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'Mosul Question, Lausanne 1922-1923 and after - Papers, despatches, speeches - Hotel de la Mer at Lausanne - Correspondence about oil'

Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Reference	Mss Eur F112/294
Date(s)	15 Nov 1922-3 Nov 1923 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	251 folios (1 file)
Copyright for document	Unknown

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About this record

Letters and papers on the frontier between Iraq (also written as Irak in the file) and Turkey, with particular reference to Mosul and questions concerning oil. The file consists mainly of correspondence between Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs George Curzon, and officials in the Foreign Office, Air Ministry, Colonial Office and Ismet Pasha [Mustafa İsmet İnönü]. The contents of the file are as follows:

- Sir John Evelyn Shuckburgh to Curzon (15 November 1922). Letter enclosing paper setting out main arguments against evacuating Iraq

- Eric Graham Forbes Adam for Curzon (3 December 1922). Interview with Mukhtar Bey [Mukhtār Beg]; submission of draft telegrams to Foreign Office

- Sir William Tyrrell to Foreign Office (Memo, 3 December 1922, circulated to the Cabinet); interview with Ismet Pasha, 28 November 1922

- Air Staff for Cabinet (5 December 1922). Note: on Sir John Salmond's proposal for a Forward Policy in the event of Turkish invasion of Iraq or a Resumption of Hostilities with Turkey, 4 December 1922

- Curzon to Foreign Office (6 December 1922). Telegram, 5 December 1922

• Middle East Department (7 December 1922). Note: Mosul – on above telegram

• Foreign Office to Curzon (8 December 1922). Telegram: Mosul

• Curzon to Ismet Pasha (14 December 1922). Letter: enclosing Memo on Mosul Vilayet: reasons for refusing Turkish claim

• Curzon for Cabinet (26 December 1922). Curzon for Cabinet. Memo presented to Ismet Pasha on Mosul, 14 December 1922

• Curzon to Cabinet (27 December 1922). Letter: Ismet Pasha to Curzon enclosing reply to British memo, 23 December 1922

• Curzon for Cabinet (28 December 1922). Letter: Ismet Pasha enclosing counter reply, 26 December 1922

• Ismet Pasha (29 December 1922). Letter with annexed Memo

• Curzon for Cabinet (1 January 1923). Letter Ismet Pasha to Curzon

• Sir Percy Cox to Colonial Office (30 December 1922)

• Sir Philip Lloyd-Greame to Sir Sydney Chapman (1 January 1923). Letter: possibility of settlement on basis of oil concessions to Turks and Italians

• Eric Graham Forbes Adam for Curzon (4 January 1923). Memo: conversation with Reader William Bullard and three Turkish experts

• Sir E Crowe to Curzon (3 January 1923). Telegram: from Colonial Office: oil

• Mr Lyndsay to Curzon (4 January 1923). Telegram: paraphrase of Colonial Office telegram to Bagdad [Baghdad], 2 January

• Curzon to Colonial Office (5 January 1923). Telegram: oil

• Sir Ronald William Graham to Curzon (8 January 1923). Letter: (printed for Cabinet) to Curzon: Italian press

• Reader William Bullard to Curzon (9 January 1923). Note: Mosul

• Sir Auckland Geddes (12 January 1923) Telegram: American attitude

• Notes by Curzon (16 January 1923). Handwritten: visit of Aga Petros to Ismet Pasha

• Shuckburgh to Forbes Adam (18 January 1923). Letter enclosing draft of telegram to Curzon

• Forbes Adam for Curzon (18 January 1923). Note attaching statement of the history and position with regard to the Mandates in Syria and Iraq and the question of frontiers

• British Case for Northern Frontier of Iraq with Map (19 January 1923). Folder containing notes ‘mostly taken from the memoranda which you (i.e. Curzon) exchanged with Ismet Pasha’ – December 1922

• Forbes Adam for Curzon (20 January 1923). Note: Plebiscite and Mosul

• Forbes Adam for Curzon: ‘Note attaching detailed minute as to the oil in Iraq and the history and present position of the claim of the Turkish Petroleum Company’

• Mr Childs's Statement for the American representatives (23 January 1923)

• *Daily Telegraph* cutting on League of Nations and Mosul Problem (27 January 1923)

• Curzon for Cabinet (26 January 1923). Speech: reply to Ismet Pasha respecting Mosul, 23 January 1923

• Secretary of State for Colonies to Acting High Commissioner for Iraq (26 January 1923). Paraphrase: telegram: British proposal that question of Northern Frontier of Iraq should be referred to the League of Nations

• High Commissioner, Bagdad to Lord Crew (29 January 1923) Telegram: Enclosing telegram from Iraq Government to Lord Balfour for communication to League of Nations

• Lord Crewe to Curzon (31 January 1923). Telegram: Iraq frontier

• Telegram to Ankara signed by Ismet Hassan [‘Iṣmat Ḥasan] and Rozor Nur [Riḍa Nūr]

• Oil engineering and finance (17 February 1923). Article: The Mesopotamian Oilfields

• *The Graphic* (17 February 1923). Article: The Mystic City of Mosul

• Colonel Francis Richard Maunsell for Cabinet (24 September 1923). Notes on the Mosul frontier question

• Sir James Edward Masterton-Smith to Foreign Office (3 November 1923). Printed for the information of Curzon, copy of a despatch from the High Commissioner for Iraq, on the subject of the delimitation of the Turco-Irak frontier.

Following documents are undated:

• Lord Balfour to League of Nations. Speech: The frontier between Turkish territory and the territory of Iraq

• The President of the League of Nations. Reply: after Speech by Balfour

• Typewritten report: The question of Mosul

• Typewritten report: The Question of Mosul

The file also includes handwritten notes by Curzon on the Mosul vilayet and groups residing there.

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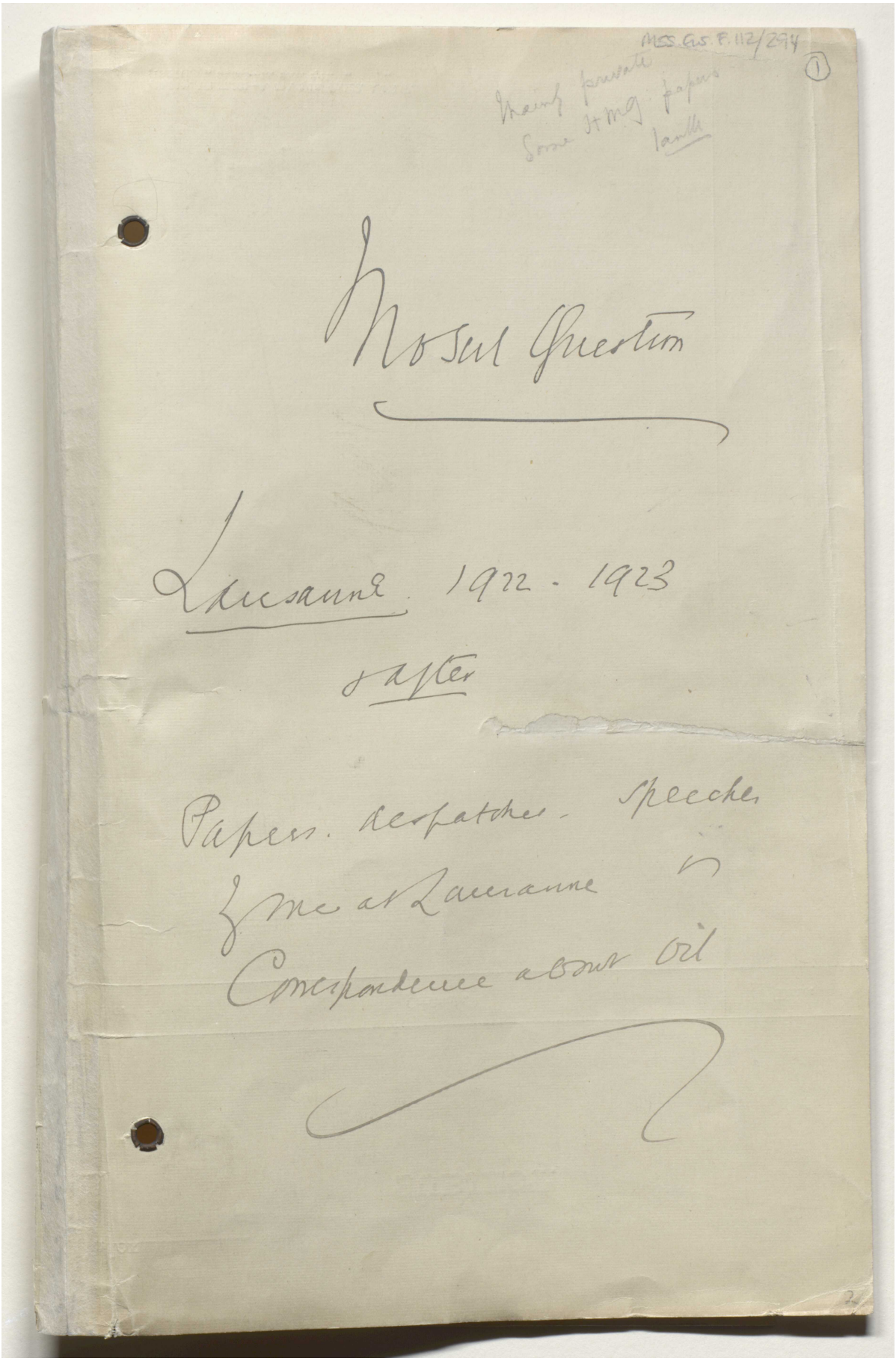

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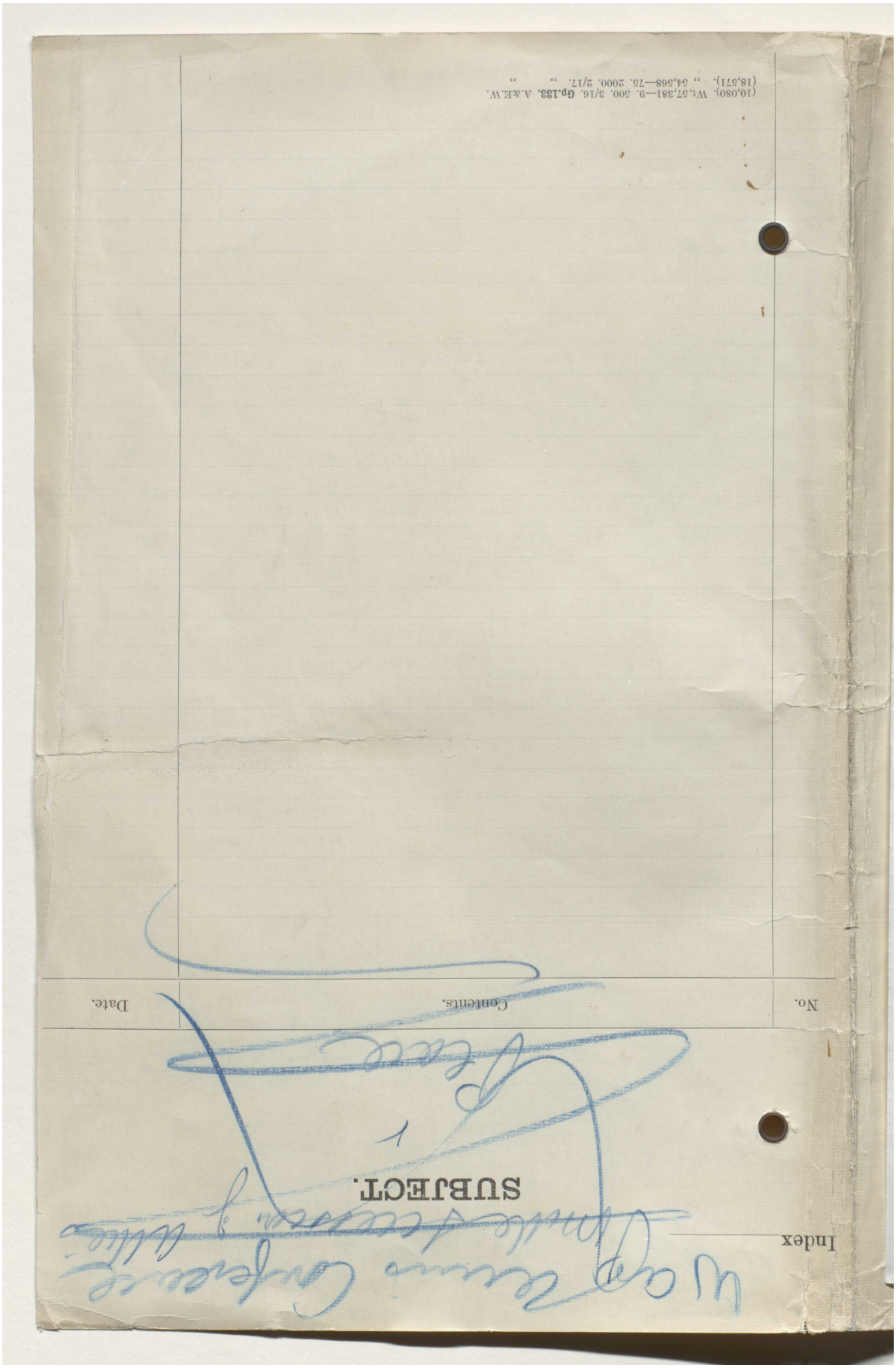

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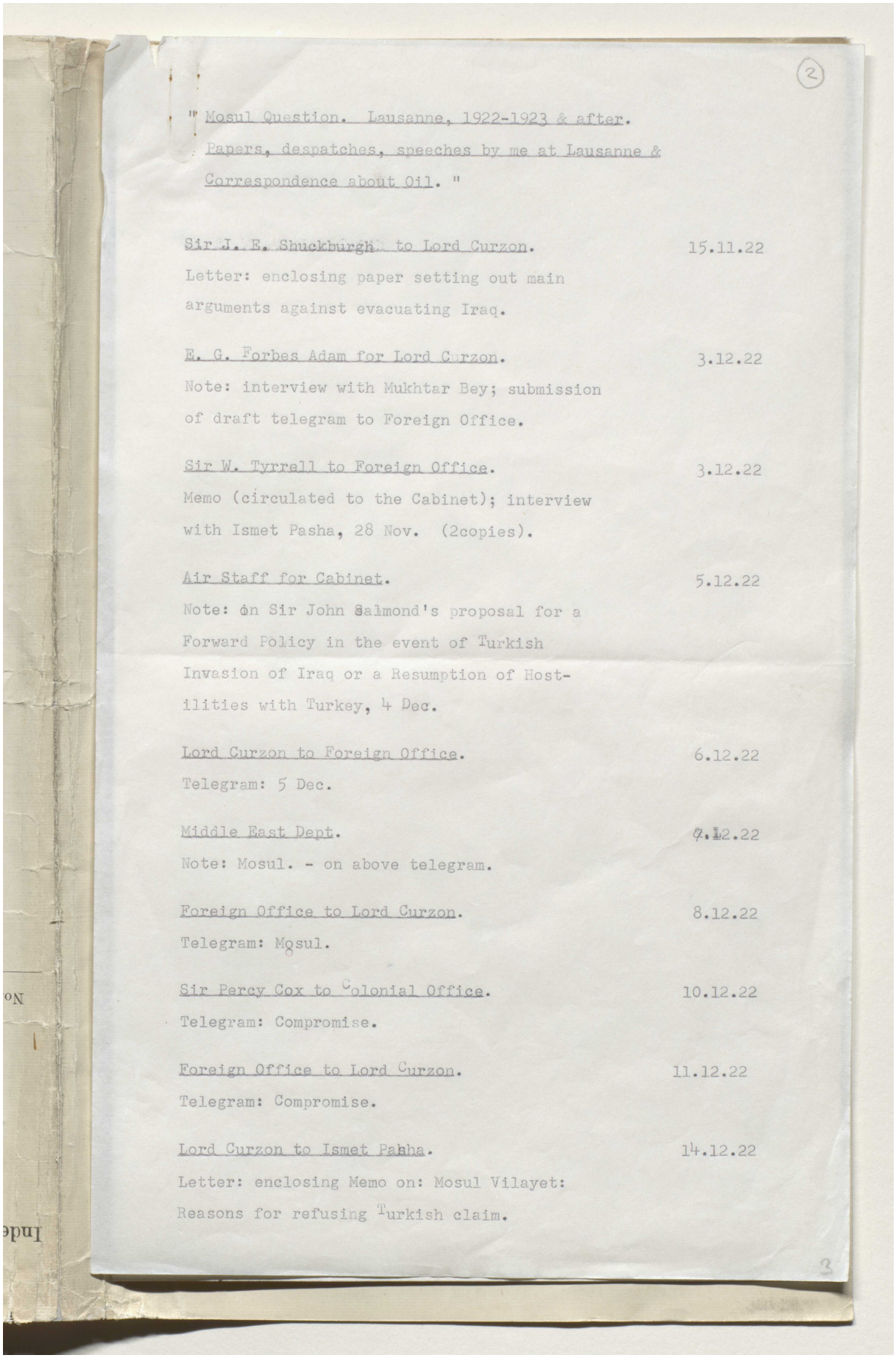

(2)

" Mosul Question. Lausanne, 1922-1923 & after.
Papers, despatches, speeches by me at Lausanne &
Correspondence about Oil. "

Sir J. E. Shuckburgh to Lord Curzon. 15.11.22
Letter: enclosing paper setting out main
arguments against evacuating Iraq.

E. G. Forbes Adam for Lord Curzon. 3.12.22
Note: interview with Mukhtar Bey; submission
of draft telegram to Foreign Office.

Sir W. Tyrrell to Foreign Office. 3.12.22
Memo (circulated to the Cabinet); interview
with Ismet Pasha, 28 Nov. (2copies).

Air Staff for Cabinet. 5.12.22
Note: on Sir John Salmond's proposal for a
Forward Policy in the event of Turkish
Invasion of Iraq or a Resumption of Host-
ilities with Turkey, 4 Dec.

Lord Curzon to Foreign Office. 6.12.22
Telegram: 5 Dec.

Middle East Dept. 7.12.22
Note: Mosul. - on above telegram.

Foreign Office to Lord Curzon. 8.12.22
Telegram: Mosul.

Sir Percy Cox to Colonial Office. 10.12.22
Telegram: Compromise.

Foreign Office to Lord Curzon. 11.12.22
Telegram: Compromise.

Lord Curzon to Ismet Pasha. 14.12.22
Letter: enclosing Memo on: Mosul Vilayet:
Reasons for refusing Turkish claim.

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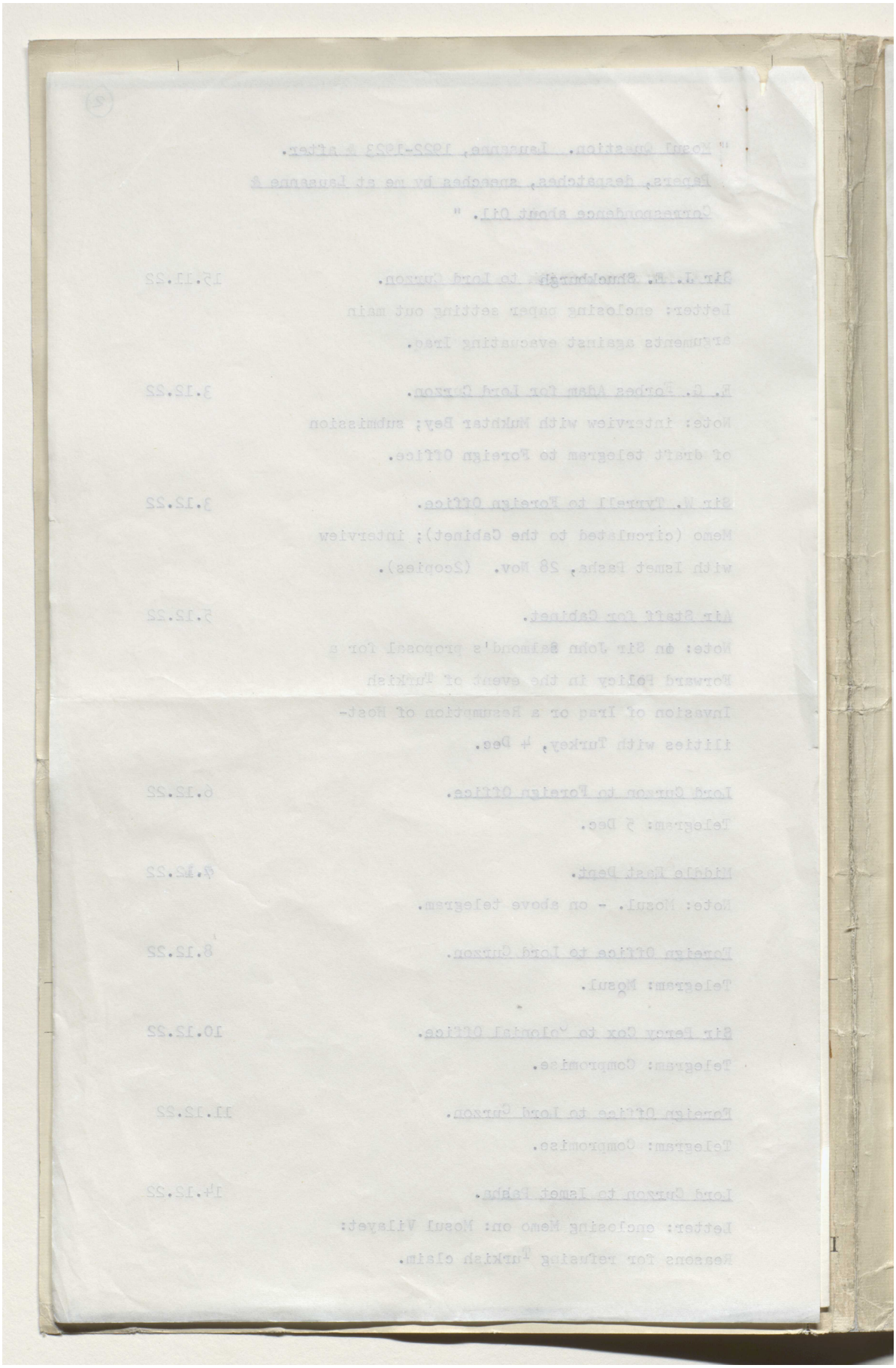

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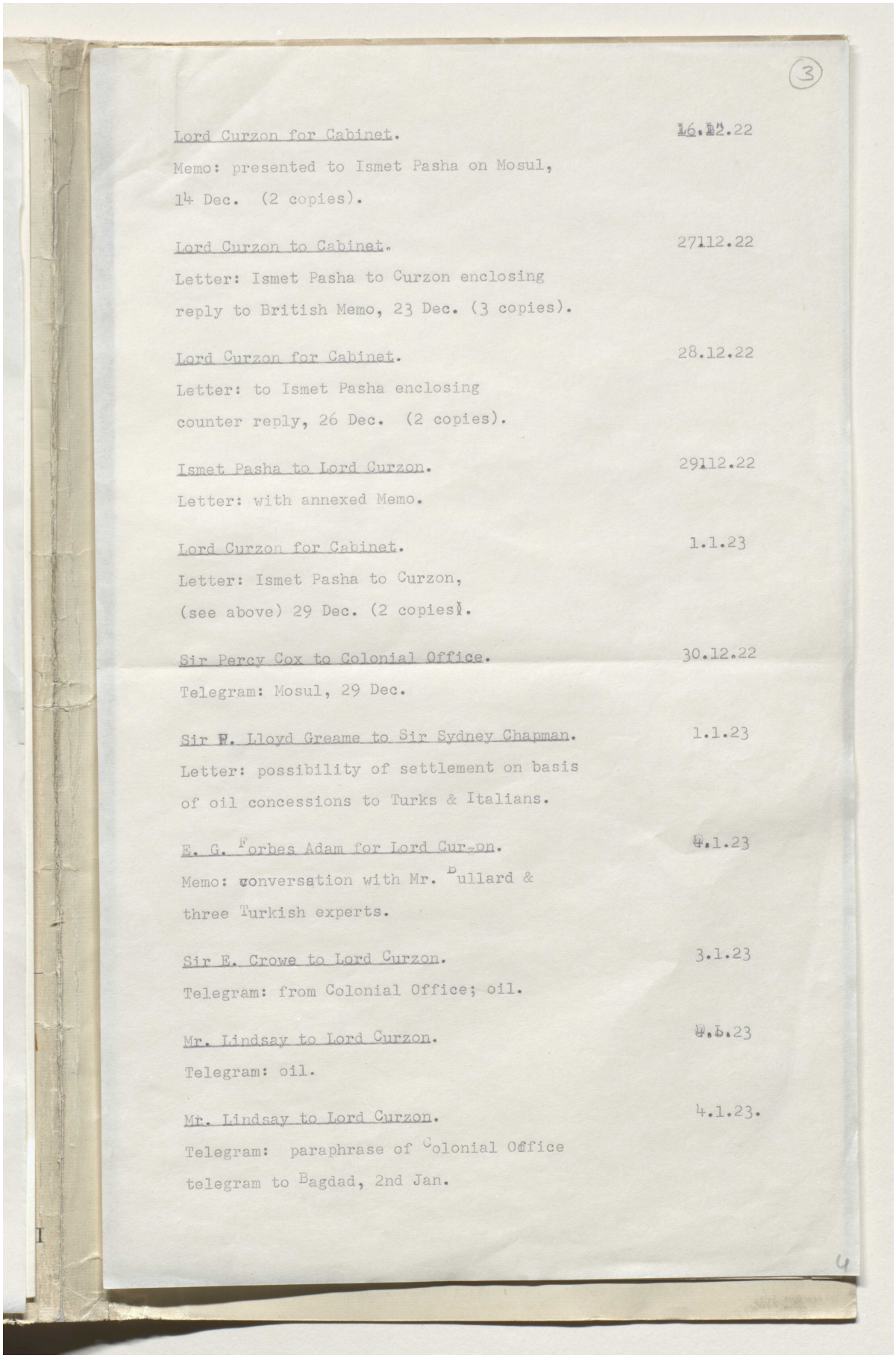

(3)

Lord Curzon for Cabinet. 16.12.22
Memo: presented to Ismet Pasha on Mosul,
14 Dec. (2 copies).

Lord Curzon to Cabinet. 27.12.22
Letter: Ismet Pasha to Curzon enclosing
reply to British Memo, 23 Dec. (3 copies).

Lord Curzon for Cabinet. 28.12.22
Letter: to Ismet Pasha enclosing
counter reply, 26 Dec. (2 copies).

Ismet Pasha to Lord Curzon. 29.12.22
Letter: with annexed Memo.

Lord Curzon for Cabinet. 1.1.23
Letter: Ismet Pasha to Curzon,
(see above) 29 Dec. (2 copies).

Sir Percy Cox to Colonial Office. 30.12.22
Telegram: Mosul, 29 Dec.

Sir H. Lloyd Greame to Sir Sydney Chapman. 1.1.23
Letter: possibility of settlement on basis
of oil concessions to Turks & Italians.

E. G. Forbes Adam for Lord Curzon. 4.1.23
Memo: conversation with Mr. Bullard &
three Turkish experts.

Sir E. Crowe to Lord Curzon. 3.1.23
Telegram: from Colonial Office; oil.

Mr. Lindsay to Lord Curzon. 3.1.23
Telegram: oil.

Mr. Lindsay to Lord Curzon. 4.1.23.
Telegram: paraphrase of Colonial Office
telegram to Bagdad, 2nd Jan.

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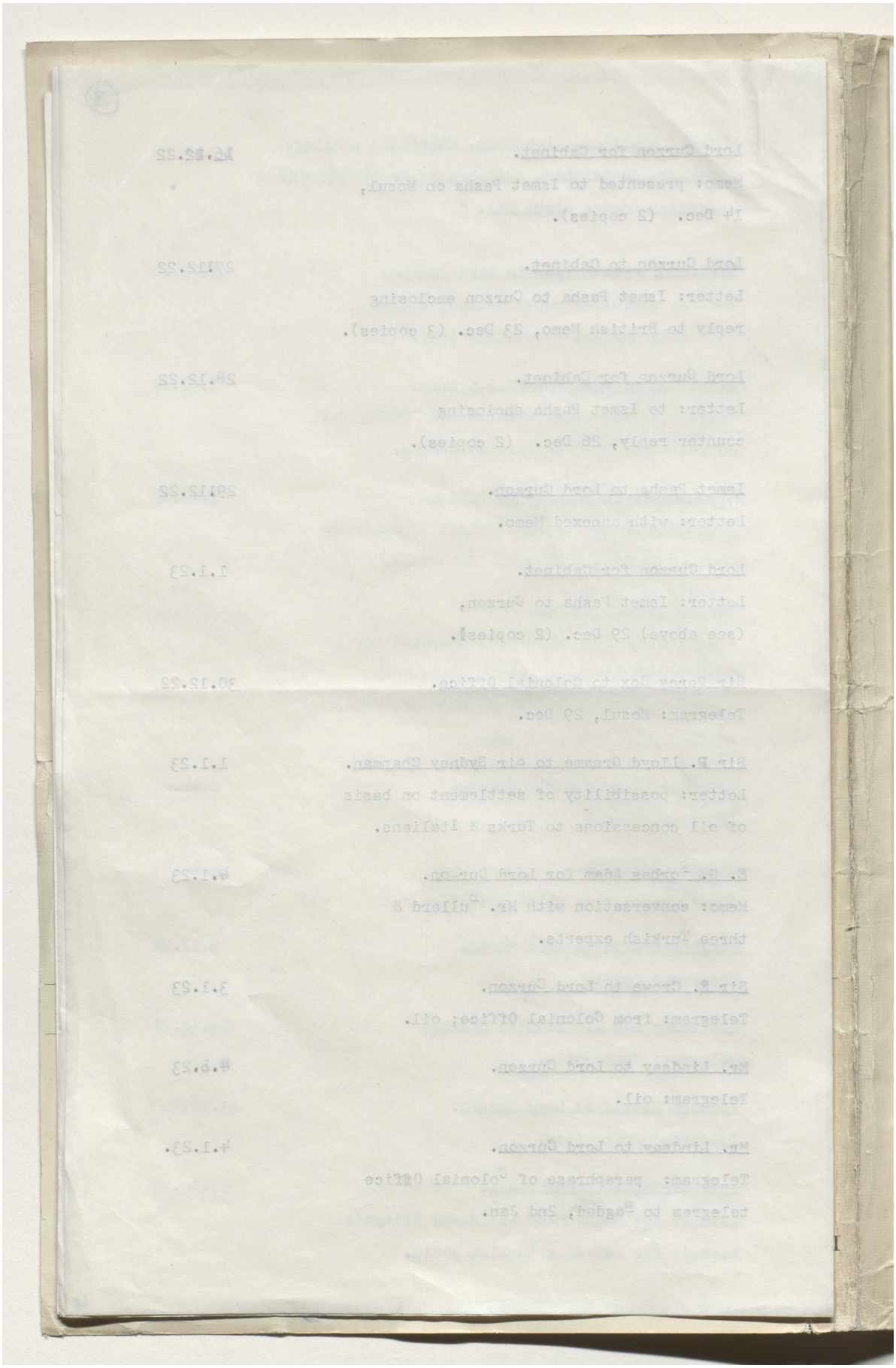

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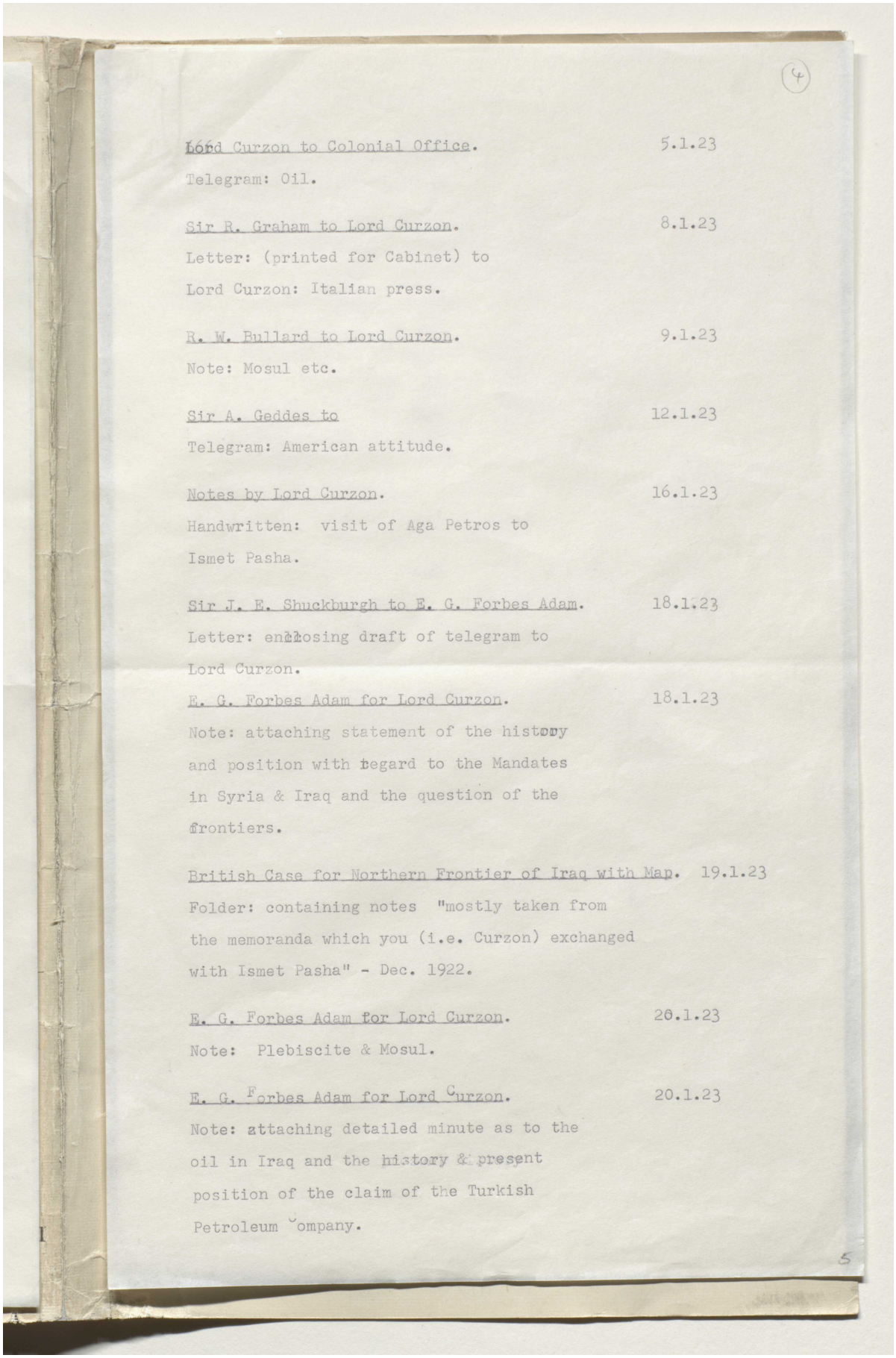

(4)

Lord Curzon to Colonial Office. 5.1.23
Telegram: Oil.

Sir R. Graham to Lord Curzon. 8.1.23
Letter: (printed for Cabinet) to
Lord Curzon: Italian press.

R. W. Bullard to Lord Curzon. 9.1.23
Note: Mosul etc.

Sir A. Geddes to 12.1.23
Telegram: American attitude.

Notes by Lord Curzon. 16.1.23
Handwritten: visit of Aga Petros to
Ismet Pasha.

Sir J. E. Shuckburgh to E. G. Forbes Adam. 18.1.23
Letter: enclosing draft of telegram to
Lord Curzon.

E. G. Forbes Adam for Lord Curzon. 18.1.23
Note: attaching statement of the history
and position with regard to the Mandates
in Syria & Iraq and the question of the
frontiers.

British Case for Northern Frontier of Iraq with Map. 19.1.23
Folder: containing notes "mostly taken from
the memoranda which you (i.e. Curzon) exchanged
with Ismet Pasha" - Dec. 1922.

E. G. Forbes Adam for Lord Curzon. 20.1.23
Note: Plebiscite & Mosul.

E. G. Forbes Adam for Lord Curzon. 20.1.23
Note: attaching detailed minute as to the
oil in Iraq and the history & present
position of the claim of the Turkish
Petroleum Company.

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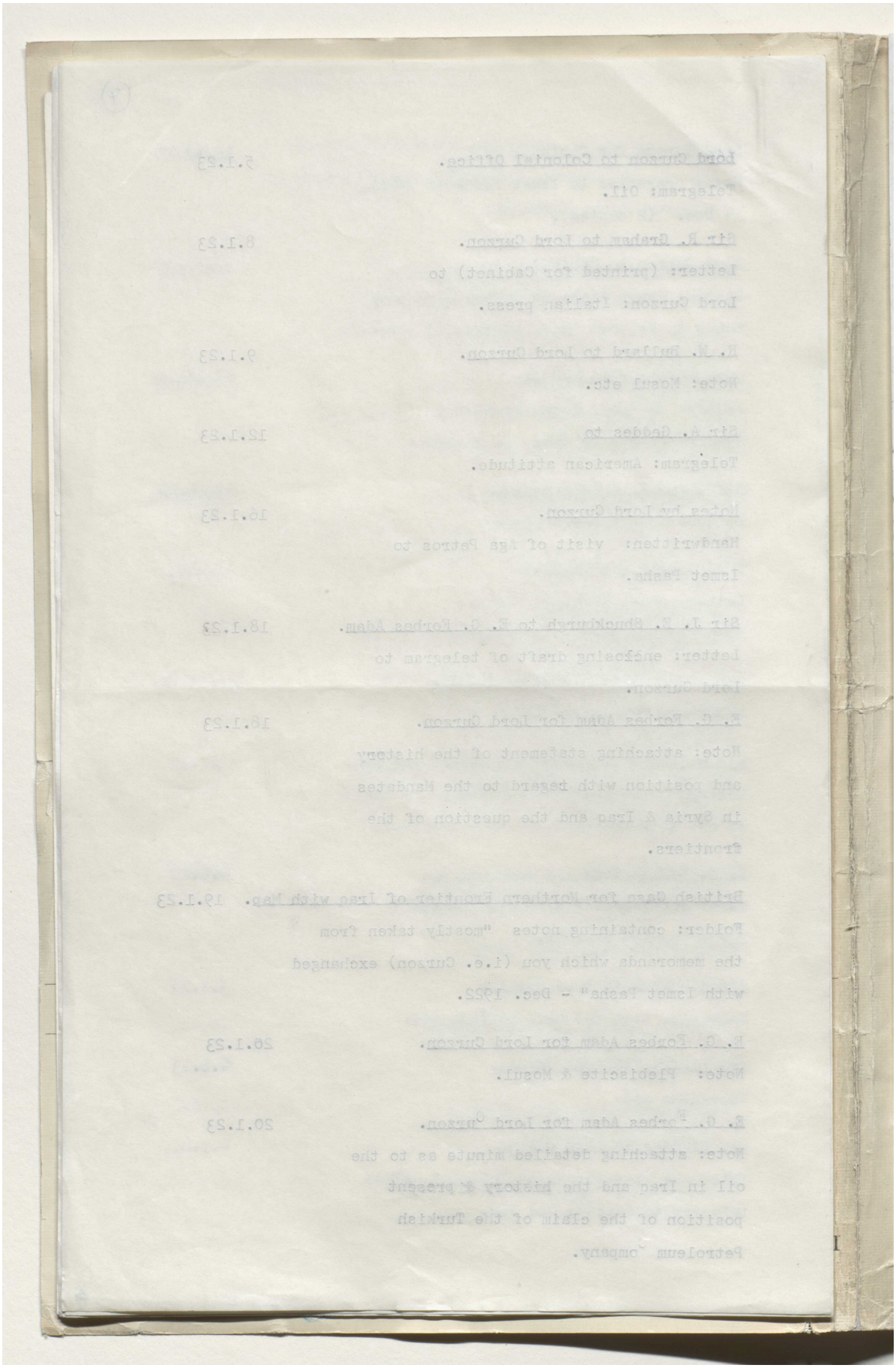

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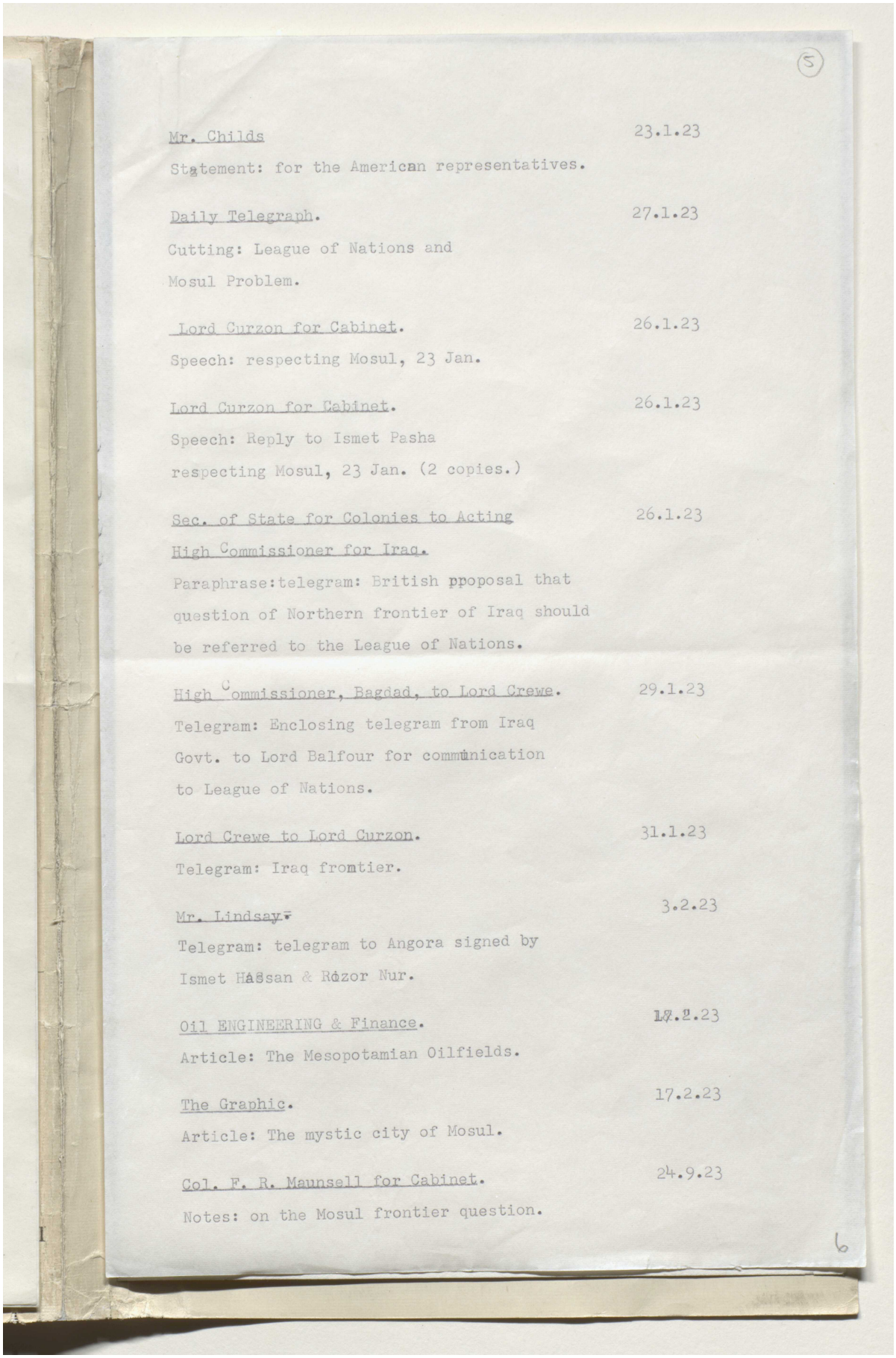

(5)

Mr. Childs — 23.1.23
Statement: for the American representatives.

Daily Telegraph. — 27.1.23
Cutting: League of Nations and
Mosul Problem.

Lord Curzon for Cabinet. — 26.1.23
Speech: respecting Mosul, 23 Jan.

Lord Curzon for Cabinet. — 26.1.23
Speech: Reply to Ismet Pasha
respecting Mosul, 23 Jan. (2 copies.)

Sec. of State for Colonies to Acting — 26.1.23
High Commissioner for Iraq.
Paraphrase:telegram: British ppoposal that
question of Northern frontier of Iraq should
be referred to the League of Nations.

High Commissioner, Bagdad, to Lord Crewe. — 29.1.23
Telegram: Enclosing telegram from Iraq
Govt. to Lord Balfour for communication
to League of Nations.

Lord Crewe to Lord Curzon. — 31.1.23
Telegram: Iraq frontier.

Mr. Lindsay. — 3.2.23
Telegram: telegram to Angora signed by
Ismet Hassan & Rozor Nur.

Oil ENGINEERING & Finance. — 17.2.23
Article: The Mesopotamian Oilfields.

The Graphic. — 17.2.23
Article: The mystic city of Mosul.

Col. F. R. Maunsell for Cabinet. — 24.9.23
Notes: on the Mosul frontier question.

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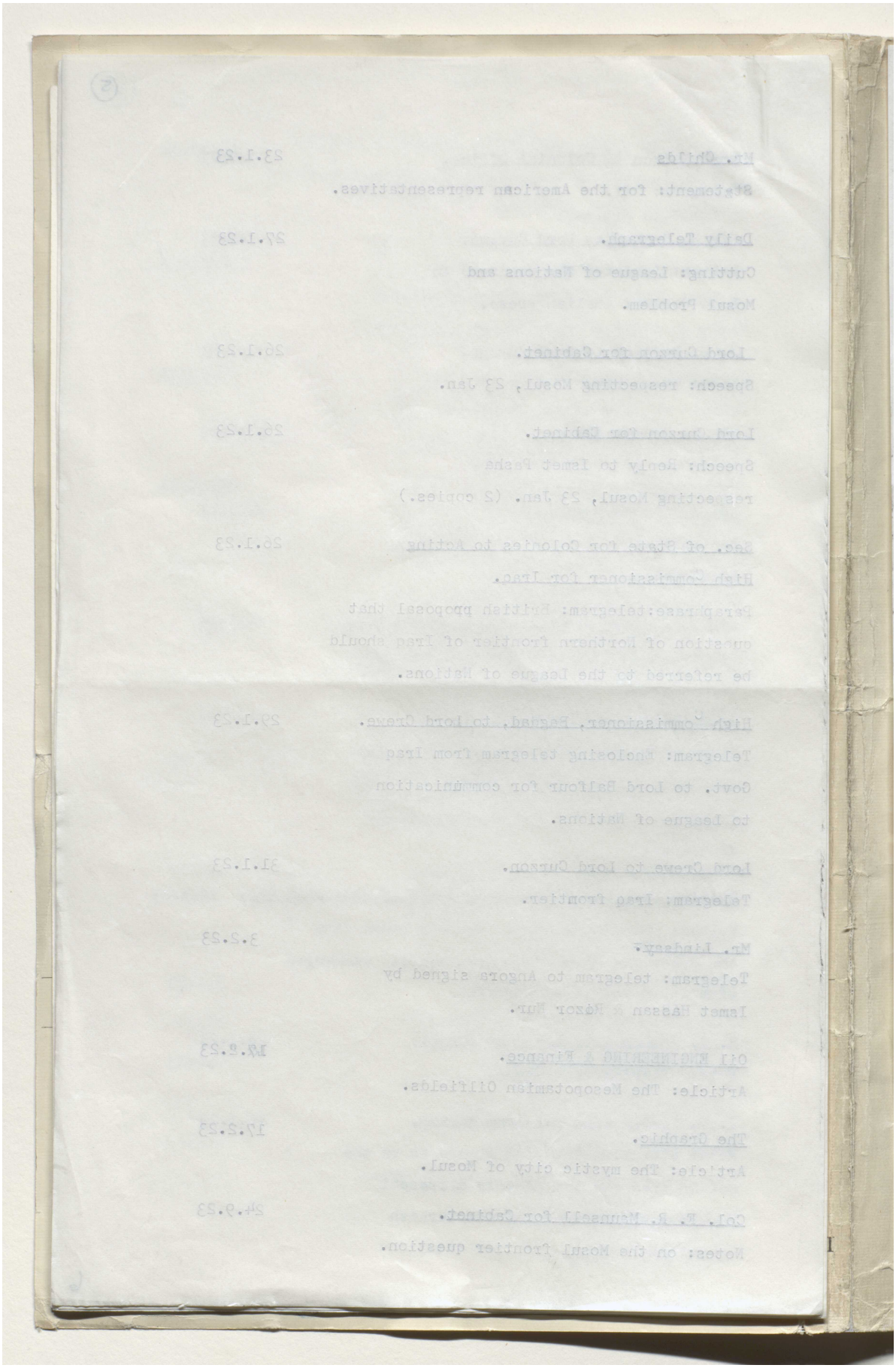

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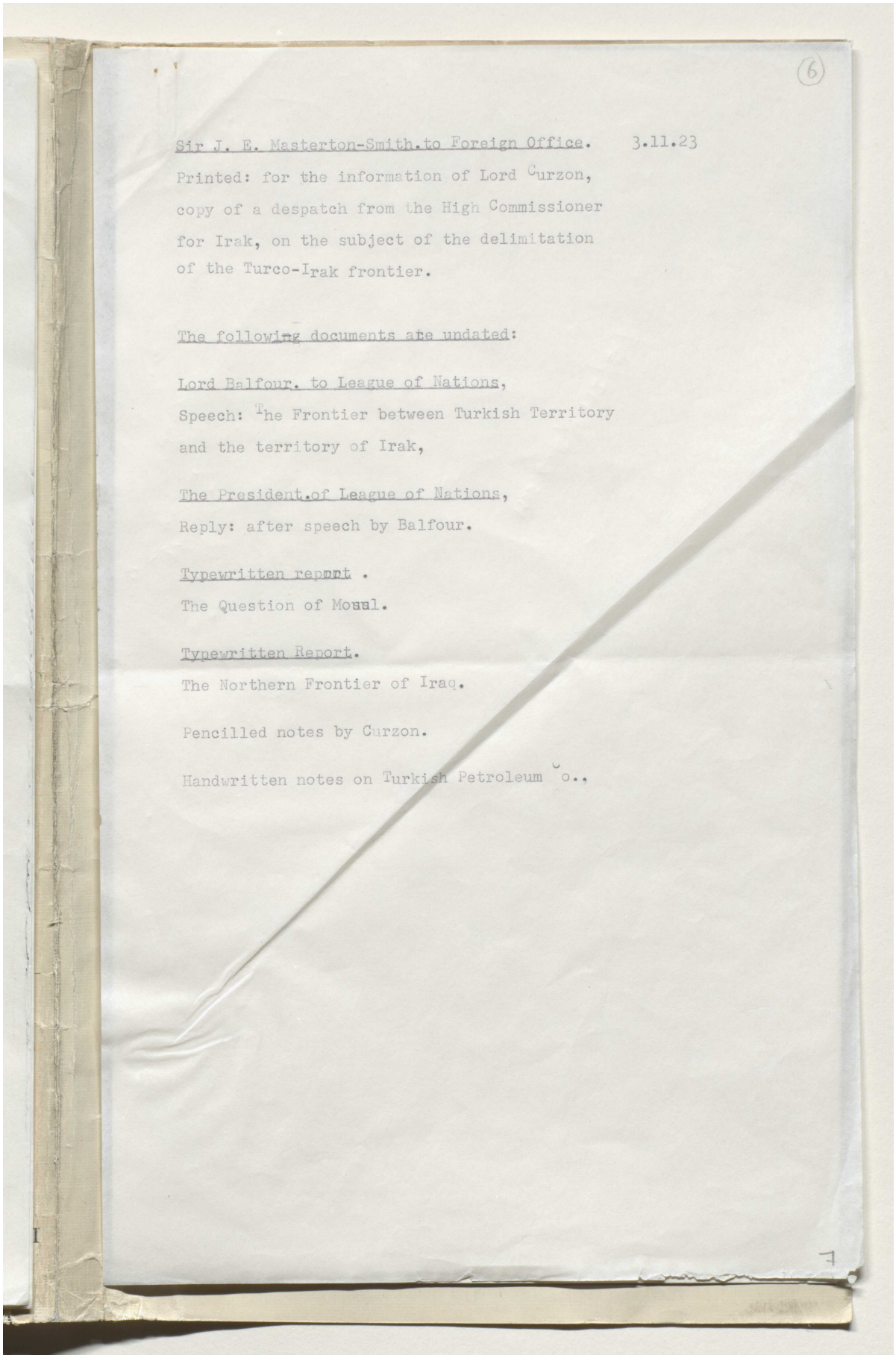

(6)

Sir J. E. Masterton-Smith.to Foreign Office. 3.11.23

Printed: for the information of Lord Curzon, copy of a despatch from the High Commissioner for Irak, on the subject of the delimitation of the Turco-Irak frontier.

The following documents are undated:

Lord Balfour. to League of Nations,
Speech: The Frontier between Turkish Territory and the territory of Irak,

The President.of League of Nations,
Reply: after speech by Balfour.

Typewritten report .
The Question of Mosul.

Typewritten Report.
The Northern Frontier of Iraq.

Pencilled notes by Curzon.

Handwritten notes on Turkish Petroleum Co..

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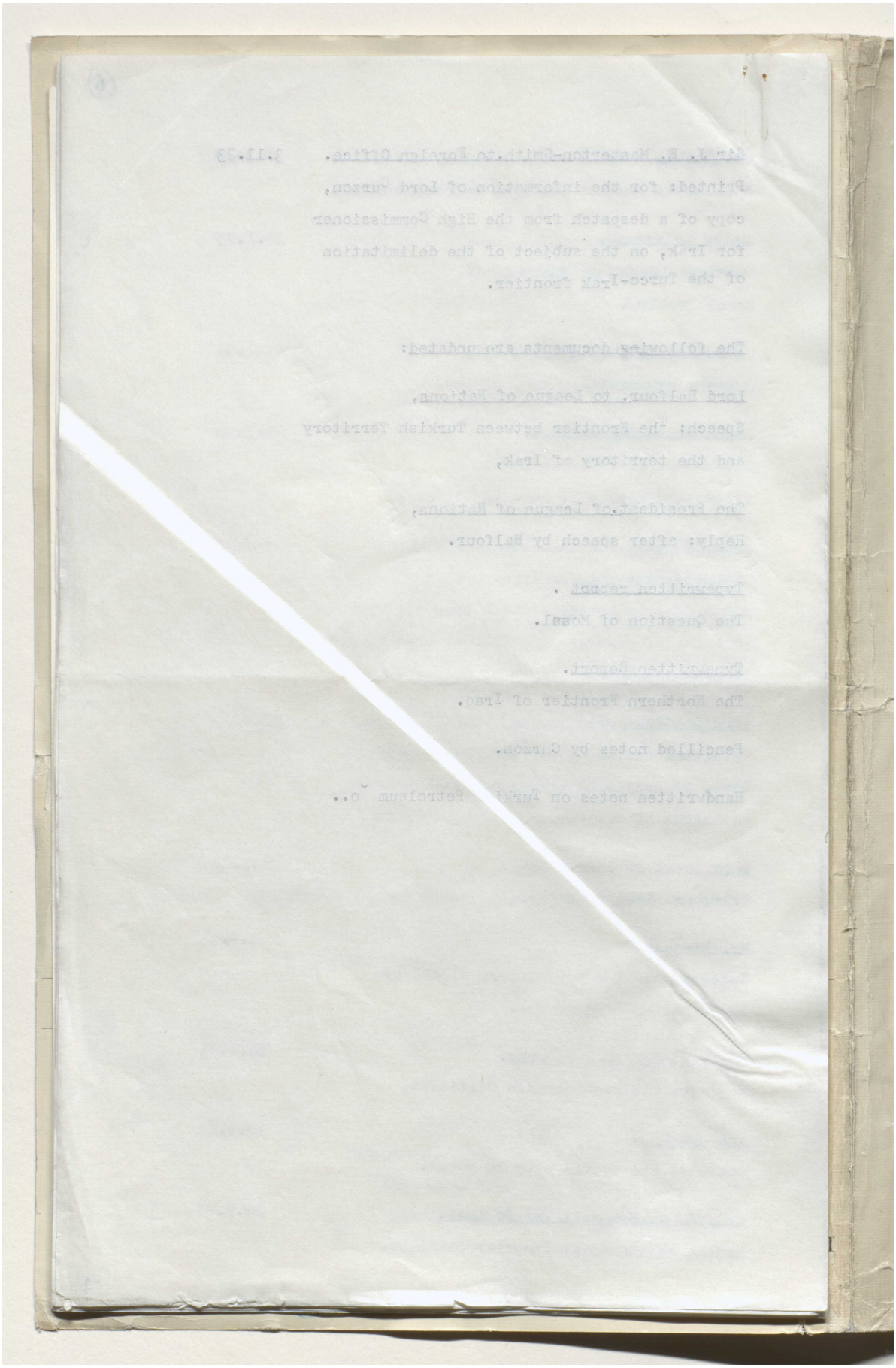

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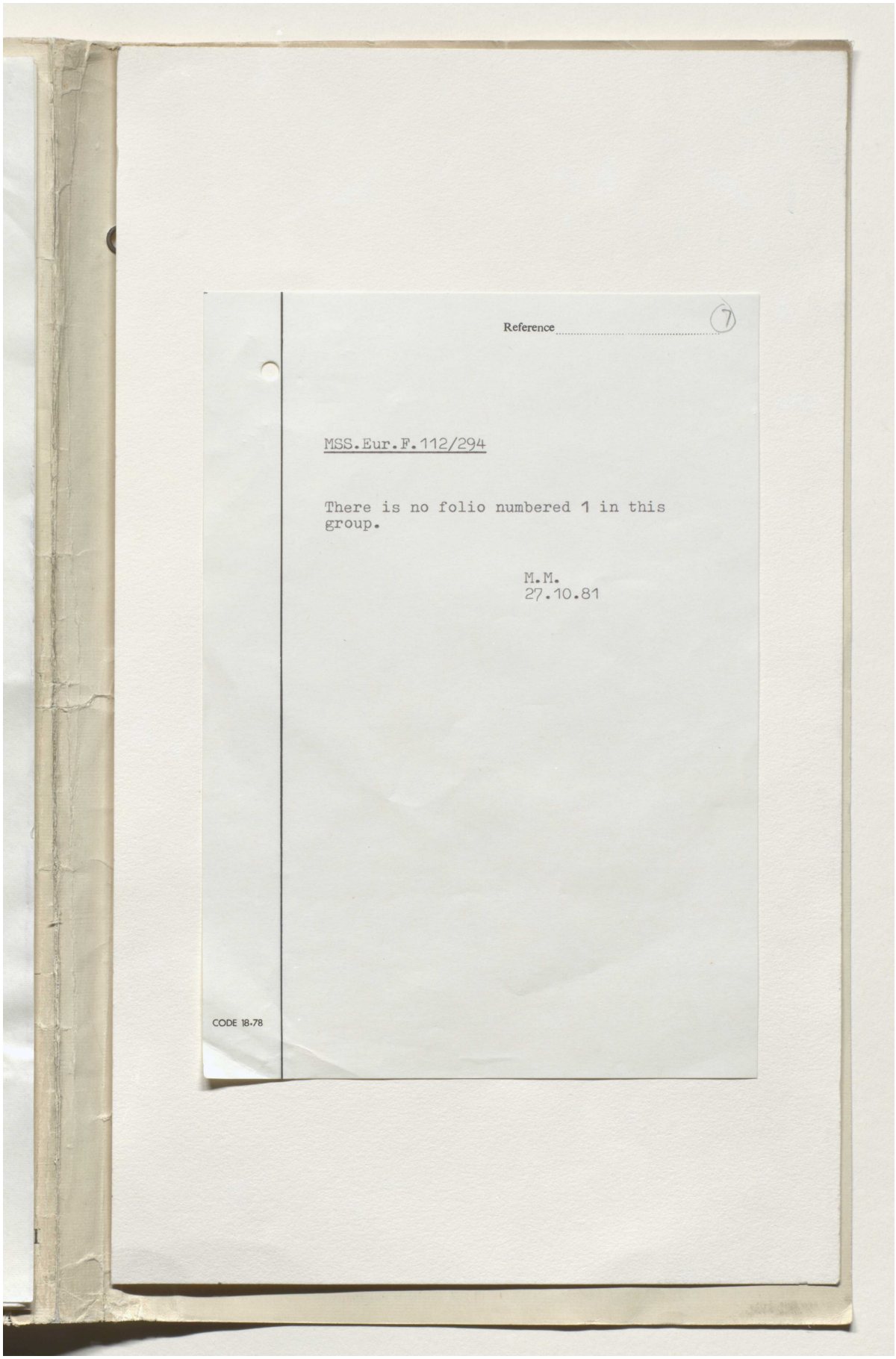

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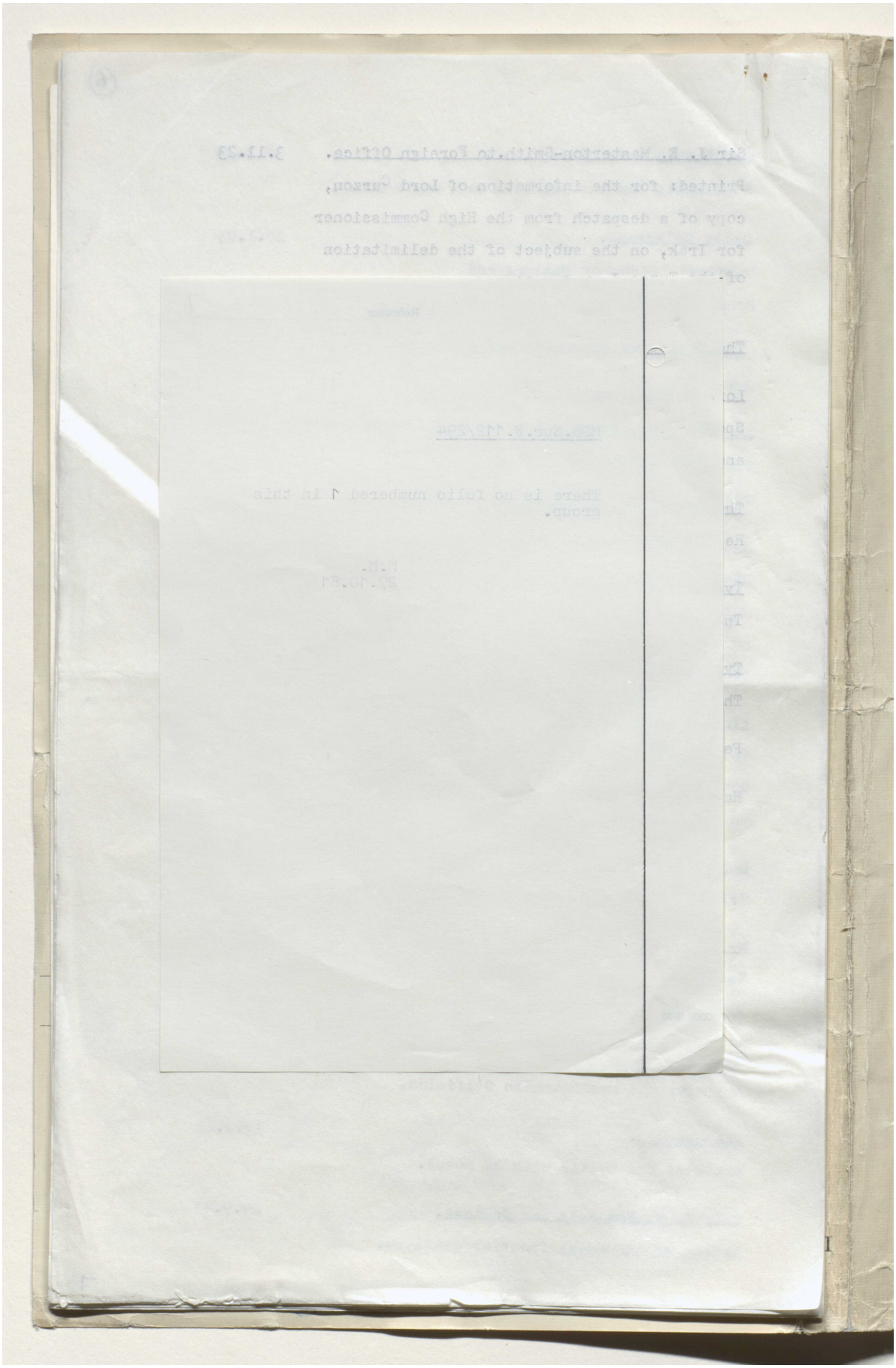

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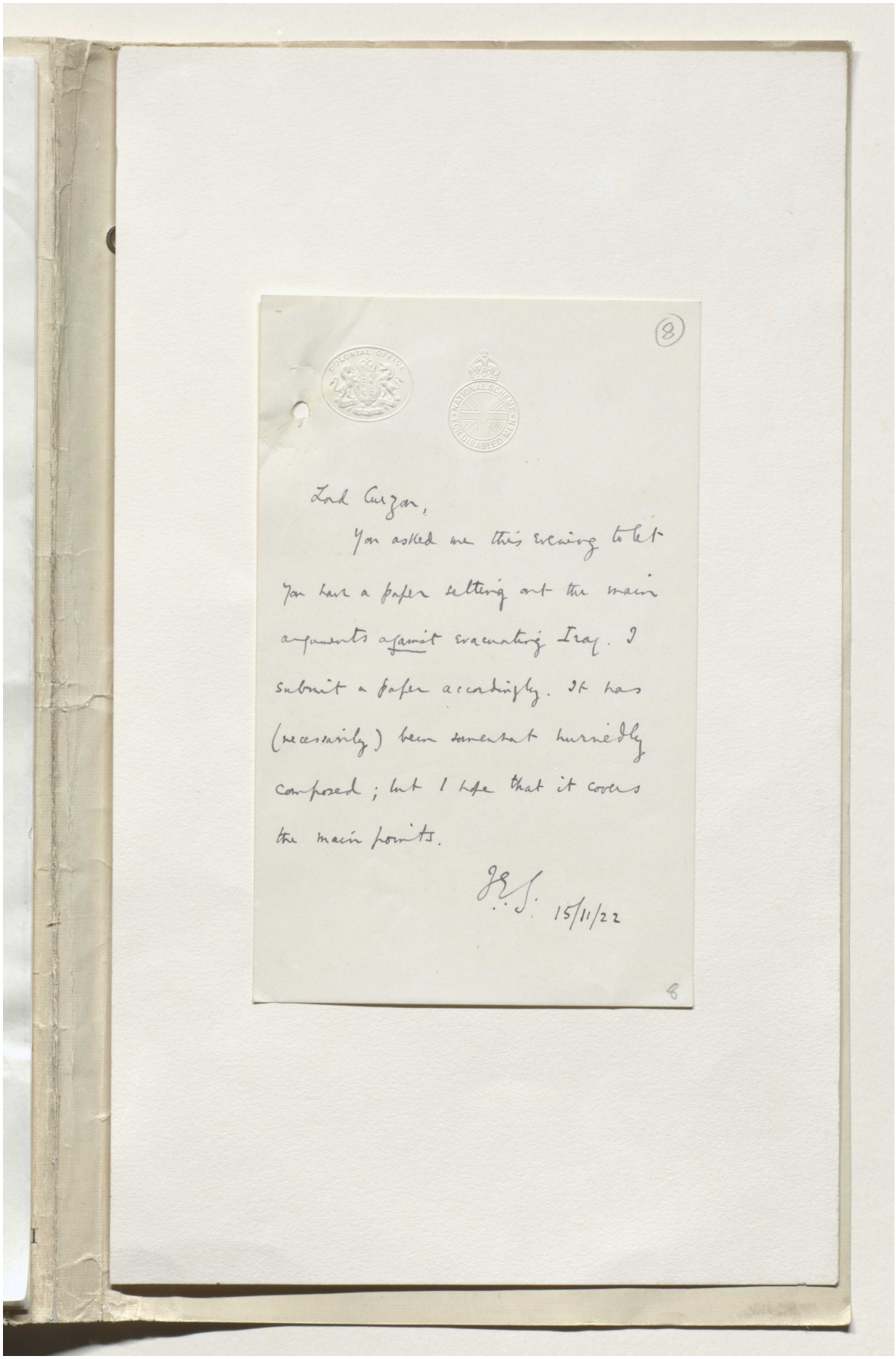

(8)

Lord Curzon,

You asked me this evening to let you have a paper setting out the main arguments against evacuating Iraq. I submit a paper accordingly. It has (necessarily) been somewhat hurriedly composed; but I hope that it covers the main points.

G.R.S. 15/11/22

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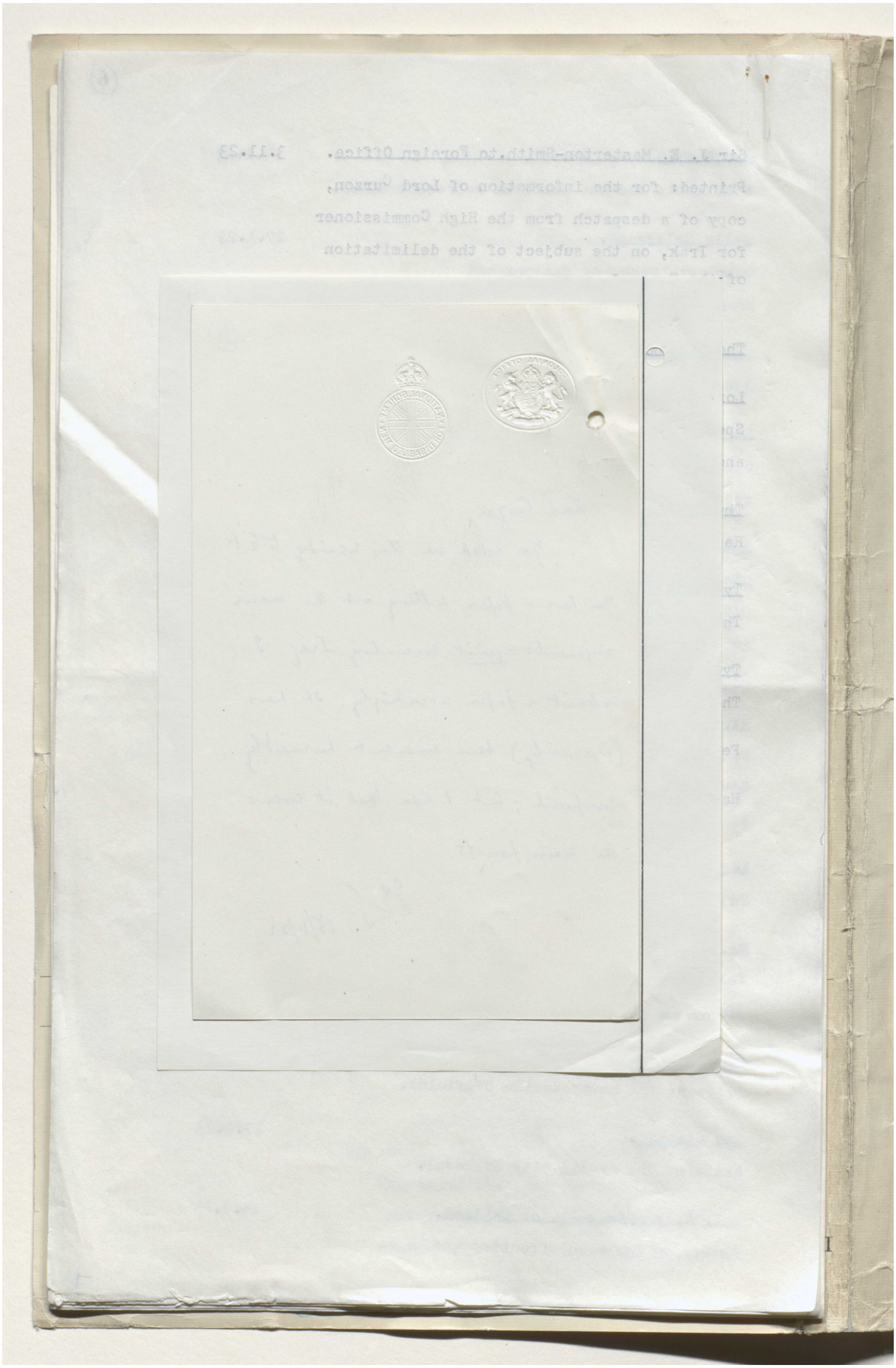

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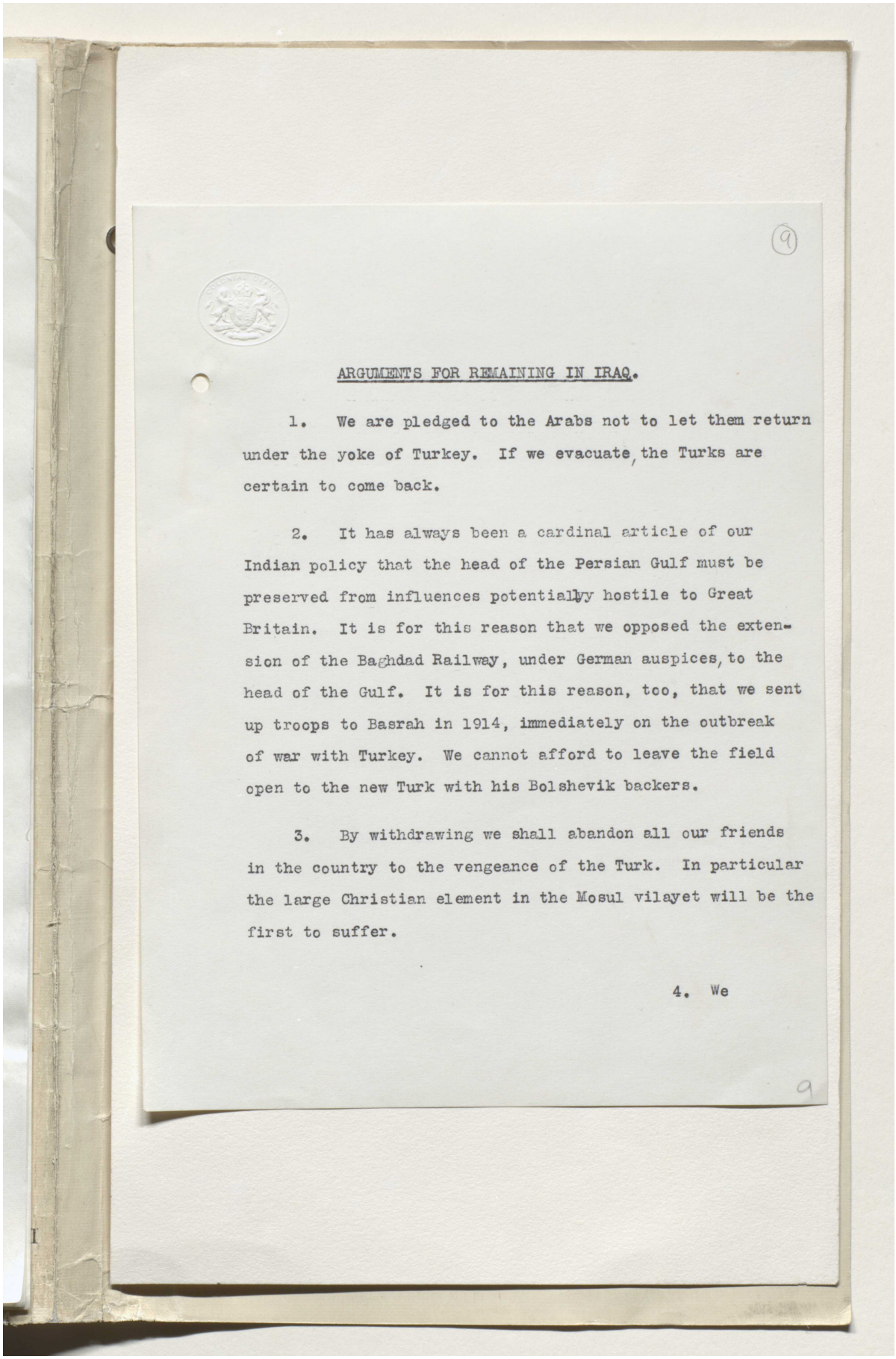

(9)

ARGUMENTS FOR REMAINING IN IRAQ.

1. We are pledged to the Arabs not to let them return under the yoke of Turkey. If we evacuate, the Turks are certain to come back.

2. It has always been a cardinal article of our Indian policy that the head of the Persian Gulf must be preserved from influences potentially hostile to Great Britain. It is for this reason that we opposed the extension of the Baghdad Railway, under German auspices, to the head of the Gulf. It is for this reason, too, that we sent up troops to Basrah in 1914, immediately on the outbreak of war with Turkey. We cannot afford to leave the field open to the new Turk with his Bolshevik backers.

3. By withdrawing we shall abandon all our friends in the country to the vengeance of the Turk. In particular the large Christian element in the Mosul vilayet will be the first to suffer.

4. We

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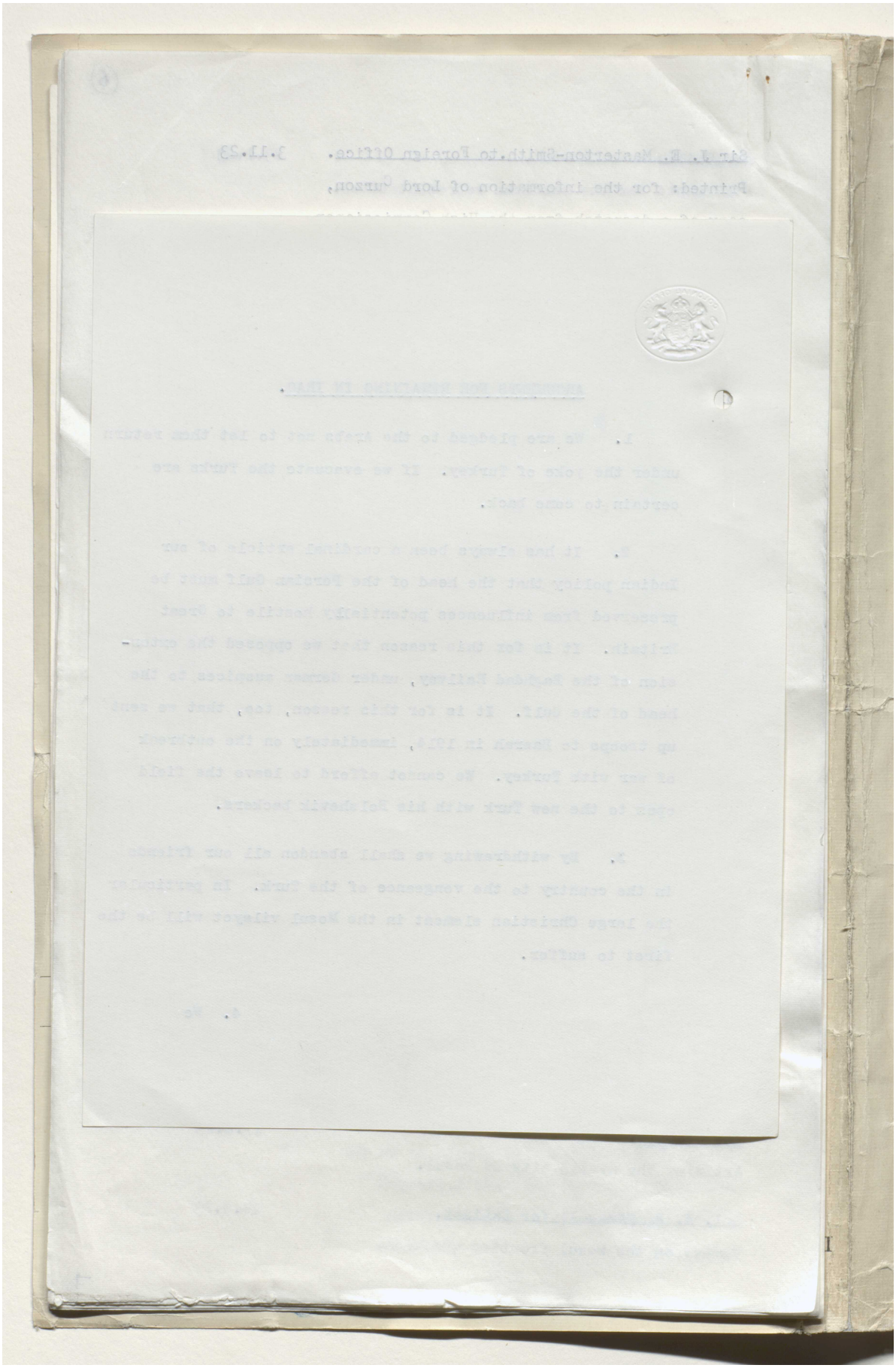

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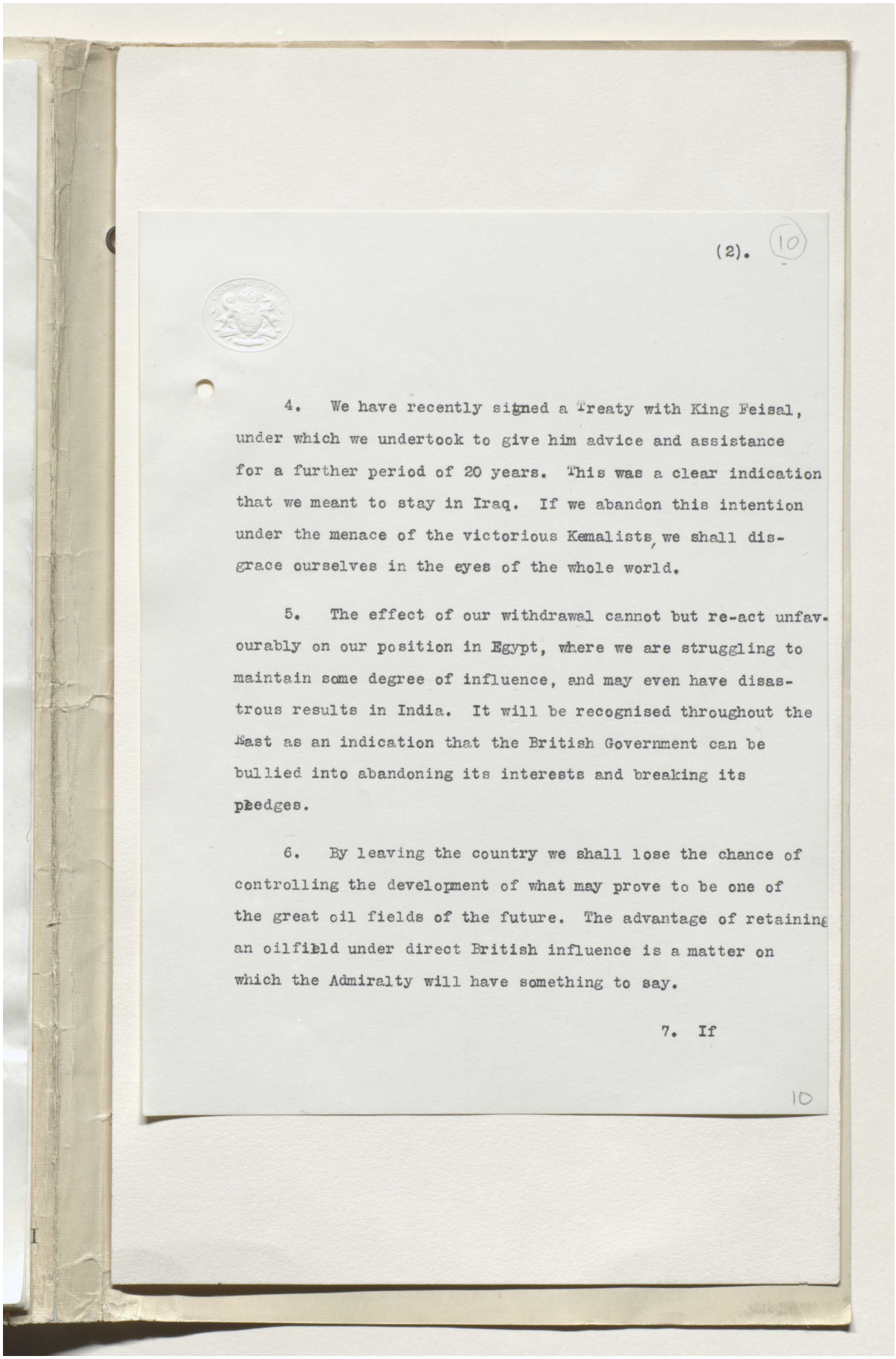

4. We have recently signed a Treaty with King Feisal, under which we undertook to give him advice and assistance for a further period of 20 years. This was a clear indication that we meant to stay in Iraq. If we abandon this intention under the menace of the victorious Kemalists, we shall disgrace ourselves in the eyes of the whole world.

5. The effect of our withdrawal cannot but re-act unfavourably on our position in Egypt, where we are struggling to maintain some degree of influence, and may even have disastrous results in India. It will be recognised throughout the East as an indication that the British Government can be bullied into abandoning its interests and breaking its pledges.

6. By leaving the country we shall lose the chance of controlling the development of what may prove to be one of the great oil fields of the future. The advantage of retaining an oilfield under direct British influence is a matter on which the Admiralty will have something to say.

7. If

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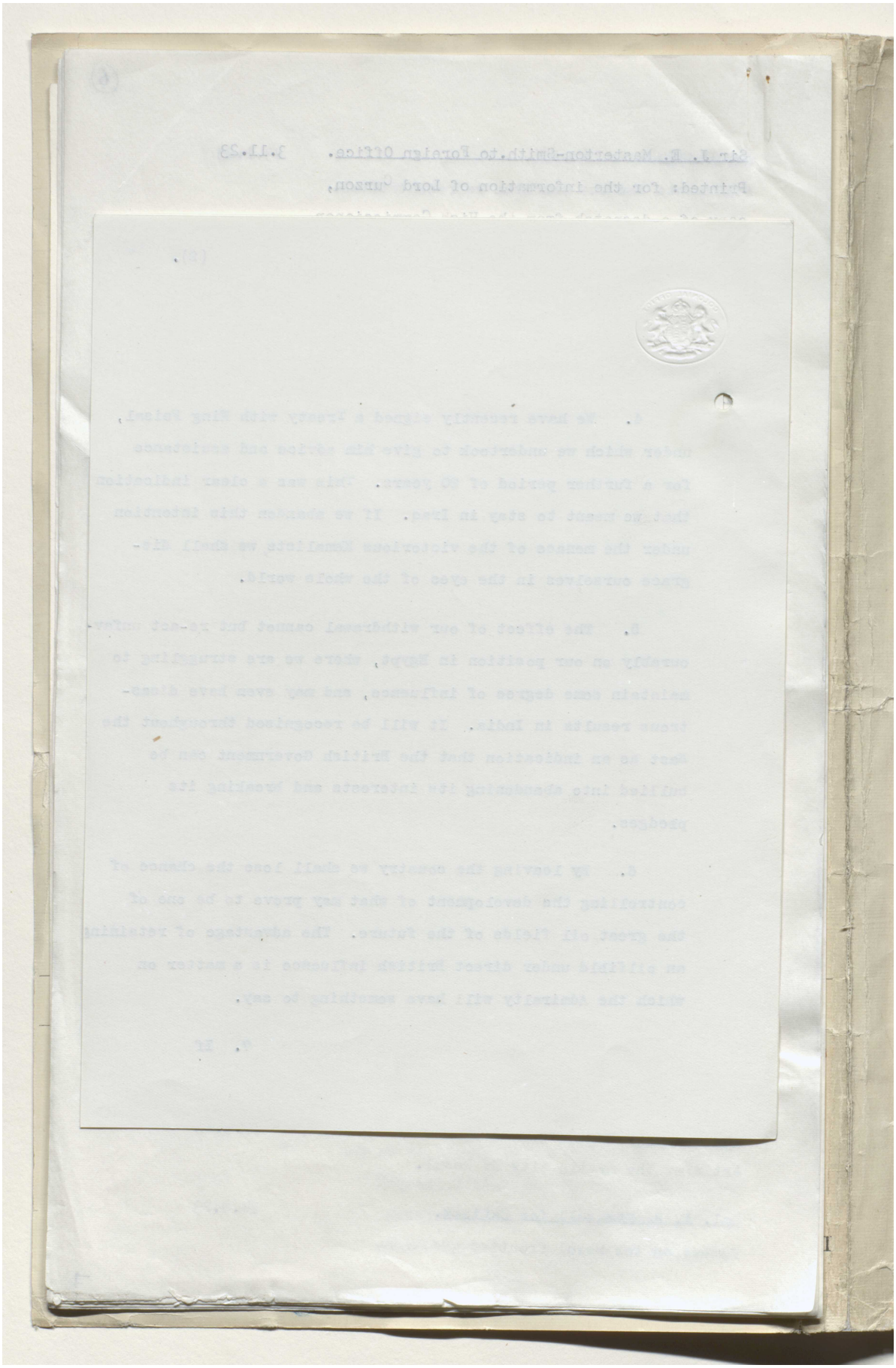

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7. If we leave Iraq it is practically certain that the French will leave Syria, in which case our position in Palestine will probably become untenable. This will involve the violation of our pledge to the Jews to promote the establishment of a Jewish National Home in that country, and will not benefit the cause of Arab independence, inasmuch as the Turks will inevitably return.

8. The mere act of withdrawal from Iraq may prove a military measure of some difficulty, involving the despatch of considerable re-enforcements to the spot.

9. After the immemse expenditure of the past we have now reduced the cost of Iraq to something like manageable proportions. It is hoped to get the estimates down to about 4 millions in the immediate future. It is surely a pity after having sunk so much money in the country to abandon the whole enterprise when we are within reasonable distance of getting some return for our expenditure.

10. It

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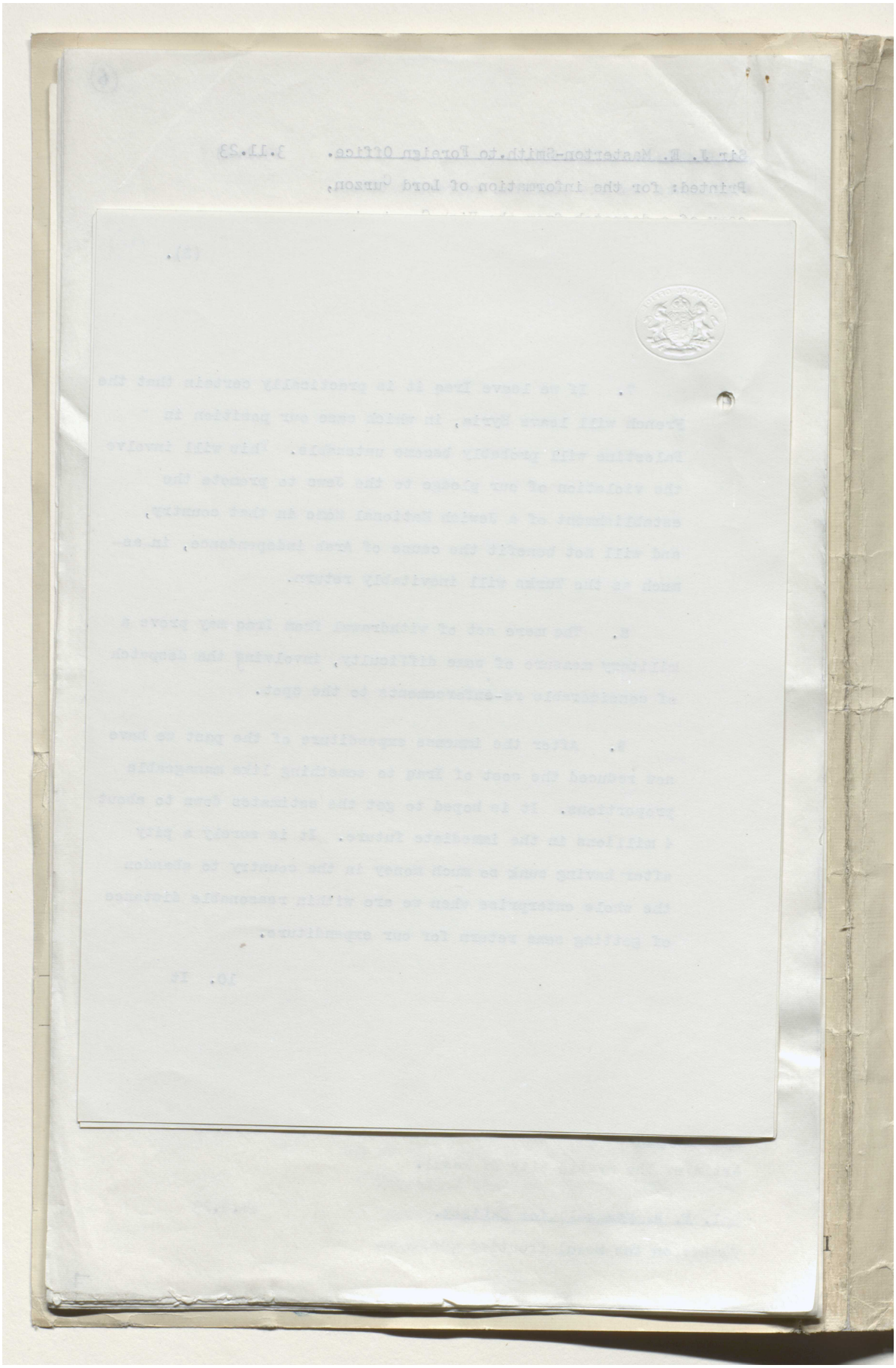

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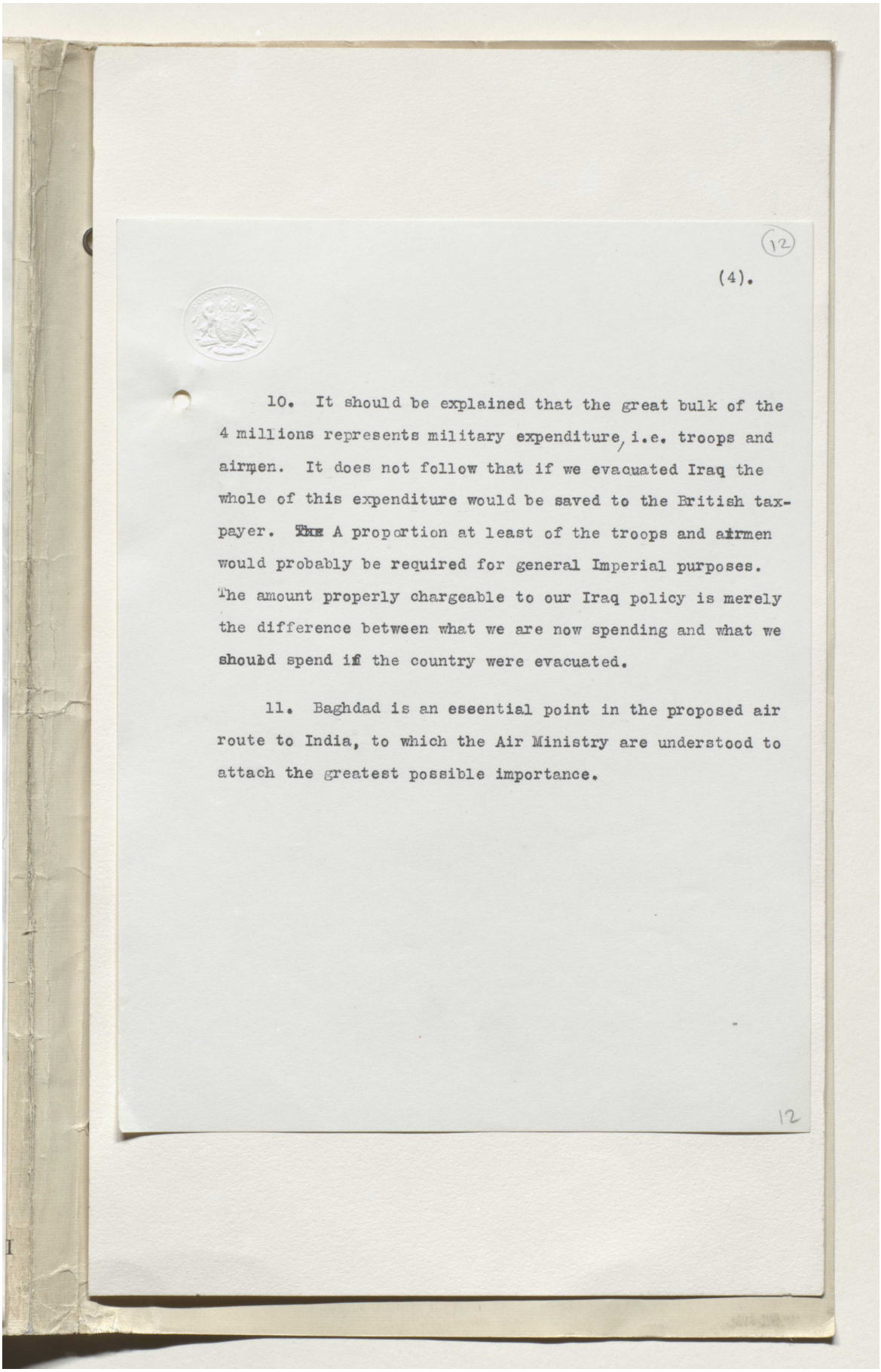

(12)

(4).

10. It should be explained that the great bulk of the 4 millions represents military expenditure, i.e. troops and airmen. It does not follow that if we evacuated Iraq the whole of this expenditure would be saved to the British tax-payer. ~~The~~ A proportion at least of the troops and airmen would probably be required for general Imperial purposes. The amount properly chargeable to our Iraq policy is merely the difference between what we are now spending and what we should spend if the country were evacuated.

11. Baghdad is an essential point in the proposed air route to India, to which the Air Ministry are understood to attach the greatest possible importance.

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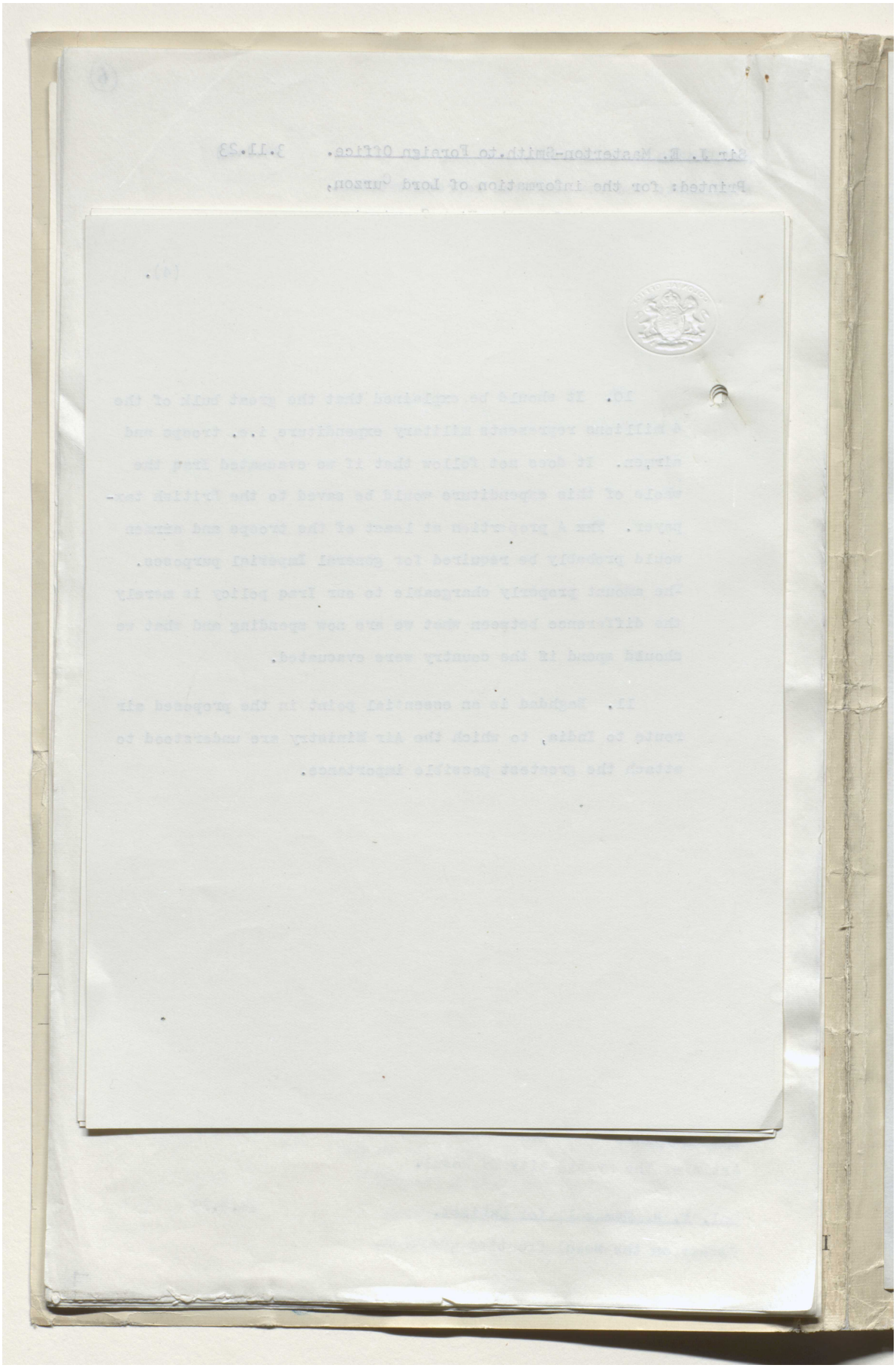

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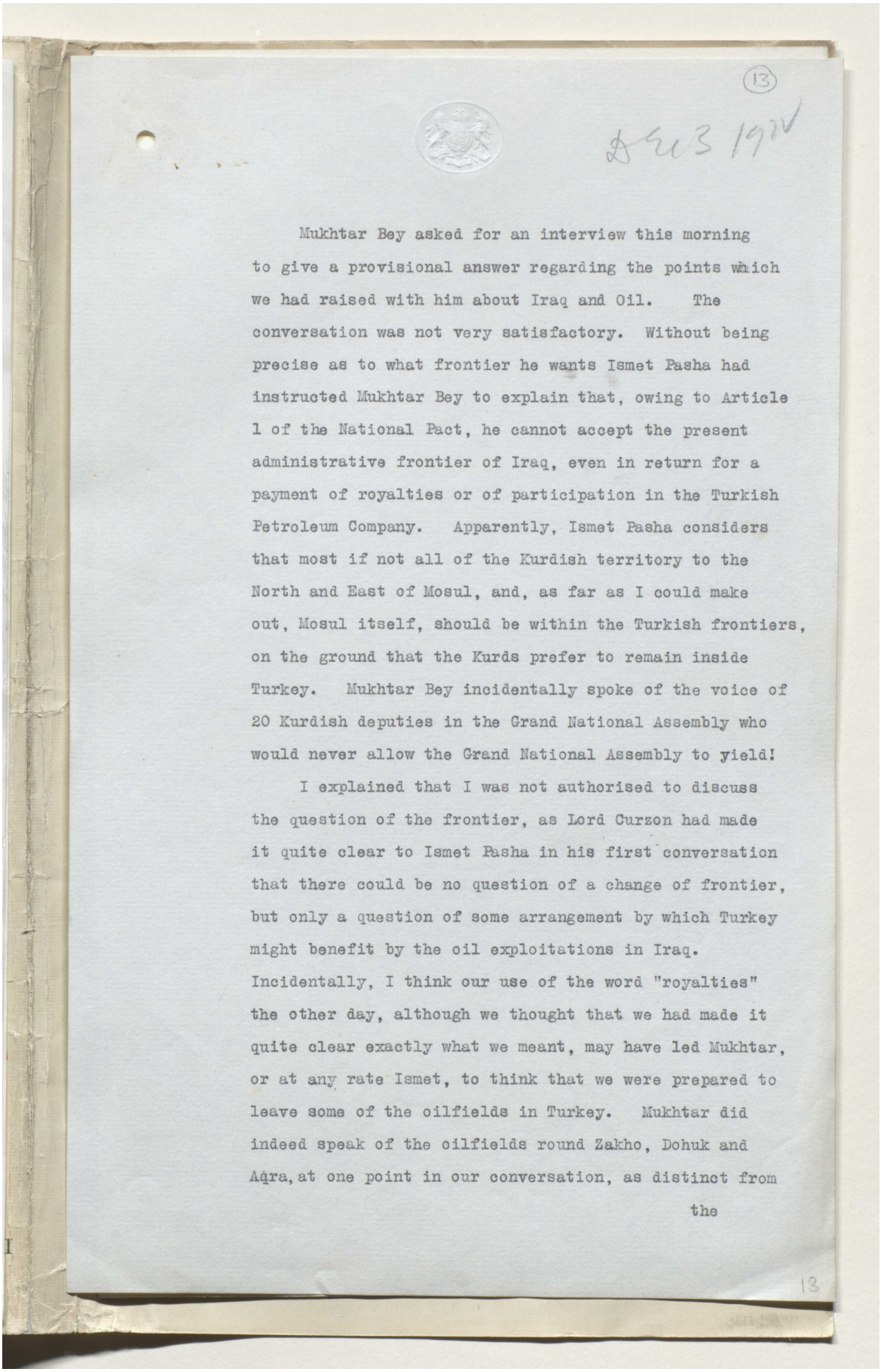

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Dec 3 1922

Mukhtar Bey asked for an interview this morning to give a provisional answer regarding the points which we had raised with him about Iraq and Oil. The conversation was not very satisfactory. Without being precise as to what frontier he wants Ismet Pasha had instructed Mukhtar Bey to explain that, owing to Article 1 of the National Pact, he cannot accept the present administrative frontier of Iraq, even in return for a payment of royalties or of participation in the Turkish Petroleum Company. Apparently, Ismet Pasha considers that most if not all of the Kurdish territory to the North and East of Mosul, and, as far as I could make out, Mosul itself, should be within the Turkish frontiers, on the ground that the Kurds prefer to remain inside Turkey. Mukhtar Bey incidentally spoke of the voice of 20 Kurdish deputies in the Grand National Assembly who would never allow the Grand National Assembly to yield!

I explained that I was not authorised to discuss the question of the frontier, as Lord Curzon had made it quite clear to Ismet Pasha in his first conversation that there could be no question of a change of frontier, but only a question of some arrangement by which Turkey might benefit by the oil exploitations in Iraq. Incidentally, I think our use of the word "royalties" the other day, although we thought that we had made it quite clear exactly what we meant, may have led Mukhtar, or at any rate Ismet, to think that we were prepared to leave some of the oilfields in Turkey. Mukhtar did indeed speak of the oilfields round Zakho, Dohuk and Aqra, at one point in our conversation, as distinct from

the

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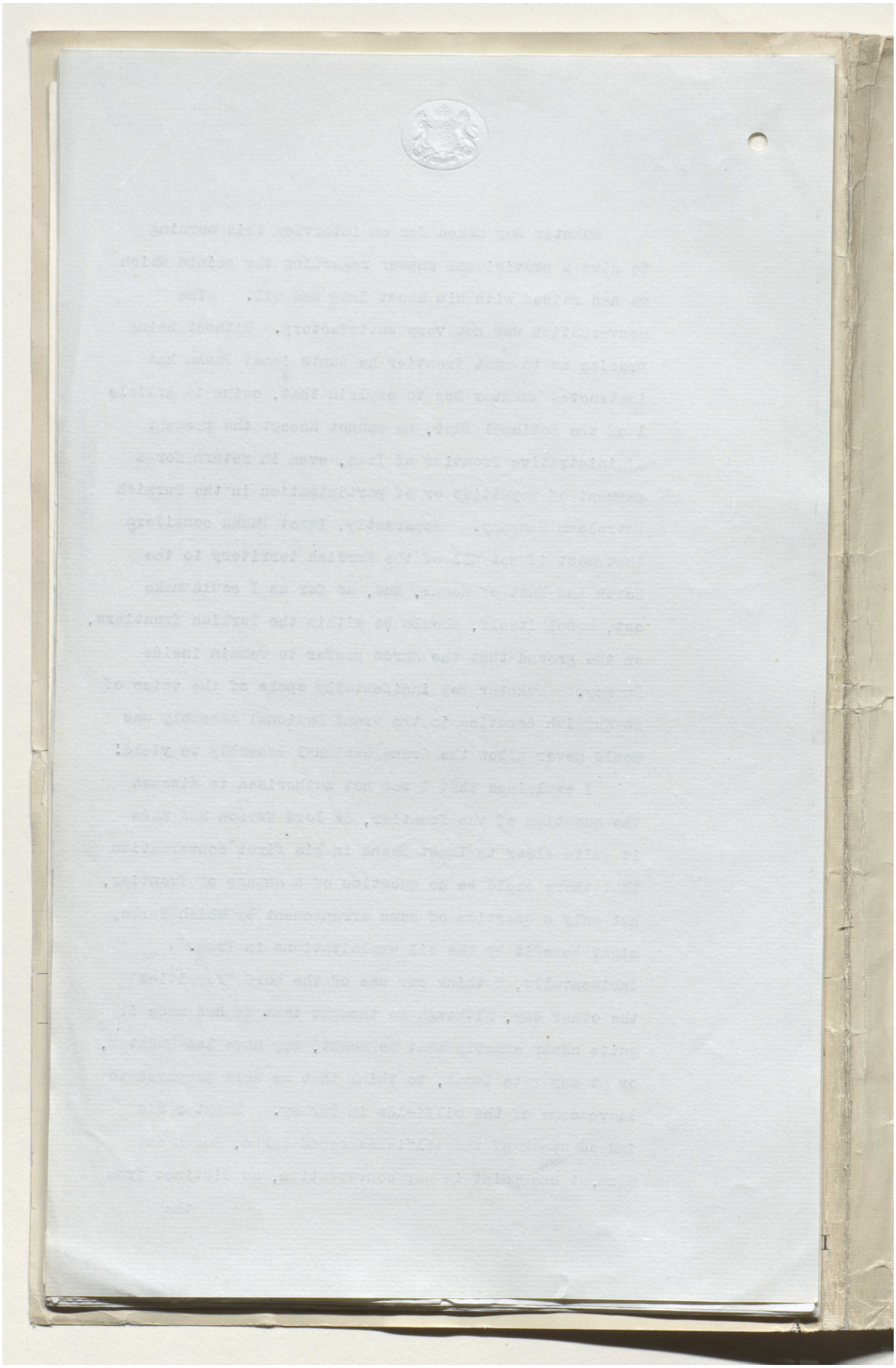

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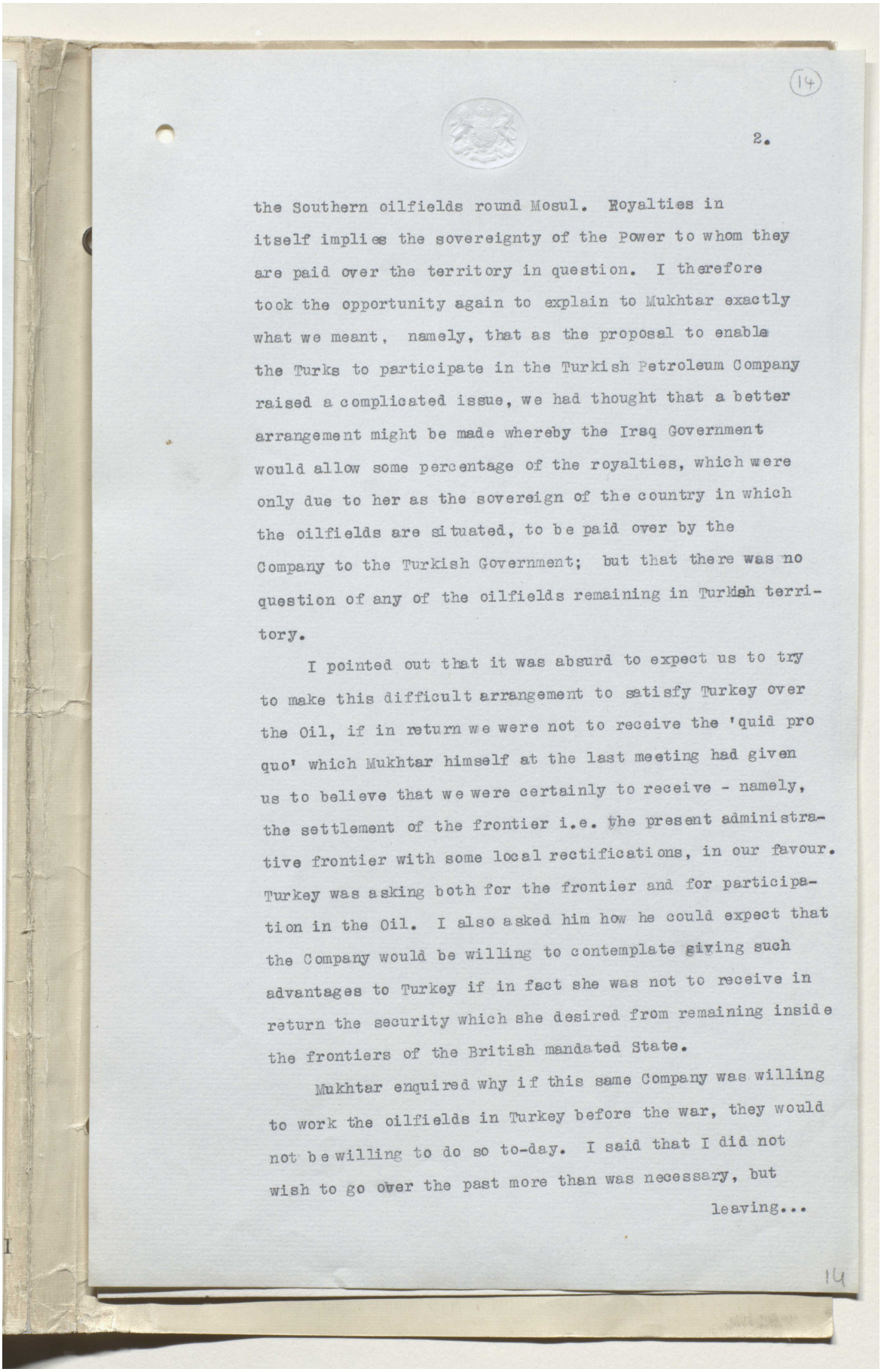

(14)

the Southern oilfields round Mosul. Royalties in itself implies the sovereignty of the Power to whom they are paid over the territory in question. I therefore took the opportunity again to explain to Mukhtar exactly what we meant, namely, that as the proposal to enable the Turks to participate in the Turkish Petroleum Company raised a complicated issue, we had thought that a better arrangement might be made whereby the Iraq Government would allow some percentage of the royalties, which were only due to her as the sovereign of the country in which the oilfields are situated, to be paid over by the Company to the Turkish Government; but that there was no question of any of the oilfields remaining in Turkish territory.

I pointed out that it was absurd to expect us to try to make this difficult arrangement to satisfy Turkey over the Oil, if in return we were not to receive the 'quid pro quo' which Mukhtar himself at the last meeting had given us to believe that we were certainly to receive - namely, the settlement of the frontier i.e. the present administrative frontier with some local rectifications, in our favour. Turkey was asking both for the frontier and for participation in the Oil. I also asked him how he could expect that the Company would be willing to contemplate giving such advantages to Turkey if in fact she was not to receive in return the security which she desired from remaining inside the frontiers of the British mandated State.

Mukhtar enquired why if this same Company was willing to work the oilfields in Turkey before the war, they would not be willing to do so to-day. I said that I did not wish to go over the past more than was necessary, but

leaving...

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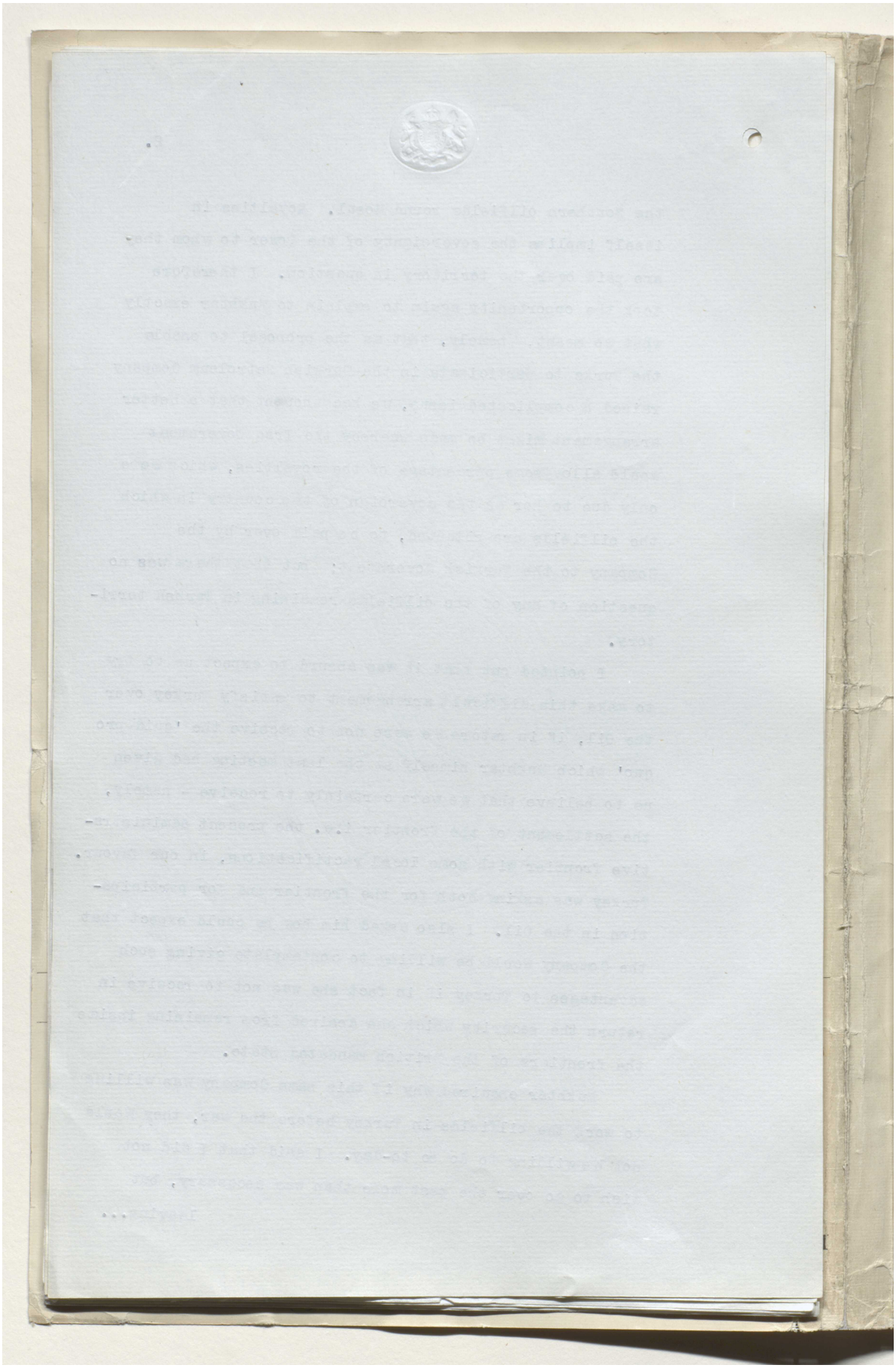

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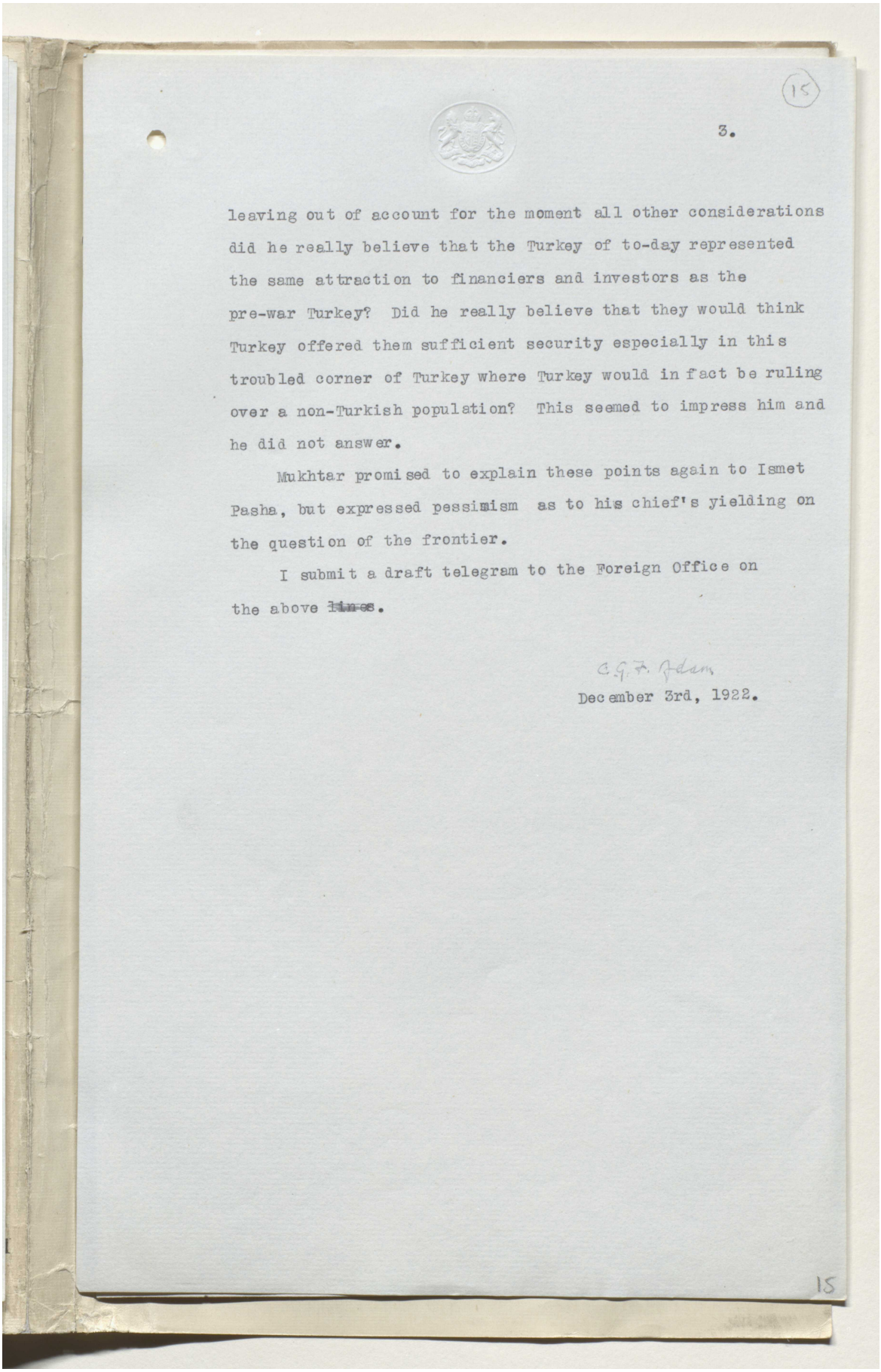

(15)

leaving out of account for the moment all other considerations did he really believe that the Turkey of to-day represented the same attraction to financiers and investors as the pre-war Turkey? Did he really believe that they would think Turkey offered them sufficient security especially in this troubled corner of Turkey where Turkey would in fact be ruling over a non-Turkish population? This seemed to impress him and he did not answer.

Mukhtar promised to explain these points again to Ismet Pasha, but expressed pessimism as to his chief's yielding on the question of the frontier.

I submit a draft telegram to the Foreign Office on the above ~~lines~~.

C.J.F. Adam

December 3rd, 1922.

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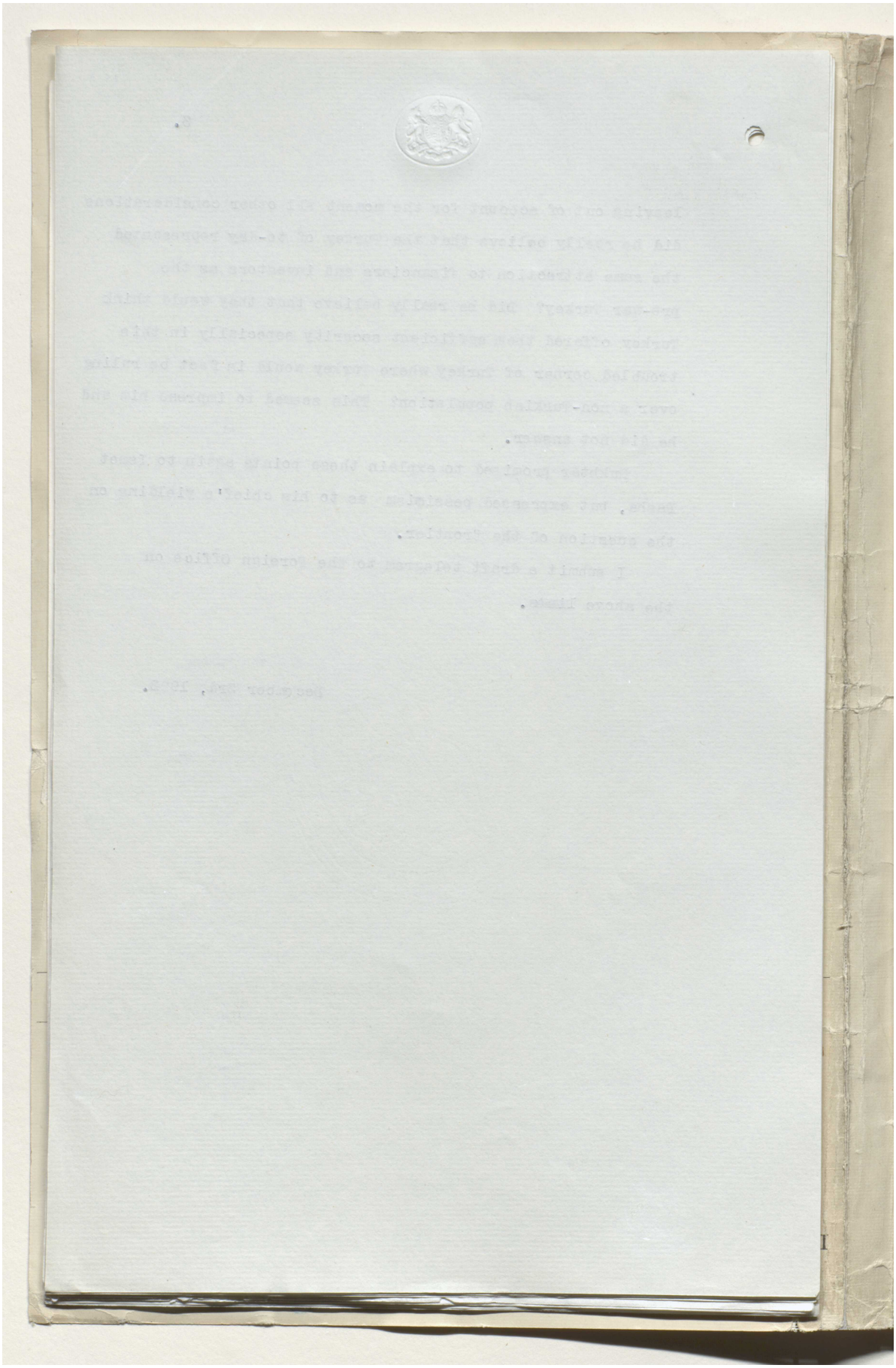

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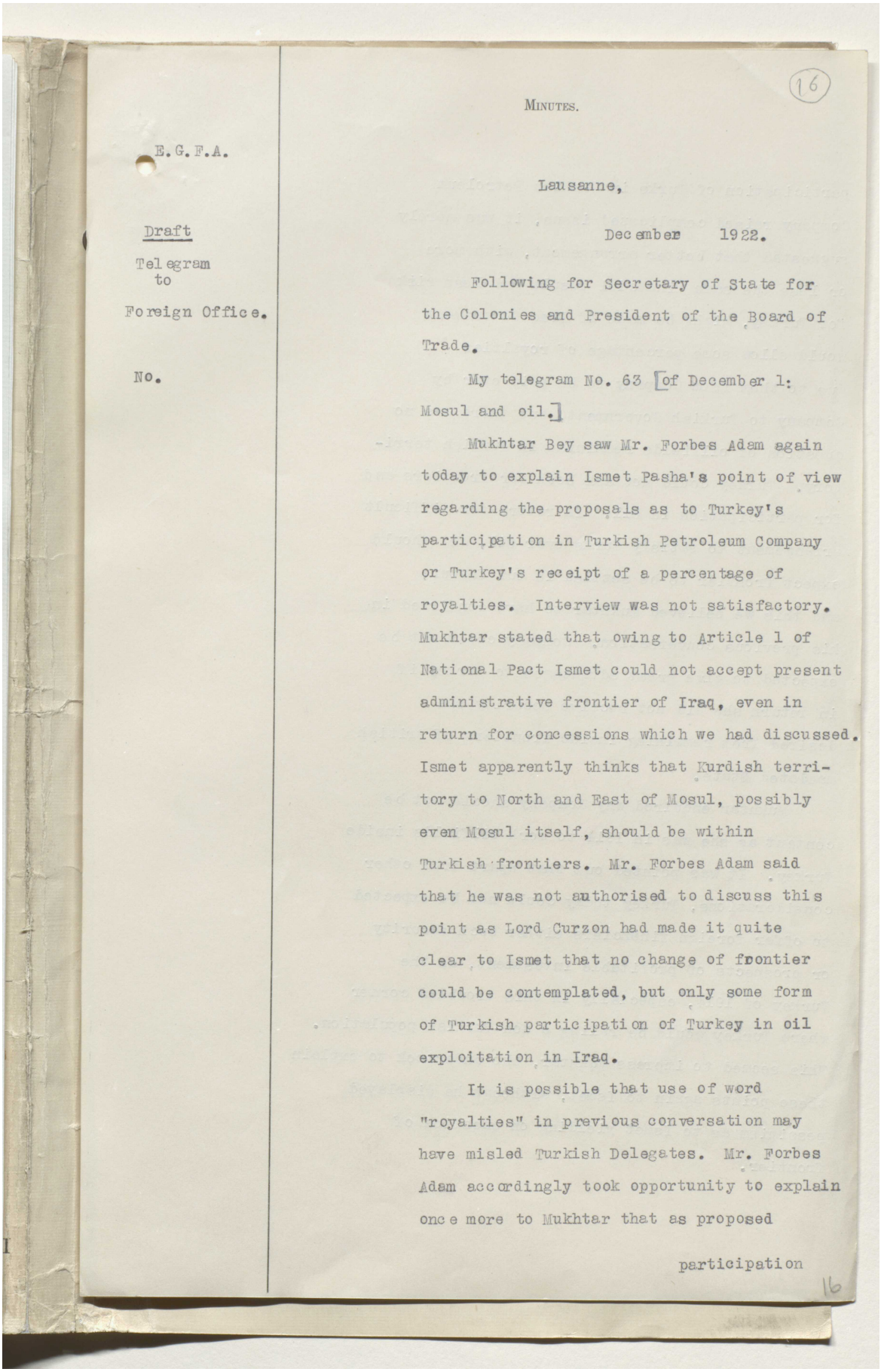

(16)

MINUTES.

E.G.F.A.

Lausanne,

December 1922.

Draft

Telegram
to

Foreign Office.

No.

Following for Secretary of State for the Colonies and President of the Board of Trade.

My telegram No. 63 [of December 1: Mosul and oil.]

Mukhtar Bey saw Mr. Forbes Adam again today to explain Ismet Pasha's point of view regarding the proposals as to Turkey's participation in Turkish Petroleum Company or Turkey's receipt of a percentage of royalties. Interview was not satisfactory. Mukhtar stated that owing to Article 1 of National Pact Ismet could not accept present administrative frontier of Iraq, even in return for concessions which we had discussed. Ismet apparently thinks that Kurdish territory to North and East of Mosul, possibly even Mosul itself, should be within Turkish frontiers. Mr. Forbes Adam said that he was not authorised to discuss this point as Lord Curzon had made it quite clear to Ismet that no change of frontier could be contemplated, but only some form of Turkish participation of Turkey in oil exploitation in Iraq.

It is possible that use of word "royalties" in previous conversation may have misled Turkish Delegates. Mr. Forbes Adam accordingly took opportunity to explain once more to Mukhtar that as proposed

participation

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participation of Turks in Turkish Petroleum Company raised complicated issue, it was merely suggested that better arrangement, with more or less the same financial result and less risk for Turkey, might be made if Iraq Government would allow some percentage of royalties due to them from Company to be paid over by Company to Turkish Government, but there was no question of oilfields remaining in Turkish territory. Turkey could not ask both for frontiers and for participation in Oil. In return for difficult arrangement to satisfy Turks over Oil, we should expect frontier to be settled in our favour, and this we believed Mukhtar to have confirmed in his previous conversation. Company could not be expected to give great advantages to Turkey if in return she did not receive security she desired from remaining inside frontiers of British mandated State.

Mukhtar enquired why Company should not be content as she was in 1914 to work oilfields inside Turkey. It was pointed out that apart from other considerations, Turkey today could not be expected to offer foreign financiers either such security or prospects of profitable investment, as the Turkey of 1914, especially in this troubled corner where Turkey would be ruling a non-Turkish population. This seemed to impress Mukhtar, who undertook to explain these points again to Ismet, although he displayed pessimism as to Ismet yielding on question of frontier.

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CIRCULATED TO THE CABINET.

17

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TURKEY.

[December 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[E 13599/13003/44] No. 1.

Memorandum by Sir W. Tyrrell.—(Received at Foreign Office, December 3.)

AT the request of Ismet Pasha I called upon his Excellency at 10 o'clock last night at the Lausanne-Palace Hotel, and spent two hours in his company alone.

The first subject Ismet took up was the question of oil, by enquiring whether the Turkish Government could look forward to a share in the Mosul supply. I replied that nobody would be more anxious than the British Government to afford every kind of economic assistance to the new Turkish State as soon as a satisfactory peace settlement had been concluded, but I repeated to him Lord Curzon's warning of the day before that he must not look upon any oil or financial contribution on our part as part of a bargain in connection with the drawing up of the treaty. Our economic contribution towards helping Turkey to rebuild herself after the war was a thing apart, and should be treated apart.

The next point his Excellency took up was the rectification of the Mosul frontier. Here again I reminded him of Lord Curzon's statement to him that to the demand for the restoration of the Mosul Vilayet he would be compelled to return an unqualified negative, but that he was prepared to consider in a friendly spirit any rectification that might be desirable owing to local considerations at Mosul.

Ismet Pasha then asked me what I should advise him to do in his position as chief Turkish delegate with regard to the presentation of his case. I answered by suggesting that the Turks should not confine themselves to a constant reiteration of their demand to be considered as an independent State, master of its own destinies; but that they should rather concentrate their efforts on proving to us that they were qualified to assume such a position. The best way of doing this would be to create internal conditions of government and administration that would enable the European Governments to persuade their own nationals that Turkey was entitled to be granted the claim she made to absolute self-determination and self-management. The best way of doing this was to give the necessary guarantees to Europe that would enable Europe to renounce the special rights she possessed with regard to her nationals in Turkey. I also urged his Excellency to come out openly in favour of the League of Nations, and to utilise to the full the machinery which that body could place at his disposal, both with a view to obtain the guarantees which I thought Turkey was entitled to ask in the regions it was proposed to demilitarise, as well as the League's assistance for the settlement of such questions as, for instance, that of the protection of minorities. On this point Ismet Pasha at once interrupted me and said that Turkey could never admit any inspection of minorities, and that they had quite made up their minds to get rid of the Greek elements by an exchange of Greco-Turkish populations, but to retain the Armenians. I expressed to him my regret to hear this decision, as I felt convinced that by getting rid of the trading classes in his country he would fail to create a public opinion in Europe which would enable the Allied Governments to persuade their business men that Turkey was a country worth helping and saving; on the contrary, the business men of Paris and London would say: "A country which behaves in so stupid a fashion will not attract our money." I also assured his Excellency that he would fail in his endeavour to persuade England and French business men that the Turk could, from one day to another, become a successful trader and take the place of the Greek and Armenian, who had hitherto carried on his business for him. Under this head I also reminded his Excellency that quite a number of countries who had been created by the Treaty of Versailles had found it compatible with their independence and sovereign rights to accept the minority clause of the above treaty, and I suggested to him that what Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Roumania and Jugoslavia had been able to accept, would surely also be acceptable to Turkey.

As regards Capitulations, his Excellency assured me that his Government would be most uncompromising.

He enquired whether there would be any interference with Turkey's military forces. To this I replied that my impression was that as regards Europe, Turkey would be expected to content herself with a strictly defensive contingent.

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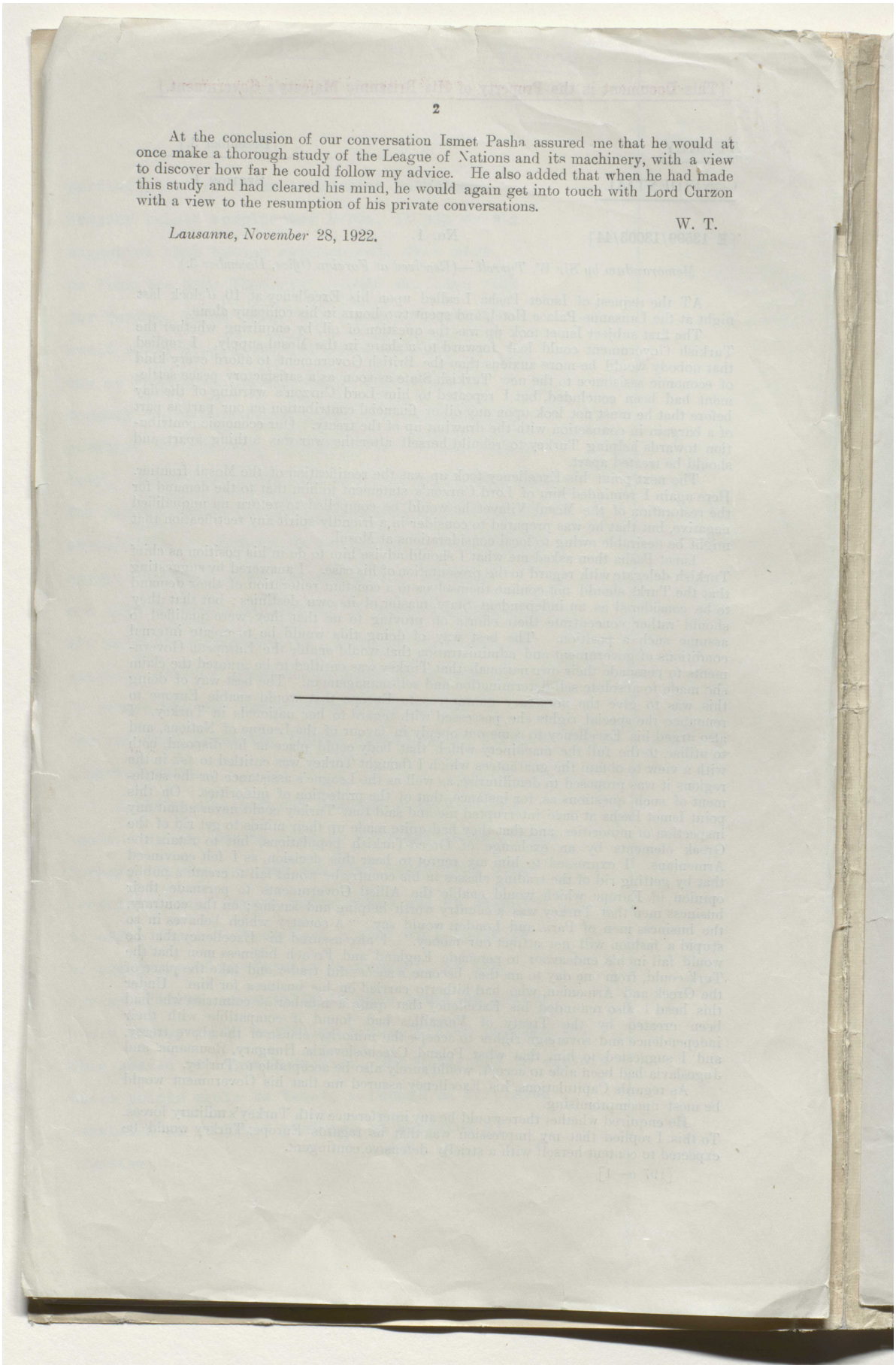

At the conclusion of our conversation Ismet Pasha assured me that he would at once make a thorough study of the League of Nations and its machinery, with a view to discover how far he could follow my advice. He also added that when he had made this study and had cleared his mind, he would again get into touch with Lord Curzon with a view to the resumption of his private conversations.

W. T.

Lausanne, November 28, 1922.

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY. [December 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13599/13003/44] No. 1.

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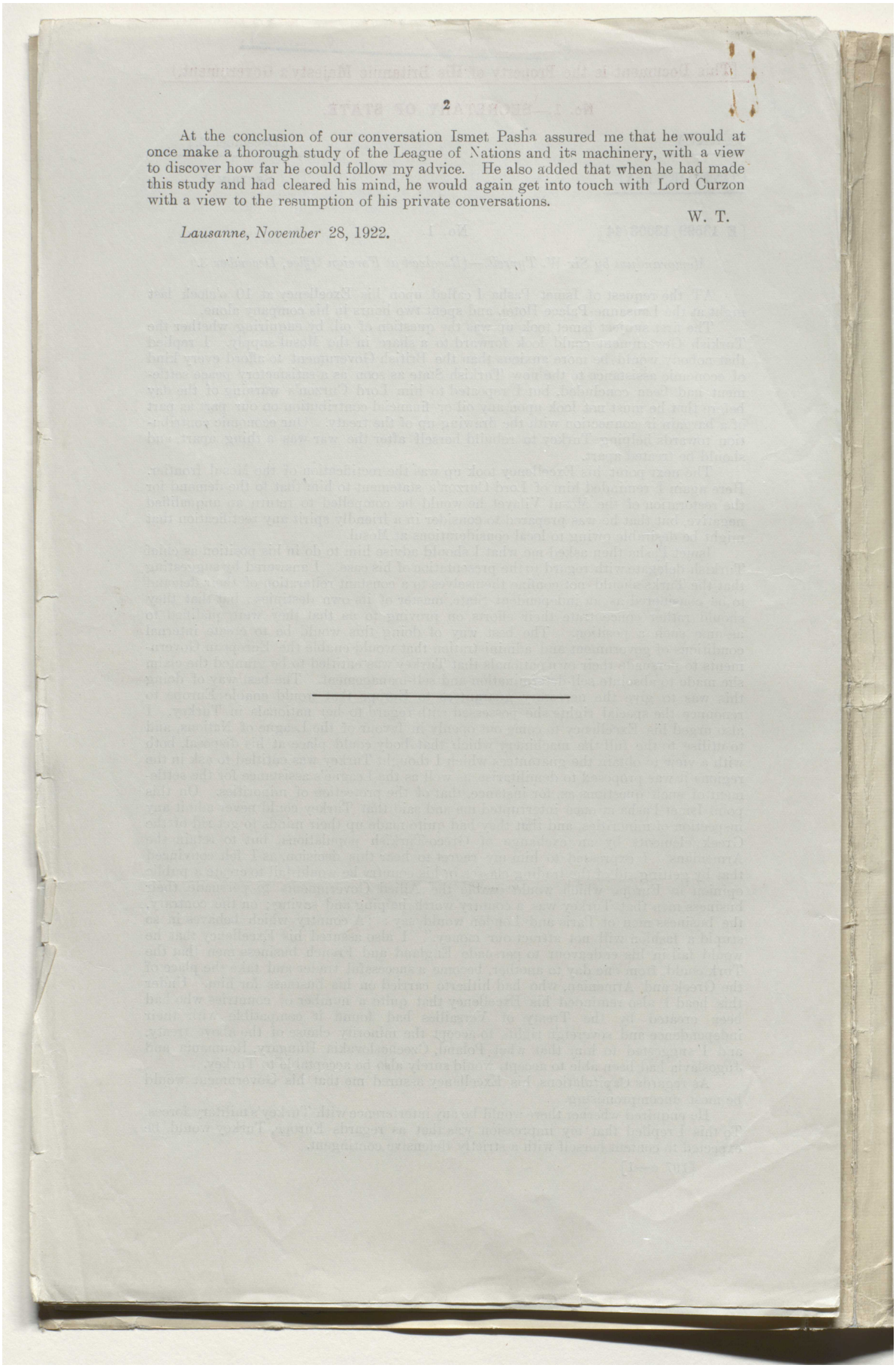

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W. T.

Lausanne, November 28, 1922.

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Lord Curzon (dup)

19

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Printed for the Cabinet. December 1922.

SECRET.

26

C.P. 4339.

CABINET.

SITUATION IN IRAQ.

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AIR.

I CIRCULATE a note on the situation in Iraq by the Air Staff and correspondence with Sir John Salmond, the Air Officer Commanding. I would ask the Cabinet for an early decision upon the point that is raised in these papers.

S. H.

Air Ministry, December 5, 1922.

Note by the Air Staff on Sir John Salmond's Proposal for a Forward Policy in the event of Turkish Invasion of Iraq or a Resumption of Hostilities with Turkey.

1. IN the event of a resumption of hostilities with Turkey, we must be prepared to face the possibility of a Turkish invasion of Iraq. To meet such a situation, Sir John Salmond's proposals are, briefly, that, of the nine Imperial battalions at present in Iraq, four should be concentrated in a battle position north of Mosul, the remainder to be placed, two north of Baghdad, two at Baghdad and one at Shaibah. At present there is only one battalion at Mosul, and all positions north of Mosul are held by native forces.

2. The reasons for the adoption of the forward policy are as follows:—

(*a.*) The country north of Mosul, on left bank of the Tigris, and on lines of probable enemy advance, lends itself to effective defence.

(*b.*) The holding of these forward positions, in the strength proposed, will make it possible to maintain the action, which may well be decisive, of strong air forces based on Mosul and Kirkouk for a prolonged period, since retirement of the ground forces covering the air bases will not be necessitated at an early stage.

The number of squadrons would, it is proposed, be raised from one to five.

On the other hand, if our policy were to evacuate Mosul, air action would have to cease altogether during the period when the main Turkish forces would be vulnerable, *i.e.*, while they are still in difficult country, and would not restart until the enemy came within striking distance of a more southerly air base. For the purpose of any air action on a considerable scale, the first practicable base is Baghdad, from which point Mosul itself is only just within striking distance of the majority of our aircraft.

(*c.*) From these positions the ground forces would be able to protect air bases, and thus enable the air squadrons to hammer the enemy's main forces and his bases, such as Jazireh and Mardin.

(*d.*) With a strong air contingent we shall have early intelligence of all enemy movements, and thus avert any probability of land forces being cut off owing to the action of Turkish forces.

(*e.*) Lastly, and above all, it must be remembered that in dealing with an Oriental people the appearance of facing the enemy is a factor of paramount value. For this reason the northward move of our forces will have a stabilising effect not only upon the tribes of the Mosul Vilayet, but on the *moral* of the whole country. On the other hand, a withdrawal from Mosul would in itself be interpreted as a sign of defeat. It would render hostile not only all the tribes who are now "sitting on the fence" to see what will happen, but also many of those who are at present well disposed.

3. The Air Staff are in entire agreement both with the conclusions of the Air Officer Commanding and the premises on which they rest. It appears to them that, for the present, two possible military situations require consideration:—

(*a.*) On the assumption that the Turks made the European front their main objective, a weak attack on Mosul might be launched on a scale which the resources

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of the existing garrison of Iraq should be able to defeat, if the forward policy was adopted. This policy, as shown above, will enable us to strike at the enemy's own bases; and it will avoid an initial withdrawal from Mosul and abandonment of Kurdistan, which would undoubtedly convert even an intrinsically weak enemy attack into a formidable movement.

The Air Staff have already indicated (C.P. 4309) that, in their view, withdrawal from Mosul, consequent on a breach with Turkey and followed by the Turkish occupation of the district, with all that it would imply, militarily and politically, would render reinforcements for Baghdad and the lines of communication south of Baghdad essential to guard against internal risings.

In view of the possibility of a weak attack developing into a strong attack, referred to in (*b*) below, some reinforcements should be designated to arrive in the country at the earliest possible moment.

(*b*.) A Turkish attack may be made on a scale which the existing garrison could not hope to meet without reinforcements. The Air Staff are of opinion that in this case reinforcements will be necessary (1) whether we stand at Mosul or (2) at Baghdad or (3) to enable us to withdraw to Basra: also that those reinforcements should reach Iraq before the invasion develops. The strength required in the above cases is being discussed with the Air Officer Commanding.*

A forward policy again offers the greater prospect of success, in that the danger of internal rising being added to external invasion will be greatly reduced by its adoption. It should be added that, from the Turkish point of view, an invasion in force would be a serious undertaking, of which we could rely on receiving ample warning and which could not, it is believed, eventuate before the spring.

4. To sum up:—

(*a*.) The Air Staff are of opinion that, in the event of attack by the Turks, reinforcements will be necessary whether we adopt a forward policy or whether we decide to evacuate.

(*b*.) The Air Staff recommend that, in the event of the Lausanne Conference resulting in a definite rupture with the Turks, and of any consequent threat of invasion in the north of Iraq, the Air Officer Commanding should be authorised to adopt the forward policy. Since, in the contingency of the vigorous action of the air forces failing to stop an invasion in force, it is assumed that it is not the policy of His Majesty's Government to provide reinforcements adequate to fight to a finish for the integrity of the present boundaries of Iraq, the Air Officer Commanding should be instructed to limit the ground forces in the forward area to such as are required to cover the air operations.

(*c*.) As immediate measures, (i) the Air Officer Commanding should be notified in this sense, and instructed to make his disposition accordingly, but not to move troops for the purpose without further authority from His Majesty's Government.

(ii.) The High Commissioner and Air Officer Commanding should receive sanction for any reasonable proposals they may put forward for the improvement of the general internal situation by enlisting the aid of the tribes as a counter-move to prevent Turkish propaganda and infiltration, and should be empowered to make the necessary preliminary arrangements, subject to political considerations, to explore the measure of assistance which might be obtained from the tribes to meet a Turkish invasion.

5. The Air Staff confine themselves to the hypothesis of a definite breakdown of the Lausanne Conference, as it is to meet that contingency that a clear indication of policy is needed for the guidance of the Air Officer Commanding. If, on the other hand, the Lausanne Conference ends either in an agreement with Turkey or comes to no conclusions either way, the position should be again reviewed.

This paper has been drawn up in general agreement with the General Staff at the War Office. A supplementary note on the subject of reinforcements will be submitted if required by the Cabinet.

Air Staff, December 4, 1922.

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* The scale of the garrison of Iraq has never comprised provision for guarding the country against serious external invasion; and we could not contemplate a retirement of our existing garrison fighting rearguard actions from Mosul to Basra in face of a Turkish attack in strength. General Townsend fought a successful battle at Ctesiphon with 14,000 troops against 13,000 regulars, but having to retire was beleaguered within 8 days in Kut, some 100 miles south.

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ANNEXURE A.

Appreciation by Sir John Salmond of the Military Situation with Special Reference to Turkish Invasion of Iraq. October 1, 1922.

TOO late in the year for serious attack by Turks from Rowanduz direction. Roads south of Van too difficult.

2. Probability of increased propaganda and incitement of Kurdish tribes to act against us on our eastern flank, combined with a Turkish attack from the north-west, especially from Jezire-ibn-Omar direction.

3. Presumably Turks would consider the Dardanelles their main front, and if they desire to hit us in this direction, they might reasonably consider a detachment of two divisions and one cavalry brigade sufficient to retake Mosul.

All Kurdish tribes would probably side with the Turks so long as they thought that the Turks would win.

The only friendlies we could count upon north of Mosul would be the Assyrians, and only those settled near Dohuk (about 2,000 men—partly armed) would be in a position to assist us.

4. Although the defence of Mosul, with the long line of communications to Basra, cannot be said to be a sound military proposition under present conditions, still, in my opinion, it would be fully justified for the following reasons:—

(*a.*) Prestige and obligations to the Iraq Government.

(*b.*) Possibility of inflicting defeat on the above-mentioned Turkish invading forces, by even such a small force as five battalions and two batteries if combined with the whole weight of the Royal Air Force. If successful, our prestige would be enormously increased, and the frontier of Iraq secured.

(*c.*) The ground north of Mosul, on the left bank of the Tigris, lends itself to skilful manœuvre of our ground forces. Also any hostile force advancing on Mosul from Jezire-ibn-Omar or Nisibin directions would be exceptionally vulnerable from the air.

5. In my opinion, the danger of the Kurdish forces backed by Turks advancing west of the Aqra–Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri line, against our line of communications on the right bank of the Tigris, is a danger which could be countered by the levies and Royal Air Force.

6. *Probable Dispositions.*

Outposts Zone.—Assyrian levies (2 battalions, 1 pack battery, 2 squadrons at Zakho and Aqra, with supports near Dohuk nd Mindan) holding their present positions. Road over Zakho pass to be prepared for demolition.

Battle Position.—Already selected near Butak Su, about half-way between Mosul and Zakho.

Striking Force—

One brigade group consisting of—

- 1 Indian Pack (Howitzer) Battery
- 1 Indian Infantry Battalion
- 1 Armoured Car Company (less 1 section)
- 2 sections Combined Field Ambulance

} From Mosul.

1 Indian Battalion from Baghdad–Mosul Line of Communication leaving 1 Pioneer Battalion on Line of Communication to be held in reserve.

- Brigade headquarters
- 1 brigade Signal Section
- 1 Field (Howitzer) Battery
- 1 company Sappers and Miners
- 2 British battalions
- 1 Armoured Car Company (less 2 sections)
- 1 Combined Field Ambulance (less 2 sections)
- 1 Mobile Veterinary Section

} From Baghdad.

Add

- 1 Indian Infantry Battalion
- 1 section Armoured Car Company

} From Kirkuk–Kingerban if circumstances permit.

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Line of Communication—
1 Indian Battalion
1 section Armoured Car Company } North of Baghdad.
*2 Indian battalions at Baghdad.
1 Indian Battalion
1 section Armoured Car Company } Basrah–Shaibah.

7. If considered necessary politically, two companies 1st Battalion Levies from Naseriyah could be sent as garrisons to Kut and Amarah. In my opinion there is no military necessity to garrison these places with regular troops. The safeguarding of the Tigris line of communication will depend on the four defence vessels and armoured barges.

8. *Transport.*—There is sufficient regular transport in the country to complete all regular units with 1st and 2nd line transport, with the exception of a few pack mules which could be easily hired.

9. *Forces not included in above*—

Royal Air Forces—
3 squadrons D.H. 9 A—Mosul.
1 Snipe squadron
1 Bristol squadron } Kirkuk.
2 Vickers Vernon squadrons—Baghdad.
1 squadron D.H. 9 A's—Shaibah.

(a.) *Levies*—
1 cavalry regiment (less 1 squadron)—Arbil.
1 cavalry regiment—Kirkuk-Alton Keupri.
1 squadron—Khanikin.
1 battalion (without British officers)—Sulaimaniyah.
1 battalion—Naseriyah.

(b.) *Iraq Army*—
1 cavalry regiment—Tel Afar.
1 cavalry regiment
1 pack battery
1 infantry battalion
1 transport company (A.T. carts) } Mosul.

I suggest that the Iraq infantry battalion might be employed to guard the bridge and aerodrome at Mosul, and that the Iraq cavalry and guns might operate on the right bank of Tigris in co-operation with the British Indian force.

1 cavalry regiment
1 pack battery
1 infantry battalion } Baghdad.

I suggest that these remain in reserve—
1 infantry battalion (less 2 companies)—Hillah.
1 company—Hindiyah Barrage
1 company—Samawah } Euphrates Valley.

ANNEXURE B.

(Most Secret.)

Sir,

November 1, 1922.

I AM commanded by the Air Council to say that they have had under consideration your appreciation (Annexure A) of the situation and proposed disposition of forces in the event of a Turkish offensive against Iraq which were forwarded with your communication of the 12th October (Air/606/). In reply I am to inform you that the determined attitude which you would propose to adopt and the offensive rôle assigned to the Air units is in full accord with the principles held by the Air

* This would entail the move of 1 Indian battalion (less 2 companies already at Baghdad) from Kut and 1 Indian battalion from Amarah (including 2 companies temporarily detached at Basrah).

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Staff. It is agreed in particular that Turkish forces advancing from Jezire-ibn-Omar or Nisibin should be exceptionally vulnerable to attacks from the air.

The Air Council have, however, to consider the possibility that in certain circumstances (as for example in case of attack by still larger forces than those envisaged by you) His Majesty's Government would view with apprehension a plan which placed a large proportion of the garrison in a very advanced position, and that they might require your operations to be limited to a closer radius of strongly defended points.

I am, therefore, to request that you will submit an alternative scheme or schemes to meet that contingency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) J. A. WEBSTER.

The Air Officer Commanding, Air Headquarters,
British Forces in Iraq, Baghdad.

ANNEXURE C.

Cipher telegram from A.O.C., Iraq, to Air Ministry.—(Despatched November 21, 1922, 20·50; Received November 22, 1922, 9·30.

(Secret.) AM 1134.
(Paraphrase.) THREE PARTS.

PART I.

X 5053 of 21st November. Reference your letter of 1st November, S 18081/S 6 (Annexure B), in which it is suggested that under certain conditions His Majesty's Government views with apprehension the offensive policy to be adopted in the event of Turkish aggression, and that it may have to be modified considerably to defensive policy nearer to Baghdad.

I have to offer the following observations :—

If, at an advance by [? Turkish] forces Mosul area is abandoned, the consequences on Iraq may prove disastrous, as in all probability the whole country will rise against us. The effect of air action alone from Mosul, against an advance of a Turkish army of two or three divisions would be to delay it, but not to prevent it. The inhabitants would interpret the sight of troops retiring from Mosul as a defeat and the news, magnified a hundred times would travel immediately from Mosul to Baghdad. Air action would cease for a while against the advancing enemy as the last troops left Mosul, until they again came within striking distance of an air base further south. Baghdad is the next base from Mosul from which considerable [one group indecipherable] air action could be carried out. Every hostile element would have meanwhile raised its banner, and at the news of the British defeat, the sight of our supply dumps burning at Mosul, and the retirement of the existing garrison from there, all those who are now sitting on the fence would flock to them. The march of this small force to Baghdad would become under these circumstances, which are not overstated, an operation of extreme difficulty.

PART II.

Further, the line Erbil–Kirkuk–Khanikin would become exposed by a retirement from Mosul, and, as this line is held with a minimum of levy troops, its abandonment would follow as a necessary corollary. Kurdistan would therefore be left to Turkey, while the repercussion of this on the tribes between this line and the Tigris would be anarchic. Baghdad itself would follow suit, and although, undoubtedly, a closer defence of strongly defended points would have an effect on the people of the city, as the enemy's advance sweeps nearer only a small proportion of the troops could be spared for the city itself, a situation of which full advantage would be taken.

Communication would cease almost entirely from Baghdad to Basra and *vice versâ*, as the railway track would undoubtedly be torn up and the only line remaining would be in the river.

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The advantages of a forward policy, as defined, are as follows:—

Paragraph 1.—That the country north of Mosul on left bank of the Tigris and on line of probable enemy advance lends itself to a protracted defence, and also to counter-offensive against an enemy force equal to, or slighly superior to, the one it is proposed to maintain there.

Paragraph 2.—The terrain is eminently suited to rearguard actions in the event of an advance of great superiority of enemy numbers, Mosul itself being one of the bounds in such a rearguard action, which, if necessary, would be continued to Baghdad and Basra. Unless it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to despatch reinforcements it is not proposed that the force should remain at Baghdad to become invested.

PART III.

Paragraph 3.—Owing to the early intelligence provided by the Air Force the probability of our forces being cut off is infinitesimal.

Paragraph 4.—Behind a retiring force of these dimensions a much larger concentration of air forces can be made than behind a force of the size of the existing garrison of Mosul carrying out a similar operation.

[? *Paragraph* 5.]—The initial move of our troops north will enhance our prestige among the tribes and raise their *moral*.

Paragraph 6.—In that there is every possibility of the enemy's advanced echelon [? word omitted] such severe hammering that he might never recover while the air forces co-operating deal with the remainder of his body reaching back to Jazireh-ibn-Omar, and with that base itself, it contains the germs of success.

I would ask that, before submitting an alternative scheme as required in your letter under discussion, the above appreciation be carefully considered as I see no vast success in any other alternative with number of forces under my command at the present time.

It is most essential for me to know, if I am to consider further the close defence indicated, the prospects of reinforcements, if any, which His Majesty's Government have in mind, their approximate numbers and the date after outbreak of war on which the first echelon bargained for is expected to reach Basra. This summary of the situation is concurred in by His Excellency the High Commissioner.

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A P P E N D I X.

S W I T Z E R L A N D.

Decypher. Lord Curzon (Lausanne)
December 5th, 1922.

D. 3.45 a.m. December 6th, 1922.

R. 8.30 a.m. December 6th, 1922.

No. 80.

Secret.

Second Turkish delegate Riza Nur Bey called this morning to renew private conversation which he had begun yesterday. After many (? protestations of) friendly intentions on both sides his case boiled down to this that Turkey would meet us on every point, conclude satisfactory treaty and even break with Soviet, if only we would give them Vilayet of Mosul. Grounds upon which he based this request were four in number :-

1. Ethnic, which I sharply contested.

2. Historical, i.e., long connection with Turkey.

3. Economic i.e., necessity for future economic life of Turkey in Asia.

4. National pact i.e., absolute and unalterable refusal of Angora to conclude any treaty that does not embrace Mosul.

I combatted whole of these points, and declined to yield upon any more.

Colonial Office argument has led me to think that Mosul cannot be given away without loss of Baghdad nor Baghdad without loss of Irak and collapse of Irak Kingdom, nor collapse of Arabs without return of Turks and final defeat of British policy in the East. I also wonder somewhat how far Turks demand for Mosul was really genuine, how far it might be inspired by hope of thus wresting formal victory for Turkey in Asia; or again whether it might not be subtle device of Turks, perhaps instigated by Russia to be able to say to the world later on "we offered to make peace with allies and notably with Great

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Britain/

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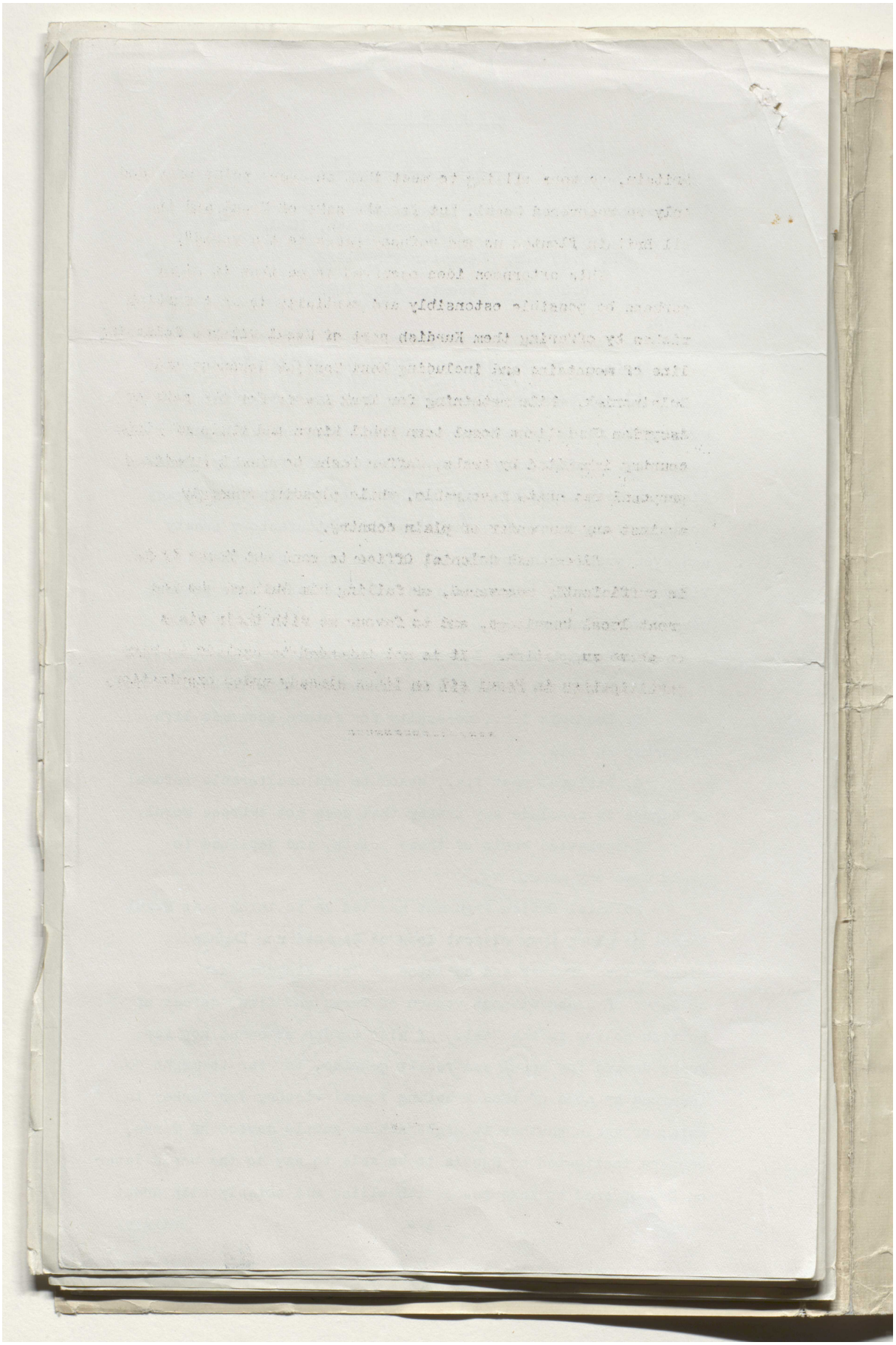

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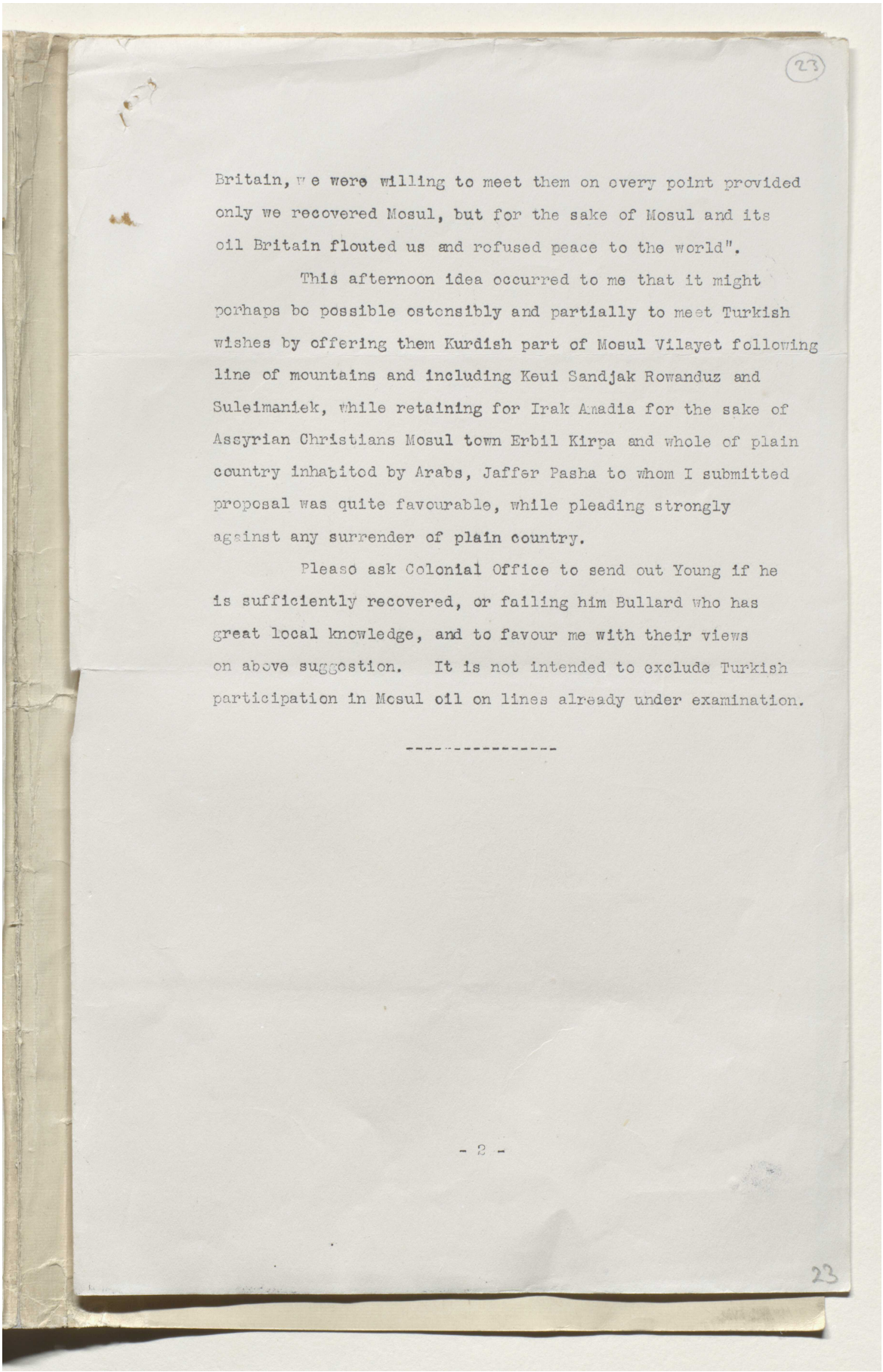

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Britain, we were willing to meet them on every point provided only we recovered Mosul, but for the sake of Mosul and its oil Britain flouted us and refused peace to the world".

This afternoon idea occurred to me that it might perhaps be possible ostensibly and partially to meet Turkish wishes by offering them Kurdish part of Mosul Vilayet following line of mountains and including Keui Sandjak Rowanduz and Suleimaniek, while retaining for Irak Amadia for the sake of Assyrian Christians Mosul town Erbil Kirpa and whole of plain country inhabited by Arabs, Jaffer Pasha to whom I submitted proposal was quite favourable, while pleading strongly against any surrender of plain country.

Please ask Colonial Office to send out Young if he is sufficiently recovered, or failing him Bullard who has great local knowledge, and to favour me with their views on above suggestion. It is not intended to exclude Turkish participation in Mosul oil on lines already under examination.

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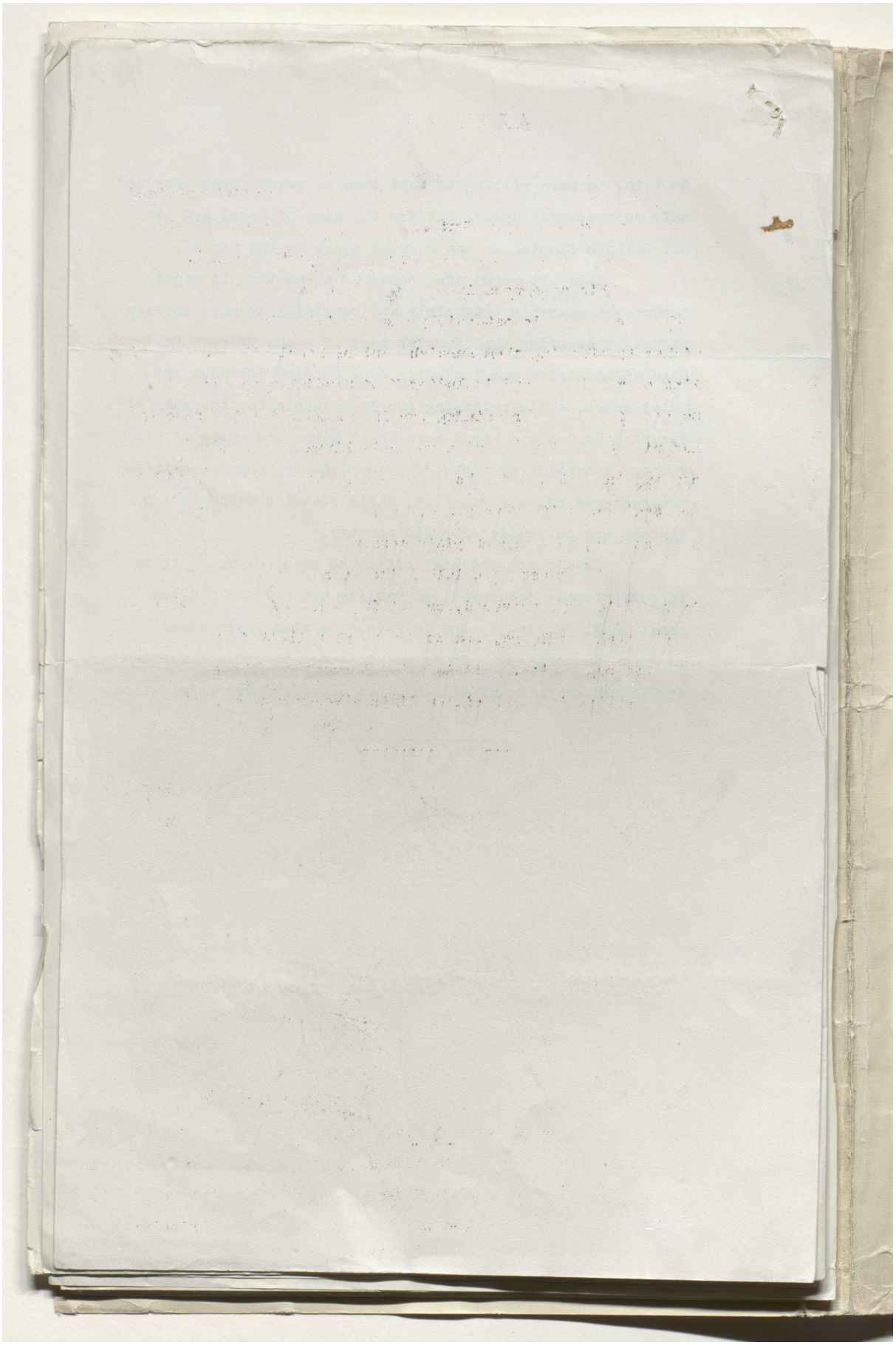

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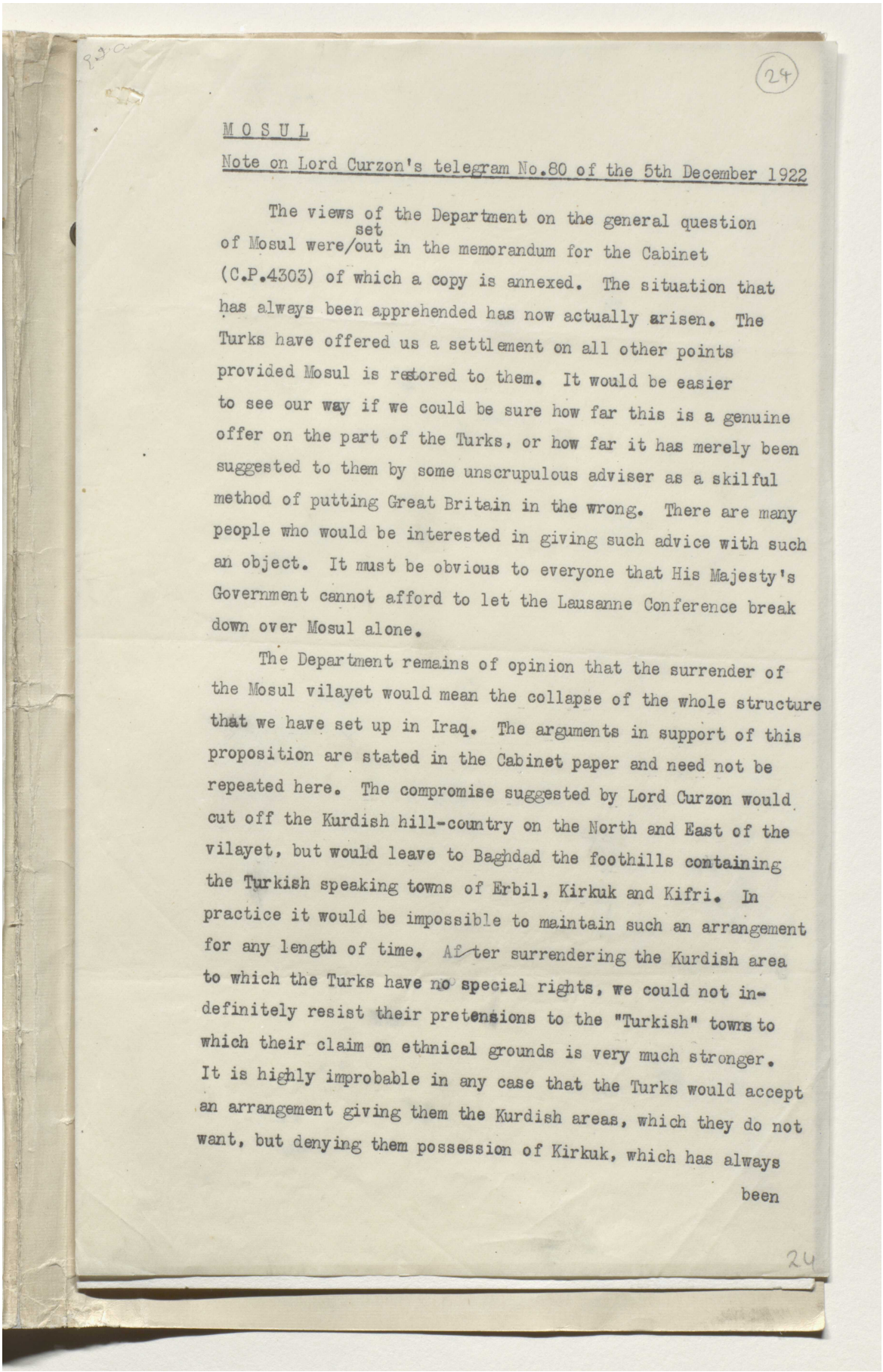

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M O S U L

Note on Lord Curzon's telegram No.80 of the 5th December 1922

The views of the Department on the general question of Mosul were set out in the memorandum for the Cabinet (C.P.4303) of which a copy is annexed. The situation that has always been apprehended has now actually arisen. The Turks have offered us a settlement on all other points provided Mosul is restored to them. It would be easier to see our way if we could be sure how far this is a genuine offer on the part of the Turks, or how far it has merely been suggested to them by some unscrupulous adviser as a skilful method of putting Great Britain in the wrong. There are many people who would be interested in giving such advice with such an object. It must be obvious to everyone that His Majesty's Government cannot afford to let the Lausanne Conference break down over Mosul alone.

The Department remains of opinion that the surrender of the Mosul vilayet would mean the collapse of the whole structure that we have set up in Iraq. The arguments in support of this proposition are stated in the Cabinet paper and need not be repeated here. The compromise suggested by Lord Curzon would cut off the Kurdish hill-country on the North and East of the vilayet, but would leave to Baghdad the foothills containing the Turkish speaking towns of Erbil, Kirkuk and Kifri. In practice it would be impossible to maintain such an arrangement for any length of time. After surrendering the Kurdish area to which the Turks have no special rights, we could not indefinitely resist their pretensions to the "Turkish" towns to which their claim on ethnical grounds is very much stronger. It is highly improbable in any case that the Turks would accept an arrangement giving them the Kurdish areas, which they do not want, but denying them possession of Kirkuk, which has always been

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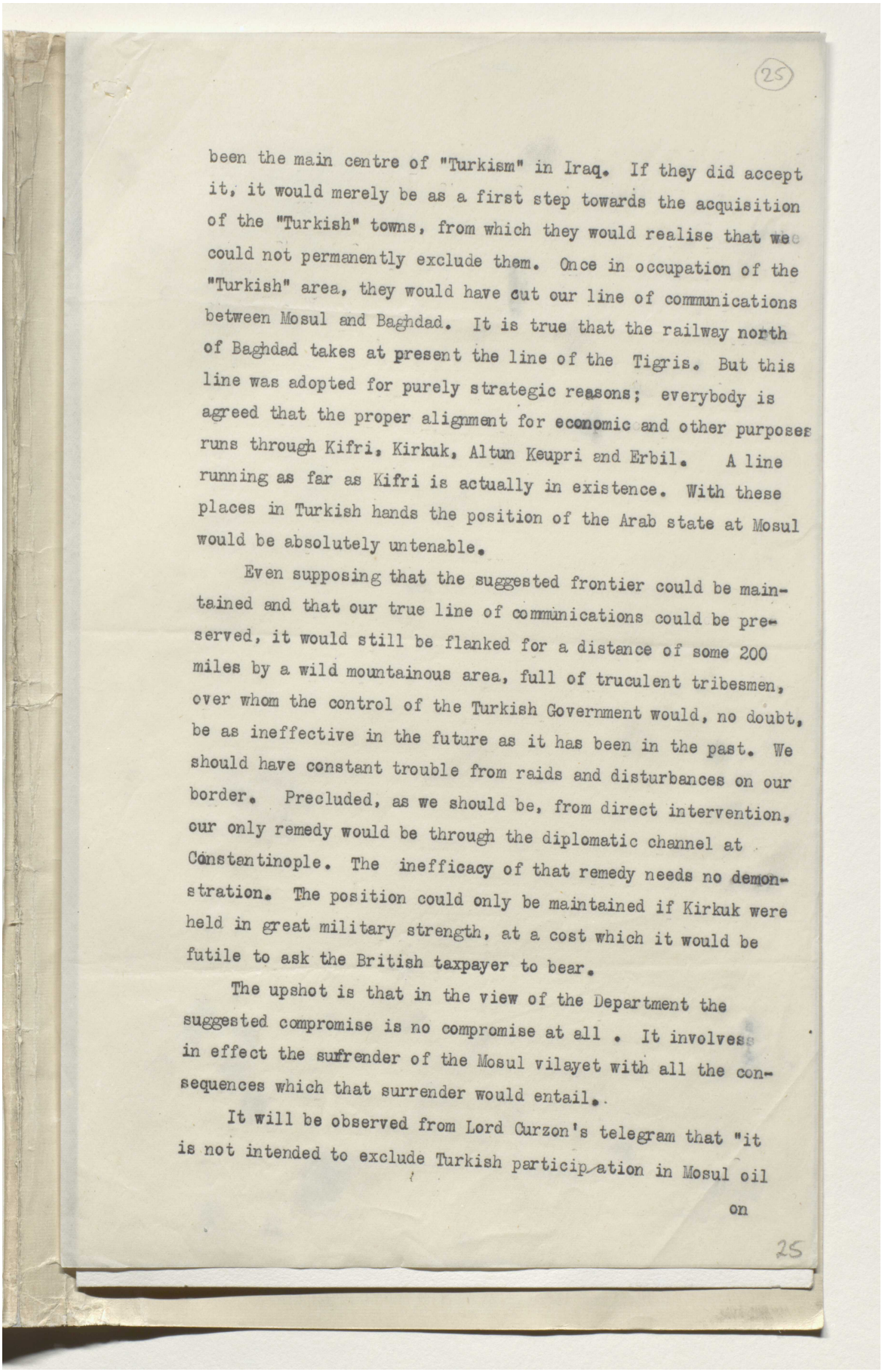

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been the main centre of "Turkism" in Iraq. If they did accept it, it would merely be as a first step towards the acquisition of the "Turkish" towns, from which they would realise that we could not permanently exclude them. Once in occupation of the "Turkish" area, they would have cut our line of communications between Mosul and Baghdad. It is true that the railway north of Baghdad takes at present the line of the Tigris. But this line was adopted for purely strategic reasons; everybody is agreed that the proper alignment for economic and other purposes runs through Kifri, Kirkuk, Altun Keupri and Erbil. A line running as far as Kifri is actually in existence. With these places in Turkish hands the position of the Arab state at Mosul would be absolutely untenable.

Even supposing that the suggested frontier could be maintained and that our true line of communications could be preserved, it would still be flanked for a distance of some 200 miles by a wild mountainous area, full of truculent tribesmen, over whom the control of the Turkish Government would, no doubt, be as ineffective in the future as it has been in the past. We should have constant trouble from raids and disturbances on our border. Precluded, as we should be, from direct intervention, our only remedy would be through the diplomatic channel at Constantinople. The inefficacy of that remedy needs no demonstration. The position could only be maintained if Kirkuk were held in great military strength, at a cost which it would be futile to ask the British taxpayer to bear.

The upshot is that in the view of the Department the suggested compromise is no compromise at all . It involves in effect the surrender of the Mosul vilayet with all the consequences which that surrender would entail.

It will be observed from Lord Curzon's telegram that "it is not intended to exclude Turkish participation in Mosul oil

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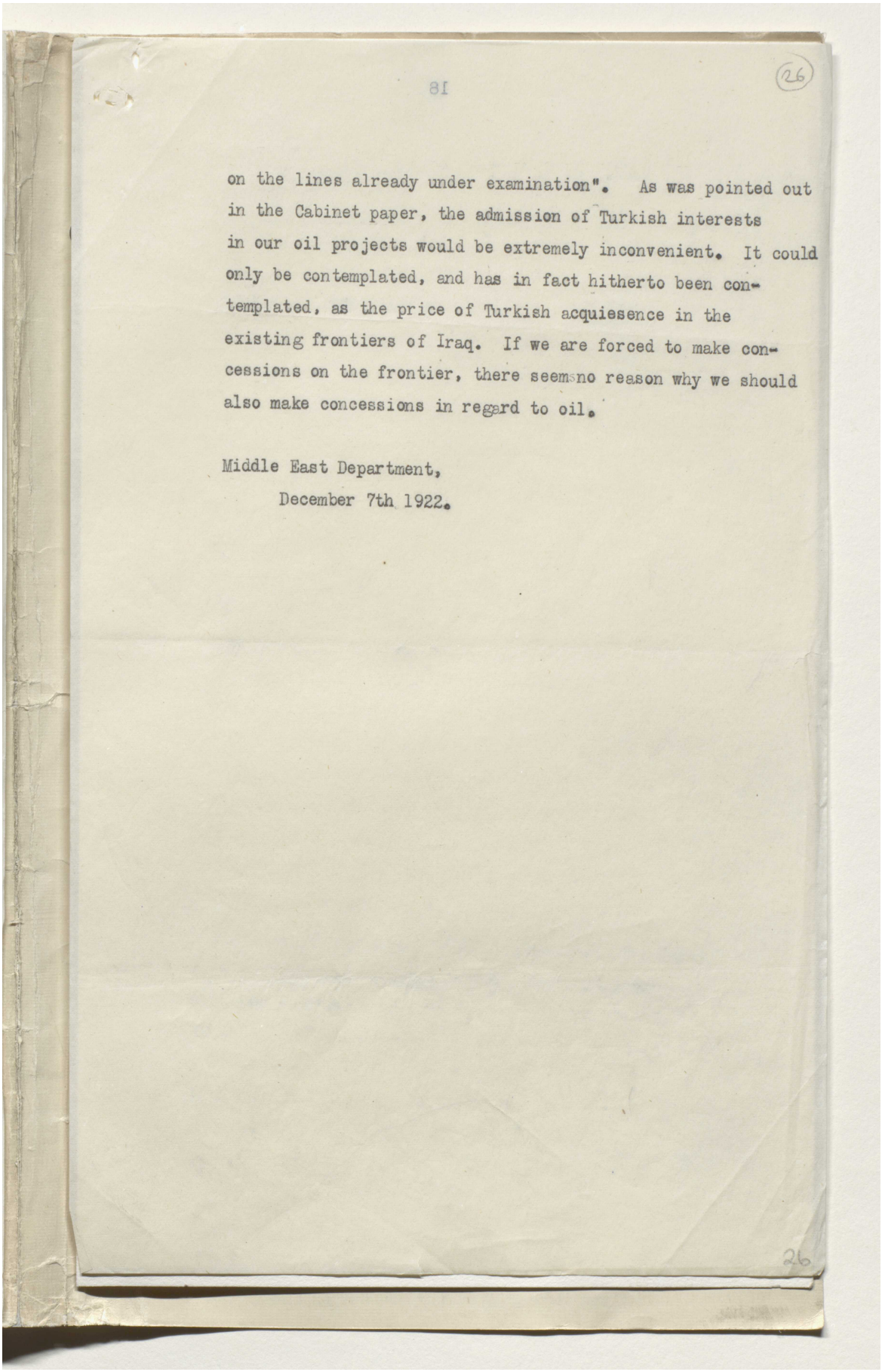

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on the lines already under examination". As was pointed out in the Cabinet paper, the admission of Turkish interests in our oil projects would be extremely inconvenient. It could only be contemplated, and has in fact hitherto been contemplated, as the price of Turkish acquiesence in the existing frontiers of Iraq. If we are forced to make concessions on the frontier, there seems no reason why we should also make concessions in regard to oil.

Middle East Department,
December 7th 1922.

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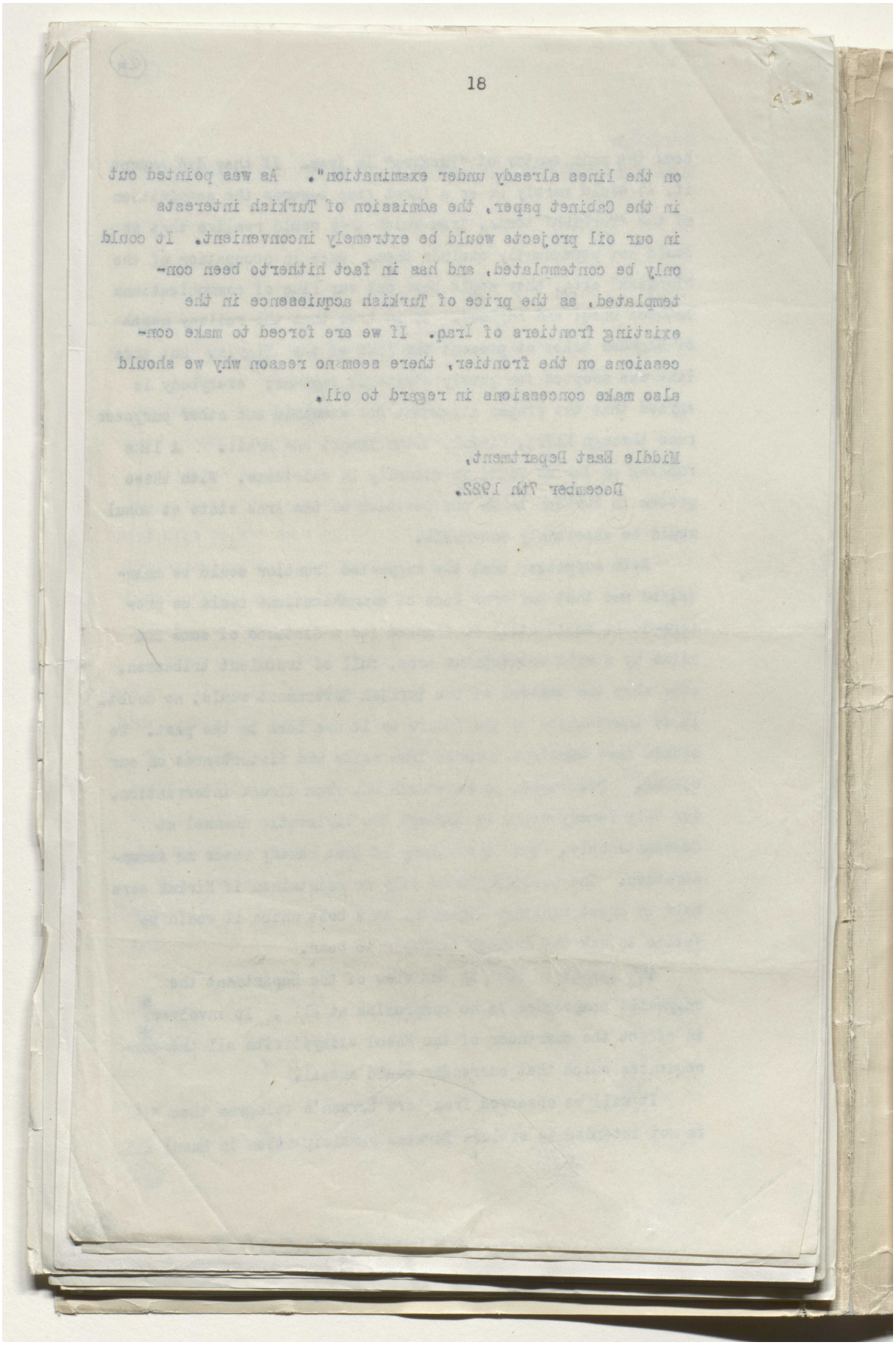

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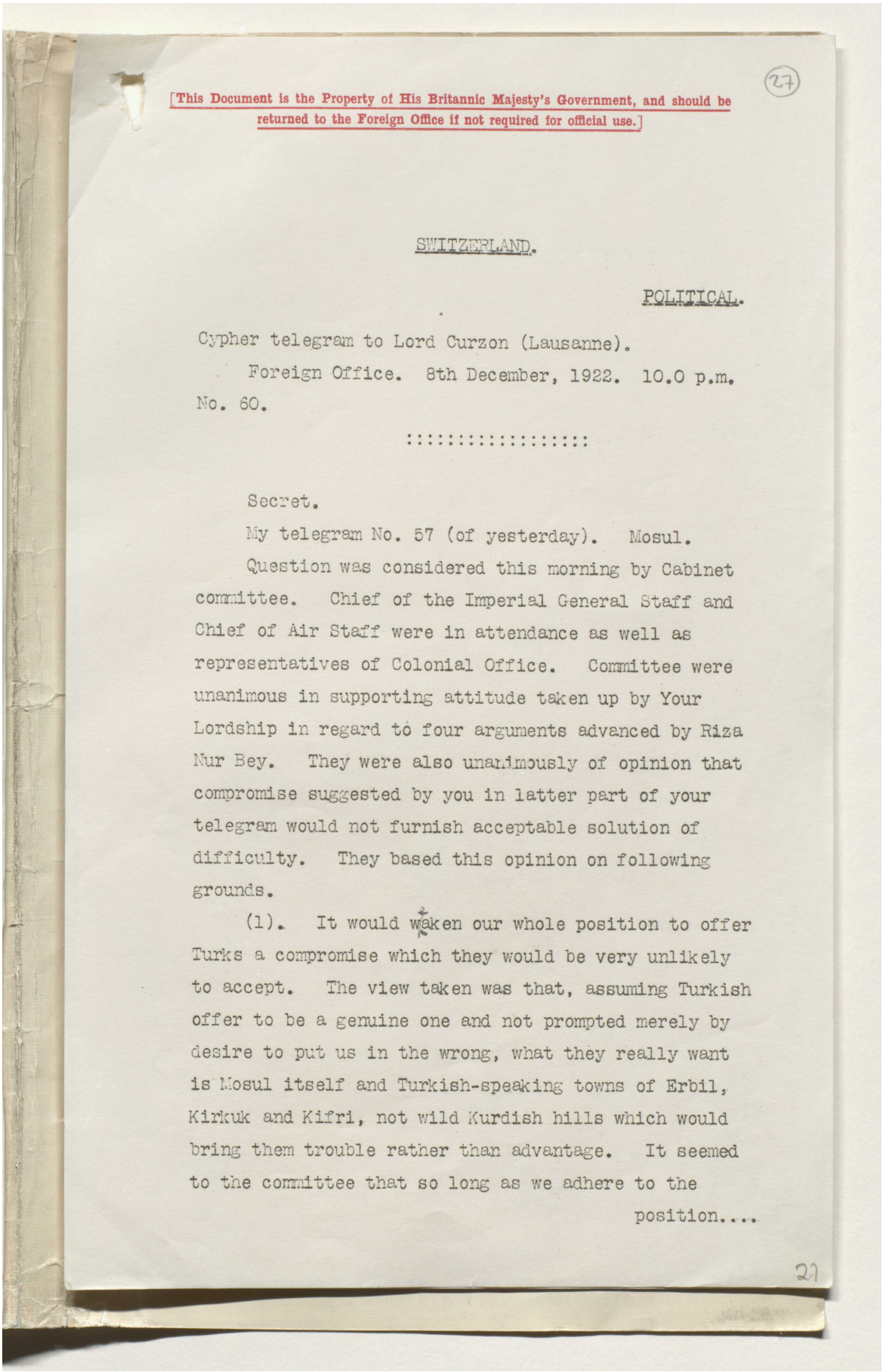

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SWITZERLAND.

POLITICAL.

Cypher telegram to Lord Curzon (Lausanne).

Foreign Office. 8th December, 1922. 10.0 p.m.

No. 60.

::::::::::::::::::

Secret.

My telegram No. 57 (of yesterday). Mosul.

Question was considered this morning by Cabinet committee. Chief of the Imperial General Staff and Chief of Air Staff were in attendance as well as representatives of Colonial Office. Committee were unanimous in supporting attitude taken up by Your Lordship in regard to four arguments advanced by Riza Nur Bey. They were also unanimously of opinion that compromise suggested by you in latter part of your telegram would not furnish acceptable solution of difficulty. They based this opinion on following grounds.

(1). It would weaken our whole position to offer Turks a compromise which they would be very unlikely to accept. The view taken was that, assuming Turkish offer to be a genuine one and not prompted merely by desire to put us in the wrong, what they really want is Mosul itself and Turkish-speaking towns of Erbil, Kirkuk and Kifri, not wild Kurdish hills which would bring them trouble rather than advantage. It seemed to the committee that so long as we adhere to the position....

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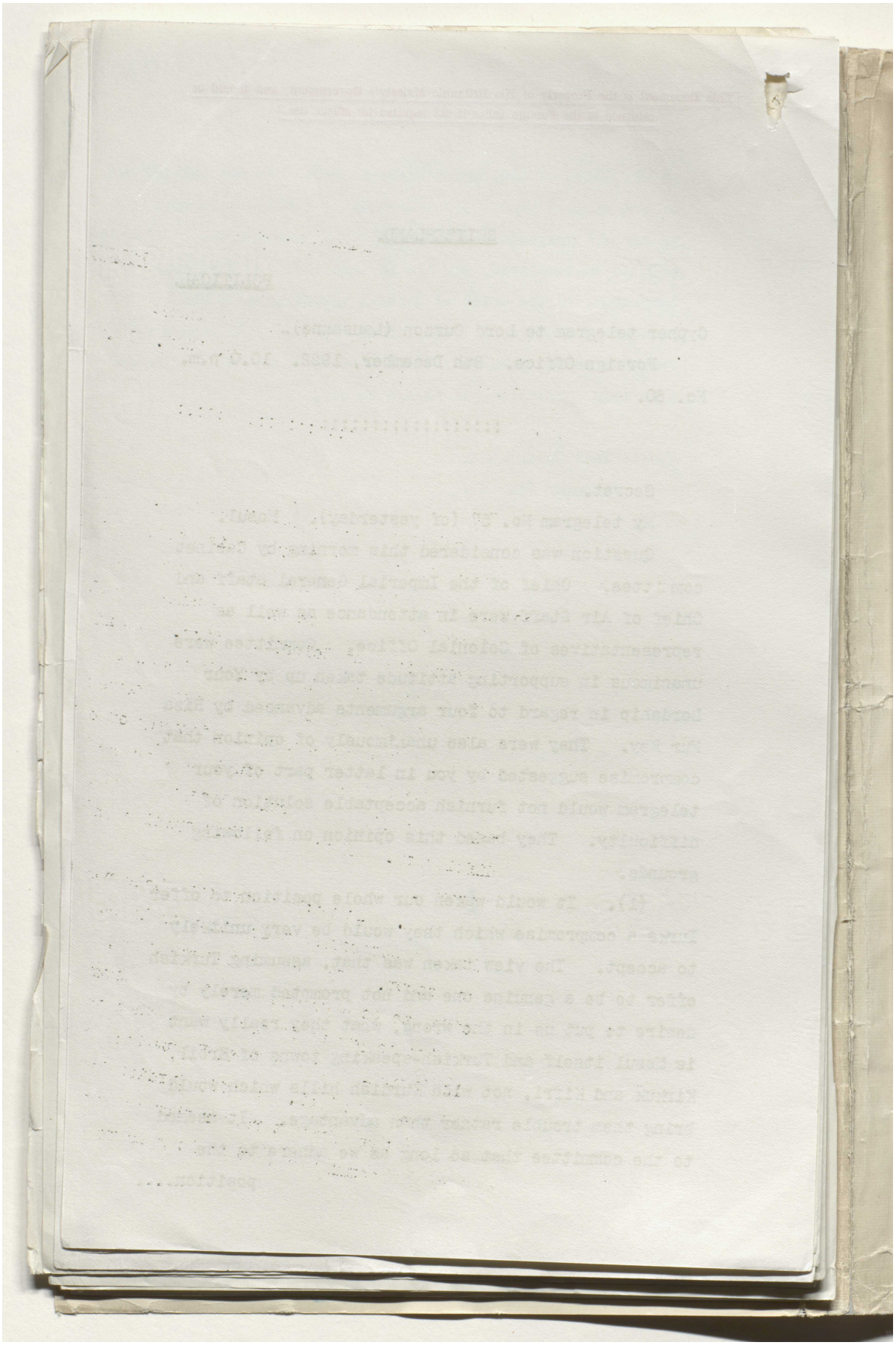

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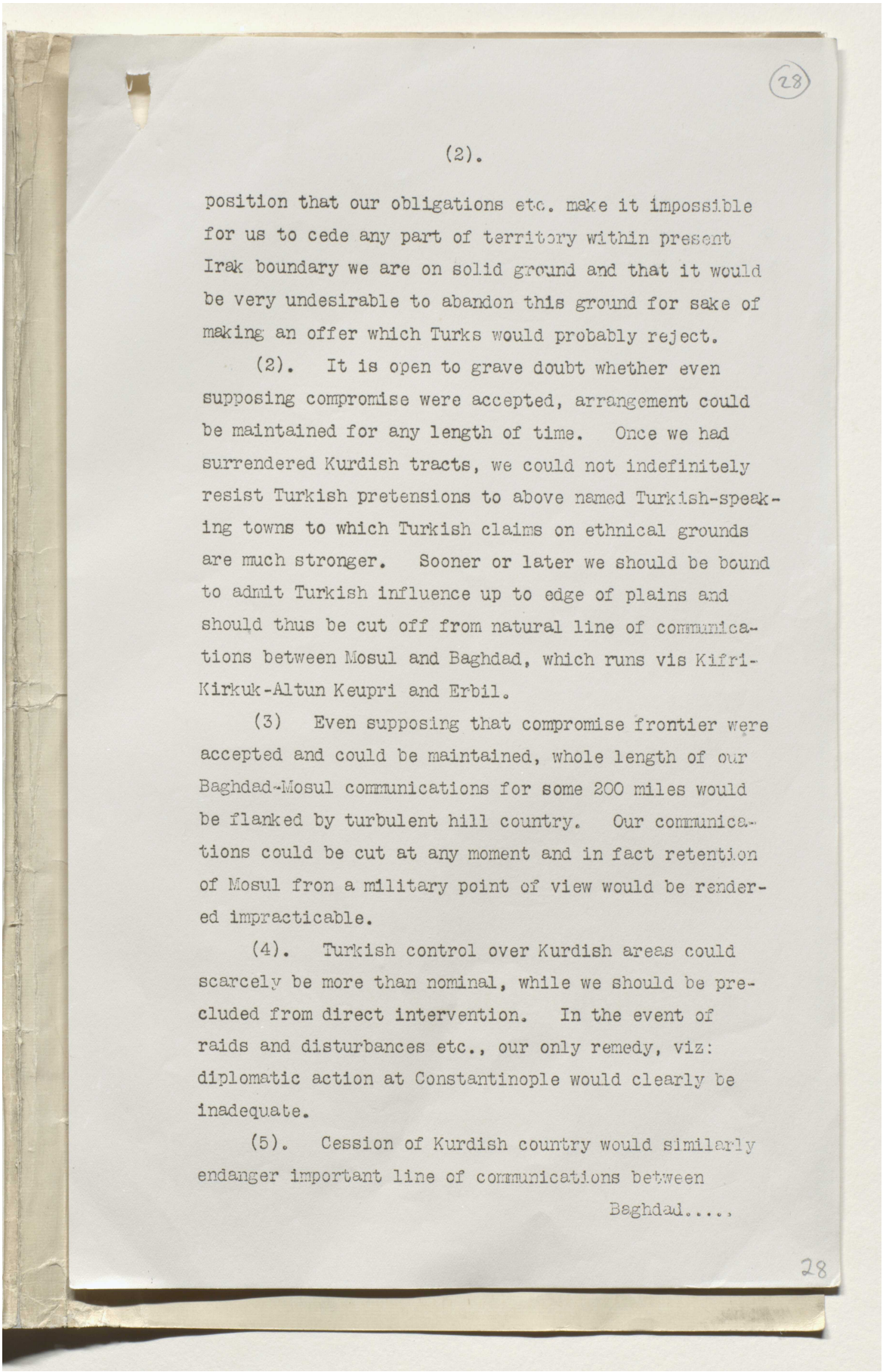

position that our obligations etc. make it impossible for us to cede any part of territory within present Irak boundary we are on solid ground and that it would be very undesirable to abandon this ground for sake of making an offer which Turks would probably reject.

(2). It is open to grave doubt whether even supposing compromise were accepted, arrangement could be maintained for any length of time. Once we had surrendered Kurdish tracts, we could not indefinitely resist Turkish pretensions to above named Turkish-speaking towns to which Turkish claims on ethnical grounds are much stronger. Sooner or later we should be bound to admit Turkish influence up to edge of plains and should thus be cut off from natural line of communications between Mosul and Baghdad, which runs vis Kifri-Kirkuk-Altun Keupri and Erbil.

(3) Even supposing that compromise frontier were accepted and could be maintained, whole length of our Baghdad-Mosul communications for some 200 miles would be flanked by turbulent hill country. Our communications could be cut at any moment and in fact retention of Mosul fron a military point of view would be rendered impracticable.

(4). Turkish control over Kurdish areas could scarcely be more than nominal, while we should be precluded from direct intervention. In the event of raids and disturbances etc., our only remedy, viz: diplomatic action at Constantinople would clearly be inadequate.

(5). Cession of Kurdish country would similarly endanger important line of communications between

Baghdad.....

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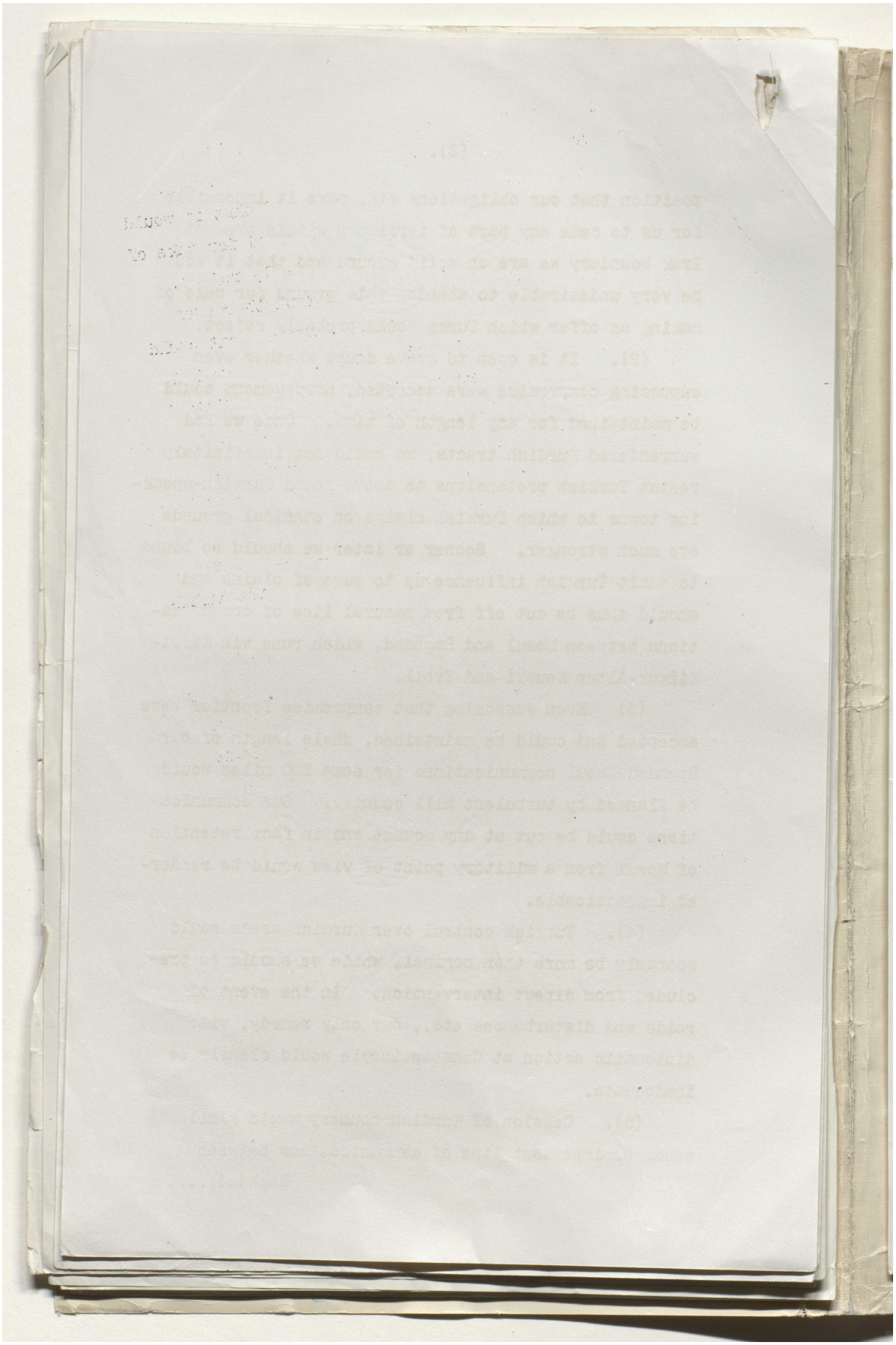

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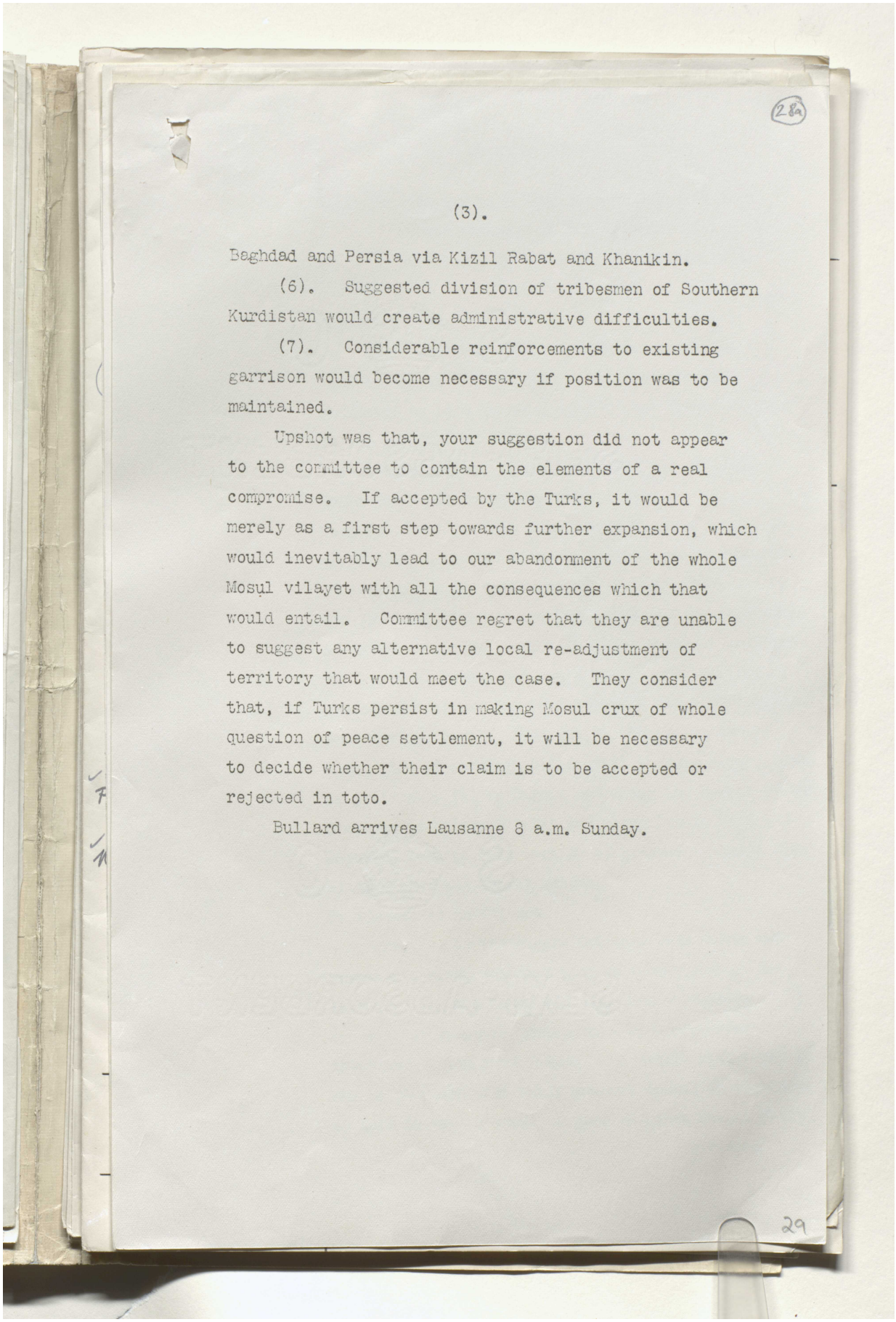

Baghdad and Persia via Kizil Rabat and Khanikin.

(6). Suggested division of tribesmen of Southern Kurdistan would create administrative difficulties.

(7). Considerable reinforcements to existing garrison would become necessary if position was to be maintained.

Upshot was that, your suggestion did not appear to the committee to contain the elements of a real compromise. If accepted by the Turks, it would be merely as a first step towards further expansion, which would inevitably lead to our abandonment of the whole Mosul vilayet with all the consequences which that would entail. Committee regret that they are unable to suggest any alternative local re-adjustment of territory that would meet the case. They consider that, if Turks persist in making Mosul crux of whole question of peace settlement, it will be necessary to decide whether their claim is to be accepted or rejected in toto.

Bullard arrives Lausanne 8 a.m. Sunday.

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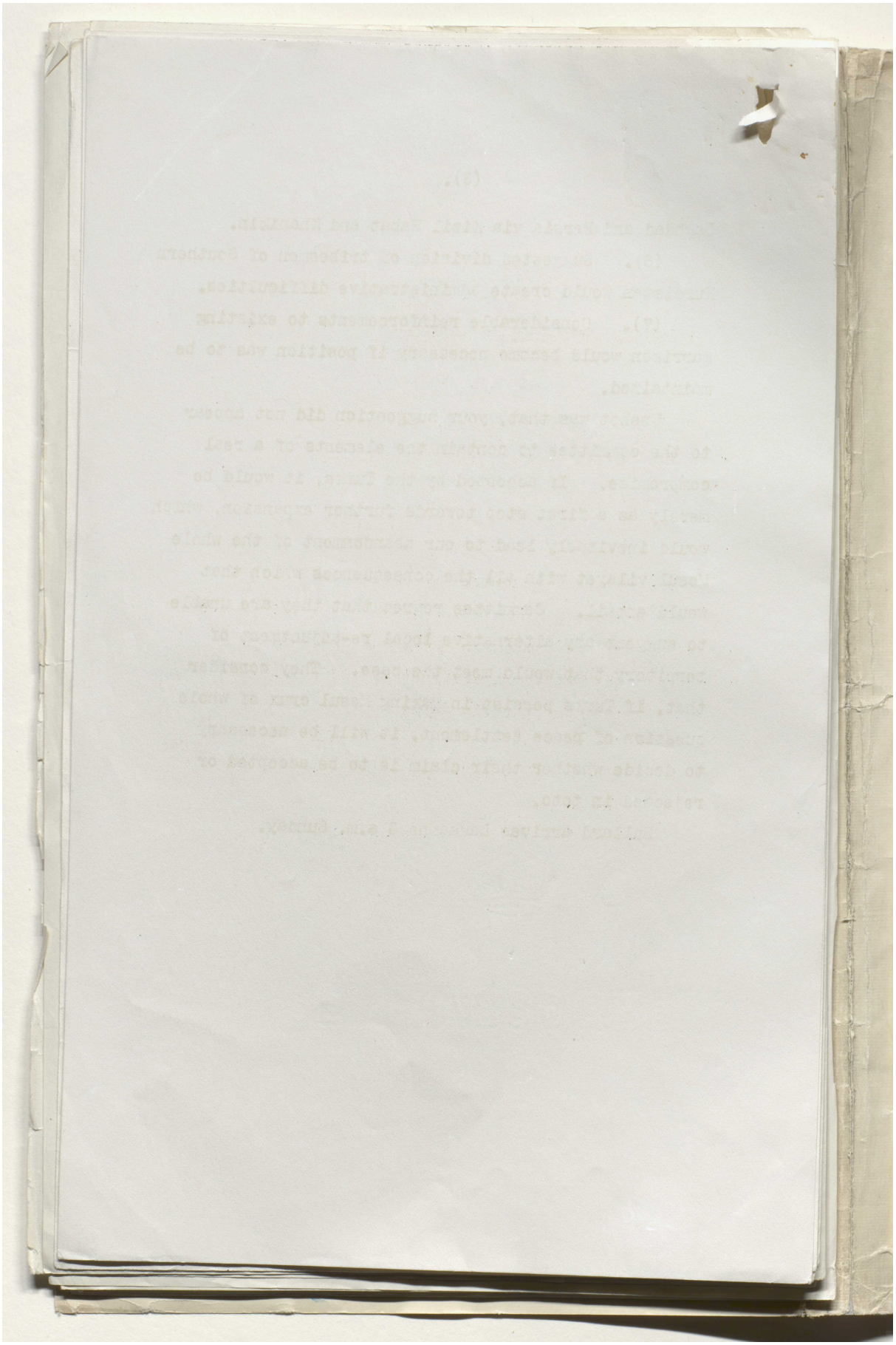

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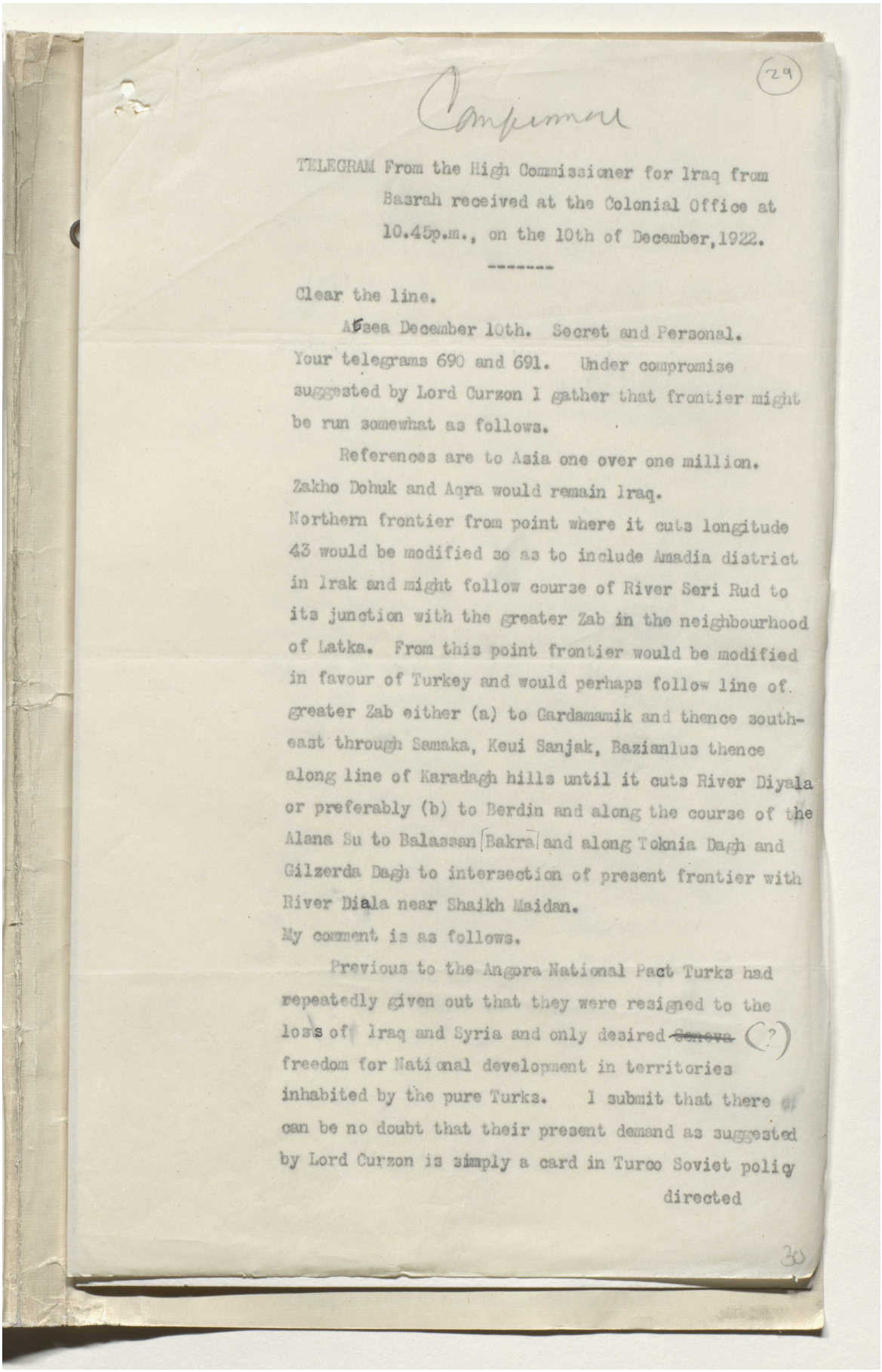

(29)

Confirmed

TELEGRAM From the High Commissioner for Iraq from Basrah received at the Colonial Office at 10.45p.m., on the 10th of December, 1922.

Clear the line.

Basea December 10th. Secret and Personal.
Your telegrams 690 and 691. Under compromise suggested by Lord Curzon I gather that frontier might be run somewhat as follows.

References are to Asia one over one million.
Zakho Dohuk and Aqra would remain Iraq.
Northern frontier from point where it cuts longitude 43 would be modified so as to include Amadia district in Irak and might follow course of River Seri Rud to its junction with the greater Zab in the neighbourhood of Latka. From this point frontier would be modified in favour of Turkey and would perhaps follow line of greater Zab either (a) to Cardamamik and thence south-east through Samaka, Keui Sanjak, Bazianlus thence along line of Karadagh hills until it cuts River Diyala or preferably (b) to Berdin and along the course of the Alana Su to Balassan [Bakra] and along Toknia Dagh and Gilzerda Dagh to intersection of present frontier with River Diala near Shaikh Maidan.
My comment is as follows.

Previous to the Angora National Pact Turks had repeatedly given out that they were resigned to the loss of Iraq and Syria and only desired ~~Geneva~~ (?) freedom for National development in territories inhabited by the pure Turks. I submit that there can be no doubt that their present demand as suggested by Lord Curzon is simply a card in Turco Soviet policy directed

(30)

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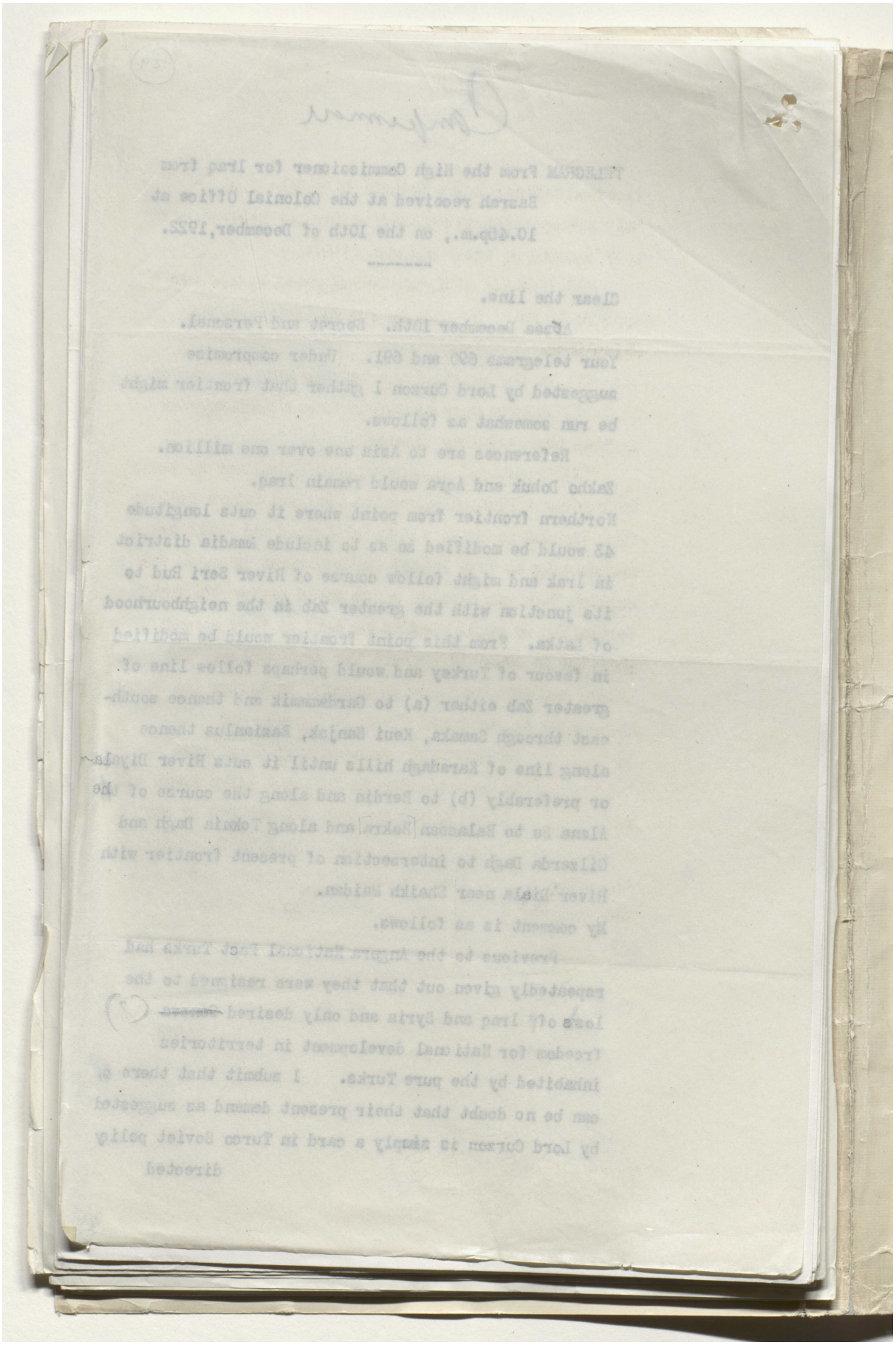

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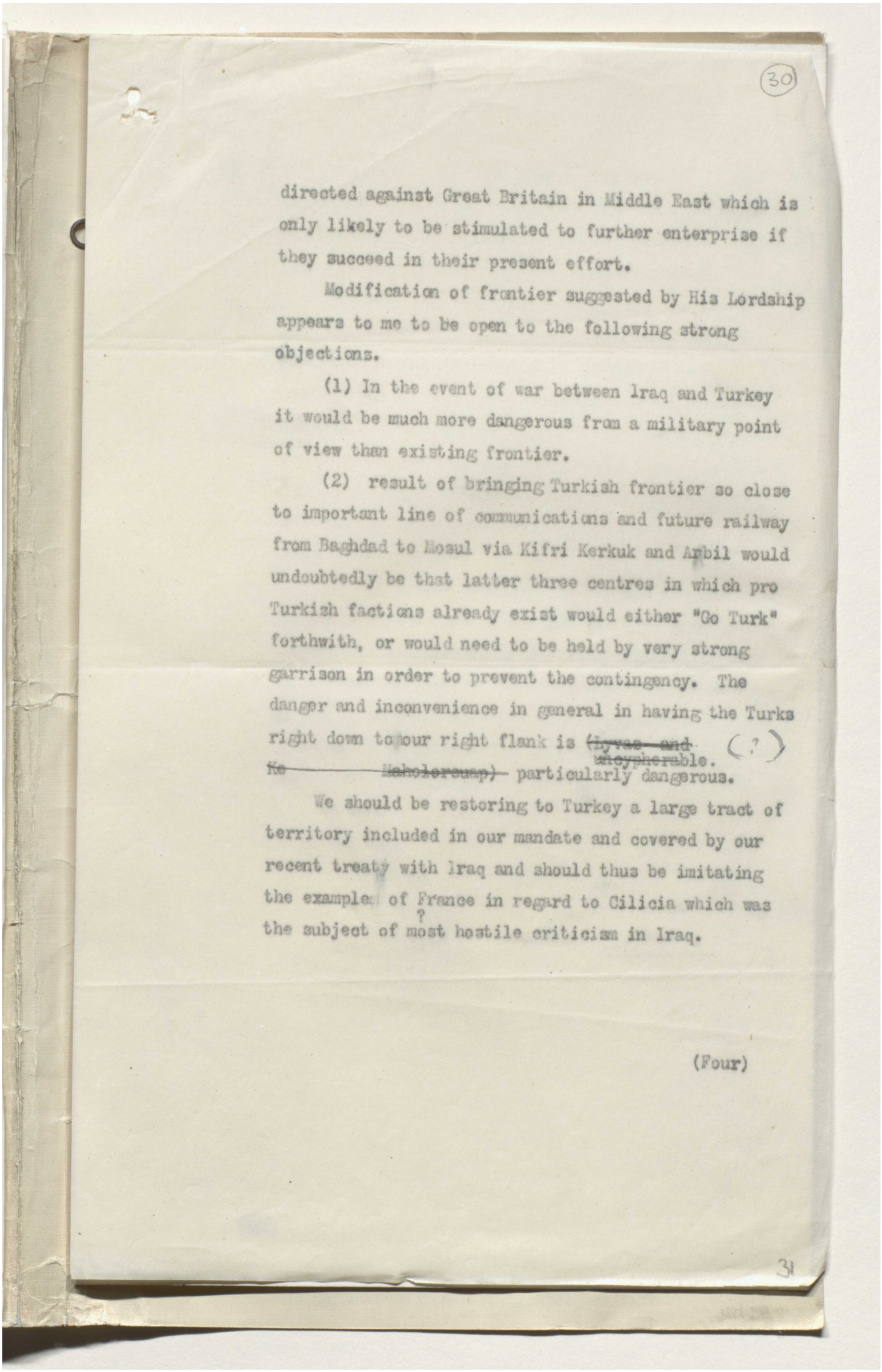

directed against Great Britain in Middle East which is only likely to be stimulated to further enterprise if they succeed in their present effort.

Modification of frontier suggested by His Lordship appears to me to be open to the following strong objections.

(1) In the event of war between Iraq and Turkey it would be much more dangerous from a military point of view than existing frontier.

(2) result of bringing Turkish frontier so close to important line of communications and future railway from Baghdad to Mosul via Kifri Kerkuk and Arbil would undoubtedly be that latter three centres in which pro Turkish factions already exist would either "Go Turk" forthwith, or would need to be held by very strong garrison in order to prevent the contingency. The danger and inconvenience in general in having the Turks right down to our right flank is ~~(Lyvas and Ke Maholorsuap)~~ uncypherable. (?) particularly dangerous.

We should be restoring to Turkey a large tract of territory included in our mandate and covered by our recent treaty with Iraq and should thus be imitating the example of France in regard to Cilicia which was the subject of most hostile criticism in Iraq.

(Four)

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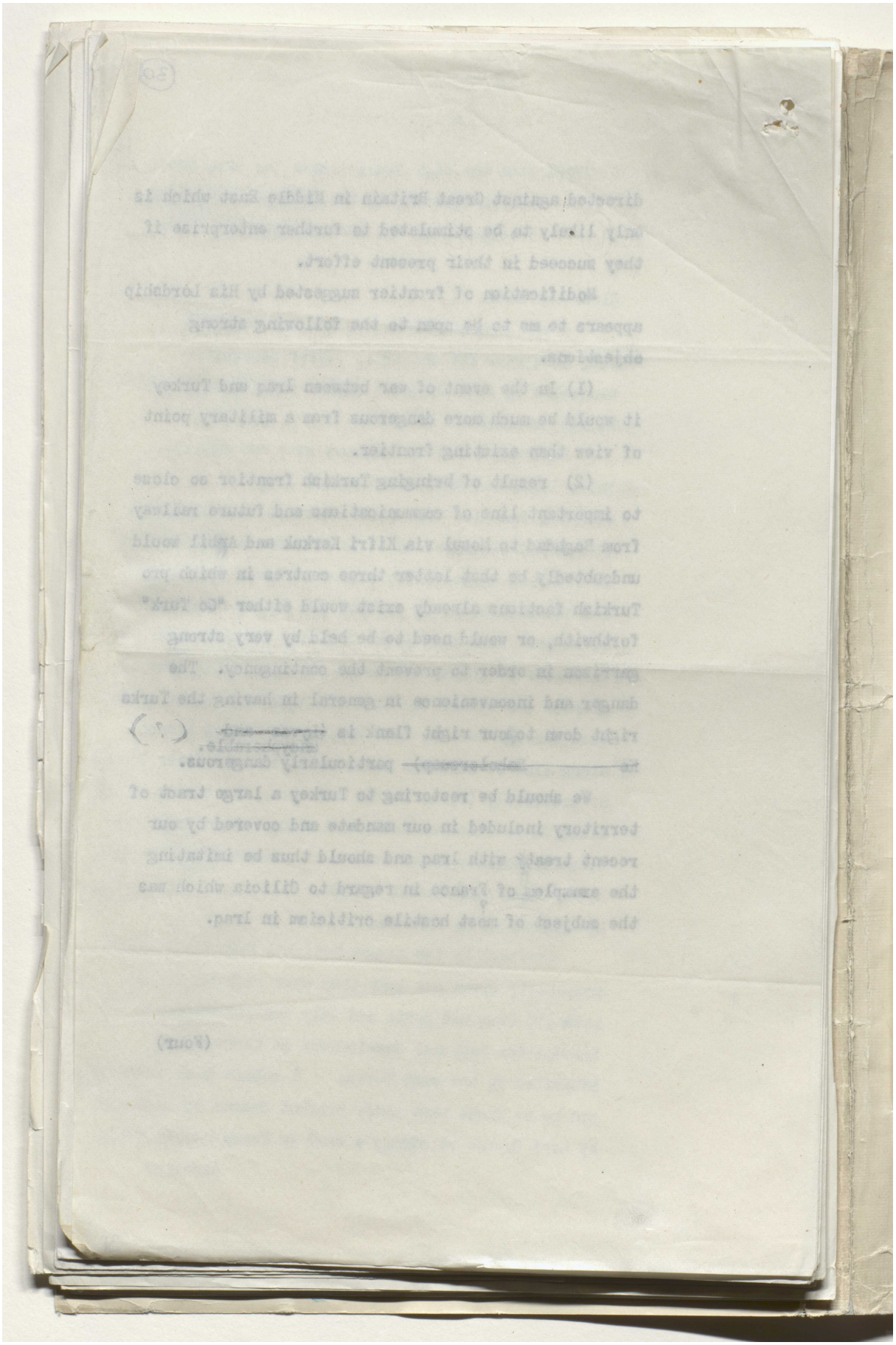

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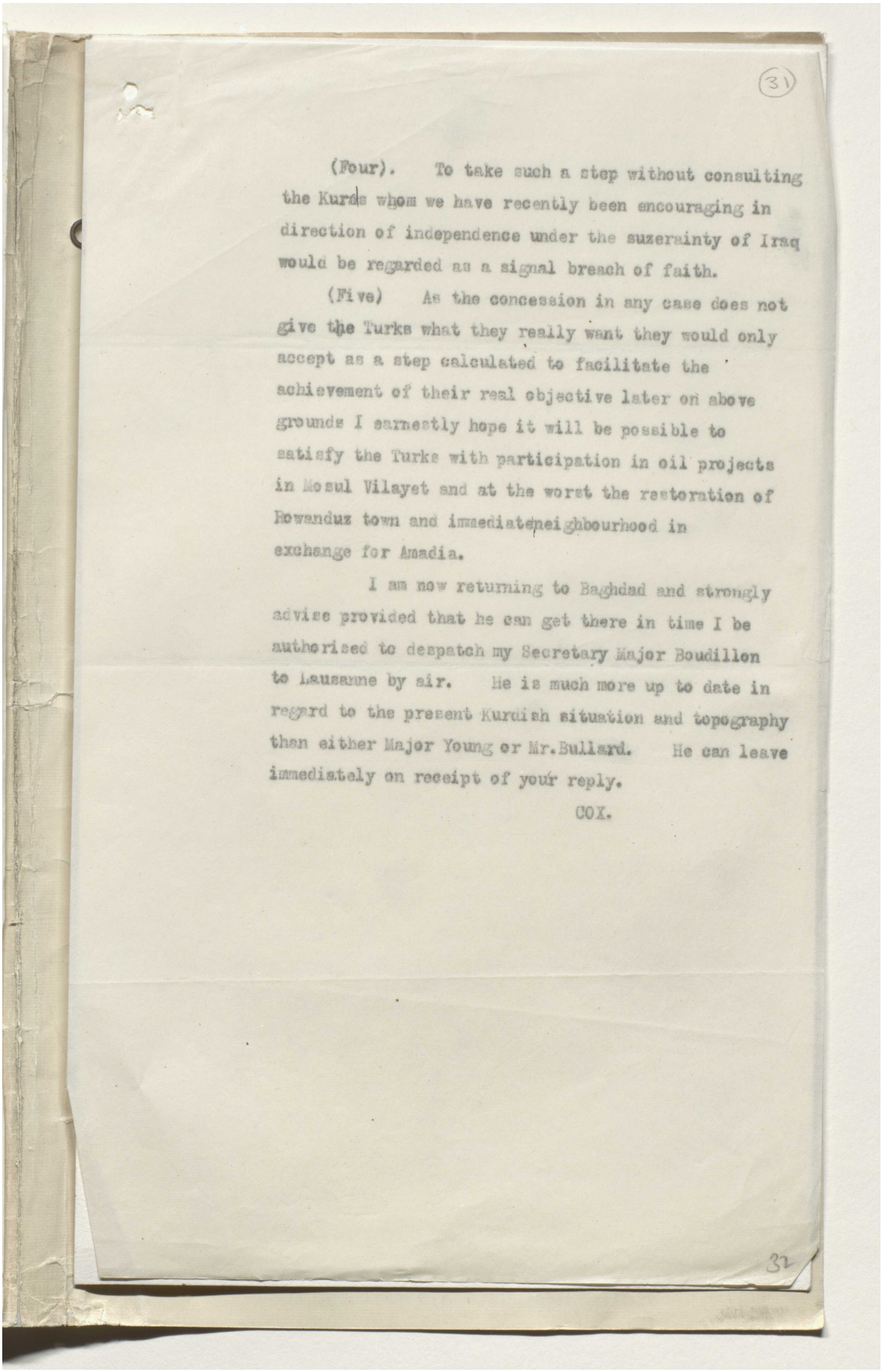

(31)

(Four). To take such a step without consulting the Kurds whom we have recently been encouraging in direction of independence under the suzerainty of Iraq would be regarded as a signal breach of faith.

(Five) As the concession in any case does not give the Turks what they really want they would only accept as a step calculated to facilitate the achievement of their real objective later on above grounds I earnestly hope it will be possible to satisfy the Turks with participation in oil projects in Mosul Vilayet and at the worst the restoration of Rowanduz town and immediate neighbourhood in exchange for Amadia.

I am now returning to Baghdad and strongly advise provided that he can get there in time I be authorised to despatch my Secretary Major Boudillon to Lausanne by air. He is much more up to date in regard to the present Kurdish situation and topography than either Major Young or Mr. Bullard. He can leave immediately on receipt of your reply.

COX.

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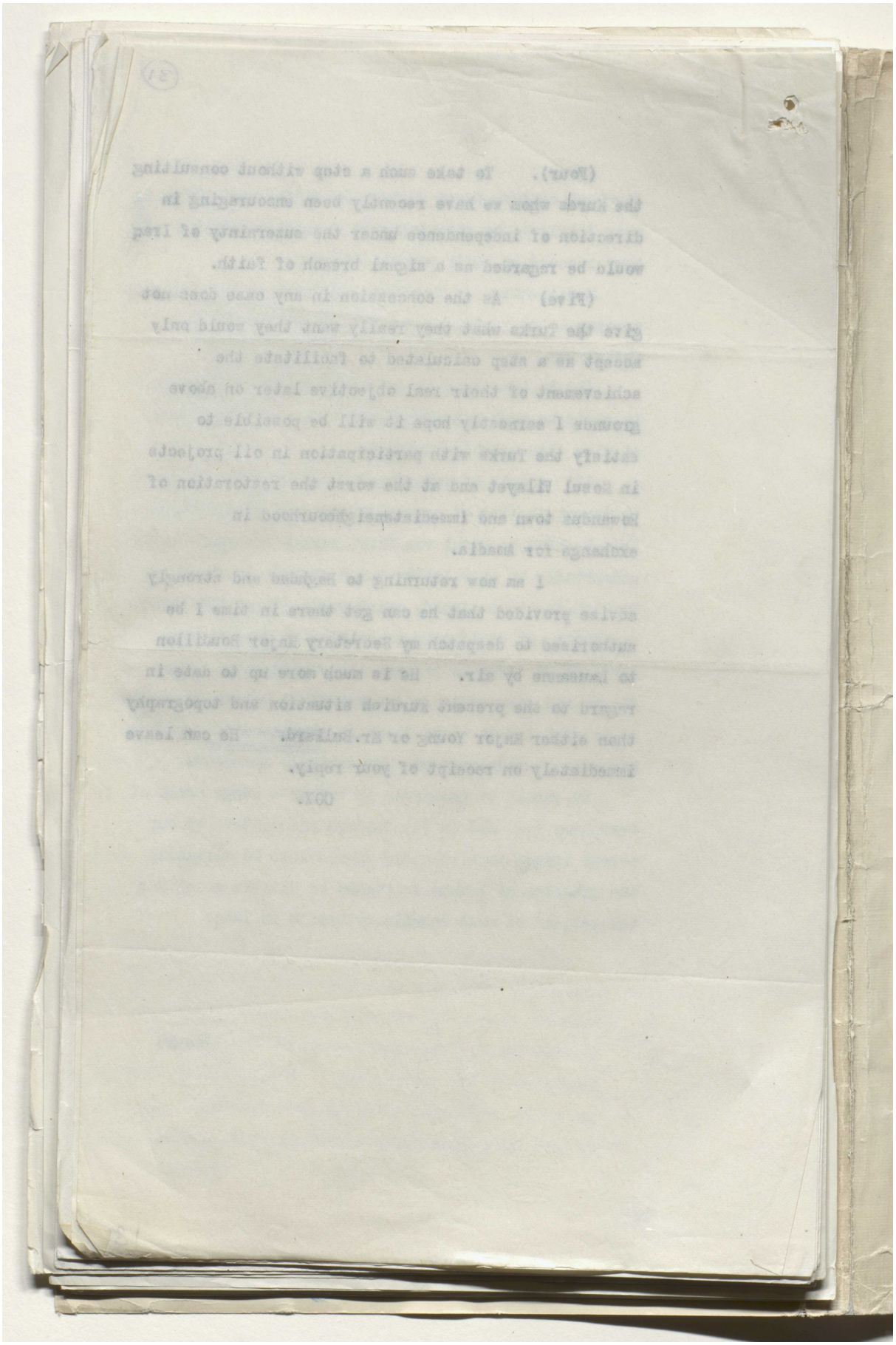

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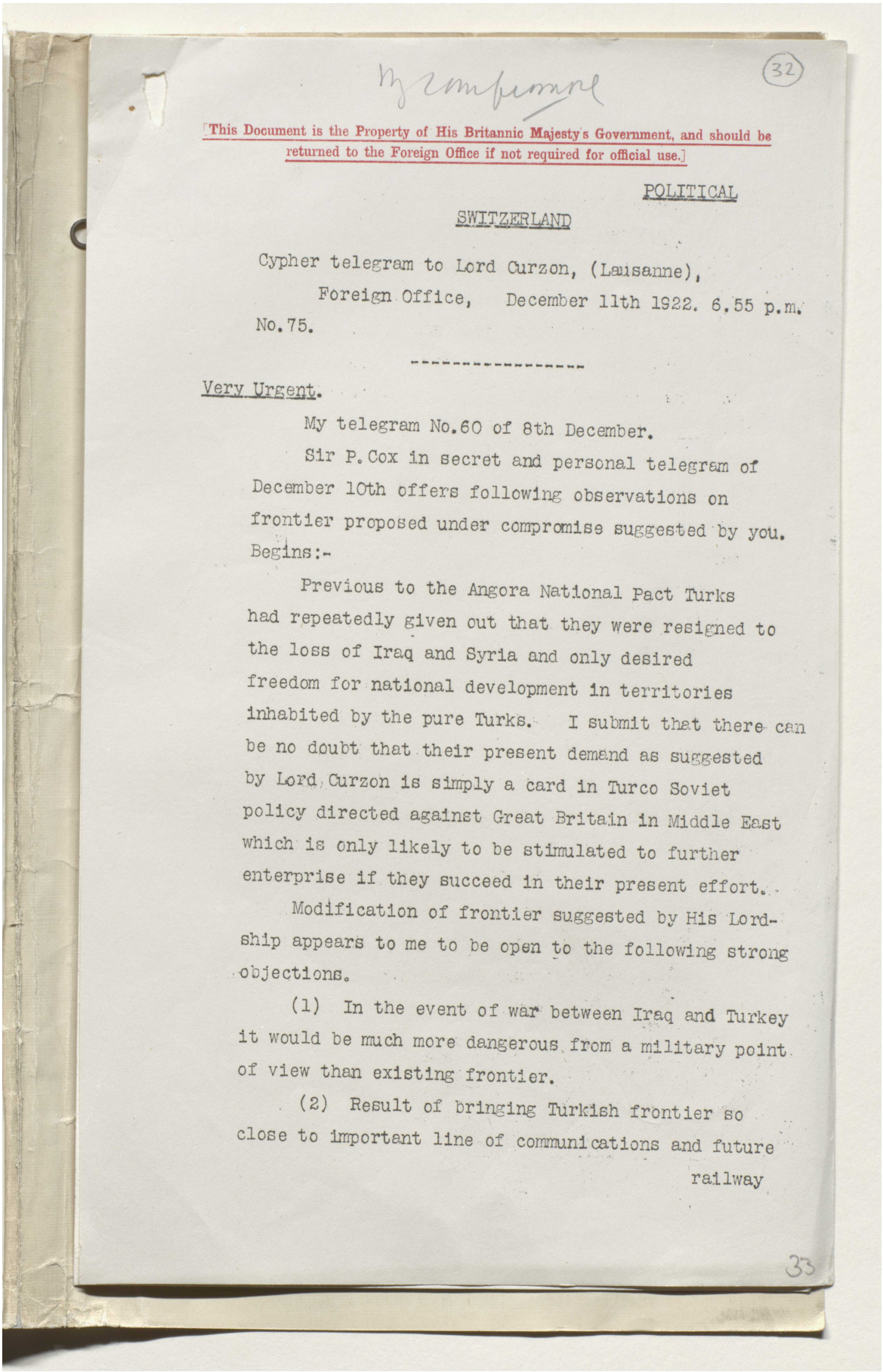

(32)

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POLITICAL

SWITZERLAND

Cypher telegram to Lord Curzon, (Lausanne),
Foreign Office, December 11th 1922. 6.55 p.m.
No.75.

Very Urgent.

My telegram No.60 of 8th December.

Sir P. Cox in secret and personal telegram of December 10th offers following observations on frontier proposed under compromise suggested by you. Begins:-

Previous to the Angora National Pact Turks had repeatedly given out that they were resigned to the loss of Iraq and Syria and only desired freedom for national development in territories inhabited by the pure Turks. I submit that there can be no doubt that their present demand as suggested by Lord Curzon is simply a card in Turco Soviet policy directed against Great Britain in Middle East which is only likely to be stimulated to further enterprise if they succeed in their present effort.

Modification of frontier suggested by His Lordship appears to me to be open to the following strong objections.

(1) In the event of war between Iraq and Turkey it would be much more dangerous from a military point of view than existing frontier.

(2) Result of bringing Turkish frontier so close to important line of communications and future railway

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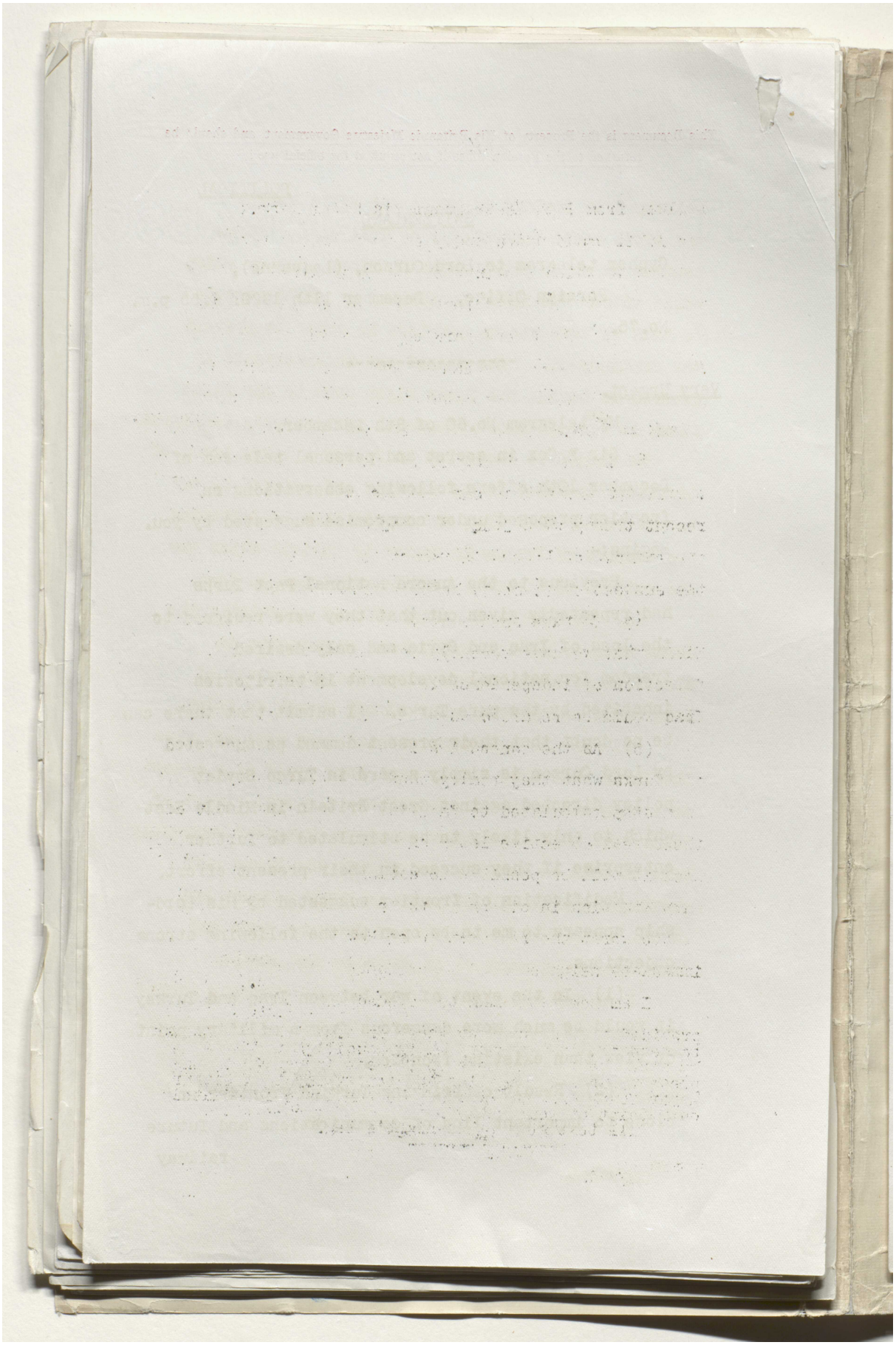

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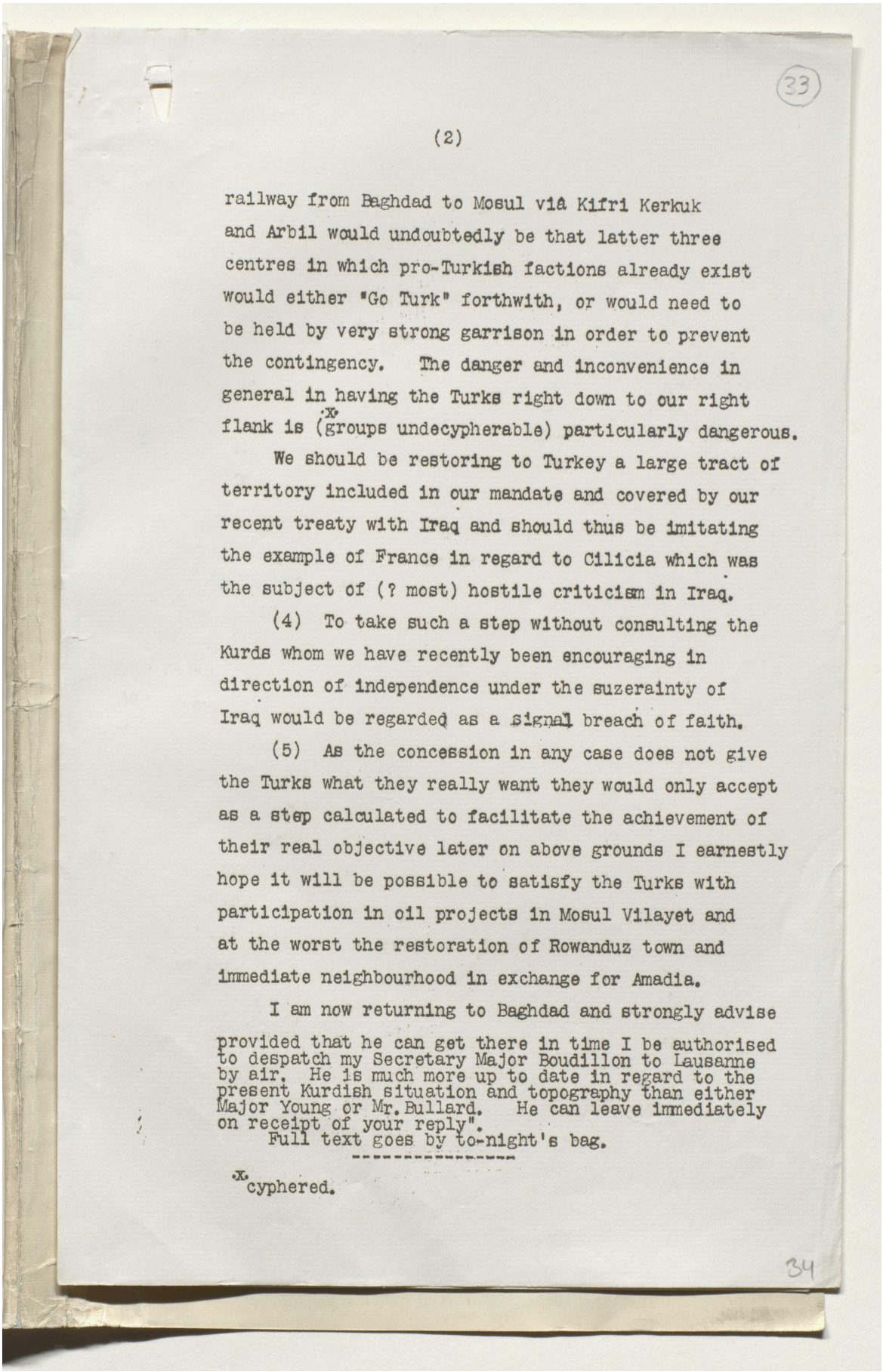

(33)

(2)

railway from Baghdad to Mosul via Kifri Kerkuk and Arbil would undoubtedly be that latter three centres in which pro-Turkish factions already exist would either "Go Turk" forthwith, or would need to be held by very strong garrison in order to prevent the contingency. The danger and inconvenience in general in having the Turks right down to our right flank is (X groups undecypherable) particularly dangerous.

We should be restoring to Turkey a large tract of territory included in our mandate and covered by our recent treaty with Iraq and should thus be imitating the example of France in regard to Cilicia which was the subject of (? most) hostile criticism in Iraq.

(4) To take such a step without consulting the Kurds whom we have recently been encouraging in direction of independence under the suzerainty of Iraq would be regarded as a signal breach of faith.

(5) As the concession in any case does not give the Turks what they really want they would only accept as a step calculated to facilitate the achievement of their real objective later on above grounds I earnestly hope it will be possible to satisfy the Turks with participation in oil projects in Mosul Vilayet and at the worst the restoration of Rowanduz town and immediate neighbourhood in exchange for Amadia.

I am now returning to Baghdad and strongly advise provided that he can get there in time I be authorised to despatch my Secretary Major Boudillon to Lausanne by air. He is much more up to date in regard to the present Kurdish situation and topography than either Major Young or Mr. Bullard. He can leave immediately on receipt of your reply".

Full text goes by to-night's bag.

X cyphered.

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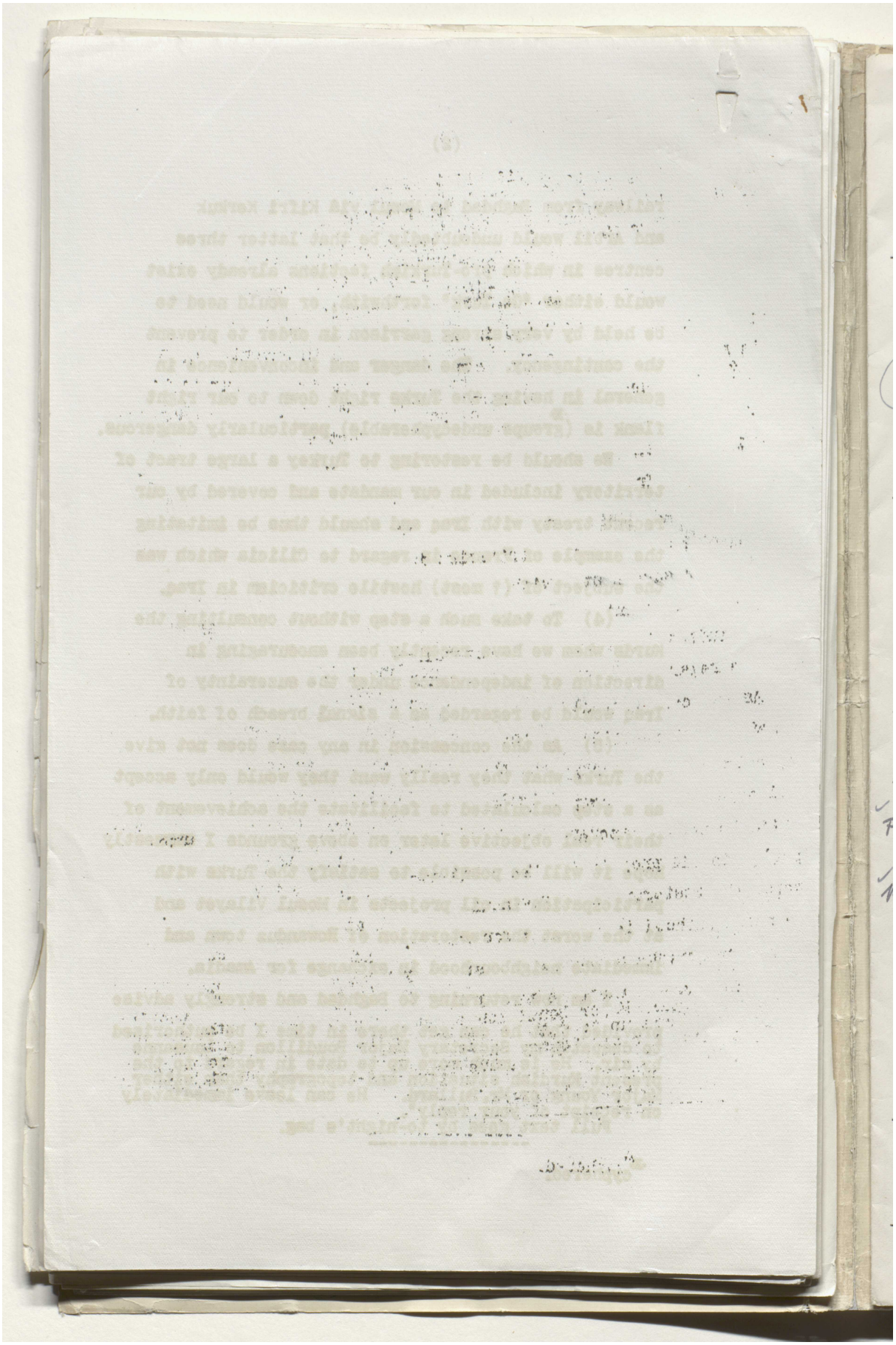

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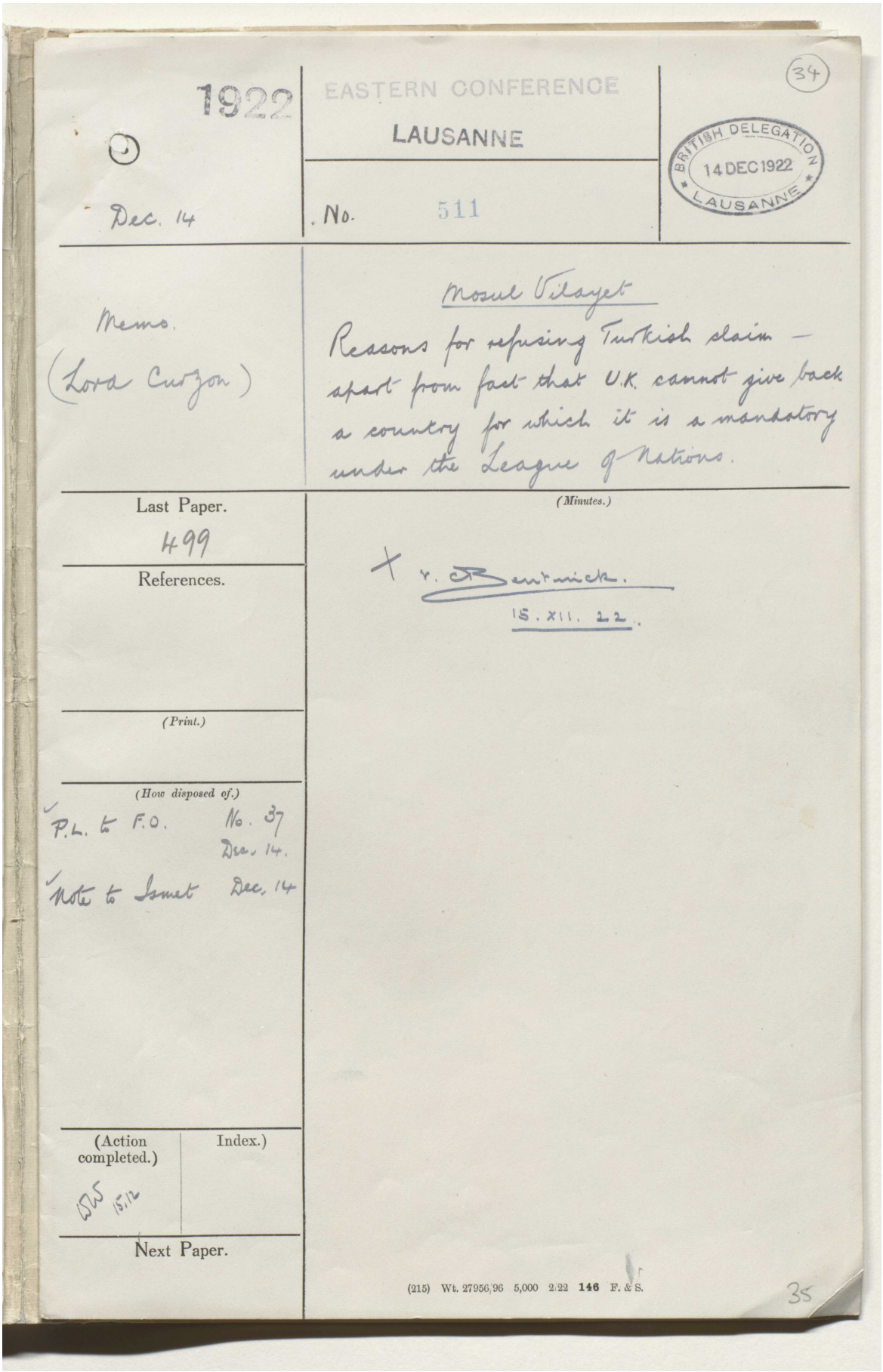

1922

EASTERN CONFERENCE

LAUSANNE

(34)

Dec. 14

No. 511

BRITISH DELEGATION 14 DEC 1922 LAUSANNE

Memo. (Lord Curzon)

Mosul Vilayet

Reasons for refusing Turkish claim — apart from fact that U.K. cannot give back a country for which it is a mandatory under the League of Nations.

Last Paper. 499

References.

(Minutes.)

+ v. Bentinck. 15. XII. 22.

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

P.L. to F.O. No. 37 Dec. 14.

Note to Ismet Dec. 14

(Action completed.) DWS 15.12

Index.)

Next Paper.

(215) Wt. 27956/96 5,000 2/22 146 F. & S.

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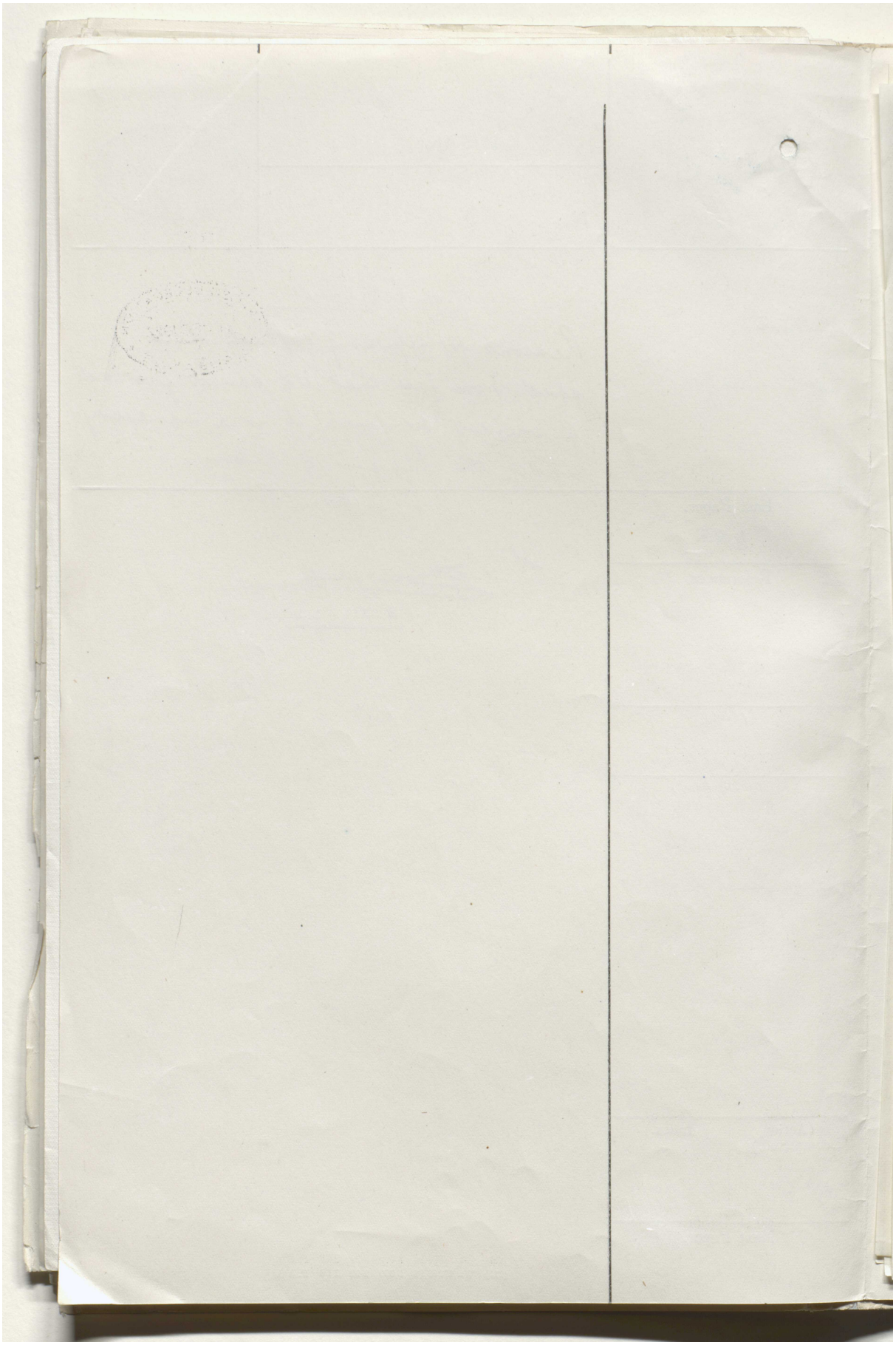

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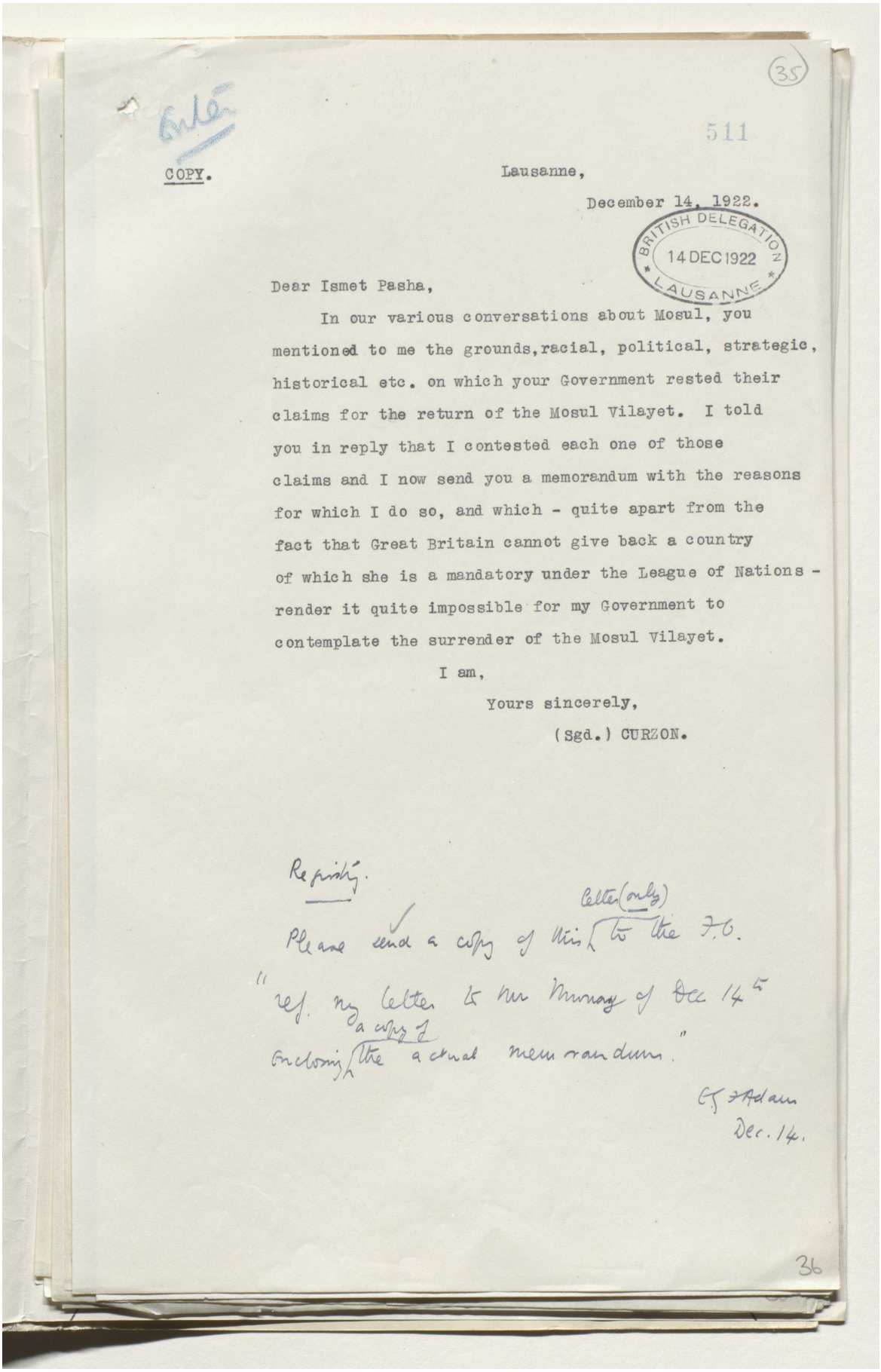

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(35)

Enter

511

COPY.

Lausanne,

December 14, 1922.

BRITISH DELEGATION 14 DEC 1922 LAUSANNE

Dear Ismet Pasha,

In our various conversations about Mosul, you mentioned to me the grounds, racial, political, strategic, historical etc. on which your Government rested their claims for the return of the Mosul Vilayet. I told you in reply that I contested each one of those claims and I now send you a memorandum with the reasons for which I do so, and which - quite apart from the fact that Great Britain cannot give back a country of which she is a mandatory under the League of Nations - render it quite impossible for my Government to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) CURZON.

Registry.

Please send a copy of this letter (only) to the F.O.

"ref. my letter to Mr Murray of Dec 14th enclosing a copy of the actual memorandum."

E.G. F. Adam
Dec. 14.

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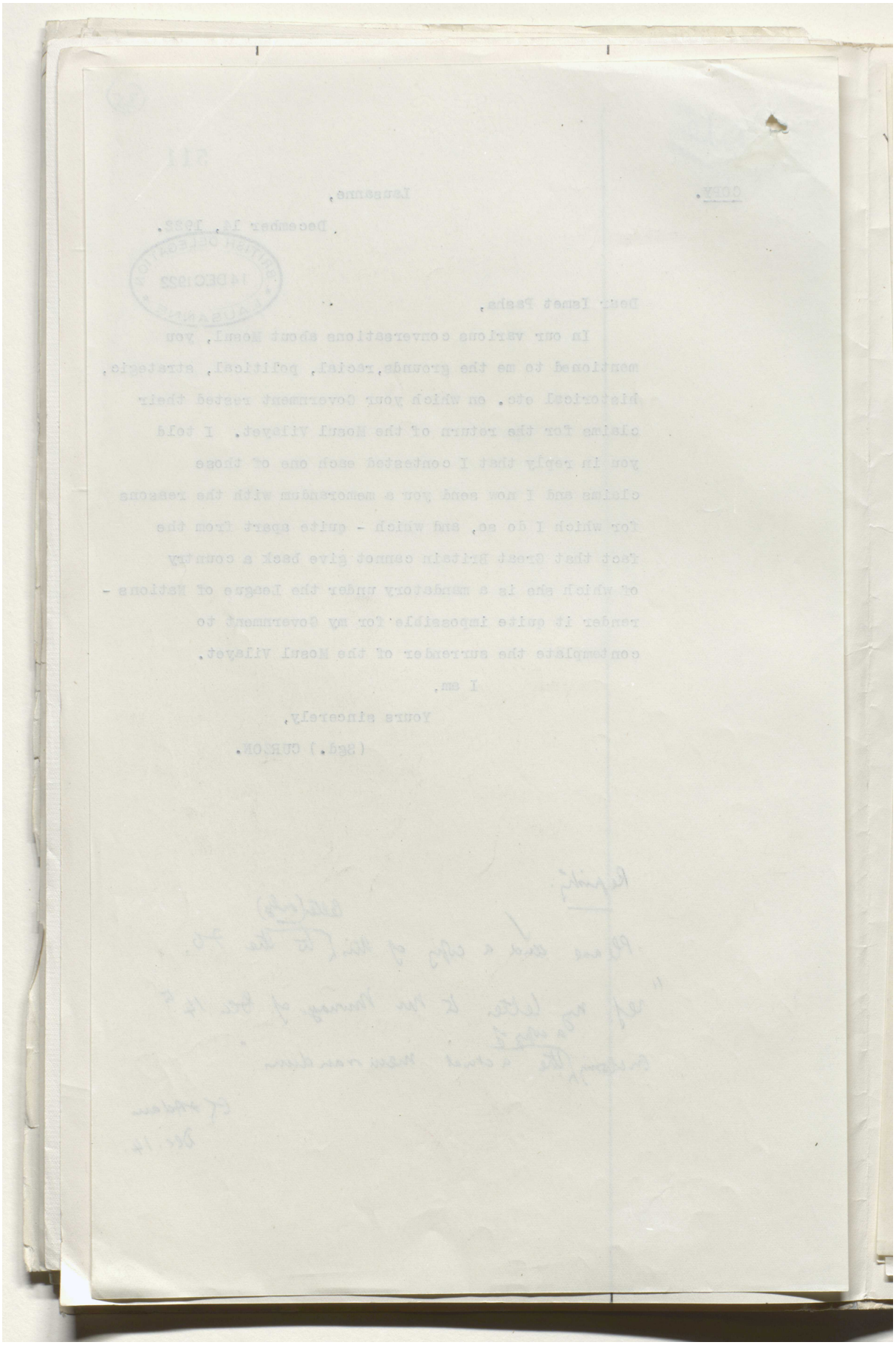

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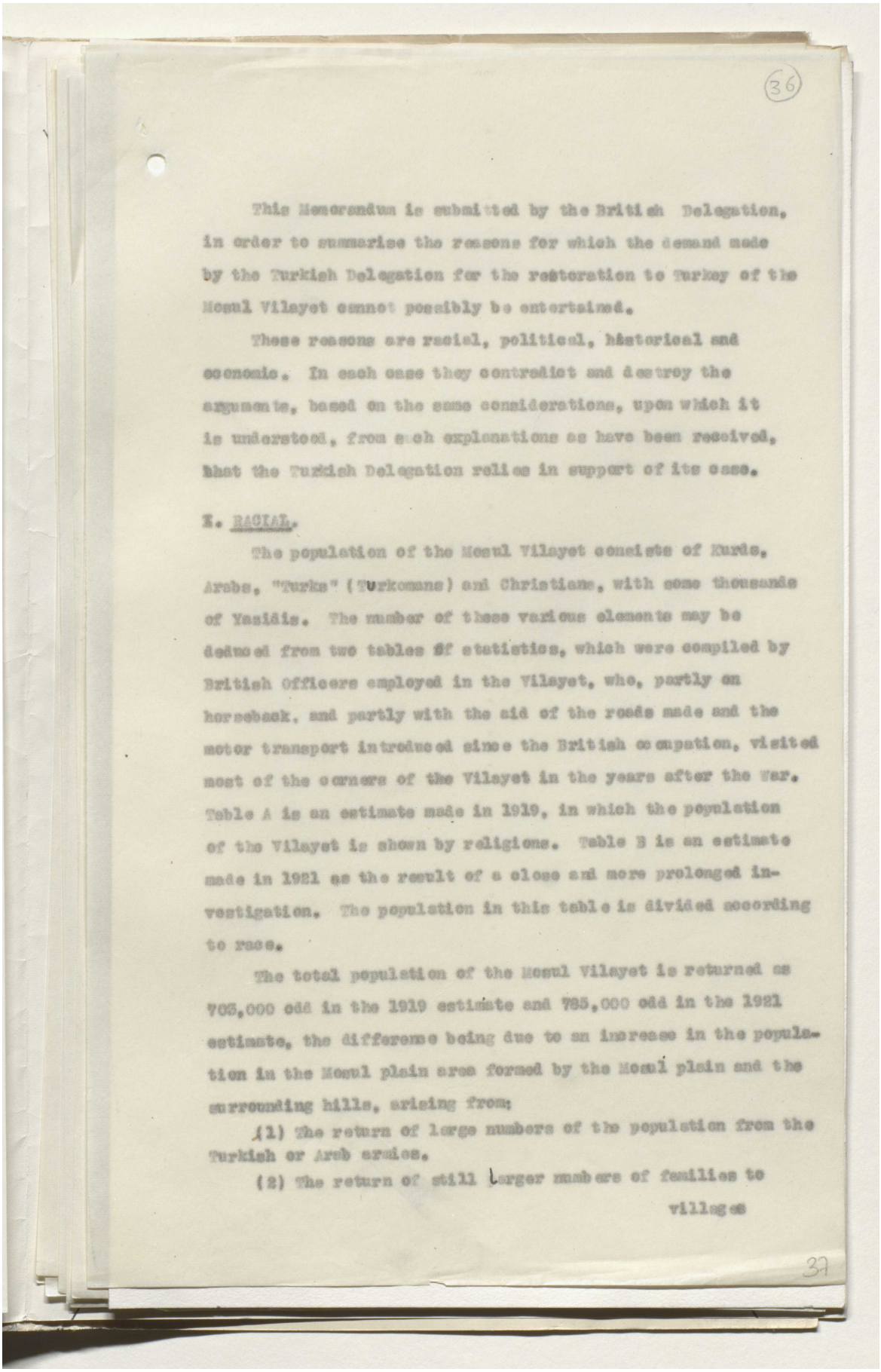

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This Memorandum is submitted by the British Delegation, in order to summarise the reasons for which the demand made by the Turkish Delegation for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet cannot possibly be entertained.

These reasons are racial, political, historical and economic. In each case they contradict and destroy the arguments, based on the same considerations, upon which it is understood, from such explanations as have been received, that the Turkish Delegation relies in support of its case.

I. RACIAL.

The population of the Mosul Vilayet consists of Kurds, Arabs, "Turks" (Turkomans) and Christians, with some thousands of Yazidis. The number of these various elements may be deduced from two tables of statistics, which were compiled by British Officers employed in the Vilayet, who, partly on horseback, and partly with the aid of the roads made and the motor transport introduced since the British occupation, visited most of the corners of the Vilayet in the years after the War. Table A is an estimate made in 1919, in which the population of the Vilayet is shown by religions. Table B is an estimate made in 1921 as the result of a close and more prolonged investigation. The population in this table is divided according to race.

The total population of the Mosul Vilayet is returned as 703,000 odd in the 1919 estimate and 785,000 odd in the 1921 estimate, the difference being due to an increase in the population in the Mosul plain area formed by the Mosul plain and the surrounding hills, arising from:

(1) The return of large numbers of the population from the Turkish or Arab armies.

(2) The return of still larger numbers of families to villages

(37)

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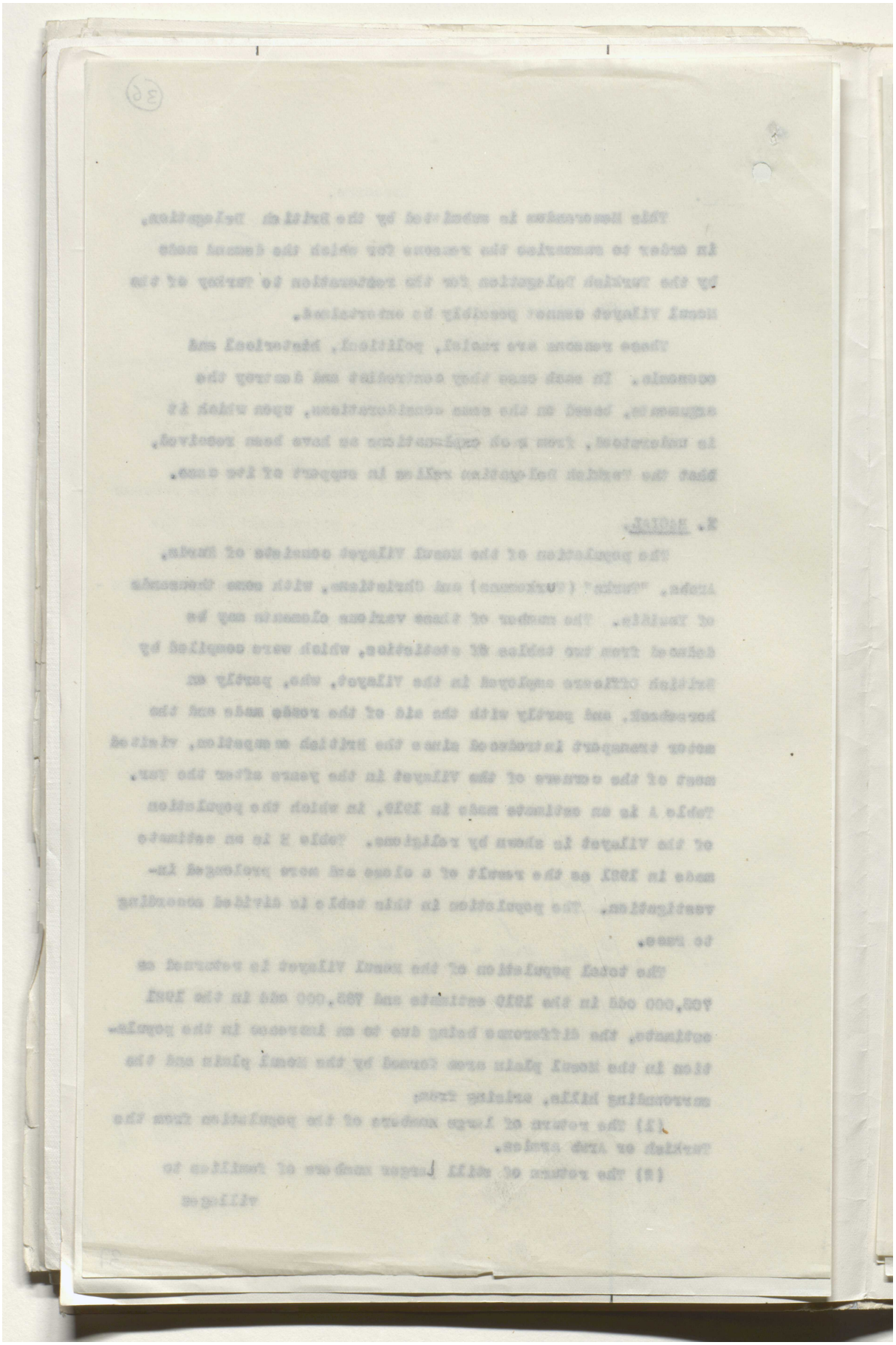

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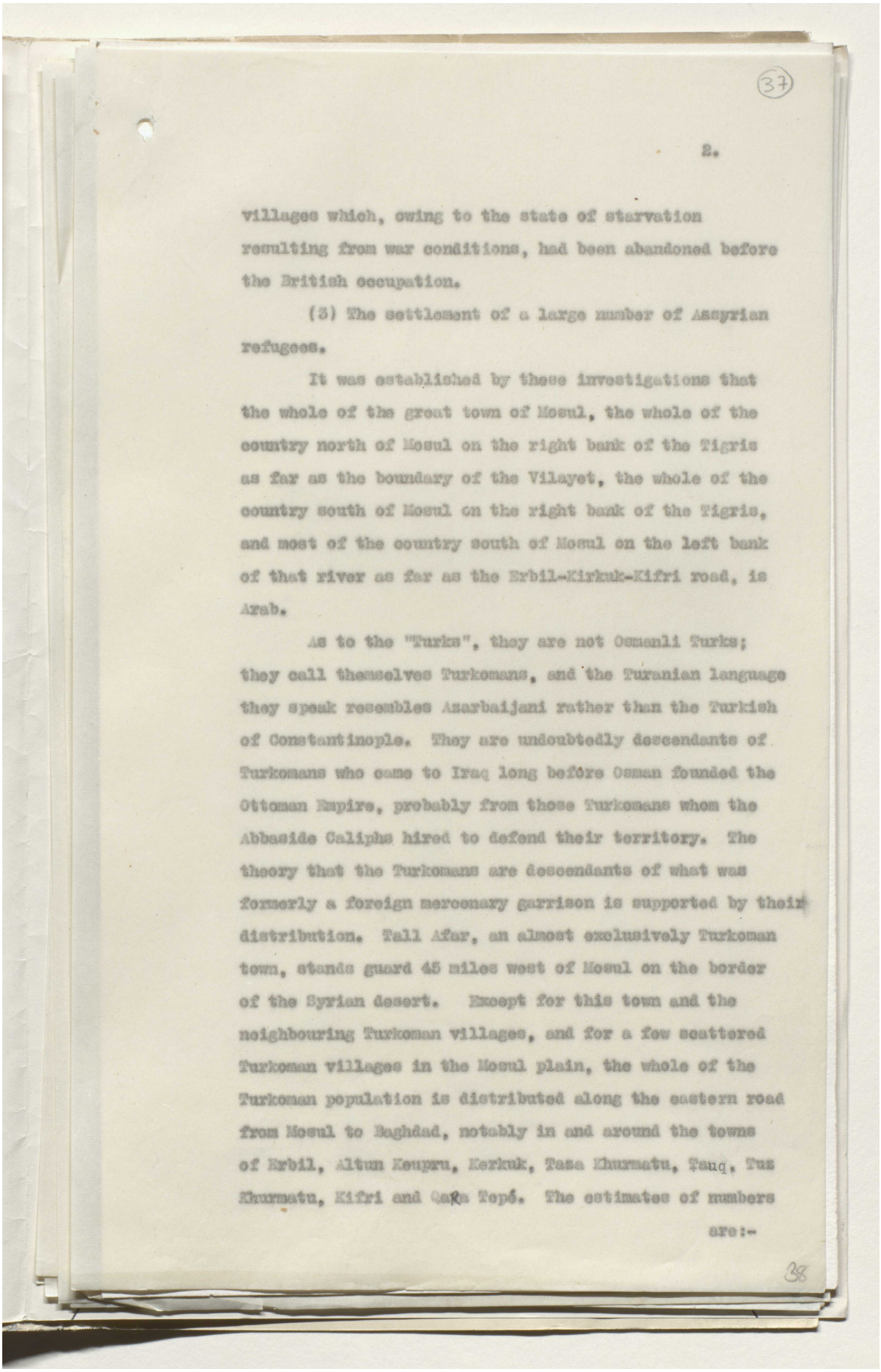

(37)

villages which, owing to the state of starvation resulting from war conditions, had been abandoned before the British occupation.

(3) The settlement of a large number of Assyrian refugees.

It was established by these investigations that the whole of the great town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the Vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of that river as far as the Erbil-Kirkuk-Kifri road, is Arab.

As to the "Turks", they are not Osmanli Turks; they call themselves Turkomans, and the Turanian language they speak resembles Azarbaijani rather than the Turkish of Constantinople. They are undoubtedly descendants of Turkomans who came to Iraq long before Osman founded the Ottoman Empire, probably from those Turkomans whom the Abbaside Caliphs hired to defend their territory. The theory that the Turkomans are descendants of what was formerly a foreign mercenary garrison is supported by their distribution. Tall Afar, an almost exclusively Turkoman town, stands guard 45 miles west of Mosul on the border of the Syrian desert. Except for this town and the neighbouring Turkoman villages, and for a few scattered Turkoman villages in the Mosul plain, the whole of the Turkoman population is distributed along the eastern road from Mosul to Baghdad, notably in and around the towns of Erbil, Altun Keupru, Kerkuk, Tasa Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu, Kifri and Qara Tepé. The estimates of numbers are:-

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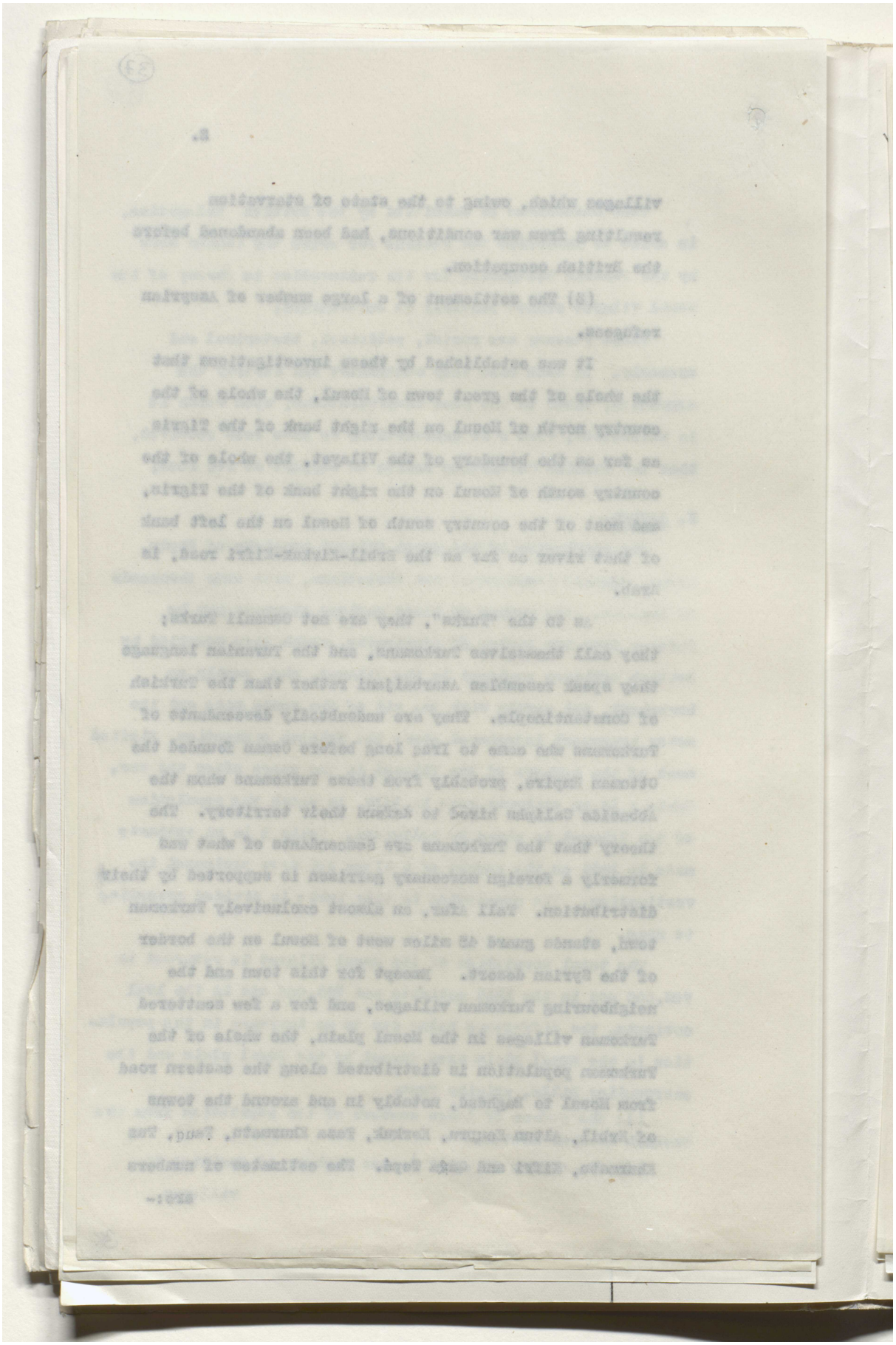

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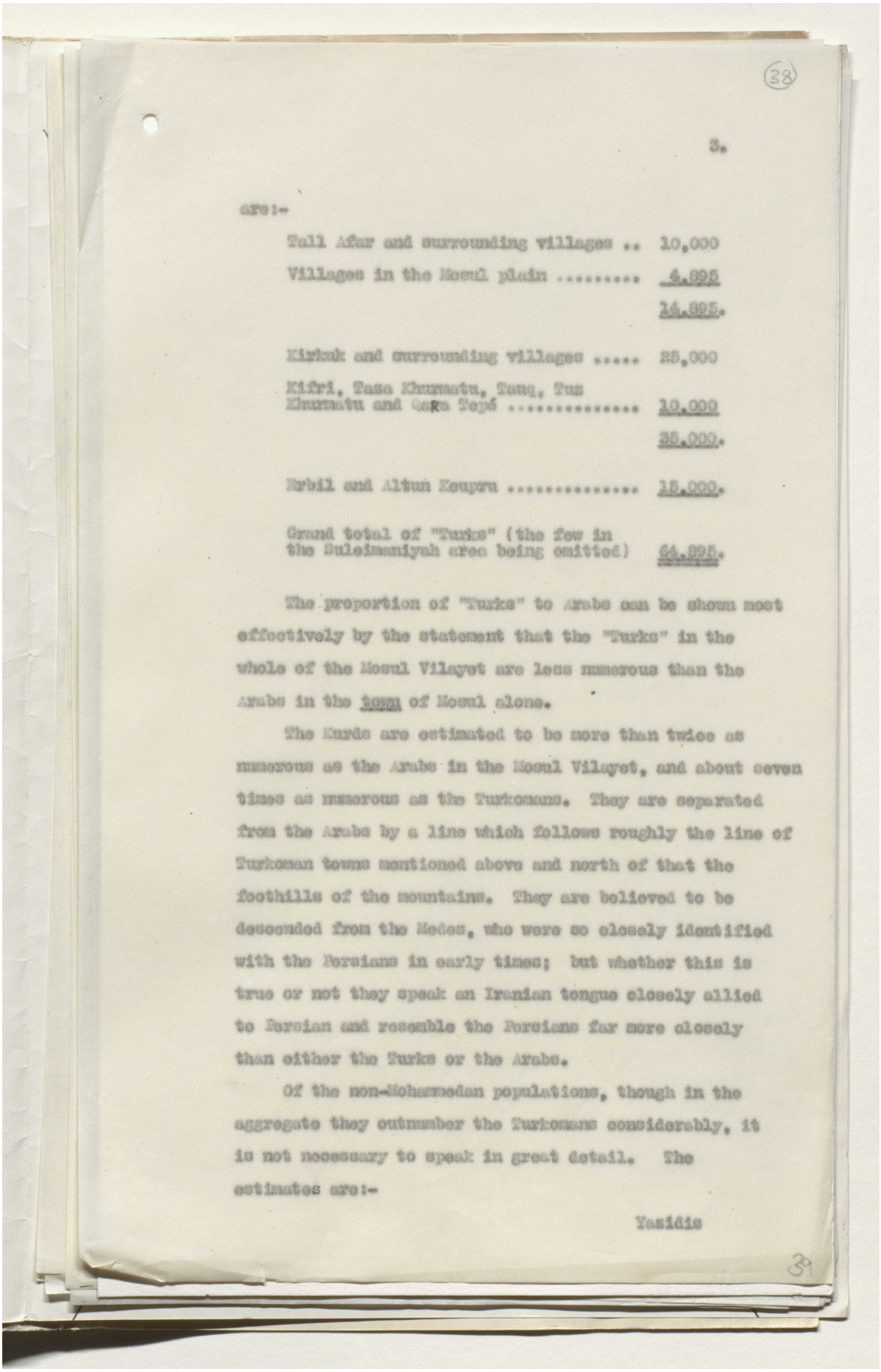

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3.

are:-

Tall Afar and surrounding villages ..	10,000
Villages in the Mosul plain	4,895
	14,895.
Kirkuk and surrounding villages	25,000
Kifri, Tasa Khurmatu, Tauq, Tus Khurmatu and Qara Tepé	10,000
	35,000.
Erbil and Altun Keupru	15,000.
Grand total of "Turks" (the few in the Suleimaniyah area being omitted)	64,895.

The proportion of "Turks" to Arabs can be shown most effectively by the statement that the "Turks" in the whole of the Mosul Vilayet are less numerous than the Arabs in the town of Mosul alone.

The Kurds are estimated to be more than twice as numerous as the Arabs in the Mosul Vilayet, and about seven times as numerous as the Turkomans. They are separated from the Arabs by a line which follows roughly the line of Turkoman towns mentioned above and north of that the foothills of the mountains. They are believed to be descended from the Medes, who were so closely identified with the Persians in early times; but whether this is true or not they speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian and resemble the Persians far more closely than either the Turks or the Arabs.

Of the non-Mohammedan populations, though in the aggregate they outnumber the Turkomans considerably, it is not necessary to speak in great detail. The estimates are:-

Yazidis

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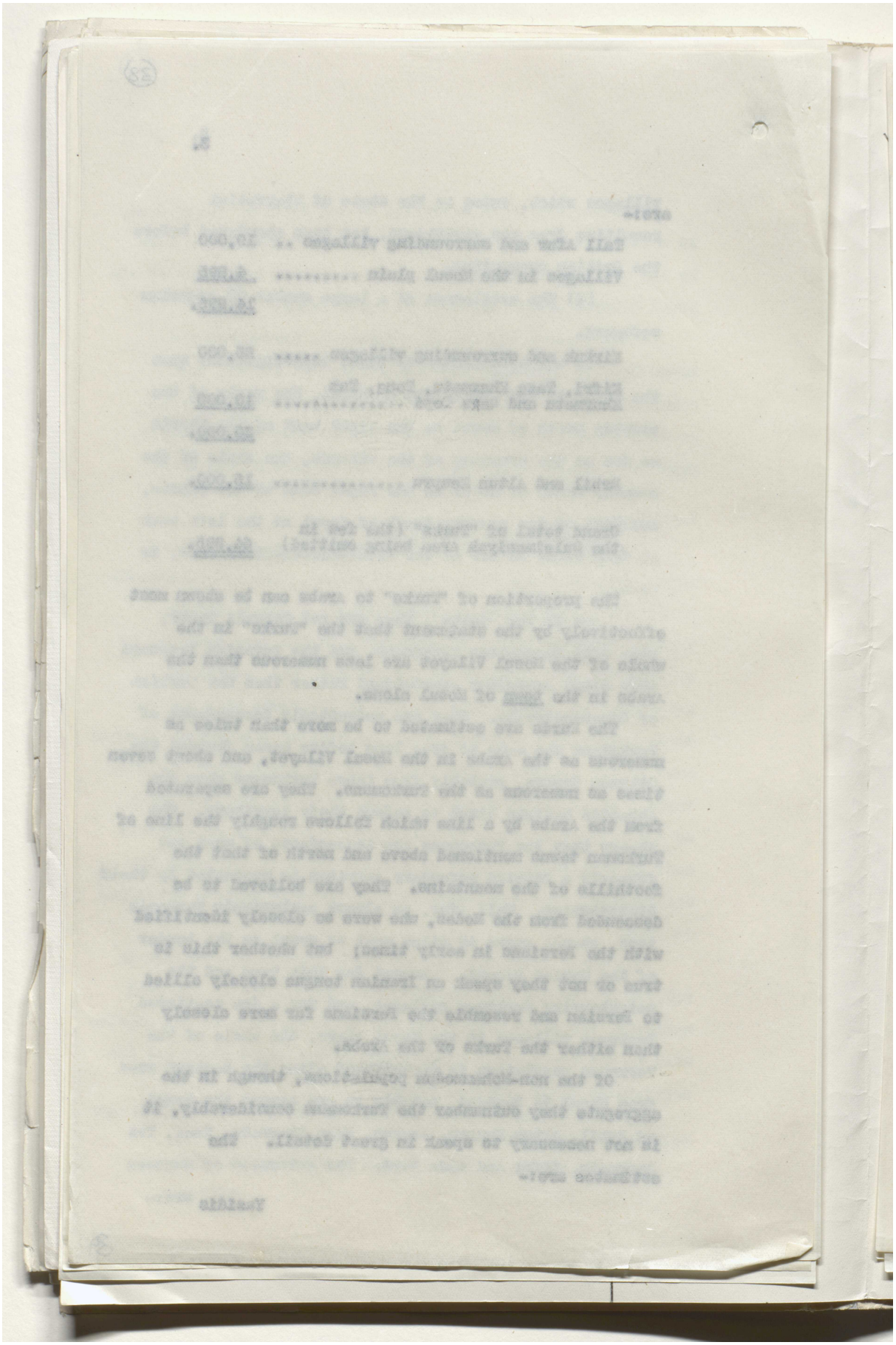

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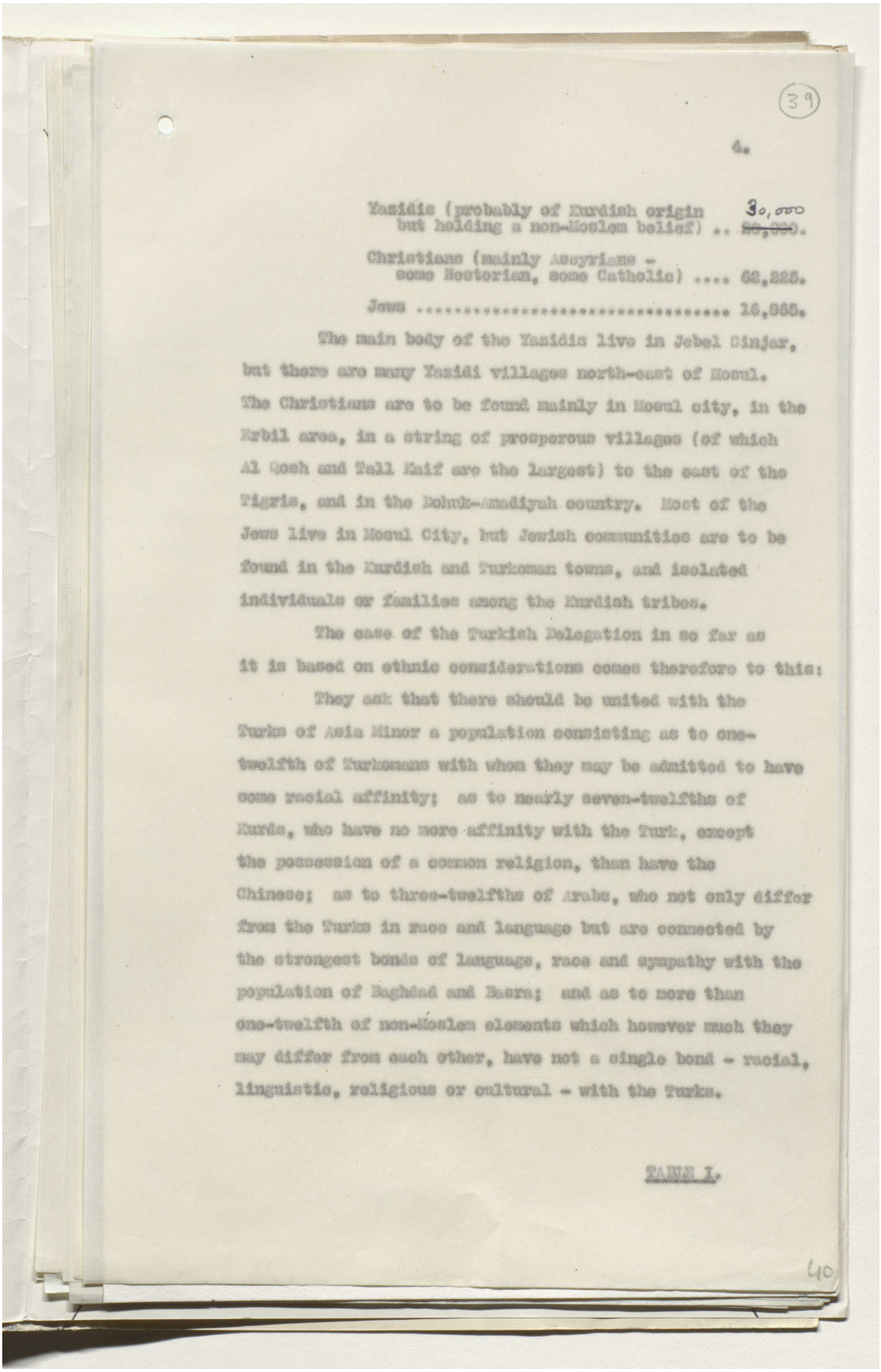

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4.

Yazidis (probably of Kurdish origin but holding a non-Moslem belief) .. ~~30,000~~ 30,000.

Christians (mainly Assyrians - some Nestorian, some Catholic) .... 62,225.

Jews ..... 16,865.

The main body of the Yazidis live in Jebel Sinjar, but there are many Yazidi villages north-east of Mosul. The Christians are to be found mainly in Mosul city, in the Erbil area, in a string of prosperous villages (of which Al Qosh and Tall Kaif are the largest) to the east of the Tigris, and in the Dohuk-Amadiyah country. Most of the Jews live in Mosul City, but Jewish communities are to be found in the Kurdish and Turkoman towns, and isolated individuals or families among the Kurdish tribes.

The case of the Turkish Delegation in so far as it is based on ethnic considerations comes therefore to this:

They ask that there should be united with the Turks of Asia Minor a population consisting as to one-twelfth of Turkomans with whom they may be admitted to have some racial affinity; as to nearly seven-twelfths of Kurds, who have no more affinity with the Turk, except the possession of a common religion, than have the Chinese; as to three-twelfths of Arabs, who not only differ from the Turks in race and language but are connected by the strongest bonds of language, race and sympathy with the population of Baghdad and Basra; and as to more than one-twelfth of non-Moslem elements which however much they may differ from each other, have not a single bond - racial, linguistic, religious or cultural - with the Turks.

TABLE I.

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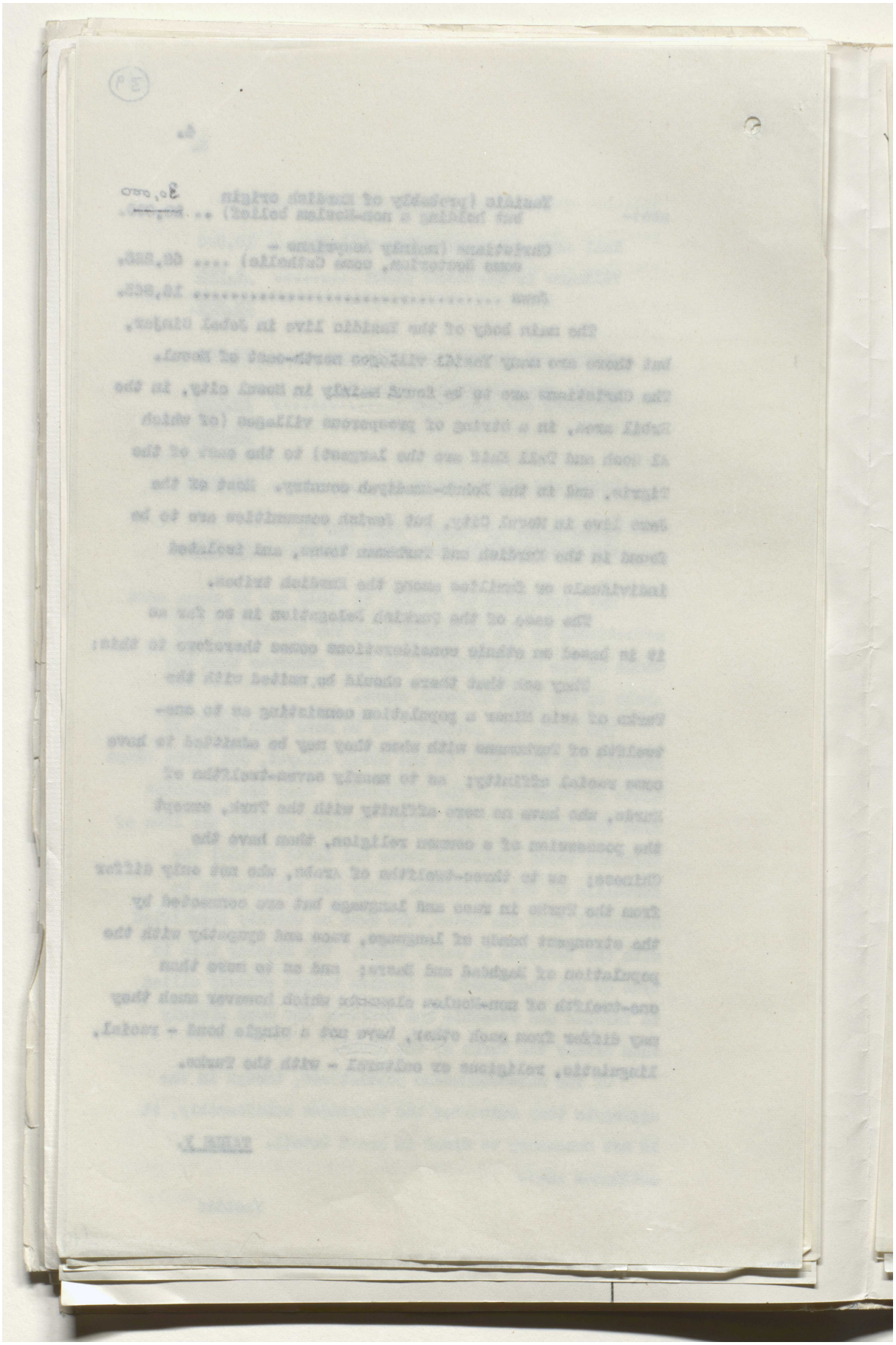

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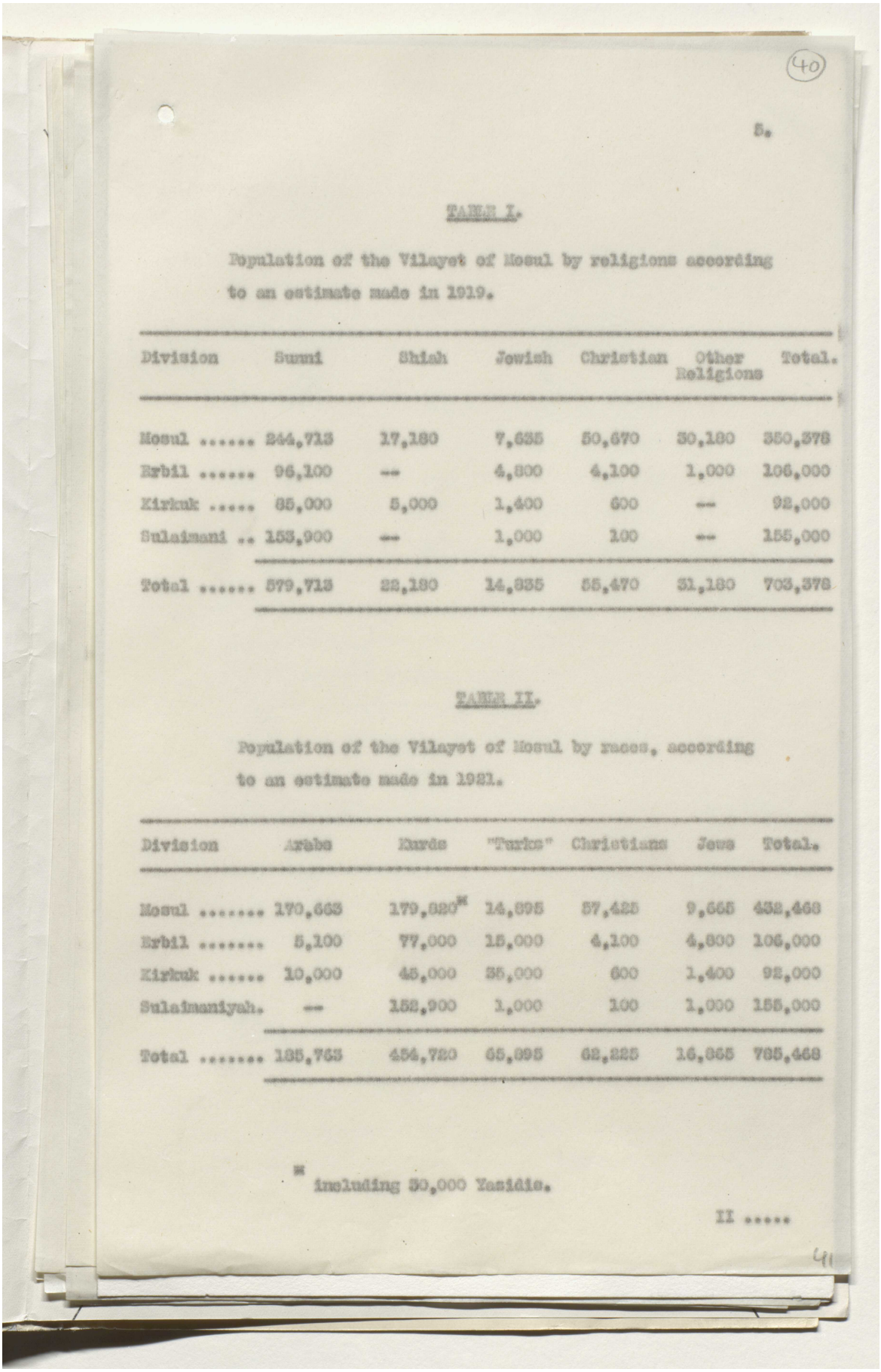

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TABLE I.

Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by religions according to an estimate made in 1919.

Division	Sunni	Shiah	Jewish	Christian	Other Religions	Total.
Mosul	244,713	17,180	7,635	50,670	30,180	350,378
Erbil	96,100	--	4,800	4,100	1,000	106,000
Kirkuk	85,000	5,000	1,400	600	--	92,000
Sulaimani ..	153,900	--	1,000	100	--	155,000
Total	579,713	22,180	14,835	55,470	31,180	703,378

TABLE II.

Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by races, according to an estimate made in 1921.

Division	Arabs	Kurds	"Turks"	Christians	Jews	Total.
Mosul	170,663	179,920*	14,695	57,425	9,665	432,468
Erbil	5,100	77,000	15,000	4,100	4,800	106,000
Kirkuk	10,000	45,000	35,000	600	1,400	92,000
Sulaimaniyah.	--	152,900	1,000	100	1,000	155,000
Total	185,763	454,720	65,695	62,225	16,865	785,468

* including 30,000 Yazidis.

II .....

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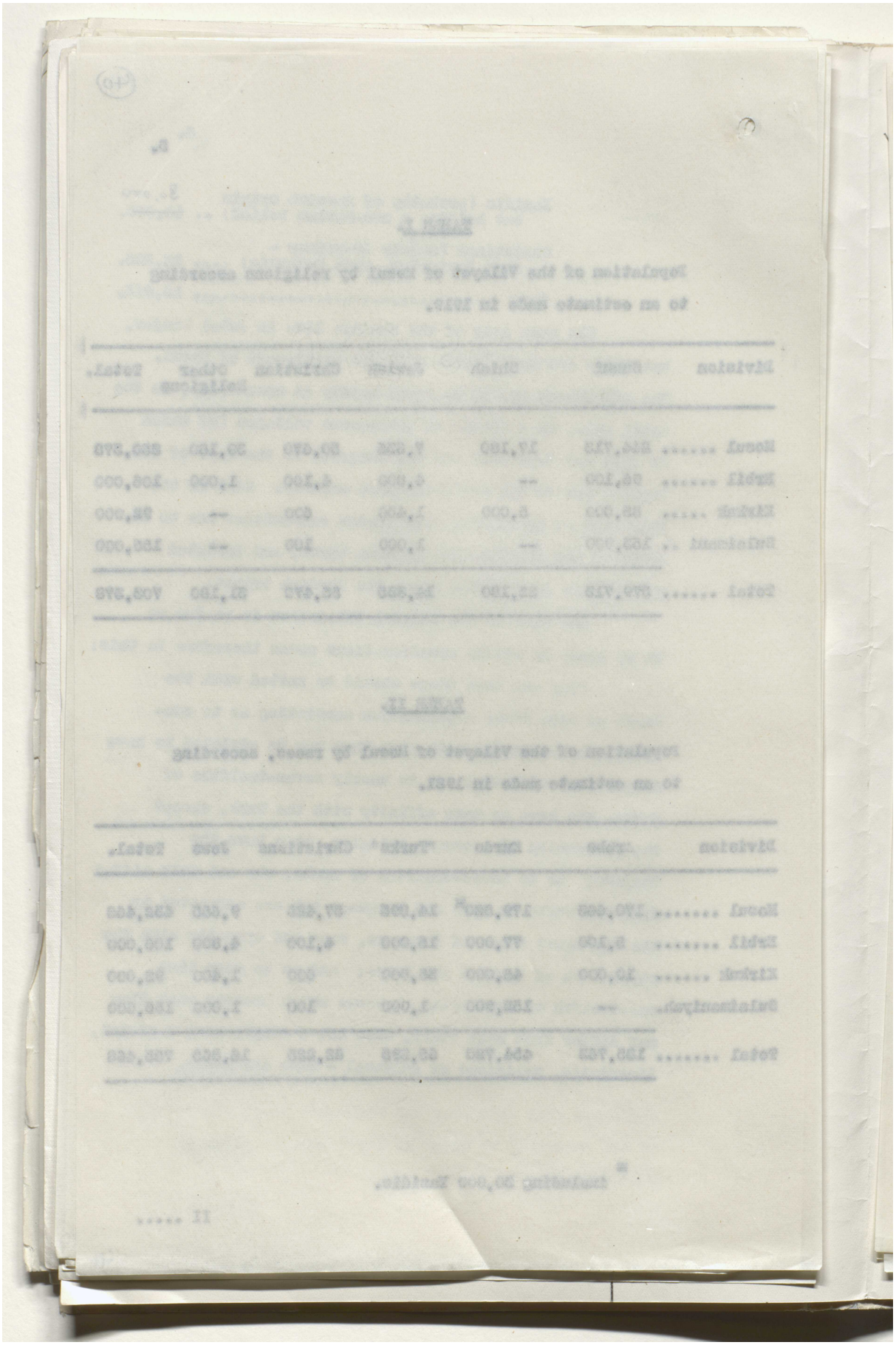

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II. POLITICAL.

The next claim of the Turkish Delegation is that the population of the Mosul Vilayet desires to return to Turkey because of its political or historical affinities with Turkish rule. Even if this were true of a majority of the inhabitants of the Turkoman towns who, under Turkish rule, enjoyed a position of privilege by no means warranted by their numbers, it cannot possibly be sustained in so far as the Kurds, the Arabs and the non-Moslem elements of the population are concerned. It is undeniable that the Arabs of Mosul are enthusiastic supporters of the new Iraq State and of King Feisal. The result of a plebiscite conducted throughout Iraq in 1919 gave a unanimous vote on the point, that Basra, Bagdad and Mosul should be united and form one State. Since then, on the arrival of the Amir Feisal in the country, the Mosul Arabs showed quite unmistakably their desire to be connected with the Arab Government at Bagdad and to be under the rulership of King Feisal. They received the Amir with acclamation, they voted unanimously that he should be King, they swore allegiance to him. This later plebiscite included the whole of the vilayet except the Kurds in the Sulaimaniyah Raniya and Rowandus areas who, being a compact body of people of an entirely difference race and language, obviously required separate treatment. The Arab areas with the Kurdish districts adjacent to them, and the Turkoman towns, all gave their votes, and with the exception of Kirkuk all voted for inclusion in the Iraq State and for the accession of Feisal to the throne of Iraq.

As to the Kurds, they are a people with a keen sense of nationality, a deep pride in their race and language, and

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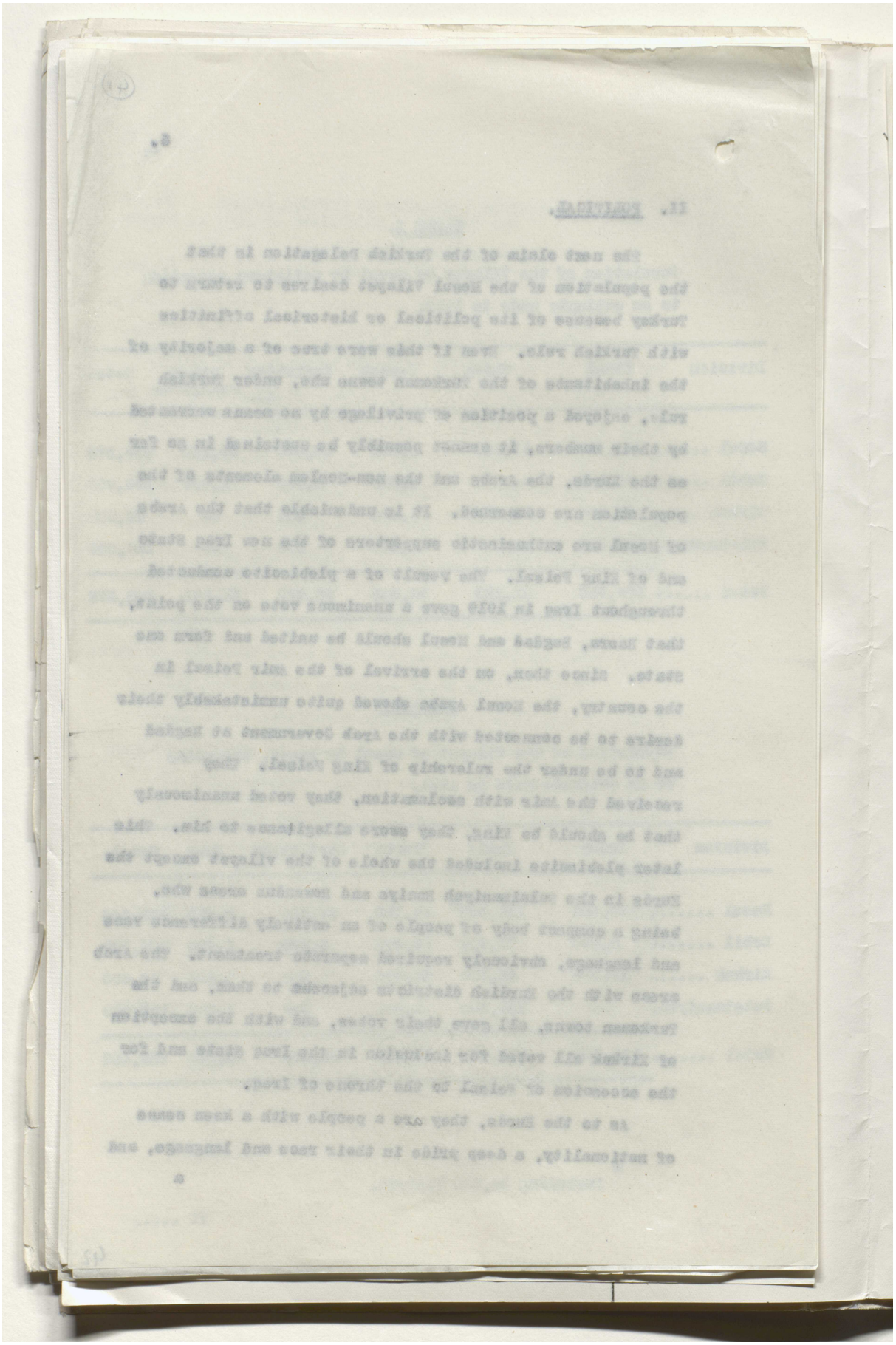

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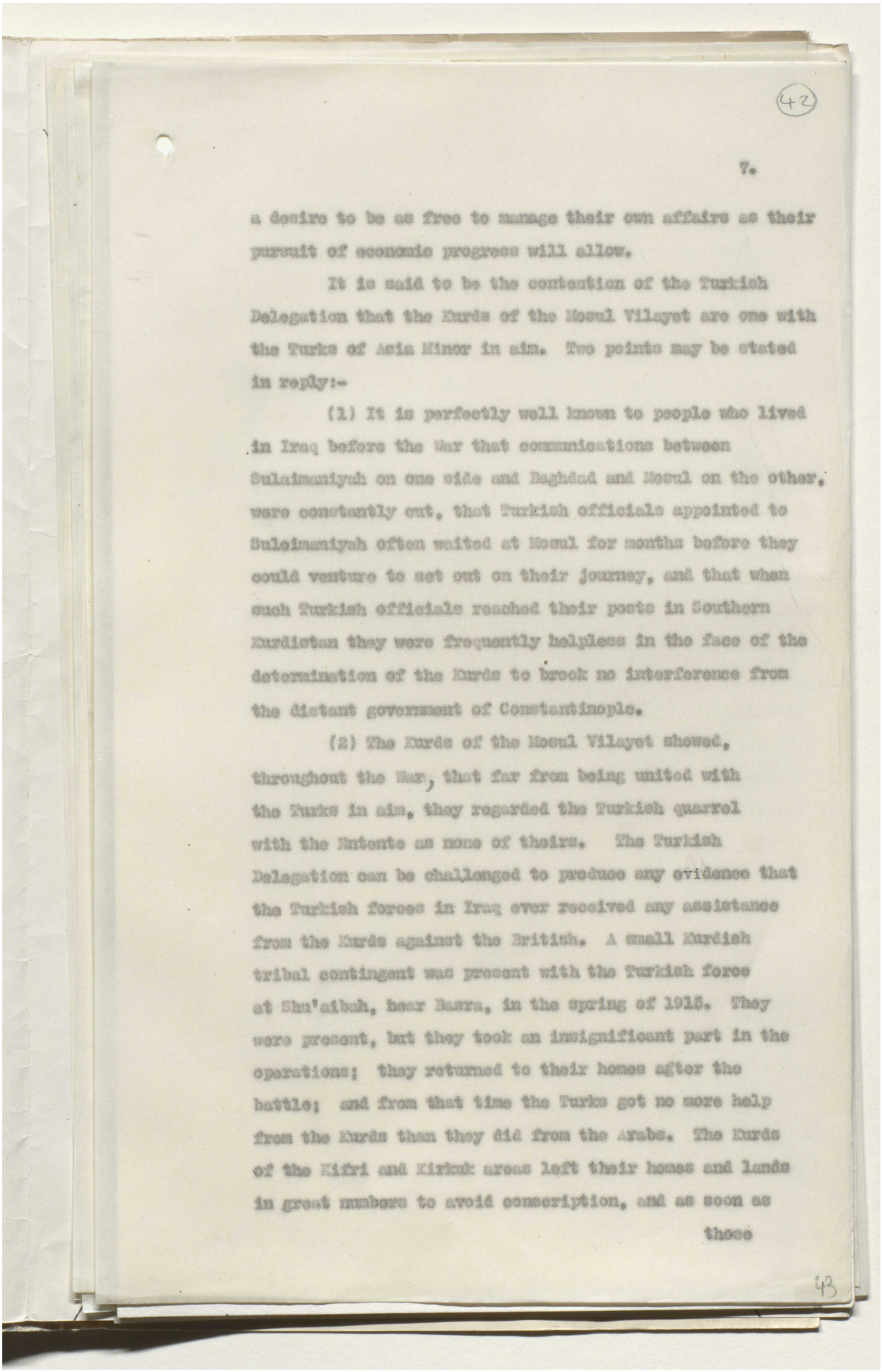

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7.

a desire to be as free to manage their own affairs as their pursuit of economic progress will allow.

It is said to be the contention of the Turkish Delegation that the Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet are one with the Turks of Asia Minor in aim. Two points may be stated in reply:-

(1) It is perfectly well known to people who lived in Iraq before the War that communications between Sulaimaniyah on one side and Baghdad and Mosul on the other, were constantly cut, that Turkish officials appointed to Sulaimaniyah often waited at Mosul for months before they could venture to set out on their journey, and that when such Turkish officials reached their posts in Southern Kurdistan they were frequently helpless in the face of the determination of the Kurds to brook no interference from the distant government of Constantinople.

(2) The Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet showed, throughout the War, that far from being united with the Turks in aim, they regarded the Turkish quarrel with the Entente as none of theirs. The Turkish Delegation can be challenged to produce any evidence that the Turkish forces in Iraq ever received any assistance from the Kurds against the British. A small Kurdish tribal contingent was present with the Turkish force at Shu'aibah, near Basra, in the spring of 1915. They were present, but they took an insignificant part in the operations; they returned to their homes after the battle; and from that time the Turks got no more help from the Kurds than they did from the Arabs. The Kurds of the Kifri and Kirkuk areas left their homes and lands in great numbers to avoid conscription, and as soon as

those

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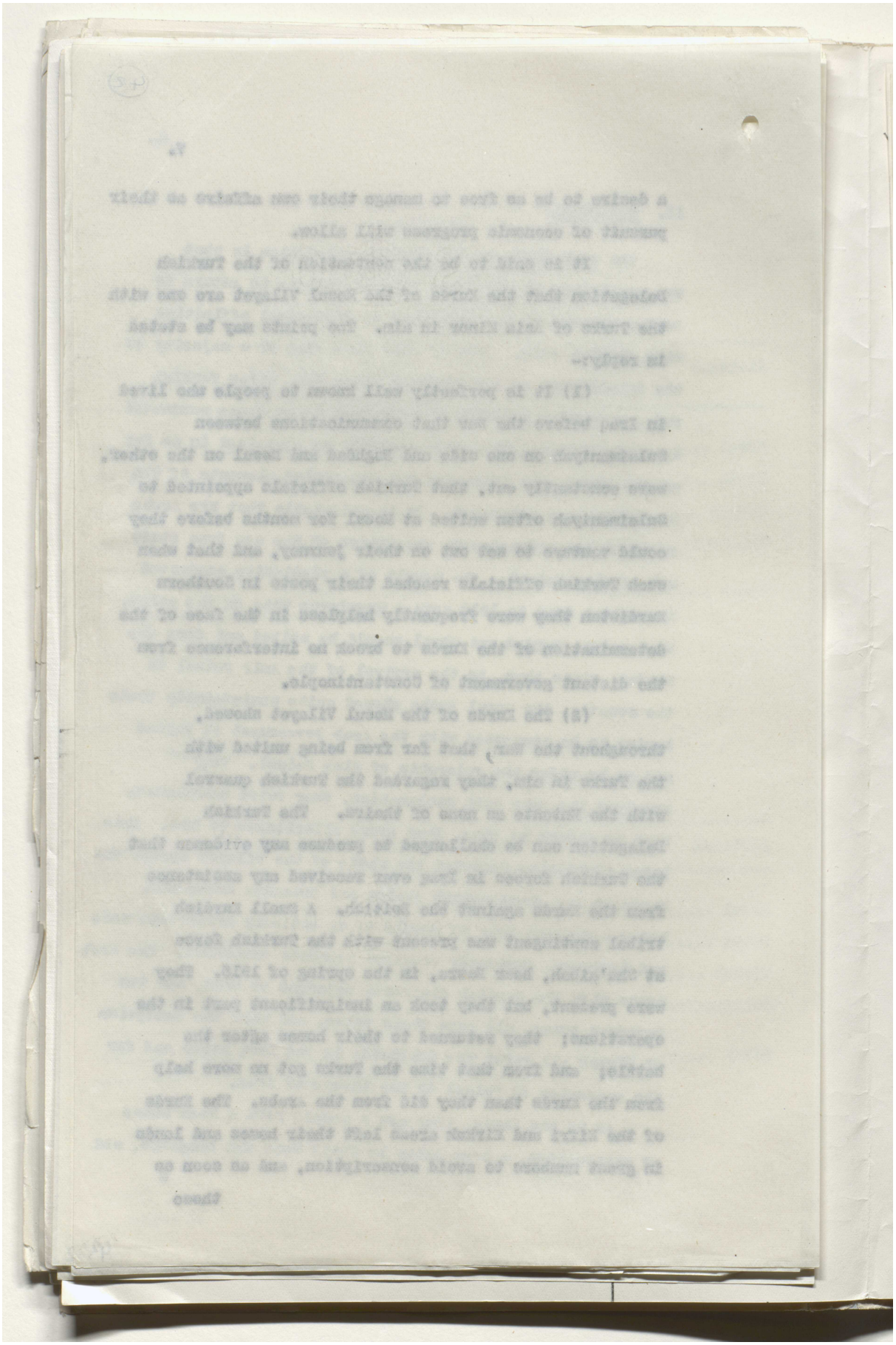

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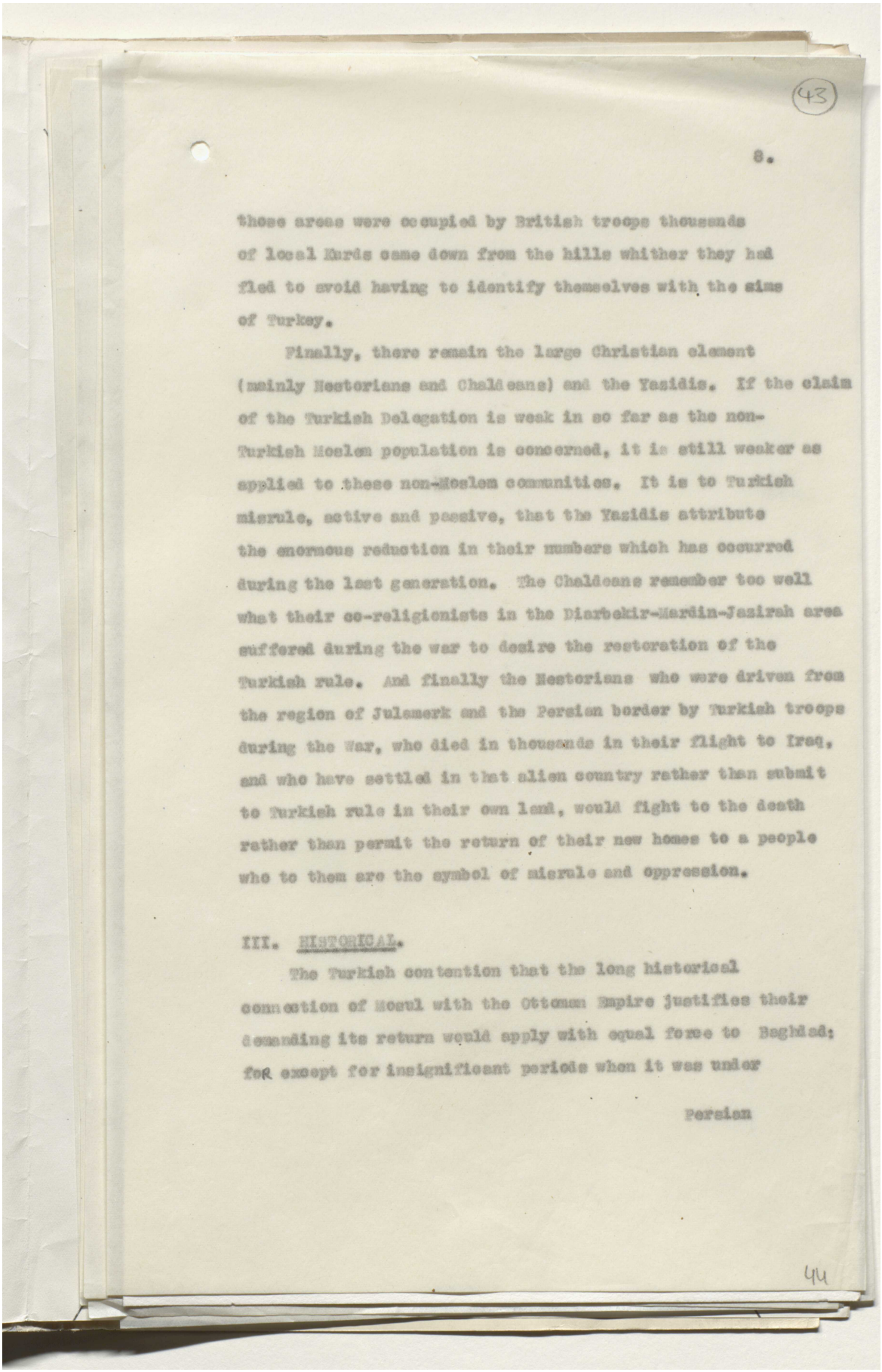

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these areas were occupied by British troops thousands of local Kurds came down from the hills whither they had fled to avoid having to identify themselves with the aims of Turkey.

Finally, there remain the large Christian element (mainly Nestorians and Chaldeans) and the Yazidis. If the claim of the Turkish Delegation is weak in so far as the non-Turkish Moslem population is concerned, it is still weaker as applied to these non-Moslem communities. It is to Turkish misrule, active and passive, that the Yazidis attribute the enormous reduction in their numbers which has occurred during the last generation. The Chaldeans remember too well what their co-religionists in the Diarbekir-Mardin-Jazirah area suffered during the war to desire the restoration of the Turkish rule. And finally the Nestorians who were driven from the region of Julamerk and the Persian border by Turkish troops during the War, who died in thousands in their flight to Iraq, and who have settled in that alien country rather than submit to Turkish rule in their own land, would fight to the death rather than permit the return of their new homes to a people who to them are the symbol of misrule and oppression.

III. HISTORICAL.

The Turkish contention that the long historical connection of Mosul with the Ottoman Empire justifies their demanding its return would apply with equal force to Baghdad; for except for insignificant periods when it was under

Persian

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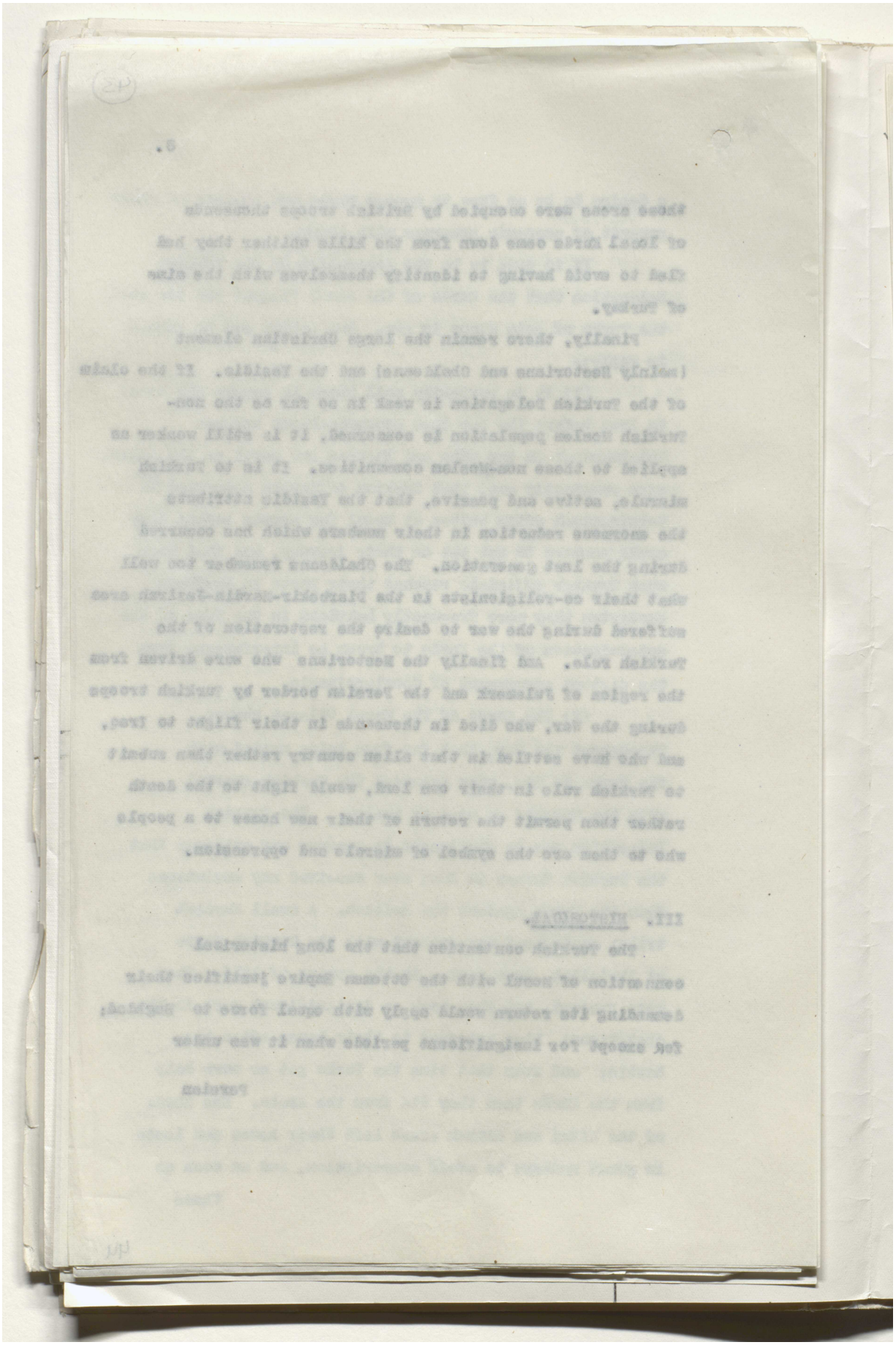

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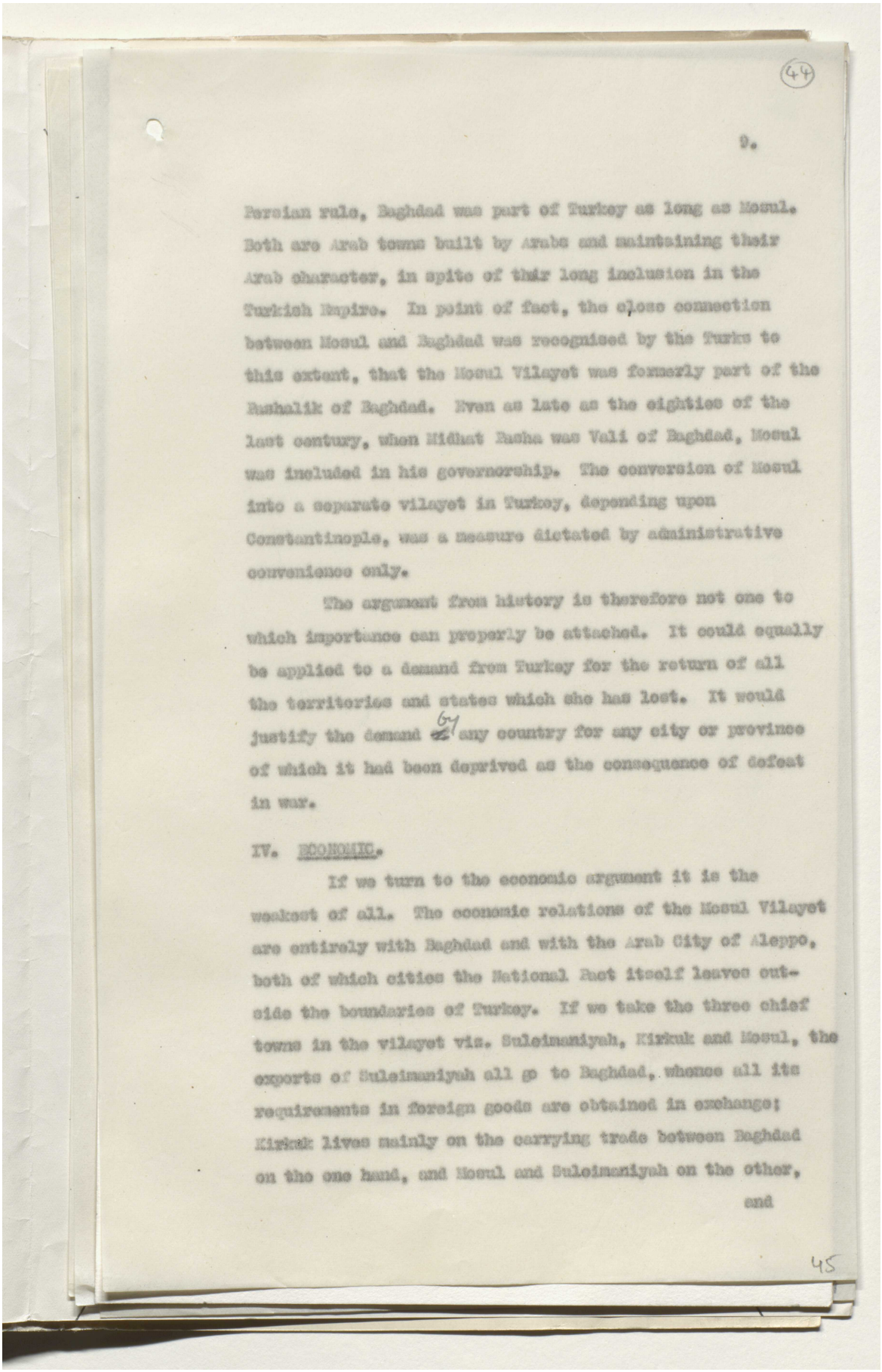

Persian rule, Baghdad was part of Turkey as long as Mosul. Both are Arab towns built by Arabs and maintaining their Arab character, in spite of their long inclusion in the Turkish Empire. In point of fact, the close connection between Mosul and Baghdad was recognised by the Turks to this extent, that the Mosul Vilayet was formerly part of the Mushalik of Baghdad. Even as late as the eighties of the last century, when Midhat Pasha was Vali of Baghdad, Mosul was included in his governorship. The conversion of Mosul into a separate vilayet in Turkey, depending upon Constantinople, was a measure dictated by administrative convenience only.

The argument from history is therefore not one to which importance can properly be attached. It could equally be applied to a demand from Turkey for the return of all the territories and states which she has lost. It would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war.

IV. ECONOMIC.

If we turn to the economic argument it is the weakest of all. The economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Baghdad and with the Arab City of Aleppo, both of which cities the National Pact itself leaves outside the boundaries of Turkey. If we take the three chief towns in the vilayet viz. Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk and Mosul, the exports of Suleimaniyah all go to Baghdad, whence all its requirements in foreign goods are obtained in exchange; Kirkuk lives mainly on the carrying trade between Baghdad on the one hand, and Mosul and Suleimaniyah on the other,

and

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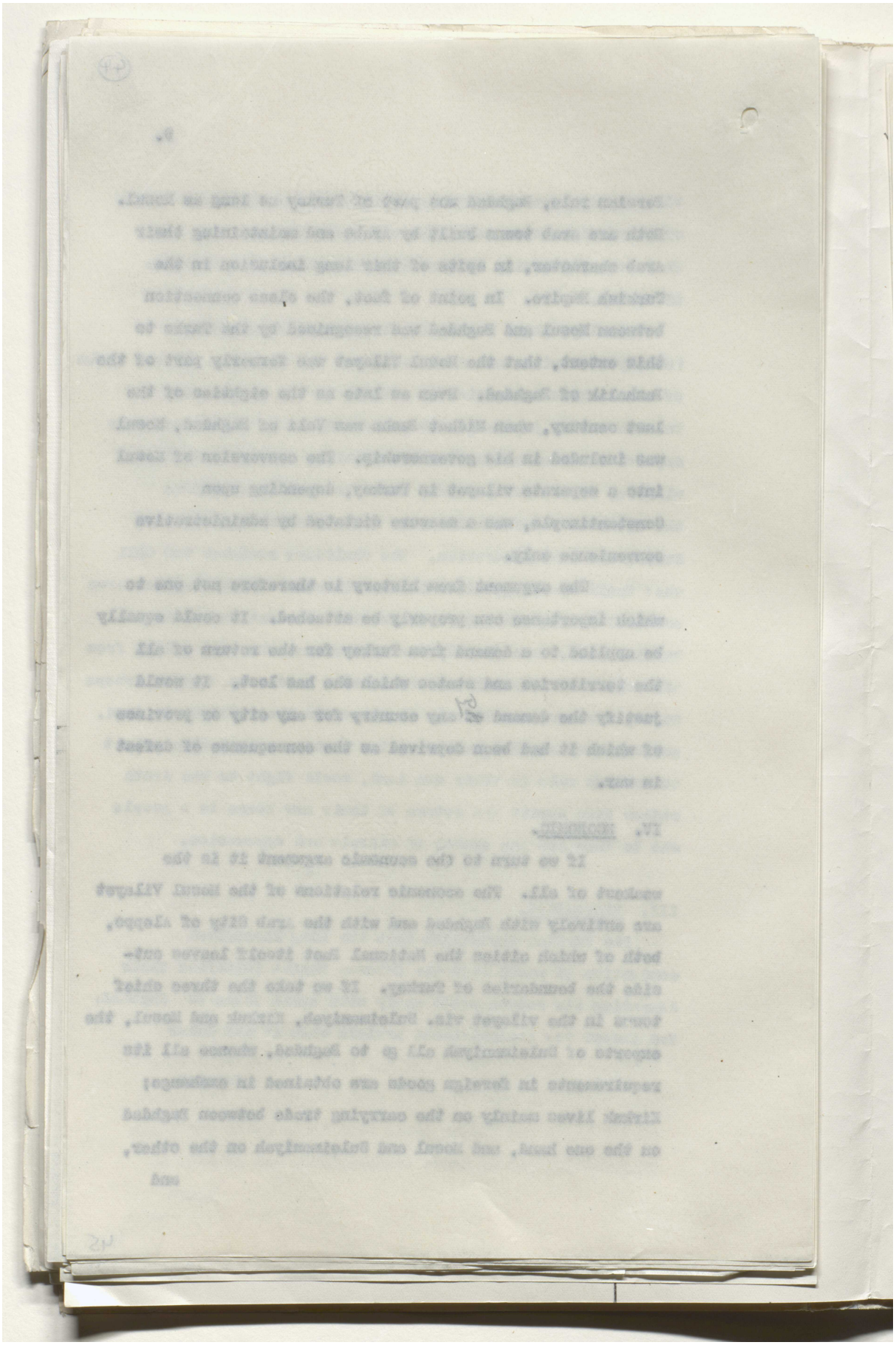

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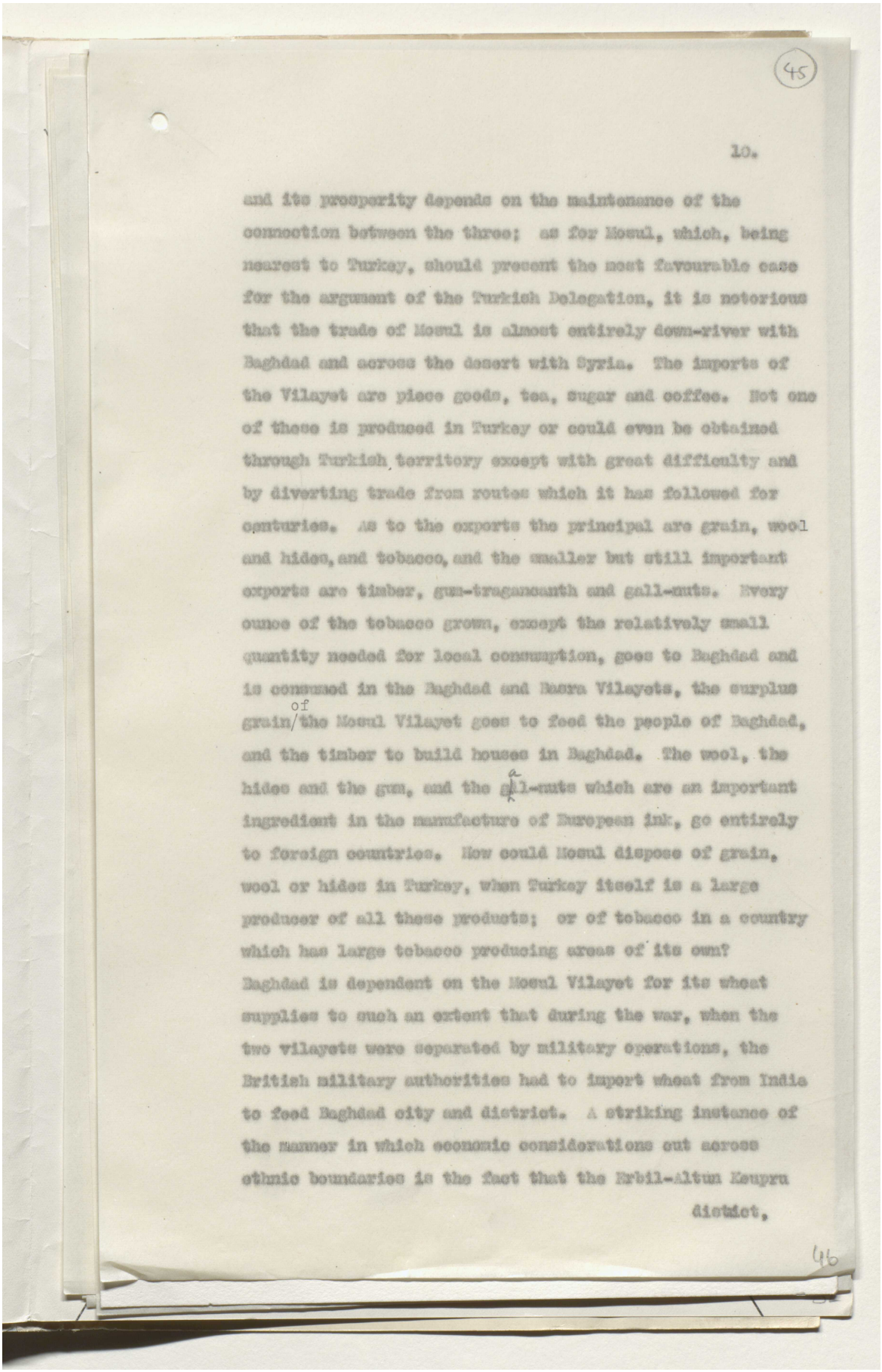

and its prosperity depends on the maintenance of the connection between the three; as for Mosul, which, being nearest to Turkey, should present the most favourable case for the argument of the Turkish Delegation, it is notorious that the trade of Mosul is almost entirely down-river with Baghdad and across the desert with Syria. The imports of the Vilayet are piece goods, tea, sugar and coffee. Not one of these is produced in Turkey or could even be obtained through Turkish territory except with great difficulty and by diverting trade from routes which it has followed for centuries. As to the exports the principal are grain, wool and hides, and tobacco, and the smaller but still important exports are timber, gum-tragacanth and gall-nuts. Every ounce of the tobacco grown, except the relatively small quantity needed for local consumption, goes to Baghdad and is consumed in the Baghdad and Basra Vilayets, the surplus grain of the Mosul Vilayet goes to feed the people of Baghdad, and the timber to build houses in Baghdad. The wool, the hides and the gum, and the gall-nuts which are an important ingredient in the manufacture of European ink, go entirely to foreign countries. How could Mosul dispose of grain, wool or hides in Turkey, when Turkey itself is a large producer of all these products; or of tobacco in a country which has large tobacco producing areas of its own? Baghdad is dependent on the Mosul Vilayet for its wheat supplies to such an extent that during the war, when the two vilayets were separated by military operations, the British military authorities had to import wheat from India to feed Baghdad city and district. A striking instance of the manner in which economic considerations cut across ethnic boundaries is the fact that the Erbil-Altun Keupru district,

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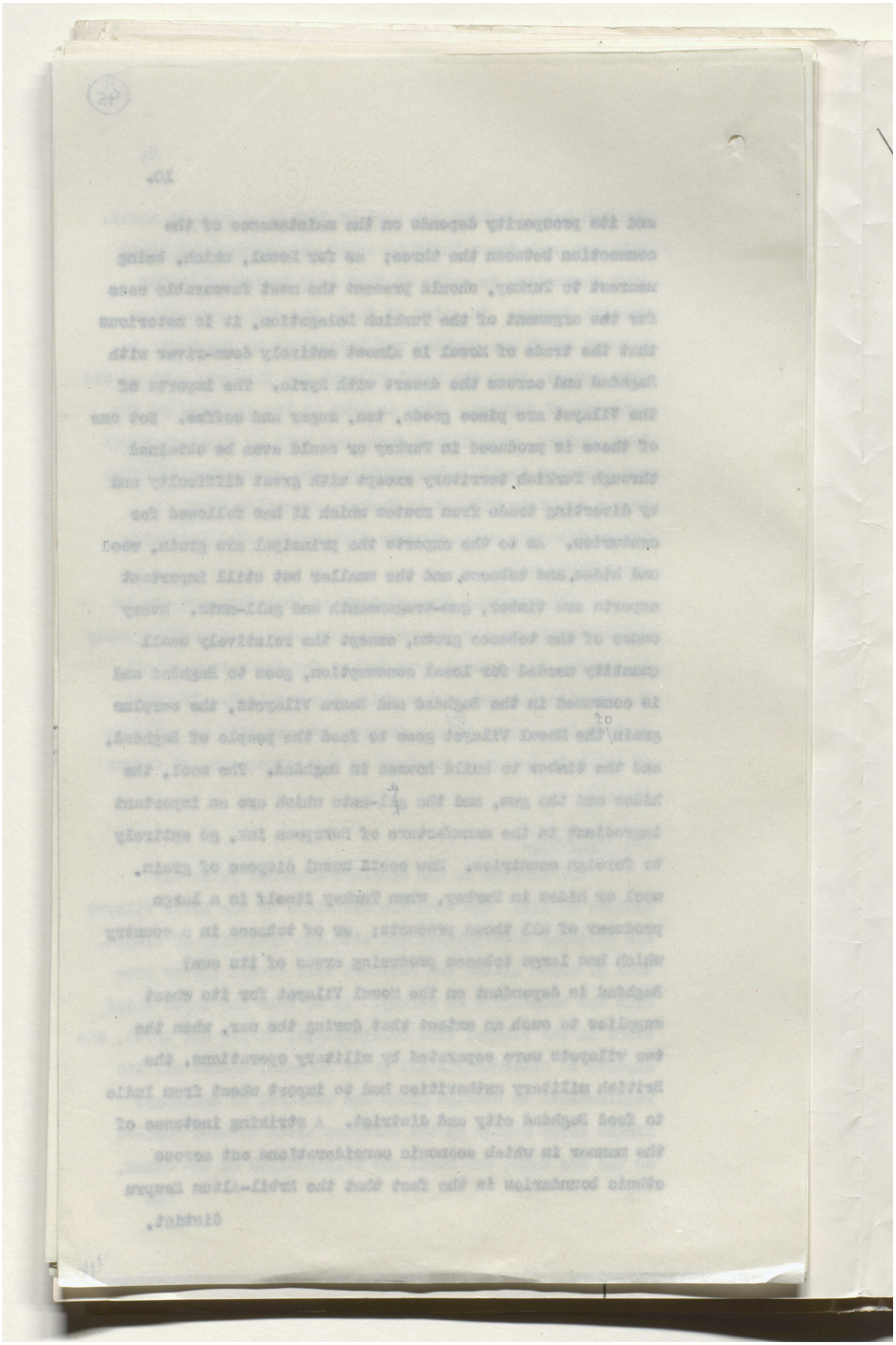

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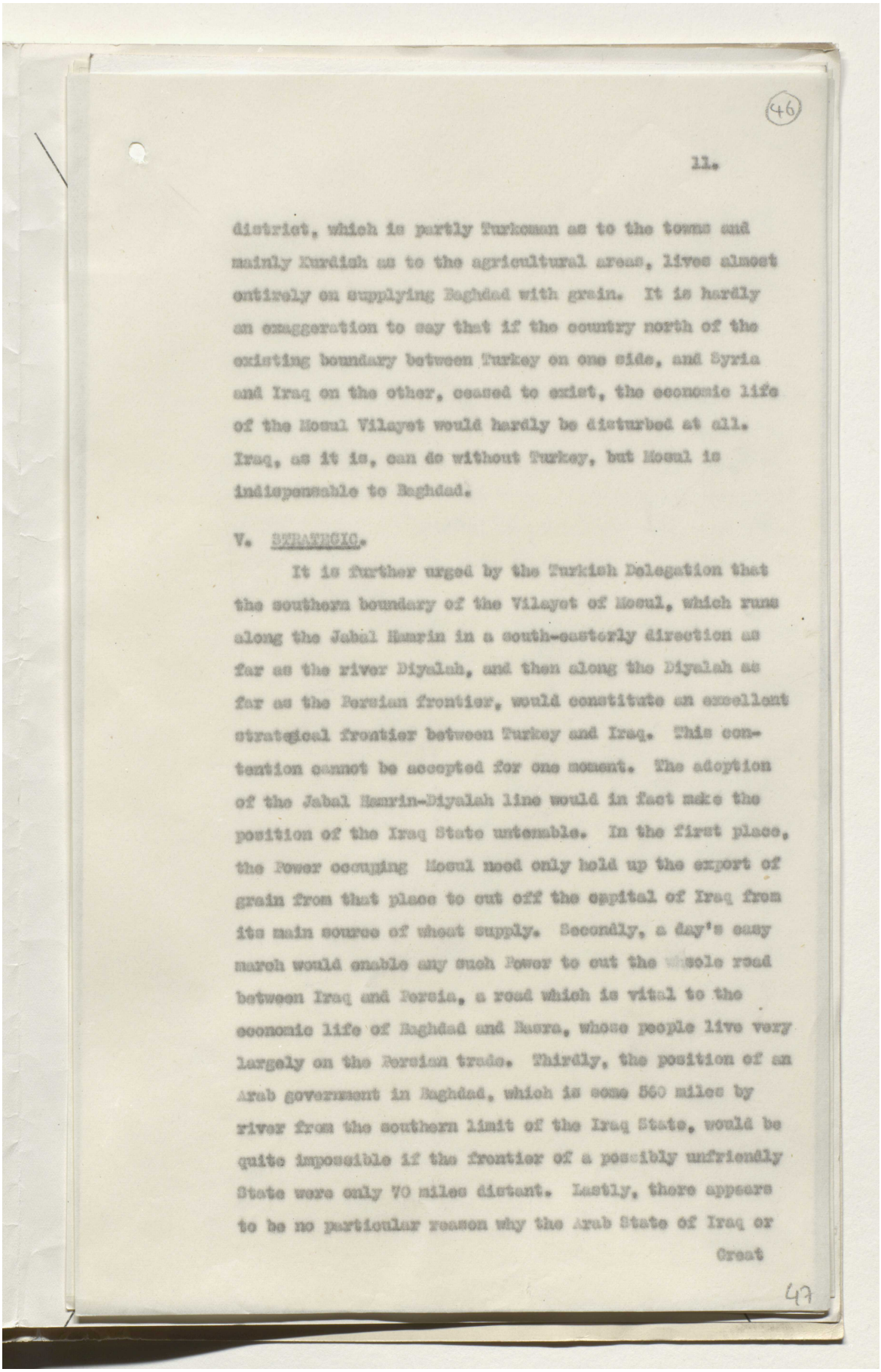

district, which is partly Turkoman as to the towns and mainly Kurdish as to the agricultural areas, lives almost entirely on supplying Baghdad with grain. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if the country north of the existing boundary between Turkey on one side, and Syria and Iraq on the other, ceased to exist, the economic life of the Mosul Vilayet would hardly be disturbed at all. Iraq, as it is, can do without Turkey, but Mosul is indispensable to Baghdad.

V. STRATEGIC.

It is further urged by the Turkish Delegation that the southern boundary of the Vilayet of Mosul, which runs along the Jabal Hamrin in a south-easterly direction as far as the river Diyalah, and then along the Diyalah as far as the Persian frontier, would constitute an excellent strategical frontier between Turkey and Iraq. This contention cannot be accepted for one moment. The adoption of the Jabal Hamrin-Diyalah line would in fact make the position of the Iraq State untenable. In the first place, the Power occupying Mosul need only hold up the export of grain from that place to cut off the capital of Iraq from its main source of wheat supply. Secondly, a day's easy march would enable any such Power to cut the whole road between Iraq and Persia, a road which is vital to the economic life of Baghdad and Basra, whose people live very largely on the Persian trade. Thirdly, the position of an Arab government in Baghdad, which is some 560 miles by river from the southern limit of the Iraq State, would be quite impossible if the frontier of a possibly unfriendly State were only 70 miles distant. Lastly, there appears to be no particular reason why the Arab State of Iraq or

Great

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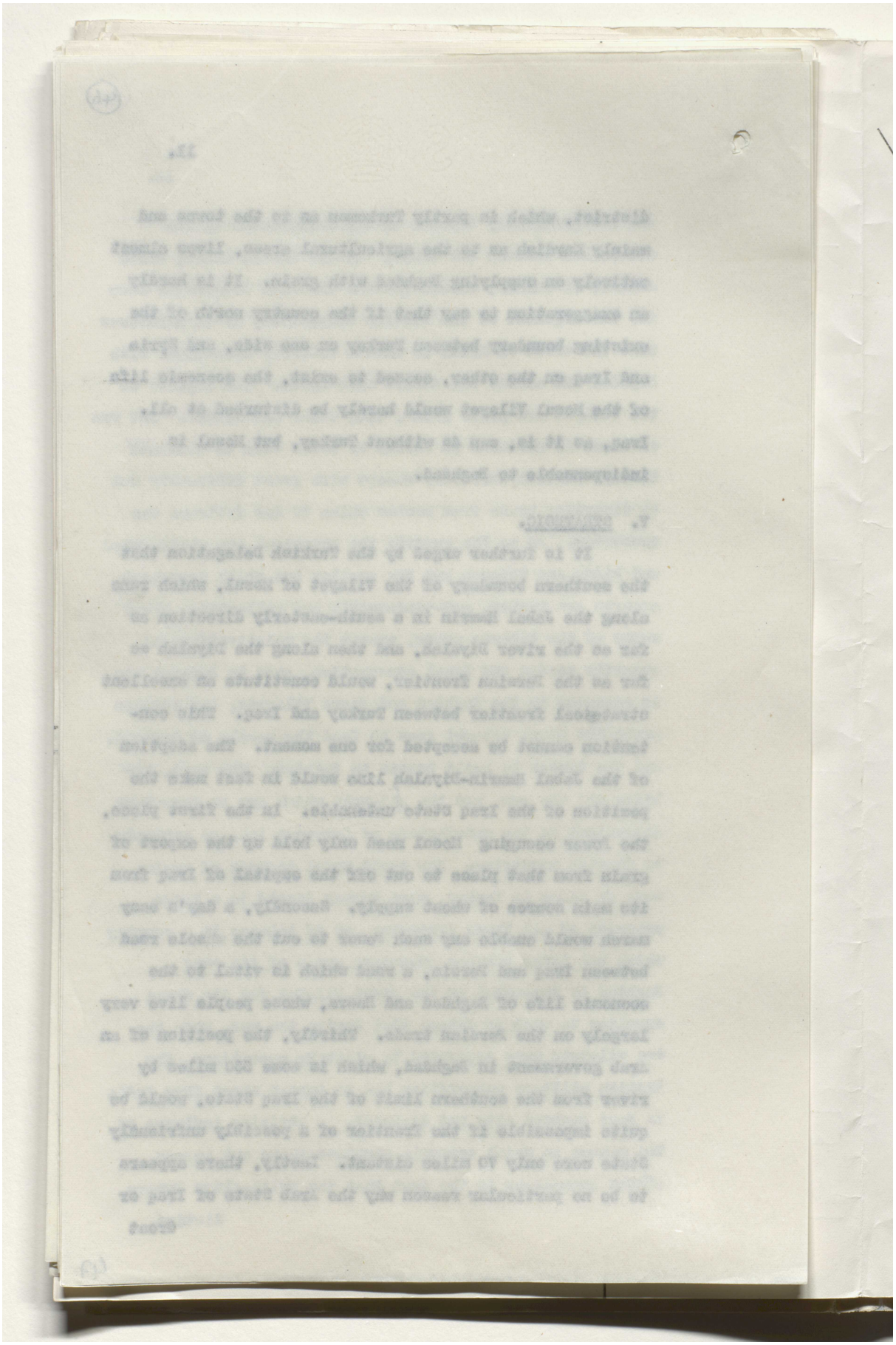

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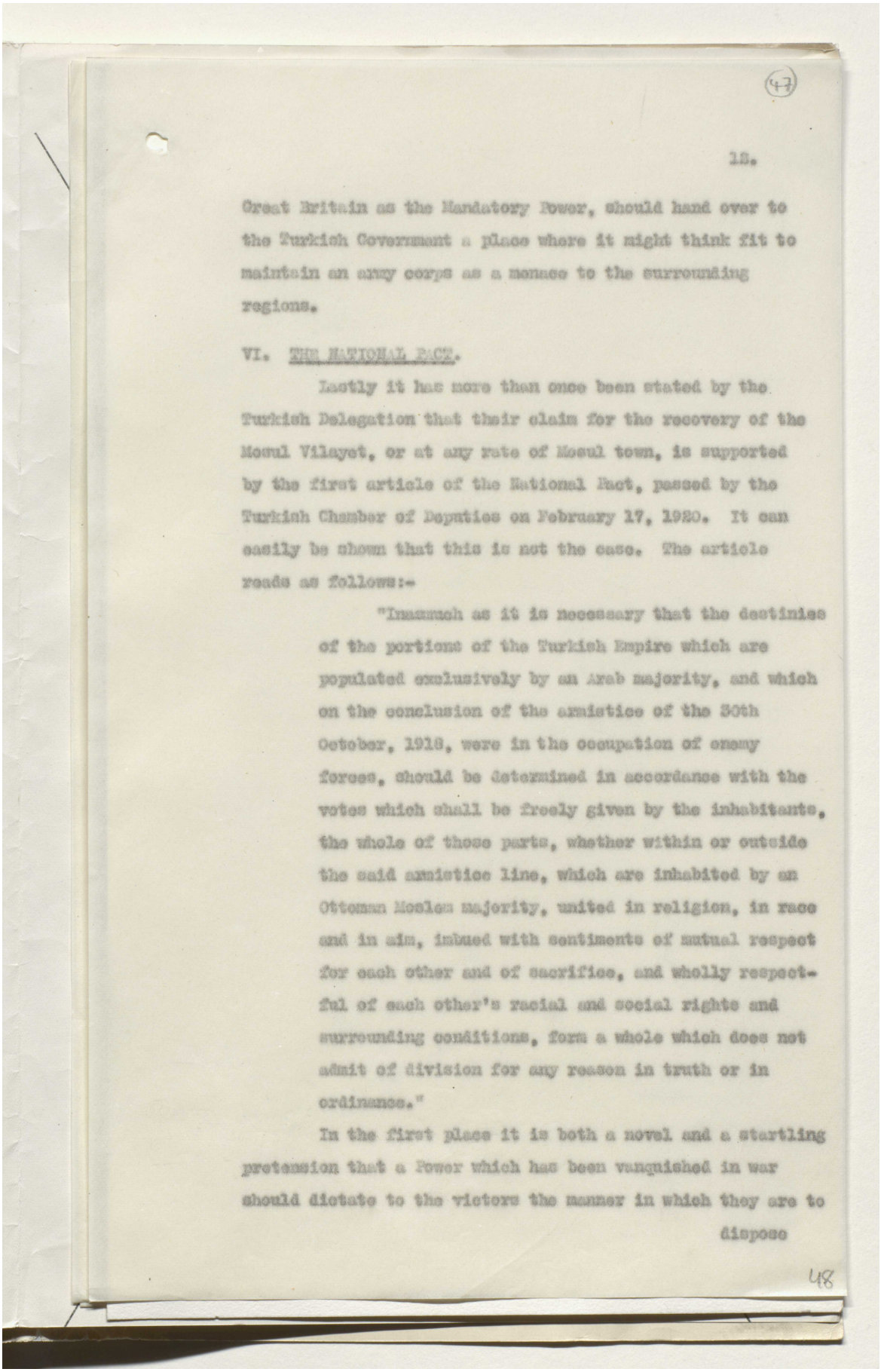

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18.

Great Britain as the Mandatory Power, should hand over to the Turkish Government a place where it might think fit to maintain an army corps as a menace to the surrounding regions.

VI. THE NATIONAL PACT.

Lastly it has more than once been stated by the Turkish Delegation that their claim for the recovery of the Mosul Vilayet, or at any rate of Mosul town, is supported by the first article of the National Pact, passed by the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on February 17, 1920. It can easily be shown that this is not the case. The article reads as follows:-

"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, inbued 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."

In the first place it is both a novel and a startling pretension that a Power which has been vanquished in war should dictate to the victors the manner in which they are to dispose

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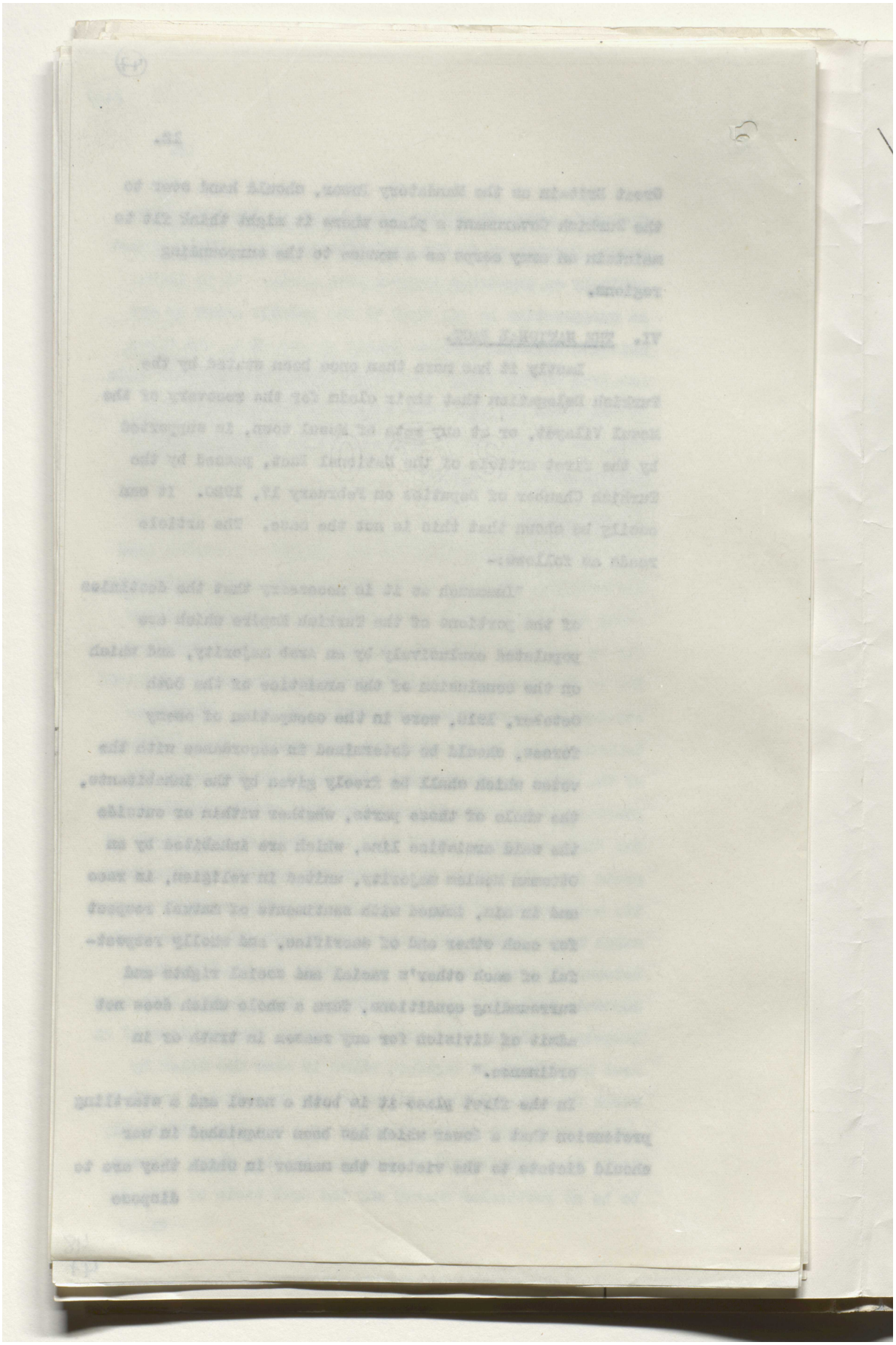

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dispose of the territories which they have wrested from the former. It would be interesting to know if a single instance can be found in history in which the Turks having conquered any territory by force or arms have ever encouraged the vanquished to demand a plebiscite in the area in question or have expressed a willingness to abide by the result of such a vote.

But let us examine the argument a little more closely in reference to the present case. The first proposition of the Article is that the plebiscite is to be held in areas "populated exclusively by an Arab majority". It is difficult to understand how any area can be populated exclusively by a majority since the existence of a majority implies the existence of minorities also. But further it is the contention of the Turks themselves that the Arabs are not in a majority in the Mosul Vilayet but that they are outnumbered by the other elements in the population viz. Kurds and Turks; and that this is the case is shown by the figures of the second table to which reference has been made, and which reveal a total of 454,720 Kurds and 65,895 Turks or Turkomans, as compared with 185,763 Arabs. Therefore, if the Turks are to claim a plebiscite, it would seem that their argument does not admit of its being applied to the Mosul Vilayet, because the Arabs are not in a majority there.

But thirdly, supposing the argument to apply to the entire area, irrespective of majorities or minorities, it has already been pointed out that such a plebiscite has already twice been held and that on each occasion it has resulted in a verdict hostile to the Turkish claim. In 1919 the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet voted unanimously in g favour of continued incorporation with Baghdad and Basra. In 1921 the whole of the Arabs, the Kurds of the adjacent districts

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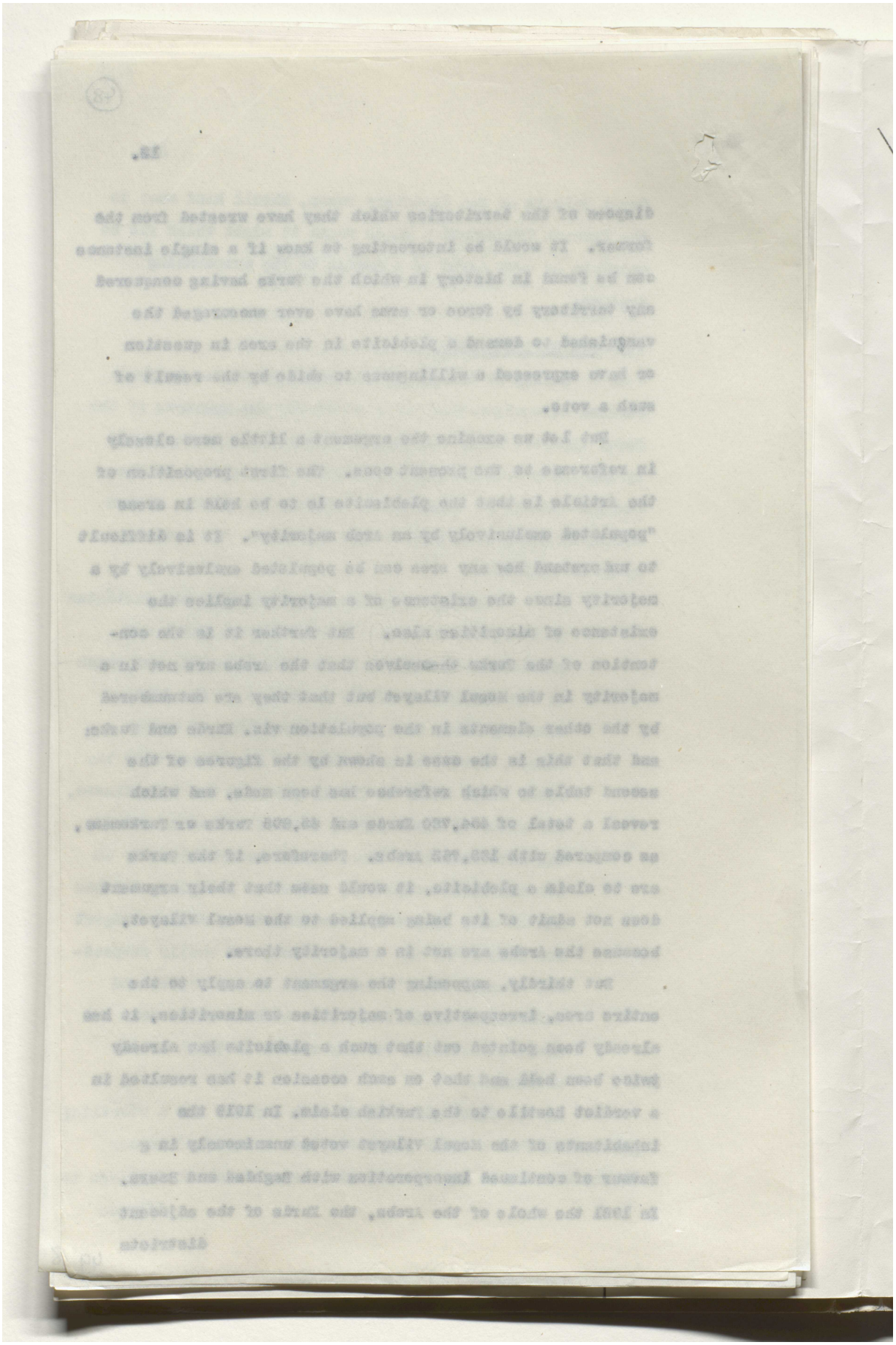

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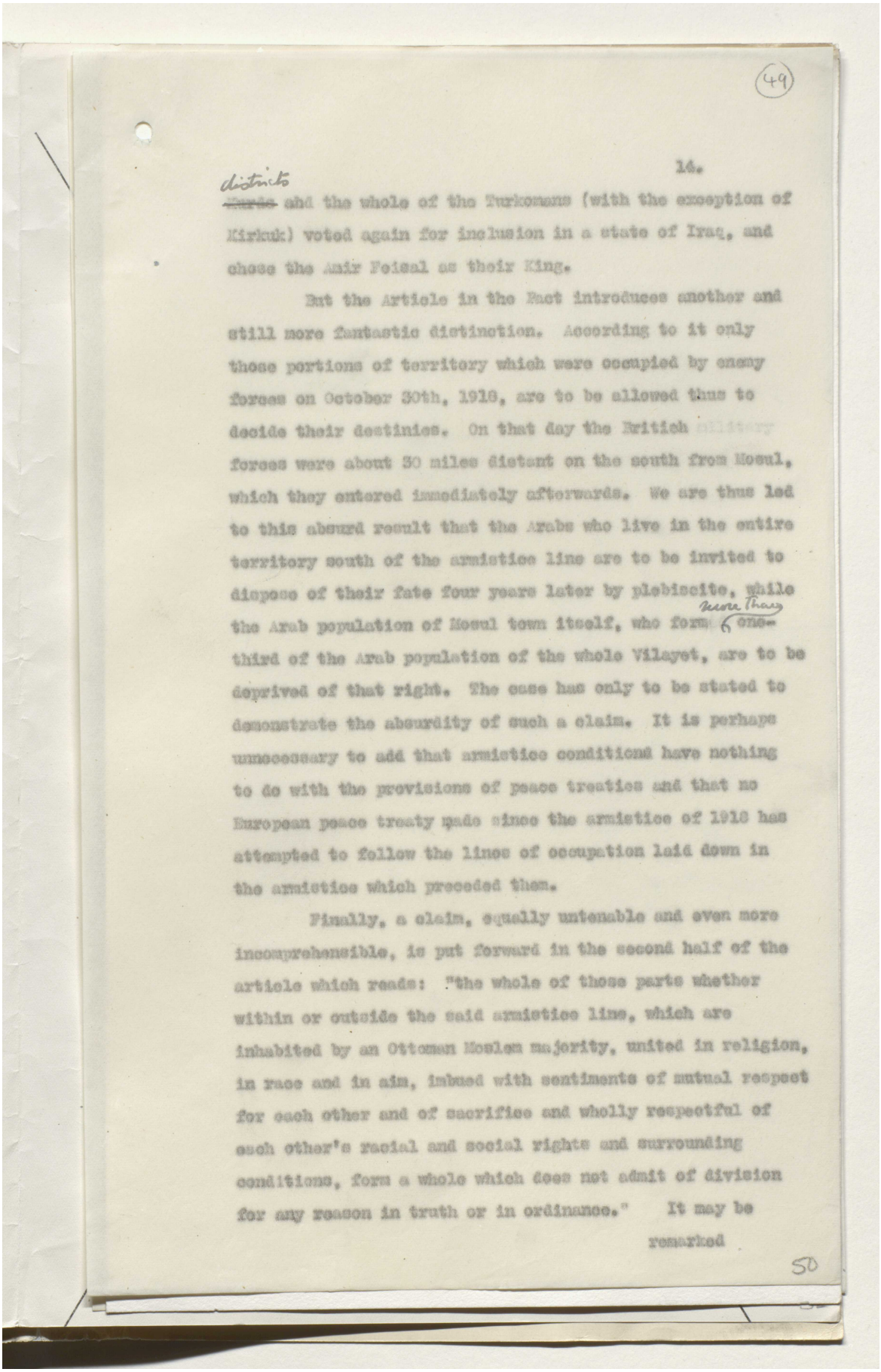

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districts
~~Kurds~~ and the whole of the Turkomans (with the exception of Kirkuk) voted again for inclusion in a state of Iraq, and chose the Amir Feisal as their King.

But the Article in the Pact introduces another and still more fantastic distinction. According to it only those portions of territory which were occupied by enemy forces on October 30th, 1918, are to be allowed thus to decide their destinies. On that day the British military forces were about 30 miles distant on the south from Mosul, which they entered immediately afterwards. We are thus led to this absurd result that the Arabs who live in the entire territory south of the armistice line are to be invited to dispose of their fate four years later by plebiscite, while the Arab population of Mosul town itself, who form more than one-third of the Arab population of the whole Vilayet, are to be deprived of that right. The case has only to be stated to demonstrate the absurdity of such a claim. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the provisions of peace treaties and that no European peace treaty made since the armistice of 1918 has attempted to follow the lines of occupation laid down in the armistice which preceded them.

Finally, a claim, equally untenable and even more incomprehensible, is put forward in the second half of the article which reads: "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." It may be remarked

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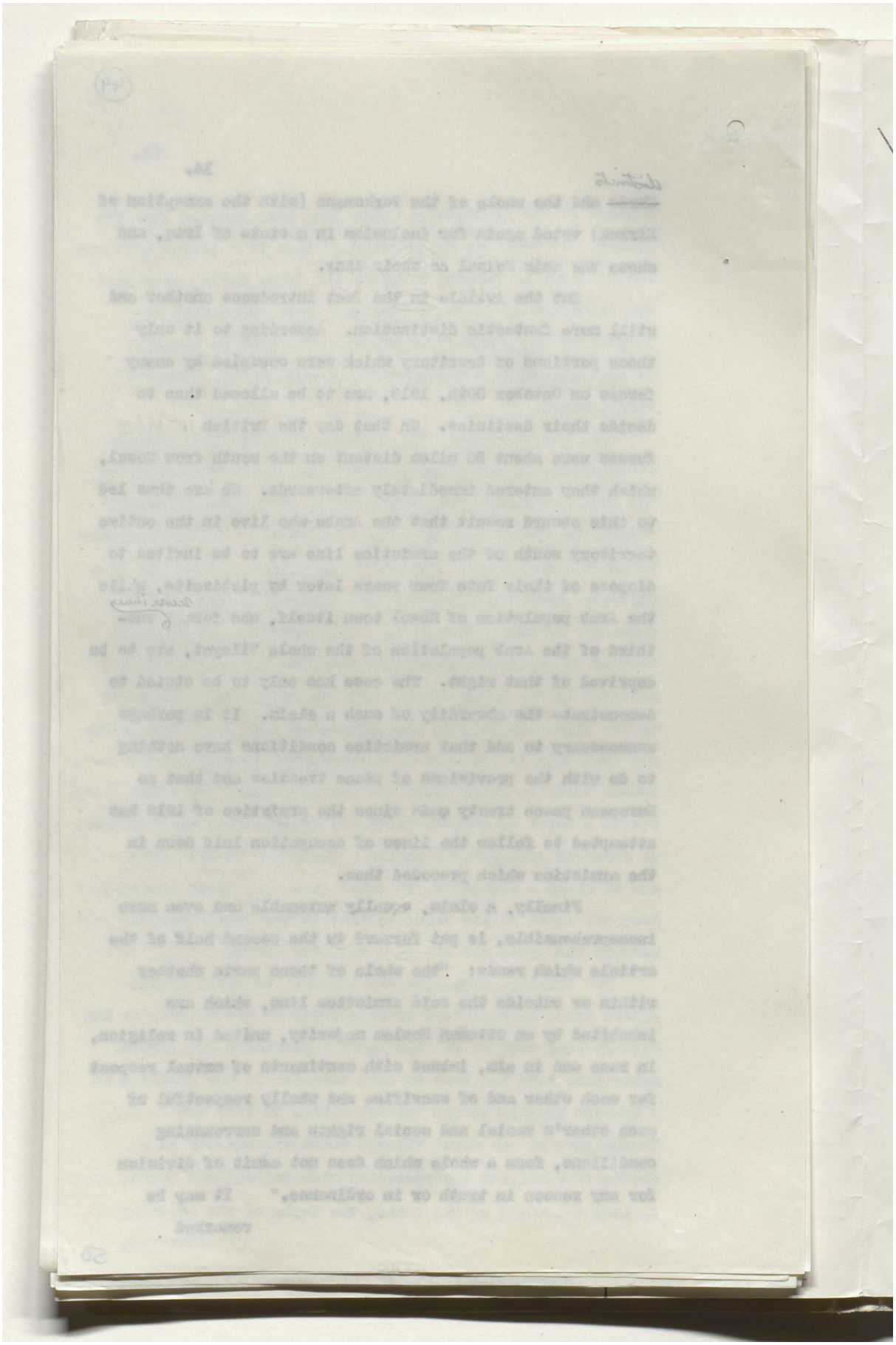

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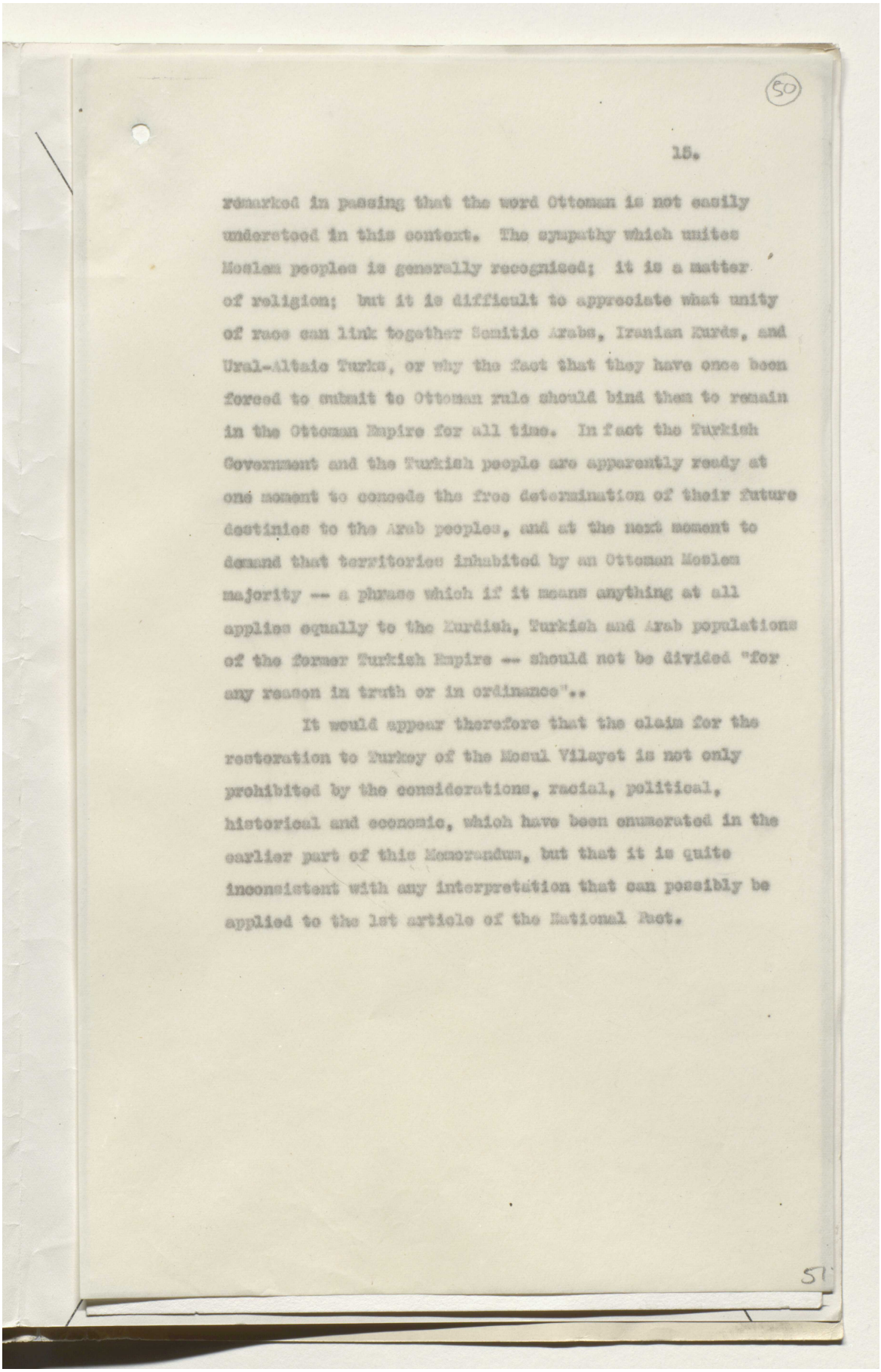

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remarked in passing that the word Ottoman is not easily understood in this context. The sympathy which unites Moslem peoples is generally recognised; it is a matter of religion; but it is difficult to appreciate what unity of race can link together Semitic Arabs, Iranian Kurds, and Ural-Altaic Turks, or why the fact that they have once been forced to submit to Ottoman rule should bind them to remain in the Ottoman Empire for all time. In fact the Turkish Government and the Turkish people are apparently ready at one moment to concede the free determination of their future destinies to the Arab peoples, and at the next moment to demand that territories inhabited by an Ottoman Moslem majority -- a phrase which if it means anything at all applies equally to the Kurdish, Turkish and Arab populations of the former Turkish Empire -- should not be divided "for any reason in truth or in ordinance"..

It would appear therefore that the claim for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet is not only prohibited by the considerations, racial, political, historical and economic, which have been enumerated in the earlier part of this Memorandum, but that it is quite inconsistent with any interpretation that can possibly be applied to the 1st article of the National Pact.

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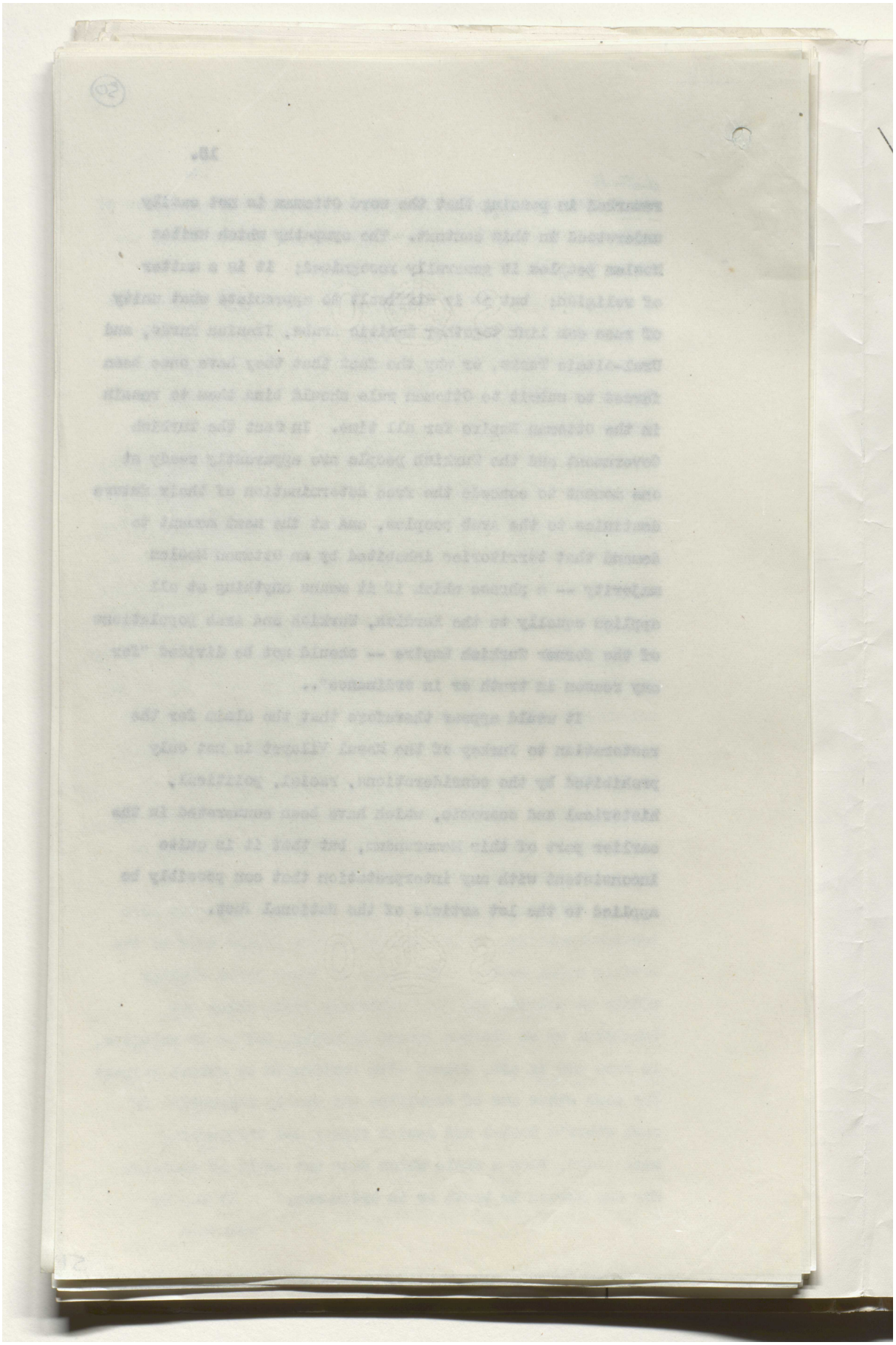

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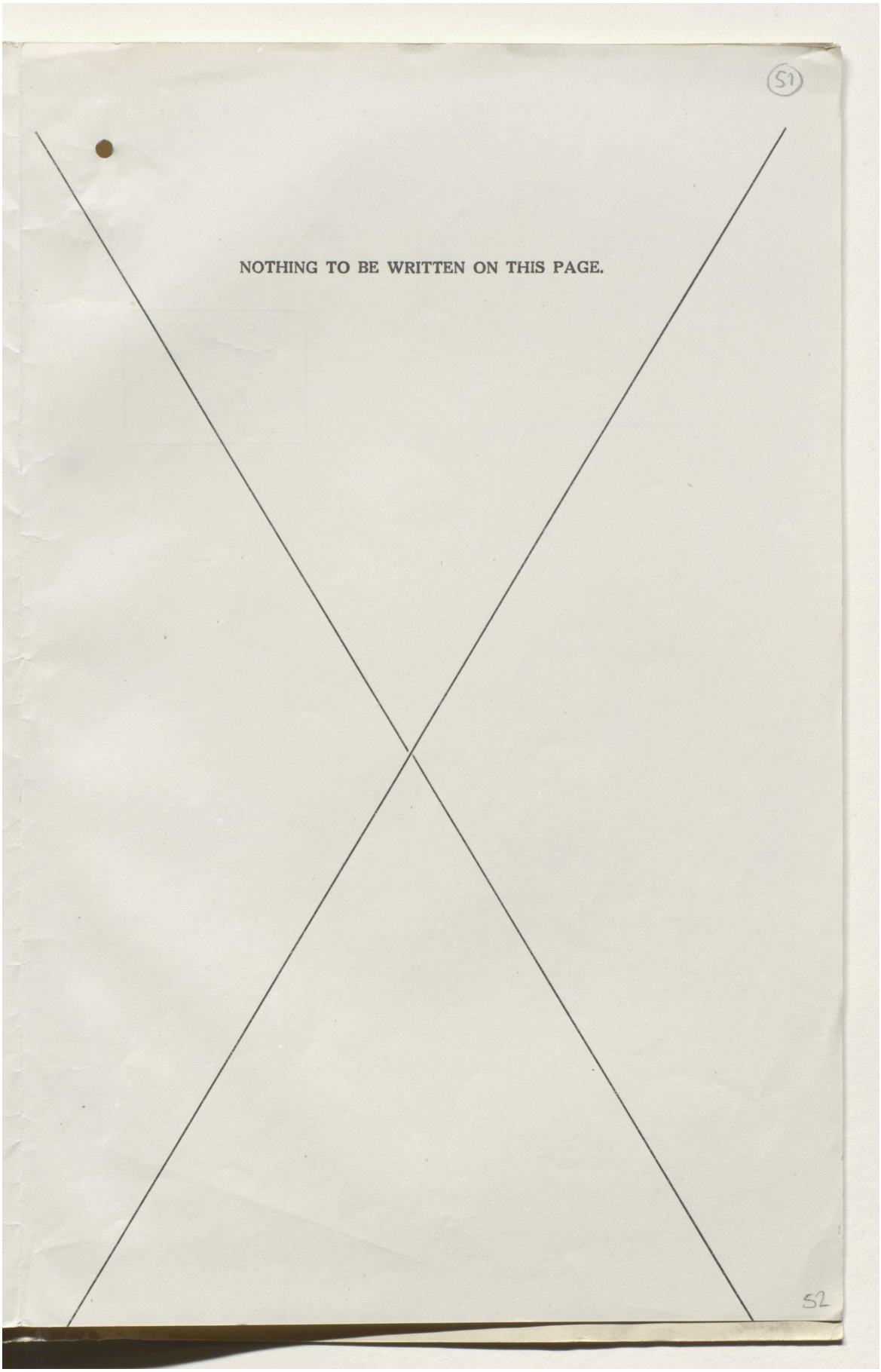

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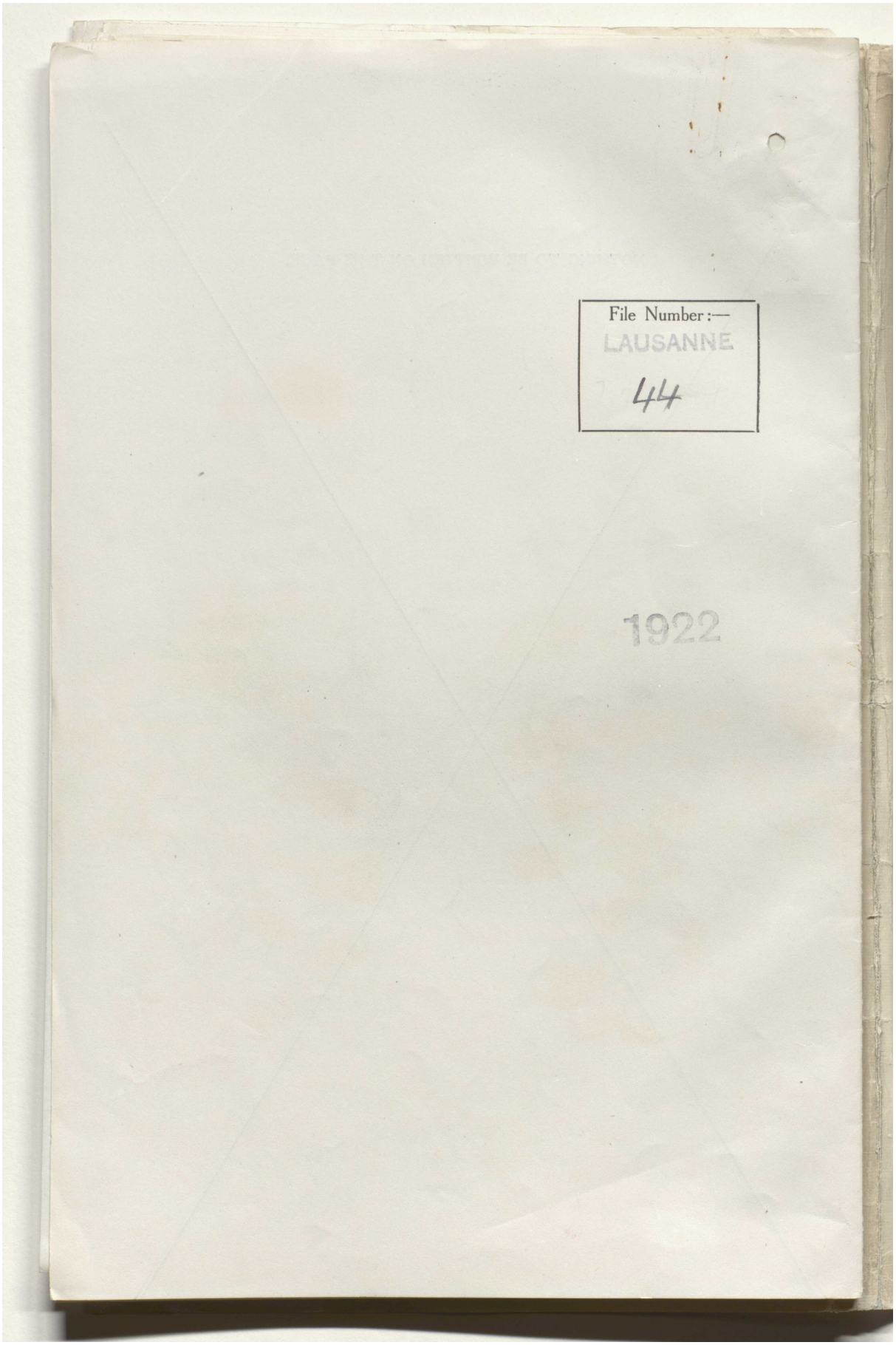

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EASTERN. [December 16.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14103/13003/44] No. 1.

Memorandum presented by the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha on December 14.—(Received in Foreign Office December 16, 1922.)

MOSUL.

THIS memorandum is submitted by the British delegation in order to summarise the reasons for which the demand made by the Turkish delegation for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet cannot possibly be entertained.

These reasons are racial, political, historical and economic. In each case they contradict and destroy the arguments, based on the same considerations, upon which it is understood, from such explanations as have been received, that the Turkish delegation relies in support of its case.

1. *Racial.*

The population of the Mosul Vilayet consists of Kurds, Arabs, "Turks" (Turkomans) and Christians, with some thousands of Yazidis. The number of these various elements may be deduced from two tables of statistics, which were compiled by British officers employed in the vilayet, who, partly on horseback, and partly with the aid of the roads made and the motor transport introduced since the British occupation, visited most of the corners of the vilayet in the years after the war. Table A is an estimate made in 1919, in which the population of the vilayet is shown by religions. Table B is an estimate made in 1921 as the result of a close and more prolonged investigation. The population in this table is divided according to race.

The total population of the Mosul Vilayet is returned as 703,000 odd in the 1919 estimate and 785,000 odd in the 1921 estimate, the difference being due to an increase in the population in the Mosul plain area, formed by the Mosul plain and the surrounding hills, arising from—

1. The return of large numbers of the population from the Turkish or Arab armies.
2. The return of still larger numbers of families to villages which, owing to the state of starvation resulting from war conditions, had been abandoned before the British occupation.
3. The settlement of a large number of Assyrian refugees.

It was established by these investigations that the whole of the great town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of that river as far as the Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri road, is Arab.

As to the "Turks," they are not Osmanli Turks; they call themselves Turkomans, and the Turanian language they speak resembles Azerbaijani rather than the Turkish of Constantinople. They are undoubtedly descendants of Turkomans who came to Irak long before Osman founded the Ottoman Empire, probably from those Turkomans whom the Abbaside Caliphs hired to defend their territory. The theory that the Turkomans are descendants of what was formerly a foreign mercenary garrison is supported by their distribution. Tall Afar, an almost exclusively Turkoman town, stands guard 45 miles west of Mosul on the border of the Syrian desert. Except for this town and the neighbouring Turkoman villages, and for a few scattered Turkoman villages in the Mosul plain, the whole of the Turkoman population is distributed along the eastern road from Mosul to Bagdad, notably in and around the towns of Erbil, Altun Keupru, Kerkuk,

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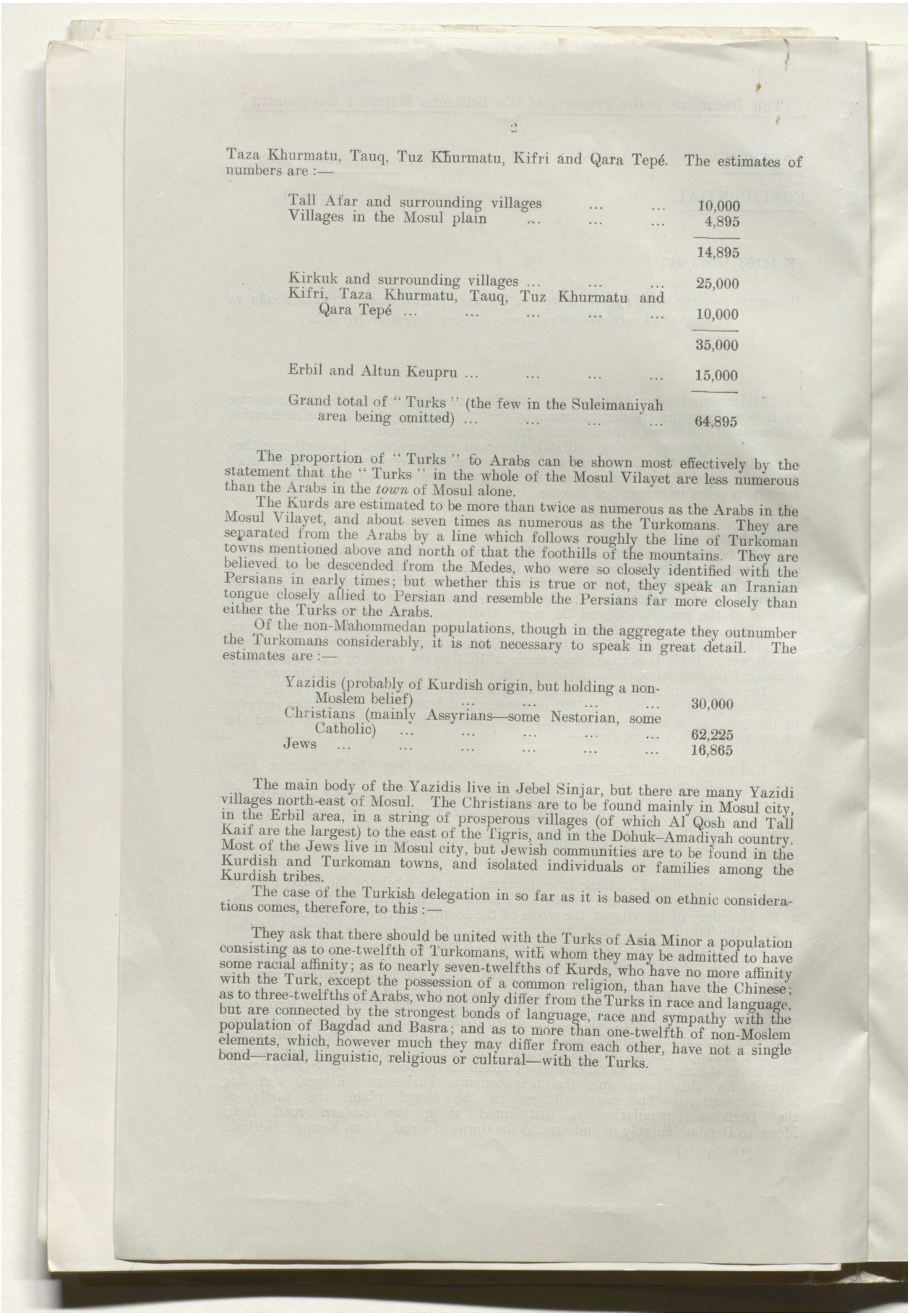

Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu, Kifri and Qara Tepé. The estimates of numbers are :—

Tall Afar and surrounding villages	10,000
Villages in the Mosul plain	4,895
	14,895
Kirkuk and surrounding villages	25,000
Kifri, Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu and Qara Tepé	10,000
	35,000
Erbil and Altun Keupru	15,000
Grand total of "Turks" (the few in the Suleimaniyah area being omitted)	64,895

The proportion of "Turks" to Arabs can be shown most effectively by the statement that the "Turks" in the whole of the Mosul Vilayet are less numerous than the Arabs in the *town* of Mosul alone.

The Kurds are estimated to be more than twice as numerous as the Arabs in the Mosul Vilayet, and about seven times as numerous as the Turkomans. They are separated from the Arabs by a line which follows roughly the line of Turkoman towns mentioned above and north of that the foothills of the mountains. They are believed to be descended from the Medes, who were so closely identified with the Persians in early times; but whether this is true or not, they speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian and resemble the Persians far more closely than either the Turks or the Arabs.

Of the non-Mahommedan populations, though in the aggregate they outnumber the Turkomans considerably, it is not necessary to speak in great detail. The estimates are :—

Yazidis (probably of Kurdish origin, but holding a non-Moslem belief)	30,000
Christians (mainly Assyrians—some Nestorian, some Catholic)	62,225
Jews	16,865

The main body of the Yazidis live in Jebel Sinjar, but there are many Yazidi villages north-east of Mosul. The Christians are to be found mainly in Mosul city, in the Erbil area, in a string of prosperous villages (of which Al Qosh and Tall Kaif are the largest) to the east of the Tigris, and in the Dohuk–Amadiyah country. Most of the Jews live in Mosul city, but Jewish communities are to be found in the Kurdish and Turkoman towns, and isolated individuals or families among the Kurdish tribes.

The case of the Turkish delegation in so far as it is based on ethnic considerations comes, therefore, to this :—

They ask that there should be united with the Turks of Asia Minor a population consisting as to one-twelfth of Turkomans, with whom they may be admitted to have some racial affinity; as to nearly seven-twelfths of Kurds, who have no more affinity with the Turk, except the possession of a common religion, than have the Chinese; as to three-twelfths of Arabs, who not only differ from the Turks in race and language, but are connected by the strongest bonds of language, race and sympathy with the population of Bagdad and Basra; and as to more than one-twelfth of non-Moslem elements, which, however much they may differ from each other, have not a single bond—racial, linguistic, religious or cultural—with the Turks.

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'Mosul Question, Lausanne 1922-1923 and after - Papers, despatches, speeches - Hotel de la Mer at Lausanne - Correspondence about oil' [53r] (107/501)

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Table I.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Religions according to an Estimate made in 1919.

Division.	Sunni.	Shiah.	Jewish.	Christian.	Other Religions.	Total.
Mosul	244,713	17,180	7,635	50,670	30,180	350,378
Erbil	96,100	...	4,800	4,100	1,000	106,000
Kirkuk	85,000	5,000	1,400	600	...	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	153,900	...	1,000	100	...	155,000
Total	579,713	22,180	14,835	55,470	31,180	703,378

Table II.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Races according to an Estimate made in 1921.

Division.	Arabs.	Kurds.	"Turks."	Christians.	Jews.	Total.
Mosul	170,663	179,820*	14,895	57,425	9,665	432,468
Erbil	5,100	77,000	15,000	4,100	4,800	106,000
Kirkuk	10,000	45,000	35,000	600	1,400	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	...	152,900	1,000	100	1,000	155,000
Total	185,763	454,720	65,895	62,225	16,865	785,468

* Including 30,000 Yazidis.

2. *Political.*

The next claim of the Turkish delegation is that the population of the Mosul Vilayet desires to return to Turkey because of its political or historical affinities with Turkish rule. Even if this were true of a majority of the inhabitants of the Turkoman towns who, under Turkish rule, enjoyed a position of privilege by no means warranted by their numbers, it cannot possibly be sustained in so far as the Kurds, the Arabs and the non-Moslem elements of the population are concerned. It is undeniable that the Arabs of Mosul are enthusiastic supporters of the new Irak State and of King Feisal. The result of a plebiscite conducted throughout Irak in 1919 gave a unanimous vote on the point that Basra, Bagdad and Mosul should be united and form one State. Since then, on the arrival of the Emir Feisal in the country, the Mosul Arabs showed quite unmistakably their desire to be connected with the Arab Government at Bagdad and to be under the rulership of King Feisal. They received the Emir with acclamation, they voted unanimously that he should be King, they swore allegiance to him. This latter plebiscite included the whole of the vilayet except the Kurds in the Suleimaniyah, Raniya and Rowanduz areas, who, being a compact body of people of an entirely different race and language, obviously required separate treatment. The Arab areas with the Kurdish districts adjacent to them, and the Turkoman towns, all gave their votes, and with the exception of Kirkuk all voted for inclusion in the Irak State and for the accession of Feisal to the throne of Irak.

As to the Kurds, they are a people with a keen sense of nationality, a deep pride in their race and language, and a desire to be as free to manage their own affairs as their pursuit of economic progress will allow.

It is said to be the contention of the Turkish delegation that the Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet are one with the Turks of Asia Minor in aim. Two points may be stated in reply :—

1. It is perfectly well known to people who lived in Irak before the war that communications between Suleimaniyah on the one side and Bagdad and Mosul on the other were constantly cut, that Turkish officials appointed to Suleimaniyah often waited at Mosul for months before they could venture to set out on their journey, and that when such Turkish officials reached their posts in Southern Kurdistan they were frequently helpless in the face of the determination of the Kurds to brook no interference from the distant Government of Constantinople.

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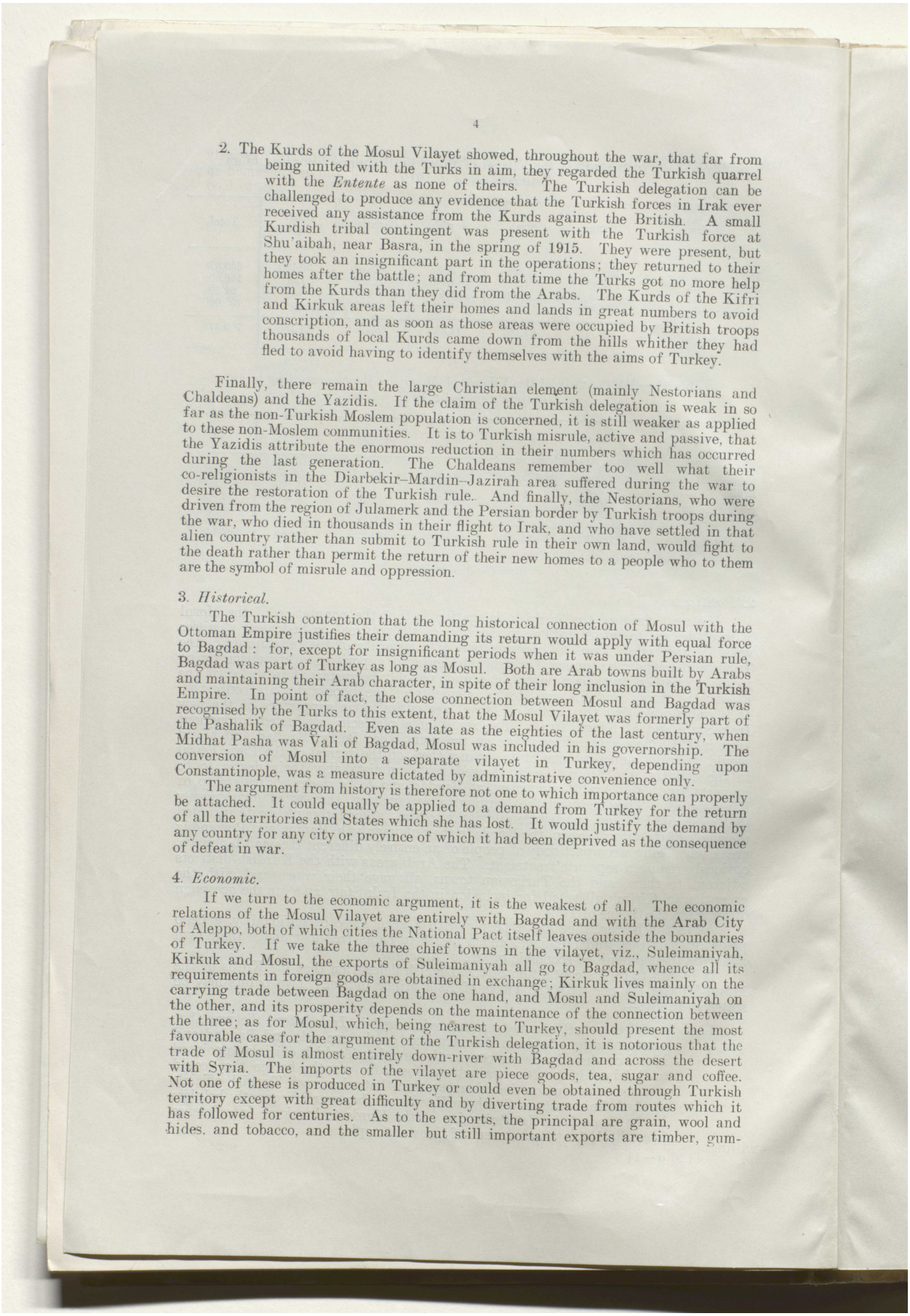

2. The Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet showed, throughout the war, that far from being united with the Turks in aim, they regarded the Turkish quarrel with the *Entente* as none of theirs. The Turkish delegation can be challenged to produce any evidence that the Turkish forces in Irak ever received any assistance from the Kurds against the British. A small Kurdish tribal contingent was present with the Turkish force at Shu'aibah, near Basra, in the spring of 1915. They were present, but they took an insignificant part in the operations; they returned to their homes after the battle; and from that time the Turks got no more help from the Kurds than they did from the Arabs. The Kurds of the Kifri and Kirkuk areas left their homes and lands in great numbers to avoid conscription, and as soon as those areas were occupied by British troops thousands of local Kurds came down from the hills whither they had fled to avoid having to identify themselves with the aims of Turkey.

Finally, there remain the large Christian element (mainly Nestorians and Chaldeans) and the Yazidis. If the claim of the Turkish delegation is weak in so far as the non-Turkish Moslem population is concerned, it is still weaker as applied to these non-Moslem communities. It is to Turkish misrule, active and passive, that the Yazidis attribute the enormous reduction in their numbers which has occurred during the last generation. The Chaldeans remember too well what their co-religionists in the Diarbekir–Mardin–Jazirah area suffered during the war to desire the restoration of the Turkish rule. And finally, the Nestorians, who were driven from the region of Julamerk and the Persian border by Turkish troops during the war, who died in thousands in their flight to Irak, and who have settled in that alien country rather than submit to Turkish rule in their own land, would fight to the death rather than permit the return of their new homes to a people who to them are the symbol of misrule and oppression.

3. *Historical.*

The Turkish contention that the long historical connection of Mosul with the Ottoman Empire justifies their demanding its return would apply with equal force to Bagdad: for, except for insignificant periods when it was under Persian rule, Bagdad was part of Turkey as long as Mosul. Both are Arab towns built by Arabs and maintaining their Arab character, in spite of their long inclusion in the Turkish Empire. In point of fact, the close connection between Mosul and Bagdad was recognised by the Turks to this extent, that the Mosul Vilayet was formerly part of the Pashalik of Bagdad. Even as late as the eighties of the last century, when Midhat Pasha was Vali of Bagdad, Mosul was included in his governorship. The conversion of Mosul into a separate vilayet in Turkey, depending upon Constantinople, was a measure dictated by administrative convenience only.

The argument from history is therefore not one to which importance can properly be attached. It could equally be applied to a demand from Turkey for the return of all the territories and States which she has lost. It would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war.

4. *Economic.*

If we turn to the economic argument, it is the weakest of all. The economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Bagdad and with the Arab City of Aleppo, both of which cities the National Pact itself leaves outside the boundaries of Turkey. If we take the three chief towns in the vilayet, viz., Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk and Mosul, the exports of Suleimaniyah all go to Bagdad, whence all its requirements in foreign goods are obtained in exchange; Kirkuk lives mainly on the carrying trade between Bagdad on the one hand, and Mosul and Suleimaniyah on the other, and its prosperity depends on the maintenance of the connection between the three; as for Mosul, which, being nearest to Turkey, should present the most favourable case for the argument of the Turkish delegation, it is notorious that the trade of Mosul is almost entirely down-river with Bagdad and across the desert with Syria. The imports of the vilayet are piece goods, tea, sugar and coffee. Not one of these is produced in Turkey or could even be obtained through Turkish territory except with great difficulty and by diverting trade from routes which it has followed for centuries. As to the exports, the principal are grain, wool and hides, and tobacco, and the smaller but still important exports are timber, gum-

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tragancanth and gall-nuts. Every ounce of the tobacco grown, except the relatively small quantity needed for local consumption, goes to Bagdad and is consumed in the Bagdad and Basra Vilayets; the surplus grain of the Mosul Milayet goes to feed the people of Bagdad, and the timber to build houses in Bagdad. The wool, the hides and the gum, and the gall-nuts which are an important ingredient in the manufacture of European ink, go entirely to foreign countries. How could Mosul dispose of grain, wool or hides in Turkey, when Turkey itself is a large producer of all these products; or of tobacco in a country which has large tobacco producing areas of its own? Bagdad is dependent on the Mosul Vilayet for its wheat supplies to such an extent that during the war, when the two vilayets were separated by military operations, the British military authorities had to import wheat from India to feed Bagdad city and district. A striking instance of the manner in which economic considerations cut across ethnic boundaries is the fact that the Erbil–Altun Keupru district, which is partly Turkoman as to the towns and mainly Kurdish as to the agricultural areas, lives almost entirely on supplying Bagdad with grain. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if the country north of the existing boundary between Turkey on one side, and Syria and Irak on the other, ceased to exist, the economic life of the Mosul Vilayet would hardly be disturbed at all. Irak, as it is, can do without Turkey, but Mosul is indispensable to Bagdad.

5. *Strategic.*

It is further urged by the Turkish delegation that the southern boundary of the vilayet of Mosul, which runs along the Jabal Hamrin in a south-easterly direction as far as the River Diyalah, and then along the Diyalah as far as the Persian frontier, would constitute an excellent strategical frontier between Turkey and Irak. This contention cannot be accepted for one moment. The adoption of the Jabal Hamrin–Diyalah line would in fact make the position of the Irak State untenable. In the first place, the Power occupying Mosul need only hold up the export of grain from that place to cut off the capital of Irak from its main source of wheat supply. Secondly, a day's easy march would enable any such Power to cut the sole road between Irak and Persia, a road which is vital to the economic life of Bagdad and Basra, whose people live very largely on the Persian trade. Thirdly, the position of an Arab Government in Bagdad, which is some 560 miles by river from the southern limit of the Irak State, would be quite impossible if the frontier of a possibly unfriendly State were only 70 miles distant. Lastly, there appears to be no particular reason why the Arab State of Irak or Great Britain as the Mandatory Power, should hand over to the Turkish Government a place where it might think fit to maintain an army corps as a menace to the surrounding regions.

6. *The National Pact.*

Lastly it has more than once been stated by the Turkish delegation that their claim for the recovery of the Mosul Vilayet, or at any rate of Mosul town, is supported by the first article of the National Pact, passed by the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on the 17th February, 1920. It can easily be shown that this is not the case. The article reads as follows:—

> "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."

In the first place it is both a novel and a startling pretension that a Power which has been vanquished in war should dictate to the victors the manner in which they are to dispose of the territories which they have wrested from the former. It would be interesting to know if a single instance can be found in history in which the Turks having conquered any territory by force of arms have ever encouraged the vanquished to demand a plebiscite in the area in question or have expressed a willingness to abide by the result of such a vote.

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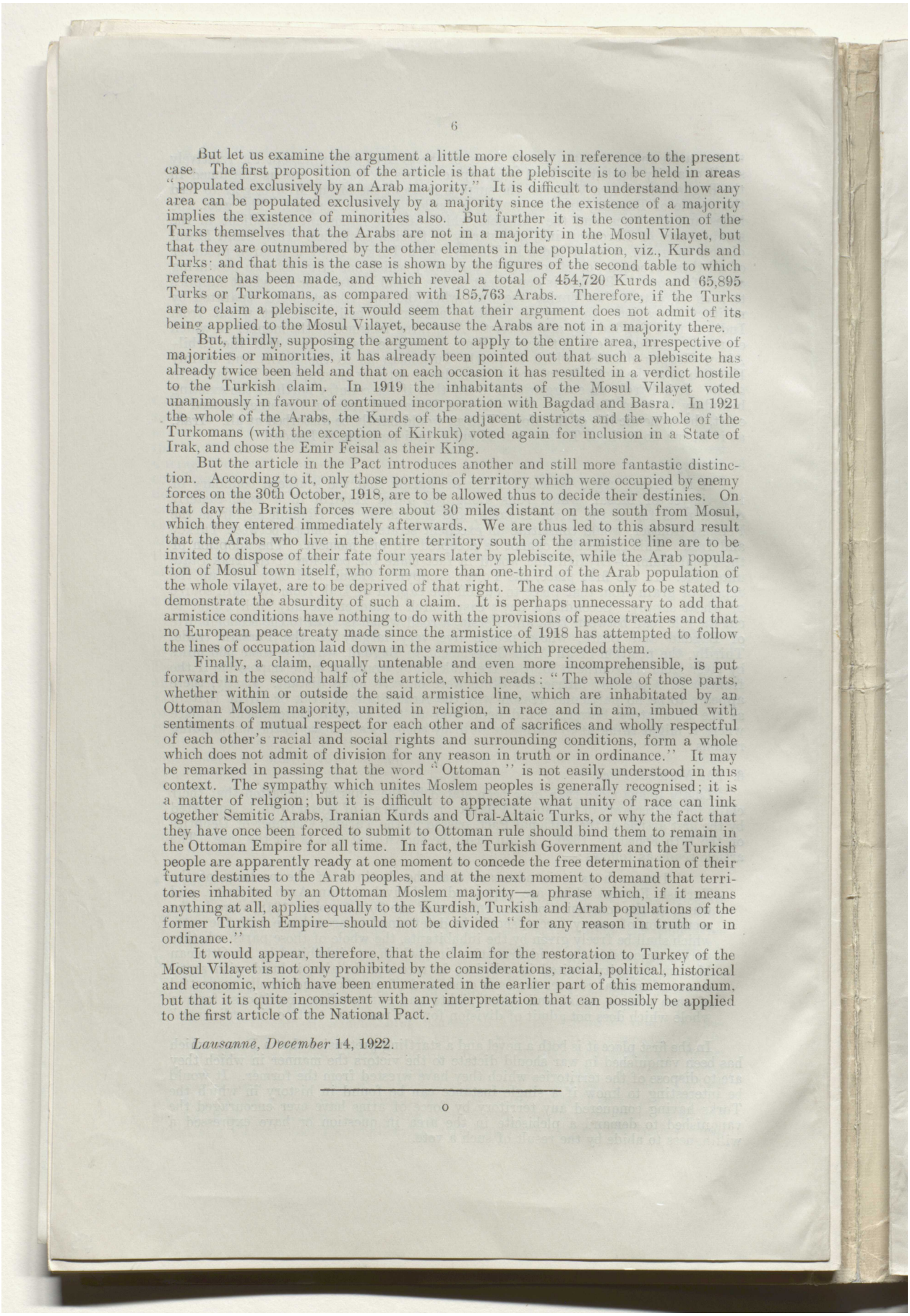

But let us examine the argument a little more closely in reference to the present case. The first proposition of the article is that the plebiscite is to be held in areas "populated exclusively by an Arab majority." It is difficult to understand how any area can be populated exclusively by a majority since the existence of a majority implies the existence of minorities also. But further it is the contention of the Turks themselves that the Arabs are not in a majority in the Mosul Vilayet, but that they are outnumbered by the other elements in the population, viz., Kurds and Turks: and that this is the case is shown by the figures of the second table to which reference has been made, and which reveal a total of 454,720 Kurds and 65,895 Turks or Turkomans, as compared with 185,763 Arabs. Therefore, if the Turks are to claim a plebiscite, it would seem that their argument does not admit of its being applied to the Mosul Vilayet, because the Arabs are not in a majority there.

But, thirdly, supposing the argument to apply to the entire area, irrespective of majorities or minorities, it has already been pointed out that such a plebiscite has already twice been held and that on each occasion it has resulted in a verdict hostile to the Turkish claim. In 1919 the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet voted unanimously in favour of continued incorporation with Bagdad and Basra. In 1921 the whole of the Arabs, the Kurds of the adjacent districts and the whole of the Turkomans (with the exception of Kirkuk) voted again for inclusion in a State of Irak, and chose the Emir Feisal as their King.

But the article in the Pact introduces another and still more fantastic distinction. According to it, only those portions of territory which were occupied by enemy forces on the 30th October, 1918, are to be allowed thus to decide their destinies. On that day the British forces were about 30 miles distant on the south from Mosul, which they entered immediately afterwards. We are thus led to this absurd result that the Arabs who live in the entire territory south of the armistice line are to be invited to dispose of their fate four years later by plebiscite, while the Arab population of Mosul town itself, who form more than one-third of the Arab population of the whole vilayet, are to be deprived of that right. The case has only to be stated to demonstrate the absurdity of such a claim. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the provisions of peace treaties and that no European peace treaty made since the armistice of 1918 has attempted to follow the lines of occupation laid down in the armistice which preceded them.

Finally, a claim, equally untenable and even more incomprehensible, is put forward in the second half of the article, which reads: "The whole of those parts, whether within or outside the said armistice line, which are inhabitated by an Ottoman Moslem majority, united in religion, in race and in aim, imbued with sentiments of mutual respect for each other and of sacrifices 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." It may be remarked in passing that the word "Ottoman" is not easily understood in this context. The sympathy which unites Moslem peoples is generally recognised; it is a matter of religion; but it is difficult to appreciate what unity of race can link together Semitic Arabs, Iranian Kurds and Ural-Altaic Turks, or why the fact that they have once been forced to submit to Ottoman rule should bind them to remain in the Ottoman Empire for all time. In fact, the Turkish Government and the Turkish people are apparently ready at one moment to concede the free determination of their future destinies to the Arab peoples, and at the next moment to demand that territories inhabited by an Ottoman Moslem majority—a phrase which, if it means anything at all, applies equally to the Kurdish, Turkish and Arab populations of the former Turkish Empire—should not be divided "for any reason in truth or in ordinance."

It would appear, therefore, that the claim for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet is not only prohibited by the considerations, racial, political, historical and economic, which have been enumerated in the earlier part of this memorandum, but that it is quite inconsistent with any interpretation that can possibly be applied to the first article of the National Pact.

Lausanne, December 14, 1922.

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN. [December 16.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[AMENDED COPY.]

[E 14103/13003/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.—(Received in Foreign Office, December 16.)

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December* 14, 1922.

IN our various conversations about Mosul, you mentioned to me the grounds, racial, political, strategic, historical, &c., on which your Government rested their claims for the return of the Mosul Vilayet. I told you in reply that I contested each one of these claims, and I now send you a memorandum with the reasons for which I do so, and which—quite apart from the fact that Great Britain cannot give back a country of which she is a mandatory under the League of Nations—render it quite impossible for my Government to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum on Mosul.

THIS memorandum is submitted by the British delegation in order to summarise the reasons for which the demand made by the Turkish delegation for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet cannot possibly be entertained.

These reasons are racial, political, historical and economic. In each case they contradict and destroy the arguments, based on the same considerations, upon which it is understood, from such explanations as have been received, that the Turkish delegation relies in support of its case.

1. *Racial.*

The population of the Mosul Vilayet consists of Kurds, Arabs, "Turks" (Turkomans) and Christians, with some thousands of Yazidis. The number of these various elements may be deduced from two tables of statistics, which were compiled by British officers employed in the vilayet, who, partly on horseback, and partly with the aid of the roads made and the motor transport introduced since the British occupation, visited most of the corners of the vilayet in the years after the war. Table A is an estimate made in 1919, in which the population of the vilayet is shown by religions. Table B is an estimate made in 1921 as the result of a close and more prolonged investigation. The population in this table is divided according to race.

The total population of the Mosul Vilayet is returned as 703,000 odd in the 1919 estimate and 785,000 odd in the 1921 estimate, the difference being due to an increase in the population in the Mosul plain area, formed by the Mosul plain and the surrounding hills, arising from—

1. The return of large numbers of the population from the Turkish or Arab armies.
2. The return of still larger numbers of families to villages which, owing to the state of starvation resulting from war conditions, had been abandoned before the British occupation.
3. The settlement of a large number of Assyrian refugees.

It was established by these investigations that the whole of the great town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of that river as far as the Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri road, is Arab.

As to the "Turks," they are not Osmanli Turks; they call themselves Turkomans, and the Turanian language they speak resembles Azerbaijani rather than the Turkish of Constantinople. They are undoubtedly descendants of Turkomans who

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came to Irak long before Osman founded the Ottoman Empire, probably from those Turkomans whom the Abbaside Caliphs hired to defend their territory. The theory that the Turkomans are descendants of what was formerly a foreign mercenary garrison is supported by their distribution. Tall Afar, an almost exclusively Turkoman town, stands guard 45 miles west of Mosul on the border of the Syrian desert. Except for this town and the neighbouring Turkoman villages, and for a few scattered Turkoman villages in the Mosul plain, the whole of the Turkoman population is distributed along the eastern road from Mosul to Bagdad, notably in and around the towns of Erbil, Altun Keupru, Kerkuk, Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu, Kifri and Qara Tepé. The estimates of numbers are :—

Tall Afar and surrounding villages	10,000
Villages in the Mosul plain	4,895
	14,895
Kirkuk and surrounding villages	25,000
Kifri, Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu and Qara Tepé	10,000
	35,000
Erbil and Altun Keupru	15,000
Grand total of " Turks " (the few in the Suleimaniyah area being omitted)	64,895

The proportion of " Turks " to Arabs can be shown most effectively by the statement that the " Turks " in the whole of the Mosul Vilayet are less numerous than the Arabs in the *town* of Mosul alone.

The Kurds are estimated to be more than twice as numerous as the Arabs in the Mosul Vilayet, and about seven times as numerous as the Turkomans. They are separated from the Arabs by a line which follows roughly the line of Turkoman towns mentioned above and north of that the foothills of the mountains. They are believed to be descended from the Medes, who were so closely identified with the Persians in early times; but whether this is true or not, they speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian and resemble the Persians far more closely than either the Turks or the Arabs.

Of the non-Mahommedan populations, though in the aggregate they outnumber the Turkomans considerably, it is not necessary to speak in great detail. The estimates are :—

Yazidis (probably of Kurdish origin, but holding a non-Moslem belief)	30,000
Christians (mainly Assyrians—some Nestorian, some Catholic)	62,225
Jews	16,865

The main body of the Yazidis live in Jebel Sinjar, but there are many Yazidi villages north-east of Mosul. The Christians are to be found mainly in Mosul city, in the Erbil area, in a string of prosperous villages (of which Al Qosh and Tall Kaif are the largest) to the east of the Tigris, and in the Dohuk–Amadiyah country. Most of the Jews live in Mosul city, but Jewish communities are to be found in the Kurdish and Turkoman towns, and isolated individuals or families among the Kurdish tribes.

The case of the Turkish delegation in so far as it is based on ethnic considerations comes, therefore, to this :—

They ask that there should be united with the Turks of Asia Minor a population consisting as to one-twelfth of Turkomans, with whom they may be admitted to have some racial affinity; as to nearly seven-twelfths of Kurds, who have no more affinity with the Turk, except the possession of a common religion, than have the Chinese; as to three-twelfths of Arabs, who not only differ from the Turks in race and language, but are connected by the strongest bonds of language, race and sympathy with the population of Bagdad and Basra; and as to more than one-twelfth of non-Moslem elements, which, however much they may differ from each other, have not a single bond—racial, linguistic, religious or cultural—with the Turks.

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Table I.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Religions according to an Estimate made in 1919.

Division.	Sunni.	Shiah.	Jewish.	Christian.	Other Religions.	Total.
Mosul	244,713	17,180	7,635	50,670	30,180	350,378
Erbil	96,100	...	4,800	4,100	1,000	106,000
Kirkuk	85,000	5,000	1,400	600	...	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	153,900	...	1,000	100	...	155,000
Total	579,713	22,180	14,835	55,470	31,180	703,378

Table II.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Races according to an Estimate made in 1921.

Division.	Arabs.	Kurds.	"Turks."	Christians.	Jews.	Total.
Mosul	170,663	179,820*	14,895	57,425	9,665	432,468
Erbil	5,100	77,000	15,000	4,100	4,800	106,000
Kirkuk	10,000	45,000	35,000	600	1,400	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	...	152,900	1,000	100	1,000	155,000
Total	185,763	454,720	65,895	62,225	16,865	785,468

* Including 30,000 Yazidis.

2. *Political.*

The next claim of the Turkish delegation is that the population of the Mosul Vilayet desires to return to Turkey because of its political or historical affinities with Turkish rule. Even if this were true of a majority of the inhabitants of the Turkoman towns who, under Turkish rule, enjoyed a position of privilege by no means warranted by their numbers, it cannot possibly be sustained in so far as the Kurds, the Arabs and the non-Moslem elements of the population are concerned. It is undeniable that the Arabs of Mosul are enthusiastic supporters of the new Irak State and of King Feisal. The result of a plebiscite conducted throughout Irak in 1919 gave a unanimous vote on the point that Basra, Bagdad and Mosul should be united and form one State. Since then, on the arrival of the Emir Feisal in the country, the Mosul Arabs showed quite unmistakably their desire to be connected with the Arab Government at Bagdad and to be under the rulership of King Feisal. They received the Emir with acclamation, they voted unanimously that he should be King, they swore allegiance to him. This latter plebiscite included the whole of the vilayet except the Kurds in the Suleimaniyah, Raniya and Rowanduz areas, who, being a compact body of people of an entirely different race and language, obviously required separate treatment. The Arab areas with the Kurdish districts adjacent to them, and the Turkoman towns, all gave their votes, and with the exception of Kirkuk all voted for inclusion in the Irak State and for the accession of Feisal to the throne of Irak.

As to the Kurds, they are a people with a keen sense of nationality, a deep pride in their race and language, and a desire to be as free to manage their own affairs as their pursuit of economic progress will allow.

It is said to be the contention of the Turkish delegation that the Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet are one with the Turks of Asia Minor in aim. Two points may be stated in reply:—

1. It is perfectly well known to people who lived in Irak before the war that communications between Suleimaniyah on the one side and Bagdad and Mosul on the other were constantly cut, that Turkish officials appointed to Suleimaniyah often waited at Mosul for months before they could venture to set out on their journey, and that when such Turkish officials reached their posts in Southern Kurdistan they were frequently helpless in the face of the determination of the Kurds to brook no interference from the distant Government of Constantinople.

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2. The Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet showed, throughout the war, that far from being united with the Turks in aim, they regarded the Turkish quarrel with the *Entente* as none of theirs. The Turkish delegation can be challenged to produce any evidence that the Turkish forces in Irak ever received any assistance from the Kurds against the British. A small Kurdish tribal contingent was present with the Turkish force at Shu'aibah, near Basra, in the spring of 1915. They were present, but they took an insignificant part in the operations; they returned to their homes after the battle; and from that time the Turks got no more help from the Kurds than they did from the Arabs. The Kurds of the Kifri and Kirkuk areas left their homes and lands in great numbers to avoid conscription, and as soon as those areas were occupied by British troops thousands of local Kurds came down from the hills whither they had fled to avoid having to identify themselves with the aims of Turkey.

Finally, there remain the large Christian element (mainly Nestorians and Chaldeans) and the Yazidis. If the claim of the Turkish delegation is weak in so far as the non-Turkish Moslem population is concerned, it is still weaker as applied to these non-Moslem communities. It is to Turkish misrule, active and passive, that the Yazidis attribute the enormous reduction in their numbers which has occurred during the last generation. The Chaldeans remember too well what their co-religionists in the Diarbekir–Mardin–Jazirah area suffered during the war to desire the restoration of the Turkish rule. And finally, the Nestorians, who were driven from the region of Julamerk and the Persian border by Turkish troops during the war, who died in thousands in their flight to Irak, and who have settled in that alien country rather than submit to Turkish rule in their own land, would fight to the death rather than permit the return of their new homes to a people who to them are the symbol of misrule and oppression.

3. *Historical.*

The Turkish contention that the long historical connection of Mosul with the Ottoman Empire justifies their demanding its return would apply with equal force to Bagdad: for, except for insignificant periods when it was under Persian rule, Bagdad was part of Turkey as long as Mosul. Both are Arab towns built by Arabs and maintaining their Arab character, in spite of their long inclusion in the Turkish Empire. In point of fact, the close connection between Mosul and Bagdad was recognised by the Turks to this extent, that the Mosul Vilayet was formerly part of the Pashalik of Bagdad. Even as late as the eighties of the last century, when Midhat Pasha was Vali of Bagdad, Mosul was included in his governorship. The conversion of Mosul into a separate vilayet in Turkey, depending upon Constantinople, was a measure dictated by administrative convenience only.

The argument from history is therefore not one to which importance can properly be attached. It could equally be applied to a demand from Turkey for the return of all the territories and States which she has lost. It would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war.

4. *Economic.*

If we turn to the economic argument, it is the weakest of all. The economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Bagdad and with the Arab City of Aleppo, both of which cities the National Pact itself leaves outside the boundaries of Turkey. If we take the three chief towns in the vilayet, viz., Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk and Mosul, the exports of Suleimaniyah all go to Bagdad, whence all its requirements in foreign goods are obtained in exchange; Kirkuk lives mainly on the carrying trade between Bagdad on the one hand, and Mosul and Suleimaniyah on the other, and its prosperity depends on the maintenance of the connection between the three; as for Mosul, which, being nearest to Turkey, should present the most favourable case for the argument of the Turkish delegation, it is notorious that the trade of Mosul is almost entirely down-river with Bagdad and across the desert with Syria. The imports of the vilayet are piece goods, tea, sugar and coffee. Not one of these is produced in Turkey or could even be obtained through Turkish territory except with great difficulty and by diverting trade from routes which it has followed for centuries. As to the exports, the principal are grain, wool and hides, and tobacco, and the smaller but still important exports are timber, gum-

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tragancanth and gall-nuts. Every ounce of the tobacco grown, except the relatively small quantity needed for local consumption, goes to Bagdad and is consumed in the Bagdad and Basra Vilayets; the surplus grain of the Mosul Milayet goes to feed the people of Bagdad, and the timber to build houses in Bagdad. The wool, the hides and the gum, and the gall-nuts which are an important ingredient in the manufacture of European ink, go entirely to foreign countries. How could Mosul dispose of grain, wool or hides in Turkey, when Turkey itself is a large producer of all these products; or of tobacco in a country which has large tobacco producing areas of its own? Bagdad is dependent on the Mosul Vilayet for its wheat supplies to such an extent that during the war, when the two vilayets were separated by military operations, the British military authorities had to import wheat from India to feed Bagdad city and district. A striking instance of the manner in which economic considerations cut across ethnic boundaries is the fact that the Erbil–Altun Keupru district, which is partly Turkoman as to the towns and mainly Kurdish as to the agricultural areas, lives almost entirely on supplying Bagdad with grain. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if the country north of the existing boundary between Turkey on one side, and Syria and Irak on the other, ceased to exist, the economic life of the Mosul Vilayet would hardly be disturbed at all. Irak, as it is, can do without Turkey, but Mosul is indispensable to Bagdad.

5. *Strategic.*

It is further urged by the Turkish delegation that the southern boundary of the vilayet of Mosul, which runs along the Jabal Hamrin in a south-easterly direction as far as the River Diyalah, and then along the Diyalah as far as the Persian frontier, would constitute an excellent strategical frontier between Turkey and Irak. This contention cannot be accepted for one moment. The adoption of the Jabal Hamrin–Diyalah line would in fact make the position of the Irak State untenable. In the first place, the Power occupying Mosul need only hold up the export of grain from that place to cut off the capital of Irak from its main source of wheat supply. Secondly, a day's easy march would enable any such Power to cut the sole road between Irak and Persia, a road which is vital to the economic life of Bagdad and Basra, whose people live very largely on the Persian trade. Thirdly, the position of an Arab Government in Bagdad, which is some 560 miles by river from the southern limit of the Irak State, would be quite impossible if the frontier of a possibly unfriendly State were only 70 miles distant. Lastly, there appears to be no particular reason why the Arab State of Irak or Great Britain as the Mandatory Power, should hand over to the Turkish Government a place where it might think fit to maintain an army corps as a menace to the surrounding regions.

6. *The National Pact.*

Lastly it has more than once been stated by the Turkish delegation that their claim for the recovery of the Mosul Vilayet, or at any rate of Mosul town, is supported by the first article of the National Pact, passed by the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on the 17th February, 1920. It can easily be shown that this is not the case. The article reads as follows:—

> "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."

In the first place it is both a novel and a startling pretension that a Power which has been vanquished in war should dictate to the victors the manner in which they are to dispose of the territories which they have wrested from the former. It would be interesting to know if a single instance can be found in history in which the Turks having conquered any territory by force of arms have ever encouraged the vanquished to demand a plebiscite in the area in question or have expressed a willingness to abide by the result of such a vote.

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But let us examine the argument a little more closely in reference to the present case. The first proposition of the article is that the plebiscite is to be held in areas "populated exclusively by an Arab majority." It is difficult to understand how any area can be populated exclusively by a majority since the existence of a majority implies the existence of minorities also. But further it is the contention of the Turks themselves that the Arabs are not in a majority in the Mosul Vilayet, but that they are outnumbered by the other elements in the population, viz., Kurds and Turks: and that this is the case is shown by the figures of the second table to which reference has been made, and which reveal a total of 454,720 Kurds and 65,895 Turks or Turkomans, as compared with 185,763 Arabs. Therefore, if the Turks are to claim a plebiscite, it would seem that their argument does not admit of its being applied to the Mosul Vilayet, because the Arabs are not in a majority there.

But, thirdly, supposing the argument to apply to the entire area, irrespective of majorities or minorities, it has already been pointed out that such a plebiscite has already twice been held and that on each occasion it has resulted in a verdict hostile to the Turkish claim. In 1919 the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet voted unanimously in favour of continued incorporation with Bagdad and Basra. In 1921 the whole of the Arabs, the Kurds of the adjacent districts and the whole of the Turkomans (with the exception of Kirkuk) voted again for inclusion in a State of Irak, and chose the Emir Feisal as their King.

But the article in the Pact introduces another and still more fantastic distinction. According to it, only those portions of territory which were occupied by enemy forces on the 30th October, 1918, are to be allowed thus to decide their destinies. On that day the British forces were about 30 miles distant on the south from Mosul, which they entered immediately afterwards. We are thus led to this absurd result that the Arabs who live in the entire territory south of the armistice line are to be invited to dispose of their fate four years later by plebiscite, while the Arab population of Mosul town itself, who form more than one-third of the Arab population of the whole vilayet, are to be deprived of that right. The case has only to be stated to demonstrate the absurdity of such a claim. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the provisions of peace treaties and that no European peace treaty made since the armistice of 1918 has attempted to follow the lines of occupation laid down in the armistice which preceded them.

Finally, a claim, equally untenable and even more incomprehensible, is put forward in the second half of the article, which reads: "The whole of those parts, whether within or outside the said armistice line, which are inhabitated by an Ottoman Moslem majority, united in religion, in race and in aim, imbued with sentiments of mutual respect for each other and of sacrifices 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." It may be remarked in passing that the word "Ottoman" is not easily understood in this context. The sympathy which unites Moslem peoples is generally recognised; it is a matter of religion; but it is difficult to appreciate what unity of race can link together Semitic Arabs, Iranian Kurds and Ural-Altaic Turks, or why the fact that they have once been forced to submit to Ottoman rule should bind them to remain in the Ottoman Empire for all time. In fact, the Turkish Government and the Turkish people are apparently ready at one moment to concede the free determination of their future destinies to the Arab peoples, and at the next moment to demand that territories inhabited by an Ottoman Moslem majority—a phrase which, if it means anything at all, applies equally to the Kurdish, Turkish and Arab populations of the former Turkish Empire—should not be divided "for any reason in truth or in ordinance."

It would appear, therefore, that the claim for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet is not only prohibited by the considerations, racial, political, historical and economic, which have been enumerated in the earlier part of this memorandum, but that it is quite inconsistent with any interpretation that can possibly be applied to the first article of the National Pact.

Lausanne, December 14, 1922.

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TURKEY. [December 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14402/13003/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office December 27.)

Cher Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 23 décembre* 1922.

À CHACUNE de nos réunions j'ai eu l'honneur d'exposer à votre Seigneurie les arguments irréfutables sur lesquels je me base pour demander la restitution du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie. De même que j'ai chaque fois écouté avec l'attention la plus soutenue les considérations que vous avez bien voulu émettre à ce sujet, j'ai de même longuement étudié le mémorandum relatif à la question de Moussoul que vous avez eu la bonté de me faire parvenir dernièrement.

Je ne doute pas que le mémorandum responsif que j'ai l'honneur de remettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence constitue une réponse convaincante aux arguments émis en faveur de la thèse britannique.

Je me permettrai d'ajouter que le Gouvernement turc ne peut songer à renoncer à ses droits souverains sur Moussoul, qui fait partie intégrante de la patrie turque.

Votre très dévoué,
C. N. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Réponse au Mémorandum britannique relatif à la Question de Moussoul.

SE basant sur une série de considérations extrêmement légitimes, la délégation turque affirme avec insistance que le vilayet de Moussoul appartient à la Turquie.

Les raisons sur lesquelles se fonde notre demande sont les suivantes :

I.—*Raison d'ordre ethnographique.*

La population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul s'élève à 503,000 hommes ; il s'y trouve, en outre, des tribus nomades kurdes, turques et arabes comprenant environ 170,000 individus.

Ces tribus changent de place suivant les saisons, et même quittent à certaines époques de l'année le vilayet de Moussoul, il est donc impossible de fixer d'une façon exacte leur nombre. Elles passent, suivant leurs besoins, les différentes saisons de l'année dans les régions de Bagdad, de Nedjef, de Moussoul, de Zor, de Diarbékir, et même sur les plateaux de l'Iran ; c'est pourquoi il n'est pas non plus possible de les considérer comme faisant effectivement partie de la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Les 503,000 hommes formant la population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul se composent d'après les dernières statistiques officielles turques de :

——	Kurdes.	Turcs.	Arabes.	Yézidis.	Non-Mussulmans.	Total.
Sandjak de Suleymanié ..	62,830	32,960	7,210	..	..	103,000
„ Kerkuk	97,000	79,000	8,000	..	..	184,000
„ Moussoul ..	104,000	35,000	28,000	18,000	31,000	216,000
Total pour le vilayet de Moussoul	263,830	146,960	43,210	18,000	31,000	503,600

Ce tableau montre :

Que l'élément arabe est insignifiant dans les sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ;
Que dans le sandjak central de Moussoul il n'y a que 28,000 Arabes contre 139,000 Turcs et Kurdes ; et

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Qu'enfin dans tout le vilayet de Moussoul contre 410,790 Turcs et Kurdes il y a 43,210 Arabes et 31,000 non-musulmans. Plus des 4/5 de la population du vilayet sont donc constitués par les Turcs et les Kurdes et moins de 1/5 par les Arabes et les non-musulmans.

Les Arabes du vilayet de Moussoul se trouvent presque entièrement à Gayara, au sud de la ligne de Sandjar et sur la rive droite du Tigre. Si l'on excepte une étroite bande de territoire s'étendant de Féthié (placé entre le Djébel-Hamrine et le Djébel-Fouhoul) vers Kerkuk, la région située à gauche du Tigre est entièrement peuplée de Kurdes et de Turcs.

Dans la ville de Moussoul on parle en même temps le turc, le kurde et l'arabe; ceux des habitants de cette ville qui actuellement parlent l'arabe et que l'on prend pour des Arabes sont en réalité des Turcs qui, ayant été pendant longtemps en contact continuel avec les Kurdes et les Arabes, ont appris également ces deux langues.

Ceux qui connaissent les affaires de l'Irak savent que la population de Moussoul ne s'est, jusqu'à présent, jamais considérée comme étant arabe et comme faisant partie de la population de l'Irak.

Le mémorandum britannique reconnaît que la ville de Tel-Afr est une ville turque et qu'il se trouve une foule de villages turcs autour de Moussoul. Effectivement, le nahié de Cheihan rattaché à Moussoul et comprenant 68 localités, celui de Achair-Sebâ, qui en comprend 78, sont peuplés en totalité par des Turcs et le nahié dépendant directement de Moussoul, qui comprend 77 localités, est peuplé en très grande majorité par des Turcs.

L'existence tout autour de Moussoul de villages portant des noms purement turcs, tels que Kara-Koyounlou, Kara-Ali, Kétchi-Hani, Narine-Keupru, Buyuk-Keuchk, &c., est une preuve de plus de ce que nous venons de dire.

Les Yézidis sont des Kurdes au point de vue de la race et ont les mêmes mœurs et les mêmes coutumes qu'eux; il n'y a entre eux qu'une différence de secte, ce qui évidemment ne peut en aucune façon servir de prétexte à les différencier les uns des autres. Le même fait s'observe d'ailleurs chez les peuples chrétiens; il ne viendrait par exemple à l'esprit de personne de considérer comme faisant partie de groupements ethniques différents des individus de même race dont les uns seraient catholiques et les autres protestants.

Quant aux Turcs du vilayet de Moussoul, nous dirons que la différence que l'on veut établir entre eux et les Turcs anatoliens en les appelant Turkmènes n'existe nullement en realité et que c'est là une opinion indéfendiable. On dit dans le mémorandum britannique que la langue turque parlée à Moussoul n'est pas identique à celle parlée à Constantinople; mais existe-il en Anatolie un endroit où l'on parle un turc identique à celui de Constantinople? Par contre le dialecte employé par les Turcs de Moussoul est le même que celui qui se parle en Anatolie; la différence qui existe entre eux est moindre que celle qui existe entre le français parlé au nord et celui parlé au sud de la France. Il est d'ailleurs naturel que dans les différentes parties d'un pays une même langue présente quelques variations.

Au sujet de la différence qui existerait entre les Turcs et les Turkmènes, nous croyons superflu d'entrer à ce sujet dans des considérations historiques; qu'il nous suffise seulement de dire que les Turcs anatoliens sont des Turkmènes et que ces deux mots signifient une seule et même chose.

Contrairement aux assertions contenues dans le mémorandum britannique, le *peuple kurde* n'est pas d'origine iranienne, mais au contraire d'origine touranienne. Cette opinion est actuellement presque unanimement partagée par tous les historiens qui se sont occupés de cette question. Il est établi en effet qu'un peuple d'origine touranienne appelé "Gudu" habitait aux temps les plus reculés de l'histoire les montagnes dominant l'Assyrie, que ce peuple était très belliqueux et que son nom qui signifiait "guerrier" se traduisait en assyrien par le synonyme "Gardu" ou "Kardu," d'où dérive le mot Kurde.

Les annales cunéiformes parlent souvent des "Kardus," qu'ils citent sur un pied d'égalité avec les Syriens, les Hittites, les Susiens, les Élamites, les Akkadiens, &c.

Les considérations ethniques qui précèdent suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul doit revenir à la Turquie.

A la présence à l'intérieur de ce vilayet d'une certaine quantité d'Arabes habitant la rive droite du Tigre on peut opposer l'existence en Irak et en dehors de ce vilayet d'une nombreuse population turque et de nombreuses localités peuplées par cet élément.

Si l'on voulait s'appuyer sur les Arabes de la province de Moussoul pour demander

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son rattachement à l'Irak nous pourrions avec tout autant de raison nous réclamer de la présence de Turcs dans les vilayets arabes et notamment dans le vilayet de Bagdad pour demander l'annexion de ces territoires à la Turquie.

II.—*Raisons d'ordre politique.*

Les Turcs et les Kurdes, qui constituent la grande majorité de la population du vilayet de Moussoul, sont fermement décidés à obtenir le rattachement de leurs pays à la Turquie ; aucun doute n'est possible là-dessus.

Ceci est démontré par le fait que les habitants des sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ont refusé de voter en faveur de leur annexion à l'Irak et, lorsque la population de Moussoul et de ses environs aura acquis la possibilité d'exprimer librement ses volontés, on verra qu'elle non plus, n'est pas partisan de son rattachement à l'Irak.

Si sur les habitants de 18 kazas qui constituent le vilayet de Moussoul seules les minorités de la ville de Moussoul ont pu, soit par suite de la violente pression qui fut exercée sur elles, soit encore par intérêt personnel, voter pour l'Irak, il est évident que ce vote d'une infime minorité ne peut en aucun cas servir à déterminer le sort de toute la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Pour ce qui est des aspirations du peuple kurde, la délégation turque a l'honneur de déclarer que la population kurde se trouve unie au peuple turc sous tous les rapports et en particulier au point de vue de la race, de la religion, des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes. Ces deux peuples ont décidé de mener une vie commune et de maintenir unies leurs destinées. Si l'on étudiait leur histoire, on s'apercevrait que les Kurdes ont passé de plein gré sous l'administration turque et ont, depuis des siècles, lié leur sort à celui des Turcs.

Tous les chefs de l'armée turque, ayant participé à la guerre générale et à la guerre d'indépendance, ont proclamé avec respect et admiration les services rendus et les sacrifices consentis par le peuple kurde pour le salut de la patrie.

Surtout dans la lutte contre le Sultan et contre le Gouvernement à jamais disparu de Constantinople, dans la défense des différents fronts anatoliens assaillis par nos ennemis ainsi que dans l'offensive qui aboutit à l'écrasement complet des Grecs, les Kurdes travaillèrent en parfaite communauté avec les Turcs pour l'obtention d'un même but et à la poursuite d'un même idéal.

Le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie est le Gouvernement des Kurdes dans la même mesure que celui des Turcs.

Les véritables et légitimes représentants des Kurdes siégeant à la grande Assemblée nationale proclament qu'ils considèrent comme d'un intérêt vital pour eux que leurs frères restés en dehors des territoires administrés actuellement par le Gouvernement turc soient rattachés à la Turquie.

Dernièrement encore, à la suite des tentatives pour passer du côté turc faites par les détachements kurdes, enrôlés par le Gouvernement de l'Irak, le peu de fidélité de ceux-ci avait été annoncé par les communiqués officiels britanniques.

Les efforts tentés au moyen d'escadrilles aériennes de bombardement en vue d'affaiblir l'attachement témoigné par la population du vilayet de Moussoul envers la Turquie suffisent à eux seuls à montrer la force de cet attachement pour la patrie commune.

Nous voulons, avant de terminer cette partie de notre exposé, parler également des Nestoriens, des Assyriens et des Chaldéens.

Les premiers ont, lors de l'invasion du vilayet de Van par les armées de la Russie tzariste, agi si traîtreusement envers leurs compatriotes avec lesquels ils vivaient tranquillement depuis des siècles, ils ont tellement surpassé en cruauté les envahisseurs eux-mêmes, qu'au moment du départ de ceux-ci, ils ont cru ne pouvoir plus vivre en commun avec les Turcs et les Kurdes et sont partis avec les Russes.

Quant aux Chaldéens et surtout aux Assyriens du vilayet de Diarbékir, comme ils ne se sont jamais laissés influencer par les excitations venues du dehors, ils continuent à vivre en parfaite intelligence avec leurs compatriotes turcs.

III.—*Raisons historiques.*

Les raisons historiques qui militent en faveur du rattachement du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie ne datent pas de la période ottomane seulement ; dans le cas contraire, nos arguments auraient également pu s'appliquer au vilayet de Bagdad ainsi qu'aux autres vilayets perdus par nous et le raisonnement formulé à ce sujet dans le mémorandum britannique aurait été justifié.

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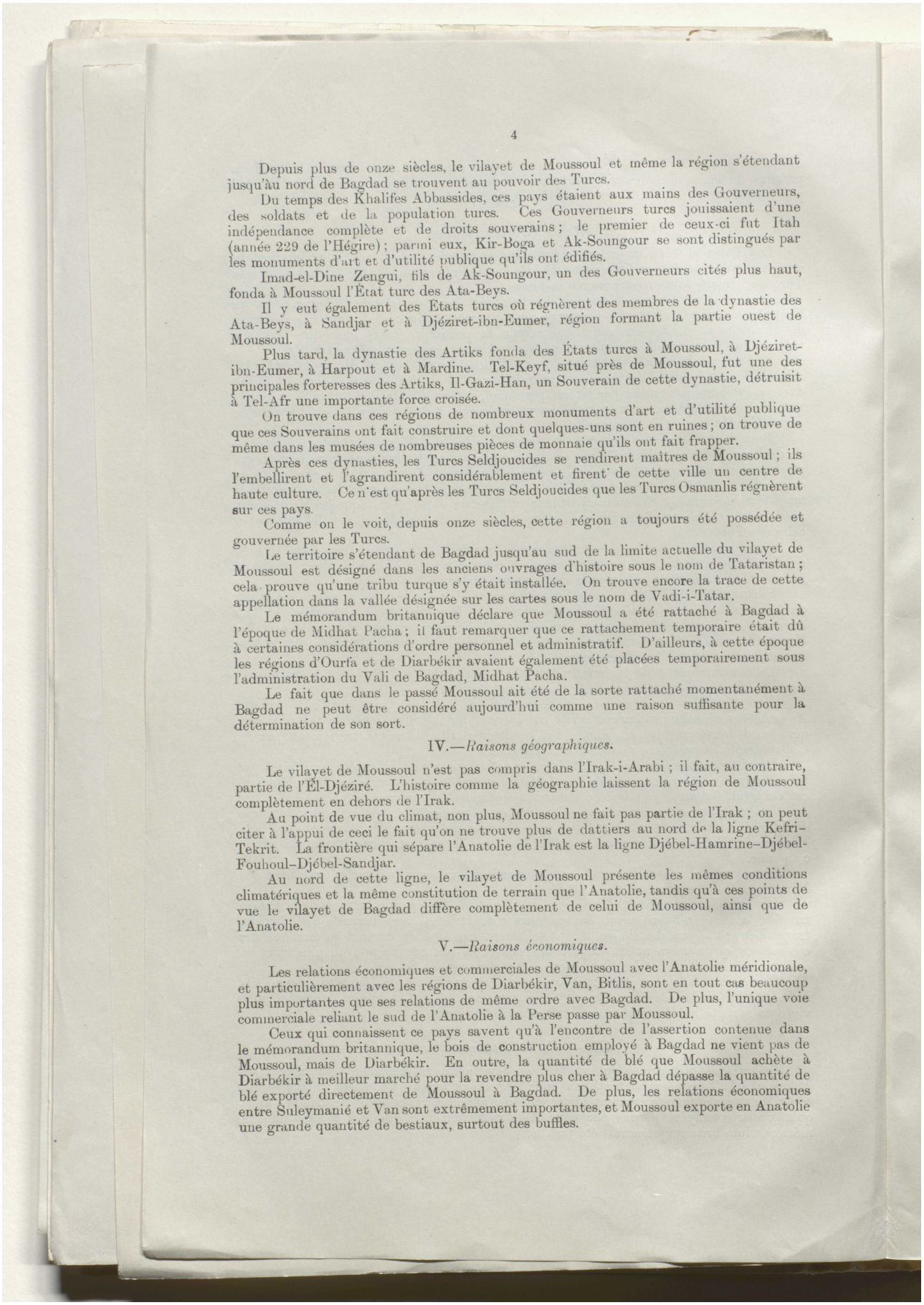

Depuis plus de onze siècles, le vilayet de Moussoul et même la région s'étendant jusqu'au nord de Bagdad se trouvent au pouvoir des Turcs.

Du temps des Khalifes Abbassides, ces pays étaient aux mains des Gouverneurs, des soldats et de la population turcs. Ces Gouverneurs turcs jouissaient d'une indépendance complète et de droits souverains; le premier de ceux-ci fut Itah (année 229 de l'Hégire); parmi eux, Kir-Boga et Ak-Soungour se sont distingués par les monuments d'art et d'utilité publique qu'ils ont édifiés.

Imad-el-Dine Zengui, fils de Ak-Soungour, un des Gouverneurs cités plus haut, fonda à Moussoul l'État turc des Ata-Beys.

Il y eut également des États turcs où régnèrent des membres de la dynastie des Ata-Beys, à Sandjar et à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, région formant la partie ouest de Moussoul.

Plus tard, la dynastie des Artiks fonda des États turcs à Moussoul, à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, à Harpout et à Mardine. Tel-Keyf, situé près de Moussoul, fut une des principales forteresses des Artiks, Il-Gazi-Han, un Souverain de cette dynastie, détruisit à Tel-Afr une importante force croisée.

On trouve dans ces régions de nombreux monuments d'art et d'utilité publique que ces Souverains ont fait construire et dont quelques-uns sont en ruines; on trouve de même dans les musées de nombreuses pièces de monnaie qu'ils ont fait frapper.

Après ces dynasties, les Turcs Seldjoucides se rendirent maîtres de Moussoul; ils l'embellirent et l'agrandirent considérablement et firent de cette ville un centre de haute culture. Ce n'est qu'après les Turcs Seldjoucides que les Turcs Osmanlis régnèrent sur ces pays.

Comme on le voit, depuis onze siècles, cette région a toujours été possédée et gouvernée par les Turcs.

Le territoire s'étendant de Bagdad jusqu'au sud de la limite actuelle du vilayet de Moussoul est désigné dans les anciens ouvrages d'histoire sous le nom de Tataristan; cela prouve qu'une tribu turque s'y était installée. On trouve encore la trace de cette appellation dans la vallée désignée sur les cartes sous le nom de Vadi-i-Tatar.

Le mémorandum britannique déclare que Moussoul a été rattaché à Bagdad à l'époque de Midhat Pacha; il faut remarquer que ce rattachement temporaire était dû à certaines considérations d'ordre personnel et administratif. D'ailleurs, à cette époque les régions d'Ourfa et de Diarbékir avaient également été placées temporairement sous l'administration du Vali de Bagdad, Midhat Pacha.

Le fait que dans le passé Moussoul ait été de la sorte rattaché momentanément à Bagdad ne peut être considéré aujourd'hui comme une raison suffisante pour la détermination de son sort.

IV.—*Raisons géographiques.*

Le vilayet de Moussoul n'est pas compris dans l'Irak-i-Arabi; il fait, au contraire, partie de l'El-Djéziré. L'histoire comme la géographie laissent la région de Moussoul complètement en dehors de l'Irak.

Au point de vue du climat, non plus, Moussoul ne fait pas partie de l'Irak; on peut citer à l'appui de ceci le fait qu'on ne trouve plus de dattiers au nord de la ligne Kefri-Tekrit. La frontière qui sépare l'Anatolie de l'Irak est la ligne Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul–Djébel-Sandjar.

Au nord de cette ligne, le vilayet de Moussoul présente les mêmes conditions climatériques et la même constitution de terrain que l'Anatolie, tandis qu'à ces points de vue le vilayet de Bagdad diffère complètement de celui de Moussoul, ainsi que de l'Anatolie.

V.—*Raisons économiques.*

Les relations économiques et commerciales de Moussoul avec l'Anatolie méridionale, et particulièrement avec les régions de Diarbékir, Van, Bitlis, sont en tout cas beaucoup plus importantes que ses relations de même ordre avec Bagdad. De plus, l'unique voie commerciale reliant le sud de l'Anatolie à la Perse passe par Moussoul.

Ceux qui connaissent ce pays savent qu'à l'encontre de l'assertion contenue dans le mémorandum britannique, le bois de construction employé à Bagdad ne vient pas de Moussoul, mais de Diarbékir. En outre, la quantité de blé que Moussoul achète à Diarbékir à meilleur marché pour la revendre plus cher à Bagdad dépasse la quantité de blé exporté directement de Moussoul à Bagdad. De plus, les relations économiques entre Suleymanié et Van sont extrêmement importantes, et Moussoul exporte en Anatolie une grande quantité de bestiaux, surtout des buffles.

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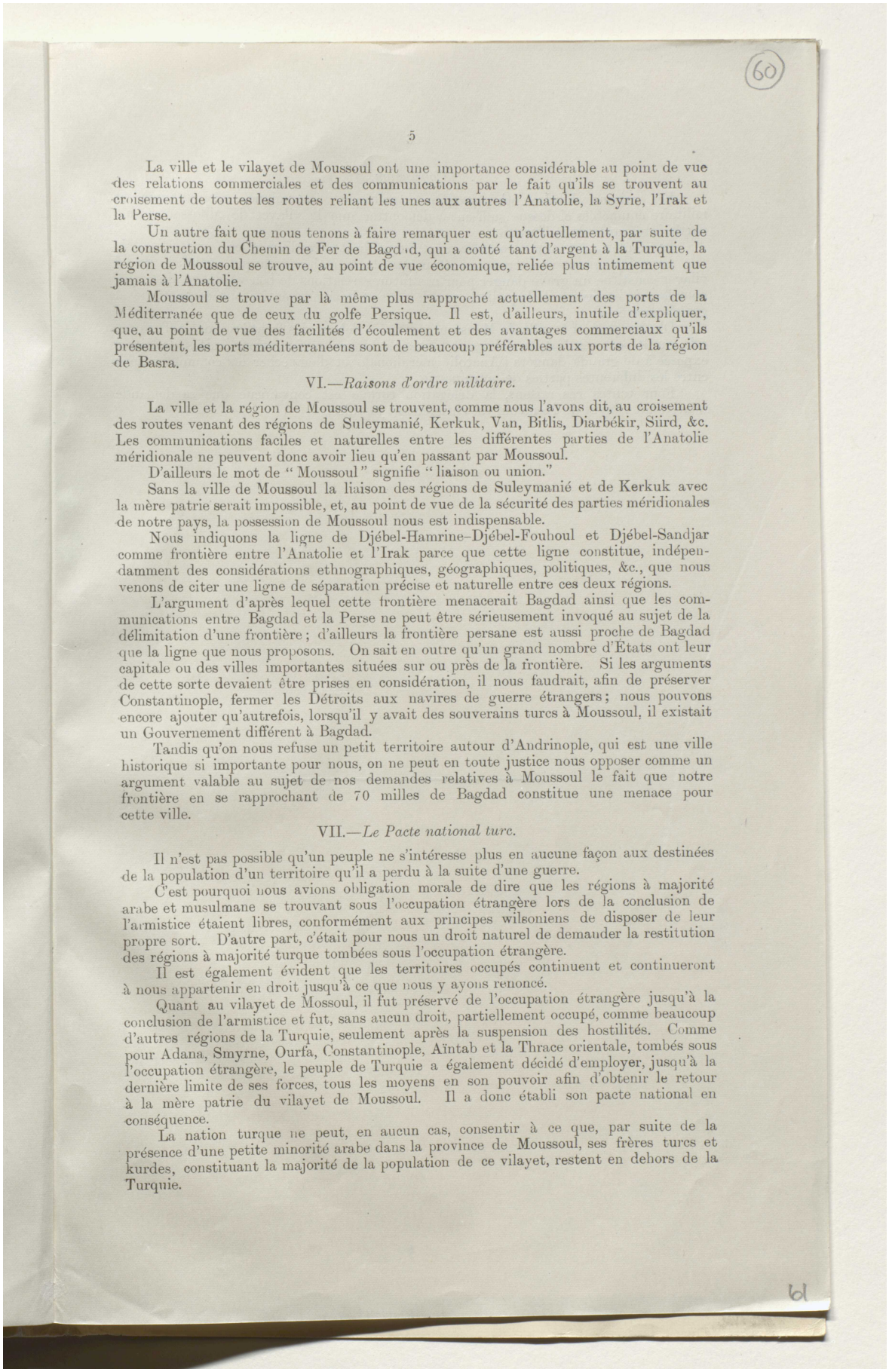

La ville et le vilayet de Moussoul ont une importance considérable au point de vue des relations commerciales et des communications par le fait qu'ils se trouvent au croisement de toutes les routes reliant les unes aux autres l'Anatolie, la Syrie, l'Irak et la Perse.

Un autre fait que nous tenons à faire remarquer est qu'actuellement, par suite de la construction du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, qui a coûté tant d'argent à la Turquie, la région de Moussoul se trouve, au point de vue économique, reliée plus intimement que jamais à l'Anatolie.

Moussoul se trouve par là même plus rapproché actuellement des ports de la Méditerranée que de ceux du golfe Persique. Il est, d'ailleurs, inutile d'expliquer, que, au point de vue des facilités d'écoulement et des avantages commerciaux qu'ils présentent, les ports méditerranéens sont de beaucoup préférables aux ports de la région de Basra.

VI.—*Raisons d'ordre militaire.*

La ville et la région de Moussoul se trouvent, comme nous l'avons dit, au croisement des routes venant des régions de Suleymanié, Kerkuk, Van, Bitlis, Diarbékir, Siird, &c. Les communications faciles et naturelles entre les différentes parties de l'Anatolie méridionale ne peuvent donc avoir lieu qu'en passant par Moussoul.

D'ailleurs le mot de "Moussoul" signifie "liaison ou union."

Sans la ville de Moussoul la liaison des régions de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk avec la mère patrie serait impossible, et, au point de vue de la sécurité des parties méridionales de notre pays, la possession de Moussoul nous est indispensable.

Nous indiquons la ligne de Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul et Djébel-Sandjar comme frontière entre l'Anatolie et l'Irak parce que cette ligne constitue, indépendamment des considérations ethnographiques, géographiques, politiques, &c., que nous venons de citer une ligne de séparation précise et naturelle entre ces deux régions.

L'argument d'après lequel cette frontière menacerait Bagdad ainsi que les communications entre Bagdad et la Perse ne peut être sérieusement invoqué au sujet de la délimitation d'une frontière; d'ailleurs la frontière persane est aussi proche de Bagdad que la ligne que nous proposons. On sait en outre qu'un grand nombre d'États ont leur capitale ou des villes importantes situées sur ou près de la frontière. Si les arguments de cette sorte devaient être prises en considération, il nous faudrait, afin de préserver Constantinople, fermer les Détroits aux navires de guerre étrangers; nous pouvons encore ajouter qu'autrefois, lorsqu'il y avait des souverains turcs à Moussoul, il existait un Gouvernement différent à Bagdad.

Tandis qu'on nous refuse un petit territoire autour d'Andrinople, qui est une ville historique si importante pour nous, on ne peut en toute justice nous opposer comme un argument valable au sujet de nos demandes relatives à Moussoul le fait que notre frontière en se rapprochant de 70 milles de Bagdad constitue une menace pour cette ville.

VII.—*Le Pacte national turc.*

Il n'est pas possible qu'un peuple ne s'intéresse plus en aucune façon aux destinées de la population d'un territoire qu'il a perdu à la suite d'une guerre.

C'est pourquoi nous avions obligation morale de dire que les régions à majorité arabe et musulmane se trouvant sous l'occupation étrangère lors de la conclusion de l'armistice étaient libres, conformément aux principes wilsoniens de disposer de leur propre sort. D'autre part, c'était pour nous un droit naturel de demander la restitution des régions à majorité turque tombées sous l'occupation étrangère.

Il est également évident que les territoires occupés continuent et continueront à nous appartenir en droit jusqu'à ce que nous y ayons renoncé.

Quant au vilayet de Mossoul, il fut préservé de l'occupation étrangère jusqu'à la conclusion de l'armistice et fut, sans aucun droit, partiellement occupé, comme beaucoup d'autres régions de la Turquie, seulement après la suspension des hostilités. Comme pour Adana, Smyrne, Ourfa, Constantinople, Aïntab et la Thrace orientale, tombés sous l'occupation étrangère, le peuple de Turquie a également décidé d'employer, jusqu'à la dernière limite de ses forces, tous les moyens en son pouvoir afin d'obtenir le retour à la mère patrie du vilayet de Moussoul. Il a donc établi son pacte national en conséquence.

La nation turque ne peut, en aucun cas, consentir à ce que, par suite de la présence d'une petite minorité arabe dans la province de Moussoul, ses frères turcs et kurdes, constituant la majorité de la population de ce vilayet, restent en dehors de la Turquie.

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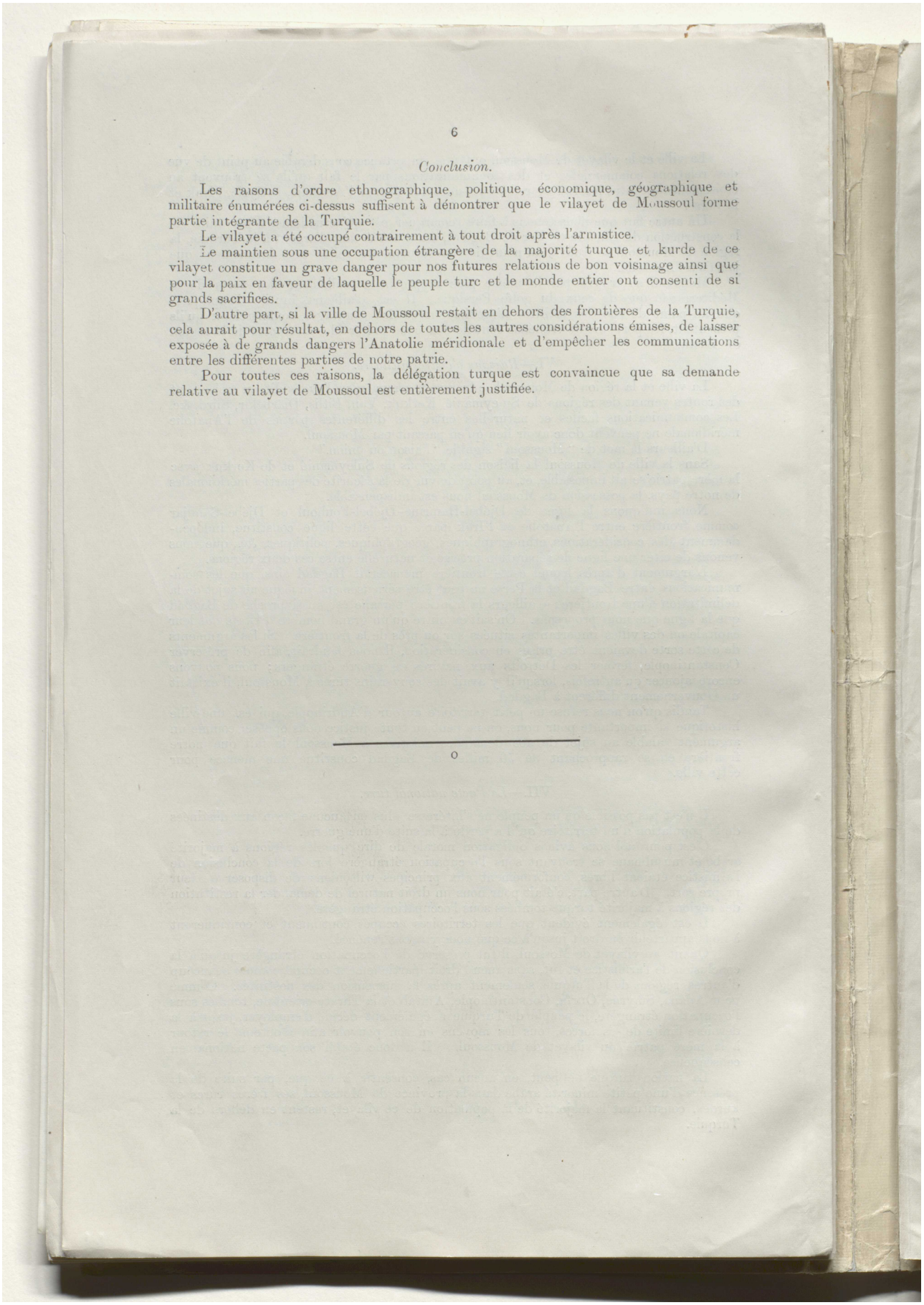

Conclusion.

Les raisons d'ordre ethnographique, politique, économique, géographique et militaire énumérées ci-dessus suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul forme partie intégrante de la Turquie.

Le vilayet a été occupé contrairement à tout droit après l'armistice.

Le maintien sous une occupation étrangère de la majorité turque et kurde de ce vilayet constitue un grave danger pour nos futures relations de bon voisinage ainsi que pour la paix en faveur de laquelle le peuple turc et le monde entier ont consenti de si grands sacrifices.

D'autre part, si la ville de Moussoul restait en dehors des frontières de la Turquie, cela aurait pour résultat, en dehors de toutes les autres considérations émises, de laisser exposée à de grands dangers l'Anatolie méridionale et d'empêcher les communications entre les différentes parties de notre patrie.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la délégation turque est convaincue que sa demande relative au vilayet de Moussoul est entièrement justifiée.

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY. [December 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14402/13003/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office December 27.)

Cher Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 23 décembre* 1922.

À CHACUNE de nos réunions j'ai eu l'honneur d'exposer à votre Seigneurie les arguments irréfutables sur lesquels je me base pour demander la restitution du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie. De même que j'ai chaque fois écouté avec l'attention la plus soutenue les considérations que vous avez bien voulu émettre à ce sujet, j'ai de même longuement étudié le mémorandum relatif à la question de Moussoul que vous avez eu la bonté de me faire parvenir dernièrement.

Je ne doute pas que le mémorandum responsif que j'ai l'honneur de remettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence constitue une réponse convaincante aux arguments émis en faveur de la thèse britannique.

Je me permettrai d'ajouter que le Gouvernement turc ne peut songer à renoncer à ses droits souverains sur Moussoul, qui fait partie intégrante de la patrie turque.

Votre très dévoué,
C. N. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Réponse au Mémorandum britannique relatif à la Question de Moussoul.

SE basant sur une série de considérations extrêmement légitimes, la délégation turque affirme avec insistance que le vilayet de Moussoul appartient à la Turquie.

Les raisons sur lesquelles se fonde notre demande sont les suivantes :

I.—*Raison d'ordre ethnographique.*

La population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul s'élève à 503,000 hommes ; il s'y trouve, en outre, des tribus nomades kurdes, turques et arabes comprenant environ 170,000 individus.

Ces tribus changent de place suivant les saisons, et même quittent à certaines époques de l'année le vilayet de Moussoul, il est donc impossible de fixer d'une façon exacte leur nombre. Elles passent, suivant leurs besoins, les différentes saisons de l'année dans les régions de Bagdad, de Nedjef, de Moussoul, de Zor, de Diarbékir, et même sur les plateaux de l'Iran ; c'est pourquoi il n'est pas non plus possible de les considérer comme faisant effectivement partie de la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Les 503,000 hommes formant la population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul se composent d'après les dernières statistiques officielles turques de :

——	Kurdes.	Turcs.	Arabes.	Yézidis.	Non-Mussulmans.	Total.
Sandjak de Suleymanié ..	62,830	32,960	7,210	..	..	103,000
„ Kerkuk	97,000	79,000	8,000	..	..	184,000
„ Moussoul ..	104,000	35,000	28,000	18,000	31,000	216,000
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Ce tableau montre :

Que l'élément arabe est insignifiant dans les sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ;
Que dans le sandjak central de Moussoul il n'y a que 28,000 Arabes contre 139,000 Turcs et Kurdes ; et

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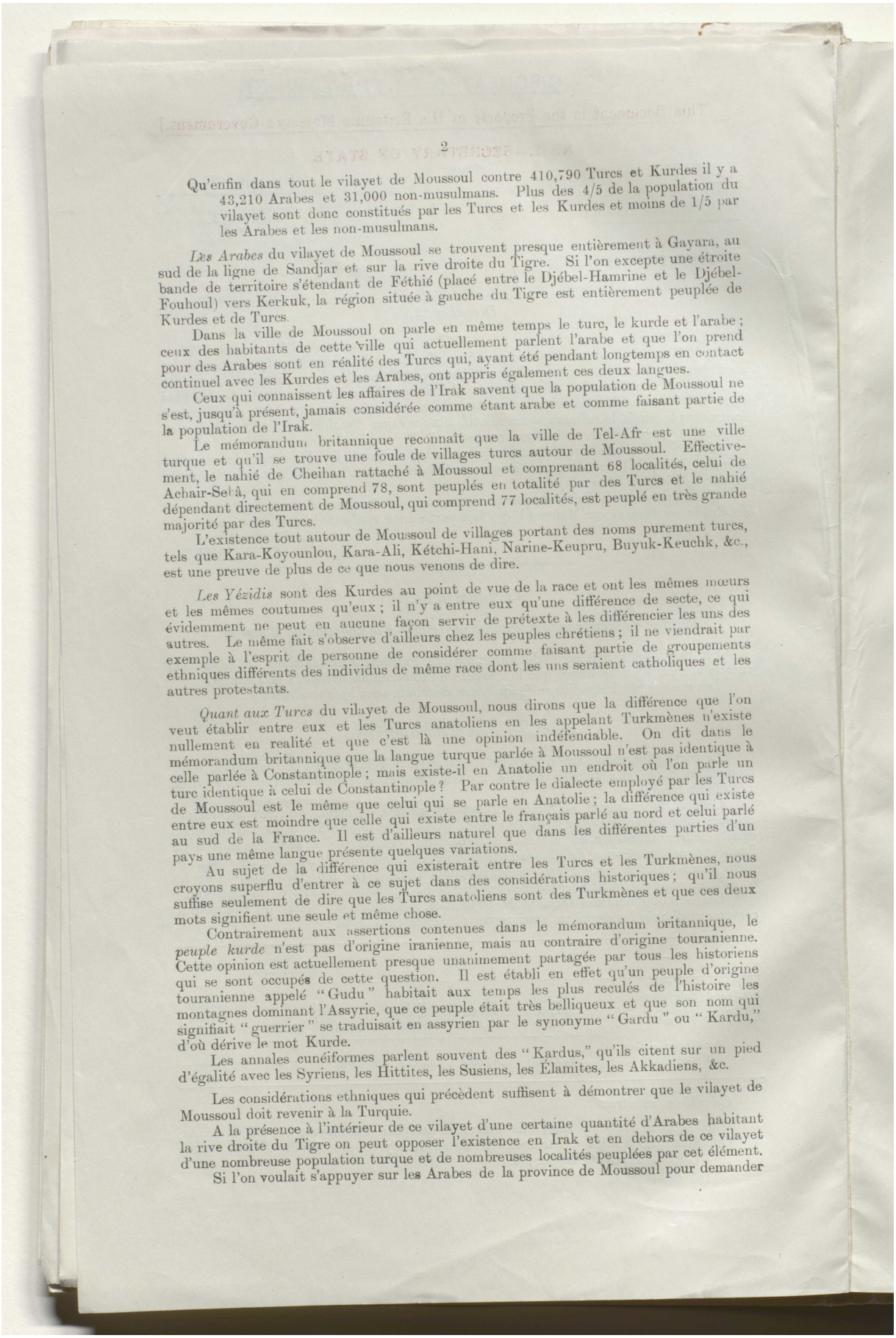

Qu'enfin dans tout le vilayet de Moussoul contre 410,790 Turcs et Kurdes il y a 43,210 Arabes et 31,000 non-musulmans. Plus des 4/5 de la population du vilayet sont donc constitués par les Turcs et les Kurdes et moins de 1/5 par les Arabes et les non-musulmans.

Les Arabes du vilayet de Moussoul se trouvent presque entièrement à Gayara, au sud de la ligne de Sandjar et sur la rive droite du Tigre. Si l'on excepte une étroite bande de territoire s'étendant de Féthié (placé entre le Djébel-Hamrine et le Djébel-Fouhoul) vers Kerkuk, la région située à gauche du Tigre est entièrement peuplée de Kurdes et de Turcs.

Dans la ville de Moussoul on parle en même temps le turc, le kurde et l'arabe; ceux des habitants de cette ville qui actuellement parlent l'arabe et que l'on prend pour des Arabes sont en réalité des Turcs qui, ayant été pendant longtemps en contact continuel avec les Kurdes et les Arabes, ont appris également ces deux langues.

Ceux qui connaissent les affaires de l'Irak savent que la population de Moussoul ne s'est, jusqu'à présent, jamais considérée comme étant arabe et comme faisant partie de la population de l'Irak.

Le mémorandum britannique reconnaît que la ville de Tel-Afr est une ville turque et qu'il se trouve une foule de villages turcs autour de Moussoul. Effectivement, le nahié de Cheihan rattaché à Moussoul et comprenant 68 localités, celui de Achair-Sebâ, qui en comprend 78, sont peuplés en totalité par des Turcs et le nahié dépendant directement de Moussoul, qui comprend 77 localités, est peuplé en très grande majorité par des Turcs.

L'existence tout autour de Moussoul de villages portant des noms purement turcs, tels que Kara-Koyounlou, Kara-Ali, Kétchi-Hani, Narine-Keupru, Buyuk-Keuchk, &c., est une preuve de plus de ce que nous venons de dire.

Les Yézidis sont des Kurdes au point de vue de la race et ont les mêmes mœurs et les mêmes coutumes qu'eux; il n'y a entre eux qu'une différence de secte, ce qui évidemment ne peut en aucune façon servir de prétexte à les différencier les uns des autres. Le même fait s'observe d'ailleurs chez les peuples chrétiens; il ne viendrait par exemple à l'esprit de personne de considérer comme faisant partie de groupements ethniques différents des individus de même race dont les uns seraient catholiques et les autres protestants.

Quant aux Turcs du vilayet de Moussoul, nous dirons que la différence que l'on veut établir entre eux et les Turcs anatoliens en les appelant Turkmènes n'existe nullement en realité et que c'est là une opinion indéfendiable. On dit dans le mémorandum britannique que la langue turque parlée à Moussoul n'est pas identique à celle parlée à Constantinople; mais existe-il en Anatolie un endroit où l'on parle un turc identique à celui de Constantinople? Par contre le dialecte employé par les Turcs de Moussoul est le même que celui qui se parle en Anatolie; la différence qui existe entre eux est moindre que celle qui existe entre le français parlé au nord et celui parlé au sud de la France. Il est d'ailleurs naturel que dans les différentes parties d'un pays une même langue présente quelques variations.

Au sujet de la différence qui existerait entre les Turcs et les Turkmènes, nous croyons superflu d'entrer à ce sujet dans des considérations historiques; qu'il nous suffise seulement de dire que les Turcs anatoliens sont des Turkmènes et que ces deux mots signifient une seule et même chose.

Contrairement aux assertions contenues dans le mémorandum britannique, le *peuple kurde* n'est pas d'origine iranienne, mais au contraire d'origine touranienne. Cette opinion est actuellement presque unanimement partagée par tous les historiens qui se sont occupés de cette question. Il est établi en effet qu'un peuple d'origine touranienne appelé "Gudu" habitait aux temps les plus reculés de l'histoire les montagnes dominant l'Assyrie, que ce peuple était très belliqueux et que son nom qui signifiait "guerrier" se traduisait en assyrien par le synonyme "Gardu" ou "Kardu," d'où dérive le mot Kurde.

Les annales cunéiformes parlent souvent des "Kardus," qu'ils citent sur un pied d'égalité avec les Syriens, les Hittites, les Susiens, les Élamites, les Akkadiens, &c.

Les considérations ethniques qui précèdent suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul doit revenir à la Turquie.

A la présence à l'intérieur de ce vilayet d'une certaine quantité d'Arabes habitant la rive droite du Tigre on peut opposer l'existence en Irak et en dehors de ce vilayet d'une nombreuse population turque et de nombreuses localités peuplées par cet élément.

Si l'on voulait s'appuyer sur les Arabes de la province de Moussoul pour demander

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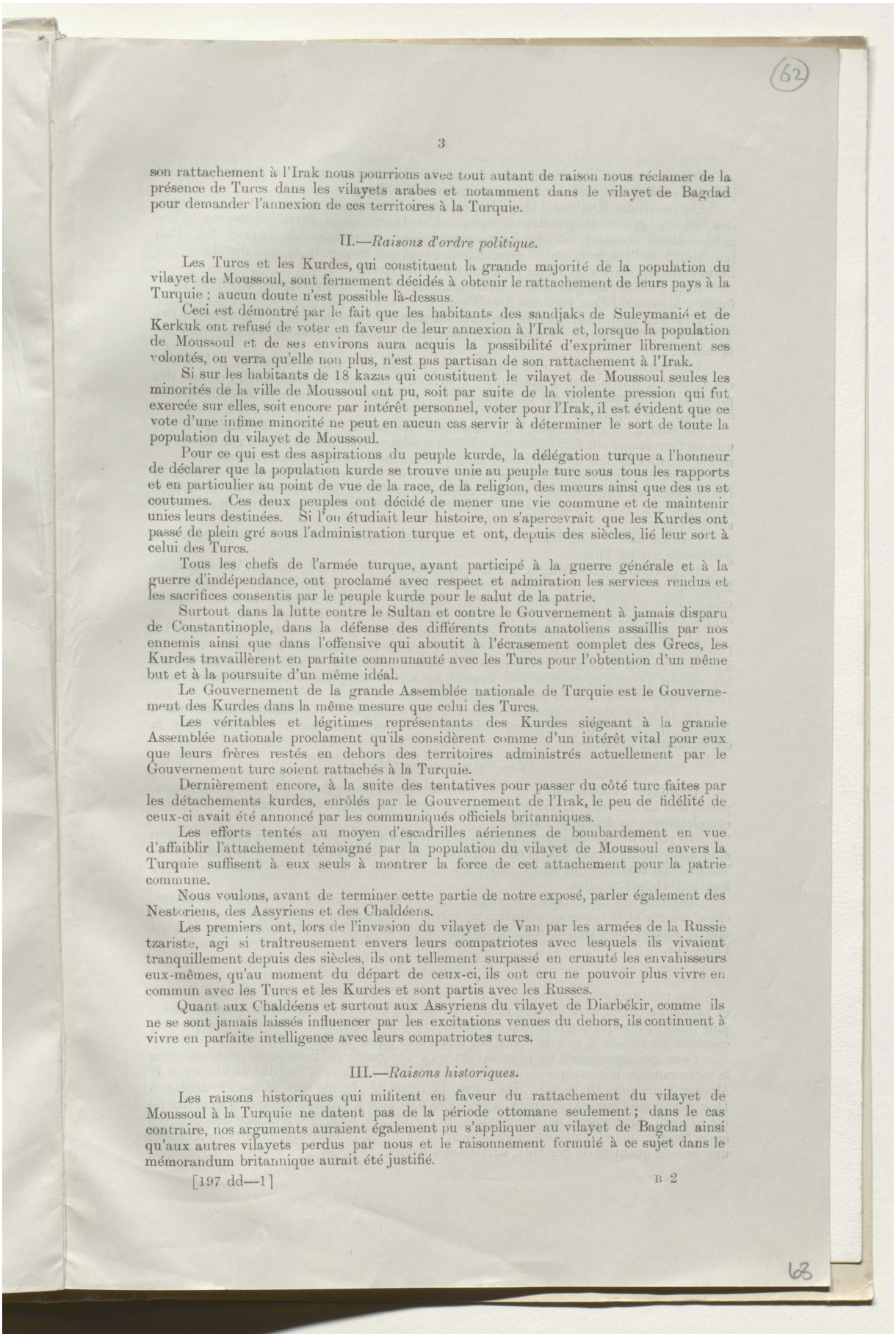

son rattachement à l'Irak nous pourrions avec tout autant de raison nous réclamer de la présence de Turcs dans les vilayets arabes et notamment dans le vilayet de Bagdad pour demander l'annexion de ces territoires à la Turquie.

II.—*Raisons d'ordre politique.*

Les Turcs et les Kurdes, qui constituent la grande majorité de la population du vilayet de Moussoul, sont fermement décidés à obtenir le rattachement de leurs pays à la Turquie ; aucun doute n'est possible là-dessus.

Ceci est démontré par le fait que les habitants des sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ont refusé de voter en faveur de leur annexion à l'Irak et, lorsque la population de Moussoul et de ses environs aura acquis la possibilité d'exprimer librement ses volontés, on verra qu'elle non plus, n'est pas partisan de son rattachement à l'Irak.

Si sur les habitants de 18 kazas qui constituent le vilayet de Moussoul seules les minorités de la ville de Moussoul ont pu, soit par suite de la violente pression qui fut exercée sur elles, soit encore par intérêt personnel, voter pour l'Irak, il est évident que ce vote d'une infime minorité ne peut en aucun cas servir à déterminer le sort de toute la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Pour ce qui est des aspirations du peuple kurde, la délégation turque a l'honneur de déclarer que la population kurde se trouve unie au peuple turc sous tous les rapports et en particulier au point de vue de la race, de la religion, des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes. Ces deux peuples ont décidé de mener une vie commune et de maintenir unies leurs destinées. Si l'on étudiait leur histoire, on s'apercevrait que les Kurdes ont passé de plein gré sous l'administration turque et ont, depuis des siècles, lié leur sort à celui des Turcs.

Tous les chefs de l'armée turque, ayant participé à la guerre générale et à la guerre d'indépendance, ont proclamé avec respect et admiration les services rendus et les sacrifices consentis par le peuple kurde pour le salut de la patrie.

Surtout dans la lutte contre le Sultan et contre le Gouvernement à jamais disparu de Constantinople, dans la défense des différents fronts anatoliens assaillis par nos ennemis ainsi que dans l'offensive qui aboutit à l'écrasement complet des Grecs, les Kurdes travaillèrent en parfaite communauté avec les Turcs pour l'obtention d'un même but et à la poursuite d'un même idéal.

Le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie est le Gouvernement des Kurdes dans la même mesure que celui des Turcs.

Les véritables et légitimes représentants des Kurdes siégeant à la grande Assemblée nationale proclament qu'ils considèrent comme d'un intérêt vital pour eux que leurs frères restés en dehors des territoires administrés actuellement par le Gouvernement turc soient rattachés à la Turquie.

Dernièrement encore, à la suite des tentatives pour passer du côté turc faites par les détachements kurdes, enrôlés par le Gouvernement de l'Irak, le peu de fidélité de ceux-ci avait été annoncé par les communiqués officiels britanniques.

Les efforts tentés au moyen d'escadrilles aériennes de bombardement en vue d'affaiblir l'attachement témoigné par la population du vilayet de Moussoul envers la Turquie suffisent à eux seuls à montrer la force de cet attachement pour la patrie commune.

Nous voulons, avant de terminer cette partie de notre exposé, parler également des Nestoriens, des Assyriens et des Chaldéens.

Les premiers ont, lors de l'invasion du vilayet de Van par les armées de la Russie tzariste, agi si traîtreusement envers leurs compatriotes avec lesquels ils vivaient tranquillement depuis des siècles, ils ont tellement surpassé en cruauté les envahisseurs eux-mêmes, qu'au moment du départ de ceux-ci, ils ont cru ne pouvoir plus vivre en commun avec les Turcs et les Kurdes et sont partis avec les Russes.

Quant aux Chaldéens et surtout aux Assyriens du vilayet de Diarbékir, comme ils ne se sont jamais laissés influencer par les excitations venues du dehors, ils continuent à vivre en parfaite intelligence avec leurs compatriotes turcs.

III.—*Raisons historiques.*

Les raisons historiques qui militent en faveur du rattachement du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie ne datent pas de la période ottomane seulement ; dans le cas contraire, nos arguments auraient également pu s'appliquer au vilayet de Bagdad ainsi qu'aux autres vilayets perdus par nous et le raisonnement formulé à ce sujet dans le mémorandum britannique aurait été justifié.

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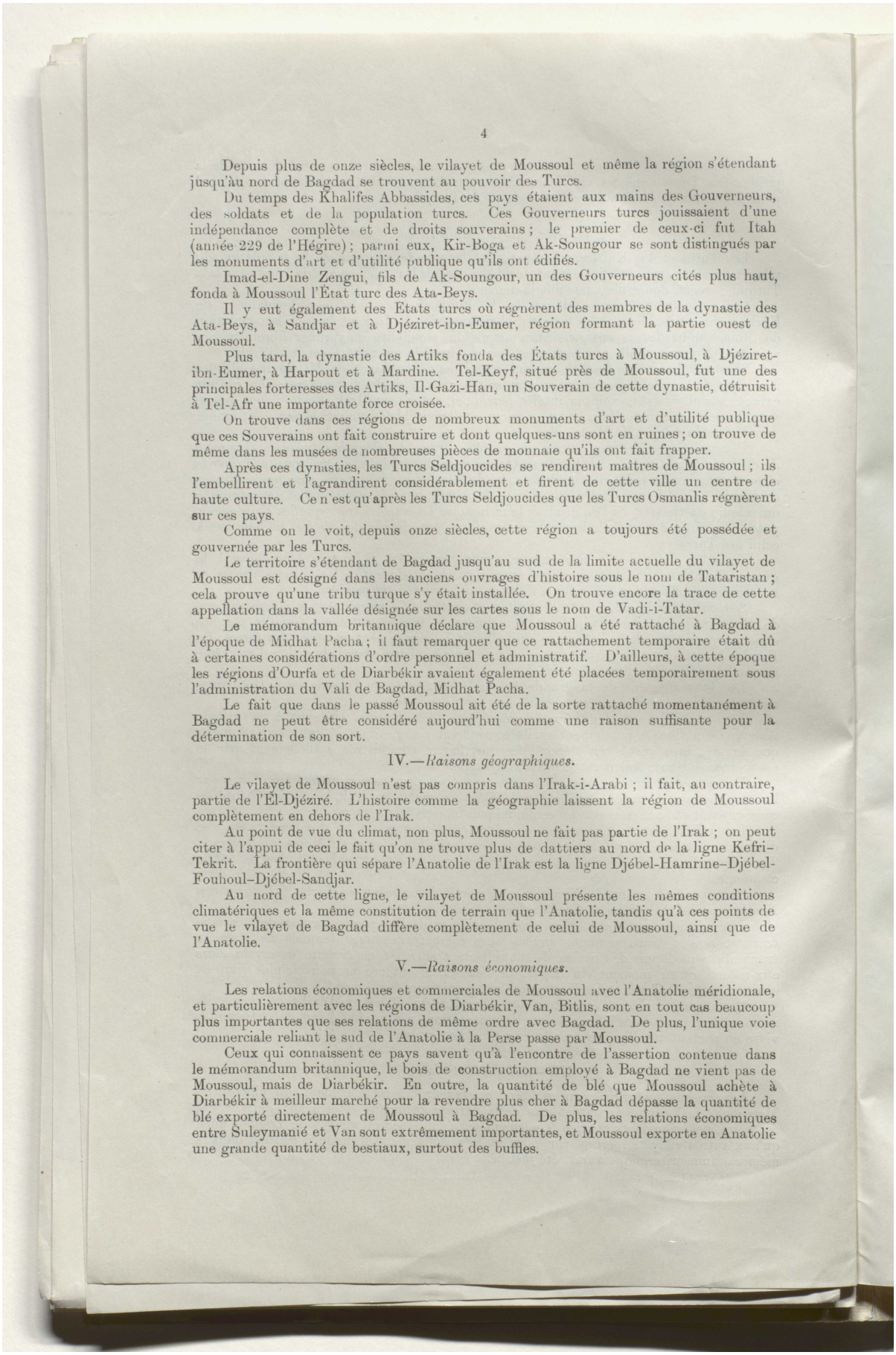

Depuis plus de onze siècles, le vilayet de Moussoul et même la région s'étendant jusqu'au nord de Bagdad se trouvent au pouvoir des Turcs.

Du temps des Khalifes Abbassides, ces pays étaient aux mains des Gouverneurs, des soldats et de la population turcs. Ces Gouverneurs turcs jouissaient d'une indépendance complète et de droits souverains ; le premier de ceux-ci fut Itah (année 229 de l'Hégire) ; parmi eux, Kir-Boga et Ak-Soungour se sont distingués par les monuments d'art et d'utilité publique qu'ils ont édifiés.

Imad-el-Dine Zengui, fils de Ak-Soungour, un des Gouverneurs cités plus haut, fonda à Moussoul l'État turc des Ata-Beys.

Il y eut également des États turcs où régnèrent des membres de la dynastie des Ata-Beys, à Sandjar et à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, région formant la partie ouest de Moussoul.

Plus tard, la dynastie des Artiks fonda des États turcs à Moussoul, à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, à Harpout et à Mardine. Tel-Keyf, situé près de Moussoul, fut une des principales forteresses des Artiks, Il-Gazi-Han, un Souverain de cette dynastie, détruisit à Tel-Afr une importante force croisée.

On trouve dans ces régions de nombreux monuments d'art et d'utilité publique que ces Souverains ont fait construire et dont quelques-uns sont en ruines ; on trouve de même dans les musées de nombreuses pièces de monnaie qu'ils ont fait frapper.

Après ces dynasties, les Turcs Seldjoucides se rendirent maîtres de Moussoul ; ils l'embellirent et l'agrandirent considérablement et firent de cette ville un centre de haute culture. Ce n'est qu'après les Turcs Seldjoucides que les Turcs Osmanlis régnèrent sur ces pays.

Comme on le voit, depuis onze siècles, cette région a toujours été possédée et gouvernée par les Turcs.

Le territoire s'étendant de Bagdad jusqu'au sud de la limite actuelle du vilayet de Moussoul est désigné dans les anciens ouvrages d'histoire sous le nom de Tataristan ; cela prouve qu'une tribu turque s'y était installée. On trouve encore la trace de cette appellation dans la vallée désignée sur les cartes sous le nom de Vadi-i-Tatar.

Le mémorandum britannique déclare que Moussoul a été rattaché à Bagdad à l'époque de Midhat Pacha ; il faut remarquer que ce rattachement temporaire était dû à certaines considérations d'ordre personnel et administratif. D'ailleurs, à cette époque les régions d'Ourfa et de Diarbékir avaient également été placées temporairement sous l'administration du Vali de Bagdad, Midhat Pacha.

Le fait que dans le passé Moussoul ait été de la sorte rattaché momentanément à Bagdad ne peut être considéré aujourd'hui comme une raison suffisante pour la détermination de son sort.

IV.—*Raisons géographiques.*

Le vilayet de Moussoul n'est pas compris dans l'Irak-i-Arabi ; il fait, au contraire, partie de l'El-Djéziré. L'histoire comme la géographie laissent la région de Moussoul complètement en dehors de l'Irak.

Au point de vue du climat, non plus, Moussoul ne fait pas partie de l'Irak ; on peut citer à l'appui de ceci le fait qu'on ne trouve plus de dattiers au nord de la ligne Kefri–Tekrit. La frontière qui sépare l'Anatolie de l'Irak est la ligne Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul–Djébel-Sandjar.

Au nord de cette ligne, le vilayet de Moussoul présente les mêmes conditions climatériques et la même constitution de terrain que l'Anatolie, tandis qu'à ces points de vue le vilayet de Bagdad diffère complètement de celui de Moussoul, ainsi que de l'Anatolie.

V.—*Raisons économiques.*

Les relations économiques et commerciales de Moussoul avec l'Anatolie méridionale, et particulièrement avec les régions de Diarbékir, Van, Bitlis, sont en tout cas beaucoup plus importantes que ses relations de même ordre avec Bagdad. De plus, l'unique voie commerciale reliant le sud de l'Anatolie à la Perse passe par Moussoul.

Ceux qui connaissent ce pays savent qu'à l'encontre de l'assertion contenue dans le mémorandum britannique, le bois de construction employé à Bagdad ne vient pas de Moussoul, mais de Diarbékir. En outre, la quantité de blé que Moussoul achète à Diarbékir à meilleur marché pour la revendre plus cher à Bagdad dépasse la quantité de blé exporté directement de Moussoul à Bagdad. De plus, les relations économiques entre Suleymanié et Van sont extrêmement importantes, et Moussoul exporte en Anatolie une grande quantité de bestiaux, surtout des buffles.

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La ville et le vilayet de Moussoul ont une importance considérable au point de vue des relations commerciales et des communications par le fait qu'ils se trouvent au croisement de toutes les routes reliant les unes aux autres l'Anatolie, la Syrie, l'Irak et la Perse.

Un autre fait que nous tenons à faire remarquer est qu'actuellement, par suite de la construction du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, qui a coûté tant d'argent à la Turquie, la région de Moussoul se trouve, au point de vue économique, reliée plus intimement que jamais à l'Anatolie.

Moussoul se trouve par là même plus rapproché actuellement des ports de la Méditerranée que de ceux du golfe Persique. Il est, d'ailleurs, inutile d'expliquer, que, au point de vue des facilités d'écoulement et des avantages commerciaux qu'ils présentent, les ports méditerranéens sont de beaucoup préférables aux ports de la région de Basra.

VI.—*Raisons d'ordre militaire.*

La ville et la région de Moussoul se trouvent, comme nous l'avons dit, au croisement des routes venant des régions de Suleymanié, Kerkuk, Van, Bitlis, Diarbékir, Siird, &c. Les communications faciles et naturelles entre les différentes parties de l'Anatolie méridionale ne peuvent donc avoir lieu qu'en passant par Moussoul.

D'ailleurs le mot de "Moussoul" signifie "liaison ou union."

Sans la ville de Moussoul la liaison des régions de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk avec la mère patrie serait impossible, et, au point de vue de la sécurité des parties méridionales de notre pays, la possession de Moussoul nous est indispensable.

Nous indiquons la ligne de Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul et Djébel-Sandjar comme frontière entre l'Anatolie et l'Irak parce que cette ligne constitue, indépendamment des considérations ethnographiques, géographiques, politiques, &c., que nous venons de citer une ligne de séparation précise et naturelle entre ces deux régions.

L'argument d'après lequel cette frontière menacerait Bagdad ainsi que les communications entre Bagdad et la Perse ne peut être sérieusement invoqué au sujet de la délimitation d'une frontière; d'ailleurs la frontière persane est aussi proche de Bagdad que la ligne que nous proposons. On sait en outre qu'un grand nombre d'États ont leur capitale ou des villes importantes situées sur ou près de la frontière. Si les arguments de cette sorte devaient être prises en considération, il nous faudrait, afin de préserver Constantinople, fermer les Détroits aux navires de guerre étrangers; nous pouvons encore ajouter qu'autrefois, lorsqu'il y avait des souverains turcs à Moussoul, il existait un Gouvernement différent à Bagdad.

Tandis qu'on nous refuse un petit territoire autour d'Andrinople, qui est une ville historique si importante pour nous, on ne peut en toute justice nous opposer comme un argument valable au sujet de nos demandes relatives à Moussoul le fait que notre frontière en se rapprochant de 70 milles de Bagdad constitue une menace pour cette ville.

VII.—*Le Pacte national turc.*

Il n'est pas possible qu'un peuple ne s'intéresse plus en aucune façon aux destinées de la population d'un territoire qu'il a perdu à la suite d'une guerre.

C'est pourquoi nous avions obligation morale de dire que les régions à majorité arabe et musulmane se trouvant sous l'occupation étrangère lors de la conclusion de l'armistice étaient libres, conformément aux principes wilsoniens de disposer de leur propre sort. D'autre part, c'était pour nous un droit naturel de demander la restitution des régions à majorité turque tombées sous l'occupation étrangère.

Il est également évident que les territoires occupés continuent et continueront à nous appartenir en droit jusqu'à ce que nous y ayons renoncé.

Quant au vilayet de Mossoul, il fut préservé de l'occupation étrangère jusqu'à la conclusion de l'armistice et fut, sans aucun droit, partiellement occupé, comme beaucoup d'autres régions de la Turquie, seulement après la suspension des hostilités. Comme pour Adana, Smyrne, Ourfa, Constantinople, Aïntab et la Thrace orientale, tombés sous l'occupation étrangère, le peuple de Turquie a également décidé d'employer, jusqu'à la dernière limite de ses forces, tous les moyens en son pouvoir afin d'obtenir le retour à la mère patrie du vilayet de Moussoul. Il a donc établi son pacte national en conséquence.

La nation turque ne peut, en aucun cas, consentir à ce que, par suite de la présence d'une petite minorité arabe dans la province de Moussoul, ses frères turcs et kurdes, constituant la majorité de la population de ce vilayet, restent en dehors de la Turquie.

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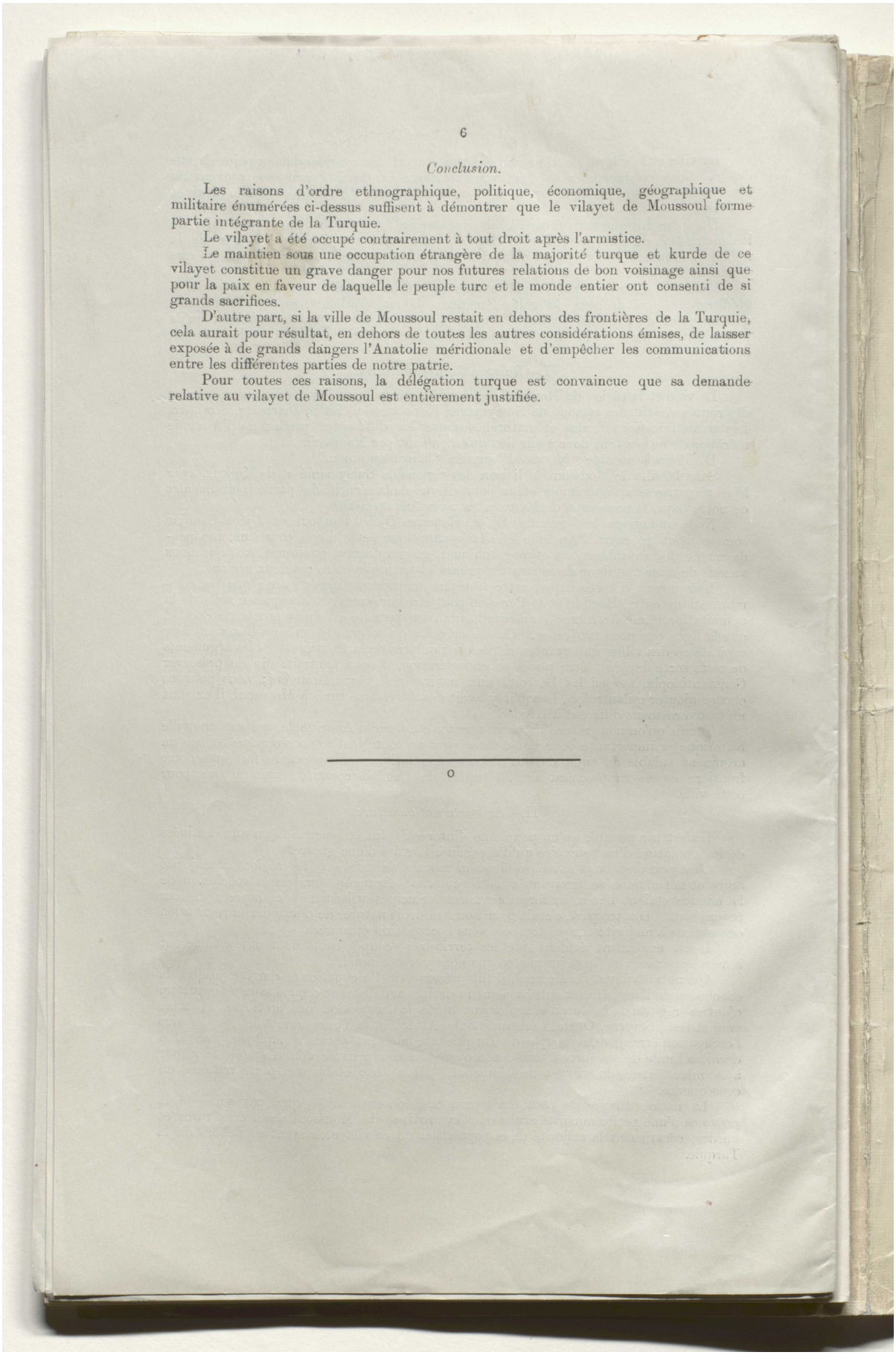

Conclusion.

Les raisons d'ordre ethnographique, politique, économique, géographique et militaire énumérées ci-dessus suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul forme partie intégrante de la Turquie.

Le vilayet a été occupé contrairement à tout droit après l'armistice.

Le maintien sous une occupation étrangère de la majorité turque et kurde de ce vilayet constitue un grave danger pour nos futures relations de bon voisinage ainsi que pour la paix en faveur de laquelle le peuple turc et le monde entier ont consenti de si grands sacrifices.

D'autre part, si la ville de Moussoul restait en dehors des frontières de la Turquie, cela aurait pour résultat, en dehors de toutes les autres considérations émises, de laisser exposée à de grands dangers l'Anatolie méridionale et d'empêcher les communications entre les différentes parties de notre patrie.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la délégation turque est convaincue que sa demande relative au vilayet de Moussoul est entièrement justifiée.

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TURKEY. [December 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14402/13003/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office December 27.)

Cher Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 23 décembre* 1922.

À CHACUNE de nos réunions j'ai eu l'honneur d'exposer à votre Seigneurie les arguments irréfutables sur lesquels je me base pour demander la restitution du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie. De même que j'ai chaque fois écouté avec l'attention la plus soutenue les considérations que vous avez bien voulu émettre à ce sujet, j'ai de même longuement étudié le mémorandum relatif à la question de Moussoul que vous avez eu la bonté de me faire parvenir dernièrement.

Je ne doute pas que le mémorandum responsif que j'ai l'honneur de remettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence constitue une réponse convaincante aux arguments émis en faveur de la thèse britannique.

Je me permettrai d'ajouter que le Gouvernement turc ne peut songer à renoncer à ses droits souverains sur Moussoul, qui fait partie intégrante de la patrie turque.

Votre très dévoué,
C. N. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Réponse au Mémorandum britannique relatif à la Question de Moussoul.

SE basant sur une série de considérations extrêmement légitimes, la délégation turque affirme avec insistance que le vilayet de Moussoul appartient à la Turquie.

Les raisons sur lesquelles se fonde notre demande sont les suivantes :

I.—*Raison d'ordre ethnographique.*

La population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul s'élève à 503,000 hommes ; il s'y trouve, en outre, des tribus nomades kurdes, turques et arabes comprenant environ 170,000 individus.

Ces tribus changent de place suivant les saisons, et même quittent à certaines époques de l'année le vilayet de Moussoul, il est donc impossible de fixer d'une façon exacte leur nombre. Elles passent, suivant leurs besoins, les différentes saisons de l'année dans les régions de Bagdad, de Nedjef, de Moussoul, de Zor, de Diarbékir, et même sur les plateaux de l'Iran ; c'est pourquoi il n'est pas non plus possible de les considérer comme faisant effectivement partie de la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Les 503,000 hommes formant la population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul se composent d'après les dernières statistiques officielles turques de :

——	Kurdes.	Turcs.	Arabes.	Yézidis.	Non-Mussulmans.	Total.
Sandjak de Suleymanié ..	62,830	32,960	7,210	..	..	103,000
„ Kerkuk	97,000	79,000	8,000	..	..	184,000
„ Moussoul ..	104,000	35,000	28,000	18,000	31,000	216,000
Total pour le vilayet de Moussoul	263,830	146,960	43,210	18,000	31,000	503,600

Ce tableau montre :

Que l'élément arabe est insignifiant dans les sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ;
Que dans le sandjak central de Moussoul il n'y a que 28,000 Arabes contre 139,000 Turcs et Kurdes ; et

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Qu'enfin dans tout le vilayet de Moussoul contre 410,790 Turcs et Kurdes il y a 43,210 Arabes et 31,000 non-musulmans. Plus des 4/5 de la population du vilayet sont donc constitués par les Turcs et les Kurdes et moins de 1/5 par les Arabes et les non-musulmans.

Les Arabes du vilayet de Moussoul se trouvent presque entièrement à Gayara, au sud de la ligne de Sandjar et sur la rive droite du Tigre. Si l'on excepte une étroite bande de territoire s'étendant de Féthié (placé entre le Djébel-Hamrine et le Djébel-Fouhoul) vers Kerkuk, la région située à gauche du Tigre est entièrement peuplée de Kurdes et de Turcs.

Dans la ville de Moussoul on parle en même temps le turc, le kurde et l'arabe; ceux des habitants de cette ville qui actuellement parlent l'arabe et que l'on prend pour des Arabes sont en réalité des Turcs qui, ayant été pendant longtemps en contact continuel avec les Kurdes et les Arabes, ont appris également ces deux langues.

Ceux qui connaissent les affaires de l'Irak savent que la population de Moussoul ne s'est, jusqu'à présent, jamais considérée comme étant arabe et comme faisant partie de la population de l'Irak.

Le mémorandum britannique reconnaît que la ville de Tel-Afr est une ville turque et qu'il se trouve une foule de villages turcs autour de Moussoul. Effectivement, le nahié de Cheihan rattaché à Moussoul et comprenant 68 localités, celui de Achair-Sebâ, qui en comprend 78, sont peuplés en totalité par des Turcs et le nahié dépendant directement de Moussoul, qui comprend 77 localités, est peuplé en très grande majorité par des Turcs.

L'existence tout autour de Moussoul de villages portant des noms purement turcs, tels que Kara-Koyounlou, Kara-Ali, Kétchi-Hani, Narine-Keupru, Buyuk-Keuchk, &c., est une preuve de plus de ce que nous venons de dire.

Les Yézidis sont des Kurdes au point de vue de la race et ont les mêmes mœurs et les mêmes coutumes qu'eux; il n'y a entre eux qu'une différence de secte, ce qui évidemment ne peut en aucune façon servir de prétexte à les différencier les uns des autres. Le même fait s'observe d'ailleurs chez les peuples chrétiens; il ne viendrait par exemple à l'esprit de personne de considérer comme faisant partie de groupements ethniques différents des individus de même race dont les uns seraient catholiques et les autres protestants.

Quant aux Turcs du vilayet de Moussoul, nous dirons que la différence que l'on veut établir entre eux et les Turcs anatoliens en les appelant Turkmènes n'existe nullement en realité et que c'est là une opinion indéfendiable. On dit dans le mémorandum britannique que la langue turque parlée à Moussoul n'est pas identique à celle parlée à Constantinople; mais existe-il en Anatolie un endroit où l'on parle un turc identique à celui de Constantinople? Par contre le dialecte employé par les Turcs de Moussoul est le même que celui qui se parle en Anatolie; la différence qui existe entre eux est moindre que celle qui existe entre le français parlé au nord et celui parlé au sud de la France. Il est d'ailleurs naturel que dans les différentes parties d'un pays une même langue présente quelques variations.

Au sujet de la différence qui existerait entre les Turcs et les Turkmènes, nous croyons superflu d'entrer à ce sujet dans des considérations historiques; qu'il nous suffise seulement de dire que les Turcs anatoliens sont des Turkmènes et que ces deux mots signifient une seule et même chose.

Contrairement aux assertions contenues dans le mémorandum britannique, le *peuple kurde* n'est pas d'origine iranienne, mais au contraire d'origine touranienne. Cette opinion est actuellement presque unanimement partagée par tous les historiens qui se sont occupés de cette question. Il est établi en effet qu'un peuple d'origine touranienne appelé "Gudu" habitait aux temps les plus reculés de l'histoire les montagnes dominant l'Assyrie, que ce peuple était très belliqueux et que son nom qui signifiait "guerrier" se traduisait en assyrien par le synonyme "Gardu" ou "Kardu," d'où dérive le mot Kurde.

Les annales cunéiformes parlent souvent des "Kardus," qu'ils citent sur un pied d'égalité avec les Syriens, les Hittites, les Susiens, les Élamites, les Akkadiens, &c.

Les considérations ethniques qui précèdent suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul doit revenir à la Turquie.

A la présence à l'intérieur de ce vilayet d'une certaine quantité d'Arabes habitant la rive droite du Tigre on peut opposer l'existence en Irak et en dehors de ce vilayet d'une nombreuse population turque et de nombreuses localités peuplées par cet élément.

Si l'on voulait s'appuyer sur les Arabes de la province de Moussoul pour demander

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son rattachement à l'Irak nous pourrions avec tout autant de raison nous réclamer de la présence de Turcs dans les vilayets arabes et notamment dans le vilayet de Bagdad pour demander l'annexion de ces territoires à la Turquie.

II.—*Raisons d'ordre politique.*

Les Turcs et les Kurdes, qui constituent la grande majorité de la population du vilayet de Moussoul, sont fermement décidés à obtenir le rattachement de leurs pays à la Turquie ; aucun doute n'est possible là-dessus.

Ceci est démontré par le fait que les habitants des sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ont refusé de voter en faveur de leur annexion à l'Irak et, lorsque la population de Moussoul et de ses environs aura acquis la possibilité d'exprimer librement ses volontés, on verra qu'elle non plus, n'est pas partisan de son rattachement à l'Irak.

Si sur les habitants de 18 kazas qui constituent le vilayet de Moussoul seules les minorités de la ville de Moussoul ont pu, soit par suite de la violente pression qui fut exercée sur elles, soit encore par intérêt personnel, voter pour l'Irak, il est évident que ce vote d'une infime minorité ne peut en aucun cas servir à déterminer le sort de toute la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Pour ce qui est des aspirations du peuple kurde, la délégation turque a l'honneur de déclarer que la population kurde se trouve unie au peuple turc sous tous les rapports et en particulier au point de vue de la race, de la religion, des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes. Ces deux peuples ont décidé de mener une vie commune et de maintenir unies leurs destinées. Si l'on étudiait leur histoire, on s'apercevrait que les Kurdes ont passé de plein gré sous l'administration turque et ont, depuis des siècles, lié leur sort à celui des Turcs.

Tous les chefs de l'armée turque, ayant participé à la guerre générale et à la guerre d'indépendance, ont proclamé avec respect et admiration les services rendus et les sacrifices consentis par le peuple kurde pour le salut de la patrie.

Surtout dans la lutte contre le Sultan et contre le Gouvernement à jamais disparu de Constantinople, dans la défense des différents fronts anatoliens assaillis par nos ennemis ainsi que dans l'offensive qui aboutit à l'écrasement complet des Grecs, les Kurdes travaillèrent en parfaite communauté avec les Turcs pour l'obtention d'un même but et à la poursuite d'un même idéal.

Le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie est le Gouvernement des Kurdes dans la même mesure que celui des Turcs.

Les véritables et légitimes représentants des Kurdes siégeant à la grande Assemblée nationale proclament qu'ils considèrent comme d'un intérêt vital pour eux que leurs frères restés en dehors des territoires administrés actuellement par le Gouvernement turc soient rattachés à la Turquie.

Dernièrement encore, à la suite des tentatives pour passer du côté turc faites par les détachements kurdes, enrôlés par le Gouvernement de l'Irak, le peu de fidélité de ceux-ci avait été annoncé par les communiqués officiels britanniques.

Les efforts tentés au moyen d'escadrilles aériennes de bombardement en vue d'affaiblir l'attachement témoigné par la population du vilayet de Moussoul envers la Turquie suffisent à eux seuls à montrer la force de cet attachement pour la patrie commune.

Nous voulons, avant de terminer cette partie de notre exposé, parler également des Nestoriens, des Assyriens et des Chaldéens.

Les premiers ont, lors de l'invasion du vilayet de Van par les armées de la Russie tzariste, agi si traîtreusement envers leurs compatriotes avec lesquels ils vivaient tranquillement depuis des siècles, ils ont tellement surpassé en cruauté les envahisseurs eux-mêmes, qu'au moment du départ de ceux-ci, ils ont cru ne pouvoir plus vivre en commun avec les Turcs et les Kurdes et sont partis avec les Russes.

Quant aux Chaldéens et surtout aux Assyriens du vilayet de Diarbékir, comme ils ne se sont jamais laissés influencer par les excitations venues du dehors, ils continuent à vivre en parfaite intelligence avec leurs compatriotes turcs.

III.—*Raisons historiques.*

Les raisons historiques qui militent en faveur du rattachement du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie ne datent pas de la période ottomane seulement ; dans le cas contraire, nos arguments auraient également pu s'appliquer au vilayet de Bagdad ainsi qu'aux autres vilayets perdus par nous et le raisonnement formulé à ce sujet dans le mémorandum britannique aurait été justifié.

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Depuis plus de onze siècles, le vilayet de Moussoul et même la région s'étendant jusqu'au nord de Bagdad se trouvent au pouvoir des Turcs.

Du temps des Khalifes Abbassides, ces pays étaient aux mains des Gouverneurs, des soldats et de la population turcs. Ces Gouverneurs turcs jouissaient d'une indépendance complète et de droits souverains; le premier de ceux-ci fut Itah (année 229 de l'Hégire); parmi eux, Kir-Boga et Ak-Soungour se sont distingués par les monuments d'art et d'utilité publique qu'ils ont édifiés.

Imad-el-Dine Zengui, fils de Ak-Soungour, un des Gouverneurs cités plus haut, fonda à Moussoul l'État turc des Ata-Beys.

Il y eut également des Etats turcs où régnèrent des membres de la dynastie des Ata-Beys, à Sandjar et à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, région formant la partie ouest de Moussoul.

Plus tard, la dynastie des Artiks fonda des États turcs à Moussoul, à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, à Harpout et à Mardine. Tel-Keyf, situé près de Moussoul, fut une des principales forteresses des Artiks, Il-Gazi-Han, un Souverain de cette dynastie, détruisit à Tel-Afr une importante force croisée.

On trouve dans ces régions de nombreux monuments d'art et d'utilité publique que ces Souverains ont fait construire et dont quelques-uns sont en ruines; on trouve de même dans les musées de nombreuses pièces de monnaie qu'ils ont fait frapper.

Après ces dynasties, les Turcs Seldjoucides se rendirent maîtres de Moussoul; ils l'embellirent et l'agrandirent considérablement et firent de cette ville un centre de haute culture. Ce n'est qu'après les Turcs Seldjoucides que les Turcs Osmanlis régnèrent sur ces pays.

Comme on le voit, depuis onze siècles, cette région a toujours été possédée et gouvernée par les Turcs.

Le territoire s'étendant de Bagdad jusqu'au sud de la limite actuelle du vilayet de Moussoul est désigné dans les anciens ouvrages d'histoire sous le nom de Tataristan; cela prouve qu'une tribu turque s'y était installée. On trouve encore la trace de cette appellation dans la vallée désignée sur les cartes sous le nom de Vadi-i-Tatar.

Le mémorandum britannique déclare que Moussoul a été rattaché à Bagdad à l'époque de Midhat Pacha; il faut remarquer que ce rattachement temporaire était dû à certaines considérations d'ordre personnel et administratif. D'ailleurs, à cette époque les régions d'Ourfa et de Diarbékir avaient également été placées temporairement sous l'administration du Vali de Bagdad, Midhat Pacha.

Le fait que dans le passé Moussoul ait été de la sorte rattaché momentanément à Bagdad ne peut être considéré aujourd'hui comme une raison suffisante pour la détermination de son sort.

IV.—*Raisons géographiques.*

Le vilayet de Moussoul n'est pas compris dans l'Irak-i-Arabi; il fait, au contraire, partie de l'Él-Djéziré. L'histoire comme la géographie laissent la région de Moussoul complètement en dehors de l'Irak.

Au point de vue du climat, non plus, Moussoul ne fait pas partie de l'Irak; on peut citer à l'appui de ceci le fait qu'on ne trouve plus de dattiers au nord de la ligne Kefri–Tekrit. La frontière qui sépare l'Anatolie de l'Irak est la ligne Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul–Djébel-Sandjar.

Au nord de cette ligne, le vilayet de Moussoul présente les mêmes conditions climatériques et la même constitution de terrain que l'Anatolie, tandis qu'à ces points de vue le vilayet de Bagdad diffère complètement de celui de Moussoul, ainsi que de l'Anatolie.

V.—*Raisons économiques.*

Les relations économiques et commerciales de Moussoul avec l'Anatolie méridionale, et particulièrement avec les régions de Diarbékir, Van, Bitlis, sont en tout cas beaucoup plus importantes que ses relations de même ordre avec Bagdad. De plus, l'unique voie commerciale reliant le sud de l'Anatolie à la Perse passe par Moussoul.

Ceux qui connaissent ce pays savent qu'à l'encontre de l'assertion contenue dans le mémorandum britannique, le bois de construction employé à Bagdad ne vient pas de Moussoul, mais de Diarbékir. En outre, la quantité de blé que Moussoul achète à Diarbékir à meilleur marché pour la revendre plus cher à Bagdad dépasse la quantité de blé exporté directement de Moussoul à Bagdad. De plus, les relations économiques entre Suleymanié et Van sont extrêmement importantes, et Moussoul exporte en Anatolie une grande quantité de bestiaux, surtout des buffles.

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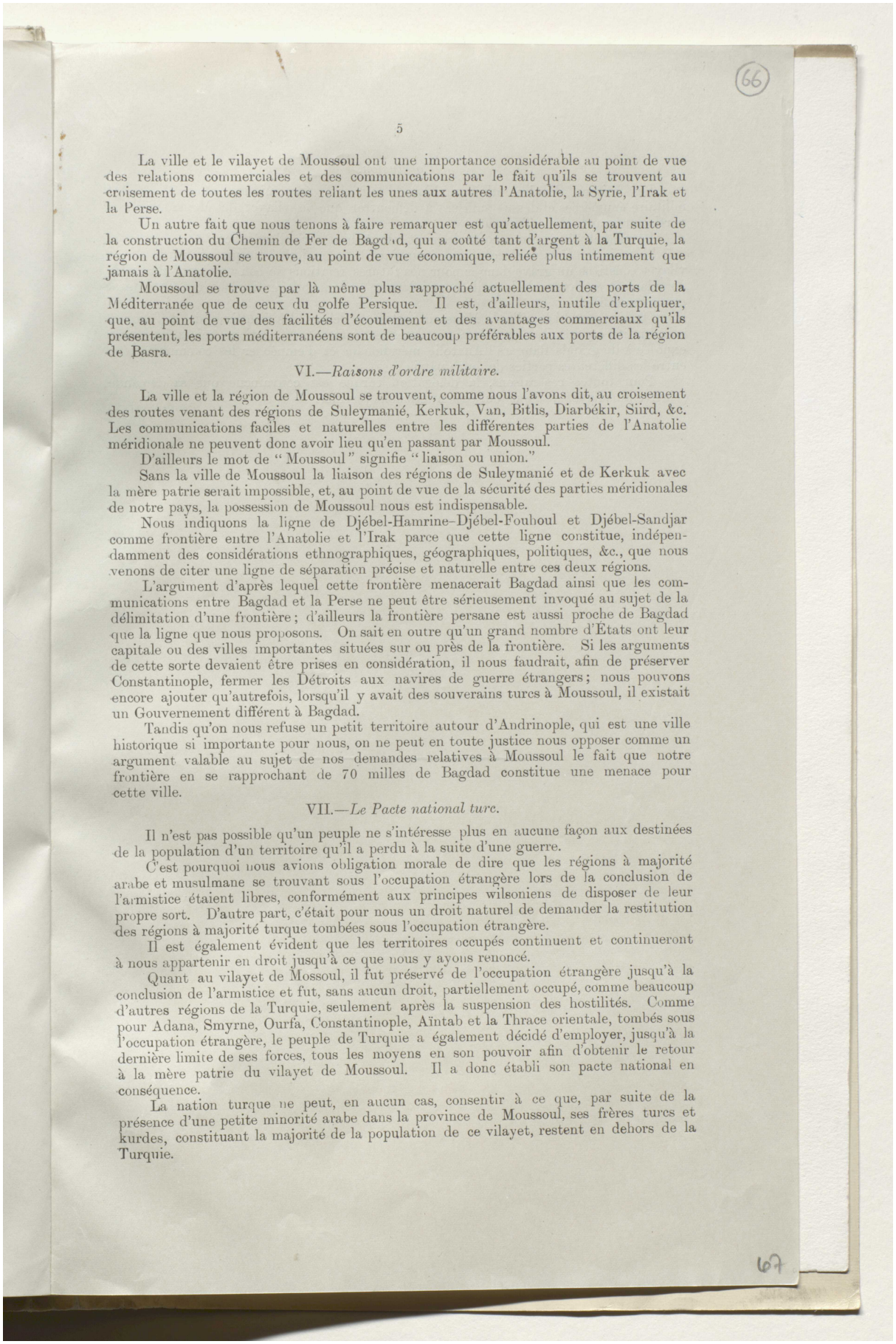

La ville et le vilayet de Moussoul ont une importance considérable au point de vue des relations commerciales et des communications par le fait qu'ils se trouvent au croisement de toutes les routes reliant les unes aux autres l'Anatolie, la Syrie, l'Irak et la Perse.

Un autre fait que nous tenons à faire remarquer est qu'actuellement, par suite de la construction du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, qui a coûté tant d'argent à la Turquie, la région de Moussoul se trouve, au point de vue économique, reliée plus intimement que jamais à l'Anatolie.

Moussoul se trouve par là même plus rapproché actuellement des ports de la Méditerranée que de ceux du golfe Persique. Il est, d'ailleurs, inutile d'expliquer, que, au point de vue des facilités d'écoulement et des avantages commerciaux qu'ils présentent, les ports méditerranéens sont de beaucoup préférables aux ports de la région de Basra.

VI.—*Raisons d'ordre militaire.*

La ville et la région de Moussoul se trouvent, comme nous l'avons dit, au croisement des routes venant des régions de Suleymanié, Kerkuk, Van, Bitlis, Diarbékir, Siird, &c. Les communications faciles et naturelles entre les différentes parties de l'Anatolie méridionale ne peuvent donc avoir lieu qu'en passant par Moussoul.

D'ailleurs le mot de "Moussoul" signifie "liaison ou union."

Sans la ville de Moussoul la liaison des régions de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk avec la mère patrie serait impossible, et, au point de vue de la sécurité des parties méridionales de notre pays, la possession de Moussoul nous est indispensable.

Nous indiquons la ligne de Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul et Djébel-Sandjar comme frontière entre l'Anatolie et l'Irak parce que cette ligne constitue, indépendamment des considérations ethnographiques, géographiques, politiques, &c., que nous venons de citer une ligne de séparation précise et naturelle entre ces deux régions.

L'argument d'après lequel cette frontière menacerait Bagdad ainsi que les communications entre Bagdad et la Perse ne peut être sérieusement invoqué au sujet de la délimitation d'une frontière; d'ailleurs la frontière persane est aussi proche de Bagdad que la ligne que nous proposons. On sait en outre qu'un grand nombre d'États ont leur capitale ou des villes importantes situées sur ou près de la frontière. Si les arguments de cette sorte devaient être prises en considération, il nous faudrait, afin de préserver Constantinople, fermer les Détroits aux navires de guerre étrangers; nous pouvons encore ajouter qu'autrefois, lorsqu'il y avait des souverains turcs à Moussoul, il existait un Gouvernement différent à Bagdad.

Tandis qu'on nous refuse un petit territoire autour d'Andrinople, qui est une ville historique si importante pour nous, on ne peut en toute justice nous opposer comme un argument valable au sujet de nos demandes relatives à Moussoul le fait que notre frontière en se rapprochant de 70 milles de Bagdad constitue une menace pour cette ville.

VII.—*Le Pacte national turc.*

Il n'est pas possible qu'un peuple ne s'intéresse plus en aucune façon aux destinées de la population d'un territoire qu'il a perdu à la suite d'une guerre.

C'est pourquoi nous avions obligation morale de dire que les régions à majorité arabe et musulmane se trouvant sous l'occupation étrangère lors de la conclusion de l'armistice étaient libres, conformément aux principes wilsoniens de disposer de leur propre sort. D'autre part, c'était pour nous un droit naturel de demander la restitution des régions à majorité turque tombées sous l'occupation étrangère.

Il est également évident que les territoires occupés continuent et continueront à nous appartenir en droit jusqu'à ce que nous y ayons renoncé.

Quant au vilayet de Mossoul, il fut préservé de l'occupation étrangère jusqu'à la conclusion de l'armistice et fut, sans aucun droit, partiellement occupé, comme beaucoup d'autres régions de la Turquie, seulement après la suspension des hostilités. Comme pour Adana, Smyrne, Ourfa, Constantinople, Aïntab et la Thrace orientale, tombés sous l'occupation étrangère, le peuple de Turquie a également décidé d'employer, jusqu'à la dernière limite de ses forces, tous les moyens en son pouvoir afin d'obtenir le retour à la mère patrie du vilayet de Moussoul. Il a donc établi son pacte national en conséquence.

La nation turque ne peut, en aucun cas, consentir à ce que, par suite de la présence d'une petite minorité arabe dans la province de Moussoul, ses frères turcs et kurdes, constituant la majorité de la population de ce vilayet, restent en dehors de la Turquie.

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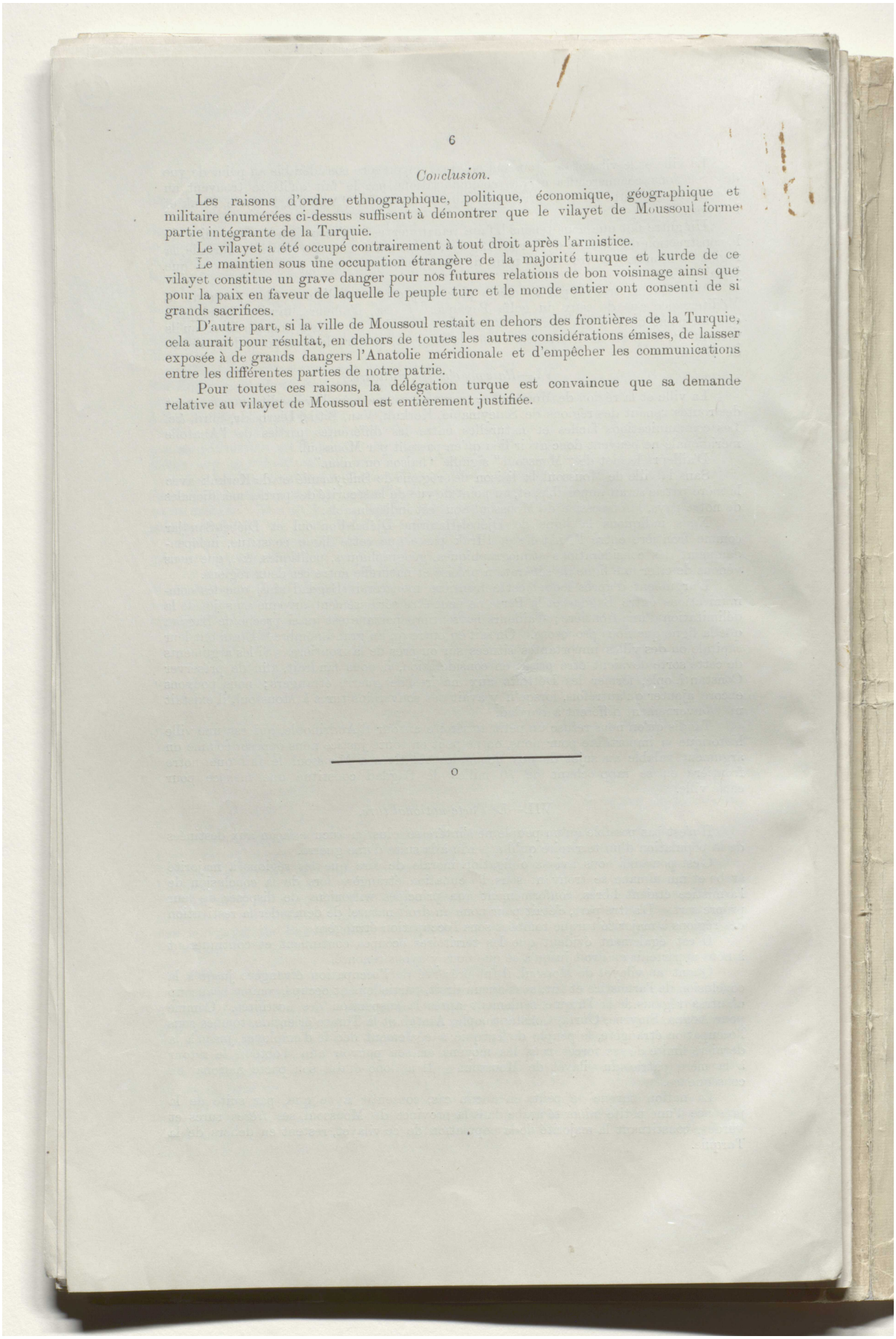

Conclusion.

Les raisons d'ordre ethnographique, politique, économique, géographique et militaire énumérées ci-dessus suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul forme partie intégrante de la Turquie.

Le vilayet a été occupé contrairement à tout droit après l'armistice.

Le maintien sous une occupation étrangère de la majorité turque et kurde de ce vilayet constitue un grave danger pour nos futures relations de bon voisinage ainsi que pour la paix en faveur de laquelle le peuple turc et le monde entier ont consenti de si grands sacrifices.

D'autre part, si la ville de Moussoul restait en dehors des frontières de la Turquie, cela aurait pour résultat, en dehors de toutes les autres considérations émises, de laisser exposée à de grands dangers l'Anatolie méridionale et d'empêcher les communications entre les différentes parties de notre patrie.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la délégation turque est convaincue que sa demande relative au vilayet de Moussoul est entièrement justifiée.

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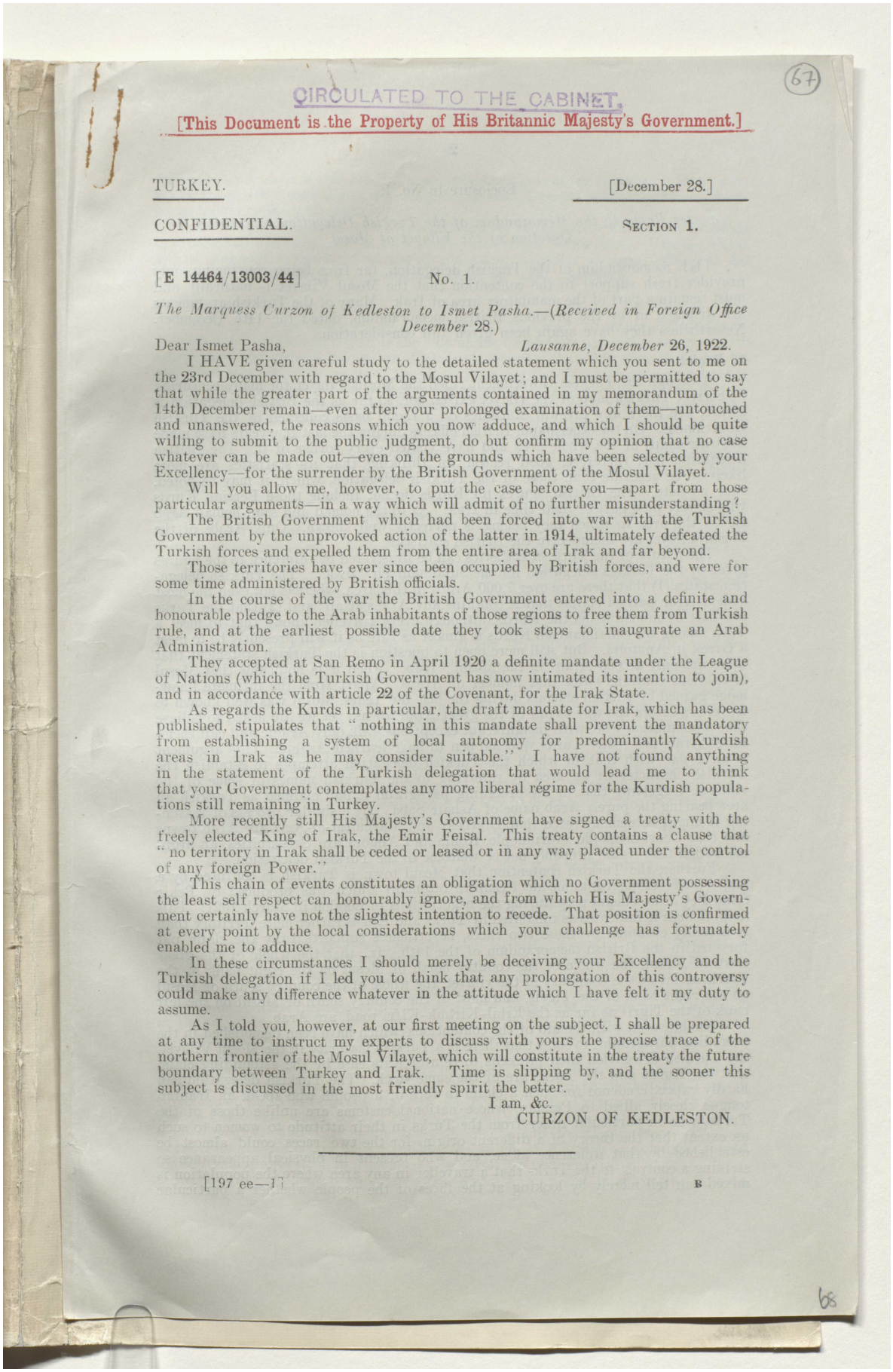

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TURKEY. [December 28.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14464/13003/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.—(Received in Foreign Office December 28.)

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December 26, 1922.*

I HAVE given careful study to the detailed statement which you sent to me on the 23rd December with regard to the Mosul Vilayet; and I must be permitted to say that while the greater part of the arguments contained in my memorandum of the 14th December remain—even after your prolonged examination of them—untouched and unanswered, the reasons which you now adduce, and which I should be quite willing to submit to the public judgment, do but confirm my opinion that no case whatever can be made out—even on the grounds which have been selected by your Excellency—for the surrender by the British Government of the Mosul Vilayet.

Will you allow me, however, to put the case before you—apart from those particular arguments—in a way which will admit of no further misunderstanding?

The British Government which had been forced into war with the Turkish Government by the unprovoked action of the latter in 1914, ultimately defeated the Turkish forces and expelled them from the entire area of Irak and far beyond.

Those territories have ever since been occupied by British forces, and were for some time administered by British officials.

In the course of the war the British Government entered into a definite and honourable pledge to the Arab inhabitants of those regions to free them from Turkish rule, and at the earliest possible date they took steps to inaugurate an Arab Administration.

They accepted at San Remo in April 1920 a definite mandate under the League of Nations (which the Turkish Government has now intimated its intention to join), and in accordance with article 22 of the Covenant, for the Irak State.

As regards the Kurds in particular, the draft mandate for Irak, which has been published, stipulates that "nothing in this mandate shall prevent the mandatory from establishing a system of local autonomy for predominantly Kurdish areas in Irak as he may consider suitable." I have not found anything in the statement of the Turkish delegation that would lead me to think that your Government contemplates any more liberal régime for the Kurdish populations still remaining in Turkey.

More recently still His Majesty's Government have signed a treaty with the freely elected King of Irak, the Emir Feisal. This treaty contains a clause that "no territory in Irak shall be ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of any foreign Power."

This chain of events constitutes an obligation which no Government possessing the least self respect can honourably ignore, and from which His Majesty's Government certainly have not the slightest intention to recede. That position is confirmed at every point by the local considerations which your challenge has fortunately enabled me to adduce.

In these circumstances I should merely be deceiving your Excellency and the Turkish delegation if I led you to think that any prolongation of this controversy could make any difference whatever in the attitude which I have felt it my duty to assume.

As I told you, however, at our first meeting on the subject, I shall be prepared at any time to instruct my experts to discuss with yours the precise trace of the northern frontier of the Mosul Vilayet, which will constitute in the treaty the future boundary between Turkey and Irak. Time is slipping by, and the sooner this subject is discussed in the most friendly spirit the better.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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Enclosure in No. 1.

Counter Reply to the Memorandum of the Turkish Delegation concerning the Question of the Vilayet of Mosul.

THE memorandum of the Turkish delegation, far from being convincing, only provides fresh support to the contention that the Mosul Vilayet is naturally and must remain a part of the mandatory area of Irak. Many of the Turkish arguments are disposed of by the previous British memorandum, dated the 14th December. Nevertheless they have again been given full consideration.

1. *Racial.*

Although the Turkish Government ruled the Mosul Vilayet for many centuries, no correct Turkish map of the vilayet exists, nor, so far as the British delegation is aware, are there any pre-war statistics on a racial basis collected by the Turkish Government. On the other hand, British officers during the last few years have made accurate maps of the whole area and have visited every corner of it. The British delegation has, therefore, good reason for thinking that its statistics are more likely to be accurate than those of the Turkish delegation, which, it may be noted, bear no date. The British figures for Kurds do not include those Persian Kurds who simply pass part of their time in Irak. As to the nomad and semi-nomad Arab tribes, the area to which they belong is perfectly well known. Only Arabs of the Mosul Vilayet are included in the British statistics.

The nature of the Turkish statistics can be illustrated by reference to the figures given by the Turkish delegation for the Sulaimaniyeh "liwa." The Turkish delegation states (1) that there are over 7,000 Arabs in this area, whereas not even the most ardent Arab patriot claims that it contains any Arabs at all; and (2) that the Turks are half as numerous as the Kurds, although every traveller knows that to meet a Turk among the Sulaimaniyeh Kurds is almost as rare as it will presently be to meet a Greek in Anatolia. But still more open to question is the Turkish statement that there are only 28,000 Arabs in the Mosul "liwa," when it is notorious that Mosul town alone contains twice that number of Arabs. Apart from the intimate knowledge gained by British officials during the last few years, Mosul was well known to travellers before the war as one of the great Arab towns; yet we are asked to believe that a population who, with insignificant exceptions, talk only Arabic and call themselves Arab, are really Turks who happen to have learned Arabic. This argument is on a par with that in which the Turkish delegation attempts to establish the Turkish character of an area by referring to the Turkish names of some of the villages, forgetting that in the preceding paragraph it had claimed as Turkish an area bearing the purely Arab name of Ashair Saba. By a similar process of reasoning it might be demonstrated that Diarbekr and Marmurat-al-Aziz are Arab towns and that Constantinople, Adrianople, Konia and Angora are Greek cities, an argumentation that would probably not be welcome to the Turkish delegation.

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Unable, even with the aid of the contentions which have been demolished in the preceding paragraphs, to show that there is a Turkish majority in the Mosul Vilayet, the Turkish delegation then proceeds to reinforce its case by the astounding claim that the Kurds and the Turks are of the same stock. The Turkish delegation can hardly expect credence for such a claim in face of a people who speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian, whose national customs are unlike those of the Turks, who in particular differ from the Turks in their attitude to women to such an extent that the theory of a different origin for the two races could almost be established by that difference alone, and who present in physical appearance so striking a contrast to the Turks that a traveller in any area where the population is mixed can tell merely by looking at the faces of the people whether a particular

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village is Turkish or Kurdish. But it is enough to say that for this theory there is no historical or other evidence of any weight, and that it is one which the Kurds themselves would reject with scorn.

The British delegation therefore maintains the claim put forward in its previous memorandum, that the only element of the population of the Mosul Vilayet which can be said to be connected with the population of Anatolia by racial affinity is the Turkoman, which numbers only one-twelfth of the total population.

2. *Political.*

Even if it were admitted that the small "Turkish" minority of the Mosul Vilayet would be glad to return to the rule under which they enjoyed so many unfair advantages, the British delegation denies categorically that this view is shared by any other element. The views of the Christians and the Yazidis are so well known that no further argument on this point is required. As to the Arabs, the British delegation not only repeats that these have unanimously voted for inclusion in the Irak State, but maintains that after the exploits of the Arabs during the war and the setting up of an Arab State in Irak with an Arab King at its head, no Arab would hesitate for a moment in preferring to remain a subject of that State rather than return to a rule which did not even recognise the Arab tongue as an official language.

It is regretted that the Turkish delegation has misinterpreted certain admissions which the British delegation, in the desire to be perfectly just and fair, included in its previous memorandum. The people of the Sulaimaniyeh area did not refuse to vote for inclusion in Irak. When the vote regarding the Emir Feisal was taken, they were not asked to vote because, as the previous British memorandum stated, "being a compact body of people of an entirely different race, they obviously required separate treatment." The people of Sulaimaniyeh have always recognised that their fate is bound up with that of Bagdad, which is practically their sole economic outlet.

The statement that "only the minorities of the town of Mosul . . . . voted for Irak," whether it purports to be based on the British memorandum or on other information, is without any foundation in fact. As the British statement on this point has been disregarded, it is desirable to repeat it in greater detail. The proposal that the Mosul Vilayet should be connected with the rest of Irak and should be placed under the rulership of the Emir Feisal as King was supported by the whole of the Mosul "liwa" (Zakho, Dohuk and Agrah included), by the Erbil "liwa," and by the Kifri portion of the Kirkuk "liwa." The amount of "pressure" brought to bear may be estimated from the well-known fact that a deputation from Kirkuk which visited Bagdad could elicit from the High Commissioner no reply to their enquiry as to the wishes of His Majesty's Government regarding the plebiscite, except the unvarying statement that they were free to do as they wished—a statement which the people of Kirkuk acted upon with absolute freedom. It may be admitted, however, that there is good foundation for the contention that many of those of the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet who voted for inclusion in Irak were actuated by self-interest. It is the basis of the British case that it is to the advantage of every inhabitant of the Mosul Vilayet to find himself within the boundaries of the mandatory area, rather than to be united to a race which from the time when the Tatar hordes destroyed the ancient irrigation system of Babylon has never done Irak any good.

In regard to the Kurdish element, the Turkish delegation puts forward a number of arguments. Perhaps the most curious is its representation of the bombing of Rowanduz and other places to which Turkish troops had penetrated as an attempt to weaken the attachment of the population to Turkey. On the other hand, the Turkish delegation passes over in silence the two important considerations adduced in the previous British memorandum, viz., (1) that in point of fact the Turkish Government was rarely or never in effective control of Southern Kurdistan, and (2) that the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan gave the Turkish Government no help during the great war. If such general considerations as those now adduced by the Turkish delegation are to be admitted, it is legitimate to recall that the Turkish Government had constant trouble with the Kurds in the Dersim and other areas; that in 1914 there was a serious Kurdish revolution in Bitlis, which was put down with difficulty; and that many Kurdish chiefs and their sons were exiled to Constantinople for years at a time lest the spirit of Kurdish nationalism should concentrate around them and break out in revolt against Turkish rule.

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'Assembly as demanding that the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan (among others) should be united with Turkey. Since it is obvious that no elections to the Angora Assembly were ever held in Southern Kurdistan, the opinion quoted has no value in respect of the Sulaimaniyeh "liwa." In any case, it is open to anyone to form an independent judgment as to whether the Southern Kurds would prefer to accept an arrangement which, while connecting them with their market and supply centre, Bagdad, leaves them free to use their own language, to be governed by their own tribal leaders and officials, and to develop their native institutions, or to be placed under a Government whose representatives can find nothing to say to their national demands except that all Kurds are Turks.

3. *Historical.*

The British memorandum dealt very briefly with this consideration on the ground that "the argument from history . . . . would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war." But if—for the sake of argument—the Turkish delegation's historical survey is accepted, it only supports the British case. The Turkish delegation will not deny that Mosul was built by Arabs and was an Arab town when the "Turkish" rulers first occupied it; and the claim is made that the Kurds were in possession of Kurdistan long before that date. Then followed, it is said, eleven centuries of Turkish domination. This domination was removed a few years ago, and it was found that the population was mainly, as it had been eleven centuries before, Arab and Kurdish, that it had neither been replaced by Turks nor assimilated to the Turks either in race or in language. A more striking proof of the artificial character of the connection of the Mosul Vilayet with the Turkish Empire it would be hard to find.

4. *Geographical.*

This argument, now raised by the Turkish delegation for the first time, leads nowhere. The Mosul plain, with its long, hot, rainless summer, its snowless winter, and only 13 inches of rain in the year, differs more from Anatolia proper than it does from Bagdad. But it would be possible to prove or to disprove anything by assuming that Anatolia, parts of which are many feet deep in snow for some months of the year while others are so hot that cotton can be grown, is a single geographical unit.

5. *Economic.*

It is a matter for regret that this important aspect of the case, which was treated in great detail in the earlier British memorandum, should have been dealt with by the Turkish delegation in so inadequate a fashion.

The British memorandum stated that the possession of the Mosul Vilayet is essential for the food supply of Bagdad. The Turkish memorandum does not contradict this statement, but adds that Bagdad needs grain from Diarbekr as well as from Mosul. The British delegation does not propose to draw from this argument the logical conclusion that Diarbekr as well as Mosul should be included in Irak. It is satisfied with pointing out that the extension of agriculture in Irak since the British occupation enables Irak to dispense more and more with Diarbekr grain, so long as the grain-growing areas of Mosul are included in her borders.

One important argument which was advanced in the British memorandum is admirably supported by the Turkish delegation. The latter lays stress on the possible importance to Mosul, in the future, of the Mediterranean ports. The British delegation is prepared to admit that the trade of Mosul with Bagdad and Basra may diminish, and its trade with Alexandretta, Beirut and Haifa increase. The British delegation recognises that the Irak State should enter into the closest economic and commercial relations with the two neighbouring States of Palestine and Syria, and has already pointed out the importance of the cross-desert trade between Syria and Mosul. The transfer of Mosul to Turkey would cut it off not only from Irak but from Syria as well, and would interfere seriously with communications in general between Syria on the one side and Irak and Persia on the other. In fact, three countries would be sacrificed in order to give unimportant economic advantages to one.

It is difficult to decide whether the Turkish case is more seriously damaged by the arguments which they advance or by the British arguments which they ignore. They quote as grounds for the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet to Turkey the trade

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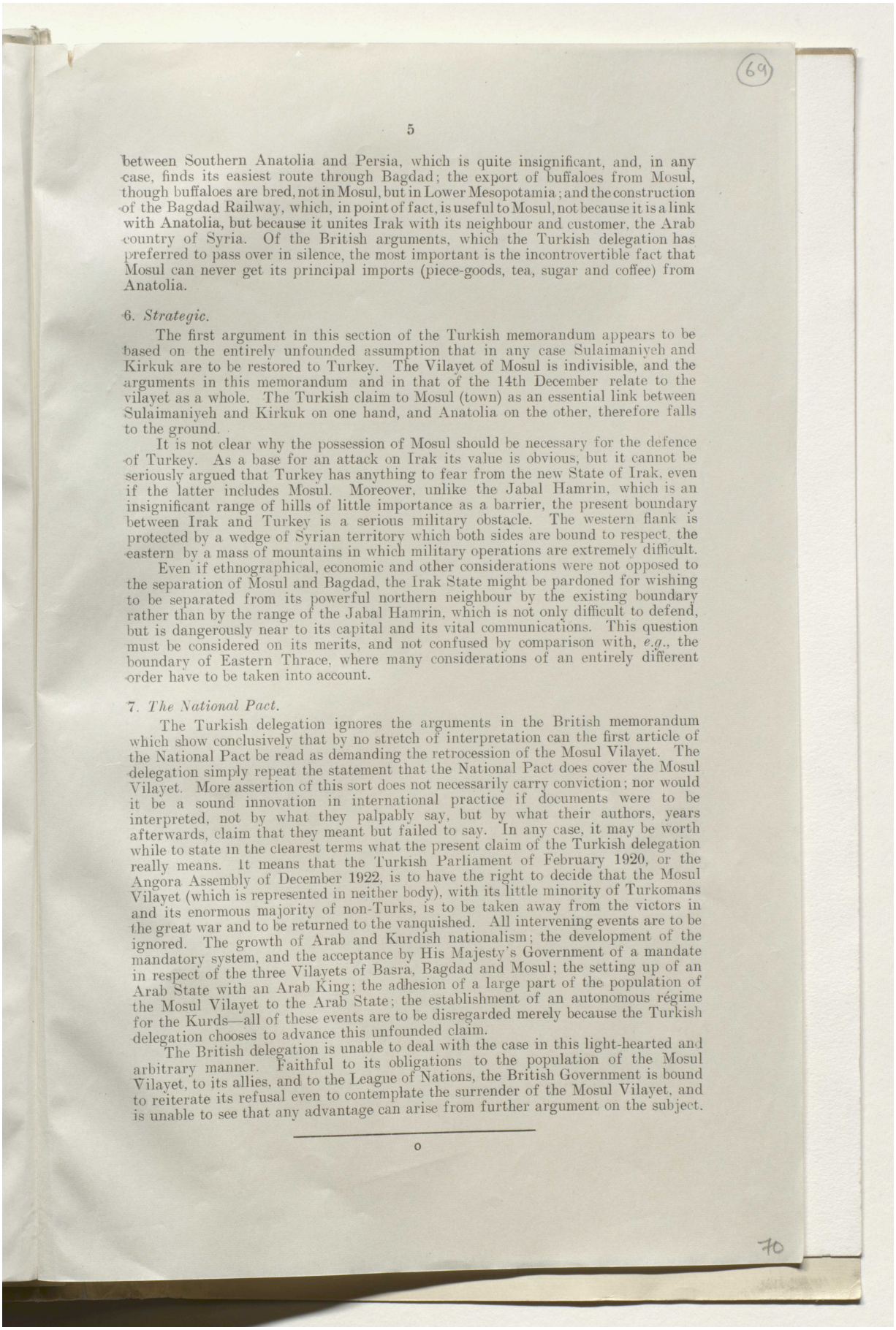

between Southern Anatolia and Persia, which is quite insignificant, and, in any case, finds its easiest route through Bagdad; the export of buffaloes from Mosul, though buffaloes are bred, not in Mosul, but in Lower Mesopotamia; and the construction of the Bagdad Railway, which, in point of fact, is useful to Mosul, not because it is a link with Anatolia, but because it unites Irak with its neighbour and customer, the Arab country of Syria. Of the British arguments, which the Turkish delegation has preferred to pass over in silence, the most important is the incontrovertible fact that Mosul can never get its principal imports (piece-goods, tea, sugar and coffee) from Anatolia.

6. *Strategic.*

The first argument in this section of the Turkish memorandum appears to be based on the entirely unfounded assumption that in any case Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk are to be restored to Turkey. The Vilayet of Mosul is indivisible, and the arguments in this memorandum and in that of the 14th December relate to the vilayet as a whole. The Turkish claim to Mosul (town) as an essential link between Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk on one hand, and Anatolia on the other, therefore falls to the ground.

It is not clear why the possession of Mosul should be necessary for the defence of Turkey. As a base for an attack on Irak its value is obvious, but it cannot be seriously argued that Turkey has anything to fear from the new State of Irak, even if the latter includes Mosul. Moreover, unlike the Jabal Hamrin, which is an insignificant range of hills of little importance as a barrier, the present boundary between Irak and Turkey is a serious military obstacle. The western flank is protected by a wedge of Syrian territory which both sides are bound to respect, the eastern by a mass of mountains in which military operations are extremely difficult.

Even if ethnographical, economic and other considerations were not opposed to the separation of Mosul and Bagdad, the Irak State might be pardoned for wishing to be separated from its powerful northern neighbour by the existing boundary rather than by the range of the Jabal Hamrin, which is not only difficult to defend, but is dangerously near to its capital and its vital communications. This question must be considered on its merits, and not confused by comparison with, *e.g.*, the boundary of Eastern Thrace, where many considerations of an entirely different order have to be taken into account.

7. *The National Pact.*

The Turkish delegation ignores the arguments in the British memorandum which show conclusively that by no stretch of interpretation can the first article of the National Pact be read as demanding the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet. The delegation simply repeat the statement that the National Pact does cover the Mosul Vilayet. More assertion of this sort does not necessarily carry conviction; nor would it be a sound innovation in international practice if documents were to be interpreted, not by what they palpably say, but by what their authors, years afterwards, claim that they meant but failed to say. In any case, it may be worth while to state in the clearest terms what the present claim of the Turkish delegation really means. It means that the Turkish Parliament of February 1920, or the Angora Assembly of December 1922, is to have the right to decide that the Mosul Vilayet (which is represented in neither body), with its little minority of Turkomans and its enormous majority of non-Turks, is to be taken away from the victors in the great war and to be returned to the vanquished. All intervening events are to be ignored. The growth of Arab and Kurdish nationalism; the development of the mandatory system, and the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of a mandate in respect of the three Vilayets of Basra, Bagdad and Mosul; the setting up of an Arab State with an Arab King; the adhesion of a large part of the population of the Mosul Vilayet to the Arab State; the establishment of an autonomous régime for the Kurds—all of these events are to be disregarded merely because the Turkish delegation chooses to advance this unfounded claim.

The British delegation is unable to deal with the case in this light-hearted and arbitrary manner. Faithful to its obligations to the population of the Mosul Vilayet, to its allies, and to the League of Nations, the British Government is bound to reiterate its refusal even to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet, and is unable to see that any advantage can arise from further argument on the subject.

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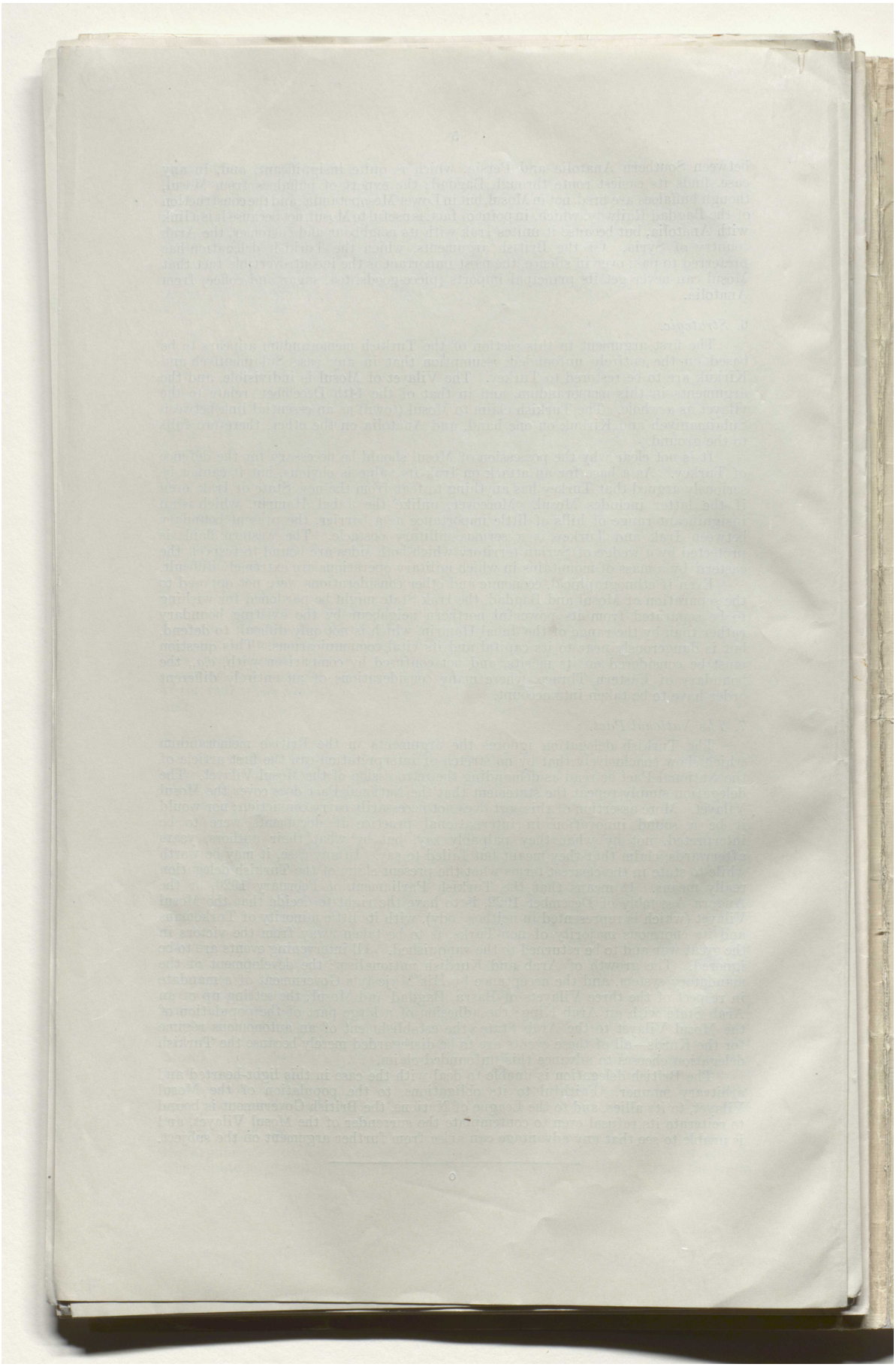

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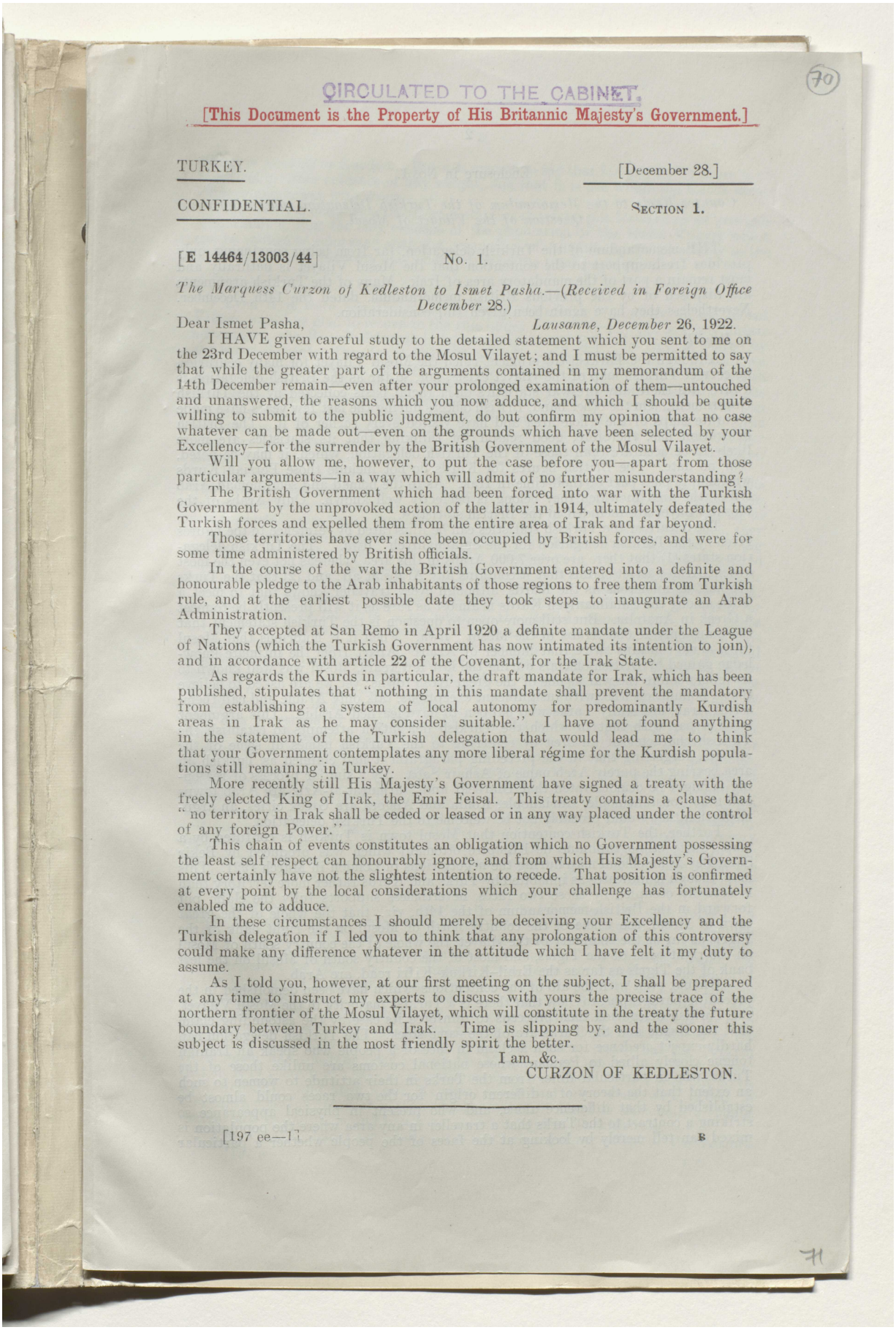

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TURKEY. [December 28.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14464/13003/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.—(Received in Foreign Office December 28.)

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December 26, 1922.*

I HAVE given careful study to the detailed statement which you sent to me on the 23rd December with regard to the Mosul Vilayet; and I must be permitted to say that while the greater part of the arguments contained in my memorandum of the 14th December remain—even after your prolonged examination of them—untouched and unanswered, the reasons which you now adduce, and which I should be quite willing to submit to the public judgment, do but confirm my opinion that no case whatever can be made out—even on the grounds which have been selected by your Excellency—for the surrender by the British Government of the Mosul Vilayet.

Will you allow me, however, to put the case before you—apart from those particular arguments—in a way which will admit of no further misunderstanding?

The British Government which had been forced into war with the Turkish Government by the unprovoked action of the latter in 1914, ultimately defeated the Turkish forces and expelled them from the entire area of Irak and far beyond.

Those territories have ever since been occupied by British forces, and were for some time administered by British officials.

In the course of the war the British Government entered into a definite and honourable pledge to the Arab inhabitants of those regions to free them from Turkish rule, and at the earliest possible date they took steps to inaugurate an Arab Administration.

They accepted at San Remo in April 1920 a definite mandate under the League of Nations (which the Turkish Government has now intimated its intention to join), and in accordance with article 22 of the Covenant, for the Irak State.

As regards the Kurds in particular, the draft mandate for Irak, which has been published, stipulates that "nothing in this mandate shall prevent the mandatory from establishing a system of local autonomy for predominantly Kurdish areas in Irak as he may consider suitable." I have not found anything in the statement of the Turkish delegation that would lead me to think that your Government contemplates any more liberal régime for the Kurdish populations still remaining in Turkey.

More recently still His Majesty's Government have signed a treaty with the freely elected King of Irak, the Emir Feisal. This treaty contains a clause that "no territory in Irak shall be ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of any foreign Power."

This chain of events constitutes an obligation which no Government possessing the least self respect can honourably ignore, and from which His Majesty's Government certainly have not the slightest intention to recede. That position is confirmed at every point by the local considerations which your challenge has fortunately enabled me to adduce.

In these circumstances I should merely be deceiving your Excellency and the Turkish delegation if I led you to think that any prolongation of this controversy could make any difference whatever in the attitude which I have felt it my duty to assume.

As I told you, however, at our first meeting on the subject, I shall be prepared at any time to instruct my experts to discuss with yours the precise trace of the northern frontier of the Mosul Vilayet, which will constitute in the treaty the future boundary between Turkey and Irak. Time is slipping by, and the sooner this subject is discussed in the most friendly spirit the better.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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Enclosure in No. 1.

Counter Reply to the Memorandum of the Turkish Delegation concerning the Question of the Vilayet of Mosul.

THE memorandum of the Turkish delegation, far from being convincing, only provides fresh support to the contention that the Mosul Vilayet is naturally and must remain a part of the mandatory area of Irak. Many of the Turkish arguments are disposed of by the previous British memorandum, dated the 14th December. Nevertheless they have again been given full consideration.

1. *Racial.*

Although the Turkish Government ruled the Mosul Vilayet for many centuries, no correct Turkish map of the vilayet exists, nor, so far as the British delegation is aware, are there any pre-war statistics on a racial basis collected by the Turkish Government. On the other hand, British officers during the last few years have made accurate maps of the whole area and have visited every corner of it. The British delegation has, therefore, good reason for thinking that its statistics are more likely to be accurate than those of the Turkish delegation, which, it may be noted, bear no date. The British figures for Kurds do not include those Persian Kurds who simply pass part of their time in Irak. As to the nomad and semi-nomad Arab tribes, the area to which they belong is perfectly well known. Only Arabs of the Mosul Vilayet are included in the British statistics.

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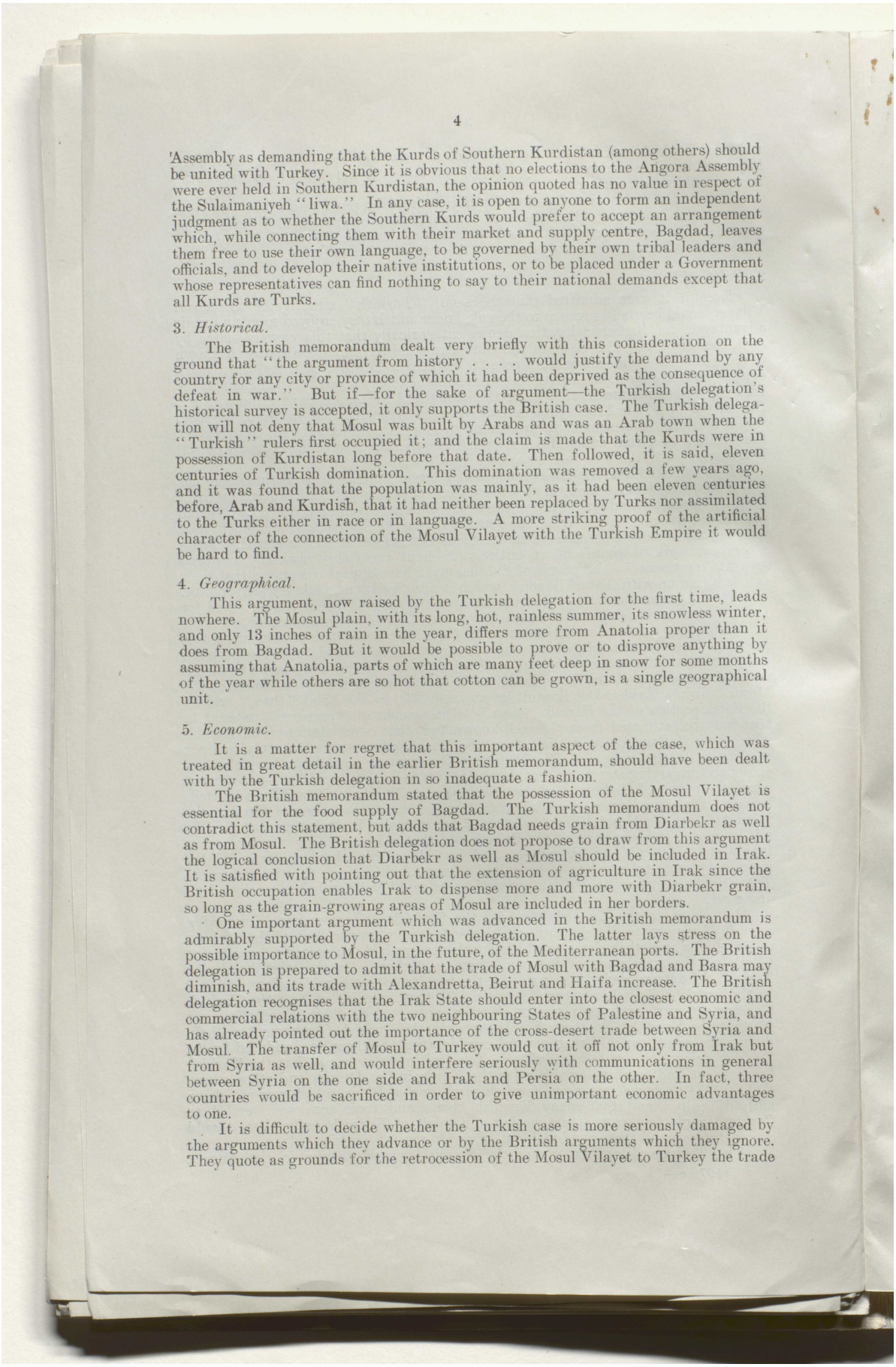

'Assembly as demanding that the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan (among others) should be united with Turkey. Since it is obvious that no elections to the Angora Assembly were ever held in Southern Kurdistan, the opinion quoted has no value in respect of the Sulaimaniyeh "liwa." In any case, it is open to anyone to form an independent judgment as to whether the Southern Kurds would prefer to accept an arrangement which, while connecting them with their market and supply centre, Bagdad, leaves them free to use their own language, to be governed by their own tribal leaders and officials, and to develop their native institutions, or to be placed under a Government whose representatives can find nothing to say to their national demands except that all Kurds are Turks.

3. *Historical.*

The British memorandum dealt very briefly with this consideration on the ground that "the argument from history . . . . would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war." But if—for the sake of argument—the Turkish delegation's historical survey is accepted, it only supports the British case. The Turkish delegation will not deny that Mosul was built by Arabs and was an Arab town when the "Turkish" rulers first occupied it; and the claim is made that the Kurds were in possession of Kurdistan long before that date. Then followed, it is said, eleven centuries of Turkish domination. This domination was removed a few years ago, and it was found that the population was mainly, as it had been eleven centuries before, Arab and Kurdish, that it had neither been replaced by Turks nor assimilated to the Turks either in race or in language. A more striking proof of the artificial character of the connection of the Mosul Vilayet with the Turkish Empire it would be hard to find.

4. *Geographical.*

This argument, now raised by the Turkish delegation for the first time, leads nowhere. The Mosul plain, with its long, hot, rainless summer, its snowless winter, and only 13 inches of rain in the year, differs more from Anatolia proper than it does from Bagdad. But it would be possible to prove or to disprove anything by assuming that Anatolia, parts of which are many feet deep in snow for some months of the year while others are so hot that cotton can be grown, is a single geographical unit.

5. *Economic.*

It is a matter for regret that this important aspect of the case, which was treated in great detail in the earlier British memorandum, should have been dealt with by the Turkish delegation in so inadequate a fashion.

The British memorandum stated that the possession of the Mosul Vilayet is essential for the food supply of Bagdad. The Turkish memorandum does not contradict this statement, but adds that Bagdad needs grain from Diarbekr as well as from Mosul. The British delegation does not propose to draw from this argument the logical conclusion that Diarbekr as well as Mosul should be included in Irak. It is satisfied with pointing out that the extension of agriculture in Irak since the British occupation enables Irak to dispense more and more with Diarbekr grain, so long as the grain-growing areas of Mosul are included in her borders.

One important argument which was advanced in the British memorandum is admirably supported by the Turkish delegation. The latter lays stress on the possible importance to Mosul, in the future, of the Mediterranean ports. The British delegation is prepared to admit that the trade of Mosul with Bagdad and Basra may diminish, and its trade with Alexandretta, Beirut and Haifa increase. The British delegation recognises that the Irak State should enter into the closest economic and commercial relations with the two neighbouring States of Palestine and Syria, and has already pointed out the importance of the cross-desert trade between Syria and Mosul. The transfer of Mosul to Turkey would cut it off not only from Irak but from Syria as well, and would interfere seriously with communications in general between Syria on the one side and Irak and Persia on the other. In fact, three countries would be sacrificed in order to give unimportant economic advantages to one.

It is difficult to decide whether the Turkish case is more seriously damaged by the arguments which they advance or by the British arguments which they ignore. They quote as grounds for the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet to Turkey the trade

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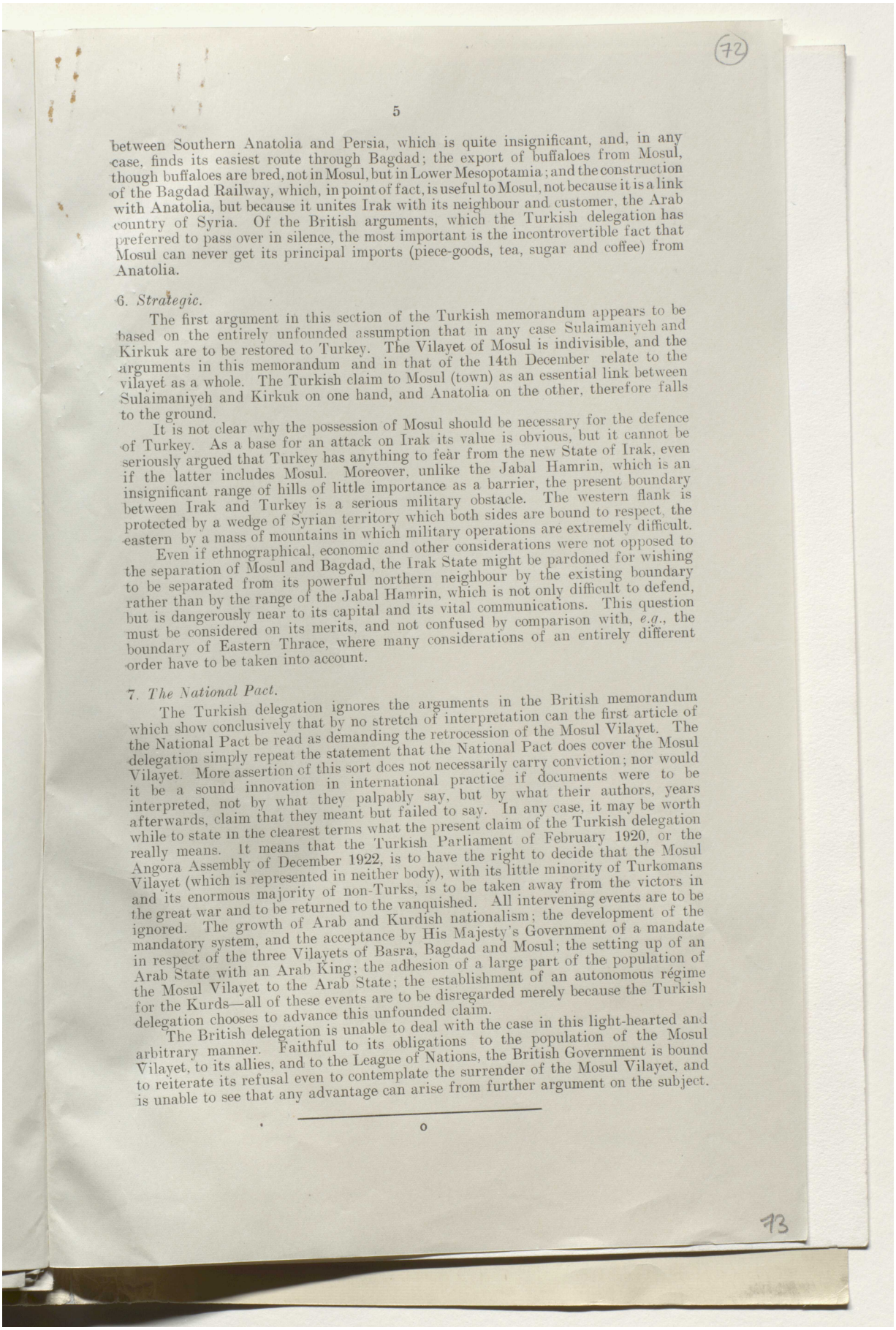

between Southern Anatolia and Persia, which is quite insignificant, and, in any case, finds its easiest route through Bagdad; the export of buffaloes from Mosul, though buffaloes are bred, not in Mosul, but in Lower Mesopotamia; and the construction of the Bagdad Railway, which, in point of fact, is useful to Mosul, not because it is a link with Anatolia, but because it unites Irak with its neighbour and customer, the Arab country of Syria. Of the British arguments, which the Turkish delegation has preferred to pass over in silence, the most important is the incontrovertible fact that Mosul can never get its principal imports (piece-goods, tea, sugar and coffee) from Anatolia.

6. *Strategic.*

The first argument in this section of the Turkish memorandum appears to be based on the entirely unfounded assumption that in any case Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk are to be restored to Turkey. The Vilayet of Mosul is indivisible, and the arguments in this memorandum and in that of the 14th December relate to the vilayet as a whole. The Turkish claim to Mosul (town) as an essential link between Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk on one hand, and Anatolia on the other, therefore falls to the ground.

It is not clear why the possession of Mosul should be necessary for the defence of Turkey. As a base for an attack on Irak its value is obvious, but it cannot be seriously argued that Turkey has anything to fear from the new State of Irak, even if the latter includes Mosul. Moreover, unlike the Jabal Hamrin, which is an insignificant range of hills of little importance as a barrier, the present boundary between Irak and Turkey is a serious military obstacle. The western flank is protected by a wedge of Syrian territory which both sides are bound to respect, the eastern by a mass of mountains in which military operations are extremely difficult.

Even if ethnographical, economic and other considerations were not opposed to the separation of Mosul and Bagdad, the Irak State might be pardoned for wishing to be separated from its powerful northern neighbour by the existing boundary rather than by the range of the Jabal Hamrin, which is not only difficult to defend, but is dangerously near to its capital and its vital communications. This question must be considered on its merits, and not confused by comparison with, *e.g.*, the boundary of Eastern Thrace, where many considerations of an entirely different order have to be taken into account.

7. *The National Pact.*

The Turkish delegation ignores the arguments in the British memorandum which show conclusively that by no stretch of interpretation can the first article of the National Pact be read as demanding the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet. The delegation simply repeat the statement that the National Pact does cover the Mosul Vilayet. More assertion of this sort does not necessarily carry conviction; nor would it be a sound innovation in international practice if documents were to be interpreted, not by what they palpably say, but by what their authors, years afterwards, claim that they meant but failed to say. In any case, it may be worth while to state in the clearest terms what the present claim of the Turkish delegation really means. It means that the Turkish Parliament of February 1920, or the Angora Assembly of December 1922, is to have the right to decide that the Mosul Vilayet (which is represented in neither body), with its little minority of Turkomans and its enormous majority of non-Turks, is to be taken away from the victors in the great war and to be returned to the vanquished. All intervening events are to be ignored. The growth of Arab and Kurdish nationalism; the development of the mandatory system, and the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of a mandate in respect of the three Vilayets of Basra, Bagdad and Mosul; the setting up of an Arab State with an Arab King; the adhesion of a large part of the population of the Mosul Vilayet to the Arab State; the establishment of an autonomous régime for the Kurds—all of these events are to be disregarded merely because the Turkish delegation chooses to advance this unfounded claim.

The British delegation is unable to deal with the case in this light-hearted and arbitrary manner. Faithful to its obligations to the population of the Mosul Vilayet, to its allies, and to the League of Nations, the British Government is bound to reiterate its refusal even to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet, and is unable to see that any advantage can arise from further argument on the subject.

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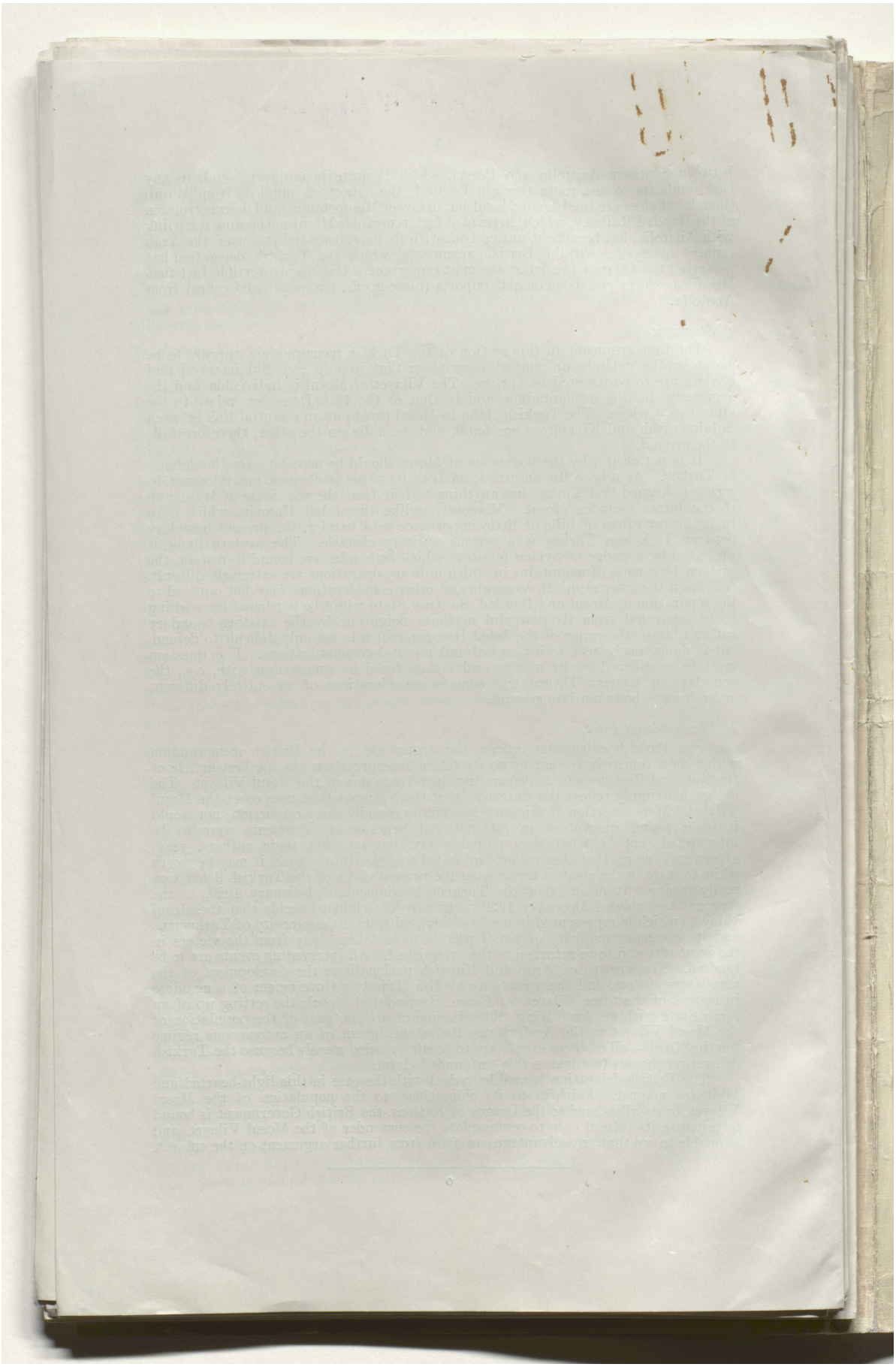

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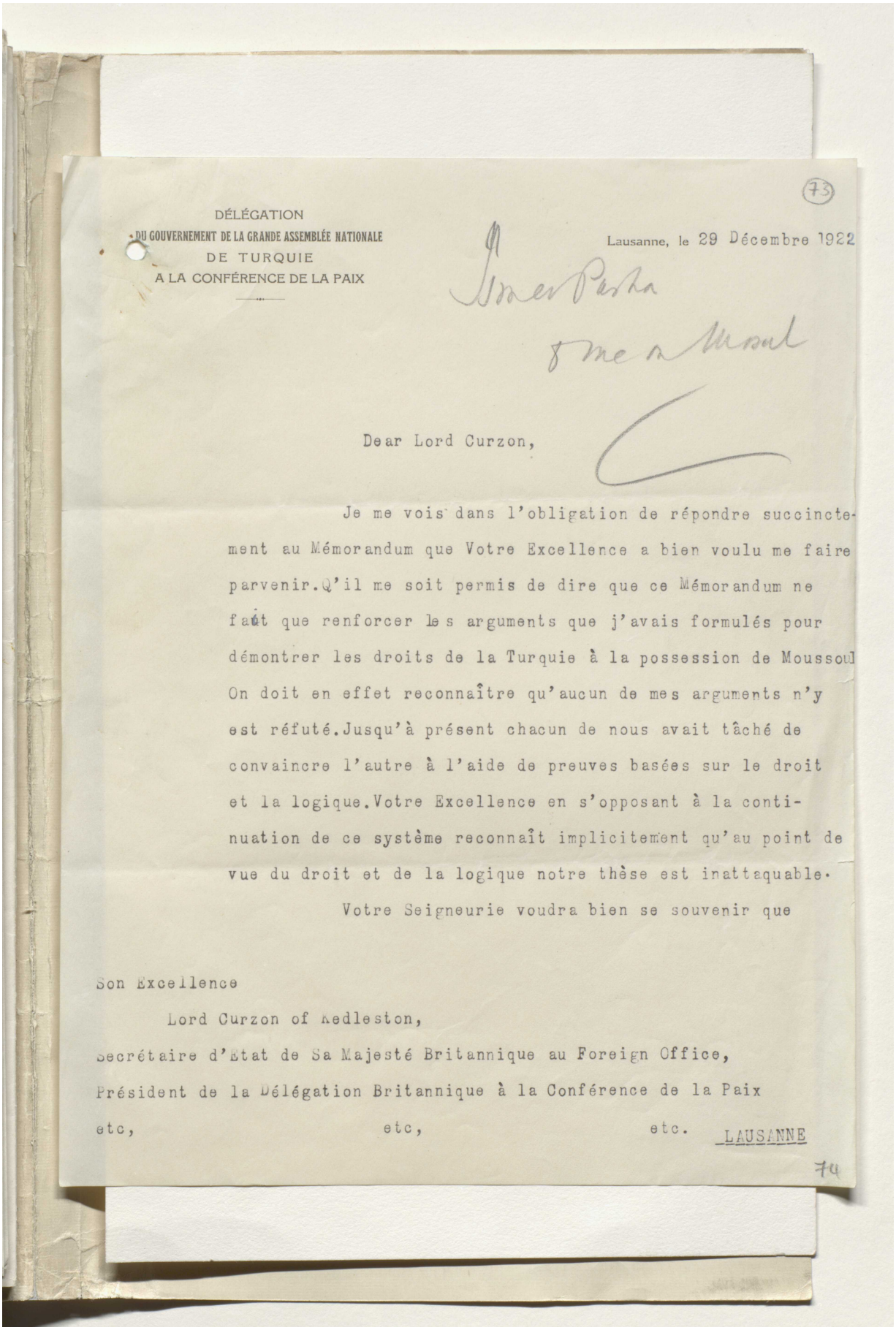

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le 29 Décembre 1922

Ismet Pasha
& me re Mosul

Dear Lord Curzon,

Je me vois dans l'obligation de répondre succinctement au Mémorandum que Votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire parvenir. Q'il me soit permis de dire que ce Mémorandum ne fait que renforcer les arguments que j'avais formulés pour démontrer les droits de la Turquie à la possession de Moussoul On doit en effet reconnaître qu'aucun de mes arguments n'y est réfuté. Jusqu'à présent chacun de nous avait tâché de convaincre l'autre à l'aide de preuves basées sur le droit et la logique. Votre Excellence en s'opposant à la continuation de ce système reconnaît implicitement qu'au point de vue du droit et de la logique notre thèse est inattaquable.

Votre Seigneurie voudra bien se souvenir que

Son Excellence
Lord Curzon of Kedleston,
Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté Britannique au Foreign Office,
Président de la Délégation Britannique à la Conférence de la Paix
etc, etc, etc. LAUSANNE

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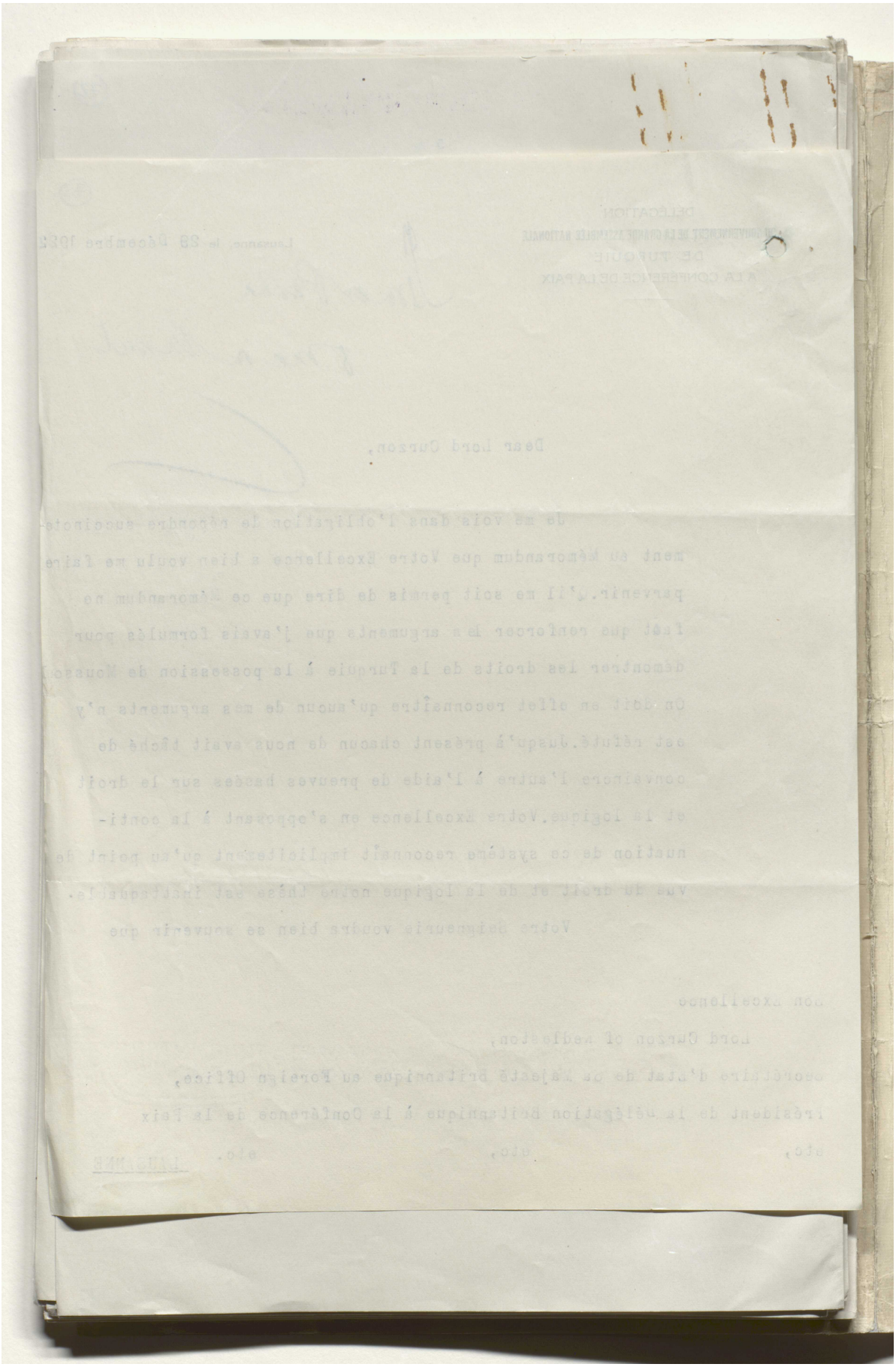

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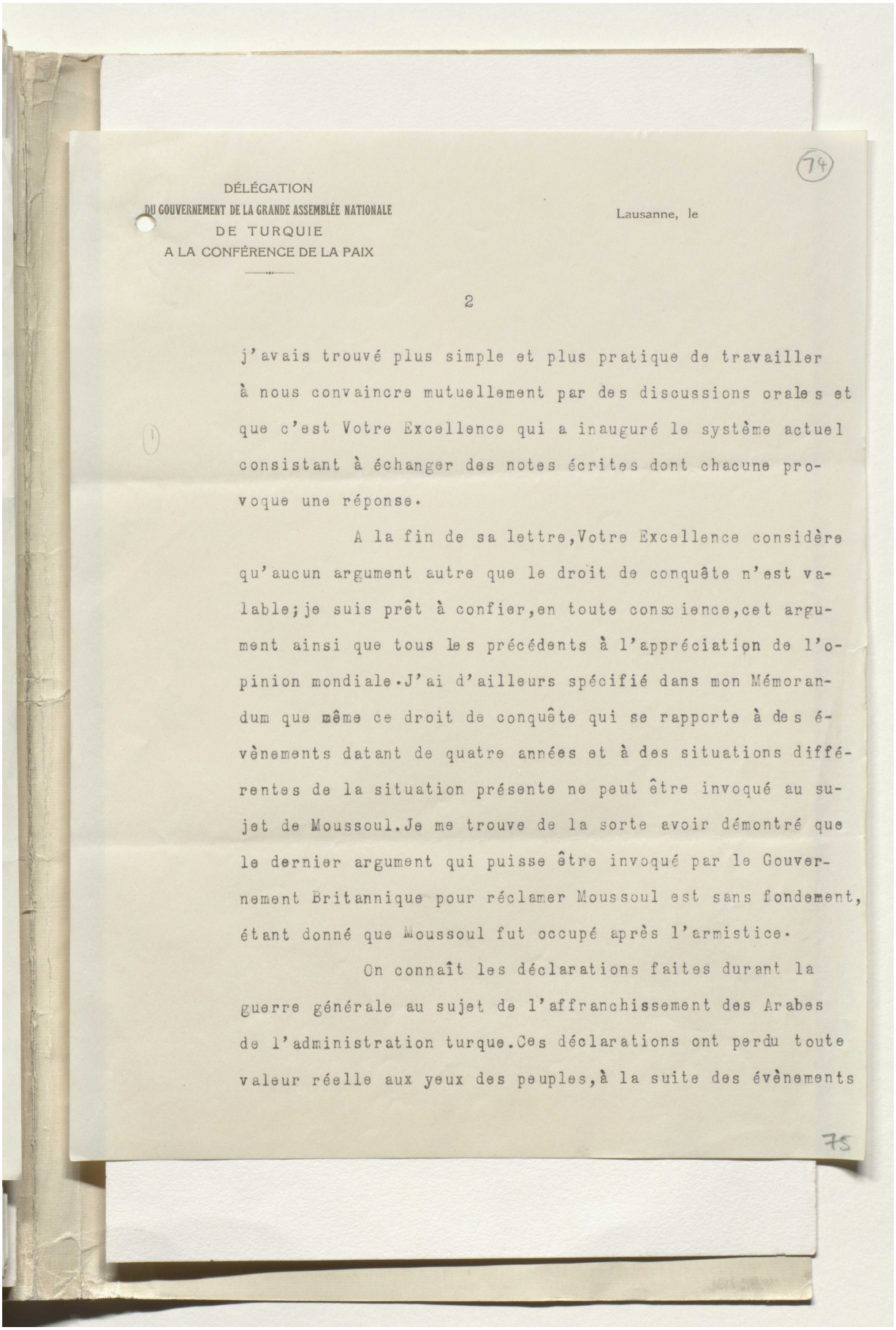

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

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j'avais trouvé plus simple et plus pratique de travailler à nous convaincre mutuellement par des discussions orales et que c'est Votre Excellence qui a inauguré le système actuel consistant à échanger des notes écrites dont chacune provoque une réponse.

A la fin de sa lettre, Votre Excellence considère qu'aucun argument autre que le droit de conquête n'est valable; je suis prêt à confier, en toute conscience, cet argument ainsi que tous les précédents à l'appréciation de l'opinion mondiale. J'ai d'ailleurs spécifié dans mon Mémorandum que même ce droit de conquête qui se rapporte à des évènements datant de quatre années et à des situations différentes de la situation présente ne peut être invoqué au sujet de Moussoul. Je me trouve de la sorte avoir démontré que le dernier argument qui puisse être invoqué par le Gouvernement Britannique pour réclamer Moussoul est sans fondement, étant donné que Moussoul fut occupé après l'armistice.

On connaît les déclarations faites durant la guerre générale au sujet de l'affranchissement des Arabes de l'administration turque. Ces déclarations ont perdu toute valeur réelle aux yeux des peuples, à la suite des évènements

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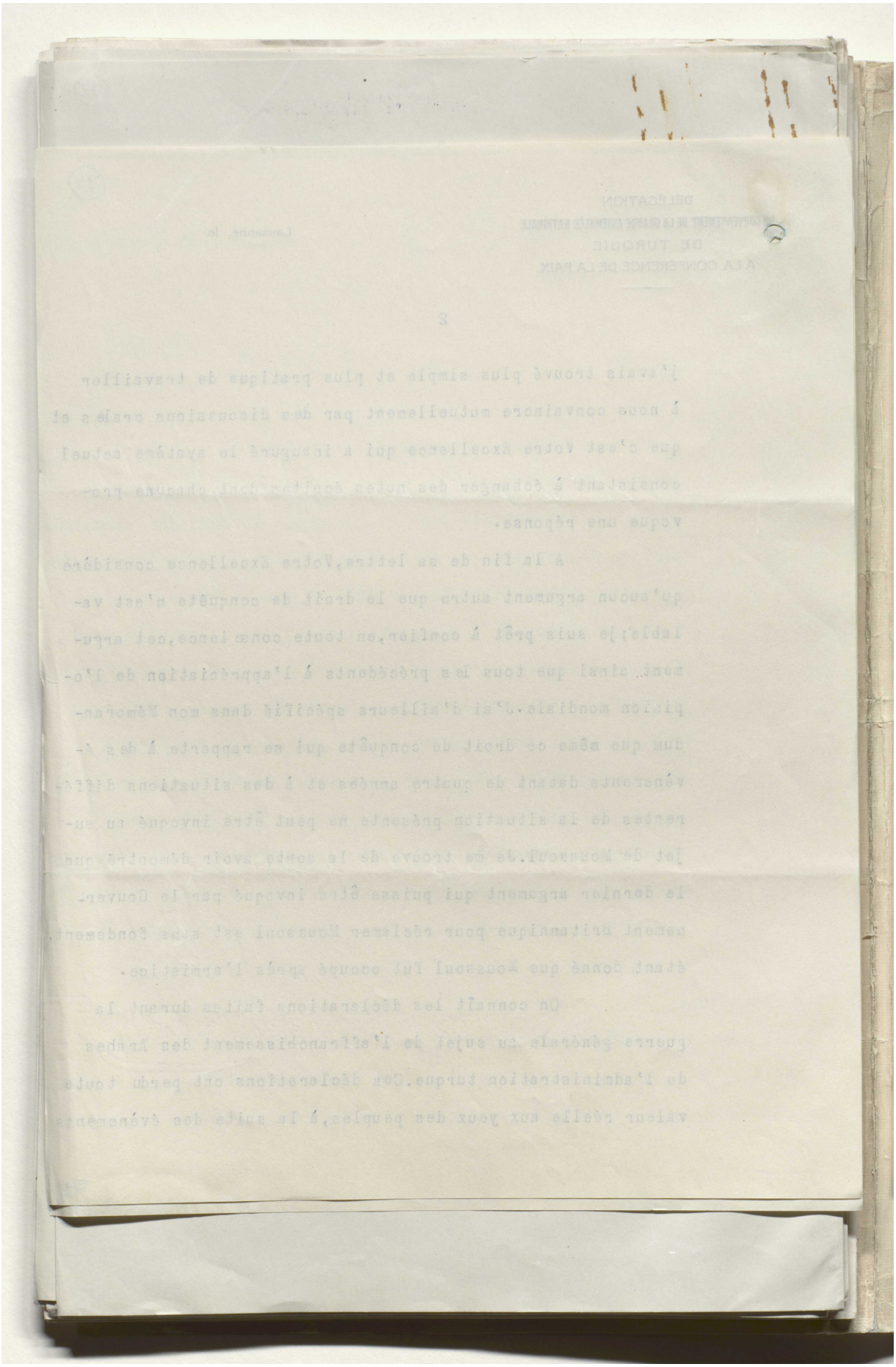

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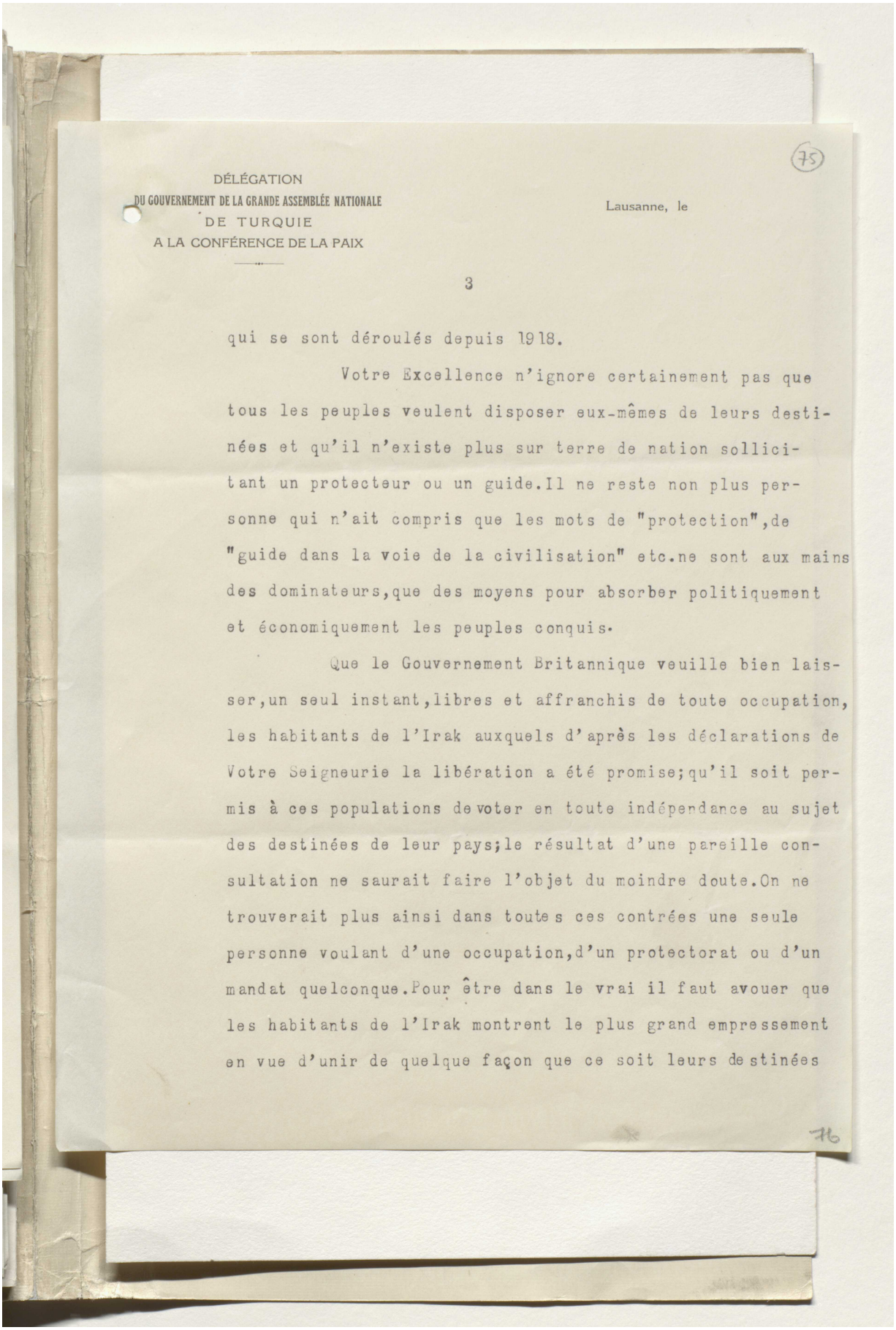

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

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qui se sont déroulés depuis 1918.

Votre Excellence n'ignore certainement pas que tous les peuples veulent disposer eux-mêmes de leurs destinées et qu'il n'existe plus sur terre de nation sollicitant un protecteur ou un guide.Il ne reste non plus personne qui n'ait compris que les mots de "protection",de "guide dans la voie de la civilisation" etc.ne sont aux mains des dominateurs,que des moyens pour absorber politiquement et économiquement les peuples conquis.

Que le Gouvernement Britannique veuille bien laisser,un seul instant,libres et affranchis de toute occupation, les habitants de l'Irak auxquels d'après les déclarations de Votre Seigneurie la libération a été promise;qu'il soit permis à ces populations de voter en toute indépendance au sujet des destinées de leur pays;le résultat d'une pareille consultation ne saurait faire l'objet du moindre doute.On ne trouverait plus ainsi dans toutes ces contrées une seule personne voulant d'une occupation,d'un protectorat ou d'un mandat quelconque.Pour être dans le vrai il faut avouer que les habitants de l'Irak montrent le plus grand empressement en vue d'unir de quelque façon que ce soit leurs destinées

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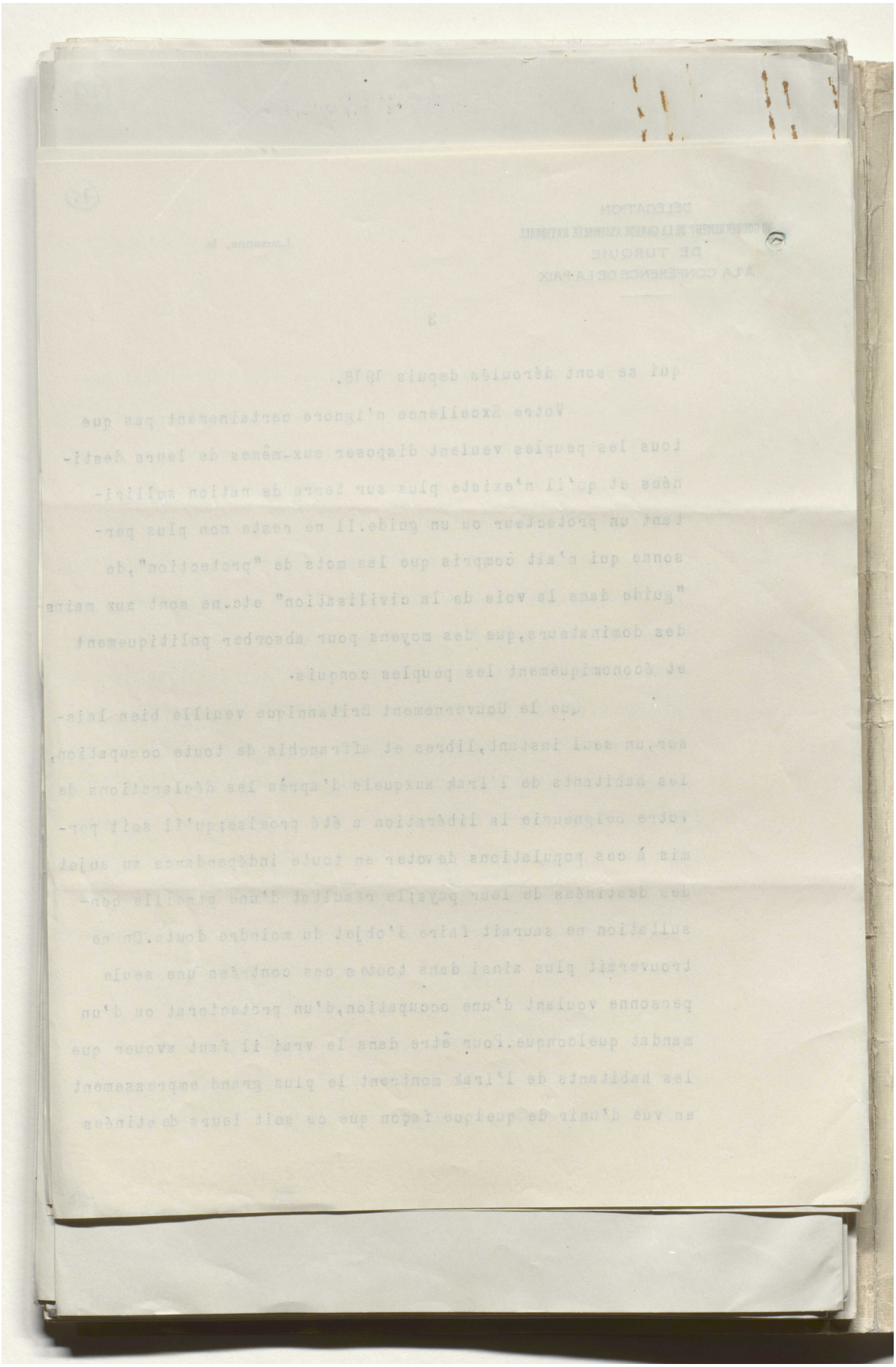

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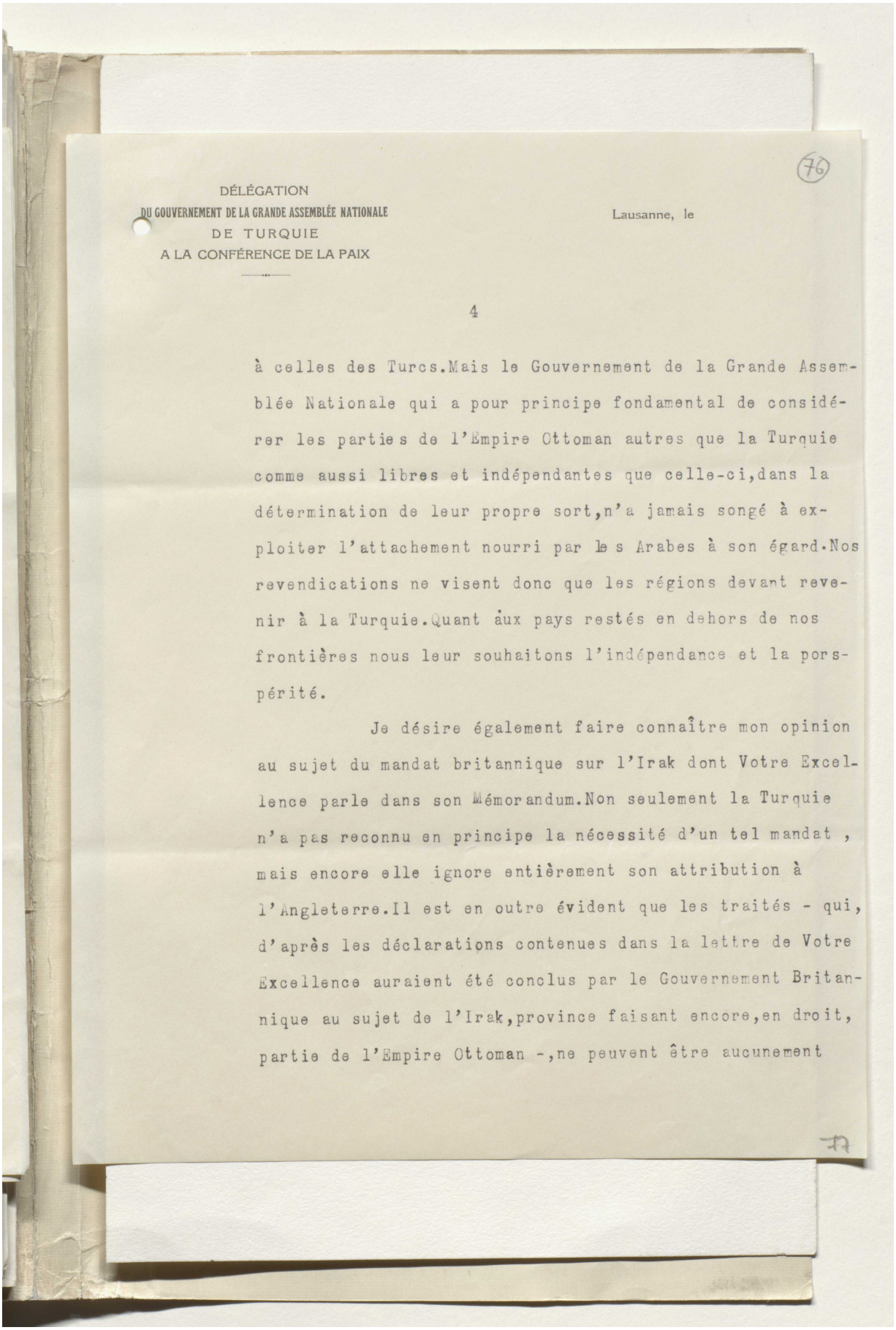

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
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Lausanne, le

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à celles des Turcs.Mais le Gouvernement de la Grande Assemblée Nationale qui a pour principe fondamental de considérer les parties de l'Empire Ottoman autres que la Turquie comme aussi libres et indépendantes que celle-ci,dans la détermination de leur propre sort,n'a jamais songé à exploiter l'attachement nourri par les Arabes à son égard.Nos revendications ne visent donc que les régions devant revenir à la Turquie.Quant aux pays restés en dehors de nos frontières nous leur souhaitons l'indépendance et la porspérité.

Je désire également faire connaître mon opinion au sujet du mandat britannique sur l'Irak dont Votre Excellence parle dans son Mémorandum.Non seulement la Turquie n'a pas reconnu en principe la nécessité d'un tel mandat , mais encore elle ignore entièrement son attribution à l'Angleterre.Il est en outre évident que les traités - qui, d'après les déclarations contenues dans la lettre de Votre Excellence auraient été conclus par le Gouvernement Britannique au sujet de l'Irak,province faisant encore,en droit, partie de l'Empire Ottoman -,ne peuvent être aucunement

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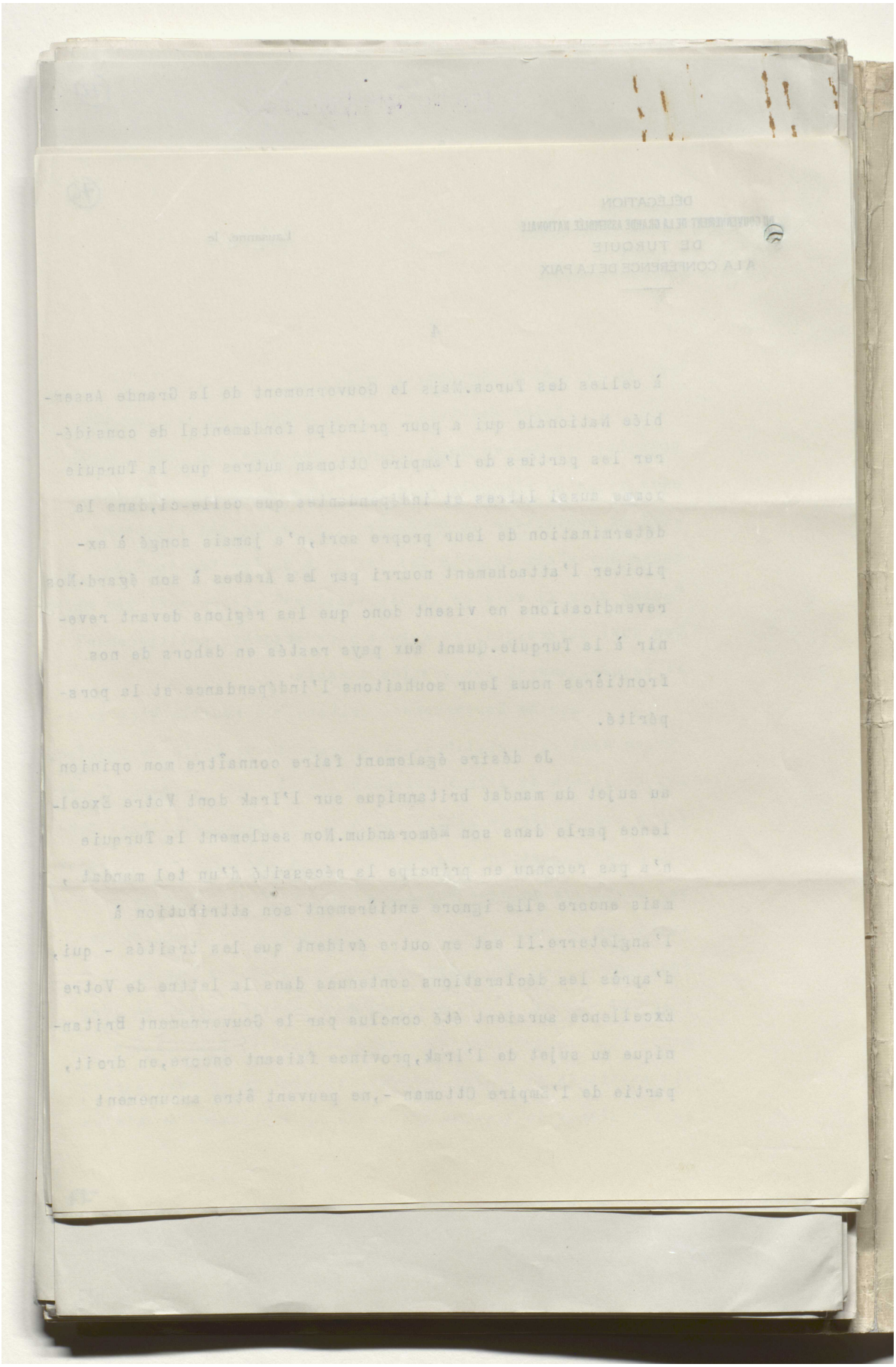

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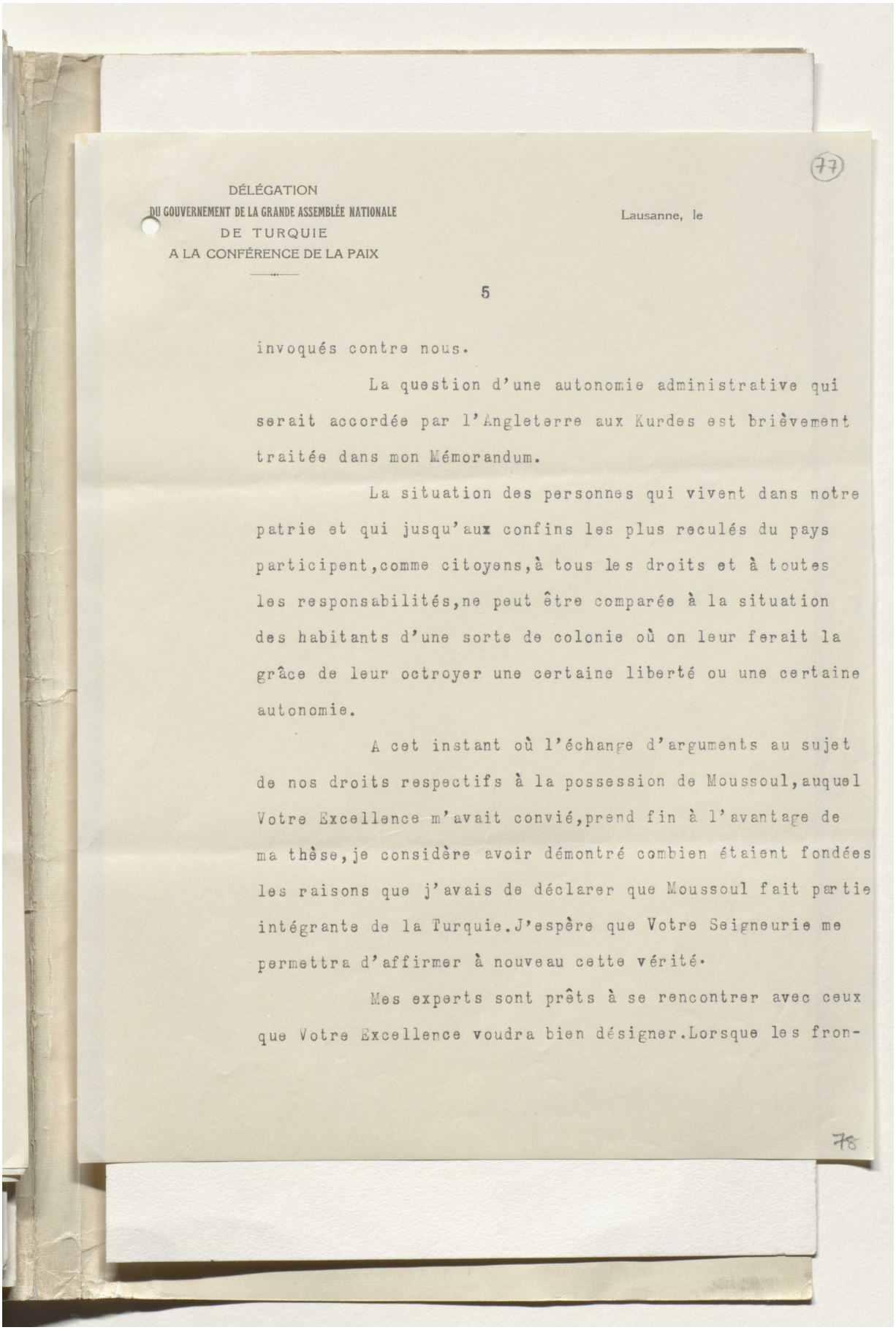

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DÉLÉGATION
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DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

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invoqués contre nous.

La question d'une autonomie administrative qui serait accordée par l'Angleterre aux Kurdes est brièvement traitée dans mon Mémorandum.

La situation des personnes qui vivent dans notre patrie et qui jusqu'aux confins les plus reculés du pays participent,comme citoyens,à tous les droits et à toutes les responsabilités,ne peut être comparée à la situation des habitants d'une sorte de colonie où on leur ferait la grâce de leur octroyer une certaine liberté ou une certaine autonomie.

A cet instant où l'échange d'arguments au sujet de nos droits respectifs à la possession de Moussoul,auquel Votre Excellence m'avait convié,prend fin à l'avantage de ma thèse,je considère avoir démontré combien étaient fondées les raisons que j'avais de déclarer que Moussoul fait partie intégrante de la Turquie.J'espère que Votre Seigneurie me permettra d'affirmer à nouveau cette vérité.

Mes experts sont prêts à se rencontrer avec ceux que Votre Excellence voudra bien désigner.Lorsque les fron-

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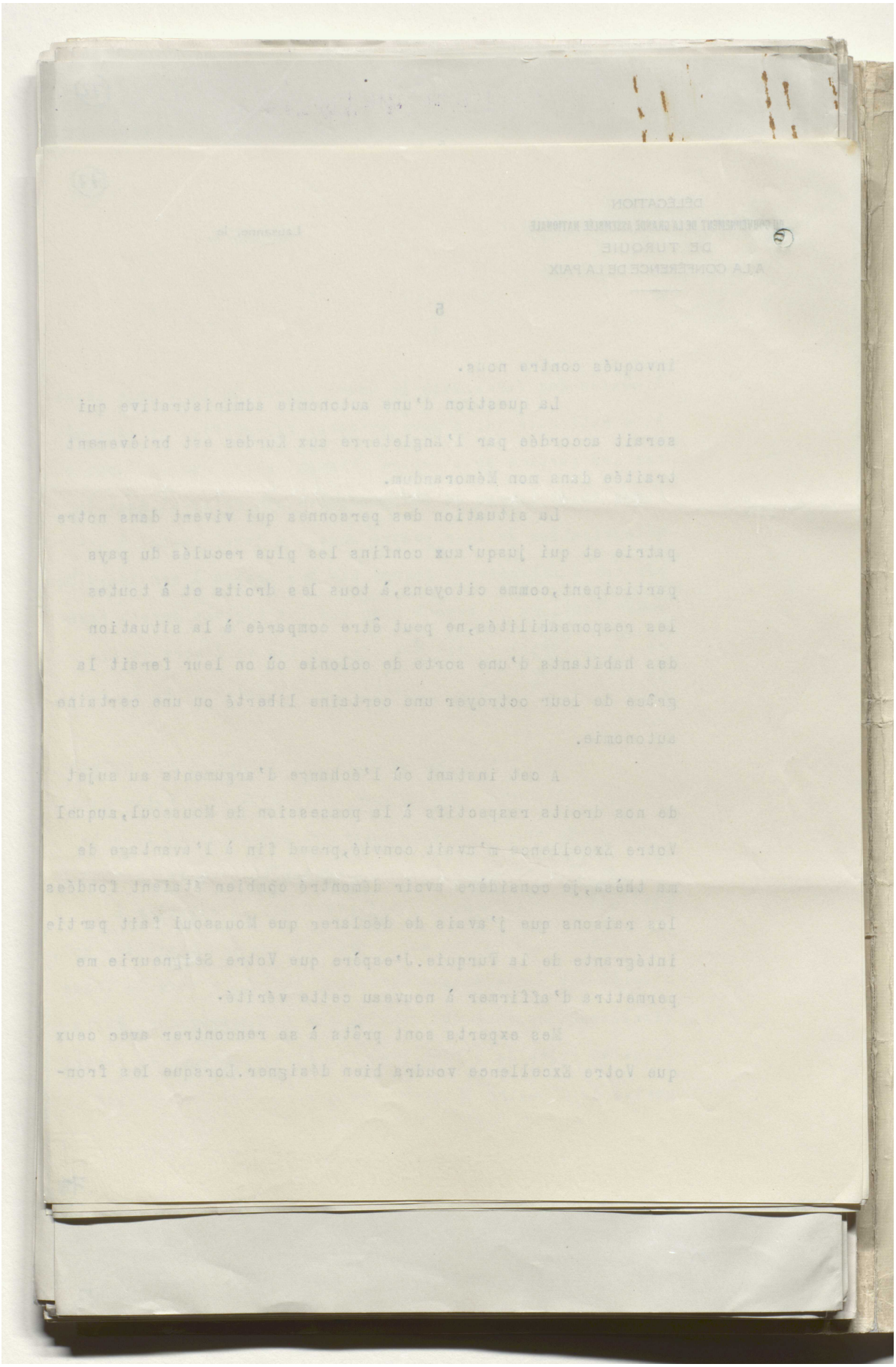

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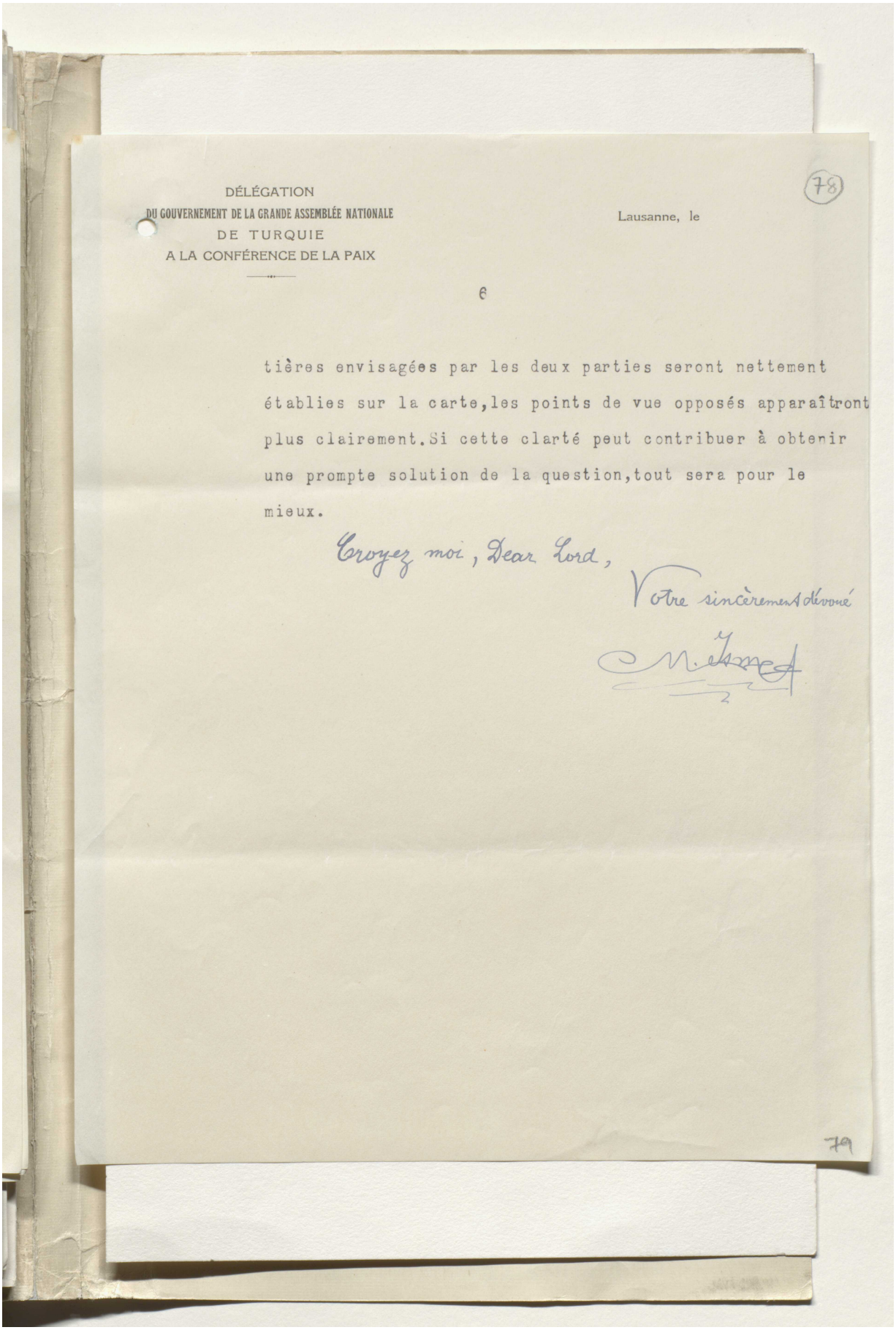

DÉLÉGATION
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Lausanne, le

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tières envisagées par les deux parties seront nettement établies sur la carte, les points de vue opposés apparaîtront plus clairement. Si cette clarté peut contribuer à obtenir une prompte solution de la question, tout sera pour le mieux.

Croyez moi, Dear Lord,

Votre sincèrement dévoué

M. Ismet

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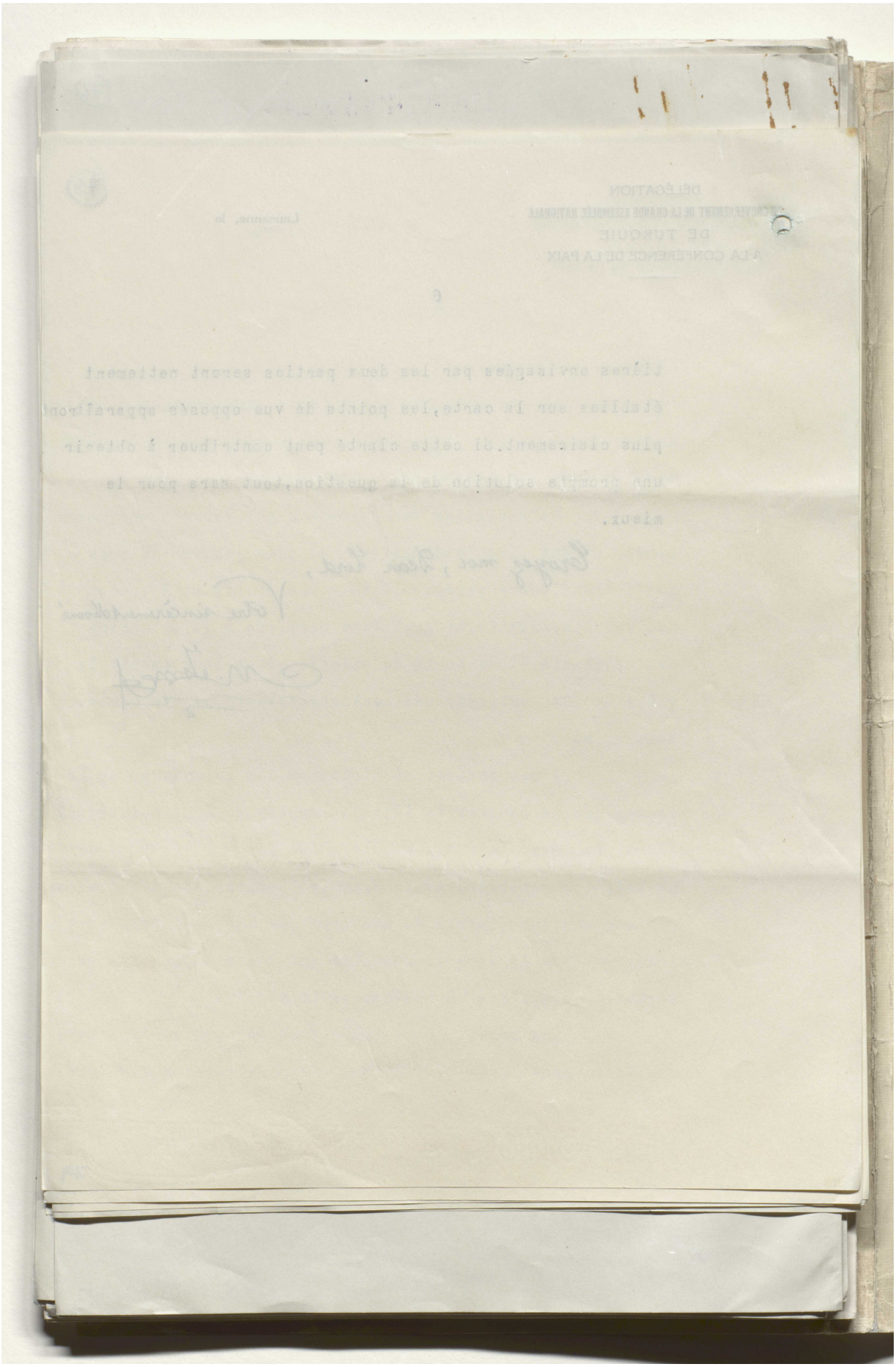

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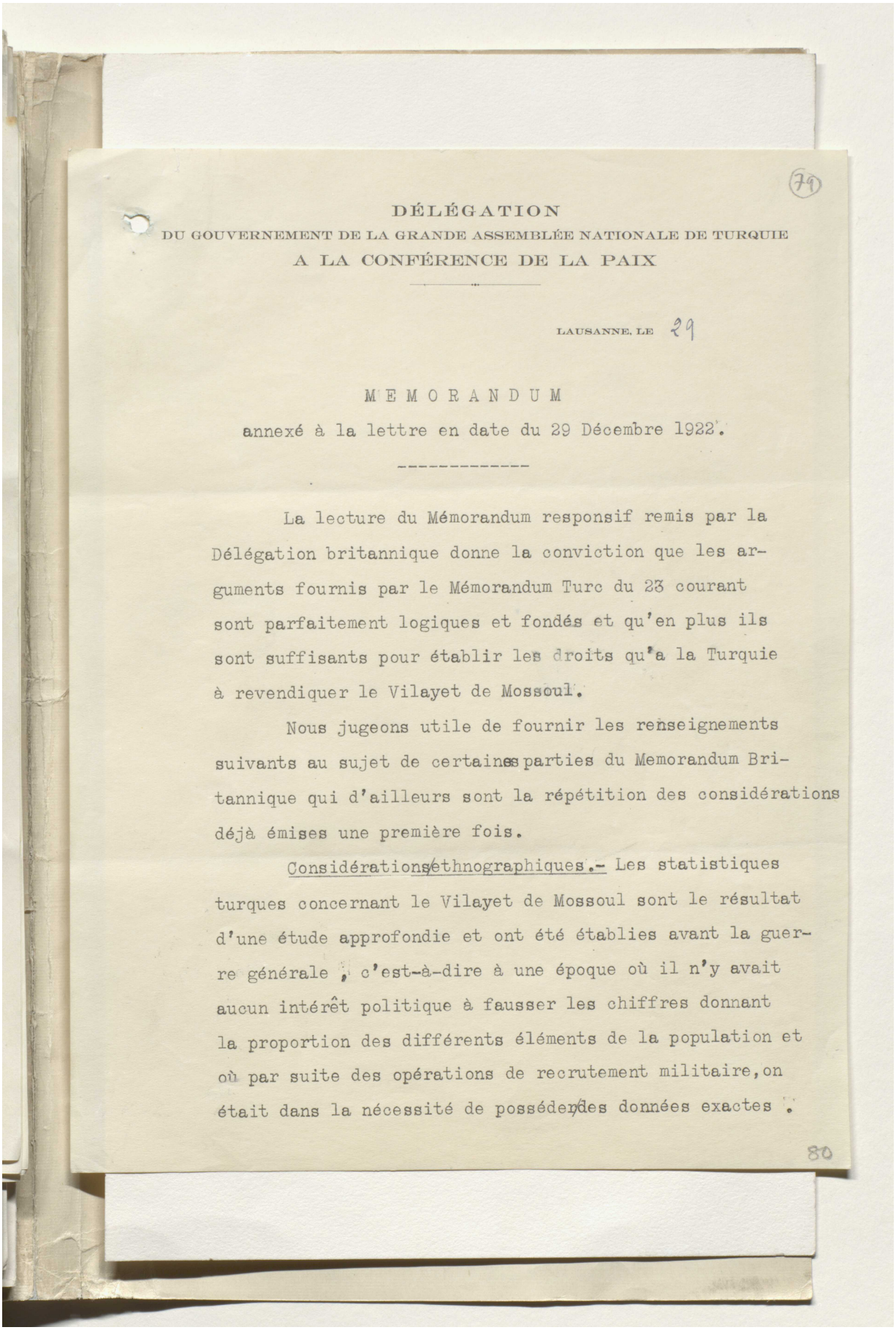

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

LAUSANNE, LE 29

MEMORANDUM
annexé à la lettre en date du 29 Décembre 1922.

La lecture du Mémorandum responsif remis par la Délégation britannique donne la conviction que les arguments fournis par le Mémorandum Turc du 23 courant sont parfaitement logiques et fondés et qu'en plus ils sont suffisants pour établir les droits qu'a la Turquie à revendiquer le Vilayet de Mossoul.

Nous jugeons utile de fournir les renseignements suivants au sujet de certaines parties du Memorandum Britannique qui d'ailleurs sont la répétition des considérations déjà émises une première fois.

Considérations ethnographiques.- Les statistiques turques concernant le Vilayet de Mossoul sont le résultat d'une étude approfondie et ont été établies avant la guerre générale ; c'est-à-dire à une époque où il n'y avait aucun intérêt politique à fausser les chiffres donnant la proportion des différents éléments de la population et où par suite des opérations de recrutement militaire, on était dans la nécessité de posséder des données exactes .

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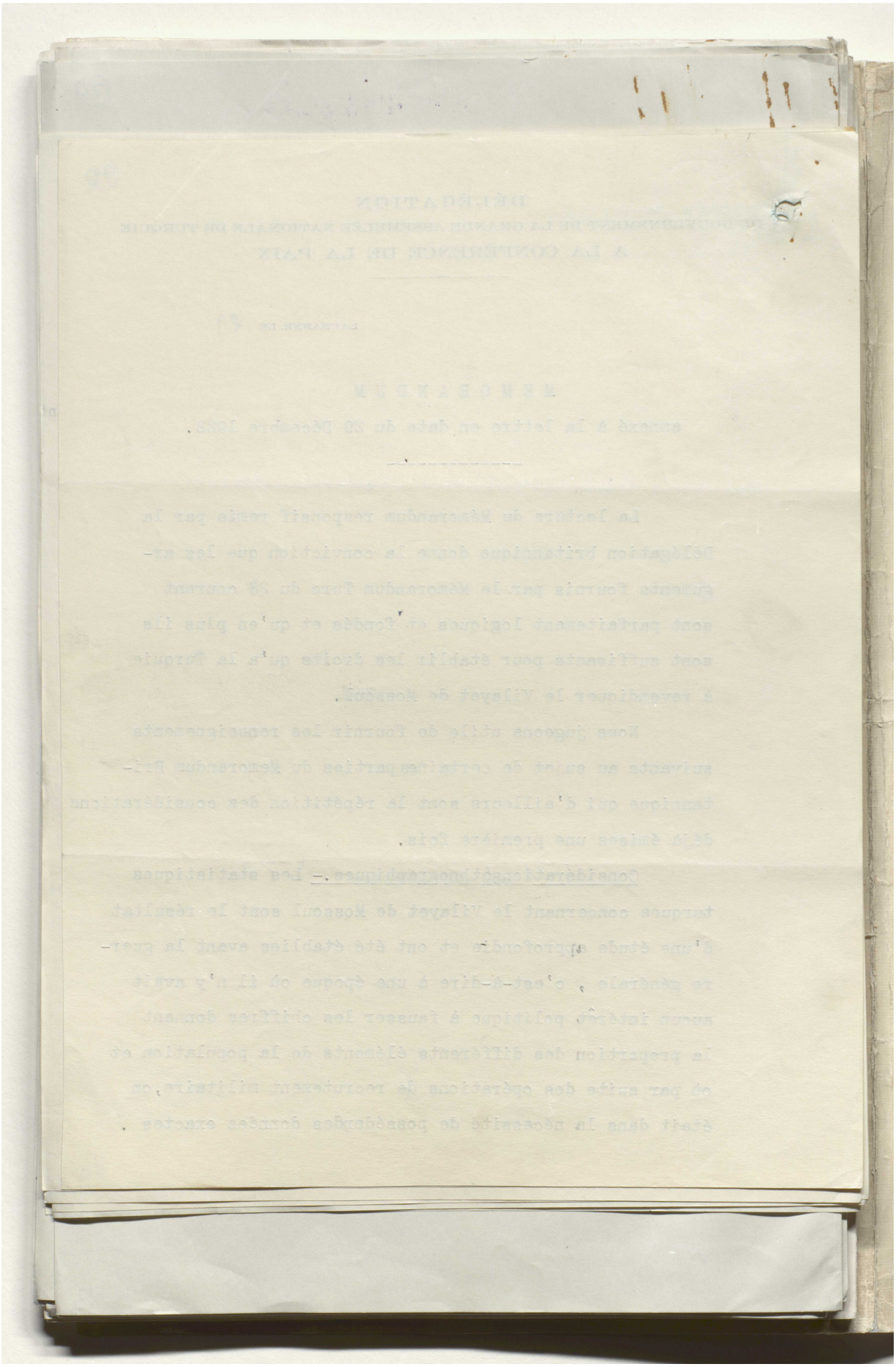

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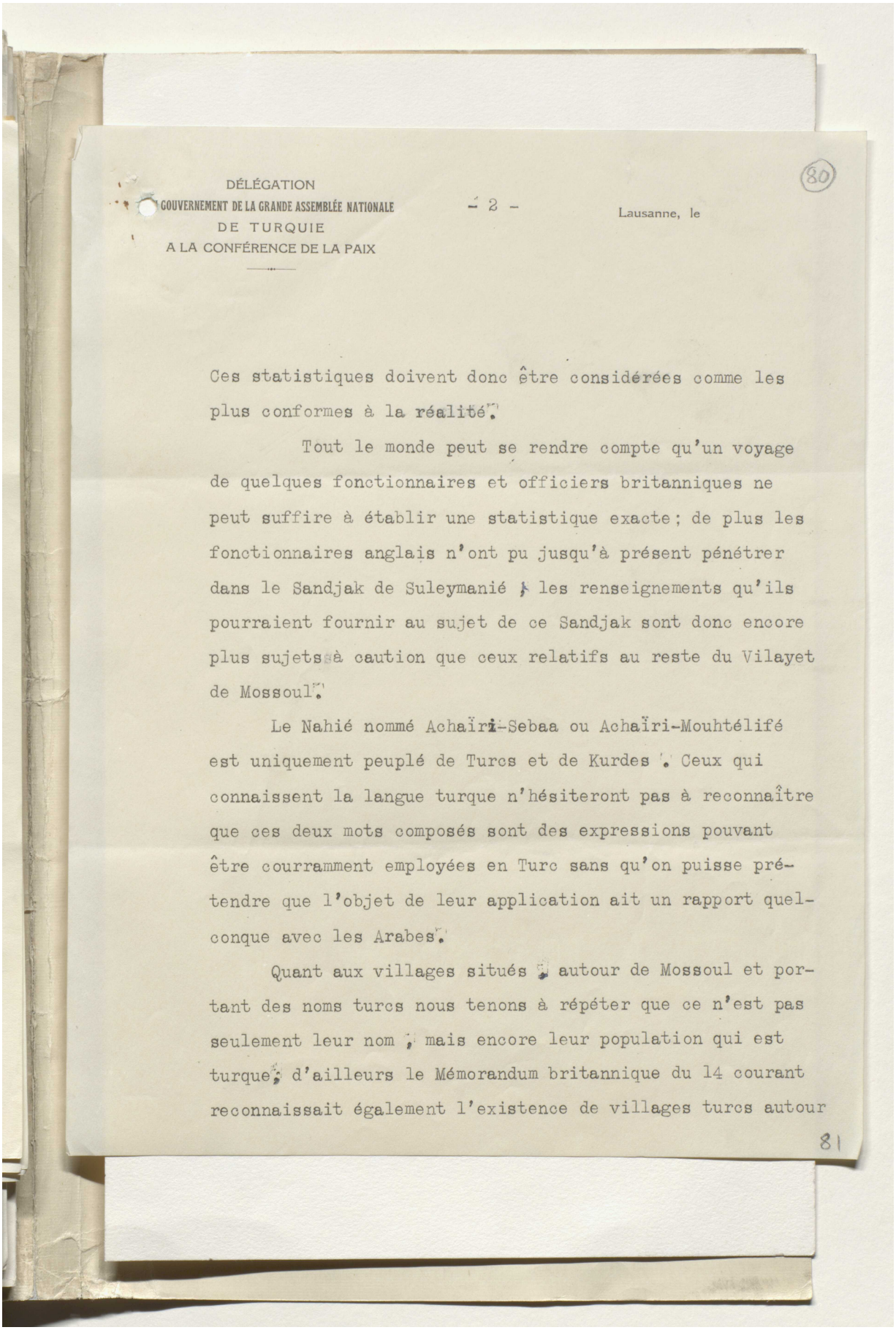

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Lausanne, le

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Ces statistiques doivent donc être considérées comme les plus conformes à la réalité.

Tout le monde peut se rendre compte qu'un voyage de quelques fonctionnaires et officiers britanniques ne peut suffire à établir une statistique exacte ; de plus les fonctionnaires anglais n'ont pu jusqu'à présent pénétrer dans le Sandjak de Suleymanié ; les renseignements qu'ils pourraient fournir au sujet de ce Sandjak sont donc encore plus sujets à caution que ceux relatifs au reste du Vilayet de Mossoul.

Le Nahié nommé Achaïri-Sebaa ou Achaïri-Mouhtélifé est uniquement peuplé de Turcs et de Kurdes. Ceux qui connaissent la langue turque n'hésiteront pas à reconnaître que ces deux mots composés sont des expressions pouvant être courramment employées en Turc sans qu'on puisse prétendre que l'objet de leur application ait un rapport quelconque avec les Arabes.

Quant aux villages situés autour de Mossoul et portant des noms turcs nous tenons à répéter que ce n'est pas seulement leur nom, mais encore leur population qui est turque ; d'ailleurs le Mémorandum britannique du 14 courant reconnaissait également l'existence de villages turcs autour

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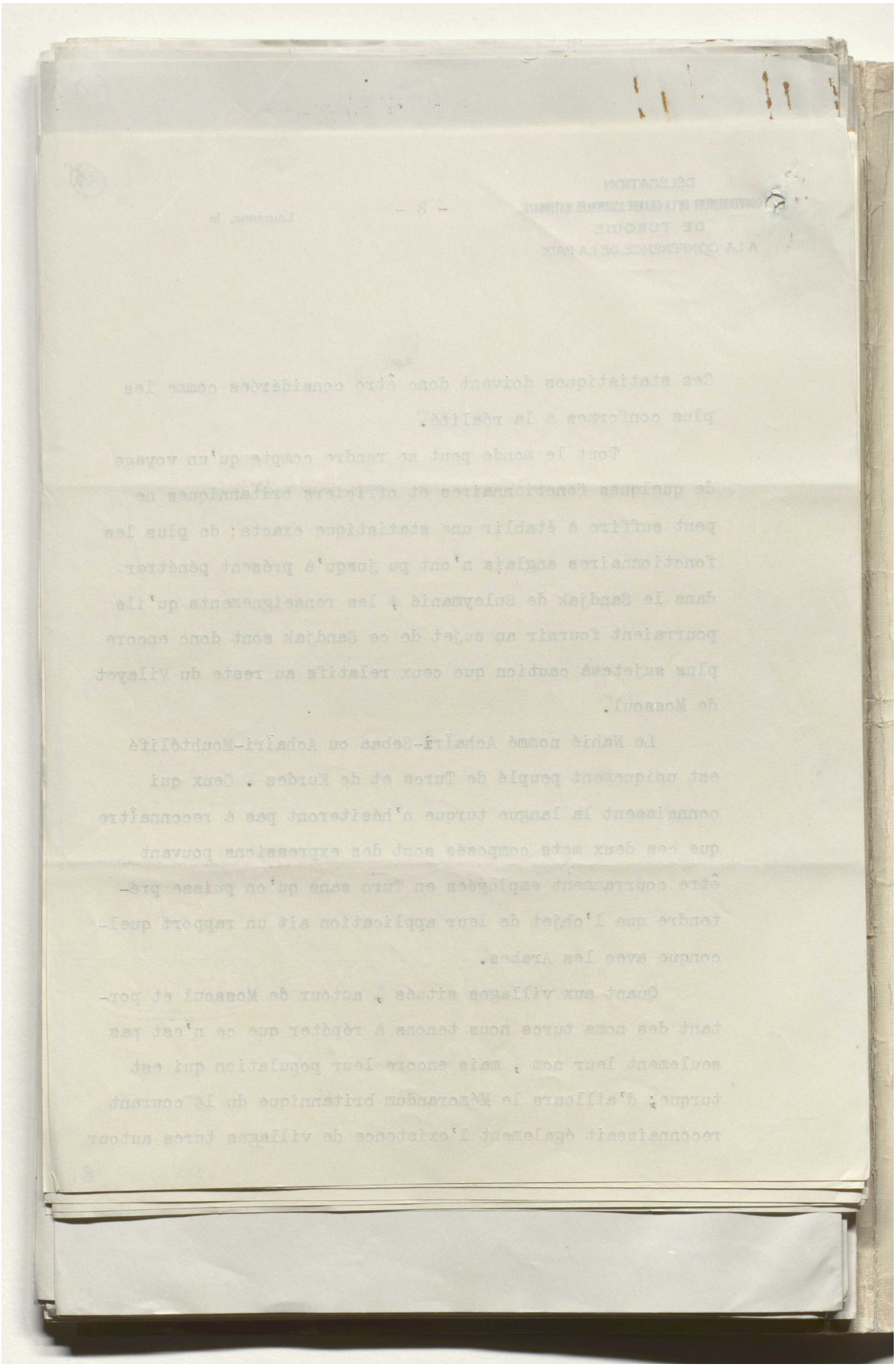

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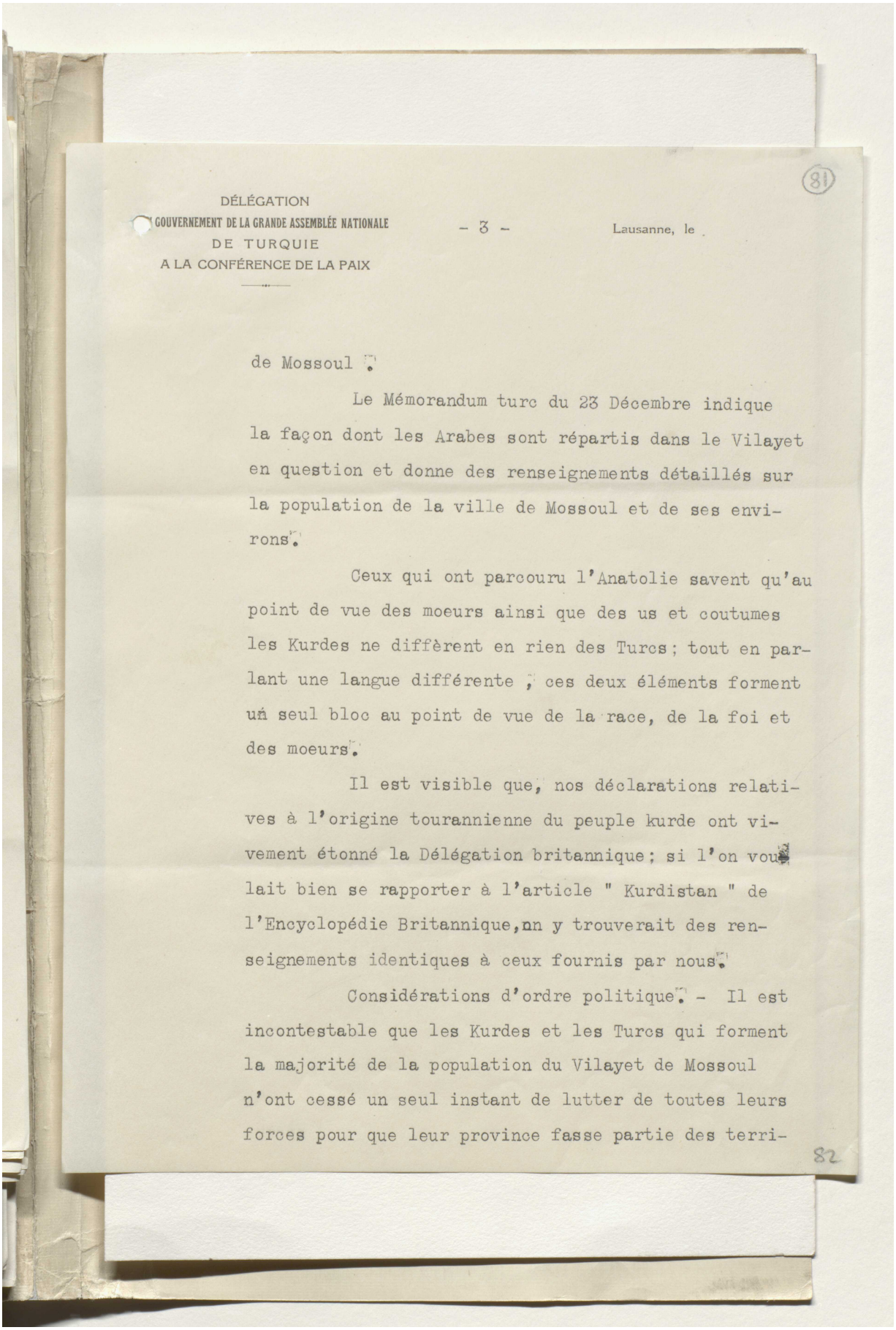

DÉLÉGATION
GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

(81)

de Mossoul.

Le Mémorandum turc du 23 Décembre indique la façon dont les Arabes sont répartis dans le Vilayet en question et donne des renseignements détaillés sur la population de la ville de Mossoul et de ses environs.

Ceux qui ont parcouru l'Anatolie savent qu'au point de vue des moeurs ainsi que des us et coutumes les Kurdes ne diffèrent en rien des Turcs; tout en parlant une langue différente, ces deux éléments forment un seul bloc au point de vue de la race, de la foi et des moeurs.

Il est visible que, nos déclarations relatives à l'origine tourannienne du peuple kurde ont vivement étonné la Délégation britannique; si l'on voulait bien se rapporter à l'article " Kurdistan " de l'Encyclopédie Britannique, on y trouverait des renseignements identiques à ceux fournis par nous.

Considérations d'ordre politique. - Il est incontestable que les Kurdes et les Turcs qui forment la majorité de la population du Vilayet de Mossoul n'ont cessé un seul instant de lutter de toutes leurs forces pour que leur province fasse partie des terri-

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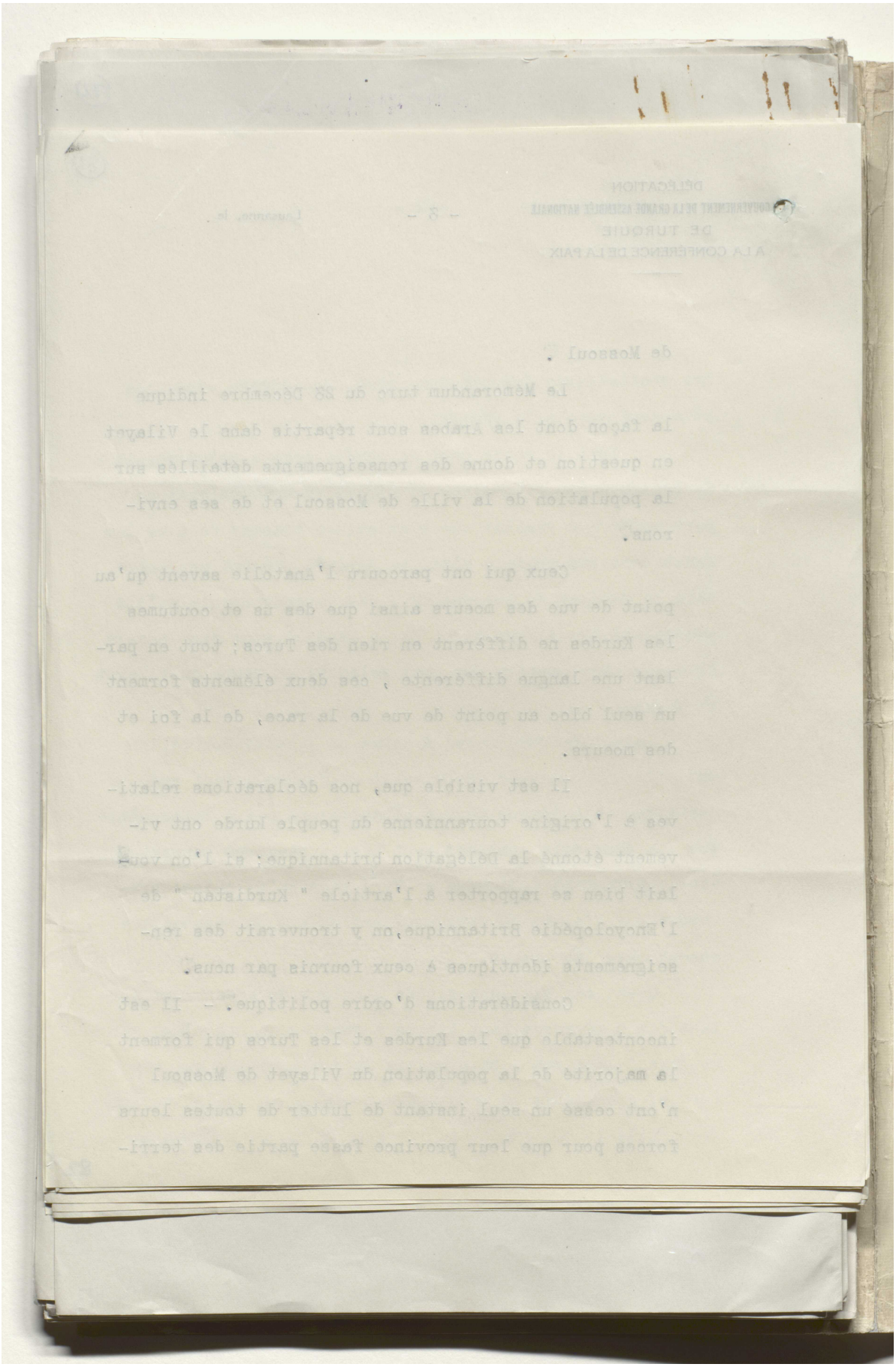

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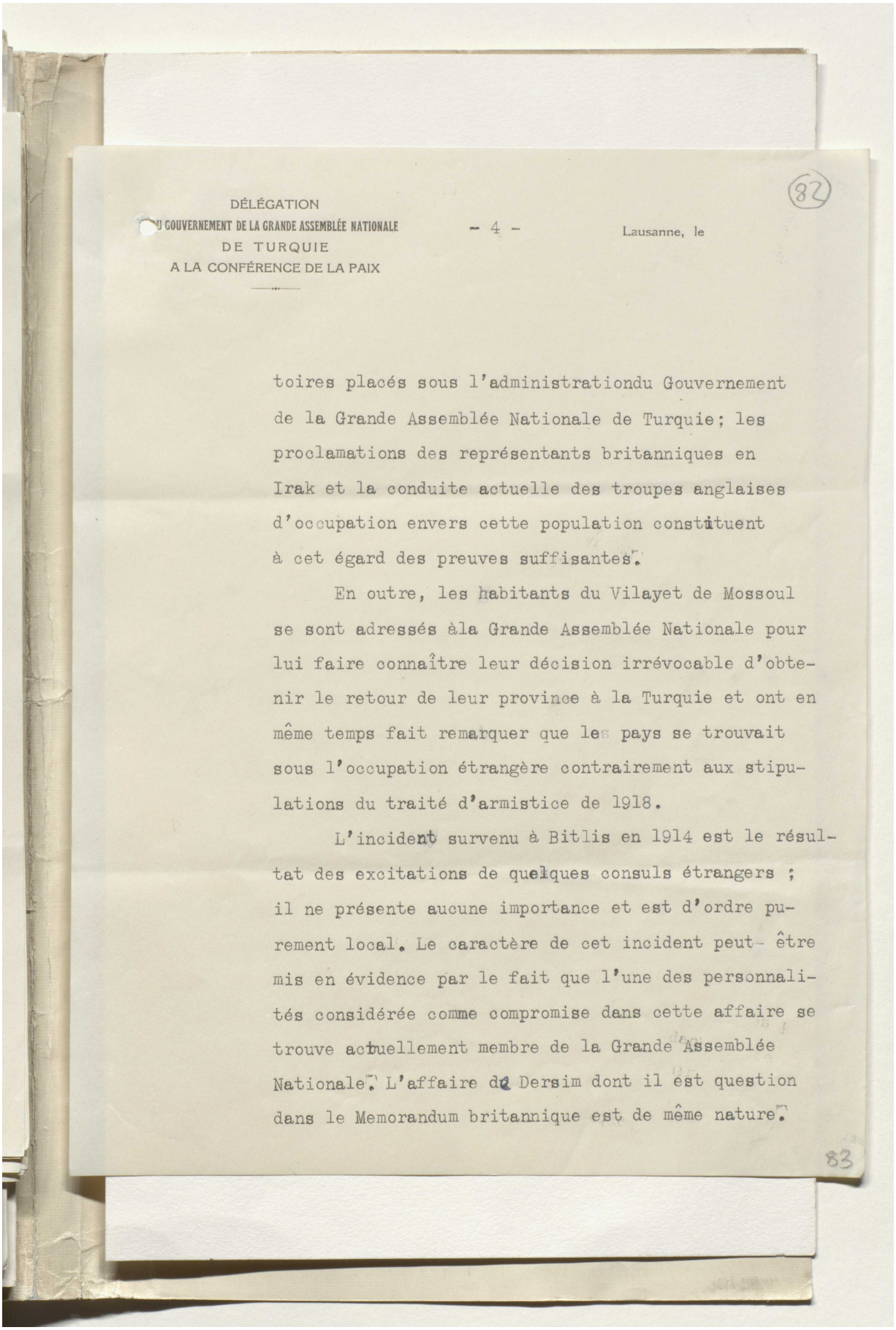

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

(82)

toires placés sous l'administrationdu Gouvernement de la Grande Assemblée Nationale de Turquie; les proclamations des représentants britanniques en Irak et la conduite actuelle des troupes anglaises d'occupation envers cette population constituent à cet égard des preuves suffisantes.

En outre, les habitants du Vilayet de Mossoul se sont adressés àla Grande Assemblée Nationale pour lui faire connaître leur décision irrévocable d'obtenir le retour de leur province à la Turquie et ont en même temps fait remarquer que les pays se trouvait sous l'occupation étrangère contrairement aux stipulations du traité d'armistice de 1918.

L'incident survenu à Bitlis en 1914 est le résultat des excitations de quelques consuls étrangers ; il ne présente aucune importance et est d'ordre purement local. Le caractère de cet incident peut- être mis en évidence par le fait que l'une des personnalités considérée comme compromise dans cette affaire se trouve actuellement membre de la Grande Assemblée Nationale. L'affaire de Dersim dont il est question dans le Memorandum britannique est de même nature.

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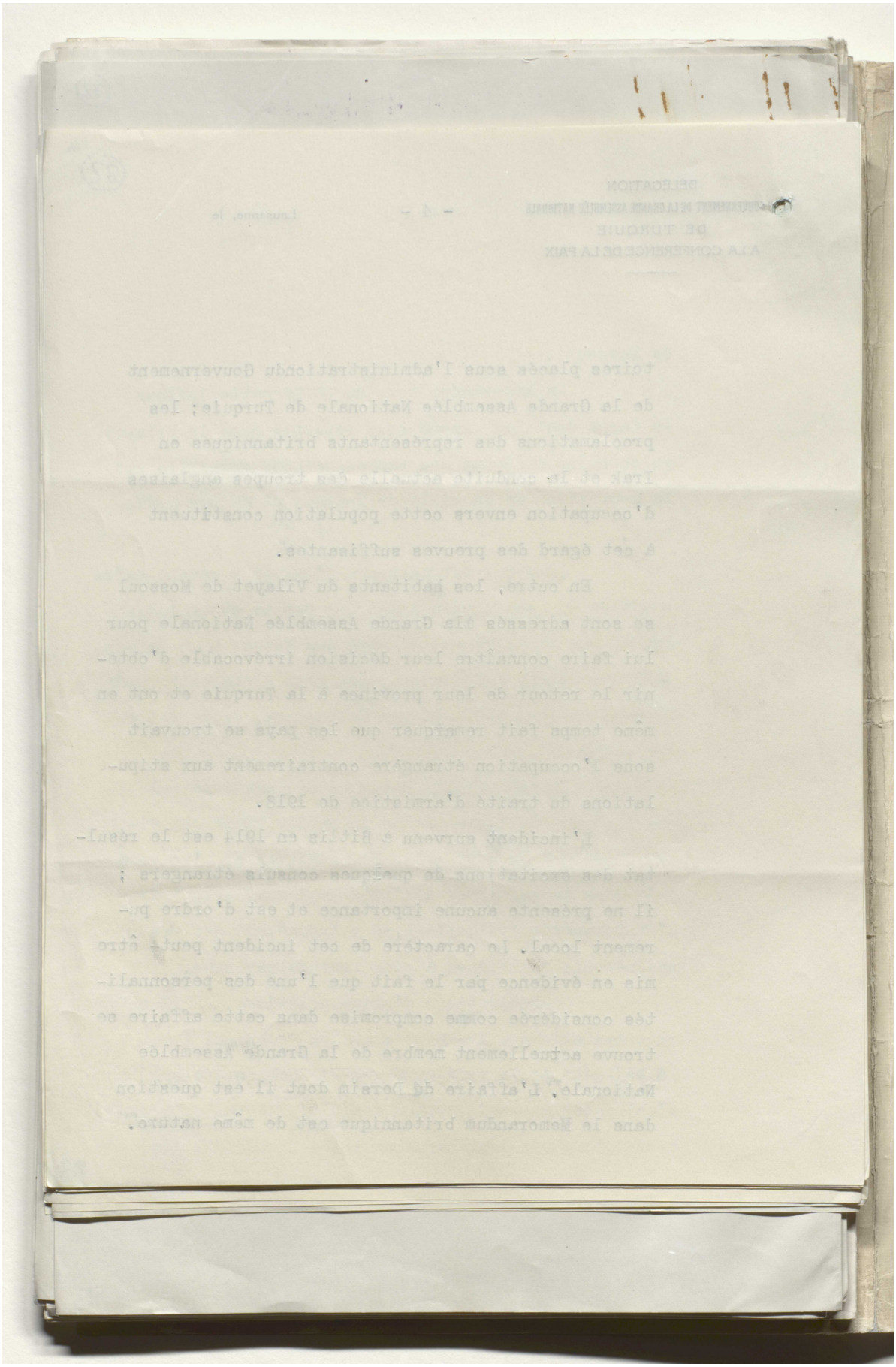

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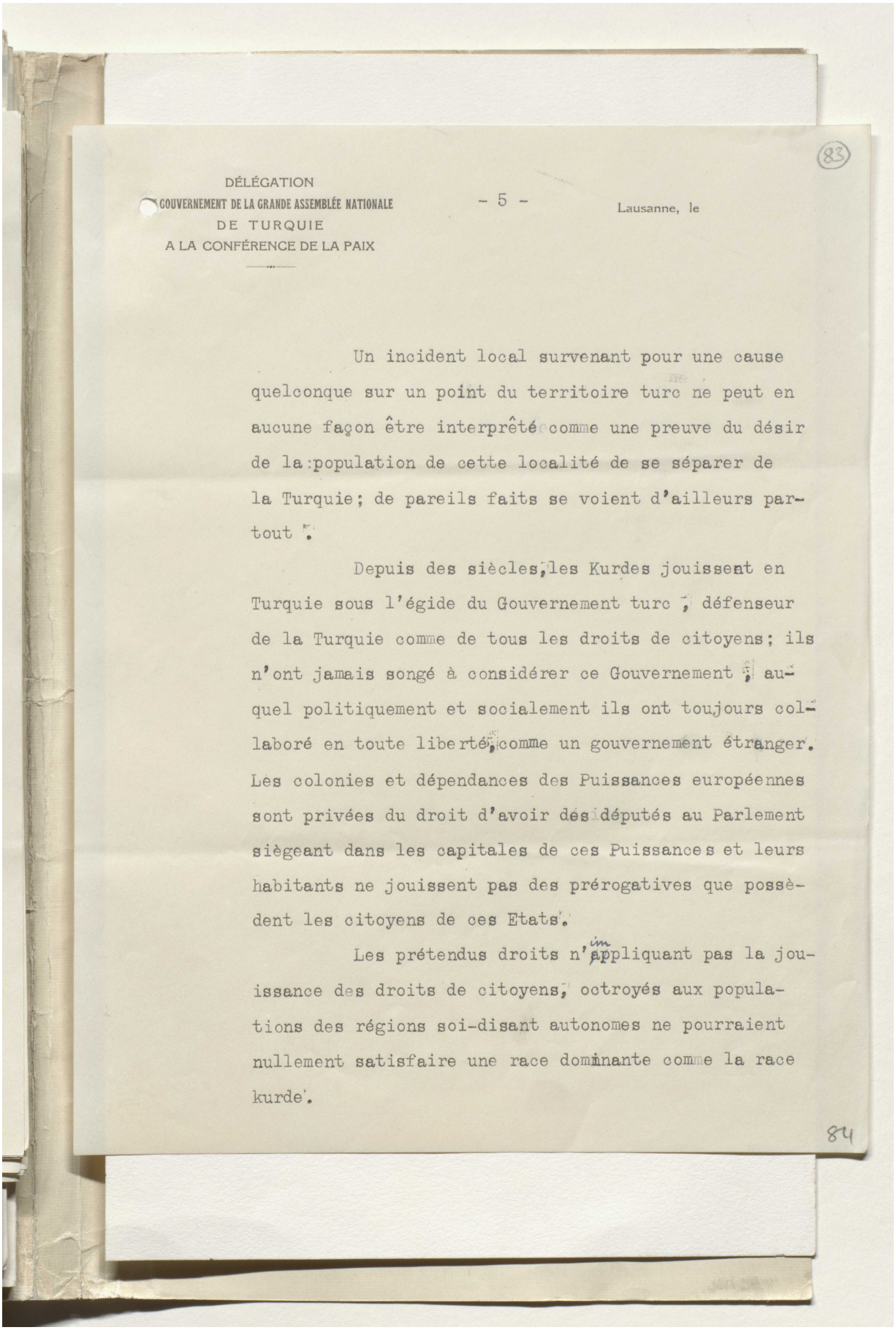

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
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Lausanne, le

(83)

Un incident local survenant pour une cause quelconque sur un point du territoire turc ne peut en aucune façon être interprêté comme une preuve du désir de la population de cette localité de se séparer de la Turquie; de pareils faits se voient d'ailleurs partout.

Depuis des siècles, les Kurdes jouissent en Turquie sous l'égide du Gouvernement turc, défenseur de la Turquie comme de tous les droits de citoyens; ils n'ont jamais songé à considérer ce Gouvernement, auquel politiquement et socialement ils ont toujours collaboré en toute liberté, comme un gouvernement étranger. Les colonies et dépendances des Puissances européennes sont privées du droit d'avoir des députés au Parlement siègeant dans les capitales de ces Puissances et leurs habitants ne jouissent pas des prérogatives que possèdent les citoyens de ces Etats.

Les prétendus droits n'impliquant pas la jouissance des droits de citoyens, octroyés aux populations des régions soi-disant autonomes ne pourraient nullement satisfaire une race dominante comme la race kurde.

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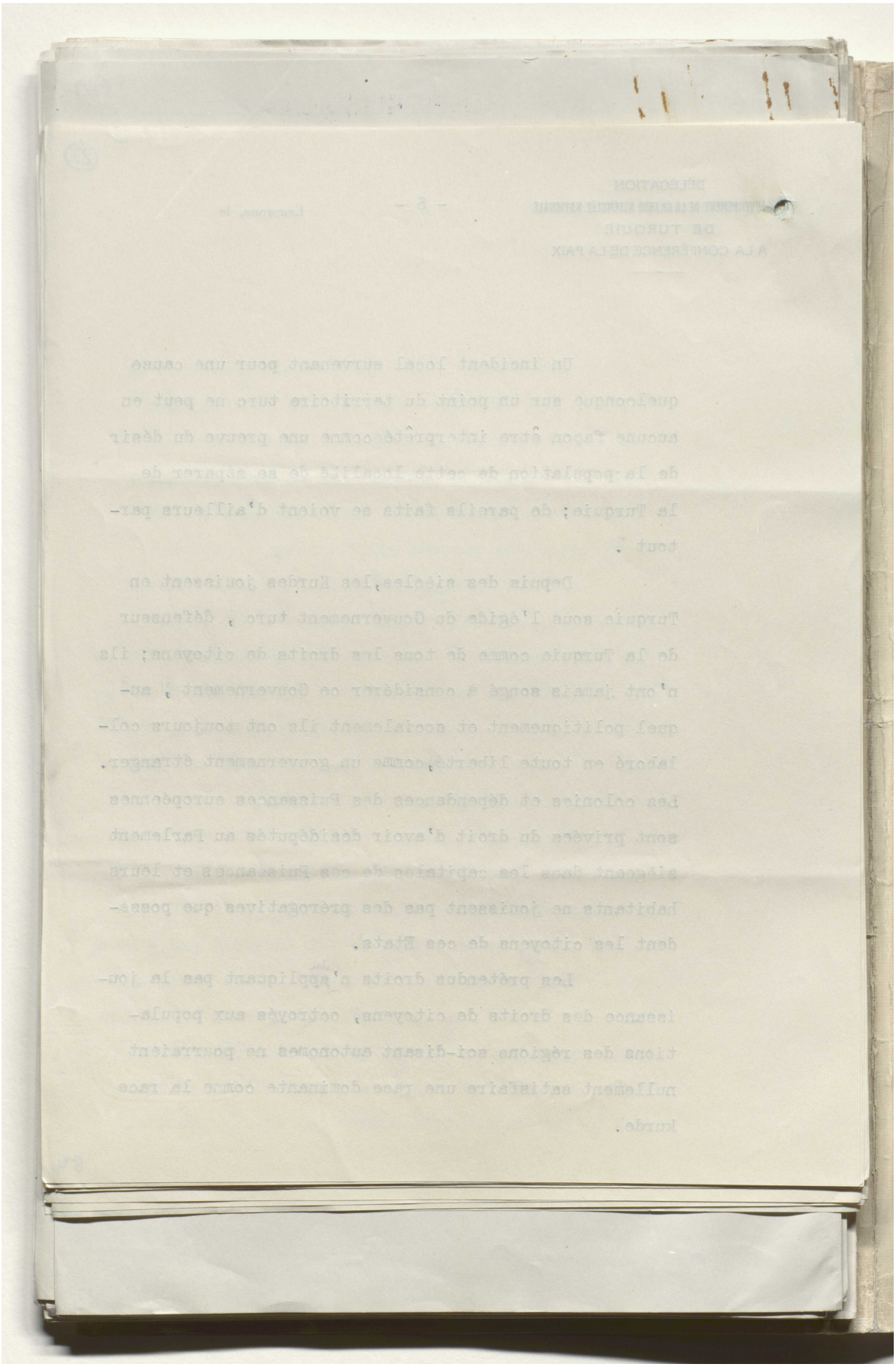

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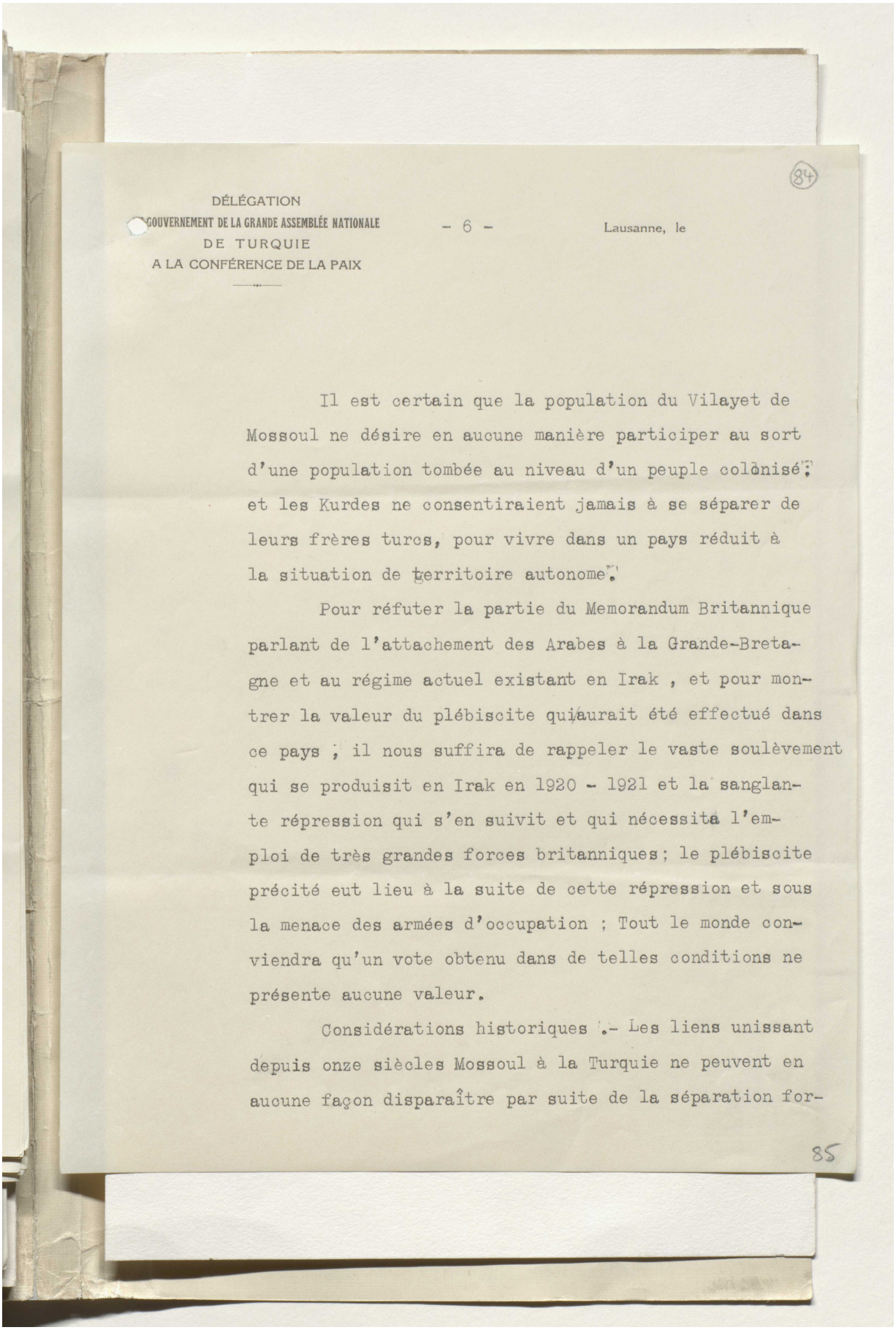

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
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A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

Il est certain que la population du Vilayet de Mossoul ne désire en aucune manière participer au sort d'une population tombée au niveau d'un peuple colonisé; et les Kurdes ne consentiraient jamais à se séparer de leurs frères turcs, pour vivre dans un pays réduit à la situation de territoire autonome.

Pour réfuter la partie du Memorandum Britannique parlant de l'attachement des Arabes à la Grande-Bretagne et au régime actuel existant en Irak , et pour montrer la valeur du plébiscite qui aurait été effectué dans ce pays ; il nous suffira de rappeler le vaste soulèvement qui se produisit en Irak en 1920 - 1921 et la sanglante répression qui s'en suivit et qui nécessita l'emploi de très grandes forces britanniques; le plébiscite précité eut lieu à la suite de cette répression et sous la menace des armées d'occupation ; Tout le monde conviendra qu'un vote obtenu dans de telles conditions ne présente aucune valeur.

Considérations historiques :- Les liens unissant depuis onze siècles Mossoul à la Turquie ne peuvent en aucune façon disparaître par suite de la séparation for-

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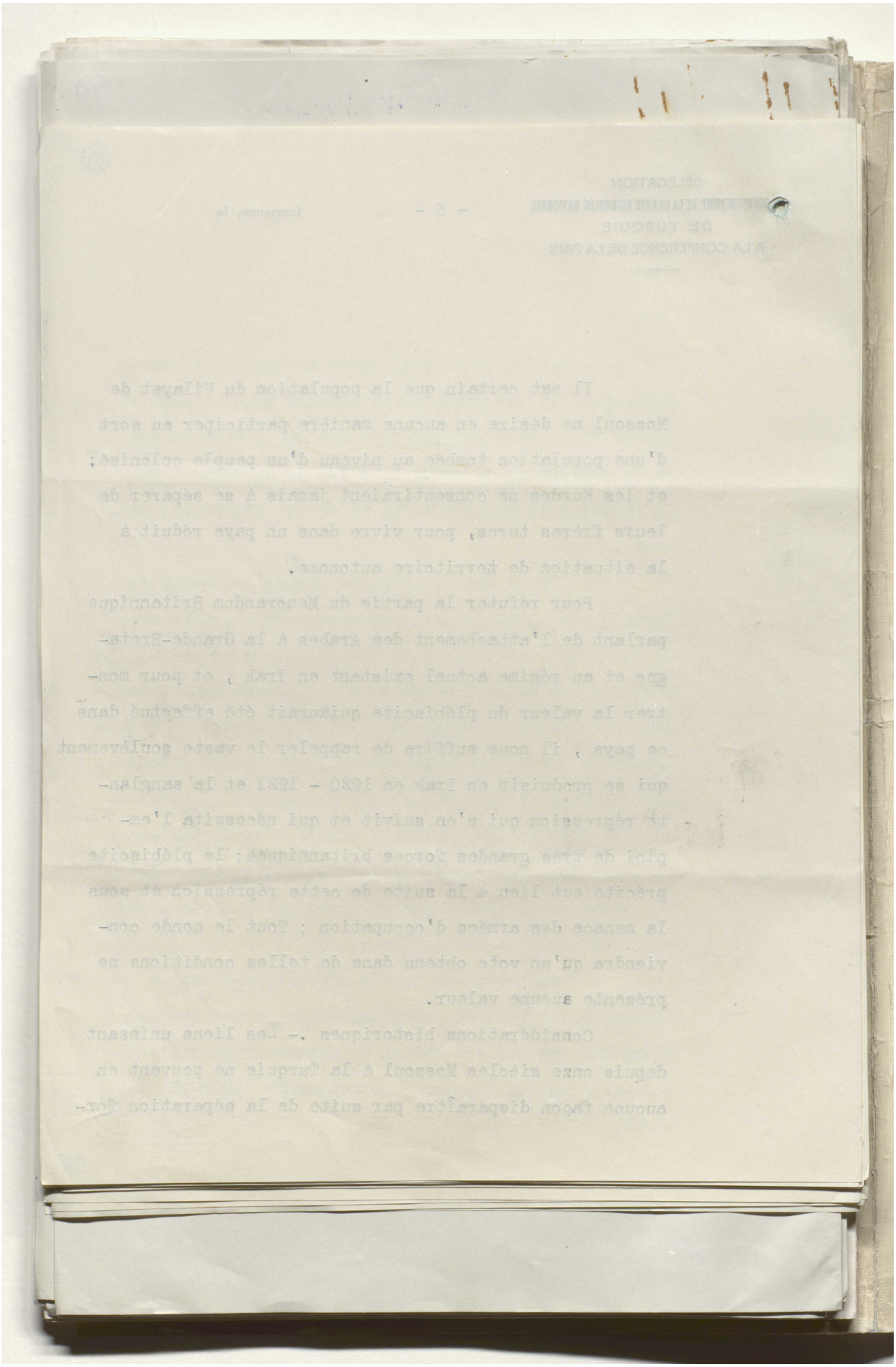

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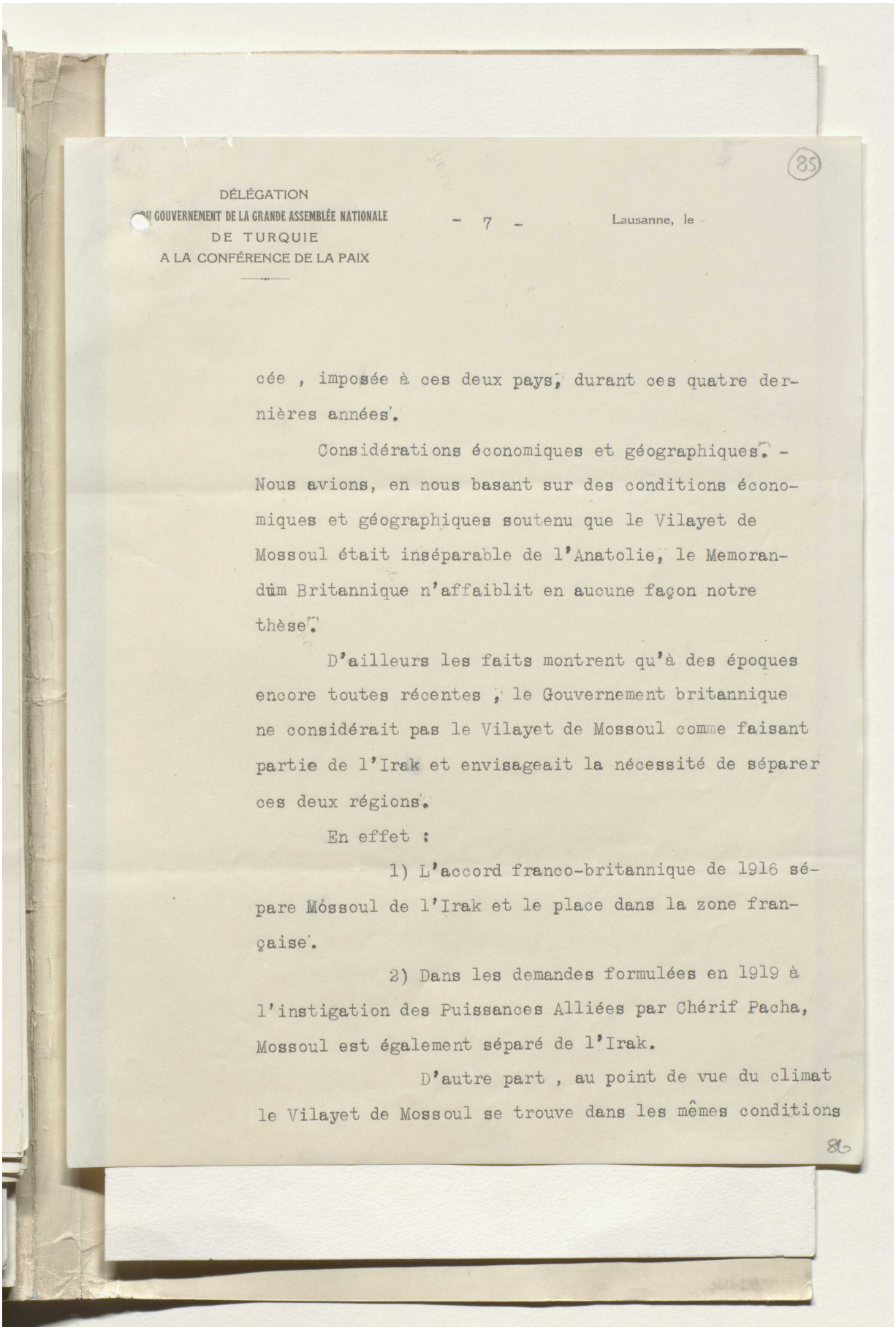

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

- 7 -

Lausanne, le

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cée , imposée à ces deux pays, durant ces quatre dernières années.

Considérations économiques et géographiques. - Nous avions, en nous basant sur des conditions économiques et géographiques soutenu que le Vilayet de Mossoul était inséparable de l'Anatolie, le Memorandum Britannique n'affaiblit en aucune façon notre thèse.

D'ailleurs les faits montrent qu'à des époques encore toutes récentes , le Gouvernement britannique ne considérait pas le Vilayet de Mossoul comme faisant partie de l'Irak et envisageait la nécessité de séparer ces deux régions.

En effet :

1) L'accord franco-britannique de 1916 sépare Mossoul de l'Irak et le place dans la zone française.

2) Dans les demandes formulées en 1919 à l'instigation des Puissances Alliées par Chérif Pacha, Mossoul est également séparé de l'Irak.

D'autre part , au point de vue du climat le Vilayet de Mossoul se trouve dans les mêmes conditions

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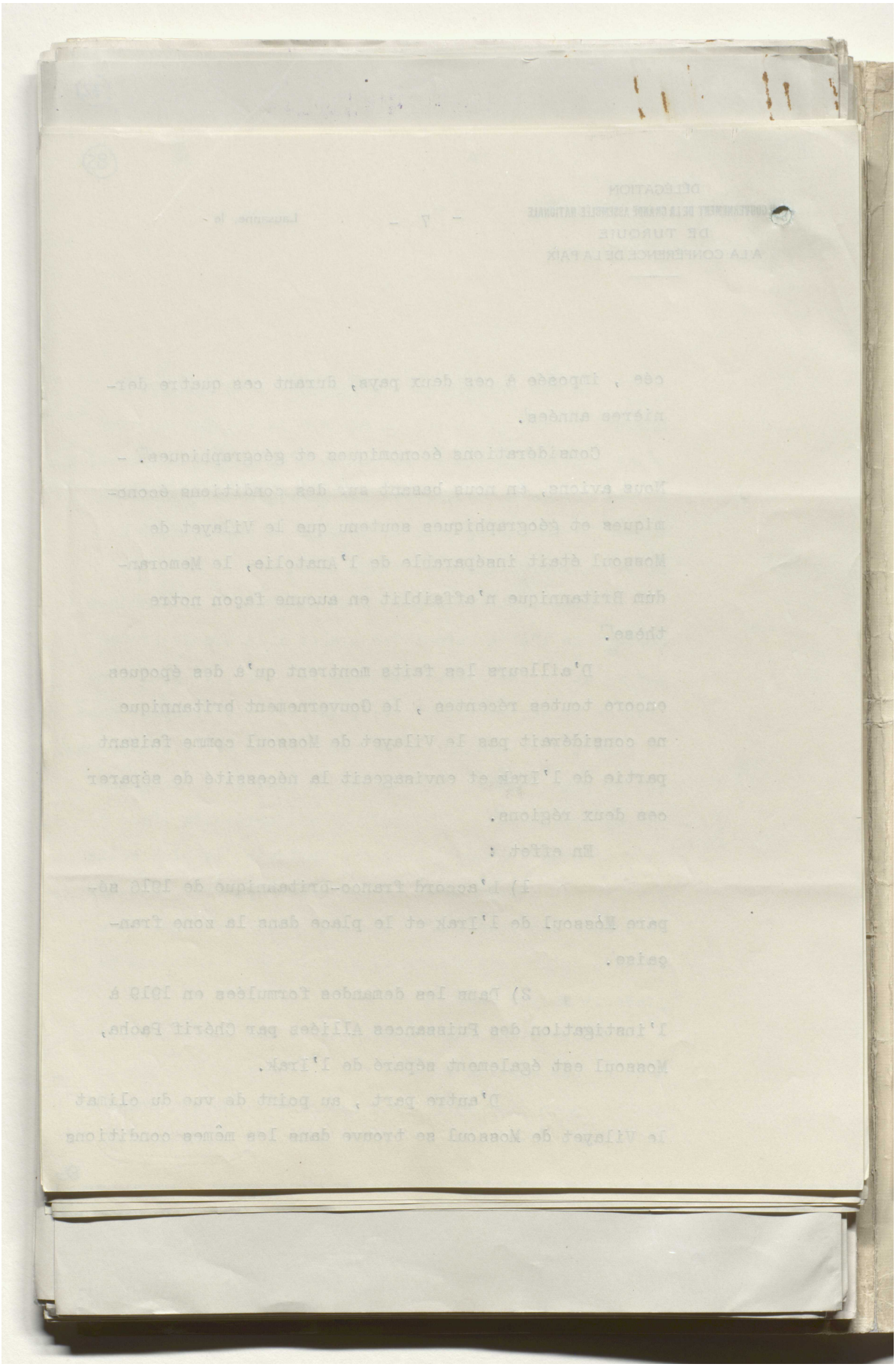

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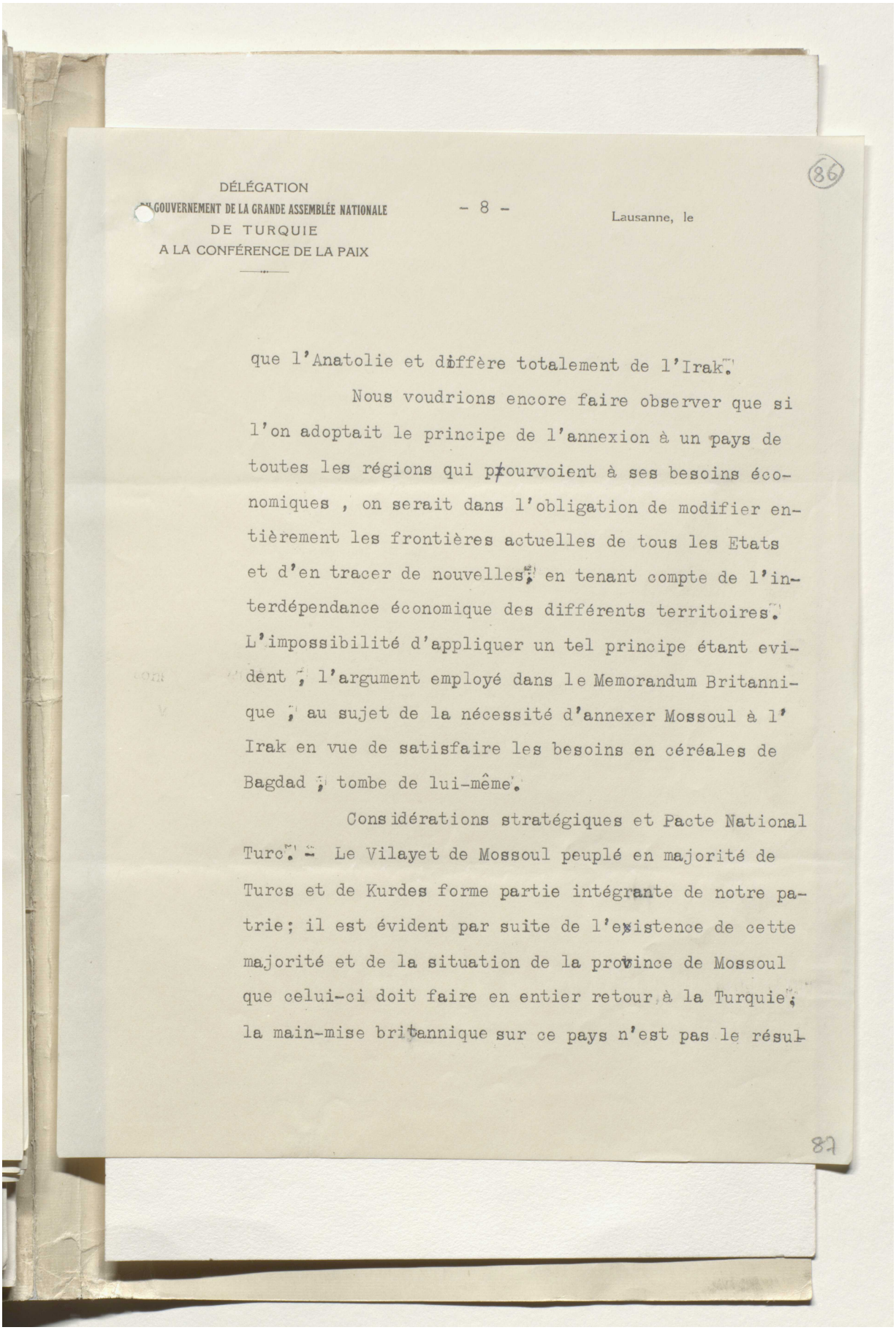

DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

(86)

que l'Anatolie et diffère totalement de l'Irak.

Nous voudrions encore faire observer que si l'on adoptait le principe de l'annexion à un pays de toutes les régions qui pourvoient à ses besoins économiques , on serait dans l'obligation de modifier entièrement les frontières actuelles de tous les Etats et d'en tracer de nouvelles, en tenant compte de l'interdépendance économique des différents territoires. L'impossibilité d'appliquer un tel principe étant evident , l'argument employé dans le Memorandum Britannique , au sujet de la nécessité d'annexer Mossoul à l'Irak en vue de satisfaire les besoins en céréales de Bagdad , tombe de lui-même.

Considérations stratégiques et Pacte National Turc. - Le Vilayet de Mossoul peuplé en majorité de Turcs et de Kurdes forme partie intégrante de notre patrie; il est évident par suite de l'existence de cette majorité et de la situation de la province de Mossoul que celui-ci doit faire en entier retour à la Turquie; la main-mise britannique sur ce pays n'est pas le résul-

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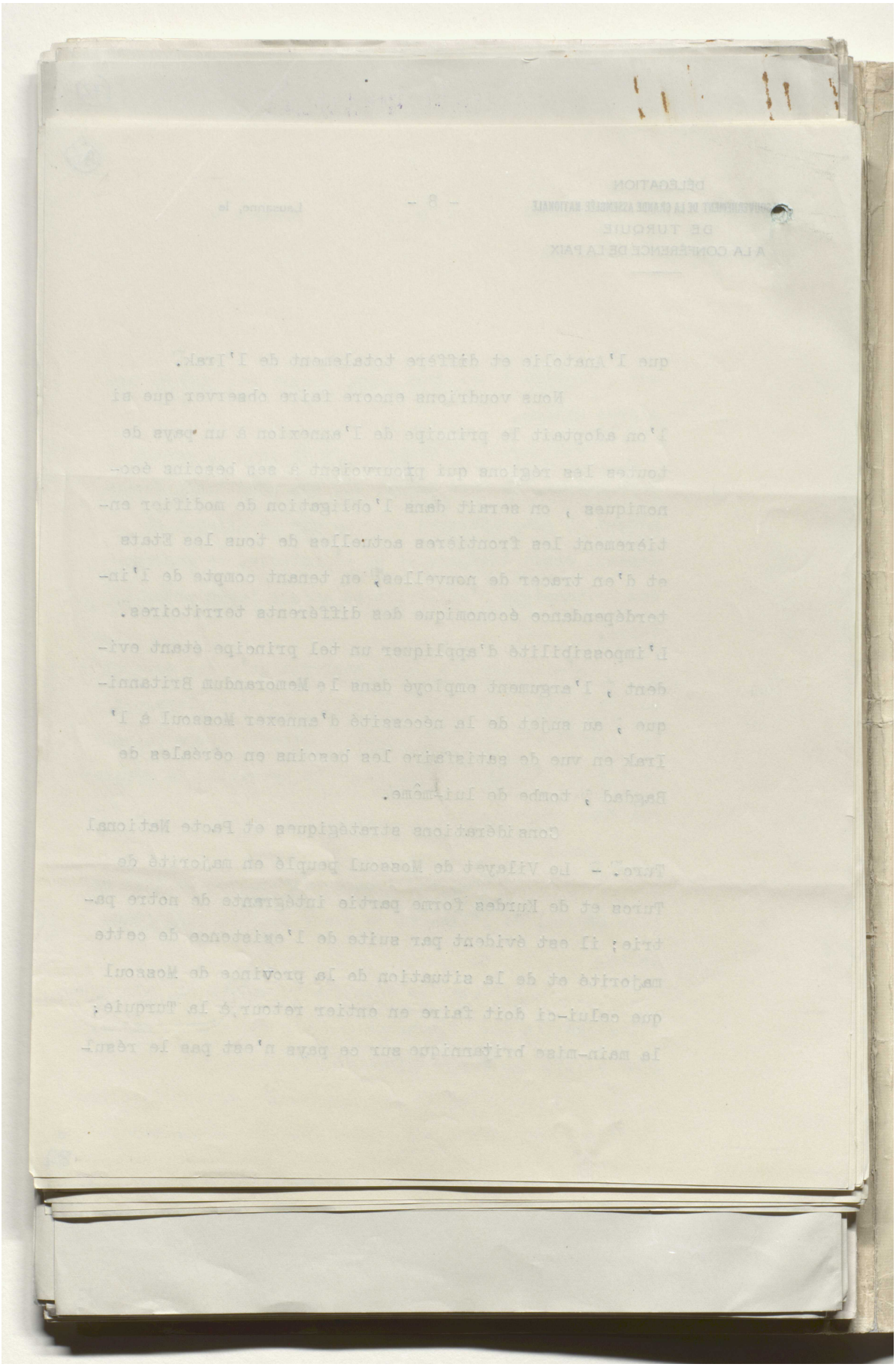

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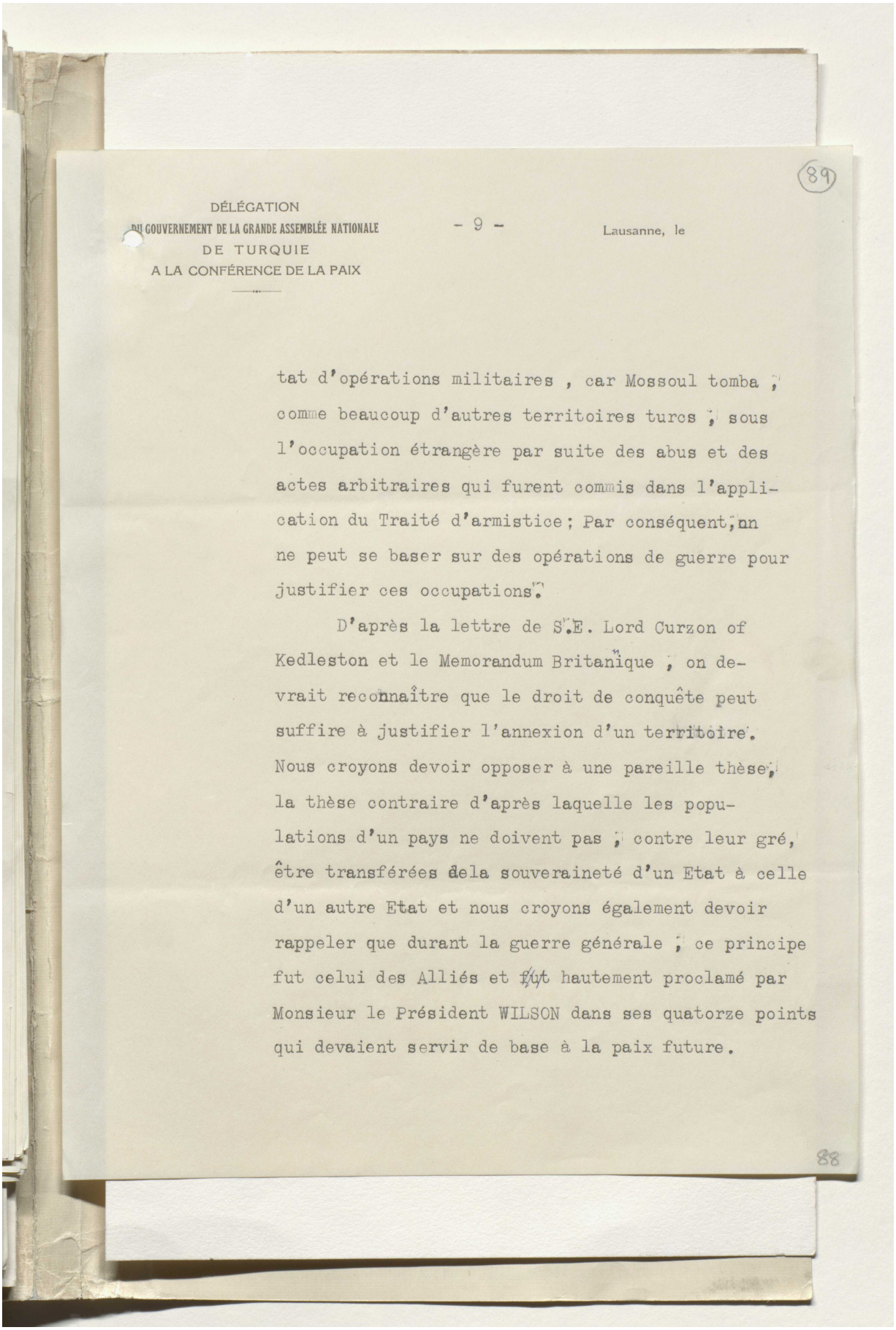

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

Lausanne, le

tat d'opérations militaires , car Mossoul tomba , comme beaucoup d'autres territoires turcs , sous l'occupation étrangère par suite des abus et des actes arbitraires qui furent commis dans l'application du Traité d'armistice ; Par conséquent, on ne peut se baser sur des opérations de guerre pour justifier ces occupations.

D'après la lettre de S.E. Lord Curzon of Kedleston et le Memorandum Britanique , on devrait reconnaître que le droit de conquête peut suffire à justifier l'annexion d'un territoire. Nous croyons devoir opposer à une pareille thèse, la thèse contraire d'après laquelle les populations d'un pays ne doivent pas , contre leur gré, être transférées dela souveraineté d'un Etat à celle d'un autre Etat et nous croyons également devoir rappeler que durant la guerre générale , ce principe fut celui des Alliés et fut hautement proclamé par Monsieur le Président WILSON dans ses quatorze points qui devaient servir de base à la paix future.

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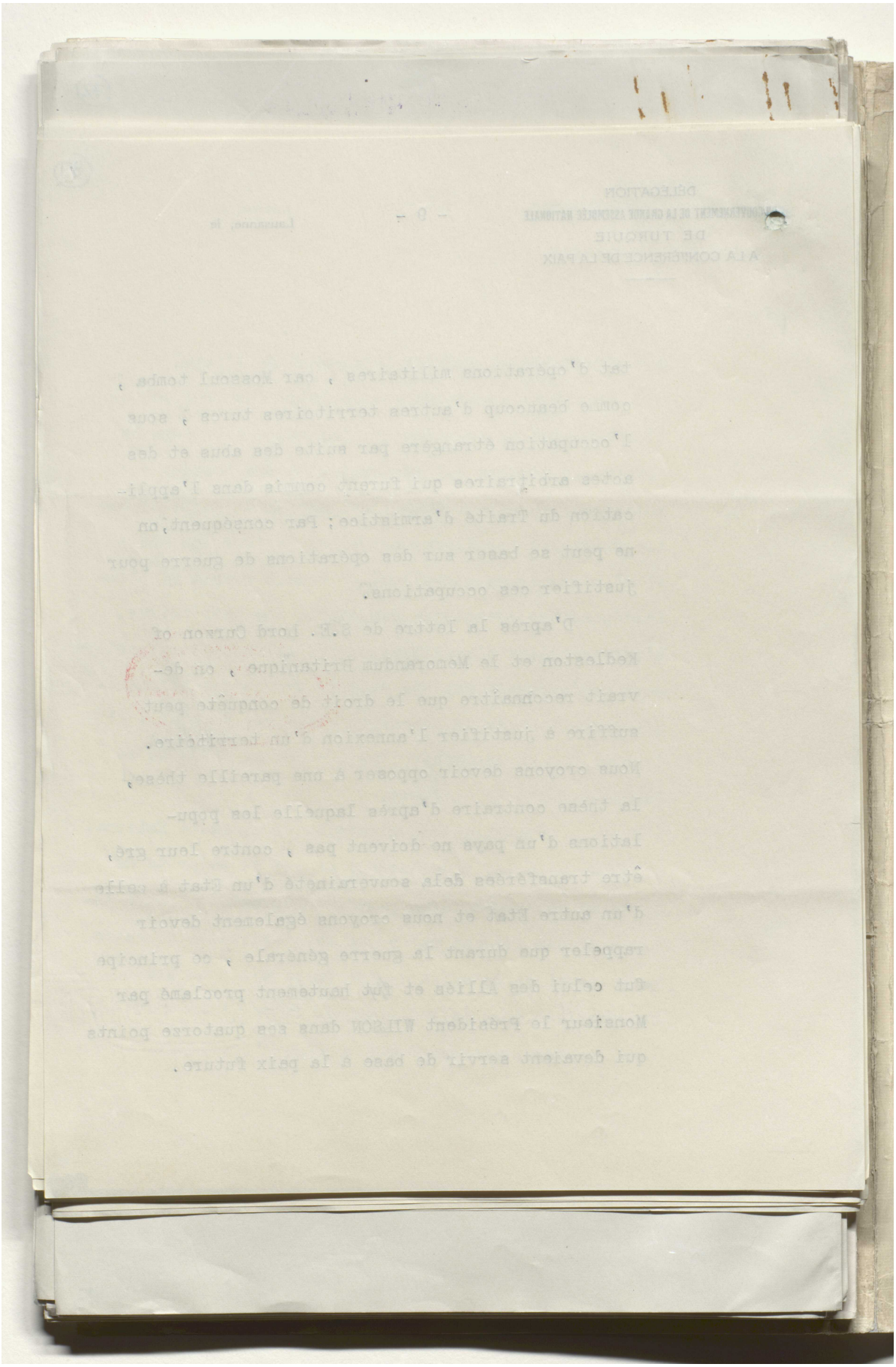

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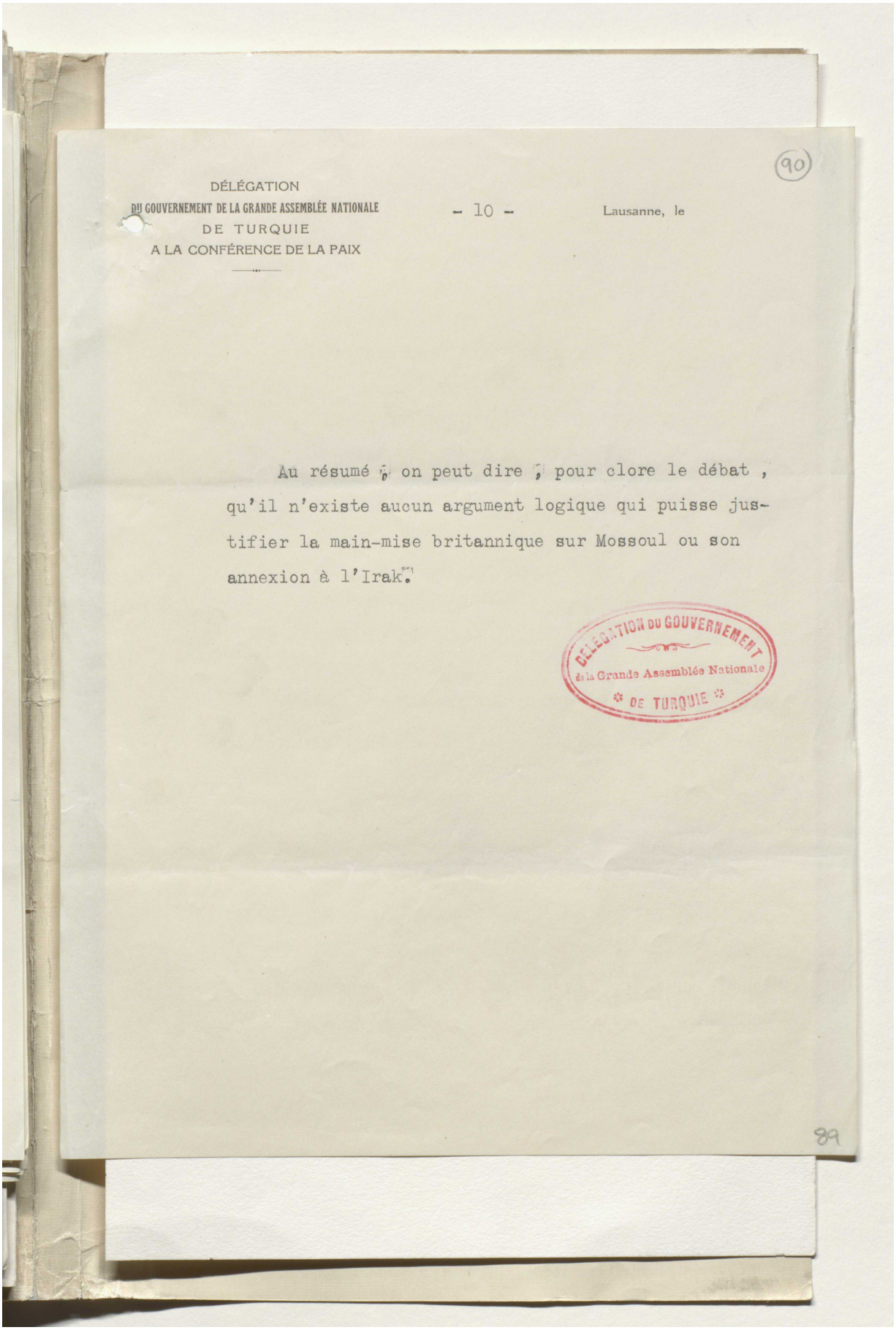

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DÉLÉGATION
DU GOUVERNEMENT DE LA GRANDE ASSEMBLÉE NATIONALE
DE TURQUIE
A LA CONFÉRENCE DE LA PAIX

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Lausanne, le

Au résumé, on peut dire, pour clore le débat, qu'il n'existe aucun argument logique qui puisse justifier la main-mise britannique sur Mossoul ou son annexion à l'Irak.

DÉLÉGATION DU GOUVERNEMENT de la Grande Assemblée Nationale * DE TURQUIE *

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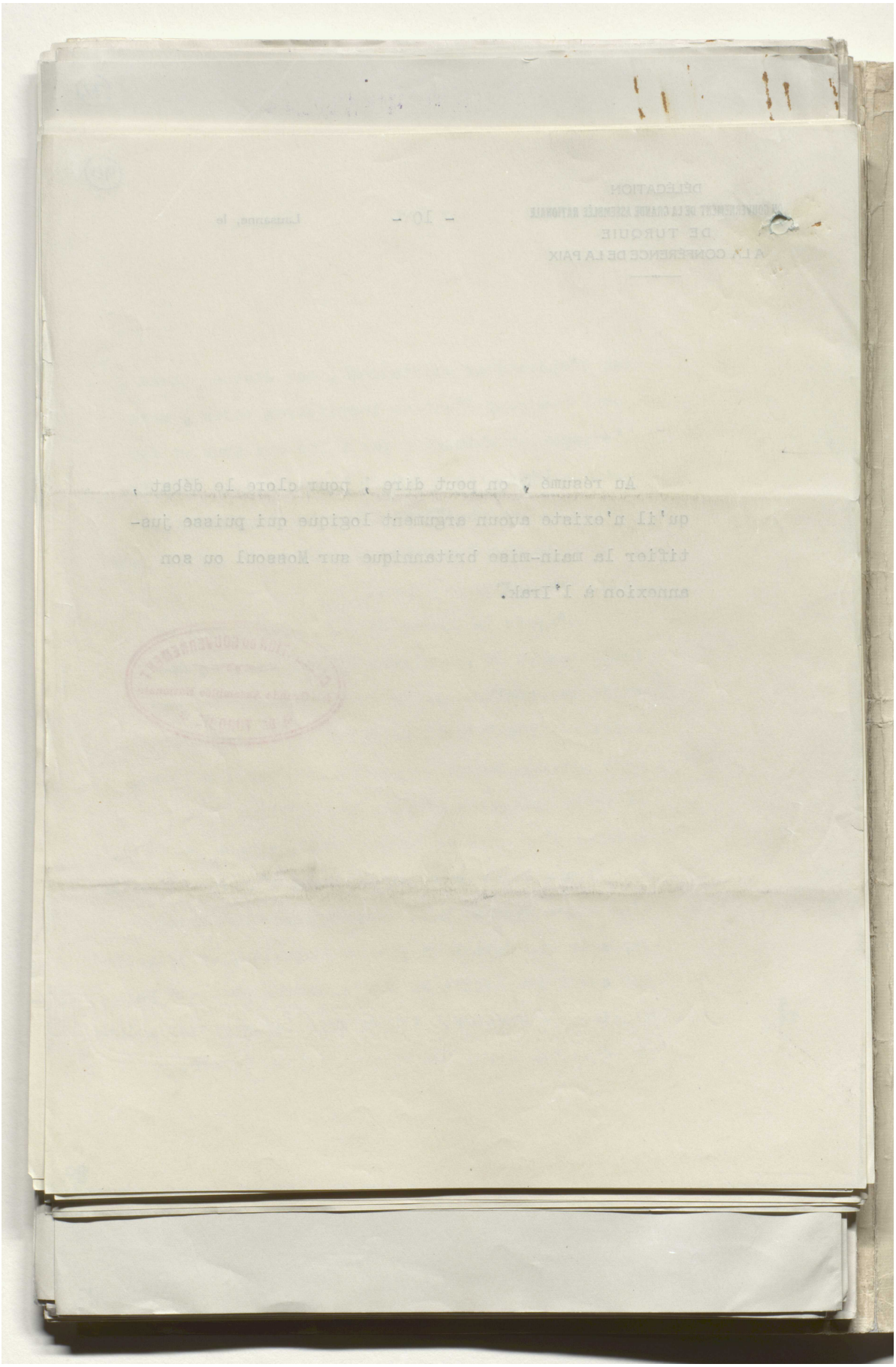

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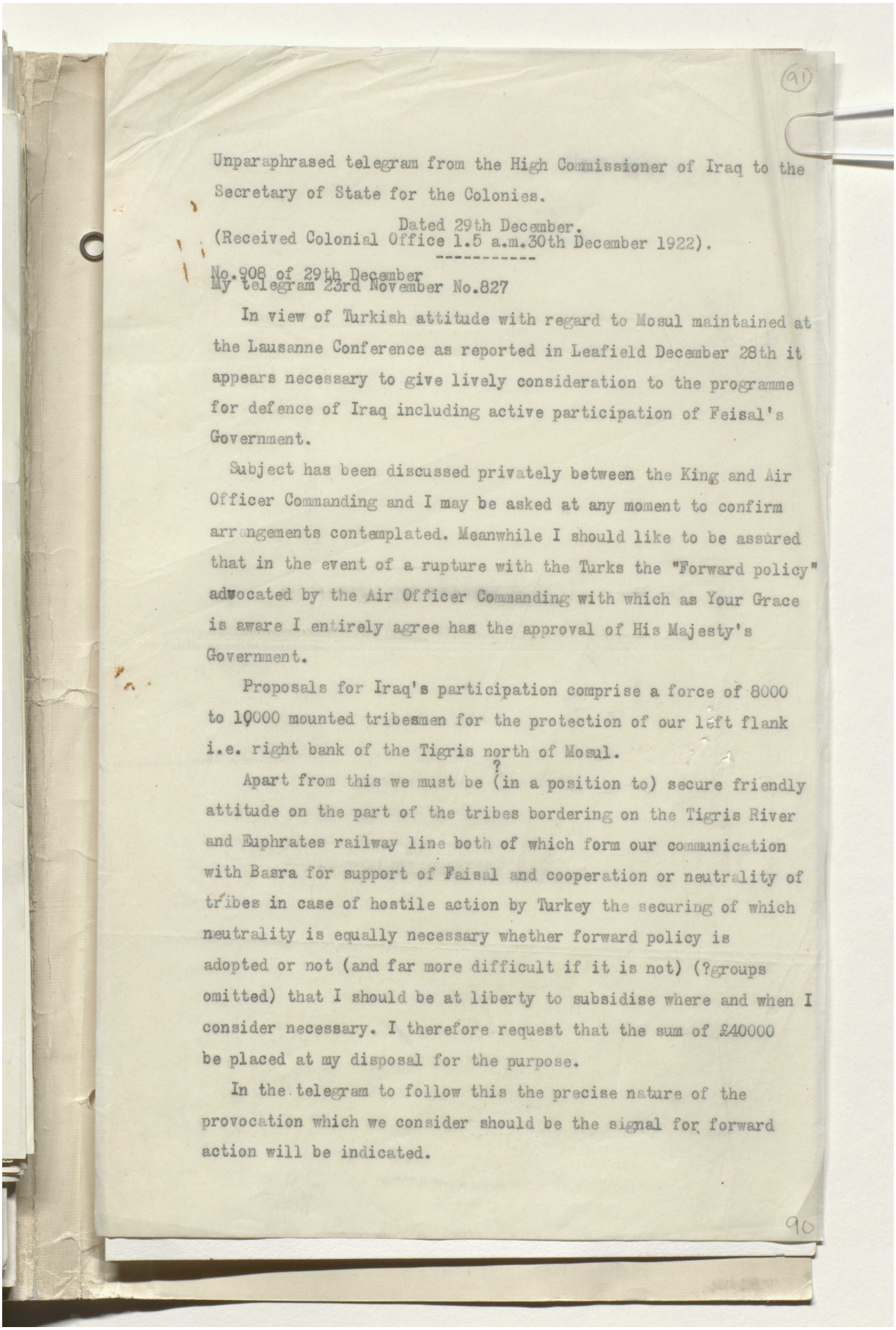

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Unparaphrased telegram from the High Commissioner of Iraq to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Dated 29th December.
(Received Colonial Office 1.5 a.m.30th December 1922).

No.908 of 29th December
My telegram 23rd November No.827

In view of Turkish attitude with regard to Mosul maintained at the Lausanne Conference as reported in Leafield December 28th it appears necessary to give lively consideration to the programme for defence of Iraq including active participation of Feisal's Government.

Subject has been discussed privately between the King and Air Officer Commanding and I may be asked at any moment to confirm arrangements contemplated. Meanwhile I should like to be assured that in the event of a rupture with the Turks the "Forward policy" advocated by the Air Officer Commanding with which as Your Grace is aware I entirely agree has the approval of His Majesty's Government.

Proposals for Iraq's participation comprise a force of 8000 to 10000 mounted tribesmen for the protection of our left flank i.e. right bank of the Tigris north of Mosul.

Apart from this we must be (in a position to) secure friendly attitude on the part of the tribes bordering on the Tigris River and Euphrates railway line both of which form our communication with Basra for support of Faisal and cooperation or neutrality of tribes in case of hostile action by Turkey the securing of which neutrality is equally necessary whether forward policy is adopted or not (and far more difficult if it is not) (?groups omitted) that I should be at liberty to subsidise where and when I consider necessary. I therefore request that the sum of £40000 be placed at my disposal for the purpose.

In the telegram to follow this the precise nature of the provocation which we consider should be the signal for forward action will be indicated.

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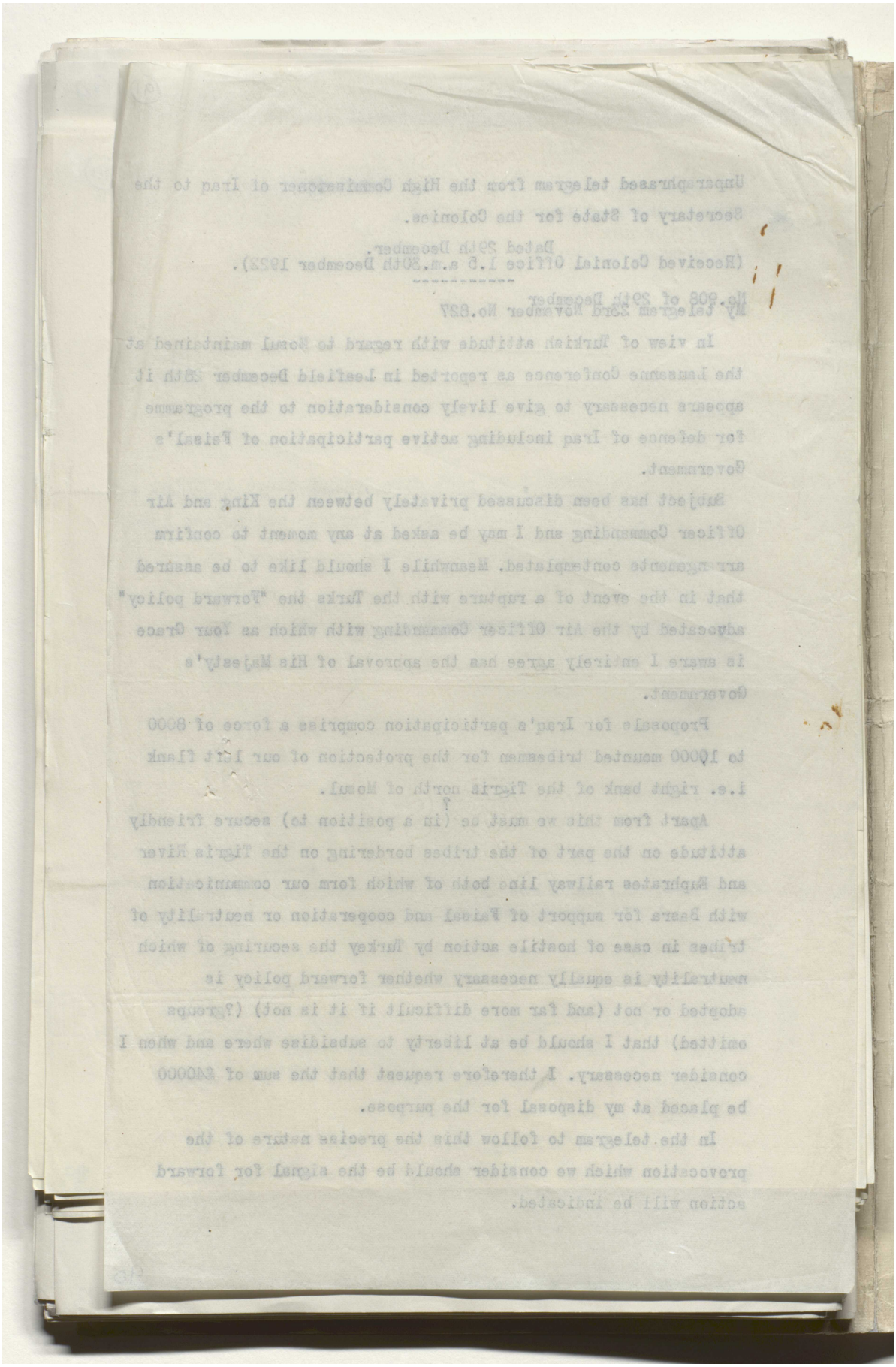

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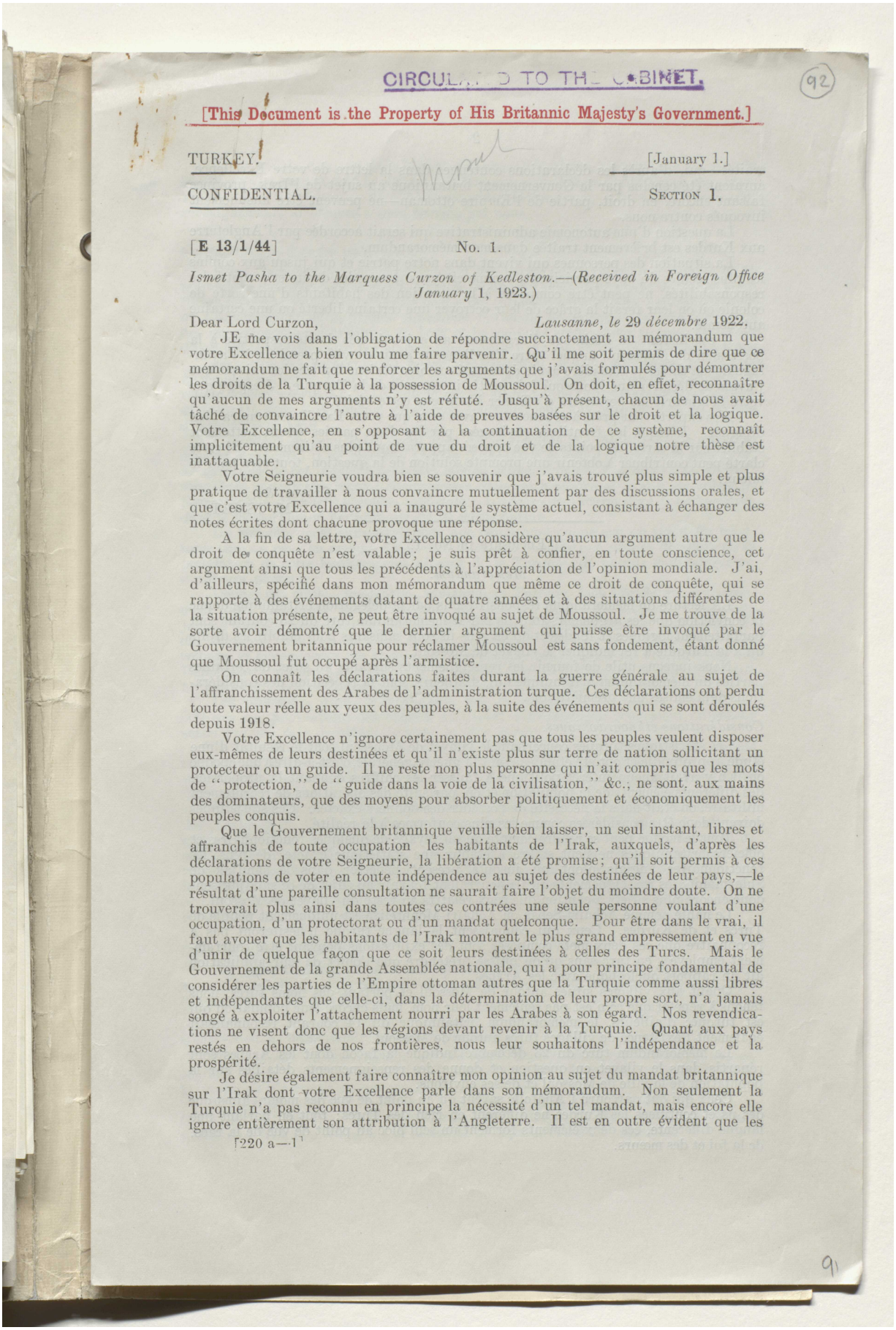

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TURKEY. [January 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13/1/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office January 1, 1923.)

Dear Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 29 décembre* 1922.

JE me vois dans l'obligation de répondre succinctement au mémorandum que votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire parvenir. Qu'il me soit permis de dire que ce mémorandum ne fait que renforcer les arguments que j'avais formulés pour démontrer les droits de la Turquie à la possession de Moussoul. On doit, en effet, reconnaître qu'aucun de mes arguments n'y est réfuté. Jusqu'à présent, chacun de nous avait tâché de convaincre l'autre à l'aide de preuves basées sur le droit et la logique. Votre Excellence, en s'opposant à la continuation de ce système, reconnaît implicitement qu'au point de vue du droit et de la logique notre thèse est inattaquable.

Votre Seigneurie voudra bien se souvenir que j'avais trouvé plus simple et plus pratique de travailler à nous convaincre mutuellement par des discussions orales, et que c'est votre Excellence qui a inauguré le système actuel, consistant à échanger des notes écrites dont chacune provoque une réponse.

A la fin de sa lettre, votre Excellence considère qu'aucun argument autre que le droit de conquête n'est valable; je suis prêt à confier, en toute conscience, cet argument ainsi que tous les précédents à l'appréciation de l'opinion mondiale. J'ai, d'ailleurs, spécifié dans mon mémorandum que même ce droit de conquête, qui se rapporte à des événements datant de quatre années et à des situations différentes de la situation présente, ne peut être invoqué au sujet de Moussoul. Je me trouve de la sorte avoir démontré que le dernier argument qui puisse être invoqué par le Gouvernement britannique pour réclamer Moussoul est sans fondement, étant donné que Moussoul fut occupé après l'armistice.

On connaît les déclarations faites durant la guerre générale au sujet de l'affranchissement des Arabes de l'administration turque. Ces déclarations ont perdu toute valeur réelle aux yeux des peuples, à la suite des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis 1918.

Votre Excellence n'ignore certainement pas que tous les peuples veulent disposer eux-mêmes de leurs destinées et qu'il n'existe plus sur terre de nation sollicitant un protecteur ou un guide. Il ne reste non plus personne qui n'ait compris que les mots de "protection," de "guide dans la voie de la civilisation," &c., ne sont, aux mains des dominateurs, que des moyens pour absorber politiquement et économiquement les peuples conquis.

Que le Gouvernement britannique veuille bien laisser, un seul instant, libres et affranchis de toute occupation les habitants de l'Irak, auxquels, d'après les déclarations de votre Seigneurie, la libération a été promise; qu'il soit permis à ces populations de voter en toute indépendence au sujet des destinées de leur pays,—le résultat d'une pareille consultation ne saurait faire l'objet du moindre doute. On ne trouverait plus ainsi dans toutes ces contrées une seule personne voulant d'une occupation, d'un protectorat ou d'un mandat quelconque. Pour être dans le vrai, il faut avouer que les habitants de l'Irak montrent le plus grand empressement en vue d'unir de quelque façon que ce soit leurs destinées à celles des Turcs. Mais le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale, qui a pour principe fondamental de considérer les parties de l'Empire ottoman autres que la Turquie comme aussi libres et indépendantes que celle-ci, dans la détermination de leur propre sort, n'a jamais songé à exploiter l'attachement nourri par les Arabes à son égard. Nos revendications ne visent donc que les régions devant revenir à la Turquie. Quant aux pays restés en dehors de nos frontières, nous leur souhaitons l'indépendance et la prospérité.

Je désire également faire connaître mon opinion au sujet du mandat britannique sur l'Irak dont votre Excellence parle dans son mémorandum. Non seulement la Turquie n'a pas reconnu en principe la nécessité d'un tel mandat, mais encore elle ignore entièrement son attribution à l'Angleterre. Il est en outre évident que les

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traités—qui, d'après les déclarations contenues dans la lettre de votre Excellence, auraient été conclus par le Gouvernement britannique au sujet de l'Irak, province faisant encore, en droit, partie de l'Empire ottoman—ne peuvent être aucunement invoqués contre nous.

La question d'une autonomie administrative qui serait accordée par l'Angleterre aux Kurdes est brièvement traitée dans mon mémorandum.

La situation des personnes qui vivent dans notre patrie et qui jusqu'aux confins les plus reculés du pays participent, comme citoyens, à tous les droits et à toutes les responsabilités, ne peut être comparée à la situation des habitants d'une sorte de colonie où on leur ferait la grâce de leur octroyer une certaine liberté ou une certaine autonomie.

À cet instant où l'échange d'arguments au sujet de nos droits respectifs à la possession de Moussoul, auquel votre Excellence m'avait convié, prend fin à l'avantage de ma thèse, je considère avoir démontré combien étaient fondées les raisons que j'avais de déclarer que Moussoul fait partie intégrante de la Turquie. J'espère que votre Seigneurie me permettra d'affirmer à nouveau cette vérité.

Mes experts sont prêts à se rencontrer avec ceux que votre Excellence voudra bien désigner. Lorsque les frontières envisagées par les deux parties seront nettement établies sur la carte, les points de vue opposés apparaîtront plus clairement. Si cette clarté peut contribuer à obtenir une prompte solution de la question, tout sera pour le mieux.

Croyez, &c.
M. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum.

LA lecture du mémorandum responsif remis par la délégation britannique donne la conviction que les arguments fournis par le mémorandum turc du 23 courant sont parfaitement logiques et fondés et qu'en plus ils sont suffisants pour établir les droits qu'a la Turquie à revendiquer le vilayet de Mossoul.

Nous jugeons utile de fournir les renseignements suivants au sujet de certaines parties du mémorandum britannique qui, d'ailleurs, sont la répétition des considérations déjà émises une première fois.

Considérations ethnographiques.

Les statistiques turques concernant le vilayet de Moussoul sont le résultat d'une étude approfondie et ont été établies avant la guerre générale, c'est-à-dire à une époque où il n'y avait aucun intérêt politique à fausser les chiffres donnant la proportion des différents éléments de la population et où, par suite des opérations de recrutement militaire, on était dans la nécessité de posséder des données exactes. Ces statistiques doivent donc être considérées comme les plus conformes à la réalité.

Tout le monde peut se rendre compte qu'un voyage de quelques fonctionnaires et officiers britanniques ne peut suffire à établir une statistique exacte; de plus, les fonctionnaires anglais n'ont pu jusqu'à présent pénétrer dans le sandjak de Suleymanié; les renseignements qu'ils pourraient fournir au sujet de ce sandjak sont donc encore plus sujets à caution que ceux relatifs au reste du vilayet de Mossoul.

Le nahié nommé Achaïri-Sebaa ou Achaïri-Mouhtélifé est uniquement peuplé de Turcs et de Kurdes. Ceux qui connaissent la langue turque n'hésiteront pas à reconnaître que ces deux mots composés sont des expressions pouvant être couramment employées en turc sans qu'on puisse prétendre que l'objet de leur application ait un rapport quelconque avec les Arabes.

Quant aux villages situés autour de Mossoul et portant des noms turcs, nous tenons à répéter que ce n'est pas seulement leur nom, mais encore leur population qui est turque; d'ailleurs, le mémorandum britannique du 14 courant reconnaissait également l'existence de villages turcs autour de Mossoul.

Le mémorandum turc du 23 décembre indique la façon dont les Arabes sont répartis dans le vilayet en question et donne des renseignements détaillés sur la population de la ville de Mossoul et de ses environs.

Ceux qui ont parcouru l'Anatolie savent qu'au point de vue des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes les Kurdes ne diffèrent en rien des Turcs; tout en parlant une langue différente, ces deux éléments forment un seul bloc au point de vue de la race, de la foi et des mœurs.

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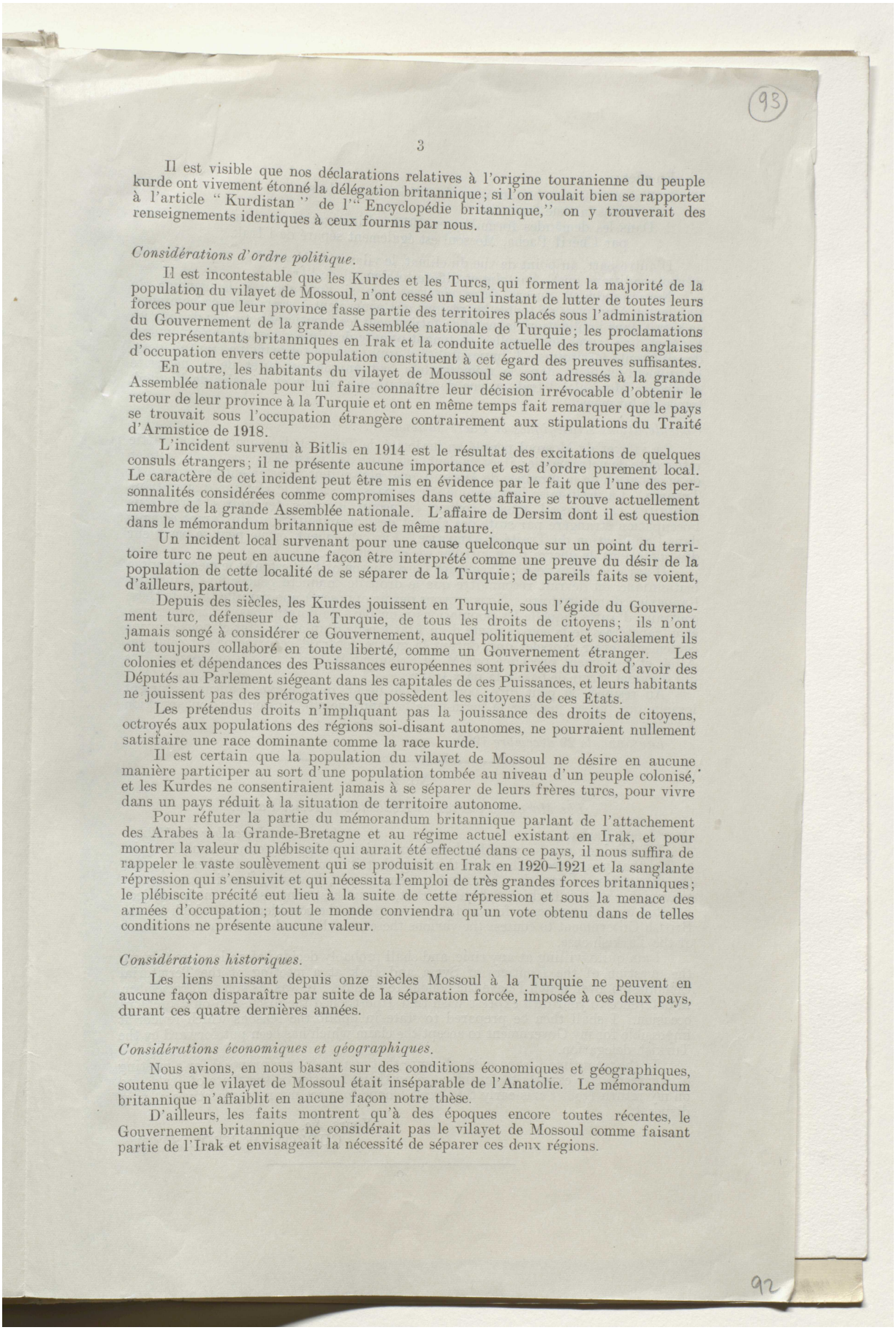

Il est visible que nos déclarations relatives à l'origine touranienne du peuple kurde ont vivement étonné la délégation britannique; si l'on voulait bien se rapporter à l'article "Kurdistan" de l'"Encyclopédie britannique," on y trouverait des renseignements identiques à ceux fournis par nous.

Considérations d'ordre politique.

Il est incontestable que les Kurdes et les Turcs, qui forment la majorité de la population du vilayet de Mossoul, n'ont cessé un seul instant de lutter de toutes leurs forces pour que leur province fasse partie des territoires placés sous l'administration du Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie; les proclamations des représentants britanniques en Irak et la conduite actuelle des troupes anglaises d'occupation envers cette population constituent à cet égard des preuves suffisantes.

En outre, les habitants du vilayet de Moussoul se sont adressés à la grande Assemblée nationale pour lui faire connaître leur décision irrévocable d'obtenir le retour de leur province à la Turquie et ont en même temps fait remarquer que le pays se trouvait sous l'occupation étrangère contrairement aux stipulations du Traité d'Armistice de 1918.

L'incident survenu à Bitlis en 1914 est le résultat des excitations de quelques consuls étrangers; il ne présente aucune importance et est d'ordre purement local. Le caractère de cet incident peut être mis en évidence par le fait que l'une des personnalités considérées comme compromises dans cette affaire se trouve actuellement membre de la grande Assemblée nationale. L'affaire de Dersim dont il est question dans le mémorandum britannique est de même nature.

Un incident local survenant pour une cause quelconque sur un point du territoire turc ne peut en aucune façon être interprété comme une preuve du désir de la population de cette localité de se séparer de la Turquie; de pareils faits se voient, d'ailleurs, partout.

Depuis des siècles, les Kurdes jouissent en Turquie, sous l'égide du Gouvernement turc, défenseur de la Turquie, de tous les droits de citoyens; ils n'ont jamais songé à considérer ce Gouvernement, auquel politiquement et socialement ils ont toujours collaboré en toute liberté, comme un Gouvernement étranger. Les colonies et dépendances des Puissances européennes sont privées du droit d'avoir des Députés au Parlement siégeant dans les capitales de ces Puissances, et leurs habitants ne jouissent pas des prérogatives que possèdent les citoyens de ces États.

Les prétendus droits n'impliquant pas la jouissance des droits de citoyens, octroyés aux populations des régions soi-disant autonomes, ne pourraient nullement satisfaire une race dominante comme la race kurde.

Il est certain que la population du vilayet de Mossoul ne désire en aucune manière participer au sort d'une population tombée au niveau d'un peuple colonisé, et les Kurdes ne consentiraient jamais à se séparer de leurs frères turcs, pour vivre dans un pays réduit à la situation de territoire autonome.

Pour réfuter la partie du mémorandum britannique parlant de l'attachement des Arabes à la Grande-Bretagne et au régime actuel existant en Irak, et pour montrer la valeur du plébiscite qui aurait été effectué dans ce pays, il nous suffira de rappeler le vaste soulèvement qui se produisit en Irak en 1920–1921 et la sanglante répression qui s'ensuivit et qui nécessita l'emploi de très grandes forces britanniques; le plébiscite précité eut lieu à la suite de cette répression et sous la menace des armées d'occupation; tout le monde conviendra qu'un vote obtenu dans de telles conditions ne présente aucune valeur.

Considérations historiques.

Les liens unissant depuis onze siècles Mossoul à la Turquie ne peuvent en aucune façon disparaître par suite de la séparation forcée, imposée à ces deux pays, durant ces quatre dernières années.

Considérations économiques et géographiques.

Nous avions, en nous basant sur des conditions économiques et géographiques, soutenu que le vilayet de Mossoul était inséparable de l'Anatolie. Le mémorandum britannique n'affaiblit en aucune façon notre thèse.

D'ailleurs, les faits montrent qu'à des époques encore toutes récentes, le Gouvernement britannique ne considérait pas le vilayet de Mossoul comme faisant partie de l'Irak et envisageait la nécessité de séparer ces deux régions.

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En effet :

1. L'accord franco-britannique de 1916 sépare Mossoul de l'Irak et le place dans la zone française.
2. Dans les demandes formulées en 1919 à l'instigation des Puissances alliées par Chérif Pacha, Mossoul est également séparé de l'Irak.

D'autre part, au point de vue du climat, le vilayet de Mossoul se trouve dans les mêmes conditions que l'Anatolie et diffère totalement de l'Irak.

Nous voudrions encore faire observer que si l'on adoptait le principe de l'annexion à un pays de toutes les régions qui pourvoient à ses besoins économiques, on serait dans l'obligation de modifier entièrement les frontières actuelles de tous les Etats et d'en tracer de nouvelles, en tenant compte de l'interdépendance économique des différents territoires. L'impossibilité d'appliquer un tel principe étant évident, l'argument employé dans le mémorandum britannique, au sujet de la nécessité d'annexer Mossoul à l'Irak en vue de satisfaire les besoins en céréales de Bagdad, tombe de lui-même.

Considérations stratégiques et Pacte national turc.

Le vilayet de Mossoul peuplé en majorité de Turcs et de Kurdes forme partie intégrante de notre patrie; il est évident, par suite de l'existence de cette majorité et de la situation de la province de Mossoul, que celui-ci doit faire en entier retour à la Turquie. La main-mise britannique sur ce pays n'est pas le résultat d'opérations militaires, car Mossoul tomba, comme beaucoup d'autres territoires turcs, sous l'occupation étrangère par suite des abus et des actes arbitraires qui furent commis dans l'application du Traité d'Armistice. Par conséquent, on ne peut se baser sur des opérations de guerre pour justifier ces occupations.

D'après la lettre de son Excellence Lord Curzon of Kedleston et le mémorandum britannique, on devrait reconnaître que le droit de conquête peut suffire à justifier l'annexion d'un territoire. Nous croyons devoir opposer à une pareille thèse la thèse contraire d'après laquelle les populations d'un pays ne doivent pas, contre leur gré, être transférées de la souveraineté d'un Etat à celle d'un autre Etat et nous croyons également devoir rappeler que, durant la guerre générale, ce principe fut celui des Alliés et hautement proclamé par M. le Président Wilson dans ses quatorze points qui devaient servir de base à la paix future.

Au résumé, on peut dire, pour clore le débat, qu'il n'existe aucun argument logique qui puisse justifier la main-mise britannique sur Mossoul ou son annexion à l'Irak.

Lausanne, le 29 *décembre* 1922.

No. 2.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December* 31, 1922.

IN thanking you for your final communication on the subject of Mosul, I rejoice to find that you agree with me in thinking that it is unnecessary further to pursue the discussion. I may be permitted to remind you, however, that it was for the convenience of the Turkish delegation that, in our first conversation on the subject, I stated my willingness to forward to you on paper the considerations which led the British Government to contest the various theses which you then advanced in favour of the Turkish case.

I am quite willing at any time, and shall probably decide before long, to take up the question of the frontiers of Syria and Irak at a meeting of the Territorial Commission, over which I have the honour to preside. It was, as you well remember, in deference to your own express wish that I postponed the discussion on a previous occasion. I shall then be prepared to state in public the reasons which render it impossible for my Government to accept the claim which has been put forward by the Turkish delegation.

In the meantime I learn with pleasure that you accept my proposal for a meeting of our respective experts to consider the northern frontier of the State of Irak; and on my return from Paris early this week I hope to place my representatives at your disposal.

Yours, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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TURKEY. [January 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13/1/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office January 1, 1923.)

Dear Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 29 décembre 1922.*

JE me vois dans l'obligation de répondre succinctement au mémorandum que votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire parvenir. Qu'il me soit permis de dire que ce mémorandum ne fait que renforcer les arguments que j'avais formulés pour démontrer les droits de la Turquie à la possession de Moussoul. On doit, en effet, reconnaître qu'aucun de mes arguments n'y est réfuté. Jusqu'à présent, chacun de nous avait tâché de convaincre l'autre à l'aide de preuves basées sur le droit et la logique. Votre Excellence, en s'opposant à la continuation de ce système, reconnaît implicitement qu'au point de vue du droit et de la logique notre thèse est inattaquable.

Votre Seigneurie voudra bien se souvenir que j'avais trouvé plus simple et plus pratique de travailler à nous convaincre mutuellement par des discussions orales, et que c'est votre Excellence qui a inauguré le système actuel, consistant à échanger des notes écrites dont chacune provoque une réponse.

À la fin de sa lettre, votre Excellence considère qu'aucun argument autre que le droit de conquête n'est valable; je suis prêt à confier, en toute conscience, cet argument ainsi que tous les précédents à l'appréciation de l'opinion mondiale. J'ai, d'ailleurs, spécifié dans mon mémorandum que même ce droit de conquête, qui se rapporte à des événements datant de quatre années et à des situations différentes de la situation présente, ne peut être invoqué au sujet de Moussoul. Je me trouve de la sorte avoir démontré que le dernier argument qui puisse être invoqué par le Gouvernement britannique pour réclamer Moussoul est sans fondement, étant donné que Moussoul fut occupé après l'armistice.

On connaît les déclarations faites durant la guerre générale au sujet de l'affranchissement des Arabes de l'administration turque. Ces déclarations ont perdu toute valeur réelle aux yeux des peuples, à la suite des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis 1918.

Votre Excellence n'ignore certainement pas que tous les peuples veulent disposer eux-mêmes de leurs destinées et qu'il n'existe plus sur terre de nation sollicitant un protecteur ou un guide. Il ne reste non plus personne qui n'ait compris que les mots de "protection," de "guide dans la voie de la civilisation," &c., ne sont, aux mains des dominateurs, que des moyens pour absorber politiquement et économiquement les peuples conquis.

Que le Gouvernement britannique veuille bien laisser, un seul instant, libres et affranchis de toute occupation les habitants de l'Irak, auxquels, d'après les déclarations de votre Seigneurie, la libération a été promise; qu'il soit permis à ces populations de voter en toute indépendence au sujet des destinées de leur pays,—le résultat d'une pareille consultation ne saurait faire l'objet du moindre doute. On ne trouverait plus ainsi dans toutes ces contrées une seule personne voulant d'une occupation, d'un protectorat ou d'un mandat quelconque. Pour être dans le vrai, il faut avouer que les habitants de l'Irak montrent le plus grand empressement en vue d'unir de quelque façon que ce soit leurs destinées à celles des Turcs. Mais le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale, qui a pour principe fondamental de considérer les parties de l'Empire ottoman autres que la Turquie comme aussi libres et indépendantes que celle-ci, dans la détermination de leur propre sort, n'a jamais songé à exploiter l'attachement nourri par les Arabes à son égard. Nos revendications ne visent donc que les régions devant revenir à la Turquie. Quant aux pays restés en dehors de nos frontières, nous leur souhaitons l'indépendance et la prospérité.

Je désire également faire connaître mon opinion au sujet du mandat britannique sur l'Irak dont votre Excellence parle dans son mémorandum. Non seulement la Turquie n'a pas reconnu en principe la nécessité d'un tel mandat, mais encore elle ignore entièrement son attribution à l'Angleterre. Il est en outre évident que les

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traités—qui, d'après les déclarations contenues dans la lettre de votre Excellence, auraient été conclus par le Gouvernement britannique au sujet de l'Irak, province faisant encore, en droit, partie de l'Empire ottoman—ne peuvent être aucunement invoqués contre nous.

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La situation des personnes qui vivent dans notre patrie et qui jusqu'aux confins les plus reculés du pays participent, comme citoyens, à tous les droits et à toutes les responsabilités, ne peut être comparée à la situation des habitants d'une sorte de colonie où on leur ferait la grâce de leur octroyer une certaine liberté ou une certaine autonomie.

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Croyez, &c.
M. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum.

LA lecture du mémorandum responsif remis par la délégation britannique donne la conviction que les arguments fournis par le mémorandum turc du 23 courant sont parfaitement logiques et fondés et qu'en plus ils sont suffisants pour établir les droits qu'a la Turquie à revendiquer le vilayet de Mossoul.

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Les statistiques turques concernant le vilayet de Moussoul sont le résultat d'une étude approfondie et ont été établies avant la guerre générale, c'est-à-dire à une époque où il n'y avait aucun intérêt politique à fausser les chiffres donnant la proportion des différents éléments de la population et où, par suite des opérations de recrutement militaire, on était dans la nécessité de posséder des données exactes. Ces statistiques doivent donc être considérées comme les plus conformes à la réalité.

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Ceux qui ont parcouru l'Anatolie savent qu'au point de vue des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes les Kurdes ne diffèrent en rien des Turcs; tout en parlant une langue différente, ces deux éléments forment un seul bloc au point de vue de la race, de la foi et des mœurs.

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Il est visible que nos déclarations relatives à l'origine touranienne du peuple kurde ont vivement étonné la délégation britannique; si l'on voulait bien se rapporter à l'article "Kurdistan" de l'"Encyclopédie britannique," on y trouverait des renseignements identiques à ceux fournis par nous.

Considérations d'ordre politique.

Il est incontestable que les Kurdes et les Turcs, qui forment la majorité de la population du vilayet de Mossoul, n'ont cessé un seul instant de lutter de toutes leurs forces pour que leur province fasse partie des territoires placés sous l'administration du Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie; les proclamations des représentants britanniques en Irak et la conduite actuelle des troupes anglaises d'occupation envers cette population constituent à cet égard des preuves suffisantes.

En outre, les habitants du vilayet de Moussoul se sont adressés à la grande Assemblée nationale pour lui faire connaître leur décision irrévocable d'obtenir le retour de leur province à la Turquie et ont en même temps fait remarquer que le pays se trouvait sous l'occupation étrangère contrairement aux stipulations du Traité d'Armistice de 1918.

L'incident survenu à Bitlis en 1914 est le résultat des excitations de quelques consuls étrangers; il ne présente aucune importance et est d'ordre purement local. Le caractère de cet incident peut être mis en évidence par le fait que l'une des personnalités considérées comme compromises dans cette affaire se trouve actuellement membre de la grande Assemblée nationale. L'affaire de Dersim dont il est question dans le mémorandum britannique est de même nature.

Un incident local survenant pour une cause quelconque sur un point du territoire turc ne peut en aucune façon être interprété comme une preuve du désir de la population de cette localité de se séparer de la Turquie; de pareils faits se voient, d'ailleurs, partout.

Depuis des siècles, les Kurdes jouissent en Turquie, sous l'égide du Gouvernement turc, défenseur de la Turquie, de tous les droits de citoyens; ils n'ont jamais songé à considérer ce Gouvernement, auquel politiquement et socialement ils ont toujours collaboré en toute liberté, comme un Gouvernement étranger. Les colonies et dépendances des Puissances européennes sont privées du droit d'avoir des Députés au Parlement siégeant dans les capitales de ces Puissances, et leurs habitants ne jouissent pas des prérogatives que possèdent les citoyens de ces Etats.

Les prétendus droits n'impliquant pas la jouissance des droits de citoyens, octroyés aux populations des régions soi-disant autonomes, ne pourraient nullement satisfaire une race dominante comme la race kurde.

Il est certain que la population du vilayet de Mossoul ne désire en aucune manière participer au sort d'une population tombée au niveau d'un peuple colonisé, et les Kurdes ne consentiraient jamais à se séparer de leurs frères turcs, pour vivre dans un pays réduit à la situation de territoire autonome.

Pour réfuter la partie du mémorandum britannique parlant de l'attachement des Arabes à la Grande-Bretagne et au régime actuel existant en Irak, et pour montrer la valeur du plébiscite qui aurait été effectué dans ce pays, il nous suffira de rappeler le vaste soulèvement qui se produisit en Irak en 1920–1921 et la sanglante répression qui s'ensuivit et qui nécessita l'emploi de très grandes forces britanniques; le plébiscite précité eut lieu à la suite de cette répression et sous la menace des armées d'occupation; tout le monde conviendra qu'un vote obtenu dans de telles conditions ne présente aucune valeur.

Considérations historiques.

Les liens unissant depuis onze siècles Mossoul à la Turquie ne peuvent en aucune façon disparaître par suite de la séparation forcée, imposée à ces deux pays, durant ces quatre dernières années.

Considérations économiques et géographiques.

Nous avions, en nous basant sur des conditions économiques et géographiques, soutenu que le vilayet de Mossoul était inséparable de l'Anatolie. Le mémorandum britannique n'affaiblit en aucune façon notre thèse.

D'ailleurs, les faits montrent qu'à des époques encore toutes récentes, le Gouvernement britannique ne considérait pas le vilayet de Mossoul comme faisant partie de l'Irak et envisageait la nécessité de séparer ces deux régions.

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En effet :

1. L'accord franco-britannique de 1916 sépare Mossoul de l'Irak et le place dans la zone française.
2. Dans les demandes formulées en 1919 à l'instigation des Puissances alliées par Chérif Pacha, Mossoul est également séparé de l'Irak.

D'autre part, au point de vue du climat, le vilayet de Mossoul se trouve dans les mêmes conditions que l'Anatolie et diffère totalement de l'Irak.

Nous voudrions encore faire observer que si l'on adoptait le principe de l'annexion à un pays de toutes les régions qui pourvoient à ses besoins économiques, on serait dans l'obligation de modifier entièrement les frontières actuelles de tous les Etats et d'en tracer de nouvelles, en tenant compte de l'interdépendance économique des différents territoires. L'impossibilité d'appliquer un tel principe étant évident, l'argument employé dans le mémorandum britannique, au sujet de la nécessité d'annexer Mossoul à l'Irak en vue de satisfaire les besoins en céréales de Bagdad, tombe de lui-même.

Considérations stratégiques et Pacte national turc.

Le vilayet de Mossoul peuplé en majorité de Turcs et de Kurdes forme partie intégrante de notre patrie; il est évident, par suite de l'existence de cette majorité et de la situation de la province de Mossoul, que celui-ci doit faire en entier retour à la Turquie. La main-mise britannique sur ce pays n'est pas le résultat d'opérations militaires, car Mossoul tomba, comme beaucoup d'autres territoires turcs, sous l'occupation étrangère par suite des abus et des actes arbitraires qui furent commis dans l'application du Traité d'Armistice. Par conséquent, on ne peut se baser sur des opérations de guerre pour justifier ces occupations.

D'après la lettre de son Excellence Lord Curzon of Kedleston et le mémorandum britannique, on devrait reconnaître que le droit de conquête peut suffire à justifier l'annexion d'un territoire. Nous croyons devoir opposer à une pareille thèse la thèse contraire d'après laquelle les populations d'un pays ne doivent pas, contre leur gré, être transférées de la souveraineté d'un Etat à celle d'un autre Etat et nous croyons également devoir rappeler que, durant la guerre générale, ce principe fut celui des Alliés et hautement proclamé par M. le Président Wilson dans ses quatorze points qui devaient servir de base à la paix future.

Au résumé, on peut dire, pour clore le débat, qu'il n'existe aucun argument logique qui puisse justifier la main-mise britannique sur Mossoul ou son annexion à l'Irak.

Lausanne, le 29 *décembre* 1922.

No. 2.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December* 31, 1922.

IN thanking you for your final communication on the subject of Mosul, I rejoice to find that you agree with me in thinking that it is unnecessary further to pursue the discussion. I may be permitted to remind you, however, that it was for the convenience of the Turkish delegation that, in our first conversation on the subject, I stated my willingness to forward to you on paper the considerations which led the British Government to contest the various theses which you then advanced in favour of the Turkish case.

I am quite willing at any time, and shall probably decide before long, to take up the question of the frontiers of Syria and Irak at a meeting of the Territorial Commission, over which I have the honour to preside. It was, as you well remember, in deference to your own express wish that I postponed the discussion on a previous occasion. I shall then be prepared to state in public the reasons which render it impossible for my Government to accept the claim which has been put forward by the Turkish delegation.

In the meantime I learn with pleasure that you accept my proposal for a meeting of our respective experts to consider the northern frontier of the State of Irak; and on my return from Paris early this week I hope to place my representatives at your disposal.

Yours, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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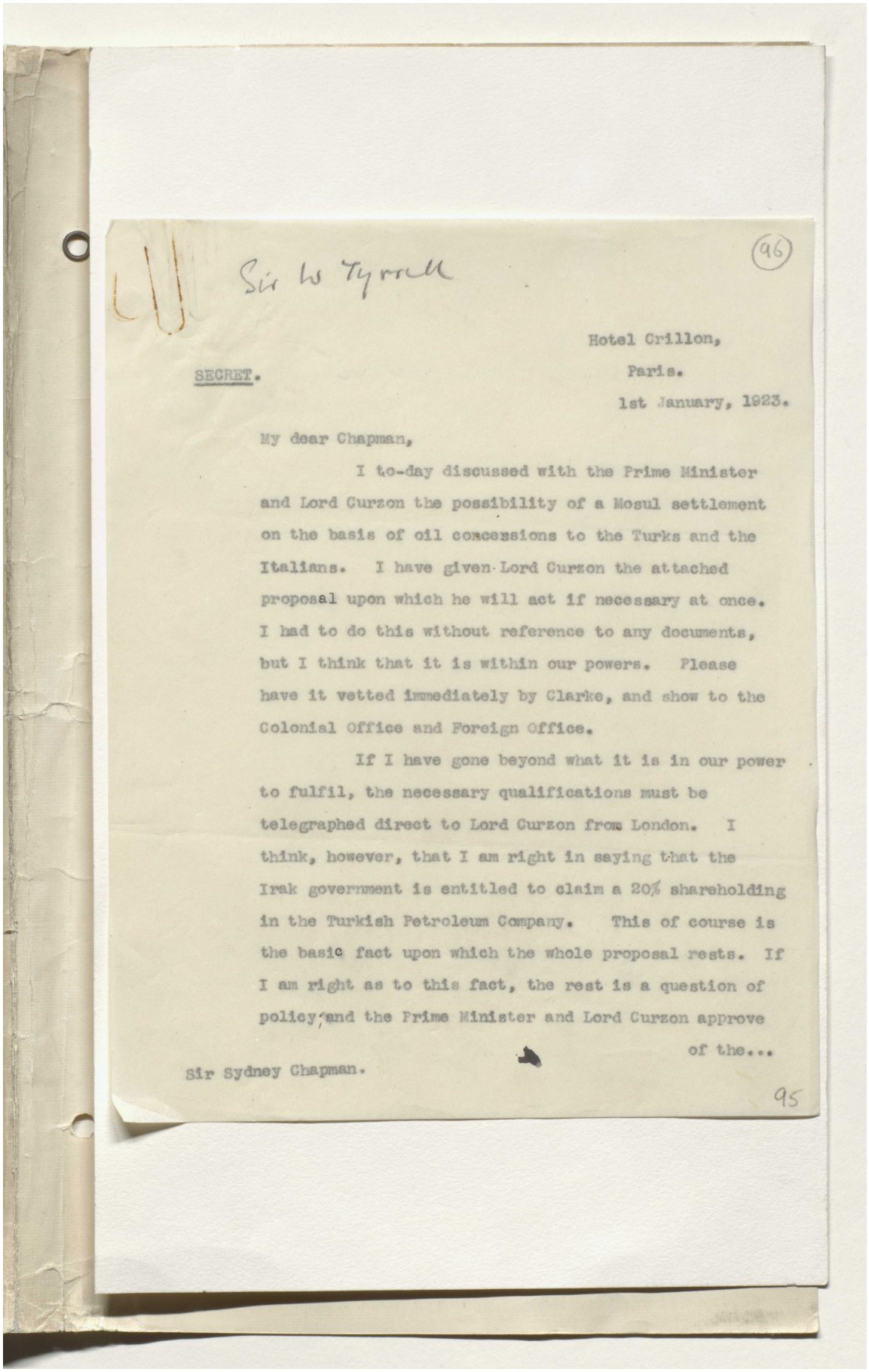

Sir W Tyrrell

(96)

Hotel Crillon,
Paris.
1st January, 1923.

SECRET.

My dear Chapman,

I to-day discussed with the Prime Minister and Lord Curzon the possibility of a Mosul settlement on the basis of oil concessions to the Turks and the Italians. I have given Lord Curzon the attached proposal upon which he will act if necessary at once. I had to do this without reference to any documents, but I think that it is within our powers. Please have it vetted immediately by Clarke, and show to the Colonial Office and Foreign Office.

If I have gone beyond what it is in our power to fulfil, the necessary qualifications must be telegraphed direct to Lord Curzon from London. I think, however, that I am right in saying that the Irak government is entitled to claim a 20% shareholding in the Turkish Petroleum Company. This of course is the basic fact upon which the whole proposal rests. If I am right as to this fact, the rest is a question of policy, and the Prime Minister and Lord Curzon approve of the...

Sir Sydney Chapman.

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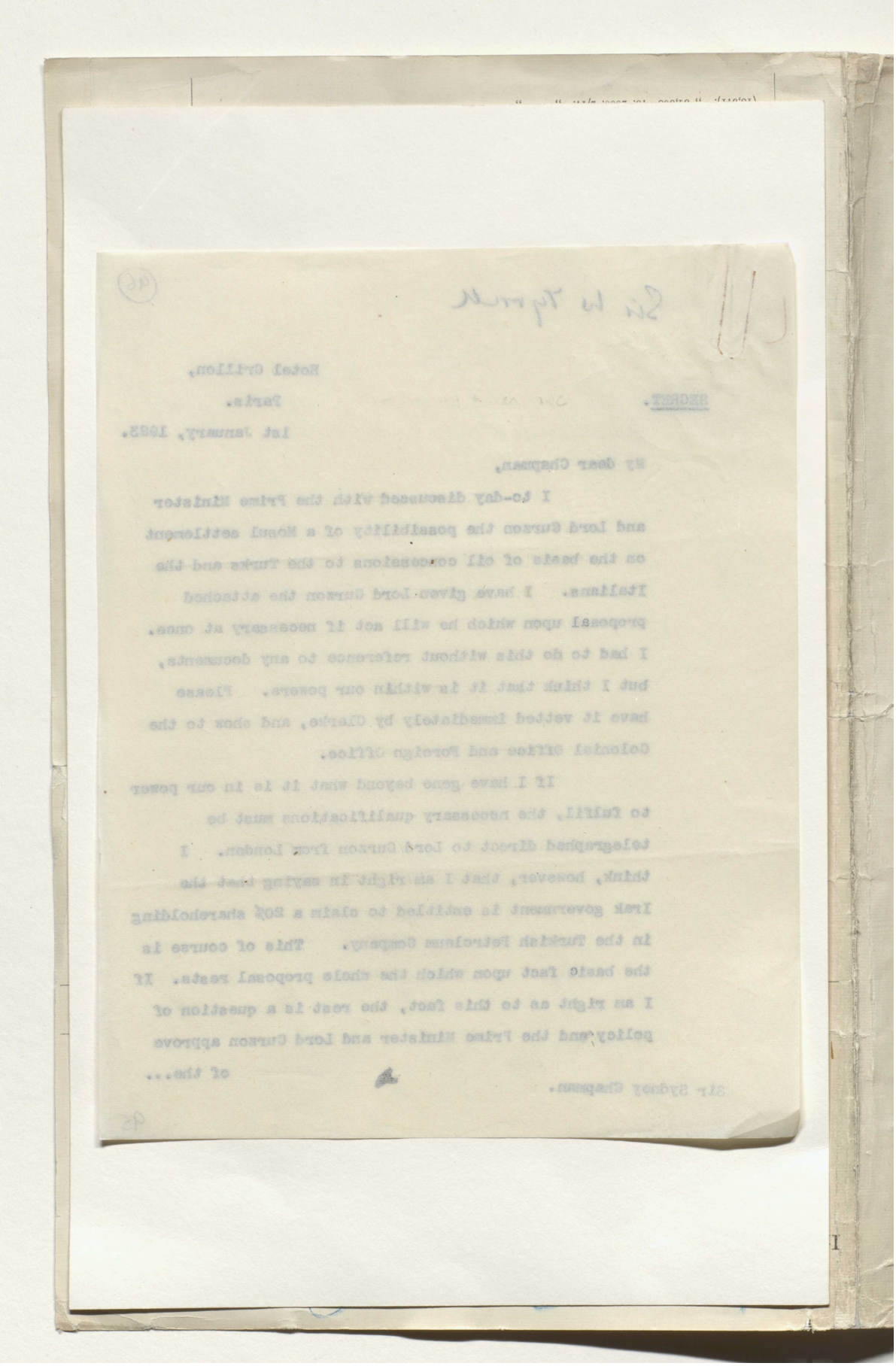

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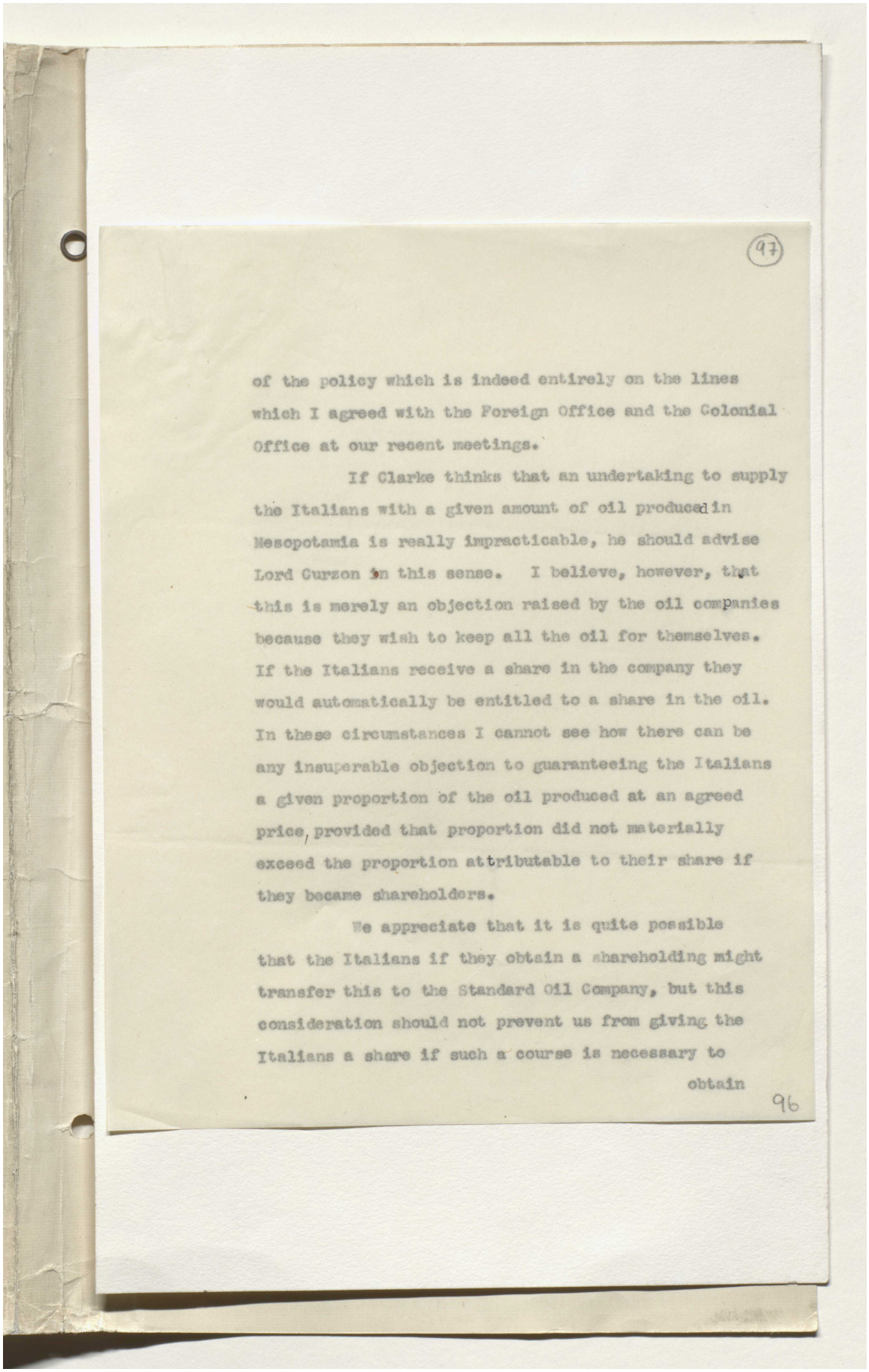

(97)

of the policy which is indeed entirely on the lines which I agreed with the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office at our recent meetings.

If Clarke thinks that an undertaking to supply the Italians with a given amount of oil produced in Mesopotamia is really impracticable, he should advise Lord Curzon in this sense. I believe, however, that this is merely an objection raised by the oil companies because they wish to keep all the oil for themselves. If the Italians receive a share in the company they would automatically be entitled to a share in the oil. In these circumstances I cannot see how there can be any insuperable objection to guaranteeing the Italians a given proportion of the oil produced at an agreed price, provided that proportion did not materially exceed the proportion attributable to their share if they became shareholders.

We appreciate that it is quite possible that the Italians if they obtain a shareholding might transfer this to the Standard Oil Company, but this consideration should not prevent us from giving the Italians a share if such a course is necessary to obtain

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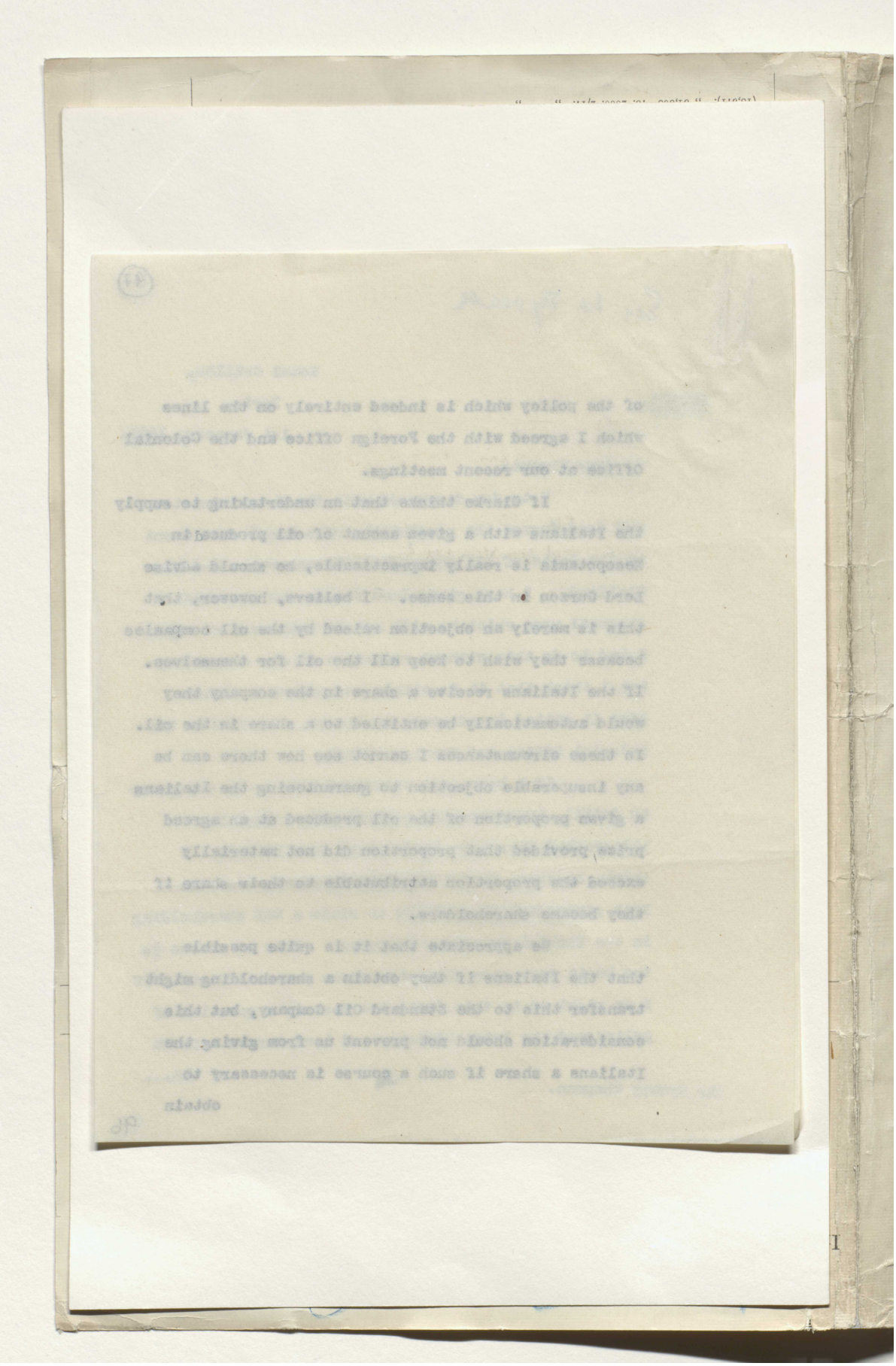

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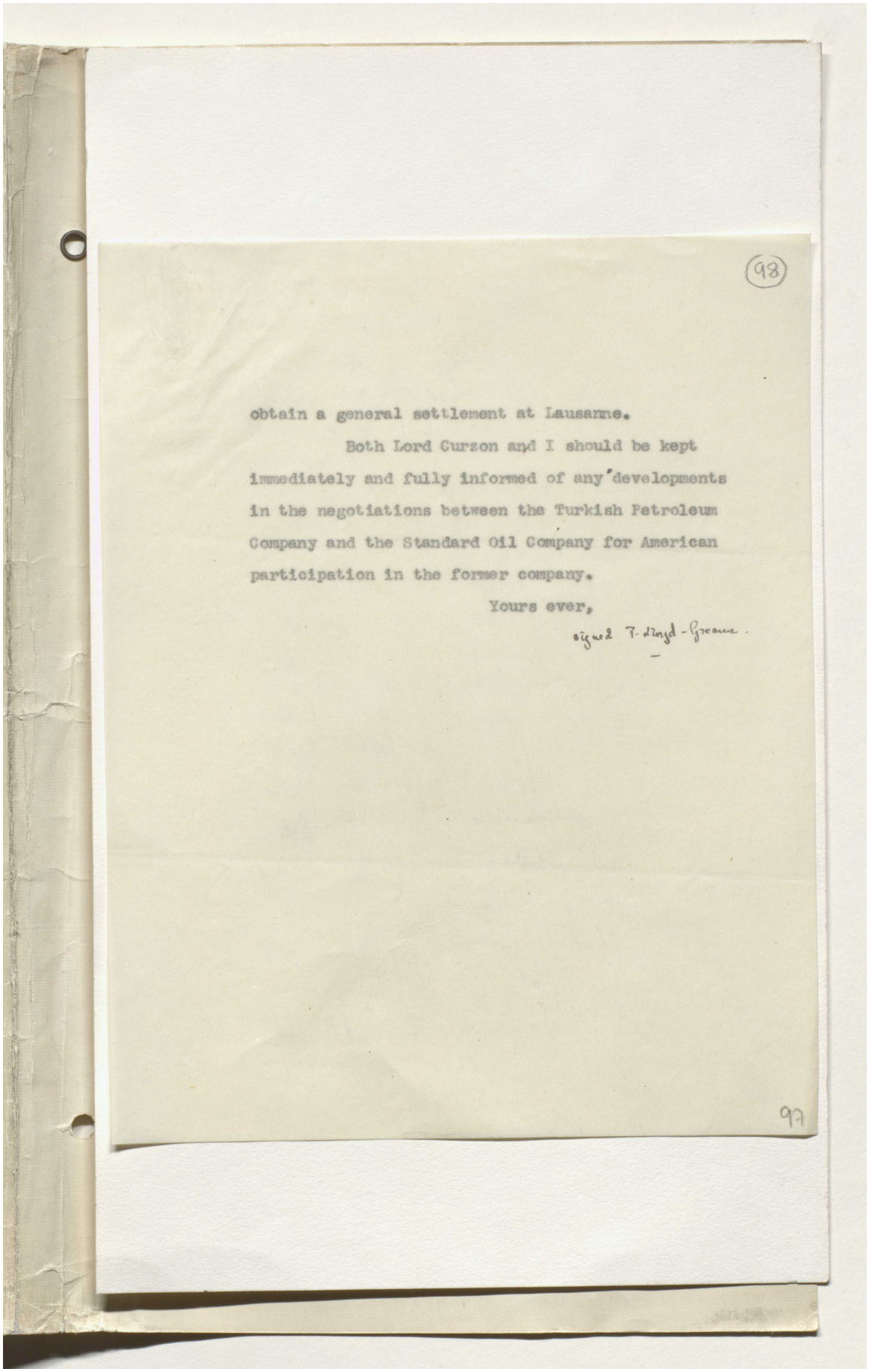

(98)

obtain a general settlement at Lausanne.

Both Lord Curzon and I should be kept immediately and fully informed of any developments in the negotiations between the Turkish Petroleum Company and the Standard Oil Company for American participation in the former company.

Yours ever,

signed D. Lloyd-George.

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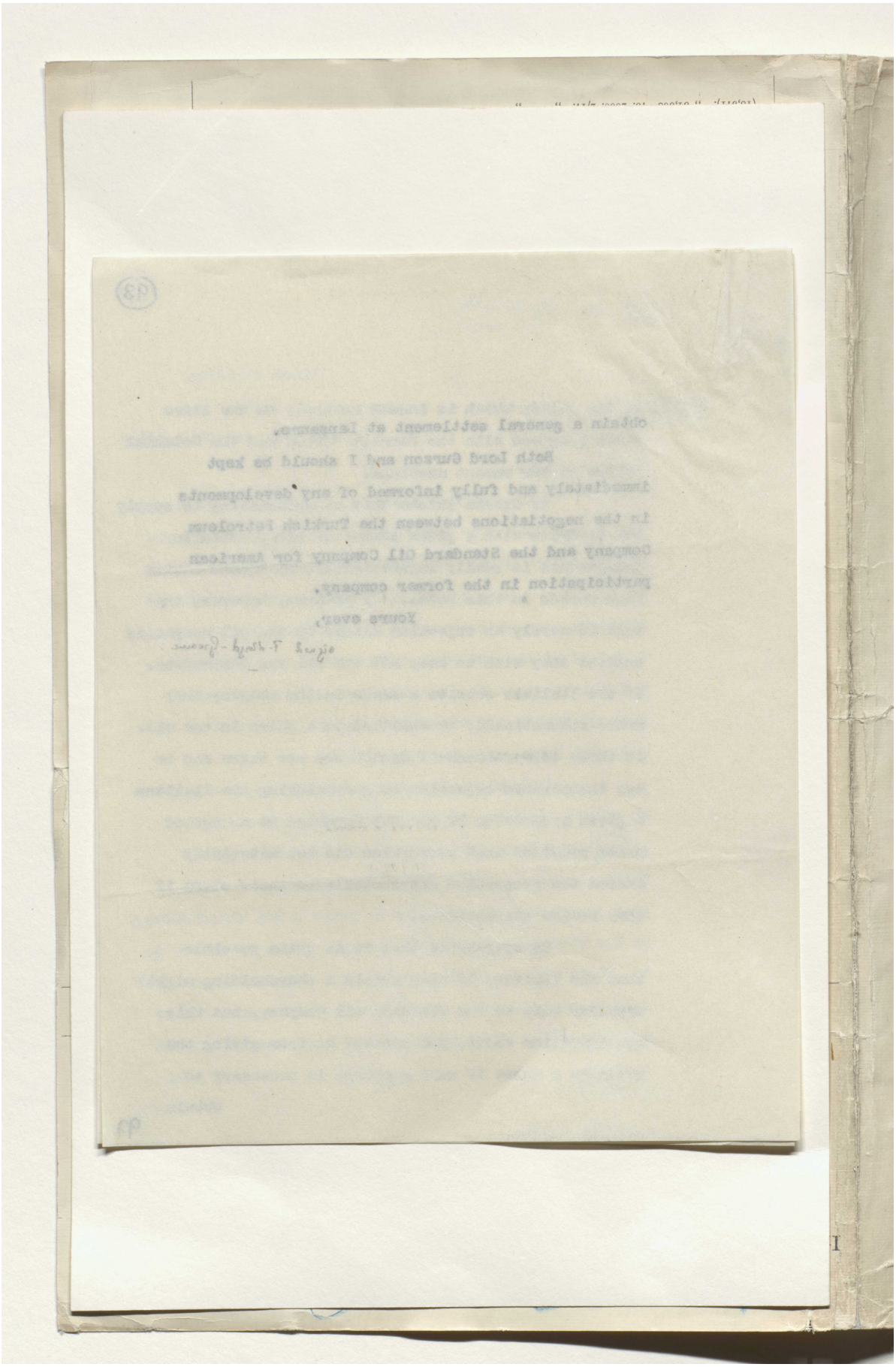

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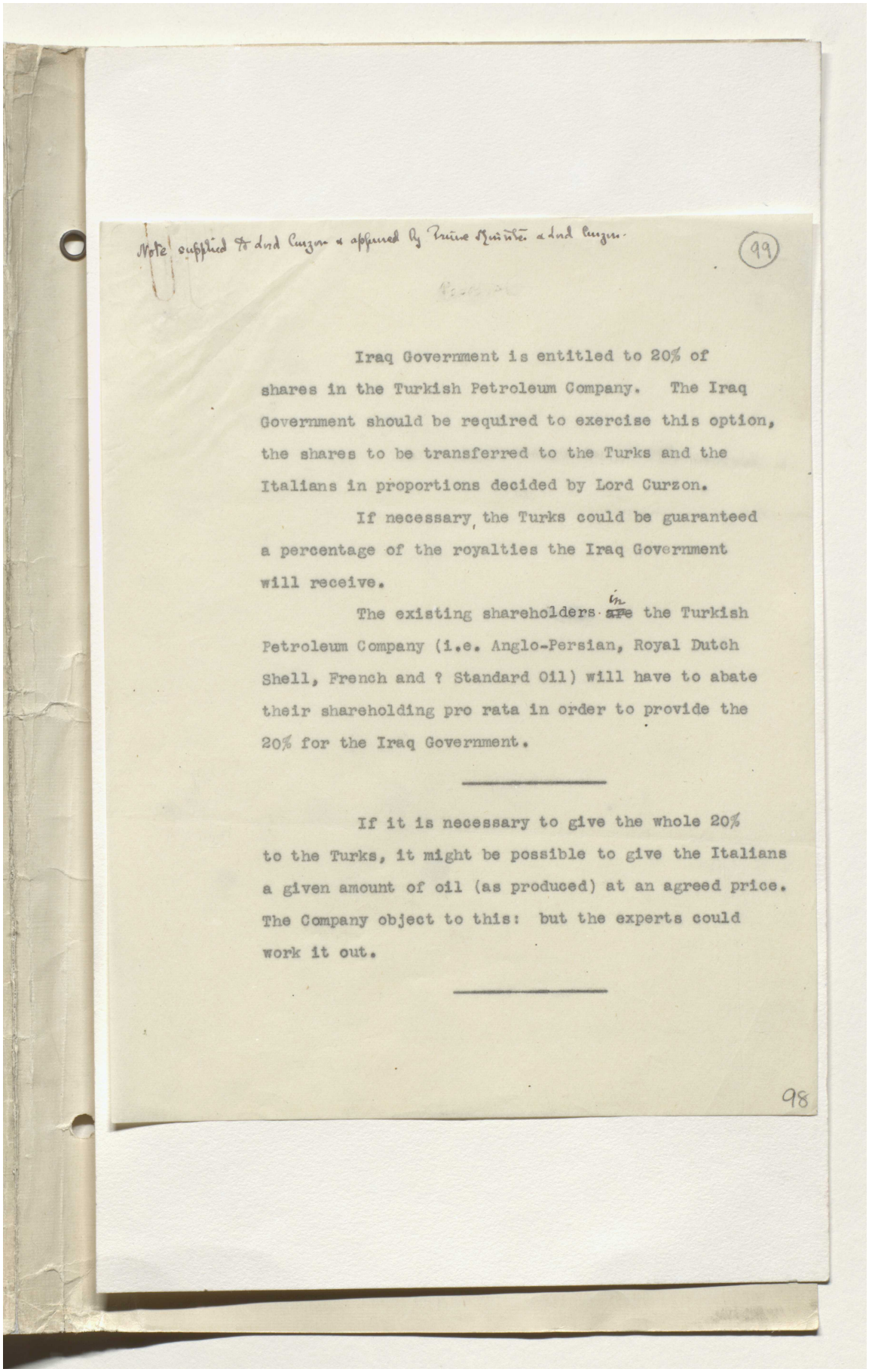

Note supplied to Lord Curzon & approved by Prime Minister & Lord Curzon.

(99)

Iraq Government is entitled to 20% of shares in the Turkish Petroleum Company. The Iraq Government should be required to exercise this option, the shares to be transferred to the Turks and the Italians in proportions decided by Lord Curzon.

If necessary, the Turks could be guaranteed a percentage of the royalties the Iraq Government will receive.

The existing shareholders ~~are~~ in the Turkish Petroleum Company (i.e. Anglo-Persian, Royal Dutch Shell, French and ? Standard Oil) will have to abate their shareholding pro rata in order to provide the 20% for the Iraq Government.

If it is necessary to give the whole 20% to the Turks, it might be possible to give the Italians a given amount of oil (as produced) at an agreed price. The Company object to this: but the experts could work it out.

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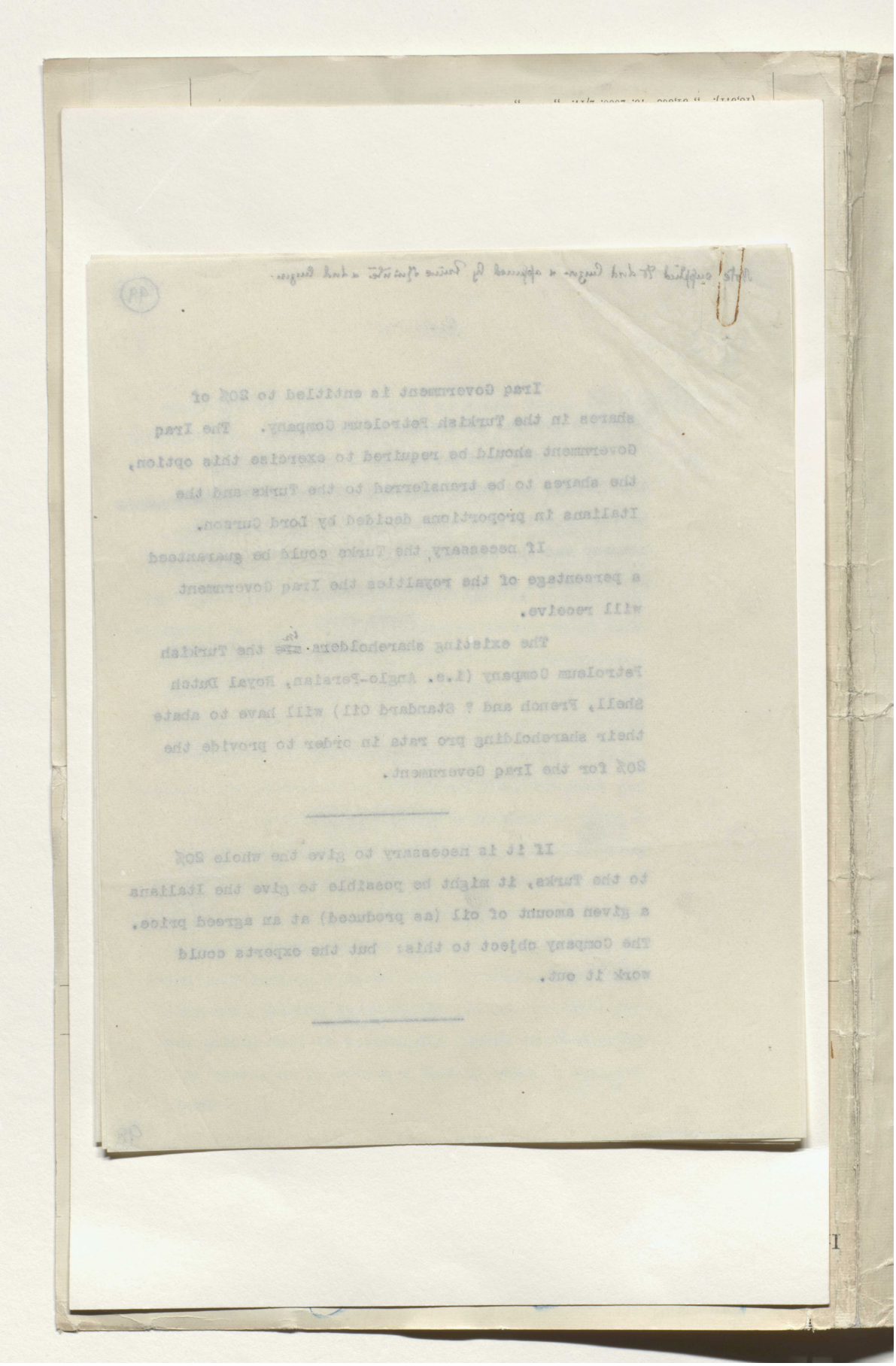

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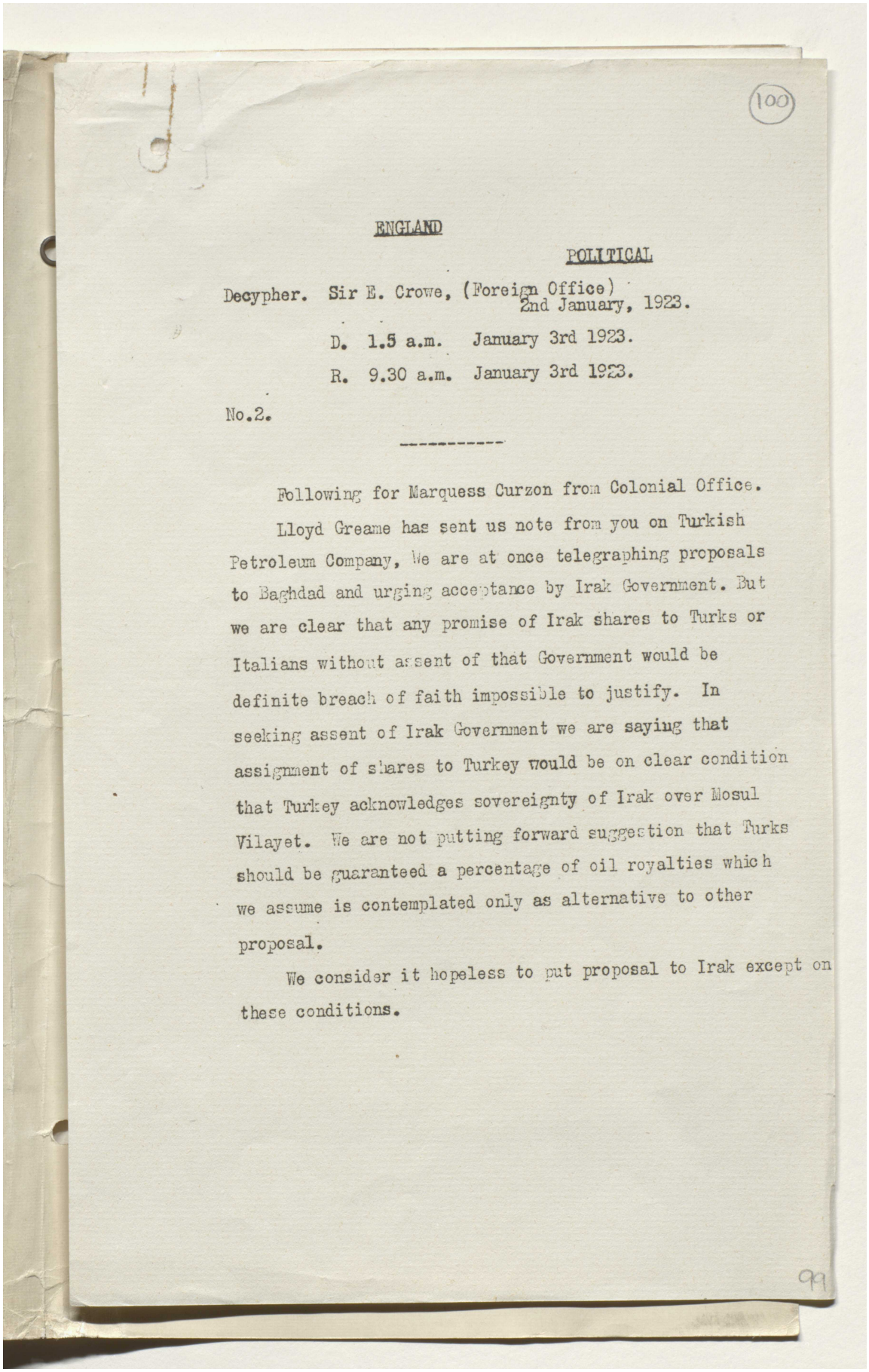

(100)

ENGLAND

POLITICAL

Decypher. Sir E. Crowe, (Foreign Office) 2nd January, 1923.

D. 1.5 a.m. January 3rd 1923.

R. 9.30 a.m. January 3rd 1923.

No.2.

Following for Marquess Curzon from Colonial Office.

Lloyd Greame has sent us note from you on Turkish Petroleum Company, We are at once telegraphing proposals to Baghdad and urging acceptance by Irak Government. But we are clear that any promise of Irak shares to Turks or Italians without assent of that Government would be definite breach of faith impossible to justify. In seeking assent of Irak Government we are saying that assignment of shares to Turkey would be on clear condition that Turkey acknowledges sovereignty of Irak over Mosul Vilayet. We are not putting forward suggestion that Turks should be guaranteed a percentage of oil royalties which we assume is contemplated only as alternative to other proposal.

We consider it hopeless to put proposal to Irak except on these conditions.

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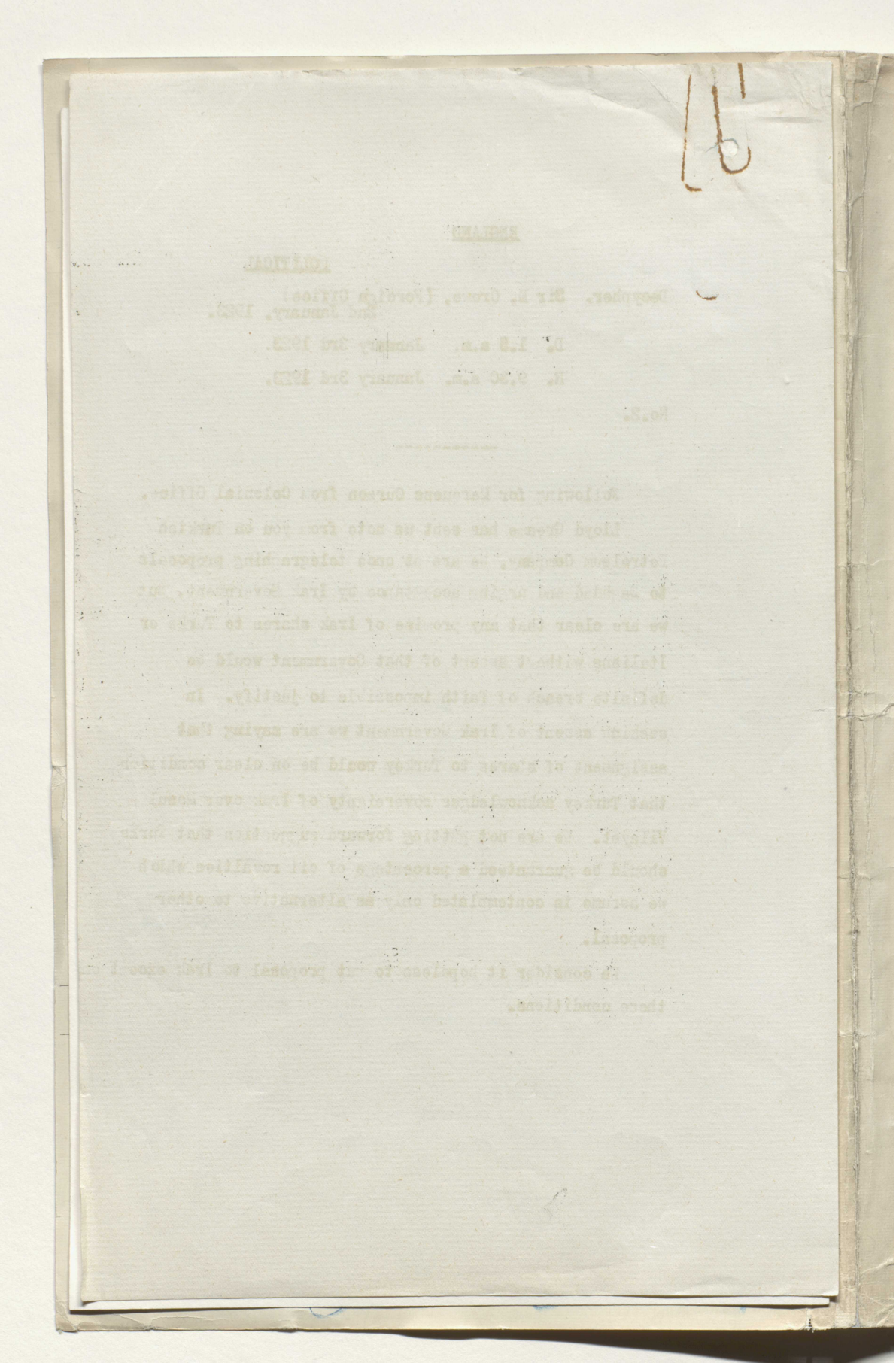

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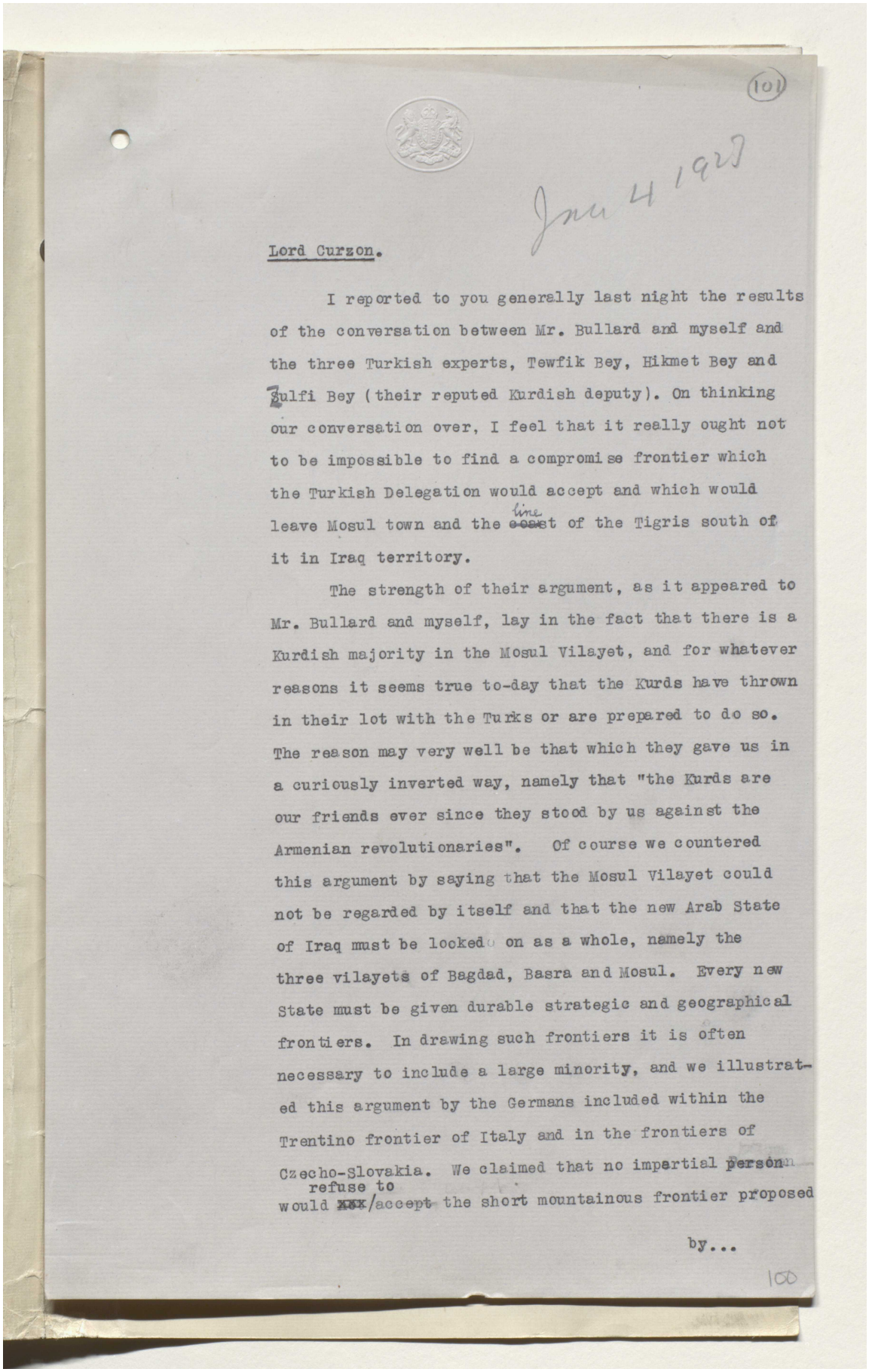

(101)

Jan 4 1923

Lord Curzon.

I reported to you generally last night the results of the conversation between Mr. Bullard and myself and the three Turkish experts, Tewfik Bey, Hikmet Bey and Zulfi Bey (their reputed Kurdish deputy). On thinking our conversation over, I feel that it really ought not to be impossible to find a compromise frontier which the Turkish Delegation would accept and which would leave Mosul town and the ~~coast~~ line of the Tigris south of it in Iraq territory.

The strength of their argument, as it appeared to Mr. Bullard and myself, lay in the fact that there is a Kurdish majority in the Mosul Vilayet, and for whatever reasons it seems true to-day that the Kurds have thrown in their lot with the Turks or are prepared to do so. The reason may very well be that which they gave us in a curiously inverted way, namely that "the Kurds are our friends ever since they stood by us against the Armenian revolutionaries". Of course we countered this argument by saying that the Mosul Vilayet could not be regarded by itself and that the new Arab State of Iraq must be looked on as a whole, namely the three vilayets of Bagdad, Basra and Mosul. Every new State must be given durable strategic and geographical frontiers. In drawing such frontiers it is often necessary to include a large minority, and we illustrated this argument by the Germans included within the Trentino frontier of Italy and in the frontiers of Czecho-Slovakia. We claimed that no impartial person would refuse to accept the short mountainous frontier proposed

by...

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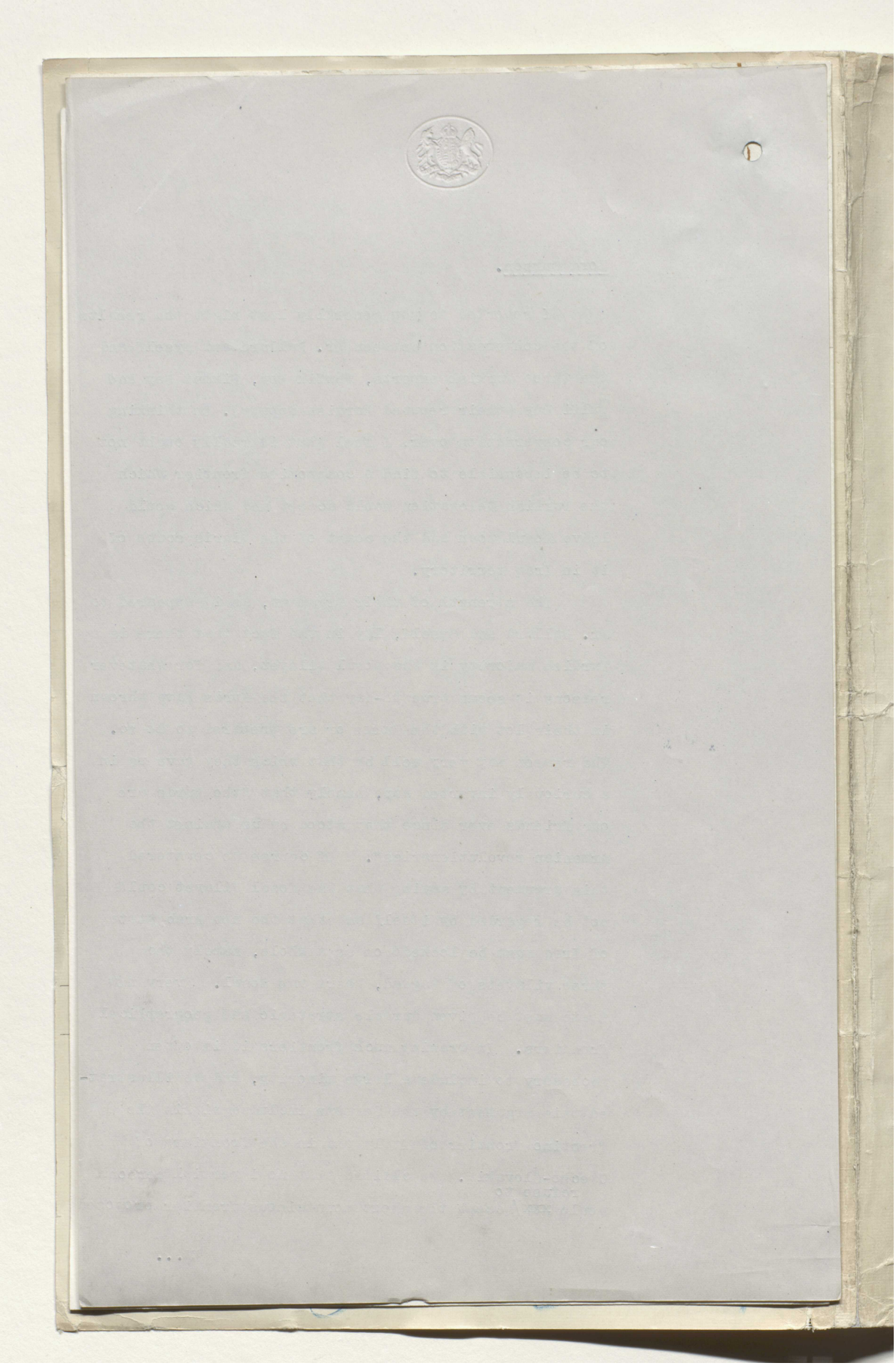

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by us as the northern frontier of Iraq and as the natural frontier for the Iraq State of the future. We also emphasised our obligations to the Assyrian population scattered in all the villages between Mosul and the frontier which we have drawn. The world would never forgive us if they were thrown back into Turkey. Their sufferings have been so terrible that they could not be expected to regard as adequate the minority safeguards of the new treaty with Turkey, and they would certainly fall back down into the plain where they could not in the long run live.

My general view remains, however, that what the Turks are really seeking is not the surrender of Mosul town itself, but some rectification of the Sèvres frontier analogous to that which they obtained from France by the Angora Agreement (they quoted this twice as a precedent in our conversation). This rectification which they want is mainly aimed at getting back as many of the Kurds as possible into their territory.

N.B. Mr Ballard is more doubtful.

It is quite true that if is very difficult to offer such a rectification without (1) giving back the villages where the Assyrians now are, and (2) without endangering the communications between Bagdad and Mosul. On the other hand it might be possible to keep enough of the mountainous territory immediately north of Mosul as a home for the larger part of the Assyrian population which is now there, and find a place for the rest perhaps across the borders of Iraq in Persia where they would be close enough for us to...

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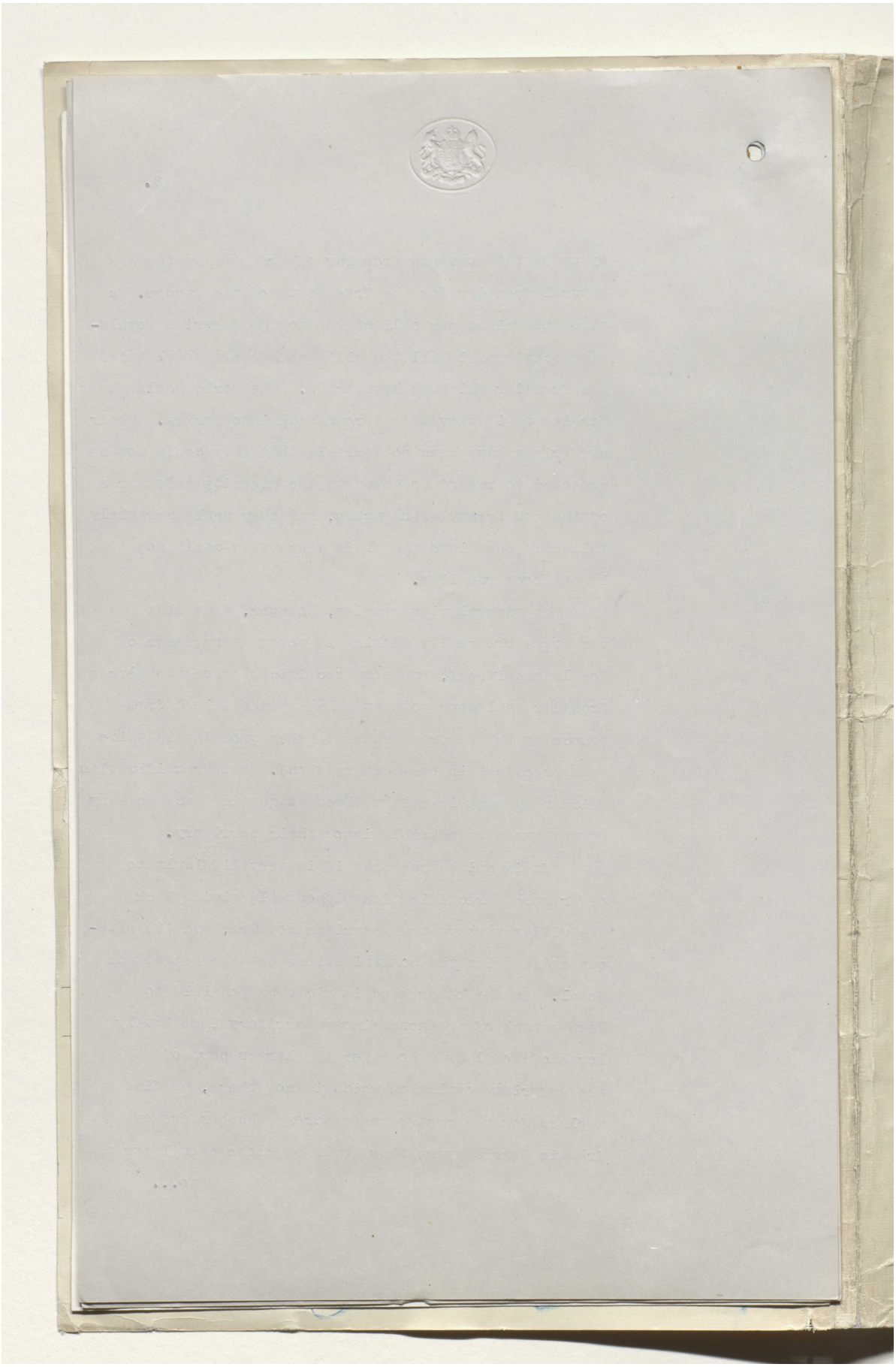

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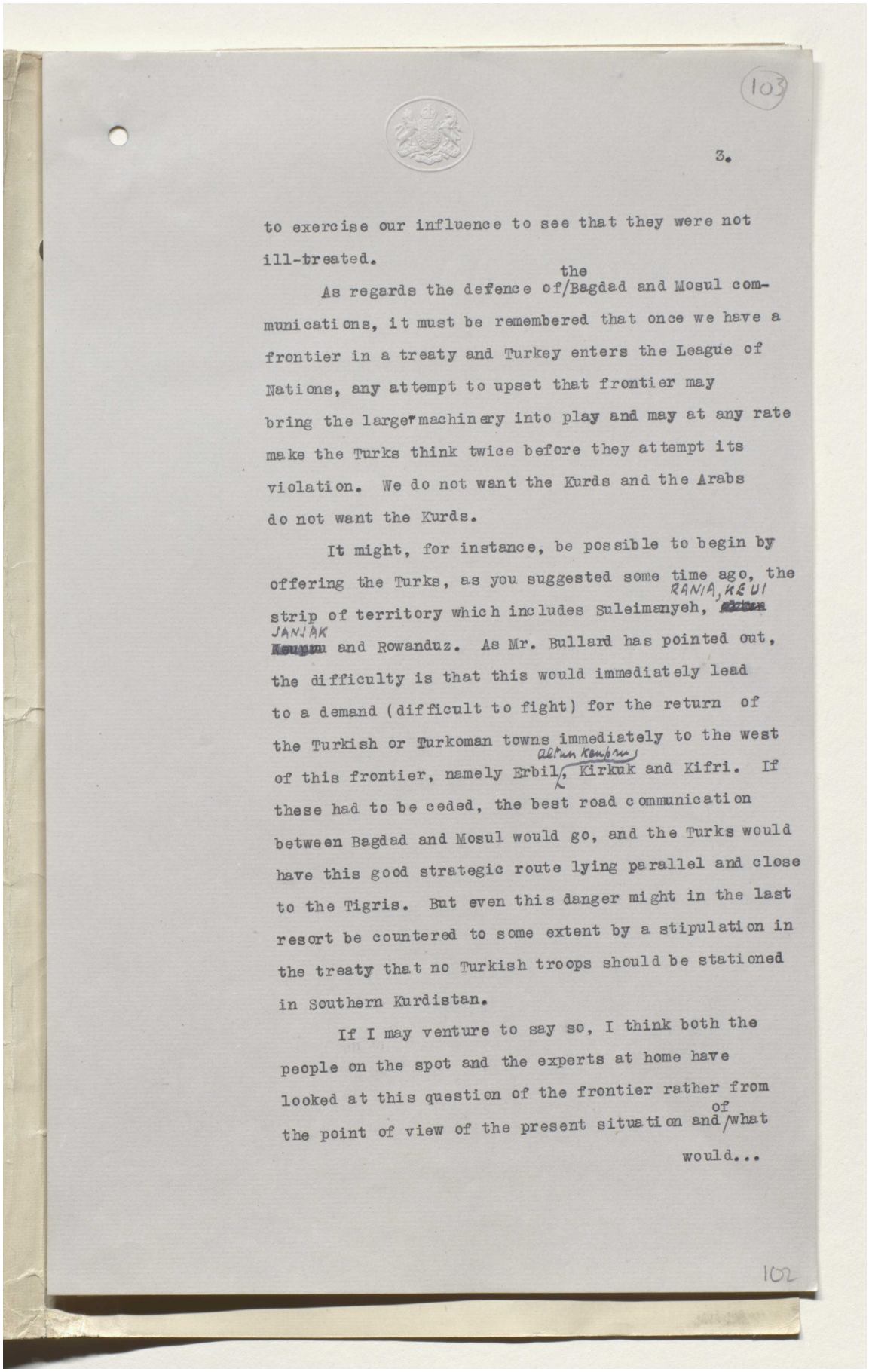

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3.

to exercise our influence to see that they were not ill-treated.

As regards the defence of the Bagdad and Mosul communications, it must be remembered that once we have a frontier in a treaty and Turkey enters the League of Nations, any attempt to upset that frontier may bring the larger machinery into play and may at any rate make the Turks think twice before they attempt its violation. We do not want the Kurds and the Arabs do not want the Kurds.

It might, for instance, be possible to begin by offering the Turks, as you suggested some time ago, the strip of territory which includes Suleimanyeh, RANIA, KEUI JANJAK Keuprm and Rowanduz. As Mr. Bullard has pointed out, the difficulty is that this would immediately lead to a demand (difficult to fight) for the return of the Turkish or Turkoman towns immediately to the west of this frontier, namely Erbil, Altun Keuprm Kirkuk and Kifri. If these had to be ceded, the best road communication between Bagdad and Mosul would go, and the Turks would have this good strategic route lying parallel and close to the Tigris. But even this danger might in the last resort be countered to some extent by a stipulation in the treaty that no Turkish troops should be stationed in Southern Kurdistan.

If I may venture to say so, I think both the people on the spot and the experts at home have looked at this question of the frontier rather from the point of view of the present situation and of what would...

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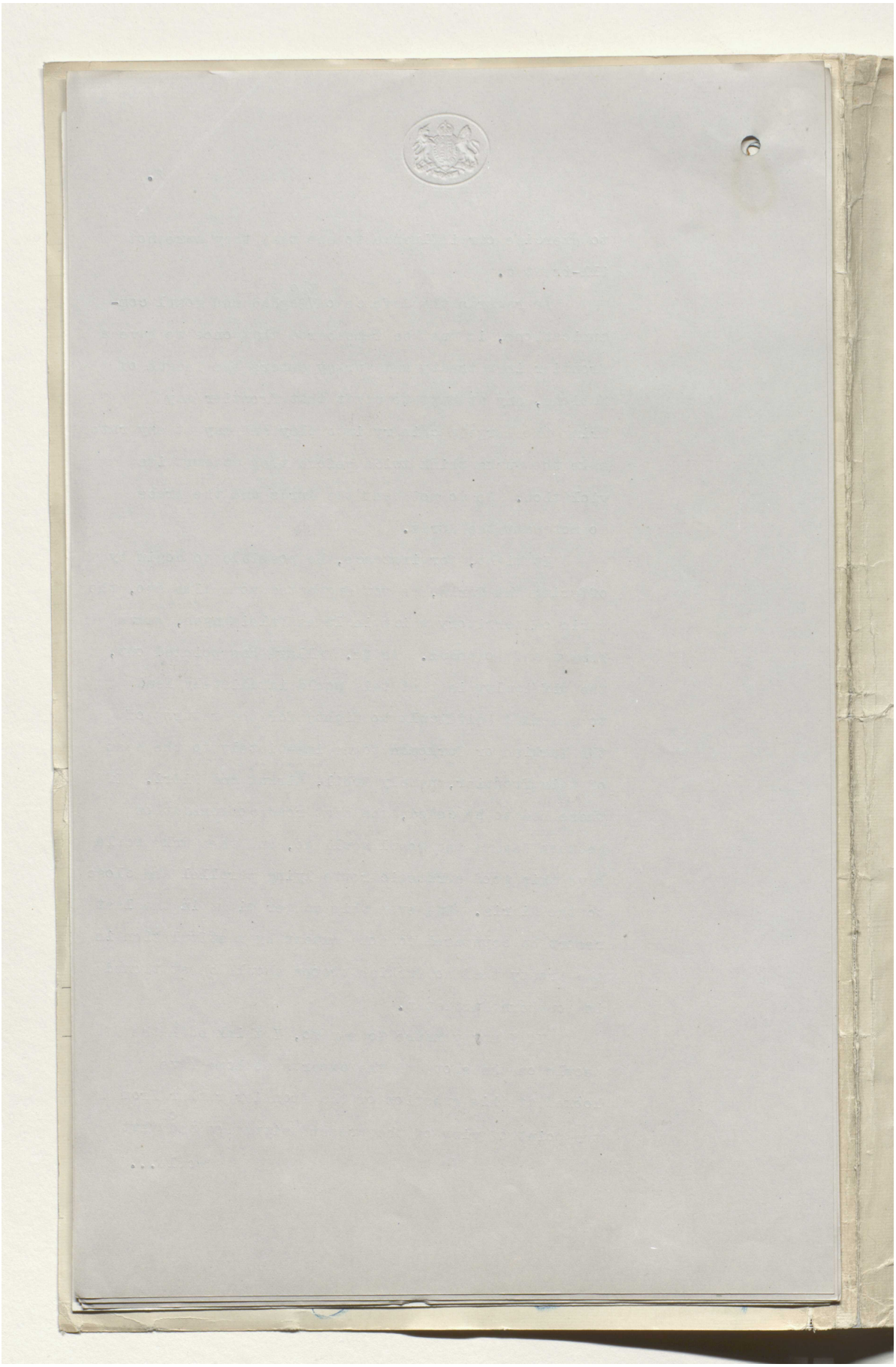

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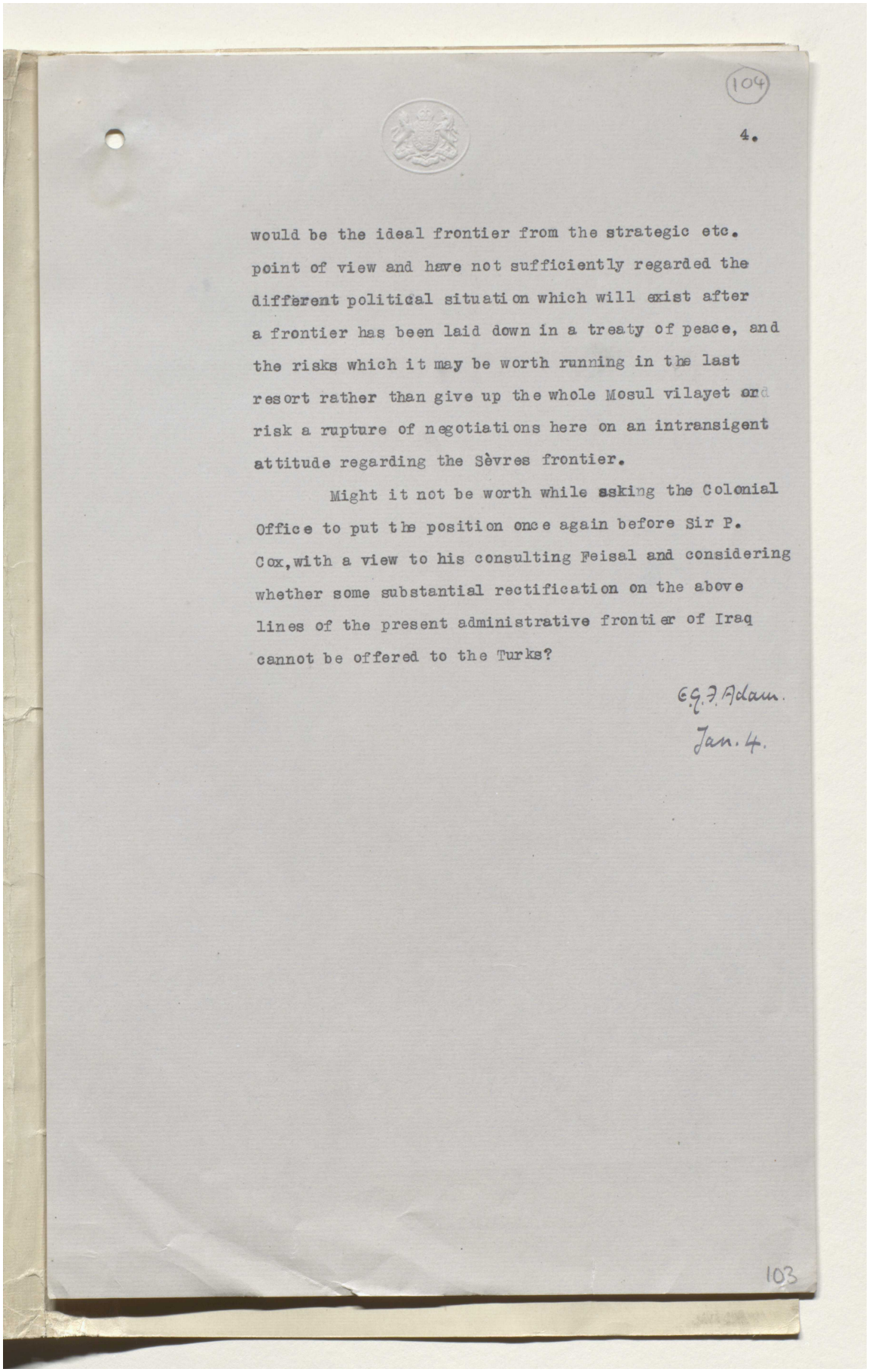

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would be the ideal frontier from the strategic etc. point of view and have not sufficiently regarded the different political situation which will exist after a frontier has been laid down in a treaty of peace, and the risks which it may be worth running in the last resort rather than give up the whole Mosul vilayet and risk a rupture of negotiations here on an intransigent attitude regarding the Sèvres frontier.

Might it not be worth while asking the Colonial Office to put the position once again before Sir P. Cox, with a view to his consulting Feisal and considering whether some substantial rectification on the above lines of the present administrative frontier of Iraq cannot be offered to the Turks?

E.G.F. Adam.
Jan. 4.

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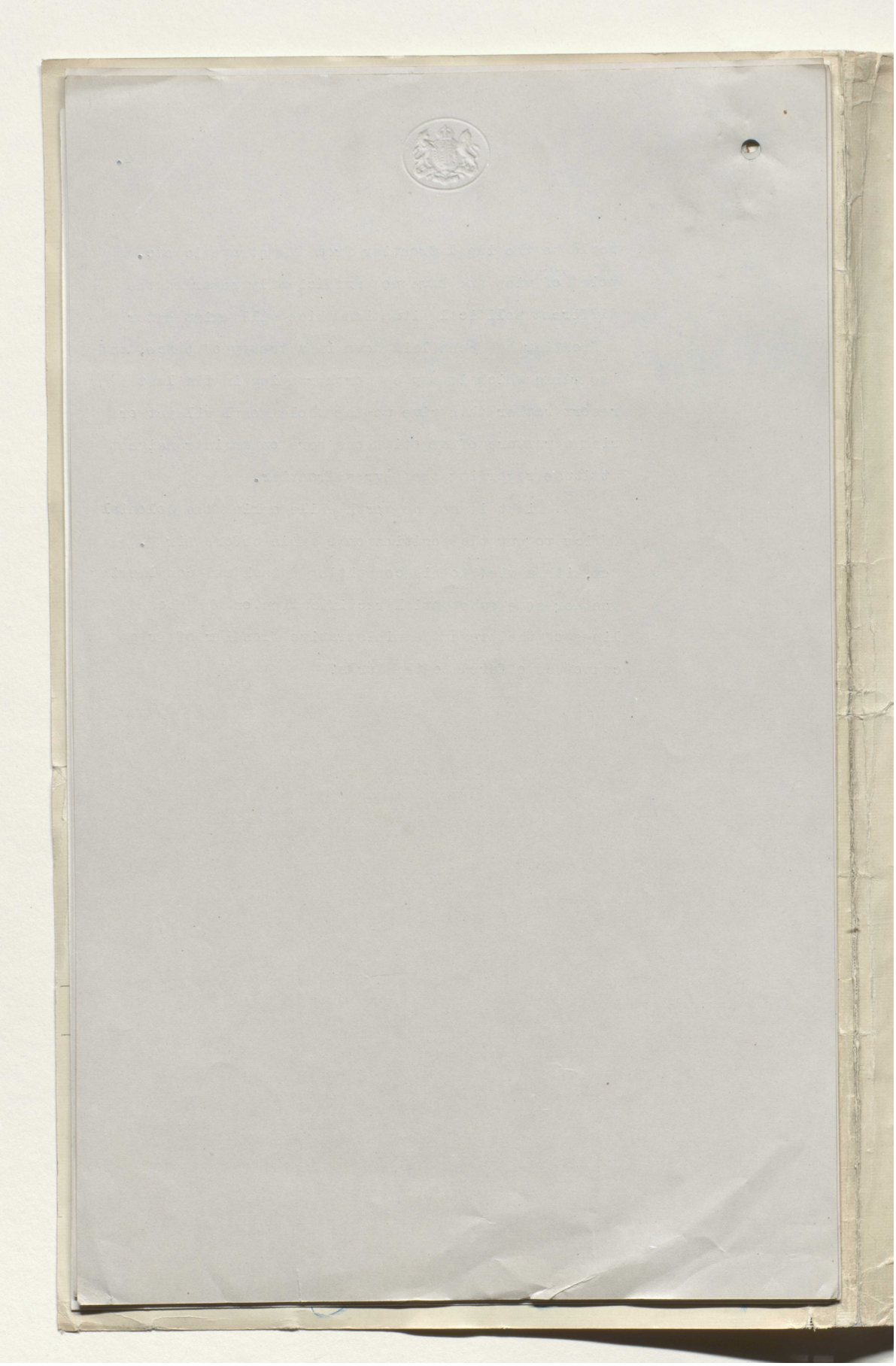

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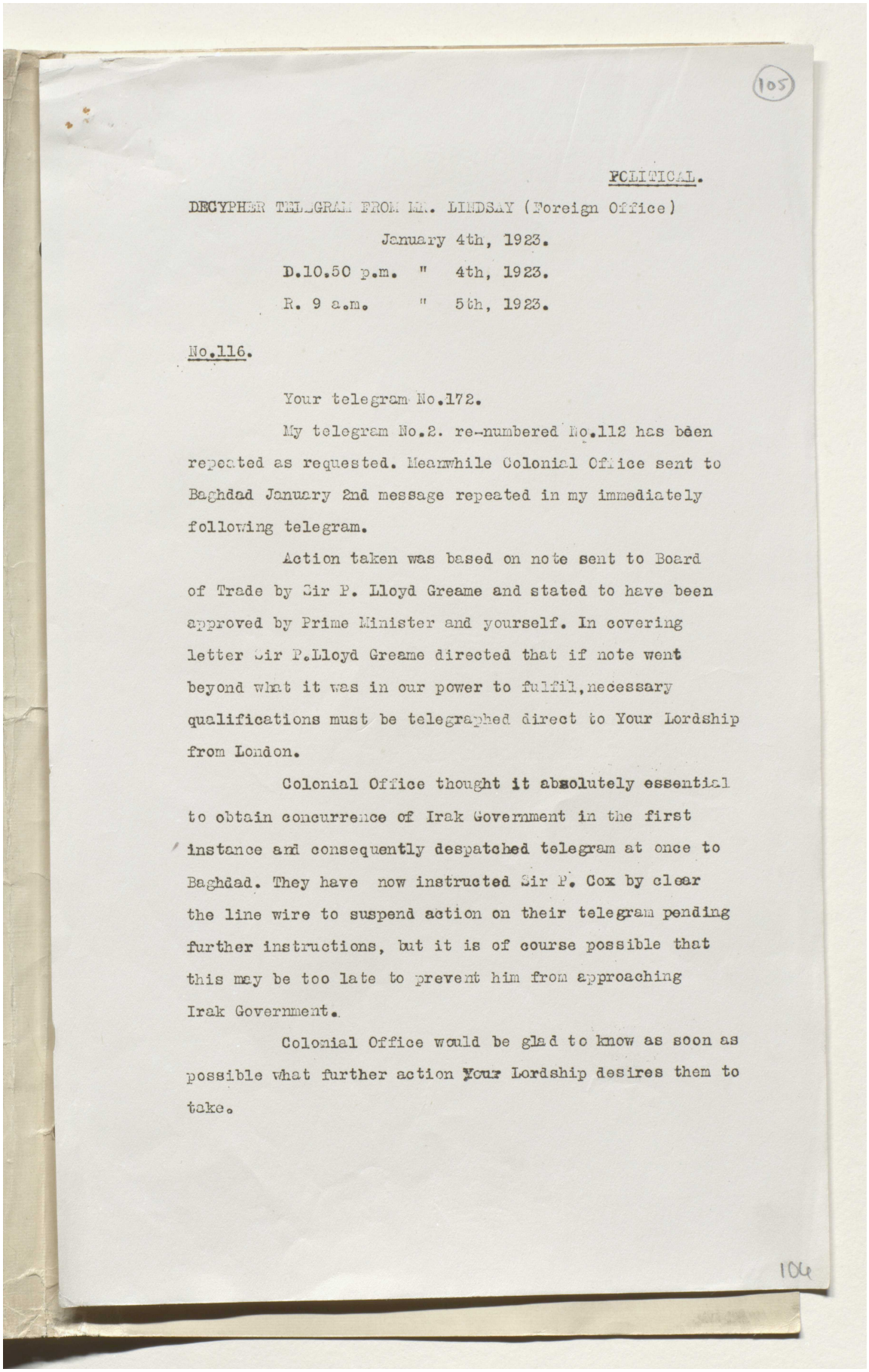

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POLITICAL.

DECYPHER TELEGRAM FROM MR. LINDSAY (Foreign Office)

January 4th, 1923.

D.10.50 p.m. " 4th, 1923.

R. 9 a.m. " 5th, 1923.

No.116.

Your telegram No.172.

My telegram No.2. re-numbered No.112 has been repeated as requested. Meanwhile Colonial Office sent to Baghdad January 2nd message repeated in my immediately following telegram.

Action taken was based on note sent to Board of Trade by Sir P. Lloyd Greame and stated to have been approved by Prime Minister and yourself. In covering letter Sir P.Lloyd Greame directed that if note went beyond what it was in our power to fulfil,necessary qualifications must be telegraphed direct to Your Lordship from London.

Colonial Office thought it absolutely essential to obtain concurrence of Irak Government in the first instance and consequently despatched telegram at once to Baghdad. They have now instructed Sir P. Cox by clear the line wire to suspend action on their telegram pending further instructions, but it is of course possible that this may be too late to prevent him from approaching Irak Government.

Colonial Office would be glad to know as soon as possible what further action Your Lordship desires them to take.

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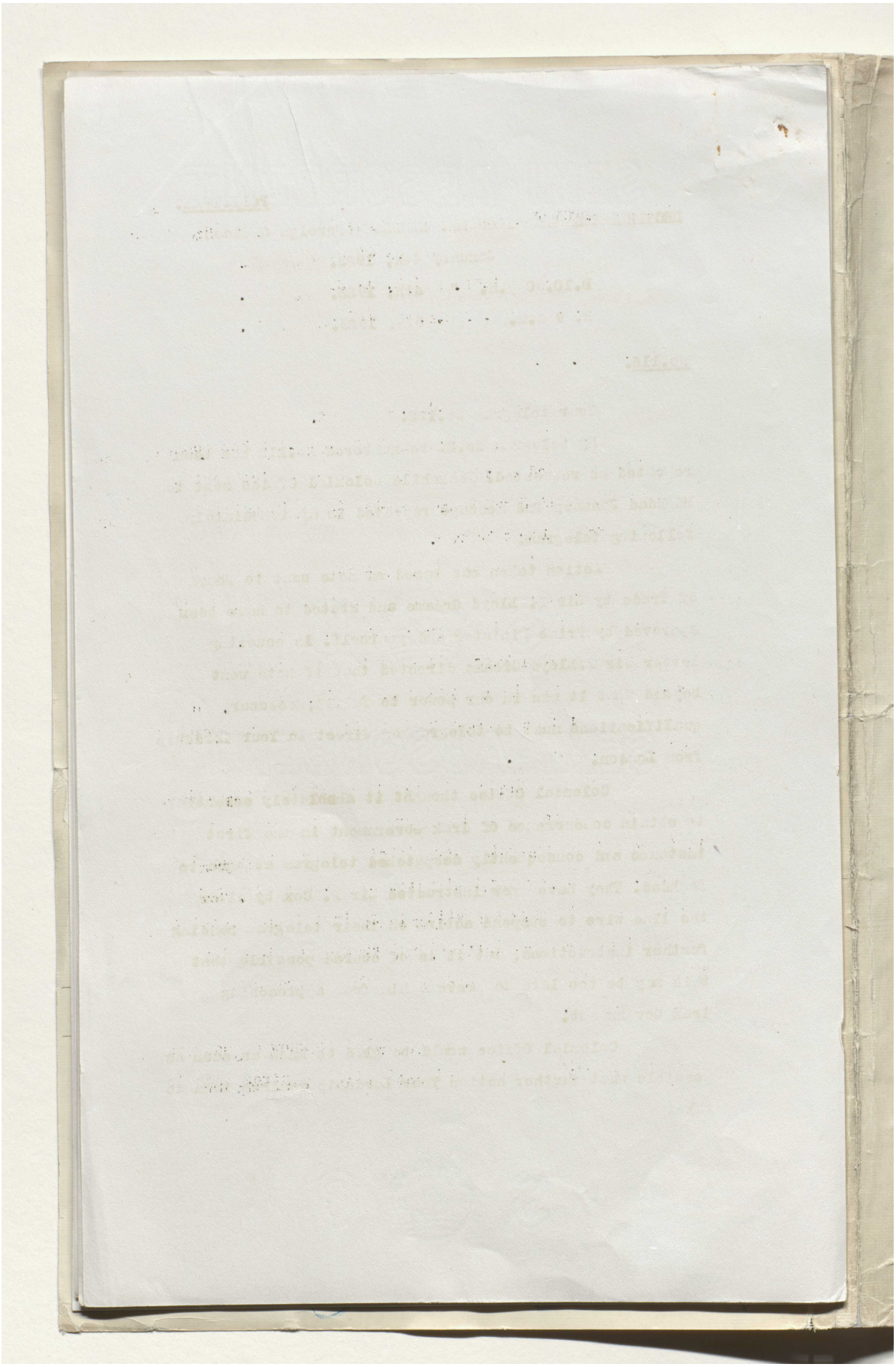

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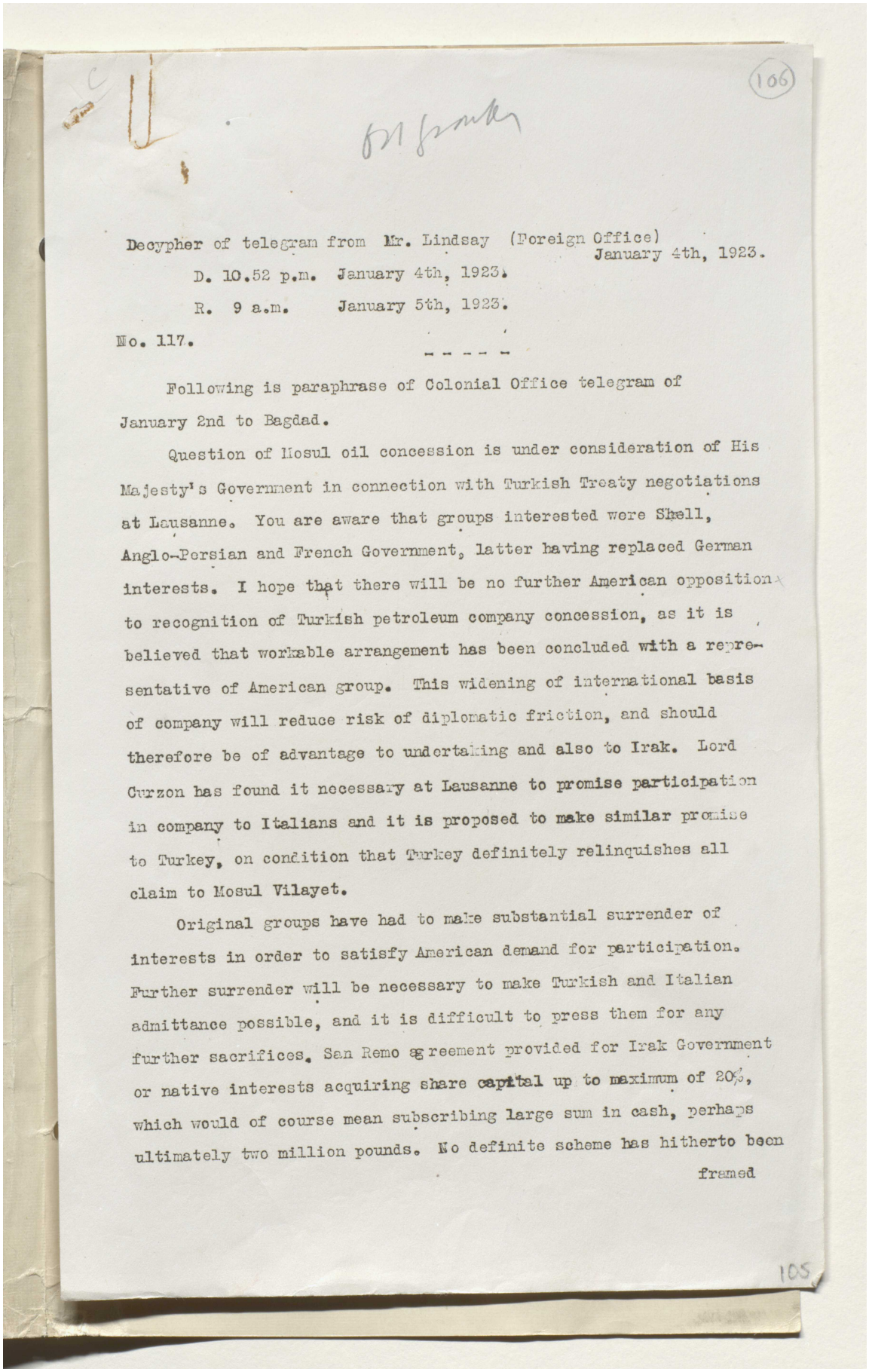

(106)

Decypher of telegram from Mr. Lindsay (Foreign Office)
January 4th, 1923.

D. 10.52 p.m. January 4th, 1923.

R. 9 a.m. January 5th, 1923.

No. 117.

- - - - -

Following is paraphrase of Colonial Office telegram of January 2nd to Bagdad.

Question of Mosul oil concession is under consideration of His Majesty's Government in connection with Turkish Treaty negotiations at Lausanne. You are aware that groups interested were Shell, Anglo-Persian and French Government, latter having replaced German interests. I hope that there will be no further American opposition to recognition of Turkish petroleum company concession, as it is believed that workable arrangement has been concluded with a representative of American group. This widening of international basis of company will reduce risk of diplomatic friction, and should therefore be of advantage to undertaking and also to Irak. Lord Curzon has found it necessary at Lausanne to promise participation in company to Italians and it is proposed to make similar promise to Turkey, on condition that Turkey definitely relinquishes all claim to Mosul Vilayet.

Original groups have had to make substantial surrender of interests in order to satisfy American demand for participation. Further surrender will be necessary to make Turkish and Italian admittance possible, and it is difficult to press them for any further sacrifices. San Remo agreement provided for Irak Government or native interests acquiring share capital up to maximum of 20%, which would of course mean subscribing large sum in cash, perhaps ultimately two million pounds. No definite scheme has hitherto been framed

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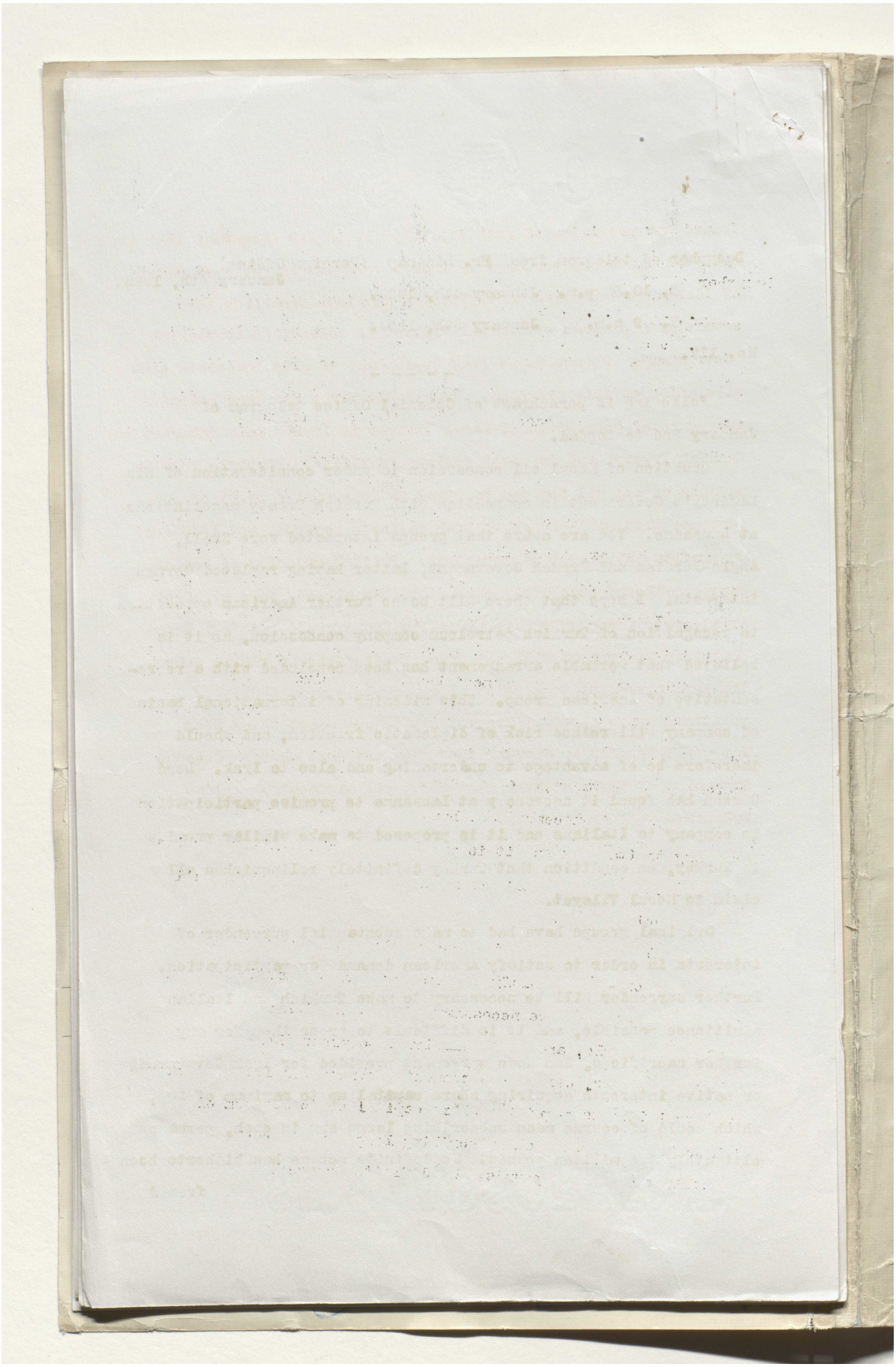

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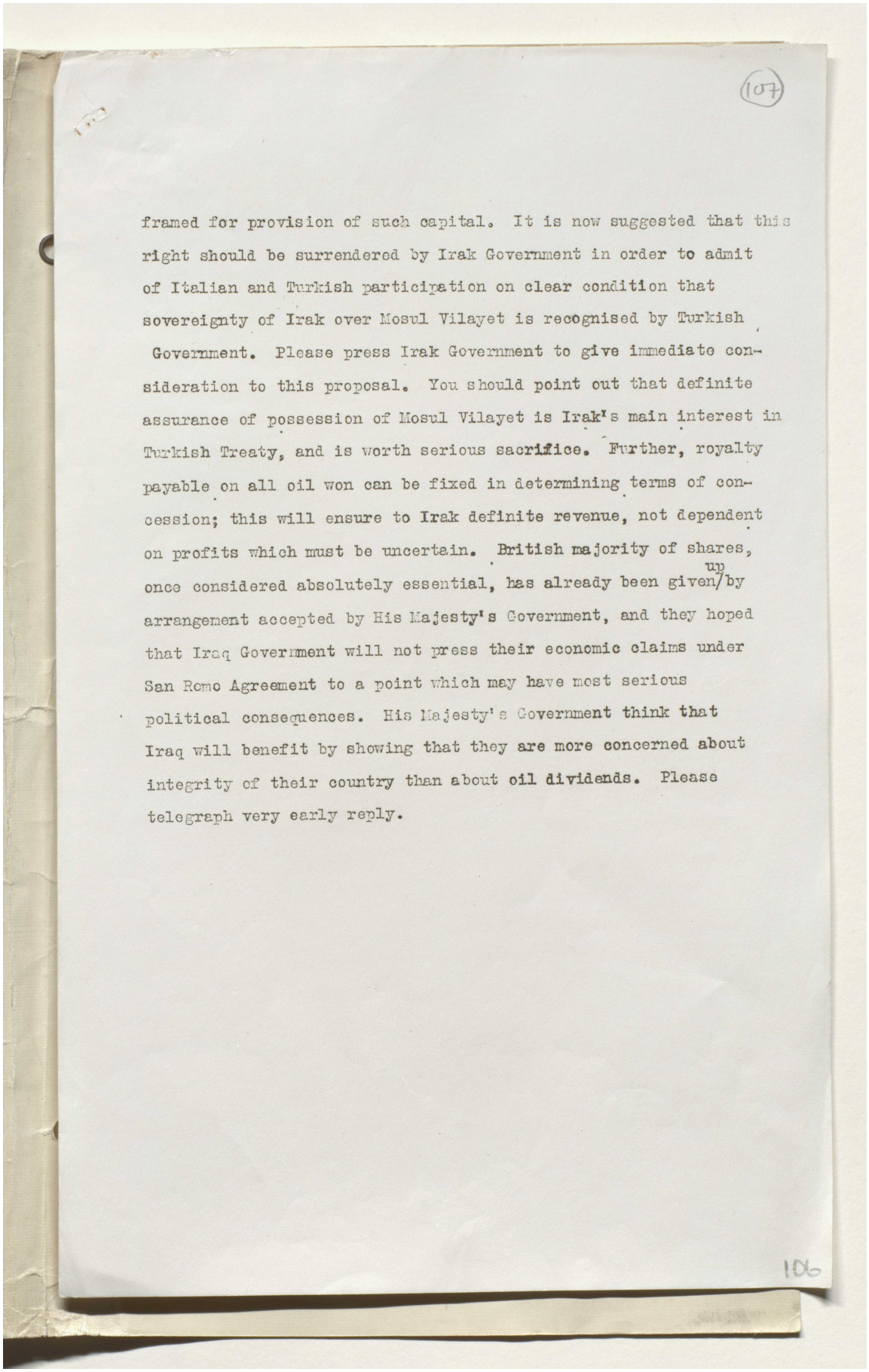

(107)

framed for provision of such capital. It is now suggested that this right should be surrendered by Irak Government in order to admit of Italian and Turkish participation on clear condition that sovereignty of Irak over Mosul Vilayet is recognised by Turkish Government. Please press Irak Government to give immediate consideration to this proposal. You should point out that definite assurance of possession of Mosul Vilayet is Irak's main interest in Turkish Treaty, and is worth serious sacrifice. Further, royalty payable on all oil won can be fixed in determining terms of concession; this will ensure to Irak definite revenue, not dependent on profits which must be uncertain. British majority of shares, once considered absolutely essential, has already been given up by arrangement accepted by His Majesty's Government, and they hoped that Iraq Government will not press their economic claims under San Remo Agreement to a point which may have most serious political consequences. His Majesty's Government think that Iraq will benefit by showing that they are more concerned about integrity of their country than about oil dividends. Please telegraph very early reply.

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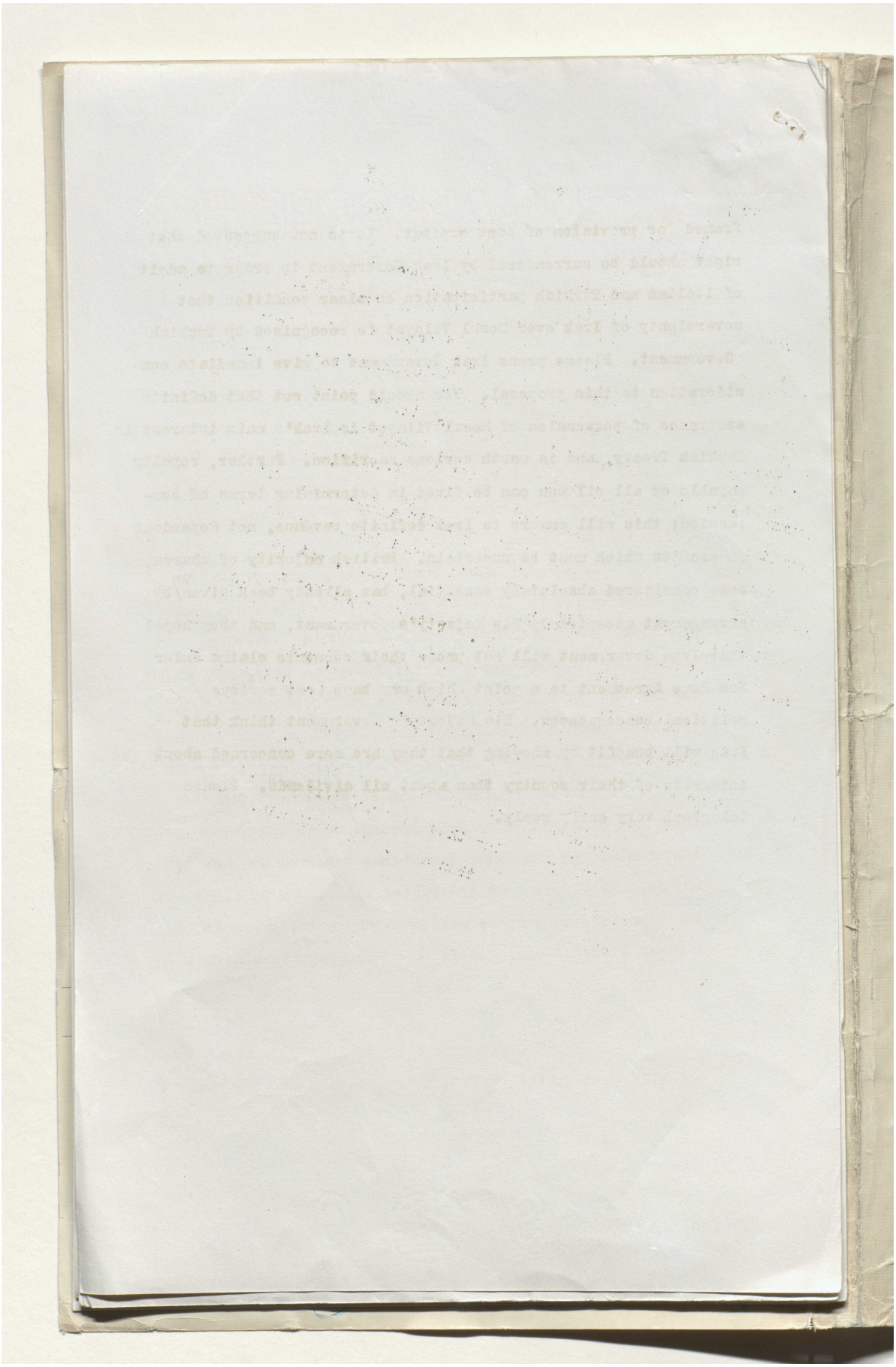

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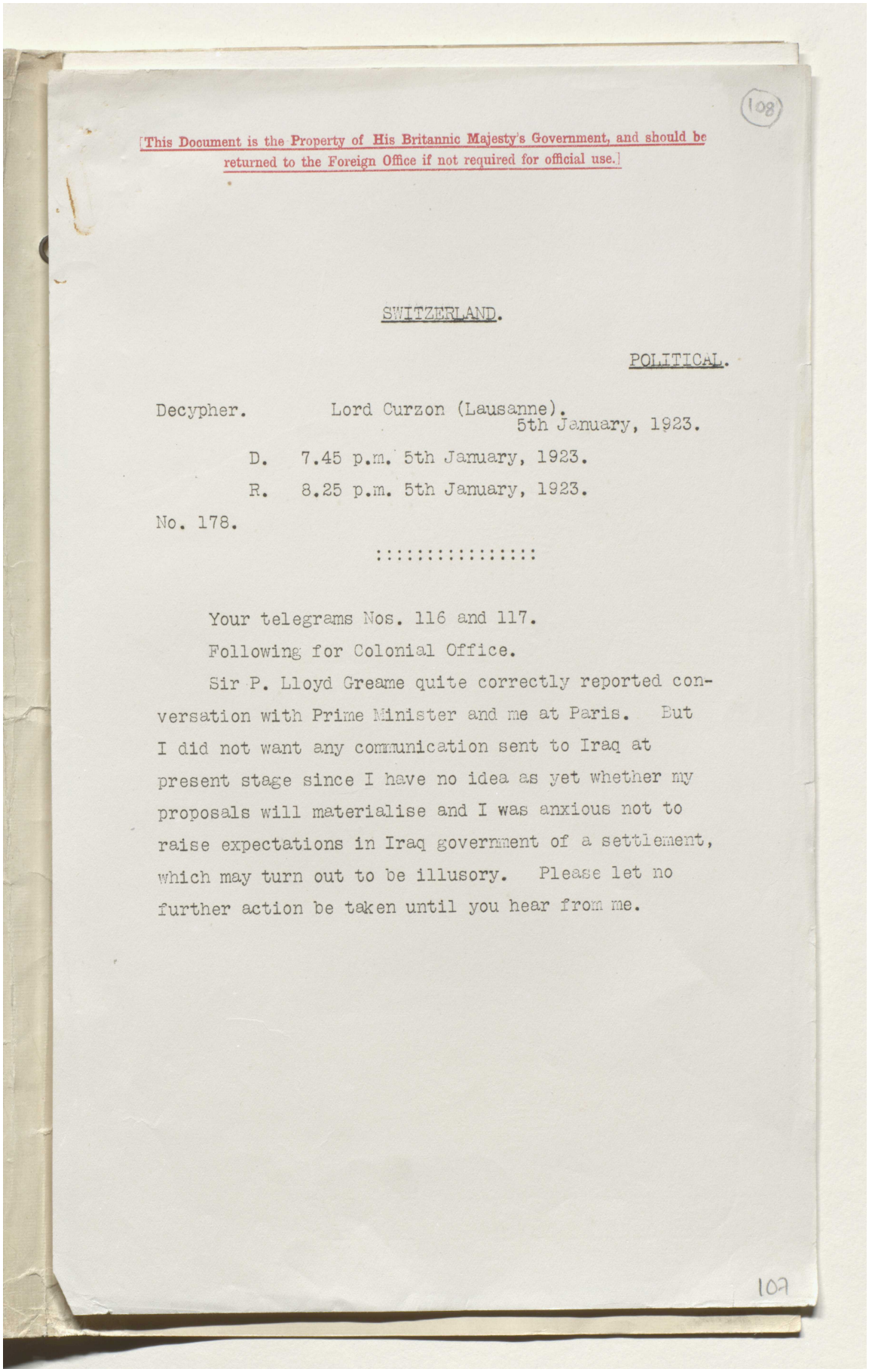

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SWITZERLAND.

POLITICAL.

Decypher. Lord Curzon (Lausanne). 5th January, 1923.

D. 7.45 p.m. 5th January, 1923.

R. 8.25 p.m. 5th January, 1923.

No. 178.

::::::::::::::::

Your telegrams Nos. 116 and 117.

Following for Colonial Office.

Sir P. Lloyd Greame quite correctly reported conversation with Prime Minister and me at Paris. But I did not want any communication sent to Iraq at present stage since I have no idea as yet whether my proposals will materialise and I was anxious not to raise expectations in Iraq government of a settlement, which may turn out to be illusory. Please let no further action be taken until you hear from me.

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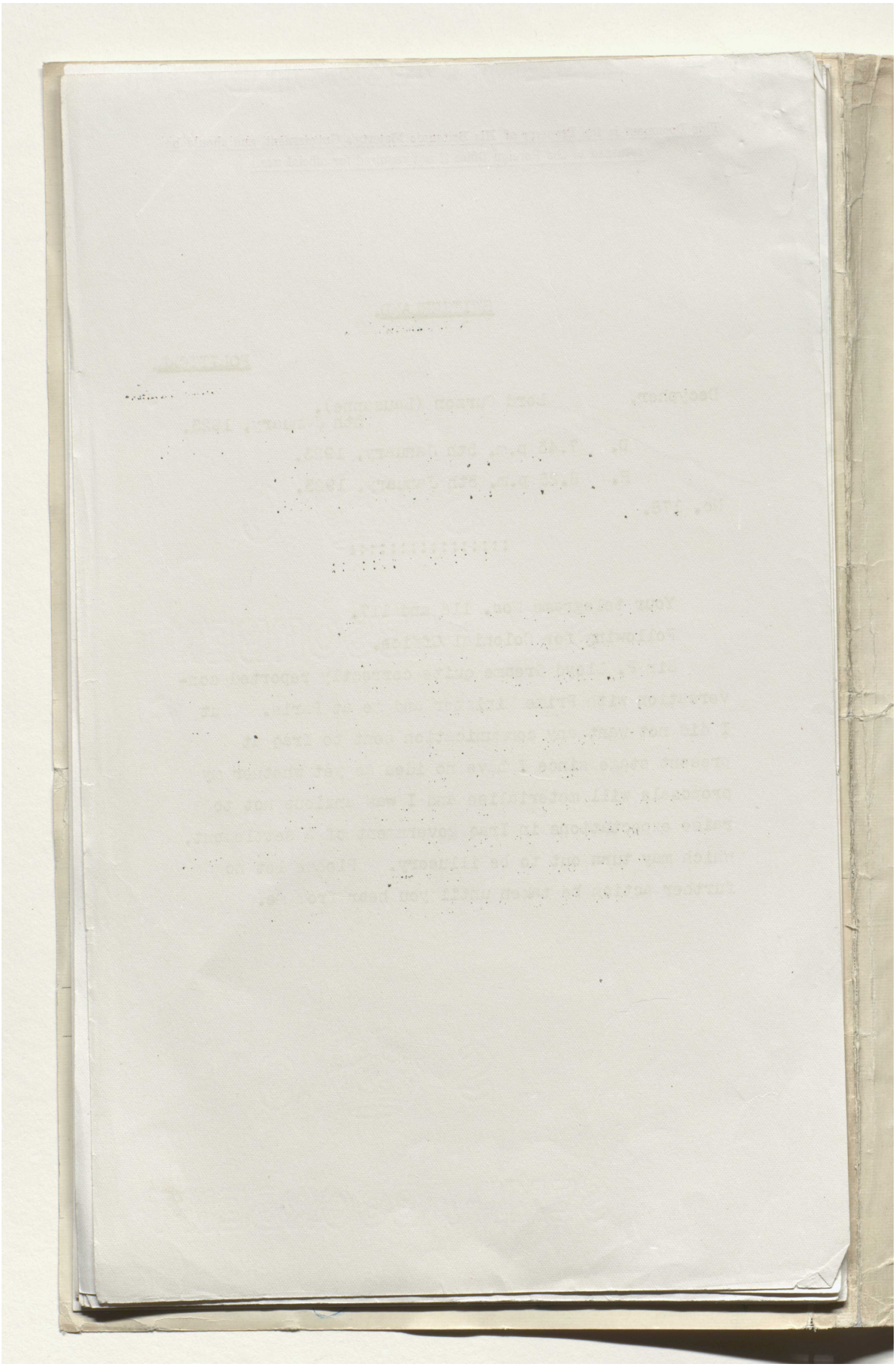

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY. [January 8.]

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 5.

[E 372/35/44] No. 1.

Sir R. Graham to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received January 8.)

(No. 15.)

Rome, January 5, 1923.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH, as reported in the press summary sent in my despatch No. 1181 of the 29th December, the Italian press, in dealing with the Lausanne Conference, was remarkably slow in taking up the subject of Mosul, the issue has during the past few days been amply ventilated.

There is a distinct tendency to attribute the crisis at Lausanne to the British insistence on Mosul, and to slur over the divergence on the Capitulations, thus making England responsible for an eventual rupture.

With this exception the tenor of the discussion has been remarkably reasonable. It will be remembered that the theme of British oil-fields is one which, in the past, has provoked the most violent hostility in the press of this country. The word "oil" has been a red rag to Nationalists and Socialists alike, who found themselves at one in attacking what was regarded as the tyranny of British capitalism. The fact that the British oil industry was the sole available protection to Italy against the consequences of an undivided American oil monopoly was overlooked, and perhaps on no subject was Italian Anglophobia more susceptible. Any suggestion that the joint policy of the Allies was being influenced by British oil interests was particularly resented; it was, therefore, to be expected that a strong demand would be expressed to break the Allied front on this point at Lausanne.

The majority of the articles which have appeared have, on the contrary, sought to place the question of Mosul if not in a friendly at least in an impartial light. The "Mondo" (30th December) observes: "The subject is eminently political; the importance of the economic and financial interests in play, the agreements entered into by the great trusts, would not by themselves sufficiently explain the violence of the dispute. England has to defend at Mosul, not only or chiefly her oil interests, but the whole of her imperial policy as it stands in its new form of a commonwealth. This policy is based on the one hand on the treaties concluded with the new States, and on the other on the colonial mandates. Lord Curzon is not indulging in sophistry when he invokes the Mesopotamian Treaty of the 10th October, 1922. It is impolitic to make an outcry about hypocrisy against what is a perfectly logical system. Every great State must evolve its own structure and fight for it. On the other hand, the Turks, after the separation of the religious and political power, are compelled to develop a policy of protection of the Turkish nationality such as may enable Angora to become a new and independent centre."

The Collaborationist-Socialist organ, "Giustizia" (2nd January), summarises the same argument to explain the British intransigence, and the London correspondent of the "Stampa" (3rd January) writes: "It is not primarily for the sake of oil that England is determined to hold to the pact guaranteeing Mosul to King Feisal. She could exploit oil-fields even in Turkish territory. What she is bound to preserve is the safety of her communications."

The "Giornale di Roma," however, notes that "Turkish circles at Lausanne look with optimism on the attitude of the French and Italian delegations. They are fully persuaded, with whatever truth, that the latter will refuse to follow the British lead."

The "Mattino" alone adopts the old abusive attitude on the subject. "England continues serenely to organise, under the eyes of the League, a system of protectorates which the covenant of the League expressly forbids, and has the added insolence to ask the League to recognise its protectorates, as in the case of Irak, as independent States. It is time this frigid farce was ended. Let England say she wants the Vilayet of Mosul for herself, and go and defend it with her own blood. What possible claim has she on us? We are not going to make war to help England to maintain the oil monopoly with which she strangles and threatens us."

The "Tribuna" and "Nuovo Paese" resign themselves to the "necessarily secondary" part played in the matter by Italy; and thus far, with the exception of the "Mattino," there has been little talk of the sacrifice of Italian interests. Extreme pessimism, however, prevails, particularly since the breakdown of the Paris Conference, as to the chances of a peaceful issue at Lausanne.

I have, &c.

R. GRAHAM.

[220 h—5]

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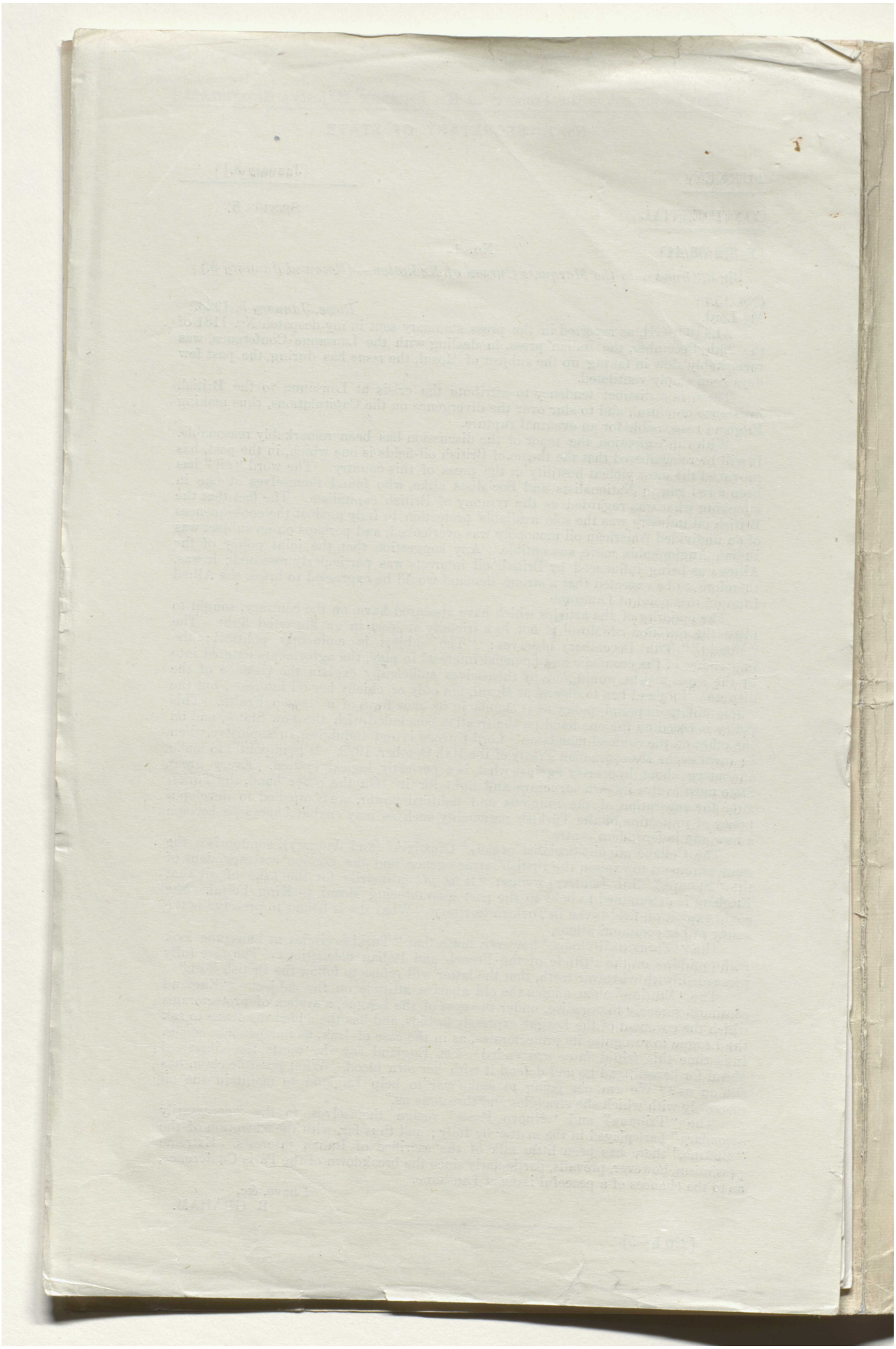

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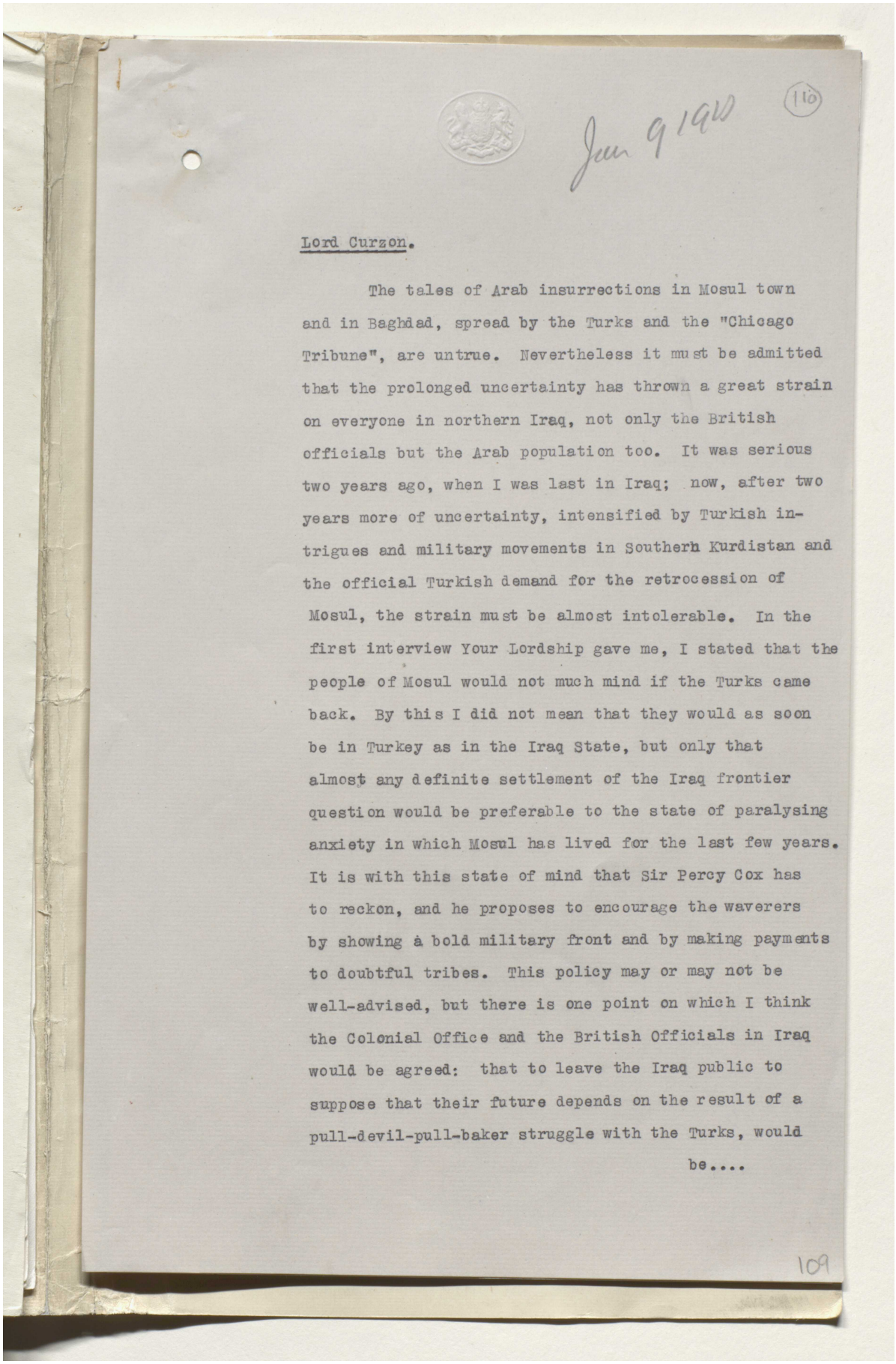

Jun 9 1920

(110)

Lord Curzon.

The tales of Arab insurrections in Mosul town and in Baghdad, spread by the Turks and the "Chicago Tribune", are untrue. Nevertheless it must be admitted that the prolonged uncertainty has thrown a great strain on everyone in northern Iraq, not only the British officials but the Arab population too. It was serious two years ago, when I was last in Iraq; now, after two years more of uncertainty, intensified by Turkish intrigues and military movements in Southern Kurdistan and the official Turkish demand for the retrocession of Mosul, the strain must be almost intolerable. In the first interview Your Lordship gave me, I stated that the people of Mosul would not much mind if the Turks came back. By this I did not mean that they would as soon be in Turkey as in the Iraq State, but only that almost any definite settlement of the Iraq frontier question would be preferable to the state of paralysing anxiety in which Mosul has lived for the last few years. It is with this state of mind that Sir Percy Cox has to reckon, and he proposes to encourage the waverers by showing a bold military front and by making payments to doubtful tribes. This policy may or may not be well-advised, but there is one point on which I think the Colonial Office and the British Officials in Iraq would be agreed: that to leave the Iraq public to suppose that their future depends on the result of a pull-devil-pull-baker struggle with the Turks, would be....

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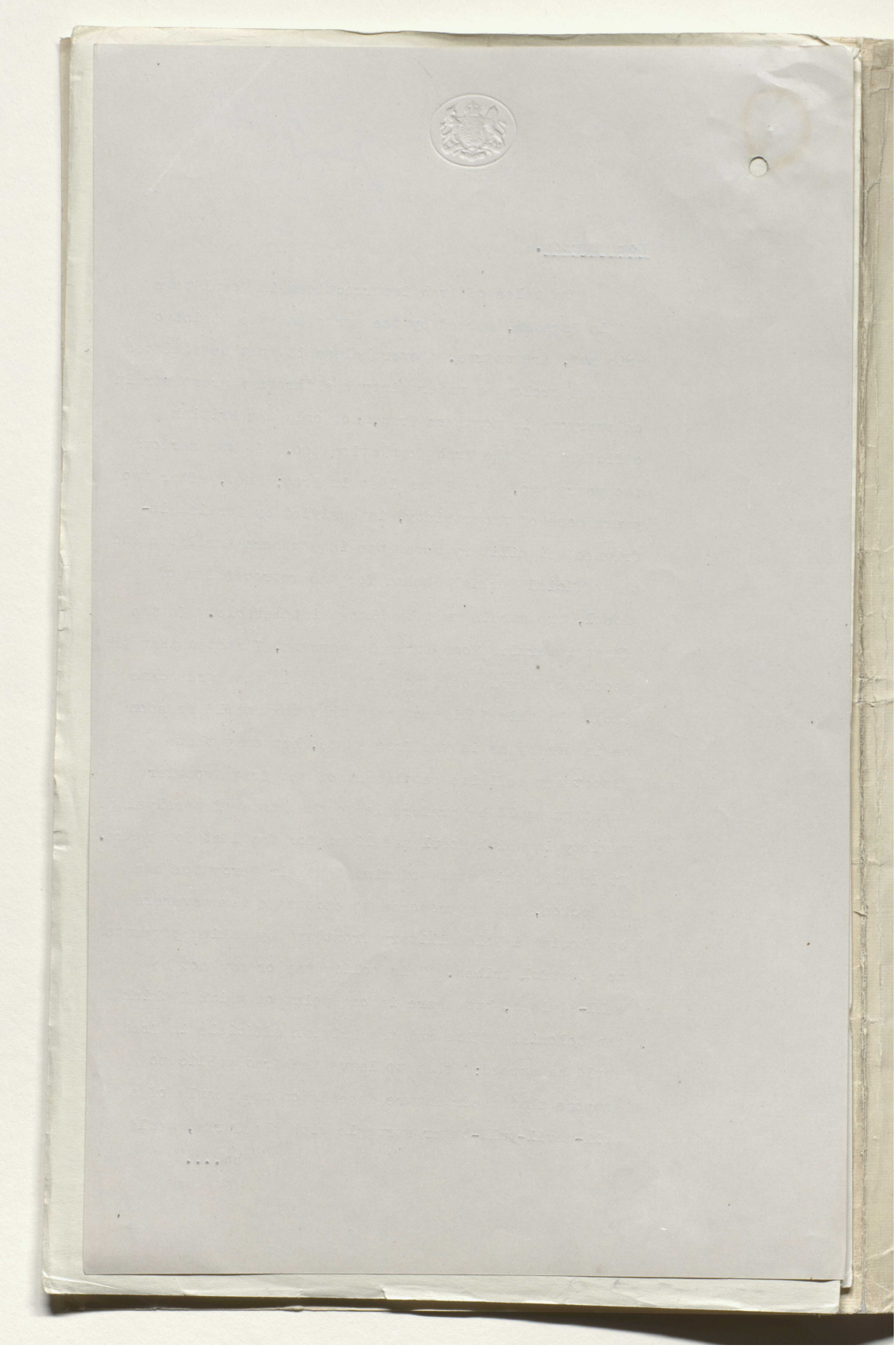

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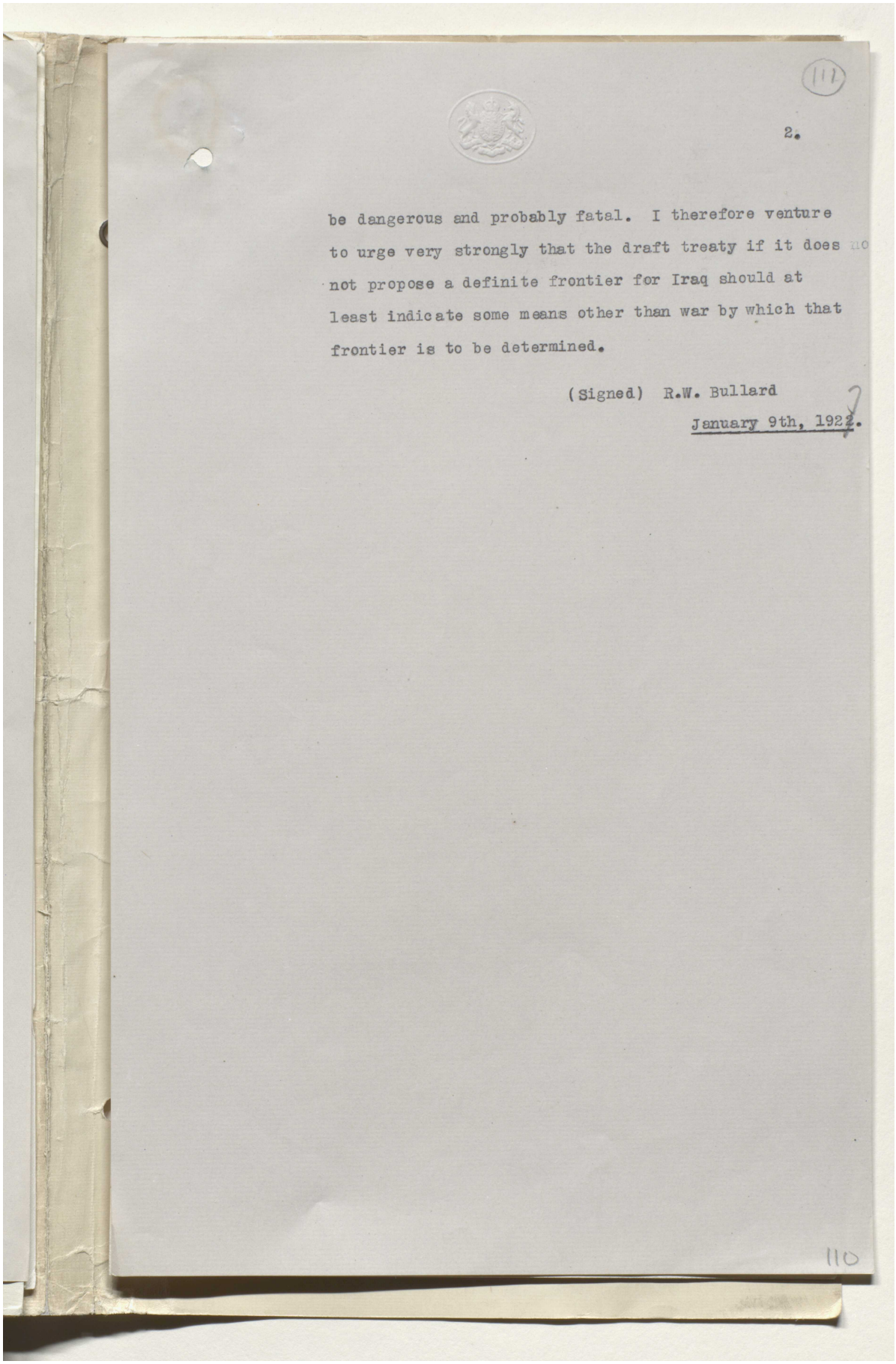

(111)

be dangerous and probably fatal. I therefore venture to urge very strongly that the draft treaty if it does not propose a definite frontier for Iraq should at least indicate some means other than war by which that frontier is to be determined.

(Signed) R.W. Bullard

January 9th, 1922.

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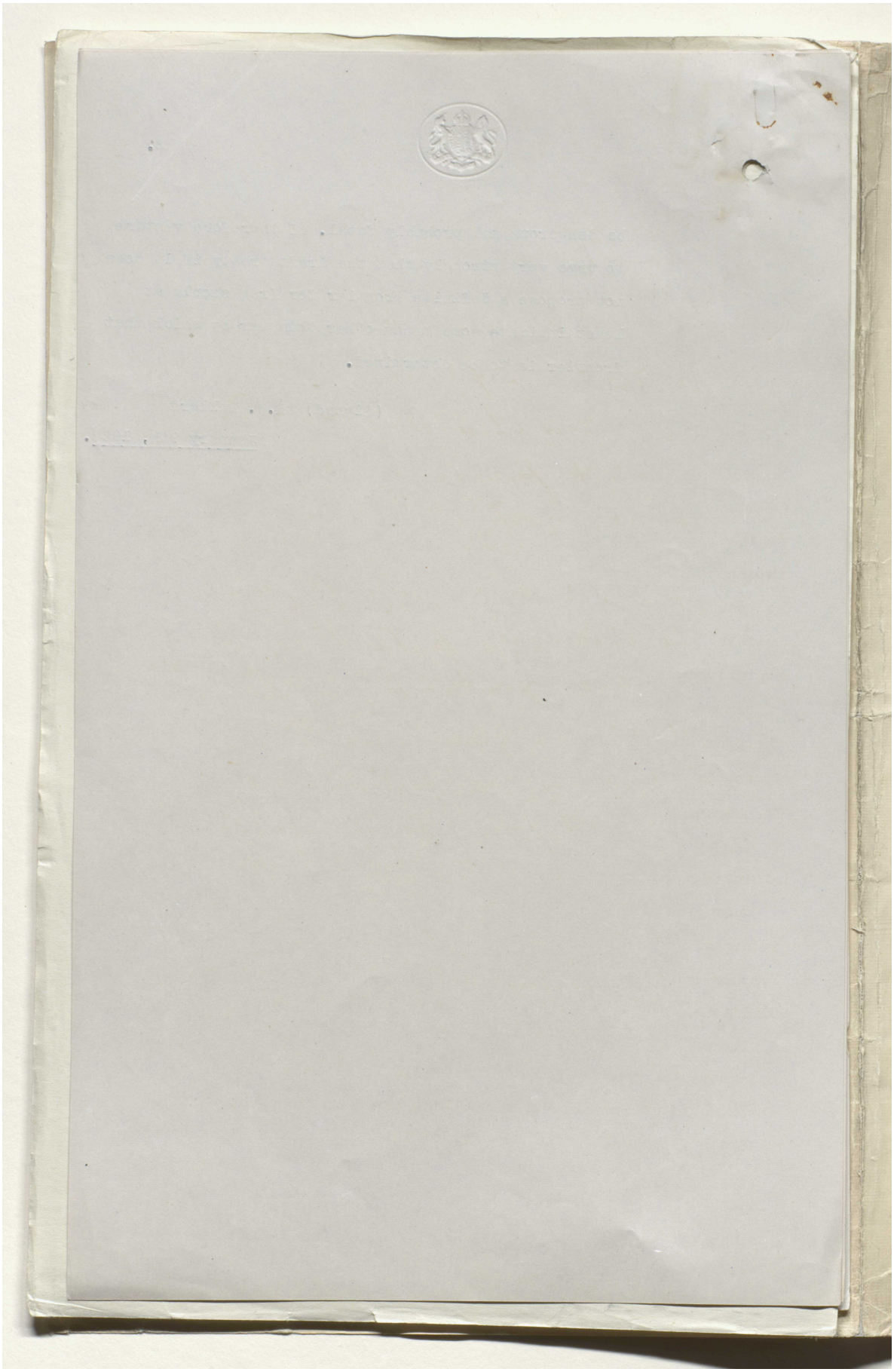

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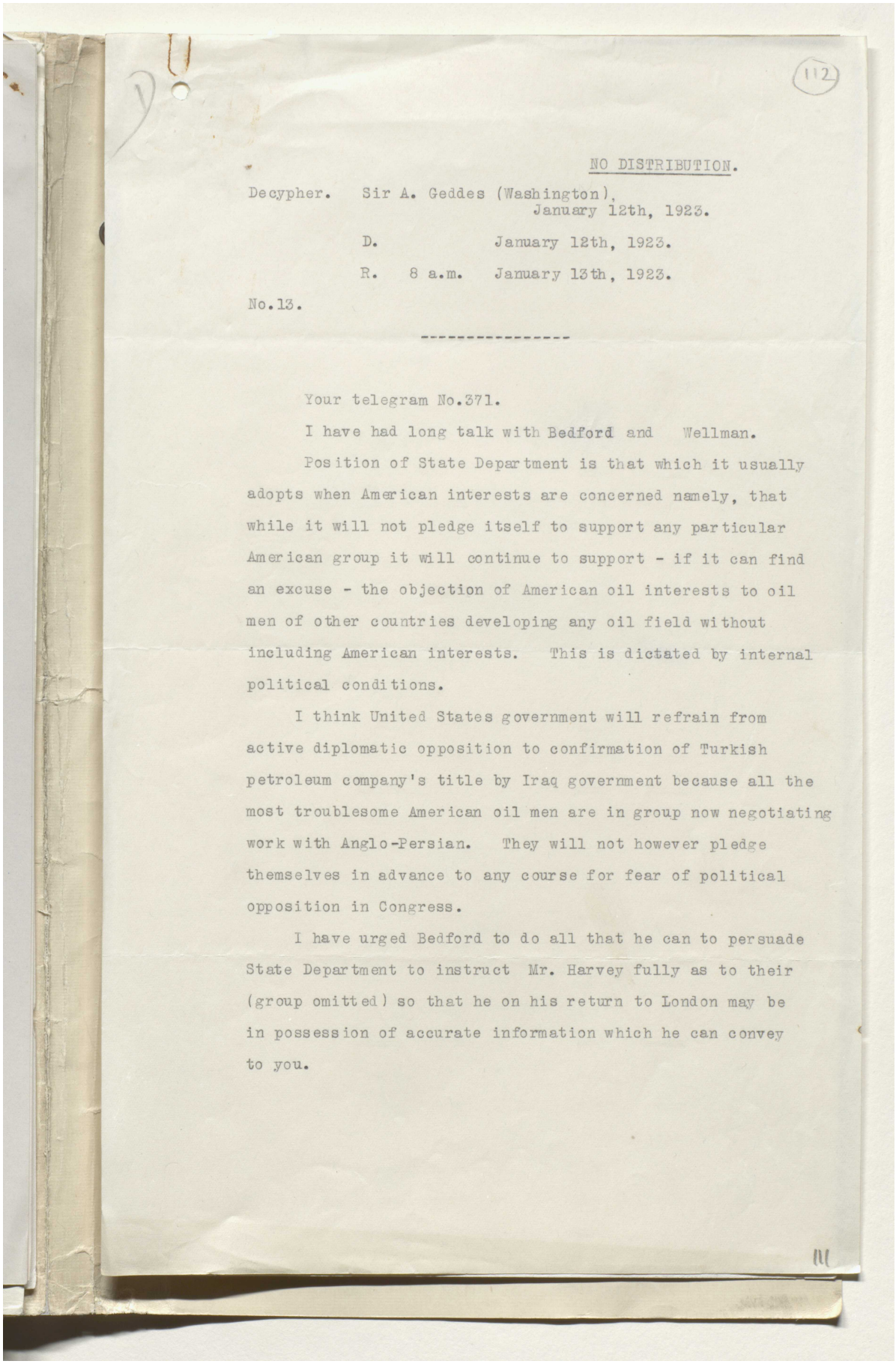

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Decypher. Sir A. Geddes (Washington),
January 12th, 1923.

D. January 12th, 1923.

R. 8 a.m. January 13th, 1923.

No.13.

Your telegram No.371.

I have had long talk with Bedford and Wellman.

Position of State Department is that which it usually adopts when American interests are concerned namely, that while it will not pledge itself to support any particular American group it will continue to support - if it can find an excuse - the objection of American oil interests to oil men of other countries developing any oil field without including American interests. This is dictated by internal political conditions.

I think United States government will refrain from active diplomatic opposition to confirmation of Turkish petroleum company's title by Iraq government because all the most troublesome American oil men are in group now negotiating work with Anglo-Persian. They will not however pledge themselves in advance to any course for fear of political opposition in Congress.

I have urged Bedford to do all that he can to persuade State Department to instruct Mr. Harvey fully as to their (group omitted) so that he on his return to London may be in possession of accurate information which he can convey to you.

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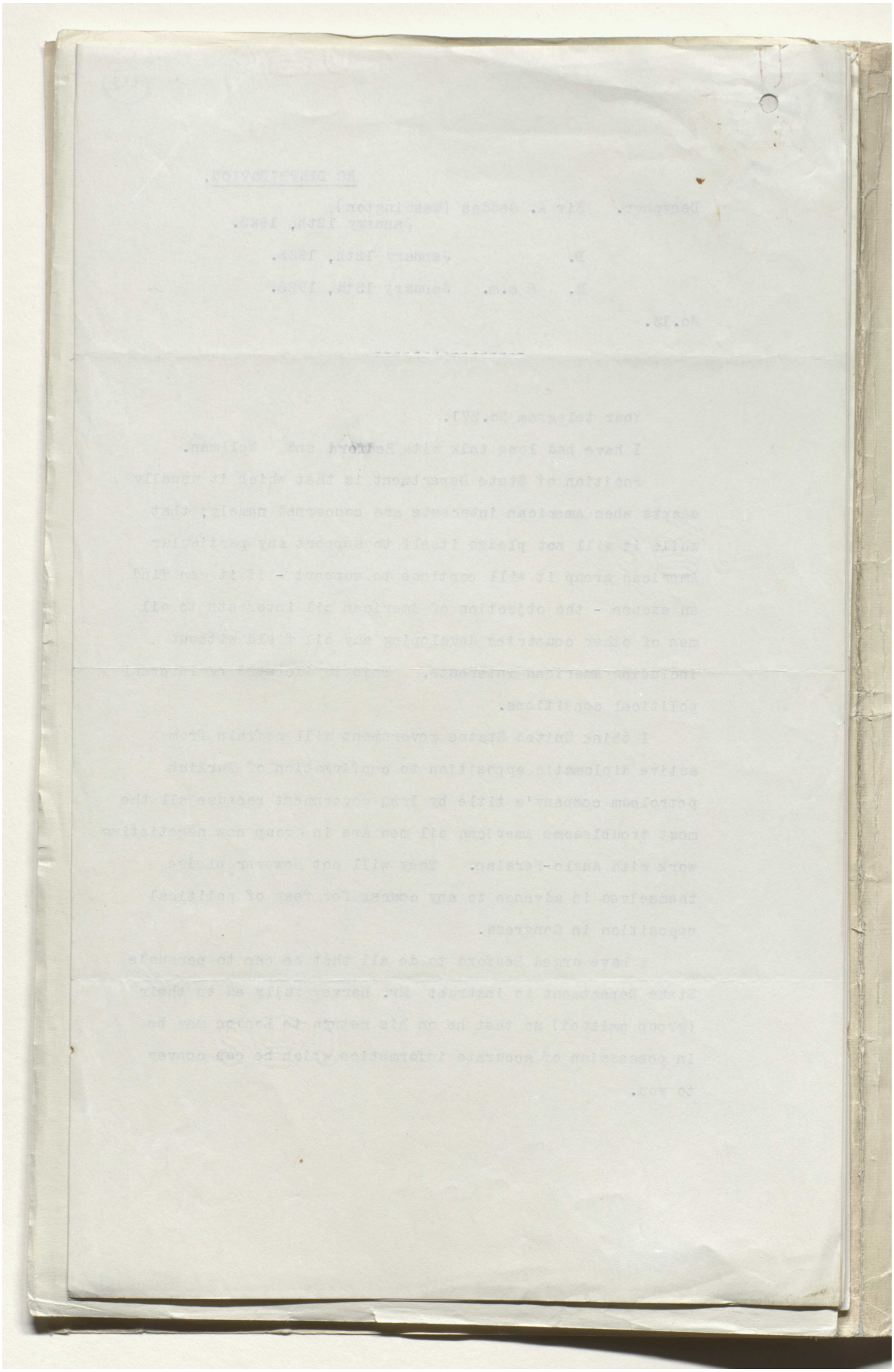

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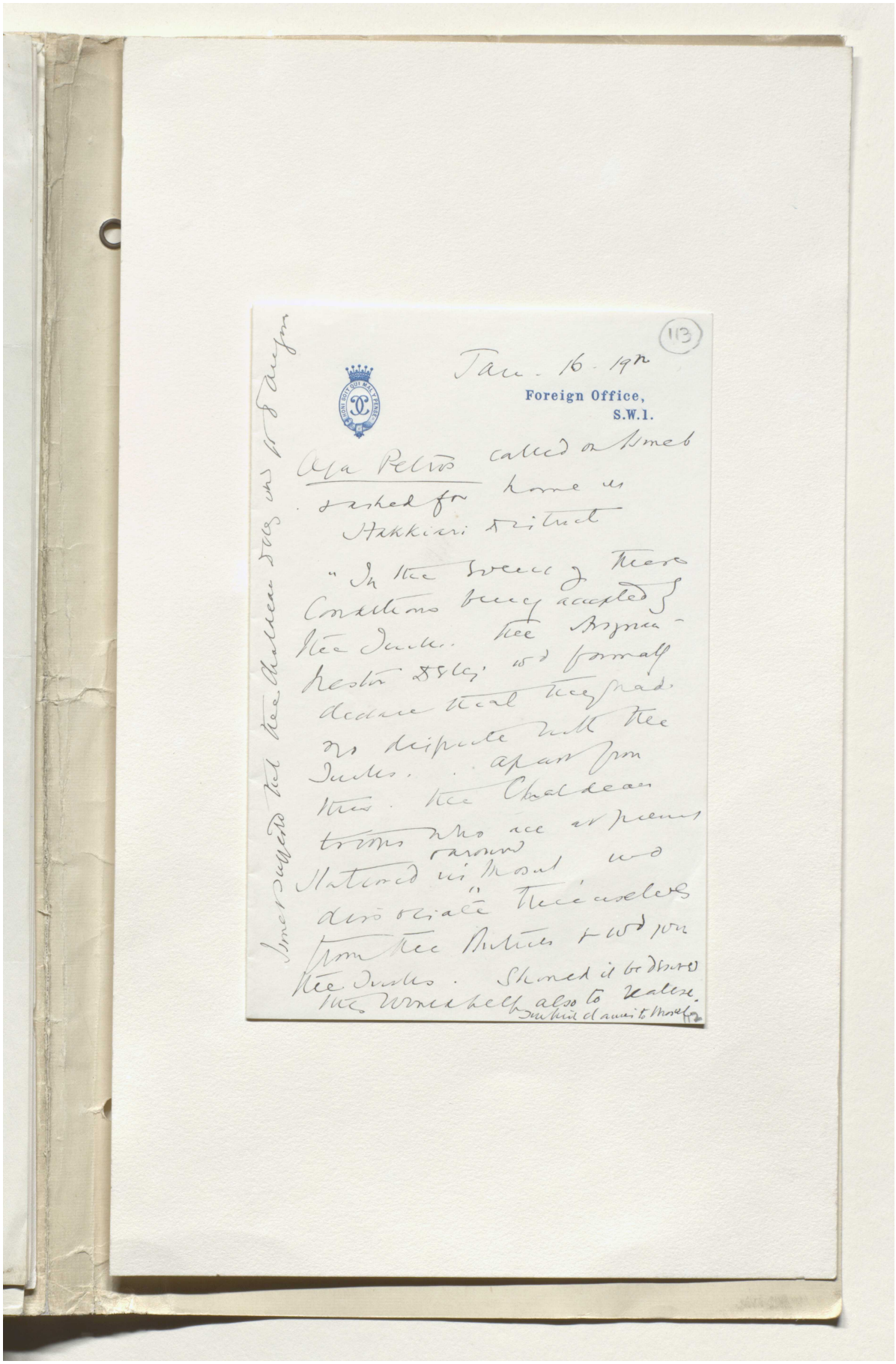

(113)

Jan. 16. 1922

Foreign Office,
S.W.1.

Aga Petros called on Hmeb & asked for home in Hakkiari District

"In the event of these conditions being accepted by the Turks, the Assyrian-Nestor Delegs wd formally declare that they had no dispute with the Turks. Apart from this, the Chaldean troops who are at present stationed in Mosul & around wd dissociate themselves from the Britain & wd join the Turks. Should it be desired they would help also to realise. Turkish claims to Mosul."

Sent & suggested that the Chaldean Delegs wd go to Angora

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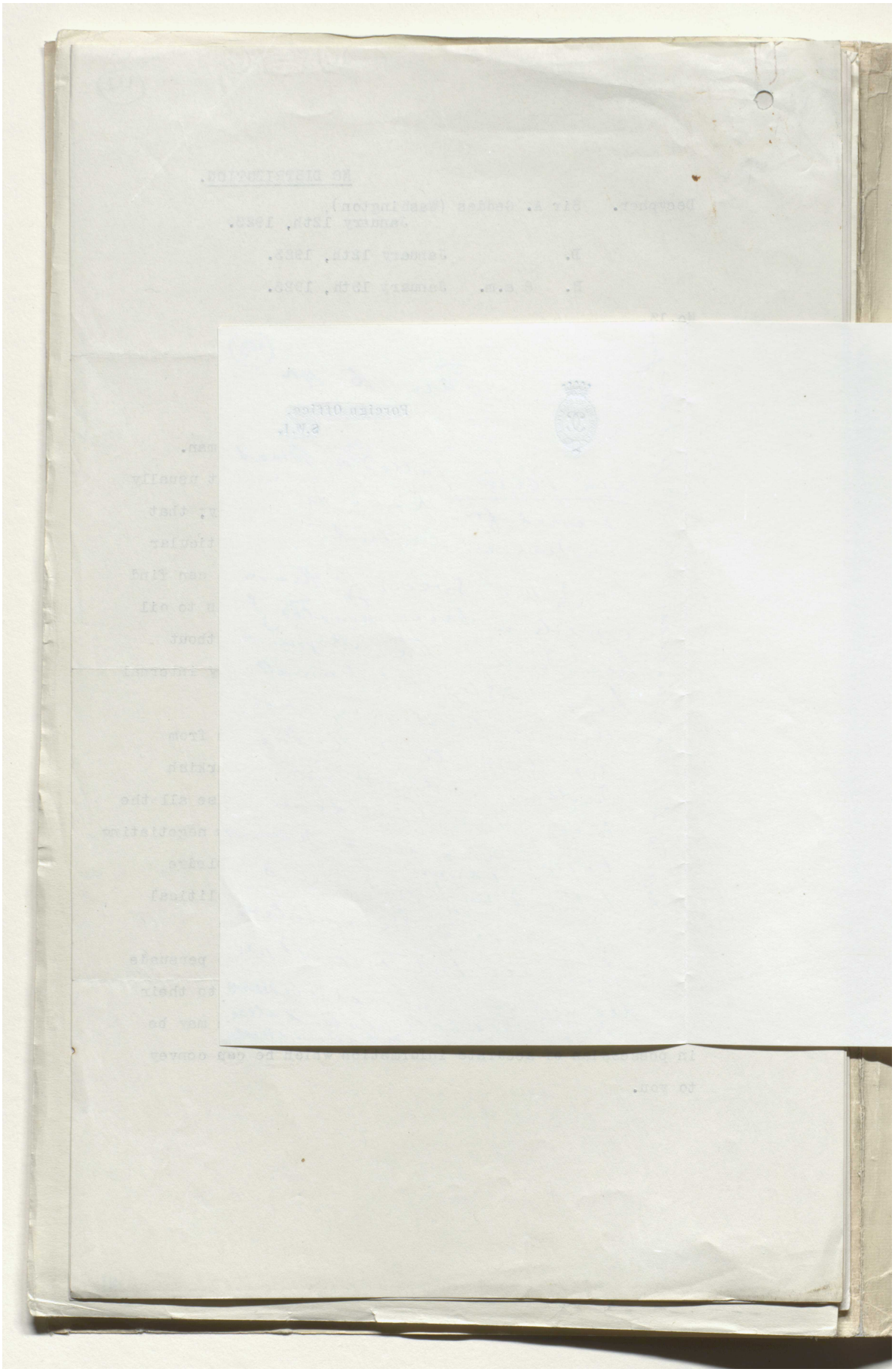

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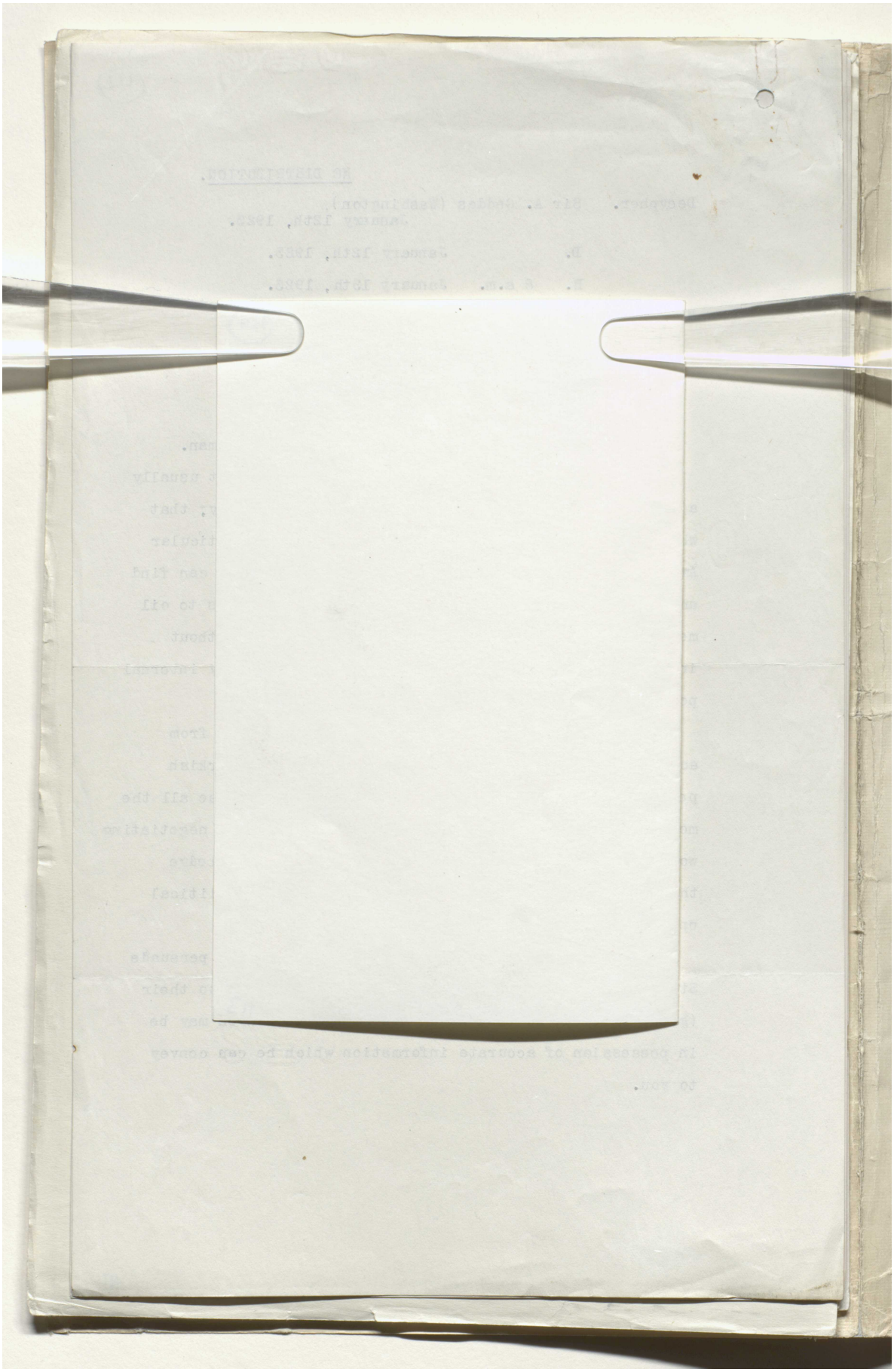

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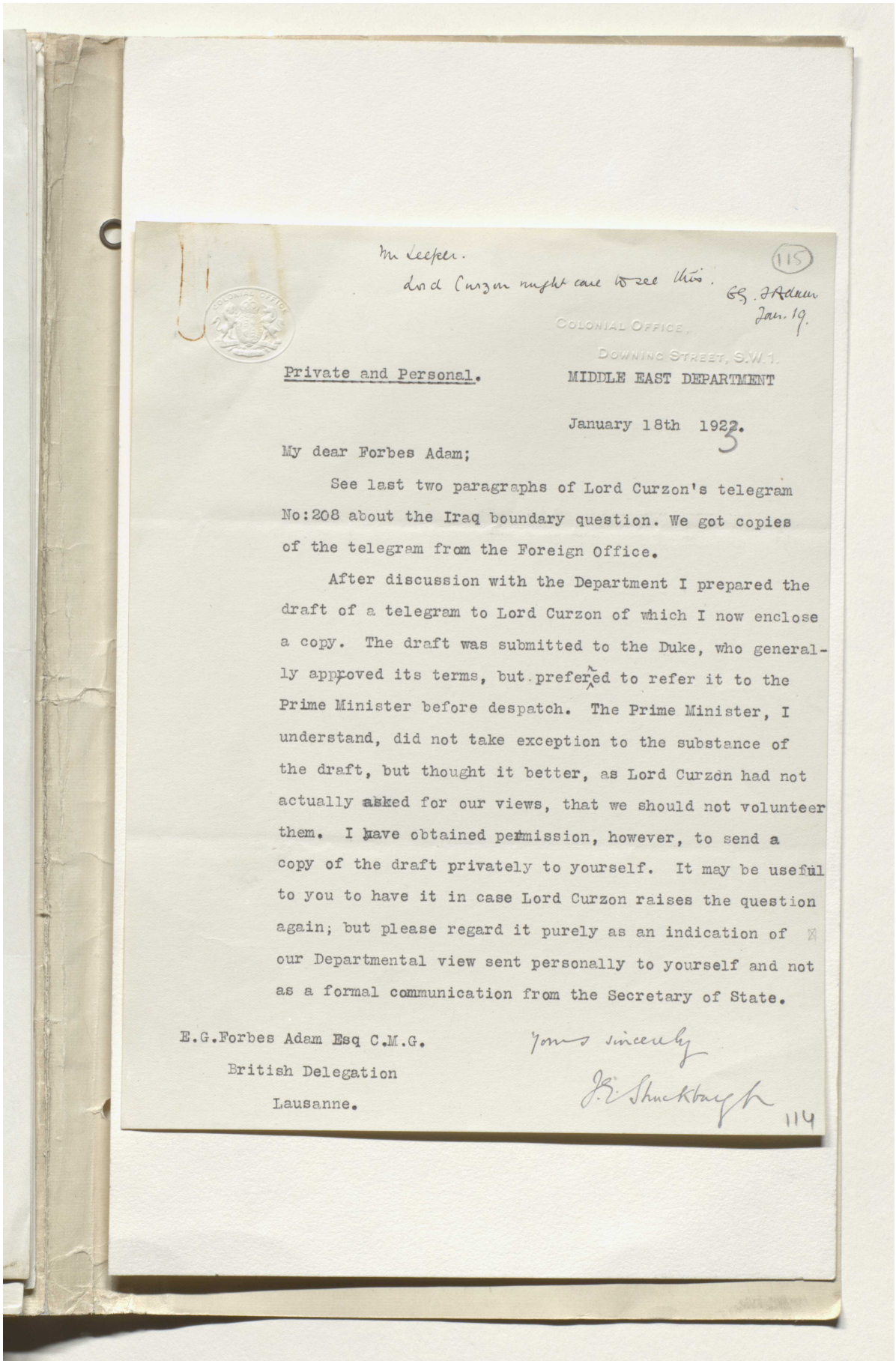

Mr Leeper.
Lord Curzon might care to see this.
(115)
EG. Forbes Adam
Jan. 19.

COLONIAL OFFICE,
DOWNING STREET, S.W.1.

Private and Personal. MIDDLE EAST DEPARTMENT

January 18th 1923.

My dear Forbes Adam;

See last two paragraphs of Lord Curzon's telegram No:208 about the Iraq boundary question. We got copies of the telegram from the Foreign Office.

After discussion with the Department I prepared the draft of a telegram to Lord Curzon of which I now enclose a copy. The draft was submitted to the Duke, who generally approved its terms, but preferred to refer it to the Prime Minister before despatch. The Prime Minister, I understand, did not take exception to the substance of the draft, but thought it better, as Lord Curzon had not actually asked for our views, that we should not volunteer them. I have obtained permission, however, to send a copy of the draft privately to yourself. It may be useful to you to have it in case Lord Curzon raises the question again; but please regard it purely as an indication of our Departmental view sent personally to yourself and not as a formal communication from the Secretary of State.

Yours sincerely
J. E. Shuckburgh

E.G.Forbes Adam Esq C.M.G.
British Delegation
Lausanne.

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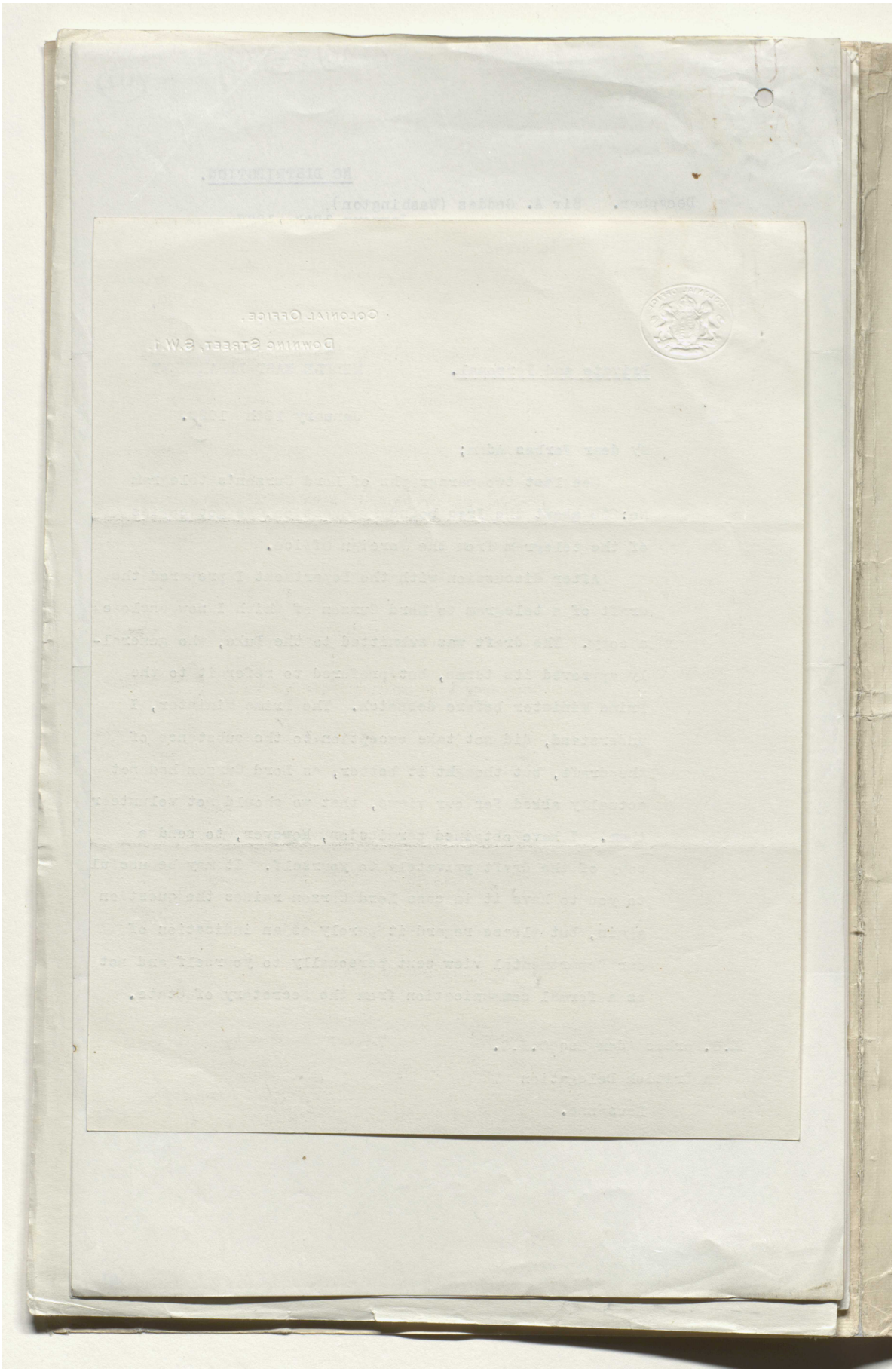

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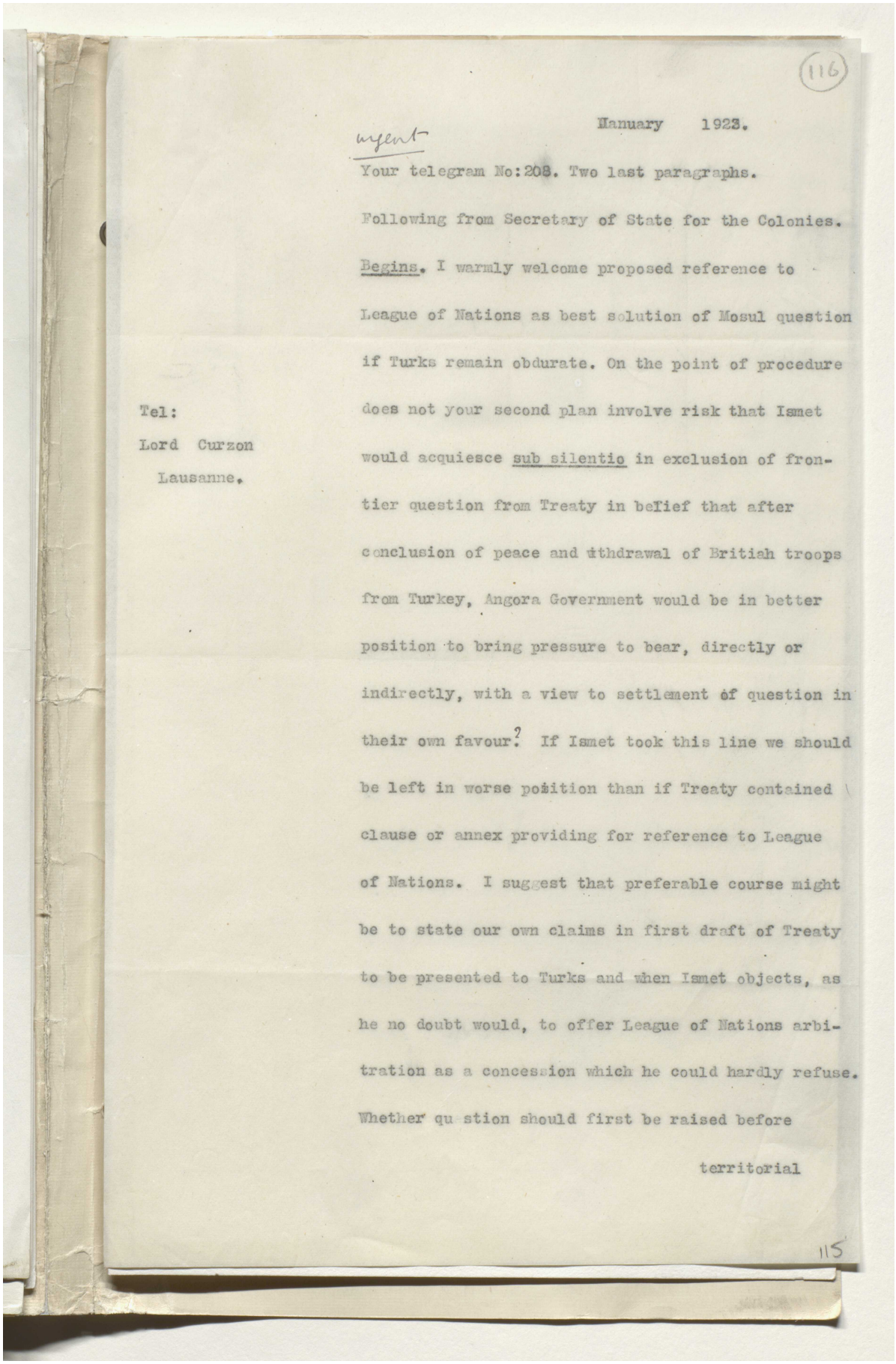

(116)

January 1923.

urgent

Your telegram No:208. Two last paragraphs.

Following from Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Begins. I warmly welcome proposed reference to League of Nations as best solution of Mosul question if Turks remain obdurate. On the point of procedure does not your second plan involve risk that Ismet would acquiesce sub silentio in exclusion of frontier question from Treaty in belief that after conclusion of peace and withdrawal of British troops from Turkey, Angora Government would be in better position to bring pressure to bear, directly or indirectly, with a view to settlement of question in their own favour? If Ismet took this line we should be left in worse position than if Treaty contained clause or annex providing for reference to League of Nations. I suggest that preferable course might be to state our own claims in first draft of Treaty to be presented to Turks and when Ismet objects, as he no doubt would, to offer League of Nations arbitration as a concession which he could hardly refuse. Whether question should first be raised before territorial

Tel:
Lord Curzon
Lausanne.

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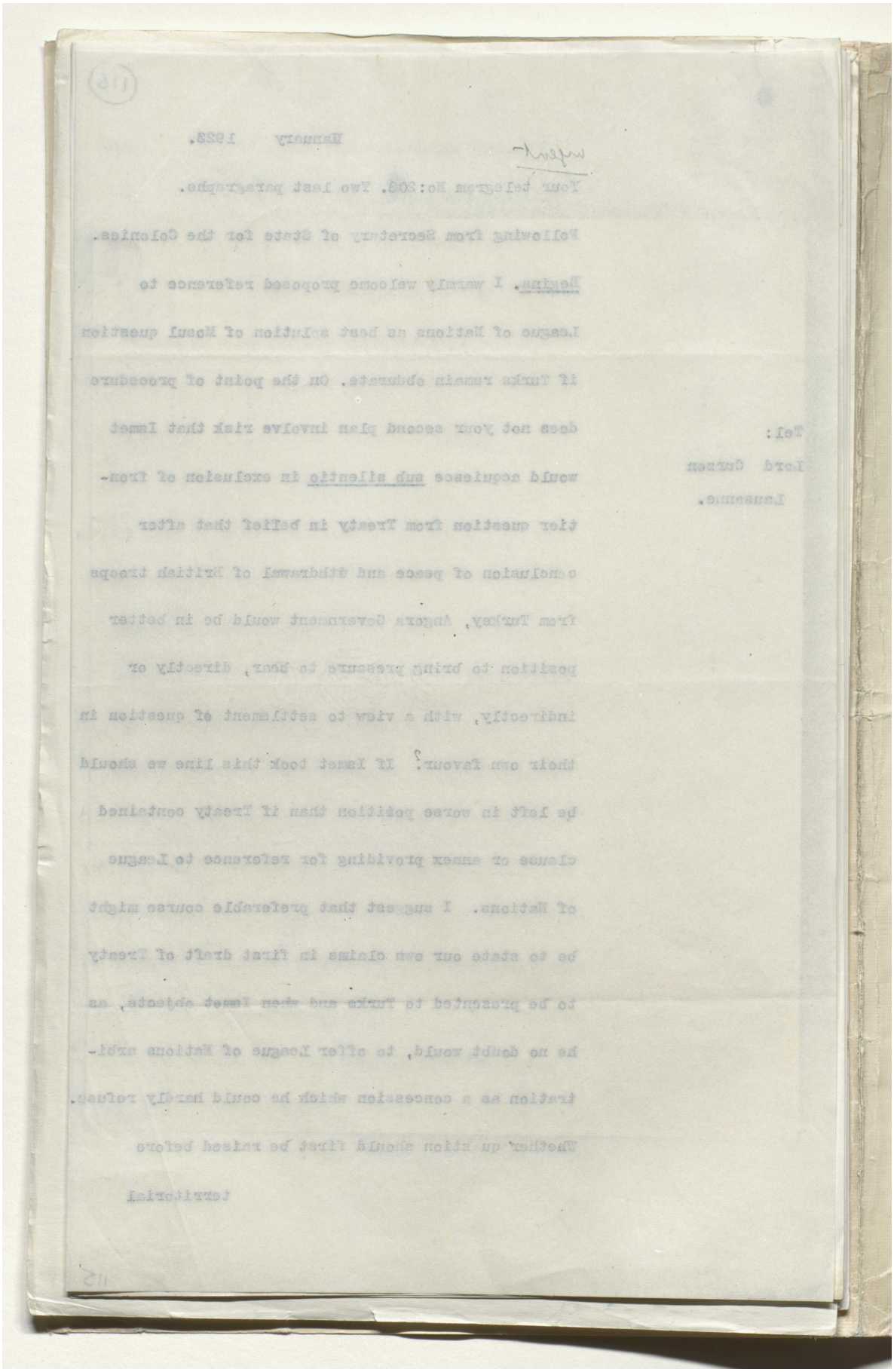

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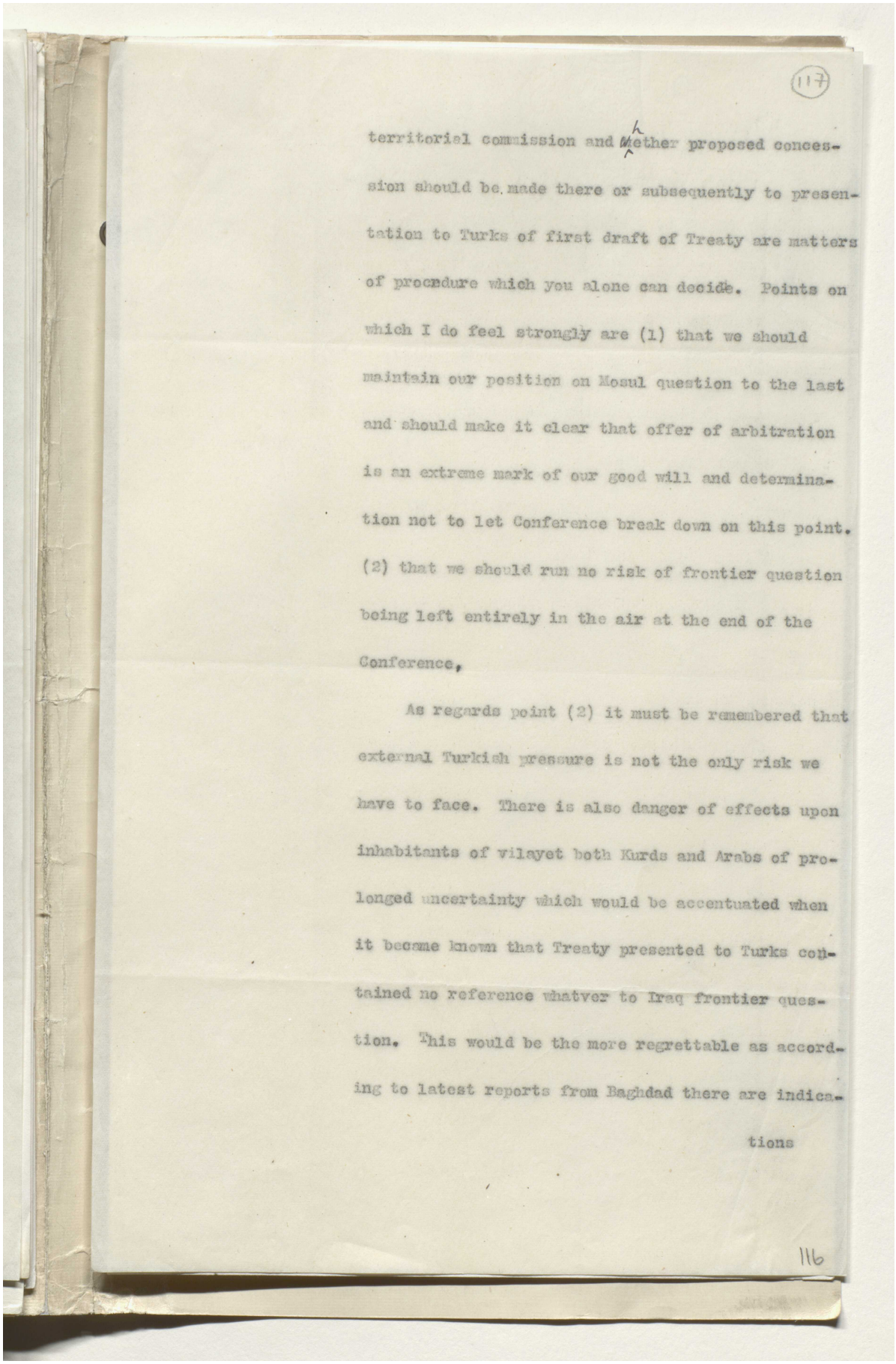

(117)

territorial commission and whether proposed concession should be made there or subsequently to presentation to Turks of first draft of Treaty are matters of procedure which you alone can decide. Points on which I do feel strongly are (1) that we should maintain our position on Mosul question to the last and should make it clear that offer of arbitration is an extreme mark of our good will and determination not to let Conference break down on this point. (2) that we should run no risk of frontier question being left entirely in the air at the end of the Conference.

As regards point (2) it must be remembered that external Turkish pressure is not the only risk we have to face. There is also danger of effects upon inhabitants of vilayet both Kurds and Arabs of prolonged uncertainty which would be accentuated when it became known that Treaty presented to Turks contained no reference whatver to Iraq frontier question. This would be the more regrettable as according to latest reports from Baghdad there are indica-

tions

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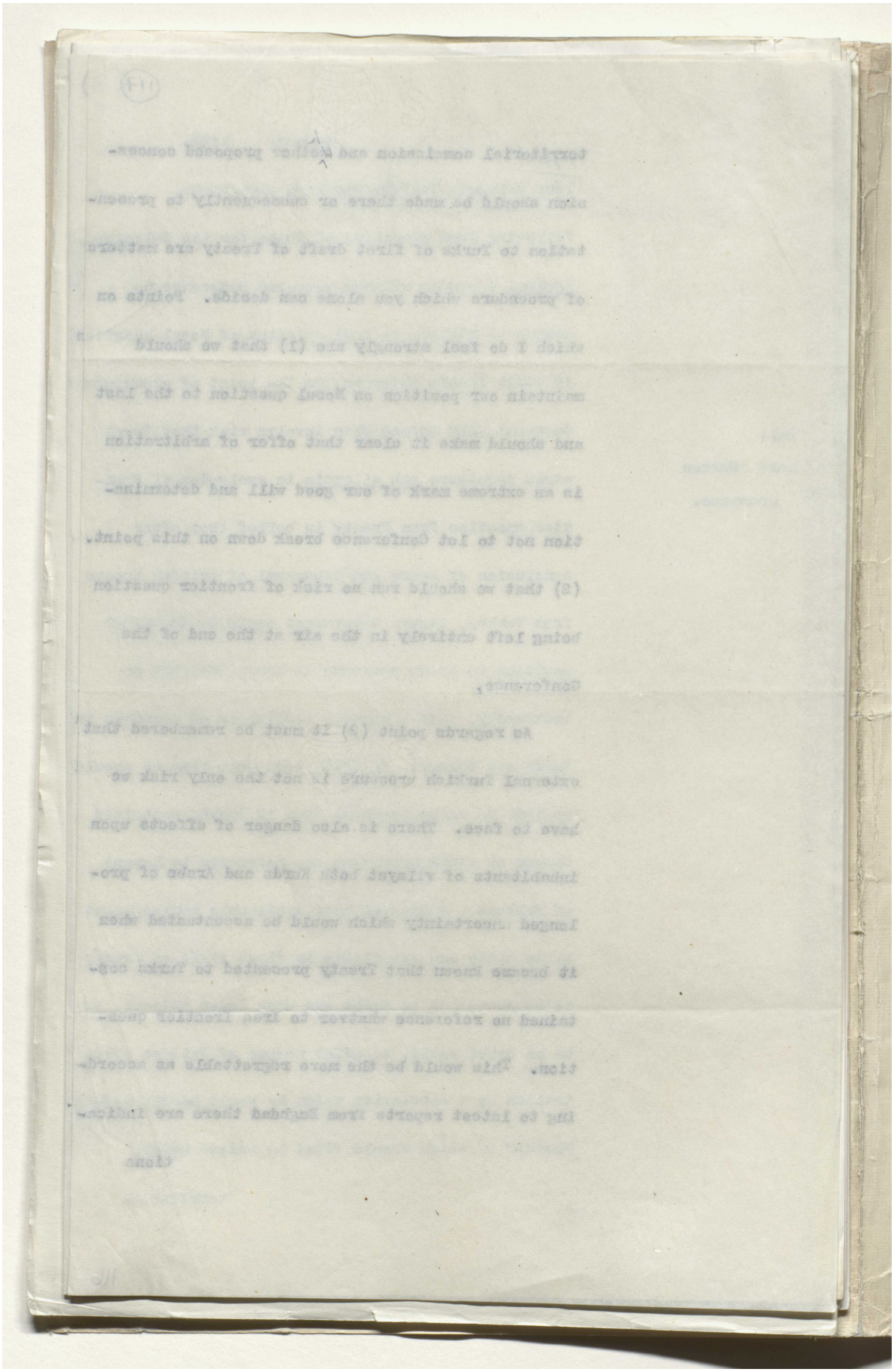

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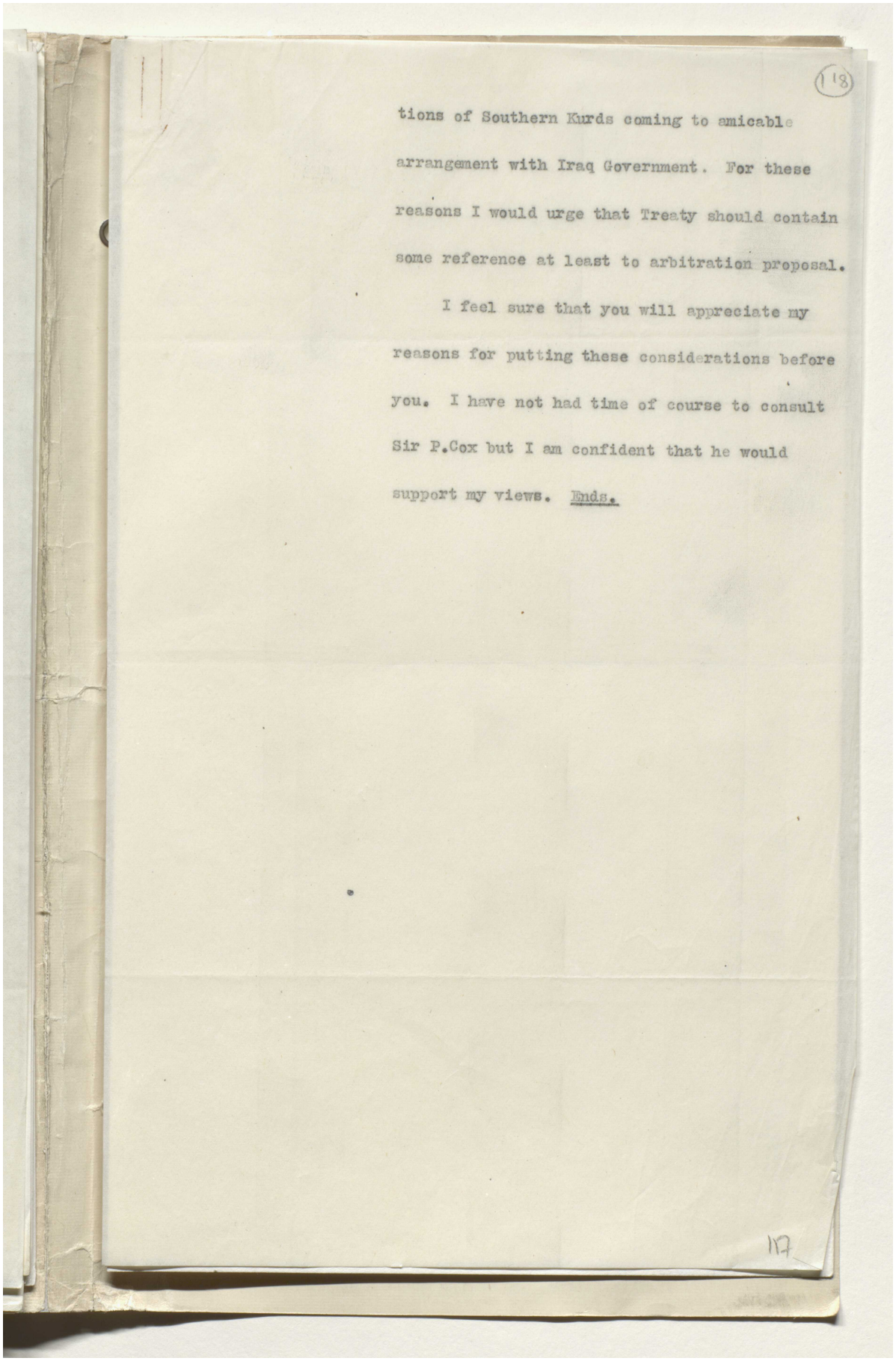

(118)

tions of Southern Kurds coming to amicable arrangement with Iraq Government. For these reasons I would urge that Treaty should contain some reference at least to arbitration proposal.

I feel sure that you will appreciate my reasons for putting these considerations before you. I have not had time of course to consult Sir P.Cox but I am confident that he would support my views. Ends.

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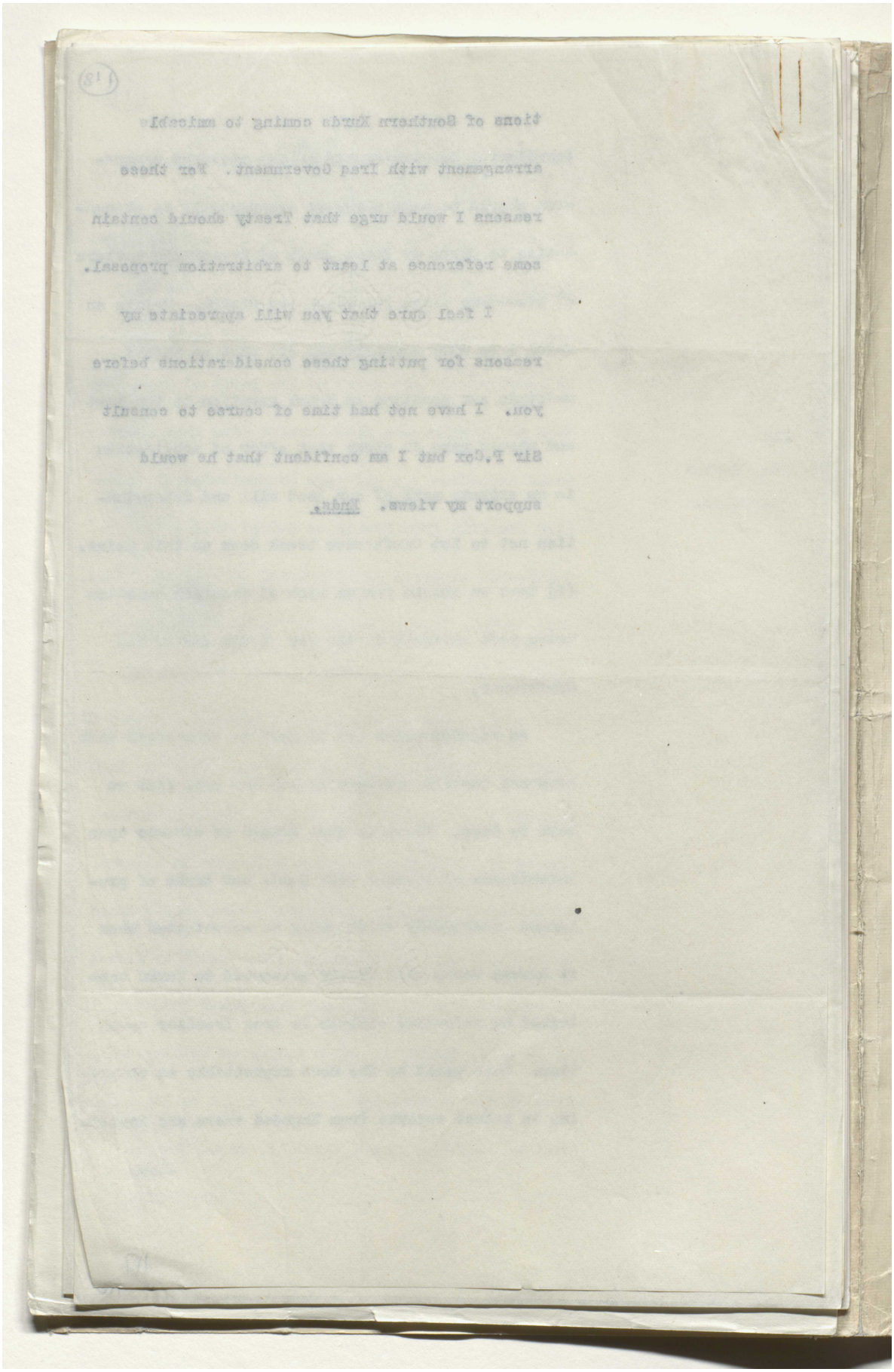

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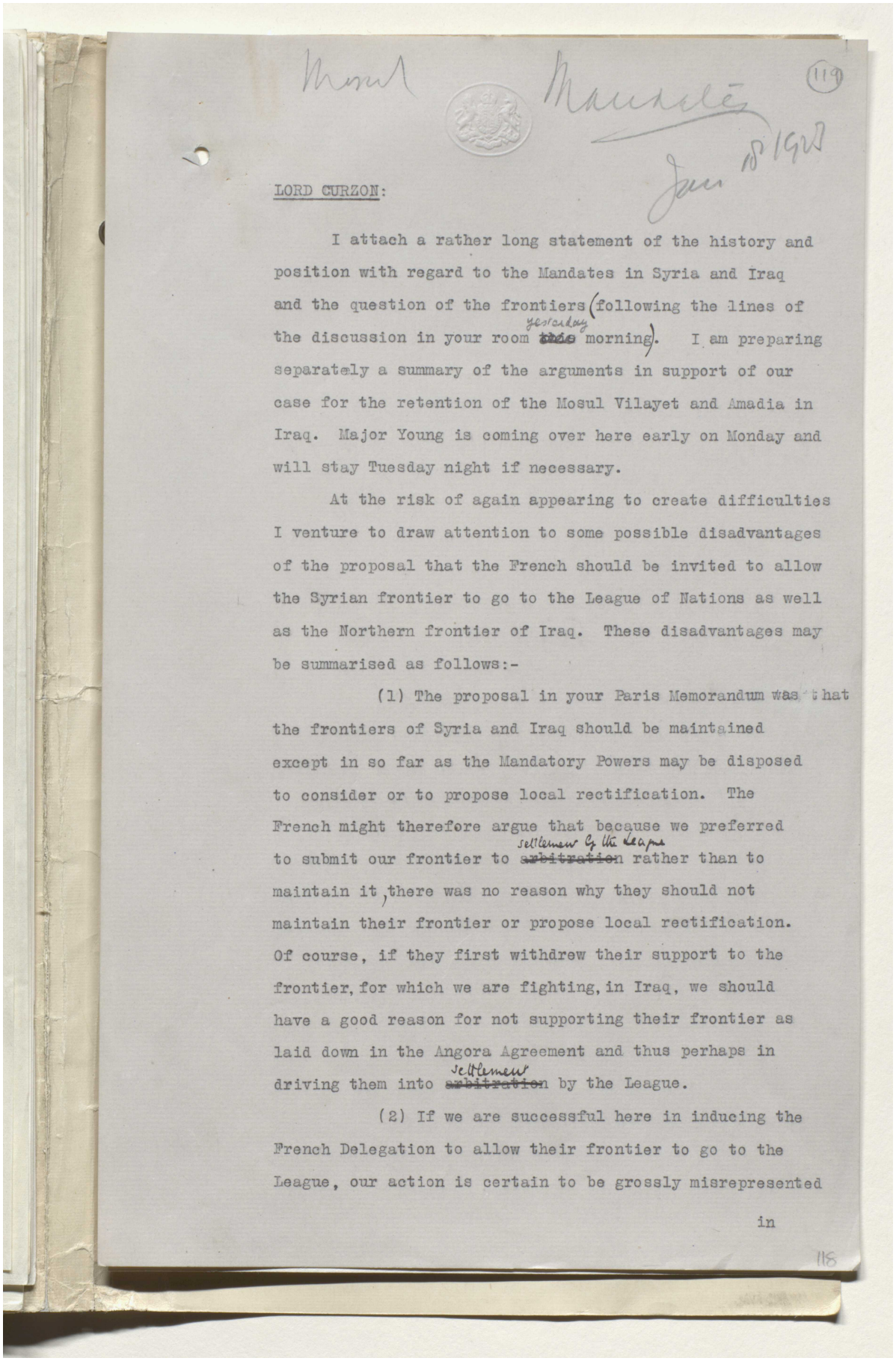

Mosul Mandates (119)

Jan 15 1923

LORD CURZON:

I attach a rather long statement of the history and position with regard to the Mandates in Syria and Iraq and the question of the frontiers (following the lines of the discussion in your room ~~this~~ yesterday morning). I am preparing separately a summary of the arguments in support of our case for the retention of the Mosul Vilayet and Amadia in Iraq. Major Young is coming over here early on Monday and will stay Tuesday night if necessary.

At the risk of again appearing to create difficulties I venture to draw attention to some possible disadvantages of the proposal that the French should be invited to allow the Syrian frontier to go to the League of Nations as well as the Northern frontier of Iraq. These disadvantages may be summarised as follows:-

(1) The proposal in your Paris Memorandum was that the frontiers of Syria and Iraq should be maintained except in so far as the Mandatory Powers may be disposed to consider or to propose local rectification. The French might therefore argue that because we preferred to submit our frontier to ~~arbitration~~ settlement by the League rather than to maintain it, there was no reason why they should not maintain their frontier or propose local rectification. Of course, if they first withdrew their support to the frontier, for which we are fighting, in Iraq, we should have a good reason for not supporting their frontier as laid down in the Angora Agreement and thus perhaps in driving them into ~~arbitration~~ settlement by the League.

(2) If we are successful here in inducing the French Delegation to allow their frontier to go to the League, our action is certain to be grossly misrepresented in

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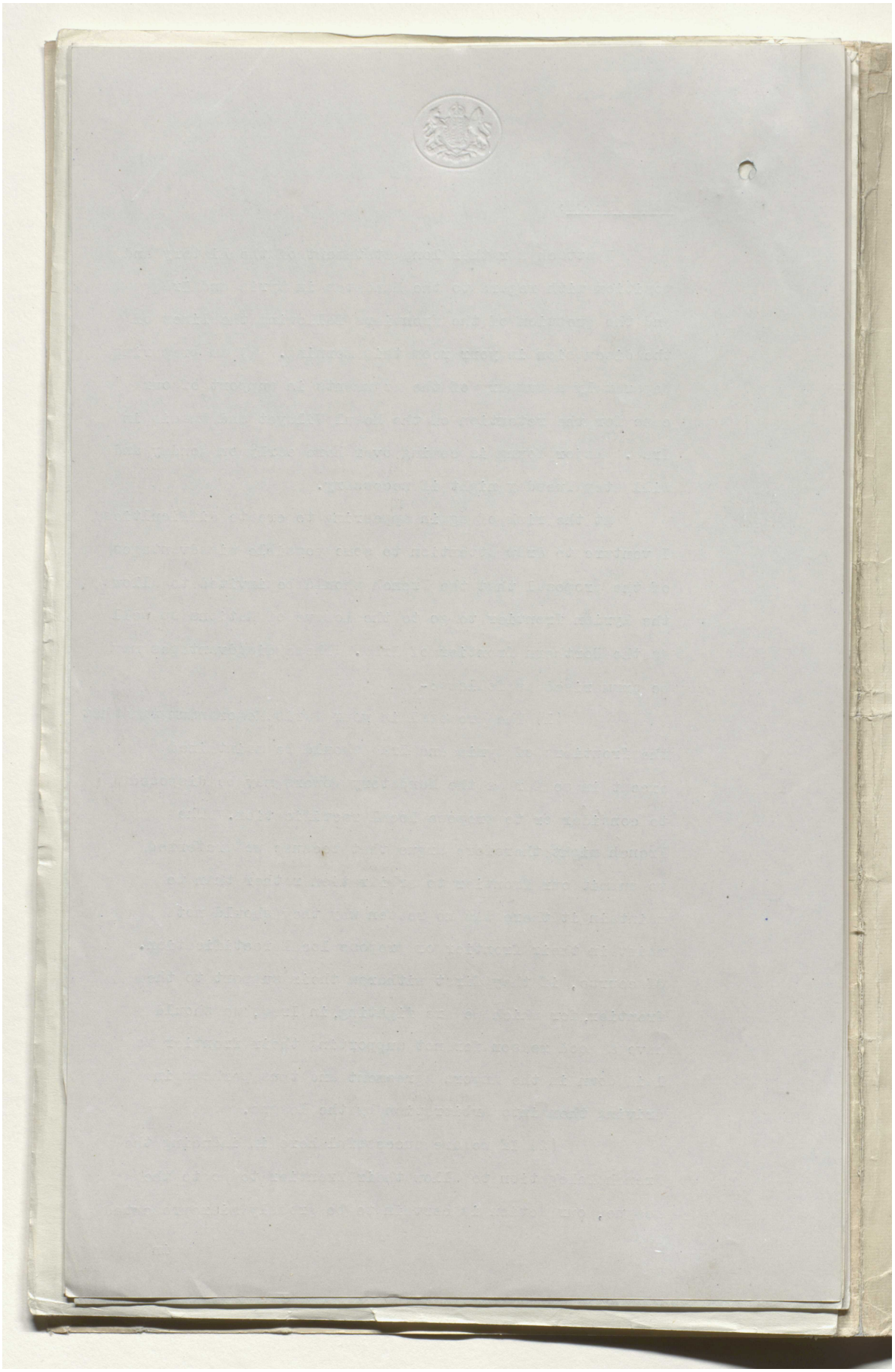

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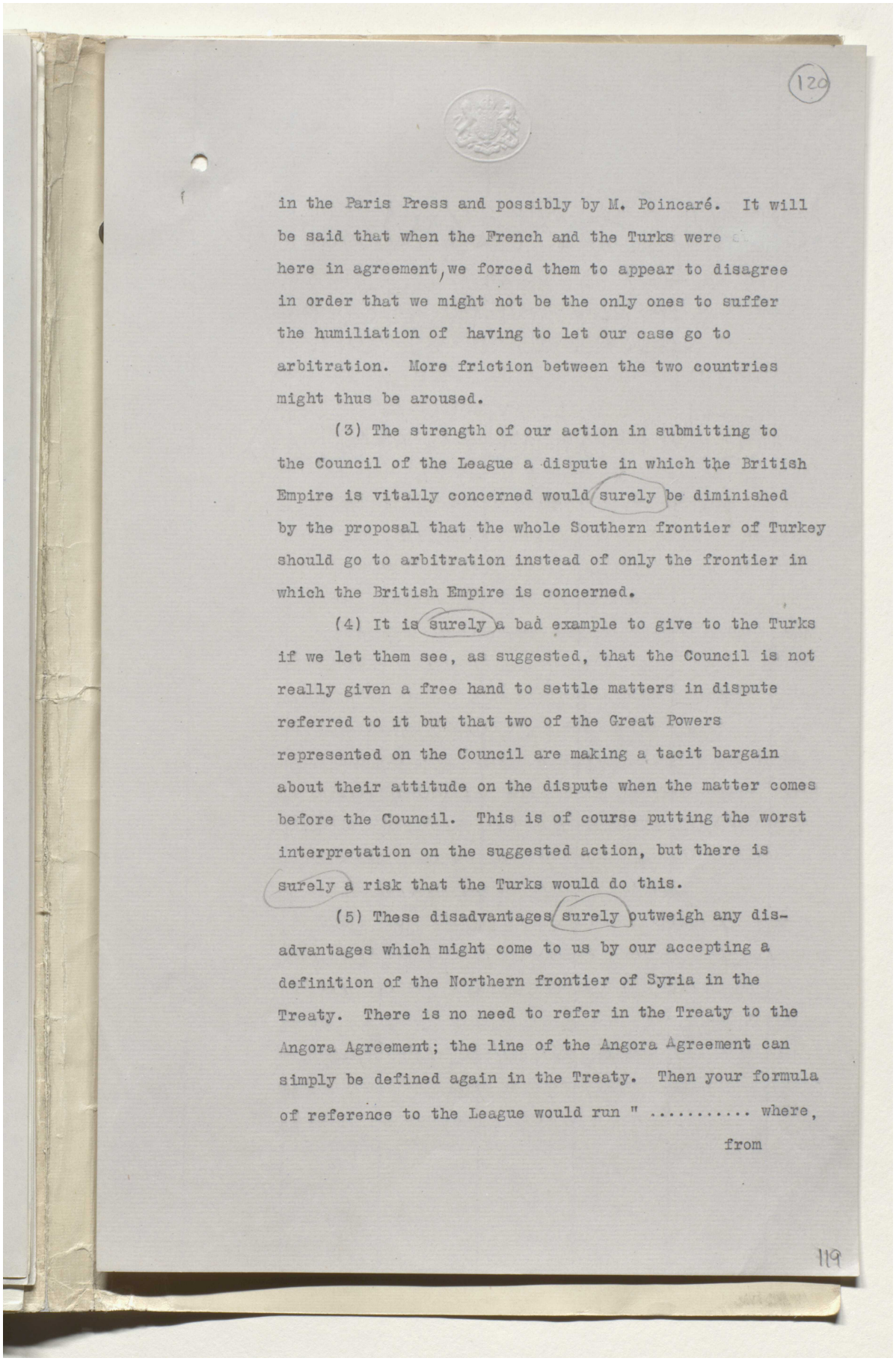

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in the Paris Press and possibly by M. Poincaré. It will be said that when the French and the Turks were a[illegible] here in agreement, we forced them to appear to disagree in order that we might not be the only ones to suffer the humiliation of having to let our case go to arbitration. More friction between the two countries might thus be aroused.

(3) The strength of our action in submitting to the Council of the League a dispute in which the British Empire is vitally concerned would surely be diminished by the proposal that the whole Southern frontier of Turkey should go to arbitration instead of only the frontier in which the British Empire is concerned.

(4) It is surely a bad example to give to the Turks if we let them see, as suggested, that the Council is not really given a free hand to settle matters in dispute referred to it but that two of the Great Powers represented on the Council are making a tacit bargain about their attitude on the dispute when the matter comes before the Council. This is of course putting the worst interpretation on the suggested action, but there is surely a risk that the Turks would do this.

(5) These disadvantages surely outweigh any disadvantages which might come to us by our accepting a definition of the Northern frontier of Syria in the Treaty. There is no need to refer in the Treaty to the Angora Agreement; the line of the Angora Agreement can simply be defined again in the Treaty. Then your formula of reference to the League would run " ..... where, from

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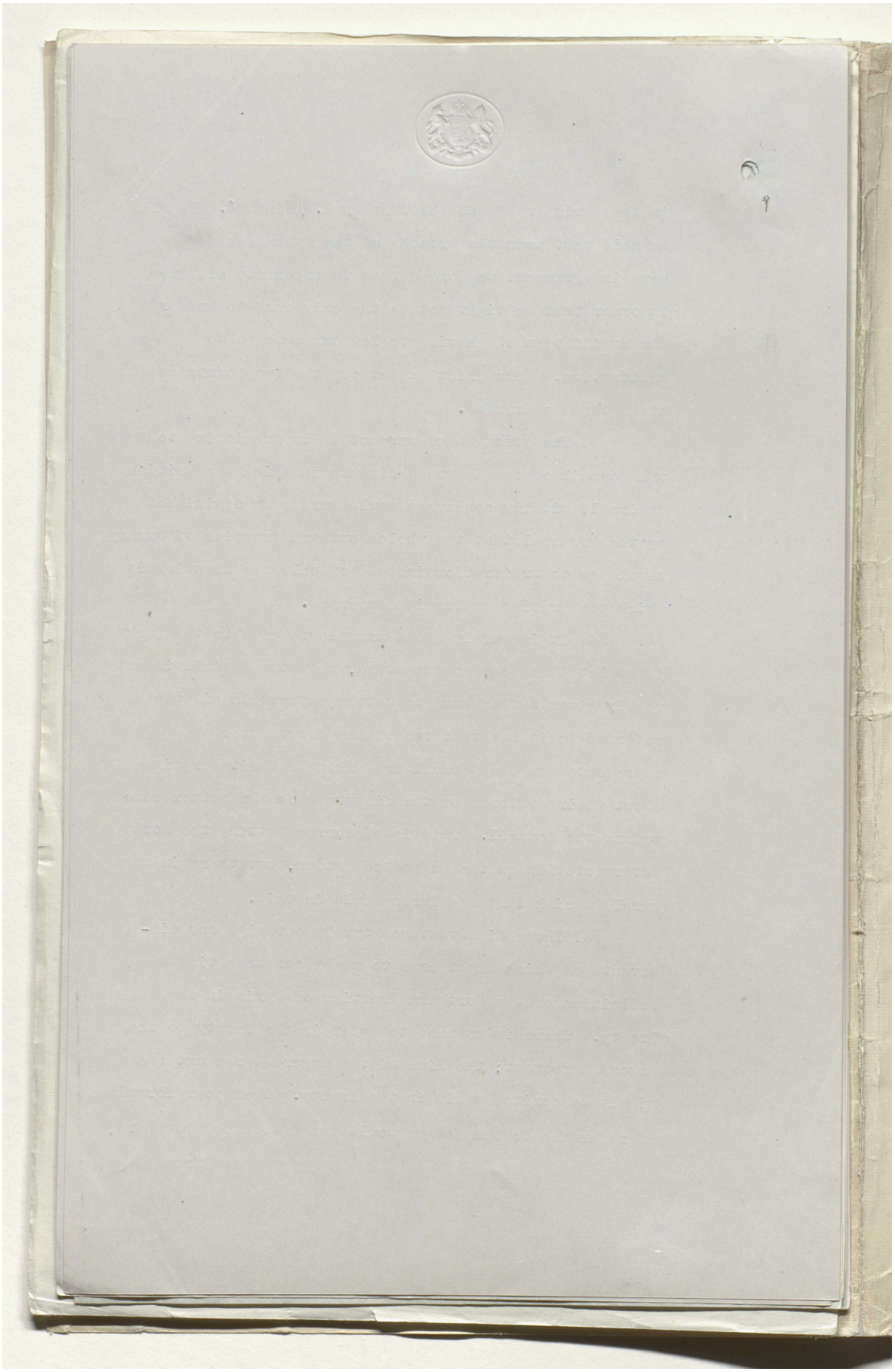

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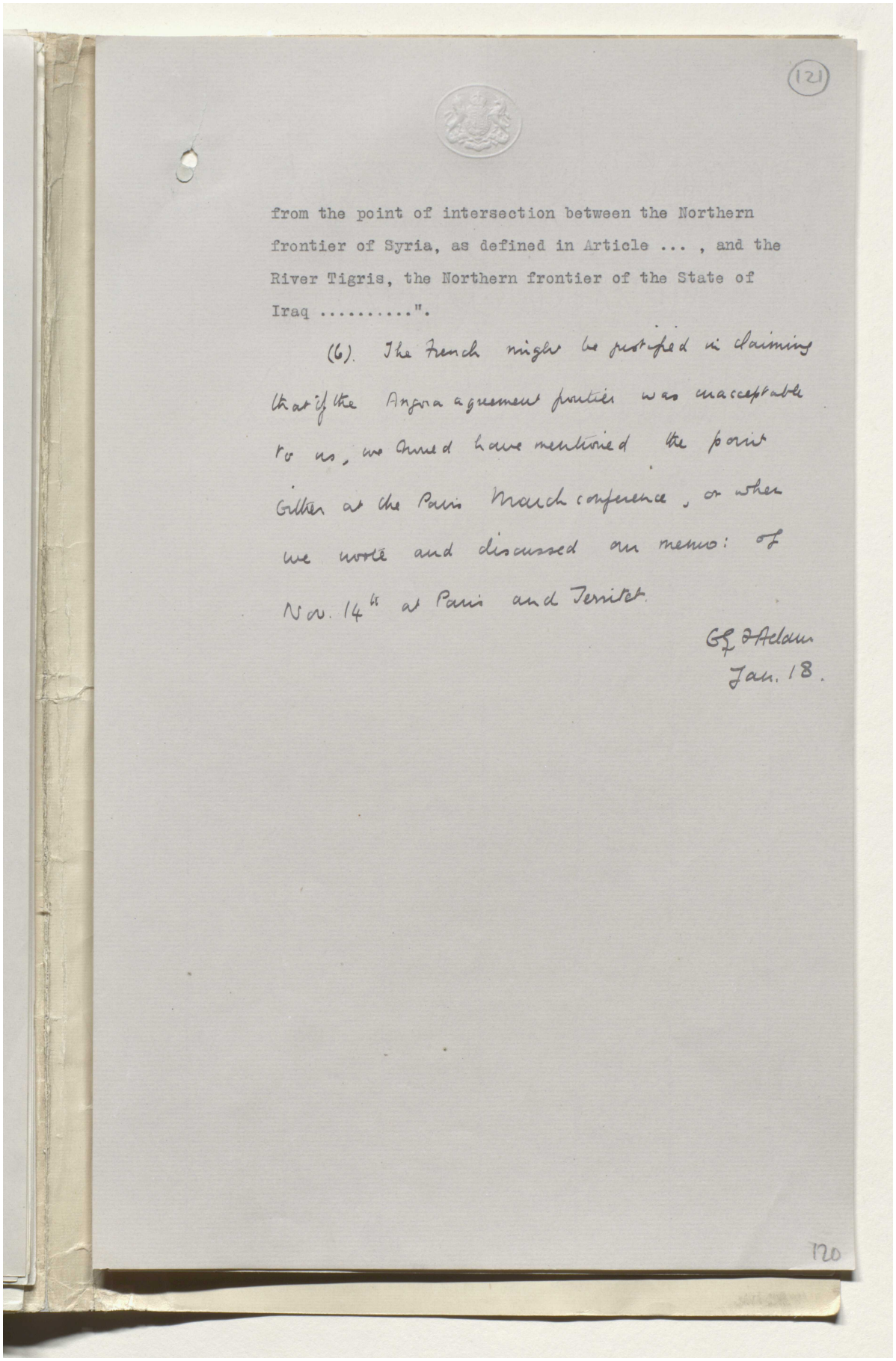

from the point of intersection between the Northern frontier of Syria, as defined in Article ... , and the River Tigris, the Northern frontier of the State of Iraq .....".

(6). The French might be justified in claiming that if the Angora agreement frontier was unacceptable to us, we should have mentioned the point either at the Paris March conference, or when we wrote and discussed our memo: of Nov. 14th at Paris and Territet.

G. G. Adam
Jan. 18.

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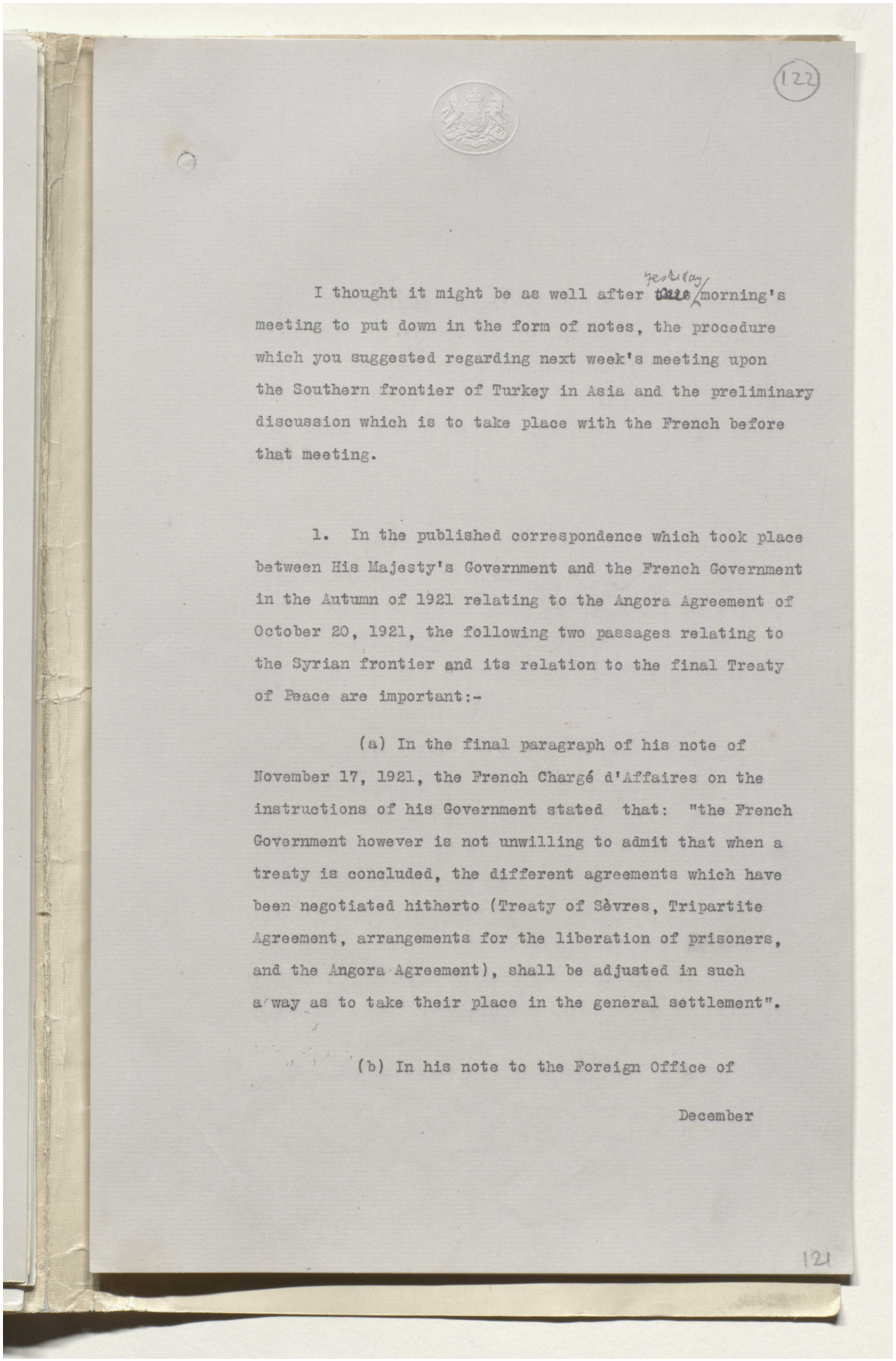

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I thought it might be as well after ~~this~~ yesterday morning's meeting to put down in the form of notes, the procedure which you suggested regarding next week's meeting upon the Southern frontier of Turkey in Asia and the preliminary discussion which is to take place with the French before that meeting.

1. In the published correspondence which took place between His Majesty's Government and the French Government in the Autumn of 1921 relating to the Angora Agreement of October 20, 1921, the following two passages relating to the Syrian frontier and its relation to the final Treaty of Peace are important:-

(a) In the final paragraph of his note of November 17, 1921, the French Chargé d'Affaires on the instructions of his Government stated that: "the French Government however is not unwilling to admit that when a treaty is concluded, the different agreements which have been negotiated hitherto (Treaty of Sèvres, Tripartite Agreement, arrangements for the liberation of prisoners, and the Angora Agreement), shall be adjusted in such a way as to take their place in the general settlement".

(b) In his note to the Foreign Office of

December

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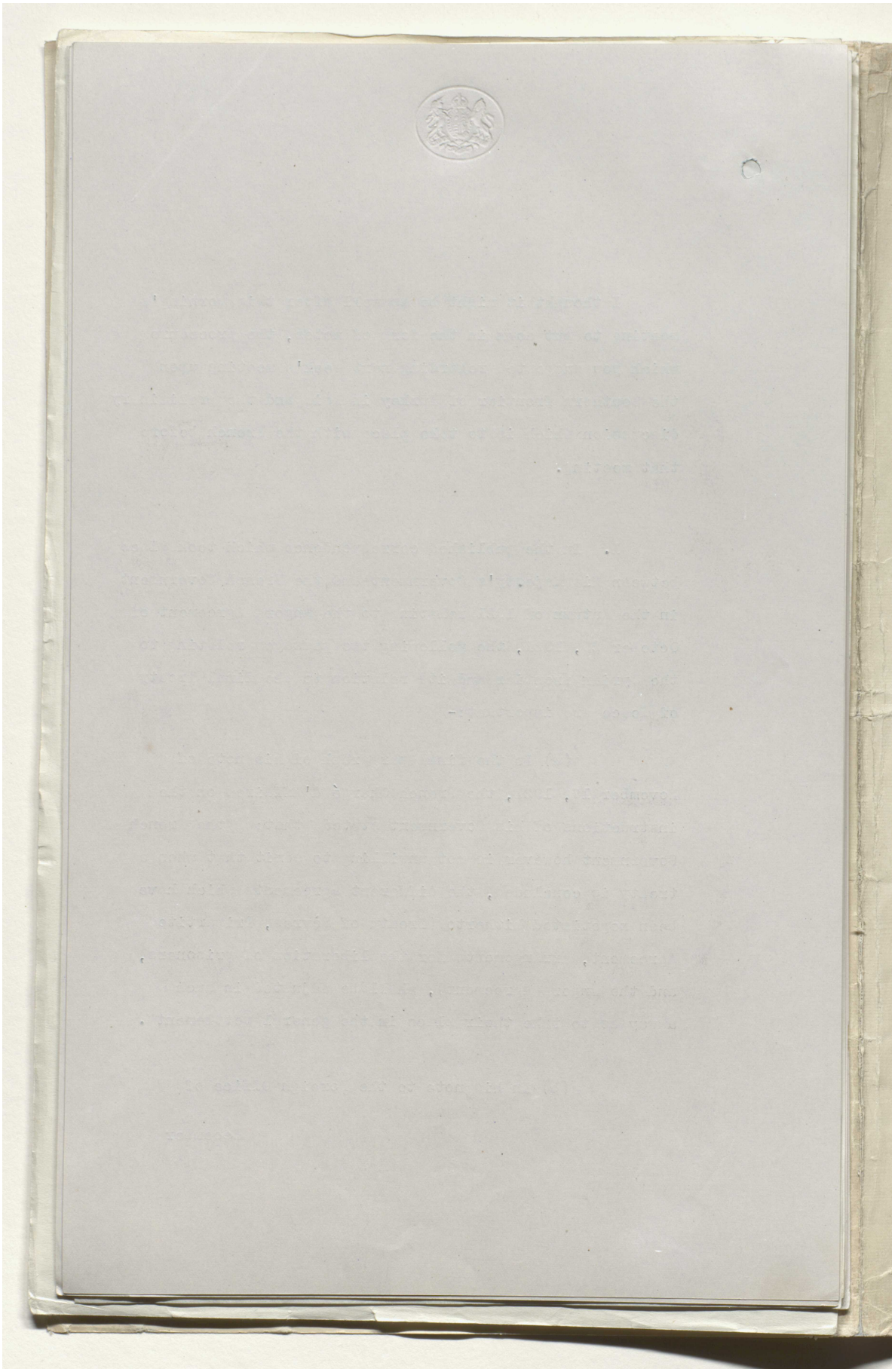

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December 26, 1921, the French Chargé d'Affaires in London on the instructions of his Government stated that: "as regards the revision of the Northern frontier of Syria, the French Government reserves to itself the right of urging, at the time when the Treaty of Peace is discussed, the reasons justifying this revision in the interests of the Syrian mandate itself, which that Government is particularly qualified to appreciate. In any event, whatever may be the differences of opinion concerning the value, even from a strategic point of view, of places such as Nisibin and Jeziret-ibn-Omar His Britannic Majesty's Government has already been assured that the French Government is determined to forbid at all times on the Syrian section of the Baghdad Railway any movement of troops capable of being directed against British mandated territory."

2. In the memorandum of essential points which you communicated to the French Government through Lord Hardinge on November 14th last the following were included:-

"VI. Frontiers of Syria and Iraq. To be maintained except insofar as the mandatory Powers may be disposed to consider or to propose local rectification.

VII. Mandated territories in Syria, Iraq and Palestine. No change to be admitted."

As a result of my conversation with M. Peretti on this memorandum, Lord Hardinge telegraphed to you on November 15th as follows:-

"Points VI and VII accepted without comment. I may here add that M. Poincaré mentioned incidentally this morning that as to the question of Mosul, he regarded it as a point of honour to support His Majesty's Government".

In the discussion between you, M. Poincaré and the

Italian

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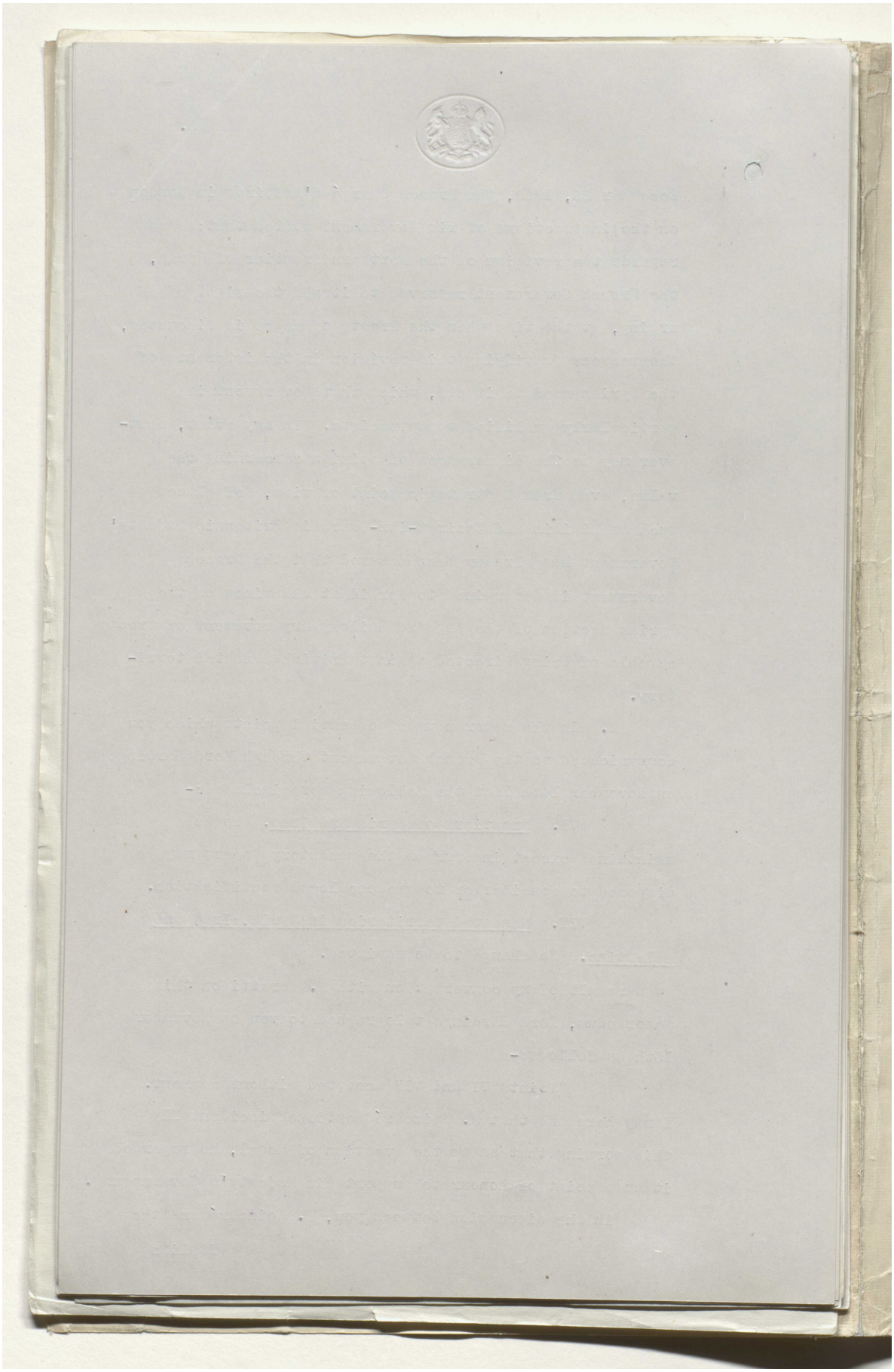

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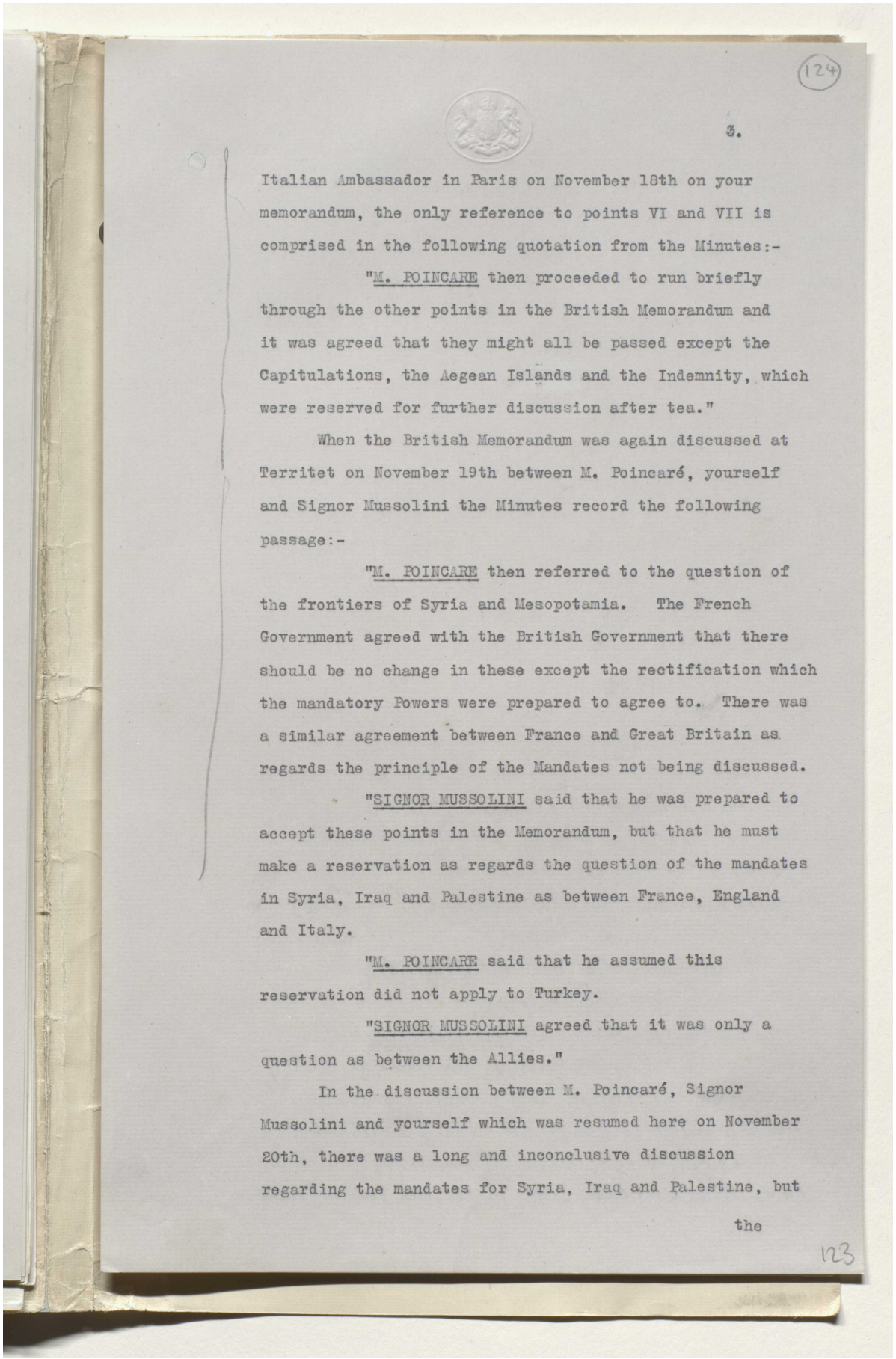

(124)

3.

Italian Ambassador in Paris on November 18th on your memorandum, the only reference to points VI and VII is comprised in the following quotation from the Minutes:-

"M. POINCARE then proceeded to run briefly through the other points in the British Memorandum and it was agreed that they might all be passed except the Capitulations, the Aegean Islands and the Indemnity, which were reserved for further discussion after tea."

When the British Memorandum was again discussed at Territet on November 19th between M. Poincaré, yourself and Signor Mussolini the Minutes record the following passage:-

"M. POINCARE then referred to the question of the frontiers of Syria and Mesopotamia. The French Government agreed with the British Government that there should be no change in these except the rectification which the mandatory Powers were prepared to agree to. There was a similar agreement between France and Great Britain as regards the principle of the Mandates not being discussed.

"SIGNOR MUSSOLINI said that he was prepared to accept these points in the Memorandum, but that he must make a reservation as regards the question of the mandates in Syria, Iraq and Palestine as between France, England and Italy.

"M. POINCARE said that he assumed this reservation did not apply to Turkey.

"SIGNOR MUSSOLINI agreed that it was only a question as between the Allies."

In the discussion between M. Poincaré, Signor Mussolini and yourself which was resumed here on November 20th, there was a long and inconclusive discussion regarding the mandates for Syria, Iraq and Palestine, but

the

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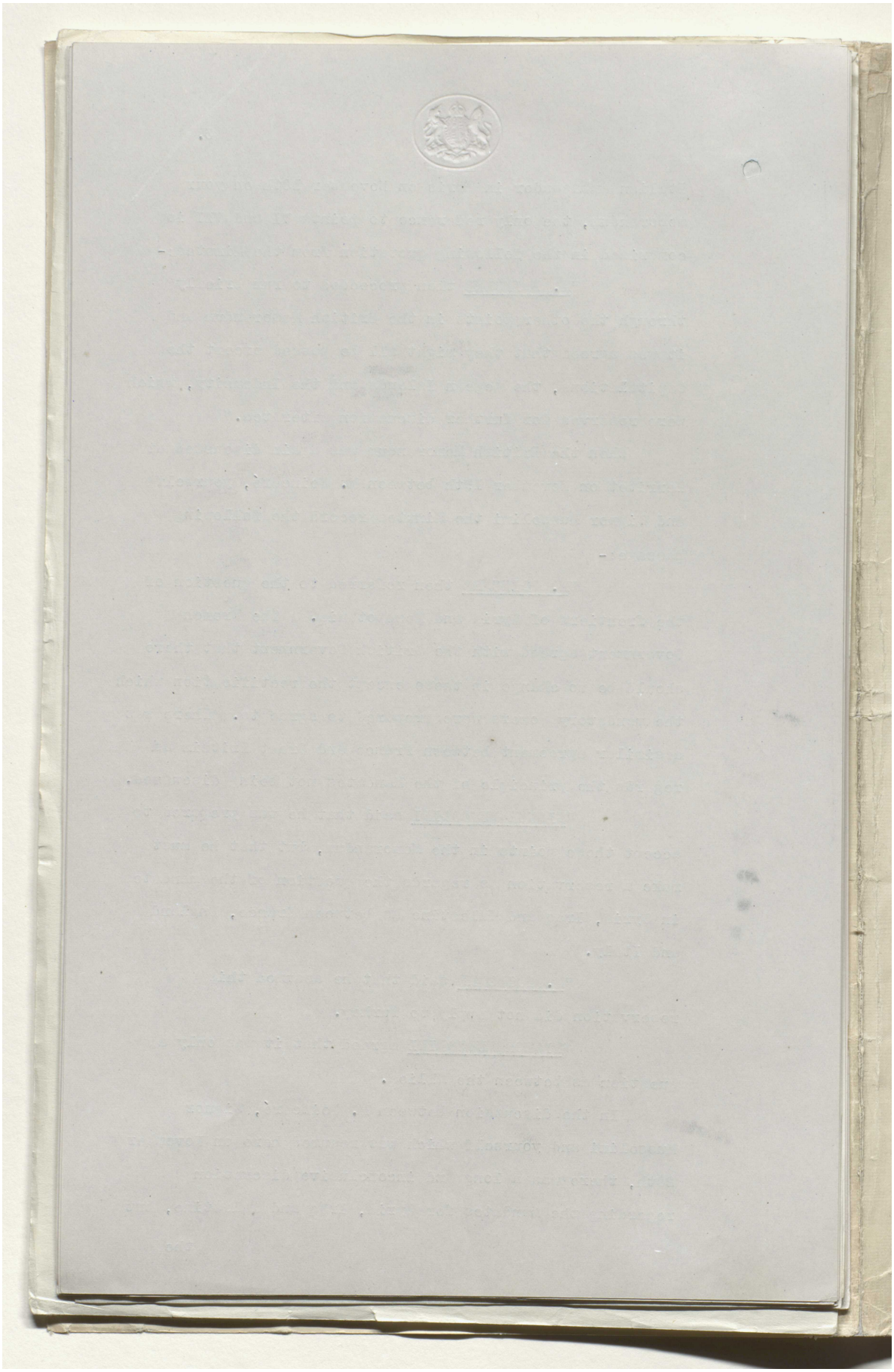

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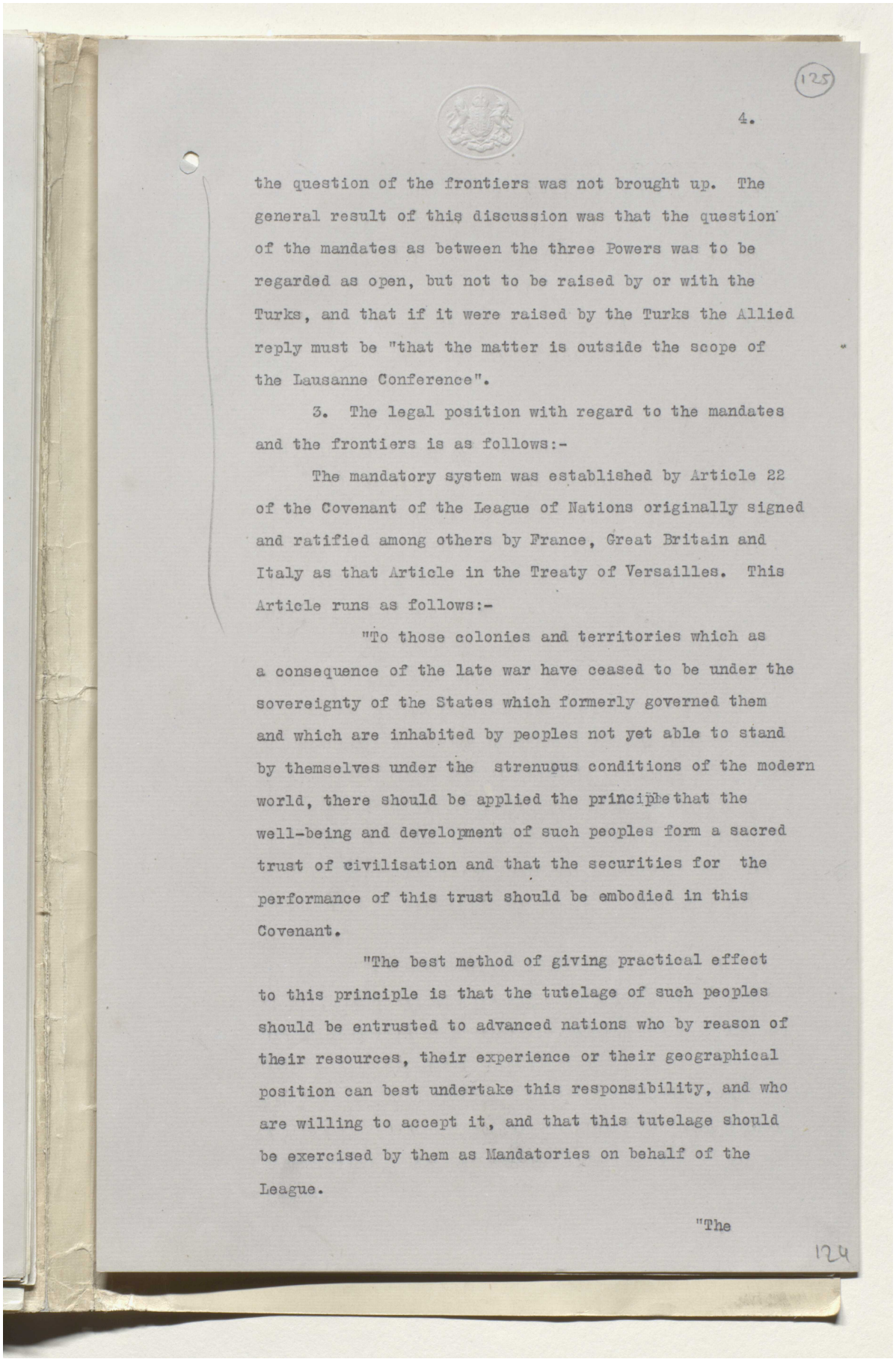

(125)

the question of the frontiers was not brought up. The general result of this discussion was that the question of the mandates as between the three Powers was to be regarded as open, but not to be raised by or with the Turks, and that if it were raised by the Turks the Allied reply must be "that the matter is outside the scope of the Lausanne Conference".

3. The legal position with regard to the mandates and the frontiers is as follows:-

The mandatory system was established by Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations originally signed and ratified among others by France, Great Britain and Italy as that Article in the Treaty of Versailles. This Article runs as follows:-

"To those colonies and territories which as a consequence of the late war have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied the principle that the well-being and development of such peoples form a sacred trust of civilisation and that the securities for the performance of this trust should be embodied in this Covenant.

"The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such peoples should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position can best undertake this responsibility, and who are willing to accept it, and that this tutelage should be exercised by them as Mandatories on behalf of the League.

"The

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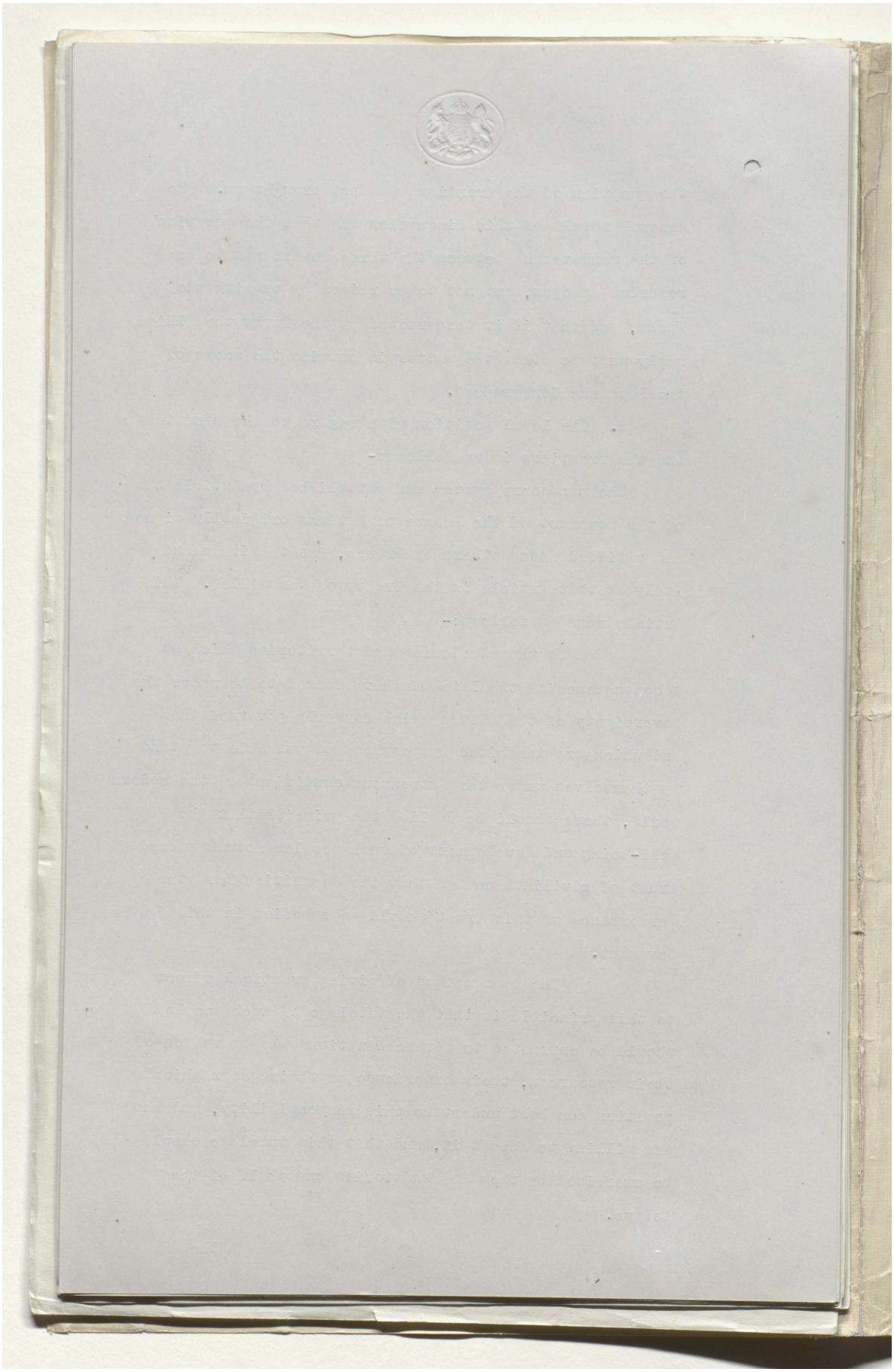

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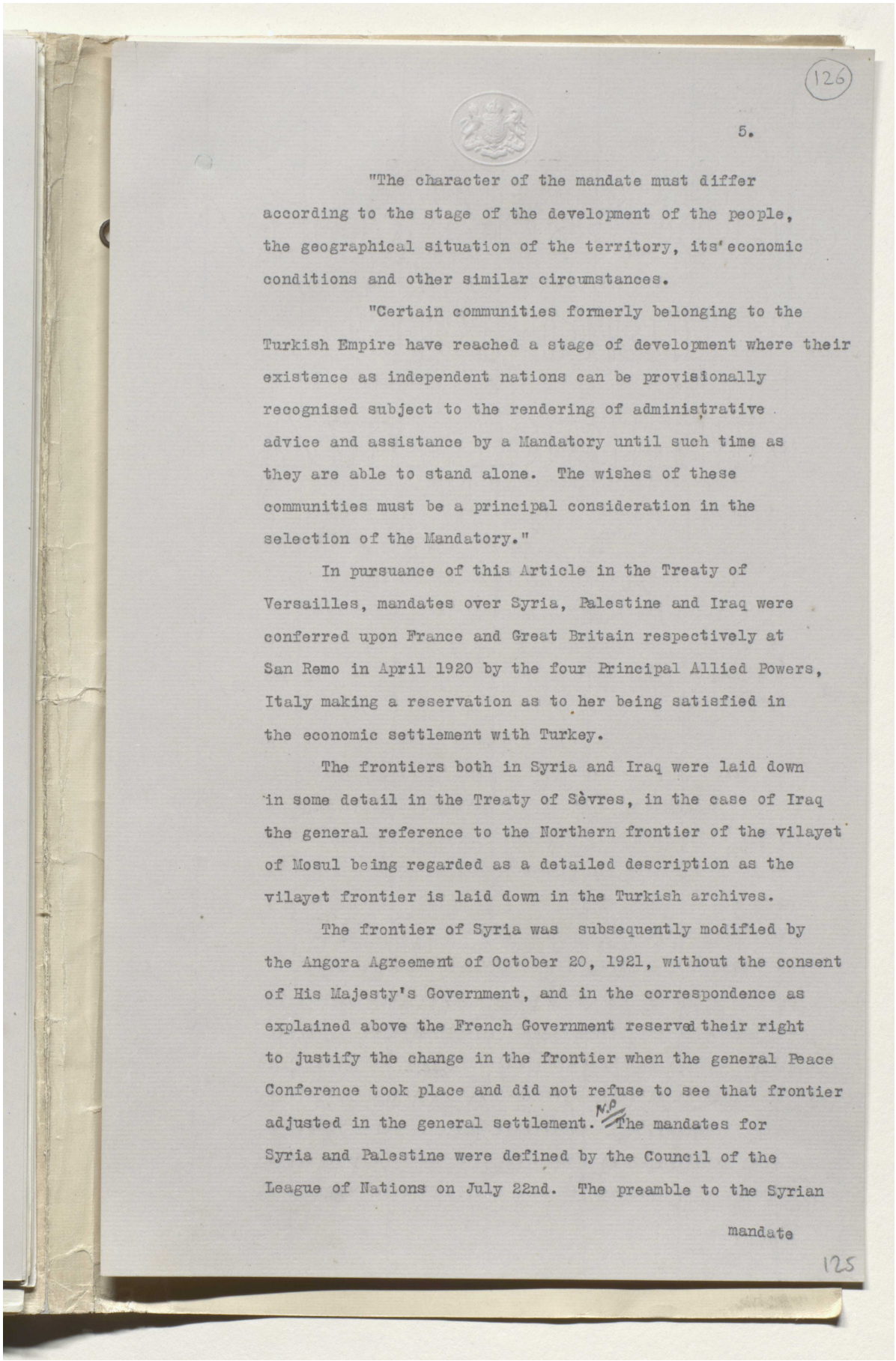

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5.

"The character of the mandate must differ according to the stage of the development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and other similar circumstances.

"Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory."

In pursuance of this Article in the Treaty of Versailles, mandates over Syria, Palestine and Iraq were conferred upon France and Great Britain respectively at San Remo in April 1920 by the four Principal Allied Powers, Italy making a reservation as to her being satisfied in the economic settlement with Turkey.

The frontiers both in Syria and Iraq were laid down in some detail in the Treaty of Sèvres, in the case of Iraq the general reference to the Northern frontier of the vilayet of Mosul being regarded as a detailed description as the vilayet frontier is laid down in the Turkish archives.

The frontier of Syria was subsequently modified by the Angora Agreement of October 20, 1921, without the consent of His Majesty's Government, and in the correspondence as explained above the French Government reserved their right to justify the change in the frontier when the general Peace Conference took place and did not refuse to see that frontier adjusted in the general settlement. N.P. The mandates for Syria and Palestine were defined by the Council of the League of Nations on July 22nd. The preamble to the Syrian

mandate

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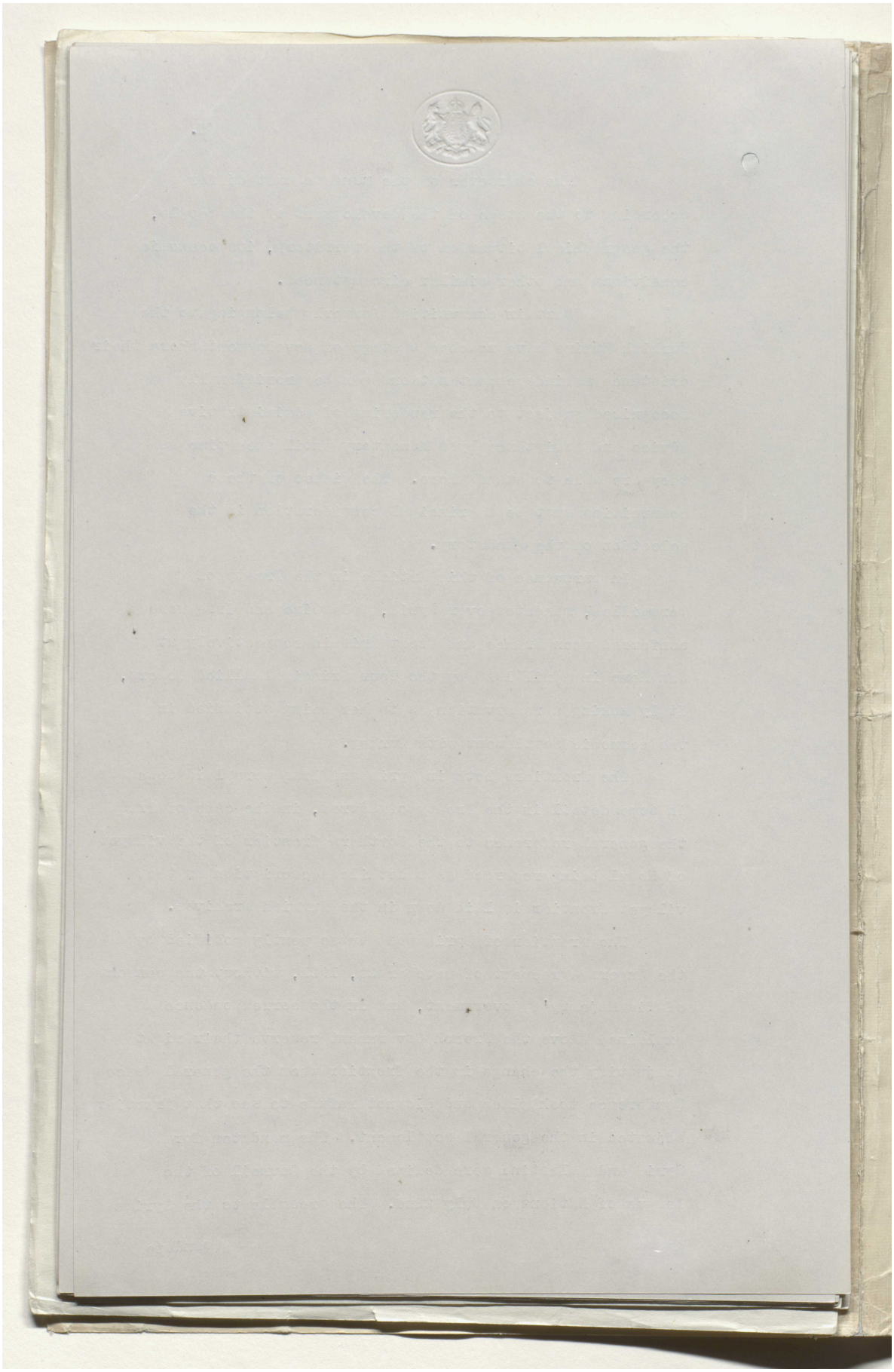

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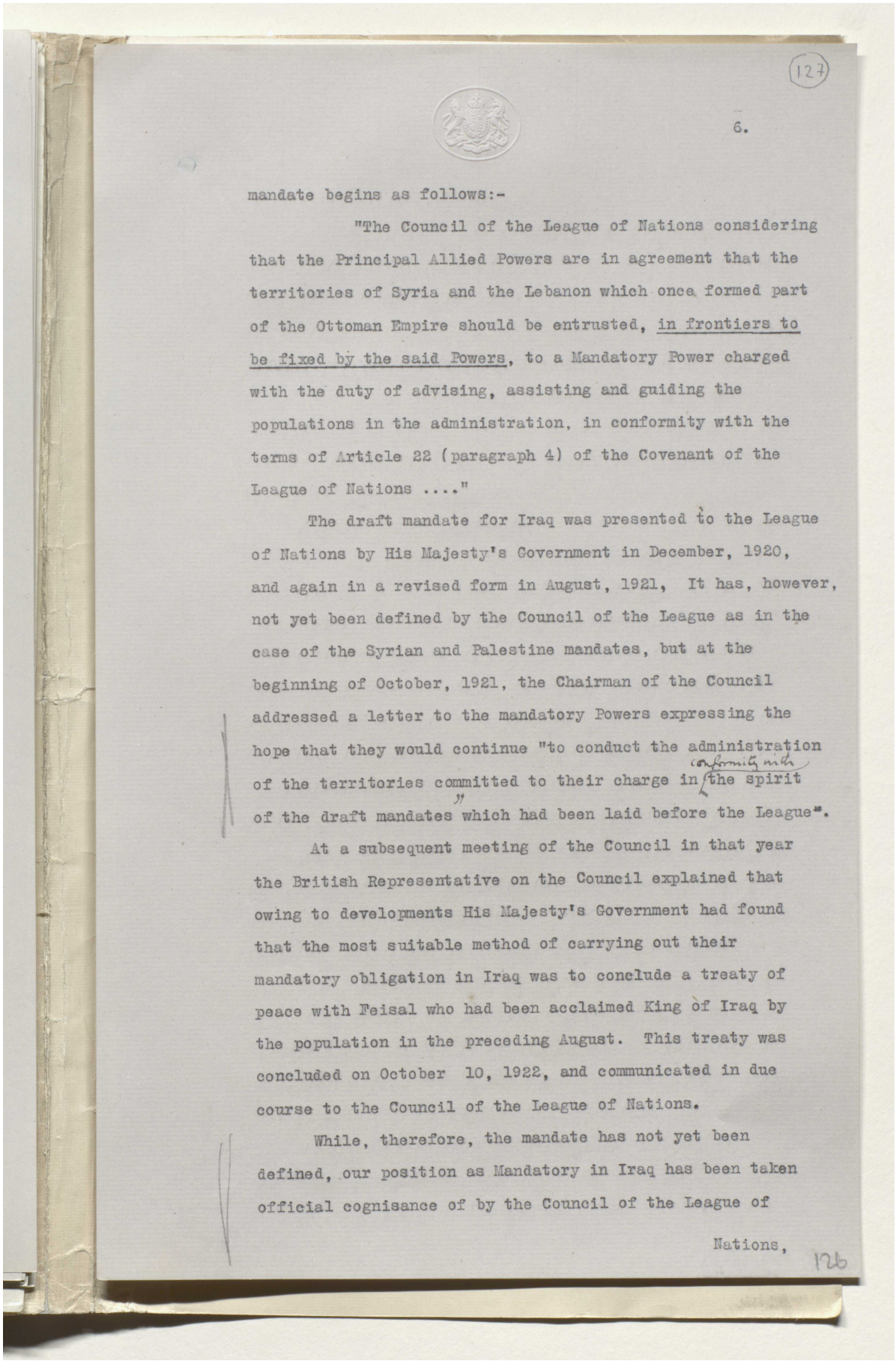

(127)

6.

mandate begins as follows:-

"The Council of the League of Nations considering that the Principal Allied Powers are in agreement that the territories of Syria and the Lebanon which once formed part of the Ottoman Empire should be entrusted, in frontiers to be fixed by the said Powers, to a Mandatory Power charged with the duty of advising, assisting and guiding the populations in the administration, in conformity with the terms of Article 22 (paragraph 4) of the Covenant of the League of Nations ...."

The draft mandate for Iraq was presented to the League of Nations by His Majesty's Government in December, 1920, and again in a revised form in August, 1921, It has, however, not yet been defined by the Council of the League as in the case of the Syrian and Palestine mandates, but at the beginning of October, 1921, the Chairman of the Council addressed a letter to the mandatory Powers expressing the hope that they would continue "to conduct the administration of the territories committed to their charge in conformity with the spirit of the draft mandates" which had been laid before the League".

At a subsequent meeting of the Council in that year the British Representative on the Council explained that owing to developments His Majesty's Government had found that the most suitable method of carrying out their mandatory obligation in Iraq was to conclude a treaty of peace with Feisal who had been acclaimed King of Iraq by the population in the preceding August. This treaty was concluded on October 10, 1922, and communicated in due course to the Council of the League of Nations.

While, therefore, the mandate has not yet been defined, our position as Mandatory in Iraq has been taken official cognisance of by the Council of the League of

Nations,

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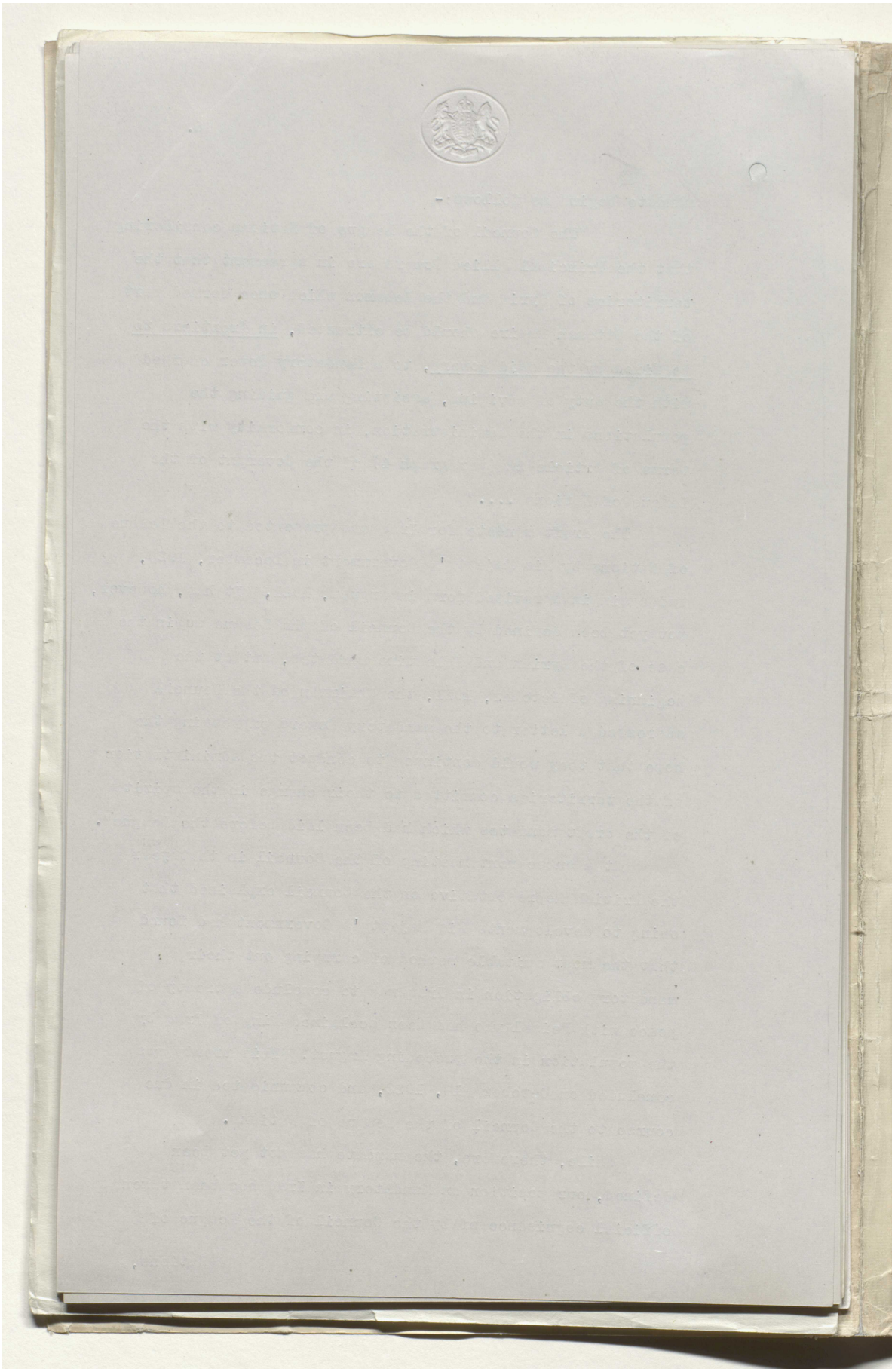

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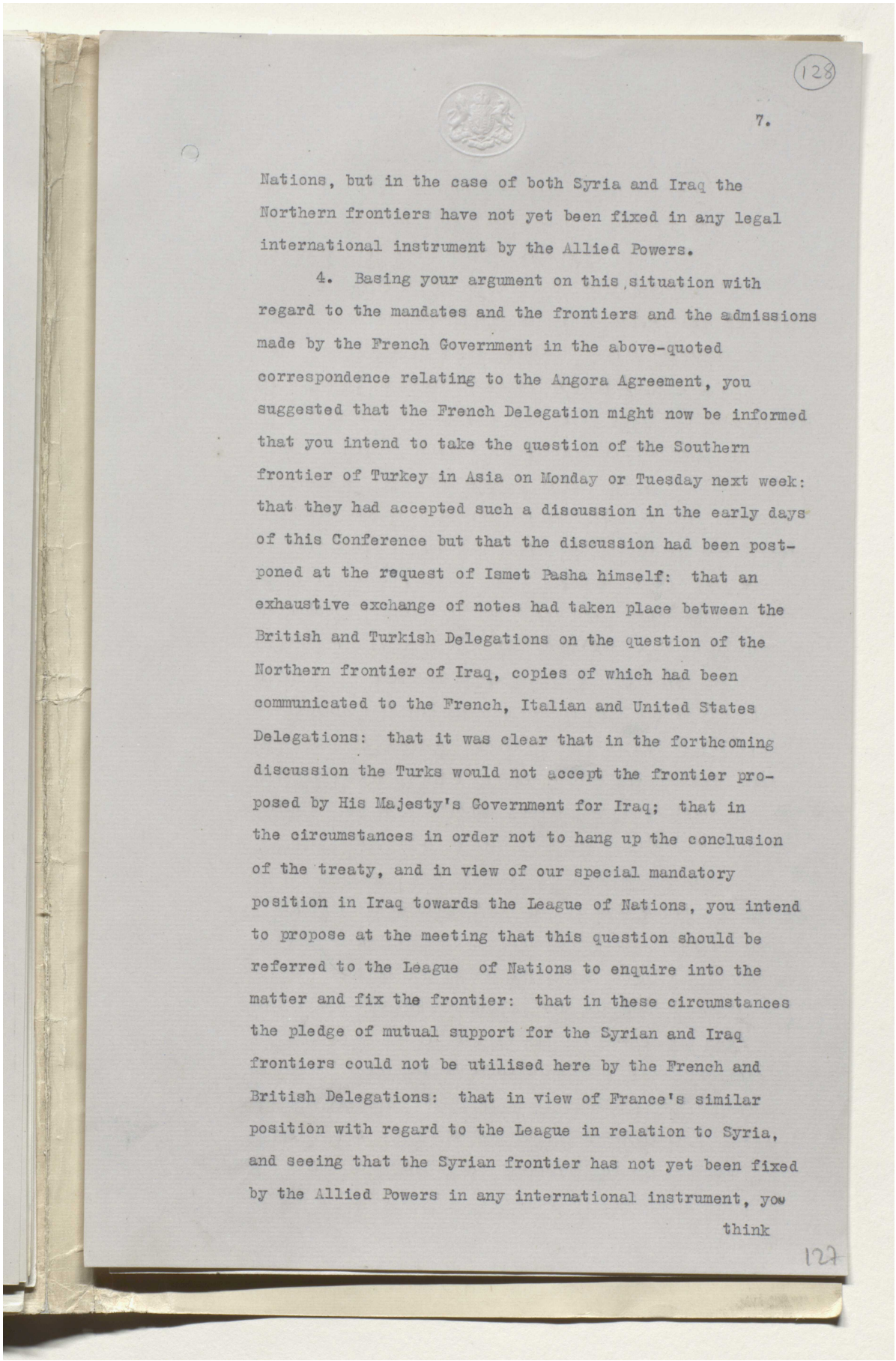

Nations, but in the case of both Syria and Iraq the Northern frontiers have not yet been fixed in any legal international instrument by the Allied Powers.

4. Basing your argument on this situation with regard to the mandates and the frontiers and the admissions made by the French Government in the above-quoted correspondence relating to the Angora Agreement, you suggested that the French Delegation might now be informed that you intend to take the question of the Southern frontier of Turkey in Asia on Monday or Tuesday next week: that they had accepted such a discussion in the early days of this Conference but that the discussion had been postponed at the request of Ismet Pasha himself: that an exhaustive exchange of notes had taken place between the British and Turkish Delegations on the question of the Northern frontier of Iraq, copies of which had been communicated to the French, Italian and United States Delegations: that it was clear that in the forthcoming discussion the Turks would not accept the frontier proposed by His Majesty's Government for Iraq; that in the circumstances in order not to hang up the conclusion of the treaty, and in view of our special mandatory position in Iraq towards the League of Nations, you intend to propose at the meeting that this question should be referred to the League of Nations to enquire into the matter and fix the frontier: that in these circumstances the pledge of mutual support for the Syrian and Iraq frontiers could not be utilised here by the French and British Delegations: that in view of France's similar position with regard to the League in relation to Syria, and seeing that the Syrian frontier has not yet been fixed by the Allied Powers in any international instrument, you think

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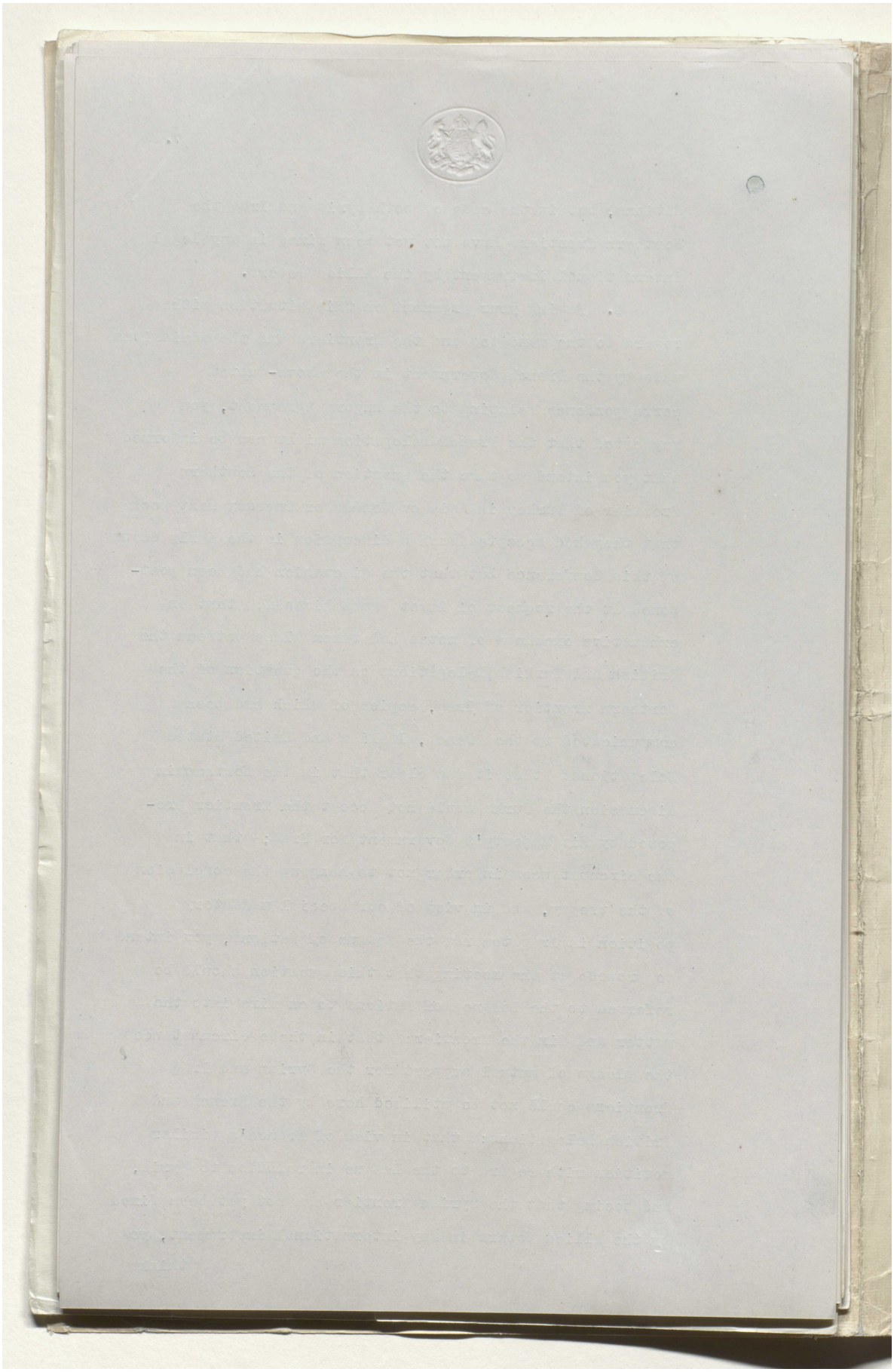

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think it would be well for the French to agree also that the whole question of the Southern frontier of Turkey in Asia should be referred ~~immediately~~ for a decision by the Council of the League: that at the same time you would ~~request~~ pledge yourself here to support in the Council the ratification of the Syrian frontier as laid down in the Angora Agreement of October 20, 1921, and that you would agree to the French Delegation informing the Turkish Delegation here that both the French and British Representatives on the Council would support the ratification of that frontier if the Turkish Government agree to submit the whole question to the Council of the League.

5. You suggested that the resolution to be put to the Commission on Monday or Tuesday after the discussion should run something as follows:-

"That the Conference should invite the Council of the League of Nations to enquire at as early a date as possible and to lay down where the frontier of the State of Iraq, at present coincident with the Northern frontier of the vilayet of Mosul, shall be drawn."

If the French accept reference to the Council as regards the Syrian frontier the words "the Northern frontier of Syria as at present administered in accordance with the separate arrangement reached between the French Government and the Grand National Assembly of Angora on October 20, 1921," and might be inserted after the word "where".

6. You suggested that if Ismet Pasha refuses reference to the arbitration by the Council of the League of Nations at the meeting of the Commission you should either at once invoke Articles 11 to 17 inclusive of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which are quoted in

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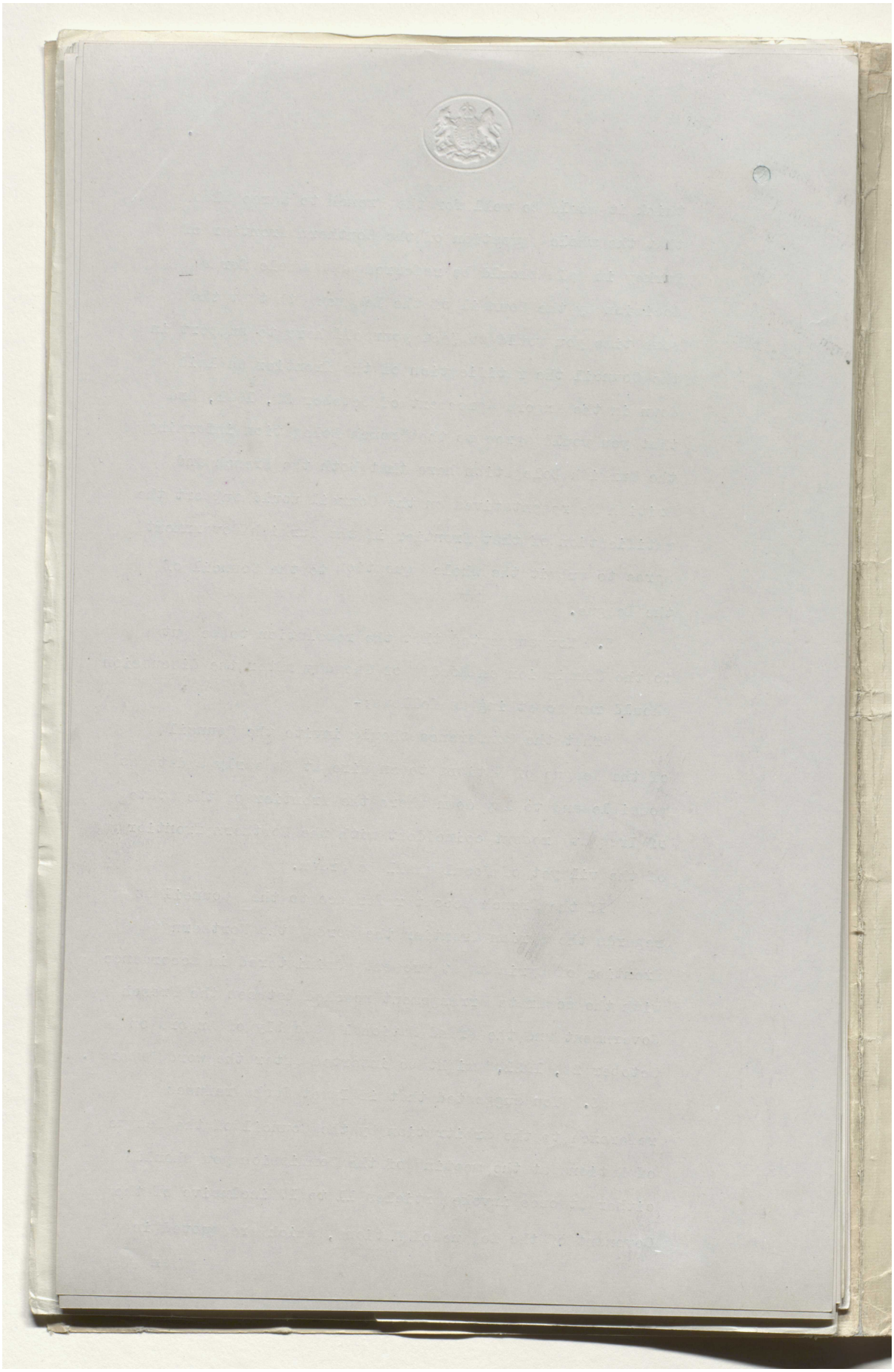

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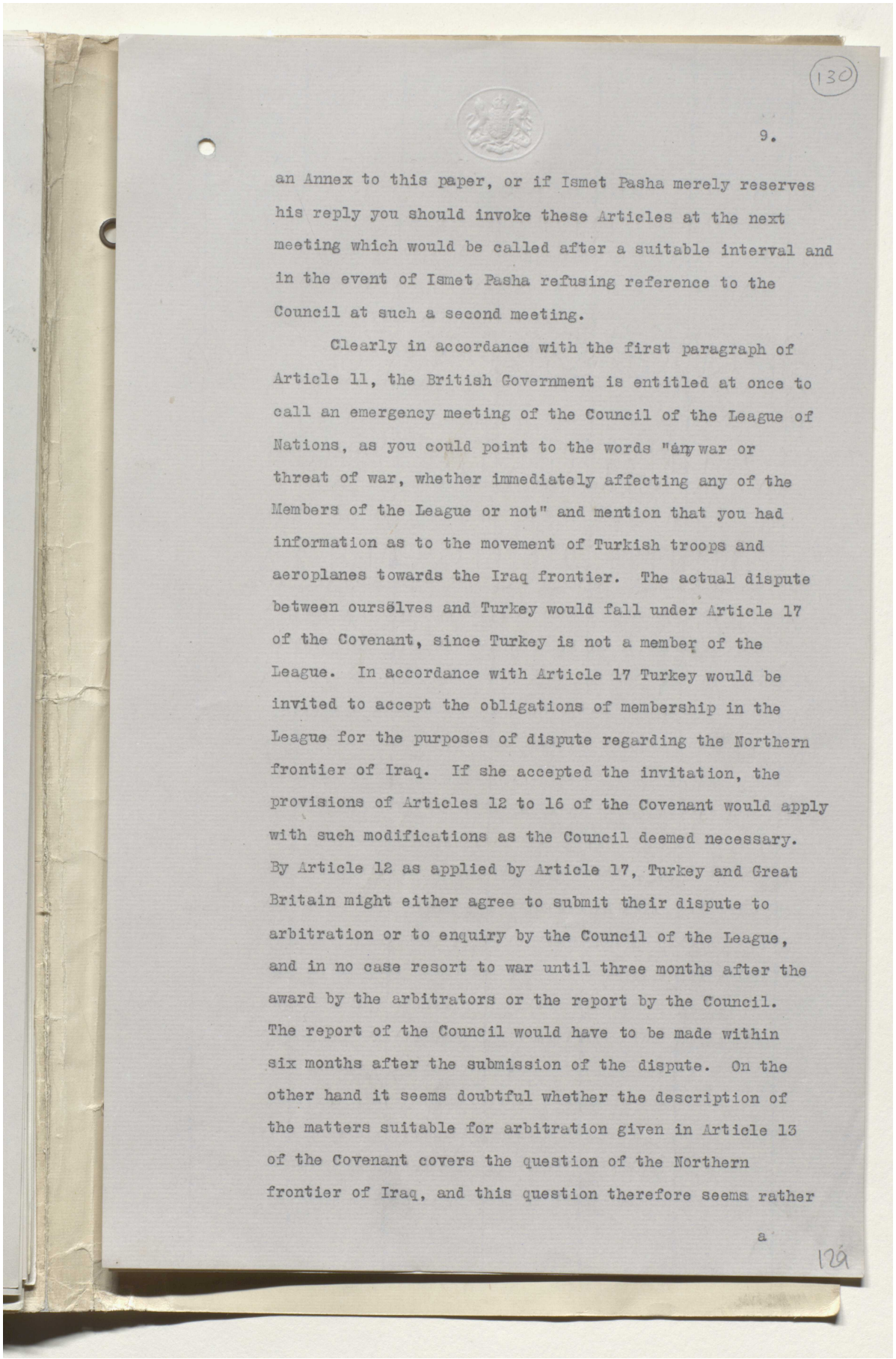

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an Annex to this paper, or if Ismet Pasha merely reserves his reply you should invoke these Articles at the next meeting which would be called after a suitable interval and in the event of Ismet Pasha refusing reference to the Council at such a second meeting.

Clearly in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 11, the British Government is entitled at once to call an emergency meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, as you could point to the words "any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not" and mention that you had information as to the movement of Turkish troops and aeroplanes towards the Iraq frontier. The actual dispute between ourselves and Turkey would fall under Article 17 of the Covenant, since Turkey is not a member of the League. In accordance with Article 17 Turkey would be invited to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of dispute regarding the Northern frontier of Iraq. If she accepted the invitation, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16 of the Covenant would apply with such modifications as the Council deemed necessary. By Article 12 as applied by Article 17, Turkey and Great Britain might either agree to submit their dispute to arbitration or to enquiry by the Council of the League, and in no case resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the report by the Council. The report of the Council would have to be made within six months after the submission of the dispute. On the other hand it seems doubtful whether the description of the matters suitable for arbitration given in Article 13 of the Covenant covers the question of the Northern frontier of Iraq, and this question therefore seems rather

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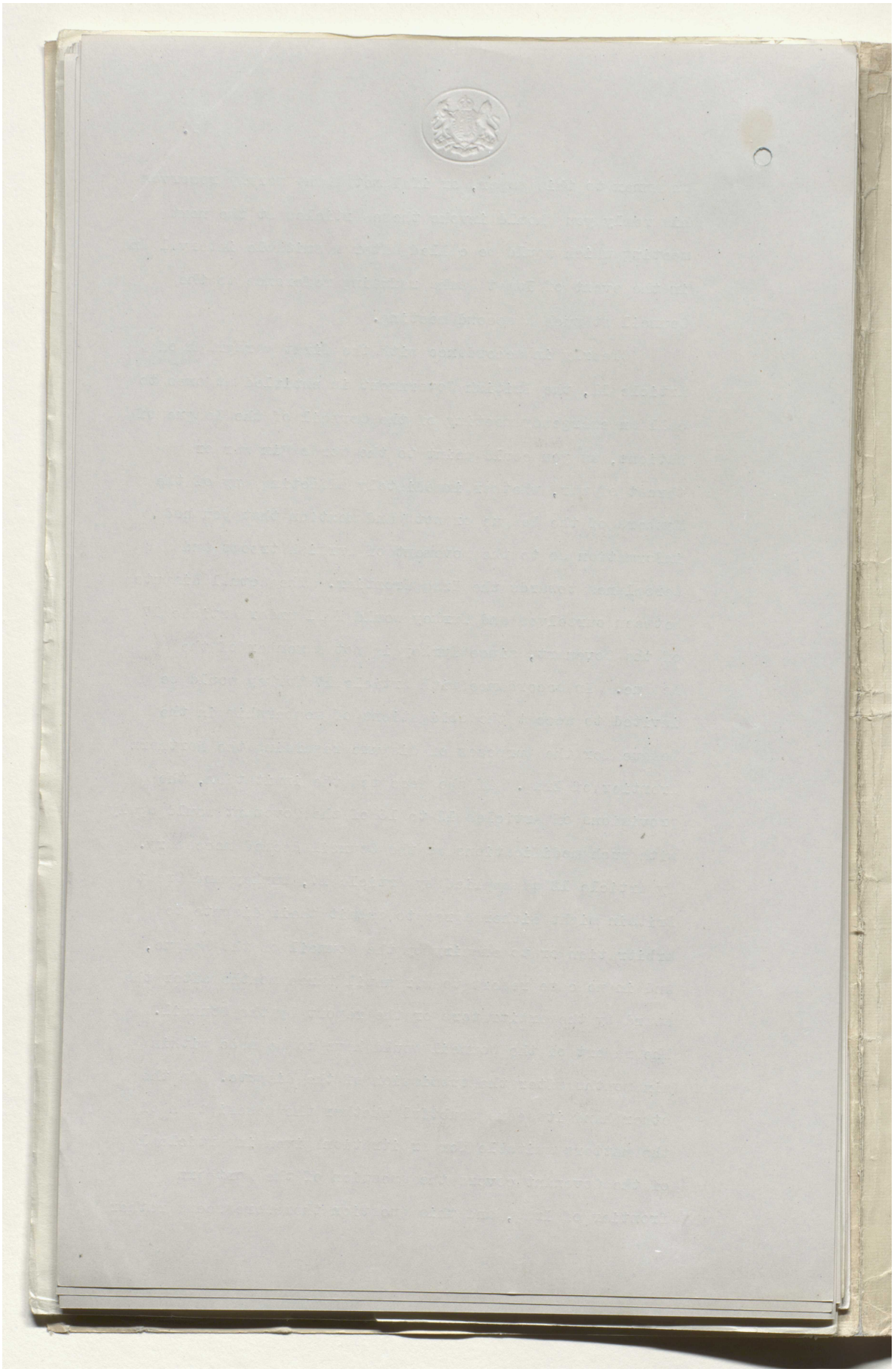

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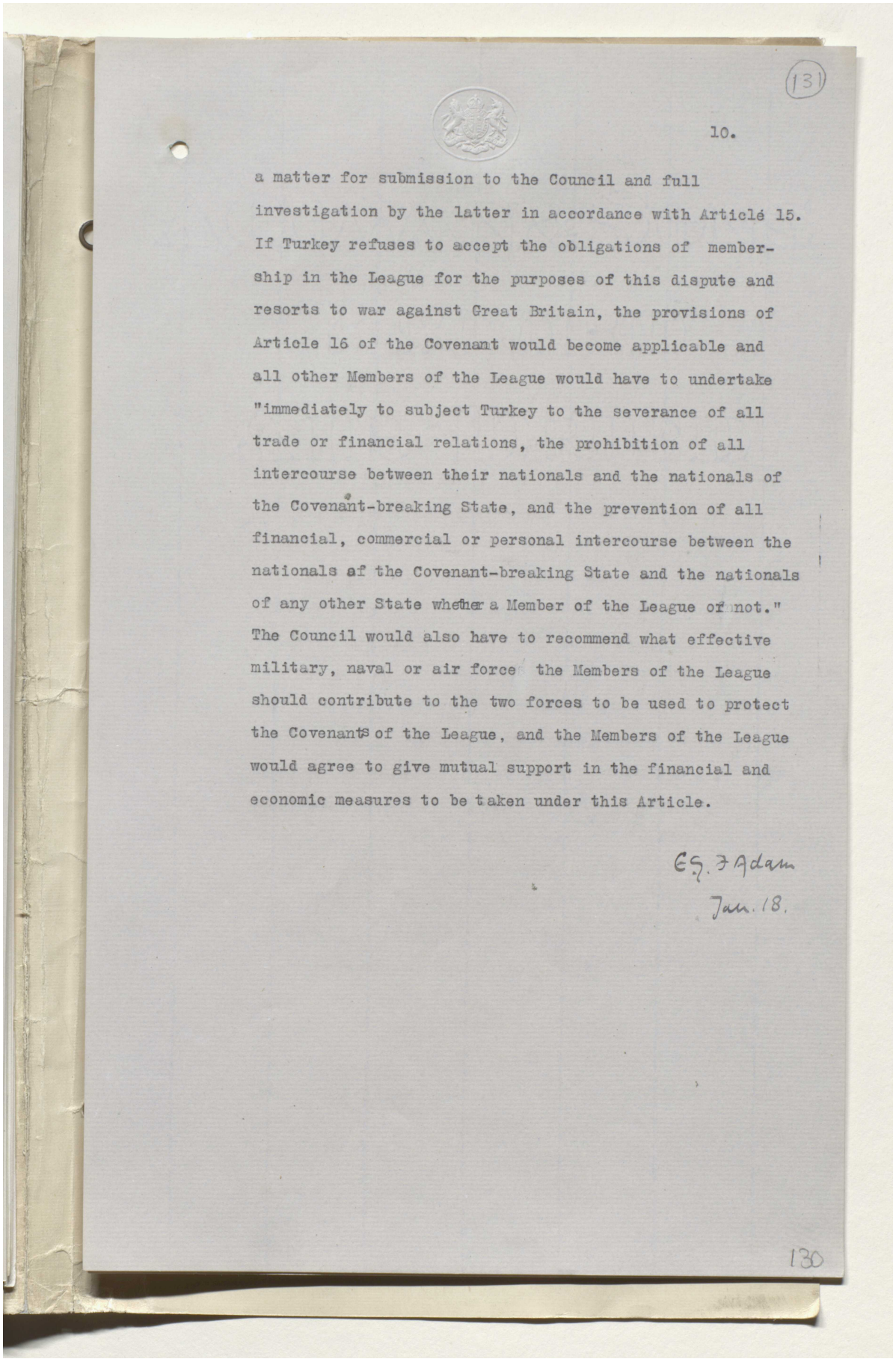

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a matter for submission to the Council and full investigation by the latter in accordance with Article 15. If Turkey refuses to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of this dispute and resorts to war against Great Britain, the provisions of Article 16 of the Covenant would become applicable and all other Members of the League would have to undertake "immediately to subject Turkey to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State whether a Member of the League or not." The Council would also have to recommend what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League should contribute to the two forces to be used to protect the Covenants of the League, and the Members of the League would agree to give mutual support in the financial and economic measures to be taken under this Article.

E.G. F Adam
Jan. 18.

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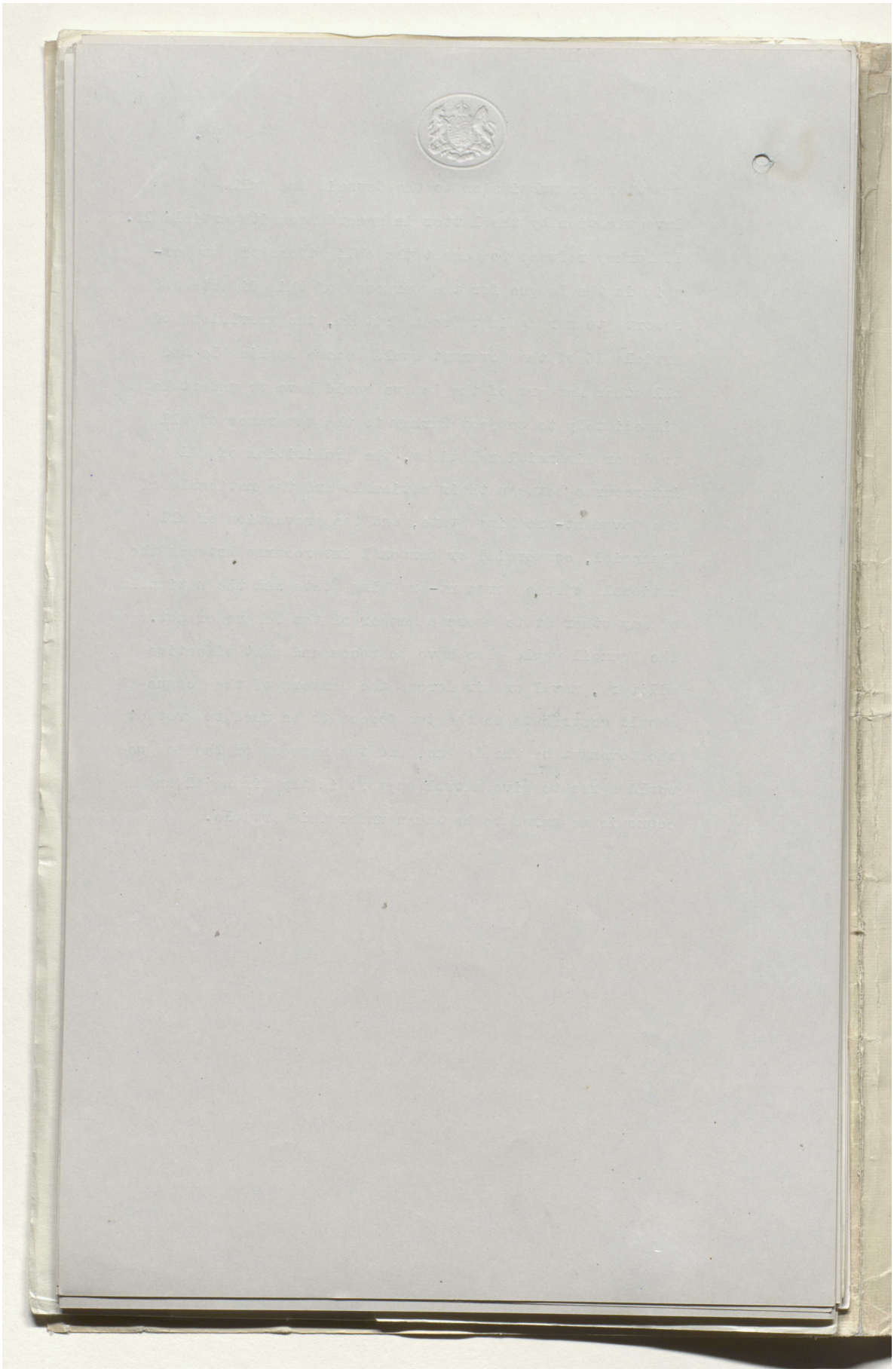

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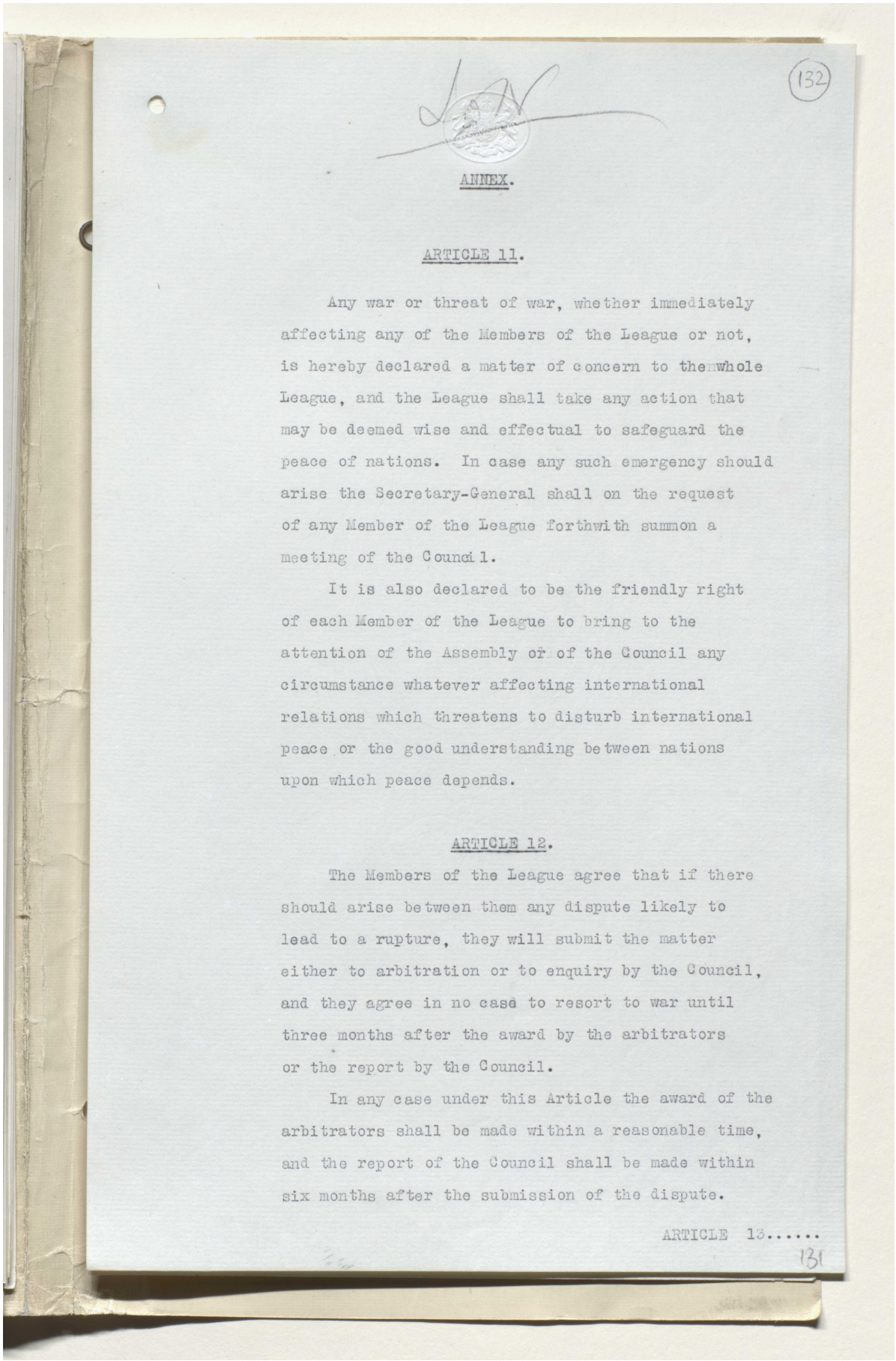

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ANNEX.

ARTICLE 11.

Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary-General shall on the request of any Member of the League forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.

ARTICLE 12.

The Members of the League agree that if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or to enquiry by the Council, and they agree in no case to resort to war until three months after the award by the arbitrators or the report by the Council.

In any case under this Article the award of the arbitrators shall be made within a reasonable time, and the report of the Council shall be made within six months after the submission of the dispute.

ARTICLE 13.....

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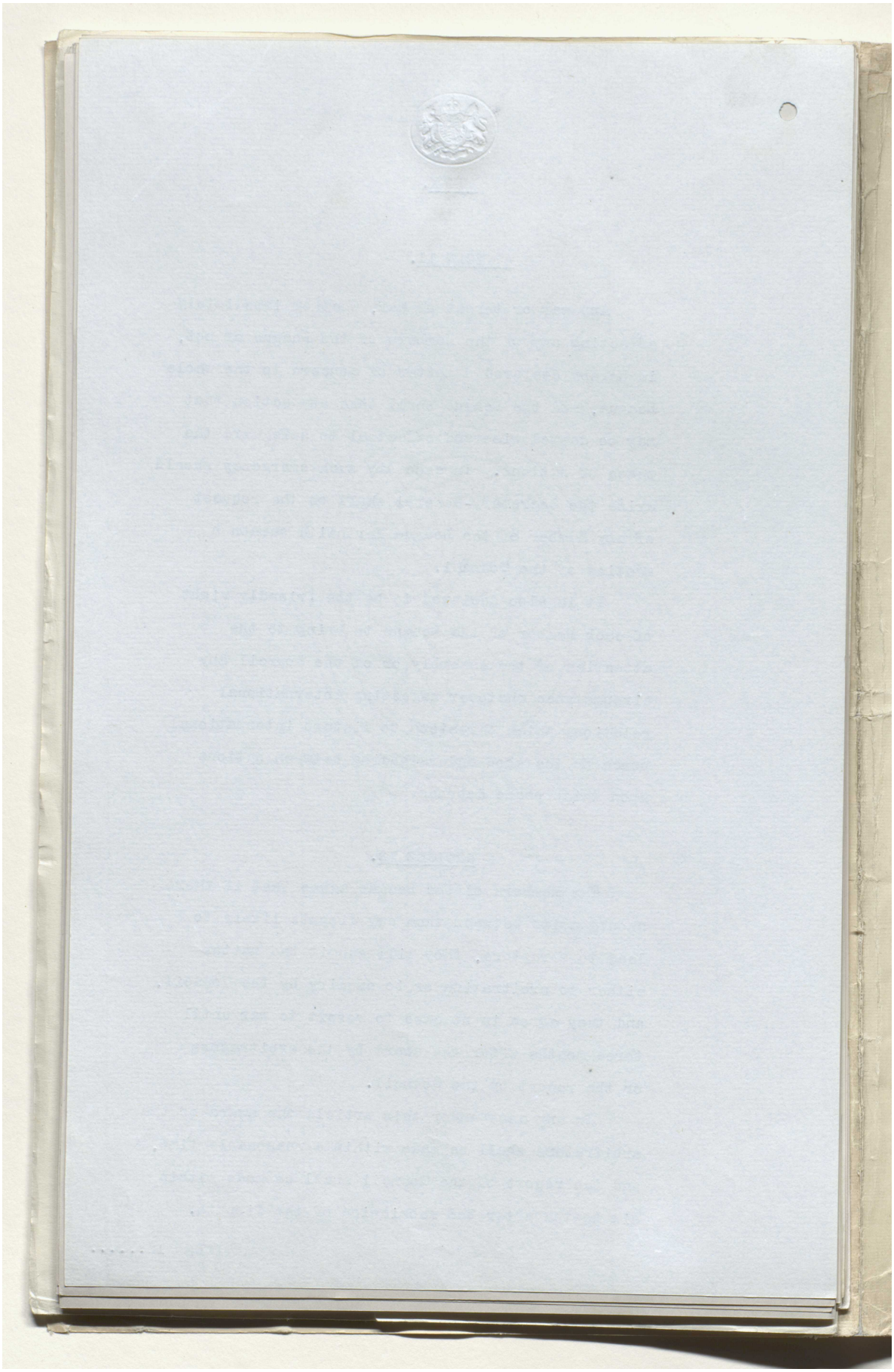

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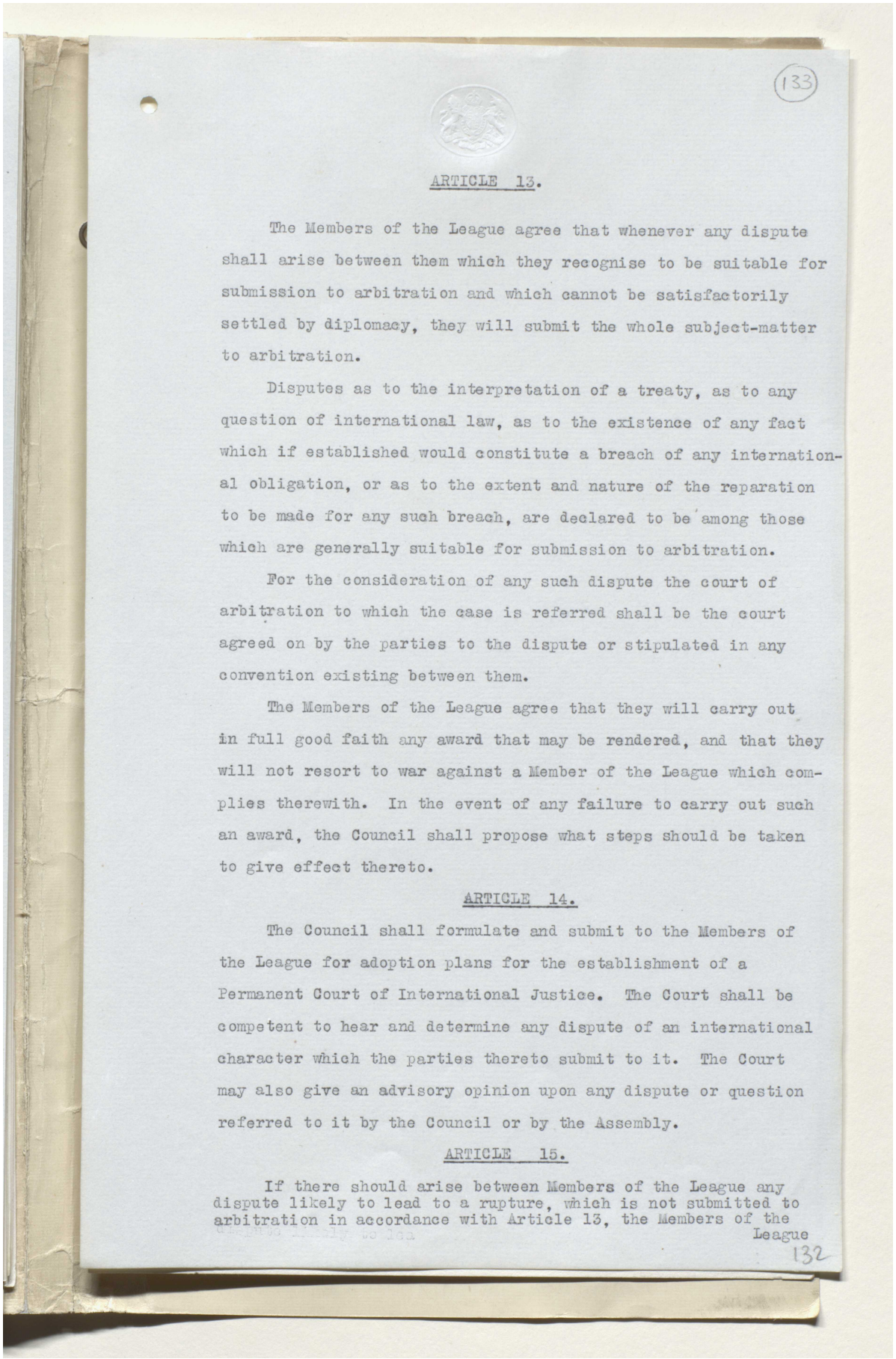

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ARTICLE 13.

The Members of the League agree that whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognise to be suitable for submission to arbitration and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject-matter to arbitration.

Disputes as to the interpretation of a treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any fact which if established would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration.

For the consideration of any such dispute the court of arbitration to which the case is referred shall be the court agreed on by the parties to the dispute or stipulated in any convention existing between them.

The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against a Member of the League which complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry out such an award, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.

ARTICLE 14.

The Council shall formulate and submit to the Members of the League for adoption plans for the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court shall be competent to hear and determine any dispute of an international character which the parties thereto submit to it. The Court may also give an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly.

ARTICLE 15.

If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League

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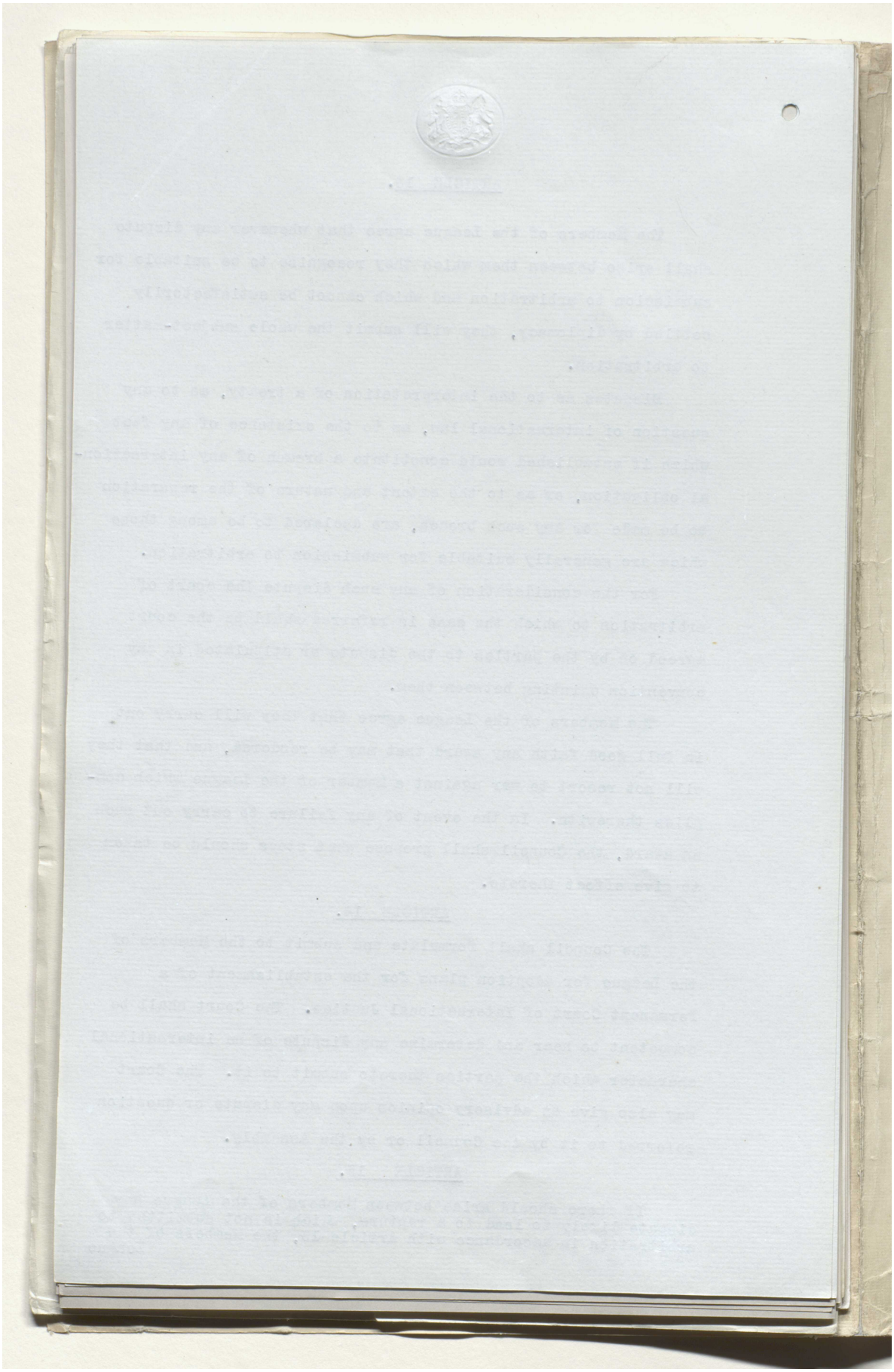

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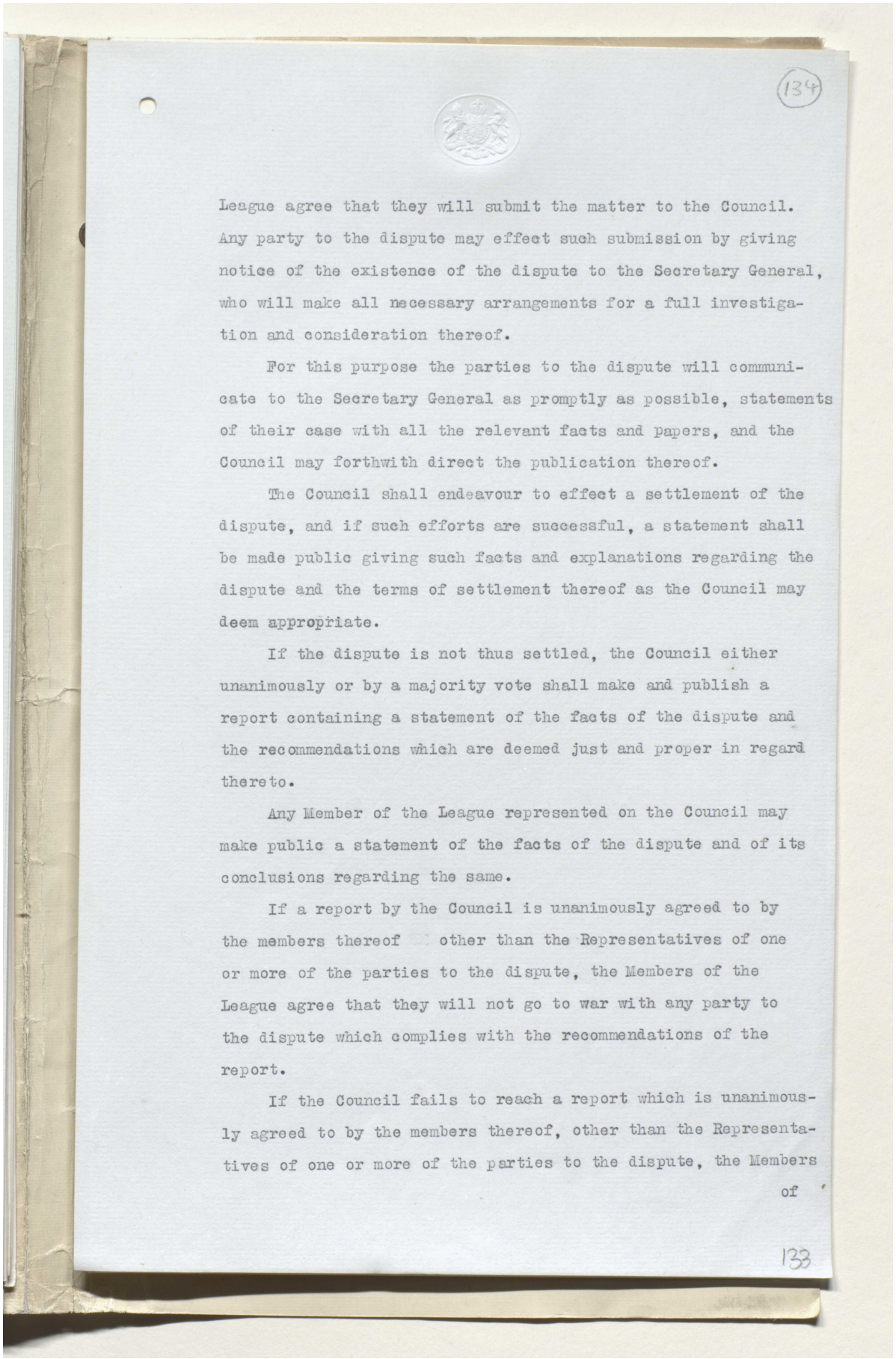

League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary General as promptly as possible, statements of their case with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council either unanimously or by a majority vote shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.

Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make public a statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of

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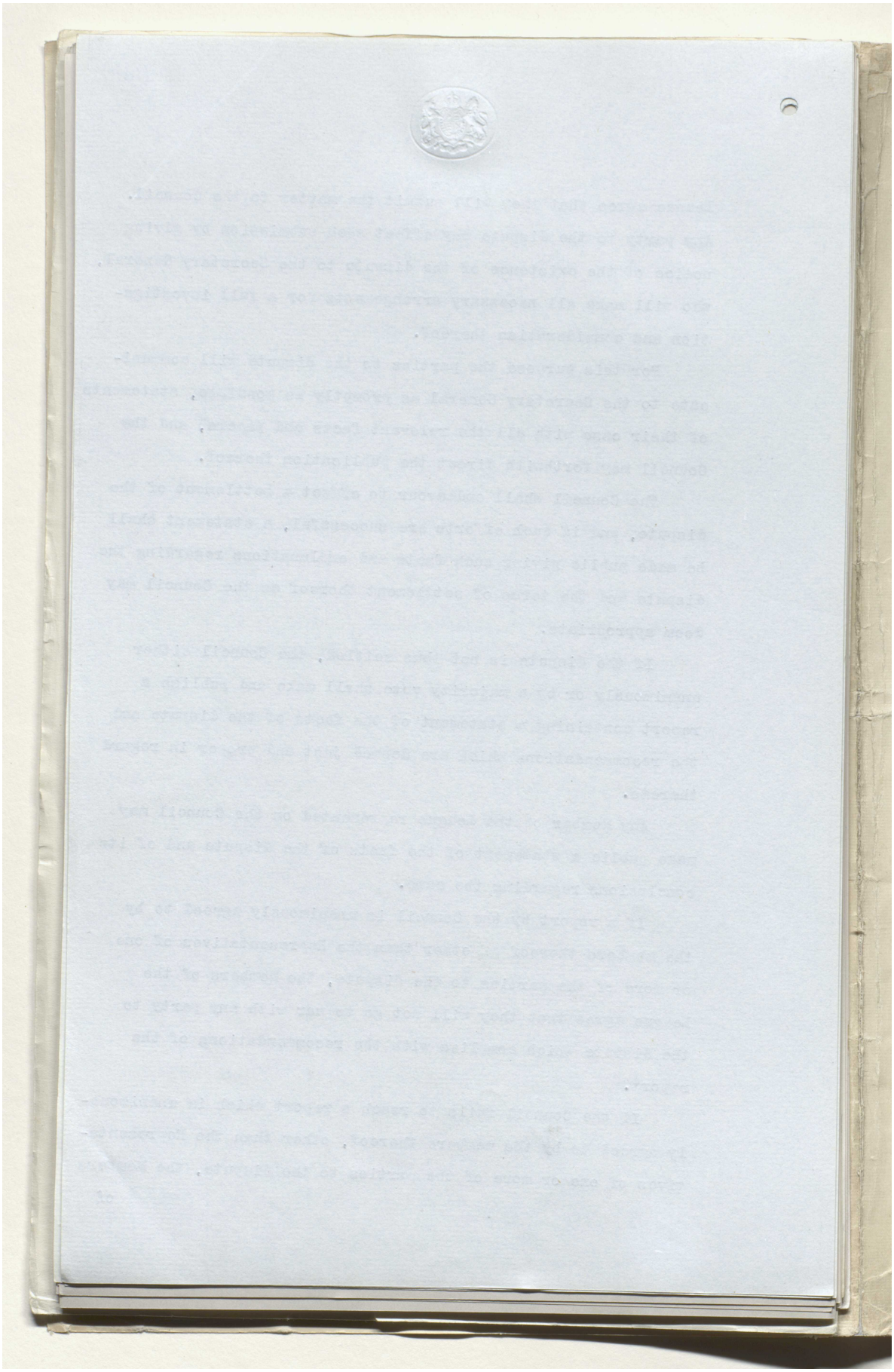

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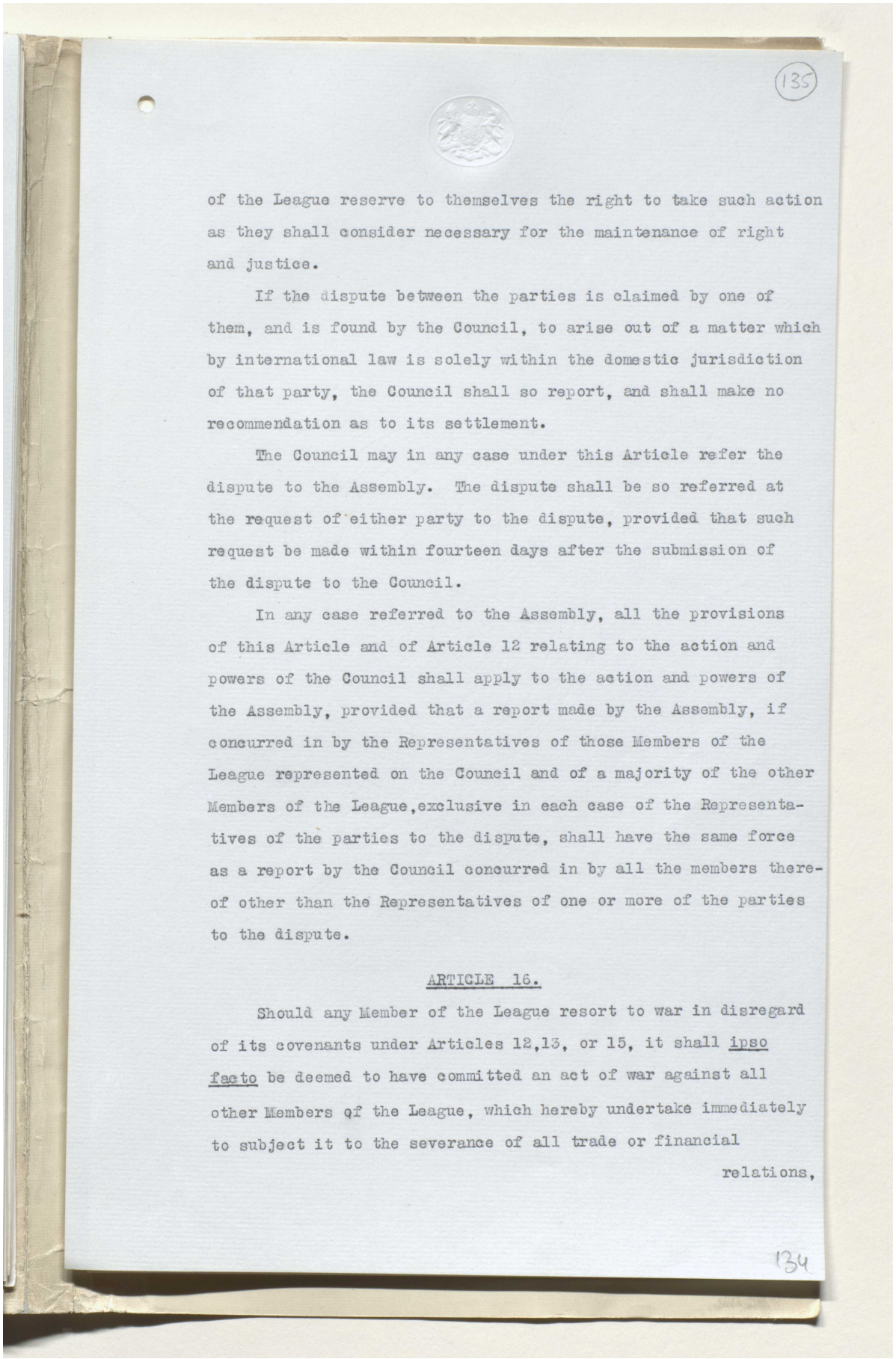

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of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.

If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council, to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute, provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12 relating to the action and powers of the Council shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the Representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the Representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the members thereof other than the Representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute.

ARTICLE 16.

Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its covenants under Articles 12, 13, or 15, it shall ipso facto be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations,

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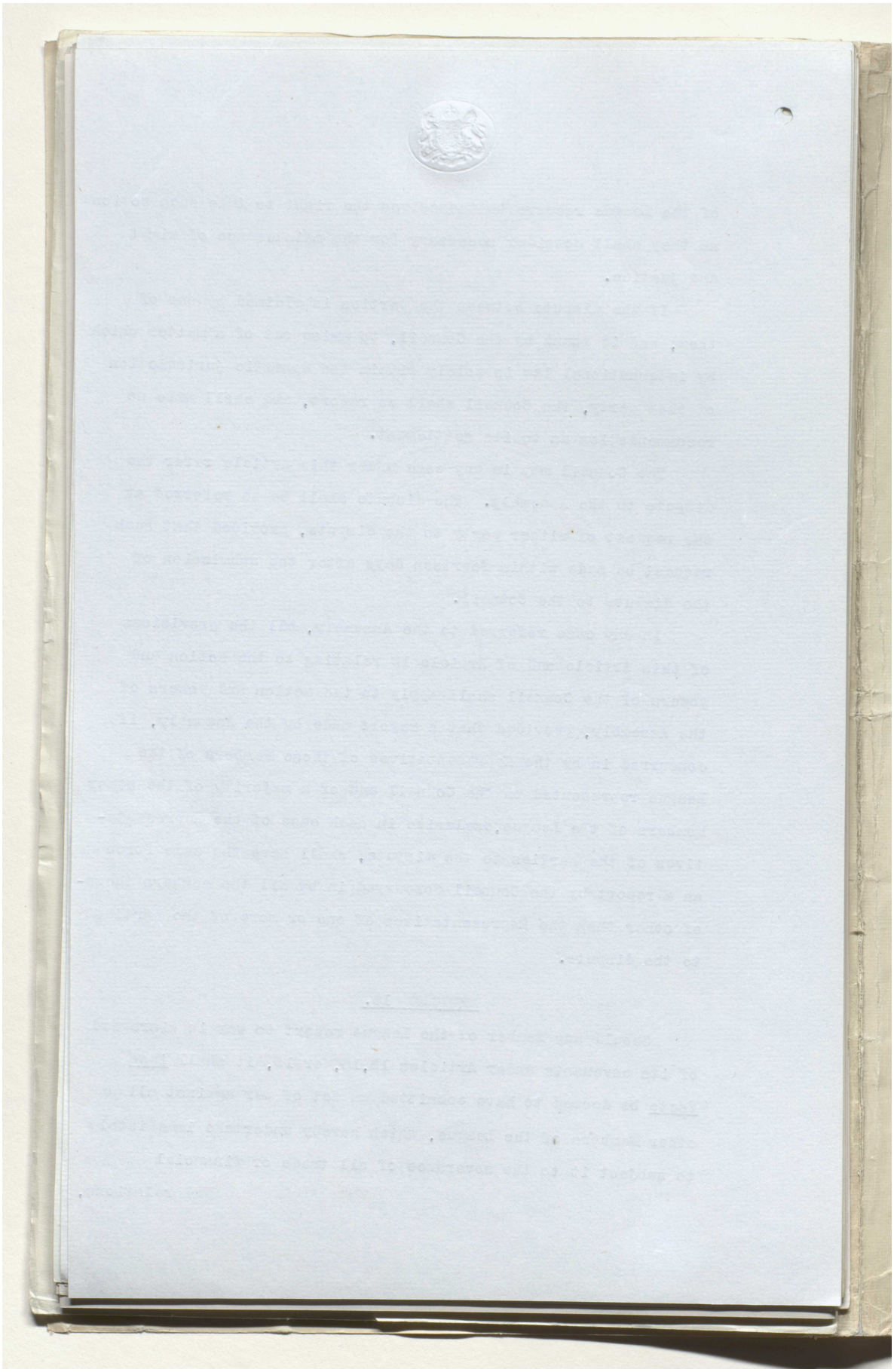

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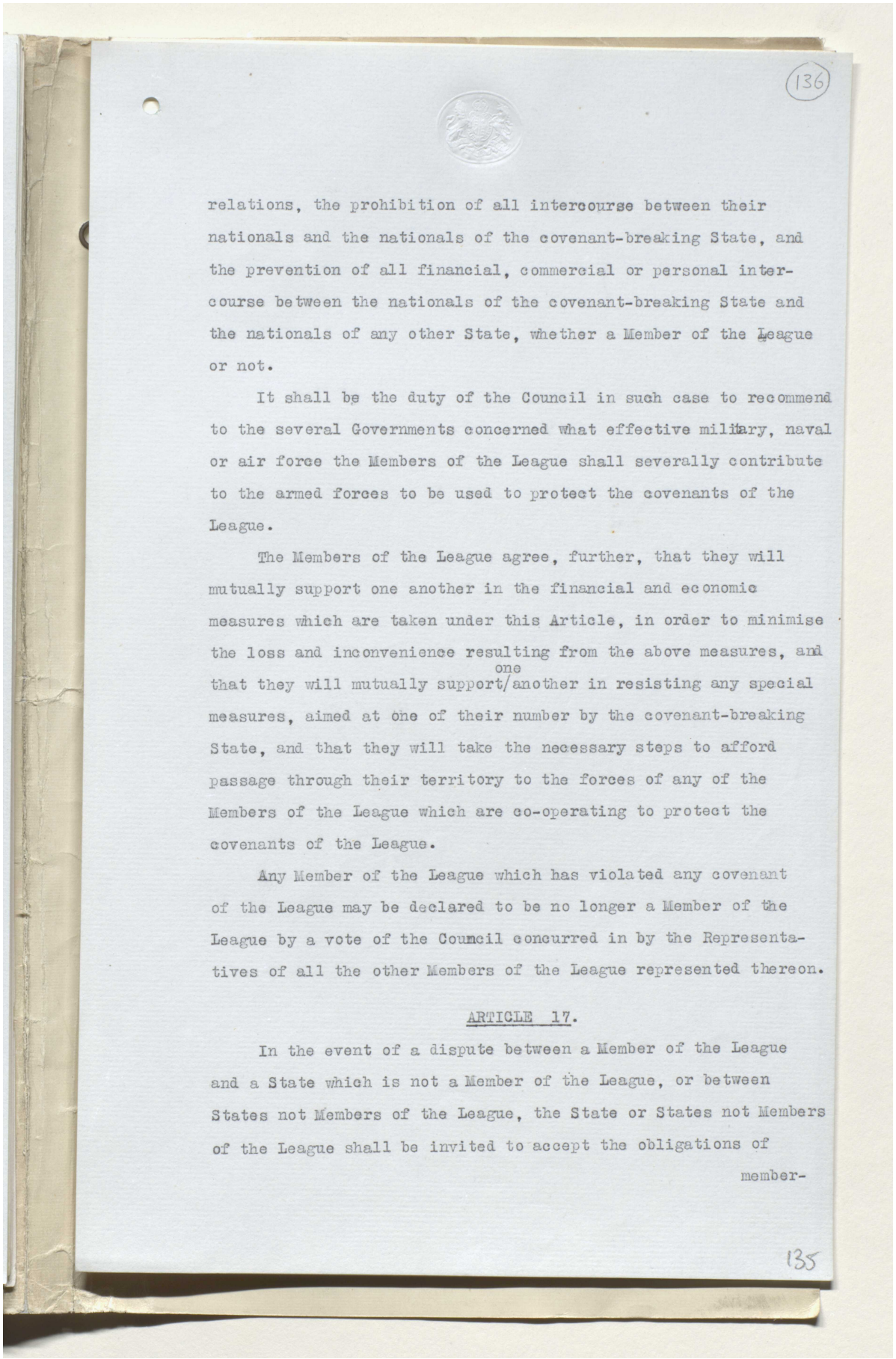

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relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League.

The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures, aimed at one of their number by the covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are co-operating to protect the covenants of the League.

Any Member of the League which has violated any covenant of the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the Representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon.

ARTICLE 17.

In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of member-

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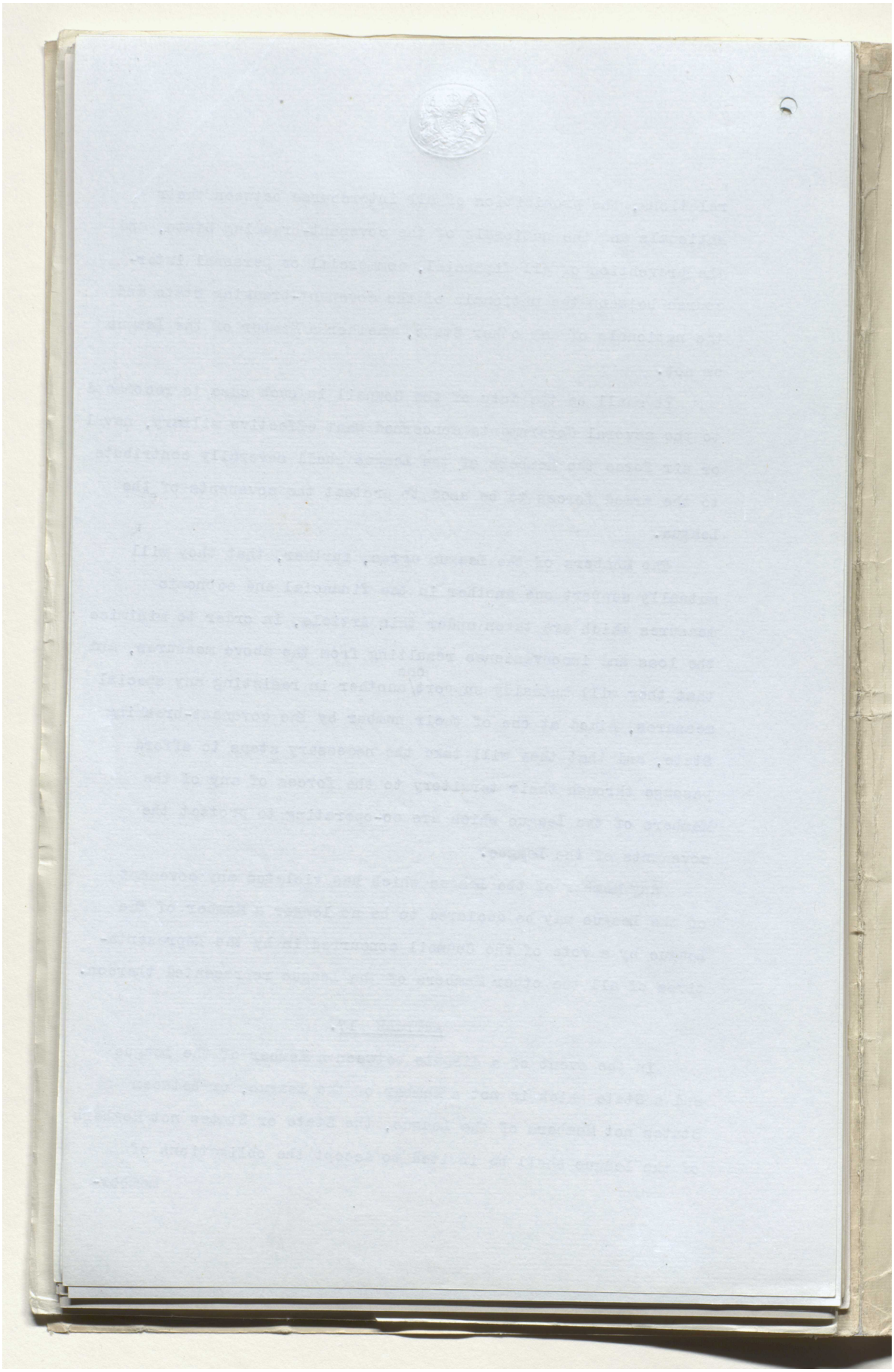

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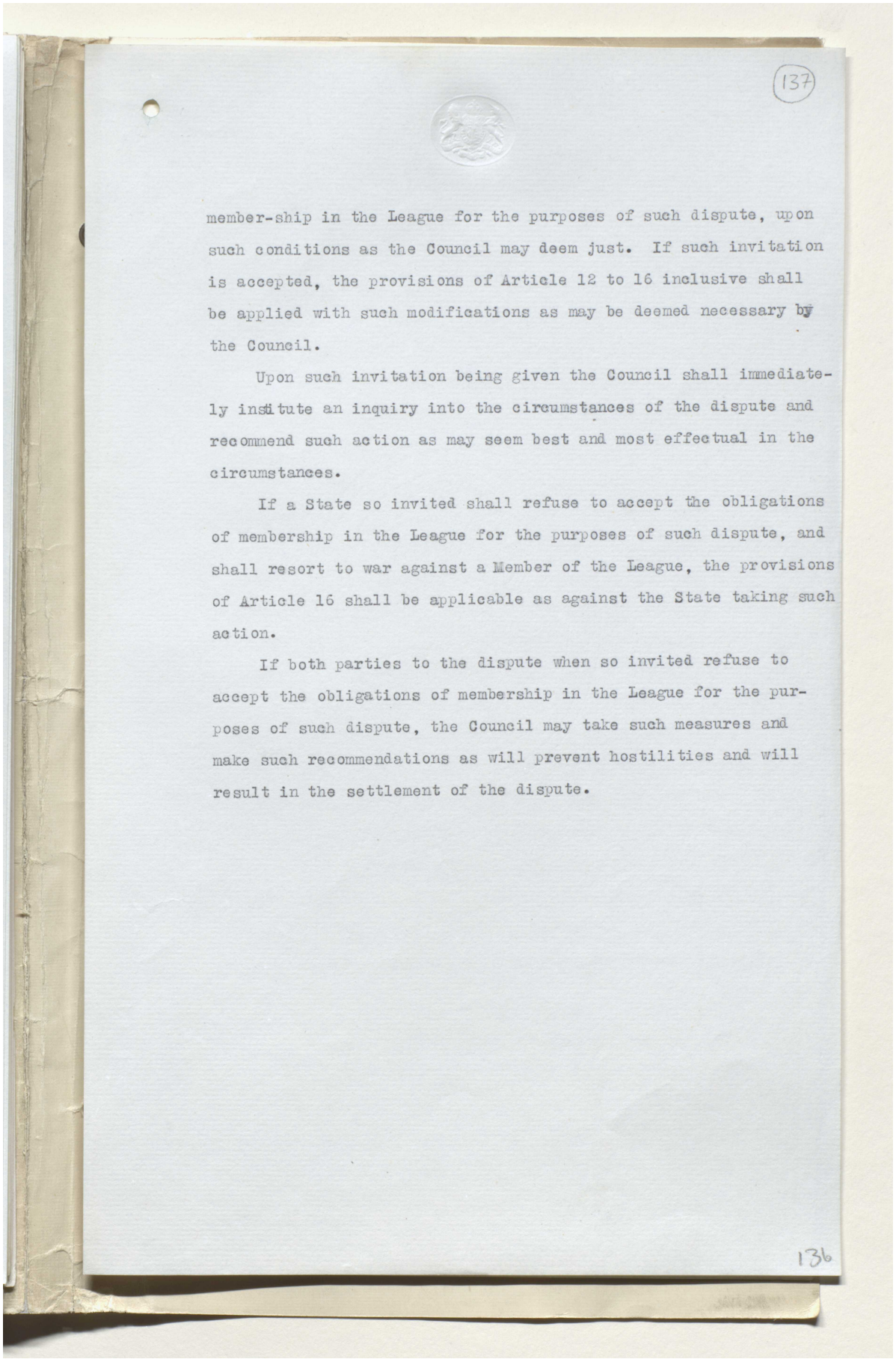

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member-ship in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Article 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

Upon such invitation being given the Council shall immediately institute an inquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

If both parties to the dispute when so invited refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute.

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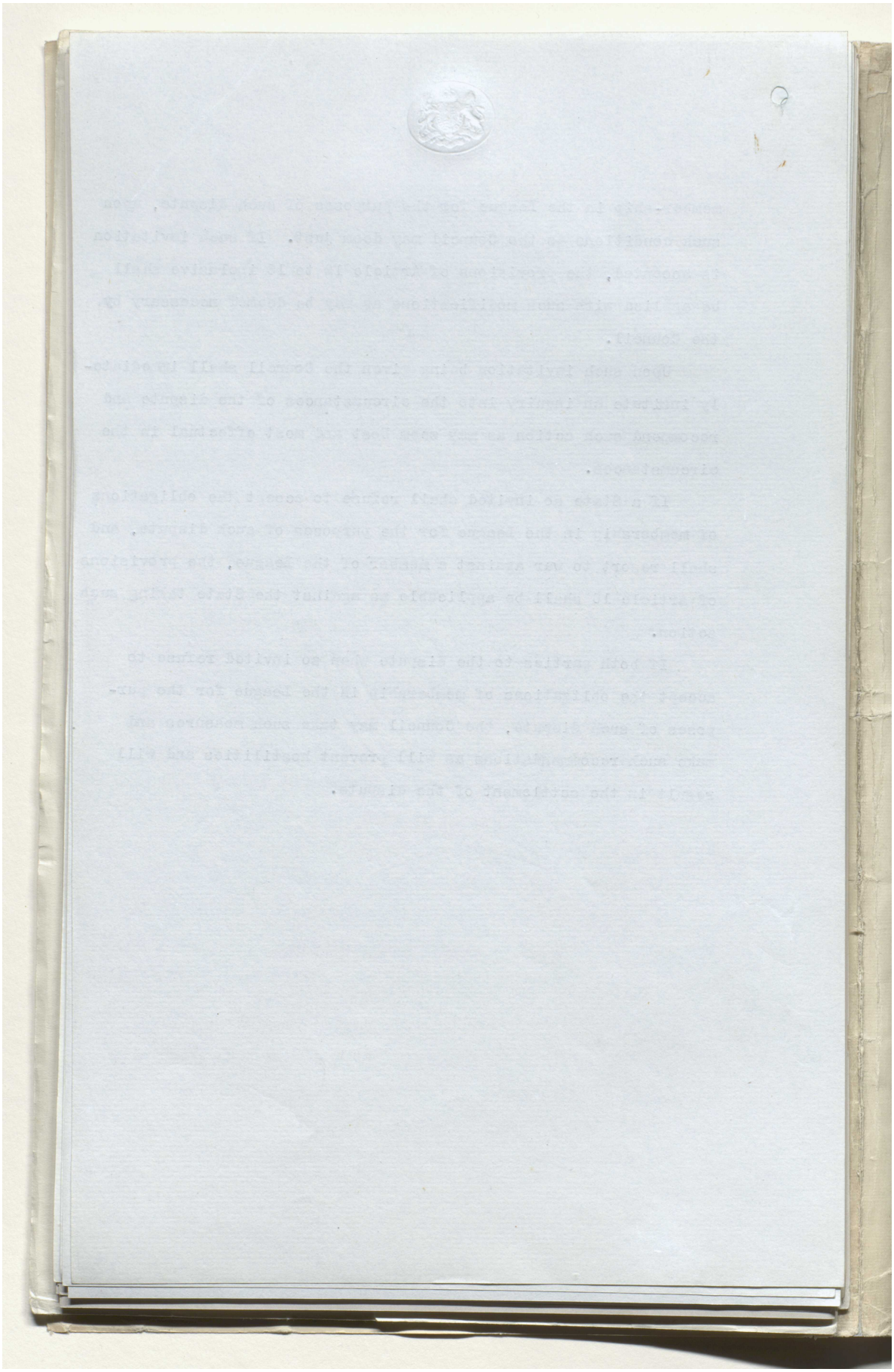

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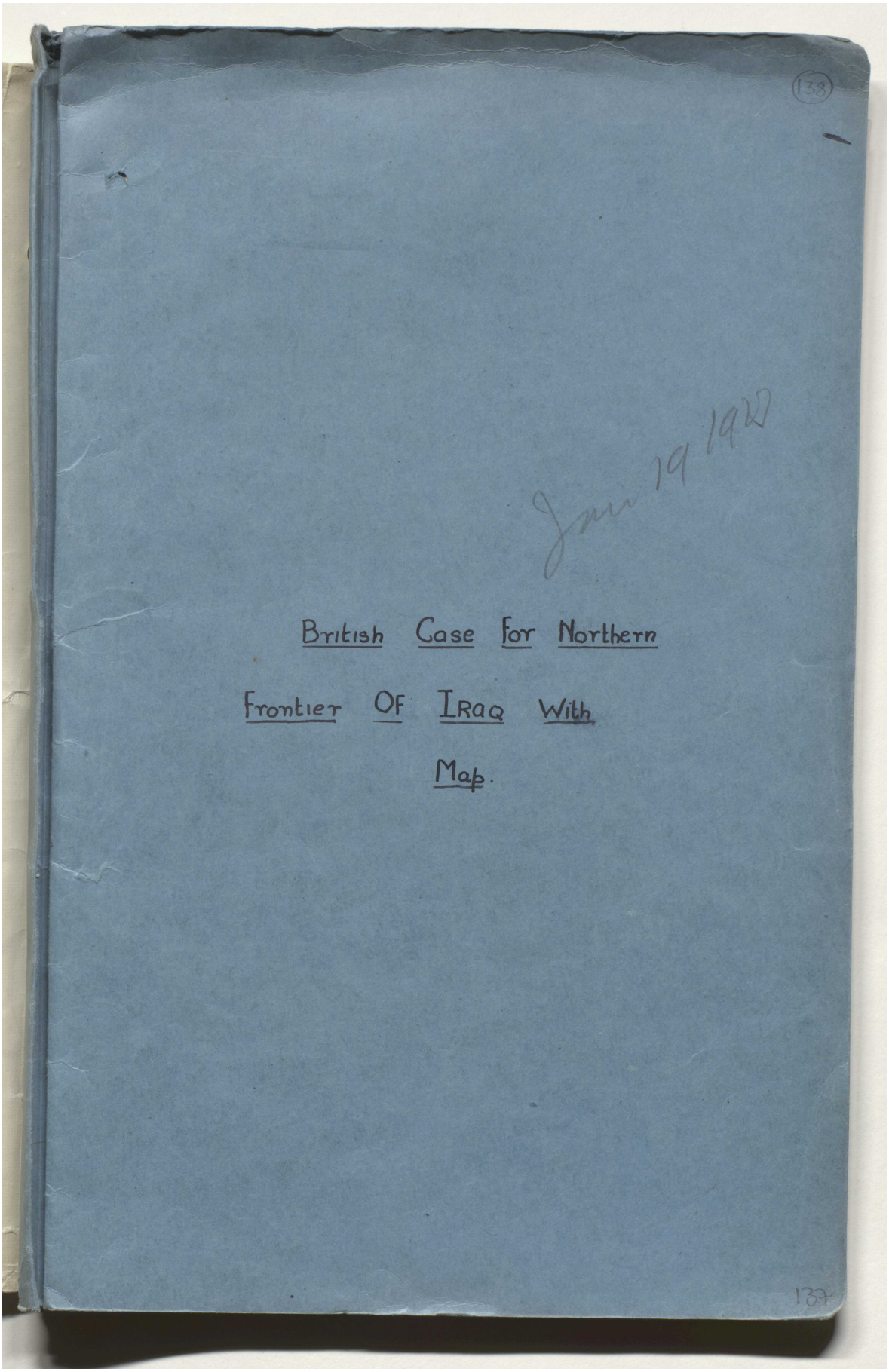

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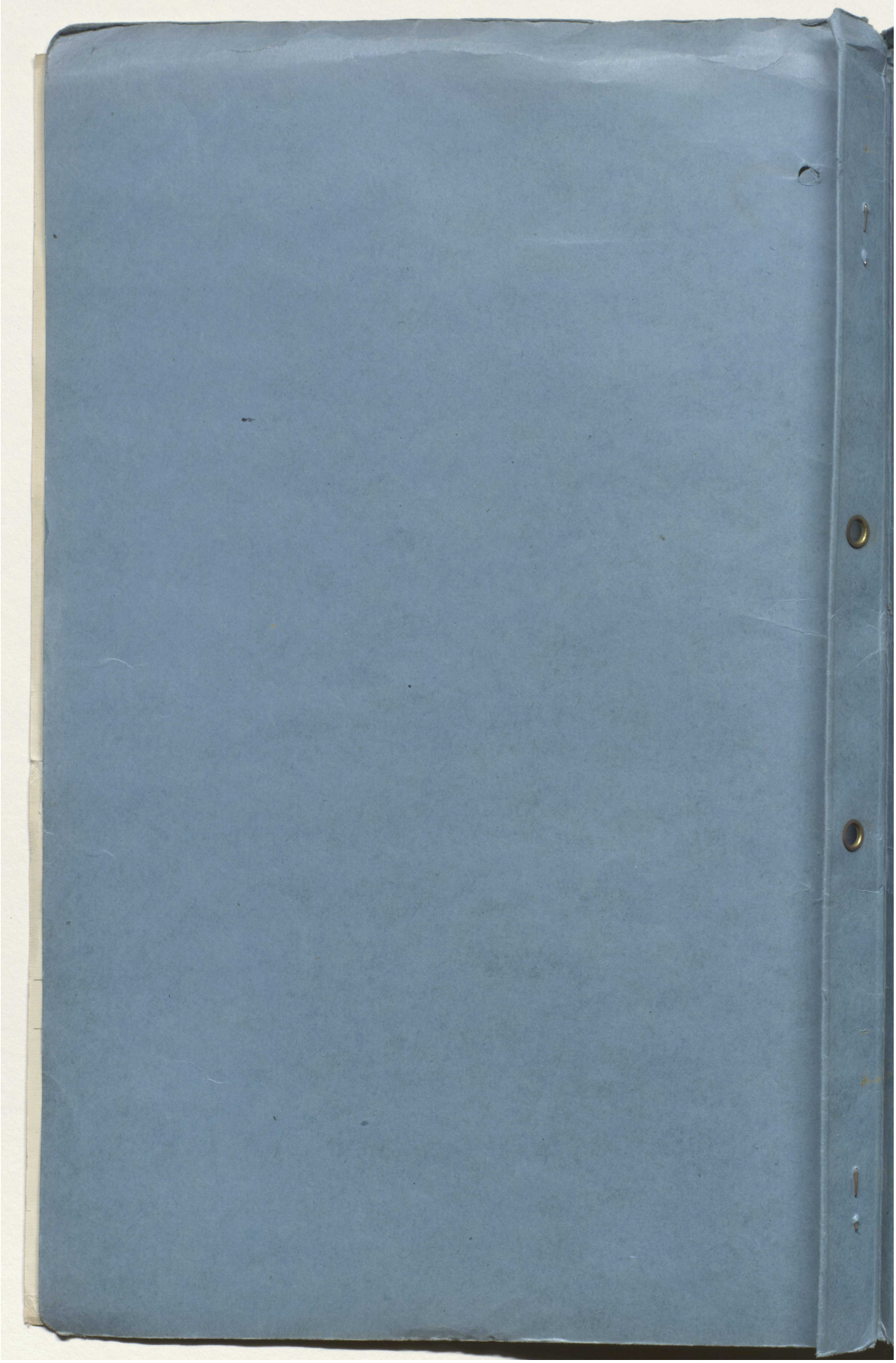

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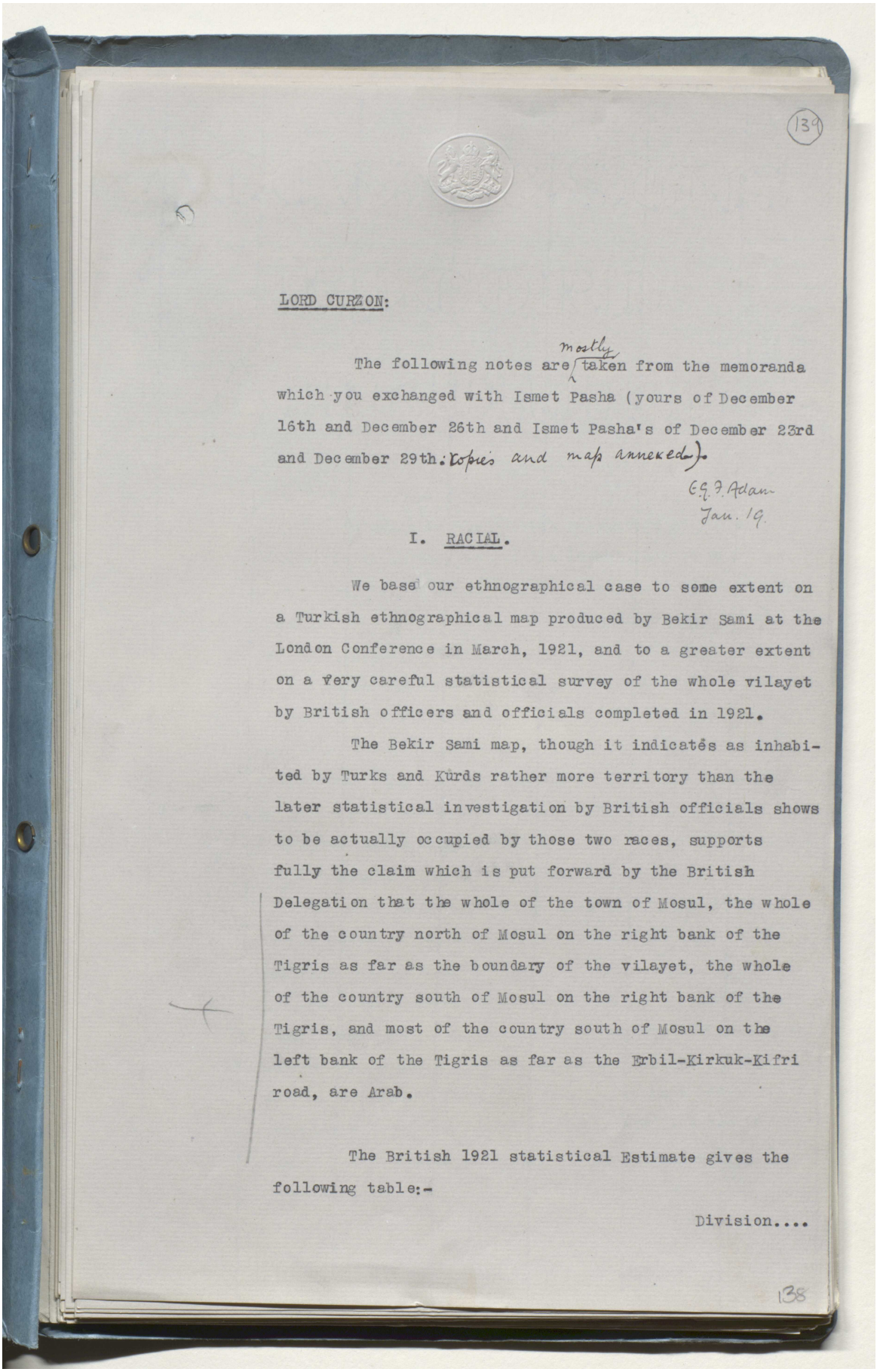

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LORD CURZON:

The following notes are mostly taken from the memoranda which you exchanged with Ismet Pasha (yours of December 16th and December 26th and Ismet Pasha's of December 23rd and December 29th: copies and map annexed).

E.G.F. Adam
Jan. 19.

I. RACIAL.

We base our ethnographical case to some extent on a Turkish ethnographical map produced by Bekir Sami at the London Conference in March, 1921, and to a greater extent on a very careful statistical survey of the whole vilayet by British officers and officials completed in 1921.

The Bekir Sami map, though it indicates as inhabited by Turks and Kurds rather more territory than the later statistical investigation by British officials shows to be actually occupied by those two races, supports fully the claim which is put forward by the British Delegation that the whole of the town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of the Tigris as far as the Erbil-Kirkuk-Kifri road, are Arab.

The British 1921 statistical Estimate gives the following table:-

Division....

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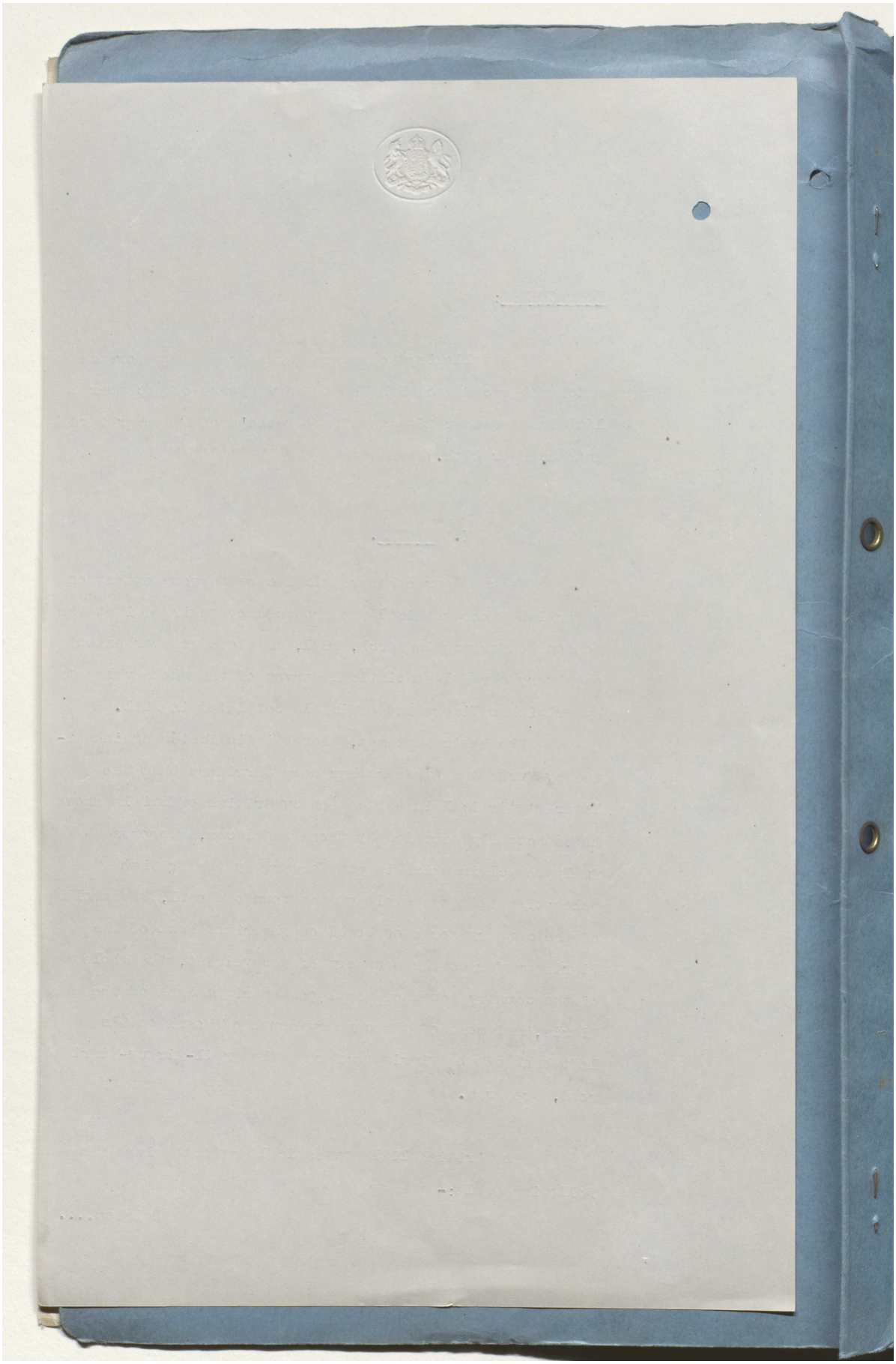

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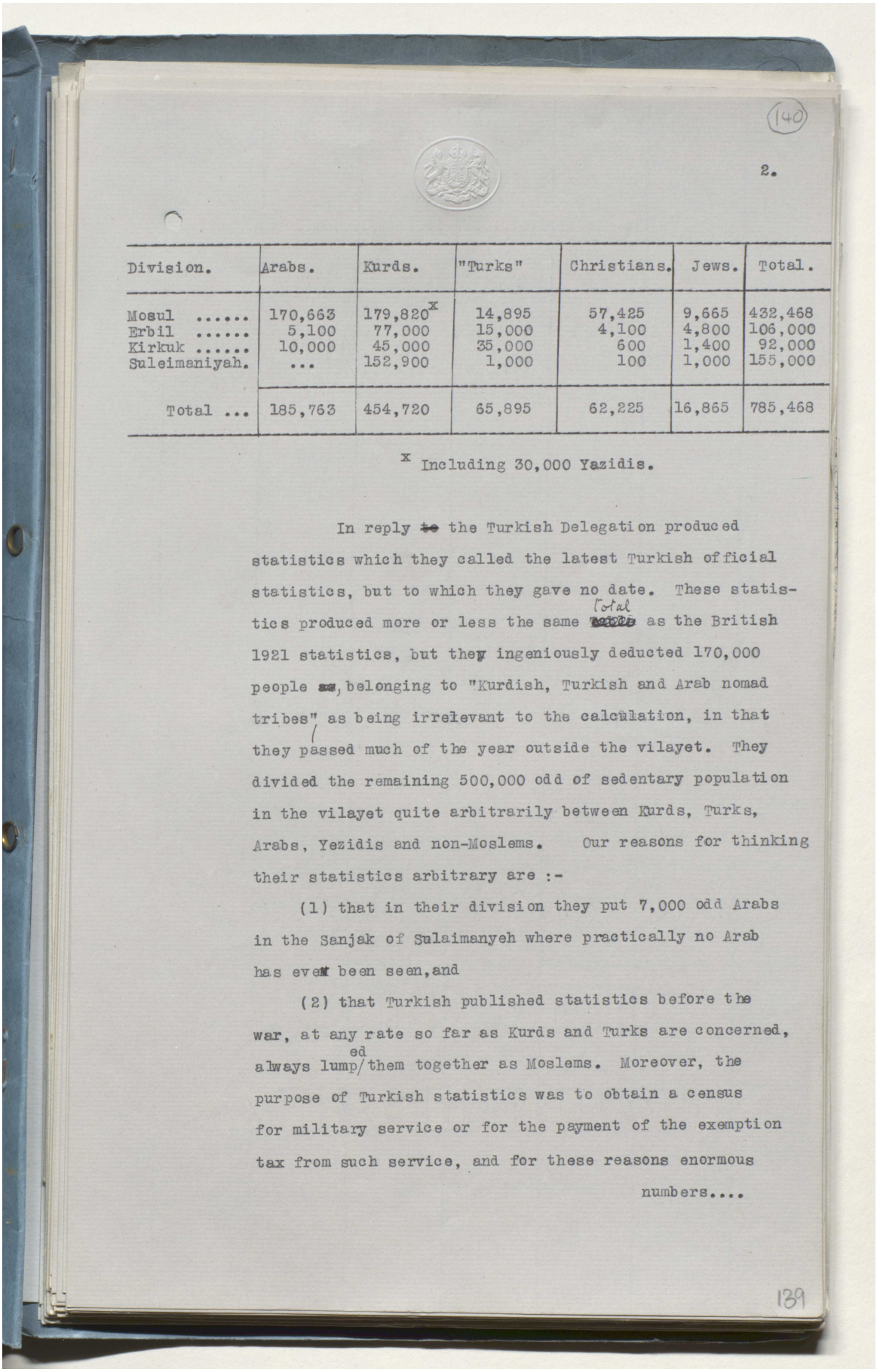

(140)

Division.	Arabs.	Kurds.	"Turks"	Christians.	Jews.	Total.
Mosul	170,663	179,820[x]	14,895	57,425	9,665	432,468
Erbil	5,100	77,000	15,000	4,100	4,800	106,000
Kirkuk	10,000	45,000	35,000	600	1,400	92,000
Suleimaniyah.	...	152,900	1,000	100	1,000	155,000
Total ...	185,763	454,720	65,895	62,225	16,865	785,468

[x] Including 30,000 Yazidis.

In reply ~~to~~ the Turkish Delegation produced statistics which they called the latest Turkish official statistics, but to which they gave no date. These statistics produced more or less the same total as the British 1921 statistics, but they ingeniously deducted 170,000 people ~~as~~, belonging to "Kurdish, Turkish and Arab nomad tribes" as being irrelevant to the calculation, in that they passed much of the year outside the vilayet. They divided the remaining 500,000 odd of sedentary population in the vilayet quite arbitrarily between Kurds, Turks, Arabs, Yezidis and non-Moslems. Our reasons for thinking their statistics arbitrary are :-

(1) that in their division they put 7,000 odd Arabs in the Sanjak of Sulaimanyeh where practically no Arab has ever been seen, and

(2) that Turkish published statistics before the war, at any rate so far as Kurds and Turks are concerned, always lumped them together as Moslems. Moreover, the purpose of Turkish statistics was to obtain a census for military service or for the payment of the exemption tax from such service, and for these reasons enormous numbers....

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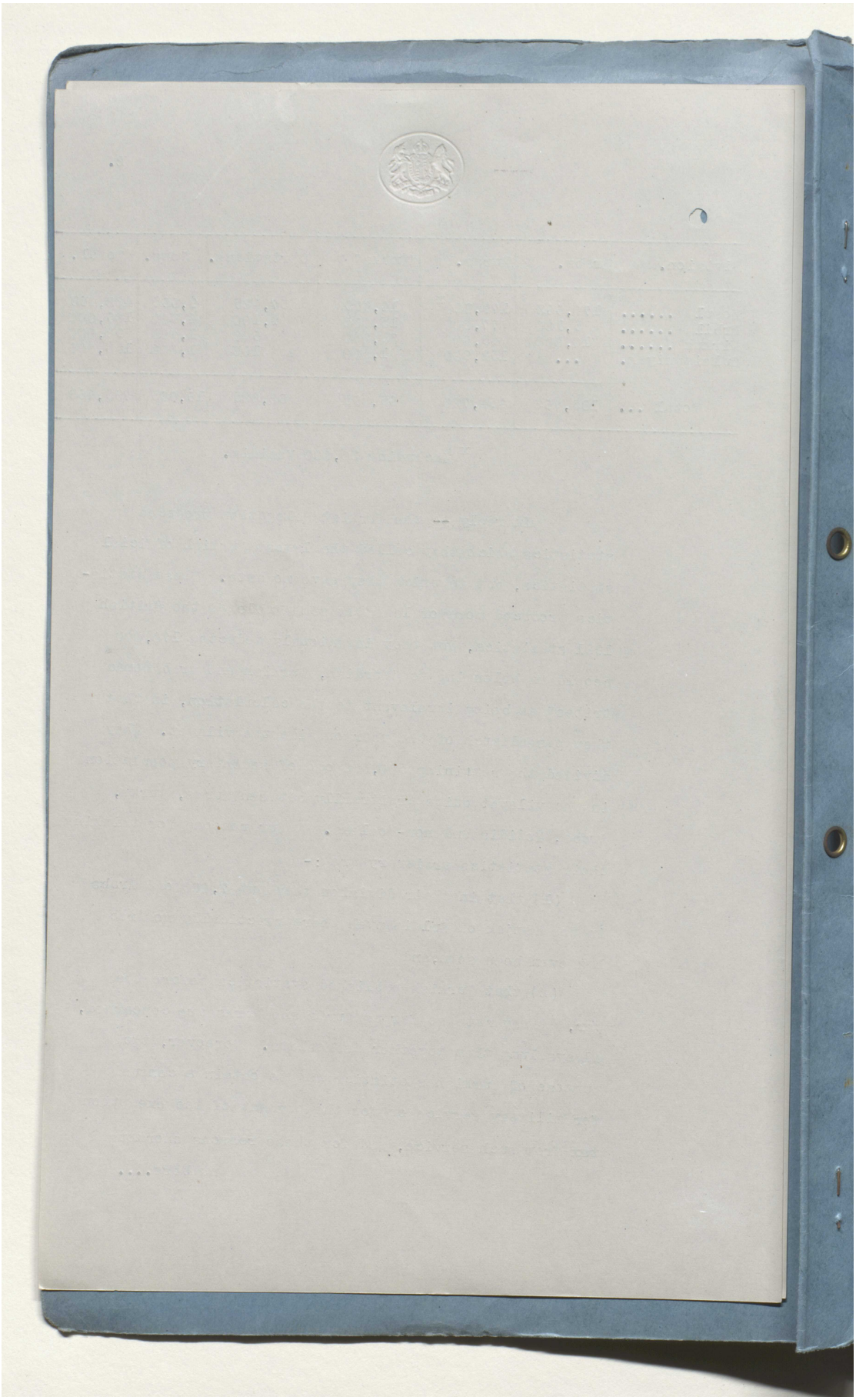

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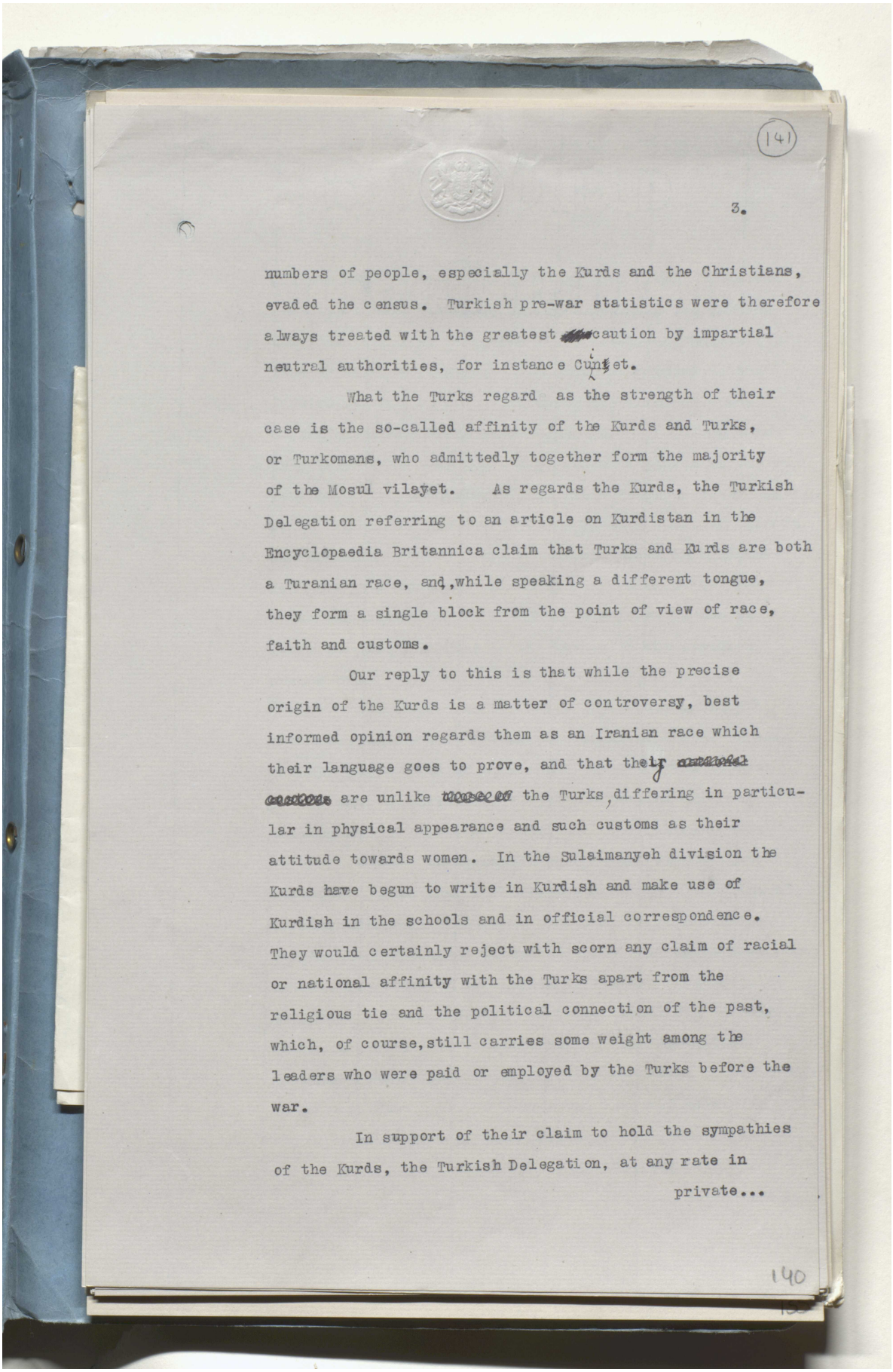

(141)

3.

numbers of people, especially the Kurds and the Christians, evaded the census. Turkish pre-war statistics were therefore always treated with the greatest caution by impartial neutral authorities, for instance Cuinet.

What the Turks regard as the strength of their case is the so-called affinity of the Kurds and Turks, or Turkomans, who admittedly together form the majority of the Mosul vilayet. As regards the Kurds, the Turkish Delegation referring to an article on Kurdistan in the Encyclopaedia Britannica claim that Turks and Kurds are both a Turanian race, and, while speaking a different tongue, they form a single block from the point of view of race, faith and customs.

Our reply to this is that while the precise origin of the Kurds is a matter of controversy, best informed opinion regards them as an Iranian race which their language goes to prove, and that their [illegible] are unlike those of the Turks, differing in particular in physical appearance and such customs as their attitude towards women. In the Sulaimanyeh division the Kurds have begun to write in Kurdish and make use of Kurdish in the schools and in official correspondence. They would certainly reject with scorn any claim of racial or national affinity with the Turks apart from the religious tie and the political connection of the past, which, of course, still carries some weight among the leaders who were paid or employed by the Turks before the war.

In support of their claim to hold the sympathies of the Kurds, the Turkish Delegation, at any rate in private...

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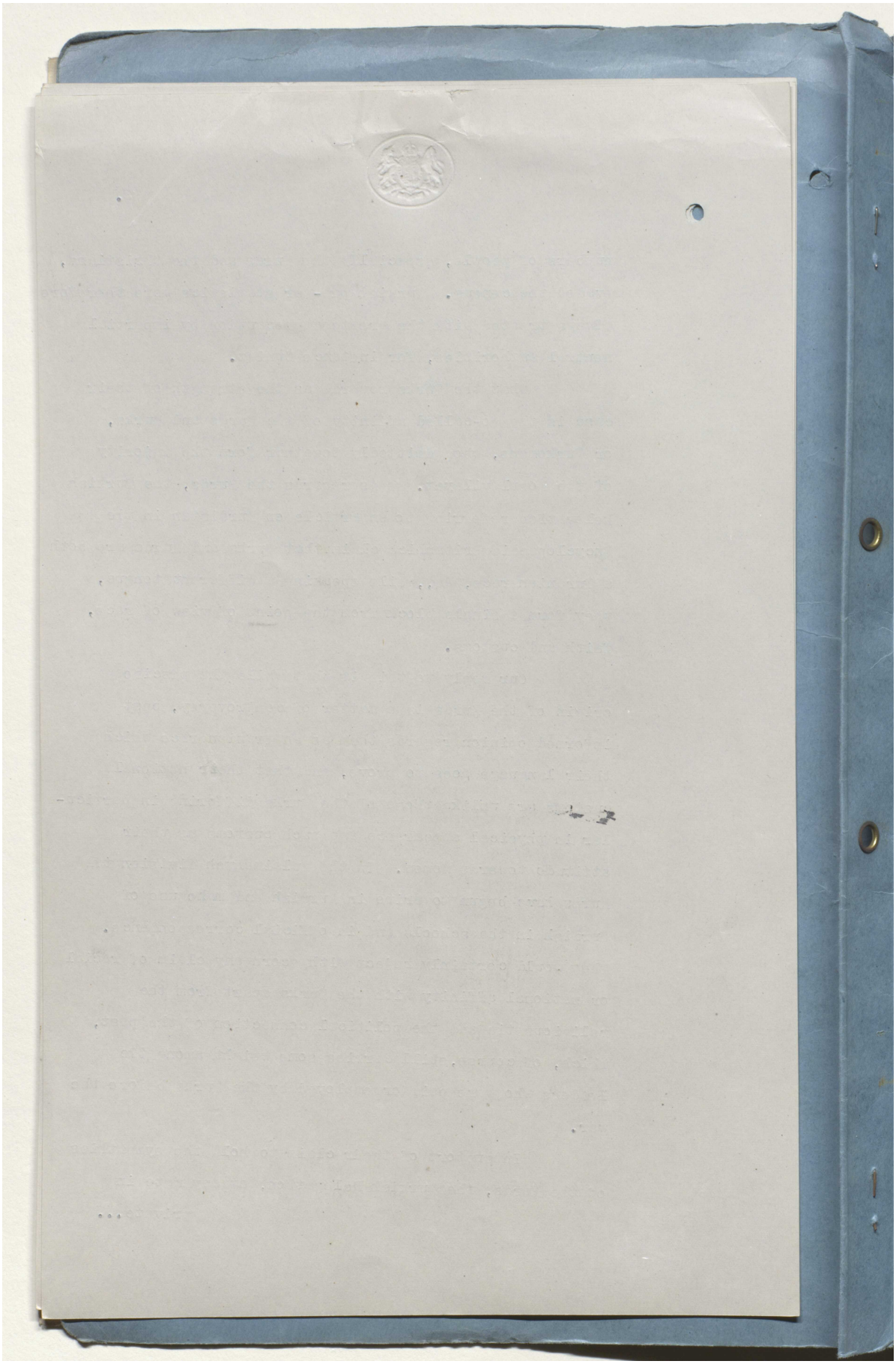

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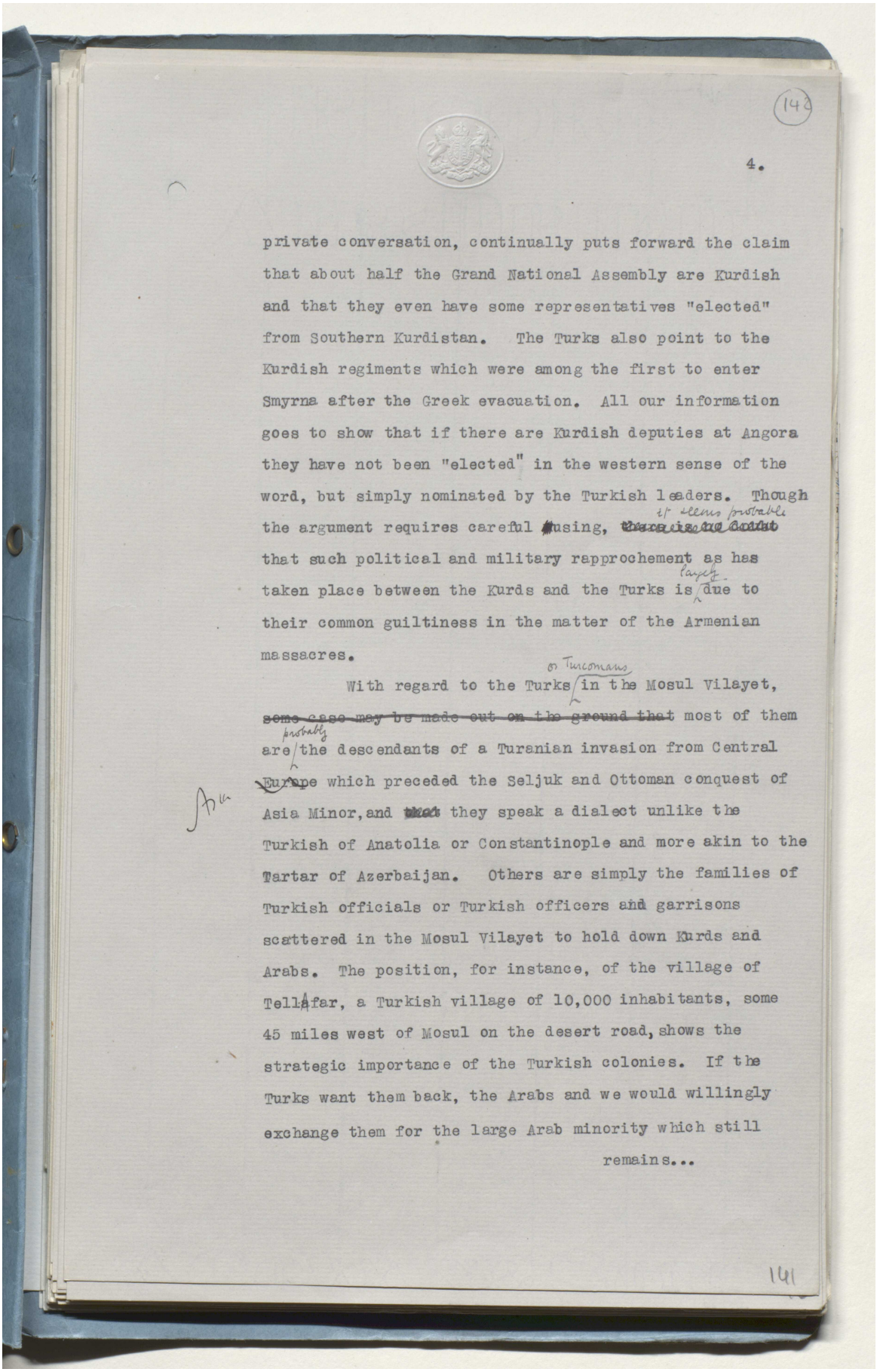

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4.

private conversation, continually puts forward the claim that about half the Grand National Assembly are Kurdish and that they even have some representatives "elected" from Southern Kurdistan. The Turks also point to the Kurdish regiments which were among the first to enter Smyrna after the Greek evacuation. All our information goes to show that if there are Kurdish deputies at Angora they have not been "elected" in the western sense of the word, but simply nominated by the Turkish leaders. Though the argument requires careful ~~#~~using, ~~there is no doubt~~ it seems probable that such political and military rapprochement as has taken place between the Kurds and the Turks is largely due to their common guiltiness in the matter of the Armenian massacres.

With regard to the Turks or Turcomans in the Mosul Vilayet, ~~some case may be made out on the ground that~~ most of them are probably the descendants of a Turanian invasion from Central Europe which preceded the Seljuk and Ottoman conquest of Asia Minor, and ~~that~~ they speak a dialect unlike the Turkish of Anatolia or Constantinople and more akin to the Tartar of Azerbaijan. Others are simply the families of Turkish officials or Turkish officers and garrisons scattered in the Mosul Vilayet to hold down Kurds and Arabs. The position, for instance, of the village of Tellafar, a Turkish village of 10,000 inhabitants, some 45 miles west of Mosul on the desert road, shows the strategic importance of the Turkish colonies. If the Turks want them back, the Arabs and we would willingly exchange them for the large Arab minority which still remains...

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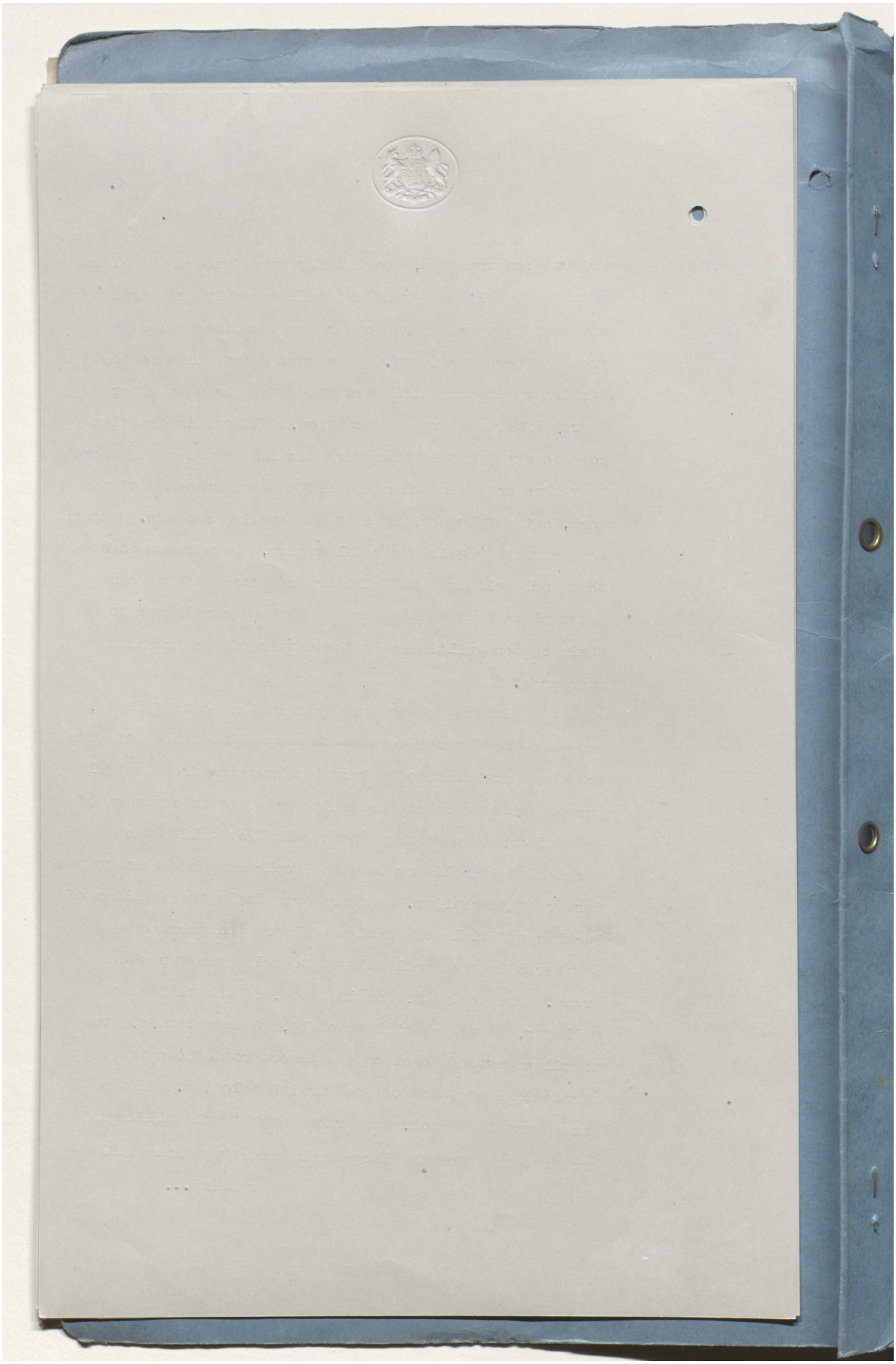

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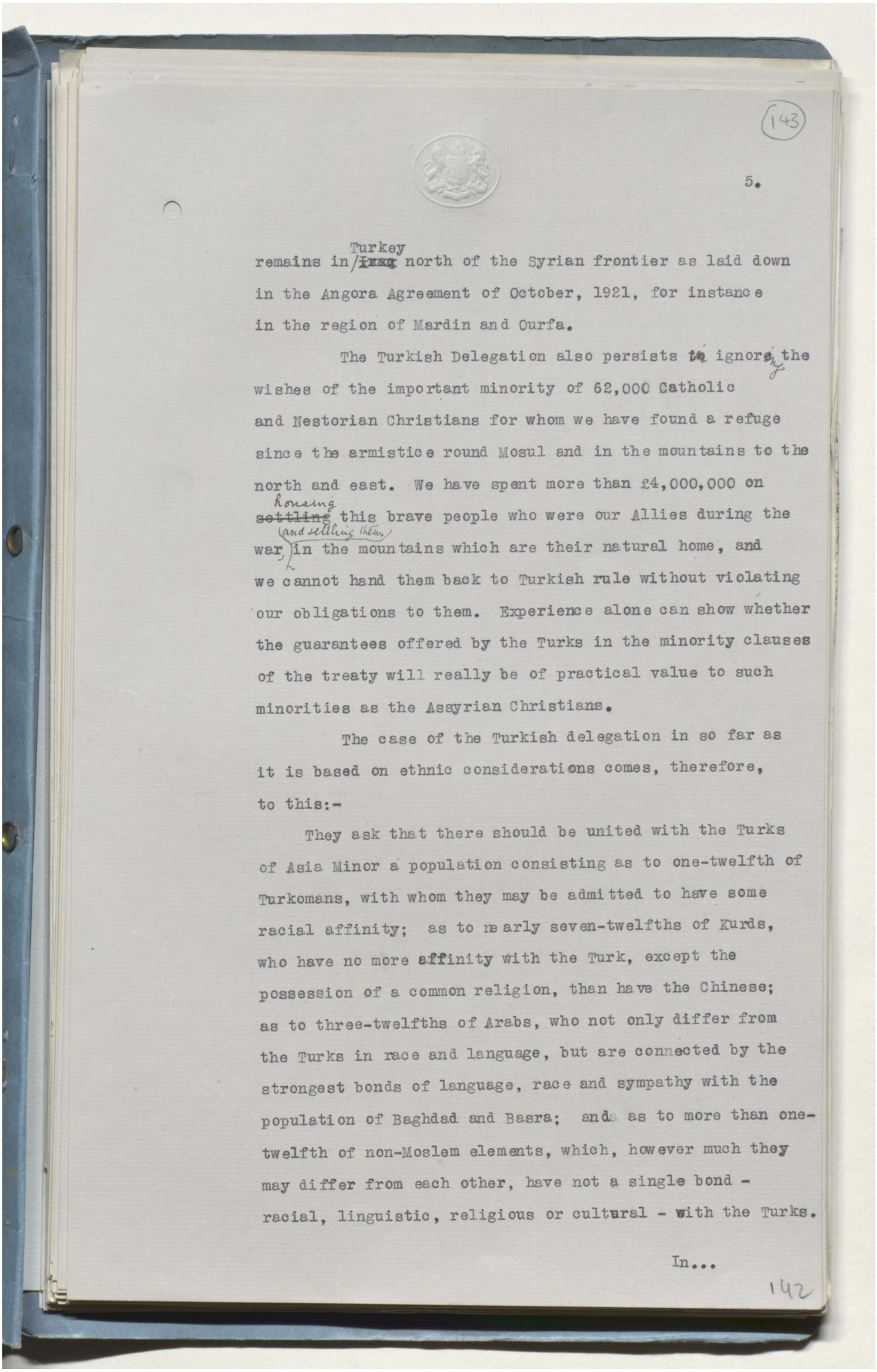

(143)

remains in ~~Iraq~~ Turkey north of the Syrian frontier as laid down in the Angora Agreement of October, 1921, for instance in the region of Mardin and Curfa.

The Turkish Delegation also persists to ignore the wishes of the important minority of 62,000 Catholic and Nestorian Christians for whom we have found a refuge since the armistice round Mosul and in the mountains to the north and east. We have spent more than £4,000,000 on ~~settling~~ housing this brave people who were our Allies during the war (and settling them) in the mountains which are their natural home, and we cannot hand them back to Turkish rule without violating our obligations to them. Experience alone can show whether the guarantees offered by the Turks in the minority clauses of the treaty will really be of practical value to such minorities as the Assyrian Christians.

The case of the Turkish delegation in so far as it is based on ethnic considerations comes, therefore, to this:-

They ask that there should be united with the Turks of Asia Minor a population consisting as to one-twelfth of Turkomans, with whom they may be admitted to have some racial affinity; as to nearly seven-twelfths of Kurds, who have no more affinity with the Turk, except the possession of a common religion, than have the Chinese; as to three-twelfths of Arabs, who not only differ from the Turks in race and language, but are connected by the strongest bonds of language, race and sympathy with the population of Baghdad and Basra; and as to more than one-twelfth of non-Moslem elements, which, however much they may differ from each other, have not a single bond - racial, linguistic, religious or cultural - with the Turks.

In...

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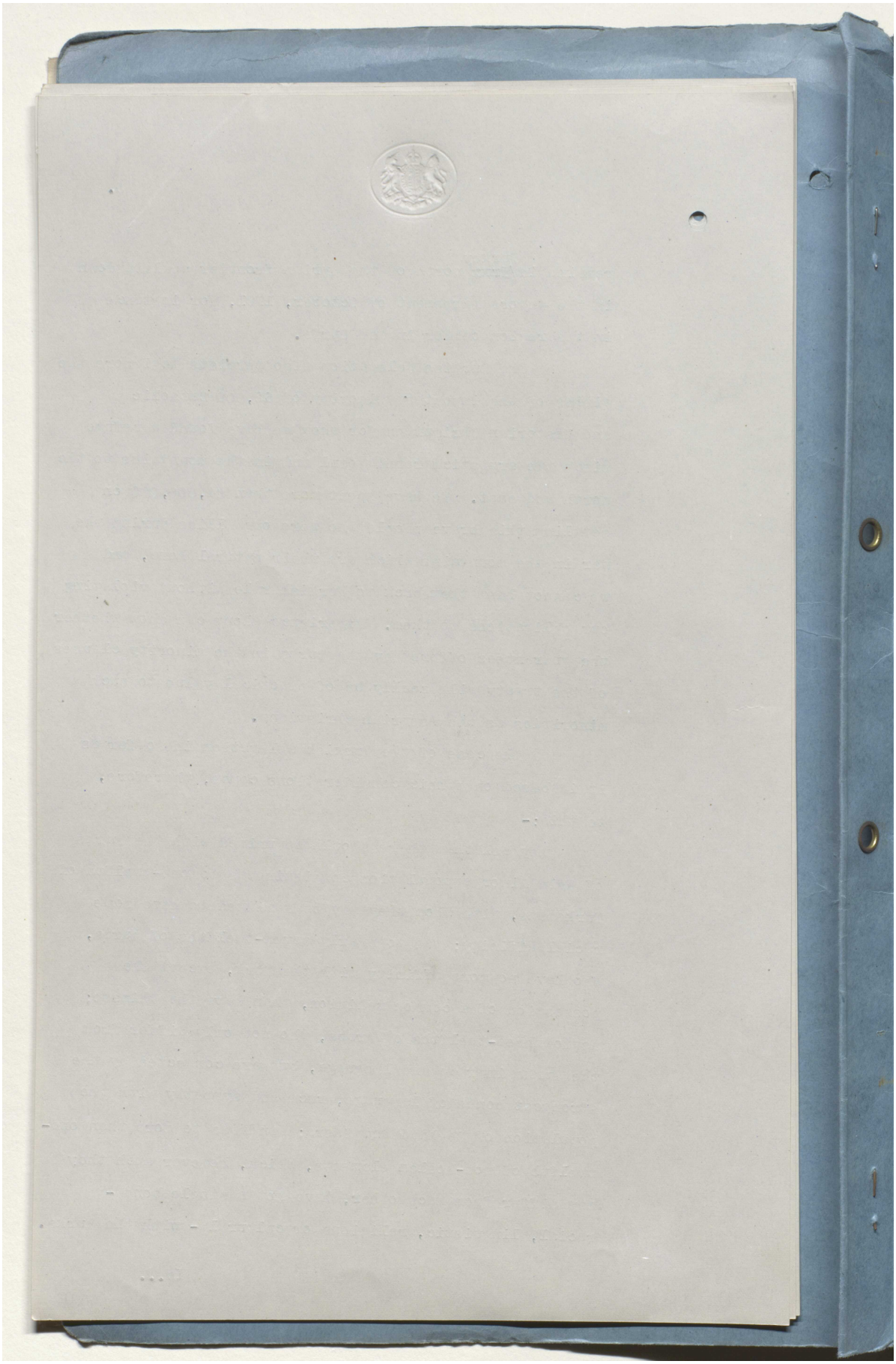

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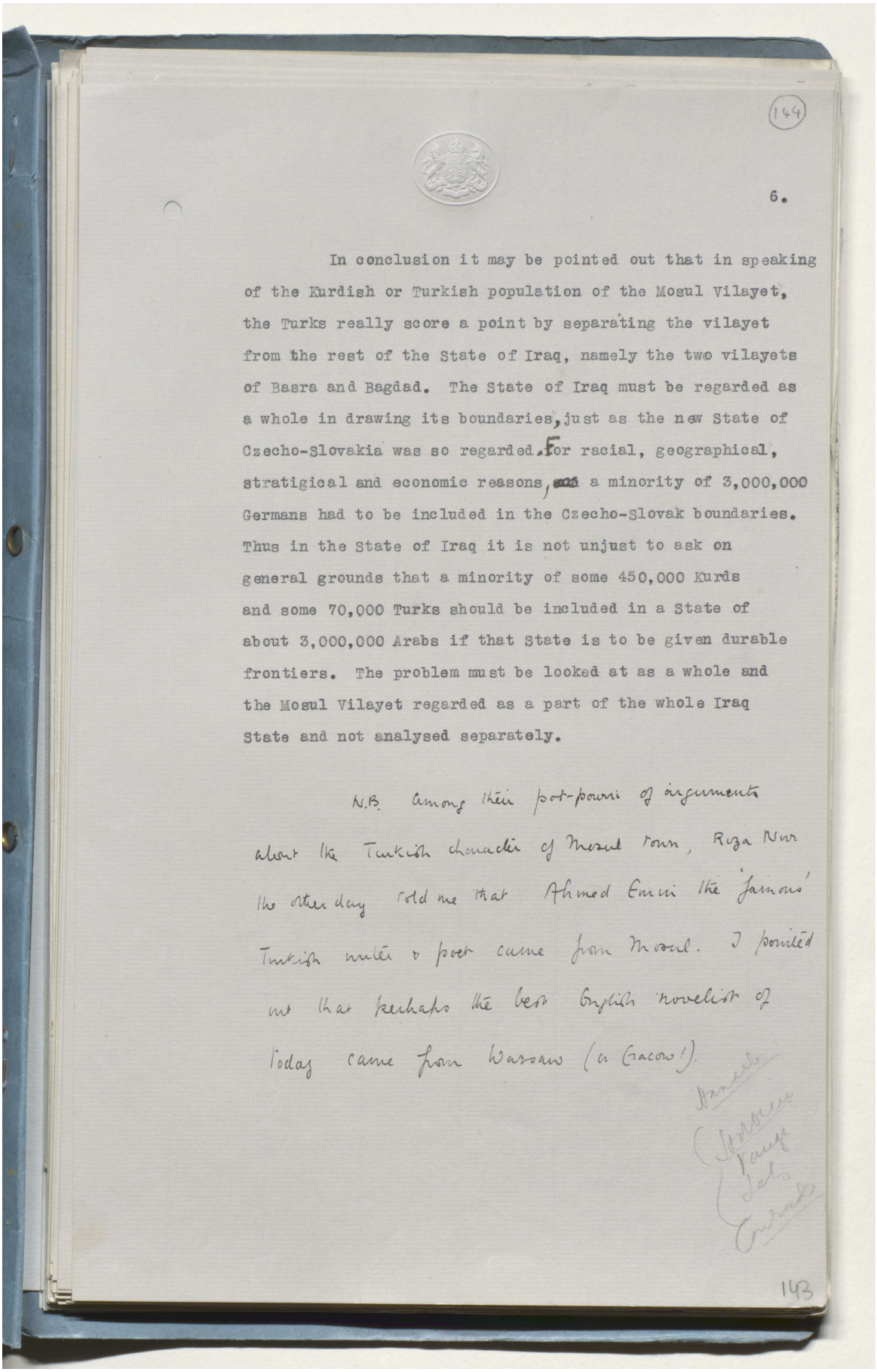

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6.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that in speaking of the Kurdish or Turkish population of the Mosul Vilayet, the Turks really score a point by separating the vilayet from the rest of the State of Iraq, namely the two vilayets of Basra and Bagdad. The State of Iraq must be regarded as a whole in drawing its boundaries, just as the new State of Czecho-Slovakia was so regarded. For racial, geographical, stratigical and economic reasons, a minority of 3,000,000 Germans had to be included in the Czecho-Slovak boundaries. Thus in the State of Iraq it is not unjust to ask on general grounds that a minority of some 450,000 Kurds and some 70,000 Turks should be included in a State of about 3,000,000 Arabs if that State is to be given durable frontiers. The problem must be looked at as a whole and the Mosul Vilayet regarded as a part of the whole Iraq State and not analysed separately.

N.B. Among their pot-pourri of arguments about the Turkish character of Mosul town, Riza Nur the other day told me that Ahmed Emin the 'famous' Turkish writer & poet came from Mosul. I pointed out that perhaps the best English novelist of today came from Warsaw (or Cracow!).

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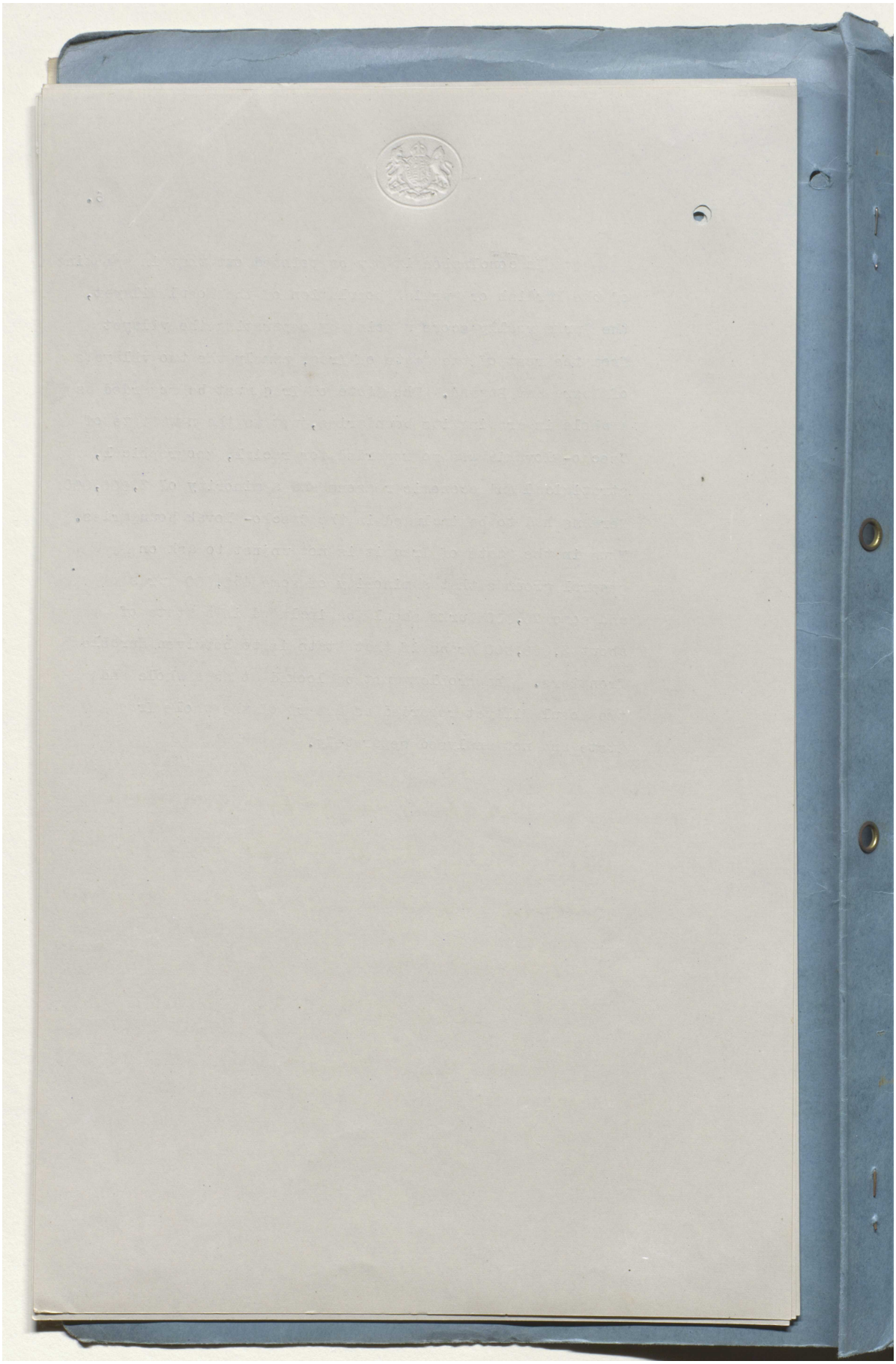

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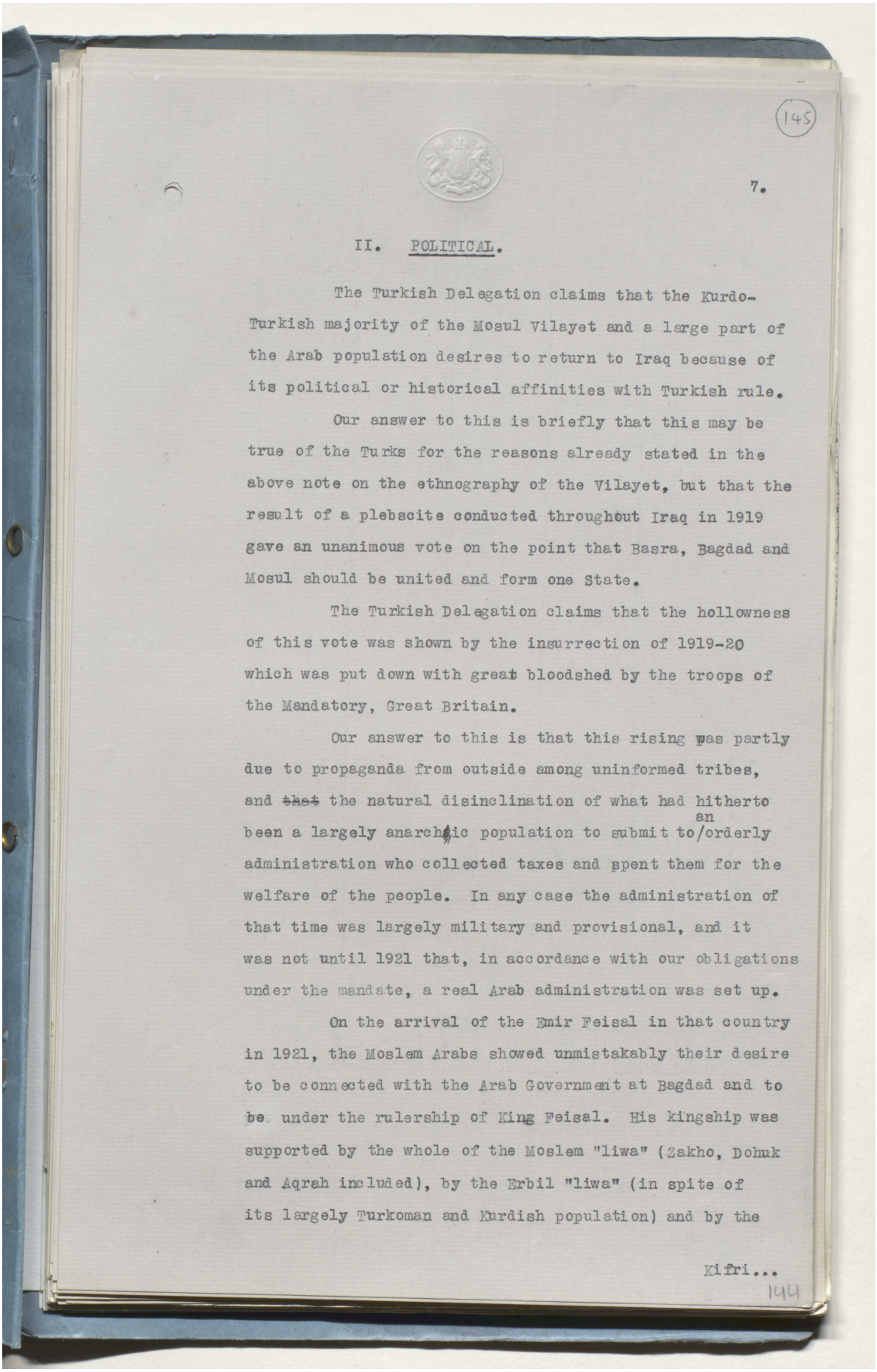

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7.

II. POLITICAL.

The Turkish Delegation claims that the Kurdo-Turkish majority of the Mosul Vilayet and a large part of the Arab population desires to return to Iraq because of its political or historical affinities with Turkish rule.

Our answer to this is briefly that this may be true of the Turks for the reasons already stated in the above note on the ethnography of the Vilayet, but that the result of a plebscite conducted throughout Iraq in 1919 gave an unanimous vote on the point that Basra, Bagdad and Mosul should be united and form one State.

The Turkish Delegation claims that the hollowness of this vote was shown by the insurrection of 1919-20 which was put down with great bloodshed by the troops of the Mandatory, Great Britain.

Our answer to this is that this rising was partly due to propaganda from outside among uninformed tribes, and ~~that~~ the natural disinclination of what had hitherto been a largely anarchic population to submit to an orderly administration who collected taxes and spent them for the welfare of the people. In any case the administration of that time was largely military and provisional, and it was not until 1921 that, in accordance with our obligations under the mandate, a real Arab administration was set up.

On the arrival of the Emir Feisal in that country in 1921, the Moslem Arabs showed unmistakably their desire to be connected with the Arab Government at Bagdad and to be under the rulership of King Feisal. His kingship was supported by the whole of the Moslem "liwa" (Zakho, Dohuk and Aqrah included), by the Erbil "liwa" (in spite of its largely Turkoman and Kurdish population) and by the

Kifri...

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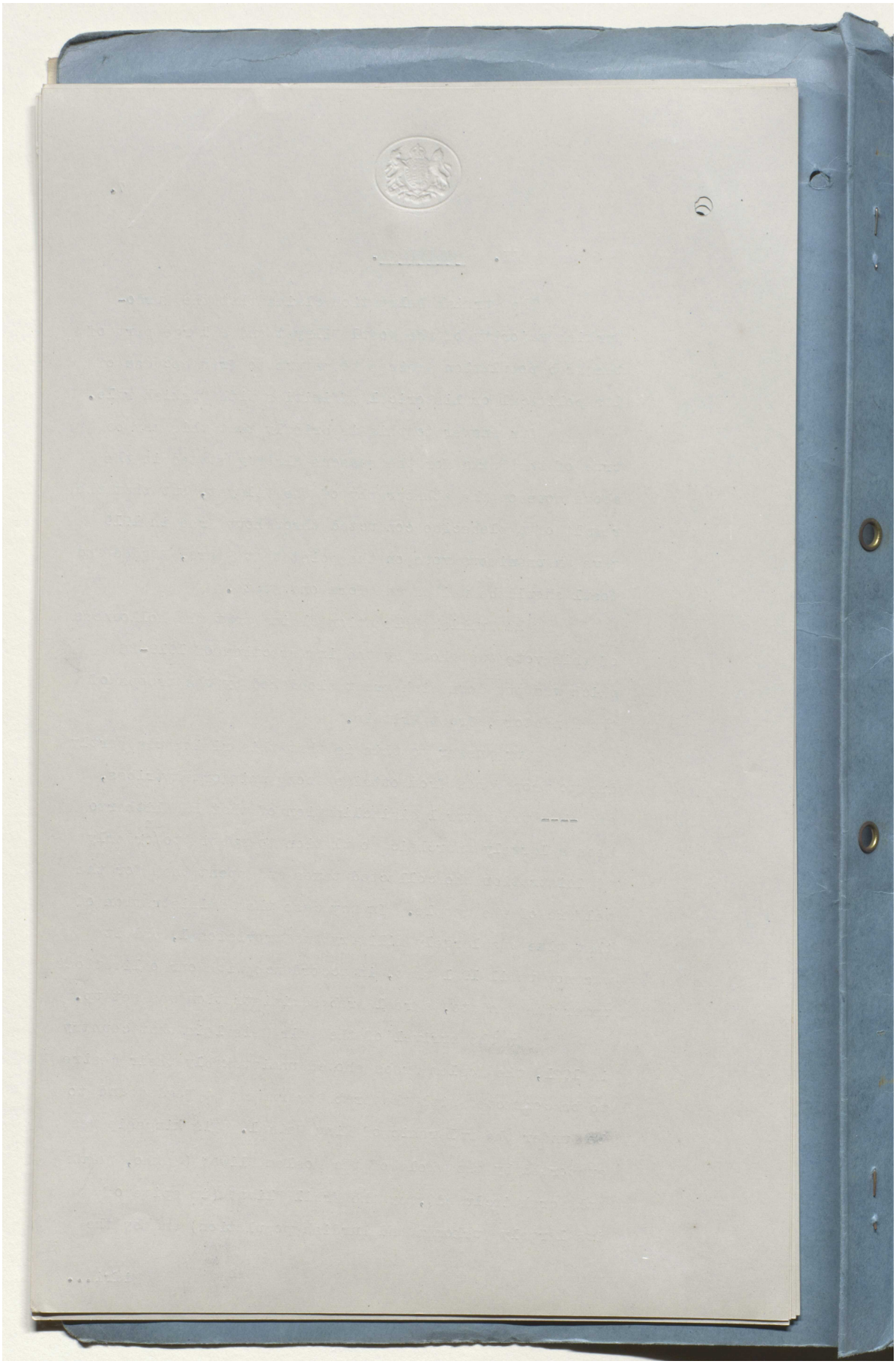

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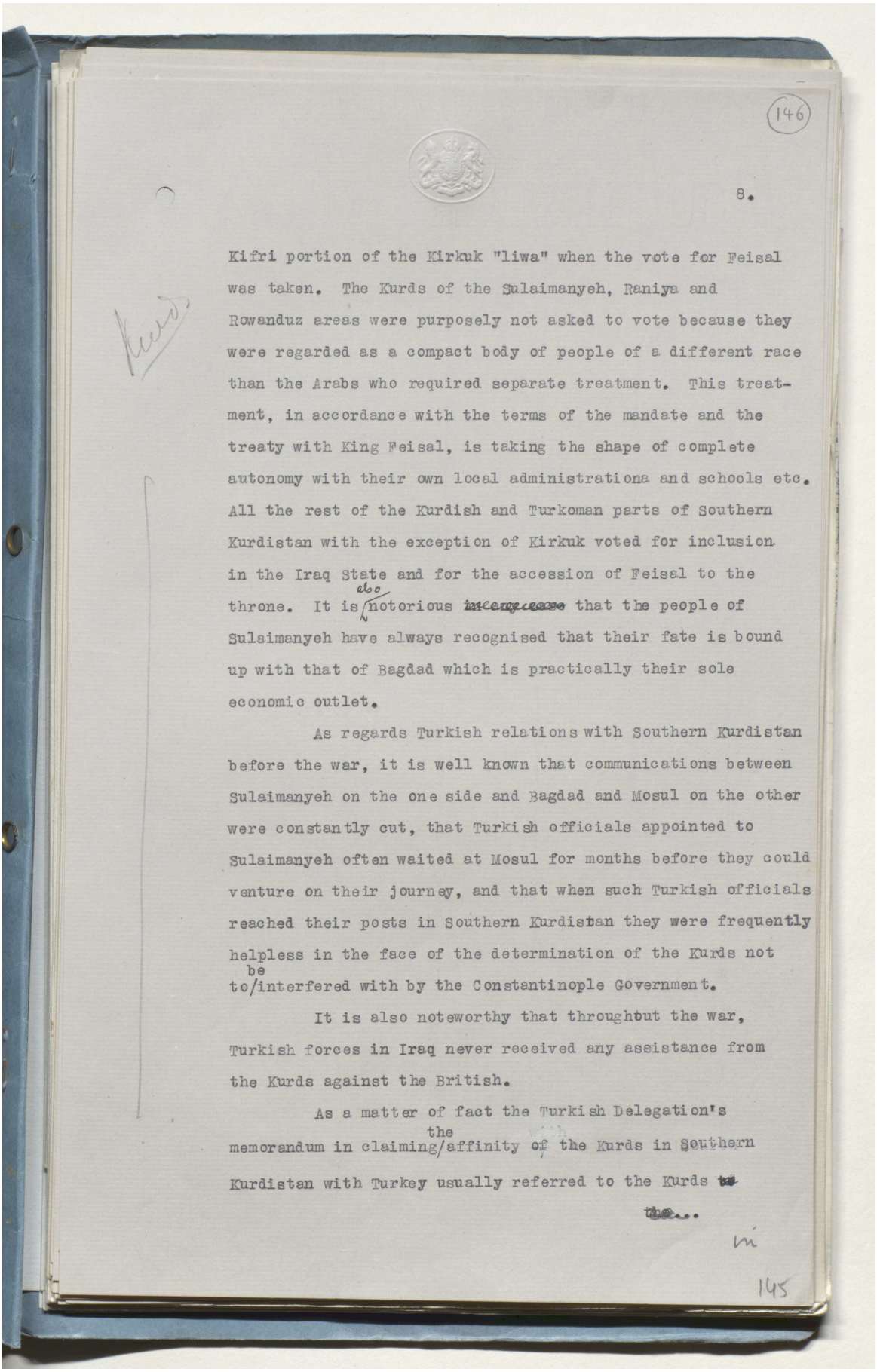

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8.

Kifri portion of the Kirkuk "liwa" when the vote for Feisal was taken. The Kurds of the Sulaimanyeh, Raniya and Rowanduz areas were purposely not asked to vote because they were regarded as a compact body of people of a different race than the Arabs who required separate treatment. This treatment, in accordance with the terms of the mandate and the treaty with King Feisal, is taking the shape of complete autonomy with their own local administrationa and schools etc. All the rest of the Kurdish and Turkoman parts of Southern Kurdistan with the exception of Kirkuk voted for inclusion in the Iraq State and for the accession of Feisal to the throne. It is also notorious ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ that the people of Sulaimanyeh have always recognised that their fate is bound up with that of Bagdad which is practically their sole economic outlet.

As regards Turkish relations with Southern Kurdistan before the war, it is well known that communications between Sulaimanyeh on the one side and Bagdad and Mosul on the other were constantly cut, that Turkish officials appointed to Sulaimanyeh often waited at Mosul for months before they could venture on their journey, and that when such Turkish officials reached their posts in Southern Kurdistan they were frequently helpless in the face of the determination of the Kurds not to be interfered with by the Constantinople Government.

It is also noteworthy that throughout the war, Turkish forces in Iraq never received any assistance from the Kurds against the British.

As a matter of fact the Turkish Delegation's memorandum in claiming the affinity of the Kurds in Southern Kurdistan with Turkey usually referred to the Kurds ~~as~~ the...

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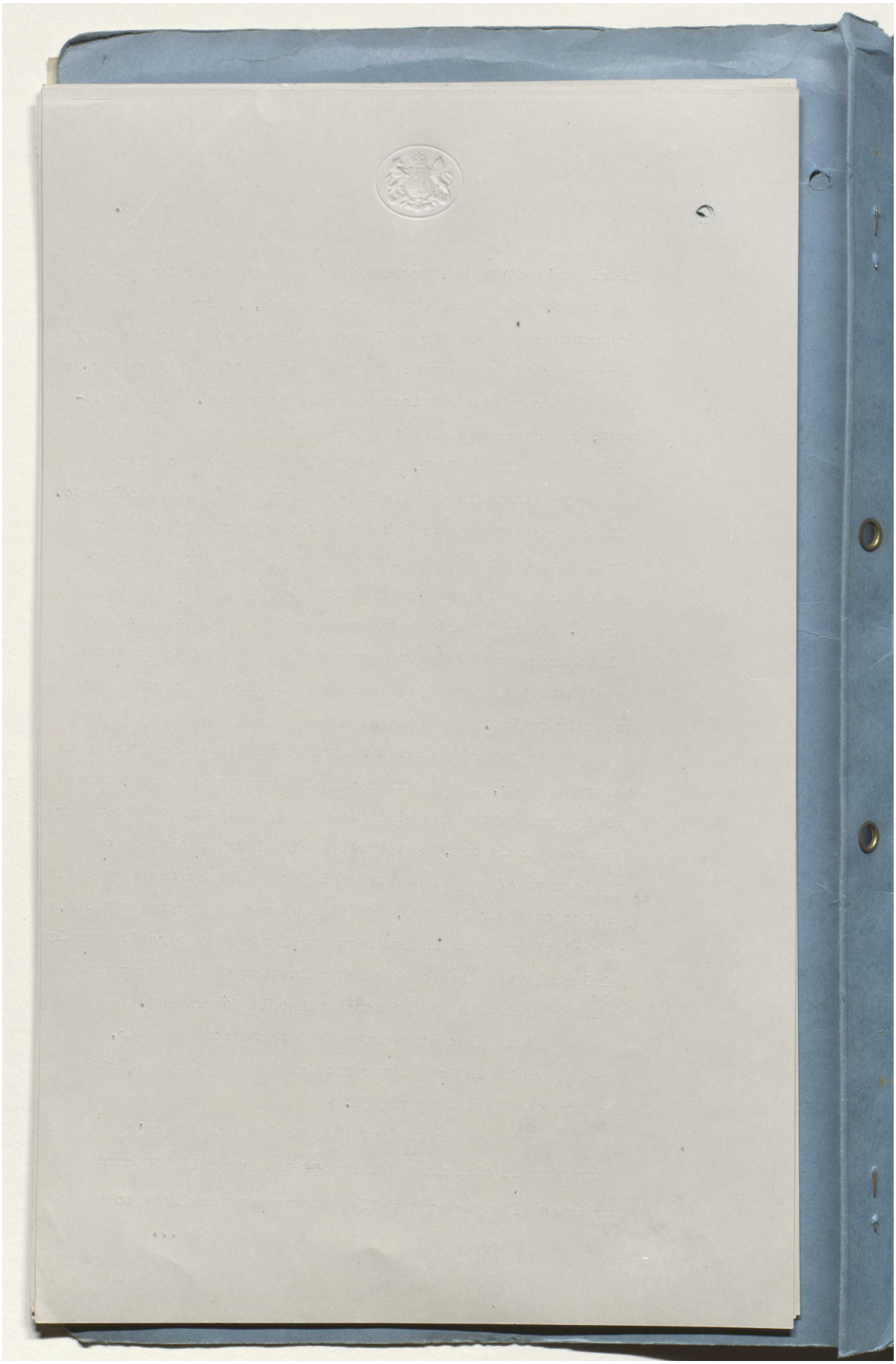

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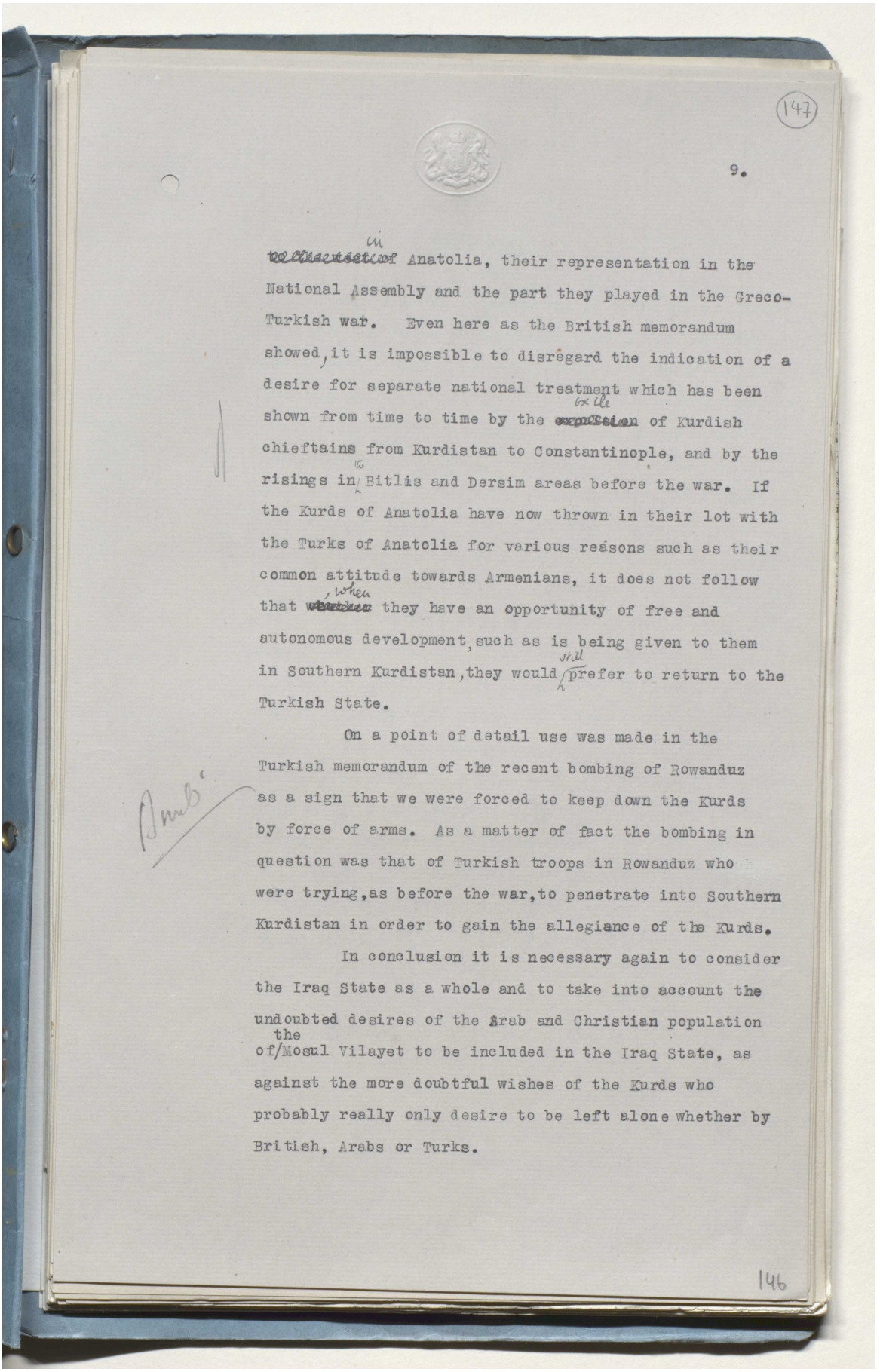

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9.

of Anatolia, their representation in the National Assembly and the part they played in the Greco-Turkish war. Even here as the British memorandum showed, it is impossible to disregard the indication of a desire for separate national treatment which has been shown from time to time by the exile of Kurdish chieftains from Kurdistan to Constantinople, and by the risings in Bitlis and Dersim areas before the war. If the Kurds of Anatolia have now thrown in their lot with the Turks of Anatolia for various reasons such as their common attitude towards Armenians, it does not follow that when they have an opportunity of free and autonomous development, such as is being given to them in Southern Kurdistan, they would still prefer to return to the Turkish State.

On a point of detail use was made in the Turkish memorandum of the recent bombing of Rowanduz as a sign that we were forced to keep down the Kurds by force of arms. As a matter of fact the bombing in question was that of Turkish troops in Rowanduz who were trying, as before the war, to penetrate into Southern Kurdistan in order to gain the allegiance of the Kurds.

In conclusion it is necessary again to consider the Iraq State as a whole and to take into account the undoubted desires of the Arab and Christian population of the Mosul Vilayet to be included in the Iraq State, as against the more doubtful wishes of the Kurds who probably really only desire to be left alone whether by British, Arabs or Turks.

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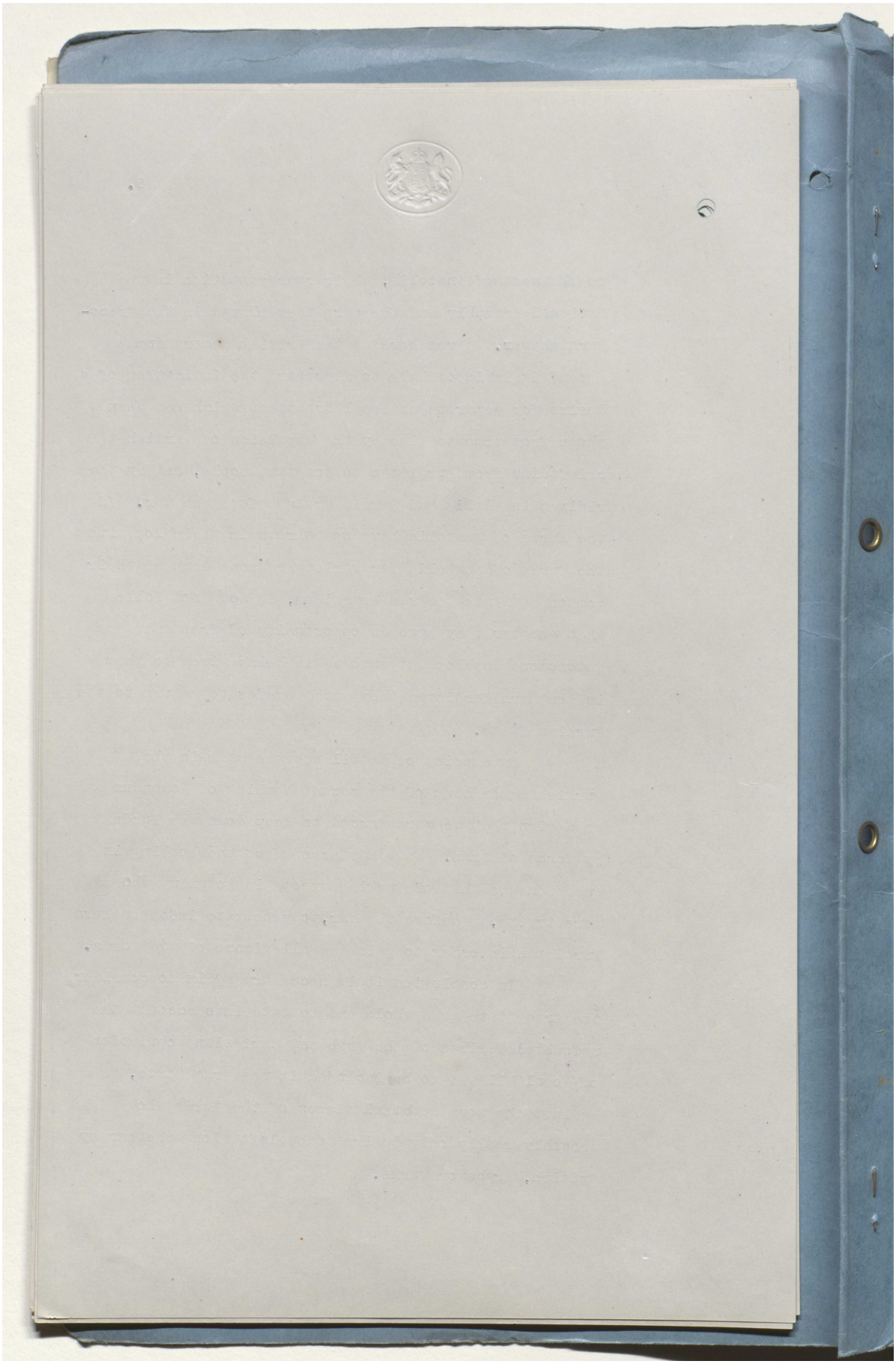

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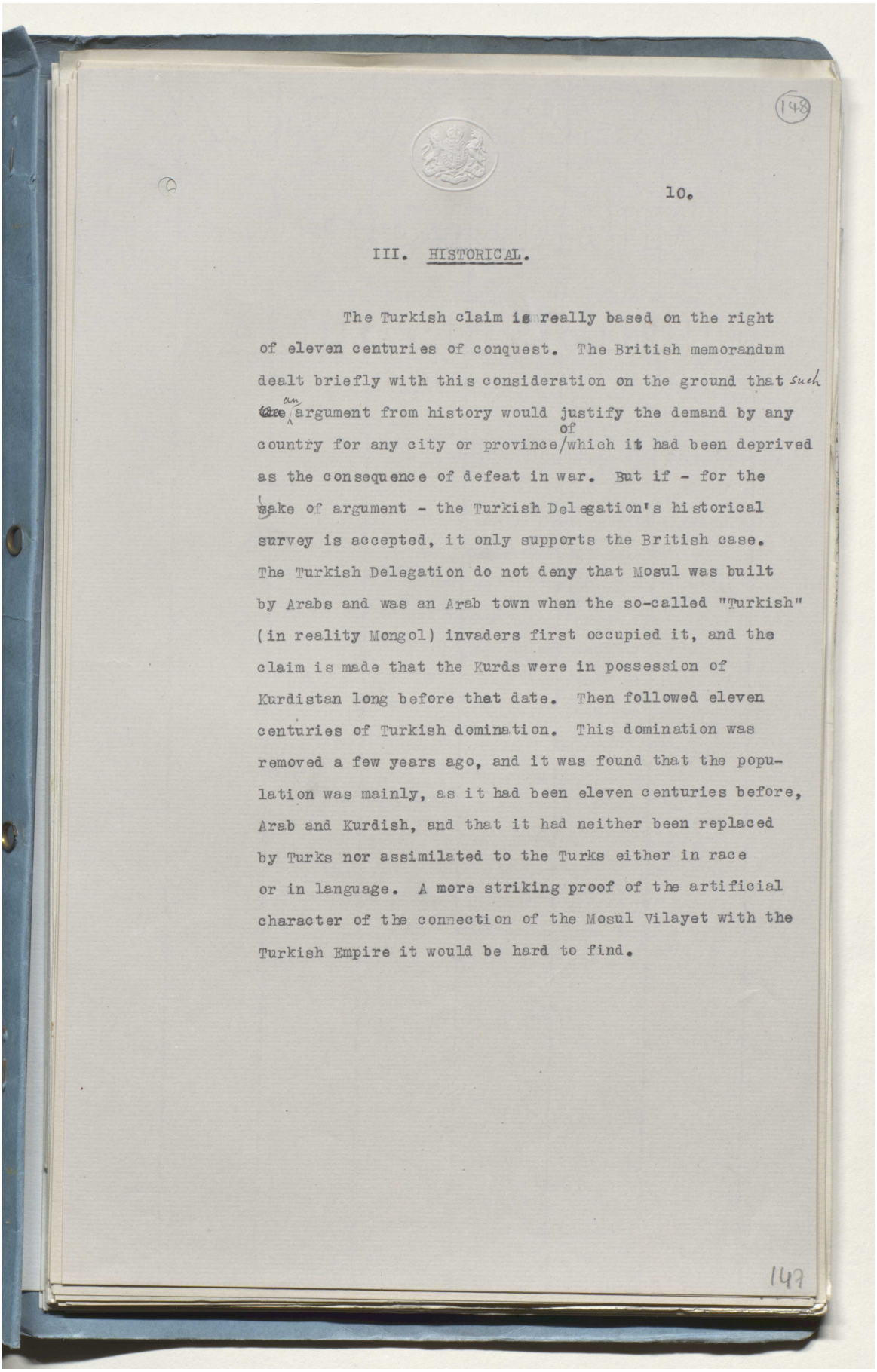

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10.

III. HISTORICAL.

The Turkish claim is really based on the right of eleven centuries of conquest. The British memorandum dealt briefly with this consideration on the ground that such an argument from history would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war. But if - for the sake of argument - the Turkish Delegation's historical survey is accepted, it only supports the British case. The Turkish Delegation do not deny that Mosul was built by Arabs and was an Arab town when the so-called "Turkish" (in reality Mongol) invaders first occupied it, and the claim is made that the Kurds were in possession of Kurdistan long before that date. Then followed eleven centuries of Turkish domination. This domination was removed a few years ago, and it was found that the population was mainly, as it had been eleven centuries before, Arab and Kurdish, and that it had neither been replaced by Turks nor assimilated to the Turks either in race or in language. A more striking proof of the artificial character of the connection of the Mosul Vilayet with the Turkish Empire it would be hard to find.

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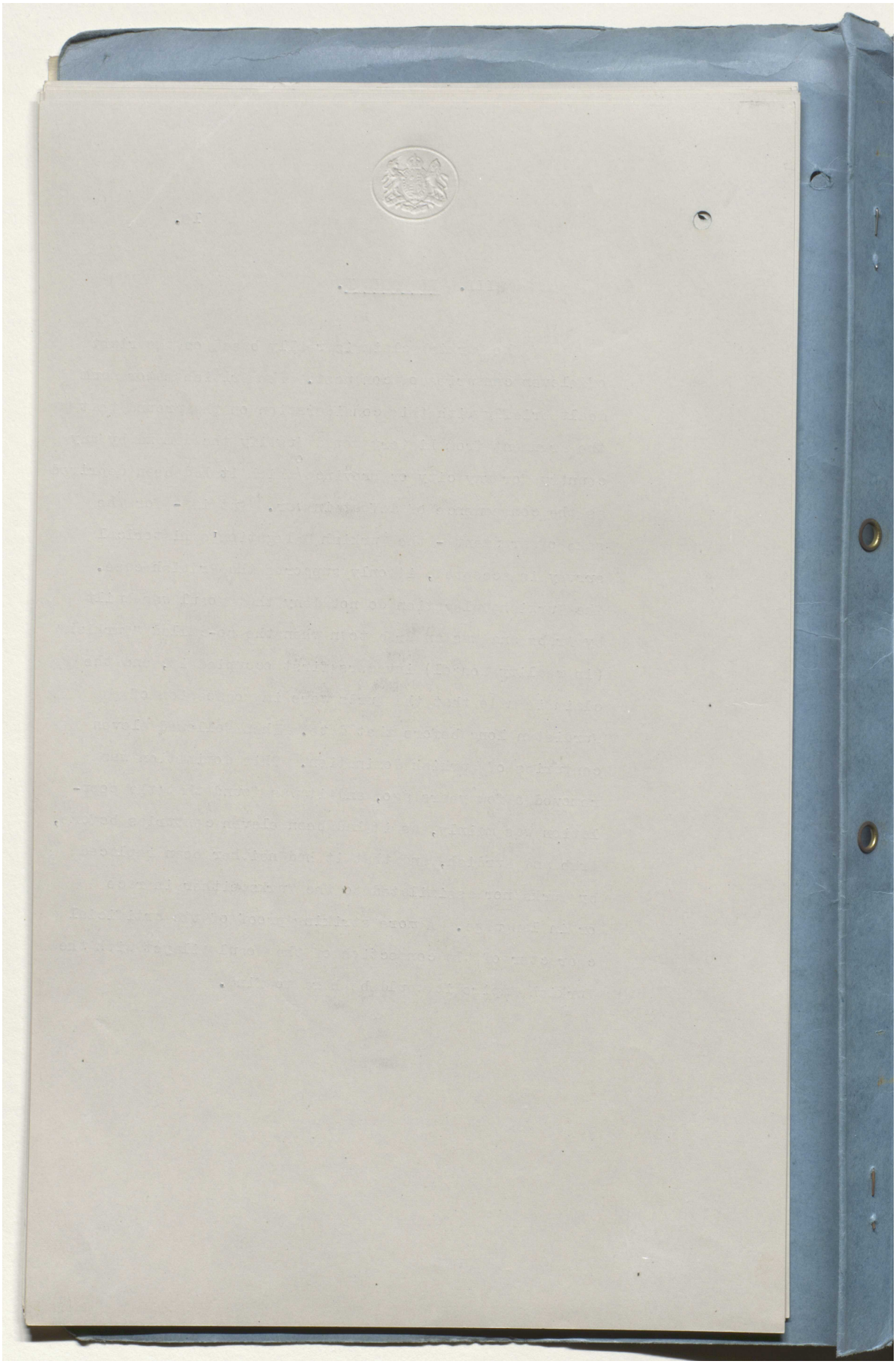

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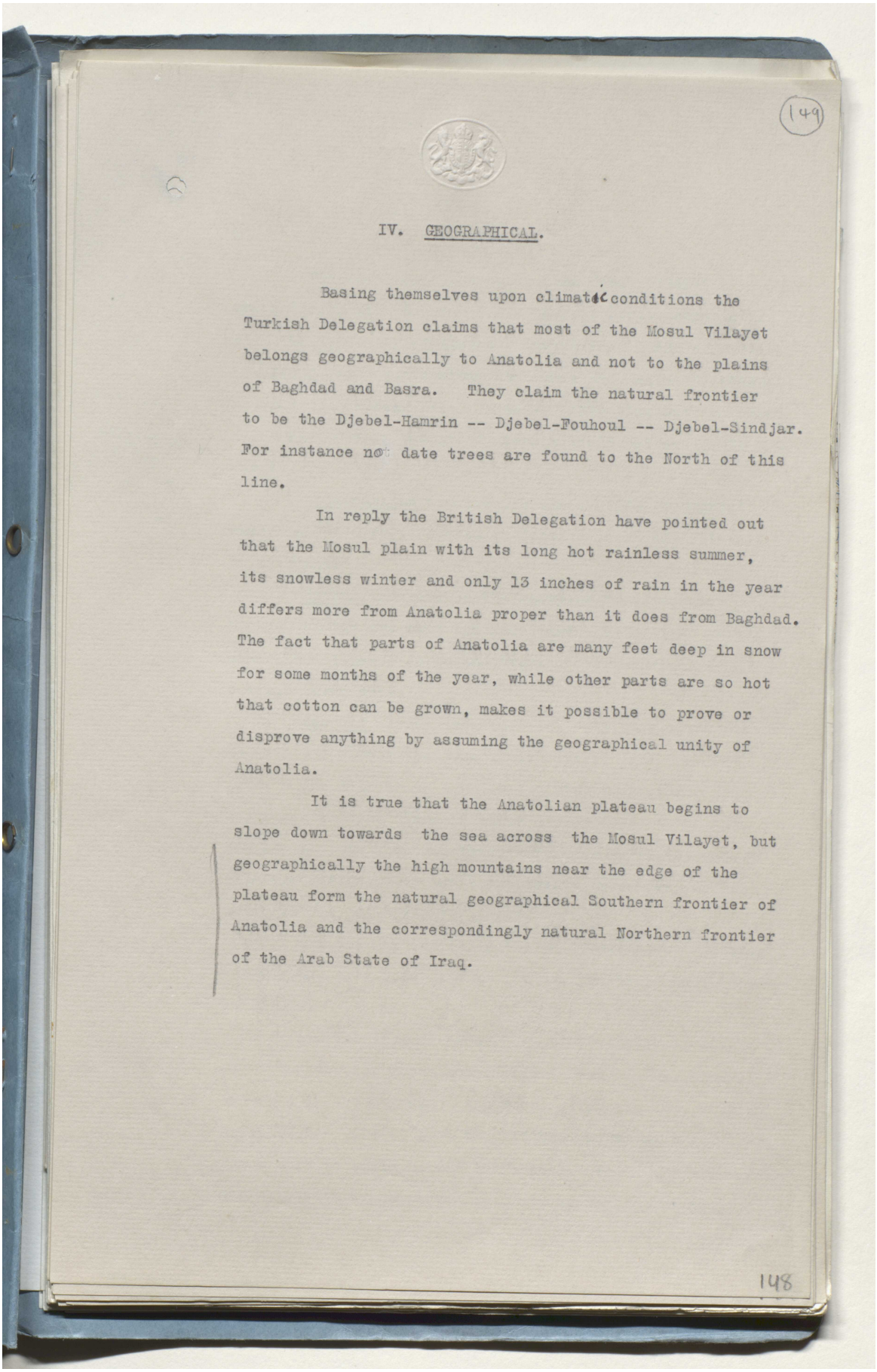

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IV. GEOGRAPHICAL.

Basing themselves upon climatic conditions the Turkish Delegation claims that most of the Mosul Vilayet belongs geographically to Anatolia and not to the plains of Baghdad and Basra. They claim the natural frontier to be the Djebel-Hamrin -- Djebel-Fouhoul -- Djebel-Sindjar. For instance no date trees are found to the North of this line.

In reply the British Delegation have pointed out that the Mosul plain with its long hot rainless summer, its snowless winter and only 13 inches of rain in the year differs more from Anatolia proper than it does from Baghdad. The fact that parts of Anatolia are many feet deep in snow for some months of the year, while other parts are so hot that cotton can be grown, makes it possible to prove or disprove anything by assuming the geographical unity of Anatolia.

It is true that the Anatolian plateau begins to slope down towards the sea across the Mosul Vilayet, but geographically the high mountains near the edge of the plateau form the natural geographical Southern frontier of Anatolia and the correspondingly natural Northern frontier of the Arab State of Iraq.

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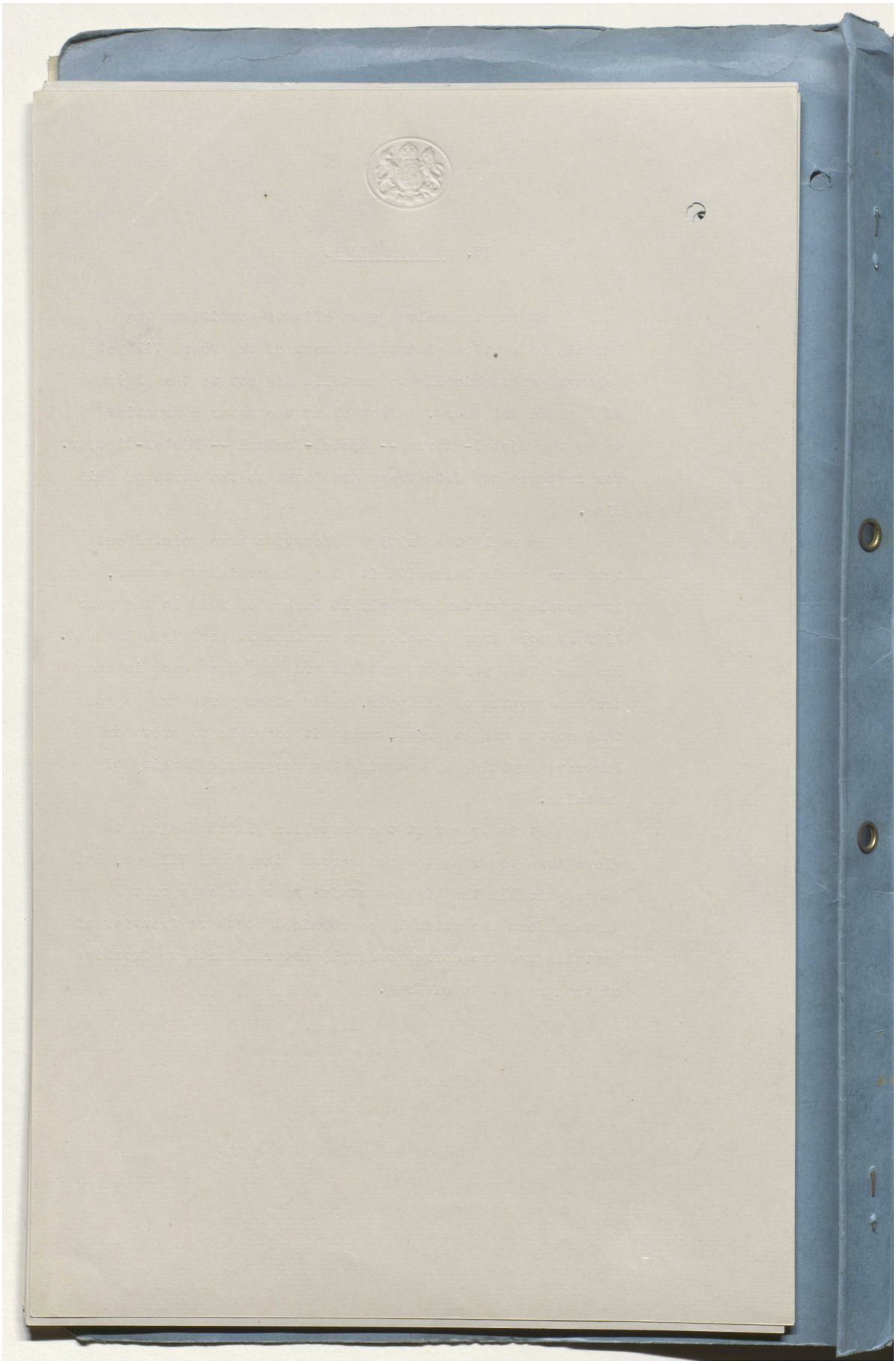

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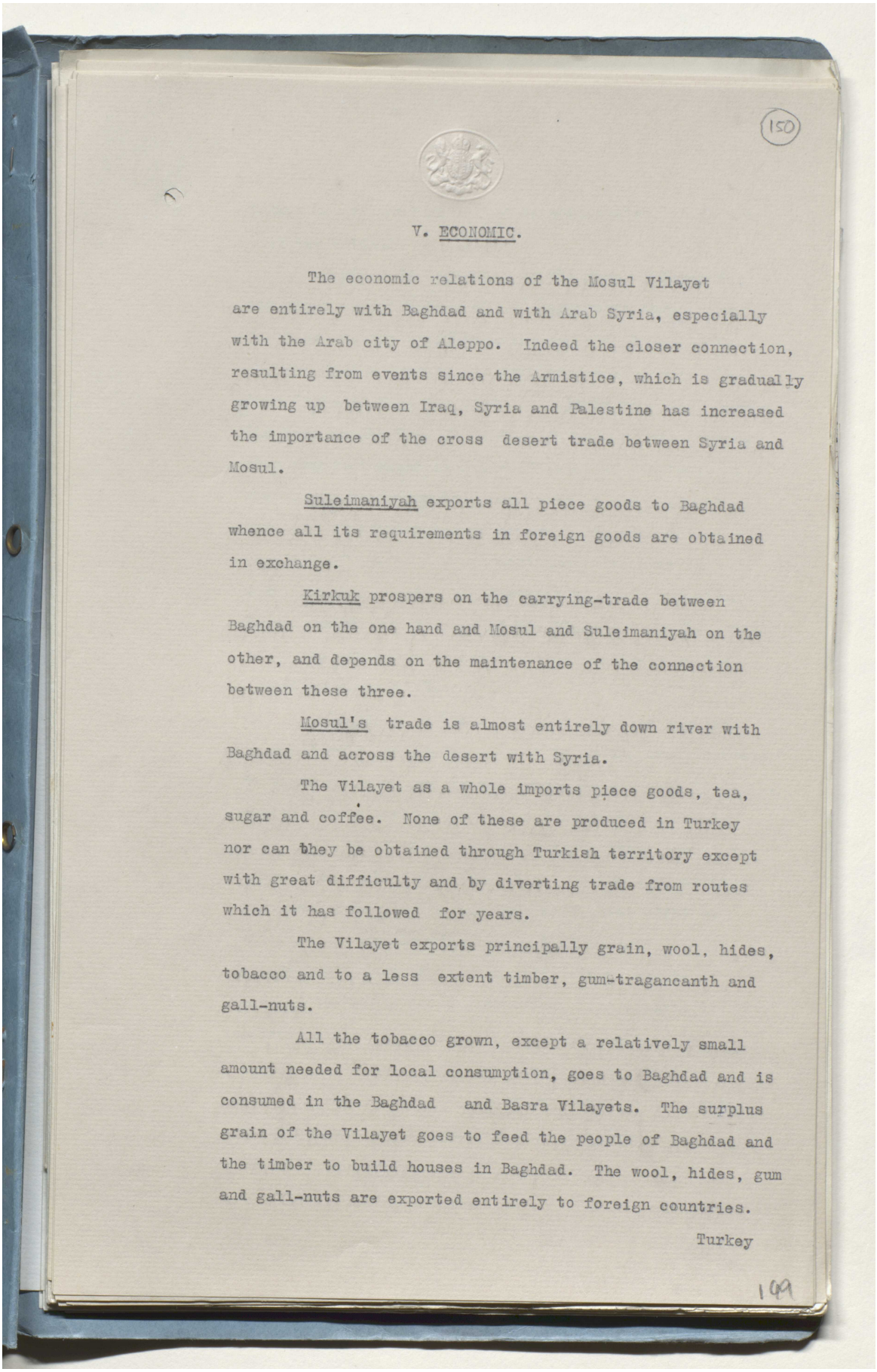

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V. ECONOMIC.

The economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Baghdad and with Arab Syria, especially with the Arab city of Aleppo. Indeed the closer connection, resulting from events since the Armistice, which is gradually growing up between Iraq, Syria and Palestine has increased the importance of the cross desert trade between Syria and Mosul.

Suleimaniyah exports all piece goods to Baghdad whence all its requirements in foreign goods are obtained in exchange.

Kirkuk prospers on the carrying-trade between Baghdad on the one hand and Mosul and Suleimaniyah on the other, and depends on the maintenance of the connection between these three.

Mosul's trade is almost entirely down river with Baghdad and across the desert with Syria.

The Vilayet as a whole imports piece goods, tea, sugar and coffee. None of these are produced in Turkey nor can they be obtained through Turkish territory except with great difficulty and by diverting trade from routes which it has followed for years.

The Vilayet exports principally grain, wool, hides, tobacco and to a less extent timber, gum-tragacanth and gall-nuts.

All the tobacco grown, except a relatively small amount needed for local consumption, goes to Baghdad and is consumed in the Baghdad and Basra Vilayets. The surplus grain of the Vilayet goes to feed the people of Baghdad and the timber to build houses in Baghdad. The wool, hides, gum and gall-nuts are exported entirely to foreign countries.

Turkey

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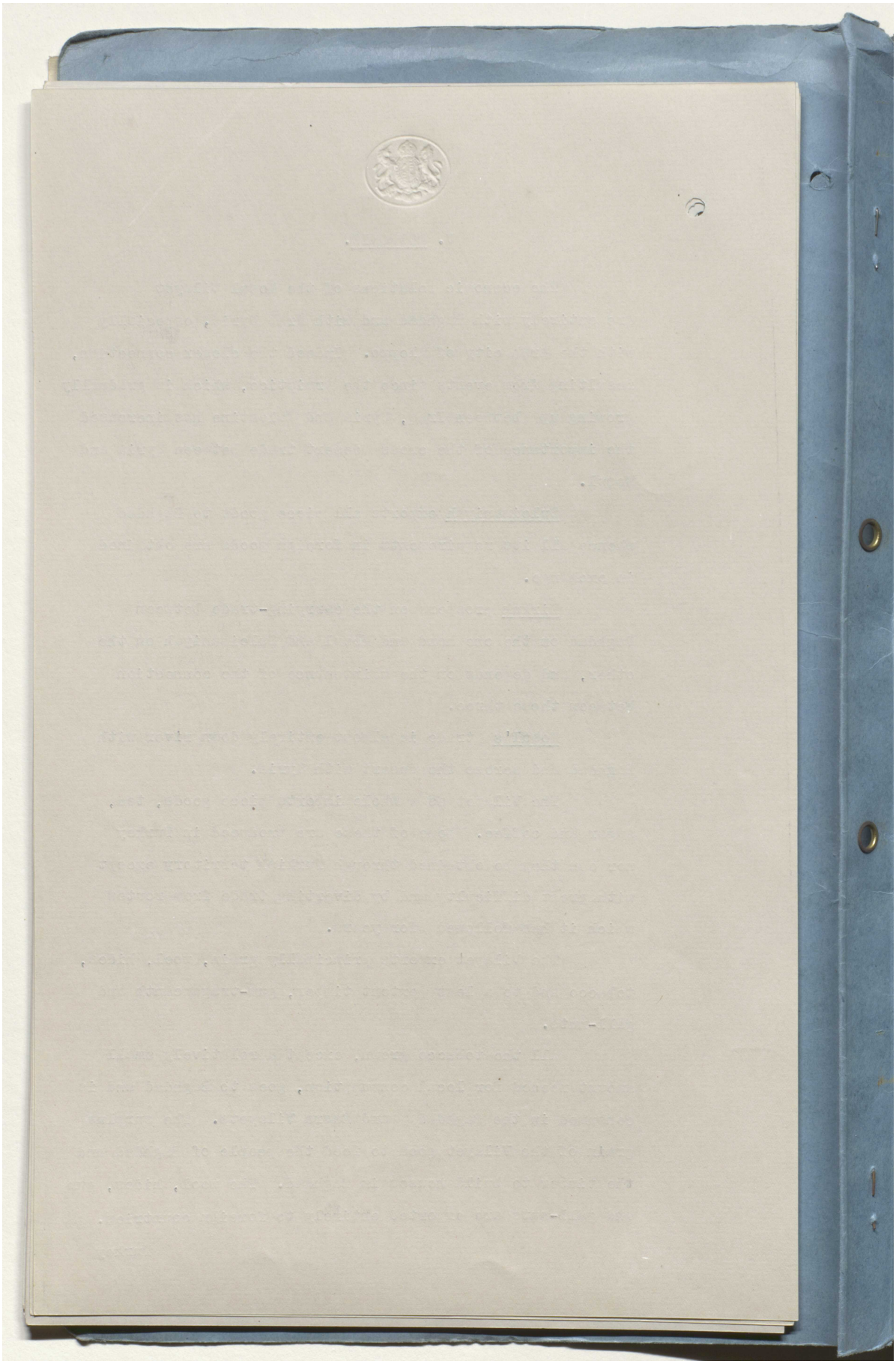

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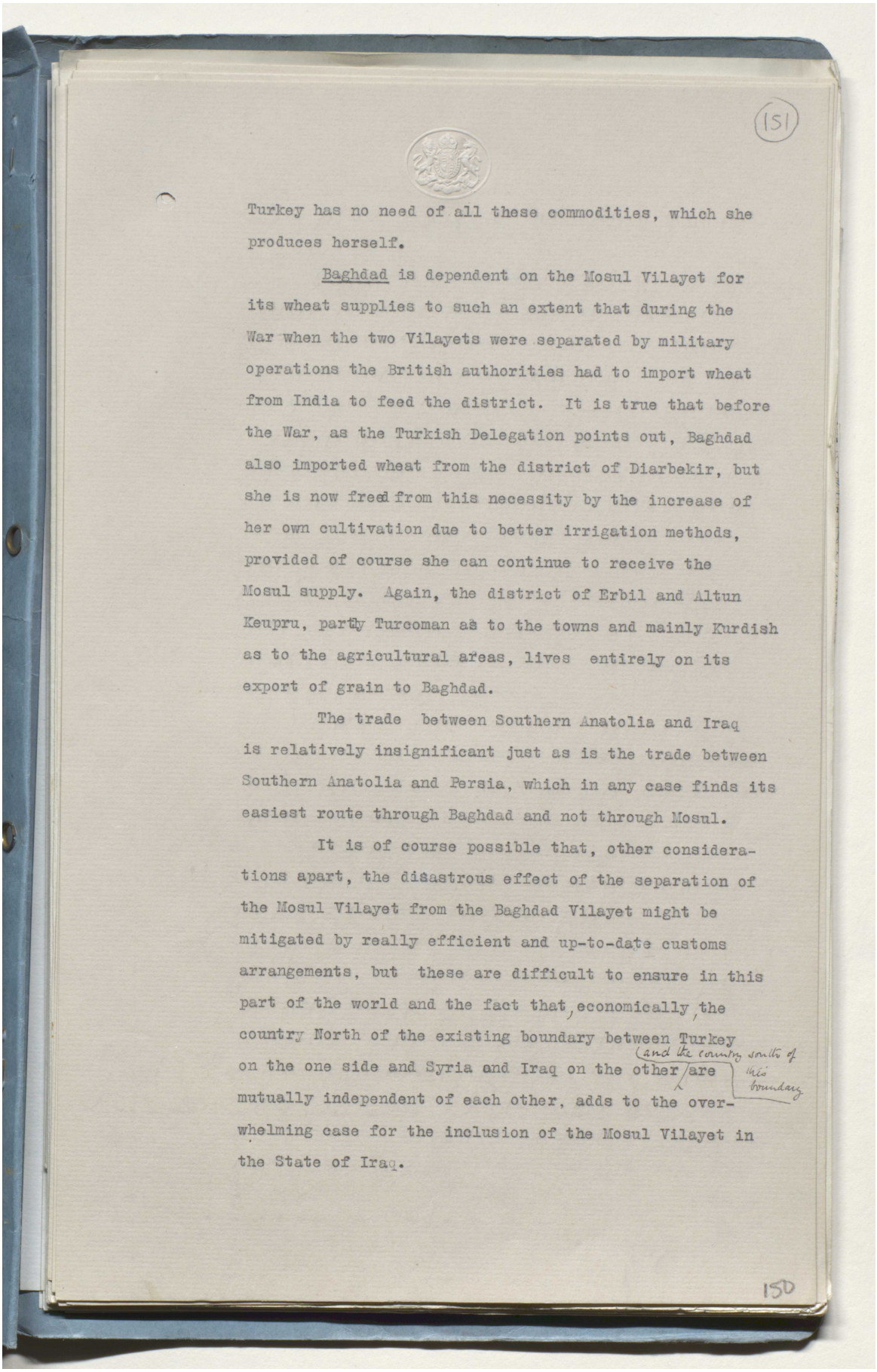

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Turkey has no need of all these commodities, which she produces herself.

Baghdad is dependent on the Mosul Vilayet for its wheat supplies to such an extent that during the War when the two Vilayets were separated by military operations the British authorities had to import wheat from India to feed the district. It is true that before the War, as the Turkish Delegation points out, Baghdad also imported wheat from the district of Diarbekir, but she is now freed from this necessity by the increase of her own cultivation due to better irrigation methods, provided of course she can continue to receive the Mosul supply. Again, the district of Erbil and Altun Keupru, partly Turcoman as to the towns and mainly Kurdish as to the agricultural areas, lives entirely on its export of grain to Baghdad.

The trade between Southern Anatolia and Iraq is relatively insignificant just as is the trade between Southern Anatolia and Persia, which in any case finds its easiest route through Baghdad and not through Mosul.

It is of course possible that, other considerations apart, the disastrous effect of the separation of the Mosul Vilayet from the Baghdad Vilayet might be mitigated by really efficient and up-to-date customs arrangements, but these are difficult to ensure in this part of the world and the fact that, economically, the country North of the existing boundary between Turkey on the one side and Syria and Iraq on the other (and the country south of this boundary) are mutually independent of each other, adds to the overwhelming case for the inclusion of the Mosul Vilayet in the State of Iraq.

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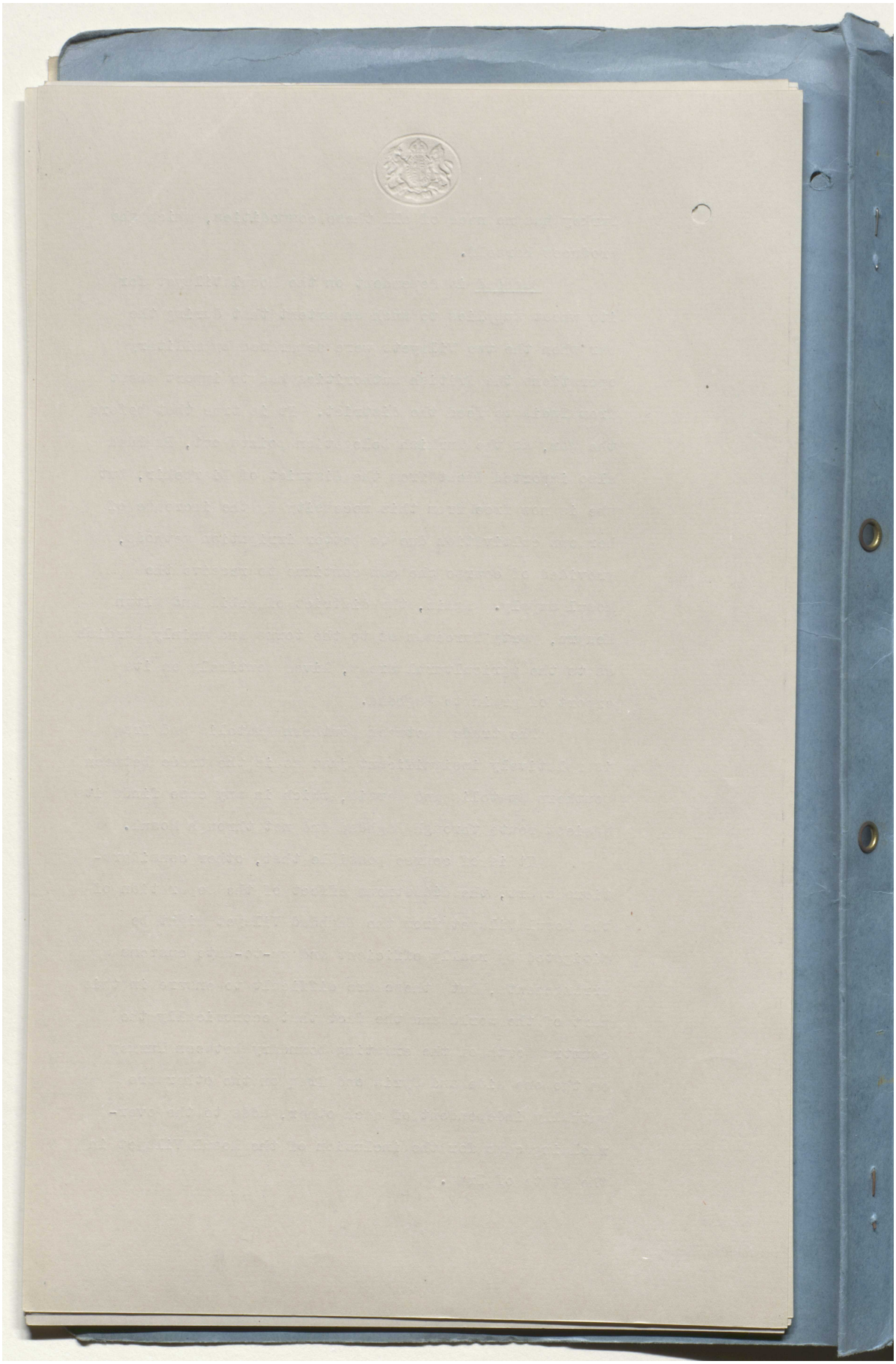

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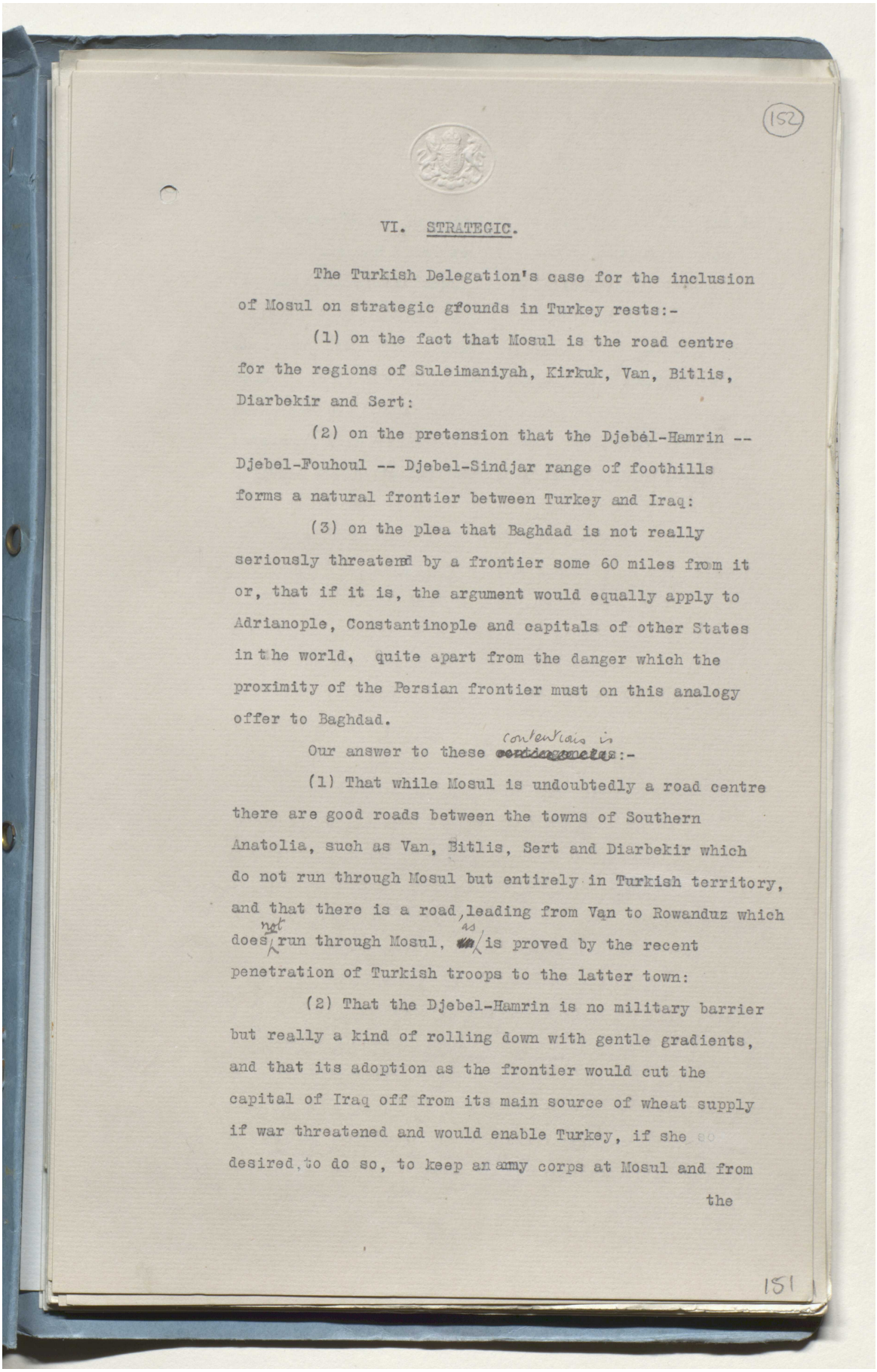

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VI. STRATEGIC.

The Turkish Delegation's case for the inclusion of Mosul on strategic gfounds in Turkey rests:-

(1) on the fact that Mosul is the road centre for the regions of Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk, Van, Bitlis, Diarbekir and Sert:

(2) on the pretension that the Djebel-Hamrin -- Djebel-Fouhoul -- Djebel-Sindjar range of foothills forms a natural frontier between Turkey and Iraq:

(3) on the plea that Baghdad is not really seriously threatemd by a frontier some 60 miles from it or, that if it is, the argument would equally apply to Adrianople, Constantinople and capitals of other States in the world, quite apart from the danger which the proximity of the Persian frontier must on this analogy offer to Baghdad.

Our answer to these contentions is:-

(1) That while Mosul is undoubtedly a road centre there are good roads between the towns of Southern Anatolia, such as Van, Bitlis, Sert and Diarbekir which do not run through Mosul but entirely in Turkish territory, and that there is a road, leading from Van to Rowanduz which does not run through Mosul, as is proved by the recent penetration of Turkish troops to the latter town:

(2) That the Djebel-Hamrin is no military barrier but really a kind of rolling down with gentle gradients, and that its adoption as the frontier would cut the capital of Iraq off from its main source of wheat supply if war threatened and would enable Turkey, if she so desired, to do so, to keep an army corps at Mosul and from the

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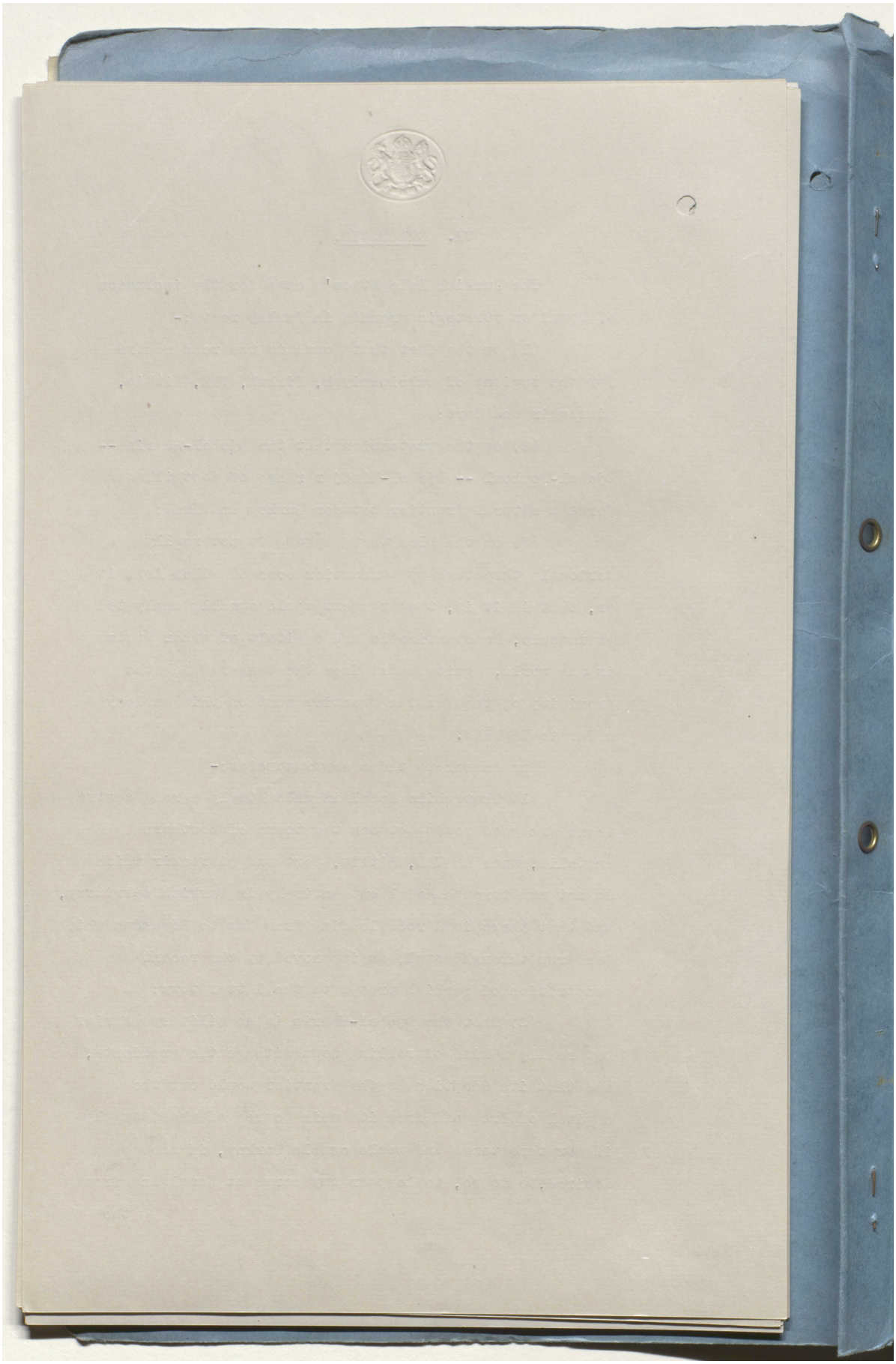

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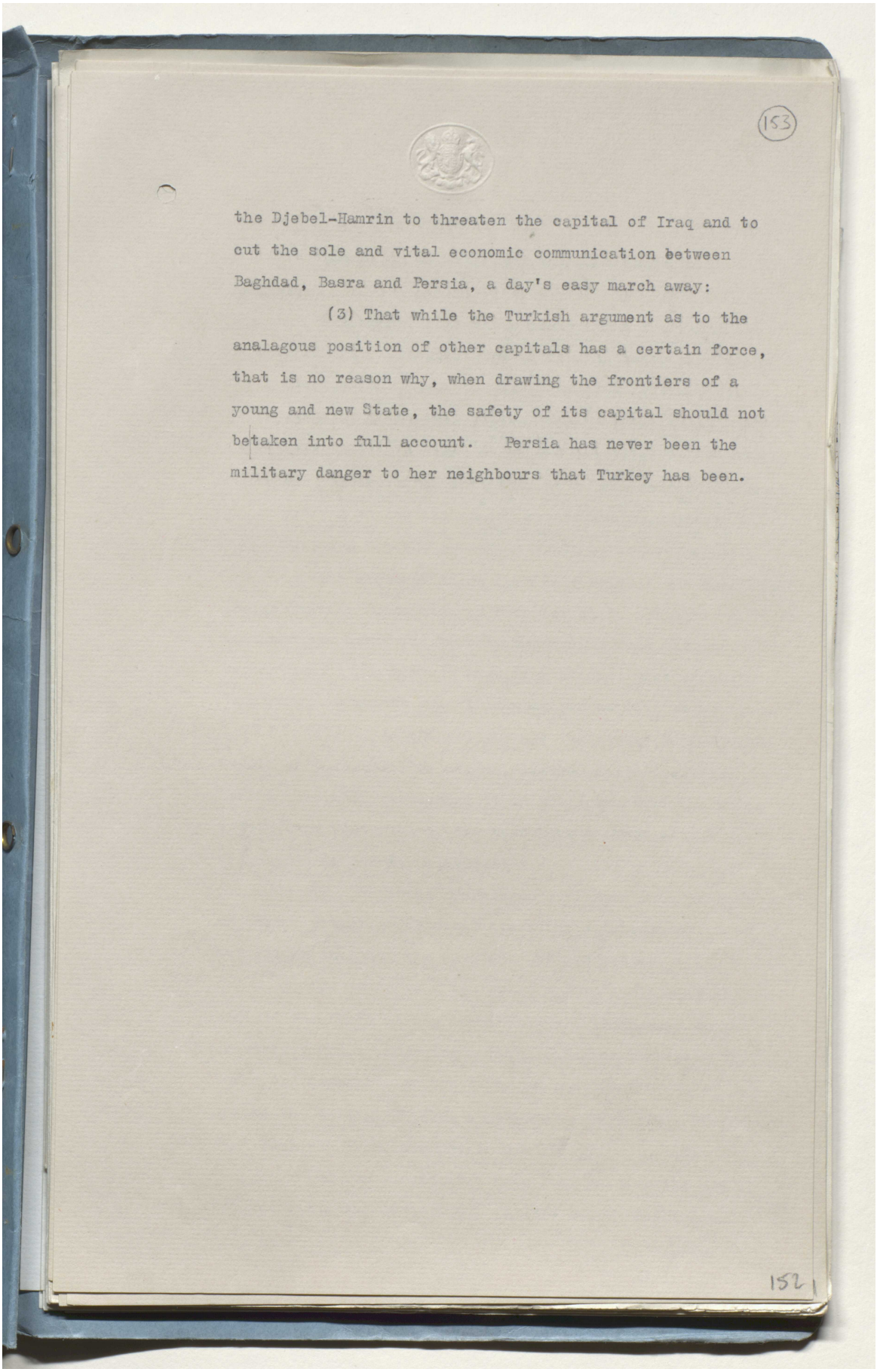

(153)

the Djebel-Hamrin to threaten the capital of Iraq and to cut the sole and vital economic communication between Baghdad, Basra and Persia, a day's easy march away:

(3) That while the Turkish argument as to the analagous position of other capitals has a certain force, that is no reason why, when drawing the frontiers of a young and new State, the safety of its capital should not betaken into full account. Persia has never been the military danger to her neighbours that Turkey has been.

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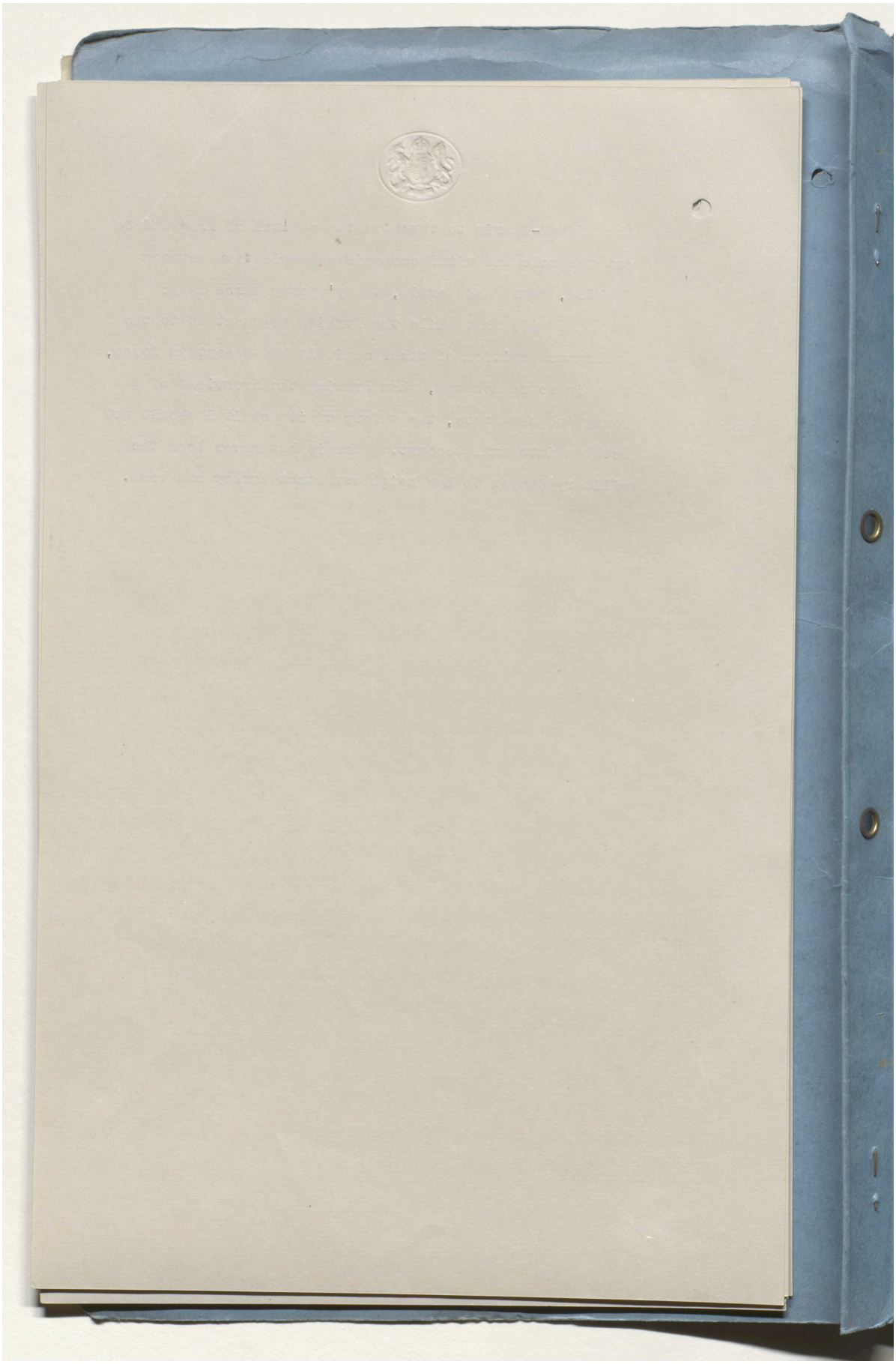

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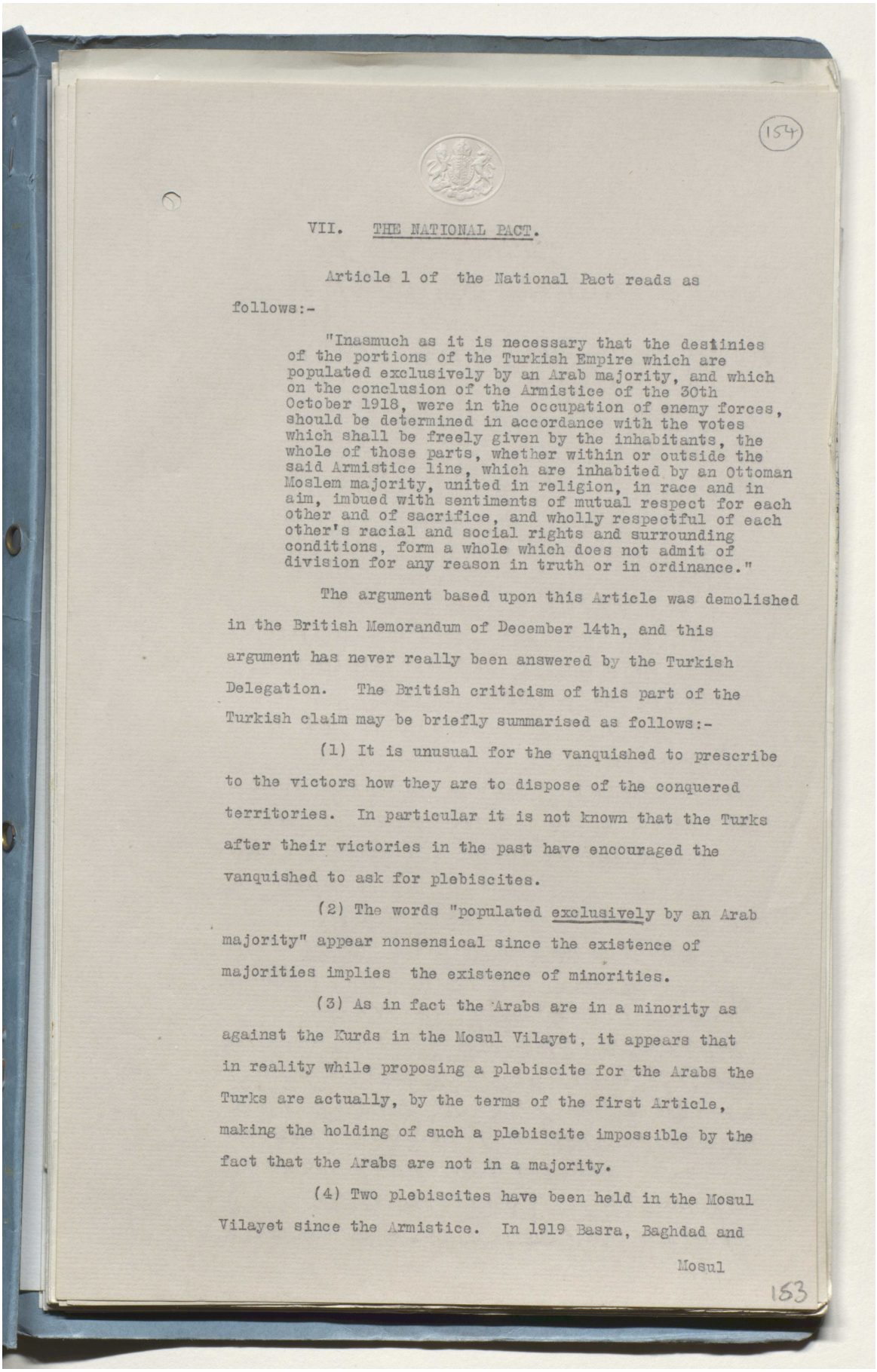

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VII. THE NATIONAL PACT.

Article 1 of the National Pact reads as follows:-

"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."

The argument based upon this Article was demolished in the British Memorandum of December 14th, and this argument has never really been answered by the Turkish Delegation. The British criticism of this part of the Turkish claim may be briefly summarised as follows:-

(1) It is unusual for the vanquished to prescribe to the victors how they are to dispose of the conquered territories. In particular it is not known that the Turks after their victories in the past have encouraged the vanquished to ask for plebiscites.

(2) The words "populated exclusively by an Arab majority" appear nonsensical since the existence of majorities implies the existence of minorities.

(3) As in fact the Arabs are in a minority as against the Kurds in the Mosul Vilayet, it appears that in reality while proposing a plebiscite for the Arabs the Turks are actually, by the terms of the first Article, making the holding of such a plebiscite impossible by the fact that the Arabs are not in a majority.

(4) Two plebiscites have been held in the Mosul Vilayet since the Armistice. In 1919 Basra, Baghdad and

Mosul

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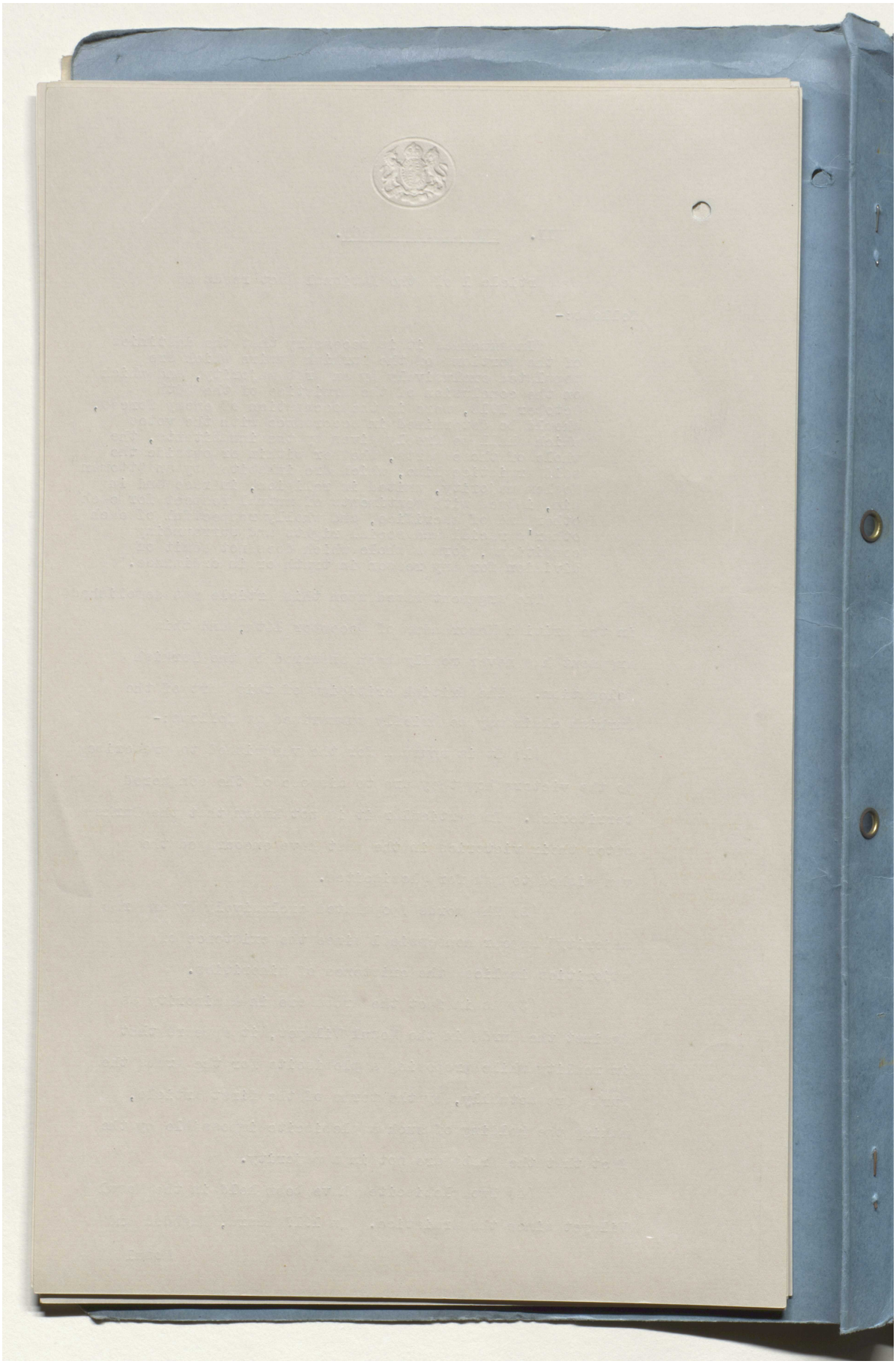

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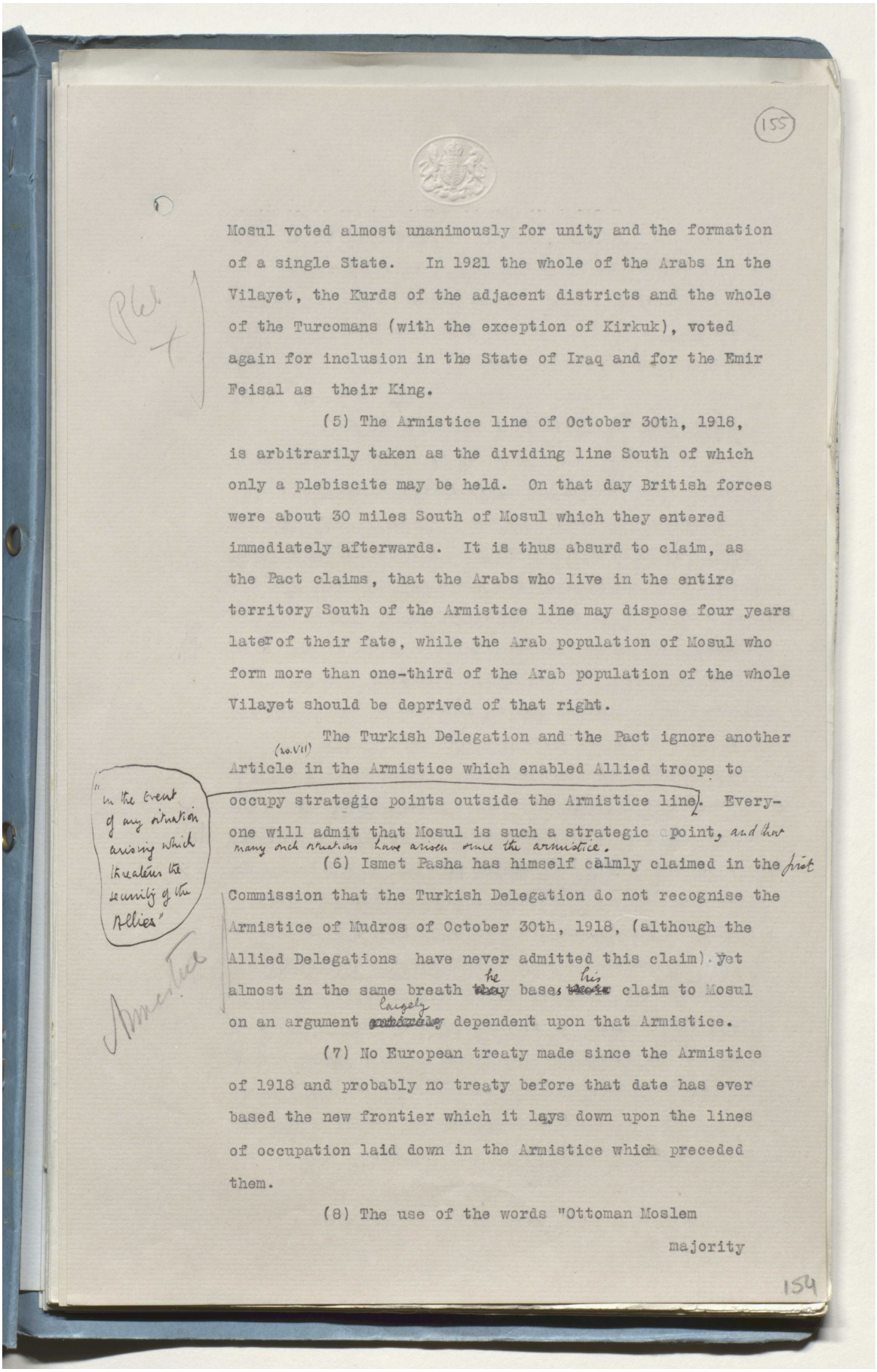

(155)

Mosul voted almost unanimously for unity and the formation of a single State. In 1921 the whole of the Arabs in the Vilayet, the Kurds of the adjacent districts and the whole of the Turcomans (with the exception of Kirkuk), voted again for inclusion in the State of Iraq and for the Emir Feisal as their King.

(5) The Armistice line of October 30th, 1918, is arbitrarily taken as the dividing line South of which only a plebiscite may be held. On that day British forces were about 30 miles South of Mosul which they entered immediately afterwards. It is thus absurd to claim, as the Pact claims, that the Arabs who live in the entire territory South of the Armistice line may dispose four years later of their fate, while the Arab population of Mosul who form more than one-third of the Arab population of the whole Vilayet should be deprived of that right.

(6) Ismet Pasha has himself calmly claimed in the first Commission that the Turkish Delegation do not recognise the Armistice of Mudros of October 30th, 1918, (although the Allied Delegations have never admitted this claim). Yet almost in the same breath he bases his claim to Mosul largely on an argument dependent upon that Armistice.

The Turkish Delegation and the Pact ignore another Article (no. VII) in the Armistice which enabled Allied troops to occupy strategic points outside the Armistice line. Everyone will admit that Mosul is such a strategic point, and that many such situations have arisen since the armistice.

"in the event of any situation arising which threatens the security of the Allies"

Armistice

(7) No European treaty made since the Armistice of 1918 and probably no treaty before that date has ever based the new frontier which it lays down upon the lines of occupation laid down in the Armistice which preceded them.

(8) The use of the words "Ottoman Moslem majority

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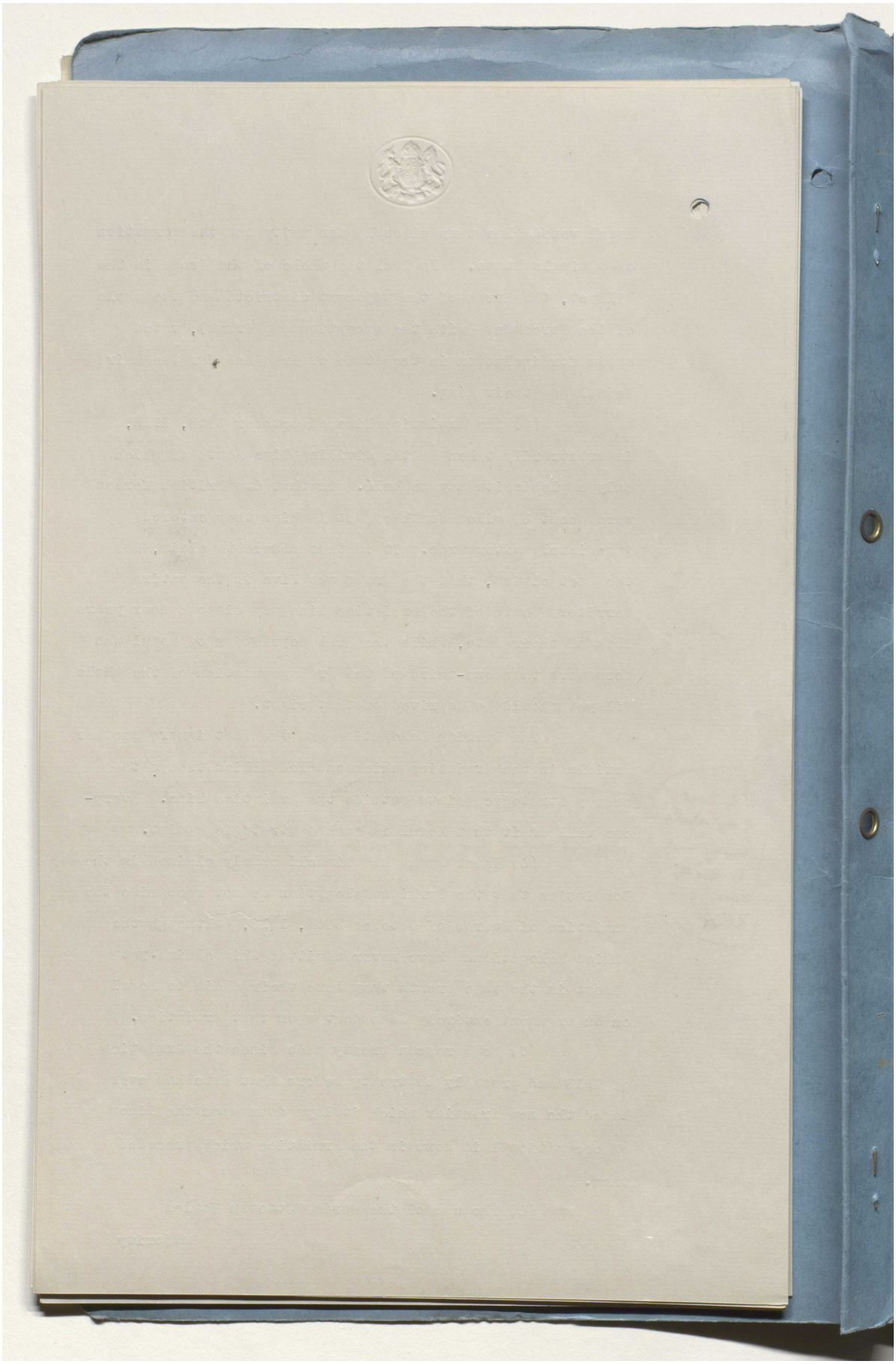

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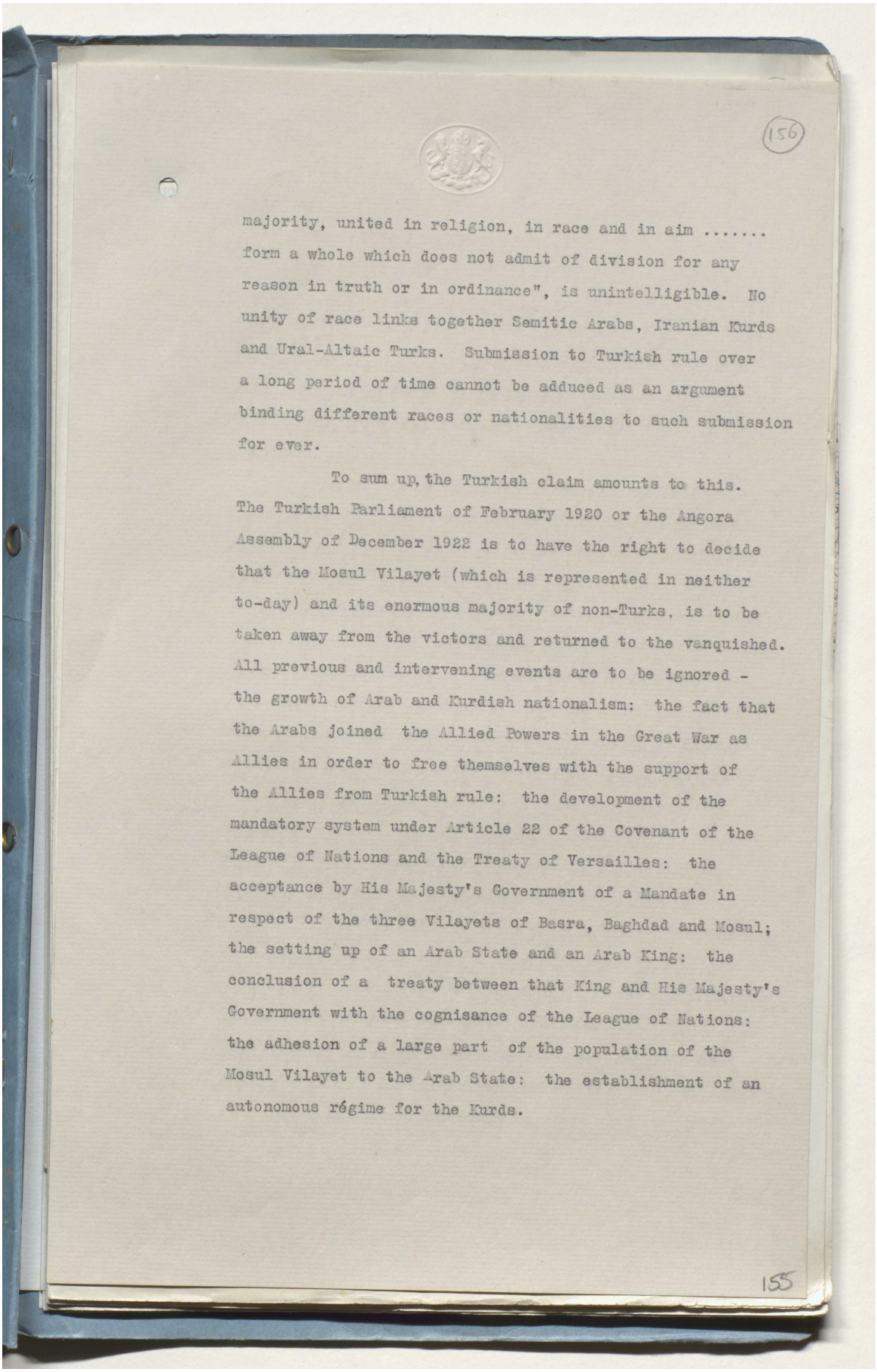

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majority, united in religion, in race and in aim ..... form a whole which does not admit of division for any reason in truth or in ordinance", is unintelligible. No unity of race links together Semitic Arabs, Iranian Kurds and Ural-Altaic Turks. Submission to Turkish rule over a long period of time cannot be adduced as an argument binding different races or nationalities to such submission for ever.

To sum up, the Turkish claim amounts to this. The Turkish Parliament of February 1920 or the Angora Assembly of December 1922 is to have the right to decide that the Mosul Vilayet (which is represented in neither to-day) and its enormous majority of non-Turks, is to be taken away from the victors and returned to the vanquished. All previous and intervening events are to be ignored - the growth of Arab and Kurdish nationalism: the fact that the Arabs joined the Allied Powers in the Great War as Allies in order to free themselves with the support of the Allies from Turkish rule: the development of the mandatory system under Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Treaty of Versailles: the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of a Mandate in respect of the three Vilayets of Basra, Baghdad and Mosul; the setting up of an Arab State and an Arab King: the conclusion of a treaty between that King and His Majesty's Government with the cognisance of the League of Nations: the adhesion of a large part of the population of the Mosul Vilayet to the Arab State: the establishment of an autonomous régime for the Kurds.

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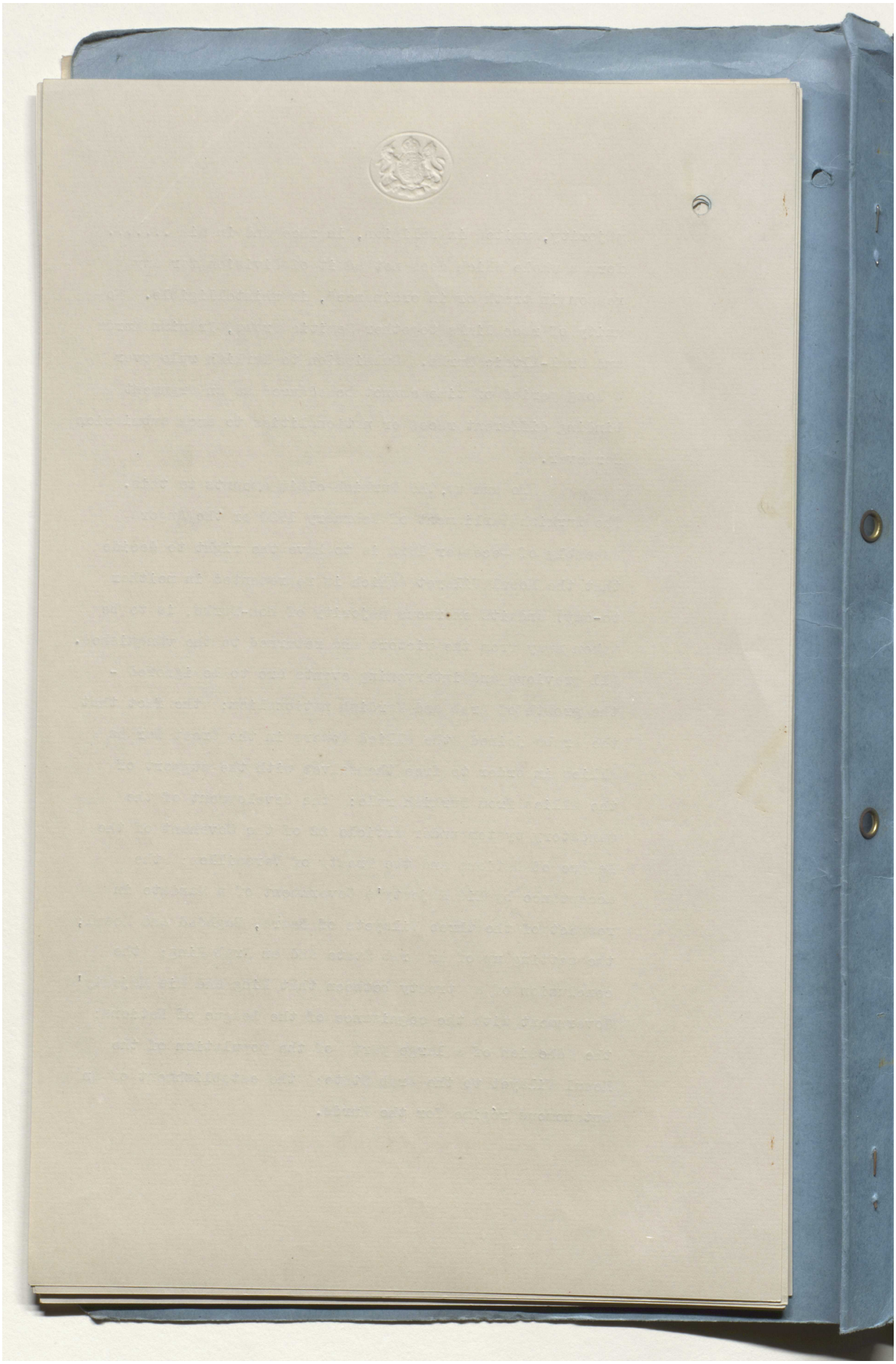

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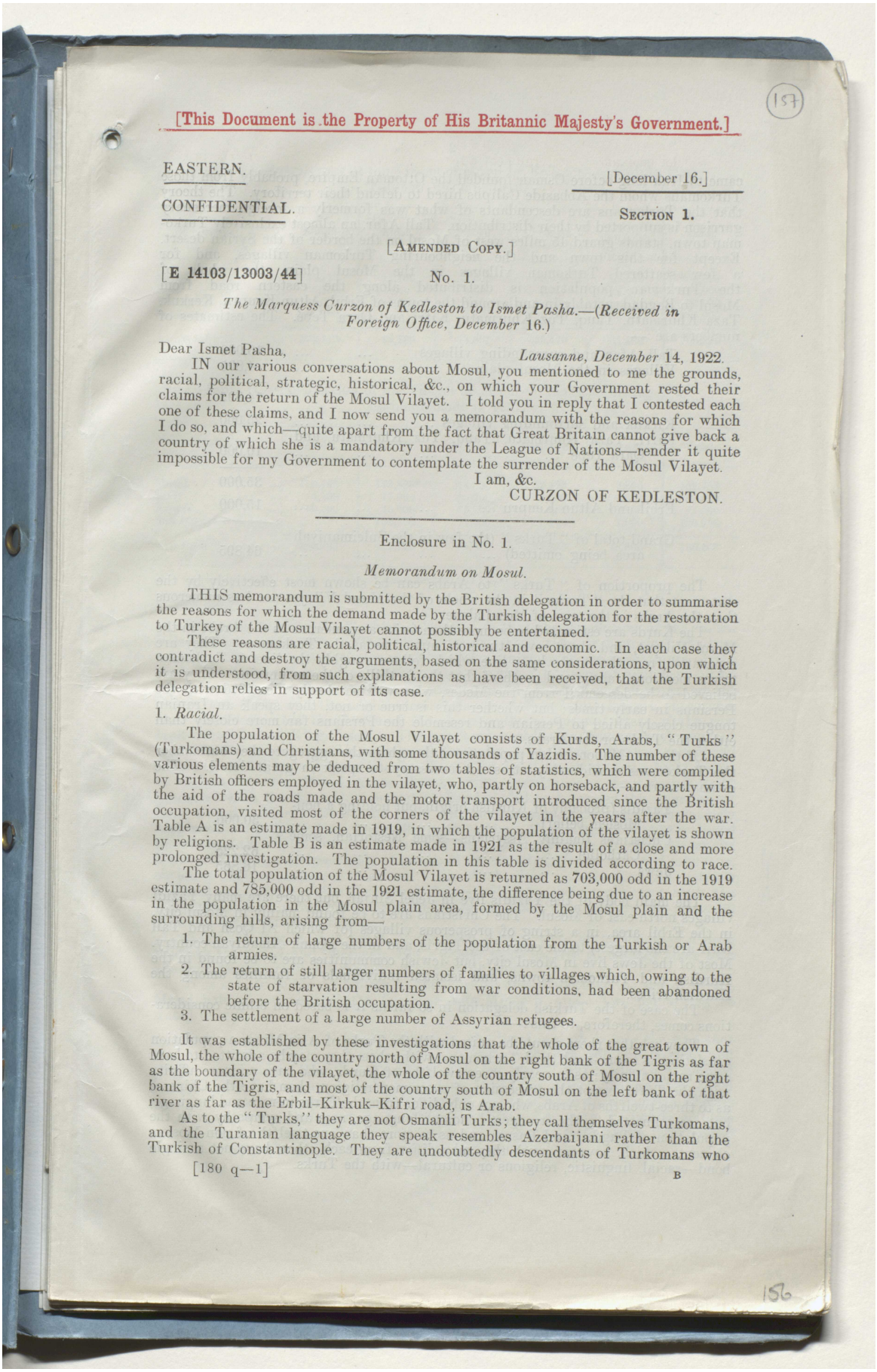

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[December 16.]

SECTION 1.

[AMENDED COPY.]

[E 14103/13003/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.—(Received in Foreign Office, December 16.)

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December 14, 1922.*

IN our various conversations about Mosul, you mentioned to me the grounds, racial, political, strategic, historical, &c., on which your Government rested their claims for the return of the Mosul Vilayet. I told you in reply that I contested each one of these claims, and I now send you a memorandum with the reasons for which I do so, and which—quite apart from the fact that Great Britain cannot give back a country of which she is a mandatory under the League of Nations—render it quite impossible for my Government to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet.

I am, &c.

CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum on Mosul.

THIS memorandum is submitted by the British delegation in order to summarise the reasons for which the demand made by the Turkish delegation for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet cannot possibly be entertained.

These reasons are racial, political, historical and economic. In each case they contradict and destroy the arguments, based on the same considerations, upon which it is understood, from such explanations as have been received, that the Turkish delegation relies in support of its case.

1. *Racial.*

The population of the Mosul Vilayet consists of Kurds, Arabs, "Turks" (Turkomans) and Christians, with some thousands of Yazidis. The number of these various elements may be deduced from two tables of statistics, which were compiled by British officers employed in the vilayet, who, partly on horseback, and partly with the aid of the roads made and the motor transport introduced since the British occupation, visited most of the corners of the vilayet in the years after the war. Table A is an estimate made in 1919, in which the population of the vilayet is shown by religions. Table B is an estimate made in 1921 as the result of a close and more prolonged investigation. The population in this table is divided according to race.

The total population of the Mosul Vilayet is returned as 703,000 odd in the 1919 estimate and 785,000 odd in the 1921 estimate, the difference being due to an increase in the population in the Mosul plain area, formed by the Mosul plain and the surrounding hills, arising from—

1. The return of large numbers of the population from the Turkish or Arab armies.
2. The return of still larger numbers of families to villages which, owing to the state of starvation resulting from war conditions, had been abandoned before the British occupation.
3. The settlement of a large number of Assyrian refugees.

It was established by these investigations that the whole of the great town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of that river as far as the Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri road, is Arab.

As to the "Turks," they are not Osmanli Turks; they call themselves Turkomans, and the Turanian language they speak resembles Azerbaijani rather than the Turkish of Constantinople. They are undoubtedly descendants of Turkomans who

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came to Irak long before Osman founded the Ottoman Empire, probably from those Turkomans whom the Abbaside Caliphs hired to defend their territory. The theory that the Turkomans are descendants of what was formerly a foreign mercenary garrison is supported by their distribution. Tall Afar, an almost exclusively Turkoman town, stands guard 45 miles west of Mosul on the border of the Syrian desert. Except for this town and the neighbouring Turkoman villages, and for a few scattered Turkoman villages in the Mosul plain, the whole of the Turkoman population is distributed along the eastern road from Mosul to Bagdad, notably in and around the towns of Erbil, Altun Keupru, Kerkuk, Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu, Kifri and Qara Tepé. The estimates of numbers are :—

Tall Afar and surrounding villages	10,000
Villages in the Mosul plain	4,895
	14,895
Kirkuk and surrounding villages	25,000
Kifri, Taza Khurmatu, Tauq, Tuz Khurmatu and Qara Tepé	10,000
	35,000
Erbil and Altun Keupru	15,000
Grand total of " Turks " (the few in the Suleimaniyah area being omitted)	64,895

The proportion of " Turks " to Arabs can be shown most effectively by the statement that the " Turks " in the whole of the Mosul Vilayet are less numerous than the Arabs in the *town* of Mosul alone.

The Kurds are estimated to be more than twice as numerous as the Arabs in the Mosul Vilayet, and about seven times as numerous as the Turkomans. They are separated from the Arabs by a line which follows roughly the line of Turkoman towns mentioned above and north of that the foothills of the mountains. They are believed to be descended from the Medes, who were so closely identified with the Persians in early times; but whether this is true or not, they speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian and resemble the Persians far more closely than either the Turks or the Arabs.

Of the non-Mahommedan populations, though in the aggregate they outnumber the Turkomans considerably, it is not necessary to speak in great detail. The estimates are :—

Yazidis (probably of Kurdish origin, but holding a non-Moslem belief)	30,000
Christians (mainly Assyrians—some Nestorian, some Catholic)	62,225
Jews	16,865

The main body of the Yazidis live in Jebel Sinjar, but there are many Yazidi villages north-east of Mosul. The Christians are to be found mainly in Mosul city, in the Erbil area, in a string of prosperous villages (of which Al Qosh and Tall Kaif are the largest) to the east of the Tigris, and in the Dohuk–Amadiyah country. Most of the Jews live in Mosul city, but Jewish communities are to be found in the Kurdish and Turkoman towns, and isolated individuals or families among the Kurdish tribes.

The case of the Turkish delegation in so far as it is based on ethnic considerations comes, therefore, to this :—

They ask that there should be united with the Turks of Asia Minor a population consisting as to one-twelfth of Turkomans, with whom they may be admitted to have some racial affinity; as to nearly seven-twelfths of Kurds, who have no more affinity with the Turk, except the possession of a common religion, than have the Chinese; as to three-twelfths of Arabs, who not only differ from the Turks in race and language, but are connected by the strongest bonds of language, race and sympathy with the population of Bagdad and Basra; and as to more than one-twelfth of non-Moslem elements, which, however much they may differ from each other, have not a single bond—racial, linguistic, religious or cultural—with the Turks.

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Table I.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Religions according to an Estimate made in 1919.

Division.	Sunni.	Shiah.	Jewish.	Christian.	Other Religions.	Total.
Mosul	244,713	17,180	7,635	50,670	30,180	350,378
Erbil	96,100	...	4,800	4,100	1,000	106,000
Kirkuk	85,000	5,000	1,400	600	...	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	153,900	...	1,000	100	...	155,000
Total	579,713	22,180	14,835	55,470	31,180	703,378

Table II.—Population of the Vilayet of Mosul by Races according to an Estimate made in 1921.

Division.	Arabs.	Kurds.	"Turks."	Christians.	Jews.	Total.
Mosul	170,663	179,820*	14,895	57,425	9,665	432,468
Erbil	5,100	77,000	15,000	4,100	4,800	106,000
Kirkuk	10,000	45,000	35,000	600	1,400	92,000
Suleimaniyah ...	...	152,900	1,000	100	1,000	155,000
Total	185,763	454,720	65,895	62,225	16,865	785,468

* Including 30,000 Yazidis.

2. *Political.*

The next claim of the Turkish delegation is that the population of the Mosul Vilayet desires to return to Turkey because of its political or historical affinities with Turkish rule. Even if this were true of a majority of the inhabitants of the Turkoman towns who, under Turkish rule, enjoyed a position of privilege by no means warranted by their numbers, it cannot possibly be sustained in so far as the Kurds, the Arabs and the non-Moslem elements of the population are concerned. It is undeniable that the Arabs of Mosul are enthusiastic supporters of the new Irak State and of King Feisal. The result of a plebiscite conducted throughout Irak in 1919 gave a unanimous vote on the point that Basra, Bagdad and Mosul should be united and form one State. Since then, on the arrival of the Emir Feisal in the country, the Mosul Arabs showed quite unmistakably their desire to be connected with the Arab Government at Bagdad and to be under the rulership of King Feisal. They received the Emir with acclamation, they voted unanimously that he should be King, they swore allegiance to him. This latter plebiscite included the whole of the vilayet except the Kurds in the Suleimaniyah, Raniya and Rowanduz areas, who, being a compact body of people of an entirely different race and language, obviously required separate treatment. The Arab areas with the Kurdish districts adjacent to them, and the Turkoman towns, all gave their votes, and with the exception of Kirkuk all voted for inclusion in the Irak State and for the accession of Feisal to the throne of Irak.

As to the Kurds, they are a people with a keen sense of nationality, a deep pride in their race and language, and a desire to be as free to manage their own affairs as their pursuit of economic progress will allow.

It is said to be the contention of the Turkish delegation that the Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet are one with the Turks of Asia Minor in aim. Two points may be stated in reply :—

1. It is perfectly well known to people who lived in Irak before the war that communications between Suleimaniyah on the one side and Bagdad and Mosul on the other were constantly cut, that Turkish officials appointed to Suleimaniyah often waited at Mosul for months before they could venture to set out on their journey, and that when such Turkish officials reached their posts in Southern Kurdistan they were frequently helpless in the face of the determination of the Kurds to brook no interference from the distant Government of Constantinople.

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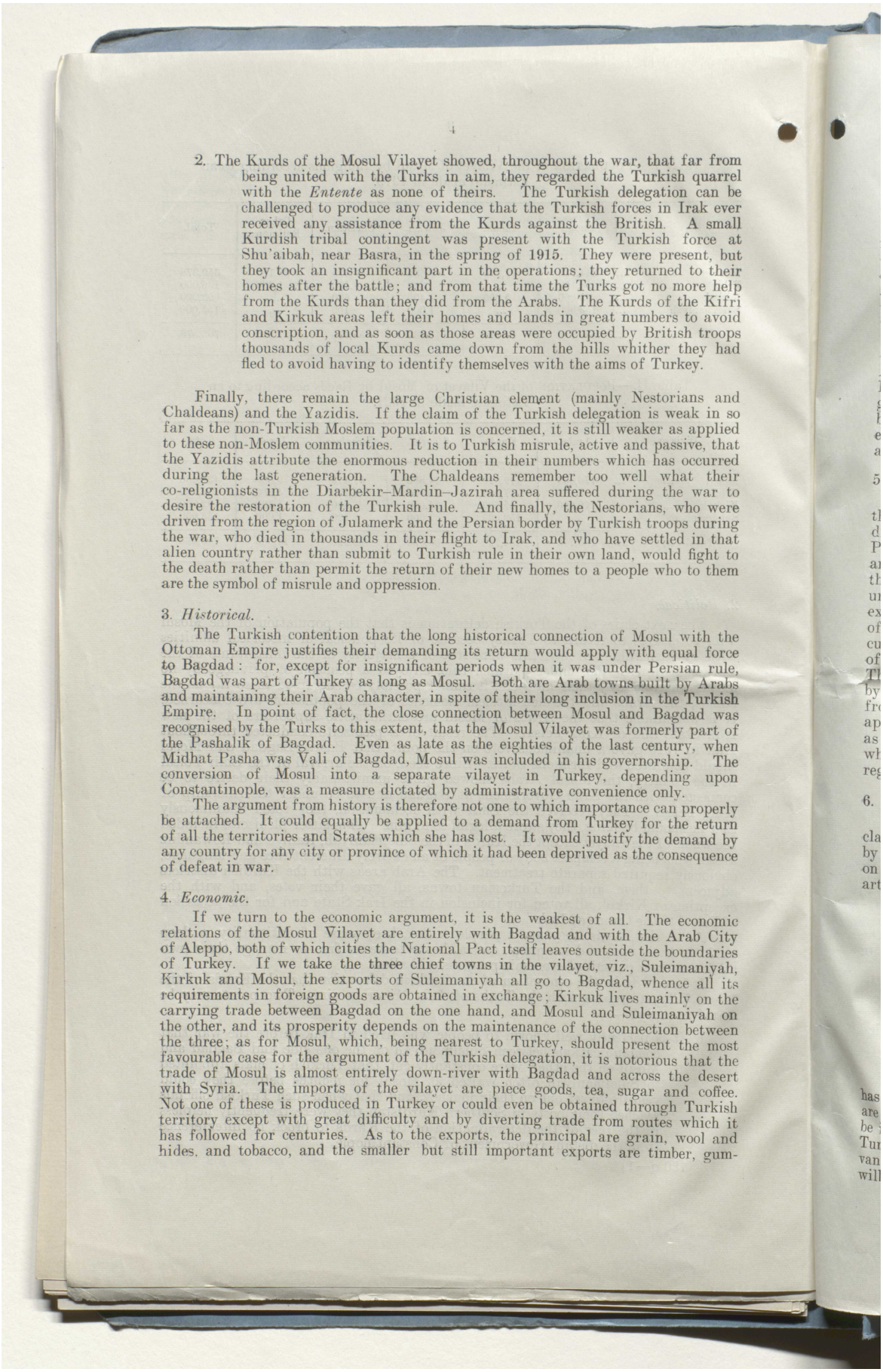

2. The Kurds of the Mosul Vilayet showed, throughout the war, that far from being united with the Turks in aim, they regarded the Turkish quarrel with the *Entente* as none of theirs. The Turkish delegation can be challenged to produce any evidence that the Turkish forces in Irak ever received any assistance from the Kurds against the British. A small Kurdish tribal contingent was present with the Turkish force at Shu'aibah, near Basra, in the spring of 1915. They were present, but they took an insignificant part in the operations; they returned to their homes after the battle; and from that time the Turks got no more help from the Kurds than they did from the Arabs. The Kurds of the Kifri and Kirkuk areas left their homes and lands in great numbers to avoid conscription, and as soon as those areas were occupied by British troops thousands of local Kurds came down from the hills whither they had fled to avoid having to identify themselves with the aims of Turkey.

Finally, there remain the large Christian element (mainly Nestorians and Chaldeans) and the Yazidis. If the claim of the Turkish delegation is weak in so far as the non-Turkish Moslem population is concerned, it is still weaker as applied to these non-Moslem communities. It is to Turkish misrule, active and passive, that the Yazidis attribute the enormous reduction in their numbers which has occurred during the last generation. The Chaldeans remember too well what their co-religionists in the Diarbekir–Mardin–Jazirah area suffered during the war to desire the restoration of the Turkish rule. And finally, the Nestorians, who were driven from the region of Julamerk and the Persian border by Turkish troops during the war, who died in thousands in their flight to Irak, and who have settled in that alien country rather than submit to Turkish rule in their own land, would fight to the death rather than permit the return of their new homes to a people who to them are the symbol of misrule and oppression.

3. *Historical.*

The Turkish contention that the long historical connection of Mosul with the Ottoman Empire justifies their demanding its return would apply with equal force to Bagdad: for, except for insignificant periods when it was under Persian rule, Bagdad was part of Turkey as long as Mosul. Both are Arab towns built by Arabs and maintaining their Arab character, in spite of their long inclusion in the Turkish Empire. In point of fact, the close connection between Mosul and Bagdad was recognised by the Turks to this extent, that the Mosul Vilayet was formerly part of the Pashalik of Bagdad. Even as late as the eighties of the last century, when Midhat Pasha was Vali of Bagdad, Mosul was included in his governorship. The conversion of Mosul into a separate vilayet in Turkey, depending upon Constantinople, was a measure dictated by administrative convenience only.

The argument from history is therefore not one to which importance can properly be attached. It could equally be applied to a demand from Turkey for the return of all the territories and States which she has lost. It would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war.

4. *Economic.*

If we turn to the economic argument, it is the weakest of all. The economic relations of the Mosul Vilayet are entirely with Bagdad and with the Arab City of Aleppo, both of which cities the National Pact itself leaves outside the boundaries of Turkey. If we take the three chief towns in the vilayet, viz., Suleimaniyah, Kirkuk and Mosul, the exports of Suleimaniyah all go to Bagdad, whence all its requirements in foreign goods are obtained in exchange; Kirkuk lives mainly on the carrying trade between Bagdad on the one hand, and Mosul and Suleimaniyah on the other, and its prosperity depends on the maintenance of the connection between the three; as for Mosul, which, being nearest to Turkey, should present the most favourable case for the argument of the Turkish delegation, it is notorious that the trade of Mosul is almost entirely down-river with Bagdad and across the desert with Syria. The imports of the vilayet are piece goods, tea, sugar and coffee. Not one of these is produced in Turkey or could even be obtained through Turkish territory except with great difficulty and by diverting trade from routes which it has followed for centuries. As to the exports, the principal are grain, wool and hides, and tobacco, and the smaller but still important exports are timber, gum-

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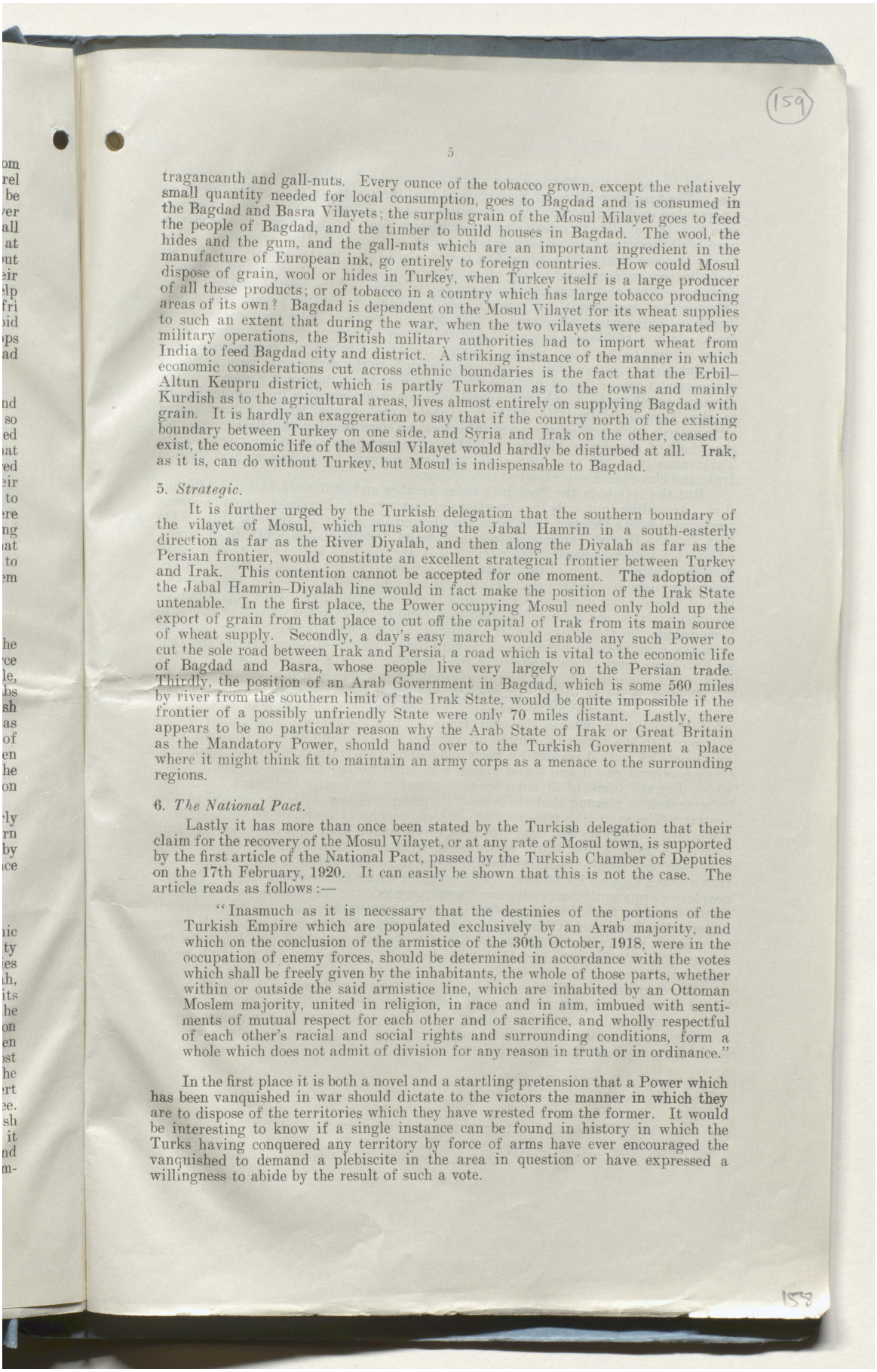

tragancanth and gall-nuts. Every ounce of the tobacco grown, except the relatively small quantity needed for local consumption, goes to Bagdad and is consumed in the Bagdad and Basra Vilayets; the surplus grain of the Mosul Milayet goes to feed the people of Bagdad, and the timber to build houses in Bagdad. The wool, the hides and the gum, and the gall-nuts which are an important ingredient in the manufacture of European ink, go entirely to foreign countries. How could Mosul dispose of grain, wool or hides in Turkey, when Turkey itself is a large producer of all these products; or of tobacco in a country which has large tobacco producing areas of its own? Bagdad is dependent on the Mosul Vilayet for its wheat supplies to such an extent that during the war, when the two vilayets were separated by military operations, the British military authorities had to import wheat from India to feed Bagdad city and district. A striking instance of the manner in which economic considerations cut across ethnic boundaries is the fact that the Erbil–Altun Keupru district, which is partly Turkoman as to the towns and mainly Kurdish as to the agricultural areas, lives almost entirely on supplying Bagdad with grain. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that if the country north of the existing boundary between Turkey on one side, and Syria and Irak on the other, ceased to exist, the economic life of the Mosul Vilayet would hardly be disturbed at all. Irak, as it is, can do without Turkey, but Mosul is indispensable to Bagdad.

5. *Strategic.*

It is further urged by the Turkish delegation that the southern boundary of the vilayet of Mosul, which runs along the Jabal Hamrin in a south-easterly direction as far as the River Diyalah, and then along the Diyalah as far as the Persian frontier, would constitute an excellent strategical frontier between Turkey and Irak. This contention cannot be accepted for one moment. The adoption of the Jabal Hamrin–Diyalah line would in fact make the position of the Irak State untenable. In the first place, the Power occupying Mosul need only hold up the export of grain from that place to cut off the capital of Irak from its main source of wheat supply. Secondly, a day's easy march would enable any such Power to cut the sole road between Irak and Persia, a road which is vital to the economic life of Bagdad and Basra, whose people live very largely on the Persian trade. Thirdly, the position of an Arab Government in Bagdad, which is some 560 miles by river from the southern limit of the Irak State, would be quite impossible if the frontier of a possibly unfriendly State were only 70 miles distant. Lastly, there appears to be no particular reason why the Arab State of Irak or Great Britain as the Mandatory Power, should hand over to the Turkish Government a place where it might think fit to maintain an army corps as a menace to the surrounding regions.

6. *The National Pact.*

Lastly it has more than once been stated by the Turkish delegation that their claim for the recovery of the Mosul Vilayet, or at any rate of Mosul town, is supported by the first article of the National Pact, passed by the Turkish Chamber of Deputies on the 17th February, 1920. It can easily be shown that this is not the case. The article reads as follows:—

> "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."

In the first place it is both a novel and a startling pretension that a Power which has been vanquished in war should dictate to the victors the manner in which they are to dispose of the territories which they have wrested from the former. It would be interesting to know if a single instance can be found in history in which the Turks having conquered any territory by force of arms have ever encouraged the vanquished to demand a plebiscite in the area in question or have expressed a willingness to abide by the result of such a vote.

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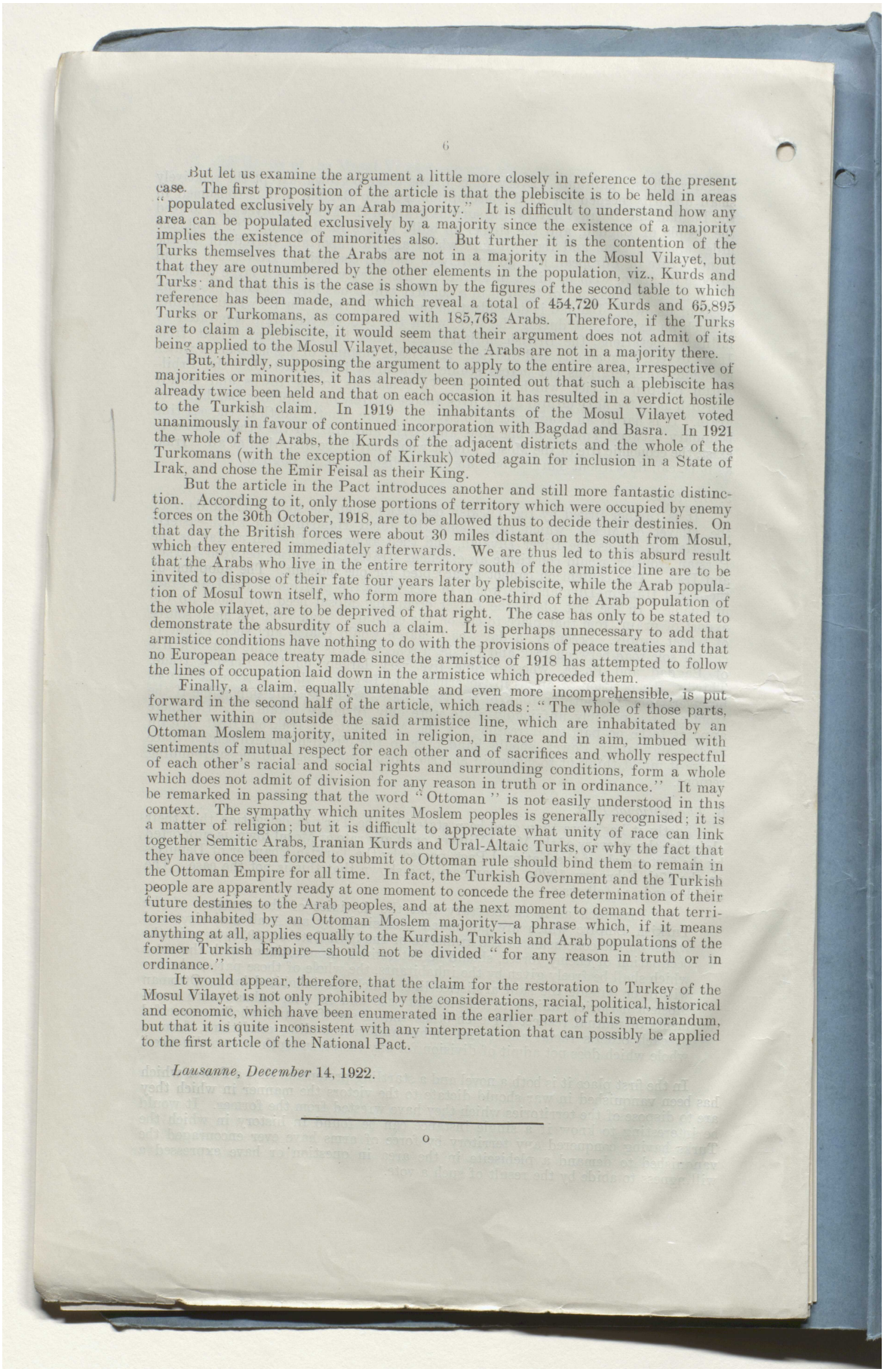

But let us examine the argument a little more closely in reference to the present case. The first proposition of the article is that the plebiscite is to be held in areas "populated exclusively by an Arab majority." It is difficult to understand how any area can be populated exclusively by a majority since the existence of a majority implies the existence of minorities also. But further it is the contention of the Turks themselves that the Arabs are not in a majority in the Mosul Vilayet, but that they are outnumbered by the other elements in the population, viz., Kurds and Turks: and that this is the case is shown by the figures of the second table to which reference has been made, and which reveal a total of 454,720 Kurds and 65,895 Turks or Turkomans, as compared with 185,763 Arabs. Therefore, if the Turks are to claim a plebiscite, it would seem that their argument does not admit of its being applied to the Mosul Vilayet, because the Arabs are not in a majority there.

But, thirdly, supposing the argument to apply to the entire area, irrespective of majorities or minorities, it has already been pointed out that such a plebiscite has already twice been held and that on each occasion it has resulted in a verdict hostile to the Turkish claim. In 1919 the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet voted unanimously in favour of continued incorporation with Bagdad and Basra. In 1921 the whole of the Arabs, the Kurds of the adjacent districts and the whole of the Turkomans (with the exception of Kirkuk) voted again for inclusion in a State of Irak, and chose the Emir Feisal as their King.

But the article in the Pact introduces another and still more fantastic distinction. According to it, only those portions of territory which were occupied by enemy forces on the 30th October, 1918, are to be allowed thus to decide their destinies. On that day the British forces were about 30 miles distant on the south from Mosul, which they entered immediately afterwards. We are thus led to this absurd result that the Arabs who live in the entire territory south of the armistice line are to be invited to dispose of their fate four years later by plebiscite, while the Arab population of Mosul town itself, who form more than one-third of the Arab population of the whole vilayet, are to be deprived of that right. The case has only to be stated to demonstrate the absurdity of such a claim. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the provisions of peace treaties and that no European peace treaty made since the armistice of 1918 has attempted to follow the lines of occupation laid down in the armistice which preceded them.

Finally, a claim, equally untenable and even more incomprehensible, is put forward in the second half of the article, which reads: "The whole of those parts, whether within or outside the said armistice line, which are inhabitated by an Ottoman Moslem majority, united in religion, in race and in aim, imbued with sentiments of mutual respect for each other and of sacrifices 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." It may be remarked in passing that the word "Ottoman" is not easily understood in this context. The sympathy which unites Moslem peoples is generally recognised; it is a matter of religion; but it is difficult to appreciate what unity of race can link together Semitic Arabs, Iranian Kurds and Ural-Altaic Turks, or why the fact that they have once been forced to submit to Ottoman rule should bind them to remain in the Ottoman Empire for all time. In fact, the Turkish Government and the Turkish people are apparently ready at one moment to concede the free determination of their future destinies to the Arab peoples, and at the next moment to demand that territories inhabited by an Ottoman Moslem majority—a phrase which, if it means anything at all, applies equally to the Kurdish, Turkish and Arab populations of the former Turkish Empire—should not be divided "for any reason in truth or in ordinance."

It would appear, therefore, that the claim for the restoration to Turkey of the Mosul Vilayet is not only prohibited by the considerations, racial, political, historical and economic, which have been enumerated in the earlier part of this memorandum, but that it is quite inconsistent with any interpretation that can possibly be applied to the first article of the National Pact.

Lausanne, December 14, 1922.

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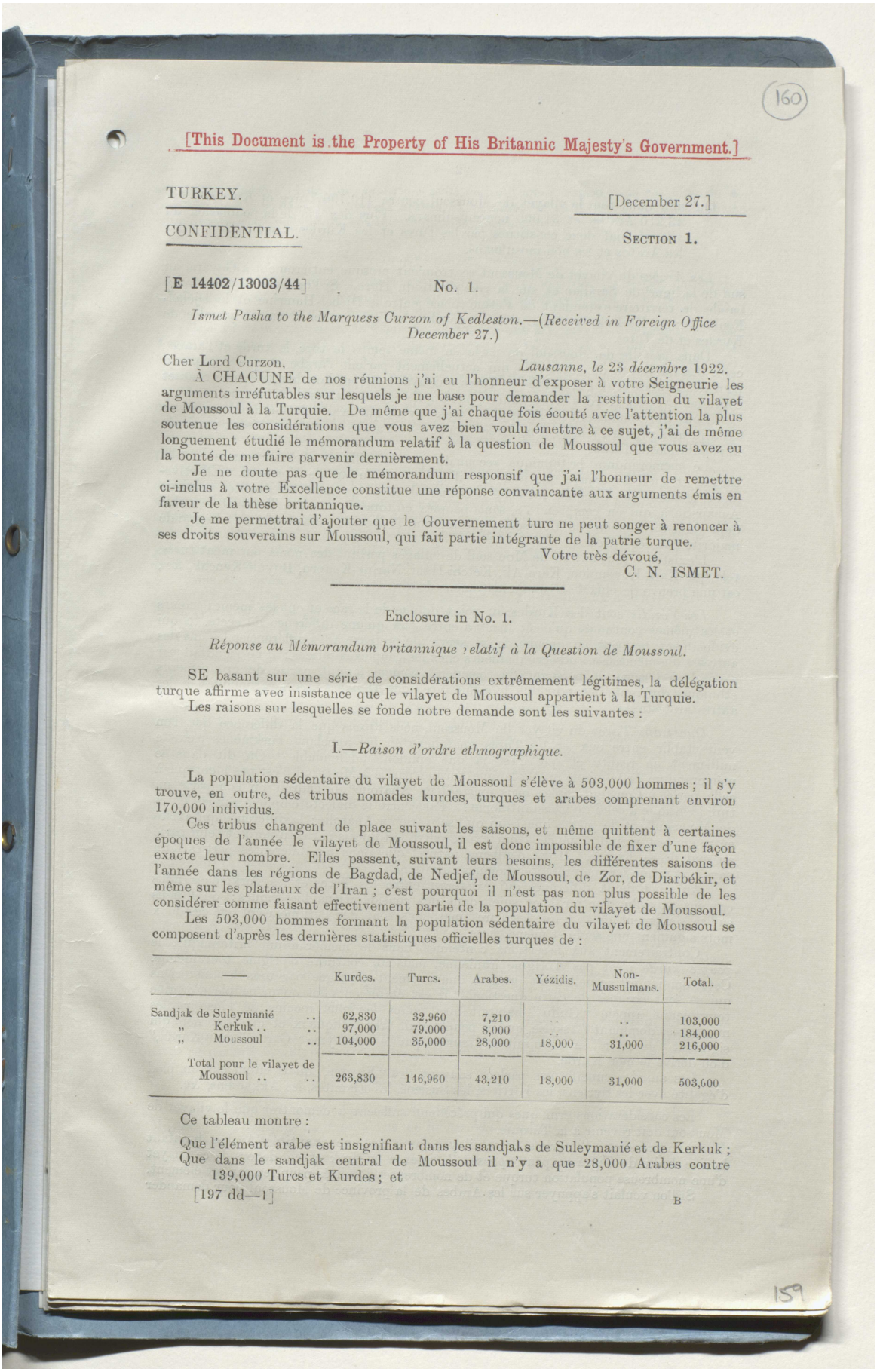

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TURKEY.

[December 27.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 1.

[E 14402/13003/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office December 27.)

Cher Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 23 décembre* 1922.

À CHACUNE de nos réunions j'ai eu l'honneur d'exposer à votre Seigneurie les arguments irréfutables sur lesquels je me base pour demander la restitution du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie. De même que j'ai chaque fois écouté avec l'attention la plus soutenue les considérations que vous avez bien voulu émettre à ce sujet, j'ai de même longuement étudié le mémorandum relatif à la question de Moussoul que vous avez eu la bonté de me faire parvenir dernièrement.

Je ne doute pas que le mémorandum responsif que j'ai l'honneur de remettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence constitue une réponse convaincante aux arguments émis en faveur de la thèse britannique.

Je me permettrai d'ajouter que le Gouvernement turc ne peut songer à renoncer à ses droits souverains sur Moussoul, qui fait partie intégrante de la patrie turque.

Votre très dévoué,
C. N. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Réponse au Mémorandum britannique relatif à la Question de Moussoul.

SE basant sur une série de considérations extrêmement légitimes, la délégation turque affirme avec insistance que le vilayet de Moussoul appartient à la Turquie.

Les raisons sur lesquelles se fonde notre demande sont les suivantes :

I.—*Raison d'ordre ethnographique.*

La population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul s'élève à 503,000 hommes ; il s'y trouve, en outre, des tribus nomades kurdes, turques et arabes comprenant environ 170,000 individus.

Ces tribus changent de place suivant les saisons, et même quittent à certaines époques de l'année le vilayet de Moussoul, il est donc impossible de fixer d'une façon exacte leur nombre. Elles passent, suivant leurs besoins, les différentes saisons de l'année dans les régions de Bagdad, de Nedjef, de Moussoul, de Zor, de Diarbékir, et même sur les plateaux de l'Iran ; c'est pourquoi il n'est pas non plus possible de les considérer comme faisant effectivement partie de la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Les 503,000 hommes formant la population sédentaire du vilayet de Moussoul se composent d'après les dernières statistiques officielles turques de :

——	Kurdes.	Turcs.	Arabes.	Yézidis.	Non-Mussulmans.	Total.
Sandjak de Suleymanié ..	62,830	32,960	7,210	..	..	103,000
„ Kerkuk	97,000	79,000	8,000	..	..	184,000
„ Moussoul ..	104,000	35,000	28,000	18,000	31,000	216,000
Total pour le vilayet de Moussoul	263,830	146,960	43,210	18,000	31,000	503,600

Ce tableau montre :

Que l'élément arabe est insignifiant dans les sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ;
Que dans le sandjak central de Moussoul il n'y a que 28,000 Arabes contre 139,000 Turcs et Kurdes ; et

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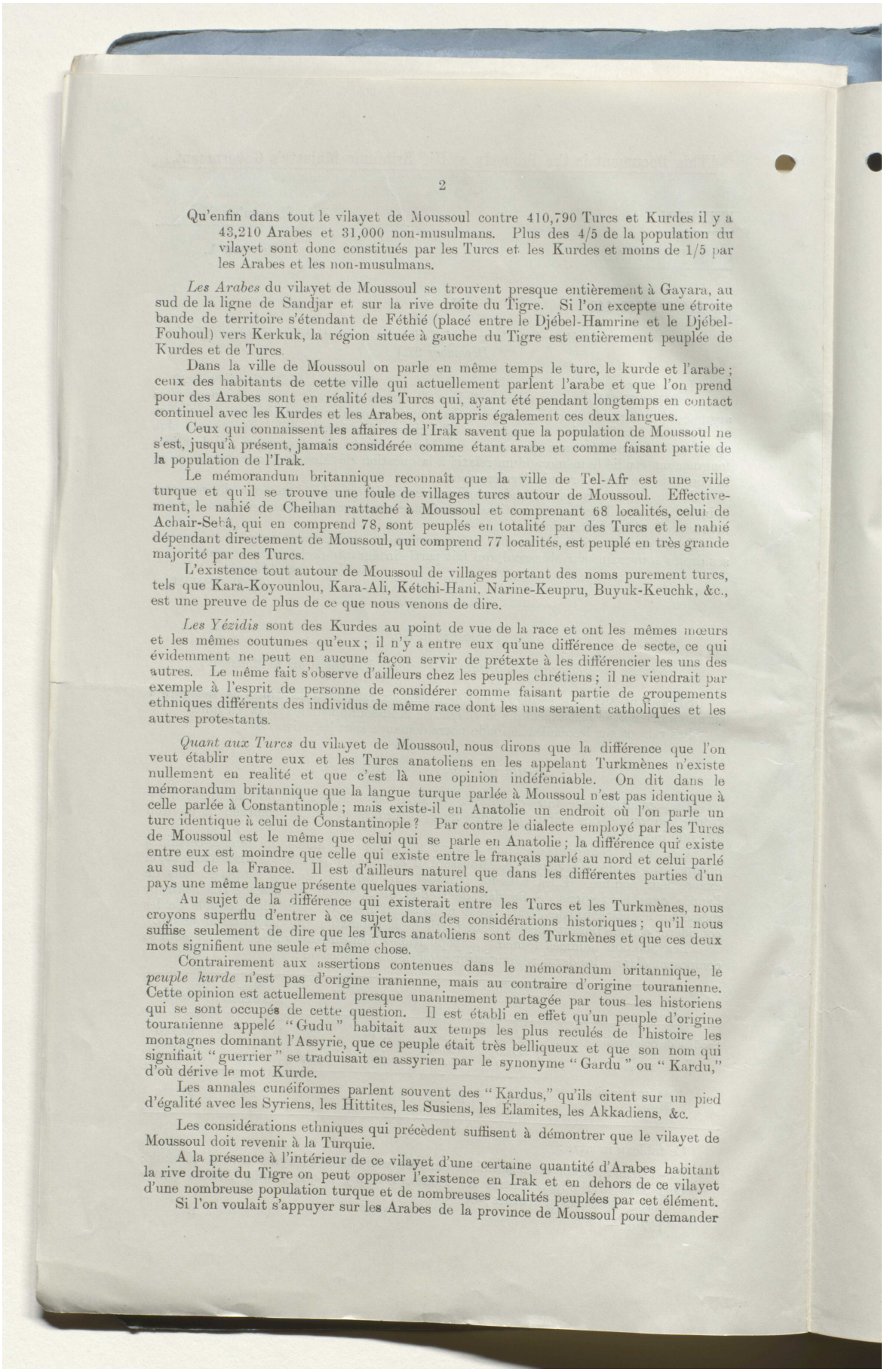

Qu'enfin dans tout le vilayet de Moussoul contre 410,790 Turcs et Kurdes il y a 43,210 Arabes et 31,000 non-musulmans. Plus des 4/5 de la population du vilayet sont donc constitués par les Turcs et les Kurdes et moins de 1/5 par les Arabes et les non-musulmans.

Les Arabes du vilayet de Moussoul se trouvent presque entièrement à Gayara, au sud de la ligne de Sandjar et sur la rive droite du Tigre. Si l'on excepte une étroite bande de territoire s'étendant de Féthié (placé entre le Djébel-Hamrine et le Djébel-Fouhoul) vers Kerkuk, la région située à gauche du Tigre est entièrement peuplée de Kurdes et de Turcs.

Dans la ville de Moussoul on parle en même temps le turc, le kurde et l'arabe; ceux des habitants de cette ville qui actuellement parlent l'arabe et que l'on prend pour des Arabes sont en réalité des Turcs qui, ayant été pendant longtemps en contact continuel avec les Kurdes et les Arabes, ont appris également ces deux langues.

Ceux qui connaissent les affaires de l'Irak savent que la population de Moussoul ne s'est, jusqu'à présent, jamais considérée comme étant arabe et comme faisant partie de la population de l'Irak.

Le mémorandum britannique reconnaît que la ville de Tel-Afr est une ville turque et qu'il se trouve une foule de villages turcs autour de Moussoul. Effectivement, le nahié de Cheihan rattaché à Moussoul et comprenant 68 localités, celui de Achair-Setâ, qui en comprend 78, sont peuplés en totalité par des Turcs et le nahié dépendant directement de Moussoul, qui comprend 77 localités, est peuplé en très grande majorité par des Turcs.

L'existence tout autour de Moussoul de villages portant des noms purement turcs, tels que Kara-Koyounlou, Kara-Ali, Kétchi-Hani, Narine-Keupru, Buyuk-Keuchk, &c., est une preuve de plus de ce que nous venons de dire.

Les Yézidis sont des Kurdes au point de vue de la race et ont les mêmes mœurs et les mêmes coutumes qu'eux; il n'y a entre eux qu'une différence de secte, ce qui évidemment ne peut en aucune façon servir de prétexte à les différencier les uns des autres. Le même fait s'observe d'ailleurs chez les peuples chrétiens; il ne viendrait par exemple à l'esprit de personne de considérer comme faisant partie de groupements ethniques différents des individus de même race dont les uns seraient catholiques et les autres protestants.

Quant aux Turcs du vilayet de Moussoul, nous dirons que la différence que l'on veut établir entre eux et les Turcs anatoliens en les appelant Turkmènes n'existe nullement en realité et que c'est là une opinion indéfendable. On dit dans le mémorandum britannique que la langue turque parlée à Moussoul n'est pas identique à celle parlée à Constantinople; mais existe-il en Anatolie un endroit où l'on parle un turc identique à celui de Constantinople? Par contre le dialecte employé par les Turcs de Moussoul est le même que celui qui se parle en Anatolie; la différence qui existe entre eux est moindre que celle qui existe entre le français parlé au nord et celui parlé au sud de la France. Il est d'ailleurs naturel que dans les différentes parties d'un pays une même langue présente quelques variations.

Au sujet de la différence qui existerait entre les Turcs et les Turkmènes, nous croyons superflu d'entrer à ce sujet dans des considérations historiques; qu'il nous suffise seulement de dire que les Turcs anatoliens sont des Turkmènes et que ces deux mots signifient une seule et même chose.

Contrairement aux assertions contenues dans le mémorandum britannique, le *peuple kurde* n'est pas d'origine iranienne, mais au contraire d'origine touranienne. Cette opinion est actuellement presque unanimement partagée par tous les historiens qui se sont occupés de cette question. Il est établi en effet qu'un peuple d'origine touranienne appelé "Gudu" habitait aux temps les plus reculés de l'histoire les montagnes dominant l'Assyrie, que ce peuple était très belliqueux et que son nom qui signifiait "guerrier" se traduisait en assyrien par le synonyme "Gardu" ou "Kardu," d'où dérive le mot Kurde.

Les annales cunéiformes parlent souvent des "Kardus," qu'ils citent sur un pied d'égalité avec les Syriens, les Hittites, les Susiens, les Élamites, les Akkadiens, &c.

Les considérations ethniques qui précèdent suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul doit revenir à la Turquie.

A la présence à l'intérieur de ce vilayet d'une certaine quantité d'Arabes habitant la rive droite du Tigre on peut opposer l'existence en Irak et en dehors de ce vilayet d'une nombreuse population turque et de nombreuses localités peuplées par cet élément.

Si l'on voulait s'appuyer sur les Arabes de la province de Moussoul pour demander

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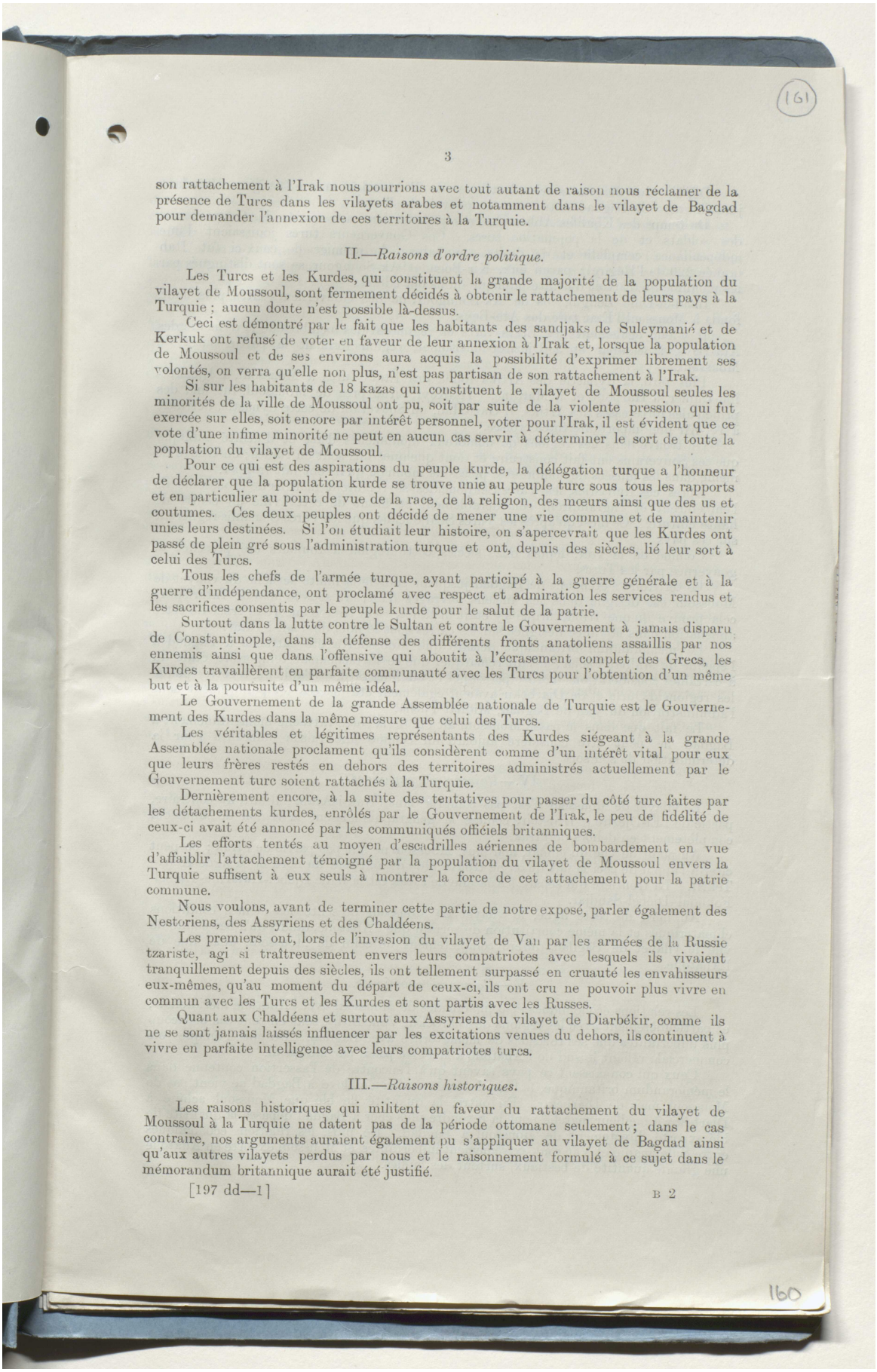

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son rattachement à l'Irak nous pourrions avec tout autant de raison nous réclamer de la présence de Turcs dans les vilayets arabes et notamment dans le vilayet de Bagdad pour demander l'annexion de ces territoires à la Turquie.

II.—*Raisons d'ordre politique.*

Les Turcs et les Kurdes, qui constituent la grande majorité de la population du vilayet de Moussoul, sont fermement décidés à obtenir le rattachement de leurs pays à la Turquie ; aucun doute n'est possible là-dessus.

Ceci est démontré par le fait que les habitants des sandjaks de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk ont refusé de voter en faveur de leur annexion à l'Irak et, lorsque la population de Moussoul et de ses environs aura acquis la possibilité d'exprimer librement ses volontés, on verra qu'elle non plus, n'est pas partisan de son rattachement à l'Irak.

Si sur les habitants de 18 kazas qui constituent le vilayet de Moussoul seules les minorités de la ville de Moussoul ont pu, soit par suite de la violente pression qui fut exercée sur elles, soit encore par intérêt personnel, voter pour l'Irak, il est évident que ce vote d'une infime minorité ne peut en aucun cas servir à déterminer le sort de toute la population du vilayet de Moussoul.

Pour ce qui est des aspirations du peuple kurde, la délégation turque a l'honneur de déclarer que la population kurde se trouve unie au peuple turc sous tous les rapports et en particulier au point de vue de la race, de la religion, des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes. Ces deux peuples ont décidé de mener une vie commune et de maintenir unies leurs destinées. Si l'on étudiait leur histoire, on s'apercevrait que les Kurdes ont passé de plein gré sous l'administration turque et ont, depuis des siècles, lié leur sort à celui des Turcs.

Tous les chefs de l'armée turque, ayant participé à la guerre générale et à la guerre d'indépendance, ont proclamé avec respect et admiration les services rendus et les sacrifices consentis par le peuple kurde pour le salut de la patrie.

Surtout dans la lutte contre le Sultan et contre le Gouvernement à jamais disparu de Constantinople, dans la défense des différents fronts anatoliens assaillis par nos ennemis ainsi que dans l'offensive qui aboutit à l'écrasement complet des Grecs, les Kurdes travaillèrent en parfaite communauté avec les Turcs pour l'obtention d'un même but et à la poursuite d'un même idéal.

Le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie est le Gouvernement des Kurdes dans la même mesure que celui des Turcs.

Les véritables et légitimes représentants des Kurdes siégeant à la grande Assemblée nationale proclament qu'ils considèrent comme d'un intérêt vital pour eux que leurs frères restés en dehors des territoires administrés actuellement par le Gouvernement turc soient rattachés à la Turquie.

Dernièrement encore, à la suite des tentatives pour passer du côté turc faites par les détachements kurdes, enrôlés par le Gouvernement de l'Irak, le peu de fidélité de ceux-ci avait été annoncé par les communiqués officiels britanniques.

Les efforts tentés au moyen d'escadrilles aériennes de bombardement en vue d'affaiblir l'attachement témoigné par la population du vilayet de Moussoul envers la Turquie suffisent à eux seuls à montrer la force de cet attachement pour la patrie commune.

Nous voulons, avant de terminer cette partie de notre exposé, parler également des Nestoriens, des Assyriens et des Chaldéens.

Les premiers ont, lors de l'invasion du vilayet de Van par les armées de la Russie tzariste, agi si traîtreusement envers leurs compatriotes avec lesquels ils vivaient tranquillement depuis des siècles, ils ont tellement surpassé en cruauté les envahisseurs eux-mêmes, qu'au moment du départ de ceux-ci, ils ont cru ne pouvoir plus vivre en commun avec les Turcs et les Kurdes et sont partis avec les Russes.

Quant aux Chaldéens et surtout aux Assyriens du vilayet de Diarbékir, comme ils ne se sont jamais laissés influencer par les excitations venues du dehors, ils continuent à vivre en parfaite intelligence avec leurs compatriotes turcs.

III.—*Raisons historiques.*

Les raisons historiques qui militent en faveur du rattachement du vilayet de Moussoul à la Turquie ne datent pas de la période ottomane seulement ; dans le cas contraire, nos arguments auraient également pu s'appliquer au vilayet de Bagdad ainsi qu'aux autres vilayets perdus par nous et le raisonnement formulé à ce sujet dans le mémorandum britannique aurait été justifié.

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Depuis plus de onze siècles, le vilayet de Moussoul et même la région s'étendant jusqu'au nord de Bagdad se trouvent au pouvoir des Turcs.

Du temps des Khalifes Abbassides, ces pays étaient aux mains des Gouverneurs, des soldats et de la population turcs. Ces Gouverneurs turcs jouissaient d'une indépendance complète et de droits souverains; le premier de ceux-ci fut Itah (année 229 de l'Hégire); parmi eux, Kir-Boga et Ak-Soungour se sont distingués par les monuments d'art et d'utilité publique qu'ils ont édifiés.

Imad-el-Dine Zengui, fils de Ak-Soungour, un des Gouverneurs cités plus haut, fonda à Moussoul l'État turc des Ata-Beys.

Il y eut également des Etats turcs où régnèrent des membres de la dynastie des Ata-Beys, à Sandjar et à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, région formant la partie ouest de Moussoul.

Plus tard, la dynastie des Artiks fonda des États turcs à Moussoul, à Djéziret-ibn-Eumer, à Harpout et à Mardine. Tel-Keyf, situé près de Moussoul, fut une des principales forteresses des Artiks, Il-Gazi-Han, un Souverain de cette dynastie, détruisit à Tel-Afr une importante force croisée.

On trouve dans ces régions de nombreux monuments d'art et d'utilité publique que ces Souverains ont fait construire et dont quelques-uns sont en ruines; on trouve de même dans les musées de nombreuses pièces de monnaie qu'ils ont fait frapper.

Après ces dynasties, les Turcs Seldjoucides se rendirent maîtres de Moussoul; ils l'embellirent et l'agrandirent considérablement et firent de cette ville un centre de haute culture. Ce n'est qu'après les Turcs Seldjoucides que les Turcs Osmanlis régnèrent sur ces pays.

Comme on le voit, depuis onze siècles, cette région a toujours été possédée et gouvernée par les Turcs.

Le territoire s'étendant de Bagdad jusqu'au sud de la limite actuelle du vilayet de Moussoul est désigné dans les anciens ouvrages d'histoire sous le nom de Tataristan; cela prouve qu'une tribu turque s'y était installée. On trouve encore la trace de cette appellation dans la vallée désignée sur les cartes sous le nom de Vadi-i-Tatar.

Le mémorandum britannique déclare que Moussoul a été rattaché à Bagdad à l'époque de Midhat Pacha; il faut remarquer que ce rattachement temporaire était dû à certaines considérations d'ordre personnel et administratif. D'ailleurs, à cette époque les régions d'Ourfa et de Diarbékir avaient également été placées temporairement sous l'administration du Vali de Bagdad, Midhat Pacha.

Le fait que dans le passé Moussoul ait été de la sorte rattaché momentanément à Bagdad ne peut être considéré aujourd'hui comme une raison suffisante pour la détermination de son sort.

IV.—*Raisons géographiques.*

Le vilayet de Moussoul n'est pas compris dans l'Irak-i-Arabi; il fait, au contraire, partie de l'El-Djéziré. L'histoire comme la géographie laissent la région de Moussoul complètement en dehors de l'Irak.

Au point de vue du climat, non plus, Moussoul ne fait pas partie de l'Irak; on peut citer à l'appui de ceci le fait qu'on ne trouve plus de dattiers au nord de la ligne Kéfri-Tekrit. La frontière qui sépare l'Anatolie de l'Irak est la ligne Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul–Djébel-Sandjar.

Au nord de cette ligne, le vilayet de Moussoul présente les mêmes conditions climatériques et la même constitution de terrain que l'Anatolie, tandis qu'à ces points de vue le vilayet de Bagdad diffère complètement de celui de Moussoul, ainsi que de l'Anatolie.

V.—*Raisons économiques.*

Les relations économiques et commerciales de Moussoul avec l'Anatolie méridionale, et particulièrement avec les régions de Diarbékir, Van, Bitlis, sont en tout cas beaucoup plus importantes que ses relations de même ordre avec Bagdad. De plus, l'unique voie commerciale reliant le sud de l'Anatolie à la Perse passe par Moussoul.

Ceux qui connaissent ce pays savent qu'à l'encontre de l'assertion contenue dans le mémorandum britannique, le bois de construction employé à Bagdad ne vient pas de Moussoul, mais de Diarbékir. En outre, la quantité de blé que Moussoul achète à Diarbékir à meilleur marché pour la revendre plus cher à Bagdad dépasse la quantité de blé exporté directement de Moussoul à Bagdad. De plus, les relations économiques entre Suleymanié et Van sont extrêmement importantes, et Moussoul exporte en Anatolie une grande quantité de bestiaux, surtout des buffles.

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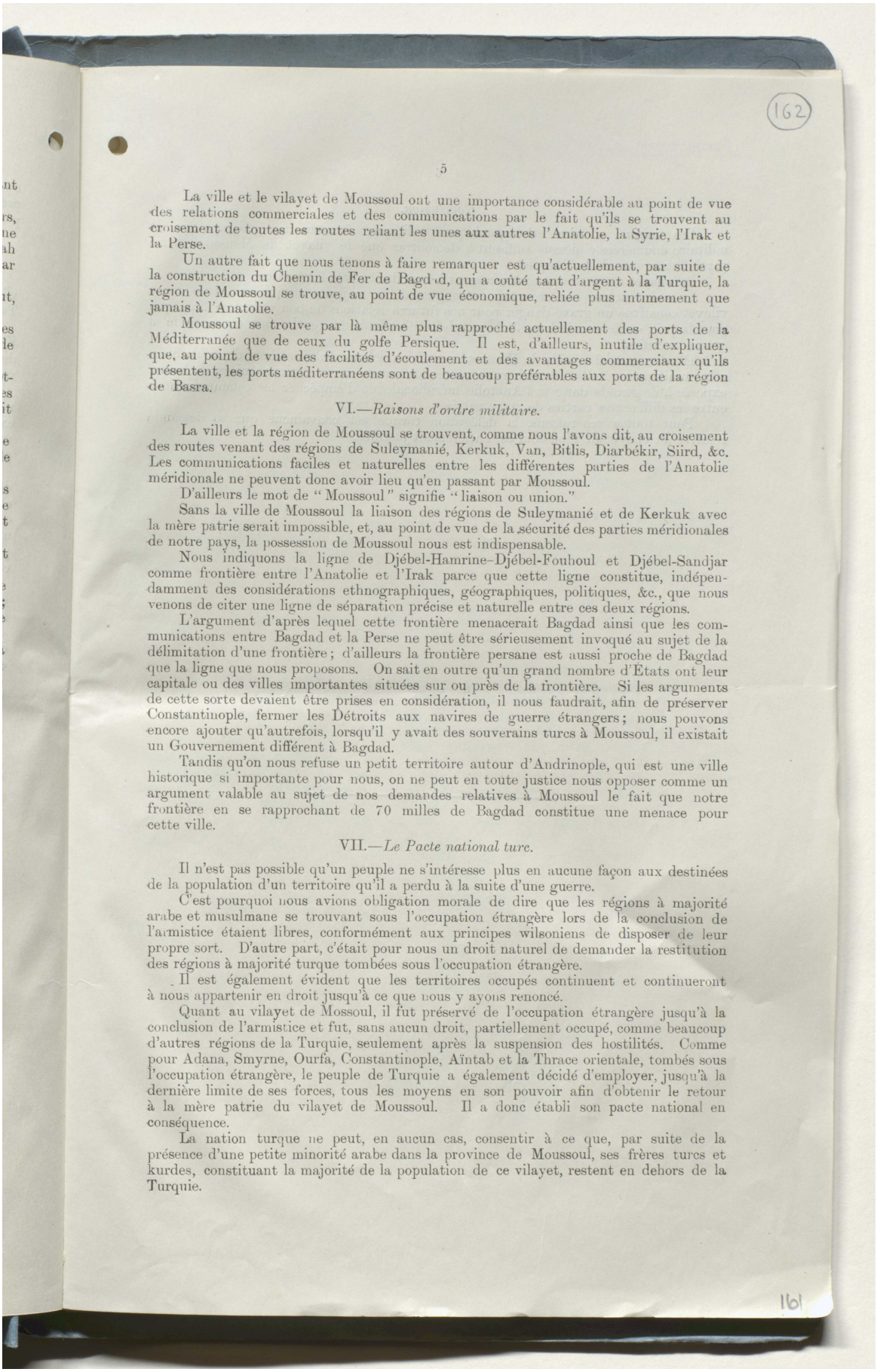

La ville et le vilayet de Moussoul ont une importance considérable au point de vue des relations commerciales et des communications par le fait qu'ils se trouvent au croisement de toutes les routes reliant les unes aux autres l'Anatolie, la Syrie, l'Irak et la Perse.

Un autre fait que nous tenons à faire remarquer est qu'actuellement, par suite de la construction du Chemin de Fer de Bagdad, qui a coûté tant d'argent à la Turquie, la région de Moussoul se trouve, au point de vue économique, reliée plus intimement que jamais à l'Anatolie.

Moussoul se trouve par là même plus rapproché actuellement des ports de la Méditerranée que de ceux du golfe Persique. Il est, d'ailleurs, inutile d'expliquer, que, au point de vue des facilités d'écoulement et des avantages commerciaux qu'ils présentent, les ports méditerranéens sont de beaucoup préférables aux ports de la région de Basra.

VI.—*Raisons d'ordre militaire.*

La ville et la région de Moussoul se trouvent, comme nous l'avons dit, au croisement des routes venant des régions de Suleymanié, Kerkuk, Van, Bitlis, Diarbékir, Siird, &c. Les communications faciles et naturelles entre les différentes parties de l'Anatolie méridionale ne peuvent donc avoir lieu qu'en passant par Moussoul.

D'ailleurs le mot de "Moussoul" signifie "liaison ou union."

Sans la ville de Moussoul la liaison des régions de Suleymanié et de Kerkuk avec la mère patrie serait impossible, et, au point de vue de la sécurité des parties méridionales de notre pays, la possession de Moussoul nous est indispensable.

Nous indiquons la ligne de Djébel-Hamrine–Djébel-Fouhoul et Djébel-Sandjar comme frontière entre l'Anatolie et l'Irak parce que cette ligne constitue, indépendamment des considérations ethnographiques, géographiques, politiques, &c., que nous venons de citer une ligne de séparation précise et naturelle entre ces deux régions.

L'argument d'après lequel cette frontière menacerait Bagdad ainsi que les communications entre Bagdad et la Perse ne peut être sérieusement invoqué au sujet de la délimitation d'une frontière; d'ailleurs la frontière persane est aussi proche de Bagdad que la ligne que nous proposons. On sait en outre qu'un grand nombre d'États ont leur capitale ou des villes importantes situées sur ou près de la frontière. Si les arguments de cette sorte devaient être prises en considération, il nous faudrait, afin de préserver Constantinople, fermer les Détroits aux navires de guerre étrangers; nous pouvons encore ajouter qu'autrefois, lorsqu'il y avait des souverains turcs à Moussoul, il existait un Gouvernement différent à Bagdad.

Tandis qu'on nous refuse un petit territoire autour d'Andrinople, qui est une ville historique si importante pour nous, on ne peut en toute justice nous opposer comme un argument valable au sujet de nos demandes relatives à Moussoul le fait que notre frontière en se rapprochant de 70 milles de Bagdad constitue une menace pour cette ville.

VII.—*Le Pacte national turc.*

Il n'est pas possible qu'un peuple ne s'intéresse plus en aucune façon aux destinées de la population d'un territoire qu'il a perdu à la suite d'une guerre.

C'est pourquoi nous avions obligation morale de dire que les régions à majorité arabe et musulmane se trouvant sous l'occupation étrangère lors de la conclusion de l'armistice étaient libres, conformément aux principes wilsoniens de disposer de leur propre sort. D'autre part, c'était pour nous un droit naturel de demander la restitution des régions à majorité turque tombées sous l'occupation étrangère.

Il est également évident que les territoires occupés continuent et continueront à nous appartenir en droit jusqu'à ce que nous y ayons renoncé.

Quant au vilayet de Mossoul, il fut préservé de l'occupation étrangère jusqu'à la conclusion de l'armistice et fut, sans aucun droit, partiellement occupé, comme beaucoup d'autres régions de la Turquie, seulement après la suspension des hostilités. Comme pour Adana, Smyrne, Ourfa, Constantinople, Aïntab et la Thrace orientale, tombés sous l'occupation étrangère, le peuple de Turquie a également décidé d'employer, jusqu'à la dernière limite de ses forces, tous les moyens en son pouvoir afin d'obtenir le retour à la mère patrie du vilayet de Moussoul. Il a donc établi son pacte national en conséquence.

La nation turque ne peut, en aucun cas, consentir à ce que, par suite de la présence d'une petite minorité arabe dans la province de Moussoul, ses frères turcs et kurdes, constituant la majorité de la population de ce vilayet, restent en dehors de la Turquie.

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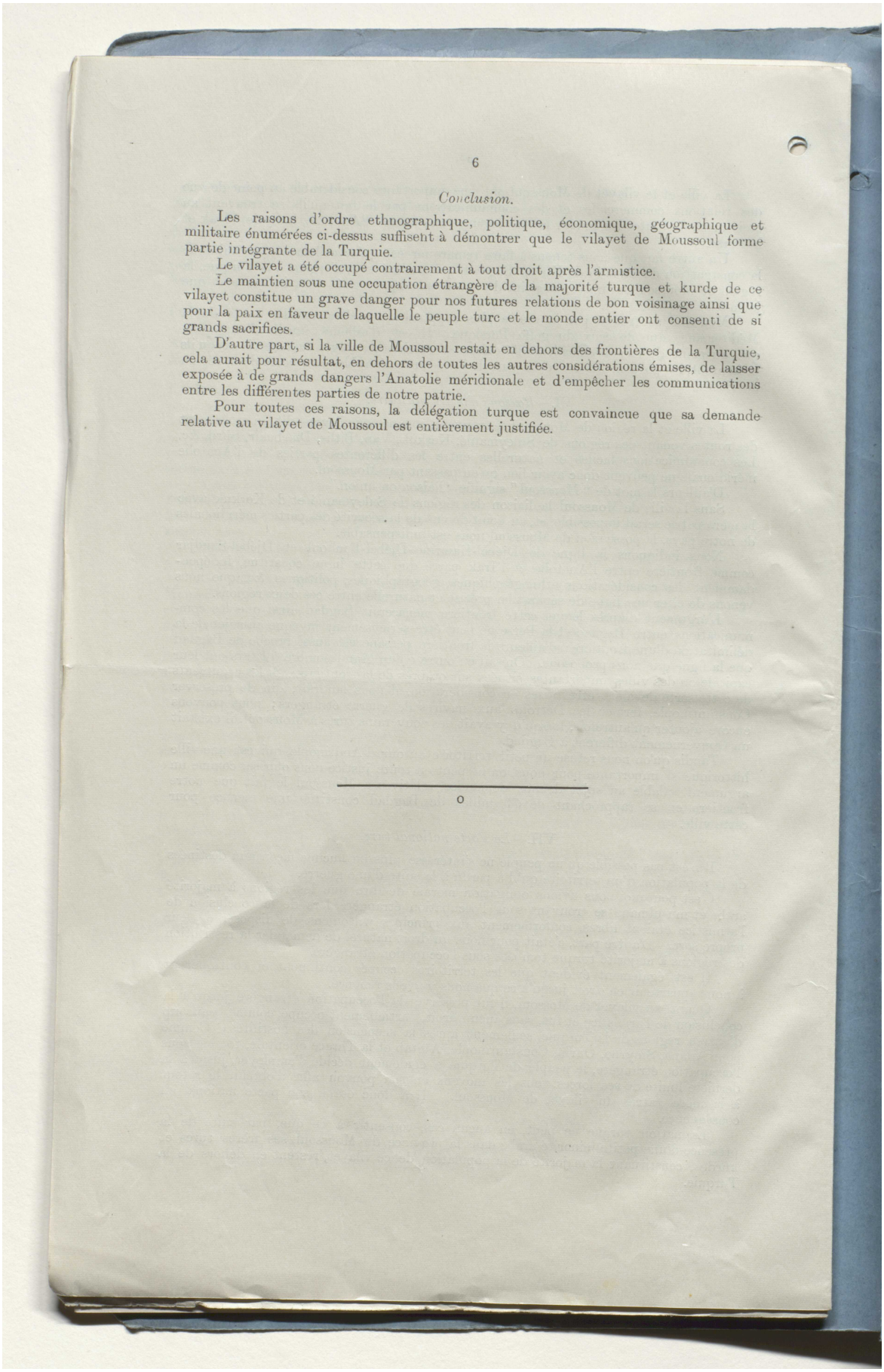

Conclusion.

Les raisons d'ordre ethnographique, politique, économique, géographique et militaire énumérées ci-dessus suffisent à démontrer que le vilayet de Moussoul forme partie intégrante de la Turquie.

Le vilayet a été occupé contrairement à tout droit après l'armistice.

Le maintien sous une occupation étrangère de la majorité turque et kurde de ce vilayet constitue un grave danger pour nos futures relations de bon voisinage ainsi que pour la paix en faveur de laquelle le peuple turc et le monde entier ont consenti de si grands sacrifices.

D'autre part, si la ville de Moussoul restait en dehors des frontières de la Turquie, cela aurait pour résultat, en dehors de toutes les autres considérations émises, de laisser exposée à de grands dangers l'Anatolie méridionale et d'empêcher les communications entre les différentes parties de notre patrie.

Pour toutes ces raisons, la délégation turque est convaincue que sa demande relative au vilayet de Moussoul est entièrement justifiée.

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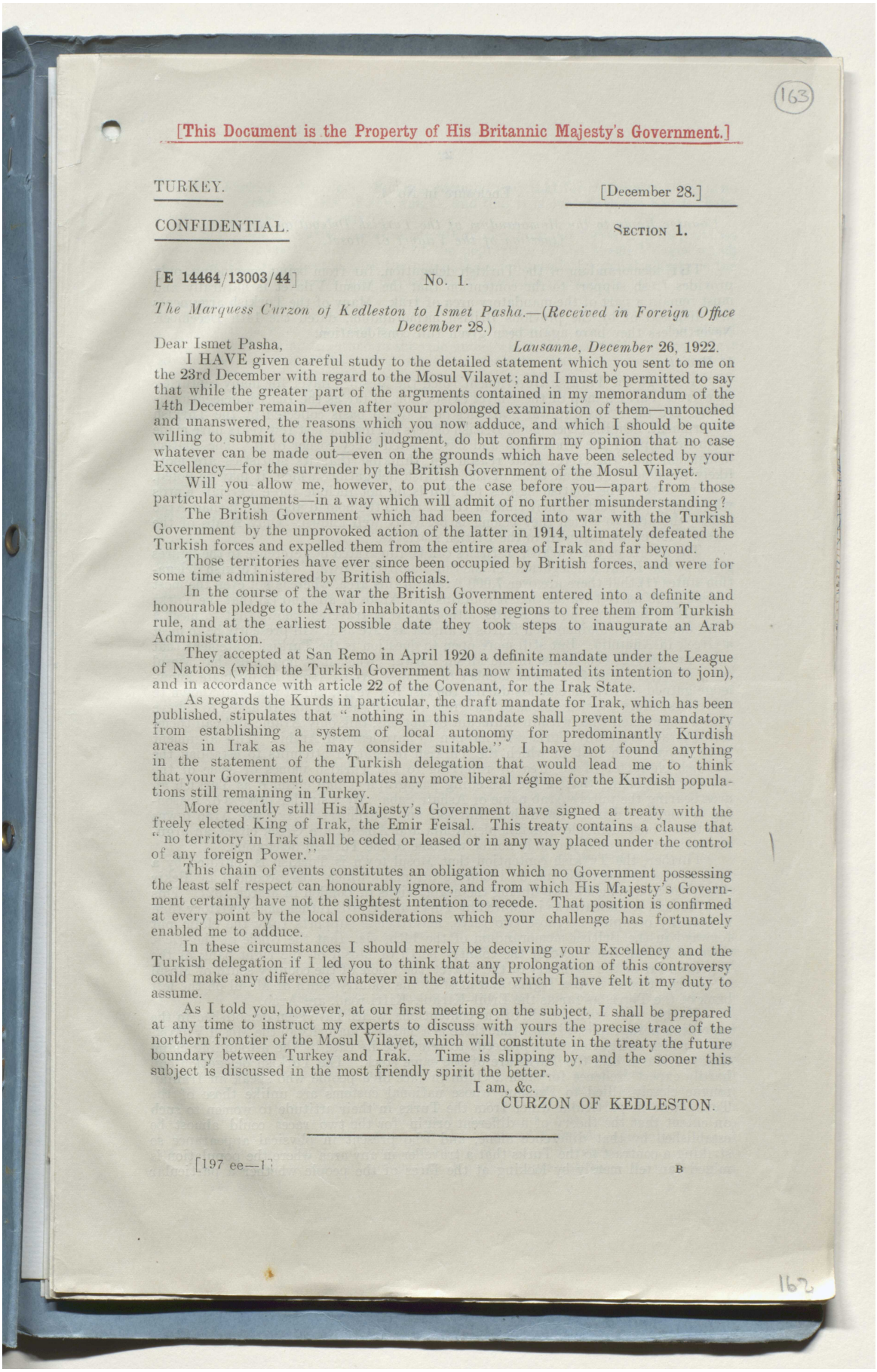

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TURKEY. [December 28.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 14464/13003/44] No. 1.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.—(Received in Foreign Office December 28.)

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December 26, 1922.*

I HAVE given careful study to the detailed statement which you sent to me on the 23rd December with regard to the Mosul Vilayet; and I must be permitted to say that while the greater part of the arguments contained in my memorandum of the 14th December remain—even after your prolonged examination of them—untouched and unanswered, the reasons which you now adduce, and which I should be quite willing to submit to the public judgment, do but confirm my opinion that no case whatever can be made out—even on the grounds which have been selected by your Excellency—for the surrender by the British Government of the Mosul Vilayet.

Will you allow me, however, to put the case before you—apart from those particular arguments—in a way which will admit of no further misunderstanding?

The British Government which had been forced into war with the Turkish Government by the unprovoked action of the latter in 1914, ultimately defeated the Turkish forces and expelled them from the entire area of Irak and far beyond.

Those territories have ever since been occupied by British forces, and were for some time administered by British officials.

In the course of the war the British Government entered into a definite and honourable pledge to the Arab inhabitants of those regions to free them from Turkish rule, and at the earliest possible date they took steps to inaugurate an Arab Administration.

They accepted at San Remo in April 1920 a definite mandate under the League of Nations (which the Turkish Government has now intimated its intention to join), and in accordance with article 22 of the Covenant, for the Irak State.

As regards the Kurds in particular, the draft mandate for Irak, which has been published, stipulates that "nothing in this mandate shall prevent the mandatory from establishing a system of local autonomy for predominantly Kurdish areas in Irak as he may consider suitable." I have not found anything in the statement of the Turkish delegation that would lead me to think that your Government contemplates any more liberal régime for the Kurdish populations still remaining in Turkey.

More recently still His Majesty's Government have signed a treaty with the freely elected King of Irak, the Emir Feisal. This treaty contains a clause that "no territory in Irak shall be ceded or leased or in any way placed under the control of any foreign Power."

This chain of events constitutes an obligation which no Government possessing the least self respect can honourably ignore, and from which His Majesty's Government certainly have not the slightest intention to recede. That position is confirmed at every point by the local considerations which your challenge has fortunately enabled me to adduce.

In these circumstances I should merely be deceiving your Excellency and the Turkish delegation if I led you to think that any prolongation of this controversy could make any difference whatever in the attitude which I have felt it my duty to assume.

As I told you, however, at our first meeting on the subject, I shall be prepared at any time to instruct my experts to discuss with yours the precise trace of the northern frontier of the Mosul Vilayet, which will constitute in the treaty the future boundary between Turkey and Irak. Time is slipping by, and the sooner this subject is discussed in the most friendly spirit the better.

I am, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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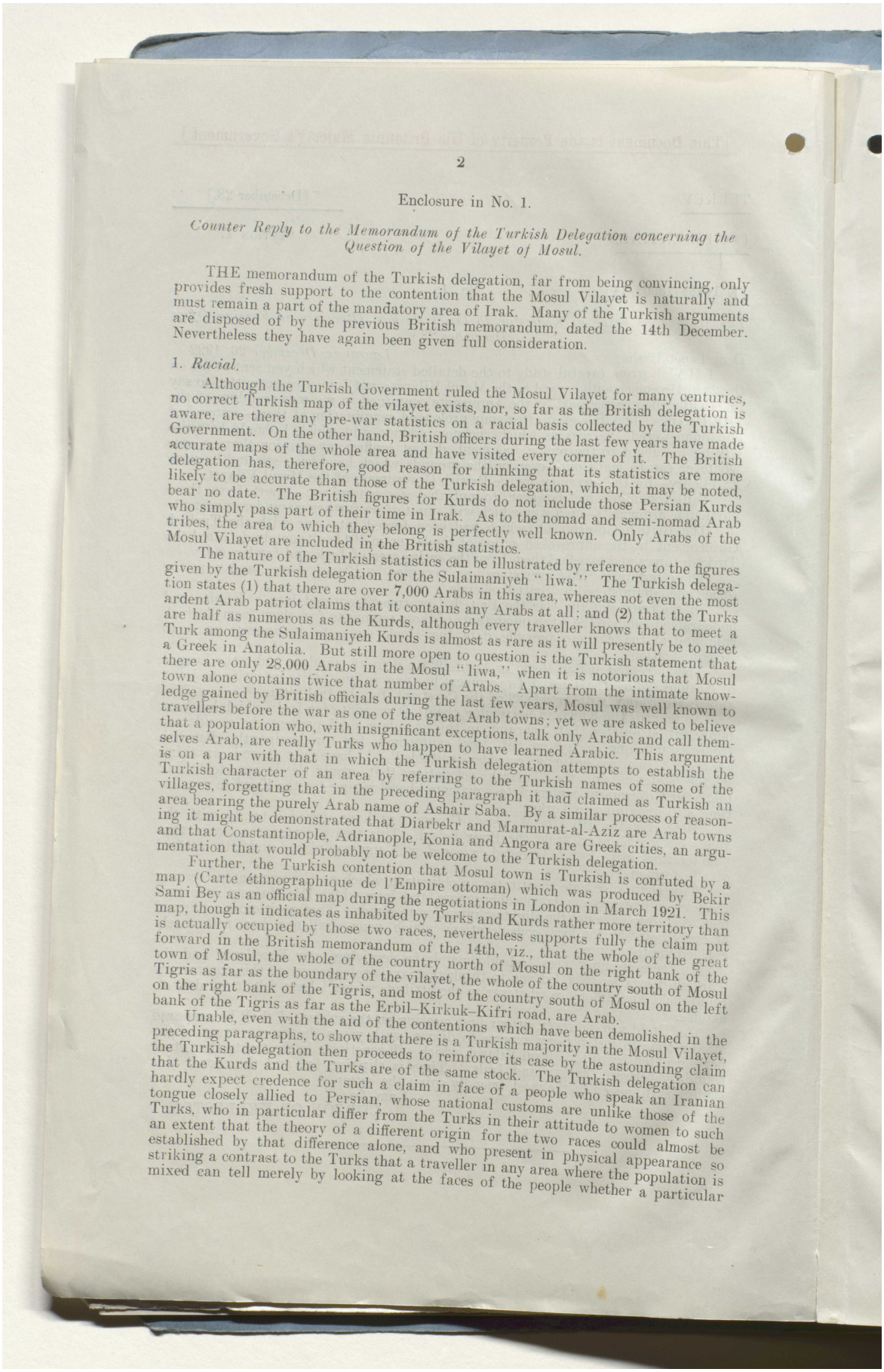

Enclosure in No. 1.

Counter Reply to the Memorandum of the Turkish Delegation concerning the Question of the Vilayet of Mosul.

THE memorandum of the Turkish delegation, far from being convincing, only provides fresh support to the contention that the Mosul Vilayet is naturally and must remain a part of the mandatory area of Irak. Many of the Turkish arguments are disposed of by the previous British memorandum, dated the 14th December. Nevertheless they have again been given full consideration.

1. *Racial.*

Although the Turkish Government ruled the Mosul Vilayet for many centuries, no correct Turkish map of the vilayet exists, nor, so far as the British delegation is aware, are there any pre-war statistics on a racial basis collected by the Turkish Government. On the other hand, British officers during the last few years have made accurate maps of the whole area and have visited every corner of it. The British delegation has, therefore, good reason for thinking that its statistics are more likely to be accurate than those of the Turkish delegation, which, it may be noted, bear no date. The British figures for Kurds do not include those Persian Kurds who simply pass part of their time in Irak. As to the nomad and semi-nomad Arab tribes, the area to which they belong is perfectly well known. Only Arabs of the Mosul Vilayet are included in the British statistics.

The nature of the Turkish statistics can be illustrated by reference to the figures given by the Turkish delegation for the Sulaimaniyeh "liwa." The Turkish delegation states (1) that there are over 7,000 Arabs in this area, whereas not even the most ardent Arab patriot claims that it contains any Arabs at all; and (2) that the Turks are half as numerous as the Kurds, although every traveller knows that to meet a Turk among the Sulaimaniyeh Kurds is almost as rare as it will presently be to meet a Greek in Anatolia. But still more open to question is the Turkish statement that there are only 28,000 Arabs in the Mosul "liwa," when it is notorious that Mosul town alone contains twice that number of Arabs. Apart from the intimate knowledge gained by British officials during the last few years, Mosul was well known to travellers before the war as one of the great Arab towns; yet we are asked to believe that a population who, with insignificant exceptions, talk only Arabic and call themselves Arab, are really Turks who happen to have learned Arabic. This argument is on a par with that in which the Turkish delegation attempts to establish the Turkish character of an area by referring to the Turkish names of some of the villages, forgetting that in the preceding paragraph it had claimed as Turkish an area bearing the purely Arab name of Ashair Saba. By a similar process of reasoning it might be demonstrated that Diarbekr and Marmurat-al-Aziz are Arab towns and that Constantinople, Adrianople, Konia and Angora are Greek cities, an argumentation that would probably not be welcome to the Turkish delegation.

Further, the Turkish contention that Mosul town is Turkish is confuted by a map (Carte éthnographique de l'Empire ottoman) which was produced by Bekir Sami Bey as an official map during the negotiations in London in March 1921. This map, though it indicates as inhabited by Turks and Kurds rather more territory than is actually occupied by those two races, nevertheless supports fully the claim put forward in the British memorandum of the 14th, viz., that the whole of the great town of Mosul, the whole of the country north of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris as far as the boundary of the vilayet, the whole of the country south of Mosul on the right bank of the Tigris, and most of the country south of Mosul on the left bank of the Tigris as far as the Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri road, are Arab.

Unable, even with the aid of the contentions which have been demolished in the preceding paragraphs, to show that there is a Turkish majority in the Mosul Vilayet, the Turkish delegation then proceeds to reinforce its case by the astounding claim that the Kurds and the Turks are of the same stock. The Turkish delegation can hardly expect credence for such a claim in face of a people who speak an Iranian tongue closely allied to Persian, whose national customs are unlike those of the Turks, who in particular differ from the Turks in their attitude to women to such an extent that the theory of a different origin for the two races could almost be established by that difference alone, and who present in physical appearance so striking a contrast to the Turks that a traveller in any area where the population is mixed can tell merely by looking at the faces of the people whether a particular

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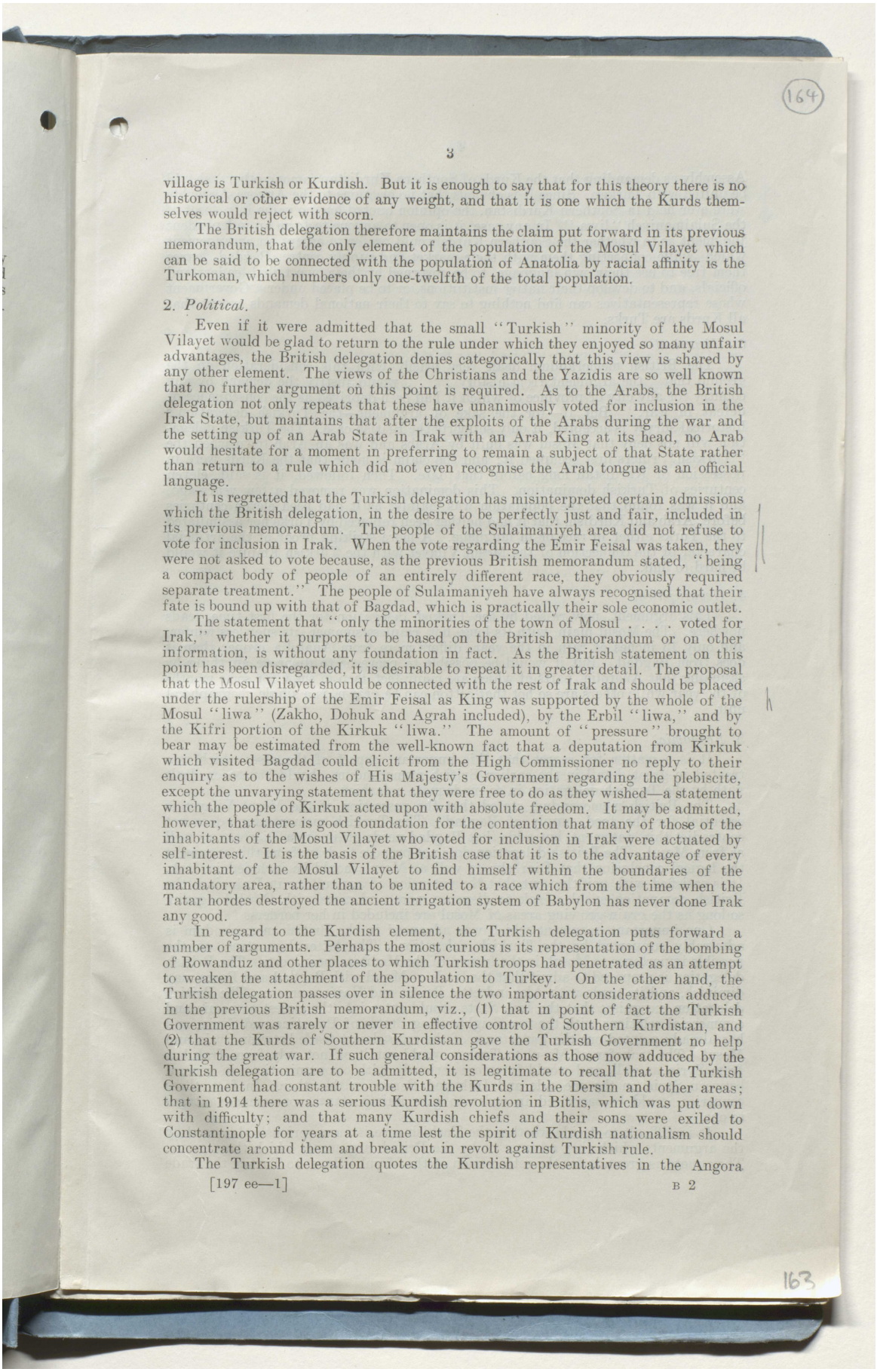

village is Turkish or Kurdish. But it is enough to say that for this theory there is no historical or other evidence of any weight, and that it is one which the Kurds themselves would reject with scorn.

The British delegation therefore maintains the claim put forward in its previous memorandum, that the only element of the population of the Mosul Vilayet which can be said to be connected with the population of Anatolia by racial affinity is the Turkoman, which numbers only one-twelfth of the total population.

2. *Political.*

Even if it were admitted that the small "Turkish" minority of the Mosul Vilayet would be glad to return to the rule under which they enjoyed so many unfair advantages, the British delegation denies categorically that this view is shared by any other element. The views of the Christians and the Yazidis are so well known that no further argument on this point is required. As to the Arabs, the British delegation not only repeats that these have unanimously voted for inclusion in the Irak State, but maintains that after the exploits of the Arabs during the war and the setting up of an Arab State in Irak with an Arab King at its head, no Arab would hesitate for a moment in preferring to remain a subject of that State rather than return to a rule which did not even recognise the Arab tongue as an official language.

It is regretted that the Turkish delegation has misinterpreted certain admissions which the British delegation, in the desire to be perfectly just and fair, included in its previous memorandum. The people of the Sulaimaniyeh area did not refuse to vote for inclusion in Irak. When the vote regarding the Emir Feisal was taken, they were not asked to vote because, as the previous British memorandum stated, "being a compact body of people of an entirely different race, they obviously required separate treatment." The people of Sulaimaniyeh have always recognised that their fate is bound up with that of Bagdad, which is practically their sole economic outlet.

The statement that "only the minorities of the town of Mosul . . . . voted for Irak," whether it purports to be based on the British memorandum or on other information, is without any foundation in fact. As the British statement on this point has been disregarded, it is desirable to repeat it in greater detail. The proposal that the Mosul Vilayet should be connected with the rest of Irak and should be placed under the rulership of the Emir Feisal as King was supported by the whole of the Mosul "liwa" (Zakho, Dohuk and Agrah included), by the Erbil "liwa," and by the Kifri portion of the Kirkuk "liwa." The amount of "pressure" brought to bear may be estimated from the well-known fact that a deputation from Kirkuk which visited Bagdad could elicit from the High Commissioner no reply to their enquiry as to the wishes of His Majesty's Government regarding the plebiscite, except the unvarying statement that they were free to do as they wished—a statement which the people of Kirkuk acted upon with absolute freedom. It may be admitted, however, that there is good foundation for the contention that many of those of the inhabitants of the Mosul Vilayet who voted for inclusion in Irak were actuated by self-interest. It is the basis of the British case that it is to the advantage of every inhabitant of the Mosul Vilayet to find himself within the boundaries of the mandatory area, rather than to be united to a race which from the time when the Tatar hordes destroyed the ancient irrigation system of Babylon has never done Irak any good.

In regard to the Kurdish element, the Turkish delegation puts forward a number of arguments. Perhaps the most curious is its representation of the bombing of Rowanduz and other places to which Turkish troops had penetrated as an attempt to weaken the attachment of the population to Turkey. On the other hand, the Turkish delegation passes over in silence the two important considerations adduced in the previous British memorandum, viz., (1) that in point of fact the Turkish Government was rarely or never in effective control of Southern Kurdistan, and (2) that the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan gave the Turkish Government no help during the great war. If such general considerations as those now adduced by the Turkish delegation are to be admitted, it is legitimate to recall that the Turkish Government had constant trouble with the Kurds in the Dersim and other areas; that in 1914 there was a serious Kurdish revolution in Bitlis, which was put down with difficulty; and that many Kurdish chiefs and their sons were exiled to Constantinople for years at a time lest the spirit of Kurdish nationalism should concentrate around them and break out in revolt against Turkish rule.

The Turkish delegation quotes the Kurdish representatives in the Angora

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Assembly as demanding that the Kurds of Southern Kurdistan (among others) should be united with Turkey. Since it is obvious that no elections to the Angora Assembly were ever held in Southern Kurdistan, the opinion quoted has no value in respect of the Sulaimaniyeh "liwa." In any case, it is open to anyone to form an independent judgment as to whether the Southern Kurds would prefer to accept an arrangement which, while connecting them with their market and supply centre, Bagdad, leaves them free to use their own language, to be governed by their own tribal leaders and officials, and to develop their native institutions, or to be placed under a Government whose representatives can find nothing to say to their national demands except that all Kurds are Turks.

3. *Historical.*

The British memorandum dealt very briefly with this consideration on the ground that "the argument from history . . . . would justify the demand by any country for any city or province of which it had been deprived as the consequence of defeat in war." But if—for the sake of argument—the Turkish delegation's historical survey is accepted, it only supports the British case. The Turkish delegation will not deny that Mosul was built by Arabs and was an Arab town when the "Turkish" rulers first occupied it; and the claim is made that the Kurds were in possession of Kurdistan long before that date. Then followed, it is said, eleven centuries of Turkish domination. This domination was removed a few years ago, and it was found that the population was mainly, as it had been eleven centuries before, Arab and Kurdish, that it had neither been replaced by Turks nor assimilated to the Turks either in race or in language. A more striking proof of the artificial character of the connection of the Mosul Vilayet with the Turkish Empire it would be hard to find.

4. *Geographical.*

This argument, now raised by the Turkish delegation for the first time, leads nowhere. The Mosul plain, with its long, hot, rainless summer, its snowless winter, and only 13 inches of rain in the year, differs more from Anatolia proper than it does from Bagdad. But it would be possible to prove or to disprove anything by assuming that Anatolia, parts of which are many feet deep in snow for some months of the year while others are so hot that cotton can be grown, is a single geographical unit.

5. *Economic.*

It is a matter for regret that this important aspect of the case, which was treated in great detail in the earlier British memorandum, should have been dealt with by the Turkish delegation in so inadequate a fashion.

The British memorandum stated that the possession of the Mosul Vilayet is essential for the food supply of Bagdad. The Turkish memorandum does not contradict this statement, but adds that Bagdad needs grain from Diarbekr as well as from Mosul. The British delegation does not propose to draw from this argument the logical conclusion that Diarbekr as well as Mosul should be included in Irak. It is satisfied with pointing out that the extension of agriculture in Irak since the British occupation enables Irak to dispense more and more with Diarbekr grain, so long as the grain-growing areas of Mosul are included in her borders.

One important argument which was advanced in the British memorandum is admirably supported by the Turkish delegation. The latter lays stress on the possible importance to Mosul, in the future, of the Mediterranean ports. The British delegation is prepared to admit that the trade of Mosul with Bagdad and Basra may diminish, and its trade with Alexandretta, Beirut and Haifa increase. The British delegation recognises that the Irak State should enter into the closest economic and commercial relations with the two neighbouring States of Palestine and Syria, and has already pointed out the importance of the cross-desert trade between Syria and Mosul. The transfer of Mosul to Turkey would cut it off not only from Irak but from Syria as well, and would interfere seriously with communications in general between Syria on the one side and Irak and Persia on the other. In fact, three countries would be sacrificed in order to give unimportant economic advantages to one.

It is difficult to decide whether the Turkish case is more seriously damaged by the arguments which they advance or by the British arguments which they ignore. They quote as grounds for the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet to Turkey the trade

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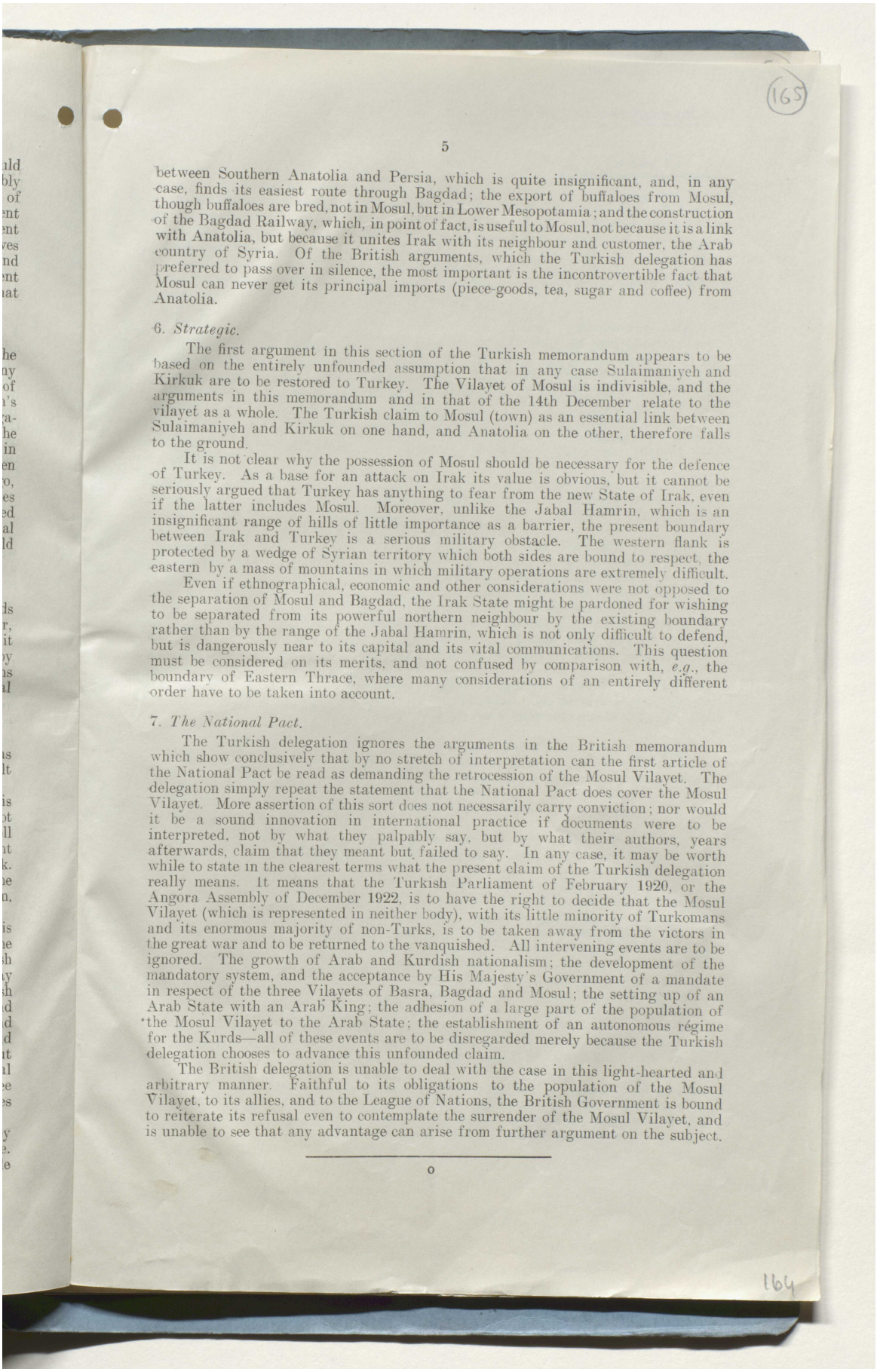

between Southern Anatolia and Persia, which is quite insignificant, and, in any case, finds its easiest route through Bagdad; the export of buffaloes from Mosul, though buffaloes are bred, not in Mosul, but in Lower Mesopotamia; and the construction of the Bagdad Railway, which, in point of fact, is useful to Mosul, not because it is a link with Anatolia, but because it unites Irak with its neighbour and customer, the Arab country of Syria. Of the British arguments, which the Turkish delegation has preferred to pass over in silence, the most important is the incontrovertible fact that Mosul can never get its principal imports (piece-goods, tea, sugar and coffee) from Anatolia.

6. *Strategic.*

The first argument in this section of the Turkish memorandum appears to be based on the entirely unfounded assumption that in any case Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk are to be restored to Turkey. The Vilayet of Mosul is indivisible, and the arguments in this memorandum and in that of the 14th December relate to the vilayet as a whole. The Turkish claim to Mosul (town) as an essential link between Sulaimaniyeh and Kirkuk on one hand, and Anatolia on the other, therefore falls to the ground.

It is not clear why the possession of Mosul should be necessary for the defence of Turkey. As a base for an attack on Irak its value is obvious, but it cannot be seriously argued that Turkey has anything to fear from the new State of Irak, even if the latter includes Mosul. Moreover, unlike the Jabal Hamrin, which is an insignificant range of hills of little importance as a barrier, the present boundary between Irak and Turkey is a serious military obstacle. The western flank is protected by a wedge of Syrian territory which both sides are bound to respect, the eastern by a mass of mountains in which military operations are extremely difficult.

Even if ethnographical, economic and other considerations were not opposed to the separation of Mosul and Bagdad, the Irak State might be pardoned for wishing to be separated from its powerful northern neighbour by the existing boundary rather than by the range of the Jabal Hamrin, which is not only difficult to defend, but is dangerously near to its capital and its vital communications. This question must be considered on its merits, and not confused by comparison with, *e.g.*, the boundary of Eastern Thrace, where many considerations of an entirely different order have to be taken into account.

7. *The National Pact.*

The Turkish delegation ignores the arguments in the British memorandum which show conclusively that by no stretch of interpretation can the first article of the National Pact be read as demanding the retrocession of the Mosul Vilayet. The delegation simply repeat the statement that the National Pact does cover the Mosul Vilayet. More assertion of this sort does not necessarily carry conviction; nor would it be a sound innovation in international practice if documents were to be interpreted, not by what they palpably say, but by what their authors, years afterwards, claim that they meant but failed to say. In any case, it may be worth while to state in the clearest terms what the present claim of the Turkish delegation really means. It means that the Turkish Parliament of February 1920, or the Angora Assembly of December 1922, is to have the right to decide that the Mosul Vilayet (which is represented in neither body), with its little minority of Turkomans and its enormous majority of non-Turks, is to be taken away from the victors in the great war and to be returned to the vanquished. All intervening events are to be ignored. The growth of Arab and Kurdish nationalism; the development of the mandatory system, and the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of a mandate in respect of the three Vilayets of Basra, Bagdad and Mosul; the setting up of an Arab State with an Arab King; the adhesion of a large part of the population of the Mosul Vilayet to the Arab State; the establishment of an autonomous régime for the Kurds—all of these events are to be disregarded merely because the Turkish delegation chooses to advance this unfounded claim.

The British delegation is unable to deal with the case in this light-hearted and arbitrary manner. Faithful to its obligations to the population of the Mosul Vilayet, to its allies, and to the League of Nations, the British Government is bound to reiterate its refusal even to contemplate the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet, and is unable to see that any advantage can arise from further argument on the subject.

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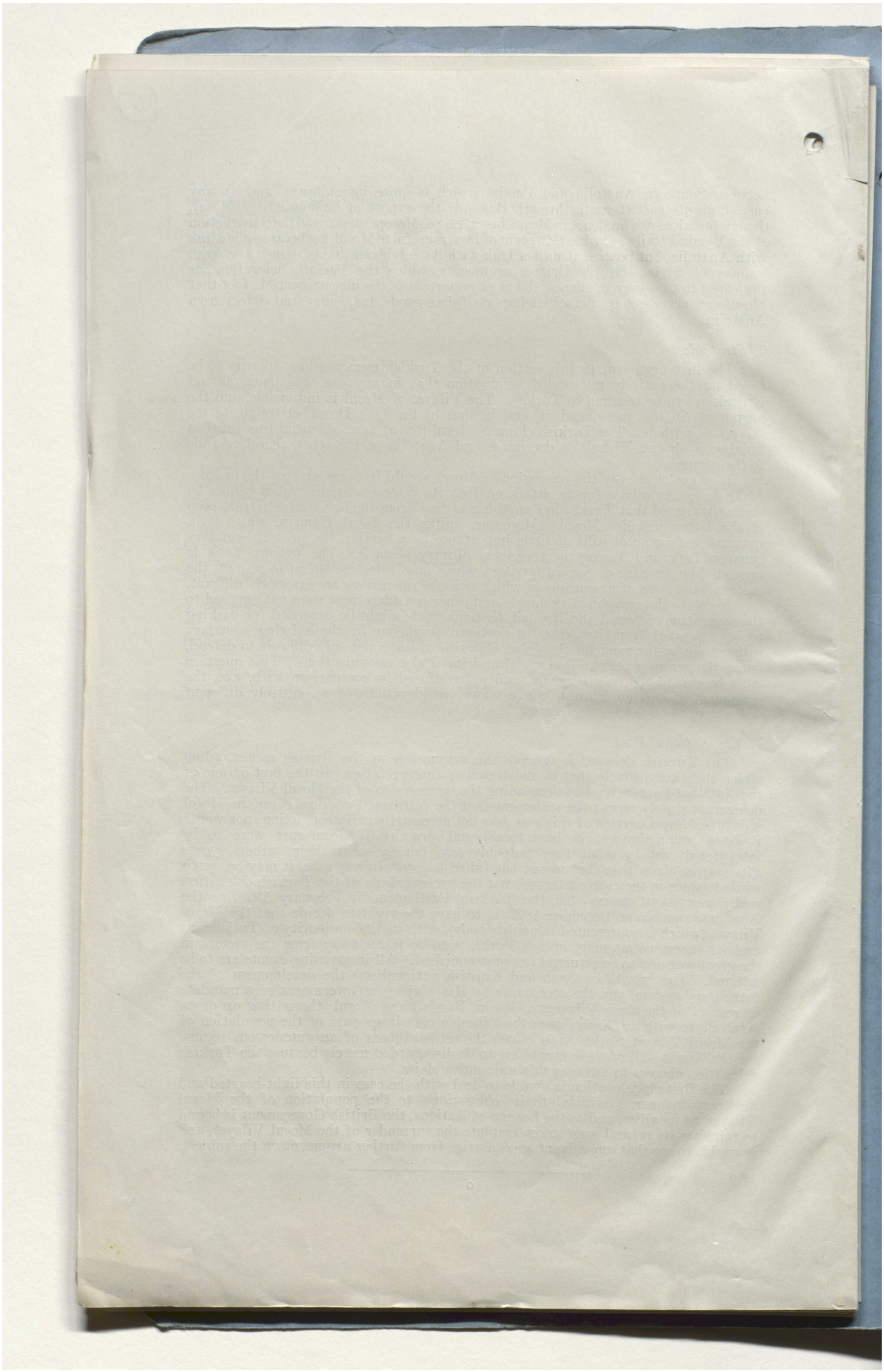

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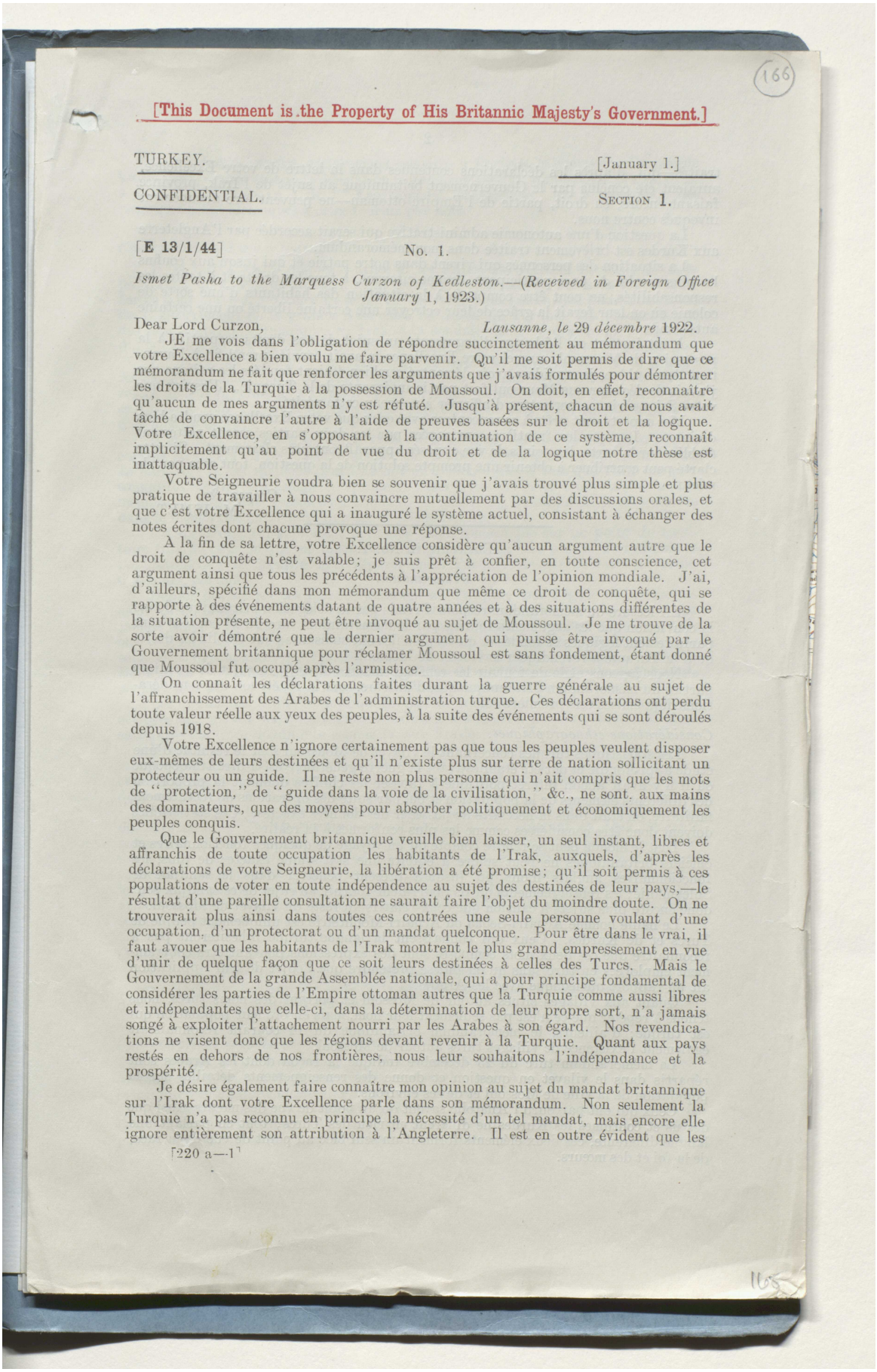

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TURKEY. [January 1.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 13/1/44] No. 1.

Ismet Pasha to the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston.—(Received in Foreign Office January 1, 1923.)

Dear Lord Curzon, *Lausanne, le 29 décembre 1922.*

JE me vois dans l'obligation de répondre succinctement au mémorandum que votre Excellence a bien voulu me faire parvenir. Qu'il me soit permis de dire que ce mémorandum ne fait que renforcer les arguments que j'avais formulés pour démontrer les droits de la Turquie à la possession de Moussoul. On doit, en effet, reconnaître qu'aucun de mes arguments n'y est réfuté. Jusqu'à présent, chacun de nous avait tâché de convaincre l'autre à l'aide de preuves basées sur le droit et la logique. Votre Excellence, en s'opposant à la continuation de ce système, reconnaît implicitement qu'au point de vue du droit et de la logique notre thèse est inattaquable.

Votre Seigneurie voudra bien se souvenir que j'avais trouvé plus simple et plus pratique de travailler à nous convaincre mutuellement par des discussions orales, et que c'est votre Excellence qui a inauguré le système actuel, consistant à échanger des notes écrites dont chacune provoque une réponse.

A la fin de sa lettre, votre Excellence considère qu'aucun argument autre que le droit de conquête n'est valable; je suis prêt à confier, en toute conscience, cet argument ainsi que tous les précédents à l'appréciation de l'opinion mondiale. J'ai, d'ailleurs, spécifié dans mon mémorandum que même ce droit de conquête, qui se rapporte à des événements datant de quatre années et à des situations différentes de la situation présente, ne peut être invoqué au sujet de Moussoul. Je me trouve de la sorte avoir démontré que le dernier argument qui puisse être invoqué par le Gouvernement britannique pour réclamer Moussoul est sans fondement, étant donné que Moussoul fut occupé après l'armistice.

On connaît les déclarations faites durant la guerre générale au sujet de l'affranchissement des Arabes de l'administration turque. Ces déclarations ont perdu toute valeur réelle aux yeux des peuples, à la suite des événements qui se sont déroulés depuis 1918.

Votre Excellence n'ignore certainement pas que tous les peuples veulent disposer eux-mêmes de leurs destinées et qu'il n'existe plus sur terre de nation sollicitant un protecteur ou un guide. Il ne reste non plus personne qui n'ait compris que les mots de "protection," de "guide dans la voie de la civilisation," &c., ne sont aux mains des dominateurs, que des moyens pour absorber politiquement et économiquement les peuples conquis.

Que le Gouvernement britannique veuille bien laisser, un seul instant, libres et affranchis de toute occupation les habitants de l'Irak, auxquels, d'après les déclarations de votre Seigneurie, la libération a été promise; qu'il soit permis à ces populations de voter en toute indépendence au sujet des destinées de leur pays,—le résultat d'une pareille consultation ne saurait faire l'objet du moindre doute. On ne trouverait plus ainsi dans toutes ces contrées une seule personne voulant d'une occupation, d'un protectorat ou d'un mandat quelconque. Pour être dans le vrai, il faut avouer que les habitants de l'Irak montrent le plus grand empressement en vue d'unir de quelque façon que ce soit leurs destinées à celles des Turcs. Mais le Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale, qui a pour principe fondamental de considérer les parties de l'Empire ottoman autres que la Turquie comme aussi libres et indépendantes que celle-ci, dans la détermination de leur propre sort, n'a jamais songé à exploiter l'attachement nourri par les Arabes à son égard. Nos revendications ne visent donc que les régions devant revenir à la Turquie. Quant aux pays restés en dehors de nos frontières, nous leur souhaitons l'indépendance et la prospérité.

Je désire également faire connaître mon opinion au sujet du mandat britannique sur l'Irak dont votre Excellence parle dans son mémorandum. Non seulement la Turquie n'a pas reconnu en principe la nécessité d'un tel mandat, mais encore elle ignore entièrement son attribution à l'Angleterre. Il est en outre évident que les

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traités—qui, d'après les déclarations contenues dans la lettre de votre Excellence, auraient été conclus par le Gouvernement britannique au sujet de l'Irak, province faisant encore, en droit, partie de l'Empire ottoman—ne peuvent être aucunement invoqués contre nous.

La question d'une autonomie administrative qui serait accordée par l'Angleterre aux Kurdes est brièvement traitée dans mon mémorandum.

La situation des personnes qui vivent dans notre patrie et qui jusqu'aux confins les plus reculés du pays participent, comme citoyens, à tous les droits et à toutes les responsabilités, ne peut être comparée à la situation des habitants d'une sorte de colonie où on leur ferait la grâce de leur octroyer une certaine liberté ou une certaine autonomie.

À cet instant où l'échange d'arguments au sujet de nos droits respectifs à la possession de Moussoul, auquel votre Excellence m'avait convié, prend fin à l'avantage de ma thèse, je considère avoir démontré combien étaient fondées les raisons que j'avais de déclarer que Moussoul fait partie intégrante de la Turquie. J'espère que votre Seigneurie me permettra d'affirmer à nouveau cette vérité.

Mes experts sont prêts à se rencontrer avec ceux que votre Excellence voudra bien désigner. Lorsque les frontières envisagées par les deux parties seront nettement établies sur la carte, les points de vue opposés apparaîtront plus clairement. Si cette clarté peut contribuer à obtenir une prompte solution de la question, tout sera pour le mieux.

Croyez, &c.
M. ISMET.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Memorandum.

LA lecture du mémorandum responsif remis par la délégation britannique donne la conviction que les arguments fournis par le mémorandum turc du 23 courant sont parfaitement logiques et fondés et qu'en plus ils sont suffisants pour établir les droits qu'a la Turquie à revendiquer le vilayet de Mossoul.

Nous jugeons utile de fournir les renseignements suivants au sujet de certaines parties du mémorandum britannique qui, d'ailleurs, sont la répétition des considérations déjà émises une première fois.

Considérations ethnographiques.

Les statistiques turques concernant le vilayet de Moussoul sont le résultat d'une étude approfondie et ont été établies avant la guerre générale, c'est-à-dire à une époque où il n'y avait aucun intérêt politique à fausser les chiffres donnant la proportion des différents éléments de la population et où, par suite des opérations de recrutement militaire, on était dans la nécessité de posséder des données exactes. Ces statistiques doivent donc être considérées comme les plus conformes à la réalité.

Tout le monde peut se rendre compte qu'un voyage de quelques fonctionnaires et officiers britanniques ne peut suffire à établir une statistique exacte; de plus, les fonctionnaires anglais n'ont pu jusqu'à présent pénétrer dans le sandjak de Suleymanié; les renseignements qu'ils pourraient fournir au sujet de ce sandjak sont donc encore plus sujets à caution que ceux relatifs au reste du vilayet de Mossoul.

Le nahié nommé Achaïri-Sebaa ou Achaïri-Mouhtélifé est uniquement peuplé de Turcs et de Kurdes. Ceux qui connaissent la langue turque n'hésiteront pas à reconnaître que ces deux mots composés sont des expressions pouvant être couramment employées en turc sans qu'on puisse prétendre que l'objet de leur application ait un rapport quelconque avec les Arabes.

Quant aux villages situés autour de Mossoul et portant des noms turcs, nous tenons à répéter que ce n'est pas seulement leur nom, mais encore leur population qui est turque; d'ailleurs, le mémorandum britannique du 14 courant reconnaissait également l'existence de villages turcs autour de Mossoul.

Le mémorandum turc du 23 décembre indique la façon dont les Arabes sont répartis dans le vilayet en question et donne des renseignements détaillés sur la population de la ville de Mossoul et de ses environs.

Ceux qui ont parcouru l'Anatolie savent qu'au point de vue des mœurs ainsi que des us et coutumes les Kurdes ne diffèrent en rien des Turcs; tout en parlant une langue différente, ces deux éléments forment un seul bloc au point de vue de la race, de la foi et des mœurs.

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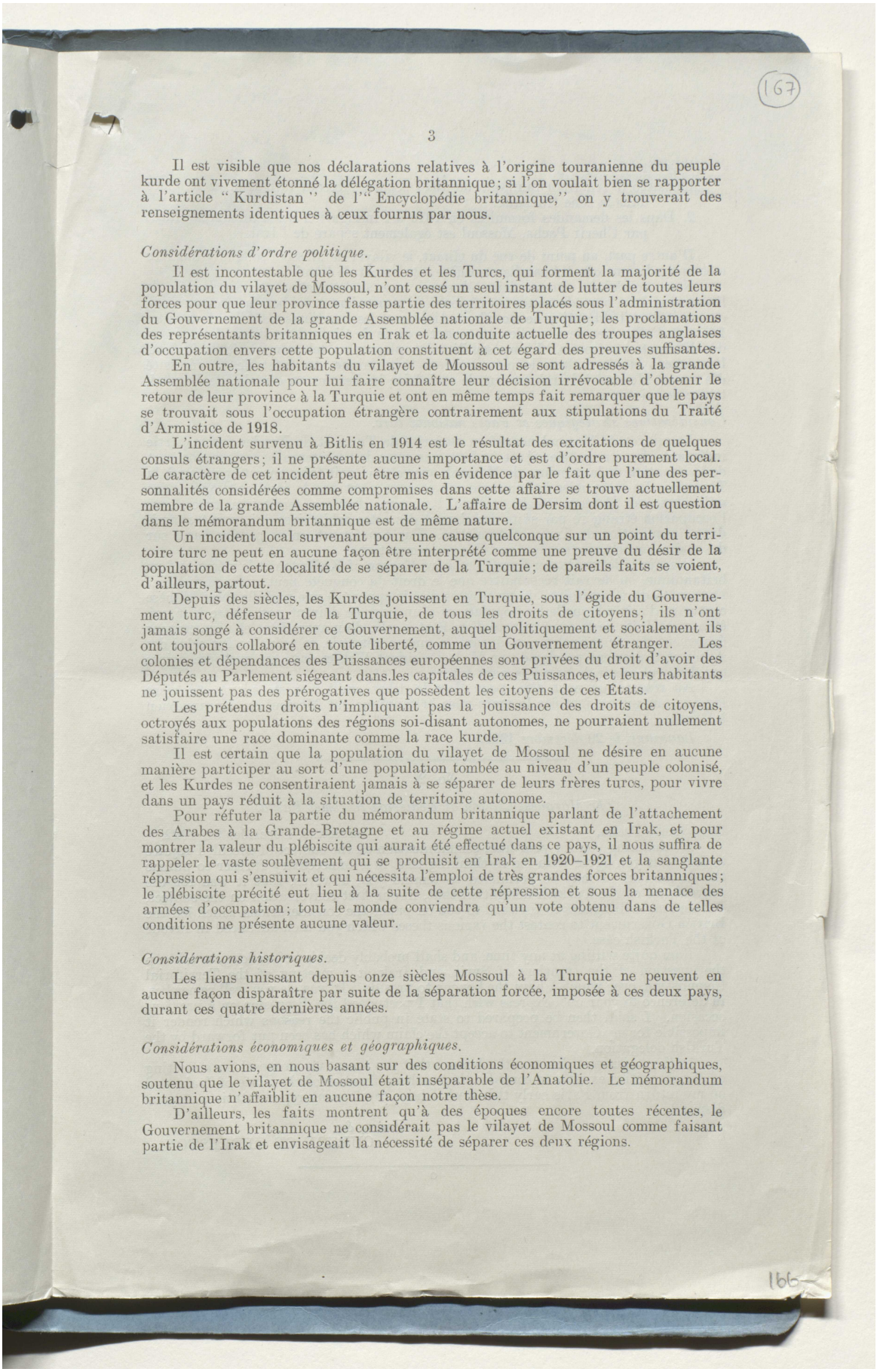

Il est visible que nos déclarations relatives à l'origine touranienne du peuple kurde ont vivement étonné la délégation britannique; si l'on voulait bien se rapporter à l'article "Kurdistan" de l'"Encyclopédie britannique," on y trouverait des renseignements identiques à ceux fournis par nous.

Considérations d'ordre politique.

Il est incontestable que les Kurdes et les Turcs, qui forment la majorité de la population du vilayet de Mossoul, n'ont cessé un seul instant de lutter de toutes leurs forces pour que leur province fasse partie des territoires placés sous l'administration du Gouvernement de la grande Assemblée nationale de Turquie; les proclamations des représentants britanniques en Irak et la conduite actuelle des troupes anglaises d'occupation envers cette population constituent à cet égard des preuves suffisantes.

En outre, les habitants du vilayet de Moussoul se sont adressés à la grande Assemblée nationale pour lui faire connaître leur décision irrévocable d'obtenir le retour de leur province à la Turquie et ont en même temps fait remarquer que le pays se trouvait sous l'occupation étrangère contrairement aux stipulations du Traité d'Armistice de 1918.

L'incident survenu à Bitlis en 1914 est le résultat des excitations de quelques consuls étrangers; il ne présente aucune importance et est d'ordre purement local. Le caractère de cet incident peut être mis en évidence par le fait que l'une des personnalités considérées comme compromises dans cette affaire se trouve actuellement membre de la grande Assemblée nationale. L'affaire de Dersim dont il est question dans le mémorandum britannique est de même nature.

Un incident local survenant pour une cause quelconque sur un point du territoire turc ne peut en aucune façon être interprété comme une preuve du désir de la population de cette localité de se séparer de la Turquie; de pareils faits se voient, d'ailleurs, partout.

Depuis des siècles, les Kurdes jouissent en Turquie, sous l'égide du Gouvernement turc, défenseur de la Turquie, de tous les droits de citoyens; ils n'ont jamais songé à considérer ce Gouvernement, auquel politiquement et socialement ils ont toujours collaboré en toute liberté, comme un Gouvernement étranger. Les colonies et dépendances des Puissances européennes sont privées du droit d'avoir des Députés au Parlement siégeant dans.les capitales de ces Puissances, et leurs habitants ne jouissent pas des prérogatives que possèdent les citoyens de ces États.

Les prétendus droits n'impliquant pas la jouissance des droits de citoyens, octroyés aux populations des régions soi-disant autonomes, ne pourraient nullement satisfaire une race dominante comme la race kurde.

Il est certain que la population du vilayet de Mossoul ne désire en aucune manière participer au sort d'une population tombée au niveau d'un peuple colonisé, et les Kurdes ne consentiraient jamais à se séparer de leurs frères turcs, pour vivre dans un pays réduit à la situation de territoire autonome.

Pour réfuter la partie du mémorandum britannique parlant de l'attachement des Arabes à la Grande-Bretagne et au régime actuel existant en Irak, et pour montrer la valeur du plébiscite qui aurait été effectué dans ce pays, il nous suffira de rappeler le vaste soulèvement qui se produisit en Irak en 1920–1921 et la sanglante répression qui s'ensuivit et qui nécessita l'emploi de très grandes forces britanniques; le plébiscite précité eut lieu à la suite de cette répression et sous la menace des armées d'occupation; tout le monde conviendra qu'un vote obtenu dans de telles conditions ne présente aucune valeur.

Considérations historiques.

Les liens unissant depuis onze siècles Mossoul à la Turquie ne peuvent en aucune façon disparaître par suite de la séparation forcée, imposée à ces deux pays, durant ces quatre dernières années.

Considérations économiques et géographiques.

Nous avions, en nous basant sur des conditions économiques et géographiques, soutenu que le vilayet de Mossoul était inséparable de l'Anatolie. Le mémorandum britannique n'affaiblit en aucune façon notre thèse.

D'ailleurs, les faits montrent qu'à des époques encore toutes récentes, le Gouvernement britannique ne considérait pas le vilayet de Mossoul comme faisant partie de l'Irak et envisageait la nécessité de séparer ces deux régions.

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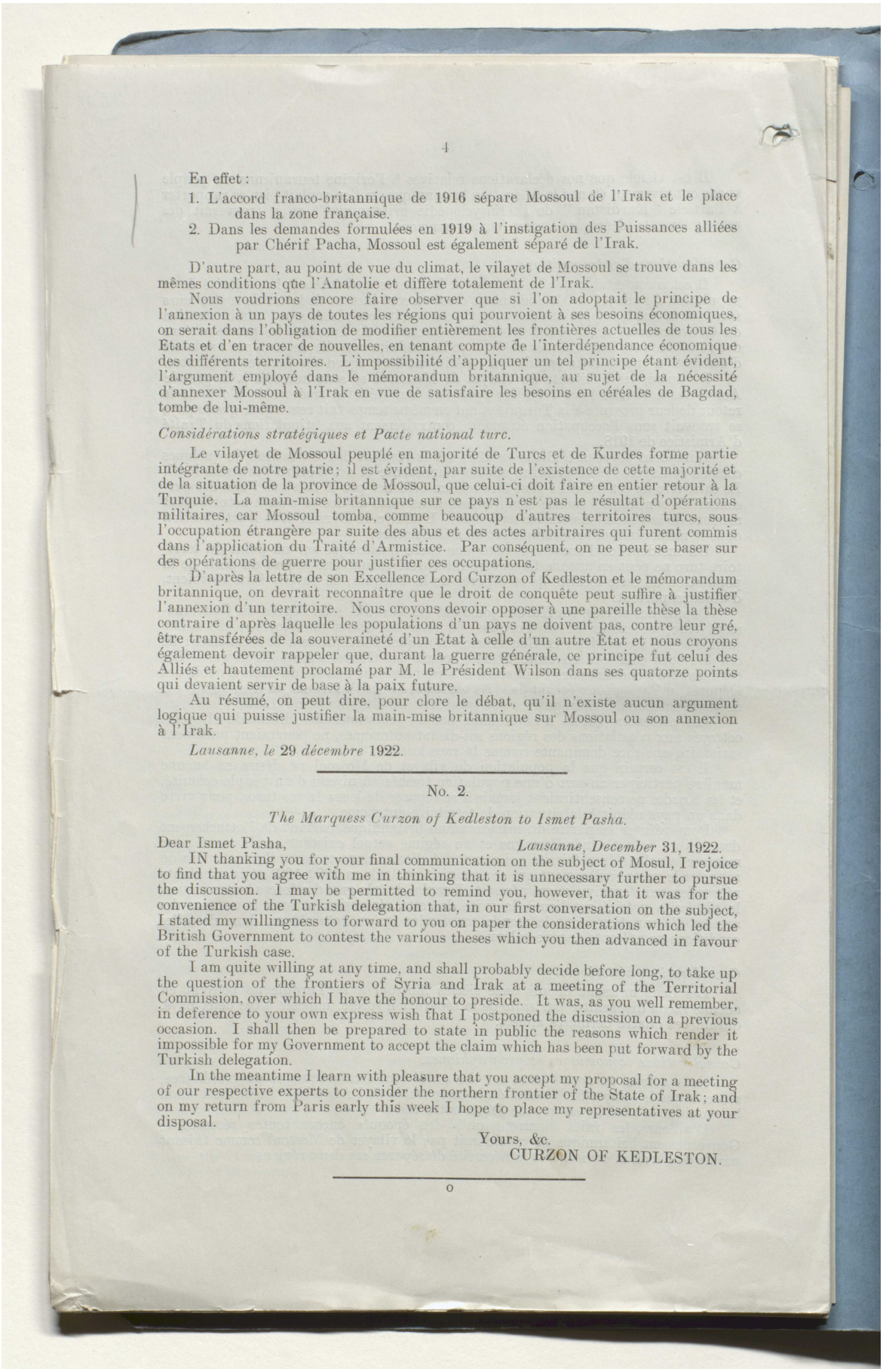

En effet :

1. L'accord franco-britannique de 1916 sépare Mossoul de l'Irak et le place dans la zone française.
2. Dans les demandes formulées en 1919 à l'instigation des Puissances alliées par Chérif Pacha, Mossoul est également séparé de l'Irak.

D'autre part, au point de vue du climat, le vilayet de Mossoul se trouve dans les mêmes conditions que l'Anatolie et diffère totalement de l'Irak.

Nous voudrions encore faire observer que si l'on adoptait le principe de l'annexion à un pays de toutes les régions qui pourvoient à ses besoins économiques, on serait dans l'obligation de modifier entièrement les frontières actuelles de tous les Etats et d'en tracer de nouvelles, en tenant compte de l'interdépendance économique des différents territoires. L'impossibilité d'appliquer un tel principe étant évident, l'argument employé dans le mémorandum britannique, au sujet de la nécessité d'annexer Mossoul à l'Irak en vue de satisfaire les besoins en céréales de Bagdad, tombe de lui-même.

Considérations stratégiques et Pacte national turc.

Le vilayet de Mossoul peuplé en majorité de Turcs et de Kurdes forme partie intégrante de notre patrie; il est évident, par suite de l'existence de cette majorité et de la situation de la province de Mossoul, que celui-ci doit faire en entier retour à la Turquie. La main-mise britannique sur ce pays n'est pas le résultat d'opérations militaires, car Mossoul tomba, comme beaucoup d'autres territoires turcs, sous l'occupation étrangère par suite des abus et des actes arbitraires qui furent commis dans l'application du Traité d'Armistice. Par conséquent, on ne peut se baser sur des opérations de guerre pour justifier ces occupations.

D'après la lettre de son Excellence Lord Curzon of Kedleston et le mémorandum britannique, on devrait reconnaître que le droit de conquête peut suffire à justifier l'annexion d'un territoire. Nous croyons devoir opposer à une pareille thèse la thèse contraire d'après laquelle les populations d'un pays ne doivent pas, contre leur gré, être transférées de la souveraineté d'un Etat à celle d'un autre Etat et nous croyons également devoir rappeler que, durant la guerre générale, ce principe fut celui des Alliés et hautement proclamé par M. le Président Wilson dans ses quatorze points qui devaient servir de base à la paix future.

Au résumé, on peut dire, pour clore le débat, qu'il n'existe aucun argument logique qui puisse justifier la main-mise britannique sur Mossoul ou son annexion à l'Irak.

Lausanne, le 29 *décembre* 1922.

No. 2.

The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston to Ismet Pasha.

Dear Ismet Pasha, *Lausanne, December* 31, 1922.

IN thanking you for your final communication on the subject of Mosul, I rejoice to find that you agree with me in thinking that it is unnecessary further to pursue the discussion. I may be permitted to remind you, however, that it was for the convenience of the Turkish delegation that, in our first conversation on the subject, I stated my willingness to forward to you on paper the considerations which led the British Government to contest the various theses which you then advanced in favour of the Turkish case.

I am quite willing at any time, and shall probably decide before long, to take up the question of the frontiers of Syria and Irak at a meeting of the Territorial Commission, over which I have the honour to preside. It was, as you well remember, in deference to your own express wish that I postponed the discussion on a previous occasion. I shall then be prepared to state in public the reasons which render it impossible for my Government to accept the claim which has been put forward by the Turkish delegation.

In the meantime I learn with pleasure that you accept my proposal for a meeting of our respective experts to consider the northern frontier of the State of Irak; and on my return from Paris early this week I hope to place my representatives at your disposal.

Yours, &c.
CURZON OF KEDLESTON.

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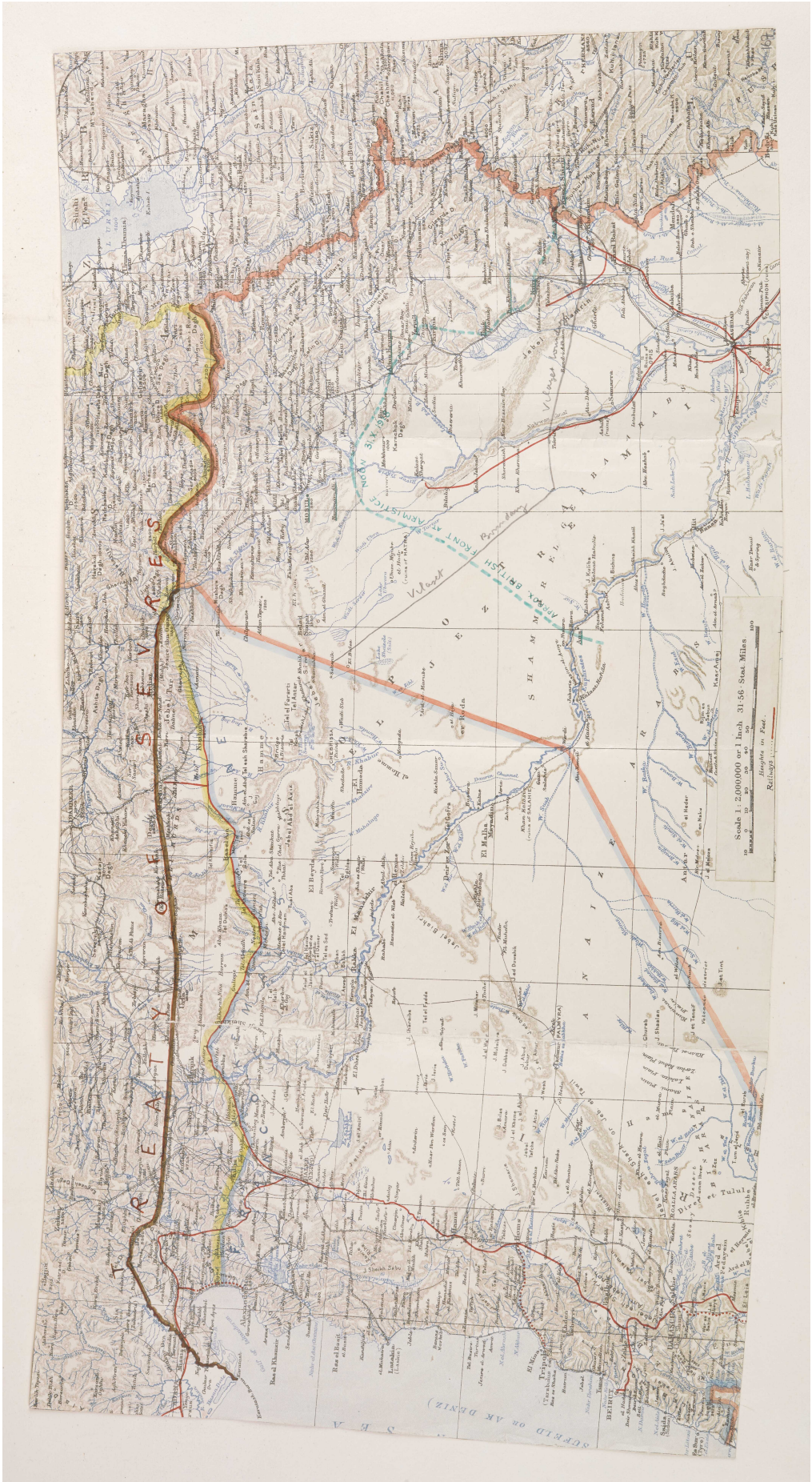
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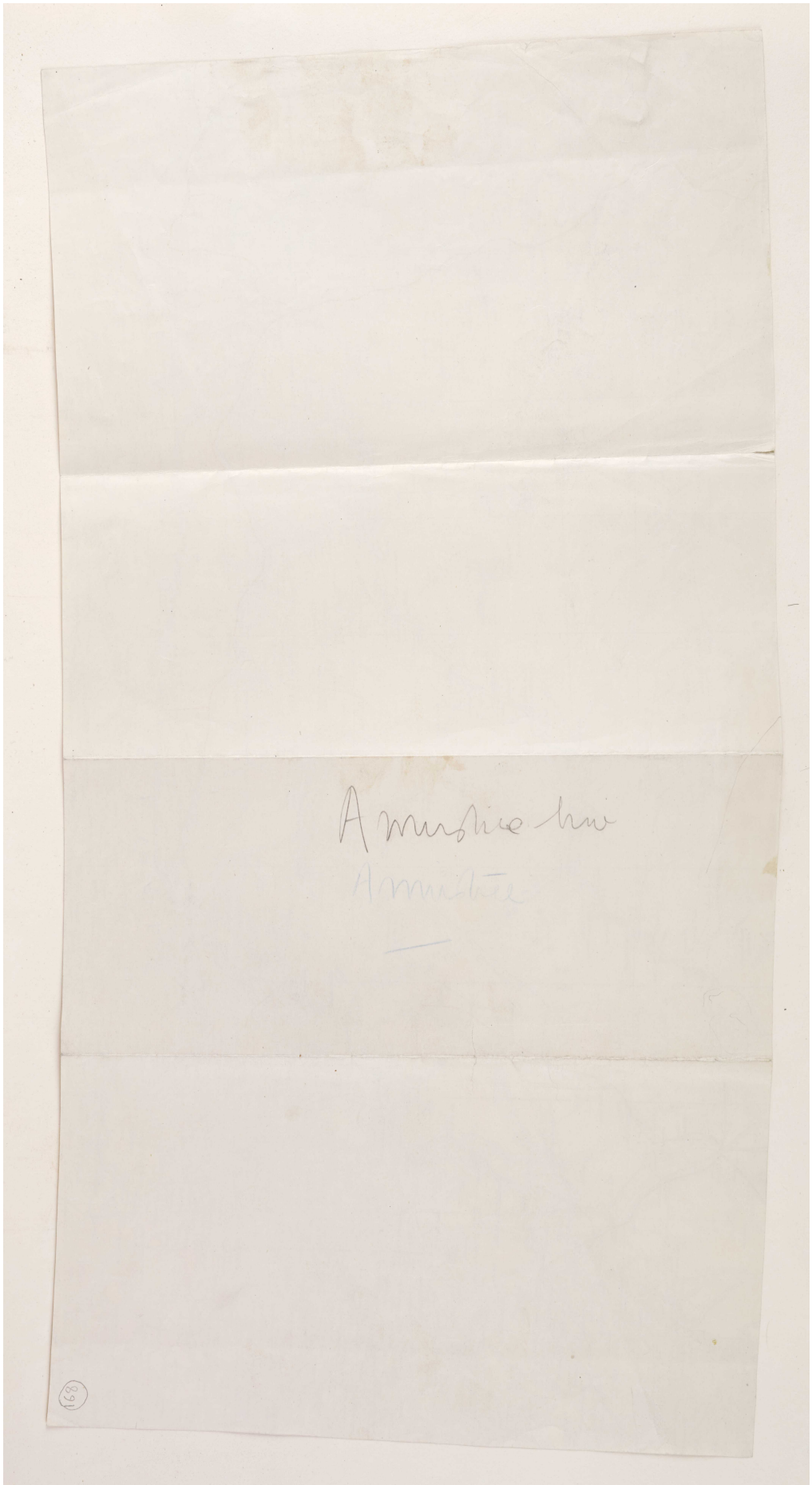

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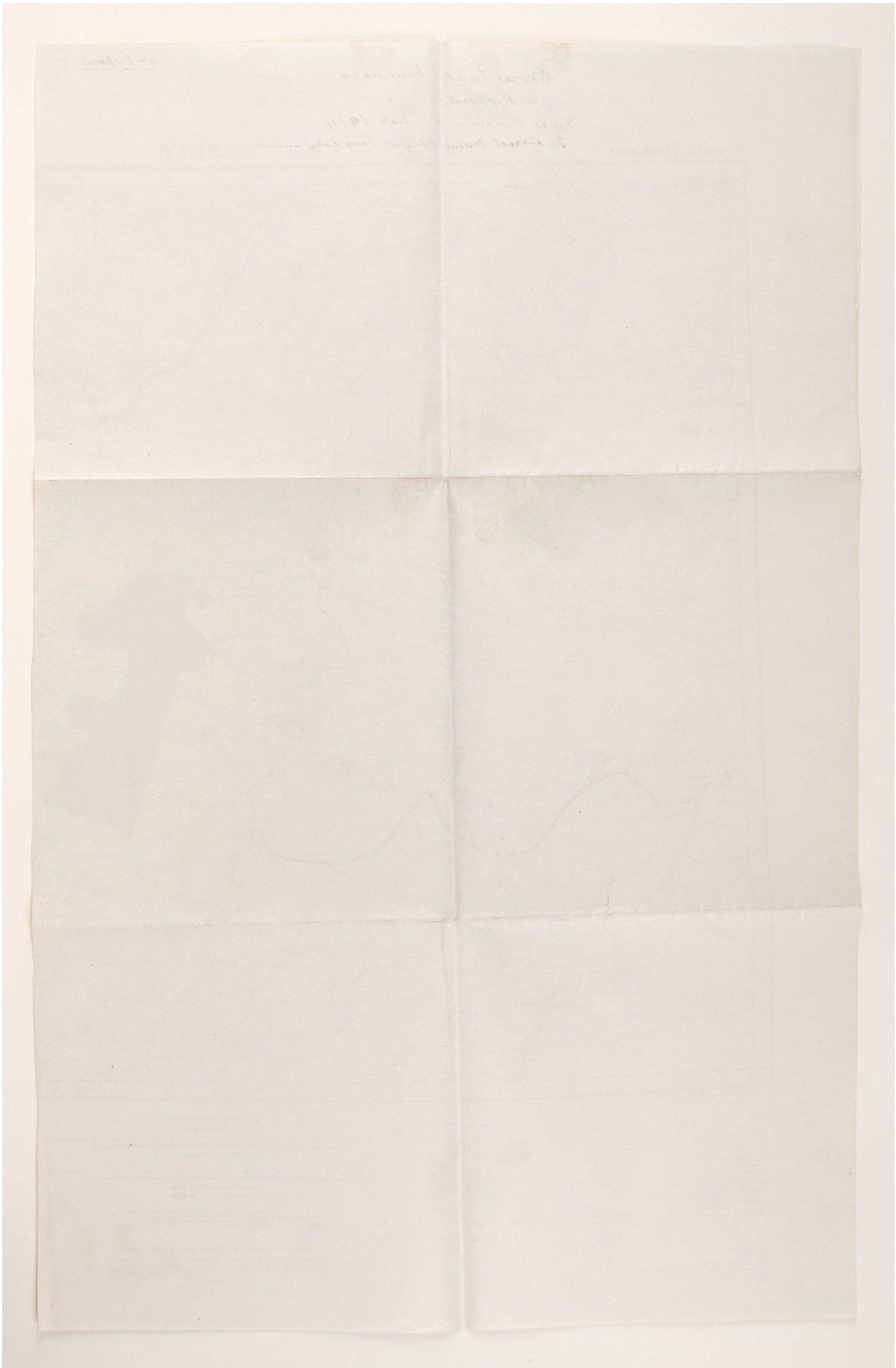

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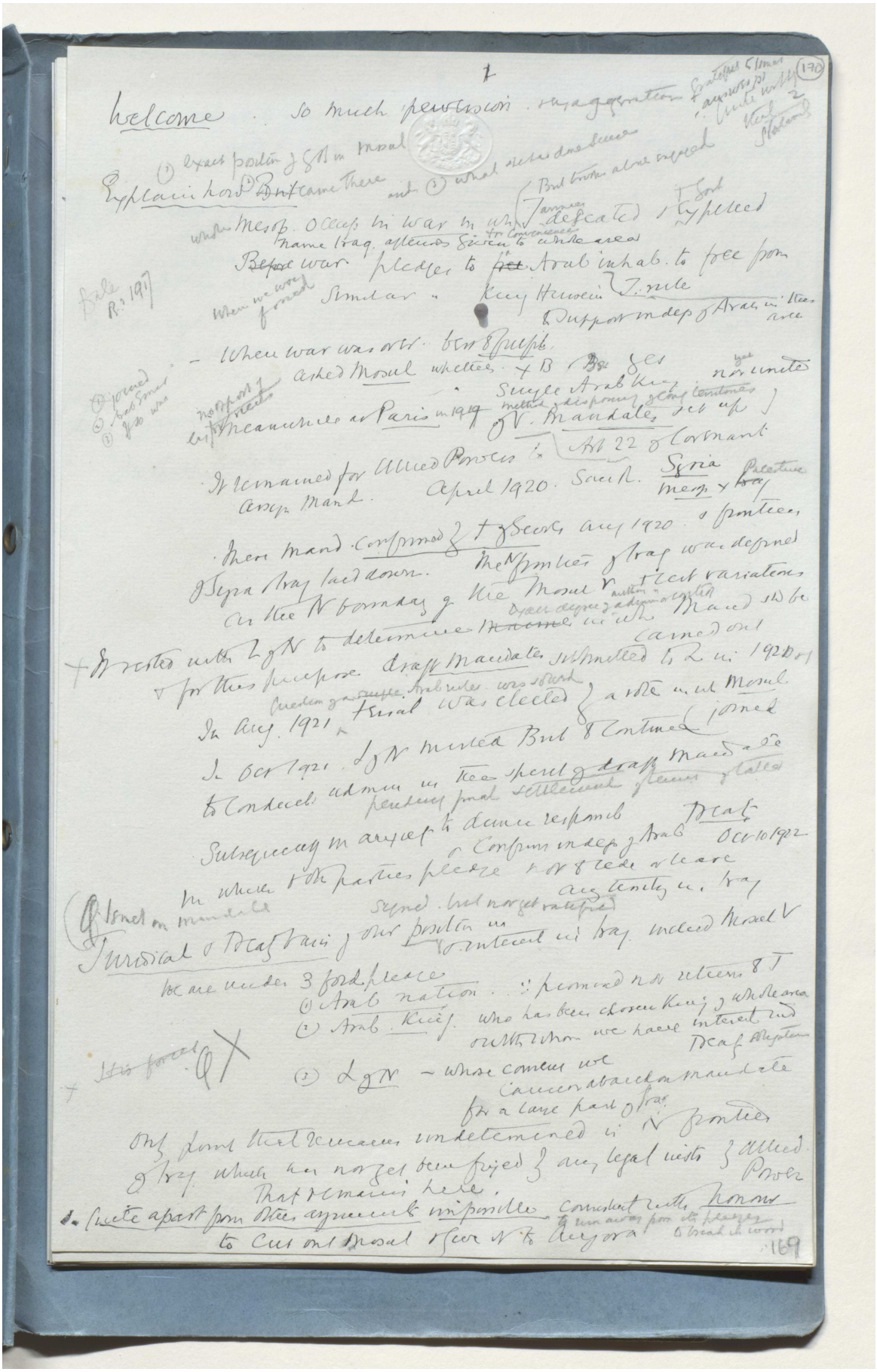

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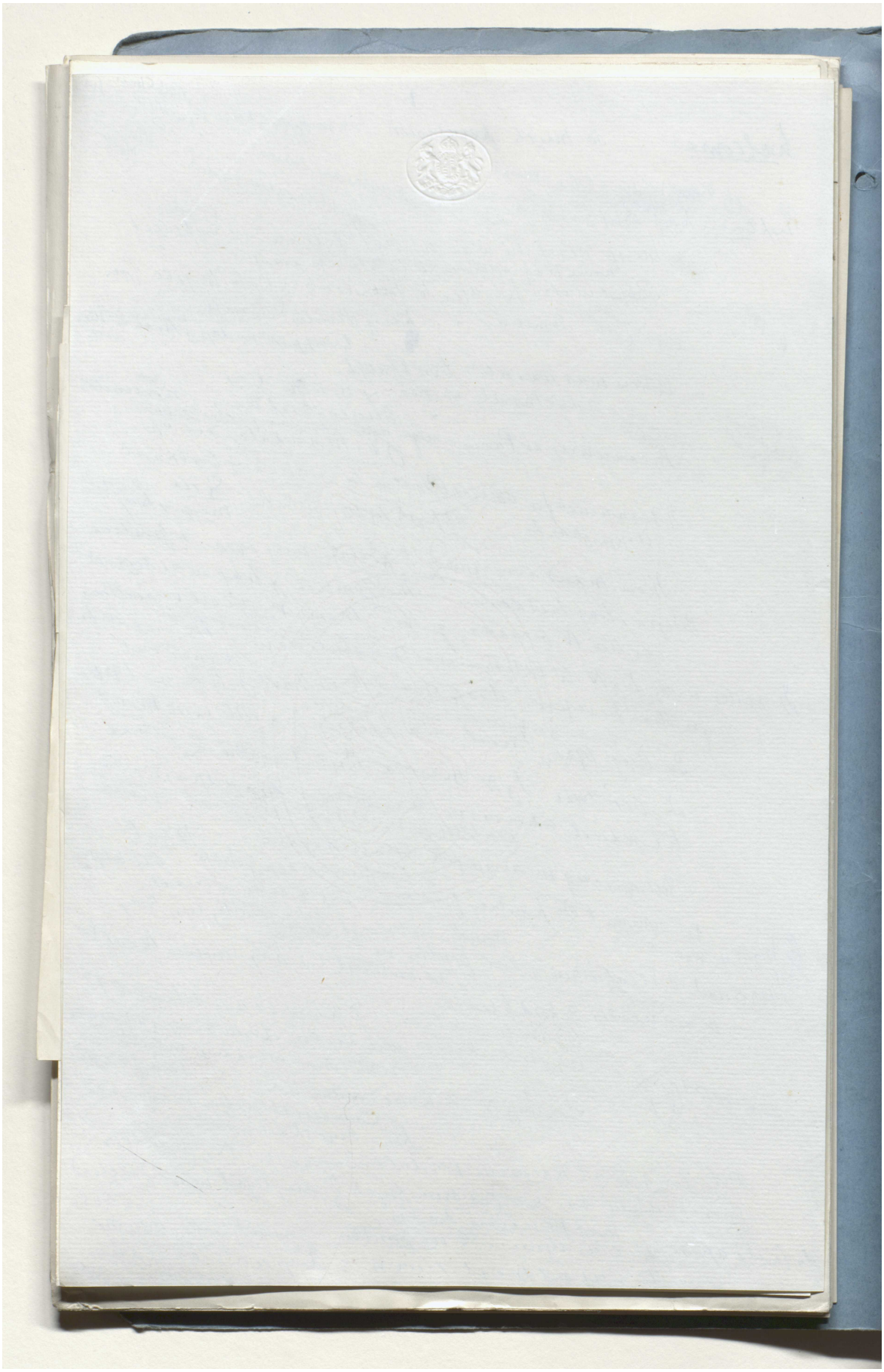

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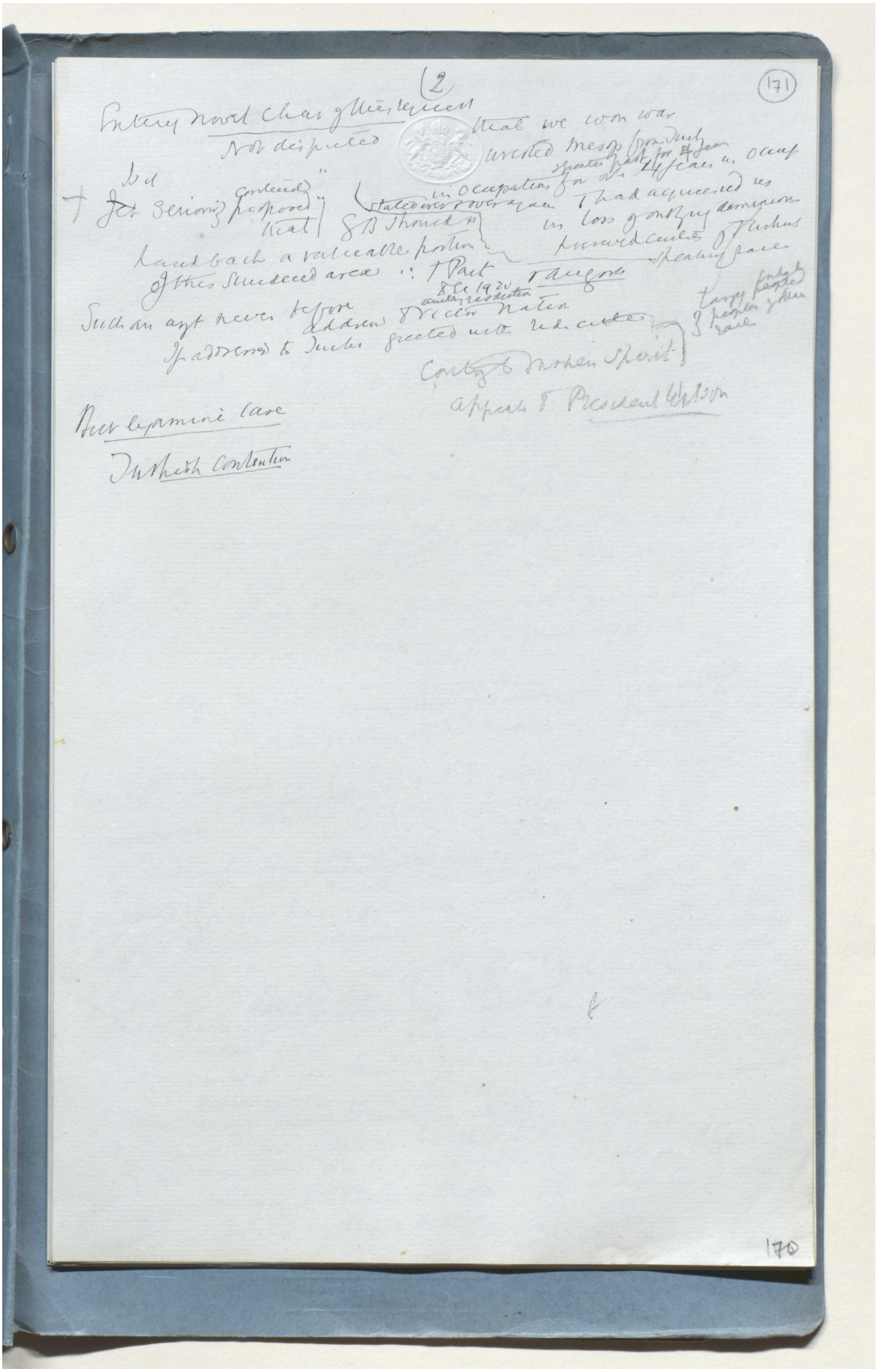

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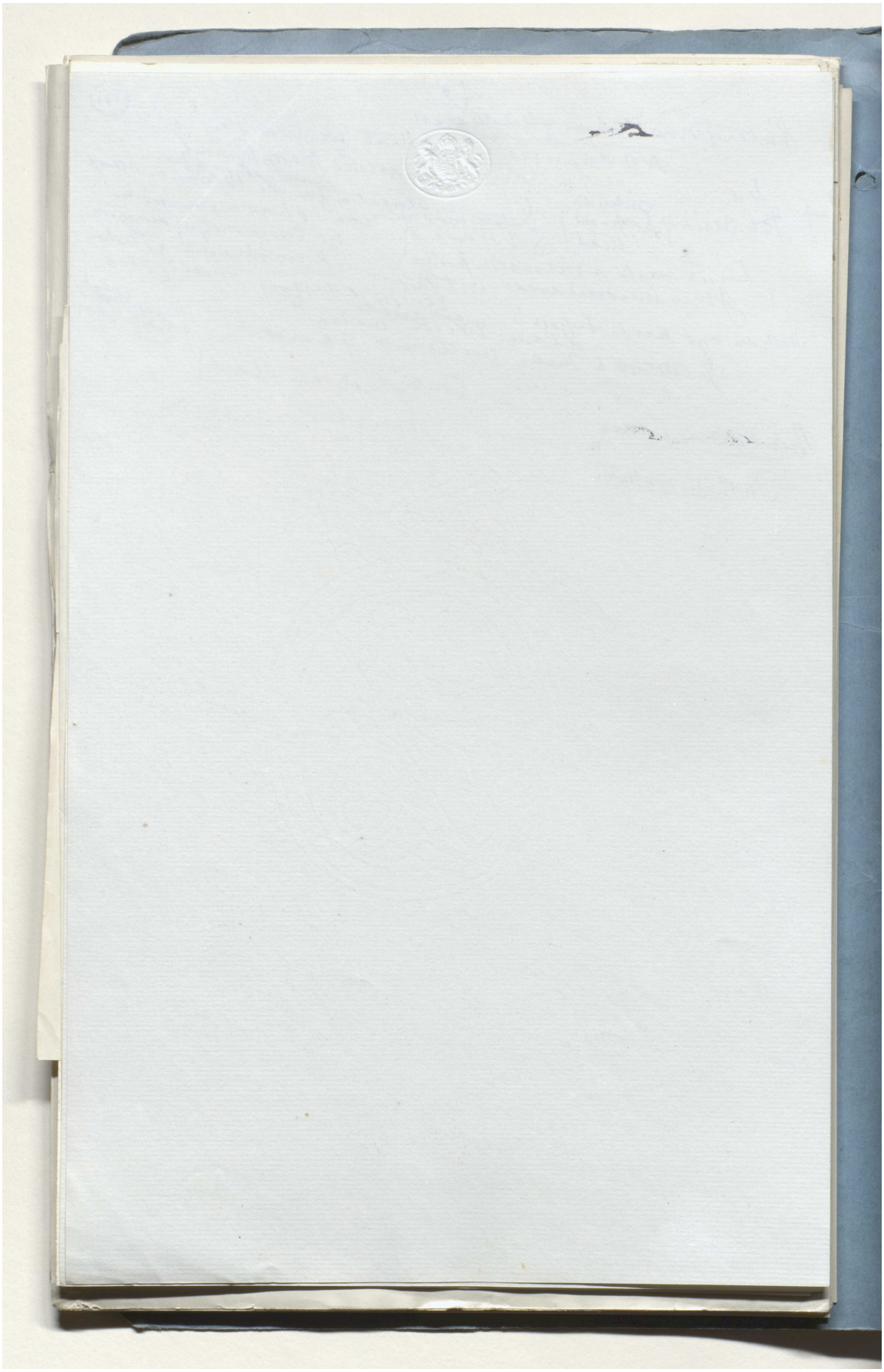

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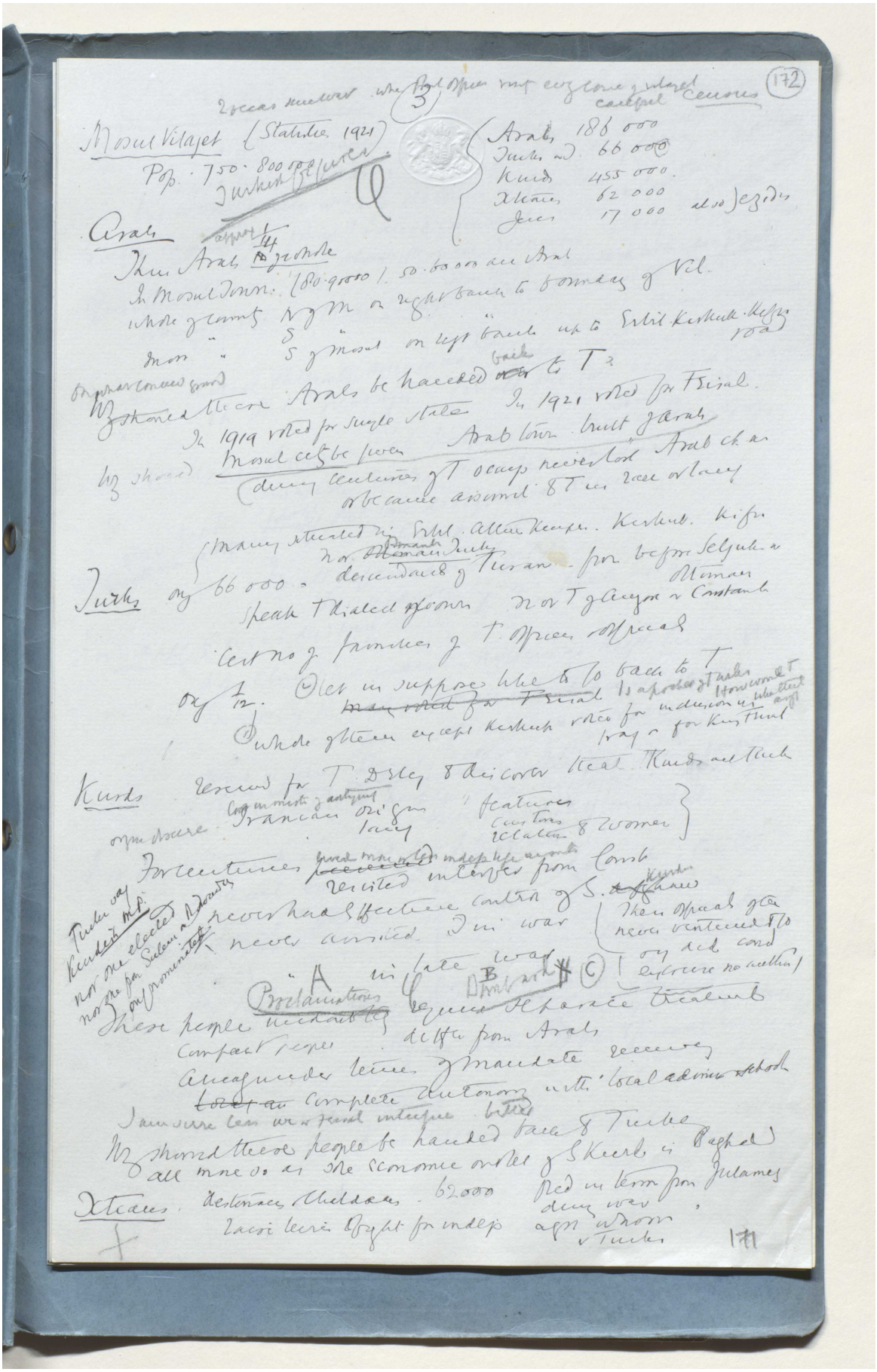

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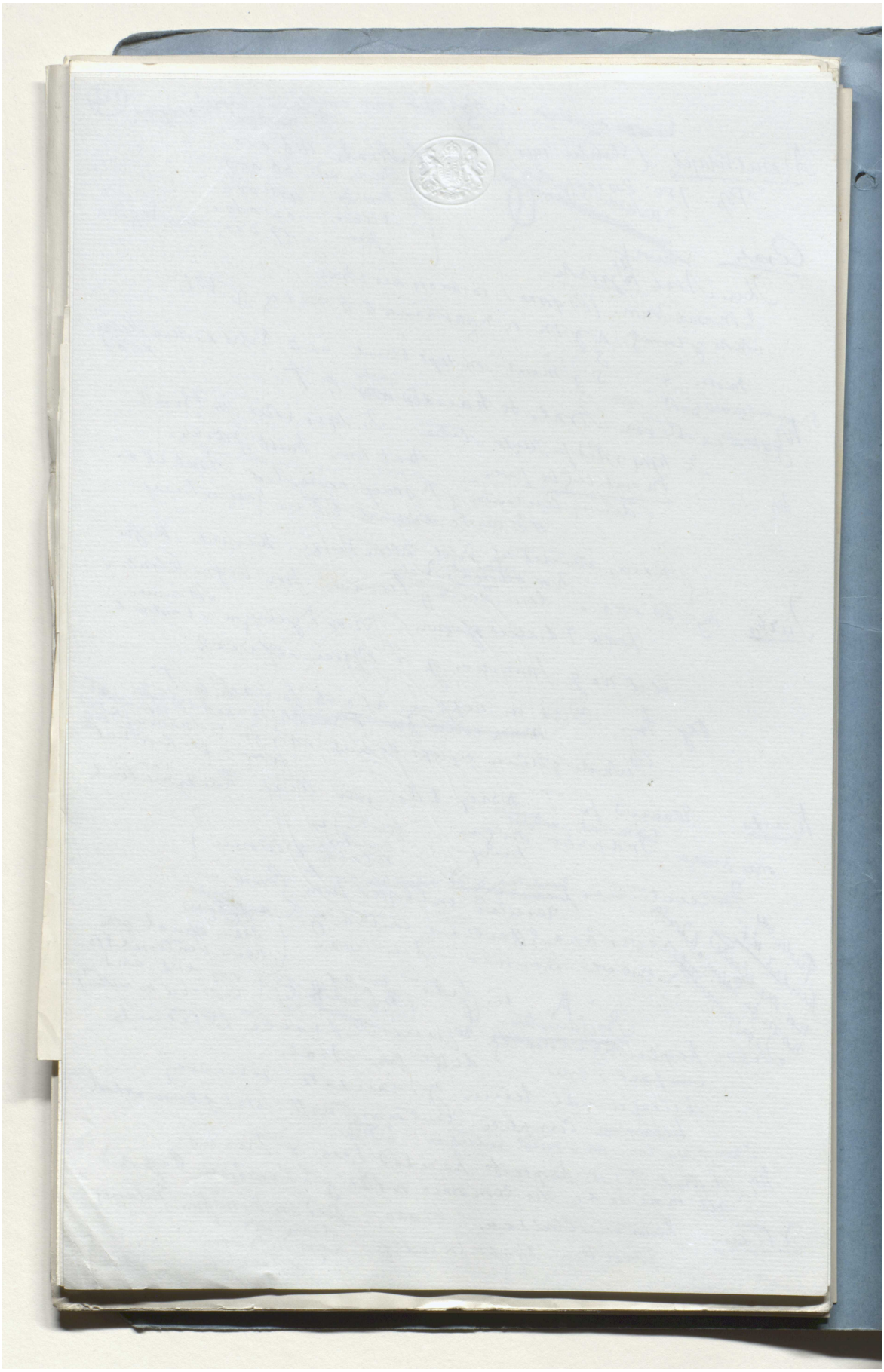

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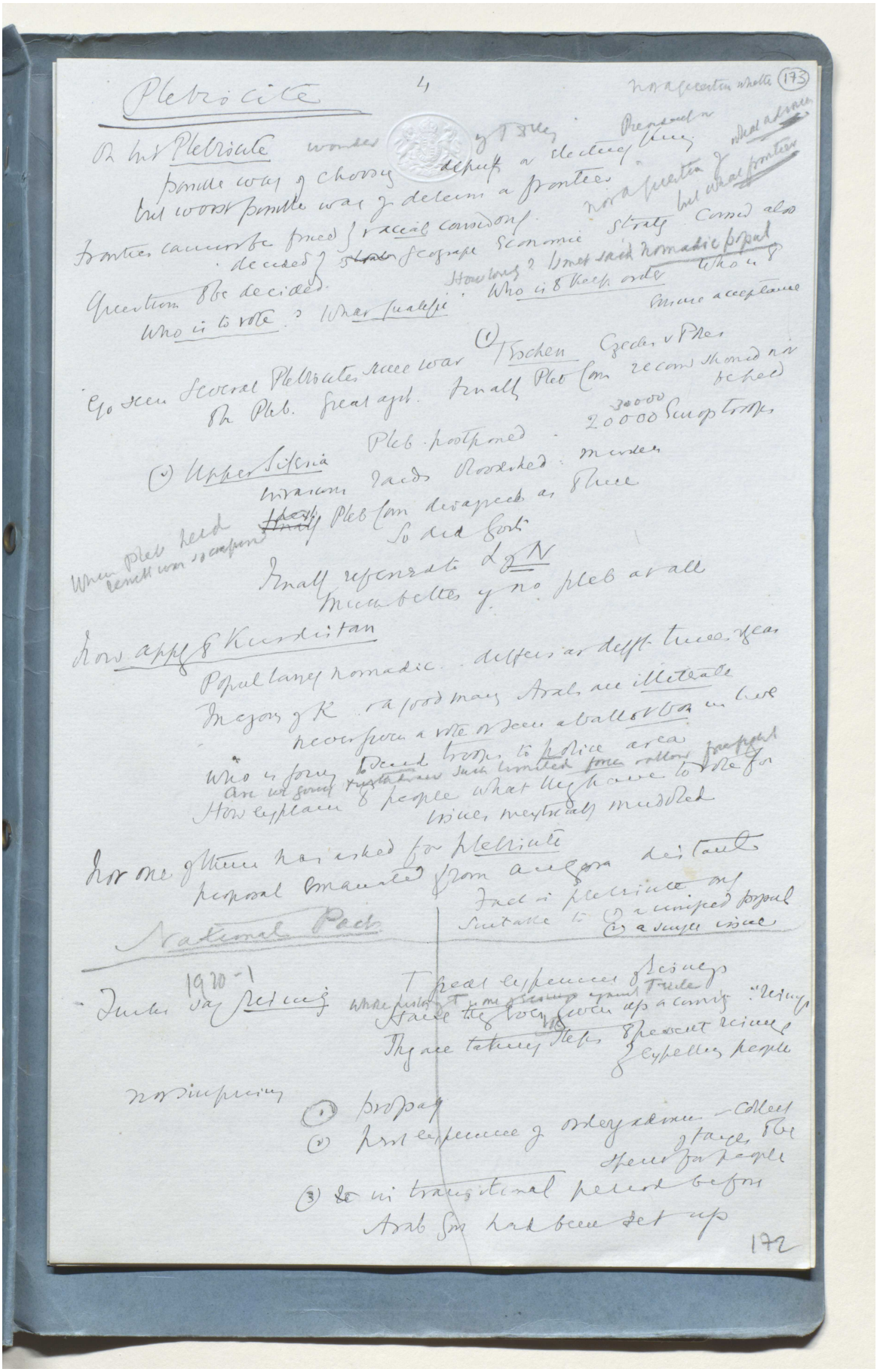

Plebiscite

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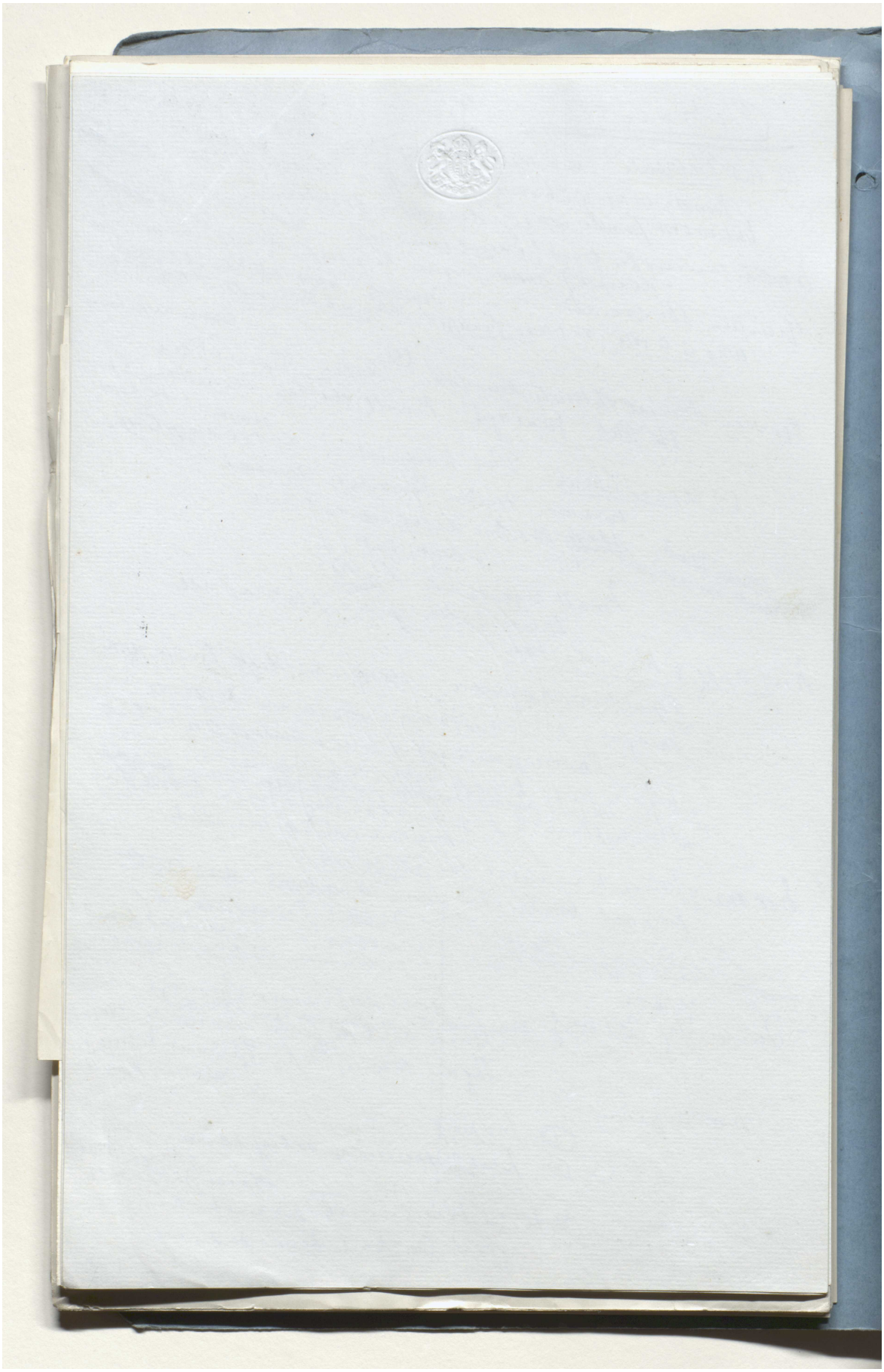

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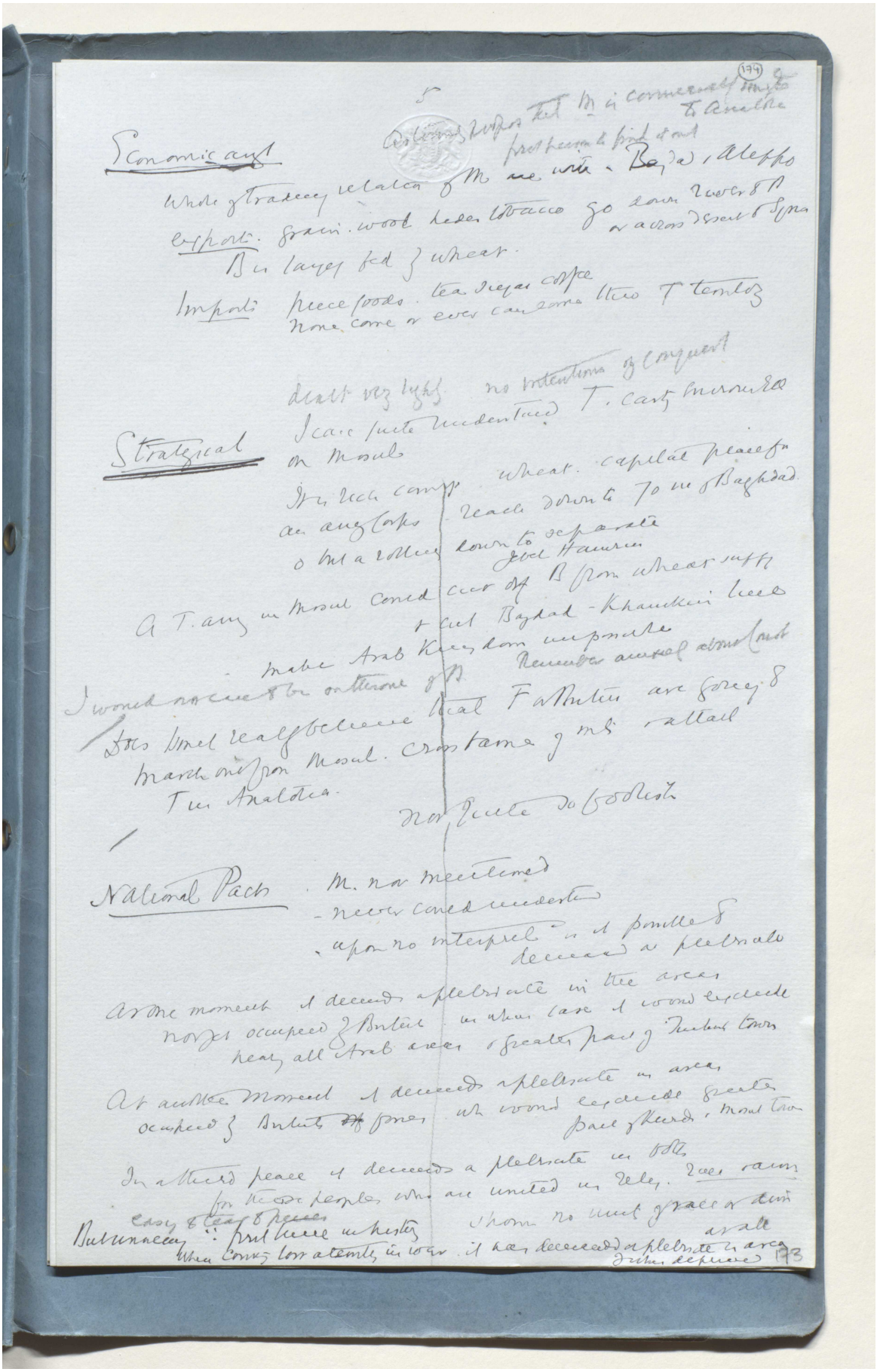

Economic aspect

Strategical

National Pacts

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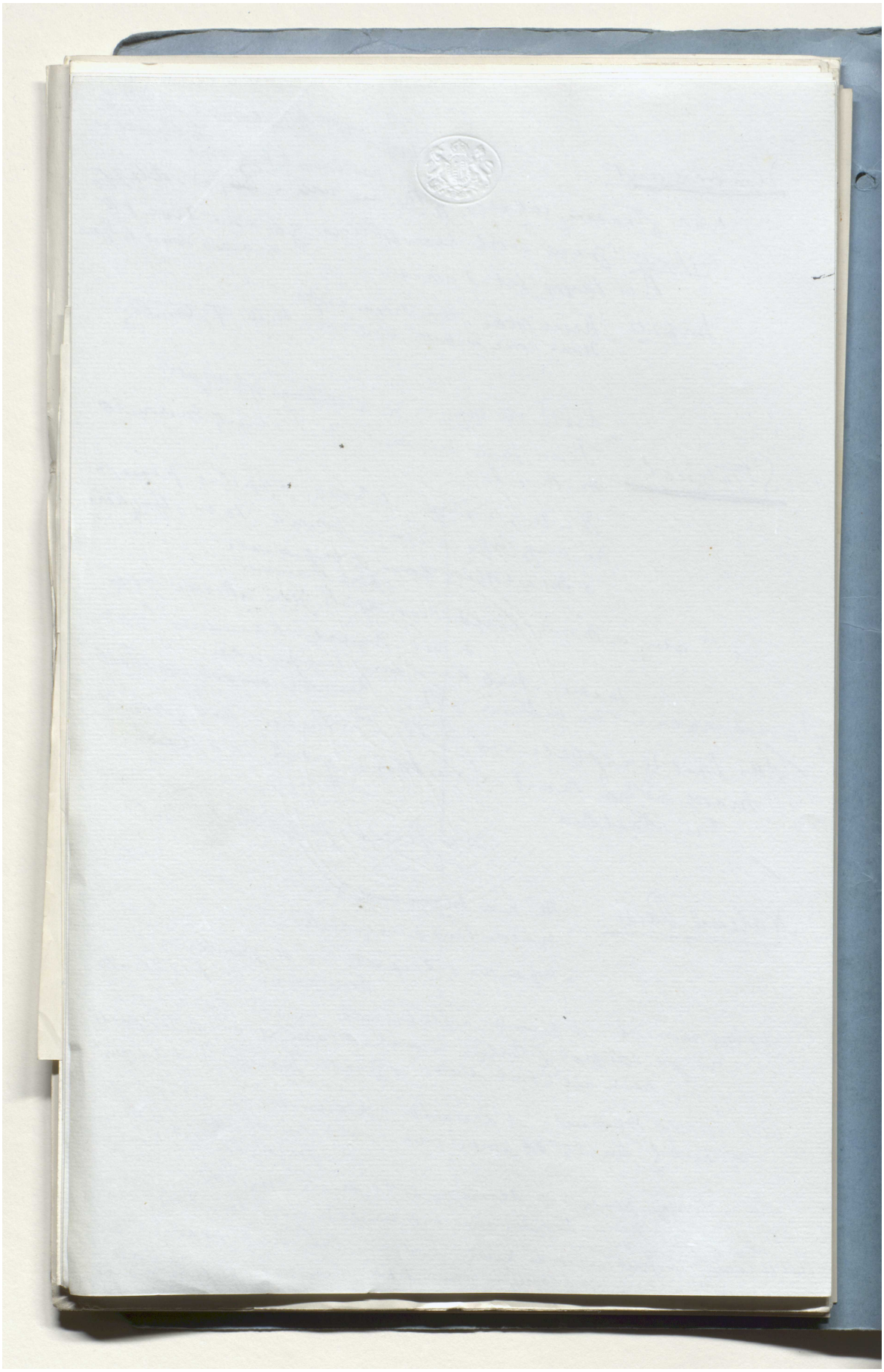

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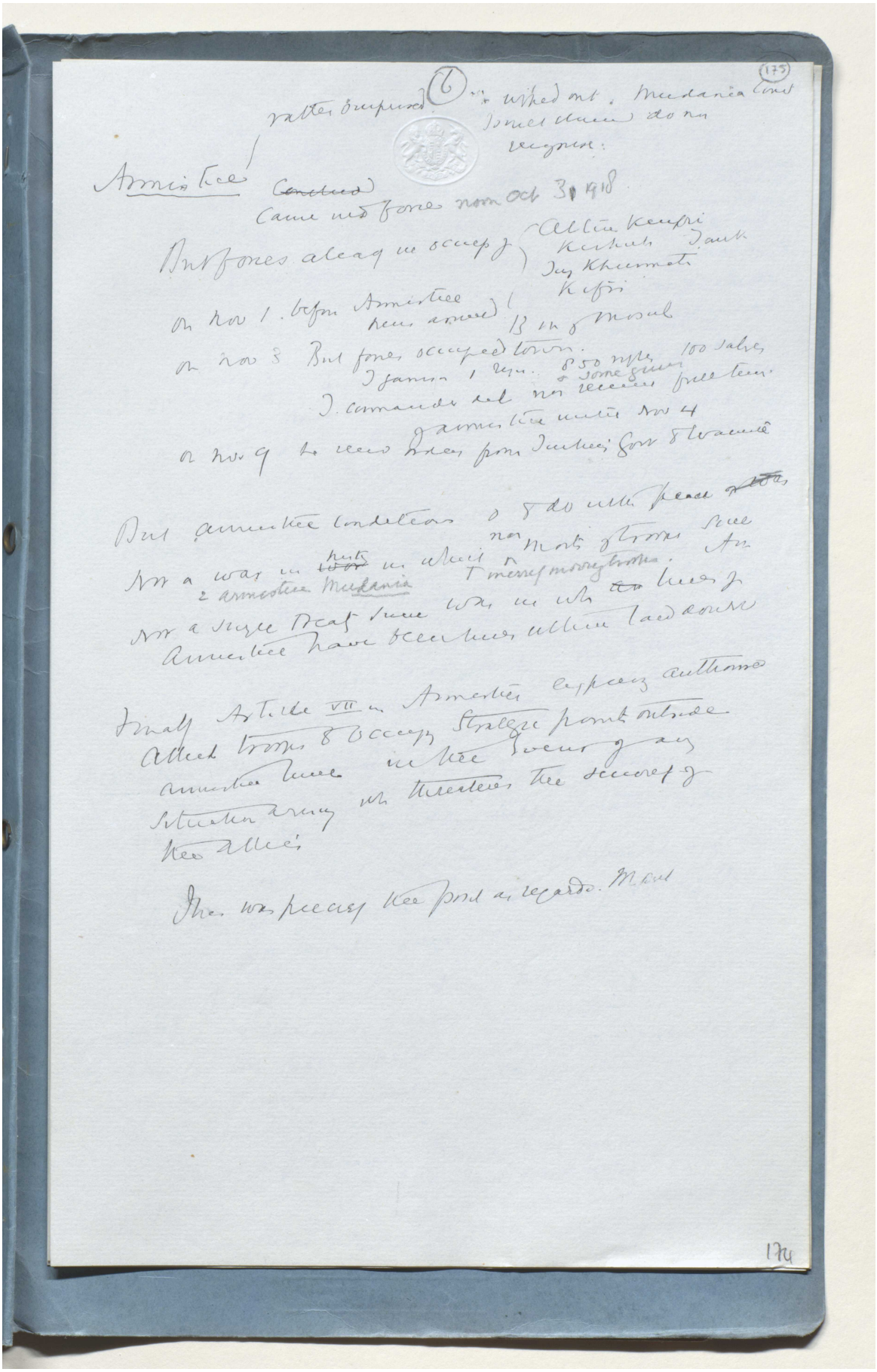

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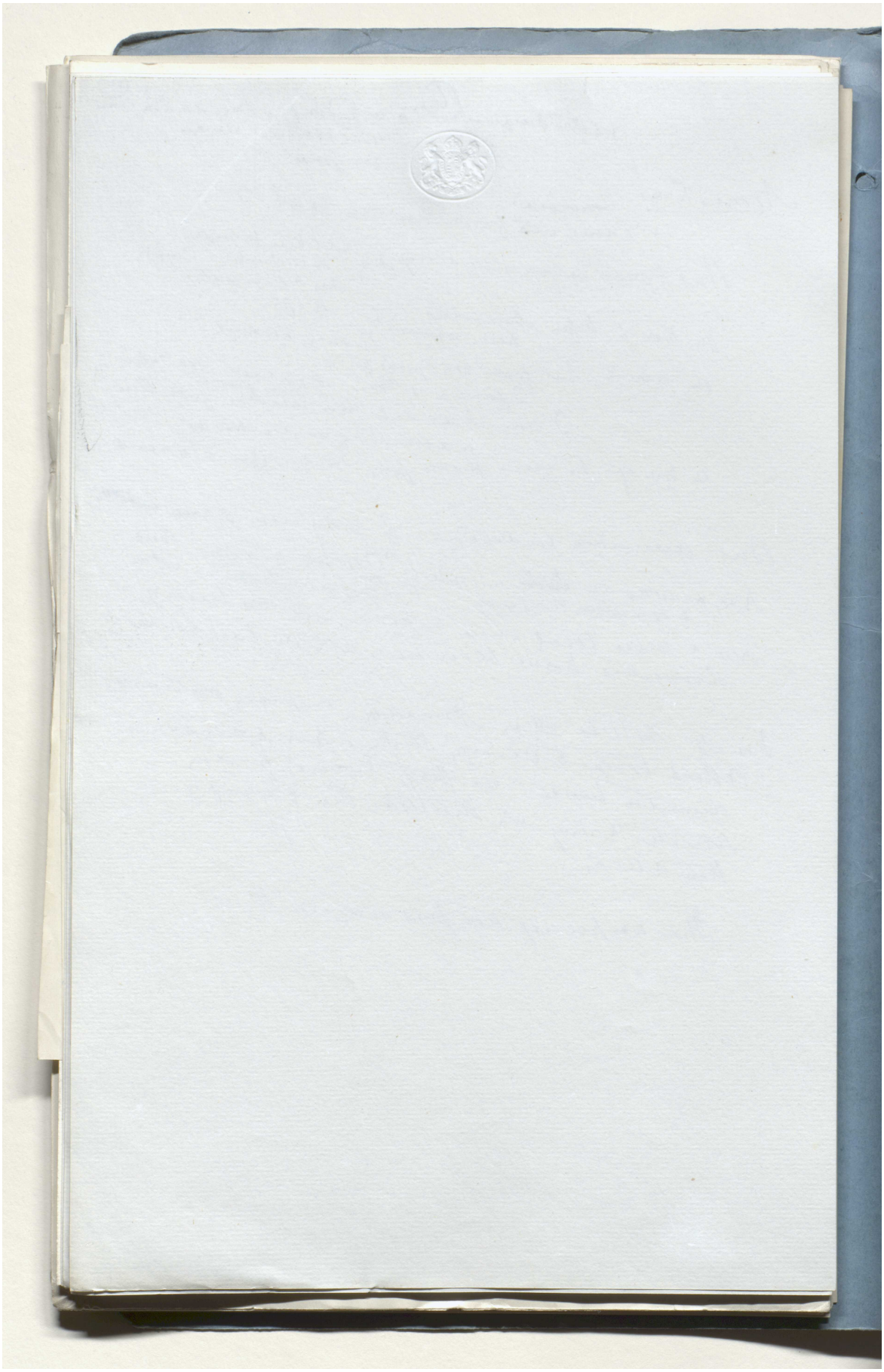

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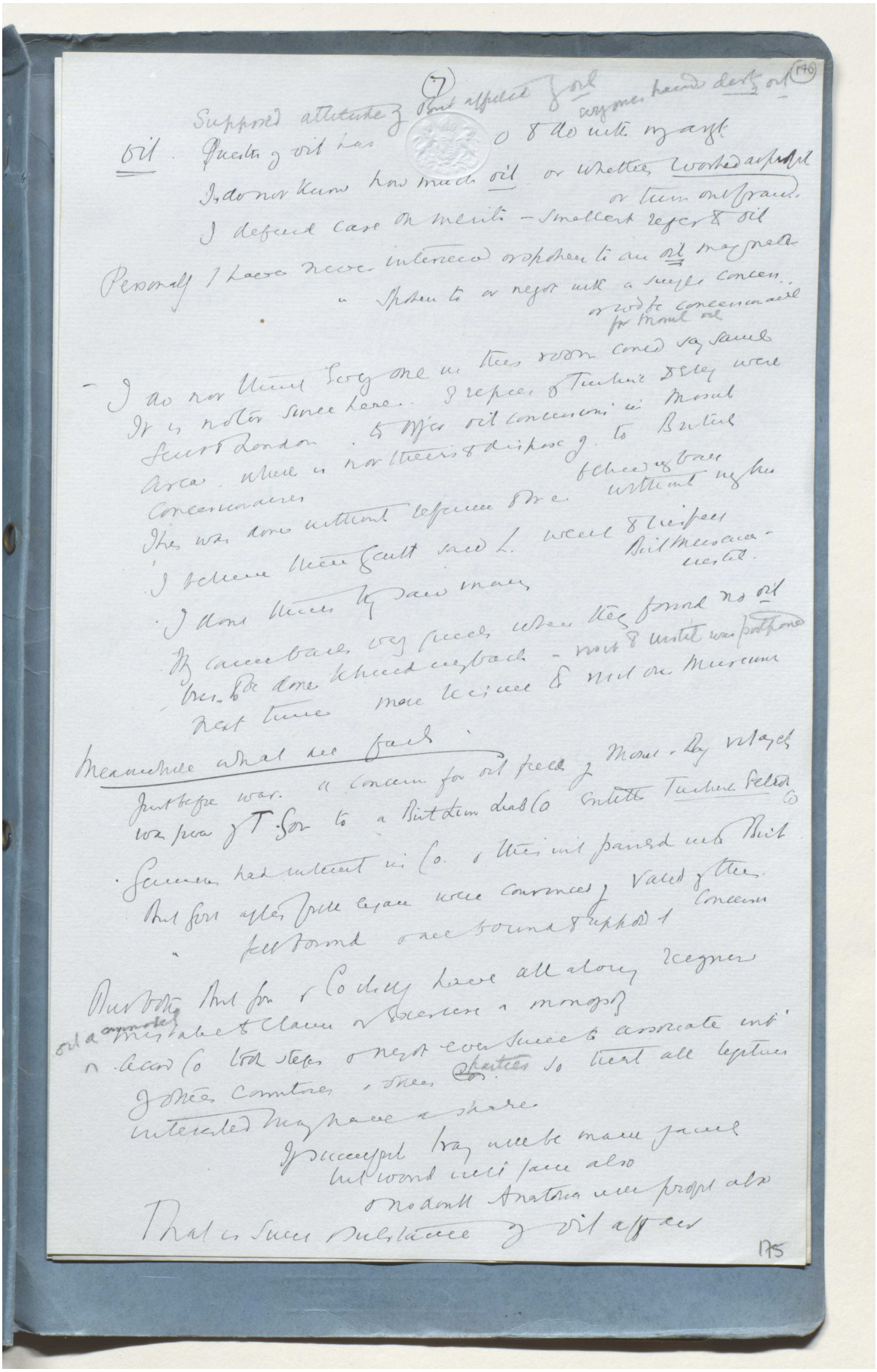

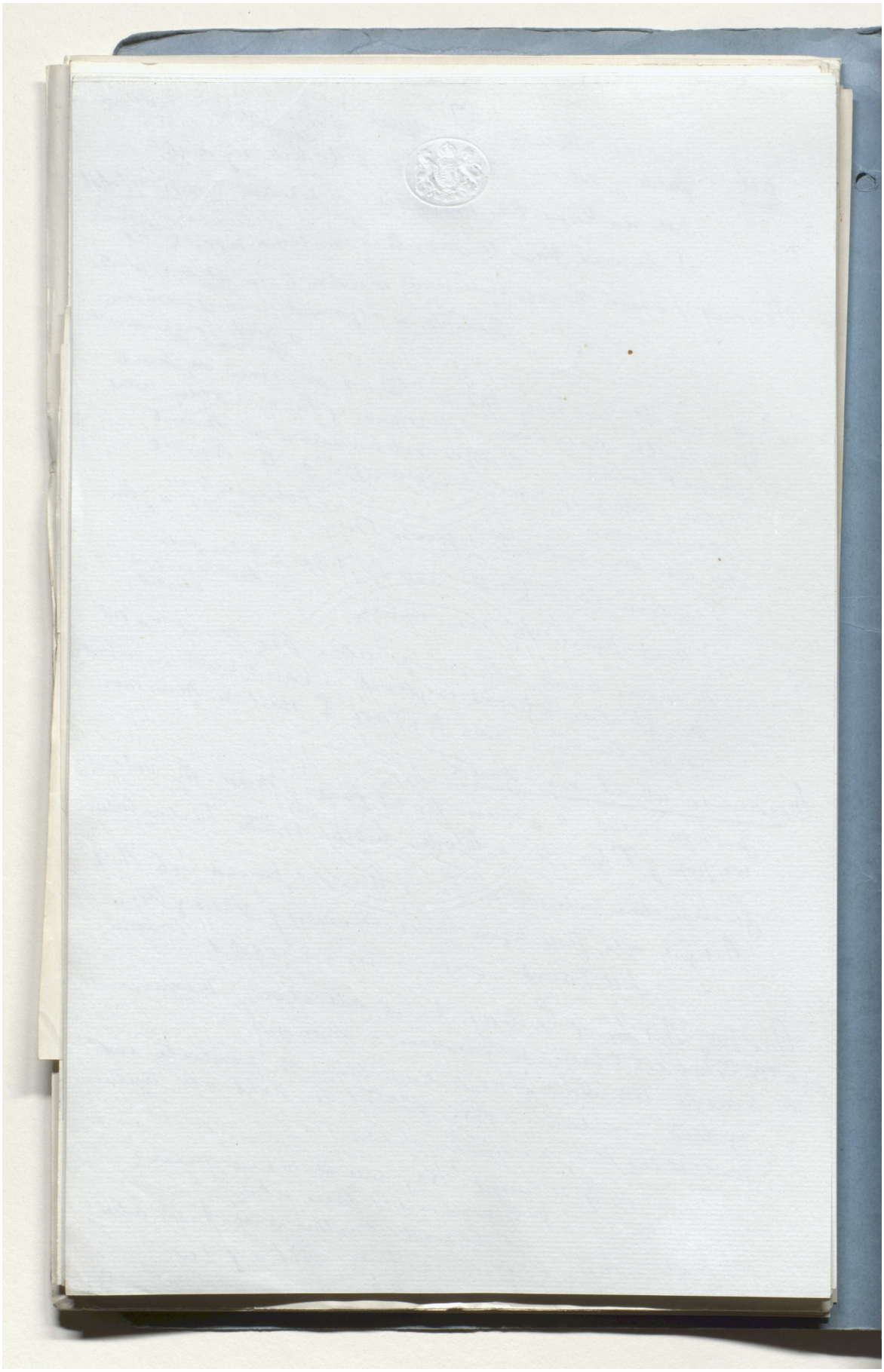

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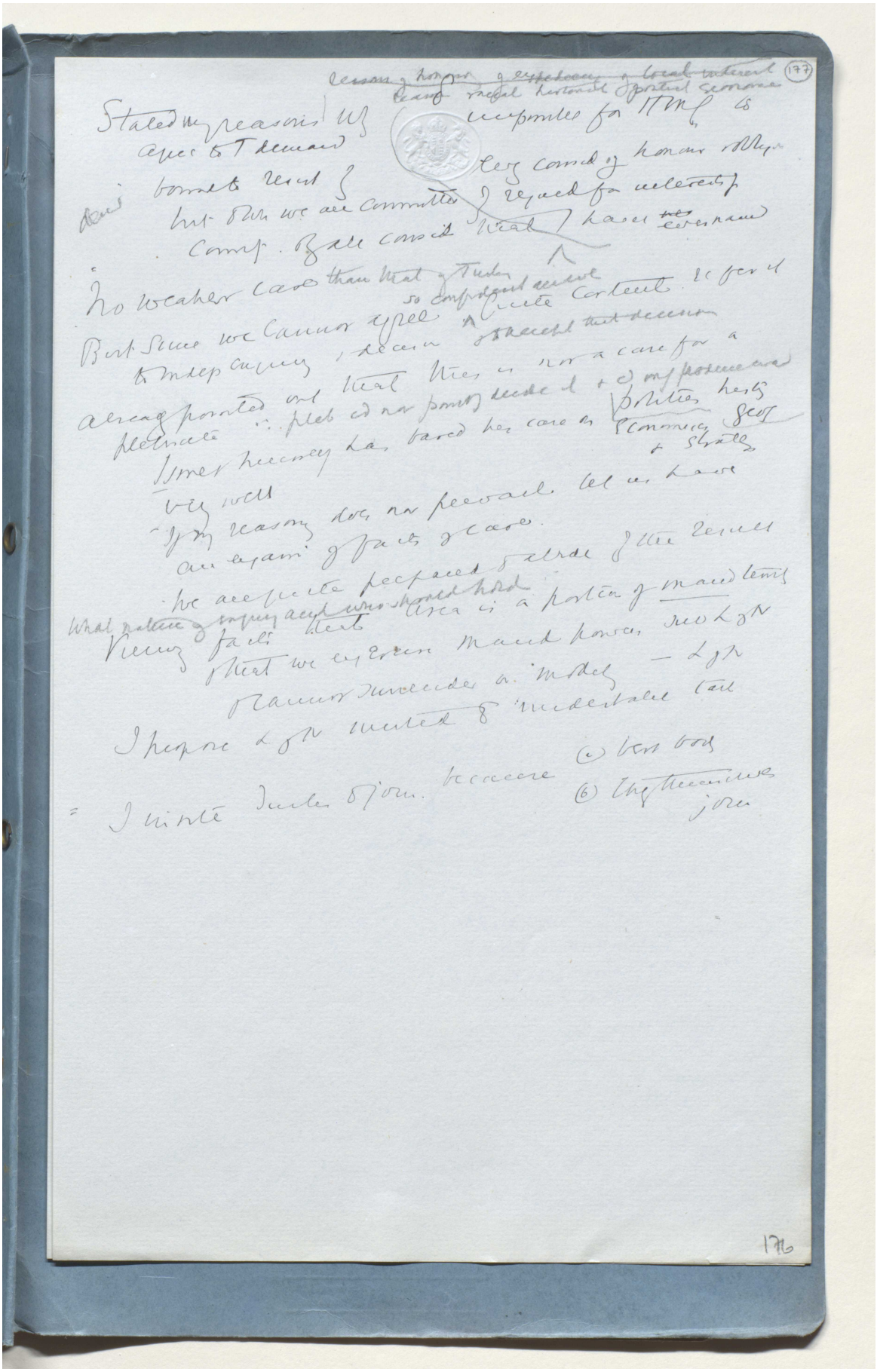

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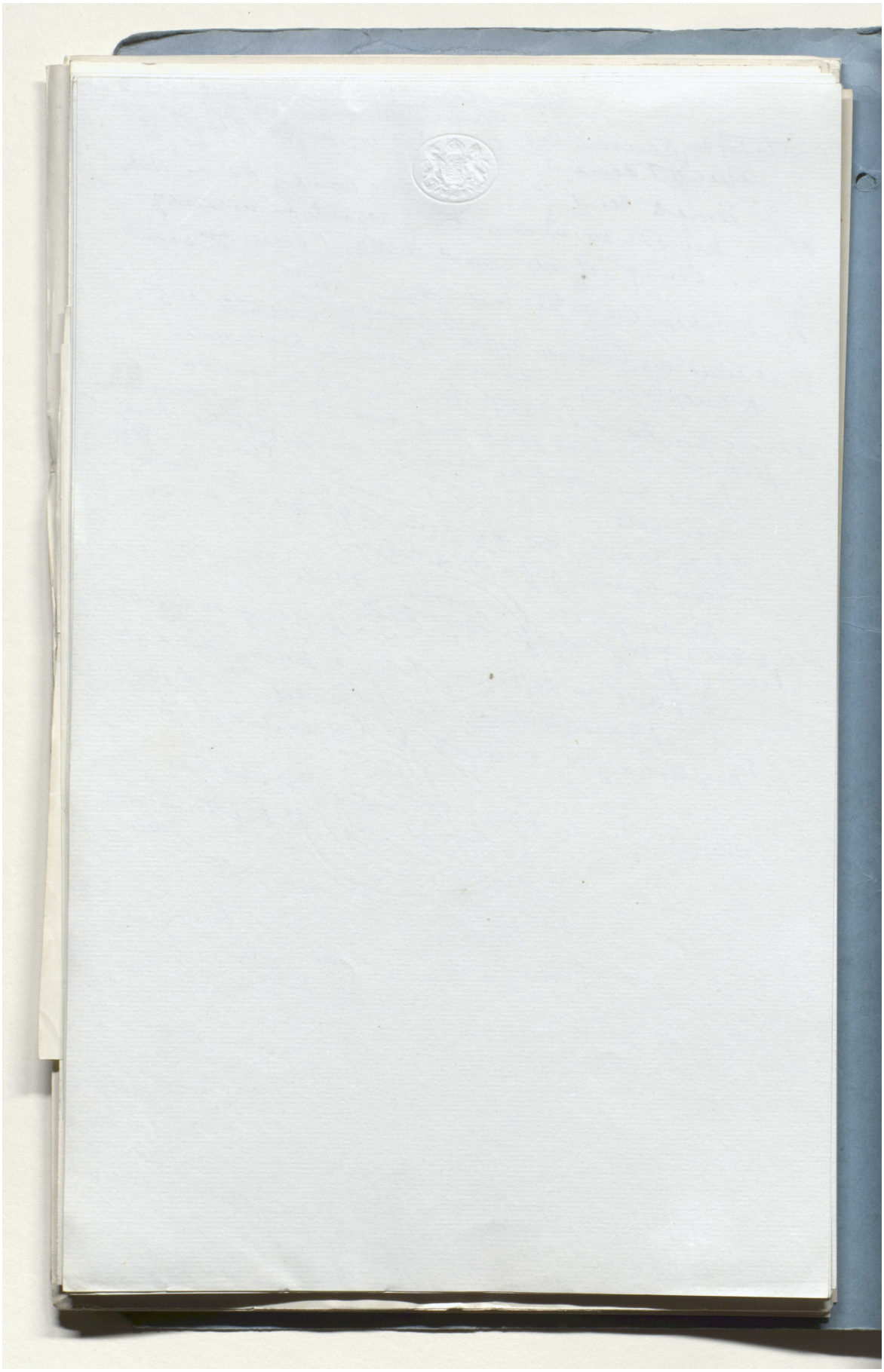

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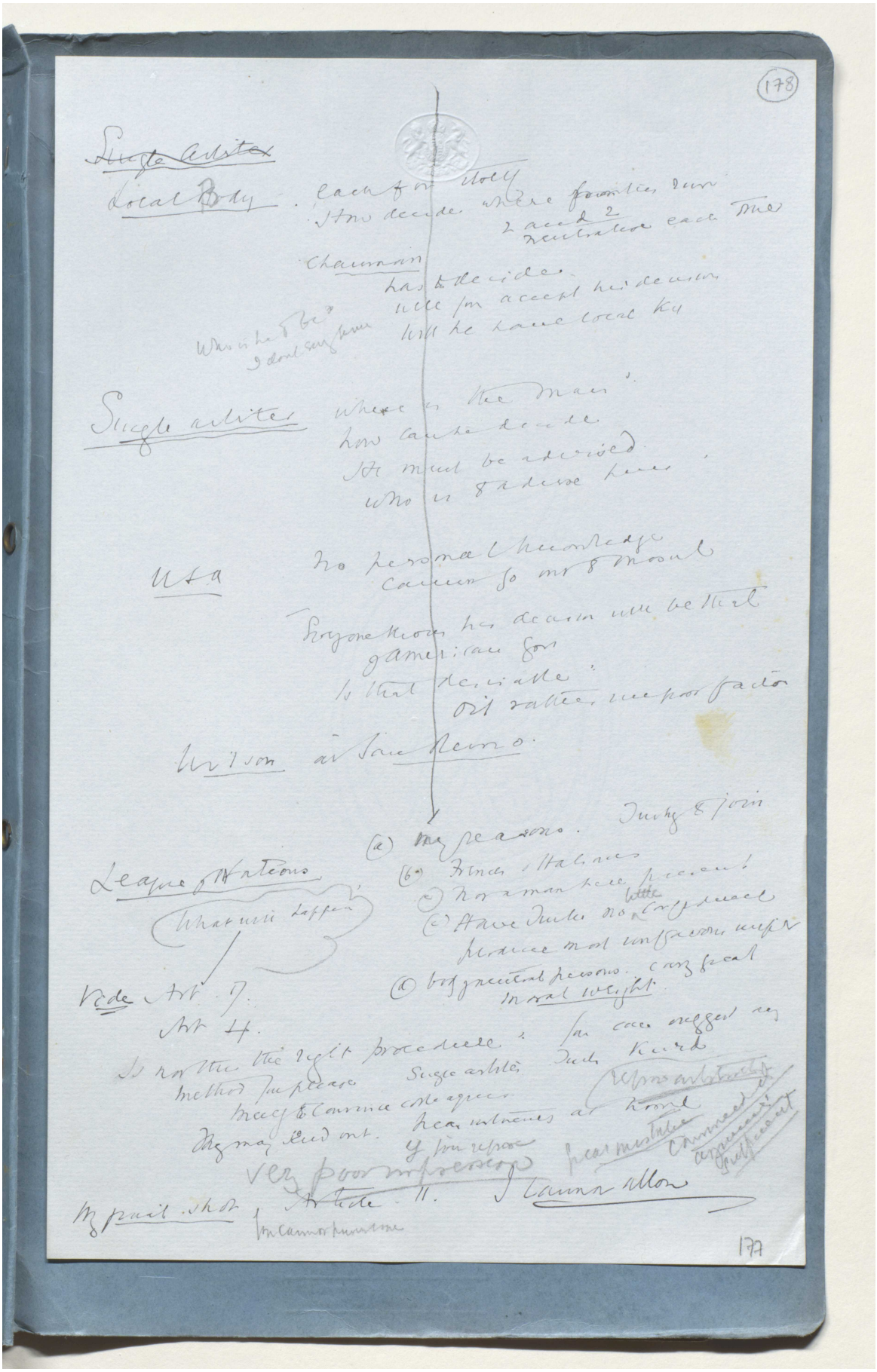

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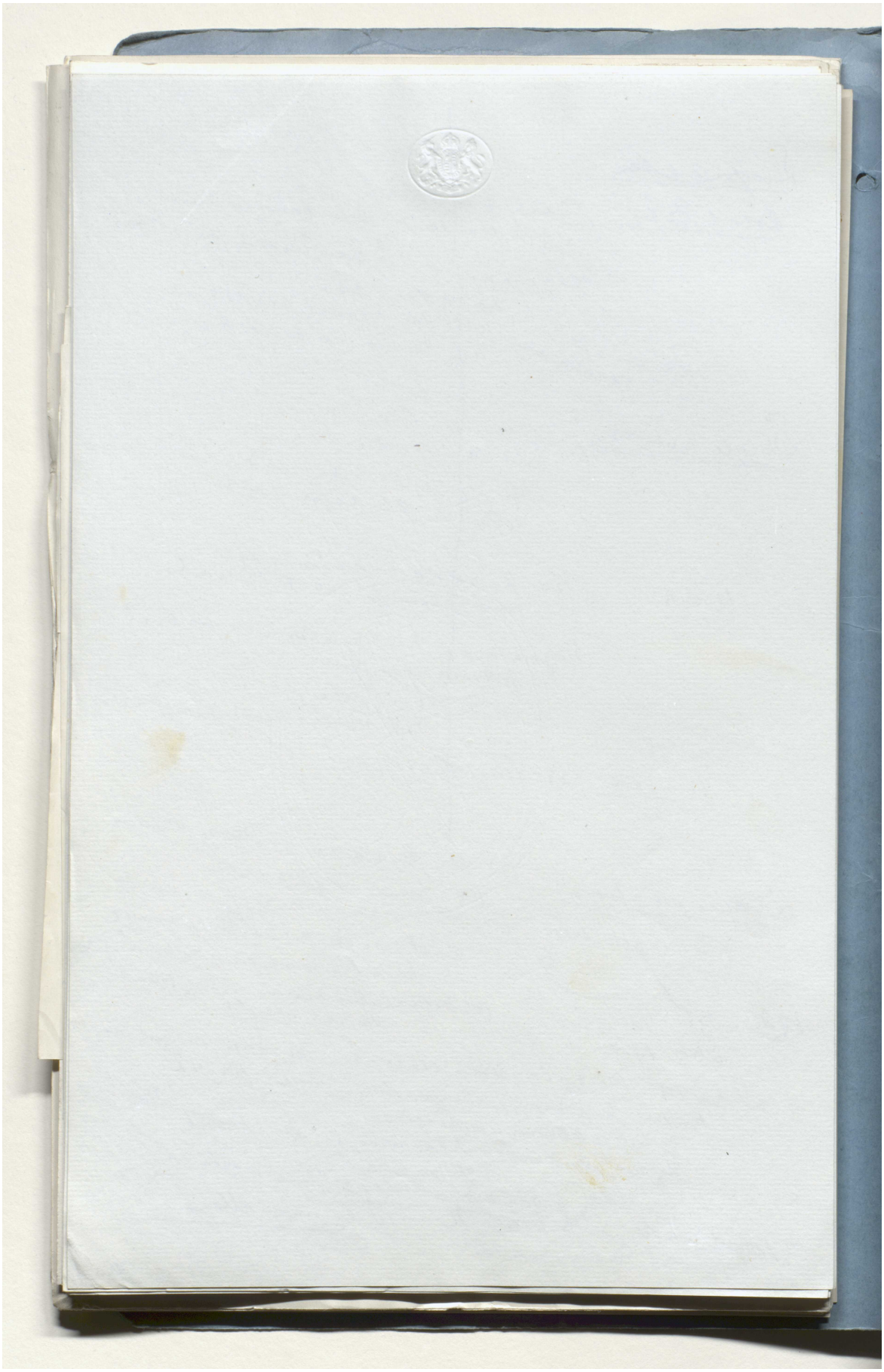

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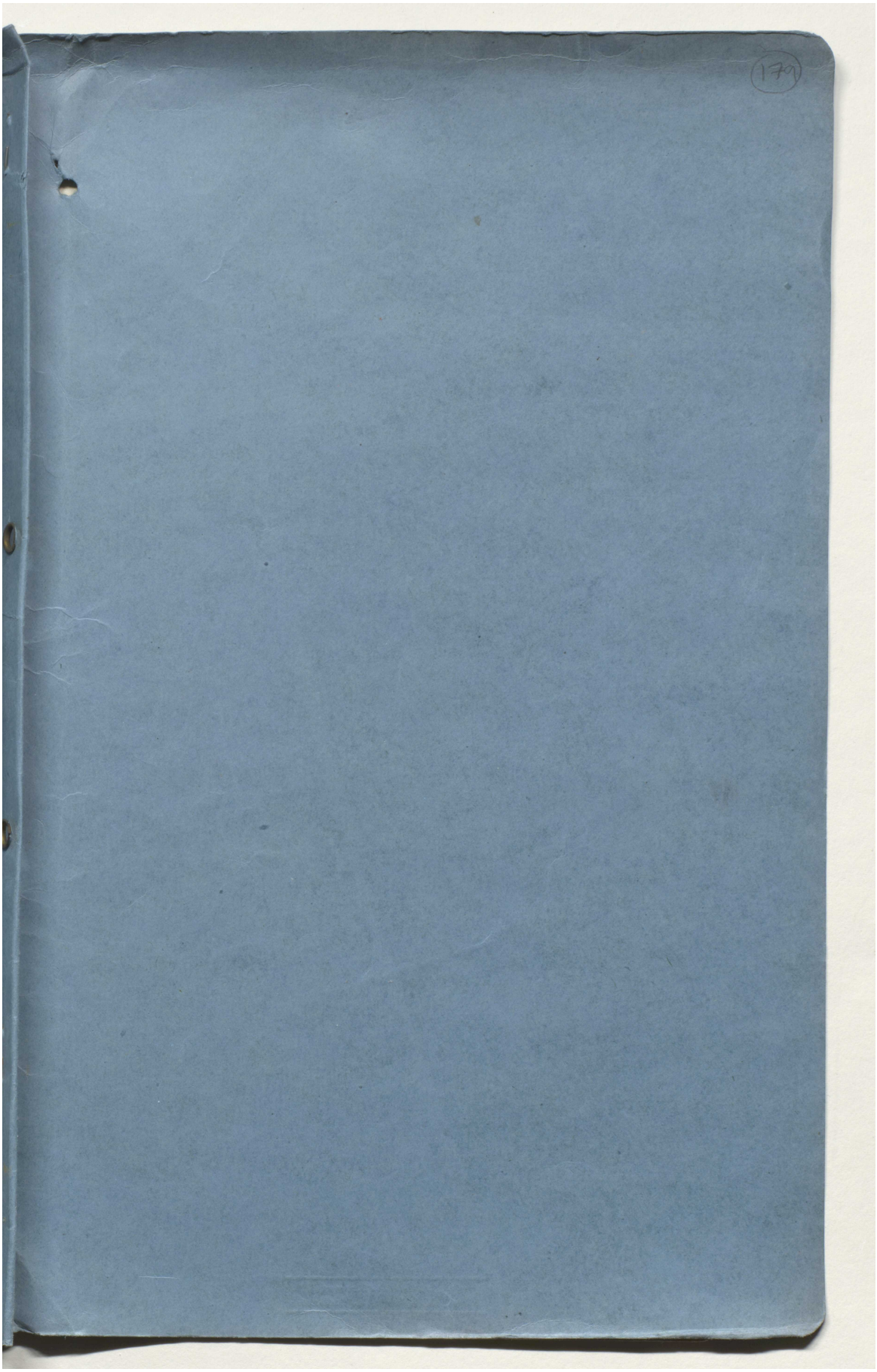

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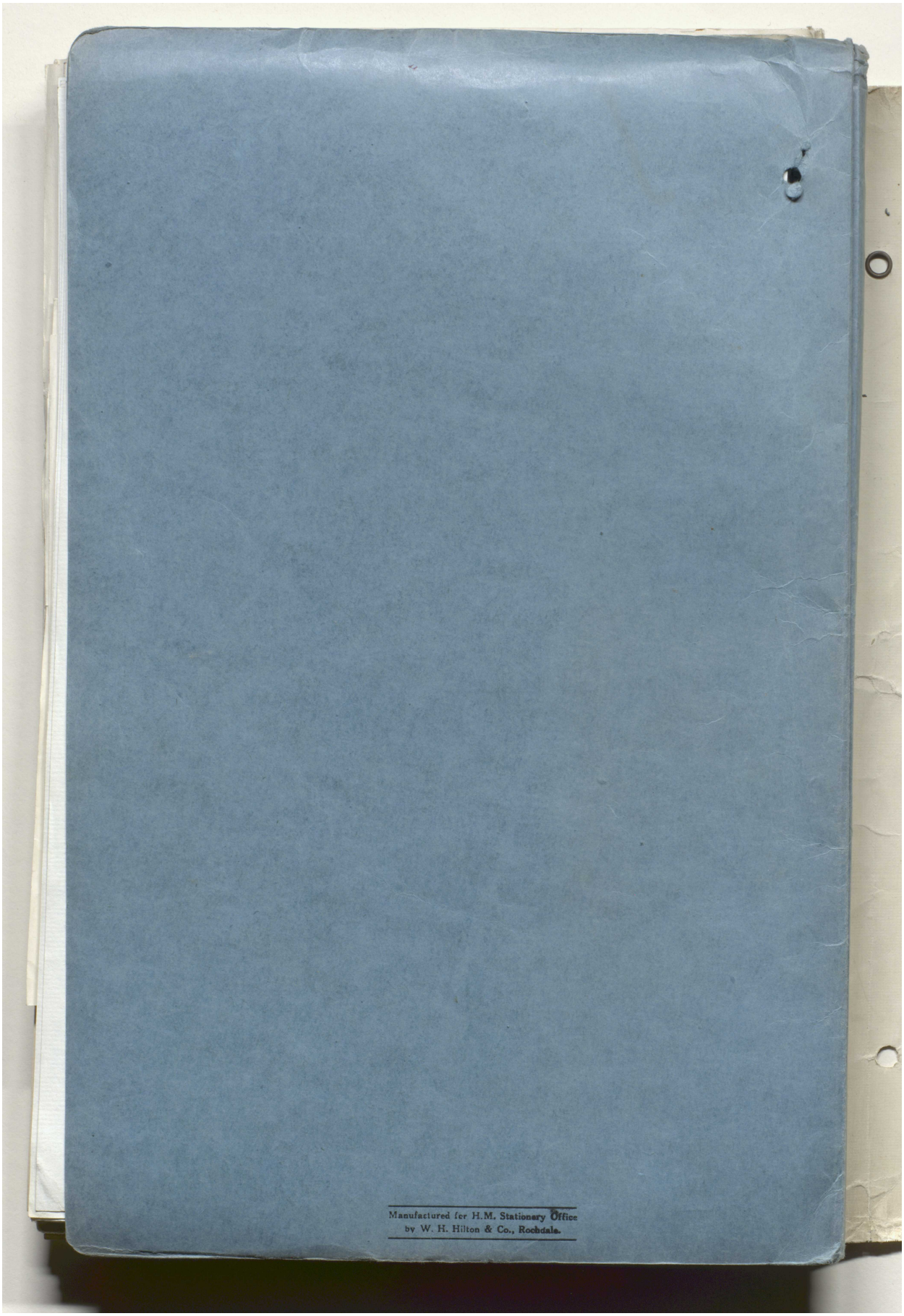

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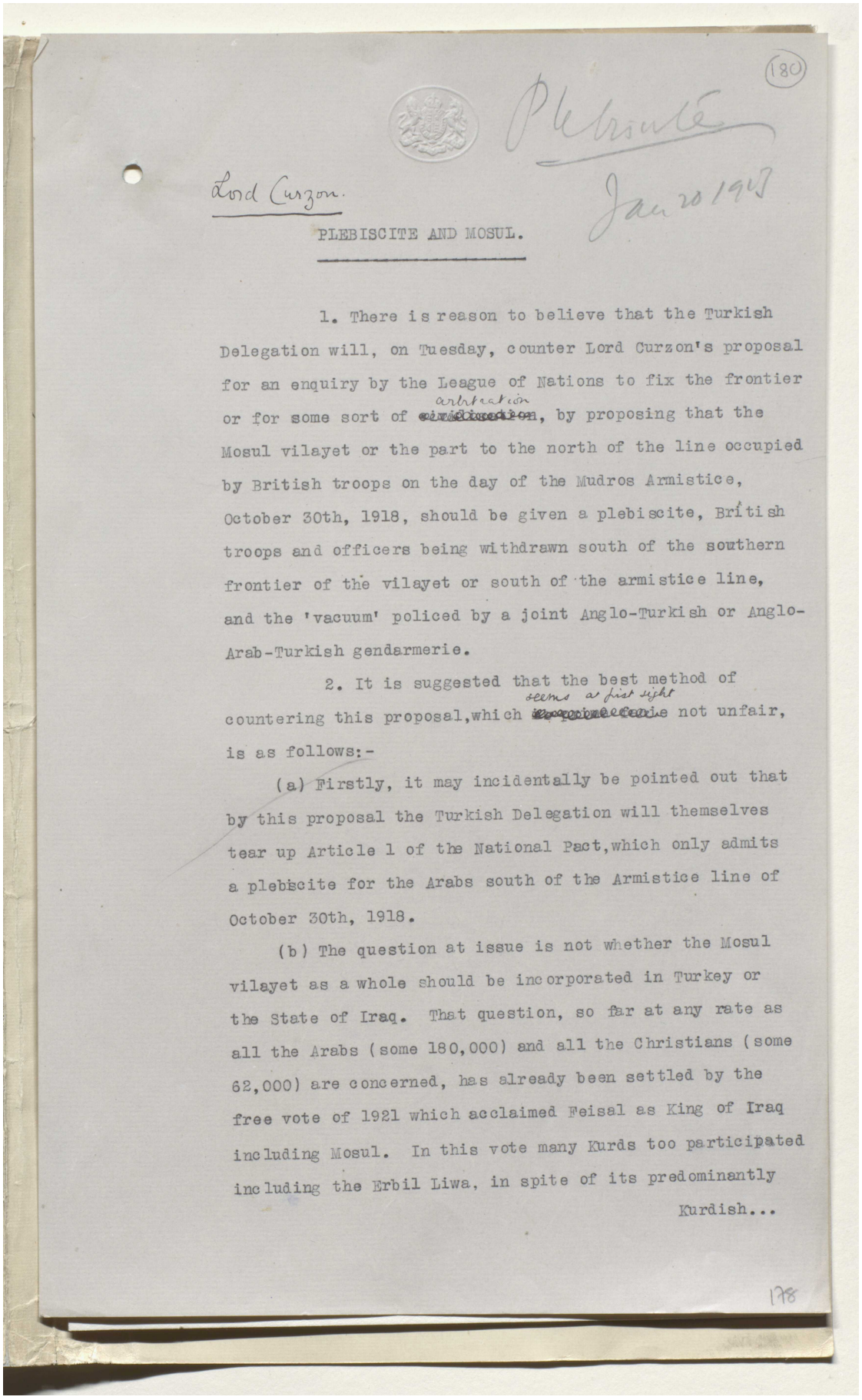

(180)

Plebiscite

Jan 20 1923

Lord Curzon.

PLEBISCITE AND MOSUL.

1. There is reason to believe that the Turkish Delegation will, on Tuesday, counter Lord Curzon's proposal for an enquiry by the League of Nations to fix the frontier or for some sort of ~~arbitration~~ arbitration, by proposing that the Mosul vilayet or the part to the north of the line occupied by British troops on the day of the Mudros Armistice, October 30th, 1918, should be given a plebiscite, British troops and officers being withdrawn south of the southern frontier of the vilayet or south of the armistice line, and the 'vacuum' policed by a joint Anglo-Turkish or Anglo-Arab-Turkish gendarmerie.

2. It is suggested that the best method of countering this proposal, which ~~appears to be~~ seems at first sight not unfair, is as follows:-

(a) Firstly, it may incidentally be pointed out that by this proposal the Turkish Delegation will themselves tear up Article 1 of the National Pact, which only admits a plebiscite for the Arabs south of the Armistice line of October 30th, 1918.

(b) The question at issue is not whether the Mosul vilayet as a whole should be incorporated in Turkey or the State of Iraq. That question, so far at any rate as all the Arabs (some 180,000) and all the Christians (some 62,000) are concerned, has already been settled by the free vote of 1921 which acclaimed Feisal as King of Iraq including Mosul. In this vote many Kurds too participated including the Erbil Liwa, in spite of its predominantly Kurdish...

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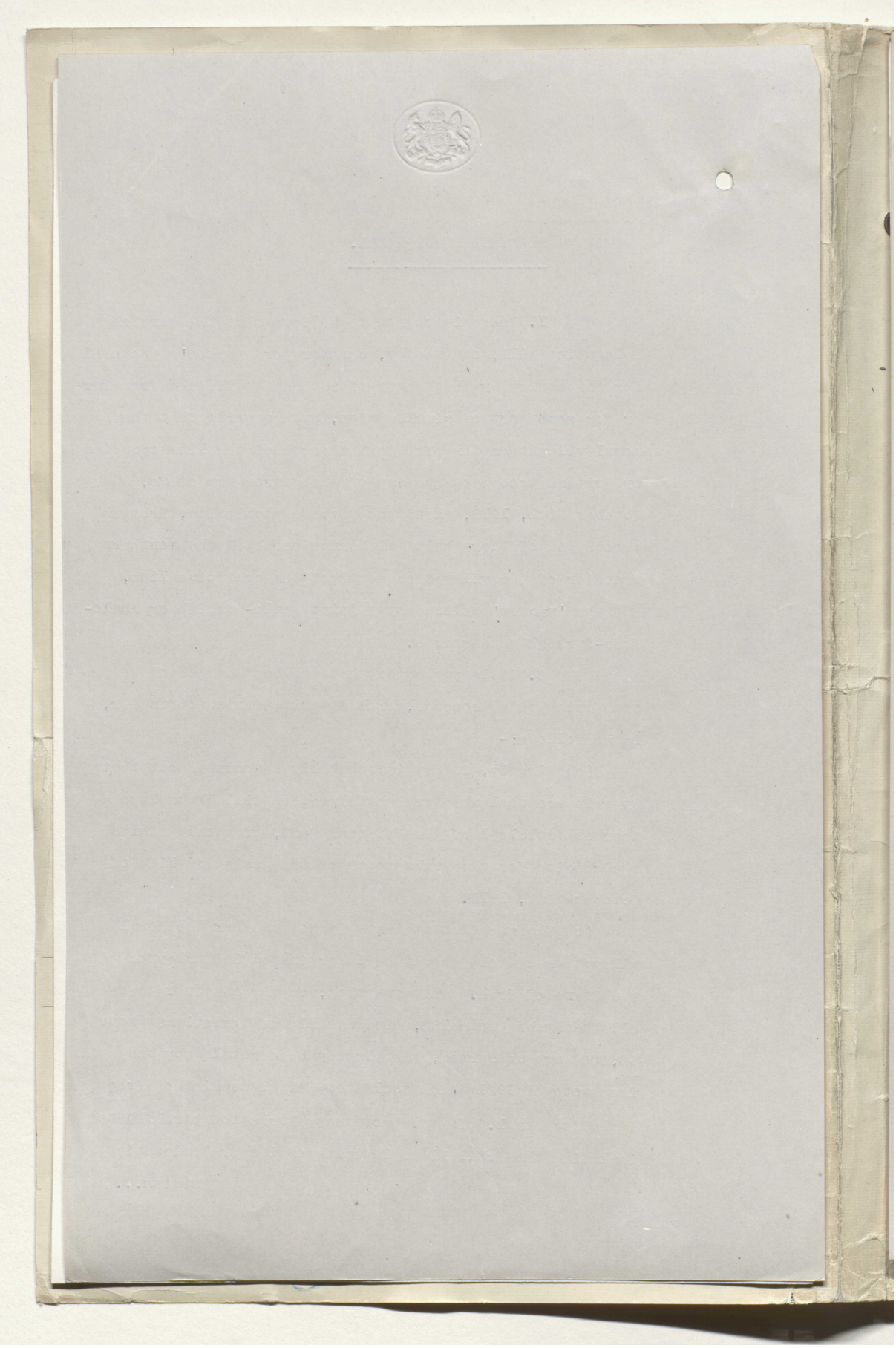

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Kurdish and Turkoman population. The question at issue is how to draw the northern frontier of the State of Iraq from the extreme easterly end of the northern frontier of Syria on the Tigris - to the frontier of Persia.

(c) There have been several examples of fixing a frontier (or parts of frontiers) by plebiscite since the armistice: Klagenfurt, Schleswig-Holstein, Upper Silesia, Allenstein, Marienwerder, Teschen, Vilna.

(d) Firstly, in very few cases has the result been a success. It is almost impossible to draw a good frontier from the economic, strategic and geographical points of view, if undue weight is given not to these factors but to the racial factor. The mere fact that a plebiscite is decided upon means that there is no clear racial line but communes or 'pockets' of different races are inextricably mixed up. Those who, after the plebiscite, are left the 'wrong' side of the frontier are bound to resent such a decision, and their mother countries are bound to resent it still more. Secondly, there is the difficulty of deciding who is to vote i.e. what qualification and what length of residence is to be required to qualify for the vote. Thirdly, there is the period of suspense, when propaganda from both parties to the issue is rife, when the incursion of armed bands from either side take place, and the party who think that they are going to lose begin to try and make it impossible to hold the plebiscite. This leads naturally to a further difficulty, that of providing for the maintenance of order in the plebiscite area; the troops of the two parties to the dispute have to be withdrawn or of one party, if the territory is actually in his

occupation....

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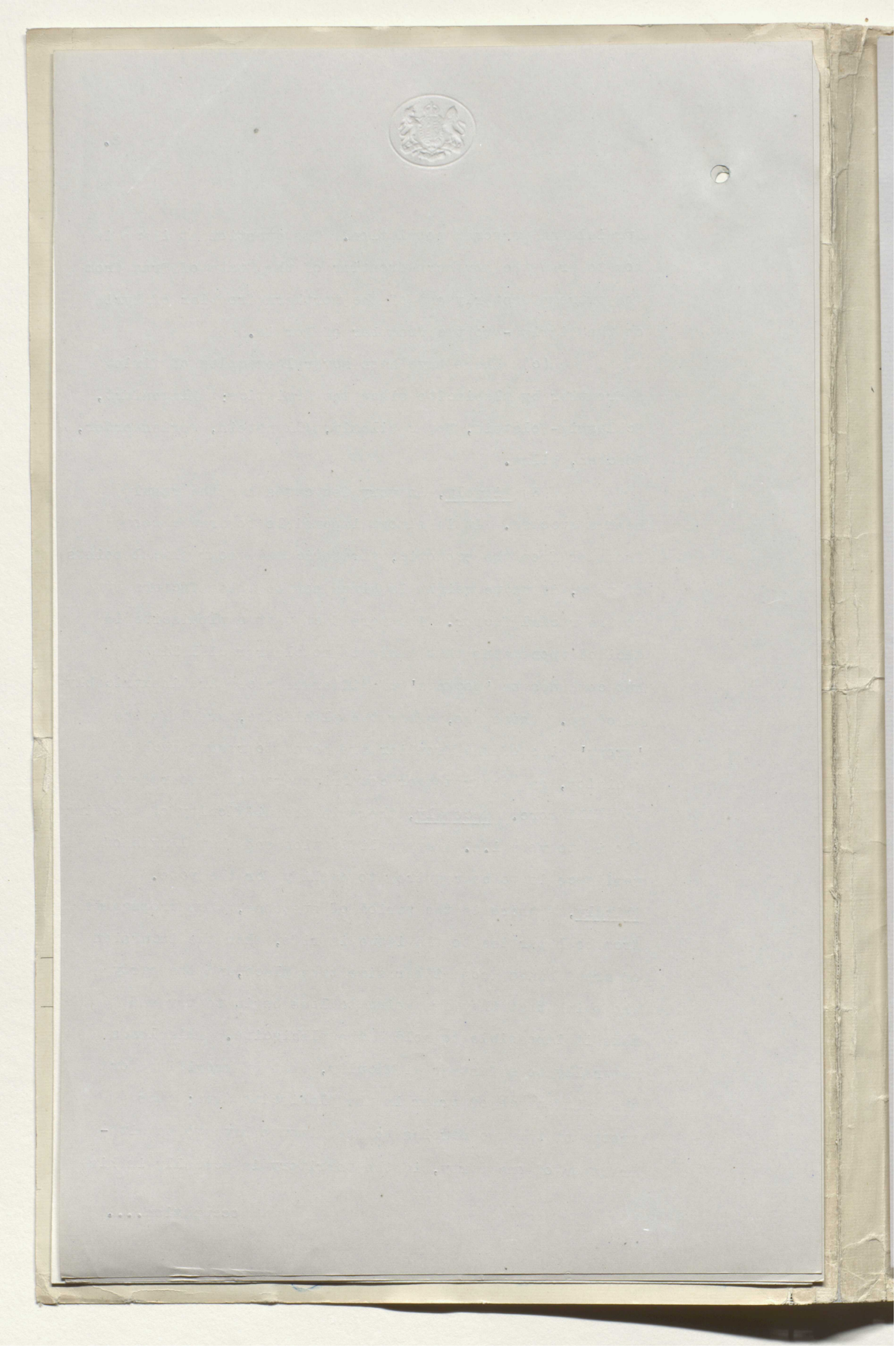

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occupation - that in itself is regarded as a sign of weakness on the part of the country whose army retires, and must to some extent influence votes. Then troops of third countries have to be introduced with additional danger of friction.

(e) Perhaps the most successful of the plebiscites held since the armistice were those in Schleswig Holstein, Allenstein, Marienwerder and Klangenfurt. But even in these cases the usual accompaniments of plebiscites - excitement, propaganda on both sides, some bloodshed and a grievance in the end - were not absent. In the case of Klagenfurt, some Slav and some German communes were left behind within the frontiers of the other, because certain districts were taken as having given a block vote, whereas a scientifically drawn frontier without a plebiscite might have avoided this. In the case of Schleswig-Holstein, the town of Flensborg, though it was the natural port and market town for the hinterland which voted for Denmark, had to be included in Germany because of its solid vote for that country. The plebiscite at Vilna would not be held by the League as originally intended because of the attitude of Soviet Russia to the proposed occupation by a mixed force of troops of various countries, members of the League. Subsequently Poland, after allowing the town to be occupied by the coup de main of a so-called 'independent' Polish general, held a plebiscite which was admittedly a farce and resulted in many abstentions but a vote, such as it was, in favour of Poland. Teschen provides a better example still of the futility of trying to draw frontiers by plebiscite. Such was the agitation in...

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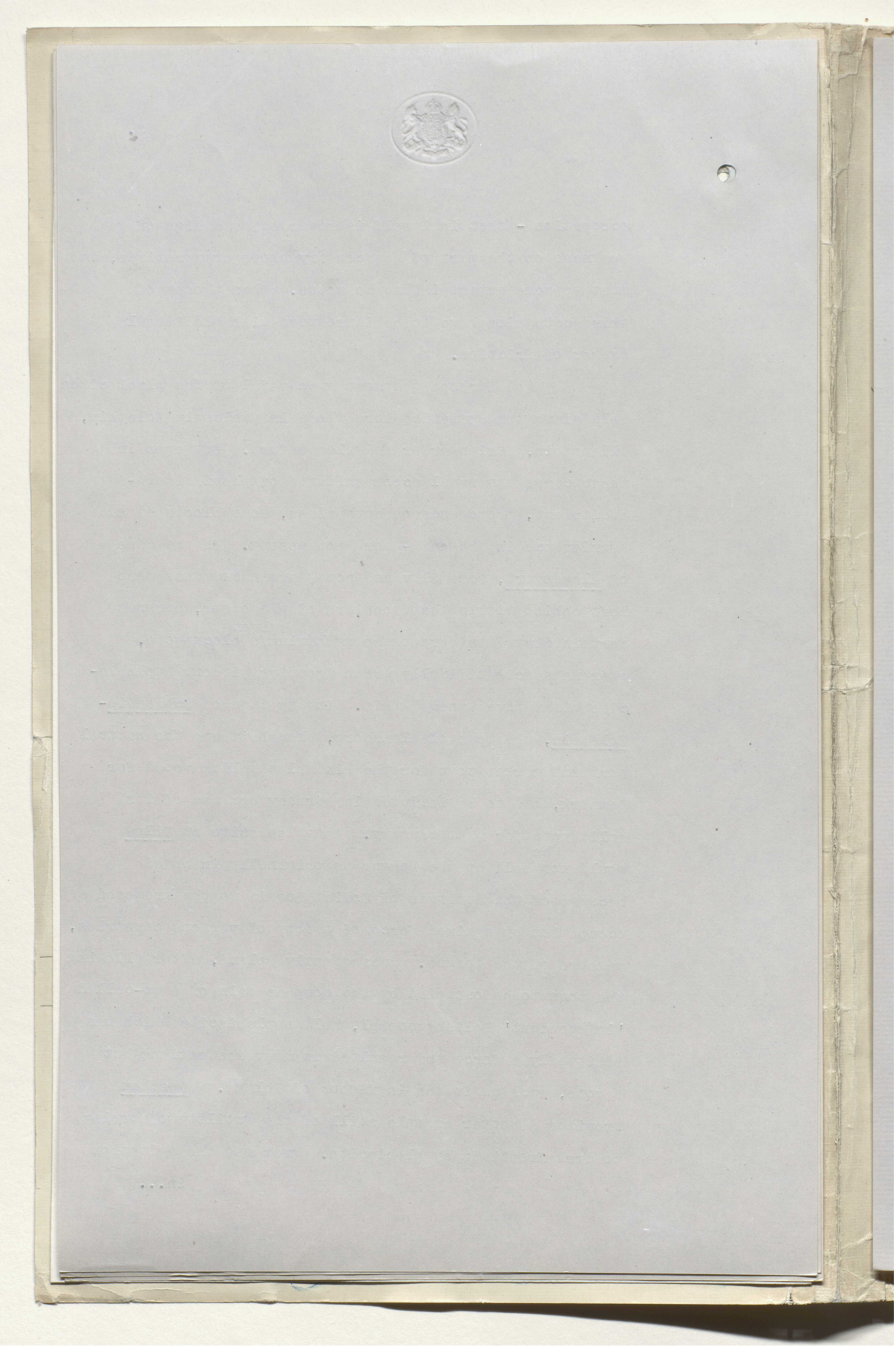

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in the district and so obviously harmful would have been the economic effects of a more or less racial frontier, that the plebiscite commission some weeks before the holding of the plebiscite advised the Conference of Ambassadors to fix a frontier, which was subsequently accepted by the Czechs and under protest by the Poles, - without the proposed plebiscite ever being held. In the case of Upper Silesia, the same agitation, propaganda and constant deferment of the date of the plebiscite took place, but the bloodshed was greater. It will be remembered that the voting by communes left large blocks of Poles and Germans on each side of the frontier and, owing to an insoluble controversy on the Plebiscite Commission and between the Governments represented on that Commission as to how the frontier should be drawn properly to conform to the voting, the issue was passed to the Council of the League of Nations by the Allied Governments. The result was a frontier which certainly did not satisfy one of the parties to the dispute, and the boundary could almost certainly have been drawn as, if not more, scientifically and with much less expense, friction and bloodshed, if no plebiscite had been held. These examples suffice to show that experience since the armistice undoubtedly tells against the fixing of frontiers by plebiscite.

(d) If an attempt were made to repeat the experiment for the northern frontier of Iraq, all the disadvantages which the above experience demonstrates would be enormously enhanced. The northern part of the vilayet where the frontier would probably run is relatively sparsely populated. Much of the population is nomadic and a plebiscite would be much affected therefore by the date chosen. Most of the

Kurdish...

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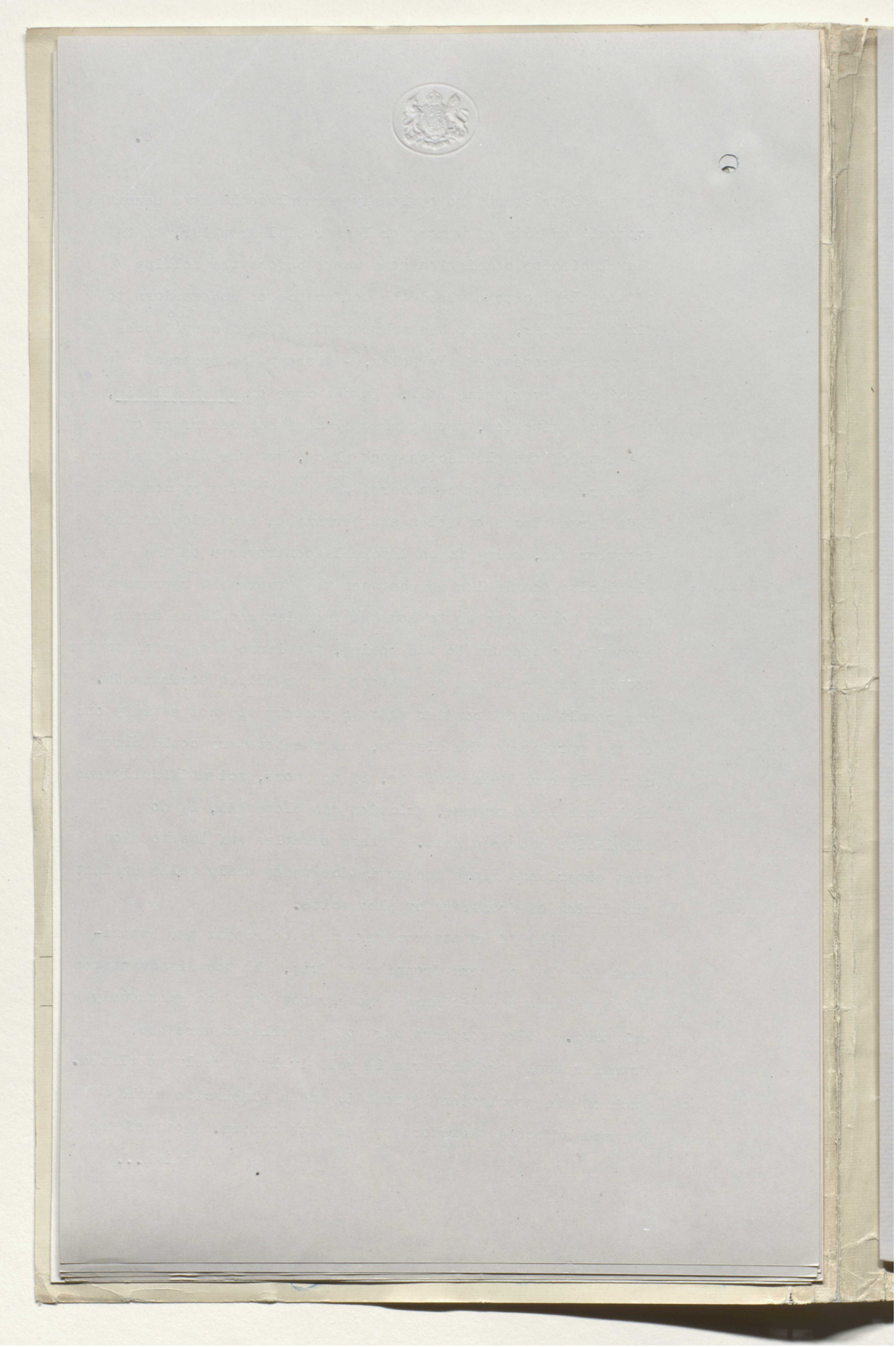

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Kurdish population and some of the Arab is illiterate. The initial withdrawal of the troops which are now keeping order, even if it did not lead to anarchy and a rising among the Kurds, would certainly be regarded by peoples of the pscychology and mentality of these wild areas as a surrender by the country withdrawing her troops and, in so far as they were able to record a vote in writing or orally, they would be influenced accordingly. No country, not parties to the dispute (Turkey, Iraq and Great Britain as mandatory might be regarded as such parties) would send troops to police the area. Then again for the drawing of a frontier some small unit, such as a Kaza must be taken, but the Kazas in the vilayet are all of different sizes and importance, many of them are sparsely populated, many of them are inhabited by nomads and many of them by 3 or 4 different races.

Of course these technical difficulties were present when Feisal was acclaimed King, but there the issue was a broad plain one, not the more delicate issue of the tracé of a frontier and generally it was not difficult to find the consensus of opinion, without taking one vote per head of every inhabitant, nomad or sedentary, in the vilayet.

Even if these technical difficulties could be overcome, how could the issue be made clear to so backward and mixed a population. Some would think that they were voting for Great Britain, others for Turkey, others for the Arab Kingdom of Iraq, other for an autonomous or independent Kurdish State, some perhaps for Persia. In all...

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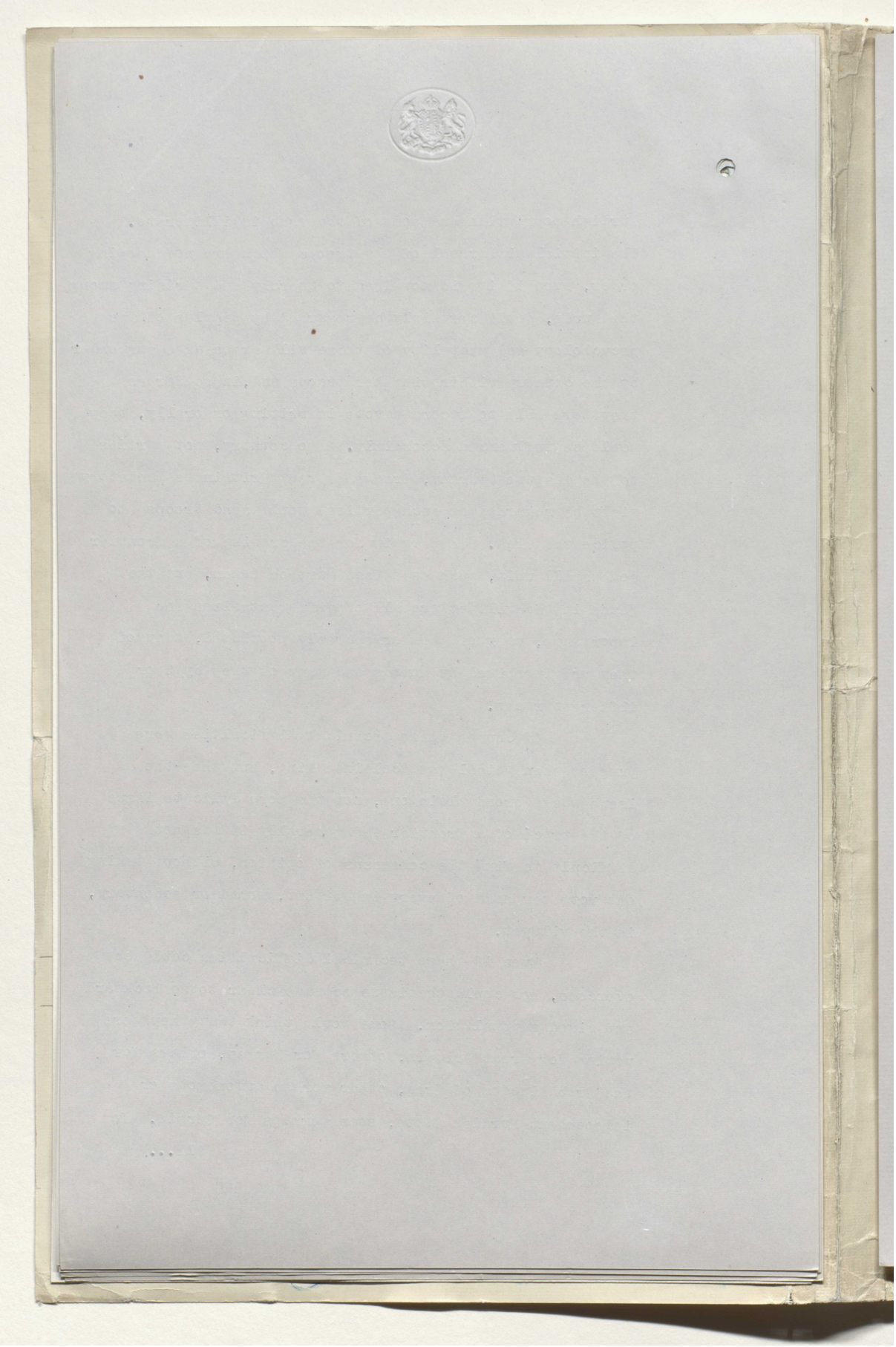

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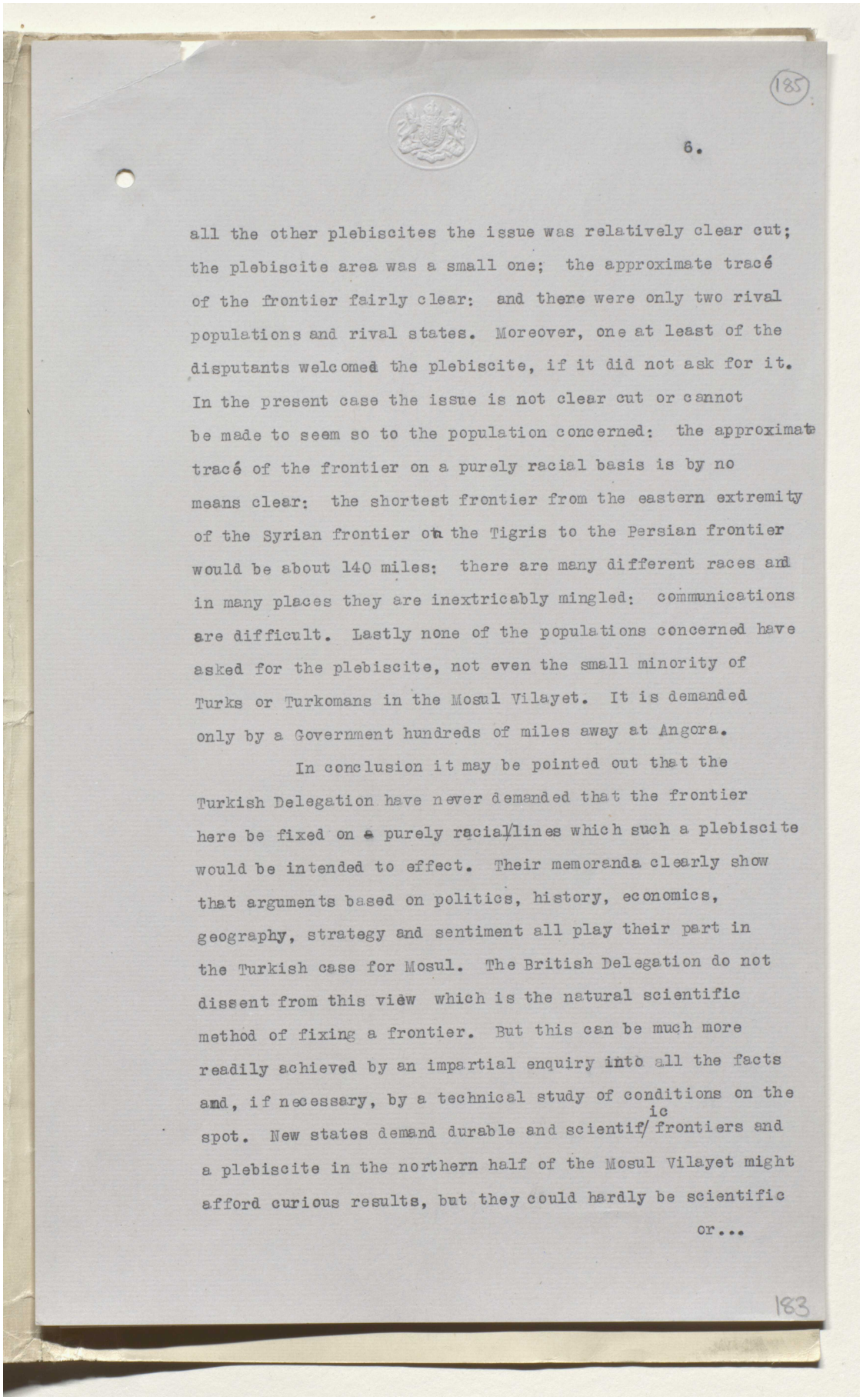

all the other plebiscites the issue was relatively clear cut; the plebiscite area was a small one; the approximate tracé of the frontier fairly clear: and there were only two rival populations and rival states. Moreover, one at least of the disputants welcomed the plebiscite, if it did not ask for it. In the present case the issue is not clear cut or cannot be made to seem so to the population concerned: the approximate tracé of the frontier on a purely racial basis is by no means clear: the shortest frontier from the eastern extremity of the Syrian frontier on the Tigris to the Persian frontier would be about 140 miles: there are many different races and in many places they are inextricably mingled: communications are difficult. Lastly none of the populations concerned have asked for the plebiscite, not even the small minority of Turks or Turkomans in the Mosul Vilayet. It is demanded only by a Government hundreds of miles away at Angora.

In conclusion it may be pointed out that the Turkish Delegation have never demanded that the frontier here be fixed on a purely racial lines which such a plebiscite would be intended to effect. Their memoranda clearly show that arguments based on politics, history, economics, geography, strategy and sentiment all play their part in the Turkish case for Mosul. The British Delegation do not dissent from this view which is the natural scientific method of fixing a frontier. But this can be much more readily achieved by an impartial enquiry into all the facts and, if necessary, by a technical study of conditions on the spot. New states demand durable and scientific frontiers and a plebiscite in the northern half of the Mosul Vilayet might afford curious results, but they could hardly be scientific

or...

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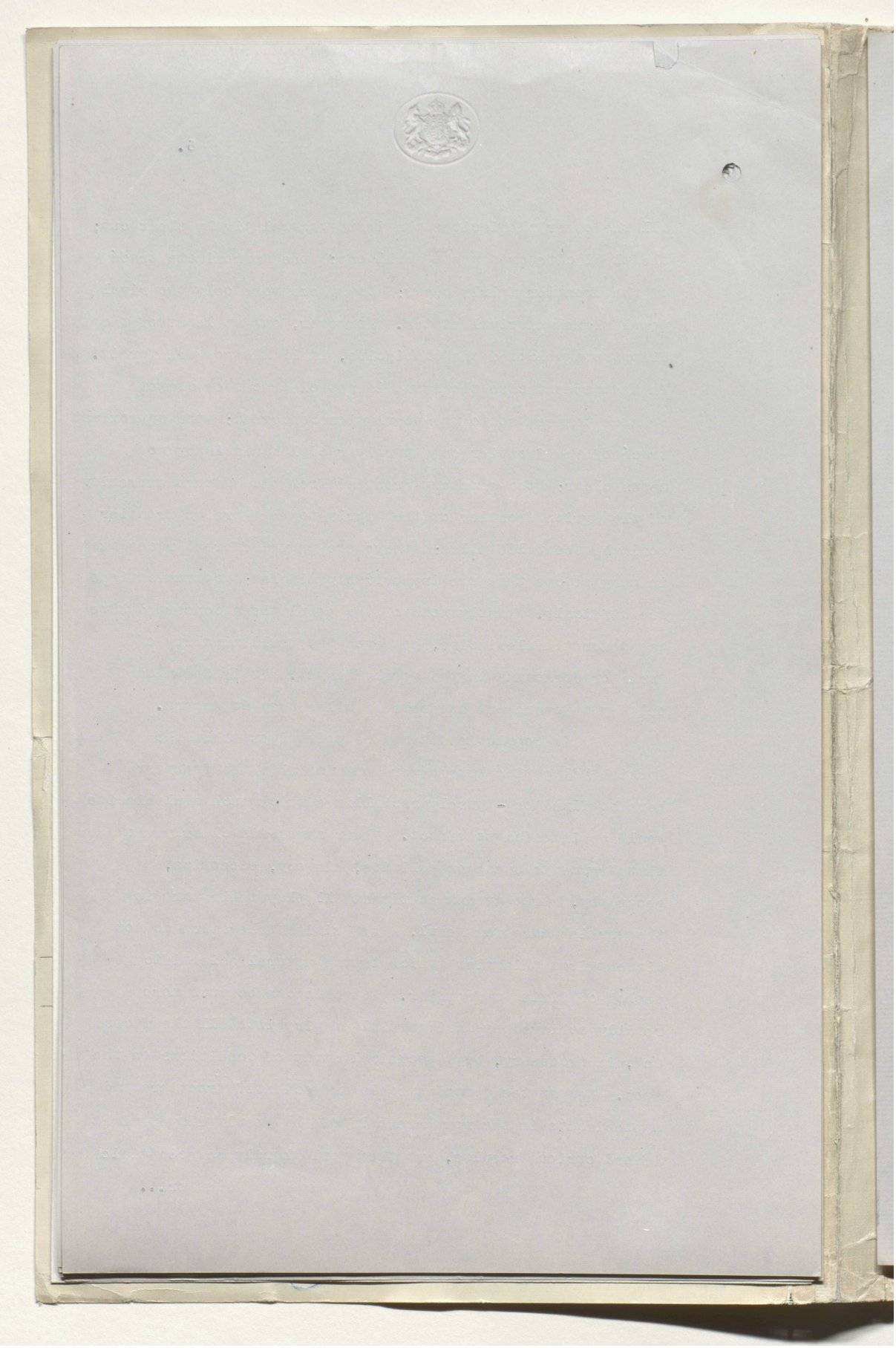

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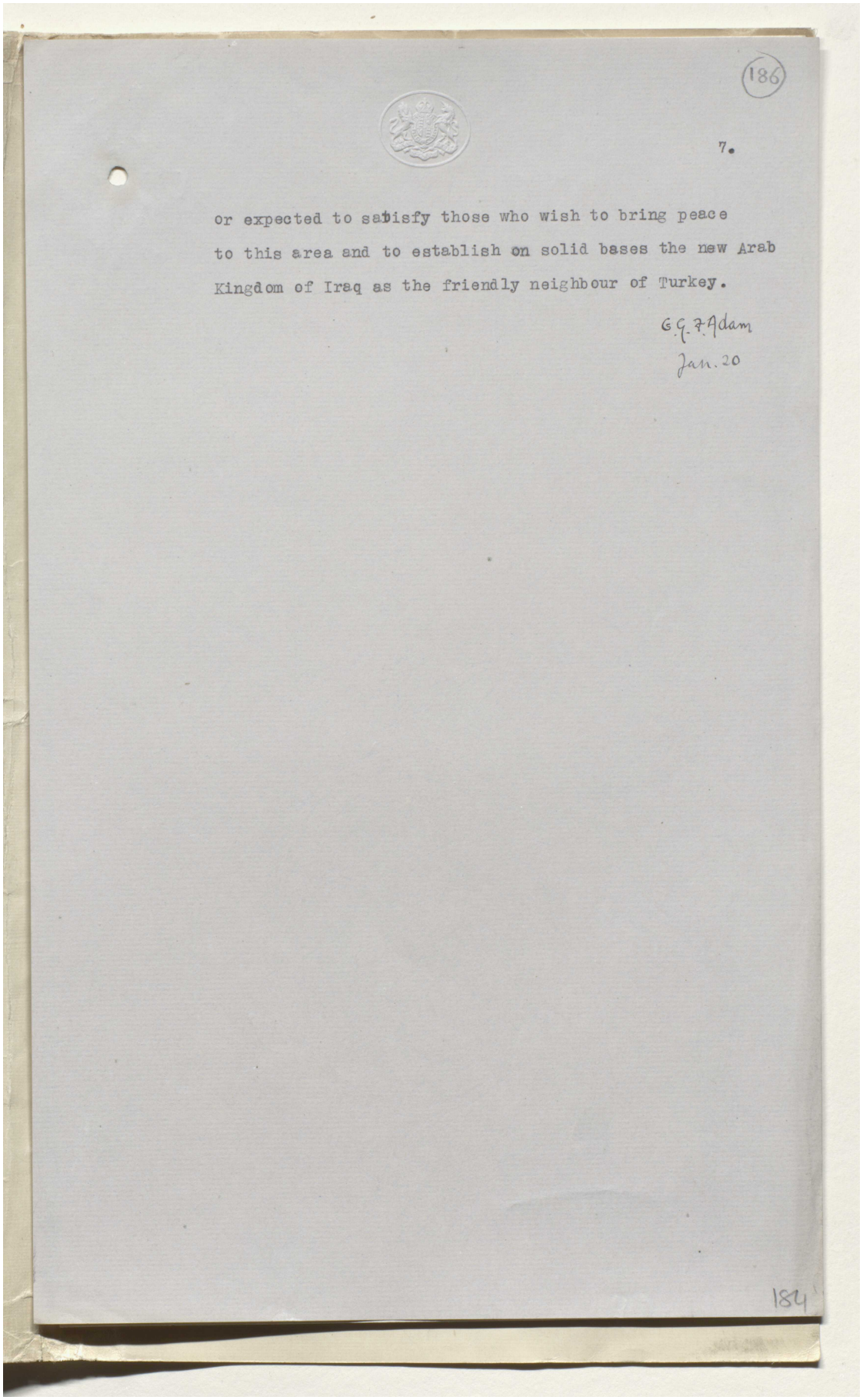

(186)

7.

or expected to satisfy those who wish to bring peace to this area and to establish on solid bases the new Arab Kingdom of Iraq as the friendly neighbour of Turkey.

G.G. Adam
Jan. 20

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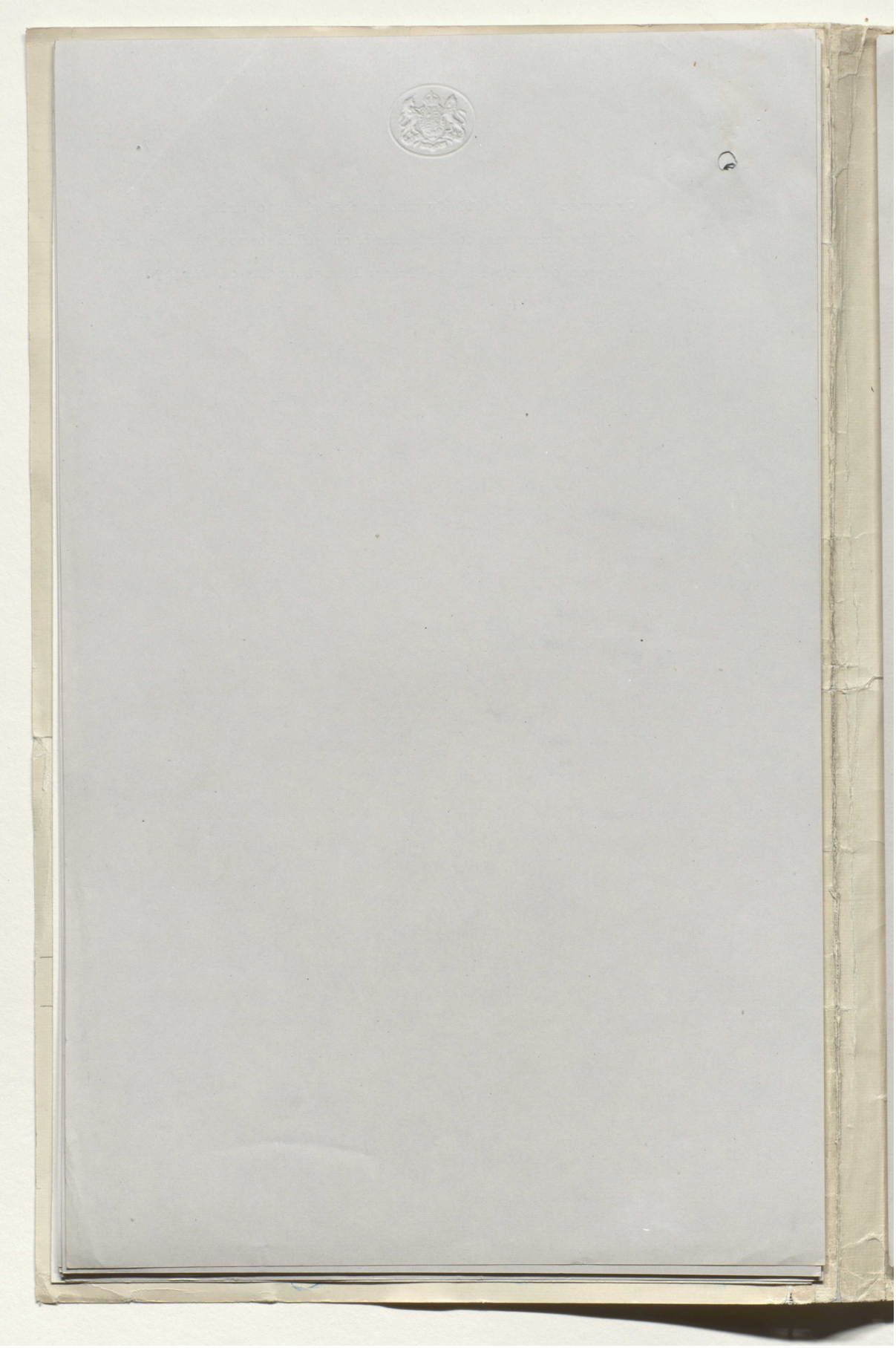

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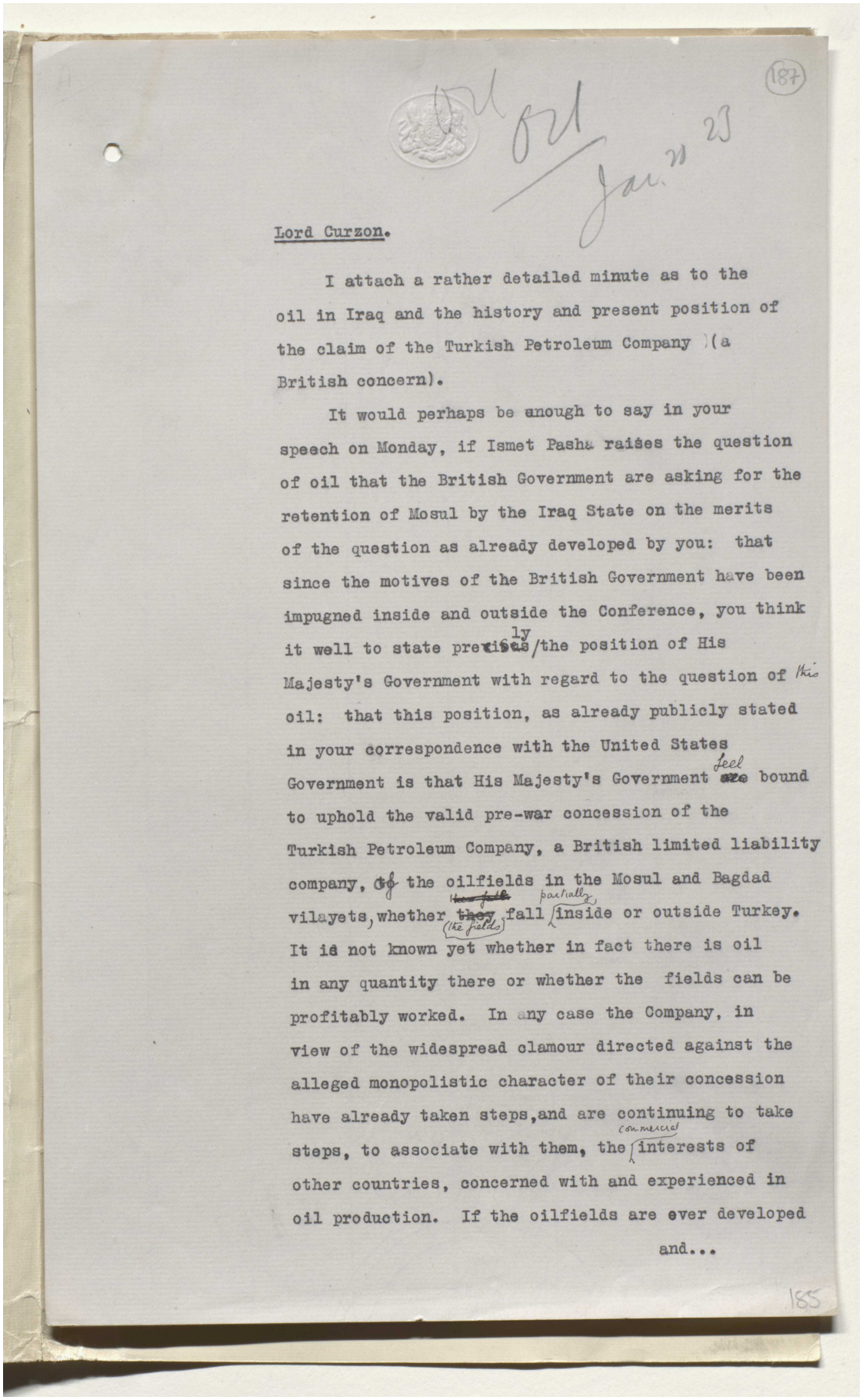

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Jan 23

Lord Curzon.

I attach a rather detailed minute as to the oil in Iraq and the history and present position of the claim of the Turkish Petroleum Company (a British concern).

It would perhaps be enough to say in your speech on Monday, if Ismet Pasha raises the question of oil that the British Government are asking for the retention of Mosul by the Iraq State on the merits of the question as already developed by you: that since the motives of the British Government have been impugned inside and outside the Conference, you think it well to state precisely the position of His Majesty's Government with regard to the question of this oil: that this position, as already publicly stated in your correspondence with the United States Government is that His Majesty's Government feel bound to uphold the valid pre-war concession of the Turkish Petroleum Company, a British limited liability company, of the oilfields in the Mosul and Bagdad vilayets, whether (the fields) partially fall inside or outside Turkey. It is not known yet whether in fact there is oil in any quantity there or whether the fields can be profitably worked. In any case the Company, in view of the widespread clamour directed against the alleged monopolistic character of their concession have already taken steps, and are continuing to take steps, to associate with them, the commercial interests of other countries, concerned with and experienced in oil production. If the oilfields are ever developed and...

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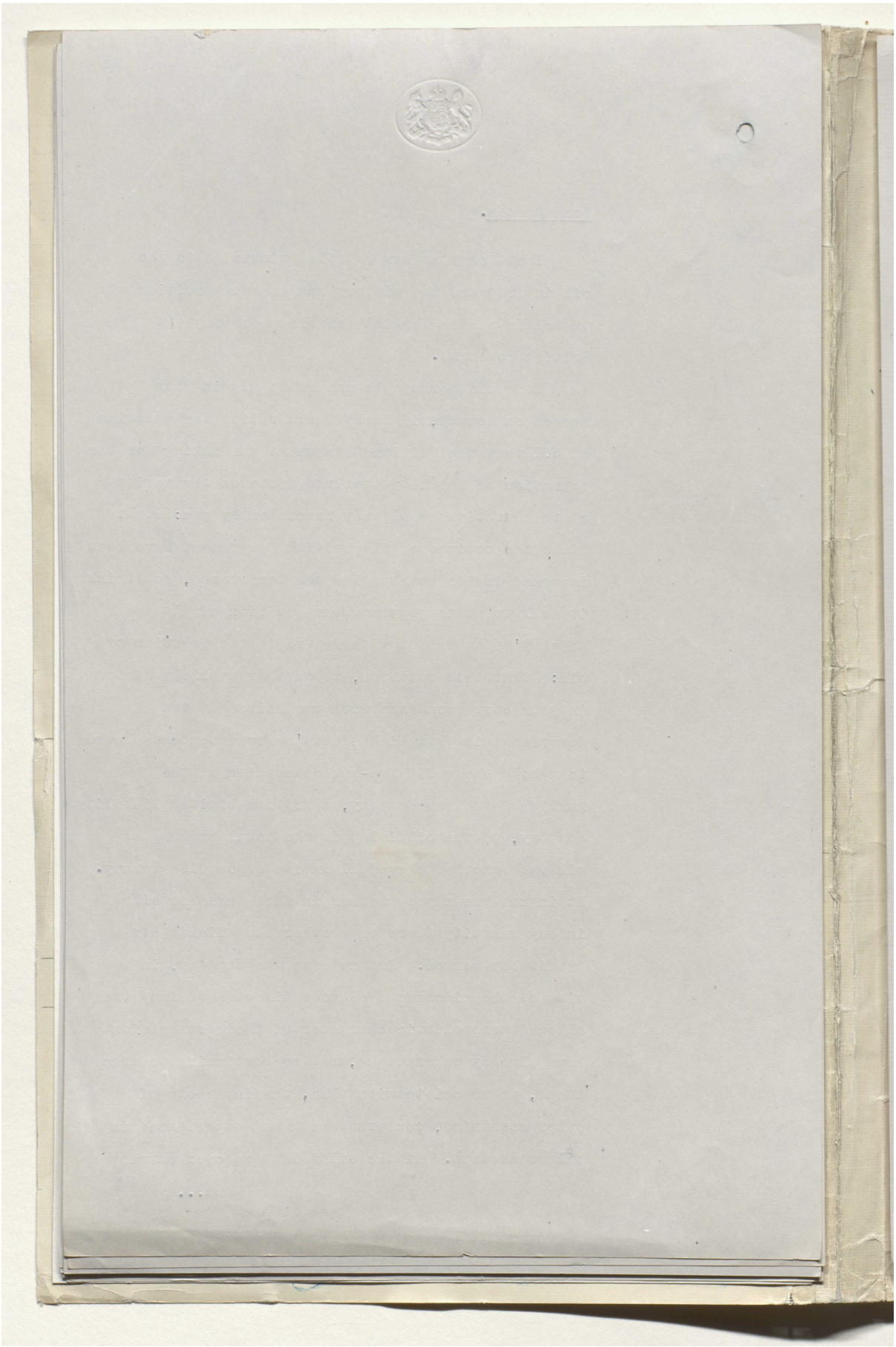

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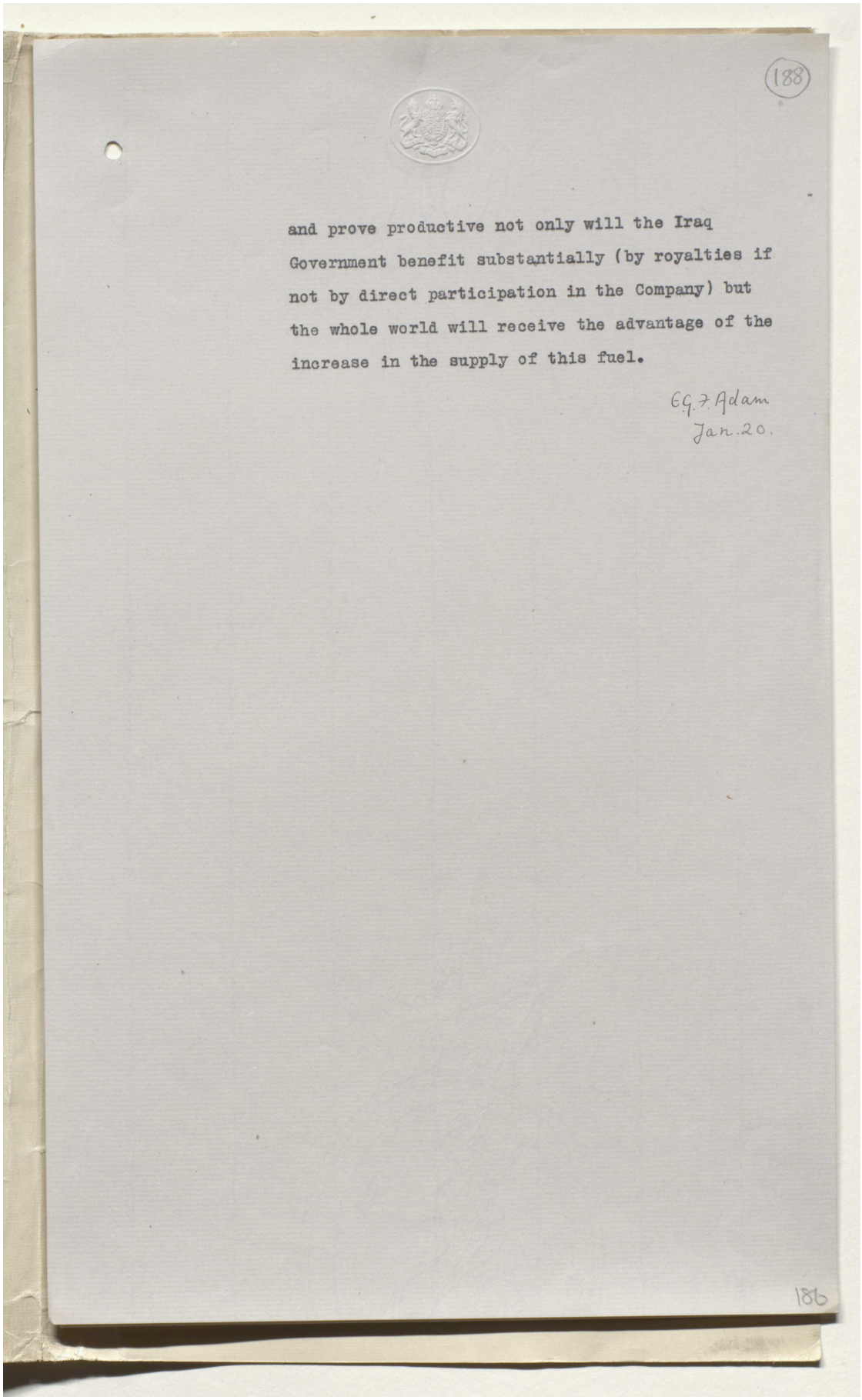

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and prove productive not only will the Iraq Government benefit substantially (by royalties if not by direct participation in the Company) but the whole world will receive the advantage of the increase in the supply of this fuel.

Eq. 7. Adam
Jan. 20.

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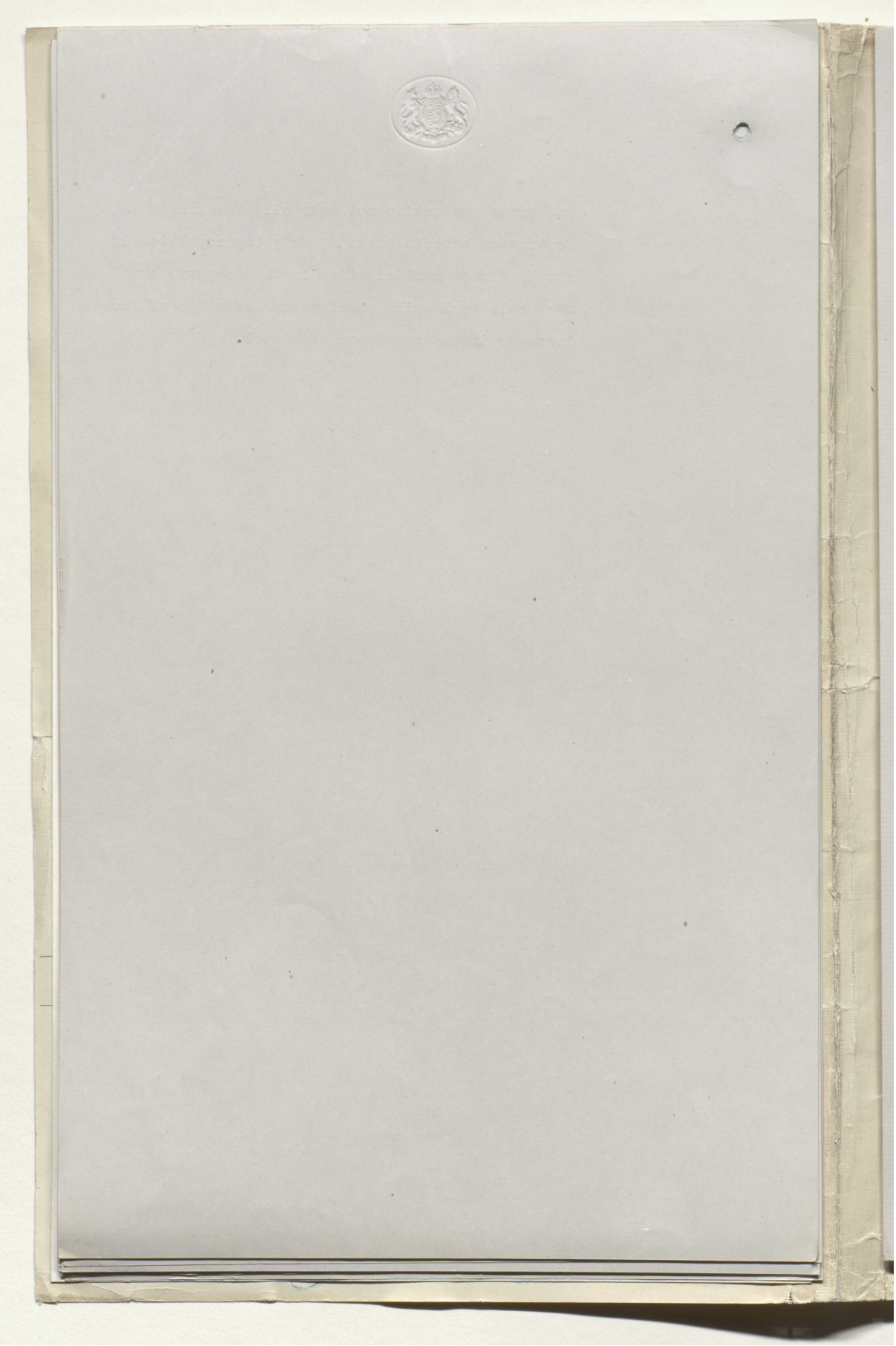

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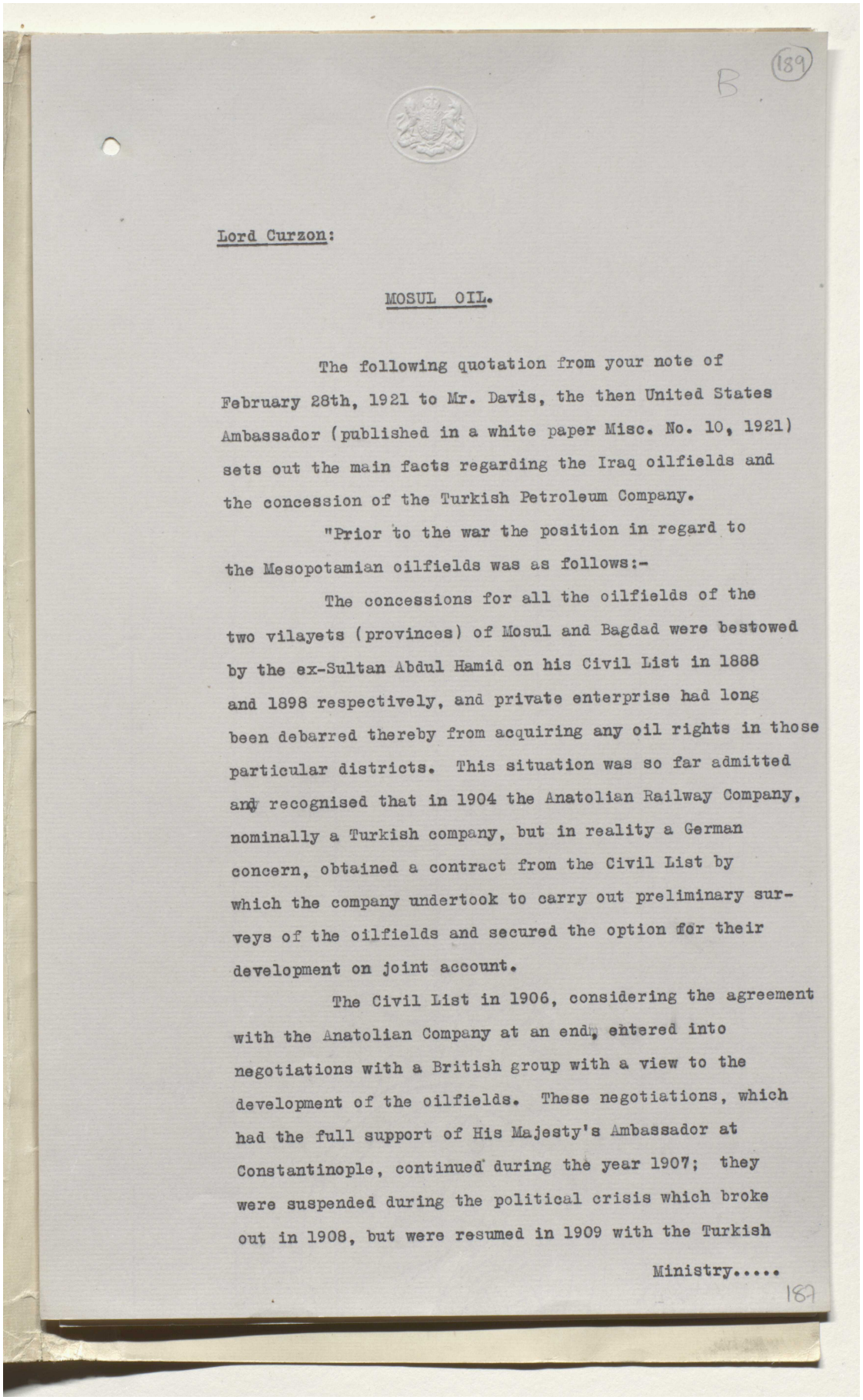

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Lord Curzon:

MOSUL OIL.

The following quotation from your note of February 28th, 1921 to Mr. Davis, the then United States Ambassador (published in a white paper Misc. No. 10, 1921) sets out the main facts regarding the Iraq oilfields and the concession of the Turkish Petroleum Company.

"Prior to the war the position in regard to the Mesopotamian oilfields was as follows:-

The concessions for all the oilfields of the two vilayets (provinces) of Mosul and Bagdad were bestowed by the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid on his Civil List in 1888 and 1898 respectively, and private enterprise had long been debarred thereby from acquiring any oil rights in those particular districts. This situation was so far admitted and recognised that in 1904 the Anatolian Railway Company, nominally a Turkish company, but in reality a German concern, obtained a contract from the Civil List by which the company undertook to carry out preliminary surveys of the oilfields and secured the option for their development on joint account.

The Civil List in 1906, considering the agreement with the Anatolian Company at an end, entered into negotiations with a British group with a view to the development of the oilfields. These negotiations, which had the full support of His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, continued during the year 1907; they were suspended during the political crisis which broke out in 1908, but were resumed in 1909 with the Turkish Ministry.....

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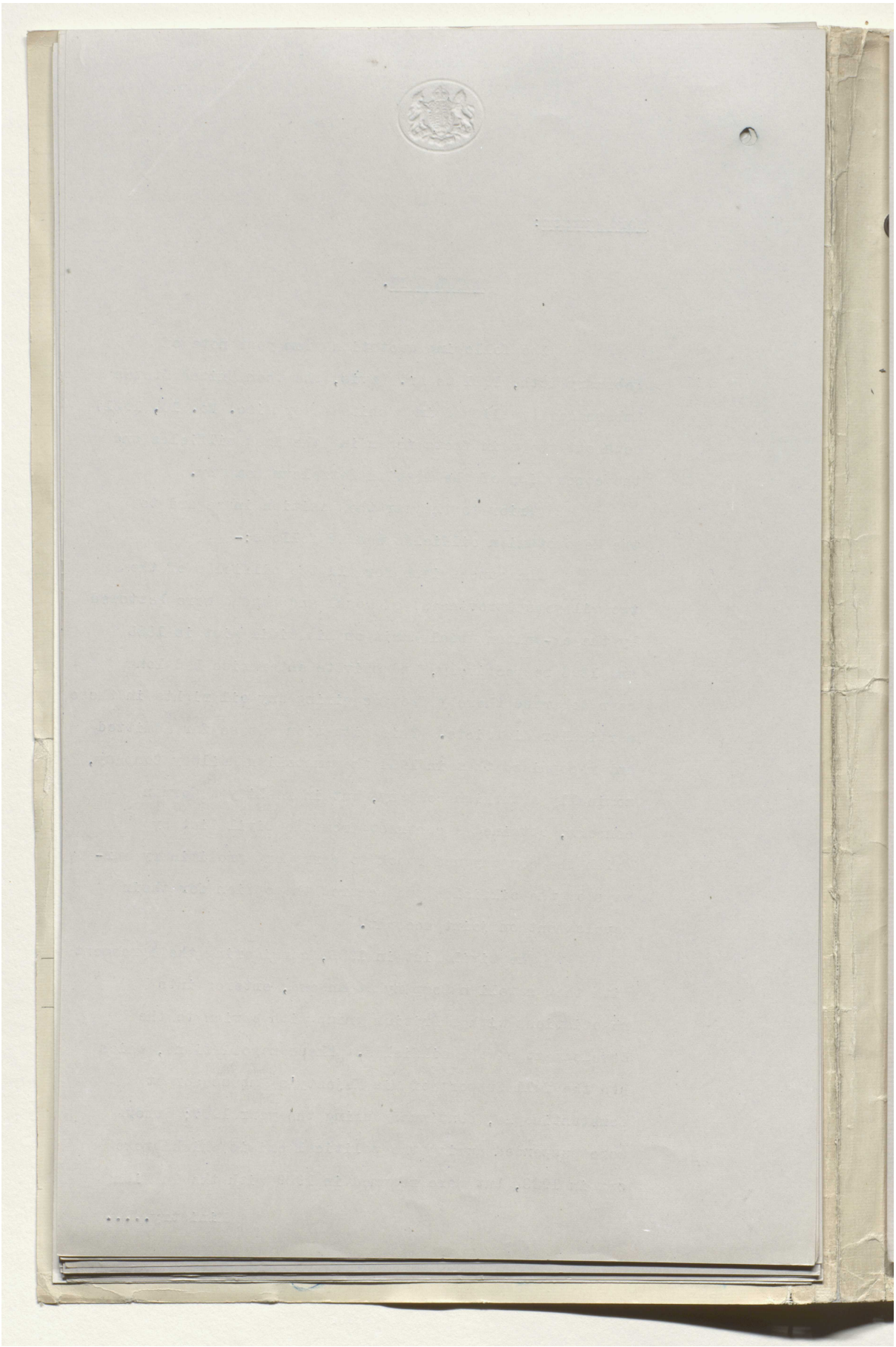

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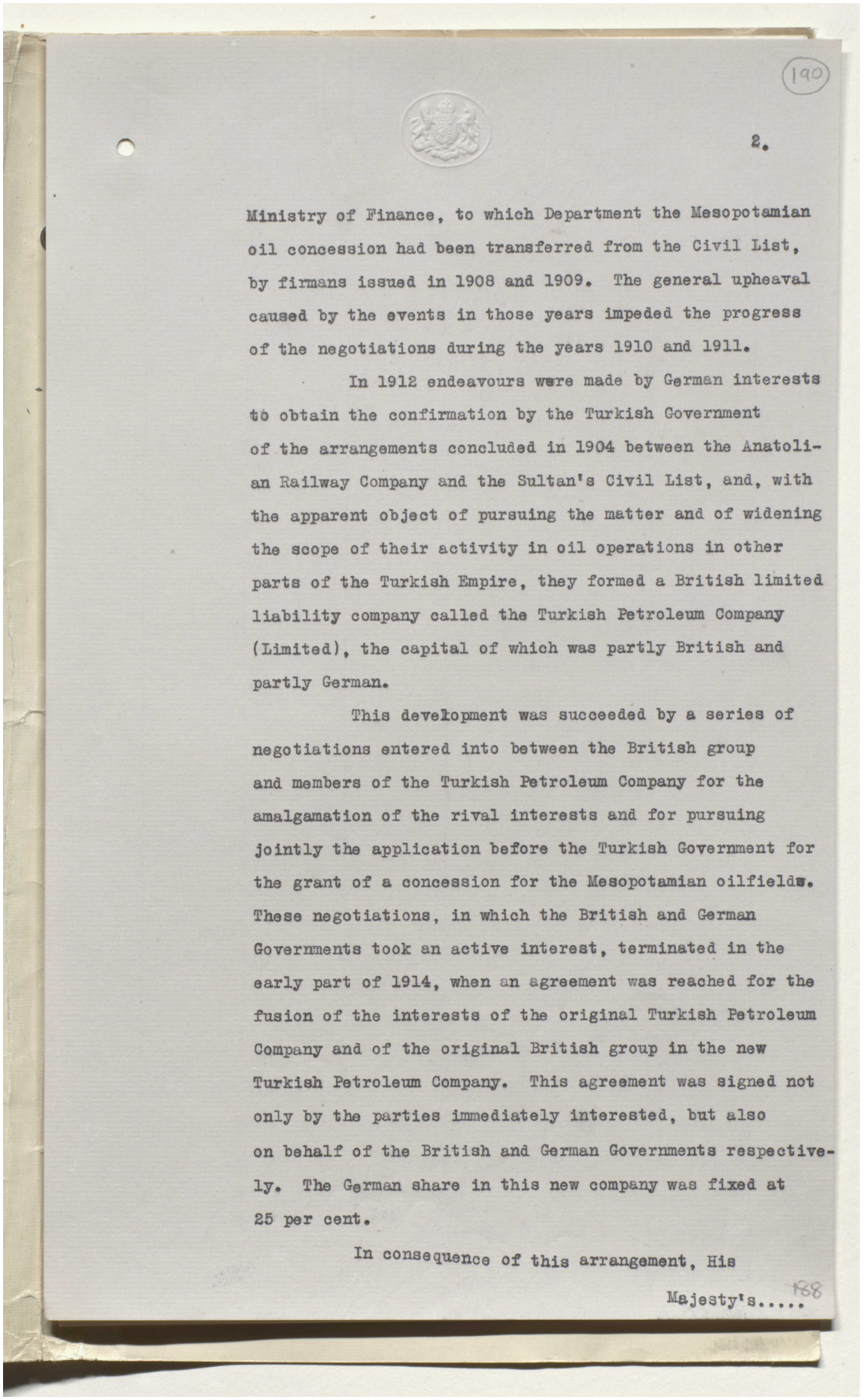

Ministry of Finance, to which Department the Mesopotamian oil concession had been transferred from the Civil List, by firmans issued in 1908 and 1909. The general upheaval caused by the events in those years impeded the progress of the negotiations during the years 1910 and 1911.

In 1912 endeavours were made by German interests to obtain the confirmation by the Turkish Government of the arrangements concluded in 1904 between the Anatolian Railway Company and the Sultan's Civil List, and, with the apparent object of pursuing the matter and of widening the scope of their activity in oil operations in other parts of the Turkish Empire, they formed a British limited liability company called the Turkish Petroleum Company (Limited), the capital of which was partly British and partly German.

This development was succeeded by a series of negotiations entered into between the British group and members of the Turkish Petroleum Company for the amalgamation of the rival interests and for pursuing jointly the application before the Turkish Government for the grant of a concession for the Mesopotamian oilfields. These negotiations, in which the British and German Governments took an active interest, terminated in the early part of 1914, when an agreement was reached for the fusion of the interests of the original Turkish Petroleum Company and of the original British group in the new Turkish Petroleum Company. This agreement was signed not only by the parties immediately interested, but also on behalf of the British and German Governments respectively. The German share in this new company was fixed at 25 per cent.

In consequence of this arrangement, His

Majesty's.....

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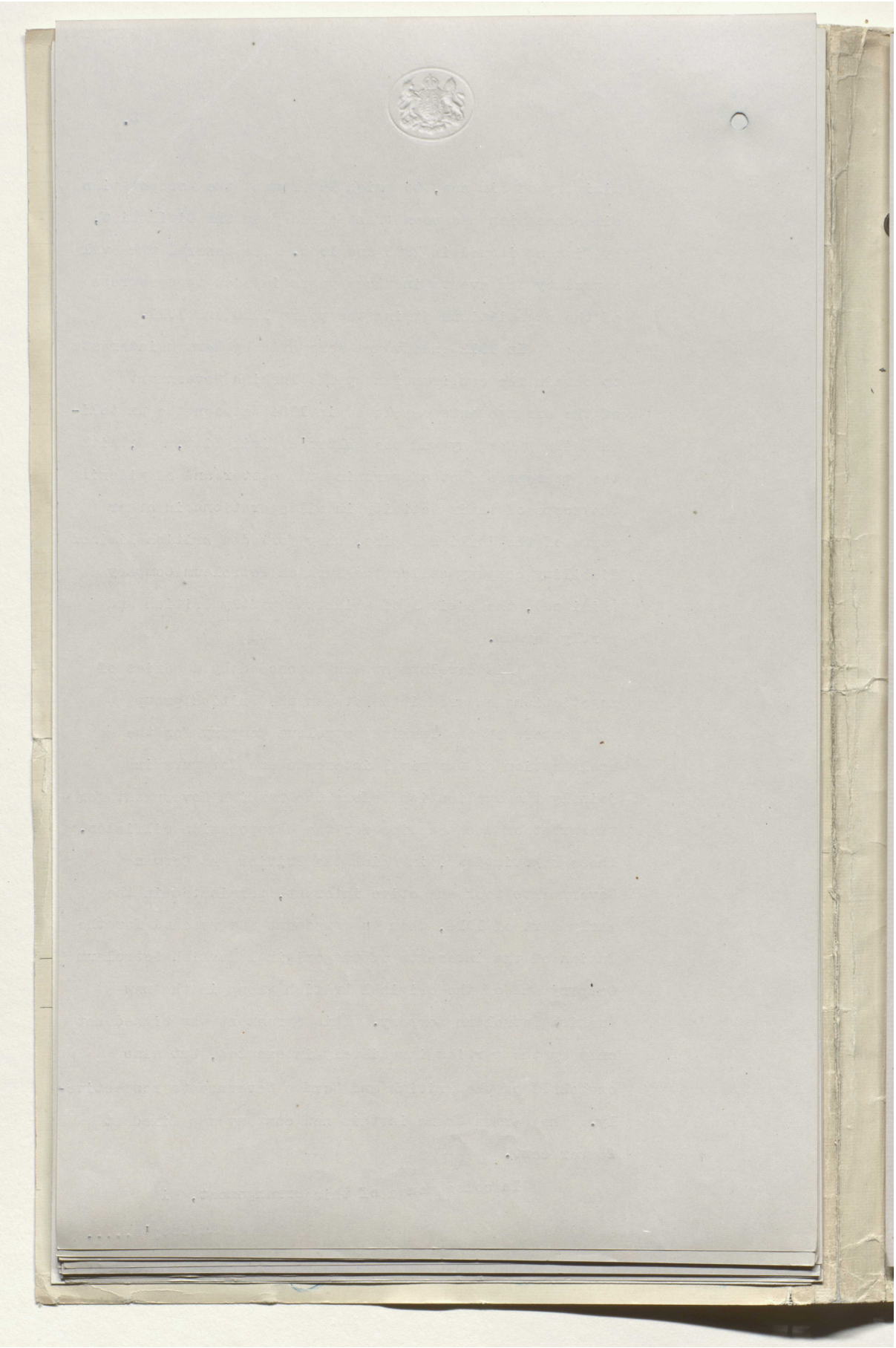

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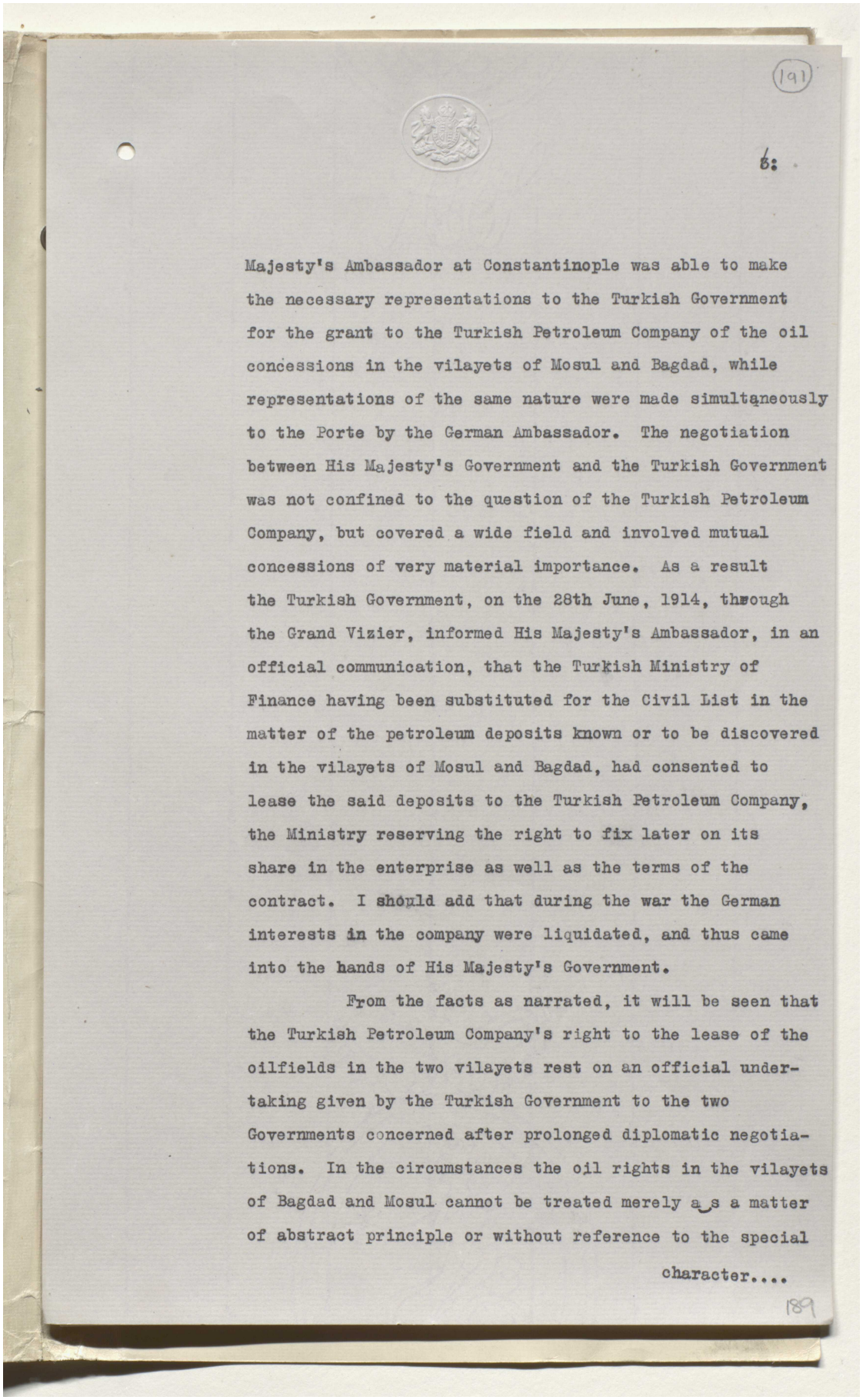

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Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was able to make the necessary representations to the Turkish Government for the grant to the Turkish Petroleum Company of the oil concessions in the vilayets of Mosul and Bagdad, while representations of the same nature were made simultaneously to the Porte by the German Ambassador. The negotiation between His Majesty's Government and the Turkish Government was not confined to the question of the Turkish Petroleum Company, but covered a wide field and involved mutual concessions of very material importance. As a result the Turkish Government, on the 28th June, 1914, through the Grand Vizier, informed His Majesty's Ambassador, in an official communication, that the Turkish Ministry of Finance having been substituted for the Civil List in the matter of the petroleum deposits known or to be discovered in the vilayets of Mosul and Bagdad, had consented to lease the said deposits to the Turkish Petroleum Company, the Ministry reserving the right to fix later on its share in the enterprise as well as the terms of the contract. I should add that during the war the German interests in the company were liquidated, and thus came into the hands of His Majesty's Government.

From the facts as narrated, it will be seen that the Turkish Petroleum Company's right to the lease of the oilfields in the two vilayets rest on an official undertaking given by the Turkish Government to the two Governments concerned after prolonged diplomatic negotiations. In the circumstances the oil rights in the vilayets of Bagdad and Mosul cannot be treated merely as a matter of abstract principle or without reference to the special

character....

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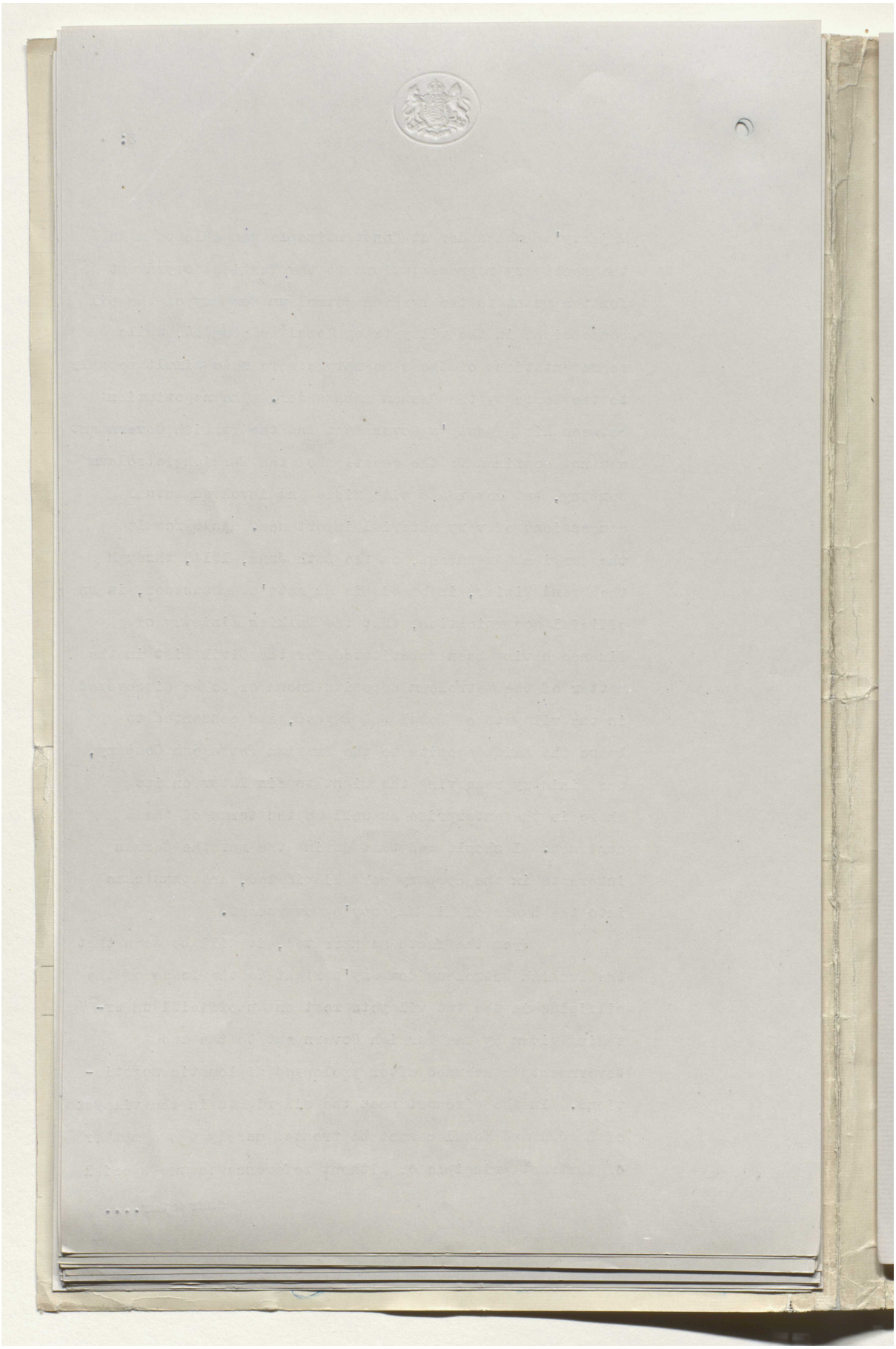

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character of the negotiations which preceded the war. Had no war supervened, and had Mesopotamia remained till now under Turkish rule, the exploitation of these oil deposits would long since have begun. It can hardly be contended that His Majesty's Government should now question the validity of an undertaking granted by the Turkish Government in return for consideration received."

This correspondence with the United States Government concluded with a note from Mr. Harvey of November 17th, 1921, not yet published, in which the United States Government continued to contest the validity of the Company's claim, asserted that it was in any case monopolistic in character, which was inconsistent with the proper method of "dealing with the resources of mandated territories, placed under conditions of trusteeship" and asked that "the claim of the Company, if it continues to be asserted, should be determined by a suitable arbitration."

About the same time in separate correspondence relating to the terms of the draft mandates, the United States Government asked that a suitable clause should be inserted in the draft mandate for Iraq excluding the grant of monopolies.

The whole position was considered by His Majesty's Government. Before the war, according to the Grand Vizier's own letter of June 28th, 1914, the rights in these oilfields were in the hands of the Ministry of Finance. Therefore if the Turkish Petroleum Company's claim were considered invalid by the Iraq Government, the pre-war rights of the Turkish Government in the oilfields would pass to the Iraq Government who would be free to develop them themselves...

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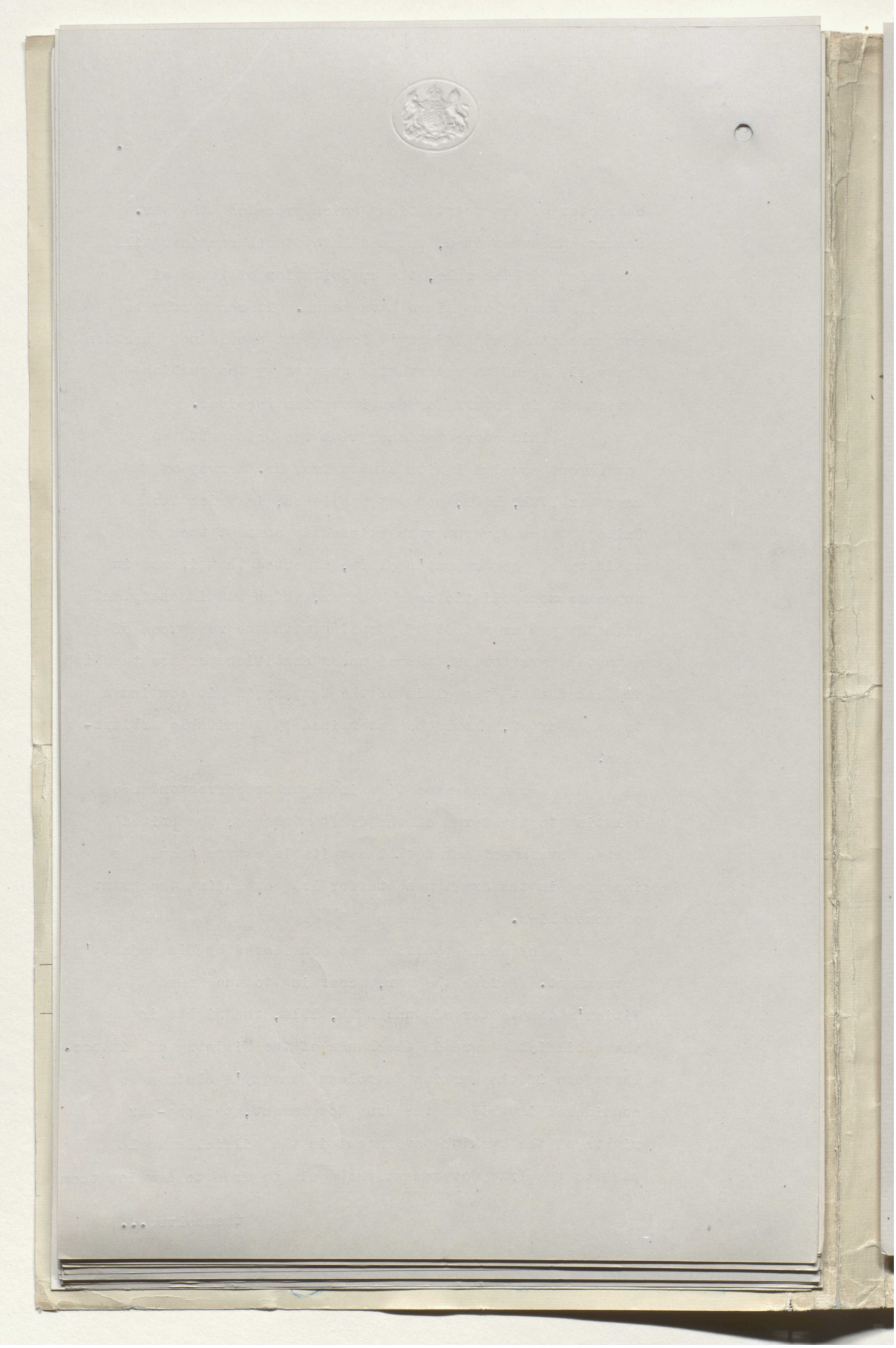

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themselves or give it to some one else to develop or to the same Company as a new concession. At the same time it was realised at home that in effect the concession to the Turkish Petroleum Company did in effect cover all the oilfields in Iraq and was monopolistic. Technically a clause in the mandate against the grant of any monopolistic concession could have been held not to affect the validation by the Iraq Government of a legitimate pre-war concession (as that of the Turkish Petroleum Company was held by His Majesty's Government to be) in accordance with the terms of the treaty with Turkey. However, it would probably have created a bad effect to have accepted the no-monopoly clause in the mandate and then to have let the oilfields be monopolised by the Turkish Per Company.

In these circumstances it was decided not to ask the Council of the League to define the terms of the draft mandate for Iraq, but to continue to proceed on the basis, publicly adopted in our notes with the United States Government that the Turkish Petroleum Company had a valid pre-war concession in Iraq which His Majesty's Government were bound to uphold.

At the same time it was thought that it should be possible to persuade the United States Government to withdraw their opposition (a) to the draft Iraq mandate in its published form (i.e. without the no-monopoly clause) and (b) to the Turkish Petroleum Company's concession if American oil interests were brought into the Company. The Office corresp with the U.S. Govt. was not concerned & the matter was dealt with through commercial channels.

On the outbreak of the war, the shares of the Turkish Petroleum Company were roughly, 50 per cent Anglo-Persian Company; 25 per cent Deutsche Bank; and 25% Anglo-Saxon (a branch of the Royal Dutch Shell). The sequestrated

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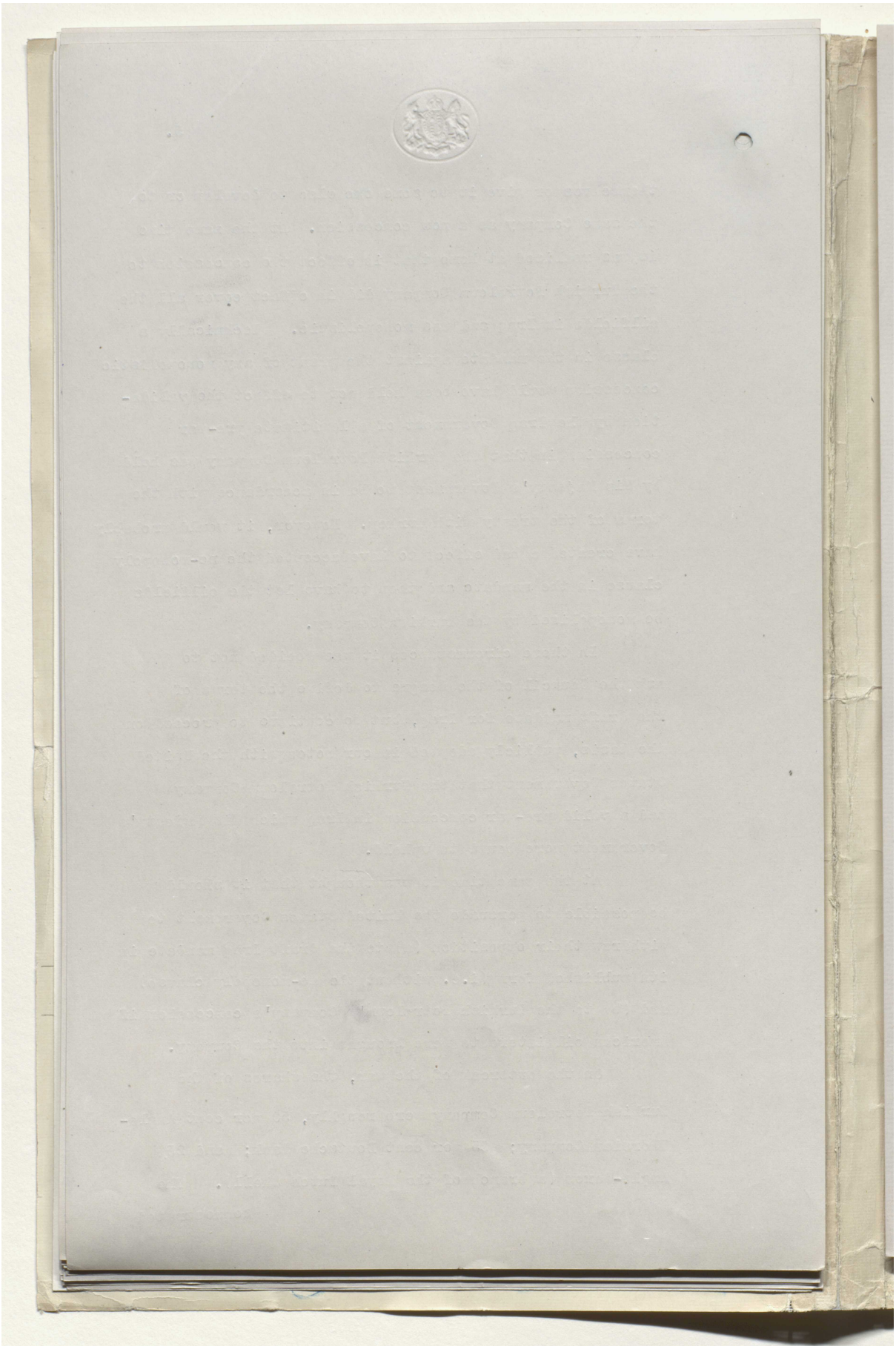

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sequestrated 25% of the Deutsche Bank holding was transferred to French interests (it is still actually in the hands of the French Government) as a result of the Anglo-French San Remo Oil Agreement of April, 1920. Negotiations were opened in 1921 and continued all through last year to bring in the United States interests. These negotiations were carried on by the Company in London with the Standard Oil Company with the cognisance of the French and British Petroleum Departments and with the general knowledge of the State Department. As a result, at the end of 1922 the shares in the Company were redivided in such a way as to give the French interests 24%, the Anglo-Persian Company 24% (plus a certain option on the oil produced as compensation for their sacrifice), the Standard Oil (and other American oil interests brought in by the latter) 24% and the Royal Dutch Shell (or Anglo-Saxon) 24%, it being found that the other shares rightfully belonged and must continue to be held by the Royal Dutch Shell.

(a certain M. Gulbenkian, a walking horse of

This redivision is understood to have been accepted by the French and the two British companies, but not by the American interests, who have been unable as yet completely to fulfil the condition attached by the Shell and Anglo-Persian Companies to the increase on the American shares (namely the State Department's approval of the concession) and who still appear to object to the Anglo-Persian Company's compensatory option.

Meanwhile under the San Remo Oil Agreement, 20% of the shares in the Company might be held by Iraq interests. It is intended to meet this by some form of subsidiary Company. In any case it is unlikely that Iraqis or the Iraq Government could produce the cash for the shares.

Early....

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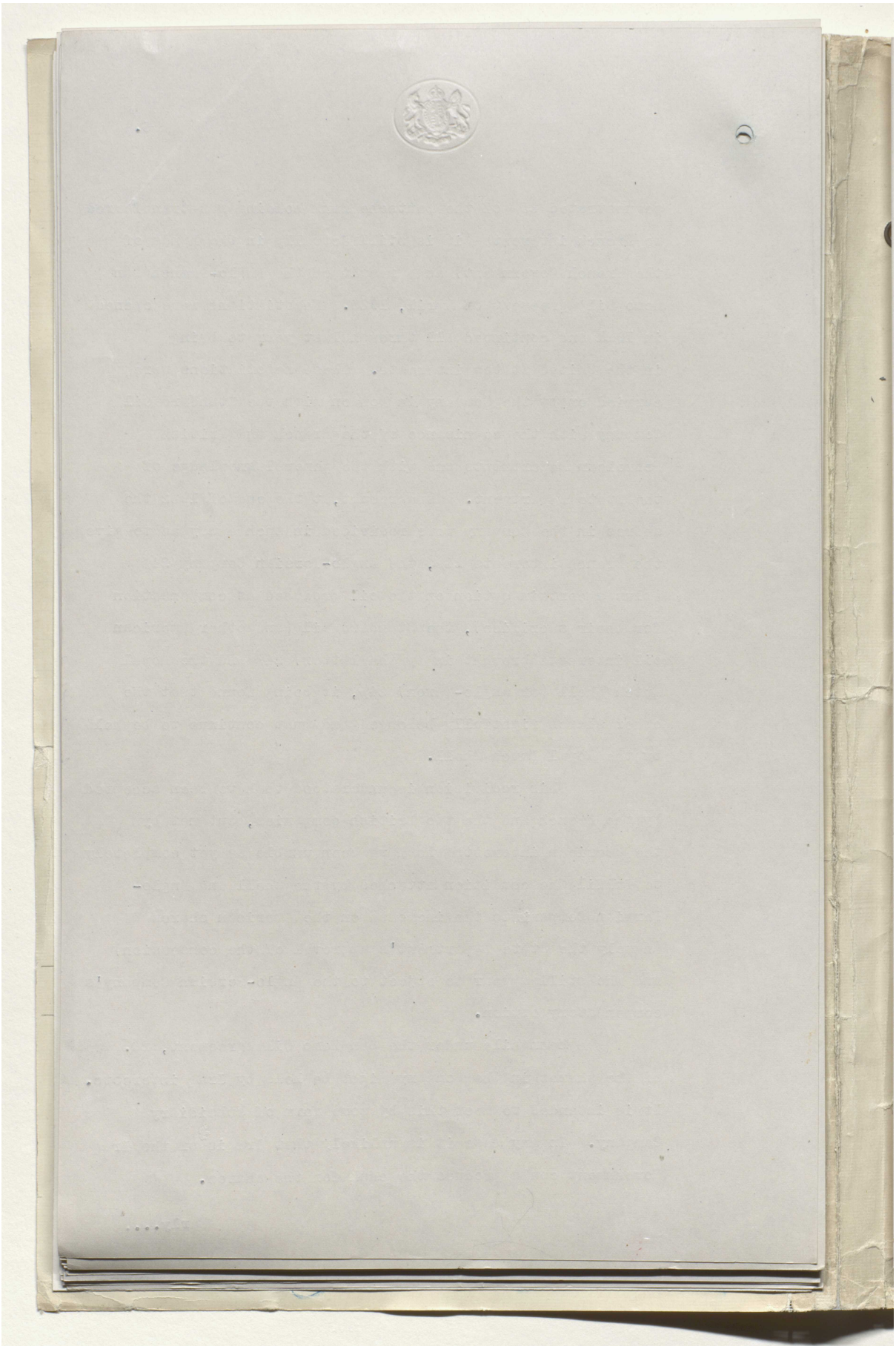

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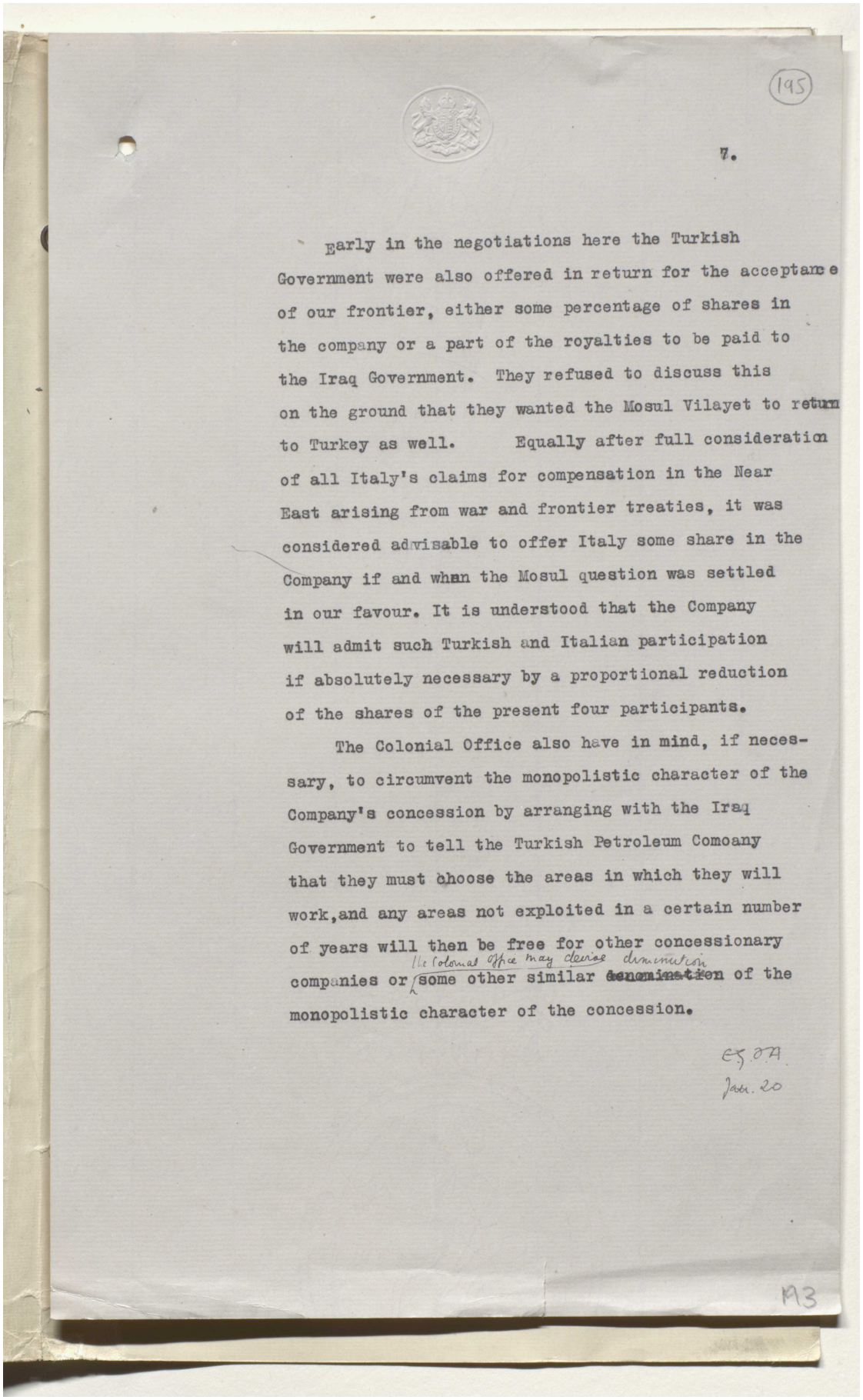

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Early in the negotiations here the Turkish Government were also offered in return for the acceptance of our frontier, either some percentage of shares in the company or a part of the royalties to be paid to the Iraq Government. They refused to discuss this on the ground that they wanted the Mosul Vilayet to return to Turkey as well. Equally after full consideration of all Italy's claims for compensation in the Near East arising from war and frontier treaties, it was considered advisable to offer Italy some share in the Company if and when the Mosul question was settled in our favour. It is understood that the Company will admit such Turkish and Italian participation if absolutely necessary by a proportional reduction of the shares of the present four participants.

The Colonial Office also have in mind, if necessary, to circumvent the monopolistic character of the Company's concession by arranging with the Iraq Government to tell the Turkish Petroleum Comoany that they must choose the areas in which they will work, and any areas not exploited in a certain number of years will then be free for other concessionary companies or (the Colonial Office may devise diminution) some other similar ~~denomination~~ of the monopolistic character of the concession.

E5.07A
Jan. 20

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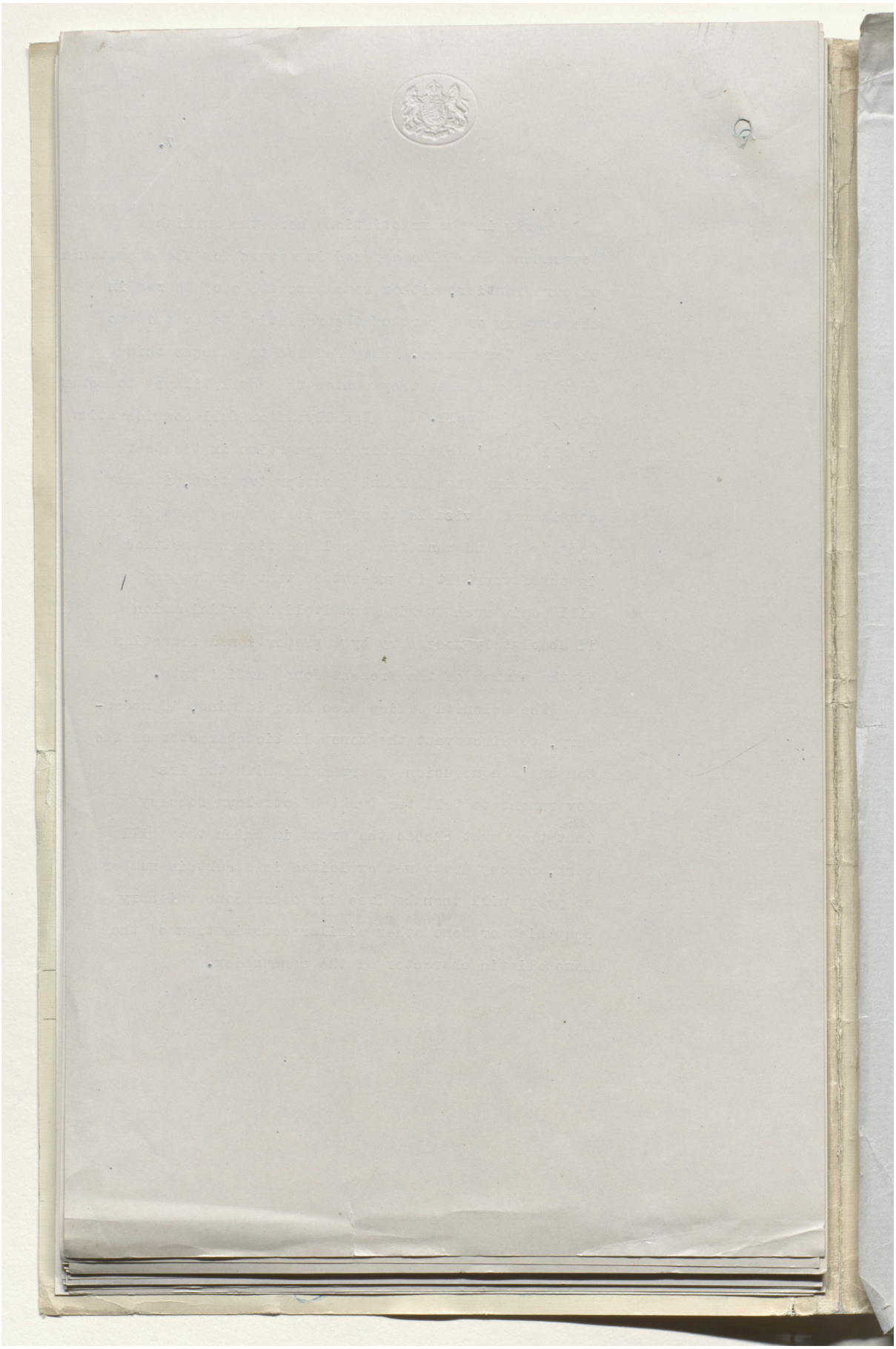

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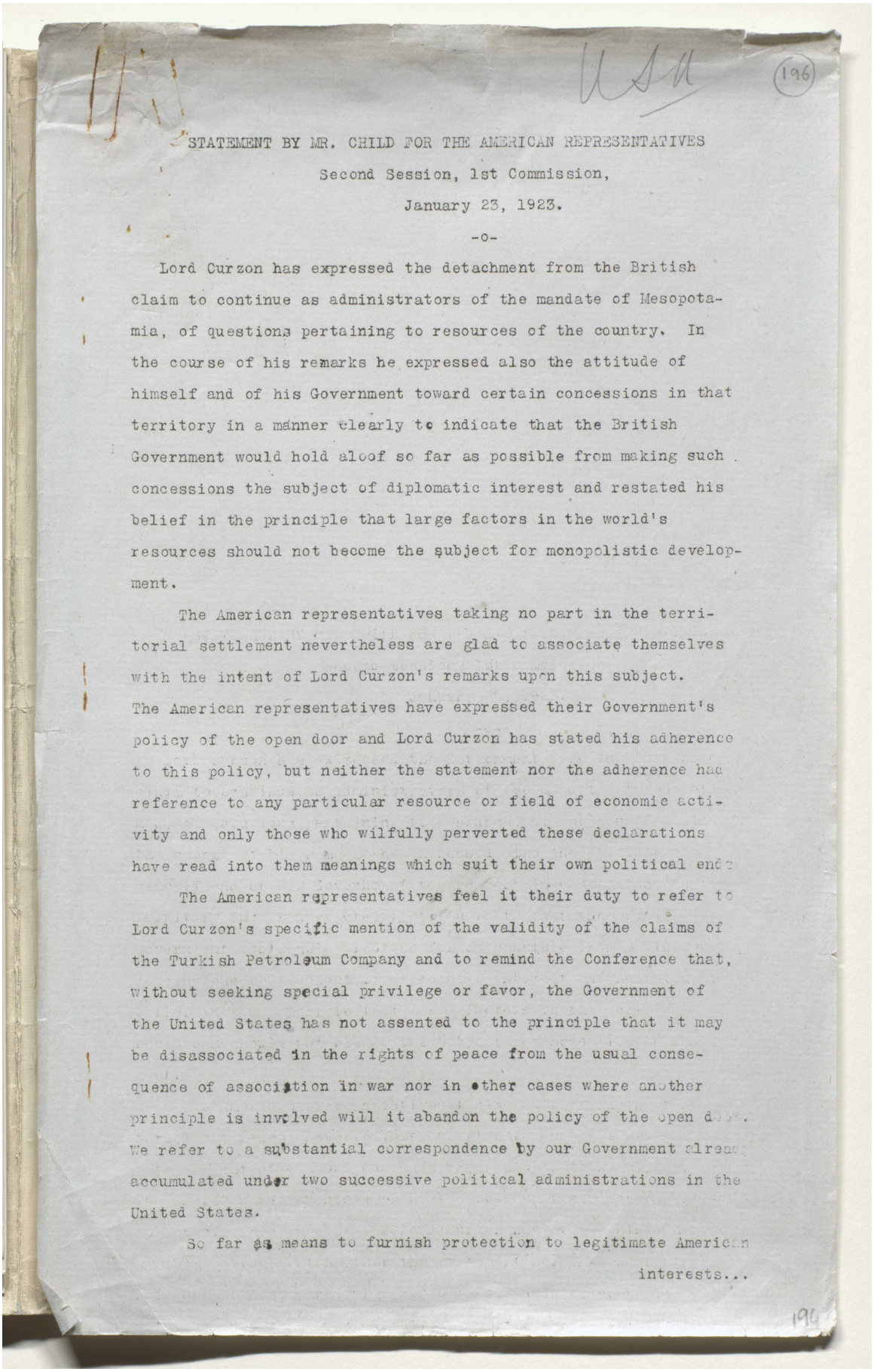

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STATEMENT BY MR. CHILD FOR THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES

Second Session, 1st Commission,

January 23, 1923.

-o-

Lord Curzon has expressed the detachment from the British claim to continue as administrators of the mandate of Mesopotamia, of questions pertaining to resources of the country. In the course of his remarks he expressed also the attitude of himself and of his Government toward certain concessions in that territory in a manner clearly to indicate that the British Government would hold aloof so far as possible from making such concessions the subject of diplomatic interest and restated his belief in the principle that large factors in the world's resources should not become the subject for monopolistic development.

The American representatives taking no part in the territorial settlement nevertheless are glad to associate themselves with the intent of Lord Curzon's remarks upon this subject. The American representatives have expressed their Government's policy of the open door and Lord Curzon has stated his adherence to this policy, but neither the statement nor the adherence had reference to any particular resource or field of economic activity and only those who wilfully perverted these declarations have read into them meanings which suit their own political ends.

The American representatives feel it their duty to refer to Lord Curzon's specific mention of the validity of the claims of the Turkish Petroleum Company and to remind the Conference that, without seeking special privilege or favor, the Government of the United States has not assented to the principle that it may be disassociated in the rights of peace from the usual consequence of association in war nor in other cases where another principle is involved will it abandon the policy of the open door. We refer to a substantial correspondence by our Government already accumulated under two successive political administrations in the United States.

So far as means to furnish protection to legitimate American interests...

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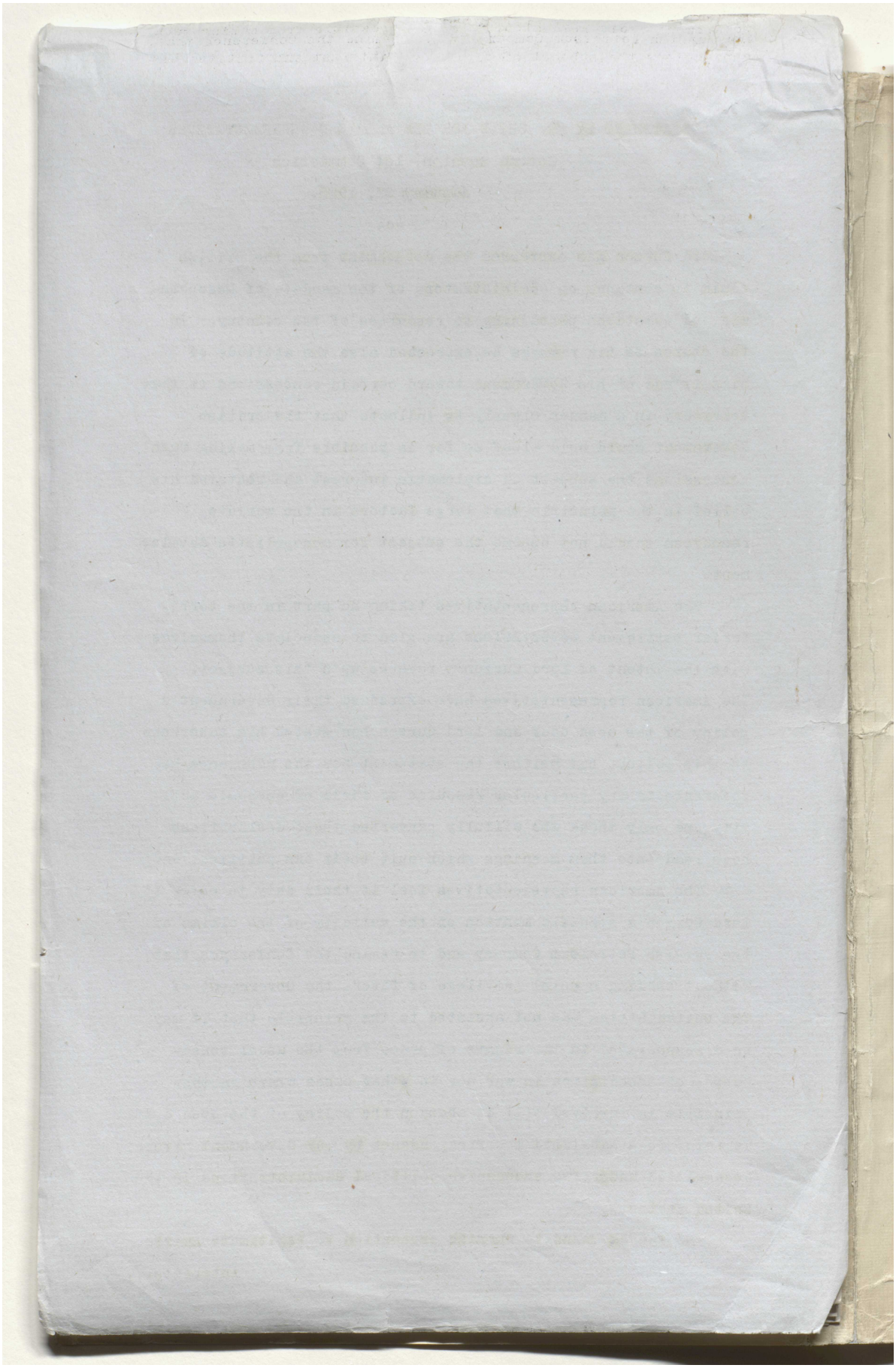

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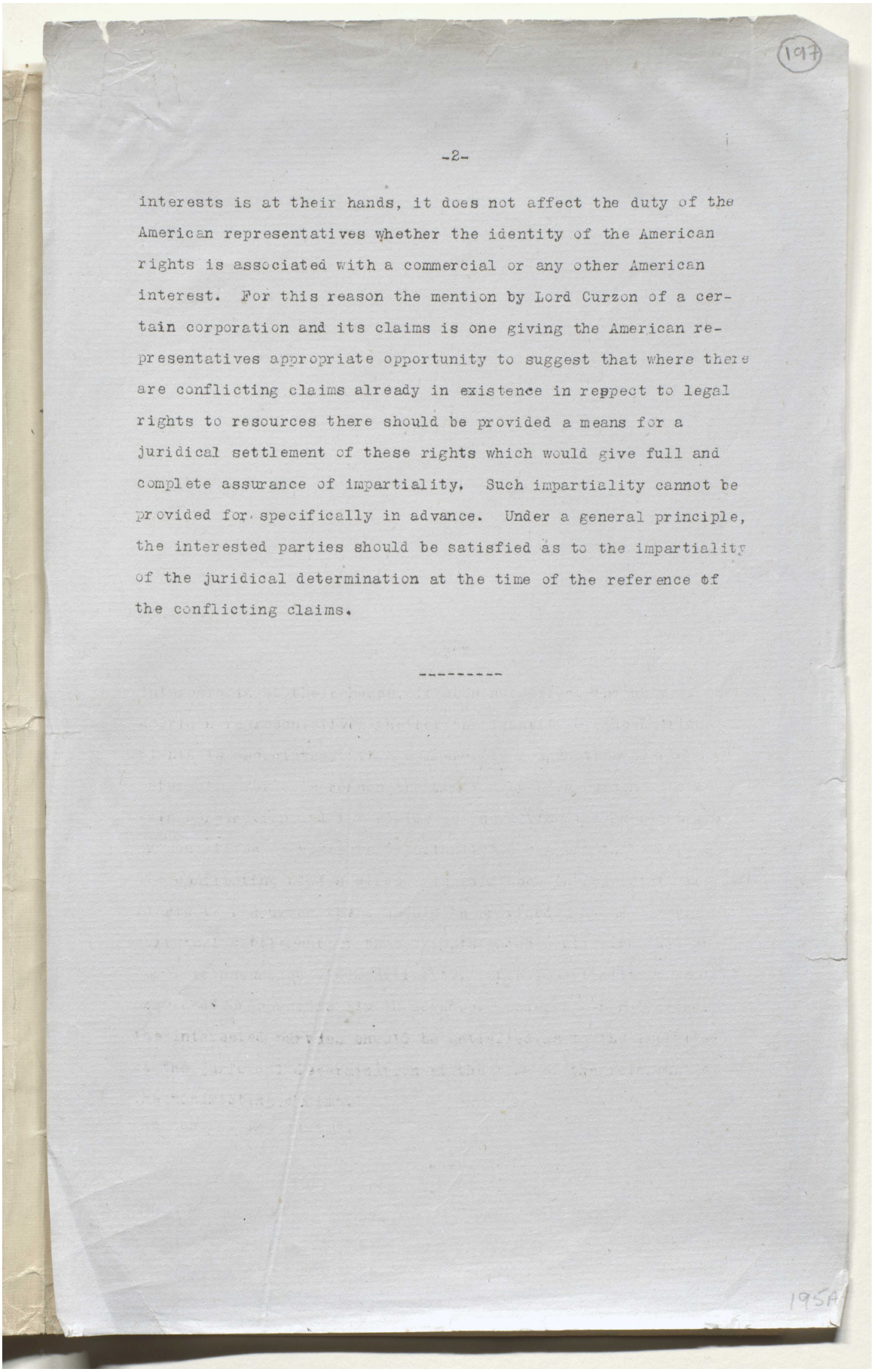

interests is at their hands, it does not affect the duty of the American representatives whether the identity of the American rights is associated with a commercial or any other American interest. For this reason the mention by Lord Curzon of a certain corporation and its claims is one giving the American representatives appropriate opportunity to suggest that where there are conflicting claims already in existence in reppect to legal rights to resources there should be provided a means for a juridical settlement of these rights which would give full and complete assurance of impartiality. Such impartiality cannot be provided for specifically in advance. Under a general principle, the interested parties should be satisfied as to the impartiality of the juridical determination at the time of the reference of the conflicting claims.

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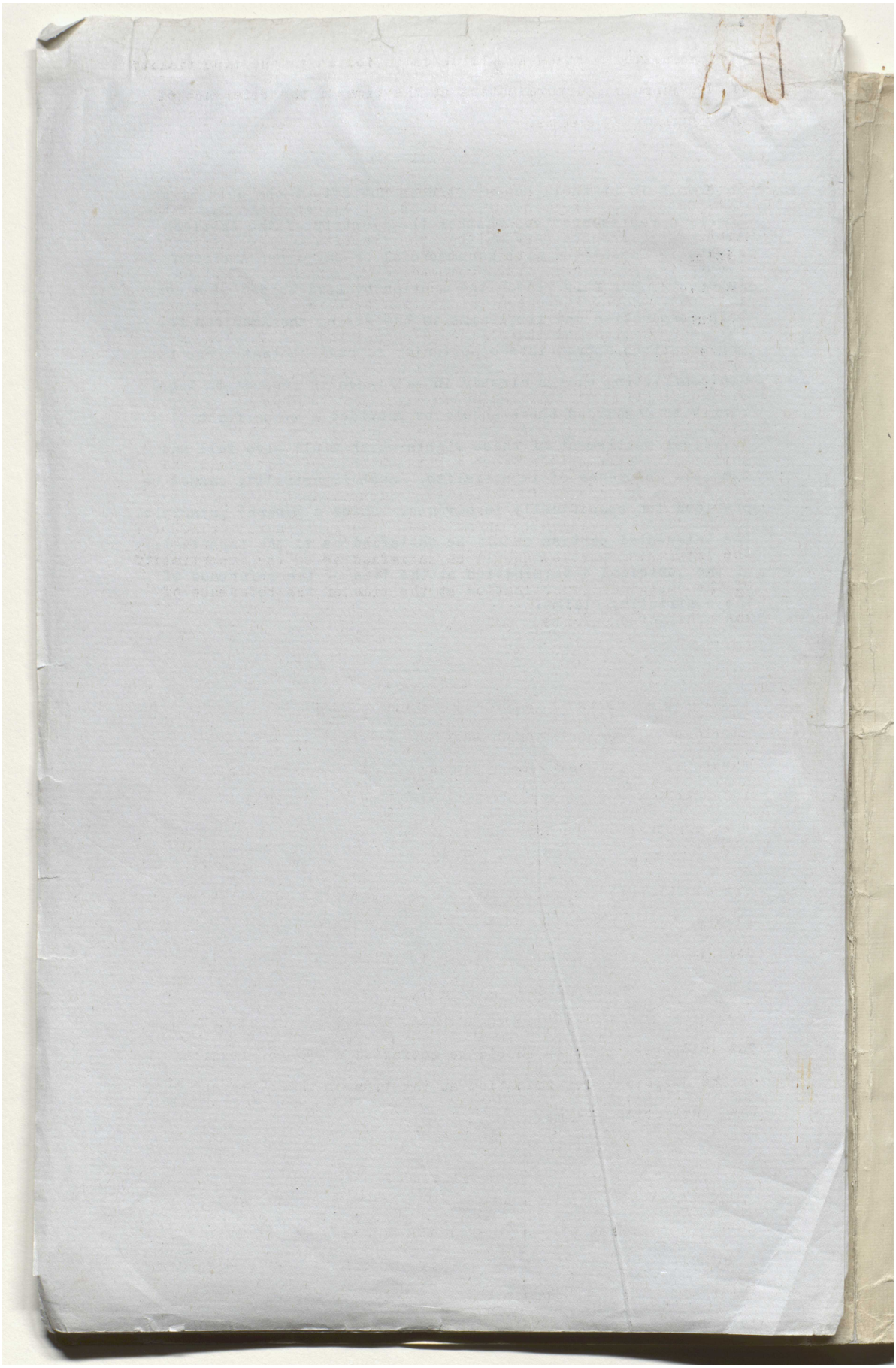

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TURKEY. [January 26.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 2.

[E 1000/1/44] No. 1.

Speech by the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston on January 23, 1923, respecting Mosul.—(Received in Foreign Office January 26.)

LORD CURZON spoke as follows:—

"I welcome the opportunity of making a public statement on this question. There has been so much perversion, exaggeration and misrepresentation about the case of Mosul that it is desirable that the facts should be known. I am grateful therefore to Ismet Pasha for having summed up the Turkish case in the statement to which we have just listened. I propose to take his case point by point and to give my reply, and I shall be only too delighted if the Turkish case and the British case could be printed side by side and referred to the opinion of the world.

"First I should like to explain the exact position in Mosul: how it is that we came there, what has been done since we came there, and what is being done there now. The whole of Mesopotamia was occupied in the course of the great war by the British troops. That was a war which ended in the defeat of the Turkish armies, and the explusion of the Turkish Government from the country. A little later on, however, the name of Irak was given because of its greater local familiarity to the country which we had hitherto called Mesopotamia.

"When we were forced to go into the war by the action of the Turkish Government, and when we first advanced into Irak, we gave solemn pledges to the people of that country that if we were successful in the war they should be freed from Turkish rule in the future. We entered into similar pledges to King Hussein at the same time—to support the independence of the Arabs in this area. When the war was over and we had been victorious we did our best to fulfil these pledges. Ismet Pasha said just now that the people of that country and of the Mosul Vilayet had never had a fair opportunity of expressing their views. That is not the case. We asked them whether they would prefer to be united together in future—that is Mosul, Bagdad and Basra, or whether they would prefer to separate. All three of these areas answered that they were parts of a complete and indivisible whole, and they declined to be separated. We asked them whether they wanted an Arab King and if so whom they would choose. Their replies were at that time divided, and therefore at the moment nothing could be done on that point. Meanwhile at Paris when the Peace Conference was sitting in 1919 the method of disposing of the conquered territories, whether of the Turkish or of the German Empires, by means of what is termed a mandate was set up; and as everybody knows it was established largely by the influence of President Wilson, to whom Ismet Pasha himself referred in favour of his argument just now. It remained for the Allied Powers who had conquered these territories in the war and who held them in trust to assign the mandates, and it was at San Remo in April 1920 that they decided to give the mandate for Syria to France and the mandates for Palestine and Mesopotamia to Great Britain. All these mandates stand on exactly the same basis. You cannot attack one without attacking the other. These mandates were confirmed by the Treaty of Sèvres in August 1920 and the frontiers of Syria and Irak were both laid down, the northern frontier of Irak being defined as the northern boundary of the Mosul Vilayet, with certain variations. It then lay with the League of Nations to determine what degree of authority and control the mandatory Powers should exercise in each of these areas. For this purpose draft mandates were submitted by the various mandatory Powers to the League of Nations in 1920–21. In the course of 1921 the question of a single Arab ruler was solved by the election of the Emir Feisal to be King of the Arab State of Irak. That was a vote in which the Mosul Vilayet joined, and by which he was unanimously elected. In October 1921 the League of Nations, not yet having defined the final mandate, invited the British to continue to conduct their administration in the spirit of the draft mandate which had been submitted to them pending the final determination of the latter. Subsequently, in our anxiety to diminish British responsibilities and to confirm the independence of the Arab State, the British Government concluded a treaty

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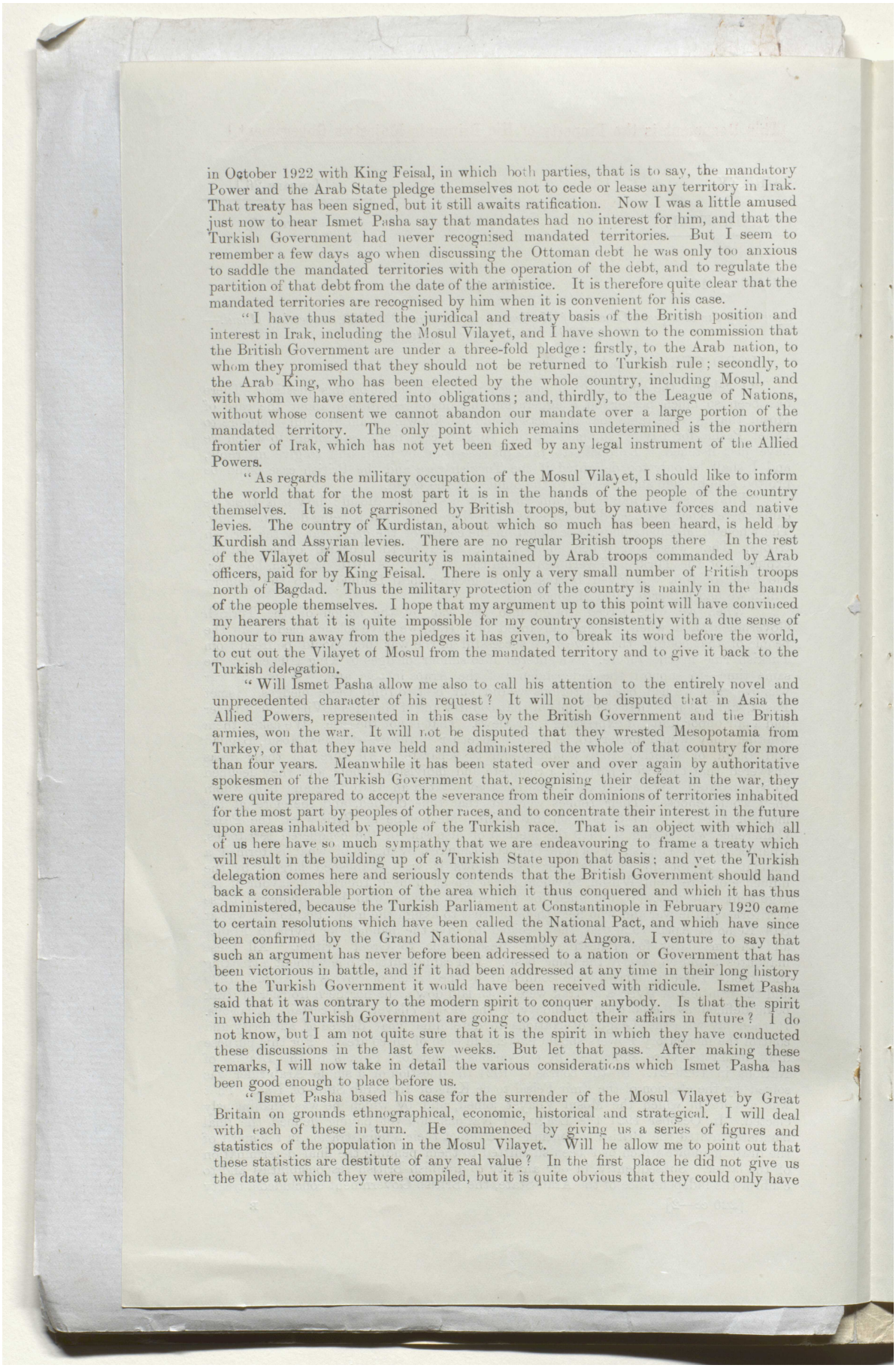

in October 1922 with King Feisal, in which both parties, that is to say, the mandatory Power and the Arab State pledge themselves not to cede or lease any territory in Irak. That treaty has been signed, but it still awaits ratification. Now I was a little amused just now to hear Ismet Pasha say that mandates had no interest for him, and that the Turkish Government had never recognised mandated territories. But I seem to remember a few days ago when discussing the Ottoman debt he was only too anxious to saddle the mandated territories with the operation of the debt, and to regulate the partition of that debt from the date of the armistice. It is therefore quite clear that the mandated territories are recognised by him when it is convenient for his case.

"I have thus stated the juridical and treaty basis of the British position and interest in Irak, including the Mosul Vilayet, and I have shown to the commission that the British Government are under a three-fold pledge: firstly, to the Arab nation, to whom they promised that they should not be returned to Turkish rule; secondly, to the Arab King, who has been elected by the whole country, including Mosul, and with whom we have entered into obligations; and, thirdly, to the League of Nations, without whose consent we cannot abandon our mandate over a large portion of the mandated territory. The only point which remains undetermined is the northern frontier of Irak, which has not yet been fixed by any legal instrument of the Allied Powers.

"As regards the military occupation of the Mosul Vilayet, I should like to inform the world that for the most part it is in the hands of the people of the country themselves. It is not garrisoned by British troops, but by native forces and native levies. The country of Kurdistan, about which so much has been heard, is held by Kurdish and Assyrian levies. There are no regular British troops there In the rest of the Vilayet of Mosul security is maintained by Arab troops commanded by Arab officers, paid for by King Feisal. There is only a very small number of British troops north of Bagdad. Thus the military protection of the country is mainly in the hands of the people themselves. I hope that my argument up to this point will have convinced my hearers that it is quite impossible for my country consistently with a due sense of honour to run away from the pledges it has given, to break its word before the world, to cut out the Vilayet of Mosul from the mandated territory and to give it back to the Turkish delegation.

"Will Ismet Pasha allow me also to call his attention to the entirely novel and unprecedented character of his request? It will not be disputed that in Asia the Allied Powers, represented in this case by the British Government and the British armies, won the war. It will not be disputed that they wrested Mesopotamia from Turkey, or that they have held and administered the whole of that country for more than four years. Meanwhile it has been stated over and over again by authoritative spokesmen of the Turkish Government that, recognising their defeat in the war, they were quite prepared to accept the severance from their dominions of territories inhabited for the most part by peoples of other races, and to concentrate their interest in the future upon areas inhabited by people of the Turkish race. That is an object with which all of us here have so much sympathy that we are endeavouring to frame a treaty which will result in the building up of a Turkish State upon that basis; and yet the Turkish delegation comes here and seriously contends that the British Government should hand back a considerable portion of the area which it thus conquered and which it has thus administered, because the Turkish Parliament at Constantinople in February 1920 came to certain resolutions which have been called the National Pact, and which have since been confirmed by the Grand National Assembly at Angora. I venture to say that such an argument has never before been addressed to a nation or Government that has been victorious in battle, and if it had been addressed at any time in their long history to the Turkish Government it would have been received with ridicule. Ismet Pasha said that it was contrary to the modern spirit to conquer anybody. Is that the spirit in which the Turkish Government are going to conduct their affairs in future? I do not know, but I am not quite sure that it is the spirit in which they have conducted these discussions in the last few weeks. But let that pass. After making these remarks, I will now take in detail the various considerations which Ismet Pasha has been good enough to place before us.

"Ismet Pasha based his case for the surrender of the Mosul Vilayet by Great Britain on grounds ethnographical, economic, historical and strategical. I will deal with each of these in turn. He commenced by giving us a series of figures and statistics of the population in the Mosul Vilayet. Will he allow me to point out that these statistics are destitute of any real value? In the first place he did not give us the date at which they were compiled, but it is quite obvious that they could only have

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been compiled before the war, several years ago; and it is also notorious that the Turkish figures were compiled only for the purpose of obtaining a list for military service or exemption, and thousands of people failed to appear in the list, because by some means or other they avoided the obligation. Therefore, with all respect, he must allow me to refuse to accept his figures. What are the figures to which I shall refer? They are the figures which were compiled only the year before last with the utmost care by British officers visiting every part of the vilayet, and making the most careful record of the facts in each locality and each town or village. Ismet Pasha said, what can you know about the figures in Sulimanyieh and in Southern Kurdistan? We ought to know a great deal more than he does, for there have been British political officers in Sulimanyieh continuously since October or November 1917 until they were temporarily withdrawn during a few weeks last year as the result of Turkish military activity in Rowanduz. There is a British military officer there now. What means have the Turkish delegation had of obtaining figures in the district in that period? There is not a Turk in the district of Sulimanyieh now, and there has not been for years. Therefore, when I come to the figures I am about to give, I hope the conference will be assured that they are figures resting upon a scientific basis.

"I will now come to the actual figures at this moment of the populations of the Mosul Vilayet, which are as follows:—

"Arabs	186,000
"Kurds	455,000
"Turks	66,000
"Christians	62,000
"Jews...	17,000

"and I will ask permission to say a few words about each of these populations who are claimed now by the Turkish delegation. First, let me take the Arabs. The figures I have given, and which amount to a total population of between 750,000 and 800,000 for the entire Mosul Vilayet, show that the Arabs are about one-quarter of the whole. In the town of Mosul, which has a population of from 80,000 to 90,000, between 50,000 and 60,000 are Arabs. The whole of the country north of Mosul, on the right bank of the Tigris to the northern boundary of the vilayet, is inhabited by Arabs. The whole of the country south of Mosul, on the right bank of the river, is inhabited by Arabs. Most of the country south of Mosul, on the left bank of the river up to the Erbil–Kirkuk–Kifri road, is inhabited by Arabs. On what conceivable ground ought these Arabs to be handed back to Turkey? I have already pointed out that they voted in 1919 for remaining in a single area of Mespotamia or Irak. In 1921 they voted for Feisal as their King. Why should we hand them back to Turkey? Why should Mosul city be handed back to the Turks? It is an Arab town built by Arabs. During centuries of Turkish occupation it has never lost its Arab character. I am unable to understand any principle of logic or equity by which it can be contended that this Arab country should be handed over to Angora.

"Now I will turn to the Turkish population upon which it is natural that Ismet Pasha should base his case. The Turkish population are only one-twelfth of the entire population of the vilayet. They are mainly situated in the towns of Erbil, Altunkeupreui, Kirkuk and Kifri. They are not Osmanli Turks at all. They are descendants of a Turanian invasion from Central Asia which came to this country long before either the Seljuk or the Ottoman invasions took place. They speak a Turkish dialect of their own. It is not the dialect of Angora; it is not the dialect of Constantinople. There exist also a certain number of the families of the Turkish officers and officials who had been employed by the Turkish Government in that neighbourhood. The whole of this people, except in the Kirkuk area, voted for inclusion in the Kingdom of Irak and for the Emir Feisal as its King. Let us suppose that they are well disposed to the Angora Government and that they would now like to go back. Is it to be seriously contended that the fate of the whole of this great vilayet is to be decided by the will of one-twelfth of the population of uncertain origin and of doubtful sympathies?

"I will next take the case of the Kurds, of whom I remarked that there are 455,000 out of a total population of between 750,000 and 800,000. It was reserved for the Turkish delegation in one of their papers to discover for the first time in history that the Kurds were Turks. Nobody has ever found it out before. The origin of this people is somewhat obscure. Ismet Pasha, in one of his notes, quoted a single authority which was of opinion that they were of Turanian origin, but that is not an opinion that is shared by the best authorities, or indeed, so far as I know, by anybody

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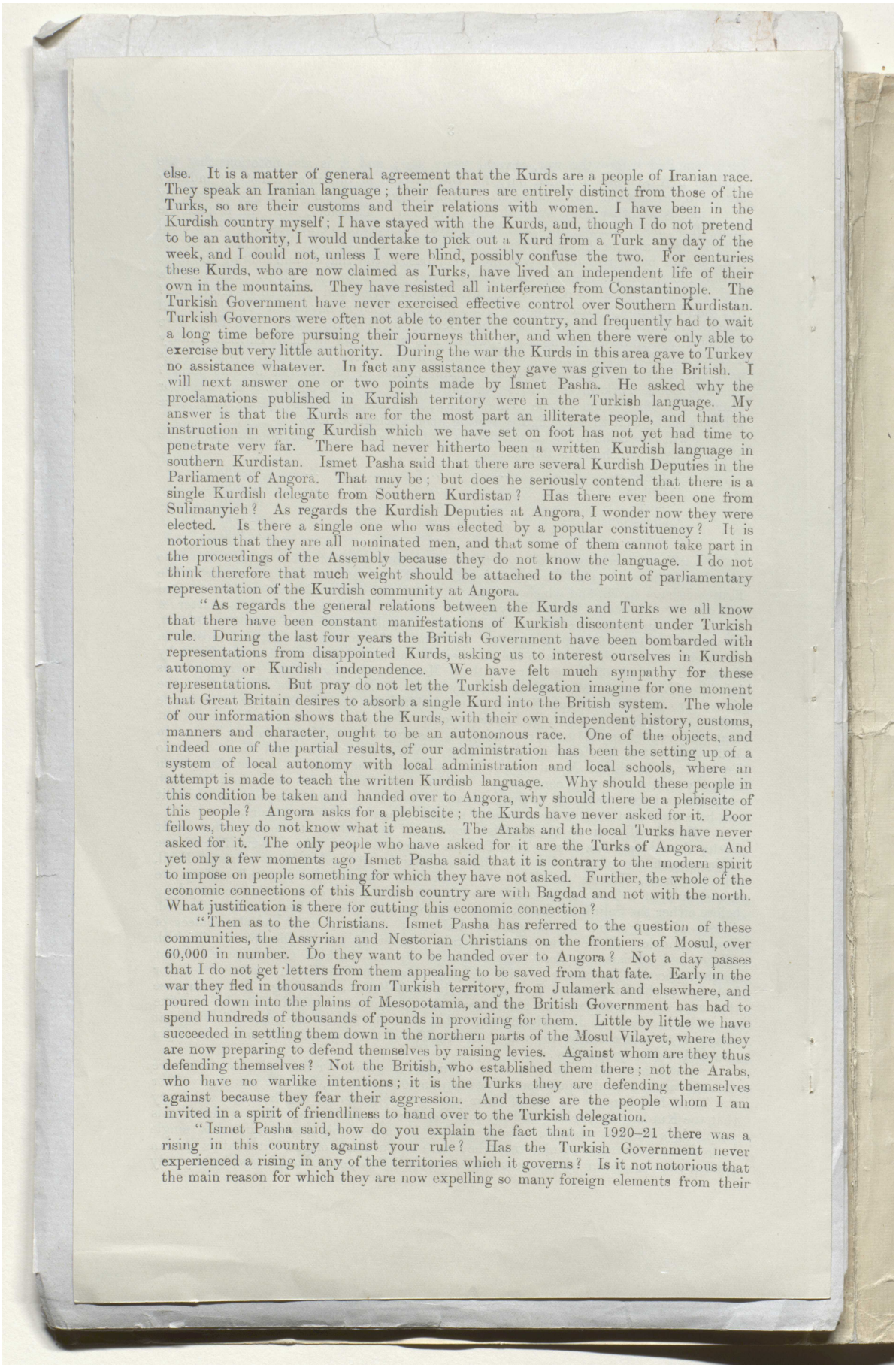

else. It is a matter of general agreement that the Kurds are a people of Iranian race. They speak an Iranian language; their features are entirely distinct from those of the Turks, so are their customs and their relations with women. I have been in the Kurdish country myself; I have stayed with the Kurds, and, though I do not pretend to be an authority, I would undertake to pick out a Kurd from a Turk any day of the week, and I could not, unless I were blind, possibly confuse the two. For centuries these Kurds, who are now claimed as Turks, have lived an independent life of their own in the mountains. They have resisted all interference from Constantinople. The Turkish Government have never exercised effective control over Southern Kurdistan. Turkish Governors were often not able to enter the country, and frequently had to wait a long time before pursuing their journeys thither, and when there were only able to exercise but very little authority. During the war the Kurds in this area gave to Turkey no assistance whatever. In fact any assistance they gave was given to the British. I will next answer one or two points made by Ismet Pasha. He asked why the proclamations published in Kurdish territory were in the Turkish language. My answer is that the Kurds are for the most part an illiterate people, and that the instruction in writing Kurdish which we have set on foot has not yet had time to penetrate very far. There had never hitherto been a written Kurdish language in southern Kurdistan. Ismet Pasha said that there are several Kurdish Deputies in the Parliament of Angora. That may be; but does he seriously contend that there is a single Kurdish delegate from Southern Kurdistan? Has there ever been one from Sulimanyieh? As regards the Kurdish Deputies at Angora, I wonder now they were elected. Is there a single one who was elected by a popular constituency? It is notorious that they are all nominated men, and that some of them cannot take part in the proceedings of the Assembly because they do not know the language. I do not think therefore that much weight should be attached to the point of parliamentary representation of the Kurdish community at Angora.

"As regards the general relations between the Kurds and Turks we all know that there have been constant manifestations of Kurkish discontent under Turkish rule. During the last four years the British Government have been bombarded with representations from disappointed Kurds, asking us to interest ourselves in Kurdish autonomy or Kurdish independence. We have felt much sympathy for these representations. But pray do not let the Turkish delegation imagine for one moment that Great Britain desires to absorb a single Kurd into the British system. The whole of our information shows that the Kurds, with their own independent history, customs, manners and character, ought to be an autonomous race. One of the objects, and indeed one of the partial results, of our administration has been the setting up of a system of local autonomy with local administration and local schools, where an attempt is made to teach the written Kurdish language. Why should these people in this condition be taken and handed over to Angora, why should there be a plebiscite of this people? Angora asks for a plebiscite; the Kurds have never asked for it. Poor fellows, they do not know what it means. The Arabs and the local Turks have never asked for it. The only people who have asked for it are the Turks of Angora. And yet only a few moments ago Ismet Pasha said that it is contrary to the modern spirit to impose on people something for which they have not asked. Further, the whole of the economic connections of this Kurdish country are with Bagdad and not with the north. What justification is there for cutting this economic connection?

"Then as to the Christians. Ismet Pasha has referred to the question of these communities, the Assyrian and Nestorian Christians on the frontiers of Mosul, over 60,000 in number. Do they want to be handed over to Angora? Not a day passes that I do not get letters from them appealing to be saved from that fate. Early in the war they fled in thousands from Turkish territory, from Julamerk and elsewhere, and poured down into the plains of Mesopotamia, and the British Government has had to spend hundreds of thousands of pounds in providing for them. Little by little we have succeeded in settling them down in the northern parts of the Mosul Vilayet, where they are now preparing to defend themselves by raising levies. Against whom are they thus defending themselves? Not the British, who established them there; not the Arabs, who have no warlike intentions; it is the Turks they are defending themselves against because they fear their aggression. And these are the people whom I am invited in a spirit of friendliness to hand over to the Turkish delegation.

"Ismet Pasha said, how do you explain the fact that in 1920–21 there was a rising in this country against your rule? Has the Turkish Government never experienced a rising in any of the territories which it governs? Is it not notorious that the main reason for which they are now expelling so many foreign elements from their

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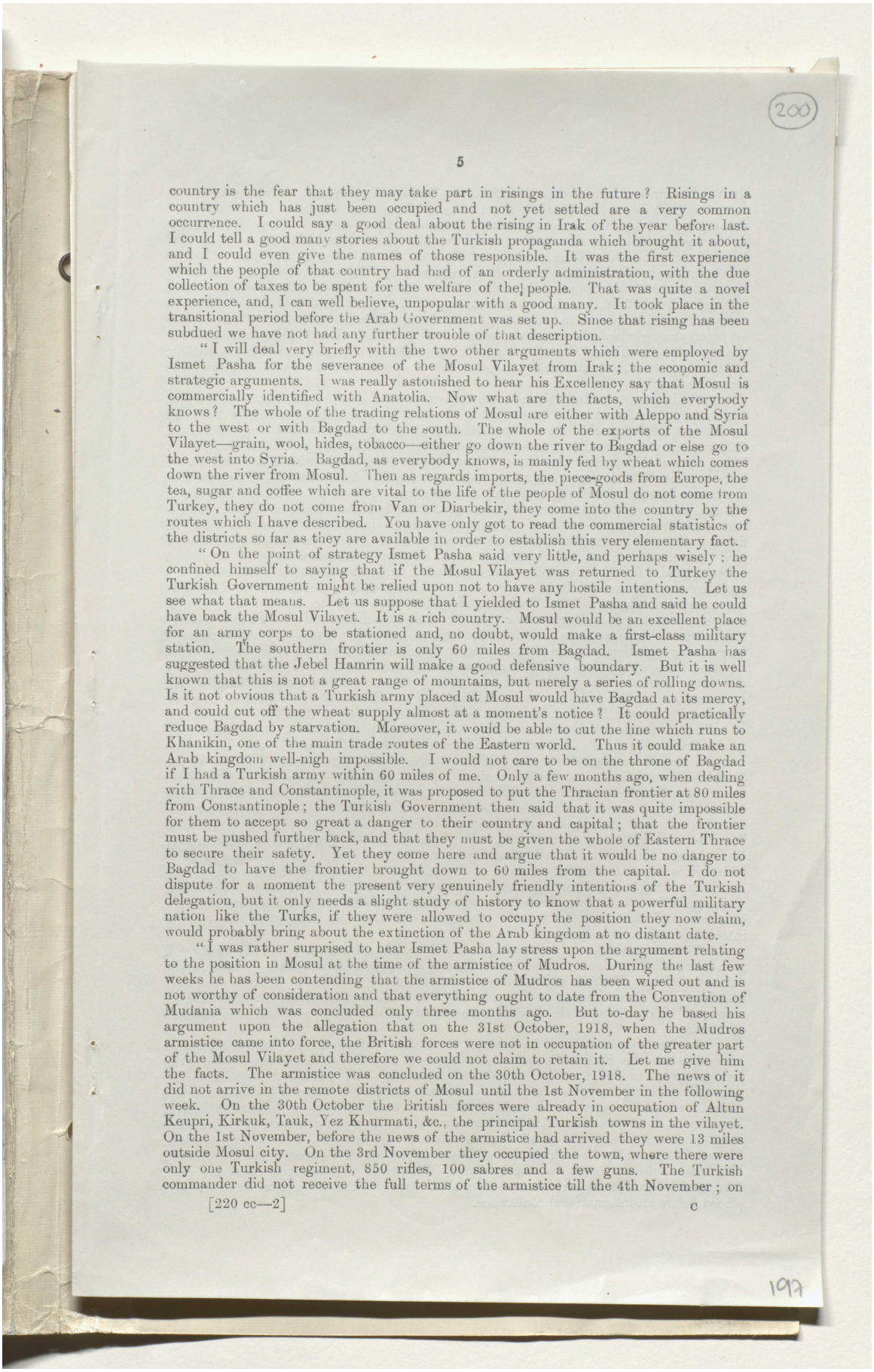

country is the fear that they may take part in risings in the future? Risings in a country which has just been occupied and not yet settled are a very common occurrence. I could say a good deal about the rising in Irak of the year before last. I could tell a good many stories about the Turkish propaganda which brought it about, and I could even give the names of those responsible. It was the first experience which the people of that country had had of an orderly administration, with the due collection of taxes to be spent for the welfare of the people. That was quite a novel experience, and, I can well believe, unpopular with a good many. It took place in the transitional period before the Arab Government was set up. Since that rising has been subdued we have not had any further trouble of that description.

"I will deal very briefly with the two other arguments which were employed by Ismet Pasha for the severance of the Mosul Vilayet from Irak; the economic and strategic arguments. I was really astonished to hear his Excellency say that Mosul is commercially identified with Anatolia. Now what are the facts, which everybody knows? The whole of the trading relations of Mosul are either with Aleppo and Syria to the west or with Bagdad to the south. The whole of the exports of the Mosul Vilayet—grain, wool, hides, tobacco—either go down the river to Bagdad or else go to the west into Syria. Bagdad, as everybody knows, is mainly fed by wheat which comes down the river from Mosul. Then as regards imports, the piece-goods from Europe, the tea, sugar and coffee which are vital to the life of the people of Mosul do not come from Turkey, they do not come from Van or Diarbekir, they come into the country by the routes which I have described. You have only got to read the commercial statistics of the districts so far as they are available in order to establish this very elementary fact.

"On the point of strategy Ismet Pasha said very little, and perhaps wisely; he confined himself to saying that if the Mosul Vilayet was returned to Turkey the Turkish Government might be relied upon not to have any hostile intentions. Let us see what that means. Let us suppose that I yielded to Ismet Pasha and said he could have back the Mosul Vilayet. It is a rich country. Mosul would be an excellent place for an army corps to be stationed and, no doubt, would make a first-class military station. The southern frontier is only 60 miles from Bagdad. Ismet Pasha has suggested that the Jebel Hamrin will make a good defensive boundary. But it is well known that this is not a great range of mountains, but merely a series of rolling downs. Is it not obvious that a Turkish army placed at Mosul would have Bagdad at its mercy, and could cut off the wheat supply almost at a moment's notice? It could practically reduce Bagdad by starvation. Moreover, it would be able to cut the line which runs to Khanikin, one of the main trade routes of the Eastern world. Thus it could make an Arab kingdom well-nigh impossible. I would not care to be on the throne of Bagdad if I had a Turkish army within 60 miles of me. Only a few months ago, when dealing with Thrace and Constantinople, it was proposed to put the Thracian frontier at 80 miles from Constantinople; the Turkish Government then said that it was quite impossible for them to accept so great a danger to their country and capital; that the frontier must be pushed further back, and that they must be given the whole of Eastern Thrace to secure their safety. Yet they come here and argue that it would be no danger to Bagdad to have the frontier brought down to 60 miles from the capital. I do not dispute for a moment the present very genuinely friendly intentions of the Turkish delegation, but it only needs a slight study of history to know that a powerful military nation like the Turks, if they were allowed to occupy the position they now claim, would probably bring about the extinction of the Arab kingdom at no distant date.

"I was rather surprised to hear Ismet Pasha lay stress upon the argument relating to the position in Mosul at the time of the armistice of Mudros. During the last few weeks he has been contending that the armistice of Mudros has been wiped out and is not worthy of consideration and that everything ought to date from the Convention of Mudania which was concluded only three months ago. But to-day he based his argument upon the allegation that on the 31st October, 1918, when the Mudros armistice came into force, the British forces were not in occupation of the greater part of the Mosul Vilayet and therefore we could not claim to retain it. Let me give him the facts. The armistice was concluded on the 30th October, 1918. The news of it did not arrive in the remote districts of Mosul until the 1st November in the following week. On the 30th October the British forces were already in occupation of Altun Keupri, Kirkuk, Tauk, Yez Khurmati, &c., the principal Turkish towns in the vilayet. On the 1st November, before the news of the armistice had arrived they were 13 miles outside Mosul city. On the 3rd November they occupied the town, where there were only one Turkish regiment, 850 rifles, 100 sabres and a few guns. The Turkish commander did not receive the full terms of the armistice till the 4th November; on

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the 9th November he received orders from the Turkish Government to evacuate. Apart from this, will Ismet Pasha allow me to remind him that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the final settlement of the conditions of peace? There is not a war in history in which movements of troops have not taken place after the conclusion of an armistice. In spite of the armistice of Mudania the movements of troops in Eastern Thrace are going on at this moment, as is well known. There is not a single treaty in history in which the armistice lines have been the peace lines ultimately laid down. Moreover, article 7 of the Mudros armistice expressly authorised the Allies' troops to occupy strategical points in Turkey outside the armistice lines in the event of any situation arising which threatens the security of the Allied lines. That was precisely the case with Mosul, and therefore the occupation of that city, only a few miles distant, a few hours after the armistice was signed was fully provided for by the terms of the armistice itself.

"I only desire to allude to one more subject before I conclude, and that is a subject which was not referred to by Ismet Pasha, but which is widely and constantly discussed in the press of the world. It is supposed and alleged that the attitude of the British Government with regard to the retention of Mosul is affected by the question of oil. The question of the oil of the Mosul Vilayet has nothing to do with my argument. I have presented the British case on its own merits quite independently of any natural resources there may be in the country. I do not know how much oil there may be in the neighbourhood of Mosul, or whether it can be worked at a profit, or whether it may turn out after all to be a fraud. During the time I have been connected with the foreign affairs of my country I have never spoken to or interviewed an oil magnate. I have never spoken to or negotiated with a single concessionnaire or would-be concessionnaire for the Mosul oil or any other oil. I do not think that everyone in this room can say the same. It is notorious that since we have been here in Lausanne three representatives of the Turkish delegation were sent to London to offer oil concessions in the Mosul area (which is not theirs to dispose of) to British concessionnaires. That was done without reference to me and without my knowledge. I believe these gentlemen when they arrived in London said they had come over in order to inspect the institutions and collections of that great capital. I don't think they saw many of them. They came back very quickly when they found there was no actual business to be done behind my back, and their visit to British institutions was therefore postponed. I hope that next time they come to London they will give me the pleasure of calling on them, and I will have the greatest satisfaction in taking them personally to the British Museum. Meanwhile what are the facts of the case? Just before the war a concession was given for the oilfields of the Mosul and Bagdad Vilayets by the Turkish Government to a British limited liability company—the Turkish Petroleum Company. The Germans had an interest in the company, and when they were defeated in the war their interest passed to the British. The British Government, after full examination, were convinced and remain convinced of the validity of this concession. They felt and feel bound to uphold it. But both the British Government and company itself recognised that oil is a commodity in which the world is interested, and as to which it is a great mistake to claim or to exercise a monopoly. Accordingly, the company, with the full knowledge and support of the British Government, took steps, and negotiations have ever since been proceeding, to associate the interests of other countries and other parties in this concession, so that all those that are equally interested may have a share.

"If the exploitation is successful, Irak will be the main gainer and the world will gain also, and I have no doubt that Anatolia will profit in her town. That is the substance of the oil affair, which I have explained to the commission in order that they may know the exact amount of influence—and it is nil—which has been exercised in respect of oil on the attitude which I have ventured to take up to-day on this question of Mosul.

"I have now completed my statement of the reasons which have rendered it impossible for the British Government to agree to the Turkish demands. With the utmost desire to arrive at an amicable solution with the Turkish delegation of all the difficulties that confront us, and to conclude a treaty honourable to both, this is a demand which I am bound to resist from every consideration of obligation and of honour. It is a demand which I cannot conceive to be in the interests of the country itself to concede in virtue of all the considerations, economic, strategical, political, historical, geographical to which Ismet Pasha appealed, and on each one of which I have been willing to rest my case to-day. Whatever be the strength of my case, I venture to say that no weaker case than that of the Turkish delegation has ever been placed before an international conference.

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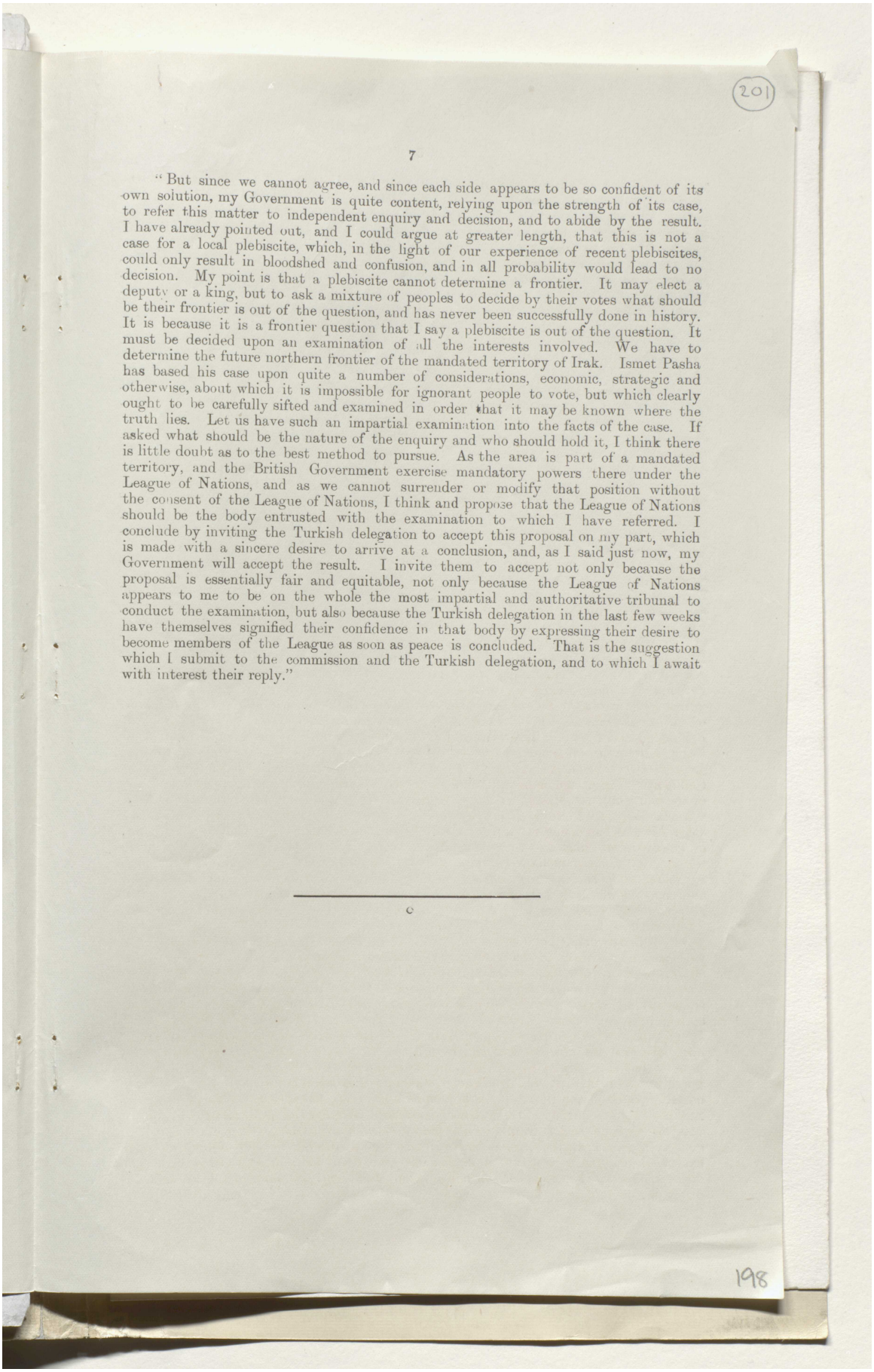

"But since we cannot agree, and since each side appears to be so confident of its own solution, my Government is quite content, relying upon the strength of its case, to refer this matter to independent enquiry and decision, and to abide by the result. I have already pointed out, and I could argue at greater length, that this is not a case for a local plebiscite, which, in the light of our experience of recent plebiscites, could only result in bloodshed and confusion, and in all probability would lead to no decision. My point is that a plebiscite cannot determine a frontier. It may elect a deputy or a king, but to ask a mixture of peoples to decide by their votes what should be their frontier is out of the question, and has never been successfully done in history. It is because it is a frontier question that I say a plebiscite is out of the question. It must be decided upon an examination of all the interests involved. We have to determine the future northern frontier of the mandated territory of Irak. Ismet Pasha has based his case upon quite a number of considerations, economic, strategic and otherwise, about which it is impossible for ignorant people to vote, but which clearly ought to be carefully sifted and examined in order that it may be known where the truth lies. Let us have such an impartial examination into the facts of the case. If asked what should be the nature of the enquiry and who should hold it, I think there is little doubt as to the best method to pursue. As the area is part of a mandated territory, and the British Government exercise mandatory powers there under the League of Nations, and as we cannot surrender or modify that position without the consent of the League of Nations, I think and propose that the League of Nations should be the body entrusted with the examination to which I have referred. I conclude by inviting the Turkish delegation to accept this proposal on my part, which is made with a sincere desire to arrive at a conclusion, and, as I said just now, my Government will accept the result. I invite them to accept not only because the proposal is essentially fair and equitable, not only because the League of Nations appears to me to be on the whole the most impartial and authoritative tribunal to conduct the examination, but also because the Turkish delegation in the last few weeks have themselves signified their confidence in that body by expressing their desire to become members of the League as soon as peace is concluded. That is the suggestion which I submit to the commission and the Turkish delegation, and to which I await with interest their reply."

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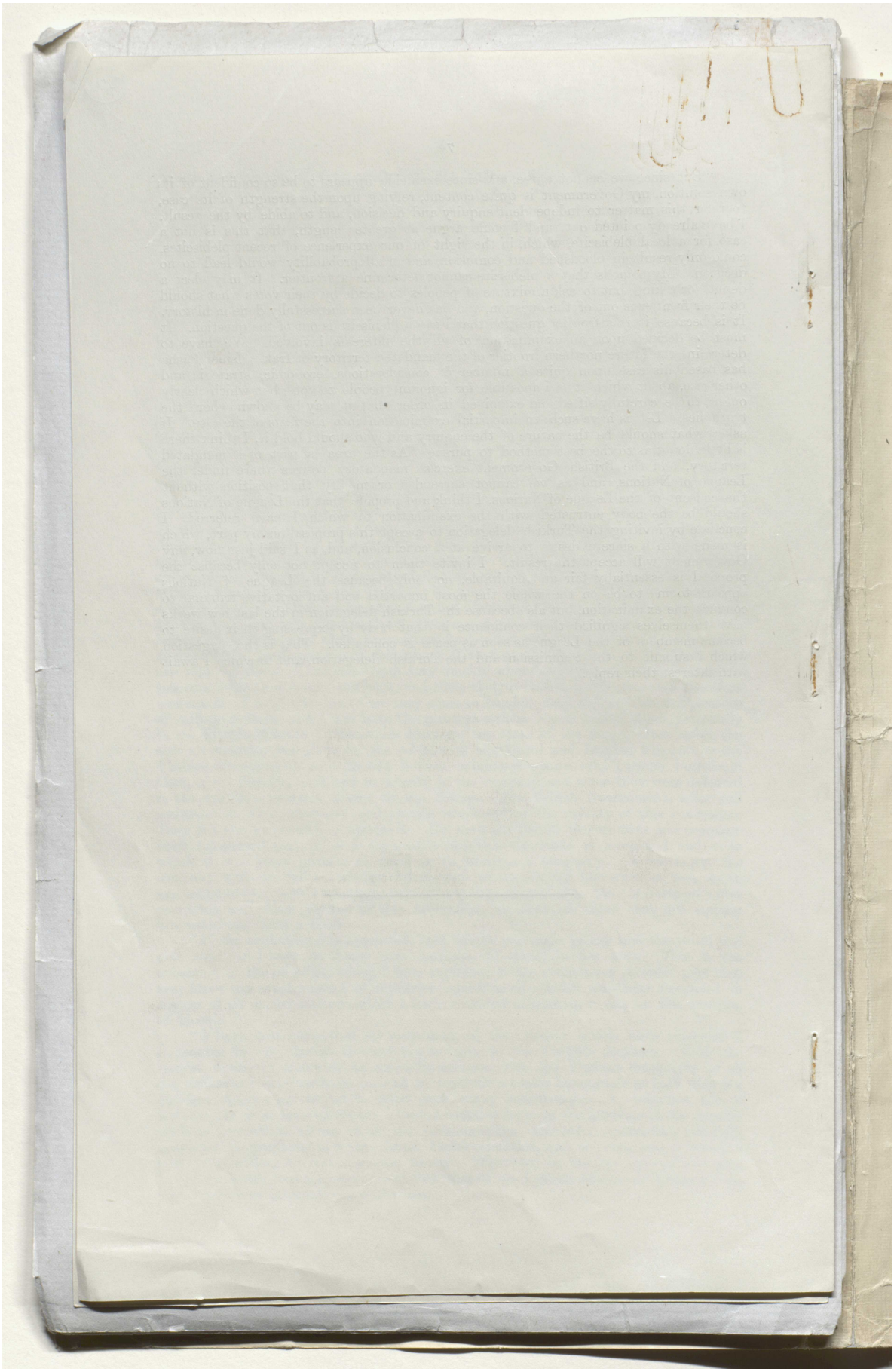

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202

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TURKEY. [January 26.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 3.

[E 1001/1/44] No. 1.

Lord Curzon's Reply to Ismet Pasha respecting Mosul, January 23, 1923.—(Received in Foreign Office January 26.)

LORD CURZON spoke as follows :—

"I will reply at once to the speech which we have just heard.

"His Excellency Ismet Pasha began by expressing regret that this matter could not be solved by direct agreement between him and myself. I share that regret. It is because we could not convince each other that the question has been brought before the commission to-day.

"The first part of Ismet Pasha's speech was devoted to contesting certain points in my speech of this morning. I do not want to reopen that discussion, but there are three or four points on which I will ask the leave of the commission to say a few words.

"In the first place, Ismet Pasha repeated what he had already said this morning, namely, that the Turkish Government cannot take any account of a mandate given for any territory and have never accepted the principle or recognised the fact of any mandate. But that is not the case. I can give an illustration showing that the Turkish Government have definitely accepted both the principle and the fact. As M. Bompard said this morning, the frontier between Syria and Turkey in Asia was agreed at a certain stage by a special arrangement concluded between a representative of the French Government and the Government of Angora. What is that but a definite recognition of a mandated territory? How is France in Syria at this moment? M. Bompard will readily admit that she is there in execution of a mandate conferred upon her at San Remo by the same Powers who conferred the mandates for Irak and Palestine on Great Britain. Her mandate was subsequently laid down and defined by the League of Nations. Turkey has therefore recognised the mandate given to France, and in the text of the agreement which exists between France and Turkey lies the recognition of the French mandate for Syria.

"Secondly, Ismet Pasha said that the Arabs were only one-quarter of the total population of the Vilayet of Mosul, and enquired how it could be argued that one-quarter of the population should decide the fate of the whole. But what is Ismet Pasha's own contention? That the vilayet should be given back to the Turks who constitute only one-twelfth of the whole. Ismet Pasha is quite prepared to accept a smaller fraction if it relates to Turks, but he will not look at a much larger fraction if it applies to Arabs.

"Ismet Pasha's next point concerned the Kurdish delegates in the Parliament at Angora, but he has not replied to the questions which I put to him this morning on the subject. I asked him how they were elected; how many voters voted for them; and from whence the delegates came. He has not told me any of these things, but he has admitted that there are no Kurdish delegates from the Mosul Vilayet and, therefore, none from that part of Kurdistan with which we are now concerned. And yet his argument this morning was that he knew all about the opinions of the people in the Mosul Vilayet through the Kurdish delegates at Angora. Therefore, that particular contention of his can be dismissed.

"I will now deal with the final position adopted by Ismet Pasha. His Excellency strongly argued that the question raised in regard to Mosul should be settled by a plebiscite; that if you can elect a ruler or a king by a plebiscite, you can also determine the fate of a country by the same means. Will his Excellency allow me to remind him that this is not the question now before us. The question is not what is to be the ultimate destiny of Mosul, but where the line is to be drawn between the Turkish possessions and the mandated Arab State of Irak—an entirely different question, and of all questions the least suitable for decision by a plebiscite. I venture to think that I have had far more experience of plebiscites than Ismet Pasha. Since the war I have had a great deal to do with plebiscites concerning frontiers, and am determined never to deal with another. The plebiscite is a fatal and pernicious system of endeavouring

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to settle a frontier, and I will tell the conference why. First, you have to decide who are to vote, what are to be their age, qualifications and length of residence in the country. As Ismet Pasha has said, many of the people in the Vilayet of Mosul are nomads, constantly going to and fro between the hills and the plains and sometimes migrating into Persia. Which of all these people are to vote and on what grounds are they to be selected? Secondly, you have to decide who is to keep order when the voting takes place. In every plebiscite held since the war it has proved necessary to have an army to keep the people quiet and prevent them from cutting each other's throats. Where is the army to come from to keep the peace in Kurdistan? It cannot be Turkish or British, as those two countries are interested parties. Is there any gentleman in this room who is willing to offer an army to go and keep the peace during this plebiscite? He will be a great fool if he does.

"I can give two illustrations of what has happened in recent plebiscites with which some of us are familiar. One of them was to take place under the Treaty of Versailles at Teschen in connection with a dispute between the Czechs and the Poles. It gave rise to so much agitation, rioting and disorder that the Plebiscite Commission eventually had to decide that it should not be held at all. Then there was another and far worse case, that of Upper Silesia. There was so much disturbance that the proceedings had to be postponed for many months. The people who were going to vote were so disorderly that 20,000 to 30,000 French, British and Italian troops were required in the area to keep the peace. During the plebiscite period constant raids and murders disfigured the country. After great difficulty the plebiscite was held, and when the Plebiscite Commission had to report on the result they could not agree among themselves on the line of frontier which they should recommend. They therefore sent the question to Paris for the Great Powers to settle. I was there myself. We too could not agree. Thus, after one and a half years had been spent and all these lives sacrificed and this trouble created, we had to send the question to the League of Nations. We ended up at the point where I now wish to begin. I therefore respectfully recommend this example of a plebiscite to the attention of Ismet Pasha.

"Let us imagine a plebiscite in Kurdistan. What would happen? As Ismet Pasha has said, the population is always moving. The majority of the Kurds and a great part of the Arabs are quite illiterate. They will not know how to vote; they have never seen a ballot box in their lives, and if they did they would probably throw it at your head. Then again, who is going to find the troops to keep order? How are you to explain to the people what they are to vote about? The Kurds would doubtless vote for an independent Kurdistan; the Arabs for an Arab State; the Turks for Turkish nationality; and the Christians for anything which will keep them away from the Turks. How can you define frontiers under such conditions? The result would be inextricable confusion, and the Great Powers would hold themselves up to ridicule. Plebiscites are only good for a unified, not a mixed, population, and for a single, not a confused, issue.

"That is why a plebiscite in Kurdistan is a proposition which no one who has any experience of recent events can possibly support.

"I now come to my final proposal and to the Turkish reply. I ended by suggesting that this difficult and disputed question should be referred for examination and decision to the League of Nations. This proposal received the warm support of my French and Italian colleagues on behalf of their respective delegations; it therefore came before the commission with the full weight of Allied approval. No other delegation spoke on the matter, but I venture to say that there is not a single representative of a single delegation here who will not agree with M. Bompard that it is a wise, equitable and liberal proposal. The Council of the League of Nations is a body composed to a large extent of representatives of neutral States, detached, absolutely impartial, and possessing great moral authority. Great Britain is ready to put her case into its hands; but Turkey has so little confidence in her case that she dare not submit it to arbitration of any kind. Ismet Pasha has just rejected arbitration in general and he therefore presumably rejects arbitration by the League of Nations. I will now tell him what it is that he has rejected.

"Supposing my proposal is accepted, what will happen? Here is the Covenant of the League describing its procedure and the action to be taken by the States which belong to it. Only three weeks ago the Turkish delegation signified that their first step after the conclusion of peace will be to ask to join the League. If this dispute were referred to the League, Turkey not being a member, the first act of the League under article 17 of the Covenant would be to invite Turkey to become a member for the purposes of the dispute. The Council of the League would then institute an

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enquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances. Lest the Turkish delegation should say that they will not have a chance of being heard and that their case will not be adequately represented, let me remind Ismet Pasha of article 4 of the Covenant, which lays down that any member of the League not represented on the council (I am speaking here of Turkey as having become a member of the League of Nations for the purposes of this enquiry) shall be invited to send a representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that member of the League. Therefore, if and when this matter goes to the League of Nations, Turkey will at once be invited not merely to become a member but to sit on the council.

"The council will have to decide what method of examination to adopt. It may ask the Turks and the British for their respective views; it may decide to send a commission to take the views of the Kurds, Turks, Arabs and Christians on the spot; it may hold an enquiry in Europe, or it may appoint a single arbitrator to settle the matter. I do not know what it will do; but my point is that the Turkish delegation will be there just like ourselves, and when the two cases have been stated you will get the most impartial examination which it is possible to secure. Further, article 5 of the Covenant provides that the decision of the council upon which the Turkish Government will be represented will have to be unanimous so that no decision can be arrived at without their consent.

"Now I speak with the utmost solemnity: Do the Turkish delegation really refuse that proposal? If they do, I venture to say in all sincerity that it will produce a worse impression than anything which the Turkish delegation have yet done at this conference. When it goes out to the world that I, on behalf of my Government, have made this offer, that it will give Turkey the opportunity just described, and that Turkey refused it without looking at it or examining it, I shall be very sorry to read the comments that will be passed in the newspapers of the world to-morrow upon the attitude and decision of the Turkish delegation. I still hope that Ismet Pasha will tell me that he did not fully consider the terms of his reply and that his delegation do not mean the complete refusal which I understood him to give.

"But I would like to add something more. The matter cannot rest there. Let us suppose that the Turkish delegation do mean to refuse and persist in their refusal; what remains to be done? I cannot leave the case in that position; it is fraught with too much peril to the peace of the world. I have seen in the papers and I have information that if the matter is not settled in the spirit which the Turkish delegation desire, there may be movements of Turkish troops from Anatolia in the direction of Mosul, there may be an attack upon the frontier, there may be an attempt to decide the issue by military means, there may be hostilities, there may be war. I am here to make a treaty of peace; I am not here to make war. I am not here to allow conditions to continue to exist which may result in war. Therefore, supposing the Turkish delegation really mean to refuse and persist in that refusal, I shall be obliged, on behalf of my own Government, to act independently. I will explain what I mean.

"There is another article in the Covenant (article 11) to which I have not yet referred. It reads as follows:—

> "'Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the council.
>
> "'It is also declared to be the friendly right of each member of the League to bring to the attention of the assembly or of the council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.'

"If the Turkish delegation refuse my proposal I shall act on that article. I shall at once address myself to the Council of the League and say that a situation has arisen which seems likely to disturb international peace and the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends. The council will at once meet to consider the question. It will address an invitation to the Turkish Government to state their cases and, in the event of their declining to do so, there will be placed in operation all the sanctions which exist in the Covenant. But I do not want to take this course; I

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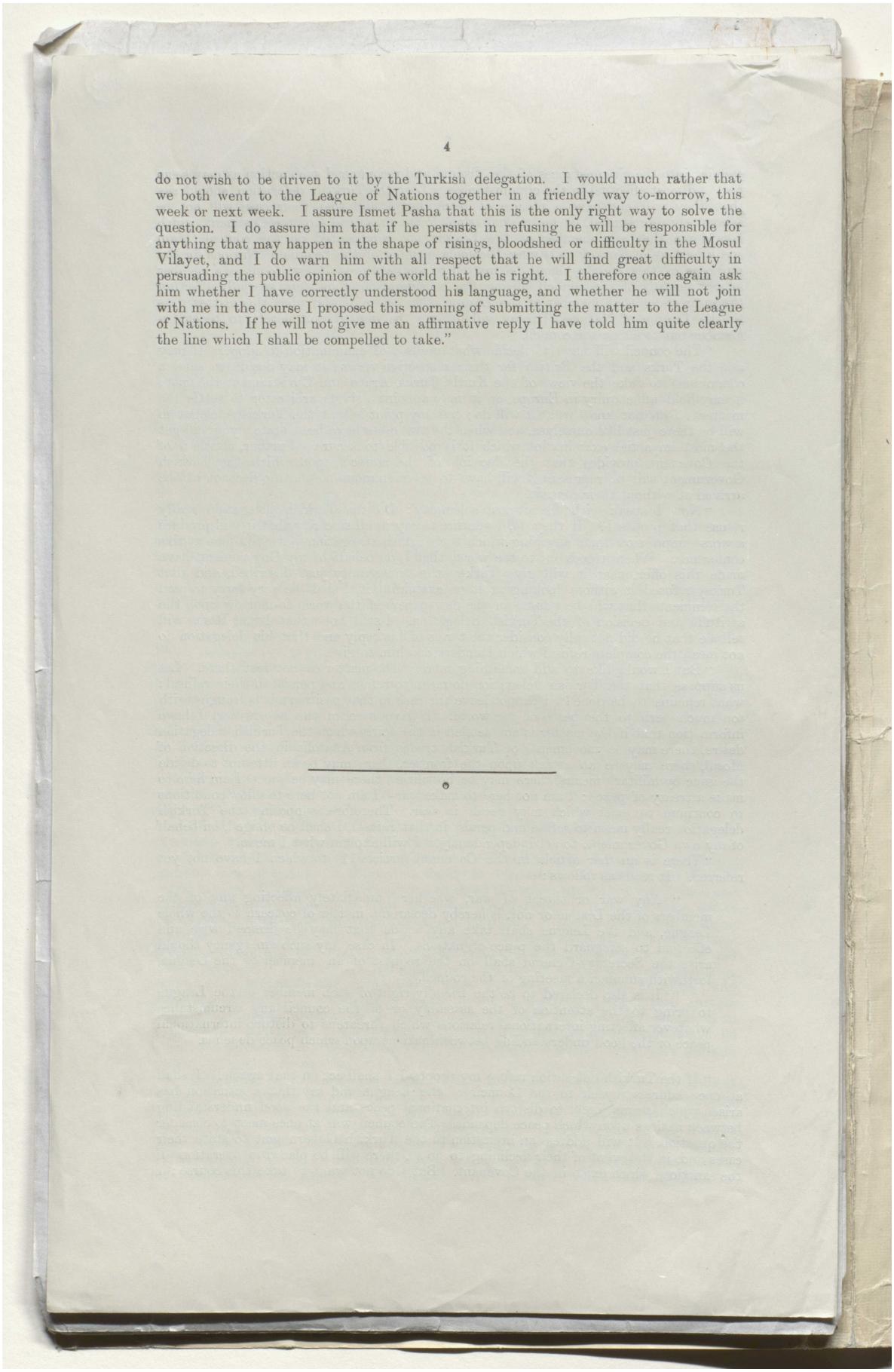

do not wish to be driven to it by the Turkish delegation. I would much rather that we both went to the League of Nations together in a friendly way to-morrow, this week or next week. I assure Ismet Pasha that this is the only right way to solve the question. I do assure him that if he persists in refusing he will be responsible for anything that may happen in the shape of risings, bloodshed or difficulty in the Mosul Vilayet, and I do warn him with all respect that he will find great difficulty in persuading the public opinion of the world that he is right. I therefore once again ask him whether I have correctly understood his language, and whether he will not join with me in the course I proposed this morning of submitting the matter to the League of Nations. If he will not give me an affirmative reply I have told him quite clearly the line which I shall be compelled to take."

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TURKEY. [January 26.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 3.

[E 1001/1/44] No. 1.

Lord Curzon's Reply to Ismet Pasha respecting Mosul, January 23, 1923.—(Received in Foreign Office January 26.)

LORD CURZON spoke as follows :—

"I will reply at once to the speech which we have just heard.

"His Excellency Ismet Pasha began by expressing regret that this matter could not be solved by direct agreement between him and myself. I share that regret. It is because we could not convince each other that the question has been brought before the commission to-day.

"The first part of Ismet Pasha's speech was devoted to contesting certain points in my speech of this morning. I do not want to reopen that discussion, but there are three or four points on which I will ask the leave of the commission to say a few words.

"In the first place, Ismet Pasha repeated what he had already said this morning, namely, that the Turkish Government cannot take any account of a mandate given for any territory and have never accepted the principle or recognised the fact of any mandate. But that is not the case. I can give an illustration showing that the Turkish Government have definitely accepted both the principle and the fact. As M. Bompard said this morning, the frontier between Syria and Turkey in Asia was agreed at a certain stage by a special arrangement concluded between a representative of the French Government and the Government of Angora. What is that but a definite recognition of a mandated territory? How is France in Syria at this moment? M. Bompard will readily admit that she is there in execution of a mandate conferred upon her at San Remo by the same Powers who conferred the mandates for Irak and Palestine on Great Britain. Her mandate was subsequently laid down and defined by the League of Nations. Turkey has therefore recognised the mandate given to France, and in the text of the agreement which exists between France and Turkey lies the recognition of the French mandate for Syria.

"Secondly, Ismet Pasha said that the Arabs were only one-quarter of the total population of the Vilayet of Mosul, and enquired how it could be argued that one-quarter of the population should decide the fate of the whole. But what is Ismet Pasha's own contention? That the vilayet should be given back to the Turks who constitute only one-twelfth of the whole. Ismet Pasha is quite prepared to accept a smaller fraction if it relates to Turks, but he will not look at a much larger fraction if it applies to Arabs.

"Ismet Pasha's next point concerned the Kurdish delegates in the Parliament at Angora, but he has not replied to the questions which I put to him this morning on the subject. I asked him how they were elected; how many voters voted for them; and from whence the delegates came. He has not told me any of these things, but he has admitted that there are no Kurdish delegates from the Mosul Vilayet and, therefore, none from that part of Kurdistan with which we are now concerned. And yet his argument this morning was that he knew all about the opinions of the people in the Mosul Vilayet through the Kurdish delegates at Angora. Therefore, that particular contention of his can be dismissed.

"I will now deal with the final position adopted by Ismet Pasha. His Excellency strongly argued that the question raised in regard to Mosul should be settled by a plebiscite; that if you can elect a ruler or a king by a plebiscite, you can also determine the fate of a country by the same means. Will his Excellency allow me to remind him that this is not the question now before us. The question is not what is to be the ultimate destiny of Mosul, but where the line is to be drawn between the Turkish possessions and the mandated Arab State of Irak—an entirely different question, and of all questions the least suitable for decision by a plebiscite. I venture to think that I have had far more experience of plebiscites than Ismet Pasha. Since the war I have had a great deal to do with plebiscites concerning frontiers, and am determined never to deal with another. The plebiscite is a fatal and pernicious system of endeavouring

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to settle a frontier, and I will tell the conference why. First, you have to decide who are to vote, what are to be their age, qualifications and length of residence in the country. As Ismet Pasha has said, many of the people in the Vilayet of Mosul are nomads, constantly going to and fro between the hills and the plains and sometimes migrating into Persia. Which of all these people are to vote and on what grounds are they to be selected? Secondly, you have to decide who is to keep order when the voting takes place. In every plebiscite held since the war it has proved necessary to have an army to keep the people quiet and prevent them from cutting each other's throats. Where is the army to come from to keep the peace in Kurdistan? It cannot be Turkish or British, as those two countries are interested parties. Is there any gentleman in this room who is willing to offer an army to go and keep the peace during this plebiscite? He will be a great fool if he does.

"I can give two illustrations of what has happened in recent plebiscites with which some of us are familiar. One of them was to take place under the Treaty of Versailles at Teschen in connection with a dispute between the Czechs and the Poles. It gave rise to so much agitation, rioting and disorder that the Plebiscite Commission eventually had to decide that it should not be held at all. Then there was another and far worse case, that of Upper Silesia. There was so much disturbance that the proceedings had to be postponed for many months. The people who were going to vote were so disorderly that 20,000 to 30,000 French, British and Italian troops were required in the area to keep the peace. During the plebiscite period constant raids and murders disfigured the country. After great difficulty the plebiscite was held, and when the Plebiscite Commission had to report on the result they could not agree among themselves on the line of frontier which they should recommend. They therefore sent the question to Paris for the Great Powers to settle. I was there myself. We too could not agree. Thus, after one and a half years had been spent and all these lives sacrificed and this trouble created, we had to send the question to the League of Nations. We ended up at the point where I now wish to begin. I therefore respectfully recommend this example of a plebiscite to the attention of Ismet Pasha.

"Let us imagine a plebiscite in Kurdistan. What would happen? As Ismet Pasha has said, the population is always moving. The majority of the Kurds and a great part of the Arabs are quite illiterate. They will not know how to vote; they have never seen a ballot box in their lives, and if they did they would probably throw it at your head. Then again, who is going to find the troops to keep order? How are you to explain to the people what they are to vote about? The Kurds would doubtless vote for an independent Kurdistan; the Arabs for an Arab State; the Turks for Turkish nationality; and the Christians for anything which will keep them away from the Turks. How can you define frontiers under such conditions? The result would be inextricable confusion, and the Great Powers would hold themselves up to ridicule. Plebiscites are only good for a unified, not a mixed, population, and for a single, not a confused, issue.

"That is why a plebiscite in Kurdistan is a proposition which no one who has any experience of recent events can possibly support.

"I now come to my final proposal and to the Turkish reply. I ended by suggesting that this difficult and disputed question should be referred for examination and decision to the League of Nations. This proposal received the warm support of my French and Italian colleagues on behalf of their respective delegations; it therefore came before the commission with the full weight of Allied approval. No other delegation spoke on the matter, but I venture to say that there is not a single representative of a single delegation here who will not agree with M. Bompard that it is a wise, equitable and liberal proposal. The Council of the League of Nations is a body composed to a large extent of representatives of neutral States, detached, absolutely impartial, and possessing great moral authority. Great Britain is ready to put her case into its hands; but Turkey has so little confidence in her case that she dare not submit it to arbitration of any kind. Ismet Pasha has just rejected arbitration in general and he therefore presumably rejects arbitration by the League of Nations. I will now tell him what it is that he has rejected.

"Supposing my proposal is accepted, what will happen? Here is the Covenant of the League describing its procedure and the action to be taken by the States which belong to it. Only three weeks ago the Turkish delegation signified that their first step after the conclusion of peace will be to ask to join the League. If this dispute were referred to the League, Turkey not being a member, the first act of the League under article 17 of the Covenant would be to invite Turkey to become a member for the purposes of the dispute. The Council of the League would then institute an

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enquiry into the circumstances of the dispute and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances. Lest the Turkish delegation should say that they will not have a chance of being heard and that their case will not be adequately represented, let me remind Ismet Pasha of article 4 of the Covenant, which lays down that any member of the League not represented on the council (I am speaking here of Turkey as having become a member of the League of Nations for the purposes of this enquiry) shall be invited to send a representative to sit as a member at any meeting of the council during the consideration of matters specially affecting the interests of that member of the League. Therefore, if and when this matter goes to the League of Nations, Turkey will at once be invited not merely to become a member but to sit on the council.

"The council will have to decide what method of examination to adopt. It may ask the Turks and the British for their respective views; it may decide to send a commission to take the views of the Kurds, Turks, Arabs and Christians on the spot; it may hold an enquiry in Europe, or it may appoint a single arbitrator to settle the matter. I do not know what it will do; but my point is that the Turkish delegation will be there just like ourselves, and when the two cases have been stated you will get the most impartial examination which it is possible to secure. Further, article 5 of the Covenant provides that the decision of the council upon which the Turkish Government will be represented will have to be unanimous so that no decision can be arrived at without their consent.

"Now I speak with the utmost solemnity: Do the Turkish delegation really refuse that proposal? If they do, I venture to say in all sincerity that it will produce a worse impression than anything which the Turkish delegation have yet done at this conference. When it goes out to the world that I, on behalf of my Government, have made this offer, that it will give Turkey the opportunity just described, and that Turkey refused it without looking at it or examining it, I shall be very sorry to read the comments that will be passed in the newspapers of the world to-morrow upon the attitude and decision of the Turkish delegation. I still hope that Ismet Pasha will tell me that he did not fully consider the terms of his reply and that his delegation do not mean the complete refusal which I understood him to give.

"But I would like to add something more. The matter cannot rest there. Let us suppose that the Turkish delegation do mean to refuse and persist in their refusal; what remains to be done? I cannot leave the case in that position; it is fraught with too much peril to the peace of the world. I have seen in the papers and I have information that if the matter is not settled in the spirit which the Turkish delegation desire, there may be movements of Turkish troops from Anatolia in the direction of Mosul, there may be an attack upon the frontier, there may be an attempt to decide the issue by military means, there may be hostilities, there may be war. I am here to make a treaty of peace; I am not here to make war. I am not here to allow conditions to continue to exist which may result in war. Therefore, supposing the Turkish delegation really mean to refuse and persist in that refusal, I shall be obliged, on behalf of my own Government, to act independently. I will explain what I mean.

"There is another article in the Covenant (article 11) to which I have not yet referred. It reads as follows:—

> "'Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the council.
>
> "'It is also declared to be the friendly right of each member of the League to bring to the attention of the assembly or of the council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends.'

"If the Turkish delegation refuse my proposal I shall act on that article. I shall at once address myself to the Council of the League and say that a situation has arisen which seems likely to disturb international peace and the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends. The council will at once meet to consider the question. It will address an invitation to the Turkish Government to state their cases and, in the event of their declining to do so, there will be placed in operation all the sanctions which exist in the Covenant. But I do not want to take this course; I

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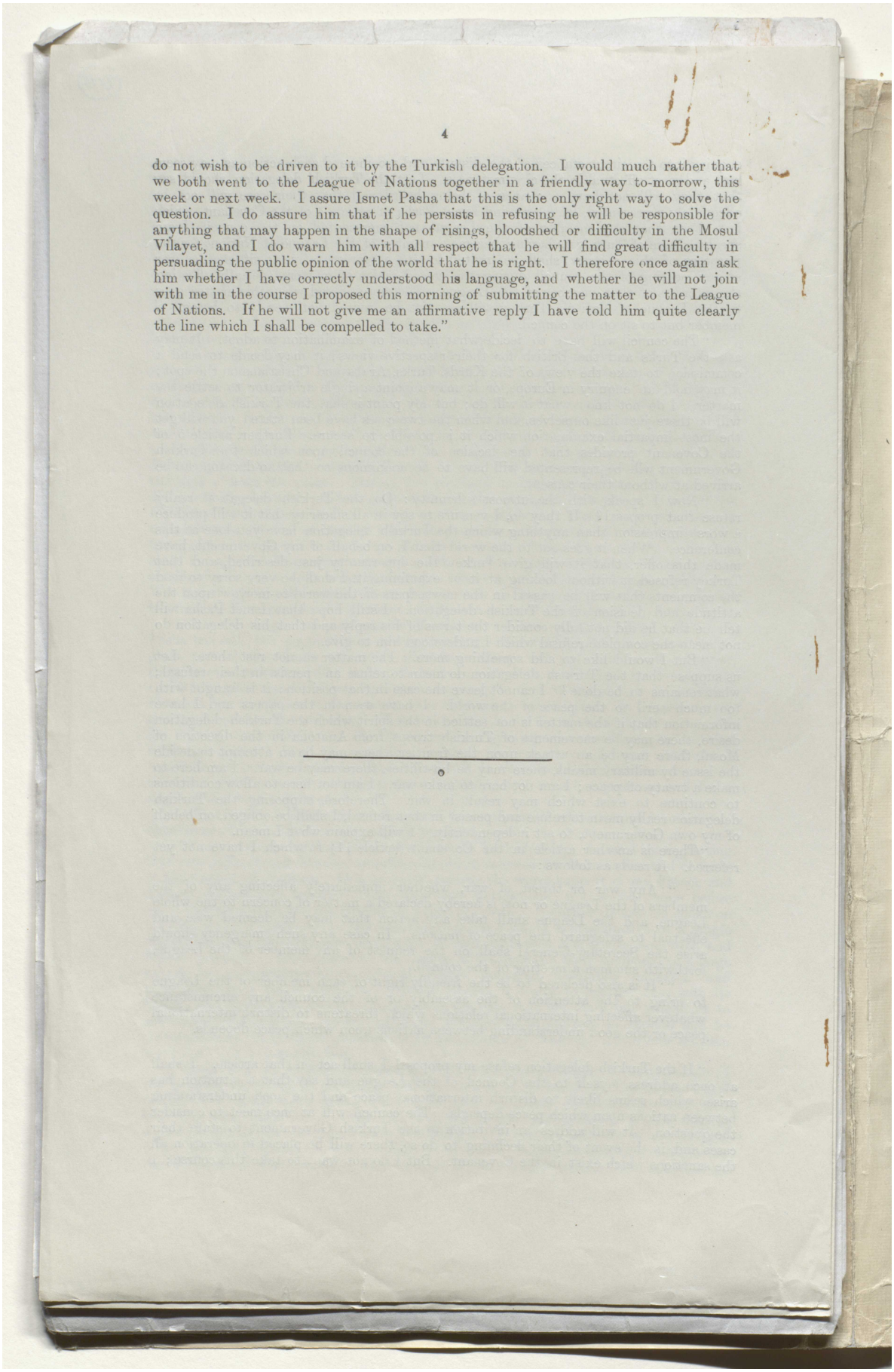

do not wish to be driven to it by the Turkish delegation. I would much rather that we both went to the League of Nations together in a friendly way to-morrow, this week or next week. I assure Ismet Pasha that this is the only right way to solve the question. I do assure him that if he persists in refusing he will be responsible for anything that may happen in the shape of risings, bloodshed or difficulty in the Mosul Vilayet, and I do warn him with all respect that he will find great difficulty in persuading the public opinion of the world that he is right. I therefore once again ask him whether I have correctly understood his language, and whether he will not join with me in the course I proposed this morning of submitting the matter to the League of Nations. If he will not give me an affirmative reply I have told him quite clearly the line which I shall be compelled to take."

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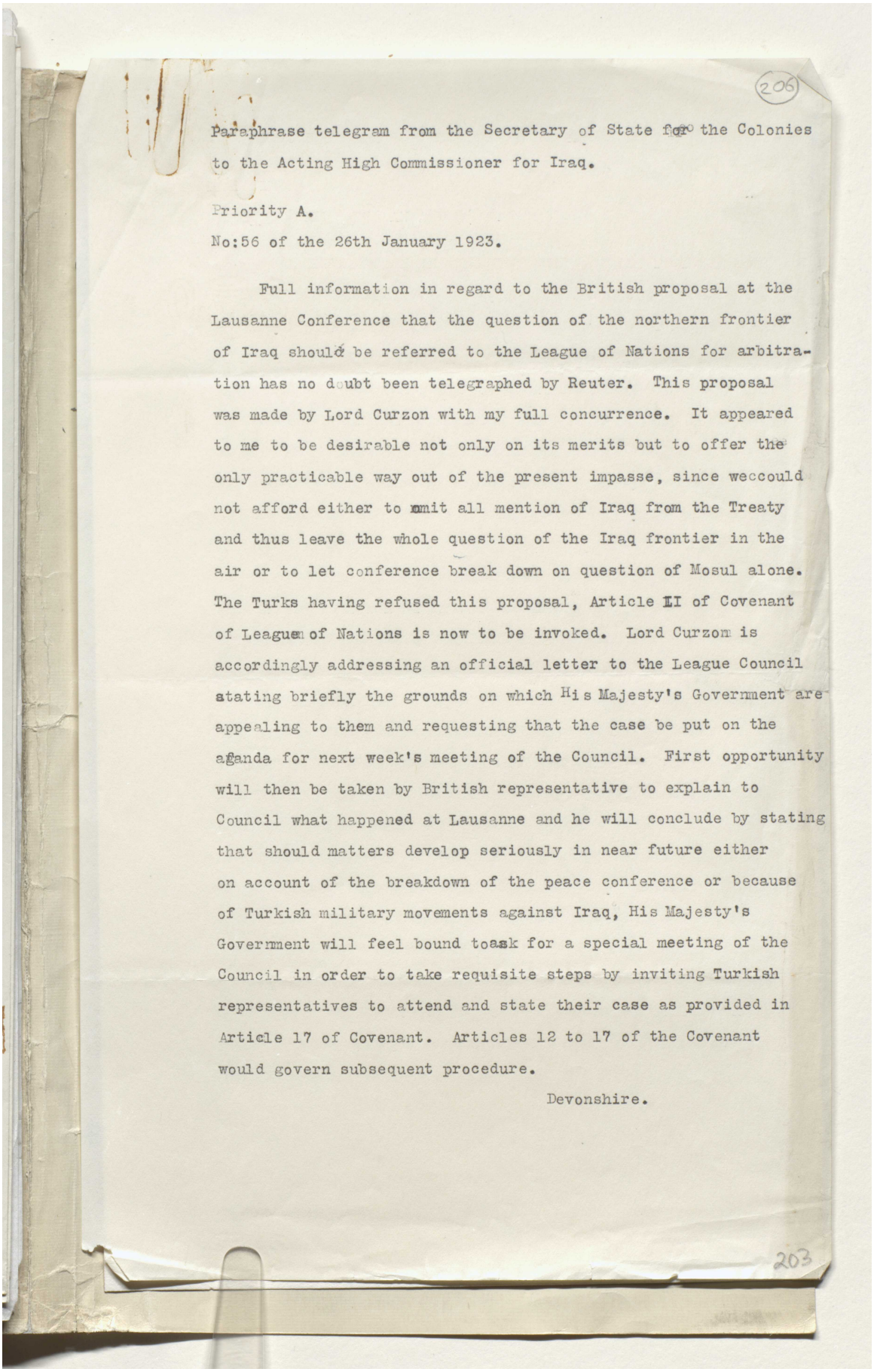

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Paraphrase telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Acting High Commissioner for Iraq.

Priority A.

No:56 of the 26th January 1923.

Full information in regard to the British proposal at the Lausanne Conference that the question of the northern frontier of Iraq should be referred to the League of Nations for arbitration has no doubt been telegraphed by Reuter. This proposal was made by Lord Curzon with my full concurrence. It appeared to me to be desirable not only on its merits but to offer the only practicable way out of the present impasse, since weccould not afford either to omit all mention of Iraq from the Treaty and thus leave the whole question of the Iraq frontier in the air or to let conference break down on question of Mosul alone. The Turks having refused this proposal, Article LI of Covenant of League of Nations is now to be invoked. Lord Curzon is accordingly addressing an official letter to the League Council stating briefly the grounds on which His Majesty's Government are appealing to them and requesting that the case be put on the aganda for next week's meeting of the Council. First opportunity will then be taken by British representative to explain to Council what happened at Lausanne and he will conclude by stating that should matters develop seriously in near future either on account of the breakdown of the peace conference or because of Turkish military movements against Iraq, His Majesty's Government will feel bound toask for a special meeting of the Council in order to take requisite steps by inviting Turkish representatives to attend and state their case as provided in Article 17 of Covenant. Articles 12 to 17 of the Covenant would govern subsequent procedure.

Devonshire.

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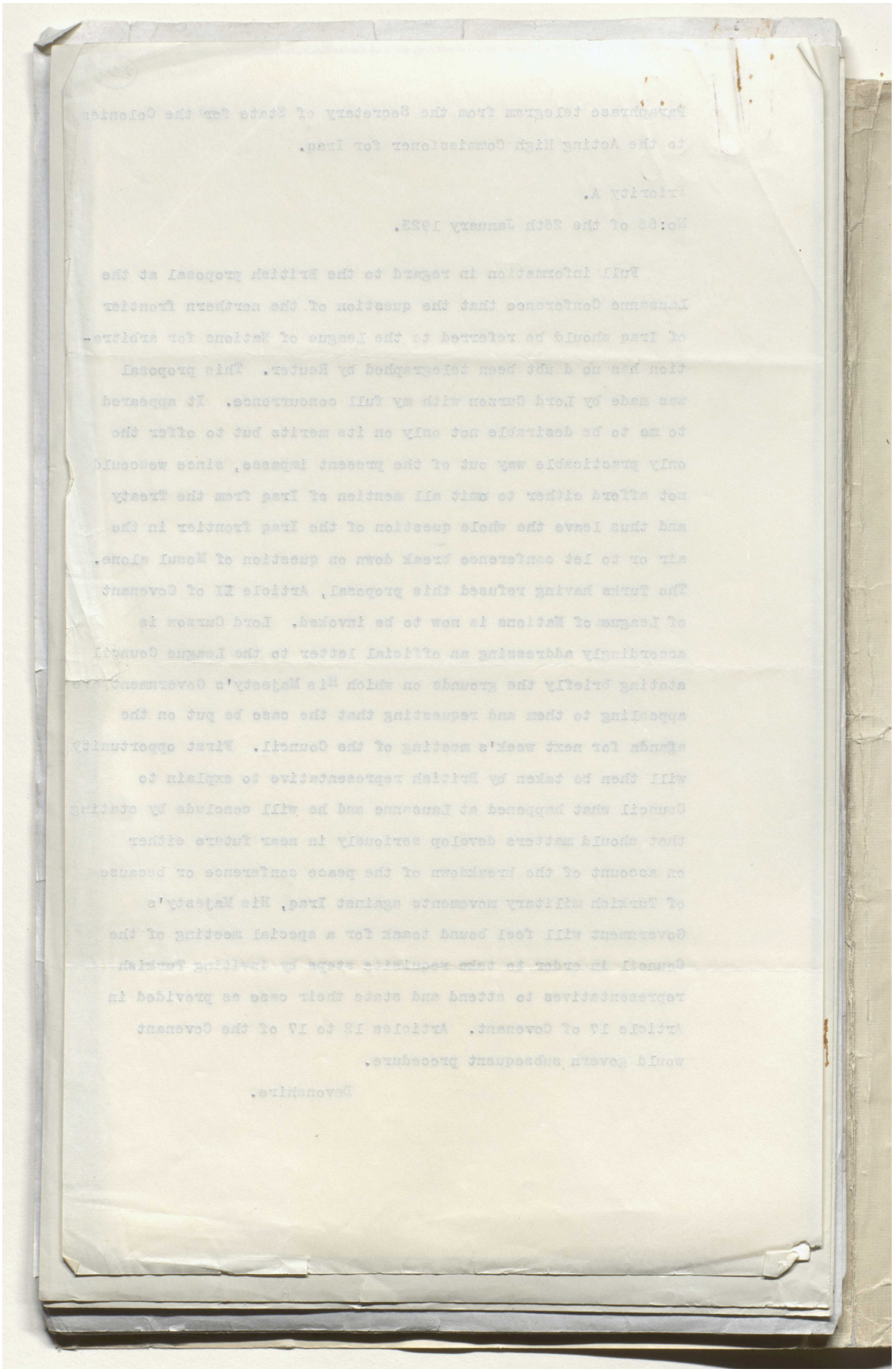

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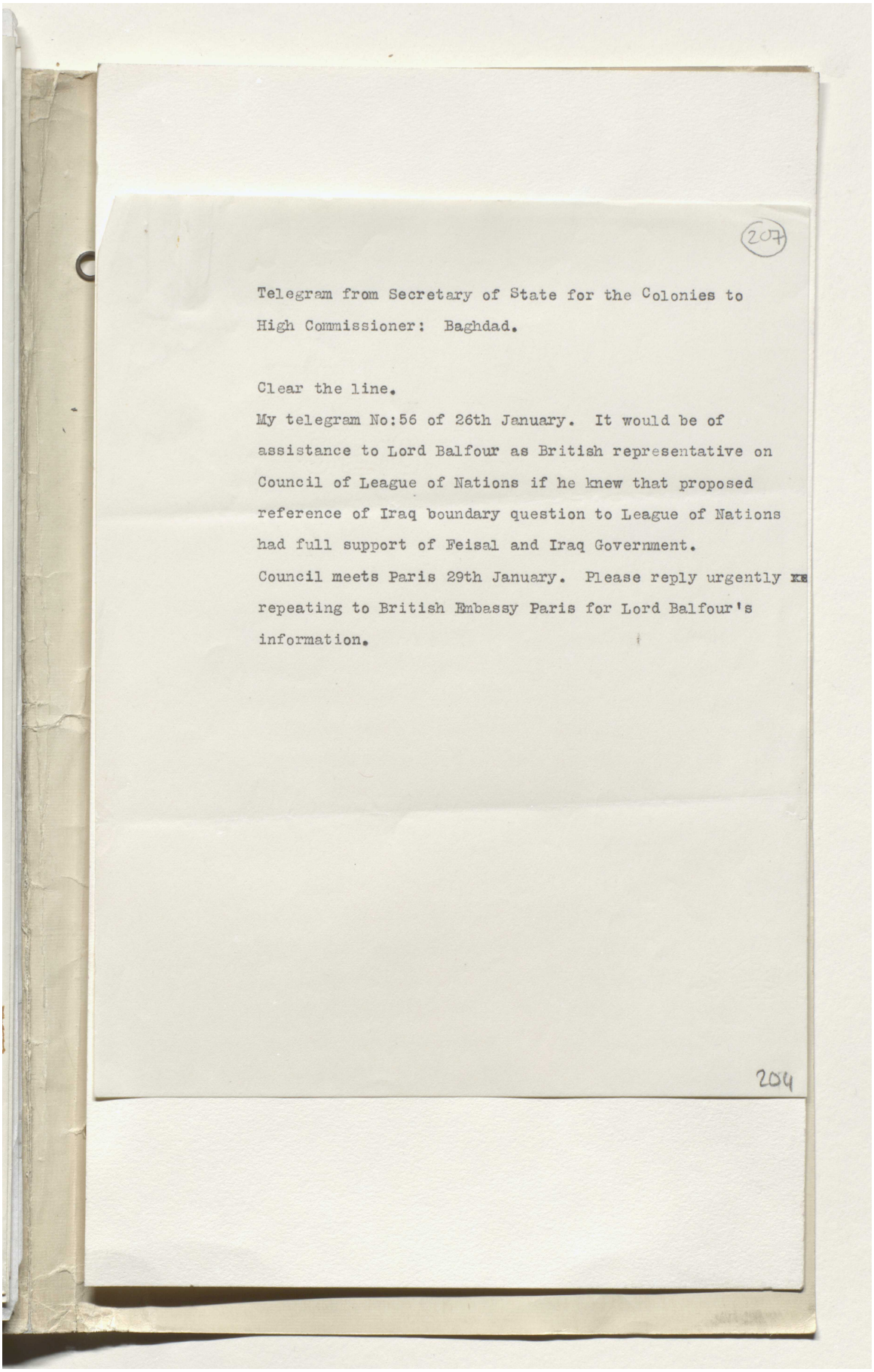

(207)

Telegram from Secretary of State for the Colonies to
High Commissioner: Baghdad.

Clear the line.
My telegram No:56 of 26th January. It would be of
assistance to Lord Balfour as British representative on
Council of League of Nations if he knew that proposed
reference of Iraq boundary question to League of Nations
had full support of Feisal and Iraq Government.
Council meets Paris 29th January. Please reply urgently xx
repeating to British Embassy Paris for Lord Balfour's
information.

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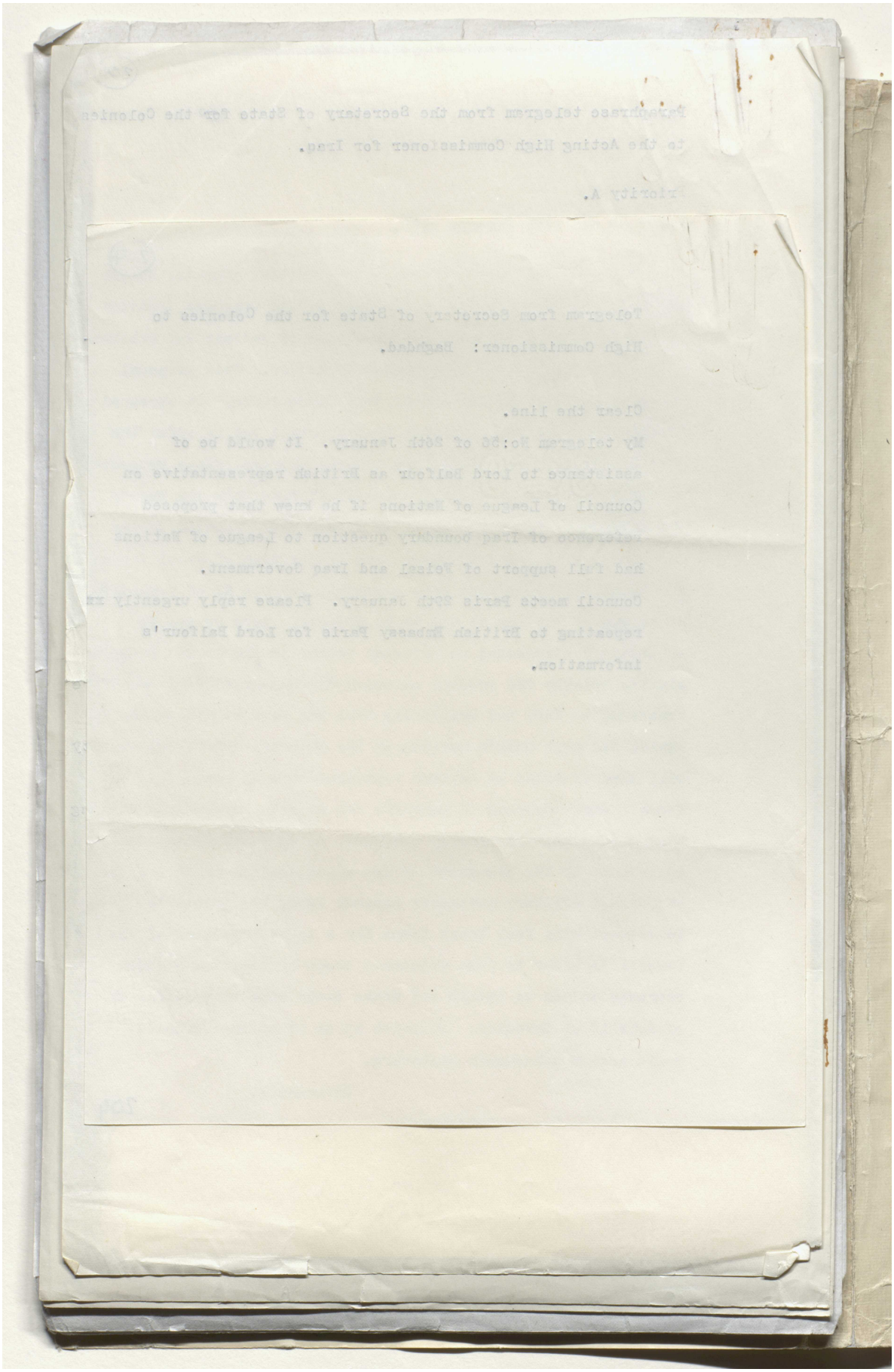

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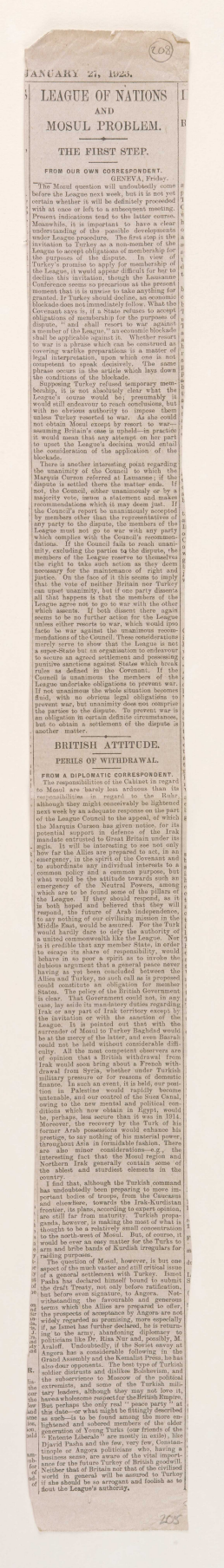

JANUARY 27, 1925.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND MOSUL PROBLEM.

THE FIRST STEP.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

GENEVA, Friday.

The Mosul question will undoubtedly come before the League next week, but it is not yet certain whether it will be definitely proceeded with at once or left to a subsequent meeting. Present indications tend to the latter course. Meanwhile, it is important to have a clear understanding of the possible developments under League procedure. The first step is the invitation to Turkey as a non-member of the League to accept obligations of membership for the purposes of the dispute. In view of Turkey's promise to apply for membership of the League, it would appear difficult for her to decline this invitation, though the Lausanne Conference seems so precarious at the present moment that it is unwise to take anything for granted. If Turkey should decline, an economic blockade does not immediately follow. What the Covenant says is, if a State refuses to accept obligations of membership for the purposes of dispute, "and shall resort to war against a member of the League," an economic blockade shall be applicable against it. Whether resort to war is a phrase which can be construed as covering warlike preparations is a matter of legal interpretation, upon which one is not competent to speak decisively. The same phrase occurs in the article which lays down the conditions of the blockade.

Supposing Turkey refused temporary membership, it is not absolutely clear what the League's course would be; presumably it would still endeavour to reach conclusions, but with no obvious authority to impose them unless Turkey resorted to war. As she could not obtain Mosul except by resort to war—assuming Britain's case is upheld—in practice it would mean that any attempt on her part to upset the League's decision would entail the consideration of the application of the blockade.

There is another interesting point regarding the unanimity of the Council to which the Marquis Curzon referred at Lausanne; if the dispute is settled there the matter ends. If not, the Council, either unanimously or by a majority vote, issues a statement and makes recommendations which it may deem just. If the Council's report be unanimously accepted by members other than the representatives of any party to the dispute, the members of the League must not go to war with any party which complies with the Council's recommendations. If the Council fails to reach unanimity, excluding the parties to the dispute, the members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they deem necessary for the maintenance of right and justice. On the face of it this seems to imply that the vote of neither Britain nor Turkey can upset unanimity, but if one party dissents all that happens is that the members of the League agree not to go to war with the other which assents. If both dissent there again seems to be no further action for the League unless either resorts to war, which would ipso facto be war against the unanimous recommendations of the Council. These considerations merely serve to show that the League is not a super-State but an organization to endeavour to secure an agreed settlement and possessing punitive sanctions against States which break rules as defined in the Covenant. If the Council is unanimous the members of the League undertake obligations to prevent war. If not unanimous the whole situation becomes fluid, with no obvious legal obligations to prevent war, but unanimity does not comprise the parties to the dispute. To prevent war is an obligation in certain definite circumstances, but to obtain a settlement of the dispute is another matter.

BRITISH ATTITUDE.

PERILS OF WITHDRAWAL.

FROM A DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT.

The responsibilities of the Cabinet in regard to Mosul are barely less arduous than its responsibilities in regard to the Ruhr, although they might conceivably be lightened next week by an adequate response on the part of the League Council to the appeal, of which the Marquis Curzon has given notice, for its potential support in defence of the Irak mandate entrusted to Great Britain under its ægis. It will be interesting to see not only how far the Allies are prepared to act, in an emergency, in the spirit of the Covenant and to subordinate any individual interests to a common policy and a common purpose, but what would be the attitude towards such an emergency of the Neutral Powers, among which are to be found some of the pillars of the League. If they should respond, as it is both hoped and believed that they will respond, the future of Arab independence, to say nothing of our civilising mission in the Middle East, would be assured. For the Turk would hardly dare to defy the authority of a united commonwealth like the League. Nor is it credible that any member State, in order to escape its share of responsibility, would behave in so poor a spirit as to invoke the dubious argument that a general peace never having as yet been concluded between the Allies and Turkey, no such call as is proposed could constitute an obligation for member States. The policy of the British Government is clear. That Government could not, in any case, lay aside its mandatory duties regarding Irak or any part of Irak territory except by the invitation or with the sanction of the League. It is pointed out that with the surrender of Mosul to Turkey Baghdad would be at the mercy of the latter, and even Basrah could not be held without considerable difficulty. All the most competent observers are of opinion that a British withdrawal from Irak would soon bring about a French withdrawal from Syria, whether under Turkish military pressure or for reasons of domestic finance. In such an event, it is held, our positions in Palestine would rapidly become untenable, and our control of the Suez Canal, owing to the new mental and political conditions which now obtain in Egypt, would be, perhaps, less secure than it was in 1914. Moreover, the recovery by the Turk of his former Arab possessions would enhance his prestige, to say nothing of his material power, throughout Asia in formidable fashion. There are also minor considerations—e.g., the interesting fact that the Mosul region and Northern Irak generally contain some of the ablest and sturdiest elements in the country.

I find that, although the Turkish command has undoubtedly been preparing to move important bodies of troops, from the Caucasus and elsewhere, towards the Irak-Kurdistan frontier, its plans, according to expert opinion, are still far from maturity. Turkish propaganda, however, is making the most of what is thought to be a relatively small concentration to the north-west of Mosul. But, of course, it would be ever an easy matter for the Turks to arm and bribe bands of Kurdish irregulars for raiding purposes.

The question of Mosul, however, is but one aspect of the much vaster and still critical issue of a general settlement with Turkey. Ismet Pasha has declared himself bound to submit the draft Treaty, not only before ratification, but before even signature, to Angora. Notwithstanding the favourable and generous terms which the Allies are prepared to offer, the prospects of acceptance by Angora are not widely regarded as promising, more especially if, as Ismet has further declared, he is returning to the army, abandoning diplomacy to politicians like Dr. Riza Nur and, possibly, M. Araloff. Undoubtedly, if the Soviet envoy at Angora has a considerable following in the Grand Assembly and the Kemalist Press, he has also dour opponents. The best type of Turkish soldier distrusts and dislikes Bolshevism, and the subservience to Moscow of the political extremists, and some of the Turkish military leaders, although they may not love it, has a wholesome respect for the British Empire. But perhaps the only real "peace party" at this date—or what might be fittingly described as such—is to be found among the more enlightened and sobered members of the older generation of Young Turks (our friends of the "Entente Liberale" are mostly in exile), like Djavid Pasha and the few, very few, Constantinople or Angora politicians who, having a business sense, are aware of the vital importance for the future Turkey of British goodwill. Neither that of Britain nor that of the civilized world in general will be assured to Turkey if she should be so arrogant and foolish as to flout the League's authority.

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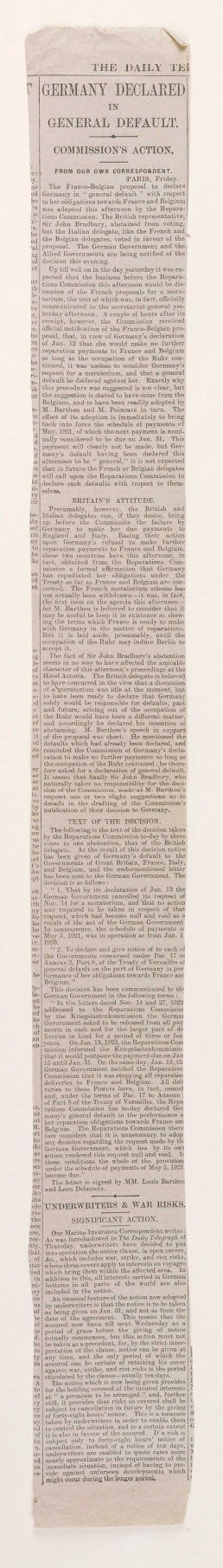

THE DAILY TE

GERMANY DECLARED IN GENERAL DEFAULT.

COMMISSION'S ACTION.

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

PARIS, Friday.

The Franco-Belgian proposal to declare Germany in "general default" with respect to her obligations towards France and Belgium was adopted this afternoon by the Reparations Commission. The British representative, Sir John Bradbury, abstained from voting, but the Italian delegate, like the French and the Belgian delegates, voted in favour of the proposal. The German Government and the Allied Governments are being notified of the decision this evening.

Up till well on in the day yesterday it was expected that the business before the Reparations Commission this afternoon would be discussion of the French proposals for a moratorium, the text of which was, in fact, officially communicated to the secretariat-general yesterday afternoon. A couple of hours after its receipt, however, the Commission received official notification of the Franco-Belgian proposal, that, in view of Germany's declaration of Jan. 12 that she would make no further reparation payments to France and Belgium so long as the occupation of the Ruhr continued, it was useless to consider Germany's request for a moratorium, and that a general default be declared against her. Exactly why this procedure was suggested is not clear, but the suggestion is stated to have come from the Belgians, and to have been readily adopted by M. Barthou and M. Poincaré in turn. The effect of its adoption is immediately to bring back into force the schedule of payments of May, 1921, of which the next payments is nominally considered to be due on Jan. 31. This payment will clearly not be made, but Germany's default having been declared this afternoon to be "general," it is not expected that in future the French or Belgian delegates will call upon the Reparations Commission to declare such defaults with respect to themselves.

BRITAIN'S ATTITUDE.

Presumably, however, the British and Italian delegates can, if they desire, bring up before the Commission the failure by Germany to make her due payments to England and Italy. Basing their action upon Germany's refusal to make further reparation payments to France and Belgium, these two countries have this afternoon, in fact, obtained from the Reparations Commission a formal affirmation that Germany has repudiated her obligations under the Treaty so far as France and Belgium are concerned. The French moratorium scheme has not actually been withdrawn—it was, in fact, the first item on the agenda this afternoon—for M. Barthou is believed to consider that it may be useful to keep it in existence as showing the terms which France is ready to make with Germany in the matter of reparations. But it is laid aside, presumably, until the occupation of the Ruhr may induce Berlin to accept it.

The fact of Sir John Bradbury's abstention seems in no way to have affected the amicable character of this afternoon's proceedings at the Hôtel Astoria. The British delegate is believed to have concurred in the view that a discussion of a moratorium was idle at the moment, but to have been ready to declare that Germany solely would be responsible for defaults, past and future, arising out of the occupation of the Ruhr would have been a different matter, and accordingly he declared his intention of abstaining. M. Barthou's speech in support of the proposal was short. He mentioned the defaults which had already been declared, and reminded the Commission of Germany's declaration to make no further payments so long as the occupation of the Ruhr continued; he therefore asked for a declaration of general default. It seems that finally Sir John Bradbury, who naturally takes no responsibility for the decision of the Commission, made use M. Barthou's request one or two slight suggestions as to details in the drafting of the Commission's notification of their decision to Germany.

TEXT OF THE DECISION.

The following is the text of the decision taken by the Reparations Commission to-day by three votes to one abstention, that of the British delegate. As the result of this decision notice has been given of Germany's default to the Governments of Great Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium, and the undermentioned letter has been sent to the German Government. The decision is as follows:

"1. That by its declaration of Jan. 13 the German Government cancelled its request of Nov. 14 for a moratorium, and that no action was required to be taken in respect of that request, which had become null and void as a result of the act of the German Government. In consequence, the schedule of payments of May 5, 1921, was in operation as from Jan. 1, 1923.

"2. To declare and give notice of to each of the Governments concerned under Par. 17 of Annex 2, Part 8, of the Treaty of Versailles of general default on the part of Germany in performance of her obligations towards France and Belgium."

This decision has been communicated to the German Government in the following terms:

"In the letters dated Nov. 14 and 27, 1922 addressed to the Reparations Commission by the Kriegslastenkommission the German Government asked to be released from all payments in cash and for the larger part of deliveries in kind for a period of three or four years. On Jan. 13, 1923, the Reparations Commission informed the Kriegslastenkommission that it would postpone the payment due on Jan. 15 until Jan. 31. On the same day, Jan. 13, the German Government notified the Reparation Commission that it was stopping all reparation deliveries to France and Belgium. All deliveries to these Powers have, in fact, ceased and, under the terms of Par. 17 to Annexe 2 of Part 8 of the Treaty of Versailles, the Reparations Commission has to-day declared Germany's general default in the performance of her reparation obligations towards France and Belgium. The Reparations Commission therefore considers that it is unnecessary to adopt any decision regarding the request made by the German Government, which has by its own action rendered this request null and void. In these conditions the whole of the provisions under the schedule of payments of May 5, 1921 become due."

The letter is signed by MM. Louis Barthou and Leon Delacroix.

UNDERWRITERS & WAR RISKS.

SIGNIFICANT ACTION.

Our Marine Insurance Correspondent writes:

As was foreshadowed in *The Daily Telegraph* of Thursday, underwriters have decided to put into operation the notice clause, in open covers, &c., which includes war, strike, and riot risks, where these covers apply to interests on voyages which bring them within the affected area. In addition to this, all interests carried in German bottoms in all parts of the world are also included in the notice.

An unusual feature of the action now adopted by underwriters is that the notice is to be taken as being given on Jan. 31, and not as from the date of the agreement. This means that the assured now have till next Wednesday as a period of grace before the giving of notice actually commences, but this action must not be taken as a precedent, for, by the strict interpretation of the clause, notice can be given at any time, and the only period of which the assured can be certain of retaining his cover against war, strike, and riot risks is the period stipulated by the clause—namely ten days.

The notice which is now being given provides for the holding covered of the insured interests at "a premium to be arranged," and, further, still, it provides that risks so covered shall be subject to cancellation in future by the giving of forty-eight hours' notice. This is a measure taken by underwriters in order to enable them to control the situation, and to a certain extent it is also in favour of the assured. If a risk is subject only to forty-eight hours' notice of cancellation, instead of a notice of ten days, underwriters are enabled to quote rates more nearly approximate to the requirements of the immediate situation, instead of having to provide against unforseen developments which might occur during the longer period.

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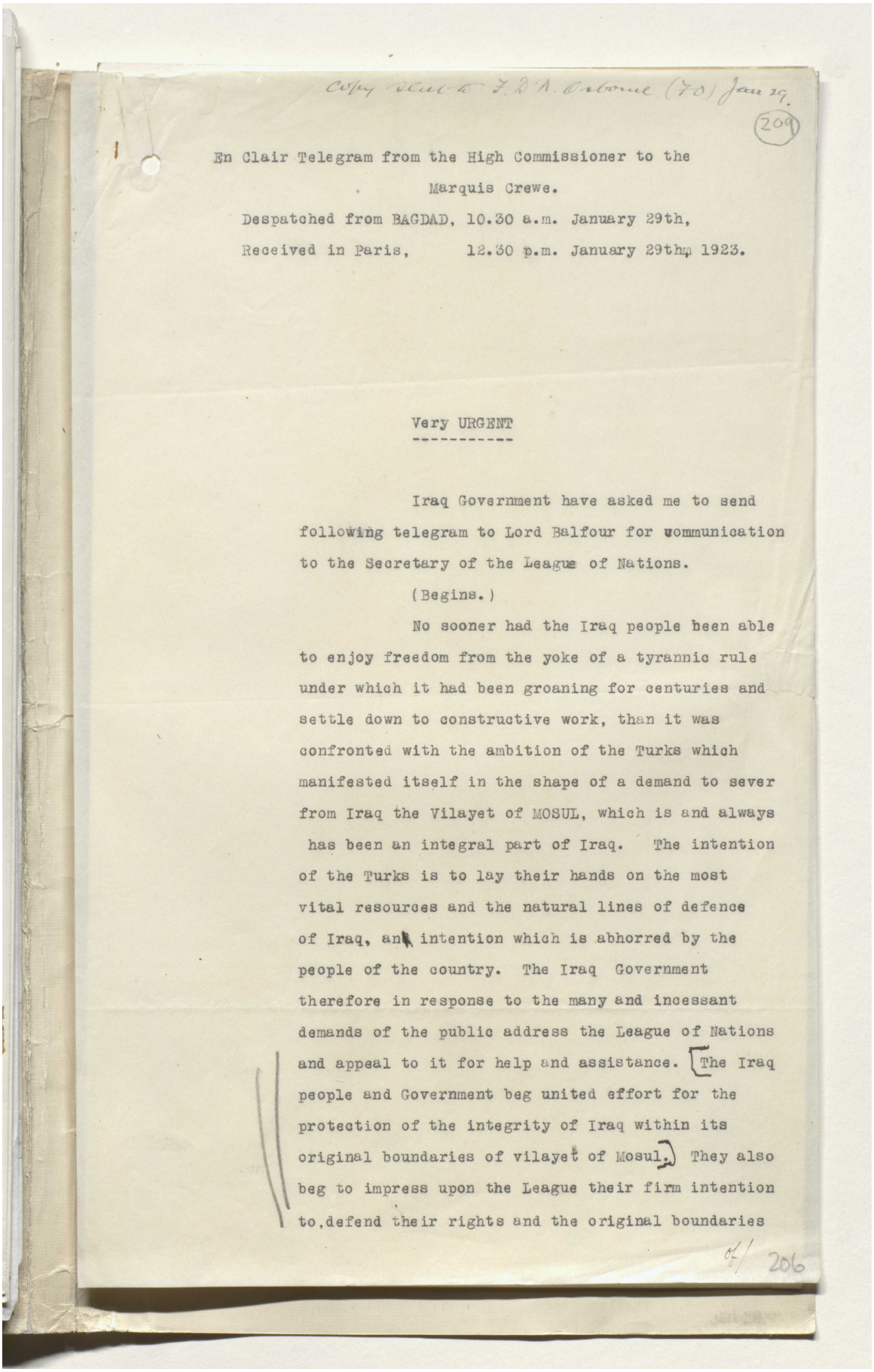

Copy sent to F.O. Osborne (70) Jan 29.

(209)

En Clair Telegram from the High Commissioner to the Marquis Crewe.

Despatched from BAGDAD, 10.30 a.m. January 29th,

Received in Paris, 12.30 p.m. January 29th, 1923.

Very URGENT

Iraq Government have asked me to send following telegram to Lord Balfour for communication to the Secretary of the League of Nations.

(Begins.)

No sooner had the Iraq people been able to enjoy freedom from the yoke of a tyrannic rule under which it had been groaning for centuries and settle down to constructive work, than it was confronted with the ambition of the Turks which manifested itself in the shape of a demand to sever from Iraq the Vilayet of MOSUL, which is and always has been an integral part of Iraq. The intention of the Turks is to lay their hands on the most vital resources and the natural lines of defence of Iraq, an intention which is abhorred by the people of the country. The Iraq Government therefore in response to the many and incessant demands of the public address the League of Nations and appeal to it for help and assistance. The Iraq people and Government beg united effort for the protection of the integrity of Iraq within its original boundaries of vilayet of Mosul. They also beg to impress upon the League their firm intention to defend their rights and the original boundaries

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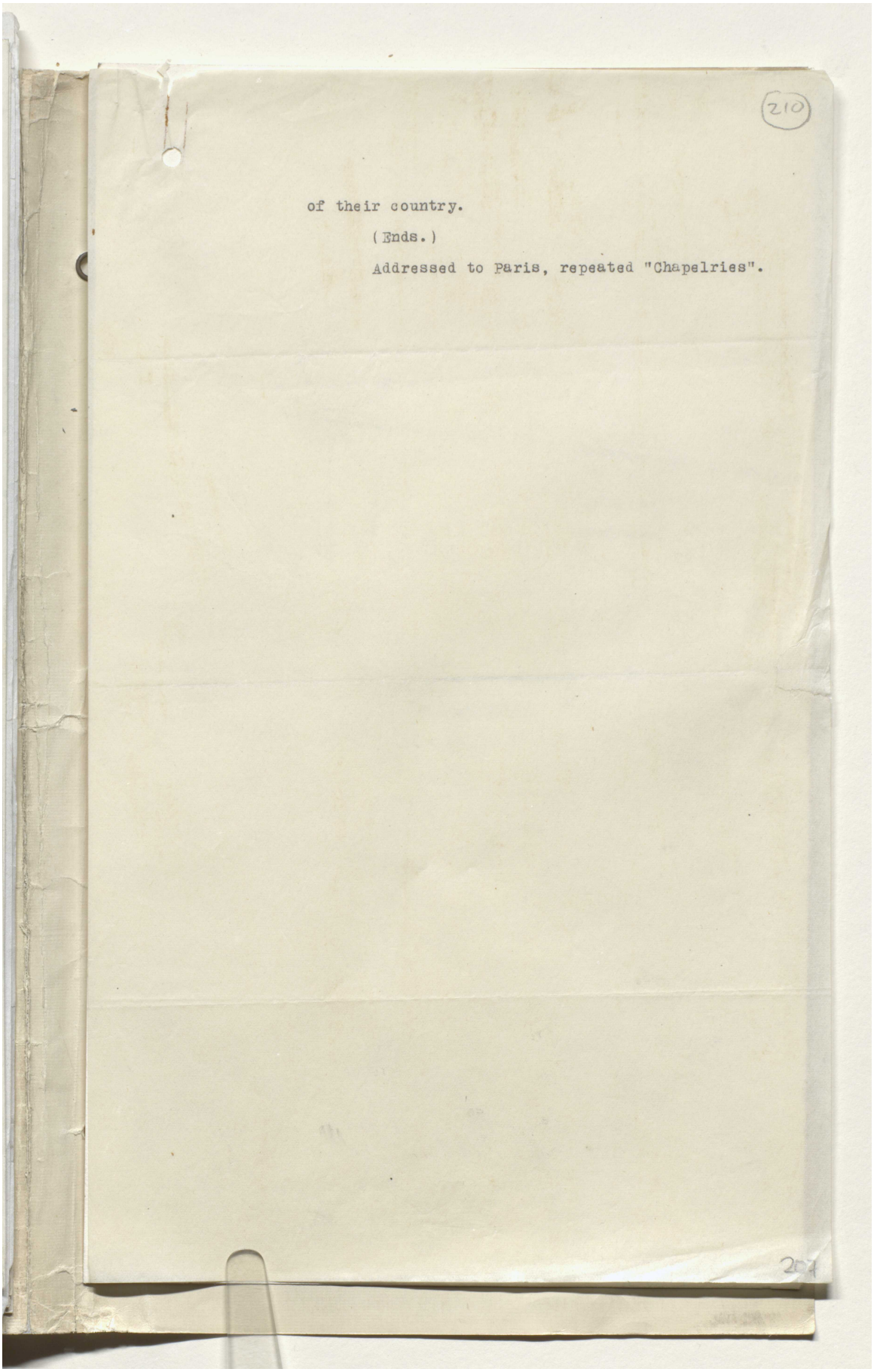

(210)

of their country.

(Ends.)

Addressed to Paris, repeated "Chapelries".

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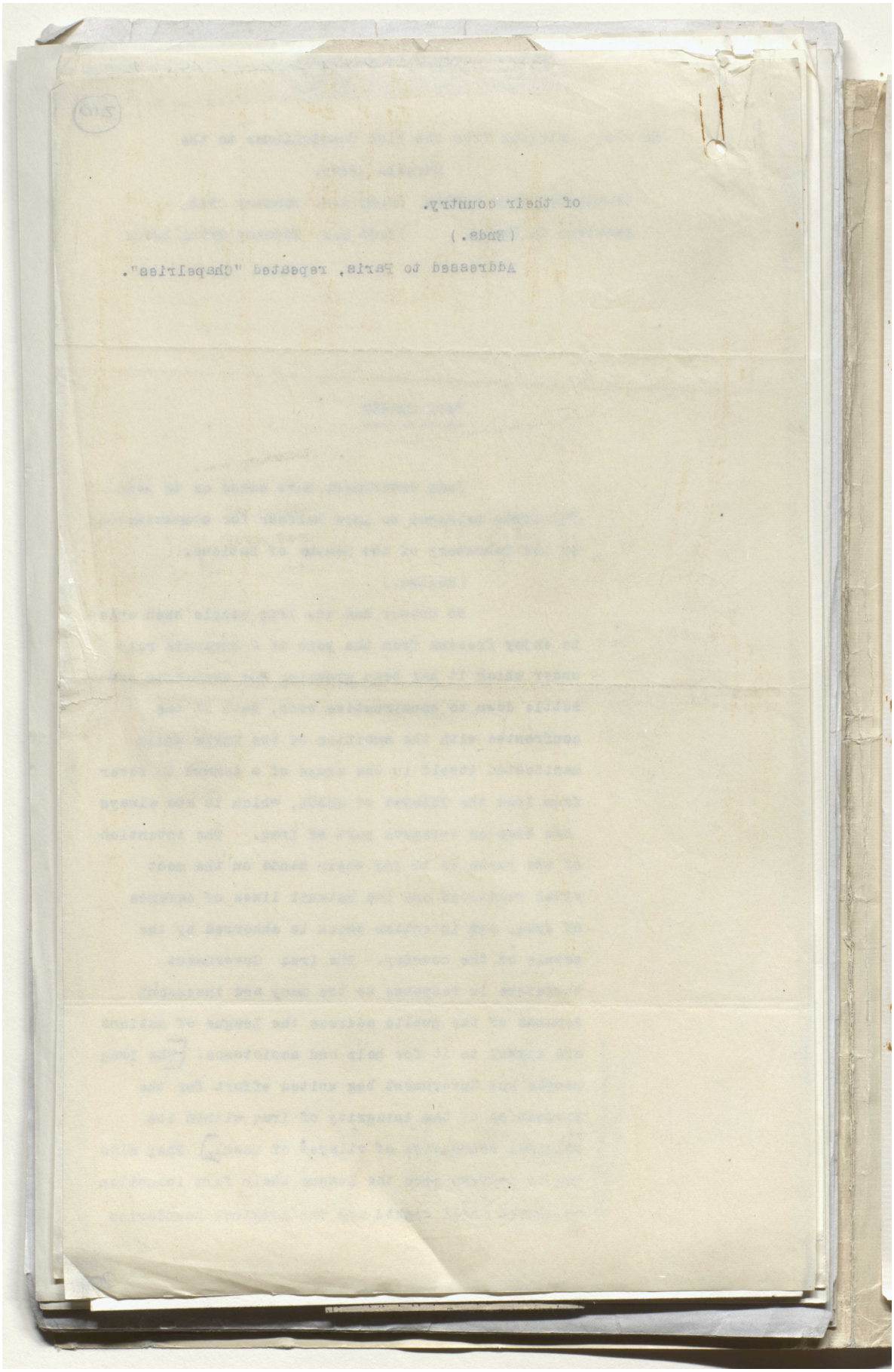

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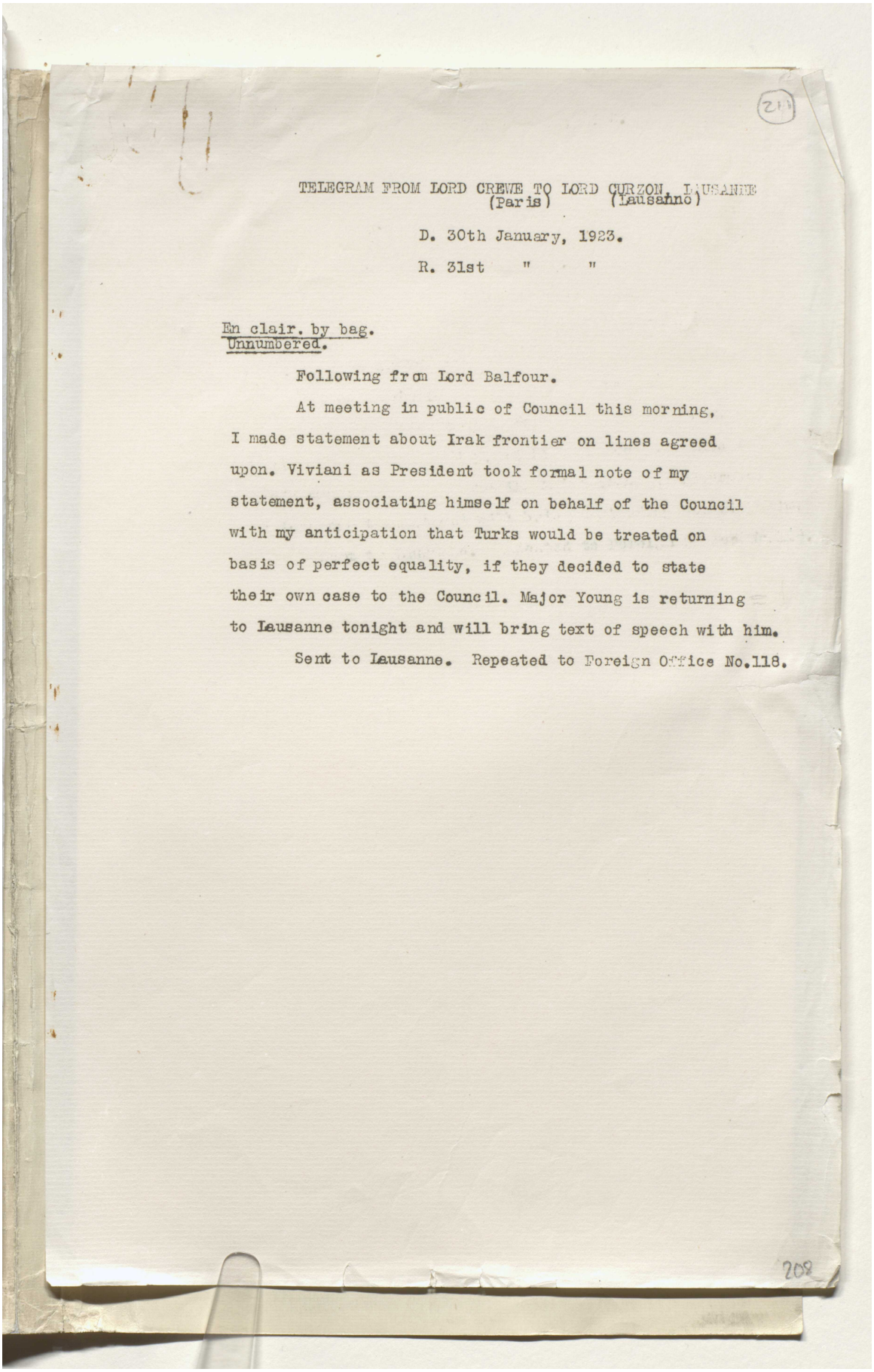

(211)

TELEGRAM FROM LORD CREWE TO LORD CURZON, LAUSANNE
(Paris) (Lausanne)

D. 30th January, 1923.

R. 31st " "

En clair. by bag.
Unnumbered.

Following from Lord Balfour.

At meeting in public of Council this morning, I made statement about Irak frontier on lines agreed upon. Viviani as President took formal note of my statement, associating himself on behalf of the Council with my anticipation that Turks would be treated on basis of perfect equality, if they decided to state their own case to the Council. Major Young is returning to Lausanne tonight and will bring text of speech with him.

Sent to Lausanne. Repeated to Foreign Office No.118.

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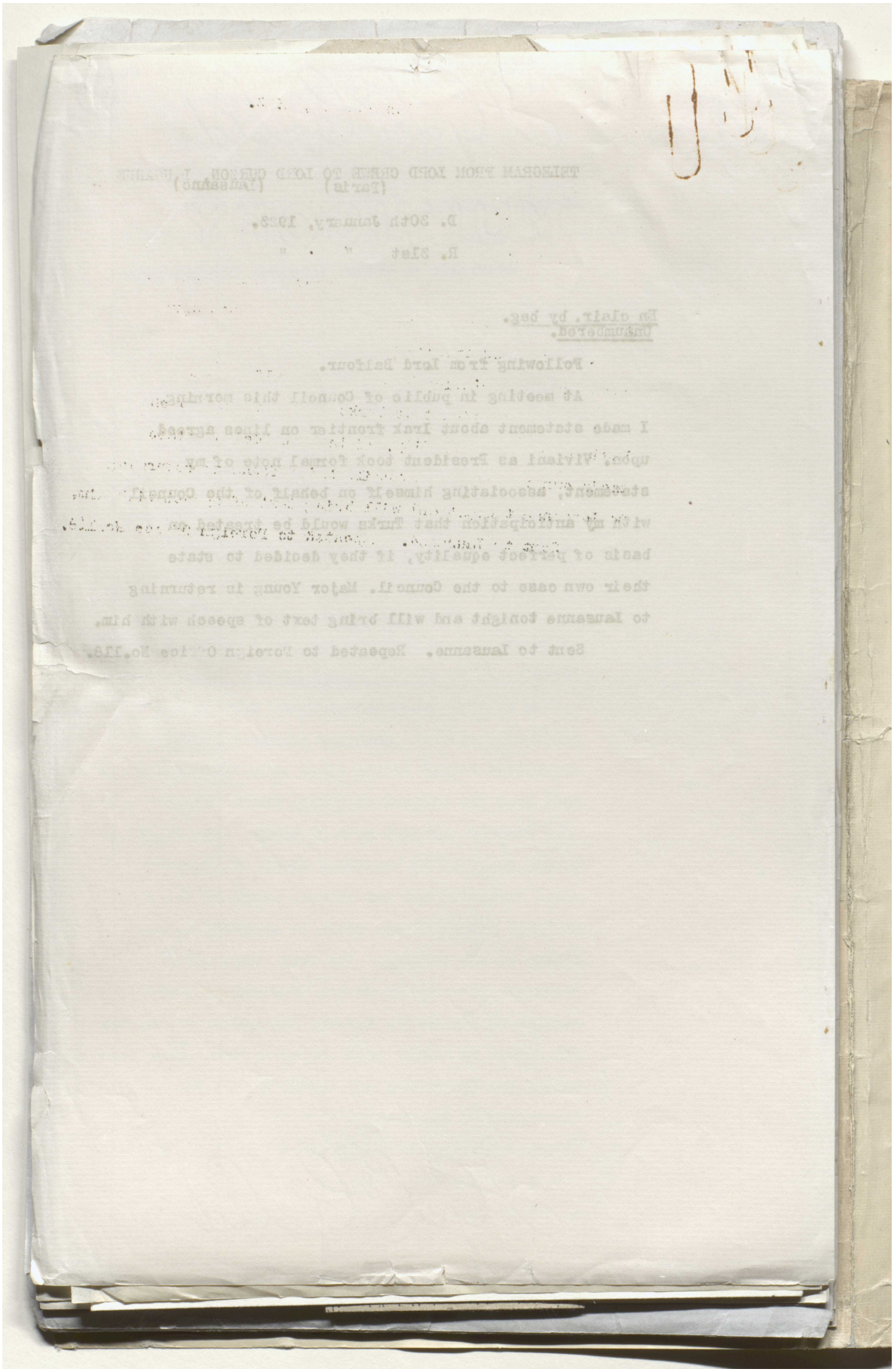

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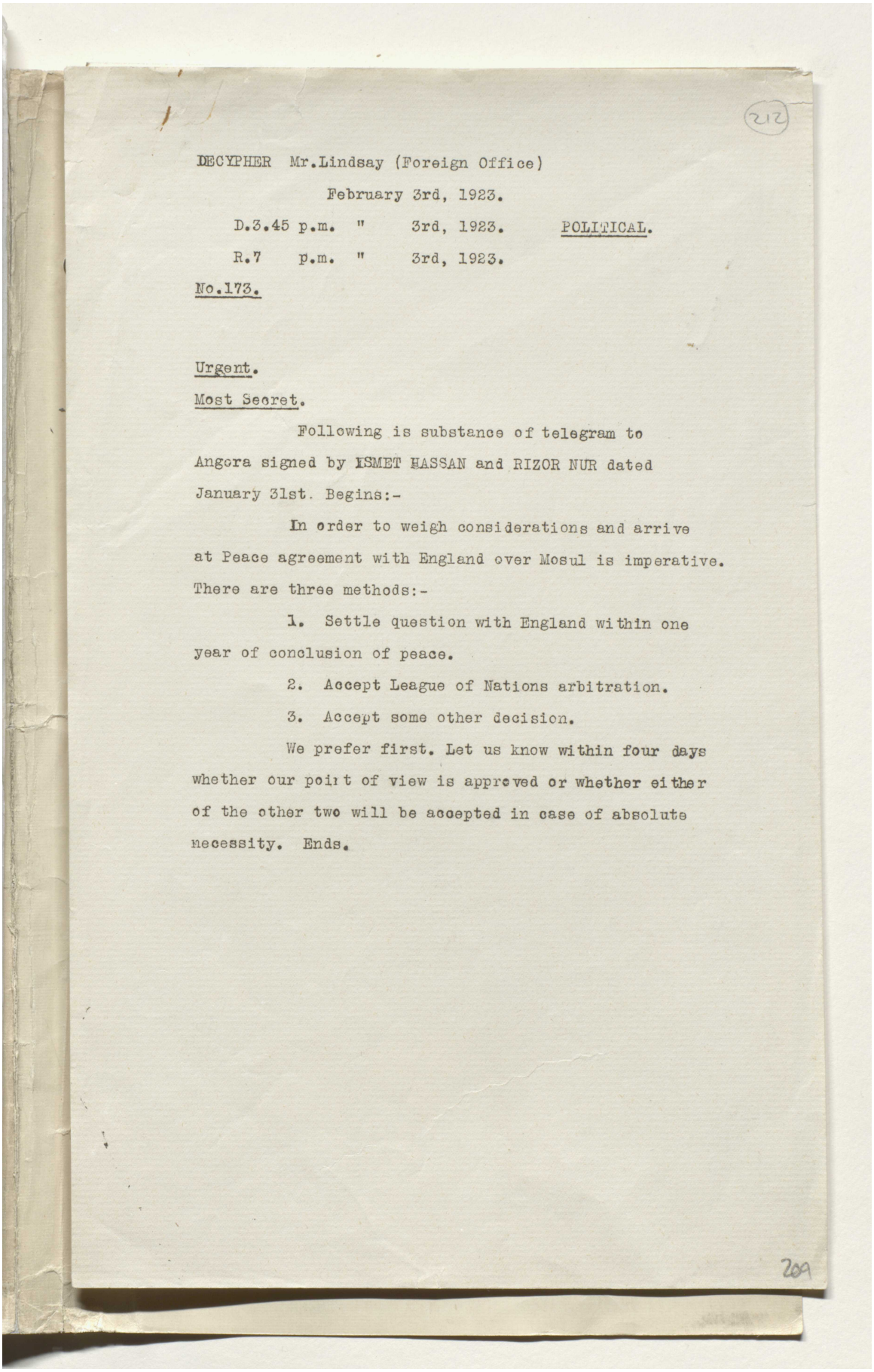

(212)

DECYPHER Mr.Lindsay (Foreign Office)

February 3rd, 1923.

D.3.45 p.m. " 3rd, 1923. POLITICAL.

R.7 p.m. " 3rd, 1923.

No.173.

Urgent.

Most Secret.

Following is substance of telegram to Angora signed by ISMET HASSAN and RIZOR NUR dated January 31st. Begins:-

In order to weigh considerations and arrive at Peace agreement with England over Mosul is imperative. There are three methods:-

1. Settle question with England within one year of conclusion of peace.

2. Accept League of Nations arbitration.

3. Accept some other decision.

We prefer first. Let us know within four days whether our point of view is approved or whether either of the other two will be accepted in case of absolute necessity. Ends.

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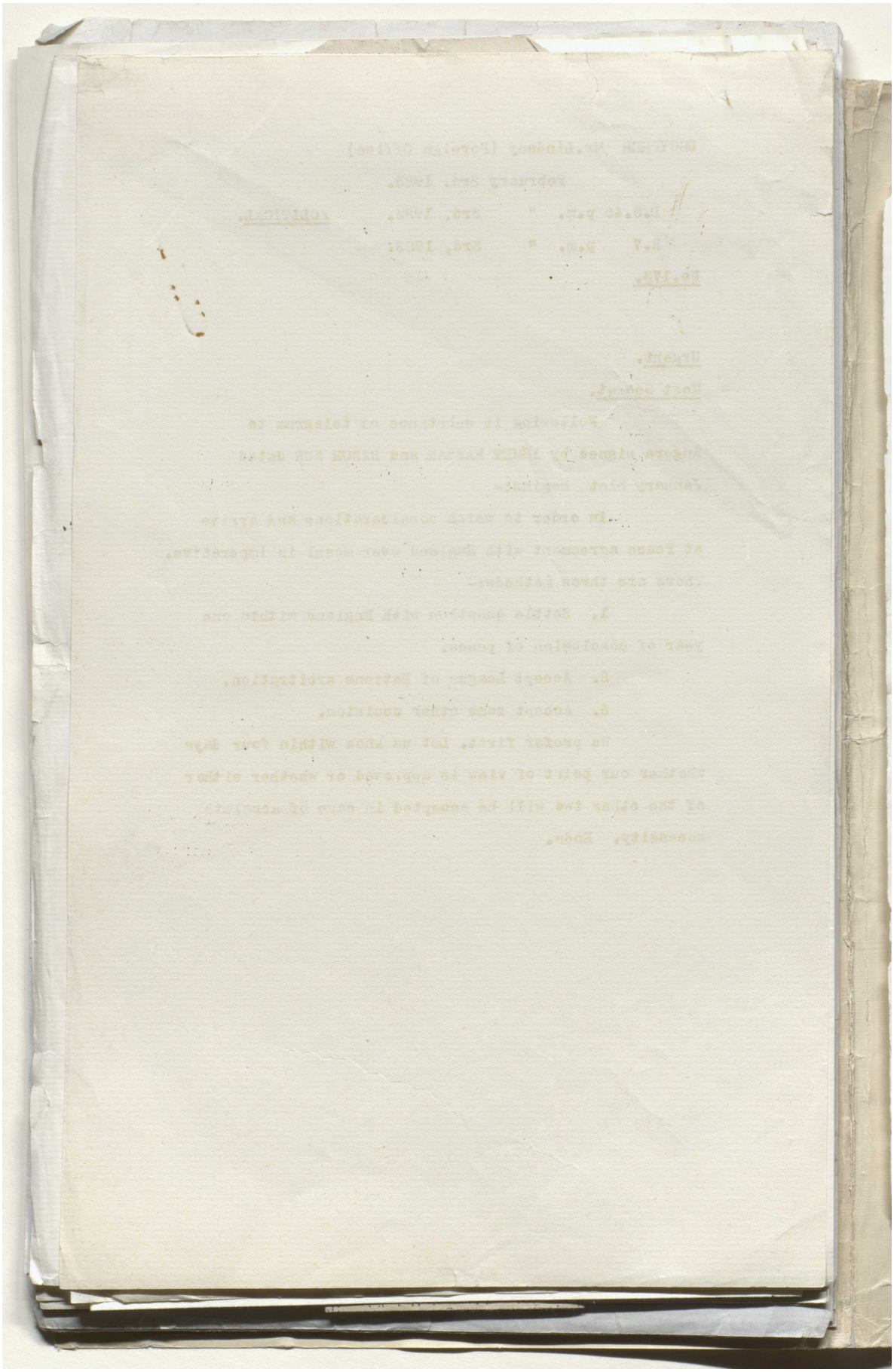

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THE MESOPOTAMIAN OILFIELDS.

(BY OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.)

Of all the known oilfields of the world to-day, the oilfields of Mesopotamia are from every point of view the most interesting. In whatever form we may hear or read about them they never fail to attract our instant attention. They have become synonymous with ideas of fabulous productions and unlimited oil supplies, although, strictly speaking, developments do not justify these. What makes them really fascinating to the public is the knowledge that these fields have now become the arena of a conflict of political and financial interests of a magnitude never before engaged over a single commercial enterprise. Interviews, reports and articles dealing with these oilfields have only become really frequent since the beginning of the Lausanne Conference, especially in American newspapers, while the French Press has not been altogether silent on the subject, as is evidenced by the recent article in the *Matin*.

The nature of the struggle which is now proceeding for these oilfields cannot possibly be known but to the barest minority, and it is possible that few even of these know everything there is to know.

After months of serious study of the subject, we now propose to give as complete a history of this most important subject as lies in our power. It is not from the want of knowledge that we have not dealt with it before in our columns. It is our legitimate and proper boast that we know all that is essential affecting the oil world in general; and while we do not pretend to a complete inside knowledge of such an extremely complicated subject as that with which we now propose to deal, we feel that we have learned enough to present a clear statement of facts to our readers in a form that will not lead to confusion or misunderstanding.

We desire, at the outset, to point out that while we shall refer to governments, corporations and persons, both British and foreign, we do not hold a brief, nor wish it to be thought that we are stating a case, for any of them. On such occasions as we may venture an observation, it will be only when such an observation follows logically on the stated facts. The only brief we hold is for British interests.

From the documents we have examined it seems that, following upon the remarkable developments in the 70's and 80's of the Russian and Mid-European oilfields, a certain Taksin Pasha, a travelled Turkish gentleman, applied, about the year 1883, to the Turkish Ministry of Mines for a *Permit de Recherche* for petroleum over the entire area of the Province of Mosul. This was duly granted and Taksin Pasha, relying on court friendships and connections to maintain his claim, spent the next three years trying to sell his permit to French and English financial interests, in which he was unsuccessful. In 1888 it came to the ears of Agop Pasha, Director of the Privy Purse of the late Sultan Abdul Hamid that oil had been found on some of the landed properties that His Imperial Majesty owned privately in the Province of Mosul. Further enquiries brought to light the fact that Taksin Pasha had been granted a *Permit de Recherche* for oil in this province, and that this permit had become invalid. The facts were brought to the notice of the Sultan and Agop Pasha prepared an Imperial Firman of Concession, giving the exclusive rights for the exploitation of petroleum in the Province of Mosul to the Sultan Abdul Hamid's Privy Purse. This was duly signed and promulgated on the 5th Redjeb, 1306 (1888).

The Permit de Recherche.

The concession for the oilfields in the Province of Bagdad was signed and promulgated practically in the same form on the 5th Djemiz ul Aker, 1316 (1898), the Director of the Privy Purse on this occasion being Channes Effendi.

Early in 1902, Taksin Pasha brought an action in the Turkish Civil Courts against the Sultan personally, whereby it was asked that the Court should find that the Sultan's Concession was illegal and that Taksin's permit was still in force. The case aroused considerable interest and was not settled until it reached the final Court of the Council of State. Taksin lost his case because he did not carry out the conditions upon which, according to the Turkish Mining Code, a *Permit de Recherche* is issued. It will be instructive to observe upon what terms a Turkish permit can be held and on what conditions it can be changed into a concession. The Turkish Mining Code gives a permit for one year, and, if during that time the holder shall have carried out, to the satisfaction of the Minister of Mines, certain exploratory work on the area covered, this period can be prolonged for another year. If further work or exploration has been carried out during this additional period, the Minister may, but apparently is not obliged to, grant a Firman of Concession provided he is satisfied that the applicant is in every way suitable, both technically and financially, to hold such concession.

Following the result of this case, a third Firman of Concession was issued in 1902 confirming the original Mosul Concession granted in 1888. We have seen certified copies of the three original Firmans of Concessions above referred to, of which we have obtained photographs. In addition we have also the official translations into English, which show the visa of the Turkish Foreign Office. We reproduce copies of the Turkish originals, as well as the English translations.

It will be observed that mention is made in these firmans of the Sultan's private properties and of the fact that oil had been discovered on them. We note that the concessionaire is "My Imperial Private Treasury." We have become accustomed to read "Civil List," instead of "Imperial Private Treasury,"

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'Mosul Question, Lausanne 1922-1923 and after - Papers, despatches, speeches - Hotel de la Mer at Lausanne - Correspondence about oil' [213v] (424/501)

which we understand is the literal translation from the Turkish.

Private Not Crown Property.

We have observed in the official correspondence between Lord Curzon and the United States Ambassador on the subject of Economic Rights in Mandated Territories, published in the White Paper of 1921, Miscellaneous No. 10, that the Concessions above discussed are precisely those claimed by the Turkish Petroleum Company, a claim evidently strongly objected to by the State Department at Washington. In his last despatch to the U.S. Ambassador, on February 28th, 1921, Lord Curzon refers to these concessions as "perfectly valid and already existing concessions." In Article 240 of the Treaty of Sevres, it states that all Civil List property shall, without compensation, become the property of successive States. It is logical, therefore, to assume that Mesopotamian oil areas have been accepted, at any rate by the Foreign Office, as private property and not as Crown property. We are confirmed in this opinion by a number of facts, of which we will mention two, which have no doubt influenced British authorities in coming to the above conclusion.

First, under the Turkish Mining Laws in force when these concessions were granted, all minerals, including petroleum, were the property of the Crown as head of the State; it cannot therefore be supposed that the promulgation of a special Firman of Concession was necessary to confirm the Crown in the possession of property which it already owned. The essential point is that Crown properties are not to be regarded as distinct from State properties in a regime of absolute monarchy. Sultan Abdul Hamid represented the State, and all mineral rights were granted by him as monarch to individuals. This is established by the form of the Concessions which are Imperial Firmans issued by the Sultan, and not by or on behalf of the Turkish Government. The granting of a Concession is, therefore, essentially the alienation of a right inherent in the Crown, and when a Concession is granted to the person of the reigning Sultan, this can only be as an individual, for otherwise the act would be *ipso facto* nugatory.

Second, by law and tradition Crown properties of the Ottoman Empire are not subject to taxes, tithes, or Government duties, and they are immune from legal action of any kind. Properties administered by the Privy Purse or Civil List are subject to taxation and legal action in exactly the same manner as properties owned by ordinary Turkish subjects. The cost of the up-keep and care of Crown properties, and the payment of employees engaged on them, is defrayed directly by the Ministry of Finance, while properties of the Civil List are repaired and employees are paid from the Revenues of the Civil List Administration. This distinction was proved in fact by the action brought against Sultan Abdul Hamid personally by Taksin Pasha in the Civil Courts of Turkey in 1902. While pursuing our enquiries on this point we found that no less than 18 civil actions were instituted against the same Sultan during his reign in respect to the purchase of landed properties.

We may therefore assume that Abdul Hamid himself owned the Mesopotamian oil areas as an individual. Negotiations for the granting of rights to exploit the oilfields were conducted directly with the Sultan, through the Administration of the Civil List and not through the Administration of the Crown properties, up to the time of his deposition by the Young Turk Party in 1909.

German Option.

The Germans were the first to conclude an arrangement with the Sultan, and in 1904 the representatives of the Anatolian Railway Company obtained an option for the purpose of examining the possibility of oil deposits in the Provinces of Mosul and Bagdad, and to prepare a scheme whereby they could be worked on joint account. In 1906 this option was considered at an end and the Sultan began other negotiations. At this time the field of competition was widened by the inclusion of a number of English, French and German interests. Among these was Mr. H. K. D'arcy, of Anglo-Persian oil fame, who made an application to the Sultan for rights to exploit the oilfields. The British Ambassador in Constantinople gave strong official support to this application.

MOUSSUL CONCESSION, 1888.

OFFICIAL TRANSLATION.

SUBLIME PORTE
GRAND VEZIRAT
IMPERIAL CHANCERY.

IMPERIAL FIRMAN OF CONCESSION.

To My Illustrious Minister of Finance and of My Imperial Private Treasury Agop Pasha, decorated with My Orders in brilliants of Osmanieh and Medjidieh.

You have submitted for My Imperial sanction the proposal to grant exclusively to My Private Treasury the Concession for the research and exploitation of petroleum sources in the whole of the Vilayet of MOUSSUL, within the properties of My Imperial estates as well as within the other parts of the Vilayet, seeing that in My Private Imperial properties situated in the Vilayet of MOUSSUL are found abundant sources of petroleum.

My Imperial Irade has been promulgated in accordance with the above, and in consequence of its high tenour My present Imperial Order has been delivered by My Imperial Chancery affirming that the Concession for the research and exploitation of the sources of petroleum in the whole of the Vilayet of MOUSSUL, in my Private Imperial properties as well as in all other parts of the said Vilayet is exclusively granted to My Imperial Private Treasury.

You, My Minister above-named will do what is necessary as regards My Private Treasury.

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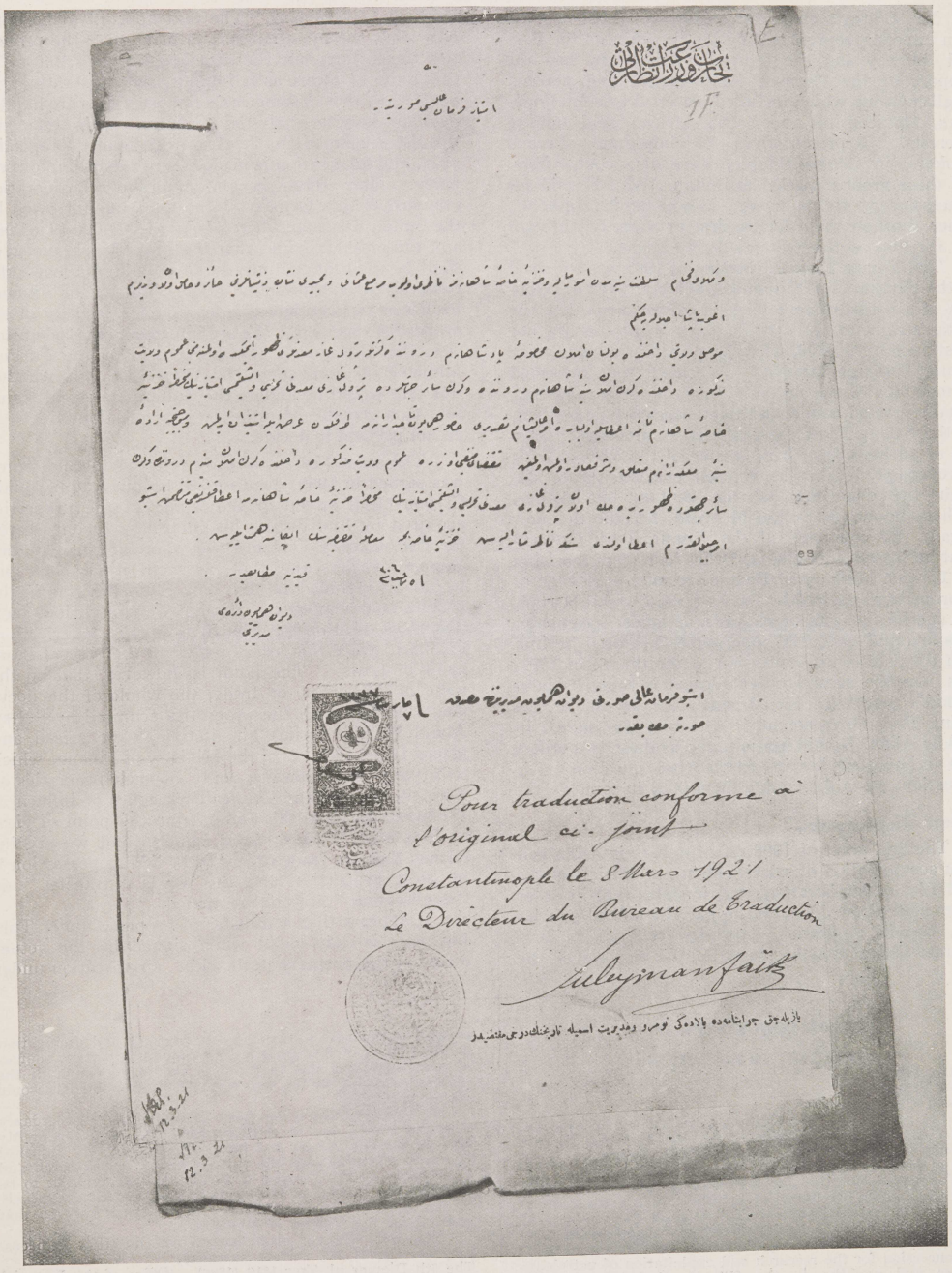

Pour traduction conforme à
l'original ci-joint
Constantinople le 8 Mars 1921
Le Directeur du Bureau de Traduction
Suleyman faïk

MOUSSUL CONCESSION, 1888.
(*Translation at foot of previous page.*)

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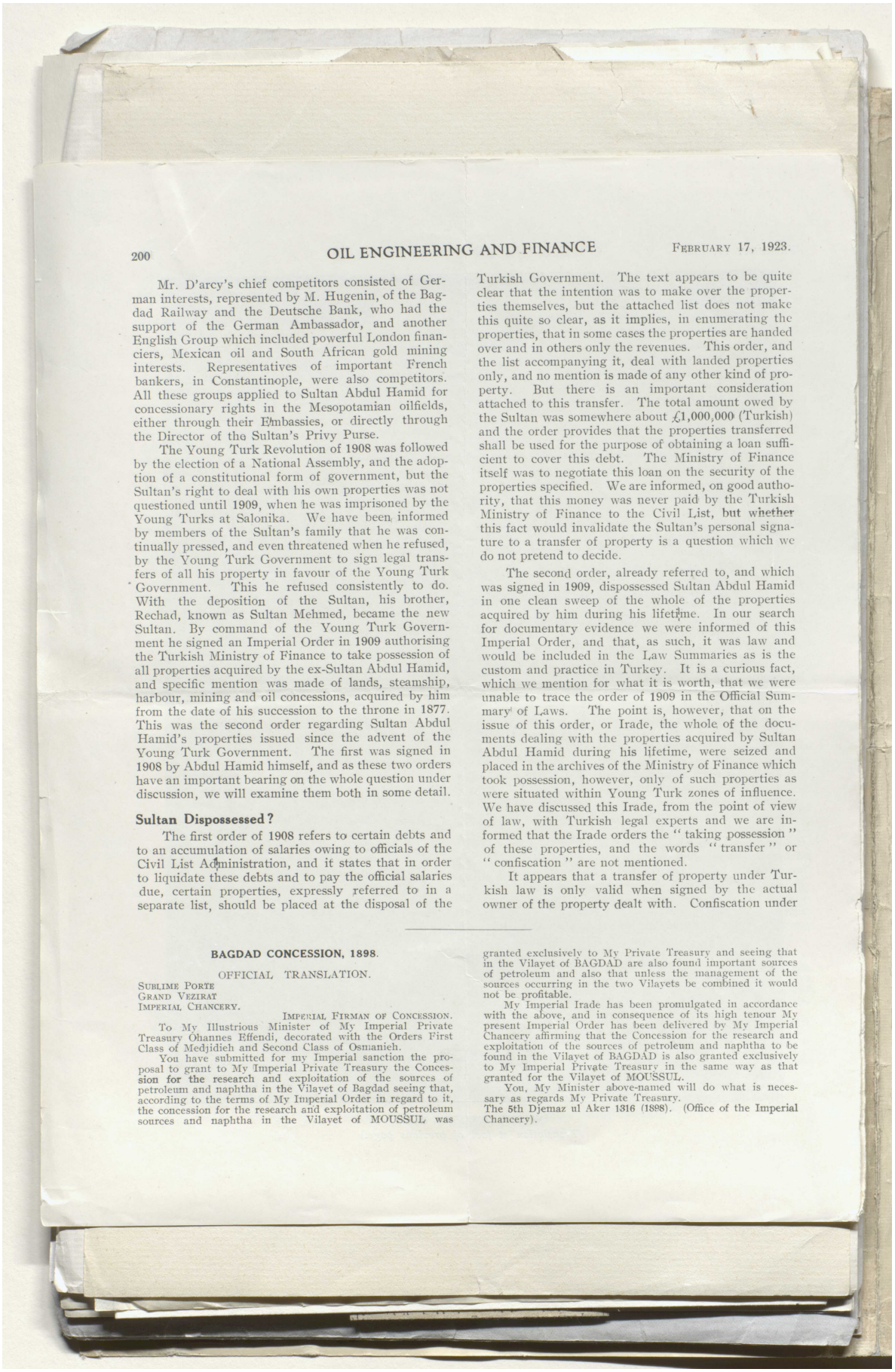

Mr. D'arcy's chief competitors consisted of German interests, represented by M. Hugenin, of the Bagdad Railway and the Deutsche Bank, who had the support of the German Ambassador, and another English Group which included powerful London financiers, Mexican oil and South African gold mining interests. Representatives of important French bankers, in Constantinople, were also competitors. All these groups applied to Sultan Abdul Hamid for concessionary rights in the Mesopotamian oilfields, either through their Embassies, or directly through the Director of the Sultan's Privy Purse.

The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 was followed by the election of a National Assembly, and the adoption of a constitutional form of government, but the Sultan's right to deal with his own properties was not questioned until 1909, when he was imprisoned by the Young Turks at Salonika. We have been informed by members of the Sultan's family that he was continually pressed, and even threatened when he refused, by the Young Turk Government to sign legal transfers of all his property in favour of the Young Turk Government. This he refused consistently to do. With the deposition of the Sultan, his brother, Rechad, known as Sultan Mehmed, became the new Sultan. By command of the Young Turk Government he signed an Imperial Order in 1909 authorising the Turkish Ministry of Finance to take possession of all properties acquired by the ex-Sultan Abdul Hamid, and specific mention was made of lands, steamship, harbour, mining and oil concessions, acquired by him from the date of his succession to the throne in 1877. This was the second order regarding Sultan Abdul Hamid's properties issued since the advent of the Young Turk Government. The first was signed in 1908 by Abdul Hamid himself, and as these two orders have an important bearing on the whole question under discussion, we will examine them both in some detail.

Sultan Dispossessed?

The first order of 1908 refers to certain debts and to an accumulation of salaries owing to officials of the Civil List Administration, and it states that in order to liquidate these debts and to pay the official salaries due, certain properties, expressly referred to in a separate list, should be placed at the disposal of the Turkish Government. The text appears to be quite clear that the intention was to make over the properties themselves, but the attached list does not make this quite so clear, as it implies, in enumerating the properties, that in some cases the properties are handed over and in others only the revenues. This order, and the list accompanying it, deal with landed properties only, and no mention is made of any other kind of property. But there is an important consideration attached to this transfer. The total amount owed by the Sultan was somewhere about £1,000,000 (Turkish) and the order provides that the properties transferred shall be used for the purpose of obtaining a loan sufficient to cover this debt. The Ministry of Finance itself was to negotiate this loan on the security of the properties specified. We are informed, on good authority, that this money was never paid by the Turkish Ministry of Finance to the Civil List, but whether this fact would invalidate the Sultan's personal signature to a transfer of property is a question which we do not pretend to decide.

The second order, already referred to, and which was signed in 1909, dispossessed Sultan Abdul Hamid in one clean sweep of the whole of the properties acquired by him during his lifetime. In our search for documentary evidence we were informed of this Imperial Order, and that, as such, it was law and would be included in the Law Summaries as is the custom and practice in Turkey. It is a curious fact, which we mention for what it is worth, that we were unable to trace the order of 1909 in the Official Summary of Laws. The point is, however, that on the issue of this order, or Irade, the whole of the documents dealing with the properties acquired by Sultan Abdul Hamid during his lifetime, were seized and placed in the archives of the Ministry of Finance which took possession, however, only of such properties as were situated within Young Turk zones of influence. We have discussed this Irade, from the point of view of law, with Turkish legal experts and we are informed that the Irade orders the "taking possession" of these properties, and the words "transfer" or "confiscation" are not mentioned.

It appears that a transfer of property under Turkish law is only valid when signed by the actual owner of the property dealt with. Confiscation under

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BAGDAD CONCESSION, 1898.

OFFICIAL TRANSLATION.

SUBLIME PORTE
GRAND VEZIRAT
IMPERIAL CHANCERY.

IMPERIAL FIRMAN OF CONCESSION.

To My Illustrious Minister of My Imperial Private Treasury Ohannes Effendi, decorated with the Orders First Class of Medjidieh and Second Class of Osmanieh.

You have submitted for my Imperial sanction the proposal to grant to My Imperial Private Treasury the Concession for the research and exploitation of the sources of petroleum and naphtha in the Vilayet of Bagdad seeing that, according to the terms of My Imperial Order in regard to it, the concession for the research and exploitation of petroleum sources and naphtha in the Vilayet of MOUSSUL was granted exclusively to My Private Treasury and seeing that in the Vilayet of BAGDAD are also found important sources of petroleum and also that unless the management of the sources occurring in the two Vilayets be combined it would not be profitable.

My Imperial Irade has been promulgated in accordance with the above, and in consequence of its high tenour My present Imperial Order has been delivered by My Imperial Chancery affirming that the Concession for the research and exploitation of the sources of petroleum and naphtha to be found in the Vilayet of BAGDAD is also granted exclusively to My Imperial Private Treasury in the same way as that granted for the Vilayet of MOUSSUL.

You, My Minister above-named will do what is necessary as regards My Private Treasury.

The 5th Djemaz ul Aker 1316 (1898). (Office of the Imperial Chancery).

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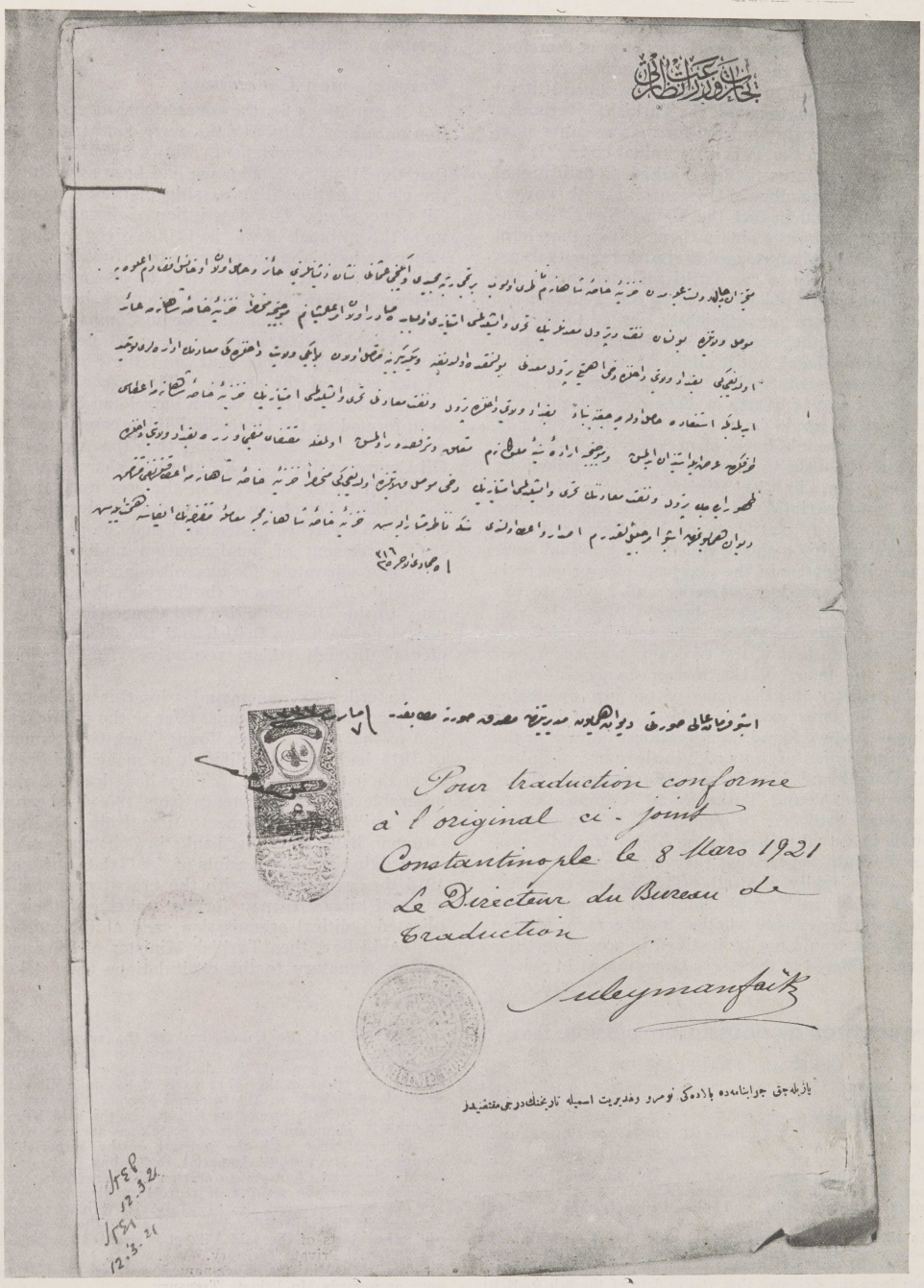

Pour traduction conforme
à l'original ci-joint
Constantinople le 8 Mars 1921
Le Directeur du Bureau de
Traduction
Suleymanfaik

BAGDAD CONCESSION, 1898.
(Translation at foot of previous page.)

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Turkish law is allowed only in case of apostasy. To obtain possession of these properties it was therefore clearly necessary for the Turkish Government to resort to an act of force, or to promulgate in a constitutional manner a special law to enable the Turkish Government to seize and confiscate property for reasons other than those laid down in the Turkish criminal code. It has been pointed out to us that no Turkish Constitutional Assembly would endow a Government with powers of this nature, and in fact the Young Turk Government did not attempt to obtain them. It is, therefore, clear that as the Sultan refused to sign documents transferring his property to the Turkish Government, the Young Turks were obliged to carry out a simple act of seizure. We are not sufficiently learned to give an opinion as to whether every act of a Government ought to be considered legal, but it might be argued that the Turkish Government, having taken possession of these properties, it was at liberty to dispose of them if prospective buyers would be content with new titles of ownership that would have, of necessity, to be issued. In Turkey the title to a property is determined by the registration, in the Ministry of the Cadastre (Lands), of a description of the property and the name of its owner. A certificate of this registration is issued to anybody on the payment of a nominal sum. The method adopted in the purchase of a property is for legal representatives, of seller and buyer, to examine the registers of the Cadastre. When the real ownership is thus established, the sale is carried out and on presentation of the contract, and an Act of Transfer, the name of the former owner is erased from the register and the name of the new owner inscribed. We have examined the Registers in Constantinople and we found no alteration whatever in the original inscription of properties in the name of Sultan Abdul Hamid and his Heirs. We presume, therefore, that the Young Turks found it impossible to destroy these evidences of ownership. Consequently, although in actual possession of Abdul Hamid's properties it would appear that they were unable to dispose of them legally, if at all. This is easy to understand in so far as Turkish Nationals are concerned, but the point arises as to whether foreigners, or foreign corporations, would not be justified in accepting titles to property offered to them by a Government in power. This point bears directly on the subject of the Mesopotamian oilfields.

Mesopotamian Concessions.

Negotiations for the concessions, after the deposition of Sultan Abdul Hamid, were conducted with the Young Turk Government, who notified the Powers that the Ministry of Finance had been substituted for the Civil List in the ownership of the Mesopotamian Oil Concessions. The description of these negotiations up to the outbreak of war in 1914 is given in the White Paper we have already referred to. Briefly, on whose initiative we have been unable to discover, the conflicting German and British interests become amalgamated in the Turkish Petroleum Company, in which the Anglo-Persian were to have 50 per cent., the Deutsche Bank 25 per cent. and the Shell Company 25 per cent. of the shares. This accord took place in 1914, although the Turkish Petroleum Company had been formed by the Deutsche Bank a considerable time previously. We understand that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company did not take up these shares until 1921, so that from the outbreak of the war until that time the Turkish Petroleum Company was kept alive by the Shell. We further understand that the parties to the 1914 agreement of amalgamation undertook not to negotiate separately for any oil concessions in Mesopotamia. The claims of the Turkish Petroleum Company to the Mesopotamian Oil Concessions were supported by both the British and the German Governments through their respective Ambassadors in Turkey.

In order to understand why this amalgamation took place in 1914, we must refer to the political situation of that time. The Young Turk Government up to 1914 had found it difficult to make their revenue meet their expenditure. They had dragged along a miserable financial existence from 1908 by borrowing a few millions from time to time from the Imperial Ottoman Bank and other banks in Constantinople, and by pledging the toll receipts of the Galata Bridge. In 1914 they were faced with the urgent need for large sums of money to pay for the upkeep of their complicated political organisation, and at the suggestion of Djavid Bey, then Turkish Minister of Finance, the powers signatory to the capitulations were asked to

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CONFIRMATION OF MOUSSUL CONCESSION, 1902.

OFFICIAL TRANSLATION.

SUBLIME PORTE
GRAND VEZIRAT
IMPERIAL CHANCERY.

IMPERIAL FIRMAN OF CONCESSION.

To My Illustrious Minister of My Imperial Private Treasury, Ohannes Effendi, decorated with the Order in brilliants of Osmanieh, and the Order First Class of Medjidieh.

As the result of My Imperial Irade the Concession for the sources of petroleum in the Vilayet of MOUSSUL has been reserved for My Imperial Private Treasury, and it appears from the Registry that at the date of the 5th Redjeb 1306 My Imperial Order was addressed to Your Ministry to inform you that the Concession for the research and exploitation of sources of petroleum in the Vilayet of MOUSSUL in general, in the properties of My Private estates as well as in the other parts of the said Vilayet, was granted exclusively to My Imperial Private Treasury seeing that in My Private properties situated in the said Vilayet of MOUSSUL abundant sources of petroleum are met with.

In accordance with the purport of the Imperial Order mentioned, My present Imperial Order has been delivered by My Imperial Chancery to affirm, with emphasis, that the Concession for the sources of petroleum already discovered and to be discovered, in My Imperial private properties situated in the said Vilayet as well as in the dependencies and other parts of the said Vilayet is granted exclusively to My Imperial Private Treasury.

You, My Minister above-named, will do what is necessary as regards My Private Treasury.

16th Ramazan 1320 (1902). (Office of the Imperial Chancery.)

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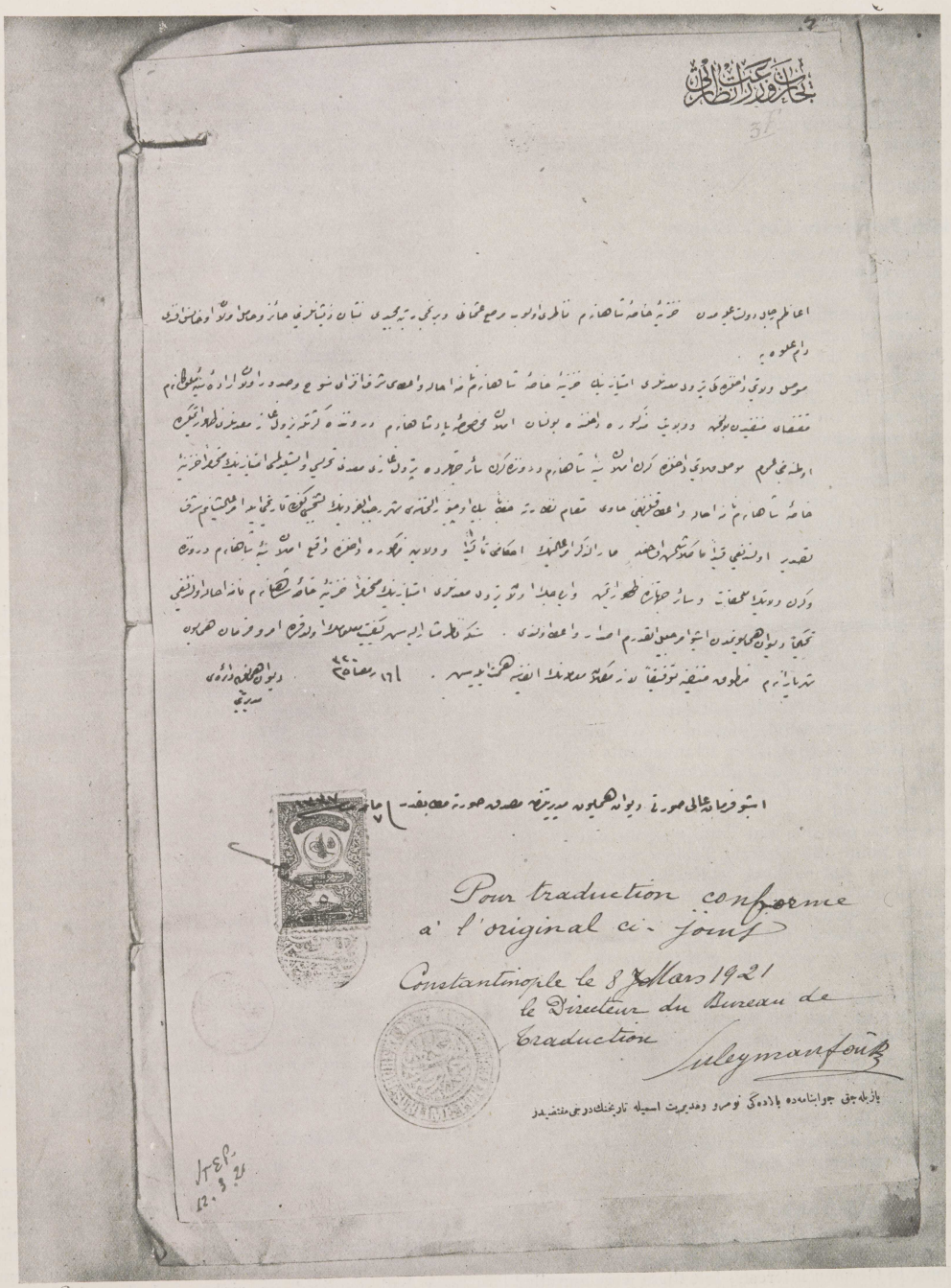

Pour traduction conforme
a l'original ci-joint
Constantinople le 8 Mars 1921
Le Directeur du Bureau de
Traduction
Suleyman Fouad

CONFIRMATION OF MOUSSUL CONCESSION, 1902.
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authorise the addition of 4 per cent. to the already existing 11 per cent. Turkish Customs duties. This was a signal for the powers once more to gather round the "sick man." They gave their assent in principle to the proposal, but made its final ratification subject to the Turkish Government settling a number of long-outstanding questions of an economic and financial character. Then began what may be termed the 1914 negotiations.

Turkish Petroleum Coy's Claims.

In order to have a clear conception of the Turkish Petroleum Company's claims, we think it advisable to explain what these negotiations really were. In effect, these negotiations were to decide the Articles of Convention between Turkey on the one side, and the Powers on the other, whereby the Powers were to grant Turkey permission to add 4 per cent. to her Customs Tariff. Turkey, in return, was to grant to the Powers, or their Nationals, a certain number of material concessions. We do not know the precise nature of the concessions that were to be given to French, German, and Italian Nationals. No doubt they dealt with harbours, railways and roads for the most part. But the principal considerations demanded by the British Government were in regard to the granting of the oil concessions to the Turkish Petroleum Company, the prolongation of the Smyrna Aidin Railway Charter, and certain concessions dealing with boracite deposits. We are informed that some time in June a point of agreement had been reached on all questions at issue, and we are further informed that the Grand Vizier confirmed the intention of the Ministry of Finance to grant Mesopotamian oil concessions to the Turkish Petroleum Company. We think it our duty to point out that these arrangements were not separate as between each individual Power and Turkey, but that the concessions that Turkey agreed to give were agreed to as a whole, as between all the Powers on the one side and Turkey on the other. To make this point still clearer, Turkey was giving so much to Italy and so much to England in return for the united consent of these Powers to the raising of the Turks Customs duties. It was not the intention of Turkey to give so much to England alone, and for England alone to give her consent to the Turks' demands.

These negotiations were interrupted by the outbreak of the war and it is conceded that the agreement reached between the parties concerned was never drawn up in the form of a convention nor signed by any of the Powers interested. We believe that Sir Edward Grey informed the Turks at the outbreak of the war that the negotiations with Turkey would have to be resumed at a later date; inferring that they were not to be considered as final.

International Rivalry.

During the war the Young Turks gave a number of oil concessions, including the Mesopotamian oil concessions, to German interests, but these were annulled by the Treaty of Versailles. After the Armistice the first mention made of the Mesopotamian oilfields is found in the negotiations between England and France, and notably in the San Remo Agreement of 1920. This agreement dealt with British and French partition of oil and pipeline rights in the Mandated Territories of Mesopotamia and Syria, and although the text does not actually refer to the Turkish Petroleum Company, reference is made to it in subsequent memoranda. It became clear at this moment that the British Government claimed the Mesopotamian oil concessions for the Turkish Petroleum Company. This claim was strongly opposed by the United States Government in a series of letters published in the White Paper, to which we have already several times referred. We understand that the American attitude to this claim has not changed, although subsequent diplomatic correspondence on the subject has not been made available to the public. Further opposition to this claim was made in 1921 by representatives of the Heirs of the late Sultan Abdul Hamid, who claimed that they were legitimate heirs to their father's property and that their title could not be legally questioned. Since 1921 the chaotic political situation in the Near East has rendered any final solution as to the real ownership of these concessions impossible.

The atmosphere for the last twelve months has been full of intrigue and counter-intrigue by all parties concerned, to strengthen their position in view of the pacification and settlement, which we hope is near at hand, of the Near East. Among other attempts to complicate a situation, already sufficiently complicated, is that of Mr. Chester to obtain railway and oil rights in Mosul from the Angora Government. His scheme is by no means new, as it was first proposed to the Young Turks in 1911, or 1912, by Admiral Chester. The Angora National Assembly have discussed Mr. Chester's proposals on several occasions, and in spite of the manifestly advantageous financial considerations offered, Mr. Chester's proposals were finally rejected about a month ago. We have not yet received a full report of the reasons for this rejection, but we understand they had something to do with the rights acquired by the late Sultan Abdul Hamid. The American Government, in refusing to accept the claims made by Lord Curzon, on behalf of the Turkish Petroleum Company, have adopted a policy of the "open door" in regard to economic rights in all Mandated Territories. Their recent Note to Lord Curzon, in Lausanne, again refutes the claims made on behalf of the Turkish Petroleum Company, and brings to his lordship's notice the fact that other claims exist.

American Attitude.

The essence of the information we have received from various sources is that the American Government is not disposed to accept a political or diplomatic settlement of the Mesopotamian oil question. While admitting that pre-war rights should be ratified and confirmed, they state that the Turkish Petroleum Company had acquired no rights and that, failing the

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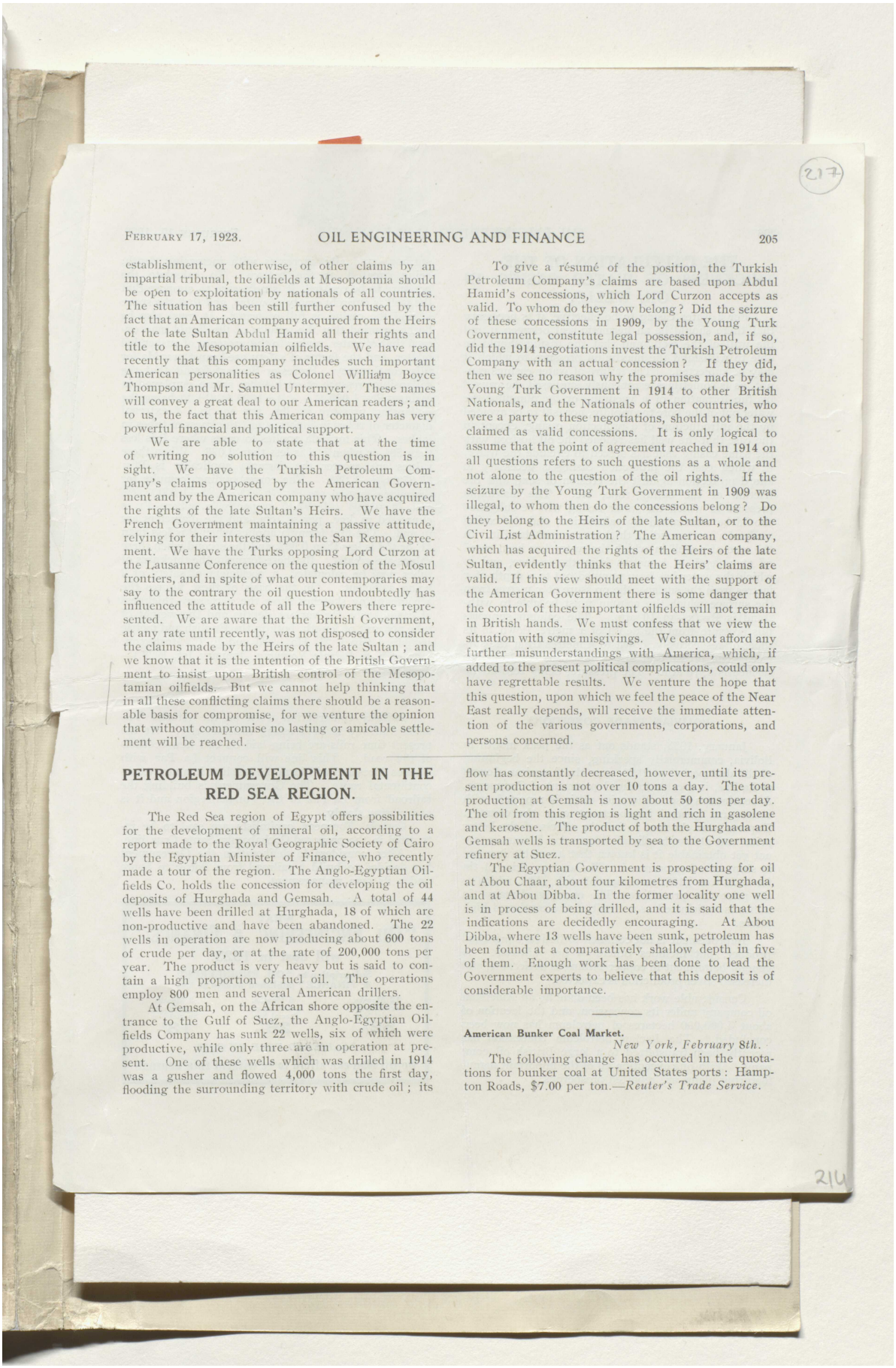

establishment, or otherwise, of other claims by an impartial tribunal, the oilfields at Mesopotamia should be open to exploitation by nationals of all countries. The situation has been still further confused by the fact that an American company acquired from the Heirs of the late Sultan Abdul Hamid all their rights and title to the Mesopotamian oilfields. We have read recently that this company includes such important American personalities as Colonel William Boyce Thompson and Mr. Samuel Untermyer. These names will convey a great deal to our American readers; and to us, the fact that this American company has very powerful financial and political support.

We are able to state that at the time of writing no solution to this question is in sight. We have the Turkish Petroleum Company's claims opposed by the American Government and by the American company who have acquired the rights of the late Sultan's Heirs. We have the French Government maintaining a passive attitude, relying for their interests upon the San Remo Agreement. We have the Turks opposing Lord Curzon at the Lausanne Conference on the question of the Mosul frontiers, and in spite of what our contemporaries may say to the contrary the oil question undoubtedly has influenced the attitude of all the Powers there represented. We are aware that the British Government, at any rate until recently, was not disposed to consider the claims made by the Heirs of the late Sultan; and we know that it is the intention of the British Government to insist upon British control of the Mesopotamian oilfields. But we cannot help thinking that in all these conflicting claims there should be a reasonable basis for compromise, for we venture the opinion that without compromise no lasting or amicable settlement will be reached.

To give a résumé of the position, the Turkish Petroleum Company's claims are based upon Abdul Hamid's concessions, which Lord Curzon accepts as valid. To whom do they now belong? Did the seizure of these concessions in 1909, by the Young Turk Government, constitute legal possession, and, if so, did the 1914 negotiations invest the Turkish Petroleum Company with an actual concession? If they did, then we see no reason why the promises made by the Young Turk Government in 1914 to other British Nationals, and the Nationals of other countries, who were a party to these negotiations, should not be now claimed as valid concessions. It is only logical to assume that the point of agreement reached in 1914 on all questions refers to such questions as a whole and not alone to the question of the oil rights. If the seizure by the Young Turk Government in 1909 was illegal, to whom then do the concessions belong? Do they belong to the Heirs of the late Sultan, or to the Civil List Administration? The American company, which has acquired the rights of the Heirs of the late Sultan, evidently thinks that the Heirs' claims are valid. If this view should meet with the support of the American Government there is some danger that the control of these important oilfields will not remain in British hands. We must confess that we view the situation with some misgivings. We cannot afford any further misunderstandings with America, which, if added to the present political complications, could only have regrettable results. We venture the hope that this question, upon which we feel the peace of the Near East really depends, will receive the immediate attention of the various governments, corporations, and persons concerned.

PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT IN THE RED SEA REGION.

The Red Sea region of Egypt offers possibilities for the development of mineral oil, according to a report made to the Royal Geographic Society of Cairo by the Egyptian Minister of Finance, who recently made a tour of the region. The Anglo-Egyptian Oilfields Co. holds the concession for developing the oil deposits of Hurghada and Gemsah. A total of 44 wells have been drilled at Hurghada, 18 of which are non-productive and have been abandoned. The 22 wells in operation are now producing about 600 tons of crude per day, or at the rate of 200,000 tons per year. The product is very heavy but is said to contain a high proportion of fuel oil. The operations employ 800 men and several American drillers.

At Gemsah, on the African shore opposite the entrance to the Gulf of Suez, the Anglo-Egyptian Oilfields Company has sunk 22 wells, six of which were productive, while only three are in operation at present. One of these wells which was drilled in 1914 was a gusher and flowed 4,000 tons the first day, flooding the surrounding territory with crude oil; its flow has constantly decreased, however, until its present production is not over 10 tons a day. The total production at Gemsah is now about 50 tons per day. The oil from this region is light and rich in gasolene and kerosene. The product of both the Hurghada and Gemsah wells is transported by sea to the Government refinery at Suez.

The Egyptian Government is prospecting for oil at Abou Chaar, about four kilometres from Hurghada, and at Abou Dibba. In the former locality one well is in process of being drilled, and it is said that the indications are decidedly encouraging. At Abou Dibba, where 13 wells have been sunk, petroleum has been found at a comparatively shallow depth in five of them. Enough work has been done to lead the Government experts to believe that this deposit is of considerable importance.

American Bunker Coal Market.

New York, February 8th.

The following change has occurred in the quotations for bunker coal at United States ports: Hampton Roads, $7.00 per ton.—*Reuter's Trade Service.*

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THE CALCULATION OF THE THICKNESS OF WATER CASING IN OIL WELLS.

For a water casing to be effective, it is necessary that there should be an hermetic seal between it and the wall of the well, and that the casing should be able to withstand the maximum pressure to which it may be subjected. The failure of water casings cannot, as is sometimes erroneously supposed, be caused by the formation of a vacuum, or by pumping the water out of the bore too rapidly, nor is it to be avoided by the introduction of a protection casing, except in the case that the well has reached the oil horizon with the same casing that has served to exclude the water, in which case the protection casing is necessary to afford protection against the erosion of sand and the friction of the baling rope, etc. The maximum pressure to which the water casing will be subjected should be ascertained by calculation, and the casing made of a corresponding thickness to withstand it. In the case of a well in which the water has been cased off at a depth of h metres from the surface, and in which the water has been pumped out to a depth of x metres from the surface, the pressure at x metres from the surface which the column must be able to withstand is $P=(x-y)/10$ atm. The column supports this pressure from the depth of x metres down to its shoe, or respectively, down to h metres from the surface. The pressure at any point h metres from the surface is $h/10$ atm. The pressure, being zero at the surface, gradually increases with increasing depth, being greatest at the bottom. To calculate the pressure to be resisted, it is necessary to suppose that the well is entirely empty of water, and that the space behind the casing is full of water. It must also be borne in mind that the gravity of the liquid may exceed that of water, owing to the presence of suspended matter, and the factor of safety used must provide for this contingency. Professor Stewart found that the collapsing pressure of such tubes as are employed in casing $=Pt=1{,}000\ (1-\sqrt{(1-1600\ t^2/d^2)}$, Pt being the collapsing pressure in lbs. per sq. in., d external diameter of tubes in inches, and t thickness of tubes in inches. This formula applies to cases where P is less than 581 or when t/d is less than 0.023. When these values are greater the formula applicable is $Pt=86{,}670\ t/d-1{,}386$. The corresponding formulæ for the metric system are $Pt=70.3\ (1-\sqrt{(1-1{,}600\ t^2/d^2)}$ and $Pt=6{,}094\ t/d-97.45$ respectively, where Pt is expressed in kgr. per sq. cm. and the diameters are in mm. The first formula applies when P is less than 41, or t/d is less than 0.023, and the second when these values are greater. By these formulæ the thickness of tubes may be calculated, a coefficient of safety of 2 being sufficient. On the basis of these figures the accompanying sketches show the necessary thickness of casing tube for various depths and the weight of tube per unit of length, both in the English and metric systems.—(By J. T. Hayward and E. C. Masterson. *Moniteur du Pétrole Roumain*, January 1st, 1923.)—P. J. M.

BOLIVIAN TRADE CONDITIONS.

January, 1923, stands out as the peak month in Bolivia, commercially speaking, since the beginning of the dull period of 1920, says the American Consul at La Paz, in a cable to the Department of Commerce. A continuous rise in the price of tin is reported, with consequent general improvement over the country. Exports were the first to feel the effects of the better price and although official figures for December are not yet obtainable it is known that a notable increase in shipments has occurred. The average price of tin for 1922 was £158, as compared with £185, which is the price now prevailing. The opening of many tin mines is anticipated as a result of the continued high prices.

Improvement is not confined to Bolivia's principal product, but includes others of her minerals. A general betterment in copper mining is noticeable, and increased silver production is expected.

Considerable work has been done by an American oil company under its concession, and the location of about 4,000,000 hectares of petroleum has now been concluded. The Backus petroleum concession has recently been transferred to a large British oil company. With one exception all of the important manufacturing plants are reported prosperous.

Railway construction work on the Atocha Villazon Railway is progressing satisfactorily. At the present time rails are being laid on two new sections of the road. This line will connect La Paz with Buenos Aires and will form the last link in a new transcontinental route. The Government is building the railroad from La Paz to the Yungas region and it is progressing slowly.

Certain European capitalists are said to be interested in the proposed Cochabamba-Santa Cruz line.

After considerable deliberation the Government has decided to build a railroad from Potosi to Sucre under its own management.

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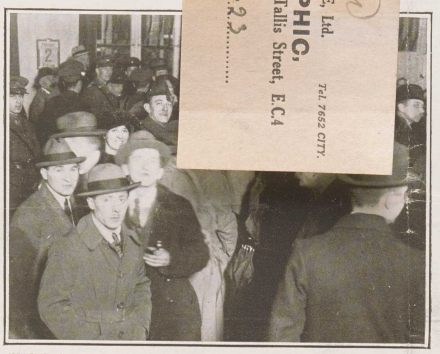

WAITING FOR THEIR SUPPLY OF MARKS AT THE BANK
A mixed crowd of British, French and Germans.



A BUSY TIME FOR THE OFFICIALS AT THE
Officers drawing millions of marks

IF, when in Cologne, and the day is Friday, you happen to meet a British soldier with tremendous bulges under his overcoat, don't imagine he is suffering from some fearful malformation of the hip. He has probably just called at Barclay's Bank and changed there the pound sterling into German paper currency.

Life among the troops in occupied territory might have settled down to a dreary humdrum routine if it had not been for the fluctuation of the mark. Buying and selling marks is now the "king of indoor sports" on the Rhine. There is no sign of gambling fever, and the game is still a game, and not a vice.

I CALLED at Barclay's Bank, which has taken over the official business once carried on by Cox's. From a small office in the Höhestrasse this branch has now grown to a magnificent building in the centre of the city. Outside were half a dozen ambulance cars, three ordinary motor-cars, a small two-horse phaeton and a hand-cart waiting to take away millions of marks to pay the troops. As I arrived two officers were staggering down the steps with a large suit-case, which they could not close, so full was it of paper marks. When they first arrived on the Rhine they could put the pay of their battalion in their pockets.

INSIDE the bank there were four long lines of customers queued tightly against the cashier's counters, with expressions on their faces comparable to the look of those hardy souls at home—the like of them known in no other land — who will cheerfully wait twenty-four hours for a first-night seat in a theatre. On the left were more than fifty officers, a score of soldiers and a sprinkling of women—probably officers' wives. Behind the counters the cashiers were calmly but swiftly making calculations in millions with their mechanical calculators and pencil and papers. One young officer, new to the duty of fetching the money, had to borrow an old sack to remove the pile of paper. I asked to see the manager, Mr. Meyer, late of Ruhleben, who controls this unique banking business carried on in most liquid currencies, several of which have been known to fluctuate 40,000 marks within the hour. He invited me to see how the business was done.

Then I accompanied the cashier to the source of supply, the strong rooms of the Reich Bank.



SACKS OF MARKS FOR BARCLAY'S BANK
These have arrived from the Reich Bank.

The clerk in charge of the messengers produced a cheque for a milliard of marks. For this we received several sacks and bundles of paper marks fresh from the printing presses.

WE loaded up on an old baker's hand-cart, and for all the interest we attracted we might have been trundling a load of bricks. The journey was repeated several times until sufficient paper for the troops had been obtained. By midday the stream of customers, military and civil, speculators, investors and ordinary business people, with hampers of small currency, had filled the bank to overflowing.

I WAS piloted through the crowd by a controller, who operated like an ice-breaker steaming through thick ice. He would throw his bulk forward and let it settle on the crowd, which would divide and leave a narrow channel. Thus we reached the exchange-operators' room, the most vital department in the bank. The operators were juggling with a score of telephones and shouting madly to several European capitals. It reminded me of a visit to one of the big mark markets in Draper's Gardens, where I thought I had blundered into a roomful of young men gone stark, staring mark mad. Receivers are snatched up, banged down, instructions hurled across to assistants in voices almost loud enough to carry to their listeners without the help of telephones.

I SAID there was practically no gambling with marks. This is true, for when a Tommy buys or sells he is on a certainty! A friendly corporal explained to me how it was done. In the early days, when the pound stood at a hundred marks, a soldier could go to the Army Post Office with his pay and buy a postal order for sixty marks, thus right away making forty marks profit out of this simple operation. This was controlled and in some way curtailed. But last Friday, for example, a man who had received 205,000 marks from the Army Pay Department for his pound could go to Barclay's and buy a pound for about 170,000, and so on *ad lib.* This is accounted for by the fact that the army gets a better rate than anyone else. This is quite legal. As my informant said, "What is good enough for the gents in Draper's Gardens is good enough for those who didn't always get jam on it."

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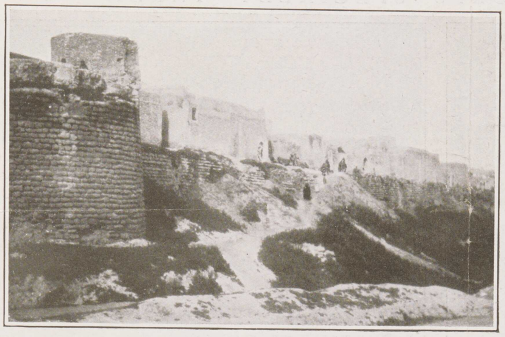
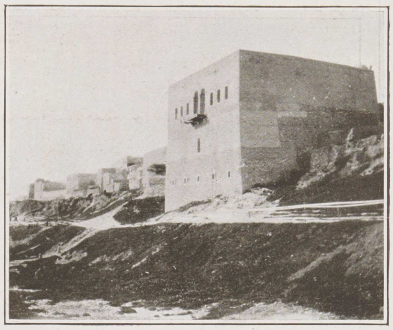
THE MYSTIC CITY OF MOSUL

IS A SETTLEMENT WITH THE TURKS IN SIGHT?

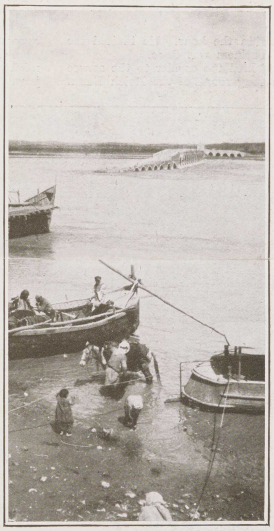


PART OF THE OLD CITY WALL OF MOSUL

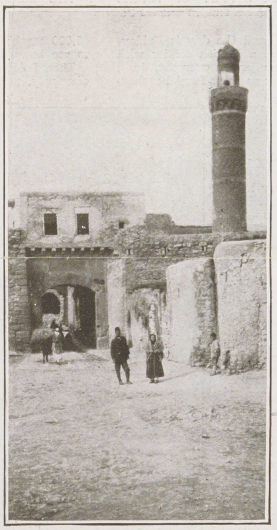


ANOTHER PART OF THE WALL AND AN OLD MOAT

THE City of Mosul, on the right bank of the Tigris and opposite the mounds of ancient Nineveh, is one of the knotty problems of the Near East which has yet to be solved, although a statement made by Lord Curzon, our Foreign Minister, on his return from the Lausanne Conference, suggests that the chances of an agreement are much brighter than they were. "I consented," said Lord Curzon, "while retaining the clause in the Treaty which referred the question of the frontier of Iraq—commonly called the Mosul question—to the League of Nations, to postpone the formal invitation to the Council to prosecute its inquiry for the space of a year, so as to admit of friendly discussion between the British and Turkish Governments in the interval, subject, however, to the condition that the *status quo* is maintained by both parties." The Turks at once agreed to accept this proposed settlement of the difficulty.



A BRIDGE ACROSS THE TIGRIS AT MOSUL



ONE OF THE GATES OF MOSUL

THE Turks claim that Mosul is really a Turkish district, but the facts fail to support them. Mosul is far more directly associated with Bagdad, the capital of Iraq, than with either Angora or Constantinople, and it has been definitely mandated by the League of Nations to us, and in any case, unless and until the League consents to such an arrangement, it cannot possibly be handed back to the Turks, who have made quite preposterous demands.

It was upon issues that the French and Italian delegates were more specially interested in that there was final failure to reach an agreement at Lausanne.

Mosul, with a population of 90,000, is the capital of a vilayet of the same name. It is 220 miles north-north-west of Bagdad. The town, still partly walled, was very prosperous between the tenth and thirteenth centuries, and was for long afterwards a great trading centre, noted particularly for the manufacture of muslin, to which it gave its name.



A VIEW FROM A ROOF
This photograph was taken from the roof of the Civil Post Office.



STREET IMPROVEMENTS AT MOSUL
A new road is here being cut through a large mosque which stood in the way.

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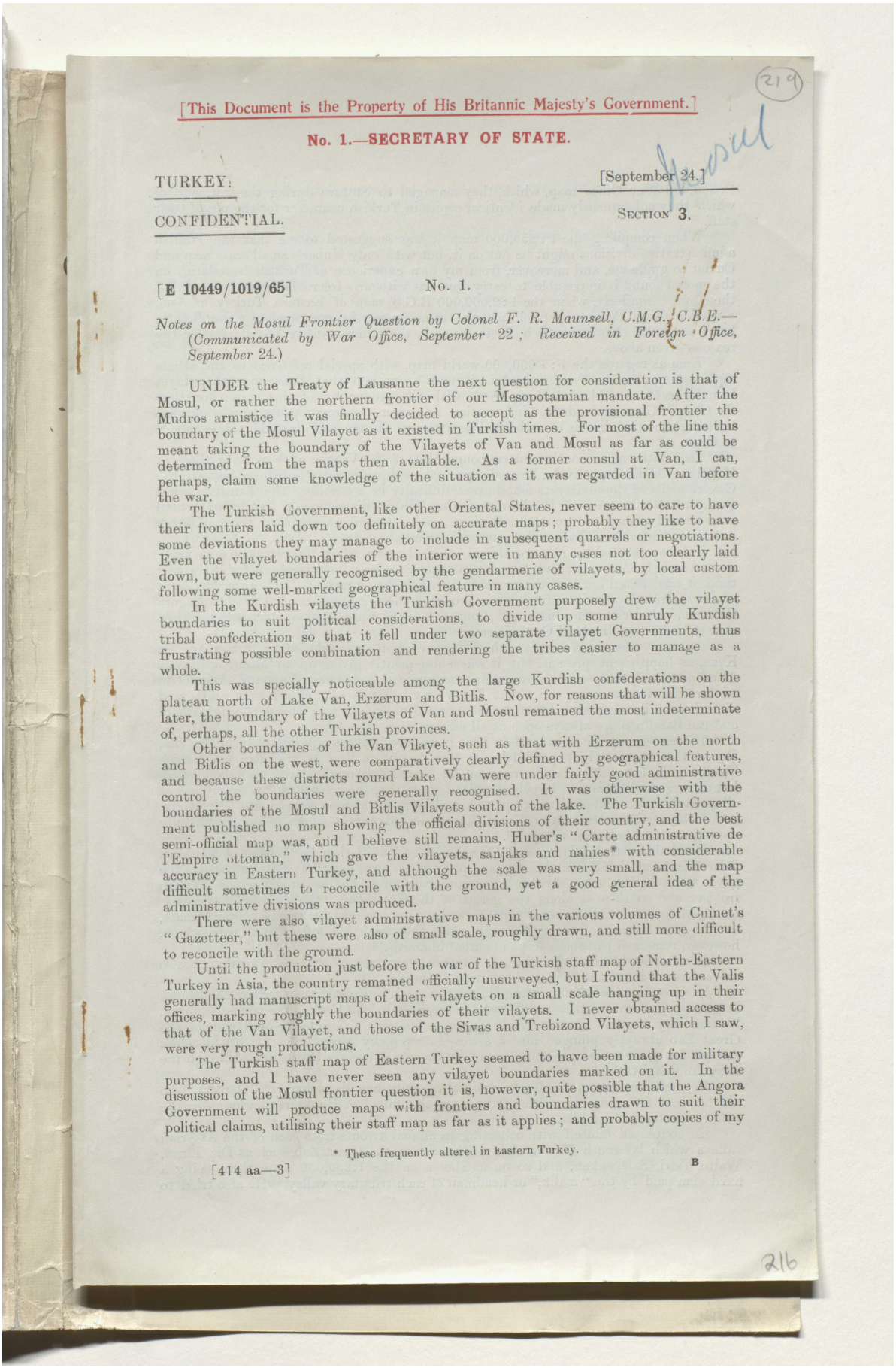

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No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

TURKEY.

[September 24.]

CONFIDENTIAL.

SECTION 3.

[E 10449/1019/65] No. 1.

Notes on the Mosul Frontier Question by Colonel F. R. Maunsell, C.M.G., C.B.E.—(Communicated by War Office, September 22; Received in Foreign Office, September 24.)

UNDER the Treaty of Lausanne the next question for consideration is that of Mosul, or rather the northern frontier of our Mesopotamian mandate. After the Mudros armistice it was finally decided to accept as the provisional frontier the boundary of the Mosul Vilayet as it existed in Turkish times. For most of the line this meant taking the boundary of the Vilayets of Van and Mosul as far as could be determined from the maps then available. As a former consul at Van, I can, perhaps, claim some knowledge of the situation as it was regarded in Van before the war.

The Turkish Government, like other Oriental States, never seem to care to have their frontiers laid down too definitely on accurate maps; probably they like to have some deviations they may manage to include in subsequent quarrels or negotiations. Even the vilayet boundaries of the interior were in many cases not too clearly laid down, but were generally recognised by the gendarmerie of vilayets, by local custom following some well-marked geographical feature in many cases.

In the Kurdish vilayets the Turkish Government purposely drew the vilayet boundaries to suit political considerations, to divide up some unruly Kurdish tribal confederation so that it fell under two separate vilayet Governments, thus frustrating possible combination and rendering the tribes easier to manage as a whole.

This was specially noticeable among the large Kurdish confederations on the plateau north of Lake Van, Erzerum and Bitlis. Now, for reasons that will be shown later, the boundary of the Vilayets of Van and Mosul remained the most indeterminate of, perhaps, all the other Turkish provinces.

Other boundaries of the Van Vilayet, such as that with Erzerum on the north and Bitlis on the west, were comparatively clearly defined by geographical features, and because these districts round Lake Van were under fairly good administrative control the boundaries were generally recognised. It was otherwise with the boundaries of the Mosul and Bitlis Vilayets south of the lake. The Turkish Government published no map showing the official divisions of their country, and the best semi-official map was, and I believe still remains, Huber's "Carte administrative de l'Empire ottoman," which gave the vilayets, sanjaks and nahies* with considerable accuracy in Eastern Turkey, and although the scale was very small, and the map difficult sometimes to reconcile with the ground, yet a good general idea of the administrative divisions was produced.

There were also vilayet administrative maps in the various volumes of Cuinet's "Gazetteer," but these were also of small scale, roughly drawn, and still more difficult to reconcile with the ground.

Until the production just before the war of the Turkish staff map of North-Eastern Turkey in Asia, the country remained officially unsurveyed, but I found that the Valis generally had manuscript maps of their vilayets on a small scale hanging up in their offices, marking roughly the boundaries of their vilayets. I never obtained access to that of the Van Vilayet, and those of the Sivas and Trebizond Vilayets, which I saw, were very rough productions.

The Turkish staff map of Eastern Turkey seemed to have been made for military purposes, and I have never seen any vilayet boundaries marked on it. In the discussion of the Mosul frontier question it is, however, quite possible that the Angora Government will produce maps with frontiers and boundaries drawn to suit their political claims, utilising their staff map as far as it applies; and probably copies of my

* These frequently altered in Eastern Turkey.

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1 : 250,000 War Office map, which they managed to capture during the war, and of which they subsequently made identical copies in Turkish character for the use of their staff.

When compiling the 1 : 250,000 map it was suggested to me that the Turkish administrative divisions might be put on it, but with only Huber's small scale map and Cuinet to guide me, and moreover, from my own experience of Turkish boundaries on the spot, I found it impossible to carry this out with any tolerable accuracy, so I left them out. Similarly, when the 1 : 2,000,000 R.G.S. map of Eastern Turkey in Asia, Syria and West Persia was published, the same suggestion was made by the R.G.S., but I concluded that it would be better to omit the administrative boundaries for the reasons given above.

Then as regards the 1 : 1,000,000 world map, with special reference to the sheets representing Eastern Turkey in Asia, it may be noticed that these give the vilayet boundaries there. I had nothing to do with the production of this map; doubtless Sir Charles Close evolved this information from some sources open to his somewhat bureaucratic mind, but as one who had seen things on the spot I could not subscribe to them.

The southern and south-western boundaries of the Vilayet of Van, with those of Mosul and Bitlis respectively, have always remained particularly indefinite because the Governments of these vilayets found great difficulty in controlling the Kurdish tribes (many of them nomad) of Hakkiari and the Bohtan districts, and had, after several unsuccessful attempts at control, left them semi-independent, mulcting them of taxes or tribute whenever a favourable opportunity offered.

This represented the state of things before the war, when the situation was fairly normal and the Armenian and Assyrian questions more or less quiescent, but I scarcely think it has altered much at the present day when the Armenians and Assyrians have been obliterated or driven from their proper homes, and the control of the Angora Government over the Hakkiari and Bohtan has certainly become much weaker than that of the former Imperial Government.

At a previous period I believe the Vilayet of Van had included in it the Amadia Kaza, as happens at present, but it was subsequently given up to Mosul as it was found practically impossible to maintain communication between Van and Amadia in winter, the tracks down the Great Zab Valley being mostly closed then and found difficult even in summer; while the routes between Amadia and Mosul through Dohul and the Bahdinan are always open at all seasons.

It seems to me an anachronism that Amadia should be in any way under Van. Before the war it might possibly have been useful to Van as a centre from which Tiari and the lower Assyrian districts on the Great Zab might have been controlled, but as these latter are now largely derelict I cannot see how Amadia can be any use at all to the Government of Van, except as a centre from which to disseminate propaganda hostile to our interests in the Mosul Vilayet, an advantage which is no doubt fully appreciated and taken advantage of.

Bashkala is the headquarters of the Sanjak of Hakkiari in the Vilayet of Van, and from this point was before the war, and probably is now, directed as far as possible the government of the very intricate mountain districts to the south along the Persian frontier and south-west along the gorges of the Great Zab. Bashkala itself stands in the upland plain of Albak, some 8,000 feet above sea level, with a severe winter climate, and is then difficult of access, the only route then being the lofty Chukh pass, which, however, remained passable except in actual blizzards.

In summer, however, Bashkala is comparatively easy of access and commands also an easy route across the Persian frontier to Urumia.

The northern boundary of the Hakkiari Sanjak was clearly marked by the Chukh Dagh and its continuations south-west to the Kokobulend Peak, after which definition became very vague. As the Albak plain terminates a few miles below Bashkala, the Great Zab abruptly plunged into a series of deep rocky gorges from which it does not emerge for many miles, sweeping round by the Amadia Kaza and passing through the Assyrian districts.

In these mountains the Turks maintained only one kaïmakam at Julamerk, who did his best from the old castle of the Kurdish "mirs" of Hakkiari to administer the wild mountains around him.

He contented himself with collecting an annual tribute from each of the Assyrian valleys which lay south of him, along tributaries of the Great Zab, such as Diz, Lizan, Walto, Tiari, Salebekkan, and so on as shown on the 1:250,000 map, there being a fixed sum paid by the "malik," or headman of each tributary valley. He also tried to

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prevent encroachments and quarrels by neighbouring Kurds, but as he had only a few gendarmes and no military garrison with him in Julamerk, he could accomplish little in this direction.

He was helped a good deal by the fact that the Assyrian Patriarch, Mar Shimun, then lived at Kochannes, a village situated on the way between Bashkala and Julamerk, and therefore comparatively easy of access from both places.

Communication between Bashkala and Julamerk was fairly easy by hill paths in summer under the slopes of Kokobulend, and in winter by tracks along the Great Zab.

I could always manage to communicate, winter and summer, with the British missionaries, who then lived with the Patriarch in Kochannes, before they moved to Amadia.

But south of Julamerk, down the Great Zab, communication was always regarded as practically impossible in winter, and extremely difficult even in summer, so that it is obvious there was no defined frontier in this direction with the Mosul Government, under which Amadia then was.

In that direction the kaïmakam simply collected a tribute from the Assyrian tribes or "valleys," and the frontier remained nebulous.

As it appears that these Assyrian valleys are now largely derelict and uninhabited, it is difficult to see what the kaïmakam at Julamerk can now accomplish, if he is there at all, except to use the place as a supporting link in propaganda among the Kurds against the British when opportunity offers, working in connection with Amadia as best he can.

Towards the south, along the Persian frontier, the authority of Bashkala was rather better supported.

A kaïmakam was installed at Diza, the chief place on the Gavvar Plain, with a military garrison of about one infantry battalion supplying small outposts in the vicinity, a customs post on the route to Urumia in Persia, by the Delasi Pass, a well-frequented track, and maintaining also some gendarmes under the kaïmakam's personal orders. The Gavvar Plain, the bed of ancient lake among the mountains, was easy to traverse, and also communication with Bashkala was easy. Diza was therefore a useful centre from which to control the districts along the Persian frontier on one side, and the intricate mountain districts of the Jelu Dagh and Sat Dagh, which lay west of the plain.

Repeated efforts in the latter direction failed to achieve success.

"Nahies" were formed, with mudirs under the kaïmakam of Diza, in such places as Oramar Heriki and Sat, on the far slope of the Sat Dagh, the mudir being sometimes a local Kurd, but these did not remain in office long, if they did not meet a violent end; so the attempts were soon abandoned.

The Assyrian districts of the Jelu and Baz, on the other side of the Jelu Dagh, paid tribute in the usual manner, through Kochannes, to Julamerk or Bashkala direct.

Here again it is obvious that there could be no defined frontier with the Mosul Vilayet at all.

In fact in this direction the Mosul Government had special difficulties of their own; they were periodically obliged to send small military expeditions, sometimes with varying success, to subdue the Kurdish Agha of Barzan, who was nominally dependent on a kaïmakam installed by them in Zebar or Akra.

Usually this chieftain lived in complete independence, defying Mosul generally, and certainly so distant a Vali as that of Van. The present agha in Barzan is, I think, not unknown to our authorities in Akra, and appears still to be continuing his career of independence, although here again we find the Turks utilising these chiefs and those in Zebar as agents for propaganda against ourselves in the Akra region.

Taking a direct line from Gavvar to Akra, or from Gavvar to Amadia, the country is exceptionally difficult, even for this mountainous region, principally owing to the deep limestone gorges which the streams traverse, and the absence of the high upland downs which make the country farther north easier to traverse.

When I passed through, the Turks contented themselves with placing a military post of a corporal and a few men from Diza at the mouth of a narrow defile which led out of Gavvar Plain towards Oramar, to control traffic, leaving the districts beyond to look after themselves under their own aghas. Nervi, Reikan, Sati, Herki and such mountain districts with their patches of fertile ground in the deep valleys and villages perched high up on the limestone crags overlooking the gorges were left to their own devices so long as they did not trouble the outer world too much.

During the war the celebrated church of Jelu, what might be called the Westminster Abbey of the Assyrians, was destroyed, and this district, with those of

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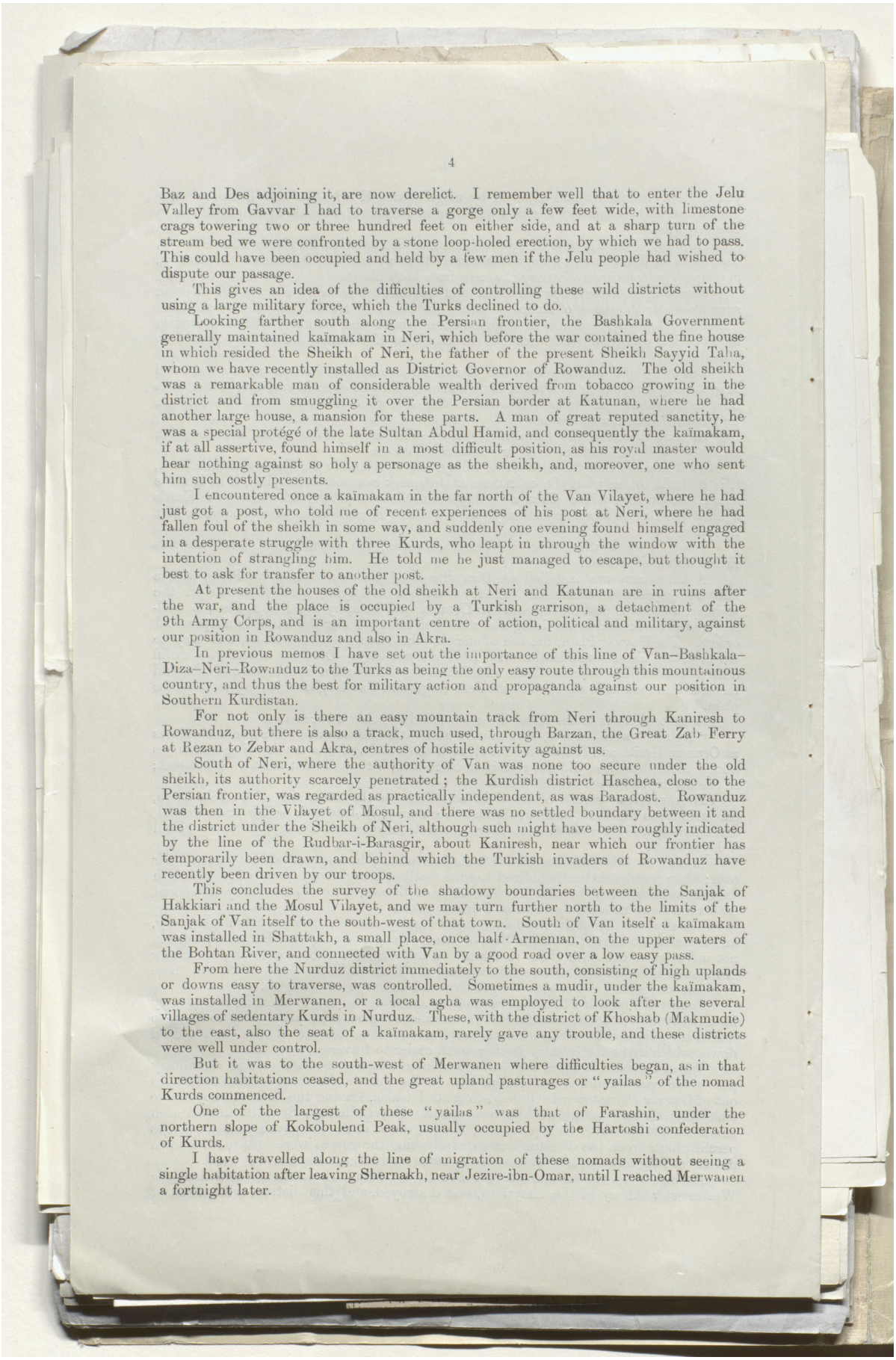

Baz and Des adjoining it, are now derelict. I remember well that to enter the Jelu Valley from Gavvar I had to traverse a gorge only a few feet wide, with limestone crags towering two or three hundred feet on either side, and at a sharp turn of the stream bed we were confronted by a stone loop-holed erection, by which we had to pass. This could have been occupied and held by a few men if the Jelu people had wished to dispute our passage.

This gives an idea of the difficulties of controlling these wild districts without using a large military force, which the Turks declined to do.

Looking farther south along the Persian frontier, the Bashkala Government generally maintained kaïmakam in Neri, which before the war contained the fine house in which resided the Sheikh of Neri, the father of the present Sheikh Sayyid Taha, whom we have recently installed as District Governor of Rowanduz. The old sheikh was a remarkable man of considerable wealth derived from tobacco growing in the district and from smuggling it over the Persian border at Katunan, where he had another large house, a mansion for these parts. A man of great reputed sanctity, he was a special protégé of the late Sultan Abdul Hamid, and consequently the kaïmakam, if at all assertive, found himself in a most difficult position, as his royal master would hear nothing against so holy a personage as the sheikh, and, moreover, one who sent him such costly presents.

I encountered once a kaïmakam in the far north of the Van Vilayet, where he had just got a post, who told me of recent experiences of his post at Neri, where he had fallen foul of the sheikh in some way, and suddenly one evening found himself engaged in a desperate struggle with three Kurds, who leapt in through the window with the intention of strangling him. He told me he just managed to escape, but thought it best to ask for transfer to another post.

At present the houses of the old sheikh at Neri and Katunan are in ruins after the war, and the place is occupied by a Turkish garrison, a detachment of the 9th Army Corps, and is an important centre of action, political and military, against our position in Rowanduz and also in Akra.

In previous memos I have set out the importance of this line of Van–Bashkala–Diza–Neri–Rowanduz to the Turks as being the only easy route through this mountainous country, and thus the best for military action and propaganda against our position in Southern Kurdistan.

For not only is there an easy mountain track from Neri through Kaniresh to Rowanduz, but there is also a track, much used, through Barzan, the Great Zab Ferry at Rezan to Zebar and Akra, centres of hostile activity against us.

South of Neri, where the authority of Van was none too secure under the old sheikh, its authority scarcely penetrated; the Kurdish district Haschea, close to the Persian frontier, was regarded as practically independent, as was Baradost. Rowanduz was then in the Vilayet of Mosul, and there was no settled boundary between it and the district under the Sheikh of Neri, although such might have been roughly indicated by the line of the Rudbar-i-Barasgir, about Kaniresh, near which our frontier has temporarily been drawn, and behind which the Turkish invaders of Rowanduz have recently been driven by our troops.

This concludes the survey of the shadowy boundaries between the Sanjak of Hakkiari and the Mosul Vilayet, and we may turn further north to the limits of the Sanjak of Van itself to the south-west of that town. South of Van itself a kaïmakam was installed in Shattakh, a small place, once half-Armenian, on the upper waters of the Bohtan River, and connected with Van by a good road over a low easy pass.

From here the Nurduz district immediately to the south, consisting of high uplands or downs easy to traverse, was controlled. Sometimes a mudir, under the kaïmakam, was installed in Merwanen, or a local agha was employed to look after the several villages of sedentary Kurds in Nurduz. These, with the district of Khoshab (Makmudie) to the east, also the seat of a kaïmakam, rarely gave any trouble, and these districts were well under control.

But it was to the south-west of Merwanen where difficulties began, as in that direction habitations ceased, and the great upland pasturages or "yailas" of the nomad Kurds commenced.

One of the largest of these "yailas" was that of Farashin, under the northern slope of Kokobulend Peak, usually occupied by the Hartoshi confederation of Kurds.

I have travelled along the line of migration of these nomads without seeing a single habitation after leaving Shernakh, near Jezire-ibn-Omar, until I reached Merwanen a fortnight later.

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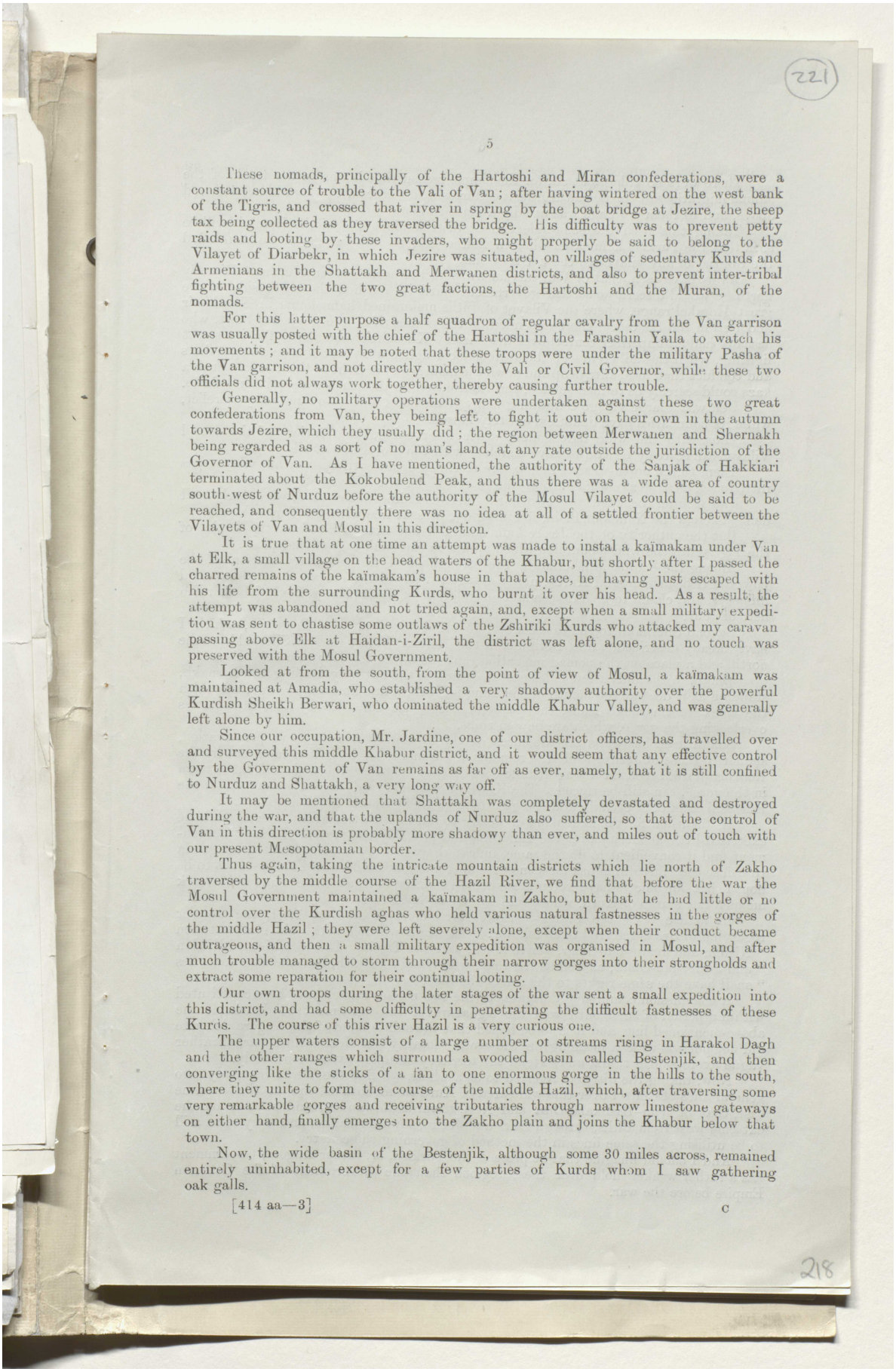

These nomads, principally of the Hartoshi and Miran confederations, were a constant source of trouble to the Vali of Van; after having wintered on the west bank of the Tigris, and crossed that river in spring by the boat bridge at Jezire, the sheep tax being collected as they traversed the bridge. His difficulty was to prevent petty raids and looting by these invaders, who might properly be said to belong to the Vilayet of Diarbekr, in which Jezire was situated, on villages of sedentary Kurds and Armenians in the Shattakh and Merwanen districts, and also to prevent inter-tribal fighting between the two great factions, the Hartoshi and the Muran, of the nomads.

For this latter purpose a half squadron of regular cavalry from the Van garrison was usually posted with the chief of the Hartoshi in the Farashin Yaila to watch his movements; and it may be noted that these troops were under the military Pasha of the Van garrison, and not directly under the Vali or Civil Governor, while these two officials did not always work together, thereby causing further trouble.

Generally, no military operations were undertaken against these two great confederations from Van, they being left to fight it out on their own in the autumn towards Jezire, which they usually did; the region between Merwanen and Shernakh being regarded as a sort of no man's land, at any rate outside the jurisdiction of the Governor of Van. As I have mentioned, the authority of the Sanjak of Hakkiari terminated about the Kokobulend Peak, and thus there was a wide area of country south-west of Nurduz before the authority of the Mosul Vilayet could be said to be reached, and consequently there was no idea at all of a settled frontier between the Vilayets of Van and Mosul in this direction.

It is true that at one time an attempt was made to instal a kaïmakam under Van at Elk, a small village on the head waters of the Khabur, but shortly after I passed the charred remains of the kaïmakam's house in that place, he having just escaped with his life from the surrounding Kurds, who burnt it over his head. As a result, the attempt was abandoned and not tried again, and, except when a small military expedition was sent to chastise some outlaws of the Zshiriki Kurds who attacked my caravan passing above Elk at Haidan-i-Ziril, the district was left alone, and no touch was preserved with the Mosul Government.

Looked at from the south, from the point of view of Mosul, a kaïmakam was maintained at Amadia, who established a very shadowy authority over the powerful Kurdish Sheikh Berwari, who dominated the middle Khabur Valley, and was generally left alone by him.

Since our occupation, Mr. Jardine, one of our district officers, has travelled over and surveyed this middle Khabur district, and it would seem that any effective control by the Government of Van remains as far off as ever, namely, that it is still confined to Nurduz and Shattakh, a very long way off.

It may be mentioned that Shattakh was completely devastated and destroyed during the war, and that the uplands of Nurduz also suffered, so that the control of Van in this direction is probably more shadowy than ever, and miles out of touch with our present Mesopotamian border.

Thus again, taking the intricate mountain districts which lie north of Zakho traversed by the middle course of the Hazil River, we find that before the war the Mosul Government maintained a kaïmakam in Zakho, but that he had little or no control over the Kurdish aghas who held various natural fastnesses in the gorges of the middle Hazil; they were left severely alone, except when their conduct became outrageous, and then a small military expedition was organised in Mosul, and after much trouble managed to storm through their narrow gorges into their strongholds and extract some reparation for their continual looting.

Our own troops during the later stages of the war sent a small expedition into this district, and had some difficulty in penetrating the difficult fastnesses of these Kurds. The course of this river Hazil is a very curious one.

The upper waters consist of a large number of streams rising in Harakol Dagh and the other ranges which surround a wooded basin called Bestenjik, and then converging like the sticks of a fan to one enormous gorge in the hills to the south, where they unite to form the course of the middle Hazil, which, after traversing some very remarkable gorges and receiving tributaries through narrow limestone gateways on either hand, finally emerges into the Zakho plain and joins the Khabur below that town.

Now, the wide basin of the Bestenjik, although some 30 miles across, remained entirely uninhabited, except for a few parties of Kurds whom I saw gathering oak galls.

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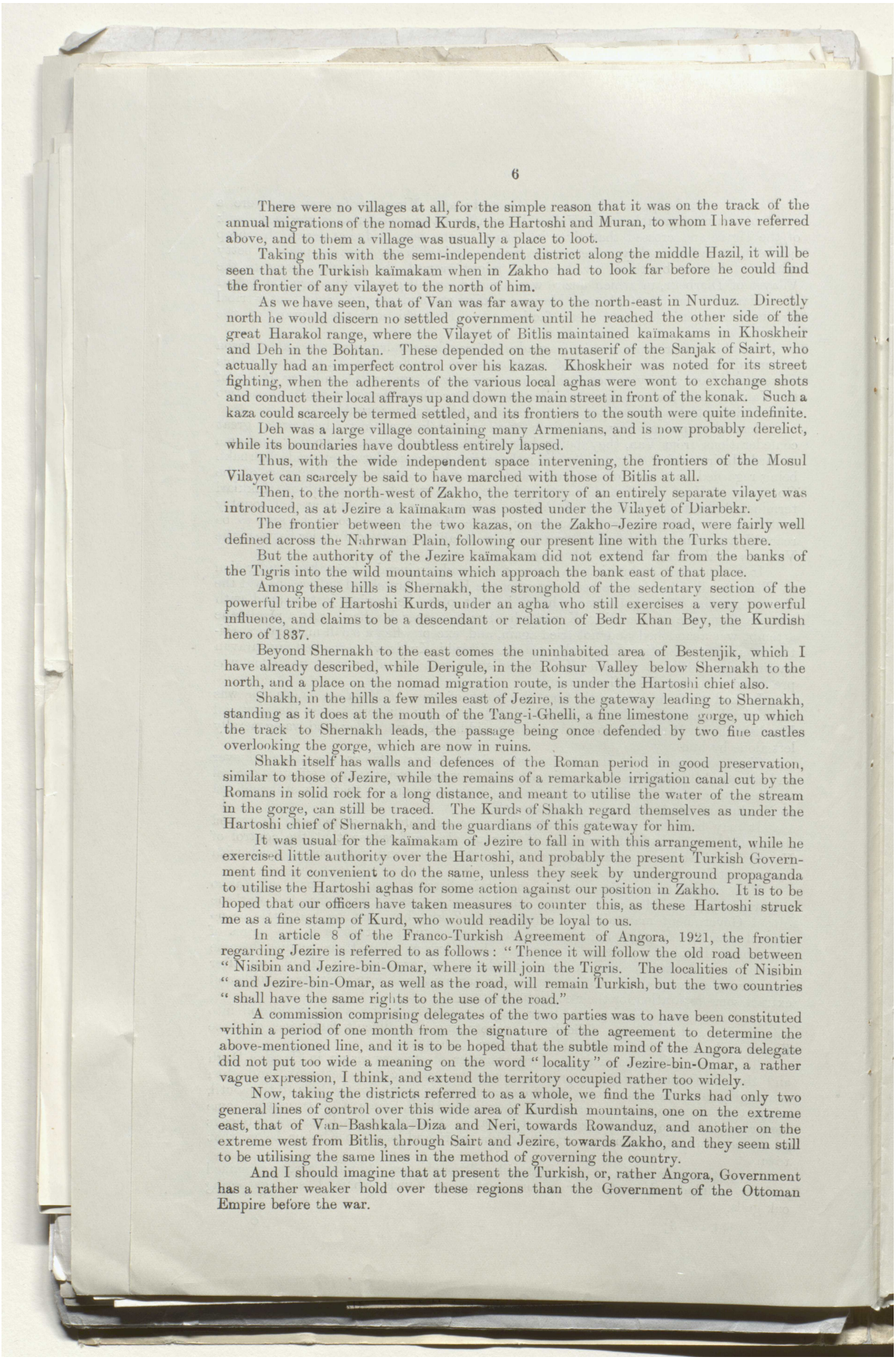

There were no villages at all, for the simple reason that it was on the track of the annual migrations of the nomad Kurds, the Hartoshi and Muran, to whom I have referred above, and to them a village was usually a place to loot.

Taking this with the semi-independent district along the middle Hazil, it will be seen that the Turkish kaïmakam when in Zakho had to look far before he could find the frontier of any vilayet to the north of him.

As we have seen, that of Van was far away to the north-east in Nurduz. Directly north he would discern no settled government until he reached the other side of the great Harakol range, where the Vilayet of Bitlis maintained kaïmakams in Khoskheir and Deh in the Bohtan. These depended on the mutaserif of the Sanjak of Sairt, who actually had an imperfect control over his kazas. Khoskheir was noted for its street fighting, when the adherents of the various local aghas were wont to exchange shots and conduct their local affrays up and down the main street in front of the konak. Such a kaza could scarcely be termed settled, and its frontiers to the south were quite indefinite.

Deh was a large village containing many Armenians, and is now probably derelict, while its boundaries have doubtless entirely lapsed.

Thus, with the wide independent space intervening, the frontiers of the Mosul Vilayet can scarcely be said to have marched with those of Bitlis at all.

Then, to the north-west of Zakho, the territory of an entirely separate vilayet was introduced, as at Jezire a kaïmakam was posted under the Vilayet of Diarbekr.

The frontier between the two kazas, on the Zakho–Jezire road, were fairly well defined across the Nahrwan Plain, following our present line with the Turks there.

But the authority of the Jezire kaïmakam did not extend far from the banks of the Tigris into the wild mountains which approach the bank east of that place.

Among these hills is Shernakh, the stronghold of the sedentary section of the powerful tribe of Hartoshi Kurds, under an agha who still exercises a very powerful influence, and claims to be a descendant or relation of Bedr Khan Bey, the Kurdish hero of 1837.

Beyond Shernakh to the east comes the uninhabited area of Bestenjik, which I have already described, while Derigule, in the Rohsur Valley below Shernakh to the north, and a place on the nomad migration route, is under the Hartoshi chief also.

Shakh, in the hills a few miles east of Jezire, is the gateway leading to Shernakh, standing as it does at the mouth of the Tang-i-Ghelli, a fine limestone gorge, up which the track to Shernakh leads, the passage being once defended by two fine castles overlooking the gorge, which are now in ruins.

Shakh itself has walls and defences of the Roman period in good preservation, similar to those of Jezire, while the remains of a remarkable irrigation canal cut by the Romans in solid rock for a long distance, and meant to utilise the water of the stream in the gorge, can still be traced. The Kurds of Shakh regard themselves as under the Hartoshi chief of Shernakh, and the guardians of this gateway for him.

It was usual for the kaïmakam of Jezire to fall in with this arrangement, while he exercised little authority over the Hartoshi, and probably the present Turkish Government find it convenient to do the same, unless they seek by underground propaganda to utilise the Hartoshi aghas for some action against our position in Zakho. It is to be hoped that our officers have taken measures to counter this, as these Hartoshi struck me as a fine stamp of Kurd, who would readily be loyal to us.

In article 8 of the Franco-Turkish Agreement of Angora, 1921, the frontier regarding Jezire is referred to as follows: "Thence it will follow the old road between "Nisibin and Jezire-bin-Omar, where it will join the Tigris. The localities of Nisibin "and Jezire-bin-Omar, as well as the road, will remain Turkish, but the two countries "shall have the same rights to the use of the road."

A commission comprising delegates of the two parties was to have been constituted within a period of one month from the signature of the agreement to determine the above-mentioned line, and it is to be hoped that the subtle mind of the Angora delegate did not put too wide a meaning on the word "locality" of Jezire-bin-Omar, a rather vague expression, I think, and extend the territory occupied rather too widely.

Now, taking the districts referred to as a whole, we find the Turks had only two general lines of control over this wide area of Kurdish mountains, one on the extreme east, that of Van–Bashkala–Diza and Neri, towards Rowanduz, and another on the extreme west from Bitlis, through Sairt and Jezire, towards Zakho, and they seem still to be utilising the same lines in the method of governing the country.

And I should imagine that at present the Turkish, or, rather Angora, Government has a rather weaker hold over these regions than the Government of the Ottoman Empire before the war.

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The growth of the Kurdish national spirit, due largely to the presence of our forces and the evidence of our administration in Mesopotamia and Southern Kurdistan, is, in my opinion, largely answerable for this, and should be encouraged further by us as far as possible.

The discussion of the Mosul frontier took place in January 1923 at the Lausanne Conference, the arguments put forward by Ismet Pasha for a Turkish occupation of the former Mosul Vilayet down to Jebel Hamrin being completely refuted in a speech by Lord Curzon at that time.

Among other details,* Lord Curzon remarked, on the point of strategy, that Ismet Pasha had said very little, and perhaps wisely. His Lordship added that Mosul would be an excellent place for an army corps to be stationed. The southern frontier was only 60 miles from Bagdad. Was it not obvious that a Turkish army placed at Mosul would have Bagdad at its mercy, and could make an Arab kingdom well-nigh impossible.

Such an argument holds with probably greater force to-day, as the Irak army is still insufficiently strong to withstand any Turkish advance without strong backing from us, especially as now in the minds of the Irak people the Lausanne Treaty was a moral victory for the Turks in the sense that in their eyes they have been able to flout the Western Powers, especially England, whom they thought so powerful, and to gain the right to expel foreigners and infidels from their country at will.

I might even add that, in my opinion, the Irak army will never be able to stand against the Turks without our support.

Or if I may put it more clearly, King Feisal's Irak army with its British advisers could not be trusted to stand for a moment against the Turks if the British garrison were withdrawn. The advisers would be quickly swept aside and might suffer an unfortunate fate.

Babylonia and Chaldaea were never able to stand against Assyria and invaders from the north, and their descendants could not do it to-day. But the Irak levies, composed of Kurds and Assyrians under the control of British officers, supported by British military and especially air force, may be expected to show a determined front to the Turks, and drive them out of their country and beyond, if called upon. The Turkish arguments regarding Mosul were completely refuted in January at Lausanne, but I scarcely think that sufficient attention was then directed to the very important strategic importance of Rowanduz looked at in conjunction with Mosul.

Assuming that the adjoining district with the various Kurdish tribes are under control, as they are at present under Sayyid Taha, Rowanduz stands as the key point on a very important trade route into North-West Persia and Tabriz by Rayat and the easy pass of the Garwa Sheikh on the frontier, up to which point the Russians constructed a metalled road during the war.

It would be an easy feat for modern engineering to construct a motor road through the Rowanduz gorge to join this road at the summit of the pass. Then there is the possibility of constructing a railway from Bagdad through Kirkuk, Rania and the Wazna Pass up the Lesser Zab Valley into Lahjan Plain, and thus entering North-West Persia from the south-west. With Rowanduz in hostile hands such a line would be impossible, and there is no other pass by which to cross the frontier ranges except near the Tak-i-Girra, a long way to the south and heading away from North-West Persia.

With Rowanduz in our hands the Wazna Pass line would be securely protected on the north. As I have shown above, Rowanduz is the terminal of an important line of Turkish advance, both for military action and propaganda from Van through Bashkala, Diza and Neri.

By this threatening attitude in recently massing troops at Neri an indication is given that they appreciate the value of this line, and intend to utilise it as a lever in their negotiations.

Then again, Rowanduz in hostile hands would always constitute a threat on the right flank of our position at Mosul.

The Turks felt this acutely when the Russians advanced and captured the place during the war, although they were prevented from moving far west of the town by the Turks holding some trenches on the crests above the gorge.

Moreover, when Rowanduz was in Turkish hands during the early part of this present year we found to our cost that they used it as a centre for their intrigues and propaganda, which penetrated as far south as Rania and Suleimanieh, and jeopardised our whole position in Southern Kurdistan. Is it wise that we should then gratuitously

* "Times" report of January 23, 1923.

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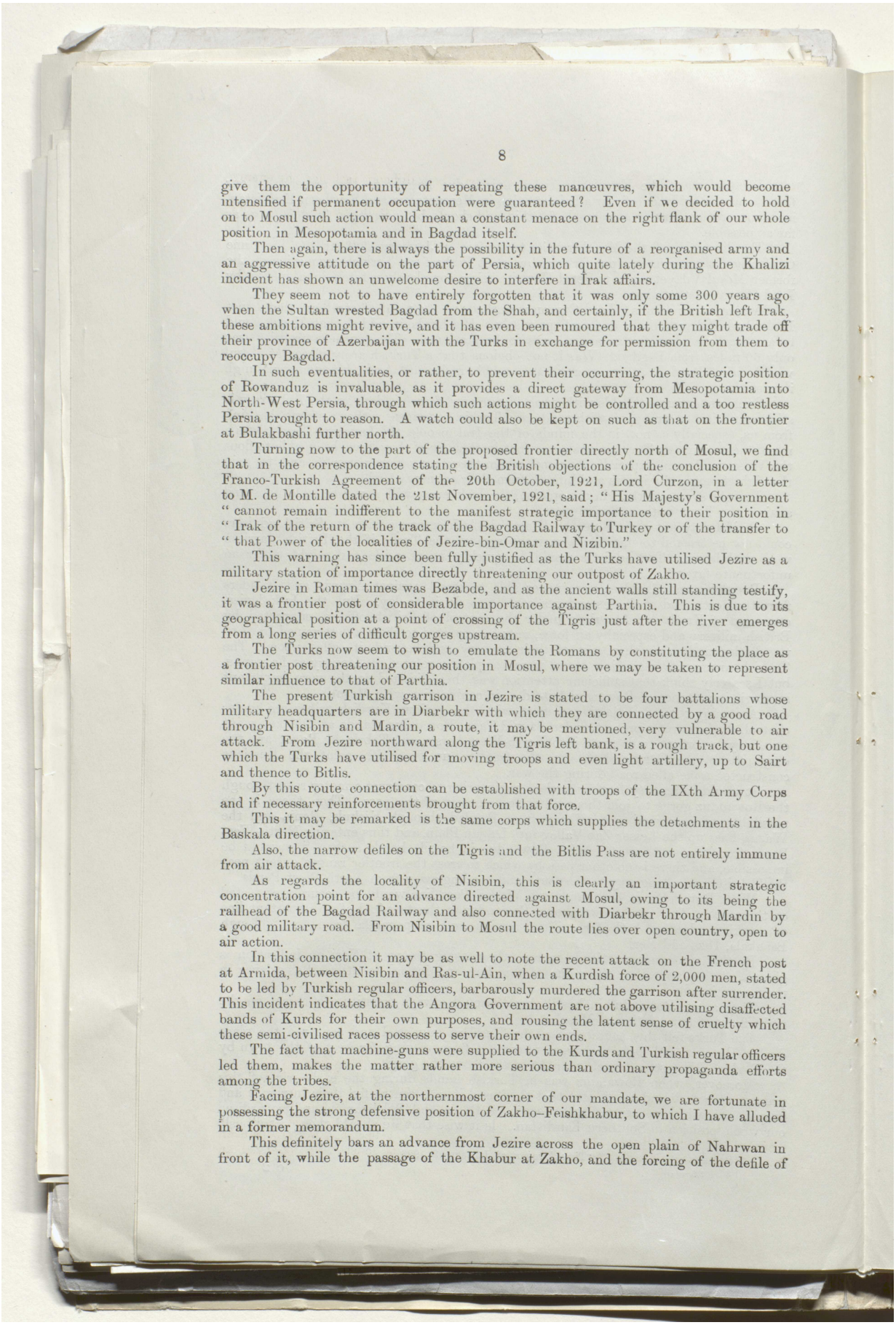

give them the opportunity of repeating these manœuvres, which would become intensified if permanent occupation were guaranteed? Even if we decided to hold on to Mosul such action would mean a constant menace on the right flank of our whole position in Mesopotamia and in Bagdad itself.

Then again, there is always the possibility in the future of a reorganised army and an aggressive attitude on the part of Persia, which quite lately during the Khalizi incident has shown an unwelcome desire to interfere in Irak affairs.

They seem not to have entirely forgotten that it was only some 300 years ago when the Sultan wrested Bagdad from the Shah, and certainly, if the British left Irak, these ambitions might revive, and it has even been rumoured that they might trade off their province of Azerbaijan with the Turks in exchange for permission from them to reoccupy Bagdad.

In such eventualities, or rather, to prevent their occurring, the strategic position of Rowanduz is invaluable, as it provides a direct gateway from Mesopotamia into North-West Persia, through which such actions might be controlled and a too restless Persia brought to reason. A watch could also be kept on such as that on the frontier at Bulakbashi further north.

Turning now to the part of the proposed frontier directly north of Mosul, we find that in the correspondence stating the British objections of the conclusion of the Franco-Turkish Agreement of the 20th October, 1921, Lord Curzon, in a letter to M. de Montille dated the 21st November, 1921, said; "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 Jezire-bin-Omar and Nizibin."

This warning has since been fully justified as the Turks have utilised Jezire as a military station of importance directly threatening our outpost of Zakho.

Jezire in Roman times was Bezabde, and as the ancient walls still standing testify, it was a frontier post of considerable importance against Parthia. This is due to its geographical position at a point of crossing of the Tigris just after the river emerges from a long series of difficult gorges upstream.

The Turks now seem to wish to emulate the Romans by constituting the place as a frontier post threatening our position in Mosul, where we may be taken to represent similar influence to that of Parthia.

The present Turkish garrison in Jezire is stated to be four battalions whose military headquarters are in Diarbekr with which they are connected by a good road through Nisibin and Mardin, a route, it may be mentioned, very vulnerable to air attack. From Jezire northward along the Tigris left bank, is a rough track, but one which the Turks have utilised for moving troops and even light artillery, up to Sairt and thence to Bitlis.

By this route connection can be established with troops of the IXth Army Corps and if necessary reinforcements brought from that force.

This it may be remarked is the same corps which supplies the detachments in the Baskala direction.

Also, the narrow defiles on the Tigris and the Bitlis Pass are not entirely immune from air attack.

As regards the locality of Nisibin, this is clearly an important strategic concentration point for an advance directed against Mosul, owing to its being the railhead of the Bagdad Railway and also connected with Diarbekr through Mardin by a good military road. From Nisibin to Mosul the route lies over open country, open to air action.

In this connection it may be as well to note the recent attack on the French post at Armida, between Nisibin and Ras-ul-Ain, when a Kurdish force of 2,000 men, stated to be led by Turkish regular officers, barbarously murdered the garrison after surrender. This incident indicates that the Angora Government are not above utilising disaffected bands of Kurds for their own purposes, and rousing the latent sense of cruelty which these semi-civilised races possess to serve their own ends.

The fact that machine-guns were supplied to the Kurds and Turkish regular officers led them, makes the matter rather more serious than ordinary propaganda efforts among the tribes.

Facing Jezire, at the northernmost corner of our mandate, we are fortunate in possessing the strong defensive position of Zakho–Feishkhabur, to which I have alluded in a former memorandum.

This definitely bars an advance from Jezire across the open plain of Nahrwan in front of it, while the passage of the Khabur at Zakho, and the forcing of the defile of

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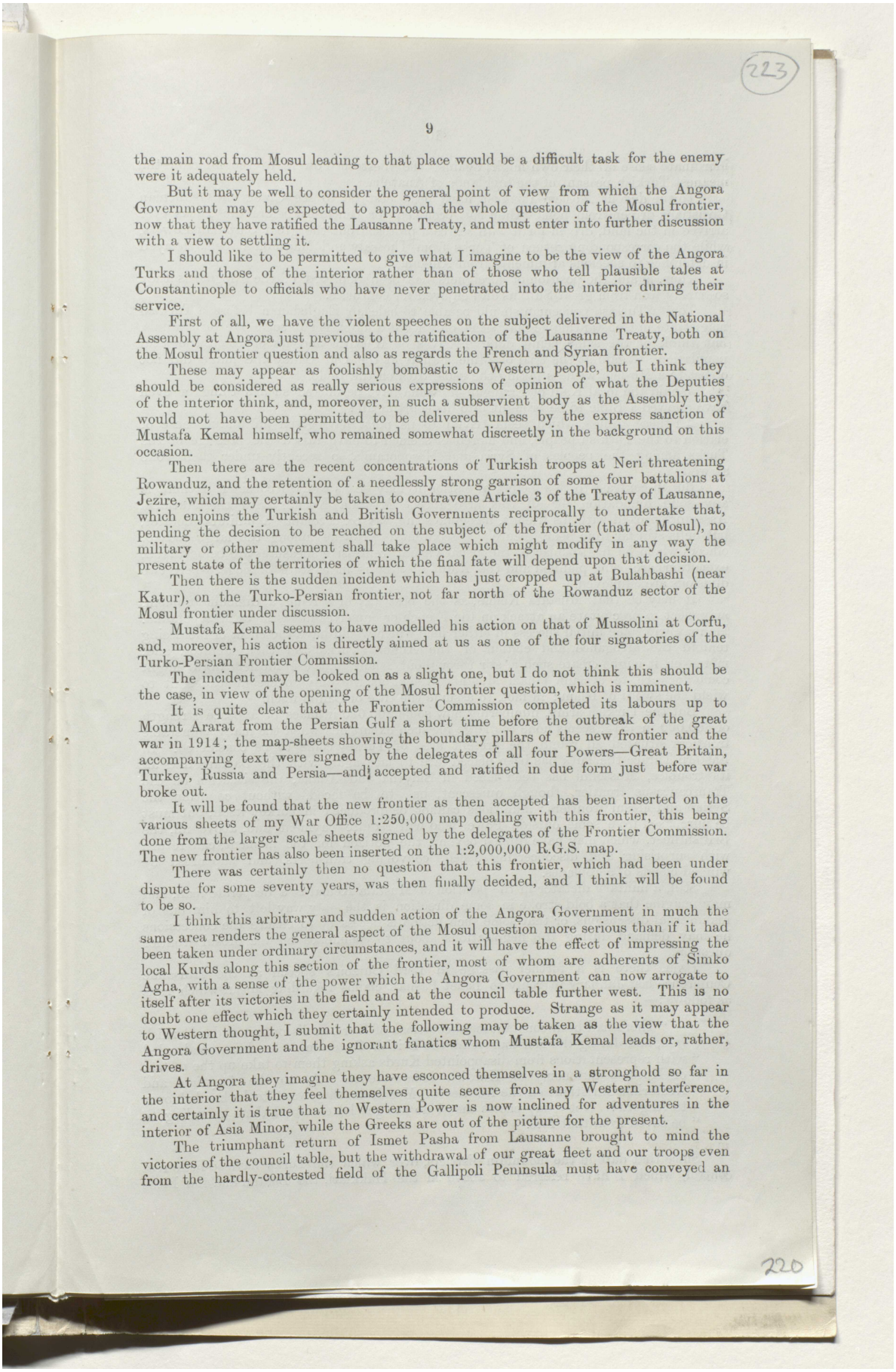

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the main road from Mosul leading to that place would be a difficult task for the enemy were it adequately held.

But it may be well to consider the general point of view from which the Angora Government may be expected to approach the whole question of the Mosul frontier, now that they have ratified the Lausanne Treaty, and must enter into further discussion with a view to settling it.

I should like to be permitted to give what I imagine to be the view of the Angora Turks and those of the interior rather than of those who tell plausible tales at Constantinople to officials who have never penetrated into the interior during their service.

First of all, we have the violent speeches on the subject delivered in the National Assembly at Angora just previous to the ratification of the Lausanne Treaty, both on the Mosul frontier question and also as regards the French and Syrian frontier.

These may appear as foolishly bombastic to Western people, but I think they should be considered as really serious expressions of opinion of what the Deputies of the interior think, and, moreover, in such a subservient body as the Assembly they would not have been permitted to be delivered unless by the express sanction of Mustafa Kemal himself, who remained somewhat discreetly in the background on this occasion.

Then there are the recent concentrations of Turkish troops at Neri threatening Rowanduz, and the retention of a needlessly strong garrison of some four battalions at Jezire, which may certainly be taken to contravene Article 3 of the Treaty of Lausanne, which enjoins the Turkish and British Governments reciprocally to undertake that, pending the decision to be reached on the subject of the frontier (that of Mosul), no military or other movement shall take place which might modify in any way the present state of the territories of which the final fate will depend upon that decision.

Then there is the sudden incident which has just cropped up at Bulahbashi (near Katur), on the Turko-Persian frontier, not far north of the Rowanduz sector of the Mosul frontier under discussion.

Mustafa Kemal seems to have modelled his action on that of Mussolini at Corfu, and, moreover, his action is directly aimed at us as one of the four signatories of the Turko-Persian Frontier Commission.

The incident may be looked on as a slight one, but I do not think this should be the case, in view of the opening of the Mosul frontier question, which is imminent.

It is quite clear that the Frontier Commission completed its labours up to Mount Ararat from the Persian Gulf a short time before the outbreak of the great war in 1914; the map-sheets showing the boundary pillars of the new frontier and the accompanying text were signed by the delegates of all four Powers—Great Britain, Turkey, Russia and Persia—and accepted and ratified in due form just before war broke out.

It will be found that the new frontier as then accepted has been inserted on the various sheets of my War Office 1:250,000 map dealing with this frontier, this being done from the larger scale sheets signed by the delegates of the Frontier Commission. The new frontier has also been inserted on the 1:2,000,000 R.G.S. map.

There was certainly then no question that this frontier, which had been under dispute for some seventy years, was then finally decided, and I think will be found to be so.

I think this arbitrary and sudden action of the Angora Government in much the same area renders the general aspect of the Mosul question more serious than if it had been taken under ordinary circumstances, and it will have the effect of impressing the local Kurds along this section of the frontier, most of whom are adherents of Simko Agha, with a sense of the power which the Angora Government can now arrogate to itself after its victories in the field and at the council table further west. This is no doubt one effect which they certainly intended to produce. Strange as it may appear to Western thought, I submit that the following may be taken as the view that the Angora Government and the ignorant fanatics whom Mustafa Kemal leads or, rather, drives.

At Angora they imagine they have esconced themselves in a stronghold so far in the interior that they feel themselves quite secure from any Western interference, and certainly it is true that no Western Power is now inclined for adventures in the interior of Asia Minor, while the Greeks are out of the picture for the present.

The triumphant return of Ismet Pasha from Lausanne brought to mind the victories of the council table, but the withdrawal of our great fleet and our troops even from the hardly-contested field of the Gallipoli Peninsula must have conveyed an

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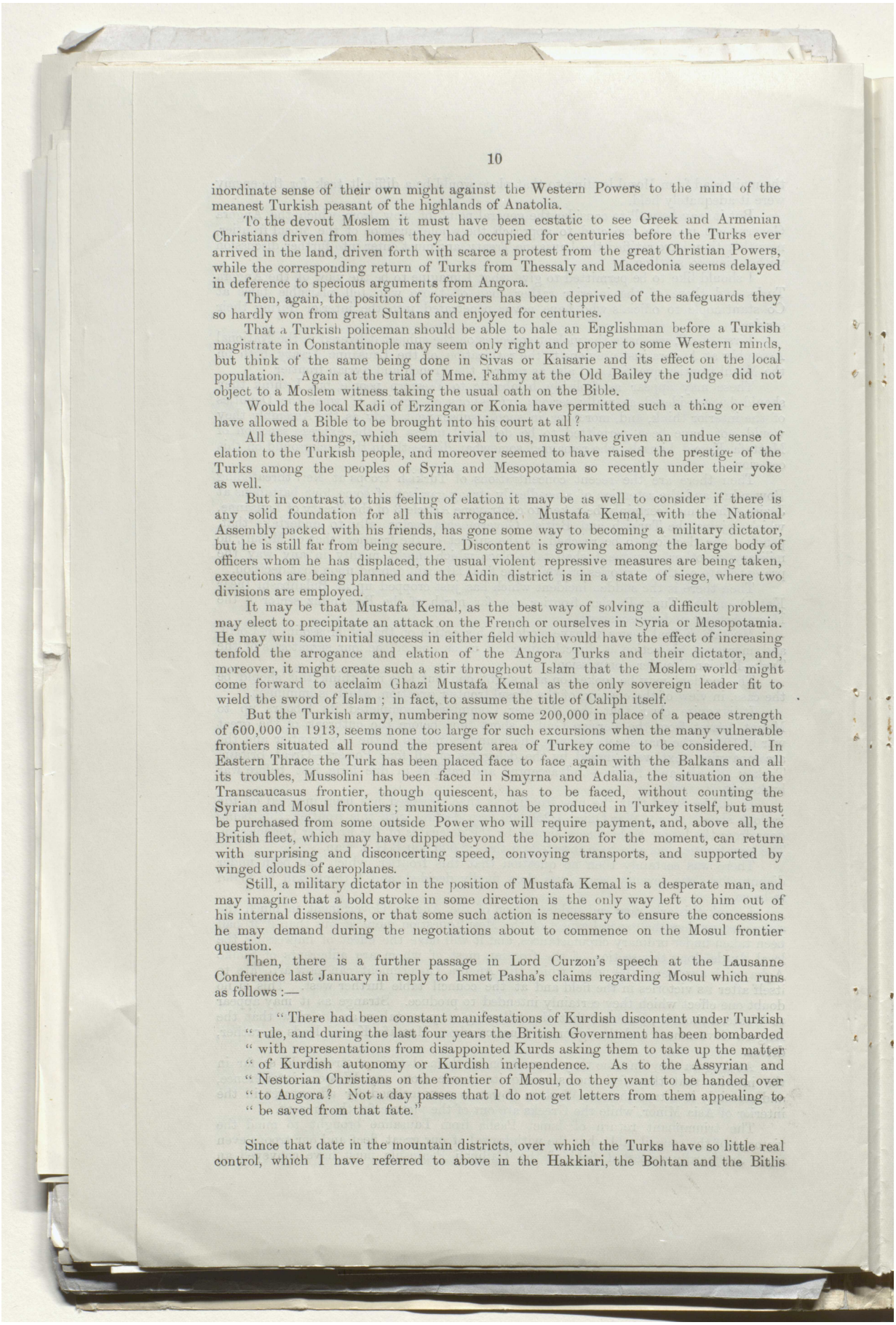

inordinate sense of their own might against the Western Powers to the mind of the meanest Turkish peasant of the highlands of Anatolia.

To the devout Moslem it must have been ecstatic to see Greek and Armenian Christians driven from homes they had occupied for centuries before the Turks ever arrived in the land, driven forth with scarce a protest from the great Christian Powers, while the corresponding return of Turks from Thessaly and Macedonia seems delayed in deference to specious arguments from Angora.

Then, again, the position of foreigners has been deprived of the safeguards they so hardly won from great Sultans and enjoyed for centuries.

That a Turkish policeman should be able to hale an Englishman before a Turkish magistrate in Constantinople may seem only right and proper to some Western minds, but think of the same being done in Sivas or Kaisarie and its effect on the local population. Again at the trial of Mme. Fahmy at the Old Bailey the judge did not object to a Moslem witness taking the usual oath on the Bible.

Would the local Kadi of Erzingan or Konia have permitted such a thing or even have allowed a Bible to be brought into his court at all?

All these things, which seem trivial to us, must have given an undue sense of elation to the Turkish people, and moreover seemed to have raised the prestige of the Turks among the peoples of Syria and Mesopotamia so recently under their yoke as well.

But in contrast to this feeling of elation it may be as well to consider if there is any solid foundation for all this arrogance. Mustafa Kemal, with the National Assembly packed with his friends, has gone some way to becoming a military dictator, but he is still far from being secure. Discontent is growing among the large body of officers whom he has displaced, the usual violent repressive measures are being taken, executions are being planned and the Aidin district is in a state of siege, where two divisions are employed.

It may be that Mustafa Kemal, as the best way of solving a difficult problem, may elect to precipitate an attack on the French or ourselves in Syria or Mesopotamia. He may win some initial success in either field which would have the effect of increasing tenfold the arrogance and elation of the Angora Turks and their dictator, and, moreover, it might create such a stir throughout Islam that the Moslem world might come forward to acclaim Ghazi Mustafa Kemal as the only sovereign leader fit to wield the sword of Islam; in fact, to assume the title of Caliph itself.

But the Turkish army, numbering now some 200,000 in place of a peace strength of 600,000 in 1913, seems none too large for such excursions when the many vulnerable frontiers situated all round the present area of Turkey come to be considered. In Eastern Thrace the Turk has been placed face to face again with the Balkans and all its troubles, Mussolini has been faced in Smyrna and Adalia, the situation on the Transcaucasus frontier, though quiescent, has to be faced, without counting the Syrian and Mosul frontiers; munitions cannot be produced in Turkey itself, but must be purchased from some outside Power who will require payment, and, above all, the British fleet, which may have dipped beyond the horizon for the moment, can return with surprising and disconcerting speed, convoying transports, and supported by winged clouds of aeroplanes.

Still, a military dictator in the position of Mustafa Kemal is a desperate man, and may imagine that a bold stroke in some direction is the only way left to him out of his internal dissensions, or that some such action is necessary to ensure the concessions he may demand during the negotiations about to commence on the Mosul frontier question.

Then, there is a further passage in Lord Curzon's speech at the Lausanne Conference last January in reply to Ismet Pasha's claims regarding Mosul which runs as follows:—

> "There had been constant manifestations of Kurdish discontent under Turkish
> "rule, and during the last four years the British Government has been bombarded
> "with representations from disappointed Kurds asking them to take up the matter
> "of Kurdish autonomy or Kurdish independence. As to the Assyrian and
> "Nestorian Christians on the frontier of Mosul, do they want to be handed over
> "to Angora? Not a day passes that I do not get letters from them appealing to
> "be saved from that fate."

Since that date in the mountain districts, over which the Turks have so little real control, which I have referred to above in the Hakkiari, the Bohtan and the Bitlis

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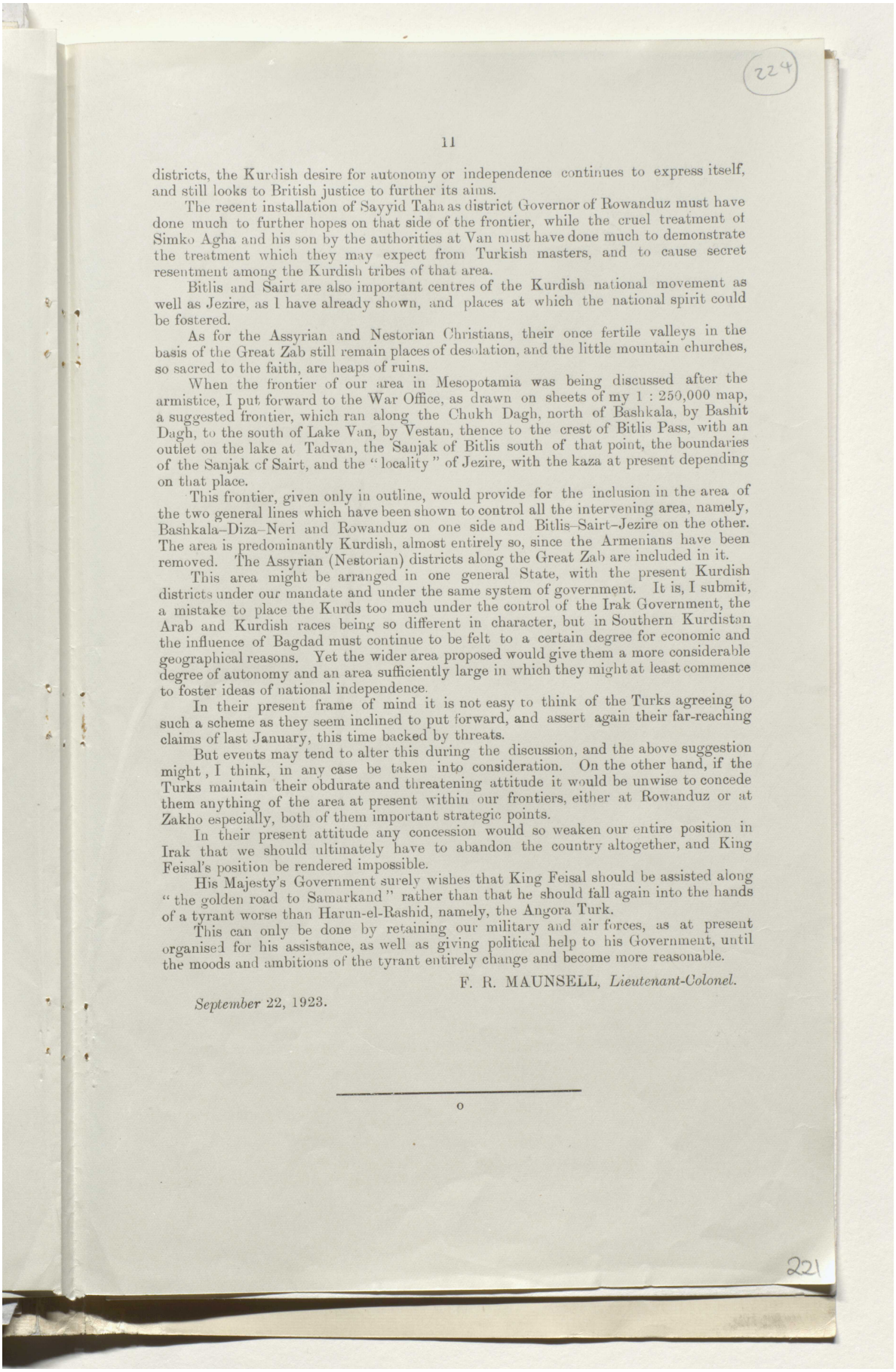

districts, the Kurdish desire for autonomy or independence continues to express itself, and still looks to British justice to further its aims.

The recent installation of Sayyid Taha as district Governor of Rowanduz must have done much to further hopes on that side of the frontier, while the cruel treatment of Simko Agha and his son by the authorities at Van must have done much to demonstrate the treatment which they may expect from Turkish masters, and to cause secret resentment among the Kurdish tribes of that area.

Bitlis and Sairt are also important centres of the Kurdish national movement as well as Jezire, as I have already shown, and places at which the national spirit could be fostered.

As for the Assyrian and Nestorian Christians, their once fertile valleys in the basis of the Great Zab still remain places of desolation, and the little mountain churches, so sacred to the faith, are heaps of ruins.

When the frontier of our area in Mesopotamia was being discussed after the armistice, I put forward to the War Office, as drawn on sheets of my 1 : 250,000 map, a suggested frontier, which ran along the Chukh Dagh, north of Bashkala, by Bashit Dagh, to the south of Lake Van, by Vestan, thence to the crest of Bitlis Pass, with an outlet on the lake at Tadvan, the Sanjak of Bitlis south of that point, the boundaries of the Sanjak of Sairt, and the "locality" of Jezire, with the kaza at present depending on that place.

This frontier, given only in outline, would provide for the inclusion in the area of the two general lines which have been shown to control all the intervening area, namely, Bashkala–Diza–Neri and Rowanduz on one side and Bitlis–Sairt–Jezire on the other. The area is predominantly Kurdish, almost entirely so, since the Armenians have been removed. The Assyrian (Nestorian) districts along the Great Zab are included in it.

This area might be arranged in one general State, with the present Kurdish districts under our mandate and under the same system of government. It is, I submit, a mistake to place the Kurds too much under the control of the Irak Government, the Arab and Kurdish races being so different in character, but in Southern Kurdistan the influence of Bagdad must continue to be felt to a certain degree for economic and geographical reasons. Yet the wider area proposed would give them a more considerable degree of autonomy and an area sufficiently large in which they might at least commence to foster ideas of national independence.

In their present frame of mind it is not easy to think of the Turks agreeing to such a scheme as they seem inclined to put forward, and assert again their far-reaching claims of last January, this time backed by threats.

But events may tend to alter this during the discussion, and the above suggestion might, I think, in any case be taken into consideration. On the other hand, if the Turks maintain their obdurate and threatening attitude it would be unwise to concede them anything of the area at present within our frontiers, either at Rowanduz or at Zakho especially, both of them important strategic points.

In their present attitude any concession would so weaken our entire position in Irak that we should ultimately have to abandon the country altogether, and King Feisal's position be rendered impossible.

His Majesty's Government surely wishes that King Feisal should be assisted along "the golden road to Samarkand" rather than that he should fall again into the hands of a tyrant worse than Harun-el-Rashid, namely, the Angora Turk.

This can only be done by retaining our military and air forces, as at present organised for his assistance, as well as giving political help to his Government, until the moods and ambitions of the tyrant entirely change and become more reasonable.

F. R. MAUNSELL, *Lieutenant-Colonel.*

September 22, 1923.

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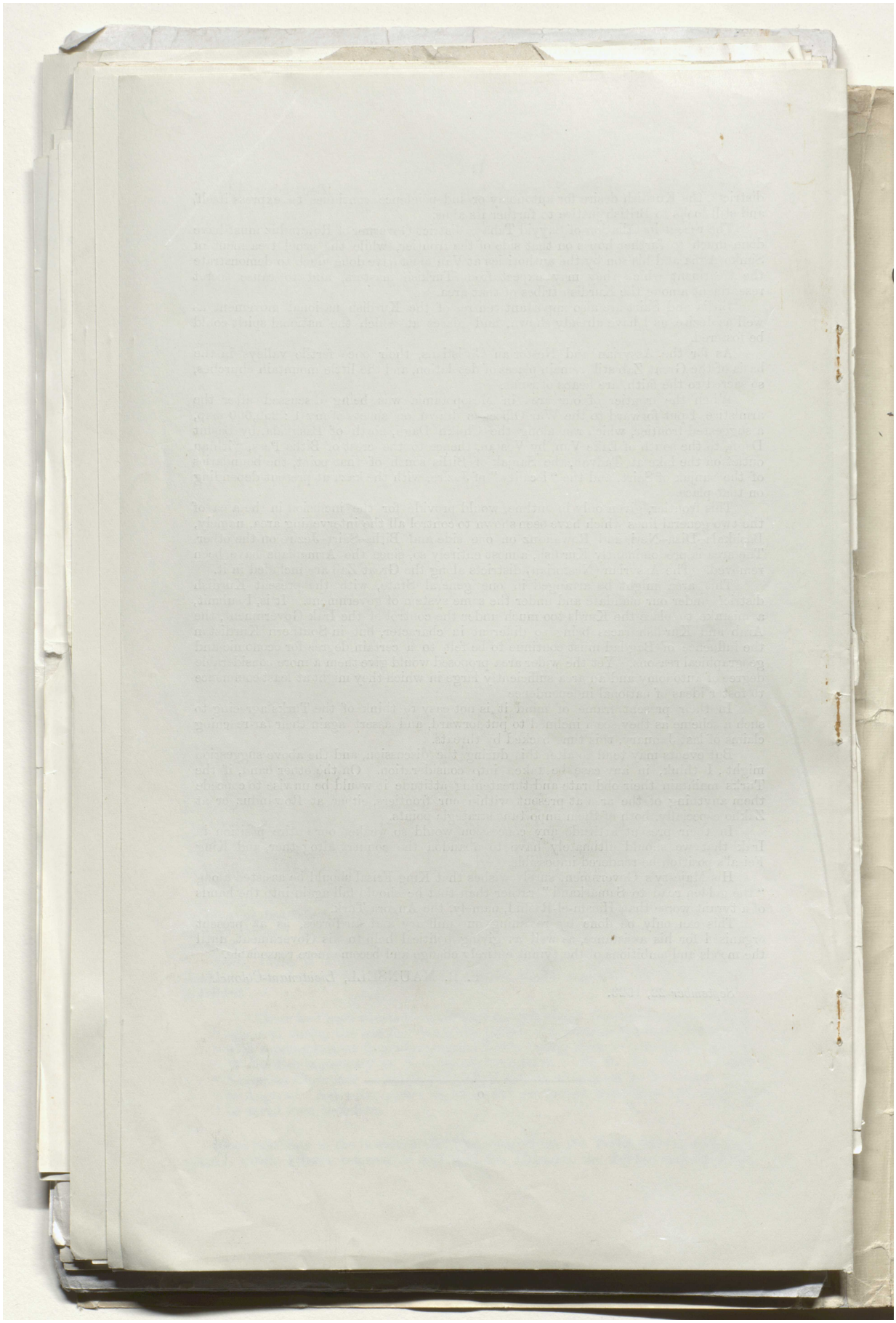

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Mosul

No. 1.—SECRETARY OF STATE.

EASTERN. [November 3.]

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 10719/1019/65] No. 1.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 3.)

Sir, *Downing Street, November 1, 1923.*

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you for the information of the Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, copy of a despatch from the High Commissioner for Irak, on the subject of the delimitation of the Turco-Irak frontier.

I am, &c.
J. E. MASTERTON-SMITH.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Sir H. Dobbs to the Duke of Devonshire.

(Secret.)
My Lord, *Bagdad, October 18, 1923.*

IN accordance with your Grace's telegram, dated the 15th August, 1923, I have the honour to submit to your Grace a comprehensive statment of the case of the Irak Government as against the claims put forward by the Turkish delegation at Lausanne for the recession to Turkey of the territory embraced formerly in the Vilayet of Mosul. In doing so I shall endeavour to examine the question under the following heads :—

(A.)—The case of the Irak Government in respect of the Mosul Vilayet as a whole.
(B.)—Its position as regards Southern Kurdistan, *i.e.*, that portion of the Mosul Vilayet in which the majority of the population is not Arab.
(C.)—A detailed examination of the northern frontier line.

(A.)—*Turkish Claims to Mosul Vilayet.*

2. The Turkish claim to the Mosul Vilayet was based on arguments which may be summarised as follows :—

(*a.*) That the area came under the terms of the Nations Pact passed at Angora in February 1920.
(*b.*) That British forces were not in occupation of Mosul at the date of the armistice.
(*c.*) Racial principles.
(*d.*) Political arguments. These included the alleged desire of the whole population for inclusion in Turkey, together with a denial that British engagements with the Irak or the assumption of the mandate by Great Britain have any bearing on the issue and they terminated with the argument stated in (*b*).
(*e.*) Claims based on history.
(*f.*) Economic argument.
(*g.*) Strategic necessities.

The first two have obviously no bearing on any local considerations and were easily disposed of by Lord Curzon in his masterly rejoinder. He pointed out in reply to (*a*) that no resolution of the Angora Assembly could entitle it to dictate to the victors in the war the manner in which they should dispose of an area from which the Turks had been ejected by force of arms, or to come to a decision on behalf of a population which was not represented in the Assembly, and in a scathing criticism of the Pact he proved that its terms were not only self-contradictory, but also that they were inapplicable to the Mosul Vilayet. Replying to (*b*) he showed that on the 30th October, when the armistice was signed, British troops had already gained in the Mosul Vilayet a decisive position which opened the road to Mosul. The Turkish commander, owing to his remote position, did not receive the full terms of the armistice till the 4th November,

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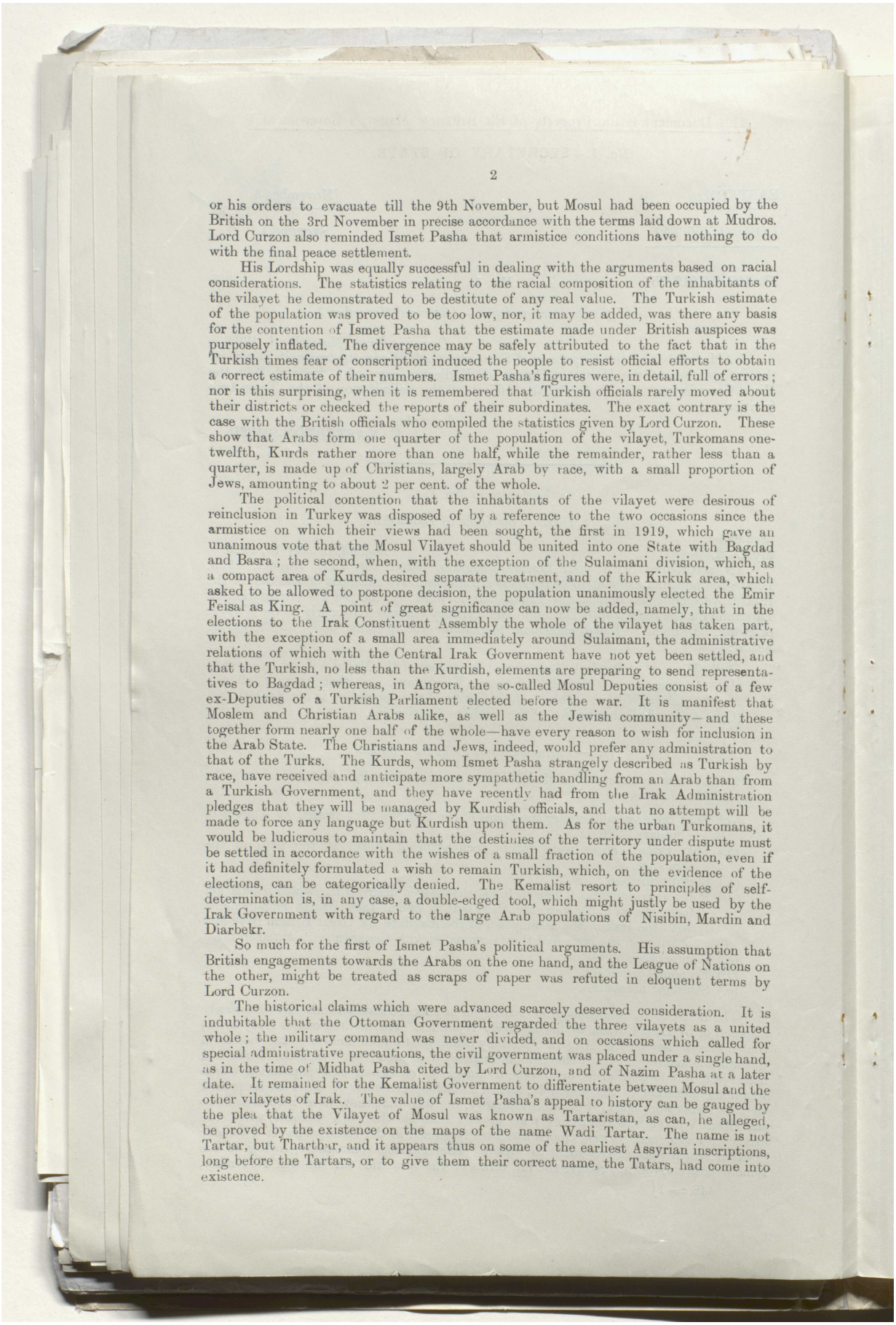

or his orders to evacuate till the 9th November, but Mosul had been occupied by the British on the 3rd November in precise accordance with the terms laid down at Mudros. Lord Curzon also reminded Ismet Pasha that armistice conditions have nothing to do with the final peace settlement.

His Lordship was equally successful in dealing with the arguments based on racial considerations. The statistics relating to the racial composition of the inhabitants of the vilayet he demonstrated to be destitute of any real value. The Turkish estimate of the population was proved to be too low, nor, it may be added, was there any basis for the contention of Ismet Pasha that the estimate made under British auspices was purposely inflated. The divergence may be safely attributed to the fact that in the Turkish times fear of conscription induced the people to resist official efforts to obtain a correct estimate of their numbers. Ismet Pasha's figures were, in detail, full of errors; nor is this surprising, when it is remembered that Turkish officials rarely moved about their districts or checked the reports of their subordinates. The exact contrary is the case with the British officials who compiled the statistics given by Lord Curzon. These show that Arabs form one quarter of the population of the vilayet, Turkomans one-twelfth, Kurds rather more than one half, while the remainder, rather less than a quarter, is made up of Christians, largely Arab by race, with a small proportion of Jews, amounting to about 2 per cent. of the whole.

The political contention that the inhabitants of the vilayet were desirous of reinclusion in Turkey was disposed of by a reference to the two occasions since the armistice on which their views had been sought, the first in 1919, which gave an unanimous vote that the Mosul Vilayet should be united into one State with Bagdad and Basra; the second, when, with the exception of the Sulaimani division, which, as a compact area of Kurds, desired separate treatment, and of the Kirkuk area, which asked to be allowed to postpone decision, the population unanimously elected the Emir Feisal as King. A point of great significance can now be added, namely, that in the elections to the Irak Constituent Assembly the whole of the vilayet has taken part, with the exception of a small area immediately around Sulaimani, the administrative relations of which with the Central Irak Government have not yet been settled, and that the Turkish, no less than the Kurdish, elements are preparing to send representatives to Bagdad; whereas, in Angora, the so-called Mosul Deputies consist of a few ex-Deputies of a Turkish Parliament elected before the war. It is manifest that Moslem and Christian Arabs alike, as well as the Jewish community—and these together form nearly one half of the whole—have every reason to wish for inclusion in the Arab State. The Christians and Jews, indeed, would prefer any administration to that of the Turks. The Kurds, whom Ismet Pasha strangely described as Turkish by race, have received and anticipate more sympathetic handling from an Arab than from a Turkish Government, and they have recently had from the Irak Administration pledges that they will be managed by Kurdish officials, and that no attempt will be made to force any language but Kurdish upon them. As for the urban Turkomans, it would be ludicrous to maintain that the destinies of the territory under dispute must be settled in accordance with the wishes of a small fraction of the population, even if it had definitely formulated a wish to remain Turkish, which, on the evidence of the elections, can be categorically denied. The Kemalist resort to principles of self-determination is, in any case, a double-edged tool, which might justly be used by the Irak Government with regard to the large Arab populations of Nisibin, Mardin and Diarbekr.

So much for the first of Ismet Pasha's political arguments. His assumption that British engagements towards the Arabs on the one hand, and the League of Nations on the other, might be treated as scraps of paper was refuted in eloquent terms by Lord Curzon.

The historical claims which were advanced scarcely deserved consideration. It is indubitable that the Ottoman Government regarded the three vilayets as a united whole; the military command was never divided, and on occasions which called for special administrative precautions, the civil government was placed under a single hand, as in the time of Midhat Pasha cited by Lord Curzon, and of Nazim Pasha at a later date. It remained for the Kemalist Government to differentiate between Mosul and the other vilayets of Irak. The value of Ismet Pasha's appeal to history can be gauged by the plea that the Vilayet of Mosul was known as Tartaristan, as can, he alleged, be proved by the existence on the maps of the name Wadi Tartar. The name is not Tartar, but Tharthar, and it appears thus on some of the earliest Assyrian inscriptions, long before the Tartars, or to give them their correct name, the Tatars, had come into existence.

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The economic arguments used by the Pasha are in complete contradiction of facts. The export trade of Mosul Vilayet finds its outlet to the sea at Basra, or at the Mediterranean ports of the Arab province of Syria. Some local bartering may take place with contiguous districts in Anatolia, and there are undoubtedly areas beyond the old administrative boundary of the Mosul Vilayet which depend economically on Mosul, a point with which I shall deal later. But beyond a limited import from Diarbekr of grain and timber, which can find no outlet save by the Tigris, Mosul has no use for Anatolian products; her imports being confined to food-stuffs such as tea and coffee, and manfactured goods brought by sea to the ports above mentioned. On the other hand, Central and Southern Irak are vitally dependent on the products of the northern area. After the British occupation of Bagdad, when for eighteen months Turkish forces denied access to the Mosul Vilayet, great difficulty was experienced in feeding a population which was thus cut off from the northern wheat-producing plains—the granary of the country. Only by wholesale and very costly importation from India, coupled with careful rationing, were famine conditions avoided. It was this experience which impressed on the mind of the population the essential unity of the three vilayets.

Finally, the strategic arguments of the Kemalist delegate were equally baseless. The suggestion that the low downs of the Jabal Hamrin form a strategic frontier is contrary to all expert military opinion. The occupation of Mosul Vilayet by the Turks could be indicative only of their intention to use it as a base for an aggressive military policy, and would be a perpetual menace to the Arab State.

(B.)—*Turkish Claims to Southern Kurdistan.*

3. It is possible that the Kemalist Government, on further consideration of Lord Curzon's statement, may have become aware of the weakness of their claim to the Mosul Vilayet as a whole, and may in the forthcoming discussions fall back in a demand for the recession of Southern Kurdistan, in which they would include Sulaimani, Arbil and Kirkuk divisions and the Kurdish kadhas of Sakho, Amadia, Douk and Akrah, which form the northern fringe of the Mosul division. They would possibly also claim the kadhas of Tall Afar and Sinjah, to the east, on the ground that the urban population of Tall Afar village is Turkoman and that the Yazidis of Sinjar are of Kurdish origin. I venture to set forth the following three principles to which I have given weight in dealing with a claim of this nature, as well as in framing detailed proposals as to the demarcation of the frontier:—

(1.) A frontier should not cut in half confederations or communities, or cut off communities from the centres upon which they depend economically.
(2.) A frontier line should, if possible, lie in country of such a nature that neither side is attracted by it, or tempted to live in it, or even to visit it.
(3.) Demarcation of a frontier should not involve any drastic change in the economic or political habits of the inhabitants of the frontier districts.

In the conference at Lausanne, Ismet Pasha referred to the fact that the Treaty of Sèvres had contemplated the formation of an autonomous Kurdish State within Anatolia, and had provided that, if this State should prove its desire for independence from Turkey, no objection would be raised to the adhesion to it of the Kurdish districts within the Irak. He sought to interpret this fact as an admission on the part of the Allies that the Irak State would not suffer by the exclusion of Southern Kurdistan. It is easy to disprove this contention. An autonomous Kurdish State, owing its existence to the Allies, bound by ties of gratitude to them, and, it may be presumed, generally amenable to their policy, would have been for the Irak State a very different and less threatening neighbour than the new Turkey. And to bring down close to the Irak frontiers the unorganised outskirts of an autonomous and newly-fledged Kurdistan would have been far less dangerous than to place the vitals of Irak within striking distance of a Power like Turkey, smarting from recent defeat and probably actuated by a desire for the reconquest of her ancient dominions. Arguments, therefore, which might reasonably be adduced in support of the right of all Kurdish areas to form part of an independent Kurdistan, are now inapplicable. The issue must be regarded from a different standpoint, and a decision as to the propriety of including the Kurdish provinces of Mosul Vilayet within the Irak should be governed by administrative, economic and strategic considerations, as well as by the inclinations of the populations concerned.

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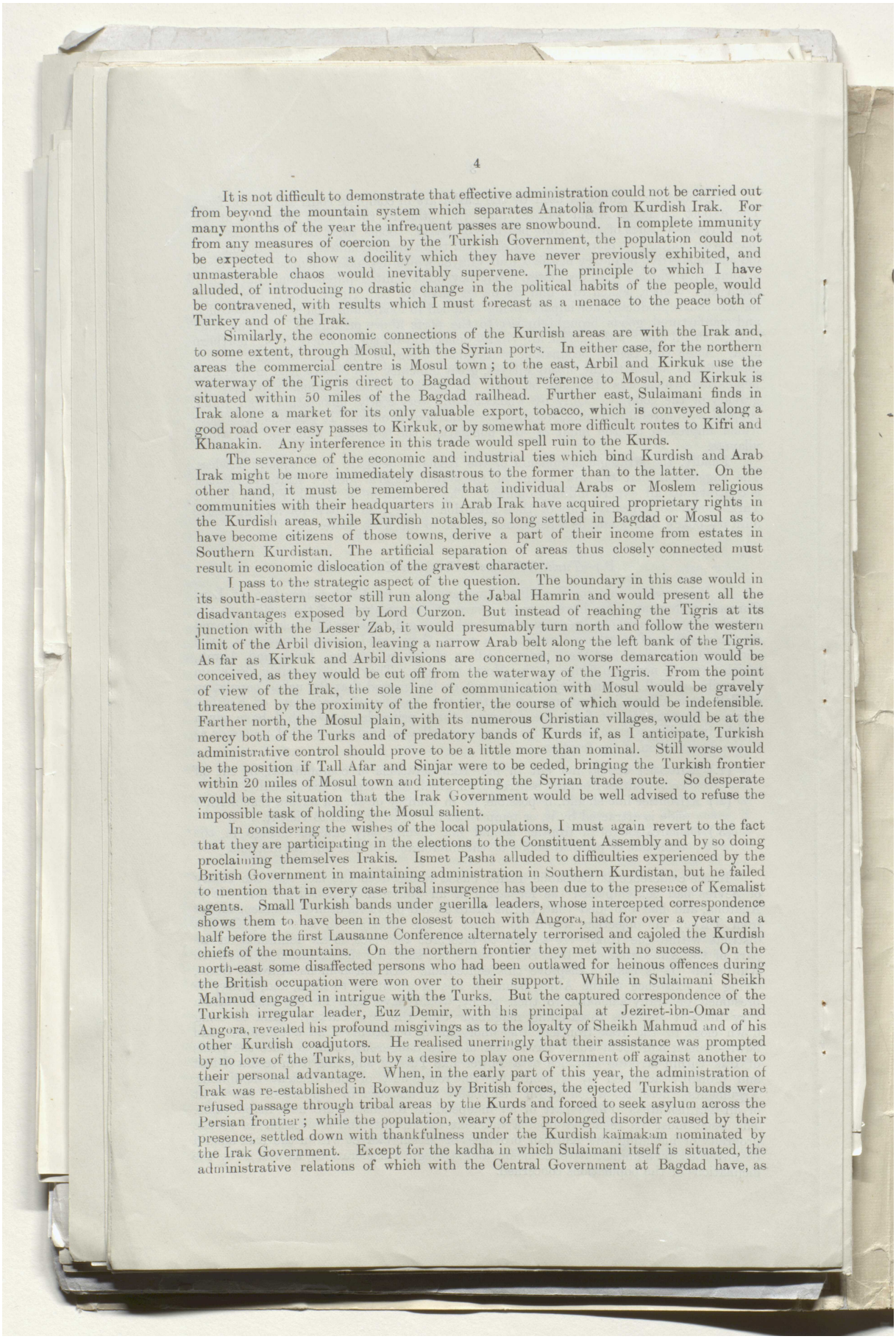

It is not difficult to demonstrate that effective administration could not be carried out from beyond the mountain system which separates Anatolia from Kurdish Irak. For many months of the year the infrequent passes are snowbound. In complete immunity from any measures of coercion by the Turkish Government, the population could not be expected to show a docility which they have never previously exhibited, and unmasterable chaos would inevitably supervene. The principle to which I have alluded, of introducing no drastic change in the political habits of the people, would be contravened, with results which I must forecast as a menace to the peace both of Turkey and of the Irak.

Similarly, the economic connections of the Kurdish areas are with the Irak and, to some extent, through Mosul, with the Syrian ports. In either case, for the northern areas the commercial centre is Mosul town; to the east, Arbil and Kirkuk use the waterway of the Tigris direct to Bagdad without reference to Mosul, and Kirkuk is situated within 50 miles of the Bagdad railhead. Further east, Sulaimani finds in Irak alone a market for its only valuable export, tobacco, which is conveyed along a good road over easy passes to Kirkuk, or by somewhat more difficult routes to Kifri and Khanakin. Any interference in this trade would spell ruin to the Kurds.

The severance of the economic and industrial ties which bind Kurdish and Arab Irak might be more immediately disastrous to the former than to the latter. On the other hand, it must be remembered that individual Arabs or Moslem religious communities with their headquarters in Arab Irak have acquired proprietary rights in the Kurdish areas, while Kurdish notables, so long settled in Bagdad or Mosul as to have become citizens of those towns, derive a part of their income from estates in Southern Kurdistan. The artificial separation of areas thus closely connected must result in economic dislocation of the gravest character.

I pass to the strategic aspect of the question. The boundary in this case would in its south-eastern sector still run along the Jabal Hamrin and would present all the disadvantages exposed by Lord Curzon. But instead of reaching the Tigris at its junction with the Lesser Zab, it would presumably turn north and follow the western limit of the Arbil division, leaving a narrow Arab belt along the left bank of the Tigris. As far as Kirkuk and Arbil divisions are concerned, no worse demarcation would be conceived, as they would be cut off from the waterway of the Tigris. From the point of view of the Irak, the sole line of communication with Mosul would be gravely threatened by the proximity of the frontier, the course of which would be indefensible. Farther north, the Mosul plain, with its numerous Christian villages, would be at the mercy both of the Turks and of predatory bands of Kurds if, as I anticipate, Turkish administrative control should prove to be a little more than nominal. Still worse would be the position if Tall Afar and Sinjar were to be ceded, bringing the Turkish frontier within 20 miles of Mosul town and intercepting the Syrian trade route. So desperate would be the situation that the Irak Government would be well advised to refuse the impossible task of holding the Mosul salient.

In considering the wishes of the local populations, I must again revert to the fact that they are participating in the elections to the Constituent Assembly and by so doing proclaiming themselves Irakis. Ismet Pasha alluded to difficulties experienced by the British Government in maintaining administration in Southern Kurdistan, but he failed to mention that in every case tribal insurgence has been due to the presence of Kemalist agents. Small Turkish bands under guerilla leaders, whose intercepted correspondence shows them to have been in the closest touch with Angora, had for over a year and a half before the first Lausanne Conference alternately terrorised and cajoled the Kurdish chiefs of the mountains. On the northern frontier they met with no success. On the north-east some disaffected persons who had been outlawed for heinous offences during the British occupation were won over to their support. While in Sulaimani Sheikh Mahmud engaged in intrigue with the Turks. But the captured correspondence of the Turkish irregular leader, Euz Demir, with his principal at Jeziret-ibn-Omar and Angora, revealed his profound misgivings as to the loyalty of Sheikh Mahmud and of his other Kurdish coadjutors. He realised unerringly that their assistance was prompted by no love of the Turks, but by a desire to play one Government off against another to their personal advantage. When, in the early part of this year, the administration of Irak was re-established in Rowanduz by British forces, the ejected Turkish bands were refused passage through tribal areas by the Kurds and forced to seek asylum across the Persian frontier; while the population, weary of the prolonged disorder caused by their presence, settled down with thankfulness under the Kurdish kaïmakam nominated by the Irak Government. Except for the kadha in which Sulaimani itself is situated, the administrative relations of which with the Central Government at Bagdad have, as

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already stated, not yet been finally settled, a similar administration has been extended of the Sulaimani division also. Order is preserved and elections are proceeding.

The reoccupation of Rowanduz has proved conclusively, in the opinion of the Air Officer Commanding, with which I concur, its value in the maintenance of stability in Southern Kurdistan. To this point I shall have occasion to refer in greater detail under section III. It is sufficient to observe here that, since a loose form of administration by the Irak Government was restored over the Kurdish areas, and since those areas have been untroubled by the intrusion of Turkish irregulars and adventurers, there has been no sign of discontent with present conditions. If in the beginning of the year there was anxiety lest Sheikh Mahmud of Sulaimani should attempt a raid on the plains of Kirkuk, his powers in that direction have during the last few months been nil. The Irak Government has been able to regard his restless activities with comparative equanimity, nor has he presented any obstacle to the continued reduction of the garrison in Kirkuk, which has now been left to the protection of the levies.

Other considerations must be mentioned with respect to the Mosul kadhas. With the responsibilities of His Majesty's Government towards the Assyrian community settled in their limits I shall deal fully in the next section; but the Yazidis of Sinjar and the northern kadhas must not be omitted, nor the large Arab tribal population of Tall Afar Kadha, where the Turkomans are confined to the village itself. The Yazidis were subject to bitter oppression under the Ottoman régime on account of their peculiar, if harmless, tenets. The fear of massacre was always before their eyes, and, like the Christians and Jews of Mosul, they would regard any Government as preferable to that of the Turks. No paper safeguards which could be devised would allay their justifiable alarm.

To sum up, it is my considered opinion that the retrocession to Turkey of Southern Kurdistan, whether Tall Afar and Sinjar are retained or not, presents even greater disadvantages than that of Mosul Vilayet as a whole, nor is there a single argument in its favour. The honour of the Irak Government might be momentarily preserved by the retention of the Arab population of Mosul town and district. But the position could not be maintained without a military effort, which must sap the strength of Irak, nor could the safety of Mosul at any time be guaranteed. It is true that the Irak Government may, when deprived in the future of the support of the British forces, be unable regularly to maintain complete military control of these mountainous Kurdish areas, and that they may be subject to disturbance by the incursion of irregular Turkish bands, which can be disavowed by the Turkish Government. This will always be a danger. But for so long as it is formally recognised that these areas lie within the Irak boundary, regular Turkish forces cannot enter them except by an act of war, and the temperament of the mountain Kurds is such that, without the close proximity and support of regular troops upon their own side, they will not ordinarily indulge in a prolonged or serious offensive nor trust themselves to the plains. The further back, therefore, that the Turkish boundary can be thrown from the Mosul plains the safer will those plains remain.

C.—*Detailed Examination of the Northern Frontier Line.*

4. In my telegram dated the 4th September, 1923, I informed your Grace that my proposals would slightly modify, by the light of more exact information, those put forward in Sir Percy Cox's despatch dated the 9th December, 1921. The arguments urged in that despatch are as cogent as they were at the time when it was written, indeed, they have been further enhanced by subsequent events. Before, however, entering on this theme I must draw attention to corrections in the map attached to the despatch.

I.—*Errors in Maps attached to Sir Percy Cox's Despatch.*

Sir Percy Cox pointed out in his despatch that the Sèvres Treaty line was apparently based upon the chain-dotted line in the obsolete million sheet. To illustrate his proposals, Sir Percy Cox appended to his despatch a photographic copy of the "Maunsell" sheets containing the areas under reference. Extension of survey work and increased knowledge of the topography and history of these areas have now revealed serious errors in these sheets, which were to some extent rectified in the "Rough Sketch Map of the Nerva and Raikan Districts" attached to Appendix III of Sir Percy Cox's despatch. Instances of incorrect mapping are also to be found in connection with the Hazil and Khabur valleys. Further, the longitude of Zakhio and Amadia and of points between and about these centres is shown in these maps as

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10′ west of the true longitude. The mapping of the Turco-Persian Boundary Commission, which was also used in the compilation of the "Maunsell" sheets, suffers from a small error of longitude in the opposite direction. Errors of latitude are not so serious. As a result of these errors, the actual and proposed boundaries traced on the photographic map cannot be considered reliable. The "present administrative frontier" (marked in Sir Percy Cox's map in green) has also, in the light of better information, been found to be incorrectly drawn, even upon the assumption that the maps were correct. The true old administrative boundary of the Mosul Vilayet is slightly north of the green line on Sir Percy Cox's photographic map, and as the district of Nerva is west, not north, of Raikan, there is no such Nerva salient as is shown upon the photographic map. The boundary up to which the Irak Government now administers or controls is again, in the main, north of the true old administrative boundary. On these considerations I have caused to be compiled, from the information collected up to date, a new map on a $\frac{1}{4}$-inch scale of which a copy is attached. My sources of information are—

(*a.*) The $\frac{1}{2}$-inch surveys, as far as these have been completed (including the Arbil and Rowanduz districts, as far north as latitude 36° 50′, the Akrah district as far as the Greater Zab, and the Zakho and Amadia districts between the Hazil and the Zab);
(*b.*) Sketch maps made by Mr. Jardine, an Administrative inspector of the Irak Government; and
(*c.*) The "Maunsell" sheets.

I am indebted to Mr. Jardine's expert knowledge for most of the facts set forth in this despatch.

I also attach as an appendix a corrected description of the northern boundary as now administered, and I have shown this boundary by red dots on the $\frac{1}{4}$-inch map attached. I have shown the true old administrative boundary by a continuous red line.

II.—*Retention of the Assyrian Country and of Amadia.*

In the despatch to which I have already referred Sir Percy Cox went fully into the question of retaining Amadia and the Assyrian country beyond it. For reasons with which he was unacquainted, but as he shows, contrary to the views of the Acting Civil Commissioner based on local knowledge, the Treaty of Sèvres specifically excluded Amadia from the Irak. It is possible that this decision was influenced by the incorrect drawing on the map attached to the Sèvres Treaty of the chain-dotted line purporting to define the boundary of the Mosul Vilayet. The origin of the error appears to date back to a period some twenty years ago, when Amadia was temporarily excluded from the Mosul Vilayet. After a two years' trial the arrangement was found unworkable, and accordingly cancelled by the Turkish Government. Sir Percy Cox observes:—

> "The high ground on which Amadia is situated overlooks the low-lying districts of Dohuk and Akrah to the south, as well as the valley running west to Zakho, and it commands the roads radiating to these places. With Amadia in the hands of a hostile force, and with the facilities for propaganda which the frequent intercourse of the local tribesmen with Mosul would provide, adequate military protection of the northern frontier would involve insuperable difficulties. In any event, the existence of Amadia as a supply and road centre, and so as a potential base of hostile operations, for which the inevitable intertribal disturbances would offer a ready pretext, would be a constant source of anxiety to the Irak Government."

Regarding the Assyrian country to the north of Amadia, Sir Percy Cox wrote:—

> "The pre-war boundary of the Mosul Vilayet at this point was not satisfactory, in that it separated from Amadia the summer pastures of a number of Assyrian and Kurdish tribes who were and are economically dependent on that town and Mosul. This fact, which was unimportant when the boundary was merely one between two provinces, may be the cause of serious difficulties if the same boundary is adopted between Turkey and Irak. The inclusion of the country in Irak would facilitate the repatriation of those now prevented from returning by their fear of the vengeance of the Ottoman Government, from which we are under moral obligations to protect them. The Assyrians whose homes were thus included in Irak would become Irak subjects, and therefore eligible for enrolment in the Irak levies."

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Since these words were written circumstances have further strengthened the argument in favour of the retention of Amadia and the Assyrian country. Not only have the measures proposed in the Treaty of Sèvres for the protection of Christian minorities not materialised, but the enlistment of the Assyrians in the British levy force and their recent employment for the purpose of turning out the Turks from Rowanduz have made it more than ever difficult to abandon their country to Turkey. The return of many of the Upper and Lower Tiari and the Tkhuma to their original homes, the resultant control by the Irak Government of the relations between them and their neighbours, the Artoshi Kurd nomads, and the more frequent recourse of the Kurds of Oramar and Chal to the Irak Governors of Amadia and Mosul, have increased the cogency of the reasons for the rectifications of the frontier, referred to in Schedule 1 of Sir Percy Cox's despatch, for the purpose of including the district of Amadia and the Nestorian country within the confines of Irak. Moreover, the surrender to the Turks of the homes of the Assyrian mountaineers would almost certainly be the signal for the collapse of the whole levy organisation. There would, in fact, be a distinct risk that the Assyrian levies, thinking themselves deserted on all sides, might "run amok" and take to indiscriminate plunder and destruction in the Mosul Vilayet. If it is true, as stated in your Grace's telegram, dated the 26th September, 1923, that the Assyrians have been greatly depressed by the shortening of the period of our treaty with Irak, and are very anxious about their future under Arab rule. The bulk of them (especially those from Van and Urumia, now temporarily settled in Amadia) say that they would prefer emigration. But this does not alter the fact that, if forced to stay in Asia, they would much rather be under the Arabs, influenced, however remotely, by Great Britain, than under the Turks. Again, as I have reported in my last telegram, a large proportion of the Assyrian mountaineers from the Tiari country and the neighbourhood are determined in any case to cleave to their homelands and not emigrate. These have every right to expect that, after employing them to fight our battles, and thus embittering the Turks against them, we shall secure for their homelands at least exclusion from Turkey, even if it is not possible for us to arrange for them any specially privileged position under Irak. However much they may doubt the future goodwill of the Arabs, they consider that at least they would be less formidable tyrants than the Turks, and less capable of compassing their destruction.

III.—*Military Importance of Rowanduz and other Military Considerations.*

I insert here extracts from a note by the Air Officer Commanding setting forth the military importance of the retention of Rowanduz and certain other military considerations regarding the frontier :—

"On the assumption that it is desired to retain Mosul in Irak, it becomes "necessary :—

"(*a.*) To provide, as far as possible, against a future wedge of Turkish or pro-"Turkish hill country between the Persian border and the Irak "plain from the Jabal Hamrin to Zakho.

"(*b.*) To deny road-centres and markets to the Turks, which they could "utilise as bases for irregular 'band' warfare, or, in the event of "hostilities, as advanced bases for operations of regular troops.

"(*c.*) To retain the important roads from Persia to Rowanduz, viâ the Rayat "and Kelishin Passes.

"(*d.*) To select a frontier trace presenting; as far as possible, a line of obstacles "which will render menace during winter months very difficult, and "to secure command of the defiles giving passage through these "obstacles.

"(*e.*) To include in Irak the territory of the fighting Assyrians, who are not "only necessary as soldiers, but if excluded and rendered hostile "would prove a serious menace to Irak generally and to the "retention of Mosul in particular.

"To comment on each of these points :—

"(*a.*) The latest indication is that the Turks are more interested in Sulaimani "and the Kurdish districts than in the Mosul plain. Wild and "unproductive as this county is, and possessing only indifferent "communications, the best initial method of weakening propaganda "and avoiding its Turkification must be to keep the frontier as far "north as possible.

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"With the hill-country from Keni Rash to Sulaimani, even "partly under Turkish influence, the tenability of Mosul would at "once be called in question.

"(*b.*) The retention of Zakho, Amadia and Rowanduz is considered of great "importance on the grounds urged. Regarding Zakho there is no "question. Good mountain roads radiate from Amadia, Zakho, "Dohuk and Akrah, and the town commands the debouches from "the Ser Amadia. These advantages are independent of its value "as a base, market and gate to the country of the mountain "Assyrians. Rowanduz commands routes to Arbil, Neri, Persia, "viâ Kelishin and Rayat Passes, and to the Rania plain by the "Naodasht, Shaur and Balassan valleys. Rowanduz will again be "dealt with in comment (*c*) below.

"(*c.*) The Persian routes to Rowanduz, with their relatively rapid communica- "tion, viâ Lake Urumia and Sharif Khanah with Transcaucasia and "Eastern Anatolia, emphasise the importance of retaining hold on "Rowanduz.

"The last few months have proved the beneficial effect in "Southern Kurdistan of stability in Rowanduz. It is the natural "advanced base for any force acting on the one lateral route of any "moment from the south coast—Lake Van Road and Sulaimani. "Present relations between Turks and Russians and between Irak "and Persia may not bring out its peculiar value at the moment; "but it is and will remain a most important strategic point on one "of the most dangerous lines of advance on Irak, particularly in so "far as concerns Mosul. Both the Kelishin and Rayat Passes and "the roads therefrom could be made passable for artillery and motor "traffic in about two months.

"(*d.*) This object is not difficult to fulfil fairly satisfactorily, as there are many "parallel ridges.

"The acquisition of the Zini-e-Berdi Pass on the main Neri– "Rowanduz route is of particular military value.

"(*e.*) Though a large proportion of the Assyrians would favour emigration "with any reasonable prospects in their new country of adoption, "there seems little likelihood that any such desirable solution will "be found.

"It is therefore sound to work on the assumption that they will "stay in or close to their own country on the border; in this case, "if their military services are to be secured, their country must be "included in Irak boundaries. Failure to take a strong hand on "this point in Irak would cause a high rate of desertion and loss of "*moral* in the levies, jeopardising the present situation and closing "down a future source of recruitment which the Irak Government "cannot replace. For these imperative reasons the inclusion of at "least the main portion of their territory is most strongly urged.

"The 'extreme limit' boundary (*vide* section IV of this despatch) requires "no more troops for its protection than would one drawn considerably closer in to "the plains of Irak, but it has the inestimable advantage of denying to a potential "enemy country which, due to its impassable nature, is, from the point of view of "large movement of troops, a military 'No Man's Land,' but remains at all times "ripe for intrigue and consequent tribal trouble, if in the hands of an ill-disposed "neighbour."

IV—*New Extreme Limit Suggested.*

The line which is shown on the new ¼-inch map by blue bars and crosses represents that which would, in my opinion and in that of the Air Officer Commanding and of the Irak Government, be the best possible frontier from the point of view of Irak. I shall refer to it in the following portions of this despatch as "the new extreme limit." Being drawn up in the light of later knowledge, it differs to some extent from the "first proposal" of Sir Percy Cox's despatch, but it is framed on the principles put forward in section IV of that despatch which I will here recapitulate.

(1.) The treaty frontier, cutting as it does across geographical and tribal divisions, must make for continual friction and unrest among the frontier tribes.

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(2.) Such friction and unrest is likely to be increased by the presence within and adjacent to the Turkish frontier of a large and necessarily disaffected Christian population and would prove a constant source of embarrassment to the Ottoman Government.

(3.) The Amadia district, being difficult and, at certain seasons, almost impossible of access from the north, cannot be effectively controlled from that side.

(4.) In the event of hostilities breaking out as a result of tribal disturbances, Amadia could be virtually isolated by forces operating from Dohuk and Akrah and, with the additional possibility of an Assyrian rising, the Turkish position in that district would speedily be rendered untenable.

(5.) Our only motive in proposing a rectification of the treaty frontier is our desire to establish a strong and settled frontier, based on natural features and on the existing facts of the local situation, which shall give promise of permanence, to the mutual advantage alike of the Ottoman and Irak Governments.

(6.) As an earnest of our sincerity, we are prepared, if the above considerations demand it, to surrender territory allotted to Irak by the Treaty of Sèvres.

I trust that it may be found possible on these grounds to support a demand for the frontier advocated in this despatch.

From the west to the Jelo Peaks, the "new extreme limit" almost coincides with the line of the "first proposal" of Sir Percy Cox's despatch. A slight modification is necessary near the Khabur to raise the line northwards nearer to latitude 37° 30′ owing to the fact that Maunsell's latitude here suffers a slight error southwards and it is intended to include the high grounds north of Aleman and Gerame. The line then continues practically along latitude 37° 30′ and along the right bank of the Zab to the Peak "Khisara" and the Jelo Peaks—Supa Durig and Geliashin.

From the Jelo Peaks eastward, it is proposed to shift the "new extreme limit" to the north-east of Sir Percy Cox's "first proposal," so as to follow the divide between Gavar and Oramar as far as the Chelli Peak, and thence to the Rashk-i-Ruwan Peak, thus including in Irak the whole of the Girdi tribe, with the important Zini-e-Berdi Pass. The Rashk-i-Ruwan–Kir-i-Masgaft ridge brings the line to the Persian frontier. This "new extreme limit" has all the advantages claimed for the line of the "first proposal" in paragraph VI (2) of Sir Percy Cox's despatch. It implies, indeed, as he mentioned, the surrender of a fertile strip of territory which was included in the Irak by the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres, namely, the area bounded by the Rivers Tigris, Khabur and Hazil on the west, south and east, or by a line drawn from Jeziret-ibn-Omar eastward to a point to be fixed on the old road boundary, but this is strictly in accordance with the principle enunciated—that the frontier should coincide with tribal divisions. It excludes from the Irak a portion of the Slopi tribe, which is dependent on Jeziret-ibn-Omar, and it rectifies the pre-war boundary of the Mosul Vilayet so as to unite with Amadia the summer pasturages of a number of Assyrian and Kurdish tribes who were and are dependent on that town and on Mosul. It is supported, in addition, by the following arguments:—

(1.) It keeps under the control of the Irak Government the two gates between the Bahdinan (the Irak Kurdish tribes) and Hakkiari (the Kurdish tribes north of Irak). These passes—the Geramus Pass and the Tkhuma Pass—are used by the Artoshi nomads, who winter in the Mosul plains and summer west of Julamerk. The control of these passes will enable the Irak Government to check sheep-counts for taxing purposes and to restrain the raids of the brigand section (Shirki, Kashura), who pester the Kadhas af Zakho, Dohuk and Amadia. It ensures to Irak access to a number of summer pasturages necessary to the Mosul sheep-owners, who entrust their sheep to the Artoshi to take north with them for the summer grazing.

(2.) Consisting almost entirely of inaccessible heights and barren ridges, this frontier line is unattractive to the settler, and prohibitive of military movement. From the Jelo Peaks to the Persian frontier the line is almost an unpierceable barrier; only the Zini-e-Berdi Pass is suitable for the passage of troops, and that only during the summer months. The remaining passages at Geramus and Tkhuma, already alluded to, are most difficult, though just practicable for nomad Kurds with their flocks. There would be no need to place military garrisons further forward than they are at present.

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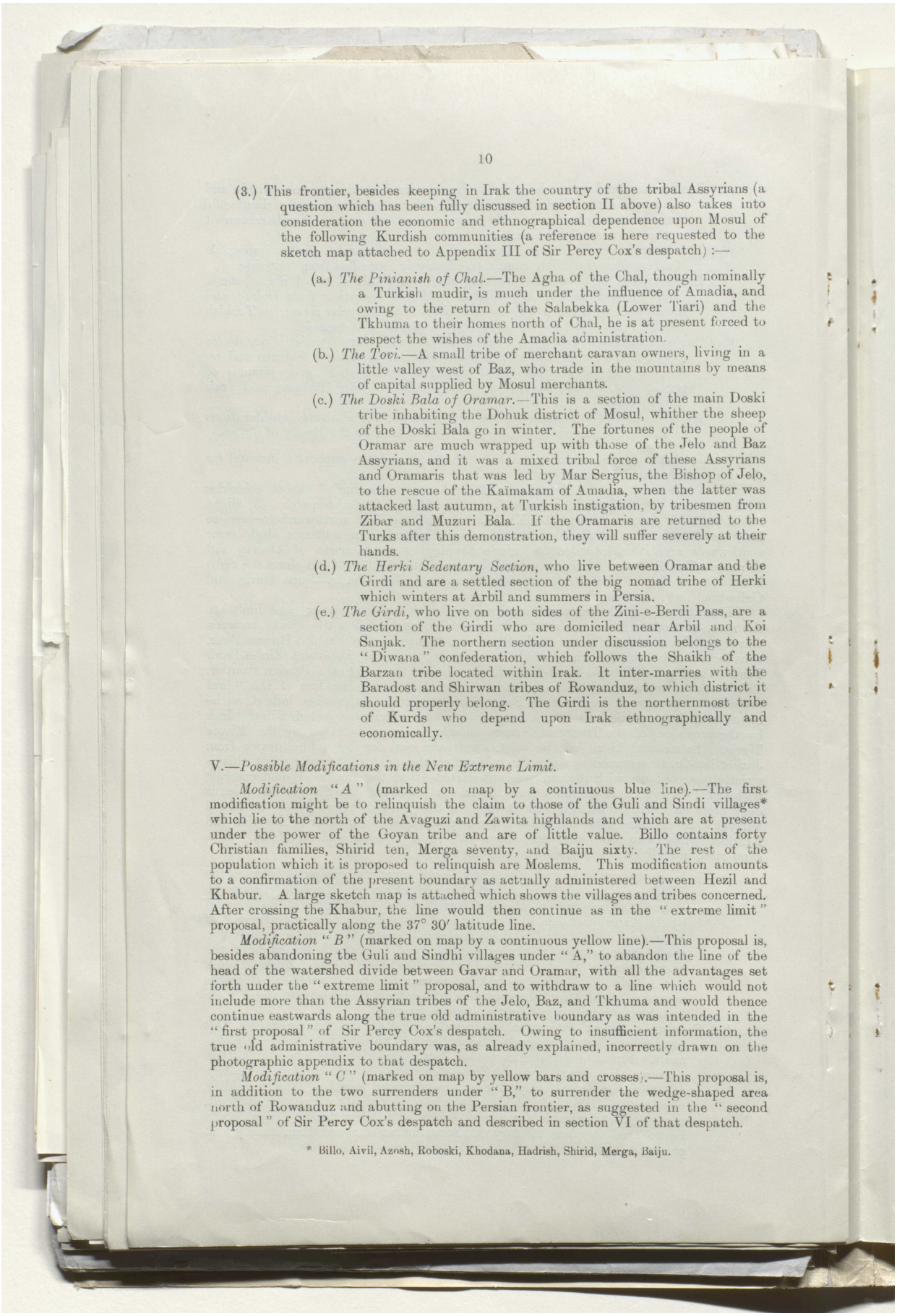

(3.) This frontier, besides keeping in Irak the country of the tribal Assyrians (a question which has been fully discussed in section II above) also takes into consideration the economic and ethnographical dependence upon Mosul of the following Kurdish communities (a reference is here requested to the sketch map attached to Appendix III of Sir Percy Cox's despatch) :—

(a.) *The Pinianish of Chal.*—The Agha of the Chal, though nominally a Turkish mudir, is much under the influence of Amadia, and owing to the return of the Salabekka (Lower Tiari) and the Tkhuma to their homes north of Chal, he is at present forced to respect the wishes of the Amadia administration.

(b.) *The Tovi.*—A small tribe of merchant caravan owners, living in a little valley west of Baz, who trade in the mountains by means of capital supplied by Mosul merchants.

(c.) *The Doski Bala of Oramar.*—This is a section of the main Doski tribe inhabiting the Dohuk district of Mosul, whither the sheep of the Doski Bala go in winter. The fortunes of the people of Oramar are much wrapped up with those of the Jelo and Baz Assyrians, and it was a mixed tribal force of these Assyrians and Oramaris that was led by Mar Sergius, the Bishop of Jelo, to the rescue of the Kaïmakam of Amadia, when the latter was attacked last autumn, at Turkish instigation, by tribesmen from Zibar and Muzuri Bala. If the Oramaris are returned to the Turks after this demonstration, they will suffer severely at their hands.

(d.) *The Herki Sedentary Section*, who live between Oramar and the Girdi and are a settled section of the big nomad tribe of Herki which winters at Arbil and summers in Persia.

(e.) *The Girdi*, who live on both sides of the Zini-e-Berdi Pass, are a section of the Girdi who are domiciled near Arbil and Koi Sanjak. The northern section under discussion belongs to the "Diwana" confederation, which follows the Shaikh of the Barzan tribe located within Irak. It inter-marries with the Baradost and Shirwan tribes of Rowanduz, to which district it should properly belong. The Girdi is the northernmost tribe of Kurds who depend upon Irak ethnographically and economically.

V.—*Possible Modifications in the New Extreme Limit.*

Modification "*A*" (marked on map by a continuous blue line).—The first modification might be to relinquish the claim to those of the Guli and Sindi villages* which lie to the north of the Avaguzi and Zawita highlands and which are at present under the power of the Goyan tribe and are of little value. Billo contains forty Christian families, Shirid ten, Merga seventy, and Baiju sixty. The rest of the population which it is proposed to relinquish are Moslems. This modification amounts to a confirmation of the present boundary as actually administered between Hezil and Khabur. A large sketch map is attached which shows the villages and tribes concerned. After crossing the Khabur, the line would then continue as in the "extreme limit" proposal, practically along the 37° 30′ latitude line.

Modification "*B*" (marked on map by a continuous yellow line).—This proposal is, besides abandoning the Guli and Sindhi villages under "A," to abandon the line of the head of the watershed divide between Gavar and Oramar, with all the advantages set forth under the "extreme limit" proposal, and to withdraw to a line which would not include more than the Assyrian tribes of the Jelo, Baz, and Tkhuma and would thence continue eastwards along the true old administrative boundary as was intended in the "first proposal" of Sir Percy Cox's despatch. Owing to insufficient information, the true old administrative boundary was, as already explained, incorrectly drawn on the photographic appendix to that despatch.

Modification "*C*" (marked on map by yellow bars and crosses).—This proposal is, in addition to the two surrenders under "B," to surrender the wedge-shaped area north of Rowanduz and abutting on the Persian frontier, as suggested in the "second proposal" of Sir Percy Cox's despatch and described in section VI of that despatch.

* Billo, Aivil, Azosh, Roboski, Khodana, Hadrish, Shirid, Merga, Baiju.

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Modification "*D*" (marked on map by a continuous green line).—The fourth modification is, in addition to the three surrenders under "C," to draw the line almost due south from the Sunbul Mountain so as to include the Thal Valley and exclude from Irak the Jelo and Baz area, which under modification "B" becomes an awkward salient. The Jelo and Baz Assyrians, owing to the difficulty of maintaining an existence in the Jelo and Baz Mountains, hesitate to return.

Modification "*E*" (shown on map by yellow dash and dot).—This proposal is to bring the frontier back to the watershed of the Dibur River, that is to say, behind the lines of the "B" and "C" modifications.

Modification "*F*" (marked on map by green bars and crosses).—This proposal has been prepared in accordance with the suggestions of the Air Officer Commanding, who would prefer to surrender the Jelo and Baz country (modification "D") before surrendering the Girdi tribe and the Zini-e-Berdi Pass (modification "B"). Under this proposal the frontier line would be the same as that under modification "D" up to a point on the true old administrative boundary (continuous red line) about 4 miles north of the Shemsdinan River and about 9 miles south-south-west of Chachelli. From this point it runs parallel with the right bank of the Shemsdinan River towards the north-east until it meets the "new extreme limit," which it then follows as far as the Persian frontier.

VI.—*Comments on Modifications.*

Modification "*A*" has the concurrence of the Air Officer Commanding, who points out, however, that, in order to deny the crossings of the Khabur and Hazil Rivers, the old administrative boundary, running along the right bank of the Khabur and Hazil up to the western point of junction with modification "A," is preferable to the line as marked along the left bank of these rivers.

Modification "*B*" entails the loss of the barrier wall and the important pass at Zini-e-Berdi. It cuts off the Oramar, Herki and Girdi from their political connections and economic centres, and gives the Turks a base for propaganda amongst the remainder of the Bahdinan (or Mosul) Kurds. It also makes of the Jelo and Baz an awkward salient.

Modification "*C*" surrenders an area which is barely inhabited and rarely frequented even by nomads. Once the important pass of the Zini-e-Berdi is surrendered, this area is of little value. It gives up the small and unimportant Baradost tribe. At the same time it looks large on the map, and the modification might be very attractive to the Turks.

Modification "*D*" lops off the awkward salient of the Jelo and Baz. The ground is of no economical value, but the peaks form a formidable corner bastion to the frontier. Moreover, the surrender of the Jelo and Baz gives the Turks easier access for the purpose of intrigue and propaganda to the remainder of the Assyrians already settled in the mountains.

Modification "*E*."—The country surrendered under modification "E" is but sparsely inhabited and of little economic value. It is true that Sidekan–Keli Shin–Ushnu route is left unprotected by this surrender, but, on the other hand, the Rowanduz–Rayat–Ushnu road is still protected by the Algurd–Rust–Ser-e-Hassan Beg mass of mountains. The Air Officer Commanding agrees that this surrender is of little military importance. Once the pass at Zini-e-Berdi is given up, the next passages of military importance are the Rowanduz passes.

Modification "*F*."—The advantages of this line are that, while it avoids the awkward salient of the Jelo and Baz and appears a much smaller demand than the "extreme limit," control is maintained of the Zini-e-Berdi Pass, which is the only gateway in the wall of mountains practicable for military formations. Control is also maintained of the important Girdi tribe.

VII.—*Cession of Nerva–Raikan Deprecated.*

Under the fourth proposal of Sir Percy Scott's despatch, it was suggested that, in order to maintain the administrative boundary north of Amadia, the Nerva–Raikan district might be surrendered and the line brought back to the Kurazhor–Chia-e-Shirin ranges, which run along the left bank of the Zab, east of Amadia. I hesitate to repeat this suggestion, involving as it would the surrender to Turkey of the two tribal communities who, though they have never been visited by troops, have been, of the Kurdish frontier tribes, the only two whose conduct has been consistently loyal to the Administration of Irak.

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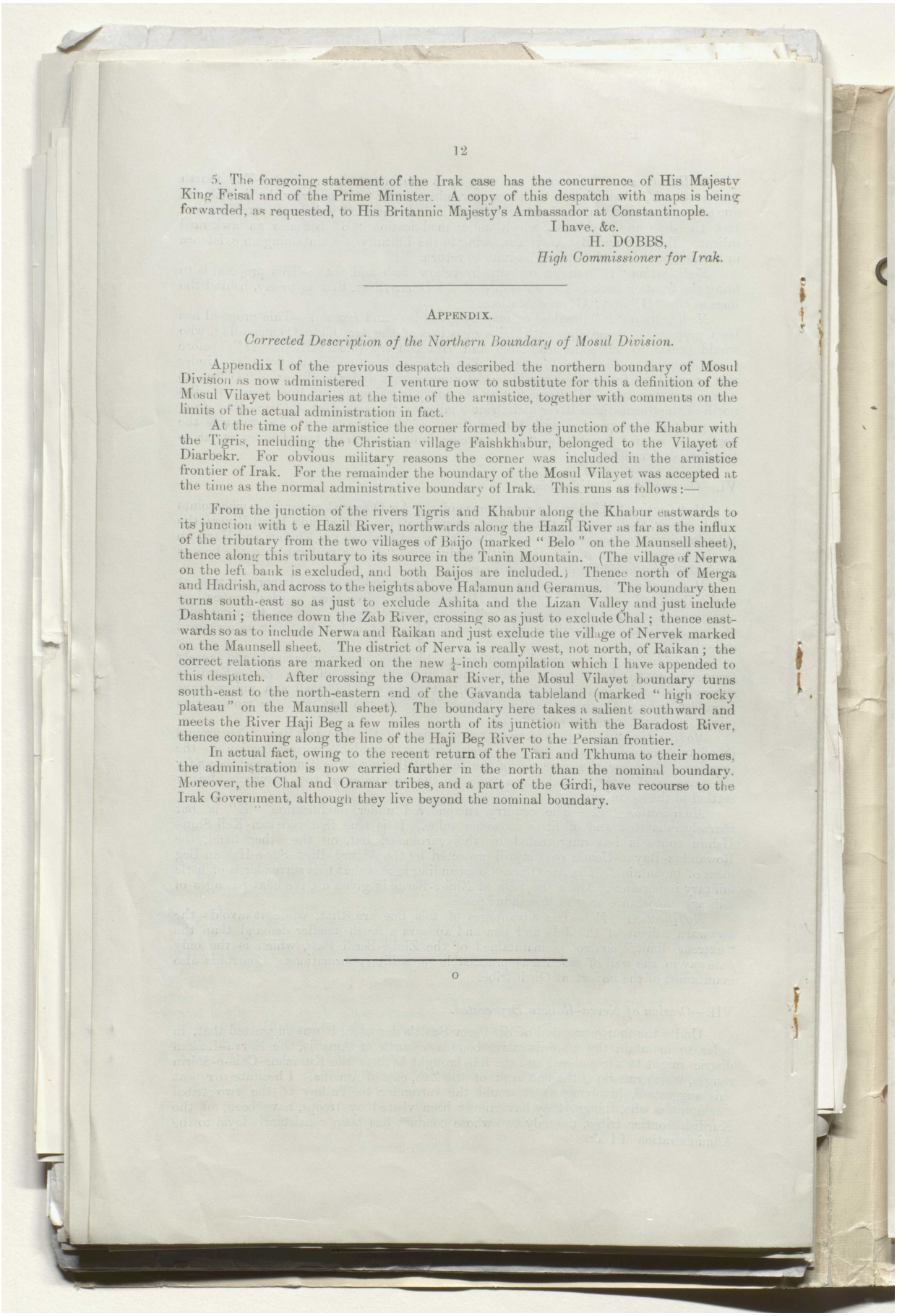

5. The foregoing statement of the Irak case has the concurrence of His Majesty King Feisal and of the Prime Minister. A copy of this despatch with maps is being forwarded, as requested, to His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

H. DOBBS,

High Commissioner for Irak.

APPENDIX.

Corrected Description of the Northern Boundary of Mosul Division.

Appendix I of the previous despatch described the northern boundary of Mosul Division as now administered I venture now to substitute for this a definition of the Mosul Vilayet boundaries at the time of the armistice, together with comments on the limits of the actual administration in fact.

At the time of the armistice the corner formed by the junction of the Khabur with the Tigris, including the Christian village Faishkhabur, belonged to the Vilayet of Diarbekr. For obvious military reasons the corner was included in the armistice frontier of Irak. For the remainder the boundary of the Mosul Vilayet was accepted at the time as the normal administrative boundary of Irak. This runs as follows:—

From the junction of the rivers Tigris and Khabur along the Khabur eastwards to its junction with t e Hazil River, northwards along the Hazil River as far as the influx of the tributary from the two villages of Baijo (marked "Belo" on the Maunsell sheet), thence along this tributary to its source in the Tanin Mountain. (The village of Nerwa on the left bank is excluded, and both Baijos are included.) Thence north of Merga and Hadrish, and across to the heights above Halamun and Geramus. The boundary then turns south-east so as just to exclude Ashita and the Lizan Valley and just include Dashtani; thence down the Zab River, crossing so as just to exclude Chal; thence eastwards so as to include Nerwa and Raikan and just exclude the village of Nervek marked on the Maunsell sheet. The district of Nerva is really west, not north, of Raikan; the correct relations are marked on the new ¼-inch compilation which I have appended to this despatch. After crossing the Oramar River, the Mosul Vilayet boundary turns south-east to the north-eastern end of the Gavanda tableland (marked "high rocky plateau" on the Maunsell sheet). The boundary here takes a salient southward and meets the River Haji Beg a few miles north of its junction with the Baradost River, thence continuing along the line of the Haji Beg River to the Persian frontier.

In actual fact, owing to the recent return of the Tiari and Tkhuma to their homes, the administration is now carried further in the north than the nominal boundary. Moreover, the Chal and Oramar tribes, and a part of the Girdi, have recourse to the Irak Government, although they live beyond the nominal boundary.

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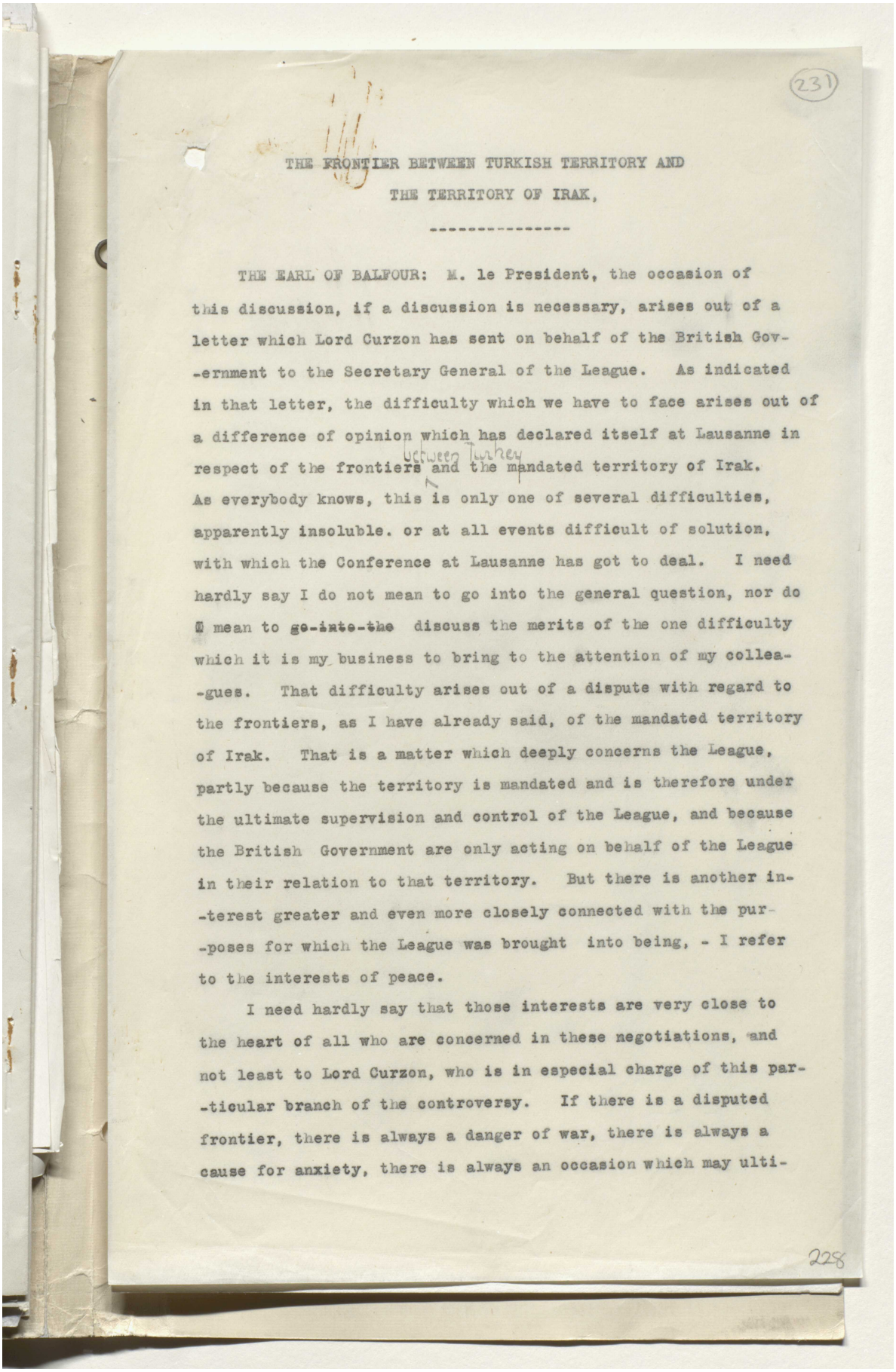

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THE FRONTIER BETWEEN TURKISH TERRITORY AND
THE TERRITORY OF IRAK.

THE EARL OF BALFOUR: M. le President, the occasion of this discussion, if a discussion is necessary, arises out of a letter which Lord Curzon has sent on behalf of the British Gov--ernment to the Secretary General of the League. As indicated in that letter, the difficulty which we have to face arises out of a difference of opinion which has declared itself at Lausanne in respect of the frontiers between Turkey and the mandated territory of Irak. As everybody knows, this is only one of several difficulties, apparently insoluble. or at all events difficult of solution, with which the Conference at Lausanne has got to deal. I need hardly say I do not mean to go into the general question, nor do I mean to ~~go into the~~ discuss the merits of the one difficulty which it is my business to bring to the attention of my collea--gues. That difficulty arises out of a dispute with regard to the frontiers, as I have already said, of the mandated territory of Irak. That is a matter which deeply concerns the League, partly because the territory is mandated and is therefore under the ultimate supervision and control of the League, and because the British Government are only acting on behalf of the League in their relation to that territory. But there is another in--terest greater and even more closely connected with the pur--poses for which the League was brought into being, - I refer to the interests of peace.

I need hardly say that those interests are very close to the heart of all who are concerned in these negotiations, and not least to Lord Curzon, who is in especial charge of this par--ticular branch of the controversy. If there is a disputed frontier, there is always a danger of war, there is always a cause for anxiety, there is always an occasion which may ulti-

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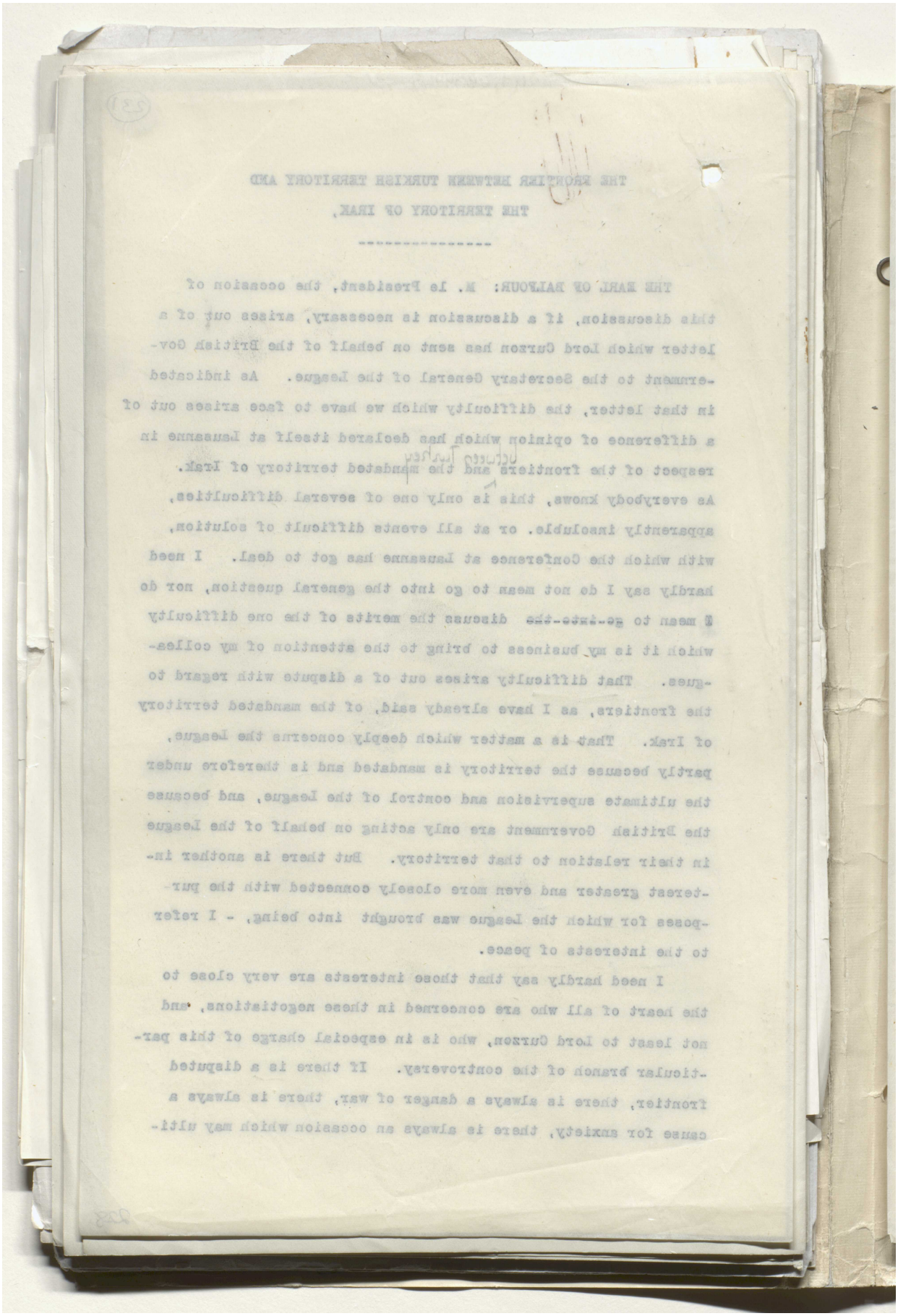

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-mately be made the occasion of warlike operations, whose limits no man can foresee - warlike operations which may bring in their train tragedies of unknown magnitude.

In these circumstances, Lord Curzon suggested at Lausanne that the League of Nations should be asked to arbitrate - per--haps that is not technically correct - but the League should be asked to use their good offices to determine what the proper frontier is of the mandated territory for which the League is directly or indirectly responsible; and in that proposal Lord Curzon had the ardent support of the representative of France, of the representative of Italy, and of the representative of Japan. All of them thought, and all of them publicly declar--ed, that they thought the proposal made by the British For--eign Secretary was eminently reasonable, eminently moderate, admirably dalculated to serve the interests of peace and good--will among nations.

Unfortunately it was not at the time accepted by the Turkish representatives. There is still a hope - and I ven--ture to cherish the hope - that still it may be accepted, and that a scheme which in itself is obviously fair - or at all events seems to me to be obviously fair - is one which will meet not merely with the approval of France, Italy, Japan and Great Britain, but of Turkey itself. But I am afraid we have to contemplate an alternative possibility; I a m afraid we cannot disguise from ourselves that when this proposal formally and finally comes before the Conference at Lausannce the Turkish representatives will not find it in accordance with their in--structions to accept the proposal, however reasonable, however moderate, it may appear to be to other people. What then is to take place? We have to contemplate failure. How are we to parry the dangers which failure might conceivably bring

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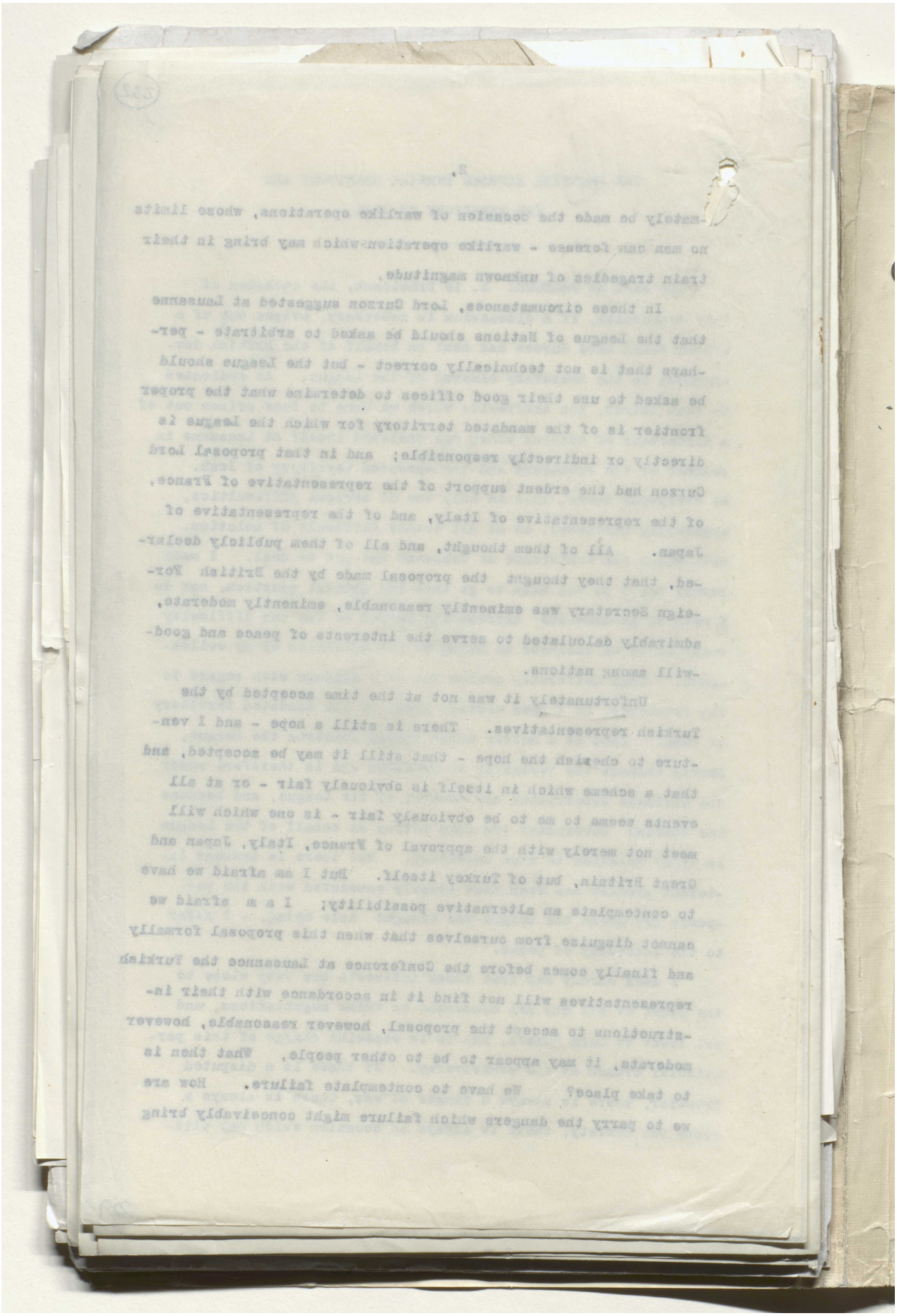

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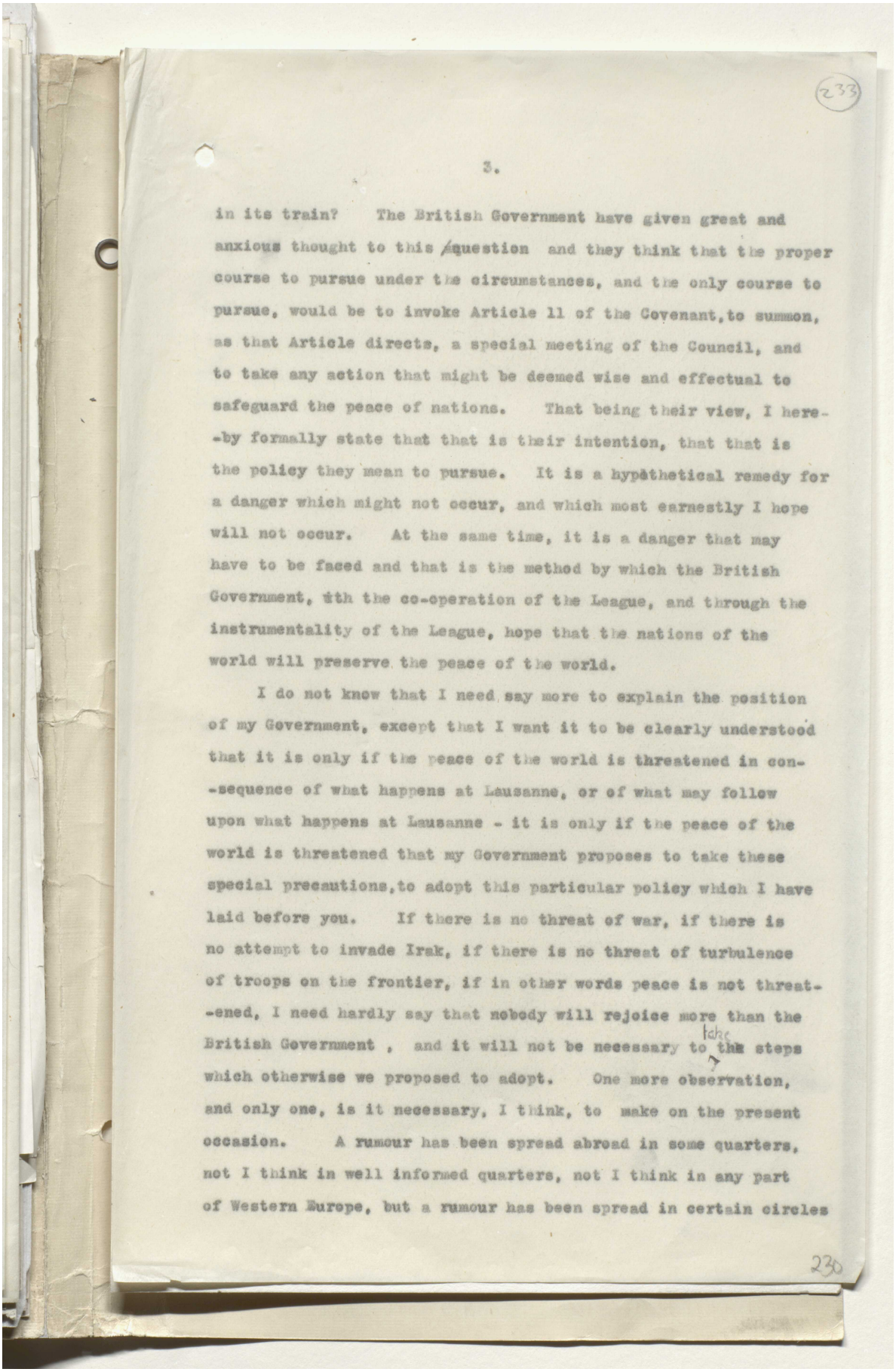

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3.

in its train? The British Government have given great and anxious thought to this question and they think that the proper course to pursue under the circumstances, and the only course to pursue, would be to invoke Article 11 of the Covenant, to summon, as that Article directs, a special meeting of the Council, and to take any action that might be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. That being their view, I here-by formally state that that is their intention, that that is the policy they mean to pursue. It is a hypothetical remedy for a danger which might not occur, and which most earnestly I hope will not occur. At the same time, it is a danger that may have to be faced and that is the method by which the British Government, with the co-operation of the League, and through the instrumentality of the League, hope that the nations of the world will preserve the peace of the world.

I do not know that I need say more to explain the position of my Government, except that I want it to be clearly understood that it is only if the peace of the world is threatened in con-sequence of what happens at Lausanne, or of what may follow upon what happens at Lausanne - it is only if the peace of the world is threatened that my Government proposes to take these special precautions, to adopt this particular policy which I have laid before you. If there is no threat of war, if there is no attempt to invade Irak, if there is no threat of turbulence of troops on the frontier, if in other words peace is not threat-ened, I need hardly say that nobody will rejoice more than the British Government, and it will not be necessary to take the steps which otherwise we proposed to adopt. One more observation, and only one, is it necessary, I think, to make on the present occasion. A rumour has been spread abroad in some quarters, not I think in well informed quarters, not I think in any part of Western Europe, but a rumour has been spread in certain circles

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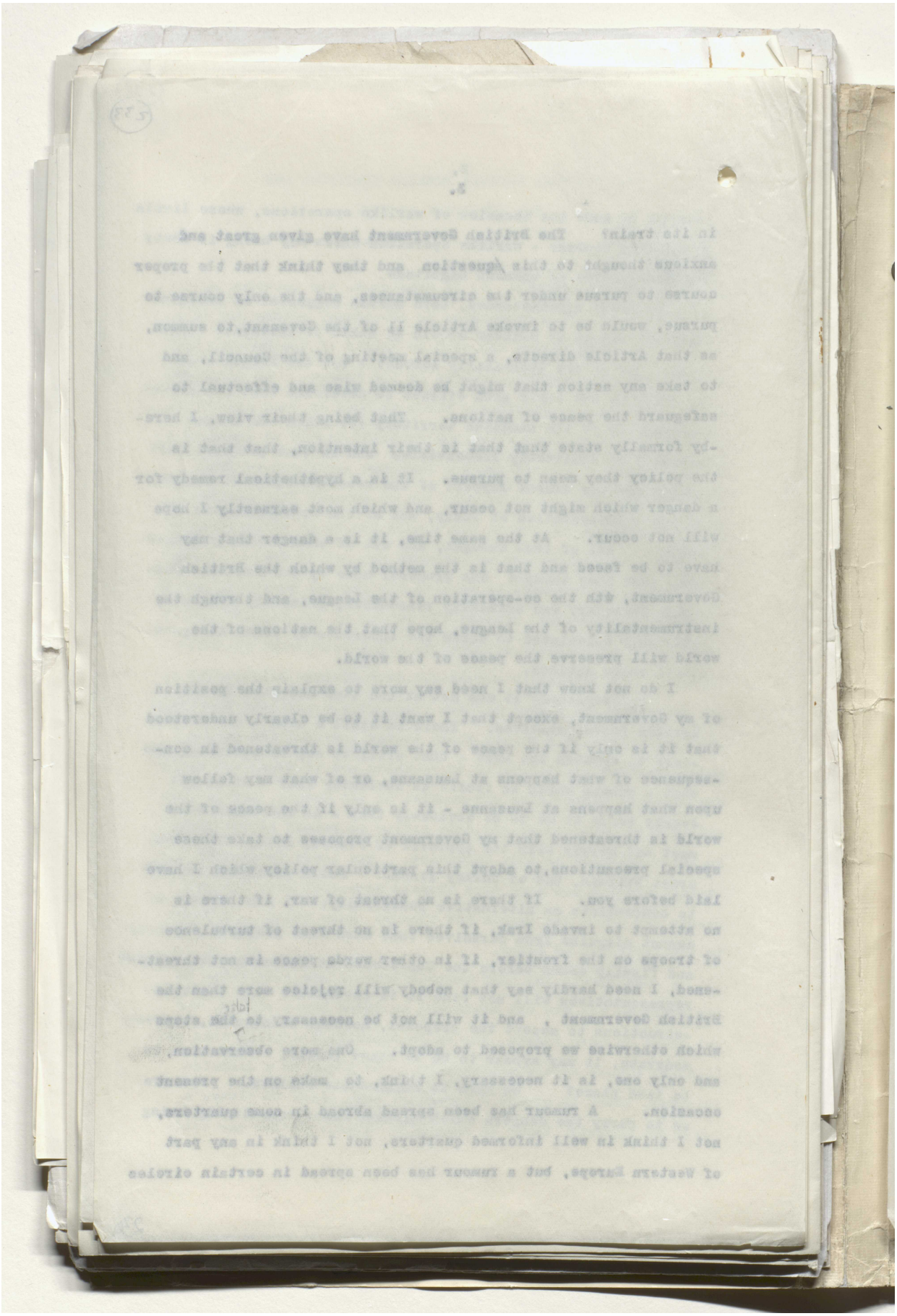

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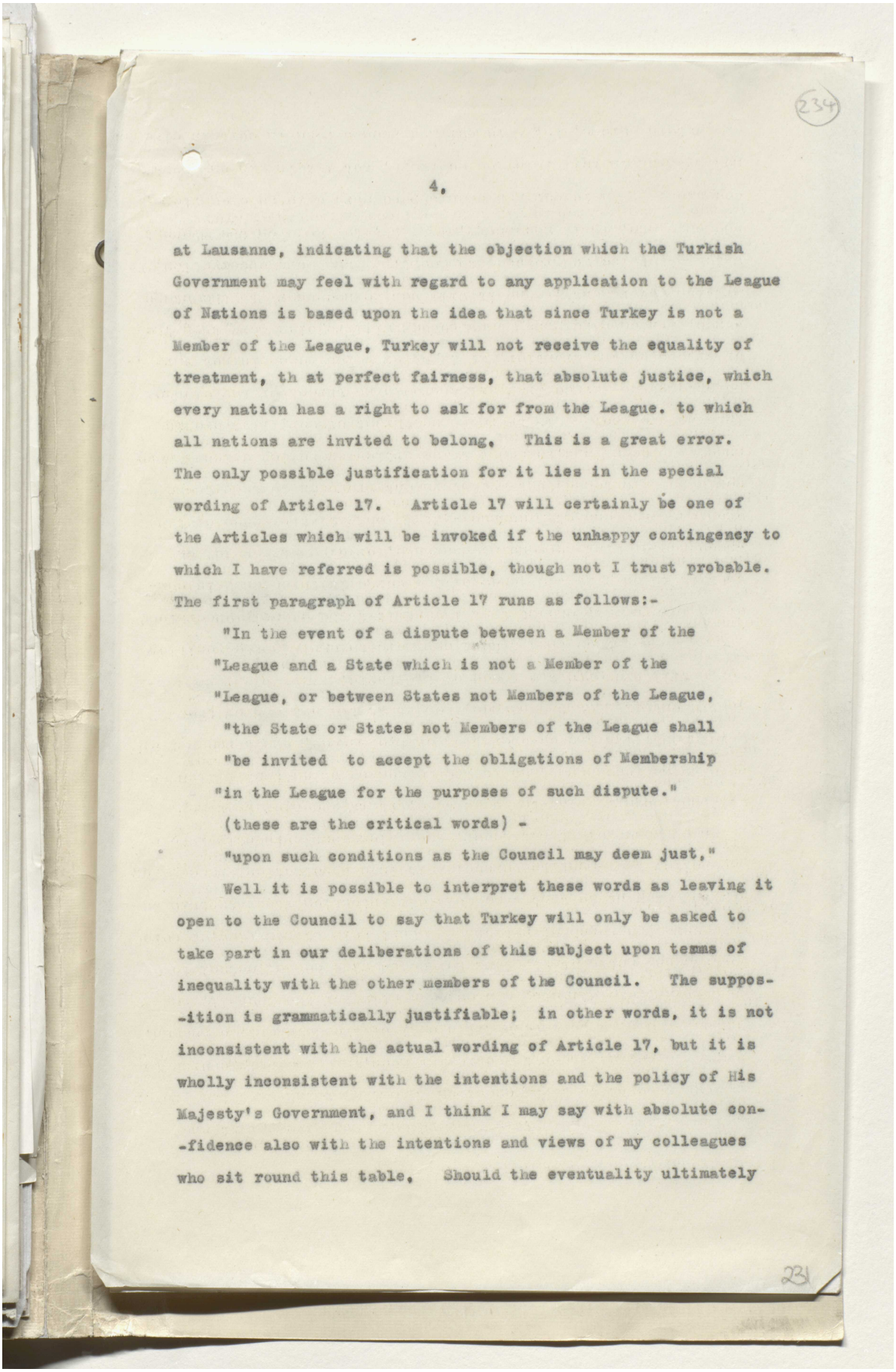

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at Lausanne, indicating that the objection which the Turkish Government may feel with regard to any application to the League of Nations is based upon the idea that since Turkey is not a Member of the League, Turkey will not receive the equality of treatment, th at perfect fairness, that absolute justice, which every nation has a right to ask for from the League. to which all nations are invited to belong. This is a great error. The only possible justification for it lies in the special wording of Article 17. Article 17 will certainly be one of the Articles which will be invoked if the unhappy contingency to which I have referred is possible, though not I trust probable. The first paragraph of Article 17 runs as follows:-

"In the event of a dispute between a Member of the "League and a State which is not a Member of the "League, or between States not Members of the League, "the State or States not Members of the League shall "be invited to accept the obligations of Membership "in the League for the purposes of such dispute."

(these are the critical words) -

"upon such conditions as the Council may deem just,"

Well it is possible to interpret these words as leaving it open to the Council to say that Turkey will only be asked to take part in our deliberations of this subject upon temms of inequality with the other members of the Council. The suppos--ition is grammatically justifiable; in other words, it is not inconsistent with the actual wording of Article 17, but it is wholly inconsistent with the intentions and the policy of His Majesty's Government, and I think I may say with absolute con--fidence also with the intentions and views of my colleagues who sit round this table. Should the eventuality ultimately

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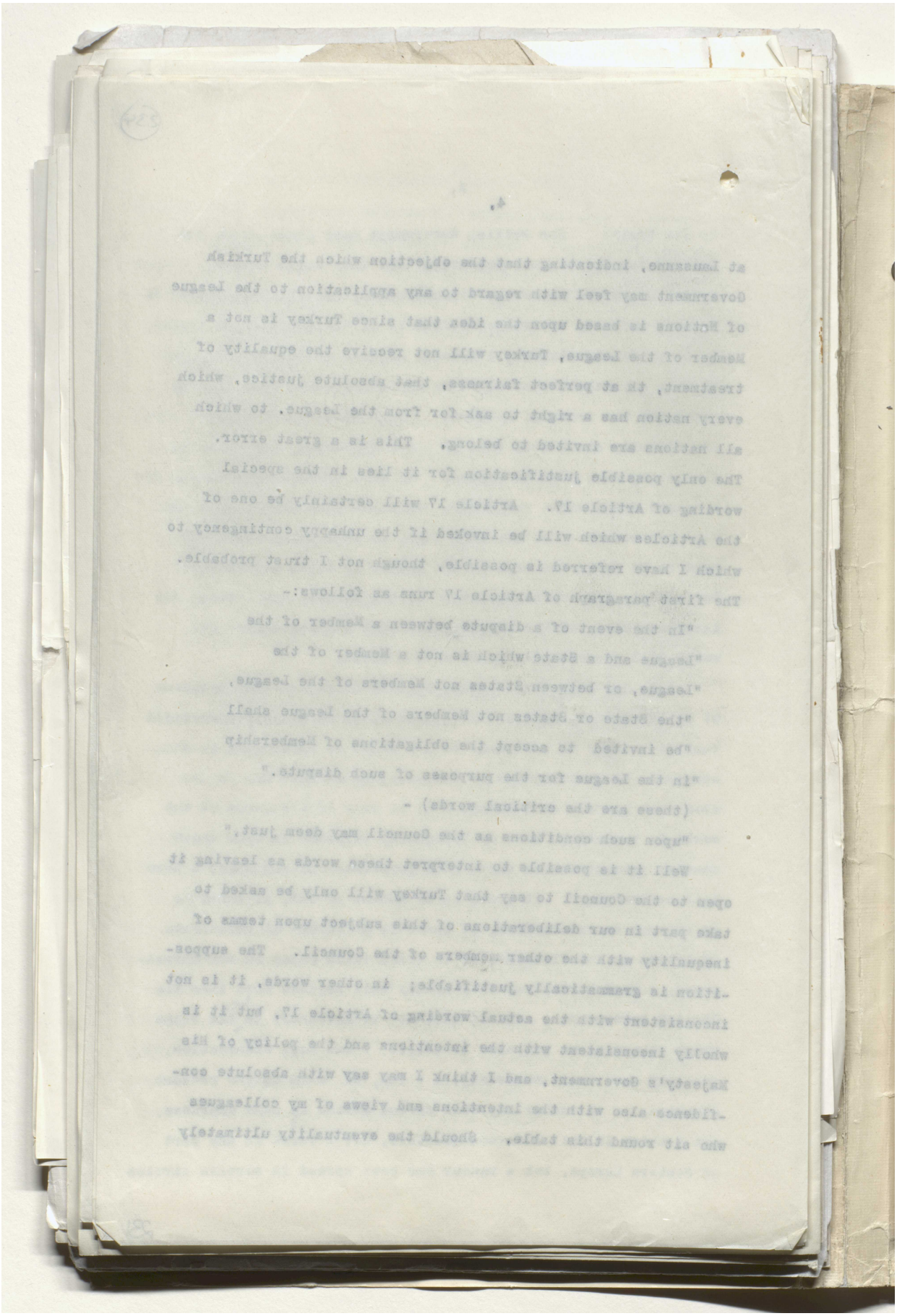

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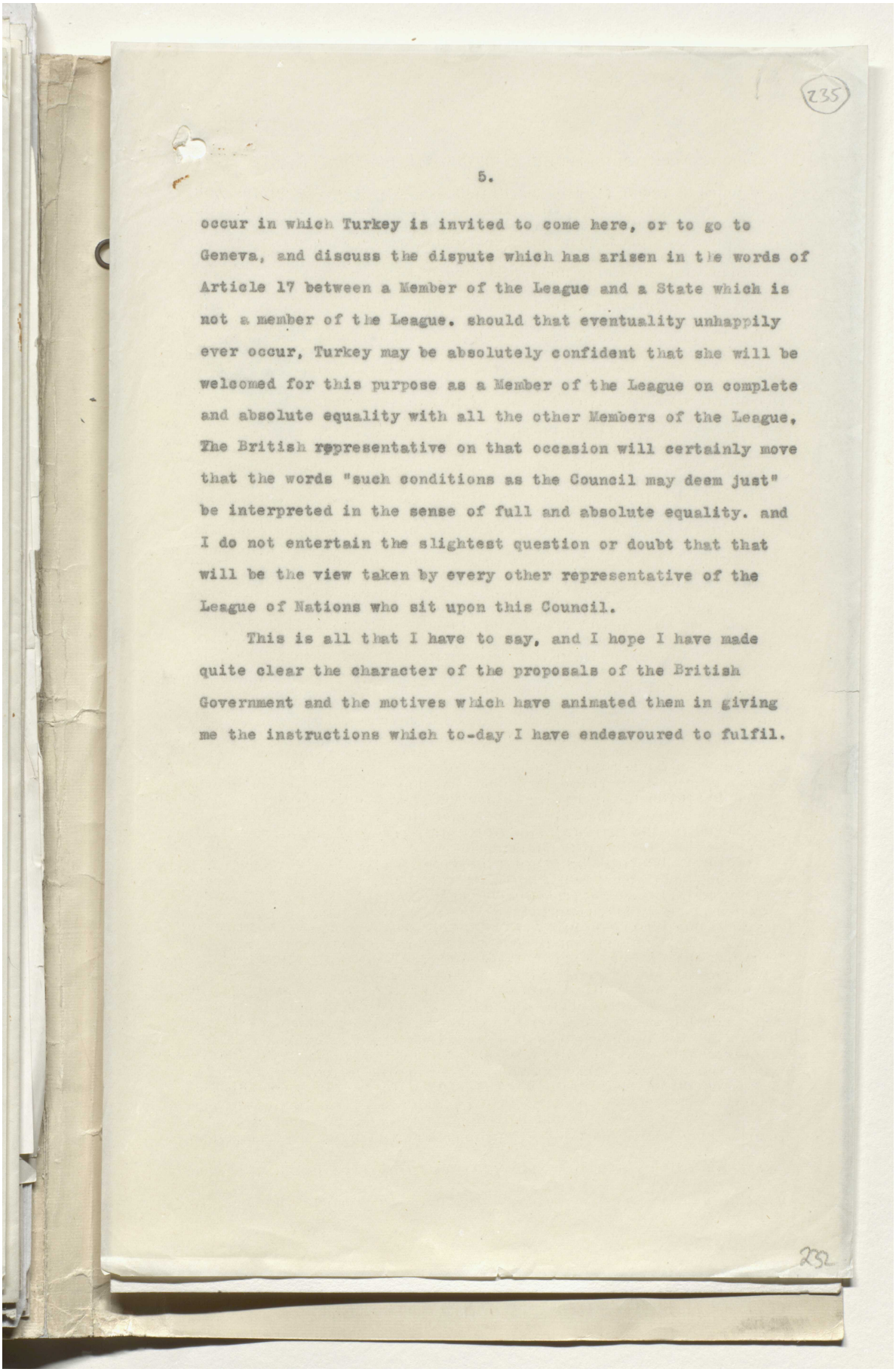

occur in which Turkey is invited to come here, or to go to Geneva, and discuss the dispute which has arisen in the words of Article 17 between a Member of the League and a State which is not a member of the League. should that eventuality unhappily ever occur, Turkey may be absolutely confident that she will be welcomed for this purpose as a Member of the League on complete and absolute equality with all the other Members of the League, The British representative on that occasion will certainly move that the words "such conditions as the Council may deem just" be interpreted in the sense of full and absolute equality. and I do not entertain the slightest question or doubt that that will be the view taken by every other representative of the League of Nations who sit upon this Council.

This is all that I have to say, and I hope I have made quite clear the character of the proposals of the British Government and the motives which have animated them in giving me the instructions which to-day I have endeavoured to fulfil.

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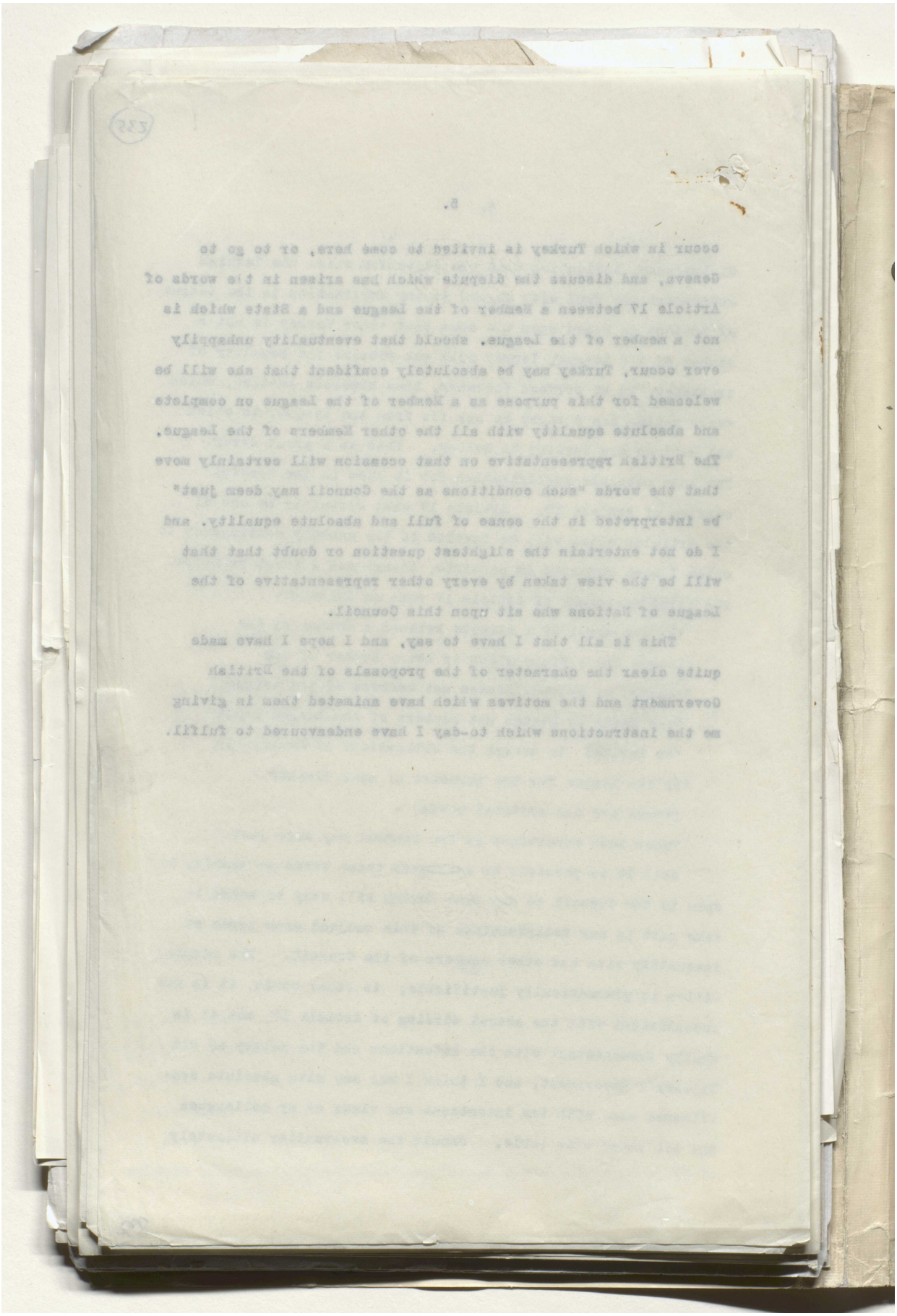

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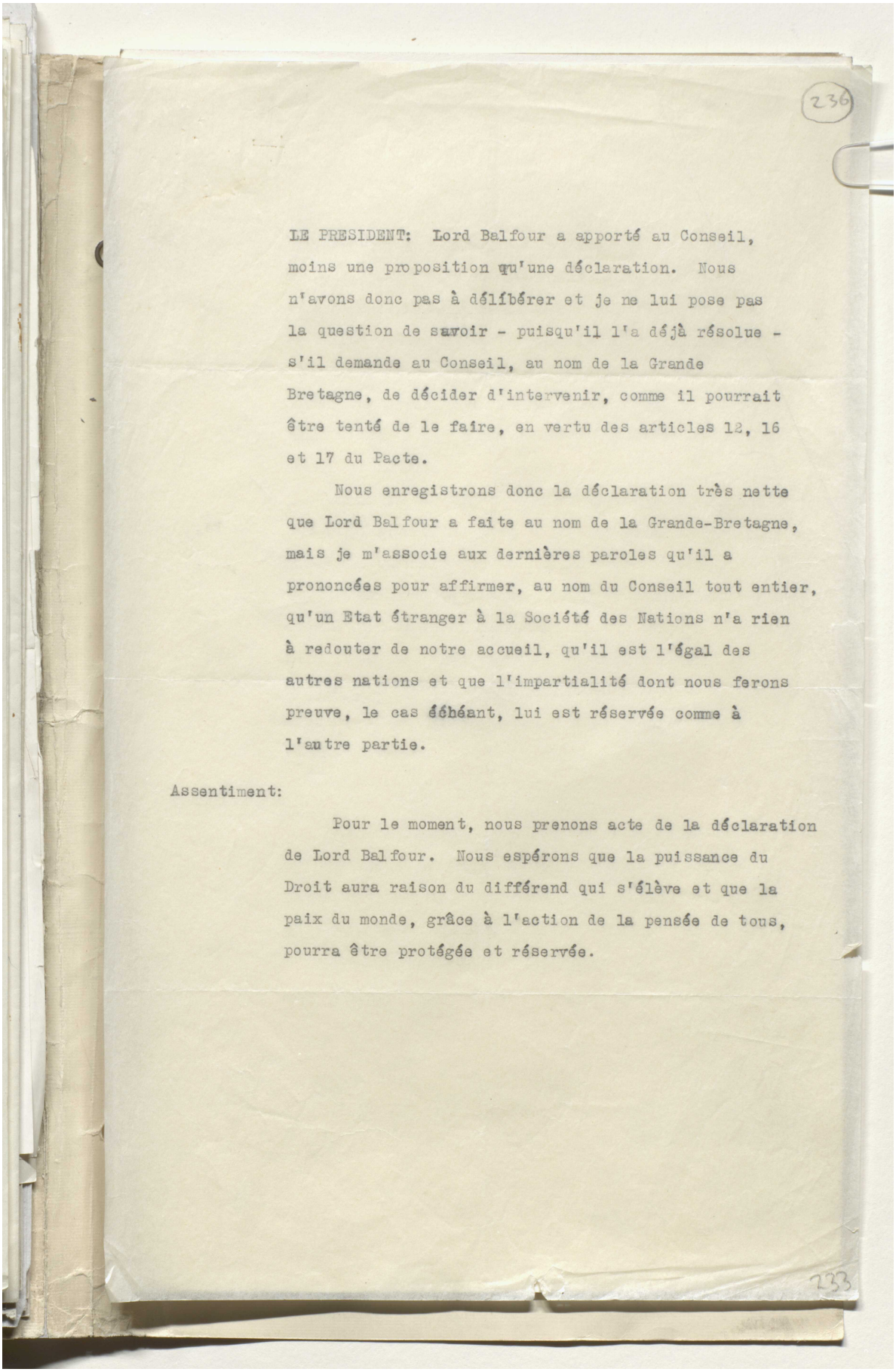

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LE PRESIDENT: Lord Balfour a apporté au Conseil, moins une proposition qu'une déclaration. Nous n'avons donc pas à délibérer et je ne lui pose pas la question de savoir - puisqu'il l'a déjà résolue - s'il demande au Conseil, au nom de la Grande Bretagne, de décider d'intervenir, comme il pourrait être tenté de le faire, en vertu des articles 12, 16 et 17 du Pacte.

Nous enregistrons donc la déclaration très nette que Lord Balfour a faite au nom de la Grande-Bretagne, mais je m'associe aux dernières paroles qu'il a prononcées pour affirmer, au nom du Conseil tout entier, qu'un Etat étranger à la Société des Nations n'a rien à redouter de notre accueil, qu'il est l'égal des autres nations et que l'impartialité dont nous ferons preuve, le cas échéant, lui est réservée comme à l'autre partie.

Assentiment:

Pour le moment, nous prenons acte de la déclaration de Lord Balfour. Nous espérons que la puissance du Droit aura raison du différend qui s'élève et que la paix du monde, grâce à l'action de la pensée de tous, pourra être protégée et réservée.

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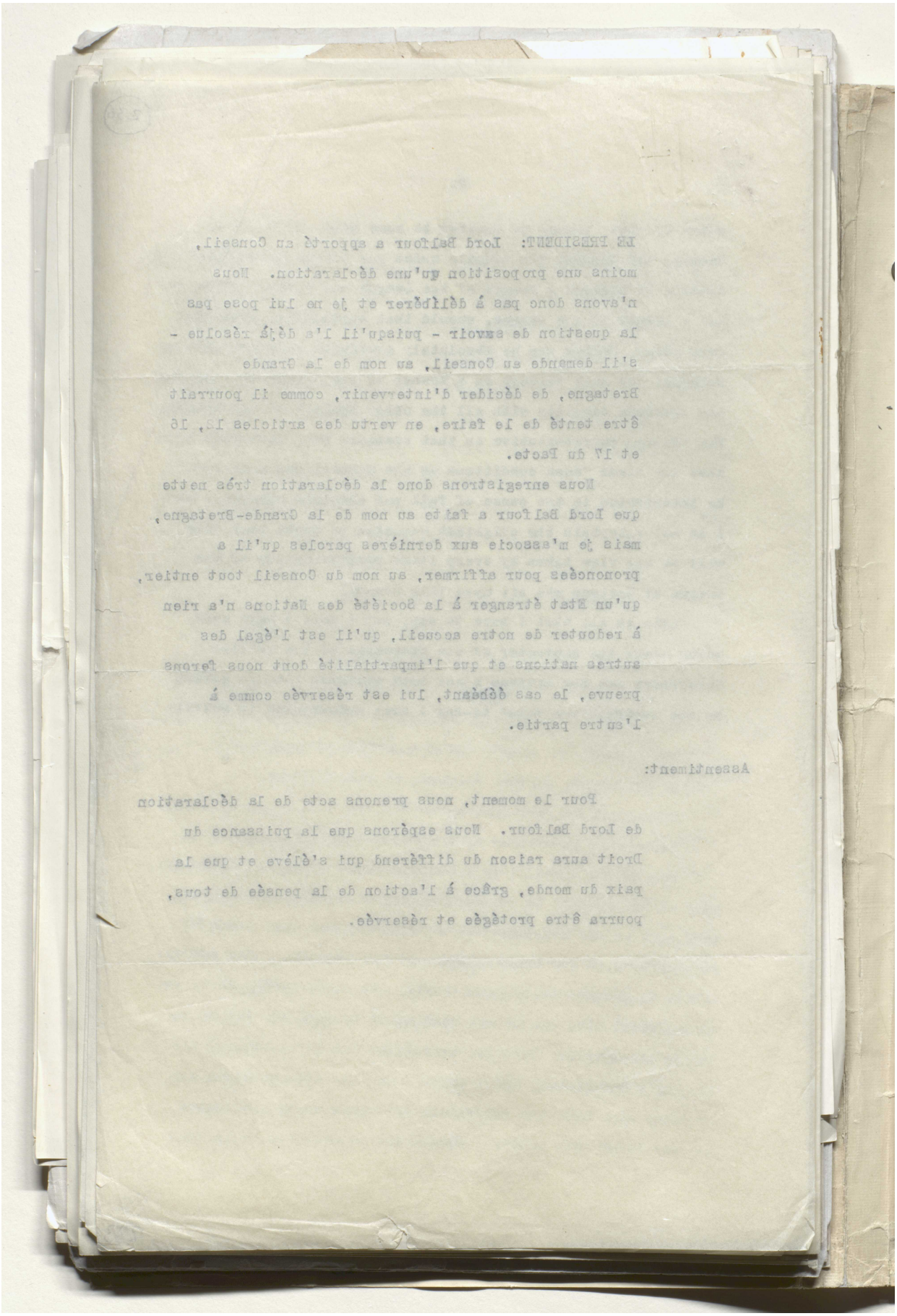

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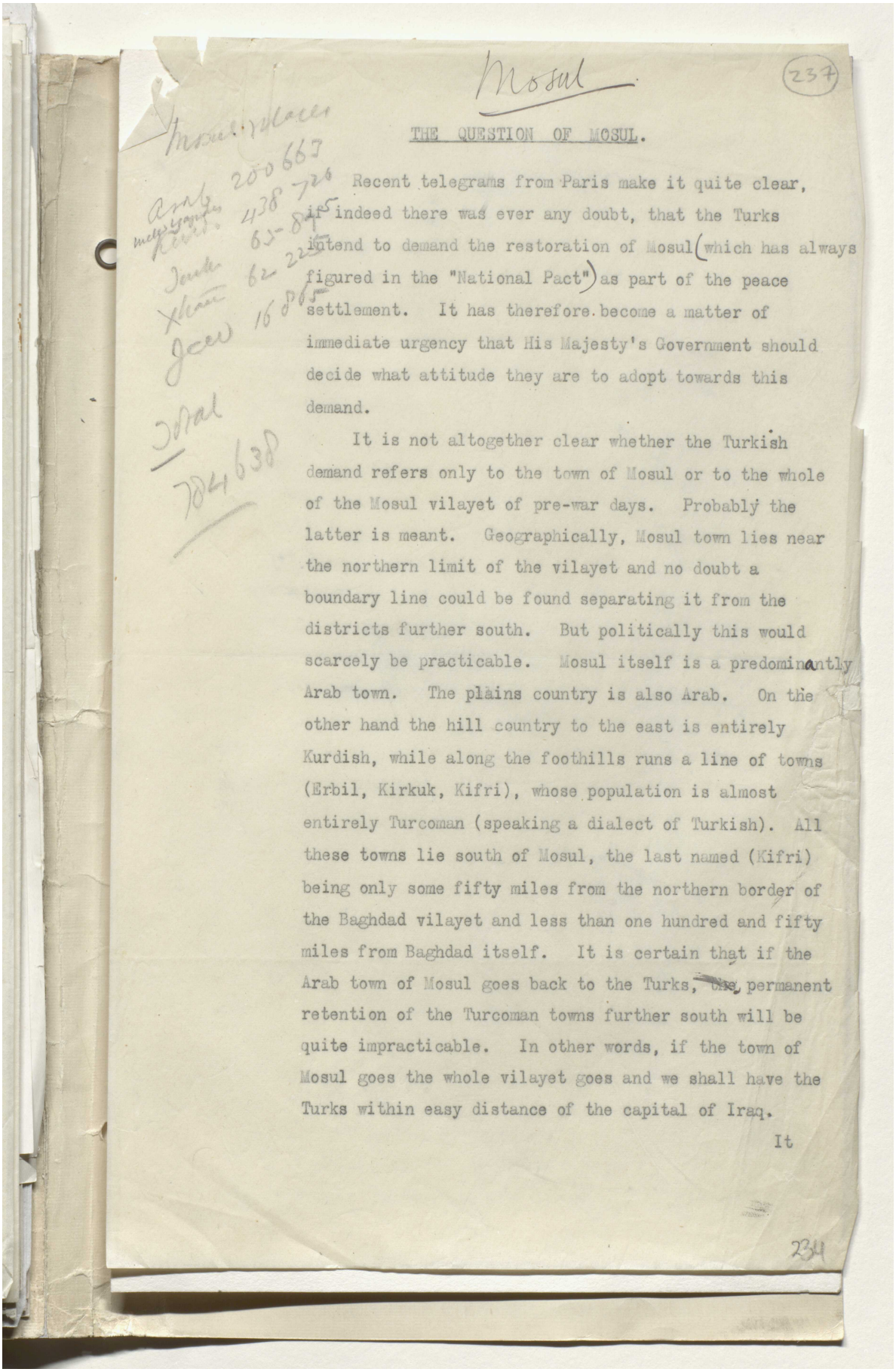

Mosul

(237)

THE QUESTION OF MOSUL.

Recent telegrams from Paris make it quite clear, if indeed there was ever any doubt, that the Turks intend to demand the restoration of Mosul (which has always figured in the "National Pact") as part of the peace settlement. It has therefore become a matter of immediate urgency that His Majesty's Government should decide what attitude they are to adopt towards this demand.

It is not altogether clear whether the Turkish demand refers only to the town of Mosul or to the whole of the Mosul vilayet of pre-war days. Probably the latter is meant. Geographically, Mosul town lies near the northern limit of the vilayet and no doubt a boundary line could be found separating it from the districts further south. But politically this would scarcely be practicable. Mosul itself is a predominantly Arab town. The plains country is also Arab. On the other hand the hill country to the east is entirely Kurdish, while along the foothills runs a line of towns (Erbil, Kirkuk, Kifri), whose population is almost entirely Turcoman (speaking a dialect of Turkish). All these towns lie south of Mosul, the last named (Kifri) being only some fifty miles from the northern border of the Baghdad vilayet and less than one hundred and fifty miles from Baghdad itself. It is certain that if the Arab town of Mosul goes back to the Turks, ~~this~~ permanent retention of the Turcoman towns further south will be quite impracticable. In other words, if the town of Mosul goes the whole vilayet goes and we shall have the Turks within easy distance of the capital of Iraq.

It

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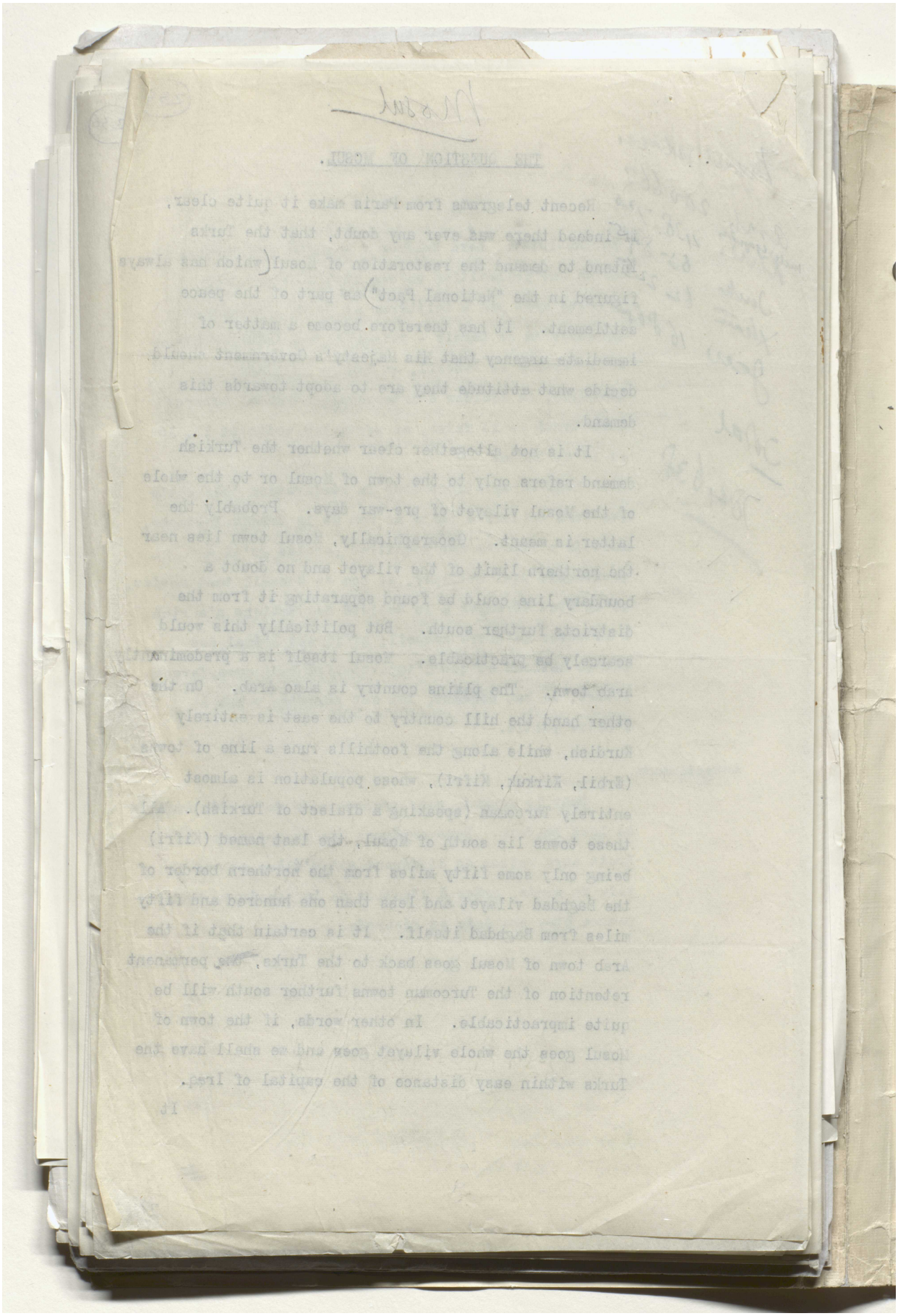

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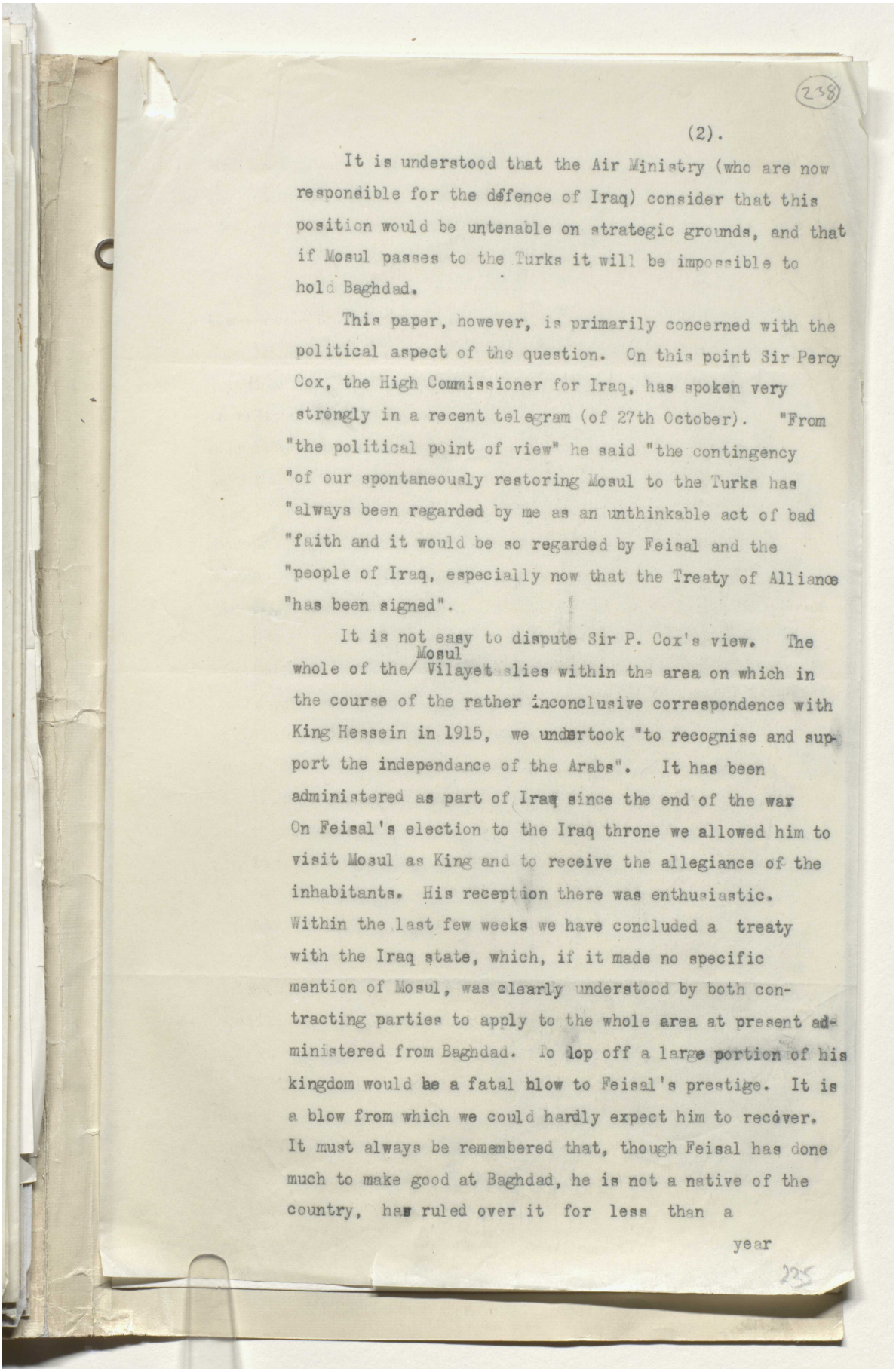

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(2).

It is understood that the Air Ministry (who are now responsible for the defence of Iraq) consider that this position would be untenable on strategic grounds, and that if Mosul passes to the Turks it will be impossible to hold Baghdad.

This paper, however, is primarily concerned with the political aspect of the question. On this point Sir Percy Cox, the High Commissioner for Iraq, has spoken very strongly in a recent telegram (of 27th October). "From "the political point of view" he said "the contingency "of our spontaneously restoring Mosul to the Turks has "always been regarded by me as an unthinkable act of bad "faith and it would be so regarded by Feisal and the "people of Iraq, especially now that the Treaty of Alliance "has been signed".

It is not easy to dispute Sir P. Cox's view. The whole of the Mosul Vilayet lies within the area on which in the course of the rather inconclusive correspondence with King Hessein in 1915, we undertook "to recognise and support the independance of the Arabs". It has been administered as part of Iraq since the end of the war On Feisal's election to the Iraq throne we allowed him to visit Mosul as King and to receive the allegiance of the inhabitants. His reception there was enthusiastic. Within the last few weeks we have concluded a treaty with the Iraq state, which, if it made no specific mention of Mosul, was clearly understood by both contracting parties to apply to the whole area at present administered from Baghdad. To lop off a large portion of his kingdom would be a fatal blow to Feisal's prestige. It is a blow from which we could hardly expect him to recover. It must always be remembered that, though Feisal has done much to make good at Baghdad, he is not a native of the country, has ruled over it for less than a

year

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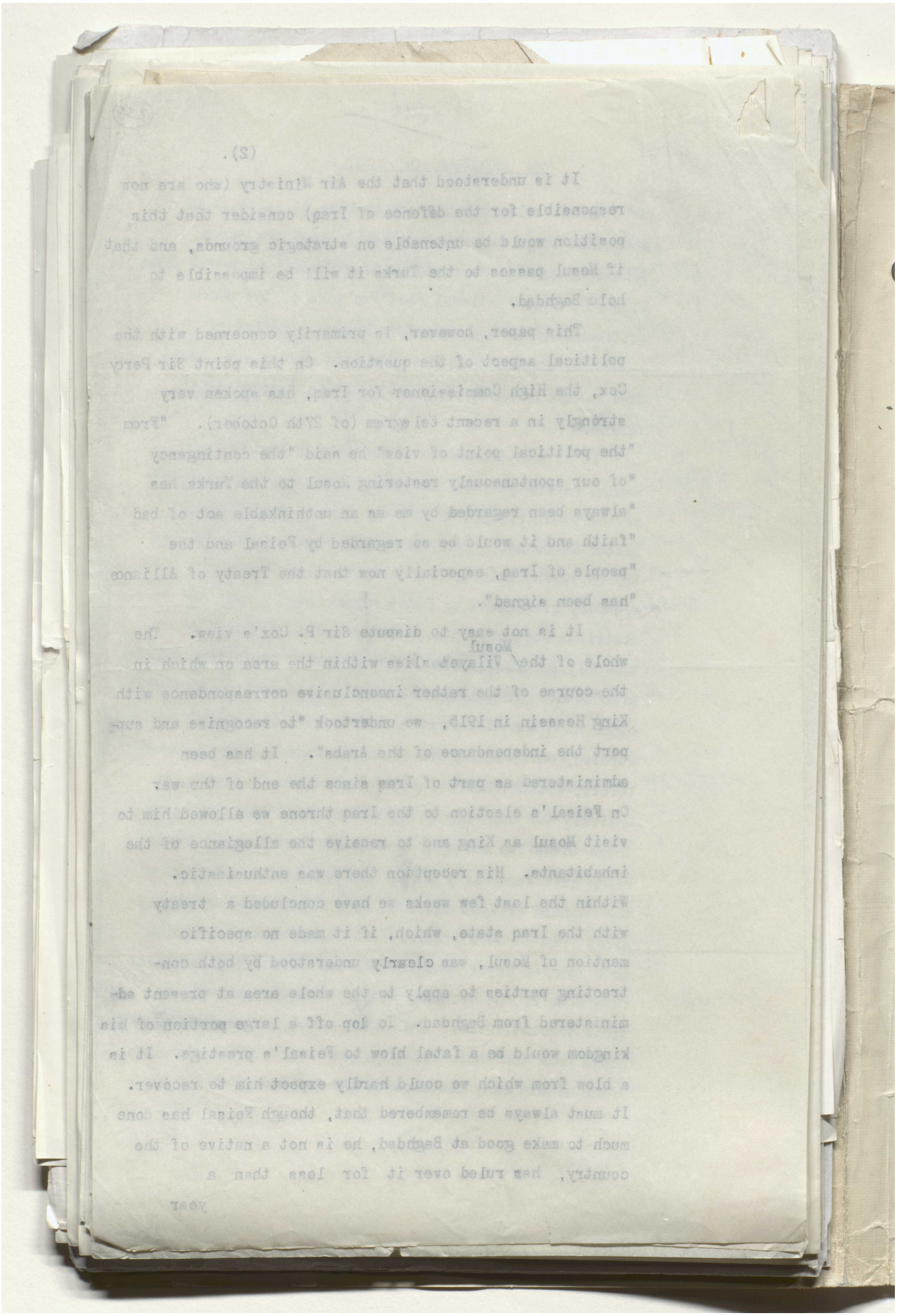

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year and a half and has had a desperately short time in which to foster and develop the very fragile plant of Iraq nationality. His subjects consist not only of comparatively civilized towns-people, but of turbulent tribesmen living on the confines of the desert and unaccustomed to obey any central authority or to respect any laws but their own. Feisal has prevailed so far because he has enjoyed our support. If we withdraw our support or if we flout him in the face of the world by giving away Mosul, the whole structure will inevitably collapse. Retirement from Mosul would be universally regarded as a prelude to retirement from Baghdad. The Iraqis would conclude that the British connection was about to disappear and would hasten to make terms with the Turks while there was yet time.

Apart from these considerations the severance of Mosul would be a serious economic loss to the Iraq state. The vilayet contains some of the most fertileland and practically the whole of the wheat growing area in the country. It also contains oil bearing districts essential to the general development of the Iraq oil fields, upon which the future prosperity of the country so largely depends. Further the population of the vilayet contains a large Christian element, numbering nearly sixty thousand in all. These people, it may be taken for granted, would not stay behind to be massacred by the Turks, but would follow the British line of withdrawal and add to our other difficulties the problem of a large body of indigent refugees. The Mosul Christians include a section

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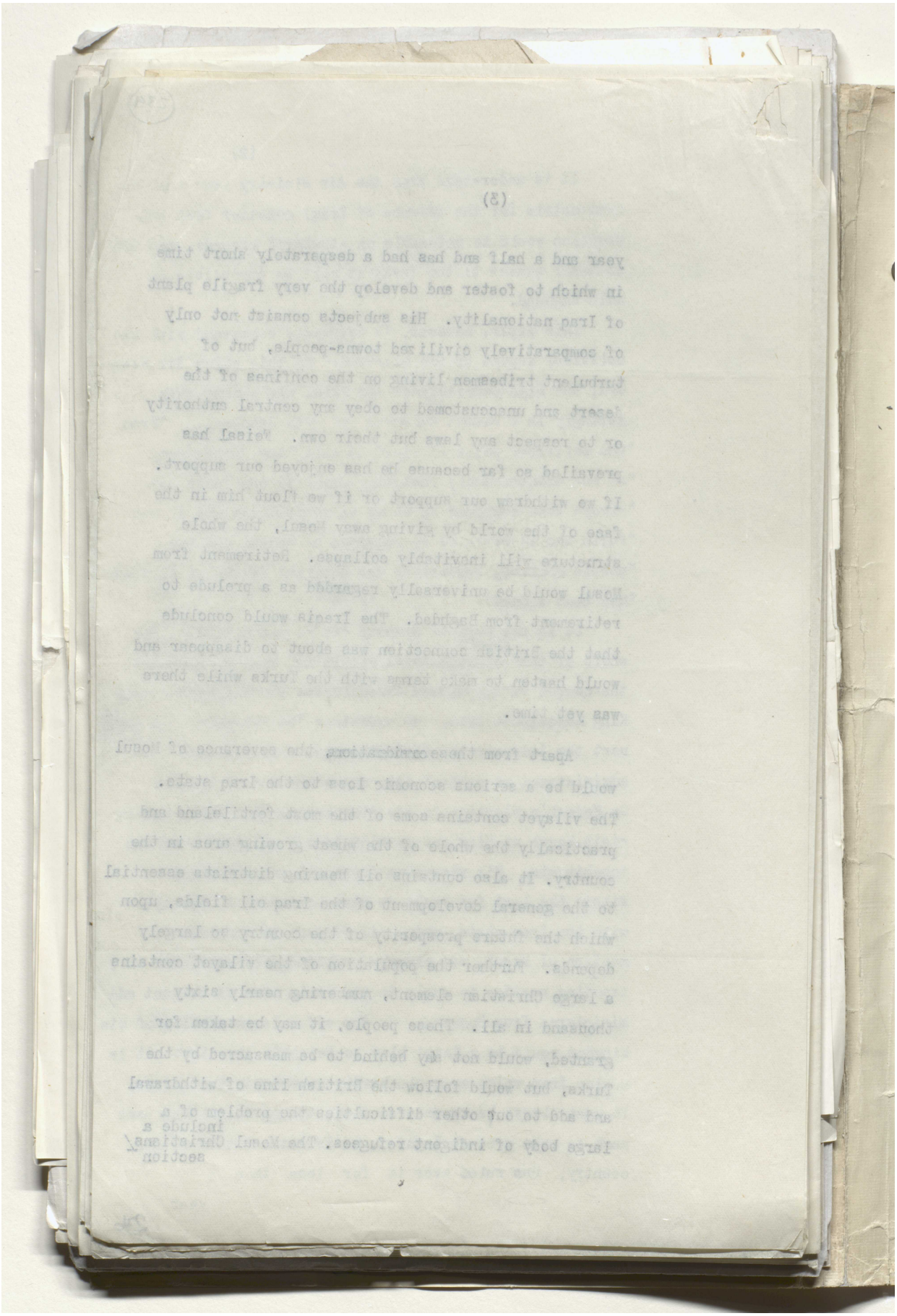

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section that has very special claims upon us, viz some twenty thousand "Assyrians", who were expelled from their homes during the war as a consequence of taking the allied side and have been living in Iraq ever since. The Archbishop of Canterbury takes a special interest in these people. Arrangements were made last year with an infinity of trouble, for establishing the Assyrians on a self-supporting basis in the neighbourhood of Amadiah. Large numbers of them serve in the Iraq levies, where they are doing very well. They certainly will not stay behind and trust themselves to the tender mercies of the Turk.

The point that it is desired to make is not only that an immediate decision is necessary with regard to Mosul, but that this decision really involves the question of maintaining our position in Iraq as a whole. Our policy in Iraq has been severely criticised in many quarters. It is of course arguable that we had better never have gone there, and that having gone there we should seize the first opportunity of getting away. But - even if that argument is accepted - the opportunity must at least be one that enables us to leave with some degree of credit and dignity. To leave now, at the dictation of the victorious Kemalists, a few weeks after parading before the world (in the form of our Treaty with Feisal) our determination to stay, would be an act of pusillanimity quite alien to British traditions. It would reduce our prestige in the East beyond vanishing point and would delight our enemies and humiliate our friends all over the world. It is a lesser consideration, but still one of force, that we should sacrifice all prospect of securing

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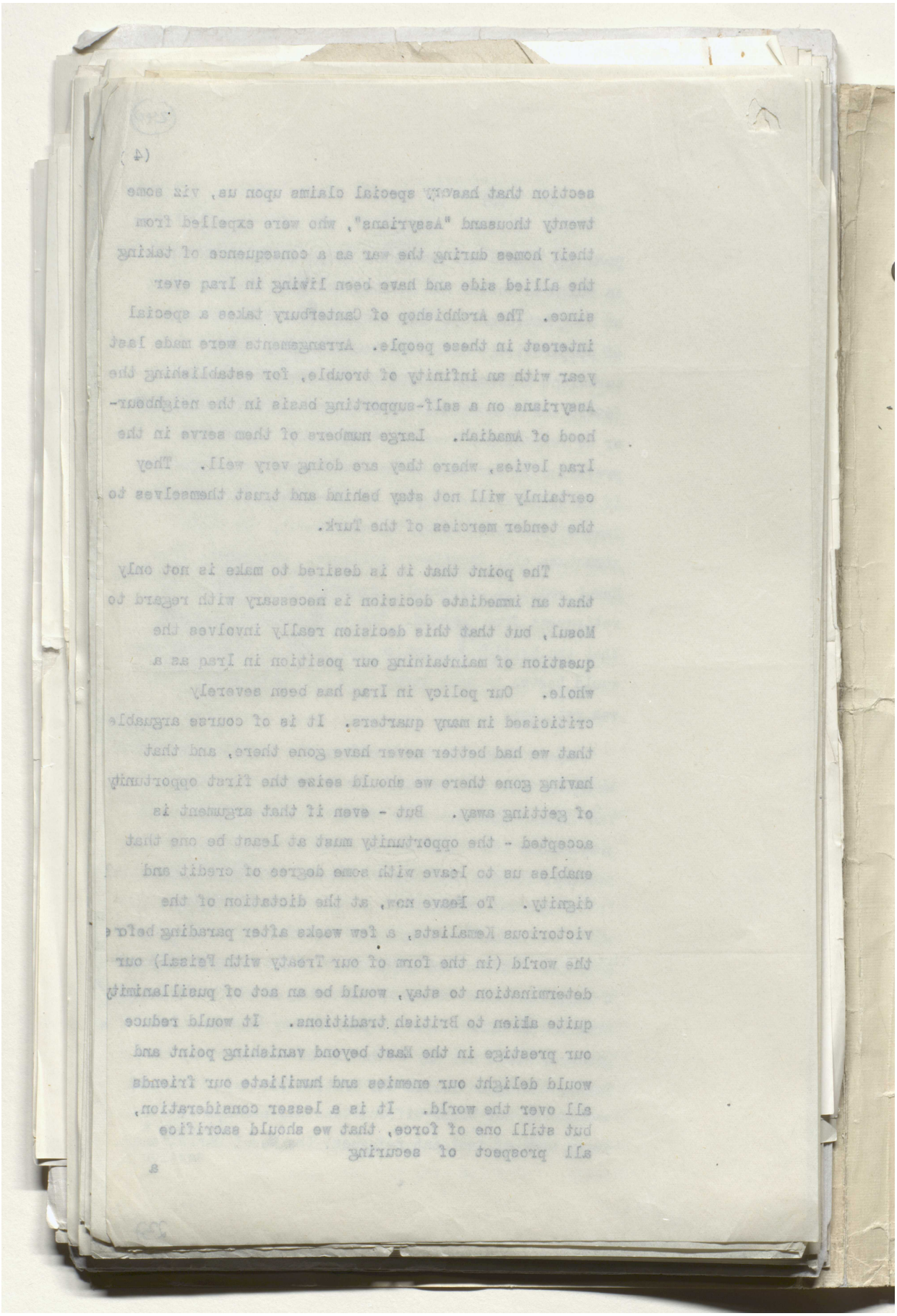

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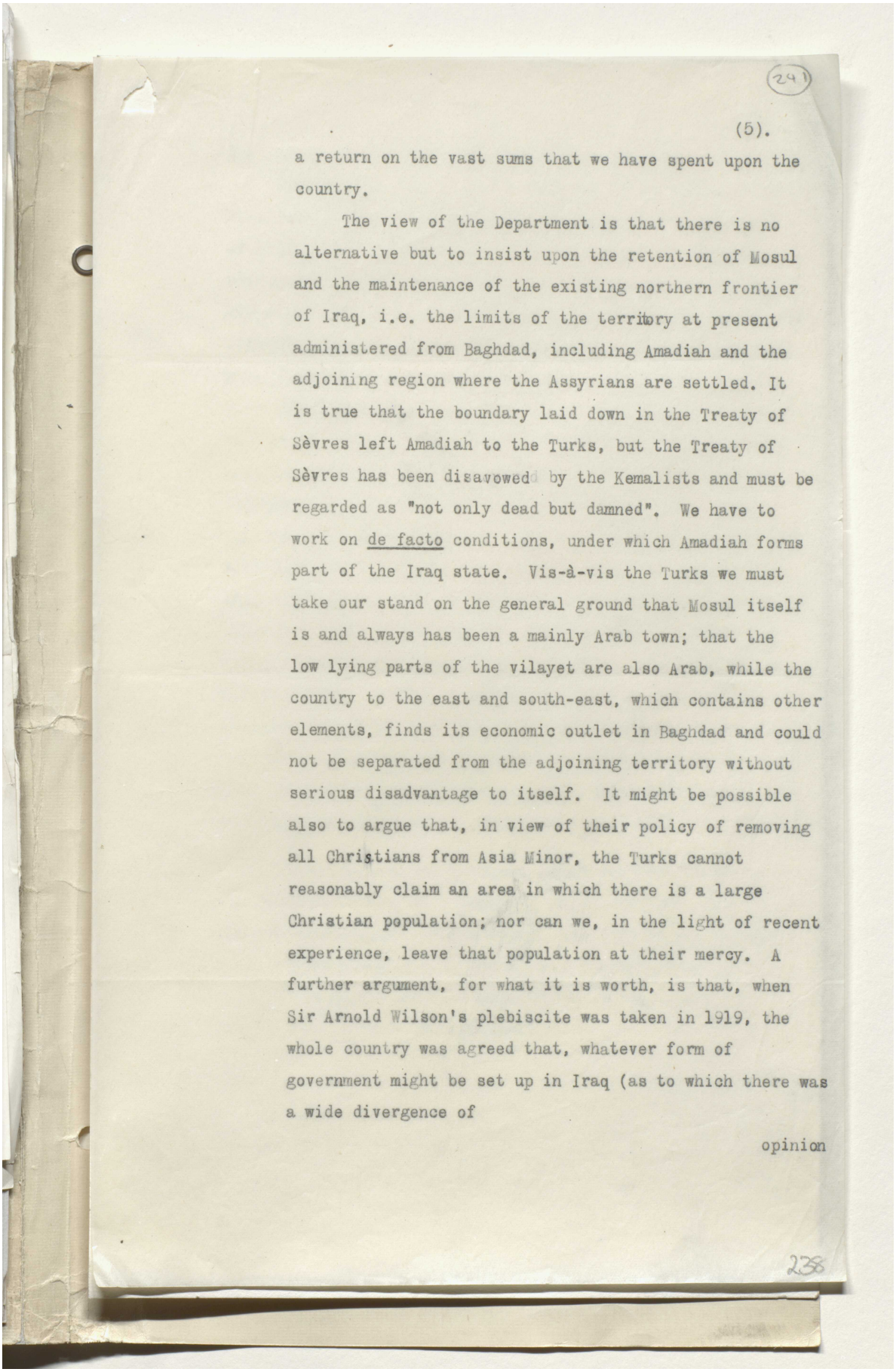

a return on the vast sums that we have spent upon the country.

The view of the Department is that there is no alternative but to insist upon the retention of Mosul and the maintenance of the existing northern frontier of Iraq, i.e. the limits of the territory at present administered from Baghdad, including Amadiah and the adjoining region where the Assyrians are settled. It is true that the boundary laid down in the Treaty of Sèvres left Amadiah to the Turks, but the Treaty of Sèvres has been disavowed by the Kemalists and must be regarded as "not only dead but damned". We have to work on de facto conditions, under which Amadiah forms part of the Iraq state. Vis-à-vis the Turks we must take our stand on the general ground that Mosul itself is and always has been a mainly Arab town; that the low lying parts of the vilayet are also Arab, while the country to the east and south-east, which contains other elements, finds its economic outlet in Baghdad and could not be separated from the adjoining territory without serious disadvantage to itself. It might be possible also to argue that, in view of their policy of removing all Christians from Asia Minor, the Turks cannot reasonably claim an area in which there is a large Christian population; nor can we, in the light of recent experience, leave that population at their mercy. A further argument, for what it is worth, is that, when Sir Arnold Wilson's plebiscite was taken in 1919, the whole country was agreed that, whatever form of government might be set up in Iraq (as to which there was a wide divergence of

opinion

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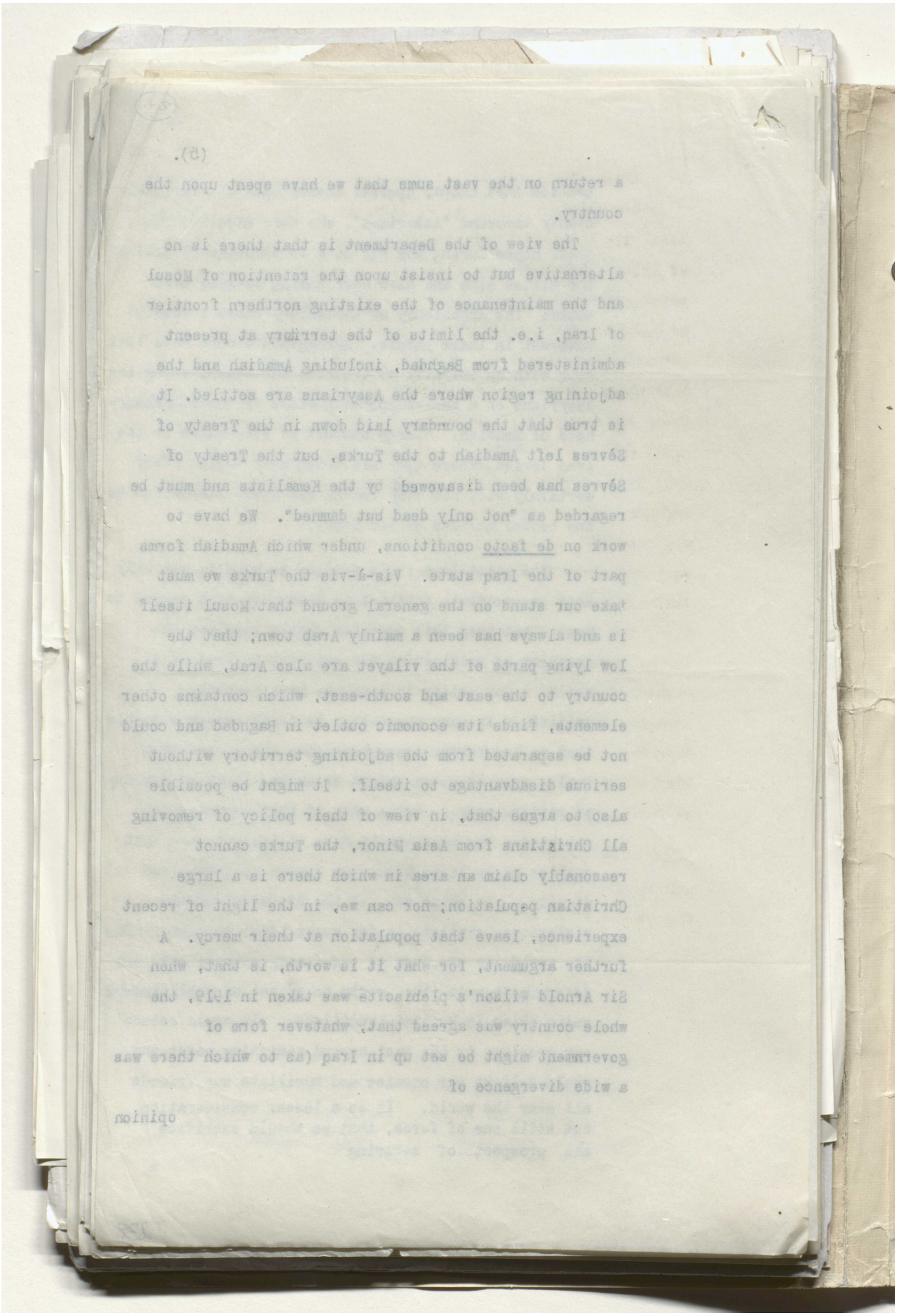

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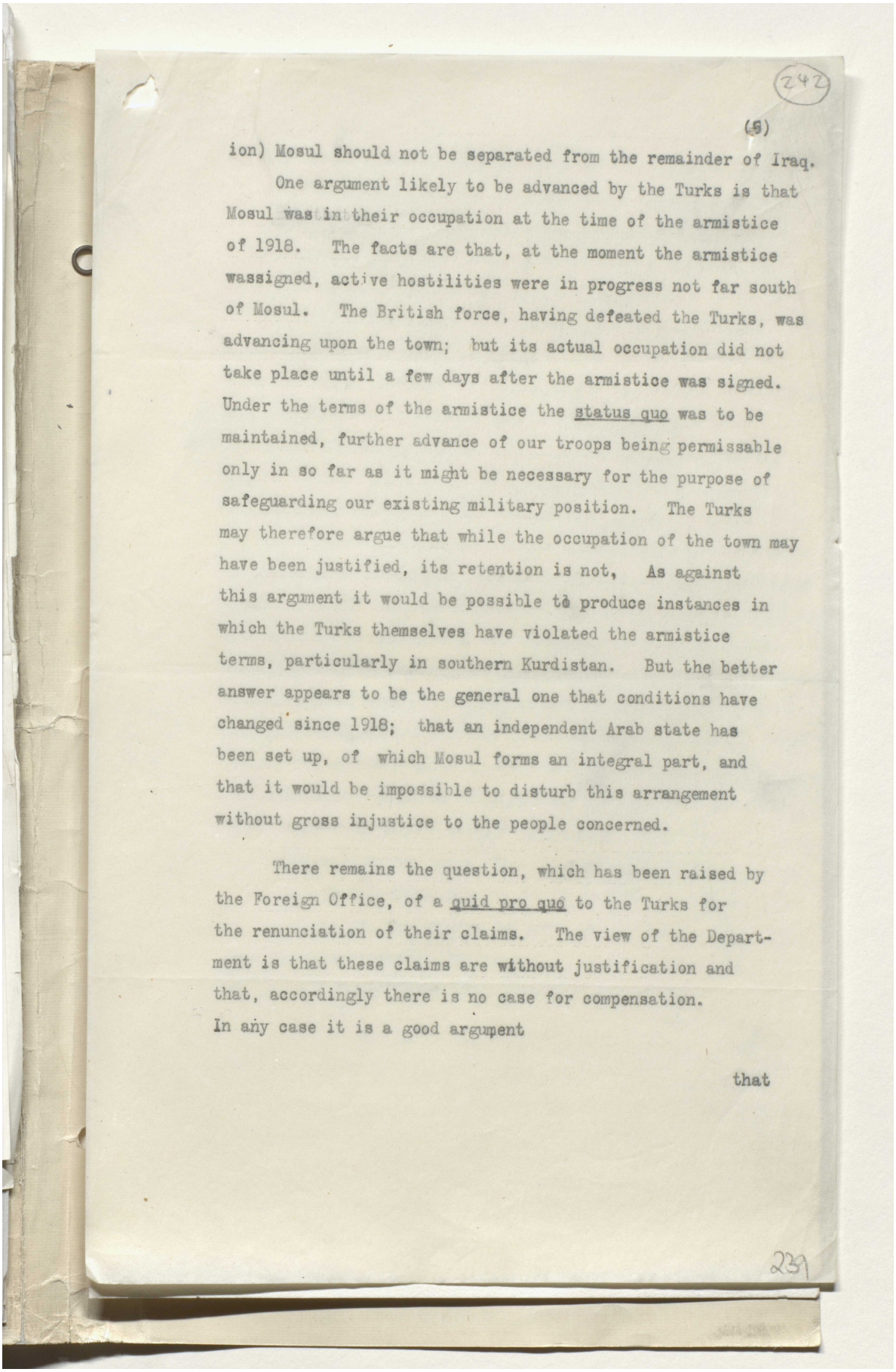

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(6)

ion) Mosul should not be separated from the remainder of Iraq.

One argument likely to be advanced by the Turks is that Mosul was in their occupation at the time of the armistice of 1918. The facts are that, at the moment the armistice wassigned, active hostilities were in progress not far south of Mosul. The British force, having defeated the Turks, was advancing upon the town; but its actual occupation did not take place until a few days after the armistice was signed. Under the terms of the armistice the status quo was to be maintained, further advance of our troops being permissable only in so far as it might be necessary for the purpose of safeguarding our existing military position. The Turks may therefore argue that while the occupation of the town may have been justified, its retention is not, As against this argument it would be possible to produce instances in which the Turks themselves have violated the armistice terms, particularly in southern Kurdistan. But the better answer appears to be the general one that conditions have changed since 1918; that an independent Arab state has been set up, of which Mosul forms an integral part, and that it would be impossible to disturb this arrangement without gross injustice to the people concerned.

There remains the question, which has been raised by the Foreign Office, of a quid pro quo to the Turks for the renunciation of their claims. The view of the Department is that these claims are without justification and that, accordingly there is no case for compensation. In any case it is a good argument

that

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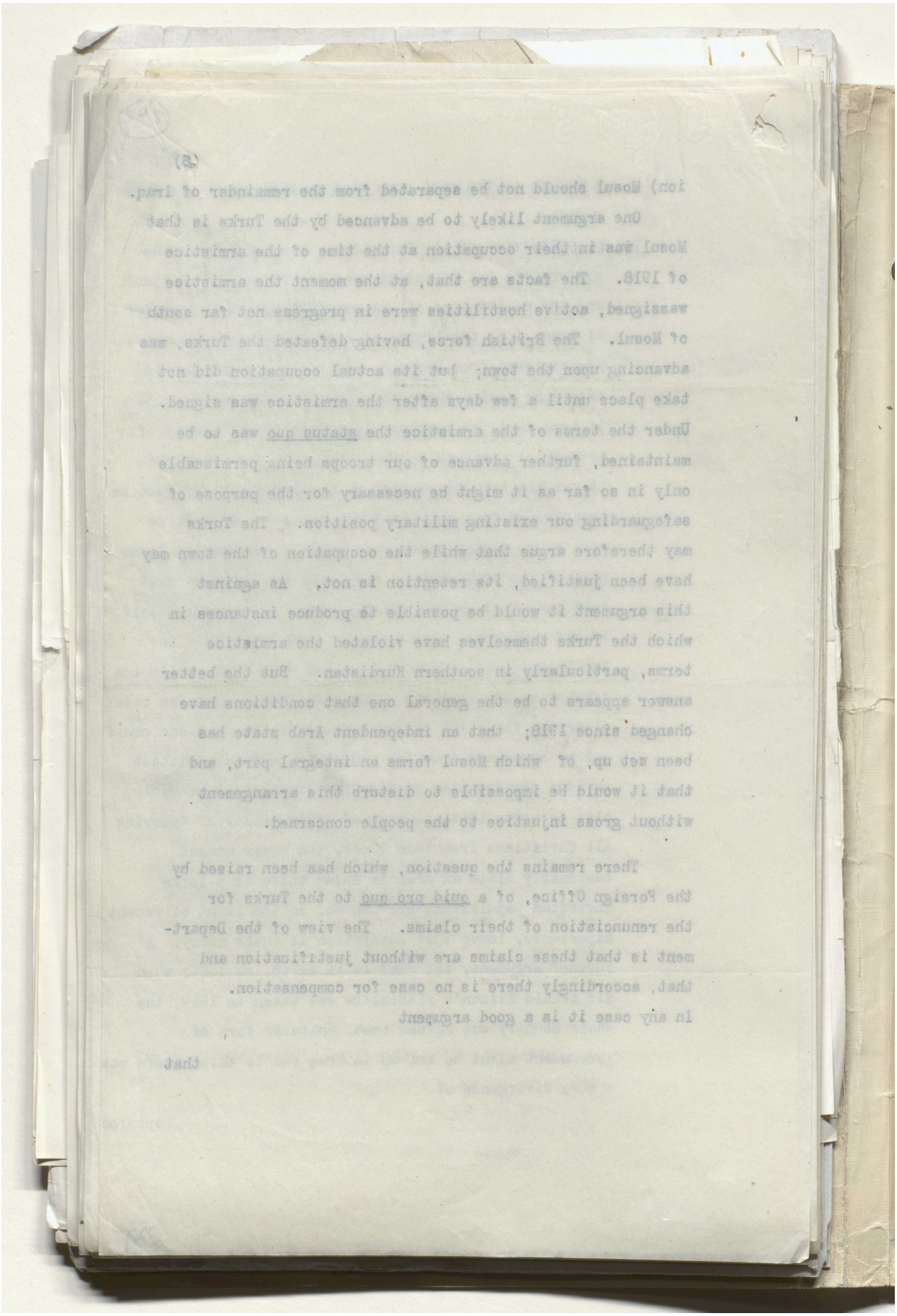

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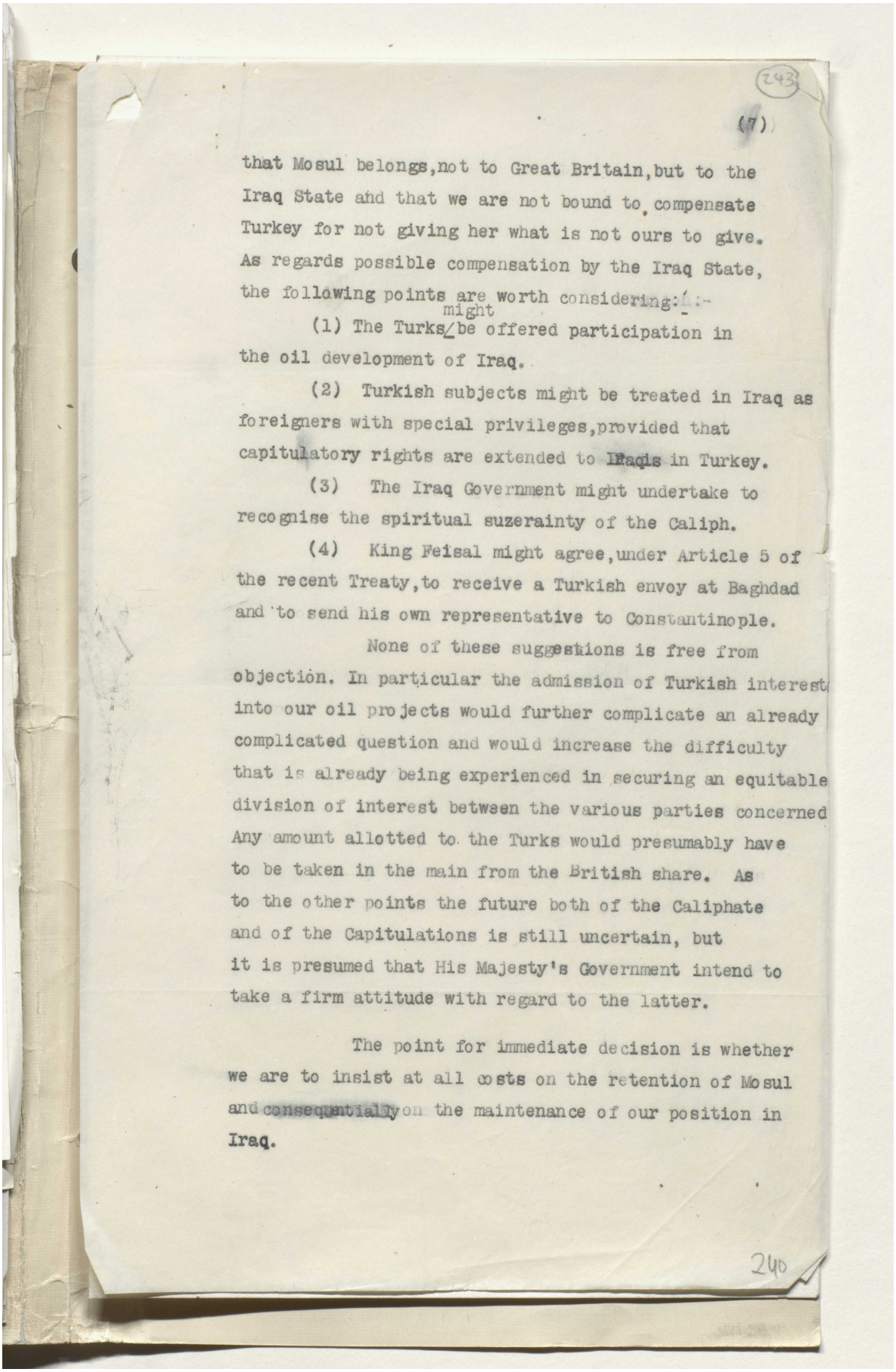

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(7)

that Mosul belongs,not to Great Britain,but to the Iraq State and that we are not bound to compensate Turkey for not giving her what is not ours to give. As regards possible compensation by the Iraq State, the following points are worth considering:-

(1) The Turks might be offered participation in the oil development of Iraq.

(2) Turkish subjects might be treated in Iraq as foreigners with special privileges,provided that capitulatory rights are extended to Iraqis in Turkey.

(3) The Iraq Government might undertake to recognise the spiritual suzerainty of the Caliph.

(4) King Feisal might agree,under Article 5 of the recent Treaty,to receive a Turkish envoy at Baghdad and to send his own representative to Constantinople.

None of these suggestions is free from objection. In particular the admission of Turkish interest into our oil projects would further complicate an already complicated question and would increase the difficulty that is already being experienced in securing an equitable division of interest between the various parties concerned Any amount allotted to the Turks would presumably have to be taken in the main from the British share. As to the other points the future both of the Caliphate and of the Capitulations is still uncertain, but it is presumed that His Majesty's Government intend to take a firm attitude with regard to the latter.

The point for immediate decision is whether we are to insist at all costs on the retention of Mosul and consequentially on the maintenance of our position in Iraq.

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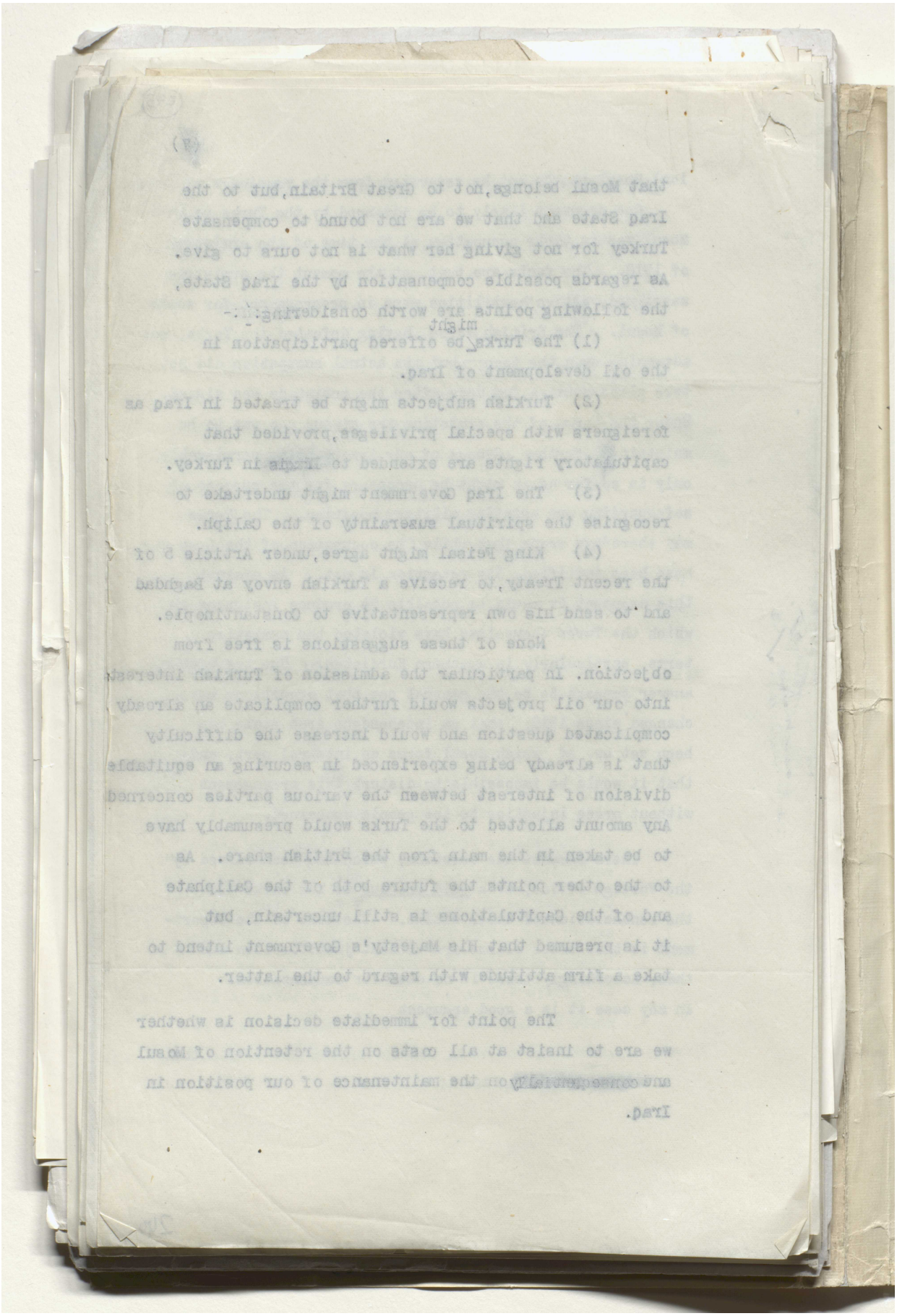

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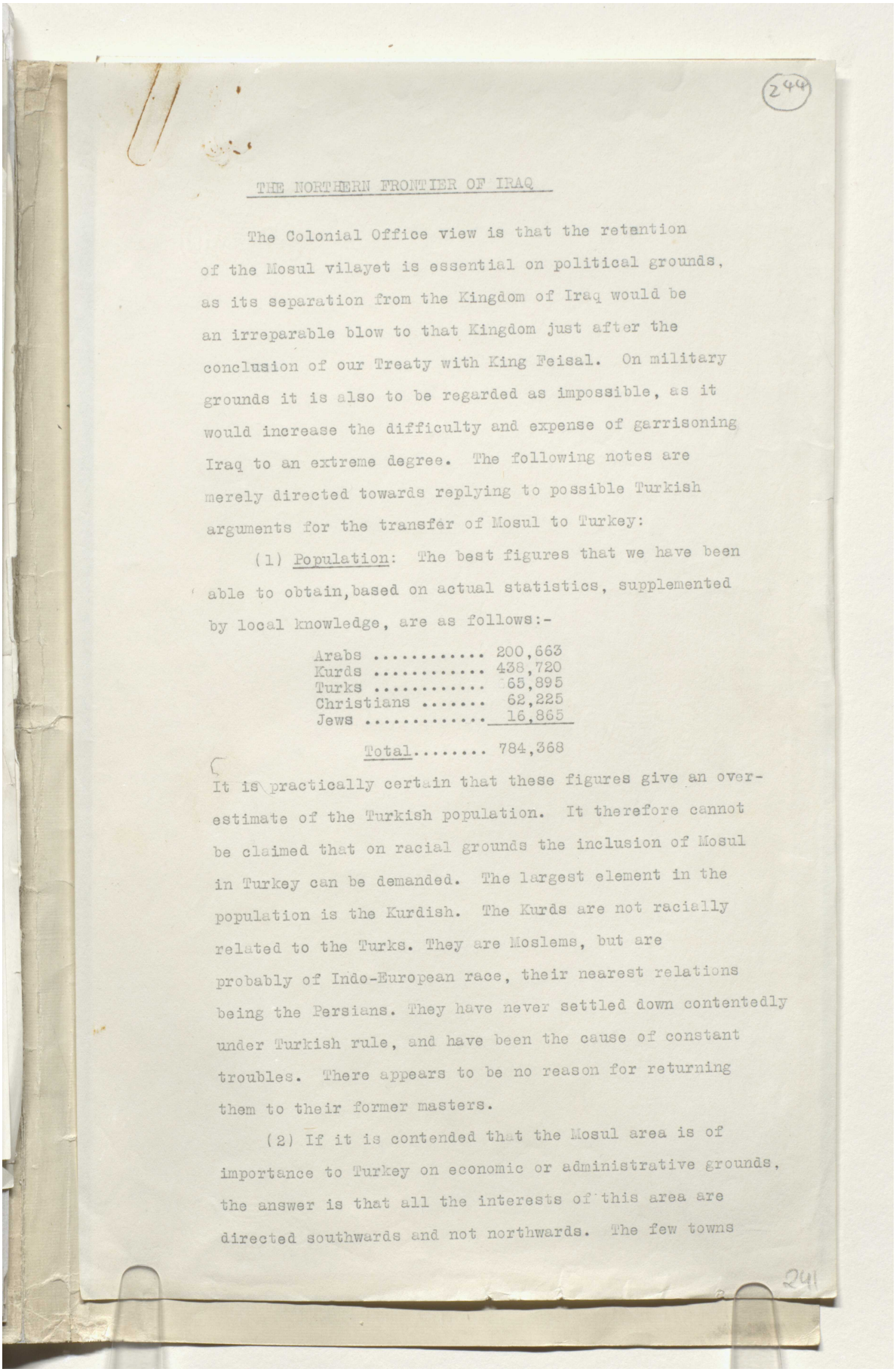

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The Colonial Office view is that the retention of the Mosul vilayet is essential on political grounds, as its separation from the Kingdom of Iraq would be an irreparable blow to that Kingdom just after the conclusion of our Treaty with King Feisal. On military grounds it is also to be regarded as impossible, as it would increase the difficulty and expense of garrisoning Iraq to an extreme degree. The following notes are merely directed towards replying to possible Turkish arguments for the transfer of Mosul to Turkey:

(1) Population: The best figures that we have been able to obtain, based on actual statistics, supplemented by local knowledge, are as follows:-

Arabs	200,663
Kurds	438,720
Turks	65,895
Christians	62,225
Jews	16,865
Total.....	784,368

It is practically certain that these figures give an over-estimate of the Turkish population. It therefore cannot be claimed that on racial grounds the inclusion of Mosul in Turkey can be demanded. The largest element in the population is the Kurdish. The Kurds are not racially related to the Turks. They are Moslems, but are probably of Indo-European race, their nearest relations being the Persians. They have never settled down contentedly under Turkish rule, and have been the cause of constant troubles. There appears to be no reason for returning them to their former masters.

(2) If it is contended that the Mosul area is of importance to Turkey on economic or administrative grounds, the answer is that all the interests of this area are directed southwards and not northwards. The few towns

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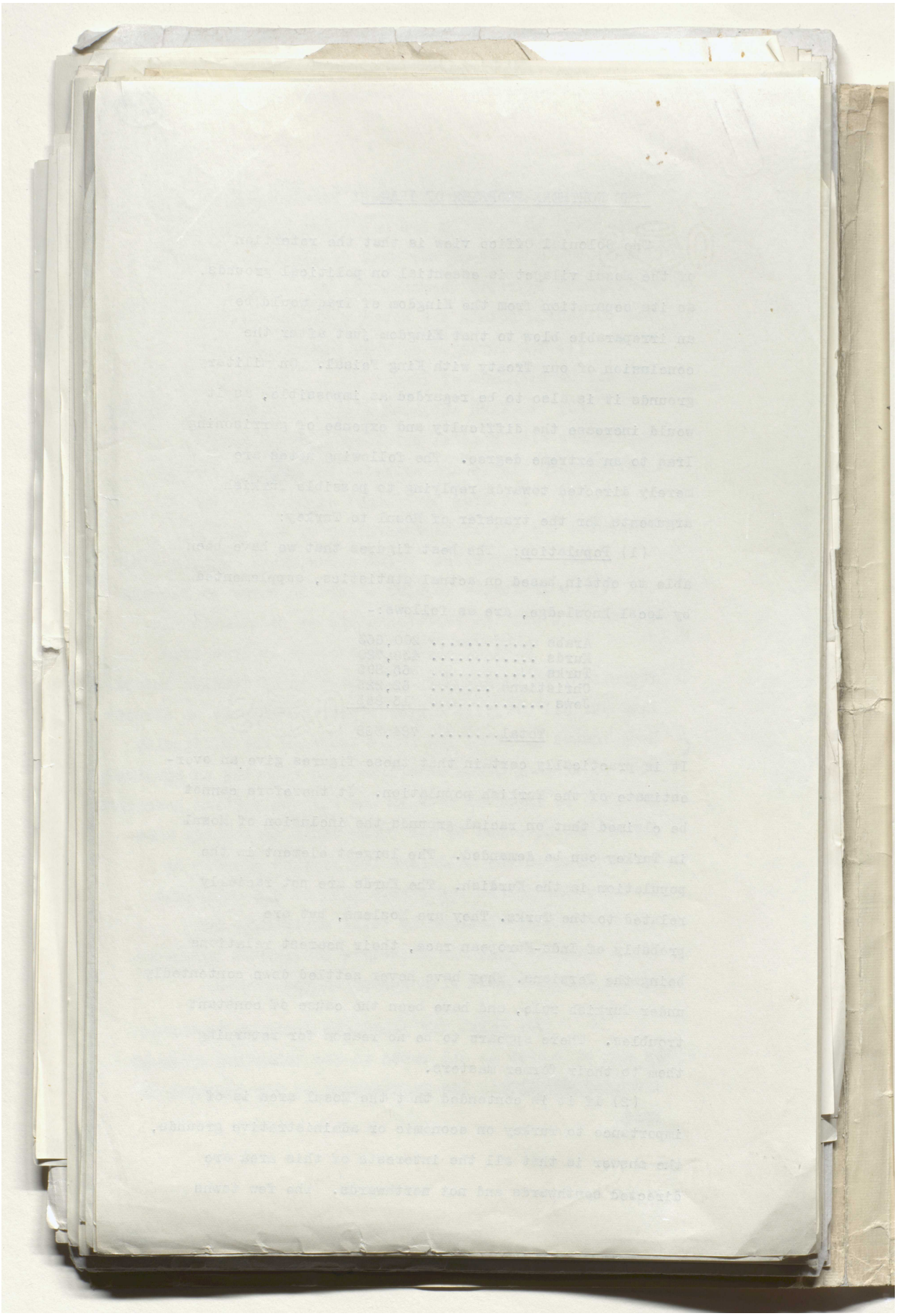

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in which there is a considerable Turkish element are all dependent on Mosul, and financially and administratively the whole area is an essential part of Iraq and has practically no connection and no communication with the Turkish Empire to the North.

The Position as regards Oil.

The Turkish Petroleum Company, the validity of whose rights His Majesty's Government have consistently maintained, embodied before the war the following interests: Anglo-Persian, 50%; Royal Dutch Shell, 25% (of this three-fifths is Dutch, and two-fifths British); German, 25%. The German interests were acquired by His Majesty's Government during the war and have now been handed over to the French who therefore hold a 25% interest in the Turkish Petroleum Company.

Negotiations have taken place with American interests, and His Majesty's Government are prepared to accept a re-distribution of the interests in the Turkish Petroleum Company as follows:- Anglo-Persian, 40%; Royal Dutch Shell, 20%; French, 20%; American, 20%. This arrangement has been accepted by the Anglo-Persians and the French, but at the present moment the Royal Dutch Shell are objecting to so large an American interest. I understand that Mr. Baldwin and Sir Eyre Crowe are to settle the matter finally.

This arrangement will give the Americans an actual substantial participating interest in the Turkish Petroleum Company. In addition, the American Government has demanded a policy of the "open door" with regard to oil. It is believed that a formula has been found which will satisfy them on this point. When the Turkish Petroleum Company

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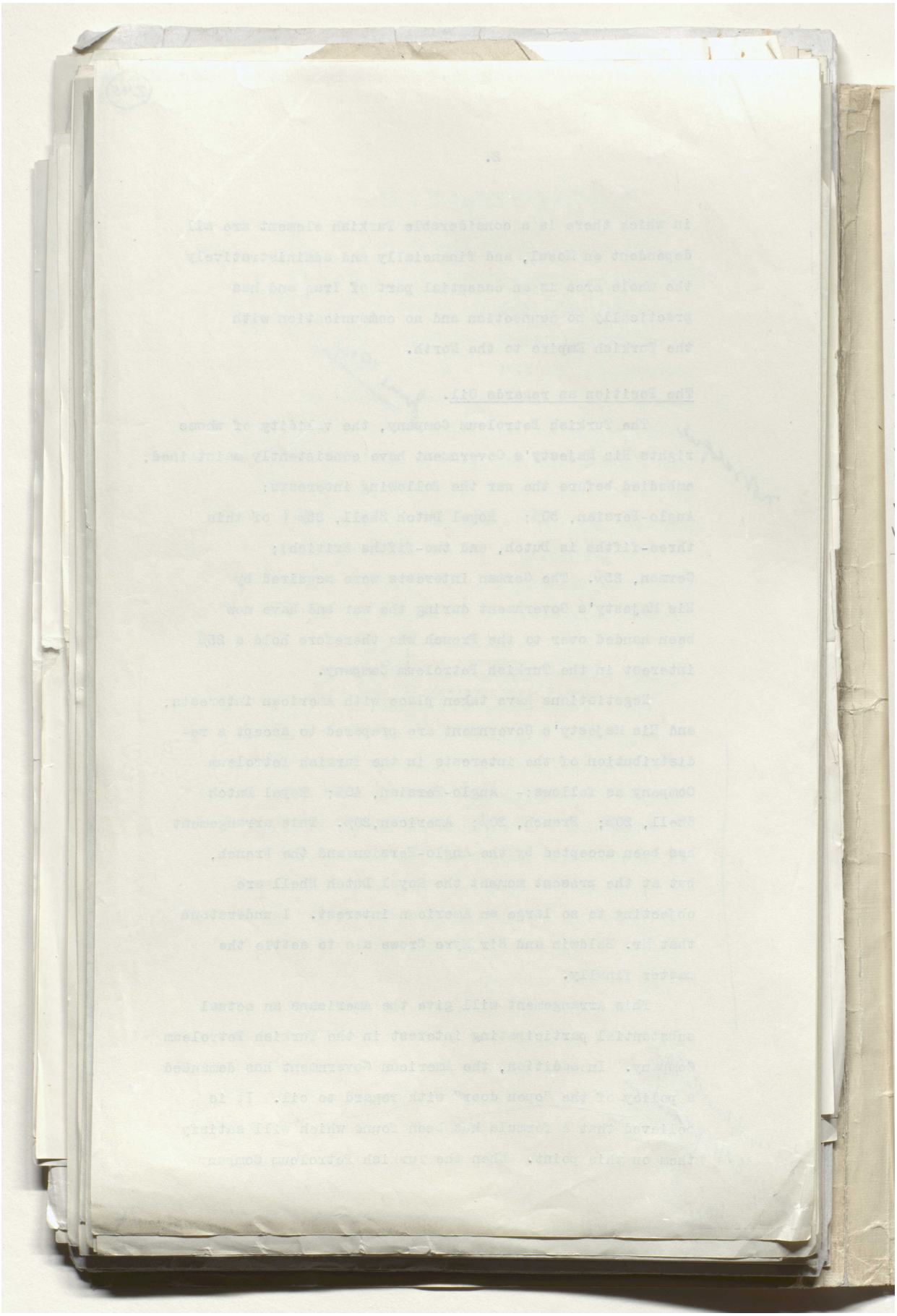

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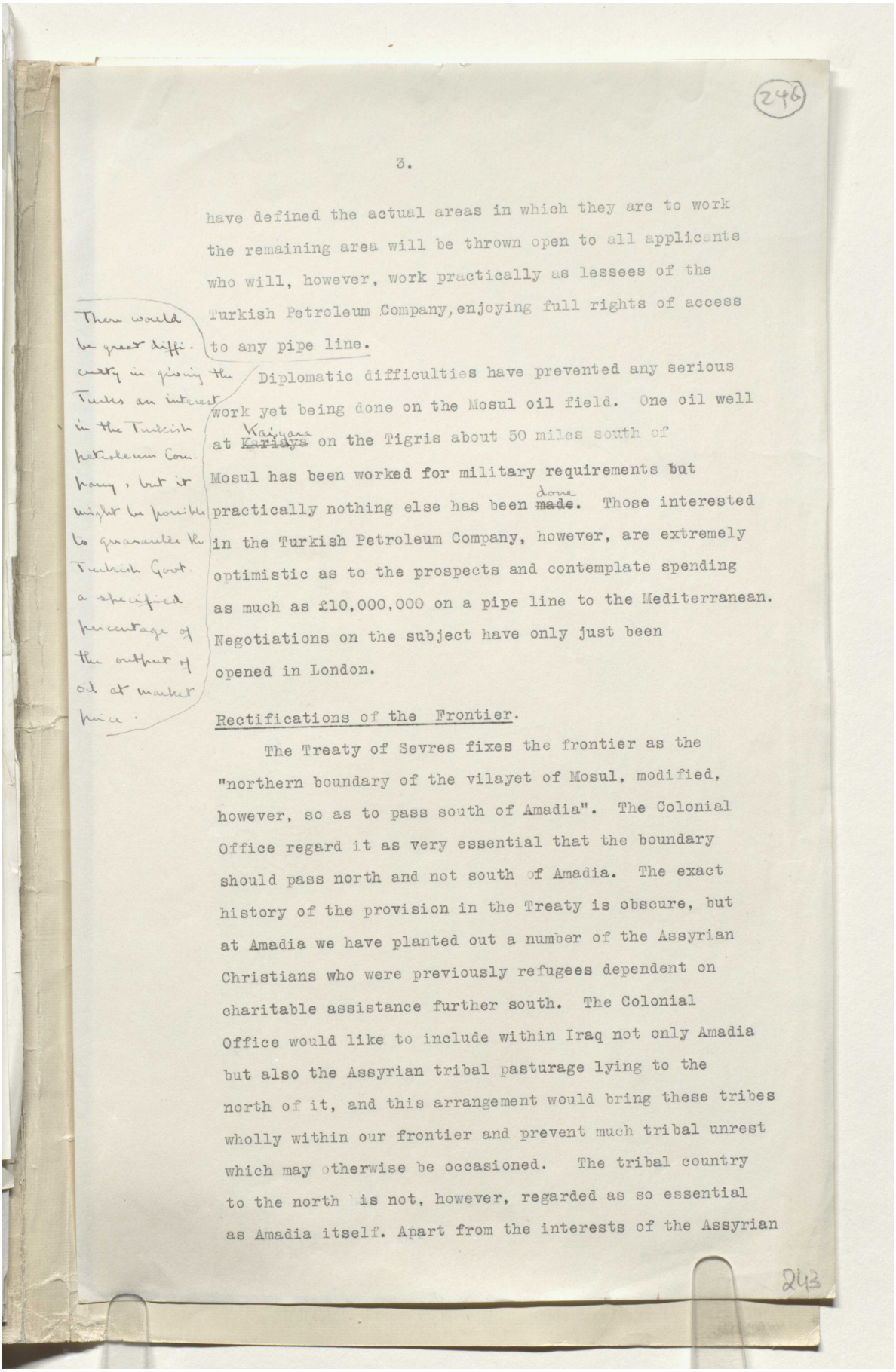

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have defined the actual areas in which they are to work the remaining area will be thrown open to all applicants who will, however, work practically as lessees of the Turkish Petroleum Company, enjoying full rights of access to any pipe line.

There would be great difficulty in giving the Turks an interest in the Turkish Petroleum Company, but it might be possible to guarantee the Turkish Govt. a specified percentage of the output of oil at market price.

Diplomatic difficulties have prevented any serious work yet being done on the Mosul oil field. One oil well at ~~Kariaya~~ Kaiyara on the Tigris about 50 miles south of Mosul has been worked for military requirements but practically nothing else has been ~~made~~ done. Those interested in the Turkish Petroleum Company, however, are extremely optimistic as to the prospects and contemplate spending as much as £10,000,000 on a pipe line to the Mediterranean. Negotiations on the subject have only just been opened in London.

Rectifications of the Frontier.

The Treaty of Sevres fixes the frontier as the "northern boundary of the vilayet of Mosul, modified, however, so as to pass south of Amadia". The Colonial Office regard it as very essential that the boundary should pass north and not south of Amadia. The exact history of the provision in the Treaty is obscure, but at Amadia we have planted out a number of the Assyrian Christians who were previously refugees dependent on charitable assistance further south. The Colonial Office would like to include within Iraq not only Amadia but also the Assyrian tribal pasturage lying to the north of it, and this arrangement would bring these tribes wholly within our frontier and prevent much tribal unrest which may otherwise be occasioned. The tribal country to the north is not, however, regarded as so essential as Amadia itself. Apart from the interests of the Assyrian

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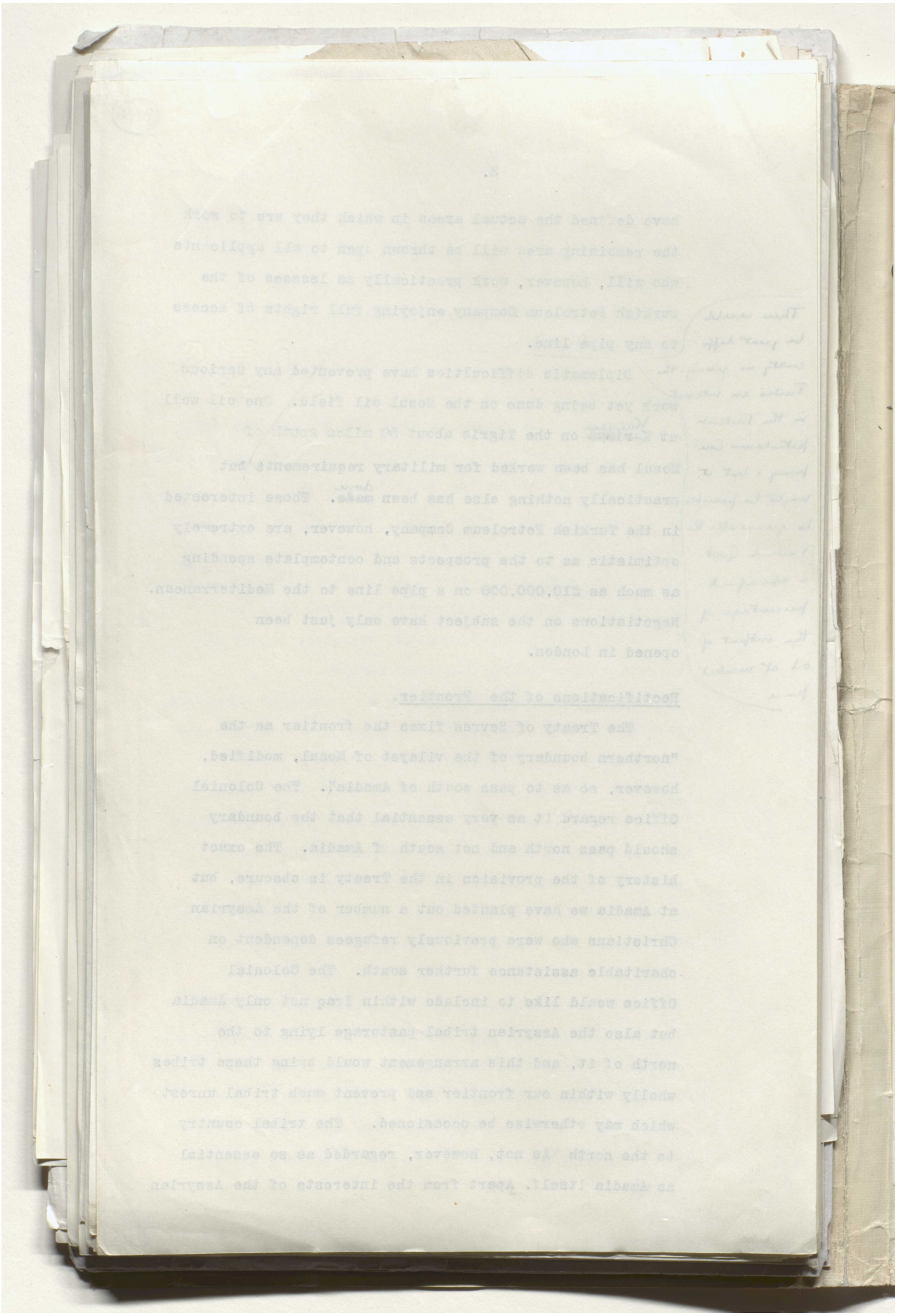

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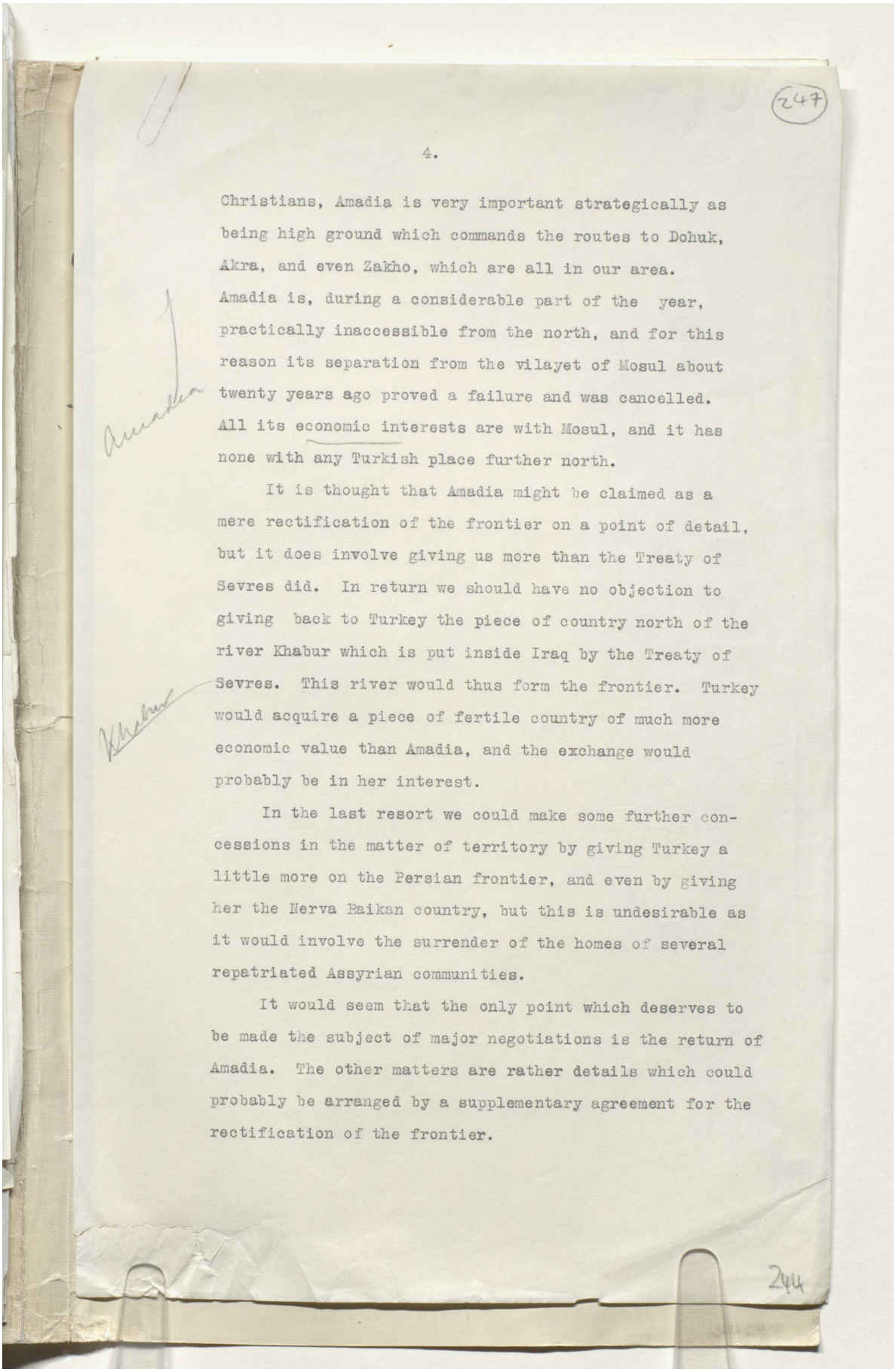

Christians, Amadia is very important strategically as being high ground which commands the routes to Dohuk, Akra, and even Zakho, which are all in our area. Amadia is, during a considerable part of the year, practically inaccessible from the north, and for this reason its separation from the vilayet of Mosul about twenty years ago proved a failure and was cancelled. All its economic interests are with Mosul, and it has none with any Turkish place further north.

It is thought that Amadia might be claimed as a mere rectification of the frontier on a point of detail, but it does involve giving us more than the Treaty of Sevres did. In return we should have no objection to giving back to Turkey the piece of country north of the river Khabur which is put inside Iraq by the Treaty of Sevres. This river would thus form the frontier. Turkey would acquire a piece of fertile country of much more economic value than Amadia, and the exchange would probably be in her interest.

In the last resort we could make some further concessions in the matter of territory by giving Turkey a little more on the Persian frontier, and even by giving her the Nerva Raikan country, but this is undesirable as it would involve the surrender of the homes of several repatriated Assyrian communities.

It would seem that the only point which deserves to be made the subject of major negotiations is the return of Amadia. The other matters are rather details which could probably be arranged by a supplementary agreement for the rectification of the frontier.

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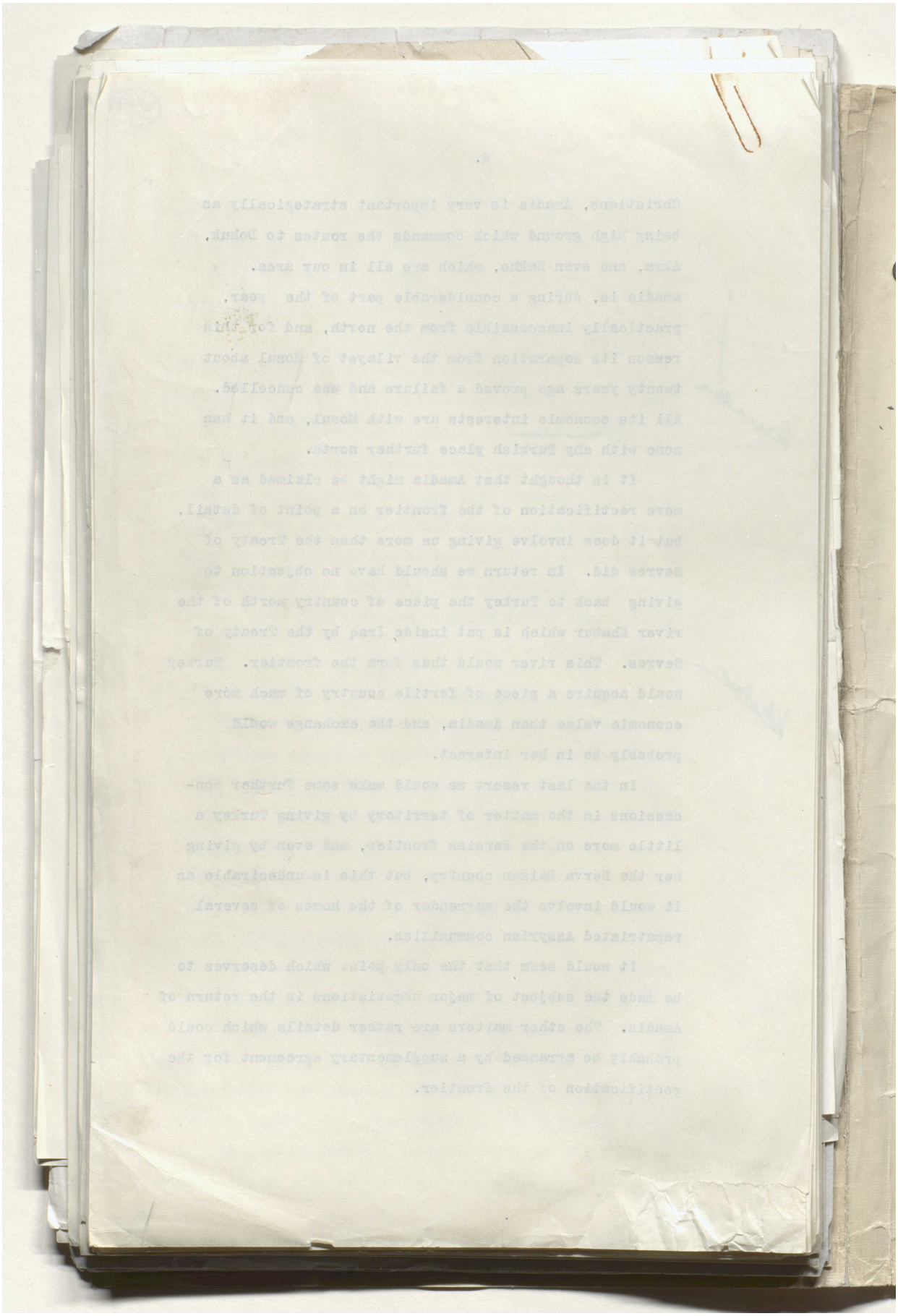

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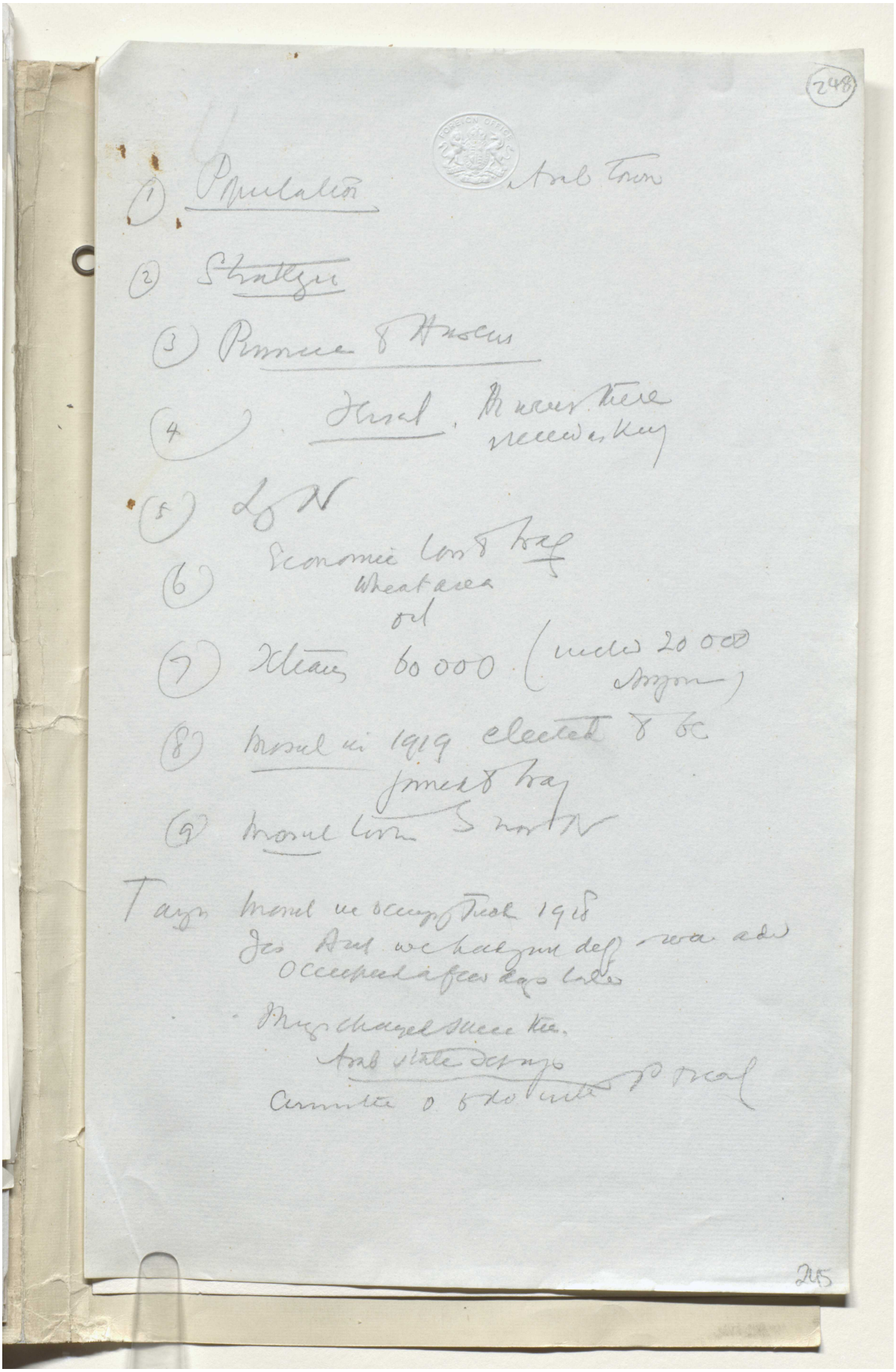

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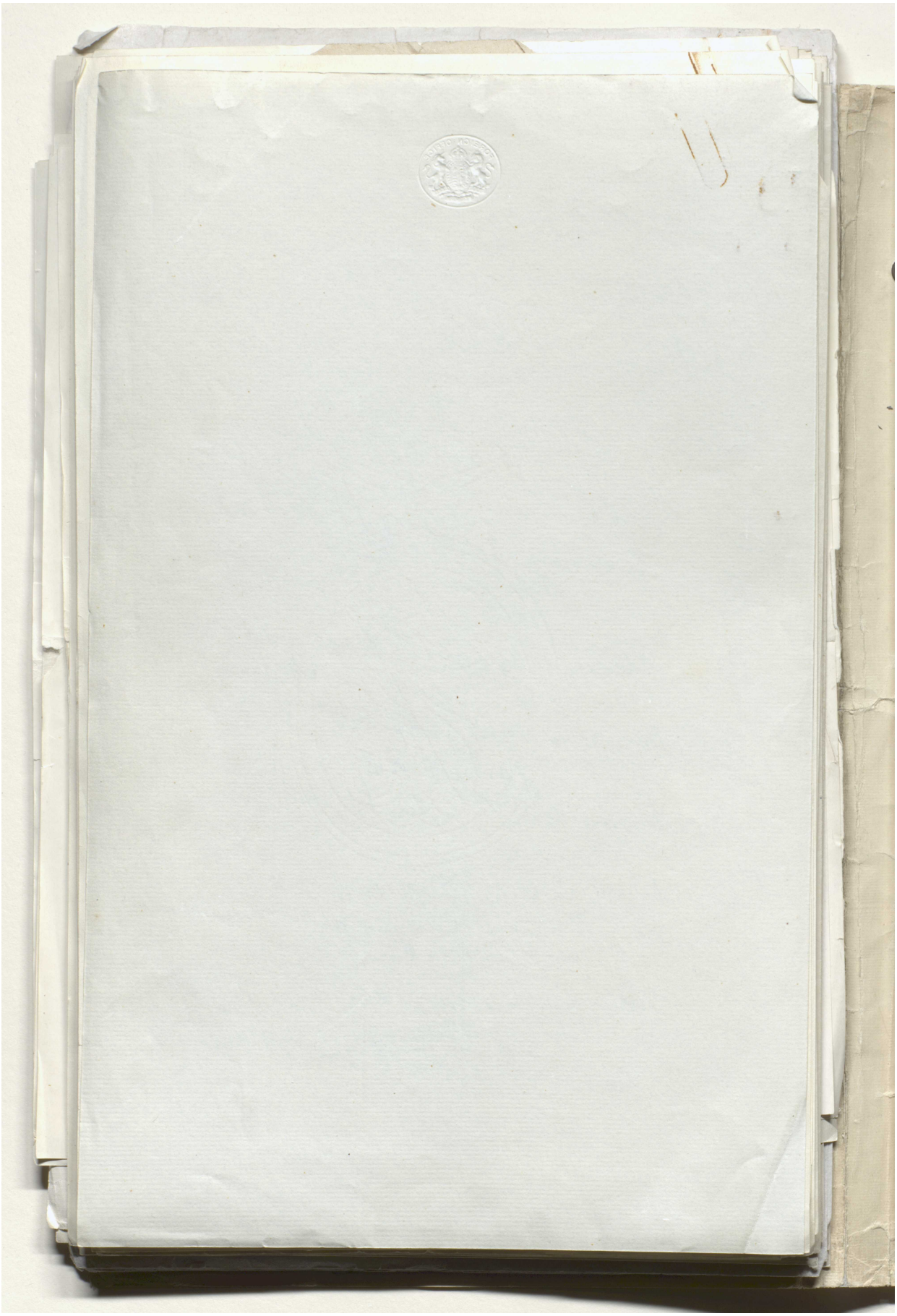

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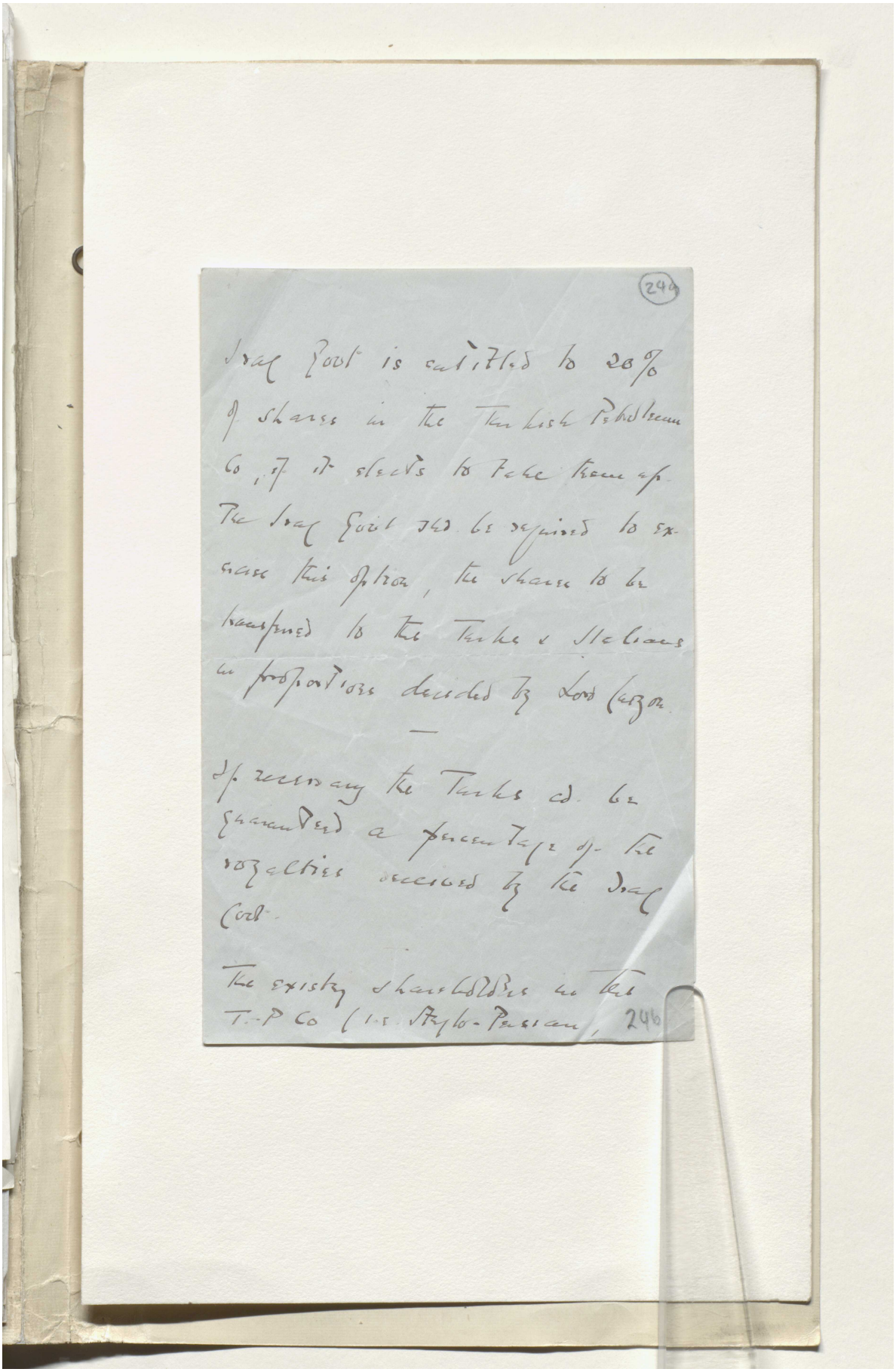

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Iraq Govt is entitled to 20%
of shares in the Turkish Petroleum
Co, if it elects to take them up.
The Iraq Govt will be required to ex-
ercise this option, the shares to be
transferred to the Turkish Nationals
in proportions decided by Lord Curzon.

—

If necessary the Turks will be
[illegible] a percentage of the
royalties received by the Iraq
Govt.

The existing shareholders in the
T.P Co (i.e. Anglo-Persian, 24[illegible]

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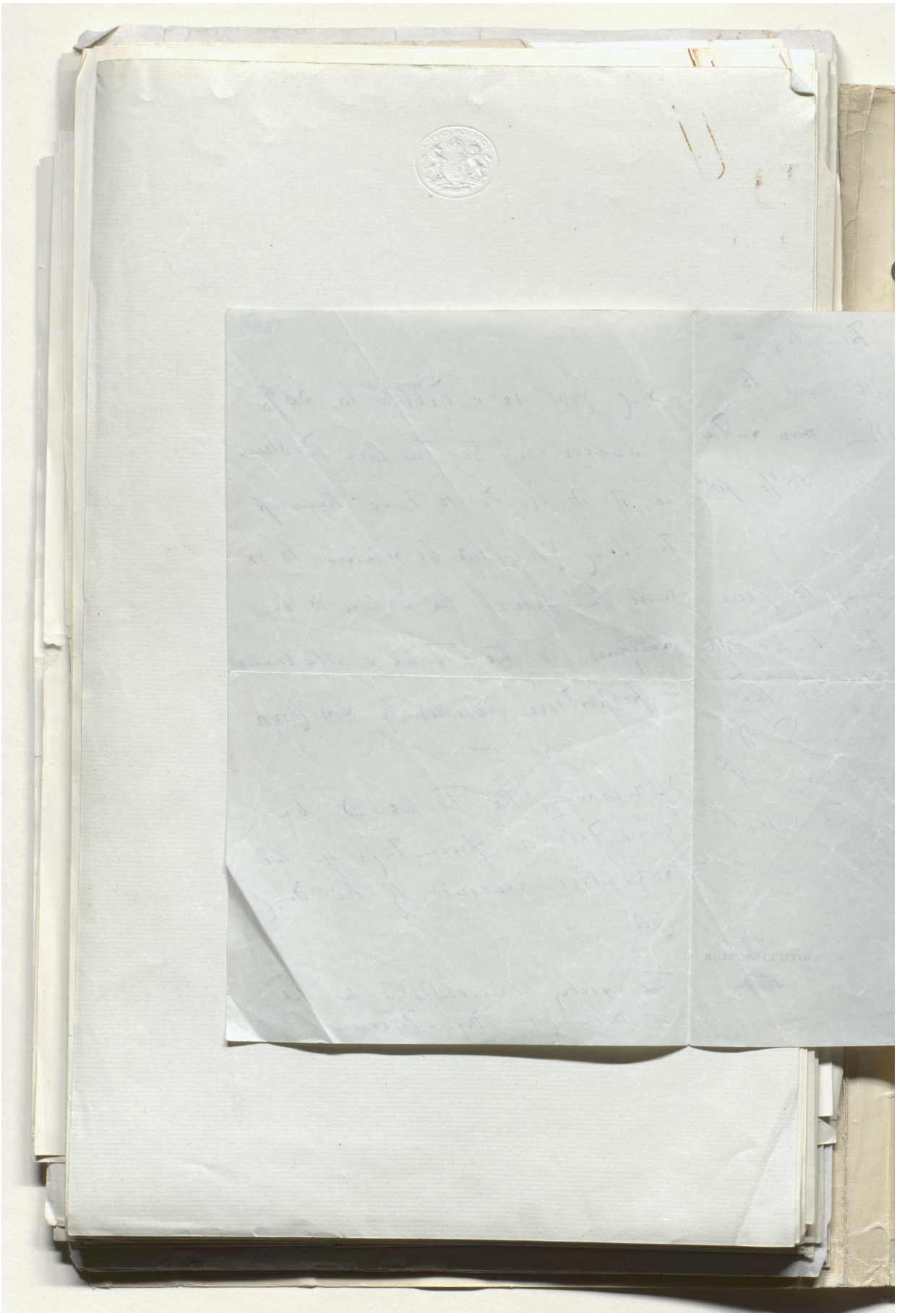

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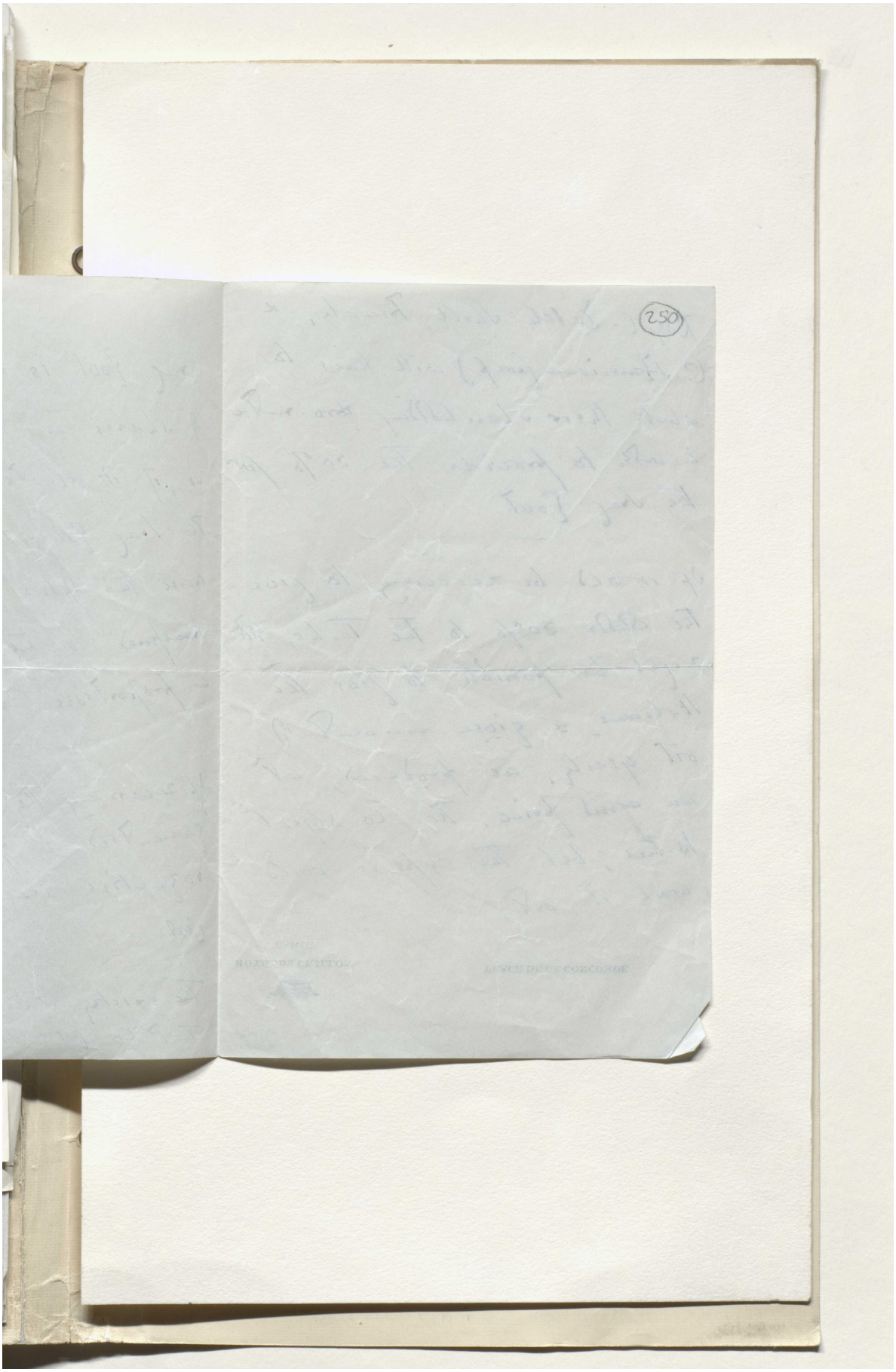

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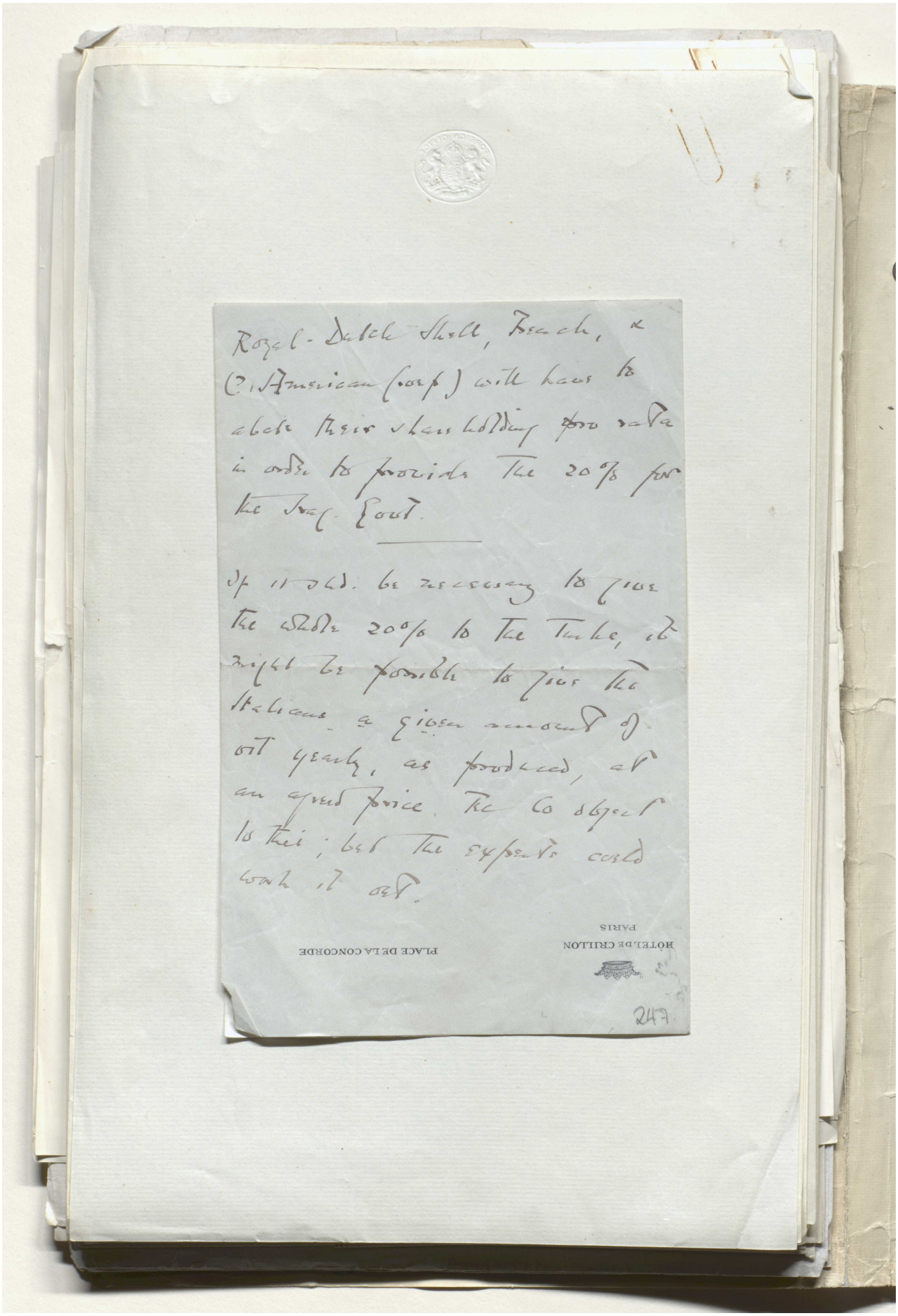

Royal-Dutch Shell, French, &
(? American (coop.) will have to
abate their shareholding pro rata
in order to provide the 20% for
the Iraq. Govt.

If it shd. be necessary to give
the whole 20% to the Turks, it
might be possible to give the
Italians a given amount of
oil yearly, as produced, at
an agreed price. The Co object
to this; but the experts could
work it out.

PLACE DE LA CONCORDE

HÔTEL DE CRILLON
PARIS

247

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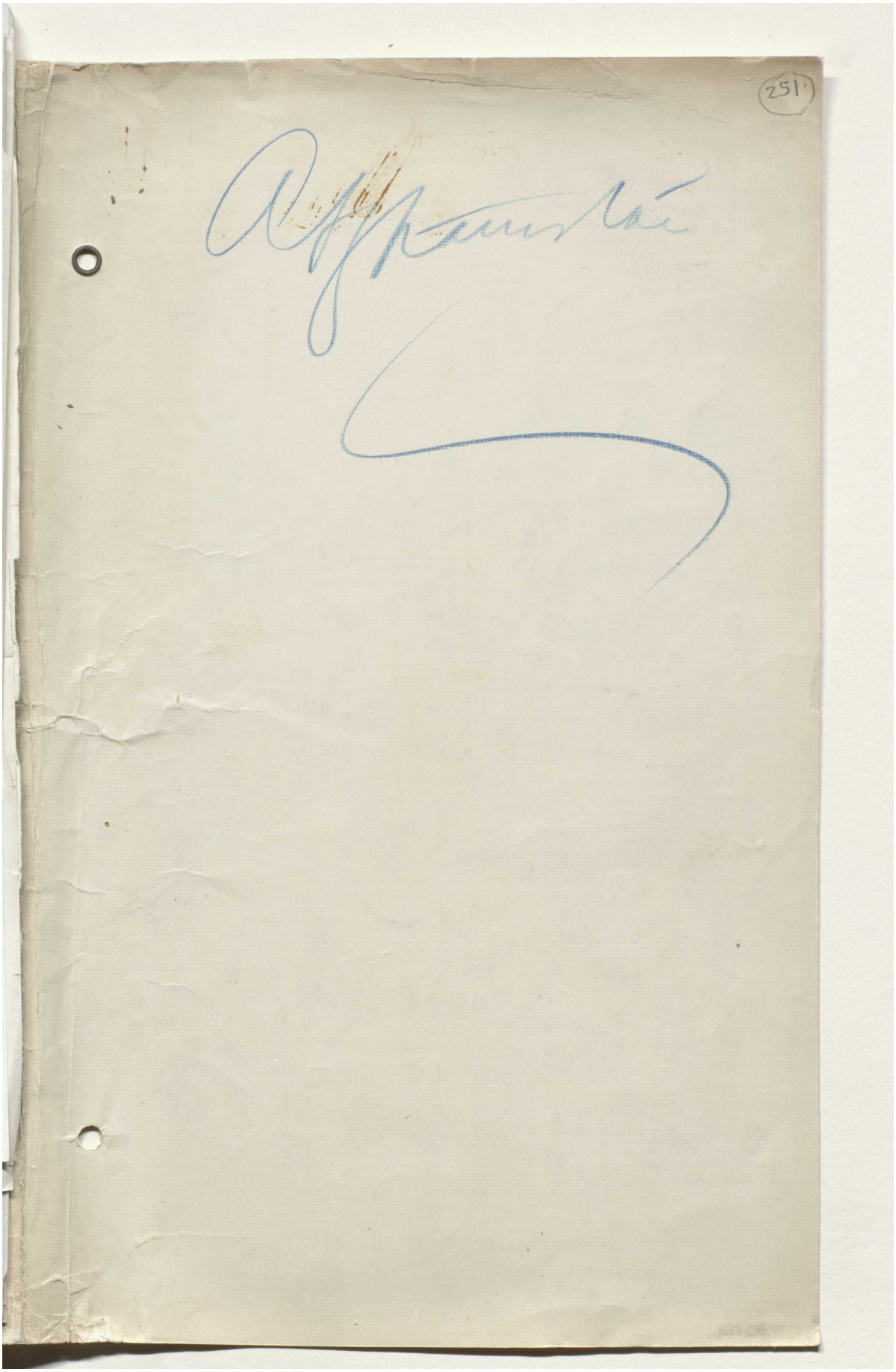

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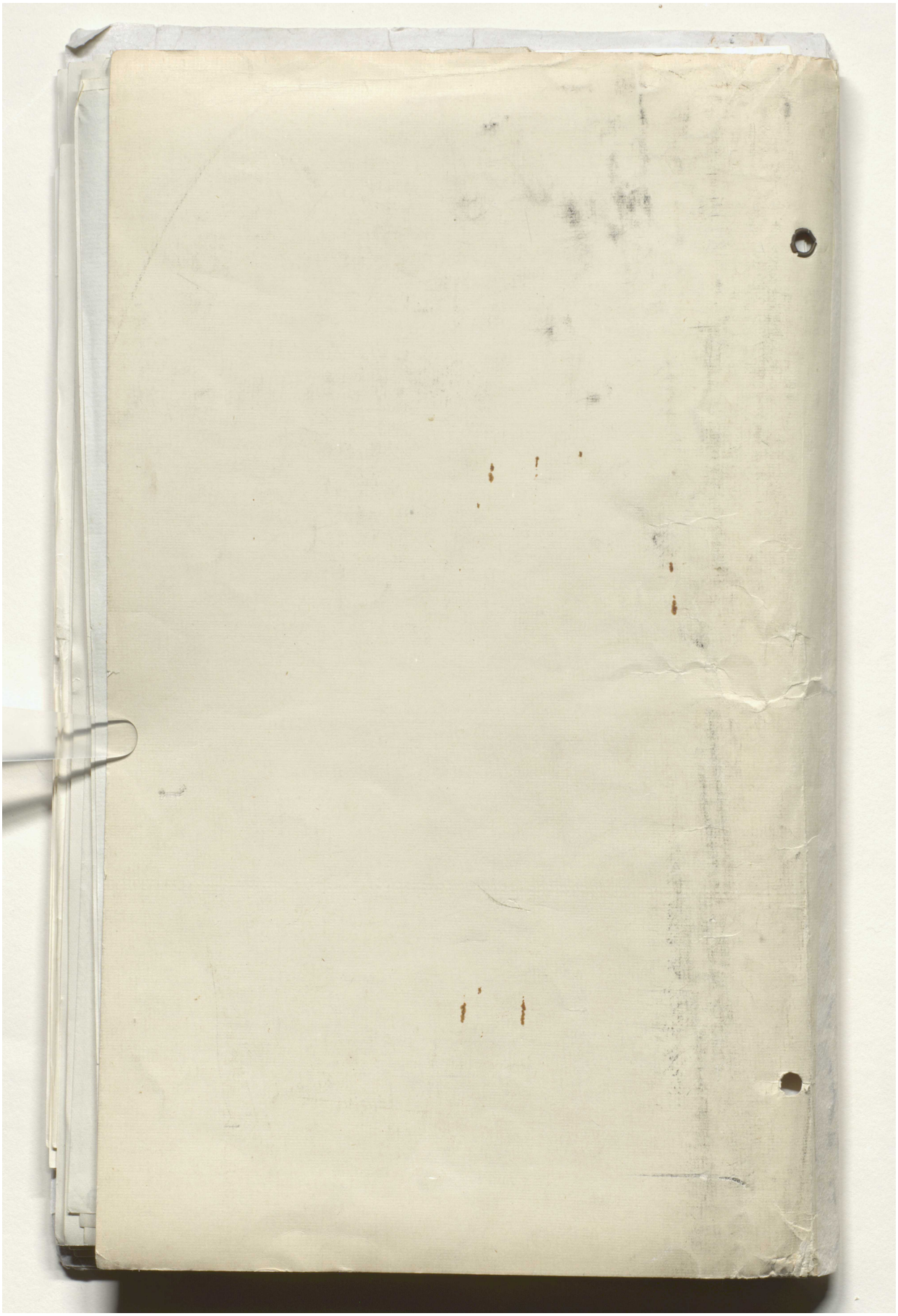

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