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تحتوي النسخة الإلكترونية على معلومات إضافية ونصوص وصور بدقة عالية تسمح بإمكانية تكبيرها ومطالعتها بسهولة.

أوراق بقلم كرزون بشأن الشرق الأدنى والأوسط

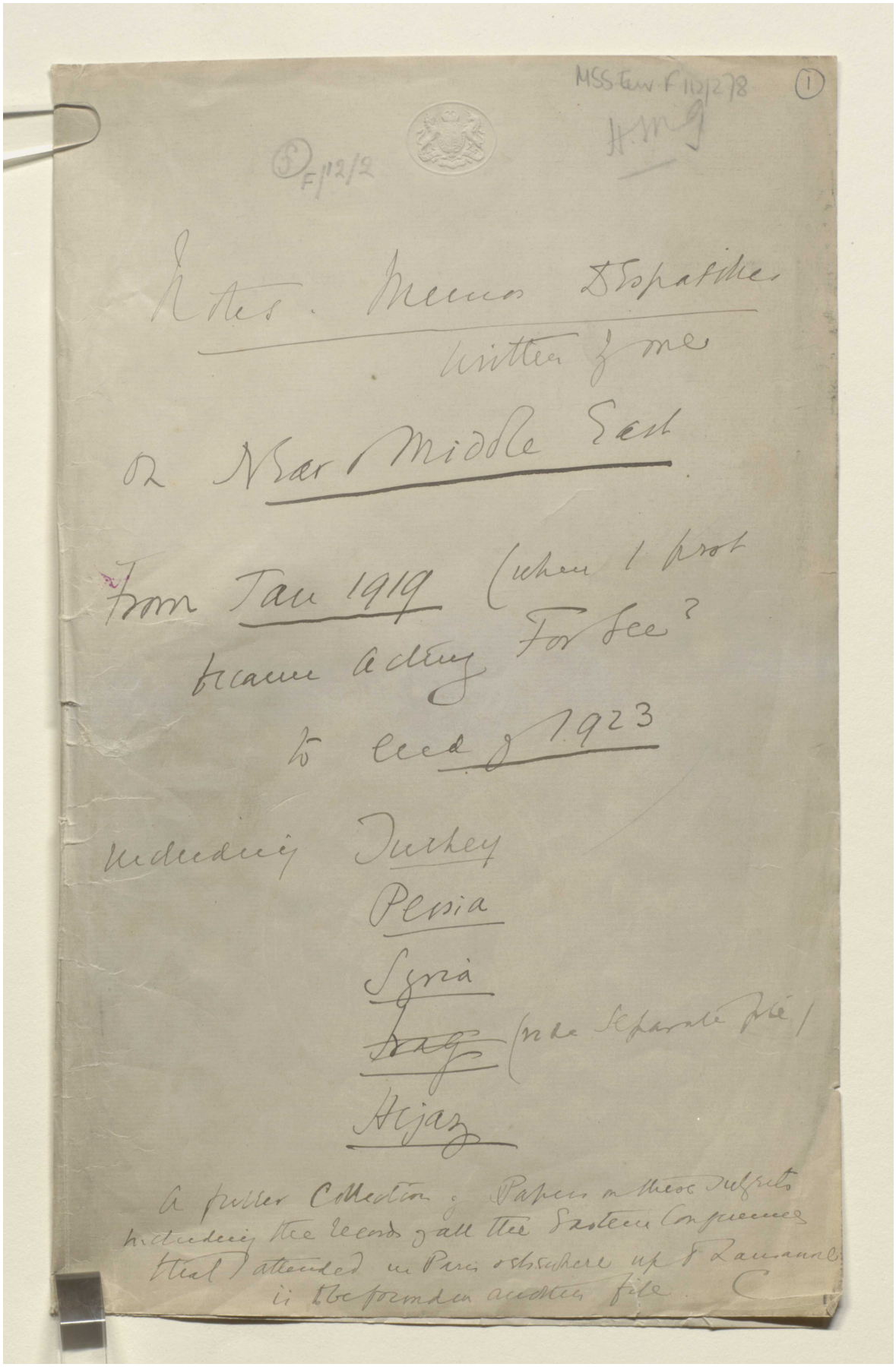
المؤسسة المالكة	المكتبة البريطانية: أوراق خاصة وسجلات من مكتب الهند
المرجع	Mss Eur F112/278
التاريخ/ التواريخ	١٦ نوفمبر ١٩١٧-١٧ يناير ١٩٢٤ (ميلادي)
لغة الكتابة	الإنجليزية و الفرنسية في اللاتينية
الحجم والشكل	ملف واحد (١٧٤ ورقة)
حق النشر	رخصة المشاع الإبداعي

حول هذا السجلّ

يحتوي الملف على مراسلات ومذكرات وخرائط وملاحظات حول موضوعات مختلفة تتعلق بالشرق الأدنى والشرق الأوسط. كتب جورج كرزون أغلب هذه الأوراق بنفسه، وهي تتعلق بتسوية الأراضي السابقة للدولة العثمانية بعد تفككها في أعقاب الحرب العالمية الأولى. وتُناقش مسائل مثل الاحتلال اليوناني لسميرنا، وتقسيم تراقيا، والحرب اليونانية التركية، واستقلال جورجيا، ومعاهدات سيفر ولوزان.

وتشمل المسائل الأخرى التي يتناولها الملف مسائل متعلقة بالأراضي العربية للدولة العثمانية السابقة، والمستشارين الأمريكيين في بلاد فارس، ومستقبل فلسطين، بما في ذلك تقرير لجنة فلسطين (مكتب المستعمرات البريطانية) بتاريخ ٢٧ يوليو ١٩٢٣ (الأوراق ١٦٨-١٧١).

أغلب المراسلات داخل الملف تدور بين كرزون وممثلين عن قوى الحلفاء الأخرى، وكذلك مسؤولين في الإدارات الحكومية والمكاتب الدبلوماسية الأخرى.



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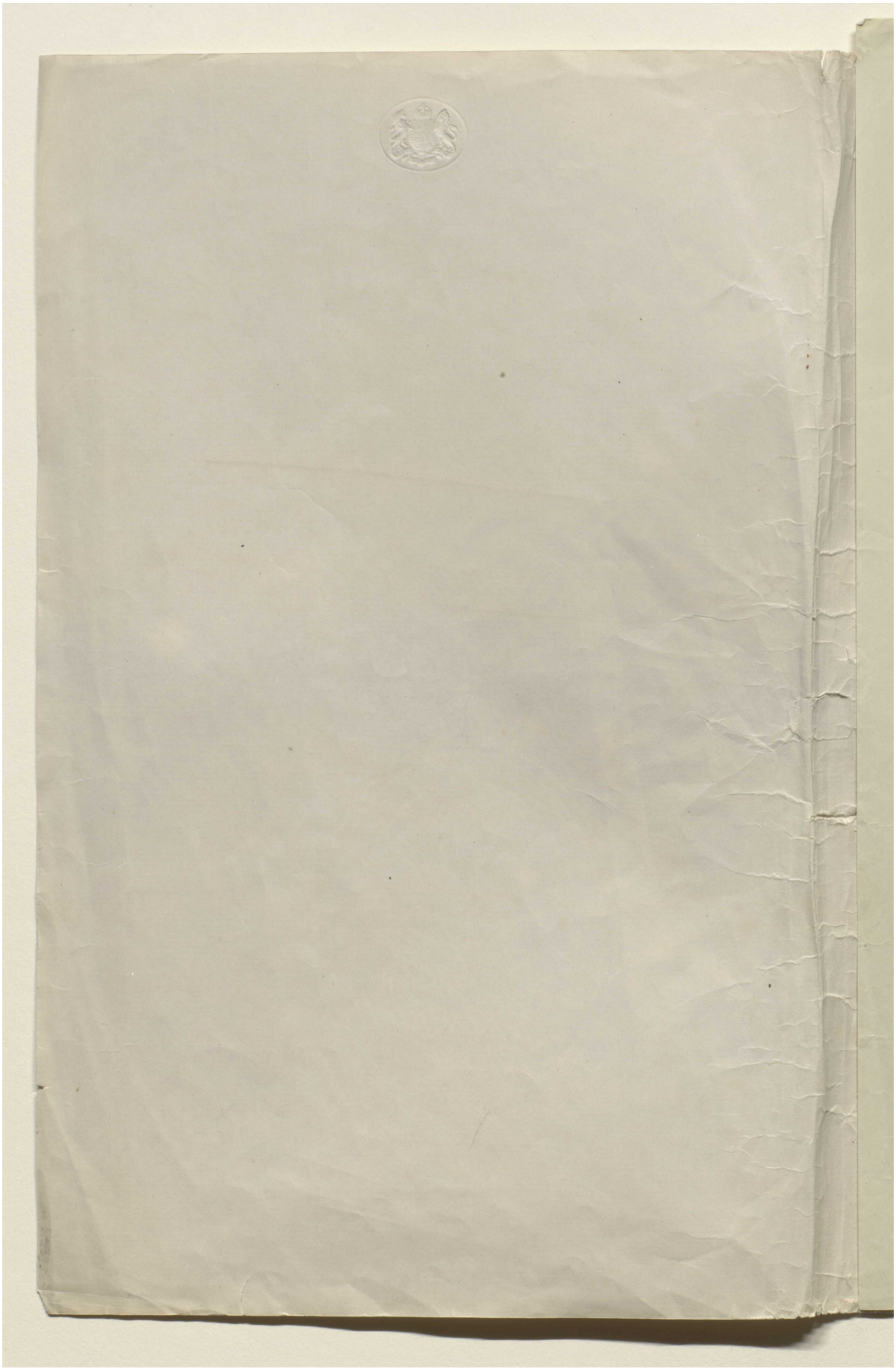

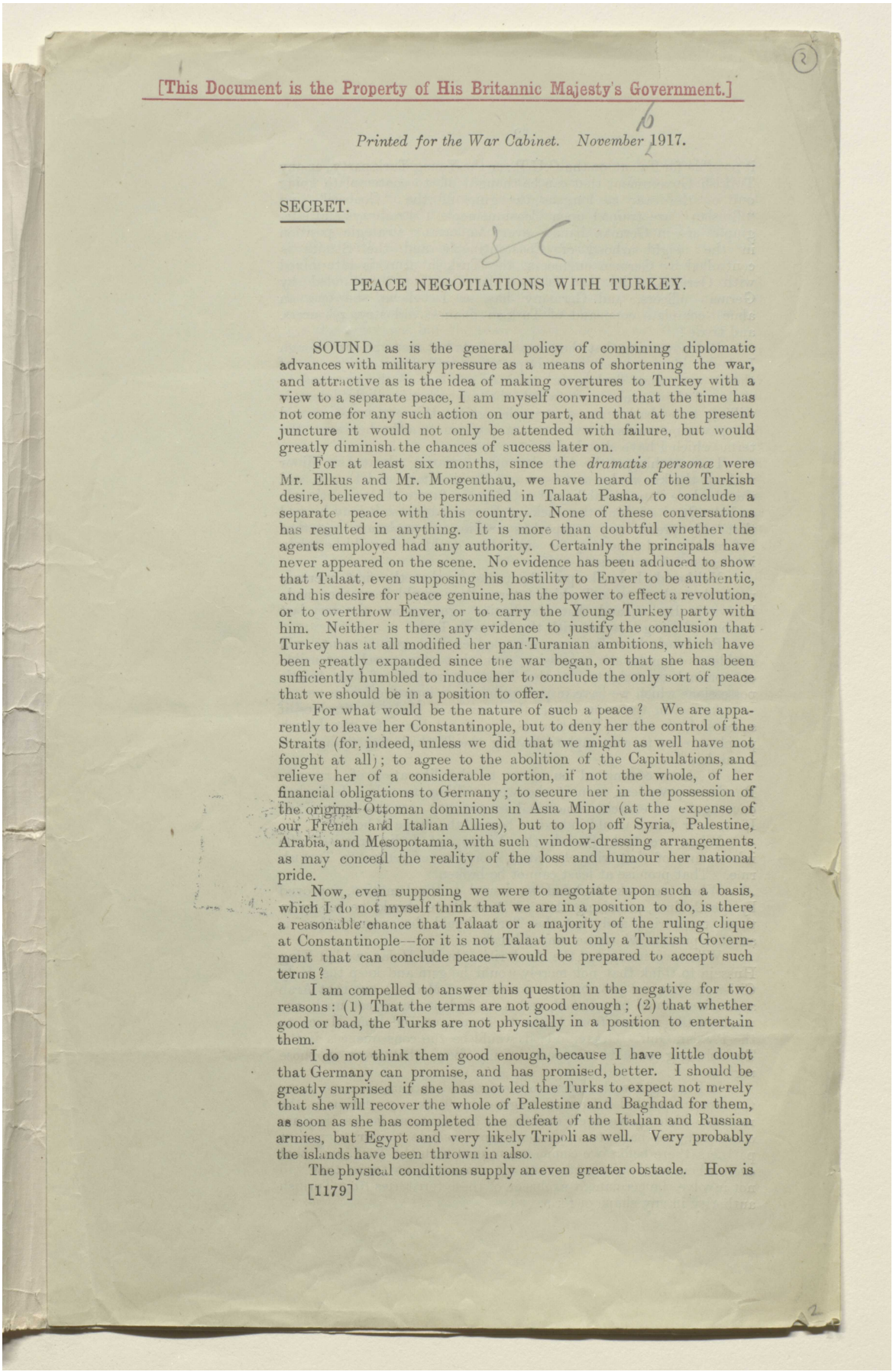

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Printed for the War Cabinet. November 1917.

SECRET.

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS WITH TURKEY.

SOUND as is the general policy of combining diplomatic advances with military pressure as a means of shortening the war, and attractive as is the idea of making overtures to Turkey with a view to a separate peace, I am myself convinced that the time has not come for any such action on our part, and that at the present juncture it would not only be attended with failure, but would greatly diminish the chances of success later on.

For at least six months, since the *dramatis personæ* were Mr. Elkus and Mr. Morgenthau, we have heard of the Turkish desire, believed to be personified in Talaat Pasha, to conclude a separate peace with this country. None of these conversations has resulted in anything. It is more than doubtful whether the agents employed had any authority. Certainly the principals have never appeared on the scene. No evidence has been adduced to show that Talaat, even supposing his hostility to Enver to be authentic, and his desire for peace genuine, has the power to effect a revolution, or to overthrow Enver, or to carry the Young Turkey party with him. Neither is there any evidence to justify the conclusion that Turkey has at all modified her pan-Turanian ambitions, which have been greatly expanded since the war began, or that she has been sufficiently humbled to induce her to conclude the only sort of peace that we should be in a position to offer.

For what would be the nature of such a peace? We are apparently to leave her Constantinople, but to deny her the control of the Straits (for, indeed, unless we did that we might as well have not fought at all); to agree to the abolition of the Capitulations, and relieve her of a considerable portion, if not the whole, of her financial obligations to Germany; to secure her in the possession of the original Ottoman dominions in Asia Minor (at the expense of our French and Italian Allies), but to lop off Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, with such window-dressing arrangements as may conceal the reality of the loss and humour her national pride.

Now, even supposing we were to negotiate upon such a basis, which I do not myself think that we are in a position to do, is there a reasonable chance that Talaat or a majority of the ruling clique at Constantinople—for it is not Talaat but only a Turkish Government that can conclude peace—would be prepared to accept such terms?

I am compelled to answer this question in the negative for two reasons: (1) That the terms are not good enough; (2) that whether good or bad, the Turks are not physically in a position to entertain them.

I do not think them good enough, because I have little doubt that Germany can promise, and has promised, better. I should be greatly surprised if she has not led the Turks to expect not merely that she will recover the whole of Palestine and Baghdad for them, as soon as she has completed the defeat of the Italian and Russian armies, but Egypt and very likely Tripoli as well. Very probably the islands have been thrown in also.

The physical conditions supply an even greater obstacle. How is

[1179]

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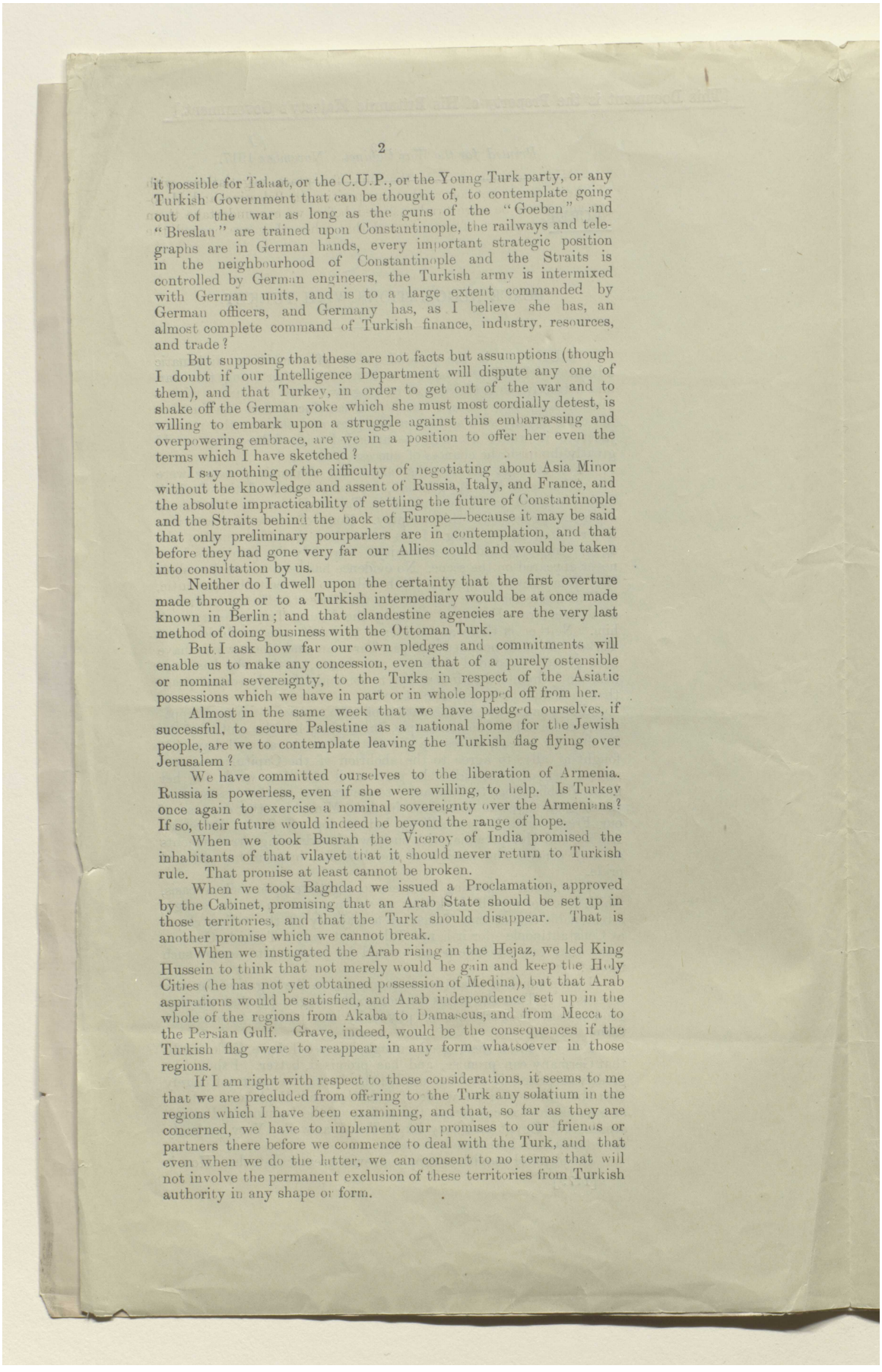

it possible for Talaat, or the C.U.P., or the Young Turk party, or any Turkish Government that can be thought of, to contemplate going out of the war as long as the guns of the "Goeben" and "Breslau" are trained upon Constantinople, the railways and telegraphs are in German hands, every important strategic position in the neighbourhood of Constantinople and the Straits is controlled by German engineers, the Turkish army is intermixed with German units, and is to a large extent commanded by German officers, and Germany has, as I believe she has, an almost complete command of Turkish finance, industry, resources, and trade?

But supposing that these are not facts but assumptions (though I doubt if our Intelligence Department will dispute any one of them), and that Turkey, in order to get out of the war and to shake off the German yoke which she must most cordially detest, is willing to embark upon a struggle against this embarrassing and overpowering embrace, are we in a position to offer her even the terms which I have sketched?

I say nothing of the difficulty of negotiating about Asia Minor without the knowledge and assent of Russia, Italy, and France, and the absolute impracticability of settling the future of Constantinople and the Straits behind the back of Europe—because it may be said that only preliminary pourparlers are in contemplation, and that before they had gone very far our Allies could and would be taken into consultation by us.

Neither do I dwell upon the certainty that the first overture made through or to a Turkish intermediary would be at once made known in Berlin; and that clandestine agencies are the very last method of doing business with the Ottoman Turk.

But I ask how far our own pledges and commitments will enable us to make any concession, even that of a purely ostensible or nominal sovereignty, to the Turks in respect of the Asiatic possessions which we have in part or in whole lopped off from her.

Almost in the same week that we have pledged ourselves, if successful, to secure Palestine as a national home for the Jewish people, are we to contemplate leaving the Turkish flag flying over Jerusalem?

We have committed ourselves to the liberation of Armenia. Russia is powerless, even if she were willing, to help. Is Turkey once again to exercise a nominal sovereignty over the Armenians? If so, their future would indeed be beyond the range of hope.

When we took Busrah the Viceroy of India promised the inhabitants of that vilayet that it should never return to Turkish rule. That promise at least cannot be broken.

When we took Baghdad we issued a Proclamation, approved by the Cabinet, promising that an Arab State should be set up in those territories, and that the Turk should disappear. That is another promise which we cannot break.

When we instigated the Arab rising in the Hejaz, we led King Hussein to think that not merely would he gain and keep the Holy Cities (he has not yet obtained possession of Medina), but that Arab aspirations would be satisfied, and Arab independence set up in the whole of the regions from Akaba to Damascus, and from Mecca to the Persian Gulf. Grave, indeed, would be the consequences if the Turkish flag were to reappear in any form whatsoever in those regions.

If I am right with respect to these considerations, it seems to me that we are precluded from offering to the Turk any solatium in the regions which I have been examining, and that, so far as they are concerned, we have to implement our promises to our friends or partners there before we commence to deal with the Turk, and that even when we do the latter, we can consent to no terms that will not involve the permanent exclusion of these territories from Turkish authority in any shape or form.

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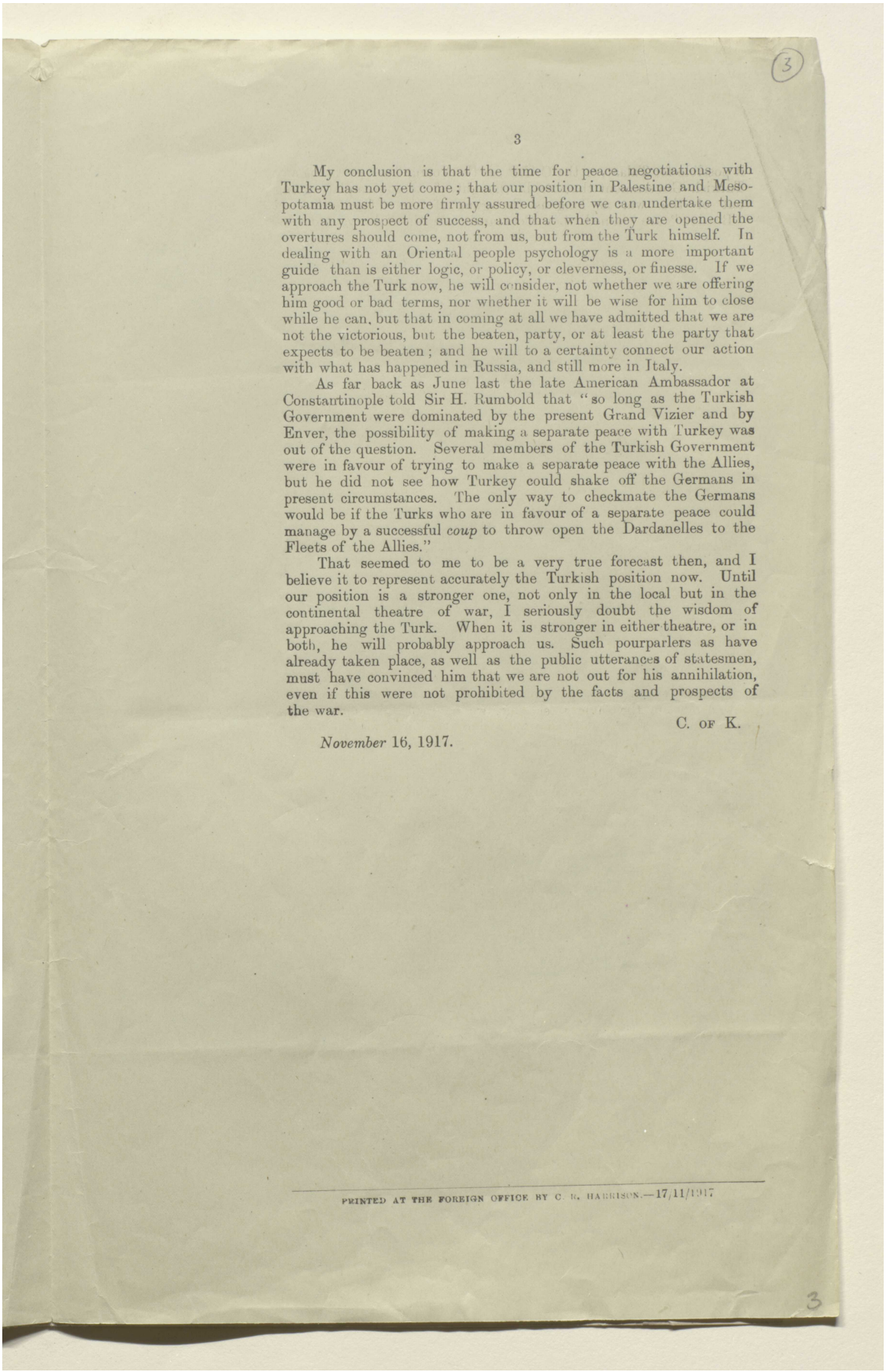

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My conclusion is that the time for peace negotiations with Turkey has not yet come; that our position in Palestine and Mesopotamia must be more firmly assured before we can undertake them with any prospect of success, and that when they are opened the overtures should come, not from us, but from the Turk himself. In dealing with an Oriental people psychology is a more important guide than is either logic, or policy, or cleverness, or finesse. If we approach the Turk now, he will consider, not whether we are offering him good or bad terms, nor whether it will be wise for him to close while he can, but that in coming at all we have admitted that we are not the victorious, but the beaten, party, or at least the party that expects to be beaten; and he will to a certainty connect our action with what has happened in Russia, and still more in Italy.

As far back as June last the late American Ambassador at Constantinople told Sir H. Rumbold that "so long as the Turkish Government were dominated by the present Grand Vizier and by Enver, the possibility of making a separate peace with Turkey was out of the question. Several members of the Turkish Government were in favour of trying to make a separate peace with the Allies, but he did not see how Turkey could shake off the Germans in present circumstances. The only way to checkmate the Germans would be if the Turks who are in favour of a separate peace could manage by a successful *coup* to throw open the Dardanelles to the Fleets of the Allies."

That seemed to me to be a very true forecast then, and I believe it to represent accurately the Turkish position now. Until our position is a stronger one, not only in the local but in the continental theatre of war, I seriously doubt the wisdom of approaching the Turk. When it is stronger in either theatre, or in both, he will probably approach us. Such pourparlers as have already taken place, as well as the public utterances of statesmen, must have convinced him that we are not out for his annihilation, even if this were not prohibited by the facts and prospects of the war.

C. OF K.

November 16, 1917.

PRINTED AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE BY C. R. HARRISON.—17/11/1917

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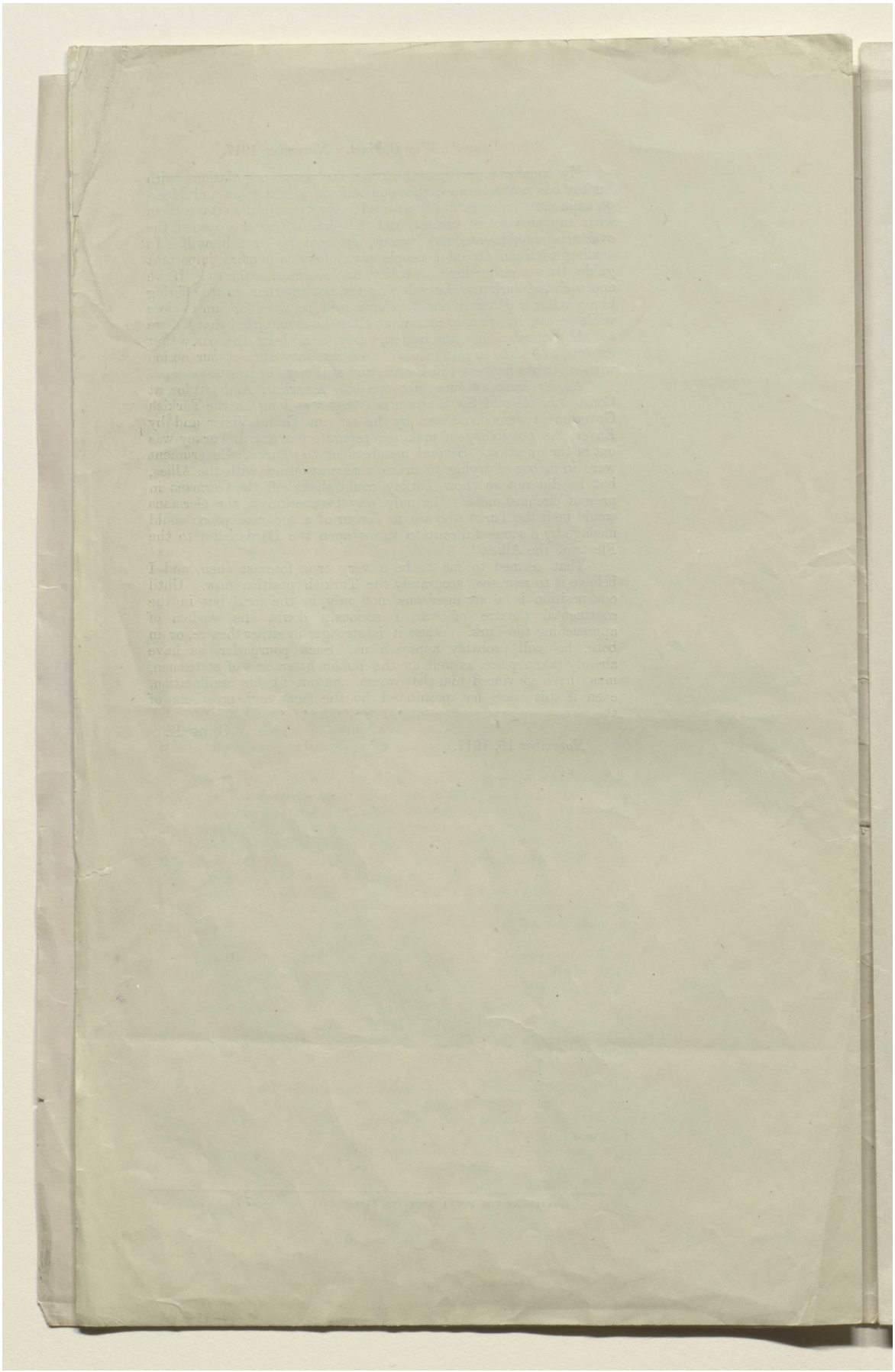
أوراق بقلم كرزون بشأن الشرق الأدنى والأوسط [٣ظ] (٣٤٨/٦)



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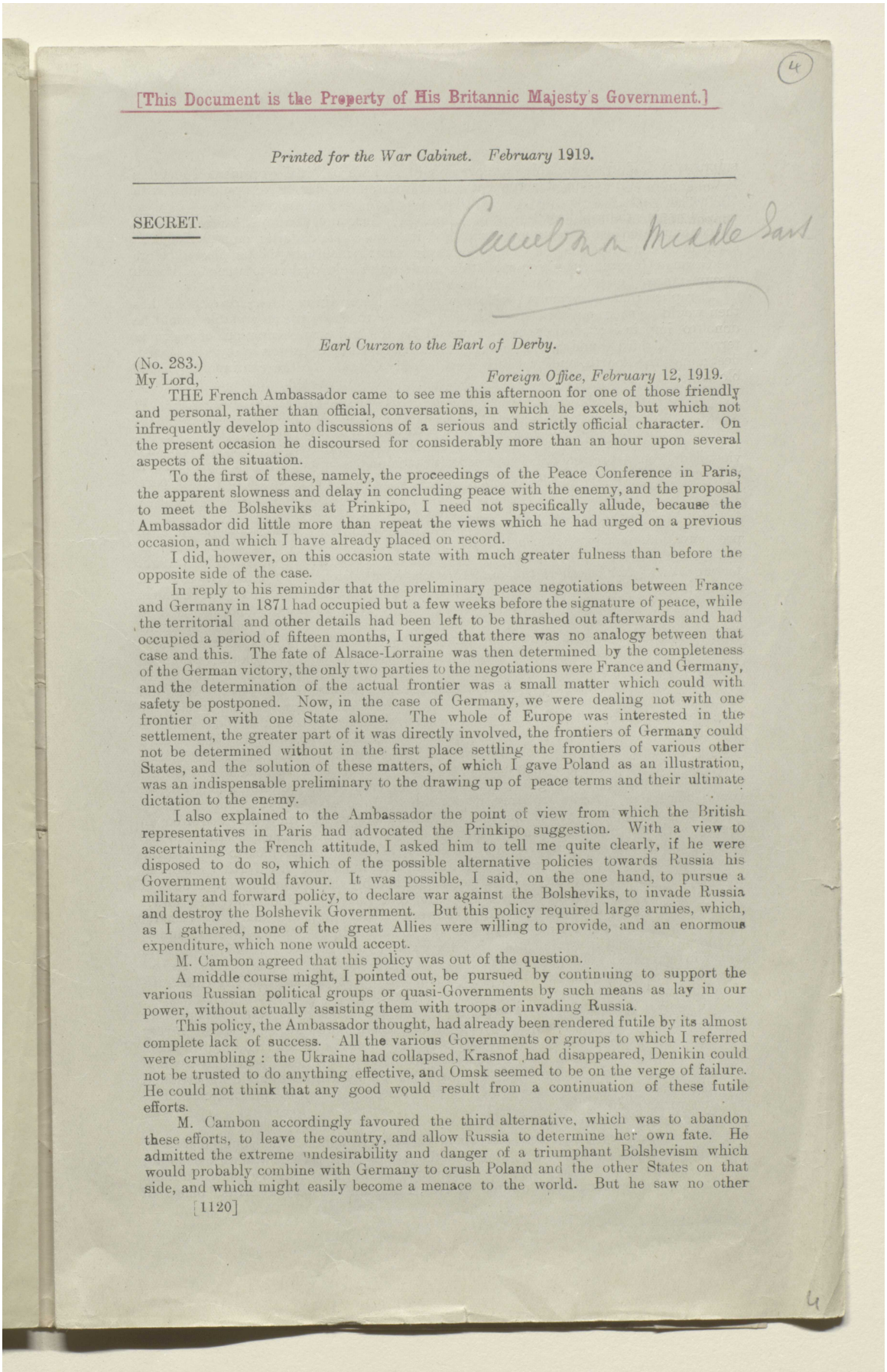

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Printed for the War Cabinet. February 1919.

SECRET.

Cambon & Middle East

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 283.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 12, 1919.

THE French Ambassador came to see me this afternoon for one of those friendly and personal, rather than official, conversations, in which he excels, but which not infrequently develop into discussions of a serious and strictly official character. On the present occasion he discoursed for considerably more than an hour upon several aspects of the situation.

To the first of these, namely, the proceedings of the Peace Conference in Paris, the apparent slowness and delay in concluding peace with the enemy, and the proposal to meet the Bolsheviks at Prinkipo, I need not specifically allude, because the Ambassador did little more than repeat the views which he had urged on a previous occasion, and which I have already placed on record.

I did, however, on this occasion state with much greater fulness than before the opposite side of the case.

In reply to his reminder that the preliminary peace negotiations between France and Germany in 1871 had occupied but a few weeks before the signature of peace, while the territorial and other details had been left to be thrashed out afterwards and had occupied a period of fifteen months, I urged that there was no analogy between that case and this. The fate of Alsace-Lorraine was then determined by the completeness of the German victory, the only two parties to the negotiations were France and Germany, and the determination of the actual frontier was a small matter which could with safety be postponed. Now, in the case of Germany, we were dealing not with one frontier or with one State alone. The whole of Europe was interested in the settlement, the greater part of it was directly involved, the frontiers of Germany could not be determined without in the first place settling the frontiers of various other States, and the solution of these matters, of which I gave Poland as an illustration, was an indispensable preliminary to the drawing up of peace terms and their ultimate dictation to the enemy.

I also explained to the Ambassador the point of view from which the British representatives in Paris had advocated the Prinkipo suggestion. With a view to ascertaining the French attitude, I asked him to tell me quite clearly, if he were disposed to do so, which of the possible alternative policies towards Russia his Government would favour. It was possible, I said, on the one hand, to pursue a military and forward policy, to declare war against the Bolsheviks, to invade Russia and destroy the Bolshevik Government. But this policy required large armies, which, as I gathered, none of the great Allies were willing to provide, and an enormous expenditure, which none would accept.

M. Cambon agreed that this policy was out of the question.

A middle course might, I pointed out, be pursued by continuing to support the various Russian political groups or quasi-Governments by such means as lay in our power, without actually assisting them with troops or invading Russia.

This policy, the Ambassador thought, had already been rendered futile by its almost complete lack of success. All the various Governments or groups to which I referred were crumbling: the Ukraine had collapsed, Krasnof had disappeared, Denikin could not be trusted to do anything effective, and Omsk seemed to be on the verge of failure. He could not think that any good would result from a continuation of these futile efforts.

M. Cambon accordingly favoured the third alternative, which was to abandon these efforts, to leave the country, and allow Russia to determine her own fate. He admitted the extreme undesirability and danger of a triumphant Bolshevism which would probably combine with Germany to crush Poland and the other States on that side, and which might easily become a menace to the world. But he saw no other

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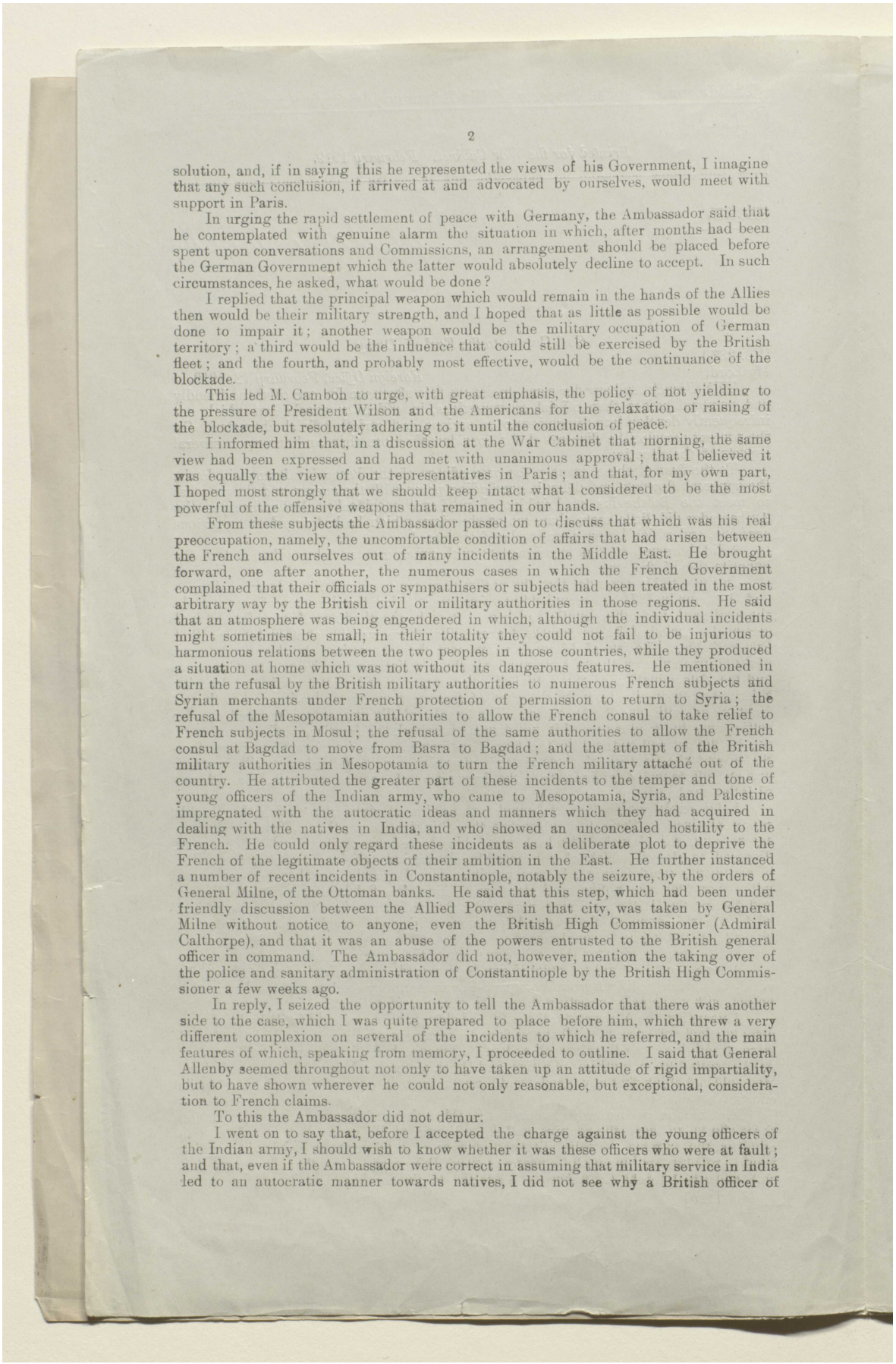

solution, and, if in saying this he represented the views of his Government, I imagine that any such conclusion, if arrived at and advocated by ourselves, would meet with support in Paris.

In urging the rapid settlement of peace with Germany, the Ambassador said that he contemplated with genuine alarm the situation in which, after months had been spent upon conversations and Commissions, an arrangement should be placed before the German Government which the latter would absolutely decline to accept. In such circumstances, he asked, what would be done?

I replied that the principal weapon which would remain in the hands of the Allies then would be their military strength, and I hoped that as little as possible would be done to impair it; another weapon would be the military occupation of German territory; a third would be the influence that could still be exercised by the British fleet; and the fourth, and probably most effective, would be the continuance of the blockade.

This led M. Cambon to urge, with great emphasis, the policy of not yielding to the pressure of President Wilson and the Americans for the relaxation or raising of the blockade, but resolutely adhering to it until the conclusion of peace.

I informed him that, in a discussion at the War Cabinet that morning, the same view had been expressed and had met with unanimous approval; that I believed it was equally the view of our representatives in Paris; and that, for my own part, I hoped most strongly that we should keep intact what I considered to be the most powerful of the offensive weapons that remained in our hands.

From these subjects the Ambassador passed on to discuss that which was his real preoccupation, namely, the uncomfortable condition of affairs that had arisen between the French and ourselves out of many incidents in the Middle East. He brought forward, one after another, the numerous cases in which the French Government complained that their officials or sympathisers or subjects had been treated in the most arbitrary way by the British civil or military authorities in those regions. He said that an atmosphere was being engendered in which, although the individual incidents might sometimes be small, in their totality they could not fail to be injurious to harmonious relations between the two peoples in those countries, while they produced a situation at home which was not without its dangerous features. He mentioned in turn the refusal by the British military authorities to numerous French subjects and Syrian merchants under French protection of permission to return to Syria; the refusal of the Mesopotamian authorities to allow the French consul to take relief to French subjects in Mosul; the refusal of the same authorities to allow the French consul at Bagdad to move from Basra to Bagdad; and the attempt of the British military authorities in Mesopotamia to turn the French military attaché out of the country. He attributed the greater part of these incidents to the temper and tone of young officers of the Indian army, who came to Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine impregnated with the autocratic ideas and manners which they had acquired in dealing with the natives in India, and who showed an unconcealed hostility to the French. He could only regard these incidents as a deliberate plot to deprive the French of the legitimate objects of their ambition in the East. He further instanced a number of recent incidents in Constantinople, notably the seizure, by the orders of General Milne, of the Ottoman banks. He said that this step, which had been under friendly discussion between the Allied Powers in that city, was taken by General Milne without notice to anyone, even the British High Commissioner (Admiral Calthorpe), and that it was an abuse of the powers entrusted to the British general officer in command. The Ambassador did not, however, mention the taking over of the police and sanitary administration of Constantinople by the British High Commissioner a few weeks ago.

In reply, I seized the opportunity to tell the Ambassador that there was another side to the case, which I was quite prepared to place before him, which threw a very different complexion on several of the incidents to which he referred, and the main features of which, speaking from memory, I proceeded to outline. I said that General Allenby seemed throughout not only to have taken up an attitude of rigid impartiality, but to have shown wherever he could not only reasonable, but exceptional, consideration to French claims.

To this the Ambassador did not demur.

I went on to say that, before I accepted the charge against the young officers of the Indian army, I should wish to know whether it was these officers who were at fault; and that, even if the Ambassador were correct in assuming that military service in India led to an autocratic manner towards natives, I did not see why a British officer of

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Indian experience should be any more unfriendly to the French than one who had served in Europe. I said that I should be able to place before M. Cambon a series of cases in which French officers had acted with extreme impetuosity and indiscretion, and had in some cases required the protection and assistance of the British military authorities, because of the unwisdom of their conduct. As regards French action in Syria, I should like him to know that, whereas the French had arranged for a special deputation from the Lebanon, whose impartiality and representative character were open to grave doubt, to proceed from Beirout to Paris to advocate the claims of France, the British authorities had consistently deprecated, and even refused permission for the embarkation of, many other bodies who had wished to go to Paris in order to state the anti-French side of the case. I said that I thought the Ambassador was mistaken in thinking that the French were everywhere welcomed in the regions to which he was referring, and that, had our attitude been really what he supposed, things might have been made much less pleasant for them than had actually been the case.

As regards the particular incidents in Mesopotamia: I replied that the French consul had not been encouraged to go to Mosul, because relief arrangements were already adequately provided for by the military authorities in that region. I was not familiar with the case of the French consul at Basra. I did, however, deprecate the action which had been proposed by our military authorities with regard to the French military attaché in Bagdad.

In regard to Constantinople, I believed that the action of General Milne in respect of the banks was justified by him on military grounds, and as such fell within his jurisdiction as the general officer in supreme military command. The Committee of Union and Progress in Constantinople was in close touch with these banks, which were also engaged in transactions with German institutions. The prompt suspension of the banks therefore became a matter of military necessity. So little had it been intended to affront the French and Italians, that controllers of those nationalities had been placed in charge on the succeeding day.

When M. Cambon mentioned the subject of the unannounced arrival of the Emir Feisal at Marseilles, I answered that I believed this had been due to a delay in the arrival or decyphering of a telegram, and that really it was too absurd to suppose that we could possibly wish to spring upon the French Government a surprise which, inasmuch as the Emir was going first to their country, they had so many means of meeting. But as regards the Emir Feisal, I said that the boot appeared to me to be upon the other leg, and that I had noted with equal surprise and regret the line which had been taken by leading French newspapers, even those supposed to be in close connection with the French Government, with regard to the statement of his claims which had been made by the Emir at a meeting of the Peace Conference last week. It seemed to me almost an outrage that this Arab potentate, who had been deputed to Paris to represent the views of his father—a monarch who had fought bravely on our side and assisted us to win the war—should, because he stated the claims of his family and race in an extreme form (a form for which we had no responsibility, and one which contained proposals with which I did not in every instance agree), therefore be denounced as a British puppet in receipt of British pay.

I further said that I did not think that an amicable solution of these difficulties was likely to be facilitated by the publication of carefully prepared schemes of French administration, French acquisition, and even French annexation in the entire group of territories from Palestine on the south to the Black Sea on the north, which were being promulgated in France. It was not surprising that claims of this description should excite suspicion, and I agreed with the Ambassador in thinking that it was high time that the air should be cleared.

I also asked leave to tell him quite frankly that, in my view, the main ground of the irritation which existed, if it did exist, in Syria and Mesopotamia was the belief that the French were disposed to take undue advantage of the conditions of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and to insist upon adherence not merely to the spirit but to the letter of an arrangement which had been shown by the progress of events to be both obsolete and impracticable; which both Governments knew must be superseded by some other and better plan; and which indeed had already been to a large extent cancelled by the Self-Determination Agreement of the French and British Governments in November last. I asked why it should not be possible to admit at once that the Sykes-Picot Agreement was impossible and out of date; and thus to put an end to pretensions based upon it, which were evidently the source of increasing friction between the two countries. It was, I thought, the utmost pity that these petty incidents should be allowed to occur, and that anything of such a nature should be

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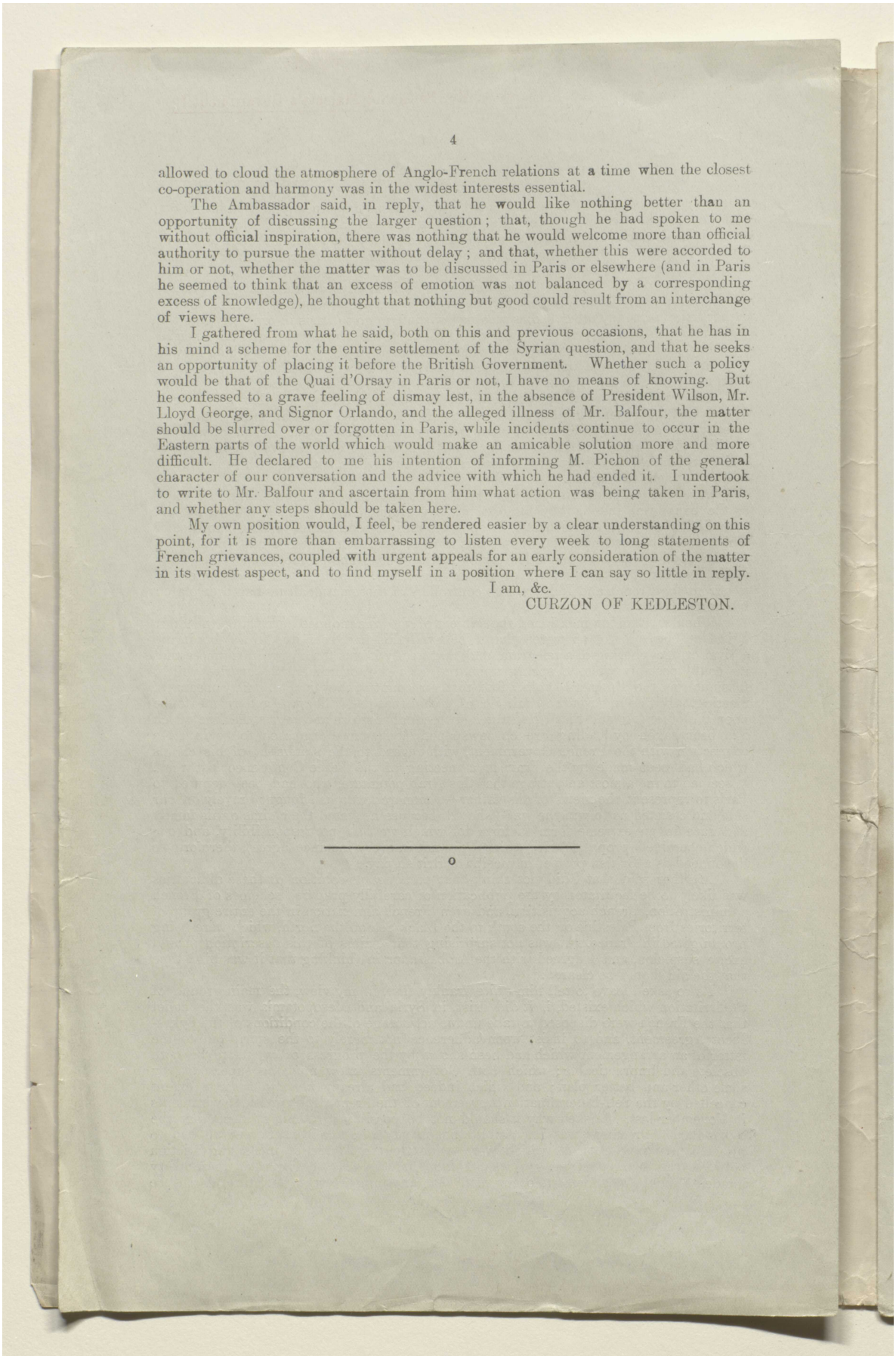

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allowed to cloud the atmosphere of Anglo-French relations at a time when the closest co-operation and harmony was in the widest interests essential.

The Ambassador said, in reply, that he would like nothing better than an opportunity of discussing the larger question; that, though he had spoken to me without official inspiration, there was nothing that he would welcome more than official authority to pursue the matter without delay; and that, whether this were accorded to him or not, whether the matter was to be discussed in Paris or elsewhere (and in Paris he seemed to think that an excess of emotion was not balanced by a corresponding excess of knowledge), he thought that nothing but good could result from an interchange of views here.

I gathered from what he said, both on this and previous occasions, that he has in his mind a scheme for the entire settlement of the Syrian question, and that he seeks an opportunity of placing it before the British Government. Whether such a policy would be that of the Quai d'Orsay in Paris or not, I have no means of knowing. But he confessed to a grave feeling of dismay lest, in the absence of President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, and Signor Orlando, and the alleged illness of Mr. Balfour, the matter should be slurred over or forgotten in Paris, while incidents continue to occur in the Eastern parts of the world which would make an amicable solution more and more difficult. He declared to me his intention of informing M. Pichon of the general character of our conversation and the advice with which he had ended it. I undertook to write to Mr. Balfour and ascertain from him what action was being taken in Paris, and whether any steps should be taken here.

My own position would, I feel, be rendered easier by a clear understanding on this point, for it is more than embarrassing to listen every week to long statements of French grievances, coupled with urgent appeals for an early consideration of the matter in its widest aspect, and to find myself in a position where I can say so little in reply.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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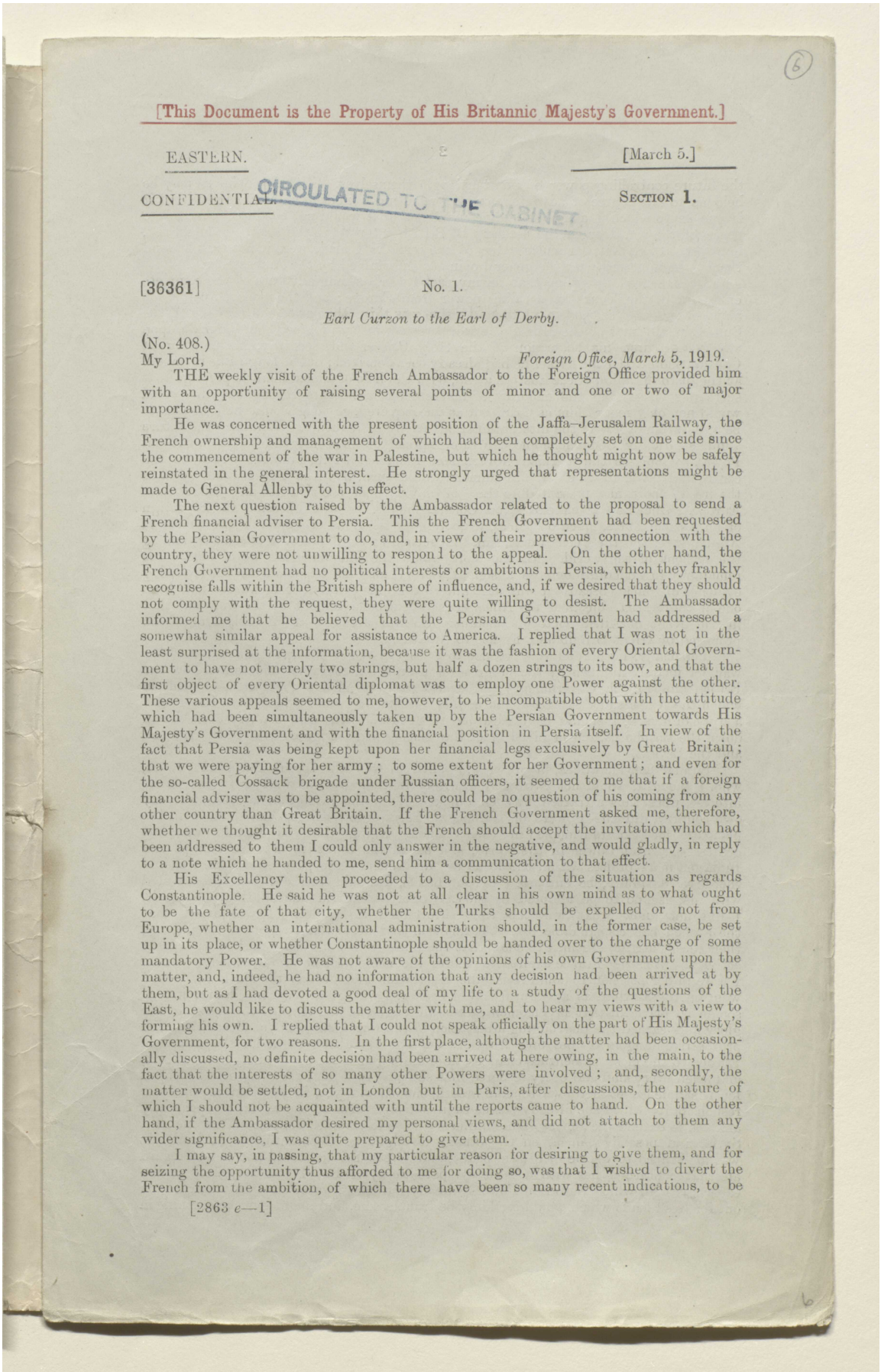

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EASTERN. [March 5.]

CONFIDENTIAL. CIRCULATED TO THE CABINET. SECTION 1.

[36361] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 408.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March 5, 1919.*

THE weekly visit of the French Ambassador to the Foreign Office provided him with an opportunity of raising several points of minor and one or two of major importance.

He was concerned with the present position of the Jaffa–Jerusalem Railway, the French ownership and management of which had been completely set on one side since the commencement of the war in Palestine, but which he thought might now be safely reinstated in the general interest. He strongly urged that representations might be made to General Allenby to this effect.

The next question raised by the Ambassador related to the proposal to send a French financial adviser to Persia. This the French Government had been requested by the Persian Government to do, and, in view of their previous connection with the country, they were not unwilling to respond to the appeal. On the other hand, the French Government had no political interests or ambitions in Persia, which they frankly recognise falls within the British sphere of influence, and, if we desired that they should not comply with the request, they were quite willing to desist. The Ambassador informed me that he believed that the Persian Government had addressed a somewhat similar appeal for assistance to America. I replied that I was not in the least surprised at the information, because it was the fashion of every Oriental Government to have not merely two strings, but half a dozen strings to its bow, and that the first object of every Oriental diplomat was to employ one Power against the other. These various appeals seemed to me, however, to be incompatible both with the attitude which had been simultaneously taken up by the Persian Government towards His Majesty's Government and with the financial position in Persia itself. In view of the fact that Persia was being kept upon her financial legs exclusively by Great Britain; that we were paying for her army; to some extent for her Government; and even for the so-called Cossack brigade under Russian officers, it seemed to me that if a foreign financial adviser was to be appointed, there could be no question of his coming from any other country than Great Britain. If the French Government asked me, therefore, whether we thought it desirable that the French should accept the invitation which had been addressed to them I could only answer in the negative, and would gladly, in reply to a note which he handed to me, send him a communication to that effect.

His Excellency then proceeded to a discussion of the situation as regards Constantinople. He said he was not at all clear in his own mind as to what ought to be the fate of that city, whether the Turks should be expelled or not from Europe, whether an international administration should, in the former case, be set up in its place, or whether Constantinople should be handed over to the charge of some mandatory Power. He was not aware of the opinions of his own Government upon the matter, and, indeed, he had no information that any decision had been arrived at by them, but as I had devoted a good deal of my life to a study of the questions of the East, he would like to discuss the matter with me, and to hear my views with a view to forming his own. I replied that I could not speak officially on the part of His Majesty's Government, for two reasons. In the first place, although the matter had been occasionally discussed, no definite decision had been arrived at here owing, in the main, to the fact that the interests of so many other Powers were involved; and, secondly, the matter would be settled, not in London but in Paris, after discussions, the nature of which I should not be acquainted with until the reports came to hand. On the other hand, if the Ambassador desired my personal views, and did not attach to them any wider significance, I was quite prepared to give them.

I may say, in passing, that my particular reason for desiring to give them, and for seizing the opportunity thus afforded to me for doing so, was that I wished to divert the French from the ambition, of which there have been so many recent indications, to be

[2863 *c*—1]

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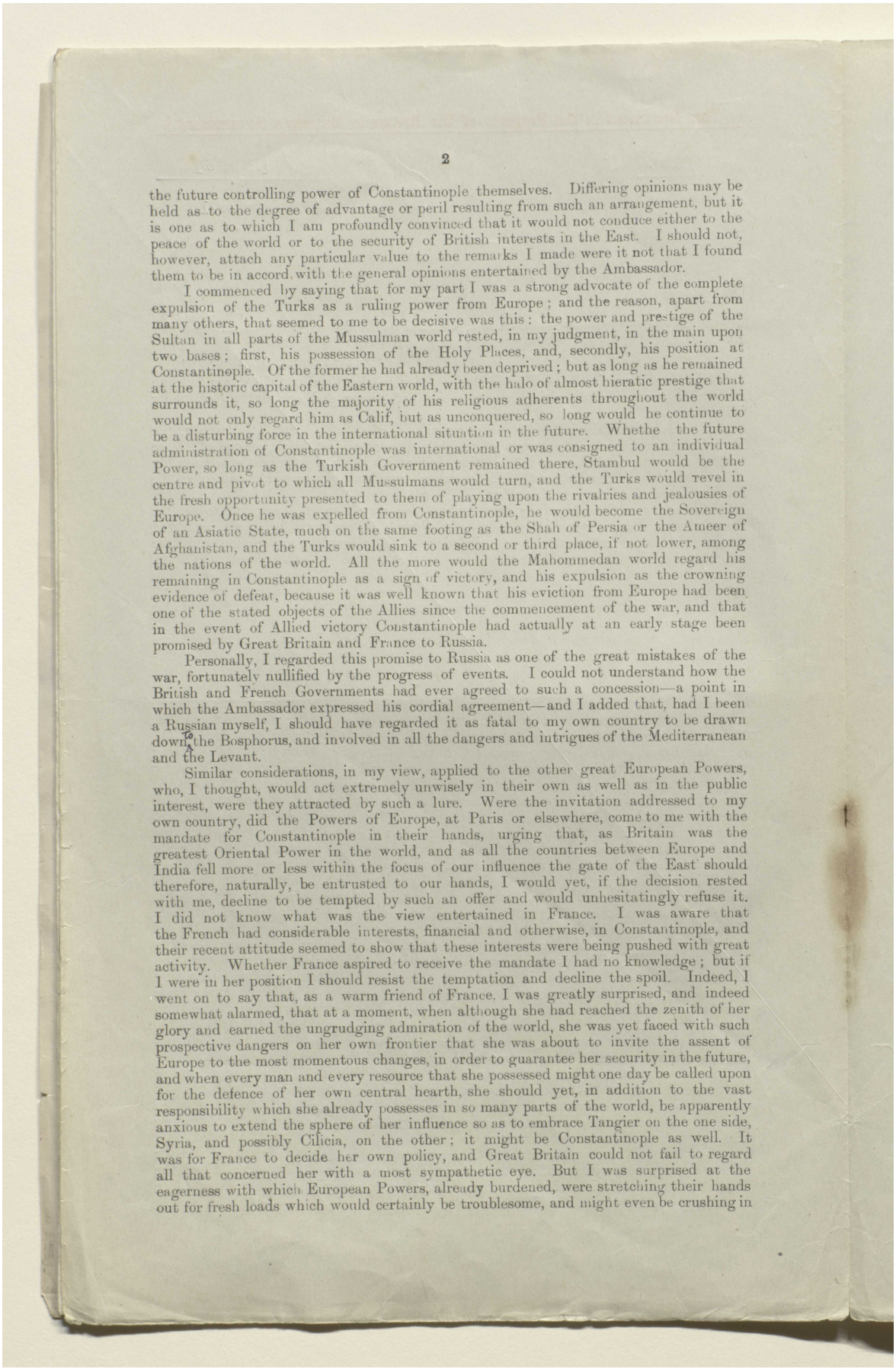

the future controlling power of Constantinople themselves. Differing opinions may be held as to the degree of advantage or peril resulting from such an arrangement, but it is one as to which I am profoundly convinced that it would not conduce either to the peace of the world or to the security of British interests in the East. I should not, however, attach any particular value to the remarks I made were it not that I found them to be in accord with the general opinions entertained by the Ambassador.

I commenced by saying that for my part I was a strong advocate of the complete expulsion of the Turks as a ruling power from Europe; and the reason, apart from many others, that seemed to me to be decisive was this: the power and prestige of the Sultan in all parts of the Mussulman world rested, in my judgment, in the main upon two bases; first, his possession of the Holy Places, and, secondly, his position at Constantinople. Of the former he had already been deprived; but as long as he remained at the historic capital of the Eastern world, with the halo of almost hieratic prestige that surrounds it, so long the majority of his religious adherents throughout the world would not only regard him as Calif, but as unconquered, so long would he continue to be a disturbing force in the international situation in the future. Whethe the future administration of Constantinople was international or was consigned to an individual Power, so long as the Turkish Government remained there, Stambul would be the centre and pivot to which all Mussulmans would turn, and the Turks would revel in the fresh opportunity presented to them of playing upon the rivalries and jealousies of Europe. Once he was expelled from Constantinople, he would become the Sovereign of an Asiatic State, much on the same footing as the Shah of Persia or the Ameer of Afghanistan, and the Turks would sink to a second or third place, if not lower, among the nations of the world. All the more would the Mahommedan world regard his remaining in Constantinople as a sign of victory, and his expulsion as the crowning evidence of defeat, because it was well known that his eviction from Europe had been one of the stated objects of the Allies since the commencement of the war, and that in the event of Allied victory Constantinople had actually at an early stage been promised by Great Britain and France to Russia.

Personally, I regarded this promise to Russia as one of the great mistakes of the war, fortunately nullified by the progress of events. I could not understand how the British and French Governments had ever agreed to such a concession—a point in which the Ambassador expressed his cordial agreement—and I added that, had I been a Russian myself, I should have regarded it as fatal to my own country to be drawn down the Bosphorus, and involved in all the dangers and intrigues of the Mediterranean and the Levant.

Similar considerations, in my view, applied to the other great European Powers, who, I thought, would act extremely unwisely in their own as well as in the public interest, were they attracted by such a lure. Were the invitation addressed to my own country, did the Powers of Europe, at Paris or elsewhere, come to me with the mandate for Constantinople in their hands, urging that, as Britain was the greatest Oriental Power in the world, and as all the countries between Europe and India fell more or less within the focus of our influence the gate of the East should therefore, naturally, be entrusted to our hands, I would yet, if the decision rested with me, decline to be tempted by such an offer and would unhesitatingly refuse it. I did not know what was the view entertained in France. I was aware that the French had considerable interests, financial and otherwise, in Constantinople, and their recent attitude seemed to show that these interests were being pushed with great activity. Whether France aspired to receive the mandate I had no knowledge; but if I were in her position I should resist the temptation and decline the spoil. Indeed, I went on to say that, as a warm friend of France, I was greatly surprised, and indeed somewhat alarmed, that at a moment, when although she had reached the zenith of her glory and earned the ungrudging admiration of the world, she was yet faced with such prospective dangers on her own frontier that she was about to invite the assent of Europe to the most momentous changes, in order to guarantee her security in the future, and when every man and every resource that she possessed might one day be called upon for the defence of her own central hearth, she should yet, in addition to the vast responsibility which she already possesses in so many parts of the world, be apparently anxious to extend the sphere of her influence so as to embrace Tangier on the one side, Syria, and possibly Cilicia, on the other; it might be Constantinople as well. It was for France to decide her own policy, and Great Britain could not fail to regard all that concerned her with a most sympathetic eye. But I was surprised at the eagerness with which European Powers, already burdened, were stretching their hands out for fresh loads which would certainly be troublesome, and might even be crushing in

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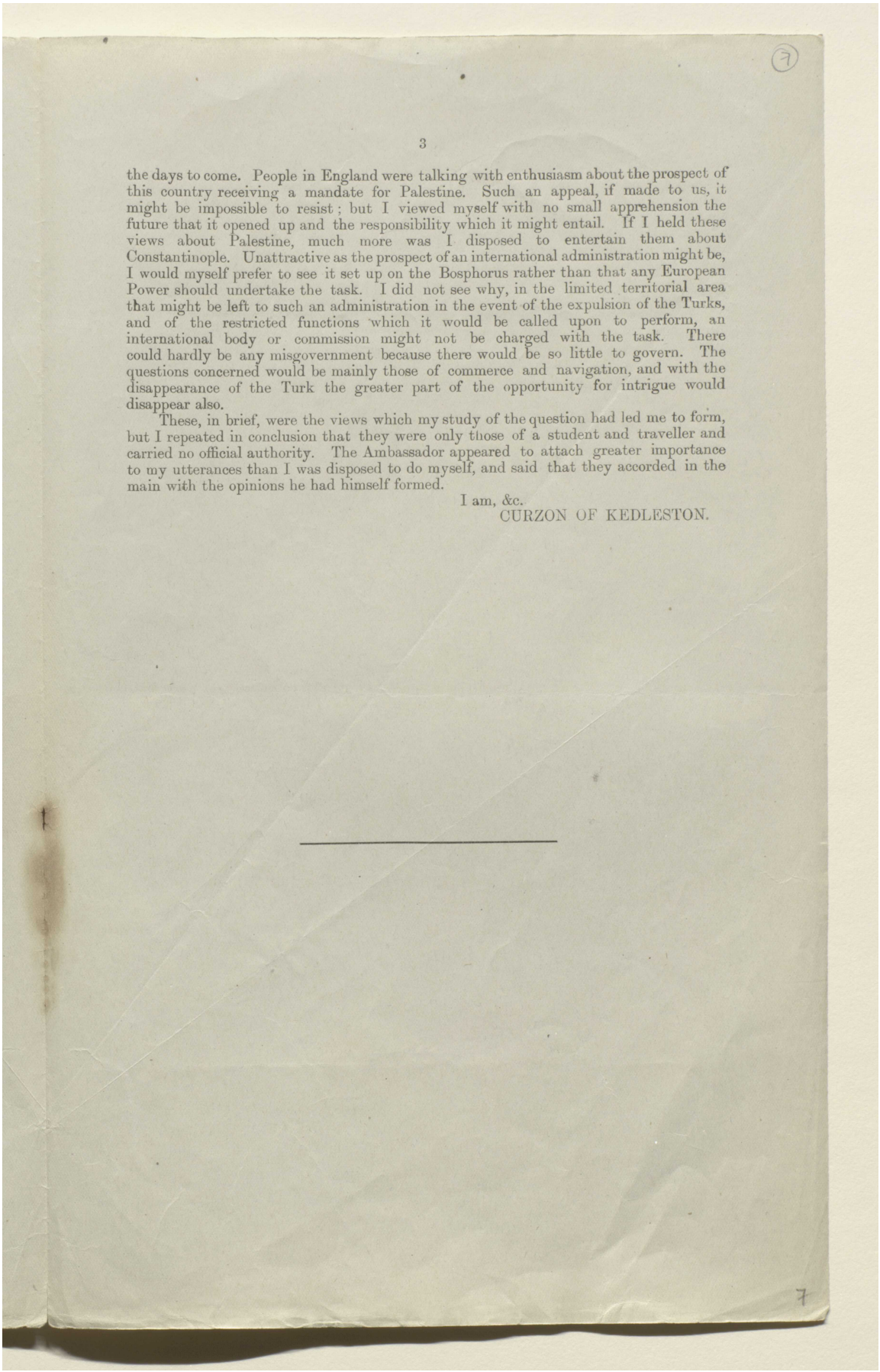

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the days to come. People in England were talking with enthusiasm about the prospect of this country receiving a mandate for Palestine. Such an appeal, if made to us, it might be impossible to resist; but I viewed myself with no small apprehension the future that it opened up and the responsibility which it might entail. If I held these views about Palestine, much more was I disposed to entertain them about Constantinople. Unattractive as the prospect of an international administration might be, I would myself prefer to see it set up on the Bosphorus rather than that any European Power should undertake the task. I did not see why, in the limited territorial area that might be left to such an administration in the event of the expulsion of the Turks, and of the restricted functions which it would be called upon to perform, an international body or commission might not be charged with the task. There could hardly be any misgovernment because there would be so little to govern. The questions concerned would be mainly those of commerce and navigation, and with the disappearance of the Turk the greater part of the opportunity for intrigue would disappear also.

These, in brief, were the views which my study of the question had led me to form, but I repeated in conclusion that they were only those of a student and traveller and carried no official authority. The Ambassador appeared to attach greater importance to my utterances than I was disposed to do myself, and said that they accorded in the main with the opinions he had himself formed.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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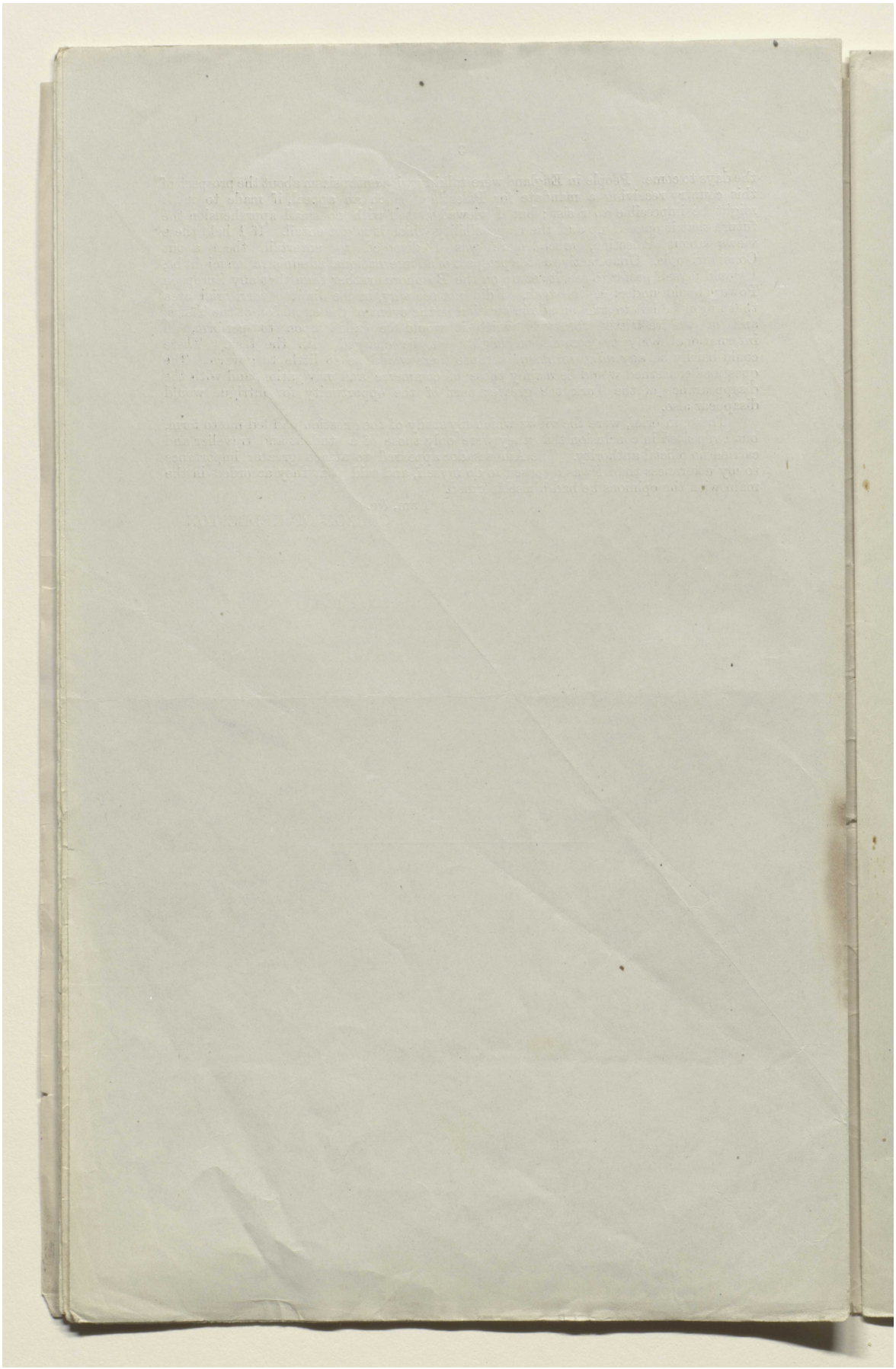

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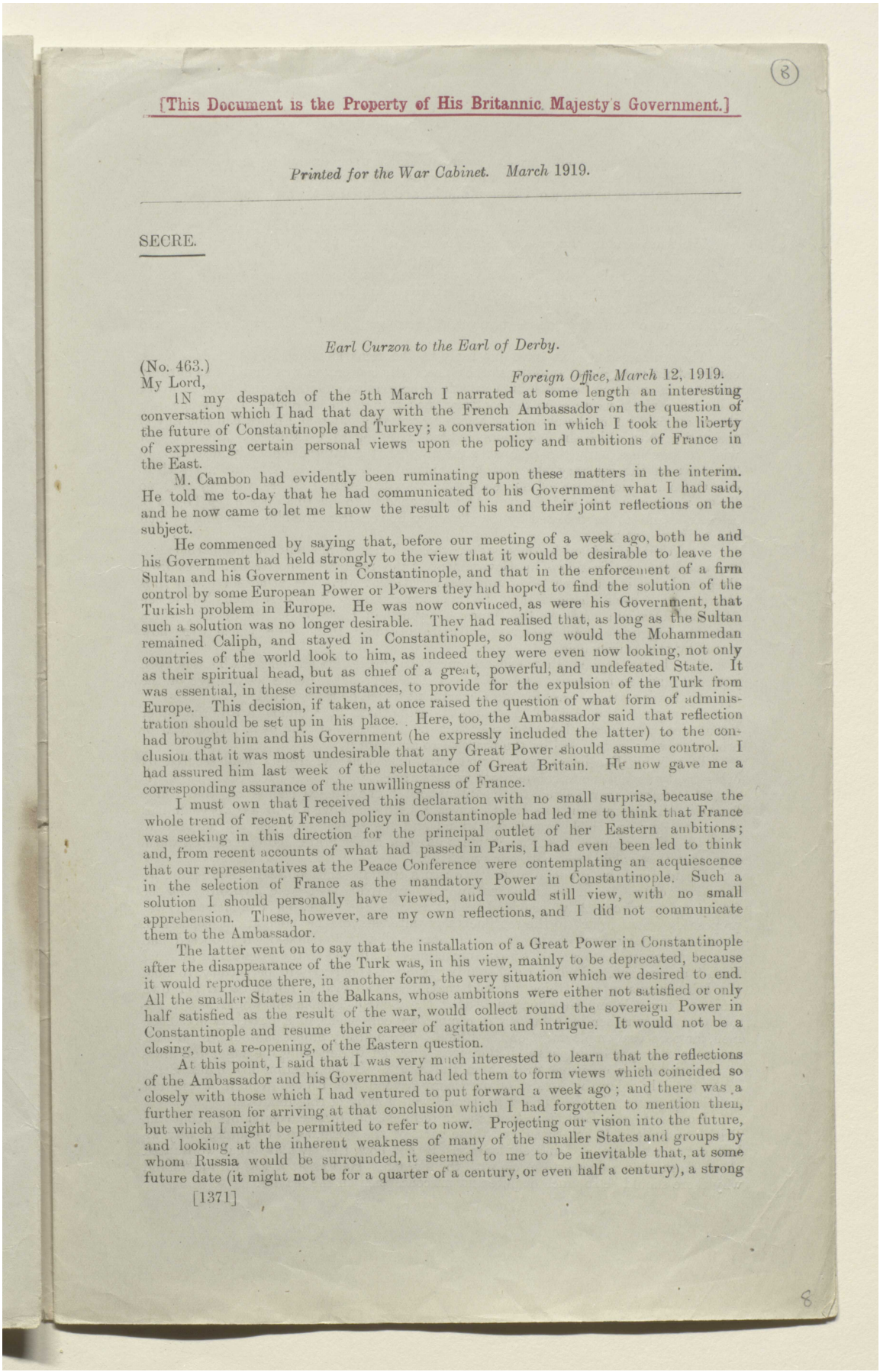

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Printed for the War Cabinet. March 1919.

SECRE.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 463.)

Foreign Office, March 12, 1919.

My Lord,

IN my despatch of the 5th March I narrated at some length an interesting conversation which I had that day with the French Ambassador on the question of the future of Constantinople and Turkey; a conversation in which I took the liberty of expressing certain personal views upon the policy and ambitions of France in the East.

M. Cambon had evidently been ruminating upon these matters in the interim. He told me to-day that he had communicated to his Government what I had said, and he now came to let me know the result of his and their joint reflections on the subject.

He commenced by saying that, before our meeting of a week ago, both he and his Government had held strongly to the view that it would be desirable to leave the Sultan and his Government in Constantinople, and that in the enforcement of a firm control by some European Power or Powers they had hoped to find the solution of the Turkish problem in Europe. He was now convinced, as were his Government, that such a solution was no longer desirable. They had realised that, as long as the Sultan remained Caliph, and stayed in Constantinople, so long would the Mohammedan countries of the world look to him, as indeed they were even now looking, not only as their spiritual head, but as chief of a great, powerful, and undefeated State. It was essential, in these circumstances, to provide for the expulsion of the Turk from Europe. This decision, if taken, at once raised the question of what form of administration should be set up in his place. Here, too, the Ambassador said that reflection had brought him and his Government (he expressly included the latter) to the conclusion that it was most undesirable that any Great Power should assume control. I had assured him last week of the reluctance of Great Britain. He now gave me a corresponding assurance of the unwillingness of France.

I must own that I received this declaration with no small surprise, because the whole trend of recent French policy in Constantinople had led me to think that France was seeking in this direction for the principal outlet of her Eastern ambitions; and, from recent accounts of what had passed in Paris, I had even been led to think that our representatives at the Peace Conference were contemplating an acquiescence in the selection of France as the mandatory Power in Constantinople. Such a solution I should personally have viewed, and would still view, with no small apprehension. These, however, are my own reflections, and I did not communicate them to the Ambassador.

The latter went on to say that the installation of a Great Power in Constantinople after the disappearance of the Turk was, in his view, mainly to be deprecated, because it would reproduce there, in another form, the very situation which we desired to end. All the smaller States in the Balkans, whose ambitions were either not satisfied or only half satisfied as the result of the war, would collect round the sovereign Power in Constantinople and resume their career of agitation and intrigue. It would not be a closing, but a re-opening, of the Eastern question.

At this point, I said that I was very much interested to learn that the reflections of the Ambassador and his Government had led them to form views which coincided so closely with those which I had ventured to put forward a week ago; and there was a further reason for arriving at that conclusion which I had forgotten to mention then, but which I might be permitted to refer to now. Projecting our vision into the future, and looking at the inherent weakness of many of the smaller States and groups by whom Russia would be surrounded, it seemed to me to be inevitable that, at some future date (it might not be for a quarter of a century, or even half a century), a strong

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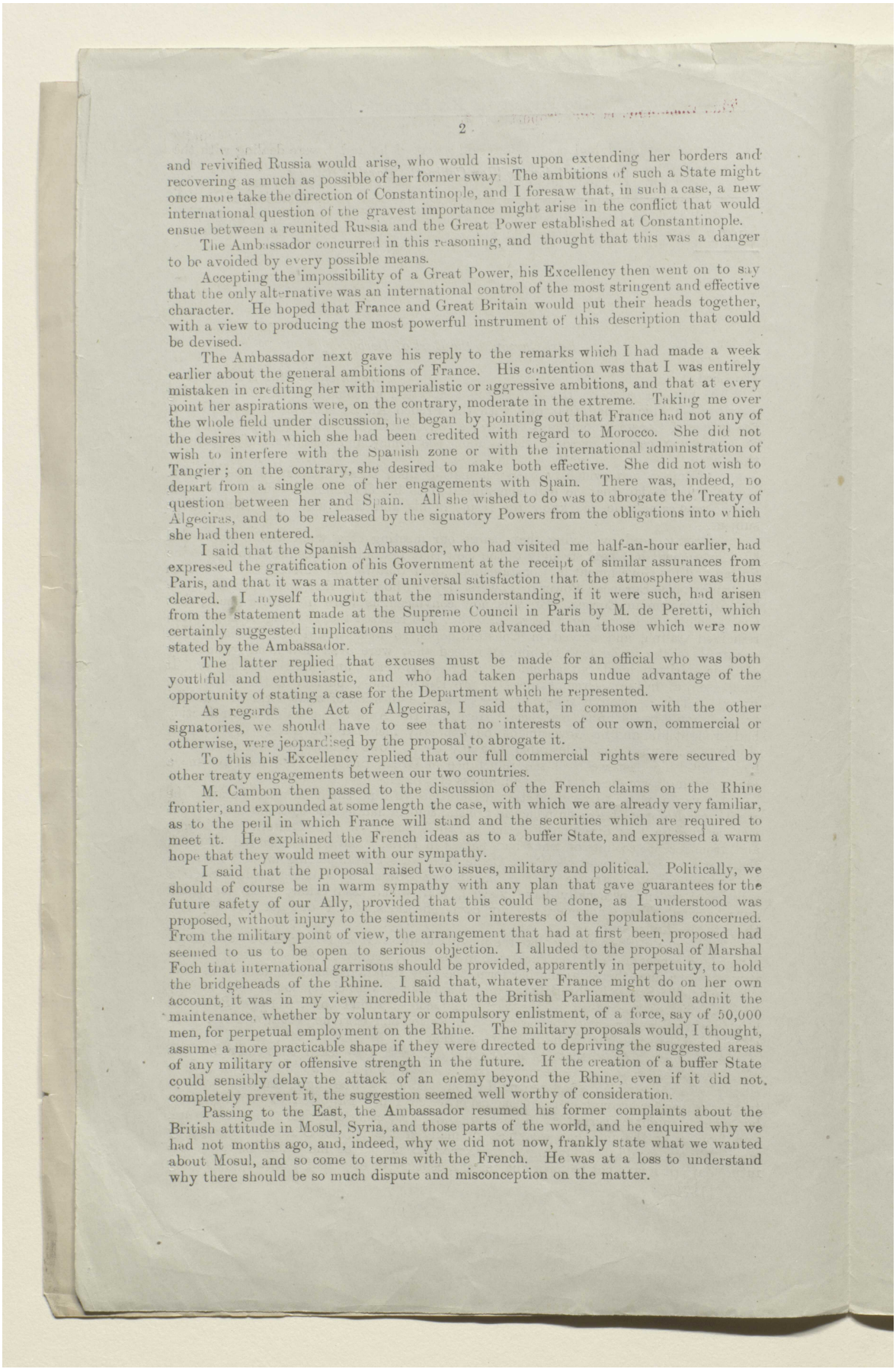

and revivified Russia would arise, who would insist upon extending her borders and recovering as much as possible of her former sway. The ambitions of such a State might once more take the direction of Constantinople, and I foresaw that, in such a case, a new international question of the gravest importance might arise in the conflict that would ensue between a reunited Russia and the Great Power established at Constantinople.

The Ambassador concurred in this reasoning, and thought that this was a danger to be avoided by every possible means.

Accepting the impossibility of a Great Power, his Excellency then went on to say that the only alternative was an international control of the most stringent and effective character. He hoped that France and Great Britain would put their heads together, with a view to producing the most powerful instrument of this description that could be devised.

The Ambassador next gave his reply to the remarks which I had made a week earlier about the general ambitions of France. His contention was that I was entirely mistaken in crediting her with imperialistic or aggressive ambitions, and that at every point her aspirations were, on the contrary, moderate in the extreme. Taking me over the whole field under discussion, he began by pointing out that France had not any of the desires with which she had been credited with regard to Morocco. She did not wish to interfere with the Spanish zone or with the international administration of Tangier; on the contrary, she desired to make both effective. She did not wish to depart from a single one of her engagements with Spain. There was, indeed, no question between her and Spain. All she wished to do was to abrogate the Treaty of Algeciras, and to be released by the signatory Powers from the obligations into which she had then entered.

I said that the Spanish Ambassador, who had visited me half-an-hour earlier, had expressed the gratification of his Government at the receipt of similar assurances from Paris, and that it was a matter of universal satisfaction that the atmosphere was thus cleared. I myself thought that the misunderstanding, if it were such, had arisen from the statement made at the Supreme Council in Paris by M. de Peretti, which certainly suggested implications much more advanced than those which were now stated by the Ambassador.

The latter replied that excuses must be made for an official who was both youthful and enthusiastic, and who had taken perhaps undue advantage of the opportunity of stating a case for the Department which he represented.

As regards the Act of Algeciras, I said that, in common with the other signatories, we should have to see that no interests of our own, commercial or otherwise, were jeopardised by the proposal to abrogate it.

To this his Excellency replied that our full commercial rights were secured by other treaty engagements between our two countries.

M. Cambon then passed to the discussion of the French claims on the Rhine frontier, and expounded at some length the case, with which we are already very familiar, as to the peril in which France will stand and the securities which are required to meet it. He explained the French ideas as to a buffer State, and expressed a warm hope that they would meet with our sympathy.

I said that the proposal raised two issues, military and political. Politically, we should of course be in warm sympathy with any plan that gave guarantees for the future safety of our Ally, provided that this could be done, as I understood was proposed, without injury to the sentiments or interests of the populations concerned. From the military point of view, the arrangement that had at first been proposed had seemed to us to be open to serious objection. I alluded to the proposal of Marshal Foch that international garrisons should be provided, apparently in perpetuity, to hold the bridgeheads of the Rhine. I said that, whatever France might do on her own account, it was in my view incredible that the British Parliament would admit the maintenance, whether by voluntary or compulsory enlistment, of a force, say of 50,000 men, for perpetual employment on the Rhine. The military proposals would, I thought, assume a more practicable shape if they were directed to depriving the suggested areas of any military or offensive strength in the future. If the creation of a buffer State could sensibly delay the attack of an enemy beyond the Rhine, even if it did not completely prevent it, the suggestion seemed well worthy of consideration.

Passing to the East, the Ambassador resumed his former complaints about the British attitude in Mosul, Syria, and those parts of the world, and he enquired why we had not months ago, and, indeed, why we did not now, frankly state what we wanted about Mosul, and so come to terms with the French. He was at a loss to understand why there should be so much dispute and misconception on the matter.

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I repeated what I had once before said; that, if he and I were dealing with the matter in Paris, I believed that we could settle it without difficulty; but that, as the matter was not in our hands in London, it did not seem to me of much use discussing it here. On the other hand, as His Excellency was always complaining of British policy and action, I should like to take the opportunity of saying two things to him. The first was this: our interest in Mosul arose, not from any *à priori* desire to possess or control that region (for two years ago no one dreamt that such a *dénouement* was likely), but solely from the fact that Mosul was united, physically, politically, and administratively, with Mesopotamia; that the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet declined to be severed from the populations of Middle and Lower Mesopotamia; and that if, as seemed likely, Great Britain was to be entrusted with the future control of Mesopotamia, Mosul, whether we liked it or not, must inevitably form a part of the charge. The French knew this as well as we did, and in these circumstances I was at a loss to understand why they continued to make such a fuss about the matter. Their attitude appeared to me to be due to what I could not help regarding as a mistaken view of both the validity and the feasibility of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. So long as the French insisted on attaching literal and textual value to that document these misunderstandings must arise. But why not admit at once, as His Excellency had practically done in conversation with me, that as an Agreement it was utterly impracticable and out-of-date, and that no real settlement could be based on its provisions. The second point that I wished to bring to the Ambassador's attention was the French attitude about Syria, which I found it equally difficult to understand, and which was the justification of my remarks last week. Assuming that the joint Anglo-French Declaration of last November, by which we accepted the principle of self-determination in settling the future of these regions, was to be effective, how could the French possibly maintain what I understood to be their present attitude with regard to Syria? If the Ambassador thought that the British had any particular desire to be at Damascus or Homs or Aleppo, he was greatly mistaken. What we did desire was that the Arab race should not be broken up, and that they should be allowed a voice in the determination of their own future. Making every allowance for the sentimental, historical, and traditional interests of France in that part of the world, how could she defend the creation of a French State at Damascus unless the Arabs desired it? Only yesterday, I had read a report from a British officer just returned from that city to the effect that, if a plebiscite of its inhabitants were now taken, not 5 per cent. would vote in favour of the French. Personally, I did not so much apprehend the solutions of the present as I did the prospects of the future. Would it be a good thing for France herself that she should commence her Syrian career by so marked an infringement of the principles upon which she had agreed to start it? Still more, assuming these difficulties to be overcome, and a French Dominion satisfying to the full the aspirations of France to be created in that district, was it desirable that an almost certain source of friction in the Arab world should be created for the future between ourselves and France; a close, continuous, and loyal union between whom was essential to the future peace of mankind?

The only other subject discussed by the Ambassador and myself was the future of Asia Minor. His Excellency did not seem clear what fate was contemplated for these regions in the Paris discussions.

I said that I had imagined that, if the Turk was expelled from Constantinople, he would be set up on a diminished throne in Asia Minor; and that for my part I would gladly leave him in such a position, with reduced territory, diminished powers, but an undivided sovereignty. On the other hand, it seemed to me from the reports received from Paris that the Sick Man was not even to be left alone in the reduced quarters to which he was to be banished. Greece was to be brought in at Smyrna, Italy at Adalia and Konia, and France in Cilicia. The Turk was for all time to be patronised or bullied by European Powers, and his Asiatic inheritance was to be as effectively parcelled out as his European inheritance was to be destroyed. If these plans were pursued, I had some fear that, having got rid, or tried to get rid, of one Eastern problem in Europe, we were on the verge of creating another in Asia Minor; a prospect which filled me with no small alarm for the future.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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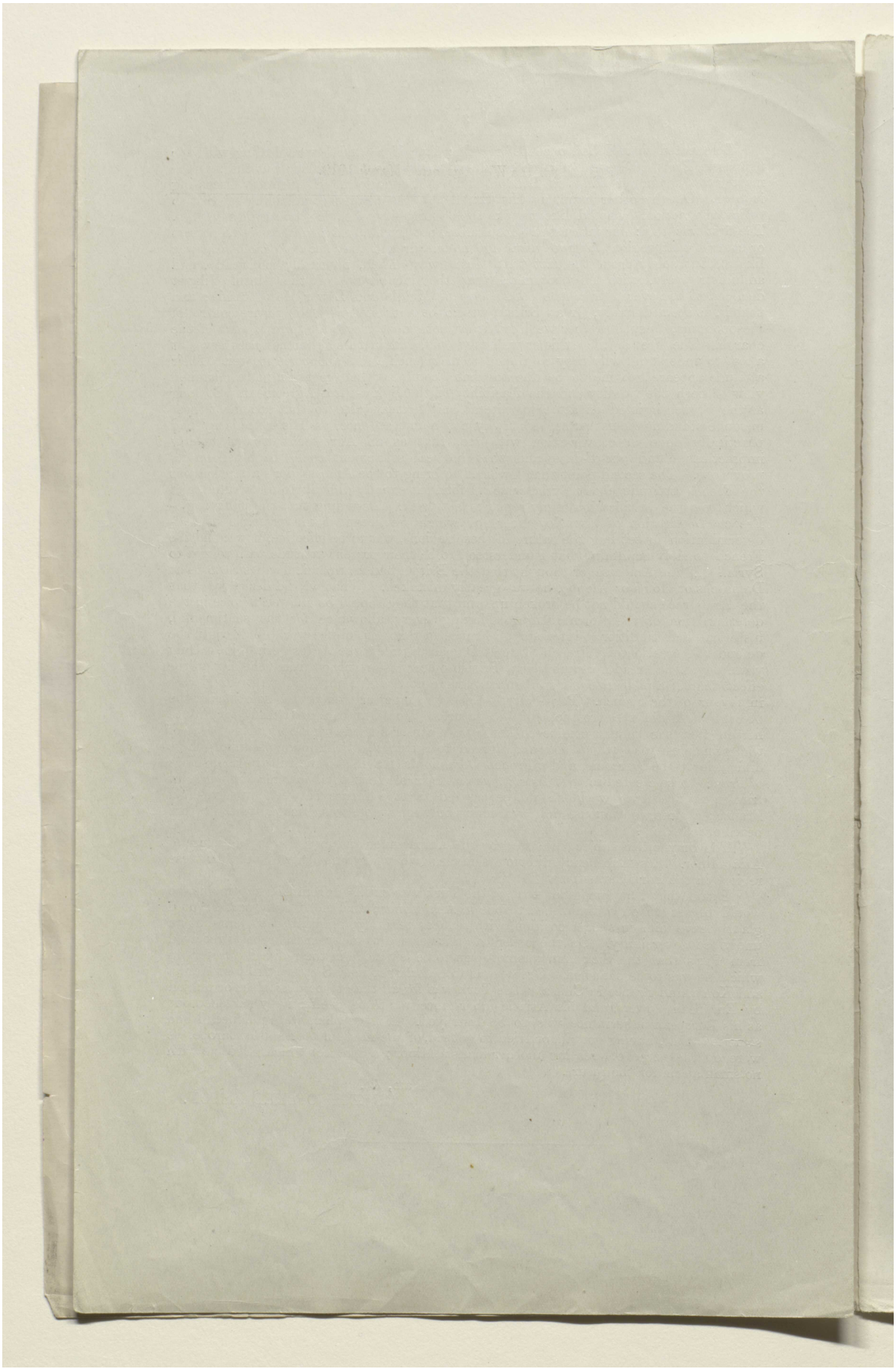

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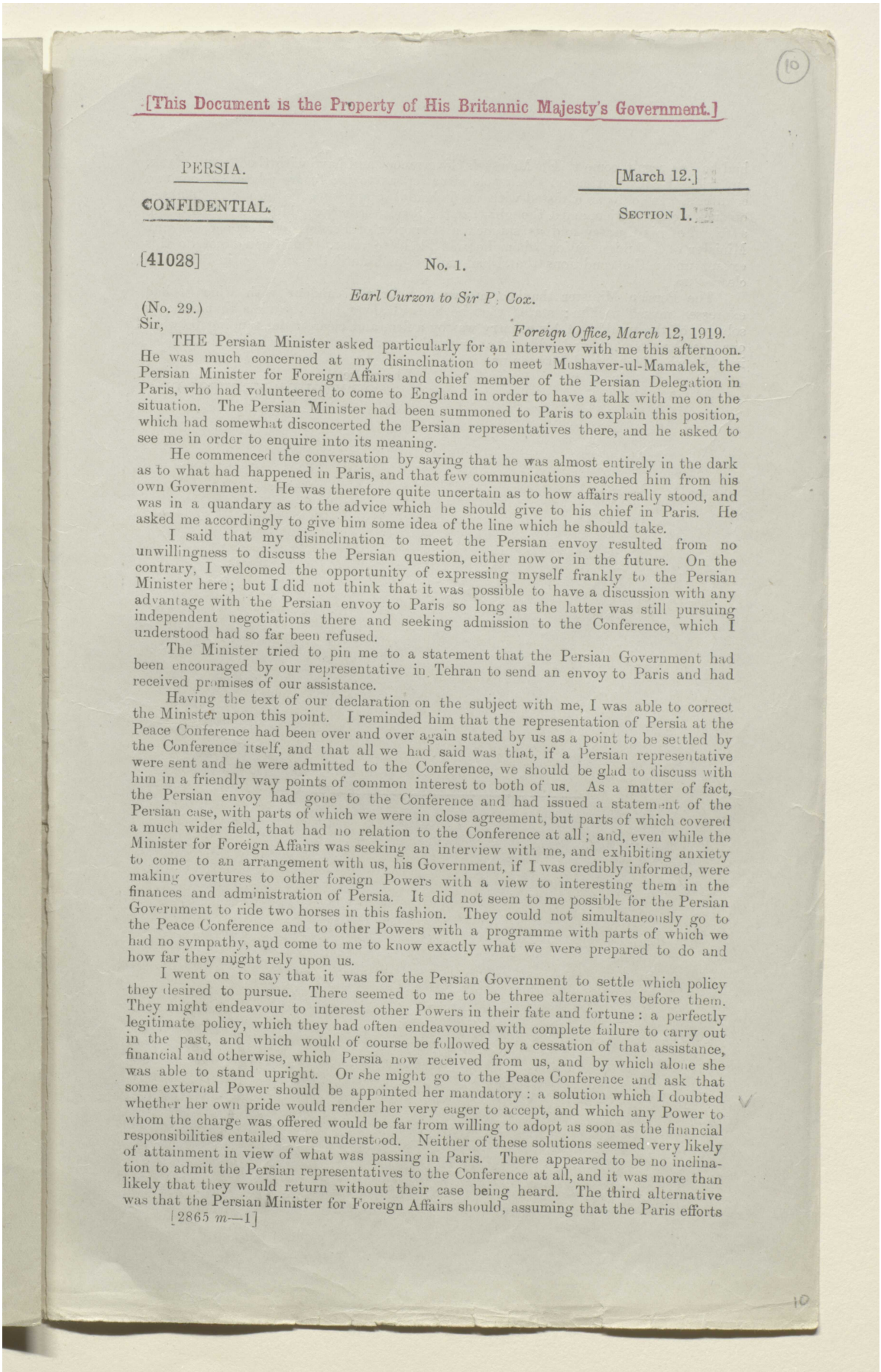

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PERSIA. [March 12.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[41028]

No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir P. Cox.

(No. 29.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 12, 1919.*

THE Persian Minister asked particularly for an interview with me this afternoon. He was much concerned at my disinclination to meet Mushaver-ul-Mamalek, the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs and chief member of the Persian Delegation in Paris, who had volunteered to come to England in order to have a talk with me on the situation. The Persian Minister had been summoned to Paris to explain this position, which had somewhat disconcerted the Persian representatives there, and he asked to see me in order to enquire into its meaning.

He commenced the conversation by saying that he was almost entirely in the dark as to what had happened in Paris, and that few communications reached him from his own Government. He was therefore quite uncertain as to how affairs really stood, and was in a quandary as to the advice which he should give to his chief in Paris. He asked me accordingly to give him some idea of the line which he should take.

I said that my disinclination to meet the Persian envoy resulted from no unwillingness to discuss the Persian question, either now or in the future. On the contrary, I welcomed the opportunity of expressing myself frankly to the Persian Minister here; but I did not think that it was possible to have a discussion with any advantage with the Persian envoy to Paris so long as the latter was still pursuing independent negotiations there and seeking admission to the Conference, which I understood had so far been refused.

The Minister tried to pin me to a statement that the Persian Government had been encouraged by our representative in Tehran to send an envoy to Paris and had received promises of our assistance.

Having the text of our declaration on the subject with me, I was able to correct the Minister upon this point. I reminded him that the representation of Persia at the Peace Conference had been over and over again stated by us as a point to be settled by the Conference itself, and that all we had said was that, if a Persian representative were sent and he were admitted to the Conference, we should be glad to discuss with him in a friendly way points of common interest to both of us. As a matter of fact, the Persian envoy had gone to the Conference and had issued a statement of the Persian case, with parts of which we were in close agreement, but parts of which covered a much wider field, that had no relation to the Conference at all; and, even while the Minister for Foreign Affairs was seeking an interview with me, and exhibiting anxiety to come to an arrangement with us, his Government, if I was credibly informed, were making overtures to other foreign Powers with a view to interesting them in the finances and administration of Persia. It did not seem to me possible for the Persian Government to ride two horses in this fashion. They could not simultaneously go to the Peace Conference and to other Powers with a programme with parts of which we had no sympathy, and come to me to know exactly what we were prepared to do and how far they might rely upon us.

I went on to say that it was for the Persian Government to settle which policy they desired to pursue. There seemed to me to be three alternatives before them. They might endeavour to interest other Powers in their fate and fortune: a perfectly legitimate policy, which they had often endeavoured with complete failure to carry out in the past, and which would of course be followed by a cessation of that assistance, financial and otherwise, which Persia now received from us, and by which alone she was able to stand upright. Or she might go to the Peace Conference and ask that some external Power should be appointed her mandatory: a solution which I doubted whether her own pride would render her very eager to accept, and which any Power to whom the charge was offered would be far from willing to adopt as soon as the financial responsibilities entailed were understood. Neither of these solutions seemed very likely of attainment in view of what was passing in Paris. There appeared to be no inclination to admit the Persian representatives to the Conference at all, and it was more than likely that they would return without their case being heard. The third alternative was that the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs should, assuming that the Paris efforts

[2865 *m*—1]

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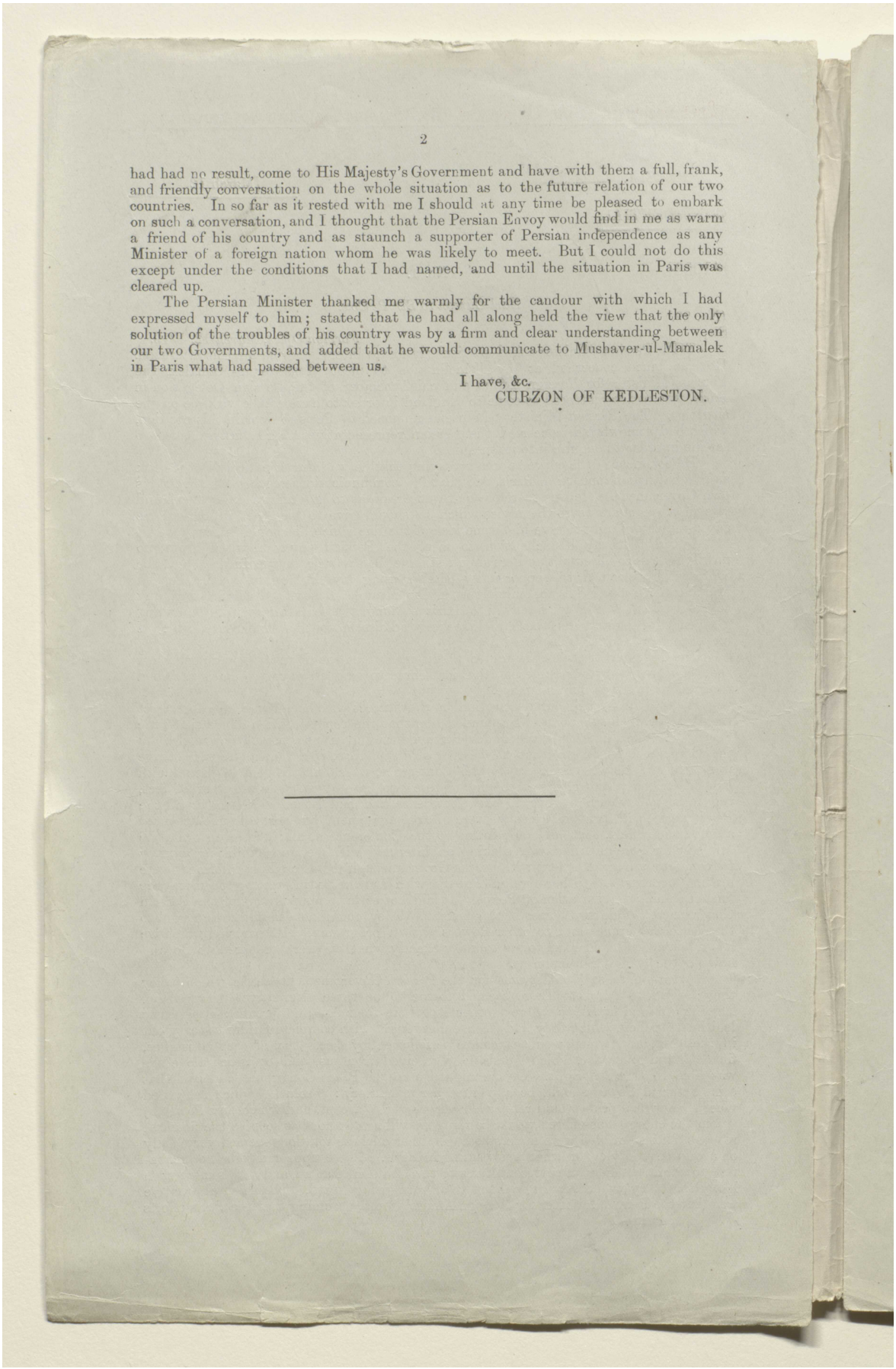

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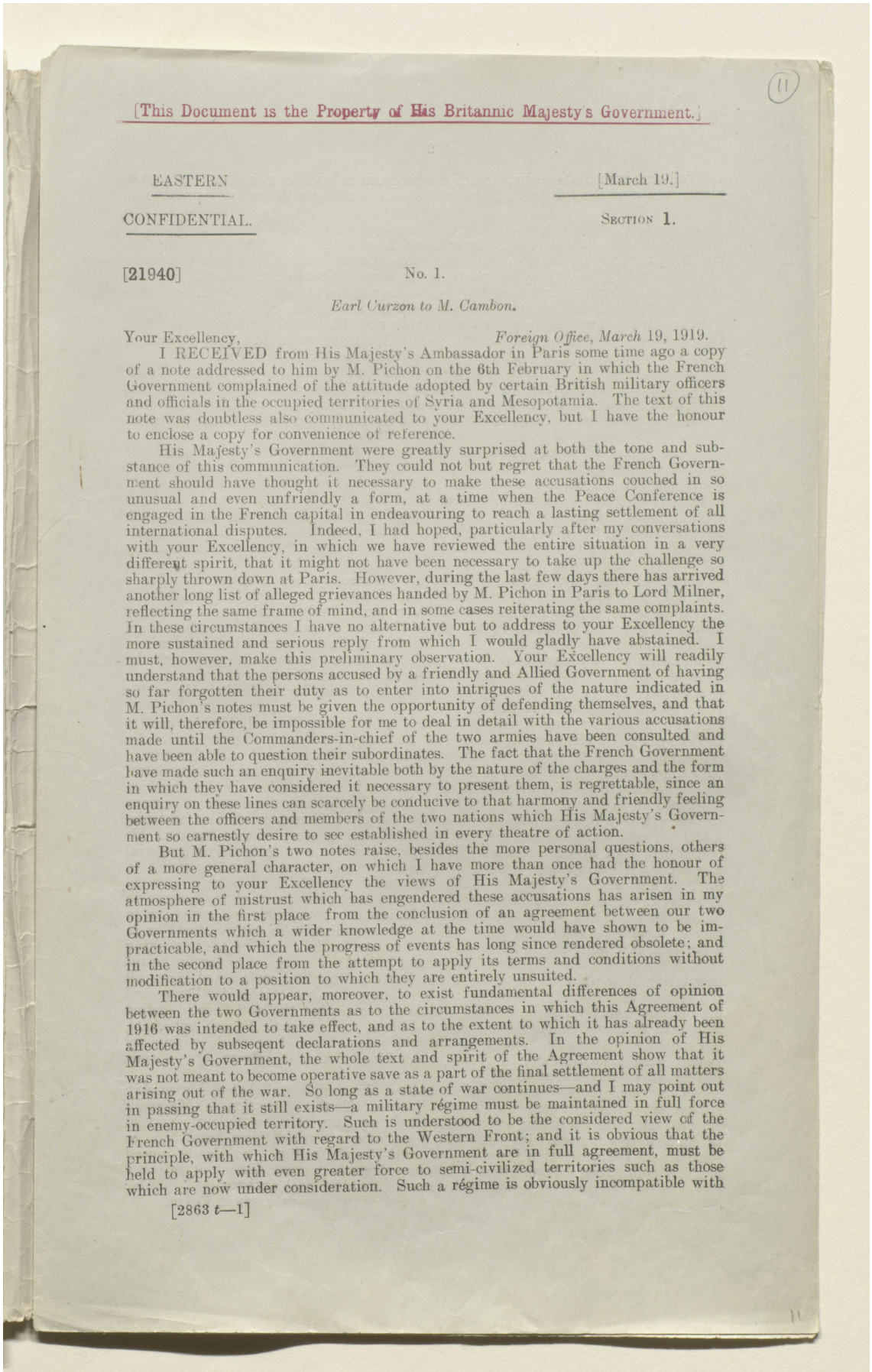
had had no result, come to His Majesty's Government and have with them a full, frank, and friendly conversation on the whole situation as to the future relation of our two countries. In so far as it rested with me I should at any time be pleased to embark on such a conversation, and I thought that the Persian Envoy would find in me as warm a friend of his country and as staunch a supporter of Persian independence as any Minister of a foreign nation whom he was likely to meet. But I could not do this except under the conditions that I had named, and until the situation in Paris was cleared up.

The Persian Minister thanked me warmly for the candour with which I had expressed myself to him; stated that he had all along held the view that the only solution of the troubles of his country was by a firm and clear understanding between our two Governments, and added that he would communicate to Mushaver-ul-Mamalek in Paris what had passed between us.

I have, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.



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EASTERN [March 19.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[21940] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to M. Cambon.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, March* 19, 1919.

I RECEIVED from His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris some time ago a copy of a note addressed to him by M. Pichon on the 6th February in which the French Government complained of the attitude adopted by certain British military officers and officials in the occupied territories of Syria and Mesopotamia. The text of this note was doubtless also communicated to your Excellency, but I have the honour to enclose a copy for convenience of reference.

His Majesty's Government were greatly surprised at both the tone and substance of this communication. They could not but regret that the French Government should have thought it necessary to make these accusations couched in so unusual and even unfriendly a form, at a time when the Peace Conference is engaged in the French capital in endeavouring to reach a lasting settlement of all international disputes. Indeed, I had hoped, particularly after my conversations with your Excellency, in which we have reviewed the entire situation in a very different spirit, that it might not have been necessary to take up the challenge so sharply thrown down at Paris. However, during the last few days there has arrived another long list of alleged grievances handed by M. Pichon in Paris to Lord Milner, reflecting the same frame of mind, and in some cases reiterating the same complaints. In these circumstances I have no alternative but to address to your Excellency the more sustained and serious reply from which I would gladly have abstained. I must, however, make this preliminary observation. Your Excellency will readily understand that the persons accused by a friendly and Allied Government of having so far forgotten their duty as to enter into intrigues of the nature indicated in M. Pichon's notes must be given the opportunity of defending themselves, and that it will, therefore, be impossible for me to deal in detail with the various accusations made until the Commanders-in-chief of the two armies have been consulted and have been able to question their subordinates. The fact that the French Government have made such an enquiry inevitable both by the nature of the charges and the form in which they have considered it necessary to present them, is regrettable, since an enquiry on these lines can scarcely be conducive to that harmony and friendly feeling between the officers and members of the two nations which His Majesty's Government so earnestly desire to see established in every theatre of action.

But M. Pichon's two notes raise, besides the more personal questions, others of a more general character, on which I have more than once had the honour of expressing to your Excellency the views of His Majesty's Government. The atmosphere of mistrust which has engendered these accusations has arisen in my opinion in the first place from the conclusion of an agreement between our two Governments which a wider knowledge at the time would have shown to be impracticable, and which the progress of events has long since rendered obsolete; and in the second place from the attempt to apply its terms and conditions without modification to a position to which they are entirely unsuited.

There would appear, moreover, to exist fundamental differences of opinion between the two Governments as to the circumstances in which this Agreement of 1916 was intended to take effect, and as to the extent to which it has already been affected by subseqent declarations and arrangements. In the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the whole text and spirit of the Agreement show that it was not meant to become operative save as a part of the final settlement of all matters arising out of the war. So long as a state of war continues—and I may point out in passing that it still exists—a military régime must be maintained in full force in enemy-occupied territory. Such is understood to be the considered view of the French Government with regard to the Western Front; and it is obvious that the principle, with which His Majesty's Government are in full agreement, must be held to apply with even greater force to semi-civilized territories such as those which are now under consideration. Such a régime is obviously incompatible with

[2863 *t*—1]

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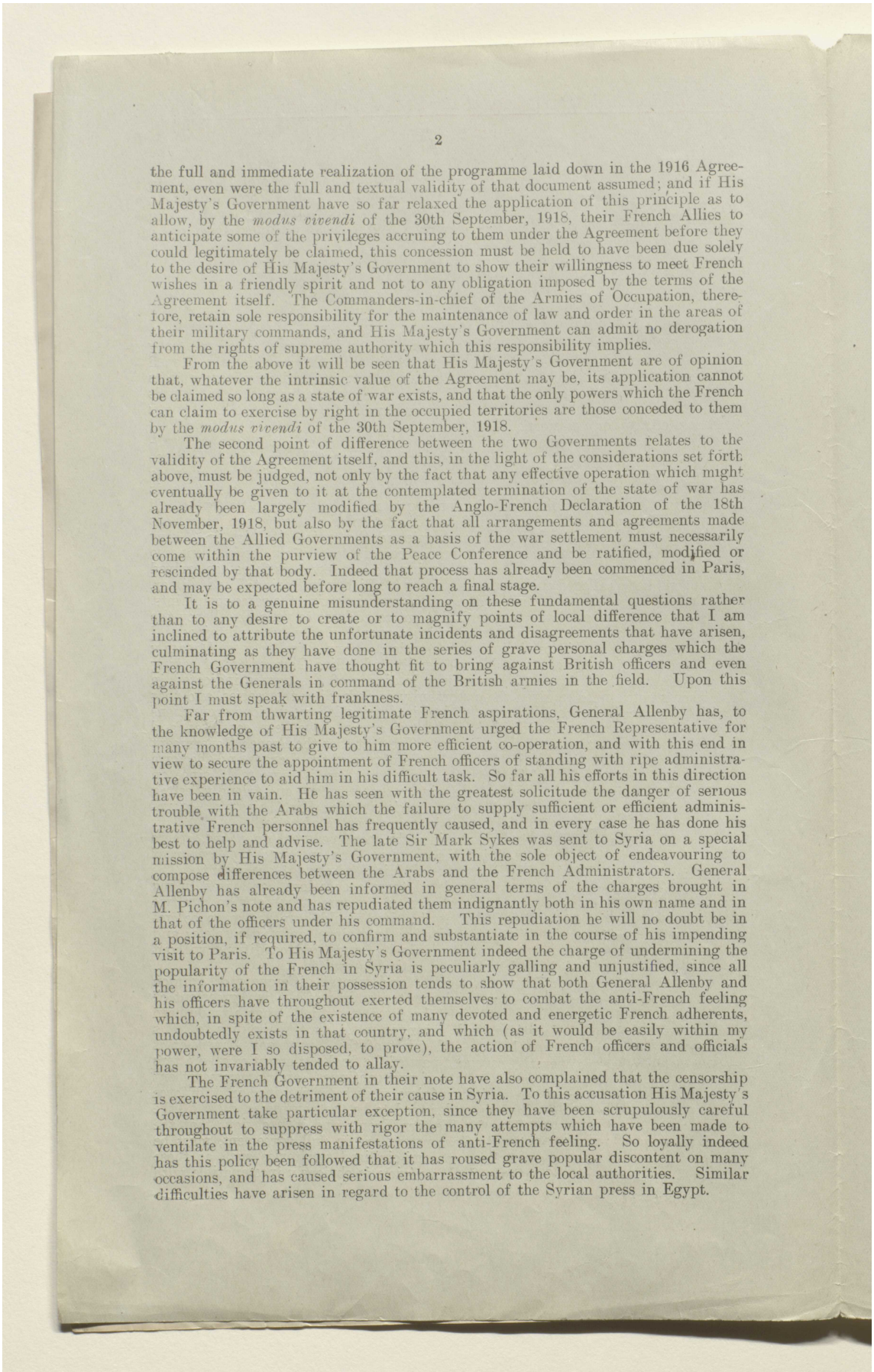

the full and immediate realization of the programme laid down in the 1916 Agreement, even were the full and textual validity of that document assumed; and if His Majesty's Government have so far relaxed the application of this principle as to allow, by the *modus vivendi* of the 30th September, 1918, their French Allies to anticipate some of the privileges accruing to them under the Agreement before they could legitimately be claimed, this concession must be held to have been due solely to the desire of His Majesty's Government to show their willingness to meet French wishes in a friendly spirit and not to any obligation imposed by the terms of the Agreement itself. The Commanders-in-chief of the Armies of Occupation, therefore, retain sole responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in the areas of their military commands, and His Majesty's Government can admit no derogation from the rights of supreme authority which this responsibility implies.

From the above it will be seen that His Majesty's Government are of opinion that, whatever the intrinsic value of the Agreement may be, its application cannot be claimed so long as a state of war exists, and that the only powers which the French can claim to exercise by right in the occupied territories are those conceded to them by the *modus vivendi* of the 30th September, 1918.

The second point of difference between the two Governments relates to the validity of the Agreement itself, and this, in the light of the considerations set forth above, must be judged, not only by the fact that any effective operation which might eventually be given to it at the contemplated termination of the state of war has already been largely modified by the Anglo-French Declaration of the 18th November, 1918, but also by the fact that all arrangements and agreements made between the Allied Governments as a basis of the war settlement must necessarily come within the purview of the Peace Conference and be ratified, modified or rescinded by that body. Indeed that process has already been commenced in Paris, and may be expected before long to reach a final stage.

It is to a genuine misunderstanding on these fundamental questions rather than to any desire to create or to magnify points of local difference that I am inclined to attribute the unfortunate incidents and disagreements that have arisen, culminating as they have done in the series of grave personal charges which the French Government have thought fit to bring against British officers and even against the Generals in command of the British armies in the field. Upon this point I must speak with frankness.

Far from thwarting legitimate French aspirations, General Allenby has, to the knowledge of His Majesty's Government urged the French Representative for many months past to give to him more efficient co-operation, and with this end in view to secure the appointment of French officers of standing with ripe administrative experience to aid him in his difficult task. So far all his efforts in this direction have been in vain. He has seen with the greatest solicitude the danger of serious trouble with the Arabs which the failure to supply sufficient or efficient administrative French personnel has frequently caused, and in every case he has done his best to help and advise. The late Sir Mark Sykes was sent to Syria on a special mission by His Majesty's Government, with the sole object of endeavouring to compose differences between the Arabs and the French Administrators. General Allenby has already been informed in general terms of the charges brought in M. Pichon's note and has repudiated them indignantly both in his own name and in that of the officers under his command. This repudiation he will no doubt be in a position, if required, to confirm and substantiate in the course of his impending visit to Paris. To His Majesty's Government indeed the charge of undermining the popularity of the French in Syria is peculiarly galling and unjustified, since all the information in their possession tends to show that both General Allenby and his officers have throughout exerted themselves to combat the anti-French feeling which, in spite of the existence of many devoted and energetic French adherents, undoubtedly exists in that country, and which (as it would be easily within my power, were I so disposed, to prove), the action of French officers and officials has not invariably tended to allay.

The French Government in their note have also complained that the censorship is exercised to the detriment of their cause in Syria. To this accusation His Majesty's Government take particular exception, since they have been scrupulously careful throughout to suppress with rigor the many attempts which have been made to ventilate in the press manifestations of anti-French feeling. So loyally indeed has this policy been followed that it has roused grave popular discontent on many occasions, and has caused serious embarrassment to the local authorities. Similar difficulties have arisen in regard to the control of the Syrian press in Egypt.

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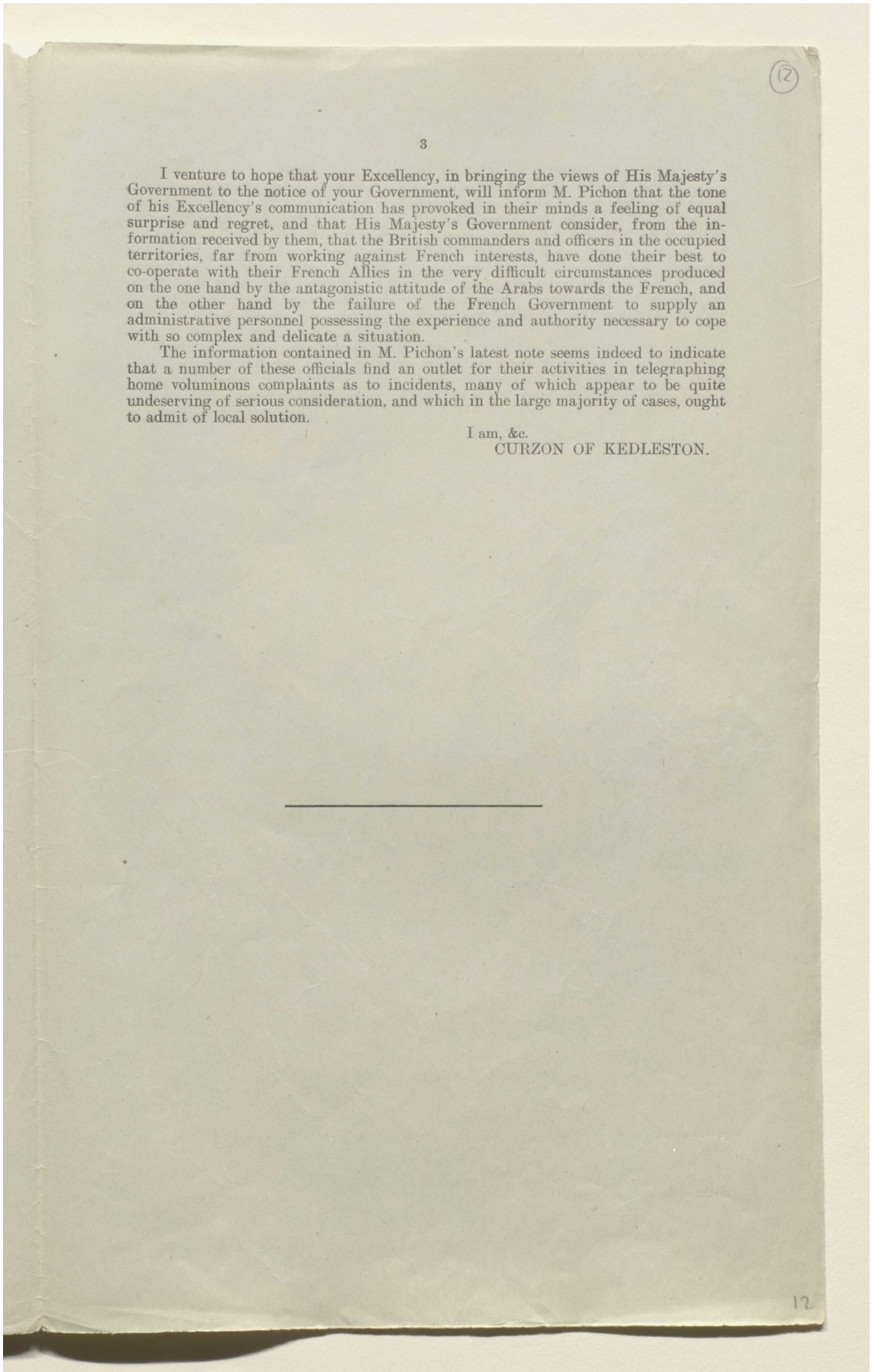

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I venture to hope that your Excellency, in bringing the views of His Majesty's Government to the notice of your Government, will inform M. Pichon that the tone of his Excellency's communication has provoked in their minds a feeling of equal surprise and regret, and that His Majesty's Government consider, from the information received by them, that the British commanders and officers in the occupied territories, far from working against French interests, have done their best to co-operate with their French Allies in the very difficult circumstances produced on the one hand by the antagonistic attitude of the Arabs towards the French, and on the other hand by the failure of the French Government to supply an administrative personnel possessing the experience and authority necessary to cope with so complex and delicate a situation.

The information contained in M. Pichon's latest note seems indeed to indicate that a number of these officials find an outlet for their activities in telegraphing home voluminous complaints as to incidents, many of which appear to be quite undeserving of serious consideration, and which in the large majority of cases, ought to admit of local solution.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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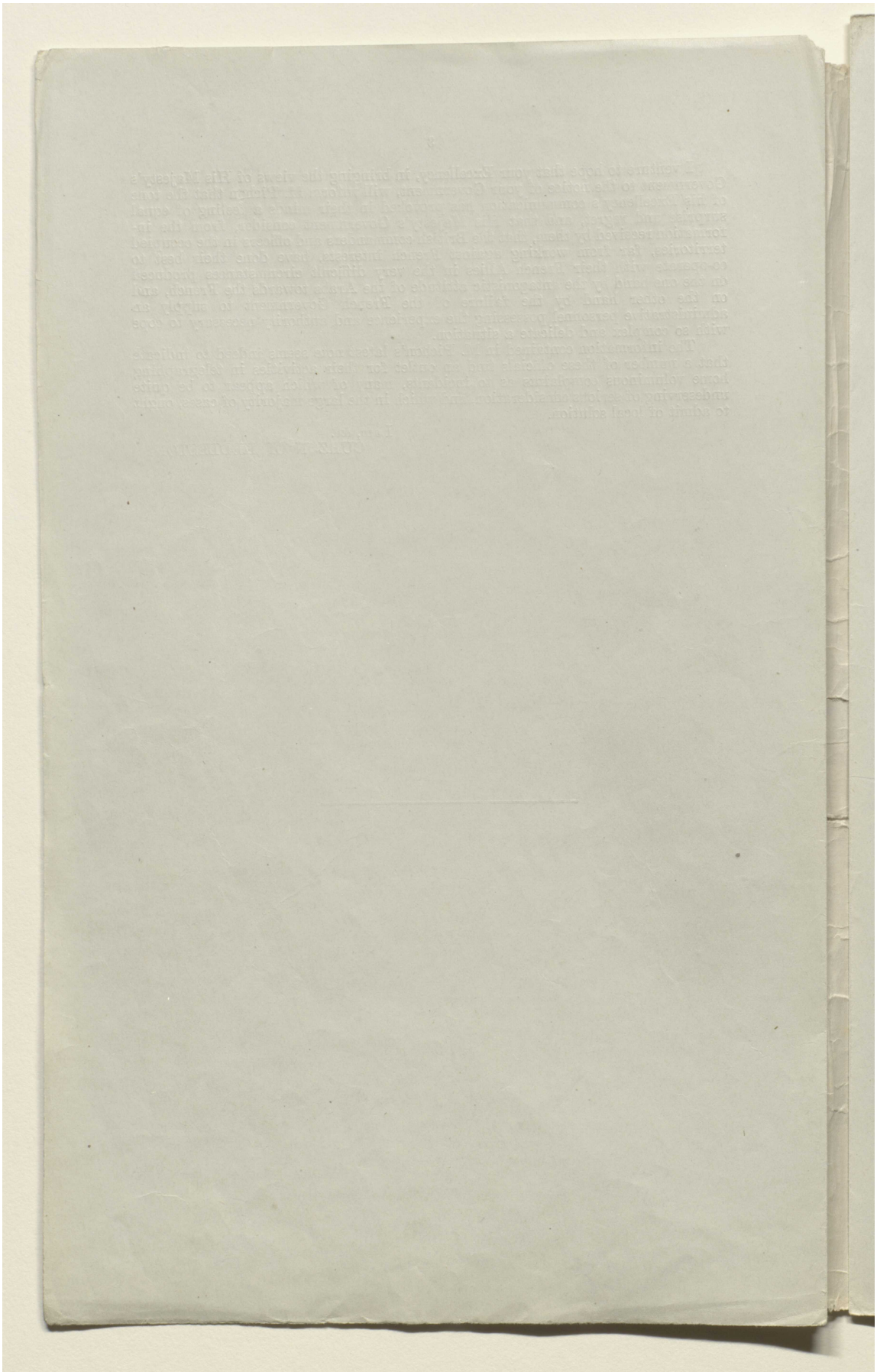

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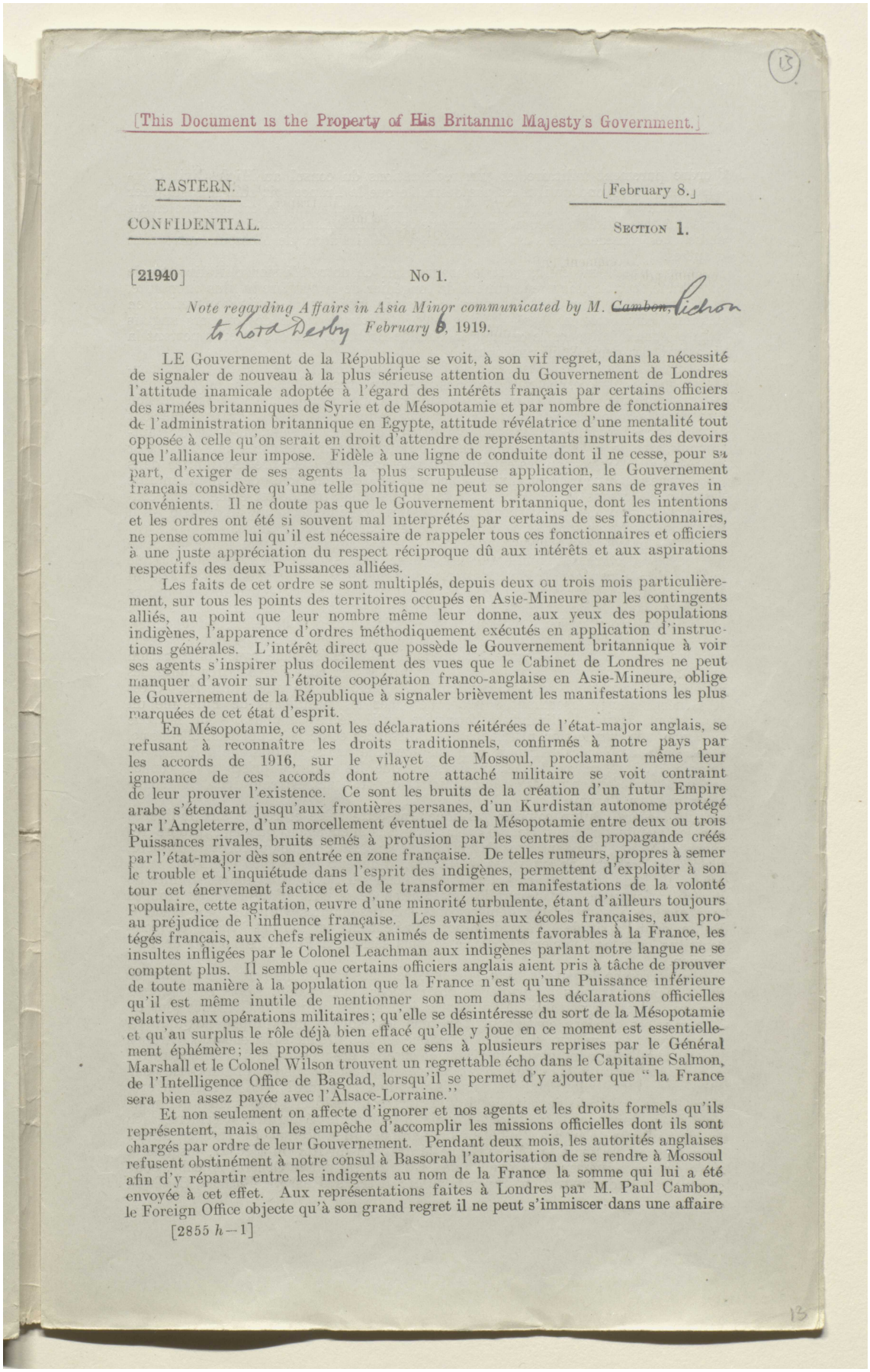

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EASTERN. [February 8.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[21940] No 1.

Note regarding Affairs in Asia Minor communicated by M. ~~Cambon~~ Pichon to Lord Derby February 6, 1919.

LE Gouvernement de la République se voit, à son vif regret, dans la nécessité de signaler de nouveau à la plus sérieuse attention du Gouvernement de Londres l'attitude inamicale adoptée à l'égard des intérêts français par certains officiers des armées britanniques de Syrie et de Mésopotamie et par nombre de fonctionnaires de l'administration britannique en Égypte, attitude révélatrice d'une mentalité tout opposée à celle qu'on serait en droit d'attendre de représentants instruits des devoirs que l'alliance leur impose. Fidèle à une ligne de conduite dont il ne cesse, pour sa part, d'exiger de ses agents la plus scrupuleuse application, le Gouvernement français considère qu'une telle politique ne peut se prolonger sans de graves inconvénients. Il ne doute pas que le Gouvernement britannique, dont les intentions et les ordres ont été si souvent mal interprétés par certains de ses fonctionnaires, ne pense comme lui qu'il est nécessaire de rappeler tous ces fonctionnaires et officiers à une juste appréciation du respect réciproque dû aux intérêts et aux aspirations respectifs des deux Puissances alliées.

Les faits de cet ordre se sont multiplés, depuis deux ou trois mois particulièrement, sur tous les points des territoires occupés en Asie-Mineure par les contingents alliés, au point que leur nombre même leur donne, aux yeux des populations indigènes, l'apparence d'ordres méthodiquement exécutés en application d'instructions générales. L'intérêt direct que possède le Gouvernement britannique à voir ses agents s'inspirer plus docilement des vues que le Cabinet de Londres ne peut manquer d'avoir sur l'étroite coopération franco-anglaise en Asie-Mineure, oblige le Gouvernement de la République à signaler brièvement les manifestations les plus marquées de cet état d'esprit.

En Mésopotamie, ce sont les déclarations réitérées de l'état-major anglais, se refusant à reconnaître les droits traditionnels, confirmés à notre pays par les accords de 1916, sur le vilayet de Mossoul, proclamant même leur ignorance de ces accords dont notre attaché militaire se voit contraint de leur prouver l'existence. Ce sont les bruits de la création d'un futur Empire arabe s'étendant jusqu'aux frontières persanes, d'un Kurdistan autonome protégé par l'Angleterre, d'un morcellement éventuel de la Mésopotamie entre deux ou trois Puissances rivales, bruits semés à profusion par les centres de propagande créés par l'état-major dès son entrée en zone française. De telles rumeurs, propres à semer le trouble et l'inquiétude dans l'esprit des indigènes, permettent d'exploiter à son tour cet énervement factice et de le transformer en manifestations de la volonté populaire, cette agitation, œuvre d'une minorité turbulente, étant d'ailleurs toujours au préjudice de l'influence française. Les avanies aux écoles françaises, aux protégés français, aux chefs religieux animés de sentiments favorables à la France, les insultes infligées par le Colonel Leachman aux indigènes parlant notre langue ne se comptent plus. Il semble que certains officiers anglais aient pris à tâche de prouver de toute manière à la population que la France n'est qu'une Puissance inférieure qu'il est même inutile de mentionner son nom dans les déclarations officielles relatives aux opérations militaires; qu'elle se désintéresse du sort de la Mésopotamie et qu'au surplus le rôle déjà bien effacé qu'elle y joue en ce moment est essentiellement éphémère; les propos tenus en ce sens à plusieurs reprises par le Général Marshall et le Colonel Wilson trouvent un regrettable écho dans le Capitaine Salmon, de l'Intelligence Office de Bagdad, lorsqu'il se permet d'y ajouter que " la France sera bien assez payée avec l'Alsace-Lorraine."

Et non seulement on affecte d'ignorer et nos agents et les droits formels qu'ils représentent, mais on les empêche d'accomplir les missions officielles dont ils sont chargés par ordre de leur Gouvernement. Pendant deux mois, les autorités anglaises refusent obstinément à notre consul à Bassorah l'autorisation de se rendre à Mossoul afin d'y répartir entre les indigents au nom de la France la somme qui lui a été envoyée à cet effet. Aux représentations faites à Londres par M. Paul Cambon, le Foreign Office objecte qu'à son grand regret il ne peut s'immiscer dans une affaire

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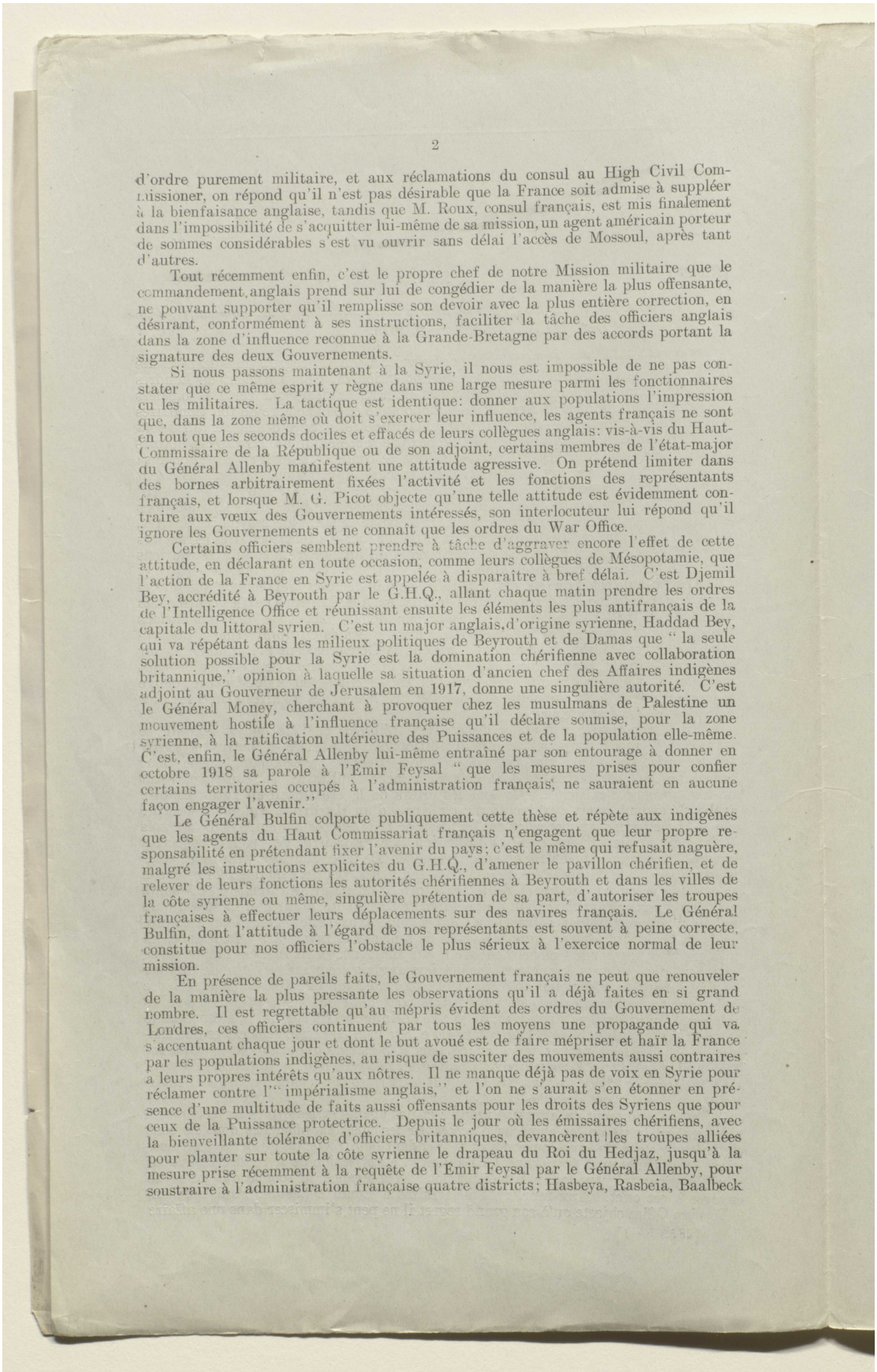

d'ordre purement militaire, et aux réclamations du consul au High Civil Commissioner, on répond qu'il n'est pas désirable que la France soit admise à suppléer à la bienfaisance anglaise, tandis que M. Roux, consul français, est mis finalement dans l'impossibilité de s'acquitter lui-même de sa mission, un agent américain porteur de sommes considérables s'est vu ouvrir sans délai l'accès de Mossoul, après tant d'autres.

Tout récemment enfin, c'est le propre chef de notre Mission militaire que le commandement anglais prend sur lui de congédier de la manière la plus offensante, ne pouvant supporter qu'il remplisse son devoir avec la plus entière correction, en désirant, conformément à ses instructions, faciliter la tâche des officiers anglais dans la zone d'influence reconnue à la Grande-Bretagne par des accords portant la signature des deux Gouvernements.

Si nous passons maintenant à la Syrie, il nous est impossible de ne pas constater que ce même esprit y règne dans une large mesure parmi les fonctionnaires ou les militaires. La tactique est identique: donner aux populations l'impression que, dans la zone même où doit s'exercer leur influence, les agents français ne sont en tout que les seconds dociles et effacés de leurs collègues anglais: vis-à-vis du Haut-Commissaire de la République ou de son adjoint, certains membres de l'état-major du Général Allenby manifestent une attitude agressive. On prétend limiter dans des bornes arbitrairement fixées l'activité et les fonctions des représentants français, et lorsque M. G. Picot objecte qu'une telle attitude est évidemment contraire aux vœux des Gouvernements intéressés, son interlocuteur lui répond qu'il ignore les Gouvernements et ne connaît que les ordres du War Office.

Certains officiers semblent prendre à tâche d'aggraver encore l'effet de cette attitude, en déclarant en toute occasion, comme leurs collègues de Mésopotamie, que l'action de la France en Syrie est appelée à disparaître à bref délai. C'est Djemil Bey, accrédité à Beyrouth par le G.H.Q., allant chaque matin prendre les ordres de l'Intelligence Office et réunissant ensuite les éléments les plus antifrançais de la capitale du littoral syrien. C'est un major anglais, d'origine syrienne, Haddad Bey, qui va répétant dans les milieux politiques de Beyrouth et de Damas que " la seule solution possible pour la Syrie est la domination chérifienne avec collaboration britannique," opinion à laquelle sa situation d'ancien chef des Affaires indigènes adjoint au Gouverneur de Jerusalem en 1917, donne une singulière autorité. C'est le Général Money, cherchant à provoquer chez les musulmans de Palestine un mouvement hostile à l'influence française qu'il déclare soumise, pour la zone syrienne, à la ratification ultérieure des Puissances et de la population elle-même. C'est, enfin, le Général Allenby lui-même entraîné par son entourage à donner en octobre 1918 sa parole à l'Émir Feysal " que les mesures prises pour confier certains territories occupés à l'administration français, ne sauraient en aucune façon engager l'avenir."

Le Général Bulfin colporte publiquement cette thèse et répète aux indigènes que les agents du Haut Commissariat français n'engagent que leur propre responsabilité en prétendant fixer l'avenir du pays; c'est le même qui refusait naguère, malgré les instructions explicites du G.H.Q., d'amener le pavillon chérifien, et de relever de leurs fonctions les autorités chérifiennes à Beyrouth et dans les villes de la côte syrienne ou même, singulière prétention de sa part, d'autoriser les troupes françaises à effectuer leurs déplacements sur des navires français. Le Général Bulfin, dont l'attitude à l'égard de nos représentants est souvent à peine correcte, constitue pour nos officiers l'obstacle le plus sérieux à l'exercice normal de leur mission.

En présence de pareils faits, le Gouvernement français ne peut que renouveler de la manière la plus pressante les observations qu'il a déjà faites en si grand nombre. Il est regrettable qu'au mépris évident des ordres du Gouvernement de Londres, ces officiers continuent par tous les moyens une propagande qui va s'accentuant chaque jour et dont le but avoué est de faire mépriser et haïr la France par les populations indigènes, au risque de susciter des mouvements aussi contraires à leurs propres intérêts qu'aux nôtres. Il ne manque déjà pas de voix en Syrie pour réclamer contre l'" impérialisme anglais," et l'on ne s'aurait s'en étonner en présence d'une multitude de faits aussi offensants pour les droits des Syriens que pour ceux de la Puissance protectrice. Depuis le jour où les émissaires chérifiens, avec la bienveillante tolérance d'officiers britanniques, devancèrent les troupes alliées pour planter sur toute la côte syrienne le drapeau du Roi du Hedjaz, jusqu'à la mesure prise récemment à la requête de l'Émir Feysal par le Général Allenby, pour soustraire à l'administration française quatre districts; Hasbeya, Rasbeia, Baalbeck

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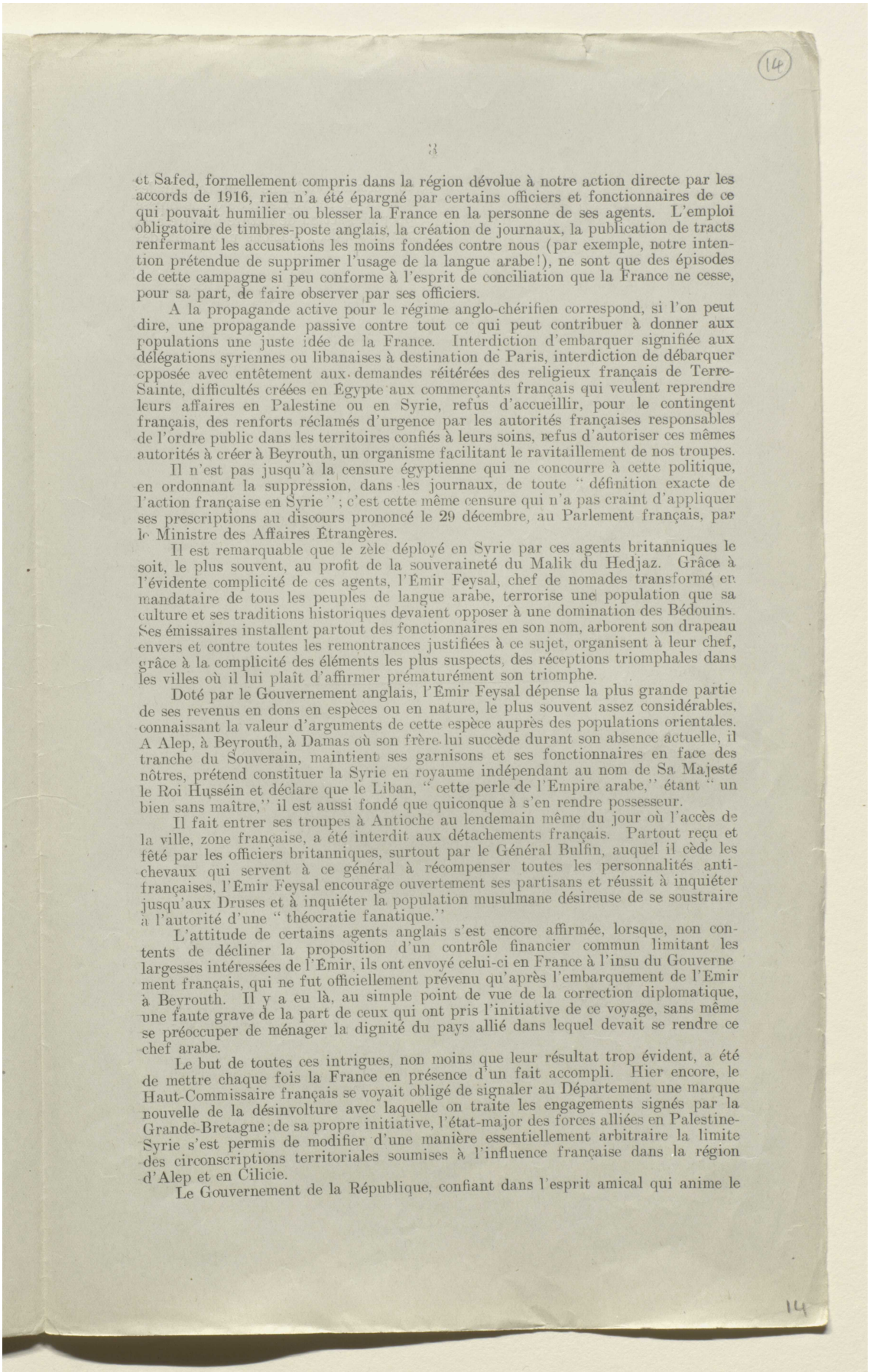

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et Safed, formellement compris dans la région dévolue à notre action directe par les accords de 1916, rien n'a été épargné par certains officiers et fonctionnaires de ce qui pouvait humilier ou blesser la France en la personne de ses agents. L'emploi obligatoire de timbres-poste anglais, la création de journaux, la publication de tracts renfermant les accusations les moins fondées contre nous (par exemple, notre intention prétendue de supprimer l'usage de la langue arabe!), ne sont que des épisodes de cette campagne si peu conforme à l'esprit de conciliation que la France ne cesse, pour sa part, de faire observer par ses officiers.

A la propagande active pour le régime anglo-chérifien correspond, si l'on peut dire, une propagande passive contre tout ce qui peut contribuer à donner aux populations une juste idée de la France. Interdiction d'embarquer signifiée aux délégations syriennes ou libanaises à destination de Paris, interdiction de débarquer opposée avec entêtement aux demandes réitérées des religieux français de Terre-Sainte, difficultés créées en Egypte aux commerçants français qui veulent reprendre leurs affaires en Palestine ou en Syrie, refus d'accueillir, pour le contingent français, des renforts réclamés d'urgence par les autorités françaises responsables de l'ordre public dans les territoires confiés à leurs soins, refus d'autoriser ces mêmes autorités à créer à Beyrouth, un organisme facilitant le ravitaillement de nos troupes.

Il n'est pas jusqu'à la censure égyptienne qui ne concourre à cette politique, en ordonnant la suppression, dans les journaux, de toute " définition exacte de l'action française en Syrie " ; c'est cette même censure qui n'a pas craint d'appliquer ses prescriptions au discours prononcé le 29 décembre, au Parlement français, par le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères.

Il est remarquable que le zèle déployé en Syrie par ces agents britanniques le soit, le plus souvent, au profit de la souveraineté du Malik du Hedjaz. Grâce à l'évidente complicité de ces agents, l'Émir Feysal, chef de nomades transformé en mandataire de tous les peuples de langue arabe, terrorise une population que sa culture et ses traditions historiques devaient opposer à une domination des Bédouins. Ses émissaires installent partout des fonctionnaires en son nom, arborent son drapeau envers et contre toutes les remontrances justifiées à ce sujet, organisent à leur chef, grâce à la complicité des éléments les plus suspects, des réceptions triomphales dans les villes où il lui plaît d'affirmer prématurément son triomphe.

Doté par le Gouvernement anglais, l'Émir Feysal dépense la plus grande partie de ses revenus en dons en espèces ou en nature, le plus souvent assez considérables, connaissant la valeur d'arguments de cette espèce auprès des populations orientales. A Alep, à Beyrouth, à Damas où son frère lui succède durant son absence actuelle, il tranche du Souverain, maintient ses garnisons et ses fonctionnaires en face des nôtres, prétend constituer la Syrie en royaume indépendant au nom de Sa Majesté le Roi Husséin et déclare que le Liban, " cette perle de l'Empire arabe," étant " un bien sans maître," il est aussi fondé que quiconque à s'en rendre possesseur.

Il fait entrer ses troupes à Antioche au lendemain même du jour où l'accès de la ville, zone française, a été interdit aux détachements français. Partout reçu et fêté par les officiers britanniques, surtout par le Général Bulfin, auquel il cède les chevaux qui servent à ce général à récompenser toutes les personnalités anti-françaises, l'Émir Feysal encourage ouvertement ses partisans et réussit à inquiéter jusqu'aux Druses et à inquiéter la population musulmane désireuse de se soustraire à l'autorité d'une " théocratie fanatique."

L'attitude de certains agents anglais s'est encore affirmée, lorsque, non contents de décliner la proposition d'un contrôle financier commun limitant les largesses intéressées de l'Émir, ils ont envoyé celui-ci en France à l'insu du Gouvernement français, qui ne fut officiellement prévenu qu'après l'embarquement de l'Émir à Beyrouth. Il y a eu là, au simple point de vue de la correction diplomatique, une faute grave de la part de ceux qui ont pris l'initiative de ce voyage, sans même se préoccuper de ménager la dignité du pays allié dans lequel devait se rendre ce chef arabe.

Le but de toutes ces intrigues, non moins que leur résultat trop évident, a été de mettre chaque fois la France en présence d'un fait accompli. Hier encore, le Haut-Commissaire français se voyait obligé de signaler au Département une marque nouvelle de la désinvolture avec laquelle on traite les engagements signés par la Grande-Bretagne ; de sa propre initiative, l'état-major des forces alliées en Palestine-Syrie s'est permis de modifier d'une manière essentiellement arbitraire la limite des circonscriptions territoriales soumises à l'influence française dans la région d'Alep et en Cilicie.

Le Gouvernement de la République, confiant dans l'esprit amical qui anime le

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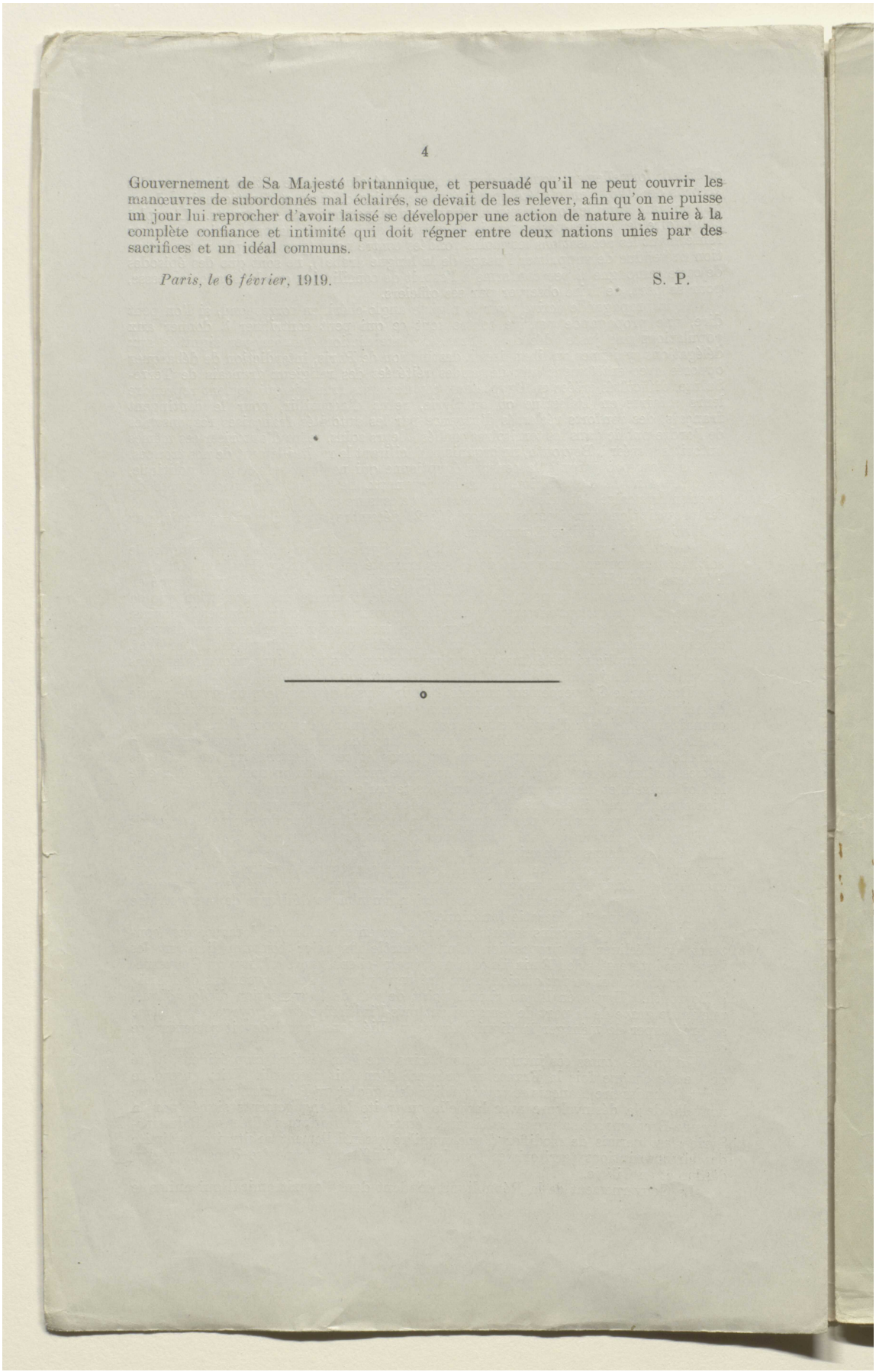

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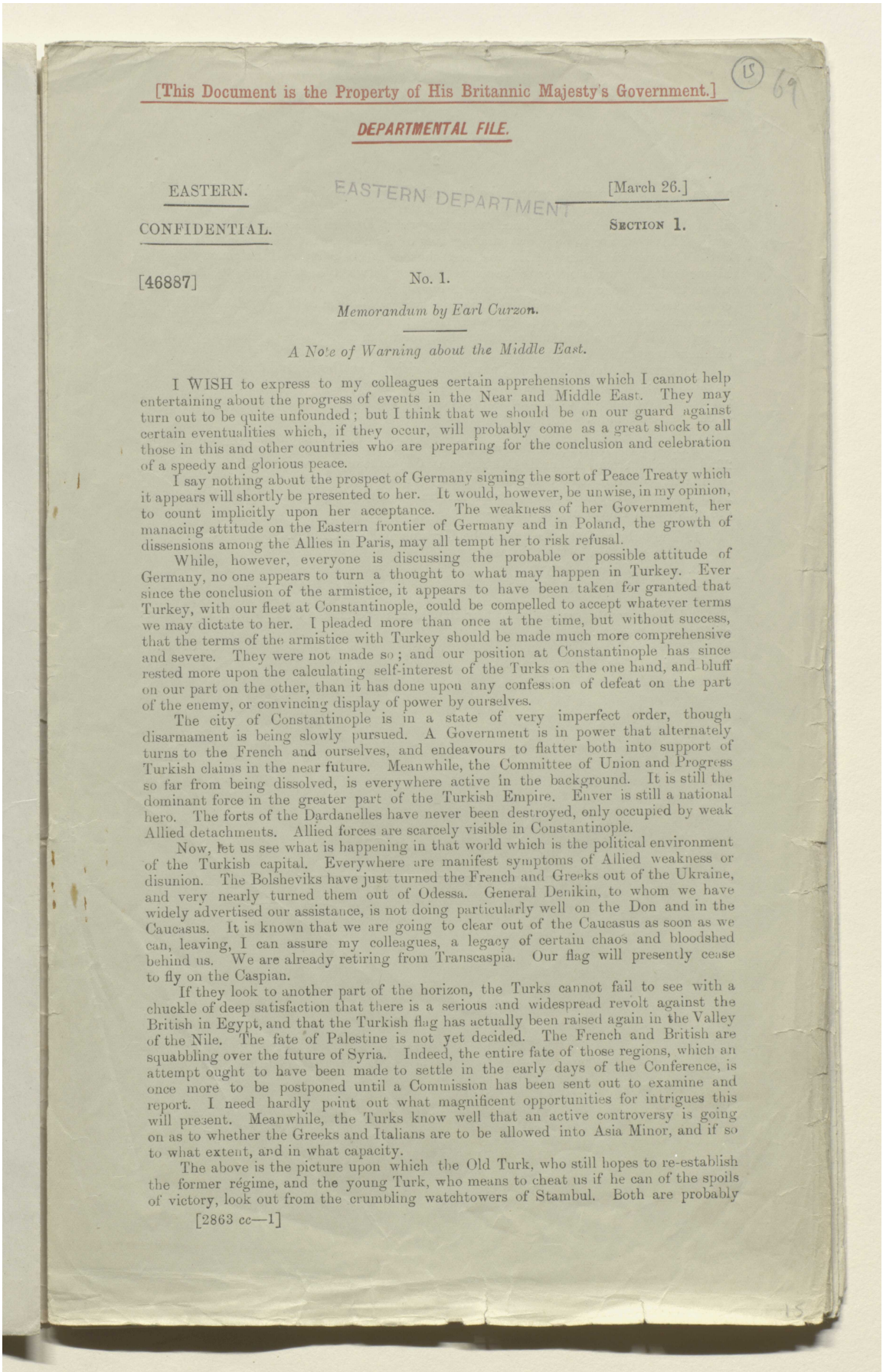
Gouvernement de Sa Majesté britannique, et persuadé qu'il ne peut couvrir les manœuvres de subordonnés mal éclairés, se devait de les relever, afin qu'on ne puisse un jour lui reprocher d'avoir laissé se développer une action de nature à nuire à la complète confiance et intimité qui doit régner entre deux nations unies par des sacrifices et un idéal communs.

Paris, le 6 *février*, 1919. S. P.



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DEPARTMENTAL FILE.

EASTERN. EASTERN DEPARTMENT [March 26.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[46887] No. 1.

Memorandum by Earl Curzon.

A Note of Warning about the Middle East.

I WISH to express to my colleagues certain apprehensions which I cannot help entertaining about the progress of events in the Near and Middle East. They may turn out to be quite unfounded; but I think that we should be on our guard against certain eventualities which, if they occur, will probably come as a great shock to all those in this and other countries who are preparing for the conclusion and celebration of a speedy and glorious peace.

I say nothing about the prospect of Germany signing the sort of Peace Treaty which it appears will shortly be presented to her. It would, however, be unwise, in my opinion, to count implicitly upon her acceptance. The weakness of her Government, her manacing attitude on the Eastern frontier of Germany and in Poland, the growth of dissensions among the Allies in Paris, may all tempt her to risk refusal.

While, however, everyone is discussing the probable or possible attitude of Germany, no one appears to turn a thought to what may happen in Turkey. Ever since the conclusion of the armistice, it appears to have been taken for granted that Turkey, with our fleet at Constantinople, could be compelled to accept whatever terms we may dictate to her. I pleaded more than once at the time, but without success, that the terms of the armistice with Turkey should be made much more comprehensive and severe. They were not made so; and our position at Constantinople has since rested more upon the calculating self-interest of the Turks on the one hand, and bluff on our part on the other, than it has done upon any confession of defeat on the part of the enemy, or convincing display of power by ourselves.

The city of Constantinople is in a state of very imperfect order, though disarmament is being slowly pursued. A Government is in power that alternately turns to the French and ourselves, and endeavours to flatter both into support of Turkish claims in the near future. Meanwhile, the Committee of Union and Progress so far from being dissolved, is everywhere active in the background. It is still the dominant force in the greater part of the Turkish Empire. Enver is still a national hero. The forts of the Dardanelles have never been destroyed, only occupied by weak Allied detachments. Allied forces are scarcely visible in Constantinople.

Now, let us see what is happening in that world which is the political environment of the Turkish capital. Everywhere are manifest symptoms of Allied weakness or disunion. The Bolsheviks have just turned the French and Greeks out of the Ukraine, and very nearly turned them out of Odessa. General Denikin, to whom we have widely advertised our assistance, is not doing particularly well on the Don and in the Caucasus. It is known that we are going to clear out of the Caucasus as soon as we can, leaving, I can assure my colleagues, a legacy of certain chaos and bloodshed behind us. We are already retiring from Transcaspia. Our flag will presently cease to fly on the Caspian.

If they look to another part of the horizon, the Turks cannot fail to see with a chuckle of deep satisfaction that there is a serious and widespread revolt against the British in Egypt, and that the Turkish flag has actually been raised again in the Valley of the Nile. The fate of Palestine is not yet decided. The French and British are squabbling over the future of Syria. Indeed, the entire fate of those regions, which an attempt ought to have been made to settle in the early days of the Conference, is once more to be postponed until a Commission has been sent out to examine and report. I need hardly point out what magnificent opportunities for intrigues this will present. Meanwhile, the Turks know well that an active controversy is going on as to whether the Greeks and Italians are to be allowed into Asia Minor, and if so to what extent, and in what capacity.

The above is the picture upon which the Old Turk, who still hopes to re-establish the former régime, and the young Turk, who means to cheat us if he can of the spoils of victory, look out from the crumbling watchtowers of Stambul. Both are probably

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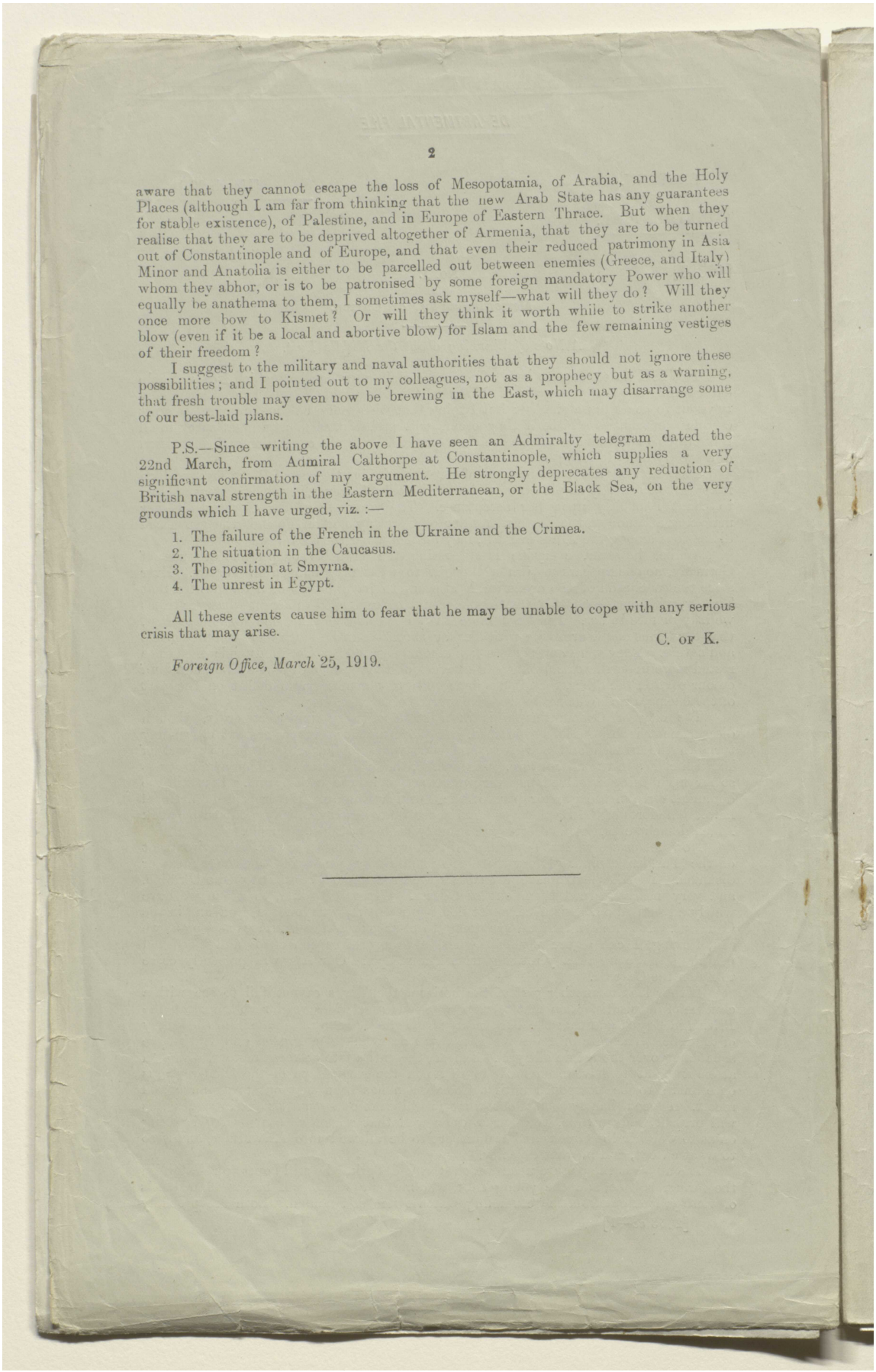

aware that they cannot escape the loss of Mesopotamia, of Arabia, and the Holy Places (although I am far from thinking that the new Arab State has any guarantees for stable existence), of Palestine, and in Europe of Eastern Thrace. But when they realise that they are to be deprived altogether of Armenia, that they are to be turned out of Constantinople and of Europe, and that even their reduced patrimony in Asia Minor and Anatolia is either to be parcelled out between enemies (Greece, and Italy) whom they abhor, or is to be patronised by some foreign mandatory Power who will equally be anathema to them, I sometimes ask myself—what will they do? Will they once more bow to Kismet? Or will they think it worth while to strike another blow (even if it be a local and abortive blow) for Islam and the few remaining vestiges of their freedom?

I suggest to the military and naval authorities that they should not ignore these possibilities; and I pointed out to my colleagues, not as a prophecy but as a warning, that fresh trouble may even now be brewing in the East, which may disarrange some of our best-laid plans.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have seen an Admiralty telegram dated the 22nd March, from Admiral Calthorpe at Constantinople, which supplies a very significant confirmation of my argument. He strongly deprecates any reduction of British naval strength in the Eastern Mediterranean, or the Black Sea, on the very grounds which I have urged, viz. :—

1. The failure of the French in the Ukraine and the Crimea.
2. The situation in the Caucasus.
3. The position at Smyrna.
4. The unrest in Egypt.

All these events cause him to fear that he may be unable to cope with any serious crisis that may arise.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office, March 25, 1919.

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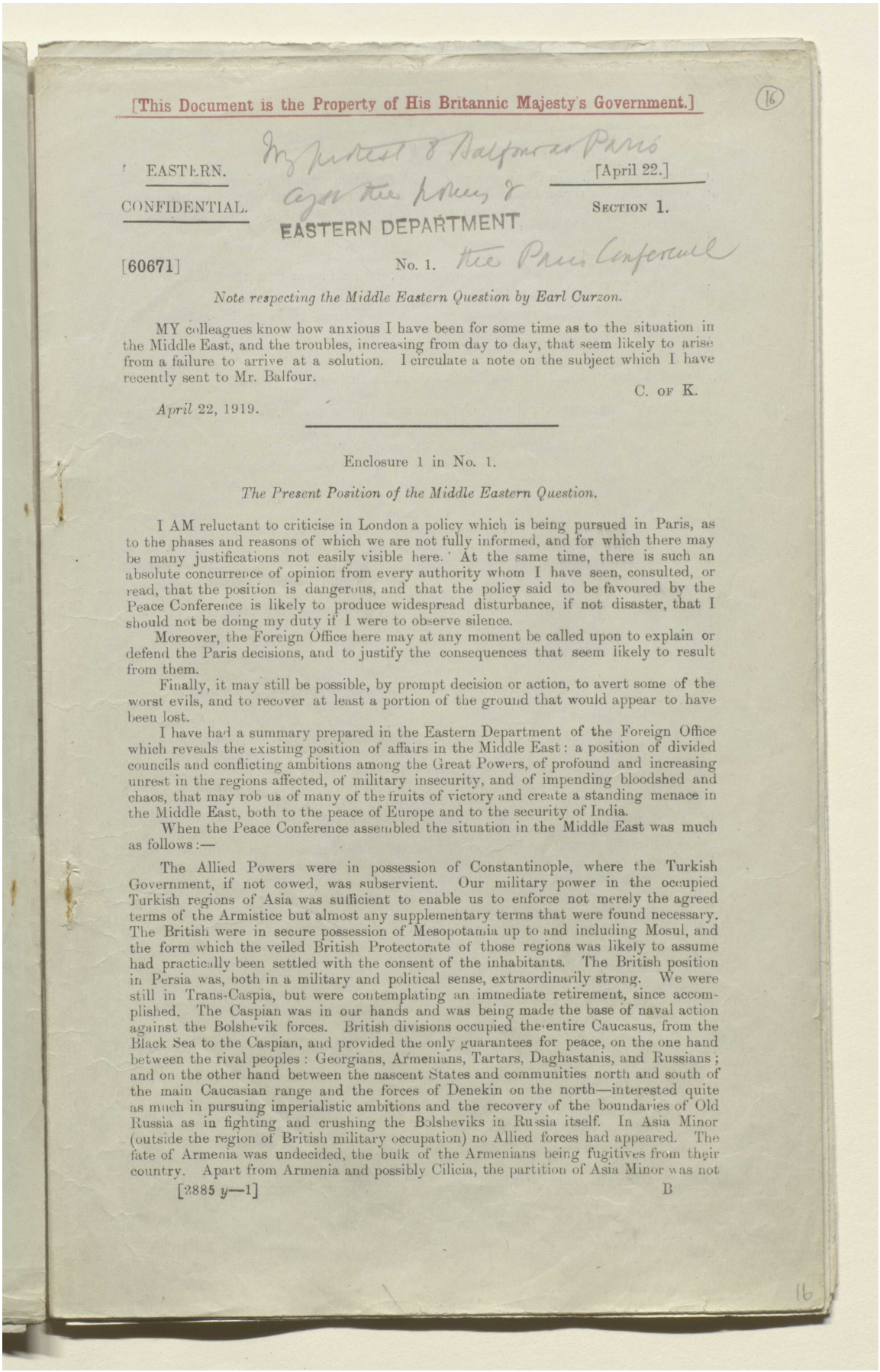

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EASTERN.

CONFIDENTIAL.

[April 22.]

SECTION 1.

EASTERN DEPARTMENT

[60671]

No. 1.

Note respecting the Middle Eastern Question by Earl Curzon.

MY colleagues know how anxious I have been for some time as to the situation in the Middle East, and the troubles, increasing from day to day, that seem likely to arise from a failure to arrive at a solution. I circulate a note on the subject which I have recently sent to Mr. Balfour.

C. OF K.

April 22, 1919.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

The Present Position of the Middle Eastern Question.

I AM reluctant to criticise in London a policy which is being pursued in Paris, as to the phases and reasons of which we are not fully informed, and for which there may be many justifications not easily visible here. At the same time, there is such an absolute concurrence of opinion from every authority whom I have seen, consulted, or read, that the position is dangerous, and that the policy said to be favoured by the Peace Conference is likely to produce widespread disturbance, if not disaster, that I should not be doing my duty if I were to observe silence.

Moreover, the Foreign Office here may at any moment be called upon to explain or defend the Paris decisions, and to justify the consequences that seem likely to result from them.

Finally, it may still be possible, by prompt decision or action, to avert some of the worst evils, and to recover at least a portion of the ground that would appear to have been lost.

I have had a summary prepared in the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office which reveals the existing position of affairs in the Middle East: a position of divided councils and conflicting ambitions among the Great Powers, of profound and increasing unrest in the regions affected, of military insecurity, and of impending bloodshed and chaos, that may rob us of many of the fruits of victory and create a standing menace in the Middle East, both to the peace of Europe and to the security of India.

When the Peace Conference assembled the situation in the Middle East was much as follows:—

The Allied Powers were in possession of Constantinople, where the Turkish Government, if not cowed, was subservient. Our military power in the occupied Turkish regions of Asia was sufficient to enable us to enforce not merely the agreed terms of the Armistice but almost any supplementary terms that were found necessary. The British were in secure possession of Mesopotamia up to and including Mosul, and the form which the veiled British Protectorate of those regions was likely to assume had practically been settled with the consent of the inhabitants. The British position in Persia was, both in a military and political sense, extraordinarily strong. We were still in Trans-Caspia, but were contemplating an immediate retirement, since accomplished. The Caspian was in our hands and was being made the base of naval action against the Bolshevik forces. British divisions occupied the entire Caucasus, from the Black Sea to the Caspian, and provided the only guarantees for peace, on the one hand between the rival peoples: Georgians, Armenians, Tartars, Daghastanis, and Russians; and on the other hand between the nascent States and communities north and south of the main Caucasian range and the forces of Denekin on the north—interested quite as much in pursuing imperialistic ambitions and the recovery of the boundaries of Old Russia as in fighting and crushing the Bolsheviks in Russia itself. In Asia Minor (outside the region of British military occupation) no Allied forces had appeared. The fate of Armenia was undecided, the bulk of the Armenians being fugitives from their country. Apart from Armenia and possibly Cilicia, the partition of Asia Minor was not

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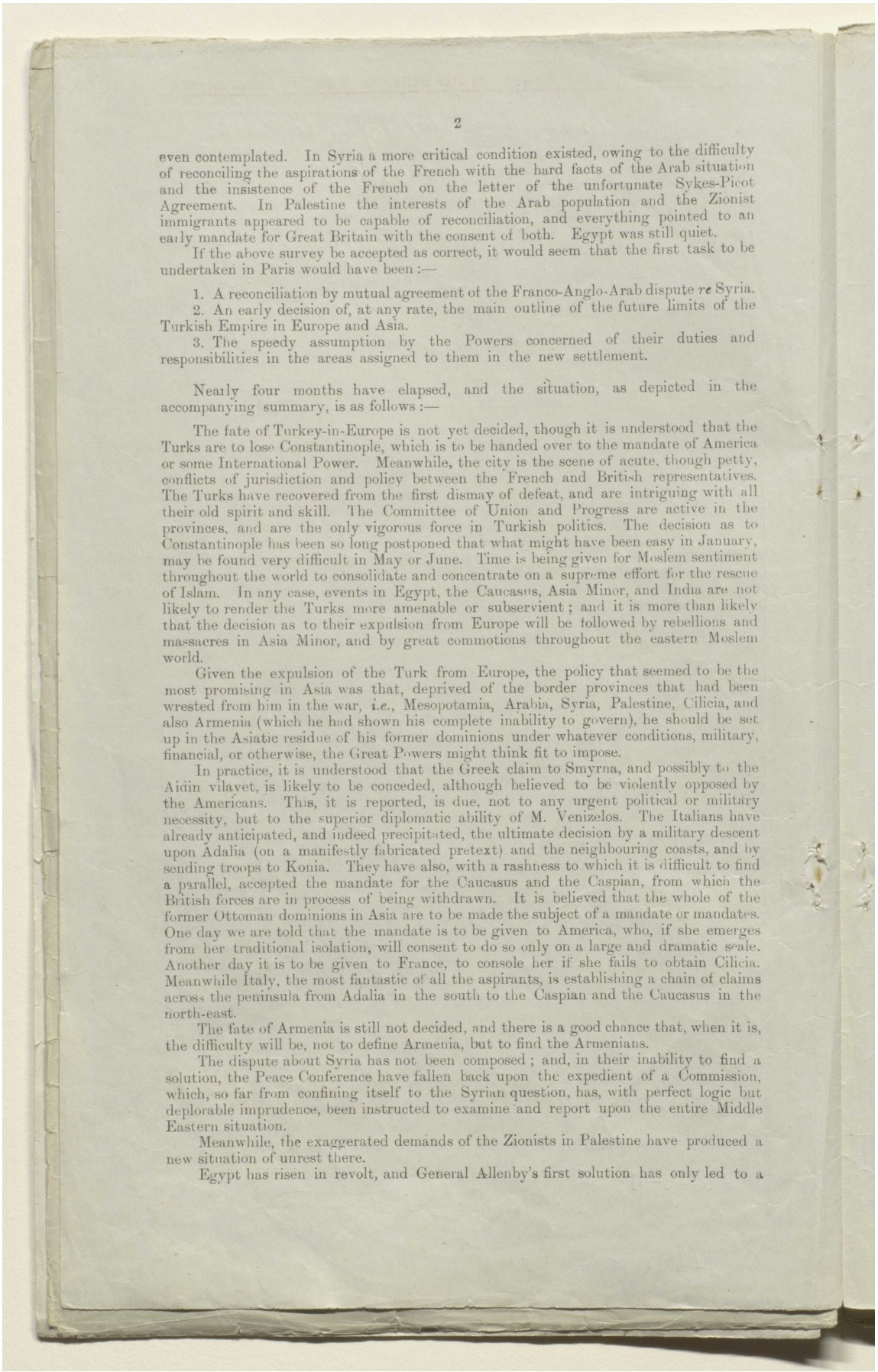

even contemplated. In Syria a more critical condition existed, owing to the difficulty of reconciling the aspirations of the French with the hard facts of the Arab situation and the insistence of the French on the letter of the unfortunate Sykes-Picot Agreement. In Palestine the interests of the Arab population and the Zionist immigrants appeared to be capable of reconciliation, and everything pointed to an early mandate for Great Britain with the consent of both. Egypt was still quiet.

If the above survey be accepted as correct, it would seem that the first task to be undertaken in Paris would have been :—

1. A reconciliation by mutual agreement of the Franco-Anglo-Arab dispute *re* Syria.
2. An early decision of, at any rate, the main outline of the future limits of the Turkish Empire in Europe and Asia.
3. The speedy assumption by the Powers concerned of their duties and responsibilities in the areas assigned to them in the new settlement.

Nearly four months have elapsed, and the situation, as depicted in the accompanying summary, is as follows :—

The fate of Turkey-in-Europe is not yet decided, though it is understood that the Turks are to lose Constantinople, which is to be handed over to the mandate of America or some International Power. Meanwhile, the city is the scene of acute, though petty, conflicts of jurisdiction and policy between the French and British representatives. The Turks have recovered from the first dismay of defeat, and are intriguing with all their old spirit and skill. The Committee of Union and Progress are active in the provinces, and are the only vigorous force in Turkish politics. The decision as to Constantinople has been so long postponed that what might have been easy in January, may be found very difficult in May or June. Time is being given for Moslem sentiment throughout the world to consolidate and concentrate on a supreme effort for the rescue of Islam. In any case, events in Egypt, the Caucasus, Asia Minor, and India are not likely to render the Turks more amenable or subservient ; and it is more than likely that the decision as to their expulsion from Europe will be followed by rebellions and massacres in Asia Minor, and by great commotions throughout the eastern Moslem world.

Given the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, the policy that seemed to be the most promising in Asia was that, deprived of the border provinces that had been wrested from him in the war, *i.e.*, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Cilicia, and also Armenia (which he had shown his complete inability to govern), he should be set up in the Asiatic residue of his former dominions under whatever conditions, military, financial, or otherwise, the Great Powers might think fit to impose.

In practice, it is understood that the Greek claim to Smyrna, and possibly to the Aidin vilayet, is likely to be conceded, although believed to be violently opposed by the Americans. This, it is reported, is due, not to any urgent political or military necessity, but to the superior diplomatic ability of M. Venizelos. The Italians have already anticipated, and indeed precipitated, the ultimate decision by a military descent upon Adalia (on a manifestly fabricated pretext) and the neighbouring coasts, and by sending troops to Konia. They have also, with a rashness to which it is difficult to find a parallel, accepted the mandate for the Caucasus and the Caspian, from which the British forces are in process of being withdrawn. It is believed that the whole of the former Ottoman dominions in Asia are to be made the subject of a mandate or mandates. One day we are told that the mandate is to be given to America, who, if she emerges from her traditional isolation, will consent to do so only on a large and dramatic scale. Another day it is to be given to France, to console her if she fails to obtain Cilicia. Meanwhile Italy, the most fantastic of all the aspirants, is establishing a chain of claims across the peninsula from Adalia in the south to the Caspian and the Caucasus in the north-east.

The fate of Armenia is still not decided, and there is a good chance that, when it is, the difficulty will be, not to define Armenia, but to find the Armenians.

The dispute about Syria has not been composed ; and, in their inability to find a solution, the Peace Conference have fallen back upon the expedient of a Commission, which, so far from confining itself to the Syrian question, has, with perfect logic but deplorable imprudence, been instructed to examine and report upon the entire Middle Eastern situation.

Meanwhile, the exaggerated demands of the Zionists in Palestine have produced a new situation of unrest there.

Egypt has risen in revolt, and General Allenby's first solution has only led to a

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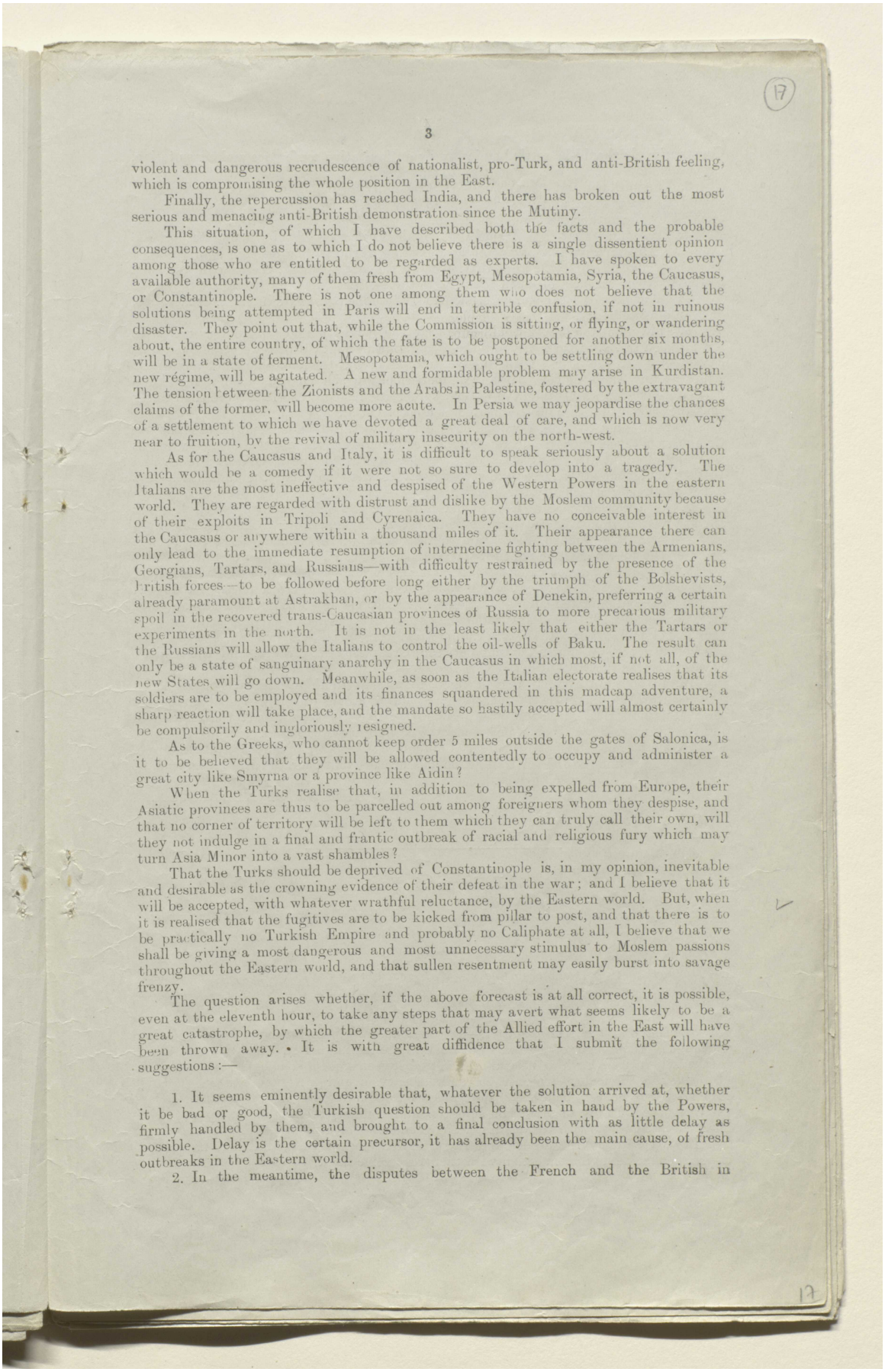

violent and dangerous recrudescence of nationalist, pro-Turk, and anti-British feeling, which is compromising the whole position in the East.

Finally, the repercussion has reached India, and there has broken out the most serious and menacing anti-British demonstration since the Mutiny.

This situation, of which I have described both the facts and the probable consequences, is one as to which I do not believe there is a single dissentient opinion among those who are entitled to be regarded as experts. I have spoken to every available authority, many of them fresh from Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, the Caucasus, or Constantinople. There is not one among them who does not believe that the solutions being attempted in Paris will end in terrible confusion, if not in ruinous disaster. They point out that, while the Commission is sitting, or flying, or wandering about, the entire country, of which the fate is to be postponed for another six months, will be in a state of ferment. Mesopotamia, which ought to be settling down under the new régime, will be agitated. A new and formidable problem may arise in Kurdistan. The tension between the Zionists and the Arabs in Palestine, fostered by the extravagant claims of the former, will become more acute. In Persia we may jeopardise the chances of a settlement to which we have devoted a great deal of care, and which is now very near to fruition, by the revival of military insecurity on the north-west.

As for the Caucasus and Italy, it is difficult to speak seriously about a solution which would be a comedy if it were not so sure to develop into a tragedy. The Italians are the most ineffective and despised of the Western Powers in the eastern world. They are regarded with distrust and dislike by the Moslem community because of their exploits in Tripoli and Cyrenaica. They have no conceivable interest in the Caucasus or anywhere within a thousand miles of it. Their appearance there can only lead to the immediate resumption of internecine fighting between the Armenians, Georgians, Tartars, and Russians—with difficulty restrained by the presence of the British forces—to be followed before long either by the triumph of the Bolshevists, already paramount at Astrakhan, or by the appearance of Denekin, preferring a certain spoil in the recovered trans-Caucasian provinces of Russia to more precarious military experiments in the north. It is not in the least likely that either the Tartars or the Russians will allow the Italians to control the oil-wells of Baku. The result can only be a state of sanguinary anarchy in the Caucasus in which most, if not all, of the new States will go down. Meanwhile, as soon as the Italian electorate realises that its soldiers are to be employed and its finances squandered in this madcap adventure, a sharp reaction will take place, and the mandate so hastily accepted will almost certainly be compulsorily and ingloriously resigned.

As to the Greeks, who cannot keep order 5 miles outside the gates of Salonica, is it to be believed that they will be allowed contentedly to occupy and administer a great city like Smyrna or a province like Aidin?

When the Turks realise that, in addition to being expelled from Europe, their Asiatic provinces are thus to be parcelled out among foreigners whom they despise, and that no corner of territory will be left to them which they can truly call their own, will they not indulge in a final and frantic outbreak of racial and religious fury which may turn Asia Minor into a vast shambles?

That the Turks should be deprived of Constantinople is, in my opinion, inevitable and desirable as the crowning evidence of their defeat in the war; and I believe that it will be accepted, with whatever wrathful reluctance, by the Eastern world. But, when it is realised that the fugitives are to be kicked from pillar to post, and that there is to be practically no Turkish Empire and probably no Caliphate at all, I believe that we shall be giving a most dangerous and most unnecessary stimulus to Moslem passions throughout the Eastern world, and that sullen resentment may easily burst into savage frenzy.

The question arises whether, if the above forecast is at all correct, it is possible, even at the eleventh hour, to take any steps that may avert what seems likely to be a great catastrophe, by which the greater part of the Allied effort in the East will have been thrown away. It is with great diffidence that I submit the following suggestions:—

1. It seems eminently desirable that, whatever the solution arrived at, whether it be bad or good, the Turkish question should be taken in hand by the Powers, firmly handled by them, and brought to a final conclusion with as little delay as possible. Delay is the certain precursor, it has already been the main cause, of fresh outbreaks in the Eastern world.

2. In the meantime, the disputes between the French and the British in

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Constantinople should be settled amicably by authoritative conference and consultation. Proposals have already been submitted to this effect.

3. The military and naval forces at Constantinople and in the occupied regions should be maintained at full strength, and any steps or military precautions recommended by the authorities should be taken.

4. Presuming that the Italians have already accepted the mandate for the Caucasus (though I am not aware of any existing authority for offering it to them), I know not what to suggest, except that, even at the last moment, they should be asked to desist from an act of such deplorable levity, for which no justification can be found on any plea of local self-determination, of public or private interest, of morality, or even of expediency.

5. If it is not too late, I would urge that the partitioning or mandatory policy be not pursued in Asia Minor beyond the geographical limits which were the inevitable consequences of the war. I am unable to find in the pronouncements of any of the Allies at any stage of the war any announcement which compels us not merely to decapitate the Turk, but to cut up and appropriate his corpse. It is more than likely that the body will decline to be treated as a corpse at all.

6. If it is not too late, I would urge even now the abandonment of the Eastern Commission (even though our representatives upon it are the most admirable whom it is possible to appoint), seeing that it is equally distrusted and disliked by French and British, and that it is more likely to aggravate than to allay the difficulties of a situation already sufficiently threatening.

7. As a consequence of this, again, if it is not too late, and if Feisal has not already retired from Paris in a state of huff, I would endeavour to make an arrangement between the French, Feisal, and ourselves as to the boundaries of the French Syria of the future and the political status and frontiers of the Damascus State.

8. If the Commission cannot be abandoned, I would try to withdraw Palestine and Mesopotamia from its purview, and I would urge the coming to a decision that will enable the contemplated administration of these countries to be provisionally, at any rate, proceeded with. The same arguments apply to Armenia.

9. Presuming that America is to undertake the custody of Armenia, I would urge the conclusion of an understanding between Great Britain, France, and the United States as to the future of Cilicia.

10. I would not hesitate, if challenged, to present to the Conference our schemes for the future administration of Mesopotamia, and to secure their provisional agreement to them without delay. In this way we might be able to escape in part the difficulties and the heavy expense of another six months of military occupation.

11. Lastly, I would press the Peace Conference with all the insistence in my power, as I have no doubt the British Delegation has already done, for an early recognition of the British Protectorate of Egypt.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Foreign Office, April 18, 1919.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Review of the Situation in the Middle East, with Special Reference to the Danger of Delay in Reaching a General Settlement.

I.—*Districts more particularly affected by the decision of the Peace Conference to send a Commission to investigate on the spot, and to ascertain the wishes of the various populations as to their future status.*

Smyrna and the Aidin vilayet.—For some months past we have been receiving warnings of the danger of a serious outbreak in the Aidin vilayet. The danger here is particularly acute, for the normal difficulty between the Ottoman Greeks and the Moslems is complicated by cross-currents of friction and intrigue between Italians, French, and Hellenes. The Italians are alleged to be intriguing with the Turks, giving protection certificates to Austrian subjects, and sending them up country to make mischief in collusion with the agents of the Committee of Union and Progress.

In Smyrna itself the French and Italians are at loggerheads, and there have been unpleasant incidents in connection with their respective flags.

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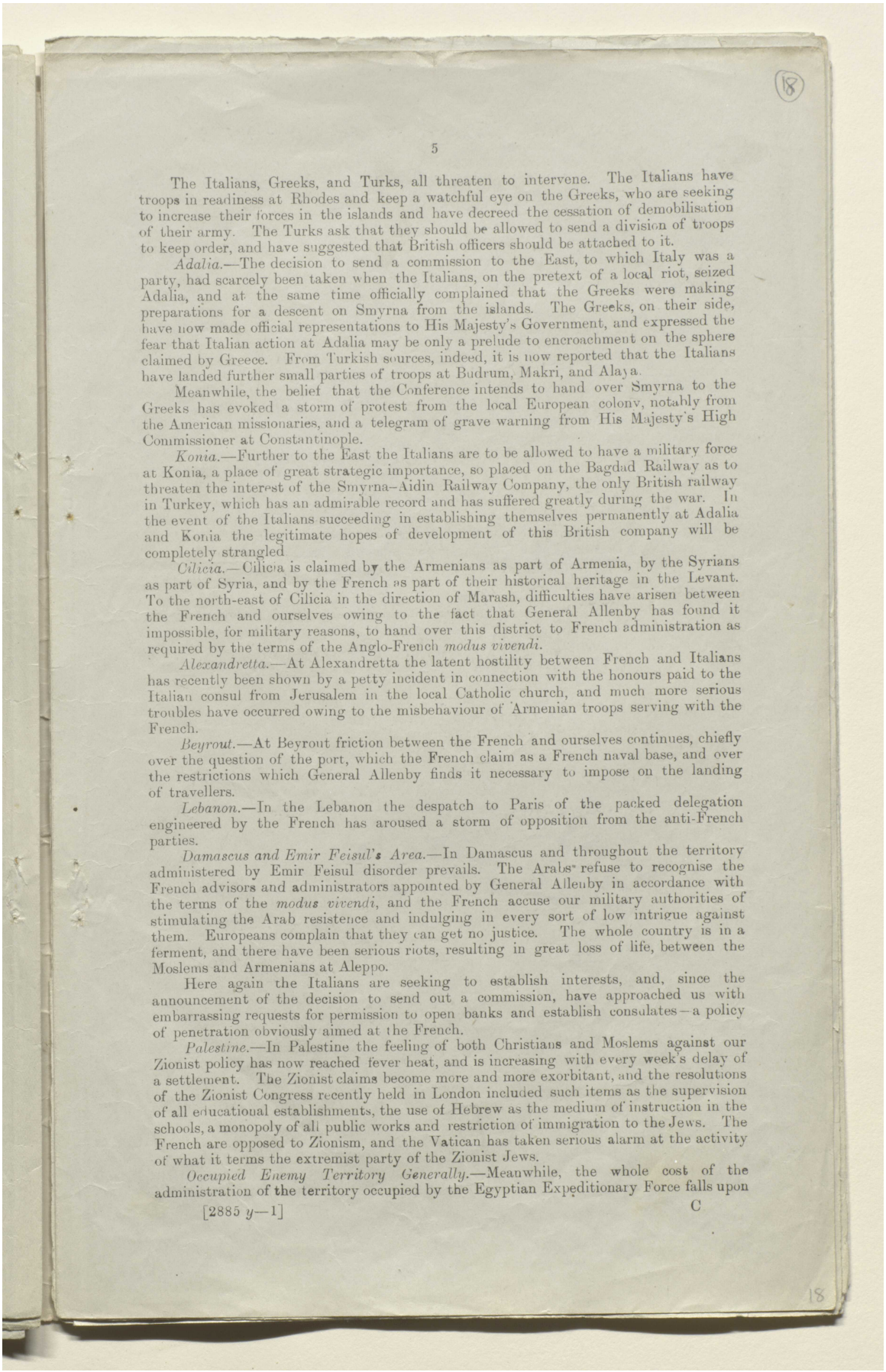

The Italians, Greeks, and Turks, all threaten to intervene. The Italians have troops in readiness at Rhodes and keep a watchful eye on the Greeks, who are seeking to increase their forces in the islands and have decreed the cessation of demobilisation of their army. The Turks ask that they should be allowed to send a division of troops to keep order, and have suggested that British officers should be attached to it.

Adalia.—The decision to send a commission to the East, to which Italy was a party, had scarcely been taken when the Italians, on the pretext of a local riot, seized Adalia, and at the same time officially complained that the Greeks were making preparations for a descent on Smyrna from the islands. The Greeks, on their side, have now made official representations to His Majesty's Government, and expressed the fear that Italian action at Adalia may be only a prelude to encroachment on the sphere claimed by Greece. From Turkish sources, indeed, it is now reported that the Italians have landed further small parties of troops at Budrum, Makri, and Alaya.

Meanwhile, the belief that the Conference intends to hand over Smyrna to the Greeks has evoked a storm of protest from the local European colony, notably from the American missionaries, and a telegram of grave warning from His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople.

Konia.—Further to the East the Italians are to be allowed to have a military force at Konia, a place of great strategic importance, so placed on the Bagdad Railway as to threaten the interest of the Smyrna–Aidin Railway Company, the only British railway in Turkey, which has an admirable record and has suffered greatly during the war. In the event of the Italians succeeding in establishing themselves permanently at Adalia and Konia the legitimate hopes of development of this British company will be completely strangled.

Cilicia.—Cilicia is claimed by the Armenians as part of Armenia, by the Syrians as part of Syria, and by the French as part of their historical heritage in the Levant. To the north-east of Cilicia in the direction of Marash, difficulties have arisen between the French and ourselves owing to the fact that General Allenby has found it impossible, for military reasons, to hand over this district to French administration as required by the terms of the Anglo-French *modus vivendi*.

Alexandretta.—At Alexandretta the latent hostility between French and Italians has recently been shown by a petty incident in connection with the honours paid to the Italian consul from Jerusalem in the local Catholic church, and much more serious troubles have occurred owing to the misbehaviour of Armenian troops serving with the French.

Beyrout.—At Beyrout friction between the French and ourselves continues, chiefly over the question of the port, which the French claim as a French naval base, and over the restrictions which General Allenby finds it necessary to impose on the landing of travellers.

Lebanon.—In the Lebanon the despatch to Paris of the packed delegation engineered by the French has aroused a storm of opposition from the anti-French parties.

Damascus and Emir Feisul's Area.—In Damascus and throughout the territory administered by Emir Feisul disorder prevails. The Arabs refuse to recognise the French advisors and administrators appointed by General Allenby in accordance with the terms of the *modus vivendi*, and the French accuse our military authorities of stimulating the Arab resistence and indulging in every sort of low intrigue against them. Europeans complain that they can get no justice. The whole country is in a ferment, and there have been serious riots, resulting in great loss of life, between the Moslems and Armenians at Aleppo.

Here again the Italians are seeking to establish interests, and, since the announcement of the decision to send out a commission, have approached us with embarrassing requests for permission to open banks and establish consulates—a policy of penetration obviously aimed at the French.

Palestine.—In Palestine the feeling of both Christians and Moslems against our Zionist policy has now reached fever heat, and is increasing with every week's delay of a settlement. The Zionist claims become more and more exorbitant, and the resolutions of the Zionist Congress recently held in London included such items as the supervision of all educational establishments, the use of Hebrew as the medium of instruction in the schools, a monopoly of all public works and restriction of immigration to the Jews. The French are opposed to Zionism, and the Vatican has taken serious alarm at the activity of what it terms the extremist party of the Zionist Jews.

Occupied Enemy Territory Generally.—Meanwhile, the whole cost of the administration of the territory occupied by the Egyptian Expeditionary Force falls upon

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the British taxpayer, and there is, so far as is known here, no guarantee that it will ever be recovered from the power or powers to whom the various mandates may eventually be assigned.

For political reasons and owing to the undesirability of allowing the French to establish themselves in active occupation of the disputed regions, it has been necessary to disguise the expenditure as military expenditure and His Majesty's Treasury are seriously perturbed by this arrangement which was only tolerated under the impression that a very early settlement would be reached by the Peace Conference, and that our liabilities in this respect would thus shortly cease.

Egypt.—The situation in Egypt only comes within the scope of this review in so far as the same forces are at work there as in Turkey, and as the deplorable situation which exists there is bound to react on Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, and indeed throughout the East. Moreover, the sending of a mission to ascertain the wishes of Syria and Palestine as to their future form of Government is scarcely likely to be passed over in silence by those who now control the current of political feeling in Egypt.

The same remark may perhaps also apply to the effect on India of the promised commission's visit to Mesopotamia.

Mesopotamia.—In Mesopotamia itself, the difficulties of administration caused by demobilisation, &c., will become more and more accentuated unless an early decision is reached as to the future of the country.

Mosul.—In the Mosul vilayet no satisfactory arrangements can be made until the rights conceded to the French under the Sykes-Picot Agreement have been definitely and entirely abandoned by them. It is not known here whether the commission proposes to visit this area, but if not it would seem that a recognition by the French of the *de facto* situation should be reached at the earliest possible moment.

Meanwhile, further to the north the French have apparently been engaging, since the decision to send the commission to the East was taken, in a curious intrigue with Sherif Pasha and the Persians to throw Kurdistan under Persian sovereignty with a view to saving it from falling into the orbit of Mosul. This scheme, it seems, is also to extend still further to the north and to embrace Russian Armenia with its capital, Erivan, and even to extend across the Caspian and take in Sarakhs and some undefined part of Russian Turkestan.

II.—*Districts more particularly affected by the decision of the Peace Conference to hand over the Caucasus to the Italians.*

We now leave behind the regions more directly affected by the despatch of the proposed commission and reach an area where the problems arise from another decision of the Peace Conference—the transfer of the Caucasus to Italian control.

Trans Caspia.—Trans-Caspia is already being evacuated, and the danger of the penetration of Bolshevism into India and Persia from this side, and of complications in Afghanistan, need only be mentioned in passing.

The Caspian.—It is understood that arrangements are already being made to transfer our naval control in the Caspian to the Italians, and this at a moment when the spring offensive of the Bolsheviks from Astrakhan may be confidently expected. It will be remembered that our naval authorities regarded the numerical superiority of the Bolshevik fleet at Astrakhan with so much misgiving that they insisted upon measures being taken to destroy it while it was still frozen in. This was to be done from the air, and a strong air base was to be established at the north of Petrovsk for the purpose. The plan had for various reasons to be abandoned. It is now proposed to entrust to Italian sailors a task which our own British sailors regarded with considerable apprehension. The objective of the Bolshevik fleet will be Baku, and if Baku falls the line of supply of our forces in north Persia from Hamadan to Enzeli will be cut. Will it be possible to arrange in time for the substitution of a line of supply viâ Bagdad? Will it be possible in any case for our forces to remain in Enzeli and in North Persia if Baku falls, and the control of the Caspian passes into Bolshevik hands? If not, what will be the political effect in Persia if we have to withdraw our forces?

Caucasus.—Nor is the military outlook in the Caucasus itself any more encouraging. Even if the Italians can provide the necessary troops and transport, is it likely that the mixed and turbulent population of that region who have given us so much trouble will welcome them?

Will General Denikin, whom we have hitherto restrained with so much difficulty from attacking the small republics, be more likely to respect the principle of self-determination when placed before him by an Italian General? Can the Italians be

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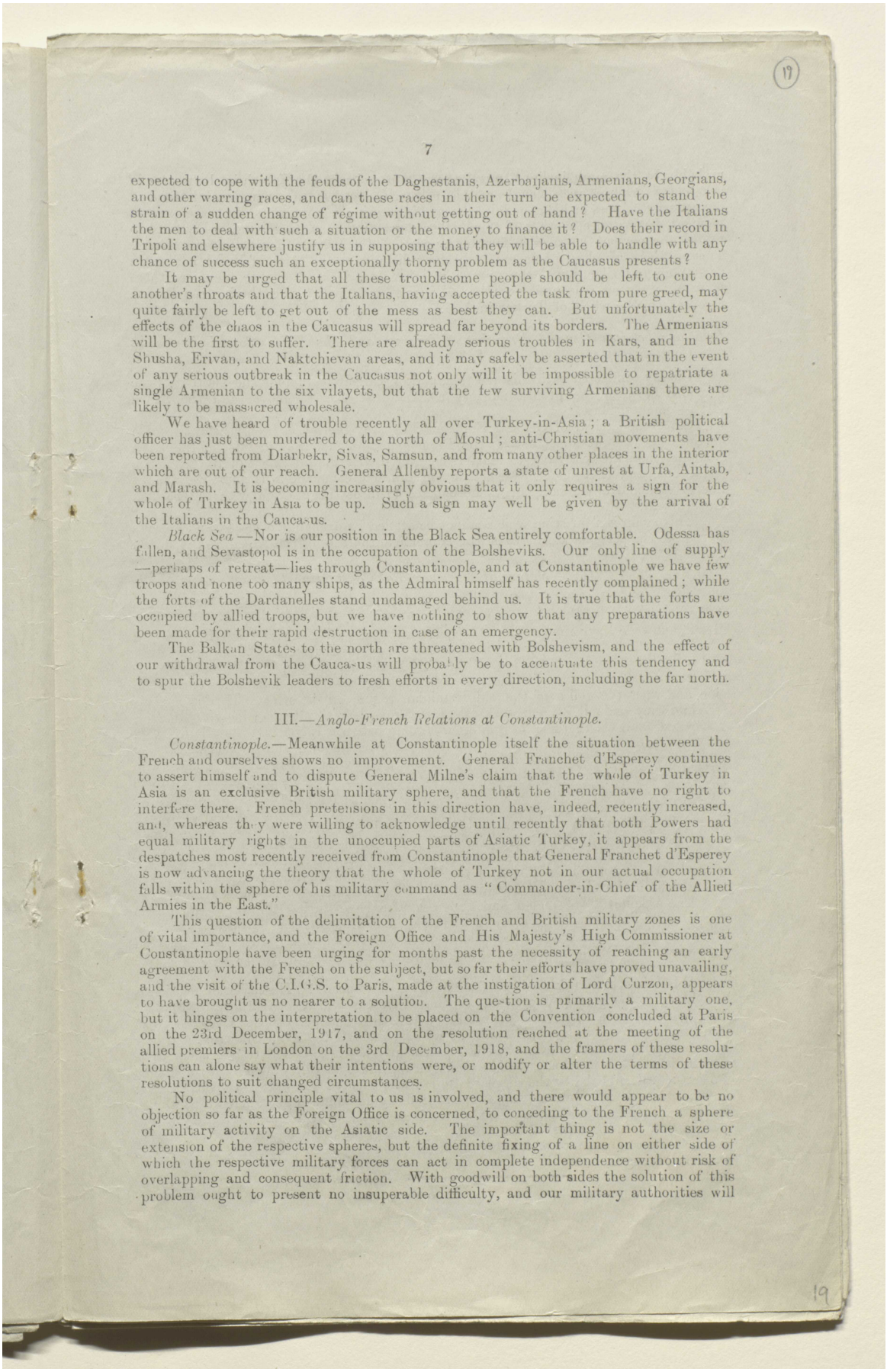

expected to cope with the feuds of the Daghestanis, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, Georgians, and other warring races, and can these races in their turn be expected to stand the strain of a sudden change of régime without getting out of hand? Have the Italians the men to deal with such a situation or the money to finance it? Does their record in Tripoli and elsewhere justify us in supposing that they will be able to handle with any chance of success such an exceptionally thorny problem as the Caucasus presents?

It may be urged that all these troublesome people should be left to cut one another's throats and that the Italians, having accepted the task from pure greed, may quite fairly be left to get out of the mess as best they can. But unfortunately the effects of the chaos in the Caucasus will spread far beyond its borders. The Armenians will be the first to suffer. There are already serious troubles in Kars, and in the Shusha, Erivan, and Naktchievan areas, and it may safely be asserted that in the event of any serious outbreak in the Caucasus not only will it be impossible to repatriate a single Armenian to the six vilayets, but that the few surviving Armenians there are likely to be massacred wholesale.

We have heard of trouble recently all over Turkey-in-Asia; a British political officer has just been murdered to the north of Mosul; anti-Christian movements have been reported from Diarbekr, Sivas, Samsun, and from many other places in the interior which are out of our reach. General Allenby reports a state of unrest at Urfa, Aintab, and Marash. It is becoming increasingly obvious that it only requires a sign for the whole of Turkey in Asia to be up. Such a sign may well be given by the arrival of the Italians in the Caucasus.

Black Sea.—Nor is our position in the Black Sea entirely comfortable. Odessa has fallen, and Sevastopol is in the occupation of the Bolsheviks. Our only line of supply—perhaps of retreat—lies through Constantinople, and at Constantinople we have few troops and none too many ships, as the Admiral himself has recently complained; while the forts of the Dardanelles stand undamaged behind us. It is true that the forts are occupied by allied troops, but we have nothing to show that any preparations have been made for their rapid destruction in case of an emergency.

The Balkan States to the north are threatened with Bolshevism, and the effect of our withdrawal from the Caucasus will probably be to accentuate this tendency and to spur the Bolshevik leaders to fresh efforts in every direction, including the far north.

III.—*Anglo-French Relations at Constantinople.*

Constantinople.—Meanwhile at Constantinople itself the situation between the French and ourselves shows no improvement. General Franchet d'Esperey continues to assert himself and to dispute General Milne's claim that the whole of Turkey in Asia is an exclusive British military sphere, and that the French have no right to interfere there. French pretensions in this direction have, indeed, recently increased, and, whereas they were willing to acknowledge until recently that both Powers had equal military rights in the unoccupied parts of Asiatic Turkey, it appears from the despatches most recently received from Constantinople that General Franchet d'Esperey is now advancing the theory that the whole of Turkey not in our actual occupation falls within the sphere of his military command as "Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the East."

This question of the delimitation of the French and British military zones is one of vital importance, and the Foreign Office and His Majesty's High Commissioner at Constantinople have been urging for months past the necessity of reaching an early agreement with the French on the subject, but so far their efforts have proved unavailing, and the visit of the C.I.G.S. to Paris, made at the instigation of Lord Curzon, appears to have brought us no nearer to a solution. The question is primarily a military one, but it hinges on the interpretation to be placed on the Convention concluded at Paris on the 23rd December, 1917, and on the resolution reached at the meeting of the allied premiers in London on the 3rd December, 1918, and the framers of these resolutions can alone say what their intentions were, or modify or alter the terms of these resolutions to suit changed circumstances.

No political principle vital to us is involved, and there would appear to be no objection so far as the Foreign Office is concerned, to conceding to the French a sphere of military activity on the Asiatic side. The important thing is not the size or extension of the respective spheres, but the definite fixing of a line on either side of which the respective military forces can act in complete independence without risk of overlapping and consequent friction. With goodwill on both sides the solution of this problem ought to present no insuperable difficulty, and our military authorities will

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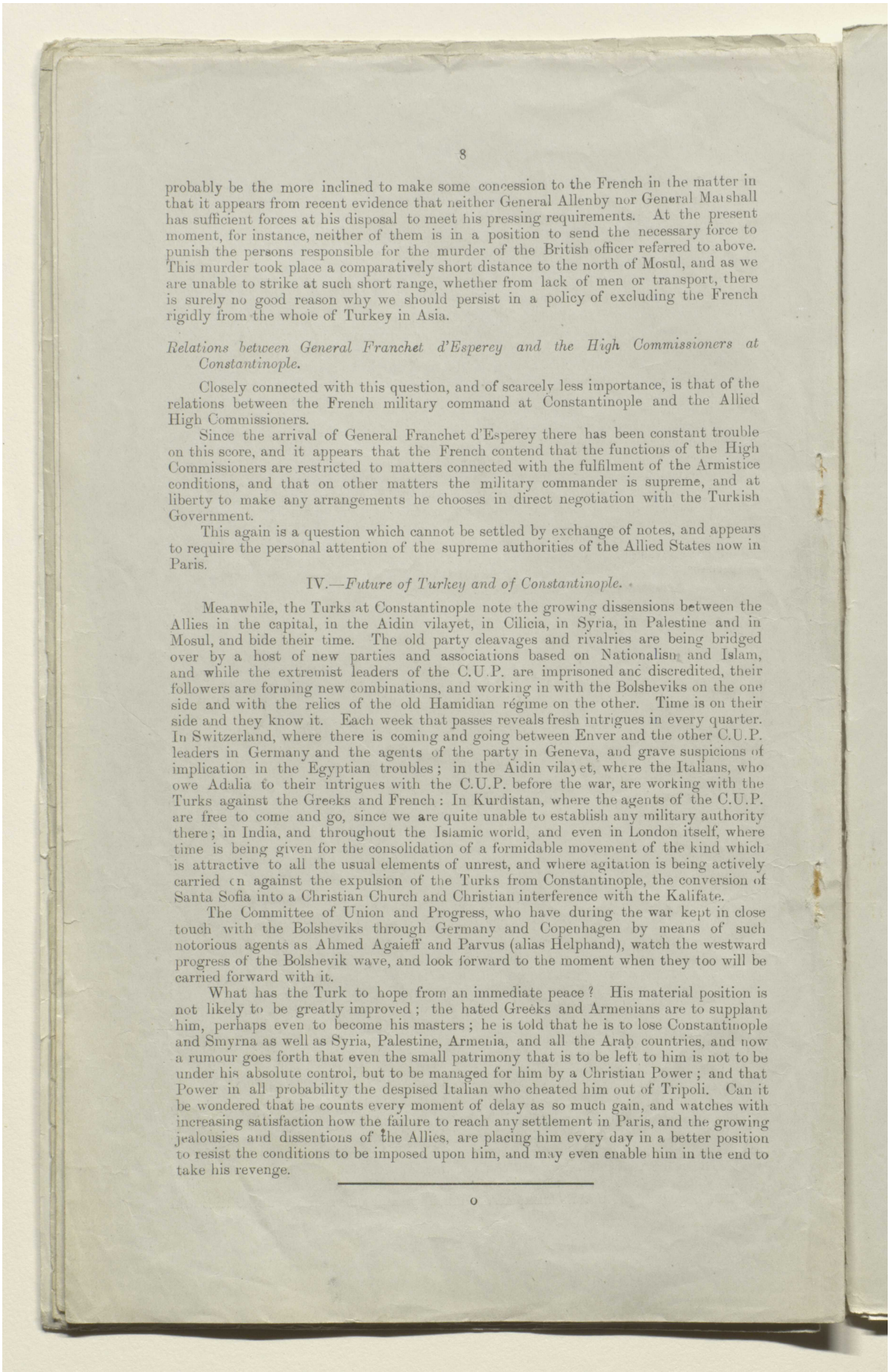

probably be the more inclined to make some concession to the French in the matter in that it appears from recent evidence that neither General Allenby nor General Marshall has sufficient forces at his disposal to meet his pressing requirements. At the present moment, for instance, neither of them is in a position to send the necessary force to punish the persons responsible for the murder of the British officer referred to above. This murder took place a comparatively short distance to the north of Mosul, and as we are unable to strike at such short range, whether from lack of men or transport, there is surely no good reason why we should persist in a policy of excluding the French rigidly from the whole of Turkey in Asia.

Relations between General Franchet d'Esperey and the High Commissioners at Constantinople.

Closely connected with this question, and of scarcely less importance, is that of the relations between the French military command at Constantinople and the Allied High Commissioners.

Since the arrival of General Franchet d'Esperey there has been constant trouble on this score, and it appears that the French contend that the functions of the High Commissioners are restricted to matters connected with the fulfilment of the Armistice conditions, and that on other matters the military commander is supreme, and at liberty to make any arrangements he chooses in direct negotiation with the Turkish Government.

This again is a question which cannot be settled by exchange of notes, and appears to require the personal attention of the supreme authorities of the Allied States now in Paris.

IV.—*Future of Turkey and of Constantinople.*

Meanwhile, the Turks at Constantinople note the growing dissensions between the Allies in the capital, in the Aidin vilayet, in Cilicia, in Syria, in Palestine and in Mosul, and bide their time. The old party cleavages and rivalries are being bridged over by a host of new parties and associations based on Nationalism and Islam, and while the extremist leaders of the C.U.P. are imprisoned and discredited, their followers are forming new combinations, and working in with the Bolsheviks on the one side and with the relics of the old Hamidian régime on the other. Time is on their side and they know it. Each week that passes reveals fresh intrigues in every quarter. In Switzerland, where there is coming and going between Enver and the other C.U.P. leaders in Germany and the agents of the party in Geneva, and grave suspicions of implication in the Egyptian troubles; in the Aidin vilayet, where the Italians, who owe Adalia to their intrigues with the C.U.P. before the war, are working with the Turks against the Greeks and French: In Kurdistan, where the agents of the C.U.P. are free to come and go, since we are quite unable to establish any military authority there; in India, and throughout the Islamic world, and even in London itself, where time is being given for the consolidation of a formidable movement of the kind which is attractive to all the usual elements of unrest, and where agitation is being actively carried on against the expulsion of the Turks from Constantinople, the conversion of Santa Sofia into a Christian Church and Christian interference with the Kalifate.

The Committee of Union and Progress, who have during the war kept in close touch with the Bolsheviks through Germany and Copenhagen by means of such notorious agents as Ahmed Agaieff and Parvus (alias Helphand), watch the westward progress of the Bolshevik wave, and look forward to the moment when they too will be carried forward with it.

What has the Turk to hope from an immediate peace? His material position is not likely to be greatly improved; the hated Greeks and Armenians are to supplant him, perhaps even to become his masters; he is told that he is to lose Constantinople and Smyrna as well as Syria, Palestine, Armenia, and all the Arab countries, and now a rumour goes forth that even the small patrimony that is to be left to him is not to be under his absolute control, but to be managed for him by a Christian Power; and that Power in all probability the despised Italian who cheated him out of Tripoli. Can it be wondered that he counts every moment of delay as so much gain, and watches with increasing satisfaction how the failure to reach any settlement in Paris, and the growing jealousies and dissentions of the Allies, are placing him every day in a better position to resist the conditions to be imposed upon him, and may even enable him in the end to take his revenge.

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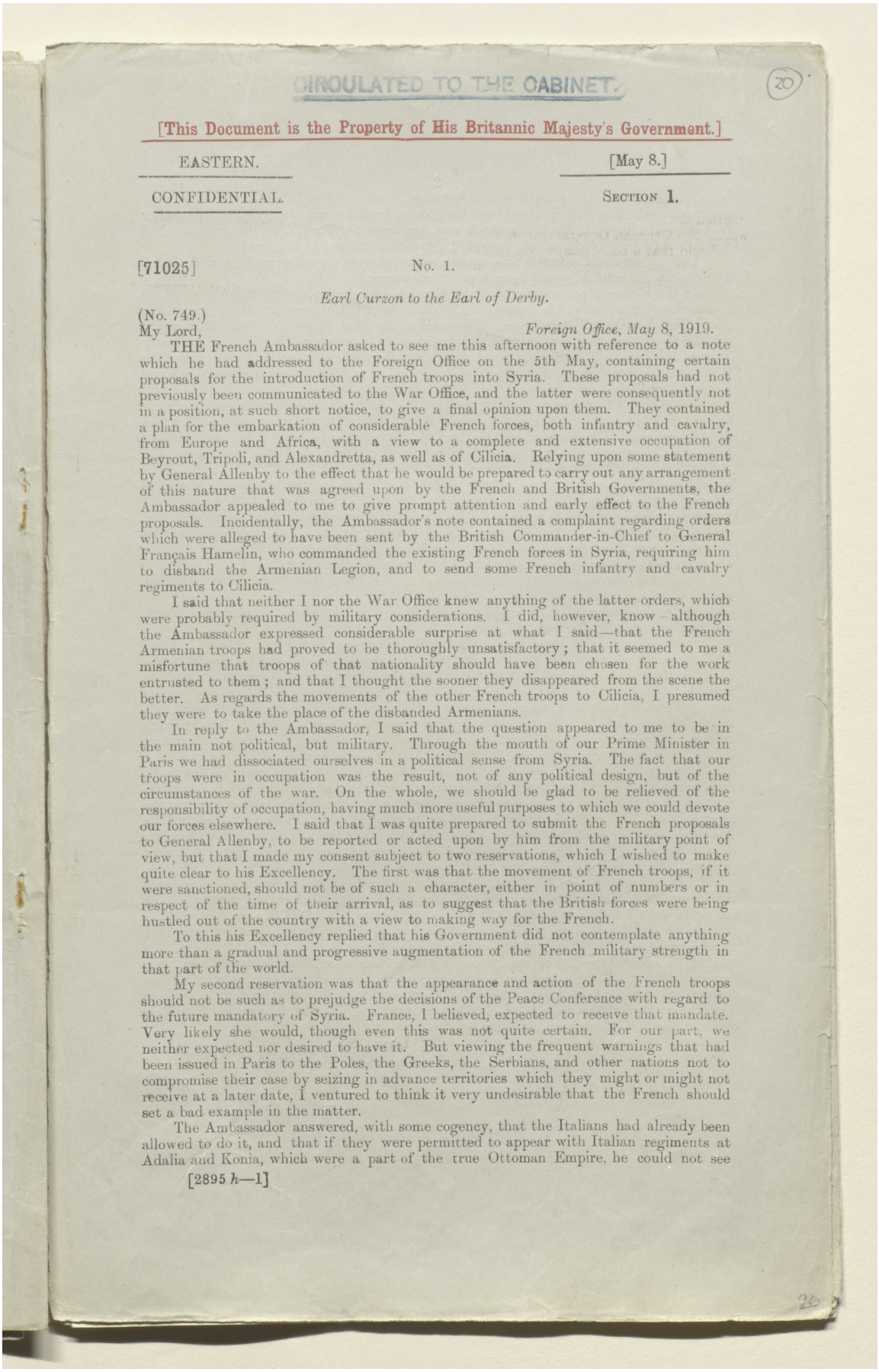

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EASTERN. [May 8.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[71025] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 749.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 8, 1919.*

THE French Ambassador asked to see me this afternoon with reference to a note which he had addressed to the Foreign Office on the 5th May, containing certain proposals for the introduction of French troops into Syria. These proposals had not previously been communicated to the War Office, and the latter were consequently not in a position, at such short notice, to give a final opinion upon them. They contained a plan for the embarkation of considerable French forces, both infantry and cavalry, from Europe and Africa, with a view to a complete and extensive occupation of Beyrout, Tripoli, and Alexandretta, as well as of Cilicia. Relying upon some statement by General Allenby to the effect that he would be prepared to carry out any arrangement of this nature that was agreed upon by the French and British Governments, the Ambassador appealed to me to give prompt attention and early effect to the French proposals. Incidentally, the Ambassador's note contained a complaint regarding orders which were alleged to have been sent by the British Commander-in-Chief to General Français Hamelin, who commanded the existing French forces in Syria, requiring him to disband the Armenian Legion, and to send some French infantry and cavalry regiments to Cilicia.

I said that neither I nor the War Office knew anything of the latter orders, which were probably required by military considerations. I did, however, know – although the Ambassador expressed considerable surprise at what I said—that the French Armenian troops had proved to be thoroughly unsatisfactory; that it seemed to me a misfortune that troops of that nationality should have been chosen for the work entrusted to them; and that I thought the sooner they disappeared from the scene the better. As regards the movements of the other French troops to Cilicia, I presumed they were to take the place of the disbanded Armenians.

In reply to the Ambassador, I said that the question appeared to me to be in the main not political, but military. Through the mouth of our Prime Minister in Paris we had dissociated ourselves in a political sense from Syria. The fact that our troops were in occupation was the result, not of any political design, but of the circumstances of the war. On the whole, we should be glad to be relieved of the responsibility of occupation, having much more useful purposes to which we could devote our forces elsewhere. I said that I was quite prepared to submit the French proposals to General Allenby, to be reported or acted upon by him from the military point of view, but that I made my consent subject to two reservations, which I wished to make quite clear to his Excellency. The first was that the movement of French troops, if it were sanctioned, should not be of such a character, either in point of numbers or in respect of the time of their arrival, as to suggest that the British forces were being hustled out of the country with a view to making way for the French.

To this his Excellency replied that his Government did not contemplate anything more than a gradual and progressive augmentation of the French military strength in that part of the world.

My second reservation was that the appearance and action of the French troops should not be such as to prejudge the decisions of the Peace Conference with regard to the future mandatory of Syria. France, I believed, expected to receive that mandate. Very likely she would, though even this was not quite certain. For our part, we neither expected nor desired to have it. But viewing the frequent warnings that had been issued in Paris to the Poles, the Greeks, the Serbians, and other nations not to compromise their case by seizing in advance territories which they might or might not receive at a later date, I ventured to think it very undesirable that the French should set a bad example in the matter.

The Ambassador answered, with some cogency, that the Italians had already been allowed to do it, and that if they were permitted to appear with Italian regiments at Adalia and Konia, which were a part of the true Ottoman Empire, he could not see

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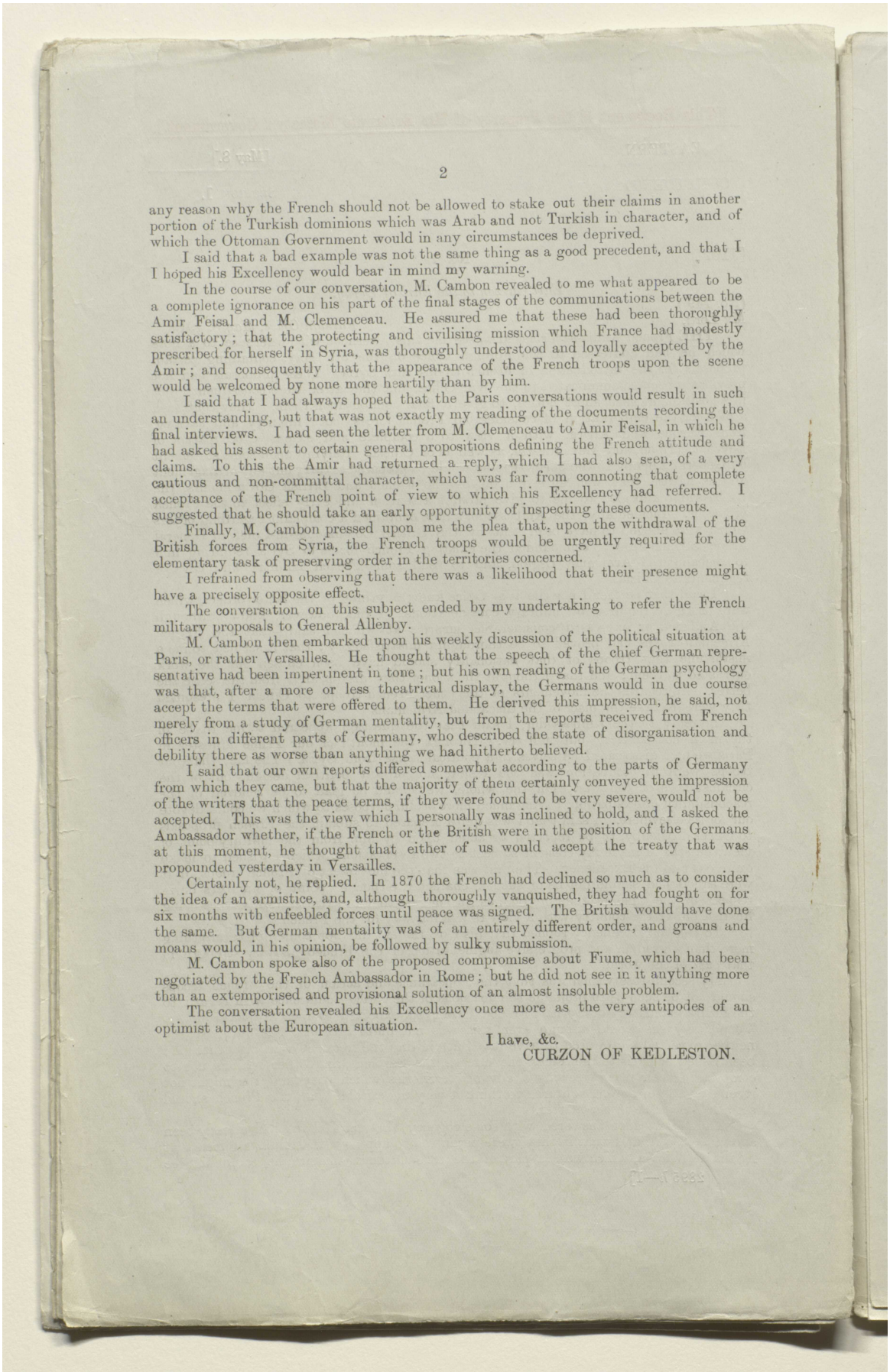

any reason why the French should not be allowed to stake out their claims in another portion of the Turkish dominions which was Arab and not Turkish in character, and of which the Ottoman Government would in any circumstances be deprived.

I said that a bad example was not the same thing as a good precedent, and that I I hoped his Excellency would bear in mind my warning.

In the course of our conversation, M. Cambon revealed to me what appeared to be a complete ignorance on his part of the final stages of the communications between the Amir Feisal and M. Clemenceau. He assured me that these had been thoroughly satisfactory; that the protecting and civilising mission which France had modestly prescribed for herself in Syria, was thoroughly understood and loyally accepted by the Amir; and consequently that the appearance of the French troops upon the scene would be welcomed by none more heartily than by him.

I said that I had always hoped that the Paris conversations would result in such an understanding, but that was not exactly my reading of the documents recording the final interviews. I had seen the letter from M. Clemenceau to Amir Feisal, in which he had asked his assent to certain general propositions defining the French attitude and claims. To this the Amir had returned a reply, which I had also seen, of a very cautious and non-committal character, which was far from connoting that complete acceptance of the French point of view to which his Excellency had referred. I suggested that he should take an early opportunity of inspecting these documents.

Finally, M. Cambon pressed upon me the plea that, upon the withdrawal of the British forces from Syria, the French troops would be urgently required for the elementary task of preserving order in the territories concerned.

I refrained from observing that there was a likelihood that their presence might have a precisely opposite effect.

The conversation on this subject ended by my undertaking to refer the French military proposals to General Allenby.

M. Cambon then embarked upon his weekly discussion of the political situation at Paris, or rather Versailles. He thought that the speech of the chief German representative had been impertinent in tone; but his own reading of the German psychology was that, after a more or less theatrical display, the Germans would in due course accept the terms that were offered to them. He derived this impression, he said, not merely from a study of German mentality, but from the reports received from French officers in different parts of Germany, who described the state of disorganisation and debility there as worse than anything we had hitherto believed.

I said that our own reports differed somewhat according to the parts of Germany from which they came, but that the majority of them certainly conveyed the impression of the writers that the peace terms, if they were found to be very severe, would not be accepted. This was the view which I personally was inclined to hold, and I asked the Ambassador whether, if the French or the British were in the position of the Germans at this moment, he thought that either of us would accept the treaty that was propounded yesterday in Versailles.

Certainly not, he replied. In 1870 the French had declined so much as to consider the idea of an armistice, and, although thoroughly vanquished, they had fought on for six months with enfeebled forces until peace was signed. The British would have done the same. But German mentality was of an entirely different order, and groans and moans would, in his opinion, be followed by sulky submission.

M. Cambon spoke also of the proposed compromise about Fiume, which had been negotiated by the French Ambassador in Rome; but he did not see in it anything more than an extemporised and provisional solution of an almost insoluble problem.

The conversation revealed his Excellency once more as the very antipodes of an optimist about the European situation.

I have, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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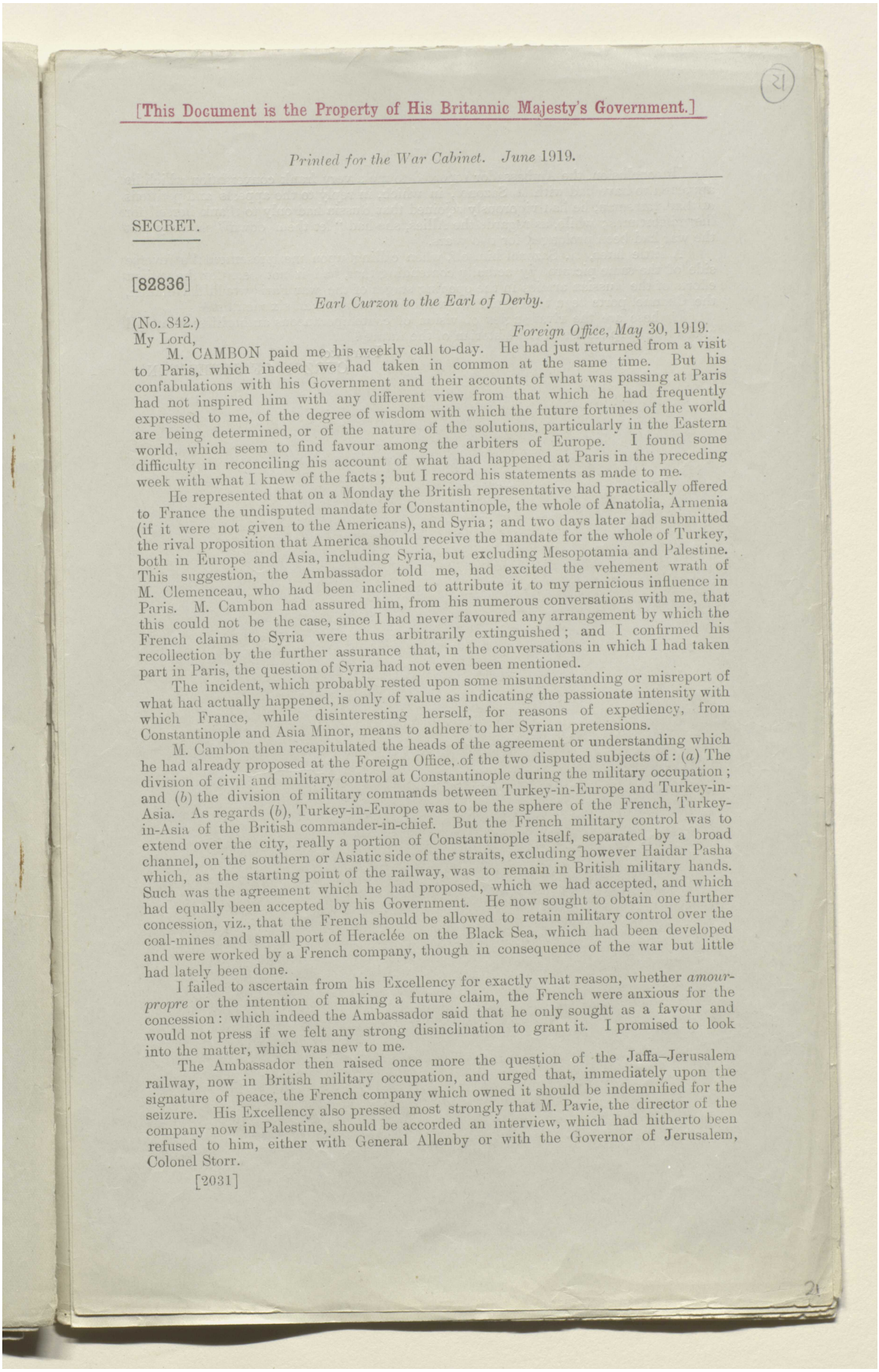

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Printed for the War Cabinet. June 1919.

SECRET.

[82836]

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 842.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 30, 1919.*

M. CAMBON paid me his weekly call to-day. He had just returned from a visit to Paris, which indeed we had taken in common at the same time. But his confabulations with his Government and their accounts of what was passing at Paris had not inspired him with any different view from that which he had frequently expressed to me, of the degree of wisdom with which the future fortunes of the world are being determined, or of the nature of the solutions, particularly in the Eastern world, which seem to find favour among the arbiters of Europe. I found some difficulty in reconciling his account of what had happened at Paris in the preceding week with what I knew of the facts; but I record his statements as made to me.

He represented that on a Monday the British representative had practically offered to France the undisputed mandate for Constantinople, the whole of Anatolia, Armenia (if it were not given to the Americans), and Syria; and two days later had submitted the rival proposition that America should receive the mandate for the whole of Turkey, both in Europe and Asia, including Syria, but excluding Mesopotamia and Palestine. This suggestion, the Ambassador told me, had excited the vehement wrath of M. Clemenceau, who had been inclined to attribute it to my pernicious influence in Paris. M. Cambon had assured him, from his numerous conversations with me, that this could not be the case, since I had never favoured any arrangement by which the French claims to Syria were thus arbitrarily extinguished; and I confirmed his recollection by the further assurance that, in the conversations in which I had taken part in Paris, the question of Syria had not even been mentioned.

The incident, which probably rested upon some misunderstanding or misreport of what had actually happened, is only of value as indicating the passionate intensity with which France, while disinteresting herself, for reasons of expediency, from Constantinople and Asia Minor, means to adhere to her Syrian pretensions.

M. Cambon then recapitulated the heads of the agreement or understanding which he had already proposed at the Foreign Office, of the two disputed subjects of: (*a*) The division of civil and military control at Constantinople during the military occupation; and (*b*) the division of military commands between Turkey-in-Europe and Turkey-in-Asia. As regards (*b*), Turkey-in-Europe was to be the sphere of the French, Turkey-in-Asia of the British commander-in-chief. But the French military control was to extend over the city, really a portion of Constantinople itself, separated by a broad channel, on the southern or Asiatic side of the straits, excluding however Haidar Pasha which, as the starting point of the railway, was to remain in British military hands. Such was the agreement which he had proposed, which we had accepted, and which had equally been accepted by his Government. He now sought to obtain one further concession, viz., that the French should be allowed to retain military control over the coal-mines and small port of Heraclée on the Black Sea, which had been developed and were worked by a French company, though in consequence of the war but little had lately been done.

I failed to ascertain from his Excellency for exactly what reason, whether *amour-propre* or the intention of making a future claim, the French were anxious for the concession: which indeed the Ambassador said that he only sought as a favour and would not press if we felt any strong disinclination to grant it. I promised to look into the matter, which was new to me.

The Ambassador then raised once more the question of the Jaffa–Jerusalem railway, now in British military occupation, and urged that, immediately upon the signature of peace, the French company which owned it should be indemnified for the seizure. His Excellency also pressed most strongly that M. Pavie, the director of the company now in Palestine, should be accorded an interview, which had hitherto been refused to him, either with General Allenby or with the Governor of Jerusalem, Colonel Storr.

[2031]

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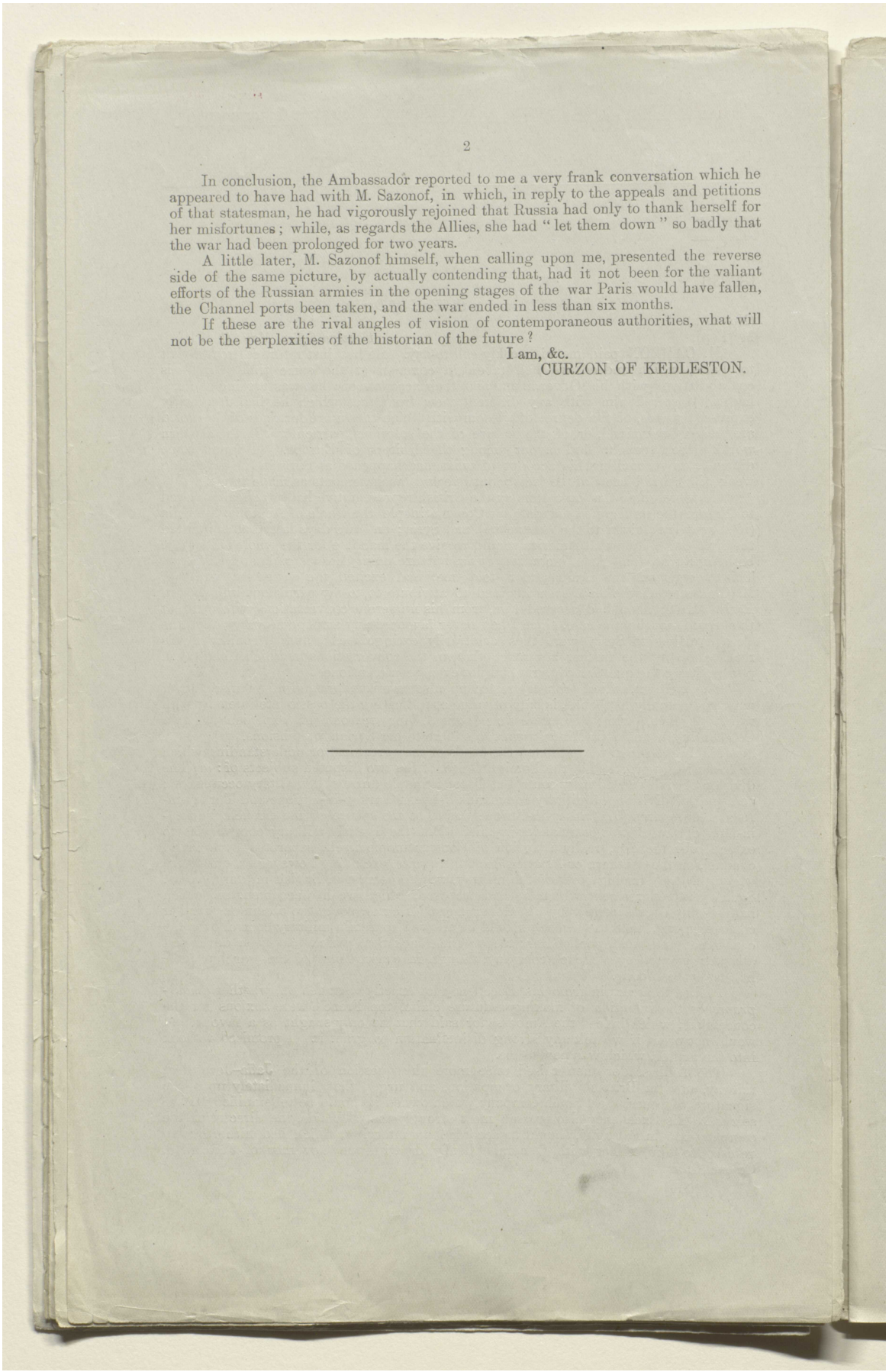
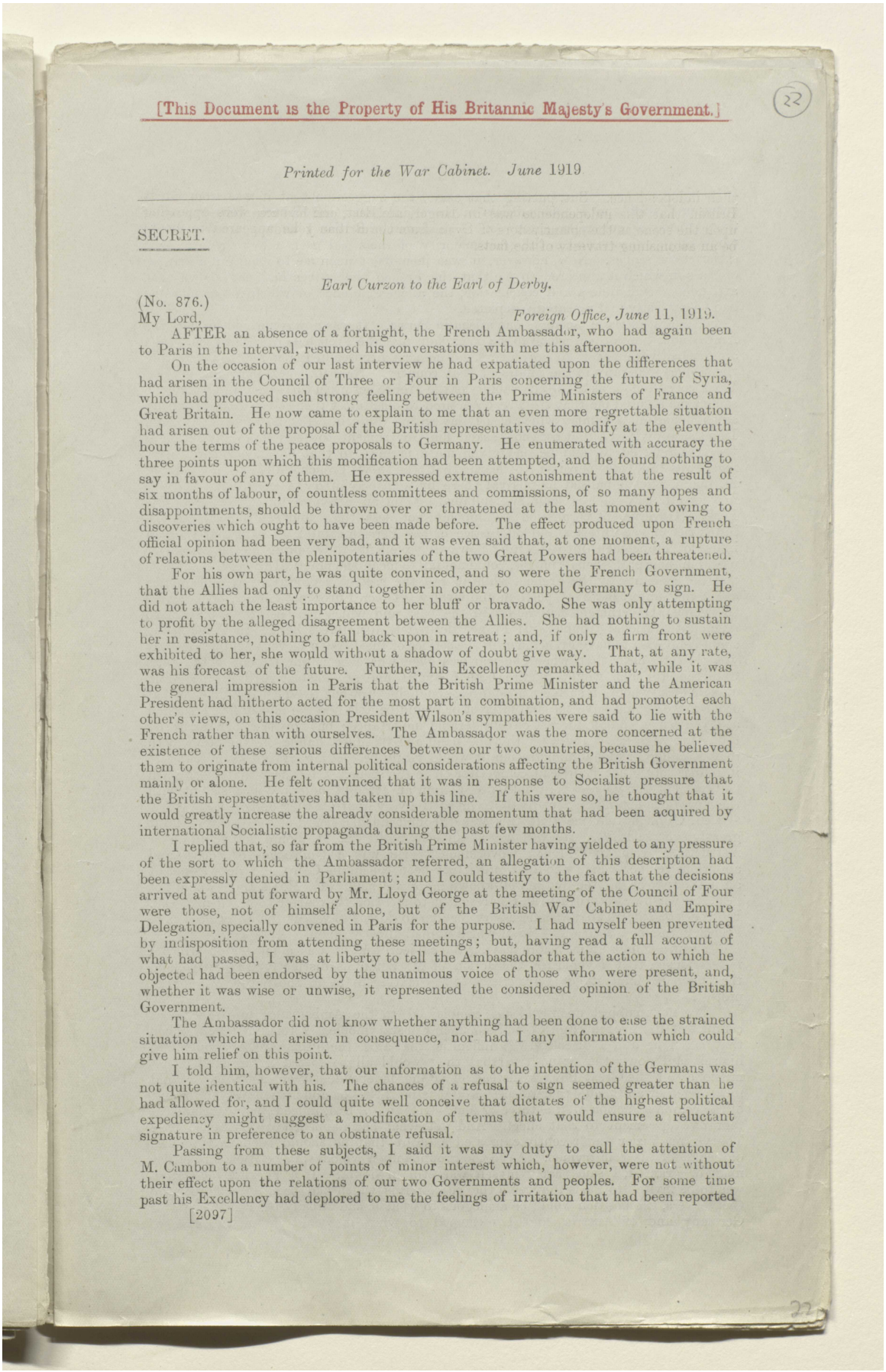


In conclusion, the Ambassador reported to me a very frank conversation which he appeared to have had with M. Sazonof, in which, in reply to the appeals and petitions of that statesman, he had vigorously rejoined that Russia had only to thank herself for her misfortunes; while, as regards the Allies, she had "let them down" so badly that the war had been prolonged for two years.

A little later, M. Sazonof himself, when calling upon me, presented the reverse side of the same picture, by actually contending that, had it not been for the valiant efforts of the Russian armies in the opening stages of the war Paris would have fallen, the Channel ports been taken, and the war ended in less than six months.

If these are the rival angles of vision of contemporaneous authorities, what will not be the perplexities of the historian of the future?

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.



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Printed for the War Cabinet. June 1919

SECRET.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 876.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1919.

AFTER an absence of a fortnight, the French Ambassador, who had again been to Paris in the interval, resumed his conversations with me this afternoon.

On the occasion of our last interview he had expatiated upon the differences that had arisen in the Council of Three or Four in Paris concerning the future of Syria, which had produced such strong feeling between the Prime Ministers of France and Great Britain. He now came to explain to me that an even more regrettable situation had arisen out of the proposal of the British representatives to modify at the eleventh hour the terms of the peace proposals to Germany. He enumerated with accuracy the three points upon which this modification had been attempted, and he found nothing to say in favour of any of them. He expressed extreme astonishment that the result of six months of labour, of countless committees and commissions, of so many hopes and disappointments, should be thrown over or threatened at the last moment owing to discoveries which ought to have been made before. The effect produced upon French official opinion had been very bad, and it was even said that, at one moment, a rupture of relations between the plenipotentiaries of the two Great Powers had been threatened.

For his own part, he was quite convinced, and so were the French Government, that the Allies had only to stand together in order to compel Germany to sign. He did not attach the least importance to her bluff or bravado. She was only attempting to profit by the alleged disagreement between the Allies. She had nothing to sustain her in resistance, nothing to fall back upon in retreat; and, if only a firm front were exhibited to her, she would without a shadow of doubt give way. That, at any rate, was his forecast of the future. Further, his Excellency remarked that, while it was the general impression in Paris that the British Prime Minister and the American President had hitherto acted for the most part in combination, and had promoted each other's views, on this occasion President Wilson's sympathies were said to lie with the French rather than with ourselves. The Ambassador was the more concerned at the existence of these serious differences between our two countries, because he believed them to originate from internal political considerations affecting the British Government mainly or alone. He felt convinced that it was in response to Socialist pressure that the British representatives had taken up this line. If this were so, he thought that it would greatly increase the already considerable momentum that had been acquired by international Socialistic propaganda during the past few months.

I replied that, so far from the British Prime Minister having yielded to any pressure of the sort to which the Ambassador referred, an allegation of this description had been expressly denied in Parliament; and I could testify to the fact that the decisions arrived at and put forward by Mr. Lloyd George at the meeting of the Council of Four were those, not of himself alone, but of the British War Cabinet and Empire Delegation, specially convened in Paris for the purpose. I had myself been prevented by indisposition from attending these meetings; but, having read a full account of what had passed, I was at liberty to tell the Ambassador that the action to which he objected had been endorsed by the unanimous voice of those who were present, and, whether it was wise or unwise, it represented the considered opinion of the British Government.

The Ambassador did not know whether anything had been done to ease the strained situation which had arisen in consequence, nor had I any information which could give him relief on this point.

I told him, however, that our information as to the intention of the Germans was not quite identical with his. The chances of a refusal to sign seemed greater than he had allowed for, and I could quite well conceive that dictates of the highest political expediency might suggest a modification of terms that would ensure a reluctant signature in preference to an obstinate refusal.

Passing from these subjects, I said it was my duty to call the attention of M. Cambon to a number of points of minor interest which, however, were not without their effect upon the relations of our two Governments and peoples. For some time past his Excellency had deplored to me the feelings of irritation that had been reported

[2097]

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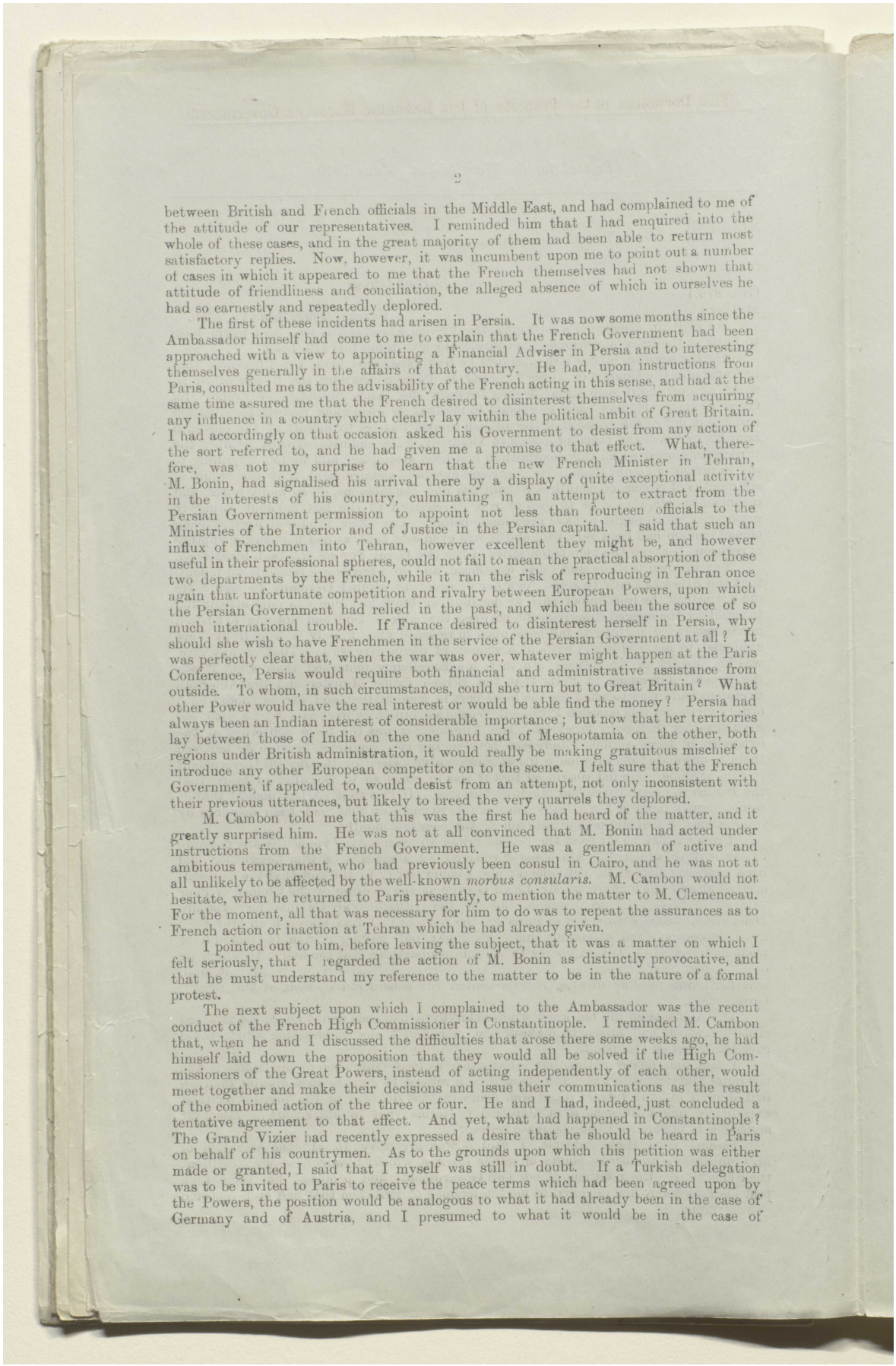

between British and French officials in the Middle East, and had complained to me of the attitude of our representatives. I reminded him that I had enquired into the whole of these cases, and in the great majority of them had been able to return most satisfactory replies. Now, however, it was incumbent upon me to point out a number of cases in which it appeared to me that the French themselves had not shown that attitude of friendliness and conciliation, the alleged absence of which in ourselves he had so earnestly and repeatedly deplored.

The first of these incidents had arisen in Persia. It was now some months since the Ambassador himself had come to me to explain that the French Government had been approached with a view to appointing a Financial Adviser in Persia and to interesting themselves generally in the affairs of that country. He had, upon instructions from Paris, consulted me as to the advisability of the French acting in this sense, and had at the same time assured me that the French desired to disinterest themselves from acquiring any influence in a country which clearly lay within the political ambit of Great Britain. I had accordingly on that occasion asked his Government to desist from any action of the sort referred to, and he had given me a promise to that effect. What, therefore, was not my surprise to learn that the new French Minister in Tehran, M. Bonin, had signalised his arrival there by a display of quite exceptional activity in the interests of his country, culminating in an attempt to extract from the Persian Government permission to appoint not less than fourteen officials to the Ministries of the Interior and of Justice in the Persian capital. I said that such an influx of Frenchmen into Tehran, however excellent they might be, and however useful in their professional spheres, could not fail to mean the practical absorption of those two departments by the French, while it ran the risk of reproducing in Tehran once again that unfortunate competition and rivalry between European Powers, upon which the Persian Government had relied in the past, and which had been the source of so much international trouble. If France desired to disinterest herself in Persia, why should she wish to have Frenchmen in the service of the Persian Government at all? It was perfectly clear that, when the war was over, whatever might happen at the Paris Conference, Persia would require both financial and administrative assistance from outside. To whom, in such circumstances, could she turn but to Great Britain? What other Power would have the real interest or would be able find the money? Persia had always been an Indian interest of considerable importance; but now that her territories lay between those of India on the one hand and of Mesopotamia on the other, both regions under British administration, it would really be making gratuitous mischief to introduce any other European competitor on to the scene. I felt sure that the French Government, if appealed to, would desist from an attempt, not only inconsistent with their previous utterances, but likely to breed the very quarrels they deplored.

M. Cambon told me that this was the first he had heard of the matter, and it greatly surprised him. He was not at all convinced that M. Bonin had acted under instructions from the French Government. He was a gentleman of active and ambitious temperament, who had previously been consul in Cairo, and he was not at all unlikely to be affected by the well-known *morbus consularis*. M. Cambon would not hesitate, when he returned to Paris presently, to mention the matter to M. Clemenceau. For the moment, all that was necessary for him to do was to repeat the assurances as to French action or inaction at Tehran which he had already given.

I pointed out to him, before leaving the subject, that it was a matter on which I felt seriously, that I regarded the action of M. Bonin as distinctly provocative, and that he must understand my reference to the matter to be in the nature of a formal protest.

The next subject upon which I complained to the Ambassador was the recent conduct of the French High Commissioner in Constantinople. I reminded M. Cambon that, when he and I discussed the difficulties that arose there some weeks ago, he had himself laid down the proposition that they would all be solved if the High Commissioners of the Great Powers, instead of acting independently of each other, would meet together and make their decisions and issue their communications as the result of the combined action of the three or four. He and I had, indeed, just concluded a tentative agreement to that effect. And yet, what had happened in Constantinople? The Grand Vizier had recently expressed a desire that he should be heard in Paris on behalf of his countrymen. As to the grounds upon which this petition was either made or granted, I said that I myself was still in doubt. If a Turkish delegation was to be invited to Paris to receive the peace terms which had been agreed upon by the Powers, the position would be analogous to what it had already been in the case of Germany and of Austria, and I presumed to what it would be in the case of

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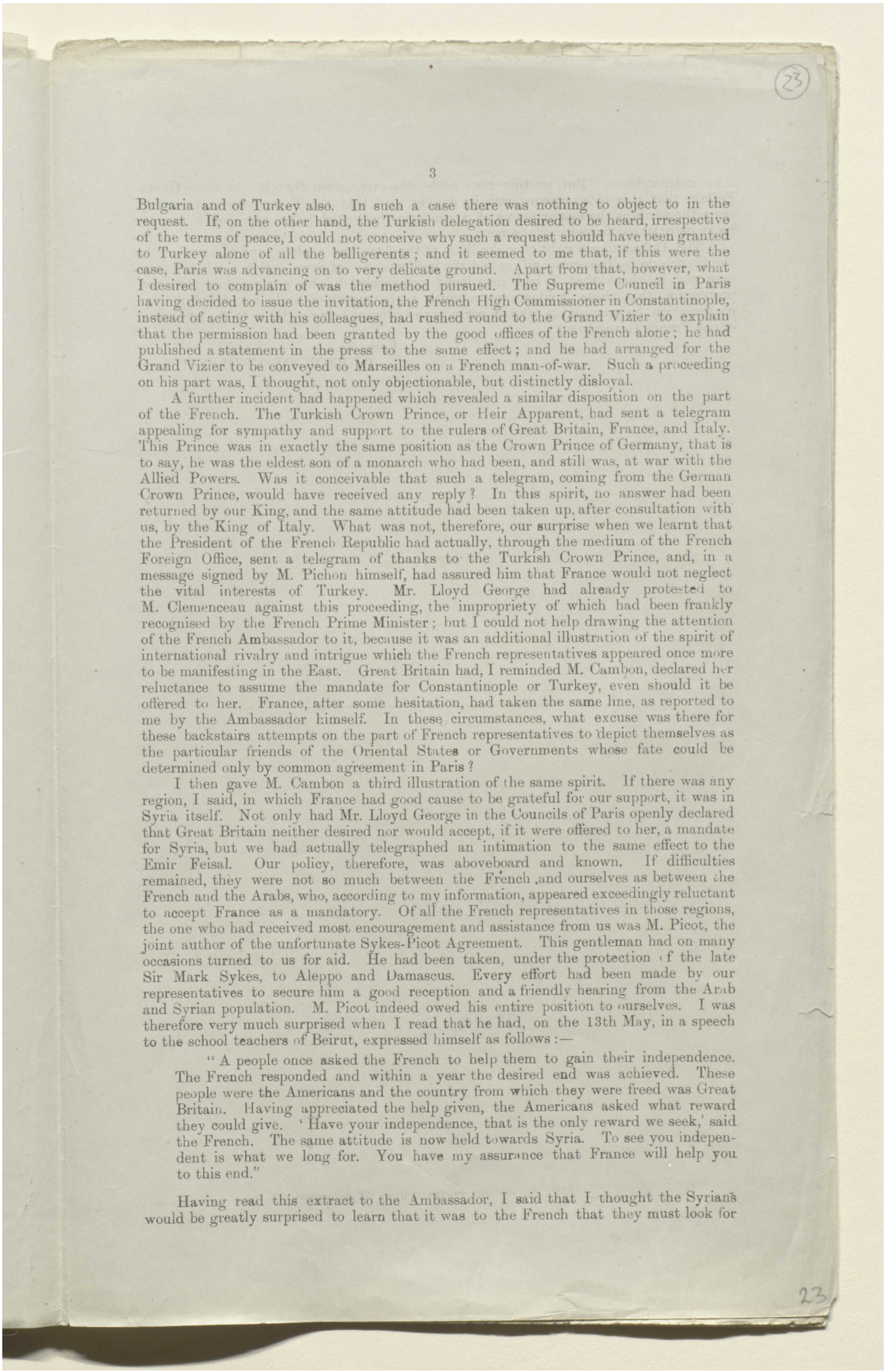

Bulgaria and of Turkey also. In such a case there was nothing to object to in the request. If, on the other hand, the Turkish delegation desired to be heard, irrespective of the terms of peace, I could not conceive why such a request should have been granted to Turkey alone of all the belligerents; and it seemed to me that, if this were the case, Paris was advancing on to very delicate ground. Apart from that, however, what I desired to complain of was the method pursued. The Supreme Council in Paris having decided to issue the invitation, the French High Commissioner in Constantinople, instead of acting with his colleagues, had rushed round to the Grand Vizier to explain that the permission had been granted by the good offices of the French alone; he had published a statement in the press to the same effect; and he had arranged for the Grand Vizier to be conveyed to Marseilles on a French man-of-war. Such a proceeding on his part was, I thought, not only objectionable, but distinctly disloyal.

A further incident had happened which revealed a similar disposition on the part of the French. The Turkish Crown Prince, or Heir Apparent, had sent a telegram appealing for sympathy and support to the rulers of Great Britain, France, and Italy. This Prince was in exactly the same position as the Crown Prince of Germany, that is to say, he was the eldest son of a monarch who had been, and still was, at war with the Allied Powers. Was it conceivable that such a telegram, coming from the German Crown Prince, would have received any reply? In this spirit, no answer had been returned by our King, and the same attitude had been taken up, after consultation with us, by the King of Italy. What was not, therefore, our surprise when we learnt that the President of the French Republic had actually, through the medium of the French Foreign Office, sent a telegram of thanks to the Turkish Crown Prince, and, in a message signed by M. Pichon himself, had assured him that France would not neglect the vital interests of Turkey. Mr. Lloyd George had already protested to M. Clemenceau against this proceeding, the impropriety of which had been frankly recognised by the French Prime Minister; but I could not help drawing the attention of the French Ambassador to it, because it was an additional illustration of the spirit of international rivalry and intrigue which the French representatives appeared once more to be manifesting in the East. Great Britain had, I reminded M. Cambon, declared her reluctance to assume the mandate for Constantinople or Turkey, even should it be offered to her. France, after some hesitation, had taken the same line, as reported to me by the Ambassador himself. In these circumstances, what excuse was there for these backstairs attempts on the part of French representatives to depict themselves as the particular friends of the Oriental States or Governments whose fate could be determined only by common agreement in Paris?

I then gave M. Cambon a third illustration of the same spirit. If there was any region, I said, in which France had good cause to be grateful for our support, it was in Syria itself. Not only had Mr. Lloyd George in the Councils of Paris openly declared that Great Britain neither desired nor would accept, if it were offered to her, a mandate for Syria, but we had actually telegraphed an intimation to the same effect to the Emir Feisal. Our policy, therefore, was aboveboard and known. If difficulties remained, they were not so much between the French and ourselves as between the French and the Arabs, who, according to my information, appeared exceedingly reluctant to accept France as a mandatory. Of all the French representatives in those regions, the one who had received most encouragement and assistance from us was M. Picot, the joint author of the unfortunate Sykes-Picot Agreement. This gentleman had on many occasions turned to us for aid. He had been taken, under the protection of the late Sir Mark Sykes, to Aleppo and Damascus. Every effort had been made by our representatives to secure him a good reception and a friendly hearing from the Arab and Syrian population. M. Picot indeed owed his entire position to ourselves. I was therefore very much surprised when I read that he had, on the 13th May, in a speech to the school teachers of Beirut, expressed himself as follows:—

> "A people once asked the French to help them to gain their independence. The French responded and within a year the desired end was achieved. These people were the Americans and the country from which they were freed was Great Britain. Having appreciated the help given, the Americans asked what reward they could give. 'Have your independence, that is the only reward we seek,' said the French. The same attitude is now held towards Syria. To see you independent is what we long for. You have my assurance that France will help you to this end."

Having read this extract to the Ambassador, I said that I thought the Syrians would be greatly surprised to learn that it was to the French that they must look for

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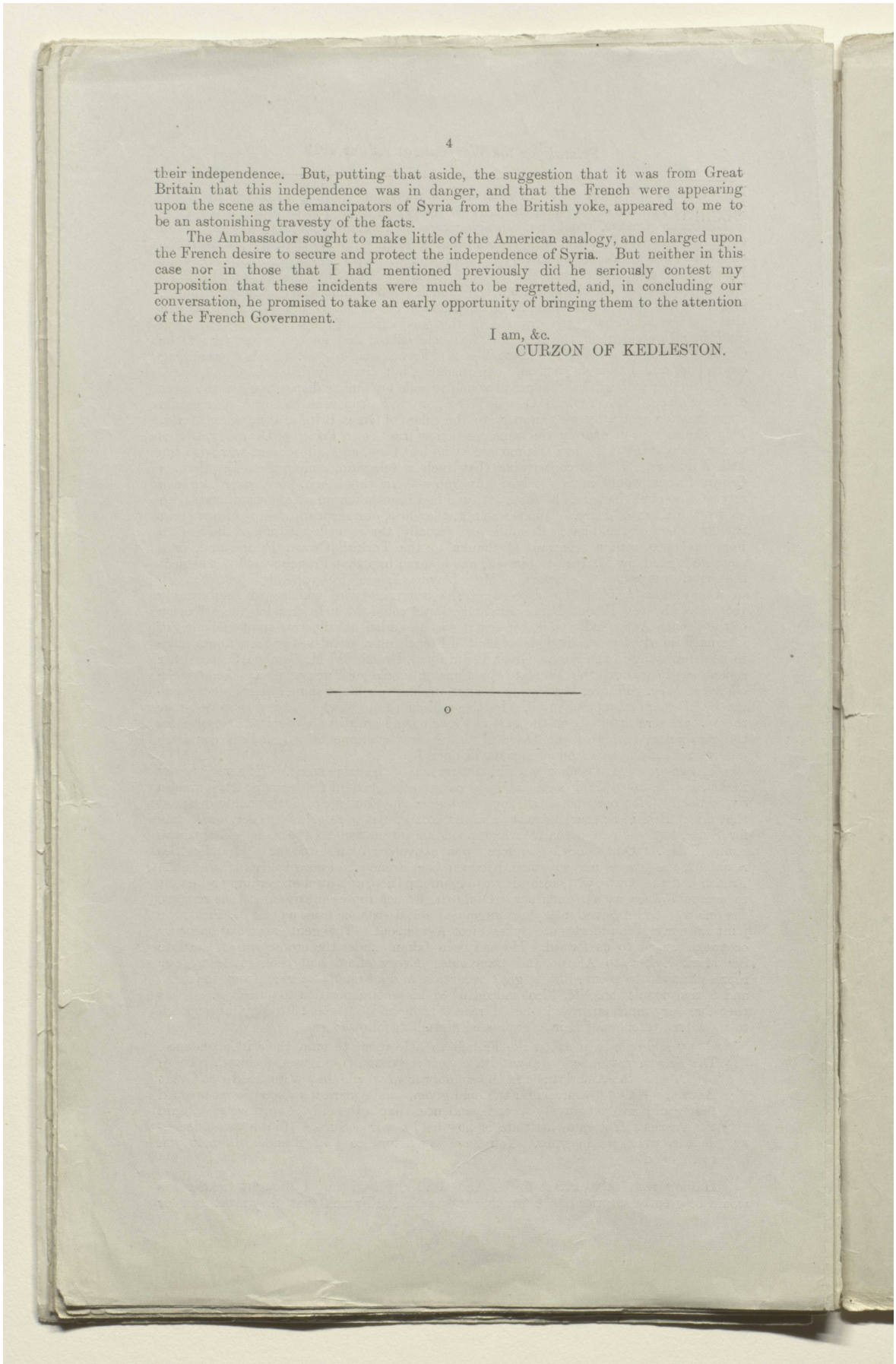

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their independence. But, putting that aside, the suggestion that it was from Great Britain that this independence was in danger, and that the French were appearing upon the scene as the emancipators of Syria from the British yoke, appeared to me to be an astonishing travesty of the facts.

The Ambassador sought to make little of the American analogy, and enlarged upon the French desire to secure and protect the independence of Syria. But neither in this case nor in those that I had mentioned previously did he seriously contest my proposition that these incidents were much to be regretted, and, in concluding our conversation, he promised to take an early opportunity of bringing them to the attention of the French Government.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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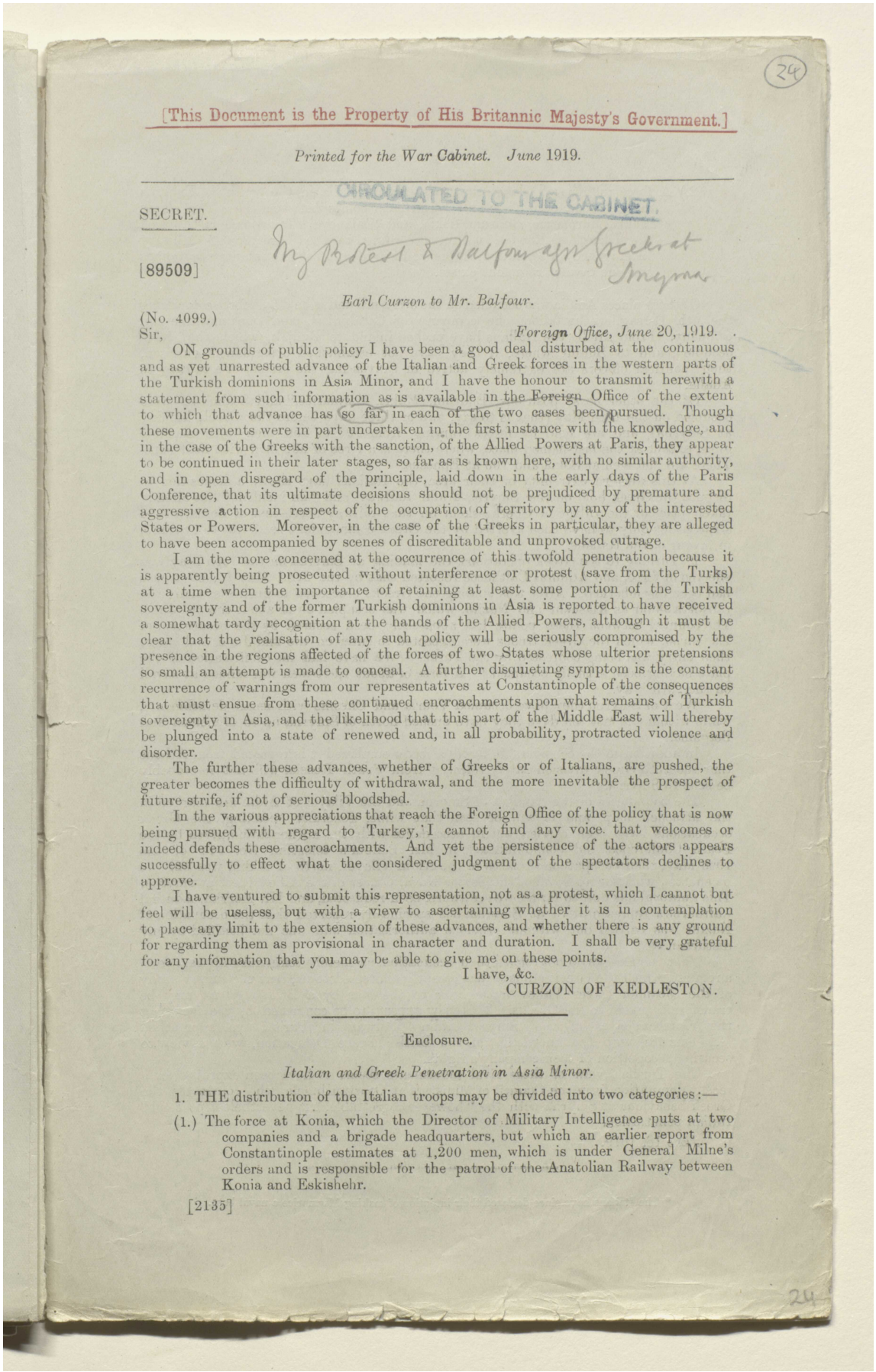

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SECRET.

[89509]

My Protest re Balfour agst Greeks at Smyrna

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour.

(No. 4099.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 20, 1919.

ON grounds of public policy I have been a good deal disturbed at the continuous and as yet unarrested advance of the Italian and Greek forces in the western parts of the Turkish dominions in Asia Minor, and I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement from such information as is available in the Foreign Office of the extent to which that advance has so far in each of the two cases been pursued. Though these movements were in part undertaken in the first instance with the knowledge, and in the case of the Greeks with the sanction, of the Allied Powers at Paris, they appear to be continued in their later stages, so far as is known here, with no similar authority, and in open disregard of the principle, laid down in the early days of the Paris Conference, that its ultimate decisions should not be prejudiced by premature and aggressive action in respect of the occupation of territory by any of the interested States or Powers. Moreover, in the case of the Greeks in particular, they are alleged to have been accompanied by scenes of discreditable and unprovoked outrage.

I am the more concerned at the occurrence of this twofold penetration because it is apparently being prosecuted without interference or protest (save from the Turks) at a time when the importance of retaining at least some portion of the Turkish sovereignty and of the former Turkish dominions in Asia is reported to have received a somewhat tardy recognition at the hands of the Allied Powers, although it must be clear that the realisation of any such policy will be seriously compromised by the presence in the regions affected of the forces of two States whose ulterior pretensions so small an attempt is made to conceal. A further disquieting symptom is the constant recurrence of warnings from our representatives at Constantinople of the consequences that must ensue from these continued encroachments upon what remains of Turkish sovereignty in Asia, and the likelihood that this part of the Middle East will thereby be plunged into a state of renewed and, in all probability, protracted violence and disorder.

The further these advances, whether of Greeks or of Italians, are pushed, the greater becomes the difficulty of withdrawal, and the more inevitable the prospect of future strife, if not of serious bloodshed.

In the various appreciations that reach the Foreign Office of the policy that is now being pursued with regard to Turkey, I cannot find any voice that welcomes or indeed defends these encroachments. And yet the persistence of the actors appears successfully to effect what the considered judgment of the spectators declines to approve.

I have ventured to submit this representation, not as a protest, which I cannot but feel will be useless, but with a view to ascertaining whether it is in contemplation to place any limit to the extension of these advances, and whether there is any ground for regarding them as provisional in character and duration. I shall be very grateful for any information that you may be able to give me on these points.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure.

Italian and Greek Penetration in Asia Minor.

1. THE distribution of the Italian troops may be divided into two categories:—

(1.) The force at Konia, which the Director of Military Intelligence puts at two companies and a brigade headquarters, but which an earlier report from Constantinople estimates at 1,200 men, which is under General Milne's orders and is responsible for the patrol of the Anatolian Railway between Konia and Eskishehr.

[2135]

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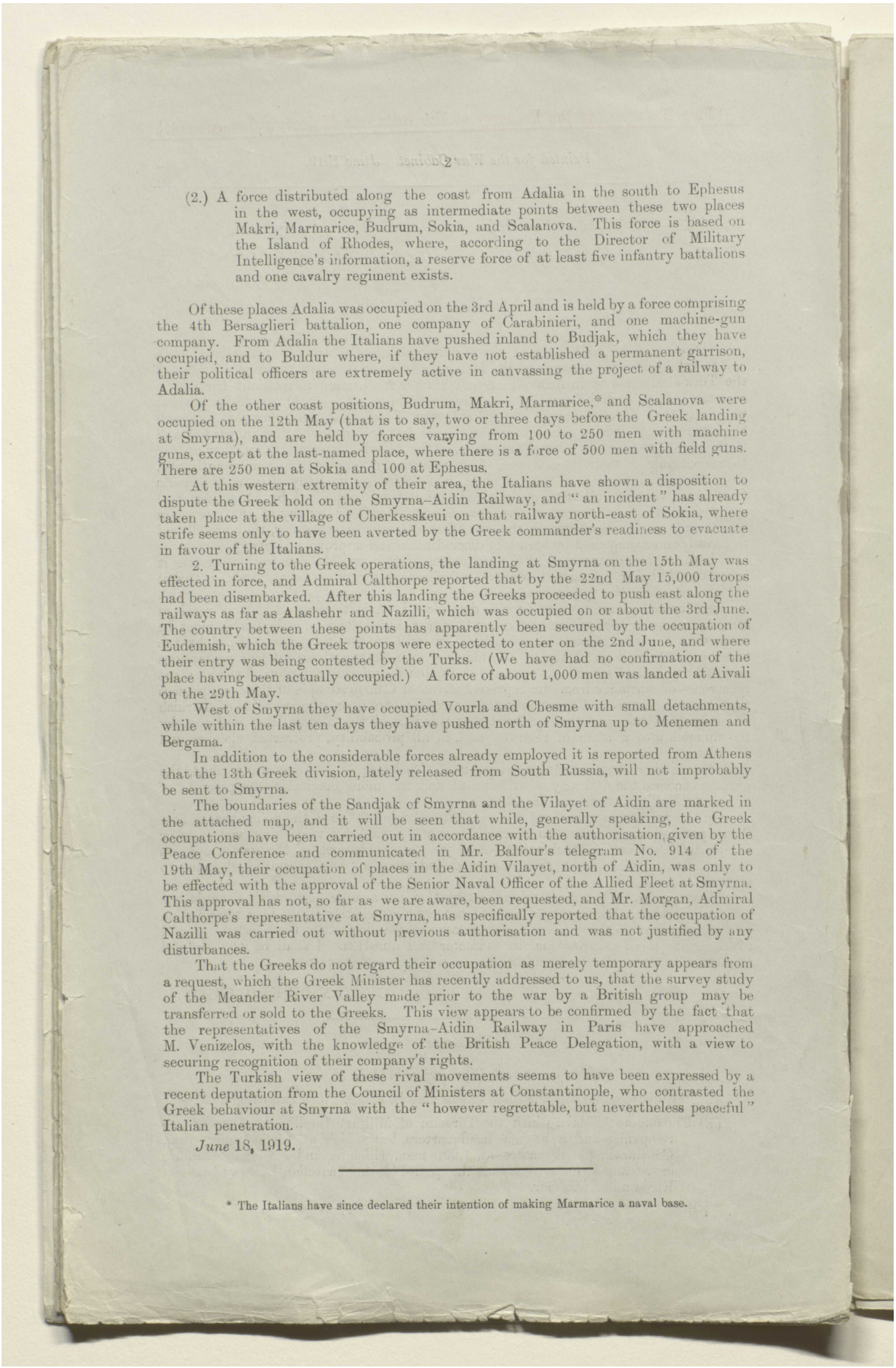

(2.) A force distributed along the coast from Adalia in the south to Ephesus in the west, occupying as intermediate points between these two places Makri, Marmarice, Budrum, Sokia, and Scalanova. This force is based on the Island of Rhodes, where, according to the Director of Military Intelligence's information, a reserve force of at least five infantry battalions and one cavalry regiment exists.

Of these places Adalia was occupied on the 3rd April and is held by a force comprising the 4th Bersaglieri battalion, one company of Carabinieri, and one machine-gun company. From Adalia the Italians have pushed inland to Budjak, which they have occupied, and to Buldur where, if they have not established a permanent garrison, their political officers are extremely active in canvassing the project of a railway to Adalia.

Of the other coast positions, Budrum, Makri, Marmarice,* and Scalanova were occupied on the 12th May (that is to say, two or three days before the Greek landing at Smyrna), and are held by forces varying from 100 to 250 men with machine guns, except at the last-named place, where there is a force of 500 men with field guns. There are 250 men at Sokia and 100 at Ephesus.

At this western extremity of their area, the Italians have shown a disposition to dispute the Greek hold on the Smyrna–Aidin Railway, and "an incident" has already taken place at the village of Cherkesskeui on that railway north-east of Sokia, where strife seems only to have been averted by the Greek commander's readiness to evacuate in favour of the Italians.

2. Turning to the Greek operations, the landing at Smyrna on the 15th May was effected in force, and Admiral Calthorpe reported that by the 22nd May 15,000 troops had been disembarked. After this landing the Greeks proceeded to push east along the railways as far as Alashehr and Nazilli, which was occupied on or about the 3rd June. The country between these points has apparently been secured by the occupation of Eudemish, which the Greek troops were expected to enter on the 2nd June, and where their entry was being contested by the Turks. (We have had no confirmation of the place having been actually occupied.) A force of about 1,000 men was landed at Aivali on the 29th May.

West of Smyrna they have occupied Vourla and Chesme with small detachments, while within the last ten days they have pushed north of Smyrna up to Menemen and Bergama.

In addition to the considerable forces already employed it is reported from Athens that the 13th Greek division, lately released from South Russia, will not improbably be sent to Smyrna.

The boundaries of the Sandjak of Smyrna and the Vilayet of Aidin are marked in the attached map, and it will be seen that while, generally speaking, the Greek occupations have been carried out in accordance with the authorisation given by the Peace Conference and communicated in Mr. Balfour's telegram No. 914 of the 19th May, their occupation of places in the Aidin Vilayet, north of Aidin, was only to be effected with the approval of the Senior Naval Officer of the Allied Fleet at Smyrna. This approval has not, so far as we are aware, been requested, and Mr. Morgan, Admiral Calthorpe's representative at Smyrna, has specifically reported that the occupation of Nazilli was carried out without previous authorisation and was not justified by any disturbances.

That the Greeks do not regard their occupation as merely temporary appears from a request, which the Greek Minister has recently addressed to us, that the survey study of the Meander River Valley made prior to the war by a British group may be transferred or sold to the Greeks. This view appears to be confirmed by the fact that the representatives of the Smyrna–Aidin Railway in Paris have approached M. Venizelos, with the knowledge of the British Peace Delegation, with a view to securing recognition of their company's rights.

The Turkish view of these rival movements seems to have been expressed by a recent deputation from the Council of Ministers at Constantinople, who contrasted the Greek behaviour at Smyrna with the "however regrettable, but nevertheless peaceful" Italian penetration.

June 18, 1919.

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* The Italians have since declared their intention of making Marmarice a naval base.

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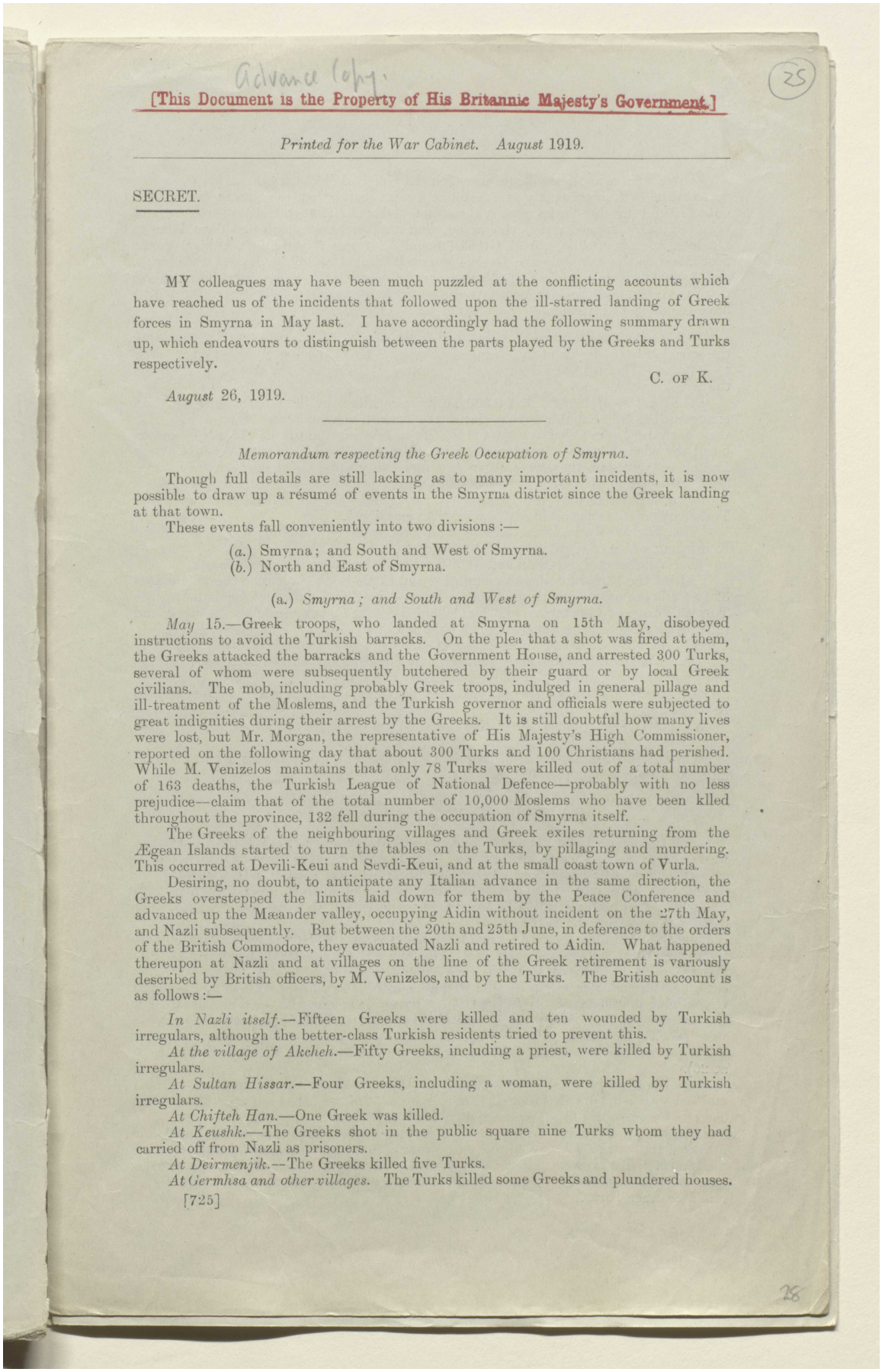

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SECRET.

MY colleagues may have been much puzzled at the conflicting accounts which have reached us of the incidents that followed upon the ill-starred landing of Greek forces in Smyrna in May last. I have accordingly had the following summary drawn up, which endeavours to distinguish between the parts played by the Greeks and Turks respectively.

C. OF K.

August 26, 1919.

Memorandum respecting the Greek Occupation of Smyrna.

Though full details are still lacking as to many important incidents, it is now possible to draw up a résumé of events in the Smyrna district since the Greek landing at that town.

These events fall conveniently into two divisions :—

(*a.*) Smyrna; and South and West of Smyrna.
(*b.*) North and East of Smyrna.

(a.) *Smyrna; and South and West of Smyrna.*

May 15.—Greek troops, who landed at Smyrna on 15th May, disobeyed instructions to avoid the Turkish barracks. On the plea that a shot was fired at them, the Greeks attacked the barracks and the Government House, and arrested 300 Turks, several of whom were subsequently butchered by their guard or by local Greek civilians. The mob, including probably Greek troops, indulged in general pillage and ill-treatment of the Moslems, and the Turkish governor and officials were subjected to great indignities during their arrest by the Greeks. It is still doubtful how many lives were lost, but Mr. Morgan, the representative of His Majesty's High Commissioner, reported on the following day that about 300 Turks and 100 Christians had perished. While M. Venizelos maintains that only 78 Turks were killed out of a total number of 163 deaths, the Turkish League of National Defence—probably with no less prejudice—claim that of the total number of 10,000 Moslems who have been klled throughout the province, 132 fell during the occupation of Smyrna itself.

The Greeks of the neighbouring villages and Greek exiles returning from the Ægean Islands started to turn the tables on the Turks, by pillaging and murdering. This occurred at Devili-Keui and Sevdi-Keui, and at the small coast town of Vurla.

Desiring, no doubt, to anticipate any Italian advance in the same direction, the Greeks overstepped the limits laid down for them by the Peace Conference and advanced up the Mæander valley, occupying Aidin without incident on the 27th May, and Nazli subsequently. But between the 20th and 25th June, in deference to the orders of the British Commodore, they evacuated Nazli and retired to Aidin. What happened thereupon at Nazli and at villages on the line of the Greek retirement is variously described by British officers, by M. Venizelos, and by the Turks. The British account is as follows :—

In Nazli itself.—Fifteen Greeks were killed and ten wounded by Turkish irregulars, although the better-class Turkish residents tried to prevent this.

At the village of Akcheh.—Fifty Greeks, including a priest, were killed by Turkish irregulars.

At Sultan Hissar.—Four Greeks, including a woman, were killed by Turkish irregulars.

At Chifteh Han.—One Greek was killed.

At Keushk.—The Greeks shot in the public square nine Turks whom they had carried off from Nazli as prisoners.

At Deirmenjik.—The Greeks killed five Turks.

At Germhsa and other villages. The Turks killed some Greeks and plundered houses.

[725]

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There were also other villages in which the Greeks killed Turks.

On the 30th June, partly as a result of Italian instigation, the Greeks were driven out of Aidin by the Turks after a three hours' battle. The Greeks retired without being seriously pressed down the valley, first to Karabunar, and two days later to Deirmenjik. Meanwhile, a fresh Greek force of 3,200 men advanced on Aidin from the north, and on the 4th July the Greeks retook Aidin. Half of the houses were burnt, and 3,000 Christians and 25,000 Moslems made homeless by these operations. As to details, Greek and Turkish accounts are entirely at variance. British officers who have been able to investigate report as follows :—

On evacuating the town of Aidin the Greeks carried off Turkish notables, including the governor and officials of the Criminal Court. Some of these were killed on the way to Smyrna. The rest were imprisoned on arrival at Smyrna on a charge of firing on the Greek troops.

The Turkish statement that 2,000 Turks were killed by the Greeks is no doubt an exaggeration, but that the Greeks burnt the Turkish quarter there is no doubt. On their part the Turks killed at least 400 Greeks on entering the town. Turkish irregulars burnt the whole Christian quarter of Aidin. Most of the Christians took refuge at the French convent, but they were all robbed and many were killed on their way there. Some perished in the fire. Several bodies were mutilated. When the Greeks retook the town there were only 100 Turks in it, and these were not touched, although the Turks have stated that all Moslems were then massacred.

The Turks killed eleven Greeks who had been left behind at the village of Karabunar. One of these was an old woman of 80.

The villages of Emir-Keui and Yeni-Keui were burnt by the Greek troops.

About the 14th June there was fighting and cattle-raiding between the inhabitants of two villages on the mainland opposite Samos—the Greek village of Changli and the Turkish village of Osmanieh. Each side laid the guilt of aggression on the other, and in addition M. Venizelos alleged Italian collusion.

On the 22nd June the Turks killed seven Greeks at the village of Balajik.

The village of Kilisseh-Keui was burnt by Greek troops on the 26th June because the Turkish inhabitants had fired on a train.

On the 27th June the Turkish village of Havuzlu, in the Greek zone, was seen to be on fire.

On the 28th August the Greeks carried off several railway employees from Kemer.

On the 6th August Turkish irregulars attacked Aidin again from the north and inflicted some losses on the Greeks.

(b.) *The District North and East of Smyrna.*

The Greeks occupied the small coast town of Aivali on the 29th May. Bloodshed was avoided, as the Turkish forces retired, largely, it is believed, owing to the action of a British officer who happened to be on the spot. On the 15th July the Greeks were reported to have pushed beyond the limits of the sub-district (kaza) of Aivali, to which they had been restricted by the Peace Conference, but there has been no other development of the situation here.

By the 25th May the Greeks had occupied Manissa (Magnesia), which was outside their prescribed sphere, and on the 11th June they advanced northwards from Menemen on Pergama which was also outside their sphere. A Greek battalion entering Pergama was ambushed and withdrew after heavy losses with the rest of the Greek force to Menemen. Here the Greeks were again attacked by the Turks. For the excesses which occurred the British Military Control Officer states that the Greeks were wholly to blame. They killed the Turkish governor and a number of other Turks (stated by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs at 200, and by M. Venizelos at 20).

On the 23rd June the Greeks landed at Dikeli and reoccupied Pergama, burning on their way ten Turkish villages, containing 1,095 houses. The number of homeless Turks who assembled in consequence at Soma was 70,000.

On the 7th July the Greeks pushed farther beyond their prescribed limits and attacked the village of Yeni-Chiftlik, north-east of Manissa. Their own casualties were 20, and 70 Turks were killed or wounded. Amongst other things the Greeks surrounded the estate of a certain Halid Pasha, and killed and mutilated the Pasha and four other Turks.

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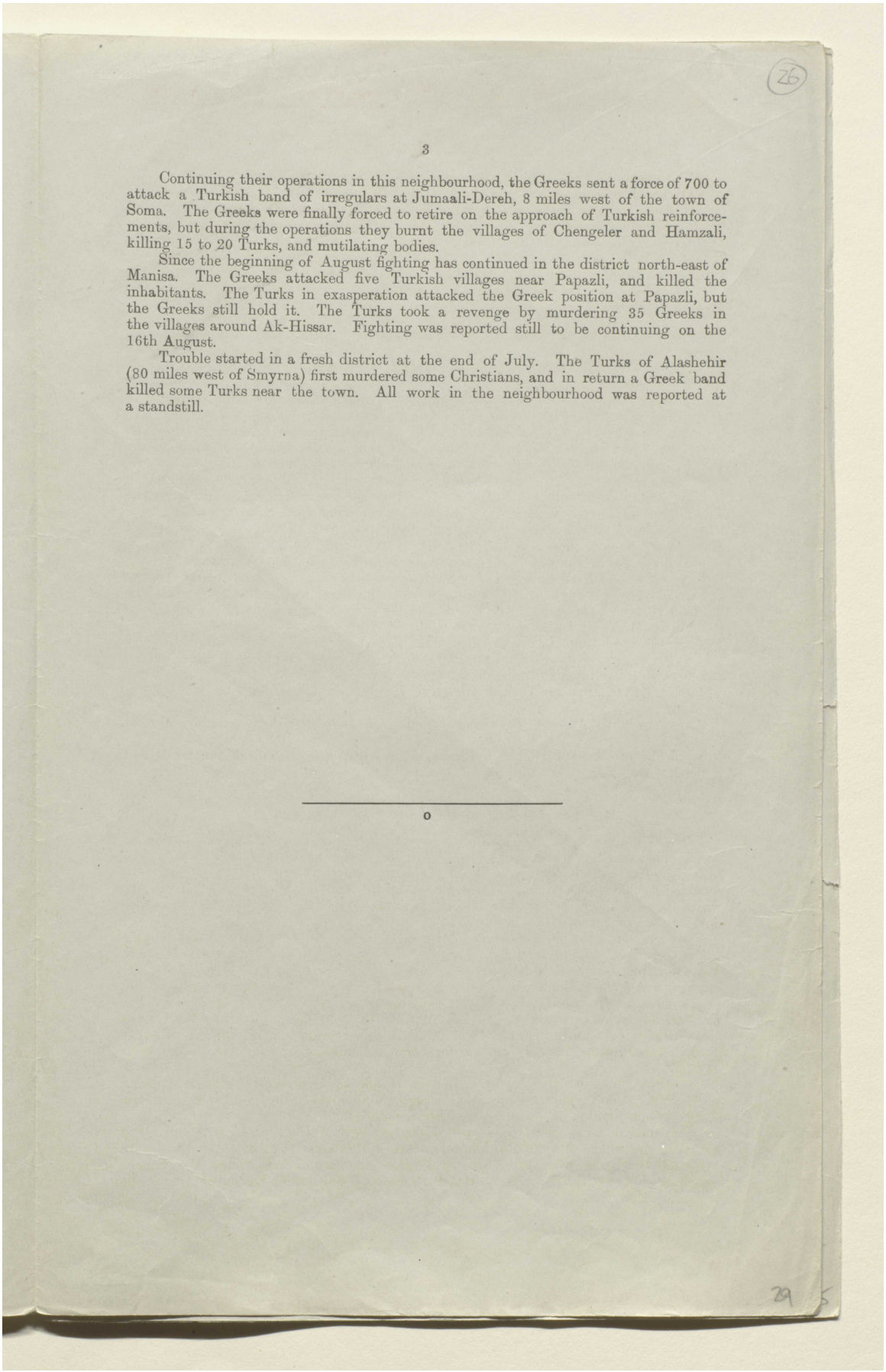

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Continuing their operations in this neighbourhood, the Greeks sent a force of 700 to attack a Turkish band of irregulars at Jumaali-Dereh, 8 miles west of the town of Soma. The Greeks were finally forced to retire on the approach of Turkish reinforcements, but during the operations they burnt the villages of Chengeler and Hamzali, killing 15 to 20 Turks, and mutilating bodies.

Since the beginning of August fighting has continued in the district north-east of Manisa. The Greeks attacked five Turkish villages near Papazli, and killed the inhabitants. The Turks in exasperation attacked the Greek position at Papazli, but the Greeks still hold it. The Turks took a revenge by murdering 35 Greeks in the villages around Ak-Hissar. Fighting was reported still to be continuing on the 16th August.

Trouble started in a fresh district at the end of July. The Turks of Alashehir (80 miles west of Smyrna) first murdered some Christians, and in return a Greek band killed some Turks near the town. All work in the neighbourhood was reported at a standstill.

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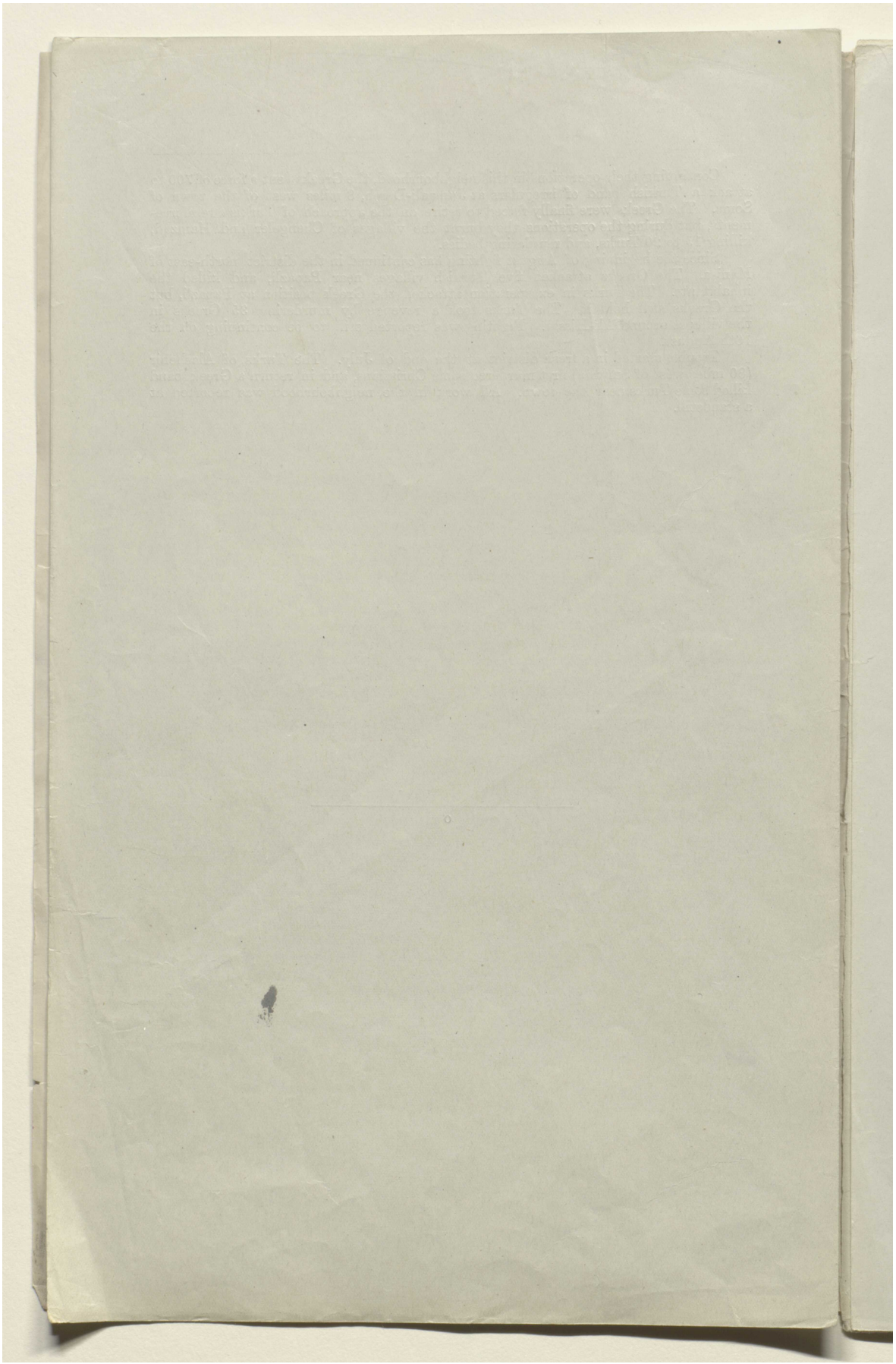

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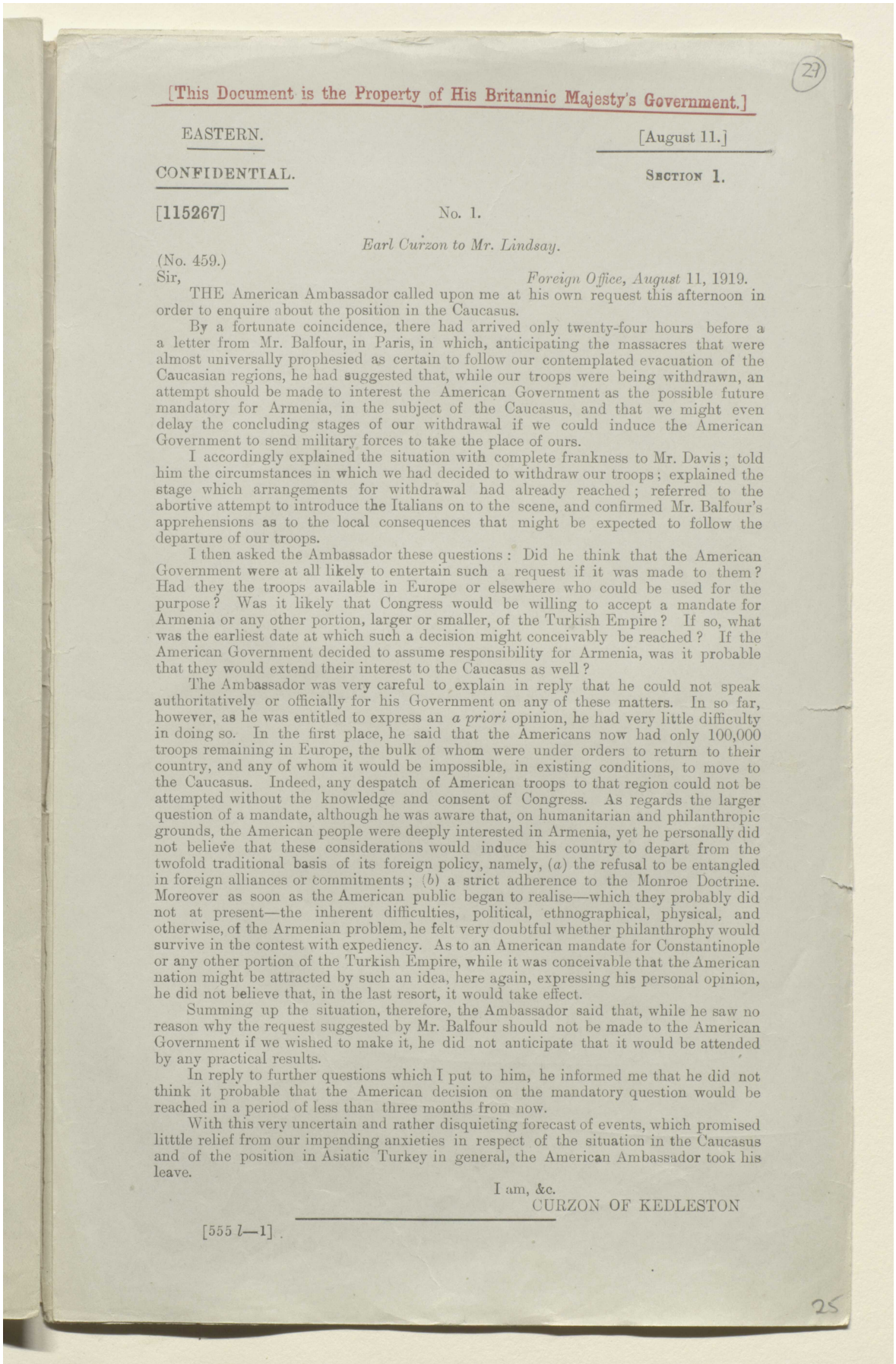

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EASTERN. [August 11.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[115267] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Lindsay.

(No. 459.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 11, 1919.

THE American Ambassador called upon me at his own request this afternoon in order to enquire about the position in the Caucasus.

By a fortunate coincidence, there had arrived only twenty-four hours before a a letter from Mr. Balfour, in Paris, in which, anticipating the massacres that were almost universally prophesied as certain to follow our contemplated evacuation of the Caucasian regions, he had suggested that, while our troops were being withdrawn, an attempt should be made to interest the American Government as the possible future mandatory for Armenia, in the subject of the Caucasus, and that we might even delay the concluding stages of our withdrawal if we could induce the American Government to send military forces to take the place of ours.

I accordingly explained the situation with complete frankness to Mr. Davis; told him the circumstances in which we had decided to withdraw our troops; explained the stage which arrangements for withdrawal had already reached; referred to the abortive attempt to introduce the Italians on to the scene, and confirmed Mr. Balfour's apprehensions as to the local consequences that might be expected to follow the departure of our troops.

I then asked the Ambassador these questions: Did he think that the American Government were at all likely to entertain such a request if it was made to them? Had they the troops available in Europe or elsewhere who could be used for the purpose? Was it likely that Congress would be willing to accept a mandate for Armenia or any other portion, larger or smaller, of the Turkish Empire? If so, what was the earliest date at which such a decision might conceivably be reached? If the American Government decided to assume responsibility for Armenia, was it probable that they would extend their interest to the Caucasus as well?

The Ambassador was very careful to explain in reply that he could not speak authoritatively or officially for his Government on any of these matters. In so far, however, as he was entitled to express an *a priori* opinion, he had very little difficulty in doing so. In the first place, he said that the Americans now had only 100,000 troops remaining in Europe, the bulk of whom were under orders to return to their country, and any of whom it would be impossible, in existing conditions, to move to the Caucasus. Indeed, any despatch of American troops to that region could not be attempted without the knowledge and consent of Congress. As regards the larger question of a mandate, although he was aware that, on humanitarian and philanthropic grounds, the American people were deeply interested in Armenia, yet he personally did not believe that these considerations would induce his country to depart from the twofold traditional basis of its foreign policy, namely, (*a*) the refusal to be entangled in foreign alliances or commitments; (*b*) a strict adherence to the Monroe Doctrine. Moreover as soon as the American public began to realise—which they probably did not at present—the inherent difficulties, political, ethnographical, physical, and otherwise, of the Armenian problem, he felt very doubtful whether philanthrophy would survive in the contest with expediency. As to an American mandate for Constantinople or any other portion of the Turkish Empire, while it was conceivable that the American nation might be attracted by such an idea, here again, expressing his personal opinion, he did not believe that, in the last resort, it would take effect.

Summing up the situation, therefore, the Ambassador said that, while he saw no reason why the request suggested by Mr. Balfour should not be made to the American Government if we wished to make it, he did not anticipate that it would be attended by any practical results.

In reply to further questions which I put to him, he informed me that he did not think it probable that the American decision on the mandatory question would be reached in a period of less than three months from now.

With this very uncertain and rather disquieting forecast of events, which promised little relief from our impending anxieties in respect of the situation in the Caucasus and of the position in Asiatic Turkey in general, the American Ambassador took his leave.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON

[555 *l*—1]

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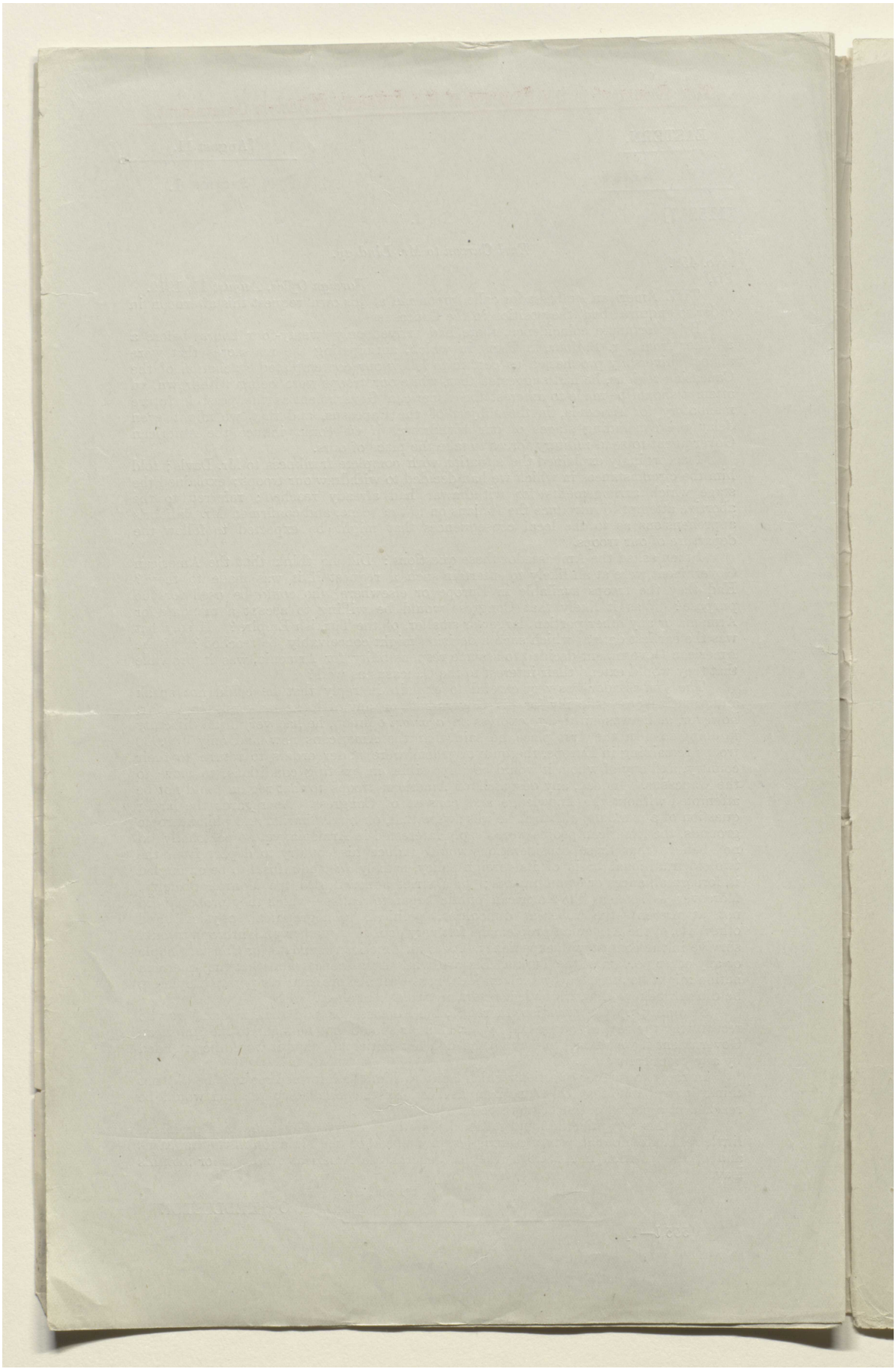

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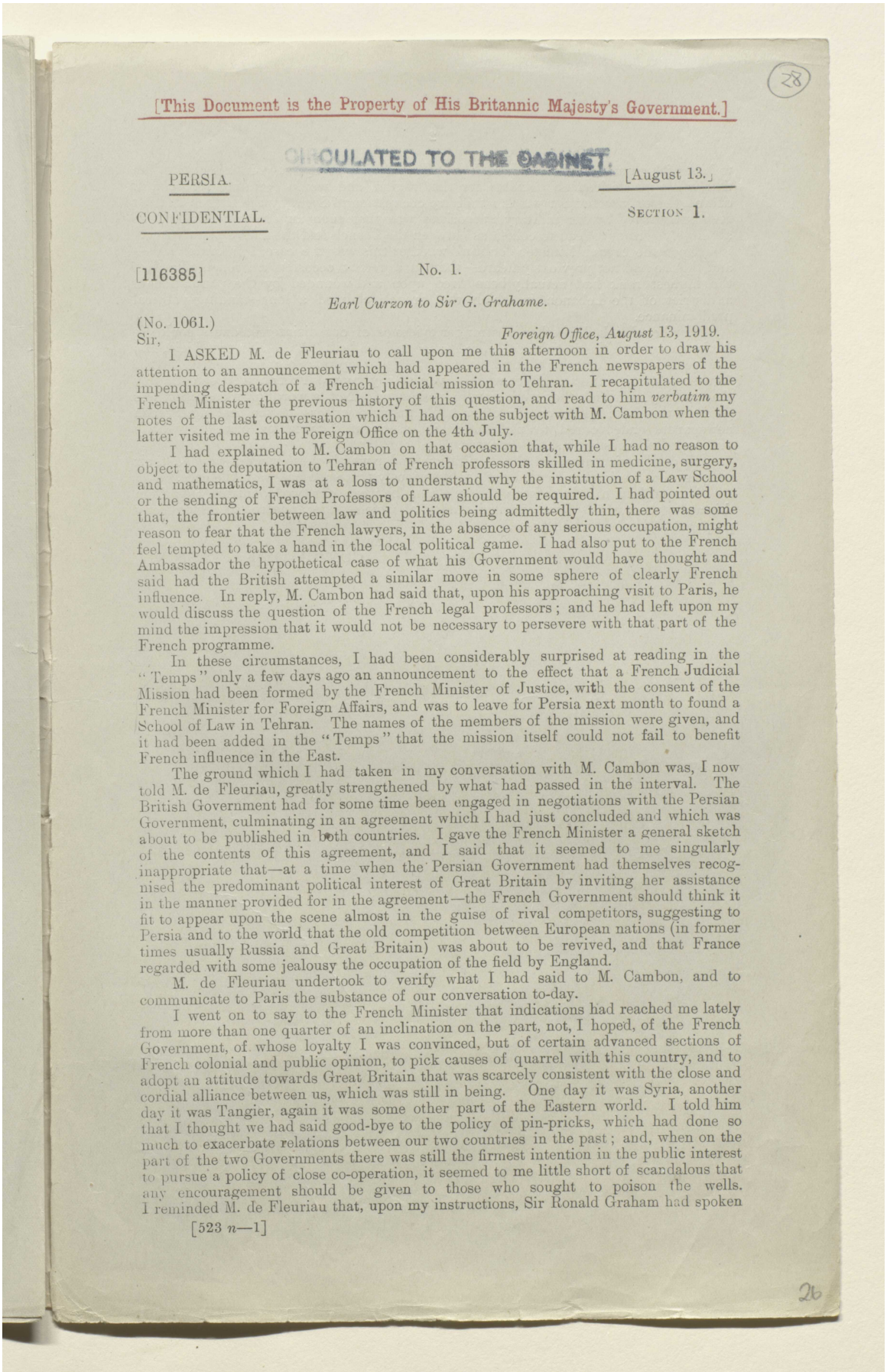

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PERSIA. [August 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[116385] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Grahame.

(No. 1061.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 13, 1919.

I ASKED M. de Fleuriau to call upon me this afternoon in order to draw his attention to an announcement which had appeared in the French newspapers of the impending despatch of a French judicial mission to Tehran. I recapitulated to the French Minister the previous history of this question, and read to him *verbatim* my notes of the last conversation which I had on the subject with M. Cambon when the latter visited me in the Foreign Office on the 4th July.

I had explained to M. Cambon on that occasion that, while I had no reason to object to the deputation to Tehran of French professors skilled in medicine, surgery, and mathematics, I was at a loss to understand why the institution of a Law School or the sending of French Professors of Law should be required. I had pointed out that, the frontier between law and politics being admittedly thin, there was some reason to fear that the French lawyers, in the absence of any serious occupation, might feel tempted to take a hand in the local political game. I had also put to the French Ambassador the hypothetical case of what his Government would have thought and said had the British attempted a similar move in some sphere of clearly French influence. In reply, M. Cambon had said that, upon his approaching visit to Paris, he would discuss the question of the French legal professors; and he had left upon my mind the impression that it would not be necessary to persevere with that part of the French programme.

In these circumstances, I had been considerably surprised at reading in the "Temps" only a few days ago an announcement to the effect that a French Judicial Mission had been formed by the French Minister of Justice, with the consent of the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, and was to leave for Persia next month to found a School of Law in Tehran. The names of the members of the mission were given, and it had been added in the "Temps" that the mission itself could not fail to benefit French influence in the East.

The ground which I had taken in my conversation with M. Cambon was, I now told M. de Fleuriau, greatly strengthened by what had passed in the interval. The British Government had for some time been engaged in negotiations with the Persian Government, culminating in an agreement which I had just concluded and which was about to be published in both countries. I gave the French Minister a general sketch of the contents of this agreement, and I said that it seemed to me singularly inappropriate that—at a time when the Persian Government had themselves recognised the predominant political interest of Great Britain by inviting her assistance in the manner provided for in the agreement—the French Government should think it fit to appear upon the scene almost in the guise of rival competitors, suggesting to Persia and to the world that the old competition between European nations (in former times usually Russia and Great Britain) was about to be revived, and that France regarded with some jealousy the occupation of the field by England.

M. de Fleuriau undertook to verify what I had said to M. Cambon, and to communicate to Paris the substance of our conversation to-day.

I went on to say to the French Minister that indications had reached me lately from more than one quarter of an inclination on the part, not, I hoped, of the French Government, of whose loyalty I was convinced, but of certain advanced sections of French colonial and public opinion, to pick causes of quarrel with this country, and to adopt an attitude towards Great Britain that was scarcely consistent with the close and cordial alliance between us, which was still in being. One day it was Syria, another day it was Tangier, again it was some other part of the Eastern world. I told him that I thought we had said good-bye to the policy of pin-pricks, which had done so much to exacerbate relations between our two countries in the past; and, when on the part of the two Governments there was still the firmest intention in the public interest to pursue a policy of close co-operation, it seemed to me little short of scandalous that any encouragement should be given to those who sought to poison the wells. I reminded M. de Fleuriau that, upon my instructions, Sir Ronald Graham had spoken

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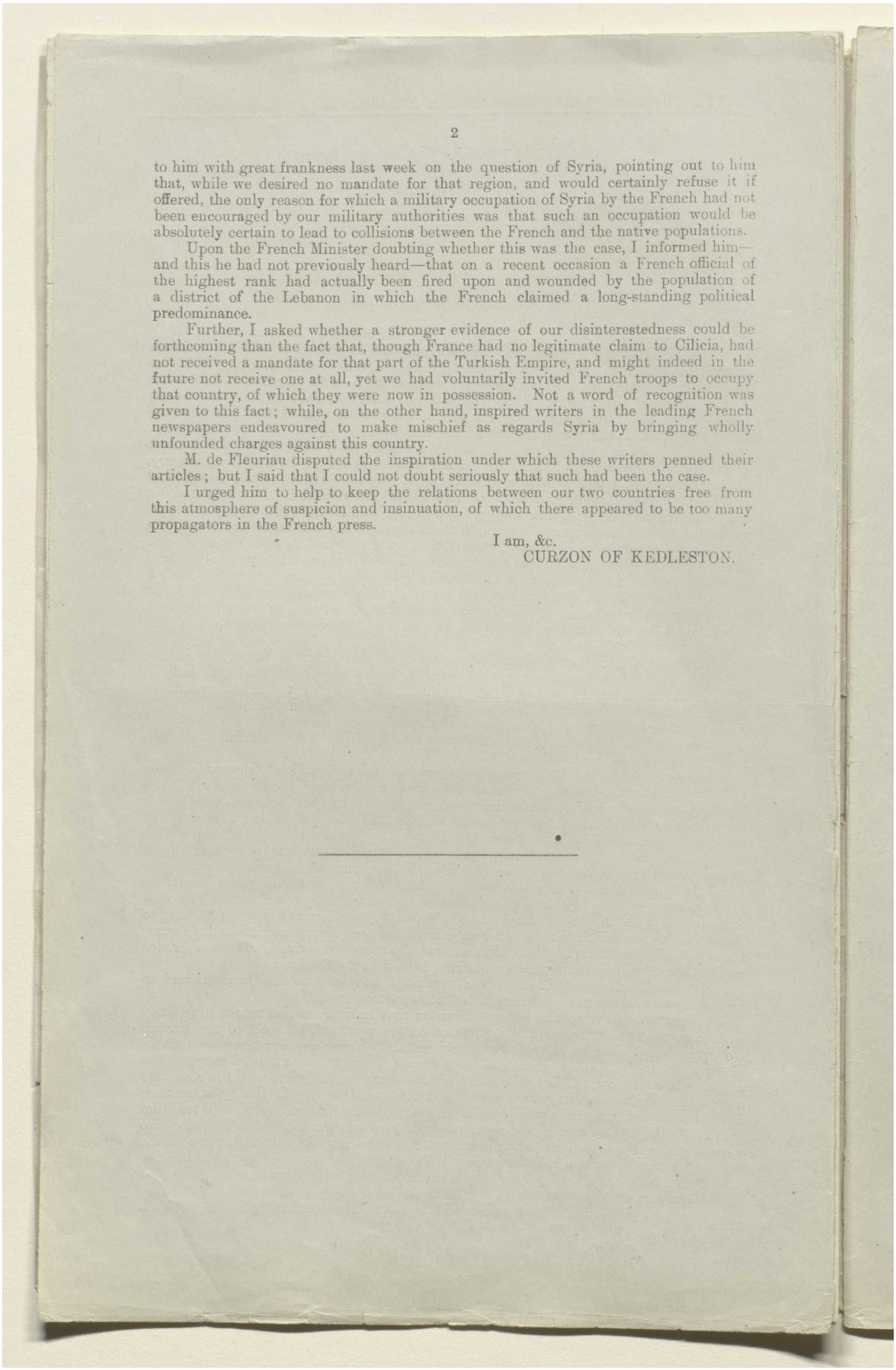

to him with great frankness last week on the question of Syria, pointing out to him that, while we desired no mandate for that region, and would certainly refuse it if offered, the only reason for which a military occupation of Syria by the French had not been encouraged by our military authorities was that such an occupation would be absolutely certain to lead to collisions between the French and the native populations.

Upon the French Minister doubting whether this was the case, I informed him—and this he had not previously heard—that on a recent occasion a French official of the highest rank had actually been fired upon and wounded by the population of a district of the Lebanon in which the French claimed a long-standing political predominance.

Further, I asked whether a stronger evidence of our disinterestedness could be forthcoming than the fact that, though France had no legitimate claim to Cilicia, had not received a mandate for that part of the Turkish Empire, and might indeed in the future not receive one at all, yet we had voluntarily invited French troops to occupy that country, of which they were now in possession. Not a word of recognition was given to this fact; while, on the other hand, inspired writers in the leading French newspapers endeavoured to make mischief as regards Syria by bringing wholly unfounded charges against this country.

M. de Fleuriau disputed the inspiration under which these writers penned their articles; but I said that I could not doubt seriously that such had been the case.

I urged him to help to keep the relations between our two countries free from this atmosphere of suspicion and insinuation, of which there appeared to be too many propagators in the French press.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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PERSIA. [August 18]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[118250.] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Lindsay.

(No. 477.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, August* 18, 1919.

I ASKED the American Ambassador to come and see me this afternoon, in order to acquaint him, as I had previously omitted to do, with the recent conclusion of the agreement between His Majesty's Government and Persia. I told him, however, that his Government had not been kept in entire ignorance of the matter, because, when I was in Paris some months ago, I had called upon Colonel House, specially to mention to him the nature of the negotiations in which I was engaged, and I had asked him to inform President Wilson on the matter, so that the President might be guided in his attitude towards the Persian Delegation in Paris, should their claim to be heard at the Peace Conference be entertained. Colonel House had subsequently told me that he had informed the President. I had no reason, therefore, to suppose that what had since passed would meet with anything but American approval.

I went on to tell Mr. Davis that our information was to the effect that the French were somewhat incensed at our having, as they alleged, stolen a march upon them in respect of Persia, and that they regarded with a certain amount of wounded pride our success in Tehran as compared with the failure which had so far attended their efforts in Syria. The French Minister in Tehran, M. Bonin, was, I had been informed, doing his best to disparage and belittle the agreement; and it was not unlikely, I thought, that he might endeavour to enlist the co-operation of his American colleague in pursuing that policy. In these circumstances, and assuming that the American Government would be, generally speaking, in favour of the agreement now concluded, I asked the Ambassador whether he could see his way to suggest that the American Minister in Tehran should be advised to facilitate the acceptance of the agreement and to give it his blessing.

Mr. Davis remarked at once that he saw no objection to doing this: that he thought the agreement an excellent one (much better, indeed, for the Persians than it was for ourselves); and that he would gladly act upon my suggestion.

Having barely recovered from a conversation lasting an hour and a half with Mr. Walter Smith, an American gentleman officially interested in the American effort in Armenia, and deeply concerned at the risk to the Armenian people involved by our intended evacuation, I mentioned to Mr. Davis, in supplement to our recent conversations on that subject, two points which I thought ought to be borne in mind.

The first was this. In reality the Powers in Paris and we in London were waiting for the American people to make up their minds whether they would take a mandate for Armenia or not. Mr. Davis had himself told me that he thought the chances were much against their taking it, and this information had been borne out by what I had heard from America. Were we then to reverse our evacuation policy, and to incur very heavy expenditure on the chance of America making up her mind in three months from now; and, if she did so in favour of taking a mandate, what, I asked, was the Armenia for which she would make herself responsible? Did it include or exclude the Caucasus? Was America aware that Armenia could not be kept alive by dollars only, but would have to be sustained by men, and was she prepared to mobilise and send to the Black Sea the very considerable army that would be required for the purpose?

The second point was that, if American public opinion was as deeply aroused as he represented it to be—and I did not deny that this might be the case—I was surprised that these representations should come from private individuals rather than from the American Government; and, if charges were to be made against the British Government of deserting the Armenians or imperilling their future, it seemed to me that they ought more properly to come from Government to Government, in which case those who were really responsible for the delay might be able to explain and justify it.

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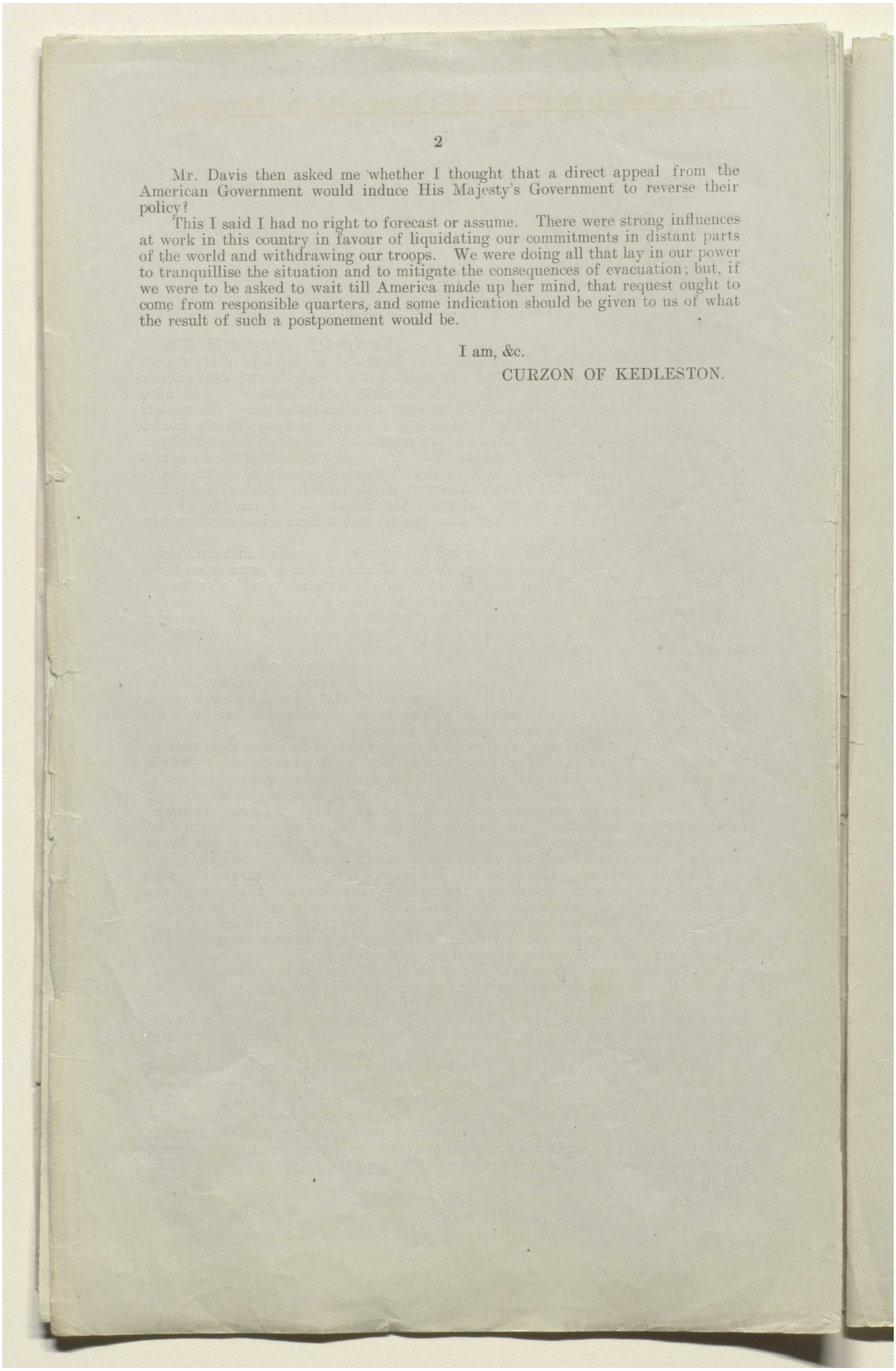

Mr. Davis then asked me whether I thought that a direct appeal from the American Government would induce His Majesty's Government to reverse their policy?

This I said I had no right to forecast or assume. There were strong influences at work in this country in favour of liquidating our commitments in distant parts of the world and withdrawing our troops. We were doing all that lay in our power to tranquillise the situation and to mitigate the consequences of evacuation; but, if we were to be asked to wait till America made up her mind, that request ought to come from responsible quarters, and some indication should be given to us of what the result of such a postponement would be.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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EASTERN. [August 29.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[122311] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Lindsay.

(No. 497.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 29, 1919.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 459 of the 11th instant, I have to inform you that the American Ambassador called on Sir R. Graham on the afternoon of the 26th instant to speak about the evacuation of the Caucasus. Mr. Davis said that he had received an answer from the United States Government to the enquiry which he had addressed to them after his conversation with me on the 18th instant, which was embodied in my despatch to you No. 447 of that date and the letter which I had sent to him on the following day, a copy of which is enclosed herewith.

This reply was, that the United States Government had no funds at their disposal from which provision could be made to defray the expenses of the continued presence of British troops in the Caucasus. To obtain such funds they would have to ask Congress for an appropriation for this purpose. In view of the present political situation in America such action would be most inopportune and injudicious and might prejudice the prospects of the Peace Treaty being accepted. Nor could the American Government give any assurance whether, or at what date, they might be able to send American troops to relieve the British forces. Such an assurance would be regarded by the Senate as prejudging their ultimate decision on the question of Mandates, and would be deeply resented. Mr. Davis was, however, instructed by the United States Government to make an official appeal to His Majesty's Government not to withdraw the British forces in the Caucasus at the present moment, as such a withdrawal must result in chaos, and in the massacre of the Christian population, and although the United States Government fully realised the difficulties of His Majesty's Government in the matter, the latter would be held responsible in the eyes of the civilised world.

Sir R. Graham said that this reply meant, in effect, that the United States intended to do nothing, but required His Majesty's Government to continue to bear the whole burden in spite of the warning which had been given seven months ago that they would not be in a position to do so. I had, in my conversations and correspondence with his Excellency, explained the whole situation, and especially the position of His Majesty's Government, so fully to him that there was no necessity to recapitulate what had passed. No Government were more anxious, or indeed so anxious, to avoid the state of affairs which was foreshadowed as the result of British evacuation, and His Majesty's Government would no doubt do everything that was possible to prevent such a catastrophe arising, but their powers in this respect were strictly limited, and they were placed in a most unfair and unenviable position.

Mr. Davis replied that he realised this perfectly well and could only express his sympathy.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the American Ambassador.

My dear Ambassador, *Foreign Office, August 19, 1919.*

YOU may remember that, in our conversation yesterday afternoon about the Armenian question and the Caucasus, I expressed some surprise that, if American opinion was as deeply stirred as I was led to believe on the subject, no official representations had reached me from the American Government, and I was left to gather American sentiment from the reports and appeals and protests of private individuals. I further said that, anxious as we were to do everything in our power to satisfy American opinion and to protect the Armenians, it was difficult to modify our announced and already inaugurated policy of evacuation, unless we knew for certain for how long

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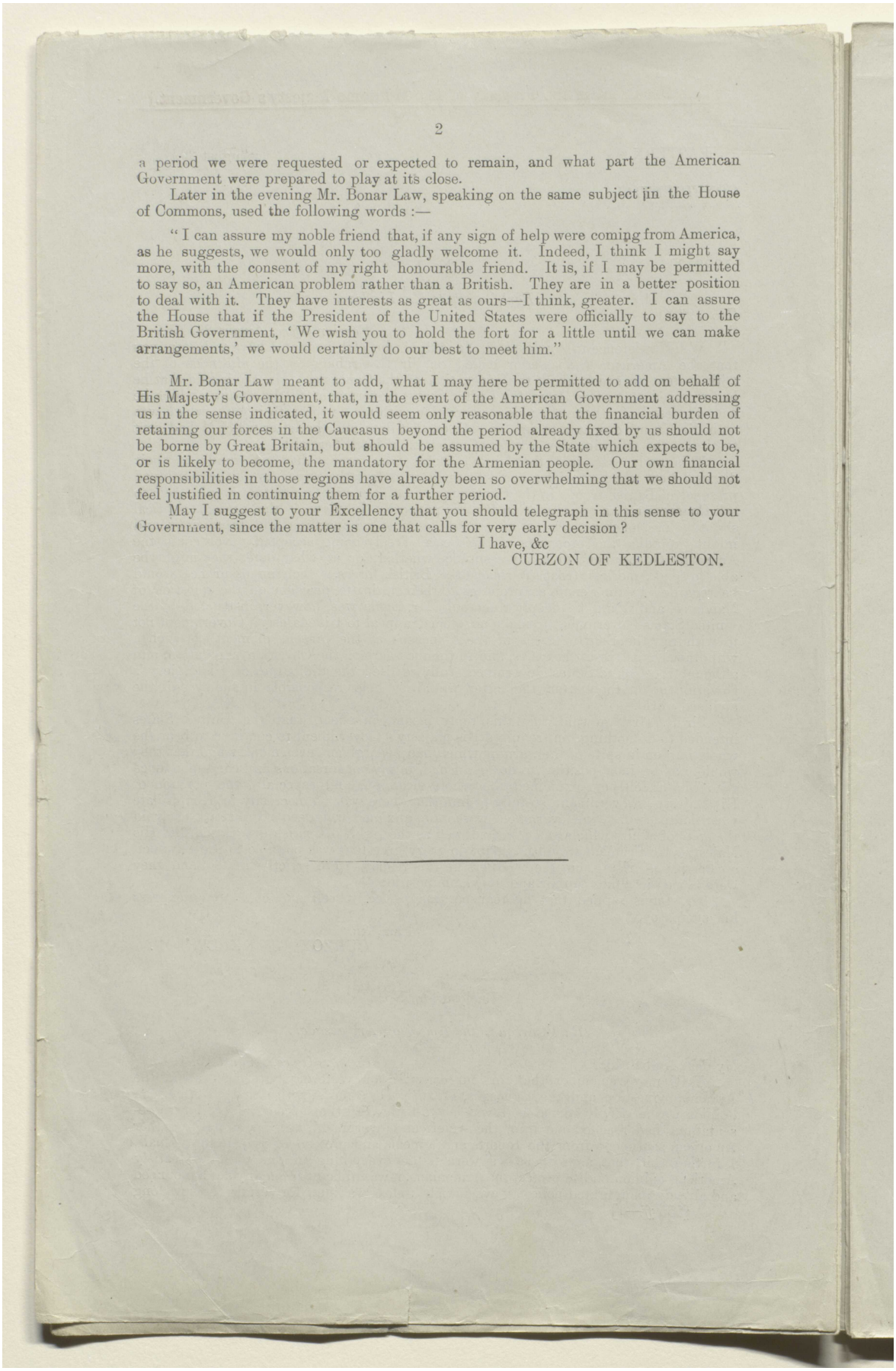

a period we were requested or expected to remain, and what part the American Government were prepared to play at its close.

Later in the evening Mr. Bonar Law, speaking on the same subject in the House of Commons, used the following words :—

"I can assure my noble friend that, if any sign of help were coming from America, as he suggests, we would only too gladly welcome it. Indeed, I think I might say more, with the consent of my right honourable friend. It is, if I may be permitted to say so, an American problem rather than a British. They are in a better position to deal with it. They have interests as great as ours—I think, greater. I can assure the House that if the President of the United States were officially to say to the British Government, 'We wish you to hold the fort for a little until we can make arrangements,' we would certainly do our best to meet him."

Mr. Bonar Law meant to add, what I may here be permitted to add on behalf of His Majesty's Government, that, in the event of the American Government addressing us in the sense indicated, it would seem only reasonable that the financial burden of retaining our forces in the Caucasus beyond the period already fixed by us should not be borne by Great Britain, but should be assumed by the State which expects to be, or is likely to become, the mandatory for the Armenian people. Our own financial responsibilities in those regions have already been so overwhelming that we should not feel justified in continuing them for a further period.

May I suggest to your Excellency that you should telegraph in this sense to your Government, since the matter is one that calls for very early decision?

I have, &c
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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CIRCULATED TO THE CABINET.

EASTERN. [September 11.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[124999] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Balfour.

(No. 5984.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 11, 1919.

RECENT developments in the situation in the Caucasus arising out of the decision to withdraw the British troops from that region lead me to think that it would be well briefly to retrace the course of events, more especially in so far as the Armenians are concerned.

I need not recall to you the circumstances in which we found ourselves forced to occupy Transcaucasia, nor remind you that our original intention was merely to expel the Turks and the Germans, to secure control of the Caspian Sea so as to prevent an enemy invasion of Transcaspia, and to hold the railway from Baku to Batoum. As time went on, however, it became clear that the peoples of the several small States which, though formerly subject to Russia, had asserted their independence upon the collapse of that Power, were unfit to stand alone, and would lapse into fratricidal warfare if left to their own devices. They were further threatened with the danger of extinction at the hands of General Denikin's forces to the north of the Caucasus, that officer making no pretence of friendship for the newly-found liberties of Georgia, Daghestan, and Azerbaijan. Owing to our efforts these calamities have been averted and a measure of law and order has been successfully maintained in the occupied regions.

In the early days of the British occupation our presence was regarded with various feelings by the local States and populations, being welcomed by some, but regarded with suspicion by others, notably by the Georgians and the Tartars, on account of our relations with General Denikin, whose supposed ambitions they regarded with genuine alarm. No sooner, however, had our intention to evacuate become generally known than the benefits of our occupation were swiftly and universally realised, and passionate appeals were addressed to us from every quarter to stay.

The policy of withdrawal was urged as early as March last by the Secretary of State for War, and was finally decided upon, with your approval, on the 9th April, on which date you informed me that the Supreme Council at Paris had decided that our forces were to be replaced by Italian troops.

The news of our intended evacuation, and still more the proposed substitution of Italian troops, who had no experience of and no connection with those parts of the East, created a profound and unpleasant impression in the Caucasus. They were received by General Milne, Admiral Calthorpe, Mr. Stevens (His Majesty's consul at Batoum) with unconcealed dismay. They represented that this policy would be a betrayal of the Caucasian peoples, with whose aspirations towards independence we had shown no small sympathy; that the new States, if left unprotected in the early stages of their struggle for independence, would probably lapse into Bolshevism; that there would be much internecine strife, and probably massacres of Christians on a large scale; and finally, that our reputation in the Middle East would suffer a damaging if not a fatal blow. I confess that to a large extent I shared these apprehensions, all the more that I was quite unable to believe in the practicability or likelihood of the substitute of an Italian occupation.

In May rumours began to arrive that the Italians were disposed to reconsider their decision to take our place, and I ventured in my telegram No. 735 of 23rd May to ask you to endeavour to hasten a decision on their part. Meanwhile it was decided on military grounds to postpone our withdrawal, originally fixed for the 15th June, until the 15th July, and subsequently again until the 15th August.

On the 2nd July I was informed by the Director of Military Intelligence that he learned from the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, then in Paris, that the Italians had abandoned their intention to go to the Caucasus, and in your telegram No. 1126 of the 6th July you informed me that you too understood this to be the case. It was not, however, until the 1st August that the Italian Ambassador was able to confirm it. No change was, however, made in our decision to withdraw.

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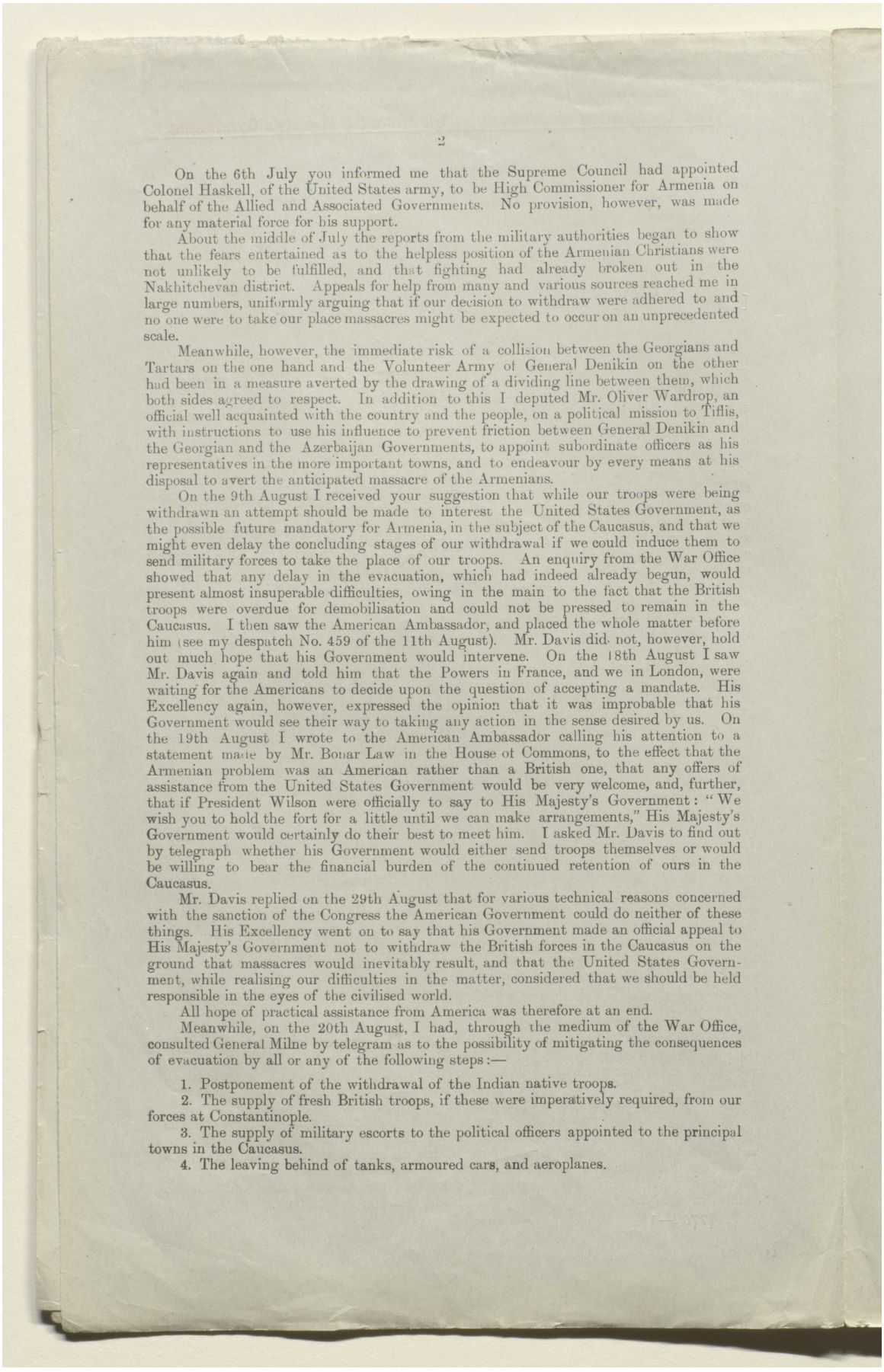

On the 6th July you informed me that the Supreme Council had appointed Colonel Haskell, of the United States army, to be High Commissioner for Armenia on behalf of the Allied and Associated Governments. No provision, however, was made for any material force for his support.

About the middle of July the reports from the military authorities began to show that the fears entertained as to the helpless position of the Armenian Christians were not unlikely to be fulfilled, and that fighting had already broken out in the Nakhitchevan district. Appeals for help from many and various sources reached me in large numbers, uniformly arguing that if our decision to withdraw were adhered to and no one were to take our place massacres might be expected to occur on an unprecedented scale.

Meanwhile, however, the immediate risk of a collision between the Georgians and Tartars on the one hand and the Volunteer Army of General Denikin on the other had been in a measure averted by the drawing of a dividing line between them, which both sides agreed to respect. In addition to this I deputed Mr. Oliver Wardrop, an official well acquainted with the country and the people, on a political mission to Tiflis, with instructions to use his influence to prevent friction between General Denikin and the Georgian and the Azerbaijan Governments, to appoint subordinate officers as his representatives in the more important towns, and to endeavour by every means at his disposal to avert the anticipated massacre of the Armenians.

On the 9th August I received your suggestion that while our troops were being withdrawn an attempt should be made to interest the United States Government, as the possible future mandatory for Armenia, in the subject of the Caucasus, and that we might even delay the concluding stages of our withdrawal if we could induce them to send military forces to take the place of our troops. An enquiry from the War Office showed that any delay in the evacuation, which had indeed already begun, would present almost insuperable difficulties, owing in the main to the fact that the British troops were overdue for demobilisation and could not be pressed to remain in the Caucasus. I then saw the American Ambassador, and placed the whole matter before him (see my despatch No. 459 of the 11th August). Mr. Davis did not, however, hold out much hope that his Government would intervene. On the 18th August I saw Mr. Davis again and told him that the Powers in France, and we in London, were waiting for the Americans to decide upon the question of accepting a mandate. His Excellency again, however, expressed the opinion that it was improbable that his Government would see their way to taking any action in the sense desired by us. On the 19th August I wrote to the American Ambassador calling his attention to a statement made by Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons, to the effect that the Armenian problem was an American rather than a British one, that any offers of assistance from the United States Government would be very welcome, and, further, that if President Wilson were officially to say to His Majesty's Government: "We wish you to hold the fort for a little until we can make arrangements," His Majesty's Government would certainly do their best to meet him. I asked Mr. Davis to find out by telegraph whether his Government would either send troops themselves or would be willing to bear the financial burden of the continued retention of ours in the Caucasus.

Mr. Davis replied on the 29th August that for various technical reasons concerned with the sanction of the Congress the American Government could do neither of these things. His Excellency went on to say that his Government made an official appeal to His Majesty's Government not to withdraw the British forces in the Caucasus on the ground that massacres would inevitably result, and that the United States Government, while realising our difficulties in the matter, considered that we should be held responsible in the eyes of the civilised world.

All hope of practical assistance from America was therefore at an end.

Meanwhile, on the 20th August, I had, through the medium of the War Office, consulted General Milne by telegram as to the possibility of mitigating the consequences of evacuation by all or any of the following steps:—

1. Postponement of the withdrawal of the Indian native troops.
2. The supply of fresh British troops, if these were imperatively required, from our forces at Constantinople.
3. The supply of military escorts to the political officers appointed to the principal towns in the Caucasus.
4. The leaving behind of tanks, armoured cars, and aeroplanes.

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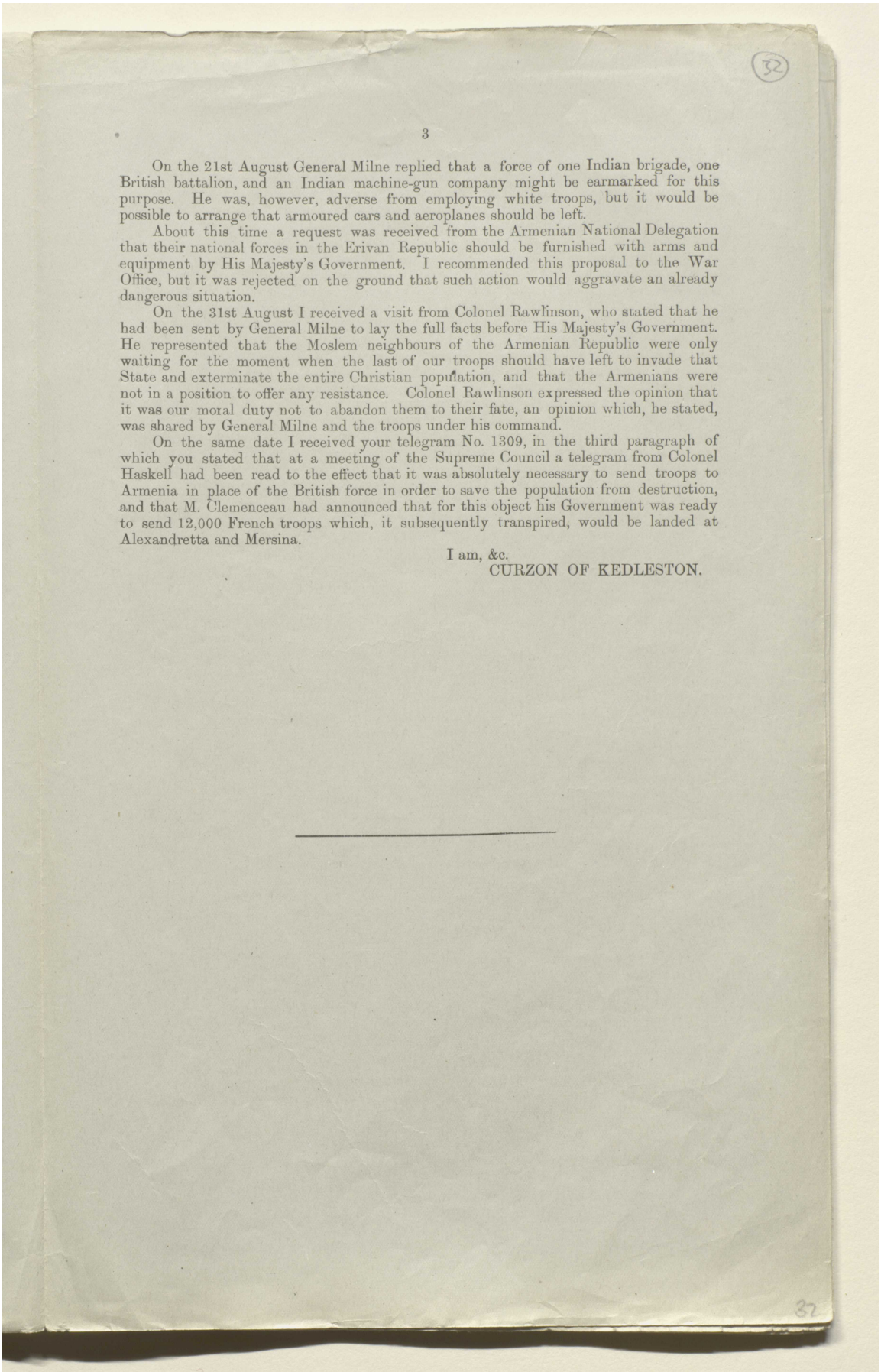

On the 21st August General Milne replied that a force of one Indian brigade, one British battalion, and an Indian machine-gun company might be earmarked for this purpose. He was, however, adverse from employing white troops, but it would be possible to arrange that armoured cars and aeroplanes should be left.

About this time a request was received from the Armenian National Delegation that their national forces in the Erivan Republic should be furnished with arms and equipment by His Majesty's Government. I recommended this proposal to the War Office, but it was rejected on the ground that such action would aggravate an already dangerous situation.

On the 31st August I received a visit from Colonel Rawlinson, who stated that he had been sent by General Milne to lay the full facts before His Majesty's Government. He represented that the Moslem neighbours of the Armenian Republic were only waiting for the moment when the last of our troops should have left to invade that State and exterminate the entire Christian population, and that the Armenians were not in a position to offer any resistance. Colonel Rawlinson expressed the opinion that it was our moral duty not to abandon them to their fate, an opinion which, he stated, was shared by General Milne and the troops under his command.

On the same date I received your telegram No. 1309, in the third paragraph of which you stated that at a meeting of the Supreme Council a telegram from Colonel Haskell had been read to the effect that it was absolutely necessary to send troops to Armenia in place of the British force in order to save the population from destruction, and that M. Clemenceau had announced that for this object his Government was ready to send 12,000 French troops which, it subsequently transpired, would be landed at Alexandretta and Mersina.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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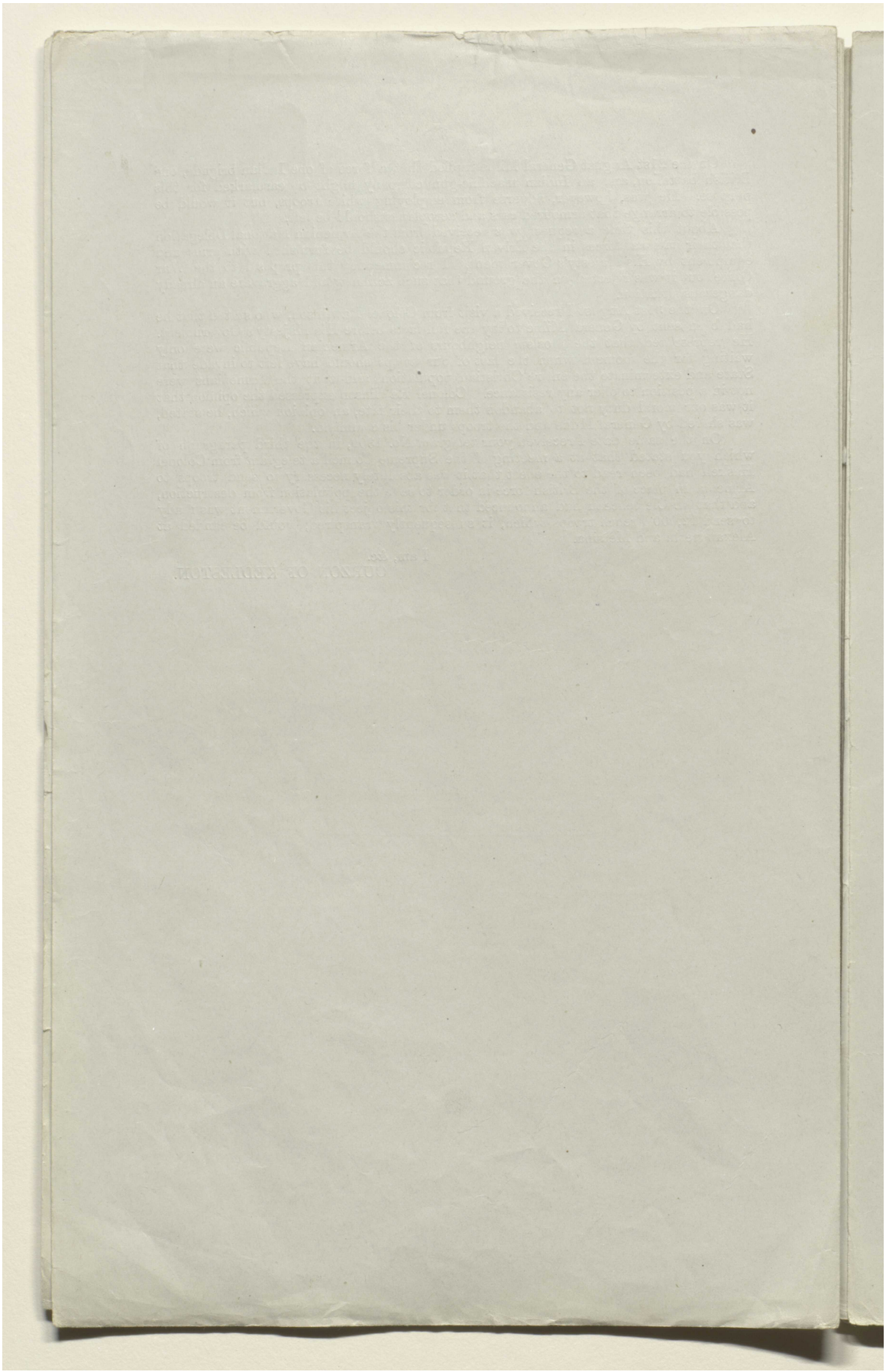

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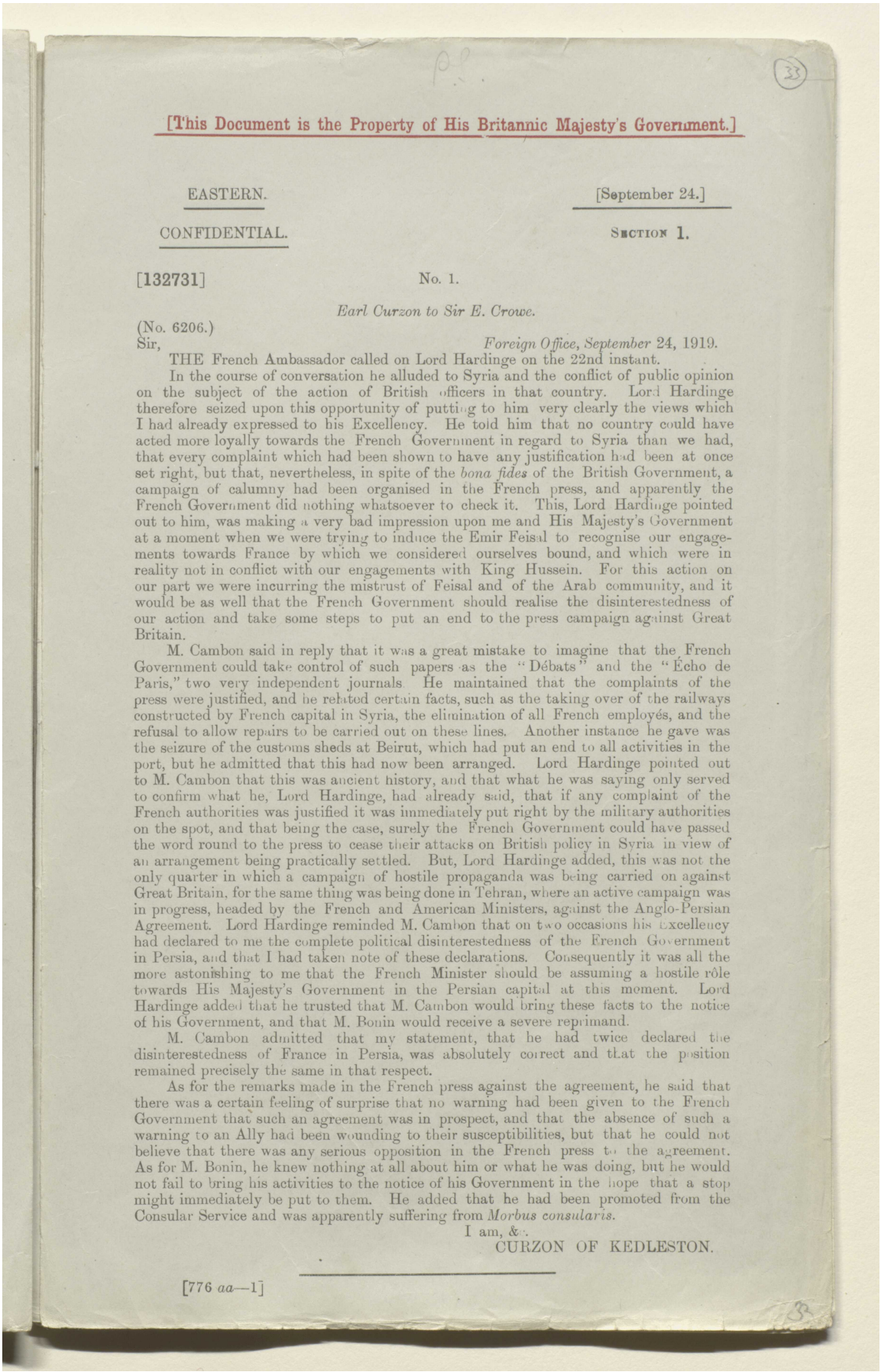

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EASTERN. [September 24.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[132731] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir E. Crowe.

(No. 6206.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 24, 1919.

THE French Ambassador called on Lord Hardinge on the 22nd instant.

In the course of conversation he alluded to Syria and the conflict of public opinion on the subject of the action of British officers in that country. Lord Hardinge therefore seized upon this opportunity of putting to him very clearly the views which I had already expressed to his Excellency. He told him that no country could have acted more loyally towards the French Government in regard to Syria than we had, that every complaint which had been shown to have any justification had been at once set right, but that, nevertheless, in spite of the *bona fides* of the British Government, a campaign of calumny had been organised in the French press, and apparently the French Government did nothing whatsoever to check it. This, Lord Hardinge pointed out to him, was making a very bad impression upon me and His Majesty's Government at a moment when we were trying to induce the Emir Feisal to recognise our engagements towards France by which we considered ourselves bound, and which were in reality not in conflict with our engagements with King Hussein. For this action on our part we were incurring the mistrust of Feisal and of the Arab community, and it would be as well that the French Government should realise the disinterestedness of our action and take some steps to put an end to the press campaign against Great Britain.

M. Cambon said in reply that it was a great mistake to imagine that the French Government could take control of such papers as the "Débats" and the "Écho de Paris," two very independent journals. He maintained that the complaints of the press were justified, and he related certain facts, such as the taking over of the railways constructed by French capital in Syria, the elimination of all French employés, and the refusal to allow repairs to be carried out on these lines. Another instance he gave was the seizure of the customs sheds at Beirut, which had put an end to all activities in the port, but he admitted that this had now been arranged. Lord Hardinge pointed out to M. Cambon that this was ancient history, and that what he was saying only served to confirm what he, Lord Hardinge, had already said, that if any complaint of the French authorities was justified it was immediately put right by the military authorities on the spot, and that being the case, surely the French Government could have passed the word round to the press to cease their attacks on British policy in Syria in view of an arrangement being practically settled. But, Lord Hardinge added, this was not the only quarter in which a campaign of hostile propaganda was being carried on against Great Britain, for the same thing was being done in Tehran, where an active campaign was in progress, headed by the French and American Ministers, against the Anglo-Persian Agreement. Lord Hardinge reminded M. Cambon that on two occasions his Excellency had declared to me the complete political disinterestedness of the French Government in Persia, and that I had taken note of these declarations. Consequently it was all the more astonishing to me that the French Minister should be assuming a hostile rôle towards His Majesty's Government in the Persian capital at this moment. Lord Hardinge added that he trusted that M. Cambon would bring these facts to the notice of his Government, and that M. Bonin would receive a severe reprimand.

M. Cambon admitted that my statement, that he had twice declared the disinterestedness of France in Persia, was absolutely correct and that the position remained precisely the same in that respect.

As for the remarks made in the French press against the agreement, he said that there was a certain feeling of surprise that no warning had been given to the French Government that such an agreement was in prospect, and that the absence of such a warning to an Ally had been wounding to their susceptibilities, but that he could not believe that there was any serious opposition in the French press to the agreement. As for M. Bonin, he knew nothing at all about him or what he was doing, but he would not fail to bring his activities to the notice of his Government in the hope that a stop might immediately be put to them. He added that he had been promoted from the Consular Service and was apparently suffering from *Morbus consularis*.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[776 *aa*—1]

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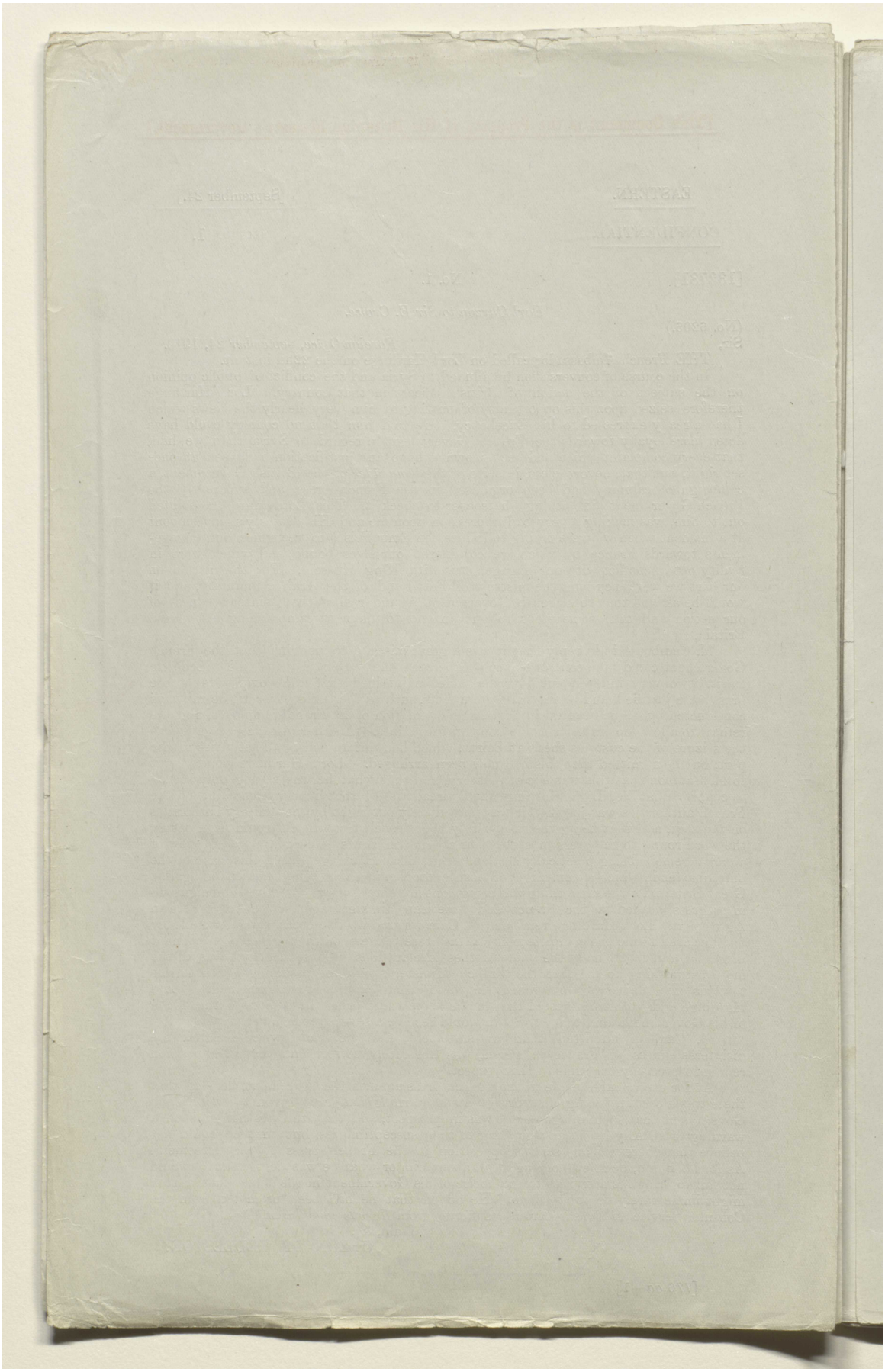

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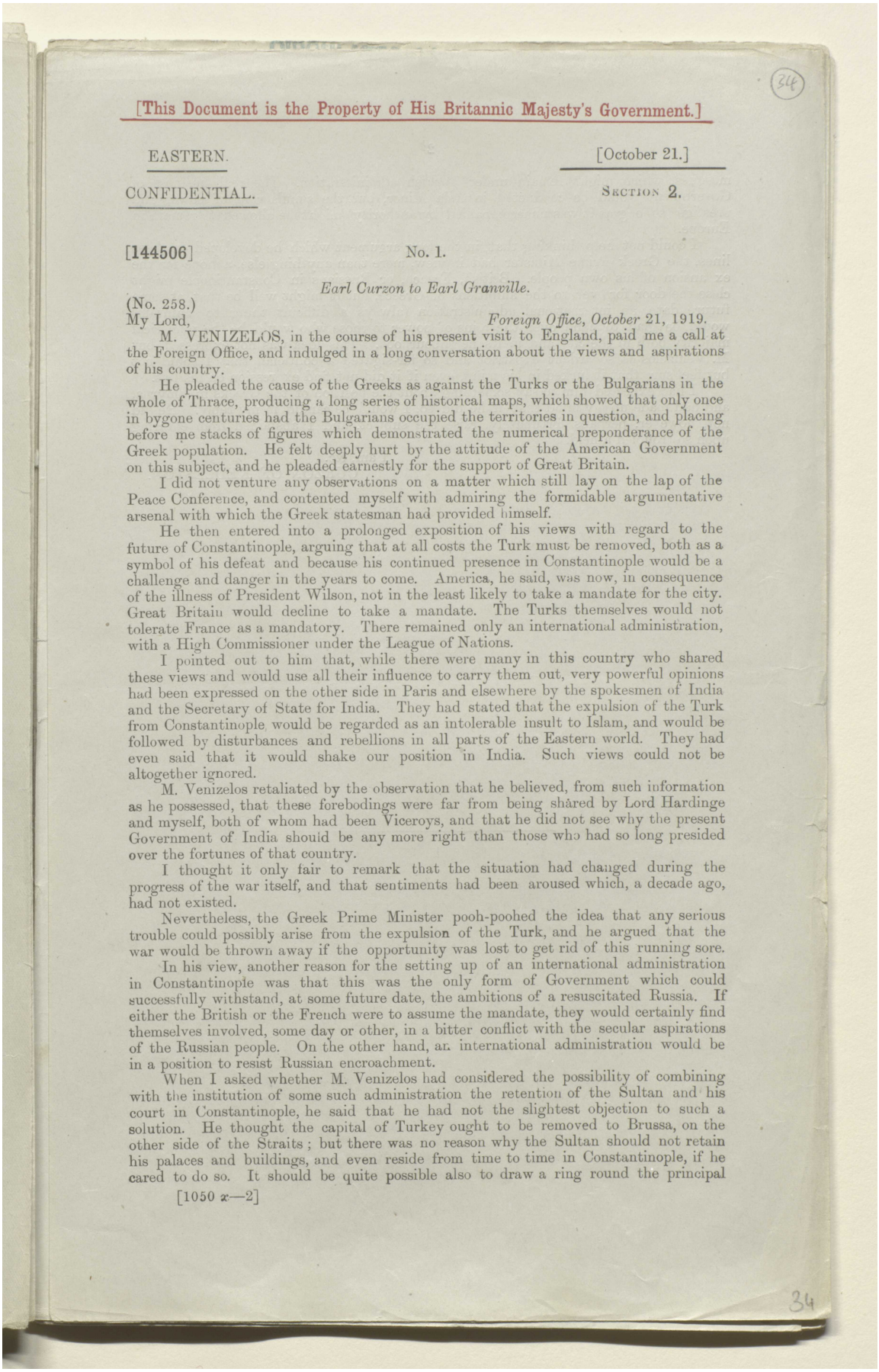

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EASTERN. [October 21.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[144506] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Earl Granville.

(No. 258.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 21, 1919.

M. VENIZELOS, in the course of his present visit to England, paid me a call at the Foreign Office, and indulged in a long conversation about the views and aspirations of his country.

He pleaded the cause of the Greeks as against the Turks or the Bulgarians in the whole of Thrace, producing a long series of historical maps, which showed that only once in bygone centuries had the Bulgarians occupied the territories in question, and placing before me stacks of figures which demonstrated the numerical preponderance of the Greek population. He felt deeply hurt by the attitude of the American Government on this subject, and he pleaded earnestly for the support of Great Britain.

I did not venture any observations on a matter which still lay on the lap of the Peace Conference, and contented myself with admiring the formidable argumentative arsenal with which the Greek statesman had provided himself.

He then entered into a prolonged exposition of his views with regard to the future of Constantinople, arguing that at all costs the Turk must be removed, both as a symbol of his defeat and because his continued presence in Constantinople would be a challenge and danger in the years to come. America, he said, was now, in consequence of the illness of President Wilson, not in the least likely to take a mandate for the city. Great Britain would decline to take a mandate. The Turks themselves would not tolerate France as a mandatory. There remained only an international administration, with a High Commissioner under the League of Nations.

I pointed out to him that, while there were many in this country who shared these views and would use all their influence to carry them out, very powerful opinions had been expressed on the other side in Paris and elsewhere by the spokesmen of India and the Secretary of State for India. They had stated that the expulsion of the Turk from Constantinople would be regarded as an intolerable insult to Islam, and would be followed by disturbances and rebellions in all parts of the Eastern world. They had even said that it would shake our position in India. Such views could not be altogether ignored.

M. Venizelos retaliated by the observation that he believed, from such information as he possessed, that these forebodings were far from being shared by Lord Hardinge and myself, both of whom had been Viceroys, and that he did not see why the present Government of India should be any more right than those who had so long presided over the fortunes of that country.

I thought it only fair to remark that the situation had changed during the progress of the war itself, and that sentiments had been aroused which, a decade ago, had not existed.

Nevertheless, the Greek Prime Minister pooh-poohed the idea that any serious trouble could possibly arise from the expulsion of the Turk, and he argued that the war would be thrown away if the opportunity was lost to get rid of this running sore.

In his view, another reason for the setting up of an international administration in Constantinople was that this was the only form of Government which could successfully withstand, at some future date, the ambitions of a resuscitated Russia. If either the British or the French were to assume the mandate, they would certainly find themselves involved, some day or other, in a bitter conflict with the secular aspirations of the Russian people. On the other hand, an international administration would be in a position to resist Russian encroachment.

When I asked whether M. Venizelos had considered the possibility of combining with the institution of some such administration the retention of the Sultan and his court in Constantinople, he said that he had not the slightest objection to such a solution. He thought the capital of Turkey ought to be removed to Brussa, on the other side of the Straits; but there was no reason why the Sultan should not retain his palaces and buildings, and even reside from time to time in Constantinople, if he cared to do so. It should be quite possible also to draw a ring round the principal

[1050 *x*—2]

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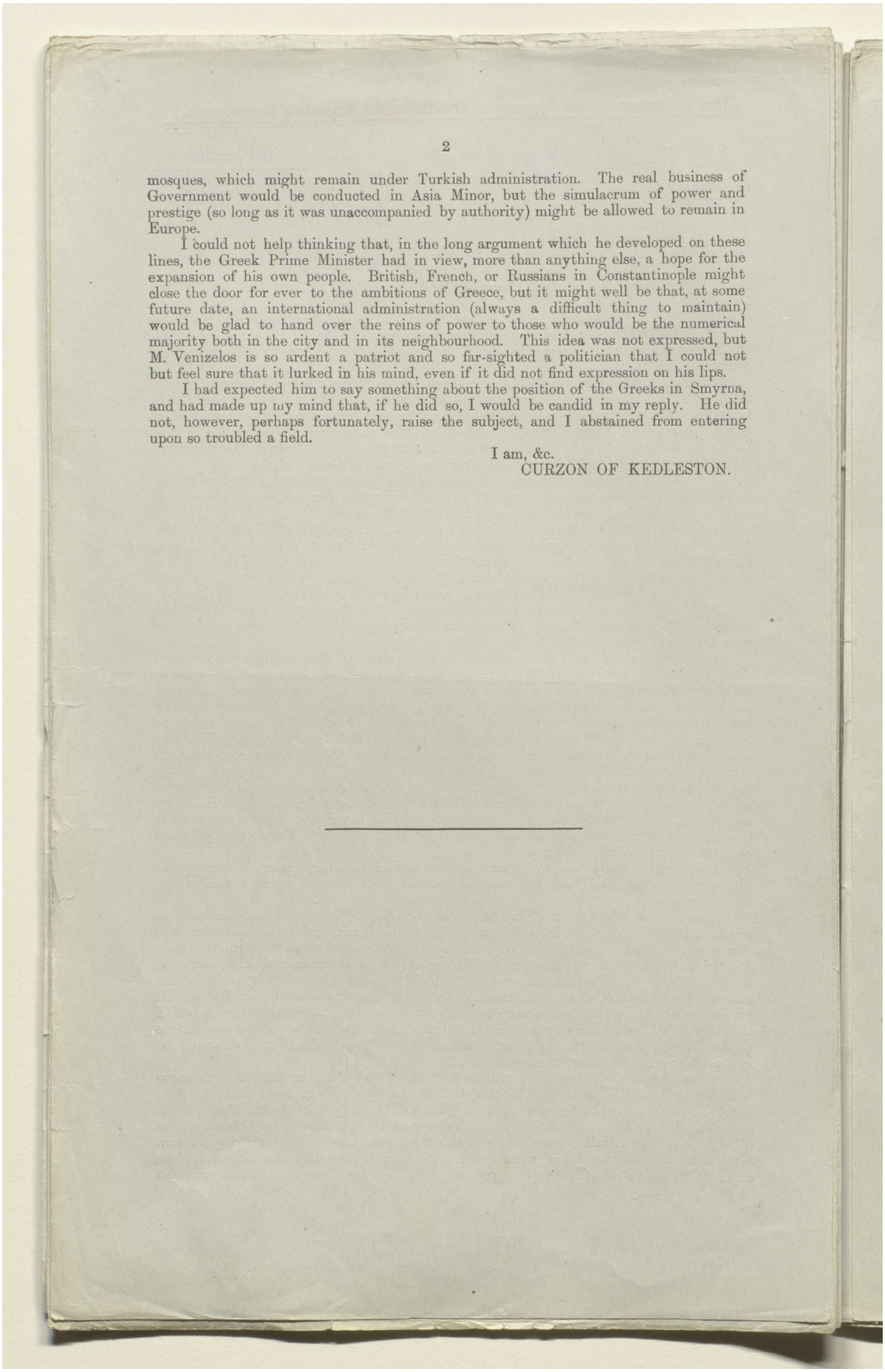

mosques, which might remain under Turkish administration. The real business of Government would be conducted in Asia Minor, but the simulacrum of power and prestige (so long as it was unaccompanied by authority) might be allowed to remain in Europe.

I could not help thinking that, in the long argument which he developed on these lines, the Greek Prime Minister had in view, more than anything else, a hope for the expansion of his own people. British, French, or Russians in Constantinople might close the door for ever to the ambitions of Greece, but it might well be that, at some future date, an international administration (always a difficult thing to maintain) would be glad to hand over the reins of power to those who would be the numerical majority both in the city and in its neighbourhood. This idea was not expressed, but M. Venizelos is so ardent a patriot and so far-sighted a politician that I could not but feel sure that it lurked in his mind, even if it did not find expression on his lips.

I had expected him to say something about the position of the Greeks in Smyrna, and had made up my mind that, if he did so, I would be candid in my reply. He did not, however, perhaps fortunately, raise the subject, and I abstained from entering upon so troubled a field.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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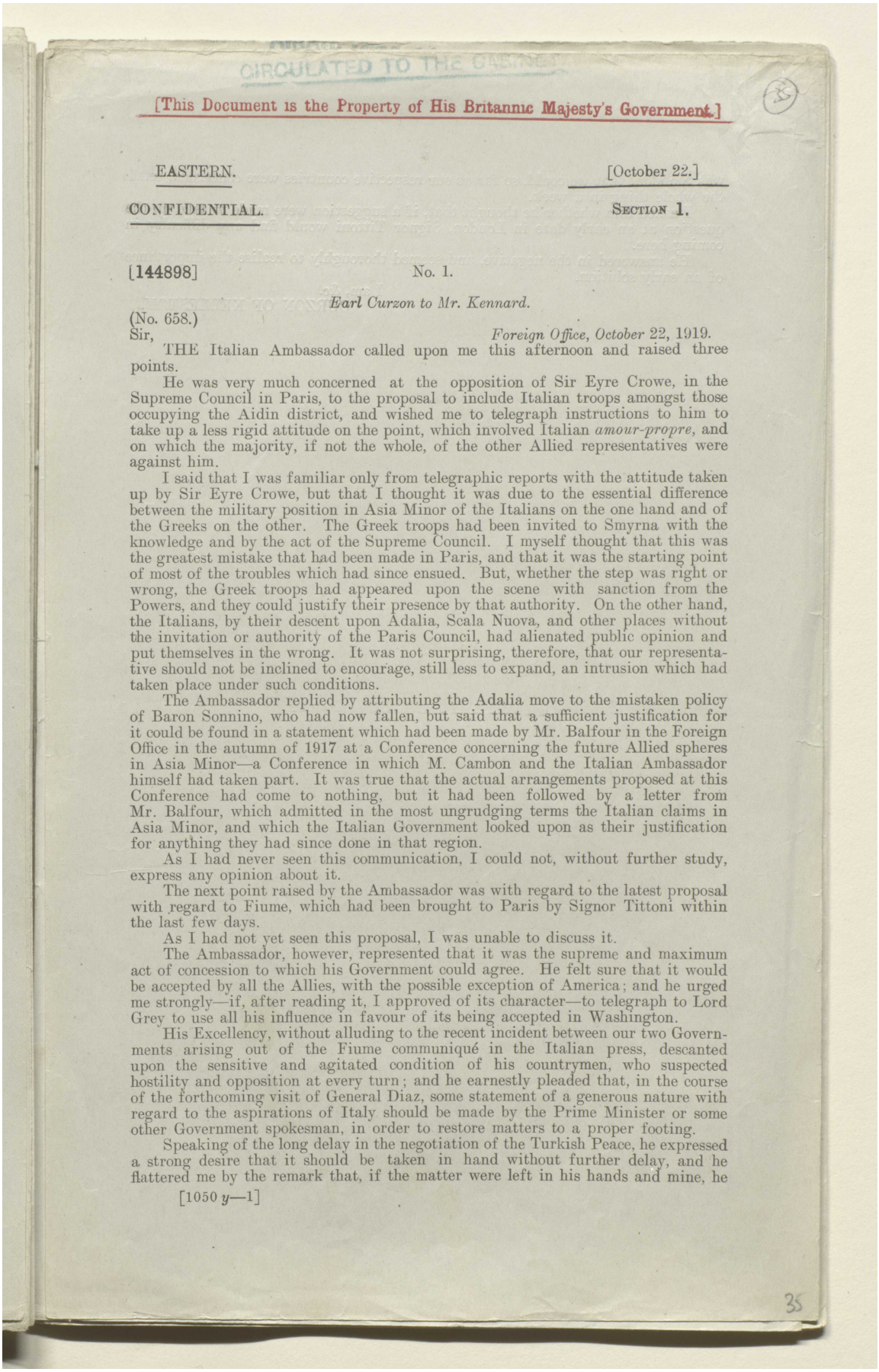

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EASTERN. [October 22.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[144898] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Mr. Kennard.

(No. 658.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 22, 1919.*

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and raised three points.

He was very much concerned at the opposition of Sir Eyre Crowe, in the Supreme Council in Paris, to the proposal to include Italian troops amongst those occupying the Aidin district, and wished me to telegraph instructions to him to take up a less rigid attitude on the point, which involved Italian *amour-propre*, and on which the majority, if not the whole, of the other Allied representatives were against him.

I said that I was familiar only from telegraphic reports with the attitude taken up by Sir Eyre Crowe, but that I thought it was due to the essential difference between the military position in Asia Minor of the Italians on the one hand and of the Greeks on the other. The Greek troops had been invited to Smyrna with the knowledge and by the act of the Supreme Council. I myself thought that this was the greatest mistake that had been made in Paris, and that it was the starting point of most of the troubles which had since ensued. But, whether the step was right or wrong, the Greek troops had appeared upon the scene with sanction from the Powers, and they could justify their presence by that authority. On the other hand, the Italians, by their descent upon Adalia, Scala Nuova, and other places without the invitation or authority of the Paris Council, had alienated public opinion and put themselves in the wrong. It was not surprising, therefore, that our representative should not be inclined to encourage, still less to expand, an intrusion which had taken place under such conditions.

The Ambassador replied by attributing the Adalia move to the mistaken policy of Baron Sonnino, who had now fallen, but said that a sufficient justification for it could be found in a statement which had been made by Mr. Balfour in the Foreign Office in the autumn of 1917 at a Conference concerning the future Allied spheres in Asia Minor—a Conference in which M. Cambon and the Italian Ambassador himself had taken part. It was true that the actual arrangements proposed at this Conference had come to nothing, but it had been followed by a letter from Mr. Balfour, which admitted in the most ungrudging terms the Italian claims in Asia Minor, and which the Italian Government looked upon as their justification for anything they had since done in that region.

As I had never seen this communication, I could not, without further study, express any opinion about it.

The next point raised by the Ambassador was with regard to the latest proposal with regard to Fiume, which had been brought to Paris by Signor Tittoni within the last few days.

As I had not yet seen this proposal, I was unable to discuss it.

The Ambassador, however, represented that it was the supreme and maximum act of concession to which his Government could agree. He felt sure that it would be accepted by all the Allies, with the possible exception of America; and he urged me strongly—if, after reading it, I approved of its character—to telegraph to Lord Grey to use all his influence in favour of its being accepted in Washington.

His Excellency, without alluding to the recent incident between our two Governments arising out of the Fiume communiqué in the Italian press, descanted upon the sensitive and agitated condition of his countrymen, who suspected hostility and opposition at every turn; and he earnestly pleaded that, in the course of the forthcoming visit of General Diaz, some statement of a generous nature with regard to the aspirations of Italy should be made by the Prime Minister or some other Government spokesman, in order to restore matters to a proper footing.

Speaking of the long delay in the negotiation of the Turkish Peace, he expressed a strong desire that it should be taken in hand without further delay, and he flattered me by the remark that, if the matter were left in his hands and mine, he

[1050 *y*—1]

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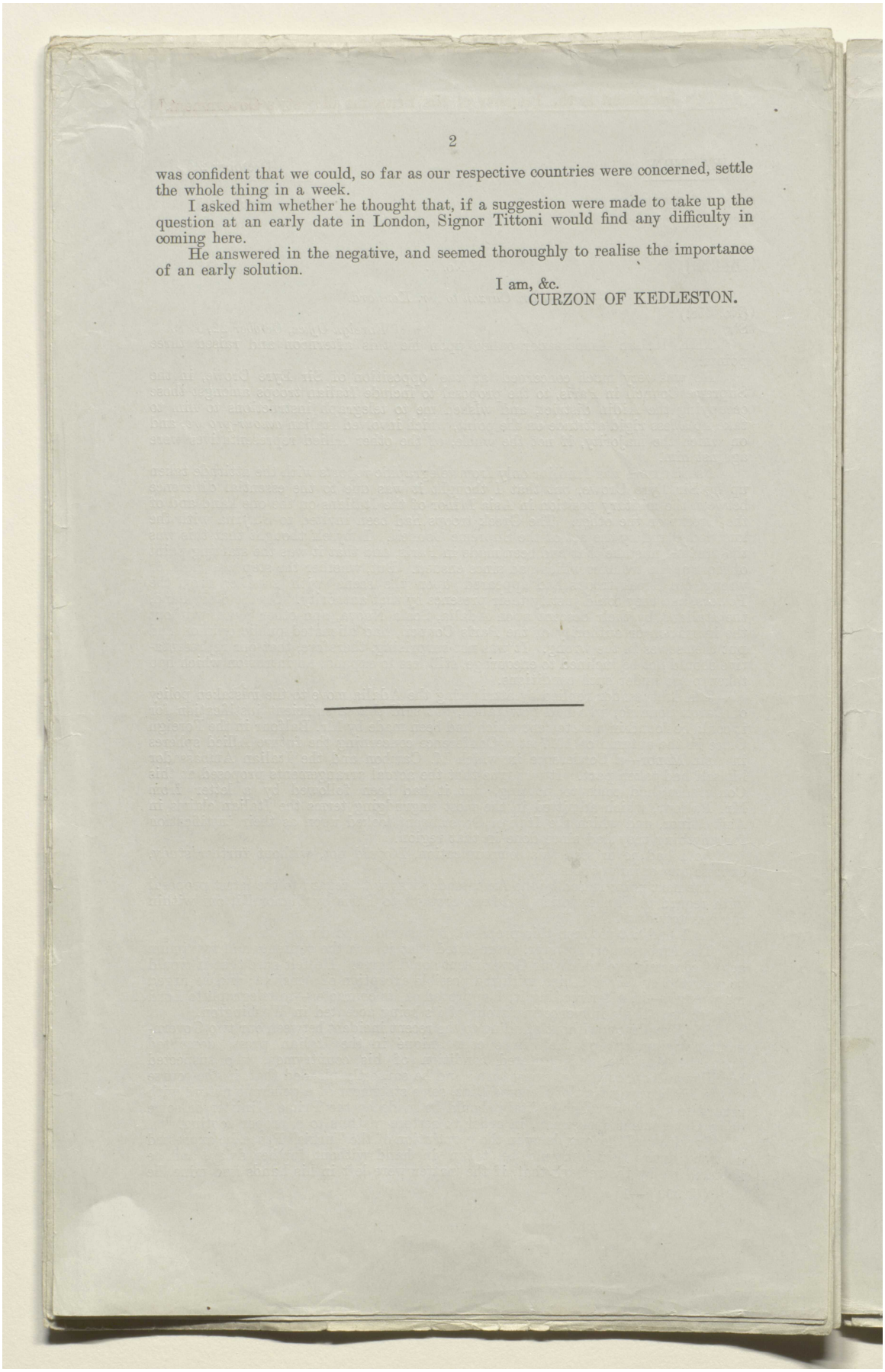

was confident that we could, so far as our respective countries were concerned, settle the whole thing in a week.

I asked him whether he thought that, if a suggestion were made to take up the question at an early date in London, Signor Tittoni would find any difficulty in coming here.

He answered in the negative, and seemed thoroughly to realise the importance of an early solution.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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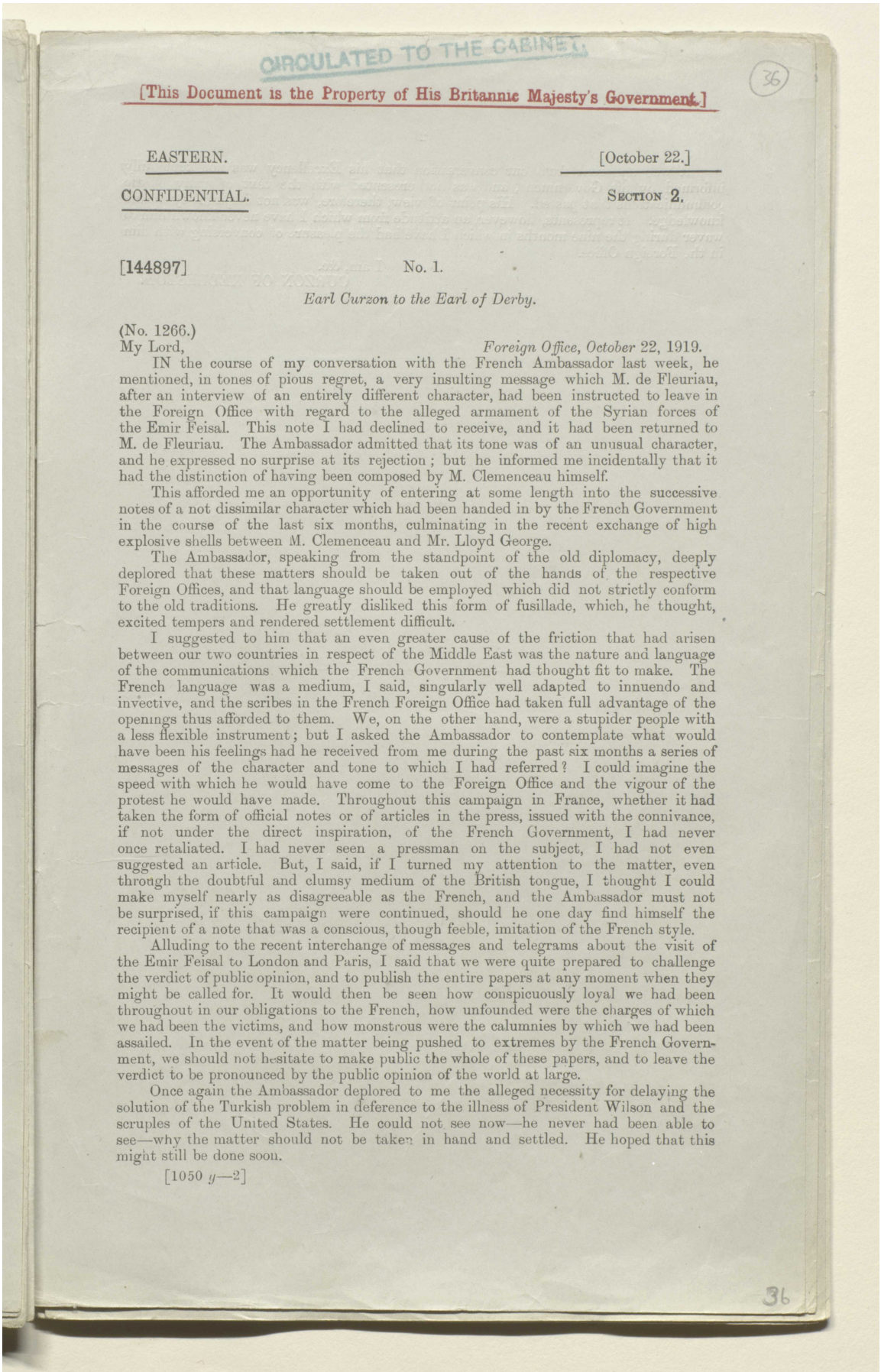

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EASTERN. [October 22.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[144897] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 1266.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 22, 1919.

IN the course of my conversation with the French Ambassador last week, he mentioned, in tones of pious regret, a very insulting message which M. de Fleuriau, after an interview of an entirely different character, had been instructed to leave in the Foreign Office with regard to the alleged armament of the Syrian forces of the Emir Feisal. This note I had declined to receive, and it had been returned to M. de Fleuriau. The Ambassador admitted that its tone was of an unusual character, and he expressed no surprise at its rejection; but he informed me incidentally that it had the distinction of having been composed by M. Clemenceau himself.

This afforded me an opportunity of entering at some length into the successive notes of a not dissimilar character which had been handed in by the French Government in the course of the last six months, culminating in the recent exchange of high explosive shells between M. Clemenceau and Mr. Lloyd George.

The Ambassador, speaking from the standpoint of the old diplomacy, deeply deplored that these matters should be taken out of the hands of the respective Foreign Offices, and that language should be employed which did not strictly conform to the old traditions. He greatly disliked this form of fusillade, which, he thought, excited tempers and rendered settlement difficult.

I suggested to him that an even greater cause of the friction that had arisen between our two countries in respect of the Middle East was the nature and language of the communications which the French Government had thought fit to make. The French language was a medium, I said, singularly well adapted to innuendo and invective, and the scribes in the French Foreign Office had taken full advantage of the openings thus afforded to them. We, on the other hand, were a stupider people with a less flexible instrument; but I asked the Ambassador to contemplate what would have been his feelings had he received from me during the past six months a series of messages of the character and tone to which I had referred? I could imagine the speed with which he would have come to the Foreign Office and the vigour of the protest he would have made. Throughout this campaign in France, whether it had taken the form of official notes or of articles in the press, issued with the connivance, if not under the direct inspiration, of the French Government, I had never once retaliated. I had never seen a pressman on the subject, I had not even suggested an article. But, I said, if I turned my attention to the matter, even through the doubtful and clumsy medium of the British tongue, I thought I could make myself nearly as disagreeable as the French, and the Ambassador must not be surprised, if this campaign were continued, should he one day find himself the recipient of a note that was a conscious, though feeble, imitation of the French style.

Alluding to the recent interchange of messages and telegrams about the visit of the Emir Feisal to London and Paris, I said that we were quite prepared to challenge the verdict of public opinion, and to publish the entire papers at any moment when they might be called for. It would then be seen how conspicuously loyal we had been throughout in our obligations to the French, how unfounded were the charges of which we had been the victims, and how monstrous were the calumnies by which we had been assailed. In the event of the matter being pushed to extremes by the French Government, we should not hesitate to make public the whole of these papers, and to leave the verdict to be pronounced by the public opinion of the world at large.

Once again the Ambassador deplored to me the alleged necessity for delaying the solution of the Turkish problem in deference to the illness of President Wilson and the scruples of the United States. He could not see now—he never had been able to see—why the matter should not be taken in hand and settled. He hoped that this might still be done soon.

[1050 *y*—2]

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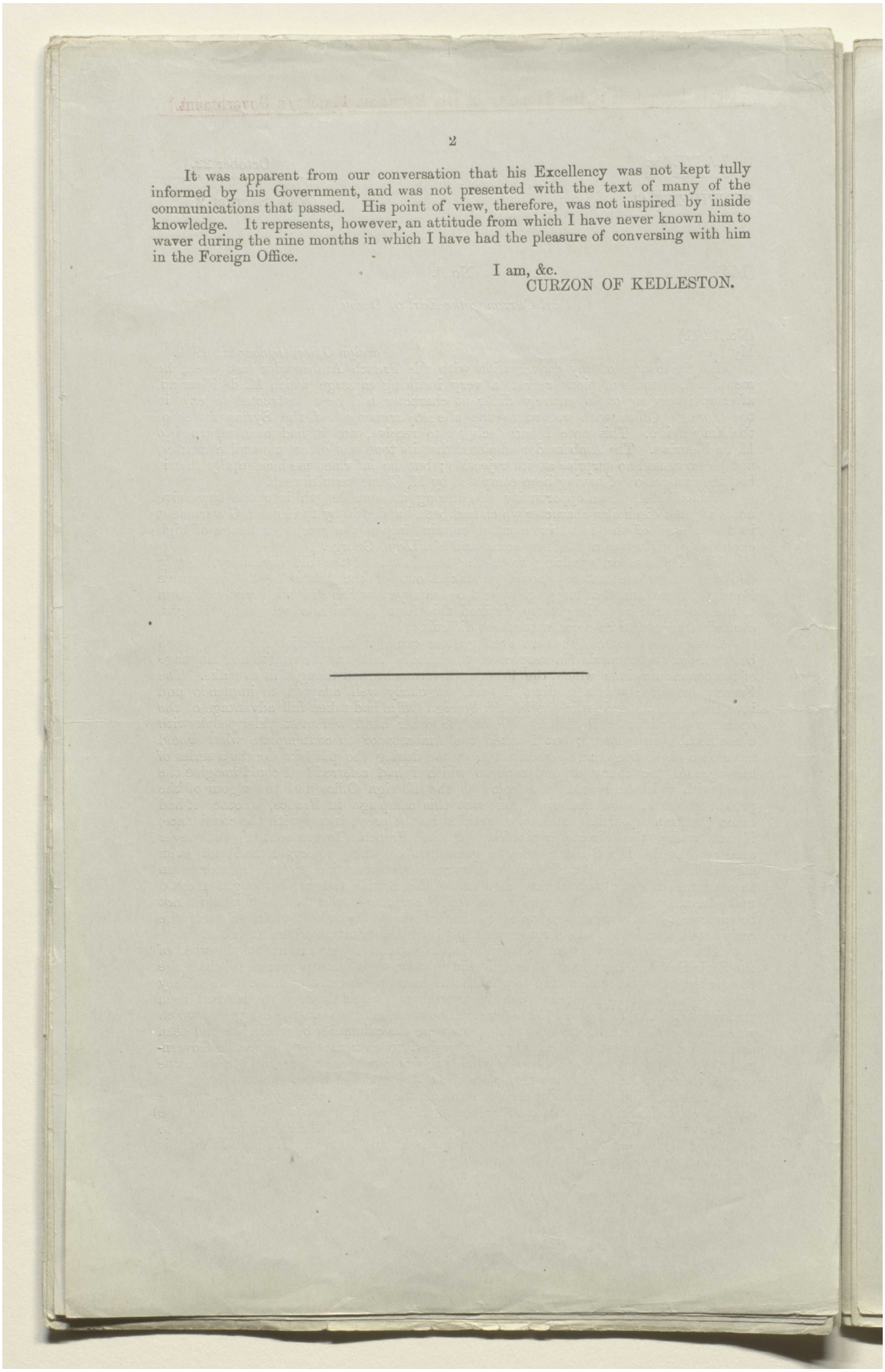

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It was apparent from our conversation that his Excellency was not kept fully informed by his Government, and was not presented with the text of many of the communications that passed. His point of view, therefore, was not inspired by inside knowledge. It represents, however, an attitude from which I have never known him to waver during the nine months in which I have had the pleasure of conversing with him in the Foreign Office.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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EASTERN. [October 30.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[147559] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Viscount Grey.

(No. 681.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 30, 1919.

THE United States Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, in order to make representations with regard to a case in which his Government took a keen interest, and concerning which they had received a reply from the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office that did not altogether satisfy them.

The case arose out of the claim of certain American geologists (as they were called by the Ambassador) representing the Standard Oil Company, who, being in possession of a concession from the Turkish Government for the exploitation of certain oil-producing areas in Palestine, had gone to Jerusalem with a view of inspecting their properties, but who had been denied by the British authorities any opportunity of carrying out their task. The defence had been made by the Foreign Office that, pending the grant of a mandate, all such proceedings had been impartially vetoed by His Majesty's Government, who felt that they had no right to anticipate a decision which might compromise the ultimate mandatory, whoever that might be; and which, further, might be a source of trouble in the country itself while it remained under a military administration.

The Ambassador read to me a long and rather argumentative statement from his Government, which did not seem to carry much conviction to his own mind, but which, he apparently felt, compelled him to reopen the case. He argued as though it would be safe to proceed upon the hypothesis that the mandate, if not already given, would presently be given to Great Britain.

To this I replied that, so far as my recollection extended, though there had been a certain classification of different forms of mandate drawn up by Lord Milner's Commission in Paris, the French had hitherto refused to agree to the grant of any particular form of mandate with regard to any part of the Turkish dominions.

Mr. Davis then sought to establish a distinction between investigation and operation. He contended that it might be possible to allow a concessionaire at least to investigate upon the spot the nature of the concession which he had obtained, without taking any practical steps to carry it into effect.

I said that, though this was a logical, I did not think that, in practice, it would be a very helpful distinction. A permission given in one case would have to be given in others; there were doubtless scores of concessionaires who held, in differing degrees, concessions from the Turkish Government—with whom, I reminded him, Great Britain was still at war—and I could not imagine anything more unfortunate than to have Palestine overrun by groups of persons of different nationalities, endeavouring to ascertain what their concessions—the legal status of which had not yet been determined—were likely to be worth. I promised, however, to look into the matter myself, and to let him have a reply.

I then took advantage of the presence of Mr. Davis to tell him, not in the form of an official protest, but as a fact of which I thought that in fairness I ought to make him aware, that I had good reason to believe that the United States High Commissioner in Constantinople, Admiral Bristol, was inspired by no very friendly feelings towards Great Britain, and was continually suspecting, and sometimes openly accusing, us of dark and sinister intrigues for which there was not a vestige of foundation. Not only had we evidence that Admiral Bristol had openly spoken to this effect in recent discussions in Smyrna, but I had an abundance of testimony from independent quarters that his whole action was characterised by a similar suspicion. This, I said, seemed to me to be a very unjustifiable attitude for the Admiral to adopt. Amongst the various parties who were figuring upon the international stage in Constantinople and Asia Minor, there was, I said, none less anxious to get any individual advantage out of the situation or more sincerely desirous to be quit of responsibility than the British. Our evacuation of the Caucasus; our retirement from Trebizond and Samsun; our reluctance to let our forces play any compromising part in Asia Minor; our well-known intention not to take a mandate for any of those regions; and the sincerity and consistency with which

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we had advocated, and were still prepared to support, an American mandate should alone have been sufficient to protect us from the kind of insinuation in which Admiral Bristol appeared constantly to indulge. I should have thought that a satisfactory solution, already very problematical, could only be retarded, and might indeed be eventually prevented, by disagreement between the Americans and ourselves. It was not for me to make any suggestion, still less did I desire to make an official complaint, to the Ambassador, but if he felt disposed to take any informal steps to moderate the attitude of Admiral Bristol, I thought that some good might be done.

While I was speaking to the Ambassador there was handed to me the telegram which your Excellency had sent, recording your conversation with Mr. Lansing about the possibility of hurrying-on the negotiations as to the Turkish Peace Treaty. I said to the Ambassador that, as Mr. Lansing had suggested that, in the interests of the debate in the Senate and of the ratification by the United States of the Peace Treaty with Germany, it might be desirable to postpone the Turkish negotiations for another ten days, we should of course do nothing that would at all complicate the situation in America.

Mr. Davis said that he saw no reason why, if we so desired, we should not at once enquire among our Allies whether they would be willing to consider the early resumption of negotiations on that aspect of the general peace, of the desirability, and indeed the necessity, of which he was as much convinced as we were; and, although he knew that Mr. Polk was anxious to return to the United States to spend Christmas with his family, he did not think that, if he were pressed to stay, there would be any insuperable obstacle to his taking part in the negotiations, whether they were conducted here or at Paris.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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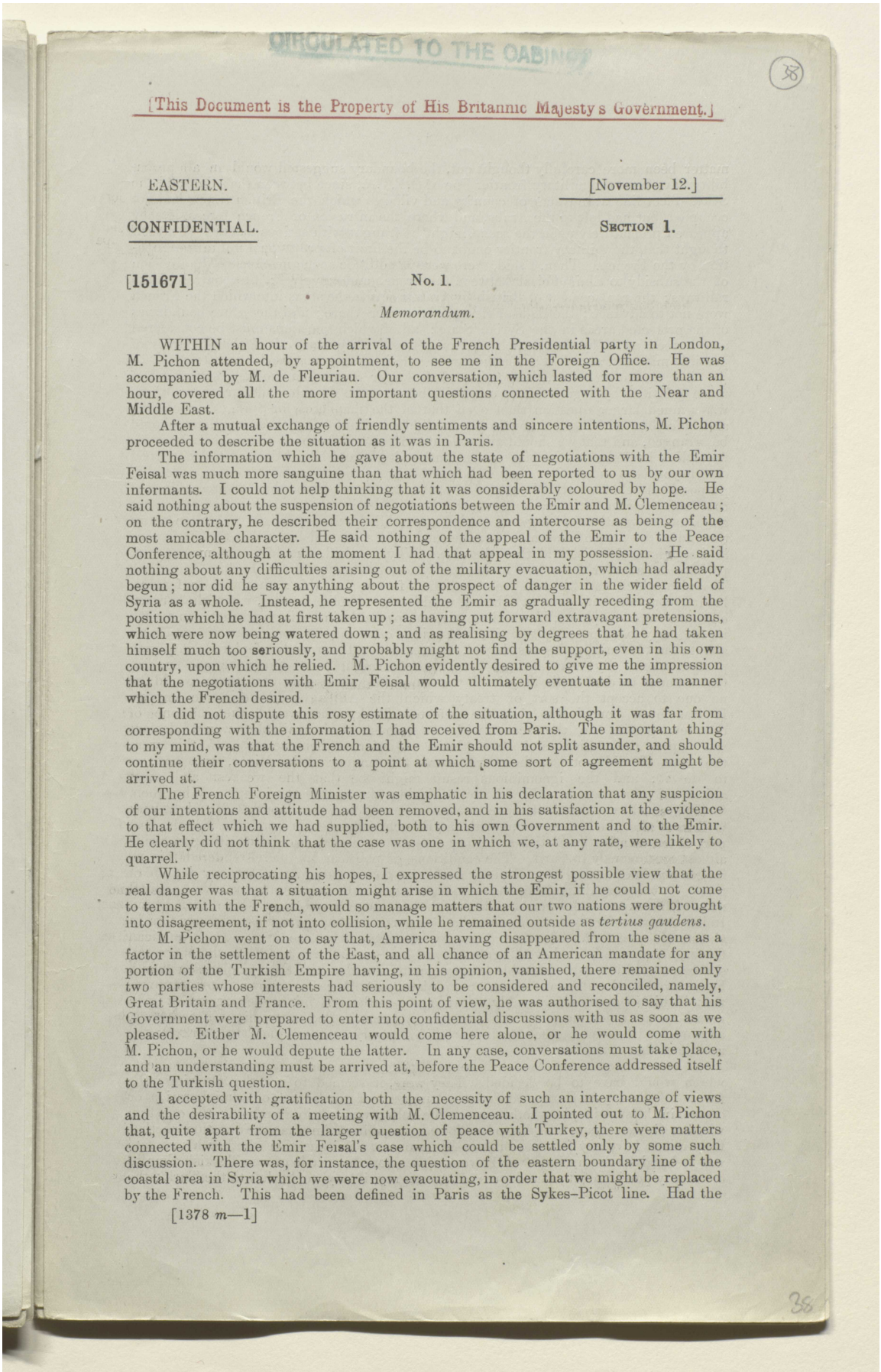

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EASTERN. [November 12.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[151671] No. 1.

Memorandum.

WITHIN an hour of the arrival of the French Presidential party in London, M. Pichon attended, by appointment, to see me in the Foreign Office. He was accompanied by M. de Fleuriau. Our conversation, which lasted for more than an hour, covered all the more important questions connected with the Near and Middle East.

After a mutual exchange of friendly sentiments and sincere intentions, M. Pichon proceeded to describe the situation as it was in Paris.

The information which he gave about the state of negotiations with the Emir Feisal was much more sanguine than that which had been reported to us by our own informants. I could not help thinking that it was considerably coloured by hope. He said nothing about the suspension of negotiations between the Emir and M. Clemenceau; on the contrary, he described their correspondence and intercourse as being of the most amicable character. He said nothing of the appeal of the Emir to the Peace Conference, although at the moment I had that appeal in my possession. He said nothing about any difficulties arising out of the military evacuation, which had already begun; nor did he say anything about the prospect of danger in the wider field of Syria as a whole. Instead, he represented the Emir as gradually receding from the position which he had at first taken up; as having put forward extravagant pretensions, which were now being watered down; and as realising by degrees that he had taken himself much too seriously, and probably might not find the support, even in his own country, upon which he relied. M. Pichon evidently desired to give me the impression that the negotiations with Emir Feisal would ultimately eventuate in the manner which the French desired.

I did not dispute this rosy estimate of the situation, although it was far from corresponding with the information I had received from Paris. The important thing to my mind, was that the French and the Emir should not split asunder, and should continue their conversations to a point at which some sort of agreement might be arrived at.

The French Foreign Minister was emphatic in his declaration that any suspicion of our intentions and attitude had been removed, and in his satisfaction at the evidence to that effect which we had supplied, both to his own Government and to the Emir. He clearly did not think that the case was one in which we, at any rate, were likely to quarrel.

While reciprocating his hopes, I expressed the strongest possible view that the real danger was that a situation might arise in which the Emir, if he could not come to terms with the French, would so manage matters that our two nations were brought into disagreement, if not into collision, while he remained outside as *tertius gaudens*.

M. Pichon went on to say that, America having disappeared from the scene as a factor in the settlement of the East, and all chance of an American mandate for any portion of the Turkish Empire having, in his opinion, vanished, there remained only two parties whose interests had seriously to be considered and reconciled, namely, Great Britain and France. From this point of view, he was authorised to say that his Government were prepared to enter into confidential discussions with us as soon as we pleased. Either M. Clemenceau would come here alone, or he would come with M. Pichon, or he would depute the latter. In any case, conversations must take place, and an understanding must be arrived at, before the Peace Conference addressed itself to the Turkish question.

I accepted with gratification both the necessity of such an interchange of views and the desirability of a meeting with M. Clemenceau. I pointed out to M. Pichon that, quite apart from the larger question of peace with Turkey, there were matters connected with the Emir Feisal's case which could be settled only by some such discussion. There was, for instance, the question of the eastern boundary line of the coastal area in Syria which we were now evacuating, in order that we might be replaced by the French. This had been defined in Paris as the Sykes–Picot line. Had the

[1378 *m*—1]

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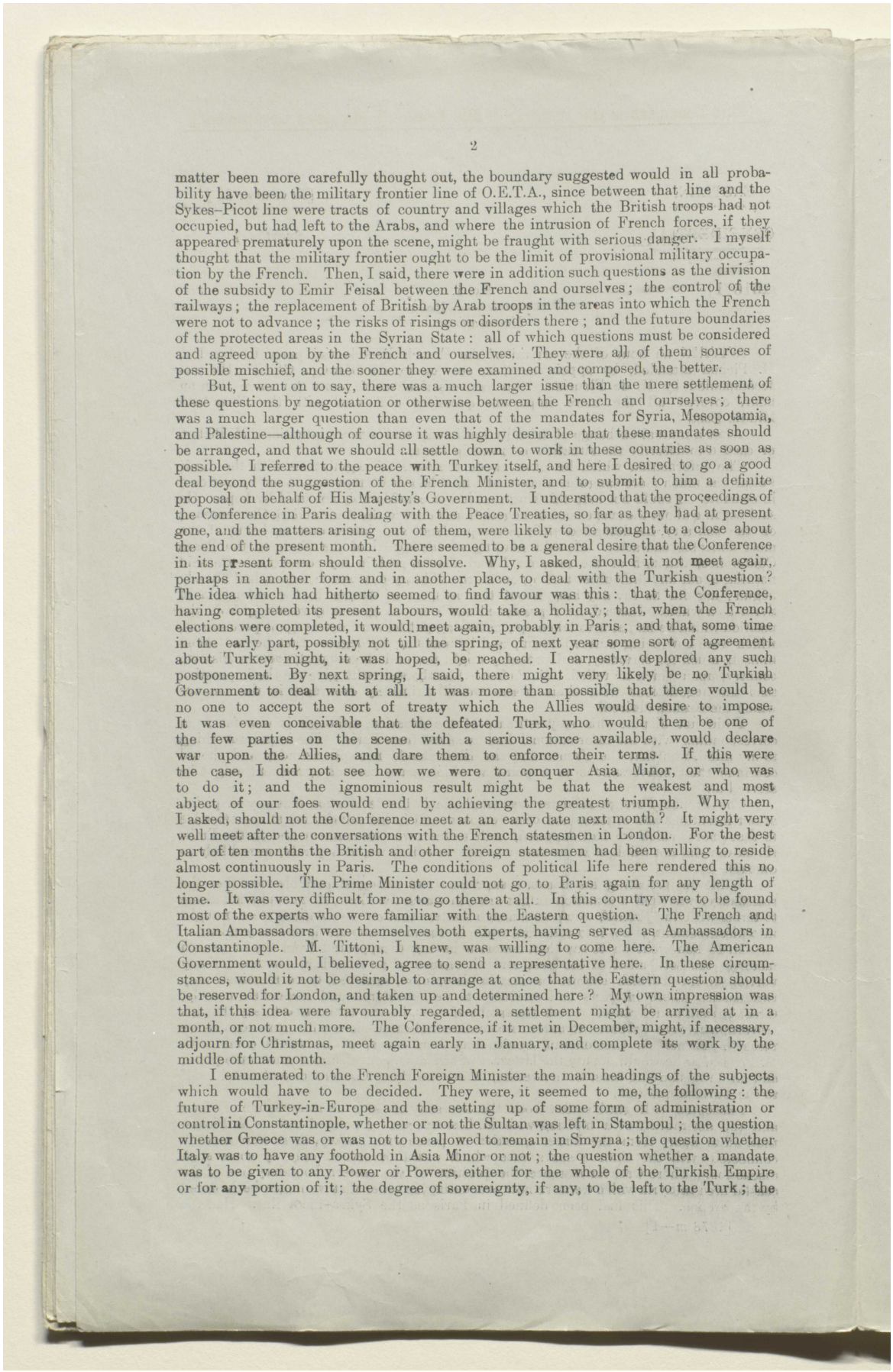

matter been more carefully thought out, the boundary suggested would in all probability have been the military frontier line of O.E.T.A., since between that line and the Sykes–Picot line were tracts of country and villages which the British troops had not occupied, but had left to the Arabs, and where the intrusion of French forces, if they appeared prematurely upon the scene, might be fraught with serious danger. I myself thought that the military frontier ought to be the limit of provisional military occupation by the French. Then, I said, there were in addition such questions as the division of the subsidy to Emir Feisal between the French and ourselves; the control of the railways; the replacement of British by Arab troops in the areas into which the French were not to advance; the risks of risings or disorders there; and the future boundaries of the protected areas in the Syrian State: all of which questions must be considered and agreed upon by the French and ourselves. They were all of them sources of possible mischief, and the sooner they were examined and composed, the better.

But, I went on to say, there was a much larger issue than the mere settlement of these questions by negotiation or otherwise between the French and ourselves; there was a much larger question than even that of the mandates for Syria, Mesopotamia, and Palestine—although of course it was highly desirable that these mandates should be arranged, and that we should all settle down to work in these countries as soon as possible. I referred to the peace with Turkey itself, and here I desired to go a good deal beyond the suggestion of the French Minister, and to submit to him a definite proposal on behalf of His Majesty's Government. I understood that the proceedings of the Conference in Paris dealing with the Peace Treaties, so far as they had at present gone, and the matters arising out of them, were likely to be brought to a close about the end of the present month. There seemed to be a general desire that the Conference in its present form should then dissolve. Why, I asked, should it not meet again, perhaps in another form and in another place, to deal with the Turkish question? The idea which had hitherto seemed to find favour was this: that the Conference, having completed its present labours, would take a holiday; that, when the French elections were completed, it would meet again, probably in Paris; and that, some time in the early part, possibly not till the spring, of next year some sort of agreement about Turkey might, it was hoped, be reached. I earnestly deplored any such postponement. By next spring, I said, there might very likely be no Turkish Government to deal with at all. It was more than possible that there would be no one to accept the sort of treaty which the Allies would desire to impose. It was even conceivable that the defeated Turk, who would then be one of the few parties on the scene with a serious force available, would declare war upon the Allies, and dare them to enforce their terms. If this were the case, I did not see how we were to conquer Asia Minor, or who was to do it; and the ignominious result might be that the weakest and most abject of our foes would end by achieving the greatest triumph. Why then, I asked, should not the Conference meet at an early date next month? It might very well meet after the conversations with the French statesmen in London. For the best part of ten months the British and other foreign statesmen had been willing to reside almost continuously in Paris. The conditions of political life here rendered this no longer possible. The Prime Minister could not go to Paris again for any length of time. It was very difficult for me to go there at all. In this country were to be found most of the experts who were familiar with the Eastern question. The French and Italian Ambassadors were themselves both experts, having served as Ambassadors in Constantinople. M. Tittoni, I knew, was willing to come here. The American Government would, I believed, agree to send a representative here. In these circumstances, would it not be desirable to arrange at once that the Eastern question should be reserved for London, and taken up and determined here? My own impression was that, if this idea were favourably regarded, a settlement might be arrived at in a month, or not much more. The Conference, if it met in December, might, if necessary, adjourn for Christmas, meet again early in January, and complete its work by the middle of that month.

I enumerated to the French Foreign Minister the main headings of the subjects which would have to be decided. They were, it seemed to me, the following: the future of Turkey-in-Europe and the setting up of some form of administration or control in Constantinople, whether or not the Sultan was left in Stamboul; the question whether Greece was or was not to be allowed to remain in Smyrna; the question whether Italy was to have any foothold in Asia Minor or not; the question whether a mandate was to be given to any Power or Powers, either for the whole of the Turkish Empire or for any portion of it; the degree of sovereignty, if any, to be left to the Turk; the

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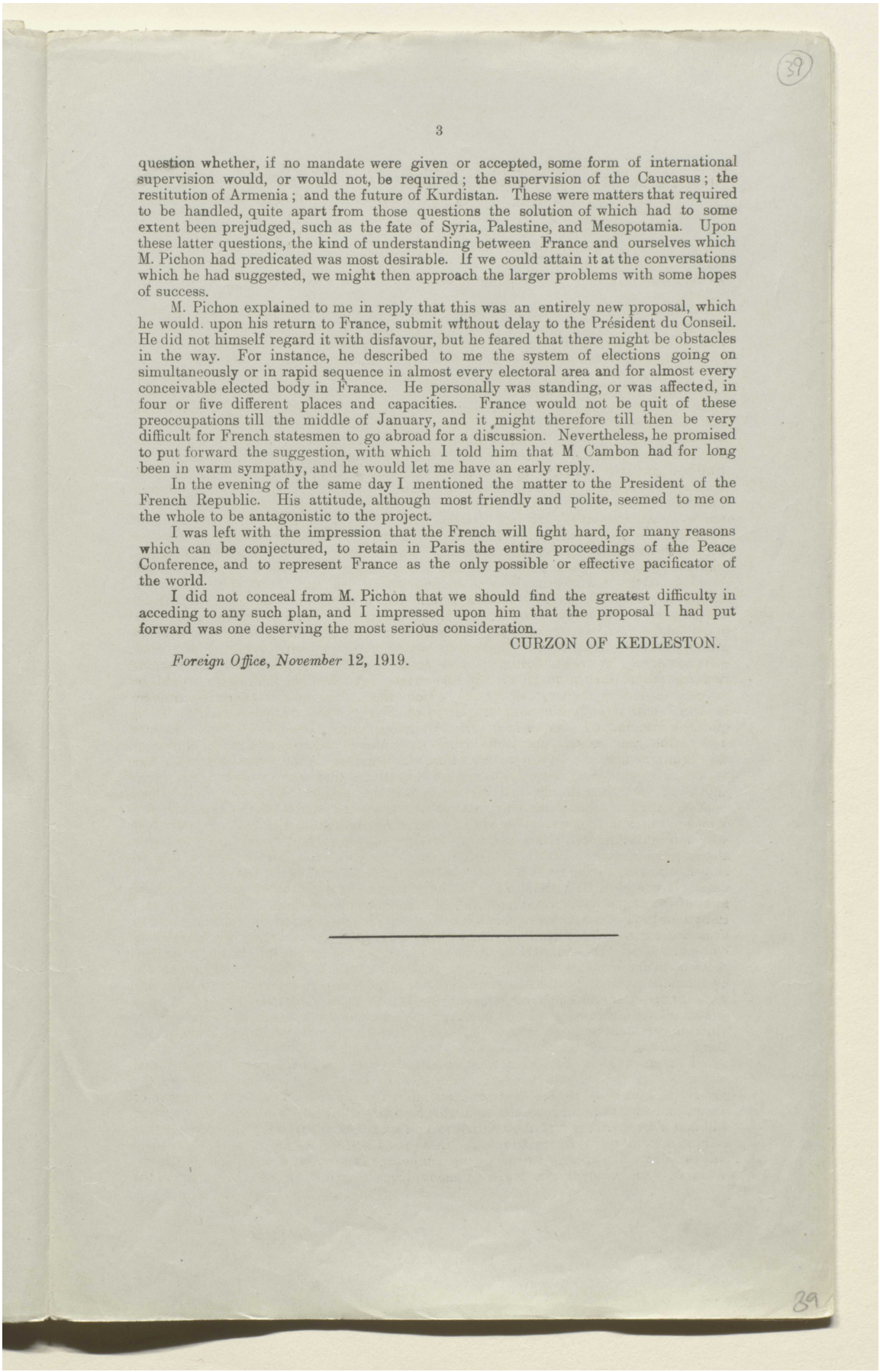

question whether, if no mandate were given or accepted, some form of international supervision would, or would not, be required; the supervision of the Caucasus; the restitution of Armenia; and the future of Kurdistan. These were matters that required to be handled, quite apart from those questions the solution of which had to some extent been prejudged, such as the fate of Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia. Upon these latter questions, the kind of understanding between France and ourselves which M. Pichon had predicated was most desirable. If we could attain it at the conversations which he had suggested, we might then approach the larger problems with some hopes of success.

M. Pichon explained to me in reply that this was an entirely new proposal, which he would, upon his return to France, submit without delay to the Président du Conseil. He did not himself regard it with disfavour, but he feared that there might be obstacles in the way. For instance, he described to me the system of elections going on simultaneously or in rapid sequence in almost every electoral area and for almost every conceivable elected body in France. He personally was standing, or was affected, in four or five different places and capacities. France would not be quit of these preoccupations till the middle of January, and it might therefore till then be very difficult for French statesmen to go abroad for a discussion. Nevertheless, he promised to put forward the suggestion, with which I told him that M. Cambon had for long been in warm sympathy, and he would let me have an early reply.

In the evening of the same day I mentioned the matter to the President of the French Republic. His attitude, although most friendly and polite, seemed to me on the whole to be antagonistic to the project.

I was left with the impression that the French will fight hard, for many reasons which can be conjectured, to retain in Paris the entire proceedings of the Peace Conference, and to represent France as the only possible or effective pacificator of the world.

I did not conceal from M. Pichon that we should find the greatest difficulty in acceding to any such plan, and I impressed upon him that the proposal I had put forward was one deserving the most serious consideration.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Foreign Office, November 12, 1919.

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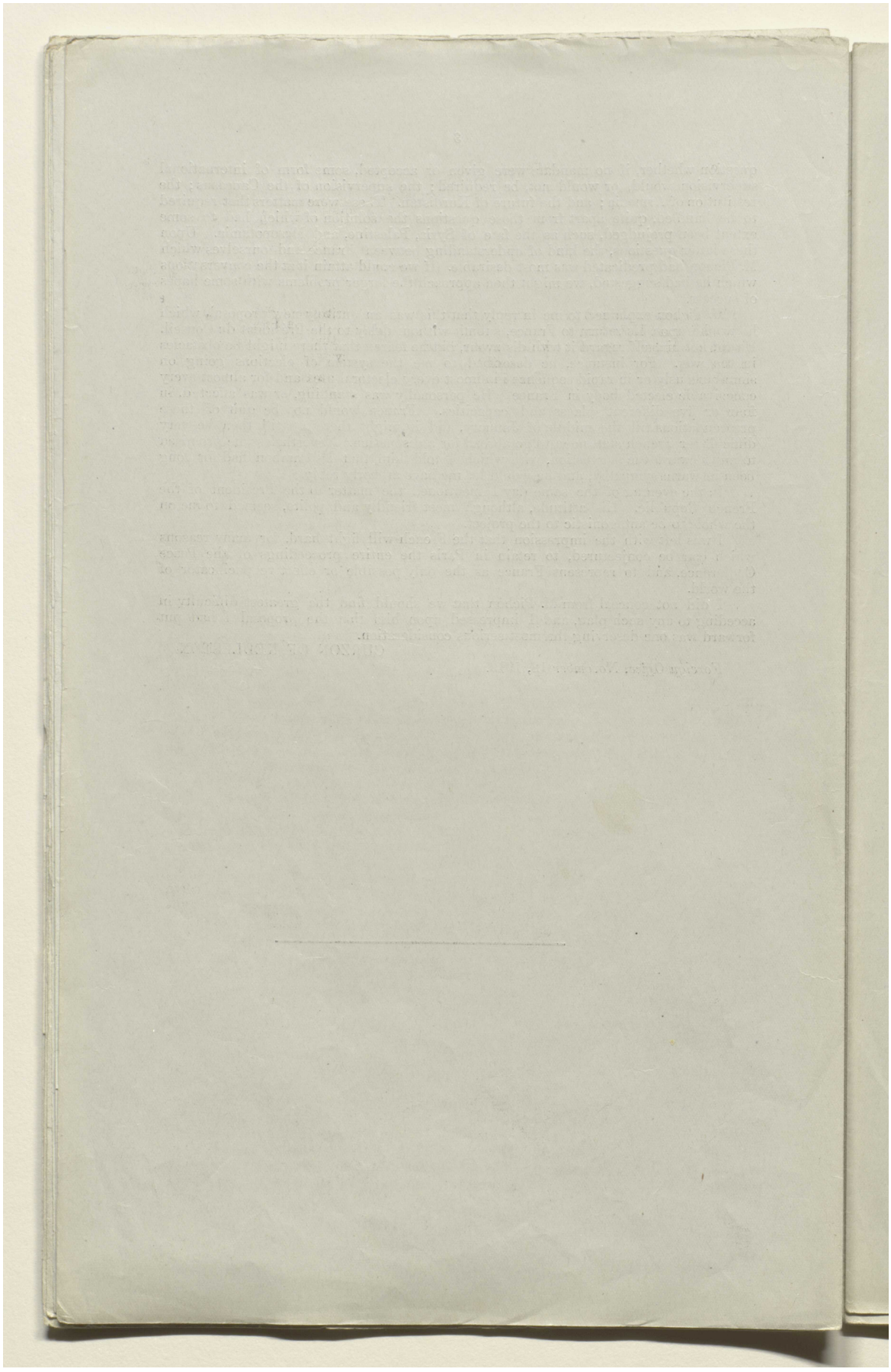

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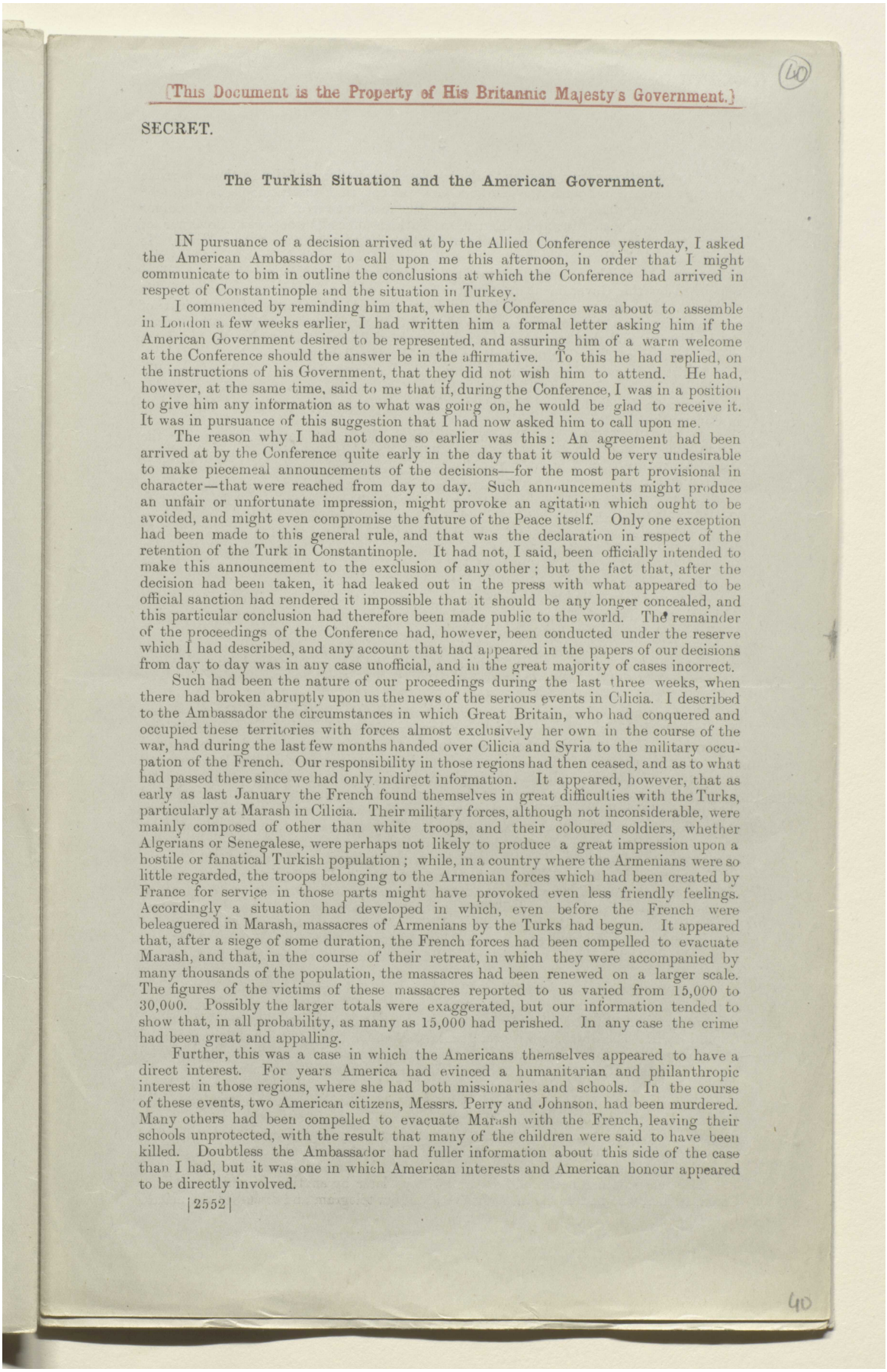

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SECRET.

The Turkish Situation and the American Government.

IN pursuance of a decision arrived at by the Allied Conference yesterday, I asked the American Ambassador to call upon me this afternoon, in order that I might communicate to him in outline the conclusions at which the Conference had arrived in respect of Constantinople and the situation in Turkey.

I commenced by reminding him that, when the Conference was about to assemble in London a few weeks earlier, I had written him a formal letter asking him if the American Government desired to be represented, and assuring him of a warm welcome at the Conference should the answer be in the affirmative. To this he had replied, on the instructions of his Government, that they did not wish him to attend. He had, however, at the same time, said to me that if, during the Conference, I was in a position to give him any information as to what was going on, he would be glad to receive it. It was in pursuance of this suggestion that I had now asked him to call upon me.

The reason why I had not done so earlier was this: An agreement had been arrived at by the Conference quite early in the day that it would be very undesirable to make piecemeal announcements of the decisions—for the most part provisional in character—that were reached from day to day. Such announcements might produce an unfair or unfortunate impression, might provoke an agitation which ought to be avoided, and might even compromise the future of the Peace itself. Only one exception had been made to this general rule, and that was the declaration in respect of the retention of the Turk in Constantinople. It had not, I said, been officially intended to make this announcement to the exclusion of any other; but the fact that, after the decision had been taken, it had leaked out in the press with what appeared to be official sanction had rendered it impossible that it should be any longer concealed, and this particular conclusion had therefore been made public to the world. The remainder of the proceedings of the Conference had, however, been conducted under the reserve which I had described, and any account that had appeared in the papers of our decisions from day to day was in any case unofficial, and in the great majority of cases incorrect.

Such had been the nature of our proceedings during the last three weeks, when there had broken abruptly upon us the news of the serious events in Cilicia. I described to the Ambassador the circumstances in which Great Britain, who had conquered and occupied these territories with forces almost exclusively her own in the course of the war, had during the last few months handed over Cilicia and Syria to the military occupation of the French. Our responsibility in those regions had then ceased, and as to what had passed there since we had only indirect information. It appeared, however, that as early as last January the French found themselves in great difficulties with the Turks, particularly at Marash in Cilicia. Their military forces, although not inconsiderable, were mainly composed of other than white troops, and their coloured soldiers, whether Algerians or Senegalese, were perhaps not likely to produce a great impression upon a hostile or fanatical Turkish population; while, in a country where the Armenians were so little regarded, the troops belonging to the Armenian forces which had been created by France for service in those parts might have provoked even less friendly feelings. Accordingly a situation had developed in which, even before the French were beleaguered in Marash, massacres of Armenians by the Turks had begun. It appeared that, after a siege of some duration, the French forces had been compelled to evacuate Marash, and that, in the course of their retreat, in which they were accompanied by many thousands of the population, the massacres had been renewed on a larger scale. The figures of the victims of these massacres reported to us varied from 15,000 to 30,000. Possibly the larger totals were exaggerated, but our information tended to show that, in all probability, as many as 15,000 had perished. In any case the crime had been great and appalling.

Further, this was a case in which the Americans themselves appeared to have a direct interest. For years America had evinced a humanitarian and philanthropic interest in those regions, where she had both missionaries and schools. In the course of these events, two American citizens, Messrs. Perry and Johnson, had been murdered. Many others had been compelled to evacuate Marash with the French, leaving their schools unprotected, with the result that many of the children were said to have been killed. Doubtless the Ambassador had fuller information about this side of the case than I had, but it was one in which American interests and American honour appeared to be directly involved.

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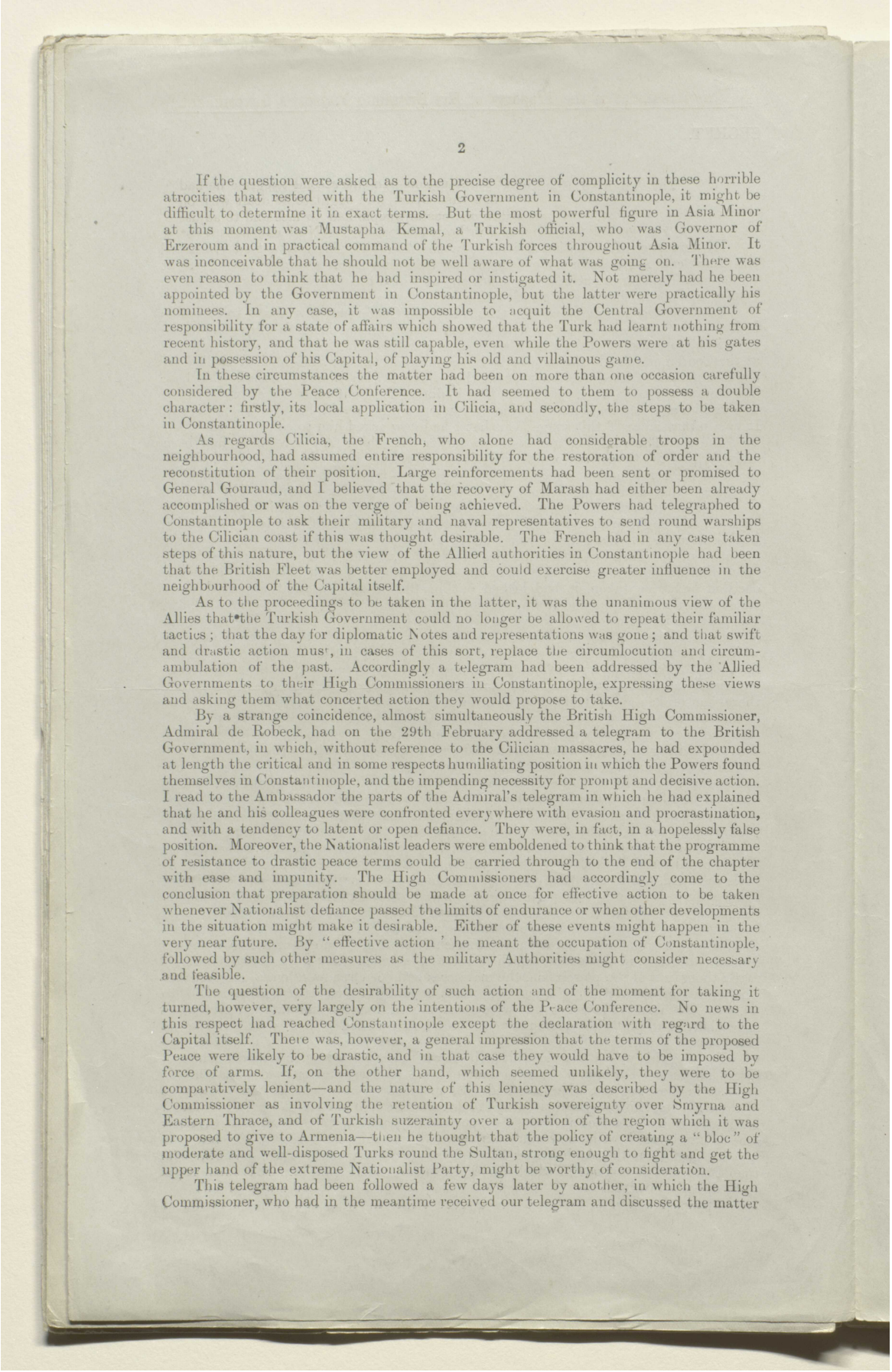

If the question were asked as to the precise degree of complicity in these horrible atrocities that rested with the Turkish Government in Constantinople, it might be difficult to determine it in exact terms. But the most powerful figure in Asia Minor at this moment was Mustapha Kemal, a Turkish official, who was Governor of Erzeroum and in practical command of the Turkish forces throughout Asia Minor. It was inconceivable that he should not be well aware of what was going on. There was even reason to think that he had inspired or instigated it. Not merely had he been appointed by the Government in Constantinople, but the latter were practically his nominees. In any case, it was impossible to acquit the Central Government of responsibility for a state of affairs which showed that the Turk had learnt nothing from recent history, and that he was still capable, even while the Powers were at his gates and in possession of his Capital, of playing his old and villainous game.

In these circumstances the matter had been on more than one occasion carefully considered by the Peace Conference. It had seemed to them to possess a double character: firstly, its local application in Cilicia, and secondly, the steps to be taken in Constantinople.

As regards Cilicia, the French, who alone had considerable troops in the neighbourhood, had assumed entire responsibility for the restoration of order and the reconstitution of their position. Large reinforcements had been sent or promised to General Gouraud, and I believed that the recovery of Marash had either been already accomplished or was on the verge of being achieved. The Powers had telegraphed to Constantinople to ask their military and naval representatives to send round warships to the Cilician coast if this was thought desirable. The French had in any case taken steps of this nature, but the view of the Allied authorities in Constantinople had been that the British Fleet was better employed and could exercise greater influence in the neighbourhood of the Capital itself.

As to the proceedings to be taken in the latter, it was the unanimous view of the Allies that the Turkish Government could no longer be allowed to repeat their familiar tactics; that the day for diplomatic Notes and representations was gone; and that swift and drastic action must, in cases of this sort, replace the circumlocution and circumambulation of the past. Accordingly a telegram had been addressed by the Allied Governments to their High Commissioners in Constantinople, expressing these views and asking them what concerted action they would propose to take.

By a strange coincidence, almost simultaneously the British High Commissioner, Admiral de Robeck, had on the 29th February addressed a telegram to the British Government, in which, without reference to the Cilician massacres, he had expounded at length the critical and in some respects humiliating position in which the Powers found themselves in Constantinople, and the impending necessity for prompt and decisive action. I read to the Ambassador the parts of the Admiral's telegram in which he had explained that he and his colleagues were confronted everywhere with evasion and procrastination, and with a tendency to latent or open defiance. They were, in fact, in a hopelessly false position. Moreover, the Nationalist leaders were emboldened to think that the programme of resistance to drastic peace terms could be carried through to the end of the chapter with ease and impunity. The High Commissioners had accordingly come to the conclusion that preparation should be made at once for effective action to be taken whenever Nationalist defiance passed the limits of endurance or when other developments in the situation might make it desirable. Either of these events might happen in the very near future. By "effective action" he meant the occupation of Constantinople, followed by such other measures as the military Authorities might consider necessary and feasible.

The question of the desirability of such action and of the moment for taking it turned, however, very largely on the intentions of the Peace Conference. No news in this respect had reached Constantinople except the declaration with regard to the Capital itself. There was, however, a general impression that the terms of the proposed Peace were likely to be drastic, and in that case they would have to be imposed by force of arms. If, on the other hand, which seemed unlikely, they were to be comparatively lenient—and the nature of this leniency was described by the High Commissioner as involving the retention of Turkish sovereignty over Smyrna and Eastern Thrace, and of Turkish suzerainty over a portion of the region which it was proposed to give to Armenia—then he thought that the policy of creating a "bloc" of moderate and well-disposed Turks round the Sultan, strong enough to fight and get the upper hand of the extreme Nationalist Party, might be worthy of consideration.

This telegram had been followed a few days later by another, in which the High Commissioner, who had in the meantime received our telegram and discussed the matter

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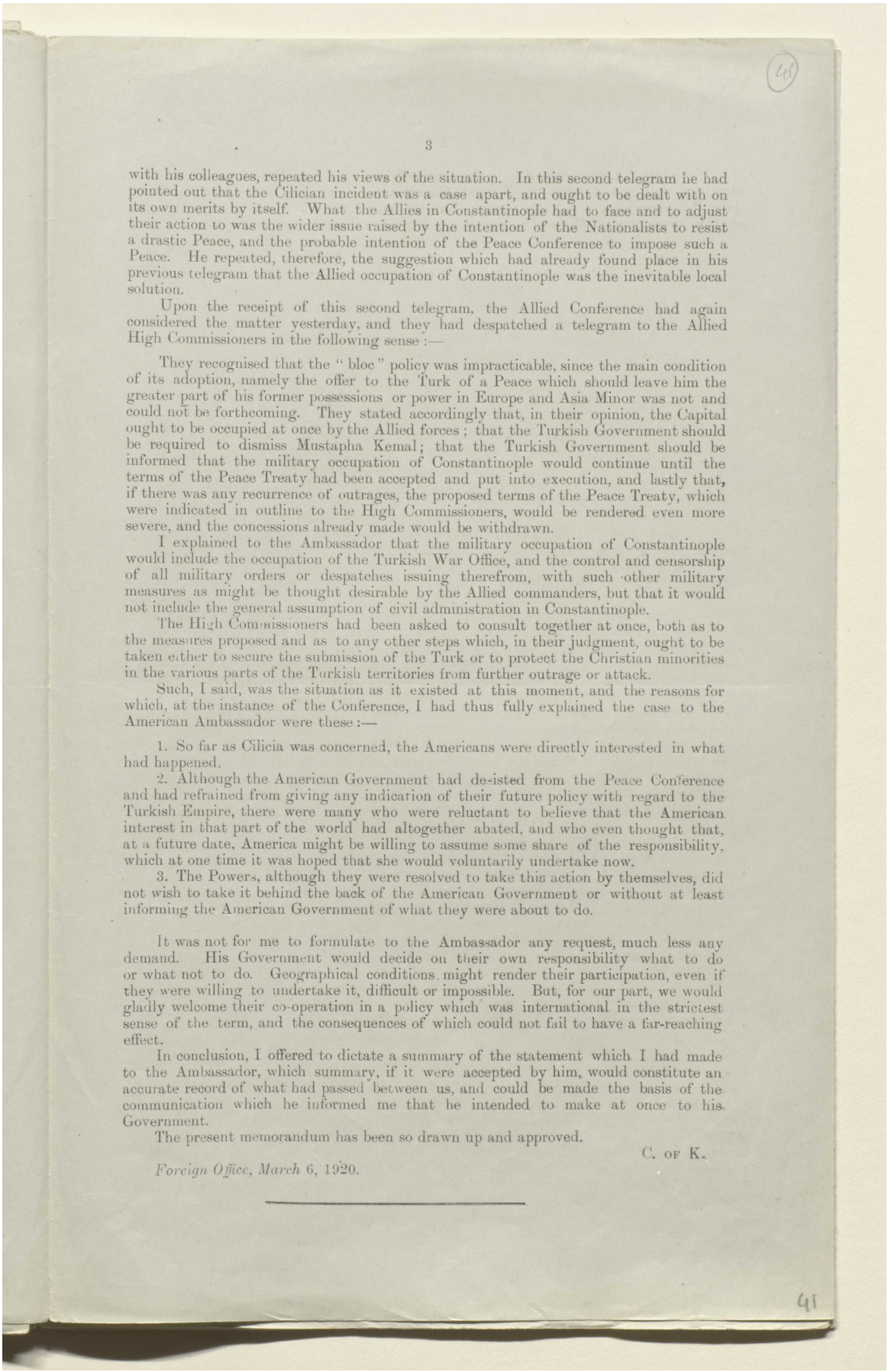

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with his colleagues, repeated his views of the situation. In this second telegram he had pointed out that the Cilician incident was a case apart, and ought to be dealt with on its own merits by itself. What the Allies in Constantinople had to face and to adjust their action to was the wider issue raised by the intention of the Nationalists to resist a drastic Peace, and the probable intention of the Peace Conference to impose such a Peace. He repeated, therefore, the suggestion which had already found place in his previous telegram that the Allied occupation of Constantinople was the inevitable local solution.

Upon the receipt of this second telegram, the Allied Conference had again considered the matter yesterday, and they had despatched a telegram to the Allied High Commissioners in the following sense :—

They recognised that the "bloc" policy was impracticable, since the main condition of its adoption, namely the offer to the Turk of a Peace which should leave him the greater part of his former possessions or power in Europe and Asia Minor was not and could not be forthcoming. They stated accordingly that, in their opinion, the Capital ought to be occupied at once by the Allied forces; that the Turkish Government should be required to dismiss Mustapha Kemal; that the Turkish Government should be informed that the military occupation of Constantinople would continue until the terms of the Peace Treaty had been accepted and put into execution, and lastly that, if there was any recurrence of outrages, the proposed terms of the Peace Treaty, which were indicated in outline to the High Commissioners, would be rendered even more severe, and the concessions already made would be withdrawn.

I explained to the Ambassador that the military occupation of Constantinople would include the occupation of the Turkish War Office, and the control and censorship of all military orders or despatches issuing therefrom, with such other military measures as might be thought desirable by the Allied commanders, but that it would not include the general assumption of civil administration in Constantinople.

The High Commissioners had been asked to consult together at once, both as to the measures proposed and as to any other steps which, in their judgment, ought to be taken either to secure the submission of the Turk or to protect the Christian minorities in the various parts of the Turkish territories from further outrage or attack.

Such, I said, was the situation as it existed at this moment, and the reasons for which, at the instance of the Conference, I had thus fully explained the case to the American Ambassador were these :—

1. So far as Cilicia was concerned, the Americans were directly interested in what had happened.

2. Although the American Government had desisted from the Peace Conference and had refrained from giving any indication of their future policy with regard to the Turkish Empire, there were many who were reluctant to believe that the American interest in that part of the world had altogether abated, and who even thought that, at a future date, America might be willing to assume some share of the responsibility, which at one time it was hoped that she would voluntarily undertake now.

3. The Powers, although they were resolved to take this action by themselves, did not wish to take it behind the back of the American Government or without at least informing the American Government of what they were about to do.

It was not for me to formulate to the Ambassador any request, much less any demand. His Government would decide on their own responsibility what to do or what not to do. Geographical conditions might render their participation, even if they were willing to undertake it, difficult or impossible. But, for our part, we would gladly welcome their co-operation in a policy which was international in the strictest sense of the term, and the consequences of which could not fail to have a far-reaching effect.

In conclusion, I offered to dictate a summary of the statement which I had made to the Ambassador, which summary, if it were accepted by him, would constitute an accurate record of what had passed between us, and could be made the basis of the communication which he informed me that he intended to make at once to his Government.

The present memorandum has been so drawn up and approved.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office, March 6, 1920.

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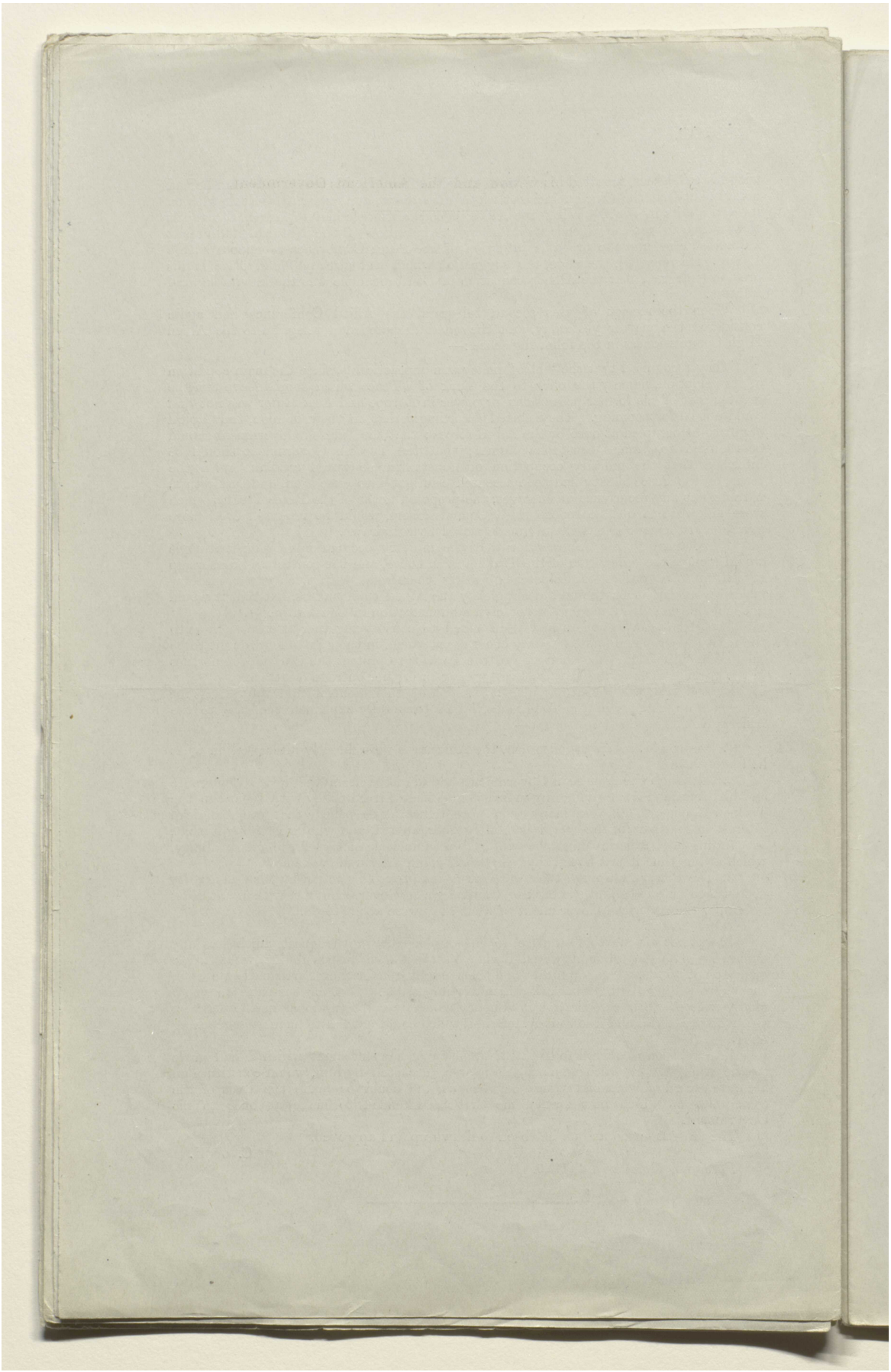

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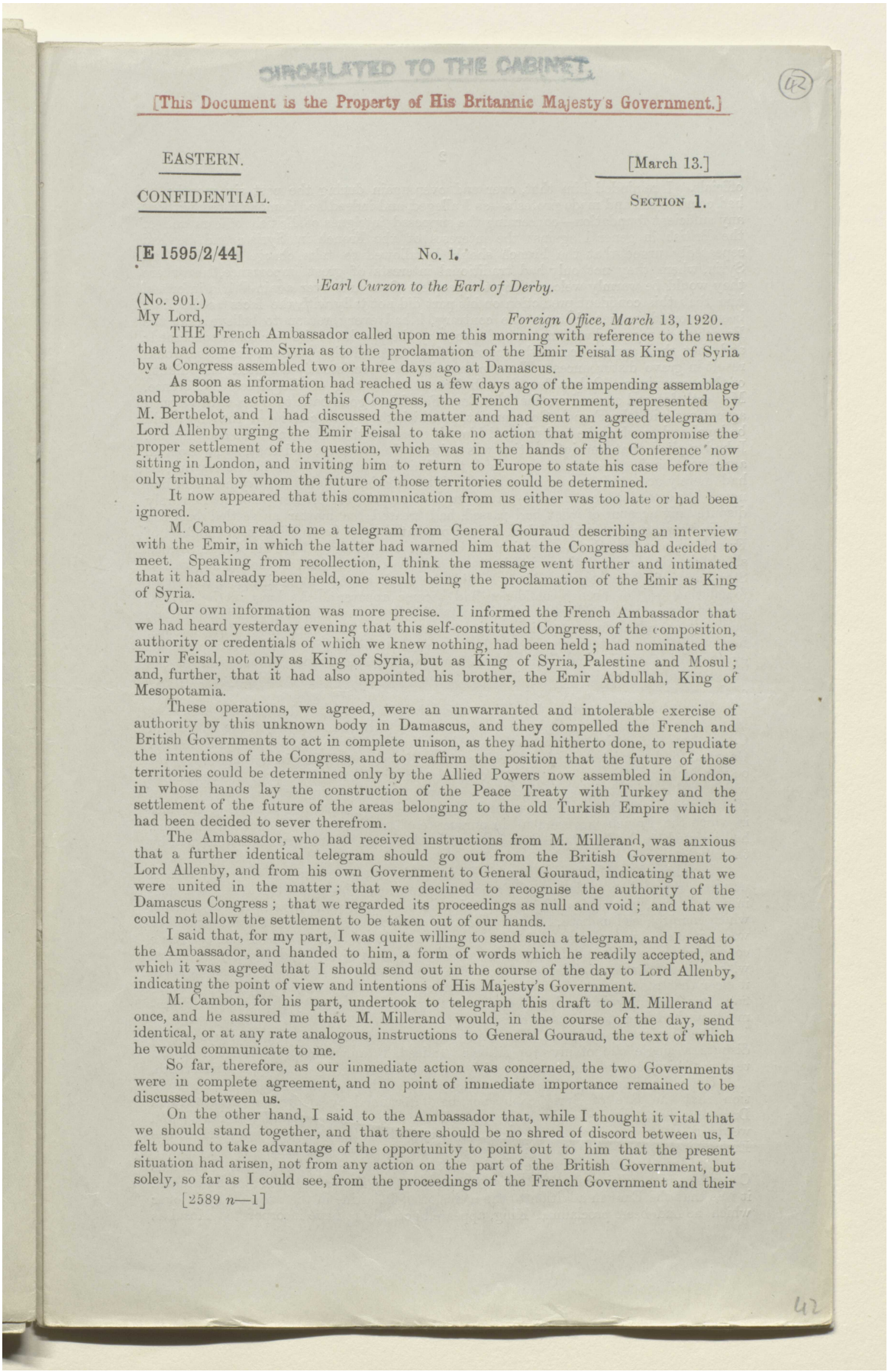

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EASTERN. [March 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1595/2/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 901.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 13, 1920.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this morning with reference to the news that had come from Syria as to the proclamation of the Emir Feisal as King of Syria by a Congress assembled two or three days ago at Damascus.

As soon as information had reached us a few days ago of the impending assemblage and probable action of this Congress, the French Government, represented by M. Berthelot, and I had discussed the matter and had sent an agreed telegram to Lord Allenby urging the Emir Feisal to take no action that might compromise the proper settlement of the question, which was in the hands of the Conference now sitting in London, and inviting him to return to Europe to state his case before the only tribunal by whom the future of those territories could be determined.

It now appeared that this communication from us either was too late or had been ignored.

M. Cambon read to me a telegram from General Gouraud describing an interview with the Emir, in which the latter had warned him that the Congress had decided to meet. Speaking from recollection, I think the message went further and intimated that it had already been held, one result being the proclamation of the Emir as King of Syria.

Our own information was more precise. I informed the French Ambassador that we had heard yesterday evening that this self-constituted Congress, of the composition, authority or credentials of which we knew nothing, had been held; had nominated the Emir Feisal, not only as King of Syria, but as King of Syria, Palestine and Mosul; and, further, that it had also appointed his brother, the Emir Abdullah, King of Mesopotamia.

These operations, we agreed, were an unwarranted and intolerable exercise of authority by this unknown body in Damascus, and they compelled the French and British Governments to act in complete unison, as they had hitherto done, to repudiate the intentions of the Congress, and to reaffirm the position that the future of those territories could be determined only by the Allied Powers now assembled in London, in whose hands lay the construction of the Peace Treaty with Turkey and the settlement of the future of the areas belonging to the old Turkish Empire which it had been decided to sever therefrom.

The Ambassador, who had received instructions from M. Millerand, was anxious that a further identical telegram should go out from the British Government to Lord Allenby, and from his own Government to General Gouraud, indicating that we were united in the matter; that we declined to recognise the authority of the Damascus Congress; that we regarded its proceedings as null and void; and that we could not allow the settlement to be taken out of our hands.

I said that, for my part, I was quite willing to send such a telegram, and I read to the Ambassador, and handed to him, a form of words which he readily accepted, and which it was agreed that I should send out in the course of the day to Lord Allenby, indicating the point of view and intentions of His Majesty's Government.

M. Cambon, for his part, undertook to telegraph this draft to M. Millerand at once, and he assured me that M. Millerand would, in the course of the day, send identical, or at any rate analogous, instructions to General Gouraud, the text of which he would communicate to me.

So far, therefore, as our immediate action was concerned, the two Governments were in complete agreement, and no point of immediate importance remained to be discussed between us.

On the other hand, I said to the Ambassador that, while I thought it vital that we should stand together, and that there should be no shred of discord between us, I felt bound to take advantage of the opportunity to point out to him that the present situation had arisen, not from any action on the part of the British Government, but solely, so far as I could see, from the proceedings of the French Government and their

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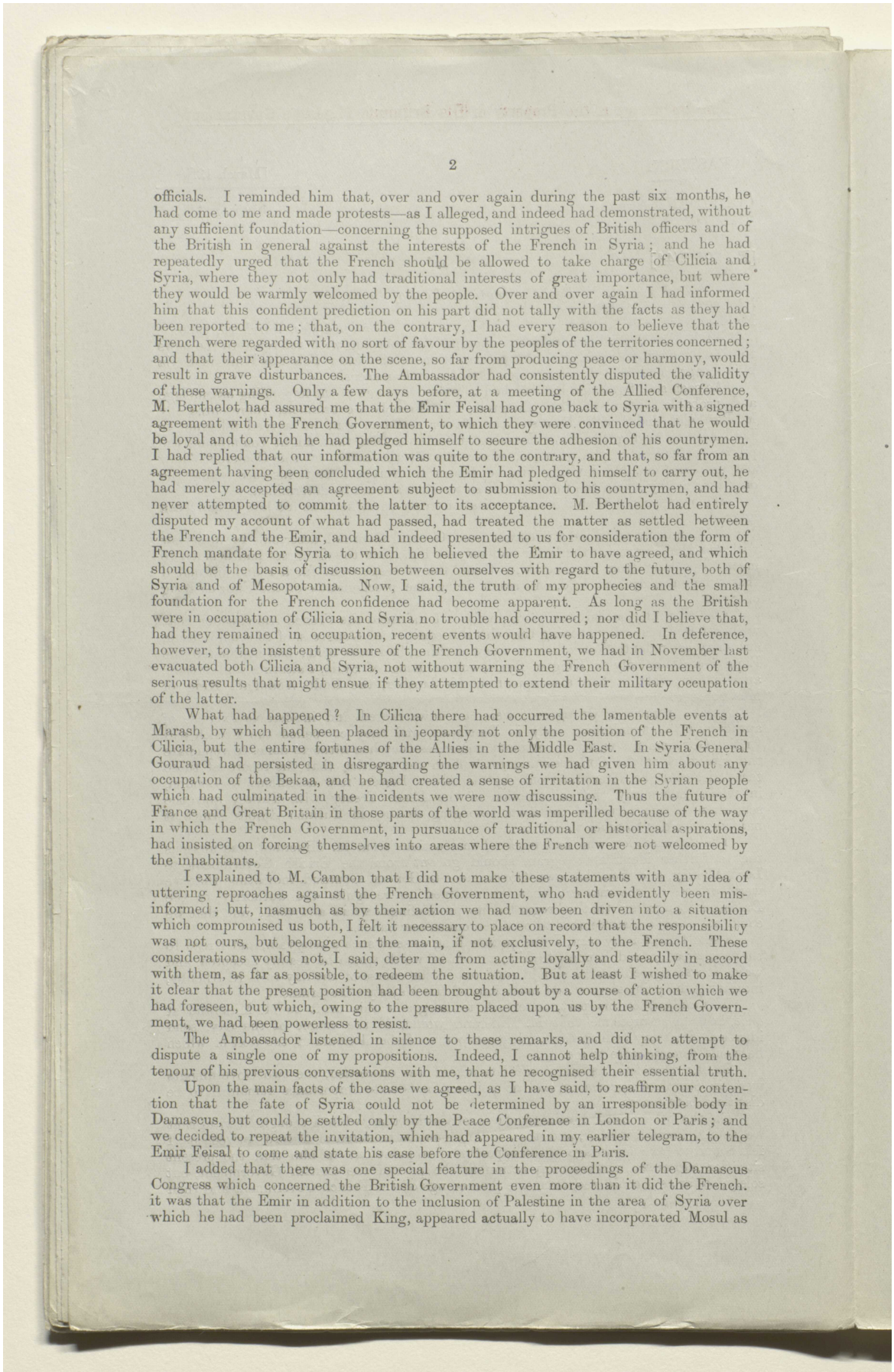

officials. I reminded him that, over and over again during the past six months, he had come to me and made protests—as I alleged, and indeed had demonstrated, without any sufficient foundation—concerning the supposed intrigues of British officers and of the British in general against the interests of the French in Syria; and he had repeatedly urged that the French should be allowed to take charge of Cilicia and Syria, where they not only had traditional interests of great importance, but where they would be warmly welcomed by the people. Over and over again I had informed him that this confident prediction on his part did not tally with the facts as they had been reported to me; that, on the contrary, I had every reason to believe that the French were regarded with no sort of favour by the peoples of the territories concerned; and that their appearance on the scene, so far from producing peace or harmony, would result in grave disturbances. The Ambassador had consistently disputed the validity of these warnings. Only a few days before, at a meeting of the Allied Conference, M. Berthelot had assured me that the Emir Feisal had gone back to Syria with a signed agreement with the French Government, to which they were convinced that he would be loyal and to which he had pledged himself to secure the adhesion of his countrymen. I had replied that our information was quite to the contrary, and that, so far from an agreement having been concluded which the Emir had pledged himself to carry out, he had merely accepted an agreement subject to submission to his countrymen, and had never attempted to commit the latter to its acceptance. M. Berthelot had entirely disputed my account of what had passed, had treated the matter as settled between the French and the Emir, and had indeed presented to us for consideration the form of French mandate for Syria to which he believed the Emir to have agreed, and which should be the basis of discussion between ourselves with regard to the future, both of Syria and of Mesopotamia. Now, I said, the truth of my prophecies and the small foundation for the French confidence had become apparent. As long as the British were in occupation of Cilicia and Syria no trouble had occurred; nor did I believe that, had they remained in occupation, recent events would have happened. In deference, however, to the insistent pressure of the French Government, we had in November last evacuated both Cilicia and Syria, not without warning the French Government of the serious results that might ensue if they attempted to extend their military occupation of the latter.

What had happened? In Cilicia there had occurred the lamentable events at Marash, by which had been placed in jeopardy not only the position of the French in Cilicia, but the entire fortunes of the Allies in the Middle East. In Syria General Gouraud had persisted in disregarding the warnings we had given him about any occupation of the Bekaa, and he had created a sense of irritation in the Syrian people which had culminated in the incidents we were now discussing. Thus the future of France and Great Britain in those parts of the world was imperilled because of the way in which the French Government, in pursuance of traditional or historical aspirations, had insisted on forcing themselves into areas where the French were not welcomed by the inhabitants.

I explained to M. Cambon that I did not make these statements with any idea of uttering reproaches against the French Government, who had evidently been misinformed; but, inasmuch as by their action we had now been driven into a situation which compromised us both, I felt it necessary to place on record that the responsibility was not ours, but belonged in the main, if not exclusively, to the French. These considerations would not, I said, deter me from acting loyally and steadily in accord with them, as far as possible, to redeem the situation. But at least I wished to make it clear that the present position had been brought about by a course of action which we had foreseen, but which, owing to the pressure placed upon us by the French Government, we had been powerless to resist.

The Ambassador listened in silence to these remarks, and did not attempt to dispute a single one of my propositions. Indeed, I cannot help thinking, from the tenour of his previous conversations with me, that he recognised their essential truth.

Upon the main facts of the case we agreed, as I have said, to reaffirm our contention that the fate of Syria could not be determined by an irresponsible body in Damascus, but could be settled only by the Peace Conference in London or Paris; and we decided to repeat the invitation, which had appeared in my earlier telegram, to the Emir Feisal to come and state his case before the Conference in Paris.

I added that there was one special feature in the proceedings of the Damascus Congress which concerned the British Government even more than it did the French. it was that the Emir in addition to the inclusion of Palestine in the area of Syria over which he had been proclaimed King, appeared actually to have incorporated Mosul as

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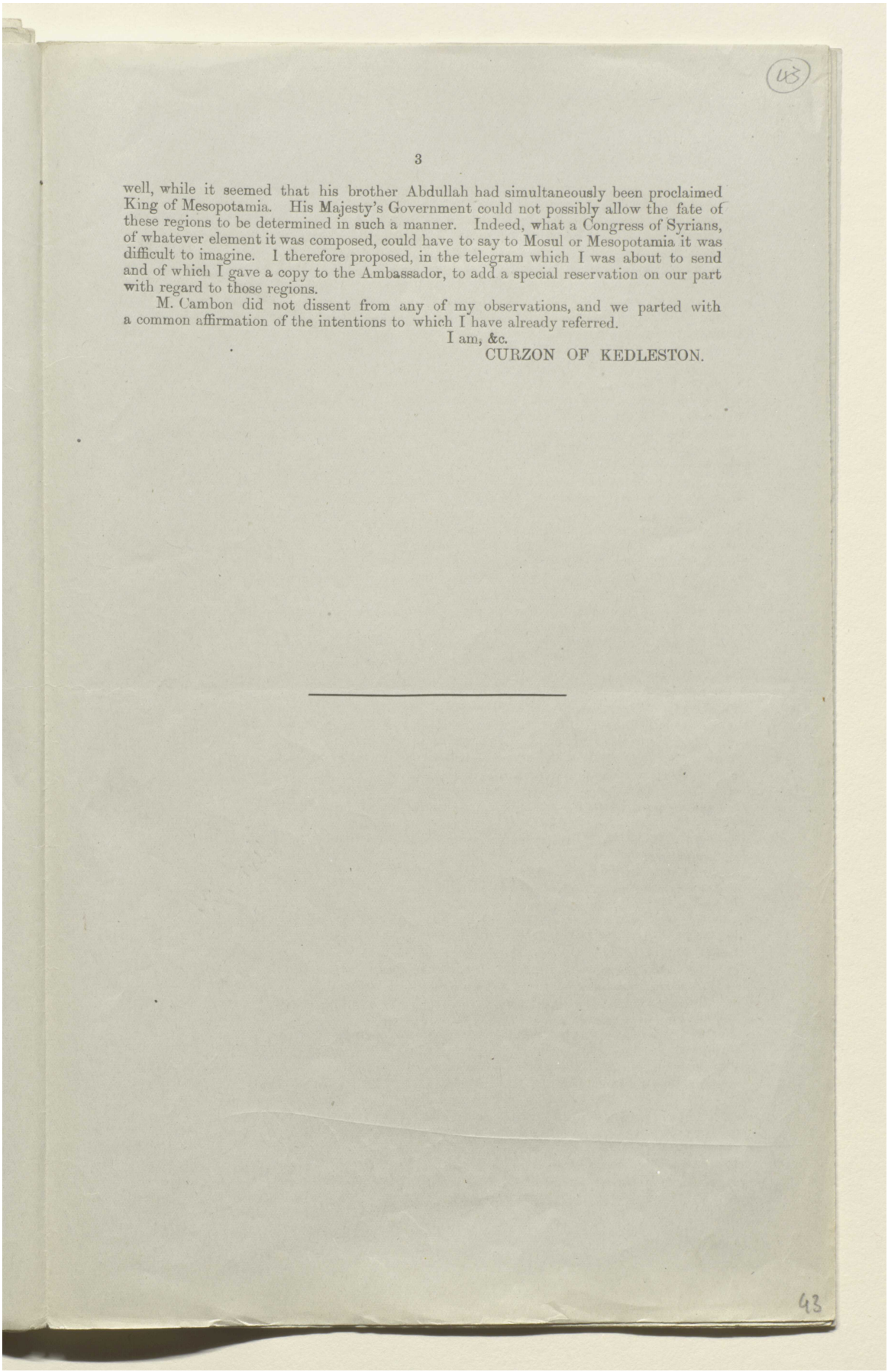

well, while it seemed that his brother Abdullah had simultaneously been proclaimed King of Mesopotamia. His Majesty's Government could not possibly allow the fate of these regions to be determined in such a manner. Indeed, what a Congress of Syrians, of whatever element it was composed, could have to say to Mosul or Mesopotamia it was difficult to imagine. I therefore proposed, in the telegram which I was about to send and of which I gave a copy to the Ambassador, to add a special reservation on our part with regard to those regions.

M. Cambon did not dissent from any of my observations, and we parted with a common affirmation of the intentions to which I have already referred.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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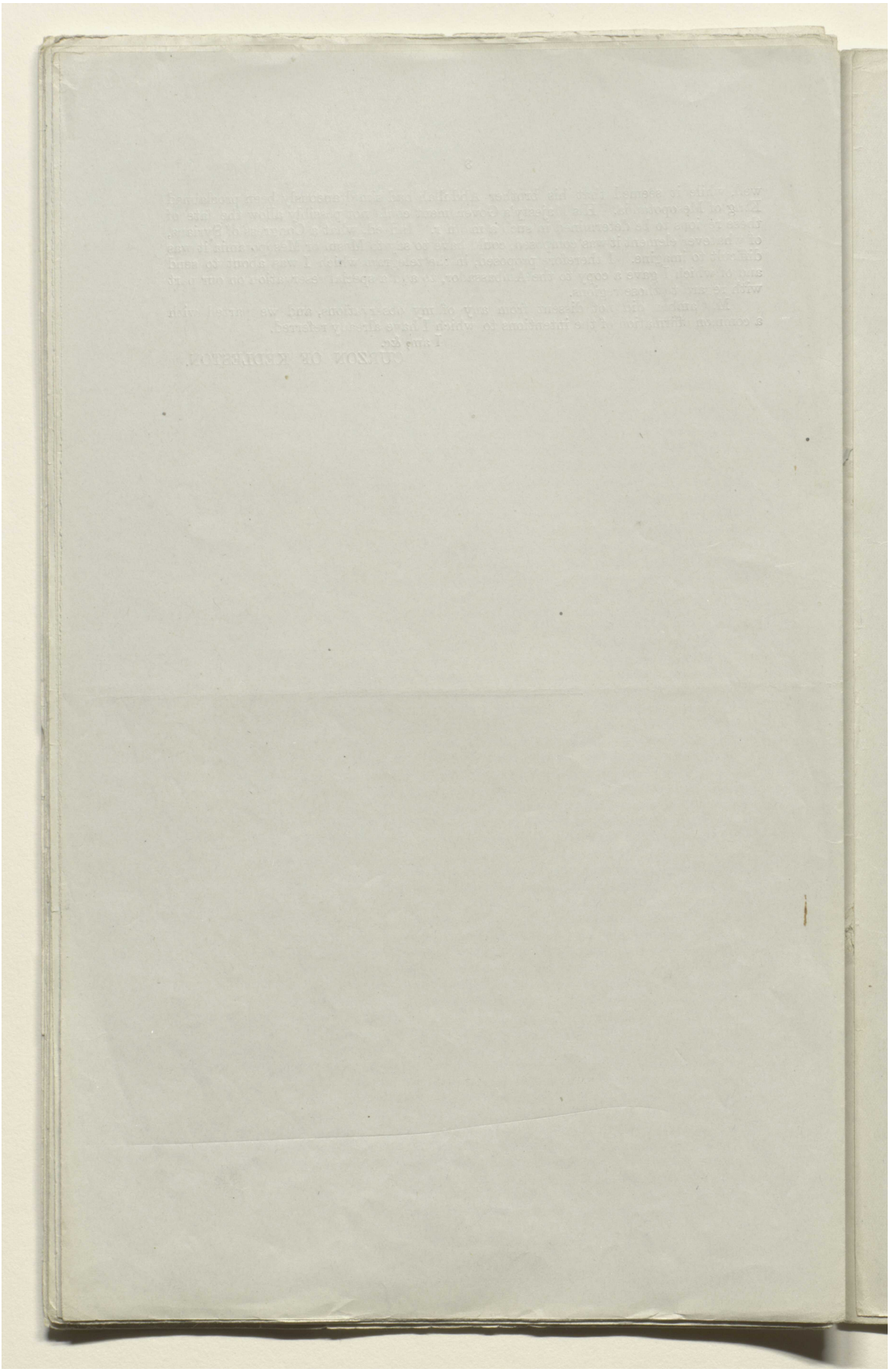

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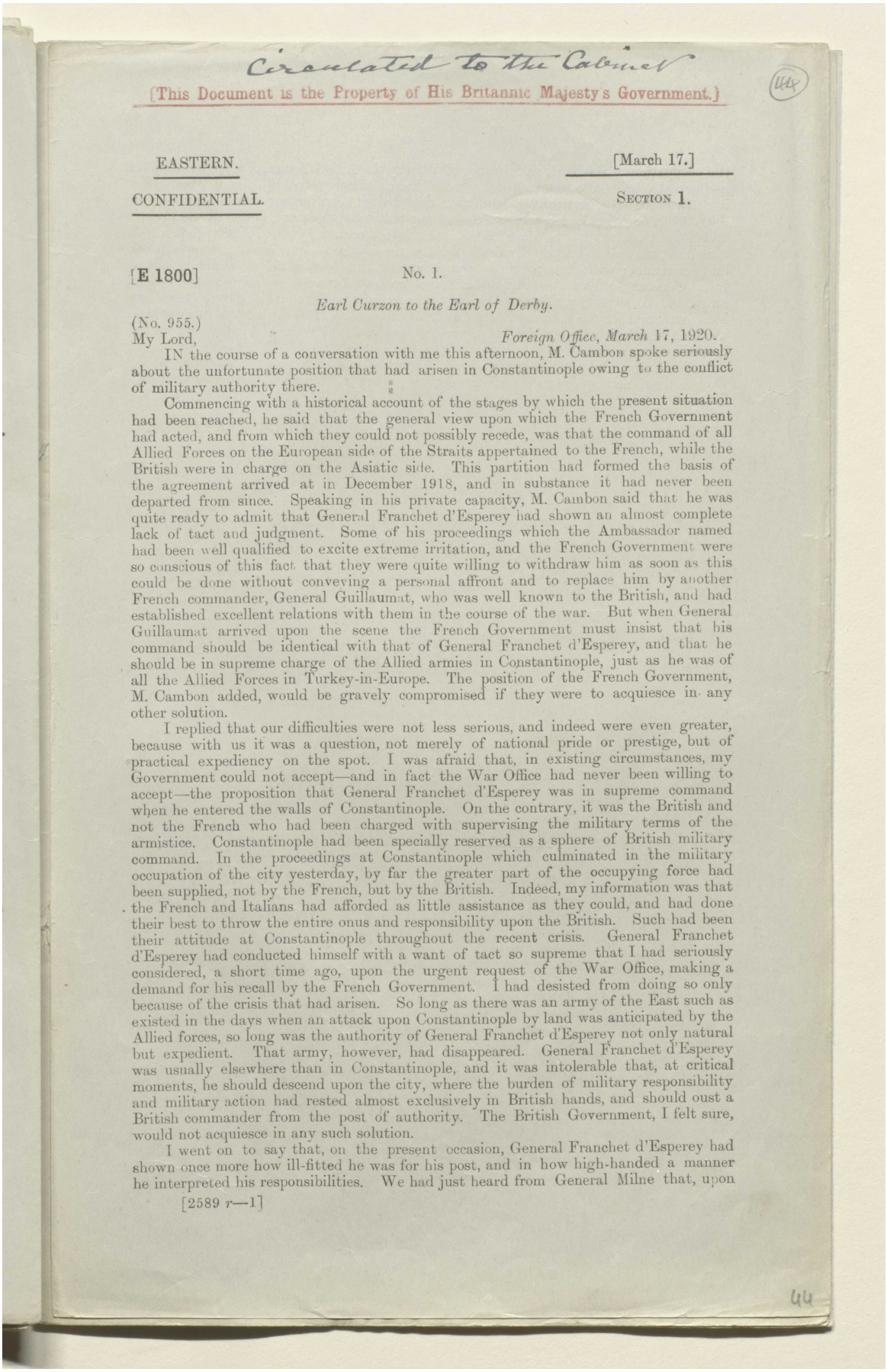

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EASTERN. [March 17.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1800] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to the Earl of Derby.

(No. 955.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March 17, 1920.*

IN the course of a conversation with me this afternoon, M. Cambon spoke seriously about the unfortunate position that had arisen in Constantinople owing to the conflict of military authority there.

Commencing with a historical account of the stages by which the present situation had been reached, he said that the general view upon which the French Government had acted, and from which they could not possibly recede, was that the command of all Allied Forces on the European side of the Straits appertained to the French, while the British were in charge on the Asiatic side. This partition had formed the basis of the agreement arrived at in December 1918, and in substance it had never been departed from since. Speaking in his private capacity, M. Cambon said that he was quite ready to admit that General Franchet d'Esperey had shown an almost complete lack of tact and judgment. Some of his proceedings which the Ambassador named had been well qualified to excite extreme irritation, and the French Government were so conscious of this fact that they were quite willing to withdraw him as soon as this could be done without conveying a personal affront and to replace him by another French commander, General Guillaumat, who was well known to the British, and had established excellent relations with them in the course of the war. But when General Guillaumat arrived upon the scene the French Government must insist that his command should be identical with that of General Franchet d'Esperey, and that he should be in supreme charge of the Allied armies in Constantinople, just as he was of all the Allied Forces in Turkey-in-Europe. The position of the French Government, M. Cambon added, would be gravely compromised if they were to acquiesce in any other solution.

I replied that our difficulties were not less serious, and indeed were even greater, because with us it was a question, not merely of national pride or prestige, but of practical expediency on the spot. I was afraid that, in existing circumstances, my Government could not accept—and in fact the War Office had never been willing to accept—the proposition that General Franchet d'Esperey was in supreme command when he entered the walls of Constantinople. On the contrary, it was the British and not the French who had been charged with supervising the military terms of the armistice. Constantinople had been specially reserved as a sphere of British military command. In the proceedings at Constantinople which culminated in the military occupation of the city yesterday, by far the greater part of the occupying force had been supplied, not by the French, but by the British. Indeed, my information was that the French and Italians had afforded as little assistance as they could, and had done their best to throw the entire onus and responsibility upon the British. Such had been their attitude at Constantinople throughout the recent crisis. General Franchet d'Esperey had conducted himself with a want of tact so supreme that I had seriously considered, a short time ago, upon the urgent request of the War Office, making a demand for his recall by the French Government. I had desisted from doing so only because of the crisis that had arisen. So long as there was an army of the East such as existed in the days when an attack upon Constantinople by land was anticipated by the Allied forces, so long was the authority of General Franchet d'Esperey not only natural but expedient. That army, however, had disappeared. General Franchet d'Esperey was usually elsewhere than in Constantinople, and it was intolerable that, at critical moments, he should descend upon the city, where the burden of military responsibility and military action had rested almost exclusively in British hands, and should oust a British commander from the post of authority. The British Government, I felt sure, would not acquiesce in any such solution.

I went on to say that, on the present occasion, General Franchet d'Esperey had shown once more how ill-fitted he was for his post, and in how high-handed a manner he interpreted his responsibilities. We had just heard from General Milne that, upon

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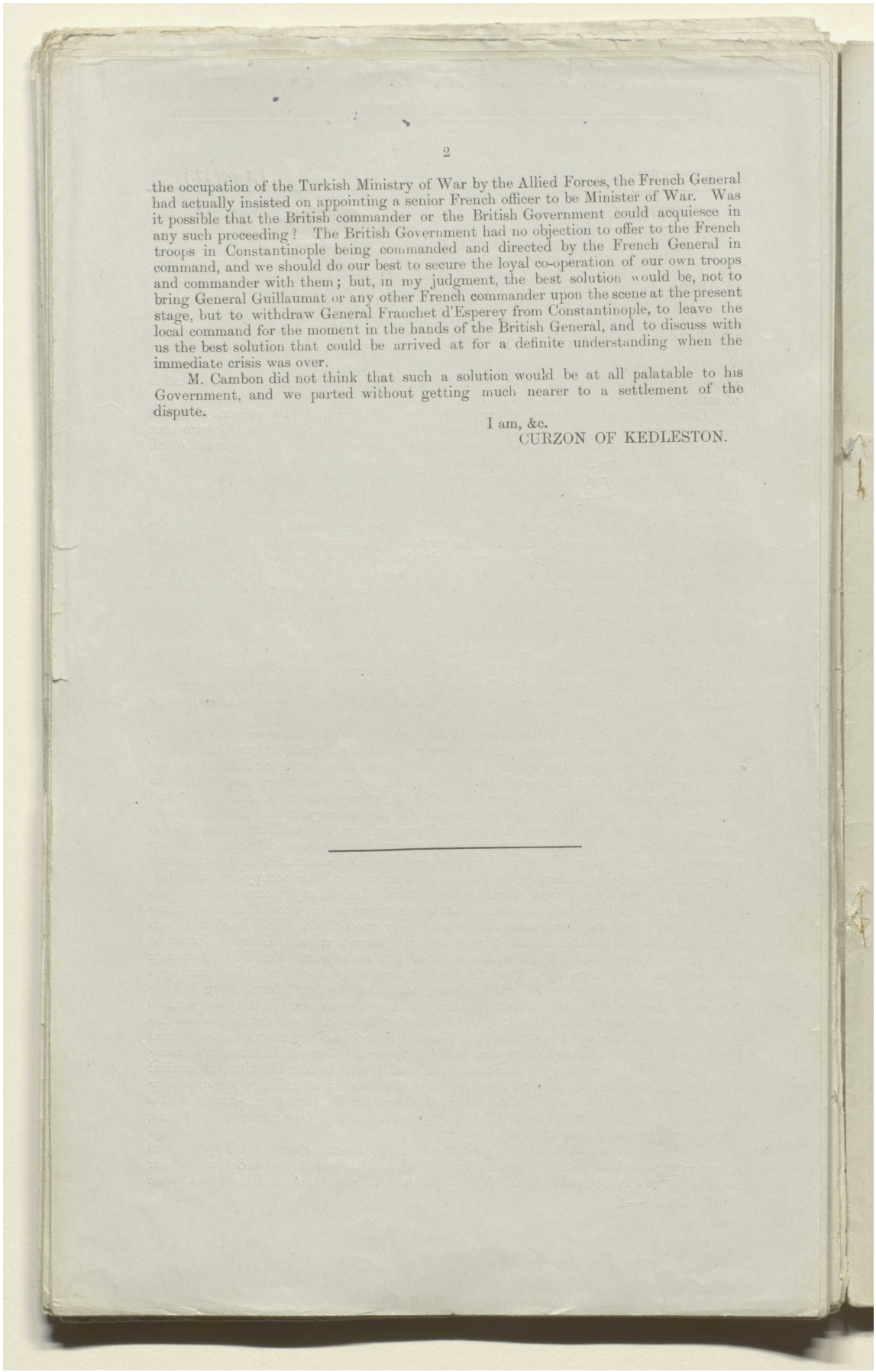

the occupation of the Turkish Ministry of War by the Allied Forces, the French General had actually insisted on appointing a senior French officer to be Minister of War. Was it possible that the British commander or the British Government could acquiesce in any such proceeding? The British Government had no objection to offer to the French troops in Constantinople being commanded and directed by the French General in command, and we should do our best to secure the loyal co-operation of our own troops and commander with them; but, in my judgment, the best solution would be, not to bring General Guillaumat or any other French commander upon the scene at the present stage, but to withdraw General Franchet d'Esperey from Constantinople, to leave the local command for the moment in the hands of the British General, and to discuss with us the best solution that could be arrived at for a definite understanding when the immediate crisis was over.

M. Cambon did not think that such a solution would be at all palatable to his Government, and we parted without getting much nearer to a settlement of the dispute.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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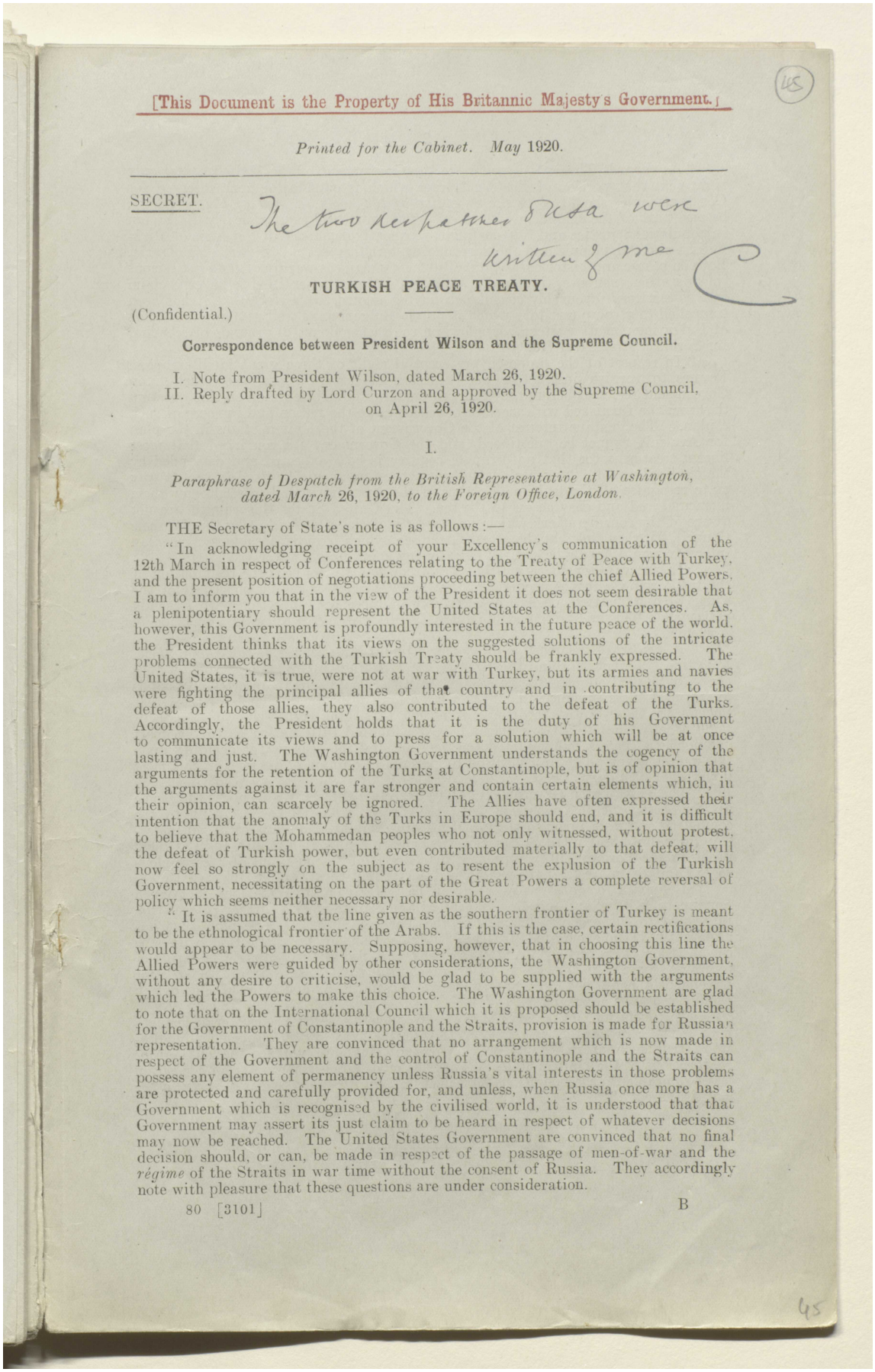

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Printed for the Cabinet. May 1920.

SECRET.

The two despatches of USA were written by me

C

TURKISH PEACE TREATY.

(Confidential.)

Correspondence between President Wilson and the Supreme Council.

I. Note from President Wilson, dated March 26, 1920.
II. Reply drafted by Lord Curzon and approved by the Supreme Council, on April 26, 1920.

I.

Paraphrase of Despatch from the British Representative at Washington, dated March 26, 1920, to the Foreign Office, London.

THE Secretary of State's note is as follows:—

"In acknowledging receipt of your Excellency's communication of the 12th March in respect of Conferences relating to the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and the present position of negotiations proceeding between the chief Allied Powers, I am to inform you that in the view of the President it does not seem desirable that a plenipotentiary should represent the United States at the Conferences. As, however, this Government is profoundly interested in the future peace of the world, the President thinks that its views on the suggested solutions of the intricate problems connected with the Turkish Treaty should be frankly expressed. The United States, it is true, were not at war with Turkey, but its armies and navies were fighting the principal allies of that country and in contributing to the defeat of those allies, they also contributed to the defeat of the Turks. Accordingly, the President holds that it is the duty of his Government to communicate its views and to press for a solution which will be at once lasting and just. The Washington Government understands the cogency of the arguments for the retention of the Turks at Constantinople, but is of opinion that the arguments against it are far stronger and contain certain elements which, in their opinion, can scarcely be ignored. The Allies have often expressed their intention that the anomaly of the Turks in Europe should end, and it is difficult to believe that the Mohammedan peoples who not only witnessed, without protest, the defeat of Turkish power, but even contributed materially to that defeat, will now feel so strongly on the subject as to resent the explusion of the Turkish Government, necessitating on the part of the Great Powers a complete reversal of policy which seems neither necessary nor desirable.

"It is assumed that the line given as the southern frontier of Turkey is meant to be the ethnological frontier of the Arabs. If this is the case, certain rectifications would appear to be necessary. Supposing, however, that in choosing this line the Allied Powers were guided by other considerations, the Washington Government, without any desire to criticise, would be glad to be supplied with the arguments which led the Powers to make this choice. The Washington Government are glad to note that on the International Council which it is proposed should be established for the Government of Constantinople and the Straits, provision is made for Russian representation. They are convinced that no arrangement which is now made in respect of the Government and the control of Constantinople and the Straits can possess any element of permanency unless Russia's vital interests in those problems are protected and carefully provided for, and unless, when Russia once more has a Government which is recognised by the civilised world, it is understood that that Government may assert its just claim to be heard in respect of whatever decisions may now be reached. The United States Government are convinced that no final decision should, or can, be made in respect of the passage of men-of-war and the *régime* of the Straits in war time without the consent of Russia. They accordingly note with pleasure that these questions are under consideration.

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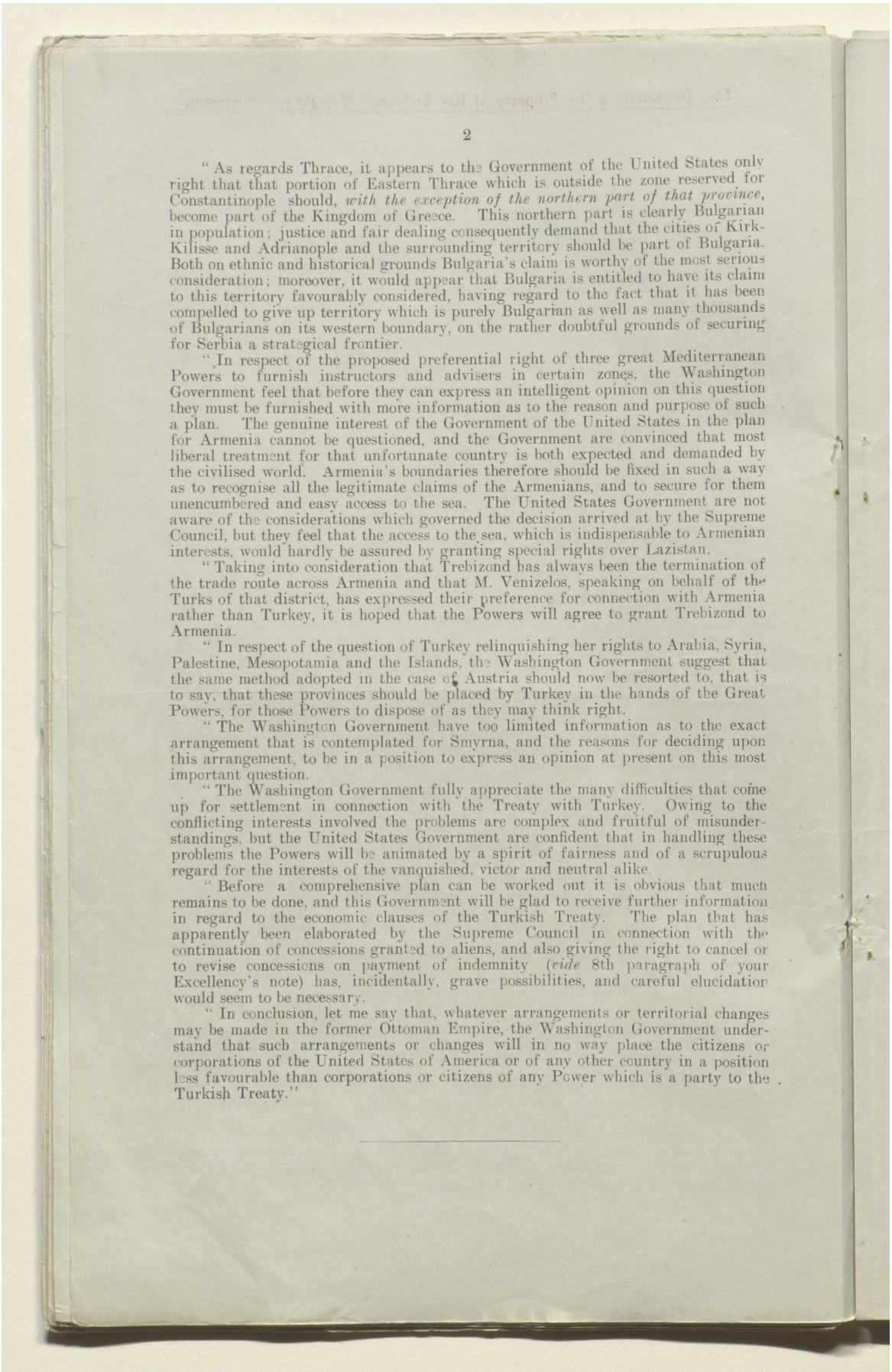

"As regards Thrace, it appears to the Government of the United States only right that that portion of Eastern Thrace which is outside the zone reserved for Constantinople should, *with the exception of the northern part of that province*, become part of the Kingdom of Greece. This northern part is clearly Bulgarian in population; justice and fair dealing consequently demand that the cities of Kirk-Kilisse and Adrianople and the surrounding territory should be part of Bulgaria. Both on ethnic and historical grounds Bulgaria's claim is worthy of the most serious consideration; moreover, it would appear that Bulgaria is entitled to have its claim to this territory favourably considered, having regard to the fact that it has been compelled to give up territory which is purely Bulgarian as well as many thousands of Bulgarians on its western boundary, on the rather doubtful grounds of securing for Serbia a strategical frontier.

"In respect of the proposed preferential right of three great Mediterranean Powers to furnish instructors and advisers in certain zones, the Washington Government feel that before they can express an intelligent opinion on this question they must be furnished with more information as to the reason and purpose of such a plan. The genuine interest of the Government of the United States in the plan for Armenia cannot be questioned, and the Government are convinced that most liberal treatment for that unfortunate country is both expected and demanded by the civilised world. Armenia's boundaries therefore should be fixed in such a way as to recognise all the legitimate claims of the Armenians, and to secure for them unencumbered and easy access to the sea. The United States Government are not aware of the considerations which governed the decision arrived at by the Supreme Council, but they feel that the access to the sea, which is indispensable to Armenian interests, would hardly be assured by granting special rights over Lazistan.

"Taking into consideration that Trebizond has always been the termination of the trade route across Armenia and that M. Venizelos, speaking on behalf of the Turks of that district, has expressed their preference for connection with Armenia rather than Turkey, it is hoped that the Powers will agree to grant Trebizond to Armenia.

"In respect of the question of Turkey relinquishing her rights to Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia and the Islands, the Washington Government suggest that the same method adopted in the case of Austria should now be resorted to, that is to say, that these provinces should be placed by Turkey in the hands of the Great Powers, for those Powers to dispose of as they may think right.

"The Washington Government have too limited information as to the exact arrangement that is contemplated for Smyrna, and the reasons for deciding upon this arrangement, to be in a position to express an opinion at present on this most important question.

"The Washington Government fully appreciate the many difficulties that come up for settlement in connection with the Treaty with Turkey. Owing to the conflicting interests involved the problems are complex and fruitful of misunderstandings, but the United States Government are confident that in handling these problems the Powers will be animated by a spirit of fairness and of a scrupulous regard for the interests of the vanquished, victor and neutral alike.

"Before a comprehensive plan can be worked out it is obvious that much remains to be done, and this Government will be glad to receive further information in regard to the economic clauses of the Turkish Treaty. The plan that has apparently been elaborated by the Supreme Council in connection with the continuation of concessions granted to aliens, and also giving the right to cancel or to revise concessions on payment of indemnity (*vide* 8th paragraph of your Excellency's note) has, incidentally, grave possibilities, and careful elucidation would seem to be necessary.

"In conclusion, let me say that, whatever arrangements or territorial changes may be made in the former Ottoman Empire, the Washington Government understand that such arrangements or changes will in no way place the citizens or corporations of the United States of America or of any other country in a position less favourable than corporations or citizens of any Power which is a party to the Turkish Treaty."

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II.

Answer to American Note on the Treaty of Peace with Turkey.

(Approved by the Supreme Council at San Remo on April 26, 1920. I.C.P.–109 (2).)

THE Allied Governments value the frank expression of the views of the United States Government. They have, however, necessarily deferred a reply to the note of the Secretary of the State Department until the terms of the Treaty have been sufficiently formulated to be submitted to the Supreme Council now assembled at San Remo.

The Council notes that the United States Government do not propose to be represented by a plenipotentiary at the Conference charged with negotiating the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, otherwise than in the capacity of an observer, from which it follows that the United States Government do not intend to become signatories to the Treaty.

The Council welcomes, however, the assurance borne out by the presence of the United States Ambassador at Rome that the United States maintain their close interest in the terms of the settlement, and is happy to take this occasion to afford the United States Government further information and explanations concerning the terms agreed upon before Mr. Johnson's arrival. The Allied Governments do not interpret Mr. Colby's desire for such information to mean that the negotiation with Turkey should be delayed until each of the particular points raised in his note has been exhaustively discussed with the United States Government, and an agreement with them arrived at. This would, indeed, in existing circumstances have rendered all fruitful negotiations impossible.

The Allied Governments have never concealed their wish to see the United States associated in the preparation and signature of the Treaty which is to embody the re-settlement of Turkey on a just and lasting basis. In the hope and expectation of American participation they had delayed the negotiations with Turkey at the risk of gravely imperilling the prospect of any satisfactory settlement being effected without a fresh recourse to arms. They fully understand and appreciate the reasons for which the United States Government have not, finally, seen their way to become parties to the Treaty. The burden of the negotiation—which has not been lightened by the long delay which has unhappily, but in the circumstances unavoidably, intervened—has therefore fallen on the Allies alone. They have readily accepted it, and have endeavoured to discharge an increasingly difficult duty to the best of their ability and judgment. They feel confident that the settlement which they are about to propose to the Turkish Government will be found in harmony with the principles and ideals which have inspired them, in common with the United States, in waging war and in concluding peace with Turkey's late allies. The desire of the United States Government that the Treaty shall be fair and just to all parties is entirely shared by the Allied Governments. When, however, it is urged that the settlement shall be made "with scrupulous regard for the interests of victor, vanquished and neutral," it must be remembered that there cannot in justice be *equality* of consideration on the one hand for the interests of the Turks who wantonly joined Germany and Austria-Hungary in their war of agression, and on the other hand for the interests of the former subject races of Turkey whom the Allies, at immense sacrifices of life and treasure, have delivered from Turkish misrule.

The Allied Governments now pass to the consideration of the specific points raised in Mr. Colby's note.

1. With regard to Constantinople the advantages and disadvantages of excluding the Sultan's Government from any territory in Europe, have been very carefully weighed. An exhaustive examination of the problem in all its bearings had convinced the Allied Governments that, supposing such a policy to be in itself desirable, its adoption would entail upon them responsibilities, dangers and sacrifices which, with due regard to their own national interests and obligations, they are not in a position safely to incur. At the same time the Allied Governments recognise that the problem might have presented itself in a different light if those responsibilities, dangers and sacrifices were not to be borne by themselves alone but shared by the United States of America.

2. The southern frontier of Turkey has been drawn after due consideration not only of the ethnical but also of the economic and geographical factors involved. The United States Government will readily recognise that as in the case of the other

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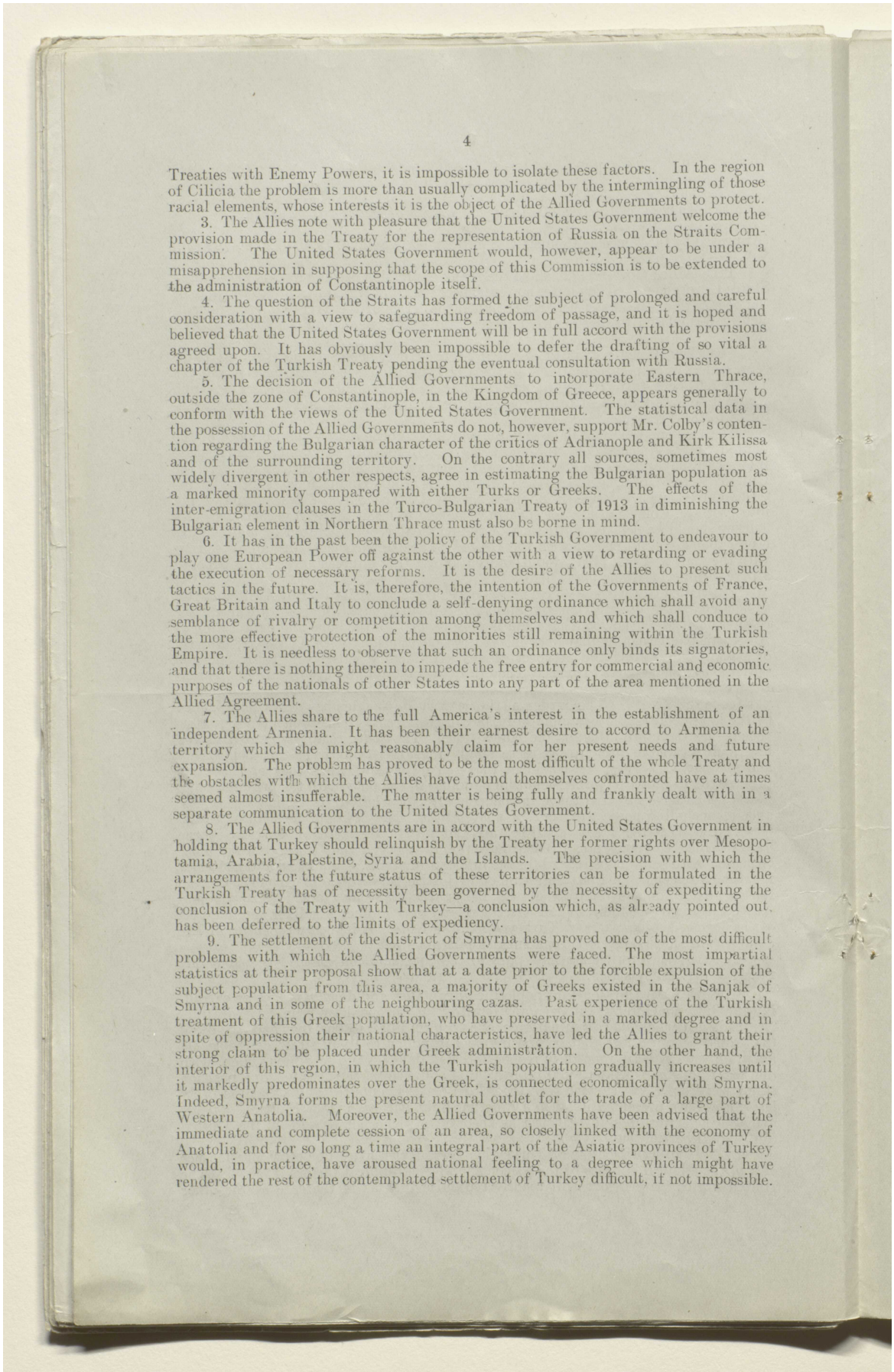

Treaties with Enemy Powers, it is impossible to isolate these factors. In the region of Cilicia the problem is more than usually complicated by the intermingling of those racial elements, whose interests it is the object of the Allied Governments to protect.

3. The Allies note with pleasure that the United States Government welcome the provision made in the Treaty for the representation of Russia on the Straits Commission. The United States Government would, however, appear to be under a misapprehension in supposing that the scope of this Commission is to be extended to the administration of Constantinople itself.

4. The question of the Straits has formed the subject of prolonged and careful consideration with a view to safeguarding freedom of passage, and it is hoped and believed that the United States Government will be in full accord with the provisions agreed upon. It has obviously been impossible to defer the drafting of so vital a chapter of the Turkish Treaty pending the eventual consultation with Russia.

5. The decision of the Allied Governments to incorporate Eastern Thrace, outside the zone of Constantinople, in the Kingdom of Greece, appears generally to conform with the views of the United States Government. The statistical data in the possession of the Allied Governments do not, however, support Mr. Colby's contention regarding the Bulgarian character of the critics of Adrianople and Kirk Kilissa and of the surrounding territory. On the contrary all sources, sometimes most widely divergent in other respects, agree in estimating the Bulgarian population as a marked minority compared with either Turks or Greeks. The effects of the inter-emigration clauses in the Turco-Bulgarian Treaty of 1913 in diminishing the Bulgarian element in Northern Thrace must also be borne in mind.

6. It has in the past been the policy of the Turkish Government to endeavour to play one European Power off against the other with a view to retarding or evading the execution of necessary reforms. It is the desire of the Allies to present such tactics in the future. It is, therefore, the intention of the Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy to conclude a self-denying ordinance which shall avoid any semblance of rivalry or competition among themselves and which shall conduce to the more effective protection of the minorities still remaining within the Turkish Empire. It is needless to observe that such an ordinance only binds its signatories, and that there is nothing therein to impede the free entry for commercial and economic purposes of the nationals of other States into any part of the area mentioned in the Allied Agreement.

7. The Allies share to the full America's interest in the establishment of an independent Armenia. It has been their earnest desire to accord to Armenia the territory which she might reasonably claim for her present needs and future expansion. The problem has proved to be the most difficult of the whole Treaty and the obstacles with which the Allies have found themselves confronted have at times seemed almost insufferable. The matter is being fully and frankly dealt with in a separate communication to the United States Government.

8. The Allied Governments are in accord with the United States Government in holding that Turkey should relinquish by the Treaty her former rights over Mesopotamia, Arabia, Palestine, Syria and the Islands. The precision with which the arrangements for the future status of these territories can be formulated in the Turkish Treaty has of necessity been governed by the necessity of expediting the conclusion of the Treaty with Turkey—a conclusion which, as already pointed out, has been deferred to the limits of expediency.

9. The settlement of the district of Smyrna has proved one of the most difficult problems with which the Allied Governments were faced. The most impartial statistics at their proposal show that at a date prior to the forcible expulsion of the subject population from this area, a majority of Greeks existed in the Sanjak of Smyrna and in some of the neighbouring cazas. Past experience of the Turkish treatment of this Greek population, who have preserved in a marked degree and in spite of oppression their national characteristics, have led the Allies to grant their strong claim to be placed under Greek administration. On the other hand, the interior of this region, in which the Turkish population gradually increases until it markedly predominates over the Greek, is connected economically with Smyrna. Indeed, Smyrna forms the present natural outlet for the trade of a large part of Western Anatolia. Moreover, the Allied Governments have been advised that the immediate and complete cession of an area, so closely linked with the economy of Anatolia and for so long a time an integral part of the Asiatic provinces of Turkey would, in practice, have aroused national feeling to a degree which might have rendered the rest of the contemplated settlement of Turkey difficult, if not impossible.

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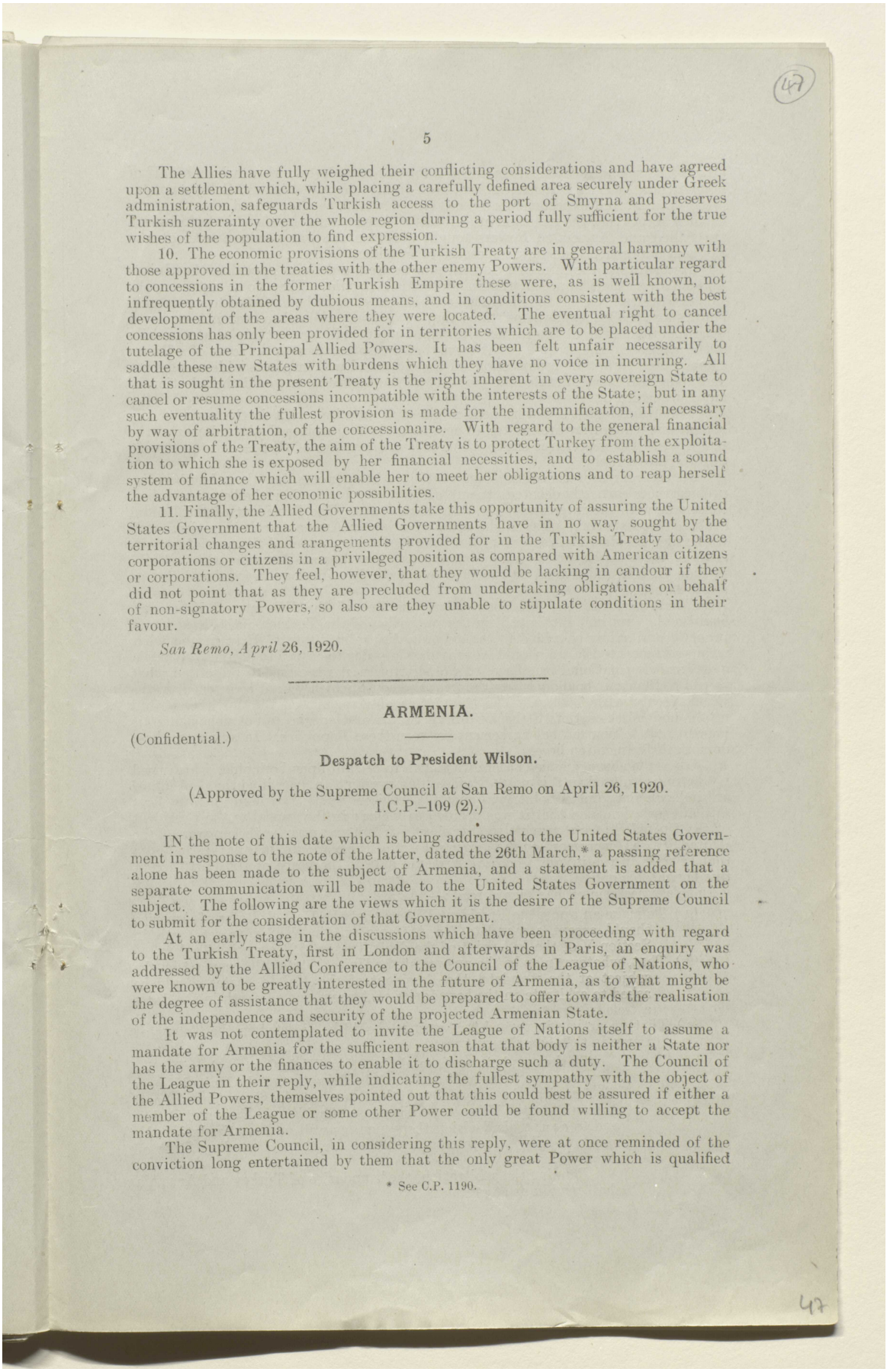

The Allies have fully weighed their conflicting considerations and have agreed upon a settlement which, while placing a carefully defined area securely under Greek administration, safeguards Turkish access to the port of Smyrna and preserves Turkish suzerainty over the whole region during a period fully sufficient for the true wishes of the population to find expression.

10. The economic provisions of the Turkish Treaty are in general harmony with those approved in the treaties with the other enemy Powers. With particular regard to concessions in the former Turkish Empire these were, as is well known, not infrequently obtained by dubious means, and in conditions consistent with the best development of the areas where they were located. The eventual right to cancel concessions has only been provided for in territories which are to be placed under the tutelage of the Principal Allied Powers. It has been felt unfair necessarily to saddle these new States with burdens which they have no voice in incurring. All that is sought in the present Treaty is the right inherent in every sovereign State to cancel or resume concessions incompatible with the interests of the State; but in any such eventuality the fullest provision is made for the indemnification, if necessary by way of arbitration, of the concessionaire. With regard to the general financial provisions of the Treaty, the aim of the Treaty is to protect Turkey from the exploitation to which she is exposed by her financial necessities, and to establish a sound system of finance which will enable her to meet her obligations and to reap herself the advantage of her economic possibilities.

11. Finally, the Allied Governments take this opportunity of assuring the United States Government that the Allied Governments have in no way sought by the territorial changes and arangements provided for in the Turkish Treaty to place corporations or citizens in a privileged position as compared with American citizens or corporations. They feel, however, that they would be lacking in candour if they did not point that as they are precluded from undertaking obligations on behalf of non-signatory Powers, so also are they unable to stipulate conditions in their favour.

San Remo, April 26, 1920.

ARMENIA.

(Confidential.)

Despatch to President Wilson.

(Approved by the Supreme Council at San Remo on April 26, 1920.
I.C.P.–109 (2).)

IN the note of this date which is being addressed to the United States Government in response to the note of the latter, dated the 26th March,* a passing reference alone has been made to the subject of Armenia, and a statement is added that a separate communication will be made to the United States Government on the subject. The following are the views which it is the desire of the Supreme Council to submit for the consideration of that Government.

At an early stage in the discussions which have been proceeding with regard to the Turkish Treaty, first in London and afterwards in Paris, an enquiry was addressed by the Allied Conference to the Council of the League of Nations, who were known to be greatly interested in the future of Armenia, as to what might be the degree of assistance that they would be prepared to offer towards the realisation of the independence and security of the projected Armenian State.

It was not contemplated to invite the League of Nations itself to assume a mandate for Armenia for the sufficient reason that that body is neither a State nor has the army or the finances to enable it to discharge such a duty. The Council of the League in their reply, while indicating the fullest sympathy with the object of the Allied Powers, themselves pointed out that this could best be assured if either a member of the League or some other Power could be found willing to accept the mandate for Armenia.

The Supreme Council, in considering this reply, were at once reminded of the conviction long entertained by them that the only great Power which is qualified

* See C.P. 1190.

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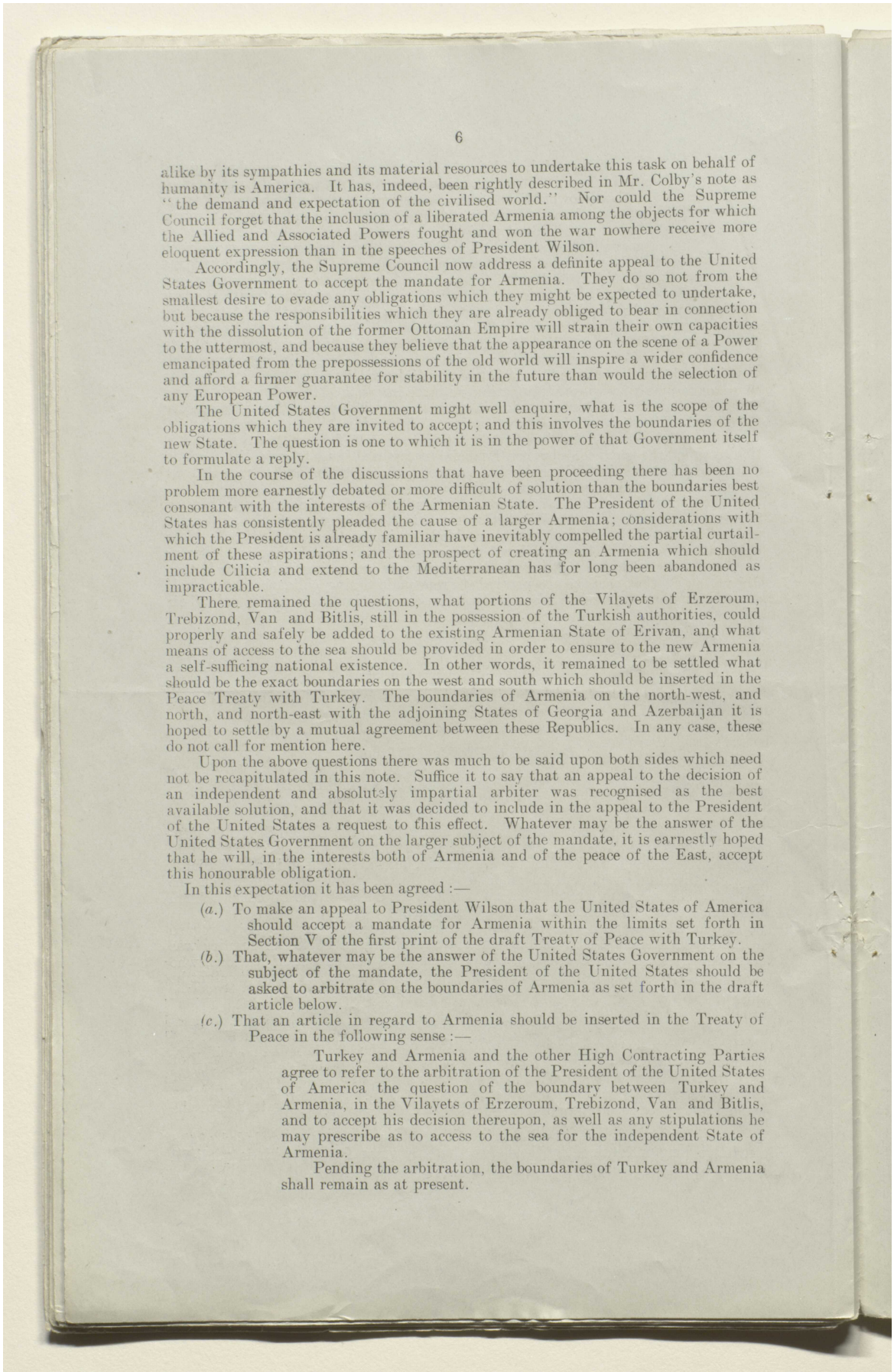

alike by its sympathies and its material resources to undertake this task on behalf of humanity is America. It has, indeed, been rightly described in Mr. Colby's note as "the demand and expectation of the civilised world." Nor could the Supreme Council forget that the inclusion of a liberated Armenia among the objects for which the Allied and Associated Powers fought and won the war nowhere receive more eloquent expression than in the speeches of President Wilson.

Accordingly, the Supreme Council now address a definite appeal to the United States Government to accept the mandate for Armenia. They do so not from the smallest desire to evade any obligations which they might be expected to undertake, but because the responsibilities which they are already obliged to bear in connection with the dissolution of the former Ottoman Empire will strain their own capacities to the uttermost, and because they believe that the appearance on the scene of a Power emancipated from the prepossessions of the old world will inspire a wider confidence and afford a firmer guarantee for stability in the future than would the selection of any European Power.

The United States Government might well enquire, what is the scope of the obligations which they are invited to accept; and this involves the boundaries of the new State. The question is one to which it is in the power of that Government itself to formulate a reply.

In the course of the discussions that have been proceeding there has been no problem more earnestly debated or more difficult of solution than the boundaries best consonant with the interests of the Armenian State. The President of the United States has consistently pleaded the cause of a larger Armenia; considerations with which the President is already familiar have inevitably compelled the partial curtailment of these aspirations; and the prospect of creating an Armenia which should include Cilicia and extend to the Mediterranean has for long been abandoned as impracticable.

There remained the questions, what portions of the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, still in the possession of the Turkish authorities, could properly and safely be added to the existing Armenian State of Erivan, and what means of access to the sea should be provided in order to ensure to the new Armenia a self-sufficing national existence. In other words, it remained to be settled what should be the exact boundaries on the west and south which should be inserted in the Peace Treaty with Turkey. The boundaries of Armenia on the north-west, and north, and north-east with the adjoining States of Georgia and Azerbaijan it is hoped to settle by a mutual agreement between these Republics. In any case, these do not call for mention here.

Upon the above questions there was much to be said upon both sides which need not be recapitulated in this note. Suffice it to say that an appeal to the decision of an independent and absolutely impartial arbiter was recognised as the best available solution, and that it was decided to include in the appeal to the President of the United States a request to this effect. Whatever may be the answer of the United States Government on the larger subject of the mandate, it is earnestly hoped that he will, in the interests both of Armenia and of the peace of the East, accept this honourable obligation.

In this expectation it has been agreed :—

(*a.*) To make an appeal to President Wilson that the United States of America should accept a mandate for Armenia within the limits set forth in Section V of the first print of the draft Treaty of Peace with Turkey.

(*b.*) That, whatever may be the answer of the United States Government on the subject of the mandate, the President of the United States should be asked to arbitrate on the boundaries of Armenia as set forth in the draft article below.

(*c.*) That an article in regard to Armenia should be inserted in the Treaty of Peace in the following sense :—

> Turkey and Armenia and the other High Contracting Parties agree to refer to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the boundary between Turkey and Armenia, in the Vilayets of Erzeroum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access to the sea for the independent State of Armenia.
>
> Pending the arbitration, the boundaries of Turkey and Armenia shall remain as at present.

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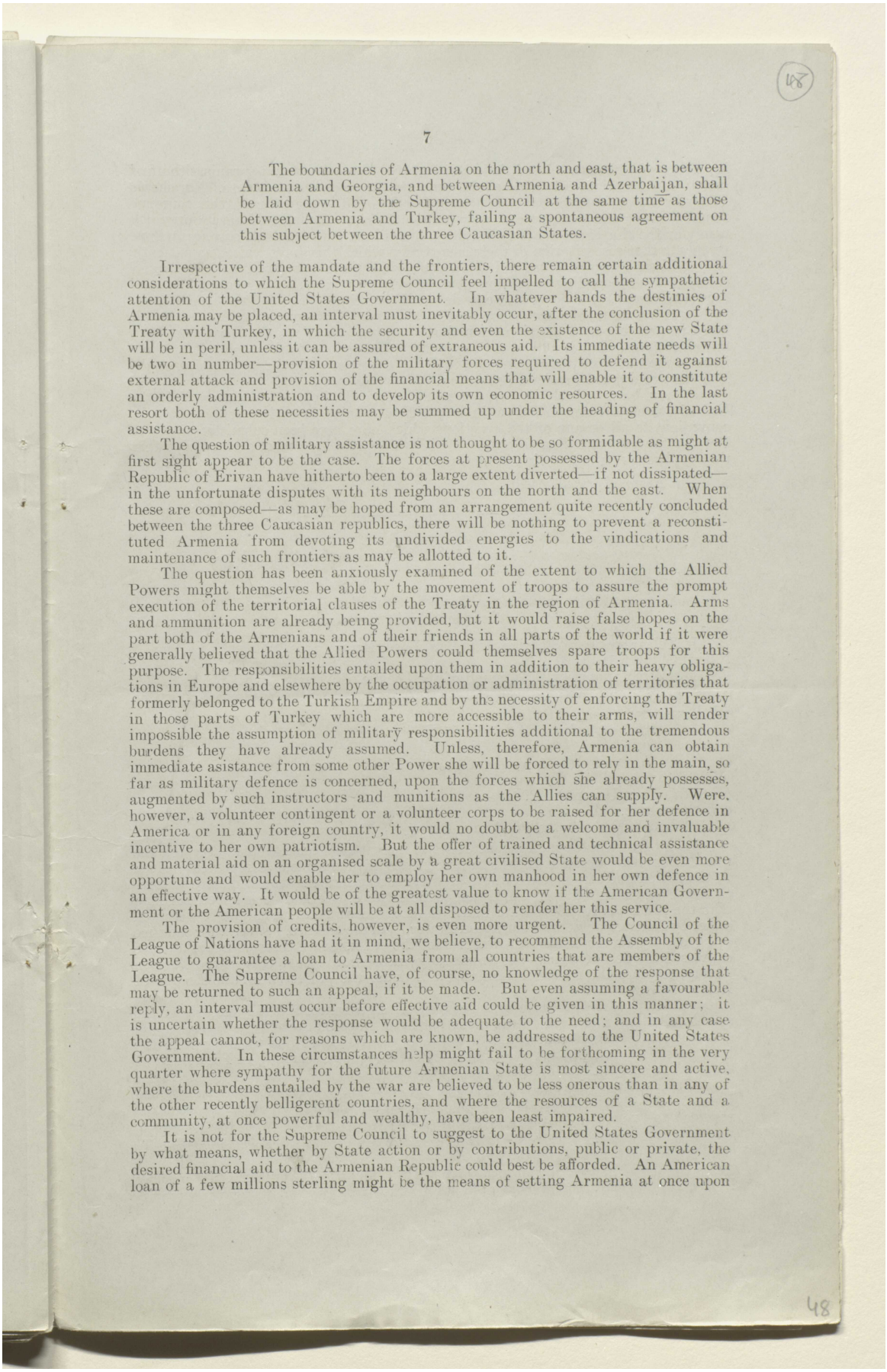

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The boundaries of Armenia on the north and east, that is between Armenia and Georgia, and between Armenia and Azerbaijan, shall be laid down by the Supreme Council at the same time as those between Armenia and Turkey, failing a spontaneous agreement on this subject between the three Caucasian States.

Irrespective of the mandate and the frontiers, there remain certain additional considerations to which the Supreme Council feel impelled to call the sympathetic attention of the United States Government. In whatever hands the destinies of Armenia may be placed, an interval must inevitably occur, after the conclusion of the Treaty with Turkey, in which the security and even the existence of the new State will be in peril, unless it can be assured of extraneous aid. Its immediate needs will be two in number—provision of the military forces required to defend it against external attack and provision of the financial means that will enable it to constitute an orderly administration and to develop its own economic resources. In the last resort both of these necessities may be summed up under the heading of financial assistance.

The question of military assistance is not thought to be so formidable as might at first sight appear to be the case. The forces at present possessed by the Armenian Republic of Erivan have hitherto been to a large extent diverted—if not dissipated—in the unfortunate disputes with its neighbours on the north and the east. When these are composed—as may be hoped from an arrangement quite recently concluded between the three Caucasian republics, there will be nothing to prevent a reconstituted Armenia from devoting its undivided energies to the vindications and maintenance of such frontiers as may be allotted to it.

The question has been anxiously examined of the extent to which the Allied Powers might themselves be able by the movement of troops to assure the prompt execution of the territorial clauses of the Treaty in the region of Armenia. Arms and ammunition are already being provided, but it would raise false hopes on the part both of the Armenians and of their friends in all parts of the world if it were generally believed that the Allied Powers could themselves spare troops for this purpose. The responsibilities entailed upon them in addition to their heavy obligations in Europe and elsewhere by the occupation or administration of territories that formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire and by the necessity of enforcing the Treaty in those parts of Turkey which are more accessible to their arms, will render impossible the assumption of military responsibilities additional to the tremendous burdens they have already assumed. Unless, therefore, Armenia can obtain immediate asistance from some other Power she will be forced to rely in the main, so far as military defence is concerned, upon the forces which she already possesses, augmented by such instructors and munitions as the Allies can supply. Were, however, a volunteer contingent or a volunteer corps to be raised for her defence in America or in any foreign country, it would no doubt be a welcome and invaluable incentive to her own patriotism. But the offer of trained and technical assistance and material aid on an organised scale by a great civilised State would be even more opportune and would enable her to employ her own manhood in her own defence in an effective way. It would be of the greatest value to know if the American Government or the American people will be at all disposed to render her this service.

The provision of credits, however, is even more urgent. The Council of the League of Nations have had it in mind, we believe, to recommend the Assembly of the League to guarantee a loan to Armenia from all countries that are members of the League. The Supreme Council have, of course, no knowledge of the response that may be returned to such an appeal, if it be made. But even assuming a favourable reply, an interval must occur before effective aid could be given in this manner; it is uncertain whether the response would be adequate to the need; and in any case the appeal cannot, for reasons which are known, be addressed to the United States Government. In these circumstances help might fail to be forthcoming in the very quarter where sympathy for the future Armenian State is most sincere and active, where the burdens entailed by the war are believed to be less onerous than in any of the other recently belligerent countries, and where the resources of a State and a community, at once powerful and wealthy, have been least impaired.

It is not for the Supreme Council to suggest to the United States Government by what means, whether by State action or by contributions, public or private, the desired financial aid to the Armenian Republic could best be afforded. An American loan of a few millions sterling might be the means of setting Armenia at once upon

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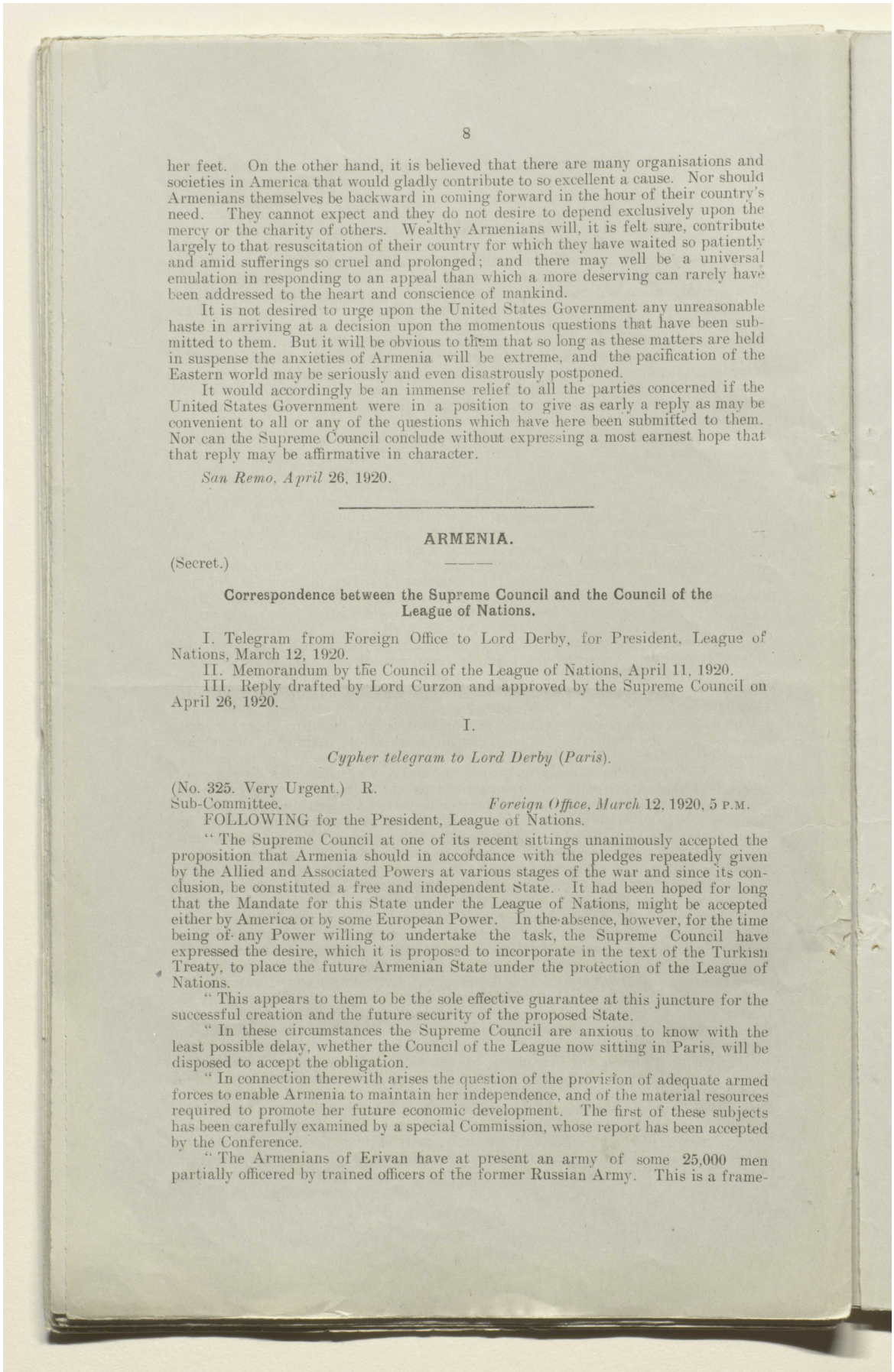

her feet. On the other hand, it is believed that there are many organisations and societies in America that would gladly contribute to so excellent a cause. Nor should Armenians themselves be backward in coming forward in the hour of their country's need. They cannot expect and they do not desire to depend exclusively upon the mercy or the charity of others. Wealthy Armenians will, it is felt sure, contribute largely to that resuscitation of their country for which they have waited so patiently and amid sufferings so cruel and prolonged; and there may well be a universal emulation in responding to an appeal than which a more deserving can rarely have been addressed to the heart and conscience of mankind.

It is not desired to urge upon the United States Government any unreasonable haste in arriving at a decision upon the momentous questions that have been submitted to them. But it will be obvious to them that so long as these matters are held in suspense the anxieties of Armenia will be extreme, and the pacification of the Eastern world may be seriously and even disastrously postponed.

It would accordingly be an immense relief to all the parties concerned if the United States Government were in a position to give as early a reply as may be convenient to all or any of the questions which have here been submitted to them. Nor can the Supreme Council conclude without expressing a most earnest hope that that reply may be affirmative in character.

San Remo, April 26, 1920.

ARMENIA.

(Secret.)

Correspondence between the Supreme Council and the Council of the League of Nations.

I. Telegram from Foreign Office to Lord Derby, for President, League of Nations, March 12, 1920.
II. Memorandum by the Council of the League of Nations, April 11, 1920.
III. Reply drafted by Lord Curzon and approved by the Supreme Council on April 26, 1920.

I.

Cypher telegram to Lord Derby (Paris).

(No. 325. Very Urgent.) R.
Sub-Committee. *Foreign Office, March* 12, 1920, 5 P.M.

FOLLOWING for the President, League of Nations.

"The Supreme Council at one of its recent sittings unanimously accepted the proposition that Armenia should in accordance with the pledges repeatedly given by the Allied and Associated Powers at various stages of the war and since its conclusion, be constituted a free and independent State. It had been hoped for long that the Mandate for this State under the League of Nations, might be accepted either by America or by some European Power. In the absence, however, for the time being of any Power willing to undertake the task, the Supreme Council have expressed the desire, which it is proposed to incorporate in the text of the Turkish Treaty, to place the future Armenian State under the protection of the League of Nations.

"This appears to them to be the sole effective guarantee at this juncture for the successful creation and the future security of the proposed State.

"In these circumstances the Supreme Council are anxious to know with the least possible delay, whether the Council of the League now sitting in Paris, will be disposed to accept the obligation.

"In connection therewith arises the question of the provision of adequate armed forces to enable Armenia to maintain her independence, and of the material resources required to promote her future economic development. The first of these subjects has been carefully examined by a special Commission, whose report has been accepted by the Conference.

"The Armenians of Erivan have at present an army of some 25,000 men partially officered by trained officers of the former Russian Army. This is a frame-

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work on which the necessary measures of self-defence could be developed, and they express confidence in being able to raise 40,000 men if arms and equipment are provided. The Allied Powers are assisting in this task, and it is hoped that the first instalments will shortly be delivered.

"The League of Nations, if it assumes the general protection of Armenia, will be able as time passes to assist materially in the prosecution of this undertaking. The Armenian representatives here, who are imploring the protection of the League, earnestly plead for the help of foreign officers and volunteers, if regular forces are not available, and in any case for the supply of military and civil advisers.

"There remains the other categories of material aid that may necessitate either now or at a later date a public appeal, which no authority could issue with an authority comparable with that of the League of Nations.

"It is not thought desirable at present to make any statement with regard to the boundaries of the new State; but full information can be supplied on this subject to the Council of the League if it is so desired.

"Before proceeding further with the matter, the Conference would like to know if they may hope to receive the co-operation of the League of Nations in the projected undertaking. They need not emphasise its vast importance for the settlement of the peace of the East."

II.

League of Nations: Future Status of Armenia.

(A. J. 156. Confidential.)

Memorandum agreed to by the Council of the League of Nations, meeting in Paris, on April 11, 1920.

The Supreme Council of the principal Allied Powers, being desirous of securing the existence, order and security of the Armenian nation, has decided to form an independent Armenian Republic, whose boundaries and status will be fixed by the Peace Treaty, now in preparation, with the Turkish Empire and other international Conventions.

Lord Curzon, in his telegram of the 12th March last, enquired whether the League of Nations would agree to take the new Republic of Armenia under its protection.

The Armenian Delegation in London have defined more or less exactly the conditions under which the League of Nations might protect the Republic of Armenia.

From Lord Curzon's communication, as well as that of the Armenian Delegation, it appears that the League of Nations is asked to accept a mandate for Armenia in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 22 of the Covenant. In examining the proposals of the Supreme Council the principal concern of the Council of the League of Nations has been to determine how the independence of Armenia could most effectively be secured and order and security maintained in Armenian territory. Indeed, the Council has been guided entirely by its desire to help a nation whose misfortunes alone have given it a title to the sympathy and consideration of the civilised world. The Council of the League is, in a word, in full accord with the Supreme Council as to the claims of the Armenian nation. It regards the establishment of an Armenian State upon a safe and independent basis as an obligation of humanity and as an end worthy of effort and sacrifice upon the part of the civilised Powers of the world. Within the limits of its own authority it is anxious to co-operate to this end. On the other hand, the Council of the League realises its own limitations. It realises that it is not a State; that it has as yet no army and no finances, and that its action upon public opinion would be fainter in Asia Minor than in the more civilised regions of Europe. Nor can the Council forget the bitter disillusionment of the Armenian Nation over the failure of the Armenian Clauses inserted in the Treaties of the last century. It cannot overlook the fact that the stipulations of Article 22 do not contemplate the League of Nations itself accepting and exercising a mandate. On the contrary, these stipulations require the League to supervise the execution of mandates entrusted to a specified Power for communities which formerly belonged to the Ottoman Empire. The supervision of the League of Nations of the various mandates entrusted to certain Powers for different regions

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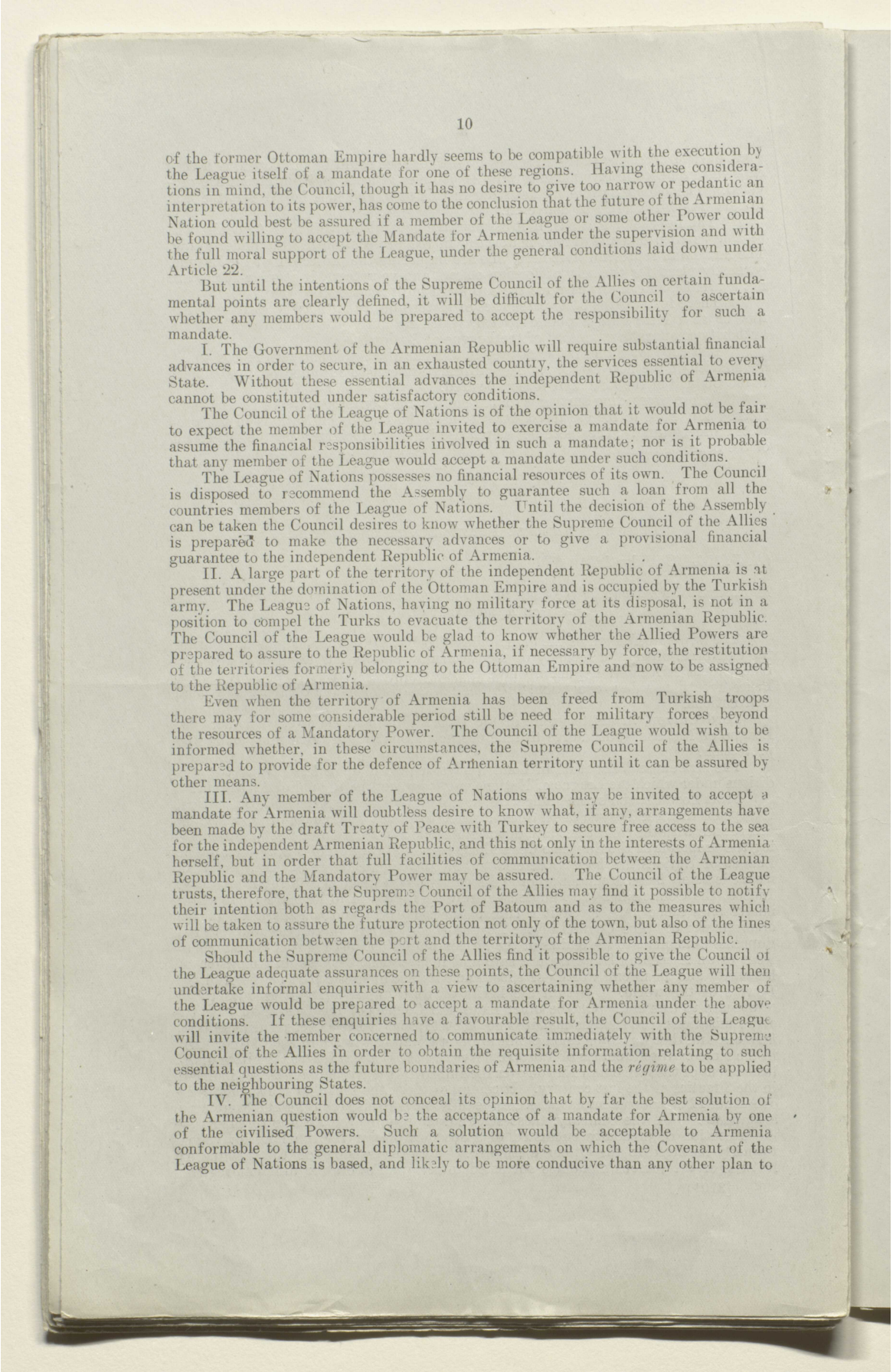

of the former Ottoman Empire hardly seems to be compatible with the execution by the League itself of a mandate for one of these regions. Having these considerations in mind, the Council, though it has no desire to give too narrow or pedantic an interpretation to its power, has come to the conclusion that the future of the Armenian Nation could best be assured if a member of the League or some other Power could be found willing to accept the Mandate for Armenia under the supervision and with the full moral support of the League, under the general conditions laid down under Article 22.

But until the intentions of the Supreme Council of the Allies on certain fundamental points are clearly defined, it will be difficult for the Council to ascertain whether any members would be prepared to accept the responsibility for such a mandate.

I. The Government of the Armenian Republic will require substantial financial advances in order to secure, in an exhausted country, the services essential to every State. Without these essential advances the independent Republic of Armenia cannot be constituted under satisfactory conditions.

The Council of the League of Nations is of the opinion that it would not be fair to expect the member of the League invited to exercise a mandate for Armenia to assume the financial responsibilities involved in such a mandate; nor is it probable that any member of the League would accept a mandate under such conditions.

The League of Nations possesses no financial resources of its own. The Council is disposed to recommend the Assembly to guarantee such a loan from all the countries members of the League of Nations. Until the decision of the Assembly can be taken the Council desires to know whether the Supreme Council of the Allies is prepared to make the necessary advances or to give a provisional financial guarantee to the independent Republic of Armenia.

II. A large part of the territory of the independent Republic of Armenia is at present under the domination of the Ottoman Empire and is occupied by the Turkish army. The League of Nations, having no military force at its disposal, is not in a position to compel the Turks to evacuate the territory of the Armenian Republic. The Council of the League would be glad to know whether the Allied Powers are prepared to assure to the Republic of Armenia, if necessary by force, the restitution of the territories formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire and now to be assigned to the Republic of Armenia.

Even when the territory of Armenia has been freed from Turkish troops there may for some considerable period still be need for military forces beyond the resources of a Mandatory Power. The Council of the League would wish to be informed whether, in these circumstances, the Supreme Council of the Allies is prepared to provide for the defence of Armenian territory until it can be assured by other means.

III. Any member of the League of Nations who may be invited to accept a mandate for Armenia will doubtless desire to know what, if any, arrangements have been made by the draft Treaty of Peace with Turkey to secure free access to the sea for the independent Armenian Republic, and this not only in the interests of Armenia herself, but in order that full facilities of communication between the Armenian Republic and the Mandatory Power may be assured. The Council of the League trusts, therefore, that the Supreme Council of the Allies may find it possible to notify their intention both as regards the Port of Batoum and as to the measures which will be taken to assure the future protection not only of the town, but also of the lines of communication between the port and the territory of the Armenian Republic.

Should the Supreme Council of the Allies find it possible to give the Council of the League adequate assurances on these points, the Council of the League will then undertake informal enquiries with a view to ascertaining whether any member of the League would be prepared to accept a mandate for Armenia under the above conditions. If these enquiries have a favourable result, the Council of the League will invite the member concerned to communicate immediately with the Supreme Council of the Allies in order to obtain the requisite information relating to such essential questions as the future boundaries of Armenia and the *régime* to be applied to the neighbouring States.

IV. The Council does not conceal its opinion that by far the best solution of the Armenian question would be the acceptance of a mandate for Armenia by one of the civilised Powers. Such a solution would be acceptable to Armenia conformable to the general diplomatic arrangements on which the Covenant of the League of Nations is based, and likely to be more conducive than any other plan to

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the efficient organisation of the new State. The Council would do its best to facilitate such an arangement by recommending to the Assembly of the League that it should endeavour to obtain collectively from the countries of which it is composed the necessary financial guarantees for the Mandatory State. It is possible, however, that these negotiations might fail. It is conceivable, though it is to be hoped not probable, that no State would be willing to assume the responsibilities of a mandate for Armenia. In that event, the Council of the League would not cease to interest itself in the fate of Armenia. On the contrary, it would be prepared to discuss in conjunction with the Supreme Council whether, in that unfortunate event, other measures could be devised for the protection of the Armenian State.

Sunderland House, Curzon Street, London, W. 1,
April 14, 1920.

III.

(A. J.–185. Confidential.)

Reply to the League of Nations.

(Approved by the Supreme Council at San Remo on April 26, 1920. I.C.P.–109 (2).)

The Supreme Council, sitting at San Remo, has received with gratification the memorandum, dated 11th April, of the Council of the League of Nations respecting the extent to which the League might be able and willing to co-operate in assuring the future of Armenia. The Allied Governments desire to express their gratitude for the response of the Council of the League in a matter which the memorandum rightly describes as an end worthy of effort and sacrifice upon the part of the civilised Powers of the world.

Before referring to the various questions formulated by the Council of the League, the Supreme Council desires to rectify a misapprehension which appears in the early part of the memorandum under a reply. It was the intention of the Allied Governments to enquire as to the degree of support and assistance which might be expected from the League in the establishment of an Armenian State upon a safe and independent basis rather than to suggest that the League should itself assume a mandate for this purpose. It is realised that, as pointed out in the memorandum, the League is not a State and has as yet no army and no finances, and the Supreme Council fully agrees that the object in view could best be assured if a member of the League or some other Power could be found willing to accept the mandate for Armenia.

The Supreme Council has, as will be seen, been guided by this view and has indeed felt that it would be failing in its duty if it did not make a final effort in the direction suggested. In reviewing the sources to which it might appeal, one country has obviously been indicated not only by its natural capacities but by the fact that these have been considerably less burdened by the events of the past six years than those of the other Allied and Associated Powers. The resources of the United States are relatively unimpaired and their sympathy with the Armenian cause has been constantly manifested.

These considerations have prompted the Supreme Council to address itself to President Wilson. It has frequently been suggested during the Peace Conference that the mandate for Armenia might be undertaken by the United States, but no definite offer has been made or rejected. The Supreme Council has deemed that the moment has now come when this step should be made. At its sitting of the 25th April it was agreed—

(*a.*) To make an appeal to President Wilson that the United States of America should accept a mandate for Armenia within the limits set forth in Part III, Section V of the first print of the draft Treaty of Peace with Turkey.

(*b.*) That, whatever may be the answer of the United States Government on the subject of the mandate the President of the United States should be asked to arbitrate on the boundaries of Armenia as set forth in the draft article below.

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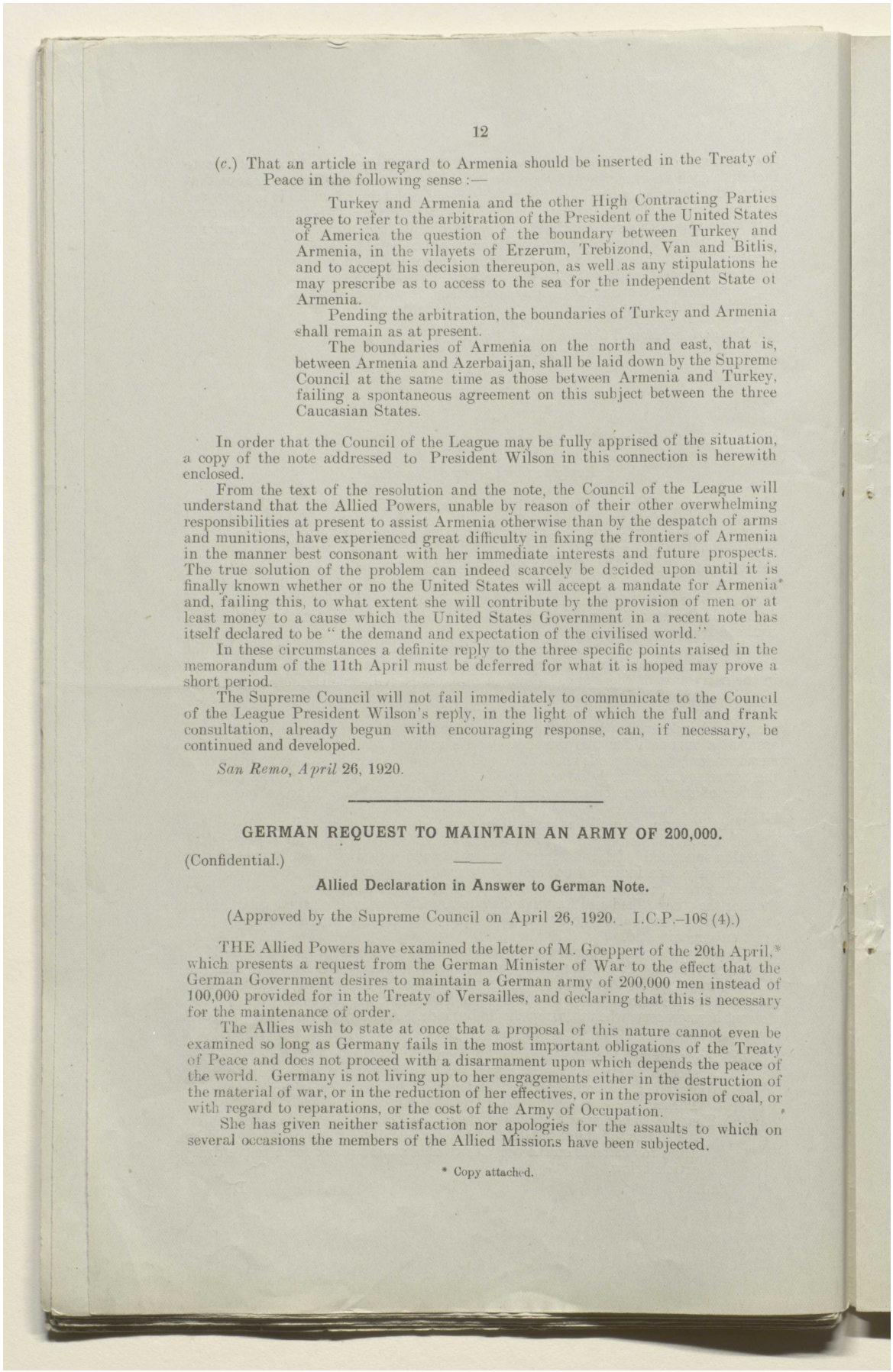

(*c.*) That an article in regard to Armenia should be inserted in the Treaty of Peace in the following sense :—

> Turkey and Armenia and the other High Contracting Parties agree to refer to the arbitration of the President of the United States of America the question of the boundary between Turkey and Armenia, in the vilayets of Erzerum, Trebizond, Van and Bitlis, and to accept his decision thereupon, as well as any stipulations he may prescribe as to access to the sea for the independent State of Armenia.
>
> Pending the arbitration, the boundaries of Turkey and Armenia shall remain as at present.
>
> The boundaries of Armenia on the north and east, that is, between Armenia and Azerbaijan, shall be laid down by the Supreme Council at the same time as those between Armenia and Turkey, failing a spontaneous agreement on this subject between the three Caucasian States.

In order that the Council of the League may be fully apprised of the situation, a copy of the note addressed to President Wilson in this connection is herewith enclosed.

From the text of the resolution and the note, the Council of the League will understand that the Allied Powers, unable by reason of their other overwhelming responsibilities at present to assist Armenia otherwise than by the despatch of arms and munitions, have experienced great difficulty in fixing the frontiers of Armenia in the manner best consonant with her immediate interests and future prospects. The true solution of the problem can indeed scarcely be decided upon until it is finally known whether or no the United States will accept a mandate for Armenia and, failing this, to what extent she will contribute by the provision of men or at least money to a cause which the United States Government in a recent note has itself declared to be " the demand and expectation of the civilised world."

In these circumstances a definite reply to the three specific points raised in the memorandum of the 11th April must be deferred for what it is hoped may prove a short period.

The Supreme Council will not fail immediately to communicate to the Council of the League President Wilson's reply, in the light of which the full and frank consultation, already begun with encouraging response, can, if necessary, be continued and developed.

San Remo, April 26, 1920.

GERMAN REQUEST TO MAINTAIN AN ARMY OF 200,000.

(Confidential.)

Allied Declaration in Answer to German Note.

(Approved by the Supreme Council on April 26, 1920. I.C.P.–108 (4).)

THE Allied Powers have examined the letter of M. Goeppert of the 20th April,* which presents a request from the German Minister of War to the effect that the German Government desires to maintain a German army of 200,000 men instead of 100,000 provided for in the Treaty of Versailles, and declaring that this is necessary for the maintenance of order.

The Allies wish to state at once that a proposal of this nature cannot even be examined so long as Germany fails in the most important obligations of the Treaty of Peace and does not proceed with a disarmament upon which depends the peace of the world. Germany is not living up to her engagements either in the destruction of the material of war, or in the reduction of her effectives, or in the provision of coal, or with regard to reparations, or the cost of the Army of Occupation.

She has given neither satisfaction nor apologies for the assaults to which on several occasions the members of the Allied Missions have been subjected.

* Copy attached.

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She has taken no steps, as was provided for under the Protocol to the Treaty, towards ascertaining her liabilities under the head of reparation, or towards making proposals for fixing the total amount she should thus pay, urgent as is a settlement of this nature in the interest of all concerned. She does not appear even to be considering how she is to meet her obligations as and when they mature.

The Allies do not ignore the difficulties with which the German Government is faced, and do not intend to insist upon a too literal interpretation of the Treaty. But they are unanimous in declaring that they cannot permit a continuation of these infractions of the Treaty of Versailles; that the Treaty must be executed and remain as the basis of relations between Germany and the Allies; and that they are determined to take all measures, even to the extent, if necessary, of the occupation of further German territory, which will have the effect of ensuring the execution of the Treaty. They declare, on the other hand, that it is not their intention to annex any portion of German territory.

At the same time the Allies consider that the questions raised by the infractions against the Treaty of Peace and by the measures necessary to ensure its execution will be more easilly solved by an exchange of views between the heads of the Governments than by an exchange of Notes. They have, therefore, decided to invite the heads of the German Government to confer directly with the heads of the Allied Governments, and they ask that, when they meet, the German Government will present to them precise explanations and proposals on all the matters mentioned above. If a satisfactory settlement is arrived at on these points, the Allied Governments will be willing to discuss with the German representatives any question which affects the internal order and economic well-being of Germany.

But Germany must understand that the unity of the Allies for the execution of the Treaty is as solid as it was for the war, and that the only method of taking her place again in the world is loyally to execute the engagements to which she has subscribed.

Hotel Royal, San Remo,
April 26, 1920.

Note.—At the same meeting at which the above note was approved, it was decided to invite the German Government to meet the Allied Governments at Spa on the 25th May, 1920.

(Translation.)

(A. J. 167. Confidential.)
German Peace Delegation.
No. 168.

M. le President, *Paris, April* 20, 1920.

BY the orders of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a memorandum by the Minister of Defence on the subject of the permanent retention of an army of 200,000 men.

Relying on the force of the arguments adduced, the German Government beg the Allied and Associated Governments to be good enough to give their consent to the maintenance of the effectives stated.

Please accept, &c.
(Signed) GOPPERT.

His Excellency, M. le President
of the Peace Conference.

Memorandum of the German Minister of Defence on the Maintenance of an Army of 200,000 *men.*

According to the Treaty of Peace and the Allies' Note of the 18th February, 1920, Germany is bound to reduce her army by the 10th July, 1920, to an effective of 100,000 men and to have realised by this date the organisation of the troops which is set forth in the Treaty. No modification of this organisation will be permitted until such time as Germany be admitted into the League of Nations, which subsequently will be able to authorise such modifications as should appear desirable.

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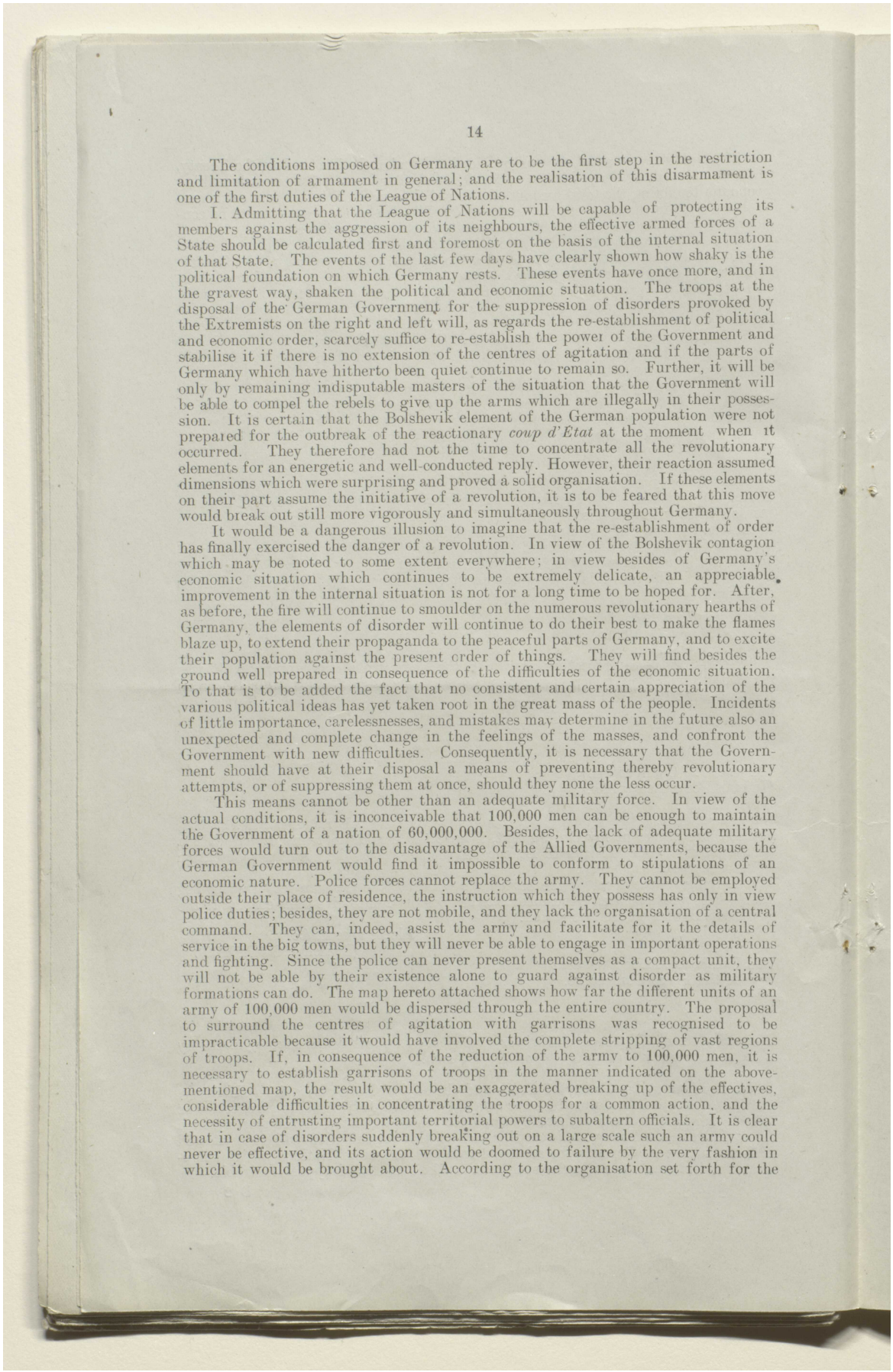

The conditions imposed on Germany are to be the first step in the restriction and limitation of armament in general; and the realisation of this disarmament is one of the first duties of the League of Nations.

I. Admitting that the League of Nations will be capable of protecting its members against the aggression of its neighbours, the effective armed forces of a State should be calculated first and foremost on the basis of the internal situation of that State. The events of the last few days have clearly shown how shaky is the political foundation on which Germany rests. These events have once more, and in the gravest way, shaken the political and economic situation. The troops at the disposal of the German Government for the suppression of disorders provoked by the Extremists on the right and left will, as regards the re-establishment of political and economic order, scarcely suffice to re-establish the power of the Government and stabilise it if there is no extension of the centres of agitation and if the parts of Germany which have hitherto been quiet continue to remain so. Further, it will be only by remaining indisputable masters of the situation that the Government will be able to compel the rebels to give up the arms which are illegally in their possession. It is certain that the Bolshevik element of the German population were not prepared for the outbreak of the reactionary *coup d'Etat* at the moment when it occurred. They therefore had not the time to concentrate all the revolutionary elements for an energetic and well-conducted reply. However, their reaction assumed dimensions which were surprising and proved a solid organisation. If these elements on their part assume the initiative of a revolution, it is to be feared that this move would break out still more vigorously and simultaneously throughout Germany.

It would be a dangerous illusion to imagine that the re-establishment of order has finally exercised the danger of a revolution. In view of the Bolshevik contagion which may be noted to some extent everywhere; in view besides of Germany's economic situation which continues to be extremely delicate, an appreciable improvement in the internal situation is not for a long time to be hoped for. After, as before, the fire will continue to smoulder on the numerous revolutionary hearths of Germany, the elements of disorder will continue to do their best to make the flames blaze up, to extend their propaganda to the peaceful parts of Germany, and to excite their population against the present order of things. They will find besides the ground well prepared in consequence of the difficulties of the economic situation. To that is to be added the fact that no consistent and certain appreciation of the various political ideas has yet taken root in the great mass of the people. Incidents of little importance, carelessnesses, and mistakes may determine in the future also an unexpected and complete change in the feelings of the masses, and confront the Government with new difficulties. Consequently, it is necessary that the Government should have at their disposal a means of preventing thereby revolutionary attempts, or of suppressing them at once, should they none the less occur.

This means cannot be other than an adequate military force. In view of the actual conditions, it is inconceivable that 100,000 men can be enough to maintain the Government of a nation of 60,000,000. Besides, the lack of adequate military forces would turn out to the disadvantage of the Allied Governments, because the German Government would find it impossible to conform to stipulations of an economic nature. Police forces cannot replace the army. They cannot be employed outside their place of residence, the instruction which they possess has only in view police duties; besides, they are not mobile, and they lack the organisation of a central command. They can, indeed, assist the army and facilitate for it the details of service in the big towns, but they will never be able to engage in important operations and fighting. Since the police can never present themselves as a compact unit, they will not be able by their existence alone to guard against disorder as military formations can do. The map hereto attached shows how far the different units of an army of 100,000 men would be dispersed through the entire country. The proposal to surround the centres of agitation with garrisons was recognised to be impracticable because it would have involved the complete stripping of vast regions of troops. If, in consequence of the reduction of the army to 100,000 men, it is necessary to establish garrisons of troops in the manner indicated on the above-mentioned map, the result would be an exaggerated breaking up of the effectives, considerable difficulties in concentrating the troops for a common action, and the necessity of entrusting important territorial powers to subaltern officials. It is clear that in case of disorders suddenly breaking out on a large scale such an army could never be effective, and its action would be doomed to failure by the very fashion in which it would be brought about. According to the organisation set forth for the

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army of 100,000 men it is necessary for the case of disorders for entrust to the superior officers territorial powers extending over such vast districts that these commanding officers would not from the points where they were stationed be able to control their measures. Contact and understanding with the local authorities would often be difficult if not impossible. In many cases, consequently, any central direction of operations would be impossible. The nine superior commands set forth by the Treaty of Peace are, then, insufficient. The doubling of the effectives would do away with the inconveniences set forth above. It would be possible to cover the country with a closer network of garrisons and, above all, considerable forces could be got together in the neighbourhood of the centres of disorder. The increased number of commands permits a reduction of the territorial districts of the different commanding officers, and in this way better communication with the civil authorities. The presence of such an army will prevent from the beginning any revolutionary tendency, it will protect working men of good intentions against the terrorists; furthermore, its effect will be to bring about the re-birth of economic life and permit it to develop freely without political tendency. An army of 200,000 men will be more or less if not completely adequate for the demands of the internal situation. In present circumstances a reduction of the armed forces would bring about grave consequences. The *coup d'Etat* of the Extremists on the right has only been possible because a corps of troops was found which allowed itself to be seduced. The corps which put itself at the disposal of the conspirators was about to be dissolved in virtue of the stipulations of the Peace Treaty. The intention was certainly to aid these troops to overcome the difficulties in which they would be involved, but the conspirators none the less found complacent ears. The Government saw themselves forced by the conditions of peace to turn into the street men and officers to whom they had appealed in the distressing moments of the spring of 1919. It was easy for the conspirators to put a false complexion on the fact that the Government could take no other course. This event showed that the German Government have been confronted with an almost insoluble task in the demand being addressed to them in present circumstances to dissolve further bodies of troops. The soldier who has engaged expects to be for a certain time free from the economic battle of life. If he is compelled to enter civilian life again before his existence can be guaranteed to him, he feels that he has been duped and falls an easy prey to seducers.

II. The Covenant of the League of Nations foresees a general disarmament of all the States. In accordance with the Treaty of Peace Germany must disarm first. She has fulfilled this duty, but so far her example has not been followed by any of the Allied or neutral States. The League of Nations has not yet taken any sort of decision in this respect, and yet this ought to be its first care.

Even leaving Germany in possession of an army of 200,000 men, there could be no fear that she could employ them either for defence or attack against a foreign Power. An army reduced to these numbers will be able to repulse raids of small contingents and of bands of irregulars; it will also be able with the support of the existing fortifications to provide for the protection of the frontier for a short space of time and up to a certain degree, but it would be absolutely inadequate as an arm of defence against an enemy invasion elaborately prepared. So much the more an army of 200,000 men with no reserves at its disposal and with its armament submitted to restrictions of a character set forth by the Treaty of Peace cannot in any way be employed on an offensive and that all the less inasmuch as, precisely at a moment of foreign complications, numerous forces would be needed in the interior of Germany for the maintenance of order and of the legal administration.

III. Neither the German Government nor those of the Allied countries would lose any advantages in seeing the constitution of an army of 100,000 men postponed to a later date, by which time the situation in Germany might be consolidated. The cohesion and solidity of the army are gravely compromised by the uncertainty of the future of its members. It is impossible at present to choose the troops to constitute the army of 100,000 men, because in this case the remainder, feeling sure of being shortly dismissed, would lose all their value and instead of a protection would become a danger for the Government and public order. It is indispensable to take without delay final measures to settle the organisation of the army and the future of its members. Otherwise it will be impossible to count on it as a protecting element. *The consequences which would result for Germany and Europe might be incalculable.*

IV. If Germany were permitted the permanent possession of an army of 200,000 men the organisation of this should be in conformity with the Peace Treaty. Only the units should be double those set forth by the Treaty. The result would be

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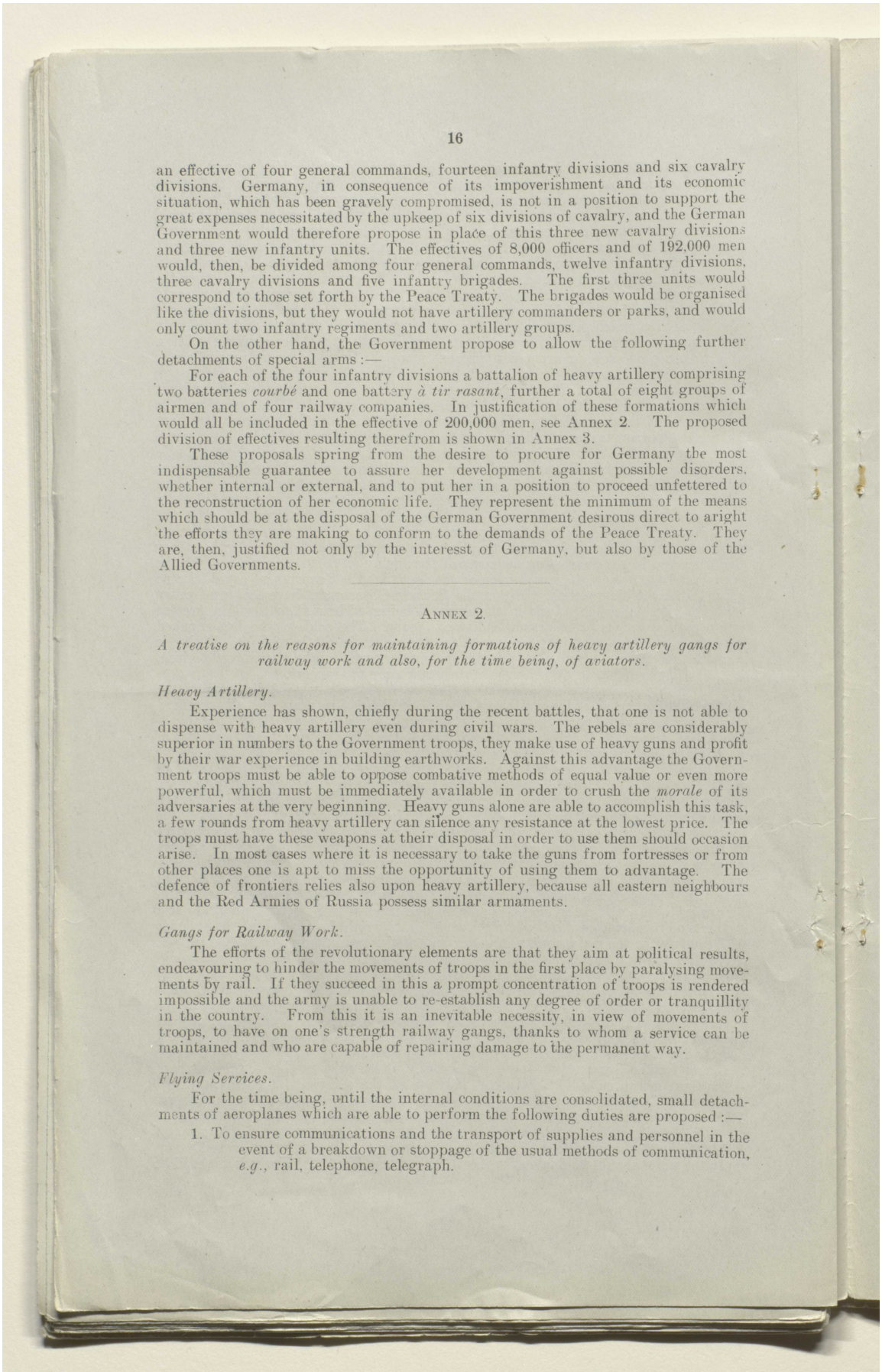

an effective of four general commands, fourteen infantry divisions and six cavalry divisions. Germany, in consequence of its impoverishment and its economic situation, which has been gravely compromised, is not in a position to support the great expenses necessitated by the upkeep of six divisions of cavalry, and the German Government would therefore propose in place of this three new cavalry divisions and three new infantry units. The effectives of 8,000 officers and of 192,000 men would, then, be divided among four general commands, twelve infantry divisions, three cavalry divisions and five infantry brigades. The first three units would correspond to those set forth by the Peace Treaty. The brigades would be organised like the divisions, but they would not have artillery commanders or parks, and would only count two infantry regiments and two artillery groups.

On the other hand, the Government propose to allow the following further detachments of special arms :—

For each of the four infantry divisions a battalion of heavy artillery comprising two batteries *courbé* and one battery *à tir rasant*, further a total of eight groups of airmen and of four railway companies. In justification of these formations which would all be included in the effective of 200,000 men, see Annex 2. The proposed division of effectives resulting therefrom is shown in Annex 3.

These proposals spring from the desire to procure for Germany the most indispensable guarantee to assure her development against possible disorders, whether internal or external, and to put her in a position to proceed unfettered to the reconstruction of her economic life. They represent the minimum of the means which should be at the disposal of the German Government desirous direct to aright the efforts they are making to conform to the demands of the Peace Treaty. They are, then, justified not only by the interesst of Germany, but also by those of the Allied Governments.

ANNEX 2.

A treatise on the reasons for maintaining formations of heavy artillery gangs for railway work and also, for the time being, of aviators.

Heavy Artillery.

Experience has shown, chiefly during the recent battles, that one is not able to dispense with heavy artillery even during civil wars. The rebels are considerably superior in numbers to the Government troops, they make use of heavy guns and profit by their war experience in building earthworks. Against this advantage the Government troops must be able to oppose combative methods of equal value or even more powerful, which must be immediately available in order to crush the *morale* of its adversaries at the very beginning. Heavy guns alone are able to accomplish this task, a few rounds from heavy artillery can silence any resistance at the lowest price. The troops must have these weapons at their disposal in order to use them should occasion arise. In most cases where it is necessary to take the guns from fortresses or from other places one is apt to miss the opportunity of using them to advantage. The defence of frontiers relies also upon heavy artillery, because all eastern neighbours and the Red Armies of Russia possess similar armaments.

Gangs for Railway Work.

The efforts of the revolutionary elements are that they aim at political results, endeavouring to hinder the movements of troops in the first place by paralysing movements by rail. If they succeed in this a prompt concentration of troops is rendered impossible and the army is unable to re-establish any degree of order or tranquillity in the country. From this it is an inevitable necessity, in view of movements of troops, to have on one's strength railway gangs, thanks to whom a service can be maintained and who are capable of repairing damage to the permanent way.

Flying Services.

For the time being, until the internal conditions are consolidated, small detachments of aeroplanes which are able to perform the following duties are proposed :—

1. To ensure communications and the transport of supplies and personnel in the event of a breakdown or stoppage of the usual methods of communication, *e.g.*, rail, telephone, telegraph.

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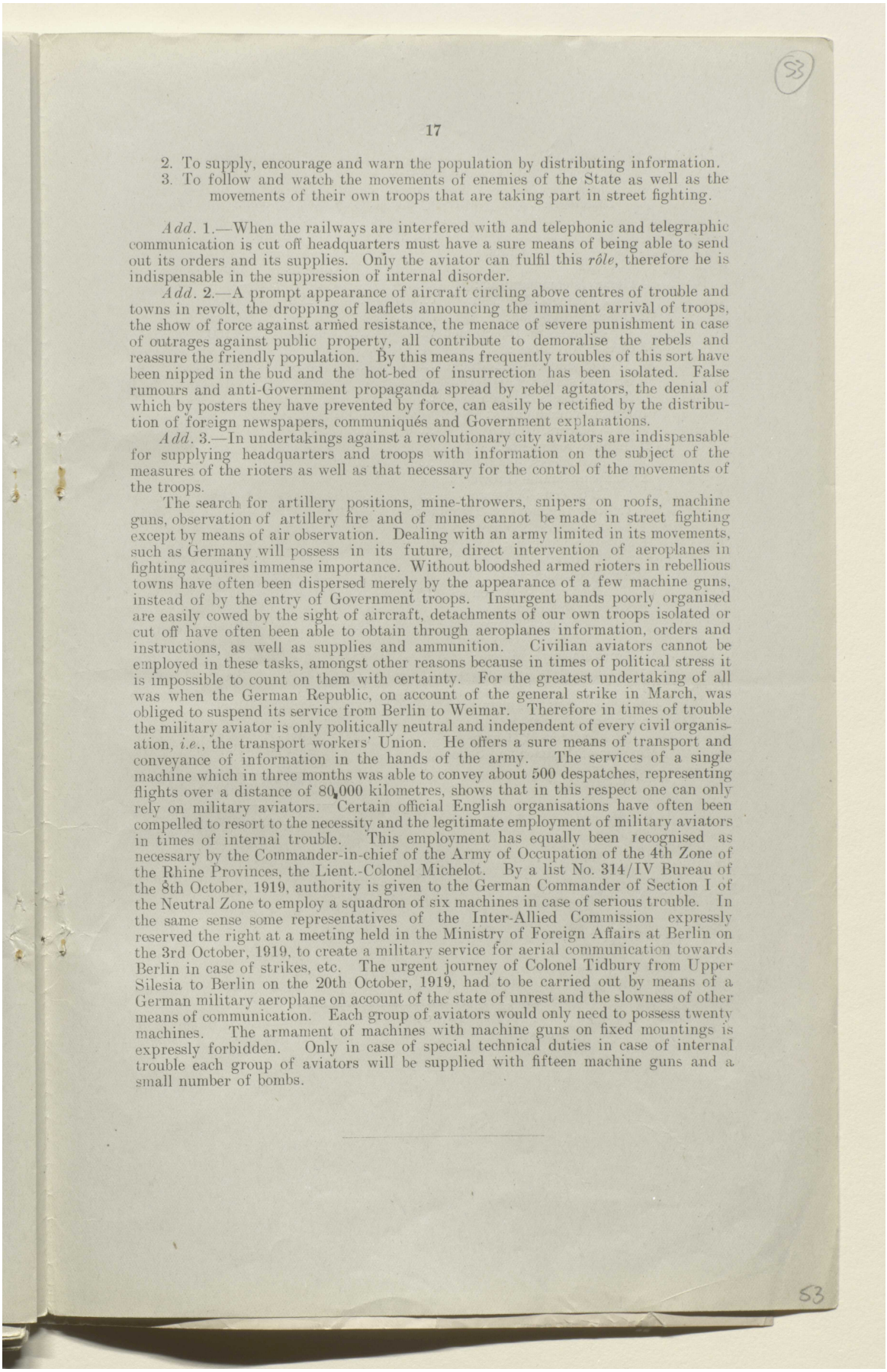

2. To supply, encourage and warn the population by distributing information.
3. To follow and watch the movements of enemies of the State as well as the movements of their own troops that are taking part in street fighting.

Add. 1.—When the railways are interfered with and telephonic and telegraphic communication is cut off headquarters must have a sure means of being able to send out its orders and its supplies. Only the aviator can fulfil this *rôle*, therefore he is indispensable in the suppression of internal disorder.

Add. 2.—A prompt appearance of aircraft circling above centres of trouble and towns in revolt, the dropping of leaflets announcing the imminent arrival of troops, the show of force against armed resistance, the menace of severe punishment in case of outrages against public property, all contribute to demoralise the rebels and reassure the friendly population. By this means frequently troubles of this sort have been nipped in the bud and the hot-bed of insurrection has been isolated. False rumours and anti-Government propaganda spread by rebel agitators, the denial of which by posters they have prevented by force, can easily be rectified by the distribution of foreign newspapers, communiqués and Government explanations.

Add. 3.—In undertakings against a revolutionary city aviators are indispensable for supplying headquarters and troops with information on the subject of the measures of the rioters as well as that necessary for the control of the movements of the troops.

The search for artillery positions, mine-throwers, snipers on roofs, machine guns, observation of artillery fire and of mines cannot be made in street fighting except by means of air observation. Dealing with an army limited in its movements, such as Germany will possess in its future, direct intervention of aeroplanes in fighting acquires immense importance. Without bloodshed armed rioters in rebellious towns have often been dispersed merely by the appearance of a few machine guns, instead of by the entry of Government troops. Insurgent bands poorly organised are easily cowed by the sight of aircraft, detachments of our own troops isolated or cut off have often been able to obtain through aeroplanes information, orders and instructions, as well as supplies and ammunition. Civilian aviators cannot be employed in these tasks, amongst other reasons because in times of political stress it is impossible to count on them with certainty. For the greatest undertaking of all was when the German Republic, on account of the general strike in March, was obliged to suspend its service from Berlin to Weimar. Therefore in times of trouble the military aviator is only politically neutral and independent of every civil organisation, *i.e.*, the transport workers' Union. He offers a sure means of transport and conveyance of information in the hands of the army. The services of a single machine which in three months was able to convey about 500 despatches, representing flights over a distance of 80,000 kilometres, shows that in this respect one can only rely on military aviators. Certain official English organisations have often been compelled to resort to the necessity and the legitimate employment of military aviators in times of internal trouble. This employment has equally been recognised as necessary by the Commander-in-chief of the Army of Occupation of the 4th Zone of the Rhine Provinces, the Lient.-Colonel Michelot. By a list No. 314/IV Bureau of the 8th October, 1919, authority is given to the German Commander of Section I of the Neutral Zone to employ a squadron of six machines in case of serious trouble. In the same sense some representatives of the Inter-Allied Commission expressly reserved the right at a meeting held in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Berlin on the 3rd October, 1919, to create a military service for aerial communication towards Berlin in case of strikes, etc. The urgent journey of Colonel Tidbury from Upper Silesia to Berlin on the 20th October, 1919, had to be carried out by means of a German military aeroplane on account of the state of unrest and the slowness of other means of communication. Each group of aviators would only need to possess twenty machines. The armament of machines with machine guns on fixed mountings is expressly forbidden. Only in case of special technical duties in case of internal trouble each group of aviators will be supplied with fifteen machine guns and a small number of bombs.

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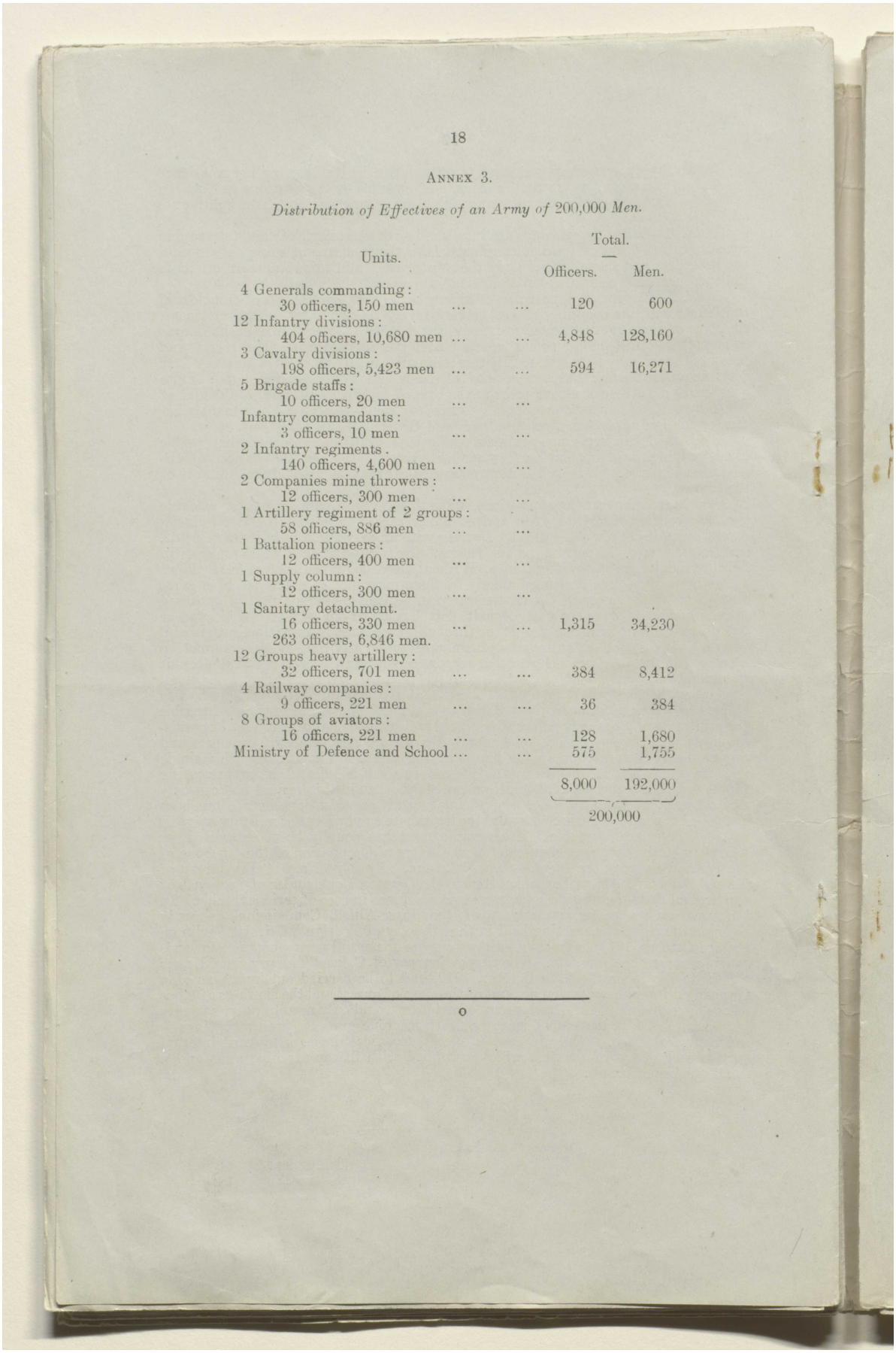

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ANNEX 3.

Distribution of Effectives of an Army of 200,000 Men.

Units.	Total. Officers.	Men.
4 Generals commanding : 30 officers, 150 men	120	600
12 Infantry divisions : 404 officers, 10,680 men	4,848	128,160
3 Cavalry divisions : 198 officers, 5,423 men	594	16,271
5 Brigade staffs : 10 officers, 20 men		
Infantry commandants : 3 officers, 10 men		
2 Infantry regiments . 140 officers, 4,600 men		
2 Companies mine throwers : 12 officers, 300 men		
1 Artillery regiment of 2 groups : 58 officers, 886 men		
1 Battalion pioneers : 12 officers, 400 men		
1 Supply column : 12 officers, 300 men		
1 Sanitary detachment. 16 officers, 330 men ... ... 263 officers, 6,846 men.	1,315	34,230
12 Groups heavy artillery : 32 officers, 701 men	384	8,412
4 Railway companies : 9 officers, 221 men	36	384
8 Groups of aviators : 16 officers, 221 men	128	1,680
Ministry of Defence and School	575	1,755
	8,000	192,000
	200,000	

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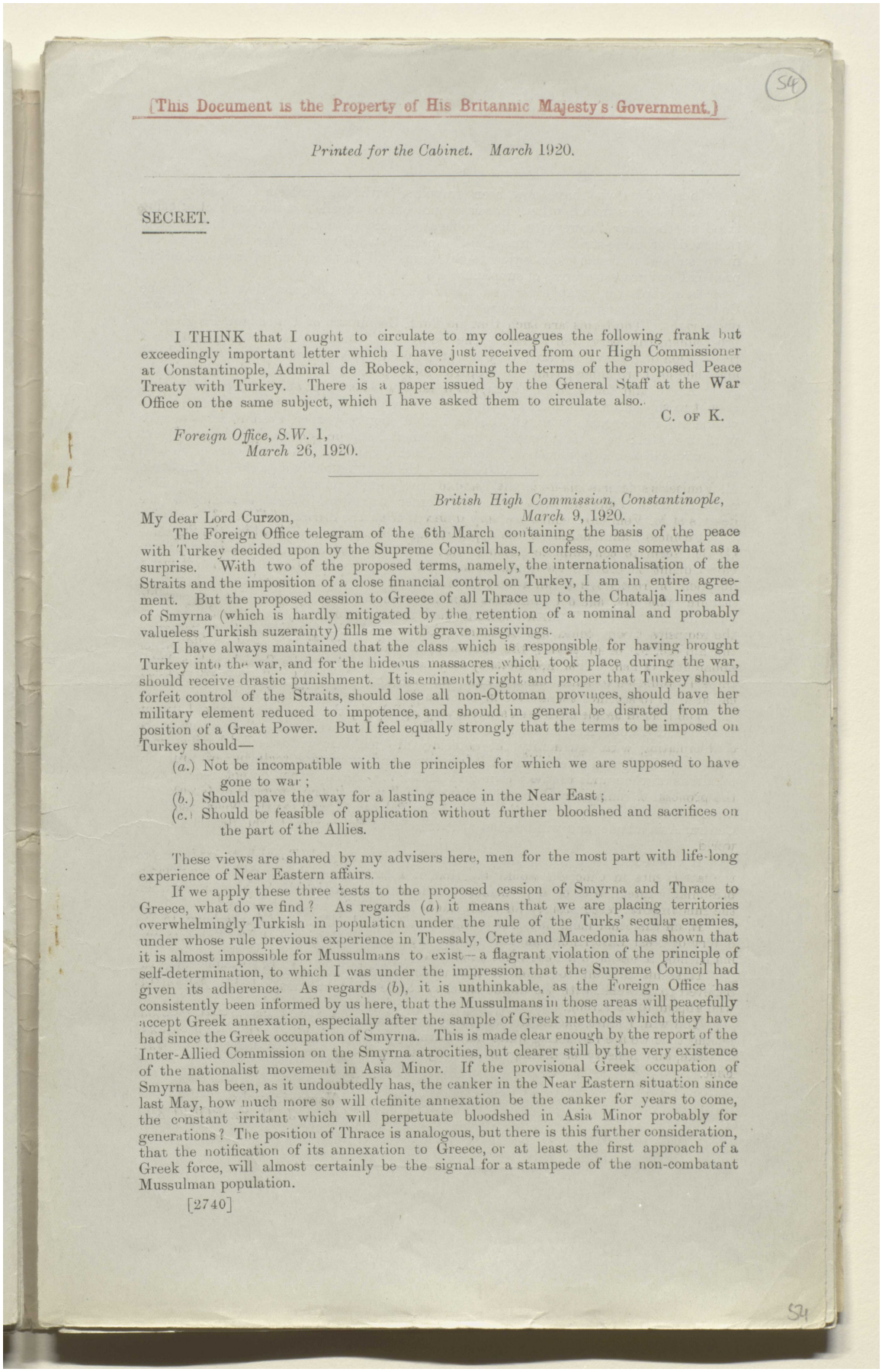

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Printed for the Cabinet. March 1920.

SECRET.

I THINK that I ought to circulate to my colleagues the following frank but exceedingly important letter which I have just received from our High Commissioner at Constantinople, Admiral de Robeck, concerning the terms of the proposed Peace Treaty with Turkey. There is a paper issued by the General Staff at the War Office on the same subject, which I have asked them to circulate also.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office, S.W. 1,
March 26, 1920.

British High Commission, Constantinople,
March 9, 1920.

My dear Lord Curzon,

The Foreign Office telegram of the 6th March containing the basis of the peace with Turkey decided upon by the Supreme Council has, I confess, come somewhat as a surprise. With two of the proposed terms, namely, the internationalisation of the Straits and the imposition of a close financial control on Turkey, I am in entire agreement. But the proposed cession to Greece of all Thrace up to the Chatalja lines and of Smyrna (which is hardly mitigated by the retention of a nominal and probably valueless Turkish suzerainty) fills me with grave misgivings.

I have always maintained that the class which is responsible for having brought Turkey into the war, and for the hideous massacres which took place during the war, should receive drastic punishment. It is eminently right and proper that Turkey should forfeit control of the Straits, should lose all non-Ottoman provinces, should have her military element reduced to impotence, and should in general be disrated from the position of a Great Power. But I feel equally strongly that the terms to be imposed on Turkey should—

(*a.*) Not be incompatible with the principles for which we are supposed to have gone to war;
(*b.*) Should pave the way for a lasting peace in the Near East;
(*c.*) Should be feasible of application without further bloodshed and sacrifices on the part of the Allies.

These views are shared by my advisers here, men for the most part with life-long experience of Near Eastern affairs.

If we apply these three tests to the proposed cession of Smyrna and Thrace to Greece, what do we find? As regards (*a*) it means that we are placing territories overwhelmingly Turkish in population under the rule of the Turks' secular enemies, under whose rule previous experience in Thessaly, Crete and Macedonia has shown that it is almost impossible for Mussulmans to exist—a flagrant violation of the principle of self-determination, to which I was under the impression that the Supreme Council had given its adherence. As regards (*b*), it is unthinkable, as the Foreign Office has consistently been informed by us here, that the Mussulmans in those areas will peacefully accept Greek annexation, especially after the sample of Greek methods which they have had since the Greek occupation of Smyrna. This is made clear enough by the report of the Inter-Allied Commission on the Smyrna atrocities, but clearer still by the very existence of the nationalist movement in Asia Minor. If the provisional Greek occupation of Smyrna has been, as it undoubtedly has, the canker in the Near Eastern situation since last May, how much more so will definite annexation be the canker for years to come, the constant irritant which will perpetuate bloodshed in Asia Minor probably for generations? The position of Thrace is analogous, but there is this further consideration, that the notification of its annexation to Greece, or at least the first approach of a Greek force, will almost certainly be the signal for a stampede of the non-combatant Mussulman population.

[2740]

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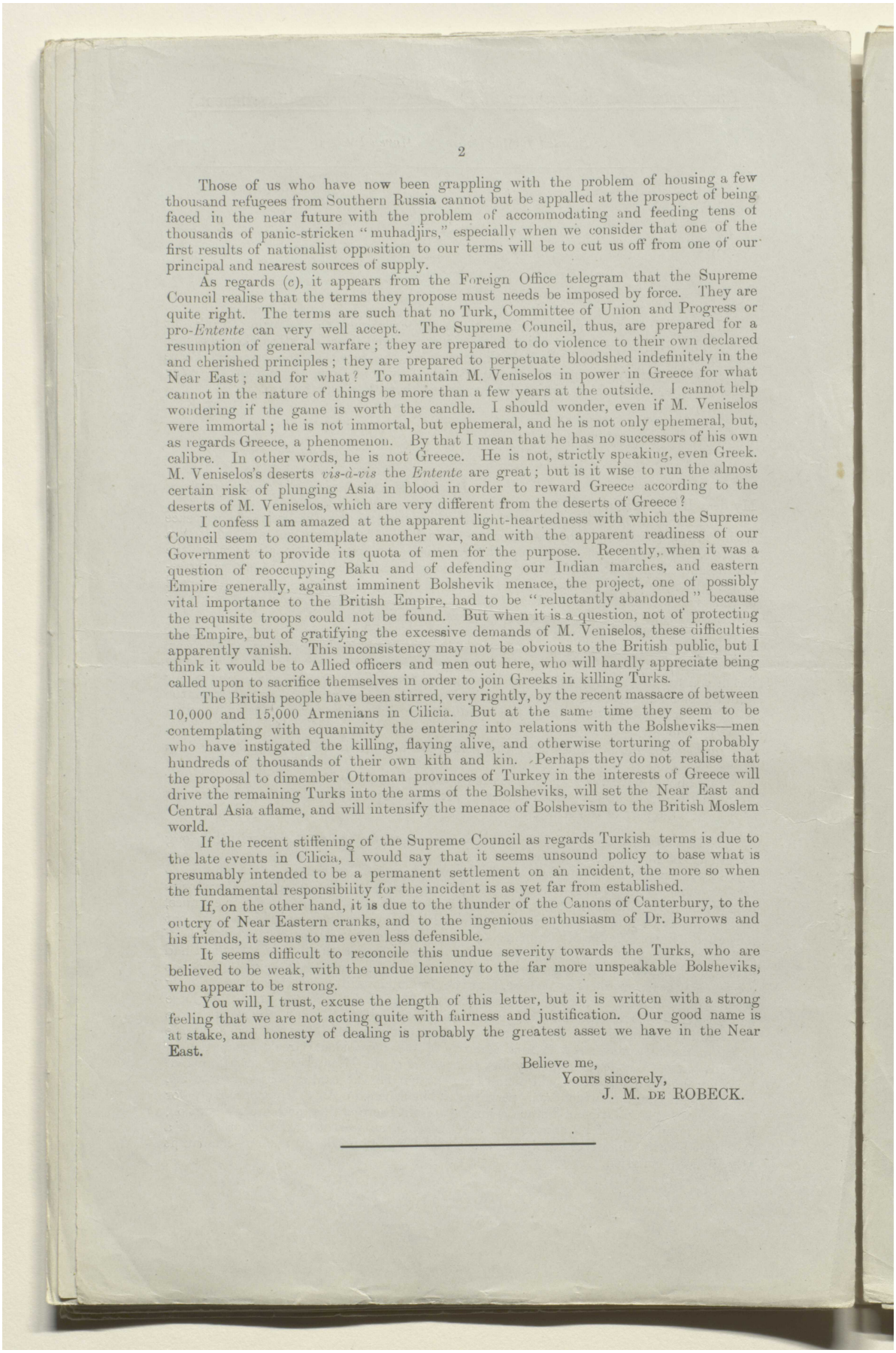

Those of us who have now been grappling with the problem of housing a few thousand refugees from Southern Russia cannot but be appalled at the prospect of being faced in the near future with the problem of accommodating and feeding tens of thousands of panic-stricken "muhadjirs," especially when we consider that one of the first results of nationalist opposition to our terms will be to cut us off from one of our principal and nearest sources of supply.

As regards (c), it appears from the Foreign Office telegram that the Supreme Council realise that the terms they propose must needs be imposed by force. They are quite right. The terms are such that no Turk, Committee of Union and Progress or pro-*Entente* can very well accept. The Supreme Council, thus, are prepared for a resumption of general warfare; they are prepared to do violence to their own declared and cherished principles; they are prepared to perpetuate bloodshed indefinitely in the Near East; and for what? To maintain M. Veniselos in power in Greece for what cannot in the nature of things be more than a few years at the outside. I cannot help wondering if the game is worth the candle. I should wonder, even if M. Veniselos were immortal; he is not immortal, but ephemeral, and he is not only ephemeral, but, as regards Greece, a phenomenon. By that I mean that he has no successors of his own calibre. In other words, he is not Greece. He is not, strictly speaking, even Greek. M. Veniselos's deserts *vis-à-vis* the *Entente* are great; but is it wise to run the almost certain risk of plunging Asia in blood in order to reward Greece according to the deserts of M. Veniselos, which are very different from the deserts of Greece?

I confess I am amazed at the apparent light-heartedness with which the Supreme Council seem to contemplate another war, and with the apparent readiness of our Government to provide its quota of men for the purpose. Recently, when it was a question of reoccupying Baku and of defending our Indian marches, and eastern Empire generally, against imminent Bolshevik menace, the project, one of possibly vital importance to the British Empire, had to be "reluctantly abandoned" because the requisite troops could not be found. But when it is a question, not of protecting the Empire, but of gratifying the excessive demands of M. Veniselos, these difficulties apparently vanish. This inconsistency may not be obvious to the British public, but I think it would be to Allied officers and men out here, who will hardly appreciate being called upon to sacrifice themselves in order to join Greeks in killing Turks.

The British people have been stirred, very rightly, by the recent massacre of between 10,000 and 15,000 Armenians in Cilicia. But at the same time they seem to be contemplating with equanimity the entering into relations with the Bolsheviks—men who have instigated the killing, flaying alive, and otherwise torturing of probably hundreds of thousands of their own kith and kin. Perhaps they do not realise that the proposal to dimember Ottoman provinces of Turkey in the interests of Greece will drive the remaining Turks into the arms of the Bolsheviks, will set the Near East and Central Asia aflame, and will intensify the menace of Bolshevism to the British Moslem world.

If the recent stiffening of the Supreme Council as regards Turkish terms is due to the late events in Cilicia, I would say that it seems unsound policy to base what is presumably intended to be a permanent settlement on an incident, the more so when the fundamental responsibility for the incident is as yet far from established.

If, on the other hand, it is due to the thunder of the Canons of Canterbury, to the outcry of Near Eastern cranks, and to the ingenious enthusiasm of Dr. Burrows and his friends, it seems to me even less defensible.

It seems difficult to reconcile this undue severity towards the Turks, who are believed to be weak, with the undue leniency to the far more unspeakable Bolsheviks, who appear to be strong.

You will, I trust, excuse the length of this letter, but it is written with a strong feeling that we are not acting quite with fairness and justification. Our good name is at stake, and honesty of dealing is probably the greatest asset we have in the Near East.

Believe me,
Yours sincerely,
J. M. DE ROBECK.

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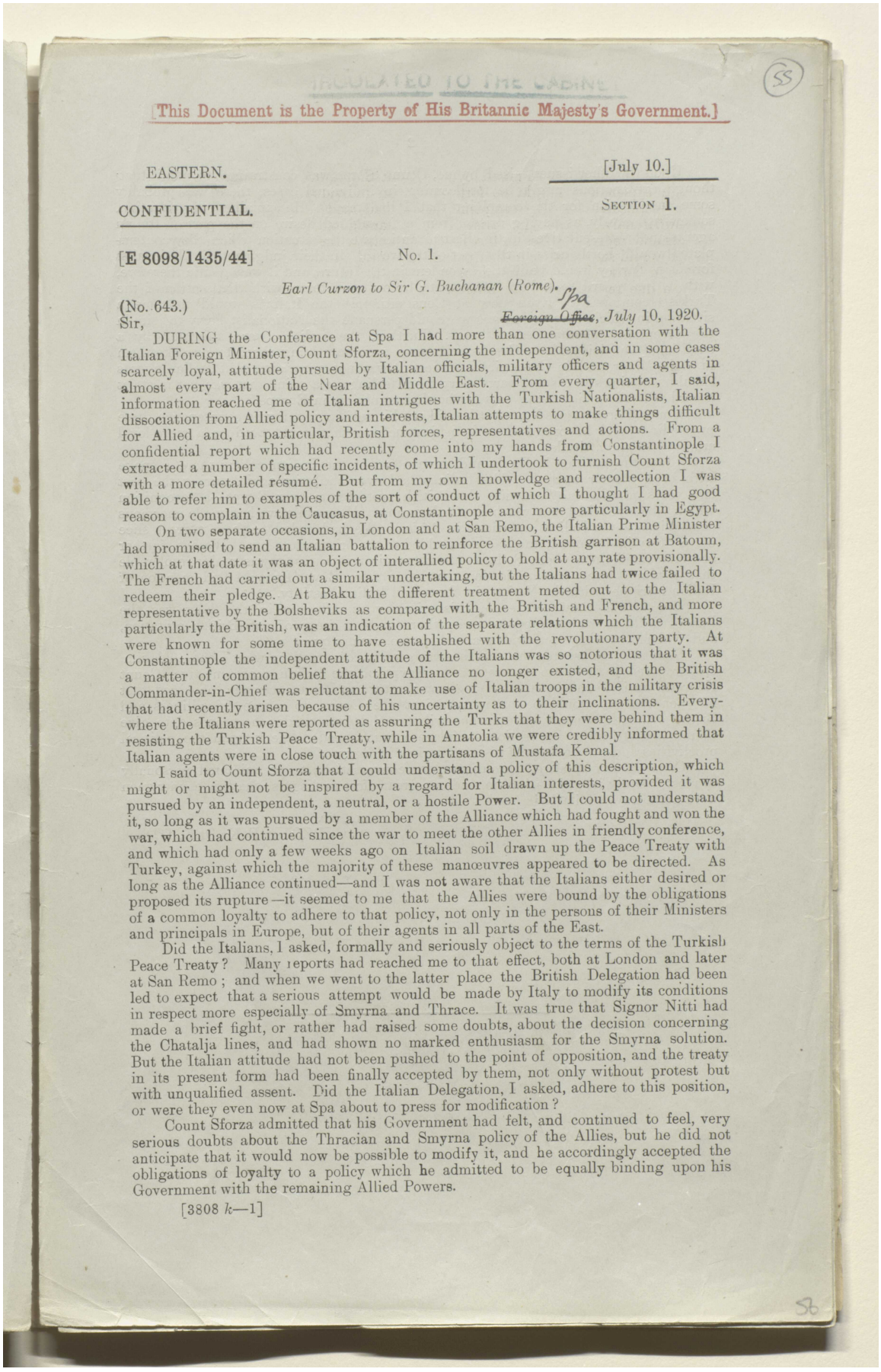

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EASTERN. [July 10.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 8098/1435/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome). Spa

(No. 643.)

Sir, ~~Foreign Office~~, *July* 10, 1920.

DURING the Conference at Spa I had more than one conversation with the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Sforza, concerning the independent, and in some cases scarcely loyal, attitude pursued by Italian officials, military officers and agents in almost every part of the Near and Middle East. From every quarter, I said, information reached me of Italian intrigues with the Turkish Nationalists, Italian dissociation from Allied policy and interests, Italian attempts to make things difficult for Allied and, in particular, British forces, representatives and actions. From a confidential report which had recently come into my hands from Constantinople I extracted a number of specific incidents, of which I undertook to furnish Count Sforza with a more detailed résumé. But from my own knowledge and recollection I was able to refer him to examples of the sort of conduct of which I thought I had good reason to complain in the Caucasus, at Constantinople and more particularly in Egypt.

On two separate occasions, in London and at San Remo, the Italian Prime Minister had promised to send an Italian battalion to reinforce the British garrison at Batoum, which at that date it was an object of interallied policy to hold at any rate provisionally. The French had carried out a similar undertaking, but the Italians had twice failed to redeem their pledge. At Baku the different treatment meted out to the Italian representative by the Bolsheviks as compared with the British and French, and more particularly the British, was an indication of the separate relations which the Italians were known for some time to have established with the revolutionary party. At Constantinople the independent attitude of the Italians was so notorious that it was a matter of common belief that the Alliance no longer existed, and the British Commander-in-Chief was reluctant to make use of Italian troops in the military crisis that had recently arisen because of his uncertainty as to their inclinations. Everywhere the Italians were reported as assuring the Turks that they were behind them in resisting the Turkish Peace Treaty, while in Anatolia we were credibly informed that Italian agents were in close touch with the partisans of Mustafa Kemal.

I said to Count Sforza that I could understand a policy of this description, which might or might not be inspired by a regard for Italian interests, provided it was pursued by an independent, a neutral, or a hostile Power. But I could not understand it, so long as it was pursued by a member of the Alliance which had fought and won the war, which had continued since the war to meet the other Allies in friendly conference, and which had only a few weeks ago on Italian soil drawn up the Peace Treaty with Turkey, against which the majority of these manœuvres appeared to be directed. As long as the Alliance continued—and I was not aware that the Italians either desired or proposed its rupture—it seemed to me that the Allies were bound by the obligations of a common loyalty to adhere to that policy, not only in the persons of their Ministers and principals in Europe, but of their agents in all parts of the East.

Did the Italians, I asked, formally and seriously object to the terms of the Turkish Peace Treaty? Many reports had reached me to that effect, both at London and later at San Remo; and when we went to the latter place the British Delegation had been led to expect that a serious attempt would be made by Italy to modify its conditions in respect more especially of Smyrna and Thrace. It was true that Signor Nitti had made a brief fight, or rather had raised some doubts, about the decision concerning the Chatalja lines, and had shown no marked enthusiasm for the Smyrna solution. But the Italian attitude had not been pushed to the point of opposition, and the treaty in its present form had been finally accepted by them, not only without protest but with unqualified assent. Did the Italian Delegation, I asked, adhere to this position, or were they even now at Spa about to press for modification?

Count Sforza admitted that his Government had felt, and continued to feel, very serious doubts about the Thracian and Smyrna policy of the Allies, but he did not anticipate that it would now be possible to modify it, and he accordingly accepted the obligations of loyalty to a policy which he admitted to be equally binding upon his Government with the remaining Allied Powers.

[3808 *k*—1]

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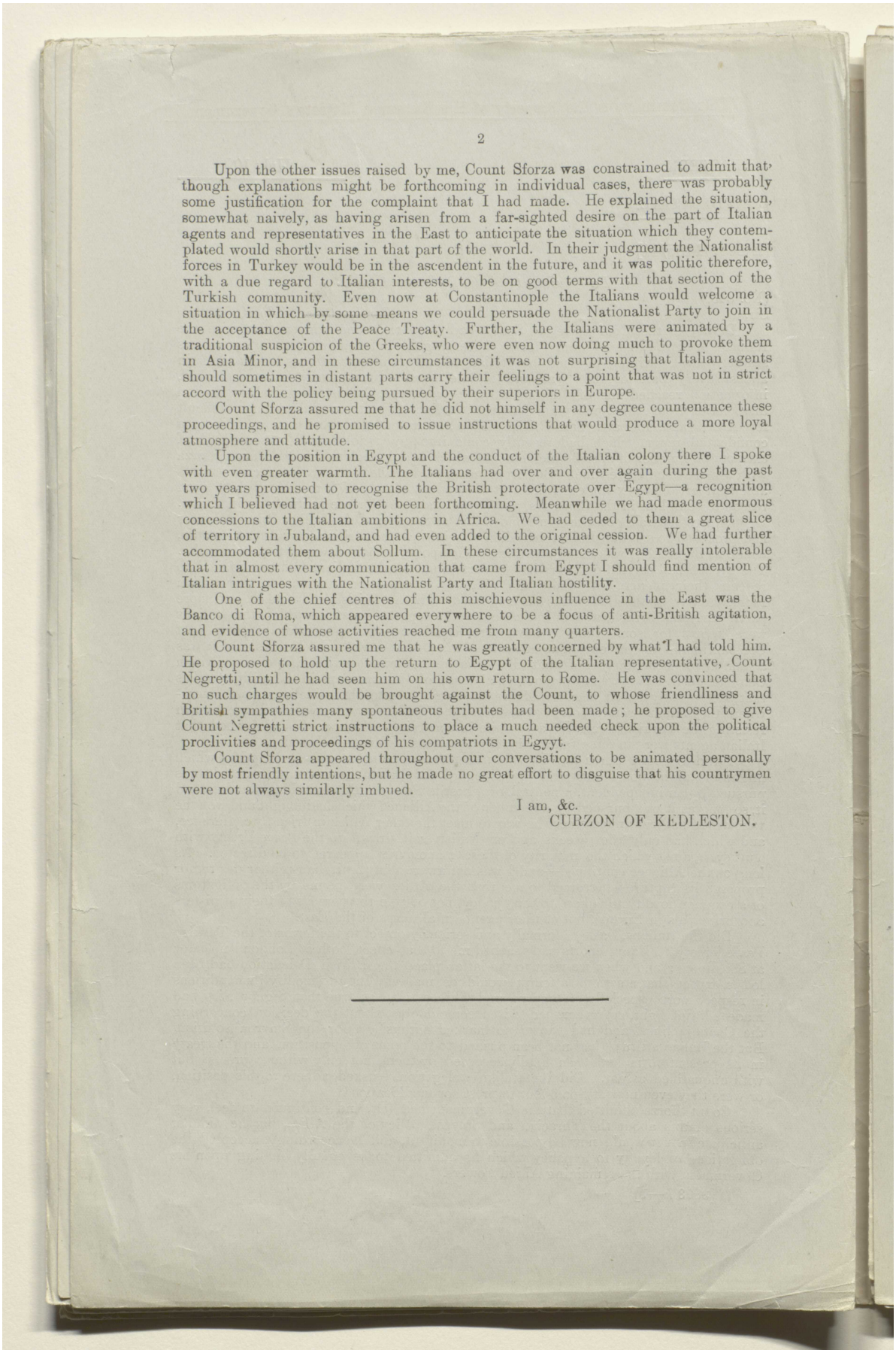

Upon the other issues raised by me, Count Sforza was constrained to admit that, though explanations might be forthcoming in individual cases, there was probably some justification for the complaint that I had made. He explained the situation, somewhat naively, as having arisen from a far-sighted desire on the part of Italian agents and representatives in the East to anticipate the situation which they contemplated would shortly arise in that part of the world. In their judgment the Nationalist forces in Turkey would be in the ascendent in the future, and it was politic therefore, with a due regard to Italian interests, to be on good terms with that section of the Turkish community. Even now at Constantinople the Italians would welcome a situation in which by some means we could persuade the Nationalist Party to join in the acceptance of the Peace Treaty. Further, the Italians were animated by a traditional suspicion of the Greeks, who were even now doing much to provoke them in Asia Minor, and in these circumstances it was not surprising that Italian agents should sometimes in distant parts carry their feelings to a point that was not in strict accord with the policy being pursued by their superiors in Europe.

Count Sforza assured me that he did not himself in any degree countenance these proceedings, and he promised to issue instructions that would produce a more loyal atmosphere and attitude.

Upon the position in Egypt and the conduct of the Italian colony there I spoke with even greater warmth. The Italians had over and over again during the past two years promised to recognise the British protectorate over Egypt—a recognition which I believed had not yet been forthcoming. Meanwhile we had made enormous concessions to the Italian ambitions in Africa. We had ceded to them a great slice of territory in Jubaland, and had even added to the original cession. We had further accommodated them about Sollum. In these circumstances it was really intolerable that in almost every communication that came from Egypt I should find mention of Italian intrigues with the Nationalist Party and Italian hostility.

One of the chief centres of this mischievous influence in the East was the Banco di Roma, which appeared everywhere to be a focus of anti-British agitation, and evidence of whose activities reached me from many quarters.

Count Sforza assured me that he was greatly concerned by what I had told him. He proposed to hold up the return to Egypt of the Italian representative, Count Negretti, until he had seen him on his own return to Rome. He was convinced that no such charges would be brought against the Count, to whose friendliness and British sympathies many spontaneous tributes had been made; he proposed to give Count Negretti strict instructions to place a much needed check upon the political proclivities and proceedings of his compatriots in Egyyt.

Count Sforza appeared throughout our conversations to be animated personally by most friendly intentions, but he made no great effort to disguise that his countrymen were not always similarly imbued.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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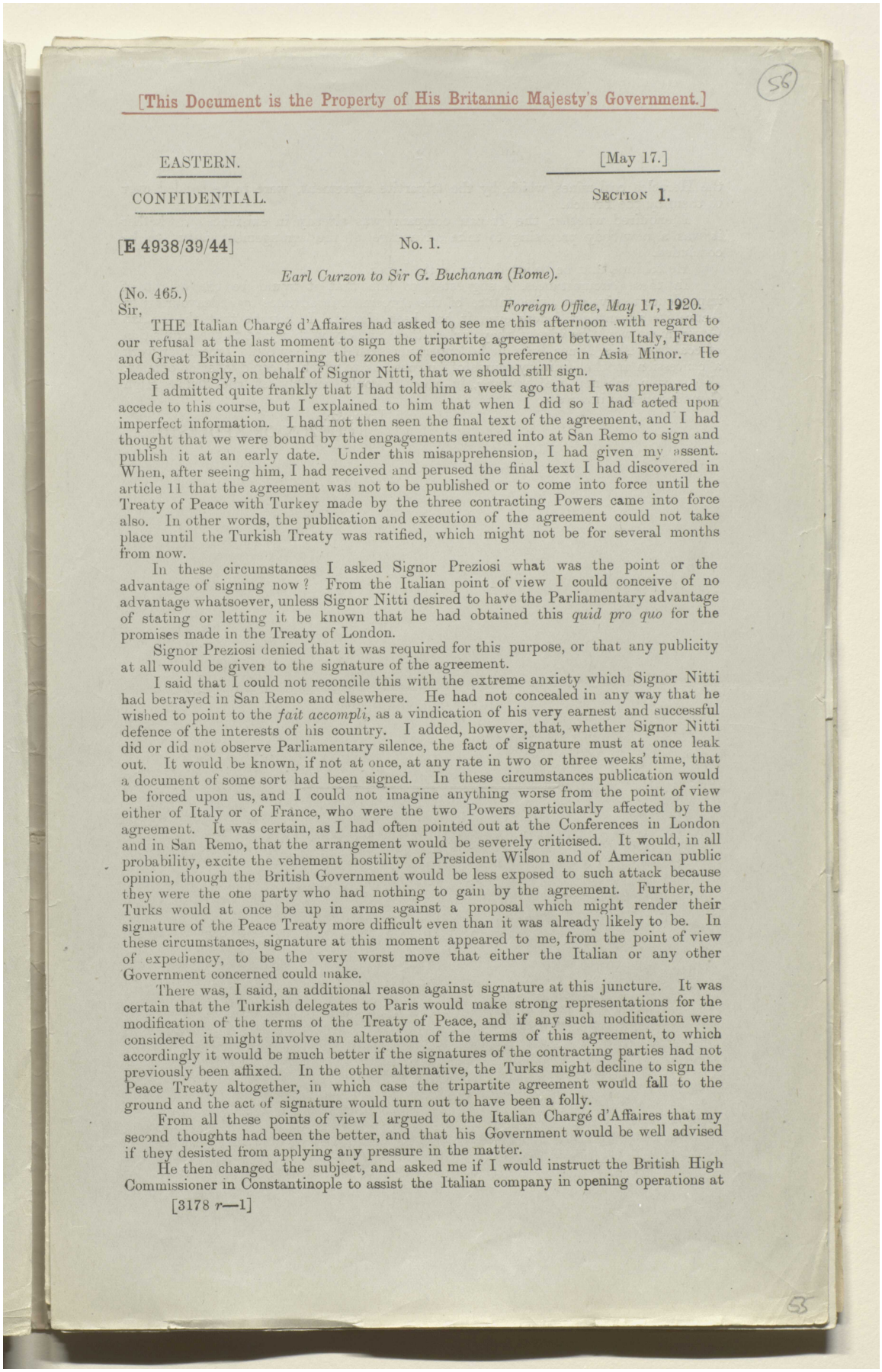

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EASTERN. [May 17.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 4938/39/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 465.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 17, 1920.

THE Italian Chargé d'Affaires had asked to see me this afternoon with regard to our refusal at the last moment to sign the tripartite agreement between Italy, France and Great Britain concerning the zones of economic preference in Asia Minor. He pleaded strongly, on behalf of Signor Nitti, that we should still sign.

I admitted quite frankly that I had told him a week ago that I was prepared to accede to this course, but I explained to him that when I did so I had acted upon imperfect information. I had not then seen the final text of the agreement, and I had thought that we were bound by the engagements entered into at San Remo to sign and publish it at an early date. Under this misapprehension, I had given my assent. When, after seeing him, I had received and perused the final text I had discovered in article 11 that the agreement was not to be published or to come into force until the Treaty of Peace with Turkey made by the three contracting Powers came into force also. In other words, the publication and execution of the agreement could not take place until the Turkish Treaty was ratified, which might not be for several months from now.

In these circumstances I asked Signor Preziosi what was the point or the advantage of signing now? From the Italian point of view I could conceive of no advantage whatsoever, unless Signor Nitti desired to have the Parliamentary advantage of stating or letting it be known that he had obtained this *quid pro quo* for the promises made in the Treaty of London.

Signor Preziosi denied that it was required for this purpose, or that any publicity at all would be given to the signature of the agreement.

I said that I could not reconcile this with the extreme anxiety which Signor Nitti had betrayed in San Remo and elsewhere. He had not concealed in any way that he wished to point to the *fait accompli*, as a vindication of his very earnest and successful defence of the interests of his country. I added, however, that, whether Signor Nitti did or did not observe Parliamentary silence, the fact of signature must at once leak out. It would be known, if not at once, at any rate in two or three weeks' time, that a document of some sort had been signed. In these circumstances publication would be forced upon us, and I could not imagine anything worse from the point of view either of Italy or of France, who were the two Powers particularly affected by the agreement. It was certain, as I had often pointed out at the Conferences in London and in San Remo, that the arrangement would be severely criticised. It would, in all probability, excite the vehement hostility of President Wilson and of American public opinion, though the British Government would be less exposed to such attack because they were the one party who had nothing to gain by the agreement. Further, the Turks would at once be up in arms against a proposal which might render their signature of the Peace Treaty more difficult even than it was already likely to be. In these circumstances, signature at this moment appeared to me, from the point of view of expediency, to be the very worst move that either the Italian or any other Government concerned could make.

There was, I said, an additional reason against signature at this juncture. It was certain that the Turkish delegates to Paris would make strong representations for the modification of the terms of the Treaty of Peace, and if any such modification were considered it might involve an alteration of the terms of this agreement, to which accordingly it would be much better if the signatures of the contracting parties had not previously been affixed. In the other alternative, the Turks might decline to sign the Peace Treaty altogether, in which case the tripartite agreement would fall to the ground and the act of signature would turn out to have been a folly.

From all these points of view I argued to the Italian Chargé d'Affaires that my second thoughts had been the better, and that his Government would be well advised if they desisted from applying any pressure in the matter.

He then changed the subject, and asked me if I would instruct the British High Commissioner in Constantinople to assist the Italian company in opening operations at

[3178 *r*—1]

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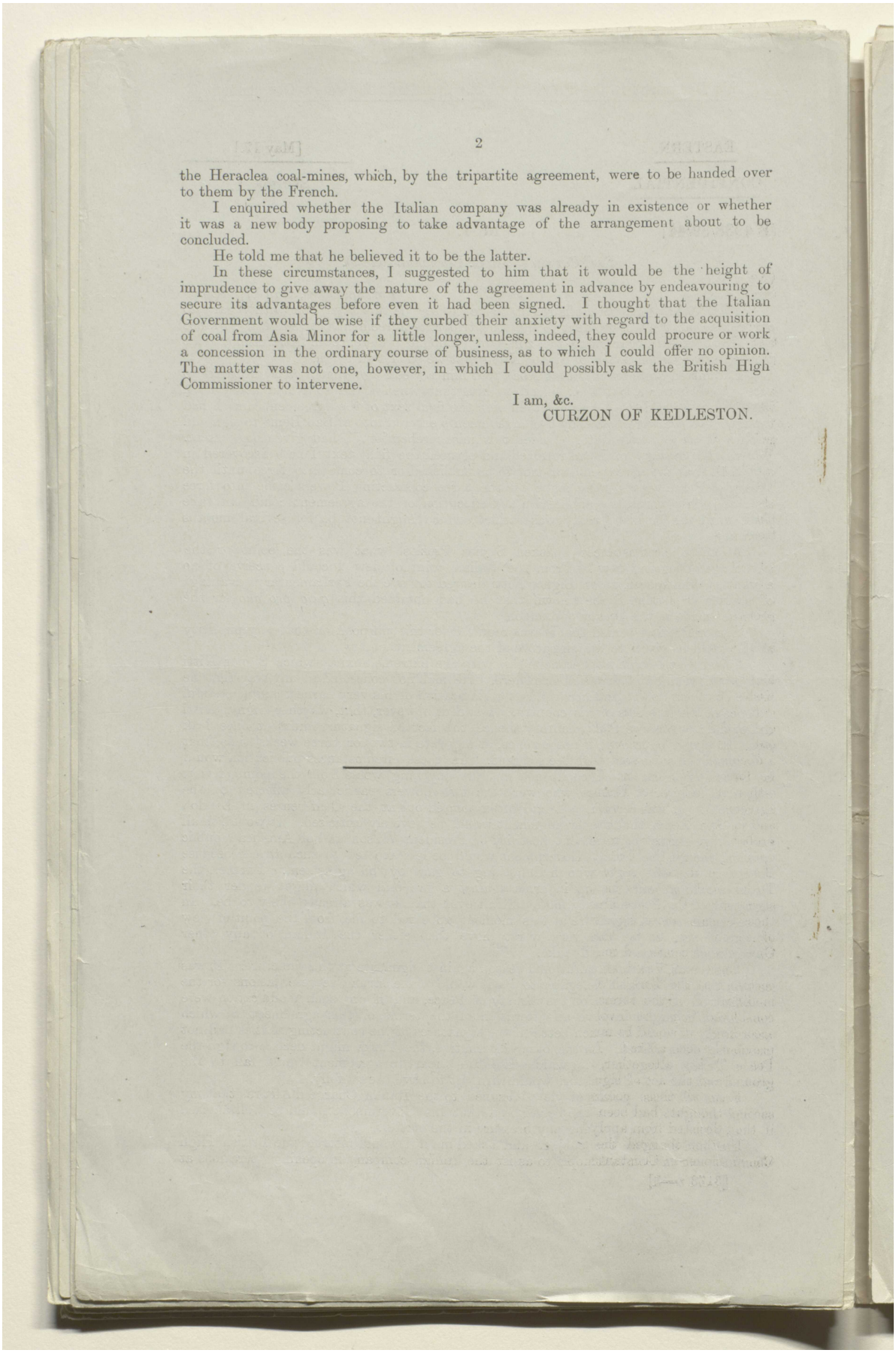

the Heraclea coal-mines, which, by the tripartite agreement, were to be handed over to them by the French.

I enquired whether the Italian company was already in existence or whether it was a new body proposing to take advantage of the arrangement about to be concluded.

He told me that he believed it to be the latter.

In these circumstances, I suggested to him that it would be the height of imprudence to give away the nature of the agreement in advance by endeavouring to secure its advantages before even it had been signed. I thought that the Italian Government would be wise if they curbed their anxiety with regard to the acquisition of coal from Asia Minor for a little longer, unless, indeed, they could procure or work a concession in the ordinary course of business, as to which I could offer no opinion. The matter was not one, however, in which I could possibly ask the British High Commissioner to intervene.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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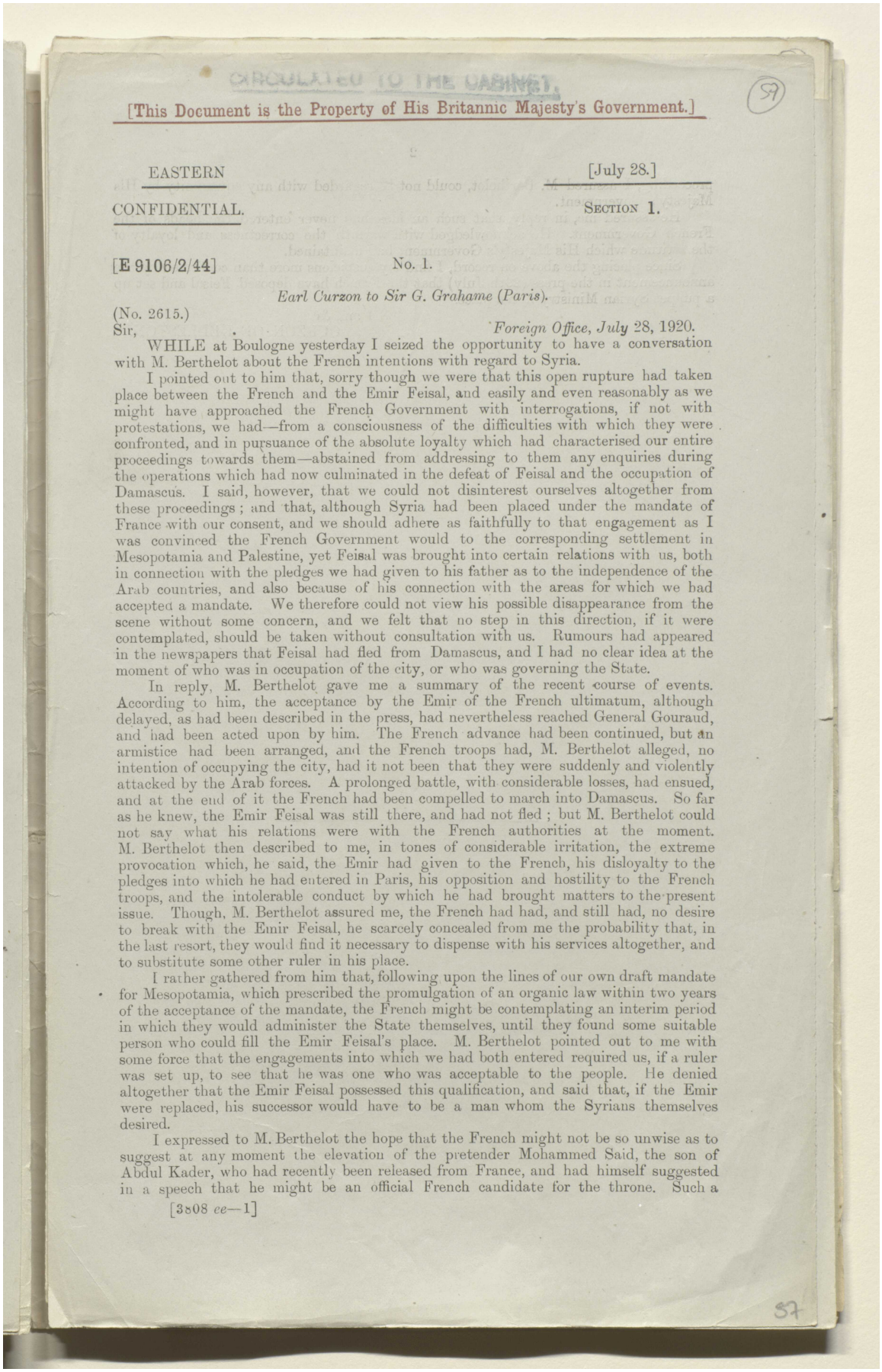

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EASTERN [July 28.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 9106/2/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Grahame (Paris).

(No. 2615.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, July* 28, 1920.

WHILE at Boulogne yesterday I seized the opportunity to have a conversation with M. Berthelot about the French intentions with regard to Syria.

I pointed out to him that, sorry though we were that this open rupture had taken place between the French and the Emir Feisal, and easily and even reasonably as we might have approached the French Government with interrogations, if not with protestations, we had—from a consciousness of the difficulties with which they were confronted, and in pursuance of the absolute loyalty which had characterised our entire proceedings towards them—abstained from addressing to them any enquiries during the operations which had now culminated in the defeat of Feisal and the occupation of Damascus. I said, however, that we could not disinterest ourselves altogether from these proceedings; and that, although Syria had been placed under the mandate of France with our consent, and we should adhere as faithfully to that engagement as I was convinced the French Government would to the corresponding settlement in Mesopotamia and Palestine, yet Feisal was brought into certain relations with us, both in connection with the pledges we had given to his father as to the independence of the Arab countries, and also because of his connection with the areas for which we had accepted a mandate. We therefore could not view his possible disappearance from the scene without some concern, and we felt that no step in this direction, if it were contemplated, should be taken without consultation with us. Rumours had appeared in the newspapers that Feisal had fled from Damascus, and I had no clear idea at the moment of who was in occupation of the city, or who was governing the State.

In reply, M. Berthelot gave me a summary of the recent course of events. According to him, the acceptance by the Emir of the French ultimatum, although delayed, as had been described in the press, had nevertheless reached General Gouraud, and had been acted upon by him. The French advance had been continued, but an armistice had been arranged, and the French troops had, M. Berthelot alleged, no intention of occupying the city, had it not been that they were suddenly and violently attacked by the Arab forces. A prolonged battle, with considerable losses, had ensued, and at the end of it the French had been compelled to march into Damascus. So far as he knew, the Emir Feisal was still there, and had not fled; but M. Berthelot could not say what his relations were with the French authorities at the moment. M. Berthelot then described to me, in tones of considerable irritation, the extreme provocation which, he said, the Emir had given to the French, his disloyalty to the pledges into which he had entered in Paris, his opposition and hostility to the French troops, and the intolerable conduct by which he had brought matters to the present issue. Though, M. Berthelot assured me, the French had had, and still had, no desire to break with the Emir Feisal, he scarcely concealed from me the probability that, in the last resort, they would find it necessary to dispense with his services altogether, and to substitute some other ruler in his place.

I rather gathered from him that, following upon the lines of our own draft mandate for Mesopotamia, which prescribed the promulgation of an organic law within two years of the acceptance of the mandate, the French might be contemplating an interim period in which they would administer the State themselves, until they found some suitable person who could fill the Emir Feisal's place. M. Berthelot pointed out to me with some force that the engagements into which we had both entered required us, if a ruler was set up, to see that he was one who was acceptable to the people. He denied altogether that the Emir Feisal possessed this qualification, and said that, if the Emir were replaced, his successor would have to be a man whom the Syrians themselves desired.

I expressed to M. Berthelot the hope that the French might not be so unwise as to suggest at any moment the elevation of the pretender Mohammed Said, the son of Abdul Kader, who had recently been released from France, and had himself suggested in a speech that he might be an official French candidate for the throne. Such a

[3808 *ee*—1]

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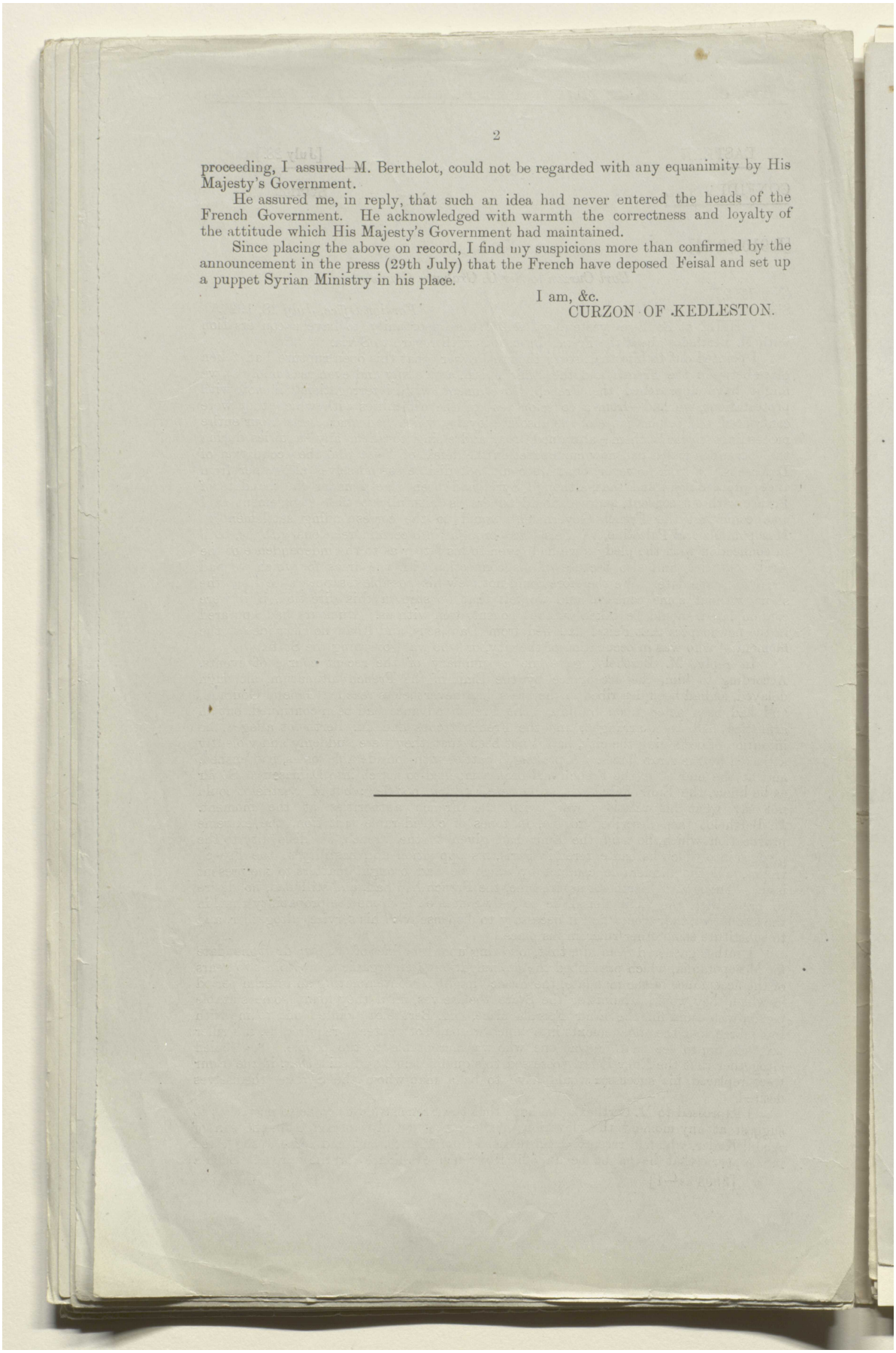

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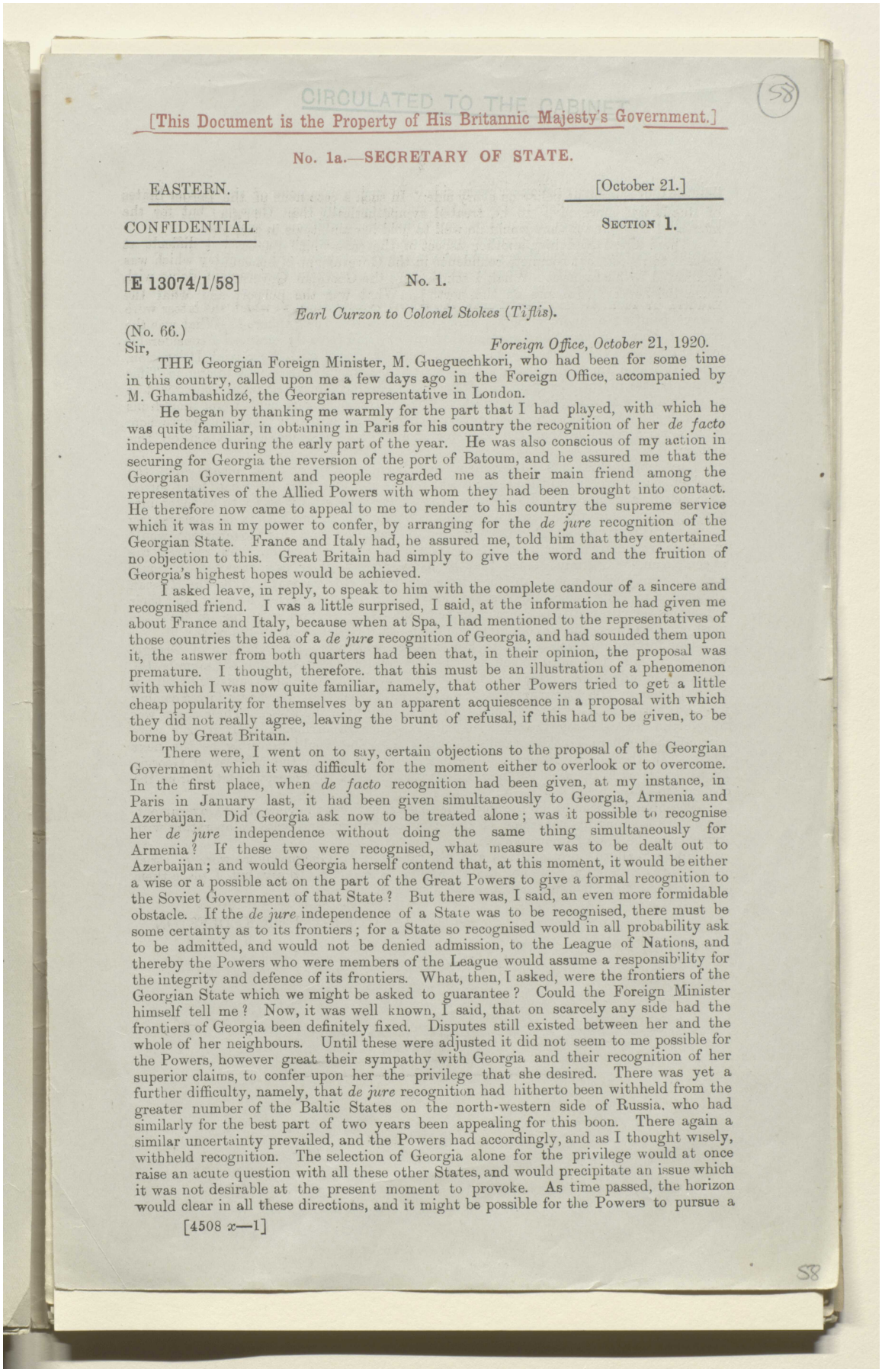
proceeding, I assured M. Berthelot, could not be regarded with any equanimity by His Majesty's Government.

He assured me, in reply, that such an idea had never entered the heads of the French Government. He acknowledged with warmth the correctness and loyalty of the attitude which His Majesty's Government had maintained.

Since placing the above on record, I find my suspicions more than confirmed by the announcement in the press (29th July) that the French have deposed Feisal and set up a puppet Syrian Ministry in his place.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.



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No. 1a.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN. [October 21.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13074/1/58] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Colonel Stokes (Tiflis).

(No. 66.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 21, 1920.

THE Georgian Foreign Minister, M. Gueguechkori, who had been for some time in this country, called upon me a few days ago in the Foreign Office, accompanied by M. Ghambashidzé, the Georgian representative in London.

He began by thanking me warmly for the part that I had played, with which he was quite familiar, in obtaining in Paris for his country the recognition of her *de facto* independence during the early part of the year. He was also conscious of my action in securing for Georgia the reversion of the port of Batoum, and he assured me that the Georgian Government and people regarded me as their main friend among the representatives of the Allied Powers with whom they had been brought into contact. He therefore now came to appeal to me to render to his country the supreme service which it was in my power to confer, by arranging for the *de jure* recognition of the Georgian State. France and Italy had, he assured me, told him that they entertained no objection to this. Great Britain had simply to give the word and the fruition of Georgia's highest hopes would be achieved.

I asked leave, in reply, to speak to him with the complete candour of a sincere and recognised friend. I was a little surprised, I said, at the information he had given me about France and Italy, because when at Spa, I had mentioned to the representatives of those countries the idea of a *de jure* recognition of Georgia, and had sounded them upon it, the answer from both quarters had been that, in their opinion, the proposal was premature. I thought, therefore, that this must be an illustration of a phenomenon with which I was now quite familiar, namely, that other Powers tried to get a little cheap popularity for themselves by an apparent acquiescence in a proposal with which they did not really agree, leaving the brunt of refusal, if this had to be given, to be borne by Great Britain.

There were, I went on to say, certain objections to the proposal of the Georgian Government which it was difficult for the moment either to overlook or to overcome. In the first place, when *de facto* recognition had been given, at my instance, in Paris in January last, it had been given simultaneously to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Did Georgia ask now to be treated alone; was it possible to recognise her *de jure* independence without doing the same thing simultaneously for Armenia? If these two were recognised, what measure was to be dealt out to Azerbaijan; and would Georgia herself contend that, at this moment, it would be either a wise or a possible act on the part of the Great Powers to give a formal recognition to the Soviet Government of that State? But there was, I said, an even more formidable obstacle. If the *de jure* independence of a State was to be recognised, there must be some certainty as to its frontiers; for a State so recognised would in all probability ask to be admitted, and would not be denied admission, to the League of Nations, and thereby the Powers who were members of the League would assume a responsibility for the integrity and defence of its frontiers. What, then, I asked, were the frontiers of the Georgian State which we might be asked to guarantee? Could the Foreign Minister himself tell me? Now, it was well known, I said, that on scarcely any side had the frontiers of Georgia been definitely fixed. Disputes still existed between her and the whole of her neighbours. Until these were adjusted it did not seem to me possible for the Powers, however great their sympathy with Georgia and their recognition of her superior claims, to confer upon her the privilege that she desired. There was yet a further difficulty, namely, that *de jure* recognition had hitherto been withheld from the greater number of the Baltic States on the north-western side of Russia, who had similarly for the best part of two years been appealing for this boon. There again a similar uncertainty prevailed, and the Powers had accordingly, and as I thought wisely, withheld recognition. The selection of Georgia alone for the privilege would at once raise an acute question with all these other States, and would precipitate an issue which it was not desirable at the present moment to provoke. As time passed, the horizon would clear in all these directions, and it might be possible for the Powers to pursue a

[4508 *x*—1]

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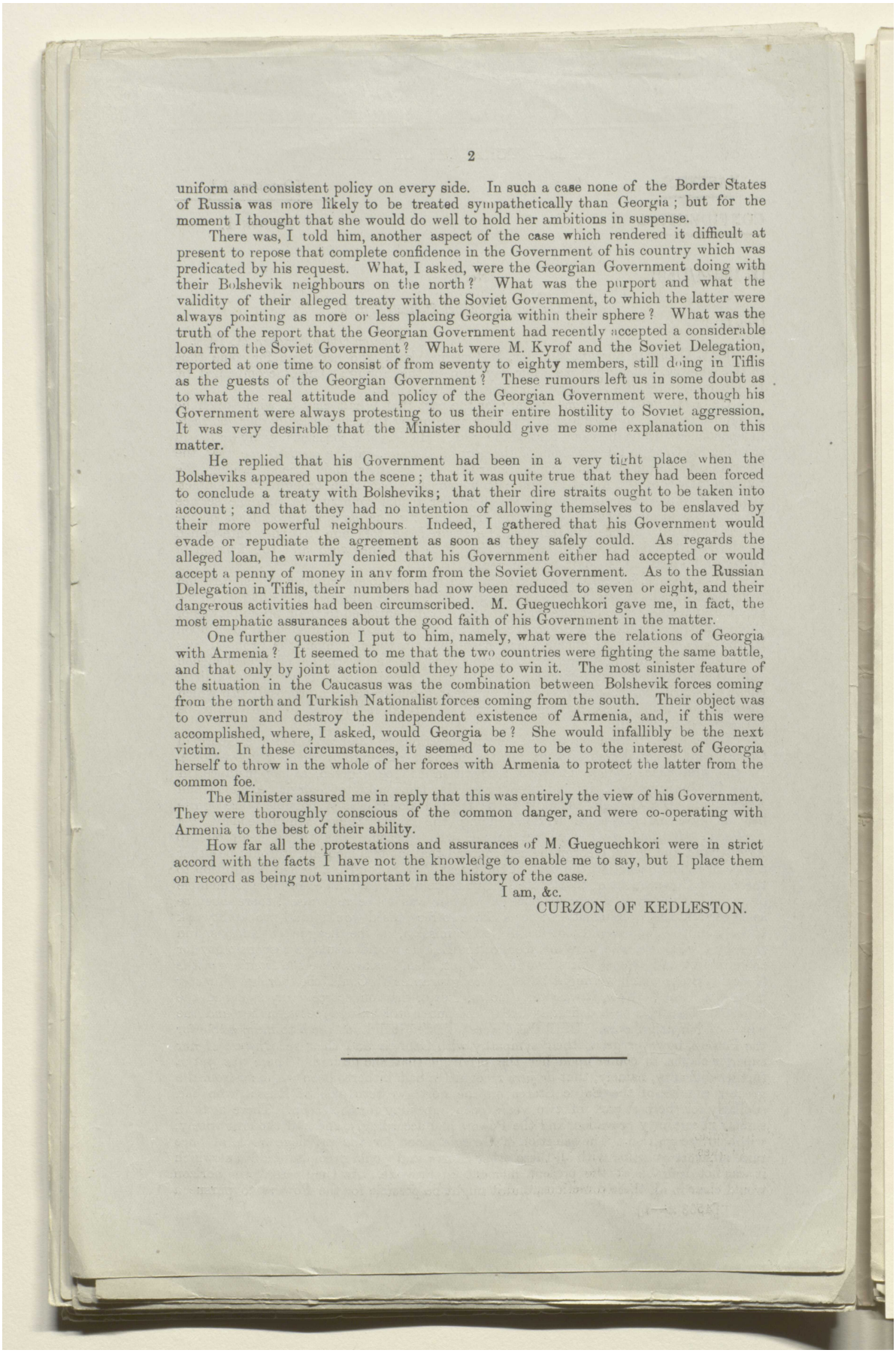

uniform and consistent policy on every side. In such a case none of the Border States of Russia was more likely to be treated sympathetically than Georgia; but for the moment I thought that she would do well to hold her ambitions in suspense.

There was, I told him, another aspect of the case which rendered it difficult at present to repose that complete confidence in the Government of his country which was predicated by his request. What, I asked, were the Georgian Government doing with their Bolshevik neighbours on the north? What was the purport and what the validity of their alleged treaty with the Soviet Government, to which the latter were always pointing as more or less placing Georgia within their sphere? What was the truth of the report that the Georgian Government had recently accepted a considerable loan from the Soviet Government? What were M. Kyrof and the Soviet Delegation, reported at one time to consist of from seventy to eighty members, still doing in Tiflis as the guests of the Georgian Government? These rumours left us in some doubt as to what the real attitude and policy of the Georgian Government were, though his Government were always protesting to us their entire hostility to Soviet aggression. It was very desirable that the Minister should give me some explanation on this matter.

He replied that his Government had been in a very tight place when the Bolsheviks appeared upon the scene; that it was quite true that they had been forced to conclude a treaty with Bolsheviks; that their dire straits ought to be taken into account; and that they had no intention of allowing themselves to be enslaved by their more powerful neighbours. Indeed, I gathered that his Government would evade or repudiate the agreement as soon as they safely could. As regards the alleged loan, he warmly denied that his Government either had accepted or would accept a penny of money in any form from the Soviet Government. As to the Russian Delegation in Tiflis, their numbers had now been reduced to seven or eight, and their dangerous activities had been circumscribed. M. Gueguechkori gave me, in fact, the most emphatic assurances about the good faith of his Government in the matter.

One further question I put to him, namely, what were the relations of Georgia with Armenia? It seemed to me that the two countries were fighting the same battle, and that only by joint action could they hope to win it. The most sinister feature of the situation in the Caucasus was the combination between Bolshevik forces coming from the north and Turkish Nationalist forces coming from the south. Their object was to overrun and destroy the independent existence of Armenia, and, if this were accomplished, where, I asked, would Georgia be? She would infallibly be the next victim. In these circumstances, it seemed to me to be to the interest of Georgia herself to throw in the whole of her forces with Armenia to protect the latter from the common foe.

The Minister assured me in reply that this was entirely the view of his Government. They were thoroughly conscious of the common danger, and were co-operating with Armenia to the best of their ability.

How far all the protestations and assurances of M. Gueguechkori were in strict accord with the facts I have not the knowledge to enable me to say, but I place them on record as being not unimportant in the history of the case.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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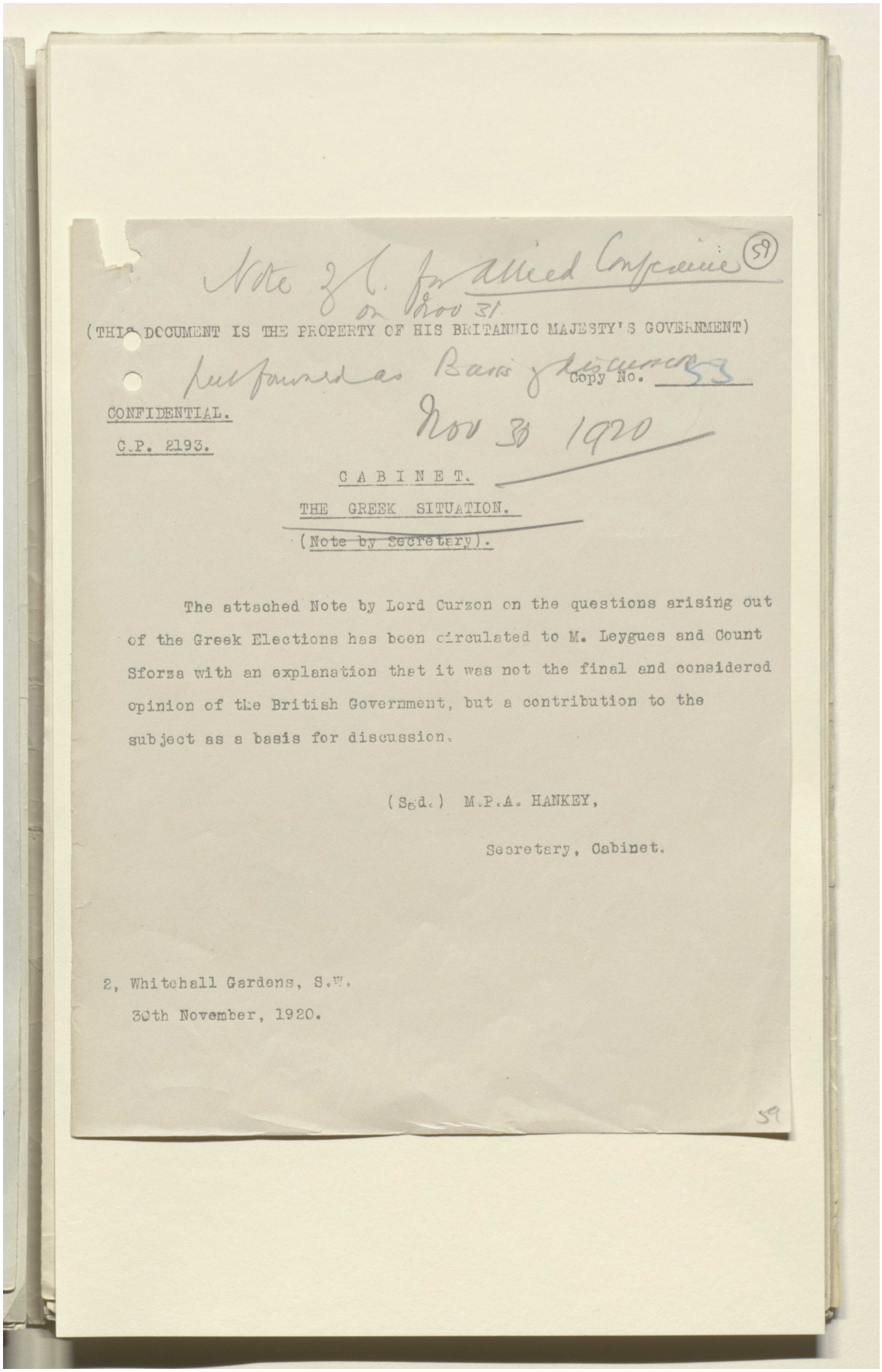

Note 2 for allied Conference (59)
on Doc 31.

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Put forward as Basis of discussion

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CONFIDENTIAL.

C.P. 2193.

Nov 30 1920

C A B I N E T.

THE GREEK SITUATION.

(Note by Secretary).

The attached Note by Lord Curzon on the questions arising out of the Greek Elections has been circulated to M. Leygues and Count Sforza with an explanation that it was not the final and considered opinion of the British Government, but a contribution to the subject as a basis for discussion.

(Sgd.) M.P.A. HANKEY,

Secretary, Cabinet.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.
30th November, 1920.

59

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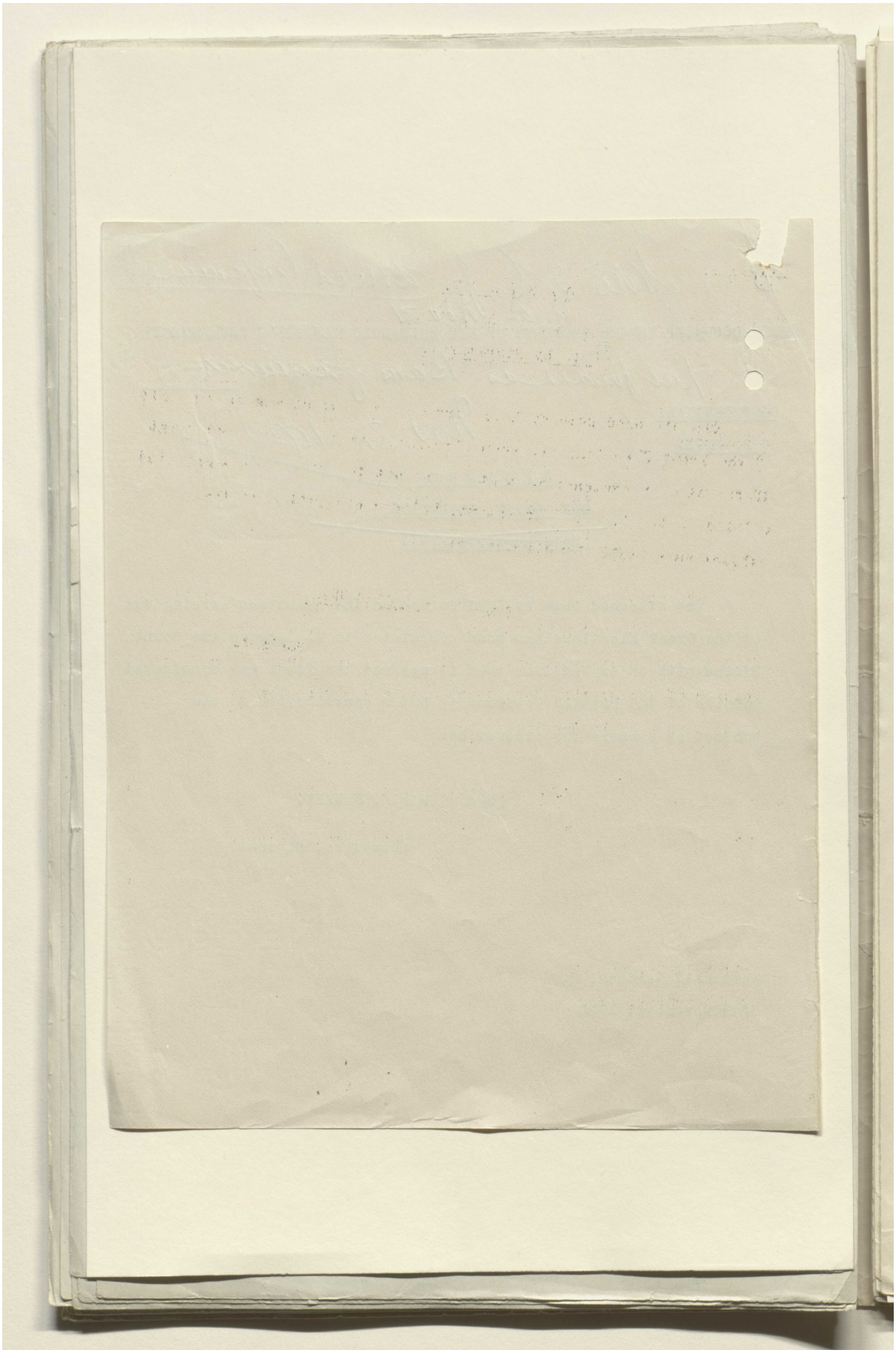
أوراق بقلم كرزون بشأن الشرق الأدنى والأوسط [٥٩ظ] (٣٤٨/١١٨)



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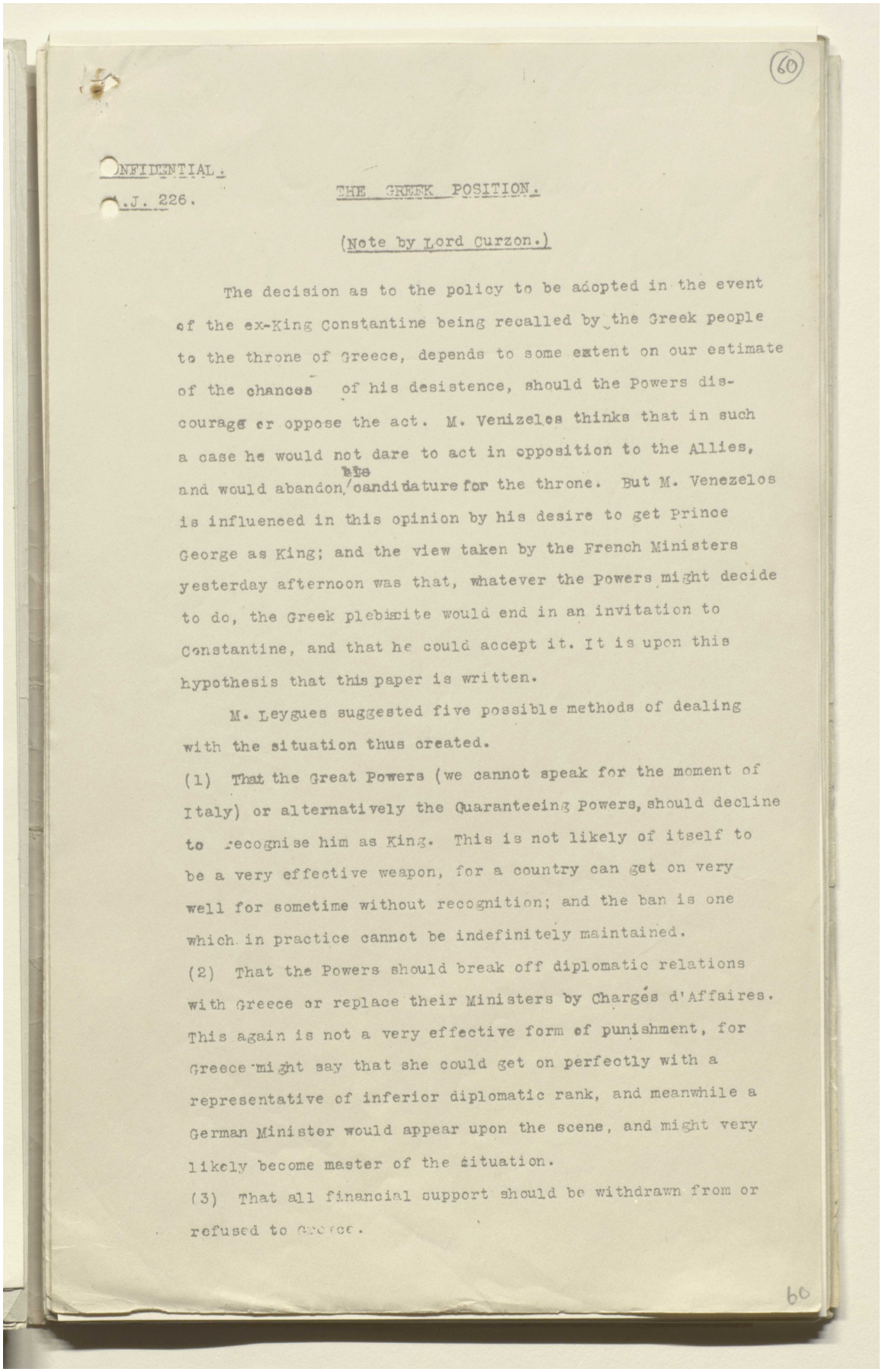

(60)

CONFIDENTIAL.

E.J. 226.

THE GREEK POSITION.

(Note by Lord Curzon.)

The decision as to the policy to be adopted in the event of the ex-King Constantine being recalled by the Greek people to the throne of Greece, depends to some extent on our estimate of the chances of his desistence, should the Powers discourage or oppose the act. M. Venizelos thinks that in such a case he would not dare to act in opposition to the Allies, and would abandon his candidature for the throne. But M. Venezelos is influenced in this opinion by his desire to get Prince George as King; and the view taken by the French Ministers yesterday afternoon was that, whatever the Powers might decide to do, the Greek plebiscite would end in an invitation to Constantine, and that he could accept it. It is upon this hypothesis that this paper is written.

M. Leygues suggested five possible methods of dealing with the situation thus created.

(1) That the Great Powers (we cannot speak for the moment of Italy) or alternatively the Guaranteeing Powers, should decline to recognise him as King. This is not likely of itself to be a very effective weapon, for a country can get on very well for sometime without recognition; and the ban is one which in practice cannot be indefinitely maintained.

(2) That the Powers should break off diplomatic relations with Greece or replace their Ministers by Charges d'Affaires. This again is not a very effective form of punishment, for Greece might say that she could get on perfectly with a representative of inferior diplomatic rank, and meanwhile a German Minister would appear upon the scene, and might very likely become master of the situation.

(3) That all financial support should be withdrawn from or refused to Greece.

60

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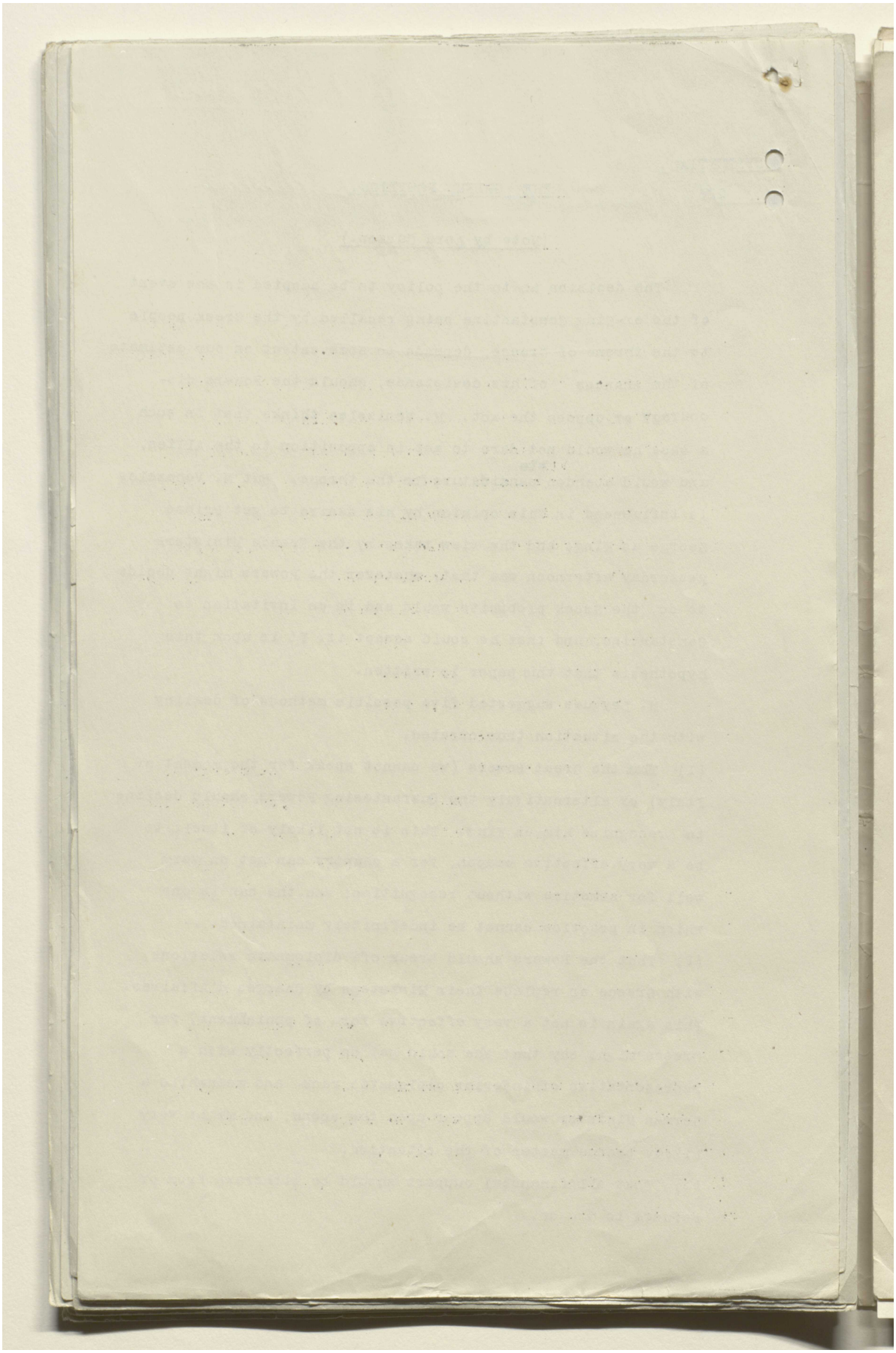
أوراق بقلم كرزون بشأن الشرق الأدنى والأوسط [٦٠ظ] (٣٤٨/١٢٠)



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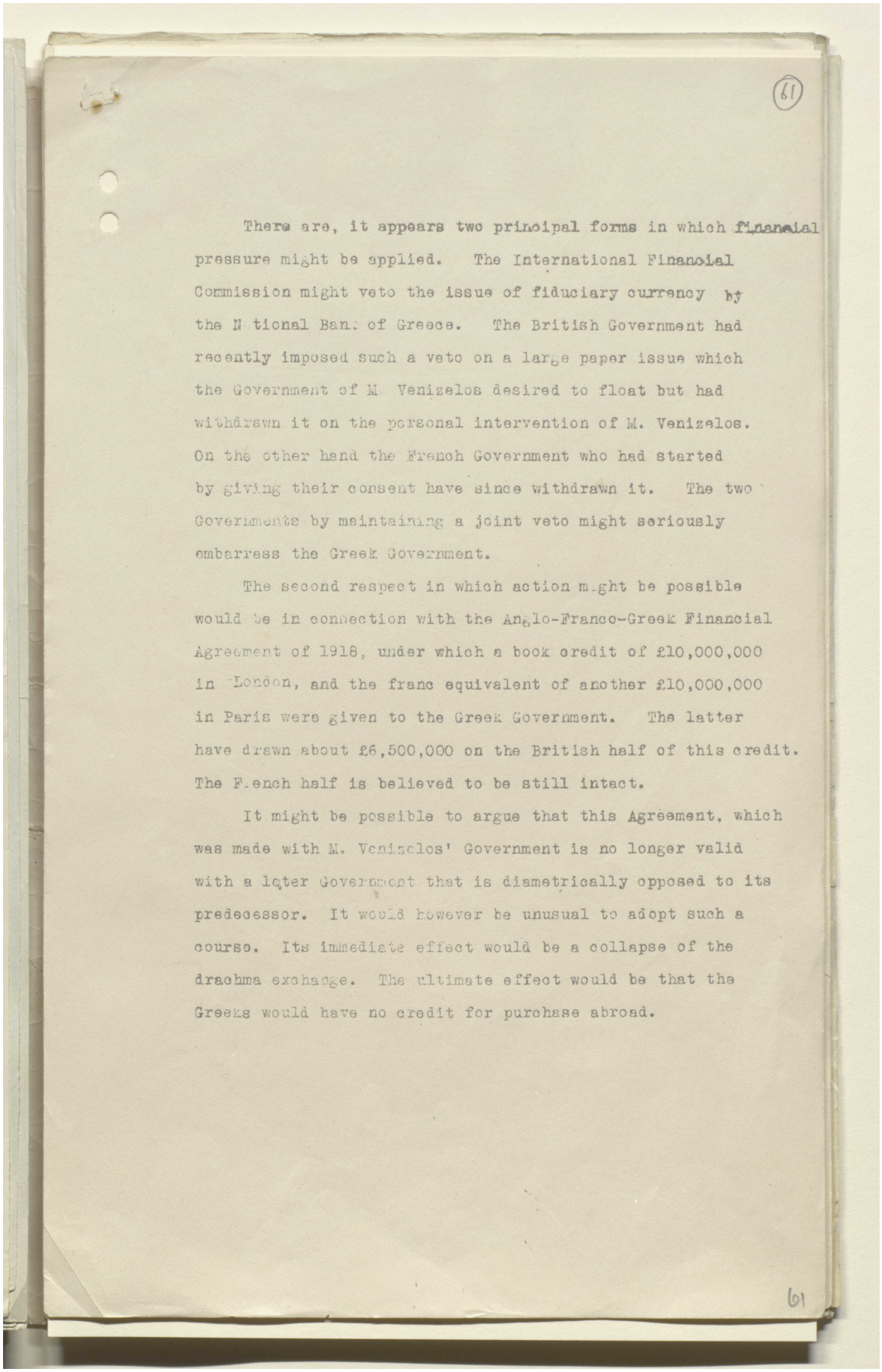

(61)

There are, it appears two principal forms in which financial pressure might be applied. The International Financial Commission might veto the issue of fiduciary currency by the National Bank of Greece. The British Government had recently imposed such a veto on a large paper issue which the Government of M. Venizelos desired to float but had withdrawn it on the personal intervention of M. Venizelos. On the other hand the French Government who had started by giving their consent have since withdrawn it. The two Governments by maintaining a joint veto might seriously embarrass the Greek Government.

The second respect in which action might be possible would be in connection with the Anglo-Franco-Greek Financial Agreement of 1918, under which a book credit of £10,000,000 in London, and the franc equivalent of another £10,000,000 in Paris were given to the Greek Government. The latter have drawn about £6,500,000 on the British half of this credit. The French half is believed to be still intact.

It might be possible to argue that this Agreement, which was made with M. Venizelos' Government is no longer valid with a later Government that is diametrically opposed to its predecessor. It would however be unusual to adopt such a course. Its immediate effect would be a collapse of the drachma exchange. The ultimate effect would be that the Greeks would have no credit for purchase abroad.

61

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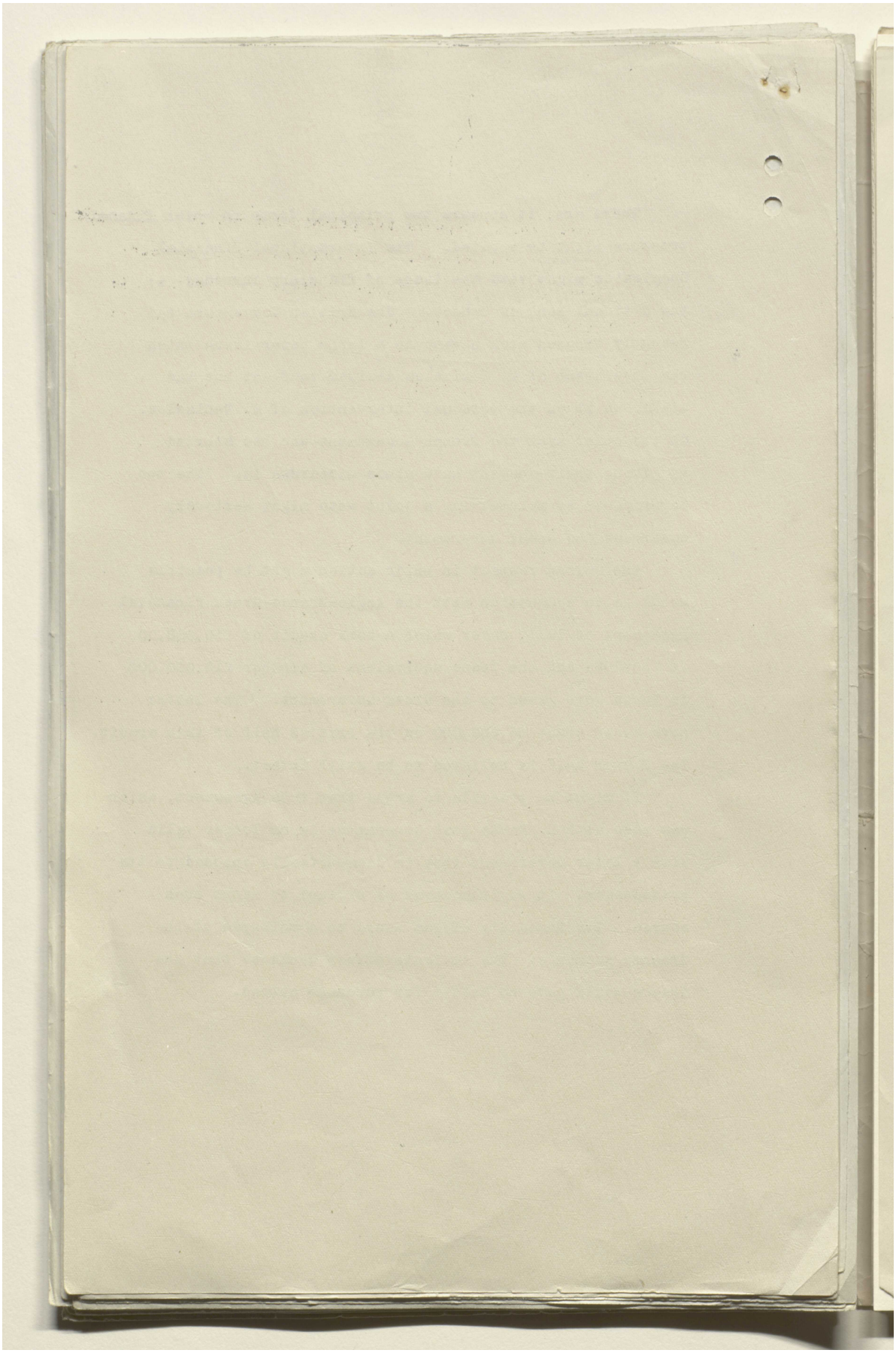

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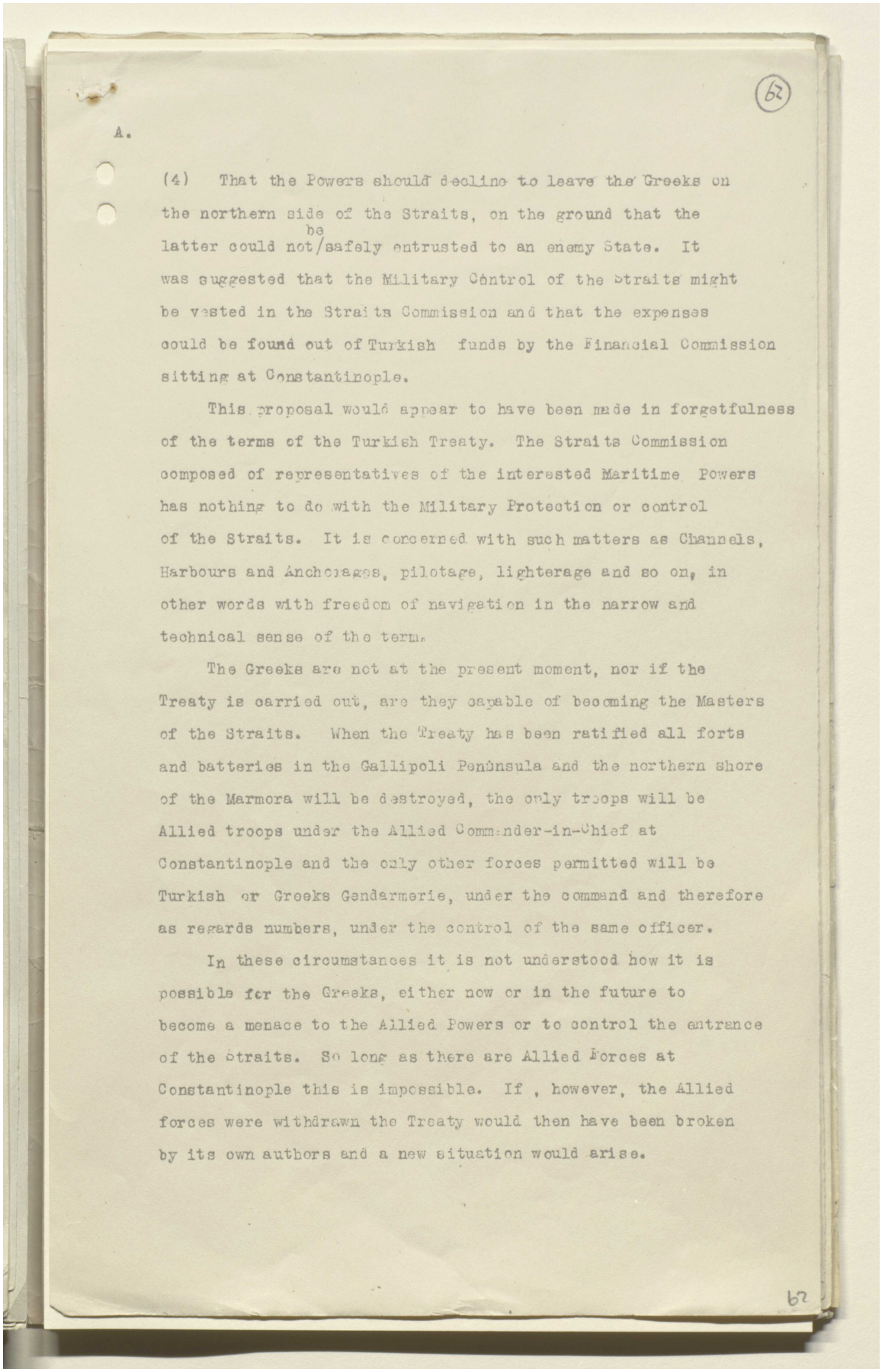

(62)

A.

(4) That the Powers should decline to leave the Greeks on the northern side of the Straits, on the ground that the latter could not be safely entrusted to an enemy State. It was suggested that the Military Control of the Straits might be vested in the Straits Commission and that the expenses could be found out of Turkish funds by the Financial Commission sitting at Constantinople.

This proposal would appear to have been made in forgetfulness of the terms of the Turkish Treaty. The Straits Commission composed of representatives of the interested Maritime Powers has nothing to do with the Military Protection or control of the Straits. It is concerned with such matters as Channels, Harbours and Anchorages, pilotage, lighterage and so on, in other words with freedom of navigation in the narrow and technical sense of the term.

The Greeks are not at the present moment, nor if the Treaty is carried out, are they capable of becoming the Masters of the Straits. When the Treaty has been ratified all forts and batteries in the Gallipoli Peninsula and the northern shore of the Marmora will be destroyed, the only troops will be Allied troops under the Allied Commander-in-Chief at Constantinople and the only other forces permitted will be Turkish or Greeks Gendarmerie, under the command and therefore as regards numbers, under the control of the same officer.

In these circumstances it is not understood how it is possible for the Greeks, either now or in the future to become a menace to the Allied Powers or to control the entrance of the Straits. So long as there are Allied Forces at Constantinople this is impossible. If , however, the Allied forces were withdrawn the Treaty would then have been broken by its own authors and a new situation would arise.

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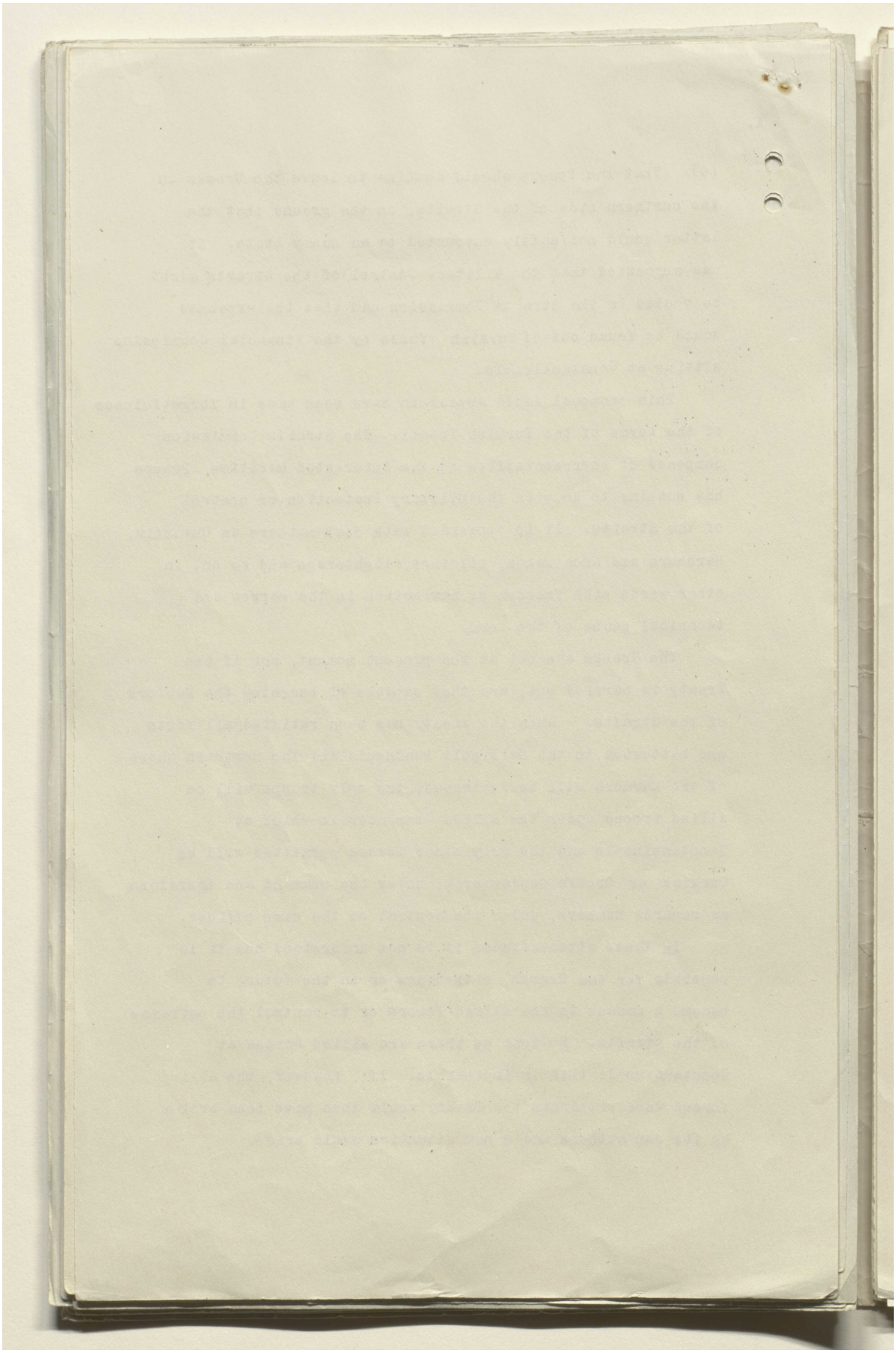

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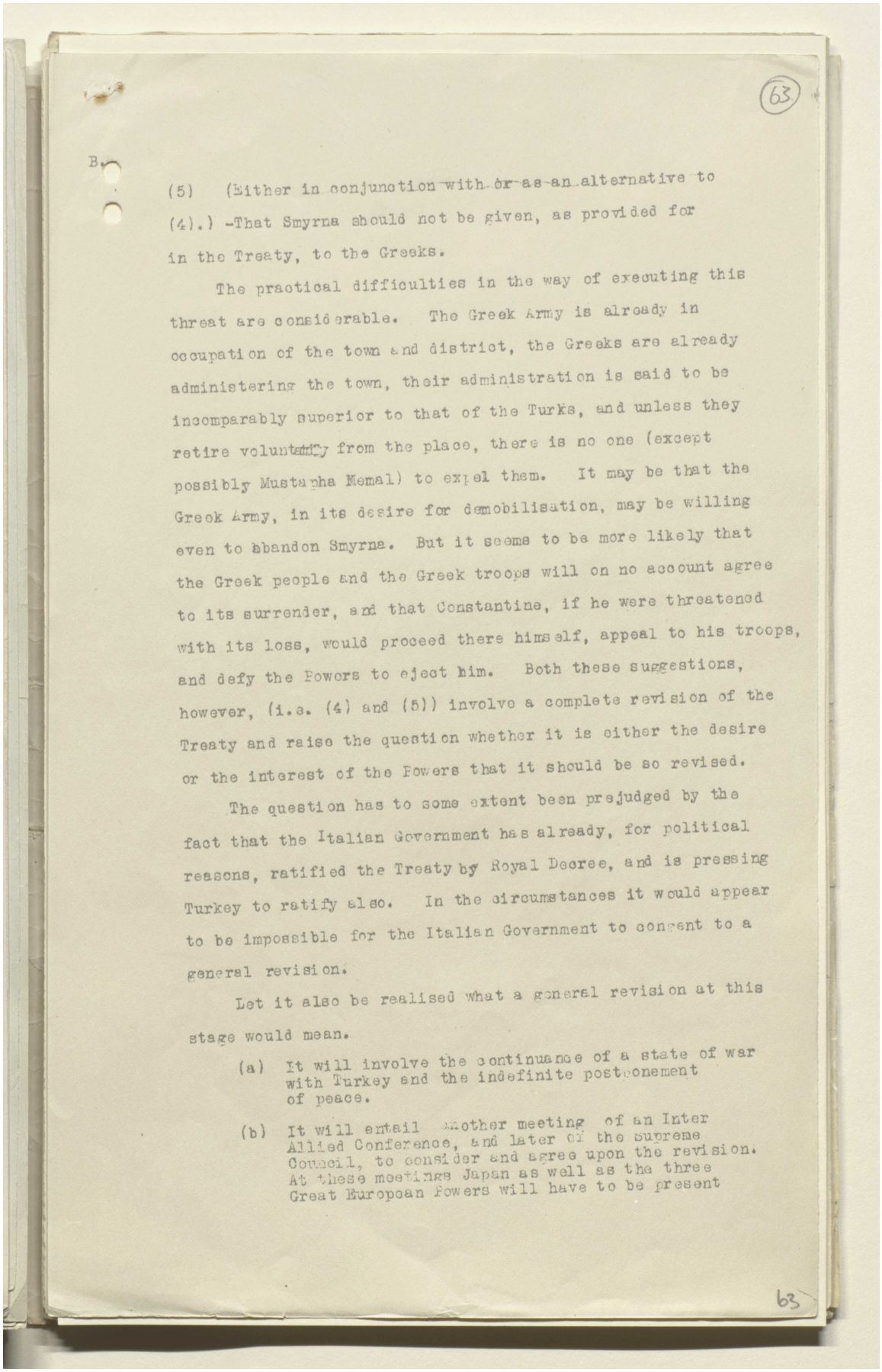

(63)

B.

(5) (Either in conjunction with or as an alternative to (4).) -That Smyrna should not be given, as provided for in the Treaty, to the Greeks.

The practical difficulties in the way of executing this threat are considerable. The Greek Army is already in occupation of the town and district, the Greeks are already administering the town, their administration is said to be incomparably superior to that of the Turks, and unless they retire voluntarily from the place, there is no one (except possibly Mustapha Kemal) to expel them. It may be that the Greek Army, in its desire for demobilisation, may be willing even to abandon Smyrna. But it seems to be more likely that the Greek people and the Greek troops will on no account agree to its surrender, and that Constantine, if he were threatened with its loss, would proceed there himself, appeal to his troops, and defy the Powers to eject him. Both these suggestions, however, (i.e. (4) and (5)) involve a complete revision of the Treaty and raise the question whether it is either the desire or the interest of the Powers that it should be so revised.

The question has to some extent been prejudged by the fact that the Italian Government has already, for political reasons, ratified the Treaty by Royal Decree, and is pressing Turkey to ratify also. In the circumstances it would appear to be impossible for the Italian Government to consent to a general revision.

Let it also be realised what a general revision at this stage would mean.

(a) It will involve the continuance of a state of war with Turkey and the indefinite postponement of peace.

(b) It will entail another meeting of an Inter Allied Conference, and later of the Supreme Council, to consider and agree upon the revision. At these meetings Japan as well as the three Great European Powers will have to be present

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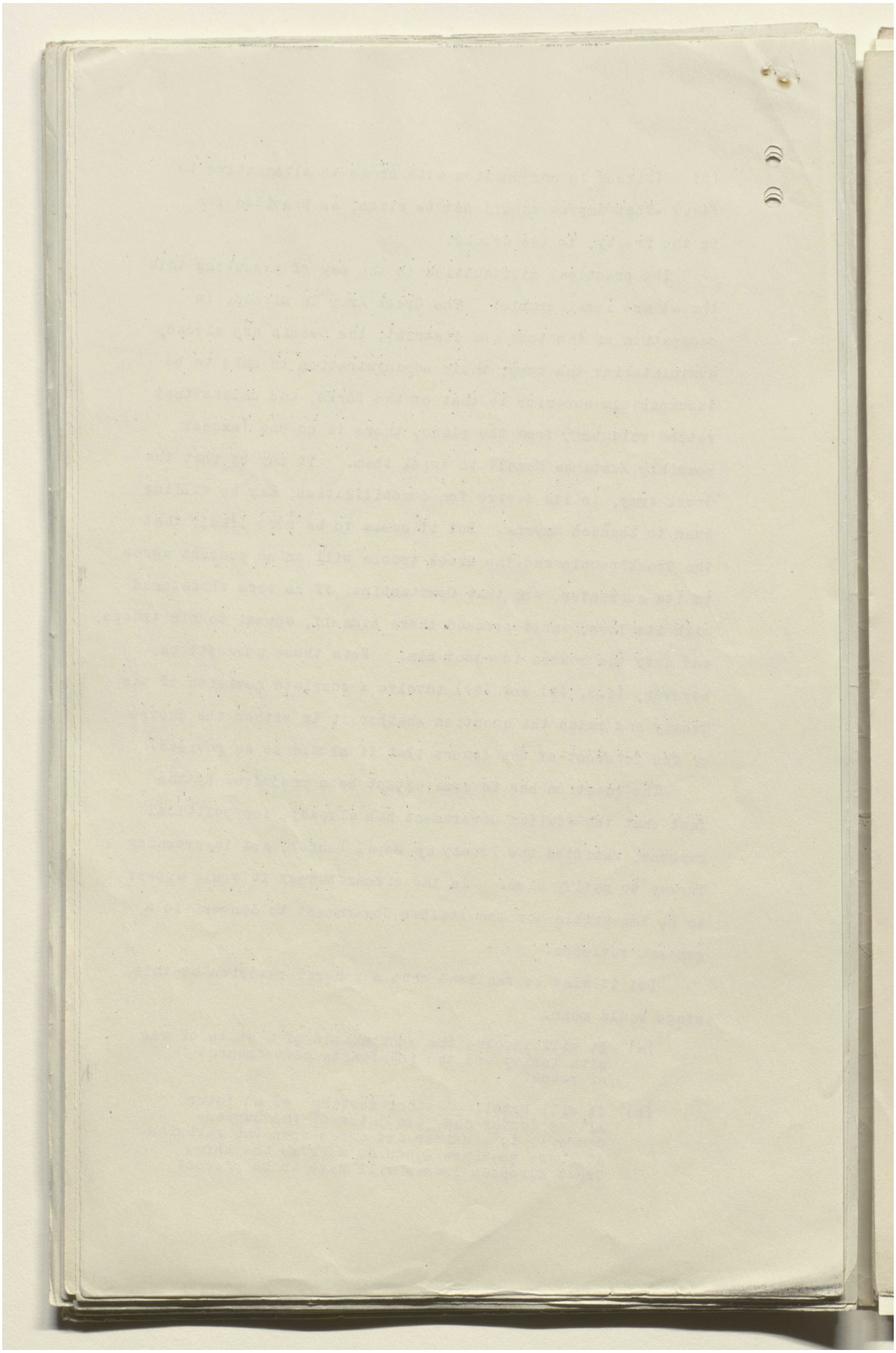

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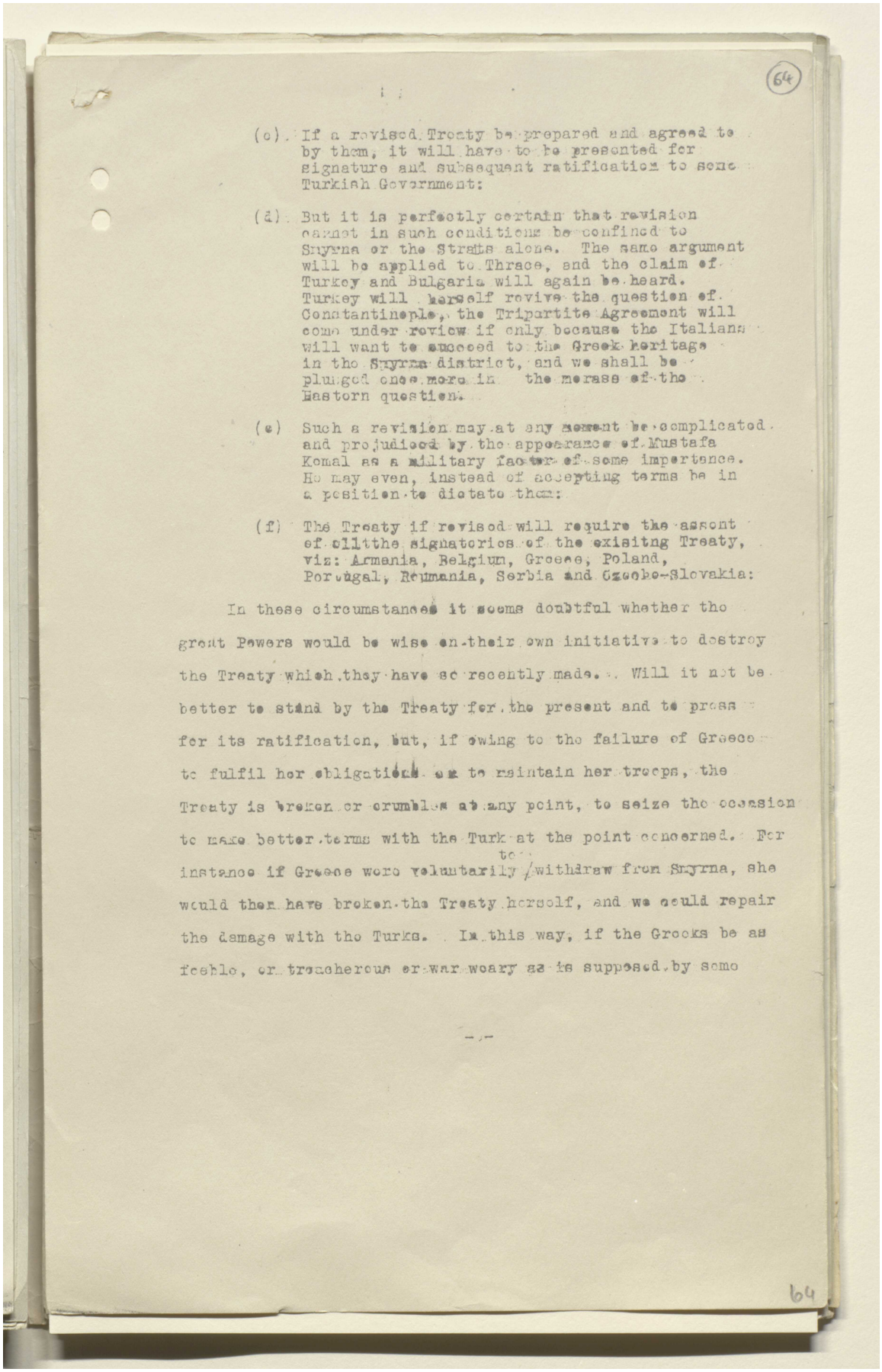

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(c). If a revised Treaty be prepared and agreed to by them, it will have to be presented for signature and subsequent ratification to some Turkish Government:

(d). But it is perfectly certain that revision cannot in such conditions be confined to Smyrna or the Straits alone. The same argument will be applied to Thrace, and the claim of Turkey and Bulgaria will again be heard. Turkey will herself revive the question of Constantinople, the Tripartite Agreement will come under review if only because the Italians will want to succeed to the Greek heritage in the Smyrna district, and we shall be plunged once more in the morass of the Eastern question.

(e) Such a revision may at any moment be complicated and prejudiced by the appearance of Mustafa Kemal as a military factor of some importance. He may even, instead of accepting terms be in a position to dictate them:

(f) The Treaty if revised will require the assent of allthe signatories of the existing Treaty, viz: Armania, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Serbia and Czecho-Slovakia:

In these circumstances it seems doubtful whether the great Powers would be wise on their own initiative to destroy the Treaty which they have so recently made. Will it not be better to stand by the Treaty for the present and to press for its ratification, but, if owing to the failure of Greece to fulfil her obligations or to maintain her troops, the Treaty is broken or crumbles at any point, to seize the occasion to make better terms with the Turk at the point concerned. For instance if Greece were voluntarily to withdraw from Smyrna, she would then have broken the Treaty herself, and we could repair the damage with the Turks. In this way, if the Greeks be as feeble, or treacherous or war weary as is supposed by some

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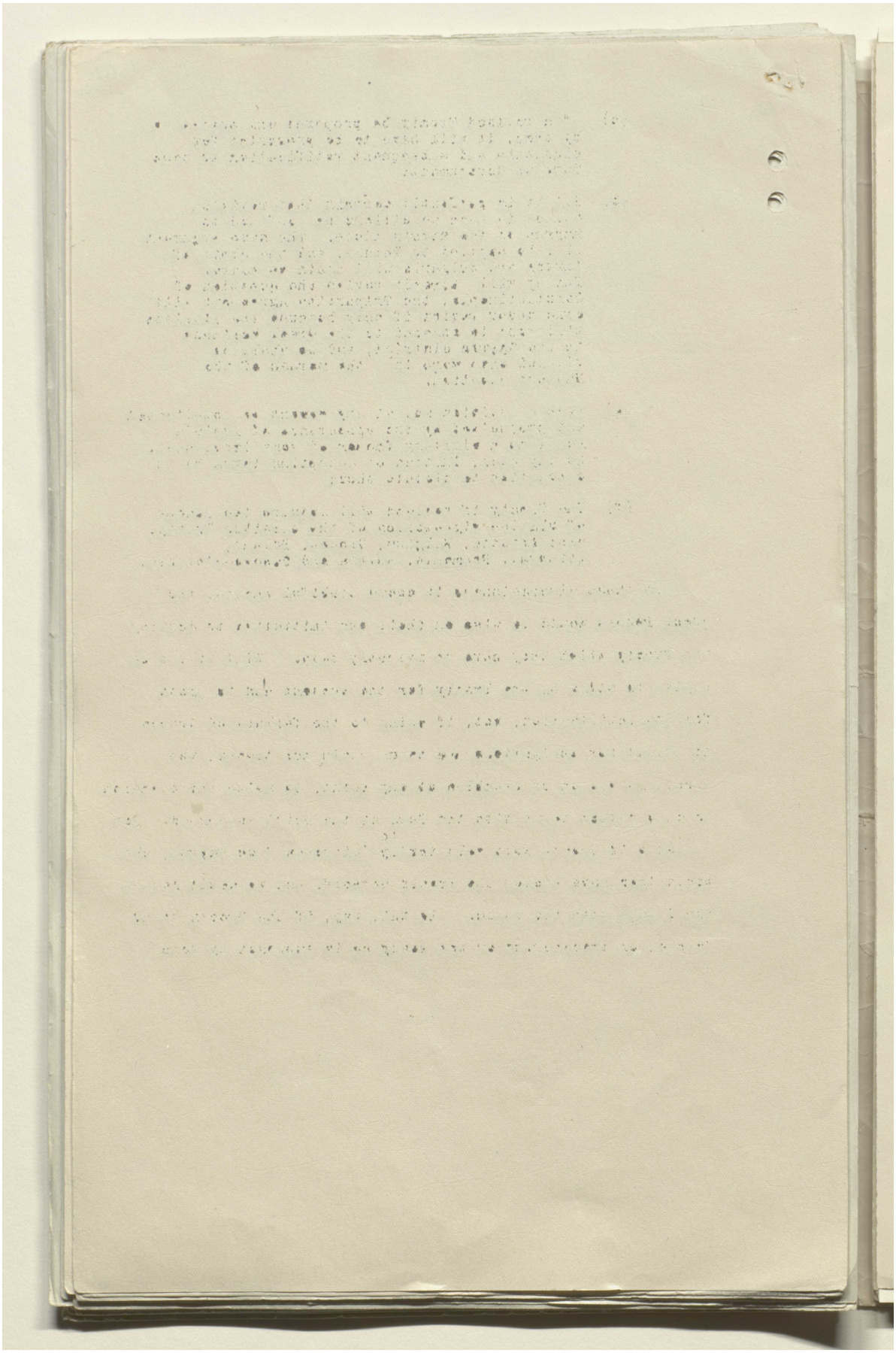

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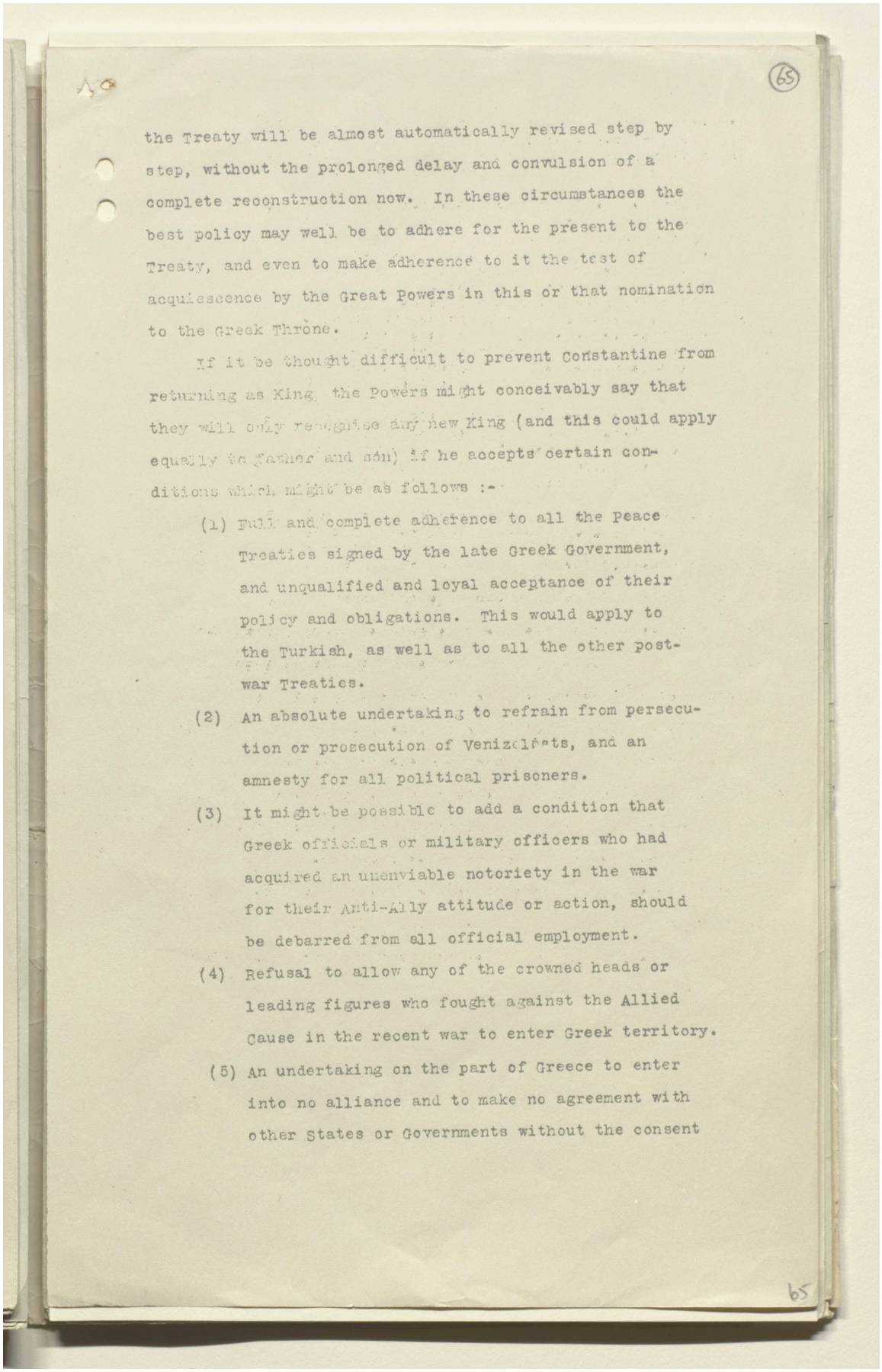

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the Treaty will be almost automatically revised step by step, without the prolonged delay and convulsion of a complete reconstruction now. In these circumstances the best policy may well be to adhere for the present to the Treaty, and even to make adherence to it the test of acquiescence by the Great Powers in this or that nomination to the Greek Throne.

If it be thought difficult to prevent Constantine from returning as King, the Powers might conceivably say that they will only recognise any new King (and this could apply equally to father and son) if he accepts certain conditions which might be as follows :-

(1) Full and complete adherence to all the Peace Treaties signed by the late Greek Government, and unqualified and loyal acceptance of their policy and obligations. This would apply to the Turkish, as well as to all the other post-war Treaties.

(2) An absolute undertaking to refrain from persecution or prosecution of Venizelists, and an amnesty for all political prisoners.

(3) It might be possible to add a condition that Greek officials or military officers who had acquired an unenviable notoriety in the war for their Anti-Ally attitude or action, should be debarred from all official employment.

(4) Refusal to allow any of the crowned heads or leading figures who fought against the Allied Cause in the recent war to enter Greek territory.

(5) An undertaking on the part of Greece to enter into no alliance and to make no agreement with other States or Governments without the consent

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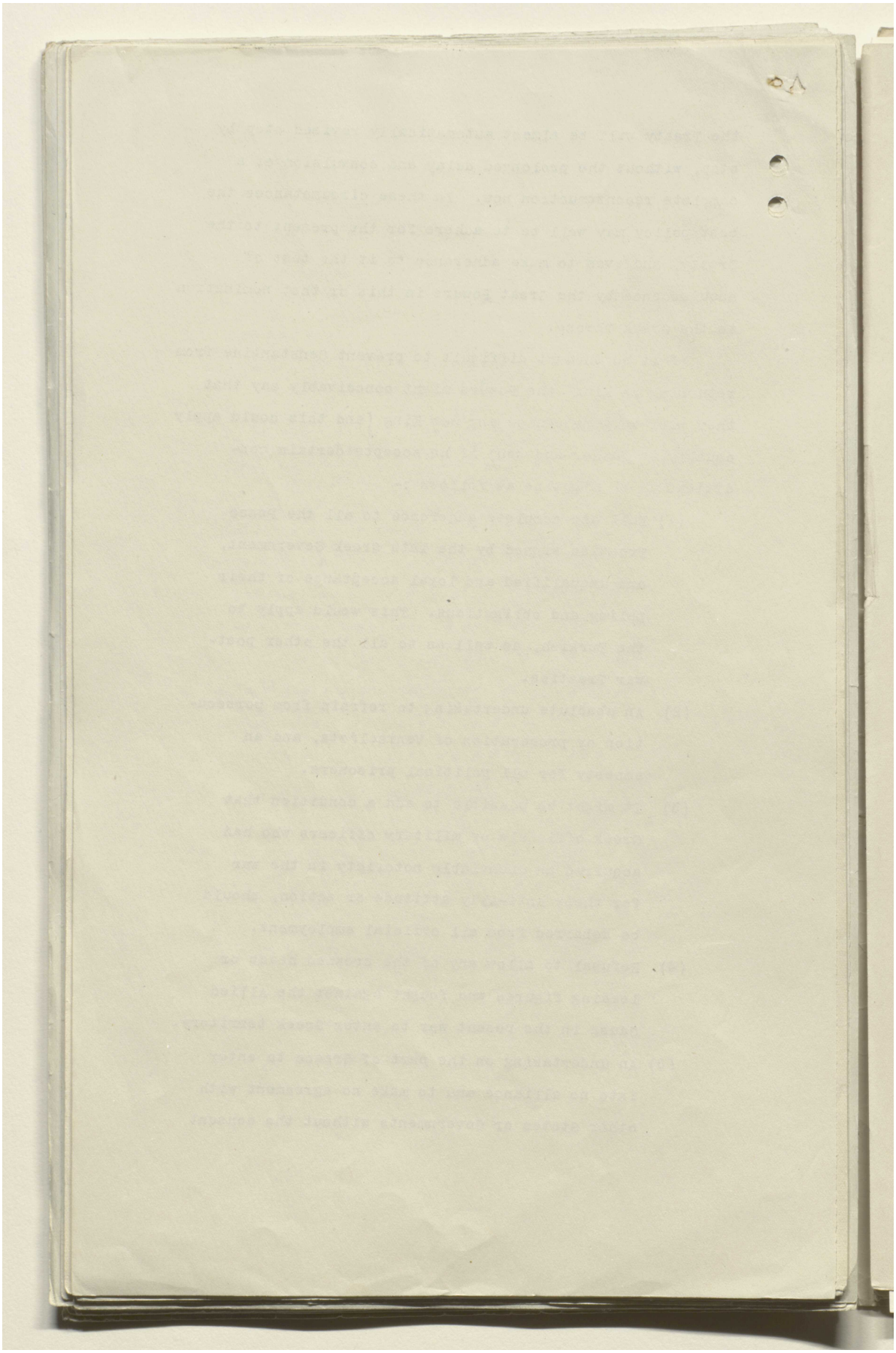

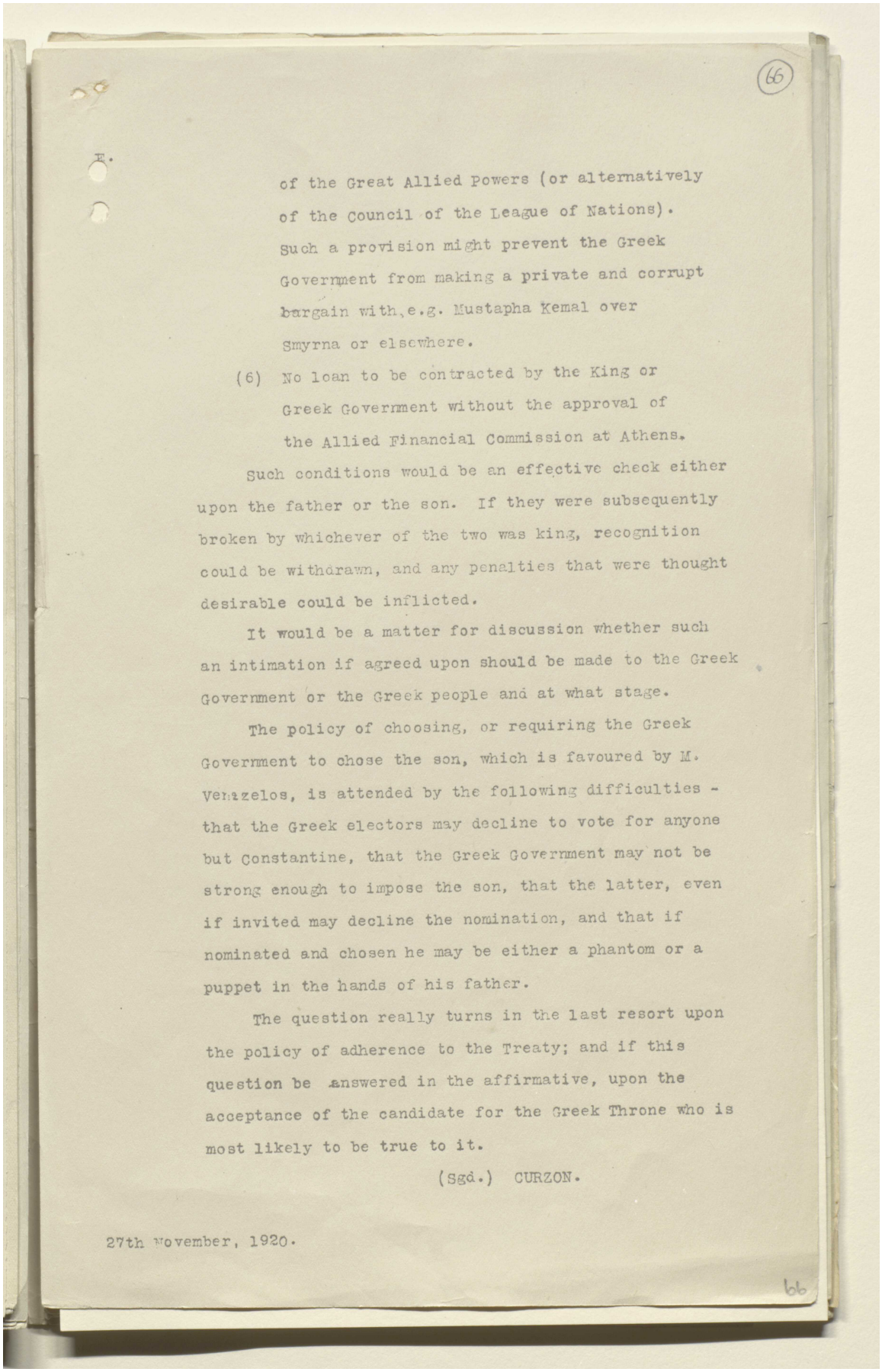

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of the Great Allied Powers (or alternatively of the Council of the League of Nations). Such a provision might prevent the Greek Government from making a private and corrupt bargain with, e.g. Mustapha Kemal over Smyrna or elsewhere.

(6) No loan to be contracted by the King or Greek Government without the approval of the Allied Financial Commission at Athens.

Such conditions would be an effective check either upon the father or the son. If they were subsequently broken by whichever of the two was king, recognition could be withdrawn, and any penalties that were thought desirable could be inflicted.

It would be a matter for discussion whether such an intimation if agreed upon should be made to the Greek Government or the Greek people and at what stage.

The policy of choosing, or requiring the Greek Government to chose the son, which is favoured by M. Venizelos, is attended by the following difficulties - that the Greek electors may decline to vote for anyone but Constantine, that the Greek Government may not be strong enough to impose the son, that the latter, even if invited may decline the nomination, and that if nominated and chosen he may be either a phantom or a puppet in the hands of his father.

The question really turns in the last resort upon the policy of adherence to the Treaty; and if this question be answered in the affirmative, upon the acceptance of the candidate for the Greek Throne who is most likely to be true to it.

(Sgd.) CURZON.

27th November, 1920.

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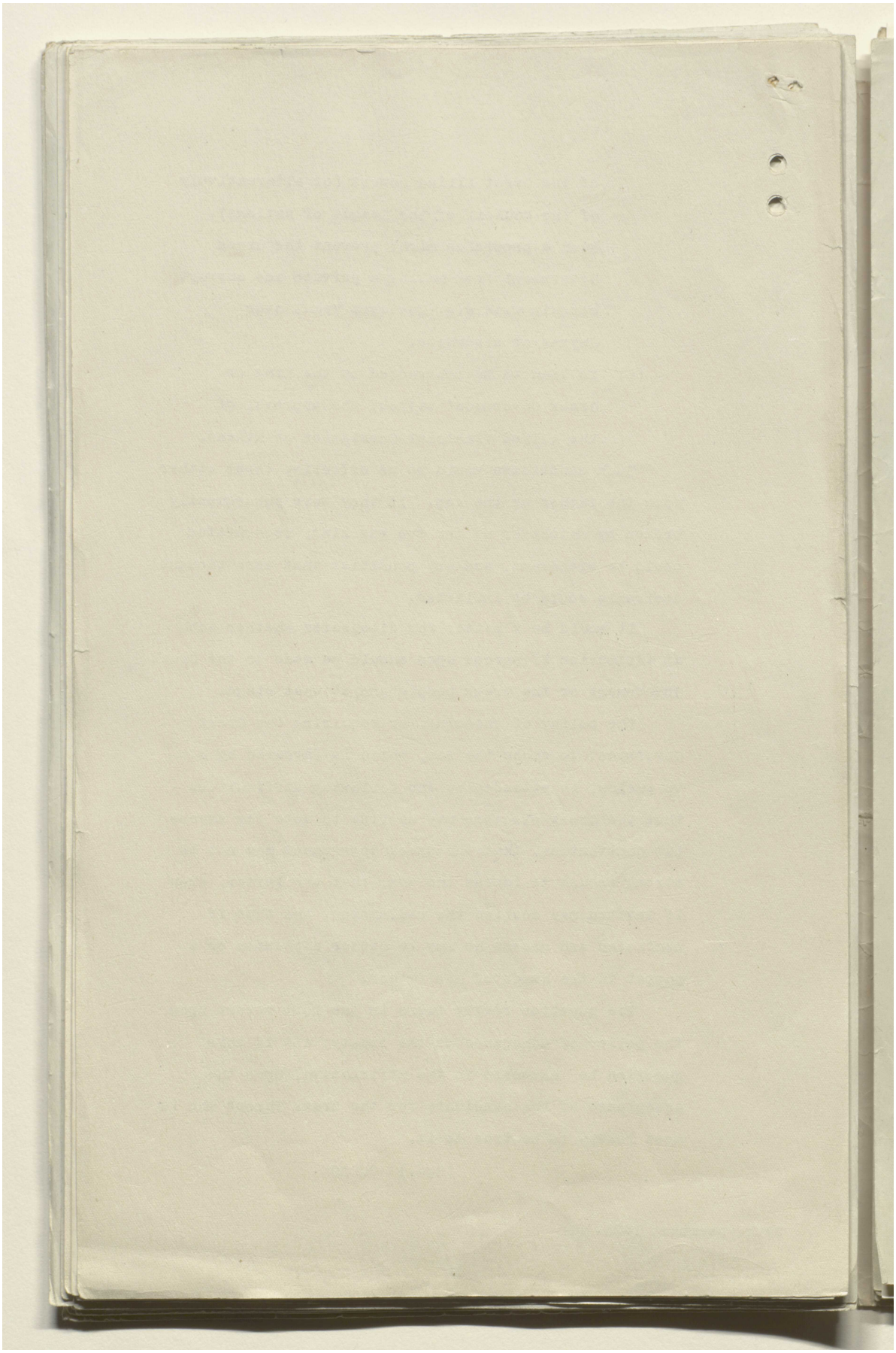

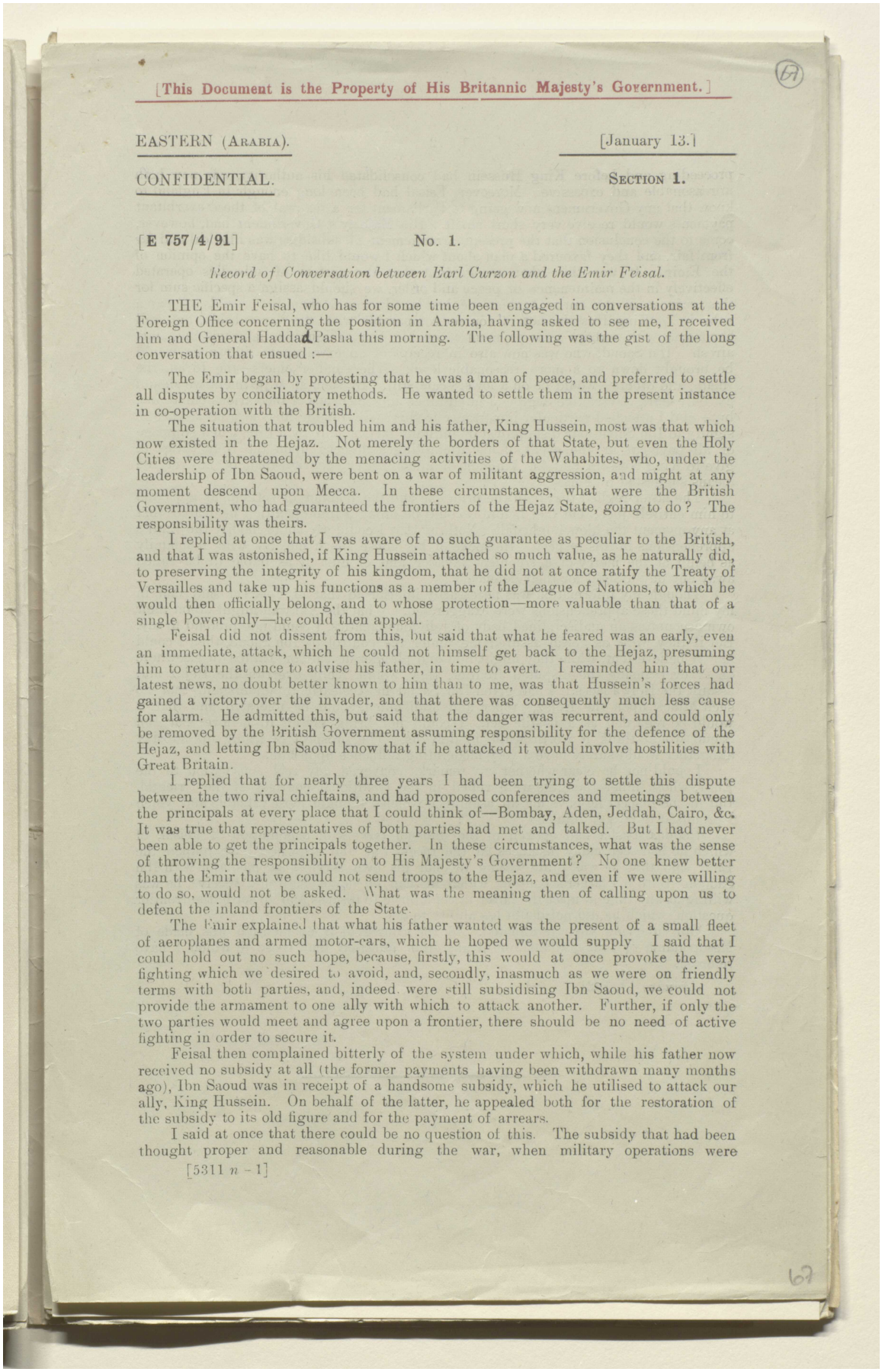

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EASTERN (ARABIA). [January 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 757/4/91] No. 1.

Record of Conversation between Earl Curzon and the Emir Feisal.

THE Emir Feisal, who has for some time been engaged in conversations at the Foreign Office concerning the position in Arabia, having asked to see me, I received him and General Haddad Pasha this morning. The following was the gist of the long conversation that ensued :—

The Emir began by protesting that he was a man of peace, and preferred to settle all disputes by conciliatory methods. He wanted to settle them in the present instance in co-operation with the British.

The situation that troubled him and his father, King Hussein, most was that which now existed in the Hejaz. Not merely the borders of that State, but even the Holy Cities were threatened by the menacing activities of the Wahabites, who, under the leadership of Ibn Saoud, were bent on a war of militant aggression, and might at any moment descend upon Mecca. In these circumstances, what were the British Government, who had guaranteed the frontiers of the Hejaz State, going to do? The responsibility was theirs.

I replied at once that I was aware of no such guarantee as peculiar to the British, and that I was astonished, if King Hussein attached so much value, as he naturally did, to preserving the integrity of his kingdom, that he did not at once ratify the Treaty of Versailles and take up his functions as a member of the League of Nations, to which he would then officially belong, and to whose protection—more valuable than that of a single Power only—he could then appeal.

Feisal did not dissent from this, but said that what he feared was an early, even an immediate, attack, which he could not himself get back to the Hejaz, presuming him to return at once to advise his father, in time to avert. I reminded him that our latest news, no doubt better known to him than to me, was that Hussein's forces had gained a victory over the invader, and that there was consequently much less cause for alarm. He admitted this, but said that the danger was recurrent, and could only be removed by the British Government assuming responsibility for the defence of the Hejaz, and letting Ibn Saoud know that if he attacked it would involve hostilities with Great Britain.

I replied that for nearly three years I had been trying to settle this dispute between the two rival chieftains, and had proposed conferences and meetings between the principals at every place that I could think of—Bombay, Aden, Jeddah, Cairo, &c. It was true that representatives of both parties had met and talked. But I had never been able to get the principals together. In these circumstances, what was the sense of throwing the responsibility on to His Majesty's Government? No one knew better than the Emir that we could not send troops to the Hejaz, and even if we were willing to do so, would not be asked. What was the meaning then of calling upon us to defend the inland frontiers of the State.

The Emir explained that what his father wanted was the present of a small fleet of aeroplanes and armed motor-cars, which he hoped we would supply. I said that I could hold out no such hope, because, firstly, this would at once provoke the very fighting which we desired to avoid, and, secondly, inasmuch as we were on friendly terms with both parties, and, indeed, were still subsidising Ibn Saoud, we could not provide the armament to one ally with which to attack another. Further, if only the two parties would meet and agree upon a frontier, there should be no need of active fighting in order to secure it.

Feisal then complained bitterly of the system under which, while his father now received no subsidy at all (the former payments having been withdrawn many months ago), Ibn Saoud was in receipt of a handsome subsidy, which he utilised to attack our ally, King Hussein. On behalf of the latter, he appealed both for the restoration of the subsidy to its old figure and for the payment of arrears.

I said at once that there could be no question of this. The subsidy that had been thought proper and reasonable during the war, when military operations were

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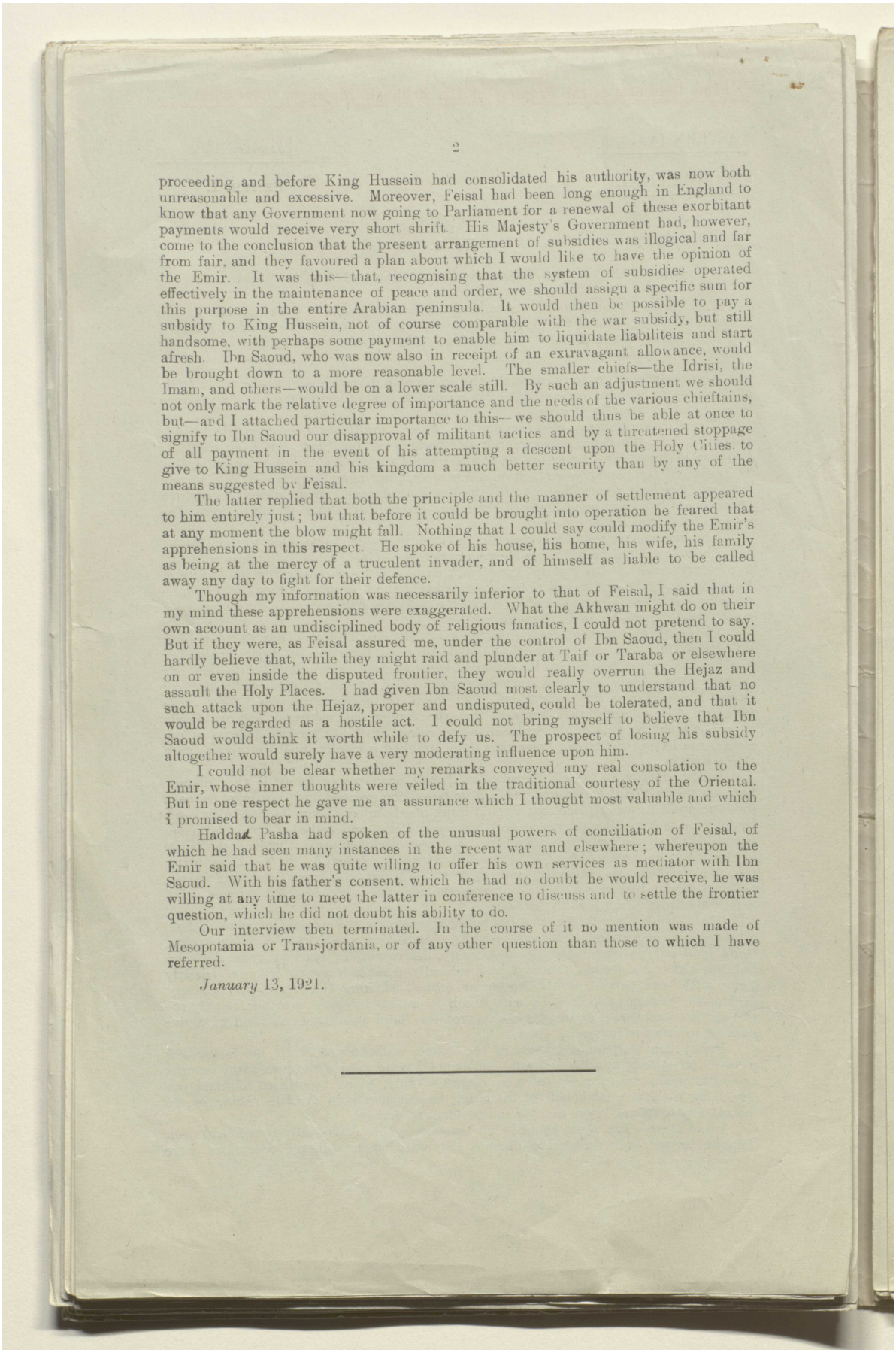

proceeding and before King Hussein had consolidated his authority, was now both unreasonable and excessive. Moreover, Feisal had been long enough in England to know that any Government now going to Parliament for a renewal of these exorbitant payments would receive very short shrift. His Majesty's Government had, however, come to the conclusion that the present arrangement of subsidies was illogical and far from fair, and they favoured a plan about which I would like to have the opinion of the Emir. It was this—that, recognising that the system of subsidies operated effectively in the maintenance of peace and order, we should assign a specific sum for this purpose in the entire Arabian peninsula. It would then be possible to pay a subsidy to King Hussein, not of course comparable with the war subsidy, but still handsome, with perhaps some payment to enable him to liquidate liabiliteis and start afresh. Ibn Saoud, who was now also in receipt of an extravagant allowance, would be brought down to a more reasonable level. The smaller chiefs—the Idrisi, the Imam, and others—would be on a lower scale still. By such an adjustment we should not only mark the relative degree of importance and the needs of the various chieftains, but—and I attached particular importance to this—we should thus be able at once to signify to Ibn Saoud our disapproval of militant tactics and by a threatened stoppage of all payment in the event of his attempting a descent upon the Holy Cities, to give to King Hussein and his kingdom a much better security than by any of the means suggested by Feisal.

The latter replied that both the principle and the manner of settlement appeared to him entirely just; but that before it could be brought into operation he feared that at any moment the blow might fall. Nothing that I could say could modify the Emir's apprehensions in this respect. He spoke of his house, his home, his wife, his family as being at the mercy of a truculent invader, and of himself as liable to be called away any day to fight for their defence.

Though my information was necessarily inferior to that of Feisal, I said that in my mind these apprehensions were exaggerated. What the Akhwan might do on their own account as an undisciplined body of religious fanatics, I could not pretend to say. But if they were, as Feisal assured me, under the control of Ibn Saoud, then I could hardly believe that, while they might raid and plunder at Taif or Taraba or elsewhere on or even inside the disputed frontier, they would really overrun the Hejaz and assault the Holy Places. I had given Ibn Saoud most clearly to understand that no such attack upon the Hejaz, proper and undisputed, could be tolerated, and that it would be regarded as a hostile act. I could not bring myself to believe that Ibn Saoud would think it worth while to defy us. The prospect of losing his subsidy altogether would surely have a very moderating influence upon him.

I could not be clear whether my remarks conveyed any real consolation to the Emir, whose inner thoughts were veiled in the traditional courtesy of the Oriental. But in one respect he gave me an assurance which I thought most valuable and which I promised to bear in mind.

Haddad Pasha had spoken of the unusual powers of conciliation of Feisal, of which he had seen many instances in the recent war and elsewhere; whereupon the Emir said that he was quite willing to offer his own services as mediator with Ibn Saoud. With his father's consent, which he had no doubt he would receive, he was willing at any time to meet the latter in conference to discuss and to settle the frontier question, which he did not doubt his ability to do.

Our interview then terminated. In the course of it no mention was made of Mesopotamia or Transjordania, or of any other question than those to which I have referred.

January 13, 1921.

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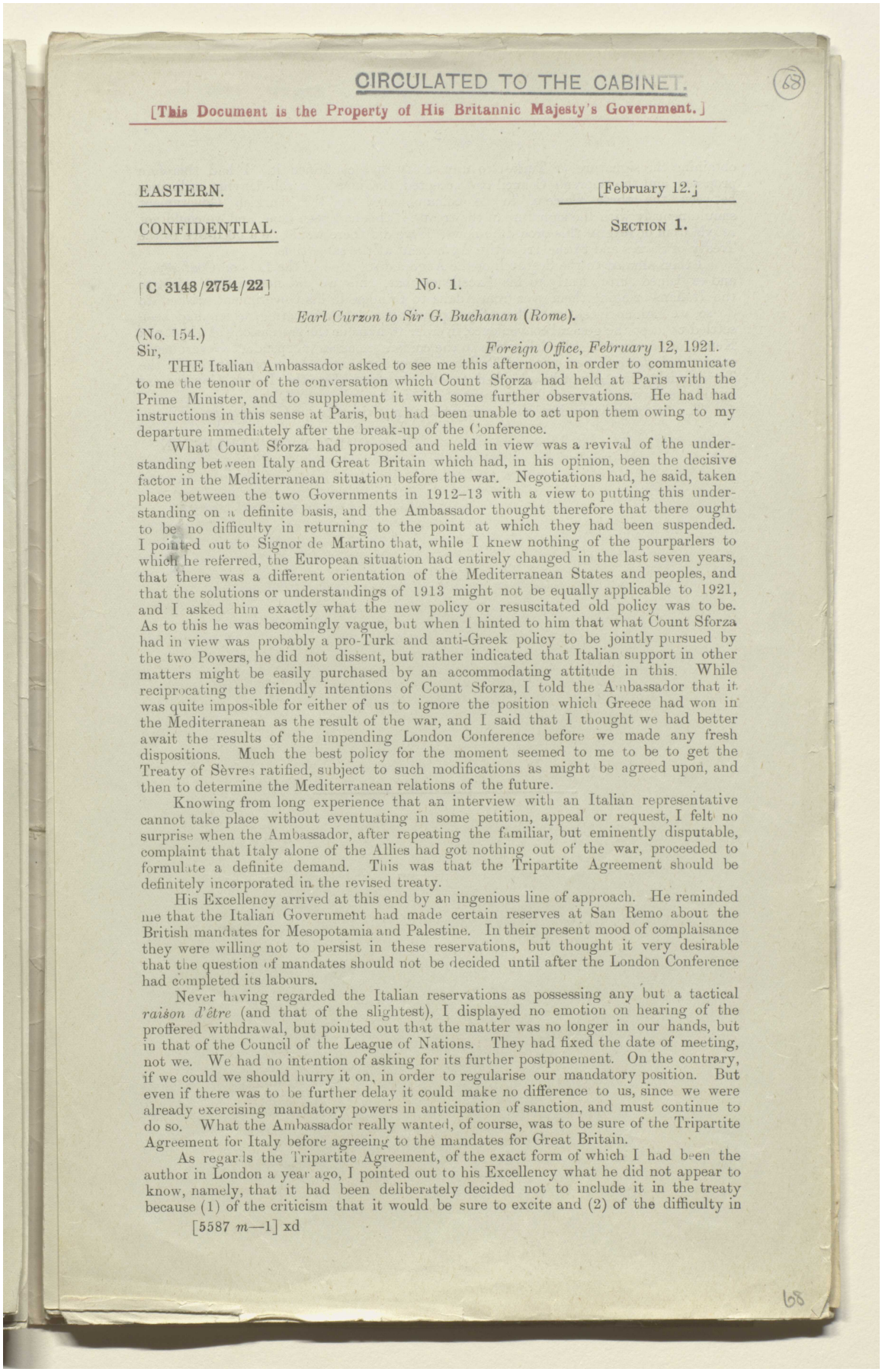

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EASTERN. [February 12.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 3148/2754/22] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 154.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February 12, 1921.*

THE Italian Ambassador asked to see me this afternoon, in order to communicate to me the tenour of the conversation which Count Sforza had held at Paris with the Prime Minister, and to supplement it with some further observations. He had had instructions in this sense at Paris, but had been unable to act upon them owing to my departure immediately after the break-up of the Conference.

What Count Sforza had proposed and held in view was a revival of the understanding between Italy and Great Britain which had, in his opinion, been the decisive factor in the Mediterranean situation before the war. Negotiations had, he said, taken place between the two Governments in 1912–13 with a view to putting this understanding on a definite basis, and the Ambassador thought therefore that there ought to be no difficulty in returning to the point at which they had been suspended. I pointed out to Signor de Martino that, while I knew nothing of the pourparlers to which he referred, the European situation had entirely changed in the last seven years, that there was a different orientation of the Mediterranean States and peoples, and that the solutions or understandings of 1913 might not be equally applicable to 1921, and I asked him exactly what the new policy or resuscitated old policy was to be. As to this he was becomingly vague, but when I hinted to him that what Count Sforza had in view was probably a pro-Turk and anti-Greek policy to be jointly pursued by the two Powers, he did not dissent, but rather indicated that Italian support in other matters might be easily purchased by an accommodating attitude in this. While reciprocating the friendly intentions of Count Sforza, I told the Ambassador that it was quite impossible for either of us to ignore the position which Greece had won in the Mediterranean as the result of the war, and I said that I thought we had better await the results of the impending London Conference before we made any fresh dispositions. Much the best policy for the moment seemed to me to be to get the Treaty of Sèvres ratified, subject to such modifications as might be agreed upon, and then to determine the Mediterranean relations of the future.

Knowing from long experience that an interview with an Italian representative cannot take place without eventuating in some petition, appeal or request, I felt no surprise when the Ambassador, after repeating the familiar, but eminently disputable, complaint that Italy alone of the Allies had got nothing out of the war, proceeded to formulate a definite demand. This was that the Tripartite Agreement should be definitely incorporated in the revised treaty.

His Excellency arrived at this end by an ingenious line of approach. He reminded me that the Italian Government had made certain reserves at San Remo about the British mandates for Mesopotamia and Palestine. In their present mood of complaisance they were willing not to persist in these reservations, but thought it very desirable that the question of mandates should not be decided until after the London Conference had completed its labours.

Never having regarded the Italian reservations as possessing any but a tactical *raison d'être* (and that of the slightest), I displayed no emotion on hearing of the proffered withdrawal, but pointed out that the matter was no longer in our hands, but in that of the Council of the League of Nations. They had fixed the date of meeting, not we. We had no intention of asking for its further postponement. On the contrary, if we could we should hurry it on, in order to regularise our mandatory position. But even if there was to be further delay it could make no difference to us, since we were already exercising mandatory powers in anticipation of sanction, and must continue to do so. What the Ambassador really wanted, of course, was to be sure of the Tripartite Agreement for Italy before agreeing to the mandates for Great Britain.

As regards the Tripartite Agreement, of the exact form of which I had been the author in London a year ago, I pointed out to his Excellency what he did not appear to know, namely, that it had been deliberately decided not to include it in the treaty because (1) of the criticism that it would be sure to excite and (2) of the difficulty in

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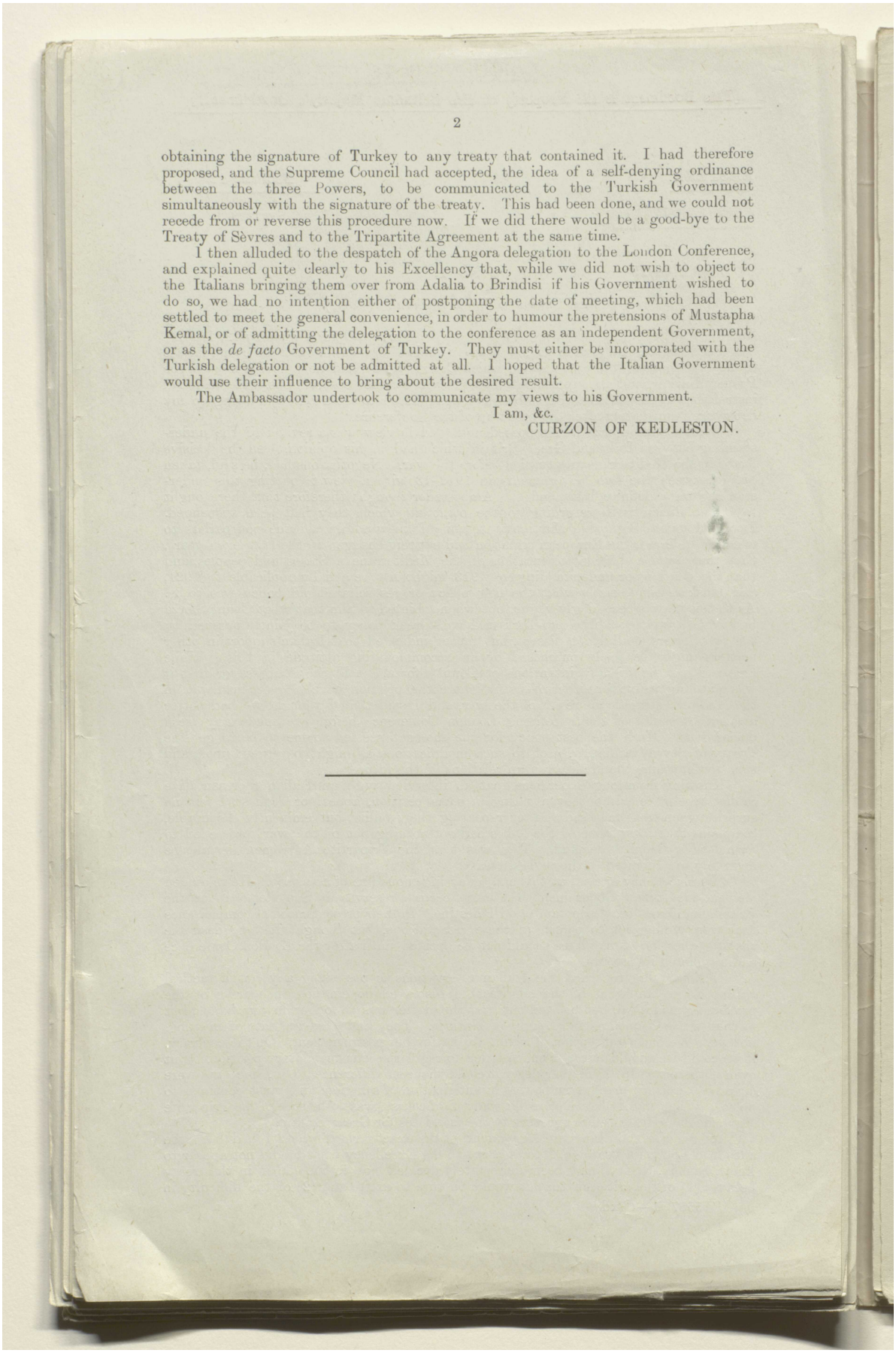

obtaining the signature of Turkey to any treaty that contained it. I had therefore proposed, and the Supreme Council had accepted, the idea of a self-denying ordinance between the three Powers, to be communicated to the Turkish Government simultaneously with the signature of the treaty. This had been done, and we could not recede from or reverse this procedure now. If we did there would be a good-bye to the Treaty of Sèvres and to the Tripartite Agreement at the same time.

I then alluded to the despatch of the Angora delegation to the London Conference, and explained quite clearly to his Excellency that, while we did not wish to object to the Italians bringing them over from Adalia to Brindisi if his Government wished to do so, we had no intention either of postponing the date of meeting, which had been settled to meet the general convenience, in order to humour the pretensions of Mustapha Kemal, or of admitting the delegation to the conference as an independent Government, or as the *de facto* Government of Turkey. They must either be incorporated with the Turkish delegation or not be admitted at all. I hoped that the Italian Government would use their influence to bring about the desired result.

The Ambassador undertook to communicate my views to his Government.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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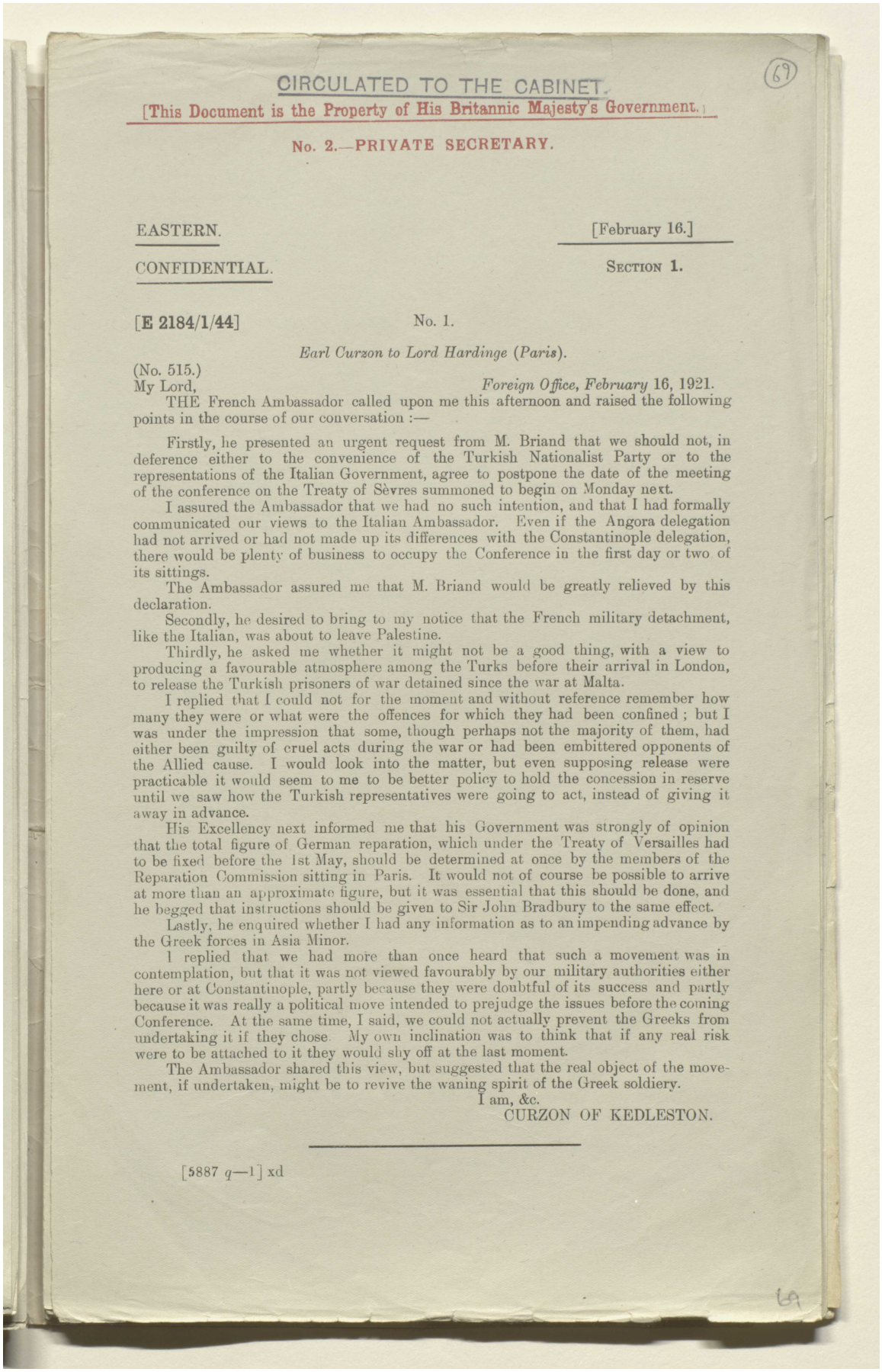

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No. 2.—PRIVATE SECRETARY.

EASTERN. [February 16.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2184/1/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 515.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 16, 1921.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and raised the following points in the course of our conversation :—

Firstly, he presented an urgent request from M. Briand that we should not, in deference either to the convenience of the Turkish Nationalist Party or to the representations of the Italian Government, agree to postpone the date of the meeting of the conference on the Treaty of Sèvres summoned to begin on Monday next.

I assured the Ambassador that we had no such intention, and that I had formally communicated our views to the Italian Ambassador. Even if the Angora delegation had not arrived or had not made up its differences with the Constantinople delegation, there would be plenty of business to occupy the Conference in the first day or two of its sittings.

The Ambassador assured me that M. Briand would be greatly relieved by this declaration.

Secondly, he desired to bring to my notice that the French military detachment, like the Italian, was about to leave Palestine.

Thirdly, he asked me whether it might not be a good thing, with a view to producing a favourable atmosphere among the Turks before their arrival in London, to release the Turkish prisoners of war detained since the war at Malta.

I replied that I could not for the moment and without reference remember how many they were or what were the offences for which they had been confined ; but I was under the impression that some, though perhaps not the majority of them, had either been guilty of cruel acts during the war or had been embittered opponents of the Allied cause. I would look into the matter, but even supposing release were practicable it would seem to me to be better policy to hold the concession in reserve until we saw how the Turkish representatives were going to act, instead of giving it away in advance.

His Excellency next informed me that his Government was strongly of opinion that the total figure of German reparation, which under the Treaty of Versailles had to be fixed before the 1st May, should be determined at once by the members of the Reparation Commission sitting in Paris. It would not of course be possible to arrive at more than an approximate figure, but it was essential that this should be done, and he begged that instructions should be given to Sir John Bradbury to the same effect.

Lastly, he enquired whether I had any information as to an impending advance by the Greek forces in Asia Minor.

I replied that we had more than once heard that such a movement was in contemplation, but that it was not viewed favourably by our military authorities either here or at Constantinople, partly because they were doubtful of its success and partly because it was really a political move intended to prejudge the issues before the coming Conference. At the same time, I said, we could not actually prevent the Greeks from undertaking it if they chose. My own inclination was to think that if any real risk were to be attached to it they would shy off at the last moment.

The Ambassador shared this view, but suggested that the real object of the movement, if undertaken, might be to revive the waning spirit of the Greek soldiery.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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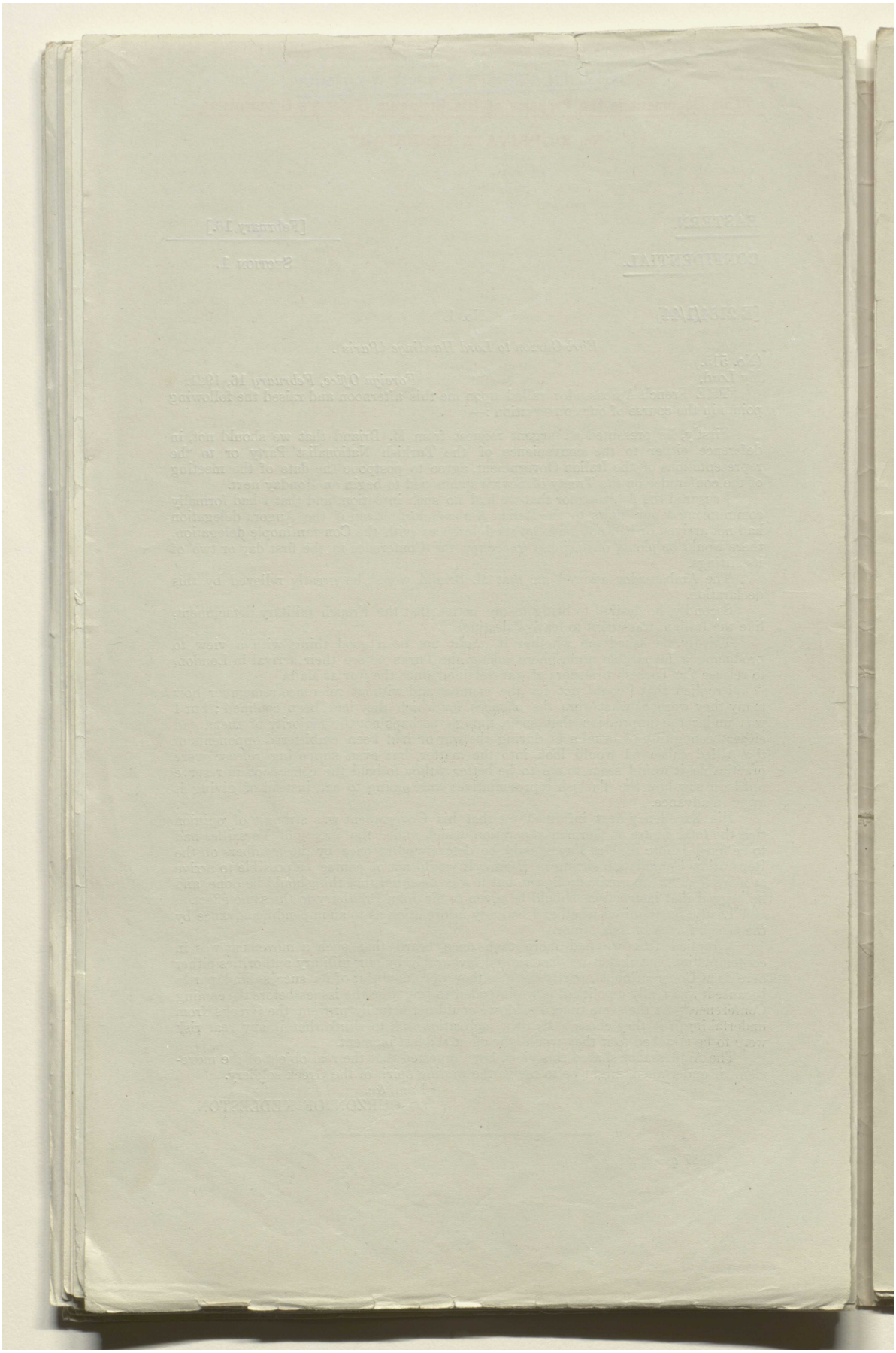

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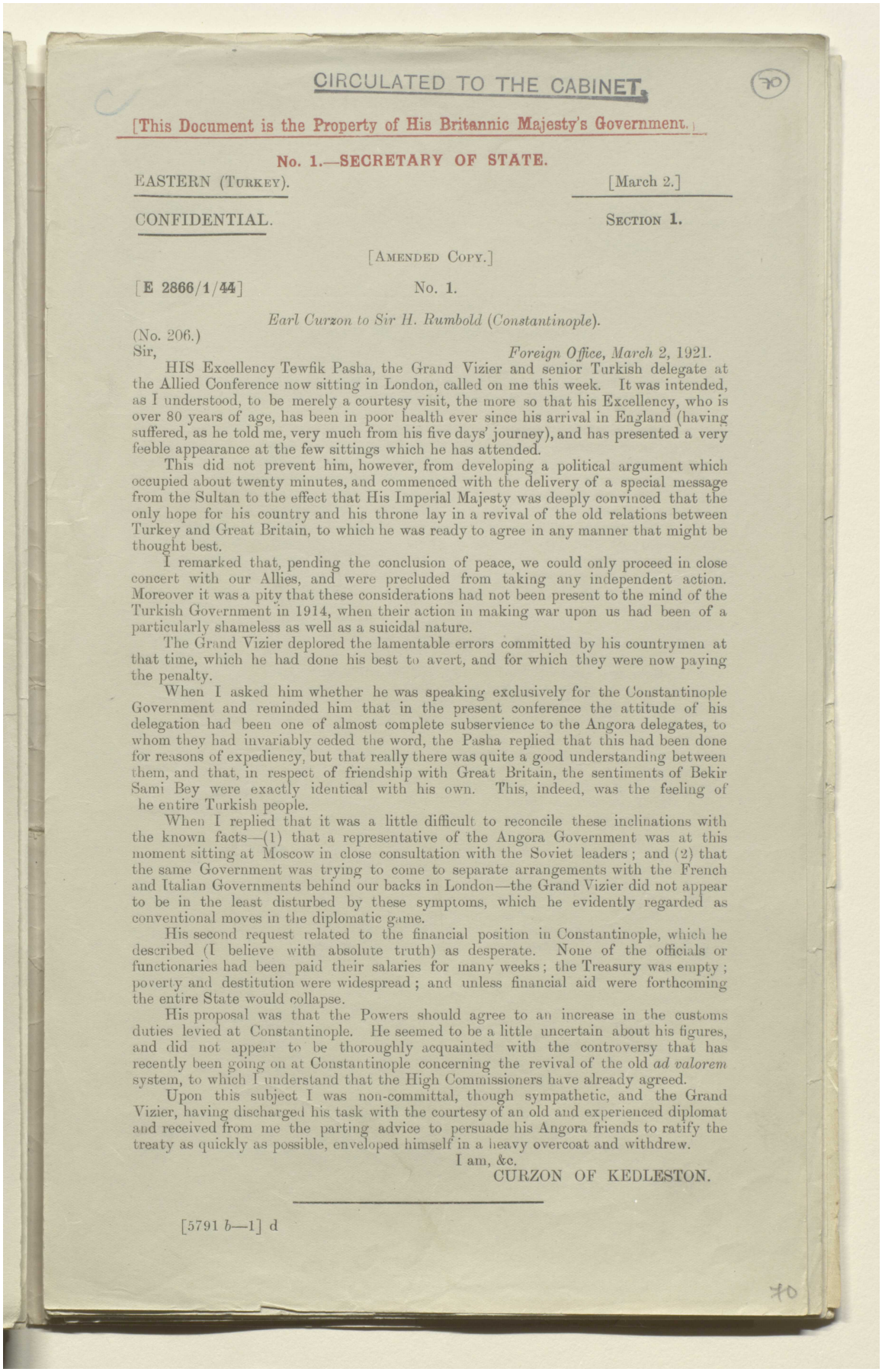

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN (TURKEY). [March 2.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[AMENDED COPY.]

[E 2866/1/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir H. Rumbold (Constantinople).

(No. 206.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 2, 1921.*

HIS Excellency Tewfik Pasha, the Grand Vizier and senior Turkish delegate at the Allied Conference now sitting in London, called on me this week. It was intended, as I understood, to be merely a courtesy visit, the more so that his Excellency, who is over 80 years of age, has been in poor health ever since his arrival in England (having suffered, as he told me, very much from his five days' journey), and has presented a very feeble appearance at the few sittings which he has attended.

This did not prevent him, however, from developing a political argument which occupied about twenty minutes, and commenced with the delivery of a special message from the Sultan to the effect that His Imperial Majesty was deeply convinced that the only hope for his country and his throne lay in a revival of the old relations between Turkey and Great Britain, to which he was ready to agree in any manner that might be thought best.

I remarked that, pending the conclusion of peace, we could only proceed in close concert with our Allies, and were precluded from taking any independent action. Moreover it was a pity that these considerations had not been present to the mind of the Turkish Government in 1914, when their action in making war upon us had been of a particularly shameless as well as a suicidal nature.

The Grand Vizier deplored the lamentable errors committed by his countrymen at that time, which he had done his best to avert, and for which they were now paying the penalty.

When I asked him whether he was speaking exclusively for the Constantinople Government and reminded him that in the present conference the attitude of his delegation had been one of almost complete subservience to the Angora delegates, to whom they had invariably ceded the word, the Pasha replied that this had been done for reasons of expediency, but that really there was quite a good understanding between them, and that, in respect of friendship with Great Britain, the sentiments of Bekir Sami Bey were exactly identical with his own. This, indeed, was the feeling of he entire Turkish people.

When I replied that it was a little difficult to reconcile these inclinations with the known facts—(1) that a representative of the Angora Government was at this moment sitting at Moscow in close consultation with the Soviet leaders; and (2) that the same Government was trying to come to separate arrangements with the French and Italian Governments behind our backs in London—the Grand Vizier did not appear to be in the least disturbed by these symptoms, which he evidently regarded as conventional moves in the diplomatic game.

His second request related to the financial position in Constantinople, which he described (I believe with absolute truth) as desperate. None of the officials or functionaries had been paid their salaries for many weeks; the Treasury was empty; poverty and destitution were widespread; and unless financial aid were forthcoming the entire State would collapse.

His proposal was that the Powers should agree to an increase in the customs duties levied at Constantinople. He seemed to be a little uncertain about his figures, and did not appear to be thoroughly acquainted with the controversy that has recently been going on at Constantinople concerning the revival of the old *ad valorem* system, to which I understand that the High Commissioners have already agreed.

Upon this subject I was non-committal, though sympathetic, and the Grand Vizier, having discharged his task with the courtesy of an old and experienced diplomat and received from me the parting advice to persuade his Angora friends to ratify the treaty as quickly as possible, enveloped himself in a heavy overcoat and withdrew.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[5791 *b*—1] d

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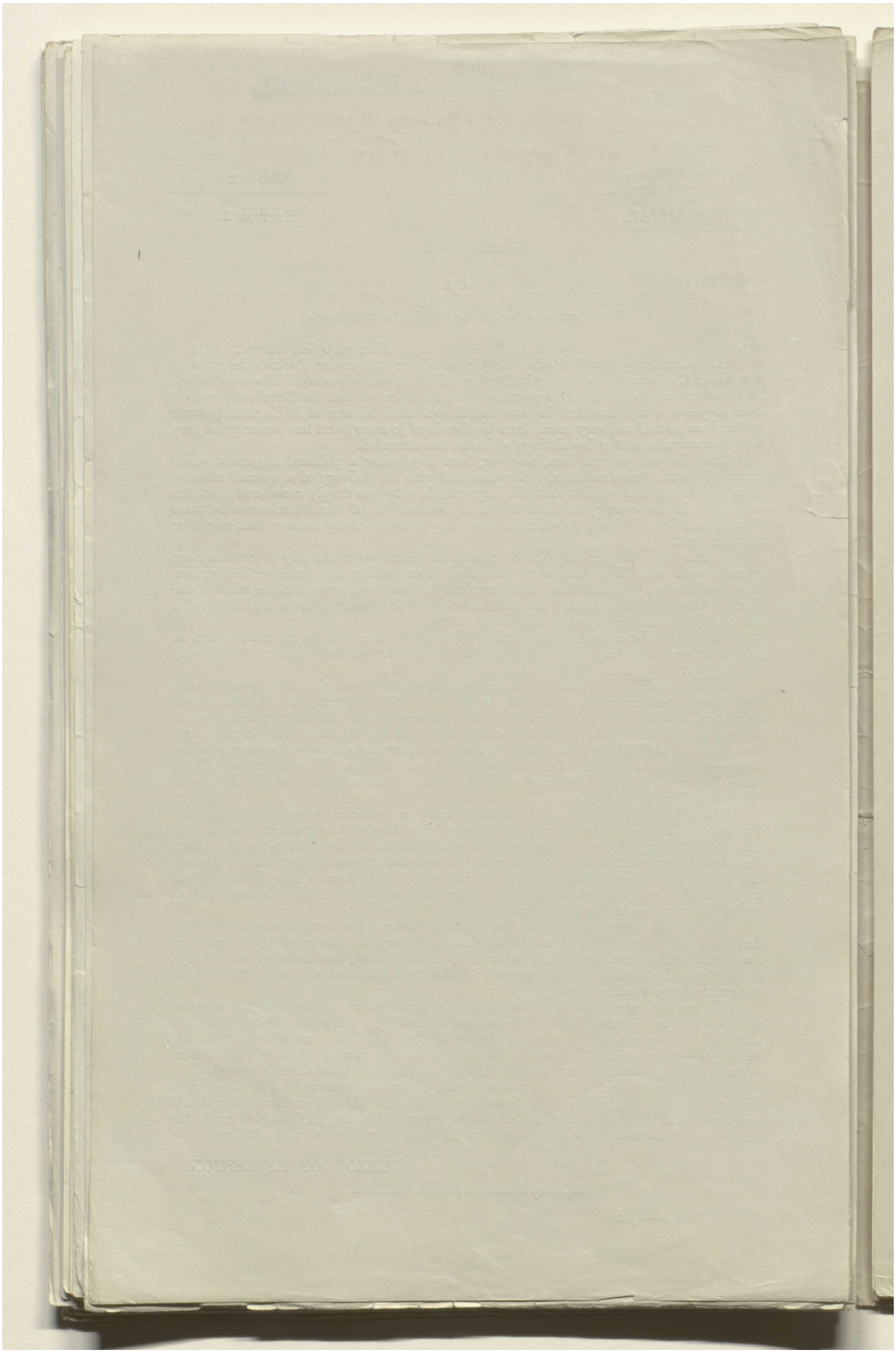

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [March 15.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3343/1/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir H. Rumbold (Constantinople).

(No. 240.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March* 15, 1921.

THE Grand Vizier, in much better health, and in greater spirits than on the occasion of his former visit, called upon me at the Foreign Office this afternoon in order to bid good-bye.

His manner on this occasion was assured and his utterance voluble, and there was no concealment on his part of the fact that he was leaving England in a very good humour at the concessions which had been made.

Following up the advance which he had made to me on the previous occasion at the instance of the Sultan, he told me that the latter was exceedingly anxious to fortify the closer co-operation, which he hoped would exist in the future between Turkey and Great Britain, by a separate alliance or agreement with ourselves. He realised, however, that at a time when we were acting in close concert with the other Great Powers such a solution was impracticable and could not receive favourable consideration at our hands. He therefore refrained from putting it forward, but he wished me to know what had been in the mind of his royal master and what was the future situation to which the latter looked forward.

I made no comment upon this suggestion, except to say that the Grand Vizier was quite right in thinking that it was impossible for us to take any step at the present juncture in separation from our allies.

His Excellency, while protesting that he did not want to raise any question of a revision of the Treaty of Sèvres beyond that which had been officially proposed, then proceeded, in contravention of his own assurance, to plead for lighter treatment in respect of Thrace. His argument was really a plea for the Enos–Midia as against the Chatalja line.

I allowed him to develop his case without interruption, but informed him at the end that an essential condition of the modifications that had been proposed was the maintenance of the rest of the Treaty of Sèvres intact, and that it was therefore out of the question that an exception should be made in the case of Thrace. The Turkish Government should bow to the facts of the situation and be grateful for the very substantial concessions that had been made.

The Grand Vizier then went on to give me a rather interesting account of the private relations which had existed between the Angora delegation and himself. He admitted that they had come to the Conference with some suspicion of each other, and that the relations for the first day or two had been strained. At the end of that time, Bekir Sami Bey having shown a very conciliatory spirit, they had acted in close co-operation, and he hoped to have established relations with the Angora delegation which would render co-operation between the two much easier than had at one time been imagined. The "wild cats of Angora" had indeed, according to him, become quite tame under his fatherly care.

Tewfik Pasha then proceeded to develop a long argument about the increase in customs duty to which the High Commissioners had agreed at Constantinople. Apparently this particular concession was not in the least what the Turkish Government desired and would not result to them in the pecuniary advantage which was the only thing to which they really attached importance. They did not want an *ad valorem* duty at all, and the 11 per cent., in practice, would mean a realised duty of not more than one-half.

I did not either interrupt or follow the Grand Vizier in this argument, which he continued until he had exhausted the fertility of the vein.

We then parted with hopes—the realisation of which, considering his advanced age, I cannot but doubt—that we might meet again.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[5791 *p*—1] xd

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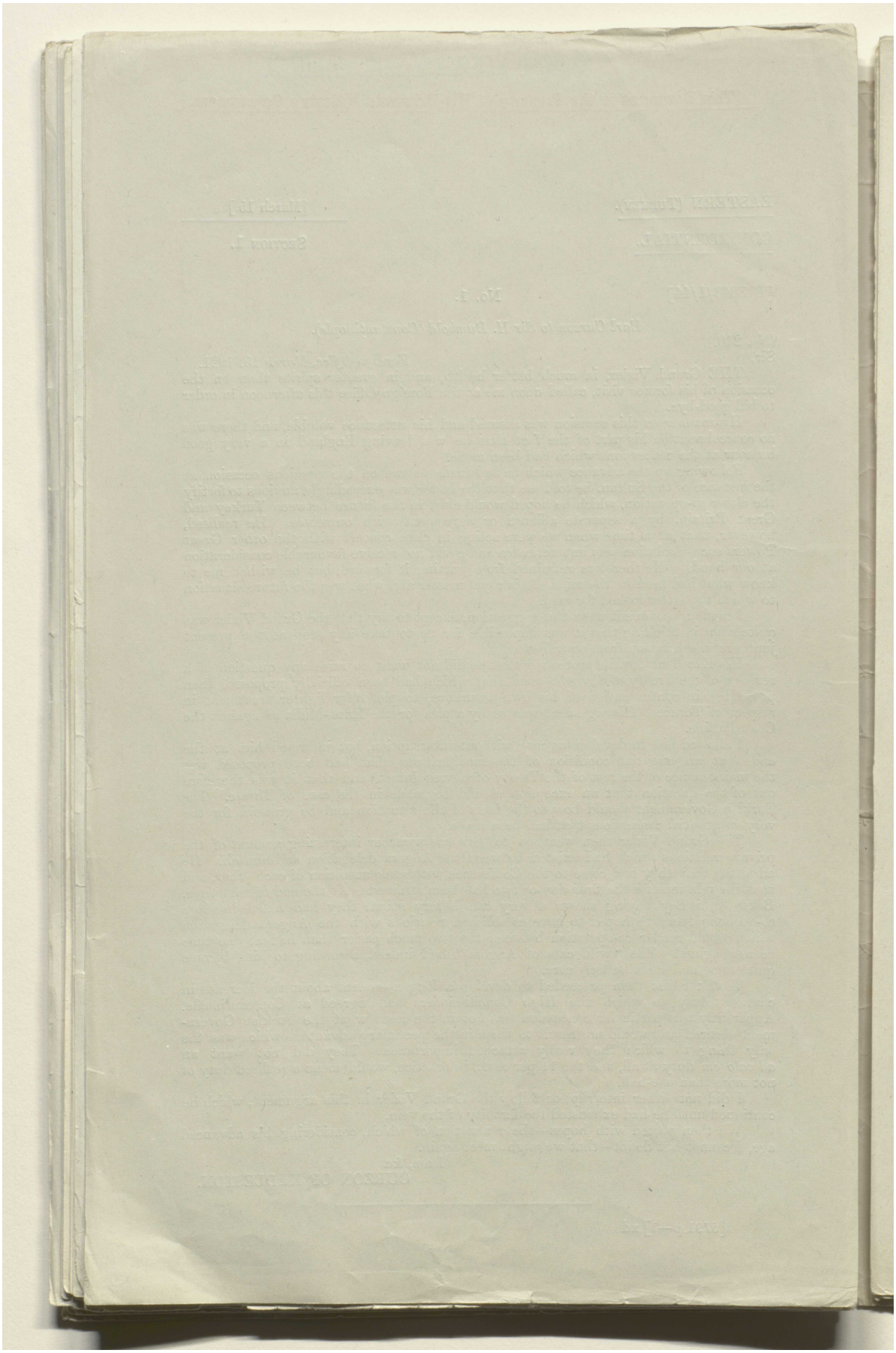

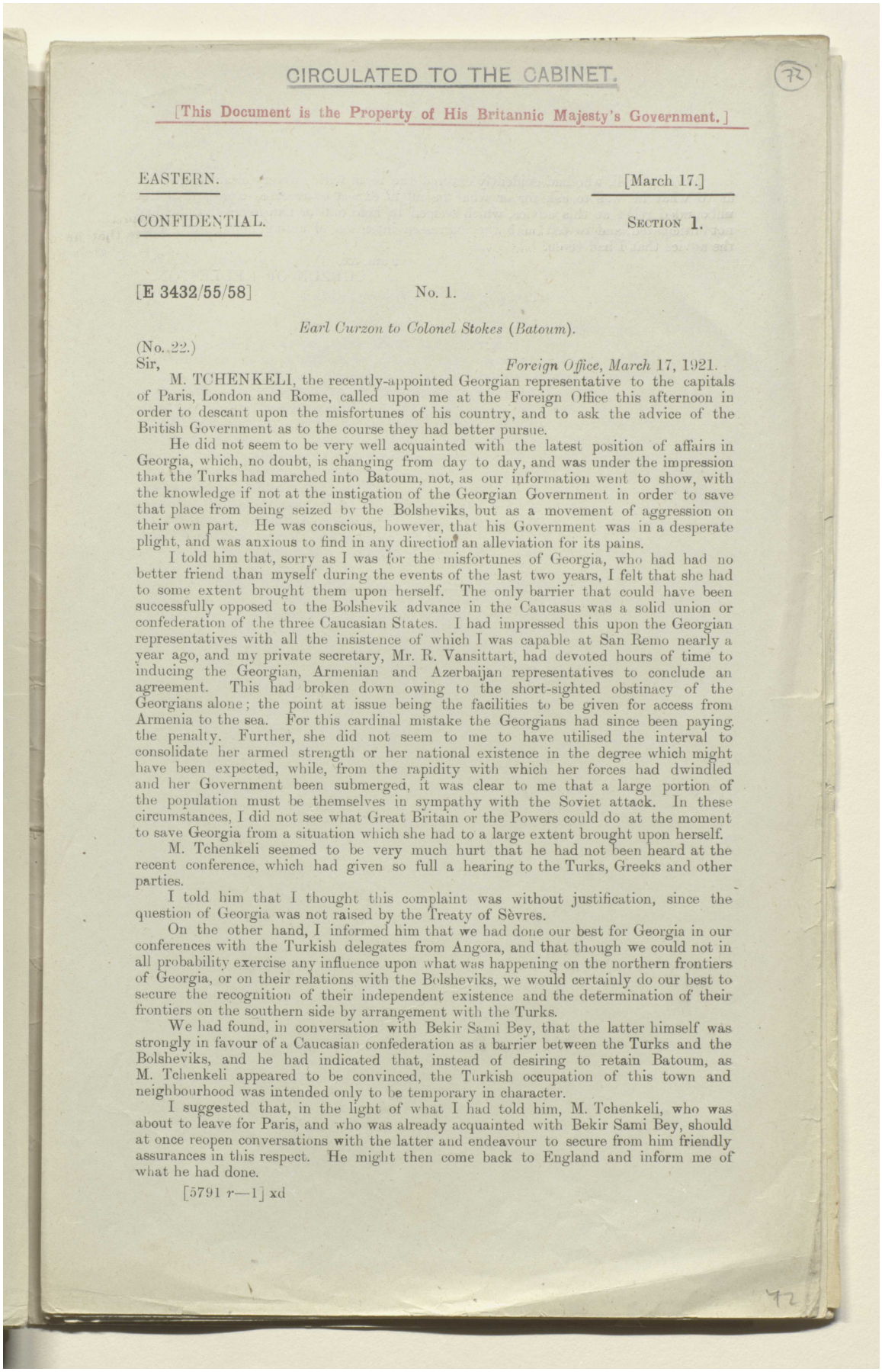

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EASTERN. [March 17.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3432/55/58] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Colonel Stokes (Batoum).

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, March 17, 1921.*

M. TCHENKELI, the recently-appointed Georgian representative to the capitals of Paris, London and Rome, called upon me at the Foreign Office this afternoon in order to descant upon the misfortunes of his country, and to ask the advice of the British Government as to the course they had better pursue.

He did not seem to be very well acquainted with the latest position of affairs in Georgia, which, no doubt, is changing from day to day, and was under the impression that the Turks had marched into Batoum, not, as our information went to show, with the knowledge if not at the instigation of the Georgian Government in order to save that place from being seized by the Bolsheviks, but as a movement of aggression on their own part. He was conscious, however, that his Government was in a desperate plight, and was anxious to find in any direction an alleviation for its pains.

I told him that, sorry as I was for the misfortunes of Georgia, who had had no better friend than myself during the events of the last two years, I felt that she had to some extent brought them upon herself. The only barrier that could have been successfully opposed to the Bolshevik advance in the Caucasus was a solid union or confederation of the three Caucasian States. I had impressed this upon the Georgian representatives with all the insistence of which I was capable at San Remo nearly a year ago, and my private secretary, Mr. R. Vansittart, had devoted hours of time to inducing the Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan representatives to conclude an agreement. This had broken down owing to the short-sighted obstinacy of the Georgians alone; the point at issue being the facilities to be given for access from Armenia to the sea. For this cardinal mistake the Georgians had since been paying the penalty. Further, she did not seem to me to have utilised the interval to consolidate her armed strength or her national existence in the degree which might have been expected, while, from the rapidity with which her forces had dwindled and her Government been submerged, it was clear to me that a large portion of the population must be themselves in sympathy with the Soviet attack. In these circumstances, I did not see what Great Britain or the Powers could do at the moment to save Georgia from a situation which she had to a large extent brought upon herself.

M. Tchenkeli seemed to be very much hurt that he had not been heard at the recent conference, which had given so full a hearing to the Turks, Greeks and other parties.

I told him that I thought this complaint was without justification, since the question of Georgia was not raised by the Treaty of Sèvres.

On the other hand, I informed him that we had done our best for Georgia in our conferences with the Turkish delegates from Angora, and that though we could not in all probability exercise any influence upon what was happening on the northern frontiers of Georgia, or on their relations with the Bolsheviks, we would certainly do our best to secure the recognition of their independent existence and the determination of their frontiers on the southern side by arrangement with the Turks.

We had found, in conversation with Bekir Sami Bey, that the latter himself was strongly in favour of a Caucasian confederation as a barrier between the Turks and the Bolsheviks, and he had indicated that, instead of desiring to retain Batoum, as M. Tchenkeli appeared to be convinced, the Turkish occupation of this town and neighbourhood was intended only to be temporary in character.

I suggested that, in the light of what I had told him, M. Tchenkeli, who was about to leave for Paris, and who was already acquainted with Bekir Sami Bey, should at once reopen conversations with the latter and endeavour to secure from him friendly assurances in this respect. He might then come back to England and inform me of what he had done.

[5791 *r*—1] xd

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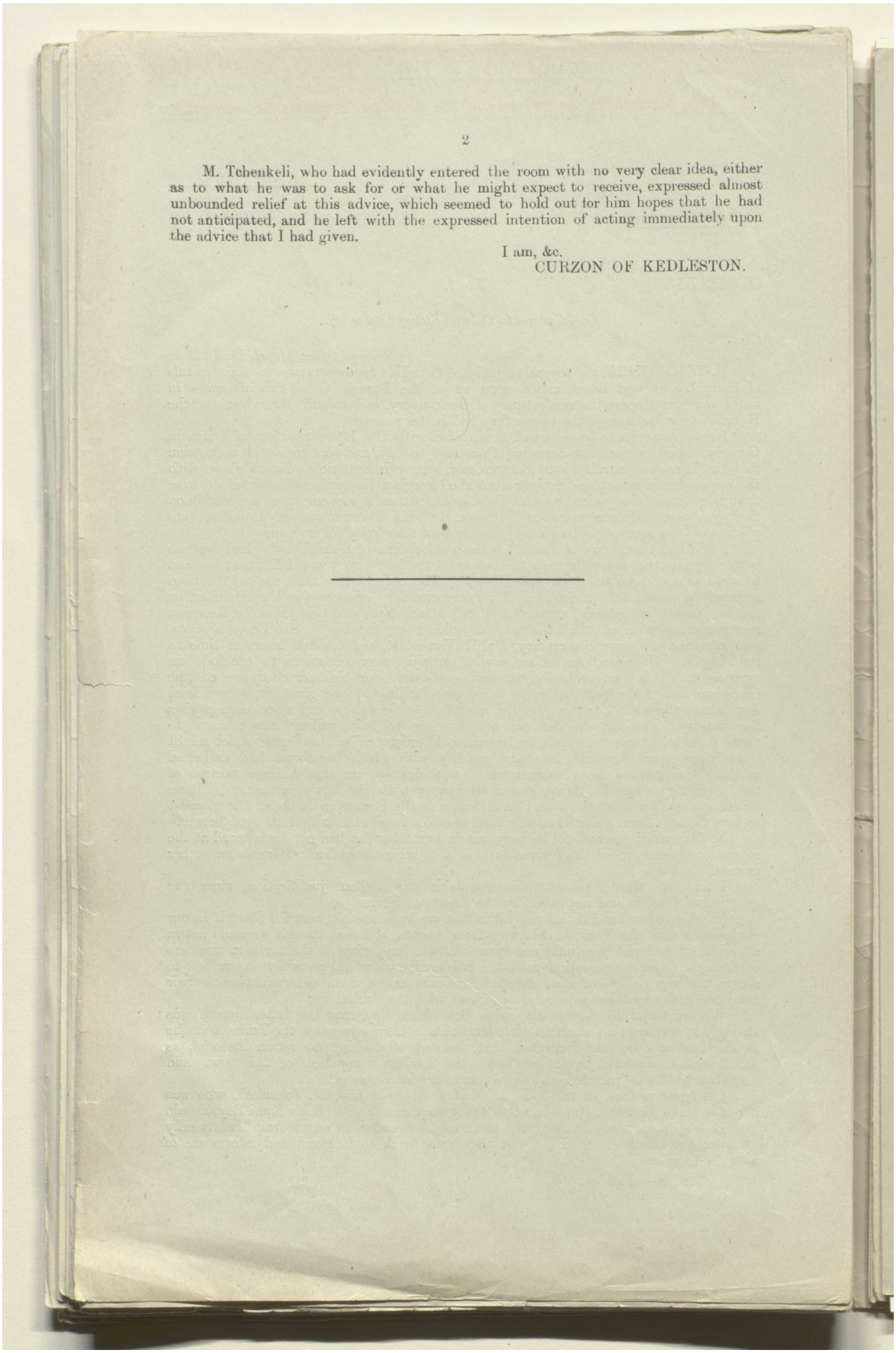

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M. Tchenkeli, who had evidently entered the room with no very clear idea, either as to what he was to ask for or what he might expect to receive, expressed almost unbounded relief at this advice, which seemed to hold out for him hopes that he had not anticipated, and he left with the expressed intention of acting immediately upon the advice that I had given.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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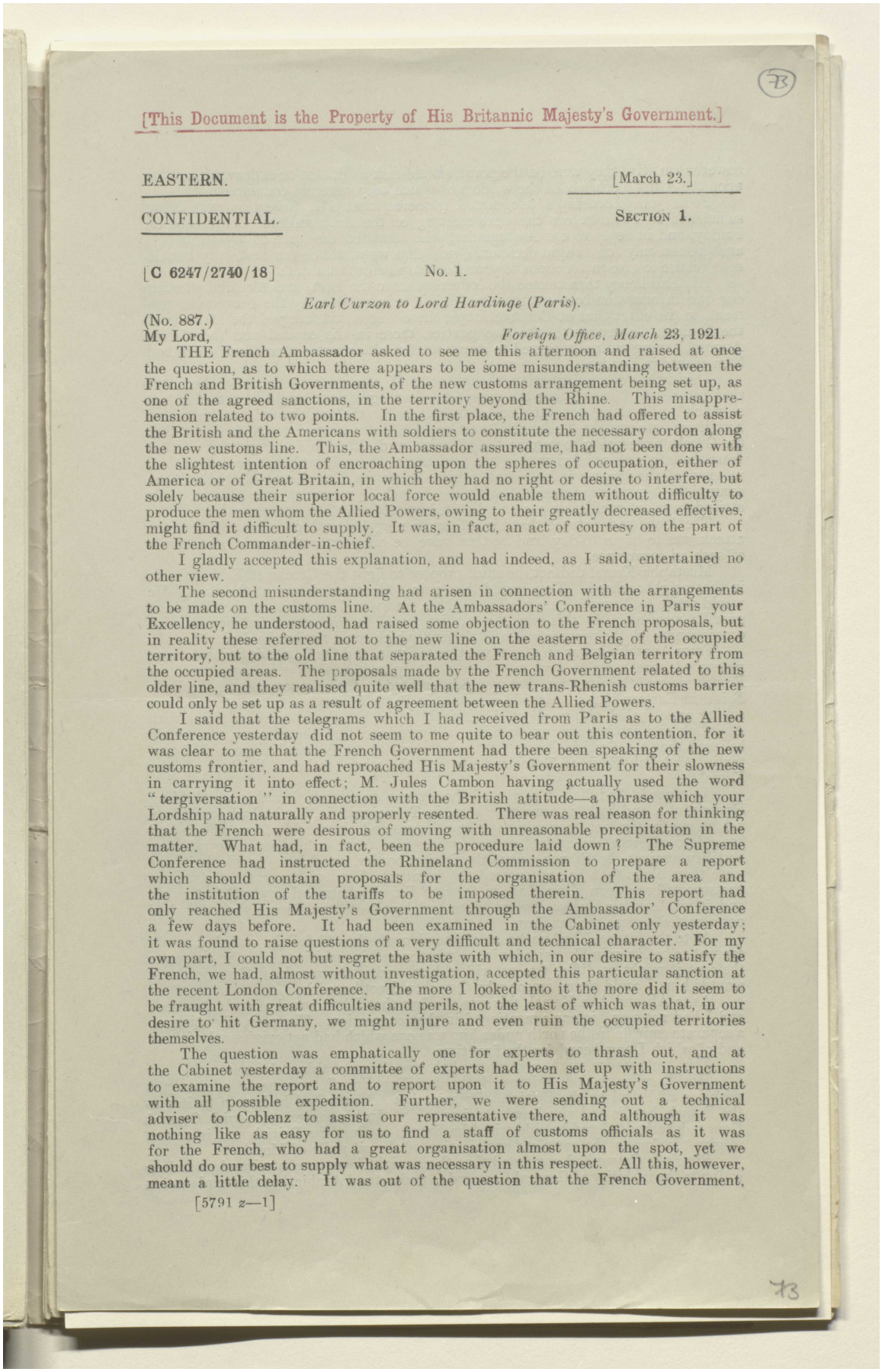

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EASTERN. [March 23.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 6247/2740/18] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 887.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March 23, 1921.*

THE French Ambassador asked to see me this afternoon and raised at once the question, as to which there appears to be some misunderstanding between the French and British Governments, of the new customs arrangement being set up, as one of the agreed sanctions, in the territory beyond the Rhine. This misapprehension related to two points. In the first place, the French had offered to assist the British and the Americans with soldiers to constitute the necessary cordon along the new customs line. This, the Ambassador assured me, had not been done with the slightest intention of encroaching upon the spheres of occupation, either of America or of Great Britain, in which they had no right or desire to interfere, but solely because their superior local force would enable them without difficulty to produce the men whom the Allied Powers, owing to their greatly decreased effectives, might find it difficult to supply. It was, in fact, an act of courtesy on the part of the French Commander-in-chief.

I gladly accepted this explanation, and had indeed, as I said, entertained no other view.

The second misunderstanding had arisen in connection with the arrangements to be made on the customs line. At the Ambassadors' Conference in Paris your Excellency, he understood, had raised some objection to the French proposals, but in reality these referred not to the new line on the eastern side of the occupied territory, but to the old line that separated the French and Belgian territory from the occupied areas. The proposals made by the French Government related to this older line, and they realised quite well that the new trans-Rhenish customs barrier could only be set up as a result of agreement between the Allied Powers.

I said that the telegrams which I had received from Paris as to the Allied Conference yesterday did not seem to me quite to bear out this contention, for it was clear to me that the French Government had there been speaking of the new customs frontier, and had reproached His Majesty's Government for their slowness in carrying it into effect; M. Jules Cambon having actually used the word "tergiversation" in connection with the British attitude—a phrase which your Lordship had naturally and properly resented. There was real reason for thinking that the French were desirous of moving with unreasonable precipitation in the matter. What had, in fact, been the procedure laid down? The Supreme Conference had instructed the Rhineland Commission to prepare a report which should contain proposals for the organisation of the area and the institution of the tariffs to be imposed therein. This report had only reached His Majesty's Government through the Ambassador' Conference a few days before. It had been examined in the Cabinet only yesterday; it was found to raise questions of a very difficult and technical character. For my own part, I could not but regret the haste with which, in our desire to satisfy the French, we had, almost without investigation, accepted this particular sanction at the recent London Conference. The more I looked into it the more did it seem to be fraught with great difficulties and perils, not the least of which was that, in our desire to hit Germany, we might injure and even ruin the occupied territories themselves.

The question was emphatically one for experts to thrash out, and at the Cabinet yesterday a committee of experts had been set up with instructions to examine the report and to report upon it to His Majesty's Government with all possible expedition. Further, we were sending out a technical adviser to Coblenz to assist our representative there, and although it was nothing like as easy for us to find a staff of customs officials as it was for the French, who had a great organisation almost upon the spot, yet we should do our best to supply what was necessary in this respect. All this, however, meant a little delay. It was out of the question that the French Government,

[5791 z—1]

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however sensitive they were on the point, should risk a decision or endeavour to force upon the Allies a scheme, of the wisdom of which they were not convinced.

From your Lordship's telegram I gathered that Mr. Robertson was being summoned to Paris before the next meeting of the Ambassadors' Conference on Friday, and in reply to the Ambassador, who admitted the force of my arguments and pressed only for a rapid decision, I said that we would do our best, only I could not promise to give instructions to your Lordship before that date.

His Excellency then turned the conversation to the East, and enquired whether our own information bore out that, which had been received by the French Government, to the effect that at Constantinople there was a stiffening of the attitude of the Turkish Government; the two parties, those in the capital and those from Angora, having mutually agreed to stand out for better terms than those which had been offered in London.

I said that our information, though not full, was much to the same effect, but that personally I feared that the prospects of an agreement would be retarded, not so much by anything done at Constantinople, as by the anticipated resumption of hostilities between the Turks and the Greeks. There seemed to be no doubt that the Greeks were going to resume the offensive, and although I thought myself that from the larger point of view this was a mistaken policy, it could not be denied that, in view of the large reinforcements which Mustapha Kemal was alleged to have secured by his recent agreement with the French Government over Cilicia, their attitude was an intelligible one and dictated by motives of self-preservation.

The Ambassador stated that his information agreed with ours, namely, that the attack was to begin to-day, and he then gave me his prognostication of the results of such an occurrence.

Mustapha Kemal did not, he said, propose to fight the Greeks at Eski-shehr or in that neighbourhood. They would thus gain a bloodless victory at the start. He would retire to Angora, mass his forces there, and would then harass the Greeks by guerilla warfare. In this way the conflict would be protracted for months with consequences for the prospects of a settlement which could not but be deplored.

From Anatolia it was an easy transition to Syria, and the Comte de Saint-Aulaire proceeded once more to give me, with great fulness and no small emphasis, the French view of the situation that would be created by the reappearance of the Emir Feisal in Eastern parts. He told me that the British consul at Damascus had been saying some foolish things about the desirability of the French making terms with Abdullah and setting him up as King in Syria, and that the rumour was widely believed that the British Government were about to make Feisal King of Mesopotamia, Abdullah Emir of Transjordania and the other brother, Ali, Emir of Abu Kemal.

As regards Abdullah, I remarked that it was quite true that this son of King Hussein was, and had for some time been, in Transjordania, but he had gone there, not at our instigation, nor with our knowledge, and the whole of our efforts had been devoted since his arrival to preventing him from indulging in intrigue or hostility against the French across the Syrian border, an object for which it was more than likely that he had entered the country. We had brought the strongest pressure to bear upon King Hussein through Feisal to suspend any such activities, and it was entirely due to our influence and loyalty to the French that they had not assumed a more serious form.

As to the future, I had no means of knowing whether Abdullah wanted or would consent to be Emir in Transjordania, or what were his ambitions. As he was upon the spot it might be difficult to get rid of him, and if the people of Transjordania wanted him, I could see no reason why they should not have him.

As to Ali and Abu Kemal, this was the first that I had heard of such a project, and I had not seen his name mentioned in that connection. The plan of setting up a separate emirate in the north under him was one which had not originated with us, and of which I now heard for the first time.

The Ambassador might rest assured that we knew nothing about it.

His Excellency then reiterated the familiar French arguments against the adoption of Feisal by the British. He said that not only had he been a traitor to the French, but he had also been a traitor to us. In his conversation with General Gouraud he had offered to side with the French against the British and in return to give the former the complete exploitation of the oil wells of Mosul.

Sir Eyre Crowe had suggested that there might have been a misunderstanding owing to the inability of General Gouraud to understand Arabic, but this explanation

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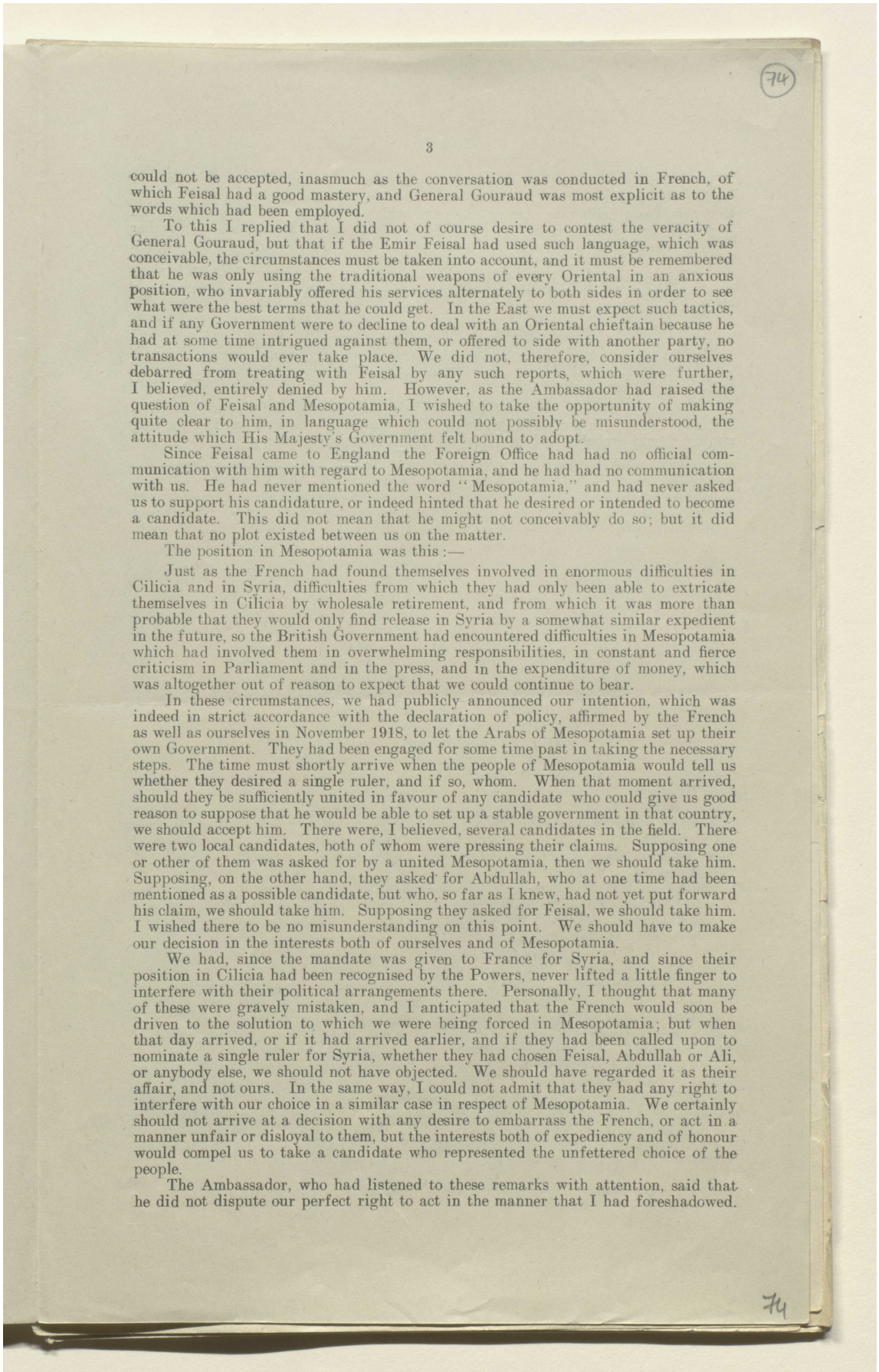

could not be accepted, inasmuch as the conversation was conducted in French, of which Feisal had a good mastery, and General Gouraud was most explicit as to the words which had been employed.

To this I replied that I did not of course desire to contest the veracity of General Gouraud, but that if the Emir Feisal had used such language, which was conceivable, the circumstances must be taken into account, and it must be remembered that he was only using the traditional weapons of every Oriental in an anxious position, who invariably offered his services alternately to both sides in order to see what were the best terms that he could get. In the East we must expect such tactics, and if any Government were to decline to deal with an Oriental chieftain because he had at some time intrigued against them, or offered to side with another party, no transactions would ever take place. We did not, therefore, consider ourselves debarred from treating with Feisal by any such reports, which were further, I believed, entirely denied by him. However, as the Ambassador had raised the question of Feisal and Mesopotamia, I wished to take the opportunity of making quite clear to him, in language which could not possibly be misunderstood, the attitude which His Majesty's Government felt bound to adopt.

Since Feisal came to England the Foreign Office had had no official communication with him with regard to Mesopotamia, and he had had no communication with us. He had never mentioned the word "Mesopotamia," and had never asked us to support his candidature, or indeed hinted that he desired or intended to become a candidate. This did not mean that he might not conceivably do so; but it did mean that no plot existed between us on the matter.

The position in Mesopotamia was this :—

Just as the French had found themselves involved in enormous difficulties in Cilicia and in Syria, difficulties from which they had only been able to extricate themselves in Cilicia by wholesale retirement, and from which it was more than probable that they would only find release in Syria by a somewhat similar expedient in the future, so the British Government had encountered difficulties in Mesopotamia which had involved them in overwhelming responsibilities, in constant and fierce criticism in Parliament and in the press, and in the expenditure of money, which was altogether out of reason to expect that we could continue to bear.

In these circumstances, we had publicly announced our intention, which was indeed in strict accordance with the declaration of policy, affirmed by the French as well as ourselves in November 1918, to let the Arabs of Mesopotamia set up their own Government. They had been engaged for some time past in taking the necessary steps. The time must shortly arrive when the people of Mesopotamia would tell us whether they desired a single ruler, and if so, whom. When that moment arrived, should they be sufficiently united in favour of any candidate who could give us good reason to suppose that he would be able to set up a stable government in that country, we should accept him. There were, I believed, several candidates in the field. There were two local candidates, both of whom were pressing their claims. Supposing one or other of them was asked for by a united Mesopotamia, then we should take him. Supposing, on the other hand, they asked for Abdullah, who at one time had been mentioned as a possible candidate, but who, so far as I knew, had not yet put forward his claim, we should take him. Supposing they asked for Feisal, we should take him. I wished there to be no misunderstanding on this point. We should have to make our decision in the interests both of ourselves and of Mesopotamia.

We had, since the mandate was given to France for Syria, and since their position in Cilicia had been recognised by the Powers, never lifted a little finger to interfere with their political arrangements there. Personally, I thought that many of these were gravely mistaken, and I anticipated that the French would soon be driven to the solution to which we were being forced in Mesopotamia; but when that day arrived, or if it had arrived earlier, and if they had been called upon to nominate a single ruler for Syria, whether they had chosen Feisal, Abdullah or Ali, or anybody else, we should not have objected. We should have regarded it as their affair, and not ours. In the same way, I could not admit that they had any right to interfere with our choice in a similar case in respect of Mesopotamia. We certainly should not arrive at a decision with any desire to embarrass the French, or act in a manner unfair or disloyal to them, but the interests both of expediency and of honour would compel us to take a candidate who represented the unfettered choice of the people.

The Ambassador, who had listened to these remarks with attention, said that he did not dispute our perfect right to act in the manner that I had foreshadowed.

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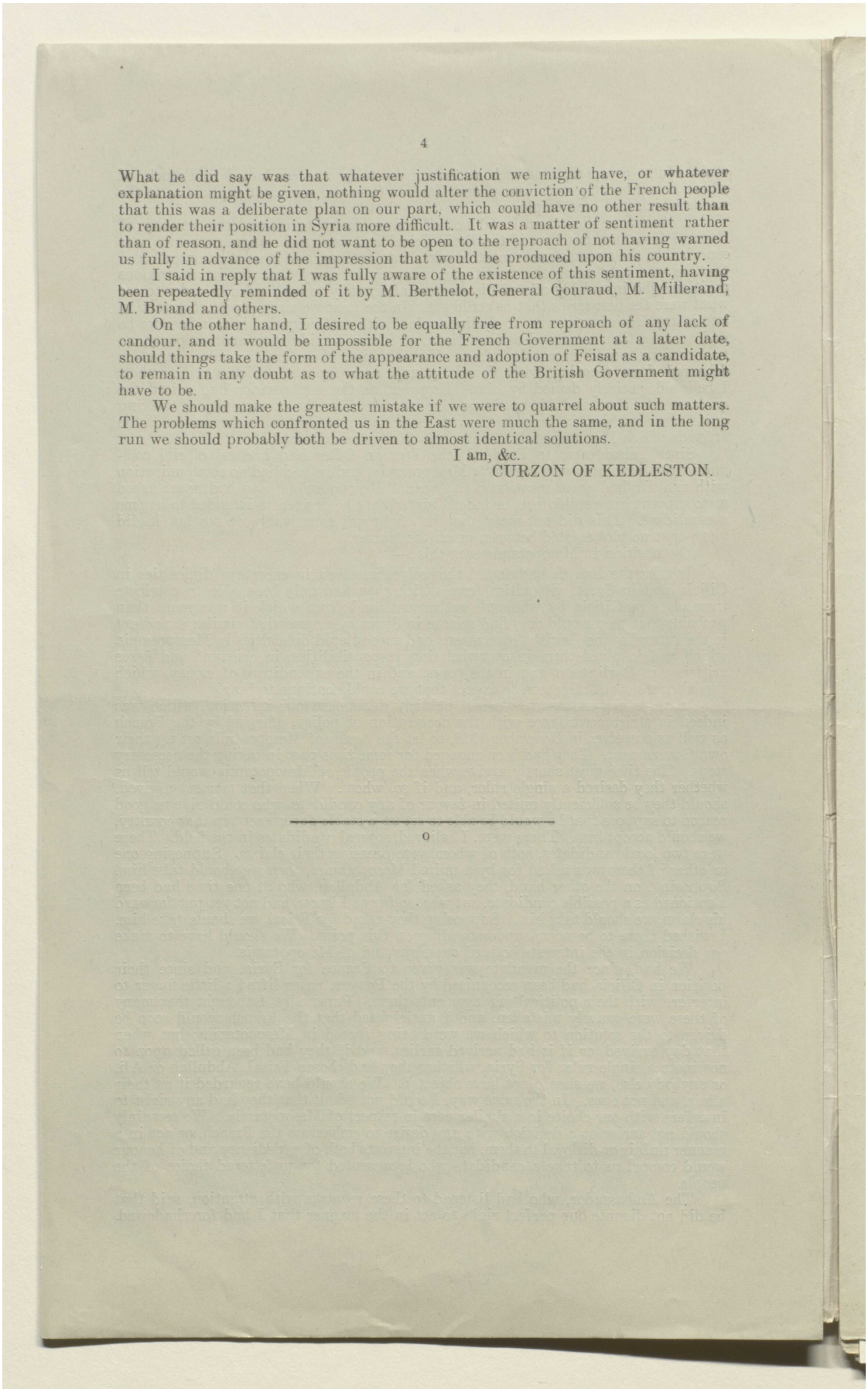

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What he did say was that whatever justification we might have, or whatever explanation might be given, nothing would alter the conviction of the French people that this was a deliberate plan on our part, which could have no other result than to render their position in Syria more difficult. It was a matter of sentiment rather than of reason, and he did not want to be open to the reproach of not having warned us fully in advance of the impression that would be produced upon his country.

I said in reply that I was fully aware of the existence of this sentiment, having been repeatedly reminded of it by M. Berthelot, General Gouraud, M. Millerand, M. Briand and others.

On the other hand, I desired to be equally free from reproach of any lack of candour, and it would be impossible for the French Government at a later date, should things take the form of the appearance and adoption of Feisal as a candidate, to remain in any doubt as to what the attitude of the British Government might have to be.

We should make the greatest mistake if we were to quarrel about such matters. The problems which confronted us in the East were much the same, and in the long run we should probably both be driven to almost identical solutions.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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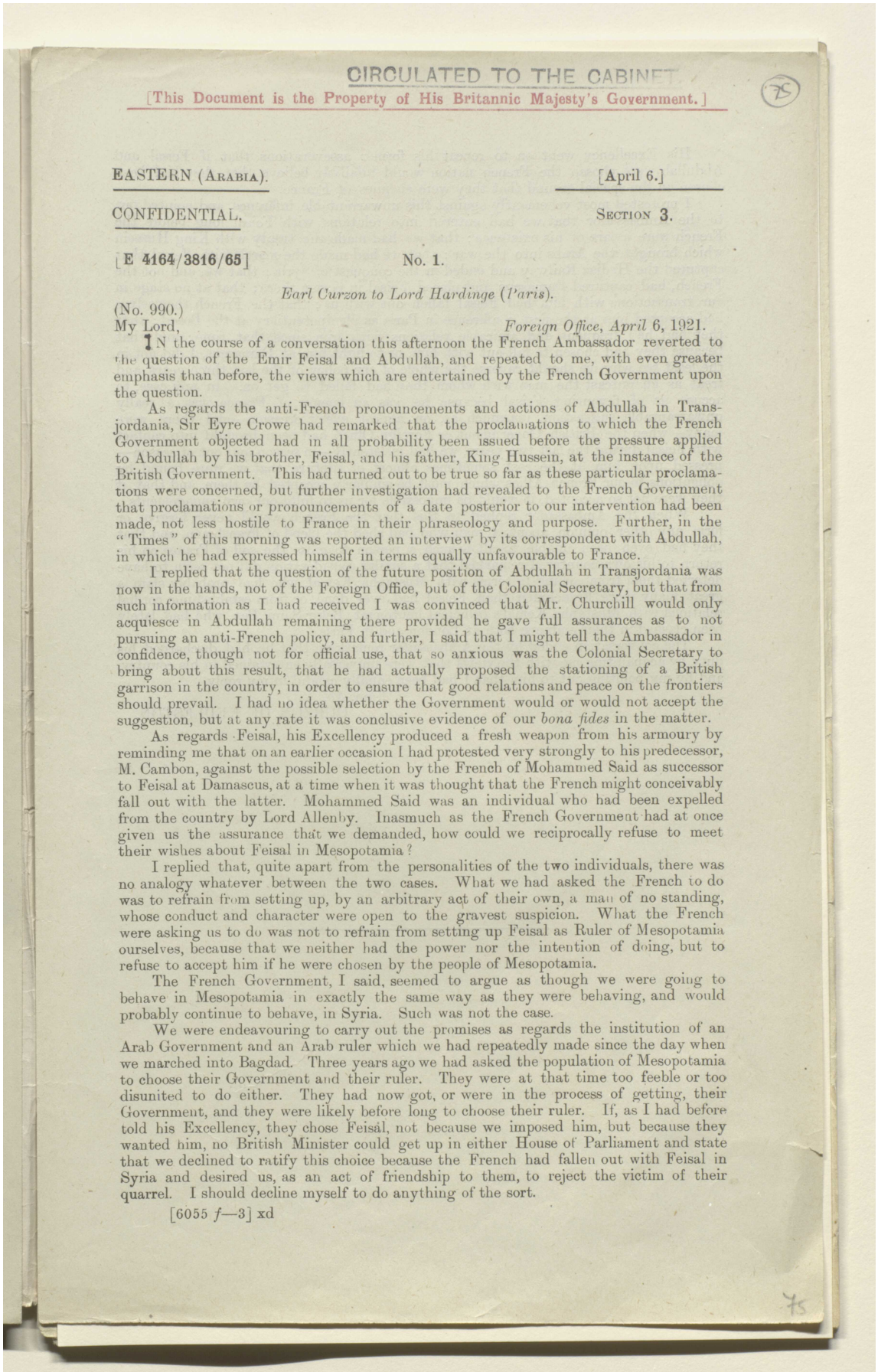

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EASTERN (ARABIA). [April 6.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 3.

[E 4164/3816/65] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 990.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, April 6, 1921.*

IN the course of a conversation this afternoon the French Ambassador reverted to the question of the Emir Feisal and Abdullah, and repeated to me, with even greater emphasis than before, the views which are entertained by the French Government upon the question.

As regards the anti-French pronouncements and actions of Abdullah in Transjordania, Sir Eyre Crowe had remarked that the proclamations to which the French Government objected had in all probability been issued before the pressure applied to Abdullah by his brother, Feisal, and his father, King Hussein, at the instance of the British Government. This had turned out to be true so far as these particular proclamations were concerned, but further investigation had revealed to the French Government that proclamations or pronouncements of a date posterior to our intervention had been made, not less hostile to France in their phraseology and purpose. Further, in the "Times" of this morning was reported an interview by its correspondent with Abdullah, in which he had expressed himself in terms equally unfavourable to France.

I replied that the question of the future position of Abdullah in Transjordania was now in the hands, not of the Foreign Office, but of the Colonial Secretary, but that from such information as I had received I was convinced that Mr. Churchill would only acquiesce in Abdullah remaining there provided he gave full assurances as to not pursuing an anti-French policy, and further, I said that I might tell the Ambassador in confidence, though not for official use, that so anxious was the Colonial Secretary to bring about this result, that he had actually proposed the stationing of a British garrison in the country, in order to ensure that good relations and peace on the frontiers should prevail. I had no idea whether the Government would or would not accept the suggestion, but at any rate it was conclusive evidence of our *bona fides* in the matter.

As regards Feisal, his Excellency produced a fresh weapon from his armoury by reminding me that on an earlier occasion I had protested very strongly to his predecessor, M. Cambon, against the possible selection by the French of Mohammed Said as successor to Feisal at Damascus, at a time when it was thought that the French might conceivably fall out with the latter. Mohammed Said was an individual who had been expelled from the country by Lord Allenby. Inasmuch as the French Government had at once given us the assurance that we demanded, how could we reciprocally refuse to meet their wishes about Feisal in Mesopotamia?

I replied that, quite apart from the personalities of the two individuals, there was no analogy whatever between the two cases. What we had asked the French to do was to refrain from setting up, by an arbitrary act of their own, a man of no standing, whose conduct and character were open to the gravest suspicion. What the French were asking us to do was not to refrain from setting up Feisal as Ruler of Mesopotamia ourselves, because that we neither had the power nor the intention of doing, but to refuse to accept him if he were chosen by the people of Mesopotamia.

The French Government, I said, seemed to argue as though we were going to behave in Mesopotamia in exactly the same way as they were behaving, and would probably continue to behave, in Syria. Such was not the case.

We were endeavouring to carry out the promises as regards the institution of an Arab Government and an Arab ruler which we had repeatedly made since the day when we marched into Bagdad. Three years ago we had asked the population of Mesopotamia to choose their Government and their ruler. They were at that time too feeble or too disunited to do either. They had now got, or were in the process of getting, their Government, and they were likely before long to choose their ruler. If, as I had before told his Excellency, they chose Feisal, not because we imposed him, but because they wanted him, no British Minister could get up in either House of Parliament and state that we declined to ratify this choice because the French had fallen out with Feisal in Syria and desired us, as an act of friendship to them, to reject the victim of their quarrel. I should decline myself to do anything of the sort.

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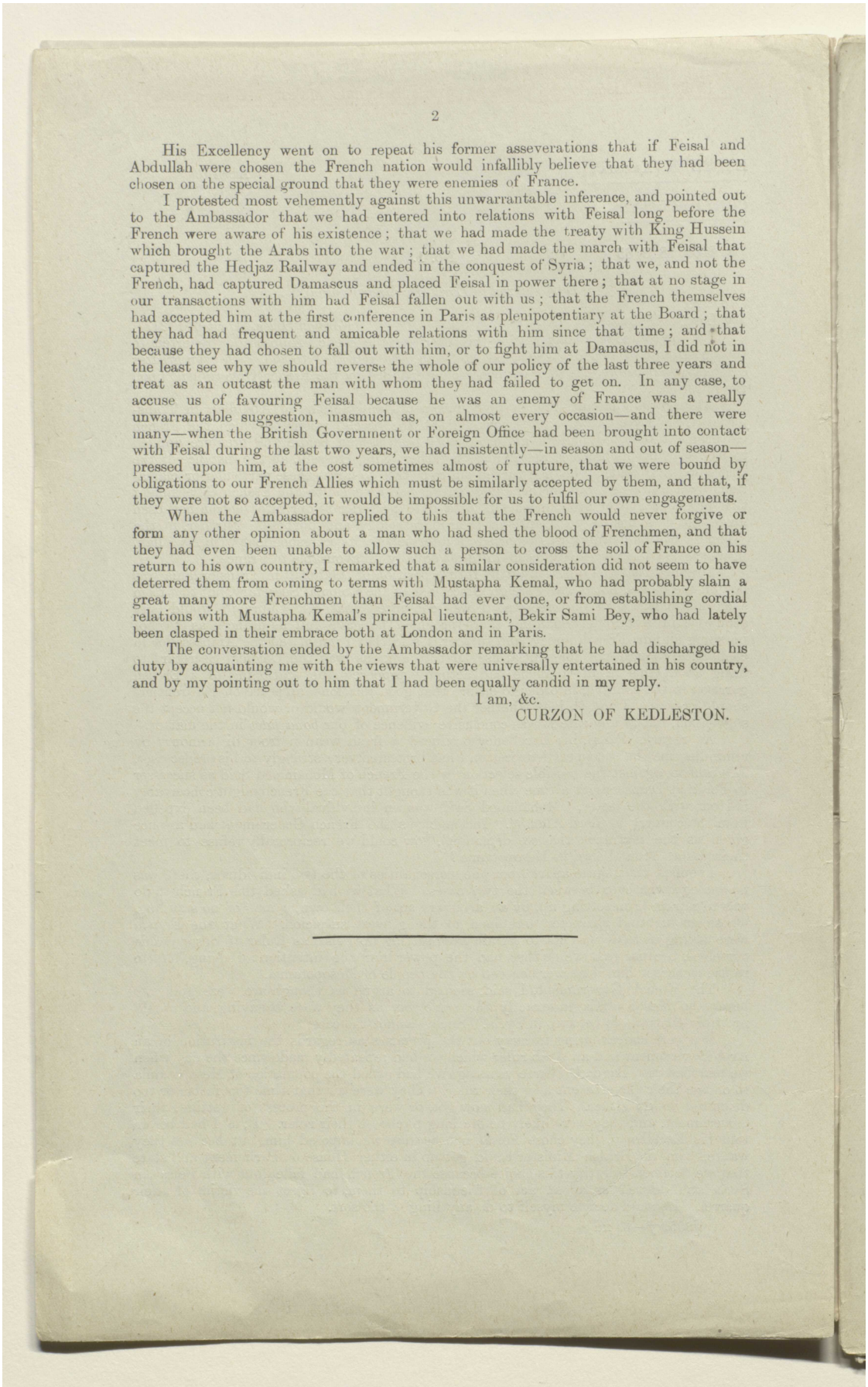

His Excellency went on to repeat his former asseverations that if Feisal and Abdullah were chosen the French nation would infallibly believe that they had been chosen on the special ground that they were enemies of France.

I protested most vehemently against this unwarrantable inference, and pointed out to the Ambassador that we had entered into relations with Feisal long before the French were aware of his existence; that we had made the treaty with King Hussein which brought the Arabs into the war; that we had made the march with Feisal that captured the Hedjaz Railway and ended in the conquest of Syria; that we, and not the French, had captured Damascus and placed Feisal in power there; that at no stage in our transactions with him had Feisal fallen out with us; that the French themselves had accepted him at the first conference in Paris as plenipotentiary at the Board; that they had had frequent and amicable relations with him since that time; and that because they had chosen to fall out with him, or to fight him at Damascus, I did not in the least see why we should reverse the whole of our policy of the last three years and treat as an outcast the man with whom they had failed to get on. In any case, to accuse us of favouring Feisal because he was an enemy of France was a really unwarrantable suggestion, inasmuch as, on almost every occasion—and there were many—when the British Government or Foreign Office had been brought into contact with Feisal during the last two years, we had insistently—in season and out of season—pressed upon him, at the cost sometimes almost of rupture, that we were bound by obligations to our French Allies which must be similarly accepted by them, and that, if they were not so accepted, it would be impossible for us to fulfil our own engagements.

When the Ambassador replied to this that the French would never forgive or form any other opinion about a man who had shed the blood of Frenchmen, and that they had even been unable to allow such a person to cross the soil of France on his return to his own country, I remarked that a similar consideration did not seem to have deterred them from coming to terms with Mustapha Kemal, who had probably slain a great many more Frenchmen than Feisal had ever done, or from establishing cordial relations with Mustapha Kemal's principal lieutenant, Bekir Sami Bey, who had lately been clasped in their embrace both at London and in Paris.

The conversation ended by the Ambassador remarking that he had discharged his duty by acquainting me with the views that were universally entertained in his country, and by my pointing out to him that I had been equally candid in my reply.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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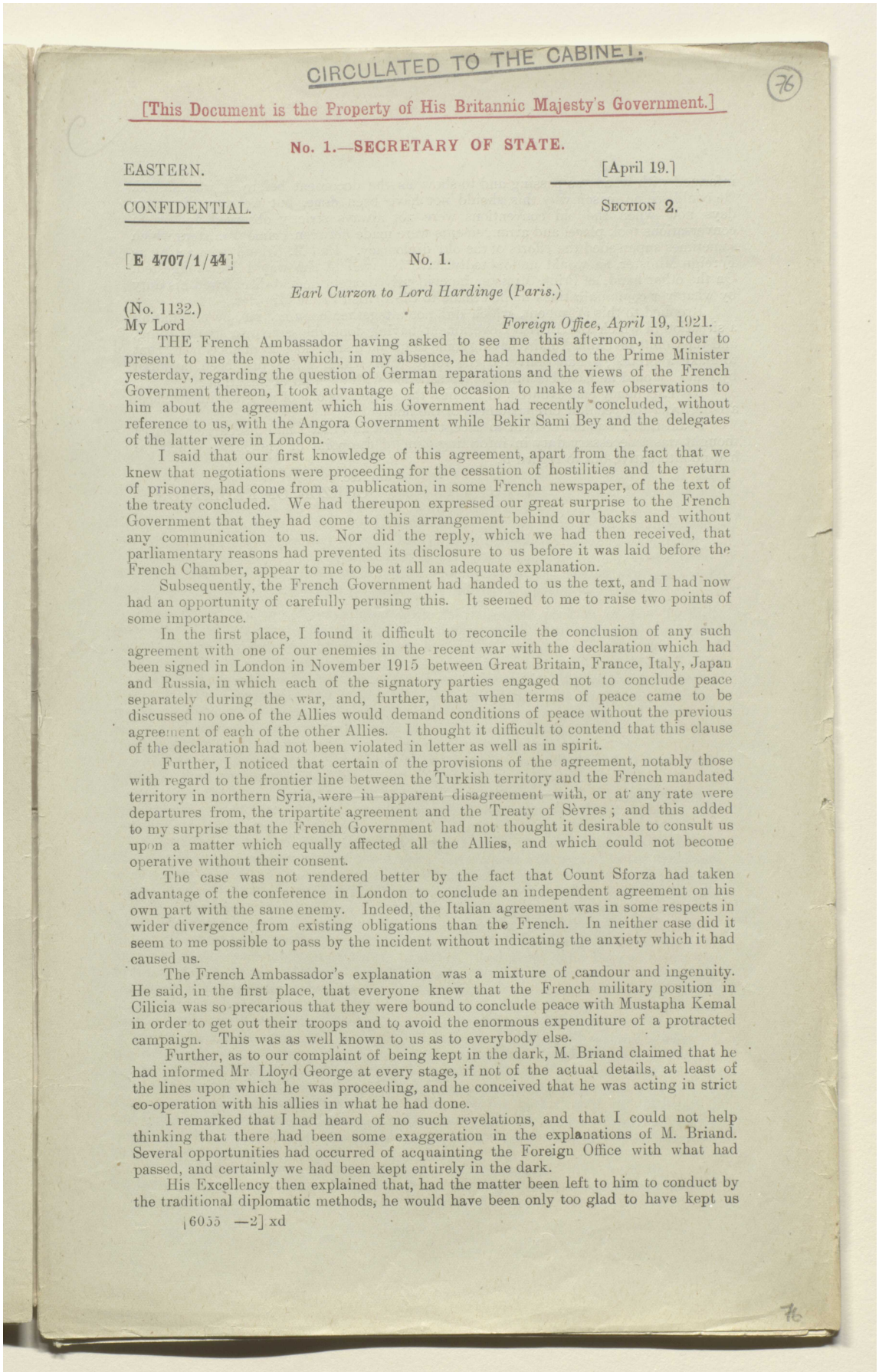

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN. [April 19.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 4707/1/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris.)

(No. 1132.)

My Lord *Foreign Office, April 19, 1921.*

THE French Ambassador having asked to see me this afternoon, in order to present to me the note which, in my absence, he had handed to the Prime Minister yesterday, regarding the question of German reparations and the views of the French Government thereon, I took advantage of the occasion to make a few observations to him about the agreement which his Government had recently concluded, without reference to us, with the Angora Government while Bekir Sami Bey and the delegates of the latter were in London.

I said that our first knowledge of this agreement, apart from the fact that we knew that negotiations were proceeding for the cessation of hostilities and the return of prisoners, had come from a publication, in some French newspaper, of the text of the treaty concluded. We had thereupon expressed our great surprise to the French Government that they had come to this arrangement behind our backs and without any communication to us. Nor did the reply, which we had then received, that parliamentary reasons had prevented its disclosure to us before it was laid before the French Chamber, appear to me to be at all an adequate explanation.

Subsequently, the French Government had handed to us the text, and I had now had an opportunity of carefully perusing this. It seemed to me to raise two points of some importance.

In the first place, I found it difficult to reconcile the conclusion of any such agreement with one of our enemies in the recent war with the declaration which had been signed in London in November 1915 between Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan and Russia, in which each of the signatory parties engaged not to conclude peace separately during the war, and, further, that when terms of peace came to be discussed no one of the Allies would demand conditions of peace without the previous agreement of each of the other Allies. I thought it difficult to contend that this clause of the declaration had not been violated in letter as well as in spirit.

Further, I noticed that certain of the provisions of the agreement, notably those with regard to the frontier line between the Turkish territory and the French mandated territory in northern Syria, were in apparent disagreement with, or at any rate were departures from, the tripartite agreement and the Treaty of Sèvres; and this added to my surprise that the French Government had not thought it desirable to consult us upon a matter which equally affected all the Allies, and which could not become operative without their consent.

The case was not rendered better by the fact that Count Sforza had taken advantage of the conference in London to conclude an independent agreement on his own part with the same enemy. Indeed, the Italian agreement was in some respects in wider divergence from existing obligations than the French. In neither case did it seem to me possible to pass by the incident without indicating the anxiety which it had caused us.

The French Ambassador's explanation was a mixture of candour and ingenuity. He said, in the first place, that everyone knew that the French military position in Cilicia was so precarious that they were bound to conclude peace with Mustapha Kemal in order to get out their troops and to avoid the enormous expenditure of a protracted campaign. This was as well known to us as to everybody else.

Further, as to our complaint of being kept in the dark, M. Briand claimed that he had informed Mr. Lloyd George at every stage, if not of the actual details, at least of the lines upon which he was proceeding, and he conceived that he was acting in strict co-operation with his allies in what he had done.

I remarked that I had heard of no such revelations, and that I could not help thinking that there had been some exaggeration in the explanations of M. Briand. Several opportunities had occurred of acquainting the Foreign Office with what had passed, and certainly we had been kept entirely in the dark.

His Excellency then explained that, had the matter been left to him to conduct by the traditional diplomatic methods, he would have been only too glad to have kept us

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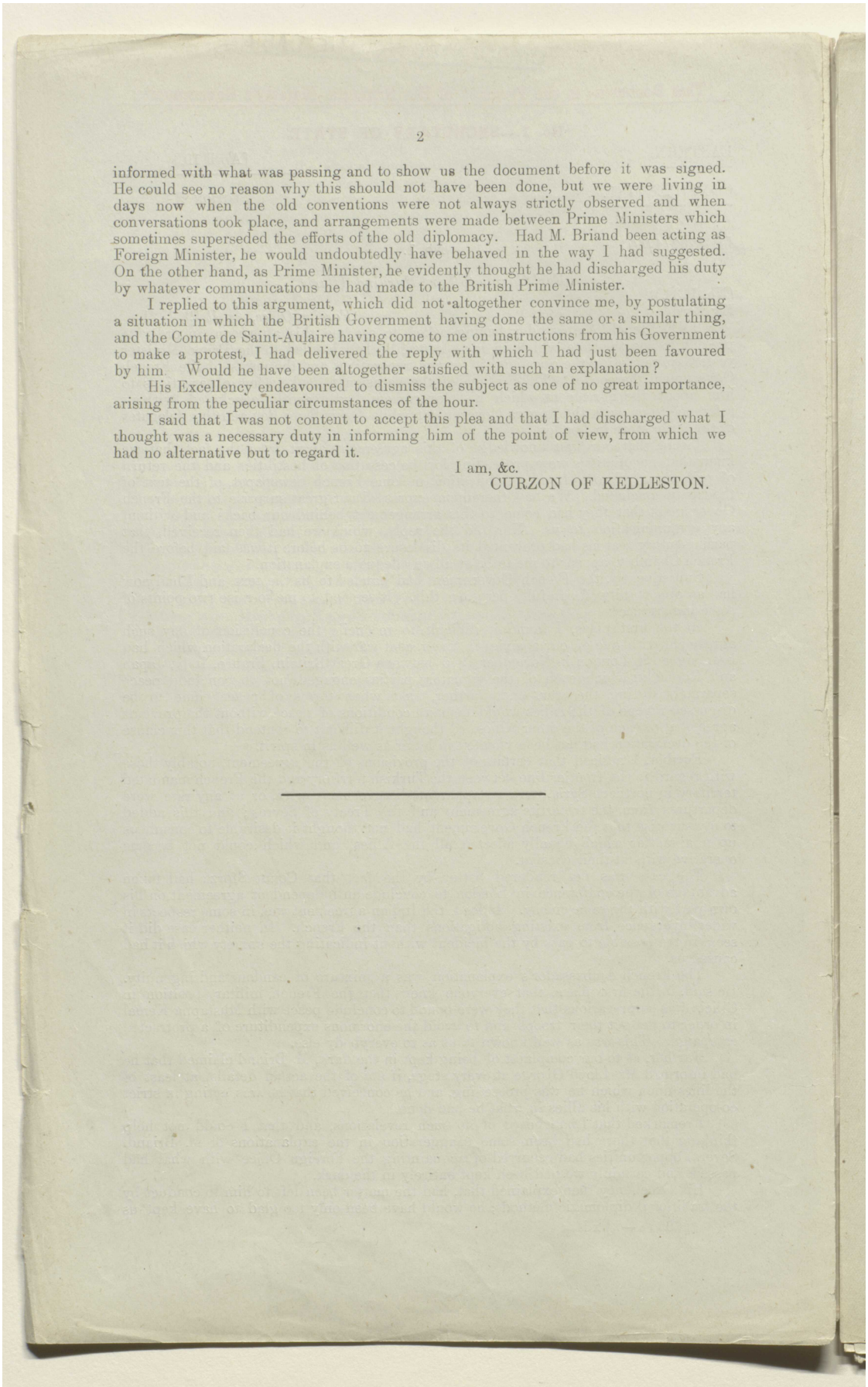

informed with what was passing and to show us the document before it was signed. He could see no reason why this should not have been done, but we were living in days now when the old conventions were not always strictly observed and when conversations took place, and arrangements were made between Prime Ministers which sometimes superseded the efforts of the old diplomacy. Had M. Briand been acting as Foreign Minister, he would undoubtedly have behaved in the way I had suggested. On the other hand, as Prime Minister, he evidently thought he had discharged his duty by whatever communications he had made to the British Prime Minister.

I replied to this argument, which did not altogether convince me, by postulating a situation in which the British Government having done the same or a similar thing, and the Comte de Saint-Aulaire having come to me on instructions from his Government to make a protest, I had delivered the reply with which I had just been favoured by him. Would he have been altogether satisfied with such an explanation?

His Excellency endeavoured to dismiss the subject as one of no great importance, arising from the peculiar circumstances of the hour.

I said that I was not content to accept this plea and that I had discharged what I thought was a necessary duty in informing him of the point of view, from which we had no alternative but to regard it.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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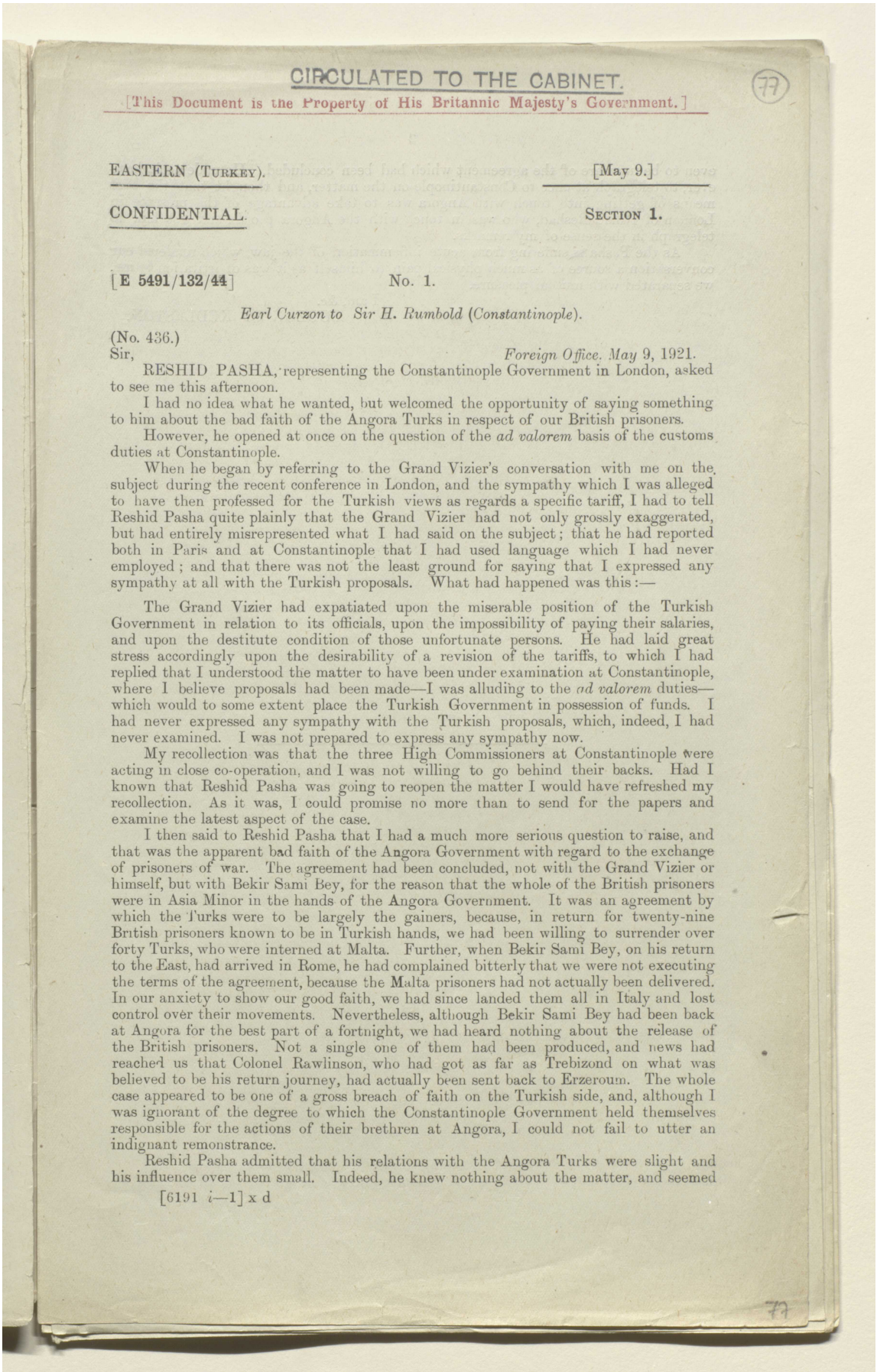

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [May 9.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 5491/132/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir H. Rumbold (Constantinople).

(No. 436.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 9, 1921.*

RESHID PASHA, representing the Constantinople Government in London, asked to see me this afternoon.

I had no idea what he wanted, but welcomed the opportunity of saying something to him about the bad faith of the Angora Turks in respect of our British prisoners.

However, he opened at once on the question of the *ad valorem* basis of the customs duties at Constantinople.

When he began by referring to the Grand Vizier's conversation with me on the subject during the recent conference in London, and the sympathy which I was alleged to have then professed for the Turkish views as regards a specific tariff, I had to tell Reshid Pasha quite plainly that the Grand Vizier had not only grossly exaggerated, but had entirely misrepresented what I had said on the subject; that he had reported both in Paris and at Constantinople that I had used language which I had never employed; and that there was not the least ground for saying that I expressed any sympathy at all with the Turkish proposals. What had happened was this:—

The Grand Vizier had expatiated upon the miserable position of the Turkish Government in relation to its officials, upon the impossibility of paying their salaries, and upon the destitute condition of those unfortunate persons. He had laid great stress accordingly upon the desirability of a revision of the tariffs, to which I had replied that I understood the matter to have been under examination at Constantinople, where I believe proposals had been made—I was alluding to the *ad valorem* duties—which would to some extent place the Turkish Government in possession of funds. I had never expressed any sympathy with the Turkish proposals, which, indeed, I had never examined. I was not prepared to express any sympathy now.

My recollection was that the three High Commissioners at Constantinople were acting in close co-operation, and I was not willing to go behind their backs. Had I known that Reshid Pasha was going to reopen the matter I would have refreshed my recollection. As it was, I could promise no more than to send for the papers and examine the latest aspect of the case.

I then said to Reshid Pasha that I had a much more serious question to raise, and that was the apparent bad faith of the Angora Government with regard to the exchange of prisoners of war. The agreement had been concluded, not with the Grand Vizier or himself, but with Bekir Sami Bey, for the reason that the whole of the British prisoners were in Asia Minor in the hands of the Angora Government. It was an agreement by which the Turks were to be largely the gainers, because, in return for twenty-nine British prisoners known to be in Turkish hands, we had been willing to surrender over forty Turks, who were interned at Malta. Further, when Bekir Sami Bey, on his return to the East, had arrived in Rome, he had complained bitterly that we were not executing the terms of the agreement, because the Malta prisoners had not actually been delivered. In our anxiety to show our good faith, we had since landed them all in Italy and lost control over their movements. Nevertheless, although Bekir Sami Bey had been back at Angora for the best part of a fortnight, we had heard nothing about the release of the British prisoners. Not a single one of them had been produced, and news had reached us that Colonel Rawlinson, who had got as far as Trebizond on what was believed to be his return journey, had actually been sent back to Erzeroum. The whole case appeared to be one of a gross breach of faith on the Turkish side, and, although I was ignorant of the degree to which the Constantinople Government held themselves responsible for the actions of their brethren at Angora, I could not fail to utter an indignant remonstrance.

Reshid Pasha admitted that his relations with the Angora Turks were slight and his influence over them small. Indeed, he knew nothing about the matter, and seemed

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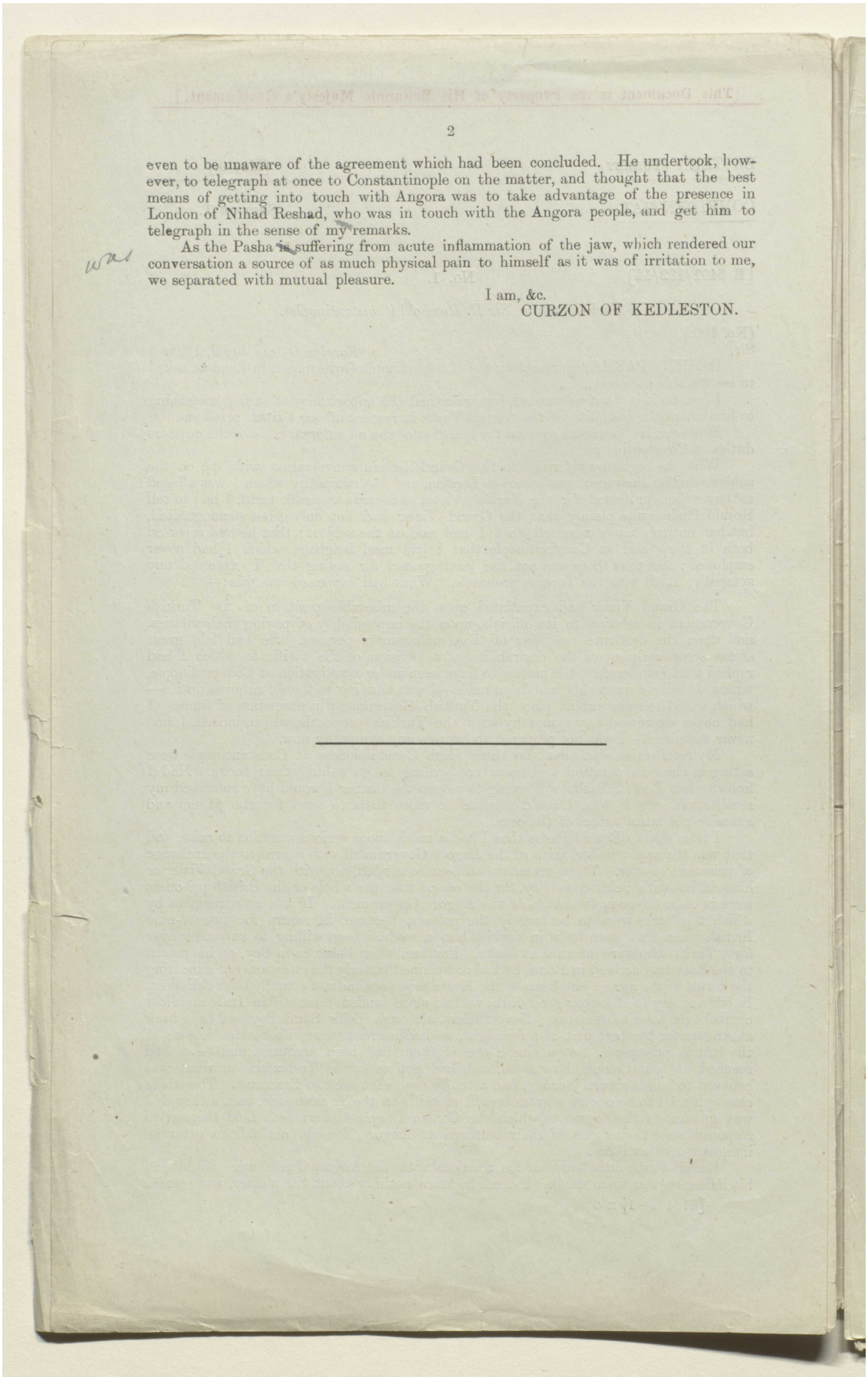

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even to be unaware of the agreement which had been concluded. He undertook, however, to telegraph at once to Constantinople on the matter, and thought that the best means of getting into touch with Angora was to take advantage of the presence in London of Nihad Reshad, who was in touch with the Angora people, and get him to telegraph in the sense of my remarks.

As the Pasha is suffering from acute inflammation of the jaw, which rendered our conversation a source of as much physical pain to himself as it was of irritation to me, we separated with mutual pleasure.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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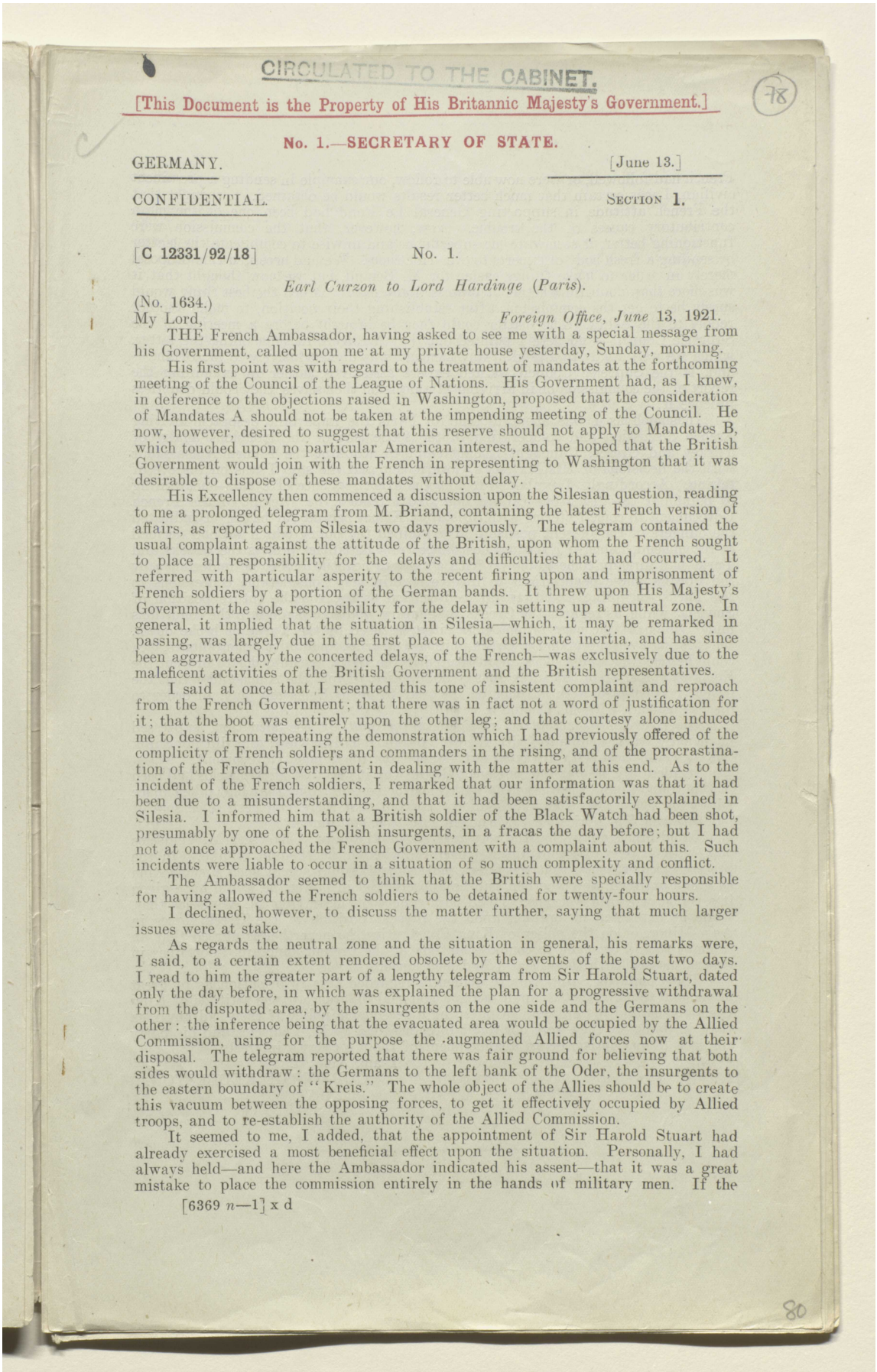

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

GERMANY. [June 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 12331/92/18] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 1634.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June 13, 1921.*

THE French Ambassador, having asked to see me with a special message from his Government, called upon me at my private house yesterday, Sunday, morning.

His first point was with regard to the treatment of mandates at the forthcoming meeting of the Council of the League of Nations. His Government had, as I knew, in deference to the objections raised in Washington, proposed that the consideration of Mandates A should not be taken at the impending meeting of the Council. He now, however, desired to suggest that this reserve should not apply to Mandates B, which touched upon no particular American interest, and he hoped that the British Government would join with the French in representing to Washington that it was desirable to dispose of these mandates without delay.

His Excellency then commenced a discussion upon the Silesian question, reading to me a prolonged telegram from M. Briand, containing the latest French version of affairs, as reported from Silesia two days previously. The telegram contained the usual complaint against the attitude of the British, upon whom the French sought to place all responsibility for the delays and difficulties that had occurred. It referred with particular asperity to the recent firing upon and imprisonment of French soldiers by a portion of the German bands. It threw upon His Majesty's Government the sole responsibility for the delay in setting up a neutral zone. In general, it implied that the situation in Silesia—which, it may be remarked in passing, was largely due in the first place to the deliberate inertia, and has since been aggravated by the concerted delays, of the French—was exclusively due to the maleficent activities of the British Government and the British representatives.

I said at once that I resented this tone of insistent complaint and reproach from the French Government; that there was in fact not a word of justification for it; that the boot was entirely upon the other leg; and that courtesy alone induced me to desist from repeating the demonstration which I had previously offered of the complicity of French soldiers and commanders in the rising, and of the procrastination of the French Government in dealing with the matter at this end. As to the incident of the French soldiers, I remarked that our information was that it had been due to a misunderstanding, and that it had been satisfactorily explained in Silesia. I informed him that a British soldier of the Black Watch had been shot, presumably by one of the Polish insurgents, in a fracas the day before; but I had not at once approached the French Government with a complaint about this. Such incidents were liable to occur in a situation of so much complexity and conflict.

The Ambassador seemed to think that the British were specially responsible for having allowed the French soldiers to be detained for twenty-four hours.

I declined, however, to discuss the matter further, saying that much larger issues were at stake.

As regards the neutral zone and the situation in general, his remarks were, I said, to a certain extent rendered obsolete by the events of the past two days. I read to him the greater part of a lengthy telegram from Sir Harold Stuart, dated only the day before, in which was explained the plan for a progressive withdrawal from the disputed area, by the insurgents on the one side and the Germans on the other: the inference being that the evacuated area would be occupied by the Allied Commission, using for the purpose the augmented Allied forces now at their disposal. The telegram reported that there was fair ground for believing that both sides would withdraw: the Germans to the left bank of the Oder, the insurgents to the eastern boundary of "Kreis." The whole object of the Allies should be to create this vacuum between the opposing forces, to get it effectively occupied by Allied troops, and to re-establish the authority of the Allied Commission.

It seemed to me, I added, that the appointment of Sir Harold Stuart had already exercised a most beneficial effect upon the situation. Personally, I had always held—and here the Ambassador indicated his assent—that it was a great mistake to place the commission entirely in the hands of military men. If the

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French had followed, or were now able to follow, our example in sending a prominent civilian, I was certain that much better results would be obtained. I thought that the French attitude in supporting General Le Rond had been one of the main contributory causes of the trouble. Now, however, that the commission were functioning better, it seemed to me superfluous and unwise to complicate the matter by sending a fresh body of experts to over-ride them. We had accepted this proposal merely in order to make things easier for M. Briand, but we now thought that it was more than doubtful whether it possessed any merit. Much the best thing would surely be to get the commission, after establishing their position, to make another report to the Allies. The matter could then be brought before a meeting of the Supreme Council—and here I pointed out that the delay in summoning the latter, which we were ready to attend at any moment, was due exclusively to M. Briand—and, if the Supreme Council wanted expert assistance, either in examining the report of the commission or in arriving at a decision themselves, they could doubtless procure it.

Inasmuch as I was about to send to Paris the important despatch inviting French discussion and co-operation in the settlement of the troublous affairs of Turkey and Greece, I thought it only right to acquaint the French Ambassador with the decisions of His Majesty's Government and the step I was on the eve of taking. Accordingly, I explained to him the exact sequence of events—not failing to point out the disastrous failure that had attended the attempt of the French Government to come to terms with Mustapha Kemal behind our backs. I indicated the dangers of the present position. I explained the policy which we had decided to recommend, namely: a mutual desistence from hostilities (unless the Greeks and Turks had already come to blows) with a view to negotiations to be undertaken by the Powers, these negotiations to involve certain very considerable concessions to the Turks, including a substantial modification as regards the future position of Smyrna; while, as regards the Greeks, an enquiry would be made into the conditions under which, if the negotiations were either refused by the Turks or broke down, the existing embargo upon the Greek purchase of arms, ammunition, aeroplanes, &c., could be removed, and a blockade instituted in the Black Sea in order to prevent the Kemalist forces from obtaining Bolshevik supplies. I told the Ambassador that the despatch concluded with an offer on my part to go to Paris any day, in order to discuss matters with M. Briand.

His Excellency, accepting my general account of the situation, expressed unofficially warm sympathy with the object that I had in view, and did not think that it would meet with anything but assent from the French Government.

Incidentally, he was very curious to know why it was that M. Veniselos had been in this country, and what was the nature of the consultations that had taken place with him. Obviously the Ambassador suspected that there had been some sort of plot between His Majesty's Government and that statesman.

I told him frankly that the very reverse was the case. I had seen M. Veniselos only with a view of ascertaining from him whether he thought it likely, in the present circumstances, that the Greek Government would accept such a suggestion as I had outlined, and whether, had he himself been in power, he would have given it a warm or a cold welcome. I had been relieved to hear from M. Veniselos that, while he expressed no opinion upon the present position of the Greek forces in Asia Minor, or on the policy of King Constantine, he nevertheless agreed that an attempt should be made to compose matters at the present juncture, upon lines in general accord with those that I had mentioned.

The Comte de Saint-Aulaire evidently regarded this information as of great value, and thought that it would make a material difference to the attitude of King Constantine and his advisers in pursuing a reasonable policy if they had any idea that, in doing so, they were not liable to be assailed by M. Veniselos and his party for lack of patriotism or an abandonment of their country's interests.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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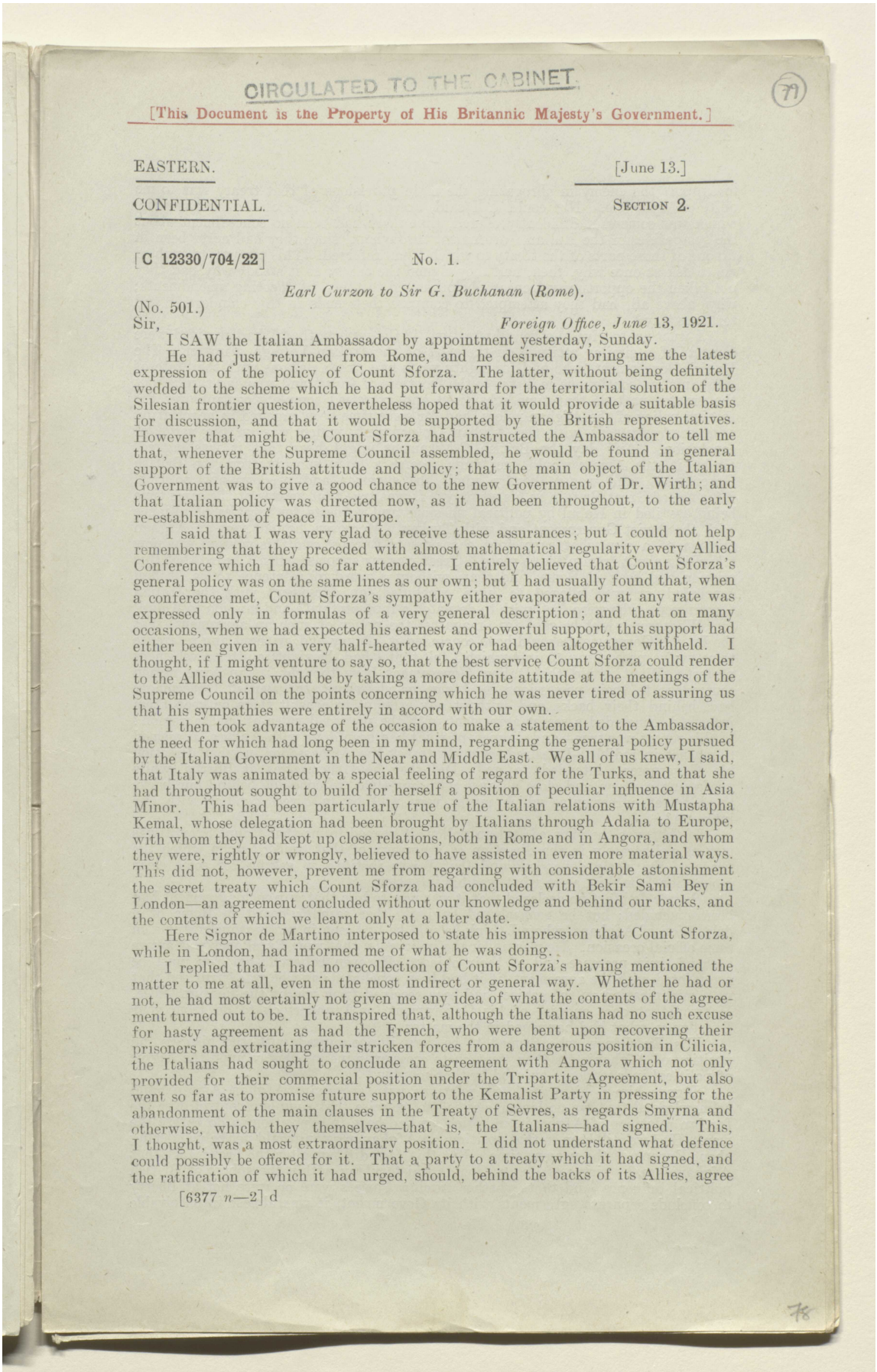

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EASTERN. [June 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[C 12330/704/22] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 501.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 13, 1921.

I SAW the Italian Ambassador by appointment yesterday, Sunday.

He had just returned from Rome, and he desired to bring me the latest expression of the policy of Count Sforza. The latter, without being definitely wedded to the scheme which he had put forward for the territorial solution of the Silesian frontier question, nevertheless hoped that it would provide a suitable basis for discussion, and that it would be supported by the British representatives. However that might be, Count Sforza had instructed the Ambassador to tell me that, whenever the Supreme Council assembled, he would be found in general support of the British attitude and policy; that the main object of the Italian Government was to give a good chance to the new Government of Dr. Wirth; and that Italian policy was directed now, as it had been throughout, to the early re-establishment of peace in Europe.

I said that I was very glad to receive these assurances; but I could not help remembering that they preceded with almost mathematical regularity every Allied Conference which I had so far attended. I entirely believed that Count Sforza's general policy was on the same lines as our own; but I had usually found that, when a conference met, Count Sforza's sympathy either evaporated or at any rate was expressed only in formulas of a very general description; and that on many occasions, when we had expected his earnest and powerful support, this support had either been given in a very half-hearted way or had been altogether withheld. I thought, if I might venture to say so, that the best service Count Sforza could render to the Allied cause would be by taking a more definite attitude at the meetings of the Supreme Council on the points concerning which he was never tired of assuring us that his sympathies were entirely in accord with our own.

I then took advantage of the occasion to make a statement to the Ambassador, the need for which had long been in my mind, regarding the general policy pursued by the Italian Government in the Near and Middle East. We all of us knew, I said, that Italy was animated by a special feeling of regard for the Turks, and that she had throughout sought to build for herself a position of peculiar influence in Asia Minor. This had been particularly true of the Italian relations with Mustapha Kemal, whose delegation had been brought by Italians through Adalia to Europe, with whom they had kept up close relations, both in Rome and in Angora, and whom they were, rightly or wrongly, believed to have assisted in even more material ways. This did not, however, prevent me from regarding with considerable astonishment the secret treaty which Count Sforza had concluded with Bekir Sami Bey in London—an agreement concluded without our knowledge and behind our backs, and the contents of which we learnt only at a later date.

Here Signor de Martino interposed to state his impression that Count Sforza, while in London, had informed me of what he was doing.

I replied that I had no recollection of Count Sforza's having mentioned the matter to me at all, even in the most indirect or general way. Whether he had or not, he had most certainly not given me any idea of what the contents of the agreement turned out to be. It transpired that, although the Italians had no such excuse for hasty agreement as had the French, who were bent upon recovering their prisoners and extricating their stricken forces from a dangerous position in Cilicia, the Italians had sought to conclude an agreement with Angora which not only provided for their commercial position under the Tripartite Agreement, but also went so far as to promise future support to the Kemalist Party in pressing for the abandonment of the main clauses in the Treaty of Sèvres, as regards Smyrna and otherwise, which they themselves—that is, the Italians—had signed. This, I thought, was a most extraordinary position. I did not understand what defence could possibly be offered for it. That a party to a treaty which it had signed, and the ratification of which it had urged, should, behind the backs of its Allies, agree

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to support the enemy in abrogating the main provisions of that treaty was to me quite inexplicable. Nor could I, I said, accept the defence of the Ambassador, which was somewhat diffidently offered, that there had been no concealment about the sympathies of the Italian Government throughout, since they had never been in favour of those parts of the treaty to which I had referred. This contention enabled me to ask at once why, then, had they signed the treaty as it stood; why had they not taken the opportunity, repeatedly presented to them, of effecting amendments; why, above all, had they attempted to compass their ends in this clandestine and tortuous way?

I went on to give another illustration, if the reports that I had received were correct, of a similar attitude on the part of the Italian Foreign Minister. The British Government, who had for eighty years had close relations with the State of Afghanistan, contiguous as it was to the frontiers of India, and who had throughout the greater part of that time subsidised and exercised complete control over the foreign policy of the Afghan rulers, had for some time been engaged in negotiating a new arrangement with the Afghan Government, which was on the verge of conclusion. Any day the British Government might hear that it was signed. Under it, the Ameer would once more receive a large subsidy from the British Government, and would thereby admit the superior and predominant political influence of Great Britain in his country. It was true that he was at the same time being assailed in Kabul by political missions and requests for treaties of alliance with the Soviet Government and with Turkey. Moreover, he had sent an Afghan mission of a somewhat suspicious character to Europe, and this mission was now travelling about from place to place. Great was my surprise when I heard that this mission had been in Rome, and that, without a word of reference to us, it had concluded, or was alleged to have concluded, an agreement with the Italian Government, who were forthwith to despatch a representative and mission to Kabul.

Whatever might be said for or against the policy of such an agreement, that the Italian Government should have concluded it, if they had, without any reference to us, was a proceeding against which I felt that I had the right to utter a vehement protest. What would the Italian Government have thought if, in some region contiguous to their possessions in Africa or elsewhere, the British Government had, behind their backs and without any attempt to consult them or keep them informed, concluded a secret agreement with the powerful ruler of such a region? If this report was true—and, in view of what had been done with Angora, it seemed to me not incredible—I desired seriously to ask the Ambassador in what direction his Government intended to go? Did they hold themselves at liberty, while professing a warm and close alliance with ourselves, to conclude behind our backs these secret agreements, which might very well be in direct conflict with our interests?

If that was the view of Italian policy, it seemed to me that Count Sforza was moving deliberately in the direction of a rupture of that concord upon which the peace of the world depended, and that I was justified in asking for some clear intimation from him as to what was his intention.

Signor de Martino declared that it was new to him that any such agreement had been concluded; but he remembered having either seen or heard in Rome of a delegation of Afghans, whom I think he said he had seen in picturesque costume on some official occasion. He was under the impression that your Excellency was aware both of their presence and of their object. He even believed that you must be acquainted with the agreement, if it had been concluded; and he was surprised that no communication on the subject had been received from you by the Foreign Office. He would at once enquire of his Government, as I undertook to do from your Excellency, what had happened in the matter.

His Excellency, who seemed to be very ill-acquainted with the history and position of Afghanistan, then went on to cross-examine me closely upon the degree of political independence enjoyed by that country.

I gave him a history of our relations with successive Afghan Ameers, and acknowledged that we no longer claimed to exercise that complete control over the foreign relations of Afghanistan which we had been in a position to do before the war. Had we still been in that position, an Afghan mission would not be wandering about Europe at the present time. But this fact did not alter the broad fact that Afghanistan, by virtue of its position and history, lay within the sphere of British political influence, and that, whether foreign Powers were or were not at liberty to conclude separate agreements with its Government, it was almost inconceivable

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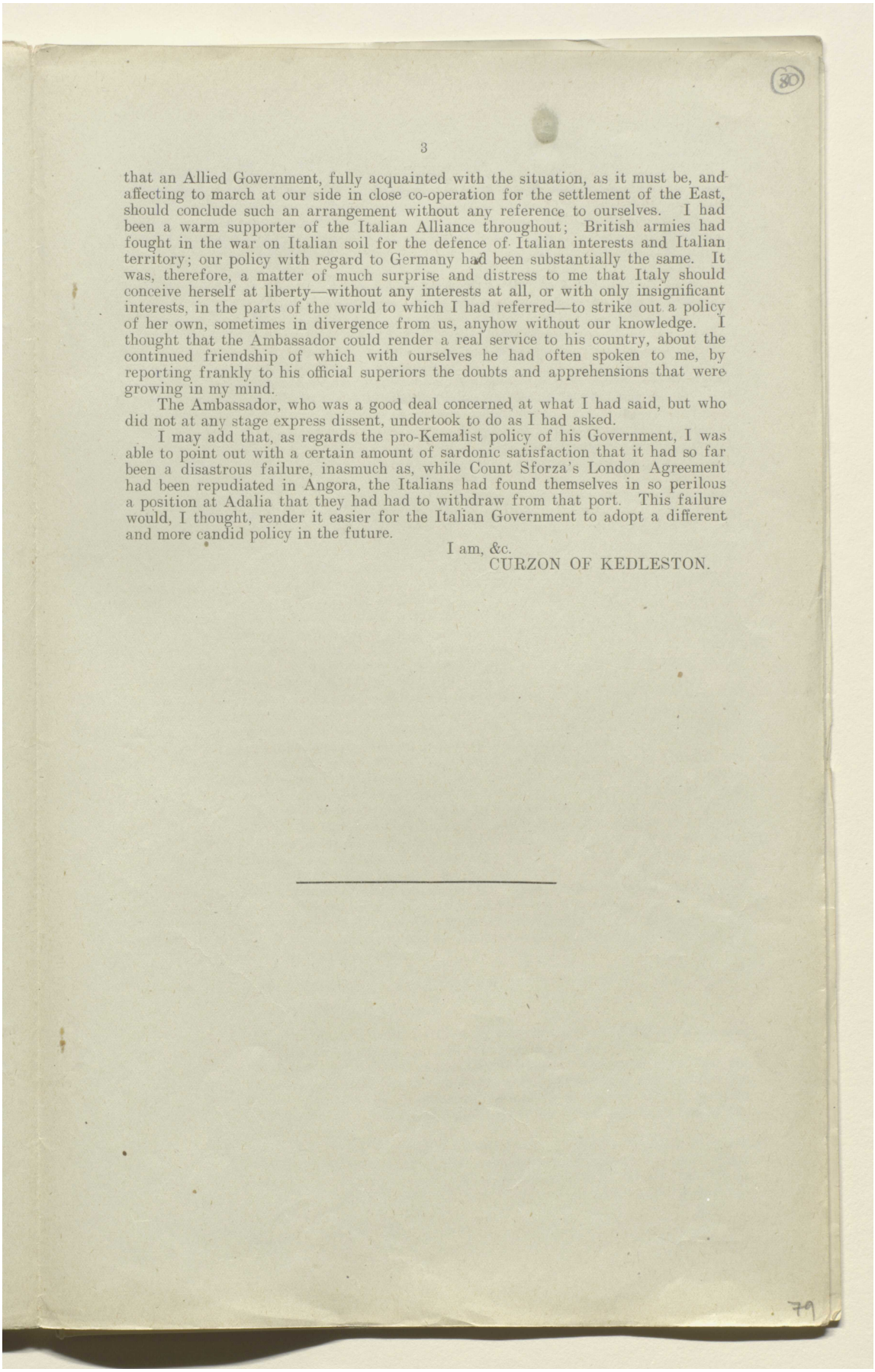

that an Allied Government, fully acquainted with the situation, as it must be, and affecting to march at our side in close co-operation for the settlement of the East, should conclude such an arrangement without any reference to ourselves. I had been a warm supporter of the Italian Alliance throughout; British armies had fought in the war on Italian soil for the defence of Italian interests and Italian territory; our policy with regard to Germany had been substantially the same. It was, therefore, a matter of much surprise and distress to me that Italy should conceive herself at liberty—without any interests at all, or with only insignificant interests, in the parts of the world to which I had referred—to strike out a policy of her own, sometimes in divergence from us, anyhow without our knowledge. I thought that the Ambassador could render a real service to his country, about the continued friendship of which with ourselves he had often spoken to me, by reporting frankly to his official superiors the doubts and apprehensions that were growing in my mind.

The Ambassador, who was a good deal concerned at what I had said, but who did not at any stage express dissent, undertook to do as I had asked.

I may add that, as regards the pro-Kemalist policy of his Government, I was able to point out with a certain amount of sardonic satisfaction that it had so far been a disastrous failure, inasmuch as, while Count Sforza's London Agreement had been repudiated in Angora, the Italians had found themselves in so perilous a position at Adalia that they had had to withdraw from that port. This failure would, I thought, render it easier for the Italian Government to adopt a different and more candid policy in the future.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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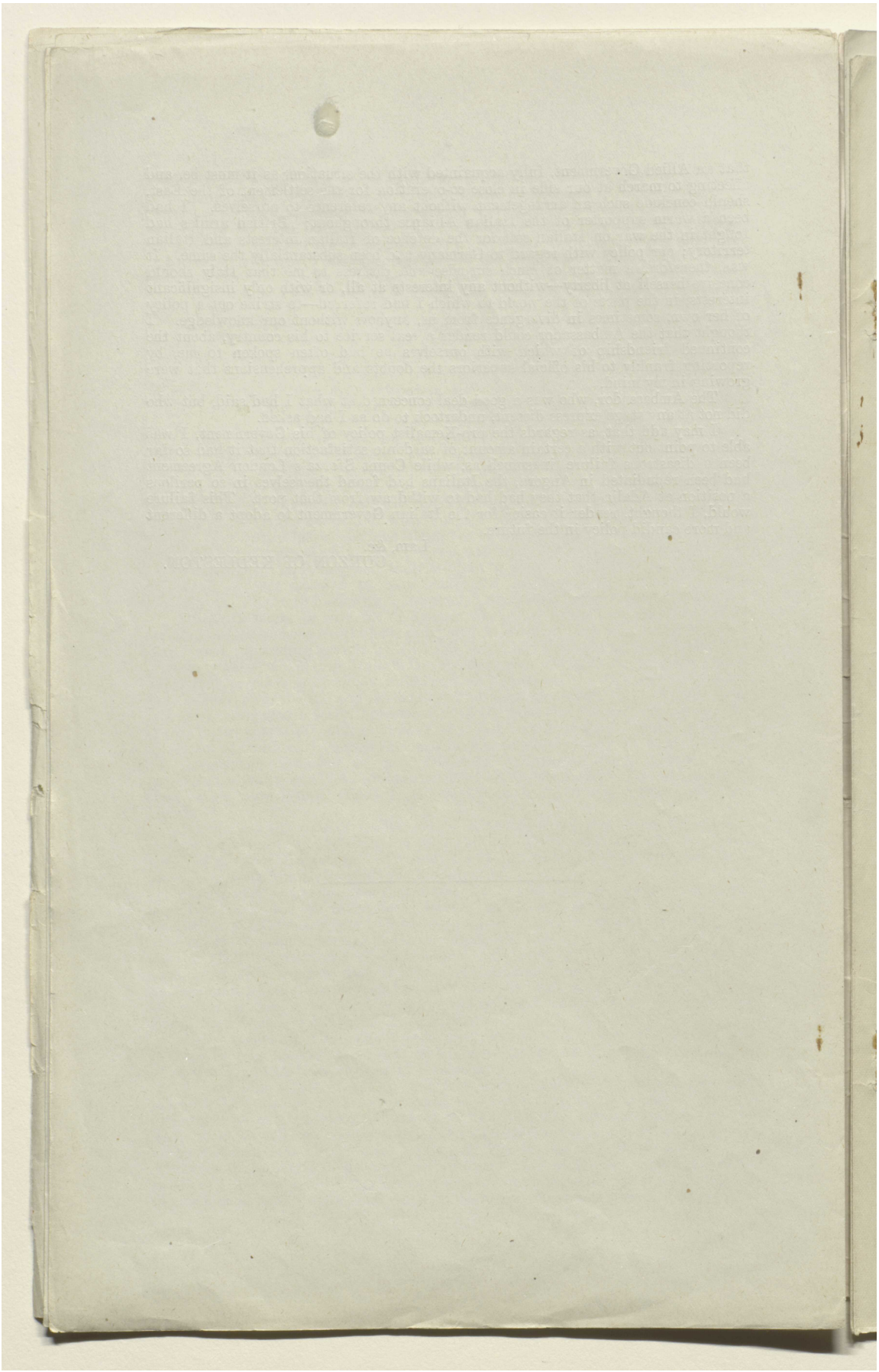

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

Conference between Lord & Briand at Paris

EASTERN (TURKEY). June 18/19 1921 [June 22.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 3.

with a view to Mediation between Turkey & Greece

[E 7154/143/44] No. 1.

Conferences between M. Briand and Lord Curzon, June 18 and 19, 1921.

JUNE 18, 10·30 A.M.

AT 10·30 Lord Curzon, accompanied by Sir Horace Rumbold, Mr. Vansittart and Mr. Osborne, met M. Briand and M. Berthelot in the former's room at the Quai d'Orsay.

Lord Curzon reviewed the whole situation since the London Conference, giving M. Briand the most recent information in the possession of His Majesty's Government relative to conditions in Greece and Turkey, and examined the possibilities inherent in a resumption of hostilities.

He pointed out that the moment was opportune for a renewal of Allied mediation, and then discussed the terms on which the Allies should base their proposals. These were briefly an extension of the London proposals regarding Smyrna, demilitarisation of that part of Eastern Thrace beyond the Chatalja line, possible further modification of financial control, a general assurance of support to a reconstituted Turkey, a possible suggestion to the Turks that the Allies would see no objection to Turkish expansion in the Caucasus, the abolition or modification of the tripartite agreement, and the other concessions contained in the London proposals.

With regard to Smyrna, he would propose an autonomous province under Turkish sovereignty, administered by a Christian Governor with the assistance of a mixed gendarmerie under European officers. Greek troops to be withdrawn as soon as the gendarmerie could ensure security in the province.

With regard to Thrace, he pointed out the obstacles to the Enos–Media line, and suggested, as alternative concessions to Turkish demands, the enforcement of the provisions regarding Adrianople contained in the Minorities Treaty between Greece and the Allies, and the demilitarisation of part of the Chatalja line.

His proposal would be to submit a solution on these lines to the Greeks, and if they accepted it, to open negotiations on this basis at Constantinople and Angora. Were the Greeks to refuse, the matter would of course be at an end. The communication to the Turks would be accompanied by an intimation that a refusal would involve the withdrawal of all the concessions contained in the present offer and in the London proposals, as well as possible assistance to the Greeks in the form of a relaxation of financial restrictions, a removal of the embargo on the export of munitions of war, and possibly a blockade of Black Sea and Mediterranean ports of Asia Minor.

He pointed out that unity of action among the Allies was an essential condition of success, but that, given loyal co-operation, the omens were favourable.

Finally, he asked that the French Government should agree to the assumption by General Harington of supreme command at Constantinople, a stipulation which would have considerable effect on the Turks.

JUNE 18, 3 P.M.

Lord Hardinge joined the Conference.

M. Briand thanked Lord Curzon for his very complete review of the situation, and expressed his entire agreement in the proposal for mediation.

French information was to the effect that the Greek army was better organised, but was tired of fighting, and that the Nationalists were apprehensive and anxious for a settlement. There was therefore a tendency for peace on both sides, and the moment for mediation was opportune. Failure of Allied mediation would, however, render the situation worse than before.

As to Smyrna, he thought it possible to satisfy the Turks on the lines proposed. The port of Smyrna was suffering from military occupation, and therefore commercially of no great value in present conditions. This was realised in Greece, but Greek *amour-propre* had to be safeguarded. Though King Constantine might wish to, he

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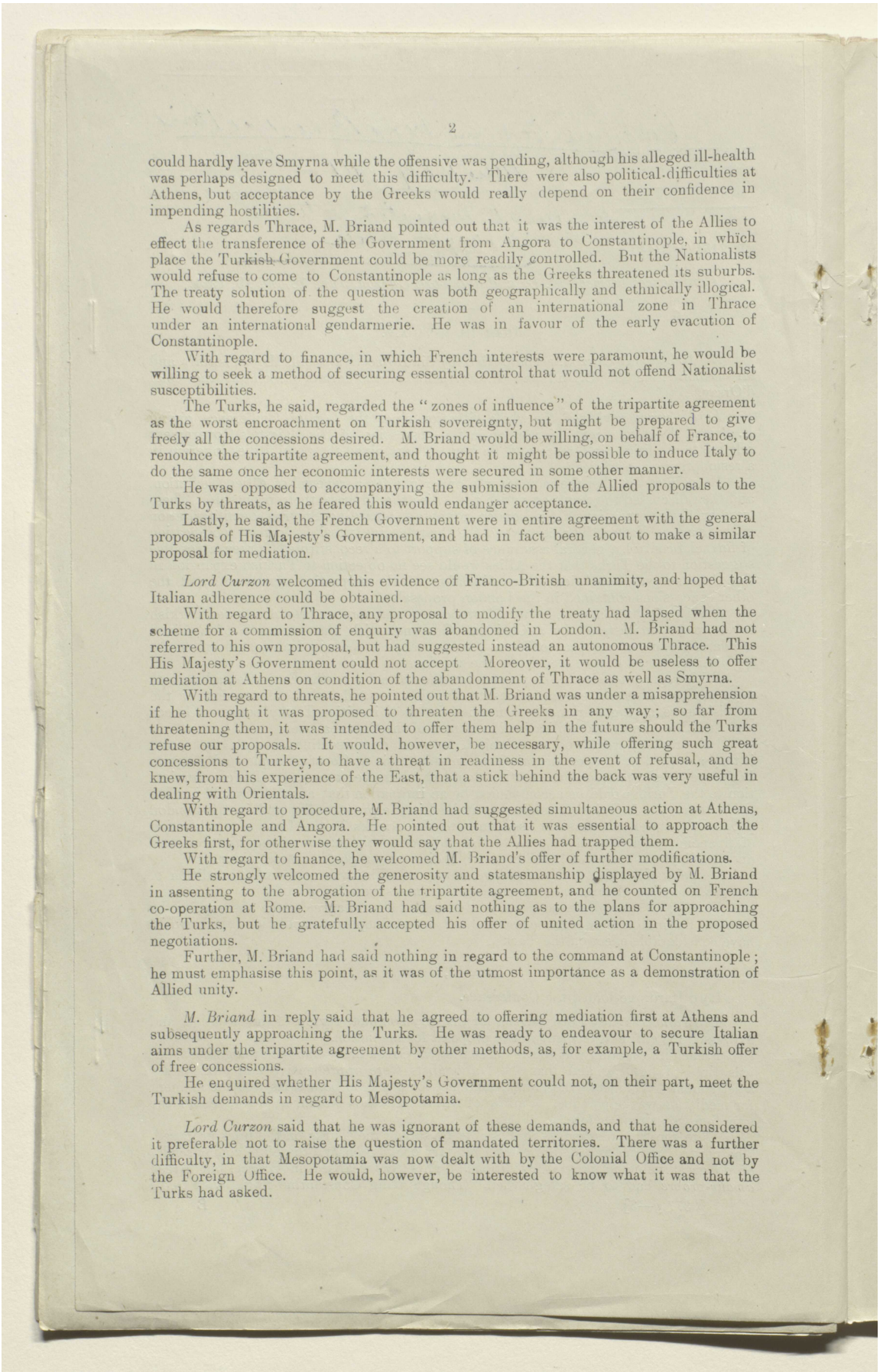

could hardly leave Smyrna while the offensive was pending, although his alleged ill-health was perhaps designed to meet this difficulty. There were also political difficulties at Athens, but acceptance by the Greeks would really depend on their confidence in impending hostilities.

As regards Thrace, M. Briand pointed out that it was the interest of the Allies to effect the transference of the Government from Angora to Constantinople, in which place the Turkish Government could be more readily controlled. But the Nationalists would refuse to come to Constantinople as long as the Greeks threatened its suburbs. The treaty solution of the question was both geographically and ethnically illogical. He would therefore suggest the creation of an international zone in Thrace under an international gendarmerie. He was in favour of the early evacuation of Constantinople.

With regard to finance, in which French interests were paramount, he would be willing to seek a method of securing essential control that would not offend Nationalist susceptibilities.

The Turks, he said, regarded the "zones of influence" of the tripartite agreement as the worst encroachment on Turkish sovereignty, but might be prepared to give freely all the concessions desired. M. Briand would be willing, on behalf of France, to renounce the tripartite agreement, and thought it might be possible to induce Italy to do the same once her economic interests were secured in some other manner.

He was opposed to accompanying the submission of the Allied proposals to the Turks by threats, as he feared this would endanger acceptance.

Lastly, he said, the French Government were in entire agreement with the general proposals of His Majesty's Government, and had in fact been about to make a similar proposal for mediation.

Lord Curzon welcomed this evidence of Franco-British unanimity, and hoped that Italian adherence could be obtained.

With regard to Thrace, any proposal to modify the treaty had lapsed when the scheme for a commission of enquiry was abandoned in London. M. Briand had not referred to his own proposal, but had suggested instead an autonomous Thrace. This His Majesty's Government could not accept Moreover, it would be useless to offer mediation at Athens on condition of the abandonment of Thrace as well as Smyrna.

With regard to threats, he pointed out that M. Briand was under a misapprehension if he thought it was proposed to threaten the Greeks in any way; so far from threatening them, it was intended to offer them help in the future should the Turks refuse our proposals. It would, however, be necessary, while offering such great concessions to Turkey, to have a threat in readiness in the event of refusal, and he knew, from his experience of the East, that a stick behind the back was very useful in dealing with Orientals.

With regard to procedure, M. Briand had suggested simultaneous action at Athens, Constantinople and Angora. He pointed out that it was essential to approach the Greeks first, for otherwise they would say that the Allies had trapped them.

With regard to finance, he welcomed M. Briand's offer of further modifications.

He strongly welcomed the generosity and statesmanship displayed by M. Briand in assenting to the abrogation of the tripartite agreement, and he counted on French co-operation at Rome. M. Briand had said nothing as to the plans for approaching the Turks, but he gratefully accepted his offer of united action in the proposed negotiations.

Further, M. Briand had said nothing in regard to the command at Constantinople; he must emphasise this point, as it was of the utmost importance as a demonstration of Allied unity.

M. Briand in reply said that he agreed to offering mediation first at Athens and subsequently approaching the Turks. He was ready to endeavour to secure Italian aims under the tripartite agreement by other methods, as, for example, a Turkish offer of free concessions.

He enquired whether His Majesty's Government could not, on their part, meet the Turkish demands in regard to Mesopotamia.

Lord Curzon said that he was ignorant of these demands, and that he considered it preferable not to raise the question of mandated territories. There was a further difficulty, in that Mesopotamia was now dealt with by the Colonial Office and not by the Foreign Office. He would, however, be interested to know what it was that the Turks had asked.

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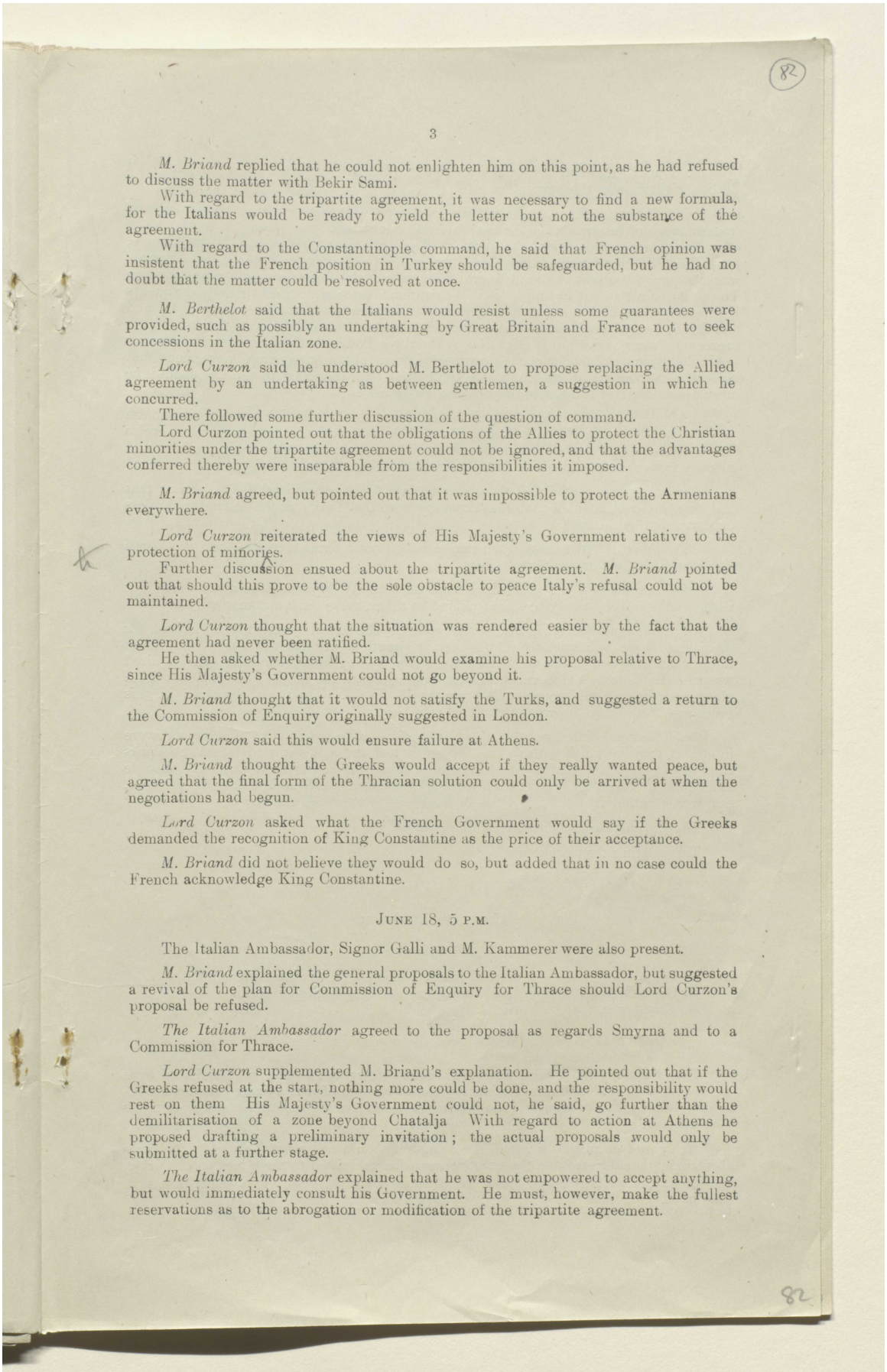

M. Briand replied that he could not enlighten him on this point, as he had refused to discuss the matter with Bekir Sami.

With regard to the tripartite agreement, it was necessary to find a new formula, for the Italians would be ready to yield the letter but not the substance of the agreement.

With regard to the Constantinople command, he said that French opinion was insistent that the French position in Turkey should be safeguarded, but he had no doubt that the matter could be resolved at once.

M. Berthelot said that the Italians would resist unless some guarantees were provided, such as possibly an undertaking by Great Britain and France not to seek concessions in the Italian zone.

Lord Curzon said he understood M. Berthelot to propose replacing the Allied agreement by an undertaking as between gentlemen, a suggestion in which he concurred.

There followed some further discussion of the question of command.

Lord Curzon pointed out that the obligations of the Allies to protect the Christian minorities under the tripartite agreement could not be ignored, and that the advantages conferred thereby were inseparable from the responsibilities it imposed.

M. Briand agreed, but pointed out that it was impossible to protect the Armenians everywhere.

Lord Curzon reiterated the views of His Majesty's Government relative to the protection of minories.

Further discussion ensued about the tripartite agreement. *M. Briand* pointed out that should this prove to be the sole obstacle to peace Italy's refusal could not be maintained.

Lord Curzon thought that the situation was rendered easier by the fact that the agreement had never been ratified.

He then asked whether M. Briand would examine his proposal relative to Thrace, since His Majesty's Government could not go beyond it.

M. Briand thought that it would not satisfy the Turks, and suggested a return to the Commission of Enquiry originally suggested in London.

Lord Curzon said this would ensure failure at Athens.

M. Briand thought the Greeks would accept if they really wanted peace, but agreed that the final form of the Thracian solution could only be arrived at when the negotiations had begun.

Lord Curzon asked what the French Government would say if the Greeks demanded the recognition of King Constantine as the price of their acceptance.

M. Briand did not believe they would do so, but added that in no case could the French acknowledge King Constantine.

JUNE 18, 5 P.M.

The Italian Ambassador, Signor Galli and M. Kammerer were also present.

M. Briand explained the general proposals to the Italian Ambassador, but suggested a revival of the plan for Commission of Enquiry for Thrace should Lord Curzon's proposal be refused.

The Italian Ambassador agreed to the proposal as regards Smyrna and to a Commission for Thrace.

Lord Curzon supplemented M. Briand's explanation. He pointed out that if the Greeks refused at the start, nothing more could be done, and the responsibility would rest on them His Majesty's Government could not, he said, go further than the demilitarisation of a zone beyond Chatalja With regard to action at Athens he proposed drafting a preliminary invitation; the actual proposals would only be submitted at a further stage.

The Italian Ambassador explained that he was not empowered to accept anything, but would immediately consult his Government. He must, however, make the fullest reservations as to the abrogation or modification of the tripartite agreement.

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M. Briand explained to him at some length that it was intended to safeguard all Italian rights under the agreement.

Lord Curzon pointed out that His Majesty's Government must insist on the maintenance of responsibility for the Christian minorities.

Lord Curzon then raised the question of procedure at Athens and Constantinople, and discussed how far the Allies should recognise the duality between Constantinople and Angora. It might be found desirable for each of the Allies to send a representative to the latter place, but he emphasised the supreme importance of all three Governments acting together and conducting negotiations in common, and he referred to and condemned the French and Italian separate agreements with the Nationalists. If an agreement were arrived at it might be by the three Powers acting together and signing a single document, not by each Power seeking to obtain a separate agreement and special advantages for itself. He also insisted that the offer to Turkey should be accompanied by an intimation of penalties for refusal.

M. Briand did not agree, as he considered that the Allied stick was not big enough to be effective and would only irritate the Turkish extremists. If any threats were to be made, he would prefer to threaten both sides, but, in the circumstances, he would abstain from threatening either party at the beginning.

Lord Curzon repeated that there was no case for threatening the Greeks, but that the British Government feared that concessions to the Turks would be fruitless unless accompanied by a threat.

M. Briand said that the French nation would not tolerate a conflict with the Turks by an anti-Turkish or pro-Greek *geste*.

Lord Curzon said that British opinion was equally opposed to going to war. But if the Turks refused the concessions offered to them, these must automatically lapse.

M. Briand agreed. He added that the psychological moment had arrived for mediation, since both sides were in a difficult situation. It was the duty of the Allies to do what they could, and he personally believed they would succeed. He enquired whether His Majesty's Government could not approach the Soviet Government with a view to cutting off this source of supply to the Turks. The threat involved in this procedure would have a great effect on Turkish extremists.

Lord Curzon pointed out that the Nationalists had a treaty with Moscow and were in closest possible touch with them. The object of the Allies was to detach the Turks from Moscow. His Majesty's Government were prepared to promise all possible assistance to the Turkey of the future if mediation were accepted. He doubted, however, whether it would be of the slightest use to approach the Soviets.

The Italian Ambassador was of like opinion.

The meeting then broke up.

JUNE 19, 10·30 A.M.

Present :

M. Briand.	Lord Curzon.	Italian Ambassador.
M. Berthelot.	Lord Hardinge.	Signor Galli.
M. Kammerer.	Sir H. Rumbold.	
	Mr. Vansittart.	
	Mr. Osborne.	

Lord Curzon read the draft telegram to Athens which he had prepared, and gave a copy to M. Briand and the Italian Ambassador, both of whom expressed themselves as delighted with its terms. The latter undertook to submit it immediately to his Government.

M. Briand enquired whether the telegram should be despatched before the three Governments had agreed on the exact terms to be submitted to the Greeks and Turks.

Lord Curzon thought the telegram should be sent at once, but stated his readiness to proceed to the immediate settlement of the proposed terms of settlement.

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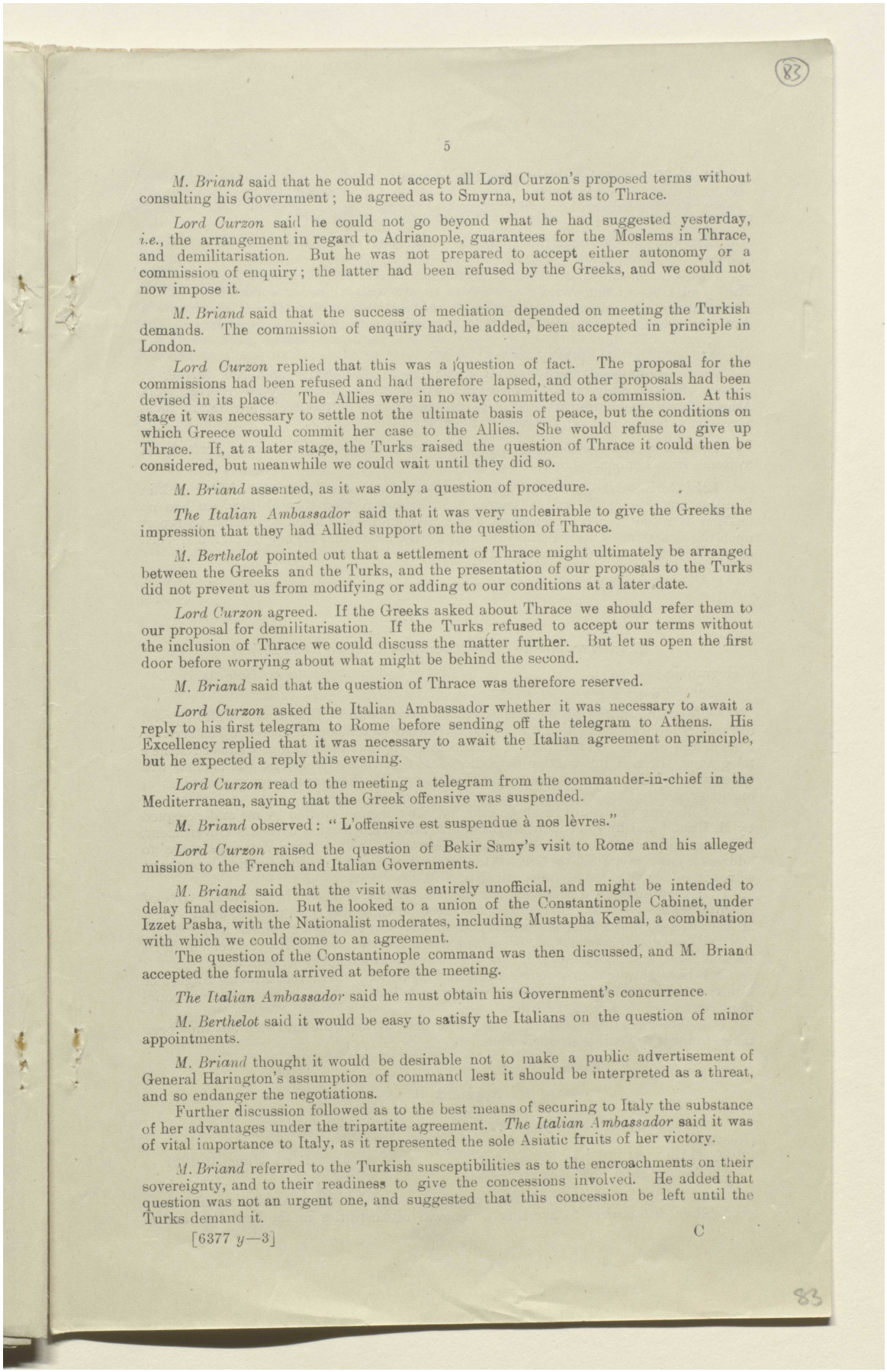

M. Briand said that he could not accept all Lord Curzon's proposed terms without consulting his Government; he agreed as to Smyrna, but not as to Thrace.

Lord Curzon said he could not go beyond what he had suggested yesterday, *i.e.*, the arrangement in regard to Adrianople, guarantees for the Moslems in Thrace, and demilitarisation. But he was not prepared to accept either autonomy or a commission of enquiry; the latter had been refused by the Greeks, and we could not now impose it.

M. Briand said that the success of mediation depended on meeting the Turkish demands. The commission of enquiry had, he added, been accepted in principle in London.

Lord Curzon replied that this was a question of fact. The proposal for the commissions had been refused and had therefore lapsed, and other proposals had been devised in its place. The Allies were in no way committed to a commission. At this stage it was necessary to settle not the ultimate basis of peace, but the conditions on which Greece would commit her case to the Allies. She would refuse to give up Thrace. If, at a later stage, the Turks raised the question of Thrace it could then be considered, but meanwhile we could wait until they did so.

M. Briand assented, as it was only a question of procedure.

The Italian Ambassador said that it was very undesirable to give the Greeks the impression that they had Allied support on the question of Thrace.

M. Berthelot pointed out that a settlement of Thrace might ultimately be arranged between the Greeks and the Turks, and the presentation of our proposals to the Turks did not prevent us from modifying or adding to our conditions at a later date.

Lord Curzon agreed. If the Greeks asked about Thrace we should refer them to our proposal for demilitarisation. If the Turks refused to accept our terms without the inclusion of Thrace we could discuss the matter further. But let us open the first door before worrying about what might be behind the second.

M. Briand said that the question of Thrace was therefore reserved.

Lord Curzon asked the Italian Ambassador whether it was necessary to await a reply to his first telegram to Rome before sending off the telegram to Athens. His Excellency replied that it was necessary to await the Italian agreement on principle, but he expected a reply this evening.

Lord Curzon read to the meeting a telegram from the commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, saying that the Greek offensive was suspended.

M. Briand observed: "L'offensive est suspendue à nos lèvres."

Lord Curzon raised the question of Bekir Samy's visit to Rome and his alleged mission to the French and Italian Governments.

M. Briand said that the visit was entirely unofficial, and might be intended to delay final decision. But he looked to a union of the Constantinople Cabinet, under Izzet Pasha, with the Nationalist moderates, including Mustapha Kemal, a combination with which we could come to an agreement.

The question of the Constantinople command was then discussed, and M. Briand accepted the formula arrived at before the meeting.

The Italian Ambassador said he must obtain his Government's concurrence.

M. Berthelot said it would be easy to satisfy the Italians on the question of minor appointments.

M. Briand thought it would be desirable not to make a public advertisement of General Harington's assumption of command lest it should be interpreted as a threat, and so endanger the negotiations.

Further discussion followed as to the best means of securing to Italy the substance of her advantages under the tripartite agreement. *The Italian Ambassador* said it was of vital importance to Italy, as it represented the sole Asiatic fruits of her victory.

M. Briand referred to the Turkish susceptibilities as to the encroachments on their sovereignty, and to their readiness to give the concessions involved. He added that question was not an urgent one, and suggested that this concession be left until the Turks demand it.

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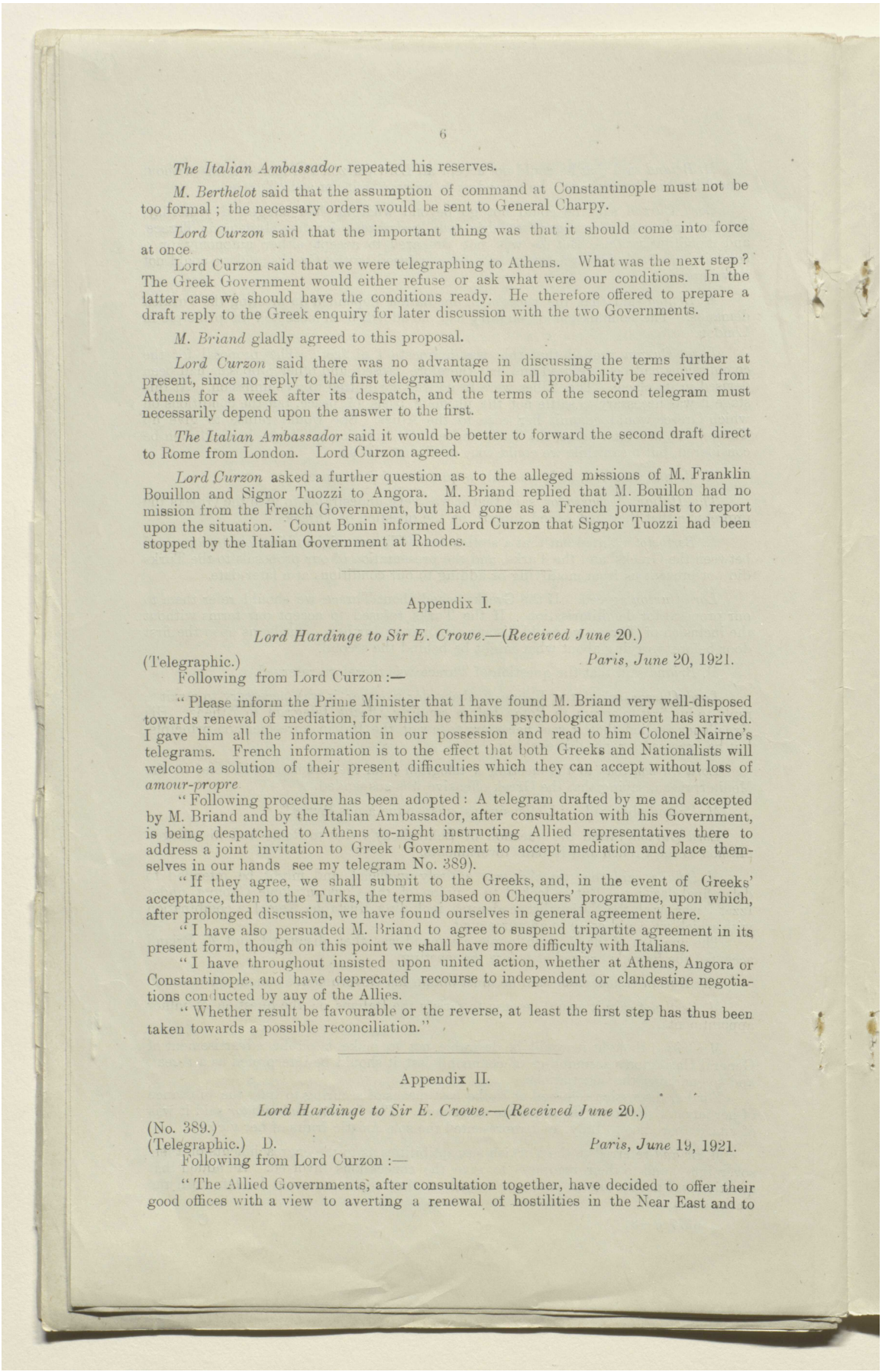

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The Italian Ambassador repeated his reserves.

M. Berthelot said that the assumption of command at Constantinople must not be too formal; the necessary orders would be sent to General Charpy.

Lord Curzon said that the important thing was that it should come into force at once.

Lord Curzon said that we were telegraphing to Athens. What was the next step? The Greek Government would either refuse or ask what were our conditions. In the latter case we should have the conditions ready. He therefore offered to prepare a draft reply to the Greek enquiry for later discussion with the two Governments.

M. Briand gladly agreed to this proposal.

Lord Curzon said there was no advantage in discussing the terms further at present, since no reply to the first telegram would in all probability be received from Athens for a week after its despatch, and the terms of the second telegram must necessarily depend upon the answer to the first.

The Italian Ambassador said it would be better to forward the second draft direct to Rome from London. Lord Curzon agreed.

Lord Curzon asked a further question as to the alleged missions of M. Franklin Bouillon and Signor Tuozzi to Angora. M. Briand replied that M. Bouillon had no mission from the French Government, but had gone as a French journalist to report upon the situation. Count Bonin informed Lord Curzon that Signor Tuozzi had been stopped by the Italian Government at Rhodes.

Appendix I.

Lord Hardinge to Sir E. Crowe.—(*Received June* 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, June* 20, 1921.

Following from Lord Curzon:—

"Please inform the Prime Minister that I have found M. Briand very well-disposed towards renewal of mediation, for which he thinks psychological moment has arrived. I gave him all the information in our possession and read to him Colonel Nairne's telegrams. French information is to the effect that both Greeks and Nationalists will welcome a solution of their present difficulties which they can accept without loss of *amour-propre*.

"Following procedure has been adopted: A telegram drafted by me and accepted by M. Briand and by the Italian Ambassador, after consultation with his Government, is being despatched to Athens to-night instructing Allied representatives there to address a joint invitation to Greek Government to accept mediation and place themselves in our hands (see my telegram No. 389).

"If they agree, we shall submit to the Greeks, and, in the event of Greeks' acceptance, then to the Turks, the terms based on Chequers' programme, upon which, after prolonged discussion, we have found ourselves in general agreement here.

"I have also persuaded M. Briand to agree to suspend tripartite agreement in its present form, though on this point we shall have more difficulty with Italians.

"I have throughout insisted upon united action, whether at Athens, Angora or Constantinople, and have deprecated recourse to independent or clandestine negotiations conducted by any of the Allies.

"Whether result be favourable or the reverse, at least the first step has thus been taken towards a possible reconciliation."

Appendix II.

Lord Hardinge to Sir E. Crowe.—(*Received June* 20.)

(No. 389.)

(Telegraphic.) D. *Paris, June* 19, 1921.

Following from Lord Curzon:—

"The Allied Governments, after consultation together, have decided to offer their good offices with a view to averting a renewal of hostilities in the Near East and to

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securing an honourable and lasting peace. They are profoundly convinced that, whatever be the immediate result of renewal of conflict between Greek and Turkish forces in Asia Minor, there are not to be found therein the prospects either of any enduring pacification of the East or of a solution compatible with the real interests and ultimate capacities of either party. The belligerents themselves will possibly not dissent from Allied Governments in this definition of the objects which they should hold in view, and any result which fails to attain them, even if it brings a temporary advantage to one or other party, will be stamped with ultimate failure. In the circumstances, Allied Governments feel that they are only discharging an international duty, as well as an obligation of friendship, if they inform Greek Government at this critical juncture, before hostilities are reopened, that, if Hellenic Government is disposed to place its interests in their hands, they are prepared to attempt task of conciliation. Should Greek Government decide that they are not prepared to accept outside intervention or advice, the Allied Powers cannot persevere in an action which would obviously be fruitless. In such a case the responsibility for consequences of renewed struggle will rest exclusively on Greeks themselves.

"On the other hand, should Hellenic Government decide, in its own interests, to accept intervention of the Powers, the latter will be prepared to state frankly to Greek Government the terms upon which their assistance will be proffered, and, in the event of these being accepted, to approach Turkish Government with a view to immediate suspension of hostilities and to negotiations for conclusion of peace.

"An identic telegram is being sent to your colleagues at Athens, and you should immediately join with them in making this proposal to Greek Government and in inviting from them a prompt reply."

(Sent to Athens, No. 1; repeated to Foreign Office, Rome and Constantinople.)

Appendix III.

Lord Hardinge to Sir E. Crowe.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 386.)
(Telegraphic.) R. *Paris, June 19, 1921.*

Following from Lord Curzon for Sir E. Crowe :—

"Agreement was reached this morning with French by which General Harington will assume immediate command of Allied troops in Constantinople, necessary instructions being sent by French Government to General Charpy.

"It was further agreed that military commission should supervise three sub-commissions—

"1. Sub-commission of control, presided over by an Italian officer.
"2. Sub-commission of gendarmerie, presided over by a French officer.
"3. Sub-commission of 'special elements,' presided over by a British officer.

"It also agreed that post of permanent secretary-general of financial commission should be attributed to a Frenchman and post of inspector-general of customs to a British official; a third analogous post will probably be devised for an Italian in order to maintain the principle of equal distribution.

"The Italian Ambassador here was unable to accept above arrangement without instructions from Rome, but is submitting them immediately to his Government, and I do not apprehend any difficulty on their part.

"Please inform War Office."

(Repeated to Rome and Constantinople.)

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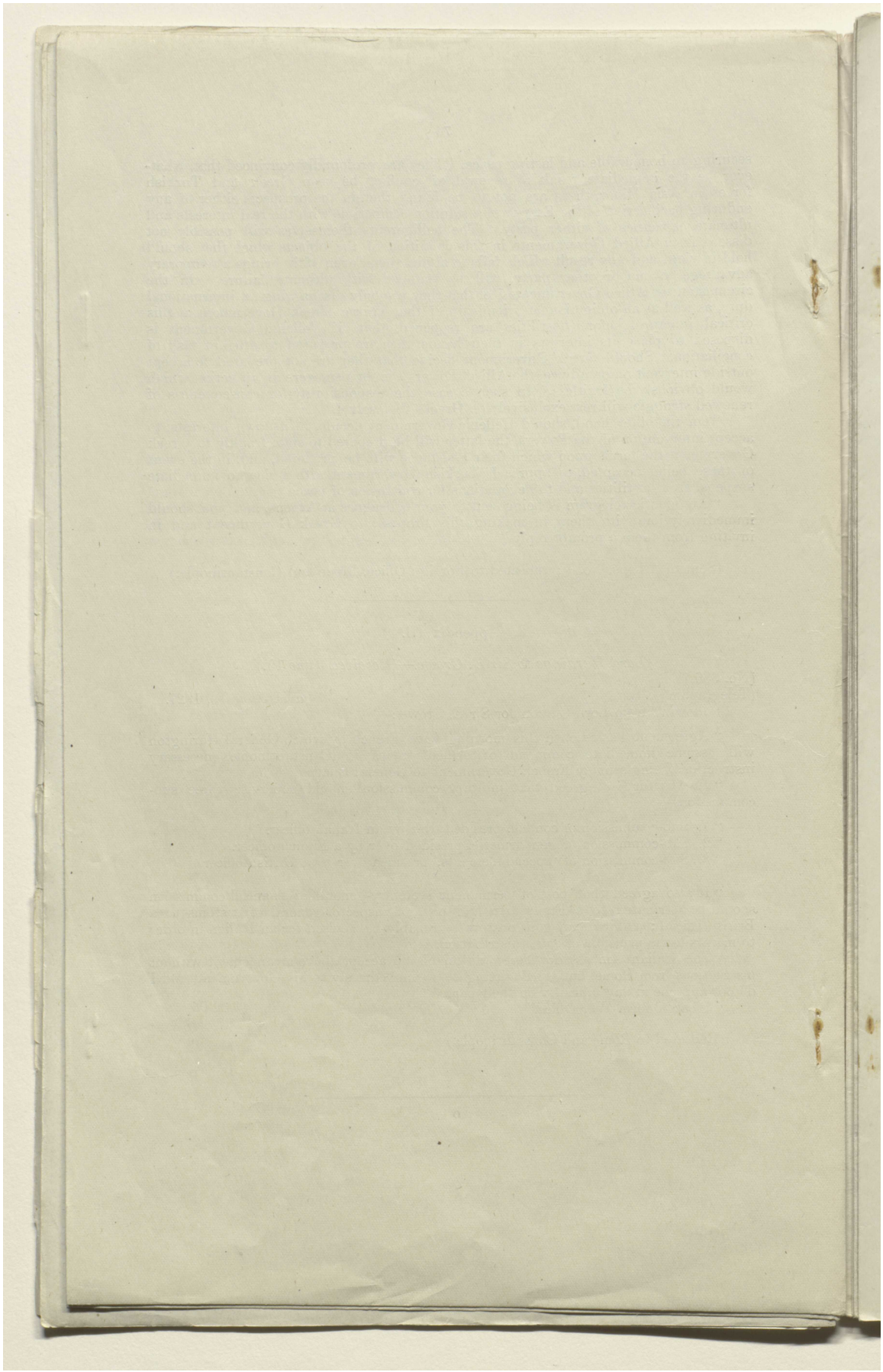

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EASTERN. [June 24.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 7279/143/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 533.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 24, 1921.

THE Italian Ambassador, having asked to see me to present a message from Count Sforza, commenced by reading out a telegram from the latter, in which the Italian Foreign Minister deplored the lack of union which had recently characterised the policy of the Allied Powers in the East; suggested that, before resuming the discussion of this question at the next meeting of the Supreme Council, there should be a confidential exchange of views between them; trusted that from this examination there might emerge a new and harmonious Allied policy for those parts of the world; and ended by reviving the suggestion, which Signor de Martino had at an earlier date placed before me, namely, that there might be a resumption of the discussions, which had been initiated with Lord Grey just before the commencement of the war, concerning a Mediterranean agreement between Italy and Great Britain.

I said at once that no one was more disposed than myself to maintain the close harmony between the Allies, which had been the accepted basis of our action during the past few years, and to which, for my own part, I had been wholly loyal; but I felt bound to tell his Excellency that, in view of the recent policy and actions of Count Sforza himself, a more unfavourable moment for opening discussions as to a closer alliance or understanding could not, in my opinion, have been found, and that before I even entered into a discussion on the matter I should have to be convinced that there was a radical change in the attitude and policy of Count Sforza himself. While Signor Nitti's Government was in power there had been, as testified at numerous conferences, a close unity of spirit and action between our two Governments. We had almost always, at any rate in European politics, been found to take the same view, and we had jointly exercised our influence in the pacification of Europe. Since Count Sforza, however, had become Foreign Minister, he had preferred to pursue an Asiatic policy of his own, which was not only independent of ours, but in many respects quite inconsistent with it, and the recent symptoms of which had caused me the gravest surprise and alarm.

I then referred to the conversation which Sir Eyre Crowe, acting upon my instructions, had recently held with his Excellency, and I said that it was probably not necessary for me to do more than to recapitulate the main points, although I had something further to add to them. It was somewhat astonishing to hear a complaint from Count Sforza of lack of unity between the Allies when he himself was mainly responsible for it. What was the good of talking about an alliance, when one of the Allies thought it open to him, while actually engaged in a conference with the others, to conclude an agreement behind their backs, or at any rate behind the back of one—namely, England—in which he openly pledged himself to support an enemy Power, in this case the Angora Government, against the Allied body of which he himself was a member, and against a treaty upon which his own signature was still wet? I had as yet heard no explanation or defence of this procedure, and I remained lost in astonishment at it.

The second point in which Count Sforza had claimed a liberty, inconsistent with any conception of an alliance, as I understood it, was that of the recent agreement which he had concluded at Rome with a mission from Afghanistan. Here again I was at a loss to understand how the Italian Government could reconcile such procedure with the sentiments which they now professed. If the defence were offered that Afghanistan was an independent State, the answer was at once clear, that no one knew better than the Italians, with their ramification of agents throughout the East, what were the real relations between Afghanistan and Great Britain, and how predominant had been for the last eighty years, and must continue for geographical reasons to be, the political influence of Great Britain at Kabul. If Count Sforza's proceedings were so innocent, why had he omitted to tell us what he was doing? I understood his defence now to be that Italy had commercial relations with Afghanistan which he was desirous of maintaining. I had yet to find anyone

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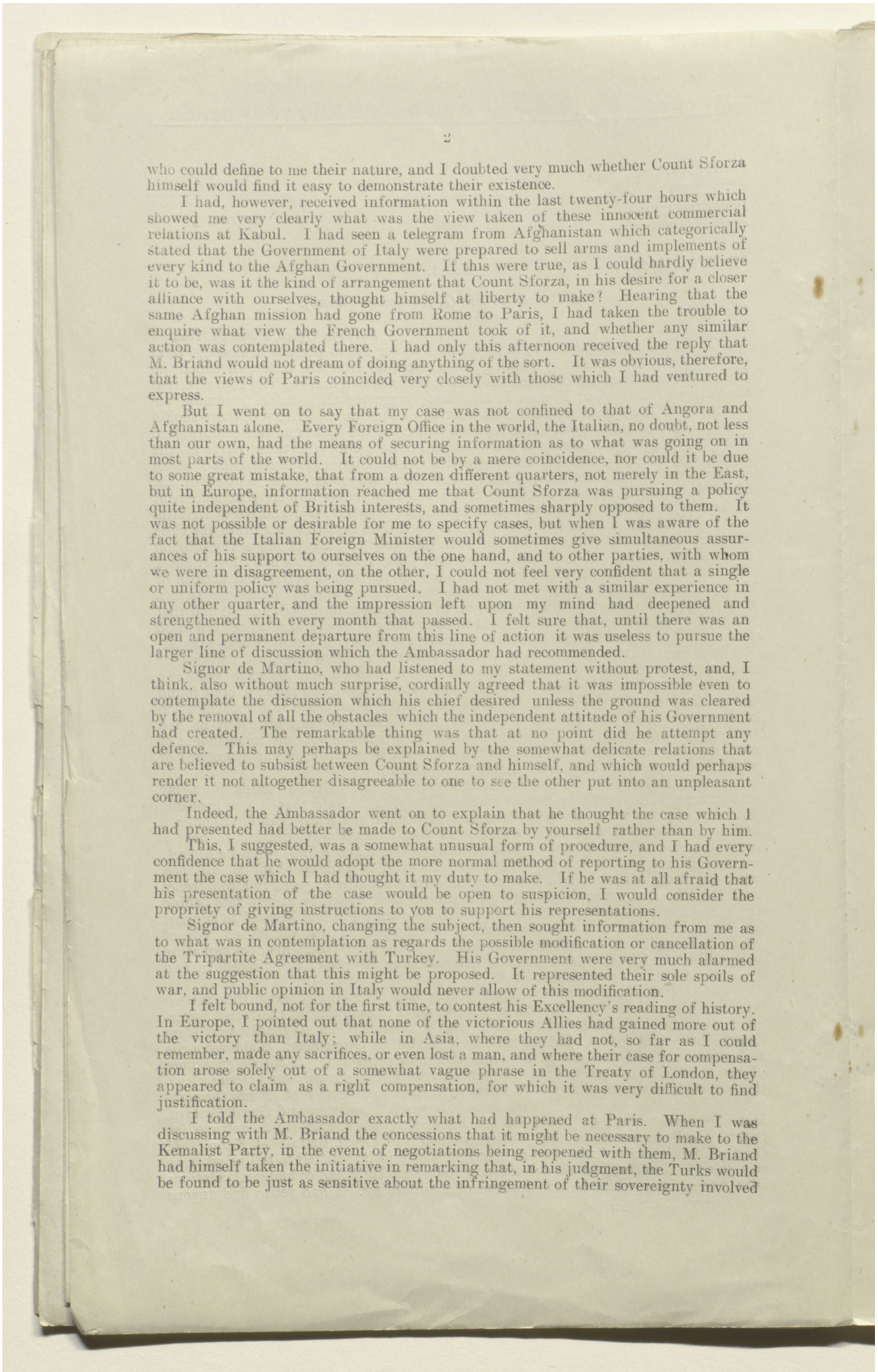

who could define to me their nature, and I doubted very much whether Count Sforza himself would find it easy to demonstrate their existence.

I had, however, received information within the last twenty-four hours which showed me very clearly what was the view taken of these innocent commercial relations at Kabul. I had seen a telegram from Afghanistan which categorically stated that the Government of Italy were prepared to sell arms and implements of every kind to the Afghan Government. If this were true, as I could hardly believe it to be, was it the kind of arrangement that Count Sforza, in his desire for a closer alliance with ourselves, thought himself at liberty to make? Hearing that the same Afghan mission had gone from Rome to Paris, I had taken the trouble to enquire what view the French Government took of it, and whether any similar action was contemplated there. I had only this afternoon received the reply that M. Briand would not dream of doing anything of the sort. It was obvious, therefore, that the views of Paris coincided very closely with those which I had ventured to express.

But I went on to say that my case was not confined to that of Angora and Afghanistan alone. Every Foreign Office in the world, the Italian, no doubt, not less than our own, had the means of securing information as to what was going on in most parts of the world. It could not be by a mere coincidence, nor could it be due to some great mistake, that from a dozen different quarters, not merely in the East, but in Europe, information reached me that Count Sforza was pursuing a policy quite independent of British interests, and sometimes sharply opposed to them. It was not possible or desirable for me to specify cases, but when I was aware of the fact that the Italian Foreign Minister would sometimes give simultaneous assurances of his support to ourselves on the one hand, and to other parties, with whom we were in disagreement, on the other, I could not feel very confident that a single or uniform policy was being pursued. I had not met with a similar experience in any other quarter, and the impression left upon my mind had deepened and strengthened with every month that passed. I felt sure that, until there was an open and permanent departure from this line of action it was useless to pursue the larger line of discussion which the Ambassador had recommended.

Signor de Martino, who had listened to my statement without protest, and, I think, also without much surprise, cordially agreed that it was impossible even to contemplate the discussion which his chief desired unless the ground was cleared by the removal of all the obstacles which the independent attitude of his Government had created. The remarkable thing was that at no point did he attempt any defence. This may perhaps be explained by the somewhat delicate relations that are believed to subsist between Count Sforza and himself, and which would perhaps render it not altogether disagreeable to one to see the other put into an unpleasant corner.

Indeed, the Ambassador went on to explain that he thought the case which I had presented had better be made to Count Sforza by yourself rather than by him.

This, I suggested, was a somewhat unusual form of procedure, and I had every confidence that he would adopt the more normal method of reporting to his Government the case which I had thought it my duty to make. If he was at all afraid that his presentation of the case would be open to suspicion, I would consider the propriety of giving instructions to you to support his representations.

Signor de Martino, changing the subject, then sought information from me as to what was in contemplation as regards the possible modification or cancellation of the Tripartite Agreement with Turkey. His Government were very much alarmed at the suggestion that this might be proposed. It represented their sole spoils of war, and public opinion in Italy would never allow of this modification.

I felt bound, not for the first time, to contest his Excellency's reading of history. In Europe, I pointed out that none of the victorious Allies had gained more out of the victory than Italy; while in Asia, where they had not, so far as I could remember, made any sacrifices, or even lost a man, and where their case for compensation arose solely out of a somewhat vague phrase in the Treaty of London, they appeared to claim as a right compensation, for which it was very difficult to find justification.

I told the Ambassador exactly what had happened at Paris. When I was discussing with M. Briand the concessions that it might be necessary to make to the Kemalist Party, in the event of negotiations being reopened with them, M. Briand had himself taken the initiative in remarking that, in his judgment, the Turks would be found to be just as sensitive about the infringement of their sovereignty involved

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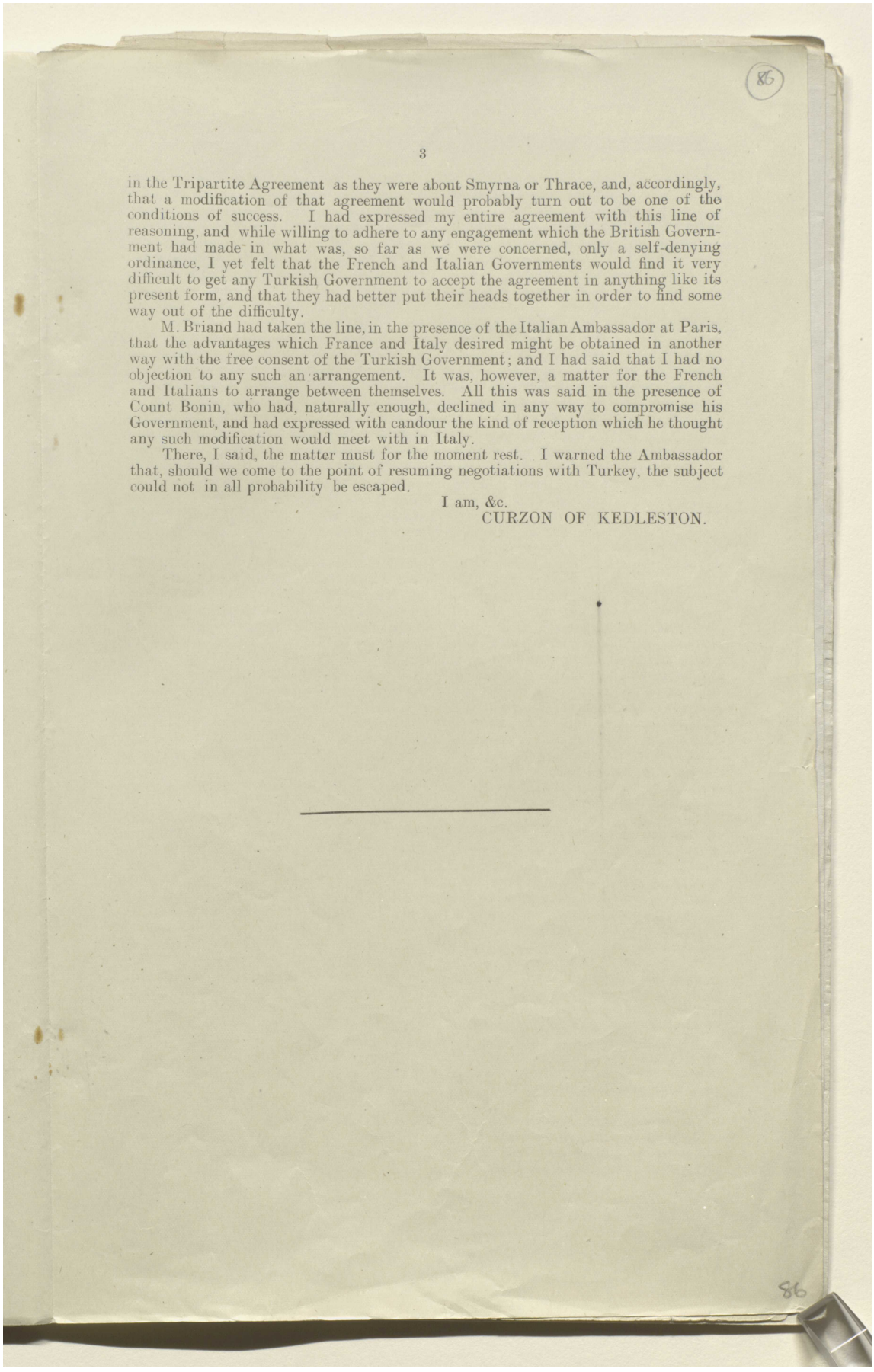

in the Tripartite Agreement as they were about Smyrna or Thrace, and, accordingly, that a modification of that agreement would probably turn out to be one of the conditions of success. I had expressed my entire agreement with this line of reasoning, and while willing to adhere to any engagement which the British Government had made in what was, so far as we were concerned, only a self-denying ordinance, I yet felt that the French and Italian Governments would find it very difficult to get any Turkish Government to accept the agreement in anything like its present form, and that they had better put their heads together in order to find some way out of the difficulty.

M. Briand had taken the line, in the presence of the Italian Ambassador at Paris, that the advantages which France and Italy desired might be obtained in another way with the free consent of the Turkish Government; and I had said that I had no objection to any such an arrangement. It was, however, a matter for the French and Italians to arrange between themselves. All this was said in the presence of Count Bonin, who had, naturally enough, declined in any way to compromise his Government, and had expressed with candour the kind of reception which he thought any such modification would meet with in Italy.

There, I said, the matter must for the moment rest. I warned the Ambassador that, should we come to the point of resuming negotiations with Turkey, the subject could not in all probability be escaped.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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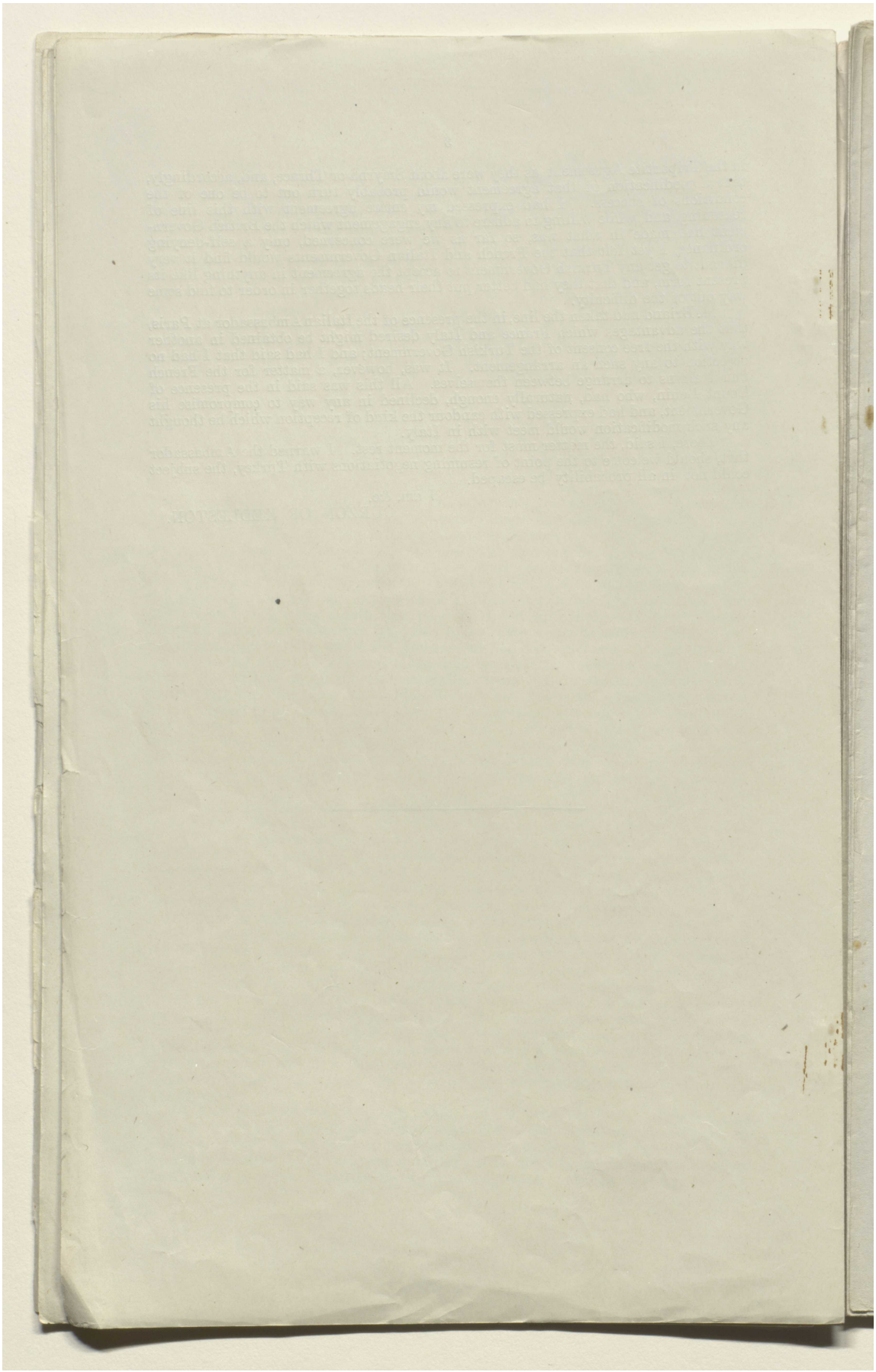

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [July 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 7570/143/44] No. 1.

Earl Curzon to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 1828.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, July* 1, 1921.

THE French Ambassador came to the Foreign Office this afternoon in order to present a communication from M. Briand. The Greek Government having refused to accede to the suggestion made by the Powers that Greece should place herself in their hands, with a view to the suspension of hostilities in Asia Minor and the conclusion of peace with Turkey, M. Briand now proposed that a joint notification should be addressed to Athens, warning the Greeks of the dangers of the course they were pursuing, and throwing upon them the responsibility for the resumption of the war and the still further arrestation of the conclusion of peace in the East. M. Briand proposed, as a second step, that the facilities which had hitherto been given to Greek warships at Constantinople, and the use which Greece had been permitted to make of that place as a port of call and revictualling, as well as the use which had been conceded to her of the Marmora, should, in accordance with strict neutrality, be withdrawn. Only by these means, M. Briand was convinced, could matters be brought to an early head and hostilities, even at the eleventh hour, prevented.

I replied that I did not feel able to entertain either proposal. The first was superfluous, because we had already told the Greeks, in the telegram which I had drafted in Paris and which had been approved by the three Powers, that, if the Greek Government preferred to decline our mediation, the exclusive responsibility would rest upon themselves. I did not, therefore, see any point in repeating the threat at the present moment, or stating again what was an obvious truism. It could have no effect, either as a rebuke or as a menace. As regards the second suggestion, the advantages accorded to the Greeks had been recommended to us from Constantinople, where it could not be said that a very pro-Greek feeling prevailed, as entirely consistent with the strict neutrality which we, at any rate in this country, had pursued; and, as long as it was open to the Turks to obtain supplies of men, money and arms from Bolshevik Russia without fear of any interruption, it seemed to me a one-sided proposal to apply this particular form of coercion to the Greeks. In my view, the only safety lay in a continuation of the policy of strict impartiality to which the British Government, at least, had all along been faithful.

As regards the general situation, I acquainted the Ambassador with the information which we had lately received from our military experts, both in Constantinople and in Smyrna, which led us to form a more favourable view of the morale and equipment of the Greek army than we had previously been led to adopt; and I remarked that, if these accounts were true, it was not for a moment to be expected that the Greek army would decline to resume a conflict in which it appeared to expect an initial victory. In all probability, although what had happened at Ismid was an unfavourable omen, the Greeks might expect to obtain some such preliminary advantage. If they held this view of their own chances, it was out of the question to expect them, because of any representations that we were inclined to make to them, to desist; although it seemed to me extremely likely that, once the initial success had been obtained, they would, of their own accord, appeal to our good offices.

The situation, I admitted, would not be rendered any easier by such a development, because the kind of terms that we had considered when I was in Paris might be more difficult to obtain from the Greeks if victorious than if they had not fought at all. On the other hand, should the issue turn the other way and the Turks be victorious in the impending struggle, we should find them also more difficult to deal with than they might be before the fighting recommenced.

The prospect, therefore, was not, in my judgment, very encouraging either way; but, however that might be, it seemed to me a useless expedient to attempt to intervene at the present stage, and I could only hope that, before long, whatever the result of the impending hostilities might be, a more favourable opportunity might occur.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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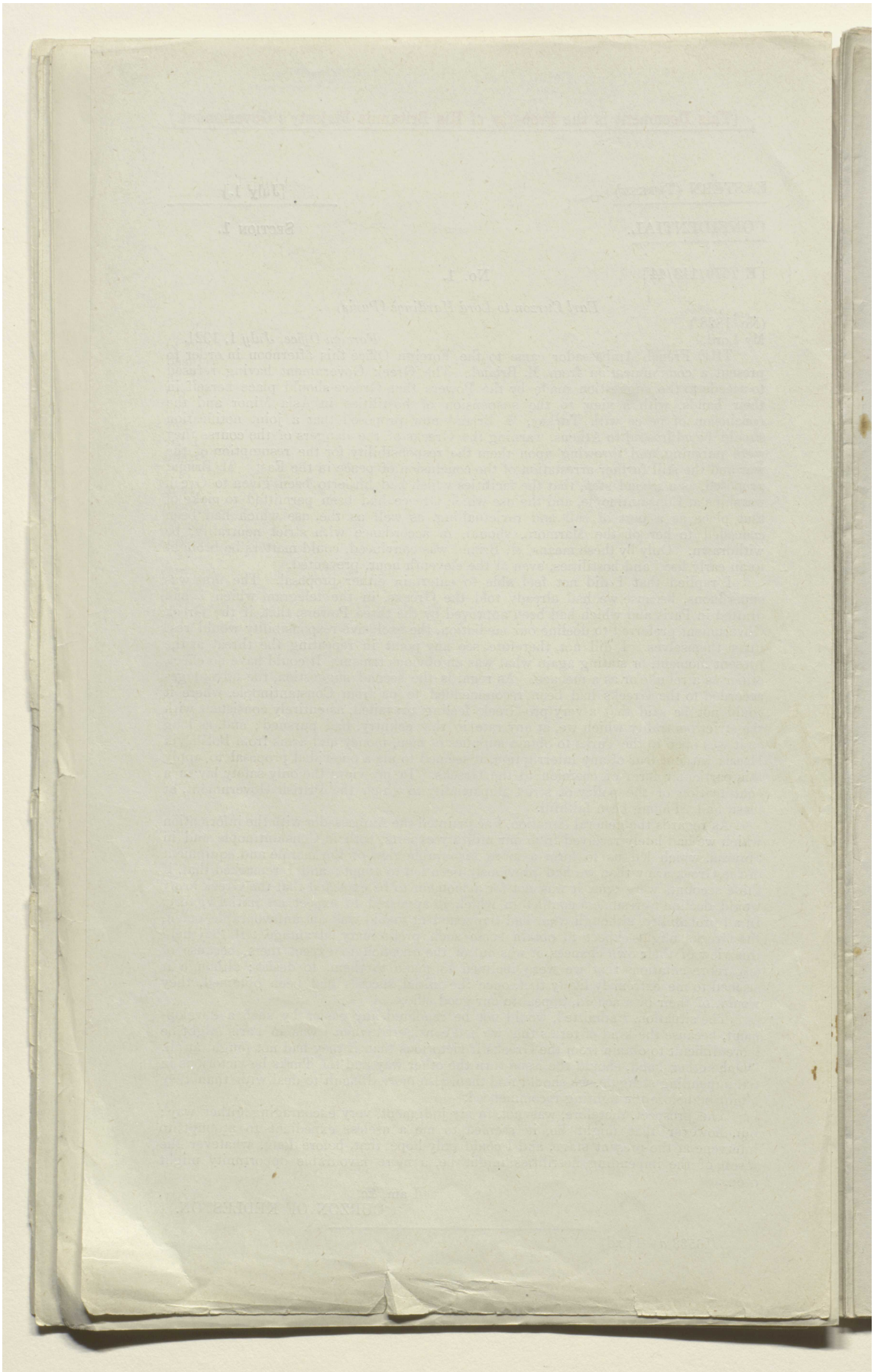

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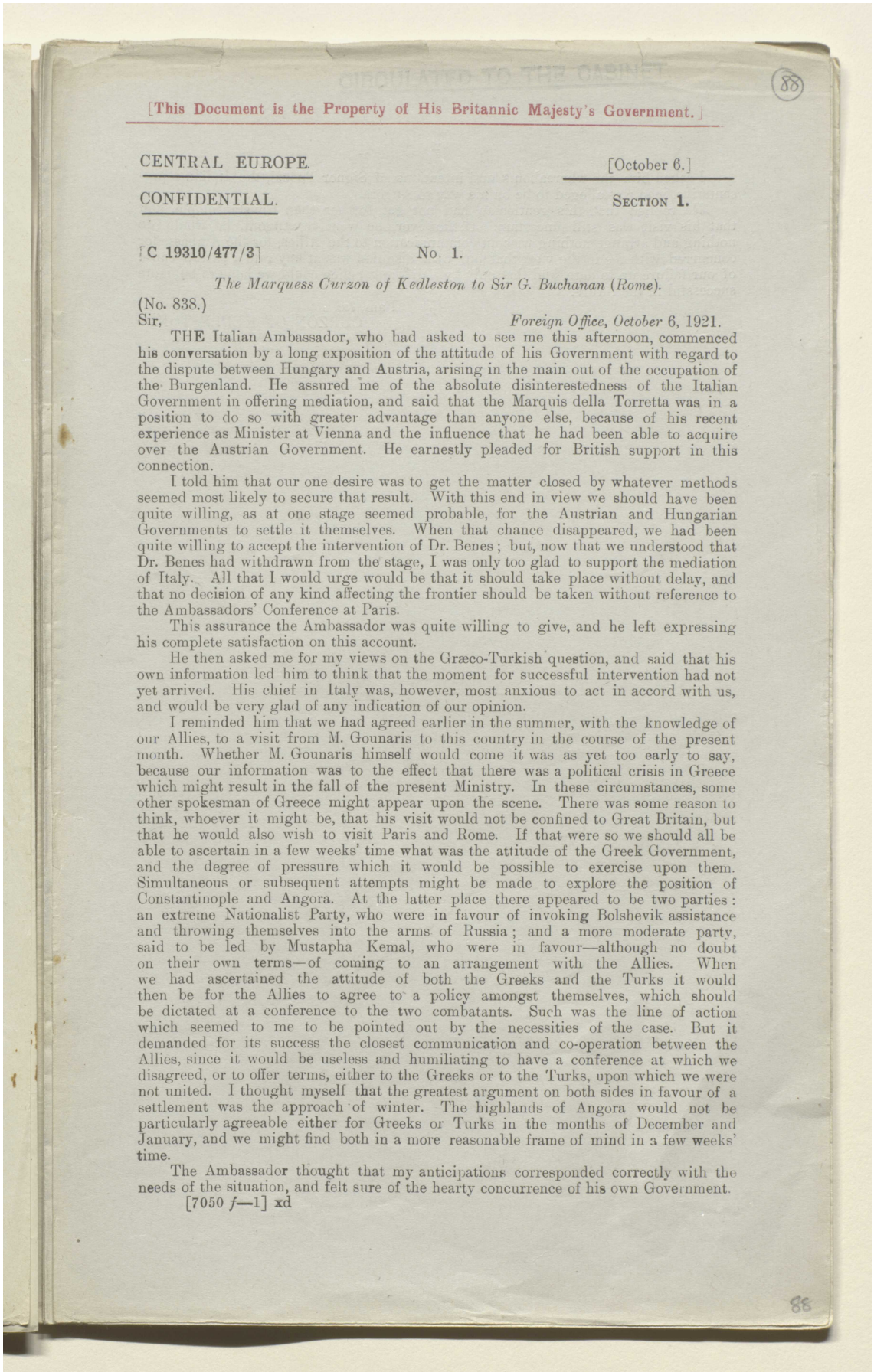

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CENTRAL EUROPE. [October 6.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 19310/477/3] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 838.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 6, 1921.*

THE Italian Ambassador, who had asked to see me this afternoon, commenced his conversation by a long exposition of the attitude of his Government with regard to the dispute between Hungary and Austria, arising in the main out of the occupation of the Burgenland. He assured me of the absolute disinterestedness of the Italian Government in offering mediation, and said that the Marquis della Torretta was in a position to do so with greater advantage than anyone else, because of his recent experience as Minister at Vienna and the influence that he had been able to acquire over the Austrian Government. He earnestly pleaded for British support in this connection.

I told him that our one desire was to get the matter closed by whatever methods seemed most likely to secure that result. With this end in view we should have been quite willing, as at one stage seemed probable, for the Austrian and Hungarian Governments to settle it themselves. When that chance disappeared, we had been quite willing to accept the intervention of Dr. Benes; but, now that we understood that Dr. Benes had withdrawn from the stage, I was only too glad to support the mediation of Italy. All that I would urge would be that it should take place without delay, and that no decision of any kind affecting the frontier should be taken without reference to the Ambassadors' Conference at Paris.

This assurance the Ambassador was quite willing to give, and he left expressing his complete satisfaction on this account.

He then asked me for my views on the Græco-Turkish question, and said that his own information led him to think that the moment for successful intervention had not yet arrived. His chief in Italy was, however, most anxious to act in accord with us, and would be very glad of any indication of our opinion.

I reminded him that we had agreed earlier in the summer, with the knowledge of our Allies, to a visit from M. Gounaris to this country in the course of the present month. Whether M. Gounaris himself would come it was as yet too early to say, because our information was to the effect that there was a political crisis in Greece which might result in the fall of the present Ministry. In these circumstances, some other spokesman of Greece might appear upon the scene. There was some reason to think, whoever it might be, that his visit would not be confined to Great Britain, but that he would also wish to visit Paris and Rome. If that were so we should all be able to ascertain in a few weeks' time what was the attitude of the Greek Government, and the degree of pressure which it would be possible to exercise upon them. Simultaneous or subsequent attempts might be made to explore the position of Constantinople and Angora. At the latter place there appeared to be two parties: an extreme Nationalist Party, who were in favour of invoking Bolshevik assistance and throwing themselves into the arms of Russia; and a more moderate party, said to be led by Mustapha Kemal, who were in favour—although no doubt on their own terms—of coming to an arrangement with the Allies. When we had ascertained the attitude of both the Greeks and the Turks it would then be for the Allies to agree to a policy amongst themselves, which should be dictated at a conference to the two combatants. Such was the line of action which seemed to me to be pointed out by the necessities of the case. But it demanded for its success the closest communication and co-operation between the Allies, since it would be useless and humiliating to have a conference at which we disagreed, or to offer terms, either to the Greeks or to the Turks, upon which we were not united. I thought myself that the greatest argument on both sides in favour of a settlement was the approach of winter. The highlands of Angora would not be particularly agreeable either for Greeks or Turks in the months of December and January, and we might find both in a more reasonable frame of mind in a few weeks' time.

The Ambassador thought that my anticipations corresponded correctly with the needs of the situation, and felt sure of the hearty concurrence of his own Government.

[7050 *f*—1] xd

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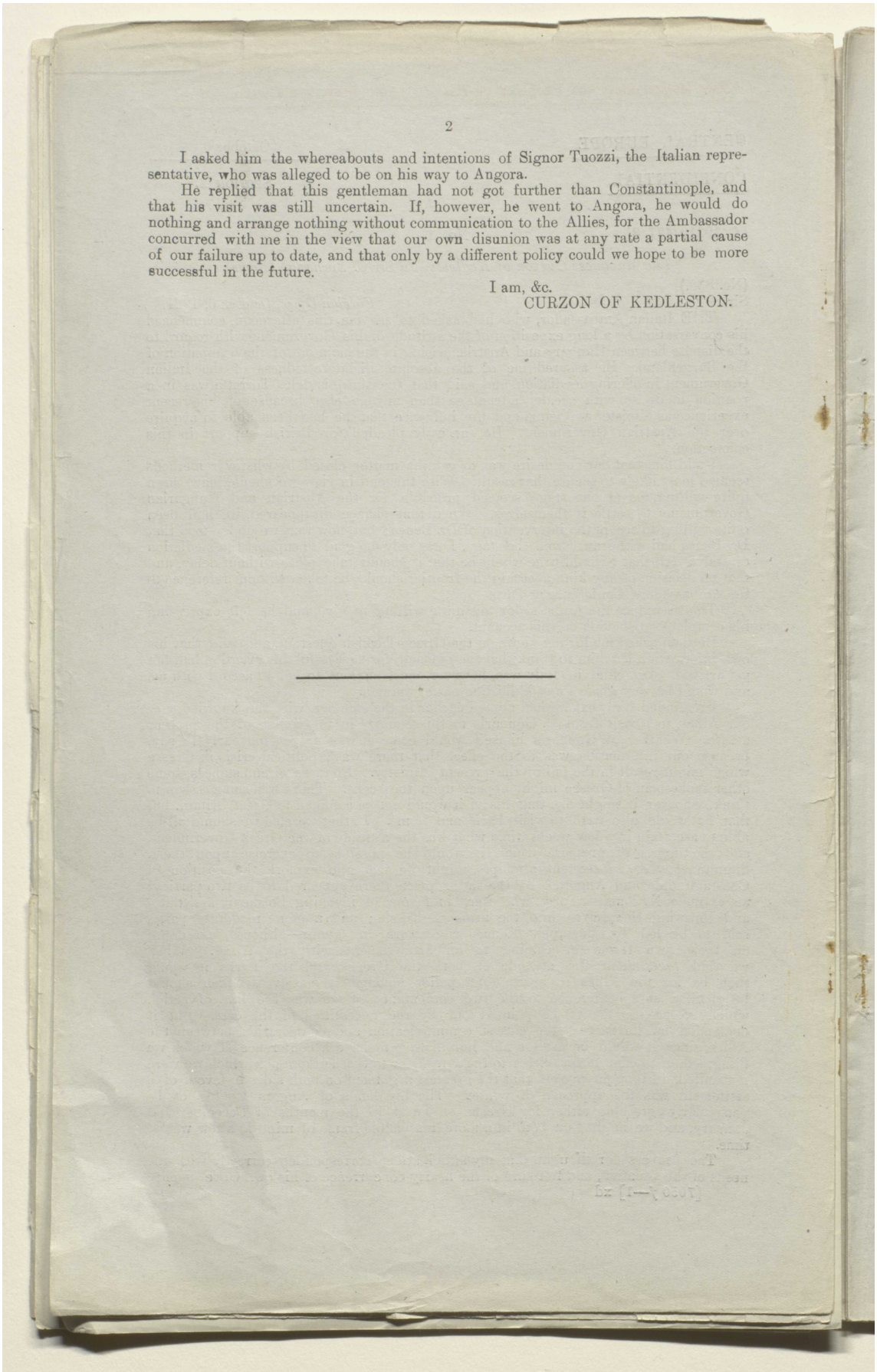

I asked him the whereabouts and intentions of Signor Tuozzi, the Italian representative, who was alleged to be on his way to Angora.

He replied that this gentleman had not got further than Constantinople, and that his visit was still uncertain. If, however, he went to Angora, he would do nothing and arrange nothing without communication to the Allies, for the Ambassador concurred with me in the view that our own disunion was at any rate a partial cause of our failure up to date, and that only by a different policy could we hope to be more successful in the future.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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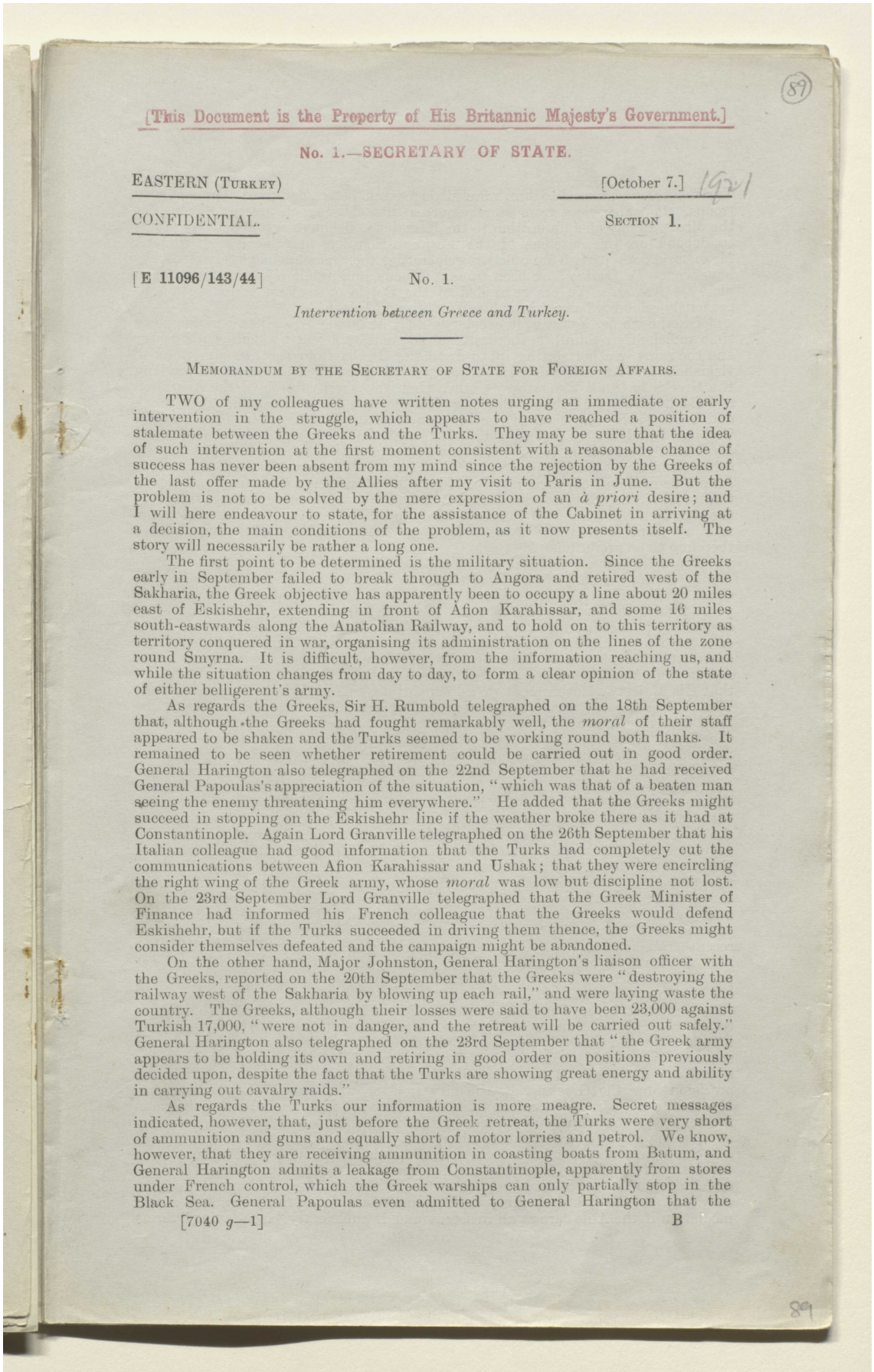

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN (TURKEY) [October 7.] 1921

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11096/143/44] No. 1.

Intervention between Greece and Turkey.

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

TWO of my colleagues have written notes urging an immediate or early intervention in the struggle, which appears to have reached a position of stalemate between the Greeks and the Turks. They may be sure that the idea of such intervention at the first moment consistent with a reasonable chance of success has never been absent from my mind since the rejection by the Greeks of the last offer made by the Allies after my visit to Paris in June. But the problem is not to be solved by the mere expression of an *à priori* desire; and I will here endeavour to state, for the assistance of the Cabinet in arriving at a decision, the main conditions of the problem, as it now presents itself. The story will necessarily be rather a long one.

The first point to be determined is the military situation. Since the Greeks early in September failed to break through to Angora and retired west of the Sakharia, the Greek objective has apparently been to occupy a line about 20 miles east of Eskishehr, extending in front of Afion Karahissar, and some 16 miles south-eastwards along the Anatolian Railway, and to hold on to this territory as territory conquered in war, organising its administration on the lines of the zone round Smyrna. It is difficult, however, from the information reaching us, and while the situation changes from day to day, to form a clear opinion of the state of either belligerent's army.

As regards the Greeks, Sir H. Rumbold telegraphed on the 18th September that, although the Greeks had fought remarkably well, the *moral* of their staff appeared to be shaken and the Turks seemed to be working round both flanks. It remained to be seen whether retirement could be carried out in good order. General Harington also telegraphed on the 22nd September that he had received General Papoulas's appreciation of the situation, "which was that of a beaten man seeing the enemy threatening him everywhere." He added that the Greeks might succeed in stopping on the Eskishehr line if the weather broke there as it had at Constantinople. Again Lord Granville telegraphed on the 26th September that his Italian colleague had good information that the Turks had completely cut the communications between Afion Karahissar and Ushak; that they were encircling the right wing of the Greek army, whose *moral* was low but discipline not lost. On the 23rd September Lord Granville telegraphed that the Greek Minister of Finance had informed his French colleague that the Greeks would defend Eskishehr, but if the Turks succeeded in driving them thence, the Greeks might consider themselves defeated and the campaign might be abandoned.

On the other hand, Major Johnston, General Harington's liaison officer with the Greeks, reported on the 20th September that the Greeks were "destroying the railway west of the Sakharia by blowing up each rail," and were laying waste the country. The Greeks, although their losses were said to have been 23,000 against Turkish 17,000, "were not in danger, and the retreat will be carried out safely." General Harington also telegraphed on the 23rd September that "the Greek army appears to be holding its own and retiring in good order on positions previously decided upon, despite the fact that the Turks are showing great energy and ability in carrying out cavalry raids."

As regards the Turks our information is more meagre. Secret messages indicated, however, that, just before the Greek retreat, the Turks were very short of ammunition and guns and equally short of motor lorries and petrol. We know, however, that they are receiving ammunition in coasting boats from Batum, and General Harington admits a leakage from Constantinople, apparently from stores under French control, which the Greek warships can only partially stop in the Black Sea. General Papoulas even admitted to General Harington that the

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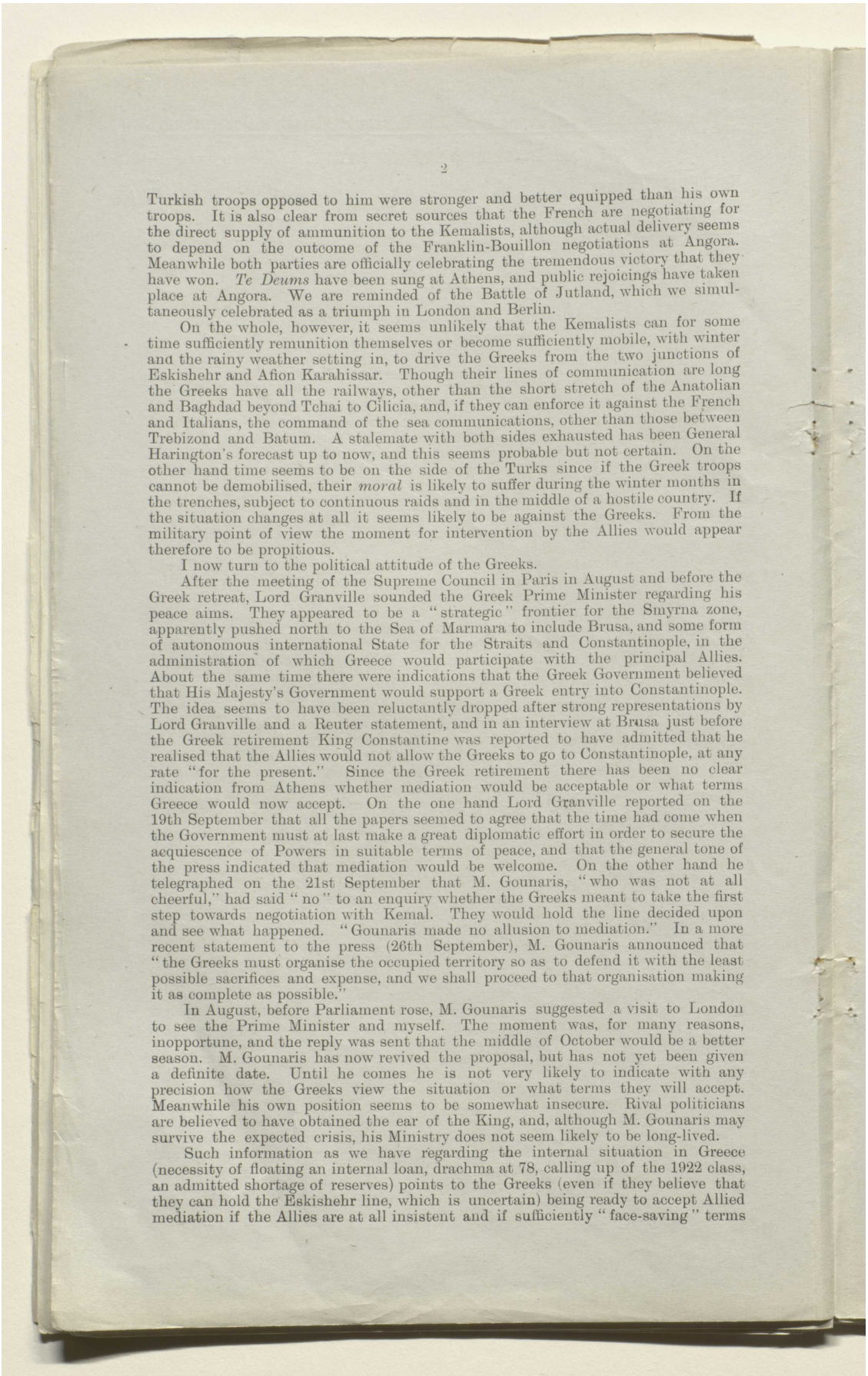

Turkish troops opposed to him were stronger and better equipped than his own troops. It is also clear from secret sources that the French are negotiating for the direct supply of ammunition to the Kemalists, although actual delivery seems to depend on the outcome of the Franklin-Bouillon negotiations at Angora. Meanwhile both parties are officially celebrating the tremendous victory that they have won. *Te Deums* have been sung at Athens, and public rejoicings have taken place at Angora. We are reminded of the Battle of Jutland, which we simultaneously celebrated as a triumph in London and Berlin.

On the whole, however, it seems unlikely that the Kemalists can for some time sufficiently remunition themselves or become sufficiently mobile, with winter and the rainy weather setting in, to drive the Greeks from the two junctions of Eskishehr and Afion Karahissar. Though their lines of communication are long the Greeks have all the railways, other than the short stretch of the Anatolian and Baghdad beyond Tchai to Cilicia, and, if they can enforce it against the French and Italians, the command of the sea communications, other than those between Trebizond and Batum. A stalemate with both sides exhausted has been General Harington's forecast up to now, and this seems probable but not certain. On the other hand time seems to be on the side of the Turks since if the Greek troops cannot be demobilised, their *moral* is likely to suffer during the winter months in the trenches, subject to continuous raids and in the middle of a hostile country. If the situation changes at all it seems likely to be against the Greeks. From the military point of view the moment for intervention by the Allies would appear therefore to be propitious.

I now turn to the political attitude of the Greeks.

After the meeting of the Supreme Council in Paris in August and before the Greek retreat, Lord Granville sounded the Greek Prime Minister regarding his peace aims. They appeared to be a "strategic" frontier for the Smyrna zone, apparently pushed north to the Sea of Marmara to include Brusa, and some form of autonomous international State for the Straits and Constantinople, in the administration of which Greece would participate with the principal Allies. About the same time there were indications that the Greek Government believed that His Majesty's Government would support a Greek entry into Constantinople. The idea seems to have been reluctantly dropped after strong representations by Lord Granville and a Reuter statement, and in an interview at Brusa just before the Greek retirement King Constantine was reported to have admitted that he realised that the Allies would not allow the Greeks to go to Constantinople, at any rate "for the present." Since the Greek retirement there has been no clear indication from Athens whether mediation would be acceptable or what terms Greece would now accept. On the one hand Lord Granville reported on the 19th September that all the papers seemed to agree that the time had come when the Government must at last make a great diplomatic effort in order to secure the acquiescence of Powers in suitable terms of peace, and that the general tone of the press indicated that mediation would be welcome. On the other hand he telegraphed on the 21st September that M. Gounaris, "who was not at all cheerful," had said "no" to an enquiry whether the Greeks meant to take the first step towards negotiation with Kemal. They would hold the line decided upon and see what happened. "Gounaris made no allusion to mediation." In a more recent statement to the press (26th September), M. Gounaris announced that "the Greeks must organise the occupied territory so as to defend it with the least possible sacrifices and expense, and we shall proceed to that organisation making it as complete as possible."

In August, before Parliament rose, M. Gounaris suggested a visit to London to see the Prime Minister and myself. The moment was, for many reasons, inopportune, and the reply was sent that the middle of October would be a better season. M. Gounaris has now revived the proposal, but has not yet been given a definite date. Until he comes he is not very likely to indicate with any precision how the Greeks view the situation or what terms they will accept. Meanwhile his own position seems to be somewhat insecure. Rival politicians are believed to have obtained the ear of the King, and, although M. Gounaris may survive the expected crisis, his Ministry does not seem likely to be long-lived.

Such information as we have regarding the internal situation in Greece (necessity of floating an internal loan, drachma at 78, calling up of the 1922 class, an admitted shortage of reserves) points to the Greeks (even if they believe that they can hold the Eskishehr line, which is uncertain) being ready to accept Allied mediation if the Allies are at all insistent and if sufficiently "face-saving" terms

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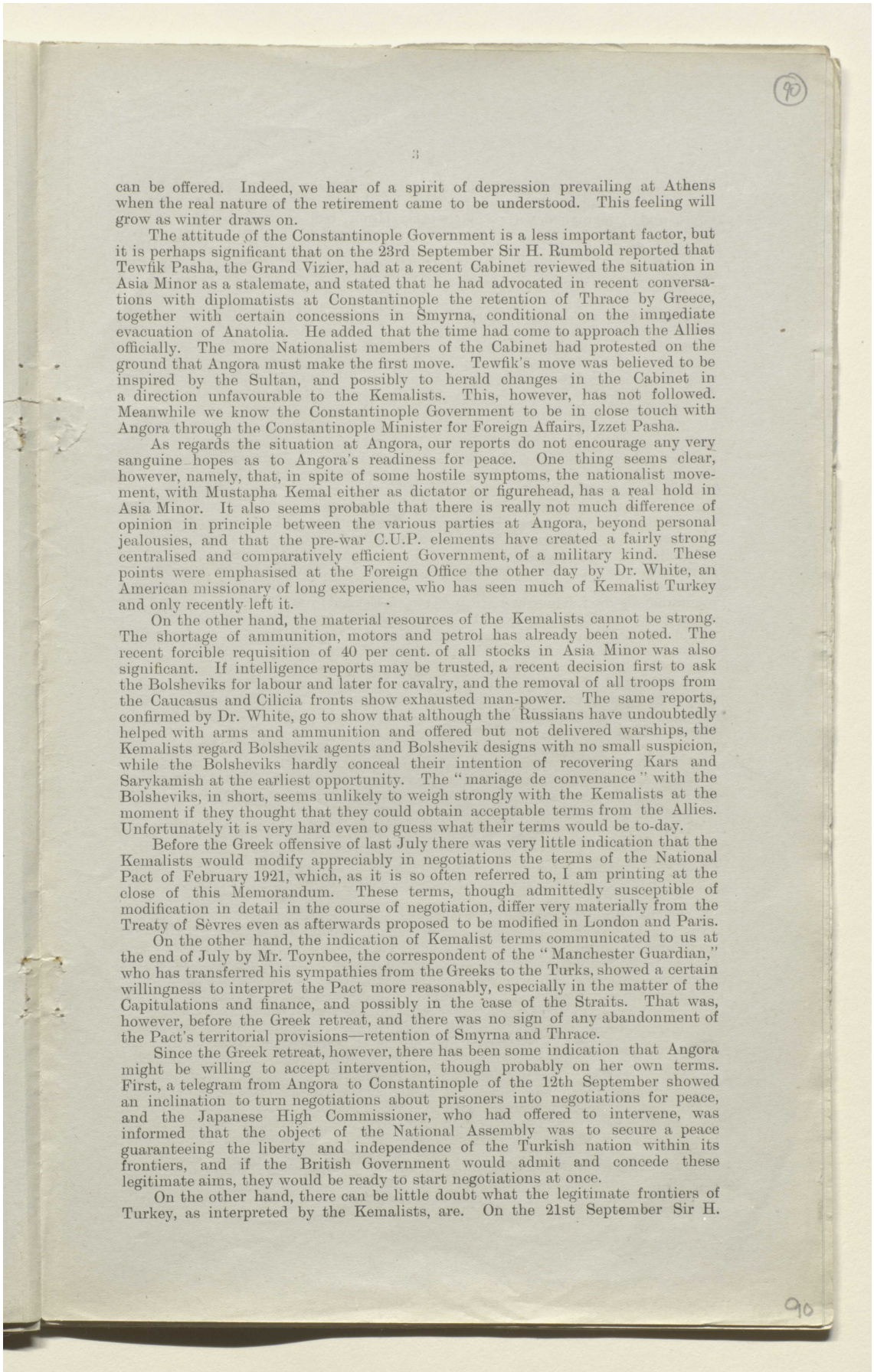

can be offered. Indeed, we hear of a spirit of depression prevailing at Athens when the real nature of the retirement came to be understood. This feeling will grow as winter draws on.

The attitude of the Constantinople Government is a less important factor, but it is perhaps significant that on the 23rd September Sir H. Rumbold reported that Tewfik Pasha, the Grand Vizier, had at a recent Cabinet reviewed the situation in Asia Minor as a stalemate, and stated that he had advocated in recent conversations with diplomatists at Constantinople the retention of Thrace by Greece, together with certain concessions in Smyrna, conditional on the immediate evacuation of Anatolia. He added that the time had come to approach the Allies officially. The more Nationalist members of the Cabinet had protested on the ground that Angora must make the first move. Tewfik's move was believed to be inspired by the Sultan, and possibly to herald changes in the Cabinet in a direction unfavourable to the Kemalists. This, however, has not followed. Meanwhile we know the Constantinople Government to be in close touch with Angora through the Constantinople Minister for Foreign Affairs, Izzet Pasha.

As regards the situation at Angora, our reports do not encourage any very sanguine hopes as to Angora's readiness for peace. One thing seems clear, however, namely, that, in spite of some hostile symptoms, the nationalist movement, with Mustapha Kemal either as dictator or figurehead, has a real hold in Asia Minor. It also seems probable that there is really not much difference of opinion in principle between the various parties at Angora, beyond personal jealousies, and that the pre-war C.U.P. elements have created a fairly strong centralised and comparatively efficient Government, of a military kind. These points were emphasised at the Foreign Office the other day by Dr. White, an American missionary of long experience, who has seen much of Kemalist Turkey and only recently left it.

On the other hand, the material resources of the Kemalists cannot be strong. The shortage of ammunition, motors and petrol has already been noted. The recent forcible requisition of 40 per cent. of all stocks in Asia Minor was also significant. If intelligence reports may be trusted, a recent decision first to ask the Bolsheviks for labour and later for cavalry, and the removal of all troops from the Caucasus and Cilicia fronts show exhausted man-power. The same reports, confirmed by Dr. White, go to show that although the Russians have undoubtedly helped with arms and ammunition and offered but not delivered warships, the Kemalists regard Bolshevik agents and Bolshevik designs with no small suspicion, while the Bolsheviks hardly conceal their intention of recovering Kars and Sarykamish at the earliest opportunity. The "mariage de convenance" with the Bolsheviks, in short, seems unlikely to weigh strongly with the Kemalists at the moment if they thought that they could obtain acceptable terms from the Allies. Unfortunately it is very hard even to guess what their terms would be to-day.

Before the Greek offensive of last July there was very little indication that the Kemalists would modify appreciably in negotiations the terms of the National Pact of February 1921, which, as it is so often referred to, I am printing at the close of this Memorandum. These terms, though admittedly susceptible of modification in detail in the course of negotiation, differ very materially from the Treaty of Sèvres even as afterwards proposed to be modified in London and Paris.

On the other hand, the indication of Kemalist terms communicated to us at the end of July by Mr. Toynbee, the correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian," who has transferred his sympathies from the Greeks to the Turks, showed a certain willingness to interpret the Pact more reasonably, especially in the matter of the Capitulations and finance, and possibly in the case of the Straits. That was, however, before the Greek retreat, and there was no sign of any abandonment of the Pact's territorial provisions—retention of Smyrna and Thrace.

Since the Greek retreat, however, there has been some indication that Angora might be willing to accept intervention, though probably on her own terms. First, a telegram from Angora to Constantinople of the 12th September showed an inclination to turn negotiations about prisoners into negotiations for peace, and the Japanese High Commissioner, who had offered to intervene, was informed that the object of the National Assembly was to secure a peace guaranteeing the liberty and independence of the Turkish nation within its frontiers, and if the British Government would admit and concede these legitimate aims, they would be ready to start negotiations at once.

On the other hand, there can be little doubt what the legitimate frontiers of Turkey, as interpreted by the Kemalists, are. On the 21st September Sir H.

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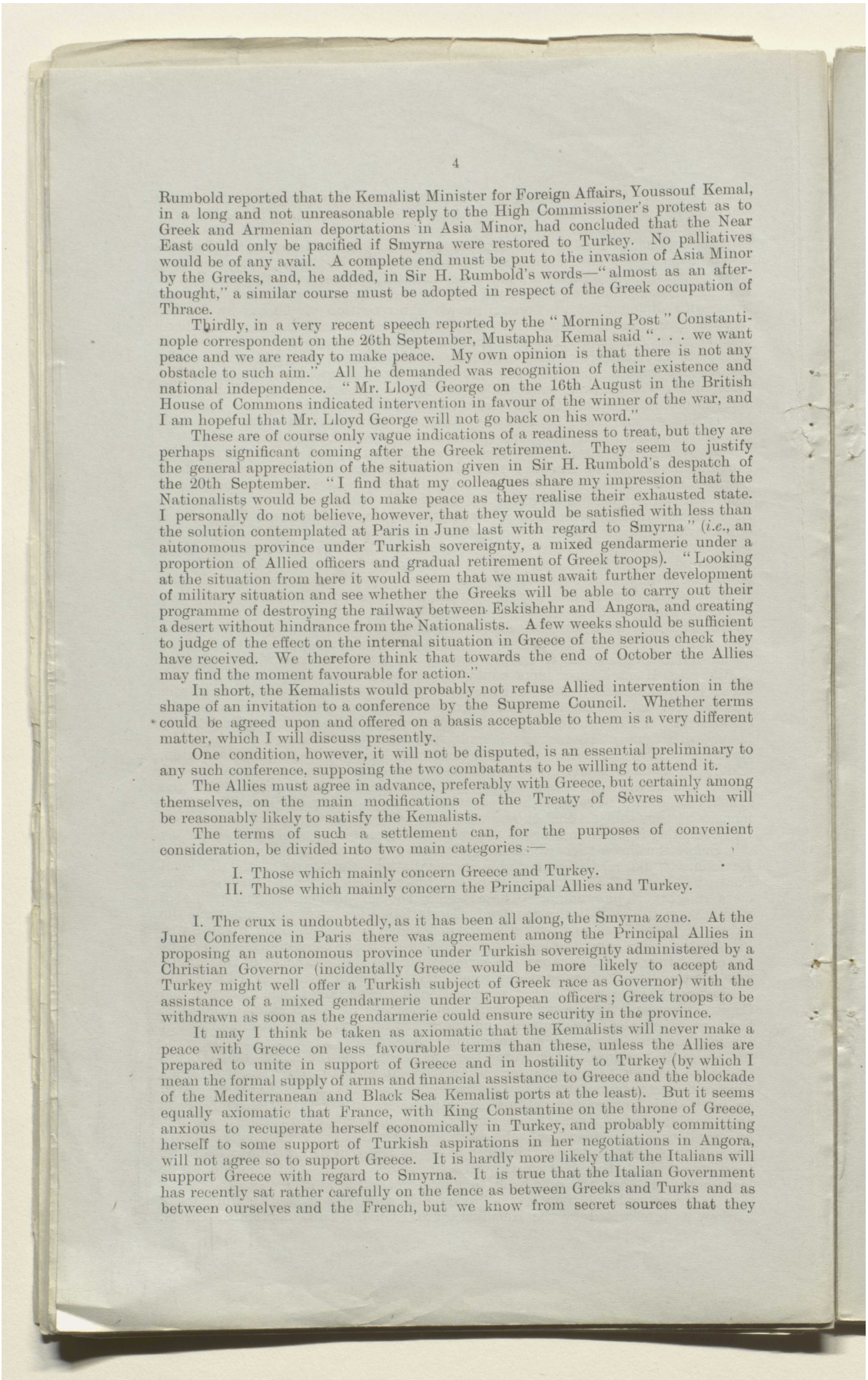

Rumbold reported that the Kemalist Minister for Foreign Affairs, Youssouf Kemal, in a long and not unreasonable reply to the High Commissioner's protest as to Greek and Armenian deportations in Asia Minor, had concluded that the Near East could only be pacified if Smyrna were restored to Turkey. No palliatives would be of any avail. A complete end must be put to the invasion of Asia Minor by the Greeks, and, he added, in Sir H. Rumbold's words—"almost as an afterthought," a similar course must be adopted in respect of the Greek occupation of Thrace.

Thirdly, in a very recent speech reported by the "Morning Post" Constantinople correspondent on the 26th September, Mustapha Kemal said ". . . we want peace and we are ready to make peace. My own opinion is that there is not any obstacle to such aim." All he demanded was recognition of their existence and national independence. "Mr. Lloyd George on the 16th August in the British House of Commons indicated intervention in favour of the winner of the war, and I am hopeful that Mr. Lloyd George will not go back on his word."

These are of course only vague indications of a readiness to treat, but they are perhaps significant coming after the Greek retirement. They seem to justify the general appreciation of the situation given in Sir H. Rumbold's despatch of the 20th September. "I find that my colleagues share my impression that the Nationalists would be glad to make peace as they realise their exhausted state. I personally do not believe, however, that they would be satisfied with less than the solution contemplated at Paris in June last with regard to Smyrna" (*i.e.*, an autonomous province under Turkish sovereignty, a mixed gendarmerie under a proportion of Allied officers and gradual retirement of Greek troops). "Looking at the situation from here it would seem that we must await further development of military situation and see whether the Greeks will be able to carry out their programme of destroying the railway between Eskishehr and Angora, and creating a desert without hindrance from the Nationalists. A few weeks should be sufficient to judge of the effect on the internal situation in Greece of the serious check they have received. We therefore think that towards the end of October the Allies may find the moment favourable for action."

In short, the Kemalists would probably not refuse Allied intervention in the shape of an invitation to a conference by the Supreme Council. Whether terms could be agreed upon and offered on a basis acceptable to them is a very different matter, which I will discuss presently.

One condition, however, it will not be disputed, is an essential preliminary to any such conference, supposing the two combatants to be willing to attend it.

The Allies must agree in advance, preferably with Greece, but certainly among themselves, on the main modifications of the Treaty of Sèvres which will be reasonably likely to satisfy the Kemalists.

The terms of such a settlement can, for the purposes of convenient consideration, be divided into two main categories:—

I. Those which mainly concern Greece and Turkey.
II. Those which mainly concern the Principal Allies and Turkey.

I. The crux is undoubtedly, as it has been all along, the Smyrna zone. At the June Conference in Paris there was agreement among the Principal Allies in proposing an autonomous province under Turkish sovereignty administered by a Christian Governor (incidentally Greece would be more likely to accept and Turkey might well offer a Turkish subject of Greek race as Governor) with the assistance of a mixed gendarmerie under European officers; Greek troops to be withdrawn as soon as the gendarmerie could ensure security in the province.

It may I think be taken as axiomatic that the Kemalists will never make a peace with Greece on less favourable terms than these, unless the Allies are prepared to unite in support of Greece and in hostility to Turkey (by which I mean the formal supply of arms and financial assistance to Greece and the blockade of the Mediterranean and Black Sea Kemalist ports at the least). But it seems equally axiomatic that France, with King Constantine on the throne of Greece, anxious to recuperate herself economically in Turkey, and probably committing herself to some support of Turkish aspirations in her negotiations in Angora, will not agree so to support Greece. It is hardly more likely that the Italians will support Greece with regard to Smyrna. It is true that the Italian Government has recently sat rather carefully on the fence as between Greeks and Turks and as between ourselves and the French, but we know from secret sources that they

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are now sending Signor Tuozzi to Angora and that they are really as anxious as ever to secure economic concessions from Turkey in southern Asia Minor.

In these circumstances it would probably be impossible for Great Britain alone to enable Greece to defeat the Kemalists and to hold Smyrna in the face of a benevolent French attitude towards the Kemalists, quite apart from the outweighing disadvantages of risking a split in the *Entente*.

If these considerations are sound, it follows that if a profitable mediation is to be offered Great Britain must press upon the Greeks something like the Paris proposals of June with regard to Smyrna. These proposals might conceivably be made more palatable to Greece by abolishing any customs barrier between the Smyrna province and Greece, and possibly by admitting Greece, so far as the Smyrna province is concerned, to the Tripartite Agreement or to the "understanding between gentlemen" which, it was proposed at Paris in June, should take the place of the Tripartite Agreement.

In addition His Majesty's Government might offer recognition of King Constantine and possibly facilities for raising a loan here, though I doubt very much whether the French Government would join in any such proceeding. It is also a matter for consideration whether the islands in the Sea of Marmara left to Turkey by the Treaty of Sèvres but ethnologically Greek might not be given to Greece. They could not be garrisoned, as they are in the demilitarised area.

Lastly, we shall have to insist on the Italians returning the Dodecanese even if it is too much to hope that they will throw in the concession of Rhodes.

If, however, the Greeks are to be brought to accept such a solution as the above of the Smyrna area, it seems politically impracticable to change the settlement of Thrace provided for in the Treaty of Sèvres in the direction apparently desired by both the French and the Italians at the Paris Conference in June (the creation of an international zone under an international gendarmerie). Both on ethnological grounds and more especially in order to secure that the Dardanelles shall remain open, it seems essential that the Dardanelles peninsula and the northern shore of the Marmara, at any rate as far as Rodosto, should remain in Greek hands. This would rule out the return of Northern Thrace to Turkey or acceptance of the Enos–Midia line (which is no natural frontier) as the Græco-Turkish boundary. The Kemalists, and the French supporting them, ask for the return of Thrace or for its internationalisation in order the better to defend Constantinople. There are other ways of meeting this: (*a*) The Treaty of Sèvres frontier can be brought across from its present point south of Midia to a point on the northern shore of the Sea of Marmara nearer Rodosto. (*b*) Greek troops in Eastern Thrace (as opposed to gendarmerie) might be stationed only in certain places and in fixed numbers. Correspondingly the number of Turkish troops in European Turkey would have to be fixed. (*c*) There would remain, to safeguard both Turkey and Greece, the existence of an international commission of the Straits and of an Allied force, however small, at the Dardanelles end of the Straits. Greek troops might participate in this garrison on the European shore and Turkish troops in the Allied garrison on the Asiatic shore.

In addition, it must be remembered that we have promised our support for the strengthening of article 15 of the Greek Minority Treaty in such a way as to give the Moslem majority of Adrianople the predominant share in the executive functions and in the ministerial council, and some stronger provision regarding non-interference by the Greek Government with the management of Moslem sacred shrines or places of Moslem worship, the immunities of the latter to be guaranteed.

II. I pass to the considerations that more directly affect the Allies in relation to Turkey. While we have no clear indication of what precise modifications of the Treaty of Sèvres, apart from Thrace and Smyrna, would satisfy the Kemalists, it seems certain that in order to obtain a settlement now, the Allies may have to go further than the concessions offered in London in March last (see Annex I to this memorandum) in the direction of saving the face of the Turks so far as the financial provisions of the treaty are concerned.

At Paris in June M. Briand told me that with regard to finance, in which French interests were paramount, he would be willing to seek a method of securing essential control that would not offend Nationalist susceptibilities. He probably meant abolishing the Financial Commission and falling back on the pre-war Debt Council. Our objection to this has always been that although the machinery of the Public Debt is very efficient, and although we and the Italians are represented equally with the French on the Council, the French Government,

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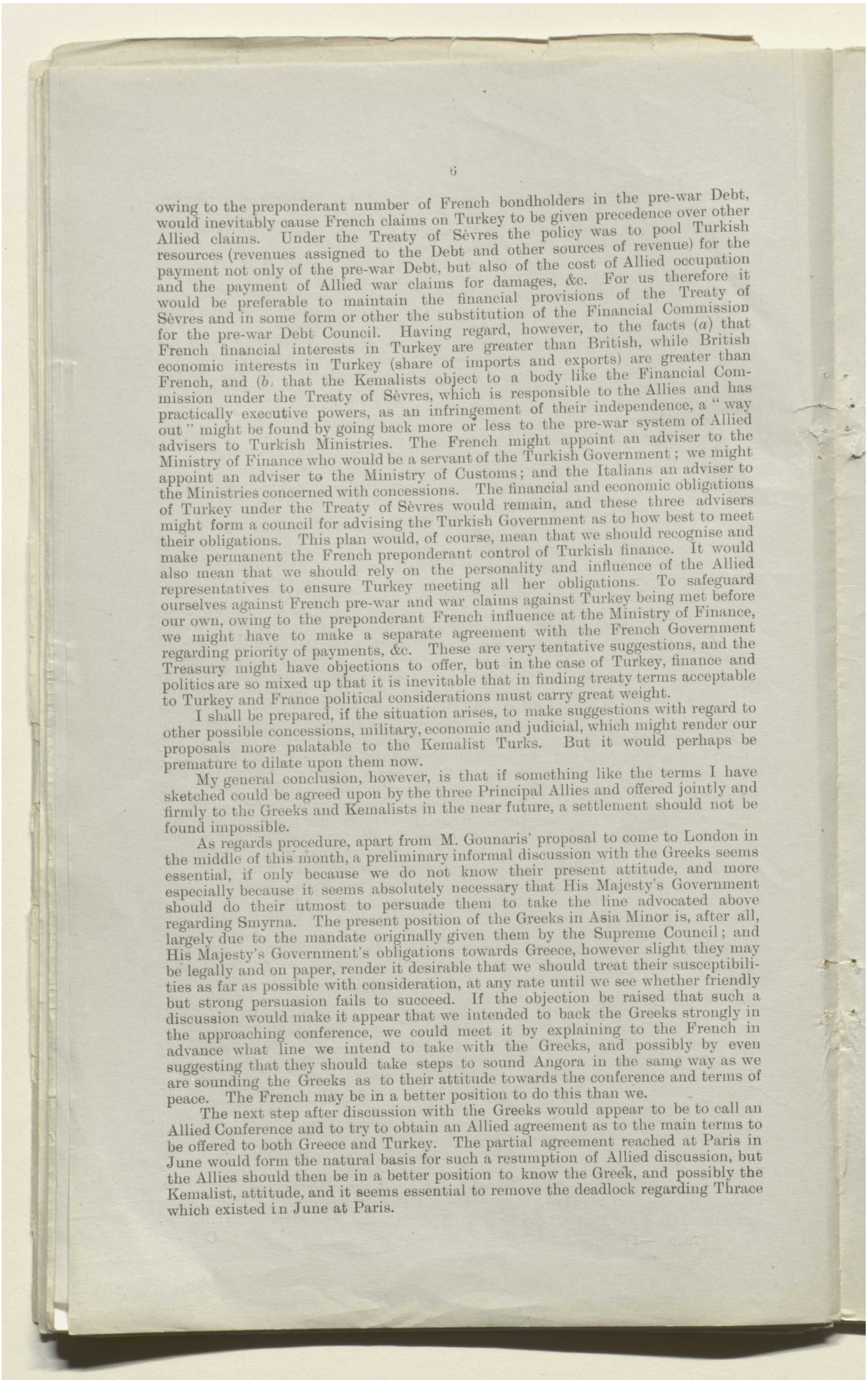

owing to the preponderant number of French bondholders in the pre-war Debt, would inevitably cause French claims on Turkey to be given precedence over other Allied claims. Under the Treaty of Sèvres the policy was to pool Turkish resources (revenues assigned to the Debt and other sources of revenue) for the payment not only of the pre-war Debt, but also of the cost of Allied occupation and the payment of Allied war claims for damages, &c. For us therefore it would be preferable to maintain the financial provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres and in some form or other the substitution of the Financial Commission for the pre-war Debt Council. Having regard, however, to the facts (*a*) that French financial interests in Turkey are greater than British, while British economic interests in Turkey (share of imports and exports) are greater than French, and (*b*) that the Kemalists object to a body like the Financial Commission under the Treaty of Sèvres, which is responsible to the Allies and has practically executive powers, as an infringement of their independence, a "way out" might be found by going back more or less to the pre-war system of Allied advisers to Turkish Ministries. The French might appoint an adviser to the Ministry of Finance who would be a servant of the Turkish Government; we might appoint an adviser to the Ministry of Customs; and the Italians an adviser to the Ministries concerned with concessions. The financial and economic obligations of Turkey under the Treaty of Sèvres would remain, and these three advisers might form a council for advising the Turkish Government as to how best to meet their obligations. This plan would, of course, mean that we should recognise and make permanent the French preponderant control of Turkish finance. It would also mean that we should rely on the personality and influence of the Allied representatives to ensure Turkey meeting all her obligations. To safeguard ourselves against French pre-war and war claims against Turkey being met before our own, owing to the preponderant French influence at the Ministry of Finance, we might have to make a separate agreement with the French Government regarding priority of payments, &c. These are very tentative suggestions, and the Treasury might have objections to offer, but in the case of Turkey, finance and politics are so mixed up that it is inevitable that in finding treaty terms acceptable to Turkey and France political considerations must carry great weight.

I shall be prepared, if the situation arises, to make suggestions with regard to other possible concessions, military, economic and judicial, which might render our proposals more palatable to the Kemalist Turks. But it would perhaps be premature to dilate upon them now.

My general conclusion, however, is that if something like the terms I have sketched could be agreed upon by the three Principal Allies and offered jointly and firmly to the Greeks and Kemalists in the near future, a settlement should not be found impossible.

As regards procedure, apart from M. Gounaris' proposal to come to London in the middle of this month, a preliminary informal discussion with the Greeks seems essential, if only because we do not know their present attitude, and more especially because it seems absolutely necessary that His Majesty's Government should do their utmost to persuade them to take the line advocated above regarding Smyrna. The present position of the Greeks in Asia Minor is, after all, largely due to the mandate originally given them by the Supreme Council; and His Majesty's Government's obligations towards Greece, however slight they may be legally and on paper, render it desirable that we should treat their susceptibilities as far as possible with consideration, at any rate until we see whether friendly but strong persuasion fails to succeed. If the objection be raised that such a discussion would make it appear that we intended to back the Greeks strongly in the approaching conference, we could meet it by explaining to the French in advance what line we intend to take with the Greeks, and possibly by even suggesting that they should take steps to sound Angora in the same way as we are sounding the Greeks as to their attitude towards the conference and terms of peace. The French may be in a better position to do this than we.

The next step after discussion with the Greeks would appear to be to call an Allied Conference and to try to obtain an Allied agreement as to the main terms to be offered to both Greece and Turkey. The partial agreement reached at Paris in June would form the natural basis for such a resumption of Allied discussion, but the Allies should then be in a better position to know the Greek, and possibly the Kemalist, attitude, and it seems essential to remove the deadlock regarding Thrace which existed in June at Paris.

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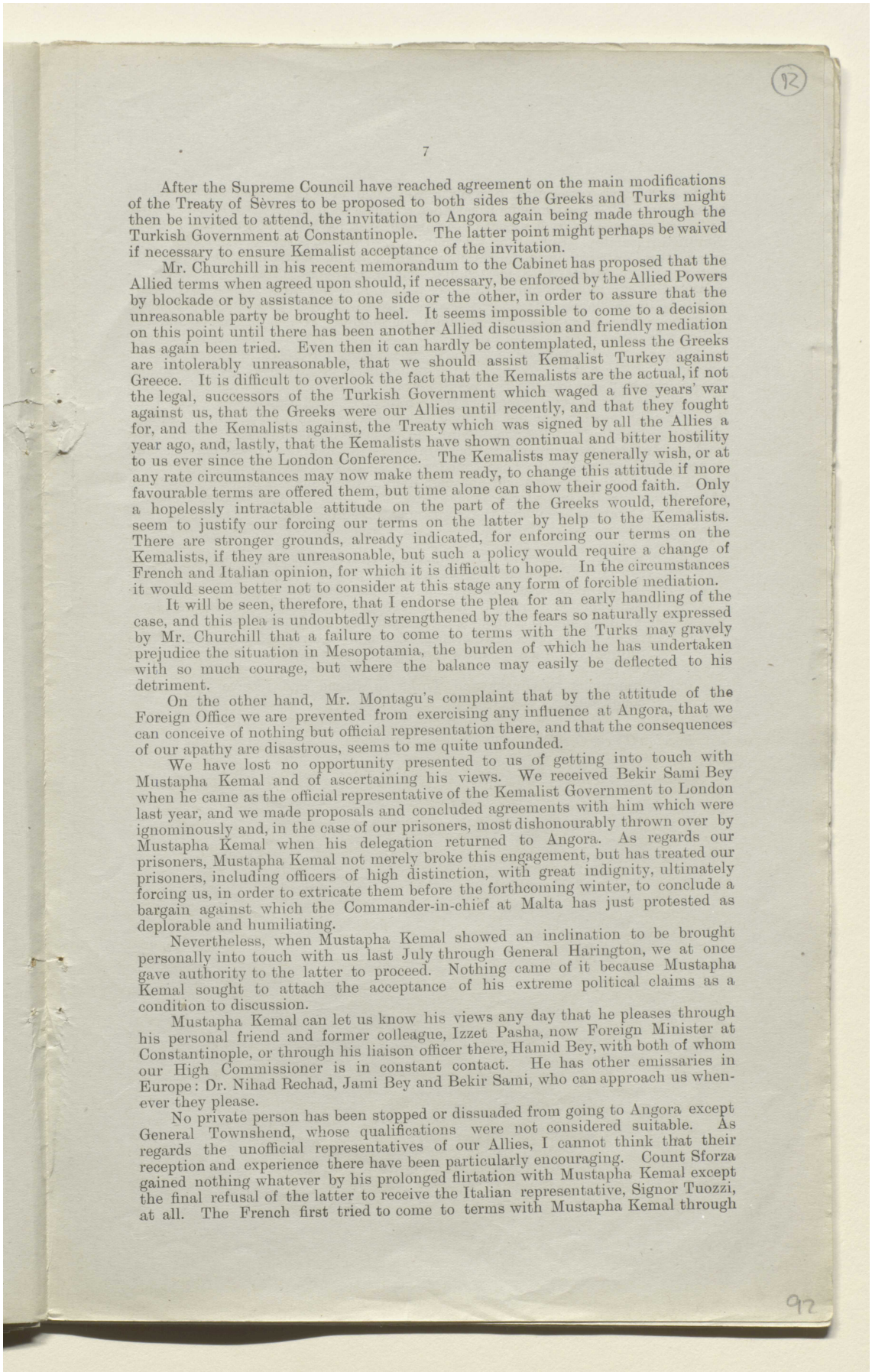

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After the Supreme Council have reached agreement on the main modifications of the Treaty of Sèvres to be proposed to both sides the Greeks and Turks might then be invited to attend, the invitation to Angora again being made through the Turkish Government at Constantinople. The latter point might perhaps be waived if necessary to ensure Kemalist acceptance of the invitation.

Mr. Churchill in his recent memorandum to the Cabinet has proposed that the Allied terms when agreed upon should, if necessary, be enforced by the Allied Powers by blockade or by assistance to one side or the other, in order to assure that the unreasonable party be brought to heel. It seems impossible to come to a decision on this point until there has been another Allied discussion and friendly mediation has again been tried. Even then it can hardly be contemplated, unless the Greeks are intolerably unreasonable, that we should assist Kemalist Turkey against Greece. It is difficult to overlook the fact that the Kemalists are the actual, if not the legal, successors of the Turkish Government which waged a five years' war against us, that the Greeks were our Allies until recently, and that they fought for, and the Kemalists against, the Treaty which was signed by all the Allies a year ago, and, lastly, that the Kemalists have shown continual and bitter hostility to us ever since the London Conference. The Kemalists may generally wish, or at any rate circumstances may now make them ready, to change this attitude if more favourable terms are offered them, but time alone can show their good faith. Only a hopelessly intractable attitude on the part of the Greeks would, therefore, seem to justify our forcing our terms on the latter by help to the Kemalists. There are stronger grounds, already indicated, for enforcing our terms on the Kemalists, if they are unreasonable, but such a policy would require a change of French and Italian opinion, for which it is difficult to hope. In the circumstances it would seem better not to consider at this stage any form of forcible mediation.

It will be seen, therefore, that I endorse the plea for an early handling of the case, and this plea is undoubtedly strengthened by the fears so naturally expressed by Mr. Churchill that a failure to come to terms with the Turks may gravely prejudice the situation in Mesopotamia, the burden of which he has undertaken with so much courage, but where the balance may easily be deflected to his detriment.

On the other hand, Mr. Montagu's complaint that by the attitude of the Foreign Office we are prevented from exercising any influence at Angora, that we can conceive of nothing but official representation there, and that the consequences of our apathy are disastrous, seems to me quite unfounded.

We have lost no opportunity presented to us of getting into touch with Mustapha Kemal and of ascertaining his views. We received Bekir Sami Bey when he came as the official representative of the Kemalist Government to London last year, and we made proposals and concluded agreements with him which were ignominously and, in the case of our prisoners, most dishonourably thrown over by Mustapha Kemal when his delegation returned to Angora. As regards our prisoners, Mustapha Kemal not merely broke this engagement, but has treated our prisoners, including officers of high distinction, with great indignity, ultimately forcing us, in order to extricate them before the forthcoming winter, to conclude a bargain against which the Commander-in-chief at Malta has just protested as deplorable and humiliating.

Nevertheless, when Mustapha Kemal showed an inclination to be brought personally into touch with us last July through General Harington, we at once gave authority to the latter to proceed. Nothing came of it because Mustapha Kemal sought to attach the acceptance of his extreme political claims as a condition to discussion.

Mustapha Kemal can let us know his views any day that he pleases through his personal friend and former colleague, Izzet Pasha, now Foreign Minister at Constantinople, or through his liaison officer there, Hamid Bey, with both of whom our High Commissioner is in constant contact. He has other emissaries in Europe: Dr. Nihad Rechad, Jami Bey and Bekir Sami, who can approach us whenever they please.

No private person has been stopped or dissuaded from going to Angora except General Townshend, whose qualifications were not considered suitable. As regards the unofficial representatives of our Allies, I cannot think that their reception and experience there have been particularly encouraging. Count Sforza gained nothing whatever by his prolonged flirtation with Mustapha Kemal except the final refusal of the latter to receive the Italian representative, Signor Tuozzi, at all. The French first tried to come to terms with Mustapha Kemal through

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M. du Caix, their representative in Syria, who negotiated the armistice preparatory to a treaty. They next made a separate agreement with Bekir Sami about Cilicia and their prisoners, which was at once thrown over by Mustapha Kemal and the National Assembly. Since then they have spent the best part of a year in trying to negotiate a substitute, first, in Paris, with Bekir Sami Bey (who was once again thrown over by Mustapha Kemal), and secondly, at Angora, through the instrumentality of M. Franklin-Bouillon, who has paid two, if not three, visits to Angora, and is believed, though officially disavowed by the French Government, to have made or to be making some arrangement confined to French prisoners and the Cilician frontier.

These examples are not particularly encouraging. Nor can I see the slightest reason to suppose that had any Englishman, official or unofficial, been at Angora during the last six months the results would have been very different. More probably he would have experienced the fate of Colonel Rawlinson. The time may come—I hope it may not be long delayed—when we can again attempt to enter into relations with Angora, while not I hope forgetting that there is still such a thing as a Government at Constantinople, to which our High Commissioner is accredited, and without whose concurrence we cannot negotiate any settlement at all. But isolated action will not help us to solve the larger problem any more than it has already helped the Italians and the French. The problem remains an international problem, and the steps now to be taken for its settlement are in my judgment these:—

(*a.*) A very early effort to ascertain what are the bases on which mediation can now take place with a reasonable prospect of success—such effort involving an urgent conference with the Greeks, upon whom we alone can exercise a friendly pressure, to be accompanied or followed by a similar attempt to resume discussion with the Turks.

(*b.*) As soon as the bases have been provisionally determined, a meeting of the Supreme Council to draw up the proposed revision of the Treaty of Sèvres.

(*c.*) A summons to Greeks and Turks to attend and receive the revised conditions.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office, October 7, 1921.

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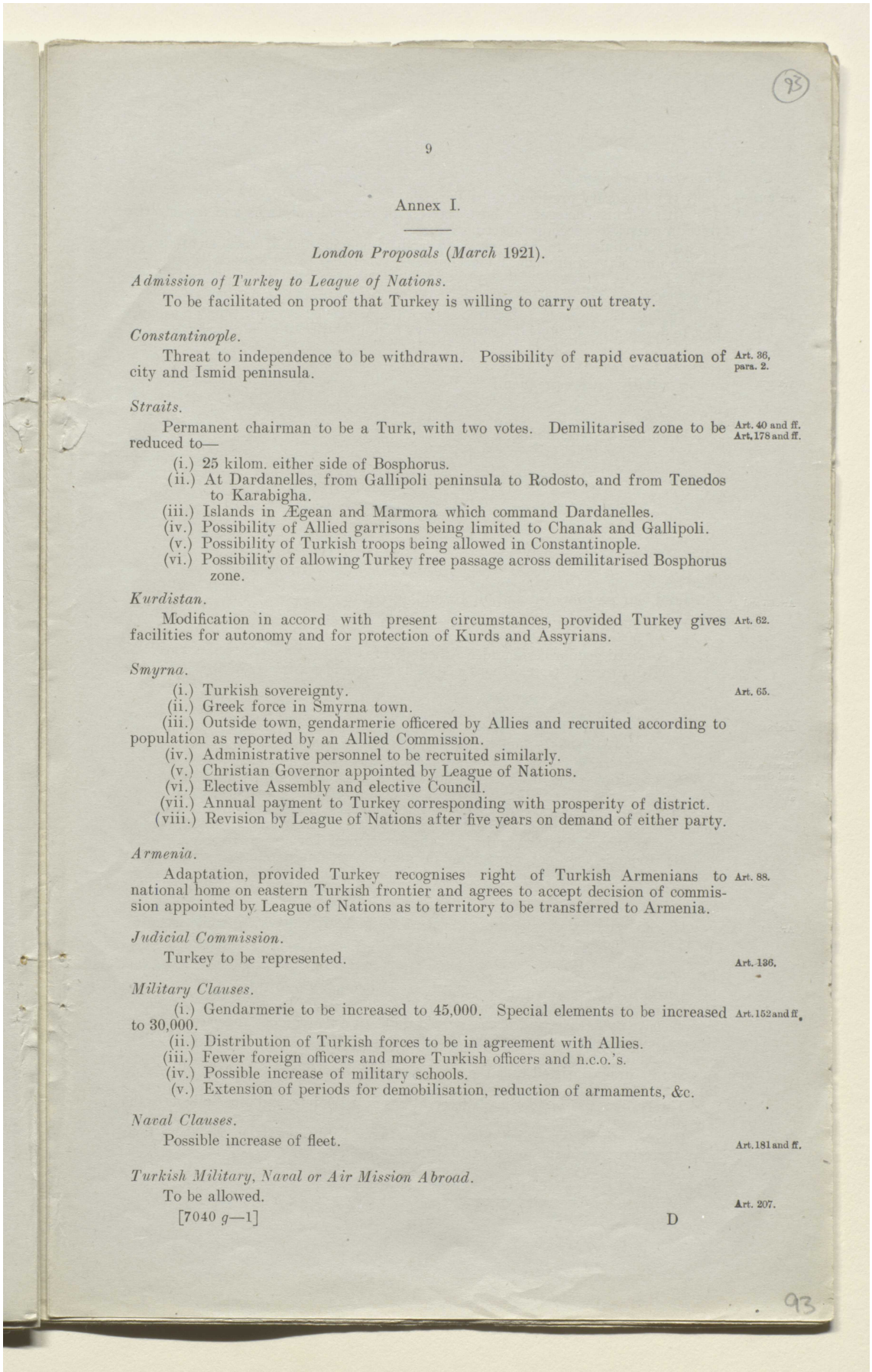

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Annex I.

London Proposals (*March* 1921).

Admission of Turkey to League of Nations.

To be facilitated on proof that Turkey is willing to carry out treaty.

Constantinople.

Threat to independence to be withdrawn. Possibility of rapid evacuation of city and Ismid peninsula. Art. 36, para. 2.

Straits.

Permanent chairman to be a Turk, with two votes. Demilitarised zone to be reduced to— Art. 40 and ff. Art. 178 and ff.

(i.) 25 kilom. either side of Bosphorus.
(ii.) At Dardanelles, from Gallipoli peninsula to Rodosto, and from Tenedos to Karabigha.
(iii.) Islands in Ægean and Marmora which command Dardanelles.
(iv.) Possibility of Allied garrisons being limited to Chanak and Gallipoli.
(v.) Possibility of Turkish troops being allowed in Constantinople.
(vi.) Possibility of allowing Turkey free passage across demilitarised Bosphorus zone.

Kurdistan.

Modification in accord with present circumstances, provided Turkey gives facilities for autonomy and for protection of Kurds and Assyrians. Art. 62.

Smyrna.

(i.) Turkish sovereignty. Art. 65.
(ii.) Greek force in Smyrna town.
(iii.) Outside town, gendarmerie officered by Allies and recruited according to population as reported by an Allied Commission.
(iv.) Administrative personnel to be recruited similarly.
(v.) Christian Governor appointed by League of Nations.
(vi.) Elective Assembly and elective Council.
(vii.) Annual payment to Turkey corresponding with prosperity of district.
(viii.) Revision by League of Nations after five years on demand of either party.

Armenia.

Adaptation, provided Turkey recognises right of Turkish Armenians to national home on eastern Turkish frontier and agrees to accept decision of commission appointed by League of Nations as to territory to be transferred to Armenia. Art. 88.

Judicial Commission.

Turkey to be represented. Art. 136.

Military Clauses.

(i.) Gendarmerie to be increased to 45,000. Special elements to be increased to 30,000. Art. 152 and ff.
(ii.) Distribution of Turkish forces to be in agreement with Allies.
(iii.) Fewer foreign officers and more Turkish officers and n.c.o.'s.
(iv.) Possible increase of military schools.
(v.) Extension of periods for demobilisation, reduction of armaments, &c.

Naval Clauses.

Possible increase of fleet. Art. 181 and ff.

Turkish Military, Naval or Air Mission Abroad.

To be allowed. Art. 207.

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Financial Commission.

Art. 231. (i.) Honorary president to be Turkish.

(ii.) Turkish delegate to have vote on all internal questions and consultative voice in questions specially affecting Allies.

(iii.) Parliament to have right to modify budget; but if such modifications disturb financial equilibrium, budget must be submitted to commission again.

Concessions.

Art. 239. Turkish Government to be free to grant concessions, but Minister of Finance first to decide with Financial Commission as to desirability of such concessions.

Foreign Post Offices.

Art. 262. Possibility of suppression.

"Nationals."

Art. 317. Definition of term might be modified.

Annex II.

Proposals made by me at Paris in June 1921.

Smyrna.

Art. 65 and ff. Lord Curzon proposed and M. Briand agreed to:

1. An autonomous province under Turkish sovereignty.
2. A Christian Governor.
3. A mixed gendarmerie under Allied officers.
4. Withdrawal of Greek troops as soon as the gendarmerie was in working order.

Thrace.

Art. 84. Lord Curzon proposed:

Treaty between Allies and Greece. Arts. 14 and 15.

1. Enforcement of minority provisions about Adrianople and the Moslem population.
2. Demilitarisation of an area north-west of the Chatalja lines.

In reply, M. Briand proposed an international Thrace under international gendarmerie. Lord Curzon was unable to accept this. M. Briand then proposed to revert to the commission of enquiry, but the question of Thrace was reserved.

M. Briand was not prepared, in any circumstances, to recognise King Constantine.

Financial Commission.

Art. 231. It was agreed that a means of control might be found which, while effective, would not offend the Turks.

Tripartite Agreement.

Lord Curzon suggested the possibility of modifying or abolishing the agreement. M. Briand concurred that French and Italian rights might be secured by a formula less offensive to Turkey, and it was agreed that a self-denying arrangement between Great Britain and France might satisfy Italy. M. Briand hinted at British concessions in Mesopotamia.

Lord Curzon insisted that the protection of minorities must not be allowed to lapse.

The Italian Ambassador made reservations on all points, and especially as to the Tripartite Agreement.

Greece refused the Allied offer of mediation. No proposals on the above lines were therefore ever made to her or to Turkey.

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Annex III.

Text of "National Pact" as printed in the Proceedings of the Turkish Chamber of Deputies of February 17, 1920.

The members of the Ottoman Chamber of Deputies recognise and affirm that the independence of the State and the future of the nation can be assured by complete respect for the following principles, which represent the maximum of sacrifice which can be undertaken in order to achieve a just and lasting peace, and that the continued existence of a stable Ottoman Sultanate and society is impossible outside of the said principles:—

First Article.—Inasmuch as it is necessary that the destinies of the portions of the Turkish Empire which are populated exclusively by an Arab majority, and which on the conclusion of the Armistice of the 30th October, 1918, were in the occupation of enemy forces, should be determined in accordance with the votes which shall be freely given by the inhabitants, the whole of those parts, whether within or outside the said Armistice line, which are inhabited by an Ottoman Moslem majority, united in religion, in race and in aim, imbued with sentiments of mutual respect for each other and of sacrifice, and wholly respectful of each other's racial and social rights and surrounding conditions, form a whole which does not admit of division for any reason in truth or in ordinance.

Second Article.—We accept that, in the case of the three sanjaks, which united themselves by a general vote to the mother-country when they first were free, recourse should again be had, if necessary, to a free popular vote.

Third Article.—The determination of the juridical status of Western Thrace also, which has been made dependent on the Turkish peace, must be effected in accordance with the votes which shall be given by the inhabitants in complete freedom.

Fourth Article.—The security of the city of Constantinople, which is the seat of the Caliphate of Islam, the capital of the Sultanate and the headquarters of the Ottoman Government, and of the Sea of Marmora must be protected from every danger. Provided this principle is maintained, whatever decision may be arrived at jointly by us and all other Governments concerned, regarding the opening of the Bosphorus to the commerces and traffic of the world, is valid.

Fifth Article.—The rights of minorities as defined in the treaties concluded between the *Entente* Powers and their enemies and certain of their associates shall be confirmed and assured by us, in reliance on the belief that the Moslem minorities in neighbouring countries also will have the benefit of the same rights.

Sixth Article.—It is a fundamental condition of our life and continued existence that we, like every country, should enjoy complete independence and liberty in the matter of assuring the means of our development in order that our national and economic development should be rendered possible, and that it should be possible to conduct affairs in the form of a more up-to-date regular administration.

For this reason we are opposed to restrictions inimical to our development in political, judicial, financial and other matters.

The conditions of settlement of our proved debts shall likewise not be contrary to these principles.

January 28, 1920.

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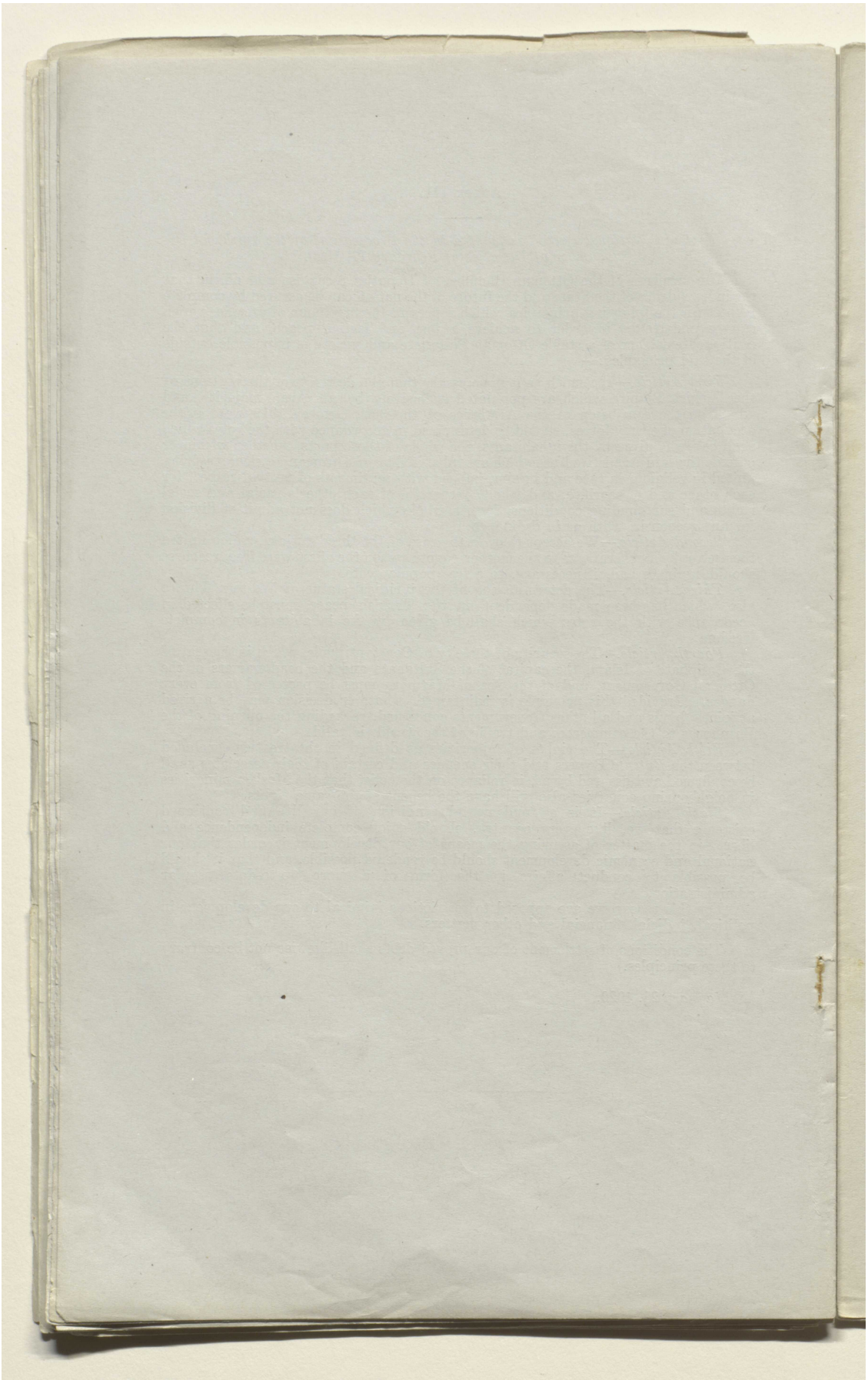

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [November 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12164/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge.

(No. 2863.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 3, 1921.

I ASKED the French Ambassador to call upon me this afternoon, in order to make certain enquiries about the draft of the agreement concluded by M. Franklin-Bouillon, apparently on behalf of the French Government, with the Turkish Government at Angora, a copy of which, with an accompanying letter by Yussouf Kemal Bey, the Foreign Minister of that Government, had been forwarded to us by the French Foreign Office.

I reminded the French Ambassador that in the earlier part of the present year I had more than once asked M. Briand personally whether M. Franklin-Bouillon had any official mission, and had been definitely assured by him that he was a private person—rather a busybody, in fact—who was going to Angora for purposes of his own. Further, in July of the present year, when M. Briand was conducting negotiations with Bekir Sami Bey on behalf of the Angora Government, M. Briand had in an official note assured us that no general engagement had been or would be entered into by France on the general question of peace between the Allies and Turkey without a close agreement with the Allies, and especially with the British Government. Finally, when M. Franklin-Bouillon went a second time to Angora in September, and we had again enquired as to the capacity in which he was acting, the French Government had admitted that he had some sort of official mission, but M. Briand had added that he had been forbidden to discuss with the Angora Government the larger questions of peace, and had been only empowered to negotiate, on behalf of the French Government, with regard to French prisoners, the protection of minorities in Cilicia, and other points involved in the evacuation of Cilicia by French troops.

Relying upon these categorical assurances I had taken no further steps in the matter, but, on the contrary, had pursued here the policy of close and unwavering co-operation with the French in every aspect of our Middle Eastern policy. Only during the last week I had been conducting negotiations with the Greek Ministers, and in spite of their pressure I had insisted upon the duty incumbent upon me of acting only with our Allies, and had only yesterday successfully persuaded the Greeks to place themselves unreservedly in the hands of the latter. Fresh from this successful effort in the interests of the Alliance, which I thought boded so well for the future, it was with feelings of astonishment and almost of dismay that I had read the provisions of M. Franklin-Bouillon's Agreement, as to which I could not avoid asking a number of serious questions, and which I could hardly believe that the French Government would be prepared to accept in its present form.

I said that I would hand to the Ambassador a memorandum which he could transmit to his Government containing the enquiries which I felt bound to make; but the principal of them I would indicate in my present remarks.

Whilst, I said, it was a matter of common knowledge that the Allies had agreed among themselves in the earlier stages of the war not to conclude peace with any enemy Power except by common agreement, it appeared from the wording of article 1 of the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement that a peace had now been concluded between France and Angora, and, further, inasmuch as the agreement was one with the Grand National Assembly of Angora, that it amounted to a recognition by the French of that Government as the Government of Turkey. No mention was made of the Government at Constantinople, and undoubtedly, if the agreement were ratified in its present form, Mustapha Kemal's Government could claim that they had received recognition from one of the most powerful of the European Allies.

Article 3 of the agreement, which provided for the withdrawal of French troops, appeared to run directly counter to article 8 of the Tripartite Agreement of the 10th August, 1920, in which the French had pledged themselves to maintain their troops in the zone of special French interests until the Allies were satisfied that the Treaty of Peace with Turkey was being executed, and that the measures accepted by Turkey for the protection of Christian minorities had been put into force and their execution effectively guaranteed.

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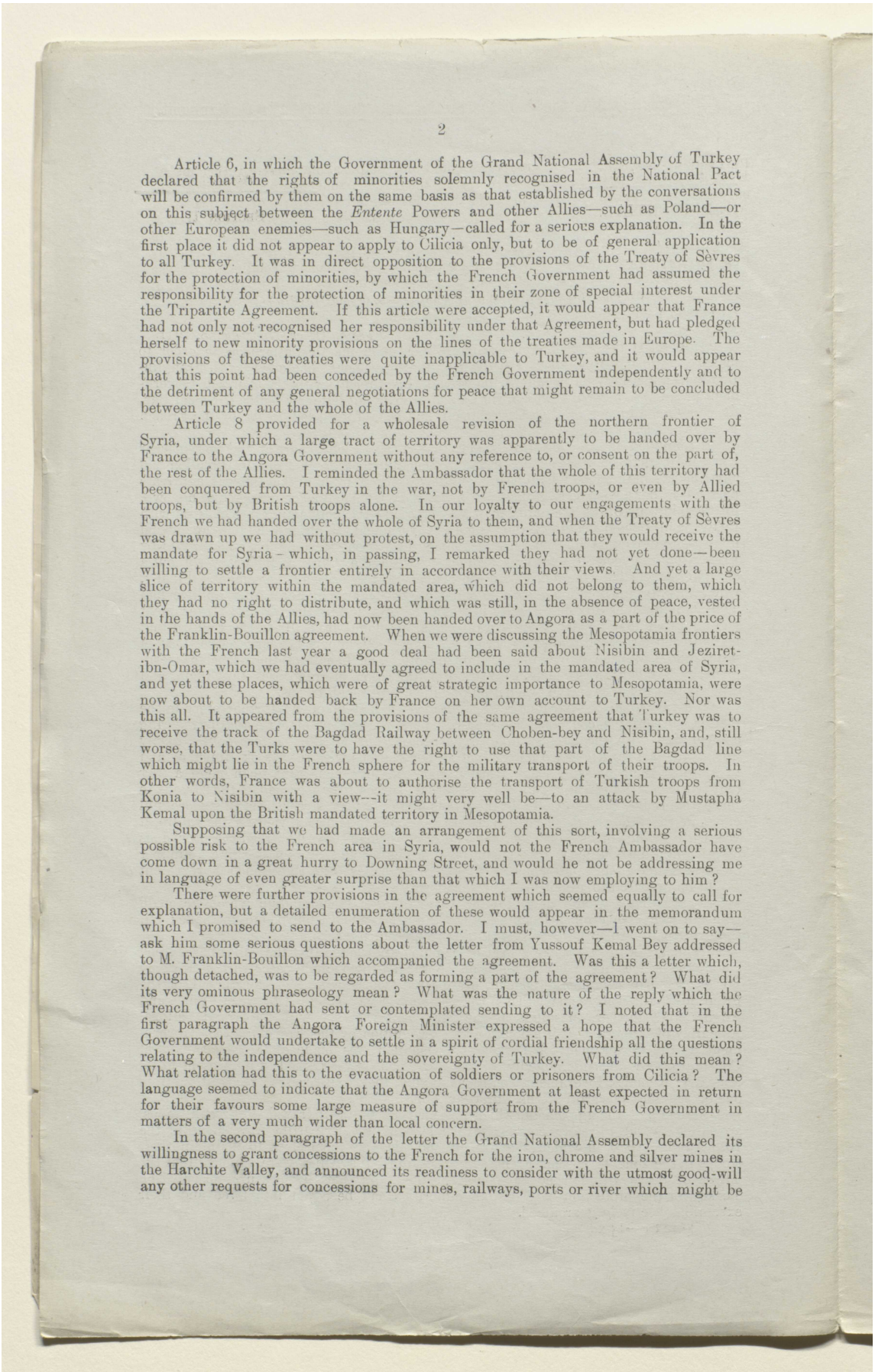

Article 6, in which the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey declared that the rights of minorities solemnly recognised in the National Pact will be confirmed by them on the same basis as that established by the conversations on this subject between the *Entente* Powers and other Allies—such as Poland—or other European enemies—such as Hungary—called for a serious explanation. In the first place it did not appear to apply to Cilicia only, but to be of general application to all Turkey. It was in direct opposition to the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres for the protection of minorities, by which the French Government had assumed the responsibility for the protection of minorities in their zone of special interest under the Tripartite Agreement. If this article were accepted, it would appear that France had not only not recognised her responsibility under that Agreement, but had pledged herself to new minority provisions on the lines of the treaties made in Europe. The provisions of these treaties were quite inapplicable to Turkey, and it would appear that this point had been conceded by the French Government independently and to the detriment of any general negotiations for peace that might remain to be concluded between Turkey and the whole of the Allies.

Article 8 provided for a wholesale revision of the northern frontier of Syria, under which a large tract of territory was apparently to be handed over by France to the Angora Government without any reference to, or consent on the part of, the rest of the Allies. I reminded the Ambassador that the whole of this territory had been conquered from Turkey in the war, not by French troops, or even by Allied troops, but by British troops alone. In our loyalty to our engagements with the French we had handed over the whole of Syria to them, and when the Treaty of Sèvres was drawn up we had without protest, on the assumption that they would receive the mandate for Syria - which, in passing, I remarked they had not yet done—been willing to settle a frontier entirely in accordance with their views. And yet a large slice of territory within the mandated area, which did not belong to them, which they had no right to distribute, and which was still, in the absence of peace, vested in the hands of the Allies, had now been handed over to Angora as a part of the price of the Franklin-Bouillon agreement. When we were discussing the Mesopotamia frontiers with the French last year a good deal had been said about Nisibin and Jeziret-ibn-Omar, which we had eventually agreed to include in the mandated area of Syria, and yet these places, which were of great strategic importance to Mesopotamia, were now about to be handed back by France on her own account to Turkey. Nor was this all. It appeared from the provisions of the same agreement that Turkey was to receive the track of the Bagdad Railway between Choben-bey and Nisibin, and, still worse, that the Turks were to have the right to use that part of the Bagdad line which might lie in the French sphere for the military transport of their troops. In other words, France was about to authorise the transport of Turkish troops from Konia to Nisibin with a view—it might very well be—to an attack by Mustapha Kemal upon the British mandated territory in Mesopotamia.

Supposing that we had made an arrangement of this sort, involving a serious possible risk to the French area in Syria, would not the French Ambassador have come down in a great hurry to Downing Street, and would he not be addressing me in language of even greater surprise than that which I was now employing to him?

There were further provisions in the agreement which seemed equally to call for explanation, but a detailed enumeration of these would appear in the memorandum which I promised to send to the Ambassador. I must, however—I went on to say—ask him some serious questions about the letter from Yussouf Kemal Bey addressed to M. Franklin-Bouillon which accompanied the agreement. Was this a letter which, though detached, was to be regarded as forming a part of the agreement? What did its very ominous phraseology mean? What was the nature of the reply which the French Government had sent or contemplated sending to it? I noted that in the first paragraph the Angora Foreign Minister expressed a hope that the French Government would undertake to settle in a spirit of cordial friendship all the questions relating to the independence and the sovereignty of Turkey. What did this mean? What relation had this to the evacuation of soldiers or prisoners from Cilicia? The language seemed to indicate that the Angora Government at least expected in return for their favours some large measure of support from the French Government in matters of a very much wider than local concern.

In the second paragraph of the letter the Grand National Assembly declared its willingness to grant concessions to the French for the iron, chrome and silver mines in the Harchite Valley, and announced its readiness to consider with the utmost good-will any other requests for concessions for mines, railways, ports or river which might be

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put before them by French groups. I could not help asking what all this meant. Even if the localities concerned were inside the French zone of special interest, the suggested concessions appeared to me to travel far beyond the spirit of the Tripartite Agreement. If they were outside, surely the concessions were in direct conflict with it.

The letter went on to invite the collaboration of French professors and teachers in the schools not of Cilicia alone, but apparently of every part of Turkey, and ended by inviting French capitalists to enter into economic and financial relations with the Angora Government—again without any geographical limitation. I did not know, of course, what view would be taken of these proposals by the French Government, or how far M. Franklin-Bouillon had committed them on the matter; but that a local arrangement of a relatively minor character for the evacuation of French troops, or the release of French prisoners, should have been expanded in this elastic fashion to include this vast motley of interests and concessions seemed to me one of the most unusual diplomatic achievements of which I had ever heard.

Before concluding, I alluded to a further report which, although it was not supported by anything that appeared in the agreement or in the letter, had yet reached me from more than one quarter, that the French had tried to procure, or had procured, the monopoly of the provision of French officers and instructors in the gendarmerie—again not in Cilicia alone, but in Anatolia, without limitation. I could hardly believe that such was the case, since any such provision would be entirely contrary to the arrangement already concluded between the Powers, by which the future gendarmerie was to be international in character.

I said that the Ambassador must pardon me if I sought insistently for further information upon all these points. I could not, I said, conceal from him that the sum total of them had left upon the minds of myself and my colleagues a very painful impression, and I hoped very earnestly that the majority of the apprehensions, to which I had given expression, would turn out to be unfounded, and would be dispelled by the explanation which it would be in his power to give.

The Ambassador interrupted me at various points of my narrative to inform me that whatever might be the answers returned by his Government on the points which I had raised, he was certain that they regarded the agreement as one of a purely local character; so much so, that they did not even propose to submit it for ratification to the French Chamber. It was merely a restricted arrangement between Angora and themselves with regard to Cilicia, and he felt convinced that the provisions, as to which I had expressed alarm, could only be applicable to the zone in which, under the Tripartite Agreement, it had been agreed that French interests should be recognised as predominant. He took great credit for the fact that there had been no attempt to discuss such wider issues as Smyrna and Thrace, and the conclusion of a general peace with Turkey, and he seemed to anticipate that, in reply to my charge that the French Government had been dealing with Angora as though it were the Government of Turkey, they would say that the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement, if accepted by the French, would be submitted to the Constantinople authorities. He did not contest that the questions which I had put were of a very important and serious nature, and that on the face of it the language both of the agreement and of the letter appeared to suggest a wider field of action and consequence than he had himself predicated. It might be that M. Franklin-Bouillon, who was a person of very ebullient nature and not used to official negotiations, had done rather more than was expected of him, and had placed matters in a light which was open to criticism. All this would be elucidated in the enquiry which I had asked him to make.

I represented to the Ambassador in taking leave of him that the question was one to which we attached great importance, and that if we were shortly to reopen Allied negotiations for the settlement of the entire Eastern question it was indispensable that there should be removed from our minds the suspicion that one of our Allies had taken independent action, or sought to secure special advantages behind the backs—and, as it would appear in some cases, to the distinct detriment—of the others.

The Ambassador did not express any surprise at the manner in which I had spoken to him, and his defence of the procedure of his Government—such as it was—would not, I think, have secured him a favourable verdict, even from a tribunal of his own countrymen.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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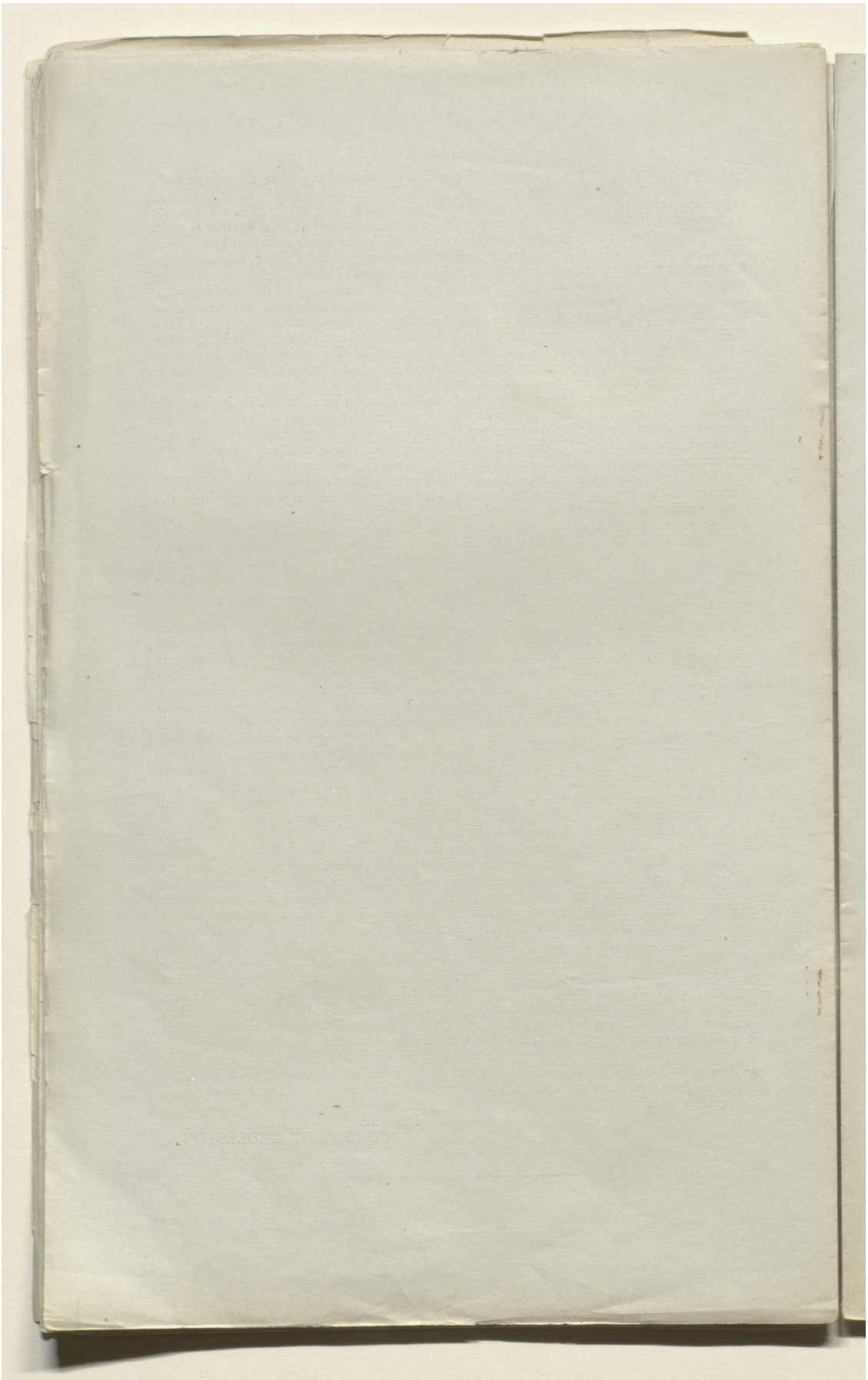

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [November 5.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12164/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Count de Saint-Aulaire.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, November 5, 1921.*

ON the occasion of our interview on the 3rd November, I undertook to send you a memorandum containing the principal points arising out of the draft agreement concluded between M. Franklin-Bouillon and the Angora Government, and also the accompanying letter to M. Franklin-Bouillon from Yussouf Kemel Bey—to some of which I had called your attention, although it was not possible in the course of a single conversation to refer to all.

I commenced by reminding you that in the earlier part of the present year I had asked M. Briand personally whether M. Franklin-Bouillon had any official mission, and had been definitely assured by him that he was a private person—and rather a busybody, in fact—who was going to Angora in connection with the press or for purposes of his own. Further, in July of the present year, when M. Briand was conducting negotiations with Bekir Sami Bey on behalf of the Angora Government, M. Briand had in an official note assured us that no general engagement had been or would be entered into by France on the general question of peace between the Allies and Turkey without a close agreement with the Allies, and especially with the British Government. Finally, when M. Franklin-Bouillon went a second time to Angora in September, and we had again enquired as to the capacity in which he was acting, the French Government had admitted that he had some sort of official mission, but M. Briand had added that he had been forbidden to discuss with the Angora Government the larger questions of peace, and had been only empowered to negotiate, on behalf of the French Government, with regard to French prisoners, the protection of minorities in Cilicia, and other points involved in the evacuation of Cilicia by French troops.

Relying upon these categorical assurances, I had taken no further steps in the matter, but, on the contrary, had pursued here the policy of close and unwavering co-operation with the French in every aspect of our Middle Eastern policy. Only during the last week I had been conducting negotiations with the Greek Ministers, and in spite of their pressure, I had insisted upon the duty incumbent upon me of acting only with our Allies, and had only yesterday successfully persuaded the Greeks to place themselves unreservedly in the hands of the latter. Fresh from this successful effort in the interests of the alliance, which I though boded so well for the future, it was with feelings of astonishment and almost of dismay that I had read the provisions of M. Franklin-Bouillon's agreement, as to which I could not avoid asking a number of serious questions, and which I could hardly believe that the French Government would be prepared to accept in its present form.

The points of the agreement as communicated to His Majesty's Government which seemed to me to call for special explanation were the following:—

Article 1 provides that with the signature of the agreement "the state of war will cease between the high contracting parties." Clearly, this phrase implies something more than a local armistice, because a state of armistice is still technically a state of war. Nothing is said as to whether the agreement is provisional pending a general peace between the Allies and Turkey or whether it is intended to have purely local scope. The latter could hardly be the case, as some of the articles appear to be of general application to Turkey. It is presumed, therefore, that the agreement establishes a state of peace between France and the Grand National Assembly.

It would also appear that the agreement involves formal recognition by France of the Grand National Assembly of Angora as the sovereign authority in Turkey, in which case a peace concluded with Angora would be contrary to the Franco-British Treaty of the 4th September, 1914, and to the London Pact of November 1915.

[7234 e—1] xe

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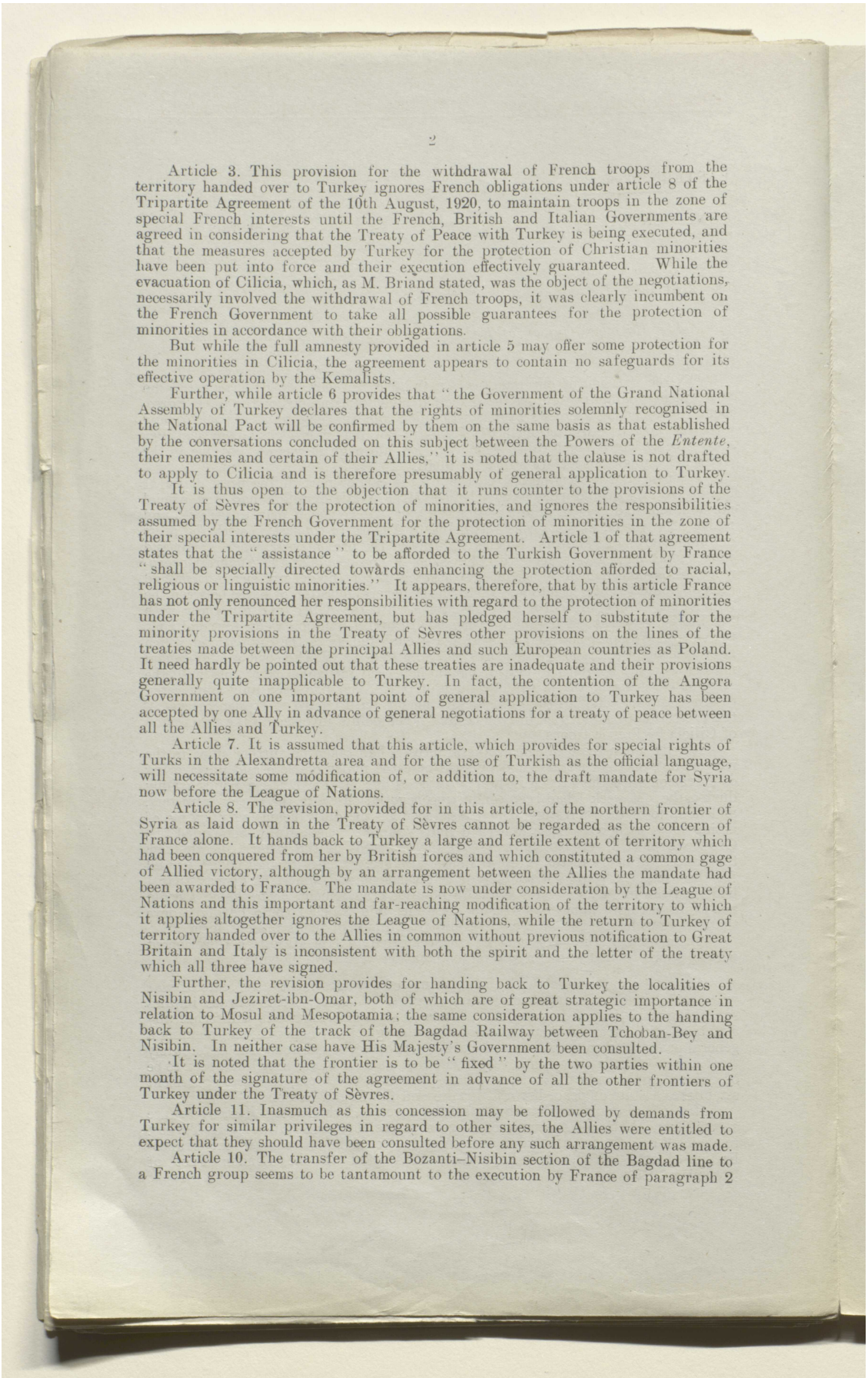

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Article 3. This provision for the withdrawal of French troops from the territory handed over to Turkey ignores French obligations under article 8 of the Tripartite Agreement of the 10th August, 1920, to maintain troops in the zone of special French interests until the French, British and Italian Governments are agreed in considering that the Treaty of Peace with Turkey is being executed, and that the measures accepted by Turkey for the protection of Christian minorities have been put into force and their execution effectively guaranteed. While the evacuation of Cilicia, which, as M. Briand stated, was the object of the negotiations, necessarily involved the withdrawal of French troops, it was clearly incumbent on the French Government to take all possible guarantees for the protection of minorities in accordance with their obligations.

But while the full amnesty provided in article 5 may offer some protection for the minorities in Cilicia, the agreement appears to contain no safeguards for its effective operation by the Kemalists.

Further, while article 6 provides that "the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey declares that the rights of minorities solemnly recognised in the National Pact will be confirmed by them on the same basis as that established by the conversations concluded on this subject between the Powers of the *Entente*, their enemies and certain of their Allies," it is noted that the clause is not drafted to apply to Cilicia and is therefore presumably of general application to Turkey.

It is thus open to the objection that it runs counter to the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres for the protection of minorities, and ignores the responsibilities assumed by the French Government for the protection of minorities in the zone of their special interests under the Tripartite Agreement. Article 1 of that agreement states that the "assistance" to be afforded to the Turkish Government by France "shall be specially directed towards enhancing the protection afforded to racial, religious or linguistic minorities." It appears, therefore, that by this article France has not only renounced her responsibilities with regard to the protection of minorities under the Tripartite Agreement, but has pledged herself to substitute for the minority provisions in the Treaty of Sèvres other provisions on the lines of the treaties made between the principal Allies and such European countries as Poland. It need hardly be pointed out that these treaties are inadequate and their provisions generally quite inapplicable to Turkey. In fact, the contention of the Angora Government on one important point of general application to Turkey has been accepted by one Ally in advance of general negotiations for a treaty of peace between all the Allies and Turkey.

Article 7. It is assumed that this article, which provides for special rights of Turks in the Alexandretta area and for the use of Turkish as the official language, will necessitate some modification of, or addition to, the draft mandate for Syria now before the League of Nations.

Article 8. The revision, provided for in this article, of the northern frontier of Syria as laid down in the Treaty of Sèvres cannot be regarded as the concern of France alone. It hands back to Turkey a large and fertile extent of territory which had been conquered from her by British forces and which constituted a common gage of Allied victory, although by an arrangement between the Allies the mandate had been awarded to France. The mandate is now under consideration by the League of Nations and this important and far-reaching modification of the territory to which it applies altogether ignores the League of Nations, while the return to Turkey of territory handed over to the Allies in common without previous notification to Great Britain and Italy is inconsistent with both the spirit and the letter of the treaty which all three have signed.

Further, the revision provides for handing back to Turkey the localities of Nisibin and Jeziret-ibn-Omar, both of which are of great strategic importance in relation to Mosul and Mesopotamia; the same consideration applies to the handing back to Turkey of the track of the Bagdad Railway between Tchoban-Bey and Nisibin. In neither case have His Majesty's Government been consulted.

It is noted that the frontier is to be "fixed" by the two parties within one month of the signature of the agreement in advance of all the other frontiers of Turkey under the Treaty of Sèvres.

Article 11. Inasmuch as this concession may be followed by demands from Turkey for similar privileges in regard to other sites, the Allies were entitled to expect that they should have been consulted before any such arrangement was made.

Article 10. The transfer of the Bozanti–Nisibin section of the Bagdad line to a French group seems to be tantamount to the execution by France of paragraph 2

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of article 4 of the Tripartite Agreement of the 10th August, 1920, in advance of, and independently of the duties and responsibilities undertaken by France towards her Allies under the Tripartite Agreement and under the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, which are interdependent. It is presumed that the transfer of this part of the Bagdad line by Turkey to the French group is not intended to override article 294 of the Treaty of Sèvres, whereby Turkey was herself to liquidate the whole Bagdad Railway on the demand of the principal Allies. Nor is it supposed that the article can be intended to give France a large portion of the railway without regard to the claims of her other Allies upon a concern which both under the Treaty of Versailles and the Treaty of Sèvres is the Allies' common asset, and in respect of which special arrangements are contemplated under article 4 of the Tripartite Agreement. Paragraph 3 of article 10 provides that each party shall have the right to use for military transport that part of the Bagdad line which lies in the other's territory. This in effect appears to mean that France must permit Turkish troops to be carried from Konia to Nisibin and possibly thus threaten the Mesopotamian frontier. Great Britain can hardly believe that the French Government would propose to conclude an arrangement which may well have such serious strategic consequences to her position in Mesopotamia without any prior reference to His Majesty's Government. Moreover, it is not understood how the acceptance of this servitude on territory placed under a mandate of the League of Nations can be accepted without prior consultation with the other members of the League concerned.

The appended letter from Yussouf Kemal expresses the hope that the French Government will endeavour to solve all questions relative to Turkish independence and sovereignty; it goes on to add that the Government of the Grand Assembly (it also speaks of the "Turkish Government") is ready to grant a number of concessions and other advantages in favour of France and French nationals, apparently both within and without the French zone. The form of the letter inevitably lends itself to the interpretation that there is some connection of a conditional nature between the Turkish hope and promise, and the expression "questions relative to Turkish independence and sovereignty" would appear to be quite outside the scope of an arrangement regarding Cilicia and Syria.

His Majesty's Government will be glad to learn whether the letter in question, which has been officially communicated to them, is regarded by the French Government as an integral part of the agreement. The implication is suggested that it was written in connection with some written or verbal understanding with M. Franklin-Bouillon. His Majesty's Government would be pleased to receive information on these points and to know whether the French Government have replied, or propose to reply, to the letter of Yussouf Kemal Bey.

The agreement and the letter have also formed the subject of various statements in the press regarding secret clauses or annexes. It has been alleged that, under arrangements concluded but not published, France is to have a monopoly of the gendarmerie organisation in Turkey (which would be entirely contrary to the arrangements for international control contemplated by the Treaty and already to some extent carried out in anticipation); that a large portion of the war loan is to be handed over to Turkey; that a French loan has been arranged; that France has promised to supply the Nationalists with a formidable armament; that she has undertaken to support Turkish claims to Smyrna and Thrace; even that she has obtained a promise of anti-British agitation by the Nationalists in Mesopotamia. His Majesty's Government cannot believe that there is any foundation for any of these statements, but, in view of their wide dissemination in the press, His Majesty's Government would like to be in a position to issue a formal denial of these and similar assertions and to announce that the published agreement was accompanied by no other written or verbal understandings.

In conclusion, with regard to the agreement as a whole, His Majesty's Government find the utmost difficulty in recognising in its present no doubt provisional form any resemblance to the *tractation locale* described by M. Briand. On the contrary, it has the appearance of being a separate agreement concluded by one of the Allies with an enemy Government without consultation with the remainder, and this impression, unless it is dissipated, cannot fail to react unfavourably upon the policy of full and complete Allied co-operation in which His Majesty's Government have always believed and which they have consistently practised in their desire to bring about a general peace in the Near East.

His Majesty's Government look forward to receiving a full and friendly explanation on the whole of these points from the French Government, and they express the

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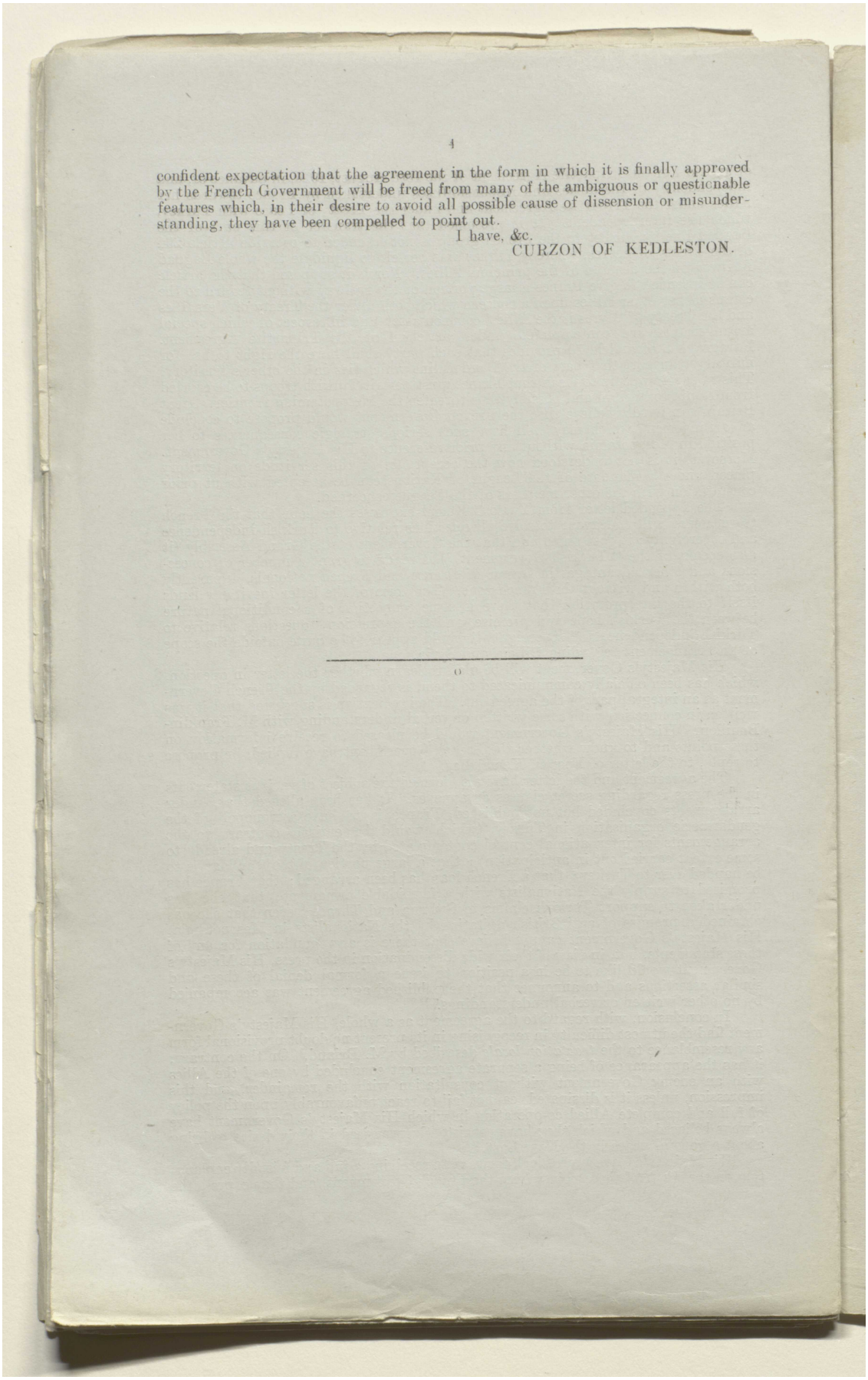

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confident expectation that the agreement in the form in which it is finally approved by the French Government will be freed from many of the ambiguous or questionable features which, in their desire to avoid all possible cause of dissension or misunderstanding, they have been compelled to point out.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [November 8.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12338/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir G. Buchanan (Rome).

(No. 951.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 8, 1921.*

I ASKED the Italian Ambassador to come and see me to-day in order to have a talk with him about the situation which had arisen in consequence of the conclusion of the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement with the Angora Government

I gave Signor de Martino a succinct account of all that had so far passed in the matter, including my representations to the French Government, with which the Count de Saint-Aulaire had returned to Paris. I pointed out how completely at variance the French proceedings had been, both with the treaty obligations of the Allies and also with the policy of mutual co-operation for the settlement of the Near and Middle Eastern question, to which I thought that, after the unsuccessful attempts of both the French and the Italians to break away last year, we had since all pledged our faith to adhere. The Italian Government was, I thought, as much concerned as ourselves in the action of the French, because the privileges obtained by the latter appeared in many cases to apply not to the French zone of economic preference only, but to the whole of Asia Minor, including the Italian sphere. I hoped that on all these grounds I might rely upon Italian support in the stand which I had been compelled to make.

The Ambassador replied that the Marquis della Torretta had not yet received the text of the agreement, and had not, therefore, communicated with him about it; but he had already informed him of the impression that had been produced in this country on its publication.

He then went into a long disquisition about the importance to Italy of the Tripartite Agreement, not so much because of its technical provisions as from the effect that it had upon Italian public opinion. Italy could not relinquish her rights under this agreement, and she would have to resist any encroachment upon them.

All this the Ambassador explained at great length, and he dwelt so exclusively on that subject that I was compelled to recall his attention to the much more serious aspect of the French action, namely, the effect that it could hardly fail to have upon the larger question of a common Allied policy *vis-à-vis* the Greeks and the Turks. If France were left at liberty to act in such a manner without remonstrance, the Italian representative at Angora might think that he enjoyed a similar liberty. I earnestly hoped that nothing of the kind would take place, and that the Ambassador would renew to me his assurances of the very circumscribed area of Signor Tuozzi's conversations.

This he did, explaining, as he had done before, that they related to matters arising out of the Adalia question alone. On the larger issue he adhered to all that we had both said on recent occasions as to the necessity of absolute confidence between the Allies and the extreme unwisdom of any one of them acting apart from the others; but, as soon as he got the Marquis della Torretta's views, he would be able to speak to me more confidently on the matter.

The Ambassador hinted once again, as he had often done before, at a resumption, when the Turkish question was out of the way, of the close relations between Great Britain and Italy in the Eastern Mediterranean, which he has repeatedly declared to have existed before the war. Though there were conversations about the matter in the time of Lord Grey of Fallodon, I have never been able to discover that they resulted in an agreement; nor have I been able to find out exactly what the Italian Government desires, except British support in all her Mediterranean undertakings. I have hitherto, therefore, rather evaded the question, feeling that it was for Italy, by a sustained policy of good faith—in which, up to the present time, she has been decidedly lacking—to justify the creation of closer relations than those which already exist.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[7234 *h*—1] xf

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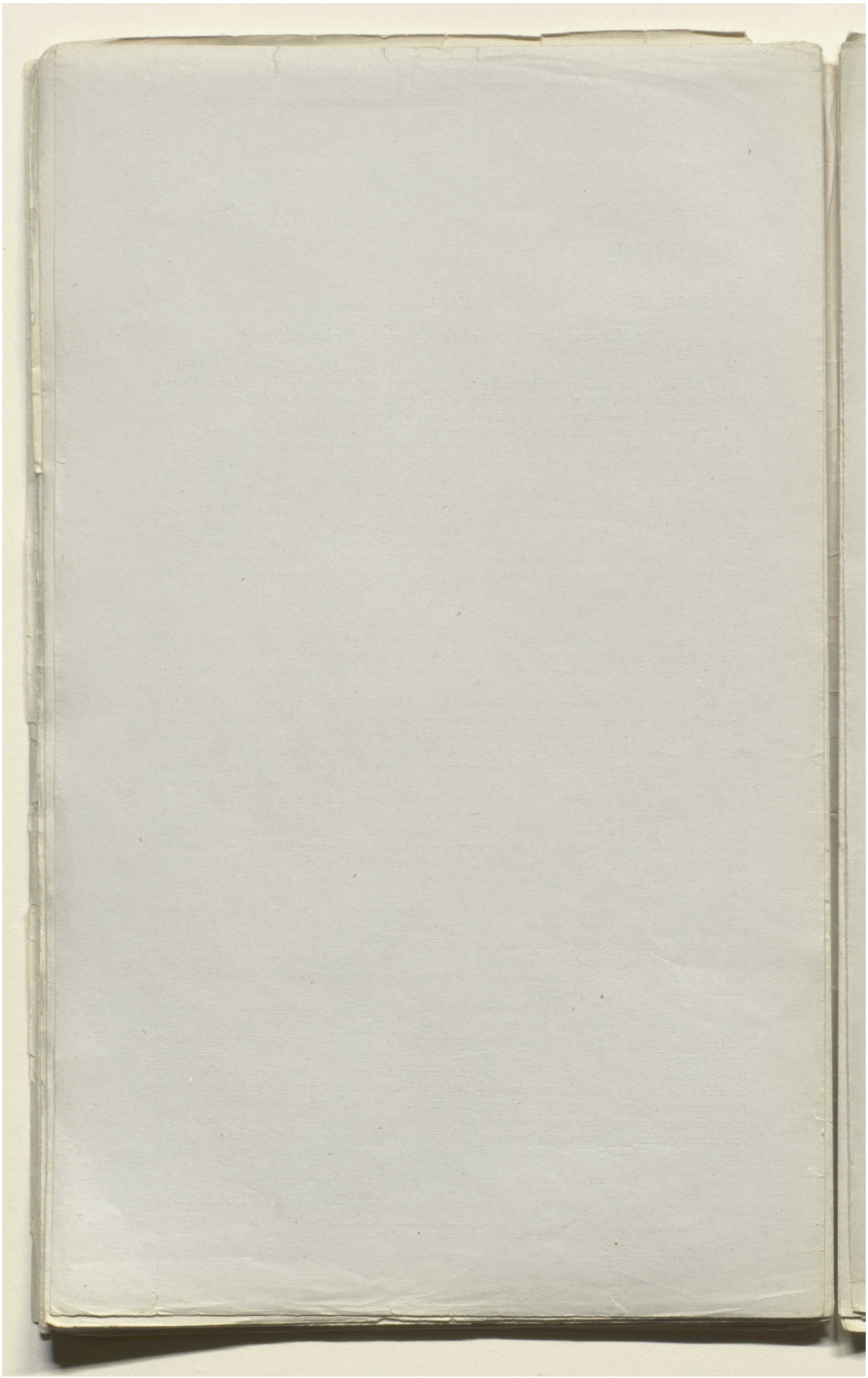

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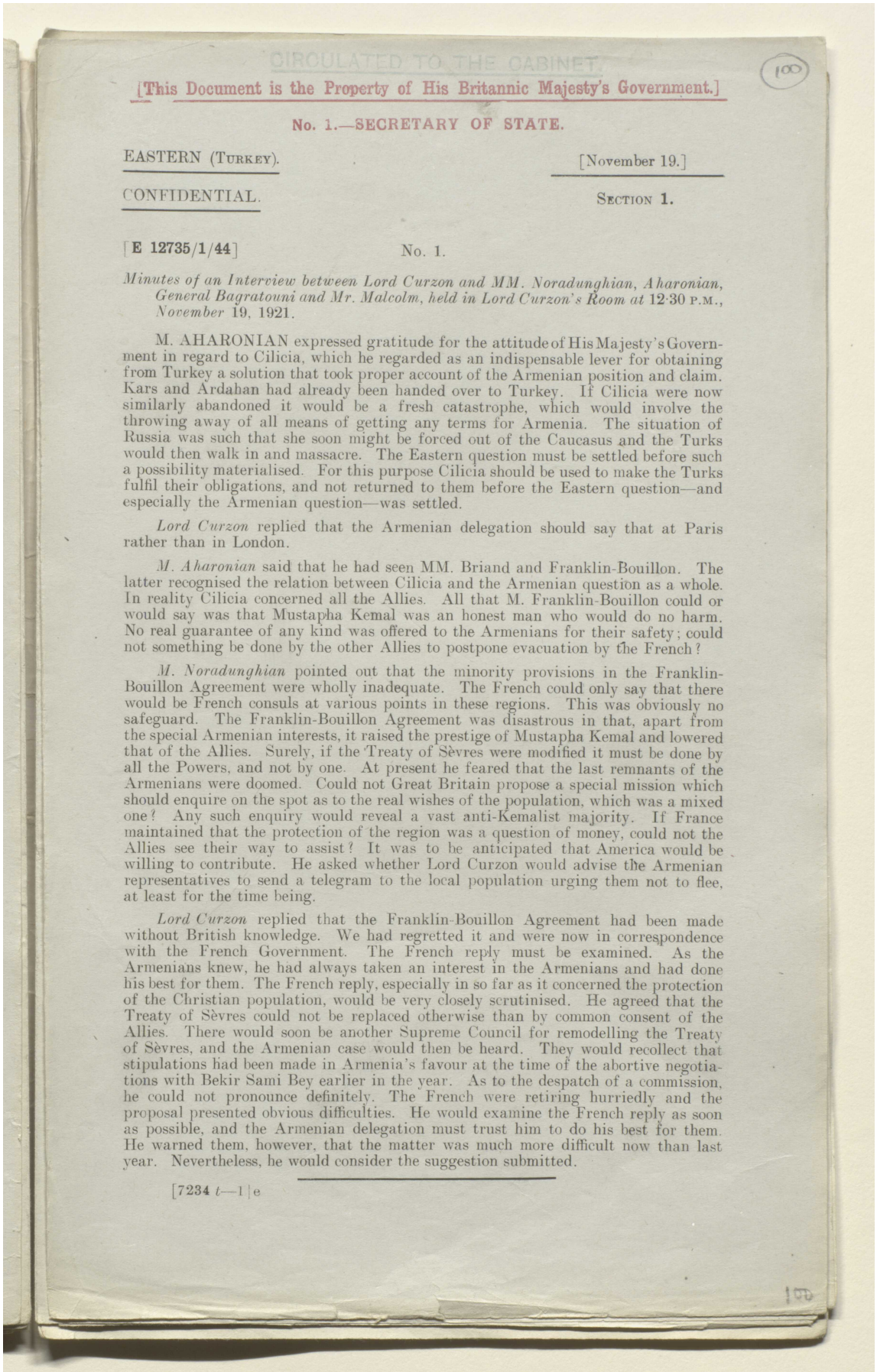

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN (TURKEY). [November 19.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12735/1/44] No. 1.

Minutes of an Interview between Lord Curzon and MM. Noradunghian, Aharonian, General Bagratouni and Mr. Malcolm, held in Lord Curzon's Room at 12·30 P.M., *November* 19, 1921.

M. AHARONIAN expressed gratitude for the attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to Cilicia, which he regarded as an indispensable lever for obtaining from Turkey a solution that took proper account of the Armenian position and claim. Kars and Ardahan had already been handed over to Turkey. If Cilicia were now similarly abandoned it would be a fresh catastrophe, which would involve the throwing away of all means of getting any terms for Armenia. The situation of Russia was such that she soon might be forced out of the Caucasus and the Turks would then walk in and massacre. The Eastern question must be settled before such a possibility materialised. For this purpose Cilicia should be used to make the Turks fulfil their obligations, and not returned to them before the Eastern question—and especially the Armenian question—was settled.

Lord Curzon replied that the Armenian delegation should say that at Paris rather than in London.

M. Aharonian said that he had seen MM. Briand and Franklin-Bouillon. The latter recognised the relation between Cilicia and the Armenian question as a whole. In reality Cilicia concerned all the Allies. All that M. Franklin-Bouillon could or would say was that Mustapha Kemal was an honest man who would do no harm. No real guarantee of any kind was offered to the Armenians for their safety; could not something be done by the other Allies to postpone evacuation by the French?

M. Noradunghian pointed out that the minority provisions in the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement were wholly inadequate. The French could only say that there would be French consuls at various points in these regions. This was obviously no safeguard. The Franklin-Bouillon Agreement was disastrous in that, apart from the special Armenian interests, it raised the prestige of Mustapha Kemal and lowered that of the Allies. Surely, if the Treaty of Sèvres were modified it must be done by all the Powers, and not by one. At present he feared that the last remnants of the Armenians were doomed. Could not Great Britain propose a special mission which should enquire on the spot as to the real wishes of the population, which was a mixed one? Any such enquiry would reveal a vast anti-Kemalist majority. If France maintained that the protection of the region was a question of money, could not the Allies see their way to assist? It was to be anticipated that America would be willing to contribute. He asked whether Lord Curzon would advise the Armenian representatives to send a telegram to the local population urging them not to flee, at least for the time being.

Lord Curzon replied that the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement had been made without British knowledge. We had regretted it and were now in correspondence with the French Government. The French reply must be examined. As the Armenians knew, he had always taken an interest in the Armenians and had done his best for them. The French reply, especially in so far as it concerned the protection of the Christian population, would be very closely scrutinised. He agreed that the Treaty of Sèvres could not be replaced otherwise than by common consent of the Allies. There would soon be another Supreme Council for remodelling the Treaty of Sèvres, and the Armenian case would then be heard. They would recollect that stipulations had been made in Armenia's favour at the time of the abortive negotiations with Bekir Sami Bey earlier in the year. As to the despatch of a commission, he could not pronounce definitely. The French were retiring hurriedly and the proposal presented obvious difficulties. He would examine the French reply as soon as possible, and the Armenian delegation must trust him to do his best for them. He warned them, however, that the matter was much more difficult now than last year. Nevertheless, he would consider the suggestion submitted.

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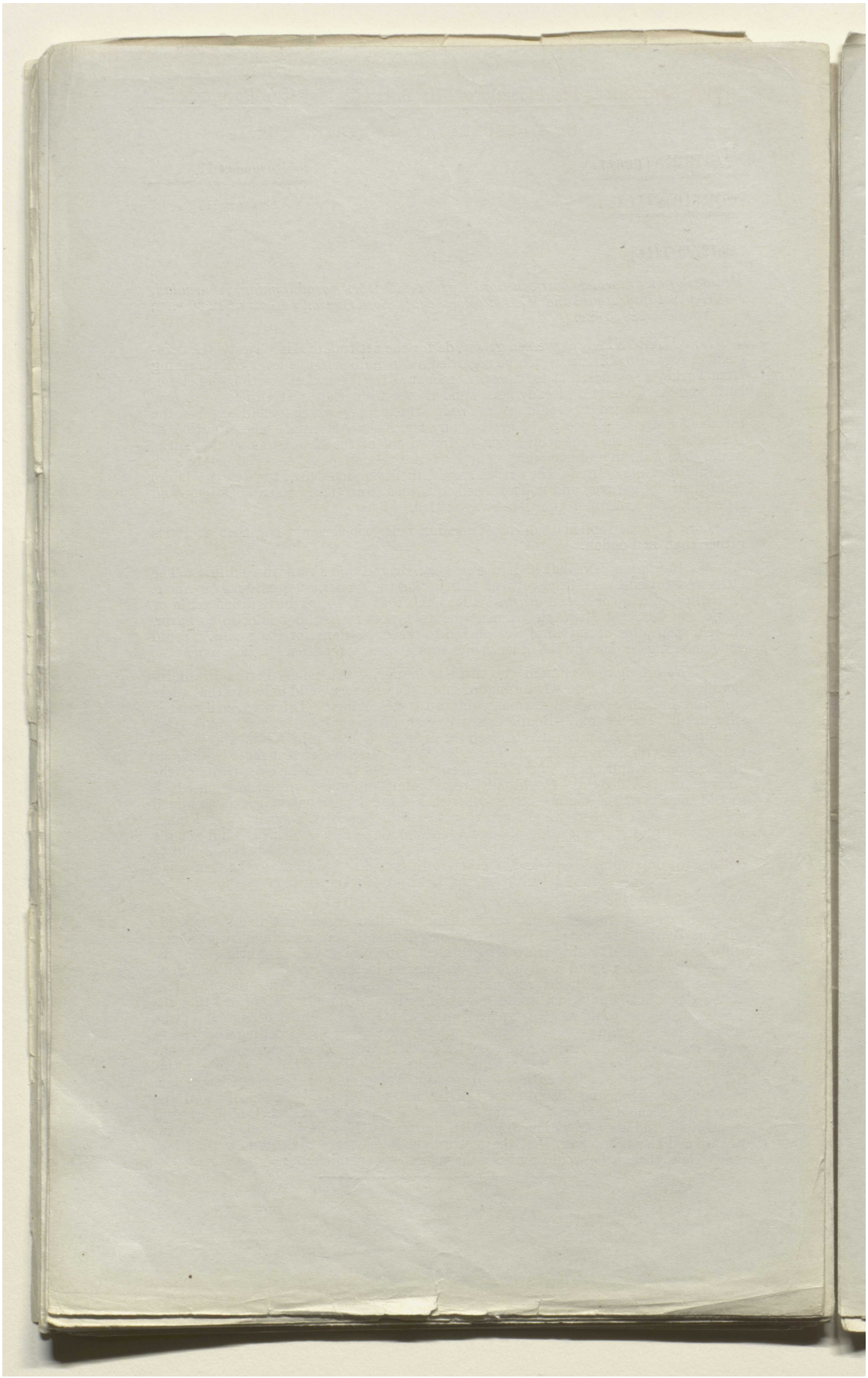

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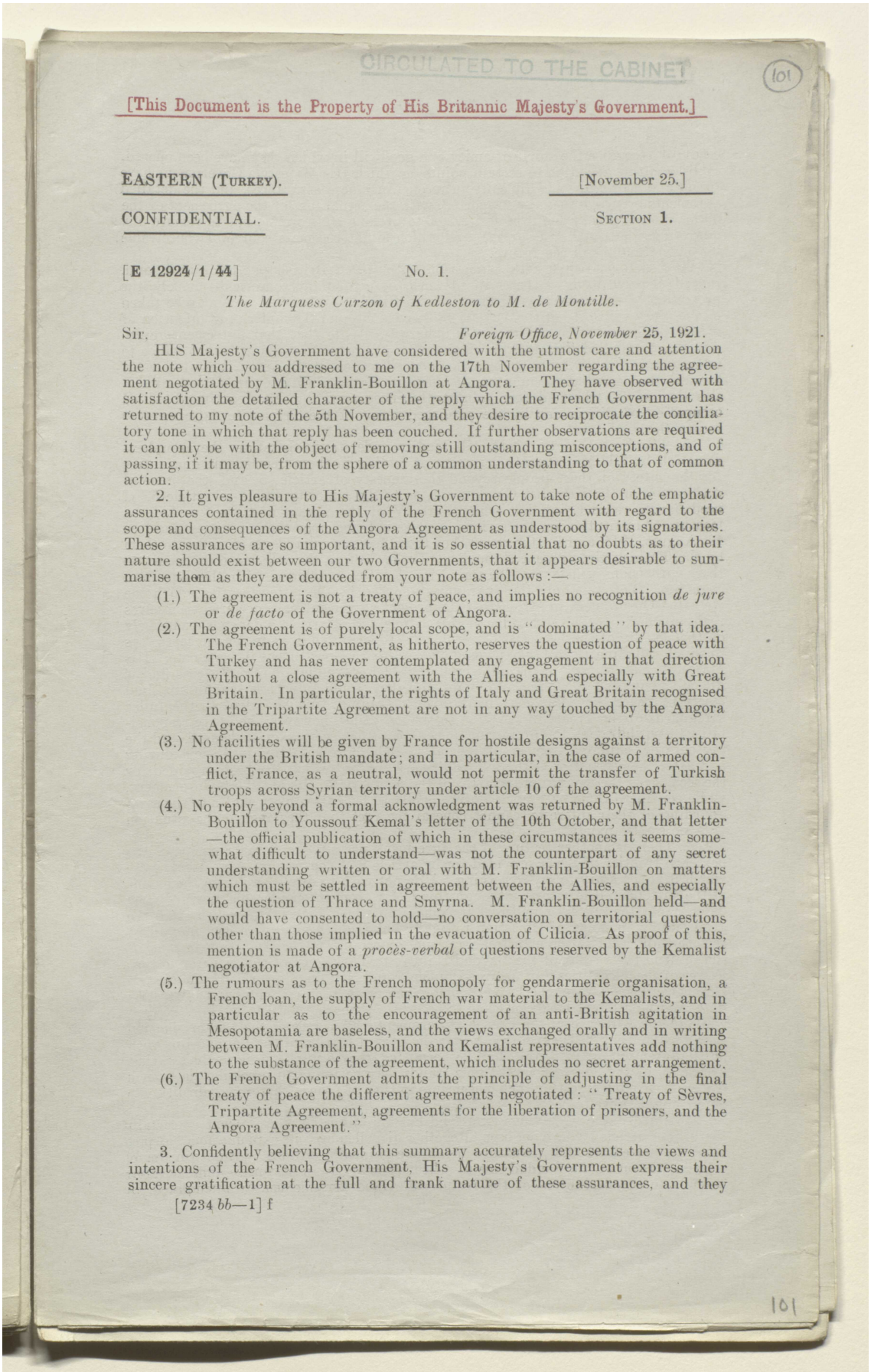

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [November 25.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12924/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to M. de Montille.

Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 25, 1921.

HIS Majesty's Government have considered with the utmost care and attention the note which you addressed to me on the 17th November regarding the agreement negotiated by M. Franklin-Bouillon at Angora. They have observed with satisfaction the detailed character of the reply which the French Government has returned to my note of the 5th November, and they desire to reciprocate the conciliatory tone in which that reply has been couched. If further observations are required it can only be with the object of removing still outstanding misconceptions, and of passing, if it may be, from the sphere of a common understanding to that of common action.

2. It gives pleasure to His Majesty's Government to take note of the emphatic assurances contained in the reply of the French Government with regard to the scope and consequences of the Angora Agreement as understood by its signatories. These assurances are so important, and it is so essential that no doubts as to their nature should exist between our two Governments, that it appears desirable to summarise them as they are deduced from your note as follows :—

(1.) The agreement is not a treaty of peace, and implies no recognition *de jure* or *de facto* of the Government of Angora.

(2.) The agreement is of purely local scope, and is "dominated" by that idea. The French Government, as hitherto, reserves the question of peace with Turkey and has never contemplated any engagement in that direction without a close agreement with the Allies and especially with Great Britain. In particular, the rights of Italy and Great Britain recognised in the Tripartite Agreement are not in any way touched by the Angora Agreement.

(3.) No facilities will be given by France for hostile designs against a territory under the British mandate; and in particular, in the case of armed conflict, France, as a neutral, would not permit the transfer of Turkish troops across Syrian territory under article 10 of the agreement.

(4.) No reply beyond a formal acknowledgment was returned by M. Franklin-Bouillon to Youssouf Kemal's letter of the 10th October, and that letter —the official publication of which in these circumstances it seems somewhat difficult to understand—was not the counterpart of any secret understanding written or oral with M. Franklin-Bouillon on matters which must be settled in agreement between the Allies, and especially the question of Thrace and Smyrna. M. Franklin-Bouillon held—and would have consented to hold—no conversation on territorial questions other than those implied in the evacuation of Cilicia. As proof of this, mention is made of a *procès-verbal* of questions reserved by the Kemalist negotiator at Angora.

(5.) The rumours as to the French monopoly for gendarmerie organisation, a French loan, the supply of French war material to the Kemalists, and in particular as to the encouragement of an anti-British agitation in Mesopotamia are baseless, and the views exchanged orally and in writing between M. Franklin-Bouillon and Kemalist representatives add nothing to the substance of the agreement, which includes no secret arrangement.

(6.) The French Government admits the principle of adjusting in the final treaty of peace the different agreements negotiated : "Treaty of Sèvres, Tripartite Agreement, agreements for the liberation of prisoners, and the Angora Agreement."

3. Confidently believing that this summary accurately represents the views and intentions of the French Government, His Majesty's Government express their sincere gratification at the full and frank nature of these assurances, and they

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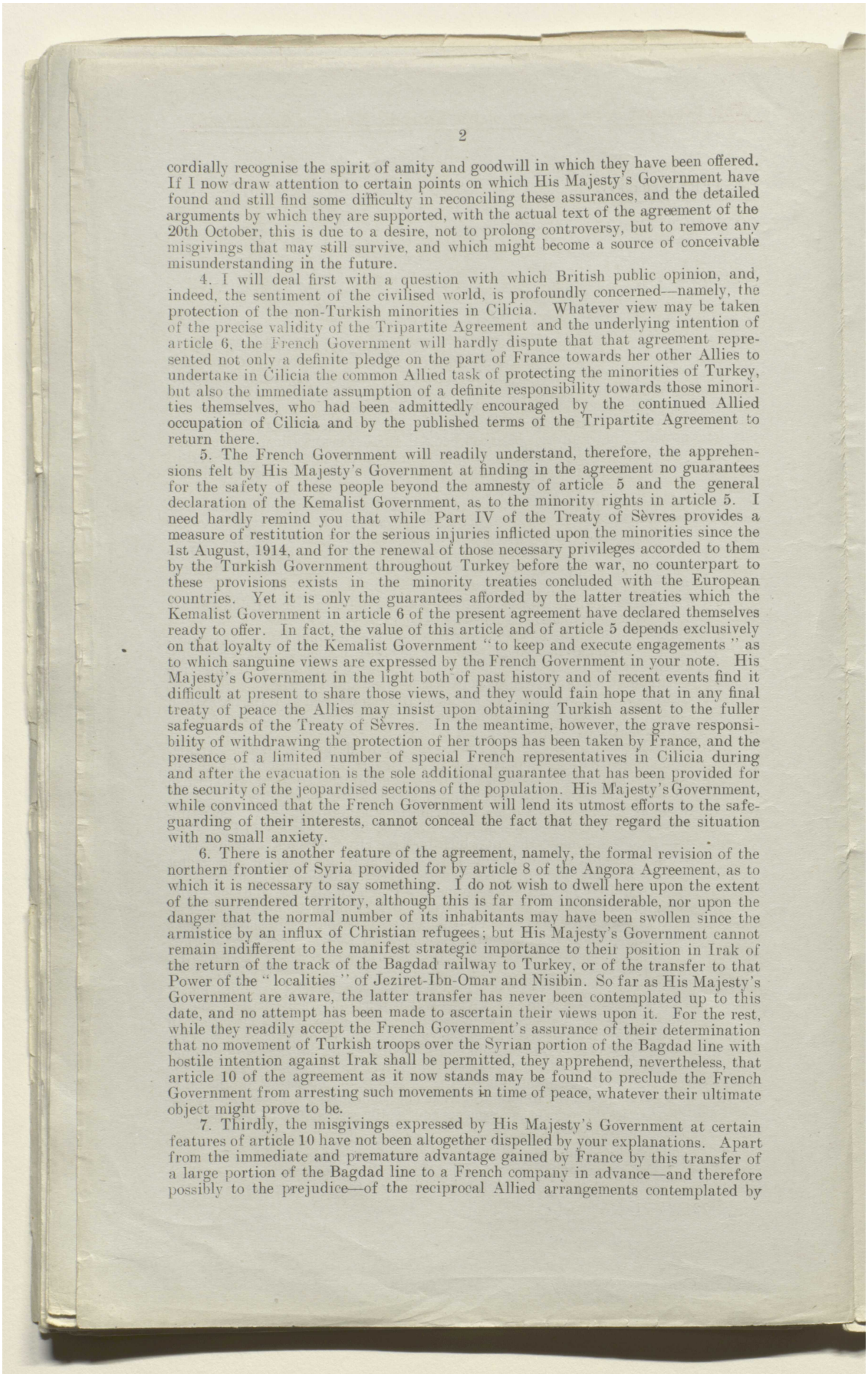

cordially recognise the spirit of amity and goodwill in which they have been offered. If I now draw attention to certain points on which His Majesty's Government have found and still find some difficulty in reconciling these assurances, and the detailed arguments by which they are supported, with the actual text of the agreement of the 20th October, this is due to a desire, not to prolong controversy, but to remove any misgivings that may still survive, and which might become a source of conceivable misunderstanding in the future.

4. I will deal first with a question with which British public opinion, and, indeed, the sentiment of the civilised world, is profoundly concerned—namely, the protection of the non-Turkish minorities in Cilicia. Whatever view may be taken of the precise validity of the Tripartite Agreement and the underlying intention of article 6, the French Government will hardly dispute that that agreement represented not only a definite pledge on the part of France towards her other Allies to undertake in Cilicia the common Allied task of protecting the minorities of Turkey, but also the immediate assumption of a definite responsibility towards those minorities themselves, who had been admittedly encouraged by the continued Allied occupation of Cilicia and by the published terms of the Tripartite Agreement to return there.

5. The French Government will readily understand, therefore, the apprehensions felt by His Majesty's Government at finding in the agreement no guarantees for the safety of these people beyond the amnesty of article 5 and the general declaration of the Kemalist Government, as to the minority rights in article 5. I need hardly remind you that while Part IV of the Treaty of Sèvres provides a measure of restitution for the serious injuries inflicted upon the minorities since the 1st August, 1914, and for the renewal of those necessary privileges accorded to them by the Turkish Government throughout Turkey before the war, no counterpart to these provisions exists in the minority treaties concluded with the European countries. Yet it is only the guarantees afforded by the latter treaties which the Kemalist Government in article 6 of the present agreement have declared themselves ready to offer. In fact, the value of this article and of article 5 depends exclusively on that loyalty of the Kemalist Government "to keep and execute engagements" as to which sanguine views are expressed by the French Government in your note. His Majesty's Government in the light both of past history and of recent events find it difficult at present to share those views, and they would fain hope that in any final treaty of peace the Allies may insist upon obtaining Turkish assent to the fuller safeguards of the Treaty of Sèvres. In the meantime, however, the grave responsibility of withdrawing the protection of her troops has been taken by France, and the presence of a limited number of special French representatives in Cilicia during and after the evacuation is the sole additional guarantee that has been provided for the security of the jeopardised sections of the population. His Majesty's Government, while convinced that the French Government will lend its utmost efforts to the safeguarding of their interests, cannot conceal the fact that they regard the situation with no small anxiety.

6. There is another feature of the agreement, namely, the formal revision of the northern frontier of Syria provided for by article 8 of the Angora Agreement, as to which it is necessary to say something. I do not wish to dwell here upon the extent of the surrendered territory, although this is far from inconsiderable, nor upon the danger that the normal number of its inhabitants may have been swollen since the armistice by an influx of Christian refugees; but His Majesty's Government cannot remain indifferent to the manifest strategic importance to their position in Irak of the return of the track of the Bagdad railway to Turkey, or of the transfer to that Power of the "localities" of Jeziret-Ibn-Omar and Nisibin. So far as His Majesty's Government are aware, the latter transfer has never been contemplated up to this date, and no attempt has been made to ascertain their views upon it. For the rest, while they readily accept the French Government's assurance of their determination that no movement of Turkish troops over the Syrian portion of the Bagdad line with hostile intention against Irak shall be permitted, they apprehend, nevertheless, that article 10 of the agreement as it now stands may be found to preclude the French Government from arresting such movements in time of peace, whatever their ultimate object might prove to be.

7. Thirdly, the misgivings expressed by His Majesty's Government at certain features of article 10 have not been altogether dispelled by your explanations. Apart from the immediate and premature advantage gained by France by this transfer of a large portion of the Bagdad line to a French company in advance—and therefore possibly to the prejudice—of the reciprocal Allied arrangements contemplated by

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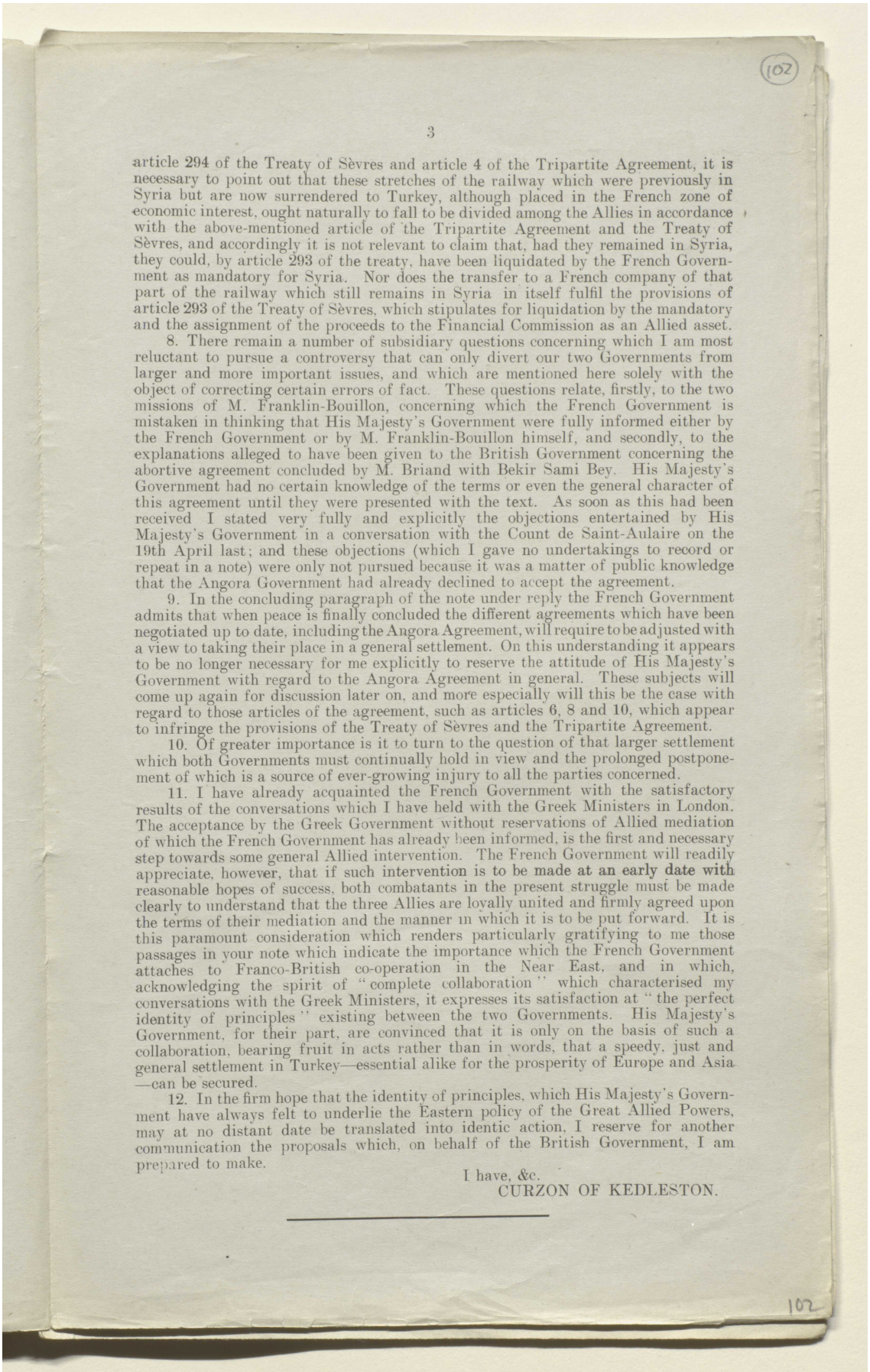

article 294 of the Treaty of Sèvres and article 4 of the Tripartite Agreement, it is necessary to point out that these stretches of the railway which were previously in Syria but are now surrendered to Turkey, although placed in the French zone of economic interest, ought naturally to fall to be divided among the Allies in accordance with the above-mentioned article of the Tripartite Agreement and the Treaty of Sèvres, and accordingly it is not relevant to claim that, had they remained in Syria, they could, by article 293 of the treaty, have been liquidated by the French Government as mandatory for Syria. Nor does the transfer to a French company of that part of the railway which still remains in Syria in itself fulfil the provisions of article 293 of the Treaty of Sèvres, which stipulates for liquidation by the mandatory and the assignment of the proceeds to the Financial Commission as an Allied asset.

8. There remain a number of subsidiary questions concerning which I am most reluctant to pursue a controversy that can only divert our two Governments from larger and more important issues, and which are mentioned here solely with the object of correcting certain errors of fact. These questions relate, firstly, to the two missions of M. Franklin-Bouillon, concerning which the French Government is mistaken in thinking that His Majesty's Government were fully informed either by the French Government or by M. Franklin-Bouillon himself, and secondly, to the explanations alleged to have been given to the British Government concerning the abortive agreement concluded by M. Briand with Bekir Sami Bey. His Majesty's Government had no certain knowledge of the terms or even the general character of this agreement until they were presented with the text. As soon as this had been received I stated very fully and explicitly the objections entertained by His Majesty's Government in a conversation with the Count de Saint-Aulaire on the 19th April last; and these objections (which I gave no undertakings to record or repeat in a note) were only not pursued because it was a matter of public knowledge that the Angora Government had already declined to accept the agreement.

9. In the concluding paragraph of the note under reply the French Government admits that when peace is finally concluded the different agreements which have been negotiated up to date, including the Angora Agreement, will require to be adjusted with a view to taking their place in a general settlement. On this understanding it appears to be no longer necessary for me explicitly to reserve the attitude of His Majesty's Government with regard to the Angora Agreement in general. These subjects will come up again for discussion later on, and more especially will this be the case with regard to those articles of the agreement, such as articles 6, 8 and 10, which appear to infringe the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres and the Tripartite Agreement.

10. Of greater importance is it to turn to the question of that larger settlement which both Governments must continually hold in view and the prolonged postponement of which is a source of ever-growing injury to all the parties concerned.

11. I have already acquainted the French Government with the satisfactory results of the conversations which I have held with the Greek Ministers in London. The acceptance by the Greek Government without reservations of Allied mediation of which the French Government has already been informed, is the first and necessary step towards some general Allied intervention. The French Government will readily appreciate, however, that if such intervention is to be made at an early date with reasonable hopes of success, both combatants in the present struggle must be made clearly to understand that the three Allies are loyally united and firmly agreed upon the terms of their mediation and the manner in which it is to be put forward. It is this paramount consideration which renders particularly gratifying to me those passages in your note which indicate the importance which the French Government attaches to Franco-British co-operation in the Near East, and in which, acknowledging the spirit of "complete collaboration" which characterised my conversations with the Greek Ministers, it expresses its satisfaction at "the perfect identity of principles" existing between the two Governments. His Majesty's Government, for their part, are convinced that it is only on the basis of such a collaboration, bearing fruit in acts rather than in words, that a speedy, just and general settlement in Turkey—essential alike for the prosperity of Europe and Asia—can be secured.

12. In the firm hope that the identity of principles, which His Majesty's Government have always felt to underlie the Eastern policy of the Great Allied Powers, may at no distant date be translated into identic action, I reserve for another communication the proposals which, on behalf of the British Government, I am prepared to make.

I have, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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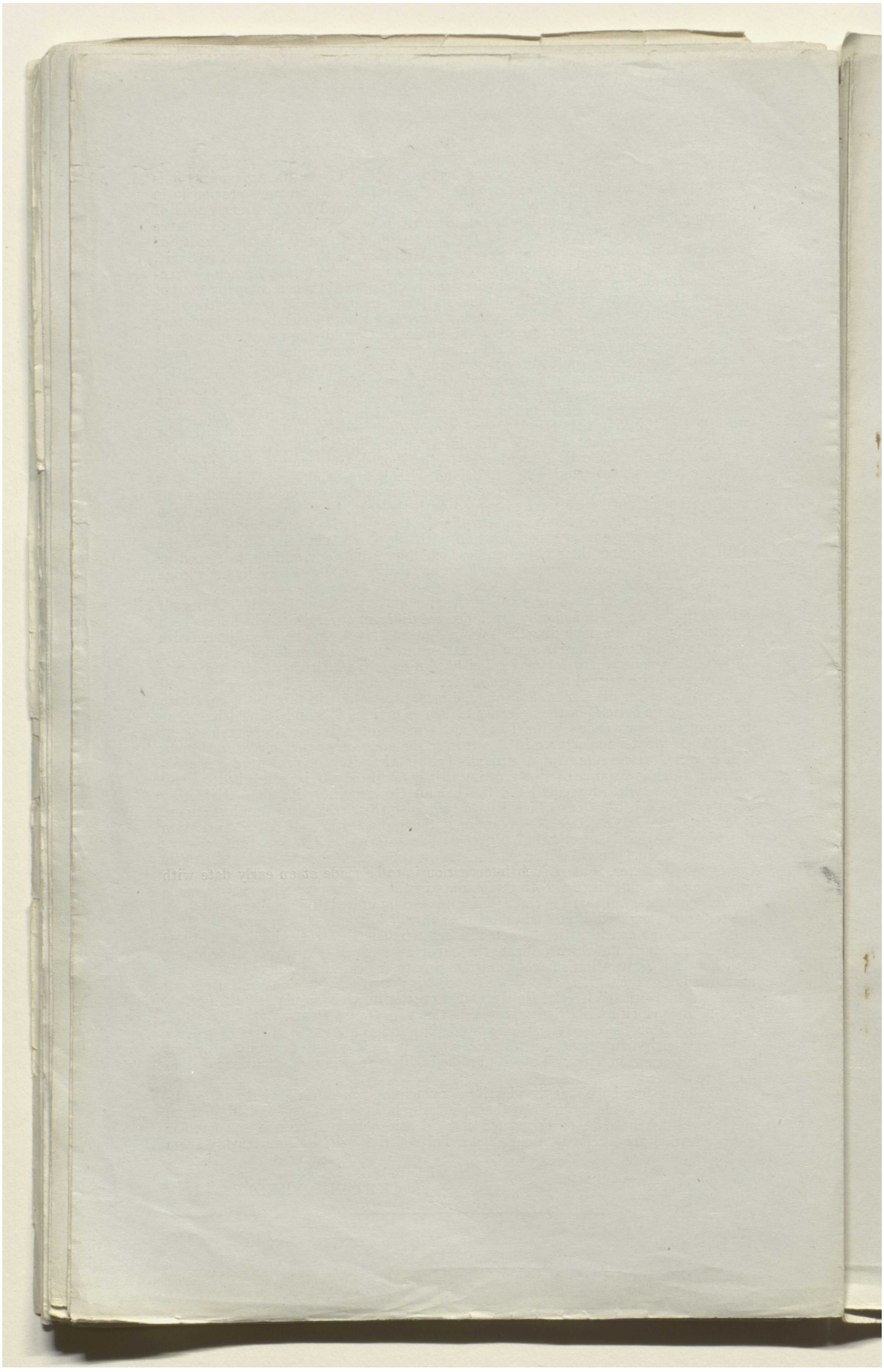

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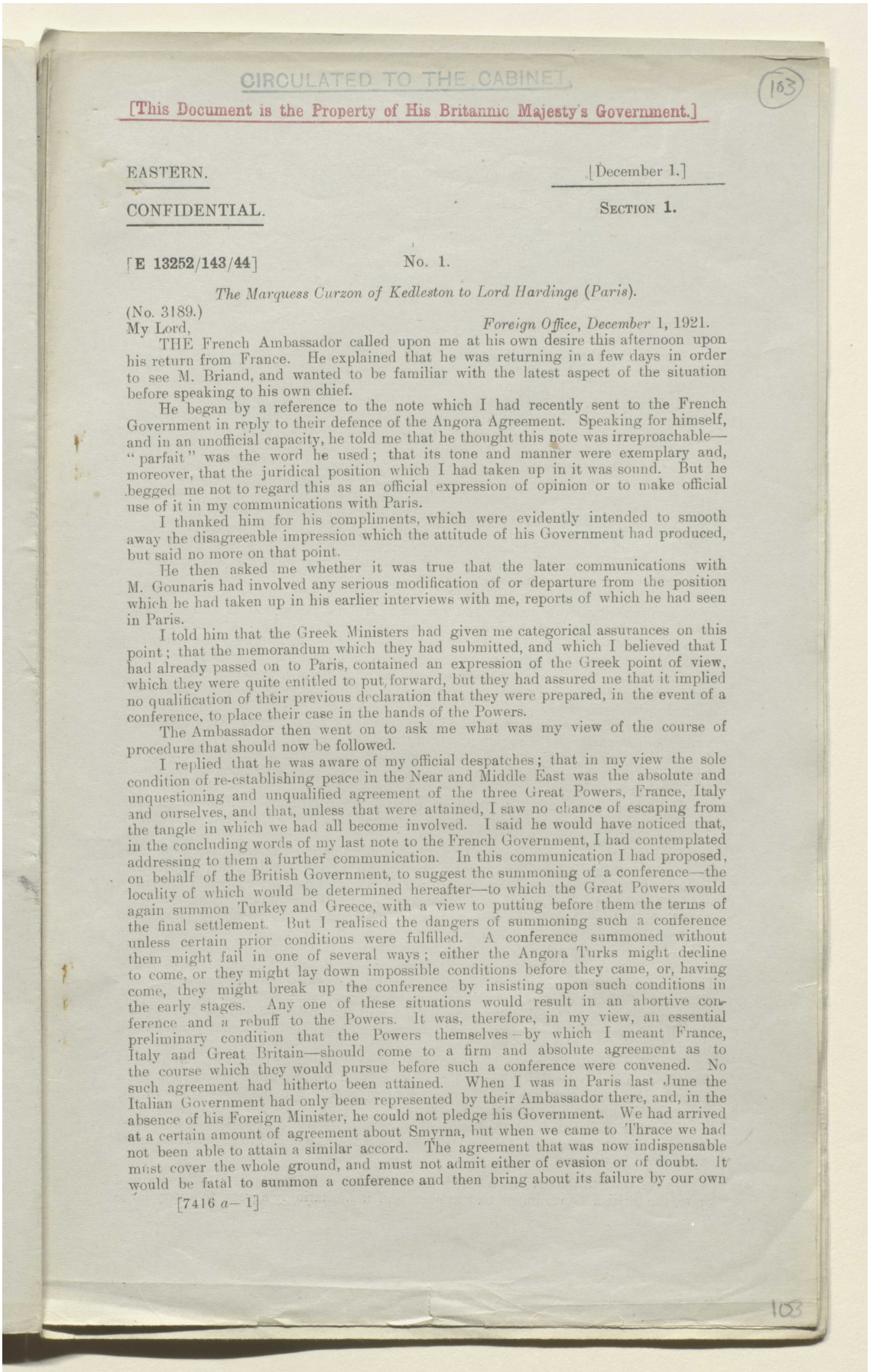

CIRCULATED TO THE CABINET.

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EASTERN. [December 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13252/143/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 3189.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, December* 1, 1921.

THE French Ambassador called upon me at his own desire this afternoon upon his return from France. He explained that he was returning in a few days in order to see M. Briand, and wanted to be familiar with the latest aspect of the situation before speaking to his own chief.

He began by a reference to the note which I had recently sent to the French Government in reply to their defence of the Angora Agreement. Speaking for himself, and in an unofficial capacity, he told me that he thought this note was irreproachable—"parfait" was the word he used; that its tone and manner were exemplary and, moreover, that the juridical position which I had taken up in it was sound. But he begged me not to regard this as an official expression of opinion or to make official use of it in my communications with Paris.

I thanked him for his compliments, which were evidently intended to smooth away the disagreeable impression which the attitude of his Government had produced, but said no more on that point.

He then asked me whether it was true that the later communications with M. Gounaris had involved any serious modification of or departure from the position which he had taken up in his earlier interviews with me, reports of which he had seen in Paris.

I told him that the Greek Ministers had given me categorical assurances on this point; that the memorandum which they had submitted, and which I believed that I had already passed on to Paris, contained an expression of the Greek point of view, which they were quite entitled to put forward, but they had assured me that it implied no qualification of their previous declaration that they were prepared, in the event of a conference, to place their case in the hands of the Powers.

The Ambassador then went on to ask me what was my view of the course of procedure that should now be followed.

I replied that he was aware of my official despatches; that in my view the sole condition of re-establishing peace in the Near and Middle East was the absolute and unquestioning and unqualified agreement of the three Great Powers, France, Italy and ourselves, and that, unless that were attained, I saw no chance of escaping from the tangle in which we had all become involved. I said he would have noticed that, in the concluding words of my last note to the French Government, I had contemplated addressing to them a further communication. In this communication I had proposed, on behalf of the British Government, to suggest the summoning of a conference—the locality of which would be determined hereafter—to which the Great Powers would again summon Turkey and Greece, with a view to putting before them the terms of the final settlement. But I realised the dangers of summoning such a conference unless certain prior conditions were fulfilled. A conference summoned without them might fail in one of several ways; either the Angora Turks might decline to come, or they might lay down impossible conditions before they came, or, having come, they might break up the conference by insisting upon such conditions in the early stages. Any one of these situations would result in an abortive conference and a rebuff to the Powers. It was, therefore, in my view, an essential preliminary condition that the Powers themselves—by which I meant France, Italy and Great Britain—should come to a firm and absolute agreement as to the course which they would pursue before such a conference were convened. No such agreement had hitherto been attained. When I was in Paris last June the Italian Government had only been represented by their Ambassador there, and, in the absence of his Foreign Minister, he could not pledge his Government. We had arrived at a certain amount of agreement about Smyrna, but when we came to Thrace we had not been able to attain a similar accord. The agreement that was now indispensable must cover the whole ground, and must not admit either of evasion or of doubt. It would be fatal to summon a conference and then bring about its failure by our own

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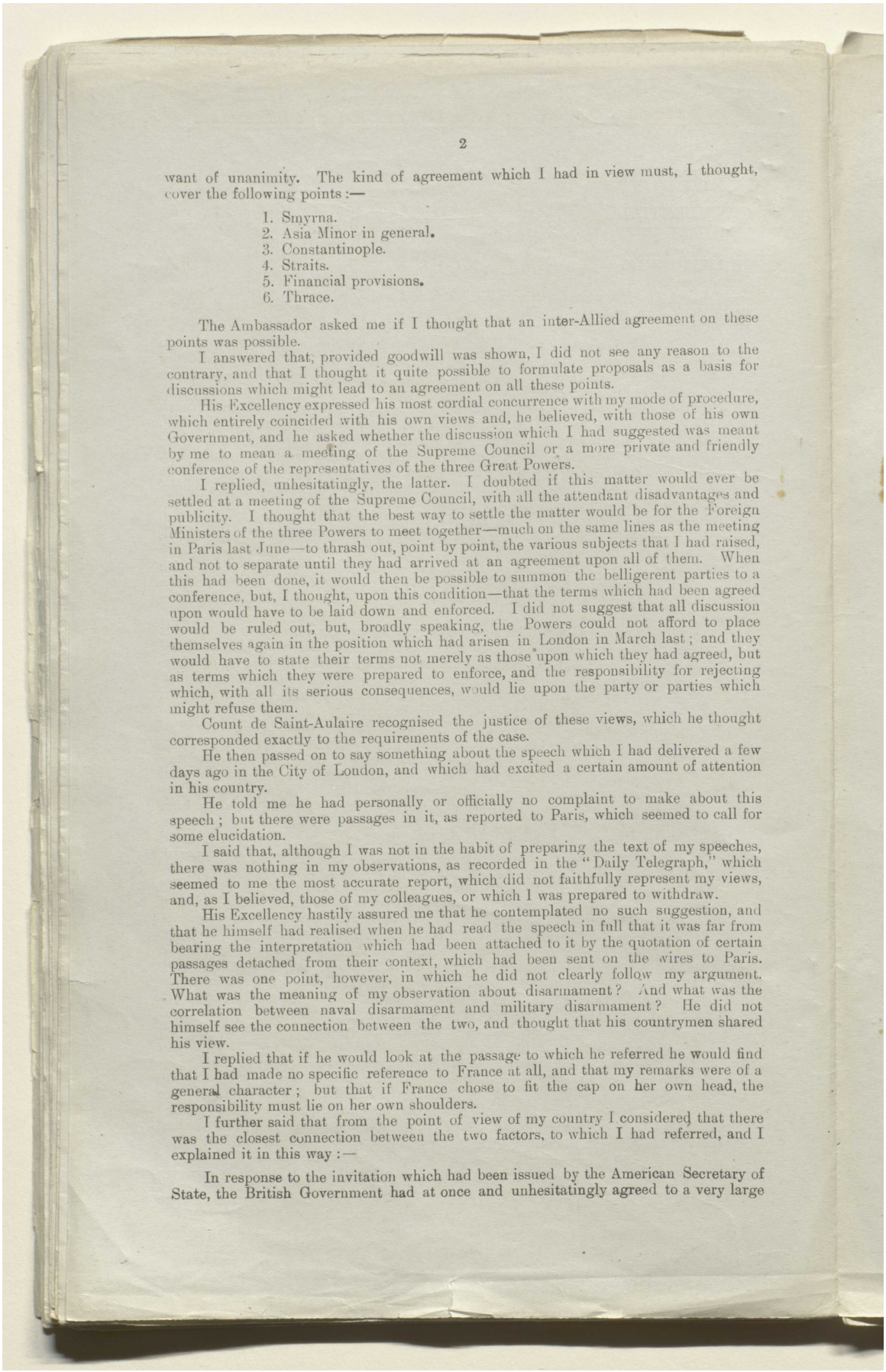

want of unanimity. The kind of agreement which I had in view must, I thought, cover the following points :—

1. Smyrna.
2. Asia Minor in general.
3. Constantinople.
4. Straits.
5. Financial provisions.
6. Thrace.

The Ambassador asked me if I thought that an inter-Allied agreement on these points was possible.

I answered that, provided goodwill was shown, I did not see any reason to the contrary, and that I thought it quite possible to formulate proposals as a basis for discussions which might lead to an agreement on all these points.

His Excellency expressed his most cordial concurrence with my mode of procedure, which entirely coincided with his own views and, he believed, with those of his own Government, and he asked whether the discussion which I had suggested was meant by me to mean a meeting of the Supreme Council or a more private and friendly conference of the representatives of the three Great Powers.

I replied, unhesitatingly, the latter. I doubted if this matter would ever be settled at a meeting of the Supreme Council, with all the attendant disadvantages and publicity. I thought that the best way to settle the matter would be for the Foreign Ministers of the three Powers to meet together—much on the same lines as the meeting in Paris last June—to thrash out, point by point, the various subjects that I had raised, and not to separate until they had arrived at an agreement upon all of them. When this had been done, it would then be possible to summon the belligerent parties to a conference, but, I thought, upon this condition—that the terms which had been agreed upon would have to be laid down and enforced. I did not suggest that all discussion would be ruled out, but, broadly speaking, the Powers could not afford to place themselves again in the position which had arisen in London in March last; and they would have to state their terms not merely as those upon which they had agreed, but as terms which they were prepared to enforce, and the responsibility for rejecting which, with all its serious consequences, would lie upon the party or parties which might refuse them.

Count de Saint-Aulaire recognised the justice of these views, which he thought corresponded exactly to the requirements of the case.

He then passed on to say something about the speech which I had delivered a few days ago in the City of London, and which had excited a certain amount of attention in his country.

He told me he had personally or officially no complaint to make about this speech; but there were passages in it, as reported to Paris, which seemed to call for some elucidation.

I said that, although I was not in the habit of preparing the text of my speeches, there was nothing in my observations, as recorded in the "Daily Telegraph," which seemed to me the most accurate report, which did not faithfully represent my views, and, as I believed, those of my colleagues, or which I was prepared to withdraw.

His Excellency hastily assured me that he contemplated no such suggestion, and that he himself had realised when he had read the speech in full that it was far from bearing the interpretation which had been attached to it by the quotation of certain passages detached from their context, which had been sent on the wires to Paris. There was one point, however, in which he did not clearly follow my argument. What was the meaning of my observation about disarmament? And what was the correlation between naval disarmament and military disarmament? He did not himself see the connection between the two, and thought that his countrymen shared his view.

I replied that if he would look at the passage to which he referred he would find that I had made no specific reference to France at all, and that my remarks were of a general character; but that if France chose to fit the cap on her own head, the responsibility must lie on her own shoulders.

I further said that from the point of view of my country I considered that there was the closest connection between the two factors, to which I had referred, and I explained it in this way :—

In response to the invitation which had been issued by the American Secretary of State, the British Government had at once and unhesitatingly agreed to a very large

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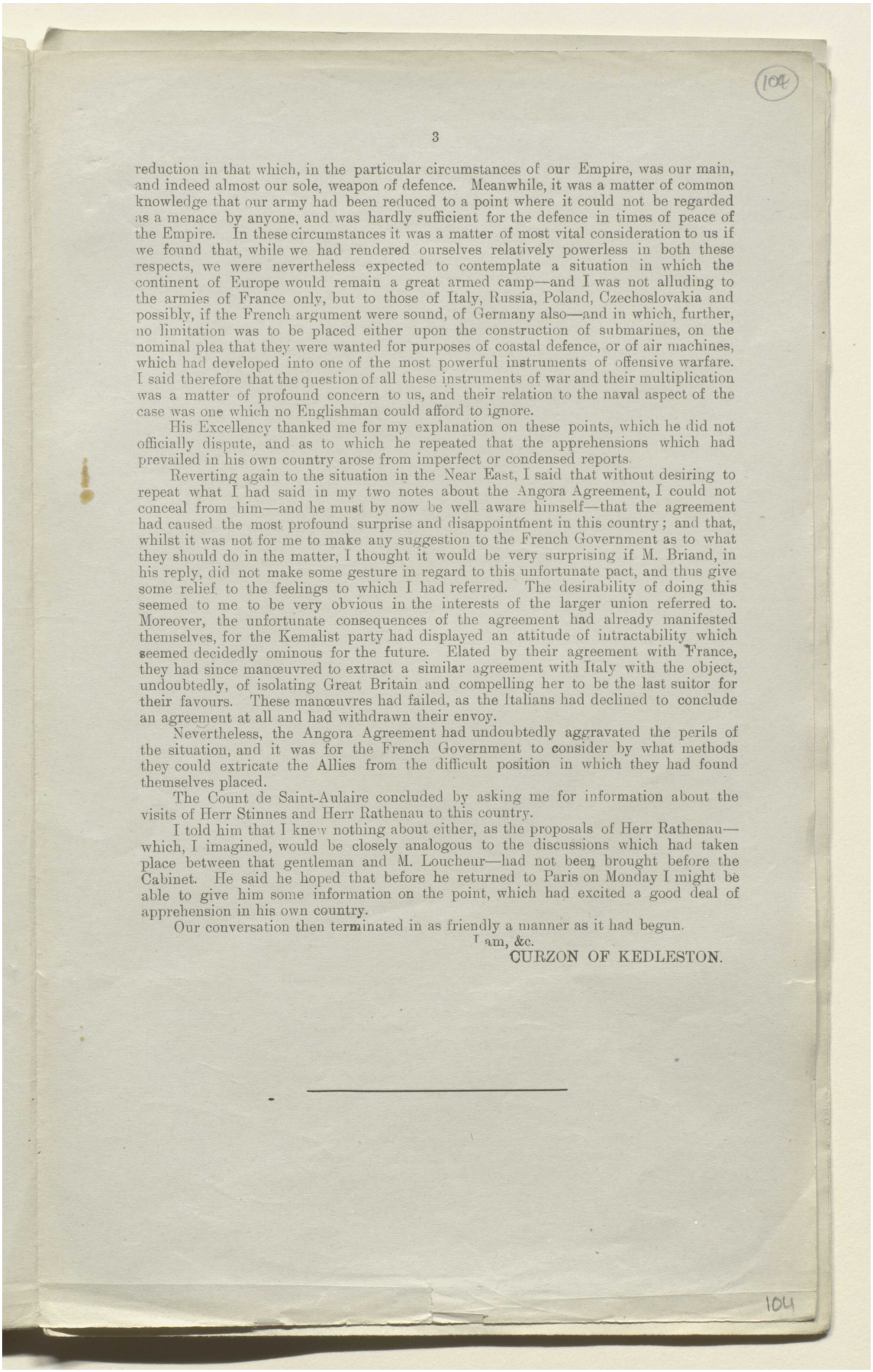

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reduction in that which, in the particular circumstances of our Empire, was our main, and indeed almost our sole, weapon of defence. Meanwhile, it was a matter of common knowledge that our army had been reduced to a point where it could not be regarded as a menace by anyone, and was hardly sufficient for the defence in times of peace of the Empire. In these circumstances it was a matter of most vital consideration to us if we found that, while we had rendered ourselves relatively powerless in both these respects, we were nevertheless expected to contemplate a situation in which the continent of Europe would remain a great armed camp—and I was not alluding to the armies of France only, but to those of Italy, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and possibly, if the French argument were sound, of Germany also—and in which, further, no limitation was to be placed either upon the construction of submarines, on the nominal plea that they were wanted for purposes of coastal defence, or of air machines, which had developed into one of the most powerful instruments of offensive warfare. I said therefore that the question of all these instruments of war and their multiplication was a matter of profound concern to us, and their relation to the naval aspect of the case was one which no Englishman could afford to ignore.

His Excellency thanked me for my explanation on these points, which he did not officially dispute, and as to which he repeated that the apprehensions which had prevailed in his own country arose from imperfect or condensed reports.

Reverting again to the situation in the Near East, I said that without desiring to repeat what I had said in my two notes about the Angora Agreement, I could not conceal from him—and he must by now be well aware himself—that the agreement had caused the most profound surprise and disappointment in this country; and that, whilst it was not for me to make any suggestion to the French Government as to what they should do in the matter, I thought it would be very surprising if M. Briand, in his reply, did not make some gesture in regard to this unfortunate pact, and thus give some relief to the feelings to which I had referred. The desirability of doing this seemed to me to be very obvious in the interests of the larger union referred to. Moreover, the unfortunate consequences of the agreement had already manifested themselves, for the Kemalist party had displayed an attitude of intractability which seemed decidedly ominous for the future. Elated by their agreement with France, they had since manœuvred to extract a similar agreement with Italy with the object, undoubtedly, of isolating Great Britain and compelling her to be the last suitor for their favours. These manœuvres had failed, as the Italians had declined to conclude an agreement at all and had withdrawn their envoy.

Nevertheless, the Angora Agreement had undoubtedly aggravated the perils of the situation, and it was for the French Government to consider by what methods they could extricate the Allies from the difficult position in which they had found themselves placed.

The Count de Saint-Aulaire concluded by asking me for information about the visits of Herr Stinnes and Herr Rathenau to this country.

I told him that I knew nothing about either, as the proposals of Herr Rathenau—which, I imagined, would be closely analogous to the discussions which had taken place between that gentleman and M. Loucheur—had not been brought before the Cabinet. He said he hoped that before he returned to Paris on Monday I might be able to give him some information on the point, which had excited a good deal of apprehension in his own country.

Our conversation then terminated in as friendly a manner as it had begun.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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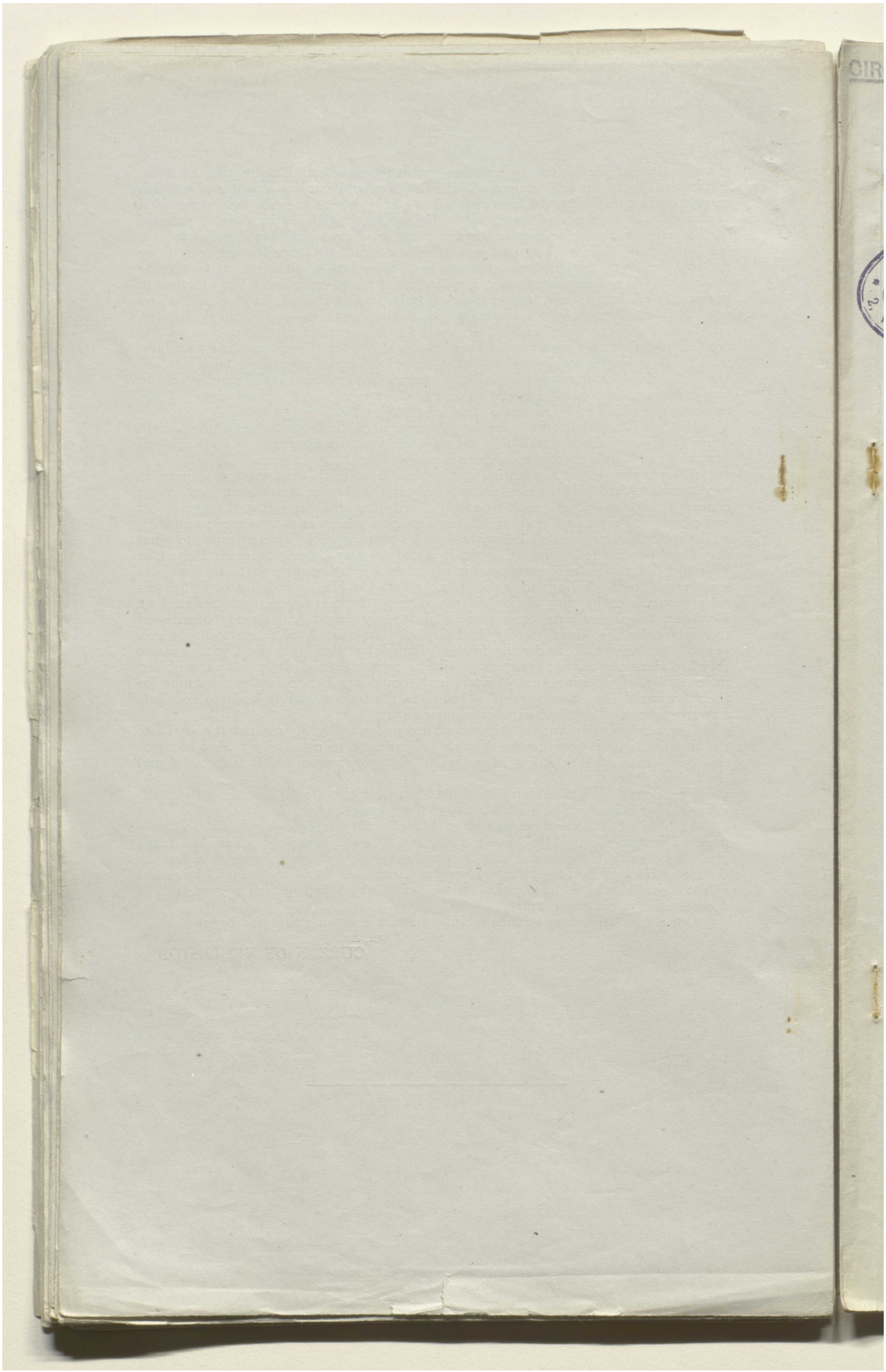

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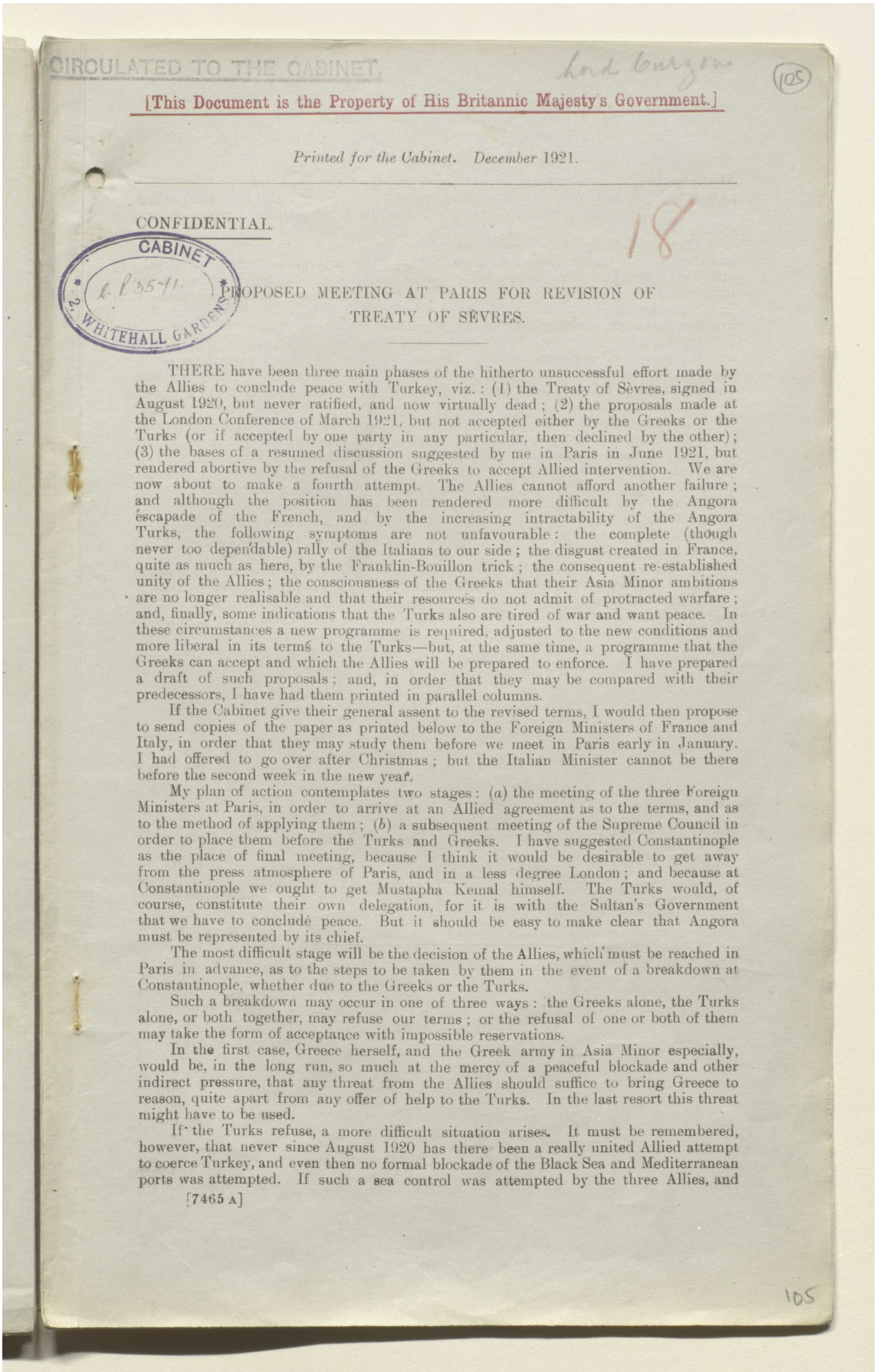

CIRCULATED TO THE CABINET.

Lord Curzon

(105)

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CONFIDENTIAL.

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CABINET
C.P. 3541
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PROPOSED MEETING AT PARIS FOR REVISION OF TREATY OF SÈVRES.

THERE have been three main phases of the hitherto unsuccessful effort made by the Allies to conclude peace with Turkey, viz.: (1) the Treaty of Sèvres, signed in August 1920, but never ratified, and now virtually dead; (2) the proposals made at the London Conference of March 1921, but not accepted either by the Greeks or the Turks (or if accepted by one party in any particular, then declined by the other); (3) the bases of a resumed discussion suggested by me in Paris in June 1921, but rendered abortive by the refusal of the Greeks to accept Allied intervention. We are now about to make a fourth attempt. The Allies cannot afford another failure; and although the position has been rendered more difficult by the Angora escapade of the French, and by the increasing intractability of the Angora Turks, the following symptoms are not unfavourable: the complete (though never too dependable) rally of the Italians to our side; the disgust created in France, quite as much as here, by the Franklin-Bouillon trick; the consequent re-established unity of the Allies; the consciousness of the Greeks that their Asia Minor ambitions are no longer realisable and that their resources do not admit of protracted warfare; and, finally, some indications that the Turks also are tired of war and want peace. In these circumstances a new programme is required, adjusted to the new conditions and more liberal in its terms to the Turks—but, at the same time, a programme that the Greeks can accept and which the Allies will be prepared to enforce. I have prepared a draft of such proposals; and, in order that they may be compared with their predecessors, I have had them printed in parallel columns.

If the Cabinet give their general assent to the revised terms, I would then propose to send copies of the paper as printed below to the Foreign Ministers of France and Italy, in order that they may study them before we meet in Paris early in January. I had offered to go over after Christmas; but the Italian Minister cannot be there before the second week in the new year.

My plan of action contemplates two stages: (*a*) the meeting of the three Foreign Ministers at Paris, in order to arrive at an Allied agreement as to the terms, and as to the method of applying them; (*b*) a subsequent meeting of the Supreme Council in order to place them before the Turks and Greeks. I have suggested Constantinople as the place of final meeting, because I think it would be desirable to get away from the press atmosphere of Paris, and in a less degree London; and because at Constantinople we ought to get Mustapha Kemal himself. The Turks would, of course, constitute their own delegation, for it is with the Sultan's Government that we have to conclude peace. But it should be easy to make clear that Angora must be represented by its chief.

The most difficult stage will be the decision of the Allies, which must be reached in Paris in advance, as to the steps to be taken by them in the event of a breakdown at Constantinople, whether due to the Greeks or the Turks.

Such a breakdown may occur in one of three ways: the Greeks alone, the Turks alone, or both together, may refuse our terms; or the refusal of one or both of them may take the form of acceptance with impossible reservations.

In the first case, Greece herself, and the Greek army in Asia Minor especially, would be, in the long run, so much at the mercy of a peaceful blockade and other indirect pressure, that any threat from the Allies should suffice to bring Greece to reason, quite apart from any offer of help to the Turks. In the last resort this threat might have to be used.

If the Turks refuse, a more difficult situation arises. It must be remembered, however, that never since August 1920 has there been a really united Allied attempt to coerce Turkey, and even then no formal blockade of the Black Sea and Mediterranean ports was attempted. If such a sea control was attempted by the three Allies, and

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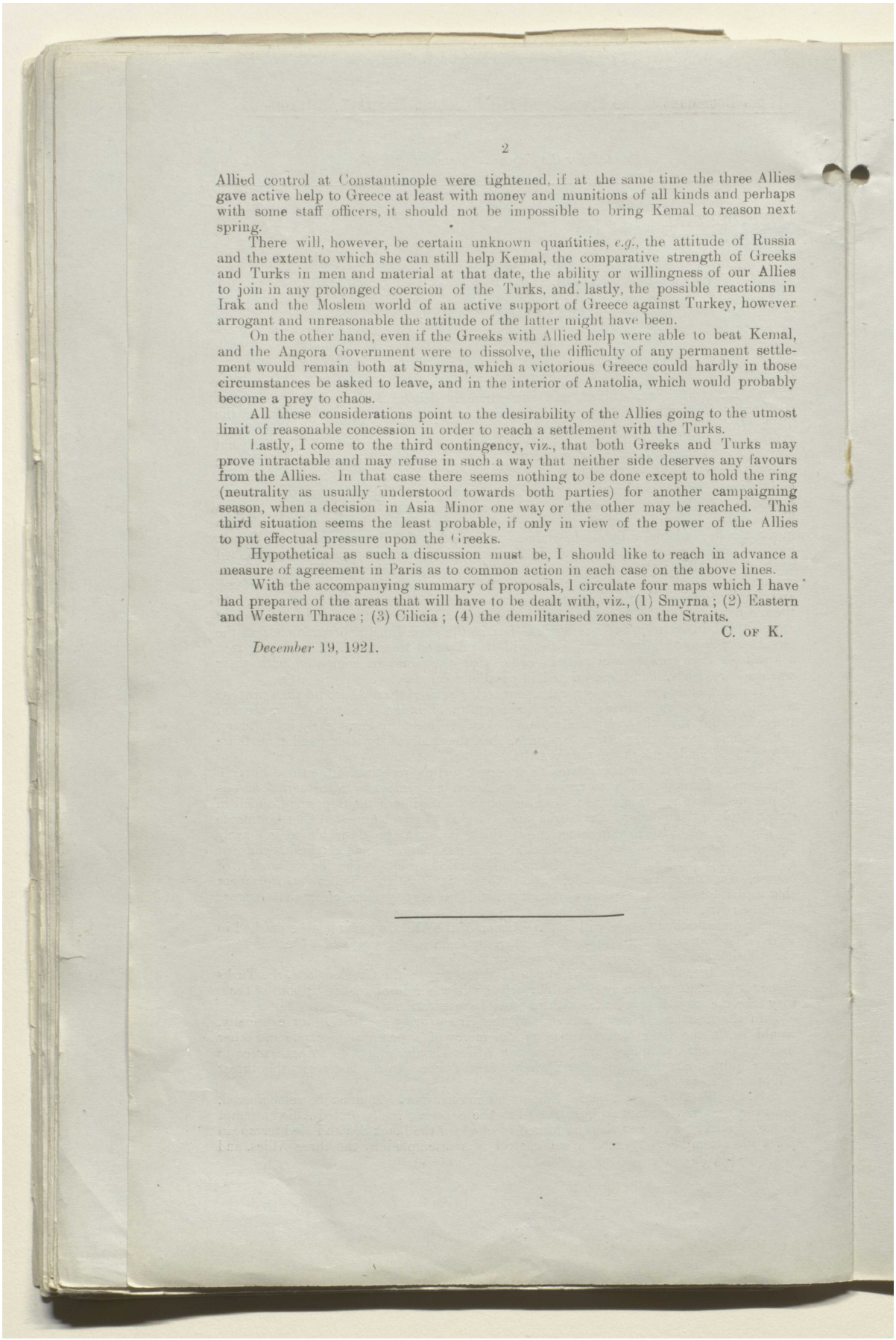

Allied control at Constantinople were tightened, if at the same time the three Allies gave active help to Greece at least with money and munitions of all kinds and perhaps with some staff officers, it should not be impossible to bring Kemal to reason next spring.

There will, however, be certain unknown quantities, *e.g.*, the attitude of Russia and the extent to which she can still help Kemal, the comparative strength of Greeks and Turks in men and material at that date, the ability or willingness of our Allies to join in any prolonged coercion of the Turks, and, lastly, the possible reactions in Irak and the Moslem world of an active support of Greece against Turkey, however arrogant and unreasonable the attitude of the latter might have been.

On the other hand, even if the Greeks with Allied help were able to beat Kemal, and the Angora Government were to dissolve, the difficulty of any permanent settlement would remain both at Smyrna, which a victorious Greece could hardly in those circumstances be asked to leave, and in the interior of Anatolia, which would probably become a prey to chaos.

All these considerations point to the desirability of the Allies going to the utmost limit of reasonable concession in order to reach a settlement with the Turks.

Lastly, I come to the third contingency, viz., that both Greeks and Turks may prove intractable and may refuse in such a way that neither side deserves any favours from the Allies. In that case there seems nothing to be done except to hold the ring (neutrality as usually understood towards both parties) for another campaigning season, when a decision in Asia Minor one way or the other may be reached. This third situation seems the least probable, if only in view of the power of the Allies to put effectual pressure upon the Greeks.

Hypothetical as such a discussion must be, I should like to reach in advance a measure of agreement in Paris as to common action in each case on the above lines.

With the accompanying summary of proposals, I circulate four maps which I have had prepared of the areas that will have to be dealt with, viz., (1) Smyrna; (2) Eastern and Western Thrace; (3) Cilicia; (4) the demilitarised zones on the Straits.

C. of K.

December 19, 1921.

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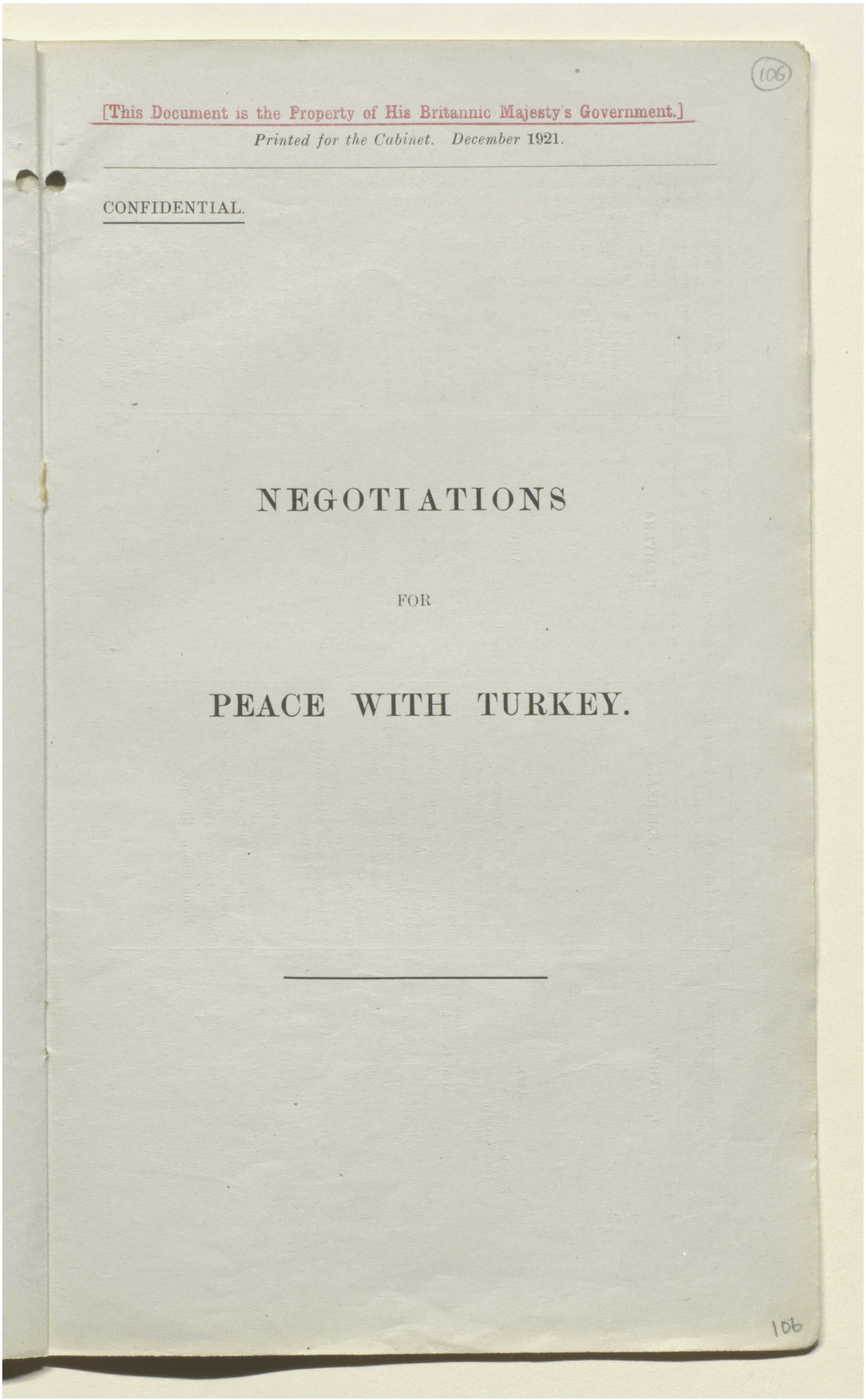

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Printed for the Cabinet. December 1921.

CONFIDENTIAL.

NEGOTIATIONS

FOR

PEACE WITH TURKEY.

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I.—Treaty of Sèvres, signed August 10, 1920.	II.—London Conference Proposals. Mareh 1921.	III—Paris Conference Proposals, June 1921.	IV.—Programme of Proposals to be discussed with Allies at Conference in Paris before communication to Greece and Turkey.
1. SMYRNA.	1. SMYRNA.	1. SMYRNA.	1. SMYRNA.
AREA.	AREA.	AREA.	AREA.
Sanjak of Smyrna plus Kazas of Kassaba. Manissa. Ak-Hissar (half only). Aivali (almost all).	*1st Proposal.* The conference proposed an Allied *commission of enquiry into population* upon condition— (*a.*) That Greece and Turkey should accept the result. (*b.*) That Greece and Turkey should accept the rest of the treaty (subject to possible modifications of certain clauses, notably those about Kurdistan and Armenia). Turkey accepted subject to reservations. Greece refused. *2nd Proposal.* The conference then made a general proposal which included— Possible modification of Smyrna boundary (in favour of Turkey). No discussion. No reply.	No discussion.	There is Allied agreement that the sovereignty and administration shall not be Greek, but questions of the area, the form of government, and defence are not decided. It is essential to meet Turkey as far as possible on this question in the interests of a general settlement. Here three alternative proposals may be considered:— (*a.*) The first is the Smyrna zone as drawn, for reasons partly of population (the American pre-war figures gave Greeks 509,000, Moslems 470,000, Armenians 23,000), partly economic and partly strategic, in the Treaty of Sèvres. The Turks would probably now decline to consider any such proposal; nor, if Turkey's sovereignty is to be restored, will economic or strategic frontiers be required. (*b.*) The Sanjak of Smyrna and the Kaza of Aivali, with a pre-war population, according to the Americans, of Greeks 410,000, Moslems 330,000, Armenians 18,000. This area would have the advantage of maintaining connection between the coastal towns and the hinterland. But Turkey's objections would very likely be maintained. (*c.*) I have thought of a third alternative, namely, the creation of a separate administration for Smyrna town, the Tchesme peninsula, and Aivali town. In these areas the population is, or was, predominantly

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Greek. Turkish figures in 1914 admitted Greeks 65,000, Turks 20,000 in the peninsula, and Greeks 30,000 to a few hundred Turks in Aivali town. Concerning Smyrna, there was the familiar dispute; for whereas the Greek figures of 1912 gave Greeks 120,000 to Turks 60,000, the Turkish figures of 1914 gave Greeks 74,000 to Turks 100,000.

The choice between these three areas will probably be found to depend in the main on the character of the régime to be set up.

GOVERNMENT.

Whatever area is chosen the sovereignty should be Turkish.

As to the administration, here again three proposals seem to be worthy of examination.

(i.) The Lebanon precedent might be considered, namely, a Christian governor chosen for three years by Turkey with the consent of the Powers and immovable without that consent, but directly responsible to the Turkish Government; a local council representative of different elements of the population: the governor to control all administrative appointments, and a gendarmerie drawn from the local population: Turkish troops only to be called in by the governor in an emergency.

If this scheme were applied to Smyrna, the governor might be a Turkish subject of Greek race, chosen by agreement between Turkey and Greece or appointed by, but not responsible to, the League of Nations.

Such a scheme might be applied either to areas (*a*) or (*b*) above; and it would provide a serviceable safeguard to the Greeks. As to the Turks, the

GOVERNMENT.

Lord Curzon proposed and M. Briand accepted the following. The Italian Ambassador also accepted subject to his Government's final approval.

(i.) *Autonomy* under Turkish sovereignty.
(ii.) A *Christian governor*.

GOVERNMENT.

The *second proposal* of the conference comprised the following:—

(i.) Turkish *sovereignty*.
(ii.) District to be called a *vilayet*.
(iii.) A *Christian governor* of the district to be appointed by the Allies or League of Nations.
An elective *assembly*.
(iv.) An *annuity* to be paid to Turkey corresponding with the district's prosperity.
(v.) The *administrative personnel* to be recruited according to the racial distribution of the population as reported by an Allied commission.
(vi.) (*Revision* after five years by League of Nations on demand of either Greece or Turkey.)

The Greek delegation accepted subject to the following reservations as to (iii), (iv) and (v):—

(iii.) The *Christian governor* should be appointed by Greece with the consent of the League of Nations or *vice-versâ*.

GOVERNMENT.

(i.) *Sovereignty* remains Turkish. Turkish flag.
(ii.) *Exercise of rights of sovereignty* is transferred to Greece. Greek administration.
(iii.) Local *parliament*.
(iv.) (*Incorporation in Greece* after five years on demand of local parliament.)

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1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT (*contd.*).	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT (*contd.*). (iv.) Before the payment of an *annuity* to Turkey Greece should first of all take a quota herself and deduct administrative expenses. (v.) The *administrative personnel* should be determined according to the result of a ballot; a minority should supply at least one-third of the personnel. No reply from Turkey.	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT (*contd.*).	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT (*contd.*). precedent is one with which they would be familiar. On the other hand, they would probably regard it as a stepping-stone to ultimate separation. (ii.) The Saar Basin may suggest a precedent. There is a governing commission of five appointed by the League of Nations (one Frenchman, one German from Saar, and three others, neither French nor German), with a chairman appointed by the League; the powers of the commission are similar to those of the governor of the Lebanon: after 15 years of government by the commission the population is to decide the question of future sovereignty. If this scheme were adapted to Smyrna the commission might consist of an American chairman, with two local Greeks and two local Turks appointed by the League of Nations and responsible to the latter, while the Turkish flag could still be retained. The scheme could be applied either to areas (*a*) or (*b*) above: it might satisfy the Greeks: the introduction of the League of Nations might also satisfy Turkey by making the problem international instead of purely Allied, while keeping the administration local. On the other hand, the Turks would probably resist a sanction that reduced their sovereignty to so thin a shadow. (iii.) A third suggestion is that of municipal autonomy for Smyrna and local autonomy for Aivali Kaza and

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the Tchesme Peninsula, by the application of a miniature Lebanon scheme to each area.

This plan would be the least likely to provoke Turkish opposition, and would give protection to the most compact units of Greek population in this area. It should not be difficult of application in the case of Aivali, which is practically a self-contained Greek city-state already, or in the Tchesme Peninsula, which is mostly agricultural. But it would separate Smyrna from its hinterland, and might therefore cause economic or administrative difficulties there.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Under any of the three schemes, and for any of the three areas, the gendarmerie (or police in the towns) would be drawn representatively from the local population and placed under Allied or foreign (*i.e.*, neither Turkish nor Greek) officers, who would be responsible solely to the local governor (schemes (i) and (iii) above). No other force would be kept or allowed into the area except in case of grave emergency, when the force should be Turkish, since the sovereignty will be Turkish.

The Greek army now in Asia Minor should withdraw on the signature of the treaty to whichever of the three above areas or group of areas is decided upon, and should evacuate Asia Minor altogether on ratification by Turkey. There can be no doubt that it is the presence of Greek forces on Turkish soil that is the main cause of offence to the Turks, and I cannot help thinking that the Greeks are at bottom quite prepared for their complete evacuation. Foreign or Allied

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Lord Curzon proposed, M. Briand accepted, and the Italian Ambassador accepted subject to the Italian Government's approval:—

(i.) A mixed *gendarmerie* under Allied officers.

(ii.) *Withdrawal* of Greek troops as soon as the gendarmerie should be in working order.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

The second proposal of the conference comprised:—

(i.) A Greek *garrison* in Smyrna town.

(ii.) Outside the town, the *gendarmerie* to be officered by the Allies and recruited according to the racial distribution of the population, as reported by an Allied commission.

The Greek delegation accepted subject to the following reservations:—

(i.) Greece should fix the size of the *garrison*, and, in case of need, be able to move it to the frontier of the district to repel invasion.

(ii.) The *gendarmerie* should be organised by Greek "cadres," and the racial proportions of the population should be determined by ballot rather than by a commission.

No reply from Turkey.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Greek garrison.

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1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). DEFENCE AND ORDER (*contd.*).	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). DEFENCE AND ORDER (*contd.*).	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). DEFENCE AND ORDER (*contd.*).	1. SMYRNA (*contd.*). DEFENCE AND ORDER (*contd.*). officers should begin to organise the local gendarmerie on the signature of the treaty, and, pending their effective establishment, a small force of Allied soldiers to act as a police might be sent from Constantinople.
2. WESTERN THRACE. AREA. Western Thrace lies on the Ægean, between the River Maritsa and the mouth of the River Mesta (Kara Su), and extends inland some 30 miles. GOVERNMENT. Before the war, Bulgarian. Ceded by Bulgaria to the Allies by Treaty of Neuilly 1919. Transferred August 1920, under a separate treaty (not yet ratified), by the Allies to Greece in full sovereignty, with the proviso that *Dedeagatch* should be a port "of international concern," and should contain a Bulgarian zone to facilitate the transit trade with Bulgaria. DEFENCE AND ORDER. Greek forces.	2. WESTERN THRACE. AREA. Not discussed. GOVERNMENT. Not discussed. DEFENCE AND ORDER. Not discussed.	2. WESTERN THRACE. AREA. Not discussed. GOVERNMENT. Not discussed. DEFENCE AND ORDER. Not discussed.	2. WESTERN THRACE. This represents the stretch of the territory on the Ægean lying between the 1914 Greco-Bulgarian frontier and the 1914 Turco-Bulgarian frontier (see map II), ceded to the principal Allies by the Treaty of Neuilly, and by them to Greece by a separate treaty signed in August 1920 but not yet ratified. It has been occupied since 1920 by Greek troops. The pre-war population was about 44,000 Greeks, 124,500 Turks and 29,500 Bulgars (Greek figures). The question of Western Thrace was settled as between Bulgaria and the Allies by the Treaty of Neuilly; it does not now concern Turkey, who ceded the area to Bulgaria after the Balkan war; there is therefore no reason why the question should be reopened.

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3. EASTERN THRACE.

AREA.

From River Maritsa to within about 15 miles of Chatalja lines, *plus* an area, south-west of Adrianople and west of the Maritsa, of about 30 by 20 miles.

3. EASTERN THRACE.

AREA.

1st Proposal.

The conference made the same proposal as for Smyrna, viz., an Allied commission of enquiry into the population on stated conditions.

Turkey accepted with reservations.

Greece refused.

The *2nd proposal* regarding Smyrna, &c., contained no reference to Thrace.

3. EASTERN THRACE.

AREA.

No discussion.

3. EASTERN THRACE.

AREA.

This represents the Turkish vilayet of Adrianople, *i.e.*, all European Turkey between the Aegean Sea, the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea except for the peninsula on which lies Constantinople (see map II).

The pre-war population of this area, ceded to Greece by the Treaty of Sèvres, was, according to Greek 1912 figures, 325,000 Greeks, 253,000 Turks and 98,000 others; according to Turkish 1914 figures, 235,000 Greeks, 365,000 Turks and 48,000 others. It has been occupied by Greek troops since 1920.

SOVEREIGNTY AND ADMINISTRATION.

The Angora Turks and their partisans talk much about the recovery of Eastern Thrace as an indispensable condition of peace; and in so far as their contentions are based upon the strategic security of Constantinople, or upon the future of Adrianople, it is not only possible but desirable to meet them (*vide* below).

But there are grave reasons against reopening the question of Eastern Thrace in its entirety. It would neither be fair nor practicable to make Greece the victim both in Smyrna and in Thrace. It would be in the highest degree risky to give back to Turkey the sovereignty on both shores of the Dardanelles (the same objection applies to the Enos–Media line). Further, if we reopen the Balkan question it is difficult to know where we shall stop. Roumania and others will require to be heard.

On the other hand, if a commission of enquiry or a plebiscite be again

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3. EASTERN THRACE (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT. Ceded, under Treaty of Sèvres, by Turkey to Greece in full sovereignty, subject to:— (i.) General guarantees for *minorities*, especially Jews and Vlachs. (ii.) Guarantees for the protection of *Moslem* mosques and other institutions, and for the observance of Moslem practice in respect of questions of family law and personal status. (iii.) Representation of all the racial elements of the town of *Adrianople* upon the Municipal Council. Adrianople executive to be open to Moslems. Inalienability of mosques in Adrianople.	3. EASTERN THRACE (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT. Not discussed.	3. EASTERN THRACE (*contd.*). GOVERNMENT. Lord Curzon proposed the enforcement of the provisions in favour of the *Moslem* population and institutions, and especially those concerning *Adrianople*. M. Briand suggested an *autonomous zone*. Lord Curzon was unable to accept this. M. Briand then revived the suggestion for a *commission of enquiry*. The Italian Ambassador agreed personally. Lord Curzon pointed out that it would mean a refusal by Greece. The whole question of Thrace was reserved.	3. EASTERN THRACE (*contd.*). SOVEREIGNTY AND ADMINISTRATION (*contd.*). suggested, this is a solution to which, after the experience of the past three years, no one will feel warmly inclined. Apart from the local uncertainty and unrest which they cause, it is almost impossible at this date to take into fair account the effect of the deportations of the Balkan War and of 1914–18. The protection of the Turkish minority in Eastern Thrace under the supervision of the League of Nations is already provided for by the Minorities Treaty between Greece and the Allies signed at Sèvres in August 1920 (see column 1). But as regards Adrianople the special case of these provisions should be strengthened by stipulating for a predominance of the Moslem element on the executive council of the town (Turkish 1914 figures, 54,000 Moslems and 41,000 Greeks and Armenians) and by more stringent provisions as to the immunities of Moslem places of worship.
DEFENCE AND ORDER. Greek forces, except in the demilitarised zone of the Straits.	DEFENCE AND ORDER. Not discussed.	DEFENCE AND ORDER. Lord Curzon proposed the *demilitarisation* of an area north-west of the Chatalja lines. M. Briand suggested an *international gendarmerie*. Lord Curzon could not accept the suggestion. Reserved.	DEFENCE AND ORDER. The Turks contend that the Greco-Turkish frontier of the Sèvres Treaty renders Constantinople indefensible from the land. This frontier is at its southern point about 25 miles from Constantinople, and gradually moves further away until it is about 70 miles distant at its northern point. The claim therefore has force; and it would seem desirable to meet it by pushing back the frontier in a north-westerly

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direction to a point just south of Midia, on the Black Sea, and just east of Rodosto (both of which are predominantly Greek towns)—see map II. Such a change would put back about an equal number of Greeks and Turks (30,000 in each case) into Turkey. But its real and decisive merit would be the removal of the frontier to at least 90 miles from Constantinople.

A further guarantee for the military security of Turkey in Europe might be thus provided. The Greek forces in Eastern Thrace other than gendarmerie might be limited in numbers and might be confined to certain towns distant from the Turko-Greek frontier; *e.g.*, Adrianople and Kirk Kilisse. Turkish forces might also be allowed in fixed numbers in European Turkey, say, at Chatalja, outside the demilitarised zone (reduced as suggested by the London Conference last March to 25 kilometres from the Bosphorus—see column II and maps II and III).

4. CONSTANTINOPLE, THE STRAITS AND DEMILITARISED ZONE.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

The threat to the retention of Constantinople by the Turks in certain emergencies (see columns I and II) should be finally withdrawn, and as suggested above, under the heading of Thrace, a fixed number of Turkish troops might be permitted in European Thrace outside the reduced demilitarised zone: (under the Sèvres Treaty the whole of European Turkey is demilitarised and the Sultan's bodyguard of 700 men is the only force allowed in Constantinople).

The complete evacuation of Constan-

4. CONSTANTINOPLE, THE STRAITS AND DEMILITARISED ZONE.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

M. Briand mentioned that he favoured early *evacuation*. Not otherwise discussed.

4. CONSTANTINOPLE, THE STRAITS AND DEMILITARISED ZONE.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

The conference suggested—

(i.) The withdrawal of the threat to the independence of Constantinople

(ii.) The possibility of rapid *evacuation*.

Greece refused this among other suggestions.

No Turkish answer was received.

4. CONSTANTINOPLE, THE STRAITS AND DEMILITARISED ZONE.

CONSTANTINOPLE.

Constantinople to be the capital of Turkey and the residence of the Sultan. The Allies, however, to have the right to modify this arrangement in the event of Turkey failing to carry out the treaty in general and the minorities clauses in particular.

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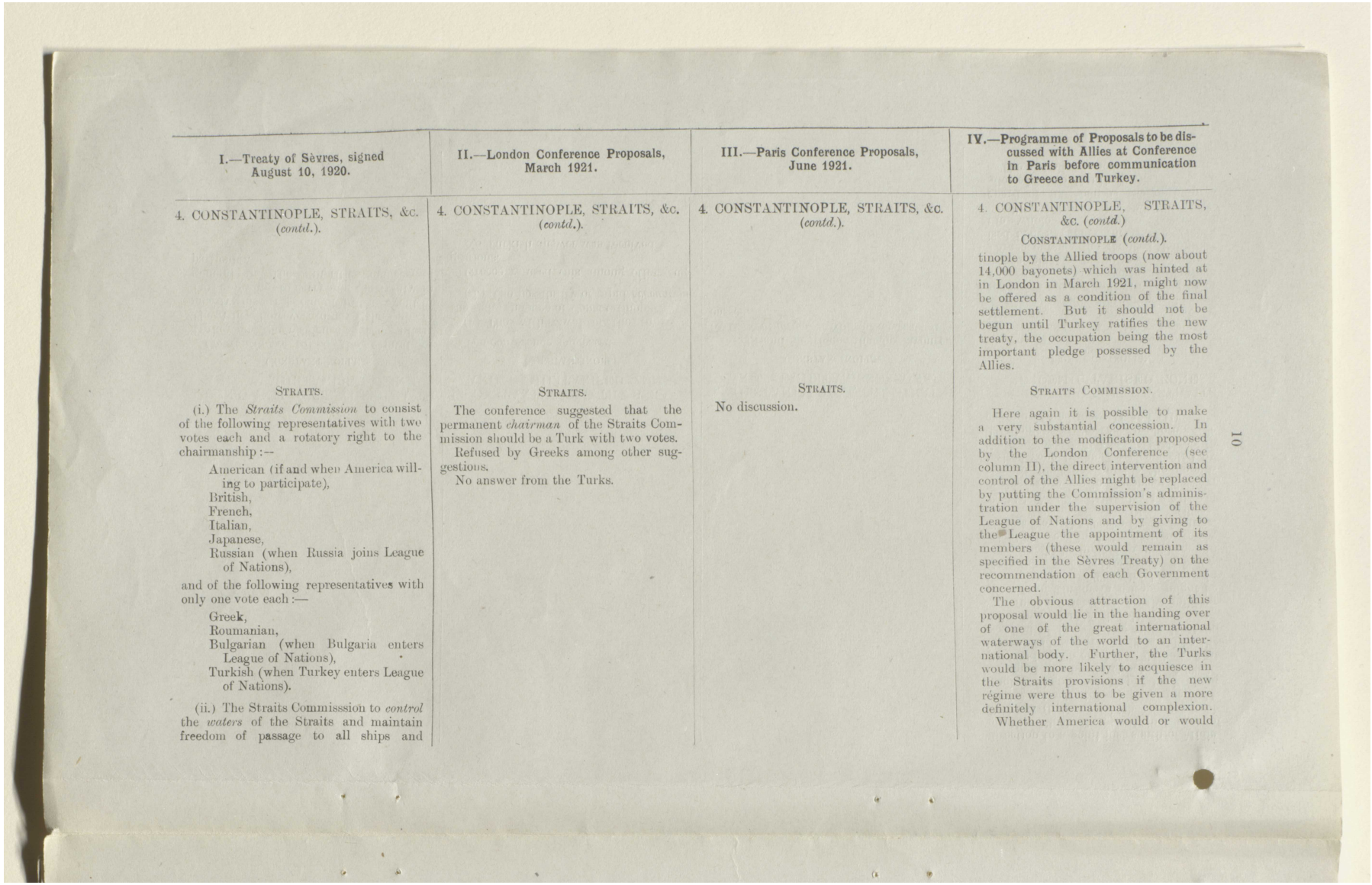

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4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*).	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*).	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*).	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*)
			CONSTANTINOPLE (*contd.*).
			tinople by the Allied troops (now about 14,000 bayonets) which was hinted at in London in March 1921, might now be offered as a condition of the final settlement. But it should not be begun until Turkey ratifies the new treaty, the occupation being the most important pledge possessed by the Allies.
STRAITS.	STRAITS.	STRAITS.	STRAITS COMMISSION.
(i.) The *Straits Commission* to consist of the following representatives with two votes each and a rotatory right to the chairmanship :— American (if and when America willing to participate), British, French, Italian, Japanese, Russian (when Russia joins League of Nations), and of the following representatives with only one vote each :— Greek, Roumanian, Bulgarian (when Bulgaria enters League of Nations), Turkish (when Turkey enters League of Nations).	The conference suggested that the permanent *chairman* of the Straits Commission should be a Turk with two votes. Refused by Greeks among other suggestions. No answer from the Turks.	No discussion.	Here again it is possible to make a very substantial concession. In addition to the modification proposed by the London Conference (see column II), the direct intervention and control of the Allies might be replaced by putting the Commission's administration under the supervision of the League of Nations and by giving to the League the appointment of its members (these would remain as specified in the Sèvres Treaty) on the recommendation of each Government concerned. The obvious attraction of this proposal would lie in the handing over of one of the great international waterways of the world to an international body. Further, the Turks would be more likely to acquiesce in the Straits provisions if the new régime were thus to be given a more definitely international complexion. Whether America would or would
(ii.) The Straits Commisssion to *control* the *waters* of the Straits and maintain freedom of passage to all ships and			

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aircraft calling on the Allied garrison for help when necessary.
(iii.) The Straits Commission—
(*a.*) to be responsible for the usual harbour works and services;
(*b.*) to have its own budget and to levy dues;
(*c.*) to have its own police force recruited locally and officered by the Allies.

DEMILITARISED ZONE.

(i.) The *demilitarised zone* to consist of:—
The Gallipoli Peninsula.
The Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles to an approximate depth of 60 miles inland.
A strip about 15 miles deep along the European shore of the Sea of Marmora.
The European side of the Bosphorus to a depth of about 50 miles north of Constantinople.
On the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus, the whole Ismid Peninsula.
A strip about 25 miles deep along the Asiatic shore of the Sea of Marmora. (leaving Brussa outside the zone).
The Marmora Islands.
The islands of Lemnos.
Imbros,
Samothrace,
Tenedos,
Mitylene.

(ii.) In the demilitarised zone all military works to be destroyed and none constructed. The zone not to be used for military purposes except by the three Allies acting jointly.
(iii.) Local Greek and Turkish gendarmerie to be under the Allied command.

DEMILITARISED ZONE.

The conference's final proposals included:
(i.) *Demilitarised zone* to be reduced to—
(*a.*) 25 kilom. either side of Bosphorus.
(*b.*) At Dardanelles: Gallipoli up to Rodosto; and from Tenedos to Karabigha.
(*c.*) Islands in Ægean which command Dardanelles.
(ii.) Possibility of allowing Turkey free passage across Bosphorus end of demilitarised zone.
Greece rejected these and all the other proposals.
No answer was received from Turkey.

DEMILITARISED ZONE.

Lord Curzon made the above-mentioned suggestion for the demilitarisation of an additional zone north-west of the Chatalja lines.
Reserved.

not interpret this change as an intention to exclude her, I cannot say.

DEMILITARISED ZONE.

The reductions proposed in March last at the London Conference (see column II and map III) should be maintained.

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4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*). ALLIED GARRISON. The three Allies to keep a military and air *garrison* to maintain the freedom of the Straits; numbers of garrison to be fixed by three Allies. Each of the three Allies to have a *guardship*.	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*). ALLIED GARRISON. Possibility of Allied garrison being limited to Chanak and Gallipoli.	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*). ALLIED GARRISON. At Paris Conference *in August 1921* military advisers were asked to consider numbers of garrison to defend Dardanelles. They understood terms of reference to be defence in the existing situation, *i.e.* against a Kemalist threat, and recommended twelve battalions with cavalry, artillery and air forces (French and Italian "recommendation"), or eighteen battalions with cavalry, &c., (British "recommendation").	4. CONSTANTINOPLE, STRAITS, &c. (*contd.*). ALLIED GARRISON. The Allied troops of guarantee should be withdrawn as soon as possible after ratification of the treaty to Chanak and Gallipoli (as proposed by the London Conference, see column II). A minimum garrison for the whole Sèvres zone of three battalions, and two batteries of garrison artillery, &c., was proposed by Marshal Foch's Committee in London in February 1920. It might now be possible to propose a further modification of these guarantees in the following respects:— (*a.*) By reducing the Allied garrison in consequence of the reduction of the demilitarised zone. (*b.*) By including a small Turkish and a small Greek contingent in the Allied forces on the Turkish and Greek shores respectively—a proposal that is recommended by considerations both of policy and economy. (*c.*) By providing in the treaty that, after a specified interval, the duty of ensuring effective demilitarisation of the zone shall be transferred from the Allied garrison either to an international garrison chosen by, and responsible to, the League of Nations, or by a commission of experts sent yearly by the League to inspect the zone and report upon it. The military experts might in the first instance be asked to report on these three proposals.

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5. ARMENIA.

AREA.

Eastern or Russian Armenia was in 1914 the districts round Erivan and Alexandropol immediately north of the Russo-Turkish frontier. What was usually known as Turkish or Western Armenia was the Turkish vilayets near this frontier—the Erzerum, Van, Bitlis, Kharput vilayets and parts of the Diarbekir and Sivas vilayets.

The Armenian people before the war was estimated at about 2,000,000, scattered over Turkey, and 1,000,000 in Russia; the latest estimate (American of February 1921) is 1,000,000 in Russian Armenia (including 400,000 Turkish refugees) and 560,000 in Turkey (including 150,000 at Constantinople and 120,000 in Cilicia)—*i.e.*, a reduction by massacres, famine, &c., of about a million and a half.

After the Turkish invasion of the Caucasus in 1915, Russia had by July 1916 occupied Trebizond, Erzingan, Erzerum, Bitlis and Van (Turkish Armenia). After the Russian revolution in March 1918 Russia retired and Turkey overran Russian Armenia, reaching Baku September 1918. Turkish occupation ceased with the armistice of Mudros, November 1918, and the three Caucasian republics of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan maintained a precarious existence, thanks largely to the presence of British troops. *De facto* recognition in January 1920 and *de jure* recognition by her signature of the Treaty of Sèvres in August 1920 were given by the Allies to Russian Armenia as an independent State.

5. ARMENIA.

AREA.

Not discussed.

GOVERNMENT.

Not discussed.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Not discussed.

5. ARMENIA.

AREA.

The conference proposed the adaptation of the treaty clauses, provided that Turkey should recognise the right of Turkish Armenians to a national home on the Eastern Turkish frontier and should accept the decision of a commission appointed by the League of Nations as to territory to be transferred from Turkey to Armenia.

This proposal was in accord with the demands of the Armenian delegates. Turkish reply not received.

GOVERNMENT.

Not discussed.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Not discussed.

N.B.—The Armenian delegation also asked for administrative autonomy for Cilicia with a gendarmerie of local Christians. The French representatives doubted the practicability of this, but stated that France was determined to do everything possible for the minorities in Cilicia.

5. ARMENIA.

AREA.

The President of the United States is to ascribe to the Armenian Republic of Erivan such parts as he thinks fit of the following Turkish vilayets:—

Erzerum.
Trebizond.
Van.
Bitlis.

He may provide for Armenian access to the sea.

GOVERNMENT.

The territory delimited by President Wilson to be ceded by Turkey to Armenia in full sovereignty and to form part of the then independent Armenian Republic, a signatory of the treaty.

DEFENCE AND ORDER.

Armenian forces.

The President of the United States may also provide for the demilitarisation of the adjacent Turkish territory.

N.B.—In December 1920 President Wilson recommended a frontier line between Turkey and Armenia which included in the latter nearly the whole of the vilayets of Van, Bitlis and Erzerum, and a large part of the vilayet of Trebizond, including the port of that name. He also recommended that the superior officers of the Turkish gendarmerie in the neighbouring Turkish territory should be foreign and should specially report to the Allied Military Commission at Constantinople of any signs of Turkish military preparations against Armenia.

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			5. ARMENIA (*contd.*). AREA (*contd.*). In November 1920, after a Kemalist attack which reached Erivan, Armenia ceded the provinces of Kars and Ardahan to Kemalist Turkey. Simultaneously Russian Soviet troops overran Russian Armenia, which has since, like Georgia and Azerbaijan, remained, except for a short interval, a part of the Russian Federal Soviet Republic. In October 1921 by the Treaty of Kars, Russia, Georgia and Armenia ceded half the province of Batoum and confirmed the cession of Kars and Ardahan to Turkey. This summary of events is sufficient to show the uselessness of attempting now to pursue the plan contemplated by the Treaty of Sèvres (see column I) of adding to Russian Armenia a portion of Turkish Armenia in order to form one independent State. The Armenian frontier in Turkey actually delimited by President Wilson and corresponding roughly to Russia's occupation of Turkish territory in 1916 (described above) is strongly held by Kemalist Turkey. Russia had lost territory in the Caucasus to Turkey. Neither the Allies nor other Powers have the men or money to create an Armenian State or even a national home for Armenians (see London Conference proposals—column II) in the inhospitable and inaccessible eastern vilayets of Turkey, even were the latter not known to be opposed to any such plan. Armenians in Turkey must trust to the

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minority provisions of the treaty if we can secure their proper execution.

On the other hand, I submit a suggestion for the possible discharge of the obligations to which all the Allies were equally committed, and for the partial, even if inadequate, satisfaction of Armenia's claims. Might not Turkey be pressed to accept some special régime on Lebanon lines, with either a Turk (chosen by agreement between the Allies or the League of Nations and Turkey) or a foreigner (preferably a French citizen, chosen by the League of Nations) as Governor, for a coastal district in Cilicia, either the whole vilayet of Adana with the sanjak of Marash (to include Aintab) or the vilayet only, or a smaller area round Adana and Mersina (see map IV)?

Before the war, according to American statistics, the population of these areas was:—

—	Moslems.	Armenians.	Greeks.
Adana and Mersina sanjaks	165,000	35,000	20,000
Adana vilayet ..	290,000	75,000	20,000
Marash sanjak ..	146,000	55,000	1,000
Total	601,000	165,000	41,000

Since the armistice the Armenian population has increased by the influx of refugees. I do not put forward this suggestion with any great confidence. Its advantages are easily discernible. It would practically meet the proposal made by the Armenian delegation

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			5. ARMENIA (*contd.*). AREA (*contd.*). during the London Conference (see column II); it would give security to the Christian refugees already in Cilicia and likely to come from other parts of Turkey; the district in question is fertile, and is easily accessible from the sea, and it is close to the mandated territory of Syria. On the other hand, the Turks may regard such a concession as the first step towards an Armenian "national home"; while the Armenians themselves might feel that their case was weakened by partition of their main centres of residence. France, by reason of her position in relation to Cilicia, and the obligations as regards the protection of minorities which she has acknowledged there, is perhaps in a better position to advise on this matter than we are. But the obligation to Armenia is an international one; and its binding character is felt with peculiar intensity in the British Parliament and by large sections of the British people.
6. MINORITIES. (1.) Provisions corresponding to those in the Hungarian, Bulgarian, &c., treaties, viz.:—	6. MINORITIES. Not discussed.	6. MINORITIES. Not discussed.	6. MINORITIES. The main differences between the minority provision of the Treaty of Sèvres and the minority provisions of the treaties concluded in 1919 at Paris with European States are shown in column I.

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(i.) Protection of life and liberty. (ii.) Religious freedom. (iii.) Freedom for use of any language. (iv.) Scholastic freedom. (v.) Political and civil equality. (vi.) General superintendence by the League of Nations. (2.) Provisions appropriate to the special circumstances in Turkey, viz.:— (i.) Mixed commissions under the League of Nations:— (*a.*) To recover Christians forcibly converted to Islam. (*b.*) To recover other survivors of deportations and massacres. (*c.*) To recover their stolen or confiscated property. (*d.*) To take administrative measures to re-establish these people in their homes. (ii.) Turkey reaffirms the ecclesiastic and scholastic privileges of the non-Moslem communities and cancels all legislation contrary thereto. (iii.) The Allies, in consultation with the League of Nations, to decide on measures for the execution of these clauses. (3.) See guarantees for Moslems in Eastern Thrace (above). (4.) See Tripartite Agreement (below)	Not discussed. Not discussed.	I suggest that our policy should be as follows:— (*a.*) Maintenance of the substance of the Sèvres clauses with drafting changes to render their form more palatable to Turkey. (*b.*) Insertion in the treaty of clauses analogous to the concluding clauses of the European Minority Treaties placing the direct supervision of minority provisions under the League of Nations. (*c.*) Insertion in the treaty of a special clause appointing the League of Nations' High Commissioner at Constantinople to watch the execution of the minority provisions, with power to send delegates to different parts of Turkey to examine and report on alleged infractions. I think that Turkey might be more likely to accept international than Allied supervision, the principle having been admitted in the National Pact of 1920. For their part the League of Nations, on a motion of the last Assembly, have already decided to appoint a Minorities' High Commissioner at Constantinople. Clauses such as the above appear to be to constitute the main practicable safeguards which we can now desire for the large Greek and Armenian minorities who will be left in Asia Minor.
7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. This is an agreement between Great Britain, France and Italy which is to take effect with the Treaty of Sèvres and is to be communicated to Turkey:— (1.) The three Allies to be equal on all commissions for reorganising Turkish	7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. No discussion.	7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. Since the zones of influence appeared to be regarded by Turkey as severe encroachment on her sovereignty, the desirability of modifying or abolishing the agreement was discussed. It was thought that French and Italian rights

See Eastern Thrace (above).

See Tripartite Agreement (below).

7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT.

This agreement signed at Sèvres, and afterwards published, was to have come into force, after ratification, with the Peace Treaty with Turkey. Its terms raised strong objections from Turkey; but it represents Italy's

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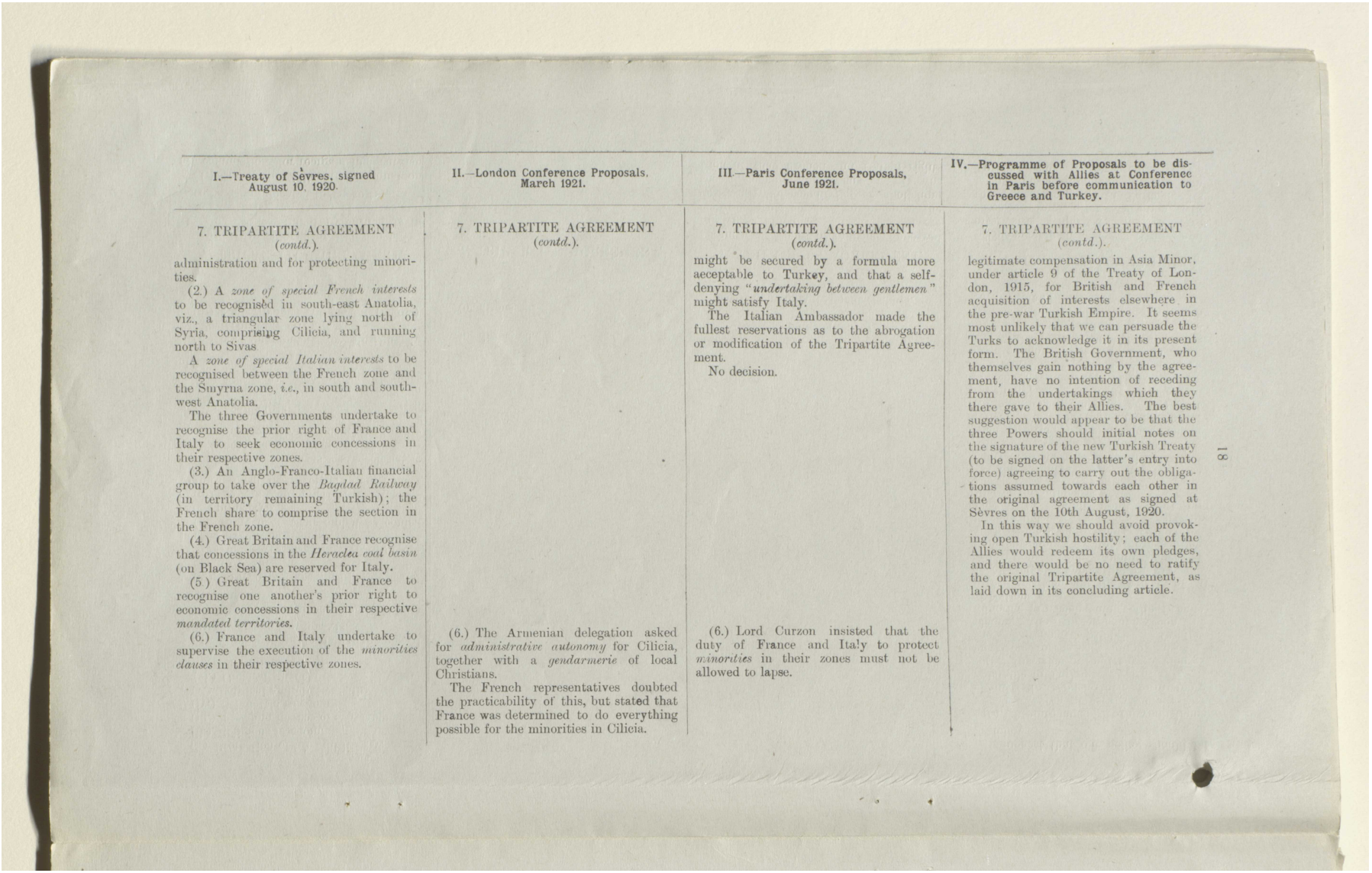

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7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (*contd.*).	7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (*contd.*).	7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (*contd.*).	7. TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT (*contd.*).
administration and for protecting minorities. (2.) A *zone of special French interests* to be recognised in south-east Anatolia, viz., a triangular zone lying north of Syria, comprising Cilicia, and running north to Sivas. A *zone of special Italian interests* to be recognised between the French zone and the Smyrna zone, *i.e.*, in south and south-west Anatolia. The three Governments undertake to recognise the prior right of France and Italy to seek economic concessions in their respective zones. (3.) An Anglo-Franco-Italian financial group to take over the *Bagdad Railway* (in territory remaining Turkish); the French share to comprise the section in the French zone. (4.) Great Britain and France recognise that concessions in the *Heraclea coal basin* (on Black Sea) are reserved for Italy. (5.) Great Britain and France to recognise one another's prior right to economic concessions in their respective *mandated territories*. (6.) France and Italy undertake to supervise the execution of the *minorities clauses* in their respective zones.	(6.) The Armenian delegation asked for *administrative autonomy* for Cilicia, together with a *gendarmerie* of local Christians. The French representatives doubted the practicability of this, but stated that France was determined to do everything possible for the minorities in Cilicia.	might be secured by a formula more acceptable to Turkey, and that a self-denying "*undertaking between gentlemen*" might satisfy Italy. The Italian Ambassador made the fullest reservations as to the abrogation or modification of the Tripartite Agreement. No decision. (6.) Lord Curzon insisted that the duty of France and Italy to protect *minorities* in their zones must not be allowed to lapse.	legitimate compensation in Asia Minor, under article 9 of the Treaty of London, 1915, for British and French acquisition of interests elsewhere in the pre-war Turkish Empire. It seems most unlikely that we can persuade the Turks to acknowledge it in its present form. The British Government, who themselves gain nothing by the agreement, have no intention of receding from the undertakings which they there gave to their Allies. The best suggestion would appear to be that the three Powers should initial notes on the signature of the new Turkish Treaty (to be signed on the latter's entry into force) agreeing to carry out the obligations assumed towards each other in the original agreement as signed at Sèvres on the 10th August, 1920. In this way we should avoid provoking open Turkish hostility; each of the Allies would redeem its own pledges, and there would be no need to ratify the original Tripartite Agreement, as laid down in its concluding article.

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8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES.

(1.) A *Financial Commission* to consist of representatives of—
Great Britain.
France.
Italy.
Turkey (consultative only).

(2.) The Financial Commission to *control both revenue and expenditure*: Parliamentary modifications of the budget to be subject to the approval of the Commission.

(3.) The Financial Commission to *control*—
A Financial Inspectorate.
Currency.
Government loans.
Grant of concessions.
Customs tariff.
Taxation of Allied nationals.
Administration of the Public Debt.

(4.) The Financial Commission to allot *Turkish revenue* in the following order of priority:—
1. Salaries and expenses of Financial Commission.
2. Current expenses of Allied garrison after entry into force of treaty.
3. Service of pre-war Public Debt.
4. Repayment of expenses of Allied armies of occupation, during armistice, in Turkey and Syria (British army).
5. Expenses of Turkish administration.
6. War claims of Allied nationals.

8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES.

The conference proposed—
(i.) That the *honorary president* should be Turkish.
(ii.) That the *Turkish delegate* should have a vote on all internal questions but only a consultative voice in questions specially affecting the Allies.
(iii.) That *parliament* should have the right to modify the budget; but if such modifications should disturb the financial equilibrium, the budget should be submitted to the Financial Commission again.
(iv.) That the Turkish Government should be free to grant *concessions*, but that the Minister of Finance should first consult with the Financial Commission as to the desirability of such concessions.

8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES.

M. Briand agreed with Lord Curzon that a means of *control* might be found which, while securing Allied interests, would not offend Turkish susceptibilities.

8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES.

The following programme is tentatively suggested, subject to the views of the financial advisers:

The scheme in the Treaty of Sèvres which created a Financial Commission (subsequently modified in some particulars in the proposals of the London Conference) not only represented an agreement arrived at by the Allies after protracted negotiation, but in all probability the only scheme that would really provide both for payment of Turkey's pre-war debt and war claims and also for effective rehabilitation of her finances and, as a consequence of her administration and economic welfare. But there is, I believe, a general consensus that the Allied executive control of Turkey's administration which this would involve is impolitic and would entail an excessive interference with her independence.

In these circumstances the following scheme is submitted for examination. A reconstituted Council of the Debt might be set up, on the following lines:

(i.) Recasting of Sèvres financial provisions somewhat on the lines of the reparation section of the Bulgarian Treaty.

(ii.) Total liability of Turkey (pre-war debt and war indemnity) to be fixed at a lump sum.

(iii.) Priority bonds to this amount to be issued by the Turkish Government with absolute priority over all other Turkish obligations.

(iv.) Assignment of ceded revenues to the service of pre-war public debt to be annulled and decree of Moharrem altered accordingly.

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			8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES (*contd.*). (v.) Collection of whole Turkish revenue by the Ottoman Public Debt Council* reconstituted to represent the Governments concerned as well as the bondholders: contributions of detached territories to the service of the Ottoman debt to be paid to the Council. (vi.) Revenues to be first applied to the service of the priority bonds. (vii.) Extension of principle of limitation of Turkish departmental expenditure, involved in the limitation of naval and military armaments, to the civilian departments. Such a scheme as I have indicated would possess the merits of definitely fixing Turkey's liability of maintaining control over Turkish finance, but in a form (*i.e.*, the Debt Council) more familiar and therefore more acceptable to Turkey: and of enabling some money to be recovered from Turkey, while at the same time restoring her finances. To what extent it would involve an inevitable or a desirable infringement

* N.B.—The Pre-war Debt Council consisted of one representative each of (1) English and Dutch, (2) French, (3) German, (4) Austrian, (5) Italian, (6) Turkish bondholders and (7) Ottoman Bank. (3) and (4) have since been eliminated by the Treaties of Versailles and Saint-Germains. The chairman is always in alternate years English and French owing to their preponderant holdings.

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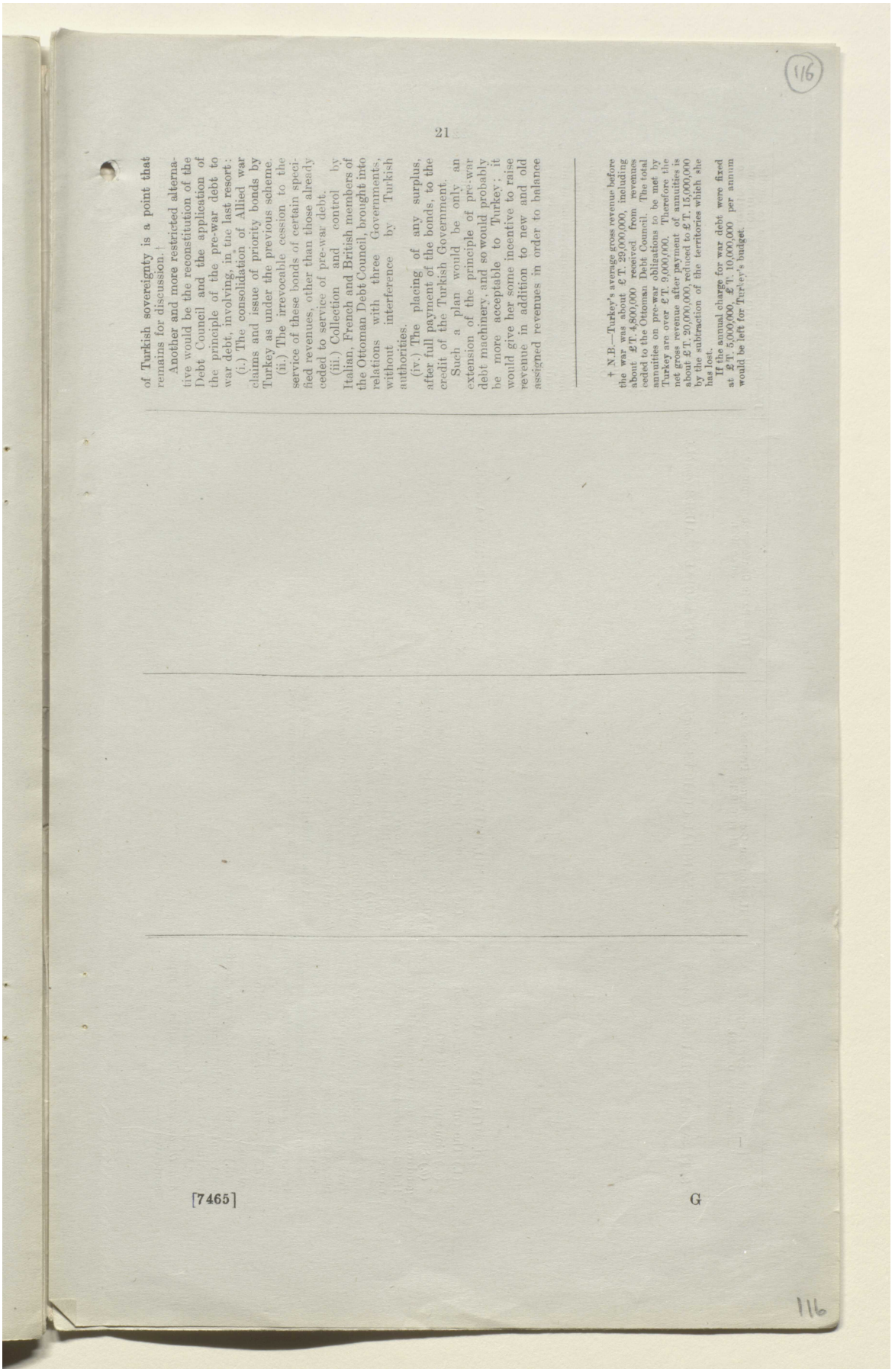

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of Turkish sovereignty is a point that remains for discussion.

Another and more restricted alternative would be the reconstitution of the Debt Council and the application of the principle of the pre-war debt to war debt, involving, in the last resort:

(i.) The consolidation of Allied war claims and issue of priority bonds by Turkey as under the previous scheme.

(ii.) The irrevocable cession to the service of these bonds of certain specified revenues, other than those already ceded to service of pre-war debt.

(iii.) Collection and control by Italian, French and British members of the Ottoman Debt Council, brought into relations with three Governments, without interference by Turkish authorities.

(iv.) The placing of any surplus, after full payment of the bonds, to the credit of the Turkish Government.

Such a plan would be only an extension of the principle of pre-war debt machinery, and so would probably be more acceptable to Turkey; it would give her some incentive to raise revenue in addition to new and old assigned revenues in order to balance

† N.B.—Turkey's average gross revenue before the war was about £T. 29,000,000, including about £T. 4,800,000 received from revenues ceded to the Ottoman Debt Council. The total annuities on pre-war obligations to be met by Turkey are over £T. 9,000,000. Therefore the net gross revenue after payment of annuities is about £T. 20,000,000, reduced to £T. 15,000,000 by the subtraction of the territories which she has lost.

If the annual charge for war debt were fixed at £T. 5,000,000, £T. 10,000,000 per annum would be left for Turkey's budget.

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8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES (*contd.*).	8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES (*contd.*).	8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES (*contd.*).	8. FINANCIAL CLAUSES (*contd.*). her budget; it would settle the priority question in a simple way; and it would provide an efficient method for securing payment of Allied war claims. On the other hand, it would leave entirely to Turkey the question whether, and, if so, how, to improve her finances and administration at all, and might for that reason be the reverse of advantageous to trade in general.
9. MILITARY CLAUSES. (1.) The Turkish *army* is reduced to:— (*a.*) Gendarmerie, 35,000. (*b.*) Special elements to reinforce the gendarmerie and to defend the frontiers, 15,000; a low proportion of officers and n.c.os. (2.) These forces are *distributed* over Turkey by the Allies and tied to their particular districts. (3.) Not more than 15 per cent. of the officers to be Allied or neutral instructors. In any one district the *foreign officers* to be of the same nationality. (4.) *Voluntary enlistment.* No conscription. (5.) Turkish *munition stocks* are specifically limited. Further manufacture only by Allied consent. (6.) The *Military Commission of Control and Organisation* will consist of representatives of—	9. MILITARY CLAUSES. The conference proposed:— (i.) *Gendarmerie* to be increased to 45,000; *special elements* to be increased to 30,000. (ii.) Turkey to *distribute* her own forces in agreement with the Allies. (iii.) Fewer *foreign officers* and more Turkish officers and n.c.os. (iv.) Extension of period for *demobilisation* and *disarmament*. This was included in general proposals to which no Turkish answer was received.	9. MILITARY CLAUSES. Not discussed.	9. MILITARY CLAUSES. Subject to the views of the military advisers the following programme is suggested:— The retention of the Sèvres clauses with the London modifications (see columns I and II), though it provides for an effective supervision over Turkish army and armaments, is probably no longer possible or desirable. There might be substituted for it a scheme by which in the last resort the life and powers of the Military Inter-Allied Commission of Control and Organisation would be confined to supervision over the reduction of Turkey's forces and armament, the power of the Commission to organise and control the employment of the new Turkish force being abandoned, and such organisation and control being secured by Allied officers nominally, at any rate, in Turkish service.

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Such a plan would have a better chance of acceptance by Turkey, and would retain the essential objects of the abolition of conscription, the appointment of foreign officers for the Turkish gendarmerie, &c., the desired limitation in numbers and armament of the Turkish forces and greater economy. For these advantages, the price that would have to be paid would be the definite abandonment of any effective or direct control over the distribution and organisation of the Turkish forces of the future.

10. OTHER PROVISIONS.

Here we might maintain, where possible, the other concessions proposed at the London Conference (see column II); introduce such changes in the economic clauses as would bring them into conformity with the final form of the financial clauses; perhaps modify article 189 of Sèvres Treaty; and possibly suppress the penalty clauses (Part VII of the Treaty of Sèvres).

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10. OTHER PROPOSALS.

KURDISTAN.

Not discussed.

10. OTHER PROPOSALS.

The conference made the following additional proposals:—

Admission of Turkey to League of Nations to be facilitated on proof that Turkey is willing to carry out treaty.

KURDISTAN.

Modification of clauses in accordance with prevailing circumstances, provided that Turkey should give facilities for *autonomy* and for protection of *Kurds and Assyrians.*

10. OTHER CLAUSES.

upon which proposals were made at the London Conference, March 1921—see column II.

KURDISTAN.

1. Area lying between Armenia, Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria and the Euphrates.
2. A *commission* of representatives of—
   Great Britain,
   France,
   Italy

to devise a scheme of *local autonomy*, with safeguards for Assyro-Chaldeans and other minorities.

3. Turkey to grant *independence* on demand addressed by the majority of the population to the League of Nations.

Great Britain
France.
Italy.
Japan.

The commission is to—

(*a.*) Control *demobilisation and disarmament.*

(*b.*) *Organise*, in collaboration with Turkey, the new forces authorised (*see* I).

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10. OTHER CLAUSES (*contd.*). JUDICIAL COMMISSION. Judicial reform to be elaborated by a *commission* representing— Great Britain. France. Italy. Japan. NAVAL CLAUSES. Turkish *fleet* reduced to— 7 sloops. 6 torpedo boats. FOREIGN POST OFFICES. To be re-established in Turkey.	10. OTHER PROPOSALS (*contd.*). JUDICIAL COMMISSION. The conference proposed that Turkey should be represented. NAVAL CLAUSES. The conference suggested a possible increase. FOREIGN POST OFFICES. The conference suggested the possibility of suppression.	10. OTHER PROPOSALS (*contd.*). JUDICIAL COMMISSION. Not discussed. NAVAL CLAUSES. Not discussed. FOREIGN POST OFFICES. Not discussed. NOTE.—Greece refused the Allied offer of mediation after the June conference in Paris. The above proposals were therefore "not" made "either" to her or Turkey.	

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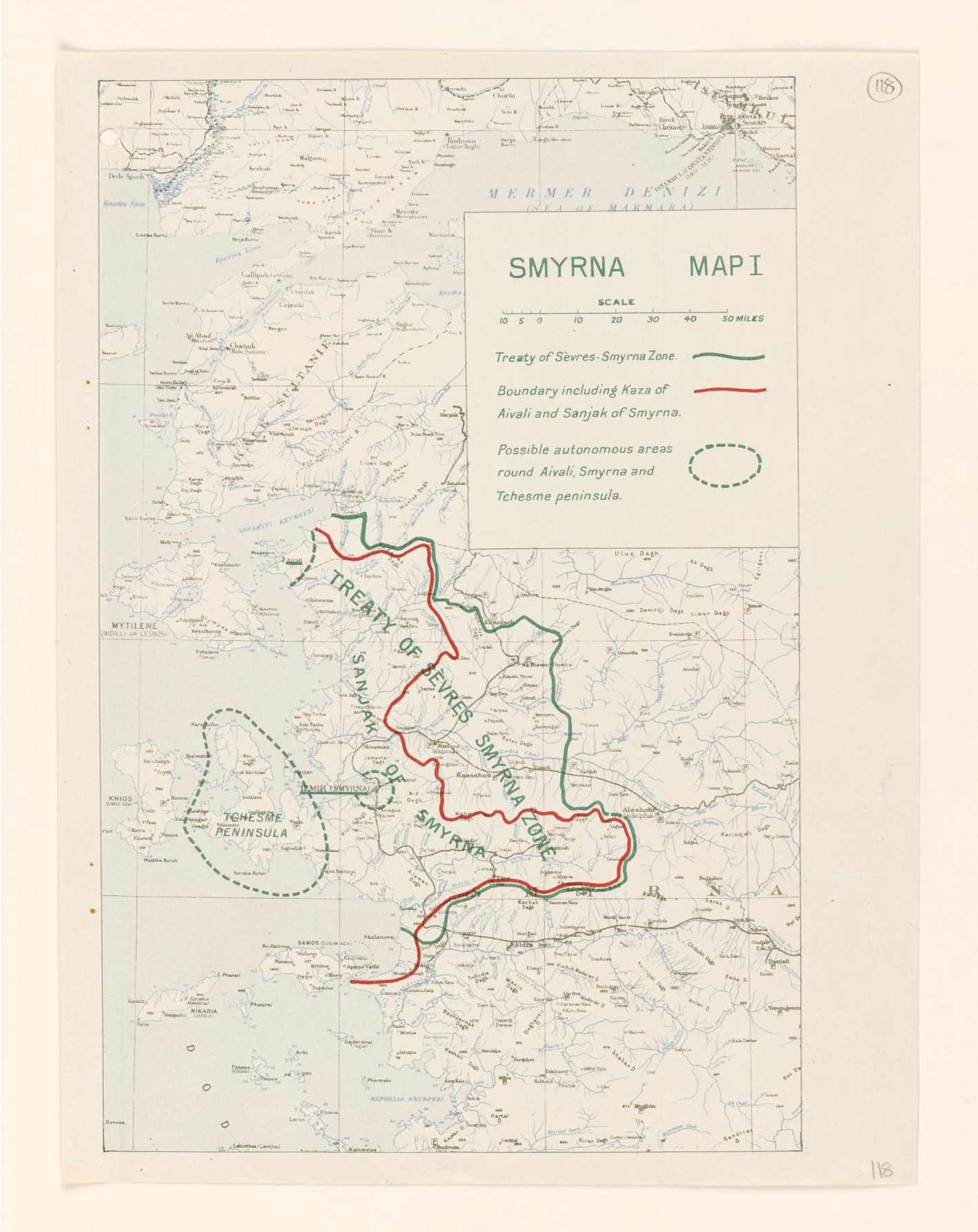

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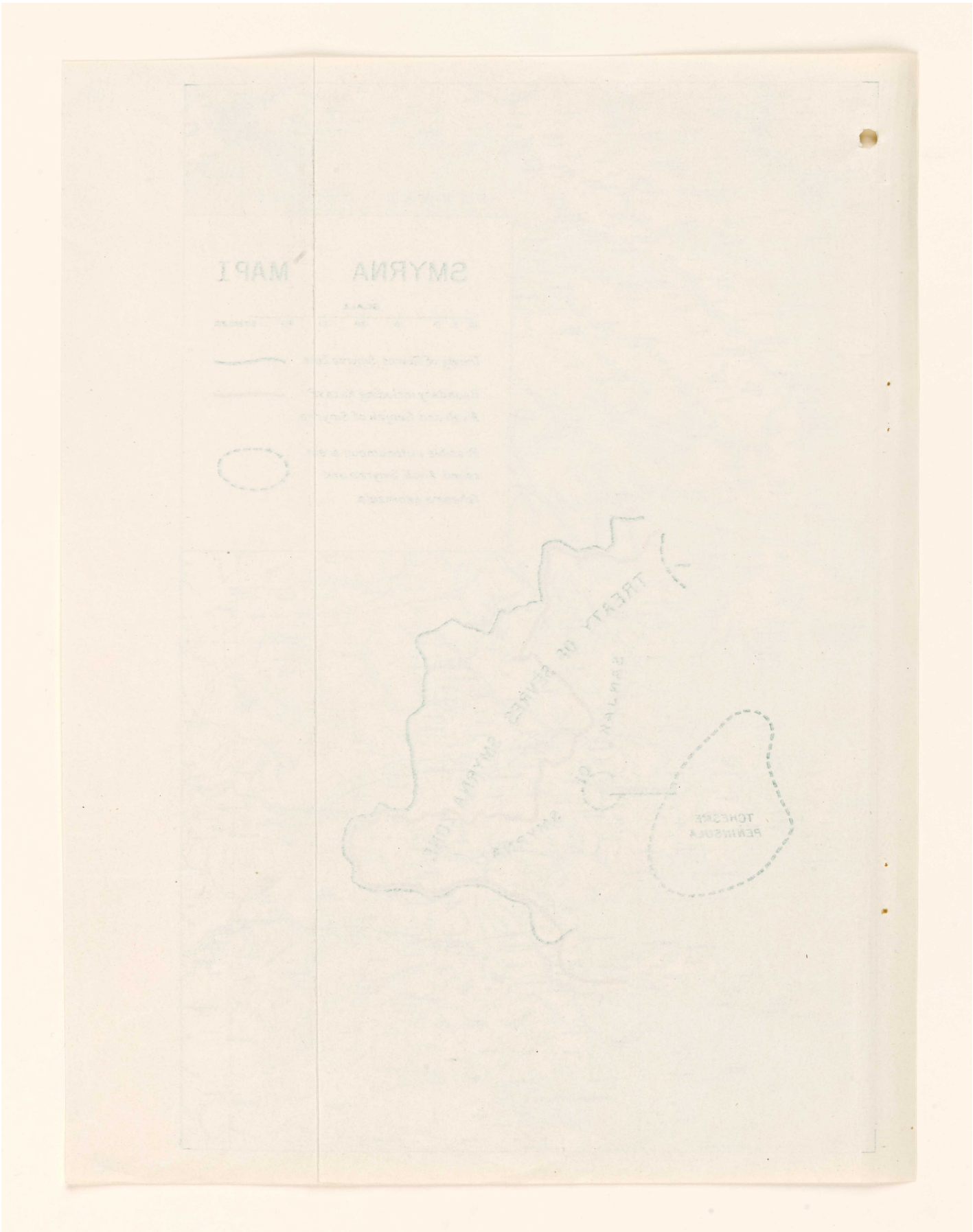

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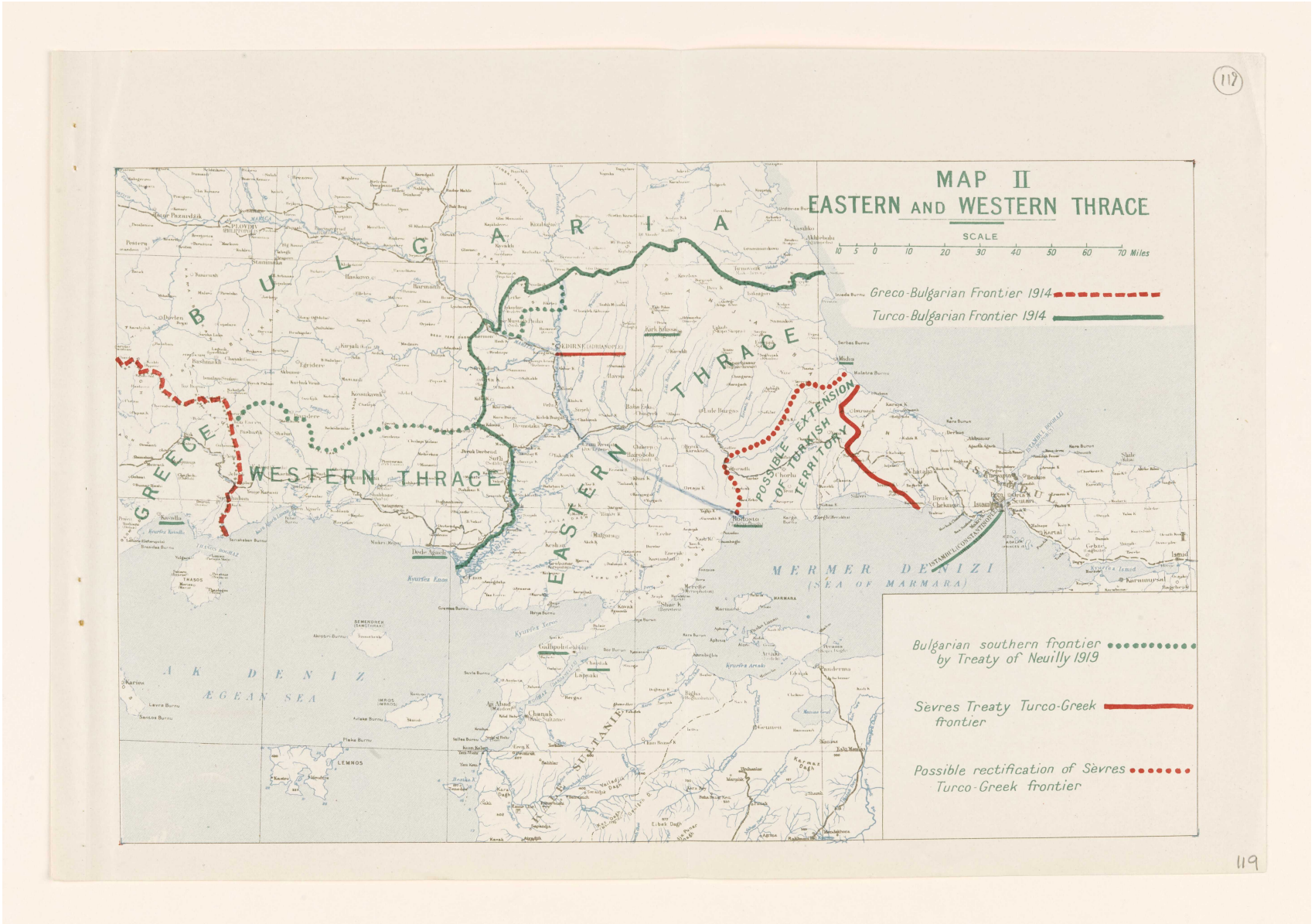

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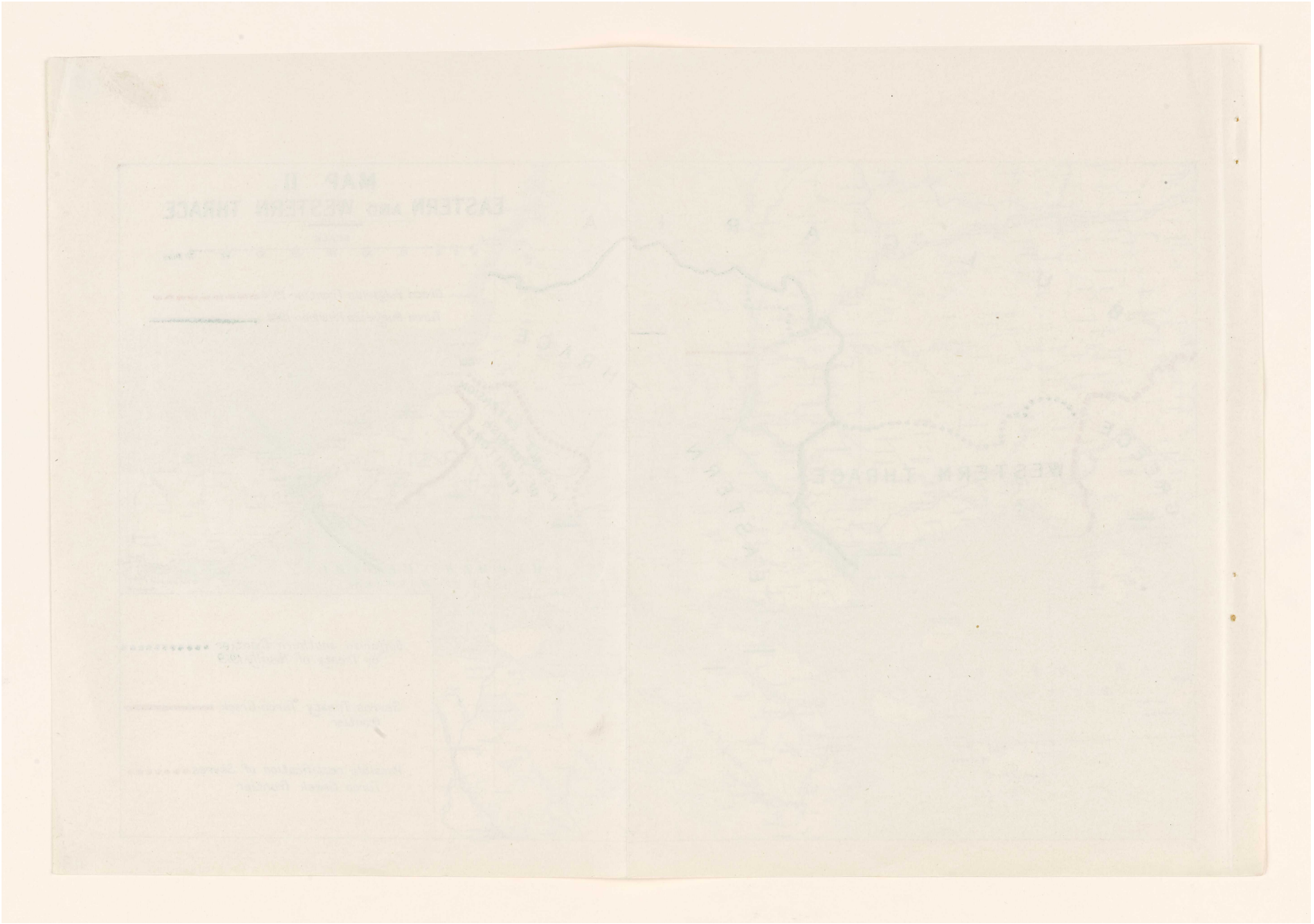

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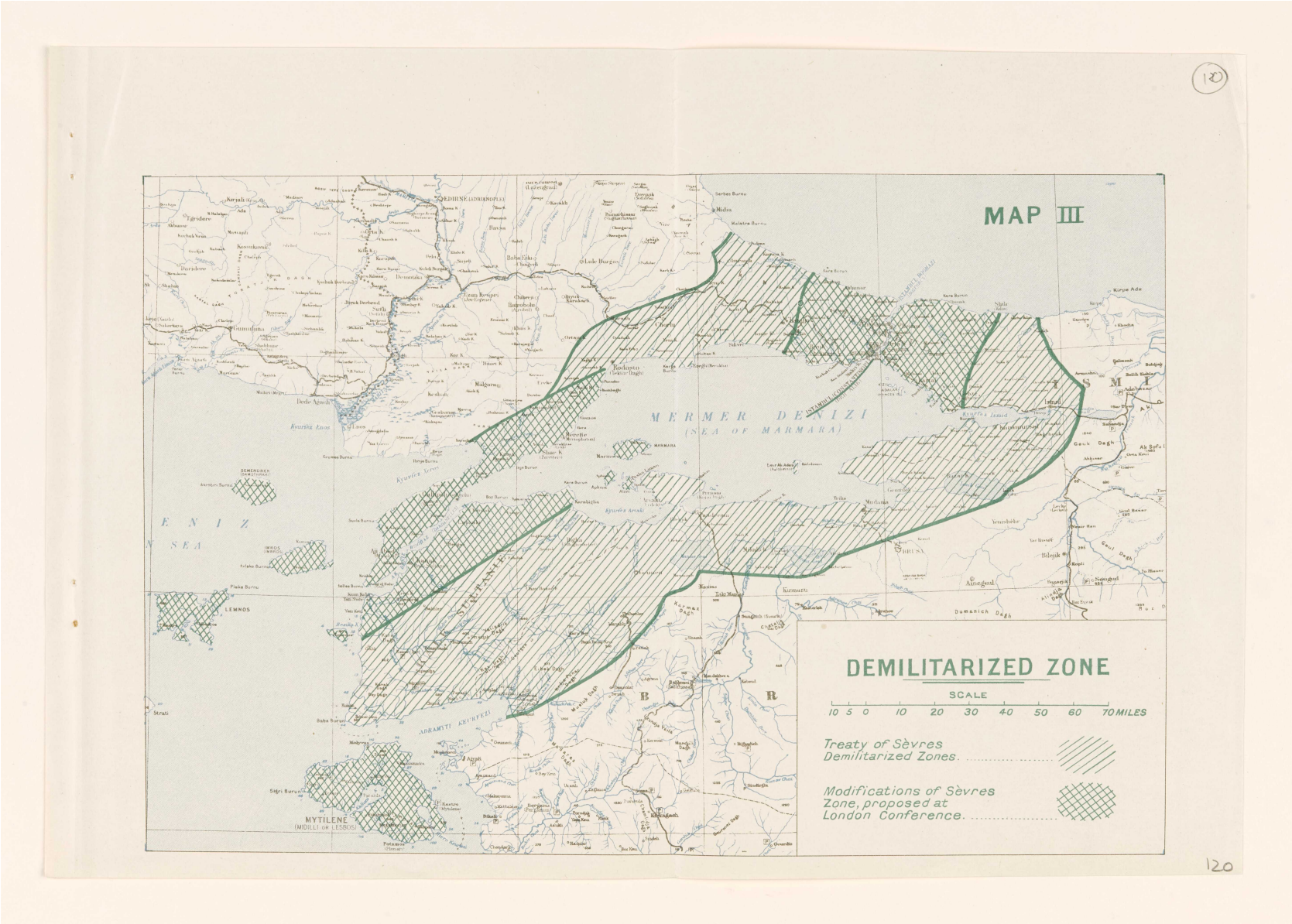

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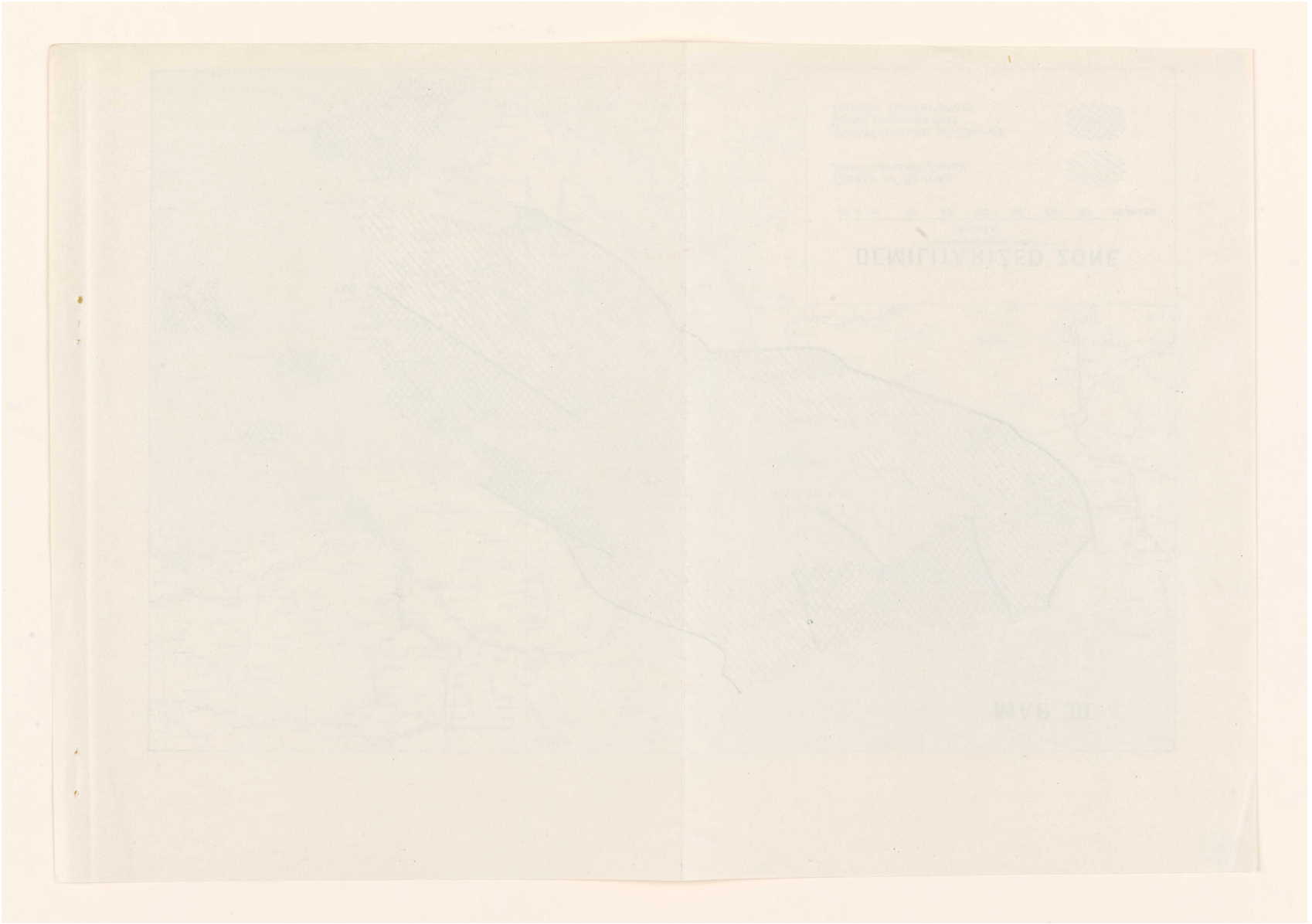

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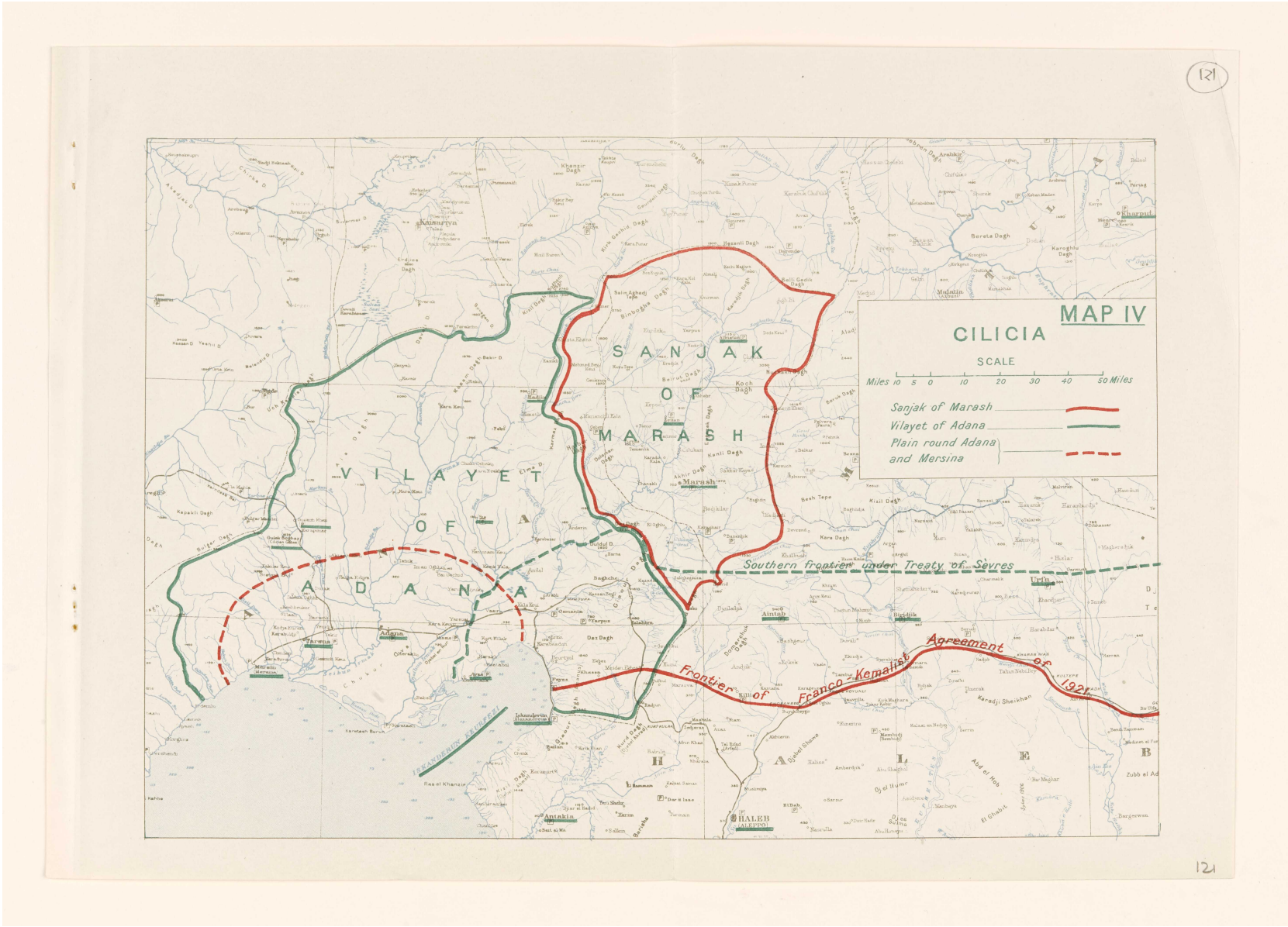

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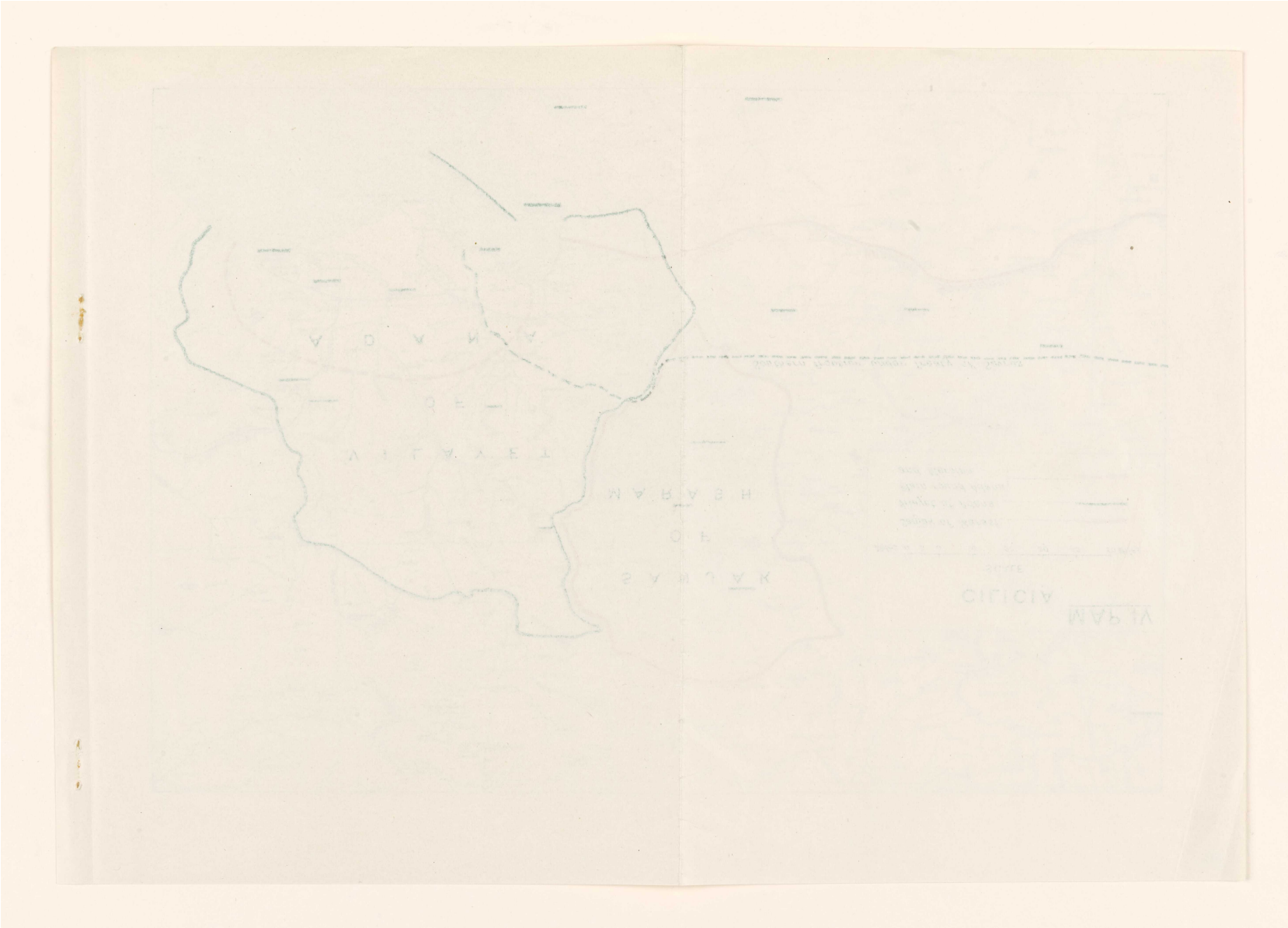

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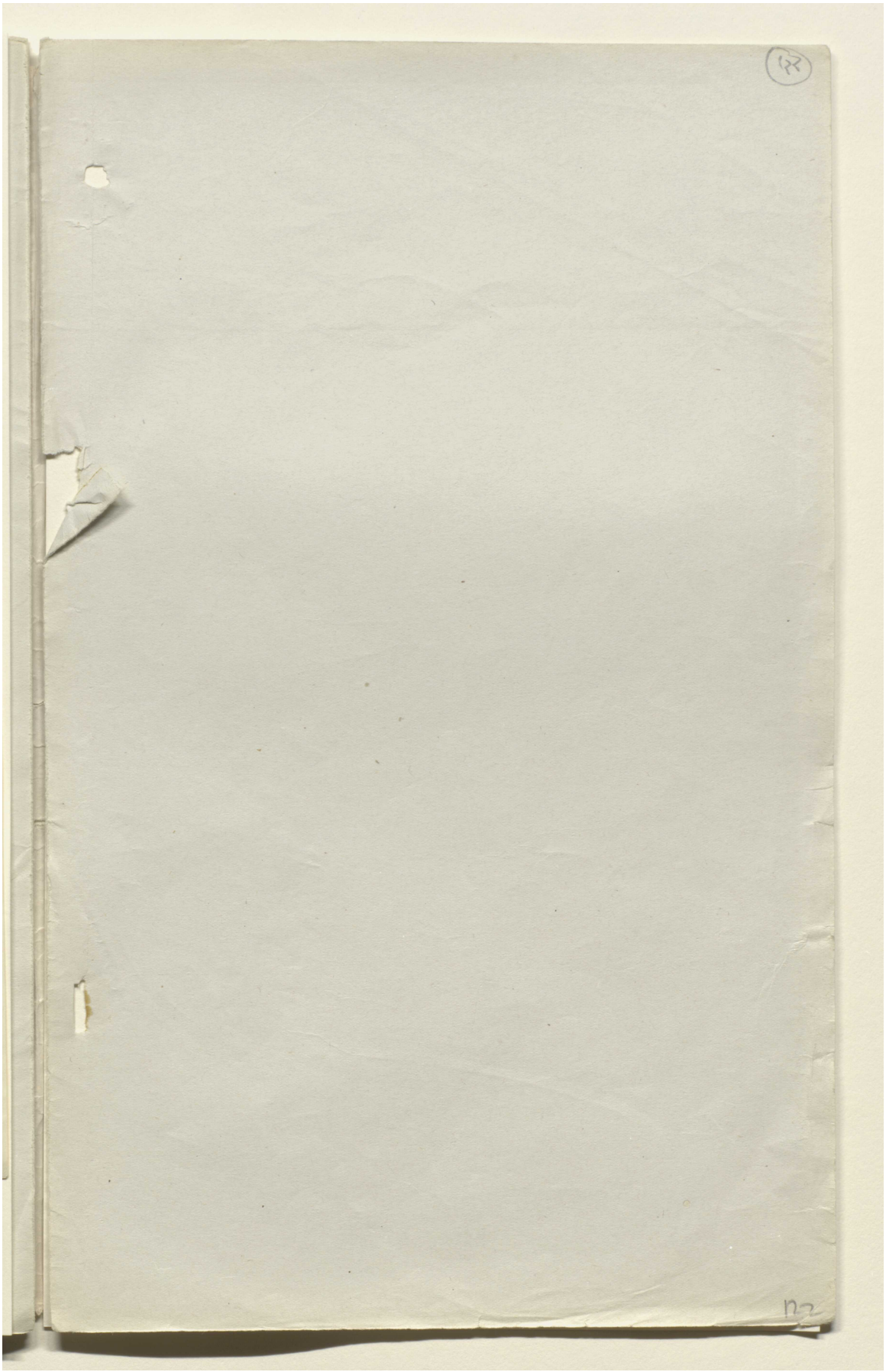

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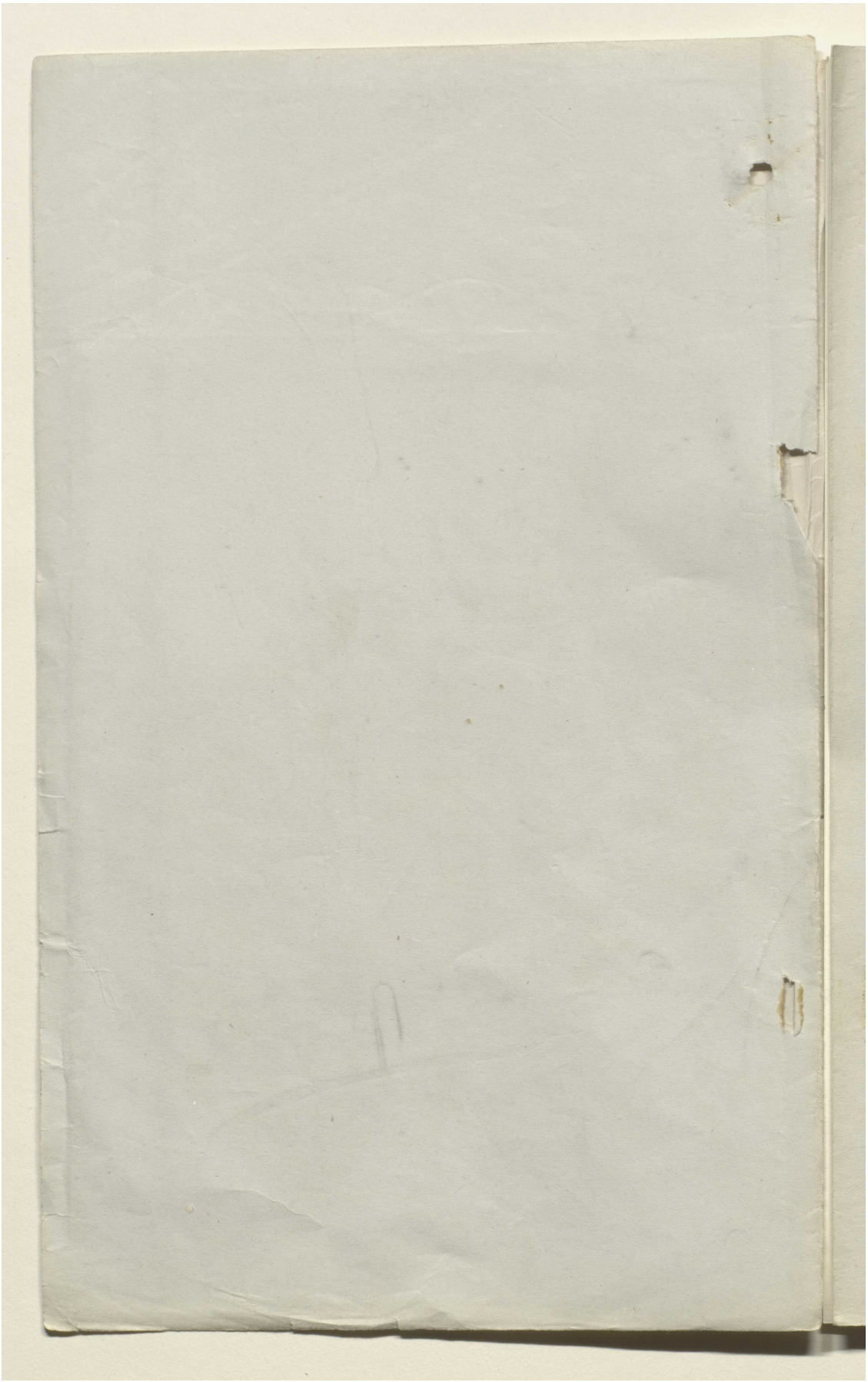

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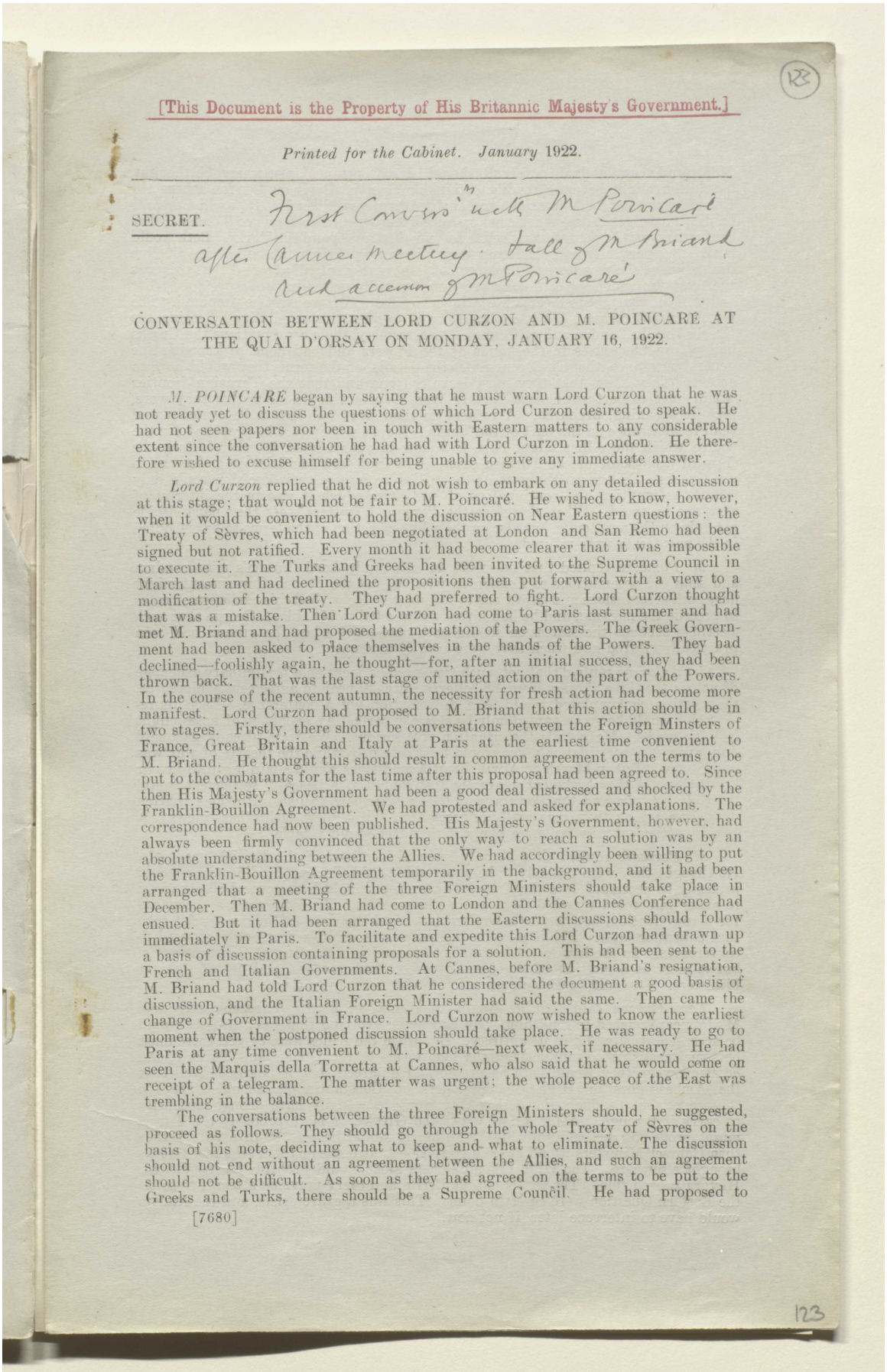

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Printed for the Cabinet. January 1922.

SECRET.

First Conversation with M Poincaré after Cannes meeting. Fall of M Briand and accession of M Poincaré

CONVERSATION BETWEEN LORD CURZON AND M. POINCARÉ AT THE QUAI D'ORSAY ON MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 1922.

M. POINCARÉ began by saying that he must warn Lord Curzon that he was not ready yet to discuss the questions of which Lord Curzon desired to speak. He had not seen papers nor been in touch with Eastern matters to any considerable extent since the conversation he had had with Lord Curzon in London. He therefore wished to excuse himself for being unable to give any immediate answer.

Lord Curzon replied that he did not wish to embark on any detailed discussion at this stage; that would not be fair to M. Poincaré. He wished to know, however, when it would be convenient to hold the discussion on Near Eastern questions: the Treaty of Sèvres, which had been negotiated at London and San Remo had been signed but not ratified. Every month it had become clearer that it was impossible to execute it. The Turks and Greeks had been invited to the Supreme Council in March last and had declined the propositions then put forward with a view to a modification of the treaty. They had preferred to fight. Lord Curzon thought that was a mistake. Then Lord Curzon had come to Paris last summer and had met M. Briand and had proposed the mediation of the Powers. The Greek Government had been asked to place themselves in the hands of the Powers. They had declined—foolishly again, he thought—for, after an initial success, they had been thrown back. That was the last stage of united action on the part of the Powers. In the course of the recent autumn, the necessity for fresh action had become more manifest. Lord Curzon had proposed to M. Briand that this action should be in two stages. Firstly, there should be conversations between the Foreign Minsters of France, Great Britain and Italy at Paris at the earliest time convenient to M. Briand. He thought this should result in common agreement on the terms to be put to the combatants for the last time after this proposal had been agreed to. Since then His Majesty's Government had been a good deal distressed and shocked by the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement. We had protested and asked for explanations. The correspondence had now been published. His Majesty's Government, however, had always been firmly convinced that the only way to reach a solution was by an absolute understanding between the Allies. We had accordingly been willing to put the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement temporarily in the background, and it had been arranged that a meeting of the three Foreign Ministers should take place in December. Then M. Briand had come to London and the Cannes Conference had ensued. But it had been arranged that the Eastern discussions should follow immediately in Paris. To facilitate and expedite this Lord Curzon had drawn up a basis of discussion containing proposals for a solution. This had been sent to the French and Italian Governments. At Cannes, before M. Briand's resignation, M. Briand had told Lord Curzon that he considered the document a good basis of discussion, and the Italian Foreign Minister had said the same. Then came the change of Government in France. Lord Curzon now wished to know the earliest moment when the postponed discussion should take place. He was ready to go to Paris at any time convenient to M. Poincaré—next week, if necessary. He had seen the Marquis della Torretta at Cannes, who also said that he would come on receipt of a telegram. The matter was urgent; the whole peace of the East was trembling in the balance.

The conversations between the three Foreign Ministers should, he suggested, proceed as follows. They should go through the whole Treaty of Sèvres on the basis of his note, deciding what to keep and what to eliminate. The discussion should not end without an agreement between the Allies, and such an agreement should not be difficult. As soon as they had agreed on the terms to be put to the Greeks and Turks, there should be a Supreme Council. He had proposed to

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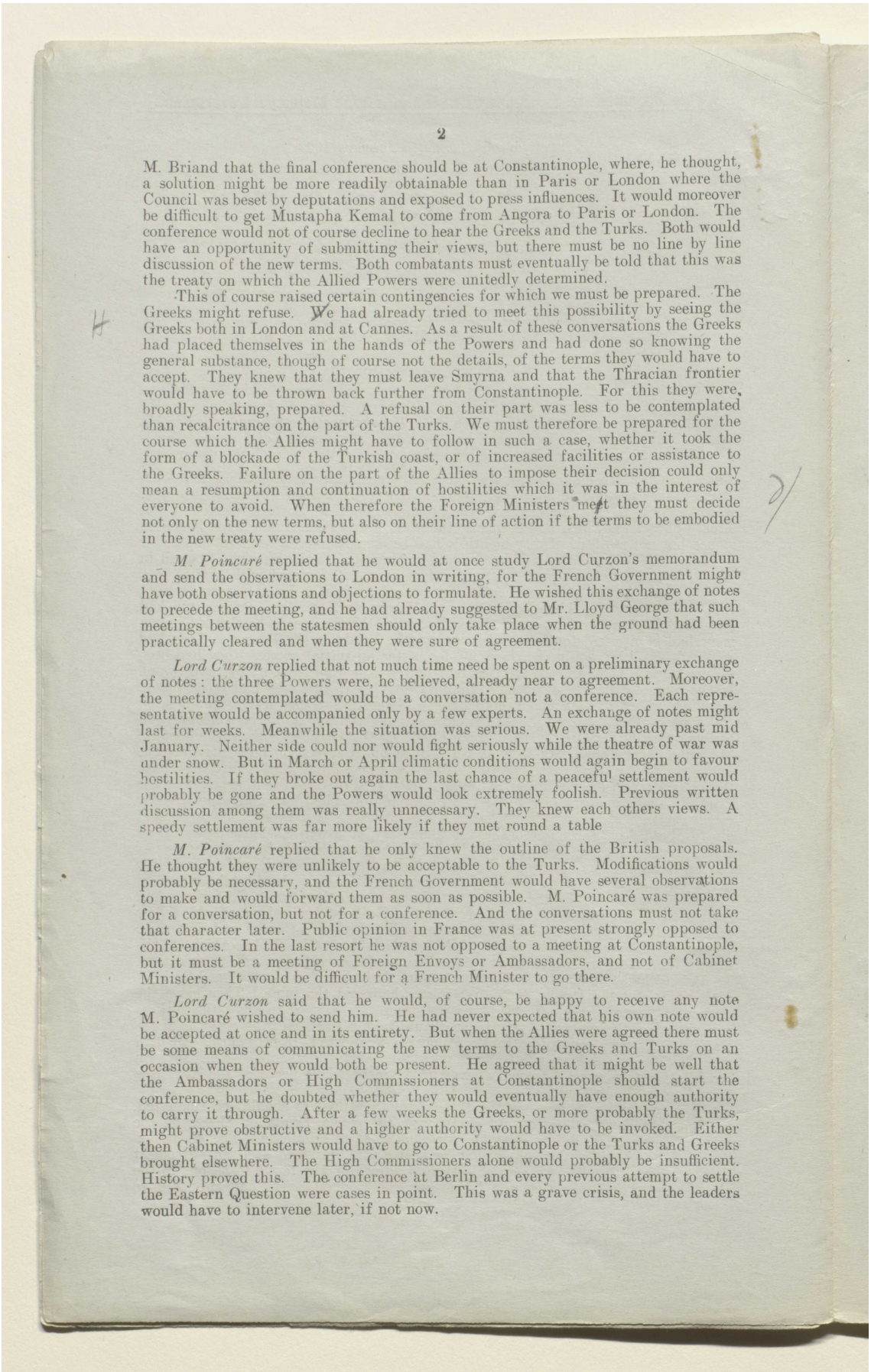

M. Briand that the final conference should be at Constantinople, where, he thought, a solution might be more readily obtainable than in Paris or London where the Council was beset by deputations and exposed to press influences. It would moreover be difficult to get Mustapha Kemal to come from Angora to Paris or London. The conference would not of course decline to hear the Greeks and the Turks. Both would have an opportunity of submitting their views, but there must be no line by line discussion of the new terms. Both combatants must eventually be told that this was the treaty on which the Allied Powers were unitedly determined.

This of course raised certain contingencies for which we must be prepared. The Greeks might refuse. We had already tried to meet this possibility by seeing the Greeks both in London and at Cannes. As a result of these conversations the Greeks had placed themselves in the hands of the Powers and had done so knowing the general substance, though of course not the details, of the terms they would have to accept. They knew that they must leave Smyrna and that the Thracian frontier would have to be thrown back further from Constantinople. For this they were, broadly speaking, prepared. A refusal on their part was less to be contemplated than recalcitrance on the part of the Turks. We must therefore be prepared for the course which the Allies might have to follow in such a case, whether it took the form of a blockade of the Turkish coast, or of increased facilities or assistance to the Greeks. Failure on the part of the Allies to impose their decision could only mean a resumption and continuation of hostilities which it was in the interest of everyone to avoid. When therefore the Foreign Ministers met they must decide not only on the new terms, but also on their line of action if the terms to be embodied in the new treaty were refused.

M. Poincaré replied that he would at once study Lord Curzon's memorandum and send the observations to London in writing, for the French Government might have both observations and objections to formulate. He wished this exchange of notes to precede the meeting, and he had already suggested to Mr. Lloyd George that such meetings between the statesmen should only take place when the ground had been practically cleared and when they were sure of agreement.

Lord Curzon replied that not much time need be spent on a preliminary exchange of notes: the three Powers were, he believed, already near to agreement. Moreover, the meeting contemplated would be a conversation not a conference. Each representative would be accompanied only by a few experts. An exchange of notes might last for weeks. Meanwhile the situation was serious. We were already past mid January. Neither side could nor would fight seriously while the theatre of war was under snow. But in March or April climatic conditions would again begin to favour hostilities. If they broke out again the last chance of a peaceful settlement would probably be gone and the Powers would look extremely foolish. Previous written discussion among them was really unnecessary. They knew each others views. A speedy settlement was far more likely if they met round a table

M. Poincaré replied that he only knew the outline of the British proposals. He thought they were unlikely to be acceptable to the Turks. Modifications would probably be necessary, and the French Government would have several observations to make and would forward them as soon as possible. M. Poincaré was prepared for a conversation, but not for a conference. And the conversations must not take that character later. Public opinion in France was at present strongly opposed to conferences. In the last resort he was not opposed to a meeting at Constantinople, but it must be a meeting of Foreign Envoys or Ambassadors, and not of Cabinet Ministers. It would be difficult for a French Minister to go there.

Lord Curzon said that he would, of course, be happy to receive any note M. Poincaré wished to send him. He had never expected that his own note would be accepted at once and in its entirety. But when the Allies were agreed there must be some means of communicating the new terms to the Greeks and Turks on an occasion when they would both be present. He agreed that it might be well that the Ambassadors or High Commissioners at Constantinople should start the conference, but he doubted whether they would eventually have enough authority to carry it through. After a few weeks the Greeks, or more probably the Turks, might prove obstructive and a higher authority would have to be invoked. Either then Cabinet Ministers would have to go to Constantinople or the Turks and Greeks brought elsewhere. The High Commissioners alone would probably be insufficient. History proved this. The conference at Berlin and every previous attempt to settle the Eastern Question were cases in point. This was a grave crisis, and the leaders would have to intervene later, if not now.

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M. Poincaré said that he understood Lord Curzon's proposal to be first conversations between the three Foreign Ministers in Paris, then the meeting at Constantinople under the auspices of the High Commissioners, and thirdly, if necessary, recourse to their Governments. At first sight he had no objection to such a procedure, but he must say that he would encounter much resistance to any coercion. Public opinion in France would not accept any such measure as a blockade. He was, however, very anxious to act with us, and on the information now in our possession he was hopeful that we might reach an acceptable result.

Lord Curzon replied that M. Poincaré might rest assured that His Majesty's Government were equally unwilling to fight the Turks for obvious reasons. M. Poincaré knew our position in Egypt and India. We did not wish to resume hostilities with a Moslem Power. But if terms were again offered, we must know what he should do if they were again refused. We need not discuss that in detail now, but he would wish to know the earliest date after the presentation of M. Poincaré's note when the French Government would like the British and Italian Foreign Ministers to come to Paris. He would be willing to come either next week, or immediately after the opening of Parliament on the 31st January. He did not wish to press M. Poincaré. But it was a case of the sooner the better, for the discussion had already been postponed from December to the 6th January, then to the 9th January, then to the 12th. It was now the 16th. We were going on towards February, and every week counted.

M. Poincaré stated that he would examine the possibility of a meeting next week, or if not soon after the 31st January. But he foresaw grave difficulties. He had thought of these conversations only as an offer of intervention, not of coercive action. On that he must make all reservations. He was ready to mediate, but he must first sound his Parliament. He was sure that neither Chamber would accept any coercion. There was no sympathy anywhere in France for Greece. If Turkey refused, coercion would be against her and to the profit of Greece. French public opinion would not accept that.

Lord Curzon thought that M. Poincaré had not quite realised the dimensions of the problem. It was not a case of mediation, but of drawing up a new Treaty of Sèvres. Only the Powers could do that. Whatever the objections of the French Parliament or public might be there must be a Supreme Council for the final stage of the new treaty.

M. Poincaré replied that the matter would be less difficult if we were acting in the interests of Great Britain, France and Italy; but this was not now the case. Our action would be in the interests of the Greeks. Anything done for the Greeks would be ill-received in France, where they were no longer regarded as Allies, but almost as enemies. King Constantine and M. Gounaris were very unpopular. The French Government were willing to attempt a compromise, but there would be much opposition if we seemed to try to impose our will upon the Turks in the interests of the Greeks. Smyrna and Thrace presented great difficulties which must be looked into very closely or we should encounter strong Turkish opposition.

Lord Curzon replied that we also had no particular affection for King Constantine or M. Gounaris. It was, however, not with the Greeks that we had to make peace, but with the Turks. This was the one treaty which yet remained to be concluded. The French Government had frequently asked us to assist them in enforcing the Treaty of Versailles, and had actually taken coercive action themselves. There could surely not be a difference between the cases of Germany and Turkey. If you make a treaty, you should be prepared to enforce it.

M. Poincaré replied that when once a treaty was signed he would be prepared for sanctions if the Turks failed to execute it. But he did not contemplate imposing a treaty on the Turks, as Allied interests were not at stake. The truth was, this was a case of defending the Greeks against the Turks. He would be willing to sound the latter to see what they would accept if we so desired.

Lord Curzon replied that he would not ask M. Poincaré to take any such action since it would probably only result in the putting forward of impossible claims.

M. Poincaré said that it could be done unofficially. As a matter of fact he had already seen the Angoran representative. We could not proceed blindly; Smyrna was the most difficult point. The Turks were convinced they would win all they wanted in the spring.

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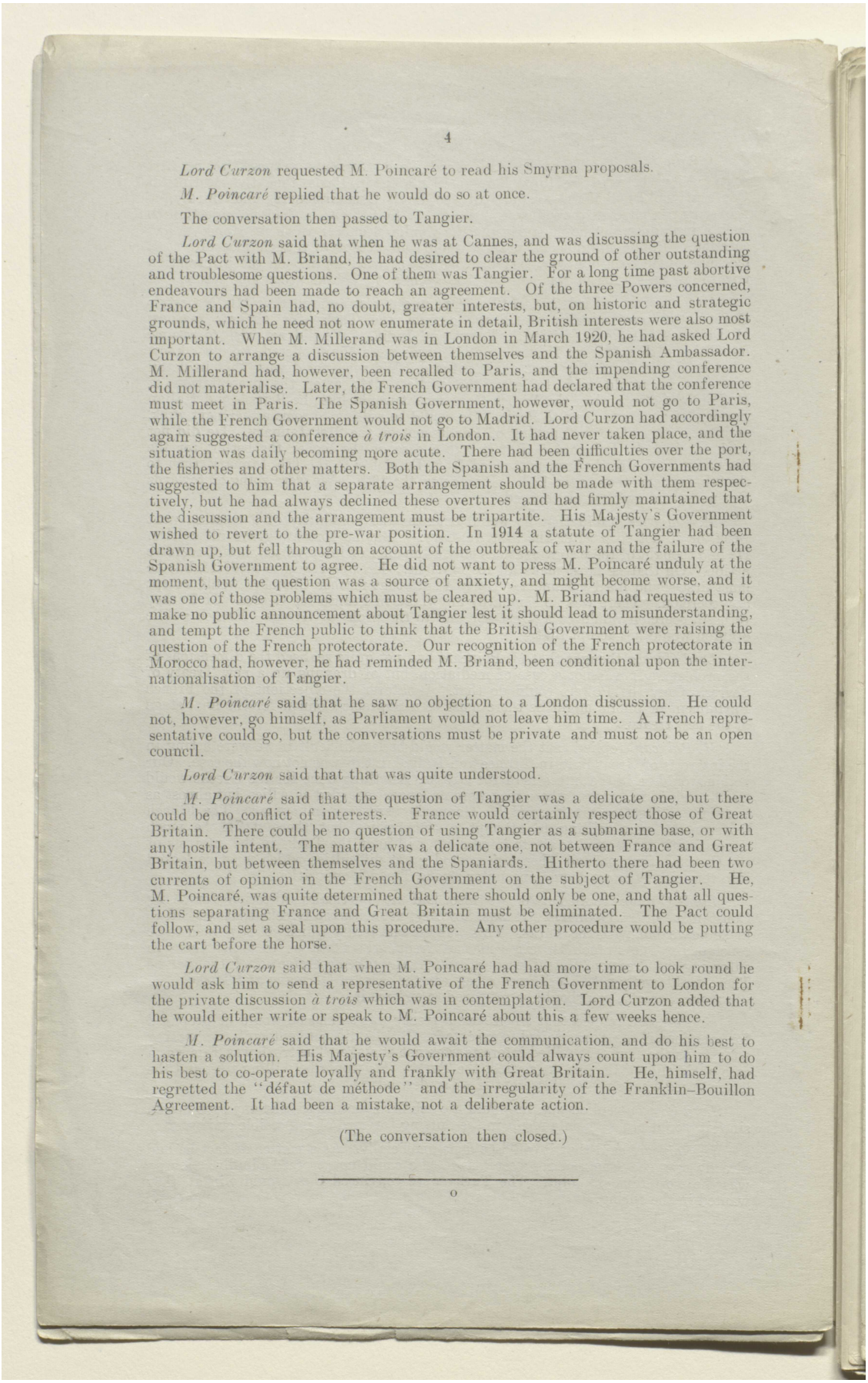

Lord Curzon requested M. Poincaré to read his Smyrna proposals.

M. Poincaré replied that he would do so at once.

The conversation then passed to Tangier.

Lord Curzon said that when he was at Cannes, and was discussing the question of the Pact with M. Briand, he had desired to clear the ground of other outstanding and troublesome questions. One of them was Tangier. For a long time past abortive endeavours had been made to reach an agreement. Of the three Powers concerned, France and Spain had, no doubt, greater interests, but, on historic and strategic grounds, which he need not now enumerate in detail, British interests were also most important. When M. Millerand was in London in March 1920, he had asked Lord Curzon to arrange a discussion between themselves and the Spanish Ambassador. M. Millerand had, however, been recalled to Paris, and the impending conference did not materialise. Later, the French Government had declared that the conference must meet in Paris. The Spanish Government, however, would not go to Paris, while the French Government would not go to Madrid. Lord Curzon had accordingly again suggested a conference *à trois* in London. It had never taken place, and the situation was daily becoming more acute. There had been difficulties over the port, the fisheries and other matters. Both the Spanish and the French Governments had suggested to him that a separate arrangement should be made with them respectively, but he had always declined these overtures and had firmly maintained that the discussion and the arrangement must be tripartite. His Majesty's Government wished to revert to the pre-war position. In 1914 a statute of Tangier had been drawn up, but fell through on account of the outbreak of war and the failure of the Spanish Government to agree. He did not want to press M. Poincaré unduly at the moment, but the question was a source of anxiety, and might become worse, and it was one of those problems which must be cleared up. M. Briand had requested us to make no public announcement about Tangier lest it should lead to misunderstanding, and tempt the French public to think that the British Government were raising the question of the French protectorate. Our recognition of the French protectorate in Morocco had, however, he had reminded M. Briand, been conditional upon the internationalisation of Tangier.

M. Poincaré said that he saw no objection to a London discussion. He could not, however, go himself, as Parliament would not leave him time. A French representative could go, but the conversations must be private and must not be an open council.

Lord Curzon said that that was quite understood.

M. Poincaré said that the question of Tangier was a delicate one, but there could be no conflict of interests. France would certainly respect those of Great Britain. There could be no question of using Tangier as a submarine base, or with any hostile intent. The matter was a delicate one, not between France and Great Britain, but between themselves and the Spaniards. Hitherto there had been two currents of opinion in the French Government on the subject of Tangier. He, M. Poincaré, was quite determined that there should only be one, and that all questions separating France and Great Britain must be eliminated. The Pact could follow, and set a seal upon this procedure. Any other procedure would be putting the cart before the horse.

Lord Curzon said that when M. Poincaré had had more time to look round he would ask him to send a representative of the French Government to London for the private discussion *à trois* which was in contemplation. Lord Curzon added that he would either write or speak to M. Poincaré about this a few weeks hence.

M. Poincaré said that he would await the communication, and do his best to hasten a solution. His Majesty's Government could always count upon him to do his best to co-operate loyally and frankly with Great Britain. He, himself, had regretted the "défaut de méthode" and the irregularity of the Franklin–Bouillon Agreement. It had been a mistake, not a deliberate action.

(The conversation then closed.)

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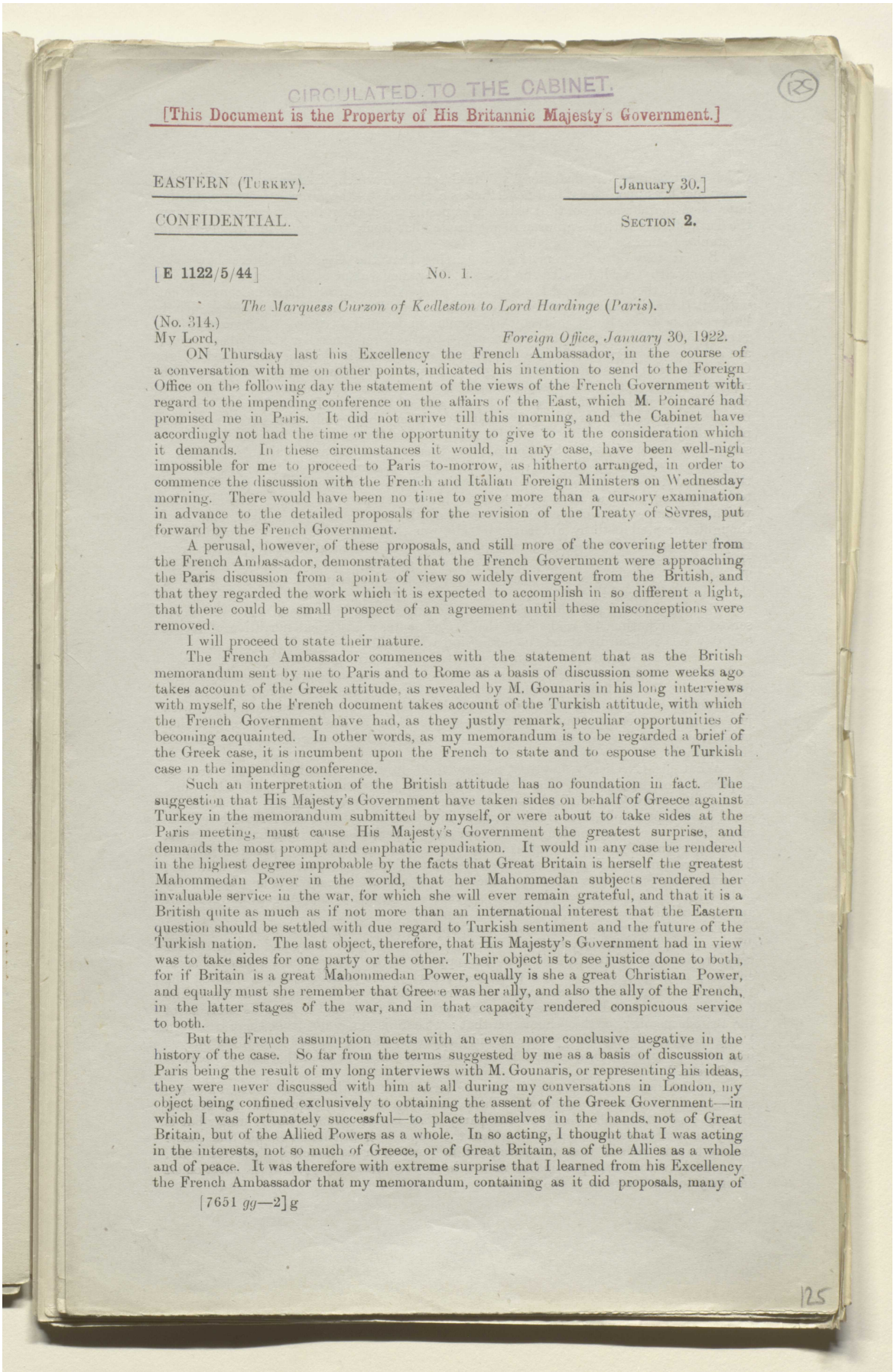

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [January 30.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 1122/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 314.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, January 30, 1922.*

ON Thursday last his Excellency the French Ambassador, in the course of a conversation with me on other points, indicated his intention to send to the Foreign Office on the following day the statement of the views of the French Government with regard to the impending conference on the affairs of the East, which M. Poincaré had promised me in Paris. It did not arrive till this morning, and the Cabinet have accordingly not had the time or the opportunity to give to it the consideration which it demands. In these circumstances it would, in any case, have been well-nigh impossible for me to proceed to Paris to-morrow, as hitherto arranged, in order to commence the discussion with the French and Italian Foreign Ministers on Wednesday morning. There would have been no time to give more than a cursory examination in advance to the detailed proposals for the revision of the Treaty of Sèvres, put forward by the French Government.

A perusal, however, of these proposals, and still more of the covering letter from the French Ambassador, demonstrated that the French Government were approaching the Paris discussion from a point of view so widely divergent from the British, and that they regarded the work which it is expected to accomplish in so different a light, that there could be small prospect of an agreement until these misconceptions were removed.

I will proceed to state their nature.

The French Ambassador commences with the statement that as the British memorandum sent by me to Paris and to Rome as a basis of discussion some weeks ago takes account of the Greek attitude, as revealed by M. Gounaris in his long interviews with myself, so the French document takes account of the Turkish attitude, with which the French Government have had, as they justly remark, peculiar opportunities of becoming acquainted. In other words, as my memorandum is to be regarded a brief of the Greek case, it is incumbent upon the French to state and to espouse the Turkish case in the impending conference.

Such an interpretation of the British attitude has no foundation in fact. The suggestion that His Majesty's Government have taken sides on behalf of Greece against Turkey in the memorandum submitted by myself, or were about to take sides at the Paris meeting, must cause His Majesty's Government the greatest surprise, and demands the most prompt and emphatic repudiation. It would in any case be rendered in the highest degree improbable by the facts that Great Britain is herself the greatest Mahommedan Power in the world, that her Mahommedan subjects rendered her invaluable service in the war, for which she will ever remain grateful, and that it is a British quite as much as if not more than an international interest that the Eastern question should be settled with due regard to Turkish sentiment and the future of the Turkish nation. The last object, therefore, that His Majesty's Government had in view was to take sides for one party or the other. Their object is to see justice done to both, for if Britain is a great Mahommedan Power, equally is she a great Christian Power, and equally must she remember that Greece was her ally, and also the ally of the French, in the latter stages of the war, and in that capacity rendered conspicuous service to both.

But the French assumption meets with an even more conclusive negative in the history of the case. So far from the terms suggested by me as a basis of discussion at Paris being the result of my long interviews with M. Gounaris, or representing his ideas, they were never discussed with him at all during my conversations in London, my object being confined exclusively to obtaining the assent of the Greek Government—in which I was fortunately successful—to place themselves in the hands, not of Great Britain, but of the Allied Powers as a whole. In so acting, I thought that I was acting in the interests, not so much of Greece, or of Great Britain, as of the Allies as a whole and of peace. It was therefore with extreme surprise that I learned from his Excellency the French Ambassador that my memorandum, containing as it did proposals, many of

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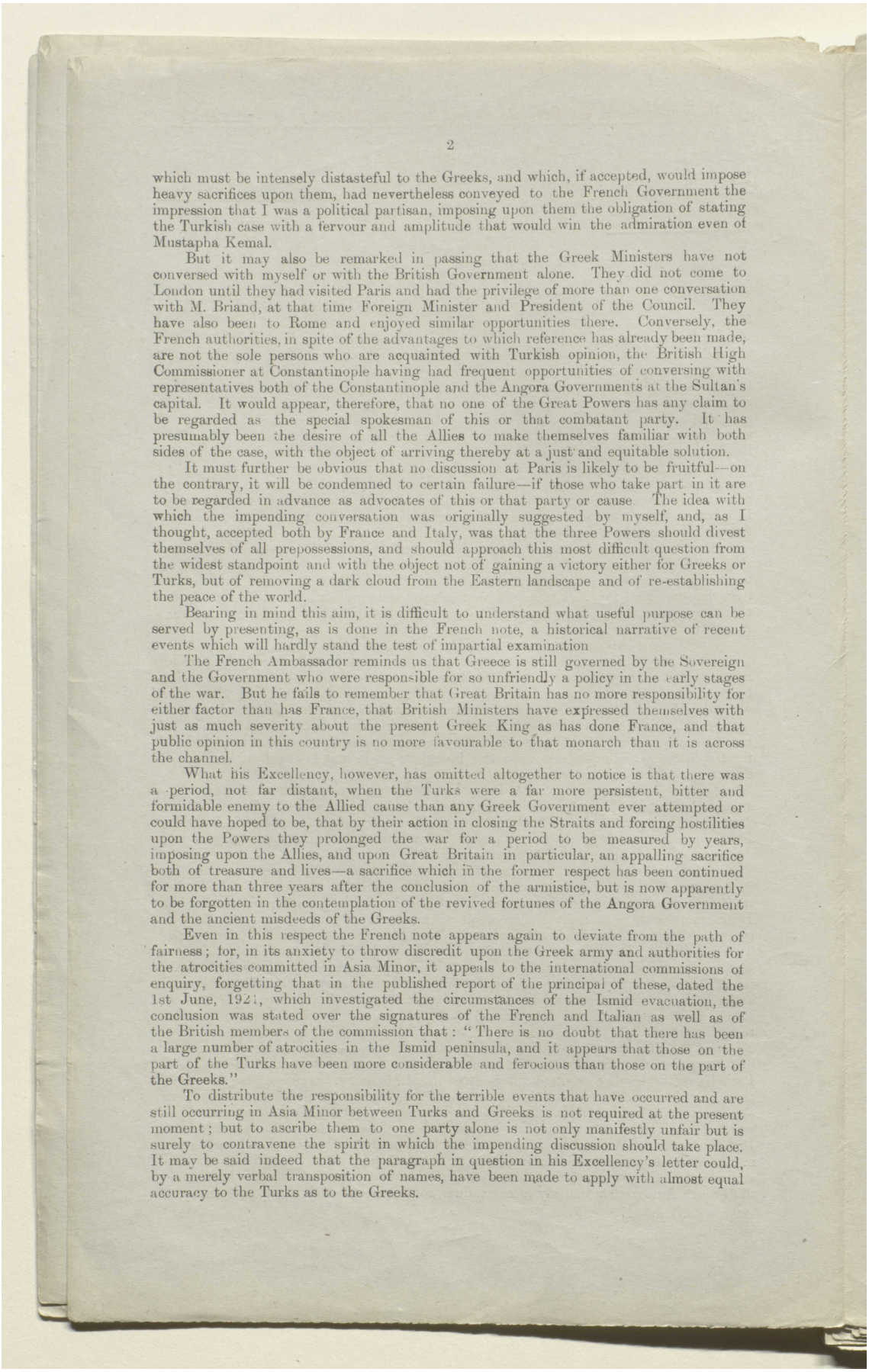

which must be intensely distasteful to the Greeks, and which, if accepted, would impose heavy sacrifices upon them, had nevertheless conveyed to the French Government the impression that I was a political partisan, imposing upon them the obligation of stating the Turkish case with a fervour and amplitude that would win the admiration even of Mustapha Kemal.

But it may also be remarked in passing that the Greek Ministers have not conversed with myself or with the British Government alone. They did not come to London until they had visited Paris and had the privilege of more than one conversation with M. Briand, at that time Foreign Minister and President of the Council. They have also been to Rome and enjoyed similar opportunities there. Conversely, the French authorities, in spite of the advantages to which reference has already been made, are not the sole persons who are acquainted with Turkish opinion, the British High Commissioner at Constantinople having had frequent opportunities of conversing with representatives both of the Constantinople and the Angora Governments at the Sultan's capital. It would appear, therefore, that no one of the Great Powers has any claim to be regarded as the special spokesman of this or that combatant party. It has presumably been the desire of all the Allies to make themselves familiar with both sides of the case, with the object of arriving thereby at a just and equitable solution.

It must further be obvious that no discussion at Paris is likely to be fruitful—on the contrary, it will be condemned to certain failure—if those who take part in it are to be regarded in advance as advocates of this or that party or cause. The idea with which the impending conversation was originally suggested by myself, and, as I thought, accepted both by France and Italy, was that the three Powers should divest themselves of all prepossessions, and should approach this most difficult question from the widest standpoint and with the object not of gaining a victory either for Greeks or Turks, but of removing a dark cloud from the Eastern landscape and of re-establishing the peace of the world.

Bearing in mind this aim, it is difficult to understand what useful purpose can be served by presenting, as is done in the French note, a historical narrative of recent events which will hardly stand the test of impartial examination

The French Ambassador reminds us that Greece is still governed by the Sovereign and the Government who were responsible for so unfriendly a policy in the early stages of the war. But he fails to remember that Great Britain has no more responsibility for either factor than has France, that British Ministers have expressed themselves with just as much severity about the present Greek King as has done France, and that public opinion in this country is no more favourable to that monarch than it is across the channel.

What his Excellency, however, has omitted altogether to notice is that there was a period, not far distant, when the Turks were a far more persistent, bitter and formidable enemy to the Allied cause than any Greek Government ever attempted or could have hoped to be, that by their action in closing the Straits and forcing hostilities upon the Powers they prolonged the war for a period to be measured by years, imposing upon the Allies, and upon Great Britain in particular, an appalling sacrifice both of treasure and lives—a sacrifice which in the former respect has been continued for more than three years after the conclusion of the armistice, but is now apparently to be forgotten in the contemplation of the revived fortunes of the Angora Government and the ancient misdeeds of the Greeks.

Even in this respect the French note appears again to deviate from the path of fairness; for, in its anxiety to throw discredit upon the Greek army and authorities for the atrocities committed in Asia Minor, it appeals to the international commissions of enquiry, forgetting that in the published report of the principal of these, dated the 1st June, 1921, which investigated the circumstances of the Ismid evacuation, the conclusion was stated over the signatures of the French and Italian as well as of the British members of the commission that: "There is no doubt that there has been a large number of atrocities in the Ismid peninsula, and it appears that those on the part of the Turks have been more considerable and ferocious than those on the part of the Greeks."

To distribute the responsibility for the terrible events that have occurred and are still occurring in Asia Minor between Turks and Greeks is not required at the present moment; but to ascribe them to one party alone is not only manifestly unfair but is surely to contravene the spirit in which the impending discussion should take place. It may be said indeed that the paragraph in question in his Excellency's letter could, by a merely verbal transposition of names, have been made to apply with almost equal accuracy to the Turks as to the Greeks.

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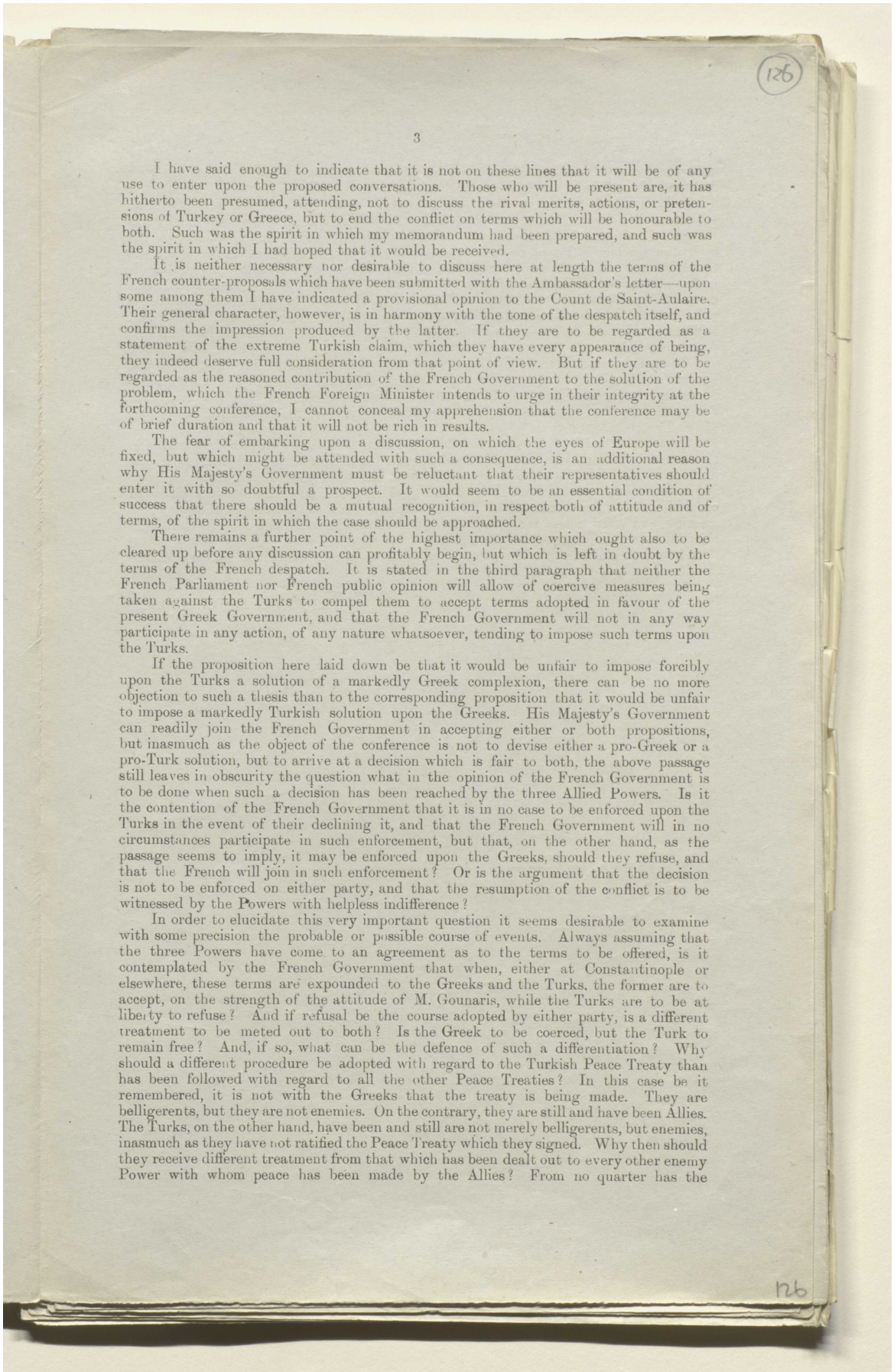

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I have said enough to indicate that it is not on these lines that it will be of any use to enter upon the proposed conversations. Those who will be present are, it has hitherto been presumed, attending, not to discuss the rival merits, actions, or pretensions of Turkey or Greece, but to end the conflict on terms which will be honourable to both. Such was the spirit in which my memorandum had been prepared, and such was the spirit in which I had hoped that it would be received.

It is neither necessary nor desirable to discuss here at length the terms of the French counter-proposals which have been submitted with the Ambassador's letter—upon some among them I have indicated a provisional opinion to the Count de Saint-Aulaire. Their general character, however, is in harmony with the tone of the despatch itself, and confirms the impression produced by the latter. If they are to be regarded as a statement of the extreme Turkish claim, which they have every appearance of being, they indeed deserve full consideration from that point of view. But if they are to be regarded as the reasoned contribution of the French Government to the solution of the problem, which the French Foreign Minister intends to urge in their integrity at the forthcoming conference, I cannot conceal my apprehension that the conference may be of brief duration and that it will not be rich in results.

The fear of embarking upon a discussion, on which the eyes of Europe will be fixed, but which might be attended with such a consequence, is an additional reason why His Majesty's Government must be reluctant that their representatives should enter it with so doubtful a prospect. It would seem to be an essential condition of success that there should be a mutual recognition, in respect both of attitude and of terms, of the spirit in which the case should be approached.

There remains a further point of the highest importance which ought also to be cleared up before any discussion can profitably begin, but which is left in doubt by the terms of the French despatch. It is stated in the third paragraph that neither the French Parliament nor French public opinion will allow of coercive measures being taken against the Turks to compel them to accept terms adopted in favour of the present Greek Government, and that the French Government will not in any way participate in any action, of any nature whatsoever, tending to impose such terms upon the Turks.

If the proposition here laid down be that it would be unfair to impose forcibly upon the Turks a solution of a markedly Greek complexion, there can be no more objection to such a thesis than to the corresponding proposition that it would be unfair to impose a markedly Turkish solution upon the Greeks. His Majesty's Government can readily join the French Government in accepting either or both propositions, but inasmuch as the object of the conference is not to devise either a pro-Greek or a pro-Turk solution, but to arrive at a decision which is fair to both, the above passage still leaves in obscurity the question what in the opinion of the French Government is to be done when such a decision has been reached by the three Allied Powers. Is it the contention of the French Government that it is in no case to be enforced upon the Turks in the event of their declining it, and that the French Government will in no circumstances participate in such enforcement, but that, on the other hand, as the passage seems to imply, it may be enforced upon the Greeks, should they refuse, and that the French will join in such enforcement? Or is the argument that the decision is not to be enforced on either party, and that the resumption of the conflict is to be witnessed by the Powers with helpless indifference?

In order to elucidate this very important question it seems desirable to examine with some precision the probable or possible course of events. Always assuming that the three Powers have come to an agreement as to the terms to be offered, is it contemplated by the French Government that when, either at Constantinople or elsewhere, these terms are expounded to the Greeks and the Turks, the former are to accept, on the strength of the attitude of M. Gounaris, while the Turks are to be at liberty to refuse? And if refusal be the course adopted by either party, is a different treatment to be meted out to both? Is the Greek to be coerced, but the Turk to remain free? And, if so, what can be the defence of such a differentiation? Why should a different procedure be adopted with regard to the Turkish Peace Treaty than has been followed with regard to all the other Peace Treaties? In this case be it remembered, it is not with the Greeks that the treaty is being made. They are belligerents, but they are not enemies. On the contrary, they are still and have been Allies. The Turks, on the other hand, have been and still are not merely belligerents, but enemies, inasmuch as they have not ratified the Peace Treaty which they signed. Why then should they receive different treatment from that which has been dealt out to every other enemy Power with whom peace has been made by the Allies? From no quarter has the

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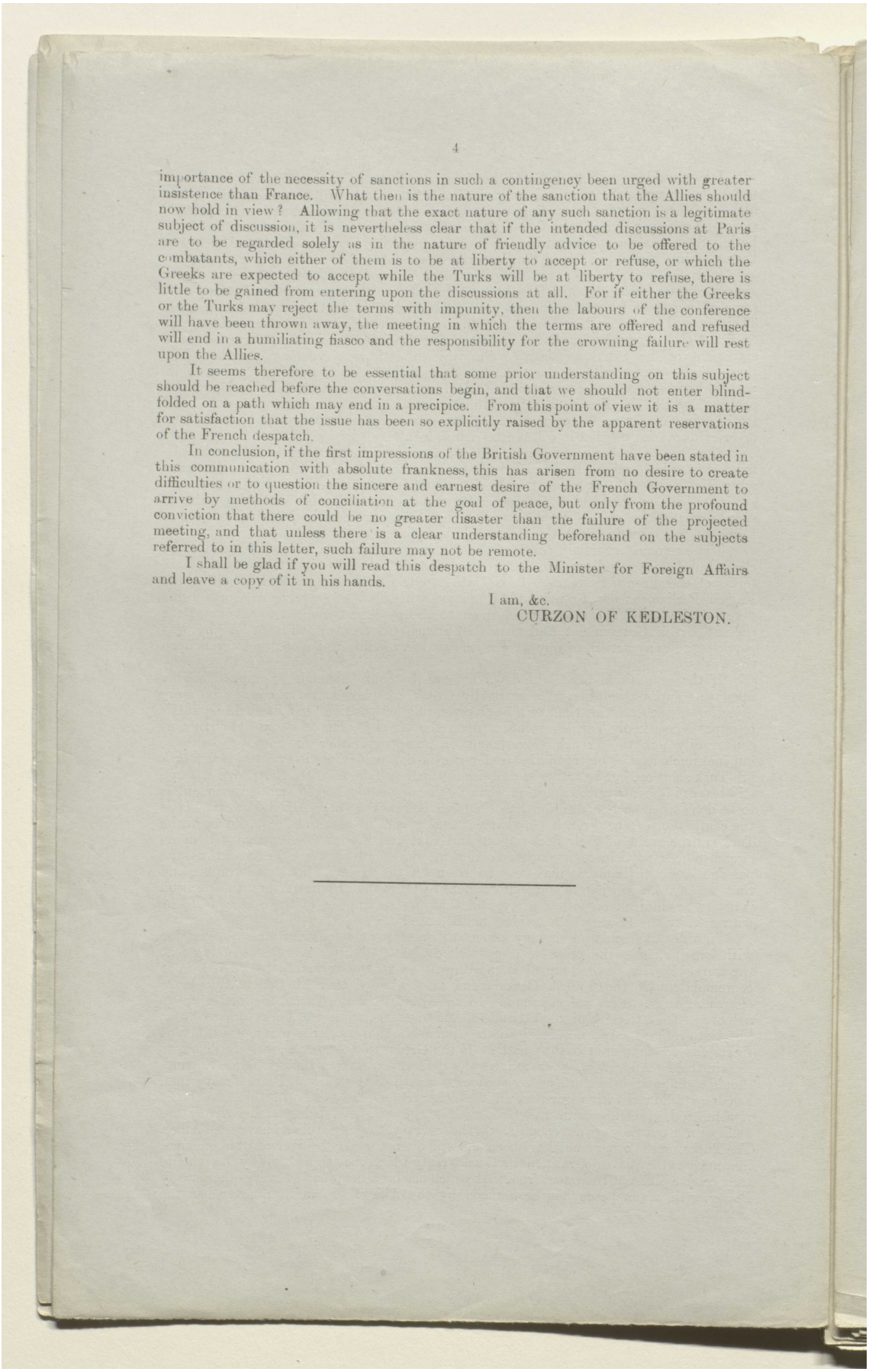

importance of the necessity of sanctions in such a contingency been urged with greater insistence than France. What then is the nature of the sanction that the Allies should now hold in view? Allowing that the exact nature of any such sanction is a legitimate subject of discussion, it is nevertheless clear that if the intended discussions at Paris are to be regarded solely as in the nature of friendly advice to be offered to the combatants, which either of them is to be at liberty to accept or refuse, or which the Greeks are expected to accept while the Turks will be at liberty to refuse, there is little to be gained from entering upon the discussions at all. For if either the Greeks or the Turks may reject the terms with impunity, then the labours of the conference will have been thrown away, the meeting in which the terms are offered and refused will end in a humiliating fiasco and the responsibility for the crowning failure will rest upon the Allies.

It seems therefore to be essential that some prior understanding on this subject should be reached before the conversations begin, and that we should not enter blindfolded on a path which may end in a precipice. From this point of view it is a matter for satisfaction that the issue has been so explicitly raised by the apparent reservations of the French despatch.

In conclusion, if the first impressions of the British Government have been stated in this communication with absolute frankness, this has arisen from no desire to create difficulties or to question the sincere and earnest desire of the French Government to arrive by methods of conciliation at the goal of peace, but only from the profound conviction that there could be no greater disaster than the failure of the projected meeting, and that unless there is a clear understanding beforehand on the subjects referred to in this letter, such failure may not be remote.

I shall be glad if you will read this despatch to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and leave a copy of it in his hands.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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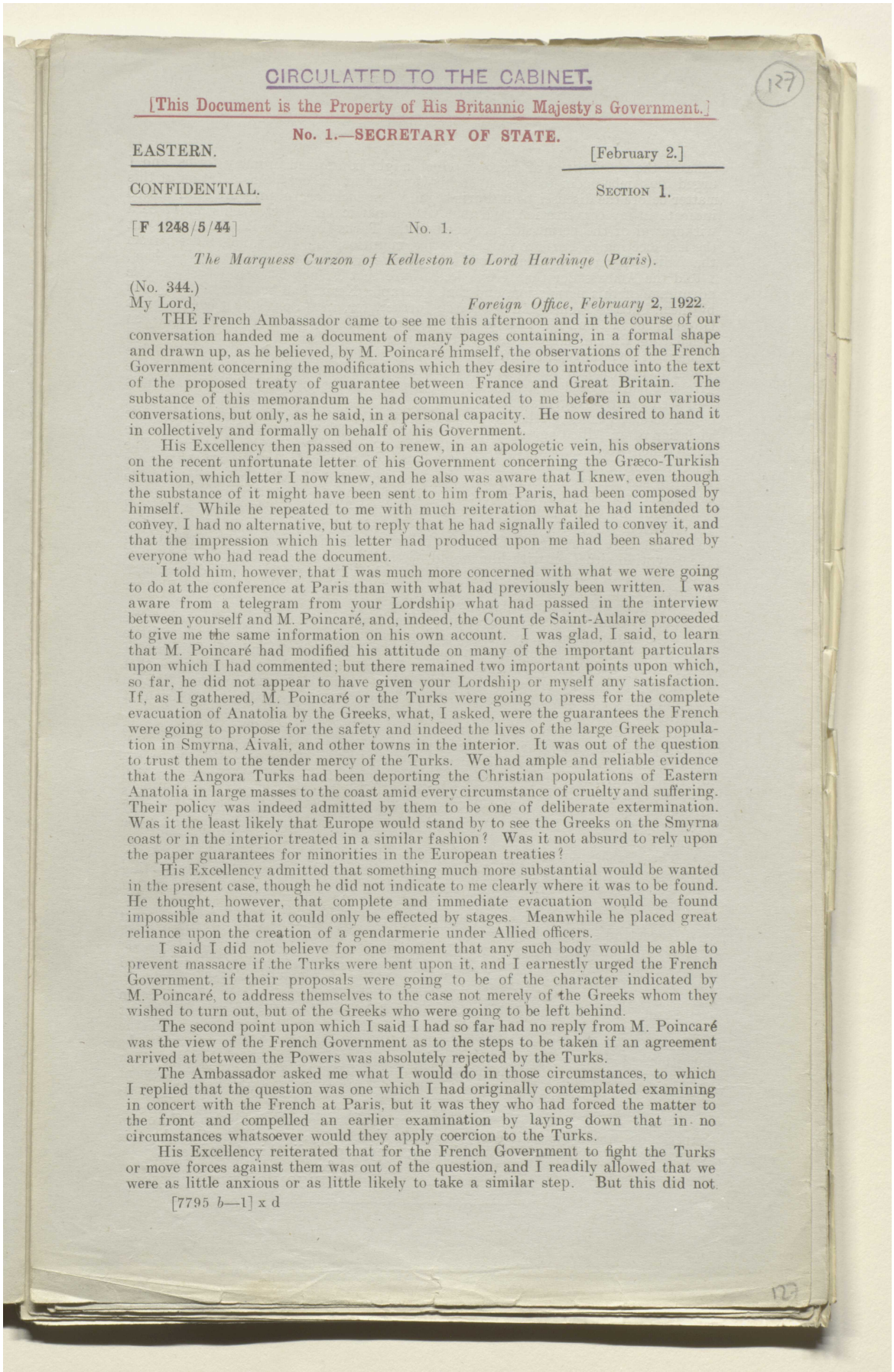

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN. [February 2.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[F 1248/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 344.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 2, 1922.

THE French Ambassador came to see me this afternoon and in the course of our conversation handed me a document of many pages containing, in a formal shape and drawn up, as he believed, by M. Poincaré himself, the observations of the French Government concerning the modifications which they desire to introduce into the text of the proposed treaty of guarantee between France and Great Britain. The substance of this memorandum he had communicated to me before in our various conversations, but only, as he said, in a personal capacity. He now desired to hand it in collectively and formally on behalf of his Government.

His Excellency then passed on to renew, in an apologetic vein, his observations on the recent unfortunate letter of his Government concerning the Græco-Turkish situation, which letter I now knew, and he also was aware that I knew, even though the substance of it might have been sent to him from Paris, had been composed by himself. While he repeated to me with much reiteration what he had intended to convey, I had no alternative, but to reply that he had signally failed to convey it, and that the impression which his letter had produced upon me had been shared by everyone who had read the document.

I told him, however, that I was much more concerned with what we were going to do at the conference at Paris than with what had previously been written. I was aware from a telegram from your Lordship what had passed in the interview between yourself and M. Poincaré, and, indeed, the Count de Saint-Aulaire proceeded to give me the same information on his own account. I was glad, I said, to learn that M. Poincaré had modified his attitude on many of the important particulars upon which I had commented; but there remained two important points upon which, so far, he did not appear to have given your Lordship or myself any satisfaction. If, as I gathered, M. Poincaré or the Turks were going to press for the complete evacuation of Anatolia by the Greeks, what, I asked, were the guarantees the French were going to propose for the safety and indeed the lives of the large Greek population in Smyrna, Aivali, and other towns in the interior. It was out of the question to trust them to the tender mercy of the Turks. We had ample and reliable evidence that the Angora Turks had been deporting the Christian populations of Eastern Anatolia in large masses to the coast amid every circumstance of cruelty and suffering. Their policy was indeed admitted by them to be one of deliberate extermination. Was it the least likely that Europe would stand by to see the Greeks on the Smyrna coast or in the interior treated in a similar fashion? Was it not absurd to rely upon the paper guarantees for minorities in the European treaties?

His Excellency admitted that something much more substantial would be wanted in the present case, though he did not indicate to me clearly where it was to be found. He thought, however, that complete and immediate evacuation would be found impossible and that it could only be effected by stages. Meanwhile he placed great reliance upon the creation of a gendarmerie under Allied officers.

I said I did not believe for one moment that any such body would be able to prevent massacre if the Turks were bent upon it, and I earnestly urged the French Government, if their proposals were going to be of the character indicated by M. Poincaré, to address themselves to the case not merely of the Greeks whom they wished to turn out, but of the Greeks who were going to be left behind.

The second point upon which I said I had so far had no reply from M. Poincaré was the view of the French Government as to the steps to be taken if an agreement arrived at between the Powers was absolutely rejected by the Turks.

The Ambassador asked me what I would do in those circumstances, to which I replied that the question was one which I had originally contemplated examining in concert with the French at Paris, but it was they who had forced the matter to the front and compelled an earlier examination by laying down that in no circumstances whatsoever would they apply coercion to the Turks.

His Excellency reiterated that for the French Government to fight the Turks or move forces against them was out of the question, and I readily allowed that we were as little anxious or as little likely to take a similar step. But this did not

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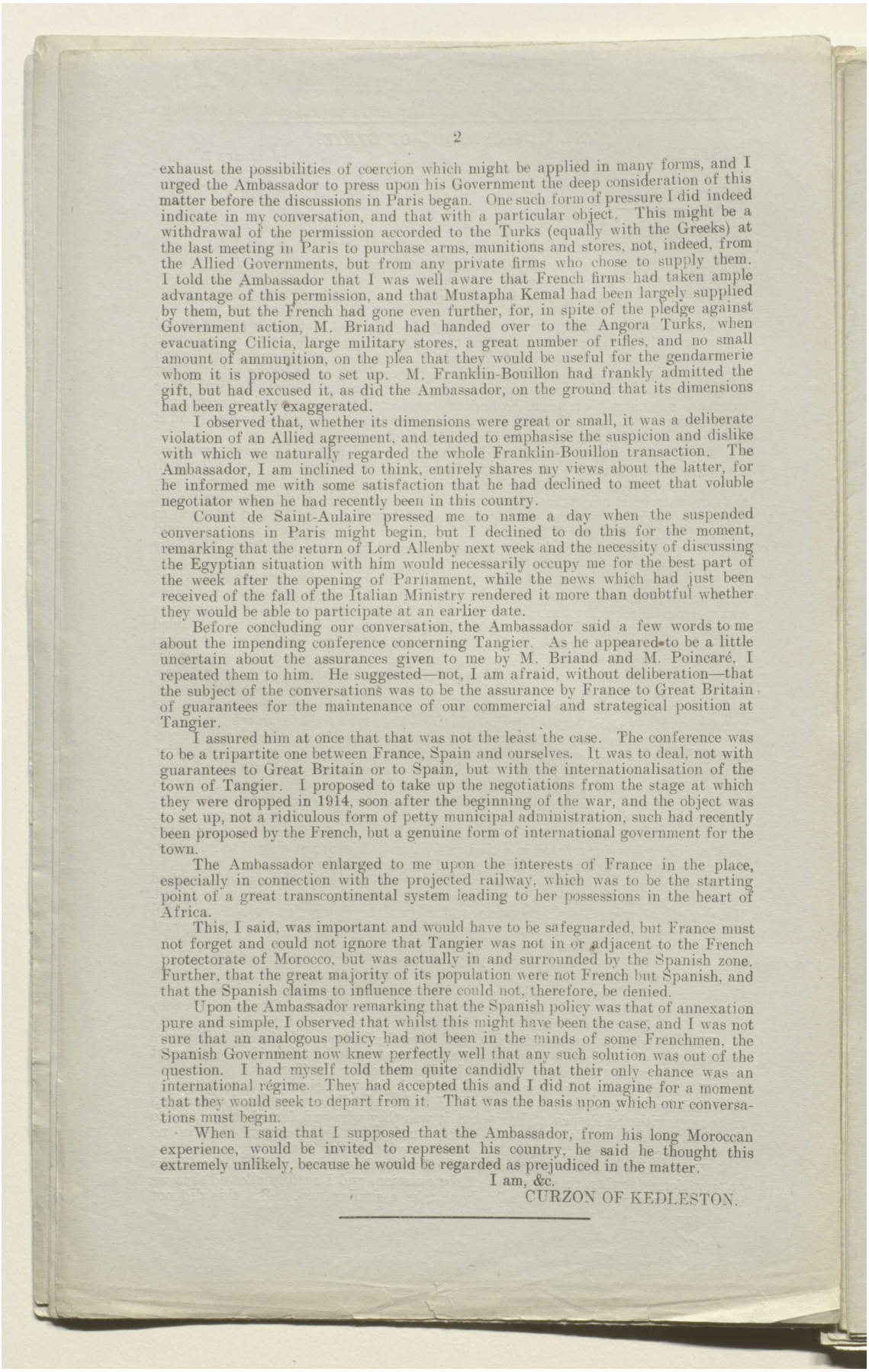

exhaust the possibilities of coercion which might be applied in many forms, and I urged the Ambassador to press upon his Government the deep consideration of this matter before the discussions in Paris began. One such form of pressure I did indeed indicate in my conversation, and that with a particular object. This might be a withdrawal of the permission accorded to the Turks (equally with the Greeks) at the last meeting in Paris to purchase arms, munitions and stores, not, indeed, from the Allied Governments, but from any private firms who chose to supply them. I told the Ambassador that I was well aware that French firms had taken ample advantage of this permission, and that Mustapha Kemal had been largely supplied by them, but the French had gone even further, for, in spite of the pledge against Government action, M. Briand had handed over to the Angora Turks, when evacuating Cilicia, large military stores, a great number of rifles, and no small amount of ammunition, on the plea that they would be useful for the gendarmerie whom it is proposed to set up. M. Franklin-Bouillon had frankly admitted the gift, but had excused it, as did the Ambassador, on the ground that its dimensions had been greatly exaggerated.

I observed that, whether its dimensions were great or small, it was a deliberate violation of an Allied agreement, and tended to emphasise the suspicion and dislike with which we naturally regarded the whole Franklin-Bouillon transaction. The Ambassador, I am inclined to think, entirely shares my views about the latter, for he informed me with some satisfaction that he had declined to meet that voluble negotiator when he had recently been in this country.

Count de Saint-Aulaire pressed me to name a day when the suspended conversations in Paris might begin, but I declined to do this for the moment, remarking that the return of Lord Allenby next week and the necessity of discussing the Egyptian situation with him would necessarily occupy me for the best part of the week after the opening of Parliament, while the news which had just been received of the fall of the Italian Ministry rendered it more than doubtful whether they would be able to participate at an earlier date.

Before concluding our conversation, the Ambassador said a few words to me about the impending conference concerning Tangier. As he appeared to be a little uncertain about the assurances given to me by M. Briand and M. Poincaré, I repeated them to him. He suggested—not, I am afraid, without deliberation—that the subject of the conversations was to be the assurance by France to Great Britain of guarantees for the maintenance of our commercial and strategical position at Tangier.

I assured him at once that that was not the least the case. The conference was to be a tripartite one between France, Spain and ourselves. It was to deal, not with guarantees to Great Britain or to Spain, but with the internationalisation of the town of Tangier. I proposed to take up the negotiations from the stage at which they were dropped in 1914, soon after the beginning of the war, and the object was to set up, not a ridiculous form of petty municipal administration, such had recently been proposed by the French, but a genuine form of international government for the town.

The Ambassador enlarged to me upon the interests of France in the place, especially in connection with the projected railway, which was to be the starting point of a great transcontinental system leading to her possessions in the heart of Africa.

This, I said, was important and would have to be safeguarded, but France must not forget and could not ignore that Tangier was not in or adjacent to the French protectorate of Morocco, but was actually in and surrounded by the Spanish zone. Further, that the great majority of its population were not French but Spanish, and that the Spanish claims to influence there could not, therefore, be denied.

Upon the Ambassador remarking that the Spanish policy was that of annexation pure and simple, I observed that whilst this might have been the case, and I was not sure that an analogous policy had not been in the minds of some Frenchmen, the Spanish Government now knew perfectly well that any such solution was out of the question. I had myself told them quite candidly that their only chance was an international régime. They had accepted this and I did not imagine for a moment that they would seek to depart from it. That was the basis upon which our conversations must begin.

When I said that I supposed that the Ambassador, from his long Moroccan experience, would be invited to represent his country, he said he thought this extremely unlikely, because he would be regarded as prejudiced in the matter.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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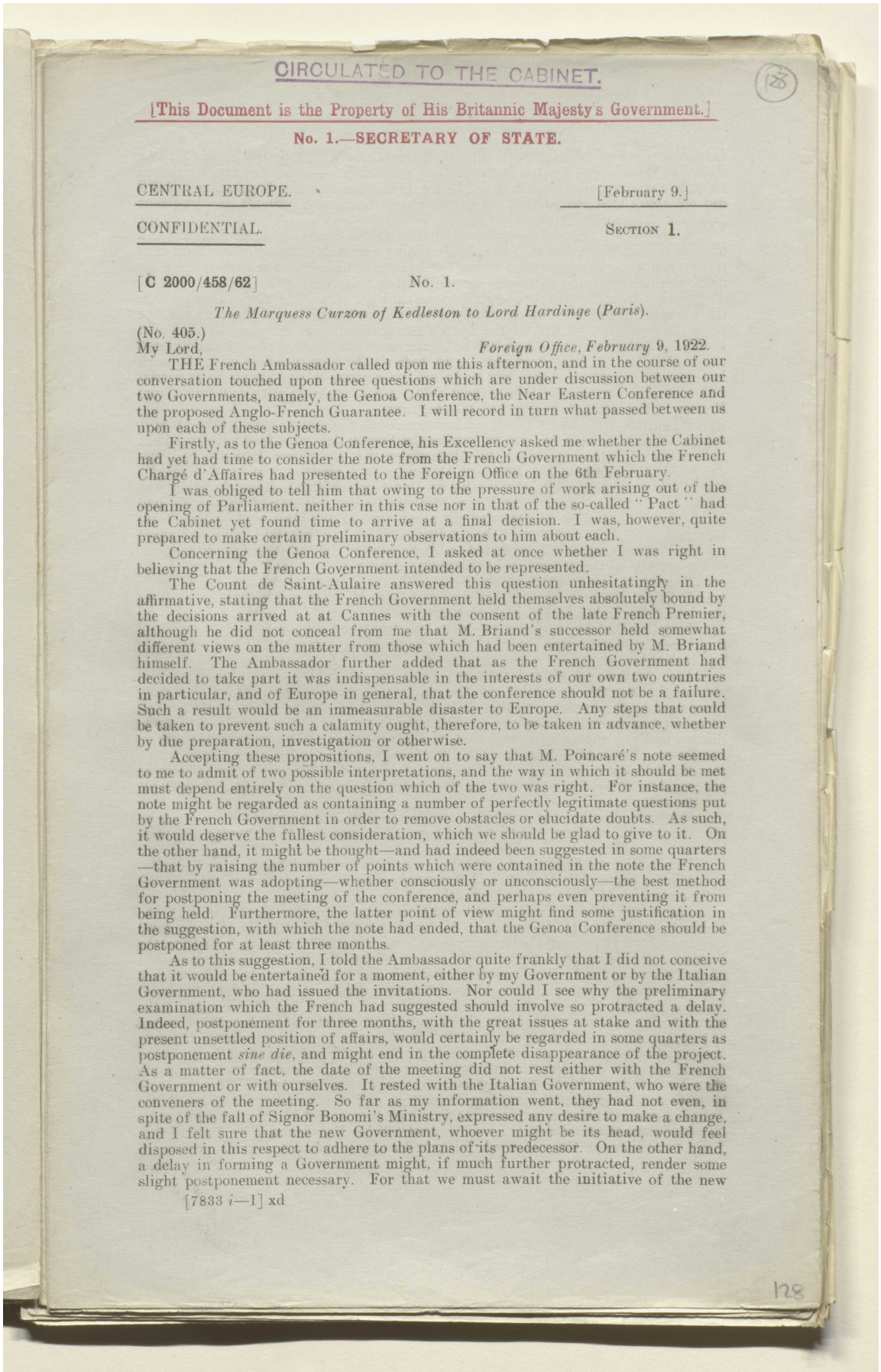

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

CENTRAL EUROPE. [February 9.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 2000/458/62] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 405.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 9, 1922.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and in the course of our conversation touched upon three questions which are under discussion between our two Governments, namely, the Genoa Conference, the Near Eastern Conference and the proposed Anglo-French Guarantee. I will record in turn what passed between us upon each of these subjects.

Firstly, as to the Genoa Conference, his Excellency asked me whether the Cabinet had yet had time to consider the note from the French Government which the French Chargé d'Affaires had presented to the Foreign Office on the 6th February.

I was obliged to tell him that owing to the pressure of work arising out of the opening of Parliament, neither in this case nor in that of the so-called "Pact" had the Cabinet yet found time to arrive at a final decision. I was, however, quite prepared to make certain preliminary observations to him about each.

Concerning the Genoa Conference, I asked at once whether I was right in believing that the French Government intended to be represented.

The Count de Saint-Aulaire answered this question unhesitatingly in the affirmative, stating that the French Government held themselves absolutely bound by the decisions arrived at at Cannes with the consent of the late French Premier, although he did not conceal from me that M. Briand's successor held somewhat different views on the matter from those which had been entertained by M. Briand himself. The Ambassador further added that as the French Government had decided to take part it was indispensable in the interests of our own two countries in particular, and of Europe in general, that the conference should not be a failure. Such a result would be an immeasurable disaster to Europe. Any steps that could be taken to prevent such a calamity ought, therefore, to be taken in advance, whether by due preparation, investigation or otherwise.

Accepting these propositions, I went on to say that M. Poincaré's note seemed to me to admit of two possible interpretations, and the way in which it should be met must depend entirely on the question which of the two was right. For instance, the note might be regarded as containing a number of perfectly legitimate questions put by the French Government in order to remove obstacles or elucidate doubts. As such, it would deserve the fullest consideration, which we should be glad to give to it. On the other hand, it might be thought—and had indeed been suggested in some quarters—that by raising the number of points which were contained in the note the French Government was adopting—whether consciously or unconsciously—the best method for postponing the meeting of the conference, and perhaps even preventing it from being held. Furthermore, the latter point of view might find some justification in the suggestion, with which the note had ended, that the Genoa Conference should be postponed for at least three months.

As to this suggestion, I told the Ambassador quite frankly that I did not conceive that it would be entertained for a moment, either by my Government or by the Italian Government, who had issued the invitations. Nor could I see why the preliminary examination which the French had suggested should involve so protracted a delay. Indeed, postponement for three months, with the great issues at stake and with the present unsettled position of affairs, would certainly be regarded in some quarters as postponement *sine die*, and might end in the complete disappearance of the project. As a matter of fact, the date of the meeting did not rest either with the French Government or with ourselves. It rested with the Italian Government, who were the conveners of the meeting. So far as my information went, they had not even, in spite of the fall of Signor Bonomi's Ministry, expressed any desire to make a change, and I felt sure that the new Government, whoever might be its head, would feel disposed in this respect to adhere to the plans of its predecessor. On the other hand, a delay in forming a Government might, if much further protracted, render some slight postponement necessary. For that we must await the initiative of the new

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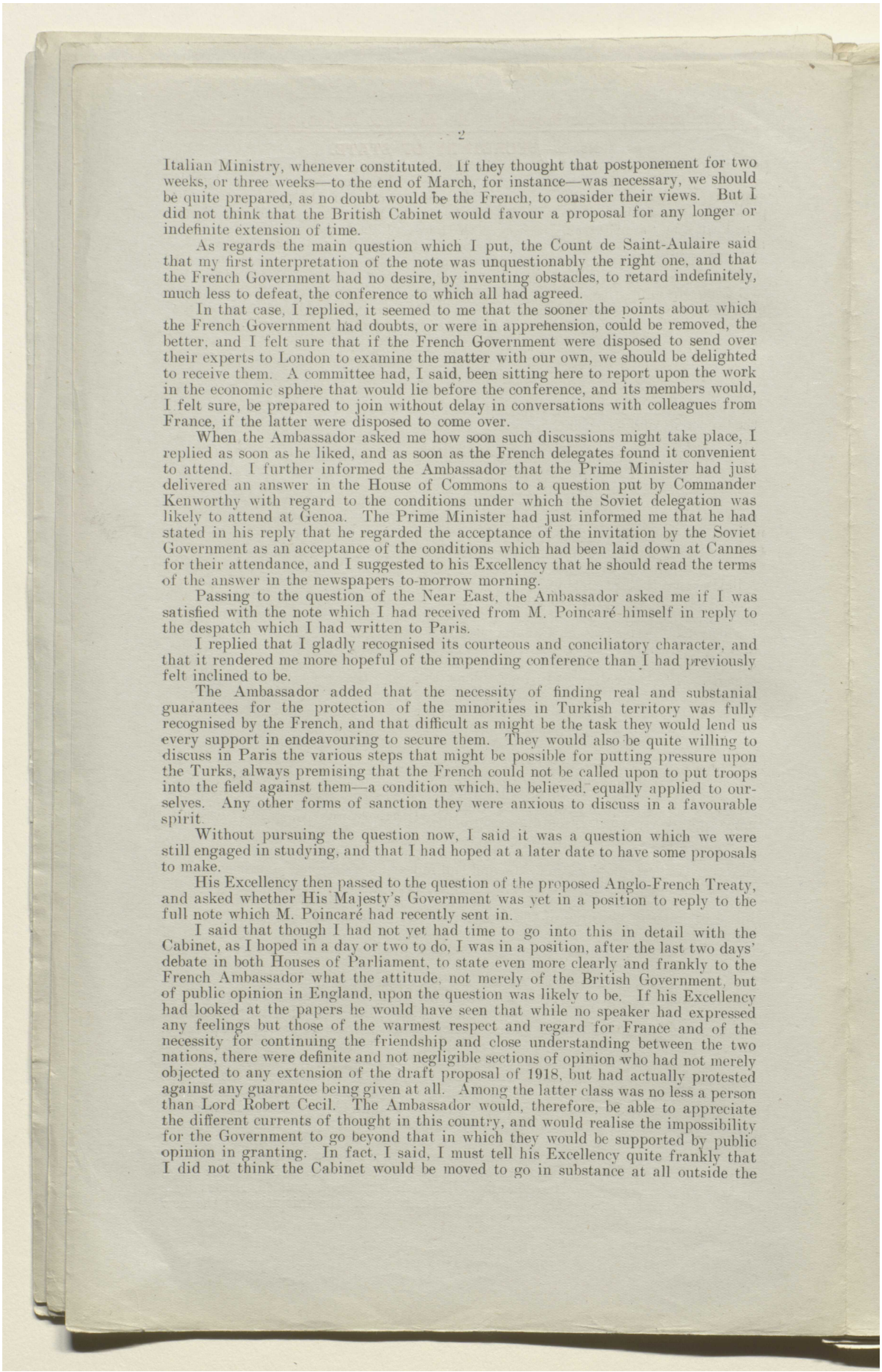

Italian Ministry, whenever constituted. If they thought that postponement for two weeks, or three weeks—to the end of March, for instance—was necessary, we should be quite prepared, as no doubt would be the French, to consider their views. But I did not think that the British Cabinet would favour a proposal for any longer or indefinite extension of time.

As regards the main question which I put, the Count de Saint-Aulaire said that my first interpretation of the note was unquestionably the right one, and that the French Government had no desire, by inventing obstacles, to retard indefinitely, much less to defeat, the conference to which all had agreed.

In that case, I replied, it seemed to me that the sooner the points about which the French Government had doubts, or were in apprehension, could be removed, the better, and I felt sure that if the French Government were disposed to send over their experts to London to examine the matter with our own, we should be delighted to receive them. A committee had, I said, been sitting here to report upon the work in the economic sphere that would lie before the conference, and its members would, I felt sure, be prepared to join without delay in conversations with colleagues from France, if the latter were disposed to come over.

When the Ambassador asked me how soon such discussions might take place, I replied as soon as he liked, and as soon as the French delegates found it convenient to attend. I further informed the Ambassador that the Prime Minister had just delivered an answer in the House of Commons to a question put by Commander Kenworthy with regard to the conditions under which the Soviet delegation was likely to attend at Genoa. The Prime Minister had just informed me that he had stated in his reply that he regarded the acceptance of the invitation by the Soviet Government as an acceptance of the conditions which had been laid down at Cannes for their attendance, and I suggested to his Excellency that he should read the terms of the answer in the newspapers to-morrow morning.

Passing to the question of the Near East, the Ambassador asked me if I was satisfied with the note which I had received from M. Poincaré himself in reply to the despatch which I had written to Paris.

I replied that I gladly recognised its courteous and conciliatory character, and that it rendered me more hopeful of the impending conference than I had previously felt inclined to be.

The Ambassador added that the necessity of finding real and substanial guarantees for the protection of the minorities in Turkish territory was fully recognised by the French, and that difficult as might be the task they would lend us every support in endeavouring to secure them. They would also be quite willing to discuss in Paris the various steps that might be possible for putting pressure upon the Turks, always premising that the French could not be called upon to put troops into the field against them—a condition which, he believed, equally applied to ourselves. Any other forms of sanction they were anxious to discuss in a favourable spirit.

Without pursuing the question now, I said it was a question which we were still engaged in studying, and that I had hoped at a later date to have some proposals to make.

His Excellency then passed to the question of the proposed Anglo-French Treaty, and asked whether His Majesty's Government was yet in a position to reply to the full note which M. Poincaré had recently sent in.

I said that though I had not yet had time to go into this in detail with the Cabinet, as I hoped in a day or two to do, I was in a position, after the last two days' debate in both Houses of Parliament, to state even more clearly and frankly to the French Ambassador what the attitude, not merely of the British Government, but of public opinion in England, upon the question was likely to be. If his Excellency had looked at the papers he would have seen that while no speaker had expressed any feelings but those of the warmest respect and regard for France and of the necessity for continuing the friendship and close understanding between the two nations, there were definite and not negligible sections of opinion who had not merely objected to any extension of the draft proposal of 1918, but had actually protested against any guarantee being given at all. Among the latter class was no less a person than Lord Robert Cecil. The Ambassador would, therefore, be able to appreciate the different currents of thought in this country, and would realise the impossibility for the Government to go beyond that in which they would be supported by public opinion in granting. In fact, I said, I must tell his Excellency quite frankly that I did not think the Cabinet would be moved to go in substance at all outside the

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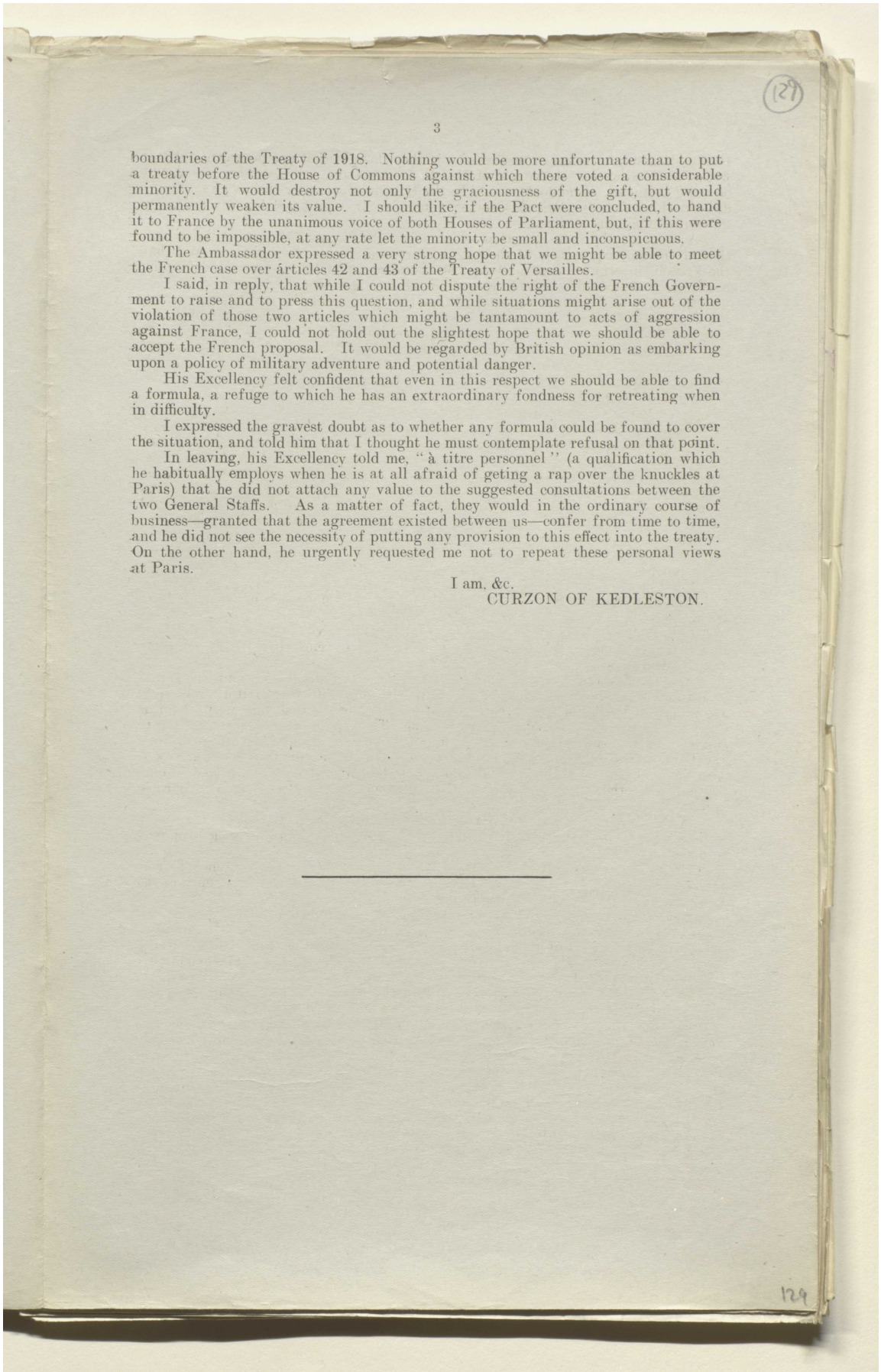

boundaries of the Treaty of 1918. Nothing would be more unfortunate than to put a treaty before the House of Commons against which there voted a considerable minority. It would destroy not only the graciousness of the gift, but would permanently weaken its value. I should like, if the Pact were concluded, to hand it to France by the unanimous voice of both Houses of Parliament, but, if this were found to be impossible, at any rate let the minority be small and inconspicuous.

The Ambassador expressed a very strong hope that we might be able to meet the French case over articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles.

I said, in reply, that while I could not dispute the right of the French Government to raise and to press this question, and while situations might arise out of the violation of those two articles which might be tantamount to acts of aggression against France, I could not hold out the slightest hope that we should be able to accept the French proposal. It would be regarded by British opinion as embarking upon a policy of military adventure and potential danger.

His Excellency felt confident that even in this respect we should be able to find a formula, a refuge to which he has an extraordinary fondness for retreating when in difficulty.

I expressed the gravest doubt as to whether any formula could be found to cover the situation, and told him that I thought he must contemplate refusal on that point.

In leaving, his Excellency told me, "à titre personnel" (a qualification which he habitually employs when he is at all afraid of geting a rap over the knuckles at Paris) that he did not attach any value to the suggested consultations between the two General Staffs. As a matter of fact, they would in the ordinary course of business—granted that the agreement existed between us—confer from time to time, and he did not see the necessity of putting any provision to this effect into the treaty. On the other hand, he urgently requested me not to repeat these personal views at Paris.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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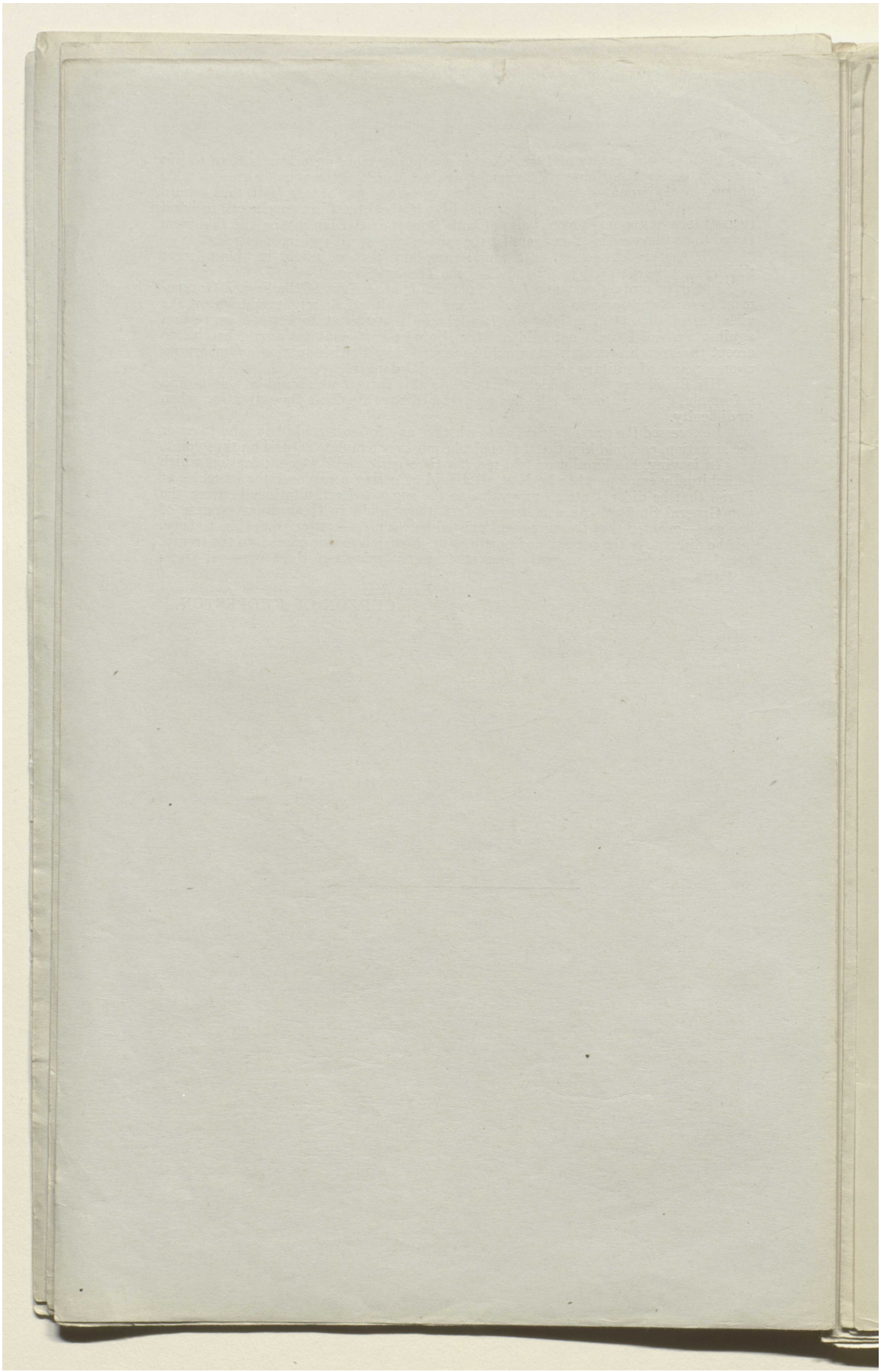

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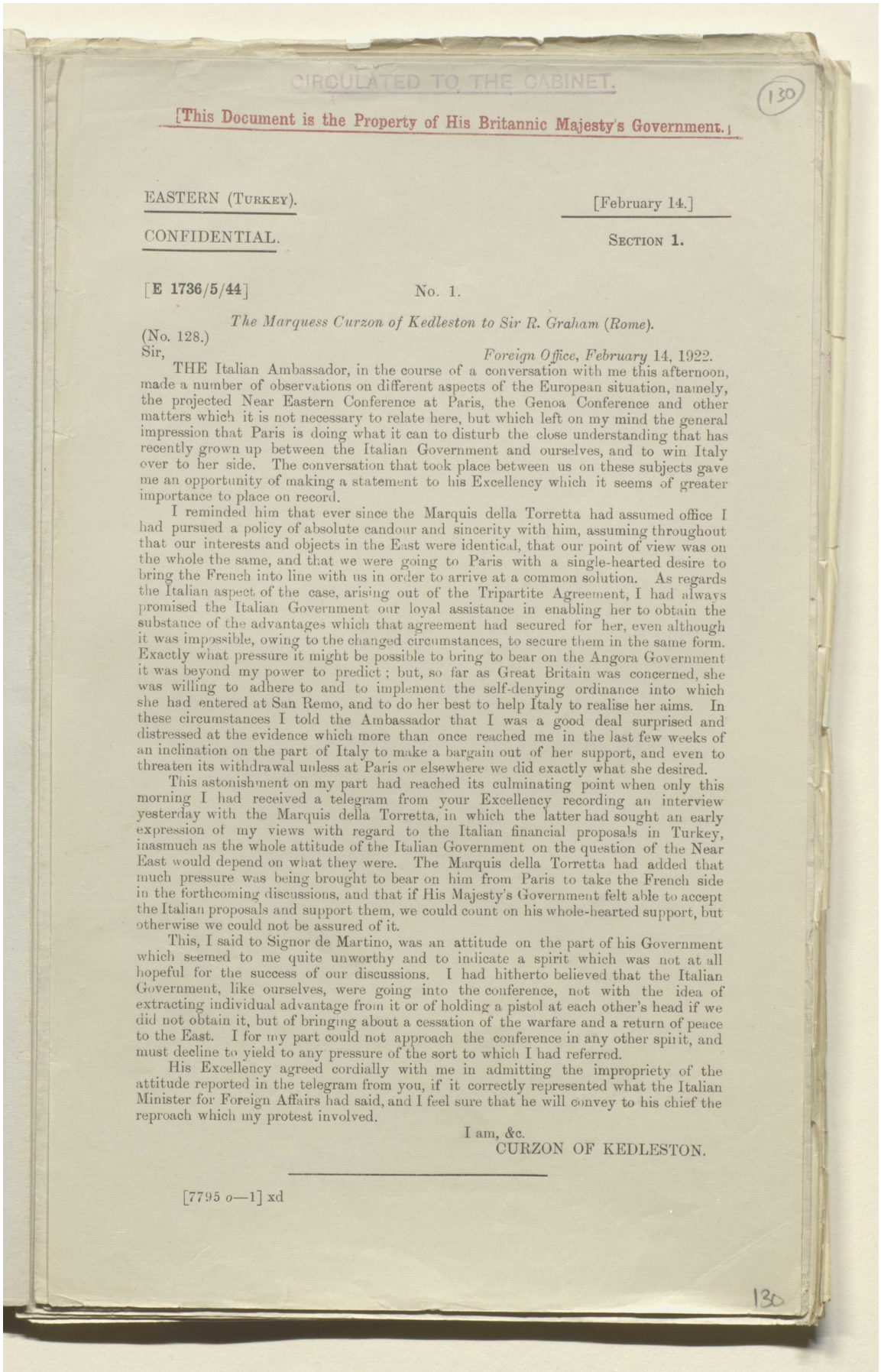

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [February 14.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1736/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 128.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 14, 1922.

THE Italian Ambassador, in the course of a conversation with me this afternoon, made a number of observations on different aspects of the European situation, namely, the projected Near Eastern Conference at Paris, the Genoa Conference and other matters which it is not necessary to relate here, but which left on my mind the general impression that Paris is doing what it can to disturb the close understanding that has recently grown up between the Italian Government and ourselves, and to win Italy over to her side. The conversation that took place between us on these subjects gave me an opportunity of making a statement to his Excellency which it seems of greater importance to place on record.

I reminded him that ever since the Marquis della Torretta had assumed office I had pursued a policy of absolute candour and sincerity with him, assuming throughout that our interests and objects in the East were identical, that our point of view was on the whole the same, and that we were going to Paris with a single-hearted desire to bring the French into line with us in order to arrive at a common solution. As regards the Italian aspect of the case, arising out of the Tripartite Agreement, I had always promised the Italian Government our loyal assistance in enabling her to obtain the substance of the advantages which that agreement had secured for her, even although it was impossible, owing to the changed circumstances, to secure them in the same form. Exactly what pressure it might be possible to bring to bear on the Angora Government it was beyond my power to predict; but, so far as Great Britain was concerned, she was willing to adhere to and to implement the self-denying ordinance into which she had entered at San Remo, and to do her best to help Italy to realise her aims. In these circumstances I told the Ambassador that I was a good deal surprised and distressed at the evidence which more than once reached me in the last few weeks of an inclination on the part of Italy to make a bargain out of her support, and even to threaten its withdrawal unless at Paris or elsewhere we did exactly what she desired.

This astonishment on my part had reached its culminating point when only this morning I had received a telegram from your Excellency recording an interview yesterday with the Marquis della Torretta, in which the latter had sought an early expression of my views with regard to the Italian financial proposals in Turkey, inasmuch as the whole attitude of the Italian Government on the question of the Near East would depend on what they were. The Marquis della Torretta had added that much pressure was being brought to bear on him from Paris to take the French side in the forthcoming discussions, and that if His Majesty's Government felt able to accept the Italian proposals and support them, we could count on his whole-hearted support, but otherwise we could not be assured of it.

This, I said to Signor de Martino, was an attitude on the part of his Government which seemed to me quite unworthy and to indicate a spirit which was not at all hopeful for the success of our discussions. I had hitherto believed that the Italian Government, like ourselves, were going into the conference, not with the idea of extracting individual advantage from it or of holding a pistol at each other's head if we did not obtain it, but of bringing about a cessation of the warfare and a return of peace to the East. I for my part could not approach the conference in any other spirit, and must decline to yield to any pressure of the sort to which I had referred.

His Excellency agreed cordially with me in admitting the impropriety of the attitude reported in the telegram from you, if it correctly represented what the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had said, and I feel sure that he will convey to his chief the reproach which my protest involved.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[7795 *o*—1] xd

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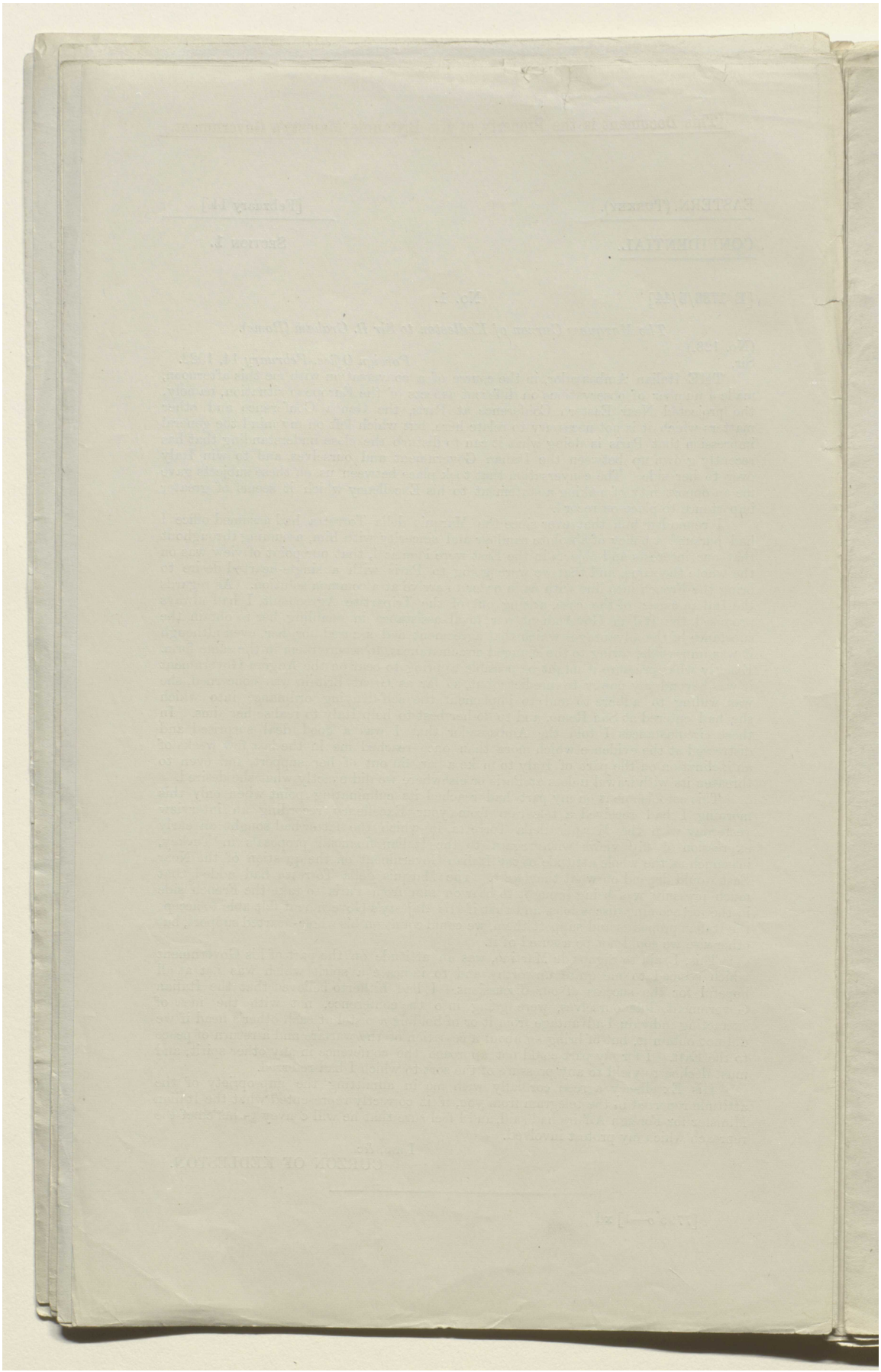

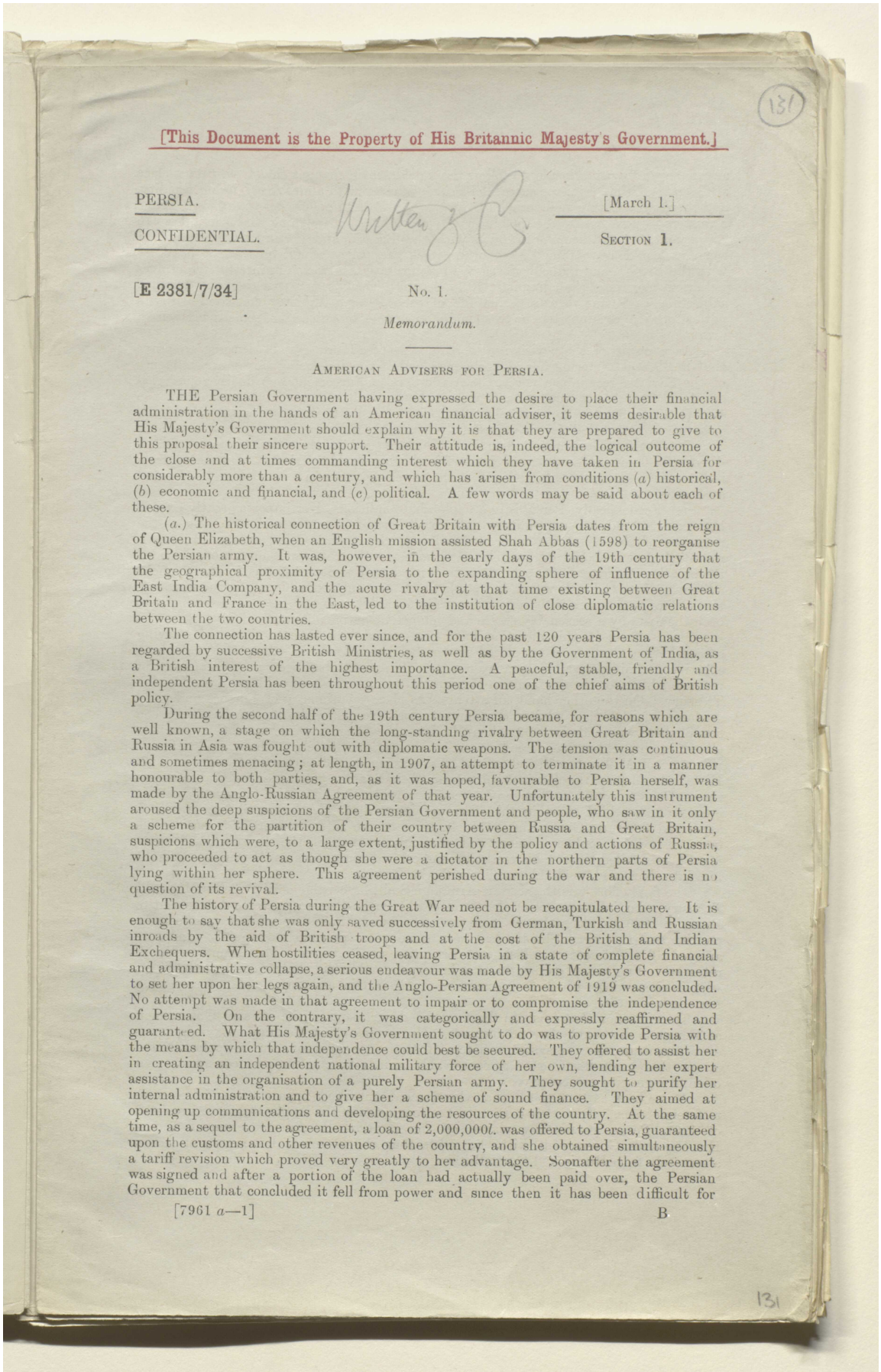

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PERSIA. [March 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2381/7/34] No. 1.

Memorandum.

AMERICAN ADVISERS FOR PERSIA.

THE Persian Government having expressed the desire to place their financial administration in the hands of an American financial adviser, it seems desirable that His Majesty's Government should explain why it is that they are prepared to give to this proposal their sincere support. Their attitude is, indeed, the logical outcome of the close and at times commanding interest which they have taken in Persia for considerably more than a century, and which has arisen from conditions (*a*) historical, (*b*) economic and financial, and (*c*) political. A few words may be said about each of these.

(*a.*) The historical connection of Great Britain with Persia dates from the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when an English mission assisted Shah Abbas (1598) to reorganise the Persian army. It was, however, in the early days of the 19th century that the geographical proximity of Persia to the expanding sphere of influence of the East India Company, and the acute rivalry at that time existing between Great Britain and France in the East, led to the institution of close diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The connection has lasted ever since, and for the past 120 years Persia has been regarded by successive British Ministries, as well as by the Government of India, as a British interest of the highest importance. A peaceful, stable, friendly and independent Persia has been throughout this period one of the chief aims of British policy.

During the second half of the 19th century Persia became, for reasons which are well known, a stage on which the long-standing rivalry between Great Britain and Russia in Asia was fought out with diplomatic weapons. The tension was continuous and sometimes menacing; at length, in 1907, an attempt to terminate it in a manner honourable to both parties, and, as it was hoped, favourable to Persia herself, was made by the Anglo-Russian Agreement of that year. Unfortunately this instrument aroused the deep suspicions of the Persian Government and people, who saw in it only a scheme for the partition of their country between Russia and Great Britain, suspicions which were, to a large extent, justified by the policy and actions of Russia, who proceeded to act as though she were a dictator in the northern parts of Persia lying within her sphere. This agreement perished during the war and there is no question of its revival.

The history of Persia during the Great War need not be recapitulated here. It is enough to say that she was only saved successively from German, Turkish and Russian inroads by the aid of British troops and at the cost of the British and Indian Exchequers. When hostilities ceased, leaving Persia in a state of complete financial and administrative collapse, a serious endeavour was made by His Majesty's Government to set her upon her legs again, and the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919 was concluded. No attempt was made in that agreement to impair or to compromise the independence of Persia. On the contrary, it was categorically and expressly reaffirmed and guaranteed. What His Majesty's Government sought to do was to provide Persia with the means by which that independence could best be secured. They offered to assist her in creating an independent national military force of her own, lending her expert assistance in the organisation of a purely Persian army. They sought to purify her internal administration and to give her a scheme of sound finance. They aimed at opening up communications and developing the resources of the country. At the same time, as a sequel to the agreement, a loan of 2,000,000*l.* was offered to Persia, guaranteed upon the customs and other revenues of the country, and she obtained simultaneously a tariff revision which proved very greatly to her advantage. Soonafter the agreement was signed and after a portion of the loan had actually been paid over, the Persian Government that concluded it fell from power and since then it has been difficult for

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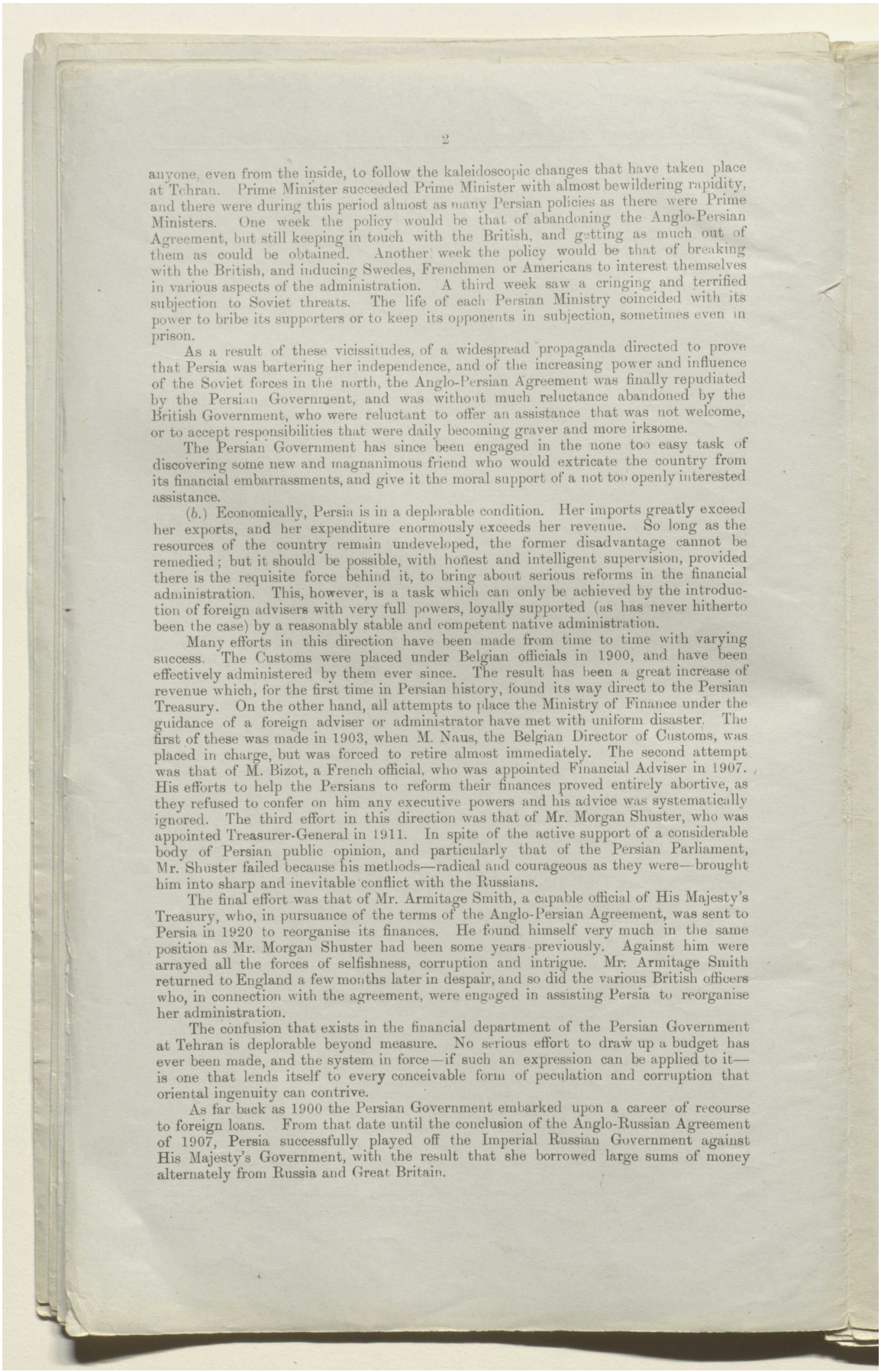

anyone, even from the inside, to follow the kaleidoscopic changes that have taken place at Tehran. Prime Minister succeeded Prime Minister with almost bewildering rapidity, and there were during this period almost as many Persian policies as there were Prime Ministers. One week the policy would be that of abandoning the Anglo-Persian Agreement, but still keeping in touch with the British, and getting as much out of them as could be obtained. Another week the policy would be that of breaking with the British, and inducing Swedes, Frenchmen or Americans to interest themselves in various aspects of the administration. A third week saw a cringing and terrified subjection to Soviet threats. The life of each Persian Ministry coincided with its power to bribe its supporters or to keep its opponents in subjection, sometimes even in prison.

As a result of these vicissitudes, of a widespread propaganda directed to prove that Persia was bartering her independence, and of the increasing power and influence of the Soviet forces in the north, the Anglo-Persian Agreement was finally repudiated by the Persian Government, and was without much reluctance abandoned by the British Government, who were reluctant to offer an assistance that was not welcome, or to accept responsibilities that were daily becoming graver and more irksome.

The Persian Government has since been engaged in the none too easy task of discovering some new and magnanimous friend who would extricate the country from its financial embarrassments, and give it the moral support of a not too openly interested assistance.

(*b.*) Economically, Persia is in a deplorable condition. Her imports greatly exceed her exports, and her expenditure enormously exceeds her revenue. So long as the resources of the country remain undeveloped, the former disadvantage cannot be remedied; but it should be possible, with honest and intelligent supervision, provided there is the requisite force behind it, to bring about serious reforms in the financial administration. This, however, is a task which can only be achieved by the introduction of foreign advisers with very full powers, loyally supported (as has never hitherto been the case) by a reasonably stable and competent native administration.

Many efforts in this direction have been made from time to time with varying success. The Customs were placed under Belgian officials in 1900, and have been effectively administered by them ever since. The result has been a great increase of revenue which, for the first time in Persian history, found its way direct to the Persian Treasury. On the other hand, all attempts to place the Ministry of Finance under the guidance of a foreign adviser or administrator have met with uniform disaster. The first of these was made in 1903, when M. Naus, the Belgian Director of Customs, was placed in charge, but was forced to retire almost immediately. The second attempt was that of M. Bizot, a French official, who was appointed Financial Adviser in 1907. His efforts to help the Persians to reform their finances proved entirely abortive, as they refused to confer on him any executive powers and his advice was systematically ignored. The third effort in this direction was that of Mr. Morgan Shuster, who was appointed Treasurer-General in 1911. In spite of the active support of a considerable body of Persian public opinion, and particularly that of the Persian Parliament, Mr. Shuster failed because his methods—radical and courageous as they were—brought him into sharp and inevitable conflict with the Russians.

The final effort was that of Mr. Armitage Smith, a capable official of His Majesty's Treasury, who, in pursuance of the terms of the Anglo-Persian Agreement, was sent to Persia in 1920 to reorganise its finances. He found himself very much in the same position as Mr. Morgan Shuster had been some years previously. Against him were arrayed all the forces of selfishness, corruption and intrigue. Mr. Armitage Smith returned to England a few months later in despair, and so did the various British officers who, in connection with the agreement, were engaged in assisting Persia to reorganise her administration.

The confusion that exists in the financial department of the Persian Government at Tehran is deplorable beyond measure. No serious effort to draw up a budget has ever been made, and the system in force—if such an expression can be applied to it—is one that lends itself to every conceivable form of peculation and corruption that oriental ingenuity can contrive.

As far back as 1900 the Persian Government embarked upon a career of recourse to foreign loans. From that date until the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, Persia successfully played off the Imperial Russian Government against His Majesty's Government, with the result that she borrowed large sums of money alternately from Russia and Great Britain.

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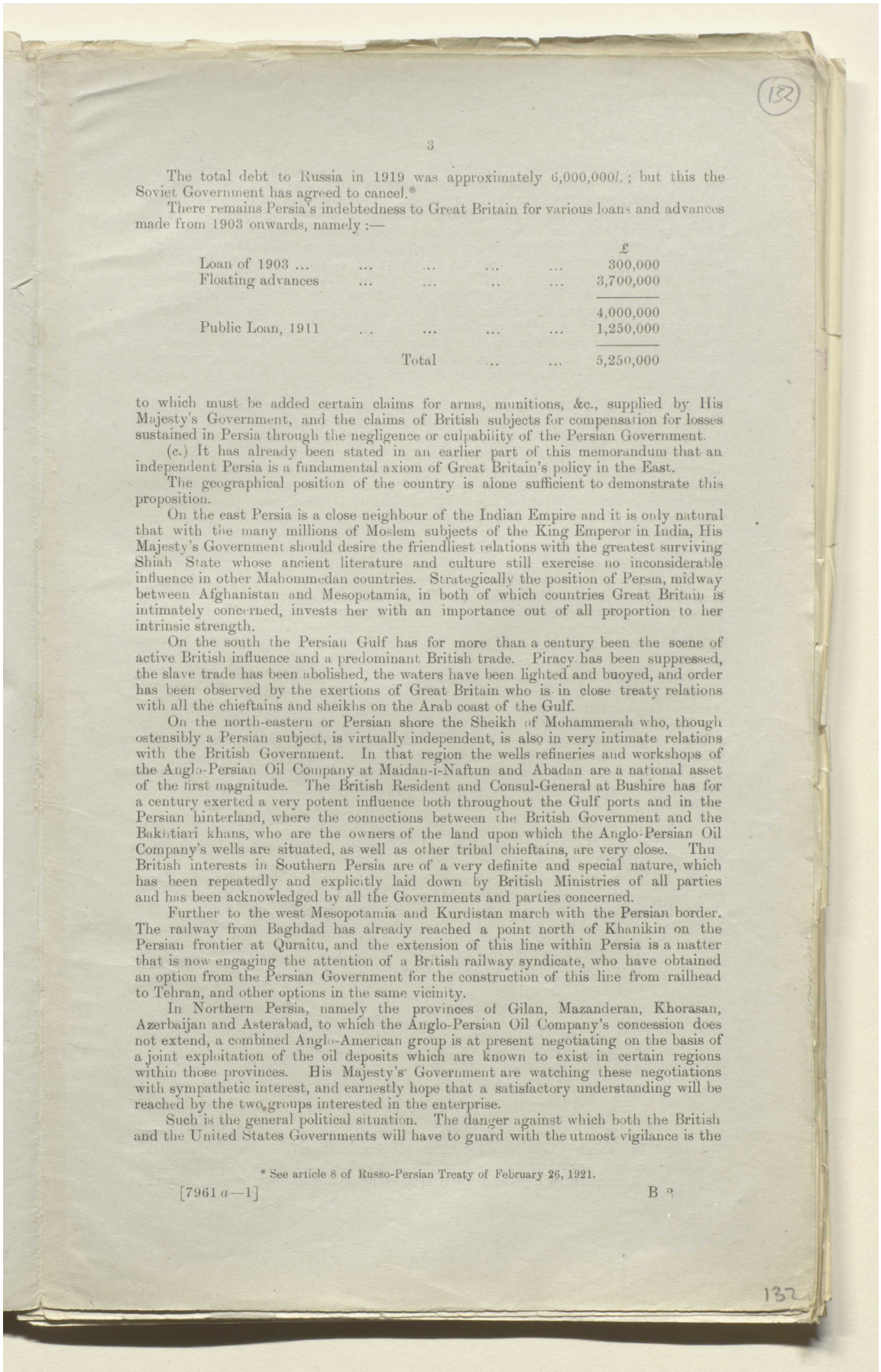

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The total debt to Russia in 1919 was approximately 6,000,000*l.*; but this the Soviet Government has agreed to cancel.*

There remains Persia's indebtedness to Great Britain for various loans and advances made from 1903 onwards, namely :—

	£
Loan of 1903	300,000
Floating advances	3,700,000
	4,000,000
Public Loan, 1911	1,250,000
Total	5,250,000

to which must be added certain claims for arms, munitions, &c., supplied by His Majesty's Government, and the claims of British subjects for compensation for losses sustained in Persia through the negligence or culpability of the Persian Government.

(c.) It has already been stated in an earlier part of this memorandum that an independent Persia is a fundamental axiom of Great Britain's policy in the East.

The geographical position of the country is alone sufficient to demonstrate this proposition.

On the east Persia is a close neighbour of the Indian Empire and it is only natural that with the many millions of Moslem subjects of the King Emperor in India, His Majesty's Government should desire the friendliest relations with the greatest surviving Shiah State whose ancient literature and culture still exercise no inconsiderable influence in other Mahommedan countries. Strategically the position of Persia, midway between Afghanistan and Mesopotamia, in both of which countries Great Britain is intimately concerned, invests her with an importance out of all proportion to her intrinsic strength.

On the south the Persian Gulf has for more than a century been the scene of active British influence and a predominant British trade. Piracy has been suppressed, the slave trade has been abolished, the waters have been lighted and buoyed, and order has been observed by the exertions of Great Britain who is in close treaty relations with all the chieftains and sheikhs on the Arab coast of the Gulf.

On the north-eastern or Persian shore the Sheikh of Mohammerah who, though ostensibly a Persian subject, is virtually independent, is also in very intimate relations with the British Government. In that region the wells refineries and workshops of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company at Maidan-i-Naftun and Abadan are a national asset of the first magnitude. The British Resident and Consul-General at Bushire has for a century exerted a very potent influence both throughout the Gulf ports and in the Persian hinterland, where the connections between the British Government and the Bakhtiari khans, who are the owners of the land upon which the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's wells are situated, as well as other tribal chieftains, are very close. Thu British interests in Southern Persia are of a very definite and special nature, which has been repeatedly and explicitly laid down by British Ministries of all parties and has been acknowledged by all the Governments and parties concerned.

Further to the west Mesopotamia and Kurdistan march with the Persian border. The railway from Baghdad has already reached a point north of Khanikin on the Persian frontier at Quraitu, and the extension of this line within Persia is a matter that is now engaging the attention of a British railway syndicate, who have obtained an option from the Persian Government for the construction of this line from railhead to Tehran, and other options in the same vicinity.

In Northern Persia, namely the provinces of Gilan, Mazanderan, Khorasan, Azerbaijan and Asterabad, to which the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's concession does not extend, a combined Anglo-American group is at present negotiating on the basis of a joint exploitation of the oil deposits which are known to exist in certain regions within those provinces. His Majesty's Government are watching these negotiations with sympathetic interest, and earnestly hope that a satisfactory understanding will be reached by the two groups interested in the enterprise.

Such is the general political situation. The danger against which both the British and the United States Governments will have to guard with the utmost vigilance is the

* See article 8 of Russo-Persian Treaty of February 26, 1921.

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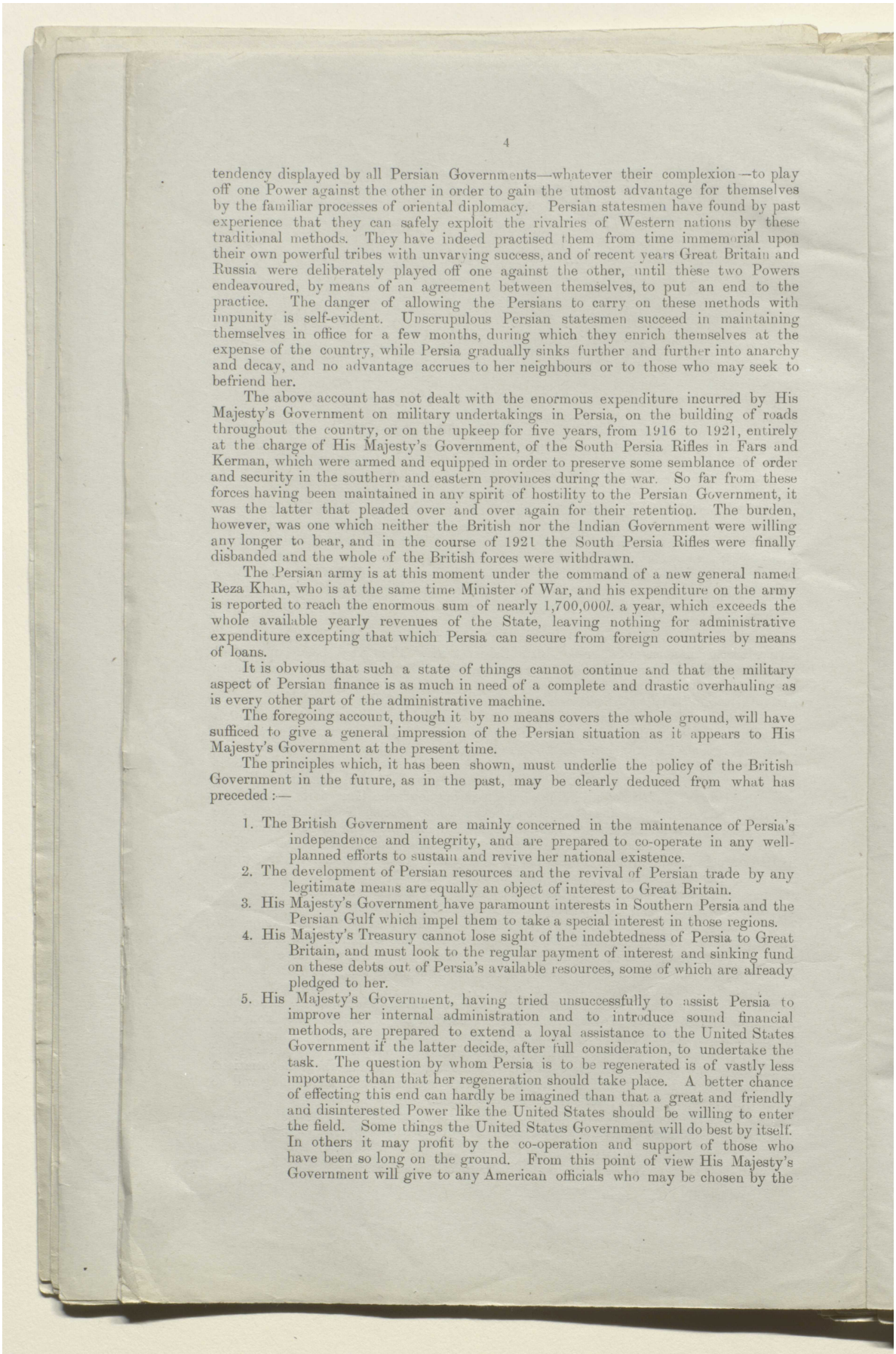

tendency displayed by all Persian Governments—whatever their complexion—to play off one Power against the other in order to gain the utmost advantage for themselves by the familiar processes of oriental diplomacy. Persian statesmen have found by past experience that they can safely exploit the rivalries of Western nations by these traditional methods. They have indeed practised them from time immemorial upon their own powerful tribes with unvarying success, and of recent years Great Britain and Russia were deliberately played off one against the other, until these two Powers endeavoured, by means of an agreement between themselves, to put an end to the practice. The danger of allowing the Persians to carry on these methods with impunity is self-evident. Unscrupulous Persian statesmen succeed in maintaining themselves in office for a few months, during which they enrich themselves at the expense of the country, while Persia gradually sinks further and further into anarchy and decay, and no advantage accrues to her neighbours or to those who may seek to befriend her.

The above account has not dealt with the enormous expenditure incurred by His Majesty's Government on military undertakings in Persia, on the building of roads throughout the country, or on the upkeep for five years, from 1916 to 1921, entirely at the charge of His Majesty's Government, of the South Persia Rifles in Fars and Kerman, which were armed and equipped in order to preserve some semblance of order and security in the southern and eastern provinces during the war. So far from these forces having been maintained in any spirit of hostility to the Persian Government, it was the latter that pleaded over and over again for their retention. The burden, however, was one which neither the British nor the Indian Government were willing any longer to bear, and in the course of 1921 the South Persia Rifles were finally disbanded and the whole of the British forces were withdrawn.

The Persian army is at this moment under the command of a new general named Reza Khan, who is at the same time Minister of War, and his expenditure on the army is reported to reach the enormous sum of nearly 1,700,000*l.* a year, which exceeds the whole available yearly revenues of the State, leaving nothing for administrative expenditure excepting that which Persia can secure from foreign countries by means of loans.

It is obvious that such a state of things cannot continue and that the military aspect of Persian finance is as much in need of a complete and drastic overhauling as is every other part of the administrative machine.

The foregoing account, though it by no means covers the whole ground, will have sufficed to give a general impression of the Persian situation as it appears to His Majesty's Government at the present time.

The principles which, it has been shown, must underlie the policy of the British Government in the future, as in the past, may be clearly deduced from what has preceded :—

1. The British Government are mainly concerned in the maintenance of Persia's independence and integrity, and are prepared to co-operate in any well-planned efforts to sustain and revive her national existence.
2. The development of Persian resources and the revival of Persian trade by any legitimate means are equally an object of interest to Great Britain.
3. His Majesty's Government have paramount interests in Southern Persia and the Persian Gulf which impel them to take a special interest in those regions.
4. His Majesty's Treasury cannot lose sight of the indebtedness of Persia to Great Britain, and must look to the regular payment of interest and sinking fund on these debts out of Persia's available resources, some of which are already pledged to her.
5. His Majesty's Government, having tried unsuccessfully to assist Persia to improve her internal administration and to introduce sound financial methods, are prepared to extend a loyal assistance to the United States Government if the latter decide, after full consideration, to undertake the task. The question by whom Persia is to be regenerated is of vastly less importance than that her regeneration should take place. A better chance of effecting this end can hardly be imagined than that a great and friendly and disinterested Power like the United States should be willing to enter the field. Some things the United States Government will do best by itself. In others it may profit by the co-operation and support of those who have been so long on the ground. From this point of view His Majesty's Government will give to any American officials who may be chosen by the

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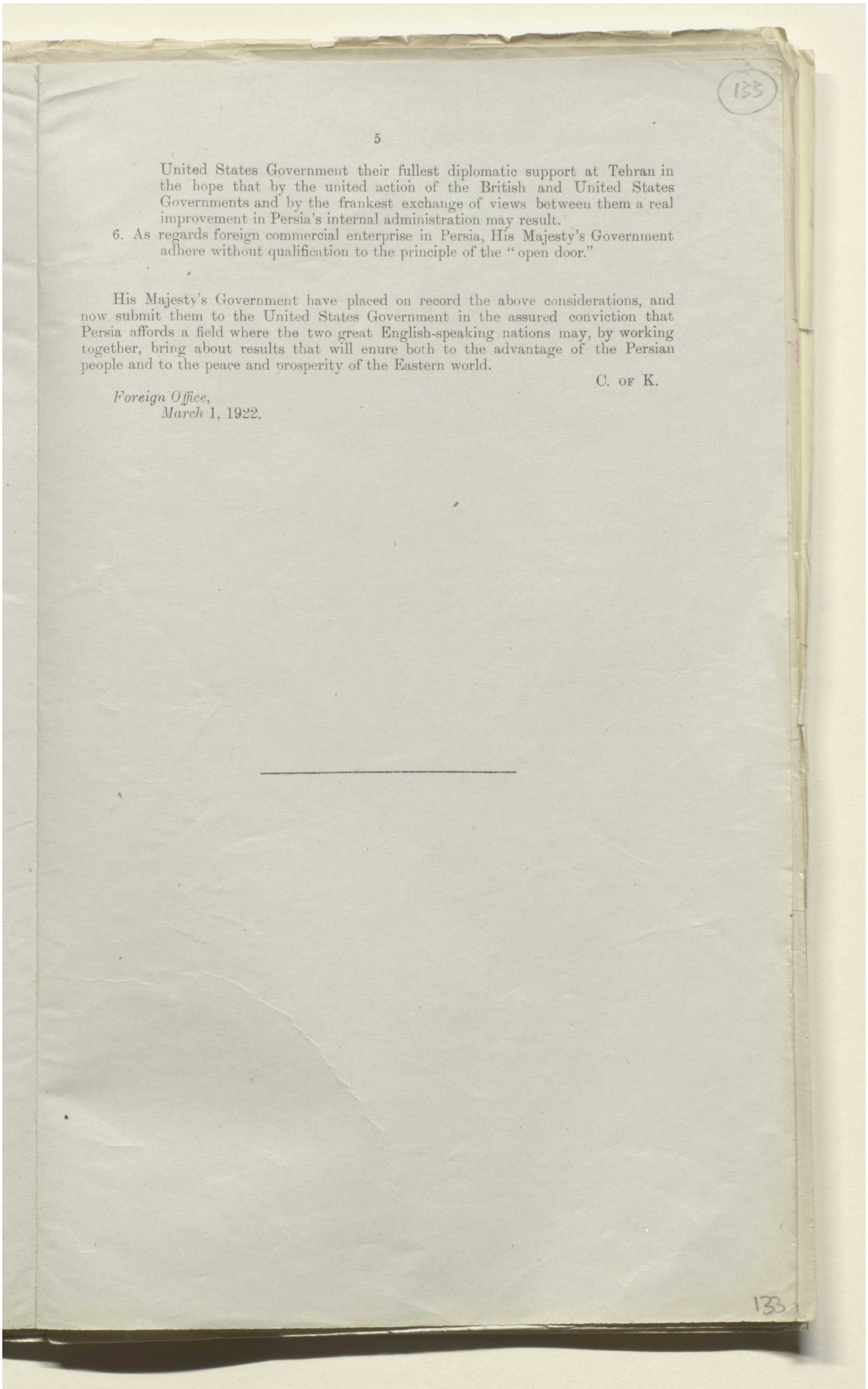

United States Government their fullest diplomatic support at Tehran in the hope that by the united action of the British and United States Governments and by the frankest exchange of views between them a real improvement in Persia's internal administration may result.

6. As regards foreign commercial enterprise in Persia, His Majesty's Government adhere without qualification to the principle of the "open door."

His Majesty's Government have placed on record the above considerations, and now submit them to the United States Government in the assured conviction that Persia affords a field where the two great English-speaking nations may, by working together, bring about results that will enure both to the advantage of the Persian people and to the peace and prosperity of the Eastern world.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office,
March 1, 1922.

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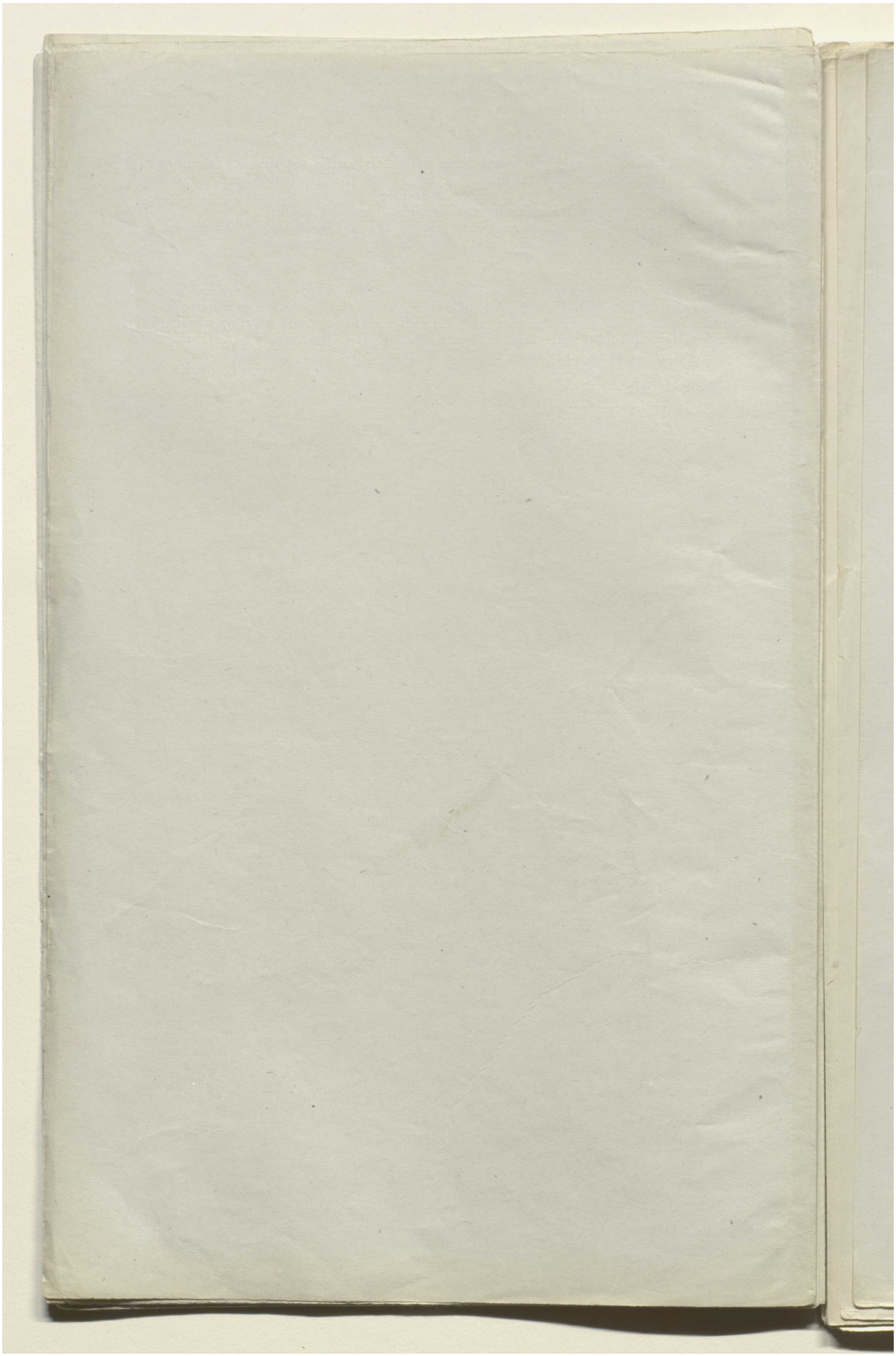

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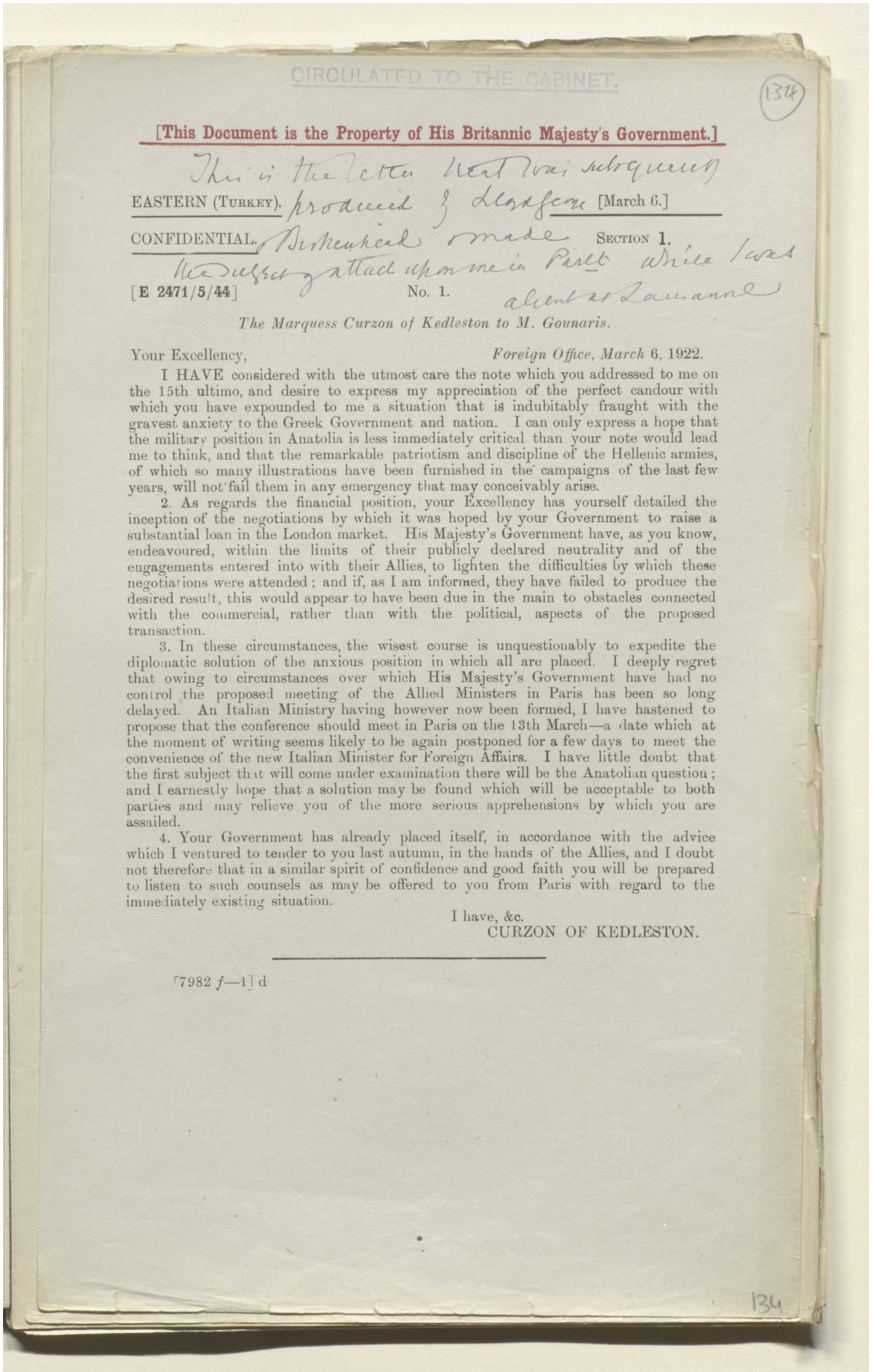

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This is the letter that was subsequently produced by Lloyd George

EASTERN (TURKEY). [March 6.]

CONFIDENTIAL. Birkenhead made SECTION 1.

the subject of attack upon me in Parlt while I was absent at Lausanne

[E 2471/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to M. Gounaris.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, March* 6, 1922.

I HAVE considered with the utmost care the note which you addressed to me on the 15th ultimo, and desire to express my appreciation of the perfect candour with which you have expounded to me a situation that is indubitably fraught with the gravest anxiety to the Greek Government and nation. I can only express a hope that the military position in Anatolia is less immediately critical than your note would lead me to think, and that the remarkable patriotism and discipline of the Hellenic armies, of which so many illustrations have been furnished in the campaigns of the last few years, will not fail them in any emergency that may conceivably arise.

2. As regards the financial position, your Excellency has yourself detailed the inception of the negotiations by which it was hoped by your Government to raise a substantial loan in the London market. His Majesty's Government have, as you know, endeavoured, within the limits of their publicly declared neutrality and of the engagements entered into with their Allies, to lighten the difficulties by which these negotiations were attended; and if, as I am informed, they have failed to produce the desired result, this would appear to have been due in the main to obstacles connected with the commercial, rather than with the political, aspects of the proposed transaction.

3. In these circumstances, the wisest course is unquestionably to expedite the diplomatic solution of the anxious position in which all are placed. I deeply regret that owing to circumstances over which His Majesty's Government have had no control the proposed meeting of the Allied Ministers in Paris has been so long delayed. An Italian Ministry having however now been formed, I have hastened to propose that the conference should meet in Paris on the 13th March—a date which at the moment of writing seems likely to be again postponed for a few days to meet the convenience of the new Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs. I have little doubt that the first subject that will come under examination there will be the Anatolian question; and I earnestly hope that a solution may be found which will be acceptable to both parties and may relieve you of the more serious apprehensions by which you are assailed.

4. Your Government has already placed itself, in accordance with the advice which I ventured to tender to you last autumn, in the hands of the Allies, and I doubt not therefore that in a similar spirit of confidence and good faith you will be prepared to listen to such counsels as may be offered to you from Paris with regard to the immediately existing situation.

I have, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

[7982 *f*—1] d

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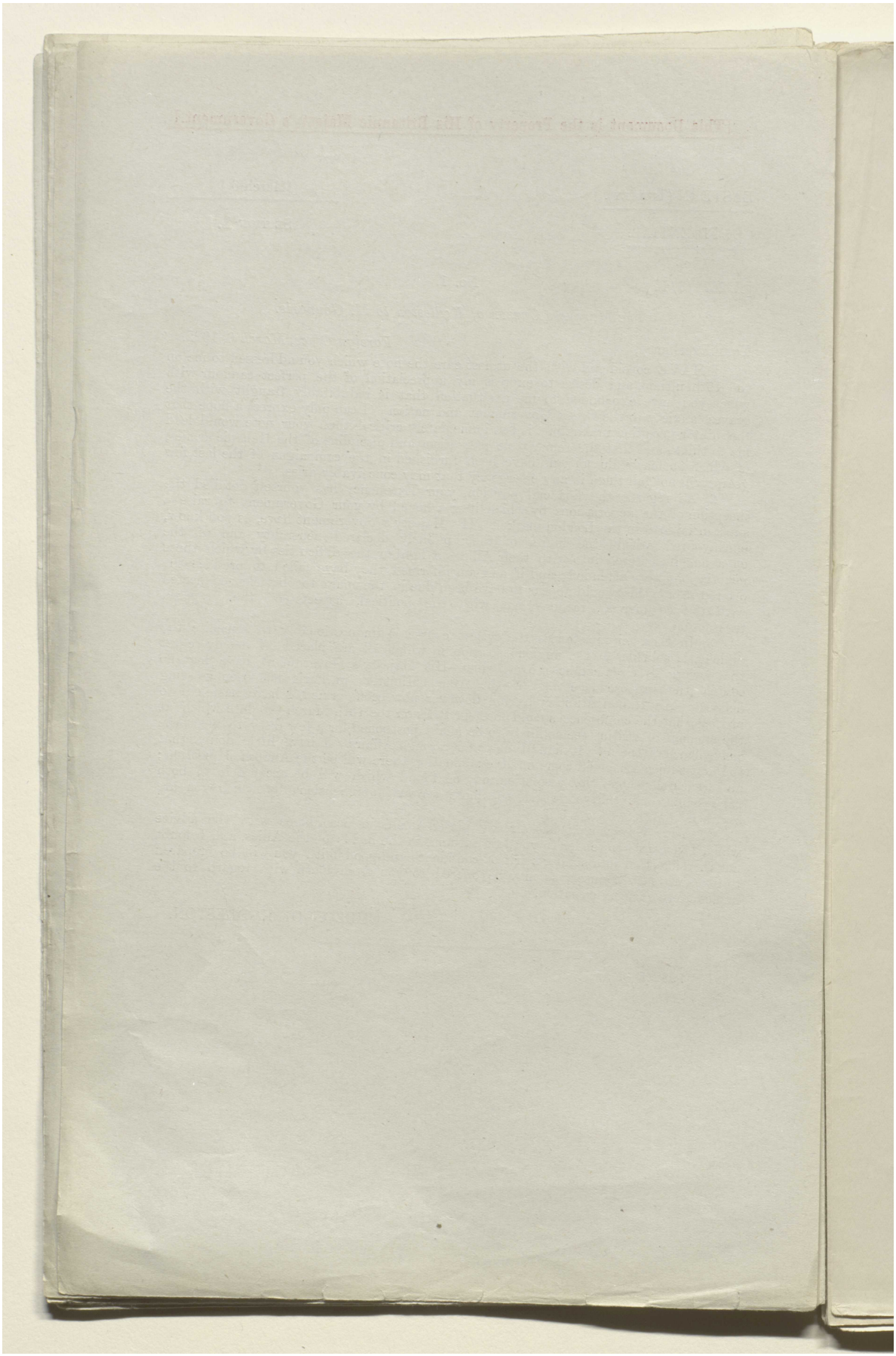

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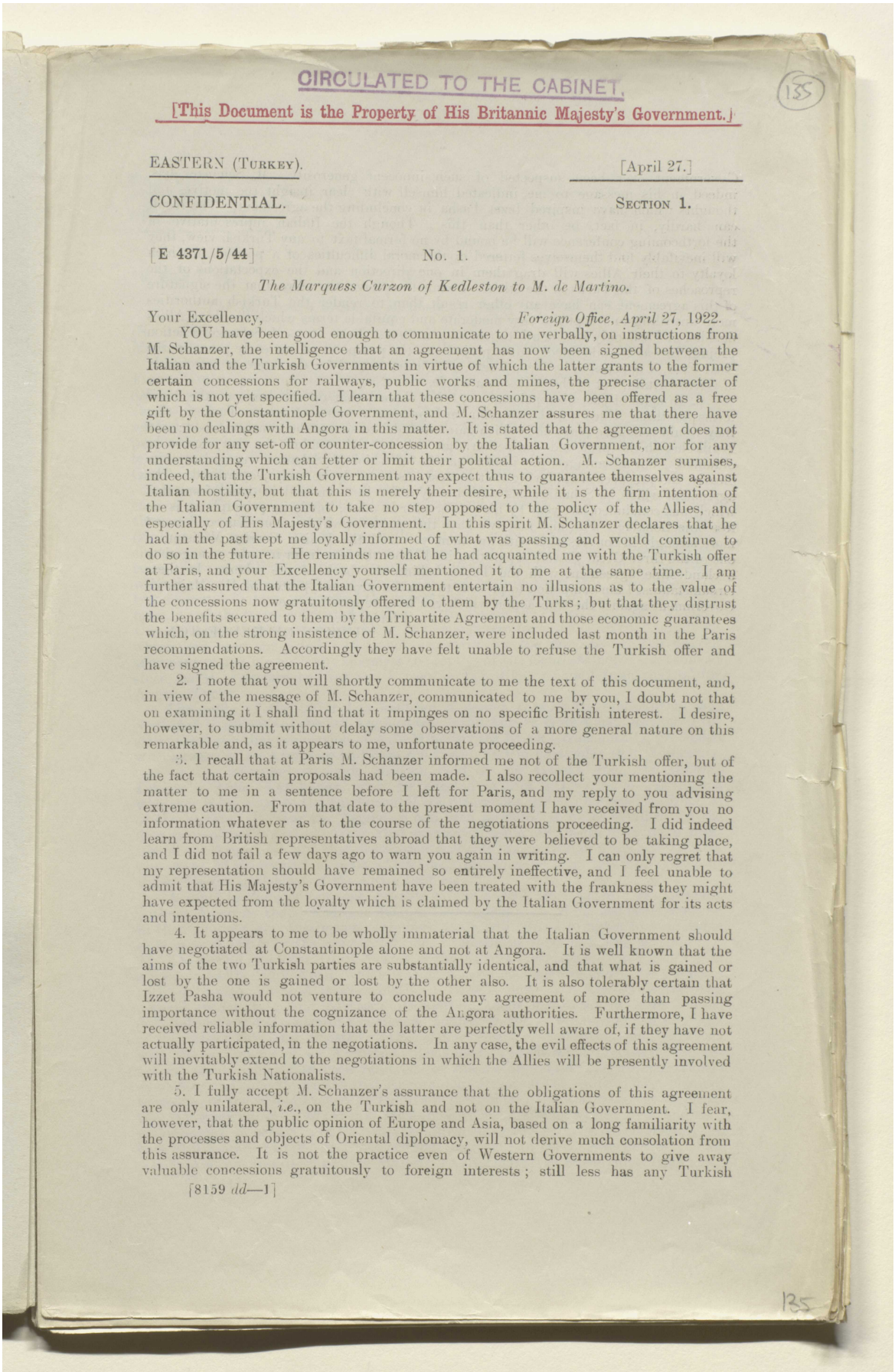

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [April 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 4371/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to M. de Martino.

Your Excellency, *Foreign Office, April 27, 1922.*

YOU have been good enough to communicate to me verbally, on instructions from M. Schanzer, the intelligence that an agreement has now been signed between the Italian and the Turkish Governments in virtue of which the latter grants to the former certain concessions for railways, public works and mines, the precise character of which is not yet specified. I learn that these concessions have been offered as a free gift by the Constantinople Government, and M. Schanzer assures me that there have been no dealings with Angora in this matter. It is stated that the agreement does not provide for any set-off or counter-concession by the Italian Government, nor for any understanding which can fetter or limit their political action. M. Schanzer surmises, indeed, that the Turkish Government may expect thus to guarantee themselves against Italian hostility, but that this is merely their desire, while it is the firm intention of the Italian Government to take no step opposed to the policy of the Allies, and especially of His Majesty's Government. In this spirit M. Schanzer declares that he had in the past kept me loyally informed of what was passing and would continue to do so in the future. He reminds me that he had acquainted me with the Turkish offer at Paris, and your Excellency yourself mentioned it to me at the same time. I am further assured that the Italian Government entertain no illusions as to the value of the concessions now gratuitously offered to them by the Turks; but that they distrust the benefits secured to them by the Tripartite Agreement and those economic guarantees which, on the strong insistence of M. Schanzer, were included last month in the Paris recommendations. Accordingly they have felt unable to refuse the Turkish offer and have signed the agreement.

2. I note that you will shortly communicate to me the text of this document, and, in view of the message of M. Schanzer, communicated to me by you, I doubt not that on examining it I shall find that it impinges on no specific British interest. I desire, however, to submit without delay some observations of a more general nature on this remarkable and, as it appears to me, unfortunate proceeding.

3. I recall that at Paris M. Schanzer informed me not of the Turkish offer, but of the fact that certain proposals had been made. I also recollect your mentioning the matter to me in a sentence before I left for Paris, and my reply to you advising extreme caution. From that date to the present moment I have received from you no information whatever as to the course of the negotiations proceeding. I did indeed learn from British representatives abroad that they were believed to be taking place, and I did not fail a few days ago to warn you again in writing. I can only regret that my representation should have remained so entirely ineffective, and I feel unable to admit that His Majesty's Government have been treated with the frankness they might have expected from the loyalty which is claimed by the Italian Government for its acts and intentions.

4. It appears to me to be wholly immaterial that the Italian Government should have negotiated at Constantinople alone and not at Angora. It is well known that the aims of the two Turkish parties are substantially identical, and that what is gained or lost by the one is gained or lost by the other also. It is also tolerably certain that Izzet Pasha would not venture to conclude any agreement of more than passing importance without the cognizance of the Angora authorities. Furthermore, I have received reliable information that the latter are perfectly well aware of, if they have not actually participated, in the negotiations. In any case, the evil effects of this agreement will inevitably extend to the negotiations in which the Allies will be presently involved with the Turkish Nationalists.

5. I fully accept M. Schanzer's assurance that the obligations of this agreement are only unilateral, *i.e.*, on the Turkish and not on the Italian Government. I fear, however, that the public opinion of Europe and Asia, based on a long familiarity with the processes and objects of Oriental diplomacy, will not derive much consolation from this assurance. It is not the practice even of Western Governments to give away valuable concessions gratuitously to foreign interests; still less has any Turkish

[8159 *dd*—1]

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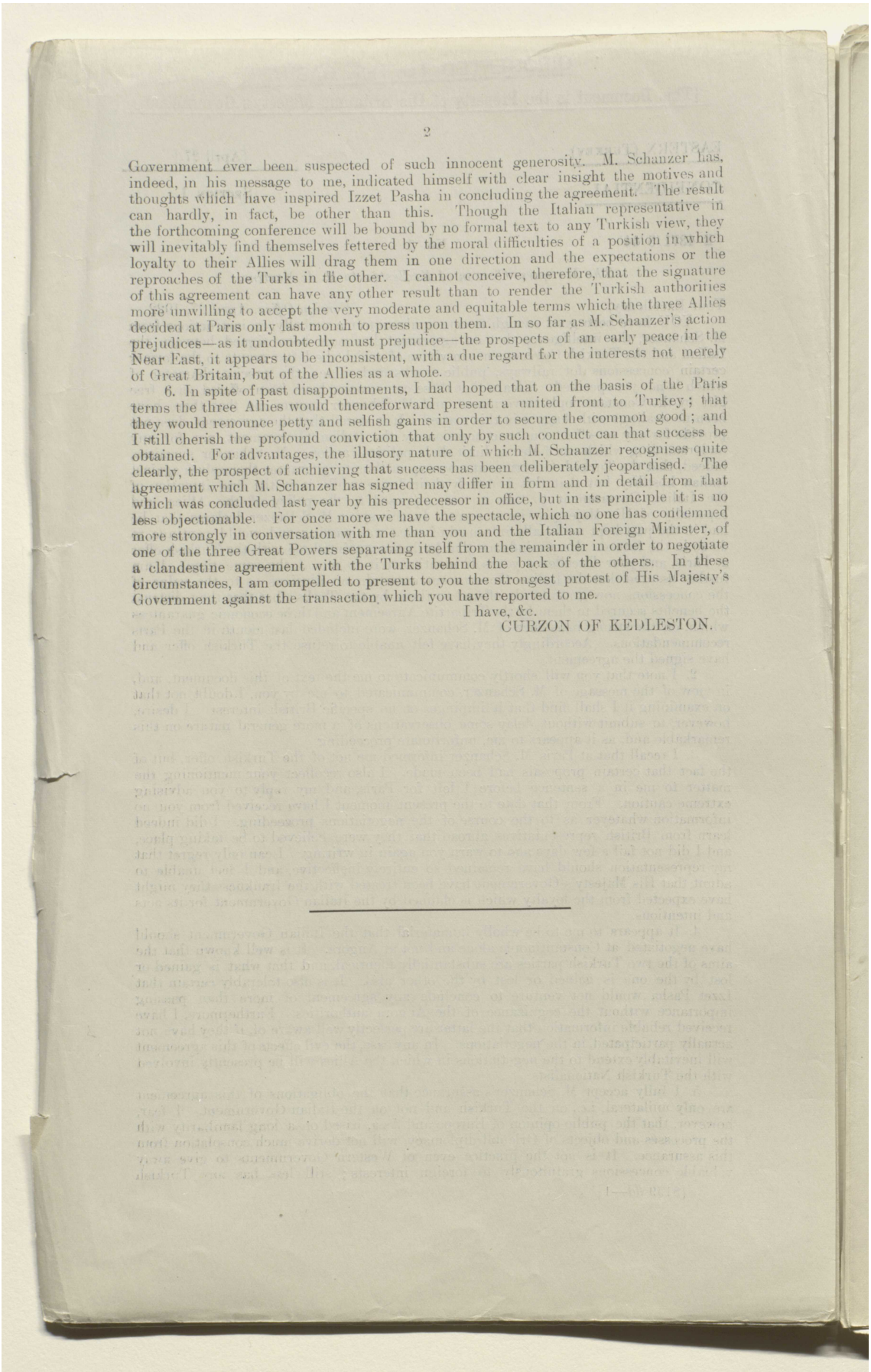

Government ever been suspected of such innocent generosity. M. Schanzer has, indeed, in his message to me, indicated himself with clear insight the motives and thoughts which have inspired Izzet Pasha in concluding the agreement. The result can hardly, in fact, be other than this. Though the Italian representative in the forthcoming conference will be bound by no formal text to any Turkish view, they will inevitably find themselves fettered by the moral difficulties of a position in which loyalty to their Allies will drag them in one direction and the expectations or the reproaches of the Turks in the other. I cannot conceive, therefore, that the signature of this agreement can have any other result than to render the Turkish authorities more unwilling to accept the very moderate and equitable terms which the three Allies decided at Paris only last month to press upon them. In so far as M. Schanzer's action prejudices—as it undoubtedly must prejudice—the prospects of an early peace in the Near East, it appears to be inconsistent, with a due regard for the interests not merely of Great Britain, but of the Allies as a whole.

6. In spite of past disappointments, I had hoped that on the basis of the Paris terms the three Allies would thenceforward present a united front to Turkey; that they would renounce petty and selfish gains in order to secure the common good; and I still cherish the profound conviction that only by such conduct can that success be obtained. For advantages, the illusory nature of which M. Schanzer recognises quite clearly, the prospect of achieving that success has been deliberately jeopardised. The agreement which M. Schanzer has signed may differ in form and in detail from that which was concluded last year by his predecessor in office, but in its principle it is no less objectionable. For once more we have the spectacle, which no one has condemned more strongly in conversation with me than you and the Italian Foreign Minister, of one of the three Great Powers separating itself from the remainder in order to negotiate a clandestine agreement with the Turks behind the back of the others. In these circumstances, I am compelled to present to you the strongest protest of His Majesty's Government against the transaction which you have reported to me.

I have, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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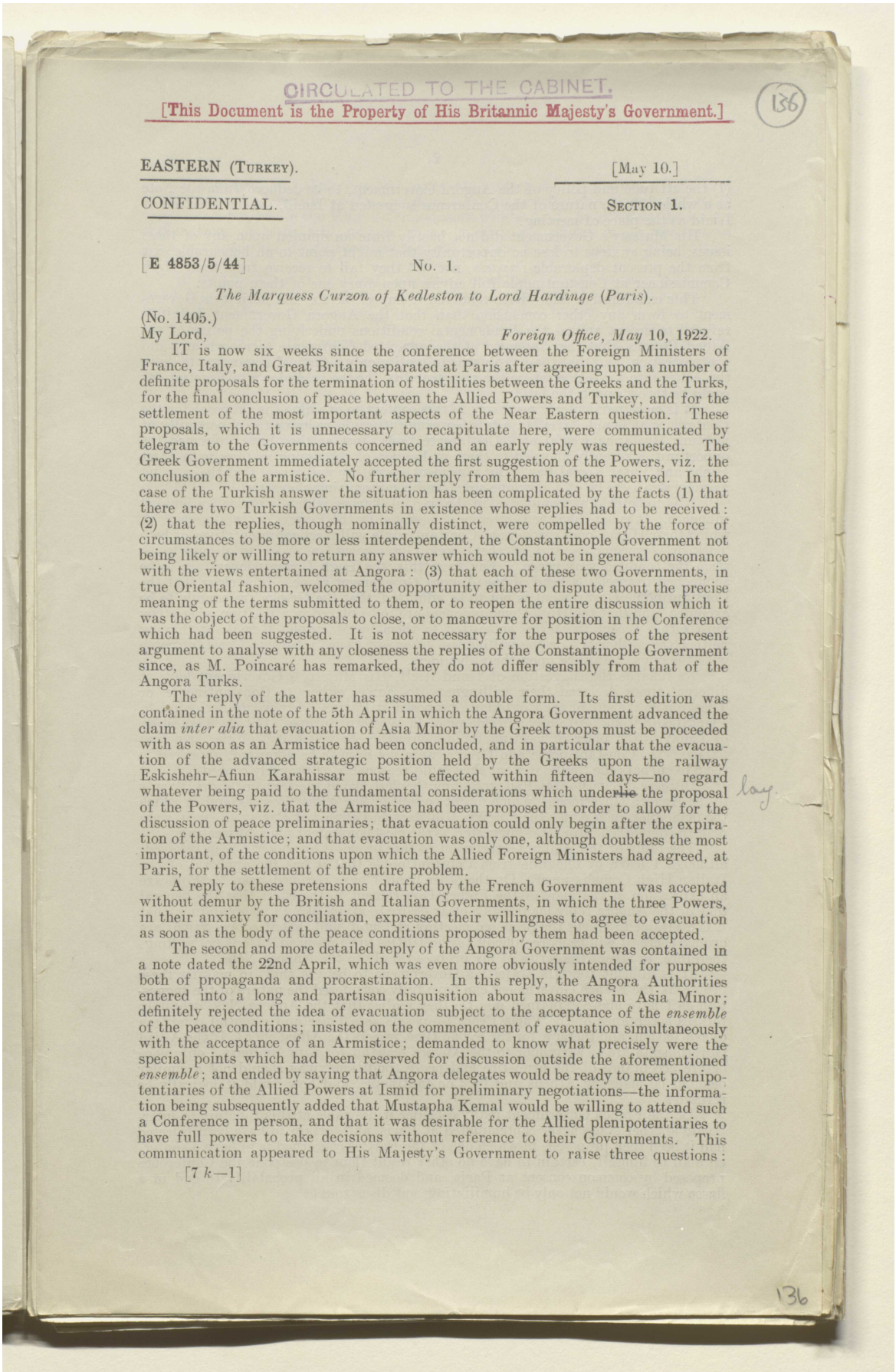

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [May 10.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 4853/5/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 1405.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 10, 1922.

IT is now six weeks since the conference between the Foreign Ministers of France, Italy, and Great Britain separated at Paris after agreeing upon a number of definite proposals for the termination of hostilities between the Greeks and the Turks, for the final conclusion of peace between the Allied Powers and Turkey, and for the settlement of the most important aspects of the Near Eastern question. These proposals, which it is unnecessary to recapitulate here, were communicated by telegram to the Governments concerned and an early reply was requested. The Greek Government immediately accepted the first suggestion of the Powers, viz. the conclusion of the armistice. No further reply from them has been received. In the case of the Turkish answer the situation has been complicated by the facts (1) that there are two Turkish Governments in existence whose replies had to be received: (2) that the replies, though nominally distinct, were compelled by the force of circumstances to be more or less interdependent, the Constantinople Government not being likely or willing to return any answer which would not be in general consonance with the views entertained at Angora: (3) that each of these two Governments, in true Oriental fashion, welcomed the opportunity either to dispute about the precise meaning of the terms submitted to them, or to reopen the entire discussion which it was the object of the proposals to close, or to manœuvre for position in the Conference which had been suggested. It is not necessary for the purposes of the present argument to analyse with any closeness the replies of the Constantinople Government since, as M. Poincaré has remarked, they do not differ sensibly from that of the Angora Turks.

The reply of the latter has assumed a double form. Its first edition was contained in the note of the 5th April in which the Angora Government advanced the claim *inter alia* that evacuation of Asia Minor by the Greek troops must be proceeded with as soon as an Armistice had been concluded, and in particular that the evacuation of the advanced strategic position held by the Greeks upon the railway Eskishehr–Afiun Karahissar must be effected within fifteen days—no regard whatever being paid to the fundamental considerations which underlie the proposal of the Powers, viz. that the Armistice had been proposed in order to allow for the discussion of peace preliminaries; that evacuation could only begin after the expiration of the Armistice; and that evacuation was only one, although doubtless the most important, of the conditions upon which the Allied Foreign Ministers had agreed, at Paris, for the settlement of the entire problem.

A reply to these pretensions drafted by the French Government was accepted without demur by the British and Italian Governments, in which the three Powers, in their anxiety for conciliation, expressed their willingness to agree to evacuation as soon as the body of the peace conditions proposed by them had been accepted.

The second and more detailed reply of the Angora Government was contained in a note dated the 22nd April, which was even more obviously intended for purposes both of propaganda and procrastination. In this reply, the Angora Authorities entered into a long and partisan disquisition about massacres in Asia Minor; definitely rejected the idea of evacuation subject to the acceptance of the *ensemble* of the peace conditions; insisted on the commencement of evacuation simultaneously with the acceptance of an Armistice; demanded to know what precisely were the special points which had been reserved for discussion outside the aforementioned *ensemble*; and ended by saying that Angora delegates would be ready to meet plenipotentiaries of the Allied Powers at Ismid for preliminary negotiations—the information being subsequently added that Mustapha Kemal would be willing to attend such a Conference in person, and that it was desirable for the Allied plenipotentiaries to have full powers to take decisions without reference to their Governments. This communication appeared to His Majesty's Government to raise three questions:

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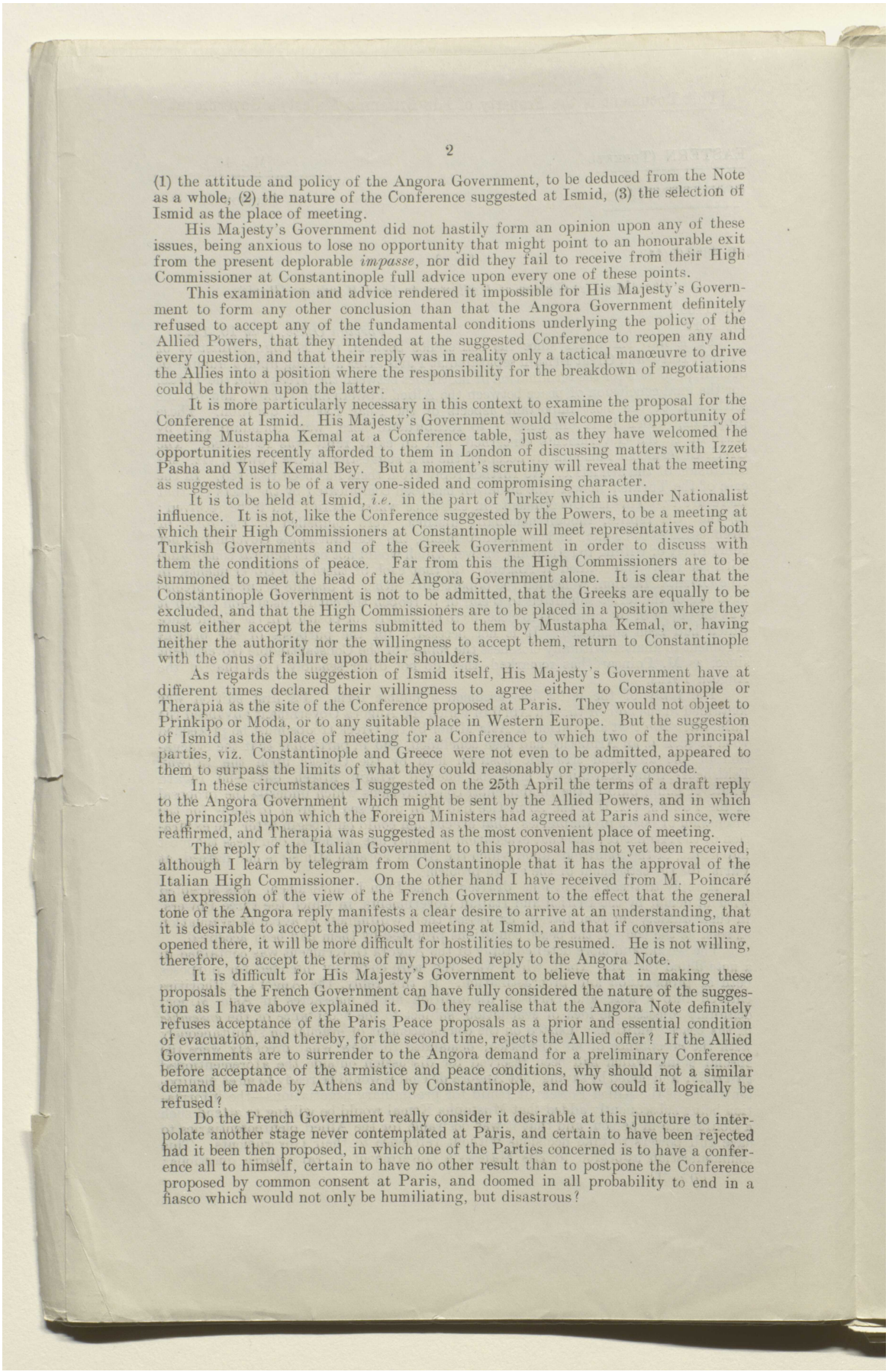

(1) the attitude and policy of the Angora Government, to be deduced from the Note as a whole, (2) the nature of the Conference suggested at Ismid, (3) the selection of Ismid as the place of meeting.

His Majesty's Government did not hastily form an opinion upon any of these issues, being anxious to lose no opportunity that might point to an honourable exit from the present deplorable *impasse*, nor did they fail to receive from their High Commissioner at Constantinople full advice upon every one of these points.

This examination and advice rendered it impossible for His Majesty's Government to form any other conclusion than that the Angora Government definitely refused to accept any of the fundamental conditions underlying the policy of the Allied Powers, that they intended at the suggested Conference to reopen any and every question, and that their reply was in reality only a tactical manœuvre to drive the Allies into a position where the responsibility for the breakdown of negotiations could be thrown upon the latter.

It is more particularly necessary in this context to examine the proposal for the Conference at Ismid. His Majesty's Government would welcome the opportunity of meeting Mustapha Kemal at a Conference table, just as they have welcomed the opportunities recently afforded to them in London of discussing matters with Izzet Pasha and Yusef Kemal Bey. But a moment's scrutiny will reveal that the meeting as suggested is to be of a very one-sided and compromising character.

It is to be held at Ismid, *i.e.* in the part of Turkey which is under Nationalist influence. It is not, like the Conference suggested by the Powers, to be a meeting at which their High Commissioners at Constantinople will meet representatives of both Turkish Governments and of the Greek Government in order to discuss with them the conditions of peace. Far from this the High Commissioners are to be summoned to meet the head of the Angora Government alone. It is clear that the Constantinople Government is not to be admitted, that the Greeks are equally to be excluded, and that the High Commissioners are to be placed in a position where they must either accept the terms submitted to them by Mustapha Kemal, or, having neither the authority nor the willingness to accept them, return to Constantinople with the onus of failure upon their shoulders.

As regards the suggestion of Ismid itself, His Majesty's Government have at different times declared their willingness to agree either to Constantinople or Therapia as the site of the Conference proposed at Paris. They would not object to Prinkipo or Moda, or to any suitable place in Western Europe. But the suggestion of Ismid as the place of meeting for a Conference to which two of the principal parties, viz. Constantinople and Greece were not even to be admitted, appeared to them to surpass the limits of what they could reasonably or properly concede.

In these circumstances I suggested on the 25th April the terms of a draft reply to the Angora Government which might be sent by the Allied Powers, and in which the principles upon which the Foreign Ministers had agreed at Paris and since, were reaffirmed, and Therapia was suggested as the most convenient place of meeting.

The reply of the Italian Government to this proposal has not yet been received, although I learn by telegram from Constantinople that it has the approval of the Italian High Commissioner. On the other hand I have received from M. Poincaré an expression of the view of the French Government to the effect that the general tone of the Angora reply manifests a clear desire to arrive at an understanding, that it is desirable to accept the proposed meeting at Ismid, and that if conversations are opened there, it will be more difficult for hostilities to be resumed. He is not willing, therefore, to accept the terms of my proposed reply to the Angora Note.

It is difficult for His Majesty's Government to believe that in making these proposals the French Government can have fully considered the nature of the suggestion as I have above explained it. Do they realise that the Angora Note definitely refuses acceptance of the Paris Peace proposals as a prior and essential condition of evacuation, and thereby, for the second time, rejects the Allied offer? If the Allied Governments are to surrender to the Angora demand for a preliminary Conference before acceptance of the armistice and peace conditions, why should not a similar demand be made by Athens and by Constantinople, and how could it logically be refused?

Do the French Government really consider it desirable at this juncture to interpolate another stage never contemplated at Paris, and certain to have been rejected had it been then proposed, in which one of the Parties concerned is to have a conference all to himself, certain to have no other result than to postpone the Conference proposed by common consent at Paris, and doomed in all probability to end in a fiasco which would not only be humiliating, but disastrous?

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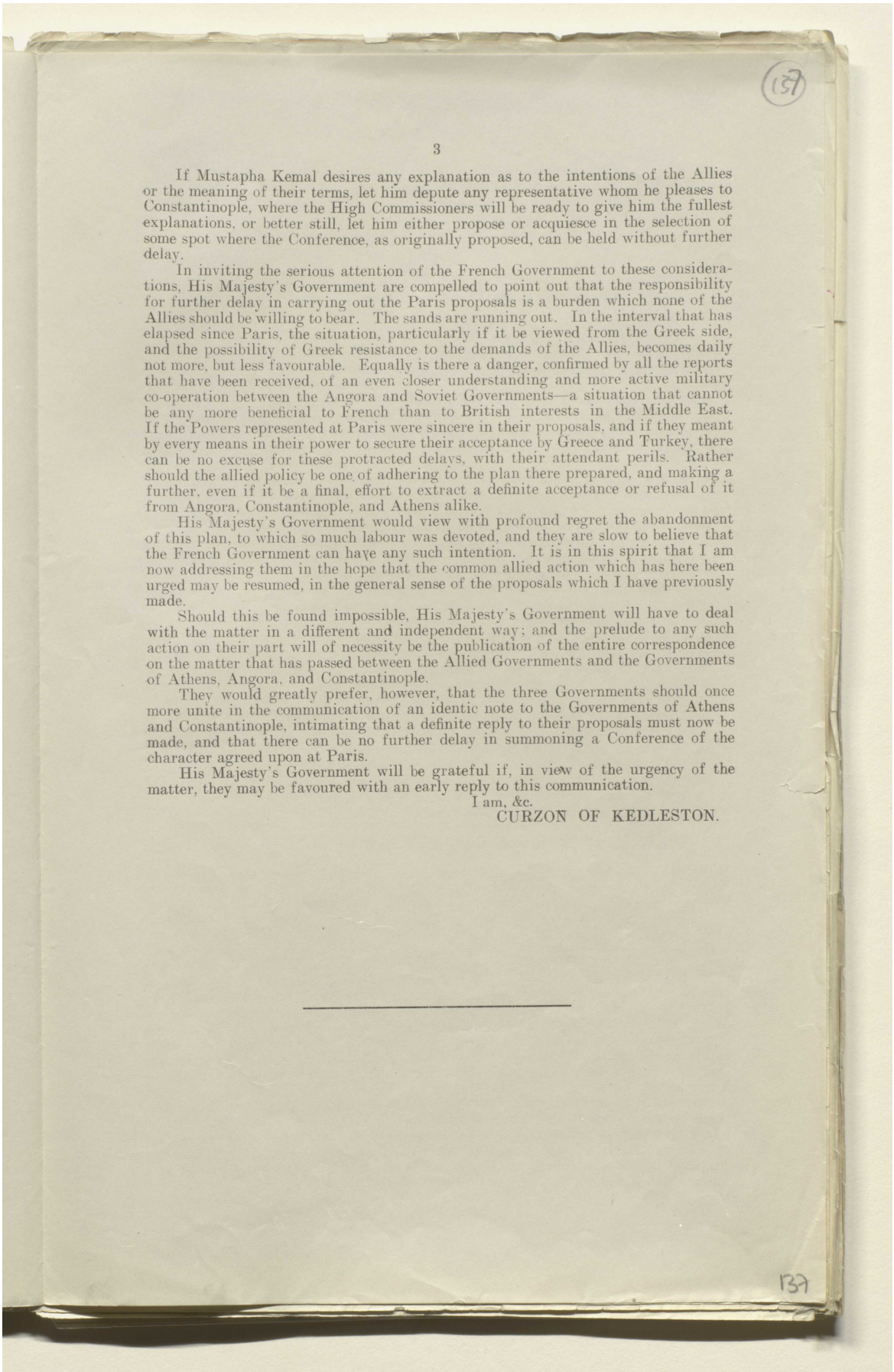

If Mustapha Kemal desires any explanation as to the intentions of the Allies or the meaning of their terms, let him depute any representative whom he pleases to Constantinople, where the High Commissioners will be ready to give him the fullest explanations, or better still, let him either propose or acquiesce in the selection of some spot where the Conference, as originally proposed, can be held without further delay.

In inviting the serious attention of the French Government to these considerations, His Majesty's Government are compelled to point out that the responsibility for further delay in carrying out the Paris proposals is a burden which none of the Allies should be willing to bear. The sands are running out. In the interval that has elapsed since Paris, the situation, particularly if it be viewed from the Greek side, and the possibility of Greek resistance to the demands of the Allies, becomes daily not more, but less favourable. Equally is there a danger, confirmed by all the reports that have been received, of an even closer understanding and more active military co-operation between the Angora and Soviet Governments—a situation that cannot be any more beneficial to French than to British interests in the Middle East. If the Powers represented at Paris were sincere in their proposals, and if they meant by every means in their power to secure their acceptance by Greece and Turkey, there can be no excuse for these protracted delays, with their attendant perils. Rather should the allied policy be one of adhering to the plan there prepared, and making a further, even if it be a final, effort to extract a definite acceptance or refusal of it from Angora, Constantinople, and Athens alike.

His Majesty's Government would view with profound regret the abandonment of this plan, to which so much labour was devoted, and they are slow to believe that the French Government can have any such intention. It is in this spirit that I am now addressing them in the hope that the common allied action which has here been urged may be resumed, in the general sense of the proposals which I have previously made.

Should this be found impossible, His Majesty's Government will have to deal with the matter in a different and independent way; and the prelude to any such action on their part will of necessity be the publication of the entire correspondence on the matter that has passed between the Allied Governments and the Governments of Athens, Angora, and Constantinople.

They would greatly prefer, however, that the three Governments should once more unite in the communication of an identic note to the Governments of Athens and Constantinople, intimating that a definite reply to their proposals must now be made, and that there can be no further delay in summoning a Conference of the character agreed upon at Paris.

His Majesty's Government will be grateful if, in view of the urgency of the matter, they may be favoured with an early reply to this communication.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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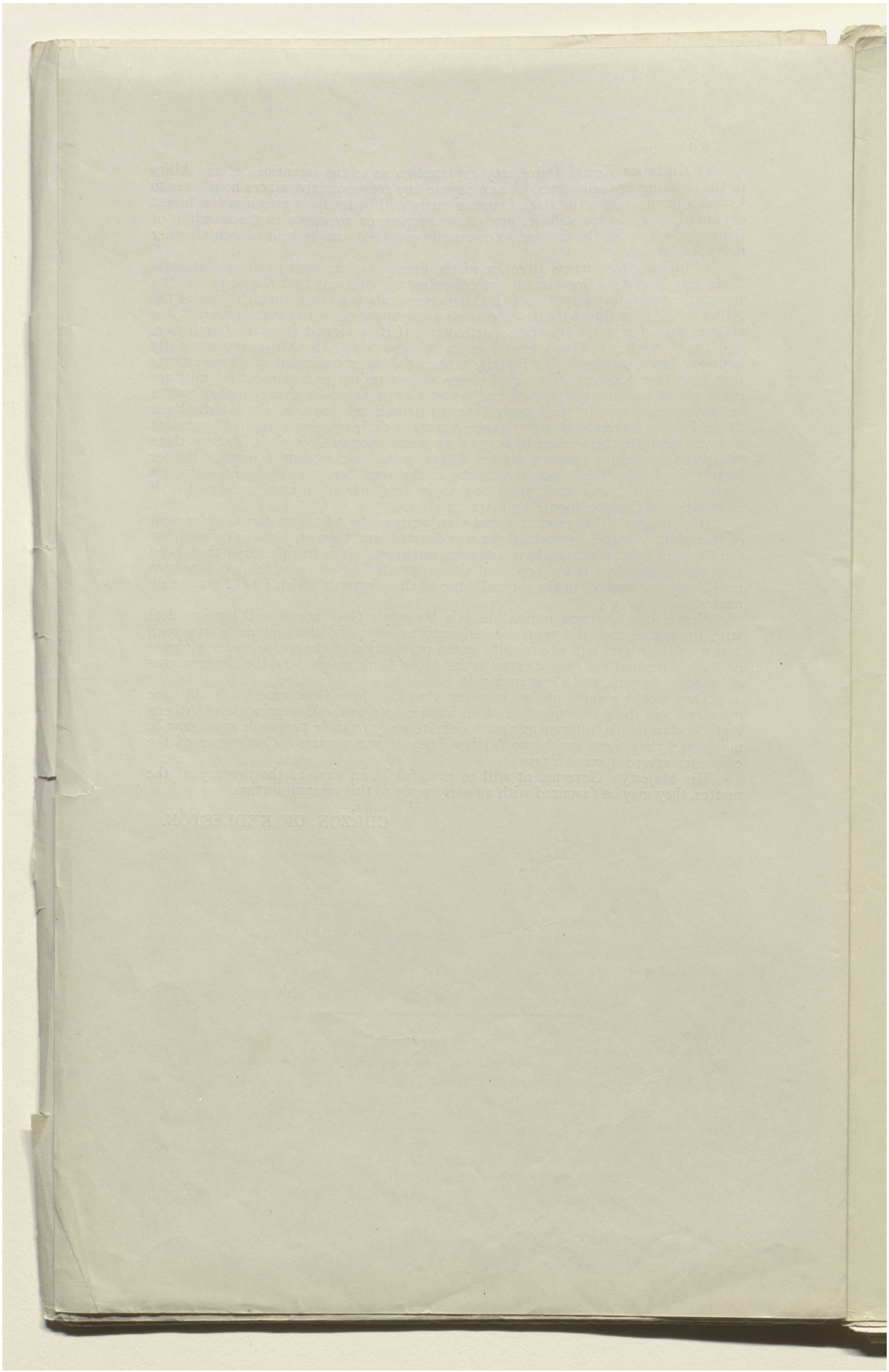

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [September 29.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 10261/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir H. Rumbold (Constantinople).

(No. 959.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, September 29, 1922.*

THIS afternoon Dr. Nihad Rechad, the Kemalist representative in London, called upon me at his special request in order to discuss the situation that had arisen between the British and Angora Governments.

He began by thanking me for the friendly attitude that I had shown in Paris, and congratulated me on the agreement that had there been arrived at. He said that he came as a warm friend of good relations between our two peoples and of the early conclusion of peace, and he hoped that I would not desist from my efforts to carry the matter to a successful conclusion.

I said that I proposed to treat him with the utmost frankness, because a situation had arisen in which immediate action alone could prevent the outbreak of hostilities and probably the renewal of war between Great Britain and Turkey. I was at a loss to understand the tactics that had been pursued by Mustapha Kemal since he had received the Paris note. This communication, it could not be denied, contained an immense and unexpected concession to his views. The three Great Powers had found themselves in absolute accord upon the point, and it rested only with Kemal, in his own interests as well as in those of peace, to meet without delay the advance that had been made. Nevertheless, a week all but a day had passed since the Paris note was despatched to him. So far, he had not answered it, and, even if he offered the excuse that he was waiting to consult M. Franklin-Bouillon, who had arrived at Smyrna on Wednesday, there was no reason why a reply should not by now have been sent. On the contrary, Mustapha Kemal had amused himself by returning captious replies to the British Commander-in-chief, and meanwhile he had authorised the continuous advance of Turkish troops into the Chanak neutral zone up to a point where they were in direct contact with the British forces, and where the situation, as I should presently tell him, was one of a critical description. The sequence of events contemplated in Paris was, firstly, a general acceptance by Mustapha Kemal of the Allied proposals and of the conditions attached to them; secondly, an immediate meeting in Mudania with the Allied generals and the Greek commander, in order to arrange for the retirement of the Greek forces; and, thirdly, such arrangements as might be required pending the holding of the Peace Conference itself. Where, I asked, was Mustapha Kemal at this moment?

Dr. Nihad Rechad explained that he had gone off with M. Franklin-Bouillon to Angora.

I replied that I had nothing to say as to Kemal's desire to consult the Grand National Assembly, although I observed that he had already summoned his Cabinet for consultation in Smyrna; but that he should go off to Angora at this moment, instead of going to Mudania, seemed to me to constitute a tactical error on his part which I found it difficult to explain. Meanwhile, I would tell Dr. Nihad Rechad frankly what had happened, and what was going to happen. Mustapha Kemal having, in spite of the Paris note and in spite of frequent protests, absolutely declined to withdraw his forces from the Chanak neutral zone, and these forces having continued to advance until they were in a position where we were informed that they even made grimaces at the British troops on the other side of the barbed wire, a situation had arisen which could not be tolerated by any army—it would not be tolerated by that of Mustapha Kemal himself. It further constituted a military menace of the most serious description. Warning after warning to the Turkish commander having been ignored, the British Government had decided that this situation, for which they were in no sense responsible, must be terminated. Orders had therefore been given this morning to the British commander to call upon the Kemalist forces to retire, and, in the event of their refusing, to compel them to do so. Thus we might, owing to the culpable action of these forces, find ourselves within a few hours on the edge of war.

[104 ff—1]

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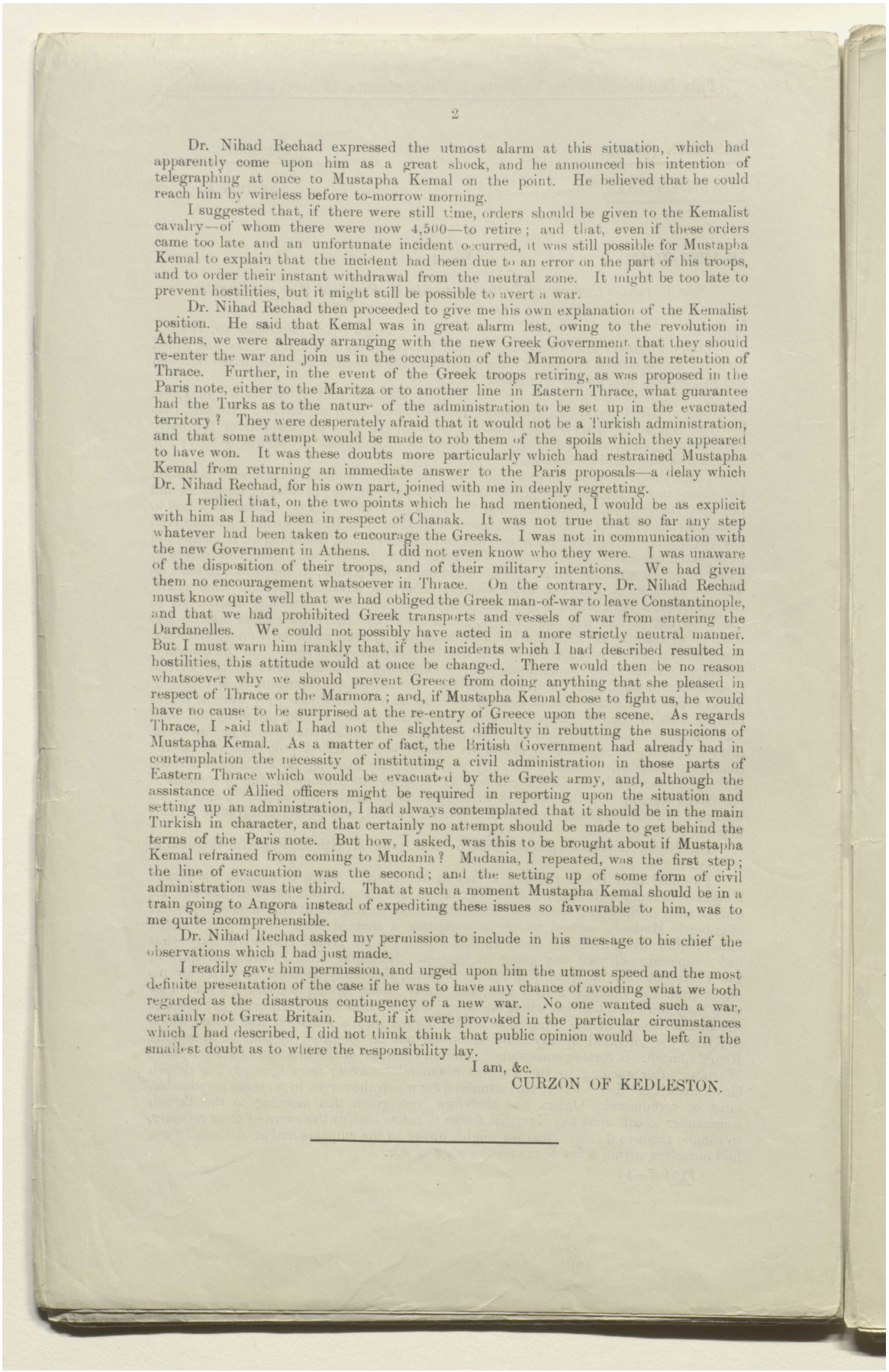

Dr. Nihad Rechad expressed the utmost alarm at this situation, which had apparently come upon him as a great shock, and he announced his intention of telegraphing at once to Mustapha Kemal on the point. He believed that he could reach him by wireless before to-morrow morning.

I suggested that, if there were still time, orders should be given to the Kemalist cavalry—of whom there were now 4,500—to retire; and that, even if these orders came too late and an unfortunate incident occurred, it was still possible for Mustapha Kemal to explain that the incident had been due to an error on the part of his troops, and to order their instant withdrawal from the neutral zone. It might be too late to prevent hostilities, but it might still be possible to avert a war.

Dr. Nihad Rechad then proceeded to give me his own explanation of the Kemalist position. He said that Kemal was in great alarm lest, owing to the revolution in Athens, we were already arranging with the new Greek Government that they should re-enter the war and join us in the occupation of the Marmora and in the retention of Thrace. Further, in the event of the Greek troops retiring, as was proposed in the Paris note, either to the Maritza or to another line in Eastern Thrace, what guarantee had the Turks as to the nature of the administration to be set up in the evacuated territory? They were desperately afraid that it would not be a Turkish administration, and that some attempt would be made to rob them of the spoils which they appeared to have won. It was these doubts more particularly which had restrained Mustapha Kemal from returning an immediate answer to the Paris proposals—a delay which Dr. Nihad Rechad, for his own part, joined with me in deeply regretting.

I replied that, on the two points which he had mentioned, I would be as explicit with him as I had been in respect of Chanak. It was not true that so far any step whatever had been taken to encourage the Greeks. I was not in communication with the new Government in Athens. I did not even know who they were. I was unaware of the disposition of their troops, and of their military intentions. We had given them no encouragement whatsoever in Thrace. On the contrary, Dr. Nihad Rechad must know quite well that we had obliged the Greek man-of-war to leave Constantinople, and that we had prohibited Greek transports and vessels of war from entering the Dardanelles. We could not possibly have acted in a more strictly neutral manner. But I must warn him frankly that, if the incidents which I had described resulted in hostilities, this attitude would at once be changed. There would then be no reason whatsoever why we should prevent Greece from doing anything that she pleased in respect of Thrace or the Marmora; and, if Mustapha Kemal chose to fight us, he would have no cause to be surprised at the re-entry of Greece upon the scene. As regards Thrace, I said that I had not the slightest difficulty in rebutting the suspicions of Mustapha Kemal. As a matter of fact, the British Government had already had in contemplation the necessity of instituting a civil administration in those parts of Eastern Thrace which would be evacuated by the Greek army, and, although the assistance of Allied officers might be required in reporting upon the situation and setting up an administration, I had always contemplated that it should be in the main Turkish in character, and that certainly no attempt should be made to get behind the terms of the Paris note. But how, I asked, was this to be brought about if Mustapha Kemal refrained from coming to Mudania? Mudania, I repeated, was the first step; the line of evacuation was the second; and the setting up of some form of civil administration was the third. That at such a moment Mustapha Kemal should be in a train going to Angora instead of expediting these issues so favourable to him, was to me quite incomprehensible.

Dr. Nihad Rechad asked my permission to include in his message to his chief the observations which I had just made.

I readily gave him permission, and urged upon him the utmost speed and the most definite presentation of the case if he was to have any chance of avoiding what we both regarded as the disastrous contingency of a new war. No one wanted such a war, certainly not Great Britain. But, if it were provoked in the particular circumstances which I had described, I did not think think that public opinion would be left in the smallest doubt as to where the responsibility lay.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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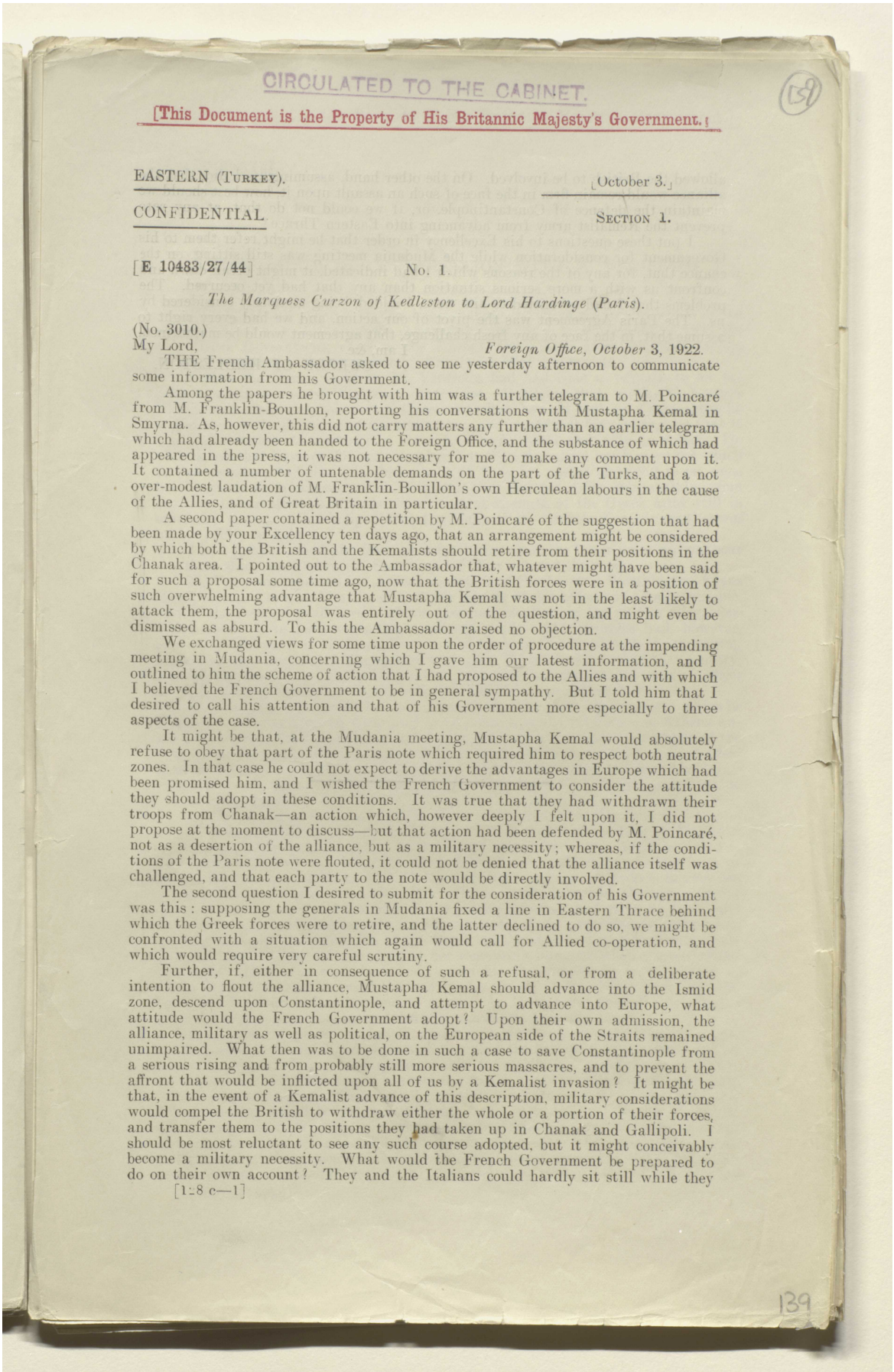

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [October 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1.

[E 10483/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 3010.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 3, 1922.

THE French Ambassador asked to see me yesterday afternoon to communicate some information from his Government.

Among the papers he brought with him was a further telegram to M. Poincaré from M. Franklin-Bouillon, reporting his conversations with Mustapha Kemal in Smyrna. As, however, this did not carry matters any further than an earlier telegram which had already been handed to the Foreign Office, and the substance of which had appeared in the press, it was not necessary for me to make any comment upon it. It contained a number of untenable demands on the part of the Turks, and a not over-modest laudation of M. Franklin-Bouillon's own Herculean labours in the cause of the Allies, and of Great Britain in particular.

A second paper contained a repetition by M. Poincaré of the suggestion that had been made by your Excellency ten days ago, that an arrangement might be considered by which both the British and the Kemalists should retire from their positions in the Chanak area. I pointed out to the Ambassador that, whatever might have been said for such a proposal some time ago, now that the British forces were in a position of such overwhelming advantage that Mustapha Kemal was not in the least likely to attack them, the proposal was entirely out of the question, and might even be dismissed as absurd. To this the Ambassador raised no objection.

We exchanged views for some time upon the order of procedure at the impending meeting in Mudania, concerning which I gave him our latest information, and I outlined to him the scheme of action that I had proposed to the Allies and with which I believed the French Government to be in general sympathy. But I told him that I desired to call his attention and that of his Government more especially to three aspects of the case.

It might be that, at the Mudania meeting, Mustapha Kemal would absolutely refuse to obey that part of the Paris note which required him to respect both neutral zones. In that case he could not expect to derive the advantages in Europe which had been promised him, and I wished the French Government to consider the attitude they should adopt in these conditions. It was true that they had withdrawn their troops from Chanak—an action which, however deeply I felt upon it, I did not propose at the moment to discuss—but that action had been defended by M. Poincaré, not as a desertion of the alliance, but as a military necessity; whereas, if the conditions of the Paris note were flouted, it could not be denied that the alliance itself was challenged, and that each party to the note would be directly involved.

The second question I desired to submit for the consideration of his Government was this: supposing the generals in Mudania fixed a line in Eastern Thrace behind which the Greek forces were to retire, and the latter declined to do so, we might be confronted with a situation which again would call for Allied co-operation, and which would require very careful scrutiny.

Further, if, either in consequence of such a refusal, or from a deliberate intention to flout the alliance, Mustapha Kemal should advance into the Ismid zone, descend upon Constantinople, and attempt to advance into Europe, what attitude would the French Government adopt? Upon their own admission, the alliance, military as well as political, on the European side of the Straits remained unimpaired. What then was to be done in such a case to save Constantinople from a serious rising and from probably still more serious massacres, and to prevent the affront that would be inflicted upon all of us by a Kemalist invasion? It might be that, in the event of a Kemalist advance of this description, military considerations would compel the British to withdraw either the whole or a portion of their forces, and transfer them to the positions they had taken up in Chanak and Gallipoli. I should be most reluctant to see any such course adopted, but it might conceivably become a military necessity. What would the French Government be prepared to do on their own account? They and the Italians could hardly sit still while they

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allowed the British to be involved. On the other hand, assuming, as I did, that the alliance would remain firm in the face of such an assault upon it, how best should we maintain the defence of Constantinople, or, if we could not do that, at any rate prevent the Kemalist army from advancing into Eastern Thrace?

I put these questions to his Excellency in order that he might refer them to his Government for consideration while the Mudania meeting was still sitting, on the chance that, for any of the reasons which I had indicated, it might break down and confront us with a more serious situation than any that had yet occurred. The problems that I had submitted to him were, I added, being anxiously considered by us. The Paris Agreement was the pivot of our action, and we had every right to assume that, in the face of any fresh challenge, that agreement would be maintained.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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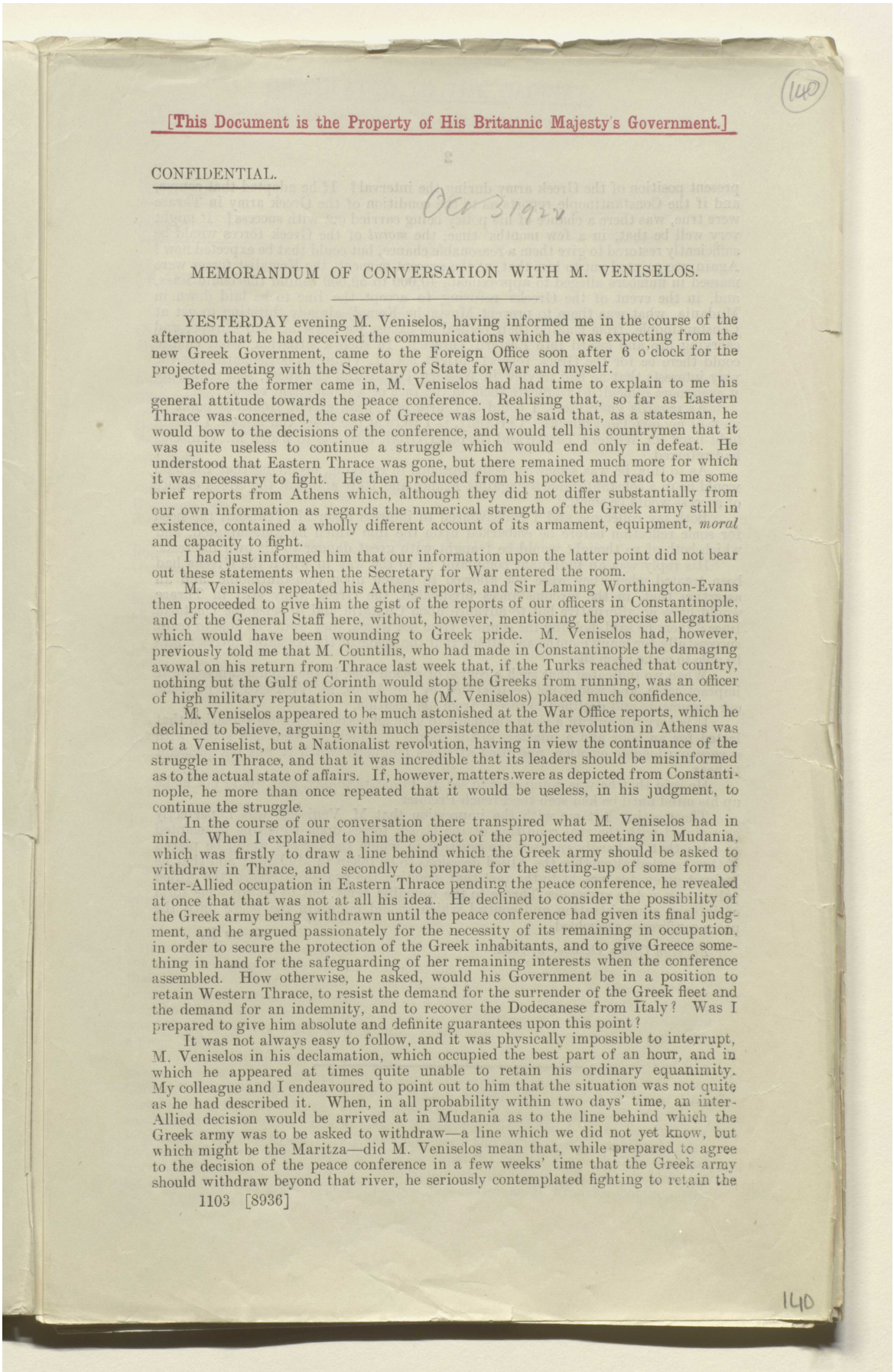

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Oct 31924

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION WITH M. VENISELOS.

YESTERDAY evening M. Veniselos, having informed me in the course of the afternoon that he had received the communications which he was expecting from the new Greek Government, came to the Foreign Office soon after 6 o'clock for the projected meeting with the Secretary of State for War and myself.

Before the former came in, M. Veniselos had had time to explain to me his general attitude towards the peace conference. Realising that, so far as Eastern Thrace was concerned, the case of Greece was lost, he said that, as a statesman, he would bow to the decisions of the conference, and would tell his countrymen that it was quite useless to continue a struggle which would end only in defeat. He understood that Eastern Thrace was gone, but there remained much more for which it was necessary to fight. He then produced from his pocket and read to me some brief reports from Athens which, although they did not differ substantially from our own information as regards the numerical strength of the Greek army still in existence, contained a wholly different account of its armament, equipment, *moral* and capacity to fight.

I had just informed him that our information upon the latter point did not bear out these statements when the Secretary for War entered the room.

M. Veniselos repeated his Athens reports, and Sir Laming Worthington-Evans then proceeded to give him the gist of the reports of our officers in Constantinople, and of the General Staff here, without, however, mentioning the precise allegations which would have been wounding to Greek pride. M. Veniselos had, however, previously told me that M. Countilis, who had made in Constantinople the damaging avowal on his return from Thrace last week that, if the Turks reached that country, nothing but the Gulf of Corinth would stop the Greeks from running, was an officer of high military reputation in whom he (M. Veniselos) placed much confidence.

M. Veniselos appeared to be much astonished at the War Office reports, which he declined to believe, arguing with much persistence that the revolution in Athens was not a Veniselist, but a Nationalist revolution, having in view the continuance of the struggle in Thrace, and that it was incredible that its leaders should be misinformed as to the actual state of affairs. If, however, matters were as depicted from Constantinople, he more than once repeated that it would be useless, in his judgment, to continue the struggle.

In the course of our conversation there transpired what M. Veniselos had in mind. When I explained to him the object of the projected meeting in Mudania, which was firstly to draw a line behind which the Greek army should be asked to withdraw in Thrace, and secondly to prepare for the setting-up of some form of inter-Allied occupation in Eastern Thrace pending the peace conference, he revealed at once that that was not at all his idea. He declined to consider the possibility of the Greek army being withdrawn until the peace conference had given its final judgment, and he argued passionately for the necessity of its remaining in occupation, in order to secure the protection of the Greek inhabitants, and to give Greece something in hand for the safeguarding of her remaining interests when the conference assembled. How otherwise, he asked, would his Government be in a position to retain Western Thrace, to resist the demand for the surrender of the Greek fleet and the demand for an indemnity, and to recover the Dodecanese from Italy? Was I prepared to give him absolute and definite guarantees upon this point?

It was not always easy to follow, and it was physically impossible to interrupt, M. Veniselos in his declamation, which occupied the best part of an hour, and in which he appeared at times quite unable to retain his ordinary equanimity. My colleague and I endeavoured to point out to him that the situation was not quite as he had described it. When, in all probability within two days' time, an inter-Allied decision would be arrived at in Mudania as to the line behind which the Greek army was to be asked to withdraw—a line which we did not yet know, but which might be the Maritza—did M. Veniselos mean that, while prepared to agree to the decision of the peace conference in a few weeks' time that the Greek army should withdraw beyond that river, he seriously contemplated fighting to retain the

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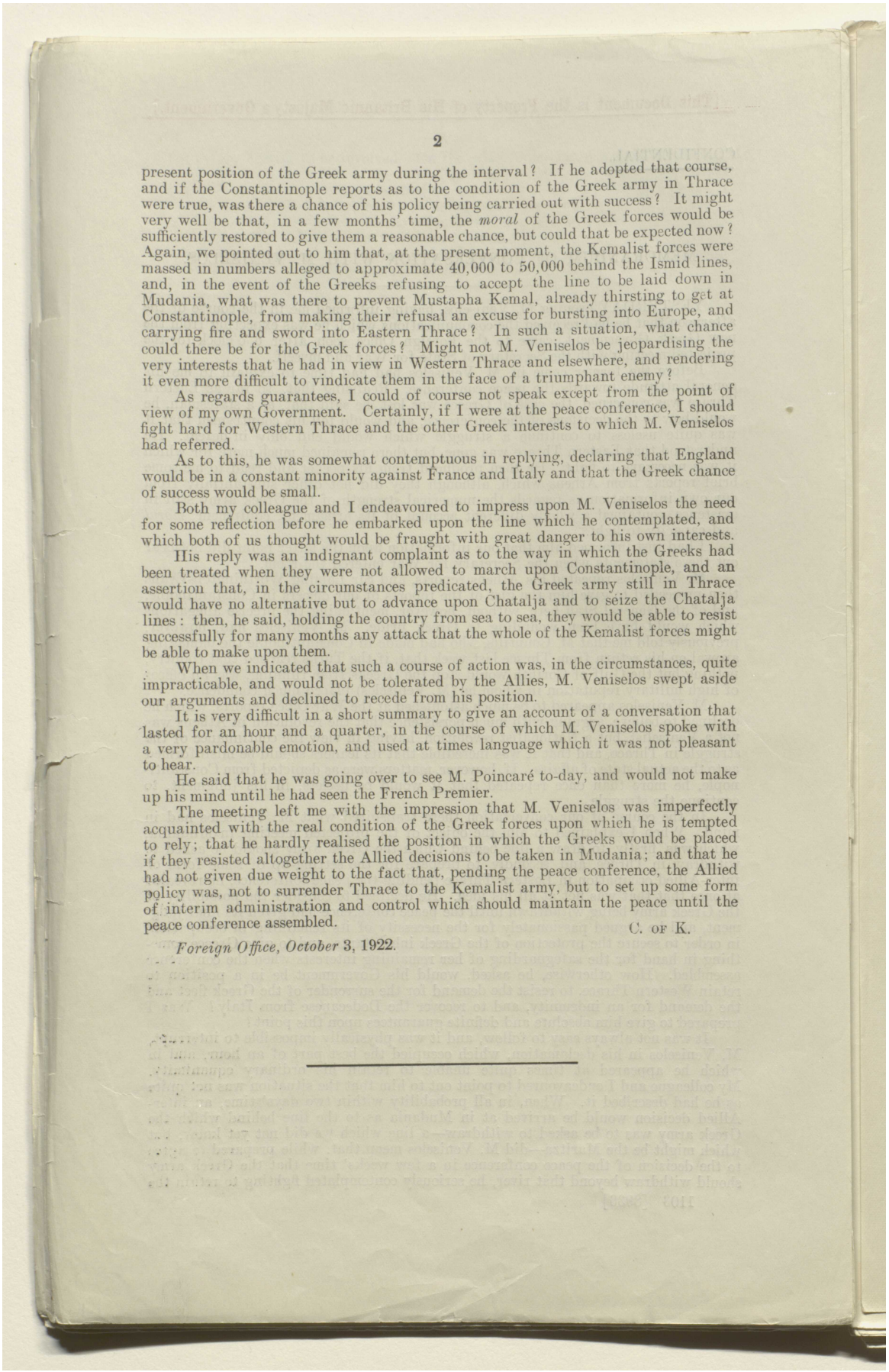

present position of the Greek army during the interval? If he adopted that course, and if the Constantinople reports as to the condition of the Greek army in Thrace were true, was there a chance of his policy being carried out with success? It might very well be that, in a few months' time, the *moral* of the Greek forces would be sufficiently restored to give them a reasonable chance, but could that be expected now? Again, we pointed out to him that, at the present moment, the Kemalist forces were massed in numbers alleged to approximate 40,000 to 50,000 behind the Ismid lines, and, in the event of the Greeks refusing to accept the line to be laid down in Mudania, what was there to prevent Mustapha Kemal, already thirsting to get at Constantinople, from making their refusal an excuse for bursting into Europe, and carrying fire and sword into Eastern Thrace? In such a situation, what chance could there be for the Greek forces? Might not M. Veniselos be jeopardising the very interests that he had in view in Western Thrace and elsewhere, and rendering it even more difficult to vindicate them in the face of a triumphant enemy?

As regards guarantees, I could of course not speak except from the point of view of my own Government. Certainly, if I were at the peace conference, I should fight hard for Western Thrace and the other Greek interests to which M. Veniselos had referred.

As to this, he was somewhat contemptuous in replying, declaring that England would be in a constant minority against France and Italy and that the Greek chance of success would be small.

Both my colleague and I endeavoured to impress upon M. Veniselos the need for some reflection before he embarked upon the line which he contemplated, and which both of us thought would be fraught with great danger to his own interests.

His reply was an indignant complaint as to the way in which the Greeks had been treated when they were not allowed to march upon Constantinople, and an assertion that, in the circumstances predicated, the Greek army still in Thrace would have no alternative but to advance upon Chatalja and to seize the Chatalja lines: then, he said, holding the country from sea to sea, they would be able to resist successfully for many months any attack that the whole of the Kemalist forces might be able to make upon them.

When we indicated that such a course of action was, in the circumstances, quite impracticable, and would not be tolerated by the Allies, M. Veniselos swept aside our arguments and declined to recede from his position.

It is very difficult in a short summary to give an account of a conversation that lasted for an hour and a quarter, in the course of which M. Veniselos spoke with a very pardonable emotion, and used at times language which it was not pleasant to hear.

He said that he was going over to see M. Poincaré to-day, and would not make up his mind until he had seen the French Premier.

The meeting left me with the impression that M. Veniselos was imperfectly acquainted with the real condition of the Greek forces upon which he is tempted to rely; that he hardly realised the position in which the Greeks would be placed if they resisted altogether the Allied decisions to be taken in Mudania; and that he had not given due weight to the fact that, pending the peace conference, the Allied policy was, not to surrender Thrace to the Kemalist army, but to set up some form of interim administration and control which should maintain the peace until the peace conference assembled.

C. OF K.

Foreign Office, October 3, 1922.

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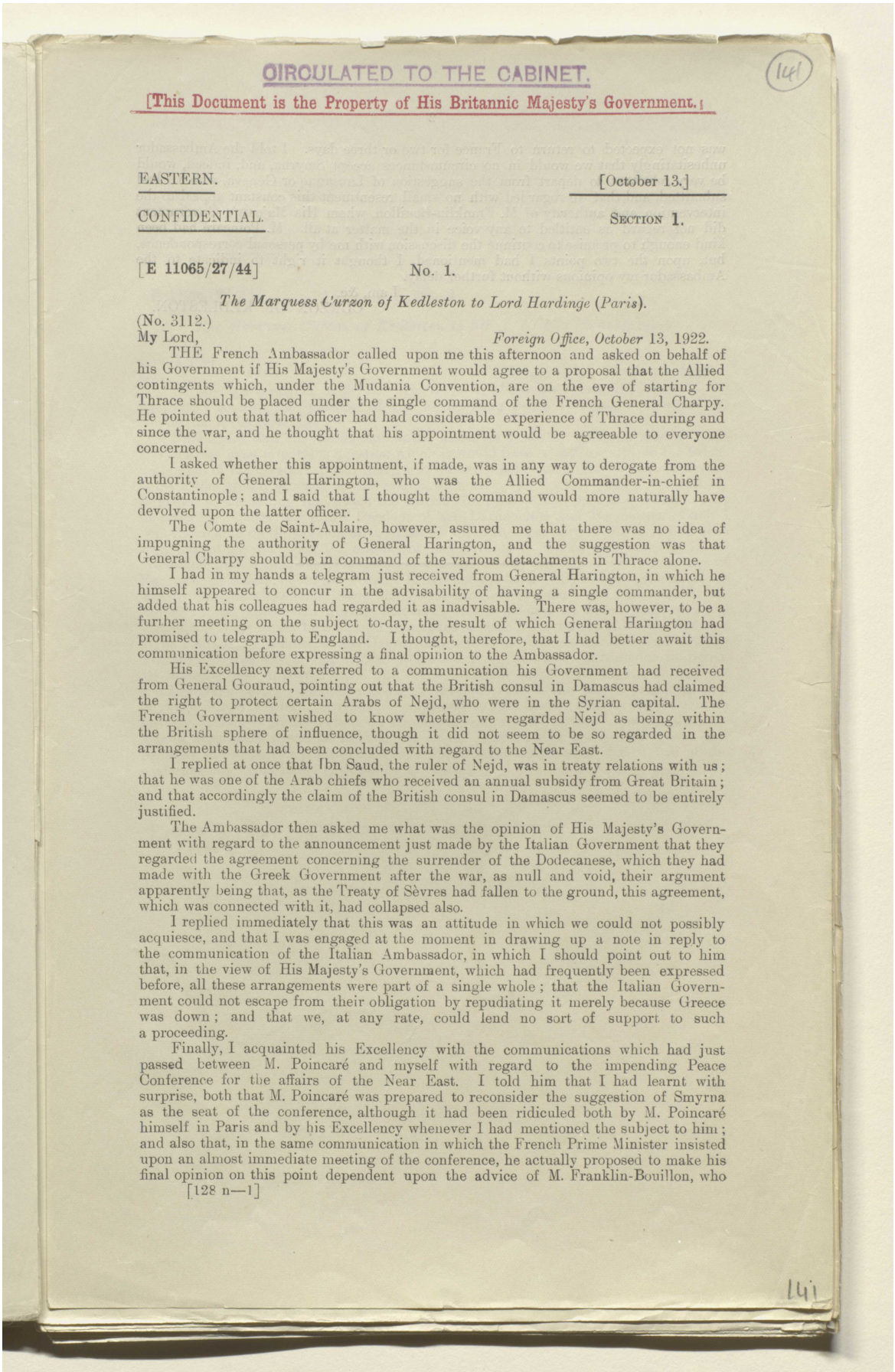

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EASTERN. [October 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11065/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 3112.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 13, 1922.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and asked on behalf of his Government if His Majesty's Government would agree to a proposal that the Allied contingents which, under the Mudania Convention, are on the eve of starting for Thrace should be placed under the single command of the French General Charpy. He pointed out that that officer had had considerable experience of Thrace during and since the war, and he thought that his appointment would be agreeable to everyone concerned.

I asked whether this appointment, if made, was in any way to derogate from the authority of General Harington, who was the Allied Commander-in-chief in Constantinople; and I said that I thought the command would more naturally have devolved upon the latter officer.

The Comte de Saint-Aulaire, however, assured me that there was no idea of impugning the authority of General Harington, and the suggestion was that General Charpy should be in command of the various detachments in Thrace alone.

I had in my hands a telegram just received from General Harington, in which he himself appeared to concur in the advisability of having a single commander, but added that his colleagues had regarded it as inadvisable. There was, however, to be a further meeting on the subject to-day, the result of which General Harington had promised to telegraph to England. I thought, therefore, that I had better await this communication before expressing a final opinion to the Ambassador.

His Excellency next referred to a communication his Government had received from General Gouraud, pointing out that the British consul in Damascus had claimed the right to protect certain Arabs of Nejd, who were in the Syrian capital. The French Government wished to know whether we regarded Nejd as being within the British sphere of influence, though it did not seem to be so regarded in the arrangements that had been concluded with regard to the Near East.

I replied at once that Ibn Saud, the ruler of Nejd, was in treaty relations with us; that he was one of the Arab chiefs who received an annual subsidy from Great Britain; and that accordingly the claim of the British consul in Damascus seemed to be entirely justified.

The Ambassador then asked me what was the opinion of His Majesty's Government with regard to the announcement just made by the Italian Government that they regarded the agreement concerning the surrender of the Dodecanese, which they had made with the Greek Government after the war, as null and void, their argument apparently being that, as the Treaty of Sèvres had fallen to the ground, this agreement, which was connected with it, had collapsed also.

I replied immediately that this was an attitude in which we could not possibly acquiesce, and that I was engaged at the moment in drawing up a note in reply to the communication of the Italian Ambassador, in which I should point out to him that, in the view of His Majesty's Government, which had frequently been expressed before, all these arrangements were part of a single whole; that the Italian Government could not escape from their obligation by repudiating it merely because Greece was down; and that we, at any rate, could lend no sort of support to such a proceeding.

Finally, I acquainted his Excellency with the communications which had just passed between M. Poincaré and myself with regard to the impending Peace Conference for the affairs of the Near East. I told him that I had learnt with surprise, both that M. Poincaré was prepared to reconsider the suggestion of Smyrna as the seat of the conference, although it had been ridiculed both by M. Poincaré himself in Paris and by his Excellency whenever I had mentioned the subject to him; and also that, in the same communication in which the French Prime Minister insisted upon an almost immediate meeting of the conference, he actually proposed to make his final opinion on this point dependent upon the advice of M. Franklin-Bouillon, who

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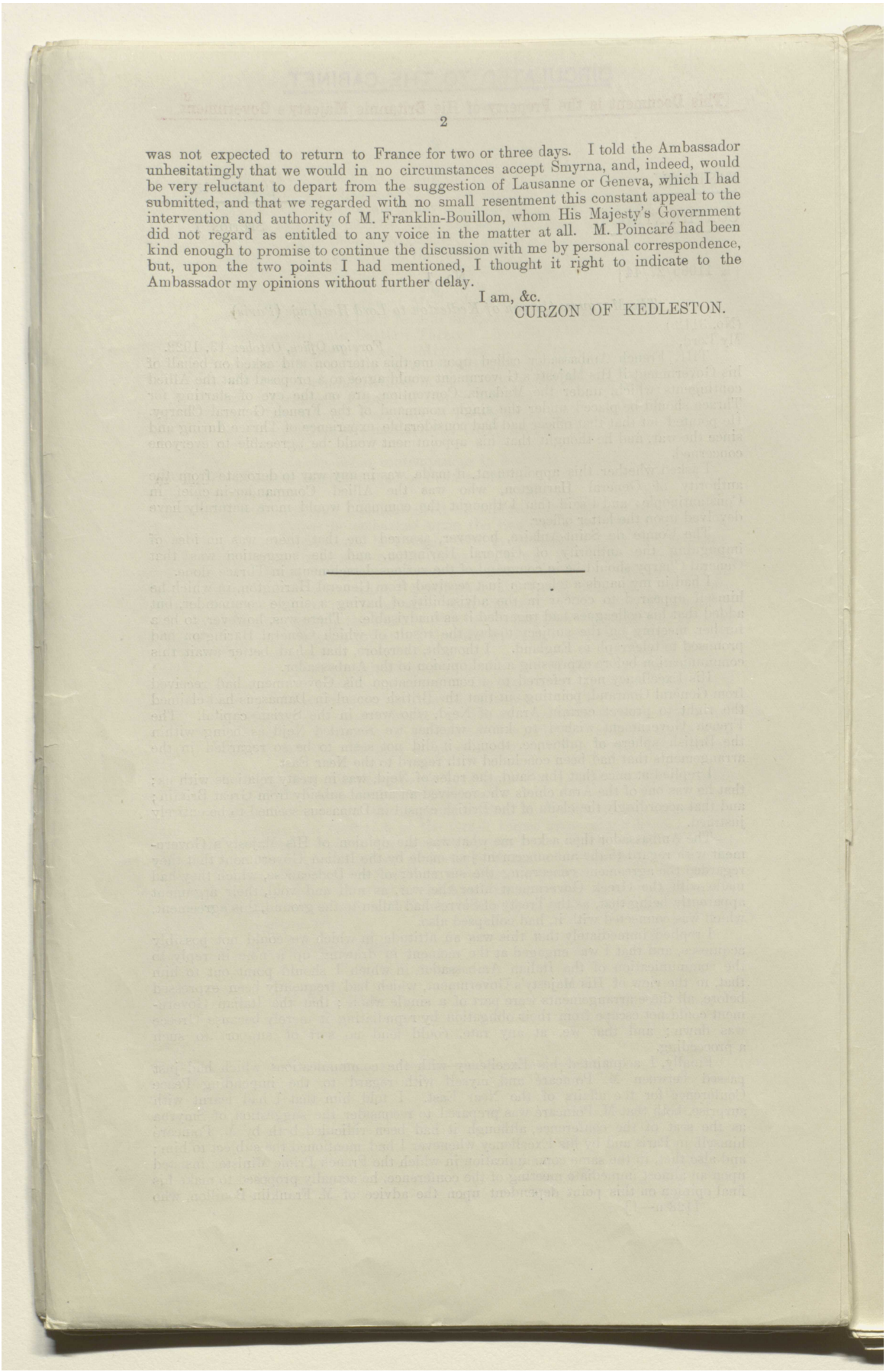

was not expected to return to France for two or three days. I told the Ambassador unhesitatingly that we would in no circumstances accept Smyrna, and, indeed, would be very reluctant to depart from the suggestion of Lausanne or Geneva, which I had submitted, and that we regarded with no small resentment this constant appeal to the intervention and authority of M. Franklin-Bouillon, whom His Majesty's Government did not regard as entitled to any voice in the matter at all. M. Poincaré had been kind enough to promise to continue the discussion with me by personal correspondence, but, upon the two points I had mentioned, I thought it right to indicate to the Ambassador my opinions without further delay.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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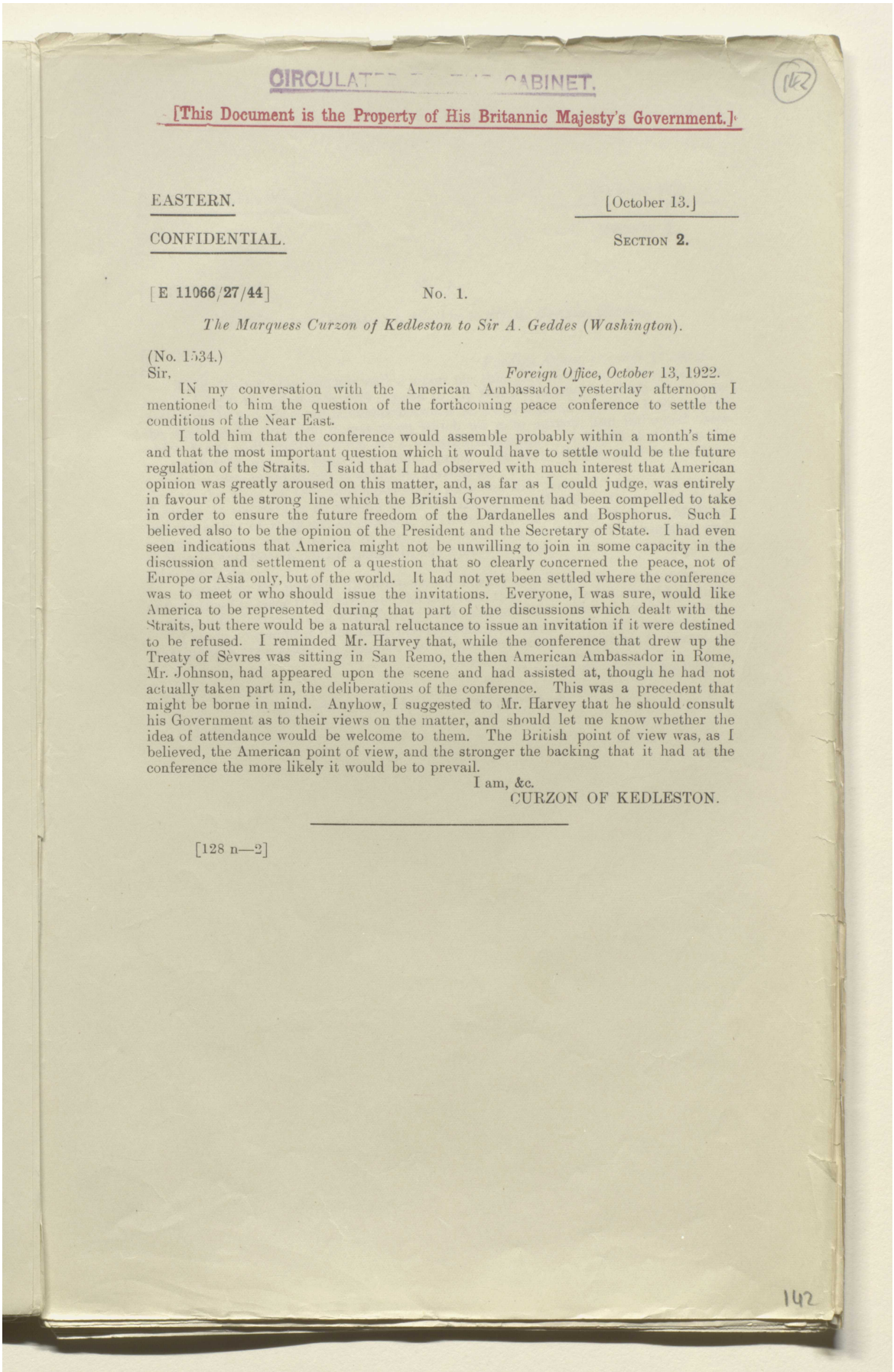

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EASTERN. [October 13.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 11066/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir A. Geddes (Washington).

(No. 1534.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 13, 1922.

IN my conversation with the American Ambassador yesterday afternoon I mentioned to him the question of the forthcoming peace conference to settle the conditions of the Near East.

I told him that the conference would assemble probably within a month's time and that the most important question which it would have to settle would be the future regulation of the Straits. I said that I had observed with much interest that American opinion was greatly aroused on this matter, and, as far as I could judge, was entirely in favour of the strong line which the British Government had been compelled to take in order to ensure the future freedom of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus. Such I believed also to be the opinion of the President and the Secretary of State. I had even seen indications that America might not be unwilling to join in some capacity in the discussion and settlement of a question that so clearly concerned the peace, not of Europe or Asia only, but of the world. It had not yet been settled where the conference was to meet or who should issue the invitations. Everyone, I was sure, would like America to be represented during that part of the discussions which dealt with the Straits, but there would be a natural reluctance to issue an invitation if it were destined to be refused. I reminded Mr. Harvey that, while the conference that drew up the Treaty of Sèvres was sitting in San Remo, the then American Ambassador in Rome, Mr. Johnson, had appeared upon the scene and had assisted at, though he had not actually taken part in, the deliberations of the conference. This was a precedent that might be borne in mind. Anyhow, I suggested to Mr. Harvey that he should consult his Government as to their views on the matter, and should let me know whether the idea of attendance would be welcome to them. The British point of view was, as I believed, the American point of view, and the stronger the backing that it had at the conference the more likely it would be to prevail.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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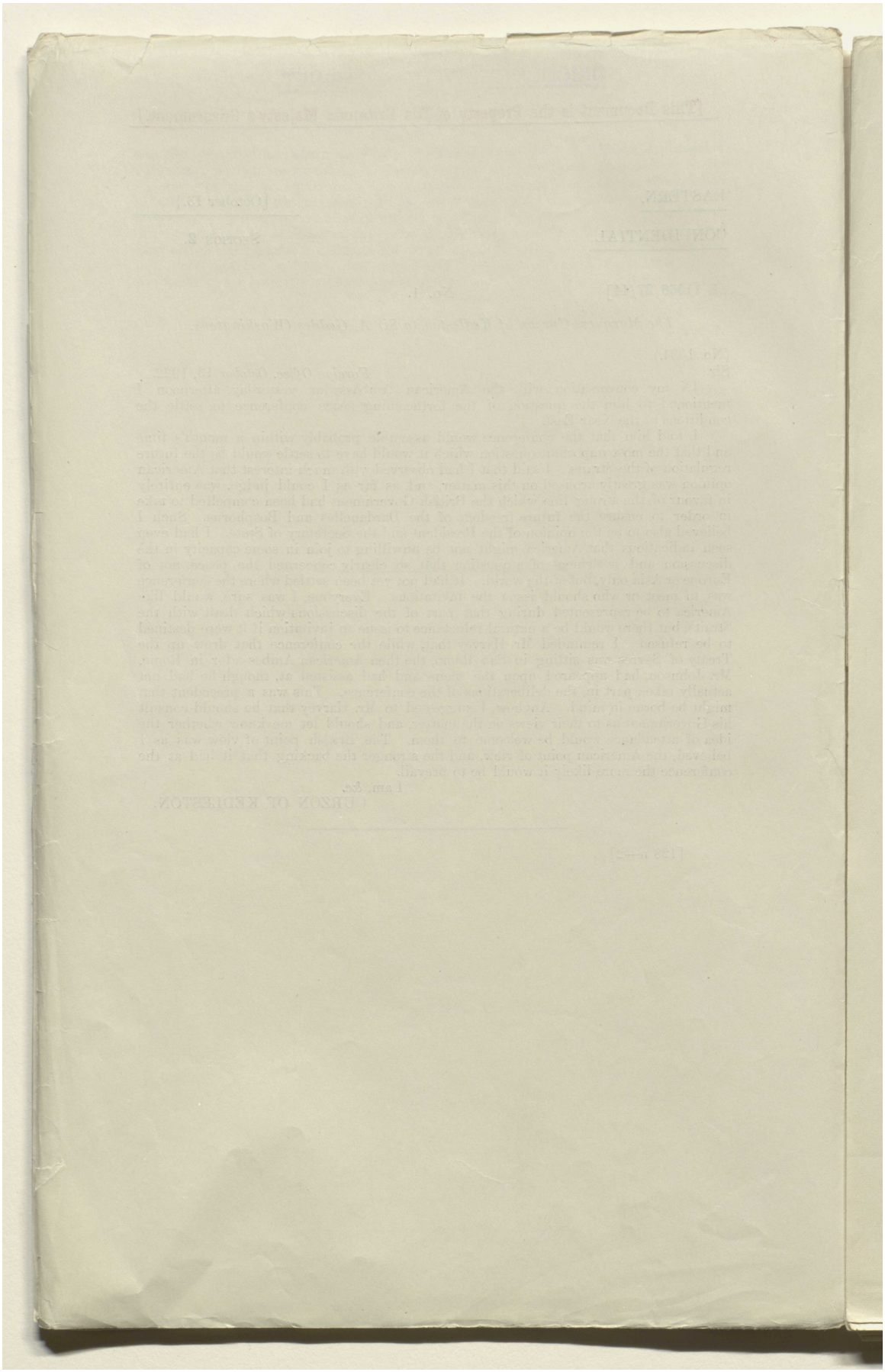

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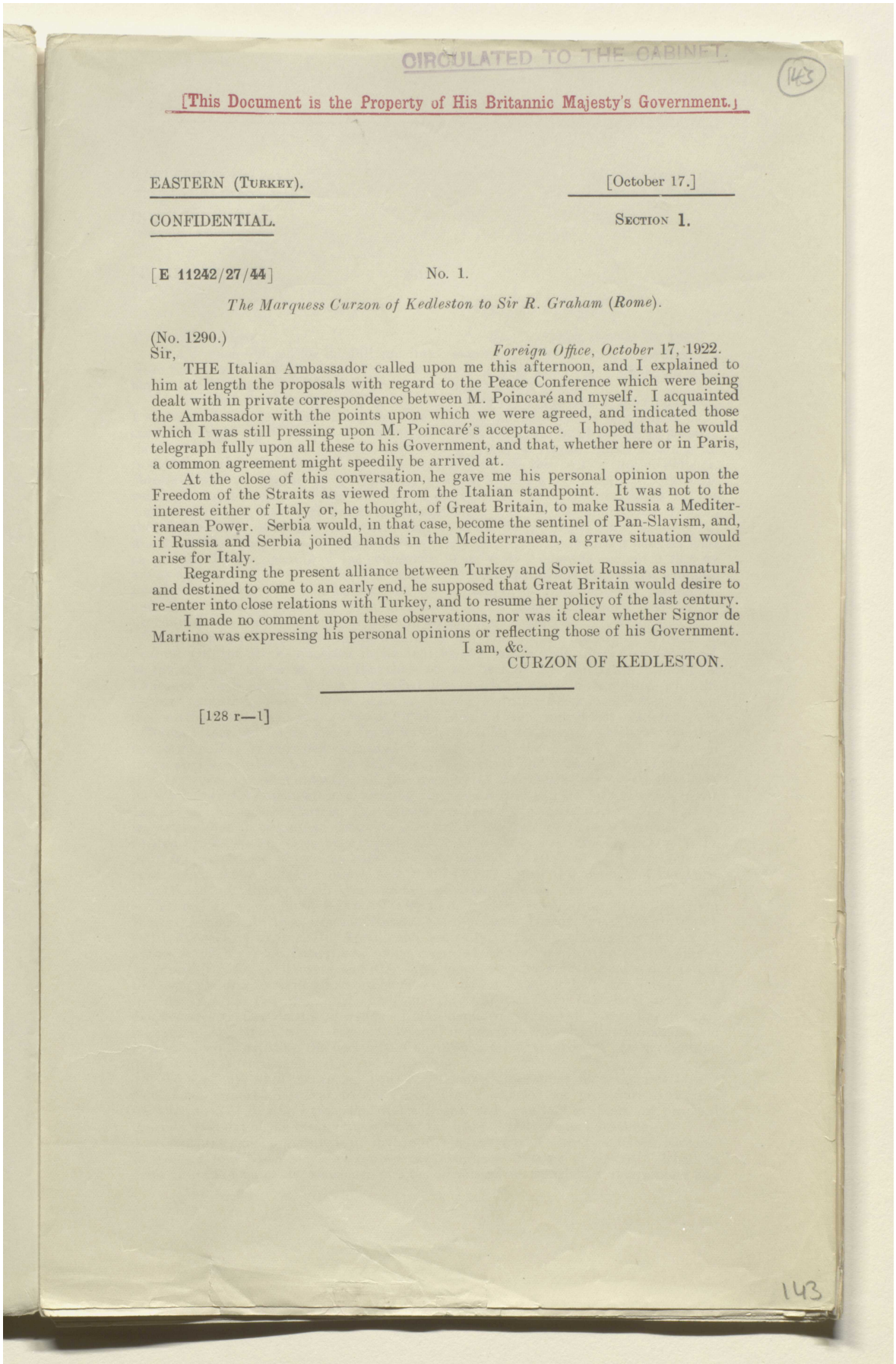

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [October 17.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11242/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 1290.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 17, 1922.

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and I explained to him at length the proposals with regard to the Peace Conference which were being dealt with in private correspondence between M. Poincaré and myself. I acquainted the Ambassador with the points upon which we were agreed, and indicated those which I was still pressing upon M. Poincaré's acceptance. I hoped that he would telegraph fully upon all these to his Government, and that, whether here or in Paris, a common agreement might speedily be arrived at.

At the close of this conversation, he gave me his personal opinion upon the Freedom of the Straits as viewed from the Italian standpoint. It was not to the interest either of Italy or, he thought, of Great Britain, to make Russia a Mediterranean Power. Serbia would, in that case, become the sentinel of Pan-Slavism, and, if Russia and Serbia joined hands in the Mediterranean, a grave situation would arise for Italy.

Regarding the present alliance between Turkey and Soviet Russia as unnatural and destined to come to an early end, he supposed that Great Britain would desire to re-enter into close relations with Turkey, and to resume her policy of the last century.

I made no comment upon these observations, nor was it clear whether Signor de Martino was expressing his personal opinions or reflecting those of his Government.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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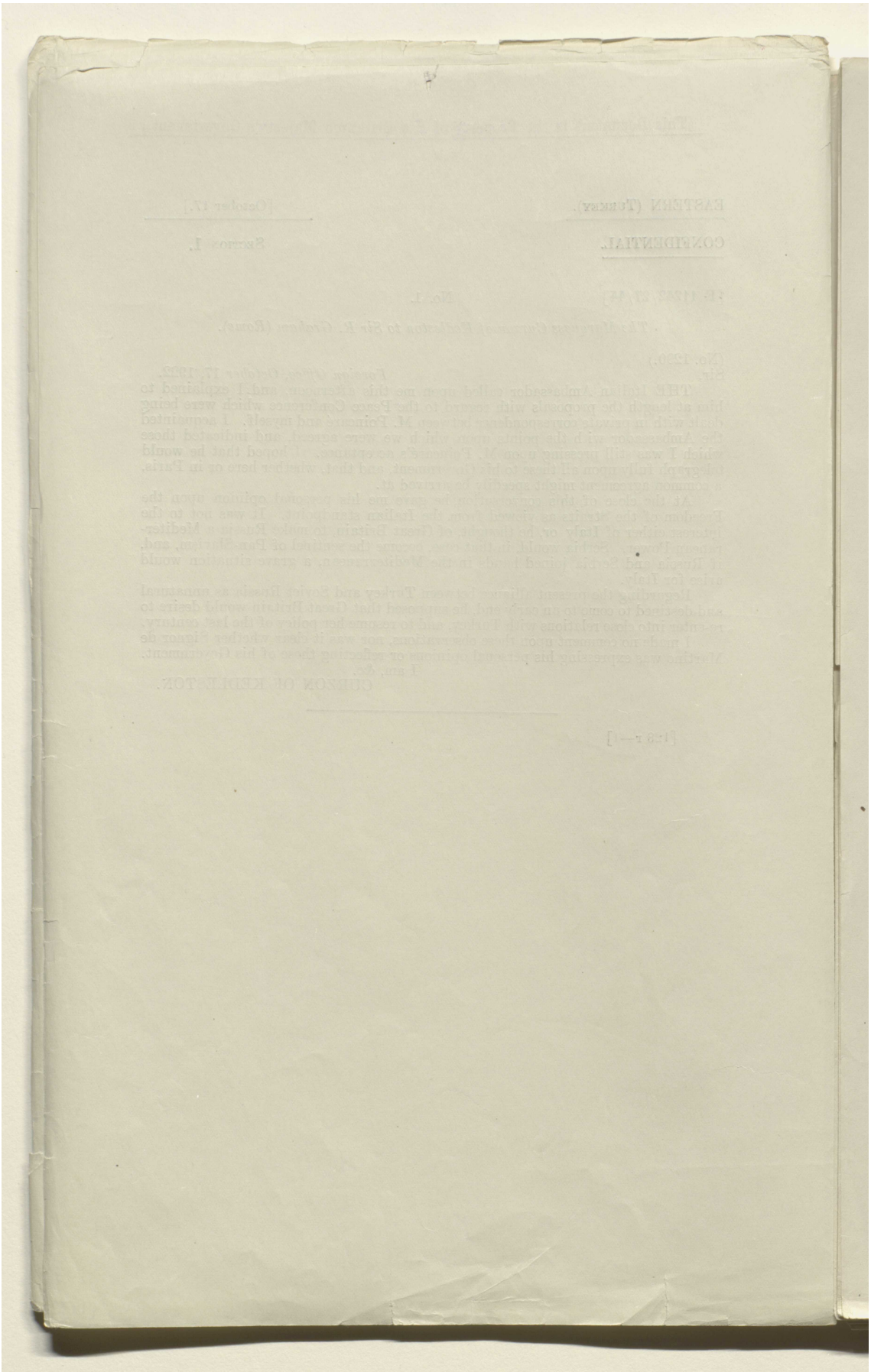
أوراق بقلم كرزون بشأن الشرق الأدنى والأوسط [١٤٣ظ] (٣٤٨/٢٨٦)



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EASTERN (TURKEY). [October 18.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11262/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to M. Poincaré.

My dear President, *Foreign Office, October* 18, 1922.

I AM much obliged for the full and frank statement of your views regarding the Near East Conference contained in your letters of the 14th and 16th October, and I am happy to find that we are already agreed on a large number of points.

I am glad that you are willing to accept Lausanne as the seat of the conference. I share your view as to expediting the date of meeting, but there is now barely more than a fortnight before the 1st November, and I think it would be physically impossible for the various delegations to make their arrangements as regards hotel accommodation, &c., by that date, even if we had already fixed on the seat of the conference. Moreover, the uncertainty of the internal political situation both here and in Italy calls for consideration. From this point of view, a too early assembling of the conference might meet with practical obstacles, and it would be unfortunate if, when the conference assembled, a full representation of all the principal countries were not at once forthcoming. To my mind, the important point is to announce a date as soon as possible for the opening of the conference to show the Angora Government that we are as anxious as they for an early meeting. It is comparatively immaterial whether, for physical reasons, the date be fixed at the beginning or the middle of November, and I therefore propose the 13th November as the most convenient and, in all probability, the earliest practicable date in all the circumstances.

We are happily in agreement regarding the rôle of the League of Nations in dealing with the Straits question in its final stage. As regards the conference itself, however, I still prefer my plan that there should be a single conference meeting at Lausanne which should deal on a specified date at a later stage in its sittings with the Straits, admitting other Powers, such as Russia and the Black Sea States, to the discussions, rather than your proposal for two distinct and concurrent conferences in different places, one for the Peace Treaty and the other for the Straits. The latter question cannot in reality be regarded or treated as distinct from the Peace Treaty, of which it forms an inseparable part. We shall almost certainly find it necessary to include in the treaty some general definition of the freedom of the Straits, even if the details of its application be elaborated in a separate instrument and handed for execution to the League of Nations. Further, the Straits question is at once so complex and so important that it is neither desirable nor indeed possible to have it examined and treated by plenipotentiaries and experts other than those who are dealing with the main treaty. These objections make it, to my mind, impossible to hold two different conferences in two different places, and it will be found that the analogy of the Paris Conference of 1856, which you quote, strongly favours my contention. That conference drew up firstly a Peace Treaty to end the Crimean war, signed by Great Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Sardinia and Turkey, on the 30th March (ratifications exchanged 27th April), and secondly, a Straits convention (which, by article 10 of the Peace Treaty, was to be regarded as annexed to the treaty), signed by precisely the same Powers and the same plenipotentiaries on the same day and at the same place, with ratifications exchanged on the same day as the Peace Treaty.

As regards the procedure for admitting the *de facto* Governments to the discussions on the Straits question, I am disposed to accept your Excellency's ingenious suggestion, which seems to be well designed to give legitimate satisfaction to Russia, while avoiding the necessity of any premature or indirect *de jure* recognition of the Soviet Government.

To sum up, while accepting your Excellency's suggestions for a separate Straits instrument, annexed, however, to the Peace Treaty, and for the procedure as regards the admission of Russia, I trust that you will now see your way to accept my proposal for the treatment of the Straits question by the main conference at Lausanne.

Touching my suggestion to invoke the assistance of the League of Nations' secretariat, your Excellency uses the words "League of Nations' delegates." I had in mind only the loan of the assistance of a technical staff of translators, interpreters and

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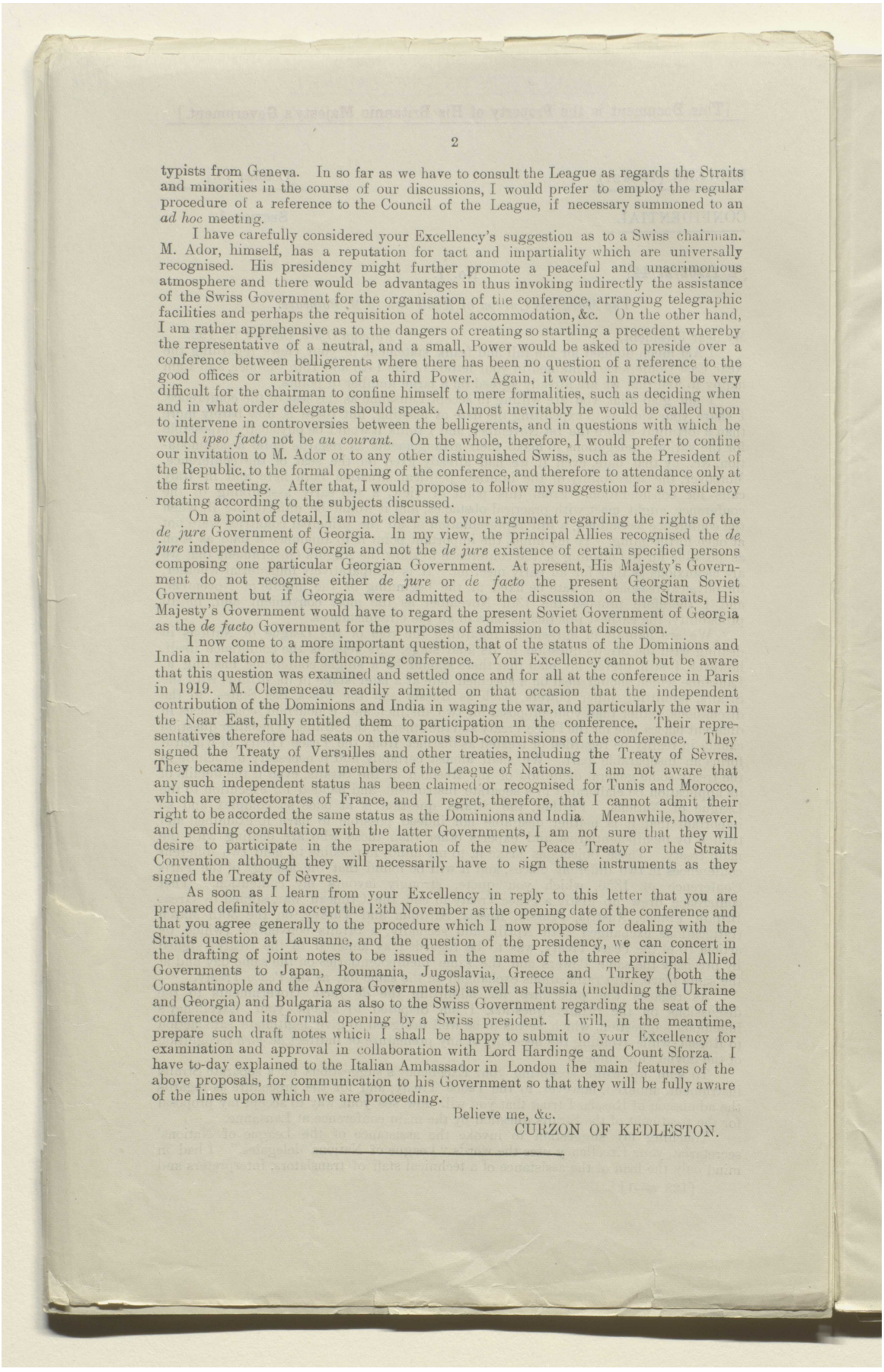

typists from Geneva. In so far as we have to consult the League as regards the Straits and minorities in the course of our discussions, I would prefer to employ the regular procedure of a reference to the Council of the League, if necessary summoned to an *ad hoc* meeting.

I have carefully considered your Excellency's suggestion as to a Swiss chairman. M. Ador, himself, has a reputation for tact and impartiality which are universally recognised. His presidency might further promote a peaceful and unacrimonious atmosphere and there would be advantages in thus invoking indirectly the assistance of the Swiss Government for the organisation of the conference, arranging telegraphic facilities and perhaps the requisition of hotel accommodation, &c. On the other hand, I am rather apprehensive as to the dangers of creating so startling a precedent whereby the representative of a neutral, and a small, Power would be asked to preside over a conference between belligerents where there has been no question of a reference to the good offices or arbitration of a third Power. Again, it would in practice be very difficult for the chairman to confine himself to mere formalities, such as deciding when and in what order delegates should speak. Almost inevitably he would be called upon to intervene in controversies between the belligerents, and in questions with which he would *ipso facto* not be *au courant*. On the whole, therefore, I would prefer to confine our invitation to M. Ador or to any other distinguished Swiss, such as the President of the Republic, to the formal opening of the conference, and therefore to attendance only at the first meeting. After that, I would propose to follow my suggestion for a presidency rotating according to the subjects discussed.

On a point of detail, I am not clear as to your argument regarding the rights of the *de jure* Government of Georgia. In my view, the principal Allies recognised the *de jure* independence of Georgia and not the *de jure* existence of certain specified persons composing one particular Georgian Government. At present, His Majesty's Government do not recognise either *de jure* or *de facto* the present Georgian Soviet Government but if Georgia were admitted to the discussion on the Straits, His Majesty's Government would have to regard the present Soviet Government of Georgia as the *de facto* Government for the purposes of admission to that discussion.

I now come to a more important question, that of the status of the Dominions and India in relation to the forthcoming conference. Your Excellency cannot but be aware that this question was examined and settled once and for all at the conference in Paris in 1919. M. Clemenceau readily admitted on that occasion that the independent contribution of the Dominions and India in waging the war, and particularly the war in the Near East, fully entitled them to participation in the conference. Their representatives therefore had seats on the various sub-commissions of the conference. They signed the Treaty of Versailles and other treaties, including the Treaty of Sèvres. They became independent members of the League of Nations. I am not aware that any such independent status has been claimed or recognised for Tunis and Morocco, which are protectorates of France, and I regret, therefore, that I cannot admit their right to be accorded the same status as the Dominions and India. Meanwhile, however, and pending consultation with the latter Governments, I am not sure that they will desire to participate in the preparation of the new Peace Treaty or the Straits Convention although they will necessarily have to sign these instruments as they signed the Treaty of Sèvres.

As soon as I learn from your Excellency in reply to this letter that you are prepared definitely to accept the 13th November as the opening date of the conference and that you agree generally to the procedure which I now propose for dealing with the Straits question at Lausanne, and the question of the presidency, we can concert in the drafting of joint notes to be issued in the name of the three principal Allied Governments to Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey (both the Constantinople and the Angora Governments) as well as Russia (including the Ukraine and Georgia) and Bulgaria as also to the Swiss Government regarding the seat of the conference and its formal opening by a Swiss president. I will, in the meantime, prepare such draft notes which I shall be happy to submit to your Excellency for examination and approval in collaboration with Lord Hardinge and Count Sforza. I have to-day explained to the Italian Ambassador in London the main features of the above proposals, for communication to his Government so that they will be fully aware of the lines upon which we are proceeding.

Believe me, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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No. 2.—PRIVATE SECRETARY.

EASTERN (TURKEY). [October 20.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 11358/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to M. Poincaré.

My dear President, *Foreign Office, October* 20, 1922.

I HASTEN to reply to your letter of the 19th October regarding the peace conference with Turkey, from which I am happy to note that we are now in agreement on nearly all essential points.

2. With regard to the date of the opening of the conference, I find it impossible, for the practical reasons which I have already explained to you, and which have been accentuated since I wrote, to fix any earlier date than the 13th November, but I will accept that date as the opening day of the conference. I agree with you that it is essential to announce that date as soon as possible.

3. Further, I am gratified to see that we are now in accord as to the place of the conference and the procedure to be followed as regards the Straits question.

4. I merely put forward the proposal as regards technical assistance from the League of Nations Secretariat as a suggestion, and have no wish to press it. Each delegation will now provide their own staff of translators and typists, but I trust that your Excellency will be able, as on previous occasions, to give the conference the invaluable services of interpreters from French into English and *vice versâ*.

5. With regard to the presidency of the conference, I fear that I still regard the objections to a neutral chairman put forward in my letter of the 18th October as insuperable, and I think that we must confine ourselves to inviting M. Ador to open the conference. In order to overcome the difficulty which your Excellency has foreseen with regard to the smaller Powers or Turkey having to preside over the conference, I would propose to confine the chairmanship (by rotation according to subjects) to the four principal Allied Powers. No formal arrangement to this effect need be proposed to the conference, but it could be arranged by a preliminary informal understanding between the four principal Allied representatives, who would propose each other in turn as chairman. The smaller Powers and Turkey would doubtless raise no objection in practice to this arrangement.

6. I have looked up the question of the *de jure* recognition of the Georgian Government. I find that on the 26th January, 1921, the Supreme Council decided to recognise *de jure* the independence of Georgia, provided it was clearly established that the latter desired immediate recognition. Accordingly, the next day (27th January) the Georgian Minister for Foreign Affairs (at that time in Paris) wrote to the Supreme Council to express officially to M. Briand, as President, the demand of the Georgian Government and of the Georgian people to be recognised *de jure* by the Powers. The Supreme Council (not the Conference of Ambassadors) agreed on the 27th January that this letter was sufficient and M. Briand thereupon wrote the letter of which you sent me a copy; but clearly the decision of the Supreme Council related to the *de jure* recognition of the independence of Georgia, and I cannot accept that the then existing Georgian Government could be regarded as the *de jure* (much less the *de facto*) Government of Georgia to-day, or that it has any right to representation at the conference.

7. I am afraid that I cannot allow the question of the relative rights of the Dominions and India and Morocco and Tunis respectively to participate in the conference to be passed over without any discussion of the reasons—irrefutable, as they appear to me—put forward in my letter of the 18th October, which render completely distinct the status of the Dominions and India on the one hand and the French protectorates on the other. No British Government could now reverse the decision formally taken at the Peace Conference in Paris in 1919, regarding the status of the constituent members of the British Empire, and I must formally reserve their right to be represented in the British delegation at the forthcoming conference and to sign the Treaty of Peace and the Straits Convention as they signed the Treaty of Sèvres, should they so desire it. I can, of course, raise no objection to representatives of the French protectorates of Morocco and Tunis being attached to the French delegation.

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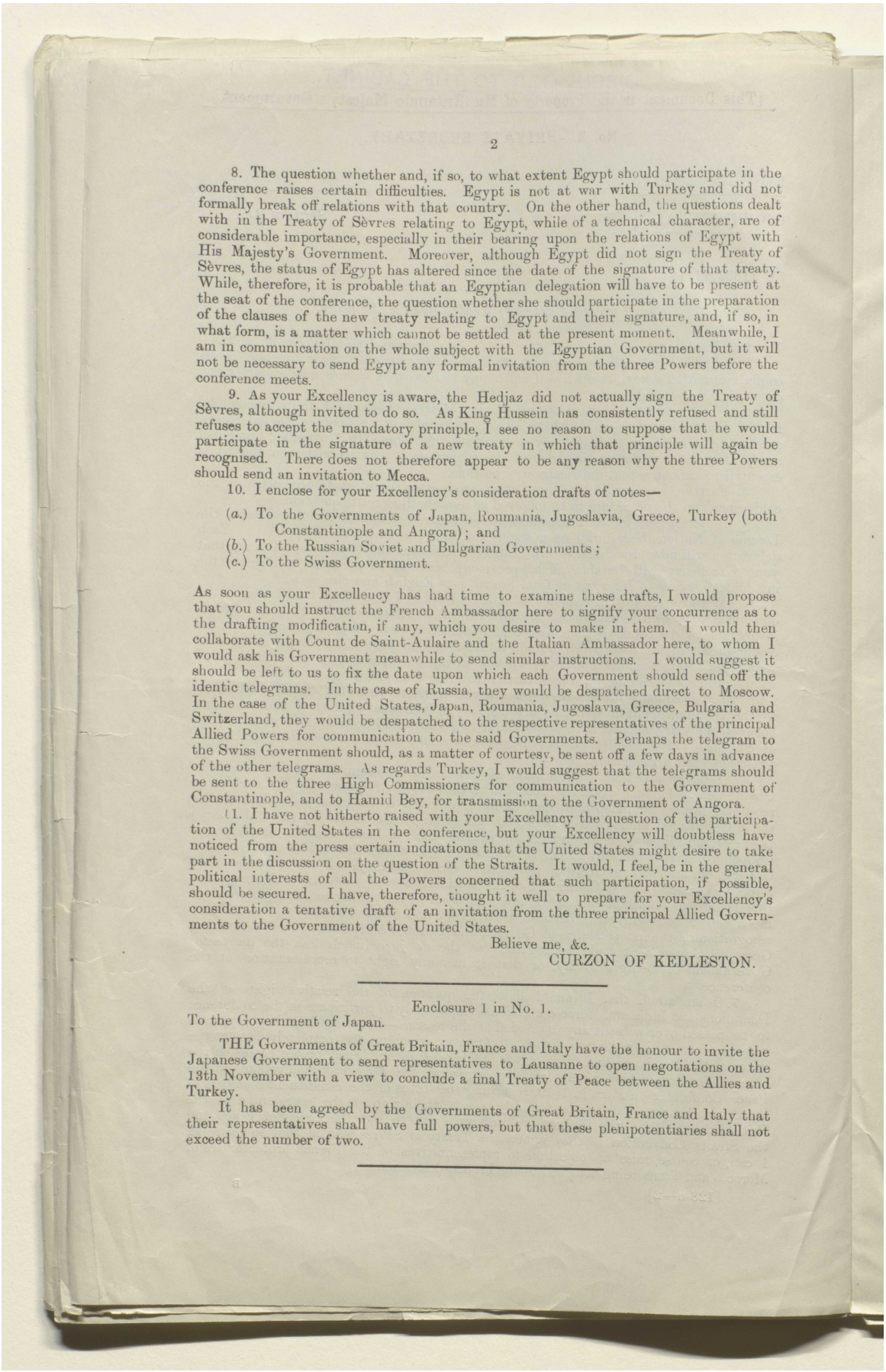

8. The question whether and, if so, to what extent Egypt should participate in the conference raises certain difficulties. Egypt is not at war with Turkey and did not formally break off relations with that country. On the other hand, the questions dealt with in the Treaty of Sèvres relating to Egypt, while of a technical character, are of considerable importance, especially in their bearing upon the relations of Egypt with His Majesty's Government. Moreover, although Egypt did not sign the Treaty of Sèvres, the status of Egypt has altered since the date of the signature of that treaty. While, therefore, it is probable that an Egyptian delegation will have to be present at the seat of the conference, the question whether she should participate in the preparation of the clauses of the new treaty relating to Egypt and their signature, and, if so, in what form, is a matter which cannot be settled at the present moment. Meanwhile, I am in communication on the whole subject with the Egyptian Government, but it will not be necessary to send Egypt any formal invitation from the three Powers before the conference meets.

9. As your Excellency is aware, the Hedjaz did not actually sign the Treaty of Sèvres, although invited to do so. As King Hussein has consistently refused and still refuses to accept the mandatory principle, I see no reason to suppose that he would participate in the signature of a new treaty in which that principle will again be recognised. There does not therefore appear to be any reason why the three Powers should send an invitation to Mecca.

10. I enclose for your Excellency's consideration drafts of notes—

(*a.*) To the Governments of Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece, Turkey (both Constantinople and Angora); and
(*b.*) To the Russian Soviet and Bulgarian Governments;
(*c.*) To the Swiss Government.

As soon as your Excellency has had time to examine these drafts, I would propose that you should instruct the French Ambassador here to signify your concurrence as to the drafting modification, if any, which you desire to make in them. I would then collaborate with Count de Saint-Aulaire and the Italian Ambassador here, to whom I would ask his Government meanwhile to send similar instructions. I would suggest it should be left to us to fix the date upon which each Government should send off the identic telegrams. In the case of Russia, they would be despatched direct to Moscow. In the case of the United States, Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria and Switzerland, they would be despatched to the respective representatives of the principal Allied Powers for communication to the said Governments. Perhaps the telegram to the Swiss Government should, as a matter of courtesy, be sent off a few days in advance of the other telegrams. As regards Turkey, I would suggest that the telegrams should be sent to the three High Commissioners for communication to the Government of Constantinople, and to Hamid Bey, for transmission to the Government of Angora.

11. I have not hitherto raised with your Excellency the question of the participation of the United States in the conference, but your Excellency will doubtless have noticed from the press certain indications that the United States might desire to take part in the discussion on the question of the Straits. It would, I feel, be in the general political interests of all the Powers concerned that such participation, if possible, should be secured. I have, therefore, thought it well to prepare for your Excellency's consideration a tentative draft of an invitation from the three principal Allied Governments to the Government of the United States.

Believe me, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

To the Government of Japan.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Japanese Government to send representatives to Lausanne to open negotiations on the 13th November with a view to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

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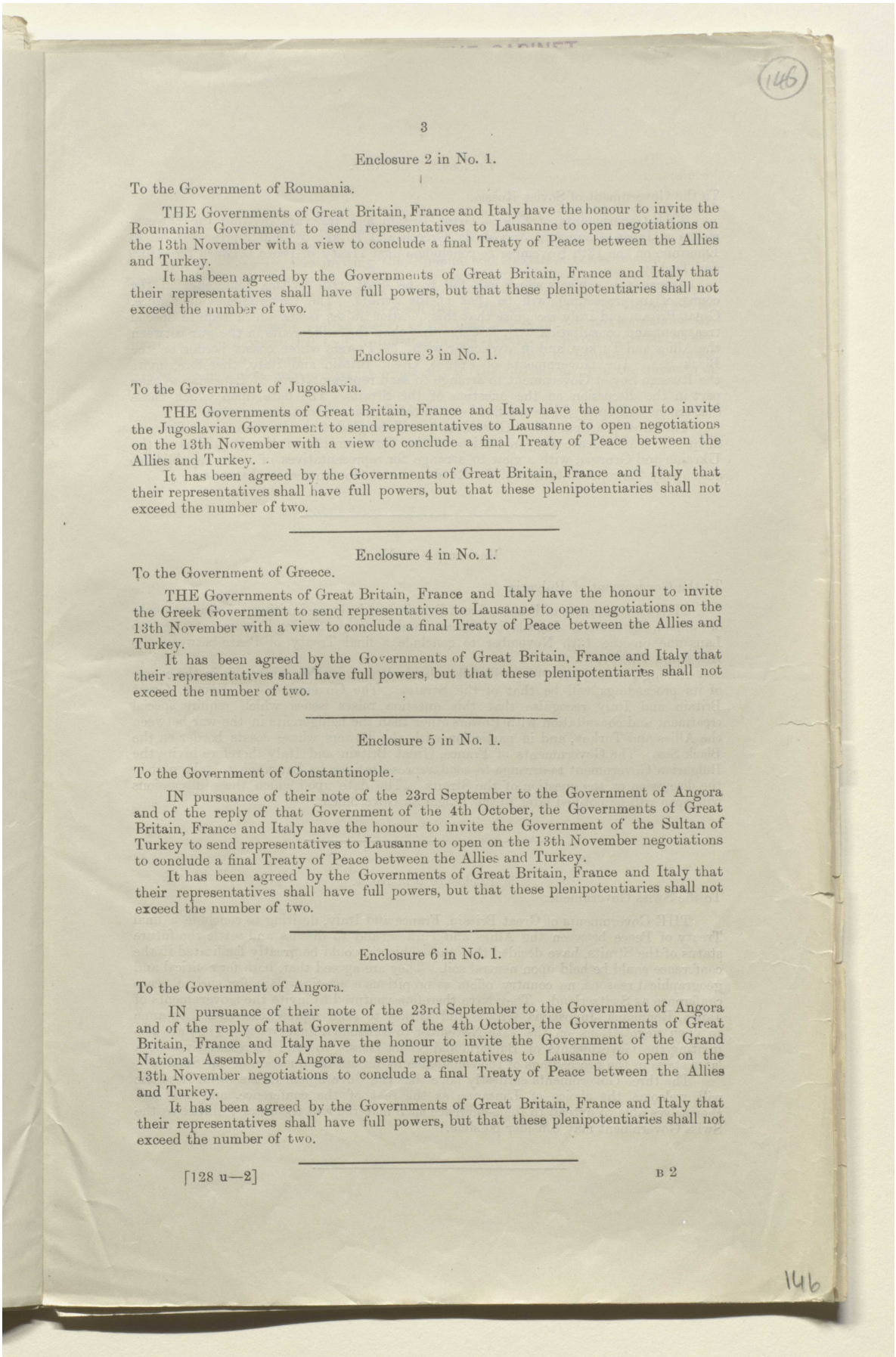

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

To the Government of Roumania.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Roumanian Government to send representatives to Lausanne to open negotiations on the 13th November with a view to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

To the Government of Jugoslavia.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Jugoslavian Government to send representatives to Lausanne to open negotiations on the 13th November with a view to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

Enclosure 4 in No. 1.

To the Government of Greece.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Greek Government to send representatives to Lausanne to open negotiations on the 13th November with a view to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

Enclosure 5 in No. 1.

To the Government of Constantinople.

IN pursuance of their note of the 23rd September to the Government of Angora and of the reply of that Government of the 4th October, the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Government of the Sultan of Turkey to send representatives to Lausanne to open on the 13th November negotiations to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

Enclosure 6 in No. 1.

To the Government of Angora.

IN pursuance of their note of the 23rd September to the Government of Angora and of the reply of that Government of the 4th October, the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy have the honour to invite the Government of the Grand National Assembly of Angora to send representatives to Lausanne to open on the 13th November negotiations to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

It has been agreed by the Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy that their representatives shall have full powers, but that these plenipotentiaries shall not exceed the number of two.

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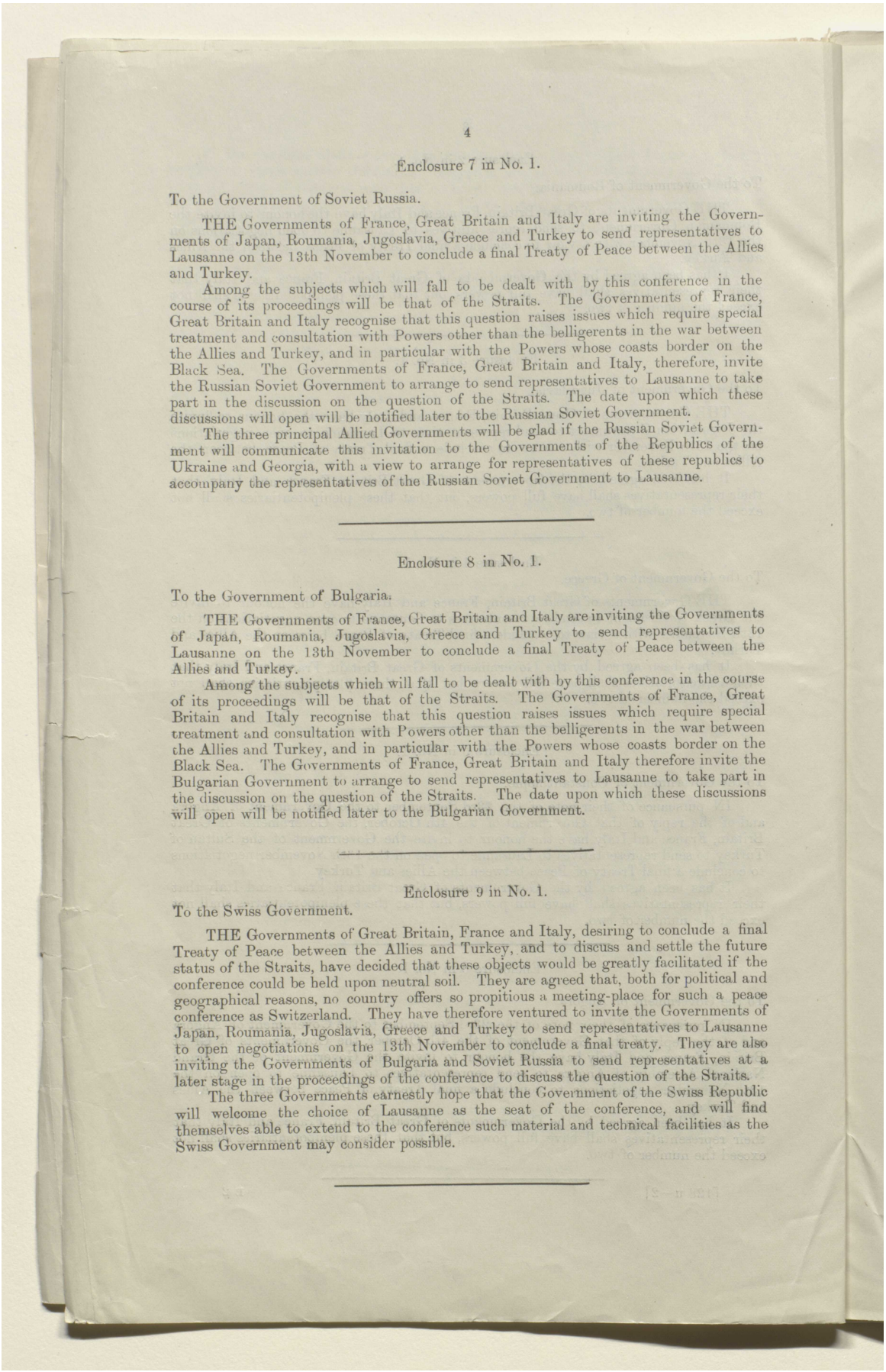

Enclosure 7 in No. 1.

To the Government of Soviet Russia.

THE Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy are inviting the Governments of Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey to send representatives to Lausanne on the 13th November to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

Among the subjects which will fall to be dealt with by this conference in the course of its proceedings will be that of the Straits. The Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy recognise that this question raises issues which require special treatment and consultation with Powers other than the belligerents in the war between the Allies and Turkey, and in particular with the Powers whose coasts border on the Black Sea. The Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy, therefore, invite the Russian Soviet Government to arrange to send representatives to Lausanne to take part in the discussion on the question of the Straits. The date upon which these discussions will open will be notified later to the Russian Soviet Government.

The three principal Allied Governments will be glad if the Russian Soviet Government will communicate this invitation to the Governments of the Republics of the Ukraine and Georgia, with a view to arrange for representatives of these republics to accompany the representatives of the Russian Soviet Government to Lausanne.

Enclosure 8 in No. 1.

To the Government of Bulgaria.

THE Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy are inviting the Governments of Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey to send representatives to Lausanne on the 13th November to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey.

Among the subjects which will fall to be dealt with by this conference in the course of its proceedings will be that of the Straits. The Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy recognise that this question raises issues which require special treatment and consultation with Powers other than the belligerents in the war between the Allies and Turkey, and in particular with the Powers whose coasts border on the Black Sea. The Governments of France, Great Britain and Italy therefore invite the Bulgarian Government to arrange to send representatives to Lausanne to take part in the discussion on the question of the Straits. The date upon which these discussions will open will be notified later to the Bulgarian Government.

Enclosure 9 in No. 1.

To the Swiss Government.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy, desiring to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey, and to discuss and settle the future status of the Straits, have decided that these objects would be greatly facilitated if the conference could be held upon neutral soil. They are agreed that, both for political and geographical reasons, no country offers so propitious a meeting-place for such a peace conference as Switzerland. They have therefore ventured to invite the Governments of Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey to send representatives to Lausanne to open negotiations on the 13th November to conclude a final treaty. They are also inviting the Governments of Bulgaria and Soviet Russia to send representatives at a later stage in the proceedings of the conference to discuss the question of the Straits.

The three Governments earnestly hope that the Government of the Swiss Republic will welcome the choice of Lausanne as the seat of the conference, and will find themselves able to extend to the conference such material and technical facilities as the Swiss Government may consider possible.

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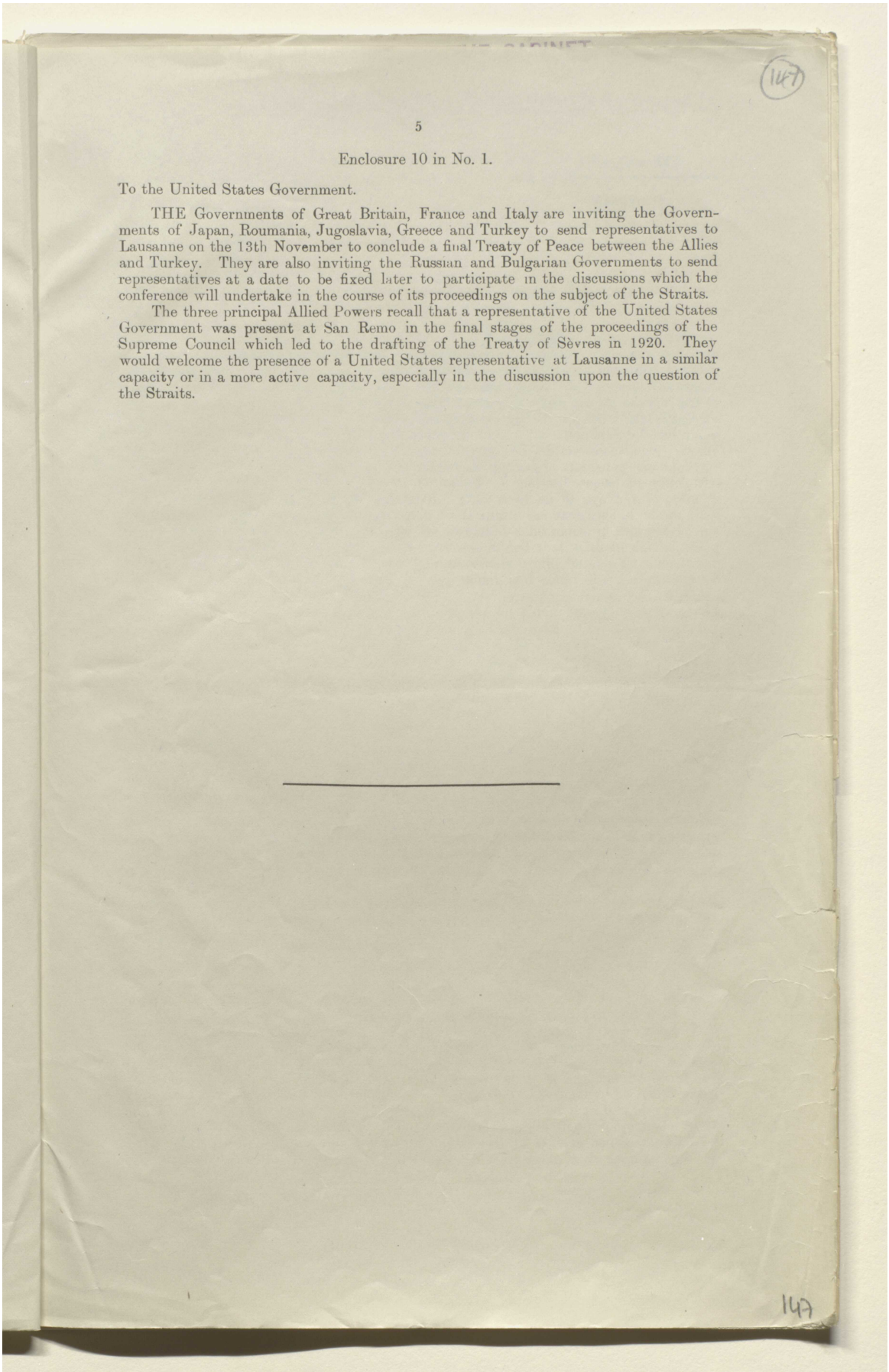

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Enclosure 10 in No. 1.

To the United States Government.

THE Governments of Great Britain, France and Italy are inviting the Governments of Japan, Roumania, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey to send representatives to Lausanne on the 13th November to conclude a final Treaty of Peace between the Allies and Turkey. They are also inviting the Russian and Bulgarian Governments to send representatives at a date to be fixed later to participate in the discussions which the conference will undertake in the course of its proceedings on the subject of the Straits.

The three principal Allied Powers recall that a representative of the United States Government was present at San Remo in the final stages of the proceedings of the Supreme Council which led to the drafting of the Treaty of Sèvres in 1920. They would welcome the presence of a United States representative at Lausanne in a similar capacity or in a more active capacity, especially in the discussion upon the question of the Straits.

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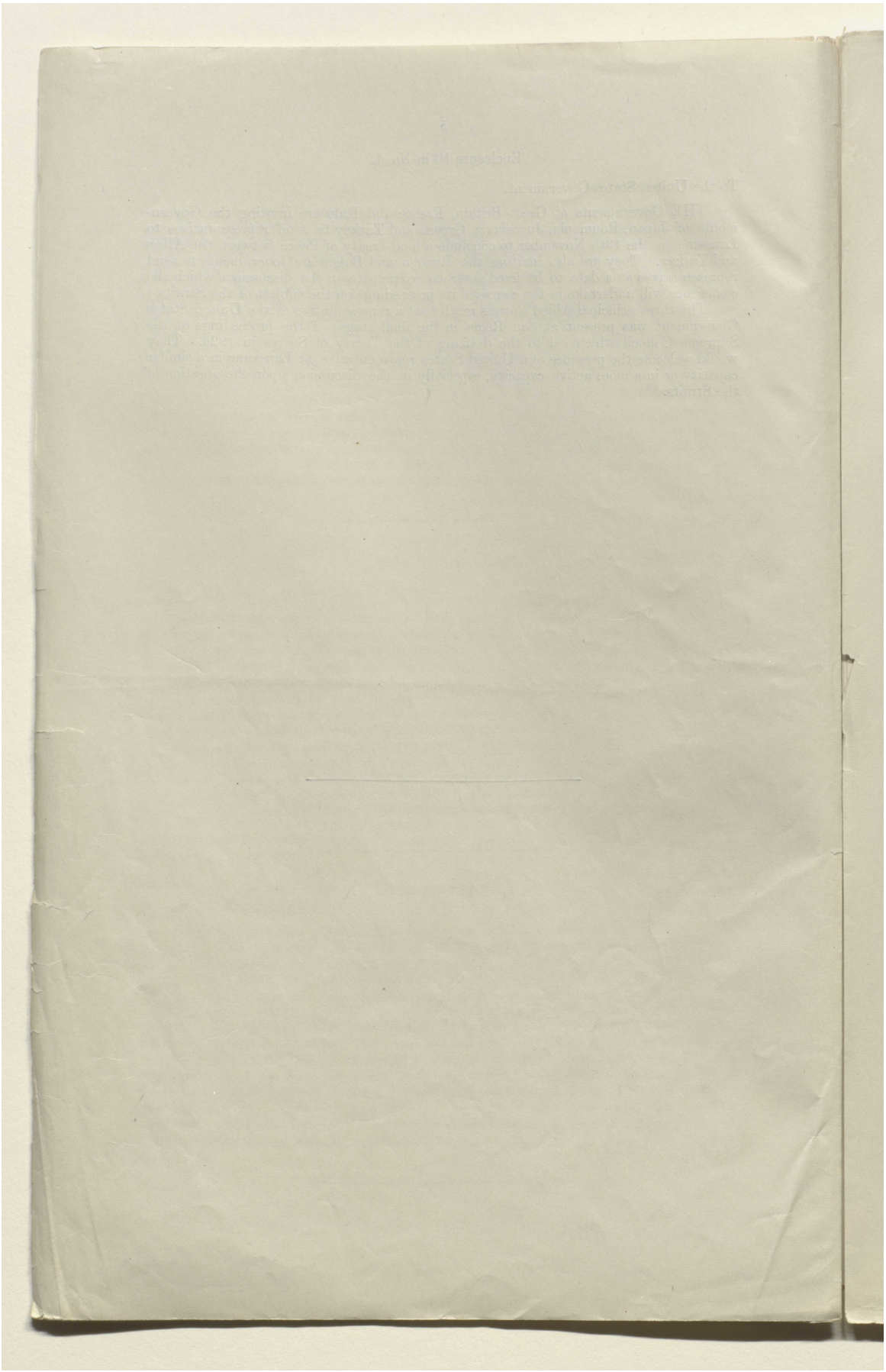

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EASTERN (TURKEY). [October 30.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11890/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir A. Geddes (Washington).

(No. 1602.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October* 30, 1922.

THE American Ambassador called upon me this afternoon in order to present to me the reply of his Government to the invitation which had been extended to them to participate in some form or other in the forthcoming Peace Conference in Lausanne. As a matter of fact, the reply of the American Secretary of State was an answer, not to the formal invitation, which had reached Washington only the day after Mr. Hughes's communication had been despatched, but to the informal suggestion which I had made to the Ambassador in conversation on my own responsibility some weeks ago. In the *aide-mémoire* which the Ambassador now placed in my hands, the American Government indicated seven subjects likely to be raised at the conference, in which the United States would be particularly interested. They went on to say that, in order to safeguard their interests in this matter and to facilitate the exchange of views, they would be prepared to send observers to the proposed conference, if this action was agreeable to the Powers concerned. A sentence was added that, without participating in the negotiating of the Treaty of Peace, these observers would be able to indicate the position of the American Government in greater detail, and could also keep the latter informed of the attitude of the other Powers.

I said that I was gratified to learn that, as I had all along hoped, America would take her share in a settlement which was of far more than local or European concern; but I should like to know what exactly the functions of the American observers would be. Would they be silent participants in the proceedings of the conference, as I had seen at more than one preceding conference; or would they take part in the discussions and express opinions? If they adopted the latter course, would they be prepared to sign the treaty that would result from the conference?

Mr. Harvey said that the American representatives would certainly be fully empowered to express the views of their Government upon all the important points in which they were concerned, and that they would not hesitate, if asked, to do so. This, he thought, would involve their almost continuous presence at the proceedings. As to the signature of a treaty: in this America could not have a hand, inasmuch as she had not been at war with Turkey.

When I pointed out, however, that the future regulation of the Straits would in all probability be the subject of a separate and special convention, to be signed by other States who had also not been belligerents, the Ambassador thought it not impossible that, in such a case, American signatures might be appended to such an agreement.

Before the Ambassador left the room, I told him that I had reported to Washington the very disquieting remarks that he had made to me on a recent occasion about the state of feeling alleged to have been produced in America by Lord Balfour's note. In reply, I had been assured by your Excellency, after you had taken steps to consult authoritative opinion, that these views were much exaggerated and did not faithfully represent the state of opinion as existing in the States at the present time.

Mr. Harvey pointed out that this might very well be the case as regards Washington and New York, the atmosphere of which was often quite different from that of America as a whole. But his own experience as a newspaper man brought him into contact with every shade of opinion in all parts of the American Continent, and, further, no American Congressman or Senator passed through London without making his views known to the Embassy. He was therefore sorry to say that he could not recede from the position he had formerly taken up. Personally, he very much regretted the despatch of the Balfour note, because he believed it to be quite possible — and in this he expressed the views of the American President and Secretary of State as well as his own—to reduce the obligation, which Great Britain had acknowledged and accepted, to the minimum point that would be compatible with acquiescence by

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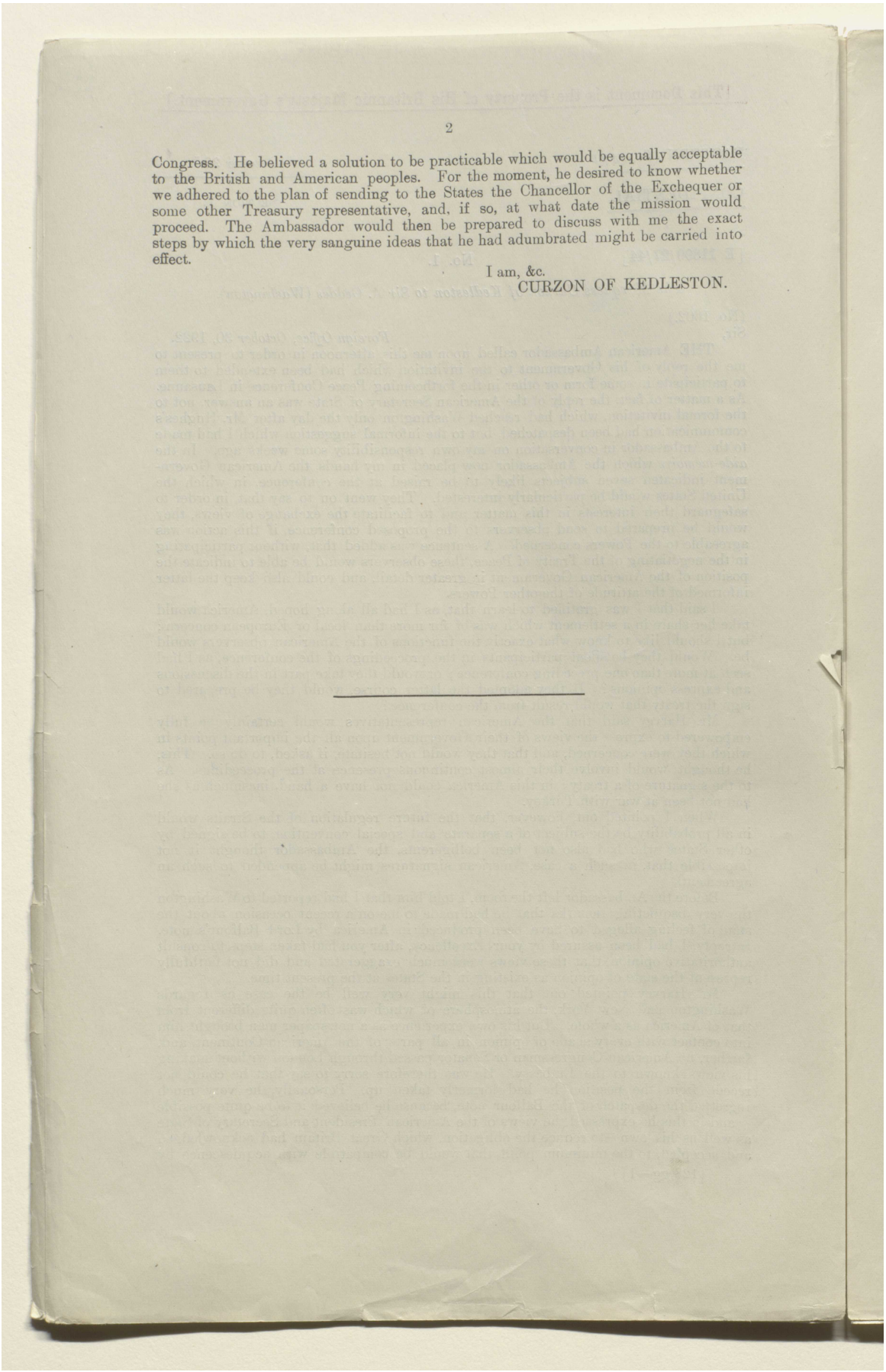

Congress. He believed a solution to be practicable which would be equally acceptable to the British and American peoples. For the moment, he desired to know whether we adhered to the plan of sending to the States the Chancellor of the Exchequer or some other Treasury representative, and, if so, at what date the mission would proceed. The Ambassador would then be prepared to discuss with me the exact steps by which the very sanguine ideas that he had adumbrated might be carried into effect.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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EASTERN. [October 31.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11909/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 3283.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October 31, 1922.*

THE French Ambassador came to me this afternoon with the information that the Kemalist authorities were opening recruiting offices in different parts of Thrace, and had announced the intention of raising two divisions of Turks in that country for the defence of Thrace and Constantinople. He pointed out that this was entirely contrary to the provisions of the Mudania Agreement, and that it could not be tolerated. He asked accordingly if I had any confirmation of this report, and whether, in any case, I would telegraph to our representative in Constantinople to join with his colleagues in protesting against this unwarrantable proceeding.

I replied that it had not yet been reported to me, but that I would certainly take the action he suggested.

This led me to enquire what was now the view of the French Government about the attitude of the Kemalist Party. I judged from his reply that the honeymoon was now well over, and that even the Divorce Court was not a remote alternative, for his Excellency told me that the conduct of the Kemalist Turks was becoming absolutely insupportable, both in Europe and in Asia; that their pretensions would have to be firmly resisted; and that in Smyrna, where they had desecrated and destroyed the European cemetery, that part of it which had been the chief object of their sacrilege had been the French cemetery.

I learnt with interest from the Ambassador these symptoms of a sharp reaction on the part of our Allies.

The Count de Saint-Aulaire went on to ask me to take advantage of the presence in this country of the Emir Abdullah, from Transjordania, to press upon him the arrest of the persons who had been implicated in the attempt to assassinate General Gouraud.

I said that this was not a case with which I was personally familiar, since it was in the hands of the Colonial Office; but I would take steps to inform the new Secretary of State for the Colonies of the request that the Ambassador had made.

The Ambassador then repeated to me, with considerable hesitation and as though he were performing a most unpleasant task, the request for the recall of our consul-general in Tunis, Mr. Sarell, which he had already submitted without any success to Sir Eyre Crowe.

I informed him that I entirely agreed with the reply of the Permanent Under-Secretary. It seemed to me an extraordinary thing, the attitude of the British consul-general having been completely vindicated by what had happened, that the French Government should now propose to us that he should be withdrawn, whereas the French Governor-General, to whose errors the whole *contretemps* had been due, was to be left in possession of the field. I was not much addicted to recommending to foreign Governments the withdrawal of any of their high officers, but, if anyone had to be retired in consequence of recent events in Tunis, it seemed to me that the chief French representative was the man who was marked out for the change.

The Ambassador could only reply that some of the letters which Mr. Sarell had addressed to the French Governor-General were lacking in courtesy, and that, when I was Governor-General in India, I should not have liked to be addressed in a similar way by a consul-general.

I indicated that the two cases were hardly in *pari materia*, and expressed my inability to take any action of the nature proposed.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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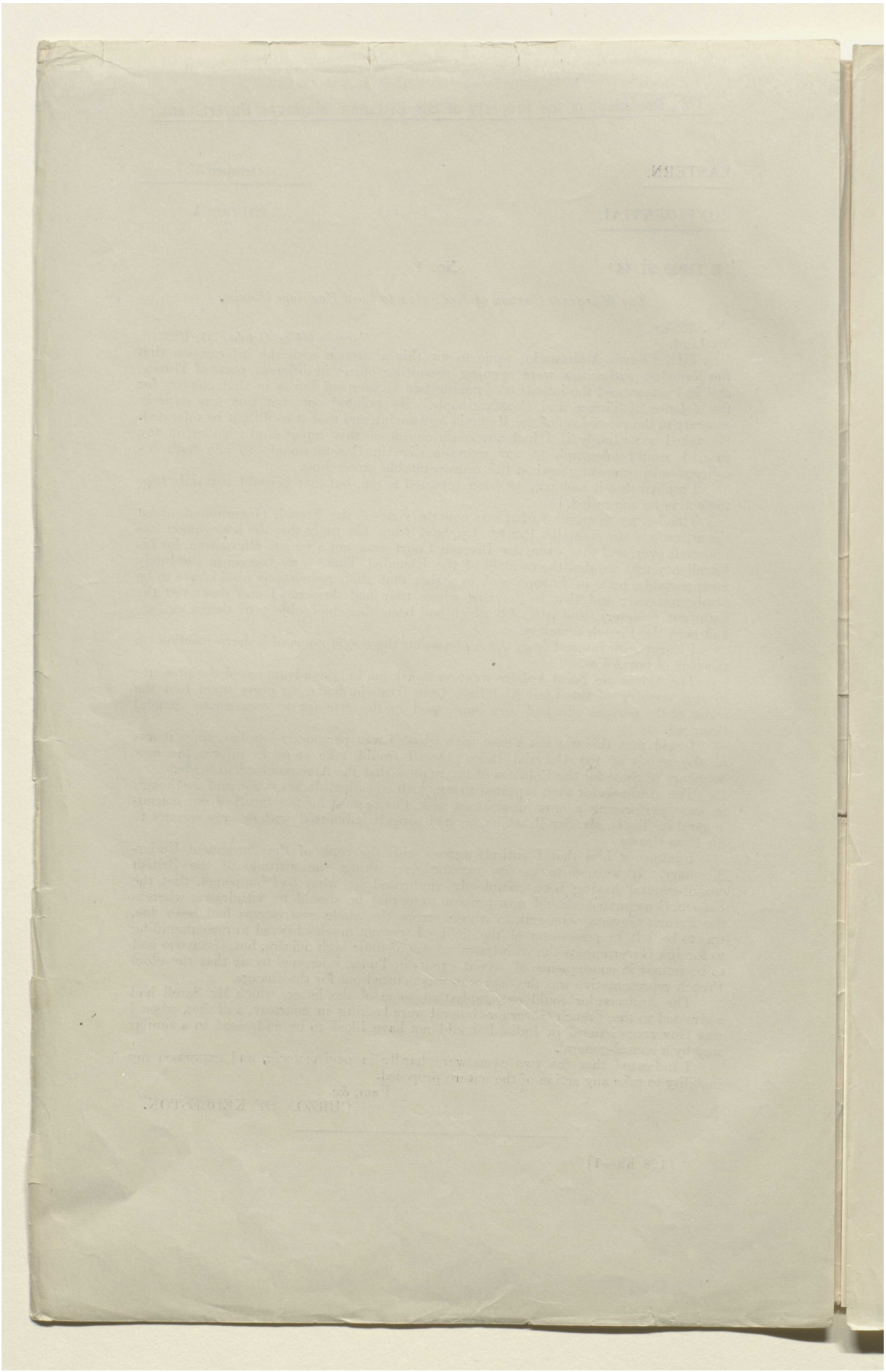

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EASTERN. [November 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 11996/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 1346.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 1, 1922.*

THE Italian Ambassador, in the course of a visit to the Foreign Office this afternoon, spoke to me about the character and prospects of the new Fascisti Government which had just assumed power in Italy. He thought that it would be a strong and honest Government; that a good many of the pronouncements of its chiefs, made when they were in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility, would now be forgotten; and that a policy of solidarity with the Allies would be pursued.

I reciprocated these sentiments, and told Signor de Martino that both the Prime Minister and I had just sent telegrams, couched in this sense, to Signor Mussolini. I was, however, somewhat apprehensive that the new Government might associate itself with a strongly imperialistic, and even chauvinistic, conception of foreign policy.

Upon my asking why Count Sforza had resigned the Italian Embassy in Paris, Signor de Martino told me that, as the author of the Rapallo Agreement, for which he had been furiously denounced at the time by the Fascisti, Count Sforza would naturally shrink from serving under their auspices. The manner in which he had announced his resignation had, however, drawn upon him a severe rebuke from Signor Mussolini, which I should see in the newspapers to-morrow.

Referring to an announcement in the press that I was likely, in the course of next week, to make a speech in the City of London on foreign affairs, the Ambassador entreated me to make some reference of a friendly character to Italy in the course of my remarks, intimating that, if I did not do so, the gravest resentment would be caused in his country, which was in a very sensitive and emotional frame of mind. Without attaching as much importance to any remarks of mine as the Ambassador seemed disposed to ascribe to them, I promised to bear in mind his appeal.

He next asked me what was the precise attitude of the British Government towards the Tripartite Agreement. Was it true, as had been publicly stated in Paris, that we had decided to repudiate that agreement *in toto*? If this was the case, did it mean that we regarded the whole of the subsidiary agreements concluded at the same time as the Treaty of Sèvres as having fallen to the ground?

I replied that, as regards the Tripartite Agreement, the attitude of this country remained the same as it had been when I was in Paris in March of the present year. Great Britain, who profited in no sense from that agreement, had always been ready to adhere to the obligation, into which she had entered by the agreement, to help in this respect the economic ambitions of her allies. But in Paris it had been frankly recognised that the agreement would never be accepted in anything like its original form by the Angora Government. This had been admitted, not only by the French, but by Signor Schanzer himself, who had spent a good deal of our time in the conference in endeavouring to substitute for the original arrangement some clauses affecting the grant of concessions by Turkey in the future which would enable Italy to obtain the equivalent of the advantages reserved for her under the original agreement. From that position I had not receded, though I did not anticipate, in view of the temper of the Angora Government, that much success would be achieved in Lausanne in endeavouring to give expression to the agreement in any overt form. As regards denunciation, I had not taken any steps in that direction, but his Excellency would remember that, in the letter which I had recently addressed to him about the Dodecanese, I had told him quite plainly that if the Italian Government proposed in their own interest to drop one of the agreements supplementary to the Treaty of Sèvres, which we regarded as inseparably bound up with that treaty, they had no right to demand our adherence to the remainder. In that sense, the Italian action in respect of the Dodecanese might compel us to insist upon a release from other obligations assumed in the same category at the same time.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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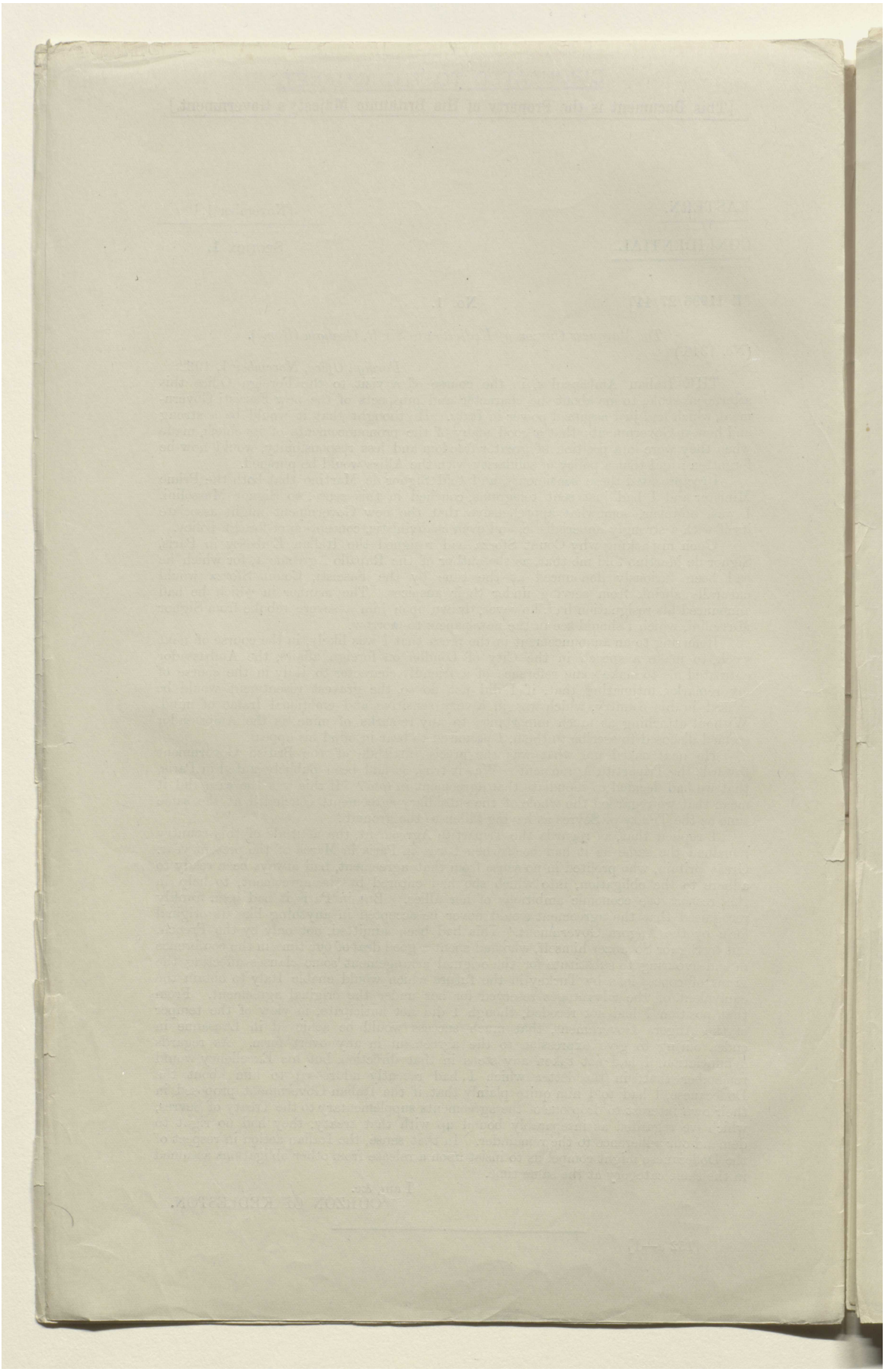

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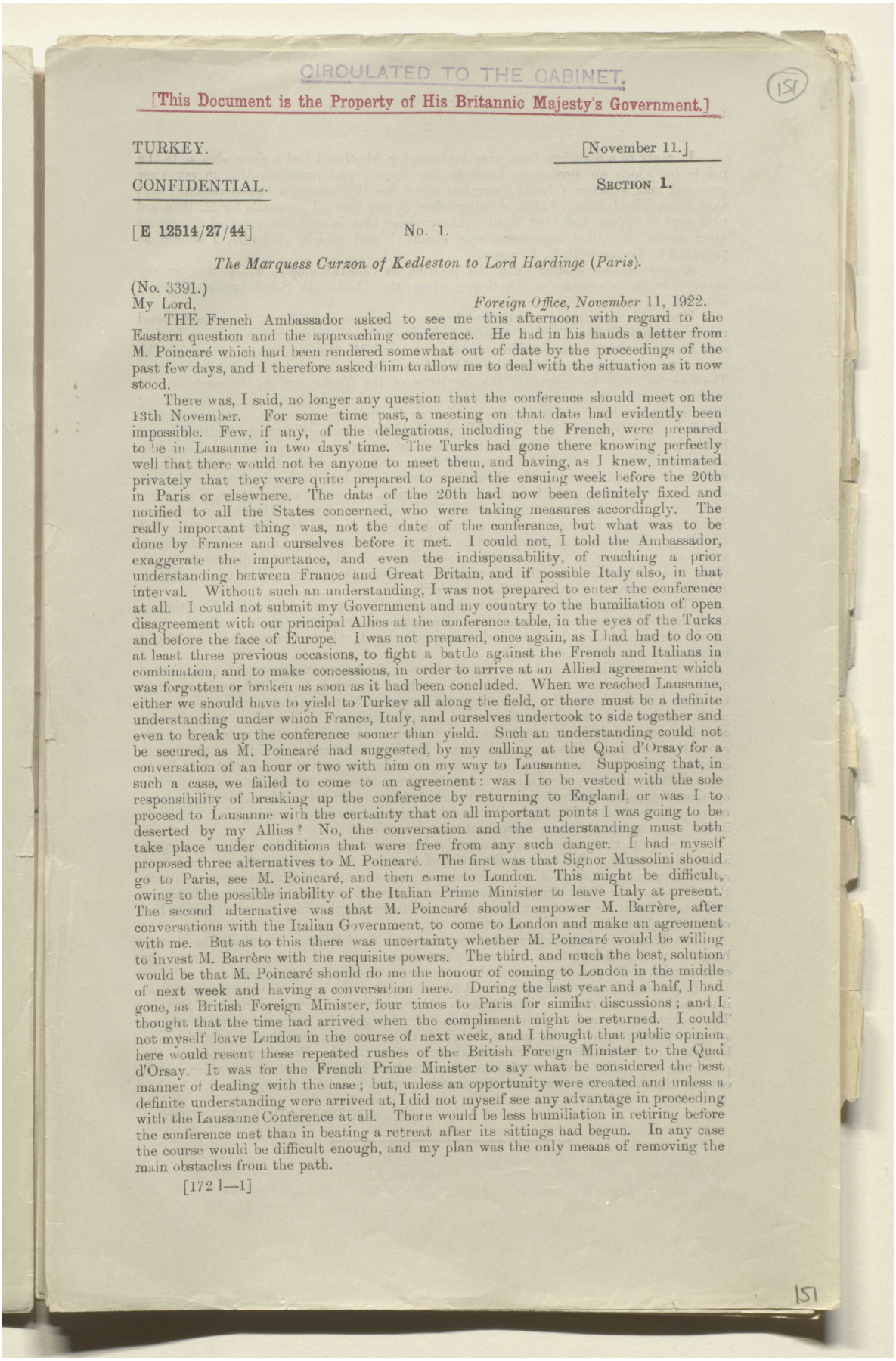

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TURKEY. [November 11.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 12514/27/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Lord Hardinge (Paris).

(No. 3391.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 11, 1922.

THE French Ambassador asked to see me this afternoon with regard to the Eastern question and the approaching conference. He had in his hands a letter from M. Poincaré which had been rendered somewhat out of date by the proceedings of the past few days, and I therefore asked him to allow me to deal with the situation as it now stood.

There was, I said, no longer any question that the conference should meet on the 13th November. For some time past, a meeting on that date had evidently been impossible. Few, if any, of the delegations, including the French, were prepared to be in Lausanne in two days' time. The Turks had gone there knowing perfectly well that there would not be anyone to meet them, and having, as I knew, intimated privately that they were quite prepared to spend the ensuing week before the 20th in Paris or elsewhere. The date of the 20th had now been definitely fixed and notified to all the States concerned, who were taking measures accordingly. The really important thing was, not the date of the conference, but what was to be done by France and ourselves before it met. I could not, I told the Ambassador, exaggerate the importance, and even the indispensability, of reaching a prior understanding between France and Great Britain, and if possible Italy also, in that interval. Without such an understanding, I was not prepared to enter the conference at all. I could not submit my Government and my country to the humiliation of open disagreement with our principal Allies at the conference table, in the eyes of the Turks and before the face of Europe. I was not prepared, once again, as I had had to do on at least three previous occasions, to fight a battle against the French and Italians in combination, and to make concessions, in order to arrive at an Allied agreement which was forgotten or broken as soon as it had been concluded. When we reached Lausanne, either we should have to yield to Turkey all along the field, or there must be a definite understanding under which France, Italy, and ourselves undertook to side together and even to break up the conference sooner than yield. Such an understanding could not be secured, as M. Poincaré had suggested, by my calling at the Quai d'Orsay for a conversation of an hour or two with him on my way to Lausanne. Supposing that, in such a case, we failed to come to an agreement: was I to be vested with the sole responsibility of breaking up the conference by returning to England, or was I to proceed to Lausanne with the certainty that on all important points I was going to be deserted by my Allies? No, the conversation and the understanding must both take place under conditions that were free from any such danger. I had myself proposed three alternatives to M. Poincaré. The first was that Signor Mussolini should go to Paris, see M. Poincaré, and then come to London. This might be difficult, owing to the possible inability of the Italian Prime Minister to leave Italy at present. The second alternative was that M. Poincaré should empower M. Barrère, after conversations with the Italian Government, to come to London and make an agreement with me. But as to this there was uncertainty whether M. Poincaré would be willing to invest M. Barrère with the requisite powers. The third, and much the best, solution would be that M. Poincaré should do me the honour of coming to London in the middle of next week and having a conversation here. During the last year and a half, I had gone, as British Foreign Minister, four times to Paris for similar discussions; and I thought that the time had arrived when the compliment might be returned. I could not myself leave London in the course of next week, and I thought that public opinion here would resent these repeated rushes of the British Foreign Minister to the Quai d'Orsay. It was for the French Prime Minister to say what he considered the best manner of dealing with the case; but, unless an opportunity were created and unless a definite understanding were arrived at, I did not myself see any advantage in proceeding with the Lausanne Conference at all. There would be less humiliation in retiring before the conference met than in beating a retreat after its sittings had begun. In any case the course would be difficult enough, and my plan was the only means of removing the main obstacles from the path.

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In reply to a question from the Ambassador whether I had a clear idea as to the points on which an agreement between the French and ourselves was in my view essential, and whether I could formulate them for M. Poincaré's consideration, I said that I was a little tired of always being asked to put forward proposals for M. Poincaré to dissect or oppose, but that I had a pretty clear idea in my own mind of the points upon which an Allied agreement was essential and which, therefore, I should be prepared to discuss with M. Poincaré.

A conversation ensued upon the position in Constantinople, which was, in my opinion, of more perilous a description than the Count de Saint-Aulaire believed it to be.

Upon his remarking that the French Government did not propose to send reinforcements to the Turkish capital, I observed that I deprecated more than I could say these constant asseverations on the part of M. Poincaré that, whatever the circumstances might be, nothing would induce him to fire a shot or to send a man. They served only to aggravate the insolence of the Turks and to demonstrate the futility of the Alliance. Circumstances might arise in Constantinople, even during the ensuing week, in which, in a local riot or disturbance, or in the event of a serious attack by the Kemalists upon the Allied forces, the blood of French soldiers might be shed. Was it the French intention that, even in such a case, not a man should be moved or a shot be fired? I was unable myself to believe that it was. There was one thing that I hoped Mr. Bonar Law and myself had made absolutely clear: we were doing our best, in the face of considerable risk, to see the matter through together with our Allies in Constantinople; but if, in the event of serious trouble arising, our Allies were not going to stand by us, we should not hesitate to withdraw. We had the ships, and we had the means, and to Gallipoli our troops would go. The discredit, and even the shame, of the evacuation would be considerable, but it would not rest with those who had been compelled to withdraw because they were called upon by their Allies to bear the burden and to face the peril alone.

The Ambassador, who seemed to be imperfectly acquainted with the situation in Constantinople, appeared to regard the alternative of evacuation as not to be dreamed of, and he argued that the French declarations related only to a situation which might be changed from day to day.

After protesting many times that he did not think a clear agreement with France on the most important points ought to be difficult to reach, he hinted, as he stood at the door before leaving the room, that the situation would be much easier if French public opinion had reason to believe that, in return for a solid front in Constantinople and Lausanne, the French would have a chance of obtaining better terms as regards reparations and the European situation. He knew perfectly well that the French interest in the East was of equal importance with our own, and that the matter ought to be settled on its own merits and apart from any other question; but French public opinion did not take that view. It believed that a settlement was of much greater moment to us than to France, and it was disposed, in return for a complaisant attitude in the East, to demand some compensation in the West.

In reply to this suggestion, I earnestly deprecated the idea of making any bargain about the matter. This was a line of diplomatic approach with which I had been rendered only too familiar in my intercourse in recent times with Italian representatives. But the Count de Saint-Aulaire was neither Signor de Martino nor Signor Schanzer, and I hoped that he would not now adopt the tactics with which those statesmen had made me only to frequently acquainted.

His Excellency assured me that nothing was further from his thoughts than a bargain of that description. Nevertheless, I am convinced that no auditor of our conversation could possibly have doubted that such was his actual suggestion.

In parting, I impressed upon the Ambassador that the present moment was one, as it seemed to me, of extreme importance in the relations of France and Great Britain. The spokesmen of the two Governments had exchanged the warmest words of mutual sympathy and respect in the past fortnight, and I was more than grateful for the kind language in which M. Poincaré had spoken of me in the French Chamber on the preceding day. But if we now fell asunder over this Eastern question, the effect would extend to a much wider area, and the situation would be wholly changed.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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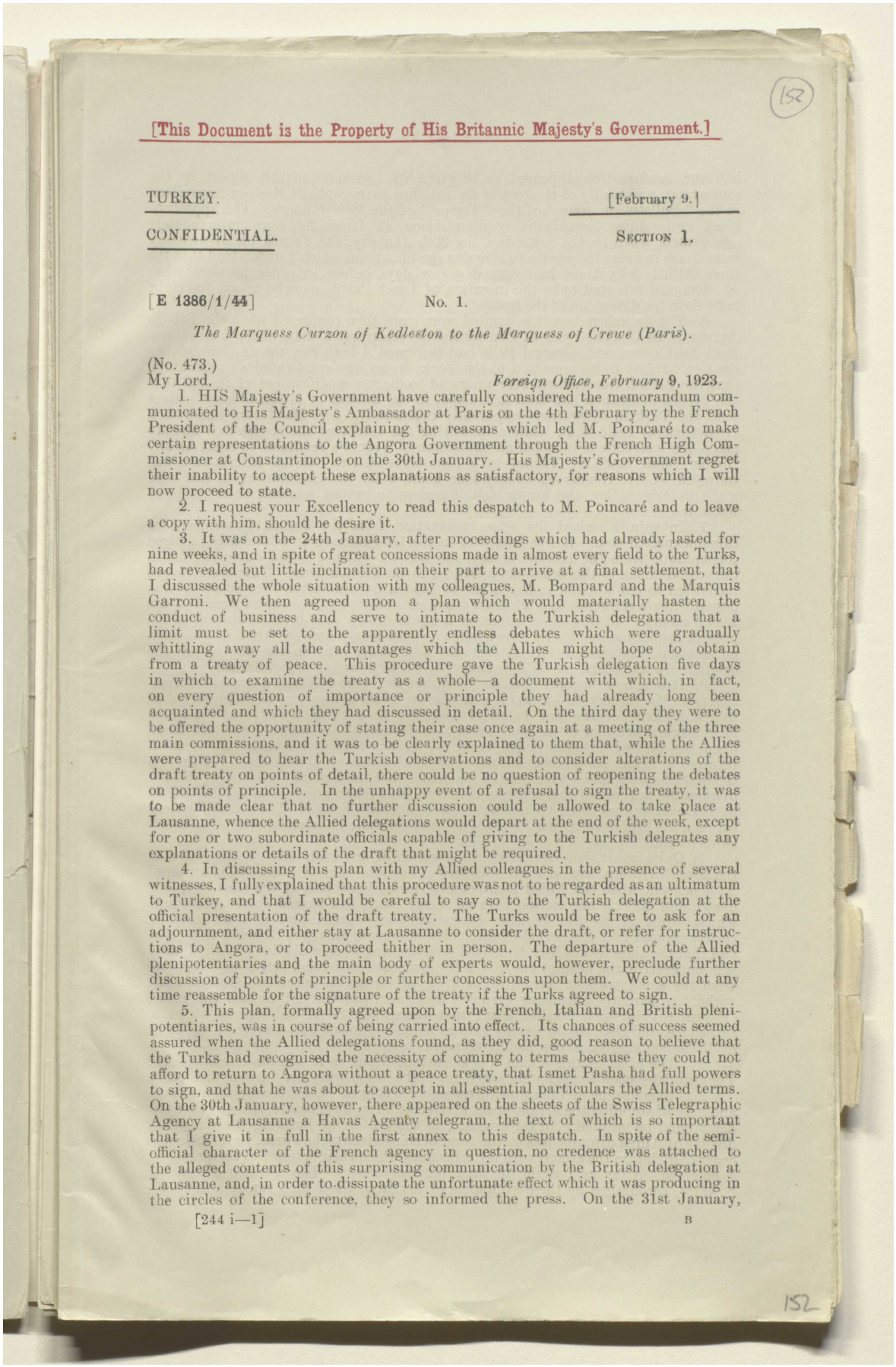

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TURKEY. [February 9.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1386/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 473.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February 9, 1923.*

1. HIS Majesty's Government have carefully considered the memorandum communicated to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris on the 4th February by the French President of the Council explaining the reasons which led M. Poincaré to make certain representations to the Angora Government through the French High Commissioner at Constantinople on the 30th January. His Majesty's Government regret their inability to accept these explanations as satisfactory, for reasons which I will now proceed to state.

2. I request your Excellency to read this despatch to M. Poincaré and to leave a copy with him, should he desire it.

3. It was on the 24th January, after proceedings which had already lasted for nine weeks, and in spite of great concessions made in almost every field to the Turks, had revealed but little inclination on their part to arrive at a final settlement, that I discussed the whole situation with my colleagues, M. Bompard and the Marquis Garroni. We then agreed upon a plan which would materially hasten the conduct of business and serve to intimate to the Turkish delegation that a limit must be set to the apparently endless debates which were gradually whittling away all the advantages which the Allies might hope to obtain from a treaty of peace. This procedure gave the Turkish delegation five days in which to examine the treaty as a whole—a document with which, in fact, on every question of importance or principle they had already long been acquainted and which they had discussed in detail. On the third day they were to be offered the opportunity of stating their case once again at a meeting of the three main commissions, and it was to be clearly explained to them that, while the Allies were prepared to hear the Turkish observations and to consider alterations of the draft treaty on points of detail, there could be no question of reopening the debates on points of principle. In the unhappy event of a refusal to sign the treaty, it was to be made clear that no further discussion could be allowed to take place at Lausanne, whence the Allied delegations would depart at the end of the week, except for one or two subordinate officials capable of giving to the Turkish delegates any explanations or details of the draft that might be required.

4. In discussing this plan with my Allied colleagues in the presence of several witnesses, I fully explained that this procedure was not to be regarded as an ultimatum to Turkey, and that I would be careful to say so to the Turkish delegation at the official presentation of the draft treaty. The Turks would be free to ask for an adjournment, and either stay at Lausanne to consider the draft, or refer for instructions to Angora, or to proceed thither in person. The departure of the Allied plenipotentiaries and the main body of experts would, however, preclude further discussion of points of principle or further concessions upon them. We could at any time reassemble for the signature of the treaty if the Turks agreed to sign.

5. This plan, formally agreed upon by the French, Italian and British plenipotentiaries, was in course of being carried into effect. Its chances of success seemed assured when the Allied delegations found, as they did, good reason to believe that the Turks had recognised the necessity of coming to terms because they could not afford to return to Angora without a peace treaty, that Ismet Pasha had full powers to sign, and that he was about to accept in all essential particulars the Allied terms. On the 30th January, however, there appeared on the sheets of the Swiss Telegraphic Agency at Lausanne a Havas Agency telegram, the text of which is so important that I give it in full in the first annex to this despatch. In spite of the semi-official character of the French agency in question, no credence was attached to the alleged contents of this surprising communication by the British delegation at Lausanne, and, in order to dissipate the unfortunate effect which it was producing in the circles of the conference, they so informed the press. On the 31st January,

[244 i—1] B

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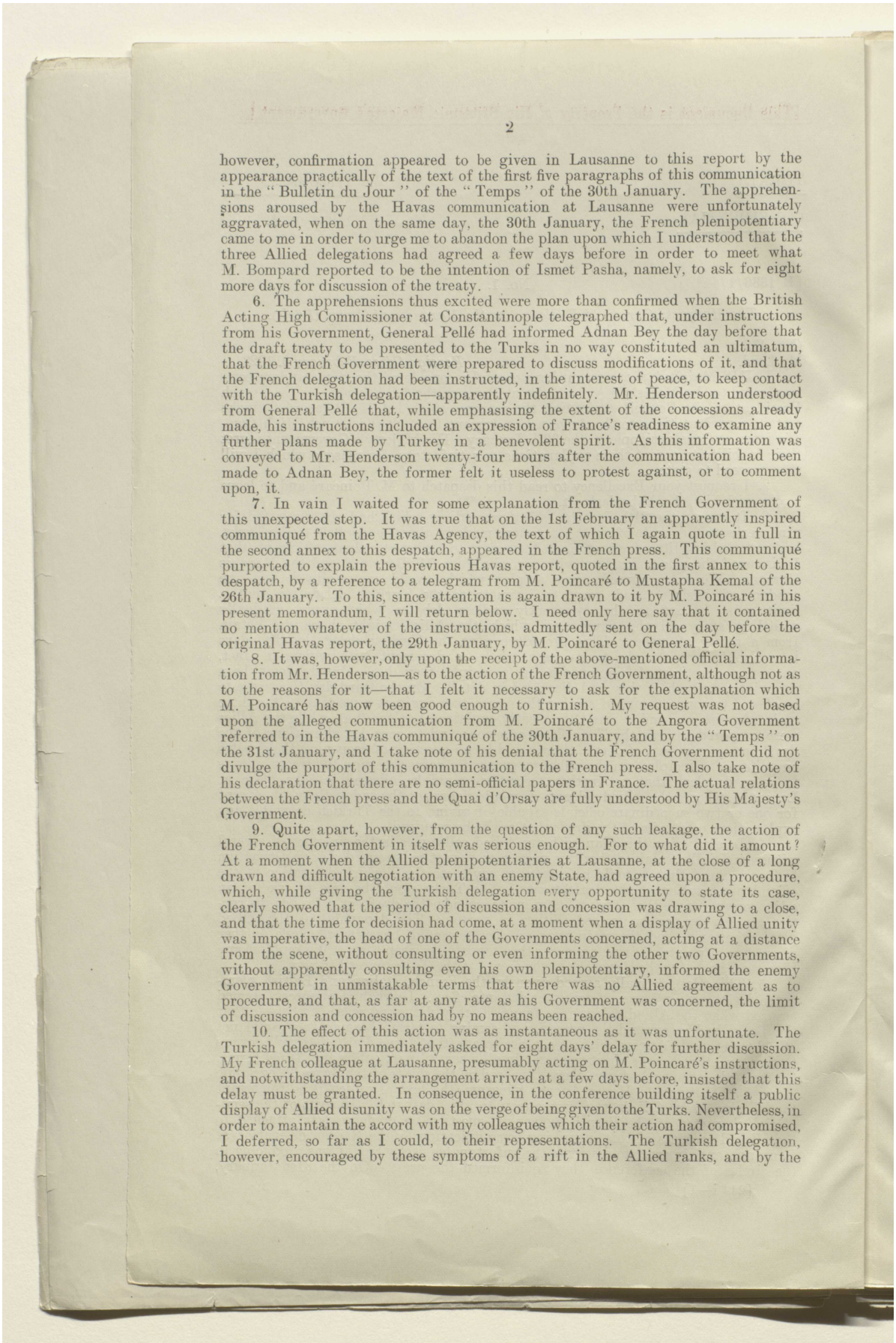

however, confirmation appeared to be given in Lausanne to this report by the appearance practically of the text of the first five paragraphs of this communication in the " Bulletin du Jour " of the " Temps " of the 30th January. The apprehensions aroused by the Havas communication at Lausanne were unfortunately aggravated, when on the same day, the 30th January, the French plenipotentiary came to me in order to urge me to abandon the plan upon which I understood that the three Allied delegations had agreed a few days before in order to meet what M. Bompard reported to be the intention of Ismet Pasha, namely, to ask for eight more days for discussion of the treaty.

6. The apprehensions thus excited were more than confirmed when the British Acting High Commissioner at Constantinople telegraphed that, under instructions from his Government, General Pellé had informed Adnan Bey the day before that the draft treaty to be presented to the Turks in no way constituted an ultimatum, that the French Government were prepared to discuss modifications of it, and that the French delegation had been instructed, in the interest of peace, to keep contact with the Turkish delegation—apparently indefinitely. Mr. Henderson understood from General Pellé that, while emphasising the extent of the concessions already made, his instructions included an expression of France's readiness to examine any further plans made by Turkey in a benevolent spirit. As this information was conveyed to Mr. Henderson twenty-four hours after the communication had been made to Adnan Bey, the former felt it useless to protest against, or to comment upon, it.

7. In vain I waited for some explanation from the French Government of this unexpected step. It was true that on the 1st February an apparently inspired communiqué from the Havas Agency, the text of which I again quote in full in the second annex to this despatch, appeared in the French press. This communiqué purported to explain the previous Havas report, quoted in the first annex to this despatch, by a reference to a telegram from M. Poincaré to Mustapha Kemal of the 26th January. To this, since attention is again drawn to it by M. Poincaré in his present memorandum, I will return below. I need only here say that it contained no mention whatever of the instructions, admittedly sent on the day before the original Havas report, the 29th January, by M. Poincaré to General Pellé.

8. It was, however, only upon the receipt of the above-mentioned official information from Mr. Henderson—as to the action of the French Government, although not as to the reasons for it—that I felt it necessary to ask for the explanation which M. Poincaré has now been good enough to furnish. My request was not based upon the alleged communication from M. Poincaré to the Angora Government referred to in the Havas communiqué of the 30th January, and by the " Temps " on the 31st January, and I take note of his denial that the French Government did not divulge the purport of this communication to the French press. I also take note of his declaration that there are no semi-official papers in France. The actual relations between the French press and the Quai d'Orsay are fully understood by His Majesty's Government.

9. Quite apart, however, from the question of any such leakage, the action of the French Government in itself was serious enough. For to what did it amount? At a moment when the Allied plenipotentiaries at Lausanne, at the close of a long drawn and difficult negotiation with an enemy State, had agreed upon a procedure, which, while giving the Turkish delegation every opportunity to state its case, clearly showed that the period of discussion and concession was drawing to a close, and that the time for decision had come, at a moment when a display of Allied unity was imperative, the head of one of the Governments concerned, acting at a distance from the scene, without consulting or even informing the other two Governments, without apparently consulting even his own plenipotentiary, informed the enemy Government in unmistakable terms that there was no Allied agreement as to procedure, and that, as far at any rate as his Government was concerned, the limit of discussion and concession had by no means been reached.

10. The effect of this action was as instantaneous as it was unfortunate. The Turkish delegation immediately asked for eight days' delay for further discussion. My French colleague at Lausanne, presumably acting on M. Poincaré's instructions, and notwithstanding the arrangement arrived at a few days before, insisted that this delay must be granted. In consequence, in the conference building itself a public display of Allied disunity was on the verge of being given to the Turks. Nevertheless, in order to maintain the accord with my colleagues which their action had compromised, I deferred, so far as I could, to their representations. The Turkish delegation, however, encouraged by these symptoms of a rift in the Allied ranks, and by the

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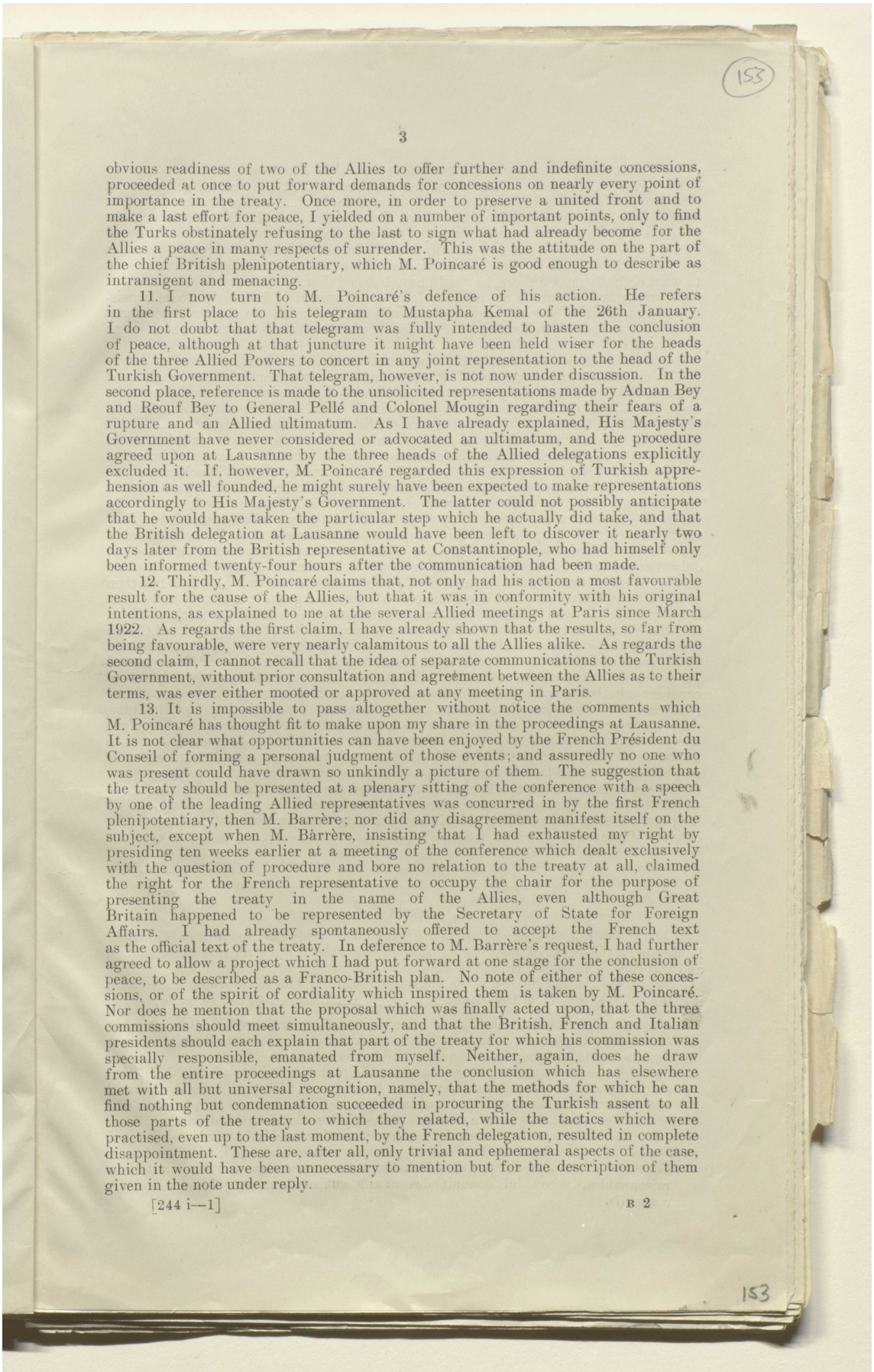

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obvious readiness of two of the Allies to offer further and indefinite concessions, proceeded at once to put forward demands for concessions on nearly every point of importance in the treaty. Once more, in order to preserve a united front and to make a last effort for peace, I yielded on a number of important points, only to find the Turks obstinately refusing to the last to sign what had already become for the Allies a peace in many respects of surrender. This was the attitude on the part of the chief British plenipotentiary, which M. Poincaré is good enough to describe as intransigent and menacing.

11. I now turn to M. Poincaré's defence of his action. He refers in the first place to his telegram to Mustapha Kemal of the 26th January. I do not doubt that that telegram was fully intended to hasten the conclusion of peace, although at that juncture it might have been held wiser for the heads of the three Allied Powers to concert in any joint representation to the head of the Turkish Government. That telegram, however, is not now under discussion. In the second place, reference is made to the unsolicited representations made by Adnan Bey and Reouf Bey to General Pellé and Colonel Mougin regarding their fears of a rupture and an Allied ultimatum. As I have already explained, His Majesty's Government have never considered or advocated an ultimatum, and the procedure agreed upon at Lausanne by the three heads of the Allied delegations explicitly excluded it. If, however, M. Poincaré regarded this expression of Turkish apprehension as well founded, he might surely have been expected to make representations accordingly to His Majesty's Government. The latter could not possibly anticipate that he would have taken the particular step which he actually did take, and that the British delegation at Lausanne would have been left to discover it nearly two days later from the British representative at Constantinople, who had himself only been informed twenty-four hours after the communication had been made.

12. Thirdly, M. Poincaré claims that, not only had his action a most favourable result for the cause of the Allies, but that it was in conformity with his original intentions, as explained to me at the several Allied meetings at Paris since March 1922. As regards the first claim, I have already shown that the results, so far from being favourable, were very nearly calamitous to all the Allies alike. As regards the second claim, I cannot recall that the idea of separate communications to the Turkish Government, without prior consultation and agreement between the Allies as to their terms, was ever either mooted or approved at any meeting in Paris.

13. It is impossible to pass altogether without notice the comments which M. Poincaré has thought fit to make upon my share in the proceedings at Lausanne. It is not clear what opportunities can have been enjoyed by the French Président du Conseil of forming a personal judgment of those events; and assuredly no one who was present could have drawn so unkindly a picture of them. The suggestion that the treaty should be presented at a plenary sitting of the conference with a speech by one of the leading Allied representatives was concurred in by the first French plenipotentiary, then M. Barrère; nor did any disagreement manifest itself on the subject, except when M. Barrère, insisting that I had exhausted my right by presiding ten weeks earlier at a meeting of the conference which dealt exclusively with the question of procedure and bore no relation to the treaty at all, claimed the right for the French representative to occupy the chair for the purpose of presenting the treaty in the name of the Allies, even although Great Britain happened to be represented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I had already spontaneously offered to accept the French text as the official text of the treaty. In deference to M. Barrère's request, I had further agreed to allow a project which I had put forward at one stage for the conclusion of peace, to be described as a Franco-British plan. No note of either of these concessions, or of the spirit of cordiality which inspired them is taken by M. Poincaré. Nor does he mention that the proposal which was finally acted upon, that the three commissions should meet simultaneously, and that the British, French and Italian presidents should each explain that part of the treaty for which his commission was specially responsible, emanated from myself. Neither, again, does he draw from the entire proceedings at Lausanne the conclusion which has elsewhere met with all but universal recognition, namely, that the methods for which he can find nothing but condemnation succeeded in procuring the Turkish assent to all those parts of the treaty to which they related, while the tactics which were practised, even up to the last moment, by the French delegation, resulted in complete disappointment. These are, after all, only trivial and ephemeral aspects of the case, which it would have been unnecessary to mention but for the description of them given in the note under reply.

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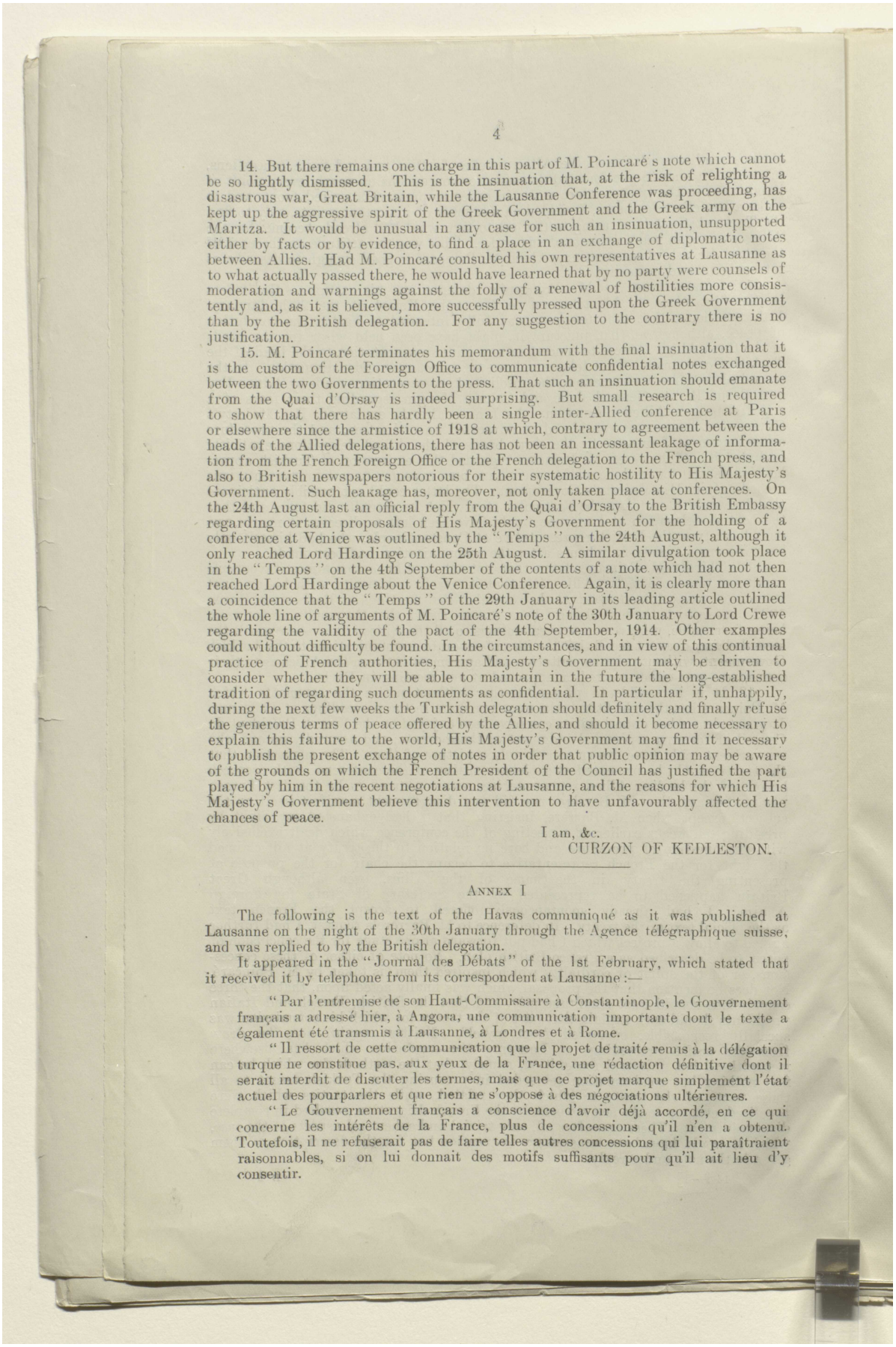

14. But there remains one charge in this part of M. Poincaré's note which cannot be so lightly dismissed. This is the insinuation that, at the risk of relighting a disastrous war, Great Britain, while the Lausanne Conference was proceeding, has kept up the aggressive spirit of the Greek Government and the Greek army on the Maritza. It would be unusual in any case for such an insinuation, unsupported either by facts or by evidence, to find a place in an exchange of diplomatic notes between Allies. Had M. Poincaré consulted his own representatives at Lausanne as to what actually passed there, he would have learned that by no party were counsels of moderation and warnings against the folly of a renewal of hostilities more consistently and, as it is believed, more successfully pressed upon the Greek Government than by the British delegation. For any suggestion to the contrary there is no justification.

15. M. Poincaré terminates his memorandum with the final insinuation that it is the custom of the Foreign Office to communicate confidential notes exchanged between the two Governments to the press. That such an insinuation should emanate from the Quai d'Orsay is indeed surprising. But small research is required to show that there has hardly been a single inter-Allied conference at Paris or elsewhere since the armistice of 1918 at which, contrary to agreement between the heads of the Allied delegations, there has not been an incessant leakage of information from the French Foreign Office or the French delegation to the French press, and also to British newspapers notorious for their systematic hostility to His Majesty's Government. Such leakage has, moreover, not only taken place at conferences. On the 24th August last an official reply from the Quai d'Orsay to the British Embassy regarding certain proposals of His Majesty's Government for the holding of a conference at Venice was outlined by the "Temps" on the 24th August, although it only reached Lord Hardinge on the 25th August. A similar divulgation took place in the "Temps" on the 4th September of the contents of a note which had not then reached Lord Hardinge about the Venice Conference. Again, it is clearly more than a coincidence that the "Temps" of the 29th January in its leading article outlined the whole line of arguments of M. Poincaré's note of the 30th January to Lord Crewe regarding the validity of the pact of the 4th September, 1914. Other examples could without difficulty be found. In the circumstances, and in view of this continual practice of French authorities, His Majesty's Government may be driven to consider whether they will be able to maintain in the future the long-established tradition of regarding such documents as confidential. In particular if, unhappily, during the next few weeks the Turkish delegation should definitely and finally refuse the generous terms of peace offered by the Allies, and should it become necessary to explain this failure to the world, His Majesty's Government may find it necessary to publish the present exchange of notes in order that public opinion may be aware of the grounds on which the French President of the Council has justified the part played by him in the recent negotiations at Lausanne, and the reasons for which His Majesty's Government believe this intervention to have unfavourably affected the chances of peace.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

ANNEX I

The following is the text of the Havas communiqué as it was published at Lausanne on the night of the 30th January through the Agence télégraphique suisse, and was replied to by the British delegation.

It appeared in the "Journal des Débats" of the 1st February, which stated that it received it by telephone from its correspondent at Lausanne :—

"Par l'entremise de son Haut-Commissaire à Constantinople, le Gouvernement français a adressé hier, à Angora, une communication importante dont le texte a également été transmis à Lausanne, à Londres et à Rome.

"Il ressort de cette communication que le projet de traité remis à la délégation turque ne constitue pas, aux yeux de la France, une rédaction définitive dont il serait interdit de discuter les termes, mais que ce projet marque simplement l'état actuel des pourparlers et que rien ne s'oppose à des négociations ultérieures.

"Le Gouvernement français a conscience d'avoir déjà accordé, en ce qui concerne les intérêts de la France, plus de concessions qu'il n'en a obtenu. Toutefois, il ne refuserait pas de faire telles autres concessions qui lui paraîtraient raisonnables, si on lui donnait des motifs suffisants pour qu'il ait lieu d'y consentir.

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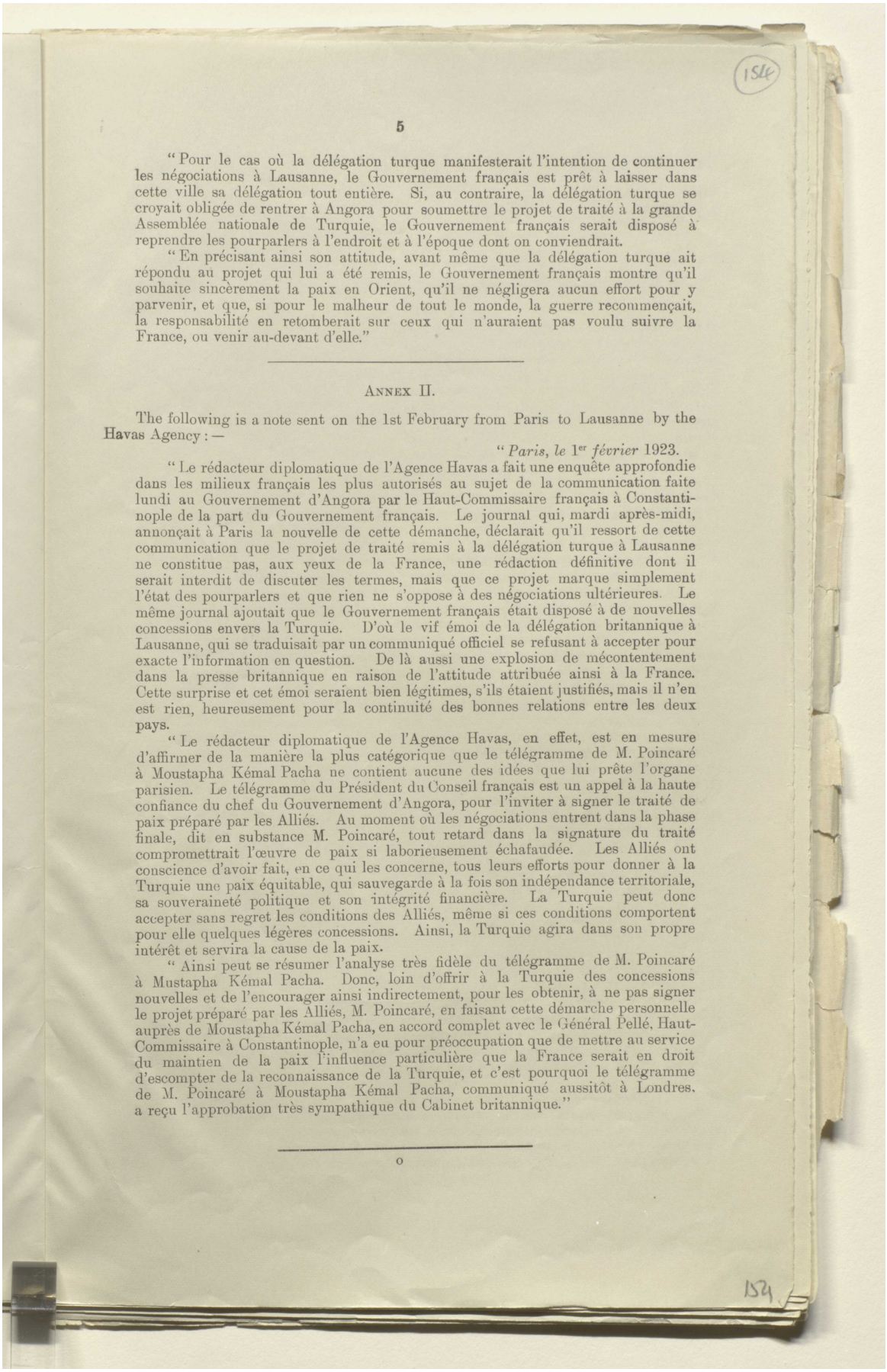

"Pour le cas où la délégation turque manifesterait l'intention de continuer les négociations à Lausanne, le Gouvernement français est prêt à laisser dans cette ville sa délégation tout entière. Si, au contraire, la délégation turque se croyait obligée de rentrer à Angora pour soumettre le projet de traité à la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie, le Gouvernement français serait disposé à reprendre les pourparlers à l'endroit et à l'époque dont on conviendrait.

"En précisant ainsi son attitude, avant même que la délégation turque ait répondu au projet qui lui a été remis, le Gouvernement français montre qu'il souhaite sincèrement la paix en Orient, qu'il ne négligera aucun effort pour y parvenir, et que, si pour le malheur de tout le monde, la guerre recommençait, la responsabilité en retomberait sur ceux qui n'auraient pas voulu suivre la France, ou venir au-devant d'elle."

ANNEX II.

The following is a note sent on the 1st February from Paris to Lausanne by the Havas Agency: —

"*Paris, le* 1er *février* 1923.

"Le rédacteur diplomatique de l'Agence Havas a fait une enquête approfondie dans les milieux français les plus autorisés au sujet de la communication faite lundi au Gouvernement d'Angora par le Haut-Commissaire français à Constantinople de la part du Gouvernement français. Le journal qui, mardi après-midi, annonçait à Paris la nouvelle de cette démanche, déclarait qu'il ressort de cette communication que le projet de traité remis à la délégation turque à Lausanne ne constitue pas, aux yeux de la France, une rédaction définitive dont il serait interdit de discuter les termes, mais que ce projet marque simplement l'état des pourparlers et que rien ne s'oppose à des négociations ultérieures. Le même journal ajoutait que le Gouvernement français était disposé à de nouvelles concessions envers la Turquie. D'où le vif émoi de la délégation britannique à Lausanne, qui se traduisait par un communiqué officiel se refusant à accepter pour exacte l'information en question. De là aussi une explosion de mécontentement dans la presse britannique en raison de l'attitude attribuée ainsi à la France. Cette surprise et cet émoi seraient bien légitimes, s'ils étaient justifiés, mais il n'en est rien, heureusement pour la continuité des bonnes relations entre les deux pays.

"Le rédacteur diplomatique de l'Agence Havas, en effet, est en mesure d'affirmer de la manière la plus catégorique que le télégramme de M. Poincaré à Moustapha Kémal Pacha ne contient aucune des idées que lui prête l'organe parisien. Le télégramme du Président du Conseil français est un appel à la haute confiance du chef du Gouvernement d'Angora, pour l'inviter à signer le traité de paix préparé par les Alliés. Au moment où les négociations entrent dans la phase finale, dit en substance M. Poincaré, tout retard dans la signature du traité compromettrait l'œuvre de paix si laborieusement échafaudée. Les Alliés ont conscience d'avoir fait, en ce qui les concerne, tous leurs efforts pour donner à la Turquie une paix équitable, qui sauvegarde à la fois son indépendance territoriale, sa souveraineté politique et son intégrité financière. La Turquie peut donc accepter sans regret les conditions des Alliés, même si ces conditions comportent pour elle quelques légères concessions. Ainsi, la Turquie agira dans son propre intérêt et servira la cause de la paix.

"Ainsi peut se résumer l'analyse très fidèle du télégramme de M. Poincaré à Mustapha Kémal Pacha. Donc, loin d'offrir à la Turquie des concessions nouvelles et de l'encourager ainsi indirectement, pour les obtenir, à ne pas signer le projet préparé par les Alliés, M. Poincaré, en faisant cette démarche personnelle auprès de Moustapha Kémal Pacha, en accord complet avec le Général Pellé, Haut-Commissaire à Constantinople, n'a eu pour préoccupation que de mettre au service du maintien de la paix l'influence particulière que la France serait en droit d'escompter de la reconnaissance de la Turquie, et c'est pourquoi le télégramme de M. Poincaré à Moustapha Kémal Pacha, communiqué aussitôt à Londres, a reçu l'approbation très sympathique du Cabinet britannique."

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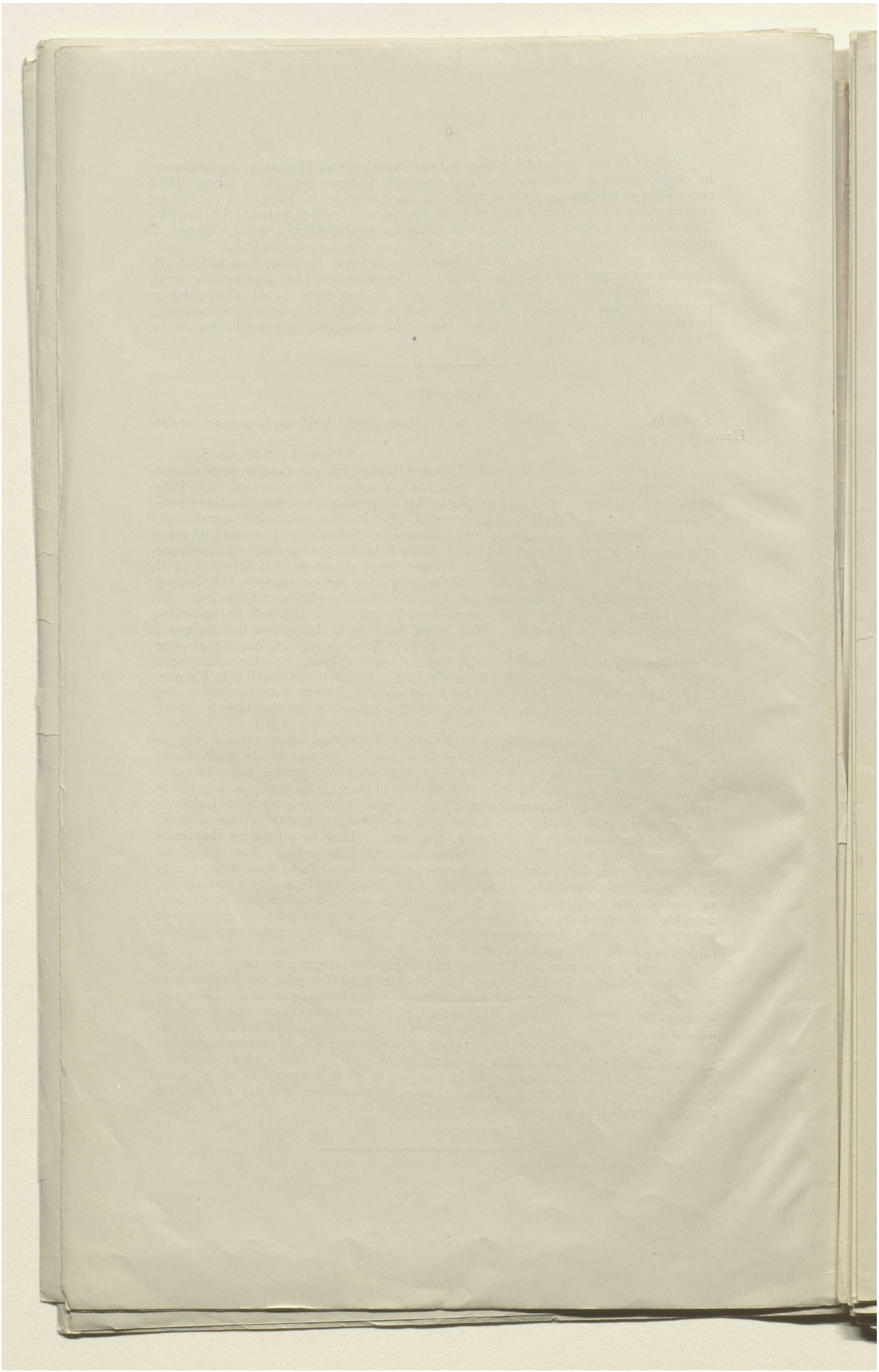

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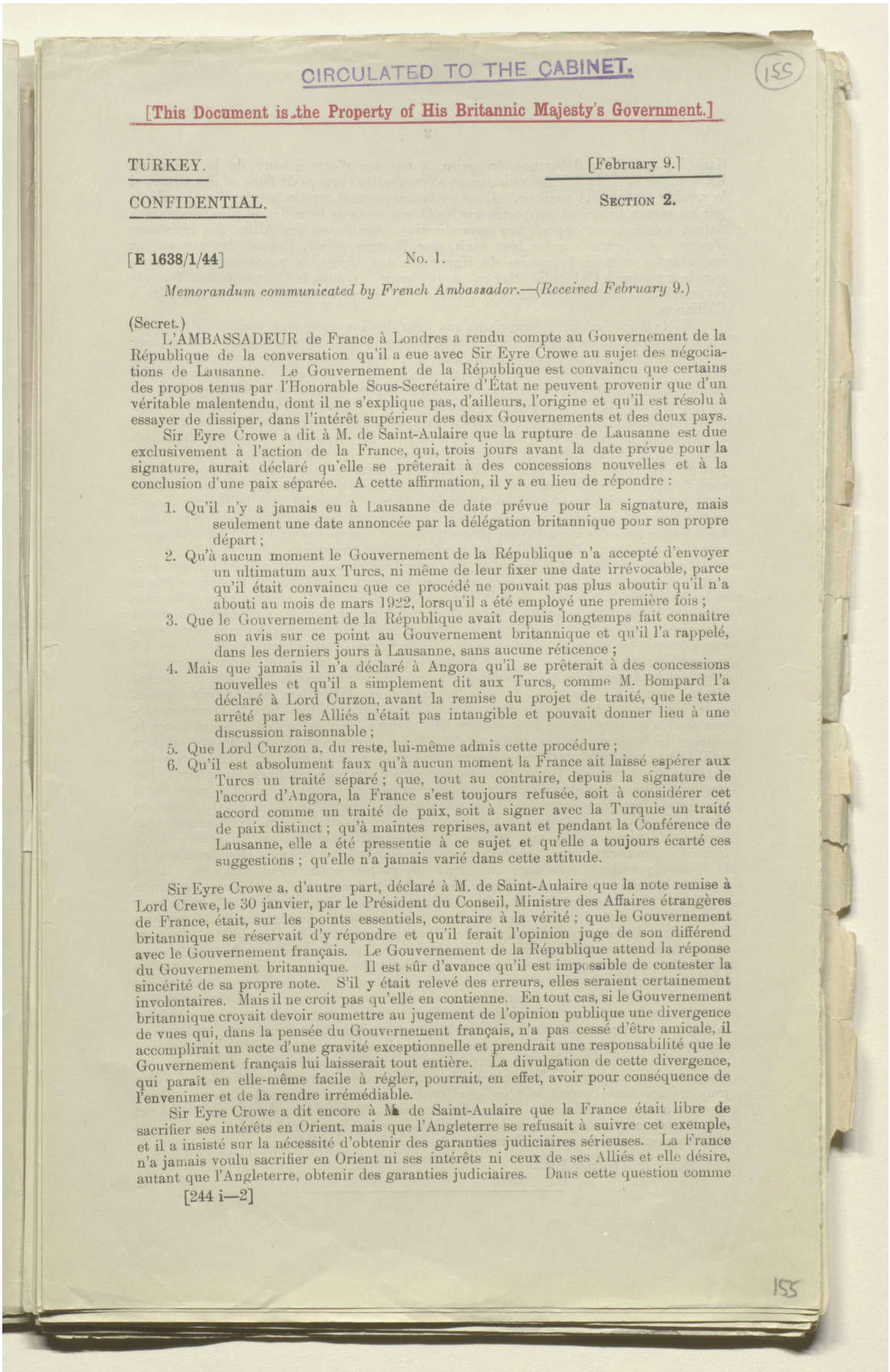

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TURKEY. [February 9.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 1638/1/44] No. 1.

Memorandum communicated by French Ambassador.—(Received February 9.)

(Secret.)

L'AMBASSADEUR de France à Londres a rendu compte au Gouvernement de la République de la conversation qu'il a eue avec Sir Eyre Crowe au sujet des négociations de Lausanne. Le Gouvernement de la République est convaincu que certains des propos tenus par l'Honorable Sous-Secrétaire d'État ne peuvent provenir que d'un véritable malentendu, dont il ne s'explique pas, d'ailleurs, l'origine et qu'il est résolu à essayer de dissiper, dans l'intérêt supérieur des deux Gouvernements et des deux pays.

Sir Eyre Crowe a dit à M. de Saint-Aulaire que la rupture de Lausanne est due exclusivement à l'action de la France, qui, trois jours avant la date prévue pour la signature, aurait déclaré qu'elle se prêterait à des concessions nouvelles et à la conclusion d'une paix séparée. A cette affirmation, il y a eu lieu de répondre :

1. Qu'il n'y a jamais eu à Lausanne de date prévue pour la signature, mais seulement une date annoncée par la délégation britannique pour son propre départ ;
2. Qu'à aucun moment le Gouvernement de la République n'a accepté d'envoyer un ultimatum aux Turcs, ni même de leur fixer une date irrévocable, parce qu'il était convaincu que ce procédé ne pouvait pas plus aboutir qu'il n'a abouti au mois de mars 1922, lorsqu'il a été employé une première fois ;
3. Que le Gouvernement de la République avait depuis longtemps fait connaître son avis sur ce point au Gouvernement britannique et qu'il l'a rappelé, dans les derniers jours à Lausanne, sans aucune réticence ;
4. Mais que jamais il n'a déclaré à Angora qu'il se prêterait à des concessions nouvelles et qu'il a simplement dit aux Turcs, comme M. Bompard l'a déclaré à Lord Curzon, avant la remise du projet de traité, que le texte arrêté par les Alliés n'était pas intangible et pouvait donner lieu à une discussion raisonnable ;
5. Que Lord Curzon a, du reste, lui-même admis cette procédure ;
6. Qu'il est absolument faux qu'à aucun moment la France ait laissé espérer aux Turcs un traité séparé ; que, tout au contraire, depuis la signature de l'accord d'Angora, la France s'est toujours refusée, soit à considérer cet accord comme un traité de paix, soit à signer avec la Turquie un traité de paix distinct ; qu'à maintes reprises, avant et pendant la Conférence de Lausanne, elle a été pressentie à ce sujet et qu'elle a toujours écarté ces suggestions ; qu'elle n'a jamais varié dans cette attitude.

Sir Eyre Crowe a, d'autre part, déclaré à M. de Saint-Aulaire que la note remise à Lord Crewe, le 30 janvier, par le Président du Conseil, Ministre des Affaires étrangères de France, était, sur les points essentiels, contraire à la vérité ; que le Gouvernement britannique se réservait d'y répondre et qu'il ferait l'opinion juge de son différend avec le Gouvernement français. Le Gouvernement de la République attend la réponse du Gouvernement britannique. Il est sûr d'avance qu'il est impossible de contester la sincérité de sa propre note. S'il y était relevé des erreurs, elles seraient certainement involontaires. Mais il ne croit pas qu'elle en contienne. En tout cas, si le Gouvernement britannique croyait devoir soumettre au jugement de l'opinion publique une divergence de vues qui, dans la pensée du Gouvernement français, n'a pas cessé d'être amicale, il accomplirait un acte d'une gravité exceptionnelle et prendrait une responsabilité que le Gouvernement français lui laisserait tout entière. La divulgation de cette divergence, qui paraît en elle-même facile à régler, pourrait, en effet, avoir pour conséquence de l'envenimer et de la rendre irrémédiable.

Sir Eyre Crowe a dit encore à M. de Saint-Aulaire que la France était libre de sacrifier ses intérêts en Orient, mais que l'Angleterre se refusait à suivre cet exemple, et il a insisté sur la nécessité d'obtenir des garanties judiciaires sérieuses. La France n'a jamais voulu sacrifier en Orient ni ses intérêts ni ceux de ses Alliés et elle désire, autant que l'Angleterre, obtenir des garanties judiciaires. Dans cette question comme

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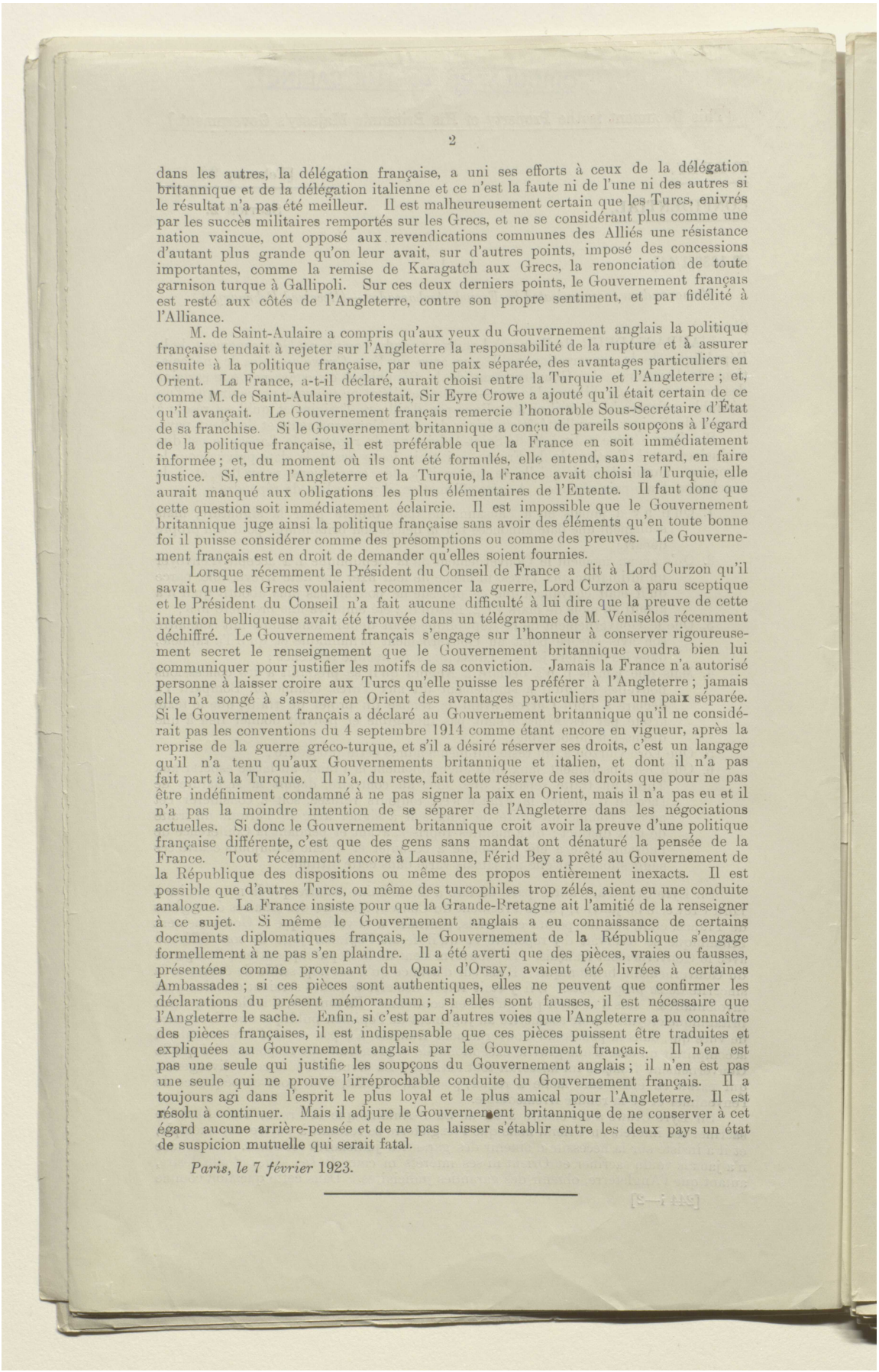

dans les autres, la délégation française, a uni ses efforts à ceux de la délégation britannique et de la délégation italienne et ce n'est la faute ni de l'une ni des autres si le résultat n'a pas été meilleur. Il est malheureusement certain que les Turcs, enivrés par les succès militaires remportés sur les Grecs, et ne se considérant plus comme une nation vaincue, ont opposé aux revendications communes des Alliés une résistance d'autant plus grande qu'on leur avait, sur d'autres points, imposé des concessions importantes, comme la remise de Karagatch aux Grecs, la renonciation de toute garnison turque à Gallipoli. Sur ces deux derniers points, le Gouvernement français est resté aux côtés de l'Angleterre, contre son propre sentiment, et par fidélité à l'Alliance.

M. de Saint-Aulaire a compris qu'aux yeux du Gouvernement anglais la politique française tendait à rejeter sur l'Angleterre la responsabilité de la rupture et à assurer ensuite à la politique française, par une paix séparée, des avantages particuliers en Orient. La France, a-t-il déclaré, aurait choisi entre la Turquie et l'Angleterre ; et, comme M. de Saint-Aulaire protestait, Sir Eyre Crowe a ajouté qu'il était certain de ce qu'il avançait. Le Gouvernement français remercie l'honorable Sous-Secrétaire d'État de sa franchise. Si le Gouvernement britannique a conçu de pareils soupçons à l'égard de la politique française, il est préférable que la France en soit immédiatement informée ; et, du moment où ils ont été formulés, elle entend, sans retard, en faire justice. Si, entre l'Angleterre et la Turquie, la France avait choisi la Turquie, elle aurait manqué aux obligations les plus élémentaires de l'Entente. Il faut donc que cette question soit immédiatement éclaircie. Il est impossible que le Gouvernement britannique juge ainsi la politique française sans avoir des éléments qu'en toute bonne foi il puisse considérer comme des présomptions ou comme des preuves. Le Gouvernement français est en droit de demander qu'elles soient fournies.

Lorsque récemment le Président du Conseil de France a dit à Lord Curzon qu'il savait que les Grecs voulaient recommencer la guerre, Lord Curzon a paru sceptique et le Président du Conseil n'a fait aucune difficulté à lui dire que la preuve de cette intention belliqueuse avait été trouvée dans un télégramme de M. Vénisélos récemment déchiffré. Le Gouvernement français s'engage sur l'honneur à conserver rigoureusement secret le renseignement que le Gouvernement britannique voudra bien lui communiquer pour justifier les motifs de sa conviction. Jamais la France n'a autorisé personne à laisser croire aux Turcs qu'elle puisse les préférer à l'Angleterre ; jamais elle n'a songé à s'assurer en Orient des avantages particuliers par une paix séparée. Si le Gouvernement français a déclaré au Gouvernement britannique qu'il ne considérait pas les conventions du 4 septembre 1914 comme étant encore en vigueur, après la reprise de la guerre gréco-turque, et s'il a désiré réserver ses droits, c'est un langage qu'il n'a tenu qu'aux Gouvernements britannique et italien, et dont il n'a pas fait part à la Turquie. Il n'a, du reste, fait cette réserve de ses droits que pour ne pas être indéfiniment condamné à ne pas signer la paix en Orient, mais il n'a pas eu et il n'a pas la moindre intention de se séparer de l'Angleterre dans les négociations actuelles. Si donc le Gouvernement britannique croit avoir la preuve d'une politique française différente, c'est que des gens sans mandat ont dénaturé la pensée de la France. Tout récemment encore à Lausanne, Férid Bey a prêté au Gouvernement de la République des dispositions ou même des propos entièrement inexacts. Il est possible que d'autres Turcs, ou même des turcophiles trop zélés, aient eu une conduite analogue. La France insiste pour que la Grande-Bretagne ait l'amitié de la renseigner à ce sujet. Si même le Gouvernement anglais a eu connaissance de certains documents diplomatiques français, le Gouvernement de la République s'engage formellement à ne pas s'en plaindre. Il a été averti que des pièces, vraies ou fausses, présentées comme provenant du Quai d'Orsay, avaient été livrées à certaines Ambassades ; si ces pièces sont authentiques, elles ne peuvent que confirmer les déclarations du présent mémorandum ; si elles sont fausses, il est nécessaire que l'Angleterre le sache. Enfin, si c'est par d'autres voies que l'Angleterre a pu connaître des pièces françaises, il est indispensable que ces pièces puissent être traduites et expliquées au Gouvernement anglais par le Gouvernement français. Il n'en est pas une seule qui justifie les soupçons du Gouvernement anglais ; il n'en est pas une seule qui ne prouve l'irréprochable conduite du Gouvernement français. Il a toujours agi dans l'esprit le plus loyal et le plus amical pour l'Angleterre. Il est résolu à continuer. Mais il adjure le Gouvernement britannique de ne conserver à cet égard aucune arrière-pensée et de ne pas laisser s'établir entre les deux pays un état de suspicion mutuelle qui serait fatal.

Paris, le 7 février 1923.

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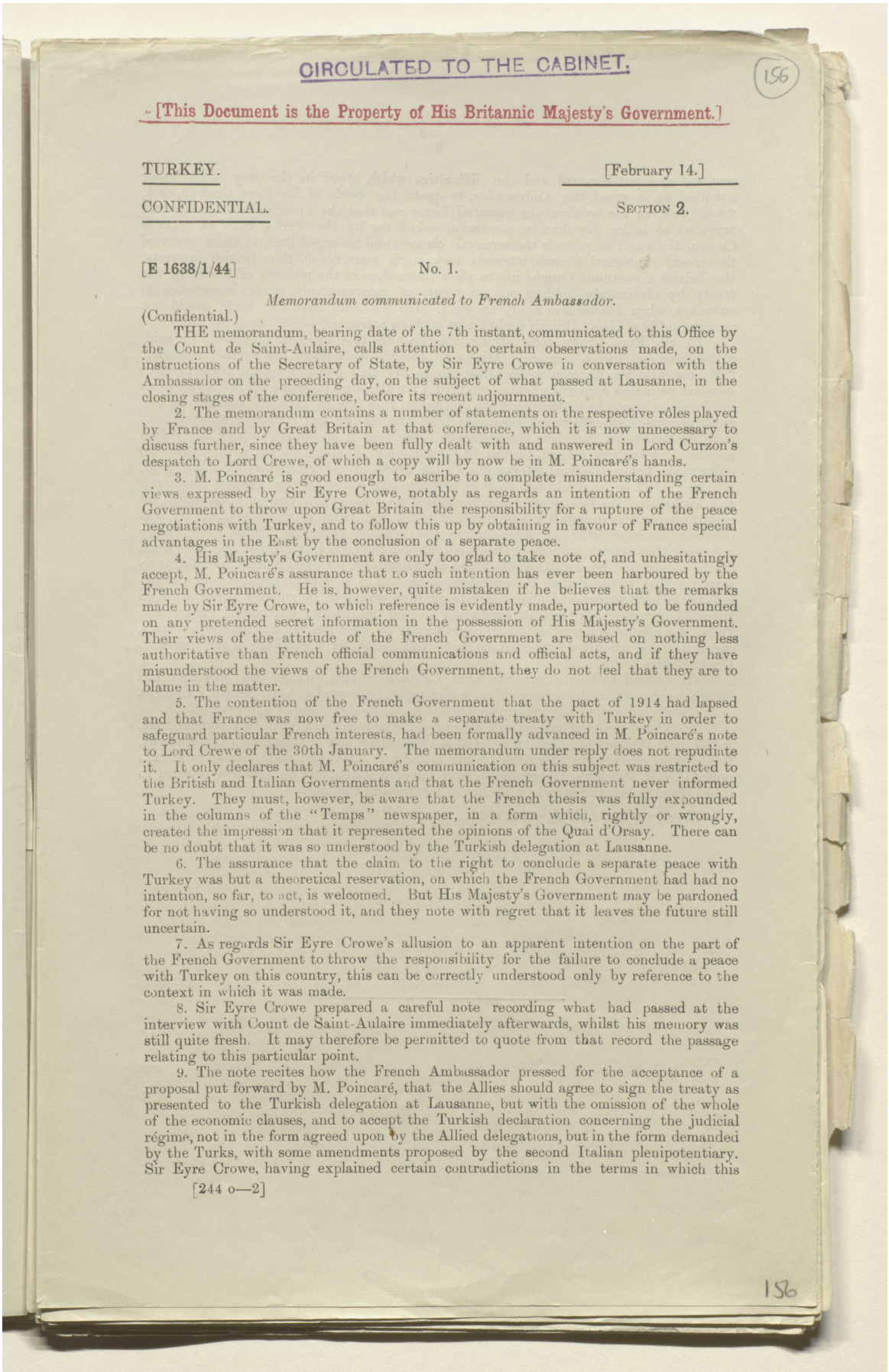

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TURKEY. [February 14.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 1638/1/44] No. 1.

Memorandum communicated to French Ambassador.

(Confidential.)

THE memorandum, bearing date of the 7th instant, communicated to this Office by the Count de Saint-Aulaire, calls attention to certain observations made, on the instructions of the Secretary of State, by Sir Eyre Crowe in conversation with the Ambassador on the preceding day, on the subject of what passed at Lausanne, in the closing stages of the conference, before its recent adjournment.

2. The memorandum contains a number of statements on the respective rôles played by France and by Great Britain at that conference, which it is now unnecessary to discuss further, since they have been fully dealt with and answered in Lord Curzon's despatch to Lord Crewe, of which a copy will by now be in M. Poincaré's hands.

3. M. Poincaré is good enough to ascribe to a complete misunderstanding certain views expressed by Sir Eyre Crowe, notably as regards an intention of the French Government to throw upon Great Britain the responsibility for a rupture of the peace negotiations with Turkey, and to follow this up by obtaining in favour of France special advantages in the East by the conclusion of a separate peace.

4. His Majesty's Government are only too glad to take note of, and unhesitatingly accept, M. Poincaré's assurance that no such intention has ever been harboured by the French Government. He is, however, quite mistaken if he believes that the remarks made by Sir Eyre Crowe, to which reference is evidently made, purported to be founded on any pretended secret information in the possession of His Majesty's Government. Their views of the attitude of the French Government are based on nothing less authoritative than French official communications and official acts, and if they have misunderstood the views of the French Government, they do not feel that they are to blame in the matter.

5. The contention of the French Government that the pact of 1914 had lapsed and that France was now free to make a separate treaty with Turkey in order to safeguard particular French interests, had been formally advanced in M. Poincaré's note to Lord Crewe of the 30th January. The memorandum under reply does not repudiate it. It only declares that M. Poincaré's communication on this subject was restricted to the British and Italian Governments and that the French Government never informed Turkey. They must, however, be aware that the French thesis was fully expounded in the columns of the "Temps" newspaper, in a form which, rightly or wrongly, created the impression that it represented the opinions of the Quai d'Orsay. There can be no doubt that it was so understood by the Turkish delegation at Lausanne.

6. The assurance that the claim to the right to conclude a separate peace with Turkey was but a theoretical reservation, on which the French Government had had no intention, so far, to act, is welcomed. But His Majesty's Government may be pardoned for not having so understood it, and they note with regret that it leaves the future still uncertain.

7. As regards Sir Eyre Crowe's allusion to an apparent intention on the part of the French Government to throw the responsibility for the failure to conclude a peace with Turkey on this country, this can be correctly understood only by reference to the context in which it was made.

8. Sir Eyre Crowe prepared a careful note recording what had passed at the interview with Count de Saint-Aulaire immediately afterwards, whilst his memory was still quite fresh. It may therefore be permitted to quote from that record the passage relating to this particular point.

9. The note recites how the French Ambassador pressed for the acceptance of a proposal put forward by M. Poincaré, that the Allies should agree to sign the treaty as presented to the Turkish delegation at Lausanne, but with the omission of the whole of the economic clauses, and to accept the Turkish declaration concerning the judicial régime, not in the form agreed upon by the Allied delegations, but in the form demanded by the Turks, with some amendments proposed by the second Italian plenipotentiary. Sir Eyre Crowe, having explained certain contradictions in the terms in which this

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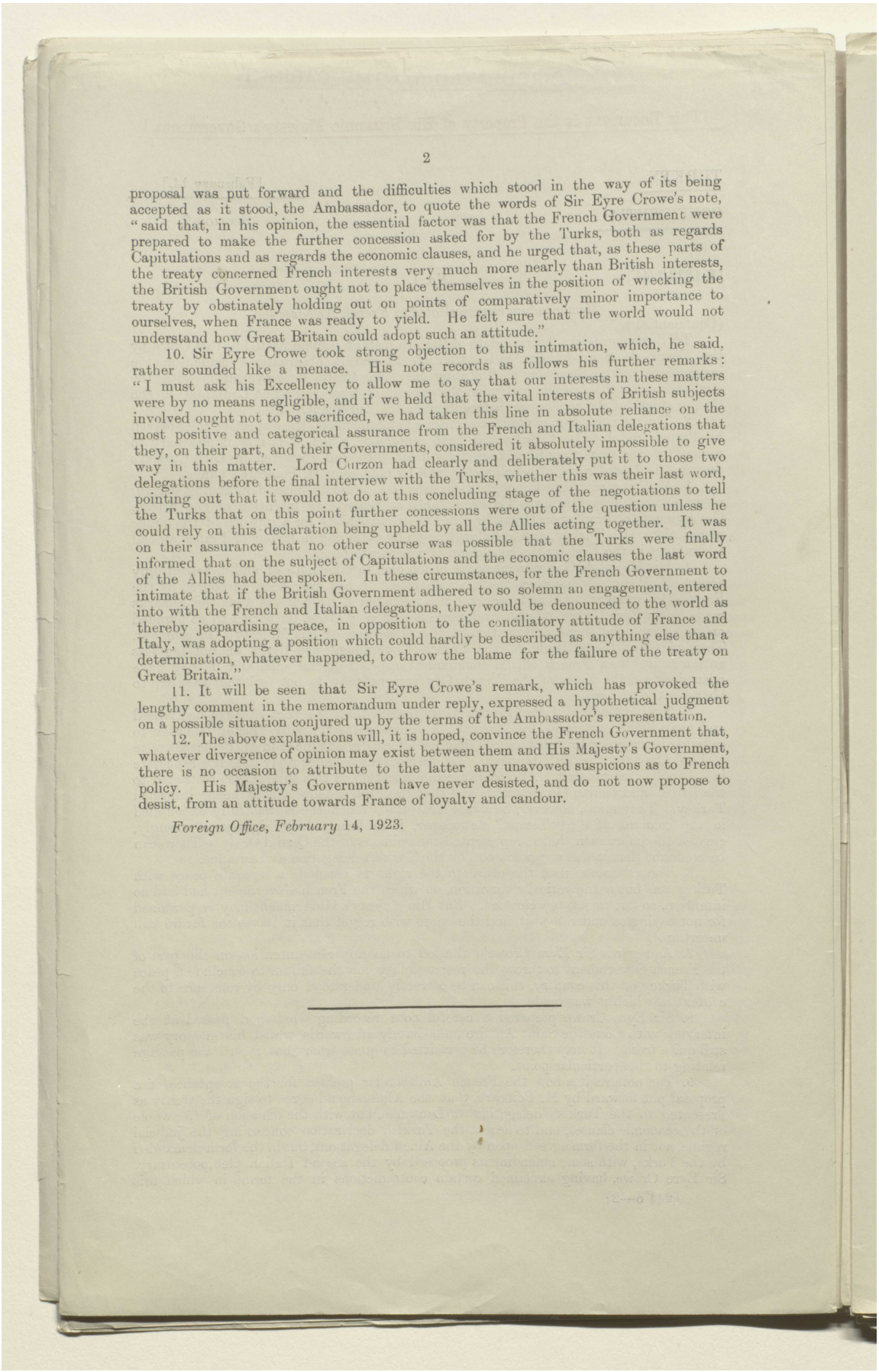

proposal was put forward and the difficulties which stood in the way of its being accepted as it stood, the Ambassador, to quote the words of Sir Eyre Crowe's note, "said that, in his opinion, the essential factor was that the French Government were prepared to make the further concession asked for by the Turks, both as regards Capitulations and as regards the economic clauses, and he urged that, as these parts of the treaty concerned French interests very much more nearly than British interests, the British Government ought not to place themselves in the position of wrecking the treaty by obstinately holding out on points of comparatively minor importance to ourselves, when France was ready to yield. He felt sure that the world would not understand how Great Britain could adopt such an attitude."

10. Sir Eyre Crowe took strong objection to this intimation, which, he said, rather sounded like a menace. His note records as follows his further remarks: "I must ask his Excellency to allow me to say that our interests in these matters were by no means negligible, and if we held that the vital interests of British subjects involved ought not to be sacrificed, we had taken this line in absolute reliance on the most positive and categorical assurance from the French and Italian delegations that they, on their part, and their Governments, considered it absolutely impossible to give way in this matter. Lord Curzon had clearly and deliberately put it to those two delegations before the final interview with the Turks, whether this was their last word, pointing out that it would not do at this concluding stage of the negotiations to tell the Turks that on this point further concessions were out of the question unless he could rely on this declaration being upheld by all the Allies acting together. It was on their assurance that no other course was possible that the Turks were finally informed that on the subject of Capitulations and the economic clauses the last word of the Allies had been spoken. In these circumstances, for the French Government to intimate that if the British Government adhered to so solemn an engagement, entered into with the French and Italian delegations, they would be denounced to the world as thereby jeopardising peace, in opposition to the conciliatory attitude of France and Italy, was adopting a position which could hardly be described as anything else than a determination, whatever happened, to throw the blame for the failure of the treaty on Great Britain."

11. It will be seen that Sir Eyre Crowe's remark, which has provoked the lengthy comment in the memorandum under reply, expressed a hypothetical judgment on a possible situation conjured up by the terms of the Ambassador's representation.

12. The above explanations will, it is hoped, convince the French Government that, whatever divergence of opinion may exist between them and His Majesty's Government, there is no occasion to attribute to the latter any unavowed suspicions as to French policy. His Majesty's Government have never desisted, and do not now propose to desist, from an attitude towards France of loyalty and candour.

Foreign Office, February 14, 1923.

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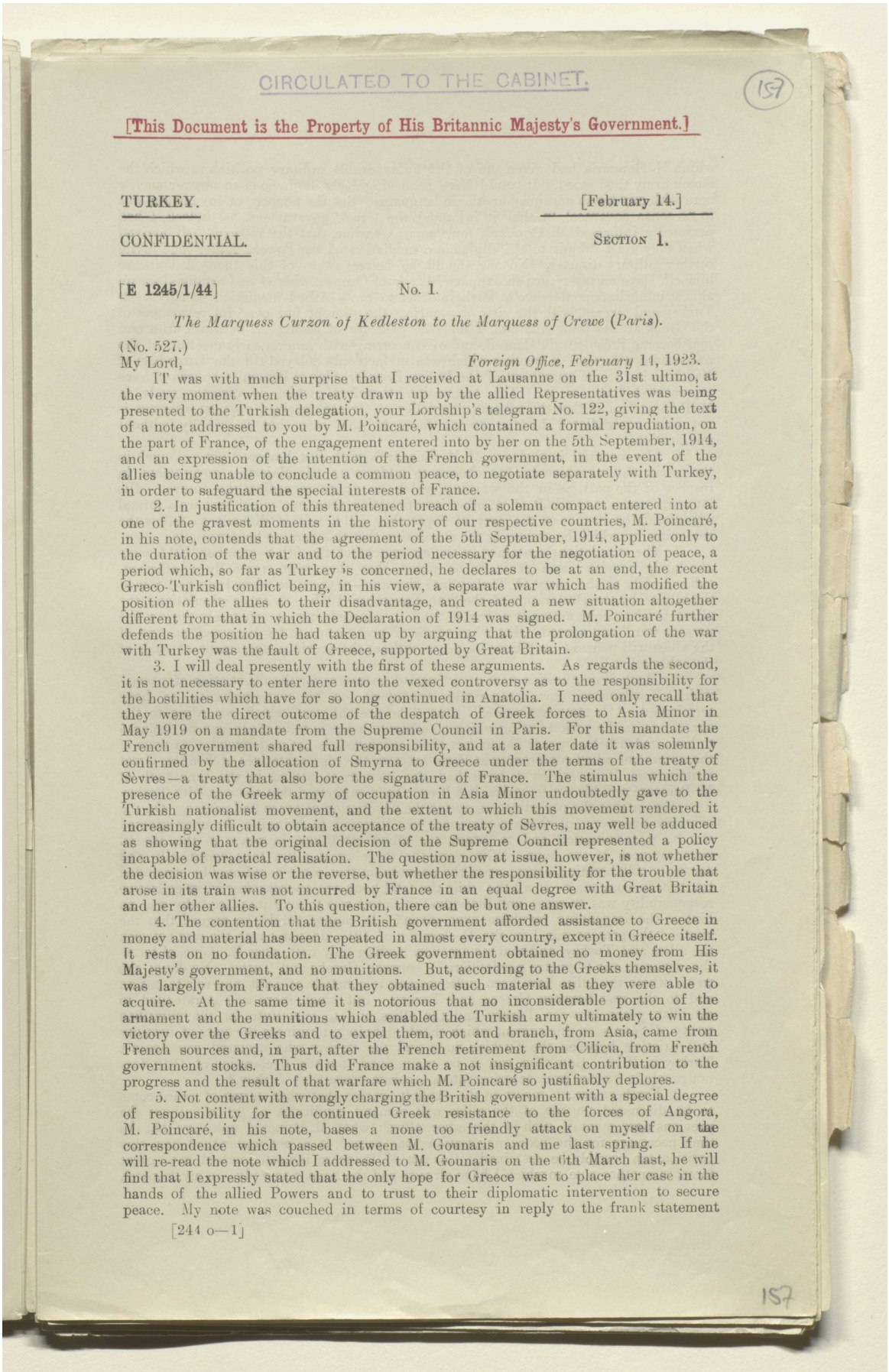

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TURKEY. [February 14.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1245/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 527.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 14, 1923.

IT was with much surprise that I received at Lausanne on the 31st ultimo, at the very moment when the treaty drawn up by the allied Representatives was being presented to the Turkish delegation, your Lordship's telegram No. 122, giving the text of a note addressed to you by M. Poincaré, which contained a formal repudiation, on the part of France, of the engagement entered into by her on the 5th September, 1914, and an expression of the intention of the French government, in the event of the allies being unable to conclude a common peace, to negotiate separately with Turkey, in order to safeguard the special interests of France.

2. In justification of this threatened breach of a solemn compact entered into at one of the gravest moments in the history of our respective countries, M. Poincaré, in his note, contends that the agreement of the 5th September, 1914, applied only to the duration of the war and to the period necessary for the negotiation of peace, a period which, so far as Turkey is concerned, he declares to be at an end, the recent Græco-Turkish conflict being, in his view, a separate war which has modified the position of the allies to their disadvantage, and created a new situation altogether different from that in which the Declaration of 1914 was signed. M. Poincaré further defends the position he had taken up by arguing that the prolongation of the war with Turkey was the fault of Greece, supported by Great Britain.

3. I will deal presently with the first of these arguments. As regards the second, it is not necessary to enter here into the vexed controversy as to the responsibility for the hostilities which have for so long continued in Anatolia. I need only recall that they were the direct outcome of the despatch of Greek forces to Asia Minor in May 1919 on a mandate from the Supreme Council in Paris. For this mandate the French government shared full responsibility, and at a later date it was solemnly confirmed by the allocation of Smyrna to Greece under the terms of the treaty of Sèvres—a treaty that also bore the signature of France. The stimulus which the presence of the Greek army of occupation in Asia Minor undoubtedly gave to the Turkish nationalist movement, and the extent to which this movement rendered it increasingly difficult to obtain acceptance of the treaty of Sèvres, may well be adduced as showing that the original decision of the Supreme Council represented a policy incapable of practical realisation. The question now at issue, however, is not whether the decision was wise or the reverse, but whether the responsibility for the trouble that arose in its train was not incurred by France in an equal degree with Great Britain and her other allies. To this question, there can be but one answer.

4. The contention that the British government afforded assistance to Greece in money and material has been repeated in almost every country, except in Greece itself. It rests on no foundation. The Greek government obtained no money from His Majesty's government, and no munitions. But, according to the Greeks themselves, it was largely from France that they obtained such material as they were able to acquire. At the same time it is notorious that no inconsiderable portion of the armament and the munitions which enabled the Turkish army ultimately to win the victory over the Greeks and to expel them, root and branch, from Asia, came from French sources and, in part, after the French retirement from Cilicia, from French government stocks. Thus did France make a not insignificant contribution to the progress and the result of that warfare which M. Poincaré so justifiably deplores.

5. Not content with wrongly charging the British government with a special degree of responsibility for the continued Greek resistance to the forces of Angora, M. Poincaré, in his note, bases a none too friendly attack on myself on the correspondence which passed between M. Gounaris and me last spring. If he will re-read the note which I addressed to M. Gounaris on the 6th March last, he will find that I expressly stated that the only hope for Greece was to place her case in the hands of the allied Powers and to trust to their diplomatic intervention to secure peace. My note was couched in terms of courtesy in reply to the frank statement

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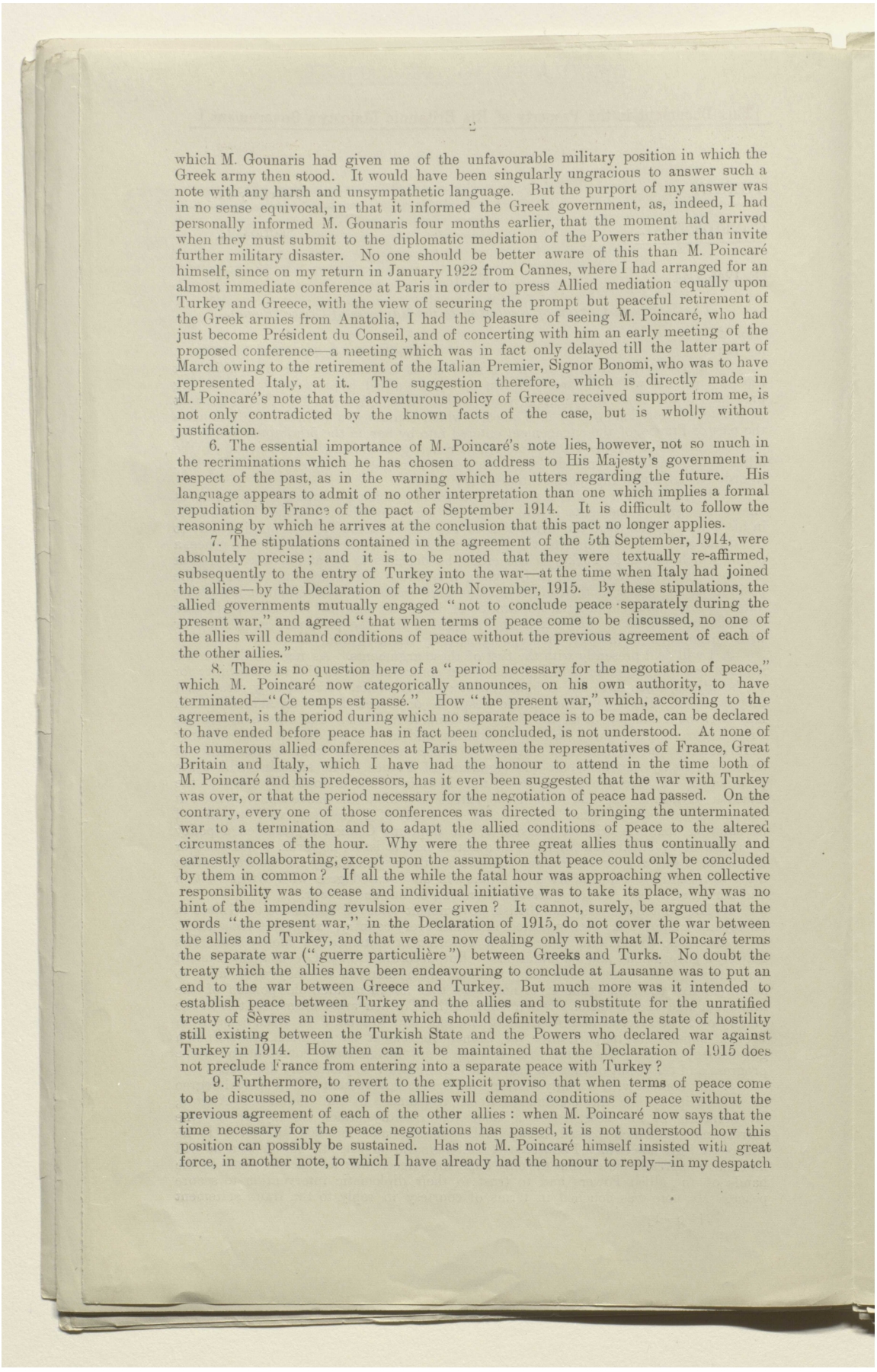

which M. Gounaris had given me of the unfavourable military position in which the Greek army then stood. It would have been singularly ungracious to answer such a note with any harsh and unsympathetic language. But the purport of my answer was in no sense equivocal, in that it informed the Greek government, as, indeed, I had personally informed M. Gounaris four months earlier, that the moment had arrived when they must submit to the diplomatic mediation of the Powers rather than invite further military disaster. No one should be better aware of this than M. Poincaré himself, since on my return in January 1922 from Cannes, where I had arranged for an almost immediate conference at Paris in order to press Allied mediation equally upon Turkey and Greece, with the view of securing the prompt but peaceful retirement of the Greek armies from Anatolia, I had the pleasure of seeing M. Poincaré, who had just become Président du Conseil, and of concerting with him an early meeting of the proposed conference—a meeting which was in fact only delayed till the latter part of March owing to the retirement of the Italian Premier, Signor Bonomi, who was to have represented Italy, at it. The suggestion therefore, which is directly made in M. Poincaré's note that the adventurous policy of Greece received support from me, is not only contradicted by the known facts of the case, but is wholly without justification.

6. The essential importance of M. Poincaré's note lies, however, not so much in the recriminations which he has chosen to address to His Majesty's government in respect of the past, as in the warning which he utters regarding the future. His language appears to admit of no other interpretation than one which implies a formal repudiation by France of the pact of September 1914. It is difficult to follow the reasoning by which he arrives at the conclusion that this pact no longer applies.

7. The stipulations contained in the agreement of the 5th September, 1914, were absolutely precise; and it is to be noted that they were textually re-affirmed, subsequently to the entry of Turkey into the war—at the time when Italy had joined the allies—by the Declaration of the 20th November, 1915. By these stipulations, the allied governments mutually engaged "not to conclude peace separately during the present war," and agreed "that when terms of peace come to be discussed, no one of the allies will demand conditions of peace without the previous agreement of each of the other allies."

8. There is no question here of a "period necessary for the negotiation of peace," which M. Poincaré now categorically announces, on his own authority, to have terminated—"Ce temps est passé." How "the present war," which, according to the agreement, is the period during which no separate peace is to be made, can be declared to have ended before peace has in fact been concluded, is not understood. At none of the numerous allied conferences at Paris between the representatives of France, Great Britain and Italy, which I have had the honour to attend in the time both of M. Poincaré and his predecessors, has it ever been suggested that the war with Turkey was over, or that the period necessary for the negotiation of peace had passed. On the contrary, every one of those conferences was directed to bringing the unterminated war to a termination and to adapt the allied conditions of peace to the altered circumstances of the hour. Why were the three great allies thus continually and earnestly collaborating, except upon the assumption that peace could only be concluded by them in common? If all the while the fatal hour was approaching when collective responsibility was to cease and individual initiative was to take its place, why was no hint of the impending revulsion ever given? It cannot, surely, be argued that the words "the present war," in the Declaration of 1915, do not cover the war between the allies and Turkey, and that we are now dealing only with what M. Poincaré terms the separate war ("guerre particulière") between Greeks and Turks. No doubt the treaty which the allies have been endeavouring to conclude at Lausanne was to put an end to the war between Greece and Turkey. But much more was it intended to establish peace between Turkey and the allies and to substitute for the unratified treaty of Sèvres an instrument which should definitely terminate the state of hostility still existing between the Turkish State and the Powers who declared war against Turkey in 1914. How then can it be maintained that the Declaration of 1915 does not preclude France from entering into a separate peace with Turkey?

9. Furthermore, to revert to the explicit proviso that when terms of peace come to be discussed, no one of the allies will demand conditions of peace without the previous agreement of each of the other allies: when M. Poincaré now says that the time necessary for the peace negotiations has passed, it is not understood how this position can possibly be sustained. Has not M. Poincaré himself insisted with great force, in another note, to which I have already had the honour to reply—in my despatch

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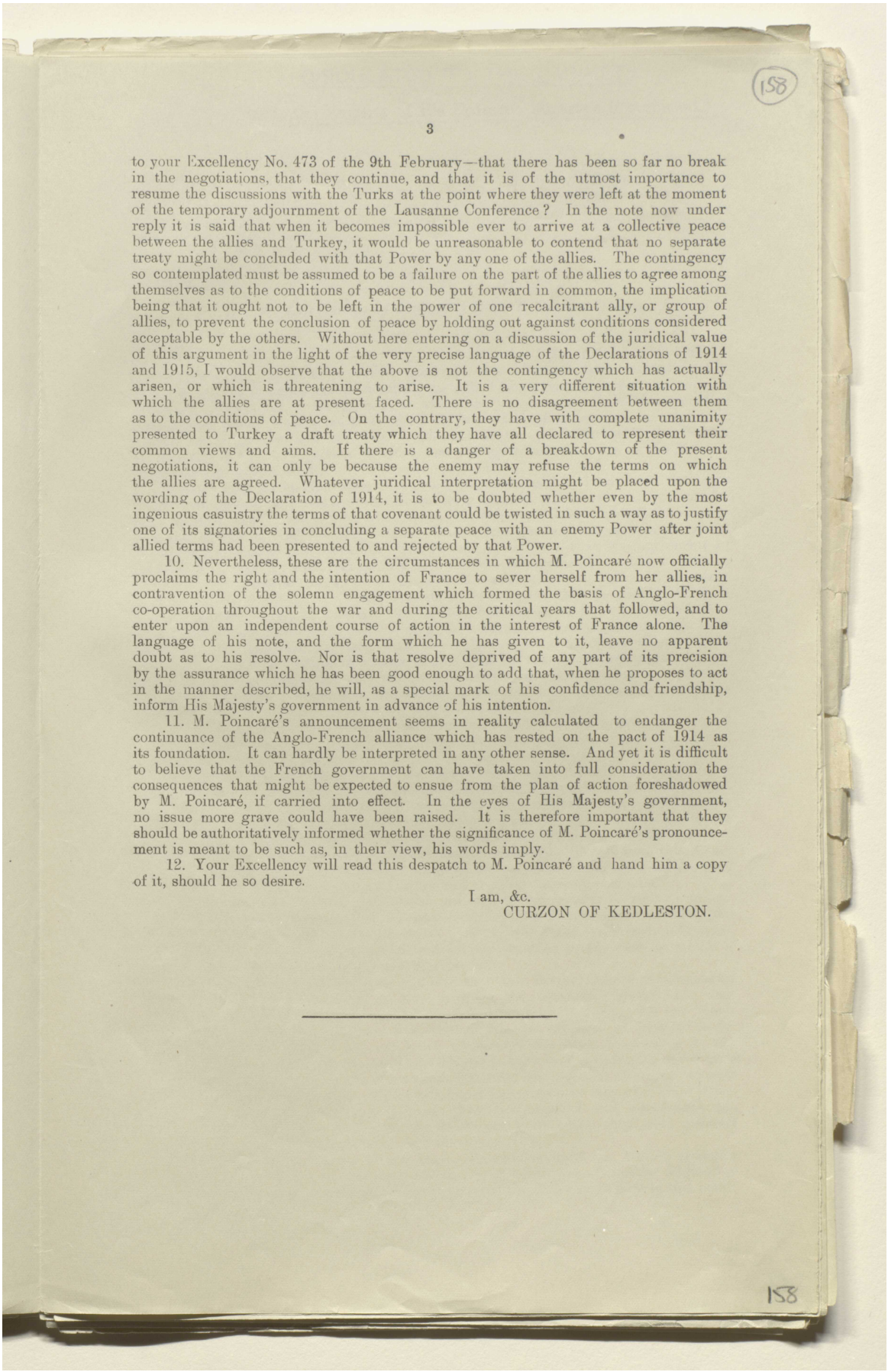

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to your Excellency No. 473 of the 9th February—that there has been so far no break in the negotiations, that they continue, and that it is of the utmost importance to resume the discussions with the Turks at the point where they were left at the moment of the temporary adjournment of the Lausanne Conference? In the note now under reply it is said that when it becomes impossible ever to arrive at a collective peace between the allies and Turkey, it would be unreasonable to contend that no separate treaty might be concluded with that Power by any one of the allies. The contingency so contemplated must be assumed to be a failure on the part of the allies to agree among themselves as to the conditions of peace to be put forward in common, the implication being that it ought not to be left in the power of one recalcitrant ally, or group of allies, to prevent the conclusion of peace by holding out against conditions considered acceptable by the others. Without here entering on a discussion of the juridical value of this argument in the light of the very precise language of the Declarations of 1914 and 1915, I would observe that the above is not the contingency which has actually arisen, or which is threatening to arise. It is a very different situation with which the allies are at present faced. There is no disagreement between them as to the conditions of peace. On the contrary, they have with complete unanimity presented to Turkey a draft treaty which they have all declared to represent their common views and aims. If there is a danger of a breakdown of the present negotiations, it can only be because the enemy may refuse the terms on which the allies are agreed. Whatever juridical interpretation might be placed upon the wording of the Declaration of 1914, it is to be doubted whether even by the most ingenious casuistry the terms of that covenant could be twisted in such a way as to justify one of its signatories in concluding a separate peace with an enemy Power after joint allied terms had been presented to and rejected by that Power.

10. Nevertheless, these are the circumstances in which M. Poincaré now officially proclaims the right and the intention of France to sever herself from her allies, in contravention of the solemn engagement which formed the basis of Anglo-French co-operation throughout the war and during the critical years that followed, and to enter upon an independent course of action in the interest of France alone. The language of his note, and the form which he has given to it, leave no apparent doubt as to his resolve. Nor is that resolve deprived of any part of its precision by the assurance which he has been good enough to add that, when he proposes to act in the manner described, he will, as a special mark of his confidence and friendship, inform His Majesty's government in advance of his intention.

11. M. Poincaré's announcement seems in reality calculated to endanger the continuance of the Anglo-French alliance which has rested on the pact of 1914 as its foundation. It can hardly be interpreted in any other sense. And yet it is difficult to believe that the French government can have taken into full consideration the consequences that might be expected to ensue from the plan of action foreshadowed by M. Poincaré, if carried into effect. In the eyes of His Majesty's government, no issue more grave could have been raised. It is therefore important that they should be authoritatively informed whether the significance of M. Poincaré's pronouncement is meant to be such as, in their view, his words imply.

12. Your Excellency will read this despatch to M. Poincaré and hand him a copy of it, should he so desire.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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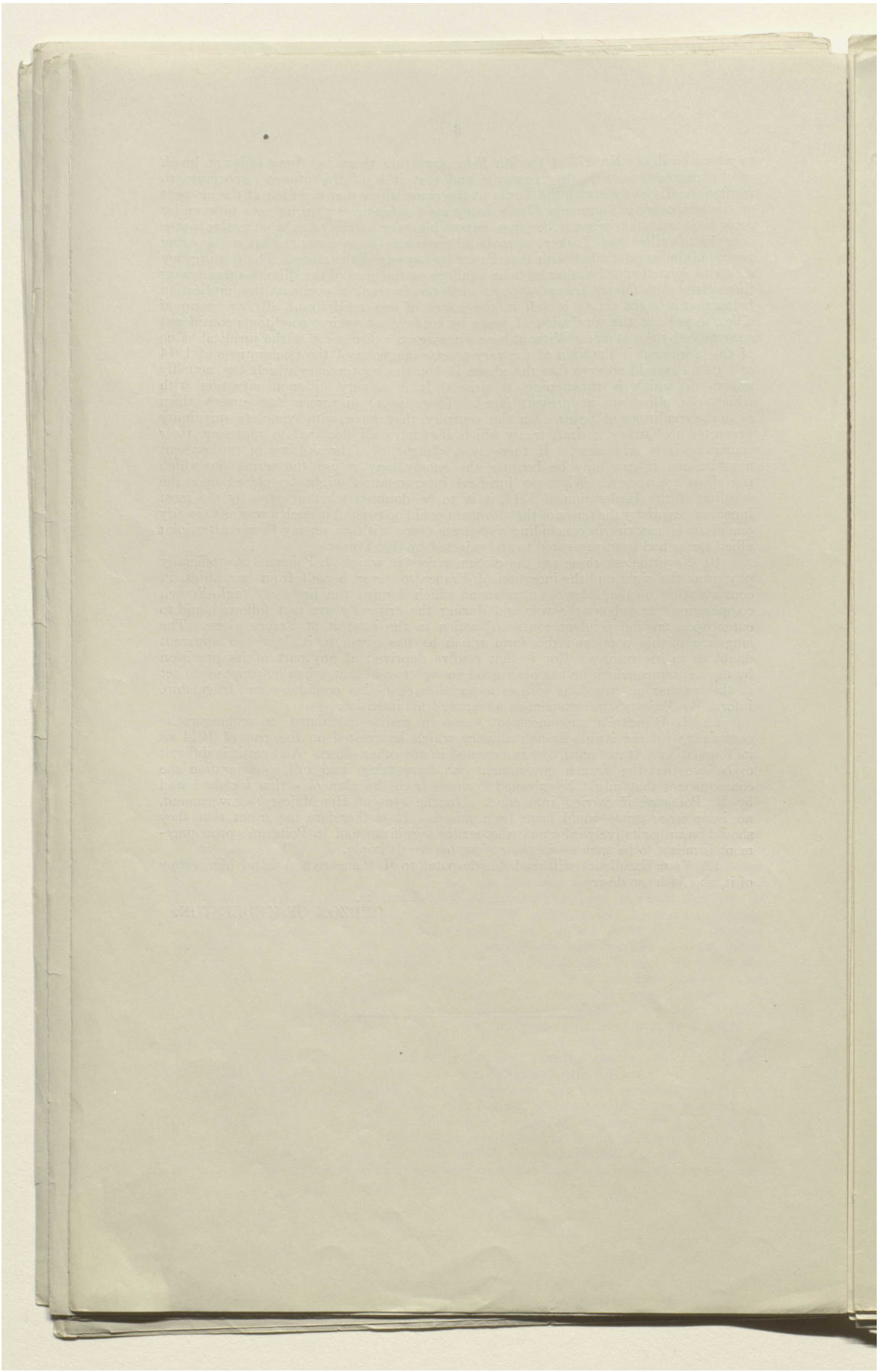

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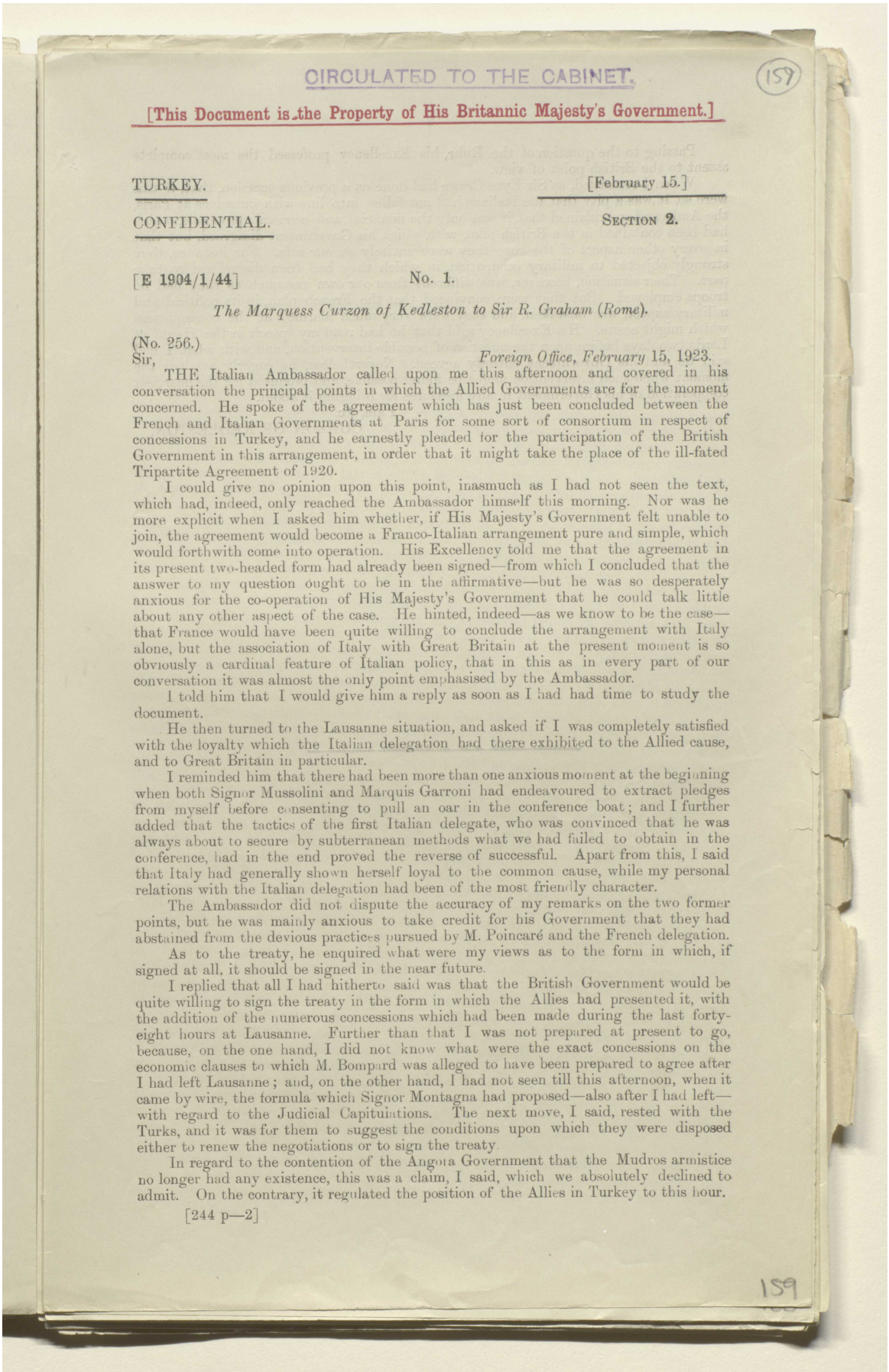

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TURKEY. [February 15.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 1904/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Sir R. Graham (Rome).

(No. 256.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 15, 1923.

THE Italian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon and covered in his conversation the principal points in which the Allied Governments are for the moment concerned. He spoke of the agreement which has just been concluded between the French and Italian Governments at Paris for some sort of consortium in respect of concessions in Turkey, and he earnestly pleaded for the participation of the British Government in this arrangement, in order that it might take the place of the ill-fated Tripartite Agreement of 1920.

I could give no opinion upon this point, inasmuch as I had not seen the text, which had, indeed, only reached the Ambassador himself this morning. Nor was he more explicit when I asked him whether, if His Majesty's Government felt unable to join, the agreement would become a Franco-Italian arrangement pure and simple, which would forthwith come into operation. His Excellency told me that the agreement in its present two-headed form had already been signed—from which I concluded that the answer to my question ought to be in the affirmative—but he was so desperately anxious for the co-operation of His Majesty's Government that he could talk little about any other aspect of the case. He hinted, indeed—as we know to be the case—that France would have been quite willing to conclude the arrangement with Italy alone, but the association of Italy with Great Britain at the present moment is so obviously a cardinal feature of Italian policy, that in this as in every part of our conversation it was almost the only point emphasised by the Ambassador.

I told him that I would give him a reply as soon as I had had time to study the document.

He then turned to the Lausanne situation, and asked if I was completely satisfied with the loyalty which the Italian delegation had there exhibited to the Allied cause, and to Great Britain in particular.

I reminded him that there had been more than one anxious moment at the beginning when both Signor Mussolini and Marquis Garroni had endeavoured to extract pledges from myself before consenting to pull an oar in the conference boat; and I further added that the tactics of the first Italian delegate, who was convinced that he was always about to secure by subterranean methods what we had failed to obtain in the conference, had in the end proved the reverse of successful. Apart from this, I said that Italy had generally shown herself loyal to the common cause, while my personal relations with the Italian delegation had been of the most friendly character.

The Ambassador did not dispute the accuracy of my remarks on the two former points, but he was mainly anxious to take credit for his Government that they had abstained from the devious practices pursued by M. Poincaré and the French delegation.

As to the treaty, he enquired what were my views as to the form in which, if signed at all, it should be signed in the near future.

I replied that all I had hitherto said was that the British Government would be quite willing to sign the treaty in the form in which the Allies had presented it, with the addition of the numerous concessions which had been made during the last forty-eight hours at Lausanne. Further than that I was not prepared at present to go, because, on the one hand, I did not know what were the exact concessions on the economic clauses to which M. Bompard was alleged to have been prepared to agree after I had left Lausanne; and, on the other hand, I had not seen till this afternoon, when it came by wire, the formula which Signor Montagna had proposed—also after I had left—with regard to the Judicial Capitulations. The next move, I said, rested with the Turks, and it was for them to suggest the conditions upon which they were disposed either to renew the negotiations or to sign the treaty.

In regard to the contention of the Angora Government that the Mudros armistice no longer had any existence, this was a claim, I said, which we absolutely declined to admit. On the contrary, it regulated the position of the Allies in Turkey to this hour.

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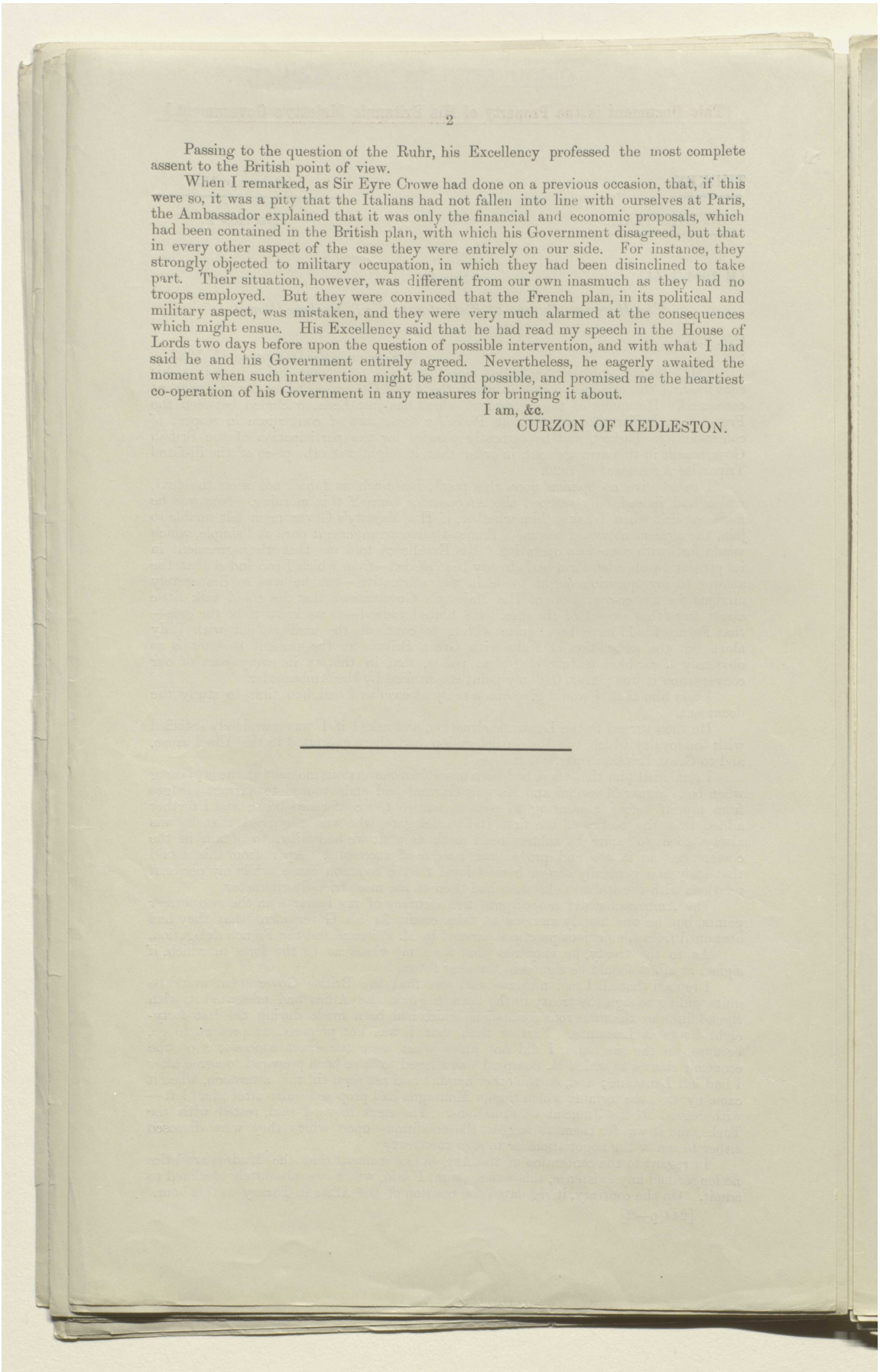

Passing to the question of the Ruhr, his Excellency professed the most complete assent to the British point of view.

When I remarked, as Sir Eyre Crowe had done on a previous occasion, that, if this were so, it was a pity that the Italians had not fallen into line with ourselves at Paris, the Ambassador explained that it was only the financial and economic proposals, which had been contained in the British plan, with which his Government disagreed, but that in every other aspect of the case they were entirely on our side. For instance, they strongly objected to military occupation, in which they had been disinclined to take part. Their situation, however, was different from our own inasmuch as they had no troops employed. But they were convinced that the French plan, in its political and military aspect, was mistaken, and they were very much alarmed at the consequences which might ensue. His Excellency said that he had read my speech in the House of Lords two days before upon the question of possible intervention, and with what I had said he and his Government entirely agreed. Nevertheless, he eagerly awaited the moment when such intervention might be found possible, and promised me the heartiest co-operation of his Government in any measures for bringing it about.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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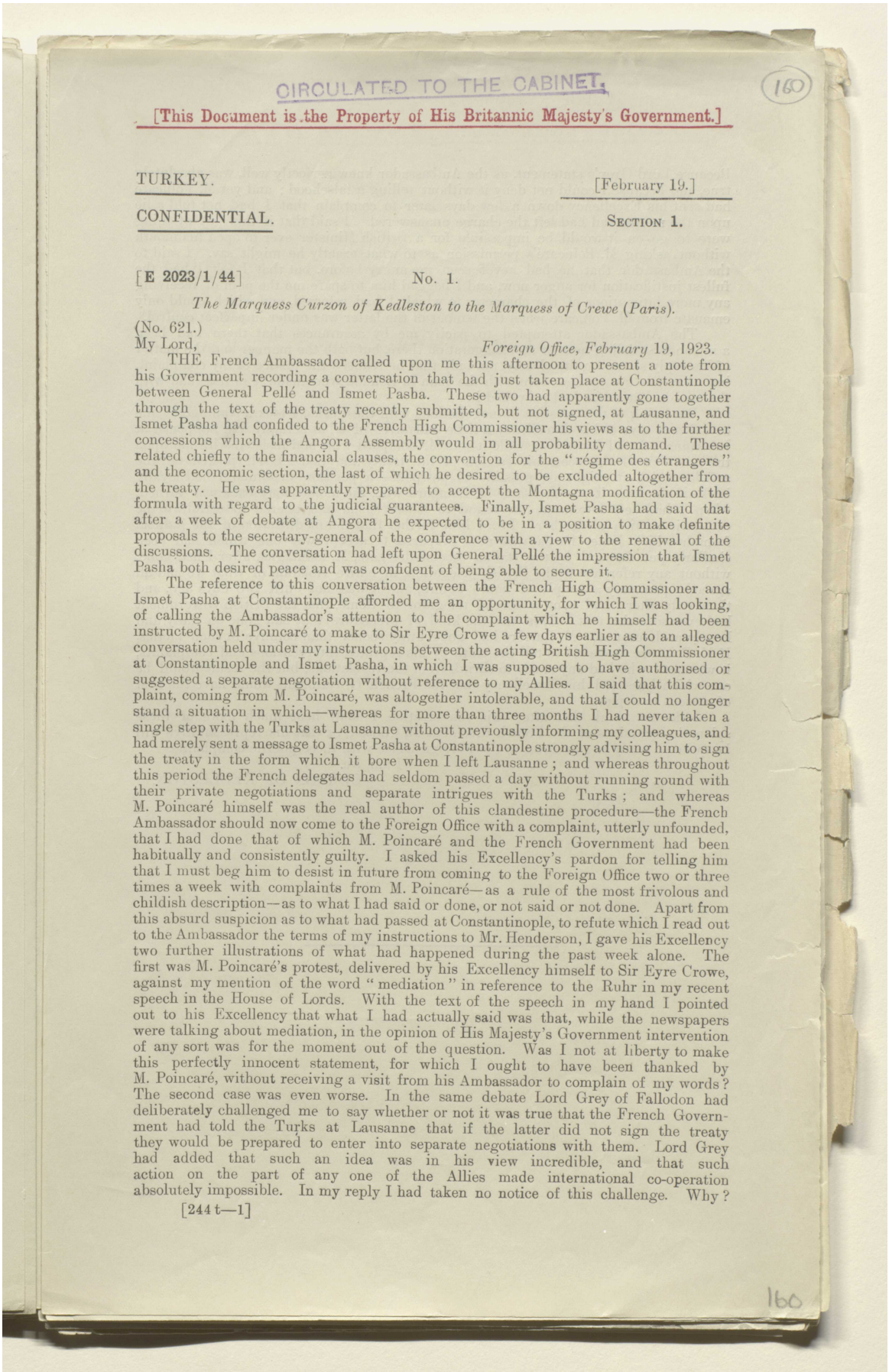

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TURKEY. [February 19.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2023/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 621.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February 19, 1923.*

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon to present a note from his Government recording a conversation that had just taken place at Constantinople between General Pellé and Ismet Pasha. These two had apparently gone together through the text of the treaty recently submitted, but not signed, at Lausanne, and Ismet Pasha had confided to the French High Commissioner his views as to the further concessions which the Angora Assembly would in all probability demand. These related chiefly to the financial clauses, the convention for the "régime des étrangers" and the economic section, the last of which he desired to be excluded altogether from the treaty. He was apparently prepared to accept the Montagna modification of the formula with regard to the judicial guarantees. Finally, Ismet Pasha had said that after a week of debate at Angora he expected to be in a position to make definite proposals to the secretary-general of the conference with a view to the renewal of the discussions. The conversation had left upon General Pellé the impression that Ismet Pasha both desired peace and was confident of being able to secure it.

The reference to this conversation between the French High Commissioner and Ismet Pasha at Constantinople afforded me an opportunity, for which I was looking, of calling the Ambassador's attention to the complaint which he himself had been instructed by M. Poincaré to make to Sir Eyre Crowe a few days earlier as to an alleged conversation held under my instructions between the acting British High Commissioner at Constantinople and Ismet Pasha, in which I was supposed to have authorised or suggested a separate negotiation without reference to my Allies. I said that this complaint, coming from M. Poincaré, was altogether intolerable, and that I could no longer stand a situation in which—whereas for more than three months I had never taken a single step with the Turks at Lausanne without previously informing my colleagues, and had merely sent a message to Ismet Pasha at Constantinople strongly advising him to sign the treaty in the form which it bore when I left Lausanne; and whereas throughout this period the French delegates had seldom passed a day without running round with their private negotiations and separate intrigues with the Turks; and whereas M. Poincaré himself was the real author of this clandestine procedure—the French Ambassador should now come to the Foreign Office with a complaint, utterly unfounded, that I had done that of which M. Poincaré and the French Government had been habitually and consistently guilty. I asked his Excellency's pardon for telling him that I must beg him to desist in future from coming to the Foreign Office two or three times a week with complaints from M. Poincaré—as a rule of the most frivolous and childish description—as to what I had said or done, or not said or not done. Apart from this absurd suspicion as to what had passed at Constantinople, to refute which I read out to the Ambassador the terms of my instructions to Mr. Henderson, I gave his Excellency two further illustrations of what had happened during the past week alone. The first was M. Poincaré's protest, delivered by his Excellency himself to Sir Eyre Crowe, against my mention of the word "mediation" in reference to the Ruhr in my recent speech in the House of Lords. With the text of the speech in my hand I pointed out to his Excellency that what I had actually said was that, while the newspapers were talking about mediation, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government intervention of any sort was for the moment out of the question. Was I not at liberty to make this perfectly innocent statement, for which I ought to have been thanked by M. Poincaré, without receiving a visit from his Ambassador to complain of my words? The second case was even worse. In the same debate Lord Grey of Fallodon had deliberately challenged me to say whether or not it was true that the French Government had told the Turks at Lausanne that if the latter did not sign the treaty they would be prepared to enter into separate negotiations with them. Lord Grey had added that such an idea was in his view incredible, and that such action on the part of any one of the Allies made international co-operation absolutely impossible. In my reply I had taken no notice of this challenge. Why?

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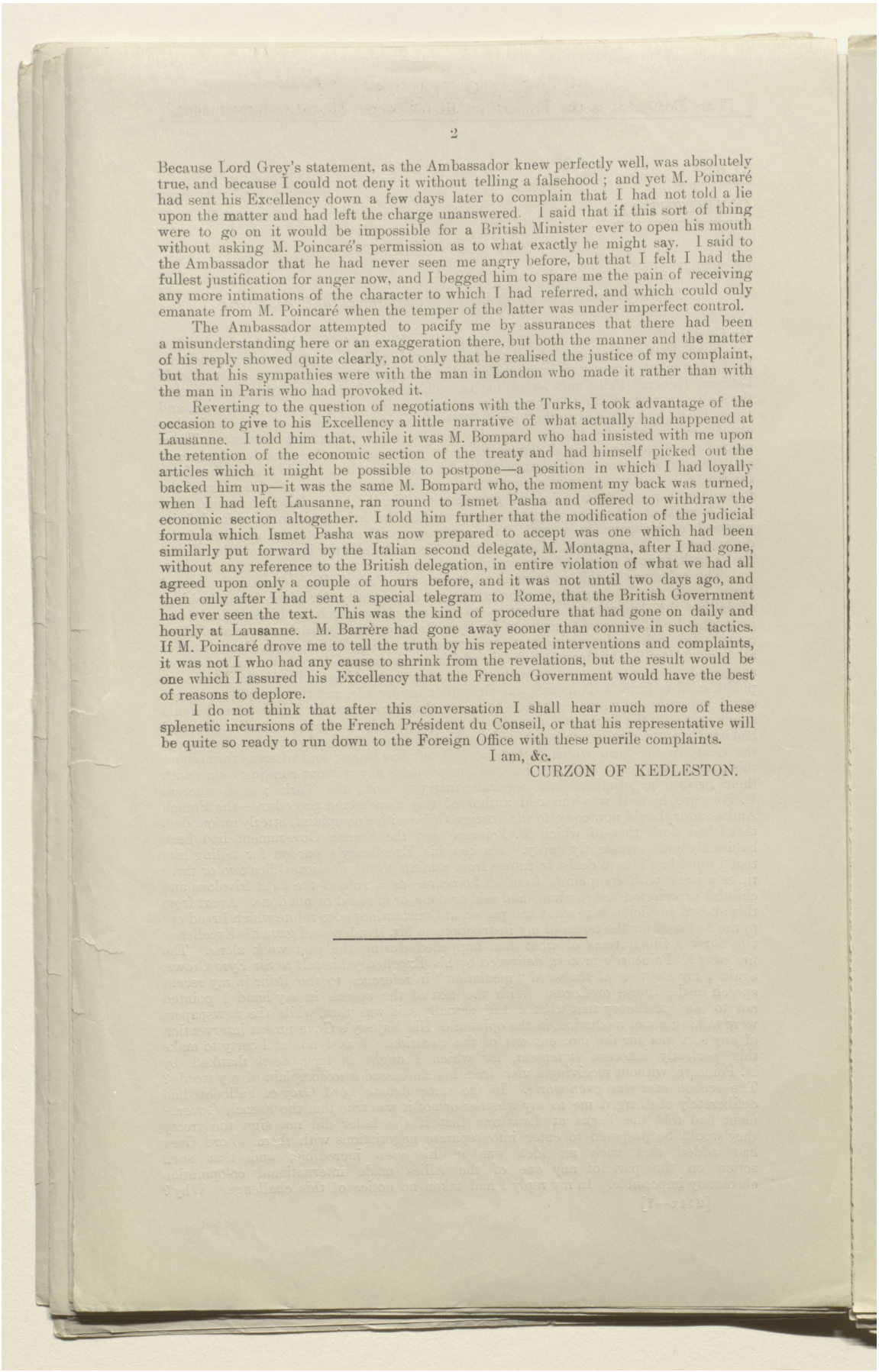

Because Lord Grey's statement, as the Ambassador knew perfectly well, was absolutely true, and because I could not deny it without telling a falsehood; and yet M. Poincaré had sent his Excellency down a few days later to complain that I had not told a lie upon the matter and had left the charge unanswered. I said that if this sort of thing were to go on it would be impossible for a British Minister ever to open his mouth without asking M. Poincaré's permission as to what exactly he might say. I said to the Ambassador that he had never seen me angry before, but that I felt I had the fullest justification for anger now, and I begged him to spare me the pain of receiving any more intimations of the character to which I had referred, and which could only emanate from M. Poincaré when the temper of the latter was under imperfect control.

The Ambassador attempted to pacify me by assurances that there had been a misunderstanding here or an exaggeration there, but both the manner and the matter of his reply showed quite clearly, not only that he realised the justice of my complaint, but that his sympathies were with the man in London who made it rather than with the man in Paris who had provoked it.

Reverting to the question of negotiations with the Turks, I took advantage of the occasion to give to his Excellency a little narrative of what actually had happened at Lausanne. I told him that, while it was M. Bompard who had insisted with me upon the retention of the economic section of the treaty and had himself picked out the articles which it might be possible to postpone—a position in which I had loyally backed him up—it was the same M. Bompard who, the moment my back was turned, when I had left Lausanne, ran round to Ismet Pasha and offered to withdraw the economic section altogether. I told him further that the modification of the judicial formula which Ismet Pasha was now prepared to accept was one which had been similarly put forward by the Italian second delegate, M. Montagna, after I had gone, without any reference to the British delegation, in entire violation of what we had all agreed upon only a couple of hours before, and it was not until two days ago, and then only after I had sent a special telegram to Rome, that the British Government had ever seen the text. This was the kind of procedure that had gone on daily and hourly at Lausanne. M. Barrère had gone away sooner than connive in such tactics. If M. Poincaré drove me to tell the truth by his repeated interventions and complaints, it was not I who had any cause to shrink from the revelations, but the result would be one which I assured his Excellency that the French Government would have the best of reasons to deplore.

I do not think that after this conversation I shall hear much more of these splenetic incursions of the French Président du Conseil, or that his representative will be quite so ready to run down to the Foreign Office with these puerile complaints.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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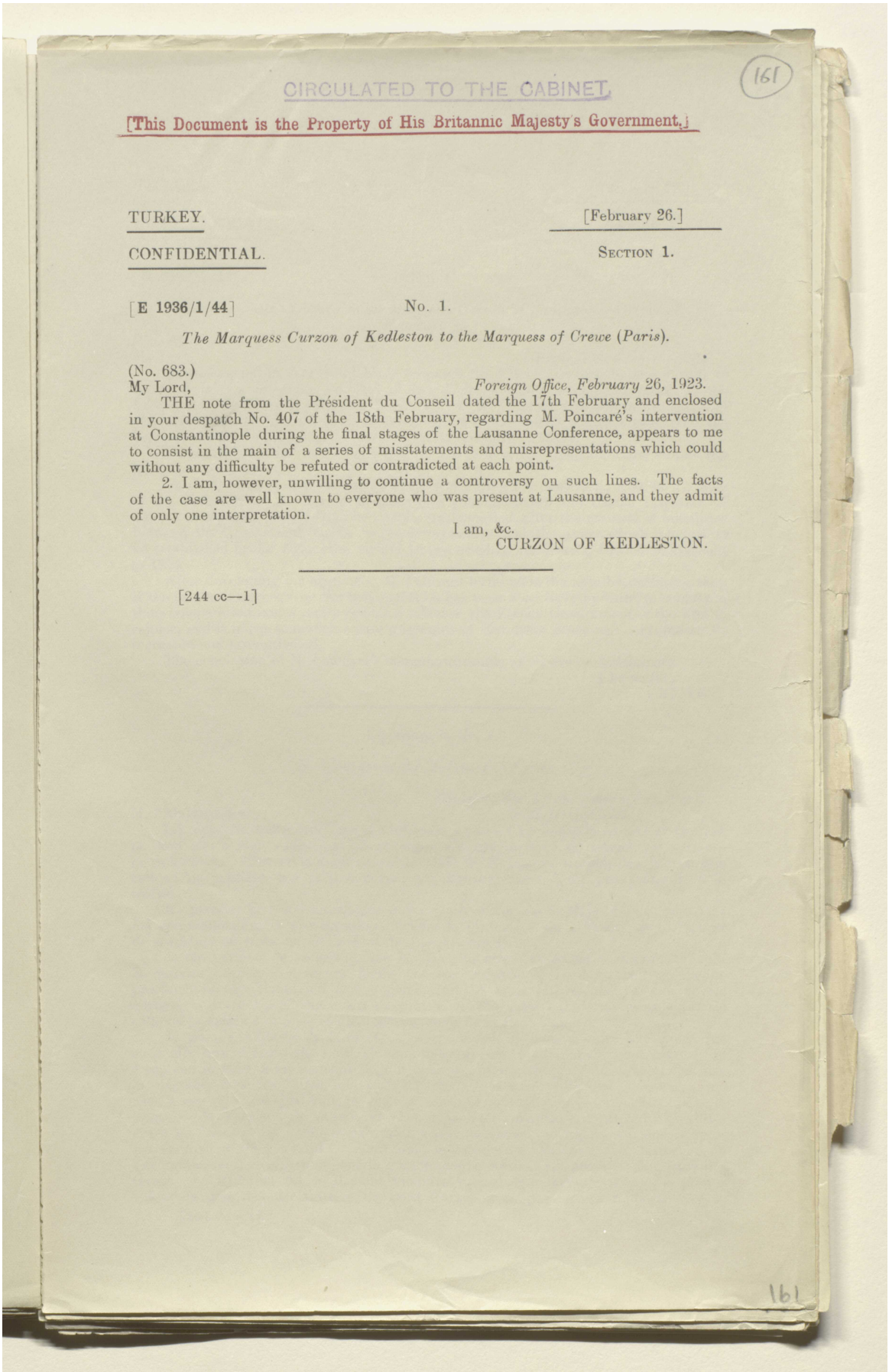

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TURKEY. [February 26.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 1936/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 683.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, February 26, 1923.*

THE note from the Président du Conseil dated the 17th February and enclosed in your despatch No. 407 of the 18th February, regarding M. Poincaré's intervention at Constantinople during the final stages of the Lausanne Conference, appears to me to consist in the main of a series of misstatements and misrepresentations which could without any difficulty be refuted or contradicted at each point.

2. I am, however, unwilling to continue a controversy on such lines. The facts of the case are well known to everyone who was present at Lausanne, and they admit of only one interpretation.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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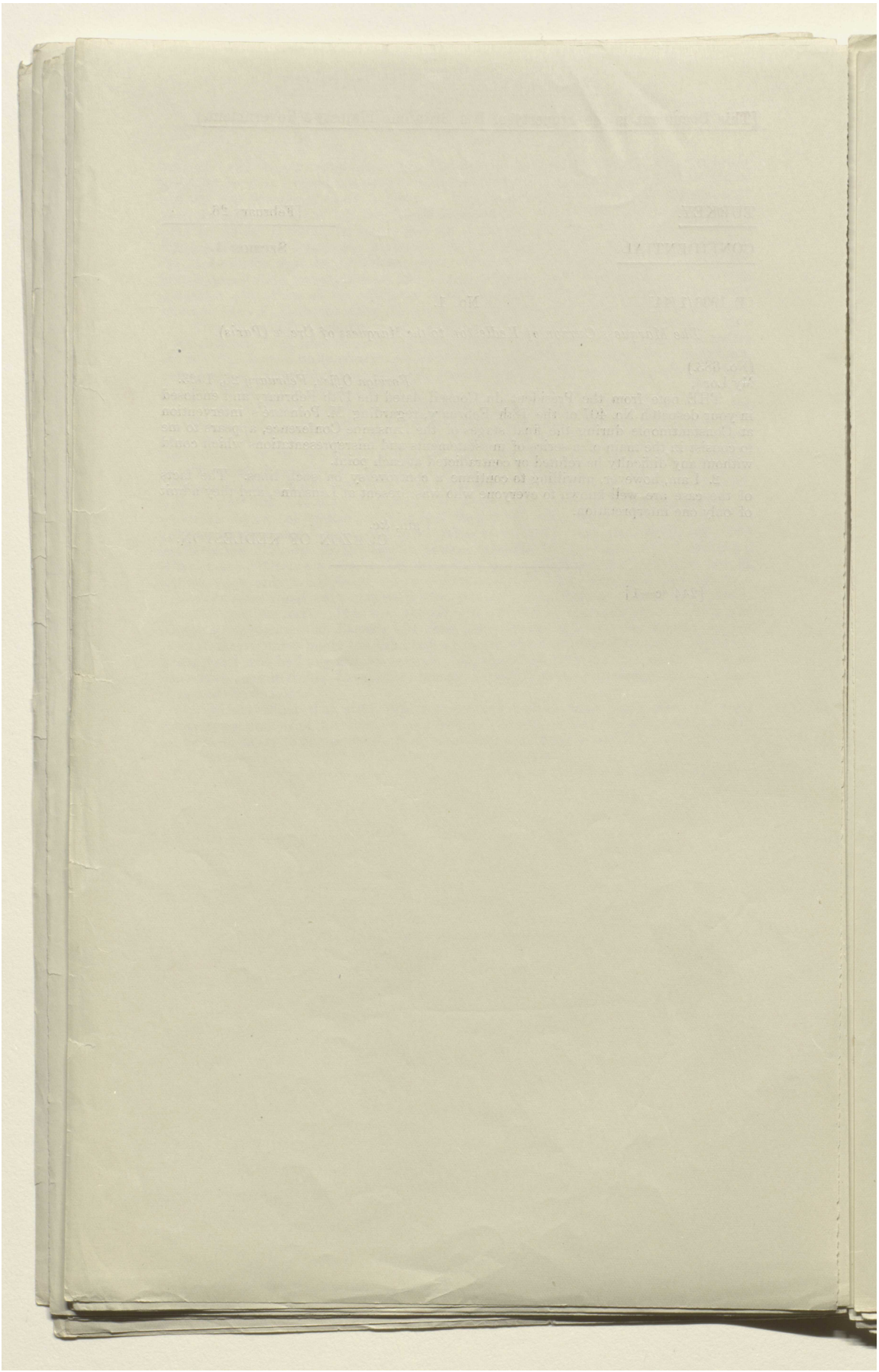

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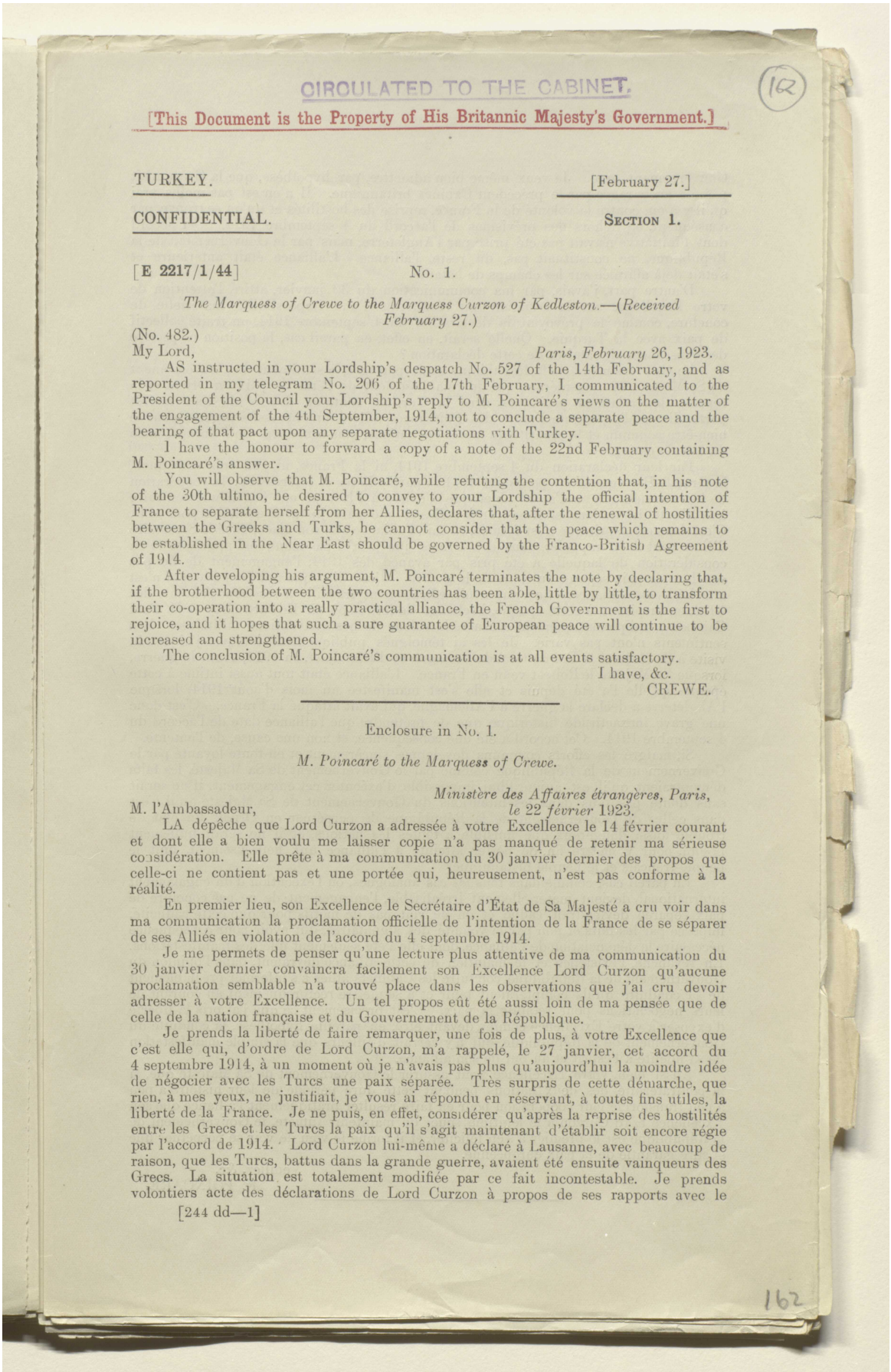

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TURKEY. [February 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2217/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received February 27.)

(No. 482.)

My Lord, *Paris, February 26, 1923.*

AS instructed in your Lordship's despatch No. 527 of the 14th February, and as reported in my telegram No. 206 of the 17th February, I communicated to the President of the Council your Lordship's reply to M. Poincaré's views on the matter of the engagement of the 4th September, 1914, not to conclude a separate peace and the bearing of that pact upon any separate negotiations with Turkey.

I have the honour to forward a copy of a note of the 22nd February containing M. Poincaré's answer.

You will observe that M. Poincaré, while refuting the contention that, in his note of the 30th ultimo, he desired to convey to your Lordship the official intention of France to separate herself from her Allies, declares that, after the renewal of hostilities between the Greeks and Turks, he cannot consider that the peace which remains to be established in the Near East should be governed by the Franco-British Agreement of 1914.

After developing his argument, M. Poincaré terminates the note by declaring that, if the brotherhood between the two countries has been able, little by little, to transform their co-operation into a really practical alliance, the French Government is the first to rejoice, and it hopes that such a sure guarantee of European peace will continue to be increased and strengthened.

The conclusion of M. Poincaré's communication is at all events satisfactory.

I have, &c.

CREWE.

Enclosure in No. 1.

M. Poincaré to the Marquess of Crewe.

Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Paris, le 22 février 1923.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

LA dépêche que Lord Curzon a adressée à votre Excellence le 14 février courant et dont elle a bien voulu me laisser copie n'a pas manqué de retenir ma sérieuse considération. Elle prête à ma communication du 30 janvier dernier des propos que celle-ci ne contient pas et une portée qui, heureusement, n'est pas conforme à la réalité.

En premier lieu, son Excellence le Secrétaire d'État de Sa Majesté a cru voir dans ma communication la proclamation officielle de l'intention de la France de se séparer de ses Alliés en violation de l'accord du 4 septembre 1914.

Je me permets de penser qu'une lecture plus attentive de ma communication du 30 janvier dernier convaincra facilement son Excellence Lord Curzon qu'aucune proclamation semblable n'a trouvé place dans les observations que j'ai cru devoir adresser à votre Excellence. Un tel propos eût été aussi loin de ma pensée que de celle de la nation française et du Gouvernement de la République.

Je prends la liberté de faire remarquer, une fois de plus, à votre Excellence que c'est elle qui, d'ordre de Lord Curzon, m'a rappelé, le 27 janvier, cet accord du 4 septembre 1914, à un moment où je n'avais pas plus qu'aujourd'hui la moindre idée de négocier avec les Turcs une paix séparée. Très surpris de cette démarche, que rien, à mes yeux, ne justifiait, je vous ai répondu en réservant, à toutes fins utiles, la liberté de la France. Je ne puis, en effet, considérer qu'après la reprise des hostilités entre les Grecs et les Turcs la paix qu'il s'agit maintenant d'établir soit encore régie par l'accord de 1914. Lord Curzon lui-même a déclaré à Lausanne, avec beaucoup de raison, que les Turcs, battus dans la grande guerre, avaient été ensuite vainqueurs des Grecs. La situation est totalement modifiée par ce fait incontestable. Je prends volontiers acte des déclarations de Lord Curzon à propos de ses rapports avec le

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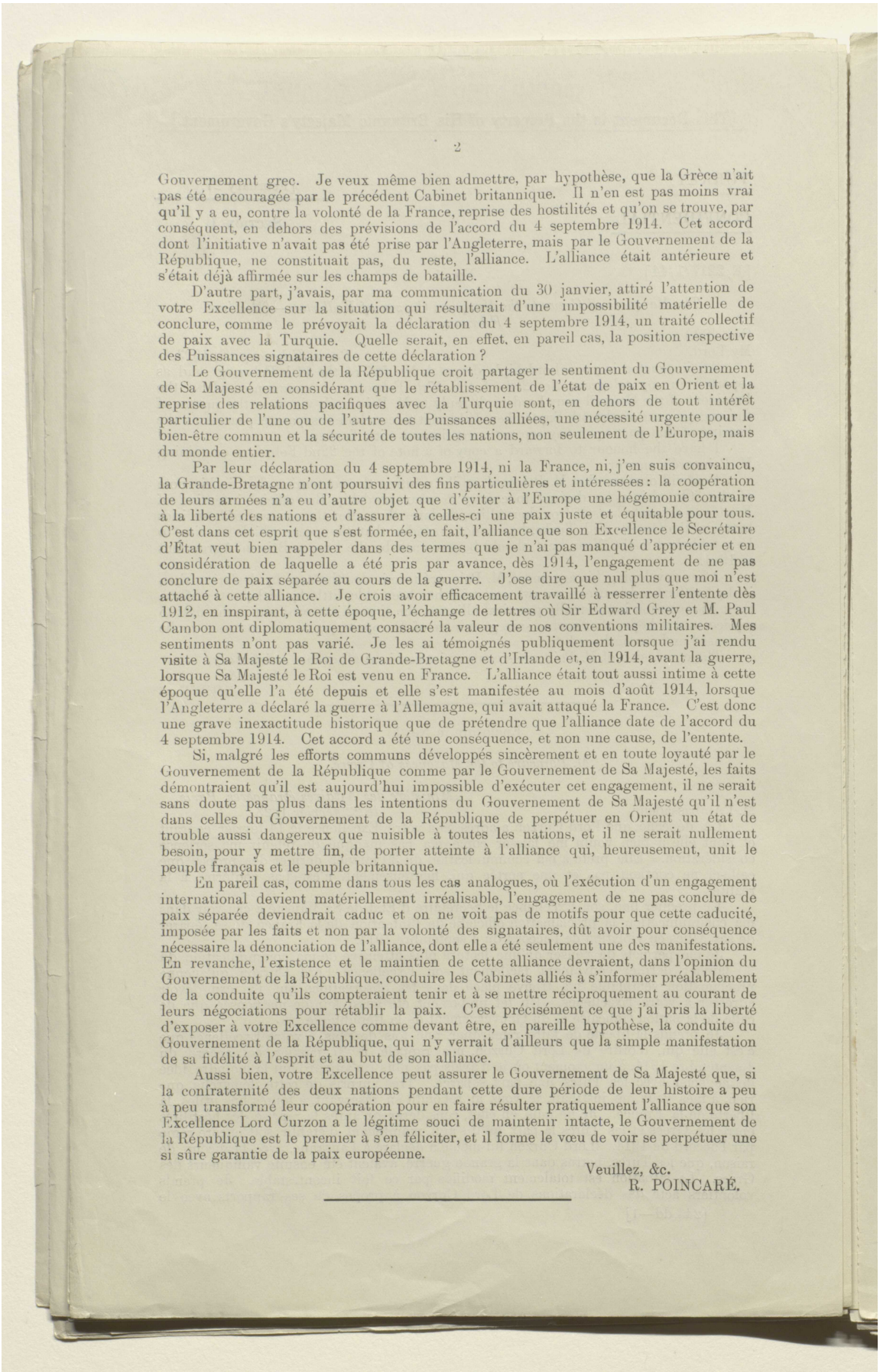

Gouvernement grec. Je veux même bien admettre, par hypothèse, que la Grèce n'ait pas été encouragée par le précédent Cabinet britannique. Il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'il y a eu, contre la volonté de la France, reprise des hostilités et qu'on se trouve, par conséquent, en dehors des prévisions de l'accord du 4 septembre 1914. Cet accord dont l'initiative n'avait pas été prise par l'Angleterre, mais par le Gouvernement de la République, ne constituait pas, du reste, l'alliance. L'alliance était antérieure et s'était déjà affirmée sur les champs de bataille.

D'autre part, j'avais, par ma communication du 30 janvier, attiré l'attention de votre Excellence sur la situation qui résulterait d'une impossibilité matérielle de conclure, comme le prévoyait la déclaration du 4 septembre 1914, un traité collectif de paix avec la Turquie. Quelle serait, en effet, en pareil cas, la position respective des Puissances signataires de cette déclaration ?

Le Gouvernement de la République croit partager le sentiment du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté en considérant que le rétablissement de l'état de paix en Orient et la reprise des relations pacifiques avec la Turquie sont, en dehors de tout intérêt particulier de l'une ou de l'autre des Puissances alliées, une nécessité urgente pour le bien-être commun et la sécurité de toutes les nations, non seulement de l'Europe, mais du monde entier.

Par leur déclaration du 4 septembre 1914, ni la France, ni, j'en suis convaincu, la Grande-Bretagne n'ont poursuivi des fins particulières et intéressées : la coopération de leurs armées n'a eu d'autre objet que d'éviter à l'Europe une hégémonie contraire à la liberté des nations et d'assurer à celles-ci une paix juste et équitable pour tous. C'est dans cet esprit que s'est formée, en fait, l'alliance que son Excellence le Secrétaire d'État veut bien rappeler dans des termes que je n'ai pas manqué d'apprécier et en considération de laquelle a été pris par avance, dès 1914, l'engagement de ne pas conclure de paix séparée au cours de la guerre. J'ose dire que nul plus que moi n'est attaché à cette alliance. Je crois avoir efficacement travaillé à resserrer l'entente dès 1912, en inspirant, à cette époque, l'échange de lettres où Sir Edward Grey et M. Paul Cambon ont diplomatiquement consacré la valeur de nos conventions militaires. Mes sentiments n'ont pas varié. Je les ai témoignés publiquement lorsque j'ai rendu visite à Sa Majesté le Roi de Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande et, en 1914, avant la guerre, lorsque Sa Majesté le Roi est venu en France. L'alliance était tout aussi intime à cette époque qu'elle l'a été depuis et elle s'est manifestée au mois d'août 1914, lorsque l'Angleterre a déclaré la guerre à l'Allemagne, qui avait attaqué la France. C'est donc une grave inexactitude historique que de prétendre que l'alliance date de l'accord du 4 septembre 1914. Cet accord a été une conséquence, et non une cause, de l'entente.

Si, malgré les efforts communs développés sincèrement et en toute loyauté par le Gouvernement de la République comme par le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté, les faits démontraient qu'il est aujourd'hui impossible d'exécuter cet engagement, il ne serait sans doute pas plus dans les intentions du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté qu'il n'est dans celles du Gouvernement de la République de perpétuer en Orient un état de trouble aussi dangereux que nuisible à toutes les nations, et il ne serait nullement besoin, pour y mettre fin, de porter atteinte à l'alliance qui, heureusement, unit le peuple français et le peuple britannique.

En pareil cas, comme dans tous les cas analogues, où l'exécution d'un engagement international devient matériellement irréalisable, l'engagement de ne pas conclure de paix séparée deviendrait caduc et on ne voit pas de motifs pour que cette caducité, imposée par les faits et non par la volonté des signataires, dût avoir pour conséquence nécessaire la dénonciation de l'alliance, dont elle a été seulement une des manifestations. En revanche, l'existence et le maintien de cette alliance devraient, dans l'opinion du Gouvernement de la République, conduire les Cabinets alliés à s'informer préalablement de la conduite qu'ils compteraient tenir et à se mettre réciproquement au courant de leurs négociations pour rétablir la paix. C'est précisément ce que j'ai pris la liberté d'exposer à votre Excellence comme devant être, en pareille hypothèse, la conduite du Gouvernement de la République, qui n'y verrait d'ailleurs que la simple manifestation de sa fidélité à l'esprit et au but de son alliance.

Aussi bien, votre Excellence peut assurer le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté que, si la confraternité des deux nations pendant cette dure période de leur histoire a peu à peu transformé leur coopération pour en faire résulter pratiquement l'alliance que son Excellence Lord Curzon a le légitime souci de maintenir intacte, le Gouvernement de la République est le premier à s'en féliciter, et il forme le vœu de voir se perpétuer une si sûre garantie de la paix européenne.

Veuillez, &c.
R. POINCARÉ.

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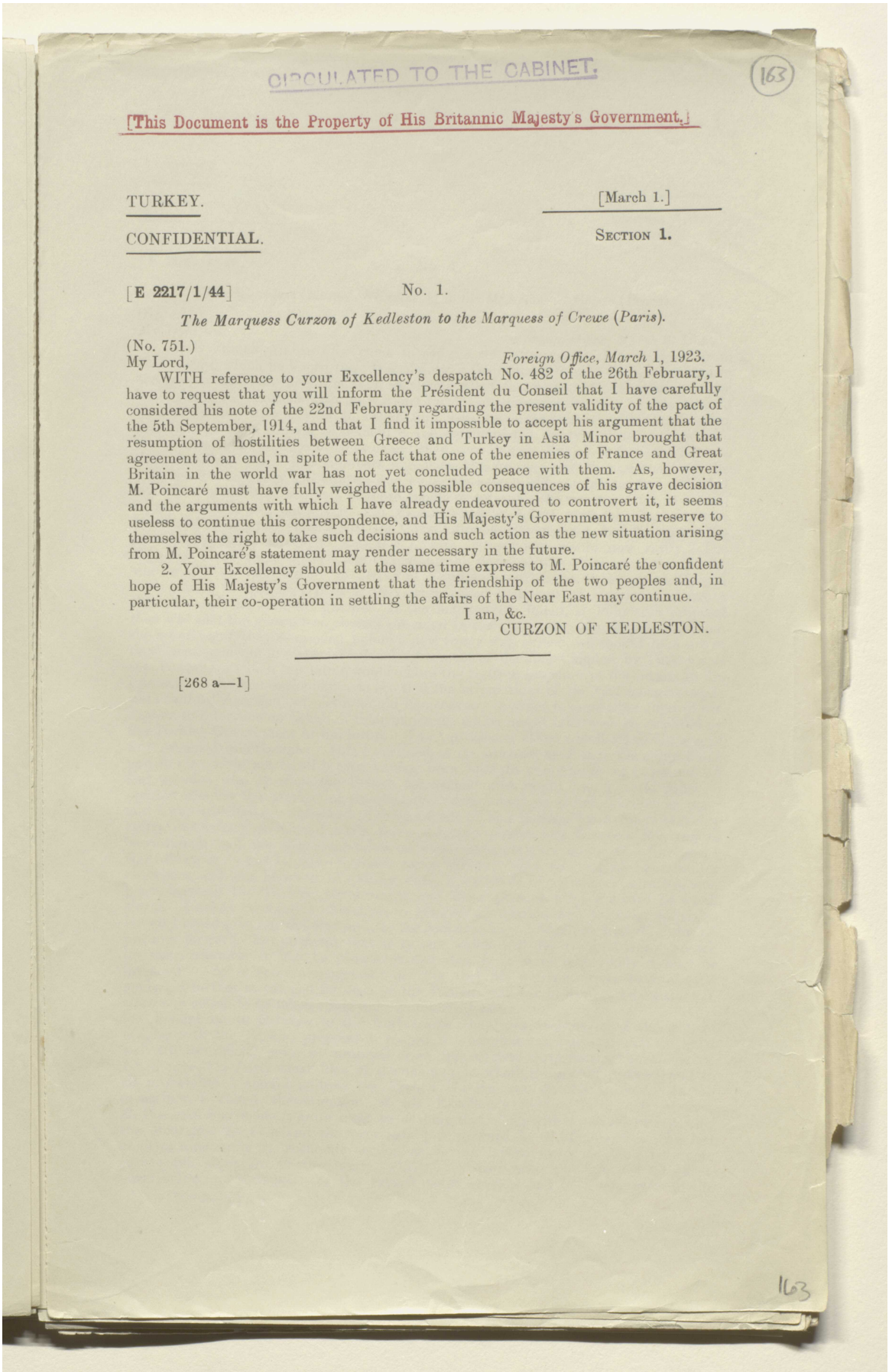

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TURKEY. [March 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2217/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 751.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March* 1, 1923.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 482 of the 26th February, I have to request that you will inform the Président du Conseil that I have carefully considered his note of the 22nd February regarding the present validity of the pact of the 5th September, 1914, and that I find it impossible to accept his argument that the resumption of hostilities between Greece and Turkey in Asia Minor brought that agreement to an end, in spite of the fact that one of the enemies of France and Great Britain in the world war has not yet concluded peace with them. As, however, M. Poincaré must have fully weighed the possible consequences of his grave decision and the arguments with which I have already endeavoured to controvert it, it seems useless to continue this correspondence, and His Majesty's Government must reserve to themselves the right to take such decisions and such action as the new situation arising from M. Poincaré's statement may render necessary in the future.

2. Your Excellency should at the same time express to M. Poincaré the confident hope of His Majesty's Government that the friendship of the two peoples and, in particular, their co-operation in settling the affairs of the Near East may continue.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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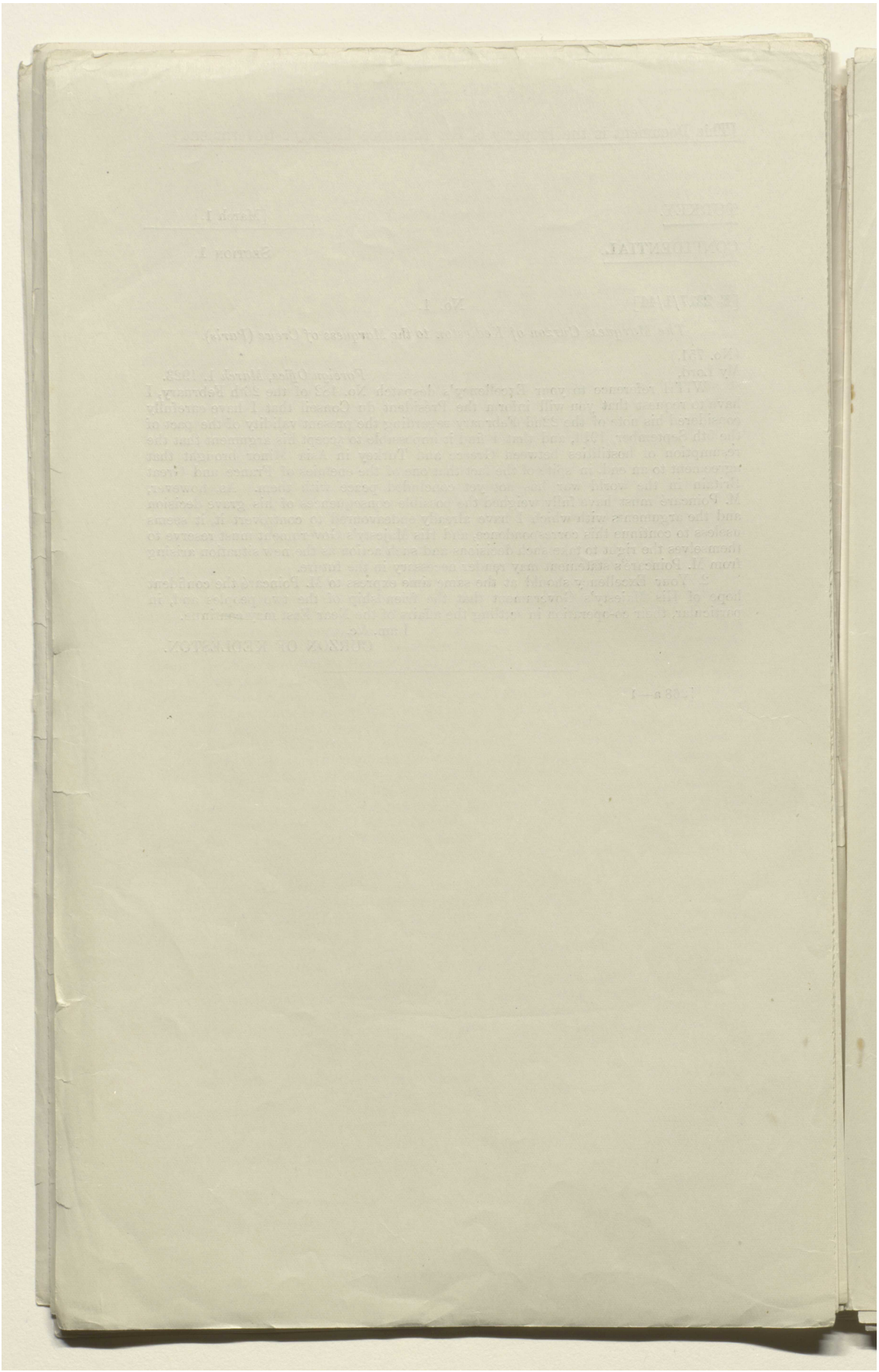

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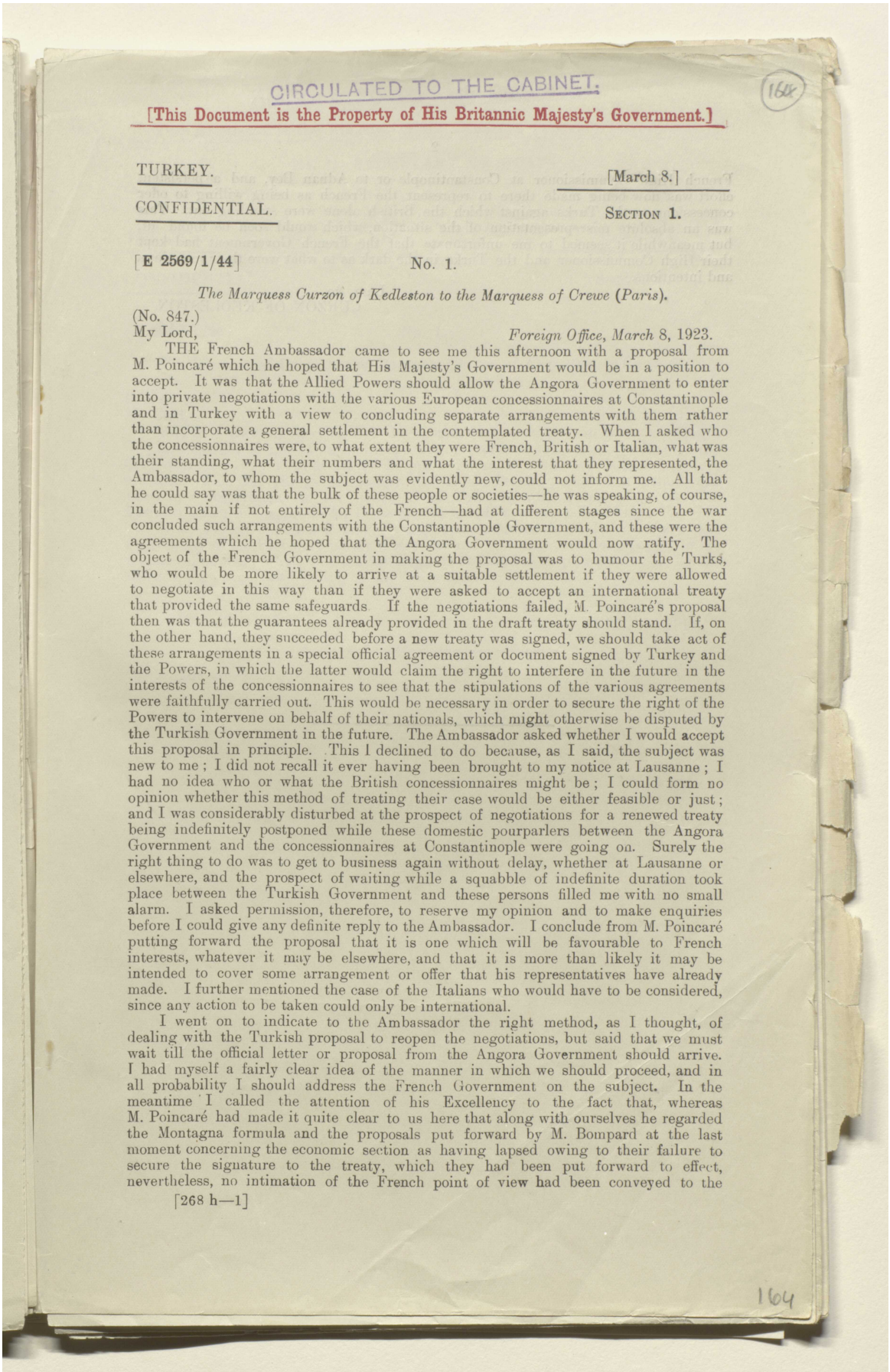

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TURKEY. [March 8.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 2569/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 847.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, March 8, 1923.*

THE French Ambassador came to see me this afternoon with a proposal from M. Poincaré which he hoped that His Majesty's Government would be in a position to accept. It was that the Allied Powers should allow the Angora Government to enter into private negotiations with the various European concessionnaires at Constantinople and in Turkey with a view to concluding separate arrangements with them rather than incorporate a general settlement in the contemplated treaty. When I asked who the concessionnaires were, to what extent they were French, British or Italian, what was their standing, what their numbers and what the interest that they represented, the Ambassador, to whom the subject was evidently new, could not inform me. All that he could say was that the bulk of these people or societies—he was speaking, of course, in the main if not entirely of the French—had at different stages since the war concluded such arrangements with the Constantinople Government, and these were the agreements which he hoped that the Angora Government would now ratify. The object of the French Government in making the proposal was to humour the Turks, who would be more likely to arrive at a suitable settlement if they were allowed to negotiate in this way than if they were asked to accept an international treaty that provided the same safeguards. If the negotiations failed, M. Poincaré's proposal then was that the guarantees already provided in the draft treaty should stand. If, on the other hand, they succeeded before a new treaty was signed, we should take act of these arrangements in a special official agreement or document signed by Turkey and the Powers, in which the latter would claim the right to interfere in the future in the interests of the concessionnaires to see that the stipulations of the various agreements were faithfully carried out. This would be necessary in order to secure the right of the Powers to intervene on behalf of their nationals, which might otherwise be disputed by the Turkish Government in the future. The Ambassador asked whether I would accept this proposal in principle. This I declined to do because, as I said, the subject was new to me; I did not recall it ever having been brought to my notice at Lausanne; I had no idea who or what the British concessionnaires might be; I could form no opinion whether this method of treating their case would be either feasible or just; and I was considerably disturbed at the prospect of negotiations for a renewed treaty being indefinitely postponed while these domestic pourparlers between the Angora Government and the concessionnaires at Constantinople were going on. Surely the right thing to do was to get to business again without delay, whether at Lausanne or elsewhere, and the prospect of waiting while a squabble of indefinite duration took place between the Turkish Government and these persons filled me with no small alarm. I asked permission, therefore, to reserve my opinion and to make enquiries before I could give any definite reply to the Ambassador. I conclude from M. Poincaré putting forward the proposal that it is one which will be favourable to French interests, whatever it may be elsewhere, and that it is more than likely it may be intended to cover some arrangement or offer that his representatives have already made. I further mentioned the case of the Italians who would have to be considered, since any action to be taken could only be international.

I went on to indicate to the Ambassador the right method, as I thought, of dealing with the Turkish proposal to reopen the negotiations, but said that we must wait till the official letter or proposal from the Angora Government should arrive. I had myself a fairly clear idea of the manner in which we should proceed, and in all probability I should address the French Government on the subject. In the meantime I called the attention of his Excellency to the fact that, whereas M. Poincaré had made it quite clear to us here that along with ourselves he regarded the Montagna formula and the proposals put forward by M. Bompard at the last moment concerning the economic section as having lapsed owing to their failure to secure the signature to the treaty, which they had been put forward to effect, nevertheless, no intimation of the French point of view had been conveyed to the

[268 h—1]

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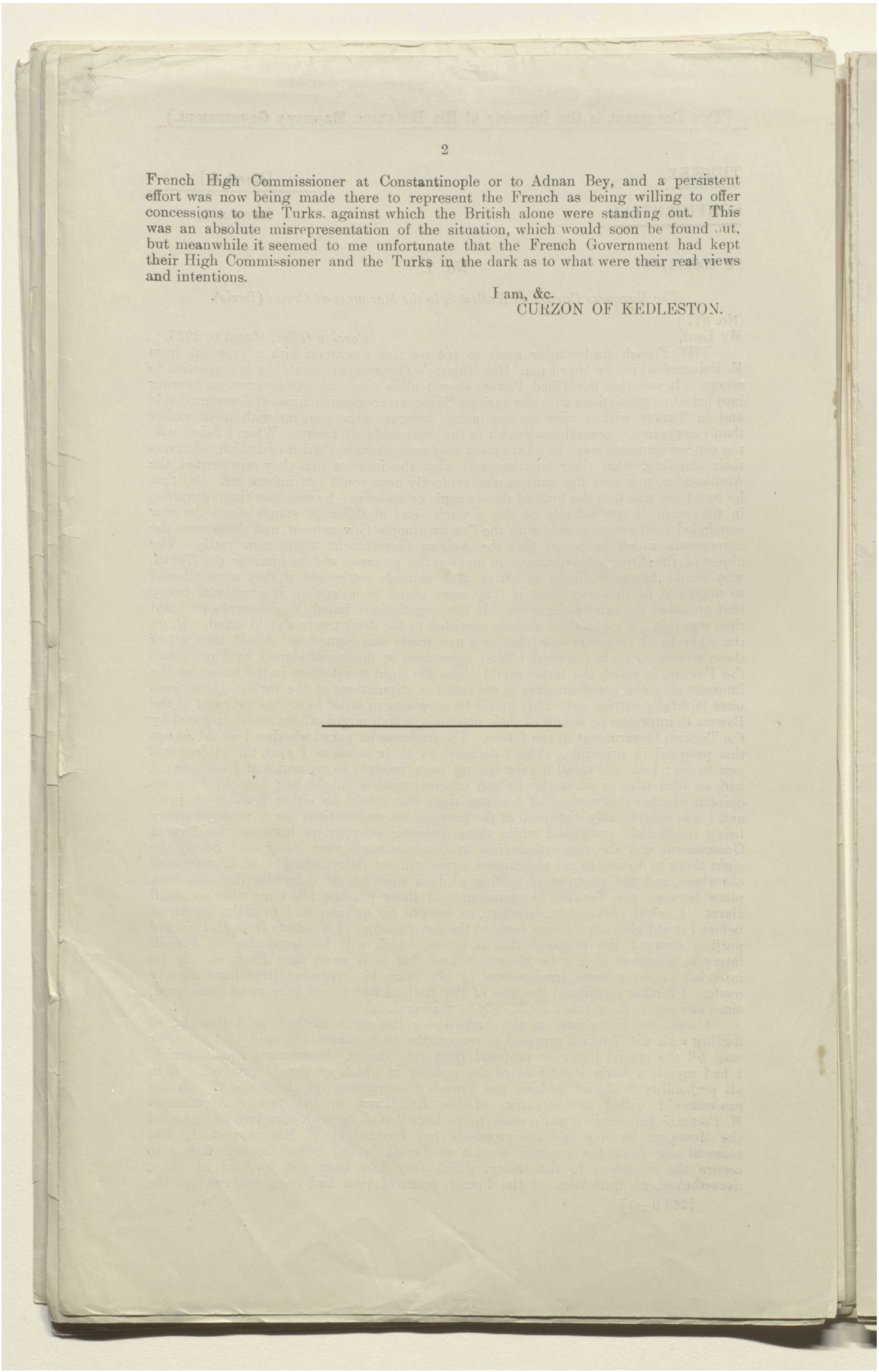
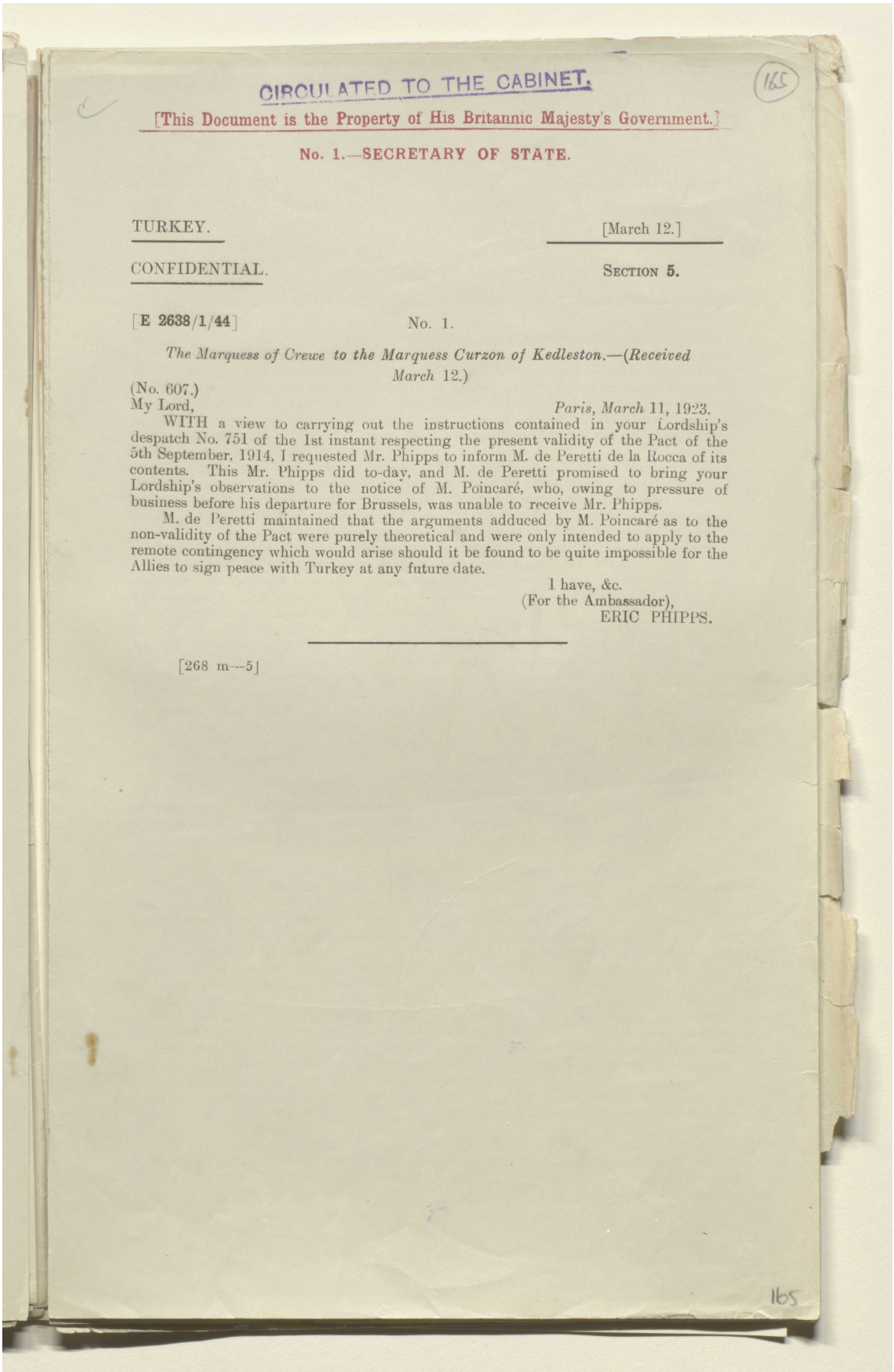


French High Commissioner at Constantinople or to Adnan Bey, and a persistent effort was now being made there to represent the French as being willing to offer concessions to the Turks. against which the British alone were standing out. This was an absolute misrepresentation of the situation, which would soon be found out, but meanwhile it seemed to me unfortunate that the French Government had kept their High Commissioner and the Turks in the dark as to what were their real views and intentions.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.



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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY. [March 12.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 5.

[E 2638/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess of Crewe to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(*Received March* 12.)

(No. 607.)

My Lord, *Paris, March* 11, 1923.

WITH a view to carrying out the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 751 of the 1st instant respecting the present validity of the Pact of the 5th September, 1914, I requested Mr. Phipps to inform M. de Peretti de la Rocca of its contents. This Mr. Phipps did to-day, and M. de Peretti promised to bring your Lordship's observations to the notice of M. Poincaré, who, owing to pressure of business before his departure for Brussels, was unable to receive Mr. Phipps.

M. de Peretti maintained that the arguments adduced by M. Poincaré as to the non-validity of the Pact were purely theoretical and were only intended to apply to the remote contingency which would arise should it be found to be quite impossible for the Allies to sign peace with Turkey at any future date.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
ERIC PHIPPS.

[268 m—5]

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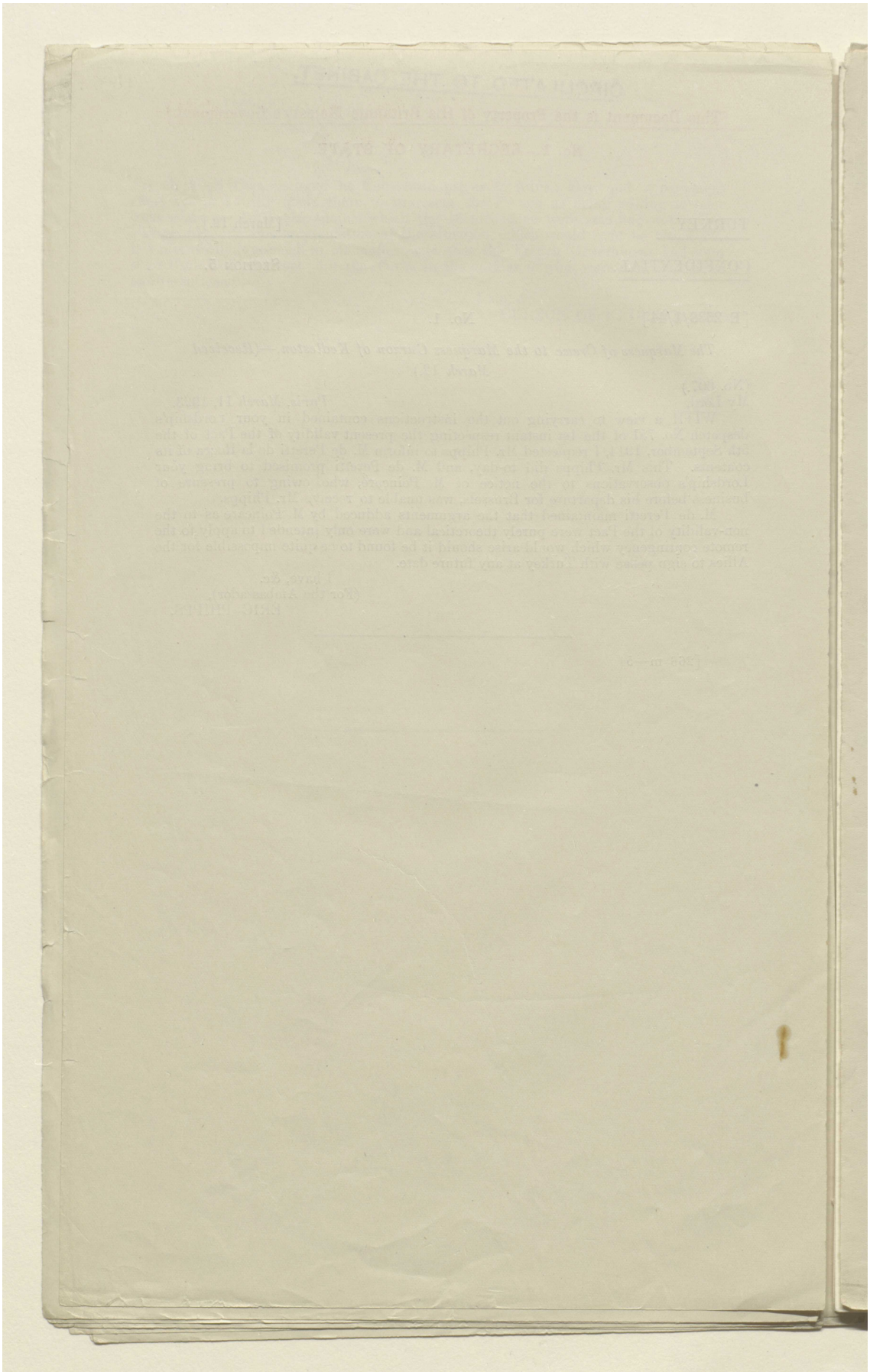

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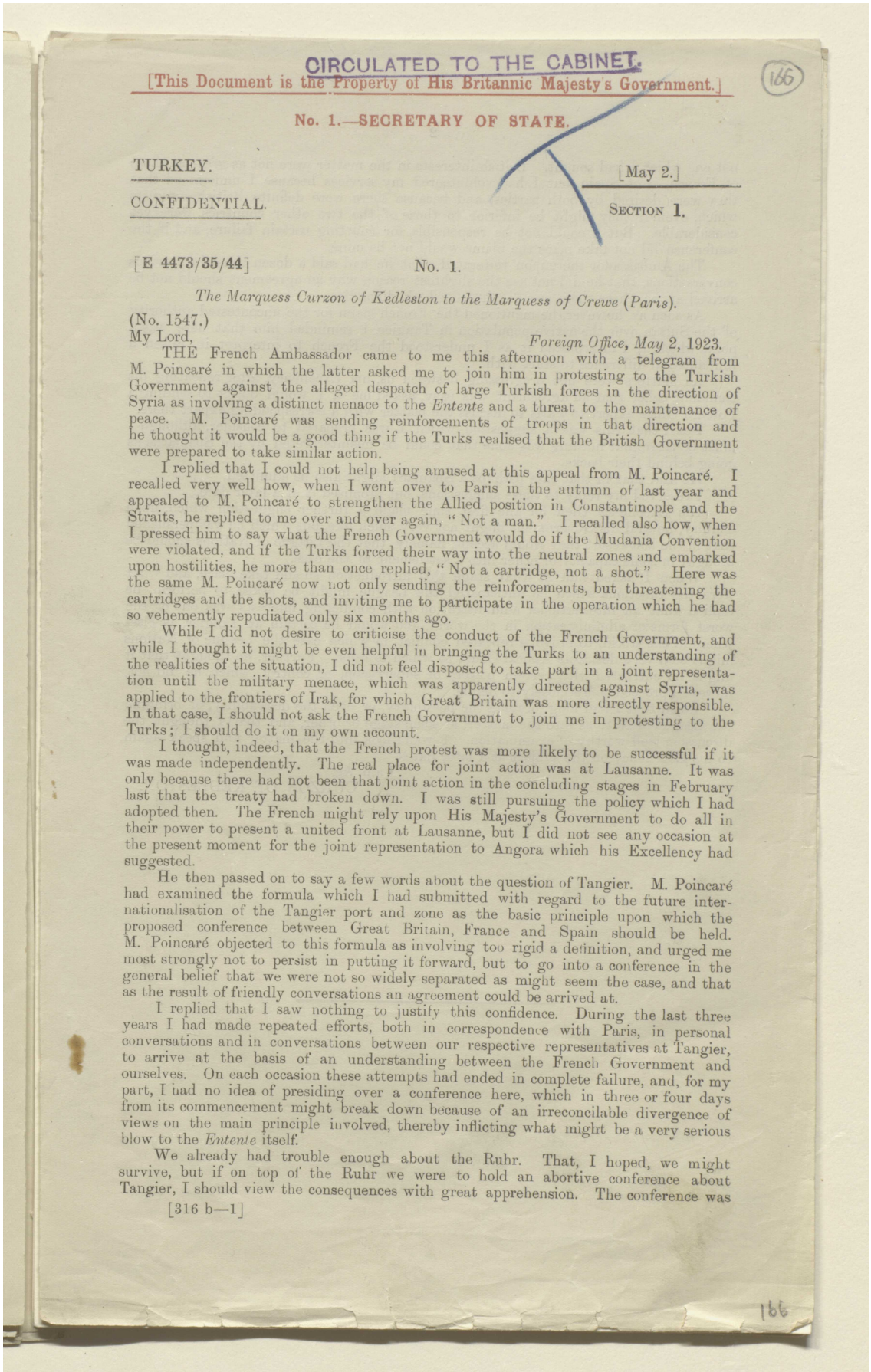

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY.

[May 2.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[E 4473/35/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 1547.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May 2, 1923.*

THE French Ambassador came to me this afternoon with a telegram from M. Poincaré in which the latter asked me to join him in protesting to the Turkish Government against the alleged despatch of large Turkish forces in the direction of Syria as involving a distinct menace to the *Entente* and a threat to the maintenance of peace. M. Poincaré was sending reinforcements of troops in that direction and he thought it would be a good thing if the Turks realised that the British Government were prepared to take similar action.

I replied that I could not help being amused at this appeal from M. Poincaré. I recalled very well how, when I went over to Paris in the autumn of last year and appealed to M. Poincaré to strengthen the Allied position in Constantinople and the Straits, he replied to me over and over again, "Not a man." I recalled also how, when I pressed him to say what the French Government would do if the Mudania Convention were violated, and if the Turks forced their way into the neutral zones and embarked upon hostilities, he more than once replied, "Not a cartridge, not a shot." Here was the same M. Poincaré now not only sending the reinforcements, but threatening the cartridges and the shots, and inviting me to participate in the operation which he had so vehemently repudiated only six months ago.

While I did not desire to criticise the conduct of the French Government, and while I thought it might be even helpful in bringing the Turks to an understanding of the realities of the situation, I did not feel disposed to take part in a joint representation until the military menace, which was apparently directed against Syria, was applied to the frontiers of Irak, for which Great Britain was more directly responsible. In that case, I should not ask the French Government to join me in protesting to the Turks; I should do it on my own account.

I thought, indeed, that the French protest was more likely to be successful if it was made independently. The real place for joint action was at Lausanne. It was only because there had not been that joint action in the concluding stages in February last that the treaty had broken down. I was still pursuing the policy which I had adopted then. The French might rely upon His Majesty's Government to do all in their power to present a united front at Lausanne, but I did not see any occasion at the present moment for the joint representation to Angora which his Excellency had suggested.

He then passed on to say a few words about the question of Tangier. M. Poincaré had examined the formula which I had submitted with regard to the future internationalisation of the Tangier port and zone as the basic principle upon which the proposed conference between Great Britain, France and Spain should be held. M. Poincaré objected to this formula as involving too rigid a definition, and urged me most strongly not to persist in putting it forward, but to go into a conference in the general belief that we were not so widely separated as might seem the case, and that as the result of friendly conversations an agreement could be arrived at.

I replied that I saw nothing to justify this confidence. During the last three years I had made repeated efforts, both in correspondence with Paris, in personal conversations and in conversations between our respective representatives at Tangier, to arrive at the basis of an understanding between the French Government and ourselves. On each occasion these attempts had ended in complete failure, and, for my part, I had no idea of presiding over a conference here, which in three or four days from its commencement might break down because of an irreconcilable divergence of views on the main principle involved, thereby inflicting what might be a very serious blow to the *Entente* itself.

We already had trouble enough about the Ruhr. That, I hoped, we might survive, but if on top of the Ruhr we were to hold an abortive conference about Tangier, I should view the consequences with great apprehension. The conference was

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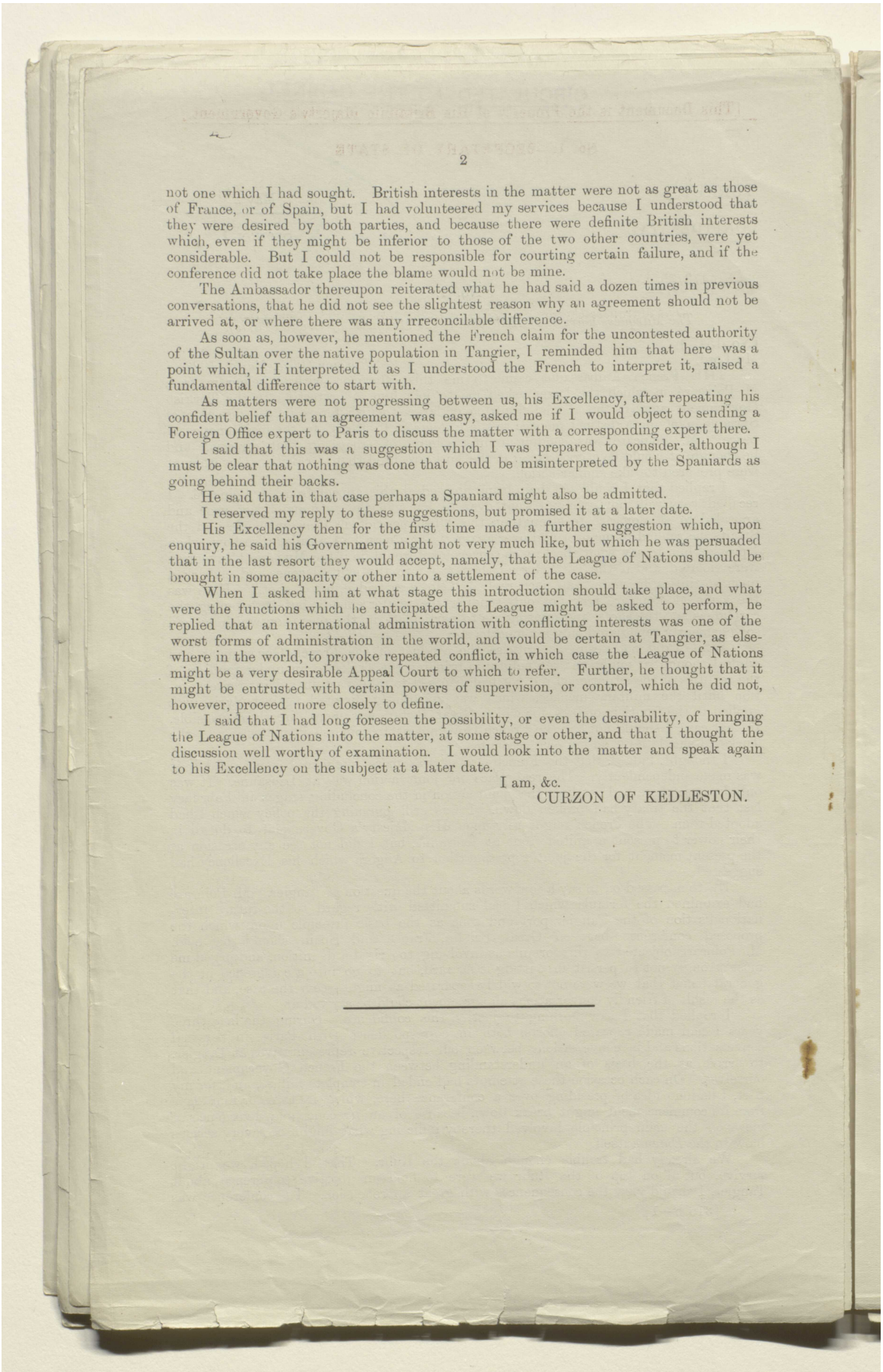

not one which I had sought. British interests in the matter were not as great as those of France, or of Spain, but I had volunteered my services because I understood that they were desired by both parties, and because there were definite British interests which, even if they might be inferior to those of the two other countries, were yet considerable. But I could not be responsible for courting certain failure, and if the conference did not take place the blame would not be mine.

The Ambassador thereupon reiterated what he had said a dozen times in previous conversations, that he did not see the slightest reason why an agreement should not be arrived at, or where there was any irreconcilable difference.

As soon as, however, he mentioned the French claim for the uncontested authority of the Sultan over the native population in Tangier, I reminded him that here was a point which, if I interpreted it as I understood the French to interpret it, raised a fundamental difference to start with.

As matters were not progressing between us, his Excellency, after repeating his confident belief that an agreement was easy, asked me if I would object to sending a Foreign Office expert to Paris to discuss the matter with a corresponding expert there.

I said that this was a suggestion which I was prepared to consider, although I must be clear that nothing was done that could be misinterpreted by the Spaniards as going behind their backs.

He said that in that case perhaps a Spaniard might also be admitted.

I reserved my reply to these suggestions, but promised it at a later date.

His Excellency then for the first time made a further suggestion which, upon enquiry, he said his Government might not very much like, but which he was persuaded that in the last resort they would accept, namely, that the League of Nations should be brought in some capacity or other into a settlement of the case.

When I asked him at what stage this introduction should take place, and what were the functions which he anticipated the League might be asked to perform, he replied that an international administration with conflicting interests was one of the worst forms of administration in the world, and would be certain at Tangier, as elsewhere in the world, to provoke repeated conflict, in which case the League of Nations might be a very desirable Appeal Court to which to refer. Further, he thought that it might be entrusted with certain powers of supervision, or control, which he did not, however, proceed more closely to define.

I said that I had long foreseen the possibility, or even the desirability, of bringing the League of Nations into the matter, at some stage or other, and that I thought the discussion well worthy of examination. I would look into the matter and speak again to his Excellency on the subject at a later date.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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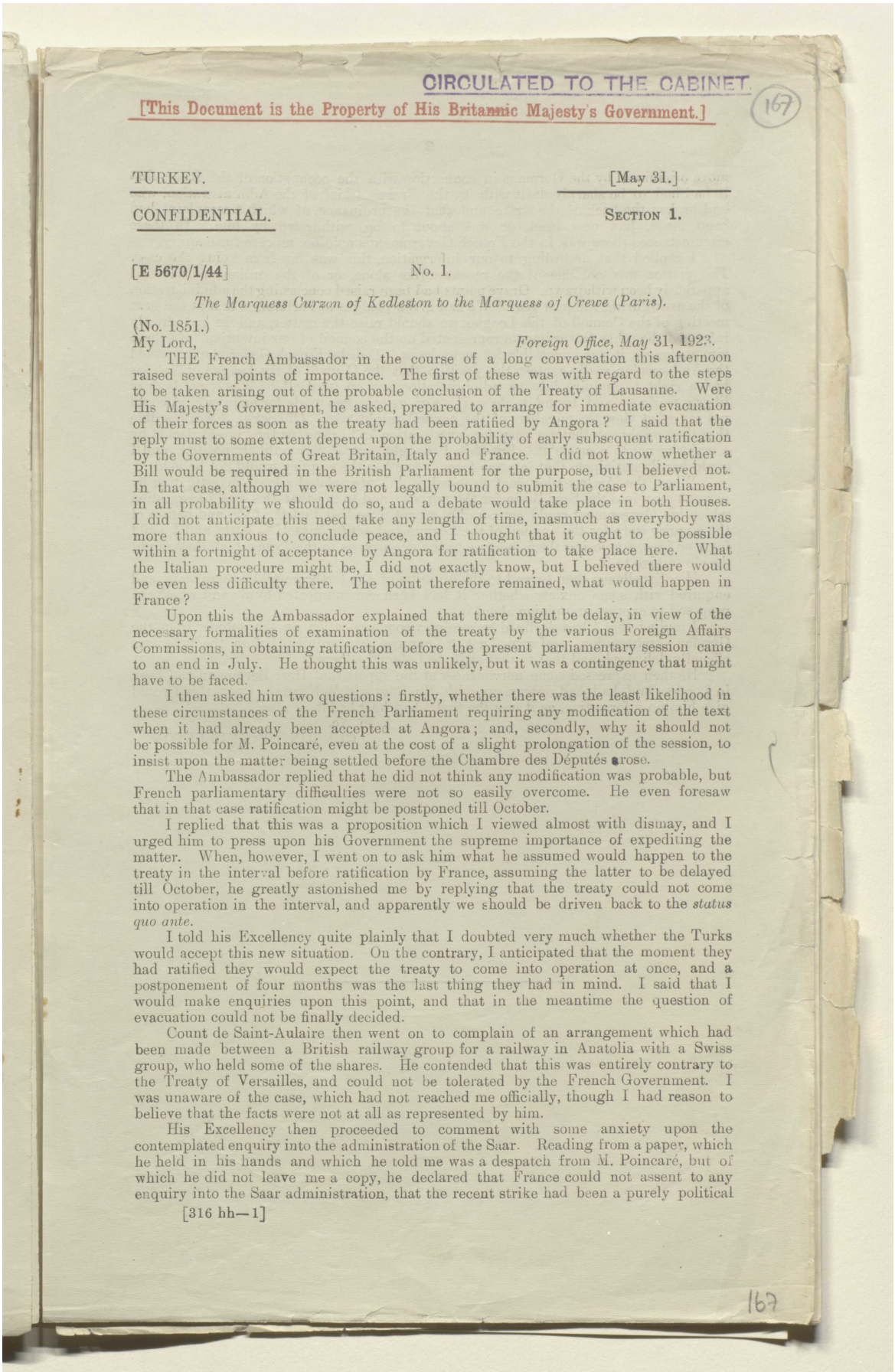

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TURKEY. [May 31.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 5670/1/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 1851.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, May* 31, 1923.

THE French Ambassador in the course of a long conversation this afternoon raised several points of importance. The first of these was with regard to the steps to be taken arising out of the probable conclusion of the Treaty of Lausanne. Were His Majesty's Government, he asked, prepared to arrange for immediate evacuation of their forces as soon as the treaty had been ratified by Angora? I said that the reply must to some extent depend upon the probability of early subsequent ratification by the Governments of Great Britain, Italy and France. I did not know whether a Bill would be required in the British Parliament for the purpose, but I believed not. In that case, although we were not legally bound to submit the case to Parliament, in all probability we should do so, and a debate would take place in both Houses. I did not anticipate this need take any length of time, inasmuch as everybody was more than anxious to conclude peace, and I thought that it ought to be possible within a fortnight of acceptance by Angora for ratification to take place here. What the Italian procedure might be, I did not exactly know, but I believed there would be even less difficulty there. The point therefore remained, what would happen in France?

Upon this the Ambassador explained that there might be delay, in view of the necessary formalities of examination of the treaty by the various Foreign Affairs Commissions, in obtaining ratification before the present parliamentary session came to an end in July. He thought this was unlikely, but it was a contingency that might have to be faced.

I then asked him two questions: firstly, whether there was the least likelihood in these circumstances of the French Parliament requiring any modification of the text when it had already been accepted at Angora; and, secondly, why it should not be possible for M. Poincaré, even at the cost of a slight prolongation of the session, to insist upon the matter being settled before the Chambre des Députés arose.

The Ambassador replied that he did not think any modification was probable, but French parliamentary difficulties were not so easily overcome. He even foresaw that in that case ratification might be postponed till October.

I replied that this was a proposition which I viewed almost with dismay, and I urged him to press upon his Government the supreme importance of expediting the matter. When, however, I went on to ask him what he assumed would happen to the treaty in the interval before ratification by France, assuming the latter to be delayed till October, he greatly astonished me by replying that the treaty could not come into operation in the interval, and apparently we should be driven back to the *status quo ante*.

I told his Excellency quite plainly that I doubted very much whether the Turks would accept this new situation. On the contrary, I anticipated that the moment they had ratified they would expect the treaty to come into operation at once, and a postponement of four months was the last thing they had in mind. I said that I would make enquiries upon this point, and that in the meantime the question of evacuation could not be finally decided.

Count de Saint-Aulaire then went on to complain of an arrangement which had been made between a British railway group for a railway in Anatolia with a Swiss group, who held some of the shares. He contended that this was entirely contrary to the Treaty of Versailles, and could not be tolerated by the French Government. I was unaware of the case, which had not reached me officially, though I had reason to believe that the facts were not at all as represented by him.

His Excellency then proceeded to comment with some anxiety upon the contemplated enquiry into the administration of the Saar. Reading from a paper, which he held in his hands and which he told me was a despatch from M. Poincaré, but of which he did not leave me a copy, he declared that France could not assent to any enquiry into the Saar administration, that the recent strike had been a purely political

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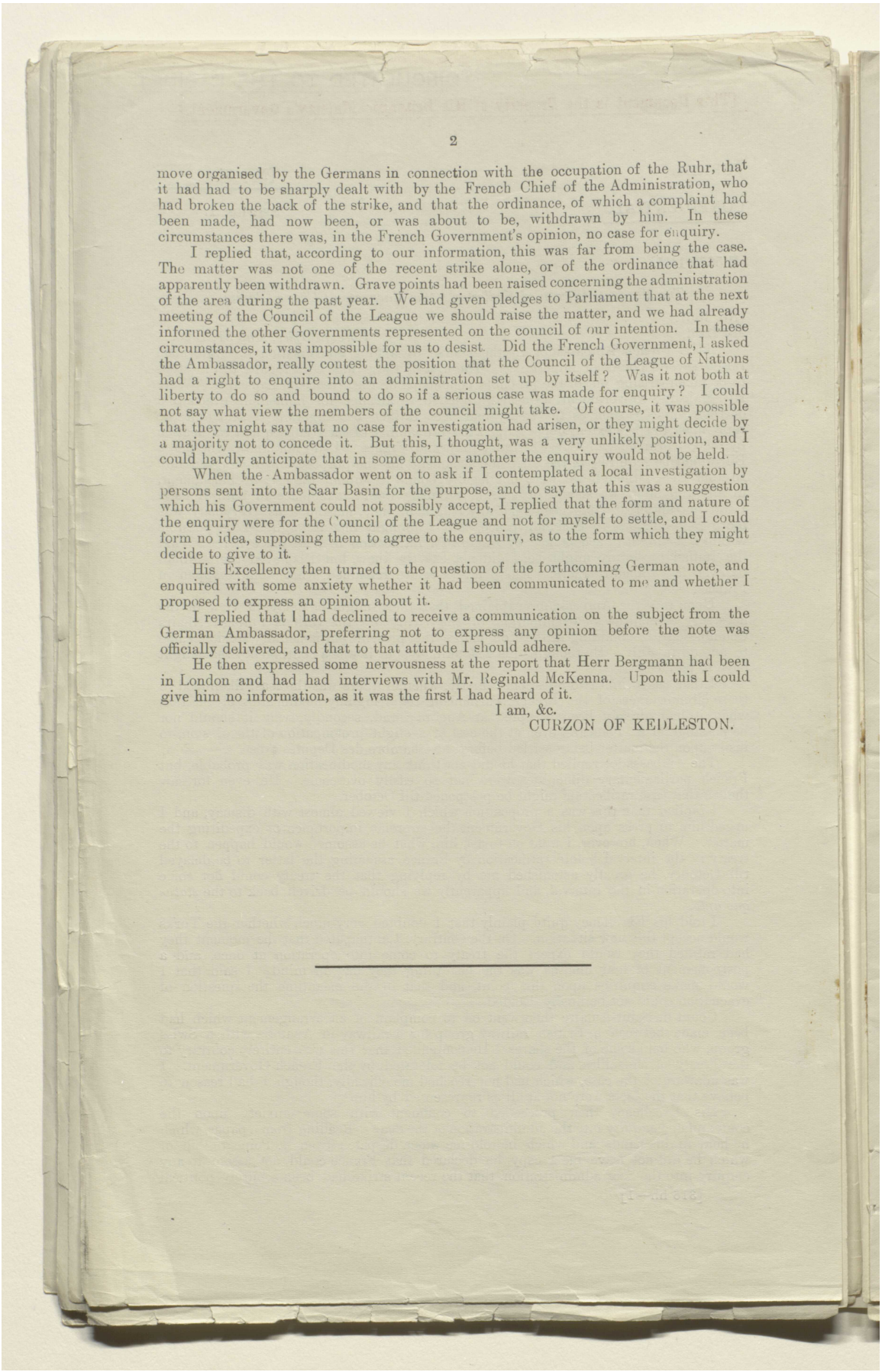

move organised by the Germans in connection with the occupation of the Ruhr, that it had had to be sharply dealt with by the French Chief of the Administration, who had broken the back of the strike, and that the ordinance, of which a complaint had been made, had now been, or was about to be, withdrawn by him. In these circumstances there was, in the French Government's opinion, no case for enquiry.

I replied that, according to our information, this was far from being the case. The matter was not one of the recent strike alone, or of the ordinance that had apparently been withdrawn. Grave points had been raised concerning the administration of the area during the past year. We had given pledges to Parliament that at the next meeting of the Council of the League we should raise the matter, and we had already informed the other Governments represented on the council of our intention. In these circumstances, it was impossible for us to desist. Did the French Government, I asked the Ambassador, really contest the position that the Council of the League of Nations had a right to enquire into an administration set up by itself? Was it not both at liberty to do so and bound to do so if a serious case was made for enquiry? I could not say what view the members of the council might take. Of course, it was possible that they might say that no case for investigation had arisen, or they might decide by a majority not to concede it. But this, I thought, was a very unlikely position, and I could hardly anticipate that in some form or another the enquiry would not be held.

When the Ambassador went on to ask if I contemplated a local investigation by persons sent into the Saar Basin for the purpose, and to say that this was a suggestion which his Government could not possibly accept, I replied that the form and nature of the enquiry were for the Council of the League and not for myself to settle, and I could form no idea, supposing them to agree to the enquiry, as to the form which they might decide to give to it.

His Excellency then turned to the question of the forthcoming German note, and enquired with some anxiety whether it had been communicated to me and whether I proposed to express an opinion about it.

I replied that I had declined to receive a communication on the subject from the German Ambassador, preferring not to express any opinion before the note was officially delivered, and that to that attitude I should adhere.

He then expressed some nervousness at the report that Herr Bergmann had been in London and had had interviews with Mr. Reginald McKenna. Upon this I could give him no information, as it was the first I had heard of it.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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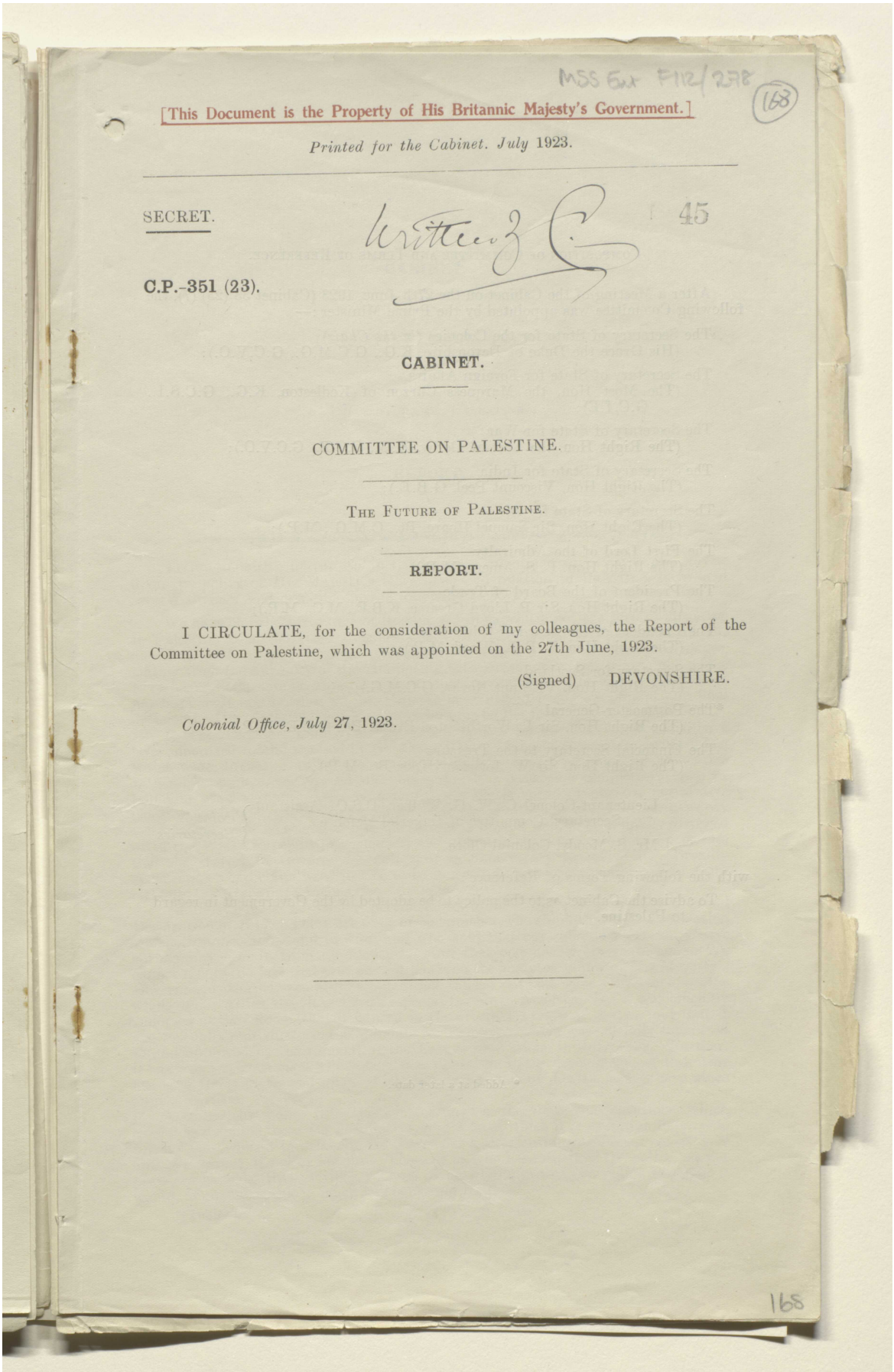

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Printed for the Cabinet. July 1923.

SECRET.

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C.P.-351 (23).

CABINET.

COMMITTEE ON PALESTINE.

THE FUTURE OF PALESTINE.

REPORT.

I CIRCULATE, for the consideration of my colleagues, the Report of the Committee on Palestine, which was appointed on the 27th June, 1923.

(Signed) DEVONSHIRE.

Colonial Office, July 27, 1923.

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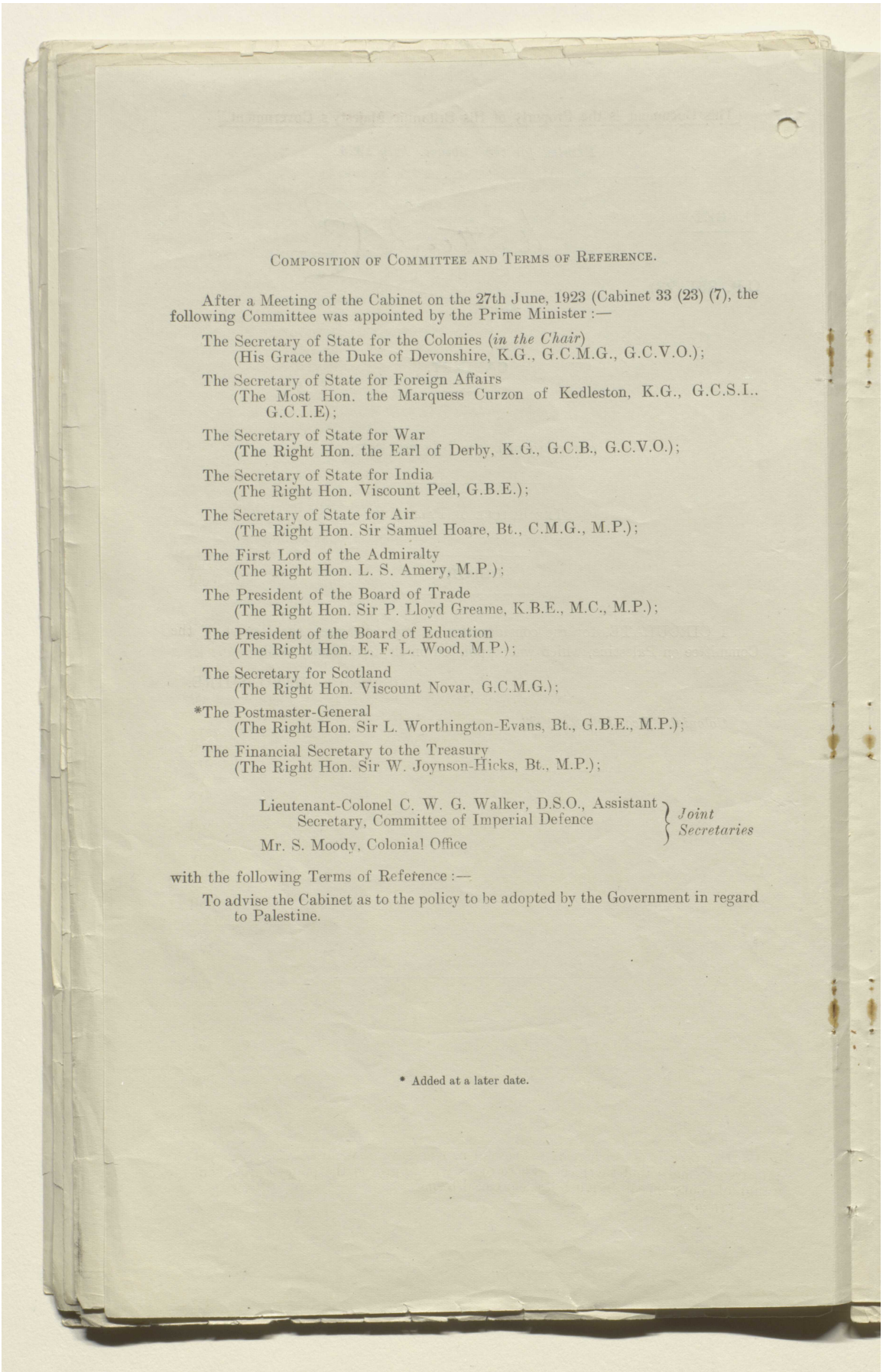

COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE AND TERMS OF REFERENCE.

After a Meeting of the Cabinet on the 27th June, 1923 (Cabinet 33 (23) (7), the following Committee was appointed by the Prime Minister :—

The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*in the Chair*)
(His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, K.G., G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.);

The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
(The Most Hon. the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, K.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E);

The Secretary of State for War
(The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby, K.G., G.C.B., G.C.V.O.);

The Secretary of State for India
(The Right Hon. Viscount Peel, G.B.E.);

The Secretary of State for Air
(The Right Hon. Sir Samuel Hoare, Bt., C.M.G., M.P.);

The First Lord of the Admiralty
(The Right Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P.);

The President of the Board of Trade
(The Right Hon. Sir P. Lloyd Greame, K.B.E., M.C., M.P.);

The President of the Board of Education
(The Right Hon. E. F. L. Wood, M.P.);

The Secretary for Scotland
(The Right Hon. Viscount Novar, G.C.M.G.);

*The Postmaster-General
(The Right Hon. Sir L. Worthington-Evans, Bt., G.B.E., M.P.);

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury
(The Right Hon. Sir W. Joynson-Hicks, Bt., M.P.);

Lieutenant-Colonel C. W. G. Walker, D.S.O., Assistant Secretary, Committee of Imperial Defence
Mr. S. Moody, Colonial Office
} *Joint Secretaries*

with the following Terms of Reference :—

To advise the Cabinet as to the policy to be adopted by the Government in regard to Palestine.

* Added at a later date.

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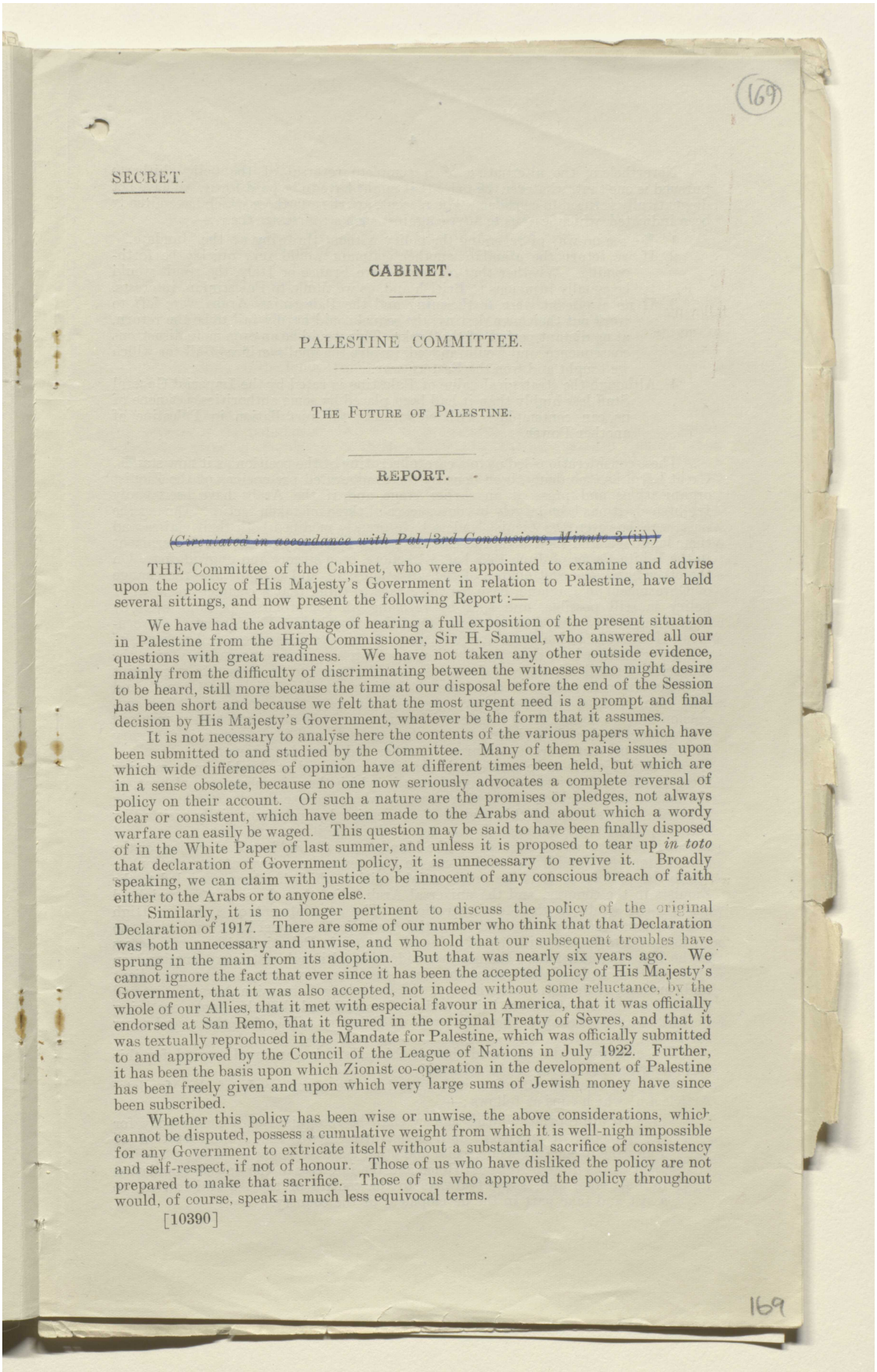

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SECRET.

CABINET.

PALESTINE COMMITTEE.

THE FUTURE OF PALESTINE.

REPORT.

~~(Circulated in accordance with Pal./3rd Conclusions, Minute 3 (ii).)~~

THE Committee of the Cabinet, who were appointed to examine and advise upon the policy of His Majesty's Government in relation to Palestine, have held several sittings, and now present the following Report :—

We have had the advantage of hearing a full exposition of the present situation in Palestine from the High Commissioner, Sir H. Samuel, who answered all our questions with great readiness. We have not taken any other outside evidence, mainly from the difficulty of discriminating between the witnesses who might desire to be heard, still more because the time at our disposal before the end of the Session has been short and because we felt that the most urgent need is a prompt and final decision by His Majesty's Government, whatever be the form that it assumes.

It is not necessary to analyse here the contents of the various papers which have been submitted to and studied by the Committee. Many of them raise issues upon which wide differences of opinion have at different times been held, but which are in a sense obsolete, because no one now seriously advocates a complete reversal of policy on their account. Of such a nature are the promises or pledges, not always clear or consistent, which have been made to the Arabs and about which a wordy warfare can easily be waged. This question may be said to have been finally disposed of in the White Paper of last summer, and unless it is proposed to tear up *in toto* that declaration of Government policy, it is unnecessary to revive it. Broadly speaking, we can claim with justice to be innocent of any conscious breach of faith either to the Arabs or to anyone else.

Similarly, it is no longer pertinent to discuss the policy of the original Declaration of 1917. There are some of our number who think that that Declaration was both unnecessary and unwise, and who hold that our subsequent troubles have sprung in the main from its adoption. But that was nearly six years ago. We cannot ignore the fact that ever since it has been the accepted policy of His Majesty's Government, that it was also accepted, not indeed without some reluctance, by the whole of our Allies, that it met with especial favour in America, that it was officially endorsed at San Remo, that it figured in the original Treaty of Sèvres, and that it was textually reproduced in the Mandate for Palestine, which was officially submitted to and approved by the Council of the League of Nations in July 1922. Further, it has been the basis upon which Zionist co-operation in the development of Palestine has been freely given and upon which very large sums of Jewish money have since been subscribed.

Whether this policy has been wise or unwise, the above considerations, which cannot be disputed, possess a cumulative weight from which it is well-nigh impossible for any Government to extricate itself without a substantial sacrifice of consistency and self-respect, if not of honour. Those of us who have disliked the policy are not prepared to make that sacrifice. Those of us who approved the policy throughout would, of course, speak in much less equivocal terms.

[10390]

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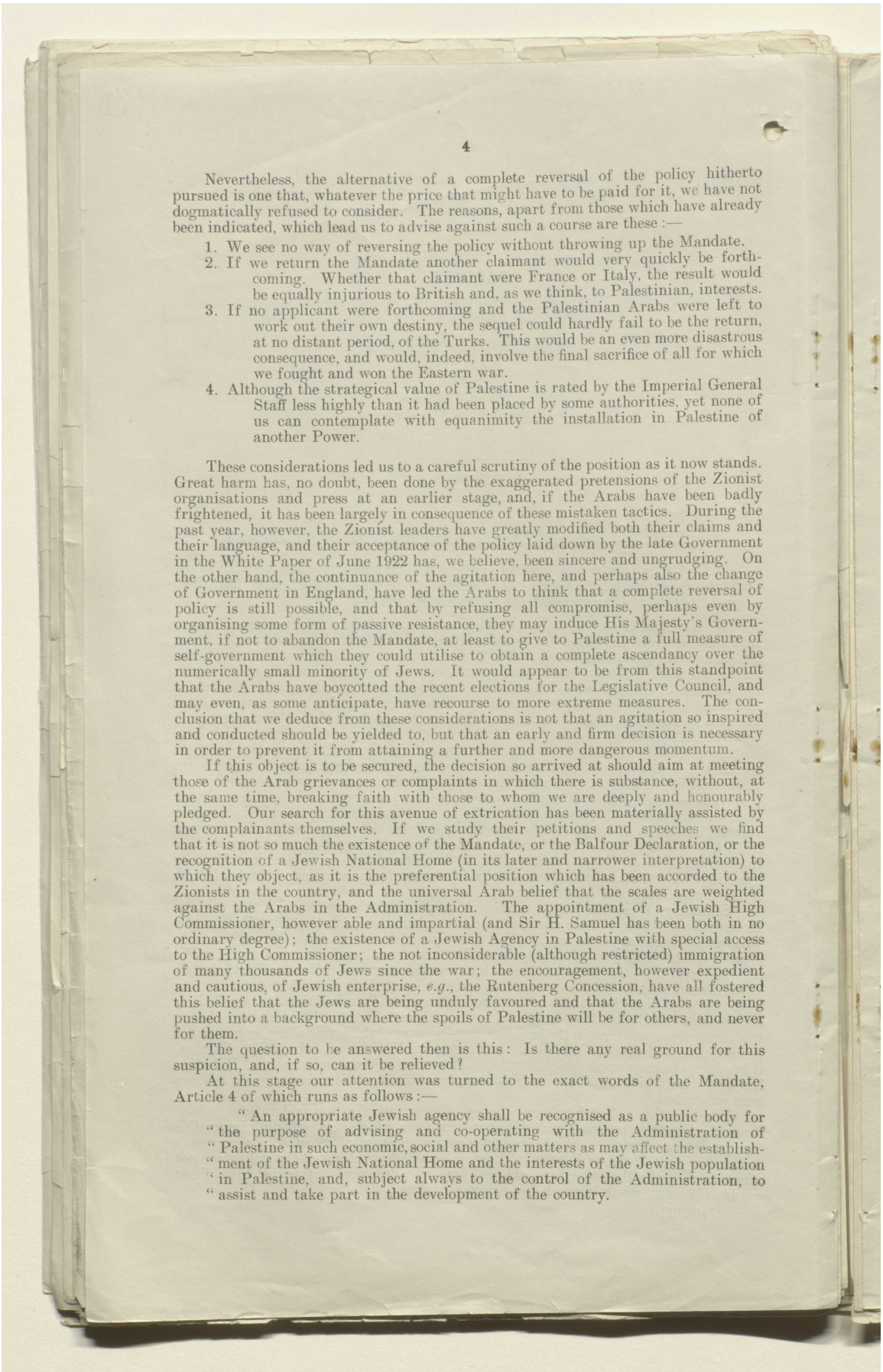

Nevertheless, the alternative of a complete reversal of the policy hitherto pursued is one that, whatever the price that might have to be paid for it, we have not dogmatically refused to consider. The reasons, apart from those which have already been indicated, which lead us to advise against such a course are these :—

1. We see no way of reversing the policy without throwing up the Mandate.
2. If we return the Mandate another claimant would very quickly be forthcoming. Whether that claimant were France or Italy, the result would be equally injurious to British and, as we think, to Palestinian, interests.
3. If no applicant were forthcoming and the Palestinian Arabs were left to work out their own destiny, the sequel could hardly fail to be the return, at no distant period, of the Turks. This would be an even more disastrous consequence, and would, indeed, involve the final sacrifice of all for which we fought and won the Eastern war.
4. Although the strategical value of Palestine is rated by the Imperial General Staff less highly than it had been placed by some authorities, yet none of us can contemplate with equanimity the installation in Palestine of another Power.

These considerations led us to a careful scrutiny of the position as it now stands. Great harm has, no doubt, been done by the exaggerated pretensions of the Zionist organisations and press at an earlier stage, and, if the Arabs have been badly frightened, it has been largely in consequence of these mistaken tactics. During the past year, however, the Zionist leaders have greatly modified both their claims and their language, and their acceptance of the policy laid down by the late Government in the White Paper of June 1922 has, we believe, been sincere and ungrudging. On the other hand, the continuance of the agitation here, and perhaps also the change of Government in England, have led the Arabs to think that a complete reversal of policy is still possible, and that by refusing all compromise, perhaps even by organising some form of passive resistance, they may induce His Majesty's Government, if not to abandon the Mandate, at least to give to Palestine a full measure of self-government which they could utilise to obtain a complete ascendancy over the numerically small minority of Jews. It would appear to be from this standpoint that the Arabs have boycotted the recent elections for the Legislative Council, and may even, as some anticipate, have recourse to more extreme measures. The conclusion that we deduce from these considerations is not that an agitation so inspired and conducted should be yielded to, but that an early and firm decision is necessary in order to prevent it from attaining a further and more dangerous momentum.

If this object is to be secured, the decision so arrived at should aim at meeting those of the Arab grievances or complaints in which there is substance, without, at the same time, breaking faith with those to whom we are deeply and honourably pledged. Our search for this avenue of extrication has been materially assisted by the complainants themselves. If we study their petitions and speeches we find that it is not so much the existence of the Mandate, or the Balfour Declaration, or the recognition of a Jewish National Home (in its later and narrower interpretation) to which they object, as it is the preferential position which has been accorded to the Zionists in the country, and the universal Arab belief that the scales are weighted against the Arabs in the Administration. The appointment of a Jewish High Commissioner, however able and impartial (and Sir H. Samuel has been both in no ordinary degree); the existence of a Jewish Agency in Palestine with special access to the High Commissioner; the not inconsiderable (although restricted) immigration of many thousands of Jews since the war; the encouragement, however expedient and cautious, of Jewish enterprise, *e.g.*, the Rutenberg Concession, have all fostered this belief that the Jews are being unduly favoured and that the Arabs are being pushed into a background where the spoils of Palestine will be for others, and never for them.

The question to be answered then is this: Is there any real ground for this suspicion, and, if so, can it be relieved?

At this stage our attention was turned to the exact words of the Mandate, Article 4 of which runs as follows:—

> "An appropriate Jewish agency shall be recognised as a public body for "the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of "Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establish-"ment of the Jewish National Home and the interests of the Jewish population "in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration, to "assist and take part in the development of the country.

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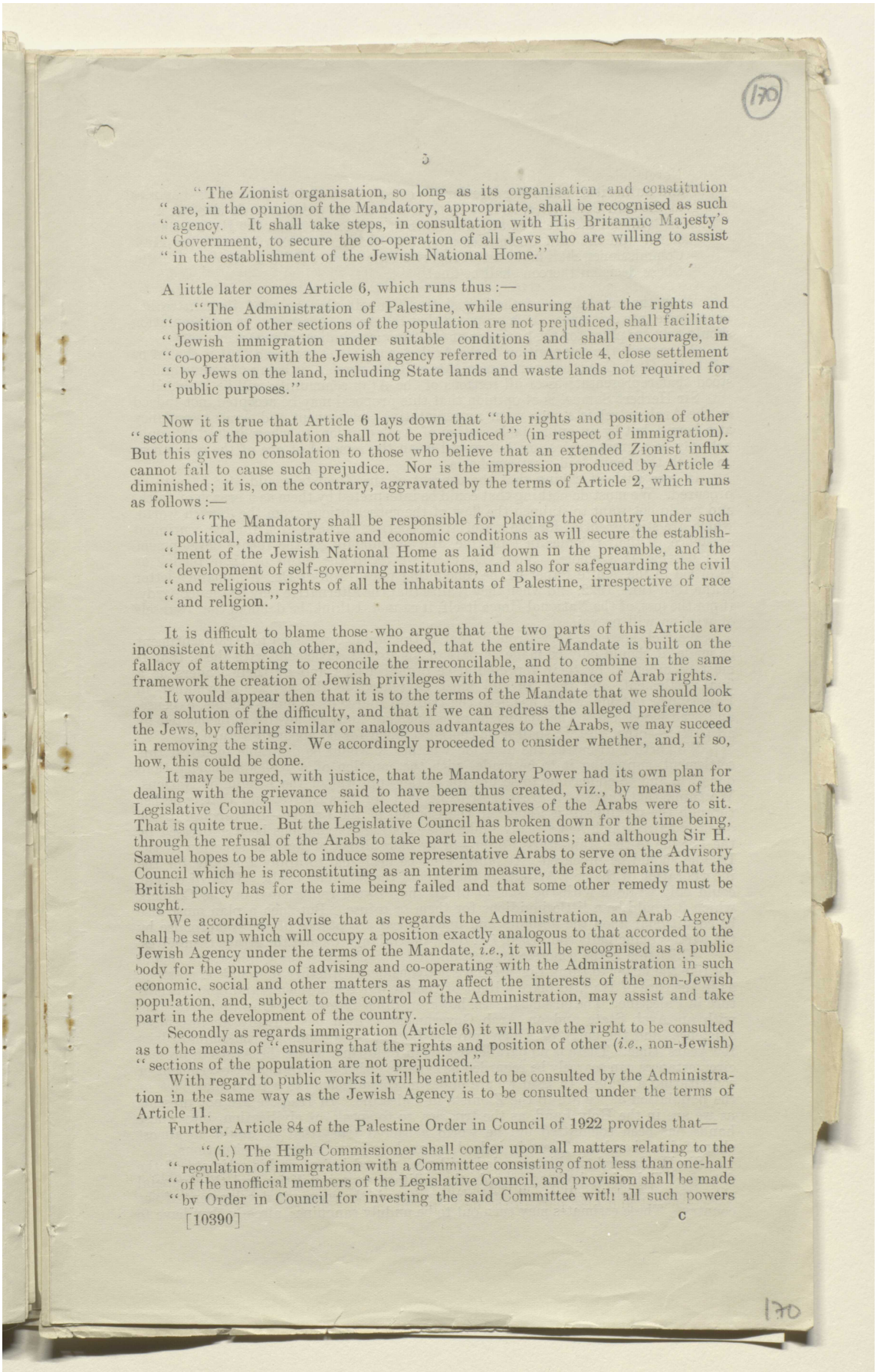

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"The Zionist organisation, so long as its organisation and constitution "are, in the opinion of the Mandatory, appropriate, shall be recognised as such "agency. It shall take steps, in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's "Government, to secure the co-operation of all Jews who are willing to assist "in the establishment of the Jewish National Home."

A little later comes Article 6, which runs thus :—

"The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and "position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall facilitate "Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage, in "co-operation with the Jewish agency referred to in Article 4, close settlement "by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for "public purposes."

Now it is true that Article 6 lays down that "the rights and position of other "sections of the population shall not be prejudiced" (in respect of immigration). But this gives no consolation to those who believe that an extended Zionist influx cannot fail to cause such prejudice. Nor is the impression produced by Article 4 diminished; it is, on the contrary, aggravated by the terms of Article 2, which runs as follows :—

"The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such "political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establish-"ment of the Jewish National Home as laid down in the preamble, and the "development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil "and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race "and religion."

It is difficult to blame those who argue that the two parts of this Article are inconsistent with each other, and, indeed, that the entire Mandate is built on the fallacy of attempting to reconcile the irreconcilable, and to combine in the same framework the creation of Jewish privileges with the maintenance of Arab rights.

It would appear then that it is to the terms of the Mandate that we should look for a solution of the difficulty, and that if we can redress the alleged preference to the Jews, by offering similar or analogous advantages to the Arabs, we may succeed in removing the sting. We accordingly proceeded to consider whether, and, if so, how, this could be done.

It may be urged, with justice, that the Mandatory Power had its own plan for dealing with the grievance said to have been thus created, viz., by means of the Legislative Council upon which elected representatives of the Arabs were to sit. That is quite true. But the Legislative Council has broken down for the time being, through the refusal of the Arabs to take part in the elections; and although Sir H. Samuel hopes to be able to induce some representative Arabs to serve on the Advisory Council which he is reconstituting as an interim measure, the fact remains that the British policy has for the time being failed and that some other remedy must be sought.

We accordingly advise that as regards the Administration, an Arab Agency shall be set up which will occupy a position exactly analogous to that accorded to the Jewish Agency under the terms of the Mandate, *i.e.*, it will be recognised as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the interests of the non-Jewish population, and, subject to the control of the Administration, may assist and take part in the development of the country.

Secondly as regards immigration (Article 6) it will have the right to be consulted as to the means of "ensuring that the rights and position of other (*i.e.*, non-Jewish) "sections of the population are not prejudiced."

With regard to public works it will be entitled to be consulted by the Administration in the same way as the Jewish Agency is to be consulted under the terms of Article 11.

Further, Article 84 of the Palestine Order in Council of 1922 provides that—

"(i.) The High Commissioner shall confer upon all matters relating to the "regulation of immigration with a Committee consisting of not less than one-half "of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council, and provision shall be made "by Order in Council for investing the said Committee with all such powers

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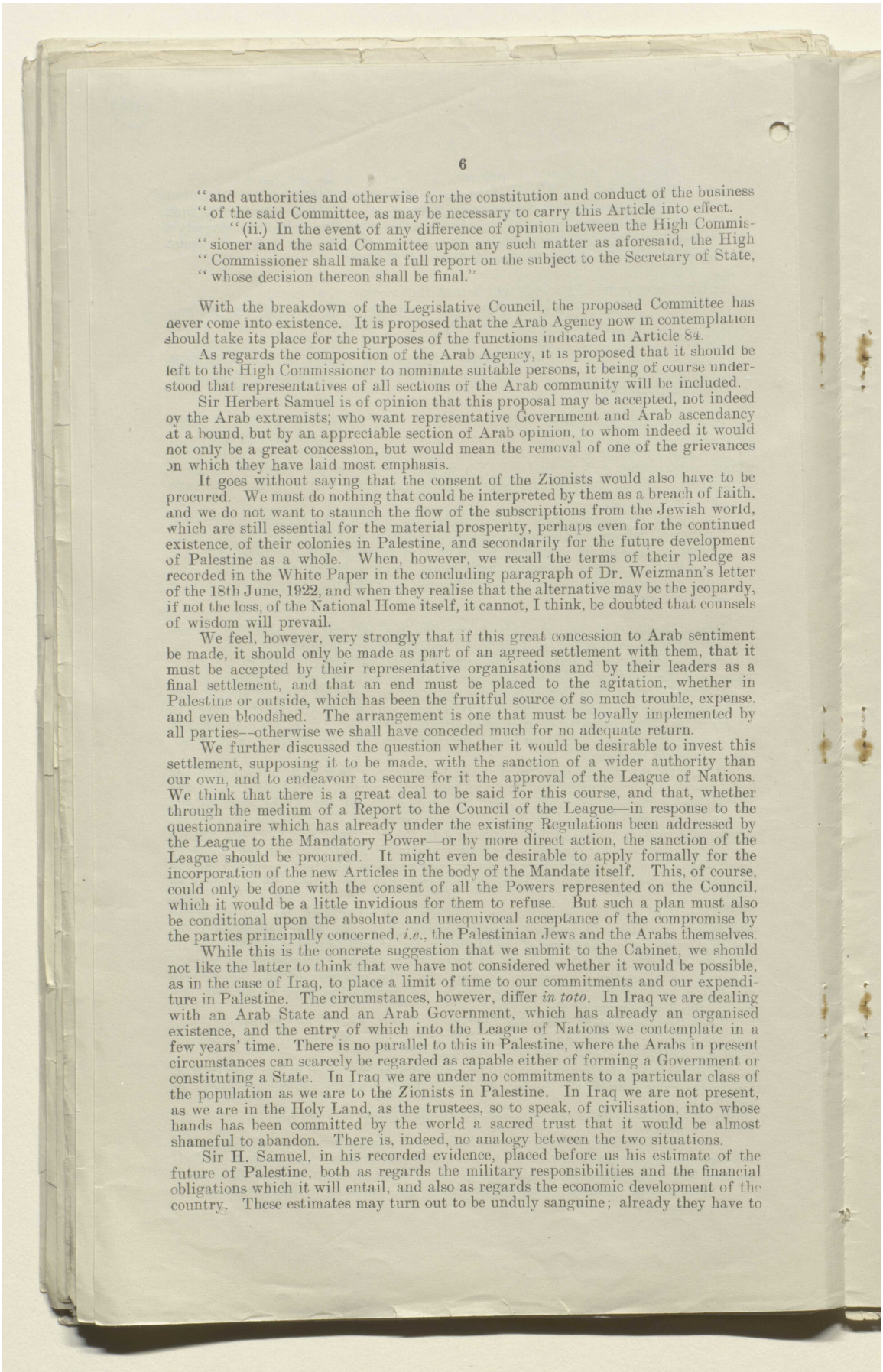

"and authorities and otherwise for the constitution and conduct of the business "of the said Committee, as may be necessary to carry this Article into effect.

"(ii.) In the event of any difference of opinion between the High Commis- "sioner and the said Committee upon any such matter as aforesaid, the High "Commissioner shall make a full report on the subject to the Secretary of State, "whose decision thereon shall be final."

With the breakdown of the Legislative Council, the proposed Committee has never come into existence. It is proposed that the Arab Agency now in contemplation should take its place for the purposes of the functions indicated in Article 84.

As regards the composition of the Arab Agency, it is proposed that it should be left to the High Commissioner to nominate suitable persons, it being of course understood that representatives of all sections of the Arab community will be included.

Sir Herbert Samuel is of opinion that this proposal may be accepted, not indeed by the Arab extremists, who want representative Government and Arab ascendancy at a bound, but by an appreciable section of Arab opinion, to whom indeed it would not only be a great concession, but would mean the removal of one of the grievances on which they have laid most emphasis.

It goes without saying that the consent of the Zionists would also have to be procured. We must do nothing that could be interpreted by them as a breach of faith, and we do not want to staunch the flow of the subscriptions from the Jewish world, which are still essential for the material prosperity, perhaps even for the continued existence, of their colonies in Palestine, and secondarily for the future development of Palestine as a whole. When, however, we recall the terms of their pledge as recorded in the White Paper in the concluding paragraph of Dr. Weizmann's letter of the 18th June, 1922, and when they realise that the alternative may be the jeopardy, if not the loss, of the National Home itself, it cannot, I think, be doubted that counsels of wisdom will prevail.

We feel, however, very strongly that if this great concession to Arab sentiment be made, it should only be made as part of an agreed settlement with them, that it must be accepted by their representative organisations and by their leaders as a final settlement, and that an end must be placed to the agitation, whether in Palestine or outside, which has been the fruitful source of so much trouble, expense, and even bloodshed. The arrangement is one that must be loyally implemented by all parties—otherwise we shall have conceded much for no adequate return.

We further discussed the question whether it would be desirable to invest this settlement, supposing it to be made, with the sanction of a wider authority than our own, and to endeavour to secure for it the approval of the League of Nations. We think that there is a great deal to be said for this course, and that, whether through the medium of a Report to the Council of the League—in response to the questionnaire which has already under the existing Regulations been addressed by the League to the Mandatory Power—or by more direct action, the sanction of the League should be procured. It might even be desirable to apply formally for the incorporation of the new Articles in the body of the Mandate itself. This, of course, could only be done with the consent of all the Powers represented on the Council, which it would be a little invidious for them to refuse. But such a plan must also be conditional upon the absolute and unequivocal acceptance of the compromise by the parties principally concerned, *i.e.*, the Palestinian Jews and the Arabs themselves.

While this is the concrete suggestion that we submit to the Cabinet, we should not like the latter to think that we have not considered whether it would be possible, as in the case of Iraq, to place a limit of time to our commitments and our expenditure in Palestine. The circumstances, however, differ *in toto*. In Iraq we are dealing with an Arab State and an Arab Government, which has already an organised existence, and the entry of which into the League of Nations we contemplate in a few years' time. There is no parallel to this in Palestine, where the Arabs in present circumstances can scarcely be regarded as capable either of forming a Government or constituting a State. In Iraq we are under no commitments to a particular class of the population as we are to the Zionists in Palestine. In Iraq we are not present, as we are in the Holy Land, as the trustees, so to speak, of civilisation, into whose hands has been committed by the world a sacred trust that it would be almost shameful to abandon. There is, indeed, no analogy between the two situations.

Sir H. Samuel, in his recorded evidence, placed before us his estimate of the future of Palestine, both as regards the military responsibilities and the financial obligations which it will entail, and also as regards the economic development of the country. These estimates may turn out to be unduly sanguine; already they have to

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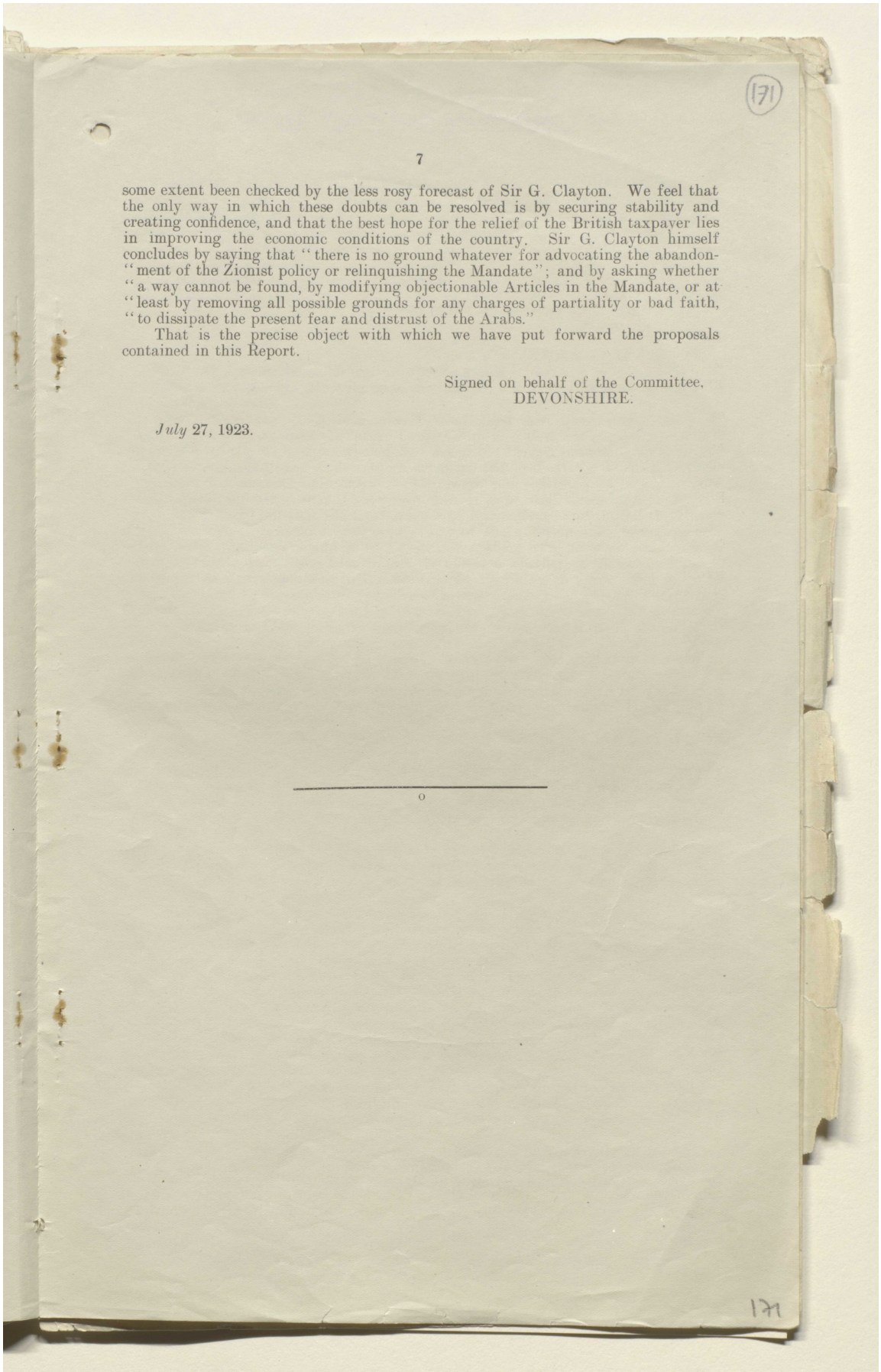

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some extent been checked by the less rosy forecast of Sir G. Clayton. We feel that the only way in which these doubts can be resolved is by securing stability and creating confidence, and that the best hope for the relief of the British taxpayer lies in improving the economic conditions of the country. Sir G. Clayton himself concludes by saying that "there is no ground whatever for advocating the abandon-"ment of the Zionist policy or relinquishing the Mandate"; and by asking whether "a way cannot be found, by modifying objectionable Articles in the Mandate, or at "least by removing all possible grounds for any charges of partiality or bad faith, "to dissipate the present fear and distrust of the Arabs."

That is the precise object with which we have put forward the proposals contained in this Report.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,
DEVONSHIRE.

July 27, 1923.

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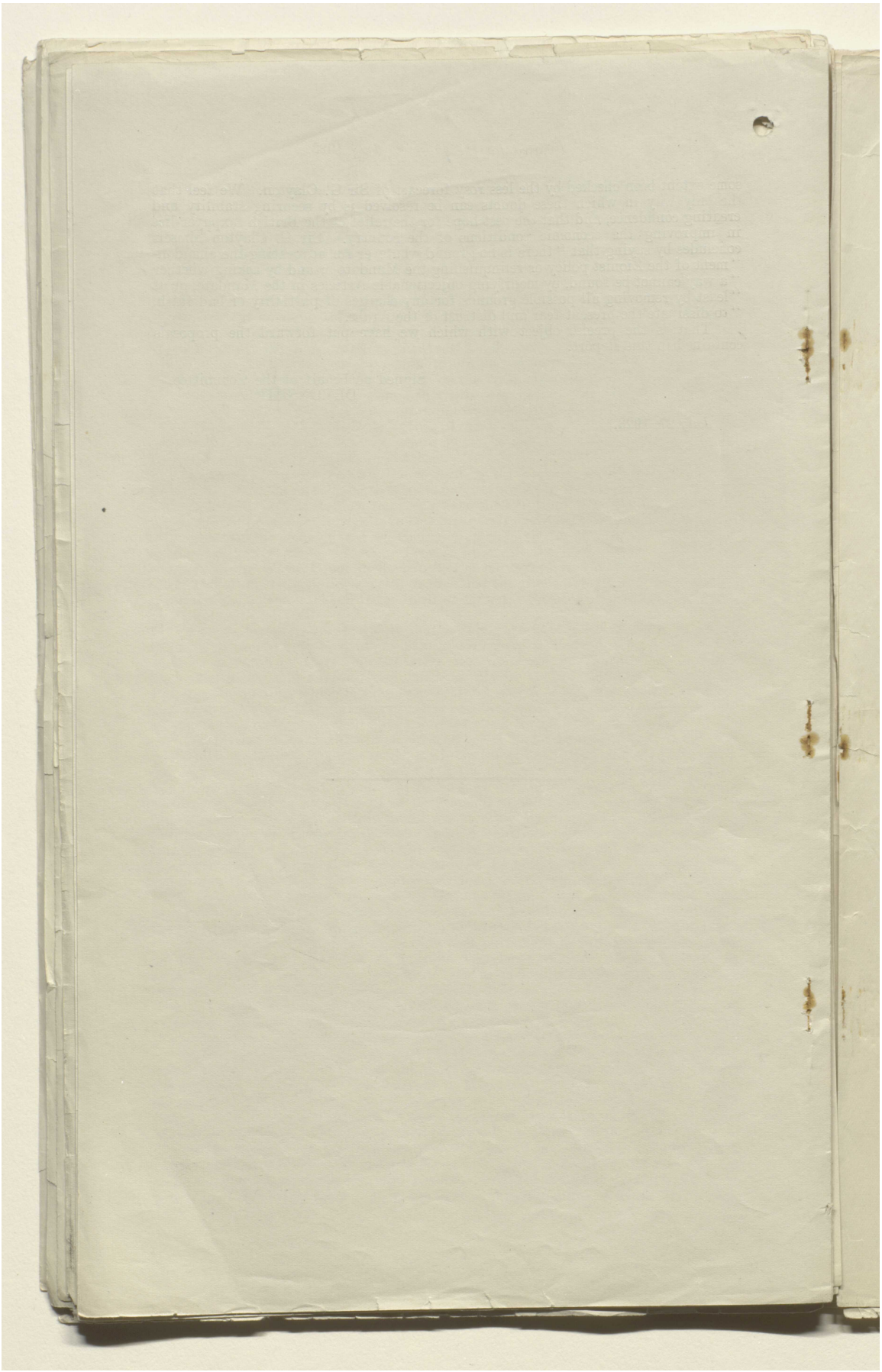

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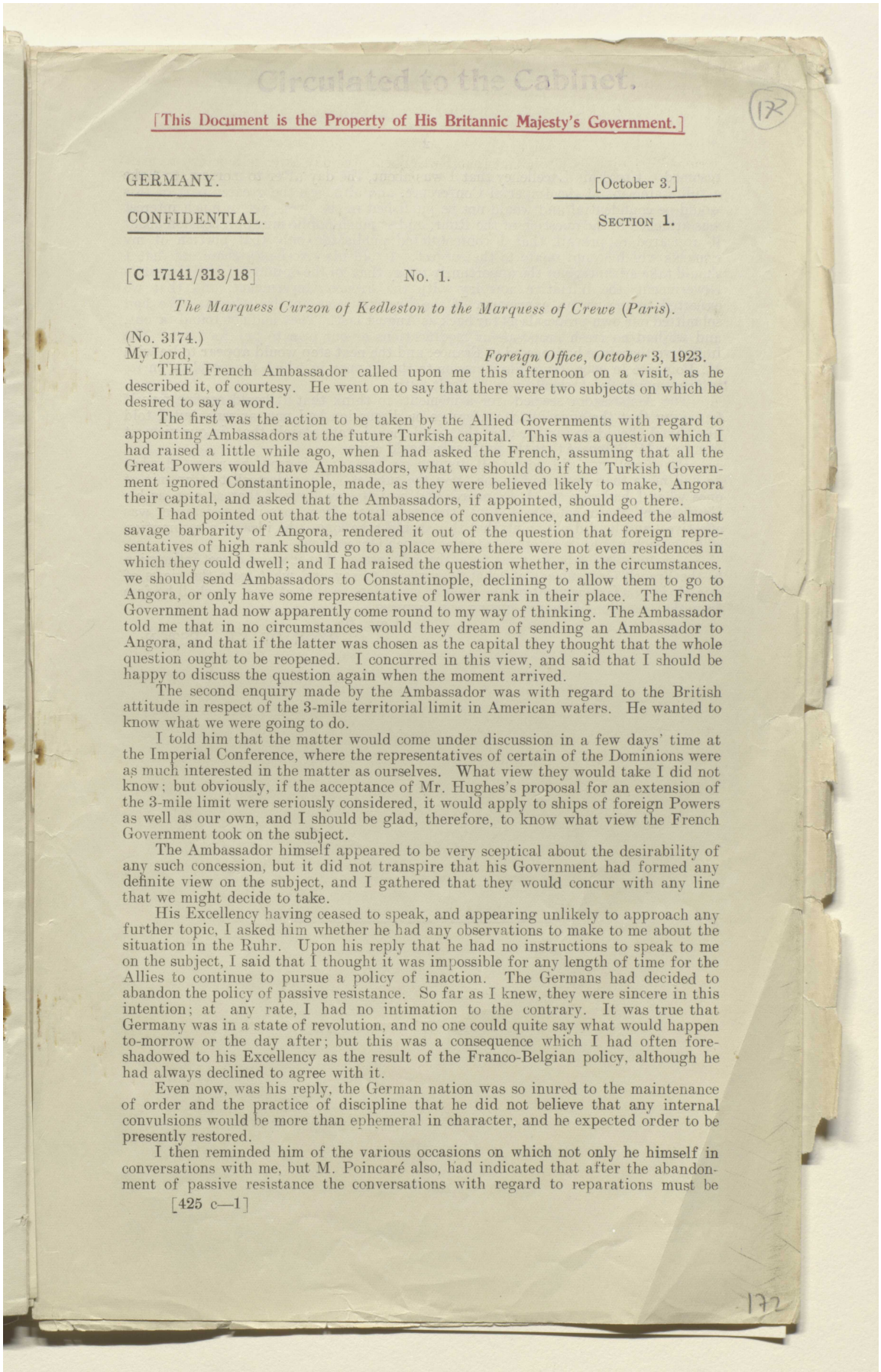

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GERMANY. [October 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[C 17141/313/18] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to the Marquess of Crewe (Paris).

(No. 3174.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, October* 3, 1923.

THE French Ambassador called upon me this afternoon on a visit, as he described it, of courtesy. He went on to say that there were two subjects on which he desired to say a word.

The first was the action to be taken by the Allied Governments with regard to appointing Ambassadors at the future Turkish capital. This was a question which I had raised a little while ago, when I had asked the French, assuming that all the Great Powers would have Ambassadors, what we should do if the Turkish Government ignored Constantinople, made, as they were believed likely to make, Angora their capital, and asked that the Ambassadors, if appointed, should go there.

I had pointed out that the total absence of convenience, and indeed the almost savage barbarity of Angora, rendered it out of the question that foreign representatives of high rank should go to a place where there were not even residences in which they could dwell; and I had raised the question whether, in the circumstances, we should send Ambassadors to Constantinople, declining to allow them to go to Angora, or only have some representative of lower rank in their place. The French Government had now apparently come round to my way of thinking. The Ambassador told me that in no circumstances would they dream of sending an Ambassador to Angora, and that if the latter was chosen as the capital they thought that the whole question ought to be reopened. I concurred in this view, and said that I should be happy to discuss the question again when the moment arrived.

The second enquiry made by the Ambassador was with regard to the British attitude in respect of the 3-mile territorial limit in American waters. He wanted to know what we were going to do.

I told him that the matter would come under discussion in a few days' time at the Imperial Conference, where the representatives of certain of the Dominions were as much interested in the matter as ourselves. What view they would take I did not know; but obviously, if the acceptance of Mr. Hughes's proposal for an extension of the 3-mile limit were seriously considered, it would apply to ships of foreign Powers as well as our own, and I should be glad, therefore, to know what view the French Government took on the subject.

The Ambassador himself appeared to be very sceptical about the desirability of any such concession, but it did not transpire that his Government had formed any definite view on the subject, and I gathered that they would concur with any line that we might decide to take.

His Excellency having ceased to speak, and appearing unlikely to approach any further topic, I asked him whether he had any observations to make to me about the situation in the Ruhr. Upon his reply that he had no instructions to speak to me on the subject, I said that I thought it was impossible for any length of time for the Allies to continue to pursue a policy of inaction. The Germans had decided to abandon the policy of passive resistance. So far as I knew, they were sincere in this intention; at any rate, I had no intimation to the contrary. It was true that Germany was in a state of revolution, and no one could quite say what would happen to-morrow or the day after; but this was a consequence which I had often foreshadowed to his Excellency as the result of the Franco-Belgian policy, although he had always declined to agree with it.

Even now, was his reply, the German nation was so inured to the maintenance of order and the practice of discipline that he did not believe that any internal convulsions would be more than ephemeral in character, and he expected order to be presently restored.

I then reminded him of the various occasions on which not only he himself in conversations with me, but M. Poincaré also, had indicated that after the abandonment of passive resistance the conversations with regard to reparations must be

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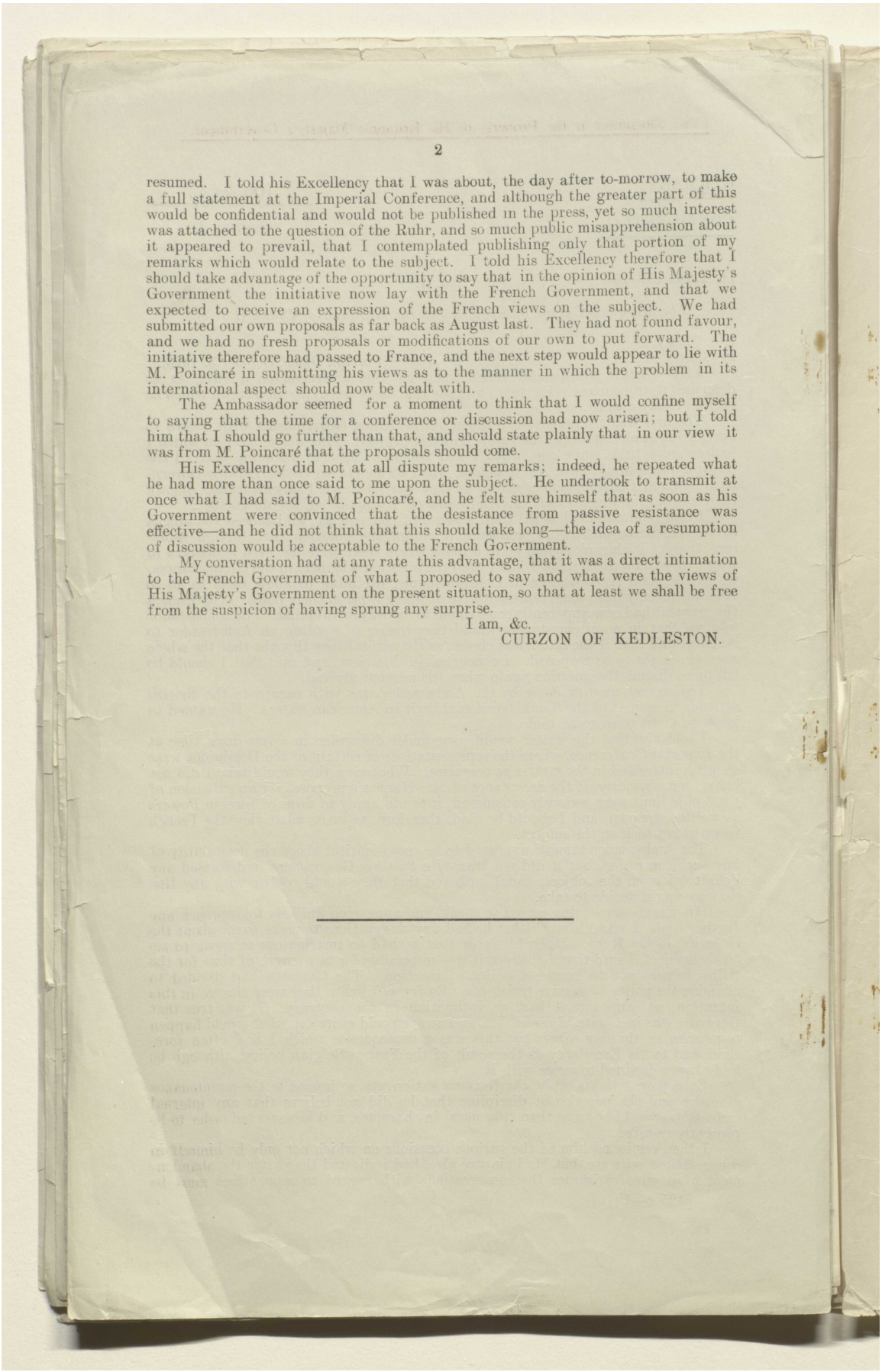

resumed. I told his Excellency that I was about, the day after to-morrow, to make a full statement at the Imperial Conference, and although the greater part of this would be confidential and would not be published in the press, yet so much interest was attached to the question of the Ruhr, and so much public misapprehension about it appeared to prevail, that I contemplated publishing only that portion of my remarks which would relate to the subject. I told his Excellency therefore that I should take advantage of the opportunity to say that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government the initiative now lay with the French Government, and that we expected to receive an expression of the French views on the subject. We had submitted our own proposals as far back as August last. They had not found favour, and we had no fresh proposals or modifications of our own to put forward. The initiative therefore had passed to France, and the next step would appear to lie with M. Poincaré in submitting his views as to the manner in which the problem in its international aspect should now be dealt with.

The Ambassador seemed for a moment to think that I would confine myself to saying that the time for a conference or discussion had now arisen; but I told him that I should go further than that, and should state plainly that in our view it was from M. Poincaré that the proposals should come.

His Excellency did not at all dispute my remarks; indeed, he repeated what he had more than once said to me upon the subject. He undertook to transmit at once what I had said to M. Poincaré, and he felt sure himself that as soon as his Government were convinced that the desistance from passive resistance was effective—and he did not think that this should take long—the idea of a resumption of discussion would be acceptable to the French Government.

My conversation had at any rate this advantage, that it was a direct intimation to the French Government of what I proposed to say and what were the views of His Majesty's Government on the present situation, so that at least we shall be free from the suspicion of having sprung any surprise.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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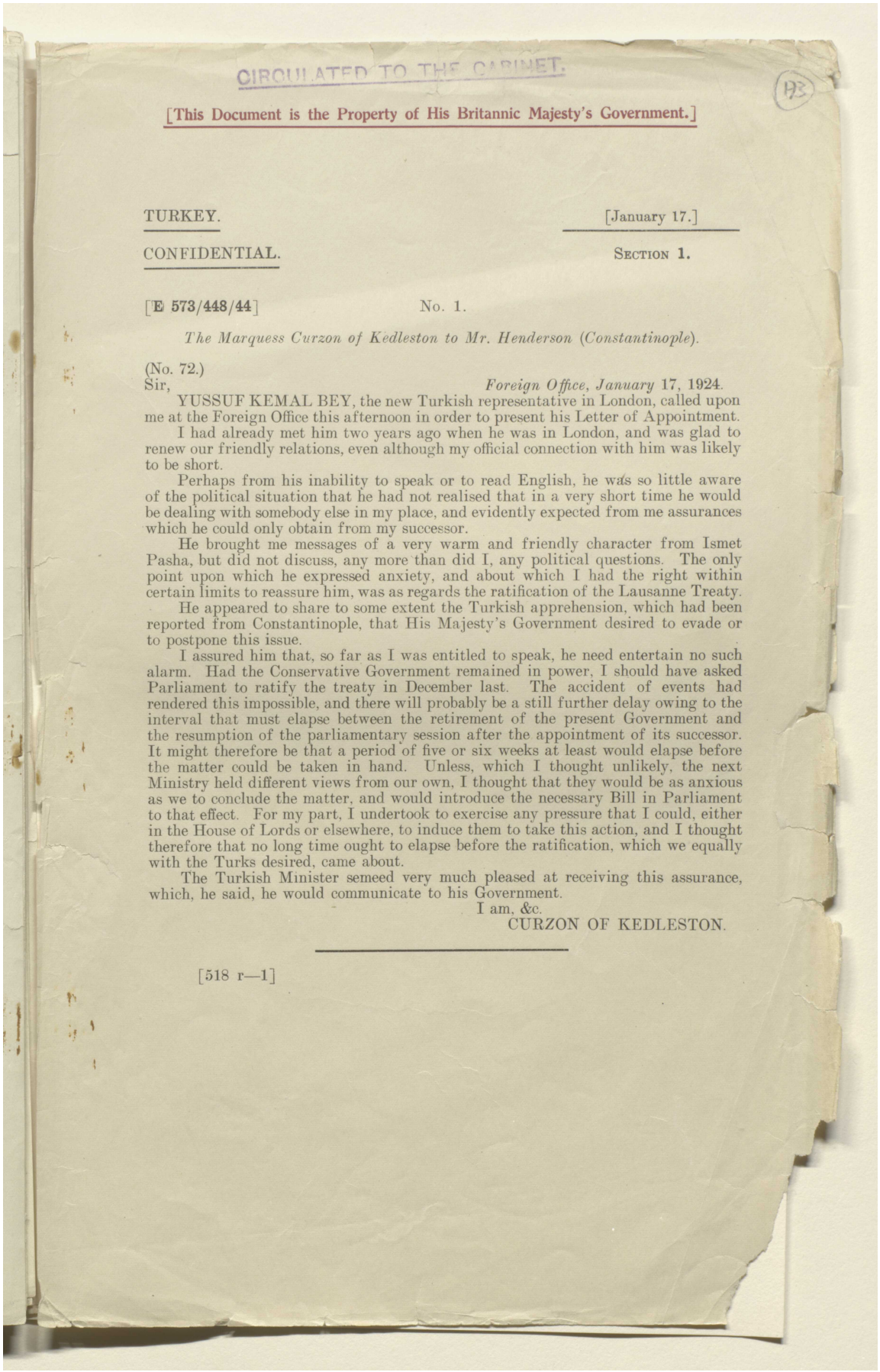

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TURKEY. [January 17.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 573/448/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Mr. Henderson (Constantinople).

(No. 72.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, January* 17, 1924.

YUSSUF KEMAL BEY, the new Turkish representative in London, called upon me at the Foreign Office this afternoon in order to present his Letter of Appointment.

I had already met him two years ago when he was in London, and was glad to renew our friendly relations, even although my official connection with him was likely to be short.

Perhaps from his inability to speak or to read English, he was so little aware of the political situation that he had not realised that in a very short time he would be dealing with somebody else in my place, and evidently expected from me assurances which he could only obtain from my successor.

He brought me messages of a very warm and friendly character from Ismet Pasha, but did not discuss, any more than did I, any political questions. The only point upon which he expressed anxiety, and about which I had the right within certain limits to reassure him, was as regards the ratification of the Lausanne Treaty.

He appeared to share to some extent the Turkish apprehension, which had been reported from Constantinople, that His Majesty's Government desired to evade or to postpone this issue.

I assured him that, so far as I was entitled to speak, he need entertain no such alarm. Had the Conservative Government remained in power, I should have asked Parliament to ratify the treaty in December last. The accident of events had rendered this impossible, and there will probably be a still further delay owing to the interval that must elapse between the retirement of the present Government and the resumption of the parliamentary session after the appointment of its successor. It might therefore be that a period of five or six weeks at least would elapse before the matter could be taken in hand. Unless, which I thought unlikely, the next Ministry held different views from our own, I thought that they would be as anxious as we to conclude the matter, and would introduce the necessary Bill in Parliament to that effect. For my part, I undertook to exercise any pressure that I could, either in the House of Lords or elsewhere, to induce them to take this action, and I thought therefore that no long time ought to elapse before the ratification, which we equally with the Turks desired, came about.

The Turkish Minister semeed very much pleased at receiving this assurance, which, he said, he would communicate to his Government.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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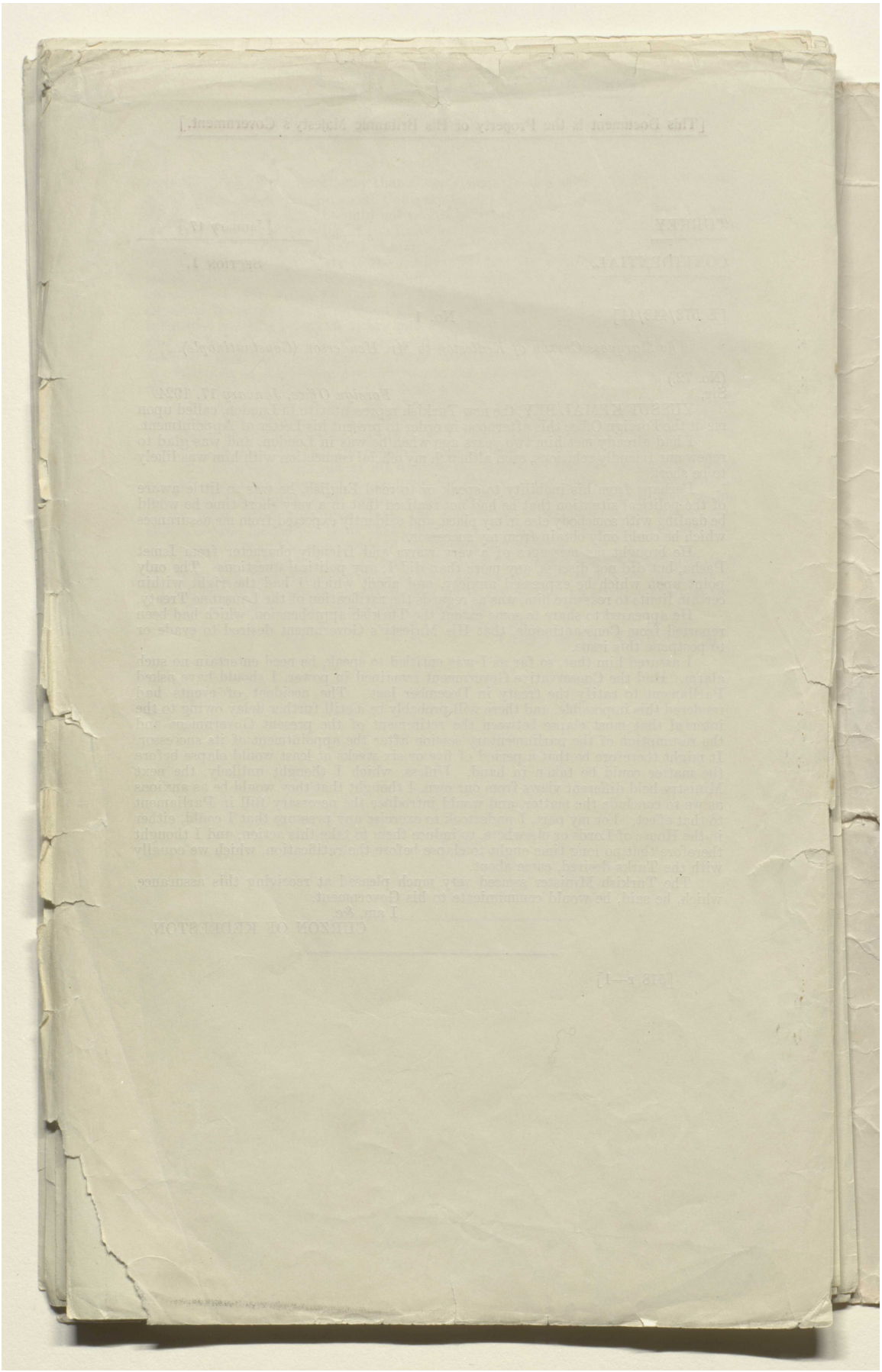

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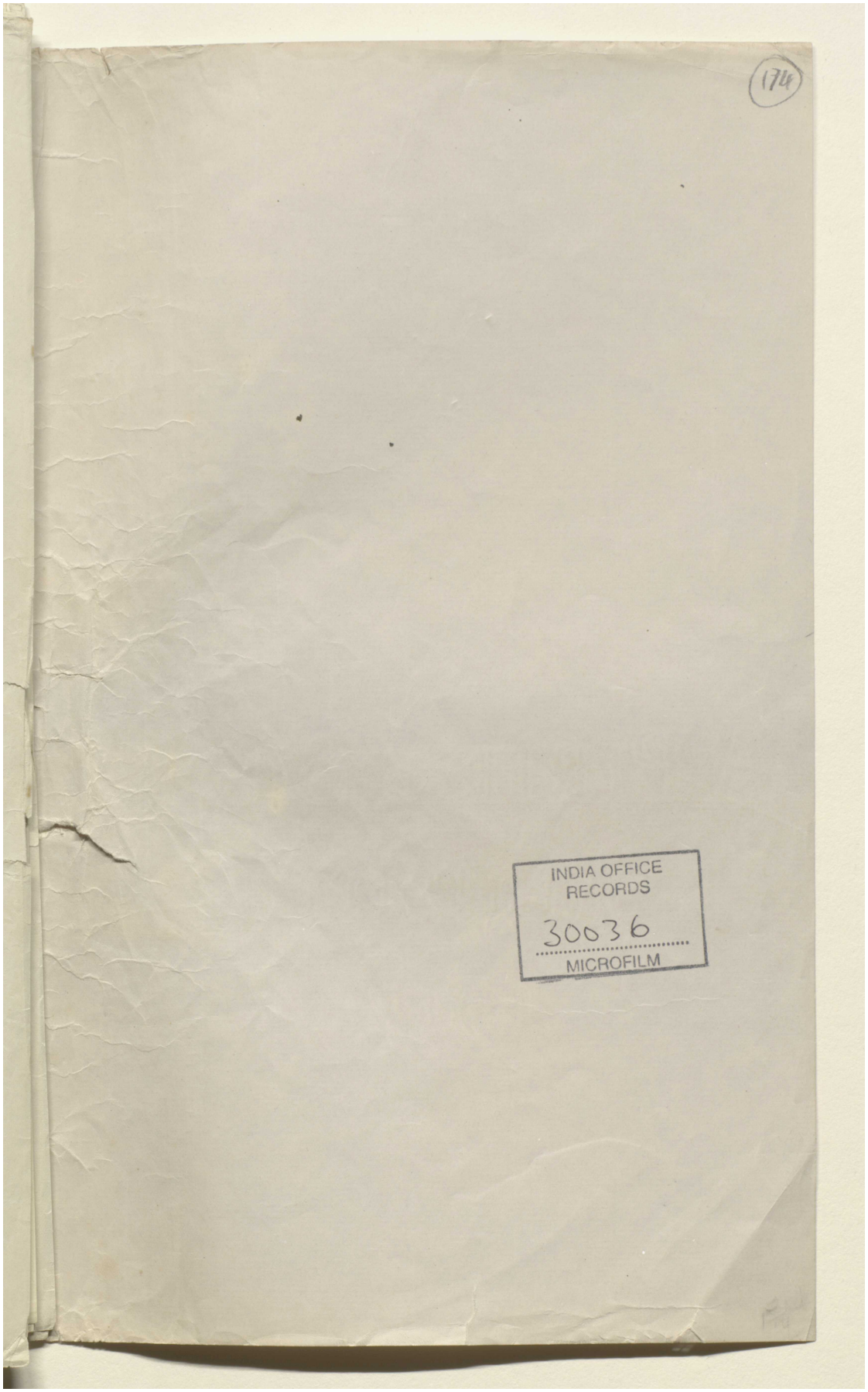

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