikhs. Nevertheless, the head of the Eastern Department at the Foreign Office, Mr Geoffrey Furlonge, rejected Hare's proposal, on the grounds that Britain was responsible for the foreign policy of these protectorates.<sup>121</sup>

Despite the failure of the first attempt made by the States Department in May 1950, the US role was more successful during the last two months of 1950. On 11 November, the British government sent the Saudi government a message indicating that as the Saudi Authority had not yet produced any evidence in support of its claims east of the Blue Line, Britain regarded itself as free to exercise its right in these territories.<sup>122</sup> Immediately after receiving this message, Ibn Saud asked the new American Ambassador, Mr Raymond Hare, to meet him at once.<sup>123</sup> During Hare's audience with Ibn Saud on 18 November in Riyadh, the King complained about the British government's insulting insistence on him to provide evidence of what he owned. After explaining to Hare that the British were withdrawing from their

proposal of the 25th of July 1950, the King asked for US support in order to make the British government more reasonable in their policy. Following his arrival in Jeddah, Hare met Trott and suggested that the British government should establish a joint frontier commission as proposed. Hare also argued with Trott to take more effective steps towards settlements rather than indulging in endless correspondence.<sup>124</sup>

Hare's suggestion to Trott was fully endorsed by the State Department. In this regard the State Department argued that the Foreign Office should bring about a settlement by reviving the proposed joint commission scheme. Moreover, the State Department warned the Foreign Office that the Saudi's might take the whole issue of the dispute to the United Nations if there was no progress. Following the American intervention and pressure on Britain, the Foreign Office reinstated the July 1950 proposal at the beginning of 1951. Thus, as a result of the US government's action the British government (on 1 January 1951) waived the condition for the establishment of the commission, which requested the Saudis to provide details of evidence of their claim before hand.<sup>125</sup>

The continuation of the frontier dispute without any positive result in 1950 did make a further negative impact on Saudi-British relations. The complaints, the explanations, and the insistence of each party on the right of its point of views, counted when it came to the assessment of their relations. Moreover, if the newly adopted US role in this issue continued in the following years its impact would still contribute to declining Saudi-British relations.

### III. From the Complications of the Frontier Issue, with Establishment of the Trucial Levy Force to the Temporary Improvement at the End of 1951

Toward the end of 1950 and the beginning of 1951 the British government was in the process of forming a small force of police for the Trucial Sheikdoms, which became known as the Levy Force.<sup>126</sup> The British government intended to bring trainers for this force from the Jordanian Arab Legion. From a British point of view the training for the new force would be practicable if Arab Jordanian soldiers carried it out. Nevertheless, such a policy was anathema to Ibn Saud as the creation of such a force would not only threaten the Saudi Arabian eastern frontier but also would

consequently bring Hashemite soldiers to it. It could be said that the impact of the frontier dispute on Saudi-British relations ironically collided with the other factor which was responsible for the deterioration in Saudi-British relations during the past few years, namely the Hashemite issue.<sup>127</sup>

It was clear to the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia by the beginning of 1951 that Saudi-British relations were deteriorating. On this Trott wrote to the Foreign Office on 6 January 1951 stating that he was “disturbed at the deterioration of our relations with the Saudi Arabian Government over the past few months”.<sup>128</sup> Trott warned the Foreign Office that the unsolved frontier dispute was not the only matter which was worsening Saudi-British relations; the recent creation of the Levy Force had brought a wind of change into Saudi-British relations.<sup>129</sup> Clearly on this Trott indicated that “there is no doubt that it is the frontier negotiations and Levy Force that have combined to throw a shadow over our relations with these people [Saudi Arabian]”.<sup>130</sup> Trott argued that “unless we could get down to brass tacks about the frontier negotiations without delay their wrangle would be likely to prejudice relations generally”.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, Trott indicated that the Levy Force would bring the Saudis to question the state of their relations with Britain, particularly when the formation of this force had something to do with the Arab Legion.<sup>132</sup>

Indeed the existence of some soldiers from the Arab Legion in the Levy Force had caused Saudi alarm about its formation. On 9 January Yusuf Yassin protested on behalf of the King about the formation of the Levy Force.<sup>133</sup> Yassin informed Trott that:

“It was completely incomprehensible to the King . . . why . . . [the British] had to call in the Arab Legion for the formation of this force. So long as there was one Arab Legion soldier on the Saudi Arabian Eastern frontier the King would consider this as an unfriendly act”.<sup>134</sup>

In January 1951, Ibn Saud deviated from his own policy of not negotiating the details of the frontiers problem with the British himself, he had previously left that job for his advisers and Ministers to do.<sup>135</sup> During an audience on 10 January, the King told the British Ambassador that he was extraordinarily concerned about the British government’s intention of bringing soldiers from the Arab Legion to his eastern

frontier.<sup>136</sup> Moreover, Ibn Saud said to Trott that, the creation of “this force could only be to cause trouble and exert pressure on him”.<sup>137</sup> The King pointed out to the British Ambassador that, “if however . . . [the British Government] imagined that this would enable . . . [it] to ‘kick out the tribes who had been there 1,000 years’ then it was the same as if . . . [the British government] threatened his Riyadh Palace or his own life”.<sup>138</sup> Speaking in sorrow, Ibn Saud indicated to Trott that the British government’s recent moves in the creation of such a force was a very strange way to treat a “friend of the darker days”.<sup>139</sup> The King stressed that he had always maintained his friendship with the British government and “he had always told the Arabs that their real friend was Britain . . . now however all the Arabs were asking what had happened to his friendship with Britain when the latter was threatening him in the Eastern territories”.<sup>140</sup> Ibn Saud warned Trott that if the British government was determined to go ahead with such a plan it would not be in its interests nor would it be fair in its relations with Saudi Arabia. The King stated that surely the British government had the upper hand as it had:

“the tanks, guns and aeroplanes and he could not stop . . . [it from forming such a force] nor would he try . . . but he would no longer be in a position to try to influence the other Arabs in favour of friendship with . . . [the British] since they would say . . . that the British rewarded friends like him with threats”.<sup>141</sup>

Despite the fact that Trott assured Ibn Saud (during the conversation) that “no threat of any kind was intended and that this small police force would be in any case for purely internal purposes”,<sup>142</sup> the King’s fears were not calmed. Indeed, the king stated that:

“he, as an old friend, deserved better treatment at . . . [the British] hands and . . . that to put the Jordanian soldiers on his frontiers in any guise was as bad for him as it would be for . . . [the British] if he were to put Soviet soldiers on [theirs]”.<sup>143</sup>

During all his arguments Ibn Saud clearly distinguished between two matters regarding his objection to the creation of the Levy Force. The first was the possible threat of such a force to the security of the southeastern frontier of Saudi Arabia. The second was the inclusion in the Levy Force of Jordanian soldiers. To some extent Ibn

Saud seemed to be willing to tolerate the first matter, but undoubtedly was unwilling to tolerate the second one. Hence, at the conclusion of the conversations with Trott, Ibn Saud was willing to accept the assurances conditionally if the police force was to be small in number and did not contain any soldier from the Arab Legion.<sup>144</sup> Ibn Saud's conditional acceptance was strongly supported by Trott when he wrote to the Foreign Office on 12 January, recommending a modification of the Levy Force plan. Trott argued that it was clear that Ibn Saud attached importance to the cooperation between the Levy Force and the Arab Legion and that considerable harm could be done to Saudi-British relations unless the British government modified its plan on this.<sup>145</sup>

The Foreign Office did not agree with either Ibn Saud's worries or with Trott's recommendations. In fact it was thought that the Levy Force matter should not be exaggerated. Mr H. A. Dudgeon of the Eastern Department minuted on 22 January that Ibn Saud's worries were irrational and unreasonable and that "since our policy in regard to this matter has already been decided . . . no further comment is called for".<sup>146</sup> Indeed, as in the case of Ibn Saud's worries about the Hashemites, the British government continued to misunderstand the King's anxieties in this particular case.

Though the Trucial Levy Force continued to be a problem for Ibn Saud, the two parties seemed to make some progress on the issue of the frontier commission. Exchange of notes between the Saudi and the British governments continued until they both agreed in April 1951 on the setting up of the commission in the autumn of 1951.<sup>147</sup>

Disturbed by his anxiety about the Levy Force Ibn Saud asked the US government to help in persuading the British government to modify its policy. Backing Ibn Saud on this, Mr Lewis Jones, the Director of the Office of Eastern Affairs of the State Department, took the opportunity to hold talks in this regard with Mr Geoffrey Furlonge, the head of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office during the latter's visit to Washington in April 1951. Without any pressure at this time, the American hoped that the British government would modify their policy towards Saudi Arabia, particularly in the two questions concerning Ibn Saud, namely the frontier dispute and the Levy Force.<sup>148</sup>

On 18 April, Yusuf Yassin re-complained to the British on behalf of the King about the case of the Levy Force. Yassin indicated to Trott, that the British government intention of going ahead with its plan to include Hashemite soldiers in the Levy Force was indeed an unfriendly act, especially when it was against King Ibn Saud's wishes.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, on 2 May, the Saudi Ambassador to London presented to Furlonge a note containing the same complaint about the Levy Force and elucidating Ibn Saud's general dissatisfaction about the present state of the frontiers negotiations. The note also reflected Ibn Saud's view that the British government was less friendly towards him than in the past.<sup>150</sup>

The continuous Saudi complaints and the State Department's advice seemed to produce an outcome from the Foreign Office in May 1951. At this stage, Furlonge wrote a minute on 21 May, illustrating the frontier dispute issue in particular and Saudi-British relations in general.<sup>151</sup> The frontier negotiations were a complicated matter and would continue to be a more difficult issue in Furlonge's point of view. On this Furlonge explained that as far as the Saudis were exaggerating their claims and as far as the British were obliged to protect the interests of their Gulf Protectorates, it seemed that they would not satisfy Ibn Saud on the issue, at least in the short term. On the Levy Force, Furlonge indicated that it seemed that it was "Ibn Saud's anti-Hashemite obsession [which] makes him particularly sensitive to the operation of Jordan personnel along his frontiers".<sup>152</sup> Furlonge's minute goes on to explain the recent complexity of these two issues for Saudi-British relations and Ibn Saud's stand and the British government position:

"The crux of the matter is, however, that as Ibn Saud grows older he becomes more fixed in his ideas and less amenable to reason. He has been a loyal friend of His Majesty's Government, and his counsels in the Arab League have frequently been helpful. Of late years he has paid more attention to the Americans, but still values his friendship with this country, although the price of that friendship has been increasing. He seems now to have got it into his head . . . [that] H.M.G's attitude towards him is less friendly than of old. The fact is that we are just as well-disposed to him, but cannot give him satisfaction over his present complaints without betraying the interests of our Protectorates or weakening our position in the Gulf".<sup>153</sup>

Therefore, Furlonge saw no point at this stage in giving Saudi Arabia any concession on either the Levy Force matter or the frontier issue. Nevertheless, in order to safeguard Saudi-British relations Furlonge argued that “it seems therefore desirable . . . to do something to reassure him [Ibn Saud] of our continued friendship”.<sup>154</sup> At this stage the only possible action that the British government could take, in Furlonge’s opinion, was to extend an invitation to the Saudi Arabian Minister of Foreign Affairs, *Amir Faisal*, to pay an official visit to London for general discussions on Anglo-Saudi relations and outstanding problems.<sup>155</sup>

In an audience with the King on 28 May, the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia extended the invitation formally.<sup>156</sup> Combining the invitation, Trott conveyed to Ibn Saud a message from the Foreign Office indicating that, the British government regretted that:

“Ibn Saud should feel that our traditional friendship for him has in any way declined and that he should doubt our good intentions, since our feelings towards him and his people are as cordial as ever. It seems that he is under some misunderstanding as to our attitude towards the questions at issue. For that reason . . . [we] feel that it would be of advantage if . . . Amir Faisal, could come to London to have general talks with us on any subject of mutual interest which either side might wish to raise”.<sup>157</sup>

The potential outcome of Faisal’s visit to London was a matter of concern for both the British and the Saudi Arabian governments. Hence, both governments sincerely intended, by that time, to make such an occasion a success.<sup>158</sup> For Britain it was advantageous to improve its relations with Saudi Arabia, not just for the sake of Saudi-British relations, which was an important matter, but also for the benefit of improving Britain’s position in the Middle East at that precise time; particularly when Britain was facing a serious crisis with Iran in mid-1951 (the well known Musaddiqi Crisis).<sup>159</sup> The Saudi government was also seeking a positive result from the visit, particularly when Ibn Saud was apprehensive that a negative result from the visit might further worsen an already complicated situation.<sup>160</sup>

During Amir Faisal's visit to London from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 1951, several meetings were held between the Saudi delegation and the British officials at the Foreign Office. During these meetings several topics were raised for discussion, in particular, the Gulf Islands, the Southeast Arabia frontier, and the Levy Force.<sup>161</sup>

In spite of the fact that the Hashemite issue had become of less concern to Ibn Saud by August 1951, still the Saudis were not willing to leave the issue of the Trucial Levy Force aside.<sup>162</sup> In fact such an issue was high on the Saudi Arabian delegation's agenda. In the first session of the meetings, *Amir Faisal* indicated that the British government policy of including military personnel from Jordan in the Levy Force was considered to be an anti- Saudi Arabian act.<sup>163</sup> Mr R. Bowker, the Assistant Under-Secretary, who led the UK party, stated that the Saudi Arabian government misunderstood the case of the Levy Force. Bowker explained that the "secondment of Jordanian personnel to this Force had been a purely practical measure . . . [and] the purpose of the Force was to control slave traffic, to provide political representatives with escorts and to maintain internal security in the Trucial States".<sup>164</sup> Bowker assured Faisal that the total number of the force was small, as it was less than a hundred men including thirty-five Jordanian instructors. Furthermore, the thirty-five "personnel seconded from Jordan would return as soon as they had completed their duties in training the members of the Force who had been recruited locally".<sup>165</sup> Further assurance was given to Faisal - by Bowker - that "the Levy Force had strict instructions to avoid all political activity and his Majesty's Government would ensure that they were carried out".<sup>166</sup>

Bowker's remarks and assurances about the Levy Force seemed to be satisfactory for the Saudis, particularly when the Hashemite issue was less troublesome to them by that time. Hence the Saudi-Anglo discussion went over the delimitation of the Gulf Islands and the seabed between Saudi Arabia and both Bahrain and Kuwait.<sup>167</sup> The Islands and seabed discussion - which both parties decided to deal with separately to the land frontier issue - were a great success. Both parties agreed, during several sessions, about the delimitation of the Gulf seabed and the allocation of its Islands between Saudi Arabia and each of Bahrain and Kuwait.<sup>168</sup>

On the land frontier issue the British representatives accepted a suggestion by Faisal of holding a round-table conference in the following winter between a Saudi Arabian delegation and a Gulf delegation headed by a United Kingdom representative. Moreover, it was agreed that both sides would suspend all their activities, including force movements and oil companies operations, in the disputed areas until when the agreed conference had taken place. By this agreement they both also decided to temporarily suspend the previously agreed frontier commission, until when the conference commenced.<sup>169</sup>

As it happens the issue of the Levy Force, which was a matter of concern for Ibn Saud at the opening of the year, was the vehicle that brought about the London Conference in August 1951. Before the London meetings the British government did not relieve Ibn Saud's anxiety about the Levy Force issue. Therefore the state of Saudi-British relations had worsened at least in Ibn Saudi's view. Nevertheless, the outcomes of the London Conference were to some extent generally positive as far as Saudi-British relations were concerned. Thus, the Levy Force issue was at last rested, though it should be mentioned that its resolution was a little late, particularly when the Hashemites no longer formed the usual threat to Saudi Arabia.<sup>170</sup> Moreover, the London conference was positive in solving the Gulf Islands and the seabed dispute between Saudi Arabia and its neighbours, a matter which had it not been solved might have further complicated an already complex frontier dispute. Finally, even though the conference did not totally solve the land frontier issue, the proposed round-table conference made the future of this issue look bright. All in all, it could be said that the overall result of the London Conference was positive for Saudi-British relations. Therefore, it could also be said that relations were at least temporarily saved from the gravity of a full collapse.

#### **D. The Reinforcement of Saudi-US Relations**

The upgrading of diplomatic relations, from that of legations to that of embassies, between Saudi Arabia and the USA in the spring of 1949, was a good omen for those two States' relations.<sup>171</sup> It seems that Ambassador Childs' audience with King Ibn Saud in May 1949 was the initial point at which the US government started to consider the possibility of forming a military alliance with Saudi Arabia. During that

audience Ibn Saud explained to Childs the danger that Saudi Arabia was facing, especially with the Hashemites problems and with the cooling off of Anglo-Saudi relations.<sup>172</sup> After mentioning his desire for USA help and assistance militarily, the King warned the Ambassador that he “was now coming to . . . [the USA] for the last time to ask . . . for help”.<sup>173</sup> Following the audience Childs cabled his government recommending that they give a very thoughtful consideration to Ibn Saud’s needs.<sup>174</sup> Though, Ibn Saud did not receive a direct reply to his request from the US government in 1949, he started to see some optimistic developments when an American Reconnaissance Party visited Saudi Arabia in mid-August 1949, in order to study the future of the Dhahran Airfield.<sup>175</sup>

In March 1950, the US government sent the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, Mr George McGhee, to Saudi Arabia especially to discuss Saudi Arabian security requirements.<sup>176</sup> Several discussions were held between McGhee and the Saudis during the visit, which lasted for six days from the 18<sup>th</sup> of March. The overall Saudi message during these discussions was that Saudi Arabia wanted “to convert its economic partnership with the United States into a full military alliance”.<sup>177</sup>

At great length Ibn Saud explained to McGhee his concern about the possibility of Hashemite aggression against Saudi Arabia. The King highlighted Saudi Arabia’s need for strong military forces in order to protect itself against such an attack. When McGhee tried to calm Ibn Saud’s fears about the Hashemites by remarking that the British government were capable of preventing any Hashemite aggression, Ibn Saud replied by stating that he did not trust the British government anymore, as they were, in fact, protecting the Hashemites by means of treaty relations. Ibn Saud expounded to McGhee, that he had refused a treaty of alliance with Britain because he preferred to have such a treaty with the United States of America instead. Thus, as he had given the oil concessions to the Americans, and as the Americans existed in Saudi Arabia not just through their oil interests but also by their involvement in the Dhahran Airfield, Saudi Arabia therefore, needed and preferred to conclude a military alliance with the United States. As well as that Saudi Arabia needed to obtain military assistance from the USA on a grant basis.<sup>178</sup>

McGhee replied that the US government was aware of the importance of the maintenance of Saudi Arabian security and was also willing to assist. Moreover, he emphasised how vital were the interests of the US in Saudi Arabia and how unique was the relationship between Saudi Arabia and the USA, particularly when this type of unique relationship only existed with Saudi Arabia rather than any other Middle Eastern country. Nevertheless, the US government could not conclude a treaty of alliance with Saudi Arabia, as that would be contrary to its traditional policy in the Middle East. McGhee explained - to Ibn Saud - that the USA's policy in the Middle East still differed from British policy there, as the USA had not concluded any alliance treaty with any state in the Middle East yet.<sup>179</sup>

Instead of an alliance treaty McGhee suggested other measures, which would achieve the same end (as such a treaty). Those measures that McGhee offered to Ibn Saud included:<sup>180</sup>

1. The conclusion of a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation.
2. The providing of technicians to Saudi Arabia under the Point Four Program.
3. Loans by the Export-Import Bank.
4. The conclusion of a long-term Dhahran Airfield Agreement.
5. The providing of a military aid program on a cash-reimbursable basis.
6. The providing of a military mission to train Saudi Arabian forces.

Though Saudi Arabia could not get an American alliance during McGhee's visit, it seemed that the Saudis were finally satisfied with the whole package.<sup>181</sup> Moreover, the gradual implementation of this comprehensive package was pleasing to the Saudi Arabians. Indeed, when it was put into practice - next to the reality of the US government intention of backing Saudi Arabia - a remarkable enhancement in Saudi-US relations was an obvious phenomenon vis-à-vis the antithesis of developments in Saudi-British relations.

In July 1950 President Truman signed a new law, which amended the USA Mutual Defence Assistant Act. This amendment allowed the US Administration to transfer military equipment, materials, and services - at no cost to the US - to states that had not joined the US in any defence arrangement "but whose security was important to the United States".<sup>182</sup> Thus, Saudi Arabia became eligible for cash reimbursable

military assistance under this new law.<sup>183</sup> Moreover, in August 1950 the Saudi government obtained a new loan of \$15 million from the Import Export Bank. The loan which was to be repaid over a 15 year period had given the US private sector a further boost in the Kingdom as almost all of its capital had been put into development projects which were carried out by American companies.<sup>184</sup>

To demonstrate the importance of Saudi-US relations, the US President nominated a high ranking US official to be the new Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. On 28 August 1950, President Truman nominated the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Raymond Hare, as Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.<sup>185</sup> Furthermore, on 31 October 1950, President Truman wrote to King Ibn Saud with a new assurance for the preservation of Saudi Arabian security:

“The United States is interested in the preservation of the independence and territorial integrity of Saudi Arabia. No threat to your Kingdom could occur which would not be a matter of immediate concern to the United States”<sup>186</sup>

The enrichment of the Saudi-US relationship did not stop at that, which was of a relatively new nature, but it also touched the basis on which the original relationship was built, namely the American oil interests in Saudi Arabia. In order to comprehend this point, the development of Saudi government relations with Aramco in 1950 need to be briefly explained.

It became apparent to the Saudi government in 1950 that the royalties that it was receiving from Aramco were not satisfactory to meet their financial needs. Under these considerations, and as a tactic by the Saudi government in order to persuade Aramco to increase its payment to the Kingdom, the Saudi Finance Minister, Mr Abdullah Ibn Sulaiman, put great pressure on Aramco to finance nearly all the development projects in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia.<sup>187</sup> Ibn Sulaiman's actions were aimed at persuading the company executives to re-negotiate the basis of the 1933 oil concession, in particular the sections related to the royalty payment.<sup>188</sup>

The Saudi Arabian government's new policy towards Aramco was motivated by two factors. First, the Saudi government knew that Aramco's taxation payment to the US government in 1949 was larger than the yield that Saudi Arabia was getting in

royalties.<sup>189</sup> Second, Saudi Arabia thought that its efforts would succeed in persuading Aramco to agree on a fifty-fifty division of profits, particularly when the Venezuelan success in this direction - in 1948 - was well known to the Saudis.<sup>190</sup>

When the State Department learned of this, it argued that Aramco should either increase its payment to the Saudi Arabian government or renegotiate the basis of the royalty payments. The State Department argued that it was necessary to increase Saudi Arabian income in order to stabilise Aramco's future position there.<sup>191</sup> Hence, by July 1950, Aramco was convinced that it should negotiate a new basis of the oil income payment with the Saudi Arabian government.<sup>192</sup> The Saudi-Aramco negotiations - in November and December - resulted in the announcement of an agreement on 30 December 1950. According to this agreement the net profits of the oil income would be shared between Saudi Arabia and Aramco on a fifty-fifty basis.<sup>193</sup>

Undoubtedly the Saudi-Aramco agreement had secured the future of Aramco in Saudi Arabia. Thus when the upheaval of the nationalisation of the Persian oil industry took place at the beginning of 1951, Saudi Arabia announced publicly that the future of the Saudi Arabian oil field would not be affected by what was happening in Persia.<sup>194</sup> Moreover, it could be said that the US government policy - which was well known to the Saudis - in encouraging Aramco to reach an agreement with Saudi Arabia had in fact enhanced Saudi-US relations.<sup>195</sup> Ultimately the positive US policy towards the process of Saudi-Aramco relations in 1950 had caused the Saudi government to be more ambitious in increasing ties with the USA *vis-à-vis* declining Saudi-British relations. Moreover, it would not be impossible to envisage that the Saudi government had compared the US government policy towards Aramco with the British government policy towards the Gulf Protectorates, particularly on the issues that had arisen between Saudi Arabia and these elements. No doubt the comparison of these policies would give the US government more credit than the British government in the eyes of the Saudi Arabian officials.

Furthermore, the swift implementation of almost all McGhee's package points by the end of 1951 was a further visible improvement in the well-being of Saudi-American relations. On 17 January 1951 the Saudi Arabian government and the US government

signed an agreement for technical cooperation under the Point Four Programme.<sup>196</sup> According to this agreement the USA would supply Saudi Arabia with numbers of technical advisers who would help in almost all the sectors of developments in the Kingdom.<sup>197</sup> Consequently, in 1951 American advisers and experts began to arrive in Saudi Arabia; among them there were experts on agriculture, irrigation, accountancy, and a financial adviser.<sup>198</sup> The significant of this development was that it enhanced USA penetration in Saudi Arabia at all levels. On this Scott-Fox remarked that “since once American experts have installed themselves here they will probably try to influence the Saudi Arabia Government in the direction of obtaining still further American advice and assistance”.<sup>199</sup> It should be remembered here that the case of the financial adviser was a point of major conflict between the USA and Britain in Saudi Arabia in the mid-1940s.<sup>200</sup> Nevertheless, in 1951 the case was deferred as the British government concluded that it did not “wish to make too much of any local differences . . . with the Americans, lest such differences be magnified and have an adverse effect on the general collaboration . . . with them over the wider Middle East sphere”.<sup>201</sup> Of course at this particular time the Saudi-British relationship itself did not help the British government to make such a move against the Americans.

In the first half of 1951 the Saudis and the Americans undertook negotiations for a long-term agreement for the Dhahran airfield. The negotiations were extensive and difficult at the beginning, as the US officials were interested in a twenty-five year lease, whereas the Saudis were reluctant to give such a long-term commitment.<sup>202</sup> Nevertheless, on 18 June 1951 both parties reached a final agreement, which renewed the Dhahran airfield agreement for a lease of five years.<sup>203</sup>

Combining the agreement the USA extended an American Military Mission (AMM) to Saudi Arabia with the task of training all sectors of the Saudi Military Force. This mission was far larger and more ambitious than the existing BMM, particularly as it contained US Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, the agreement entitled Saudi Arabia “to procurement assistance for military supplies on a cash reimbursable basis”.<sup>205</sup> On top of all that, the USA promised Saudi Arabia further arms grant-in-aid worth almost \$15 million.<sup>206</sup>

The renewal of the Dhahran airfield agreement for a further five years indicates the continuity of a strong US military interest in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, there is little doubt that the new American Military Mission would have an effect on the existing British Military Mission in Saudi Arabia, particularly when the scope of the AMM was far more ambitious than that of the BMM. On the whole, the new military commitments between Saudi Arabia and the USA were bound to have a significant impact on Saudi-British military cooperation and thereafter Saudi-British relations.

Broadly speaking, Saudi-US relations were strengthening by the end of 1951. The conclusion of a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation in August 1951, was the last step in the completion of McGhee package.<sup>207</sup> Indeed, the implementation of McGhee's package led to the USA becoming - even in the view of British diplomats - "overwhelmingly the predominant foreign influence in the country [Saudi Arabia]".<sup>208</sup>

#### **E. The End of Saudi-British Military Cooperation by the End of 1951**

The delivery of the previously agreed British arms to Saudi Arabia was not a trouble free task in 1951. The misunderstanding between Saudi and British officials about the arms prices, the Saudis dissatisfaction about the quality of the arms, and the shortages in British arms production, seemed to overshadow this issue during a time when Saudi-British relations were already witnessing a decline. Furthermore, it became apparent during the last quarter of 1951 that Saudi-US military cooperation had a tremendous impact not only on the British arms supply to Saudi Arabia but also in all aspects of Saudi-British Military cooperation.<sup>209</sup>

At the beginning of 1951, Saudi officials were surprised by the increase in British arms prices compared to the original quoted prices. On this, Yassin inquired during a meeting with Trott in mid-January 1951, that as "the supplies were the same as what had been previously offered", why did its price increase?<sup>210</sup> Trott could not answer Yassin without instructions from London.<sup>211</sup> After correspondences between the Foreign Office and the War Office, the British government concluded that it did not "think that the Saudis have any case in the matter".<sup>212</sup> Furthermore, the War office argued that if a concession was given to the Saudis on this, they might be encouraged to ask for further quantities of arms, something that Britain could not fulfill at that

precise time, as it was facing acute shortages in the production of arms vis-à-vis worldwide commitments.<sup>213</sup>

When the first consignment of arms arrived in Jeddah in February, it produced amazement in both British and Saudi officers to note that it was in a “disgraceful condition”.<sup>214</sup> The Head of the BMM and the British Ambassador moved swiftly in order to avoid a formal Saudi protest and hence a political disaster. Baird and Trott’s notion was to exchange the whole shipment with a more appropriate one at no extra cost to Saudi Arabia.<sup>215</sup> When the entire consignment was successfully replaced the Saudi Defence Minister expressed gratitude to the head of the BMM for the prompt replacement action. *Amir* Mansour stated to Baird that “Ibn Saud had been extremely angry on hearing of the poor condition of the equipment but the immediately following news . . . had more than restored his good humour”.<sup>216</sup>

The second shipment of arms arrived in September 1951, ironically arriving just a few days before the BMM was to cease activities.<sup>217</sup> The British government cancelled the last quantity of the arms, which was supposed to have consisted of armoured cars, as it was in need of these vehicles for its own use at that particular time. This cancellation did not lead to any Saudi objection, as the Saudis were engaged in receiving the newly acquired USA arms and equipment and as it seems that they were no longer interested in any British arms and equipment by that time.<sup>218</sup>

In 1951 the BMM faced certain difficulties. The relationship between the head of the BMM and the Saudi Defence Minister was uncooperative at the outset of the year, particularly there were disagreements between them about some of the training strategies. Nevertheless, *Amir* Mansour and Brigadier Baird improved their relationship at a later stage.<sup>219</sup> Another difficulty that faced the BMM during 1951 was the shortage of training officers. The shortage of officers occurred when some of the officers left the Mission without being replaced.<sup>220</sup>

Despite these difficulties the British government assessed that the Saudi Arabian officials were generally satisfied with the work of the BMM. Hence, the British government was not worried about these matters.<sup>221</sup> What was disturbing to the British government was the future of the BMM when the proposed American military

mission commenced its work in Saudi Arabia. Trying to secure the future of the BMM, the British government assured both the Saudi and US governments, on several occasions, about its intention of implementing a healthy coordination and cooperation between the BMM and the AMM.<sup>222</sup>

Nonetheless, it seemed that the British government's emphasis on coordination and cooperation between its military mission and the American mission had had a negative impact on the Saudis. This particularly strengthened the Saudi government intention of stopping the work of the BMM. It is likely that the Saudi government did not want to give the British any excuse for interfering in its newly strengthened military ties with the USA. Therefore, it could be said that the newly agreed AMM caused the Saudis to make an end to BMM operations, not just because it replaced Saudi Arabian military needs - for that of Britain - but also because the Saudis were careful not to let the British disturb Saudi-US military cooperation. Moreover, contrary to British government beliefs, it seems that the Saudis had a just cause to discard the BMM, which was in fact their dissatisfaction with the general outcome of its whole operation. These reasons, next to the general decline of Saudi-Anglo relations had paved the way for the Saudi government's decision to make an end to the existence of the BMM in the Kingdom.<sup>223</sup> On 23 September 1951 the new Saudi Defence Minister, *Amir* Mishal asked the head of the BMM to cease all the training activities at once.<sup>224</sup>

In conclusion, it could be said that the impact of Saudi-US military cooperation was tremendous on the Saudi-British military cooperation, especially when that impact occurred during a critical period in which Saudi-British relations were already declining. Moreover, this impact was the latest in a series that made a clear end to any sign of cooperation between Britain and Saudi Arabia.

## Summary and Conclusions

As Ibn Saud's proposal of a tripartite treaty was not accepted, the British government offered - as an alternative - to send a reconnaissance party in order to study projects of strategic facilities in Saudi Arabia. The negative outcome of the reconnaissance party survey made the Saudis unwilling to initiate any new proposal for further Saudi-British cooperations. Moreover, it could be said that, the already existing Saudi-British Military cooperation, through the means of the BMM, was not that impressive. Although the mission had faced several difficulties in expanding and enhancing its operations, and as it seems that the Saudi's were not intensely happy with the general result of its work (since its arrival), the British did supply Saudi Arabia, in 1950-1951, with arms as obliged by previous commitments. Even so, the delivery of these arms was not free from some embarrassments.

Broadly speaking, it could be said that the general look, and hence the general outcome of Saudi-British military cooperation did not meet the Saudi government's high expectations. Thus, when Saudi-US military cooperation was formally extended in June 1951, the Saudi government decided to make an end to its military cooperation with Britain. Therefore, it could be said that the Saudis disaffection about the general outlook of Saudi-British military cooperation was a factor in its end beside the other direct factor which was the establishment of Saudi-US military cooperation. It should not be forgotten that an additional factor strengthened the Saudi government decision to terminate Saudi-British military cooperation. Indeed, the decline of Saudi-British relations, particularly over the frontier dispute and the Hashemites question, made it suitable for the Saudi government to take such an action towards Saudi-British military cooperation by the last quarter of 1951. Undoubtedly the departure of the BMM, which marked the end of Saudi-British cooperation, would make a tremendous impact on the future of Saudi-British relation. Surely, this development makes relations less meaningful, particularly in the light of conflicting relations over the frontier issue.

Ibn Saud's difficulty with the Hashemites had returned in 1949 and at a worse level than before. British government policy in regard to this issue remained unsatisfactory

for the King and the security of his Kingdom. Indeed, the British government's failure to give Ibn Saud a convincing assurance - in regard to his worries from the Hashemites - was one of the matters that made the King seek a solution elsewhere. No doubt the USA's positive assurance of December 1949 was advantageous to the American's vis-à-vis British. The Hashemite issue remained, continuously harming Saudi-British relations throughout 1950. When the British government regarded the Saudi loan to Syria as being a means of interference in Syrian affairs, Ibn Saud became more convinced that Britain was indeed siding with the Hashemites. Hence as his suspicion came close to becoming fact from his point of view, Ibn Saud completely stopped asking for any British assurances. Instead, he concentrated his efforts on facing the Hashemites potential danger through his enhanced relations with the USA and with collaboration with Egypt. The British position towards the Saudi Kingdom's anxiety over the Hashemites had a great impact on King Ibn Saud's thinking regarding his friendship with Britain. Thus when this dilemma ended with the death of King Abdullah in July 1951, its effects were not easily removed from the already deteriorating Saudi-British relationship.

The revival of the sleeping frontier dispute in 1949 was motivated by the activities of Saudi Arabia along its southeastern frontiers. A matter which indicated this was that the Saudis initiated the revival of the issue though it was noted that the Saudis action was carefully preceded by a cordial message from the King, emphasizing the benevolence of his intentions towards Britain. This measure indicated that the King did not want the reopening of the frontier issue to devastate relations at that particular time especially when most of the Kingdom's security concerns were still relatively dependent on Britain. The Saudi government's claim of October 1949, which exceeded any previous claims, meant that understanding between Britain and Saudi Arabia would be difficult to reach in the short-term. Hence, as each party took an extreme stand on this issue, the frontier dispute continued to fuel a deterioration in Saudi-British relations through 1950. At the beginning of 1951 the complicated frontier issue had ironically joined with the other matter responsible for declining Saudi-British relations, namely the Hashemite issue. Indeed, the existence of Jordanian Arab Legion soldiers among the personnel of the Levy Force had alarmed Ibn Saud. The British government did not ease the King of Saudi Arabia's anxiety about such a development until the London Conference took place in August 1951, a

late solution that came after the end of his real worries about the Hashemites. Though, it was unknown to both the Saudi and the British governments at the end of 1951 where the frontier issue would lead them, still both were hoping that the proposed conference in 1952 would help in finding a solution to the dispute.

The impact of Saudi-US cooperation on Saudi-British relations was evident in the period covered in this chapter. McGhee's visit to Saudi Arabia, which took place during a time of decline in Saudi-British relations, was effective in strengthening cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the United States of America. Certainly, the fulfilment of the McGhee package during 1950-1951 further consolidated Saudi-US relations at all levels. Thus, the Export Bank Loan intensified the work of US private companies in the development of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, Saudi-US ties were strengthened militarily by the signing of the five years Dhahran airfield agreement, by the extension of the AMM and by the supply of various kinds of American arms. Moreover, Saudi-US technical cooperation, through the means of the Point Four Program Agreement, had opened the way for further US penetration into the Kingdom. In addition, the significance of the Saudi government agreement with Aramco in 1950 should not be underestimated when we look at it from the point of view of Saudi-US relations. The State Department role in encouraging Aramco to make a deal with the Saudi government was fruitful by all means. The agreement meant an increase in the income of Saudi Arabia, more opportunities for US private companies in getting a larger stake in the development of the Kingdom, and a more stable future for US oil interests in Saudi Arabia. As well as that, the State Department's positive and helpful role had also caused the Saudi government to increase its trust in US government policy towards it.

It could be generally concluded that, in addition to the impact of previous experience of Saudi-British relations, all the above factors jointly contributed to adding a further apparent deterioration to Saudi British relations.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> See Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1949, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1950, FO 371/82638. Also, see Devereux, David. The Formulation of British Defence Policy Towards the Middle East:1948-56. London: Macmillan, 1990, p. 35.
- <sup>2</sup> Foreign Office minute on relations between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, 7 May 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, Annual Report on Saudi Arabia for 1948, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 2 February 1949, FO 371/75505.
- <sup>3</sup> See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 15 April 1948, FO 371/68767. Also, see section E:1 of Chapter 3. For clear evidence of Ibn Saud's intention see section D of this chapter.
- <sup>4</sup> See Devereux, David. op. Cit., p. 35.
- <sup>5</sup> See Foreign Office minute, 26 January 1949, FO 371/75508. Because the treaty involved both the USA and Britain, and according to the British and the American agreement in the autumn of 1947, both governments contacted each other in this matter when the final joint decision was conveyed - by the British government - to the Saudi government in May 1949. See Ibid. Also see the following pages of this section. Also, see section A of chapter three.
- <sup>6</sup> Foreign Office minute, 26 January 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, see Devereux, David. op. cit., p.35.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> From Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 22 January 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>9</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>11</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 20 April 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>12</sup> The blockade of Berlin had began in June 1948. See Louis, Wm. Roger. The British Empire in the Middle East: 1945-1951. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 537.
- <sup>13</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 20 April 1949, FO 371/75508. It should be noted that the UK and the USA were also studying the applications of Greece and Turkey to join the Atlantic Pact at that time, which meant those applications would get a priority in comparison to that of the Saudi proposal. See Ibid.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid. Burrows - the then head of the Eastern Department - explained this particular issue to Trott as follows: "we have as you know the greatest difficulty in finding war material which could be supplied to Arab States with whom we have treaty relations when the embargo is lifted. A commitment to supply yet another state, whose contribution in armed forces to the defence of the Middle East is nil, would be most unwelcome at present". Ibid. Also, see Foreign Office minute on relations between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, 7 May 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>15</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 3 March 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1949, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1950, FO 371/82638.
- <sup>16</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 8 May 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 18 May 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, see Text of Message sent to the British Ambassador in Jeddah for communication to King Ibn Saud, 12 May 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>19</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 18 May 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 22 June 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>20</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 18 May 1949, FO 371/75508.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 13 August 1949, FO 371/75521. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 23 August 1949, FO 371/75521. Also, see Summary of the Reporter of Military Reconnaissance Party in Saudi Arabia, 9 November 1949, FO 371/75521. It should be noted that there was also a US Reconnaissance Party around the same time. The aim of the British Reconnaissance Party should not be confused with the aim of the American Reconnaissance Party, which visited Saudi Arabia for two months (mid-August to mid-October) in 1949. The aim of the American party was mainly to make recommendations to the US government in regard to the future of the Dhahran air base. Hence, the American party was not intended to study other facilities such as the newly proposed three airfields. See from Washington to Foreign Office, 12 August 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 18 October 1949, FO 371/75525.
- <sup>24</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 13 August 1949, FO 371/75521. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 23 August 1949, FO 371/75521.

<sup>25</sup> Summary of the Reporter of Military Reconnaissance Party in Saudi Arabia, 9 November 1949, FO 371/75521.

<sup>26</sup> Though Ibn-Saud requested a copy of the report of the Military Reconnaissance Party in November 1949, the year ended without him either receiving that report or seeing any sequel to the visit. The delay was because the British government was at the beginning reluctant to pass such a negative report to the Saudis. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 15 August 1949, FO 371/75521. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 November 1949, FO 371/75521. Also, Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1949, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1950, FO 371/82638. Also, see Foreign Office minute and its attachments, 15 December 1949, FO 371/75522. Also, see from Ministry of Defence to Foreign Office, 6 February 1950, FO 371/82669.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 11 January 1950, FO 371/75524. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 13 January 1950, FO 371/75524.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office (and Enclosures), 16 January 1949, FO 371/75523. Also, from War Office to Foreign Office, 28 February 1949, FO 371/75523. Also, Foreign Office Minute, 11 July 1949, FO 371/75523. Also, from War Office to Foreign Office, 15 November 1949, FO 371/75524.

<sup>31</sup> See from Treasury to Foreign Office, 16 December 1949, FO 371/75524. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 11 January 1950, FO 371/75524.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> The proposal of reducing the size of the BMM came as a result of the increment to its member's salaries (all the British army personnel's salaries were increased then) whilst the annual budget remained unchanged a matter which left the BMM with only two choices, either to reduce the number of its personnel, or to ask the Treasurer to increase the level of its budget. In any case, the Treasury agreement to increase the BMM budget in order to match the increased salary budget saved the situation in December 1950. From Foreign Office to Treasury, 8 January 1950, FO 371/82673. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 October 1950, FO 371/82673. Also, from Foreign Office to Treasury, 13 November 1950, FO 371/82673.

<sup>34</sup> Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1950, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 March 1951, FO 371/91757.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> For the lifting of arms embargo, see Gold, Isadore Jay. The United States and Saudi Arabia, 1933-1953: Post-Imperial Diplomacy and the Legacy of British Power. Ph.D. Dissertation, Columbia University, 1984, p. 241 and pp. 247-248. For the Saudi demand of certain quantities of arms which was made through the BMM in April 1948, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 23 April 1948, FO 371/68767.

<sup>37</sup> From Riyadh (Scott Fox) to Foreign Office, 1 September 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>38</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 18 March 1950, FO 371/82668.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 19 April 1950, FO 371/82668.

<sup>41</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 6 October 1950, FO 371/82668. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 12 October 1950, FO 371/82668. Also, Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1950, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 March 1951, FO 371/91757.

<sup>42</sup> See for example, Gold, Isadore Jay. *op. cit.*, p. 284.

<sup>43</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 6 February 1949, in King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence:1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 439.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Enclosure No. 2, in from Jeddah (Scott-Fox) to Foreign Office, 21 June 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> From Jeddah (Scott-Fox) to Foreign Office, 21 June 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 20 June 1949, in King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence:1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 443.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 6 August 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 27 August 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, see Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1949, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1950, FO 371/82638.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. Also, see Record of discussion between Mr Wright and members of the State Department, 22 November 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 27 November 1949, FO 371/75508. It should be noted that Ibn Saud informed the US Ambassador about his worries regarding the Hashemites on 10 May 1949. See Telegram of US Minister, 10 May 1949, in Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 196-197.

<sup>56</sup> Foreign Office Minute, 30 November 1949, FO 371/75508.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> See from Washington to Foreign Office, 30 November 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, Foreign Office Minute, 1 December 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Foreign Office to Washington, 2 December 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Washington to Foreign Office, 3 December 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 13 December 1949, FO 371/75508.

<sup>59</sup> From Washington to Foreign Office, 30 November 1949, FO 371/75508. Also, from Washington to Foreign Office, 3 December 1949, FO 371/75508.

<sup>60</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 13 December 1949, FO 371/75508.

<sup>61</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Telegram from US Ambassador, 31 December 1949, in Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud.** Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1985, p. 1.

<sup>63</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 276.

<sup>64</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 17 February 1950, FO 371/82649. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 9 March 1950, FO 371/82649.

<sup>65</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 9 March 1950, FO 371/82649.

<sup>66</sup> Nadav, Safran. **Saudi Arabia: The Ceaseless Quest for Security.** London: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 66.

<sup>67</sup> Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 66. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 262-265. For the continuation of Ibn Saud's complaints about the Hashemites to the US government, see section D of this chapter.

<sup>68</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p.266. Also, Louis, Roger. op. cit., p. 758. Gold Isadore stated that "The war in Palestine had led to a nearly permanent break in the Arab League between Egypt and Saudi Arabia on the one hand, and the Hashimi [Hashemites] Kingdom on the other. Transjordan's annexation of Jerusalem and the captured territories of Arab Palestine nearly led to its expulsion from the League". Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>69</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 27 May 1950, FO 371/82642. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 June 1950. FO 371/82643.

<sup>70</sup> See section C: III of this chapter, for the levy Force and its association with the Hashemites and the frontier issue.

<sup>71</sup> See Rubin, Barry. **The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict.** Syracuse (New York): Syracuse University, 1981, pp. 212-215.

<sup>72</sup> Pappé, Ilan. **Sir Alec Kirkbride and Anglo-Transjordanian alliance, 1945-50.** In Zametica, John. **British Officials and British Foreign Policy:1945-50.** Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1990, p. 150.

<sup>73</sup> Podedh, Elie. **Ending an Age-Old Rivalry: The Rapprochement between the Hashemites and the Saudis, 1956-1958.** In Susser, Asher & Shmuelevitz, Aryeh. **The Hashemites in the Modern Arab World.** London: Frank Cass, 1995, p. 88.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Pappé, Ilan. op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>76</sup> Nor would it study its legal aspects. Other studies did focus on this issue. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. **The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955.** Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987. Also, Kelly, J. **Eastern Arabian Frontiers.** London: Faber and Faber, 1964. Also, Wilkinson, John. **Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert.** London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991.

<sup>77</sup> The details of all matters that link the Saudi-Anglo relations to the frontier dispute will be intensely investigated.

<sup>78</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 185-186. & pp. 192-193. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p.142. Wilkinson indicated that the Saudi Arabian government policy "to get the frontier issue opened was to start operations in disputed territory". Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 245. Also, see Hart, Parker T. **Saudi**

**Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership.** Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, pp. 56-57. Nevertheless, it seems to be impossible to dismiss any idea which could relate the Saudi activities as a reaction to activities that were carried out by the opposite parties, particularly, that of the Omani Sultan activity among Dhahirah and Buraimi tribes in the summer of 1948, during which even British Oil companies were attempting to get oil concessions in these areas. See Paper on Buraimi, By Mr R Bird, 14 March 1949, FO 371/74973. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 1. pp. 103-104.

<sup>79</sup> From the British Agency at Sharjah (Stobart) to the Political Agent in Bahrain, 9 March 1949. FO 1016/58, in Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. **Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957.** Farnham (UK): 1988, Vol. 16. p. 383.

<sup>80</sup> Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 246. Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>81</sup> See Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 245. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 193-196. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p.142.

<sup>82</sup> See from the British Agency at Sharjah (Stobart) to the Political Agent in Bahrain, 27 April 1949. FO 1016/58, in Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. **Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957.** Farnham (UK): 1988, Vol. 16. pp. 387-389. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 196-197.

<sup>83</sup> From the British Agency at Sharjah (Stobart) to the Political Agent in Bahrain, 27 April 1949. FO 1016/58, in Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. **Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957.** Farnham (UK): 1988, Vol. 16. p. 387.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 196-197. Also, see Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia).** Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 397-398.

<sup>86</sup> From the British Embassy at Jeddah to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 11 May 1949, in Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. **Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957.** Farnham (UK): 1988, Vol. 16. p. 330. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 197. Also, Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 246. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 143.

<sup>87</sup> From the British Embassy at Jeddah to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 11 May 1949, in Schofield, Richard & Blake, Gerald. **Arabian Boundaries: Primary Documents 1853-1957.** Farnham (UK): 1988, Vol. 16. p. 330.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 21 April 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, see from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 18 April 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, see Translation of a Message from H.M. King Ibn Saud; handed in to H.M. Embassy, Jeddah, 19 April 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, in **King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence:1904-1953.** Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 440. The reason for sending such a message was explained by the King himself at its opening. On this Ibn Saud stated that he had heard from various sources "that the British Government is displeased with us [Saudi Arabia] because we are said to be adopting a steady policy of neglect for Britain's friendship". Ibid. Nonetheless, both the Saudi Ambassador to London and the British Ambassador to Jeddah felt that Ibn Saud's message was probably motivated by the British government's delay in responding to the tripartite treaty proposal. Wahba added that Ibn Saud may have felt that the British government was favouring the Hashemites, particularly when there were stories that the British government was delivering war materials to Iraq and Jordan while refusing to do so to Saudi Arabia. See From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 18 April 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 25 April 1949, FO 371/75511. Nevertheless, Mr Chadwick of the Foreign Office minuted on 7 May 1949, that "It is possible that Ibn Saud's message is a tactical demonstration in his campaign to advance his frontiers in the oil-bearing lands on the Trucial Coast". Foreign Office minute on relations between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia, 7 May 1949, FO 371/75508. Indeed, time-wise, Ibn Saud's message came in the same week as the Stobart incident took place. This demonstrates Ibn Saud's intention of keeping Saudi-British relations away from any consequences of misunderstanding over the frontier issue.

<sup>90</sup> Translation of a Message from H.M. King Ibn Saud; handed in to H.M. Embassy, Jeddah, 19 April 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>91</sup> Text of Message sent to H.M. Ambassador, Jeddah for communication to King Ibn Saud, 12 May 1949, FO 371/75508. It was indicated in that message; that the British government was: "Grieved to learn of the reports which have come to the ears of His Majesty's . . . and gratified to receive the assurances of his friendship. They sincerely reciprocate these assurances and have no hesitation in

saying that they have in no way loosened the close ties which have for so long linked them with His Majesty; and they categorically deny the tales which His Majesty has received to the contrary". Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Aide Memoire from the United Kingdom Government to H.M. King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud, 17 June 1949, in King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence:1904-1953. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 441.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Saudi Arabia's reply to the British Government Aide Memoire, 18 June 1949, FO 371/75511. Also, from Jeddah (Scott-Fox) to Foreign Office, 21 June 1949, FO 371/75511.

<sup>95</sup> Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 248. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>96</sup> Statement by the Saudi Arabian government interpreting the Boundaries with Qatar and Abu Dhabi, 14 October 1949, in Tuson, P & Burdett, A. Records of Saudi Arabia: Primary Documents, 1902-1960. Oxford: Redwood Press Ltd, 1992, Vol. 8. p. 422.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. Also, Wilkinson, John. op. cit., pp. 248-249. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 215-217.

<sup>100</sup> Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 217-218.

<sup>101</sup> See for example, Note From the Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the British Ambassador at Jeddah, 10 December 1949, in Tuson, P & Burdett, A. op. cit., pp. 425-426.

<sup>102</sup> Note From H.M. Embassy at Jeddah to the Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 30 November 1949, in Tuson, P & Burdett, A. op. cit., pp. 423-424.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Note From the Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the British Ambassador at Jeddah, 10 December 1949, in Tuson, P & Burdett, A. op. cit., pp. 425-426.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 403-404. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 148.

<sup>109</sup> The British reply was on 3 October 1950. Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 406. Also, see Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز (The Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz). Beirut: دار العلم للملايين, 1992, pp. 1394-1395.

<sup>110</sup> Foreign Office aide-memoire to Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 25 July 1950, FO 371/82653. In Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 73-75. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 148-149. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 226. Also, Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 404-405.

<sup>111</sup> Foreign Office aide-memoire to Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 25 July 1950, FO 371/82653. In Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 75.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> The Saudi Arabian Government memorandum to the British Government, 22 September 1950, FO 371/82653. In Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 76-77. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p.149.

<sup>115</sup> The Saudi Arabian Government memorandum to the British Government, 22 September 1950, FO 371/82653. In Priestland, Jane. The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 76-77. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p.149.

<sup>116</sup> Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 149-150.

<sup>117</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 232-235.

<sup>118</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 224.

<sup>119</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 223-224.

<sup>120</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 293-295. For the continuous pressure from the Saudi Government and Aramco on the State Department for help in regard to the frontier issue See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 224-225.

<sup>121</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 295-296.

<sup>122</sup> From the British Embassy to the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 11 November 1950. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 76-77. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 232-233.

<sup>123</sup> It should be noted that Raymond Hare, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, was appointed as an Ambassador to Saudi Arabia in August 1950, See section D of this Chapter.

<sup>124</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 20 November 1950. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 92-94. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 233-234.

<sup>125</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 234-235. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>126</sup> It was stated in the Foreign Office minute of the 21<sup>st</sup> May 1951, that the Levy Force was established in the autumn of 1950. Foreign Office minute by Mr Furlonge, 21 May 1951, FO 371/91761.

<sup>127</sup> See from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 6 January 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 277-278. Also, see from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 January 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 281-284. Also, see Saudi Arabia: Annual Review for 1950, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 March 1951, FO 371/91757.

<sup>128</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 6 January 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 277-278.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 January 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 281-284.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid. It should be mentioned that, during this meeting, Yassin pointed out to Trott that "if it was the oil operation that were promoting our [the British] attitude, that Saudi Arabian Government would be perfectly prepared to take the concession away from the Americans so far as that area was concerned and give it to a British company". Ibid. Nevertheless, the Saudis never repeated this.

<sup>135</sup> Ibn Saud's previous policy on this is a sign which indicates that he was not willing to negotiate a conflicting issue himself as he was careful not to completely injure his Kingdom's relations with the UK. But by the beginning of 1951 Ibn Saud put this policy aside as it seems that he became less concerned about the total preservation of such relations.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Foreign Office minutes (by Mr H. A. Dudgeon), 22 January 1951, FO 371/91761.

<sup>147</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 234-235. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 150. Also, see Memorandum from Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs to the British embassy in Jeddah, 7 February 1951, FO 371/91763. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 185-186. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1951, FO 371/91764. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 189-191. Also, see Aide Memoire, as enclosure in From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1951, FO 371/91765. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 194-197.

<sup>148</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy to Foreign Office, 19 April 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 287-288.

- <sup>149</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1951, FO 371/91765. In Priestland, Jane. op. cit., pp. 194-196.
- <sup>150</sup> Foreign Office minute by Mr Furlonge, 21 May 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, Foreign Office minute on Saudi Arabia Frontier Negotiations, 18 May 1951, FO 371/91765. In Priestland, Jane. op. cit., pp. 198-199.
- <sup>151</sup> Foreign Office minute by Mr Furlonge, 21 May 1951, FO 371/91761.
- <sup>152</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>153</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>154</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>155</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>156</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 30 May 1951, FO 371/91761.
- <sup>157</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 May 1951, 371/91761.
- <sup>158</sup> See Foreign Office minute by Mr Furlonge, 21 May 1951, FO 371/91761. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 9 June 1951, FO 371/91761.
- <sup>159</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 236-239.
- <sup>160</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 9 June 1951, FO 371/91761.
- <sup>161</sup> See Draft Report on Saudi Arabian discussions at the Foreign Office, 29 August 1951, FO 371/91762. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 213-218.
- <sup>162</sup> See section B of this chapter.
- <sup>163</sup> Discussions with the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister: Record of the First Session, 8 August 1951, FO 371/91762.
- <sup>164</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>165</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>166</sup> Discussions with the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister: Record of the Ninth Session, 22 August 1951, FO 371/91762.
- <sup>167</sup> Ibid. Also, see Discussions with the Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister: Records of the Second-Tenth Sessions, 9-23 August 1951, FO 371/91762.
- <sup>168</sup> Records of the Second-Tenth Sessions, 9-23 August 1951, FO 371/91762. Also, see Draft Report on Saudi Arabian discussions at the Foreign Office, 29 August 1951, FO 371/91762. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 213-218. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 239.
- <sup>169</sup> Draft Report on Saudi Arabian discussions at the Foreign Office, 29 August 1951, FO 371/91762. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 213-218. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 239. Also, see Amir Faisal Resume of the London discussions, undated, FO 317/91762. Also, in Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 219-222.
- <sup>170</sup> See section B of this chapter.
- <sup>171</sup> On 3 February 1949, President Truman formally appointed Mr Childs as an Ambassador to Saudi Arabia instead of ranking him as a Minister. Ultimately, the Saudi Arabian Minister to the USA, Asad Al-Faqih, presented his Letters of credence to the President of the USA as an Ambassador on 4 March 1949. See Middle East Journal Chronology, April 1949. Also, see Middle East Journal Chronology, July 1949. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 256.
- <sup>172</sup> Though Ibn Saud was telling the American's frankly about the cooling of his Kingdom's relations with Britain, it should be noted that the British were told otherwise, a tactic that was useful for Saudi Arabia at that particular time. See section C: I of this chapter.
- <sup>173</sup> Telegram of US Minister, 10 May 1949, in Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **Saudi Arabia Enters the Modern World: Secret U.S. Documents on the Emergence of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a World Power, 1936-1949, Part II.** Salisbury, N.C.: Documentary Publications, 1980, pp. 196-197. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 256. Also, Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 65.
- <sup>174</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 256-257. Also, Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 65.
- <sup>175</sup> See from Washington to Foreign Office, 12 August 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 18 October 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 257.
- <sup>176</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 262.
- <sup>177</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>178</sup> Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 66. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 262-265.
- <sup>179</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 262-265. Also, Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>180</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 265. Also, Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 66. It should be noted that for some reason the British were not aware of this package, however they were aware that the US was prepared to sign a treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation with Saudi Arabia. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 12 April 1950, FO 371/82645.

<sup>181</sup> Nadav, Safran. op. cit., p. 66.

<sup>182</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 285.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> From Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 12 August 1950, FO 371/82662. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, FO 371/82662. Also, see Middle East Journal. Chronology, October 1950.

<sup>185</sup> Middle East Journal, Chronology. October 1950. Hare replaced Childs in October 1950. Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 285.

<sup>186</sup> From President Truman to King Abdulaziz, 31 October 1950, quoted in Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 270.

<sup>187</sup> Anderson, Irvine. Aramco the United States and Saudi Arabia: A Study of the Dynamic of Foreign Oil Policy 1933-1950. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981, p. 189-190.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 185 & p. 192. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>192</sup> Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., p. 190. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>193</sup> Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., p. 194. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 278. Also, from Jeddah (Trott) to Foreign Office, 20 December 1950, FO 371/91779. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 3 January 1951, FO 371/91779. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 January 1951, FO 371/91779.

<sup>194</sup> Amir Faisal made this announcement while he was in Cairo on 19 March 1950. See a cutting from Glasgow Herald, 20 March 1951, in FO 371/91780.

<sup>195</sup> Anderson, Irvine. op. cit., p. 185 & p. 192. Also, Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 275.

<sup>196</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 21 February 1951, FO 371/91768. It should be mentioned that the Saudi government did also sign an agreement for technical cooperation under the Point Four Programme with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in October 1950. Ibid. Also, see Agreement of Technical Assistance between the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and the Government of Saudi Arabia, FO 371/82662.

<sup>197</sup> Point Four General Agreement for Technical Cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the United States of America, FO 371/91768. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 21 February 1951, FO 371/91768.

<sup>198</sup> British and American interests in Saudi Arabia, as enclosure in From Jeddah to foreign Office, 30 January 1951, FO 371/91759. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 21 February 1951, FO 371/91768.

<sup>199</sup> British and American interests in Saudi Arabia, as enclosure in From Jeddah to foreign Office, 30 January 1951, FO 371/91759.

<sup>200</sup> See section C of chapter two.

<sup>201</sup> Foreign Office Minutes by Dudgeon, 6 March 1951, FO 371/91759.

<sup>202</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 6 January 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 13 January 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 26 February 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., pp. 285-286. It should be noted that when the Dhahran airfield agreement expired on 15 March 1949, the Saudi Arabian government and the USA government embarked on negotiations for its renewal. Although not reaching an agreement until June 1949, the lease for the airfield continued on a monthly basis until agreement was reached on 23 June 1949. This agreement extended the US right to use the airfield for one year. Thereafter, both governments kept extending the agreement annually until the summer of 1951. See Saudi Arabia: future of the United States Air Base at Dhahran, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 11 July 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 31 March 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 4 May 1949, FO 371/75525. Also, see from Washington to Foreign Office, 28 May 1950, FO 371/82678.

<sup>203</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 8 June 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, from Washington (The British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 25 June 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, see Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 286. The agreement indicated that it "shall continue in force for a period of five years, and shall remain in force for an additional period of five years thereafter unless, six month prior to the termination of the first five year period, either party to the Agreement gives to the other notice of intention to modify or terminate the Agreement". See a Copy of the Agreement in FO 371/91776.

- <sup>204</sup> Gold, Isadore Jay. op. cit., p. 286. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 14 July 1951, FO 371/91773.
- <sup>205</sup> From Washington (The British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 25 June 1951, FO 371/91776. Also, see a Copy of the Agreement in FO 371/91776.
- <sup>206</sup> From Washington to Foreign Office, 30 May 1951, 371/91776.
- <sup>207</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 13 September 1951, FO 371/91761.
- <sup>208</sup> Saudi Arabia Annual Review for 1952, From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852.
- <sup>209</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 14 January 1951, FO 371/91771. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 March 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>210</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 14 January 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>211</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>212</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 February 1951, FO 371/91771. Also, see from Foreign Office to War Office, 6 February 1951, FO 371/91771. Also, see from War office to Foreign Office, 13 February 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>213</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 February 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>214</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 10 February 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>215</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 March 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>216</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>217</sup> From War Office to Ministry of Defence, 2 August 1951, FO 371/91771. From Foreign Office to Ministry of Defence, 16 August 1951, FO 371/91771. From Ministry of Defence to War Office, 27 August 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>218</sup> From War Office to Ministry of Defence, 12 November 1951, FO 371/91771. From Ministry of Defence to War Office, 15 December 1951, FO 371/91771.
- <sup>219</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 30 January 1951, FO 371/91773. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 29 March 1951, FO 371/91773.
- <sup>220</sup> At that time Britain faced a shortage of officers in general, in most sectors of the British forces. From the BMM to the British Embassy in Jeddah, 26 May 1951, FO 371/91773. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 June 1951, FO 371/91773. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 July 1951, FO 371/91773.
- <sup>221</sup> See for example from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 30 January 1951, FO 371/91773.
- <sup>222</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 25 January 1951, FO 371/91771. From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign office, 9 July 1951, FO 371/91771. From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign office, 8 August 1951, FO 371/91774.
- <sup>223</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 14 July 1951, FO 371/91773. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office (and enclosures), 30 January 1951, FO 371/91773. Also, see Minute by General Robertson, 12 January 1951, FO 371/91773. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 June 1999, FO 371/91773. Also see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 16 July 1951, FO 371/91773. Also see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 September 1951, FO 371/91774.
- <sup>224</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 25 September 1951, FO 371/91774. Amir Mishal became the new Saudi Defence Minister after the death of his full brother Amir Mansour in May 1951. McLoughlin, Leslie. **Ibn Saud: Founder of a Kingdom.** (Arabic edition) Beirut: Almatbouat co., 1995, P.243. It should be noted that the new situation in the Saudi Defence Ministry had no impact on Saudi Arabia's decision to cease the BMM activities. Moreover, it could be said that the Saudi decision of making an end to the operation of the BMM was taken in mid-June 1951, when the Saudi-US agreement was signed. Nevertheless, the Saudi government successfully delayed the communication of its resolution to the British government until after Faisal's visit to London was over. This was because the Saudi government did not want to make any obstacle before and during Faisal's visit to London in August 1951. See section C: III of this chapter. Moreover, it could be also said that the Saudi government did not want to create any new dilemma for the already declining Saudi-British relationship by requesting immediate departure of the BMM. Hence, the Saudi Defence Minister's communication to the head of the BMM was only a request for the cessation of its operations and not for its complete removal. By this the Saudis left the final decision of the mission's withdrawal to the British government. See from Jeddah to foreign office, 25 September 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 September 1951, FO 371/91774. At the beginning the British government was not so keen on withdrawing the mission. Hence, it kept studying the matter for almost two months, during which the BMM was waiting without any activities. Until November 1951, the British government believed that Ibn Saud might revise the Saudi government decision and ask for the BMM to resume its training. Nevertheless, during an audience with the King in Riyadh on 2 November 1951, it became clear to Mr

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Riches of the British Embassy that even Ibn Saud did not want the BMM to stay in Saudi Arabia anymore. Consequently, the British government finally ordered the BMM to withdraw from Saudi Arabia. See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 3 November 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 September 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see British Military Mission to Saudi Arabia, 10 October 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 October 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from Foreign office to Jeddah, 22 October 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from Foreign office to Jeddah, 27 October 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from War Office to MELF, 7 November 1951, FO 371/91774. Also, see from Ministry of Defence to Washington (BJSM), 3 December 1951, FO 371/91774.

## ***Chapter Five: Troubled Relations, 1952-1953***

This chapter will focus on Saudi-British relations during the last two years of King Ibn Saud's reign. As all forms of Saudi-British cooperation had ended in 1951, the chapter will study Saudi-British relations during the period of conflict over the frontier issue. Alongside the study of the impact of growing USA influence in Saudi Arabia, the chapter will determine the state that the conflict had caused Saudi-British relations to reach by November 1953.

The Dammam Conference, the basis of its failure, and its aftermath will be analysed. The establishment of Saudi Arabian authority in Buraimi and its consequences will be examined alongside the conflict's development towards the British blockade of Buraimi. The blockade and the developments that tagged-along will be examined and analysed at length. Following a look at the effect of the scope of Saudi-US relations in the development of the Saudi-British conflict, the development of the conflict during the final months of Ibn Saud's life will be studied.

### **A. The Failure of the Dammam Conference and its Aftermath**

It was hoped that the proposed conference would produce positive progress in regard to the complex frontier issue. Nevertheless, because of the unwillingness of the Saudi and the British representatives to compromise, the conference was an evident failure. Before, embarking on the developments of the conference, it would be worthwhile to digest the basis on which the Saudis and the British representatives had formed their firm positions upon.<sup>1</sup>

The Saudi Arabian position was not just formulated around their objectives of getting territorial gains, but was also formulated in accordance with the reality of the new cycle that had occurred in Saudi-British relations before the end of 1951. As the previous chapter revealed, by the end of that year, Saudi Arabian reliance on Britain was almost demolished by the termination of Saudi-British military cooperation, the natural ending of Ibn Saud's anxiety about the Hashemite issue, and the intensification of Saudi-US ties.<sup>2</sup> Ultimately - and from the Saudi point of view - the attachment of the Kingdom's security to Saudi-British relations had been severely

weakened in accordance to the changes within these factors. Moreover, as they were approaching the conference the Saudis might have weighted the possibility of territorial gains - if a strong position was maintained - against further deterioration in Saudi-British relations. Hence, it might have been obvious to the Saudis that there could be territorial gains if a firm position was maintained, particularly when there were no such equal gains from a positive improvement in the Saudi-British relations.

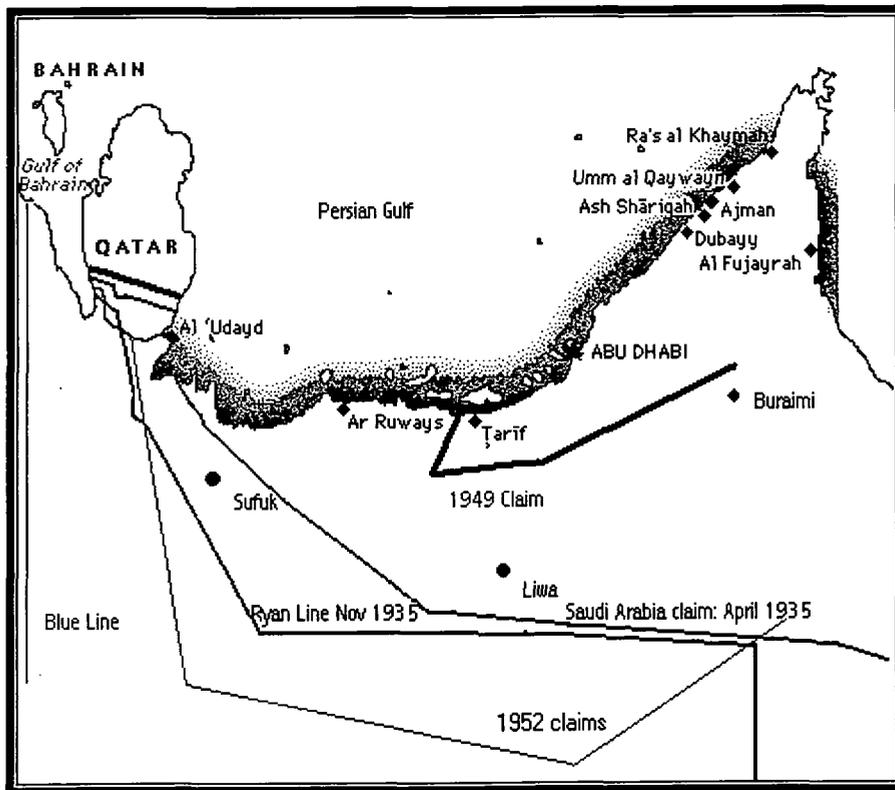
For the British, it seems that there was not any new consideration which might make them soften their position over the frontier issue. Thus, it was apparent that Britain would continue to maintain its usual firm position vis-à-vis Saudi Arabian ambitions in the protectorate territories. Moreover, it became obvious that the British had approached the conference without looking at the possibility of a further deterioration in Saudi-British relations. This is the case when the British records do not show any attempt at investigating the frontier issue within the changes that accrued to Saudi-British relations in the second half of 1951. Likewise, the appointment of the Political Resident in the Gulf as the head of the British delegation to the conference showed that Britain was obviously dealing with this issue on considerations that were related to the interests of its Gulf Protectorates rather than anything else.<sup>3</sup>

As agreed in London in August 1951, the Dammam Conference assembled on 28 January 1952.<sup>4</sup> *Amir* Faisal headed the Saudi delegation to the conference and Sir Rupert Hay, the Political Resident in the Gulf, headed the British delegation. The ruler of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Shakhbut Ibn Sultan, and the ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Ali Al-Thani, attended the conference. Both rulers, who were considered to be a part of the British delegation, were present purely on consultative terms. The ruler of Oman was neither present nor represented, a matter which excluded the issue of the Saudi-Omani frontiers - for the time being - from the agenda of the conference discussions. The conference concentrated on the Saudi-Qatari frontier and on the northern sector of Saudi Arabia's frontier with Abu Dhabi.<sup>5</sup>

The first sign of misunderstanding between the Saudi and British representatives occurred on the second day of the conference. At the initiation of the discussions of the Saudi-Qatari frontier on 29 January, Sheikh Ali of Qatar declared that as he had always regarded King Abdulaziz as his own father, Qatar's frontier with Saudi Arabia

would be left for the King's judgement. Ali mentioned that he would unconditionally accept any decision taken by Ibn Saud in this regard.<sup>6</sup> Being alarmed by Ali's unexpected remarks, Hay asked for instant private conversation with the ruler. Upon Ali and Hay returning to the main conference table, the British representative affirmed that he was the only one who was entitled to speak for Qatar and Abu Dhabi. At this stage *Amir* Faisal remarked that he would convey Sheikh Ali's statement to King Ibn Saud. Hay strongly objected to Faisal's suggestion and stated that the British government - as the guardian of Qatar interests - would reserve full rights on any decision taken by Ibn Saud in this regard.<sup>7</sup> Faisal responded that the lands under discussion did not belong to Britain, and the best solution in regard to the whole issue could be reached in a peaceful and friendly, direct, negotiation between Saudi Arabia and its neighbours.<sup>8</sup> Hay re-emphasised that the British government was the sole authority with the right to address any issue regarding the British Gulf Protectorates (with any foreign power).<sup>9</sup> Concluding this issue Faisal warned Hay about the negative impact which would result from the British government's unnecessary interference in negotiations between friends and neighbours.<sup>10</sup>

On the same day (29 January), Hay proclaimed on behalf of Qatar a new frontier that exceeded any previous claims (see map four). The new British-Qatari claim, which would preserve for the Emirate a strip of territory, approximately twenty-five miles deep across the base of the Qatar peninsula, was shocking to the Saudi representatives. When the Saudi representatives asked the Sheikh of Qatar to confirm this claim, the latter reluctantly did so after mentioning hopes that this should not damage the brotherly relations between Qatar and Saudi Arabia.<sup>11</sup> At this junction, the Saudi delegates became aware that the British representatives were responsible for the extreme position in regard to Qatar's new claim.<sup>12</sup>



**Map 4: The 1952 Claims**

On 30 January, the British representatives presented another extreme claim on behalf of Abu Dhabi (see map four). Abu Dhabi's new claim, which surpassed all former claims, put a vast tract of land that was obviously within the Saudi territories, into Abu Dhabi confines. After, objecting to and rejecting such a claim the Saudi representatives asked the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi - who was less friendly towards the Saudis compared to the Sheikh of Qatar - to confirm the latest claim, with evidence. In his turn Shakhbut referred the entire matter to the British representative, with explanation that Hay was the only authority to speak formally on behalf of Abu Dhabi.<sup>13</sup>

Following those two claims, the delegates spent several meetings exchanging proofs and explaining the basis of their claims. All in all, the Saudis maintained the basis of their 1949 claim, and the British representatives would not ask for less than the newly placed claims. Nevertheless, in the last session of the conference, on 14 February, Hay offered to continue the negotiations on the basis of the Saudi claim of 1935, excluding Khaur al-Udaid from the 1935 line, as the British delegates saw the coastal village as belonging to Abu Dhabi. Though, the Saudi representatives did not accept the latest British proposal, still *Amir* Faisal promised to convey the proposal to Ibn

Saud for further instructions.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the Saudis and the British representatives agreed upon the maintenance of the August 1951 agreement, which had restricted all kind of activities in the disputed area.<sup>15</sup> On 14 February 1952, the conference was adjourned for one month, but never reconvened.<sup>16</sup>

The developments of the conference revealed the concepts and the expectations of both the Saudi and the British governments about the outcome of such a formal discussion. As both parties approached the conference without any modest intention of making any concessions, both were hoping that the sessions of the conference might bring about a magical solution. The Saudi representatives were estimating that the participation of Abu Dhabi and Qatar rulers might bring about an understanding if direct negotiations were held. However, the second day of the conference confirmed to the Saudis that the British representatives would form an obstacle against any attempt at direct agreement between them and these rulers. On the other side, the British representatives thought that an extensive counter claim might bring about some change to the principles of the Saudis 1949 claim. However, the outcome of both parties' strategies and policies, which were based according to the positions of each of them on the frontier issue, brought about a negative end to the conference. The failure of the Dammam Conference made each party rethink the whole policy in regard to the frontier as future pages will reveal.

Indeed, the negative result of the Dammam Conference added to the complexity of the policies and strategies of the main conflicting parties. For the Saudi government, it became recognisable that negotiations - with the British - would not achieve any positive result, thus without an implementation of new tactics no breakthrough would be reached.<sup>17</sup> The same thing could be said about the British government position on this. The head of the British delegation to Dammam included in his report to London a recommendation to refer the frontier dispute to arbitration.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the possibility of changes in the tactics of each party was apparent when the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia attempted to encourage both parties - following the adjournment of the conference - to reach a mutual political agreement.<sup>19</sup> At that time, it became evident that neither was interested in the American suggestion. The British Ambassador replied to his American colleague that, his government "had abandoned hope of negotiated settlement and was preparing to seek arbitration".<sup>20</sup> The Saudi

government reply to the American Ambassador revealed that it had also lost hope of reaching settlement by means of negotiation, and hinted that it may refer the whole dispute to the United Nations.<sup>21</sup> Regardless of the style of the new tactics that the Saudi and the British were about to adopt, it could be said that their course of action - as following paragraphs will reveal - would explain that the failure of the conference to reach a settlement was the paddle which would accelerate the deterioration of the situation.

By 12 March, the British government was examining the possibility of unilaterally declaring a boundary line, similar to the Ryan line, if the Saudi government did not relinquish its 1949 claim.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, the British government was encouraging and assisting the Petroleum Concessions to acquire the right of the oil concession for the Buraimi area. For this purpose the Sultan of Muscat was encouraged by the British authority to establish political control over Buraimi.<sup>23</sup>

Though both parties agreed in Dammam that the restriction of activities in the disputed area should remain in force, it could be said that neither fulfilled their commitments. In February, the Petroleum Concessions officials, who were touring the area as well, reported the presence of Saudi Arabian agents and *Zakat* collectors in the disputed areas.<sup>24</sup> On 14 March, the British Political Agent in Sharjah, who was accompanied by representatives of the Sultan of Muscat and the Petroleum Concessions, visited Buraimi in order to convince the local tribal Sheikhs to declare allegiance to the Sultan.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, in the spring of the same year a British expedition toured the whole disputed area in order to gather some detailed facts about it.<sup>26</sup>

The British activities and in particular the Political Agent in Sharjah's visit to Buraimi brought about a strong Saudi protest. On 29 March 1952, the Saudi government protested that the political agent's visit was a clear violation of the London Agreement and that Saudi Arabia did not recognise the sovereignty of the Sultan of Muscat or Trucial Sheikhs over the area of Buraimi. Furthermore, the Saudi government statement explained that the Buraimi local tribal Sheikhs were in fact Saudi citizens who acknowledged loyalty to King Ibn Saud and who allowed the King's sovereignty over them.<sup>27</sup> In reply, the British government sent a counter

protest to the Saudi government, rejecting any assumption of Saudi sovereignty over the Buraimi area. Furthermore, the same British statement brought about a new British interpretation of the meaning of the London Agreement when it explained that the London Agreement did not restrict political officers from touring the disputed area as part of normal official duties.<sup>28</sup> The exchange of protests did not help the situation. In fact the situation continued to deteriorate towards the middle of the summer of 1952 as both parties extended their activities in the disputed area.<sup>29</sup>

The activities in the disputed area were not the only warning of further deterioration. The USA's diplomatic difficulties in bringing a successful solution to the situation were a further indicator. The US government became more concerned about the deterioration of Saudi-British relations, especially over the frontier issue. Thus, during the first half of 1952, the US government tried to encourage the British government to ease the situation. Nevertheless, the failure of the US government's efforts made a further worsening in the situation inevitable.

In March 1952, King Ibn Saud sent *Amir* Faisal to Jeddah to complain to the American Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Raymond Hare, about the extreme and difficult policies that the British government was imposing upon Saudi Arabia in regard to the frontier issue.<sup>30</sup> The British government's antagonistic attitude proved for Ibn Saud, that Britain had become "indifferent" to Saudi Arabian territorial integrity. Ibn Saud's complaint went further saying that the British government was now probably conspiring against his Kingdom, as British influence was surrounding Saudi Arabia not only from the northern side, but also from the eastern and southern sides. Faisal expressed Ibn Saud's desire to prevent the situation declining, not just for the sake of Saudi Arabia and Britain, but also for the sake of Middle Eastern security. In his oral message to Hare, - which Faisal conveyed - Ibn Saud insisted on the immediate need for US government intervention in this issue, as the USA was the only power which was capable of rescuing this explosive situation.<sup>31</sup>

Ibn Saud's anxiety was taken to heart, particularly when the State Department estimated that the deterioration of Saudi-British relations might produce negative impacts on the overall US-British position in the Middle East. On 7 April, the State Department sent the US Embassy in London an Aide-Memoire to be conveyed to the

Foreign Office.<sup>32</sup> In that memoire the Americans were very careful to explain the motivation in sending such a detailed suggestion:

“As the Foreign Office knows, the United States Government attaches great importance to the maintenance of the British position in the Near East, which is considered a source of great stability in the area. It is for this reason that we are concerned about a deterioration in UK-Saudi relations which might adversely affect the British position in the area”.<sup>33</sup>

Moreover, it was emphasised in the memoire that “the [State] Department hopes that the Foreign Office will not misconstrue its purpose as supporting the Saudi position”.<sup>34</sup> In fact it was believed by the State Department that, “a solution of this problem would go a long way towards bringing about an improvement of relations between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia”.<sup>35</sup> The State Department warned the Foreign Office that unless quick and smoothly determined plans are implemented Saudi Arabia might be “seriously alienated” from Britain.<sup>36</sup>

In order to reassure Ibn Saud about the goodwill of the British government policy towards his Kingdom, the State Department suggested that Churchill send a frank and friendly message to Ibn Saud expressing warm sentiment and assuring that Britain’s policy in the Middle East was not inimical to Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the State Department suggested the necessity for a settlement of the frontier dispute by friendly negotiations, during which the British should make some compromises including:<sup>37</sup>

1. Giving Saudi Arabia an outlet on the Gulf east of Qatar;
2. The partition of the disputed area, including Buraimi area;
3. American and British oil companies to be given equal opportunity in this area.

Despite the State Department’s careful explanations about its motivation in regard to these detailed suggestions, the British were still suspicious about American motivations.<sup>38</sup> It was thought in the Foreign Office that the State Department suggestions were taken on the basis of American interests and growing influence in Saudi Arabia, without any consideration to Britain’s interests in the area. Excepting the kind of message to be sent to the Saudi King, the State Department suggestions were inept and unfair in the Foreign Office’s point of view. Indeed, the Foreign Office

deemed that the State Department suggestions would lead to a fundamental surrender of all kind of British claims in the area.<sup>39</sup>

On 8 May, The Foreign Office replied, objecting to the State Department's initiative. In that reply, it was explained that Britain had made several compromise offers previously, and that Saudi Arabia was the one which would not moderate its position. The Foreign Office did not miss the opportunity to state in its reply that Buraimi had never been a Saudi territory and had never been recognised as such.<sup>40</sup>

On the same day (8 May 1952), the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Anthony Eden, sent King Ibn Saud a personal message expressing Britain's aspiration to maintain long lasting cordial relations with Saudi Arabia. Eden's message did not mention the frontier dispute, but was an attempt by the British government to confirm its goodwill towards Ibn Saud and his Kingdom in general.<sup>41</sup> It should be mentioned that, Eden's message to Ibn Saud was not only motivated by the Americans, but was also inspired by a suggestion from the British Ambassador in Saudi Arabia.<sup>42</sup>

On 12 May the US government made another attempt when its Embassy in London endeavoured to encourage the Foreign Office to improve the relations between Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Sheikhdoms. Nevertheless, the American diplomat's argument failed to impress the Foreign Office officials.<sup>43</sup>

It could be said that the British government's negative responses were associated with its anxiety about the growing US influence in Saudi Arabia. Increasing US-Saudi cooperation at all levels, including military, economic, and political cooperations, had led the Foreign Office to suppose that the State Department and Aramco were conspiring against Britain in Saudi Arabia. Moreover, the British government was inclined to believe that Ibn Saud's strong position in regard to the frontier dispute could not be maintained without American sympathy and support.<sup>44</sup>

To conclude, it could be assumed that the US government's mediation failure paved the way for a further decline in the whole situation of the conflict. Thus, toward the middle of the summer of 1952, the frontier dispute was already sliding towards further

dangerous developments, particularly when the area was witnessing accelerating activity from both of the conflicting parties.

### **B. The Establishment of a Saudi Arabian Authority in Buraimi, and its Consequences in 1952**

The Saudi government decision to establish its authority in Buraimi was taken some time after the failure of the Dammam Conference. Though, the precise timing in which the Saudis took such a decision remains, to some extent mysterious, still, as was previously indicated, the Saudis were processing new tactics and strategies within a few weeks of the adjournment of the conference. Hence, it could be argued that the Saudi government might have been considering the establishment of a kind of formal base in Buraimi as early as February 1952.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the implementation of such action was delayed until the circumstances left no alternative but its implementation.

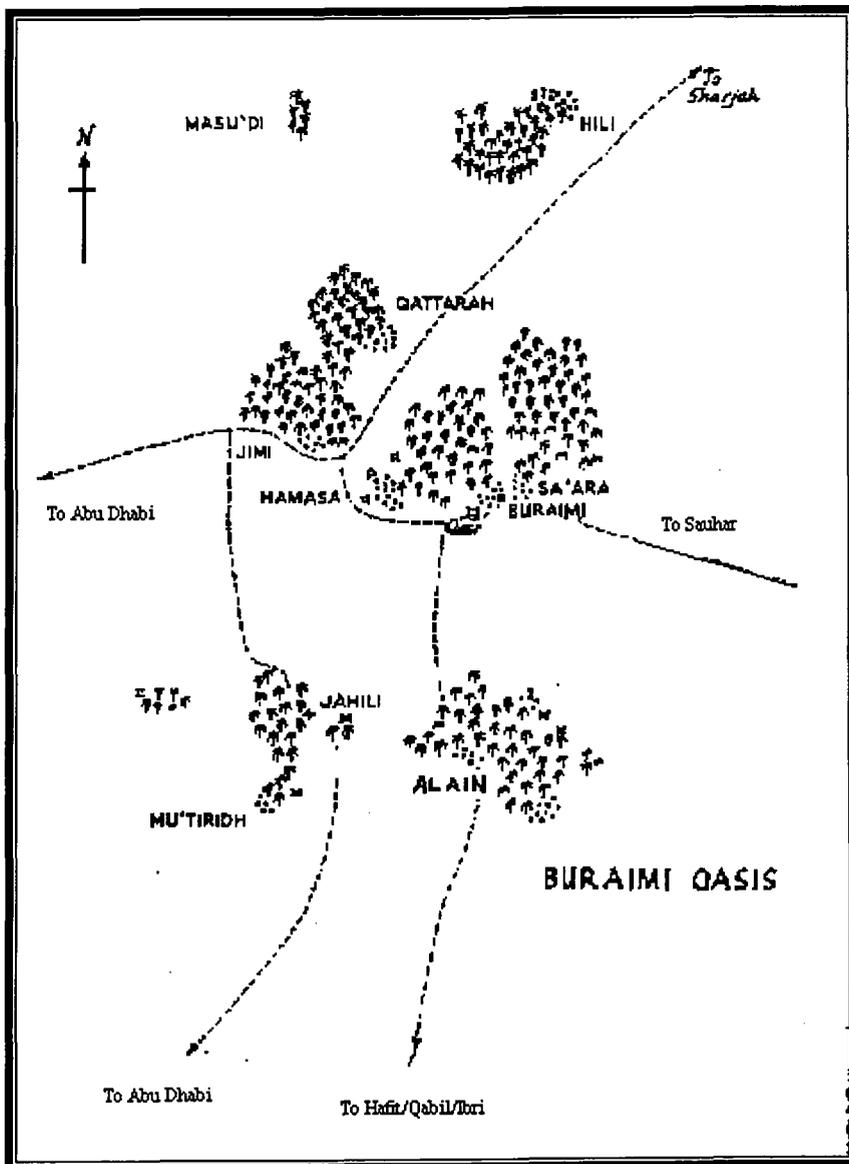
The British official's activity in Buraimi in March 1952 was one of the motives behind the Saudi government's implementation of its hard-line policy in regard to Buraimi, particularly when the Saudi government began to believe that the British officials and their affiliates were already eyeing that area.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, it could be said that the failure of US government mediation was another factor that motivated the Saudi regime to go ahead with its plan.

No doubt that the Saudi government's decision in forming an authority over Buraimi was a turning point in its policy, not just in regard to the frontier dispute, but also towards Britain. The extreme end of the establishment of a Saudi post in Buraimi - or indeed, the Saudi occupation of Buraimi according to the expected British accusation - might result in a direct military confrontation between Saudi Arabia on the one side and Britain and its satellites on the other, thus, revolutionising the concept of security in the Saudi-British relationship from that which was considered as a helpful factor to that which would turn into a distracting one. Indeed, this action would easily turn the security concerns between Saudi Arabia and Britain to one which could involve a direct-armed confrontation between them. However, it could be said that the Saudi's had decided to take such an action with the hope that the British would not respond aggressively. In any case, by choosing such a risky direction, it could be said, that the

Saudi government was already neglecting any hope of improving its relations with Britain for, perhaps, more rewarding territorial gains from its point of view. It should also be noted that the dramatic developments in the frontier dispute in 1952 had also made the British government - like the Saudi government - neglect the effect of this issue on Saudi-British relations. Hence, apart from the British Foreign Secretary's message to Ibn Saud in May 1952, no other action was taken by Britain in order to insure that there was no effect from the frontier dispute on its relations with Saudi Arabia.<sup>47</sup>

In July 1952, Rashid Bin Hamad Al Bu Shamis, the Sheikh of Hamasa - one of the major settlements in Buraimi Oasis - left for Saudi Arabia. On 31 August, he returned, accompanied by a Saudi party under the leadership of Turki Ibn Utaishan, a Saudi agent who took over the duties of Hamasa Sheikh and announced that he was the Saudi *Amir* for the entire Buraimi area.<sup>48</sup> According to a British report, the Saudi party consisted of fifty armed men and thirty civil servants. Nevertheless, the Saudi government claimed that none of the individuals were troops and that their total number did not exceed forty.<sup>49</sup> Ibn Utaishan brought with him letters from the Governor of Al-Hasa, *Amir* Saud Ibn Jalawi, addressed to several principal Sheikhs of the Buraimi area. These letters were carefully written in order to legitimise - and explain to the inhabitants who were considered, in these letters, as Saudi citizens - the Saudi government's lawful move. An extract from these letters read:

“In view of the repeated request made by our *tawarif* [subjects] in Oman and the arrival of Rashid Bin Hamad Al-Shamisi for himself and on behalf of them for the appointment by us of a . . . representative in their country, we have appointed our servant Turki Bin Abdullah Bin Ataishan [Utaishan], and have supplied him with the necessary instructions which he should observe. We have full trust in him. As you are one of our *tawarif* and belonging to us, your help in this connection cannot be spared. You will see from him, by the will of God, what will please you”.<sup>50</sup>



**Map 5: Buraimi Oasis**

Sources: Kelly, J. Eastern Arabian Frontiers.

London: Faber and Faber, 1964, p. 16.

On 15 September, the British chargé d'affaires in Jeddah, Mr D. M. Riches, delivered a protest note to King Ibn Saud in Riyadh.<sup>51</sup> The British government strongly protested against the introduction of Ibn Utaishan and his party into Buraimi. It was stated that Buraimi was a part of an area covered by the 1951 London restrictions agreement. In addition to Abu Dhabi rights in Buraimi Oasis a part of Buraimi belonged to the Sultan of Muscat, who had asked the British government to fully represent him in any issue regarding such a right. Ibn Utaishan's immediate withdrawal was requested. Moreover, it was stated in that note, and was also restated

orally by Riches, that "In the absence of a very urgent reply and prompt withdrawal of Turki as requested Her Majesty's Government will be compelled to take such action as may be necessary to protect their positions"<sup>52</sup>

The first Saudi reaction to the British government note came from Ibn Saud himself. Immediately after when Riches delivered the note, Ibn Saud remarked to the British diplomat that:

"Churchill used to call me the "friend of the dark days". But now he comes to demand my lands. Go back to my history with your country and look how I used to treat Britain . . . But now the British government wanted to give the lands which belonged to me and to my grandfathers to someone who did not help Britain in the same way that I did. Where is the friendship? I'm not willing to give away any part of my lands. Do you prefer the honesty and justice? If so let's discuss the matter in a friendly manner and solve it in one hour on the basis of what belonged to my grandfathers and what belongs to me now".<sup>53</sup>

Furthermore, on 17 September, the Saudi government sent the British government a replying note.<sup>54</sup> It was indicated in that note, that none of the rulers of the entire Omani Coast have or had any actual authority in Buraimi. Hence, the British government had no political right in expressing concern in a matter that only concerned the Saudi government and its own subjects in Buraimi. The Saudi Arabian government never accepted the possibility of making Buraimi a subject of negotiations between it and the British government. Buraimi was never mentioned during either London or Dammam Conferences as it was considered to be a de facto Saudi Arabian territory. Broadly speaking, the Saudi government note completely rejected the British government protest and considered the withdrawal of Ibn Utaishan to be out of the question. Moreover, - in that note - the Saudi government expressed its deep regret at hearing about the British government threat of using whatever means necessary (i.e. the use of force) to remove Ibn Utaishan from Buraimi. It was stated that such a threat "does not accord with the friendship existing between the two countries . . . the Saudi Arabian Government did not expect such a statement to be made by the friendly British Government".<sup>55</sup> Though the Saudi note was dry and negative response to the British government protests, and though the Saudi

government did consider Buraimi as a de facto Saudi territory, still the note did not end without stating that “the Saudi Arabian Government is entirely ready to solve these problems in accordance with the requirements of friendship on the principles of the United Nations”.<sup>56</sup>

Subsequent to the Saudi government reply the British government gave immediate instructions to the Political Resident in the Gulf to despatch an armed force to the Buraimi area.<sup>57</sup> By 18 September, a military post for the Trucial Oman Levies was established just four kilometres from Hamasa. Additionally, armed forces from the Sultan of Oman and the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi arrived in the Buraimi region. Moreover, orders were given to the British Royal Air Force (RAF) in Sharjah, to fly over Hamasa at a very low altitude, in order to intimidate the Saudis and in order to drop messages provoking the inhabitants against them.<sup>58</sup>

The Saudi government was alarmed when it first heard about the RAF’s threatening manoeuvres over Hamasa. On 19 September, a note from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was delivered to the British Embassy in Jeddah.<sup>59</sup> In that note, the manoeuvre of the RAF airplanes was intensely objected to. Immediate cessation of what the Saudi government regarded as clear act of aggression against its sovereignty was requested. In addition, the note explained that if the British government did not stop this aggressive act, the matter would be taken to the Security Council of the UN.<sup>60</sup>

On the same day that the Saudi government note was delivered to the British Embassy in Jeddah a similar but more important message from Ibn Saud to Eden was on the way via the Saudi Embassy in London.<sup>61</sup> In the beginning of the message, Ibn Saud’s resentment about the deterioration of his Kingdom relations with Britain was clearly stated:

“There is nothing more painful to me than to have the situation between us and the British Government deteriorate to a point where we are threatened by the airplanes of a government headed by our friend Mr. Churchill and his Deputy and Minister of Foreign Affairs, our friend Mr. Eden”.<sup>62</sup>

Ibn Saud's message goes on; "we are in our own country and we have not committed aggression against any . . . British territory".<sup>63</sup> After mentioning that it was in the interests of both governments to solve this crisis, Ibn Saud stated that:

"If Mr. Eden desires to maintain friendship between them [Britain] and us, let the British Government cease to allow its officials in the Gulf to engage in such hostile action. Otherwise, we shall be forced to announce what has happened and will consider this action as directed against us, against Najd, and against our Kingdom. We shall also be obliged to take our complaint to the Security Council and to defend our right as vigorously as we can".<sup>64</sup>

It appeared that though the Saudi government was aware of the RAF operations over Hamasa, it did not notice the existence of the ground forces until after its protest had been despatched. Hence, on 23 September the Saudi government sent the British government a further protest regarding the newly created military posts near Hamasa.<sup>65</sup> It was stated in the new message that the Saudi government considered the movements of the ground forces in the Buraimi area as "an act of aggression against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and a threat to peace and security, and it requests that this be stopped".<sup>66</sup> The new protest did not repeat the former clear threat to take the matter to the Security Council, but it again indicated that the Saudi government "is ready to solve the problems by peaceful means in accordance with the requirements of friendship and the principles of the United Nations".<sup>67</sup>

On 3 October, the British government replied to the Saudi note of the 17 September and to the two Saudi government protests of 19 and 23 of September.<sup>68</sup> The reply began:

"Her Majesty's Government welcome the expression of friendship of the Saudi Arabian Government's and note in particular the Saudi Arabian Government's determination to solve the frontier problem in accordance with the requirements of friendship".<sup>69</sup>

In response to the Saudi government point of view that Buraimi was not an area of dispute, as it was not mentioned in the London and Dammam Conferences, the British government gave a contrary point of view. It was illustrated that though the name Buraimi was not in the record of London discussions, yet the name was mentioned in

the correspondence preceding those discussions. In addition, it was logically recognised that the London discussion in regard to the disputed areas applied at least by implication to Buraimi. Furthermore, it was indicated that it was “purely fortuitous” that Buraimi was not discussed at the Dammam Conference.<sup>70</sup> It was remarked that the Saudi Arabian government action of sending armed men into territories belonging to the Trucial Sheikhdoms and the Sultan of Muscat had “no justifications whatever”.<sup>71</sup> Saudi Arabia’s claim to Buraimi was not accepted and the Saudi government was requested once more to withdraw Ibn Utaishan and his party from the Buraimi Oasis immediately. Moreover, the RAF flight and the movement of Levies, which were made at the request of the Sultan of Oman and the Sheikhs of the Trucial Coast, cannot be regarded as “an act of aggression against Saudi Arabia or any infringement of Saudi Arabian sovereignty”.<sup>72</sup> In fact, “Her Majesty’s Government would emphasise that the decision to send levies into Bureimi [Buraimi] was forced upon them by the action of the Saudi Arabian Government”.<sup>73</sup> At the conclusion of the note the British government mentioned its intention of reaching a solution by means of discussions and hoped that “it will shortly be possible to resume such discussions in an atmosphere of harmony and goodwill”.<sup>74</sup>

Eden’s reply to Ibn Saud’s message of the 19 September was still to come. On 9 October, the British Foreign Secretary wrote positively to Ibn Saud offering the desire of his government to settle the frontier dispute “amiably and equitably” by the reopening of the suspended discussions.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, in his message Eden informed Ibn Saud that the RAF flights had ceased. However, it was indicated in the message that the Levies forces would not be withdrawn unless Ibn Utaishan withdrew at the same time.<sup>76</sup>

Despite the mentioning of both governments’ desire for a solution, the actual crisis in the area of the dispute continued to worsen. Hence, no positive effort was made from either side in order to prevent further declination. Instead, both sides continued to reinforce their position in Buraimi during the first half of October 1952.<sup>77</sup> It became apparent that neither party involved was willing to withdraw from the area. Indeed, Ibn Saud’s insistence that “he would rather see Turki dead than withdrawn” had caused the British government to facilitate the reinforcement of its forces near the village.<sup>78</sup> Whether it was inspired by the British government or not, the reinforcement

of the Sultan of Muscat's forces, and his declaration of a *Jihad* against Ibn Utaishan, brought the situation to a climax. Thus, the "imminent possibility of an armed clash" was foreseen.<sup>79</sup>

Comprehension of the possibility of a military clash, and inspired by a Saudi request, led the US Ambassador to Saudi Arabia to propose, on 10 October, a standstill agreement.<sup>80</sup> The principle acceptance of Hare's proposal by both parties had led to a comprehensive negotiation in Riyadh between the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Mr George Pelham, and the Saudi officials.<sup>81</sup> On 26 October *Amir* Faisal and Ambassador Pelham signed the Buraimi Standstill Agreement.<sup>82</sup> The agreement, which lulled the tense situation, called for all parties in Buraimi to remain in their position without any further military reinforcement. In addition, all parties were to abstain from any provocative actions and the Saudi and British governments were to resume discussion over a settlement.<sup>83</sup>

Despite the Standstill Agreement's call for the resumption of discussions no progress was made during the remaining months of 1952 so as to bring about a real solution to the conflict. In fact most of the time was spent on several correspondences during which the British and the Saudis fielded new proposals in order to support their positions. Following the signing of the standstill agreement, the Saudi government proposed the setting up of a Tripartite Commission composed of Saudis, British, and US representatives in order to hold a plebiscite in Buraimi. For the remaining frontiers the Saudis proposed the resumption of the Dammam Conference with the intention of forming a fact-finding commission.<sup>84</sup> The Saudi proposal was completely rejected by the British government, instead they proposed "an impartial settlement of the whole problem by arbitration".<sup>85</sup> As the Saudi government also refused the British government proposal they remained divided.<sup>86</sup>

Each government had its own reasons and explanations for insisting on its own proposal and for rejecting the other side's proposal. The Saudi government maintained that the population of the area allied themselves to Saudi Arabia rather than to any other country, particularly when nearly all of the Buraimi area tribes were historically considered to be Saudis, and when they were in fact genuinely loyal to King Ibn Saud.<sup>87</sup> Thus their opinions should be taken into consideration by holding an

open plebiscite before anyone could impose his will upon them. The former were also the grounds on which the Saudi government rejected the arbitration proposal, additional to the argument that Buraimi was a part of Saudi Arabia, and thus was not subject to such practice.<sup>88</sup> For the British government, arbitration was the safest procedure that might bring a favourable settlement for all parties involved.<sup>89</sup> The British government's rejection of the Saudi proposal was related to its apprehension that the Saudi influence upon the tribes of the area might allow the Saudis to win the case illegally. The British government was almost certain that Ibn Utaishan conduct, in spending lavishly on the people of the area, had in fact created such influence.<sup>90</sup>

Signs of further deterioration were visible during the last months of 1952 when both sides failed to fully preserve the principles of the Standstill Agreement. Each of them engaged in several actions that were considered - by the other party - as contrary to the principles of the agreement. Each side accused the other of indulging in activities that included those to gain the loyalty of the tribes of the area, manoeuvre of forces, punishment of the other's supporters, etc.<sup>91</sup>

In conclusion for this section, it can be said that the arrival of Turki Ibn Utaishan in Buraimi marked the beginning of a serious crisis between Saudi Arabia and Britain over the Oasis. Though, armed clashes were prevented by the Standstill Agreement, the development of the crisis toward the end of 1952 was not conducive to optimism. The Saudi and the British correspondences since 15 September 1952, reflected the impact of the crisis on the state of their relations. There is little doubt about the damage that had been done to Saudi-British relations from the sublimation of the frontier issue. Depending on which direction the crisis would follow in 1953, Saudi-British relations would be effected accordingly.

### **C. Firmness of Policies and Further Deterioration in the Buraimi Crisis**

The Saudi government's refusal to accept - even in principle - the settlement of the frontier dispute through arbitration had in fact made the British government harden its position. As early as the beginning of December 1952, the Foreign Office was formulating a new tactic in order to persuade the Saudis to agree about arbitration.<sup>92</sup> Two methods were considered; the first was to win US government support in

advising and encouraging the Saudi government to settle the issue through the means of arbitration,<sup>93</sup> the second was to demonstrate the use of force in order to put pressure on the Saudis. In this regard the British government was considering the reinforcement of the forces in the Buraimi area in an attempt to ease the Saudi government's intransigent position.<sup>94</sup>

Composing its new approach the British government renewed on 5 January 1953 the offer of submitting the entire dispute to arbitration.<sup>95</sup> However, the Saudi government response on the new arbitration offer was tactically delayed. Explaining that it was studying the proposal the Saudi Arabian government was also trying to obtain US government support for its plebiscite proposal.<sup>96</sup> Without waiting for the Saudi reply the British government began to quietly reinforce its forces in the Trucial Coast area.<sup>97</sup> Meanwhile, the US government favoured the arbitration proposal. The US government made it plain to both sides that it had no intention to support any of them against the other. But in its point of view arbitration offered the most equitable method of resolving the dispute.<sup>98</sup>

During the second half of February 1953, the Saudi government started to discover the British plans for building up of its military capability in the area. The arrival of a warship on 18 February in Dubai, the arrival of 180 soldiers on 21 February at the Sharjah Airport, and the arrival of an additional 380 troops on 26 February to Sharjah led the Saudi government to assume that the British government was indeed planning for aggression.<sup>99</sup> It became a routine that in lesser circumstances the Saudi government would protest to the British government as violating the Standstill Agreement. However, the Saudi government considered a new method in addition to the usual one. Thus after a formal protest, the British government was told that the Saudi government had decided to publish the Standstill Agreement and the related documents and any violation act accordingly.<sup>100</sup>

It is imperative to highlight the Saudi decision to launch a propaganda campaign against Britain, particularly when it could be regarded as the second major anti-British decision that was taken by the Saudi government alongside its decision to send Ibn Utaishan to Hamasa during the previous year. The Saudi Arabian government formally explained to the British authority that it was compelled to take such a

decision because of the continuous British violation of the Standstill Agreement and because of the existence of a state of anxiety throughout the Kingdom.<sup>101</sup> Nonetheless, “the Saudi Arabian Government express their regret for the necessity of publishing the occurrences when her past procedure in solving her differences with the British Government was without publishing them”.<sup>102</sup> The British government anticipated the new Saudi actions as if the Saudi government intended to excuse in advance its rejection of the arbitration offer, along with representing the British government as “acting throughout in bad faith”.<sup>103</sup>

It could be said that the new policy of media propaganda was taken by the Saudi government in order to deter any British aggression against the Saudi authority in Buraimi, as well as to stop Britain from reinforcing its military capability in the area by disclosing such activity. Moreover, the Saudis might have thought that the publishing of details of what they firmly considered as an aggressive British act, might possibly mobilise international, Muslim, Arab, and - maybe - American public opinion against what could be regarded as British imperialism. This argument could be reinforced by Ibn Saud’s previously mentioned threat to Eden on 19 September 1952, when the former wrote to the latter with reference to the RAF manoeuvre over Hamasa, “. . . we shall be forced to announce what has happened and will consider this action as directed against us . . .”.<sup>104</sup> However, the negative sides of putting this theme into practice were not difficult to predict, as it would bring about more damage to the deteriorated Saudi-British relations, but it seems that this matter was not a concern for the Saudis at that stage. One additional matter that seemed to be missing from the Saudi government calculation when it was about to adopt this policy was the consideration of the possibility of a negative impact on Saudi Arabia itself. Propaganda in this case is a double-edged sword, thus if it succeeded in deterring the likely British aggression, it was working positively, but if it failed the humiliations of a Saudi Arabian defeat would be highlighted.

The British government reacted to the new Saudi policy of publicity by deciding to take the same step.<sup>105</sup> On this, Mr D. A. Greenhill of the Foreign Office minuted that:

“It looks very much as if the Saudis are getting rattled by the action we have taken to strengthen our position in the Trucial Oman States, and I think we should continue to stand firm. We are in fact in a relatively strong position for

the following reasons: (a) Our consistent offers of arbitration will be understood by international opinion as fair and equitable. (b) The activities of the Saudi representative in Buraimi have contravened the stand-still agreement, and we can make this clear in any statement".<sup>106</sup>

On 6 March 1953, the BBC Radio broadcast the first formal British announcement in regard to the Buraimi dispute.<sup>107</sup> On the following day, the Saudi government published several documents including the Standstill Agreement and the incidents that were regarded as a violation to it.<sup>108</sup> From then on a war of propaganda ensued bringing about more deterioration in the conflict and to Saudi-British relations. As each side was publishing its point of view and denouncing the contrary published view, the disagreement and misunderstanding in regard to the gloomy conflict became a public phenomenon.<sup>109</sup>

#### **D. The British Blockade of Hamasa**

By 12 March 1953, it became apparent to the British government that the Saudis were not ready to agree about the arbitration offer.<sup>110</sup> Indeed, the Saudi government was still promising to reply to the 5 January note until that particular day.<sup>111</sup> Instead, of receiving a positive Saudi reply, Britain was continuously receiving protests against the British military movements in the Trucial Coast.<sup>112</sup>

The Saudi government's refusal of the arbitration proposal compounded with the increasing anti-British propaganda campaign, and British fears of the growing Saudi influence in Buraimi, had hardened British government policy in regard to the dispute.<sup>113</sup> Additionally, the likelihood of further Saudi Arabian expansion in the territories of the Trucial Protectorates had made the possibility of an extra hard-line policy a definite prospect.<sup>114</sup> Indeed, the importance of maintaining the security and the interests of these Sheikdoms was a clear driving force behind British policies at that juncture. According to the Foreign office, the:

"Saudi Arabian Government have continued to exploit their wrongful occupation of Buraimi for the purpose of advancing still further their territorial claims. It is quite clear that they aim at absorbing the whole of the Trucial Shaikdoms except for the coastal towns . . . The effect of this increasing Saudi

encroachment would be to deprive the people of the Trucial States of their right to enjoy independence and benefits which come from economic development of their lands".<sup>115</sup>

Accordingly, by mid-March, the British government began studying a new policy that would include:<sup>116</sup>

1. The renewal of the arbitration offer to the Saudi government.
2. The cancellation of the Standstill Agreement and the 1951 London Understanding.
3. The reservation of the freedom of action in all areas considered by the British government to belong to Abu Dhabi and Oman.
4. The blockade of Ibn Utaishan and his followers in Hamasa.

Subsequent to intensive - but swift - examinations and communications between the British government departments and missions, the new policy was ready to be carried out by the end of March 1953.<sup>117</sup> On 2 April the British government communicated the implementation of its new policy to the Saudi government.<sup>118</sup> In an extended note that was handed to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the British government gave an explanation along with its view, on the development of the frontier issue since the opening of negotiations in 1949. In brief the note held the Saudi government accountable for the failure to reach a settlement. After emphasising the Saudi occupation of Hamasa as being the spark that fired the issue, the note emphasised that the Saudi government had been abusing the Standstill Agreement since it was agreed.<sup>119</sup> The main message of the note was in its conclusion:

"Her Majesty's Government are bound to conclude that the Saudi Arabian Government have destroyed the basis of the London Agreement and have not observed and do not intend to observe the Buraimi "Standstill" Agreement, and that their territorial claims are continually being increased. In these circumstances they and the Rulers under their protection are obliged to reserve complete freedom of action in regard to all matters covered by the aforesaid Agreements. They are authorised to state on behalf of the Sultan of Muscat that His Highness reserve freedom of action in respect of matters covered by the Buraimi "Standstill" Agreement. At the same time they wish to inform the Saudi Arabian Government that they regard it as a matter of urgency that the

question of the frontiers should be settled and for this purpose they renew once again their offer to submit the whole question to impartial arbitration".<sup>120</sup>

The British government predictions on the subject of Saudi Arabian reactions were unclear. Pelham estimated that the Saudis might appeal to the UN or might introduce irregular forces into Buraimi, or indeed may do both.<sup>121</sup> By way of trying to limit the Saudi reaction to an agreement with the arbitration offer, as well as in order to sweeten the note of bitterness the British government considered sending a friendly message from Churchill to Ibn Saud.<sup>122</sup> The Prime Minister's letter to the King, which was handed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jeddah together with the note on 2 April, read:

"Her Majesty's Government . . . have today authorised the despatch of a Note to Your Majesty's Government which I have no doubt will be displeasing to You . . . permit me to add these few personal words as an old friend and comrade in the war. It is my personal wish . . . that the friendship between the peoples of our two countries, which has been a source of strength and comfort in days of adversity, should prosper and continue ever firmer. I do not intend for my part to allow it to be disturbed by events which I trust will prove only temporary. But it is my duty as Prime Minister and as a friend to point out that Her Majesty's Government stand in friendly relations to Your Majesty's neighbours, to whom indeed they are for the most part bound by solemn obligations. Her Majesty's Government have every intention of maintaining those relations and of honouring those obligations. If in so doing they grieve another valued friend, that is a matter for great regret, but it cannot be a reason for inaction. What would the friendship of Great Britain be worth if she abandoned the weaker of her friends for the sake of the stronger? We shall stand up for what we believe to be right. Your Majesty will undoubtedly do the same, and neither of us shall think the worse of the other for it. If neither of us can convince the other, is it beyond the power of statesmanship to find the means of reconciling our view, with justice and honour?"<sup>123</sup>

It must be pointed out that the overall connotation of the British government message to Ibn Saud and his government was rather ambiguous. The messages did not give a clue as to what the British government intended to do next, apart from the arguable

terms of freedom of action and honouring of obligations to the protectorates, the messages left a set of unanswered questions. Another matter that was questionable was the method of the delivery of these important messages. The British Ambassador delivered these messages to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jeddah without any comment or explanation, as if the British government wanted the Saudi government to react to them as they were.<sup>124</sup> Nevertheless, what Ibn Saud and his government clearly knew from the note is that, the London and Standstill Agreements were completely abandoned from the British side, and the British authority now was free to do whatever it wished in the disputed area. Even worse, the British government was putting pressure on Saudi Arabia to accept the impartial arbitration proposal, or indeed issuing a dictate to the Saudi government. Moreover, from Churchill's message they knew that the British government was determined to protect the right of its Trucial Coast protectorates even if that would "grieve" Saudi Arabia.

It is true that in the messages there was no mention of force and indeed no hint of threat to the Saudi post in Hamasa, but at the same time there were no indications to the contrary. According to information already known to the Saudi government there had been a troop build-up in the Trucial Coast since the beginning of the year.<sup>125</sup> Hence, the cancellation of the previous agreements at this particular time was intentionally done to allow Britain and her satellites to march their forces into Hamasa. In short, every possibility was explicable and the crisis was reaching a frightening point.

When these messages reached Riyadh, someone might possibly have enquired, what should Saudi Arabia do? Or indeed what are the available alternatives for Saudi Arabia to take? Should it simply agree to the arbitration offer, and let the British government obtain what it wishes from a strong position? Or should it adopt a very tough policy? This would include:

1. Request for immediate help from the USA with a full demand for the implementation of Truman's assurance of 31 October 1950.
2. Reinforce the propaganda campaign against the British government's imperialism.
3. Reinforce Ibn Utaishan's position with additional forces.

4. Protest at the way that the British government had cancelled the agreements partially (from one side).
5. Take the whole issue to the UN with a strong complaint.

A look at Saudi Arabia's position, particularly on the same day when the messages arrived, would help in answering these speculations. Moreover, a close look at Ibn Saud's way of thinking in such a case would also be useful.

The obvious fact is that the British government's messages had reached Ibn Saud at the worst time he could have wanted to hear such news. The option of requesting help from the US government was remote at that particular time, at least in Ibn Saud's view. Though Saudi-US relations were gaining in strength, the Saudi government could not convince the US government to support its case in regard to the frontier issue. During Faisal's stay in the USA from 19 November 1952 to 6 April 1953, he tried in various conversations to encourage the State Department to aid the Saudi government proposal of a plebiscite; however the State department was convinced that the best procedure to employ was arbitration.<sup>126</sup> Moreover, when the Eisenhower administration (Republican replacing Democrat) took office in January 1953, Faisal requested the reaffirmation of Truman's assurance of 31 October 1950, yet - by 2 April - the Saudi government was still waiting for a reply.<sup>127</sup> Thus, it seems that Ibn Saud was far from the USA option during that specific time. Indeed he did not bother about asking Faisal to talk to the State Department about the new development, though Faisal was still in the US; also the King did not request an immediate meeting with the US Ambassador.<sup>128</sup>

The other courses of action within the 'tough policy' seemed to be discouraging. Indeed, the use of propaganda was a failure so far, particularly when it did not achieve its main objective in stopping the British government from building up its military capability in the area. Beside, the messages that Ibn Saud and his government had just received proved that such a propaganda campaign was not effective in stopping the British government in its intentions. More relevantly, the propaganda campaign had just shown a negative result, thus if Ibn Saud simply agreed about the arbitration now, it would be universally known that he had been forced to agree, and it would be even worse, if Ibn Utaishan was forced out of Hamasa.

Sending forces to Hamasa may indeed have brought about further negative results. No matter how many soldiers Ibn Saud sent to that tiny village the British forces could still get them out easily. As a warrior himself Ibn Saud had never underestimated British power, particularly when in this case acknowledgement was coming from the head of the British government. Indeed, Ibn Saud wrote to Churchill at a later stage stating "I am not ignorant of the strength of Great Britain which makes her capable to dictate her wishes".<sup>129</sup>

The remaining two courses of action seemed to be weak if they were implemented without the others. Hence protest to the British government usually did not bring a positive result. In fact all the Saudi government's previous protests were either denounced or neglected. Appealing to the UN seemed to be a weak option if it was implemented alone although it might irritate the British government and force it to take speedy action over the Hamasa case.<sup>130</sup>

The other alternative, of agreeing to the arbitration offer, would be the last recourse for Ibn Saud to take. But still, Ibn Saud would not let himself be defeated publicly simply because the British government was in a position of strength. Honour to Ibn Saud was a very important issue and he would do his best in order to protect it. Indeed, Ibn Saud had stated on various occasions, that even he would fight in a war that he was going to lose if the matter came to his honour.<sup>131</sup> Beside, a quick Saudi agreement to the arbitration - under these circumstances - might weaken the concept of Saudi Arabian strength in the eyes of the international community, a matter which would impact upon the image that maintained the Kingdom's security.

The action that Ibn Saud adopted was clear from his forthcoming reply. He chose to adopt a very tactful reply based on the messages he received; a reply that could help his state avoid a humiliating response; a reply that would allow him to contain the risky situation within diplomatic boundaries and correspondence; a reply that would not force him to weakly agree to arbitration immediately; a reply that might bring an honourable result from his point of view. Accordingly, Ibn Saud was seriously reviewing his government policies in this crisis. In fact the King gave immediate instructions to his government to stop the whole publicity campaign at once.<sup>132</sup>

Tactfully, the Saudi government reply to the British government note of 2 April had been temporarily neglected perhaps for the following three reasons.<sup>133</sup> First, the King might have reserved the entire case to be dealt by himself and the British Prime Minister at this stage, especially when Ibn Saud was aiming to contain any British aggression through correspondence and diplomacy.<sup>134</sup> Second, while the note contained the new offer for arbitration, Churchill's message to Ibn Saud did not mention the arbitration. Thus, a specific reply from Ibn Saud to Churchill's message would make it possible for the king to avoid replying about the arbitration offer at this critical stage without losing the ability to deter any possible British attack on Hamasa. Finally, Churchill's letter was a more comfortable route of honour for Ibn Saud to take, particularly when its opening contained clear references to the friendship of the old days, a matter which Ibn Saud was trying to persuade the British government to consider when dealing with Saudi Arabia in regard to the dispute.

Unlike Ibn Saud's message to Eden on 19 September 1952, Ibn Saud's reply to Churchill on 4 April 1953 was well thought out, even though the circumstances at the time of sending the latter were even worse than when the former was sent.<sup>135</sup> Ibn Saud's reply to Churchill contained no words of objection, no complaints, and no mention of threat. More surprising, there was not even a proposal for a solution; in fact Ibn Saud provided Churchill with a kind of limited 'power of attorney' to put a proposal forward. Emphasis on the old friendship and the need for its continuity were the major details in the message, despite the fact that Ibn Saud may have felt that April 1953 was the lowest that his relations with Britain had ever reached.<sup>136</sup> Ibn Saud's reply on 4 April, read:

"I have received your friendly message to which I have given my full attention. The fine expressions which it contains have reminded me of that dear friendship on both sides on which, for tens of years, the policies of our two countries have centred in the service of peace and humanity, and in those hard times when we stood together side by side and during which you called us the friends of the dark nights. All this makes me do everything possible for the maintenance and continuation of this friendship. The Buraimi question, in which I believe we have the right and in which Your Excellency sees otherwise, should not be a reason for the collapse and destruction of this deep-

rooted friendship . . . [in your] message the following is stated “if neither of us can convince the other, is it difficult for political wisdom to find means to bring together view and understanding on basis of justice and honour”. This desire finds in me a strong echo. Therefore I request Your Excellency to point out to us ways and means leading to that, so that we may all follow them to reach our desired goal in a way which maintains justice and preserves honour”.<sup>137</sup>

For military purposes the operation to blockade Hamasa was concealed until it became a fact during the second week of April 1953.<sup>138</sup> Following the creation of a military ring around Hamasa a strict blockade was established. Further, military posts were established in most of the disputed area including Liwa Oasis. Meanwhile, permission was given to the Petroleum Concessions to explore oil in all the disputed area up to the Ryan line.<sup>139</sup>

#### **E. The Aftermath of the Blockade and the ‘Crisis Diplomacy’**

The days and months after the British Blockade of Hamasa could be categorised as the hardest time for Saudi-British relations. The long and hard negotiations that the shrewd British Ambassador carried out in Riyadh and the several correspondences between Churchill and Ibn Saud were most unpleasant for the ageing King.<sup>140</sup>

Ibn Saud’s message - of 4 April 1953 - was viewed in London as “encouraging”.<sup>141</sup> On 8 April, the Foreign Office instructed the British Ambassador at Jeddah to work “directly on the King” in order to get his agreement on a solution by arbitration. Moreover, Pelham was instructed to deliver at once a brief reply from Churchill to Ibn Saud.<sup>142</sup> To the King’s request that the Prime Minister should propose a just and honourable solution, Churchill replied in his message of 8 April that Pelham, who had his “full confidence”, would soon come to Riyadh to explain what Churchill “has in mind”.<sup>143</sup>

On 10 April, Ibn Saud received disturbing news from Buraimi, coincidentally on the same day that Churchill’s reply reached him.<sup>144</sup> Immediately on the same day, Ibn Saud wrote to Churchill that he had just learned that the British forces were

blockading Hamasa from every side and denying entry for “motor vehicles carrying food” to Ibn Utaishan and his people.<sup>145</sup> It was stated that the king “did not expect this to be done at a moment when . . . [Churchill] had sent him a message, and suggested that Her Majesty’s Ambassador should go to see [him in Riyadh] . . . in order to discuss ways of settling the problem”.<sup>146</sup> On the same day (10 April 1953), Ibn Saud wrote an additional message to Churchill, a matter, which demonstrate that the King’s anxiety about the blockade had resulted in a panic situation.<sup>147</sup> In the second message, Ibn Saud inquired if Churchill:

“was aware of all the actions of British officials in the Persian Gulf, especially after the recent exchange of communications with him. If . . . not . . . [then Ibn Saud] expected him to stop their aggressive and provocative activities in order to re-establish mutual trust and the old friendship between the two countries. If . . . [Churchill] is aware of what has happened and wants these aggressive activities to continue, then . . . [Ibn Saud] . . . believes that the atmosphere for . . . [the] meeting [with the British Ambassador] would not be suitable. Even so, he would be ready to receive Mr. Pelham”.<sup>148</sup>

On 15 April, The British Prime Minister replied with what King Ibn Saud presumably did not want to hear. Indeed, Churchill confirmed that the British government over which he himself “presides ordered certain action in conformity with the decision which was conveyed to the Saudi Arabian Government . . . on April 2nd”.<sup>149</sup> Nonetheless, Churchill remarked that he and the British government “still hope for the friendliest relations between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia and for a just solution of all problems arising between them”.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, Churchill submitted that the Ambassador’s meeting with the King “would still be in the best interests of the two countries and would prevent further misunderstandings arising”.<sup>151</sup>

At an audience with King Ibn Saud in Riyadh on 19 April, the British Ambassador emphasised “the complete impartiality of arbitration and . . . [explained] how it was the only method of settlement consonant with justice and honour”.<sup>152</sup> Pelham illustrated to Ibn Saud that both parties would be treated equally and the tribunal body should consider all the related factors including Saudi Arabia’s “historical claims and the wishes of the people concerned”.<sup>153</sup> Despite the fact that Ibn Saud attempted once more to direct the conversation to the new situation created after 2 April, Pelham

“refused to be drawn” to this. But he explained briefly that the British government’s latest action was taken because the “deterioration of the situation left us with no alternative”.<sup>154</sup> According to Pelham, “It was soon evident that to . . . [Ibn Saud] the main problem was not so much a matter of procedure as the maintenance of what he conceived to be his honour and his reputation”.<sup>155</sup> Hence when the conversation returned to arbitration with a convincing argument by Pelham that such procedure would end both states differences whilst maintaining honour and justice, Ibn Saud seemed to concur. In fact, the King “responded with an agreement to accept the decision of a number of impartial arbitrators provided it was done with agreement between . . . [Saudi Arabia and the UK] and it did not impugn his honour”.<sup>156</sup>

Later on in the same day, Ambassador Pelham held a second audience with King Ibn Saud, during which the atmosphere of the conversations was tense. Pelham described the audience as being a:

“tortuous and exhausting course. Scarcely a sentence of mine was permitted to pass without at least one and often several interruptions. The King was insistent and repetitive to a degree that seriously impeded any orderly discussion. I was forced to be equally insistent”.<sup>157</sup>

At the opening of the conversation, Pelham assured Ibn Saud that “there was no thought on the part of . . . Her Majesty’s Government . . . of aggression against Saudi Arabia”.<sup>158</sup> The King who was already annoyed about an incident at Sa’ara village Mosque, said what happened in Sa’ara was an aggression.<sup>159</sup> During the course of the conversation, Ibn Saud clearly reiterated his view that he could not imagine that such a situation would ever exist between his Kingdom and Britain, relating that to his honour and religion. Pelham recorded Ibn Saud remarks:

“He could have dreamed of nothing which could have induced him to go to war with Britain, but he would expend every last man in Najd and himself as well rather than allow any blemish upon his honour. Striking his chest and pointing his finger at me he said several times in the most emphatic manner: ‘My honour and my religion, my honour and my religion’”.<sup>160</sup>

Later in that audience, Pelham “had attempted to impress upon” Ibn Saud a three-stage solution, during which Saudi Arabia would first declare its “readiness to be

bound by the decision of impartial adjudication. Thereafter the arbitrators could be agreed upon and then the term of reference".<sup>161</sup> Ibn Saud was "very interested in finding a practical solution . . . and he seemed to think this lay in the agreed appointment of impartial arbitration".<sup>162</sup>

From the first two meetings on 19 April, it became obvious that Ibn Saud was already agreeing about the appointment of an impartial arbitration body conditional upon it being created by both governments accord and that it would not slur his honour. In view of that, Pelham was optimistic and was planning to press on further, on the following day, to obtain a formal declaration of Saudi Arabia's full acceptance of the principle of arbitration.<sup>163</sup>

Whatever the case might be, it should be realised that Ibn Saud's swift agreement on arbitration - to Pelham - was the reverse of what the King had decided upon when he replied to Churchill on 4 April 1953. As previously illustrated, King Ibn Saud had reached a decision by 4 April, to alter his policy with Britain - over Buraimi - from confrontation to compromise. However, Ibn Saud at that juncture was not willing to agree to the arbitration proposal, because such an agreement then was contrary to honour and the image of his Kingdom's security shield. Pelham's justifications on 19 April, for arbitration as the best practical technique of settlement consistent with justice and honour, may have positively influenced Ibn Saud. But still, Pelham's presentation was not the only factor that caused Ibn Saud to mull over impartial arbitration. It could be argued that the new factor that instigated Ibn Saud to consider the arbitration was the news of the Buraimi blockade on 10 April. Indeed, Ibn Saud did shift his policy on 4 April, on the basis of the possibility that the British might commence hostilities over Hamasa. Now he knew as a fact, that Hamasa was surrounded by troops on every side. Hence an armed offensive on Hamasa was closer than ever before, despite Pelham's assurance. Thus, if such an attack occurred the concepts of honour - and security - would be totally destroyed. Ibn Saud, who was well informed about the strength of the British forces, knew that his few men in Hamasa were defenceless. Thus, he might have believed that if Pelham left Riyadh without a result the worse would be inevitable. If Hamasa were invaded at that particular time, the King would have only two alternatives. Either to wage unequal - and irrational - war against Britain in the same style that he explained to Pelham on 19

April, or to survive with the humiliation of a defeat, that could bring internal and external intimidation to his own throne. Definitely, both alternatives were far worse than if he agreed with Pelham on the principle of arbitration.

Nevertheless, on the same evening (of 19 April) the Saudi Deputy Foreign Minister, Yusuf Yassin, called upon Pelham. During the conversation Yassin argued that what the King had said was no more than his idea of a plebiscite. In his turn Pelham completely refused to accept Yassin's argument. During the course of the talk Pelham realised that Yassin was aiming to restore the *status quo* of 26 October 1952, before further discussions. In fact Yassin in some form "threatened the breaking off" of the dialogues unless the British government withdrew its forces.<sup>164</sup>

Does Yassin's conversation with Pelham mean that the former did not know what he was talking about? Or does it mean that the king had changed his opinion dramatically within hours? The development of the discussions that were to follow answer those two questions negatively. In fact, the discussions reveal that Yassin enjoyed King Ibn Saud's confidence and was trying to maximise gains before Saudi Arabia disclosed agreement to the arbitration.<sup>165</sup> Yassin must have convinced the King that they should not put Pelham in the full picture about their intention of agreeing on arbitration until when they had at least obtained essential concessions. Yassin may have supported this, when explaining to the King, with Pelham's assurance as clear indication that no harm would be done at least as the negotiations continued. As the following discussions confirmed, Yassin was permitted to complete the discussions with Pelham, with the implementation of his idea, but perhaps with one clear condition - made by Ibn Saud - that whatever happened, that Pelham should not leave Riyadh without anything to stop a British strike on Hamasa. Yassin's idea was the same as his proposal to Pelham, namely the need for the restoration of the pre-2 April *status quo* before the Saudi government could grant their agreement on arbitration. As Pelham observed and recorded the King's willingness on agreement to arbitration on 19 April, the only way out of that, perhaps in Yassin's point of view, was to send a letter from Ibn Saud to Churchill. This letter would be a reply to his letter and give information on the Riyadh discussions during which two matters would be solved: First the reversing of Ibn Saud remarks to Pelham on the arbitration (on 19 April); Second a clear statement requesting Churchill for the restoration of the situation before 2 April.

Indeed, on the same night Yassin had made his diplomatic coup. Thus, by the morning of 20 April 1953, a message from Ibn Saud was on its way to Churchill. In the message which was transmitted through the Saudi Embassy in London on 20 April 1953, it was stated that:

“I expressed to Her Majesty’s Ambassador my willingness to discuss with him the possibilities of finding a middle course which would combine the British Government’s suggestion for arbitration and mine for plebiscite. Would it not be possible for my old friend [Churchill] to re-examine the present situation and help to restore it to what it was when the agreement [was] reached in London in August 1951 and that of Riyadh [in] . . . October 1952. It would not be possible for an international body to act freely if . . . [the] situation remains as it is at the present”.<sup>166</sup>

During a meeting on the morning of 20 April, Yassin handed Pelham a copy of Ibn Saud’s message to Churchill and explained that the message “expressed the essence of the King’s words of the previous day”.<sup>167</sup> Pelham diplomatically did not allude to the differences between what the King had said and the text of the message. However, he “refused to accept this inconclusive statement as the answer to . . . [his] representations and insisted on [an] unequivocal note stating that the Saudis . . . [accepted] the principle of arbitration”.<sup>168</sup> When Yassin enquired if the British government would restore the *status quo* in the disputed area to what it was before 2 April, Pelham “insisted that the object of . . . [his] mission was to discover whether the King would declare the principle of arbitration. Everything else was irrelevant”.<sup>169</sup>

On the same evening another meeting with Yassin - or what Pelham called “battle”- was taking place during which the Ambassador had adopted a “stiff tone”.<sup>170</sup> The discussion started by covering the same points that were discussed previously without any constructive outcome from either side. When the atmosphere of the meeting was almost like a “fierce interview”, Yassin said, “The Saudi Arabian Government could not negotiate under the threat of bayonets”.<sup>171</sup> Furthermore, Yassin “introduced the subjects of . . . British delinquencies, starvation, military threats, killing and occupation by force of Saudi Arabia”.<sup>172</sup> At this junction, Pelham restated the former assurance that the British government “had no hostile intention” and declined to

converse on these subjects.<sup>173</sup> Moreover, Pelham stated that the essential issue at this instant was a declaration by all parties on their “willingness to settle the dispute by impartial arbitration and that Her Majesty’s Government could not now consider anything before this principles had been agreed upon”.<sup>174</sup> Ultimately, Yassin stated, “the Saudi Arabian Government had no objection to the principle of impartial arbitration”. Nevertheless, Yassin refused to put anything in writing and insisted that the British government should first answer Ibn Saud’s request on the restoration of the *status quo* prior to 2 April, before any further negotiations - in Riyadh - could take place.<sup>175</sup>

While in Riyadh, Pelham cabled the Foreign Office, with an update of the discussions.<sup>176</sup> After mentioning that the Saudi government had temporarily suspended the discussions pending a satisfactory reply on Ibn Saud’s question regarding the *status quo*, Pelham stated that he could still move the Saudis on this. Furthermore, Pelham advised his government to reply to Ibn Saud that without written acceptance of the principle of impartial arbitration and without agreement on the members of the tribunal and the terms of reference, there would be no discussion about any modification of the *statue quo*. In the conclusion of his telegram Pelham stated the “The general impression is that our position is strong and the Saudis [are] ready to agree to some form of neutral settlement”.<sup>177</sup>

While the Foreign Office was considering a reply on even better terms than Pelham had suggested, a surprising telegram arrived from Riyadh stating that “On 22 April the Saudi Arabian Government fully accepted the principle of arbitration”.<sup>178</sup> Apparently, the Saudis had modified their position even without getting the reply. Accompanying the acceptance the Saudi government submitted a draft of a joint public statement.<sup>179</sup> The details of the Saudi government draft included several issues that needed to be discussed. One of the draft items was a reference to the restoration of the *status quo* pre-2 April.<sup>180</sup> It seems that, there were two reasons that made the Saudis act swiftly even before getting a reply. First, by submitting their acceptance with a draft stating their wish for the restoration of the *status quo* they kept the initiative successfully in their hands for further discussions and without perhaps getting obligations on that from the British government. But most important, the Saudi government was very concerned about the British forces’ activities in Buraimi,

thus there was an immediate need for action in Riyadh in order to insure that no harm would be done in Buraimi. Indeed, in the same telegram from Riyadh to the Foreign office, Pelham wrote, "The Saudis showed anxiety about the situation of the dispute areas . . . it may be possible to avoid actions which might be construed as incidents".<sup>181</sup>

Pelham and Yassin then concentrated their discussions on the draft of the joint statement, but could not reach a mutually satisfactory result. When Pelham left Riyadh on 24 April, it was agreed that further negotiations regarding the draft, the creation of the arbitration body, and the terms of reference would be commenced soon.<sup>182</sup>

Subsequent to the conclusion of his mission to Riyadh, Pelham wrote to the Foreign office that, "the King . . . [said] that our friendship was most precious and I believe Yusuf Yasin [Yassin] knows that he has been defeated. He is in a more malleable frame of mind than I have ever known him before".<sup>183</sup> Commenting on his position during the discussion Pelham, wrote "I felt all the advantage of British prestige and power just as I had noticed the lack of it when I was negotiating the Standstill Agreement last October".<sup>184</sup> Indeed, the reality of the Saudis concerns over the Kingdom's security had made them do what might have been considered as impossible.

It must be noted that Ibn Saud's assumption about the possibility of a British offensive on Hamasa if Pelham left Riyadh without any constructive result, was a very wise point to be considered. Despite the fact that the British government did not rule out a clear decision whether to invade Hamasa or not at that stage, the possibility of such an issue was still not entirely dead until the Riyadh talks started to show a positive result for London. Indeed, on 23 April, it was noted in the Foreign Office that; "the use of forces" against the Saudis in Hamasa is not now a consideration, "at least so long as we are talking reasonably in Riyadh".<sup>185</sup> Moreover, following the Riyadh discussions Pelham wrote in one of his despatches to the Foreign Office that, "I assume we do not now consider the use of force".<sup>186</sup>

Following the Saudi government's acceptance of the arbitration, it was in a better position to request US government support, especially when Saudi Arabia accepted the principle of arbitration, a matter which was recommended by the USA.<sup>187</sup> On 1 May, the State Department approached the Foreign Office, through the British Embassy in Washington, about the Saudi government concerns.<sup>188</sup> The State Department suggested that the British government should consider giving Saudi Arabia a concession by the meaning of restoring the *status quo* of 26 October 1952 when the arbitrators commenced their work. Moreover, the State Department recommended that the arbitration be made easier for Saudi Arabia by introducing the wishes of the disputed area's population in the term of reference.<sup>189</sup> Nonetheless, the Foreign Office reacted negatively to the State Department suggestions. Despite the fact that the State Department's efforts did not get a fruitful outcome, the attempt was still viewed with some appreciation in Riyadh, particularly when this attempt was the first of its kind since the new US administration took office at the beginning of the year. Hence, this attempt had made the Saudi government become more optimistic about further US support.<sup>190</sup>

On 7 May, Pelham arrived in Riyadh in order to follow-up the April discussions. On his arrival the Ambassador handed the King a message from the British Prime Minister.<sup>191</sup> Churchill expressed his gratitude to Ibn Saud for his decision upon the acceptance of the arbitration then stated that, "While arbitration is taking place it shall be a matter of honour between us that no advantages are to be taken by either side in the military position".<sup>192</sup> Concerning Ibn Utaishan and his men, Churchill assured Ibn Saud that they would be allowed to supply themselves from the local markets "while arbitration is being settled".<sup>193</sup>

Pelham observed the King's reaction, after the message was read to him: "He listened in silence, but the effect was somewhat disappointing, for he made no other reply than "we would agree upon the essentials of what we would discuss".<sup>194</sup> The King was probably anticipating a British concession in regard to the military positions in Buraimi, particularly when Saudi Arabia had agreed to the arbitration. The King in "several long speeches" during this audience illustrated his general dissatisfaction about the British government attitude towards him. In addition, he emphasised his

goodwill towards Britain and how he felt let down.<sup>195</sup> Pelham summarised these speeches as follow:

“He would never have imagined that a difference could have arisen between himself and Her Majesty Government . . . He regarded Britain as he regarded his family . . . He had been embarrassed by requests from . . . [his subjects] and even from foreigners to know what they might do to help His Majesty in this dispute. He had constantly maintained that there was no dispute between our Governments, merely a local difference of opinion. He had done all he could to minimise the matter and avoid publicity . . . All he wanted was to achieve a final settlement with justices and honour on both sides. He asked for nothing but that each side should have its rights. These he seemed to consider were laid down in various treaties and agreements”.<sup>196</sup>

Following the audience, Pelham discussed the details with Yusuf Yassin and Khalid Al-Qarqani. For Pelham these discussions were not as calm as the previous month's discussions. Thus, by 11 May, the talks reached a deadlock on most matters regarding the details of the preparation for the arbitration. However, the only matter that they agreed upon was a British government redrafting of the Saudi's proposed public statement. Still the Saudi agreement to the issuance of the statement was subject to it including a clear reference to the restoration of the *status quo* of 26 October 1952.<sup>197</sup>

On 11 May, Pelham had a second audience with Ibn Saud. During this meeting the King repeated - but with further explanations - what he told Pelham on 7 May. According to Pelham, the main points were “categorical assertion that the land was his and the people were his people. He was blameless but the British had neglected their agreements and encroached upon his land”.<sup>198</sup> It must be pointed out that Pelham had misunderstood Ibn Saud's reference to the agreements. Hence Pelham interpreted it as if Ibn Saud was referring to all the treaties, with particular emphasis on the Jeddah treaty of 1927.<sup>199</sup> But, if the timing of such criticism was taken into consideration, it could be assumed that Ibn Saud was referring to the British government termination of the Standstill and London agreements. If this were examined with Ibn Saud's disregard of Pelham's assurance on 19 April, as well as to Churchill's message on 7 May, it could be understood that Ibn Saud no longer trusted the British government, particularly when the King experienced Britain's simple

cancellation on 2 April 1953 of written contracts, compared to an aural assurance or a promise in a message. Moreover, Ibn Saud's comments, in his letter to Churchill on 20 April 1953, about his own respect for the agreements that he had entered, would clearly reveal that the King was in fact questioning his trust of Britain explicitly. In that letter Ibn Saud wrote that "All those who followed my personal history from the beginning know that I honour [honour] the agreements I enter to most faithfully. I have never abrogated an agreement and never breached a promise".<sup>200</sup>

During the same meeting Ibn Saud summed up Saudi Arabia's stance in regard to the dispute. The king explained that he wished "for a speedy settlement of the whole problem by arbitration and . . . would gladly accept the arbitrators' decision based on historical facts and the loyalties of the people, whatever that decision might be".<sup>201</sup> However, before he "could proceed further with arbitration Her Majesty's Government must accede to his request to withdraw their troops and raise the blockade".<sup>202</sup> At this stage Pelham emphasised to Churchill the "desire and need to deal . . . with His Majesty on the basis of honour".<sup>203</sup> King Ibn Saud commented that, "it is right that if we are to have an impartial neutral settlement neither side should have any advantage. It was intolerable that the British should be blockading . . . [my] men".<sup>204</sup> Moreover, the King added that, if Churchill:

"has made it a matter of honour. Very well. I will solemnly give my word of honour and swear upon all that is holy that on my side of the agreement I will not send any more men to the disputed areas. Let Sir Winston Churchill withdraw his forces, raise the blockade and similarly give his word of honour. Then and only then can arbitration proceed".<sup>205</sup>

In contrast to the April 1953 discussion, Pelham could not get similar advantages during the May discussions. The reasons for this were that the topics of the discussions and the circumstances for the Saudi government were not the same as in April. Indeed, the pressure from the possibility of a British attack on Hamasa was weaker in May than in April, particularly as the Saudi government had agreed on arbitration, which was a principal demand for the British government, compared to the discussions of the details of the preparation of the arbitration body. Hence, the Saudis were more relaxed during May discussions in these respects. Moreover, contrasting with the situation in April the Saudis were aware now that the US

government was willing to help them, as it had approached the British government in this regard on 1 May 1953.<sup>206</sup> Accordingly, the Saudis were hoping and waiting to push for further US support during the scheduled visit of the US Secretary of State, Mr John Foster Dulles, to Riyadh on 18 May 1953.<sup>207</sup>

Before leaving Riyadh Pelham was handed a letter of reply from Ibn Saud to Churchill.<sup>208</sup> The contents of the message, which was dated 11 May, were similar to what the King had told the British Ambassador on 11 May, in regard to Saudi Arabia's attitude to the dispute. But furthermore, Ibn Saud emphasised the need for an equality of existence between both parties in the disputed areas.<sup>209</sup> With a reference to Churchill's message of 7 May, Ibn Saud stated:

“The British Government has prejudiced the principles agreed upon [in the Standstill and London agreements] by securing for itself . . . military advantages in the disputed areas . . . We are confident that respect for the principle of equality . . . will be helpful in solving the dispute. Equality can be secured by continuing to carry out what was agreed upon in the standstill Agreement . . . and the London Conference . . . we are ready to exchange with Your Excellency honourable assurances that nothing shall be done by either side to prejudice this . . . if anything happens to prejudice this, the neutral and impartial body . . . shall have the power to see that those two Agreements are enforced”.<sup>210</sup>

At the end of his mission to Riyadh, Pelham recommended that his government provide the Saudi government with some concessions, in the Buraimi area only, in order to make the forthcoming discussions more successful for finalising the arbitration issue.<sup>211</sup> In particular, Pelham suggested that Churchill reply to Ibn Saudi to include “something on lines of one of the following alternatives”:

“(a) proposal to raise blockade on Turki and to make substantial troop withdrawals after Arbitral Agreement has been concluded and subject to suitable safeguards . . . (b) the terms of the Standstill Agreement . . . shall apply to Buraimi Oasis from the day of the appointment of the Arbitrators, . . . until conclusion of arbitration”.<sup>212</sup>

Pelham supported his recommendation convincingly. In regard to the possibility of a negative result on British prestige he stated that, “the possible ill-effect on our prestige as a result of giving concessions in relation to arbitration might be off-set by Saudi retreat from plebiscite and would, in any case, be obliterated by arbitral award”.<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, Pelham emphasised that, this “may not be too a high price for a friendly settlement of a long outstanding dispute with a country of growing influence and with whom steady worsening of relations may do us no good in the Middle East”.<sup>214</sup> Moreover, Pelham argued that by granting Saudi Arabia these “temporary concessions” we could attain a permanent solution of the entire dispute by arbitration. Pelham also added that, the “achievement of our object would greatly strengthen our position generally”.<sup>215</sup> The only two “possible objections” to this in which Pelham himself did not believe, would be, “(a) that we do not trust the Saudis (and do not care about our relations with them); (b) that our prestige in the Gulf might suffer”.<sup>216</sup>

In London the views were contrary to Pelham recommendations,<sup>217</sup> a matter that logically would mean that the British government did not trust the Saudi, as well as that it did not care about relations with Saudi Arabia. Following a recommendation from the Foreign office in taking a further hard line policy, Churchill wrote to Ibn Saud on 2 June.<sup>218</sup> The British Prime Minister agreed with the Saudi King on the significance of equality in the disputed areas, and stated:

“True equality will best be established if we both recall our forces. If Turki and his men leave, our forces also shall leave the disputed areas. Thereafter, until the future of the areas has been decided in the manner agreed, neither of us shall send forces . . . and it shall be a matter of honour between us that neither side shall seek any military or political advantage”.<sup>219</sup>

Moreover, The British Prime Minister proposed the abolition of the scheme for a neutral body. On this Churchill suggested, “We do not need any outside umpires to supervise this agreement, which shall be between friends. Will You Majesty agree to this?”.<sup>220</sup>

On 7 June, Pelham arrived in Riyadh for further talks with the Saudis on Churchill’s new proposal.<sup>221</sup> During his five days stay in Riyadh Pelham could not reach any

agreement with the Saudis.<sup>222</sup> Churchill's suggestion of the withdrawal of all forces was emphasised by Pelham repeatedly during all his discussions. Nevertheless, the Saudi government stood firmly that Ibn Utaishan would not be withdrawn under any circumstances, nor would Saudi Arabia proceed with arbitration unless the blockade was lifted. Moreover, if the blockade was lifted and the arbitration commenced its work then both sides must keep equal numbers of officials and forces in the area.<sup>223</sup> The Saudi government position on this was clearly illustrated in Ibn Saud's message to Churchill, a message that was written while Pelham was in the middle of his mission in Riyadh; hence the British diplomat was struggling to convince the Saudis in a matter that they had already decided upon after hearing about Churchill's unacceptable proposal.<sup>224</sup>

On 9 June, Ibn Saud's reply to Churchill was handed to Pelham.<sup>225</sup> Following the usual friendly comments, Ibn Saud stated that, "it never occurred to me that any problem between me and Britain would reach the proportions which the frontier dispute has reached".<sup>226</sup> Ibn Saud reminded Churchill that the promise of allowing Ibn Utaishan to "be supplied from the local market" was not being honoured. In regard to Churchill's proposal for the withdrawal of all forces, Ibn Saud insisted that it would not bring about equality; in his view, it created inequality:

"for we are asked to withdraw Turki and the few men with him to al-Hasa, a distance over seven hundred kilometres from Buraimi, while the British forces will withdraw to . . . undetermined distances probably not more than fifty kilometres. We have no guarantee that the other forces will not return for reasons which they might create in the name of security . . . Moreover, security will . . . be unbalanced . . . [thus we] will not be in a position to fulfil our obligations to protect our subjects; whereas the other forces will be nearby".<sup>227</sup>

With respect to Churchill's suggestion on abolishing the neutral body Ibn Saud explained that:

"it was implied in the standstill agreement . . . that the honour of both sides was bound up with the implementation of its provisions, yet this agreement was abolished unilaterally on the part of Britain on the basis of a judgment issued by Britain herself to herself; and there was no third party to say who the

wrongdoer was. So how can we repeat the situation without setting up over us an arbitrator who will ensure that neither party delivers judgment independently against the other?"<sup>228</sup>

After stating that he is "extremely anxious" to end this dispute, Ibn Saud put forward a proposal that included the following line:<sup>229</sup>

1. The removal of the blockade on Ibn Utaishan.
2. Upon the commencement of the arbitral operations both sides "undertake to have equal number of officials" and all the extra forces would be withdrawn.
3. All sides will refrain from any kind provocation and the neutral body will be authorised to oversee that.

Ibn Saud's counter proposal of 9 June was completely rejected by the British government. Ibn Saud's proposal was viewed in London as "unacceptable" as it allowed Ibn Utaishan to remain in Buraimi while it limited the British government's actions in the disputed areas.<sup>230</sup> Moreover, the British government believed that if Ibn Saud's proposals were implemented, it would be interpreted locally in the Trucial Coast as a major retreat from its actions on 2 April 1953.<sup>231</sup> Thus, the British government was not willing to put forward any new proposals apart from what had already been offered to the Saudis. Furthermore, a formal reply from Churchill to Ibn Saud was delayed temporarily, a matter that brought about a temporary deadlock on the whole issue.<sup>232</sup>

Toward the end of June 1953, the British government was reconsidering its general policy towards the dispute. All possibilities were under consideration and investigations within the British government departments, including studies of the advantages to the continuation of the deadlock and the possibility of removing Ibn Utaishan by force.<sup>233</sup>

Meanwhile, as a result of further British tightening of the Buraimi Blockade the situation deteriorated. On 20 June 1953, the Saudi government protested against the detention and torture of 35 locals who were on their way to visit Ibn Utaishan.<sup>234</sup> Moreover, on 23 June, the Saudi government protested against a further act. Fire was

exchanged between fifteen local tribesmen who were on their way to Hamasa and one of the British force posts nearby. According to the Saudi government story those tribesmen were forced to retaliate in order to defend themselves. The incident resulted in "a few casualties and also some deaths".<sup>235</sup>

#### **F. The Scope of Saudi-US Relations, and its Association with the Development of the Frontier Dispute**

By the end of 1952 it became apparent that the USA was the predominant foreign influence in Saudi Arabia. The British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia wrote in December 1952, that in the past "America was feeling her way to a position of paramountcy against those foreign nations taking an interest in Saudi Arabia: now in every field - military, economic and diplomatic - her influence is supreme".<sup>236</sup>

As a result of the developments of the unique and constructive relations between the USA and Saudi Arabia, the USA became naturally the sole foreign power that Ibn Saud could politically rely on. Indeed, the King's frequent requests for US government help - in almost all the political issues - had become a normal phenomenon by 1953. In fact the Saudi-American political association became even broader when the Saudi King became used to the counsel of the Americans on his Kingdom's affairs, a matter which used to be considered British business during the early 1940s. On this, Pelham commented that, "Ibn Saud has changed his solicitors and it is now to the American Embassy that he applies for general political advice or legal or economic aid. At the request of the King . . . Mr. Hare is frequently in Riyadh".<sup>237</sup>

As a consequence of the 1951 agreements, the USA military supremacy in Saudi Arabia had become more noticeable during 1952-53. The considerable American air base at Dhahran was expanding, American military equipment was arriving, and the AMM was functioning successfully. Moreover, the extent of the operations of the AMM had made the American military role - in the Kingdom - to be demonstrable, particularly when it embarked in a project that was designed to train, organise, and equip over 17,000 troops. Likewise, the same thing could be said about the preparation for a relatively ambitious program for the creation of a Saudi Air Force,

which was underway by 1953.<sup>238</sup> In addition to all of that, the Kingdom had been given special consideration in regard to military grant aid, when President Eisenhower found Saudi Arabia “eligible for military assistance under the Mutual Defence Assistance Act of 1951” on 14 March 1953.<sup>239</sup>

The arrival of further American technical advisers had further enhanced the work of Saudi-US technical cooperation. Dr Young, a principle member of the American Technical Cooperation Mission became the chief financial adviser to the Saudi Arabian government. The first step for the success of the mission was the creation of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency.<sup>240</sup> The predicted increment of US influence as a result of the work of the US advisers became a reality within a year of the establishment of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency. Indeed, the newly created state bank, which controlled the Saudi currency was headed by an American, Mr Dlowers, and advised by Young, a matter that tied the Saudi Riyal to the US dollar or indeed, made Saudi Arabia to be a part of the US dollar market.<sup>241</sup> Moreover, the Arabian American Oil Company - which was the main force in bringing US interests into Saudi Arabia - was also expanding in size with increased oil operations. This ultimately resulted in bringing in more US companies, not just as sub-contractors for Aramco, but also as participants in all the Saudi Arabian development projects.<sup>242</sup> The growing American involvement in the Saudi Arabian economy produced expectations of further involvement. Furthermore, the arrangement of the Saudi government constructional engineering and planning became an exclusively American affair. For instance, the American Company, Michael Baker Junior, held “exclusive right to specify plans, materials and standards for government construction schemes”.<sup>243</sup>

By the beginning of 1953, Pelham described the US supremacy in Saudi Arabia as incomparable to Britain’s position there. Moreover, Pelham stated that “the Americans are here as overwhelmingly the principal producers of wealth in the country . . . [they] have luxury, wealth and modernisation to offer”.<sup>244</sup> The British Ambassador’s comments go on: “America is putting in Advisers free of charge and American Enterprises is causing money to flow”.<sup>245</sup> Whereas Britain has “little to offer”.<sup>246</sup> Pelham observed that, in contrast with the USA, Britain’s “position . . . may now be near its nadir”.<sup>247</sup> Indeed, the impact of the enhancement of USA influence in Saudi Arabia was remarkable on Saudi-British relations, particularly when this is

judged alongside the deterioration of the situation over the frontier issue. On this, Mr R. Bowker, the Assistant Under-Secretary supervising Middle East affairs at the Foreign Office, minuted "The present state of Anglo-Saudi relations is unsatisfactory, affected as they are by rapidly growing American influence in Saudi-Arabia, and bedevilled . . . by the frontier dispute".<sup>248</sup>

Despite the fact that Saudi-American relations were growing at almost all levels - and despite the US government's previous efforts in trying to solve the Saudi-British dispute - the Saudi government was not that satisfied about the US attitude towards the Saudi-Anglo dispute in the first quarter of 1953. As was mentioned previously, the Saudi government's attempts to convince the US government to support the Saudi proposal of plebiscite before April 1953 were doomed to failure. Instead of considering the Saudi proposal the Americans had viewed the British proposal of arbitration as the best procedure for settlement. Though the US government had explained that it was not siding with the British but was merely convinced, according to its own independent study, that arbitration was the most equitable means of resolving the dispute, the Saudi government was still not totally satisfied about their attitude.<sup>249</sup> In fact, by the end of April 1953 the Saudi government started to lose its patience about the US government's delay in reaffirming the Truman assurance of October 1950.<sup>250</sup> Furthermore, the Saudi government even saw itself in a position to attribute its weak stand vis-à-vis the British government act of April to the absence of a supportive US attitude.<sup>251</sup> Nonetheless, the State Department's fruitless approach to the Foreign Office on 1 May was viewed optimistically in Riyadh; but the experience of the negotiations with the British government throughout the spring had made the Saudi government believe that without the full backing of the US government the frontier conflict would never be controlled.<sup>252</sup>

When the US Secretary for State, Mr John Foster Dulles, visited Riyadh on 18 May 1953, the Saudi government did not waste the opportunity to seek US backing for its case.<sup>253</sup> In the evening of his arrival in Riyadh Dulles met King Ibn Saud. During the audience King Ibn Saud stated that Saudi-US friendship had received a "heavy blow".<sup>254</sup> This was particularly so, as he personally was dissatisfied about the lack of US government support during his recent difficulties. The King remarked that; "his old friend the British government had turned against him because of his closer

friendship with the United States, to which he had awarded the oil concession. Now Britain had begun to chase Saudi subjects from their own country”.<sup>255</sup> Ibn Saud requested the US government’s assistance in this case, as well as the immediate reaffirmation of the Truman letter of October 1950.<sup>256</sup> Furthermore, disappointment and threats were evident during a talk between Yassin and Dulles. Yassin remarked to Dulles that unless the US government supported Saudi Arabia in the frontier dispute, there would be no option for the Saudi government but to reconsider its relations with the USA.<sup>257</sup> On his departure from Riyadh Dulles was handed a message from King Ibn Saudi to President Eisenhower. Ibn Saud’s letter emphasised the necessity of mutual cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the USA, and the need for the US government’s support for Saudi Arabia’s case in the frontier dispute.<sup>258</sup>

The outcome of Dulles visit was fruitful for the Saudi Arabian government. The US administration became concerned at correcting the notion, which King Ibn Saud and his officials appeared to have, that the USA had “let them down”.<sup>259</sup> On 15 June, Eisenhower replied to Ibn Saud reaffirming the assurances included in the Truman letter of October 1950. Furthermore, Eisenhower’s correspondence expressed concern at learning from Dulles that the King believed that the USA had not “adequately supported” him during recent difficulties. For this reason the President invited the King to correspond with him frankly and at anytime about any concern even if it would be against the USA itself.<sup>260</sup>

The US President’s letter was well received in Riyadh when the US Ambassador delivered it to the King on 27 June.<sup>261</sup> Eisenhower’s invitation for open dialogue between him and Ibn Saud resulted in numerous correspondences regarding the dispute between both heads of States until Ibn Saud’s death in November 1953.<sup>262</sup> Accordingly, the US government became closely involved in the development of the Saudi-British dispute, as the following pages will reveal.<sup>263</sup>

### **G. Further Difficulty in Buraimi and the US Intervention**

On 11 July 1953, the US government put forward a proposal to the British government as follows:

“(1) It should be agreed that arbitration should take place with the Saudi and British forces remaining in the area on the understanding that the blockade would be lifted and that the Saudis would engage in no further suborning activities. (2) An Observation Commission consisting of one Saudi, one British and one neutral representative should be set up immediately to proceed to the area and ensure that these conditions are carried out . . . (3) At the same time, the British and Saudi Governments should make a public announcement of their agreement to submit the frontier dispute to arbitration”.<sup>264</sup>

In London the American proposal was considered “misconceived” and unfair for British “prestige” in the Gulf.<sup>265</sup> In a despatch from the Foreign office, to the Acting British Secretary of State, Lord Robert Salisbury - who was about to hold talks with the Americans in Washington - an update of the British government position was expounded. Salisbury was requested to reject the proposal and to explain to the Americans that Ibn Utaishan’s presence in Buraimi was the “crux” of the issue. Salisbury was requested to emphasize that, “Turki’s move there was in the first place outrageous”.<sup>266</sup> The explanation to Salisbury goes on, that since Turki’s arrival:

“he has done endless harm to our friends, the effects of which cannot easily be eradicated. If he is allowed to stay on, even supervised by a commission, the local tribes will interpret it as recognition of Saudi claims and a capitulation by us to the Saudis . . . [Hence the local tribes] answers to any questions put to them by the representatives of the arbitral tribunal will be coloured by this fact”.<sup>267</sup>

The proposed neutral commission, in the British government point of view, would not control Ibn Utaishan’s “highly organised” activities. Furthermore, Turki’s “personal contacts with tribal leaders will be renewed by the lifting of the blockade”.<sup>268</sup> Therefore, the US government’s proposal would not be acceptable to the British government. In reply, Salisbury was asked to suggest to Eisenhower that he consider proposing the idea of complete mutual withdrawal to Ibn Saud. The British government “are not convinced that Ibn Saud will refuse to move Turki”.<sup>269</sup>

In a meeting with Dulles in Washington on the morning of 14 July 1953, Salisbury argued the British government case and explained accordingly the basis for its

rejection of the US government proposal.<sup>270</sup> Dulles remarked that the US government was “convinced that Ibn Saud would not accept proposal involving the withdrawal of Turki”.<sup>271</sup> Furthermore, Dulles’ illustrated to Salisbury that, “The continuance of the dispute was having unfortunate effect on the relations of the United States Government with Ibn Saud who considered that . . . [the American] were under an obligation to defend his interest and that they had hitherto failed to do so”.<sup>272</sup> Dulles explanation continued that, “it was . . . important from the American point of view to terminate the present deadlock. They had major interests in Saudi Arabia . . . They therefore appealed to us [the British] to reconsider their proposals”.<sup>273</sup> Salisbury remarked to Dulles that British interests and prestige in the Gulf was also “deeply involved”. Nonetheless, his colleagues in the British government would look at the American proposal again when he returned to London.<sup>274</sup>

At lunch on the same day Eisenhower raised the question with Salisbury.<sup>275</sup> Without going into details, but with rather frank criticism, the President remarked that he felt that:

“the possible tranquillization of the Middle East was prevented by the continuation of Great Britain’s disputes with Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. It was essential in his view to bring these disputes to an end so that the area might calm down and become an effective part of the free world”.<sup>276</sup>

Subsequent to meetings of the Foreign Office and the British Cabinet, Salisbury wrote back to Dulles on 27 July.<sup>277</sup> Though it was realised in London that a rejection of the American proposal “would place a considerable strain on Anglo-American relations” the British government saw no alternative but to reject the proposal.<sup>278</sup> Salisbury’s letter to Dulles, which again rejected the US proposal, reiterated British government views on similar grounds to Salisbury’s argument in Washington on 14 July.<sup>279</sup> Salisbury re-emphasised that in the British government’s view, “Turki has no right to be in Hamasa; the village is one of those belonging to [the] Sultan of Muscat, who, with the Ruler of Abu Dhabi, objected most strongly to Turki’s incursion into Buraimi Oasis”.<sup>280</sup> The Saudi Arabian occupation of Hamasa in August 1953 had “no legal justification”. Following emphasis on the legitimate right of the local rulers over the Oasis, Salisbury stated that:

“We had indeed every right to remove Turki many months ago. But as you know . . . we restrained [the] Sultan of Muscat from using forces against him, and in Buraimi Standstill Agreement we acquiesced in his remaining in Oasis temporarily until, as we hoped, an agreement was reached in regard to arbitration”.<sup>281</sup>

In details almost identical to Salisbury’s previous explanation to Dulles on 14 July, the British Minister summed up that Ibn Utaishan’s presence in Buraimi would result in the failure of the arbitration task. Furthermore, the lifting of the Blockade would make such a failure inevitable and “will have a disastrous effect on our relations with our old and tried friends”.<sup>282</sup> Moreover, British acceptance of the proposal was considered as a “risk” option that would weaken the British position in the whole Persian Gulf. Salisbury illustrated that “Our position in the Persian Gulf States has been carefully built up, we are trusted there, and to weaken it now would be detrimental . . . to us”.<sup>283</sup> At the conclusion Salisbury requested the US government for the second time to urge Ibn Saud to reconsider the mutual withdrawal proposal. On this it was stated that all the British government information was confirming that, “your advice would be accepted”.<sup>284</sup>

On 28 August 1953 Dulles replied to Salisbury.<sup>285</sup> Dulles stated the US government’s disappointment and concern about the British government’s refusal of the proposal. Moreover, Dulles pointed out that the British and the US governments “respective estimates of the situation differ” in two “important respects”.<sup>286</sup> First, while the British government considered that any compromise in accepting Turki to remain in Hamasa without the Blockade “will prejudice the issue”; the US government considered its proposal as a safeguard against any “suborning activities” by Turki.<sup>287</sup> Second, while the British government was convinced that Ibn Saud would accept US advice for mutual withdrawal, the US government was also convinced that Ibn Saud “would not accept such a proposal”.<sup>288</sup> Furthermore, Dulles emphasised the importance of maintaining a supportive attitude towards King Ibn Saud as well as the importance of Saudi Arabia itself:

“Perhaps you were not aware, however, of the strain which our support imposed upon our friendly relationship with King Ibn Saud. I am sure you will agree that Saudi Arabia is assuming an increasingly important position in the

pattern of our common defense. While recognizing the importance of your position in the Persian Gulf, I feel strongly that in the days ahead of us it will be of paramount importance to both of us to have the friendship and confidence of the ruler of Saudi Arabia".<sup>289</sup>

Illustrating the US government's concern with solving the dispute with an agreeable arrangement for the Saudi Arabian government, Dulles pressurised:

"I judge from your letter that we may not have made sufficiently clear, during our conversations in July, the seriousness with which we view the situation and the importance we attach to finding some means of settling the dispute which would have greater chance of being accepted by the Saudi government than those you have put forward. I feel that the possible consequences of inaction are so serious that I again urge your reconsideration of our proposals in the light of our understanding of the situation as I have set it forth above".<sup>290</sup>

While the US and the British governments were corresponding about Buraimi, the actual situation on the ground in the oasis was deteriorating. As the British forces strengthened the blockade around Hamasa, shooting incidents between those entering Hamasa village and the British forces intensified. Throughout July and August the Saudi government kept protesting about these incidents to the British government without receiving a positive response.<sup>291</sup> By September 1953 the Saudi government began to realise that the British government was inclined to uphold the deadlock in Buraimi. Hence a new tactic by the Saudi government might compel the British government to speed the breaking of deadlock.<sup>292</sup>

The increasing number of shooting incidents and the British government's tendency to leave the situation as it was in Buraimi had motivated the Saudi government to retrieve its publicity policy.<sup>293</sup> On 20 September 1953, the Saudi government published the details of recent incidents in Buraimi.<sup>294</sup> Accompanying the publication of the occurrences the Saudi government issued an anti-British communiqué that ends:

"in announcing this the Saudi Arabian Government reserve the right to act as they see fit to secure their interests. They are in possession of documents about

repeated acts of aggression which show the course of British policy and their colonialist plans”.<sup>295</sup>

The retrieval of the Saudi media campaign policy did not discourage the occurrences in Buraimi. In fact the immediate British response was also the renewal of their counter propaganda campaign. Furthermore, incidents in Buraimi continued to take place through September and October.<sup>296</sup>

Until the last week of September 1953, the Foreign Office was still studying Dulles message of 28 August. Hence, pending a final decision of either accepting or refusing the American proposal, the British government was approaching a fixed policy in regard to the Buraimi dispute.<sup>297</sup> Eventually, the Foreign office concluded on 25 September, that it was inclined to take a hard line policy in Buraimi, hence, rejecting the American proposal and taking necessary actions in order to control the situation.<sup>298</sup> Such actions would include the improvement of the British defence capability in the entire area, encouraging the Sultan of Muscat to improve his position, and the tightening of the Blockade on Turki in order to eject him from the Oasis. Before taking a final decision on this policy and prior to informing the US and the Saudi governments, the British Ambassador at Jeddah and the British Resident in the Gulf were called to London for a consultation.<sup>299</sup>

Unexpectedly, on the same day, the 25 September 1953, the Foreign Office received through the British Embassy at Jeddah a new Saudi proposal.<sup>300</sup> The proposal was put forward by the Saudi Ambassador to London, who was lately in Taif, where King Ibn Saud was. Wahba explained that he managed after several talks with the King, the Crown Prince, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to convince them that he might put forward “a personal proposal” to the British government on the following lines:

“Desiring to bring about a state of peace and quiet in the Buraimi area, the two parties shall - (i) replace the present forces by smaller, but equal forces (whose numbers will be agreed upon) to preserve security during the period of arbitration, and withdraw all their forces at present in those parts; (ii) undertake not to engage in any political or other activity in that area; (iii) undertake not to put any obstacles in the way of the return of inhabitants to the

places where they were living before abrogation of [the] Standstill Agreement by the British Government".<sup>301</sup>

It was clarified that King Ibn Saud preferred the proposal to be made by Wahba personally "in case it was rejected" but if the British government accepted it in principle the Saudi government "would also accept it".<sup>302</sup>

On 1 and 2 October, Wahba's proposal was already under extensive scrutiny in the Foreign Office. The proposal was considered as "worthy of serious consideration", particularly when it offered the withdrawal of Ibn Utaishan from Buraimi and when it would be a better alternative for the cause of British-US relations.<sup>303</sup> Ultimately, the British government plan of hard lines actions in Buraimi was put on hold while the new proposal was under consideration.<sup>304</sup>

On 9 October, Wahba was handed a note from the Foreign Office expressing the British government's intention "to examine the new proposal sympathetically provided" that the Saudi government agrees to some alterations to its implications.<sup>305</sup> Moreover, on 13 October, Eden wrote to Dulles apologising for the delay in answering his letter of 28 August 1953. After informing Dulles about the recent optimistic Saudi proposal, Eden promised that his government was intending to make progress on this.<sup>306</sup> Throughout October and the beginning of November, the Saudis and the British official were extensively working on the new proposal.<sup>307</sup>

The Saudi proposal, which had suspended the British government plans of taking further action against the Saudis in Buraimi, was a surprise move by the Saudi government. The timing of the proposal cannot be understood without adding some facts about King Ibn Saud's health situation. Though, the exact day when Ibn Saud's critical illness began was mysterious, yet this matter can be comprehended within the available data. According to Khairaldin Al-Zarkali, the King had been critically ill since his arrival in Taif on 8 August 1953.<sup>308</sup> However, according to the British documents, King Ibn Saud's critical illness started at the beginning of October.<sup>309</sup> As the exact date of Ibn Saud's illness cannot be proved, whether it took place before or after the 25 September 1953, it would be impossible to conclude that the Saudi proposal was made with or without Ibn Saud's knowledge, unless Wahba words were

treated as absolute. In any case, it could be said that the proposal was prompted either by King Ibn Saud or by his two senior sons: Saud and Faisal. If the proposal was the idea of Ibn Saud, it would be understood that while he was critically ill, he favoured a fast and secure ending for an issue that would challenge the future of his successors. If the proposal was initiated by Saud and Faisal they must have done so when their father was in a very critical situation during which they did not want to face any trouble in regard to the frontier question. Whoever promoted the proposal, it must be said that its promotion must have been taken from a vulnerable position that was similar to the Saudi Arabian decision in April 1953. This added a definite sense of disappointment into the Saudi government's view of its connection with Britain.

Despite the fact that Ibn Saud's death on 9 November 1953 took place while the Saudi and British officials were trying to find their way to a solution,<sup>310</sup> it must be said that the final year of Ibn Saud's rule was the year that ended all hopes for the return of the 'good old days' of the Saudi-British relations.<sup>311</sup>

## Summary and Conclusions

The firm positions of the Saudi and the British negotiators at the Dammam Conference in January-February 1952, was the main cause of its failure. The Saudi representatives had insisted on the Saudi Arabian 1949 claim and the British representatives had introduced new, exaggerated, claims for Qatar and Abu Dhabi. The rigidity of each attitude suggested that neither the British nor the Saudi governments were giving any weight to Saudi-British relations in contrast to their desired territorial gains. The outcome of the conference was negative on the future development of the frontier dispute, as both sides became pessimistic about reaching a solution by means of negotiations.

From the collapse of the conference until the end of August 1952, no direct attempt was made by the Saudis or the British in order to solve the frontier dilemma directly between them; on the contrary they were both preparing secretly against each other. Britain was planning from March to reinforce the Trucial Coast rulers' political control over the disputed area. Simultaneously, Saudi Arabia was intending to strengthen its position in the disputed area. In addition, the Saudi government had attempted to attain US government support, in order to exert pressure on the British government to modify its position.

Following the increase in British activities in the disputed area and the failure of US government mediation, the Saudi government established an authority in Buraimi. The Saudi government action of 31 August 1952 was a turning point, not just in its approach to the dispute, but also in its attitude towards Britain. Indeed, this action showed that Saudi Arabia cared less about its relations with Britain than about territorial gains. Moreover, the Saudi's presence in Buraimi had transformed the nature of the frontier issue from a dispute to a severe crisis that was fated to make an end to Saudi-British relations, particularly when the concept of security, that was positively associated with Saudi-British relations, had taken on a destructive character. By October 1952, the possibility of an armed clash in Buraimi between Britain and its allies in the Trucial Coast on one side, and Saudi Arabia on the other was imminent. However, the Standstill Agreement, which the USA had proposed, waived such a battle temporarily.

Although the Standstill agreement had called upon the Saudis and the British to bring about a peaceful settlement via direct discussions, still that was not taken into consideration. Instead, each of them brought forward a new proposal in line with its own interests. The Saudi government had proposed the plebiscite as an instrument for settlement, whereas the British government had proposed the arbitration. The insistence of each side on its own proposal led to further strains.

At the beginning of 1953, the British government had attempted to soften the Saudi position in relation to the arbitration proposal with several measures, of which the most hazardous was the reinforcement of the British forces in the Trucial Coast. In its turn Saudi Arabia had launched an anti-British propaganda campaign that resulted in the launching of a counter campaign. In the meantime, the British and the Saudi governments had tried to convince the US government to support their proposals. The US government had informed both parties that it would maintain a neutral position, which according to its own independent studies arbitration was the best instrument to be implemented.

Saudi Arabia's disregard of the arbitration proposal, the British fear of growing Saudi influence in Buraimi, the needs for the safeguarding of the security and the territorial interests of the Gulf Protectorates, and the increasing Saudi publicity campaign, induced the British government to adopt a new radical policy. The British government decision at the end of March 1953 was another turning point for Saudi-British relations (almost equal - if not more - to the Saudi government decision to send Ibn Utaishan to Buraimi). Specifically it included the cancellation of the Standstill Agreement, the reservation of freedom of action in all the disputed area, the blockade of Hamasa, and the persuading of the Saudi government to accept the arbitration by force.

The British government conclusion on this was communicated to the Saudi government in a note on 2 April, which stated all the elements except for the blockade. Even though the note was supplemented by a cordial message from Churchill to Ibn Saud, the Saudis were still astonished and could not neglect the possibility of a British invasion of Hamasa. The British messages had reached the

Saudi government when all the effective means of countering such a policy were unavailable. Saudi Arabia was incapable of facing British military power. Additionally, Saudi Arabia was not certain if the USA would assist it against Britain at that stage, particularly when the US government had recently declared neutrality and preferred the arbitration proposal. Moreover, Saudi Arabia could not see the feasibility of reinforcing its propaganda campaign or even appealing to the United Nations. Hence, Ibn Saud attempted to contain the situation - through diplomacy and correspondence - without jeopardising the security of his Kingdom and without agreeing to the arbitration. Thus, Ibn Saud replied cordially to Churchill and hoped for a peaceful solution. Nevertheless, when it became certain that the British forces were blockading the Saudis in Buraimi, Saudi Arabia modified its position. During negotiations that the British Ambassador undertook in the third week of April, Saudi Arabia had accepted the principle of the arbitration reluctantly.

Yet, preparation for the setting up of the arbitration body and the *status quo* in Buraimi were major disagreements. During the Saudi-British negotiations in May-June 1953, it became evident that Britain was not willing to give Saudi Arabia any concessions, even if these concessions were temporary, such as lifting the blockade on Hamasa when the arbitration board began its work. The British government insistence on this - despite Pelham's recommendation of giving Saudi Arabia some concessions - confirm that it no longer gave relations with Saudi Arabia priority.

At the same time, during which the frontier conflict was damaging Saudi-British relations, Saudi-US relations were being enhanced. By the end of 1952 it became noticeable that USA influence in Saudi Arabia was already colonising the Kingdom politically, economically, militarily, etc. There were two outcomes of this development. First, with an exception to the Saudis position in April 1953, the USA factor enabled Saudi Arabia to maintain a solid position in regard to the frontier conflict. Second, the enhancement of US influence in Saudi Arabia had negatively impacted on the general conduct of Saudi-British relations and thereafter on the development of the frontier conflict.

Despite US government help in attempting to solve the Saudi-British dispute in 1952, the Saudis were not that happy about the American stand during the first quarter of

1953. During Dulles visit to Saudi Arabia in May 1953, the Saudis insisted on the necessity of full backing from the USA. In fact Dulles was told that unless the US government supported the Saudi case in the frontier conflict, Saudi-US relations would be reconsidered. Fearing the consequences of its neutral position on its relations with Saudi Arabia, the US government adopted a policy in favour of Saudi Arabia. The USA government endeavoured to persuade the British government to modify its position. Nonetheless, Britain was not willing to respond to USA pressure; in fact the British government was determined to implement several measures in order to eject the Saudis from Buraimi. However, a considerate Saudi proposal came out as a result of King Ibn Saud's critical illness. Subsequently the British government plans were put on hold.

As misunderstanding was the main aspect of the frontier conflict, the impact of this development was remarkable on Saudi-British relations. Indeed, the firm position that the Saudi and the British governments maintained impacted negatively on Saudi-British relations. Beside, the relational interaction between Saudi Arabia and Britain during the last two years of King Ibn Saud's reign was mainly conducted through their interaction over the frontier conflict. Undoubtedly the development of the frontier issue in 1952-53 was the last stage in the destruction of Saudi-British relations.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. **The Evolution of National Boundaries in the Southeastern Arabian Peninsula: 1934-1955**. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987, p. 247-248.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter Four.

<sup>3</sup> See the following pages of this section.

<sup>4</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 250. Also, see Kelly, J. **Eastern Arabian Frontiers**. London: Faber and Faber, 1964, p. 153. Also, see Dammam Anglo-Saudi Frontier Conference, 14 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 301-310. Also, see Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 412.

<sup>5</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 250. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 153-158. Also, see Dammam Anglo-Saudi Frontier Conference, 14 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 301-310. Also, see Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 412-417. Beside Sir Rupert Hay and the Sheikhs of Abu Dhabi and Qatar, the British delegation include; Mr Pelly, Mr Evans, and Mr Weir. The Saudi delegation included beside *Amir Faisal*, *Amir Saud Bin Jalawi*, Mr Yassin, and Mr Wahba. See Dammam Anglo-Saudi Frontier Conference, 14 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 301. The Sultan of Muscat refused to attend or send a representative because he was up to that stage hoping that no dispute would arise about his land despite the 1949 Saudi claim. Wilkinson, John. **Arabia's Frontiers: The Story of Britain's Boundary Drawing in the Desert**. London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1991, p. 295.

<sup>6</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 251. Also, Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 413.

<sup>7</sup> Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 413. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 251.

<sup>8</sup> Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 413.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 413-414.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Faisal's remarks were an accurate representation of Ibn Saud's opinion. Indeed, though Ibn Saud was fully aware of Britain's position and policy in regard to its Gulf Protectorates and to the frontier issue, he was still hoping that direct negotiations between Saudi Arabia and the concerned Gulf Sheikdoms might bring a positive result. See also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 248.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 251-252. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>12</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 251-252.

<sup>13</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 252-254. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 153.

<sup>14</sup> It could be said that Faisal's promise to convey the latest British proposal to Ibn Saud was a delaying tactic policy for a firm Saudi decision on this. Thus on the 28 February 1952 Faisal told the British Ambassador in Saudi Arabia that the proposal was completely unacceptable to the Saudi government. Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 416-417.

<sup>15</sup> Dammam Anglo-Saudi Frontier Conference, 14 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 301-310.

<sup>16</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 252-254. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 158. Also, see Dammam Anglo-Saudi Frontier Conference, 14 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 301-310.

<sup>17</sup> See Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 158-159.

<sup>18</sup> From the British Residency in Bahrain (Hay) to Foreign Office, 27 February 1952, FO 1016/220. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 311-313.

<sup>19</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 254-256.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 256-257. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 12 March 1952, FO 371/98394. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 314. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Ibn Utaishan had arrived in Buraimi in August 1952 before the British government finalised this policy.

<sup>23</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 264-266. Also, see Foreign Office Memorandum, 22 February 1952, FO 371/98369. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 400-401. Also, see from Bahrain to Muscat (the British Consul-General), 8 May 1952, FO 371/98370. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 423.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 263-264. The Petroleum Concessions officials claimed that the Saudi agents and *Zakat* collectors were seen in the areas of Liwa, Dhahirah, and Buraimi. See Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 265. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 30 March 1952, FO 371/98970. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 419. It should be mentioned that the Political Agent attempt was doomed to failure. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 266.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pp. 265-266. Also, see Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 418-419.

<sup>27</sup> Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 419. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 266. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 159.

<sup>28</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 266. Also, Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 419.

<sup>29</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 266-267.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 257. It should be noted that Ibn Saud was in Riyadh at that specific time, otherwise he may have talked to Hare himself. Moreover Faisal, who seemed to be working on government affairs in Riyadh at the time, was instructed to go and convey the King's message to the Ambassador, a matter that showed the issue to be very important for the King. See from the Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 9 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 331-333. Also, Aide-Memoire by the Foreign Service of the United States Of America, 7 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 325-330.

<sup>31</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 257. Also, from the Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 9 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 331-333. Also, Aide-Memoire by the Foreign Service of the United States Of America, 7 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 325-330. It should be noted that Ibn Saud was also worried about recent Iraqi activities in the Gulf Region. There were rumours indicating that with the help of Britain, the Iraqi government was pursuing interests in the Gulf, particularly in regard to Kuwait. Ibn Saud thought that the British government was supporting the Iraqi activities in order to form a kind of unity between Iraq and some or all the Gulf Sheikdoms. Nevertheless, it later became clear that there was no ground for these rumours, particularly when the British government confirmed the non-existence of such plans to the US government. See Ibid. Also, from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 15 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 334-335. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 26 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 336-338.

<sup>32</sup> Aide-Memoire by the Foreign Service of the United States Of America, 7 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 325-330. Also see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>33</sup> Aide-Memoire by the Foreign Service of the United States Of America, 7 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 325-330.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 258.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 259.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. Also, Anglo-American-Saudi Arabian Relations 1952, Summary of recent exchanges, 21 May 1952, FO 371/98828.

<sup>40</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 259. Also, Foreign Office Aide Memoire, 6 May 1952, FO 371/98828.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 259-260. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 8 May 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 14 May 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 340-345.

<sup>42</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 9 April 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 331-333.

<sup>43</sup> Discussion with the United States Embassy regarding Anglo-American-Saudi Arabian Relations, 12 May 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 260.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., pp. 260-262. Also, see Anglo-Saudi Relations, 28 April 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see Foreign Office memorandum, 29 May 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 6 June 1952, FO 371/98828.

<sup>45</sup> The speculation about the possibility that the Saudis were thinking, as early as February 1952, about establishing themselves in Buraimi in particular, had some supportive arguments. The Saudi representatives realised during the Dammam Conference that the British government was not willing to compromise its position because the Saudi representatives did not have a strong card to play at the negotiation table. Hence, unless Saudi Arabia strengthened its position by the clear fact of occupying a strategic part of the disputed area, the same experience in Dammam would be repeated in any future discussion. Moreover, it became obvious after the conference that Buraimi was the only place that was never discussed in either London or Dammam. This allowed the Saudi government to argue that the removal of Buraimi from the agenda discussions was proof that it was not a part of the disputed area, and therefore could be argued as being a Saudi territory. Location wise, Buraimi was the best possible card Saudi Arabia could use. Thus, its location deep inside the disputed area would give Saudi Arabia the advantage of demanding all the territory between Buraimi and the 1952 claims, this was the case when the Saudi claim of 1949 include Buraimi within Saudi Arabia. Additionally, Buraimi was the best area Saudi Arabia could demand strongly, particularly when there were historical links with Saudi Arabia and when relations between Ibn Saud and the Buraimi tribes were strong. See the previous sections of this chapter. Also, see Wilkinson, John. op. cit., pp. 305-306. Wilkinson believed that the Saudi government's protest on 29 March 1952, regarding the British Political Officer visit to Buraimi, was in fact the beginning of preparations for setting up its position in the Oasis. Wilkinson, John. op. cit., pp. 303-304. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 256. Also see Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 154-159. It should be noted that Ibn Saud had been continuously strengthening his relations with the Buraimi tribes' leader since the reopening of the frontier issue in 1949. See Wilkinson, John. op. cit., pp. 305. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 151-152. Wilkinson accounts how Saudi Arabia could consolidate its claim "by effecting occupation with an official presence [in Buraimi]. Unless Britain could produce convincing evidence to the outside world that the area was not *res nullius*, there was absolutely nothing it could do legally to stop it [Saudi Arabia] . . . only the [remained] possibility that British would use force to remove them. That would clearly make them appear in the wrong, and so might be counteracted by diplomatic pressure from the Americans and the threat of the United Nations". Wilkinson, John. op. cit., p. 306.

<sup>46</sup> See Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 418-419. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 265-266.

<sup>47</sup> It should be noted that the British Foreign Secretary's message was not that affective, especially when it failed to bring about any optimistic words about the frontier conflict. See section B of this Chapter. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 14 May 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 340-345.

<sup>48</sup> Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 159. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 267. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 11 September 1953, FO 371/104303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 286. Buraimi oasis consisted of eight settlements, which were Al-Ain, Buraimi, Hili, Mu'tiridh, Qattarah, Jimi, Hamasa, and Sa'ara. See Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 16. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, The Eastern Frontiers of Saudi

Arabia: summary of events, 2 October 1952, FO 371/98374. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 533-535. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 2 September 1952, FO 371/98370. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 441-442. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 218.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 267.

<sup>50</sup> From Saud Ibn Jalawi to Rashid Bin Ali Al-Badi, 21 August 1952, FO 371/104278. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 437. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 160.

<sup>51</sup> From Riyadh (Riches) to Foreign Office, 16 September 1952, FO 371/98371. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 483. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 11 September 1952, FO 371/98371. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 462-463. Also, Note handed to Saudi Arabian Government by Her Majesty's Government, September 1952. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 474-475. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 161. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 267-268. It should be noted that the British Ambassador to Saudi Arabia was on leave. See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 14 May 1952, FO 371/98828. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 340-345.

<sup>52</sup> Note handed to Saudi Arabian Government by Her Majesty's Government, September 1952. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 474-475. Also, see from Jeddah (Riches) to Foreign Office, 17 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 490-496.

<sup>53</sup> Saudi Arabia. عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia). Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 420-421. It should be noted that the British government did not look into Ibn Saud's remark here. In fact even Riches himself did not include this remark in full in his report to London. See from Jeddah (Riches) to Foreign Office, 17 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 490-496.

<sup>54</sup> The Saudi Arabian Government Note, 17 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 497-500.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid. Indeed, the Saudis were hoping that the British government reaction would be modest.

<sup>56</sup> The Saudi Arabian Government Note, 17 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 497-500. Also from Jeddah (Riches) to Foreign Office, 18 September 1952. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 485-487. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 268. It seems that the recent development had created better reasons for the Saudi's to reconsider Saudi-British discussions.

<sup>57</sup> See from Jeddah (Riches) to Foreign Office, 17 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 488-489. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, The Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia: summary of events, 2 October 1952, FO 371/98374. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 533-535.

<sup>58</sup> See Foreign Office Intel, The Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia: summary of events, 2 October 1952, FO 371/98374. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 533-535. Also, Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 268. Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 161. It should be mentioned that the British government documentary records during this crisis clearly referred to the Trucial Oman levies as "the British Security Force in the Protected States", differing from the British explanations to the Saudis during London Conference in August 1951. See for example, Foreign Office Intel, The Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia: summary of events, 2 October 1952, FO 371/98374. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 533-535. Also, see section C: III of Chapter four.

<sup>59</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 504-505. Also, The Government of Saudi Arabia to the Government of the United Kingdom, 19

September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 145.

<sup>60</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 19 September 1952, FO 371/98372. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 504-505. Also, The Government of Saudi Arabia to the Government of the United Kingdom, 19 September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 145.

<sup>61</sup> H. M King Abdulaziz to the Saudi Embassy at London, 19 September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 147, also, in **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 459.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> From the Government of Saudi Arabia to the Government of the United Kingdom, 23 September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 146.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. A matter, which may indicate that the Saudis were really concerned with the severity of the situation, and its possible impact on the Kingdom's security.

<sup>68</sup> From the Government of the United Kingdom to the Government of Saudi Arabia, 3 October 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 149-150. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 30 September 1952, FO 371/98373. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 523-524. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, The Eastern Frontiers of Saudi Arabia: summary of events, 2 October 1952, FO 371/98374. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 533-535. This reply does not include Eden's reply to Ibn Saud. For that, see from the British Foreign Secretary to H. M King Abdulaziz, 9 October 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 148. Also, in **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 461.

<sup>69</sup> From the Government of the United Kingdom to the Government of Saudi Arabia, 3 October 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 149-150.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. Indeed the Saudi action in that summer had forced the British government to reconsider its views in regard to the discussions, a contradictory position to the British stance during the spring of 1952. See section A of this chapter.

<sup>75</sup> From the British Foreign Secretary to H. M King Abdulaziz, 9 October 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 148. Also, in **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 461.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> See Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 162-163. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 269. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, Buraimi, 14 October 1952, FO 371/98375. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 583. Also, see Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852.

<sup>78</sup> Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. Also, see Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 162-163. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 269. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, Buraimi, 14 October 1952, FO 371/98375. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 583.

<sup>80</sup> See Kelly, J. op. cit., pp. 162-163. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 269. Also, see Foreign Office Intel, Buraimi, 14 October 1952, FO 371/98375. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 583. Also, see Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 425.

<sup>81</sup> Pelham had succeeded Trott as an Ambassador to Saudi Arabia in the spring of 1952. See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1952 (and enclosure), FO 371/98378. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 607-612.

<sup>82</sup> See Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 163. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 269. Also, see Buraimi Standstill Agreement. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 156-158. Also, see from Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 27 October 1952, FO 371/98377. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 601-602. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1952 (and enclosure), FO 371/98378. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 607-615.

<sup>83</sup> See Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 163. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 269. Also, see Buraimi Standstill Agreement. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 156-158. Also, see from Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 27 October 1952, FO 371/98377. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 601-602. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 29 October 1952 (and enclosure), FO 371/98378. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 607-615. It should be noted that the British government was authorised to state on behalf of Sultan of Muscat that he "fully accepts and adheres" to the Standstill Agreement. Buraimi Standstill Agreement. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 156-158.

<sup>84</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 30 October 1952, FO 371/98377. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 617-618. Also, see Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852.

<sup>85</sup> Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852. Also, see from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 30 October 1952, FO 371/98377. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 617-618.

<sup>86</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 8 December 1952, FO 371/98384. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 707. Also, see Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 269-270.

<sup>87</sup> Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, pp. 421-422. & pp. 427-428. Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>88</sup> Saudi Arabia. **عرض حكومة المملكة العربية السعودية (The Proposal of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)**. Cairo: دار المعارف, 31 July 1955, Vol. 1, p. 428. Also, Kelly, J. op. cit., p. 166.

<sup>89</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 280.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>91</sup> See Foreign Office Minute (by Ross), 3 November 1952, FO 371/98380. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 632. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 6 November 1952, FO 371/98378. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 636. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 18 November 1952, FO 371/98381. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 669-671. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 November 1952, FO 371/98382. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 688. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 26 November 1952, FO 371/98382. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 689. Also, see Memorandum by Abdulrahman Heleissi of the Embassy of Saudi Arabia at London, 8 December 1952, FO 371/98385. In Priestland,

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Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 708-710.

<sup>92</sup> See Foreign Office Minute (by Ross), Saudi Arabia Frontier Dispute, 29 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 364-365. Also, see Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), 23 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 367. Also, see from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 31 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 371-972. Also see Brief for Discussion in the Cabinet (titled: the Middle East), 29 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 368-370.

<sup>93</sup> It should be noted that after May 1952, the British officials started to change their view that the Americans were conspiring against Britain in Saudi Arabia. This change did not take place until some of the British officials and diplomats recommended the need for cooperation and understanding between Britain and the USA in Saudi Arabia, and when the dispute was further worsened by the Saudi accusation about Buraimi. See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 12 June 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see Foreign Office Minute (by Ross), Saudi Arabia Frontier Dispute, 29 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 364-365.

<sup>94</sup> See Foreign Office Minute (by Ross), Saudi Arabia Frontier Dispute, 29 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 364-365. Also, see Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), 23 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. p. 367. Also, see from Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 31 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 371-972. Also see Brief for Discussion in the Cabinet (titled: the Middle East), 29 December 1952, FO 371/104276. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 2. pp. 368-370.

<sup>95</sup> Note-Verbal from the British Embassy at Jeddah to the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 5 January 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 8.

<sup>96</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1953, FO 1016/226. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 21-23. Also, Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106.

<sup>97</sup> Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute, 2 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 27-29. Also, Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13.

<sup>98</sup> From Foreign Office to Bahrain, 7 January 1953, FO 371/104278. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 14. Also, From Jeddah to Foreign office, 4 February 1953, FO 371/104278. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 18-19. Also, from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 7 February 1953, FO 371/104278. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 20. Also, Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106.

<sup>99</sup> Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, see Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 3 March 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud.** Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 92-94.

<sup>100</sup> Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1953, FO 1016/226. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 21-23.

<sup>101</sup> Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1953, FO 1016/226. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 21-23.

<sup>102</sup> Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13.

<sup>103</sup> Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute, 2 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 27-29.

<sup>104</sup> H. M King Abdulaziz to the Saudi Embassy at London, 19 September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.** Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 147, also, in **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953.** Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 459. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 March 1953, FO 371/104285. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 65-67.

<sup>105</sup> Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute, 2 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 27-29. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 4 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 37-38.

<sup>106</sup> Foreign Office Minute (by Greenhill), Saudi Arabian Frontier Dispute, 2 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 27-29.

<sup>107</sup> Note from Saudi Arabian Ministry for Foreign Affairs in reply to the British Government note of 5 January 1953, FO 371/104282. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 44-45.

<sup>108</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 42-43.

<sup>109</sup> For examples of the published announcement and articles see News cutting, Dispute over Gulf Shaikdoms, the Times, 10 March 1953, FO 371/104283. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 46-47. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 7 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 42-43. Also, see News cutting, Saudi Arabia Accusations, the Times, 12 March 1953, FO 371/104281. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 52. Also, see Summary of the official Statement of the Government of Saudi Arabia on Buraimi Dispute, undated, FO 371/104286. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 58-60. Also, see Circular no. 2, the Saudi Arabian Embassy at London, 16 March 1953, FO 371/104286. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 60-61.

<sup>110</sup> From Foreign Office to the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee, 13 March 1953, FO 371/104281. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 57.

<sup>111</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 12 March 1953, FO 371/104281. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961.** Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 54-55.

<sup>112</sup> See Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 25 January 1953, FO 371/104277. Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 15-14. Also, see Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government to the British Government, 1 March 1953, FO 371/104280. Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 36. Moreover, it became obvious to the British government that the US government could not convince the Saudi Arabian government to accept the arbitration proposal. See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 7 February 1953, FO 371/104278. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 20. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 4 March 1953, FO 371/104280. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 39-40.

<sup>113</sup> From Foreign Office to the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee, 13 March 1953, FO 371/104281. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 57. Also, see from Foreign Office to Bahrain, 1 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 101-102. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 272-273.

<sup>114</sup> From Foreign Office to Bahrain, 1 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 101-102.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid. It seems that, the British had reached such a conclusion about the objective of Saudi policies by looking at overall Saudi actions up to that month. In my opinion if Foreign Office analysts had studied all of King Ibn Saud's statements - that were made to them after the beginning of 1949 - they might have become even more convinced about that hypothesis. Indeed, a statement by King Ibn Saud just seventeen days before the "Stobart incident" - in 1949 - may give grounds for this assumption. During the visit of the Gulf Political Resident to Riyadh on 6 April 1949, the King remarked frankly to the Political Resident "that the interests of the Gulf States were confined entirely to the sea". Note on the Political Resident's Visit to Riyadh, as enclosure in From Persian Gulf Residency (Bahrain) to Foreign Office, 12 April 1949, FO 371/77511.

<sup>116</sup> From Foreign Office to the Secretary, Chiefs of Staff Committee, 13 March 1953, FO 371/104281. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 57.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 March 1953, FO 371/104285. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 65-67. Also, from New York (the UK Delegation to the UN) to Foreign Office, 18 March 1953, FO 371/104282. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 68-69. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 20 March 1953, FO 371/104283. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 70-71. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 March 1953, FO 371/104284. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 77-80.

<sup>118</sup> Note to the Saudi Arabian Government presented by H.M. Ambassador, 2 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 103-104. Also, from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 March 1953, FO 371/104284. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 77-80. Also, From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 30 March 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 85-86.

<sup>119</sup> Note to the Saudi Arabian Government presented by H.M. Ambassador, 2 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 103-104.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 20 March 1953, FO 371/104283. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 70-71.

<sup>122</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 30 March 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 85-86.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> See *Ibid.* Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 24 March 1953, FO 371/104284. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 77-80. Also, see Note to the Saudi Arabian Government presented by H.M. Ambassador, 2 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 103-104.

<sup>125</sup> See Oral Message from the Saudi Arabian Government in reply to the British proposal of 5 January 1953, FO 1016/227. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 11-13. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 February 1953, FO 1016/226. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 21-23.

<sup>126</sup> Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106. Al-Shamlan wrote, "The State Department also maintained that arbitration would be the best procedure for settling a dispute of this nature. The Saudis interpreted the American position as tacitly supporting the British proposal . . . Failing to attract direct American support, the Saudi government had only two choices: it could accept arbitration . . . or it could take the frontier question to the United Nation . . . the Saudis were hemmed in". Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. *op. cit.*, pp. 270-272.

<sup>127</sup> Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106. Also, Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 3 March 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 92-94.

<sup>128</sup> No mention of any talks between Faisal and the US government on or after 2 April 1953, though Faisal was in the USA until 6 April 1953. See Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106.

<sup>129</sup> Copy of a letter handed to Pelham in Riyadh, 20 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 113. Also, see H. M King Abdulaziz to the British Prime Minister, 20 April 1953. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 180-181. It should be noted that this quotation was taken from the original version of the letter in the former reference and not from the edited version on the later reference.

<sup>130</sup> It also seems that the Saudis were not so convinced about a solution through the UN. Indeed, their threat of referring the issue to the UN seems not to have been serious. Also see section B: V of Chapter three.

<sup>131</sup> During hard discussions at a later stage in Riyadh, in which the British Ambassador was pressing the Saudis to accept the arbitration unconditionally, Ibn Saud told Pelham that: "He could have dreamed of nothing which could have induced him to go to war with Britain, but he would expend every last man in Najd and himself as well rather than allow any blemish upon his honour. Striking his chest and pointing his finger at me he said several times in the most emphatic manner: 'My honour and my religion, my honour and my religion'". From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>132</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 162-170.

<sup>133</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 4 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 108-109. The Saudi government reply to the 2 April note was handed to Pelham in Riyadh on 23 April 1999, when the whole matter had been discussed with the Ambassador before then. Hence, Yusuf Yassin remarked when he was handing the reply that "it was out of date . . . [and it is just] for the record". From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The**

**Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**, Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 126. Also, Enclosure to Jeddah despatch of 29 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 138-139.

<sup>134</sup> Indeed, Ibn Saud continued corresponding with the British government for a while at its highest level, with Churchill. **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 471-481.

<sup>135</sup> See the section B of this chapter. Also, see H. M King Abdulaziz to the Saudi Embassy at London, 19 September 1952. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, p. 147, also, in **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 459. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 4 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 108-109.

<sup>136</sup> Indeed, Ibn Saud hinted that the recent dispute should not be the instrument that would make an end to this historical friendship. From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 4 April 1953, FO 371/104287. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 108-109.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. It should be noted that the structure of the sentence quoted in Ibn Saud's reply to Churchill's message had changed slightly from the original text, however the meaning was still the same. This change had obviously occurred because Churchill's original letter was translated into Arabic, then that quote was inserted into Ibn Saud's reply in Arabic, and then Ibn Saud's reply had been translated into English again.

<sup>138</sup> See from Foreign Office to Bahrain, 1 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 101-102. Also, see from Foreign Office to Bahrain, 4 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 106-107. Also, see news cutting, 'Blockade of the Amir Turki', Manchester Guardian, 14 April 1953, FO 371/104289. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. P. 112.

<sup>139</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>140</sup> King Ibn Saud's year of birth is confused in most of the literature, however according to his grandson Prince Badr Bin Abdulmohsin Bin Abdulaziz, the most accurate is 1876, a matter that Leslie McLoughlin agrees with. See Ben Abdulaziz, Badr Bin Abdulmohsin. **Fares Al-Tawheid**. Riyadh: National Guard Printing Press, February 1999, p. 40. Also, McLoughlin, Leslie. **Ibn Saud (In Arabic)**. Beirut: Sharikat Al-matbouat, 1995, P. 15. Pelham's analysis, views, way of negotiation, etc., are outstanding compared to his colleagues, the British Ambassadors at Jeddah since 1939. See for example, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 17 March 1953, FO 371/104285. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 65-67. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 20 March 1953, FO 371/104283. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 70-71. Also, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>141</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 8 April 1953, FO 371/104288. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 111.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 15 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 475-476.

<sup>144</sup> See Ibid. Also, Summary of the First Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 473. Also, Summary of the Second Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 474.

<sup>145</sup> Summary of the First Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 473. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 15 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 475-476.

<sup>146</sup> Summary of the First Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 473.

<sup>147</sup> Summary of the Second Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 474. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 15 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 475-476. These two messages were wired to the Saudi Arabian Embassy in London and were subsequently rushed to number 10 Downing Street. See Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Summary of the Second Message from King Ibn Saud to Churchill, 10 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 474.

<sup>149</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 15 April 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz: Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. pp. 475-476.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> From Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. The Saudi story of the incident is as follows: On 17 April 1953, British forces arrested, Mohammed Ibn Saif, the Sheikh (*Imam*) of the Village Sa'ara, in the main Mosque while at prayer. Then, the Sheikh was dragged "by his beard through the town for no reason other than being a Saudi National". Copy of a letter handed to Pelham in Riyadh, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 113. The reference to this incident as aggression could be a hint by the King to the British diplomat, that he was not expecting anything more than that. Nevertheless, the developments of these particular discussions made it obvious that the Saudi's at this stage were in fact fearing the worse.

<sup>160</sup> From Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Pelham called his discussions with Yassin during this mission "battles". See Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> See Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Copy of a letter handed to Pelham in Riyadh, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 113. Also, see H. M King Abdulaziz to the British Prime Minister, 20 April 1953. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 180-181. It should be noted that this quotation was taken from the original version of the letter in the former reference and not from the edited version on the later reference. Moreover, the original message was mistyped and had a lot of mistakes, a clear sign that it was rushed through during a time when editors were not available, presumably late at night. See Copy of a letter handed to Pelham in Riyadh, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 113.

<sup>167</sup> From Riyadh to Foreign Office, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 114-115. Also, see from Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

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<sup>168</sup> From Riyadh to Foreign Office, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 114-115.

<sup>169</sup> From Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> See from Riyadh to Foreign Office, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 114-115.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> From Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 119. The Foreign Office was considering a reply with the following line: "insist on written acceptance of the principle of arbitration, but at the same time indicate that, having obtained this acceptance, Her Majesty's Government would be willing at once to discuss simultaneously: (i) terms of reference, and (ii) some modification of the present situation". Foreign Office Minute, Saudi Arabia Frontier Dispute, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 116-118.

<sup>179</sup> See from Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 119. Also, see from Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. 130-137. Also, see from Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 120-121.

<sup>180</sup> See from Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 120-121.

<sup>181</sup> From Riyadh (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104290. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 119.

<sup>182</sup> See from Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>183</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 24 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 124-125.

<sup>184</sup> From Jeddah to (Pelham) Foreign Office, 28 April 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 130-137.

<sup>185</sup> Foreign Office Minute, Saudi Arabia Frontier Dispute, 23 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 116-118.

<sup>186</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 24 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 124-125. It could be said that the difficulty that Ibn Saud had faced in April 1953, was the worst that he ever had experienced with the British. Despite the British government's short term gain, in the long run, and if Ibn Saud lived for long, the events of April were to remain as a black mark in Ibn Saud's thinking about the Britain attitude towards his Kingdom. Moreover, in the short term, April's difficulties substantiated a destructive force for Saudi-British relations, as the following pages demonstrate.

- <sup>187</sup> See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 275. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 371/104294. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 158-161.
- <sup>188</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 4 May 1953, FO 371/104293. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 153.
- <sup>189</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>190</sup> See Ibid.
- <sup>191</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 162-170. Also, see from the British Prime Minister to H.M. King Abdulaziz, 7 May 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 477. It should be noted that in May and June 1953, when Eden was critically ill, Churchill personally took over all of his duties at the Foreign office. See for example from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 162-170. Also, see Petersen, Tore. **Anglo-American Rivalry in the Middle East: The Struggle for the Buraimi Oasis, 1952-1957**. In **The International History Review**. Vol. XIV (1), February 1992, p. 75.
- <sup>192</sup> From the British Prime Minister to H.M. King Abdulaziz, 7 May 1953. In **King Abdul Aziz Political Correspondence: 1904-1953**. Chippenham (UK): Archive Editions, 1996, Vol. 4. p. 477.
- <sup>193</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>194</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 162-170.
- <sup>195</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>196</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>197</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>198</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>199</sup> See Ibid.
- <sup>200</sup> Copy of a letter handed to Pelham in Riyadh, 21 April 1953, FO 371/104291. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 113. Also, see H. M King Abdulaziz to the British Prime Minister, 20 April 1953. In Saudi Arabia. **Memorial of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Place of issue is not recorded, 31 July 1955, Vol. II, pp. 180-181. It should be noted that this quotation was taken from the original version of the letter in the former reference and not from the edited version in the later reference.
- <sup>201</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 162-170.
- <sup>202</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>203</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>204</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>205</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>206</sup> See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 4 May 1953, FO 371/104293. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 153.
- <sup>207</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 371/104294.. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 158-161.
- <sup>208</sup> Ibid. Also, from H.M. King Ibn Saud to Sir Winston Churchill, 11 May 1953, FO 371/104294. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 154.
- <sup>209</sup> See from H.M. King Ibn Saud to Sir Winston Churchill, 11 May 1953, FO 371/104294. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 154.
- <sup>210</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>211</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 13 May 1953, FO 371/104294.. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 158-161.

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> See Foreign Office Minute, Saudi Arabia Frontier Despute, 22 May 1953, FO 371/104295. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 181-183. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 2 June 1953, FO 1016/303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 191-193.

<sup>218</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 2 June 1953, FO 371/104296. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 194. Also, see Foreign Office Minute, Saudi Arabia Frontier Despute, 22 May 1953, FO 371/104295. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 181-183.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 14 June 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 210-218.

<sup>222</sup> Indeed, the Saudis stance became firmer, as they were waiting - optimistically - for the US government reply to their presentation to Dulles in mid-May 1953. See section F of this chapter.

<sup>223</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 14 June 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 210-218.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. Also, see from H.M. King Ibn Saud to Sir Winston Churchill, 9 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 196-197.

<sup>225</sup> From H.M. King Ibn Saud to Sir Winston Churchill, 9 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 196-197.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 26 June 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 226-227.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid. Moreover, that reply never had been made to Ibn Saud.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid. Also see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 28 June 1953, FO 371/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 228-229.

<sup>234</sup> According to the Saudi government statement that called this act "barbaric", those 35 men who were still in custody on 20 June 1953, were continuously "exposed [by the British forces] to the heat of the sun". Aide Memoire from the Saudi Arabian Government, 20 June 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. P. 222. The Statement added "The seriousness of this beastly and barbaric action can only be understood by those who know the extent of the heat of the sun in that place. British colonialist forces have taken similar action before in Arab countries which has resulted in the death of more than one person and in aggression upon British personnel in revenge for what was done. We do not believe there is any person in Britain itself or anywhere else . . . who will not shudder at such a crime. The Saudi Government, in the hope that their protest will have some effect in [on] the soul of the British Government, do not wish to make public such an act of crime [criminal act] before world opinion and such a contravention of the Charter of Human Rights . . . [we] hope that the British authorities will conduct an immediate investigation to discover the perpetrators of this act, which is against humanity; and this is quite apart from . . . its violation of friendship, which might be badly affected and destroyed by acts even less terrible". Ibid.

- <sup>235</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. P. 223.
- <sup>236</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1952, FO 371/98828.
- <sup>237</sup> Ibid. Pelham's statement here would sound ironic if compared with another statement in the British Legation annual report for 1942, "In many . . . ways Ibn Saud's loyalty to His Majesty's Government has been manifest throughout the year . . . he has taken no important move without consulting His Majesty's Government at every point. Indeed, Britain in all her long history can seldom have had such loyal support from a foreign power either in adversity or in success". From Jeddah (Wikeley) to Foreign Office, Annual Summary of Events in Saudi Arabia during 1942, 27 January 1943, FO 371/35155.
- <sup>238</sup> See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 19 November 1952, FO 371/98828.
- <sup>239</sup> Hart, Parker T. **Saudi Arabia and the United States: Birth of a Security Partnership**. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998, p. 63. Also, see Further meeting with Prince Faisal's, Department of State Memorandum, 24 March 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 96-97.
- <sup>240</sup> By the beginning of 1953, there were about 14 advisors with a plan of increasing them to 35. See from Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 19 November 1952, FO 371/98828. Also see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 March 1952, FO 371/98822.
- <sup>241</sup> See Saudi Arabia: Annual review for 1952, from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, FO 371/104852.
- <sup>242</sup> That was possible as the oil revenue was increasing. In 1952 alone the oil revenue was estimated at \$180 million. See Ibid.
- <sup>243</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1952, FO 371/98828.
- <sup>244</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>245</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 March 1952, FO 371/98822.
- <sup>246</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>247</sup> From Jeddah (Pelham) to Foreign Office, 17 December 1952, FO 371/98828.
- <sup>248</sup> Foreign Office Minute (by Bowker), 1 May 1952, FO 371/98828. Also, see Louis, Wm. Roger. **The British Empire in the Middle East: 1945-1951**. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 729.
- <sup>249</sup> Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 270-272.
- <sup>250</sup> The Saudi government request for the reaffirmation of the Truman assurance of October 1950 was made to the new US administration on 2 March 1953. Prince Faisal's visit to the United States, Department of State Memorandum, 7 April 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 101-106. Also, Memorandum of Conversation, Department of State, 3 March 1953. In Al-Rashid, Ibrahim. **The Struggle Between the Two Princes: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Final Days of Ibn Saud**. Chapel Hill, N.C.: Documentary Publications, pp. 92-94.
- <sup>251</sup> See Hart, Parker T. op. cit., pp. 55-56.
- <sup>252</sup> See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 4 May 1953, FO 371/104293. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 153. Also, see Hart, Parker T. op. cit., pp. 55-56.
- <sup>253</sup> Hart, Parker T. op. cit., p. 55.
- <sup>254</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>255</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>256</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-56. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 277-278. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 26 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 224-225.
- <sup>257</sup> Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 277-278.
- <sup>258</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>259</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 26 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 224-225.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid. Also, see Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., p. 278. Also, See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 June 1953, FO 371/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 232-233.

<sup>261</sup> See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 26 June 1953, FO 371/104297. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 224-225. Also, see from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 June 1953, FO 371/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 232-233.

<sup>262</sup> See Hart, Parker T. op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>263</sup> On 28 June, Ibn Saud sent Eisenhower a message in which the King complained about the latest incidents in Buraimi and requested immediate USA mediation. See from Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 29 June 1953, FO 371/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 232-233. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 July 1953, FO 370/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 241-242. Also, see from the Saudi Arabian Embassy at London to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 7 July 1953, FO 371/104299. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 243-244.

<sup>264</sup> From Washington (the British Embassy) to Foreign Office, 11 July 1953, FO 371/104299. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 245.

<sup>265</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (Salisbury), 13 July 1953, FO 371/104299. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 246-247.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid. It was explained to Salisbury, that the British government believed in the possibility of Ibn Saud accepting the withdrawal of Ibn Utaishan based on two matters. First, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador at London, Wahba, (Salisbury was asked not to quote Wahba at any rate on this) thought that if such a proposal was put forward by Eisenhower Ibn Saud "might well accept it". Second, Ibn Saud "was at one time apparently adamant in his refusal to arbitrate but finally agreed". Ibid. Also, see Foreign Office Minute (by Ross), 4 June 1953, FO 371/104296. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 195.

<sup>270</sup> From Washington (Salisbury) to Foreign Office, 14 July 1953, FO 371/104299. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 250-251.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid. Also, see Note on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room, 21 July 1953, FO 371/104300. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 258-259.

<sup>276</sup> Note on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room, 21 July 1953, FO 371/104300. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 258-259.

<sup>277</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 July 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 263-264. Also, see Note on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room, 21 July 1953, FO 371/104300. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 258-259. Also, see from Dulles to Salisbury, 28 August 1953, FO 371/104303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 273-275.

<sup>278</sup> Note on a meeting held in the Secretary of State's room, 21 July 1953, FO 371/104300. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 258-259. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 July 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 263-264.

<sup>279</sup> See from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 28 July 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 263-264.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid.

<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> From Dulles to Salisbury, 28 August 1953, FO 371/104303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 273-275.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 July 1953, FO 370/104298. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 241-242. Also, see from the Saudi Arabian Embassy at London to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 7 July 1953, FO 371/104299. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 243-244. Also, see Memorandum from the Saudi Arabian Government to the British Government, 20 July 1953, FO 371/104300. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 255-256. Also, see Memorandum by the Embassy of Saudi Arabia at London, 10 August 1953, FO 371/104302. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 267-268. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 17 August 1953, FO 371/104302. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 269.

<sup>292</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 22 September 1953, 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 295-296. Also, see from Foreign Office to Jeddah, 21 August 1953, FO 371/104302. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 270-271.

<sup>293</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 22 September 1953, 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 295-296.

<sup>294</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 22 September 1953, FO 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 295-296. Also, see from Cairo to Foreign Office, 22 September 1953, FO 371/104305. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 294. The Saudi government published the details of two incidents as follow: "(1) That on September 15 fifteen British soldiers had fired on inhabitants of Al-Buraimi Oasis from 13 posts in the north, south, west, and east of Buraimi, killing several persons (2) That on September 19 British troops had opened fire on a caravan . . . killing and wounding caravan men". Middle East Journal Chronology, winter 1954. On 23 September 1953, the British government published its version of those incidents as follows: "(1) On September 15 a party of armed tribesman attempted to enter the village of Hamasa . . . and were intercepted by a patrol of Trucial Oman Levies who called on them to halt; the tribesmen had opened fire and the levies retaliated. (2) . . . a patrol from the Village of Jimi had been despatched to interrogate a man heading for Hamasa, . . . but the man had fired, fire had also been opened on the patrol from Hamasa, then the patrol . . . was followed by a force of 100 men . . . and the post at Jimi was forced to open fire to avoid being overrun". Middle East Journal Chronology, winter 1954.

<sup>295</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 22 September 1953, FO 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 295-296.

<sup>296</sup> See Verbal Memorandum by the Embassy of Saudi Arabia at London, 16 October 1953, FO 371/104308. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 21 October 1953, FO 371/104308. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 24 October 1953, FO 371/104308. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 25 October 1953, FO 371/104308. Also, see Middle East Journal Chronology, Winter 1954.

<sup>297</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 6 September 1953, FO 371/104303. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 279-281. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 8 September 1953, FO 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 282-285. Also, see from Bahrain to Foreign Office, 14 September 1953, FO 371/104304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 287-288.

<sup>298</sup> See from Foreign Office to Bahrain, 25 September 1953, FO 1016/304. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 303-304.

<sup>299</sup> See Ibid. Also, see Foreign Office Minute (By Greenhill), 13 October 1953, FO 371/104308. Also, see from the Secretary of the State (Eden) to the Prime Minister (Churchill), 14 October 1953. FO 371 104308. Also, see from Shuckburgh to Oates, 2 October 1953, FO 371/104308.

<sup>300</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 25 September 1953, FO 371/104305. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 297-299.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

<sup>303</sup> See Record of meeting held at Foreign Office, 1 October 1953, FO 371/104306. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 307-310. Also see Foreign Office Minute (by Allen), 1 October 1953, FO 371/104306. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 311-312. Also, see Record of meeting held at Foreign Office, 2 October 1953, FO 371/104306. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 313-315.

<sup>304</sup> Extract from Chief of Staff meeting, 8 October 1953, FO 371/104307. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 319-321.

<sup>305</sup> From Foreign Office to Jeddah, 8 October 1953, FO 371/104307. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. pp. 323-324.

<sup>306</sup> From Foreign Office to Washington (the British Embassy), 13 October 1953, 371/104307. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 325.

<sup>307</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 October 1953, FO 371/104308. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 331. Also see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 November 1953, FO 371/104310. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 345-346.

<sup>308</sup> Al-Zarkali, Khairaldin. شبه الجزيرة في عهد الملك عبد العزيز (The Peninsula during the reign of King Abdulaziz). Beirut: دار العلم للملايين, 1992, p. 1437.

<sup>309</sup> From Jeddah to Foreign Office, 24 November 1953, FO 371/104885.

<sup>310</sup> See from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 9 November 1953, FO 371/104885. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 26 October 1953, FO 371/104308. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 331. Also, see from Jeddah to Foreign Office, 5 November 1953, FO 371/104310. In Priestland, Jane. **The Buraimi Dispute: Contemporary Documents 1950-1961**. Oxford: Archive Editions, 1992, Vol. 4. p. 345-346.

<sup>311</sup> Saud Bin Abdulaziz succeeded his father as King on 9 November 1953 and continued dealing with the frontier issue with the same attitude as King Ibn Saud. After several negotiations between Saudi and British officials final agreement on arbitration was reached on 30 July 1954. The agreed arbitration tribunal board of 5 members held its sessions in Geneva on 11 September 1955. On 16 September 1955, the British member of the tribunal board, Sir Reader Bullard, resigned on the ground that the Saudi member, Mr Yusuf Yassin, was acting as a representative for the Saudi government rather than "as an impartial arbitrator". Ultimately the tribunal board broke up by the end of September. On 26 October 1955 the British forces invaded Hamasa and expelled the Saudis from the area. Following the British action Saudi Arabia withdraw its Ambassador in London and complained to the UN. Nevertheless, Saudi Arabia did not break off its diplomatic relations with Britain, in the hope that further discussion might bring a solution. In May and June 1956, the British and the Saudi held talks in Jeddah without any success. Following the British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt, Saudi Arabia broke

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off diplomatic relations with Britain in November 1956. See Al-Shamlan, Abdulrahman. op. cit., pp. 289-360. Also, see Middle East Journal Chronology, winter, summer, and autumn 1956. Also, see Wahba, Hafiz. خمسون عاما في جزيرة العرب (Fifty years in the Arabian Peninsula). Cairo: مكتبة مصطفى البابی, 1960, pp. 114-115.

## *Conclusion*

Whether examined from a Saudi or a British prospective, the impact of security concerns was evident in Saudi-British relations. Indeed, the security concept was - in one way or another - impacting on virtually all of the developments that were associated with British and Saudi Arabian relations.

During World War Two, the Saudi-British connection had provided a safe haven for the Saudi Arabian security concerns, especially regarding a regional threat. In the same era, Saudi Arabia was considered as imperative for the security of the British Empire. In fact, the maintenance of the security of Saudi Arabia was even regarded by the British government as an important issue that concerned the security of the Empire. Ultimately, the assumption of security was - then - helpful to the main course of the Saudi-Anglo relationship. Nonetheless, matters changed from the British perspective in the post-war era. In Britain's strategy, Saudi Arabia's importance altered - particularly upon Indian independence in 1947 - from that which was for the most part connected with the security of the British Empire, to that of the security of the area as a whole, particularly vis-à-vis a Soviet threat. With the occurrence of such a development, the Saudi and the British governments failed to establish any constructive arrangement for their concerns, resulting in a decline for the concept of security in Saudi-Anglo relations. Above and beyond, the security assumption became a hindrance rather than a help for the relationship when the Saudi and the British governments faced each other over the frontier conflict in the early 1950s.

Though the effect of the development of the Saudi-American relationship on Saudi-British relations was evident, it would be more appropriate to admit that - in accordance with the Saudi actions - the former were strengthened because of the deterioration of the latter, rather than that the latter deteriorating because of the strengthening of the former. This was the case as the deterioration of Saudi-British relations included a decline in the constructiveness of the security concept.

Up to 1943, Saudi Arabian relations with the USA remained inconsequential; however, from that year onward Saudi-US relations gradually strengthened. In concert with the advancement of Saudi-US ties, the British and the Americans confronted

each other over certain issues in the Saudi Kingdom. Nevertheless, the development of such a conflict - alongside the British need for a broader cooperation with the Americans, particular that of wider security concerns - had influenced the British government to work towards an Anglo-American understanding in regard to Saudi Arabia; an accord that was finalised in 1947. Such an understanding was more positive - as later stages revealed - for the progress of American-Saudi ties rather than that of the Anglo-Saudi ties.

Though Saudi Arabia welcomed the enrichment of Saudi-US ties, it was apparent that up to 1945 the Saudis were inclined to pay more attention to their relations with Britain rather than USA. Indeed, up to then the Saudis were to some extent contented over the British government's attitude towards most of their security concerns. Nonetheless, by early 1947, when King Ibn Saud began to doubt the British government attitude towards his problem with the Hashemites, and ultimately his Kingdom's security concerns, he considered enhancing relations with the USA; even if such enhancement would be at the expense of Saudi-Anglo relations. From then onwards, and in concert with the deterioration of Saudi-British relations, Saudi Arabia was looking towards and encouraging the strengthening of its relationship with the USA. In the early 1950s when Saudi-British relations were turned into purely conflicting relations, the Saudi-US relationship was evidently functioning in even better dynamic than that of the Saudi-Anglo relationship of the early 1940's.

Furthermore, the American factor did not help ease the negative impact of Britain's economic deterioration on Saudi-Anglo relations. In fact, the US function alongside such a development was rather to help the course of American-Saudi ties at the expense of Anglo-Saudi ties. Indeed, in the case of British financial assistance to Saudi Arabia, which was helping the course of Saudi-Anglo relations during the early 1940s, this had had begun to alter from 1944 onward. Britain's economic difficulty at the end of the war, alongside the American intention of increasing their financial assistance to Saudi Arabia, had discouraged the British government from considering any increase in - its part of - the assistance. Additionally, the Anglo-American conflict over Saudi Arabia had also persuaded the British government to modify the nature of the assistances from that of - which was mostly - financial to that of technical. Besides, the improvement of Saudi Arabian income, particularly from the oil royalty

in the pre-war era had also weakened the Saudi's reliance on the usual British aid. Though, the functions of the British Military Mission had kept the channel of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Britain open, the Saudis were not entirely satisfied with its modest overall achievement. In fact, the variety of difficulties that the BMM had faced - including financial - had limited the scope of its achievement. Hence, in 1951, when the US government provided Saudi Arabia with an alternative mission, the BMM operations came to an understandable end, particularly, as Saudi-British relations had already declined by then.

Though King Ibn Saud was not totally satisfied on Britain's policy towards the Palestine Issue during the early 1940s, he was able to control the negative impact of such a problem on Saudi-British relations by the means of *realpolitik*. Together with the implementation of the British proposal of the White Paper, the crucial war developments, and the positive aspects of the Saudi-Anglo relations, Ibn Saud managed to avoid the opening of such a complicated question with the British government. Hence, the Palestine problem had been kept aside from Saudi-British relations until Ibn Saud discussed the matter with Churchill in 1945. But with the Americans, the issue was raised - though without any constructive outcome - in 1943. In his historical meetings with Roosevelt and Churchill in February 1945, Ibn Saud conversed more positively with the former rather than with the latter, but in any case, the Palestine Issue remained a problematic question. During 1946-1947 both the British and the American policies towards the issue were unsatisfactory for the Saudis; nevertheless, the reality of the pragmatic approach saved the Kingdom's relations with both of them. When ideological values had associated the Arab States behaviour on the Palestine Issue in 1948, Saudi Arabia, as well as most of the Arab States, became more disappointed with the USA attitude than the British attitude on the same issue, a matter that had made most of them appreciate the neutral British attitude vis-à-vis the aligned US policy. But in any case, it could be said that though the Saudi government was not generally pleased when it came to the Kingdom's main partners policies in Palestine, still *realpolitik* values were more impermeable than those of the ideological. Hence, Saudi Arabian relations with both Britain and the USA were saved from the gravity of such an issue.

The development of the Saudi-Hashemite dilemma and its implications for Saudi-British relations was no doubt associated with the Saudi Arabian security concerns. Up to 1945, Britain's policy on the Saudi-Hashemite problem and its related concerns was generally satisfactory for the King of Saudi Arabia. Hence up to then, such an issue did not obstruct the goodwill in Saudi-British relations. Nonetheless, the matter changed in 1946 when this issue began to challenge the main course of Anglo-Saudi relations. Jordan's independence, the Saudi-Jordanian frontier misunderstanding, King Abdullah activities, and the British government's mishandling of the ultimate Saudi security concerns brought about nothing but trouble - to the relationship - as far as King Ibn Saud was concerned. The British government did not satisfy Ibn Saud on his anxiety vis-à-vis what he believed to be intrigues from the head of the Hashemites. In fact, Britain did not meet the Saudi king's request for an assurance against any Hashemite threat. Even when he attempted to cause the British government to balance what he believed as an unequal - British - treatment of his Kingdom and of Abdullah's Kingdom, his effort was doomed to failure. By not getting a solution through Britain, and by knowing that the USA was not yet ready to fulfil Saudi Arabia's security obligations, Ibn Saud even tried to reconcile directly with Abdullah when circumstances allowed in 1948. However, Abdullah's actions in 1949 made the Saudi-Hashemite settlement short-lived. Even then, a further effort from Ibn Saud did not bring what he could regard as a convincing assurance from Britain. In fact, by the end of 1949 Ibn Saud was able to obtain what he deemed as a satisfactory assurance from the USA, instead. Besides, in 1950, when the British questioned the objectives of the Saudi Arabian loan to Syria, Ibn Saud became more convinced that the British government was siding with the Hashemite against himself. The Saudi-Hashemite dilemma could not have been made worse as it collided with the frontier dispute in 1951. Indeed, the inclusion of certain Jordanian soldiers in the Levy Force had worsened the issue furthermore. Despite the fact that the Saudis were enlightened by the British government on this subject, in August 1951, the British clarification came a bit late as Saudi-British relations had already deteriorated.

Unlike their stance during the war when they were keen to maintain and to preserve their special relationship with the British, the Saudis took a different stance as their activities along the disputed borders were taking place during the first quarter of 1949. Indeed, by then the Saudis were already experiencing the phenomenal changes that

had occurred in Saudi-British relations; changes that did not exclude security aspects. But as they did not completely lose all hope for a positive correction from the British side in regard to this phenomenon, they wished that the reopening of the frontiers issue would not stand against any positive move in such a course. Nevertheless, the Saudi's aspiration did not go in accordance to their wishes, in fact, the frontiers conflict had twisted the general development of Saudi-British relations - including that of security - into further negative territories.

Indeed, the reopening of the frontier dispute had brought about further complications in the Saudi-British relationship. The difficulties of the negotiations coupled with the inflexibility in the position of each party - such as the Saudi claims in October 1949 and the British insistence in considering the Blue and the Violet lines as the basis for the negotiations - were in fact unhelpful for the progress of the already declining relations. Besides, throughout 1950 and into 1951, the frontier conflict and its associated elements had kept facilitating the deterioration of Britain's relations with Saudi Arabia. It was only during the London Conference of August 1951 that some signs of hope materialised, as the Saudis and the British agreed upon certain matters amongst which was the agreement to hold comprehensive talks at the beginning of 1952. However, by the time that the Dammam Conference took place in January 1952, Saudi-British relations had already entered into a new cycle that neutralised it from the negotiators considerations in reaching a constructive solution for all the parties involved. Hence, with the opening of the conference each side was determined to achieve an outcome that fitted its own interests, rather than the interests of all parties. Ultimately, the conference was doomed to a predictable failure. Subsequently, the frontier dispute continued to deteriorate until it was transformed into a visible crisis by the establishment of a Saudi formal post in Buraimi at the end of the summer of that year. Without the temporary solution that was reached - with the mediation of the Americans - by the signing of the Standstill Agreement, Saudi Arabia might have faced up to Britain - and its partners in the Trucial Coast - in an armed clash. Though in accordance with the Standstill Agreement the Saudis and the British were to have reached a settlement by the means of negotiations, the crisis was further inflated as each of the conflicting sides proposed a resolution that fit better with its own interests. Whereas the Saudis had insisted that plebiscite was the best method for a settlement, the British in their turn insisted on their own proposal of arbitration. In this tone the

crisis was further worsened - at the beginning of 1953 - as each side was attempting to implement the necessary measures for the implementation of its proposal. Propaganda campaigns were launched as the British forces were reinforced in the area. As the situation further intensified without a detectable solution, the British decided to force the Saudis to concur. With other measures, the British forces blockaded the village that contained the Saudi post - in April - and forced the Saudis to comply with the arbitration proposal. Under such pressure the Saudis had no choice but to concede from a weak position, and indeed during a time in which the Saudi-British relationship had reached its nadir. Still the Saudis and the British could not reach agreements on all the points that were involved. By the middle of 1953, it was evident whom the Saudis were regarding as a friend, and whom they were regarding as a foe. Indeed, it was with the Americans that the Saudis had sought a safe haven with vis-à-vis what they experienced as obvious British hostility. Despite the fact that the USA had been involved with a policy that was in the best interest of Saudi Arabia, the timing of Ibn Saud's critical illness had forced the Saudis to give the British further concessions reluctantly. By all means, the frontier conflict represented the last phase of deterioration in Saudi-British relations during King Ibn Saud's reign.

If King Ibn Saud was the most active in the practicality of the shift that occurred in his Kingdom's relations with Britain, it should be noted that Britain was also responsible for causing him to do so. Indeed, the British policy towards Saudi Arabia's interests - particularly that which was connected to the security concept - was effective when it came to the orientation of the Kingdom's foreign policy. The Saudi move towards Germany in 1939 was associated with such concerns, particularly when the Anglo-Italian connection was a matter of suspicion in Riyadh. On the other hand, King Ibn Saud was keen to keep the goodwill of his Kingdom's relations with Britain intact when the British government was accommodating Saudi security concerns during World War Two. In the post-war era when the Saudi security situation was worsening - particularly in comprehension of a potential Hashemite threat - it was obvious that the Saudis were endeavouring to move towards the USA. So was the case, when Britain itself confronted Saudi Arabia over the frontier issue. Ultimately, it could be said that the motivations that were driving the orientation of Saudi Arabia's policy were not in fact contesting the British interests, rather than

complementing the Saudi interests, particular as those interests were built upon the imperative base of security.

In accordance with the previous arguments it could be briefly concluded that there were a variety of issues that had dynamically facilitated the shift that had occurred in Saudi-British relations throughout 1939-1953. Indeed, the security concept, the American factor, the economic aspect, the Saudi-Hashemite problem, and the frontier conflict; had impacted on the main course of Saudi-British relations as those relations were transforming into their eventual structure by 1953.

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