

BRITISH POLICY IN ASSYRIAN SETTLEMENT

COMPILED BY: ISAAC E. ASIA (LONDON) 2008

Credit Lyonnais

West end Branch,
4, Cockspur Street,
Charing Cross,
London

30th July 1924

The Secretary
Foreign Office,
Whitehall, S.W.1

Dear Sir,

We should esteem a favour if you would kindly confirm to us the accuracy of the statement made to us by General Agha Petros of the Hotel Cecil, W.C.2, who has been in the habit of transacting certain business with us, to the effect that he is a General of the Assyrian Army and was President of the Assyrian Delegation of Lausanne Conference, and was here on a Political Mission to the Foreign Office,

Thankng you in anticipation,

Yours Faithfully,

Manager,

E 6564/88/65
CONFIDENTIAL
Foreign Office, S.W.1

To the Manager,
Credit Lyonnais,
West End Branch,
4, Cockspur Street,
Charing Cross, W.1

Date: 6th August 1924.

Sir,

In reply to your letter Private and Confidential of the 30th ultimo, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Ramsay MacDonald to state that, as General Agha Petros is not a British subject it is not possible for this department to vouch for his alleged rank.

He was undoubtedly present at Lausanne during the conference but was not admitted to a seat at the conference table and his activities there on behalf of the Assyrians were thus of a more or less personal nature.

He was subsequently received at the Foreign Office on various occasions in an informal and unofficial capacity,

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
LANCELOT OLIPHANT

**TELEGRAM FROM THE ACTING HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR IRAQ
TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.**

Dated 14th August, 1924.

Received, Colonial Office, 4.26 p.m. 14th August, 1924.

Priority.

Incident occurred on 9th August north of territory administered by us near Khan? between Tkhuma Assyrians and the new Vali of Julamerk. Vali, accompanied by forty sowars, was making tour of the frontier to collect revenue and owing to this, Tkhuma Assyrians were in a great state of alarm. They had therefore taken up a defensive position near above place. The Turks attacked them and a fight ensued in which the Vali and some of his escort were captured.

Casualties Turks, three killed, two died of wounds and two wounded, Assyrians, one man, one boy, and one woman killed. On the 11th Malak Khoshaba, one of their head men freed the Vali and escort and returned arms from fear of punishment by the British.

Above is report received from Administrative Inspector, Mosul, who proceeded by air at once to see that the Vali was returned with suitable escort but found on arrival that he had already been released.

Addressed to Colonial Office No. 401 repeated to Constantinople No. 153S.

Extract from letter of the Rev. E.w. McDowell, D.D. of Mosul, dated July 3rd, 1924, to Mr. R.E.Speer.

Thank you for making use of my letters in behalf of the Assyrian people. And also for sharing with me the extracts from the letters of Mr. Carter and Mr. Philip Kerr. It is a pleasure now to recall the personalities of Philip Kerr and Sir John Shuckburgh. The extracts have interested me deeply because of recent events in this area. The writer, or rather Mr. Kerr, reveals a very intimate and on the whole, correct knowledge of the situation here.

The Assyrians in the Mosul area may be divided into three groups: Those who are still refugees, temporarily occupying villages two days North of Mosul, along the Zakho-Dohuk-Akra line, all well within the Iraq boundary. Second, those who are occupying their own homes a little farther north, in Supna, Amadia and Berwer; territory evidently considered by the English as within their mandate sphere. Third, The Assyrians of Tiary and Tkhoma, several thousand of them, who while not sent by the Authorities were encouraged by them to return to their homes, and which was all right. That territory is debatable ground. **Sir Percy Cox I think desired to include it in Iraq, and with justice. But the Turks claim it as theirs. And it is important to inform you that they are at this moment moving to occupy it.**

Word has just come down from Tiary to the effect that a Turkish army has appeared in the neighbourhood of Julamerk. It is stated that they have come to collect taxes from certain Kurds. Certain Kurdish chiefs are in conference with the Turks in Julamerk. Before the arrival of the Army the Christians were informed that if they proposed to reside in Turkish territory they would have to surrender their arms and pay taxes.

I read the movement as follows:

The Turks refused to grant any of the Mosul territory to Sir Percy. Up to the present that part of Kurdistan has not been officially or fully reoccupied by the Turkish government. At this point in the procedure it would be the natural thing for them to do, to assume control of just as much of that debatable territory as they possibly can without coming into serious conflict with the British. They would appoint and locate Mudirserfs, Kaimakums and all the local officials and then proceed to collect taxes. The army is there to assist them in this process, and in sufficient strength to warn the English to keep hands off. The territory they actually occupy they will stand a good chance of retaining when it comes to another conference. We may expect them, therefore, to push as far south as the English will allow them to at this time. This will probably mean the whole of Tiary and Tkhoma.

The Tiarians are greatly disturbed. They have occupied their mountain passes and are on the watch night and day. They have sent messengers asking for help from the British. It is not yet known what the British will do. It will be a difficult problem for them. Where will they draw the line at which they will say to the Turks, "Thus far but no farther," and say it with a fighting force? Without aid the mountaineers will not be able to hold their own against a well equipped army supported by all the Kurds of that wide spread region. It is probably one of the chief purposes of that Turkish army to sweep all the Tiarians and Tkhomians out of the mountains. I do not think that this movement will involve the city of Mosul. But I do think that the Turks will come down as far as they can without calling down on themselves too great opposition from the English.

You will have noted that the treaty between Iraq and England was signed in Baghdad recently, but only after prolonged opposition on the part of the Iraq Mejlis-Assembly. Two clipping from the Baghdad Times will indicate something of the temper of both sides.

Most unfortunately, right in the midst of this discussion, the Assyrian soldiers ran amuck in the city of Kerkuk and in the fighting which followed some forty or fifty of the Moslems of Kerkuk were killed, among them being a Sheikh of considerable reputation. There was great excitement all over the country including Baghdad and Mosul, but the Government handled the matter wisely and firmly and a big disturbance was nipped in the bud. But it has stirred

Moslem hatred and antagonism to the limit all over Mesopotamia and Kurdistan. The Iraqi Assembly demand the removal of all the Assyrians from their territory, and especially the Assyrian army. **The government had to confess that they could not dispense with the services of the Assyrian army in defending Iraq from the Turks.**

It should be stated that the trouble in Kerkuk was started by Moslems, made worse by Arab police and bungled by the officers in command of the Assyrians. But it was a sad blunder on the part of the Assyrians. They also lost heavily in killed and wounded.

But the incident proves conclusively the utter impossibility of the Assyrians dwelling anywhere in this land without the presence of the English.

And the anomaly of the situation. The Arab is as bitter an enemy of the Assyrians as the Turk and just as dangerous but he is depending upon these Assyrians to save him from the Turk. That once done, the Arab will turn on the Assyrian and rend him. (This is true and was expected and happened in 1933 in Simail by the massacre of thousand of the Assyrians).

FUTURE OF THE ASSYRIANS

Refers to Foreign Office letter of September 11h 1924 (E 7571/88/65.)

Suggests that Assyrian National Association in United States of America should be informed that **Future of Assyrians must depend upon ultimate position of Turkey-Iraq frontier which is now being considered by League of Nations.**

**ASSYRIAN NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
WARCESTER BRANCH
92 Austin Street,
Worcester, Mass.,
United States of America.**

To: Under the Secretary of State,
Foreign Office,
London S.W.1

Honorable Sir:

The Assyrians in America since this world's great war, are anxiously waiting and praying that a good message from His Britanic Majesty's Government will come to those Assyrians who valiantly fought the battle of the Allies.

While I was in Paris and London, in a capacity of the Assyrian delegate from America, I was assured that His Majesty's Government would look after them. For the last six years, Assyrians have suffered from deportation and many thousands are in Aleppo, Marseilles, Russia, etc., who are in a dangerous and pitiful condition. There is no hope for them to come to America or elsewhere but to our place toward Mossul or in Iraq State.

As President of the Assyro-Chaldean Association, I would venture to ask from His Britanic Majesty's Government their attitude in this regard.

From some newspaper reports we learn that the Kurds and the Assyrians are working in harmony under His Britanic Majesty's protection. We hope this will bring them to a closer relation as the Kurds were originally Christians. We hope the British Government with the consent of the Iraq Government will assign the vacant lands for the settlement. We trust that His Britanic Majesty's Government will bring into effect the policy which has been attained -- assuring the Assyrian people their freedom and the settlement of their local affairs.

Awaiting for your answer, I remain,

Yours very truly,

Presiden
Dr. S. K. Yoosuf.

**FOREIGN OFFICE
S.W.1
GREAT BRITAIN**

22nd September 1924.

Doctor A. K. Yoosuf,
Assyrian National Association,
Worcester Branch,
92, Austin Street,
Worcester, Mass.,
United States of America.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, relative to the attitude of His Majesty's Government towards the future of the Assyrian, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Ramsay MacDonald to inform you that the **future of the Assyrians must depend in some measure upon the ultimate position of the frontier between Iraq and Turkey. The question of that frontier is now under consideration by the Council of the League of Nations, to whom the matter has been referred for a decision.**

I am
Sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Signed) LANCELOT LIPHANT

ASSYRO - CHALDEAN AND YIZEDIES
Geneve Hotel Richemond

(General Agha Petros, Legion d'Honneur)
(Commander-in-Chief of the Assyro-Chaldean Forces,)
(President of the National Executive Committee.

To His Excellency
President of the Society of Nations,
Geneva.

Sir,

We the Members of the Assyro-Chaldean and Yezidi Delegation thank God for having chosen and assembled here the most intelligent men of the Greatest Powers of the World. God's purpose in so doing is to see that Justice is dealt out impartially, and we thank him for giving us language to explain our condition.

1. The South Part of the Mosul Vilayet is mostly inhabited by Arabs, about 20% only being Assyro-Chaldewans; but the North of Mosul Vilayet belongs entirely to the Assyro-Chaldeans, Yezidis and friendly Kurds under Sayid Taha. Not a single Arab or Turk ever dwelt there.

2. If therefore, You, the most Honourable Members of the Society of Nations, allow and accept to see the North of Mosul Vilayet handed over to any power other than its lawful owners, I and the other Members of our Delegation most solemnly protest against as being unjust and unlawful in God's Sight. It is not because we are poor and helpless that justice should be denied us.

THE NORTH OF MOSUL VILAYET BELONGS TO US.

3. If it is taken from us, it is indeed a poor reward for the services we rendered during the Great War as "The Smallest Ally" of the "ENTENTE" a poor reward for the loss of one-third of our population, not to mention all our material losses. And now, if the North of Mosul Vilayet is not restored to us, we shall lose our Nationality and our Language, which is as old as the world, for we are the only people living to-day who speak the language of the cradle of humanity, which we have kept and spoken for thousands of years.

4. We have no objection to returning and living in our homes in the North of Mosul Vilayet as long as we are under British Mandate, but we cannot live under our War Enemies, for We are Christians, and the laws of those Countries governing the Christians and Mohammedans are entirely different, as the attached ANNEXE A. will show. If we are left scattered among Mohammedans we shall certainly be massacred - as our Forefathers have been in the past, and everybody knows that all Christians who owned property in Turkey have been obliged to leave and their property confiscated, they and their wives and children driven to wander in search of food and help. A home must be found for those unfortunate refugees, and the only place which I can earnestly recommend is the home of our Forefathers: The North of Mosul Vilayet, Under British Mandate.

5. Since 1920 all the children born of Parents of the North of Mosul Vilayet who have been kept round the city of Mosul have died for they are a Mountain People, who cannot live in the Plains as the climate and water is unsuitable.

6. If we give up our right to our Homes and Fatherland where shall we go to found new Homes to protect and keep our Nationality and our Language ????. All other Nations and Peoples have a Home, why should we be the only exception???

Therefore, as the **North of Mosul Vilayet belongs to us, I feel sure that all the honourable members of this Society will admit that in asking it to be left to us under British Mandate, we are simply claiming our right, and we are moreover asking it for the sake of peace in that part of the country.**

**(General Agha Petros, Legion dHonneur)
(Commander-in-Chief of the Assyro-Chaldean Forces,)
(President of the National Executive Committee.)**

With the agreement of Assyro-Chaldean and Yezidis Delegation,

The note concluded as follows:

" The bringing into existence and consolidation of a permanent Government in Iraq is dependent on the preservation of the status quo, as I consider that it is impossible, both strategically and economically, for a Government in Baghdad to live if Mosul is detached from it and held by another Government. Nor can a real life be hoped for the people of Iraq without Mosul. What is more, my convictions and my experience of the mentality (original spiritual state) of the Turkish people, their historic ambition for extension and invasion and the absence of another line of frontier safeguarding to the existence of my country make me declare that it will be impossible to maintain internal peace even in normal times except by the creation of a permanent military force which it is not within the powers of the Iraq amputated to create either at present or in future. Likewise, I do not believe that any foreign capital will come into Iraq when foreign capitalists are aware that the country is constantly exposed to risks, anarchy and invasion, therefore I consider the Mosul is to Iraq as the head is to the rest of the body; and it is my unshakeable conviction that, though the question is only one of fixing a boundary between Iraq and Turkey, it is nevertheless and in fact the question of the Iraq as a whole. Accordingly, the happiness or misery of four millions of human being is placed in the hands of the members of your honourable Commission. If for any reason the Commission may consider that it should recommend to the League of Nations any alteration or modification of the present frontiers of Iraq, it should at the same time recommend to the League the choice of a new status for the Iraq in its entirety, and it shall be responsible for the destinies of this mass of human beings.

The Commission on that day held a meeting at the Residency in the presence of the High Commissioner. At this meeting an incident occurred, the effect of which was to delay the commencement of work for a fortnight. Sir Henry Dobbs said that among the Turkish experts there were two -Nazim Bey and Fettah Bey - who, although nationals of Iraq, had engaged in transactions directed against the present Government of their country. These two persons, against one of whom a warrant of arrest had been issued, had been obliged to flee the country and were now availing themselves of the presence of the Commission in order to return to Iraq and possibly, under the cloak of diplomatic immunity, to engage in activities likely to disturb peace and order. This danger was the greater since, at the present time, the patriotic and nationalist parties, whose intense excitement in the present circumstances could easily be understood, had already uttered threats against them. He asked that the two experts should be recalled.

The members of the Commission were unable to share Sir Henry Dobbs views. While deploring the fact that the Turkish Government should have appointed experts who were compromised in the eyes of the Iraq authorities and whose presence therefore rendered the Commission's task more difficult, **the Commission pointed out that the two experts in question were citizens of the Vilayet of Mosul and could not be regarded as Iraqi subjects until the question of the frontiers had been finally settled.**

The Commission reported this incident to the Turkish Government should have selected these experts. However, for the above-mentioned reasons, it was decided not to place any pressure on General Jevad Pasha with a view to having these experts recalled.

In the meantime, the Turkish assessor informed the Commission that his experts and aide-de-camp had been placed in an "entrenched camp" and kept under observation. The Commission immediately drew the attention of the High Commissioner to the fact that such procedure was unjustified.

The Commission felt it its duty to proceed to the spot, and it noted that the Turkish delegation had indeed been housed some few kilometres from the town in military barracks surrounded by barbed wire. As a result of the

Commission's very energetic representations to the High Commissioner, it finally succeeded in having the Turkish experts transferred to rooms near the Residency.. On the other hand, it assured Sir Henry Dobbs that the Turkish experts would not go into the town. It felt that this arrangement was admissible on account of the special conditions obtaining in the City of Baghdad, but it stated that, as soon as it arrived in the disputed territory, it would insist that full freedom of movement should be accorded to the Turkish assessor:

" the reply of His Excellency the High Commissioner and the representations made by His Excellency General Jevad Pasha have suggested to the Commission the following observations:

" 1. The Commission again expresses its regret that the Government of the Turkish Republic should have thought fit to send with its assessor attached to the Commission of the League of Nations persons who, by reason of their recent political activity, were, to say the least, hardly suited to accomplish so delicate a mission. The fact that these two gentlemen have been mentioned by name in the minutes of the Constantinople Conference should have made it possible to foresee that difficulties and complications would arise likely to hinder the work of the Commission.

" 2. The Commission considers that, so long as it remains outside the disputed territory, it cannot oppose certain measures which the authorities responsible for public order state that they have been obliged to take in order to ensure the personal safety of the Turkish assessor and his experts.

"3. The Commission considers, however, that, when it is at Mosul or in any other locality in the disputed territory, the Turkish assessor must enjoy complete freedom in order that he may be able to support as he thinks best the arguments laid before the Commission by his Government. Consequently, he must be able to avail himself freely and at all times of the assistance of his experts and such persons as he may think fit to employ. It is clear that, if these conditions are to be fulfilled, the experts must enjoy the right to move about quite freely. After consultation with General Jevad Pasha, the Commission reserves the right to come to an agreement with the local authorities concerning the measures to be taken to ensure the personal safety of the persons accompanying it.

" The Commission is convinced that the two parties will realise that any difficulty of an internal or secondary nature placed in the way of the accomplishment of the Commission's task can but hinder the satisfactory progress of the enquiry entrusted to it. It hopes that the two Governments will do all that lies in their power to render it unnecessary for the Commission to take decision which would inevitably delay the speedy settlement of the dispute."

During its stay at Baghdad, the Commission, on the invitation of the Iraq Government, visited a number of Ministries, the Military School, the hospitals, educational establishments and agricultural schools, and received various delegations. It also visited the markets, granaries and wood depots in the commercial centres of the town in order to obtain an insight into the trade between Baghdad and its neighbourhood and the northern regions. It endeavoured to obtain direct evidence of the economic interdependence of the former vilayets of Mosul and Baghdad. It studied the Customs statistics with particular care, sought out pre-war consular reports and thus gathered information regarding the economic situation of the country.

The Commission proceeded to Mosul by the Sharqat Railway, which runs for a certain distance alongside the Jebel Hamrin, the frontier proposed by the Turkish Government.

The Commission arrived at Mosul on the afternoon of January 27th 1925, and took up its residence in a large house near the town which is used as the residence of King Faisal when staying in this district.

Immediately after its arrival, a further regrettable incident occurred. This incident is related by Count Teleki in a memorandum which may be summarised as follows:

" On January 27th, the day on which the Commission arrived at Mosul, I went for a walk in the town with M. Roddolo and M. Charriere. As I was leaving our house, General Jevad Pasha, in uniform, offered to accompany me. I accepted his offer the more readily as I was curious to see what impression his uniform might produce on the population. Hardly had we come into the street -- the police not having yet followed us -- when about thirty persons (who I supposed were Arabs) surrounded the Pasha and kissed his hands amid cries of "Long live Turkey!". The crowd following us grew until it must have consisted of about 200 individuals, and the shouting increased. As we were passing the barracks a few police officers intervened and endeavoured to disperse the crowd.

"As we arrived in the bazaar (Market) we were joined by three police officers, one of whom was an English man. The crowd surrounding us had been increased by a large number of persons from the bazaar. The Pasha became the subject of further acclamations and further demonstrations of sympathy. The crowd seemed to consist of various elements. Some of those present were very respectable; others again, seemed to be beggars; there were also a great many children. The police officers renewed their efforts to disperse the crowd, which seemed to obey their orders. It was then that we noticed that behind us two policemen were using their sticks, and one of them attacked a middle-aged man who had taken refuge in a shop, belabouring him violently under our eyes. I felt bound to intervene. I called an officer and said to him: 'I forbid you to strike people in the presence of a member of the Commission of the League of Nations'.

"Continuing our walk in the direction of the Town Hall, we were followed by an ever-increasing crowd which the police endeavoured to control. When we arrived in front of the Nationalist Club of Iraq, situated opposite the Town Hall, we witnessed a counter-manifestation of students wearing cockades of the Iraq colours and acclaiming King Faisal.

"Still followed by the crowd and surrounded by police officers, we returned to the house".

On the morning following upon this incident, the Commission received a visit from the Mutasserif of Mosul, accompanied by Major Lloyd, the British Administrative Inspector, who stated that they would be bound to establish a system of supervision in order to ensure the personal safety of the Turkish delegation in view of the ever-increasing excitement manifested by the more extreme elements of the population. For this purpose, they proposed the following measures:

(1) The Turkish assessor and his experts should warn the administrative authorities one hour in advance of their desire to leave their residence. They should indicate the place to which they proposed to proceed and should be accompanied by the police.

(2) Javad Pasha should be requested not to leave his residence in military uniform.

(3) Measures should be taken by the authorities to ensure that no political manoeuvre likely to disturb public order should be attempted by the Turkish delegates.

The commission, being anxious to safeguard the freedom of action of the Turkish experts, stated that it could not accept the conditions proposed by the Mosul authorities, and it drafted a note, which was at once dispatched to the Administrative Inspector and the Mutasserif.

The purport of this note was as follows:

"(1) We require that the Turkish delegates be given complete freedom of movement without any visible police escort. The Turkish assessor must be allowed to introduce his witnesses to the Commission, even if they wish to be examined in secret.

"(2) It is the duty of the municipality to provide for the safety of the Turkish delegation; we can only allow such discreet measures of protection to be taken on their behalf as will not be perceived by the public.

"(3) The Commission will refuse to open its enquiry until it has received satisfaction on these points.

On receiving this note, the Mutasserif and the British Inspector stated that they could not reply without first referring to the central authorities. The High Commissioner replied by telegram that, though he recognised the justice of the Commission's demands, he could not accept any responsibility on behalf of the British and Iraq Governments for any hostile acts which might be committed against the members of the Turkish mission.

At the same time, the Commission received by telegram from Angora a strong protest against the attitude of the Iraq authorities. The Turkish Government asserted that the occupying authorities must be held responsible for the safety of the Turkish delegates. A similar protest from the Turkish Government was forwarded to the Commission through the Secretariat of the League of Nations. It then dispatched to Geneva a long telegram explaining the origin of the situation created by the ill-advised choice of the Turkish experts. It also reproduced its reply to Angora, in which it pointed out to the Turkish Government that the latter could scarcely hold the Iraq authorities responsible if it refused to accept the precautions proposed by Baghdad.

The Commission's situation in Mosul was becoming increasingly difficult. It learned that persons who had demonstrated in favour of Turkey had been imprisoned. The members of the Commission themselves were under constant supervision. Two police patrols were stationed at the entrances to the Commission's quarters with instructions to note the coming and going of members and secretaries and to telephone immediately to the central police-station of the city. Under these circumstances, the Commissioners came to the conclusion that no impartial enquiry was possible; they informed the two assessors of this decision and stated that the Commission would not begin work until this state of affairs was brought to an end.

Telegrams were then exchanged with the Angora Government, but as no definite reply was given to the Commission's proposals, it was finally agreed that, pending such definite reply, General Jevad Pasha - who, under the circumstances, did all that he personally could to assist the Commission in its work -- should take the responsibility for the safety of his delegation and should accept certain discreet precautions, so far as they did not damage the prestige and susceptibilities of the Turkish delegation or interfere with its freedom of action.

A reply was received two days later, but as it still did not seem sufficiently explicit on the question of responsibility the following telegram was sent, which definitely put an end to the correspondence:

The Turkish Memorandum of September 5th, 1924, asserts that the British claims to the territory beyond the confines of the Turkish Vilayet of Mosul manifestly exceed the limits of the question which the two parties have agreed to submit to the Council of the League of Nations. The Council accordingly will only have to give a decision on the British claim in so far as it is within the limits of the question at issue.

In support of this view the Memorandum quotes various expressions used by Lord Curzon which, it is urged, show that the dispute between the two parties relates exclusively to the Vilayet of Mosul.

With reference to the arguments advanced by the British Government, the Memorandum observes that whatever sympathy that Government may feel for those non-Moslems of the Vilayet of Mosul who espoused the cause of the Allies during the war, this sympathy cannot justify the separation from Turkey of a large province in which they form scarcely one-seventeenth of the population. Moreover, the Nestorian Assyrians are not indigenous to the Vilayet of Mosul. If they were forced to leave their native country during the war, the reason was that they had taken up arms against their Moslem compatriots. They are, however, few in number. They had for centuries lived in prosperity and security among their Moslem countrymen.

The British Government's proposal to assemble the Assyrians in a compact mass on the frontier between Turkey and Iraq suggests that it is not quite certain whether, whatever may be the wishes of this community, it was really those wishes and not other consideration which prompted this proposal. The artificial grouping on the frontier of Assyrians who might be utilised against the Kurds and who would be animated by a spirit of aggression against Turkey certainly cannot be expected to produce the results that the British Government hopes to obtain -- namely, the establishment of lasting peace in these regions, good relations between Turkey and Iraq and the possibility of a safe existence for the Assyrians.

B. Considerations and Conclusions.

The position of the Assyrians in the Ottoman Empire has been explained in another section of this book. We will therefore merely repeat here that they enjoyed a considerable degree of independence under the government of their Patriarch, as the Turkish authorities seldom visited their country. Quarrels between Kurds and Assyrians seem, however, to have been frequent.

In the year before the war Russian propaganda on religious lines began to make itself felt. In the spring of 1915 the Russian troops advancing towards Julamerk got into touch with the Assyrians, who, at the instigation of the Russian commander, attacked the Turks. When, shortly afterwards, the Russians retired, the position of the Assyrians, exposed as they were to attacks by large Turkish forces, became untenable, and they were forced to withdraw with their families to Persian territory after six months' hazard fighting.

On reaching Persia, however, they continued to assist the Russians, who formed several bodies of Assyrian troops. These troops fought under Russian command until the break-up of the Tsar's army, though one battalion was under the direct control of the Assyrian Patriarch. During the early part of 1918 the Assyrian formations joined the irregular force which, under the command of Russian officers who had remained in Persia, was defending the plains of Urmia and Salmas against the Turks. Their position became increasingly difficult, partly owing to quarrels with the Kurds and partly as the result of the intervention of the Persian authorities, who were anxious to disarm these forces operating in Persian territory. About the end of July the Assyrians were obliged to retire before the attacks of Turks, Kurds and Persians, and they then sought shelter in the territory occupied by the British forces.

The Assyrians who had settled in Persia, like the Armenian organisations, had taken part in the war against Turkey from the outset. They suffered the same fate as the Assyrians of Turkey.

During their retreat the Assyrians were exposed to the greatest sufferings; many were killed in battle, others died of hunger and exposure. Nevertheless, nearly 50,000 Assyrians and Armenians succeeded in reaching Hamadan in the middle of August 1918. From Hamadan they were sent by stages to the camp of Baquba, on the Diala, about 50 kilometres from Baghdad.

Immediately after the Armistice a plan was proposed for repatriating the Assyrians, but this proved impossible, largely owing to repeated outbreaks of disorder among the Kurds. As a result of the disturbances at Amadia in July 1919, the Civil Commissioner suggested to the military authorities that they should evacuate all the Moslem Kurds from the Amadia district, where there would be room for the Assyrians assembled at Baquba. In that case they would all be settled in the Vilayet of Mosul. The number of Kurdish families to be transferred was estimated at 2,000. The British Government, however, was unwilling at that time to take any definite decision on this question. The number of Assyrians at Baquba at the end of 1919 was 35,000 divided into two groups consisting respectively of Assyrians from Hakkari and from Urmia (in Persia).

In the Spring of 1920 a certain Aga Petros, an Assyrian mountaineer of the Baz tribe, who had played a not-unimportant part as commander of the Assyrian troops during the war, conceived the idea of creating an Assyrian buffer State on the Turko-Persian frontier, while leaving it open to those who preferred to do so to return to their homes in the mountains of the Vilayet of Hakkari. The execution of this scheme was delayed by the Great Arab revolt of 1920, and failed in October owing to the incapacity of Aga Petros and the resistance of the Kurds in the districts north of Aqra. In the course of the fighting which took place the Assyrians looted several districts inhabited by Kurds who had taken no part in the hostilities.

After this the Government was obliged to try other measures. It decided to settle the Assyrians tribe by tribe, gradually extending their territory northwards. By the summer of 1921, 7,500 persons had been settled in this way, some in the neighbourhood of Zakho, Dohuk and Amadia and some in the more northerly districts of Barwari Bala and Upper and Lower Tiari. A considerable number of Assyrians joined the "Levies"

The Government distributed rather more than 1,900 rifles and a certain amount of ammunition among the Assyrian tribes who had returned to their homes north of the frontier of the Vilayet of Mosul.

In April 1924, the number of Assyrians settled in the territory administered by Iraq and in the region to the north now claimed was estimated as follows:

From Persia.....	5,000
From the territory subsequently claimed	14,000
From Turkish territory north of the above	6,000

TOTAL	25,000

Of those in the second group, 7,500 were already settled in the territory claimed at Constantinople. They returned to the south side of the treaty-line in consequence of the incidents which occurred in 1924. It was the British Government's intention to take steps to enable the Assyrians who came from Persia to return to their country.

The relations between the Assyrians and the Moslem peoples are not always as good as they might be, this being, in the view of the authorities, partly due to the lack of tact displayed by the Assyrians themselves, who are of a warlike temper and have somewhat rough manners. In August 1923, a brawl occurred in the bazaar at Mosul between Arabs and Assyrian soldiers. In the same month hostile demonstrations took place there against a body of about 800 Assyrians who had just been repatriated from Constantinople. Still more serious was the mutiny of two Assyrian companies in the garrison of Kirkuk. This incident, which occurred in May 1924, arose out of a dispute between Assyrian soldiers and Moslem merchants. Despite the efforts of their officers and non-commissioned officers, the men went round the town firing on every Moslem they saw and looting shops and houses. There were casualties, some of them fatal, and British troops had to be sent by air to restore order.

The following are the liberties enjoyed by the Assyrians in Iraq. Their disputes are settled by arbitrators of their own race; their chiefs have an official or semi-official position and collect a regular tithe and a cattle-tax with the help of police chosen by them from their own tribes. This situation, however, has had to be altered owing to the departure of a large number of them as the result of the frontier incidents which occurred in the autumn of 1924. The family holding the patriarchate is the only Assyrian authority recognised by the British and Iraq authorities.

The British High Commissioner at Baghdad informed the Commission of this Government's intentions in case the frontier claimed should be given to Iraq. The territory immediately south of the frontier would be reoccupied by the Assyrian tribes which formerly lived there. At the present time this territory is inhabited by only about 10,500 persons, including 750 Christians. The Assyrians whose homes were north of the proposed frontier would be settled in the neighbourhood of Dohuk and Amadia -- at a certain distance from the frontier. Thus they would not be exposed to the temptation of returning to their homes in Turkish territory and so giving rise to frontier incidents.

The total number of Assyrians to be settled would be only about 20,000 if the Assyrians from Persia returned to their own country. According to later information there is in Russia a considerable number (about 30,000) of Turkish Assyrians who would wish to return to their own homes provided that these did not remain under Turkish rule.

The British authorities also informed the Commission that the future treatment of the Assyrian would depend entirely on the decision taken with regard to the frontier. If the territory occupied by the Assyrians is not assigned to Iraq they cannot be granted any local autonomy, because in that case they would not be settled in homogeneous communities. If the frontier were drawn towards the south, thus incorporating in Iraq only a small part of the former Assyrian territory, it would be impossible to find land for the Assyrians in Iraq. The plan for settling the Assyrians depends on the acceptance of the frontier proposed by the British Government. Even if lands could be found, the Assyrians could not live in the plains owing to climatic conditions. Other difficulties would be produced by the difference of customs between the Arabs and the

Assyrians, which would strain the relations between them, whereas Assyrian and Kurdish customs are much more similar.

The Commission recognises the necessity of protecting the Assyrian people and enabling them to live in the most favourable conditions that can be secured.

The Commission does not feel, however, that the solution proposed by the British Government is consonant with the principles of equity which should govern the desired settlement.

In the first place, the Turkish Government's objections to the presentation of new territorial demands after the Lausanne Conference seem by no means groundless. It appears from the documents of that Conference that from the beginning the British delegate claimed the northern boundary of the Vilayet of Mosul as the frontier of Iraq. If any modifications were mentioned they were modifications of the Treaty of Sevres; but according to the provisions of that Treaty the Zaza of Amadia was to be restored to Turkey.

In another letter, dated December 26th, 1922 Lord Curzon invited Ismet Pasha to appoint experts to discuss the precise trace of the northern frontier of the Mosul Vilayet, which was to constitute, in the future treaty, the boundary between Turkey and Iraq. This appears to show that nothing was contemplated other than slight rectifications which could be dealt with by a delimitation commission. The British Government's proposals, however, as presented at Constantinople, considerably exceeded mere rectifications. There would appear accordingly to be some reason for thinking that the proposal made at Constantinople implied the opening of a new question and that the Turkish Government had good grounds for refusing to discuss it.

Another objection to the solution proposed by the British Government resides in the circumstances under which the Assyrians took up arms against Turkey. There is no doubt that this people rose in armed revolt against its lawful government at the instigation of foreigners and without any provocation on the part of the Turkish authorities. It is also established that the conditions of life enjoyed by the Assyrian people within the Ottoman Empire were rather better than those of the other Christians, since they were conceded a fairly wide measure of local autonomy under the authority of the Patriarchal House.

Under these circumstances it would hardly be fair to take from Turkey a territory which indisputably belongs to her in order to settle in that territory a people that deliberately took up arms against its sovereign. The Commission is led to conclude that the most satisfactory solution would be for the Assyrians to accept the offer, made by the Turkish delegate at the Constantinople Conference, that they should be allowed to return to their former homes. In that case it would have to be added that the Assyrians must continue to enjoy the same local autonomy as formerly and that their safety must be guaranteed by a complete amnesty.

**BRIEF FOR THE BRITISH REPRESENTATIVE AT
THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.**

Assyrian Petitions

1. Two petitions submitted by representatives of the Assyrian community in Iraq are awaiting consideration by the League of Nations. Of these one, which was submitted in October 1931, states that it will be impossible for the Assyrians to remain in Iraq after the termination of the mandate and appeals to the Permanent Mandates Commission to arrange for the emigration of the Assyrians to a country under the rule of one of the Western nations, or, failing that, to Syria. The other, dated the 17th of June, 1932, demands the **establishment of an autonomous Assyrian enclave either in the Hakkiari province of Turkey or in Iraqi Kurdistan.**
2. These petitions would normally fall to be dealt with by the Mandates Commission at their meeting in November next; but it is anticipated that before then Iraq will have been admitted to membership of the League of Nations, and there is reason to think that in that event the Mandates Commission would consider themselves incompetent to examine and report upon these petitions, since Iraq would then be outside the purview of the Commission. In any case there are considerations which render it desirable that a decision by the Council on these petitions should be reached without avoidable delay. It is proposed, therefore, that the British Representative at the next Council meeting should recommend the Council to set up some adhoc procedure for dealing with them expeditiously.
3. Before considering the petitions themselves and the action to be taken at Geneva, it would be well to examine the factors which have contributed to the present unrest among the Assyrians and their dissatisfaction with conditions of life in Iraq. For this purpose it will be necessary to review briefly the history of that portion of the race which now find itself in Iraq.

4. It is well known how at British, and Russian instigation, the Assyrian left their homes in Turkish and Persian Kurdistan and threw in their lot with the Allies during the war. After having been twice deserted by the British and the Russians during the War, the survivors of the Assyrian nation found their way as refugees into Iraqi territory, where they were housed and fed for three years at the expense of His Majesty's Government. Their numbers at that time were estimated at 40,000, of whom 10,000 only were inhabitants of what is now Iraqi territory. An attempt was made in the autumn of 1920 under Assyrian leadership to form an Assyrian colony on the Turco-Persian frontier; this proved abortive. In the summer of 1921, the Assyrian refugee camp was closed down, a money grant being made to each refugee family to finance their return to their old homes. Many of these families found their way back to their villages in the Hakkari country, which it was then believed would be included in Iraqi territory. Other Assyrian tribesmen, whose original homes were in territory which it was recognised would remain Turkish, were settled within Iraq territory near Dohuk and Aqra; there they still remain. The Persian Assyrian, numbering between 4,000 and 5,000 mostly dispersed to the towns awaiting the time when it would be possible for them to return to their homes in the Urmia district. Many of them are waiting still. **In the meantime large numbers of Assyrians were recruited for service in a force of local Levies, officered and paid by His Majesty's Government, which was raised in order to permit the reduction of the British Forces garrisoning the country. Some two battalions of the Levy Force still exist to protect British aerodromes in Iraq.** The strength of this force is likely to be substantially reduced when the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 1930 enters into force with Iraq's admission to the League.

5. During the period 1921-1924 there seemed every prospect that the Assyrian problem would solve itself, that the majority of the refugees would filter back to their homes in Persia and Turkey, while the remainder would settle down and develop vacant lands in the Mosul district of Iraq. In order to assist this process, His Majesty's Government decided to press for a frontier with Turkey which would include within Iraq the greater part of the homelands of the Ottoman Assyrians. In particular it was decided to advocate the cession to Iraq of the Hakkari province of Turkey in which the Tiari, Tkhuma, Jelu, and Baz tribes had their homes. This scheme received its first set back in the summer of 1924, when the Turks, extending their administration into the Hakkari district, expelled those Assyrians who had returned there back into Iraq.

6. Some months earlier the northern frontier of Iraq, which, it will be recollected, was left undefined by the Treaty of Lausanne, was discussed between representative of the United Kingdom and Turkish Governments at Constantinople. At this conference the Turkish refused to consider any frontier which would leave within Iraq the Assyrian lands in Hakkari. In the course of the discussions, however, the Turkish Delegate stated that the Assyrians "would still find in Turkish territory the tranquillity and prosperity which they enjoyed there for centuries, provided that they did not repeat the errors which they committed, with foreign encouragement, at the beginning of the Great War."

7. The hope that the Hakkari province would be gained for the Assyrians and Iraq was finally dispelled by the Council of the League of Nations, who, in December, 1925, allotted to Turkey the bulk of the territory formerly inhabited by the Assyrians, including the Hakkari province. In promulgating their frontier award, **the Council invited the mandatory power to grant the Assyrians a measure of local autonomy.** The British Representative at the Council meeting lost no time in showing that this was impracticable; he pointed out that the frontier awarded by the Council rendered it impossible to find in Iraq suitable territories for the settlement of the Assyrians as a compact and organised community, and finally destroyed their hopes of a separate and homogeneous existence. In the British evidence presented to the League Frontier Commission, upon whose report the Council's award was based, it had been emphasised that, if the Hakkari region were not assigned to Iraq, the Assyrians could not be granted any local autonomy, because, in that case, they could not be settled in homogeneous communities. In making their recommendations to the Council, however, the Frontier Commission appear to have expected that in course of time the mountain bred Assyrians would drift back to their homes in the Hakkari country, and they apparently did not contemplate, in view of the statement made by the Turkish Delegate at the Constantinople conference, that the Turkish Government would place any obstacle in their way. These expectations, however, were not fulfilled. Ruthless deportations of Assyrians were carried out by the Turks in the frontier districts in the autumn of 1925, which effectually extinguished any immediate prospect of the Assyrians returning to live under Turkish rule, and since 1925, the Turkish Government have consistently denied the Assyrians access to their former homes.

8. The frontier fixed by the League Council in 1925, which was subsequently accepted by the Turkish Government under the Treaty of Angora of June, 1926, separated about 20,000 Assyrians from their original homes. His Majesty's Government and the Iraqi Government were thus faced with the formidable task of settling these Assyrians, who were mountaineers by origin, on unoccupied lands in the northern districts of Iraq. The difficulty of this task was enhanced by the fact that Iraqis generally were out of sympathy with the Assyrians, whom they regarded as an alien race bound to Iraq by no strong ties of patriotism or loyalty, and having no claim to the special consideration of the Iraqi Government or people; and the Assyrians, who have never concealed their hatred and suspicion of the Arab Government of Iraq, themselves did little to remove this latent racial antagonism. Nevertheless the Assyrians have had little to complain of in their treatment at the hands of the Iraqi Government; indeed in the matter of exemption from taxation they have been dealt with most generously, and it is scarcely necessary to add that they have not been subjected, at Iraqi hands, to the molestation and persecution which have their frequent lot in their original Turkish homes.

9. Between 1925 and 1930 the process of settlement continued, and by 1929 there remained only about 350 families for whom suitable homes had not yet been found. There seemed every reason to hope that before Iraq entered the League the re-settlement of Assyrians - not as a compact and homogeneous community, since this was impossible

without the wholesale dispossession of Kurds from their homes, but dispersed among suitable villages in Iraqi Kurdistan - would be completed. The new settlements were in most cases beginning to prosper and the Assyrians themselves seemed reasonably content and willing to fit into their place in the body politic.

10. The situation was, however, fundamentally changed by the publication of the terms of the new Treaty with Iraq in 1930. When it was found that this Treaty did not - as from the nature of the case it could not - contain express provisions for the protection of minorities, the Assyrians showed themselves apprehensive at the prospect of the complete independence of Iraq, and addressed protests to British representatives. An agitation largely fostered by sympathisers from the United Kingdom, was set on foot against the termination of the mandate, and during the latter part of 1930 and 1931 a number of petitions were submitted on behalf of the Assyrians to the League of Nations. **These petitions culminated in 1931 in a demand for the establishment of an autonomous enclave.** This was rejected by the League Council on the recommendation of the Permanent Mandates Commission, at whose instance the Council had previously caused the petitioners to be informed that the League would continue to protect their rights with the greater zeal and sympathy, if it were convinced that they were loyally contributing to the security and prosperity of the State of Iraq.

11. The Council's rejection of the demand for an autonomous enclave doubtless prompted the submission of the Assyrian petition of October, 1931, proposing Assyrian emigration **en mass**, to which reference is made in paragraph 1 of this note. A copy of that petition and a copy of the observations of His Majesty's Government thereon is attached (Appendix 1). There is reason to think that, after submitting this petition, the Assyrian leaders made enquiries of the French authorities in Syria to ascertain whether a mass movement of Assyrians into Syria would be welcomed. It is understood that these enquiries met with an unfavourable response.

12. In the meantime the Council of the League had had under consideration the various guarantees to be entered into by Iraq towards the Council dealing with, among other matters, the protection of racial and religious minorities in Iraq. The text of a Declaration of Guarantees to be made by the Iraqi Government was drawn up by a special committee of the Council, and its terms adopted by the Council at their meeting on the 19th May last. The Declaration was subsequently accepted by the Iraqi Government, signed, ratified and deposited with the Secretary-General. This Declaration provides the most ample safeguards for the future protection of minorities in Iraq, and ensures that their cultural, linguistic and religious aspirations will be given full recognition. It was confidently hoped, therefore, that, with the rejection of their demand for autonomy, and with the removal of any fear of future ill treatment at the hands of the Iraqi Government, the Assyrians, realizing the impracticability of wholesale emigration, would become reconciled to equal citizenship in the Iraqi State.

13. This hope proved ill founded. On the 1st of June a manifesto was presented to the Brigadier commanding the Assyrian Levies in Iraq stating that, as the British Government had failed to ensure the future of the Assyrian nation, all the officers and men had resolved to cease serving from the 1st of July. Subsequent enquiry showed that the Assyrian officers had entered into a pact with the Assyrian tribal leaders to act together to obtain satisfaction of certain demands concerning their future. **It was discovered that a concentration of all the Assyrians in Iraq on the northern frontier was proposed. The object of this concentration was reported to be either the formation of an independent Assyrian State within Iraq, or the seizure of the Hakkari province from Turkey by force.** All arguments having failed to deflect the Assyrian officers and leaders from their course, it proved necessary to fly a British battalion from Egypt to Iraq for the double purpose of relieving the Levies in their duty of guarding the aerodromes and **preventing them (the Assyrians) taking part in the proposed national concentration.** This action achieved its purpose. The national concentration was abandoned and the vast majority of the Levies agreed to continue serving until a petition, submitted by the Assyrian Patriarch and other Assyrian leaders on the 17th of June, had been considered and pronounced on by the League. A copy of that petition and of the observations of His Majesty's Government thereon will be found in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 2

It will be seen that this petition demands that the Hakkari region of Turkey should be ceded to Iraq and handed over to the Assyrians, or, failing this, that they should be given a large tract of country in the neighbourhood of Amadia, wherein the whole Assyrian race, both those at present in Iraq and those outside, should be settled as a single community. **In either case, the petition demands the establishment of an autonomous Assyrian enclave.**

14. The demand for the cession of Hakkari is, of course, quite impracticable. It is moreover most doubtful whether the Turkish Government would even now be prepared to allow the Assyrians to return to their old homes in that provision. There is however some slight indication of a possible change of heart; for example, the Iraqi Prime Minister, during a recent visit to Angora, found the impression that the Turks were not unattracted by the idea of re-admitting the Assyrian into Hakkari with the object of using them as a counterweight to the Kurds, with whom the Turkish Government are perpetually in trouble. There seems little doubt that an arrangement whereby the mountain tribes of the Assyrians could return to their homes in Hakkari, with reasonable safeguards of future good treatment, would provide the only satisfactory and lasting solution. These tribes were mainly responsible for the disaffection in the Assyrian Levies last June and for the wild project of a national concentration. They have hitherto refused all offers of

land for settlement within Iraq, and it seems clear that their longing to return to their old homes in Hakkari is the real cause of their dissatisfaction with conditions of life in Iraq.

15. In the course of the conversations with the Assyrian Patriarch and leaders which led up to the withdrawal of the Levy manifesto, the Assyrian Patriarch was promised that His Majesty's Government would try to bring the matter before the league of nations prior to the termination of the mandatory regime and would do everything possible to ensure that the Assyrians received an early reply to their petition. If the normal procedure were followed, and this petition and the previous petition of October 1931 were left to be examined by the Mandates Commission next November and then, as would probably happen, referred by the Commission to the League Council to dealt with under the normal minorities procedure, the Assyrian leaders might well consider that the promise given to them had not been fulfilled, and that they had been tricked. While it is most important that the Assyrians should not be left with any such impression, it is equally important that nothing should be done which might endanger Iraq's admission to the League at the next meeting of the Assembly. Any tendency on the part of His Majesty's Government to stress unduly the importance of the petitions, or any attempt to rush a decision through before Iraq enters the League, might give rise to suspicion at Geneva and involve serious risk of delaying the admission of Iraq. In particular it is important to avoid any suggestion that these petitions call for any alteration in the minority provisions of the Declaration of Guarantees recently signed by Iraq, which, it is believed, represent the utmost that the Iraqi Government and Parliament could be induced to accept. Moreover no modification or addition to the Guarantees could be accepted by the Iraqi Delegates on their own responsibility. A reference to the Iraqi Parliament would be necessary; and that body does not meet again until November.

16. It has been agreed that the course involving the minimum of risk would be to bring the Assyrian petition of June last incidentally to the notice of the Council, merely as one of outstanding petitions which it would be well for an ad-hoc committee of the Council to consider in view of the fact that, after the termination of the mandatory regime, the Mandates Commission will no longer have competence to deal with such matters. It is, therefore, proposed that when the Council take note of the Iraqi Declaration of Guarantees and are about to pronounce the termination of the mandatory regime, conditional upon Iraq being admitted to the League by the Assembly, the United Kingdom representative should mention that certain petitions are outstanding, with which the Mandates Commission when it next meets will not, in the circumstances, be competent to deal, and should suggest that these petitions should be examined in case they contain anything of which the Council should take note, a special committee being appointed for the purpose to present a report to the Council as soon as possible. A less obtrusive way of dealing with the matter might be to allow the Council's Rapporteur to pass forward those proposal in his report to the Council, and the United Kingdom representative may find it expedient to adopt this procedure unless there is strong reason for doing so, however it would probably be more in accordance with the pledges given to the Assyrians, and partially that the United Kingdom representative should himself put forward the proposal.

17. The procedure contemplated is either that the application of the Council's minorities procedure should be anticipated in the case of these petitions, that is to say, that in spite of the fact that Iraq would not then have been admitted to the League, the petitions should be considered, as if Iraq were a member of the League and the Declaration of guarantees operative, by the Committee of Three of the Council; or, that a special ad-hoc committee with the same composition as that which framed the Iraq Declaration of Guarantees should be set up to consider the petitions and report to the Council.

18. Correspondence on this subject is at present proceeding with the League Secretariat and it is suggested that preparation of any draft statement to be made by United Kingdom Representative should wait until further consultation has taken place.

19. Both the Iraqi Government and the Assyrian Community will be represented at Geneva; the former by the Iraqi Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance, and the latter by the Assyrian Patriarch, the Mar Shimun. Sir Francis Humphrys will also be at Geneva. **(September 17, 1932)**

Mar Shimoun's Petition to the League of Nations

**THE PATRIARCHATE OF THE EAST
Mosul, October 23rd, 1931**

Petition on behalf of Assyrian Nation

**To:
His Excellency
The Chairman of the Mandate's Commission
to the League of Nations,
GENEVA.**

Reference the attached document I beg to inform your Excellency. The Assyrian Nation which is temporarily living in Iraq having placed before their eyes the dark future, and the miserable conditions, which are undoubtedly waiting to

meet them in Iraq, after the withdrawal of the Mandate, they unanimously held a conference with me in Mosul, on the 20th October, 1931. In this conference were present the temporal and spiritual leaders of the Assyrian Nation as a whole, as the following related document shows the names thereof, and the future condition was most fully discoursed on the two following points: - (Can we live in Iraq, or not). On the conclusion of a very long discussion, it was unanimously decided by all the members, that it is impossible for us to live in Iraq, and the will of all the members was entrusted to me, through the said document signed by them that I may work through any way that I am deem possible for the immigration of the Assyrians out of Iraq. This being so, I, with the undermentioned signatories who are the responsible leaders of the Assyrian Nation, submit before your Commission our Nation's humble request, which in centuries past numbered in millions, but owing to the numerous persecutions and massacres that surrounded us, we are now reduced to a very small number. And up to the present we have preserved our language and our faith throughout all the persecutions and massacres that have befallen us. The near past condition of our nation, has been fully made known to you, through the official workers of our Nation. This being so, we do not see it necessary to relate every condition in detail, but we are positively sure that if we remain in Iraq, in a few years time we shall be wiped out of existence. This being so, we implore your mercy to take care of us, and immigrate us to one of the countries under the rule of one of the Western Nations any of which you may deem proper. And if this is not possible, that you may request the French Government to accept us in Syria, and take us under its responsibility, because we can no longer live in Iraq, and we will leave.

(Signed by)

- 1. Eshai Shimoun (by the Grace of God.)
Catholicos Patriarch of the East.**
- 2. Yoseph Khananishu, Metropolitan.**
- 3. Zia Sargis by Grace, Bishop.**
- 4. Khoshaba, Malik Yoseph.**
- 5. Zia Malik Shamizdin.**
- 6. Malik Andrews of Jelu.**
- 7. Malik Marogil**
- 8. Malik Khanu of Tkhooma.**
- 9. Malik Khamo of Baz.**
- 10. Malik Ismael of Upper Tiary.**

Letter of Request, the Metropolitans, Leaders of the Tribes (Maliks), Rayses, and the Priestss:

We the Chiefs and representatives of the Tribes of the Assyrian Nation, that our names are under mentioned, having considered the future of our Nation in Iraq, we gather unanimously to Mosul, to His Beatitude Mar Shimoun Patriarch.

Having fully discussed the said case, we came to decide that our living in Iraq, after the withdrawl of the Great Britain's Mandate, is impossible.

This being so, we requested the Patriarch, as the head of our Nation, to struggle in every way that he may deem possible, for the fulfillment of our above related decision, that is to say immigrate us out of this country. And in the affirmation of our decision we are hereby attaching our signatures.

SIGNATORIES:

1. Yoseph Khanisho, Metropolitan,
2. Zia Sargis, by the Grace of God, Bishop,
3. Malik Andrews of Jelu.
4. Malik Nimrud of Jelu.
5. Malik Khnanu of Tkhooma.
6. Shimoun Barkhishu.
7. Zia Odishu,
8. Rayes Odisho of Rumtha.
9. Sulaka of Bohtan.
10. Shamasha Saipo.
12. Dinkha Bacus.
13. Revd. Tooma Archdeacon of Ashita.
14. Buku Rayes Oshana.

15. Rayes Jajju Hormizd.
 16. Khamis Shimoun.
 17. Bacus Aiwass.
 18. Shimoun Mooshi.
 19. Yoseph Adam.
 20. Malik Yokhanan of Tkhooma.
 21. Malik Warda of Dizen.
 22. Malik David.
 23. Maksut Lawandu.
 24. Shamsha Shlimun of Gundicta.
 25. Revd. Sahda.
 26. Shikhu Ispendiar.
 27. Rayes Shinu of Upper Tiary.
 28. Rayes Wards of Simeli.
 29. Sawa of Taal.
 30. Rayes Athniel.
 31. Malik Khamo of Baz.
 32. Malik Ismael of Upper Tiary.
 33. David Khoshaba.
 34. Malik Marogil.
 35. Rayes Haroon.
 36. Haroon Shimoun.
 37. Lira Ishu.
 38. Yonan Malik Giwargis.
 39. Soru Bubbu.
 40. Shamasha Ishu.
 41. Rayes Nissan Yalda.
 42. Rayes Dinkha of Sadt.
 43. Shamasha Israel of Zawita.
 44. Shamasha Gandalu of Zawita.
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BRITISH POLICY IN ASSYRIAN SETTLEMENT

**Extract from Iraq Command Intelligency Summary
No. 19 for fortnight ending September 21, 1932.**

ASSYRIAN AFFAIRS

Reference paragraph 529 of 1932. The acting High Commissioner has received, for transmission to the League of Nations, a petition from a number of Assyrians who are in disagreement with the policy of Mar Shimoun. A copy of the petition is attached at Appendix "A", together with particulars of the signatories where available.

The June petition was signed by the Bishops, the Maliks and Officers of the 'Assyrian Levies and the signatories purported to represent all the Assyrians in 'Iraq, with the exception of the Barwari Bala, Sapna and Nerva-Raikan tribes, who have been settled in their present villages since the days of Turkish rule and have always been content to continue under the 'Iraq Government. The new petition, inspired by Bishop Yuwalaha of BARWARI BALA, is signed by these latter tribes and is a disclaimer of the June petition. It represents families who were considered, by virtue of the signatures of their maliks to be supporters of the earlier petition and it follows, therefore, that one of the two petitions cannot be accepted at its face value.

The recent petition has one virtue in that it specifies in some detail the villages and sections it claims to represent. The majority of its signatories are minor characters, such as village headmen, but this does not necessarily detract from the value of the document, which may be regarded as a petition from the people themselves, whilst the June petition, signed by the religious leaders, may or may not have had the support of the people.

At first sight the signatories of the Bishop Yuwalah's petition appear to represent 2,395 families, but in actual fact some of the claims are excessive whilst others are already included in the larger figures, thus appearing twice. 1,200 families is a conservative estimate, which is probably about right.

Mar Shimoun's party, of which Lady Surma is now the most active member, is very indignant at the appearance of this latest petition and immediate steps are being taken to counteract its effect. Lady Surma asserts that the people were persuaded to sign the petition without knowing its real purport and she is now actively engaged in drawing up a statement to be signed by the same signatories attesting that they were induced to sign the document under official persuasion and pressure.

(Authority S.S.O. MOSUL)

COMMENT.

A document of the nature of the September petition will seriously embarrass the position of Mar Shimoun at GENEVA and it may be assumed that no stone will be left unturned by his representatives on Iraq in order to put him in possession of a document repudiating the genuineness of this latest manifesto and thus vindicating his claims to represent the Assyria race. With regard to the petition itself, it does not represent the opinions of anything like 2,395 Assyrian families and it is more than probable that many of the signatories were ignorant of the text and motive of the petition at the time of signing and were encouraged to do so by Government officials, who apparently assisted in framing the document. At the same time, there is a gradually increasing number of Assyrians who view with displeasure the policy of Mar Shimoun and who are now no longer content to place their future entirely in his hands.

ASSYRIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The circumstances in which the move by air of an infantry battalion from Egypt to Iraq was undertaken in June, 1932, could be adequately described only by a detailed account of the problem of Assyrian settlement and of the various attempts which had been made, unfortunately without success, to provide for its solution. Such account would be more appropriate to a political appreciation than to a military record of events for the period covered by the present Report. In its definitely military aspect the problem became acute with the issue on 1st June, 1932, of a manifesto signed by the Assyrian officers of the Iraqi levies which announced the intention of all the Assyrian ranks of the levies to terminate their military service at the end of June 1932. The reason given for taking this step was that the British Government had failed to safeguard the future of the Assyrian nation after the termination of the mandate over Iraq. This revelation of the effect of the Assyrian national aspirations on the loyalty and discipline of the Assyrians serving in the Iraq levies came as a complete surprise. The leaders had planned this coup some months previously, but the secret had been well kept.

THE DECISION TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS AND DISCHARGE THE ASSYRIANS.

In spite of the grave breach of discipline involved in the manifesto, there appeared to be no alternative but to accept the resignations. It was clearly undesirable to retain in its Majesty's service men who had decided to break their engagements, and it was thought at first that the manifesto was no more than a bluff, designed to force the British Government to support the political demands of the Assyrian minority in Iraq. Plans were therefore made for the Assyrian officers and men in the Iraq levies to be discharged between 18th and 30th June, 1932.

ASSYRIAN PLANS

In the meantime every effort was made to find out what were the intentions of the Assyrian leaders, and whether any concrete plan lay behind the manifesto. The information which soon became available showed that the situation was far more serious than had appeared at first sight.

The Mar Shimoun and other leaders of the Assyrians had frequently expressed their grave anxiety at the prospect of the termination of the Mandate. They were convinced that as soon as the protection of Great Britain was withdrawn they would be subjected to continual persecution by the Iraq Government, eventuating perhaps in ultimate massacre. When questioned as to the cause of their fears they always pointed to certain incidents which had already taken place in the Kurdis mountains, such as the murder of Assyrians by Kurds and the subsequent failure of the Iraqi officials to trace the murderers, and the general indifference which the Iraqi Government showed towards such occurrences.

From the enquiries which were now made it appeared that the leaders, faced with the immediate prospect of the termination of the Mandate while their demands for homogeneous national settlement were still unsatisfied, had decided to take a desperate step to draw attention to their fears and to their demands, and if possible to force the British Government to meet their requests before the termination of the Mandate. This step was none other than to concentrate in the Amadia district the whole of that part of the Assyrian nation which had originally been domiciled in the Hakkiari district of Turkey. Whatever might be the political reactions of this plan, it would at least realise their oft-expressed desire to reunite the Assyrian nation. The resignation of the Assyrians in the Levies was the keystone of this plan. It was intended that the disbanded Assyrian soldiers should march through the country, carrying with them, willy-nilly, the civilian Assyrian population. The discharged Assyrians from Hinaidi would collect the civilian Assyrians living in Baghdad, such as servants, artisans and railway workers, and take them along with them to Amadia. Similarly, it was intended that the Companies at Diana should migrate with the whole population of Diana village to Amadia by way of the districts

occupied by settled Assyrians (Dasht I Harir), and that they should take along with them the inhabitants of all Assyrian villages through which they passed. Simultaneously, the Assyrians employed in the Iraqi Army and police would resign or desert and join the movement. The whole nation would in that way move north and concentrate in the Amadia district.

POSSIBLE RESULTS OF THE ASSYRIAN PLAN

Although their plans subsequent to this concentration were nebulous, it was obvious that a movement of this kind would have highly dangerous possibilities, particularly as the Assyrians are well armed with some five thousand modern British rifles and ammunition presented to them by the British authorities under the Dohuk agreement of October, 1922. In the first place, the Diana migration of approximately 2,000 souls (including about 100 armed men) would pass through Kurdish districts, and as the provisioning of so large a number of migrants would give rise to serious difficulties, it seemed probable that disturbances would arise. Even if they did not arise during the march to Amadia, the resources of that district would be insufficient to support so great a concentration of people. With the coming of winter, if not earlier, this great surplus population would find itself without adequate accommodation, food, or means of livelihood. Consequently, it seemed inevitable that sooner or later there would be serious trouble. If disturbances occurred before or just at the time when Iraq was about to be admitted to the League of Nations they might well result in a postponement of the admission of Iraq to the League. Moreover, unless some real attempt were made to prevent the disbandment of the Levies it would appear to the Iraqis that the British were conniving in the Assyrian plan by deliberately disbanding the Levies to enable them to bring about their national concentration in the Amadia district. Thus the Iraqis might easily attribute the whole movement to a Machiavellian plan on the part of the British to prevent at the last moment the admission of Iraq to the League, and consequently to prolong the Mandate and balk Iraqi independence. The knowledge that the Assyrians had been deliberately armed with modern rifles and trained in modern fighting tactics by the British would more than confirm and aggravate these suspicions, and would undoubtedly give rise to bitter resentment. The acute anti-British sentiment which might then develop, combined with the keen disappointment caused by the postponement of their independence, might ultimately result in serious anti-British rioting.

IF CARRIED OUT THE PLAN WOULD EFFECT: -

- (i) The long desired concentration of the Assyrian nation.
- (ii) A situation of such potential danger as to embarrass both the British and Iraqi Governments, and compel attention to the Assyrian question.
- (iii) Possibly a break in the good relations existing between the British and Iraqi Governments.
- (iv) Possibly a postponement of the admission of Iraq to the League, and the consequent continuation of the Mandate.

Such might have been the formidable results of the Assyrian plan. Whether the Assyrian nation would ultimately have benefited from these events is another matter.

THEY HAD TIMED THE PLAN ADMIRABLY IN THAT: -

(i) The Iraqi Army and Police and the Royal Air Force were all fully committed to the Barzan operations. Consequently, neither troops nor police could be spared to deal with the movement. The resignation of the many Assyrians in the police engaged in the operations would have caused serious difficulties.

(ii) As a last resort, the Assyrians might join the Barzani rebels, and in fact veiled suggestions to this effect were put about by the Assyrian leaders. This might well have led to widespread revolt in Kurdistan.

(iii) Disturbances resulting from the Amadia concentration would occur just at a time when they might well influence the League to postpone the admission of Iraq.

THE DECISION TO DETAIN THE ASSYRIANS.

The discovery of the true nature of the Assyrian plans placed an entirely different complexion on the whole affair. At first, as described above, the Levy manifesto had been regarded as an attempt, complete in itself, to attract attention to the Assyrian demands. But when these plans for the whole-sale migration of the Assyrian nation and for their concentration in the Amadia district became known, it was no longer possible to deal with the Levy manifesto as a matter only of purely military or domestic concern. The grave political consequences which would follow if the first plan of disbanding the Assyrians was carried out, had to be taken into consideration. It would indeed be difficult to disprove the conviction which would inevitably arise in Iraq circles, that in deliberately discharging some 1,500 men from the Levies, the British Government were conniving at a challenge by the Assyrians just at the time when Iraq was expecting to become independent.

Consequently, in the light of the information now available regarding the Assyrian intentions, it was agreed with the High Commissioner, that it was imperative to take steps to prevent the mass movement of the discharged Assyrian Levies. It was considered that means must at all costs be found to baulk the Assyrian plan to concentrate in the Amadia district, and that the best means available to us to prevent that concentration was to prevent the discharged Assyrians carrying out the marches by means of which they hoped to carry with them the great numbers of Assyrian civilian working in such centres as Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul, or settled in the villages in the Dash I Harir and Nahla districts. The High Commissioner was confident that, if it were possible to prevent these marches the whole concentration plan would fall to the ground. Our information indicated that the Assyrian soldiers themselves provided the main impetus in the hands of the leaders, and that the civilian would certainly not move of themselves. Thus, if the Levy soldiers could be stopped, the whole movement might be scotched.

In any event it was considered that it would be essential to avoid creating the impression that the British were conniving at the Assyrian movement by refraining from taking firm steps to prevent it.

There is always a seasonable migration of Assyrian families into the Amadia mountains in the early summer. During the month of June this migration became abnormally large, due to Assyrian soldiers despatching their families to the north in expectation of joining them later on at the end of the month. Although this movement was not in itself of grave importance, it was very desirable to check it, because it would be much easier to detain the Assyrian soldiers if their families remained with them, than if their families had already gone north. The concern which an Assyrian always feels for the safety of his family is well known, and he is liable under any circumstances to become anxious and restless if separated from his family. The Iraqi Government was therefore sounded as to the possibility of checking the northward movement of these families, but it was found that in their opinion it was not legally possible to do so. Our own attempts necessarily cautious and circumspect, to check the movement of the families also failed, and the unavoidable loss of the strong hold over the Assyrian soldiers, which the presence of their families would have given us, had to be accepted. It would obviously have been much easier to prevent the movement of the Assyrian soldiers if they had to take their families with them, and they would certainly not go without their families.

PLAN FOR THE RESTRAINING OF THE LEVIES

The High Commissioner proposed in the first place to take all possible steps by negotiation with the leaders to induce them to postpone or cancel their project. Should these efforts prove fruitless, we decided that we should have to consider means to prevent the Levies taking their discharge as they intended to do by the end of June and to detain them, if necessary, by force, in their cantonments. Plans for the forcible detention of the Assyrians in their cantonments had therefore to be considered.

Under any circumstances this would have been an extremely difficult problem and the departure of most of the families made it more difficult. In the first place it would obviously be necessary to disarm the Assyrians before detaining them, as it was above all thing essential that the operation should be carried out without fighting of any kind. It was unlikely that they would quietly submit to disarmament if they were aware that they were subsequently to be detained forcibly. The first essential to the success of our plans was therefore the utmost secrecy and we must on no account allow the Assyrian Levies for one moment to suspect that we did not intend to allow them to take their discharges at the expiration of the months notice which they had given in their manifesto. Accordingly, complete arrangements were openly made to put the discharges into effect.

In the circumstances, it was reasonable that precautionary measures should be taken to ensure that no trouble occurred at the time of the disarming and discharge of Assyrian soldiers, and no attempt was made to conceal the fact that certain precautionary measures of this kind would be taken. It was, of course, possible that the companies would refuse to hand over their arms or that they might creat disturbances in connection with their final pay settlements, especially as it would be necessary to deduct from their final pay a proportion of their re-engagement bonus due on account of the unexpired portion of their contract. It was necessary, however, to take the most extreme care to keep our intention of detaining the men absolutely secret.

ANTI MAR SHIMOUN PETITION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

**Air Headquarters,
Iraq Command,
Hinaidi,**

21st September, 1932

**APPENDIX "A"
TO SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE NO. 19**

**Translation of Petition addressed to His Excellency Nuri Pasha,
The Prime Minister of IRAQ, for transmission to the
Secretarial of the League of Nations through His
Excellency the Highh Commissioner for IRAQ**

As Mar Shimoun and certain Assyrians who do not represent the Assyrian Community are seeking nothing but personal advantages in the name of that Community, we represent the following in order to reveal the truth and true facts; we the Assyrians in 'Iraq both refugees and original inhabitants are very grateful to the 'Iraqi Government and admit her kindness towards us. She has assisted us very much in our settlement and in employing us in Government appointments, in medical treatment and exemption from taxes and similar privileges. Now we are living under her justice in complete peace, prosperity, safety and tranquility, nor is there any difference between us and our 'Iraqi brothers and the guarantees concerning minorities which the 'Iraqi Government has furnished to the respected League of Nations are sufficient to safeguard our rights. In view of these our statements the demands of Mar Shimoun have therefore no value as we do not consider them because they are based on unsound principles and founded on his personal aims and wishes as they have not been made at the request of the Assyrians. He made these demands for his own benefit and those of his relatives and friends. He is moreover an ecclesiastic, having neither connection with other affairs nor any right to dispose at will of the destinies of the Assyrians. He only represents a small number of his relatives and his own family and we represent the communities and people mentioned against our respective signatures. We submit this document and request that Mar Shimoun's demands should not be taken into consideration and that we be permitted to live in peace and tranquility under the 'Iraqi flag.

LIST OF SIGNATORIES

Name of Chief.	Tribe.	No. of families claimed.	Official estimate of families	REMARKS
Bishop Yuwalaha Barwari Bala, Nerva Raikan and Sapna.	Barwari Bala	-	-	Bishop of
				Represents tribes settled in present villages before Great War, 1914-1918. Took no part in activities for an Assyrian concentration.
Zekharia Govergis.	Barwari Bala. (Ain Noni Village	30	30	
Derwish David.	----- do -----	20		
Yacub Shino. Villazge) 20 represent	Barwari Bala. (Hayis	12		Father and son duplicated all together
	12 families of Hayis.			
Shlimon Yacub	----- do -----	40	12	
Shlimon .	----- do -----	25		
Marbina Haji.	Barwari Bala.	30	20	
Tawar Ismail.	Barwari Bala (Eyat Village)	15		
Jajju Esho	----- do -----	20		
Zaia Tooma.	----- do -----	15		
Esho Orahim.	----- do -----	15		
Slaiman Gevergis.	----- do -----	15		
Khamis Shamo	----- do -----	10		
Khiyu Orahim.	----- do -----	25		
Zaia Aziz.	----- do -----	15		
Lazar Mako	----- do -----	10		
Zaia Noona.	----- do -----	10		
Yukhanan Joseph	----- do -----	15		
Hormez Shimoun	----- do -----	15		
Doud Shiba	----- do -----	17		
Yukhanan Nanoo.	----- do -----	8		
Kanoon Dakoo	----- do -----	10		
Tooma.	----- do -----	17		
Sada Shmuil	----- do -----	7		
Khoshaba Shimoun	----- do -----	12		
Yousuf Envia.	----- do -----	87		
Khoshaba-a-Yukhanan	BARWARI BALA.	52		
Khamro Antoo	----- do -----	16		
Neesan Polis	----- do -----	14		
Bareham Warda	----- do -----	16		

Sliwo Mirza	----- do -----	12	The number of families in Barwari Bala
Assyrian tribes is approximately 409 families,			
Khoshaba Warda.	----- do -----	32	according to official figures. Families
claimed to be represented on the Septembner petition			
Mooshi Naider	----- do -----	17	are 749 families.
Nomi Mooshi	----- do -----	36	
Goriel Zomaia.	----- do -----	8	
Lazar Goro.	----- do -----	7	
Tooma Marogul	----- do -----	12	
Doud Zia	----- do -----	24	
Rais Khiyou	Lower Tiari (Ashita).	300	Rais Jajju is the rightful chief of Ashita
which was represented by the principal chiefs of			
			Lower Tiari. Malik Khoshaba and
Zaiah Shemsdin both signed the June petition, in			favour of Mar Shimoun.
			This is a section of Lower Tiari; was
Chosino Adam.	Lower Tiari. (Lizan).	100	Khoshaba in June Petition, in
represented by Malik Zaiah Shemsdin and Malik			
favour of Mar Shimoun.			
Jaju Dinkha.	Lower Tiari.	50	
Shabi Eshaia.	Lower Tiari	30	
Gevergis Daniel.	Lower Tiari (Kasran).	54	
Deri Maxud Lawando	Lower Tiari (Bnni Gippa)	200	There are only 40 families with Benyamin
and Maxud Lawando and not 270 as claimed.			
Benyamin Cholo.	Lower Tiari		
Rais Ibrahim.	Nerva Tribe.	16	There are only 4 families with Rais
Ibrahim and not 16 as claimed.			
Yacub Yoseph	Nerva Tribe.	40	
Gilliana Mirza.	Nerva Tribe.(Nerva Zhor).	50	Mirza Gilliana and Gilliana Mirza of Nerva
Zhor father and son, both represent 6 families,			
			total inhabitants of the village.
Zaia Malik Nimrud	Jelu Tribe.	400	The father of Zia, Malik Nimrud, together
with other two chiefs of the Jelu tribe signed the			
Conference with Mar Shimoun.			Assyrian petition at Ser Amadia
			Malik Nimrud himself actually
represent 50 families out of 100 Jelu families settled in			Qadha and out of
Shaikhhan			and is a school boy.
250 families of the whole of Jelu tribe in Iraq. Zaia is 16 years old			
Rais Khoshaba Towil	Deri Village of Sapna.	40	
Rais Yukhana.	Dergoni Village of Nahla.	40	

BRITISH POLICY IN ASSYRIAN SETTLEMENT

EASTERN (IRAQ). CONFIDENTIAL

British Public Record Office
(E 6023/23/93)

November 17, 1932.
No. 1

OPINION OF THE PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION

Note by the Secretary-General, League of Nations. -
(Received in British Foreign Office November 17.)

Geneva, November 14, 1932

The Secretary-General has the honour to communicate herewith to the Council the opinion (with one appendix and one annex) given by the Permanent Mandates Commission during its twenty-second session after the examination of the

petitions from the Assyrian population in Iraq, in conformity with the Council recommendation of the 24th September, 1932.

OPINION OF THE COMMISSION

When formulating its opinion, the commission fully realised how delicate was its task from the constitutional point of view. When, on the 24th September, 1932, the Council of the League of Nations asked the Mandates Commission to examine the Petitions of the Assyrian of Iraq, that country was still subject to the regime provided for in article 22 of the Covenant, and Great Britain was responsible for the application to it of the tutelary principles of this article. Since then Iraq has been emancipated from its guardianship, and admitted to the League of Nations. There is now, therefore, neither a mandate nor mandatory Power in regard to Iraq. Furthermore, the Iraqi Government, which henceforth is alone responsible for the administration of that State, could not be heard by the commission.

Subject to this observation the commission, in response to the Council's formal invitation, addresses to it the following opinion: -

" The Permanent Mandates Commission.

" Having examined the petitions from the Assyrian community in Iraq which have been forwarded to the League of Nations since the commission's twentyfirst session;

" Having noted the observations of the United Kingdom Government on those petitions and heard the additional information given orally by the representative of that Government;

" Endorsing the attached conclusion of its rapporteur; (1)

" Draws the Councils special attention to the great importance both for the Assyrians themselves and for Iraq of providing the Assyrians with opportunities for settlement in a homogeneous group which would be in keeping with their traditions and would satisfy their economic needs;

" For the rest, it considers, for the reasons stated in its rapporteur; conclusions, that there is no need for it to submit to the Council any other special recommendation in regard to those petitions."

APPENDIX.

Conclusions of the Rapporteur to the Permanent Mandates Commission.

From a comparison of the documents analysed above (2) and of the numerous petitions previously addressed to the League by Assyrian groups or on behalf of the Assyrians of Iraq there arises a definite impression that this community is dissatisfied with its present lot and profoundly uneasy as to its future. A few discordant voices in this concert of complaints and appeals to the League only emphasise its practical unanimity.

It should not, however, be inferred --- as the commission has already pointed out on other occasions,, while expressing the concern with which it views the position of the minorities --- that either the mandatory Power or the Iraqi authorities are open to grave reproach for the manner in which the Assyrians settled in Iraq have been treated under the mandatory system. No proof has indeed ever been provided that they were treated with unjustifiable severity by the Iraqi authorities, or that they were victims of an abuse of power; it is remarkable that in the petitions dealt with in the present report no complaint that can be entertained has been brought against these authorities.

Amongst the Assyrians of Iraq the greater number, who have come from Turkey in Asia, have found shelter in this country in the course of the last few years. They are encamped there in conditions which, in most cases, are precarious and miserable; they are "refugees."

They have had to be settled on the land. In fact, these mountaineers have been settled in districts consisting of marshy and unhealthy plains, or dispersed in small groups or families in the midst of the Kurdish or Arab population, according to the possibilities offered by the occupation of the soil.

In the petitions which the commission has had to deal with at its previous sessions, we find an expression of the feeling of insecurity inspired in the Assyrians, not only by the climate, with the casualties which it causes in their ranks, by the sterility of the land which has been assigned to them and by the precariousness of their rights to cultivate the soil, but **especially by the scattering of their community among populations of other races.**

It is this latter circumstance which explains these individual acts of violence, these attacks against persons and property which the Assyrians have constantly complained of, and which they fear --- since the cessation of British control has appeared imminent --- will be multiplied to the point of making the conditions of existence of their community definitely intolerable.

The root cause of the state of unrest revealed by the petitions we are dealing with resides in the fact that it has not yet been possible to collect the Assyrians of Iraq into a homogeneous group in a region suitable to their needs.

Your rapporteur is inclined to think that as long as this has not been done the discontent and moral dissidence of this section of its population will remain like a thorn in the flesh of Iraq. This opinion seems to fall in with that of the Government of the United Kingdom when it states that "the return of the Assyrians to their old homes in the Hakkari Mountains would still undoubtedly be the best solution."

It has not been proved to the satisfaction of an impartial observer that lands combining the requisite conditions for the settlement of the Assyrians in a homogeneous group do not exist in Iraq, or that the possibility of resettling them in their country of origin must be definitely ruled out. It would be desirable for the Council of the League to use its influence in favour of one or other of these solutions being sincerely sought.

We share the confidence of the Government of the United Kingdom in the part which the Assyrian element is destined to play in Iraq, but we are inclined to believe that the Assyrians would be still more likely to remain loyal subjects if they were placed in conditions more closely approaching to those which they had been led to expect in view of the circumstances to which they draw attention.

There is here a situation worthy of engaging the League's attention. It concerns the very existence of a race whose glorious past goes back to the earliest history, and it also concerns the future of Iraq. The League has followed the progress accomplished by this young State, and has consecrated its political emancipation: any factor which may hamper its peaceful and harmonious development cannot leave the League indifferent.

On the other hand, there is one aspiration of the Assyrians which cannot find any encouragement; namely, that of granting the widest administrative autonomy to the Assyrian "nation" ("millet") grouped in the territory which Iraq may assign to it. The adoption of such a solution would imperil the unity of the Iraqi state, and could not but perpetuate the antipathy with which the Assyrians believe themselves to be viewed by the other elements of the nation in the midst of which they are destined to live.

The other specific solutions proposed in the various petitions call for the following observations: -

1. The request for the mass transfer of the Assyrian section put forward in the first petition is a matter on which the Permanent Mandates Commission cannot express an opinion.
2. A modification of the northern frontiers of Iraq as defined in the Council's decision of 1925, and in the provisions of the Angora Treaty of 1926, suggested in the second petition could only take place as a result of an agreement between the States concerned. Such an agreement might constitute a satisfactory solution and be sought by Iraq should it be found that there was no territory in Iraq itself which was suitable for the settlement of the Assyrians as a homogeneous group.
3. As regards the future status of minorities in Iraq, which is also dealt with in this petition, it has already been defined and guaranteed by the declaration recently signed by the Iraqi Government on the recommendation of the Council of the League of Nations. This declaration makes it open in future to the Assyrians, as to the other minorities in Iraq, to resort to the ordinary procedure in the matter of the protection of minorities.
4. The Mar Shimoun's last petition merely reproduces in more general terms the assertions already contained in his previous petitions, and produces no evidence of a nature to change the commission's opinion.

ANNEX.

Report presented to the Permanent Mandate Commission by M. Orts, Member of the Commission, Rapporteur.

At its meeting on the 24th September, 1932, the Council expressed the desire that the Mandates Commission should report to it as soon as possible on the petitions from the Assyrians in Iraq, forwarded to the League by the mandatory Power since the commission's last session.

The petitions from this source, which have so far reached the secretariat, are as follows: --

I, Two petitions, dealing with the same subject, dated the 20th and the 23rd October, 1931, emanating respectively from certain representatives of the Assyrians of Iraq and from the Mar Shimoun, forwarded by the United Kingdom Government, together with its observations, on the 11th March, 1932.

(Document C. P. M. 12282.0)

II. Petition, dated the 17th June, 1932, from certain Assyrian leaders and representatives of the Assyrian levies in Iraq, forwarded by the United Kingdom Government, together with its observations, on the 8th September, 1932. (Document C.P.M, 1296)

III. Petition from Bishop Yuwalah, forwarded by the United Kingdom Government, together with its observations, on the 21st September, 1932.
Document C.P.M. 12298)

IV. Petition, dated the 22nd September, 1932, from the Mar Shimoun, forwarded by the United Kingdom Government on the 27th September, 1932.

Document C.P.. 1300) Letter from the United Kingdom Government dated the 2nd November, 1932, stating that it has no observations to make on this petition. (Document C.P.M. 1321.

The petitions, dated the 20th and the 23rd October, 1931, and the 21st September, 1932, the originals of which were in Syriac, were forwarded by the United Kingdom Government in an English translation. Those of the 17th June and the 22nd September, 1932, were forwarded in English without mention of the language in which they were originally drawn up.

ANNEX - I -

The signatories of the petitions of the 20th and the 23rd October, 1931, assert that it will be impossible for them to live in Iraq after the withdrawal of the Mandate from Iraq in 1932 therefore they are asking that all arrangements be made for the transfer of the Assyrians in Iraq to a country under the rule of any of the Western nations, or, if this is not possible, to Syria.

The United Kingdom Government replied in its observations that if the French Government, or any other European Government, were prepared to offer the Assyrians compact accommodation, to guarantee them fair and permanent conditions, and to finance their transport, and if the Assyrians themselves desired to accept the offer, neither the mandatory Power nor the Iraqi Government would object.

Such a contingency, however, seemed so remote that the United Kingdom Government did not think it expedient to take any steps in the matter.

With regard to the allegation that it will be impossible for the Assyrians to live in Iraq, the United Kingdom Government refers to the conclusions of the Permanent Mandates Commission on Captain Hormuzd Rassam's petitions. It feels confident that as soon as the Assyrian are convinced that their visions of an autonomous Assyrian State within Iraq, or of wholesale immigration is impossible of realisation, they will become a most useful section of the Iraqi nation.

ANNEX - II -

The Second Petition Asks ----

1. That the Assyrian be recognised as a "millet" (nation) domiciled in Iraq.
2. That the regions from which they came, now in Turkish territory, be returned to them, and the boundaries of Iraq extended so as to include them.
3. That, if it is impossible to fulfill this latter request, a "national home" be set aside for them, and that this home be open to all Assyrians who are ex-Ottomans; this home to be organised as follows: -

(a) The whole of the district of Amedia and the adjacent parts of the districts of Zakho, Dohuk and Akra to be created a separate and specifically Assyrian district forming a subdivision of the Liwa of Mosul with an Arab mutassarif and British adviser.

(b) An investigation to be made by an authoritative commission with a view to deciding upon improvements in the position of the Assyrian communities in Iraq. The necessary funds to be placed at the disposal of those communities. The land chosen for the settlement of the Assyrian to be conveyed to them as their individual property with regular title-deeds.

(c) Priority to be given to Assyrians in this administrative sub-division in the selection of public officials, except the mutassarif and technical advisers. The official language to be Syriac side by side with Arabic.

4. That the temporal and ecclesiastical leadership of the Mar Shimoun over the Assyrian "millet" be recognised by the Government.
5. That the Assyrians and the Patriarch have the right to nominate a member of Parliament.
6. That the Government establish schools at the places to be decided upon in consultation with the Mar Shimoun, and that the Assyrian language be taught in those schools in the same way as Arabic.
7. That 500,000 rupees be granted by the League of Nations or by the Iraqi Government for the erection by the Assyrians of residences for the Patriarch and bishops and churches and schools.
8. That a hospital and the necessary dispensaries be established in the sub-division.
9. That men who have served in the Assyrian levies be allowed to retain their rifles.

The United Kingdom Government states that, while the petitioners represent the majority of those Assyrians who have come from Turkey, the autochthonous Assyrians are not represented among them. Regarding their various claims, the United Kingdom Government makes the following observations:-

1. A special national status could not be given to the Assyrians without arousing demands for similar treatment from other racial, linguistic and religious minorities. The national unity of Iraq would thus be endangered.

Further, unoccupied land does not exist in Iraq whereon the Assyrian could be settled as an autonomous community and, without compact settlement, administrative autonomy would be impracticable.

2. When the question of the frontier between Turkey and Iraq was before the Council, the United Kingdom Government strongly urged that the lands where the home villages of the Assyrians were situated, most of which were ultimately allotted to Turkey, should be assigned to Iraq.

The best solution would undoubtedly be the return of the Assyrians to the Hakkiari Mountain. The Turkish Government, however, has so far refused to permit the Assyrian to return to their old villages.

3. In view of the difficulties attendant upon the settlement of the Assyrians already in Iraq, the United Kingdom Government does not feel justified in pressing the Iraqi Government to permit the immigration of large number of Assyrians.

(a) The area claimed by the petitioners for the creation of an Assyrian national home contains about 77,000 inhabitants, of whom 57,000 are Kurds and 16,000 Christians, of the latter, about 60 per cent, are Assyrians. The four Qadhas mentioned in the petition have been recognised as predominately Kurdish within the meaning of article 9 of the Iraqi Government's declaration to the Council.

(b) With regard to the request for an investigation into the condition of the Assyrian colonies, it is pointed out that a special committee has already been set up for this purpose. On the basis of this committee's conclusions, the Iraqi Government has drawn up a plan for the settlement of the Assyrians. The question of the registration of title is the subject of a scheme based on data supplied by an expert. The grant of title to Assyrian refugees on preferential terms would, however, provoke resentment among the other inhabitants.

(c) It would be inadvisable to give the Assyrians a privileged position in an area where they represent only one-fifth of the population. The request that Syriac should be recognised as the official language is unacceptable for similar reasons and, moreover, ignores the provisions of the Local Languages Law.

4. The Mar Shimoun is actually recognised as the spiritual head of the Assyrians. He receives a monthly allowance from the Iraqi Government. The Assyrians enjoy complete autonomy in matters of personal status, religion and education, and the maintenance of this regime in future is assured by article 6 of the declaration made by the Iraqi Government to the Council. In any case, no temporal authority could be granted to the Mar Shimoun, which might prevent the application of the laws of the country to Assyrians.

5. The law provides that two Christian Deputies shall be elected by the Mosul Liwa. To guarantee that one of these two Deputies shall always be an Assyrian would be contrary to the law, and might provoke resentment among the other Christian communities, who are more numerous than the Assyrians.

6. The educational rights of minorities will be safeguarded by article 8 of the Iraqi Declaration. The Iraqi Government will sympathetically consider the possibility of increasing the grants given to Assyrian schools.

7. Assuming that the sum of 500,000 rupees asked for by the petitioners could be obtained, it could be better spent on facilitating the settlement of the Assyrians and the establishment of social services than on the building of residences for the Patriarch and the bishops.

8. At present there are dispensaries at Amedia and Dohuk, and three more dispensaries are to be established in the Amedia Qadha. A new motor road connecting the various Assyrian villages had made it easier for the sick to be taken to the Mosul hospital.

9. There has been no suggestion that the rifles given to the men of the Assyrian levies should be taken from them. Recent amendments to the Arms Regulations have legalised the retention by the Assyrians of their British army-pattern rifles.

ANNEX III

The third petition is signed by fifty-eight persons, claiming to represent 2,395 families in all. Its object is refute the Mar Shimoun's petition of the 17th June (No. II)

The petitioners assert that the Mar Shimoun does not represent the Assyrian community, that he is seeking nothing but personal advantages for himself and his relatives and friends, and that his demands are based on unsound principles.

The Assyrians, both refugees and original inhabitants, are very grateful to the Iraqi Government, which has assisted them in various ways, has given them various privileges, and has secured them justice, property and safety.

The guarantees concerning minorities which Iraq has furnished to the League of Nations are sufficient to safeguard their rights. They request that the Mar Shimoun's demands should not be taken into consideration, and that they should be permitted to live in peace under the Iraqi flag.

The United Kingdom Government in its observations gives particulars concerning the various signatories of the petition and their qualifications to speak on behalf of the Assyrian people. The petitioners' claim to represent 2,395 families is certainly exaggerated. In that Government's opinion, however, the petition shows that a considerable body of the Assyrians are not in sympathy with the Patriarch's policy and do not share the alleged dissatisfaction of the Assyrian people with their situation under the Iraqi Government.

ANNEX IV

In the last petition the Patriarch refers to the recommendations of the commission sent by the League to Iraq in 1925 in connexion with the local autonomy of the Assyrians. It was, he says, those recommendations that led the Assyrians to vote for Iraq when the plebiscite for the Mosul Liwa was taken. The commission's recommendations, however, were not followed, and the mandatory Power has revealed its intention of leaving the Assyrians of Iraq in their present state of insecurity.

The Assyrian, he alleges, have a right to claim from the United Kingdom Government, for which they fought in 1918, either the return of their original homes, or, failing that, the grant of another area to serve as national home.

The League of Nations has assumed responsibilities in this respect, in as much as it has assigned the Hakkari Province --- the inheritance of their forefathers --- to Turkey and has given the Assyrians assurances of receiving their rights in the Mosul Vilayet. They therefore request that the Hakkari Province be given back to the Assyrians and included in Iraq under a special administrative system, or else the complete resettlement of the Assyrian people as an autonomous body as requested in the petition of the 17th June (No. II).

Extract from Iraq Command Intelligence Summary
No. 19 for fortnight ending September 21, 1932.

ASSYRIAN AFFAIRS

Reference paragraph 529 of 1932. The acting High Commissioner has received, for transmission to the League of Nations, a petition from a number of Assyrians who are in disagreement with the policy of Mar Shimoun. A copy of the petition is attached at Appendix "A", together with particulars of the signatories where available.

The June petition was signed by the Bishops, the Maliks and Officers of the 'Assyrian Levies and the signatories purported to represent all the Assyrians in 'Iraq, with the exception of the Barwari Bala, Sapna and Nerva-Raikan tribes,

who have been settled in their present villages since the days of Turkish rule and have always been content to continue under the 'Iraq Government. The new petition, inspired by Bishop Yuwalaha of BARWARI BALA, is signed by these latter tribes and is a disclaimer of the June petition. It represents families who were considered, by virtue of the signatures of their maliks to be supporters of the earlier petition and it follows, therefore, that one of the two petitions cannot be accepted at its face value.

The recent petition has one virtue in that it specifies in some detail the villages and sections it claims to represent. The majority of its signatories are minor characters, such as village headmen, but this does not necessarily detract from the value of the document, which may be regarded as a petition from the people themselves, whilst the June petition, signed by the religious leaders, may or may not have had the support of the people.

At first sight the signatories of the Bishop Yuwalaha's petition appear to represent 2,395 families, but in actual fact some of the claims are excessive whilst others are already included in the larger figures, thus appearing twice. 1,200 families is a conservative estimate, which is probably about right.

Mar Shimoun's party, of which Lady Surma is now the most active member, is very indignant at the appearance of this latest petition and immediate steps are being taken to counteract its effect. Lady Surma asserts that the people were persuaded to sign the petition without knowing its real purport and she is now actively engaged in drawing up a statement to be signed by the same signatories attesting that they were induced to sign the document under official persuasion and pressure.

(Authority S.S.O. MOSUL)

COMMENT.

A document of the nature of the September petition will seriously embarrass the position of Mar Shimoun at GENEVA and it may be assumed that no stone will be left unturned by his representatives on Iraq in order to put him in possession of a document repudiating the genuineness of this latest manifesto and thus vindicating his claims to represent the Assyrian race. With regard to the petition itself, it does not represent the opinions of anything like 2,395 Assyrian families and it is more than probable that many of the signatories were ignorant of the text and motive of the petition at the time of signing and were encouraged to do so by Government officials, who apparently assisted in framing the document. At the same time, there is a gradually increasing number of Assyrians who view with displeasure the policy of Mar Shimoun and who are now no longer content to place their future entirely in his hands.

ASSYRIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT

The circumstances in which the move by air of an infantry battalion from Egypt to Iraq was undertaken in June, 1932, could be adequately described only by a detailed account of the problem of Assyrian settlement and of the various attempts which had been made, unfortunately without success, to provide for its solution. Such account would be more appropriate to a political appreciation than to a military record of events for the period covered by the present Report. In its definitely military aspect the problem became acute with the issue on 1st June, 1932, of a manifesto signed by the Assyrian officers of the Iraqi levies which announced the intention of all the Assyrian ranks of the levies to terminate their military service at the end of June 1932. The reason given for taking this step was that the British Government had failed to safeguard the future of the Assyrian nation after the termination of the mandate over Iraq. This revelation of the effect of the Assyrian national aspirations on the loyalty and discipline of the Assyrians serving in the Iraq levies came as a complete surprise. The leaders had planned this coup some months previously, but the secret had been well kept.

THE DECISION TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATIONS AND DISCHARGE THE ASSYRIANS.

In spite of the grave breach of discipline involved in the manifesto, there appeared to be no alternative but to accept the resignations. It was clearly undesirable to retain in its Majesty's service men who had decided to break their engagements, and it was thought at first that the manifesto was no more than a bluff, designed to force the British Government to support the political demands of the Assyrian minority in Iraq. Plans were therefore made for the Assyrian officers and men in the Iraq levies to be discharged between 18th and 30th June, 1932.

ASSYRIAN PLANS

In the meantime every effort was made to find out what were the intentions of the Assyrian leaders, and whether any concrete plan lay behind the manifesto. The information which soon became available showed that the situation was far more serious than had appeared at first sight.

The Mar Shimoun and other leaders of the Assyrians had frequently expressed their grave anxiety at the prospect of the termination of the Mandate. They were convinced that as soon as the protection of Great Britain was withdrawn they would be subjected to continual persecution by the Iraq Government, eventuating perhaps in ultimate massacre. When questioned as to the cause of their fears they always pointed to certain

incidents which had already taken place in the Kurdis mountains, such as the murder of Assyrians by Kurds and the subsequent failure of the Iraqi officials to trace the murderers, and the general indifference which the Iraqi Government showed towards such occurrences.

From the enquiries which were now made it appeared that the leaders, faced with the immediate prospect of the termination of the Mandate while their demands for homogeneous national settlement were still unsatisfied, had decided to take a desperate step to draw attention to their fears and to their demands, and if possible to force the British Government to meet their requests before the termination of the Mandate. This step was none other than to concentrate in the Amadia district the whole of that part of the Assyrian nation which had originally been domiciled in the Hakkiari district of Turkey. Whatever might be the political reactions of this plan, it would at least realise their oft-expressed desire to reunite the Assyrian nation. The resignation of the Assyrians in the Levies was the keystone of this plan. It was intended that the disbanded Assyrian soldiers should march through the country, carrying with them, willy-nilly, the civilian Assyrian population. The discharged Assyrians from Hinaidi would collect the civilian Assyrians living in Baghdad, such as servants, artisans and railway workers, and take them along with them to Amadia. Similarly, it was intended that the Companies at Diana should migrate with the whole population of Diana village to Amadia by way of the districts occupied by settled Assyrians (Dasht I Harir), and that they should take along with them the inhabitants of all Assyrian villages through which they passed. Simultaneously, the Assyrians employed in the Iraqi Army and police would resign or desert and join the movement. The whole nation would in that way move north and concentrate in the Amadia district.

POSSIBLE RESULTS OF THE ASSYRIAN PLAN

Although their plans subsequent to this concentration were nebulous, it was obvious that a movement of this kind would have highly dangerous possibilities, particularly as the Assyrians are well armed with some five thousand modern British rifles and ammunition presented to them by the British authorities under the Dohuk agreement of October, 1922. In the first place, the Diana migration of approximately 2,000 souls (including about 100 armed men) would pass through Kurdish districts, and as the provisioning of so large a number of migrants would give rise to serious difficulties, it seemed probable that disturbances would arise. Even if they did not arise during the march to Amadia, the resources of that district would be insufficient to support so great a concentration of people. With the coming of winter, if not earlier, this great surplus population would find itself without adequate accommodation, food, or means of livelihood. Consequently, it seemed inevitable that sooner or later there would be serious trouble. If disturbances occurred before or just at the time when Iraq was about to be admitted to the League of Nations they might well result in a postponement of the admission of Iraq to the League. Moreover, unless some real attempt were made to prevent the disbandment of the Levies it would appear to the Iraqis that the British were conniving in the Assyrian plan by deliberately disbanding the Levies to enable them to bring about their national concentration in the Amadia district. Thus the Iraqis might easily attribute the whole movement to a Machiavellian plan on the part of the British to prevent at the last moment the admission of Iraq to the League, and consequently to prolong the Mandate and balk Iraqi independence. The knowledge that the Assyrians had been deliberately armed with modern rifles and trained in modern fighting tactics by the British would more than confirm and aggravate these suspicions, and would undoubtedly give rise to bitter resentment. The acute anti-British sentiment which might then develop, combined with the keen disappointment caused by the postponement of their independence, might ultimately result in serious anti-British rioting.

IF CARRIED OUT THE PLAN WOULD EFFECT: -

- (i) The long desired concentration of the Assyrian nation.
- (ii) A situation of such potential danger as to embarrass both the British and Iraqi Governments, and compel attention to the Assyrian question.
- (iii) Possibly a break in the good relations existing between the British and Iraqi Governments.
- (iv) Possibly a postponement of the admission of Iraq to the League, and the consequent continuation of the Mandate.

Such might have been the formidable results of the Assyrian plan. Whether the Assyrian nation would ultimately have benefited from these events is another matter.

THEY HAD TIMED THE PLAN ADMIRABLY IN THAT: -

- (i) The Iraqi Army and Police and the Royal Air Force were all fully committed to the Barzan operations. Consequently, neither troops nor police could be spared to deal with the movement. The resignation of the many Assyrians in the police engaged in the operations would have caused serious difficulties.

(ii) As a last resort, the Assyrians might join the Barzani rebels, and in fact veiled suggestions to this effect were put about by the Assyrian leaders. This might well have led to widespread revolt in Kurdistan.

(iii) Disturbances resulting from the Amadia concentration would occur just at a time when they might well influence the League to postpone the admission of Iraq.

THE DECISION TO DETAIN THE ASSYRIANS.

The discovery of the true nature of the Assyrian plans placed an entirely different complexion on the whole affair. At first, as described above, the Levy manifesto had been regarded as an attempt, complete in itself, to attract attention to the Assyrian demands. But when these plans for the whole-sale migration of the Assyrian nation and for their concentration in the Amadia district became known, it was no longer possible to deal with the Levy manifesto as a matter only of purely military or domestic concern. The grave political consequences which would follow if the first plan of disbanding the Assyrians was carried out, had to be taken into consideration. It would indeed be difficult to disprove the conviction which would inevitably arise in Iraq circles, that in deliberately discharging some 1,500 men from the Levies, the British Government were conniving at a challenge by the Assyrians just at the time when Iraq was expecting to become independent.

Consequently, in the light of the information now available regarding the Assyrian intentions, it was agreed with the High Commissioner, that it was imperative to take steps to prevent the mass movement of the discharged Assyrian Levies. It was considered that means must at all costs be found to baulk the Assyrian plan to concentrate in the Amadia district, and that the best means available to us to prevent that concentration was to prevent the discharged Assyrians carrying out the marches by means of which they hoped to carry with them the great numbers of Assyrian civilian working in such centres as Baghdad, Kirkuk and Mosul, or settled in the villages in the Dash I Harir and Nahla districts. The High Commissioner was confident that, if it were possible to prevent these marches the whole concentration plan would fall to the ground. Our information indicated that the Assyrian soldiers themselves provided the main impetus in the hands of the leaders, and that the civilian would certainly not move of themselves. Thus, if the Levy soldiers could be stopped, the whole movement might be scotched.

In any event it was considered that it would be essential to avoid creating the impression that the British were conniving at the Assyrian movement by refraining from taking firm steps to prevent it.

There is always a seasonable migration of Assyrian families into the Amadia mountains in the early summer. During the month of June this migration became abnormally large, due to Assyrian soldiers despatching their families to the north in expectation of joining them later on at the end of the month. Although this movement was not in itself of grave importance, it was very desirable to check it, because it would be much easier to detain the Assyrian soldiers if their families remained with them, than if their families had already gone north. The concern which an Assyrian always feels for the safety of his family is well known, and he is liable under any circumstances to become anxious and restless if separated from his family. The Iraqi Government was therefore sounded as to the possibility of checking the northward movement of these families, but it was found that in their opinion it was not legally possible to do so. Our own attempts necessarily cautious and circumspect, to check the movement of the families also failed, and the unavoidable loss of the strong hold over the Assyrian soldiers, which the presence of their families would have given us, had to be accepted. It would obviously have been much easier to prevent the movement of the Assyrian soldiers if they had to take their families with them, and they would certainly not go without their families.

PLAN FOR THE RESTRAINING OF THE LEVIES

The High Commissioner proposed in the first place to take all possible steps by negotiation with the leaders to induce them to postpone or cancel their project. Should these efforts prove fruitless, we decided that we should have to consider means to prevent the Levies taking their discharge as they intended to do by the end of June and to detain them, if necessary, by force, in their cantonments. Plans for the forcible detention of the Assyrians in their cantonments had therefore to be considered.

Under any circumstances this would have been an extremely difficult problem and the departure of most of the families made it more difficult. In the first place it would obviously be necessary to disarm the Assyrians before detaining them, as it was above all things essential that the operation should be carried out without fighting of any kind. It was unlikely that they would quietly submit to disarmament if they were aware that they were subsequently to be detained forcibly. The first essential to the success of our plans was therefore the utmost secrecy and we must on no account allow the Assyrian Levies for one moment to suspect that we did not intend to allow them to take their discharges at the expiration of the months notice which they had given in their manifesto. Accordingly, complete arrangements were openly made to put the discharges into effect.

In the circumstances, it was reasonable that precautionary measures should be taken to ensure that no trouble occurred at the time of the disarming and discharge of Assyrian soldiers, and no attempt was made to conceal the fact that certain precautionary measures of this kind would be taken. It was, of course, possible that the companies would refuse to hand over their arms or that they might create disturbances in connection with their final pay settlements, especially as it would be necessary to deduct from their final pay a proportion of their re-engagement bonus due on account of the unexpired portion of their contract. It was necessary, however, to take the most extreme care to keep our intention of detaining the men absolutely secret.

THE REQUEST FOR REINFORCEMENTS

What force would be required to ensure that the detention could be carried out without undue risk of serious disturbance had now to be considered. At this time the Barzan operations were in full swing and had in fact reached a very critical stage. It was quite out of the question to hold up these operations in any way. **It was, in fact, most desirable that they should, if possible, be brought to a conclusion before the end of the month, particularly as the Assyrians themselves had suggested that after they had concentrated in the Amadia district they might decide to ally themselves with the Shaikh of Barzan.** Nos. 30 and 55 (Bomber) Squadrons and half of No. 70) Bomber Transport) squadron, were engaged in the operations, and the aircraft depot was also fully employed in maintaining those units in aircraft and engines. The conclusion was reached that it would be impossible to exercise restraint on the movement of the Assyrian Levies with the available resources, at any rate not without suspending the Barzan operations, even so, there would still be no means of controlling the levies at Sulaimania and Diana.

To use Iraqi troops or police for the purpose of interfering in any way with the Assyrians was out of the question. It would certainly have led to fighting. Since there was nothing the Assyrians would have resented more than restraint by Iraqi troops. Even had it been desirable to use Iraqi troops for this purpose, such a course would have been impracticable, since eight out of the ten battalions in the Iraqi Army and all available police were also engaged in the Barzan area. The question of external reinforcements, therefore, compelled consideration. The Assyrians in the levies numbered some 1,500 men. Even supposing that it were possible to disarm them quietly so far as their service equipment was concerned, it was well known that more than 50 percent. Of the serving men had either private rifles, automatics, revolvers or arms of some kind of their own. It was therefore possible that any attempt to restrain and confine them to their cantonments, instead of discharging them as they expected, might lead this formidable body to revolt and forcibly to break out of control.

It was essential, therefore, that it should be possible to dispose of a sufficient force to overawe the Assyrians and convince them that resistance was impracticable.

For this purpose two battalions of British infantry were considered necessary. It was realised, however, that any such reinforcement would be extremely difficult to get, and that it was unlikely that we should be able to obtain the services of more than one battalion. After consultation with the High Commissioner, therefore, it was decided that we should ask for the minimum reinforcement of one battalion. It was explained to the High Commissioner that while two battalions would be necessary to confine the Assyrians to their cantonments for an indefinite period, one would probably be sufficient provided the Assyrians were allowed to take their discharge in slow time at the rate of so many per week. Our main object of preventing the mass marches of the Assyrians would be equally well attained in this manner. Moreover, it would put a definite termination to the length of time it would be necessary to retain the British troops in this country. It was suggested that the rate of discharge should be somewhere between 70 and 100 Assyrians a week. (This number was subsequently, at the request of the High Commissioner, reduced to 50 a week for the first month.) That would mean that the whole force might be discharged in about four months. **The disbandment would therefore not be complete until well on into the Autumn, after the termination of the Mandate, when a concentration in the North would neither be so practicable nor so dangerous.**

On the understanding, therefore, that the plan was modified to one of regulating the discharge of the Assyrians rather than the detention of the whole force for an indefinite period, it was decided that a minimum of one battalion should be sufficient.

It is unnecessary to enter into the negotiations which then took place between the High Commissioner and His Majesty's Government with regard to the provision of this battalion. It is sufficient for the purpose of this report to observe that the High Commissioner was assured that the exacting demands of the War Office relative to the comfort and welfare of the battalion would be fully met.

The most important condition was, perhaps, that the British soldiers should on no account be involved in any fighting with the Assyrians. It was confidently considered that the presence of the soldiers, the prestige of their sudden arrival in the country, and the extreme reluctance which the Assyrians would have to any open conflict with the British authorities would suffice to keep the situation in hand. However, in order to avoid any possibility of such conflicts taking place, orders were issued that on no account were the British soldiers to use force against the Assyrians, **and arrangements made that wherever a show of force might be necessary or wherever there might be risk of conflict with the Assyrians, Air force personnel should be used.**

At the same time plans were being prepared for the move of the battalion from Egypt. Plans for the detention of the Assyrians and for the control of the discharges were also matured about this time. In the first place, orders were issued defining the procedure to be adopted in connection with the discharge of all Assyrians who wished to go. These

discharges would have to be completed by the end of the month in accordance with the Assyrian manifesto, and orders were prepared accordingly.

It was first of all necessary to arrange for the detachments at Amadia, Erbil and Kirkuk to join their parent units. It was also decided that the company at Margil should move to Hinaidi. This decision certainly increased the risk of trouble at Hinaidi by bringing the number of Assyrians at Hinaidi up to three companies, and a Levy Headquarters, amounting in all to 14 officers and 435 other ranks, or more than three times the strength of the British company who would subsequently have to guard them. There were, however, difficulties about detaining the company at Margil, and the additional risk at Hinaidi was accepted in view of the strength of the Royal Air force at that station. Orders were accordingly issued for all these moves to be completed by the evening of 27th June.

THE SUBSEQUENT PROGRAMME WAS AS FOLLOWS:

28th June. All Levy guards were to be relieved by British infantry, Royal Air Force, Iraqi Army or Iraqi Police by the evening of the 28th. In this connection the ready to-operation of the Iraqi Government in arranging for the relief of many of the Levy guards by men of the Iraqi Army or Police was greatly appreciated and should be placed on record.

29th June. On the morning of the 29th the Levy soldiers at all the four station, Hinaidi, Mosul, Diana and Sulaimania were simultaneously to hand in all arms, ammunition and personal equipment. All arms and ammunition were to be immediately disposed of as follows: -

At Hinaidi --- to the Armament Section of the Aircraft Depot.

At Mosul --- to the station Storehouse.

At Sulaimania and Diana -- to be immediately loaded into Victorias and flown direct to Hinaidi for storage in the Armament Section of the Aircraft Depot.

30th June. At 0700 hours local time the Commanding Officer at each of the four stations would make his final address to the Assyrian officers and then to the men. Subsequently the Levy soldiers would hand in their clothing and bedding and would then be paid out before final discharge.

The above was the plan which was promulgated openly to all concerned, together with instructions for the necessary precautions to be taken to prevent disorder during the discharge and movement of Assyrians. These precautions included the dispatch of one section of armoured cars to Diana and one section of armoured cars to Sulaimania. At Hinaidi, they included the control of traffic through the cantonment and the safeguarding of important points within the cantonment. Detachments known as flying squads consisting each of 20 unarmed airmen in six wheelers were also detailed and dispatched to work with the Armoured Car Sections.

SECRET PLANS FOR THE DETENTION OF THE ASSYRIANS

In addition to these orders secret instructions were issued dealing with the action which was to be taken for the detention of the Assyrians on 30th June. These instructions were issued and known only to the Officer Commanding at each of the four stations, the Officer Commanding the Levies, the Officer Commanding the British infantry, and two or three Staff Officers at Air Headquarters. Nobody else was informed. The orders were to the effect that at the address which the Commanding Officer was to make to the Assyrian officers on the 1st parade on 30th June, he was to inform the officers that the British Government had decided not to permit them to take their discharge en masse, but that they would be permitted to go at the rate of so many per week. A similar announcement was subsequently to be made to the men. **Sealed orders were also issued defining the action to be taken in the event of any attempt on the part of the Assyrians to break out of camp.**

METHOD OF CONTROL

The method of control depended mainly upon a show of force, upon the prestige of the British troops, and upon putting difficulties in the way of the Assyrians in obtaining and using transport facilities. In the first place, the Assyrian camps were to be watched by guards of the Northamptonshire Regiment. These men were armed, and the Assyrians presumably would suppose that if they attempted to break out, the Northampton would use their arms. In fact, however, strict instructions were issued that they were not on any account to use force against Assyrians breaking out of camp. The only action they were permitted to take was immediately to inform the main guard. The main guard was directly in communication with the Royal Air Force flying squad, composed of half a section of armoured cars, together with six-wheelers containing 20 unarmed airmen. It had originally been intended that these airmen should be armed with axe helms. The High Commissioner felt, however, that if any physical force of this kind were used

against Assyrians breaking out of camp it was possible that the Assyrians might retaliate by fire, since many of them carry private weapons of some sort. It would be necessary for the armoured cars to reply in order to protect the airmen, and as a result many casualties might be caused to both sides. It was agreed, therefore, that the airmen of flying squads should be unarmed and should depend upon the moral effect of their backing of armoured cars. The duty of the flying squad was immediately to round up the men breaking out of camp, and by remonstrances and threats, endeavour to persuade them to return to their barracks.

Of course if practicable, Assyrians would be quietly arrested and taken back to camp in the vehicles of the flying squad. Apart from these precautions it had been arranged, in conjunction with the police, to enforce a strict control of taxi traffic. In some cases, notably at Sulaimania, it was expected to be possible by this means to prevent the Assyrians obtaining the services of any motor transport. Consequently, movement from there would be any great difficulty in preventing a march of that kind. At any rate, it would be possible to hold it up at the river crossings, and a flying squad was held in reserve at Kirkuk to cooperate with the police for that purpose. Similar measures were taken at all stations, and in the case of Diana, a flying squad was stationed at the exit of the Rowanduz Gorge with a view to holding up any movements of the Assyrians through the gorge. At Hinaidi, in addition to the control of road traffic, it was also found possible to arrange with the railways a scheme for the prevention of the use of the railways by large bodies of Assyrians should that be necessary.

In spite of all these elaborate arrangements the control scheme was in reality no more than a huge bluff. Reliance was placed upon the prestige of the British troops and upon the anxiety which the Assyrians entertained to avoid any physical conflict with the British authorities. But as we were denied the use of physical force, the other restrictions would not have prevented a really determined move of the Assyrians. Even so, however, we should probably have been able to do enough to convince the Iraqi that we were not conniving in the concentration of the Assyrians in the north, and that in itself would have been worth the move of the battalion from Egypt.

ARRIVAL OF REINFORCEMENTS

The time was now rapidly approaching when it would be necessary to come to a final decision on the question of reinforcements. His Majesty's Government had on 18th June sanctioned the despatch of a battalion from Egypt should this be necessary. It was, however, most urgently and expressly stipulated by His Majesty's Government that the battalion should not be moved unless it was absolutely essential, and the High Commissioner was most anxious that these stipulations should be scrupulously adhered to. In order to restrain the Assyrians from taking their discharge in accordance with their manifesto, it was essential that the troops should be in place at the various stations by 27th June.

It was calculated that it would take not less than six days to fly the troops over and get them into position at the four levy stations; should there be any delay due to weather, it would take longer. The High Commissioner was therefore informed that the very latest date to which the movement of the first company from Egypt could be postponed was 22nd June.

On 21st June, further efforts to induce the Assyrian leaders to withdraw the manifesto having failed, the High Commissioner signalled Egypt requesting that the battalion should commence moving on the following day. This movement was carried out by Nos. 70 and 216 (Bomber Transport) Squadrons, and, commencing on 22nd June, was completed on 27th June. A full account of the move is given later on, By the 28th the battalion (1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment), was disposed as follows :-

"A" Company	At Mosul.
"B" Company	At Diana.
"C" Company	At Sulaimania.
"C" Company, Battalion H.Q.	At Hinaidi.

On 24th June "B" Section of No. 2 Armoured Car Company also arrived at Hinaidi from Amman, and the Armoured Car Sections were disposed as follows: -

No. 1 Section, No. 1 A.C.C	Mosul
No. 2 Section, No. 1 A. C. C.	Diana.
No. 3 Section No. 1 A. C. C.	Sulaimania
Half No. 4 Section No. 1 A.C.C	Hinaidi
"B" Section, No. 2 A. C. C.	Hinaidi

In the meanwhile, the A.O.C. personally addressed the Levies at Hinaidi, Sulaimania, Diana, Mosul and Erbil, in a last attempt to convince them of the desperate folly of their intentions, and to persuade them to reconsider their proposed plan before it was too late. By bringing home to them the terrible destitution and distress in which they and their families would find themselves if they carried out their plan of concentrating in the Amadia district, it was hoped that many

would secretly be glad of any excuse to escape such a disaster, and that they would, therefore, be in reality thankful to accept the way out which we intended to impose.

By the evening of 27th June, all levy detachments had rejoined their parent units, the Margil company had arrived at Hinaidi and all four companies of the Northamptonshire Regiment had reached their stations. Guard duties at Erbil and Kirkuk were assumed by detachments of the Iraqi Army, at Basrah by the Royal Air Force and at Ser Amadia by Royal Air Force personnel at the Summer Training Camp.

By 28th June, levy dispositions were as follows: -

1st Battalion (less 2 companies)	At Diana.
1 Company, 1st Battalion	At Mosul
2nd Battalion (less 2 companies)	At Sulaimania.
1 Company, 1st Battalion	At Hinaidi.
2 Companies, 2nd Battalion.....	At Hinaidi.

On this day also guard duties at the four main stations were relinquished by the levies and assumed as follows: -

Diana.	By "B" Company, Northamptonshires.
Mosul,	By "A" Company, Northamptonshires.
Sulaimania,	By "C" Company, Northamptonshires.

Hinaidi,

Levy Lines.	By "D" Company, Northamptonshires.
Magazine.	By R.A.F. Guard.
Aerodrome.	By R.A.F. Guard.
Residence.	By Iraqi Army.
A.O.C's Residence. -	By R.A.F. Service Police.

On the morning of 29th June, the levies at all four stations handed in their arms and ammunition without trouble of any kind. By the same evening the arms from Sulaimania and Diana had arrived at Hinaidi and were safely deposited in the magazine. The stage was now set for the critical announcement which was to be made to the levies simultaneously at 0700 hours local time next morning by the Officers Commanding at all four stations to the effect that the officers and men of the levies were to be detained at the pleasure of His Majesty's Government.

WITHDRAWAL OF THE MANIFESTO

It was precisely at this moment, namely the evening of 29th June, after the Levies had been safely disarmed, that letter were received from the Mar Shimoun by the leading Assyrian officers calling off the "strike" and cancelling the manifesto.

This very dramatic denouncement was the result of further negotiations between the Mar Shimoun and the High Commissioner. It was the Mar Shimoun himself who had initiated the correspondence which finally resulted in this last minute cancellation of their Levy resignations. Negotiations had to all appearance reached a final deadlock on 21st June, when the Oriental Secretary, Captain Holt, reported from Amadia no change in the attitude of the leaders, and the High Commissioner thereupon informed the Colonial Office that negotiation had broken down and that he had had, therefore, to ask for the move of the battalion from Egypt. However, on 25th June, the Mar Shimoun suddenly re-opened negotiations by a signal which indicated a very changed attitude of mind. Whereas previously he had insisted on the acceptance of all the Assyrian demands (except one dealing with Hakkari), he now intimated that he would order the Assyrian officers and soldiers to continue to serve loyally if only the High Commissioner would undertake to give his personal support to the Assyrian demands. In the few days between the 25th and the end of the month, letters and telegrams between the High Commissioner and the Mar Shimoun followed each other in rapid succession. Ultimately, on 27th June, the High Commissioner dispatched his final conditions which were accepted by the Mar Shimoun on 28th June. The Mar Shimoun, prompted by Squadron Leader G.S. Reed, O.B.E. who had been sent to Amadia to assist in the final negotiations, prepared on the 28th and 29th the necessary letters to the Levy units instructing them to continue to serve the British Government loyally for a further specified period. These letters were rushed to the units by air and for the most part reached their destination that afternoon and evening after the Levies had been disarmed.

SPEED OF COMMUNICATION

It was fortunate that the Mar Shimoun in his remote summer resort on Ser Amadia was located close to the Royal Air Force Summer Training Camp, commanded by Squadron Leader O. W. de Putron. The presence of the camp enabled us to keep in close touch with the Assyrian leaders, and also enormously facilitated the passage of correspondence between Baghdad and Ser Amadia. Had it not been for the wireless station at Ser Amadia and the landing ground in close proximity at Bebad, it would not have been possible to have got the Mar Shimoun's cancellation orders through before the end of the month, when the Assyrians would already have demanded their discharge.

THE RECEIPT OF THE MAR SHIMOUN'S LETTERS BY THE ASSYRIANS

It had naturally been confidently anticipated that the receipt by the Levies of the instruction of the Mar Shimoun would have at once put an end to their intention to resign at the end of the month. This, however, did not immediately prove to be the case. Both at Sulaimania and Hinaidi, and to a lesser extent at Mosul, considerable doubt was expressed by the men as to the genuineness of the Mar Shimoun's letters. They could not conceive that the great plan for a national concentration could have been abandoned at the last moment. They noticed that the letters did not bear the Mar Shimoun's seal and asked for some more convincing confirmation of his instructions. When these objections were communicated to the Mar Shimoun he caused fresh letters to be prepared, signed and sealed in due form, and these also were expressed by air to all units on 30th June 1932.

INSUBORDINATION AT HINAIDI

The second edition of the letters proved definitely acceptable at Mosul, Diana and Sulaimania, and satisfactory reports from these three places were soon received stating that the men were prepared to carry out the Mar Shimoun's orders, and to continue to serve. At Hinaidi, however, all three companies vehemently discredited the genuineness of the letters and from the evening of the 29th, began vociferously to demand their immediate discharge. They would accept no explanations or assurances from either their British or Assyrian officers, and when all attempts in this direction to bring them to reason had failed, they were informed on the afternoon of the 30th that they would be confined to camp. Prearranged steps to this end were taken by placing guards on the Levy lines and by the control of traffic on the roads.

These unruly companies were duly informed according to plan that they would not be permitted to take their discharges in a body, but that they would be allowed to go at a reasonable rate. During the succeeding eight days, eight officers and 228 other ranks took their discharge and were conveyed in batches to the railway station for entrainment to Mosul.

COLLAPSE OF MOVEMENT

On 9th July 1932, however, the remaining officers (nine) and men (213) at Hinaidi signified their wish to continue in the service. They paraded as usual, and were detailed for fatigues.

ASSURANCES FOR THE FUTURE

It now remained to take steps to ensure that there could be no repetition of this unfortunate episode. The letters addressed by the Mar Shimoun to all Levy units on 30th June, had given instructions that during the period of three months in which a reply from the League might be expected, the Levies were to serve loyally and if at the end of that period they wished to be discharged, they must do so in a regular and proper manner.

It was now explained to the Mar Shimoun that continued service in the Levies would not be acceptable without satisfactory guarantees of good behaviour for the future. It would obviously be most unwise and dangerous to maintain a force of armed men unless their loyalty and reliability were assured. Furthermore, the Mar Shimoun's instructions to continue in the service held good only for three months, whereas the High Commissioner's conditions which the Mar Shimoun had accepted stipulated that the levies would undertake to serve loyally and truly until an answer was received from the League of Nations to the Assyrian petition, and it was unlikely that this answer would be received until the middle of October at the earliest.

The High Commissioner therefore requested the Mar Shimoun to instruct all Levy units that they were individually to give their word of honour that they would serve the British Government loyally and truly until an answer to their petition was received from the League of Nations, and that if they then wished to take their discharges, they were not to go in a body but must do so over a reasonable period not exceeding one month, in accordance with the orders of their British officers.

At first the Mar Shimoun regarded this request with some suspicion. He thought that an attempt was being made to obtain guarantees that the Levies would give no trouble until after the admission of Iraq to the League of Nations, which was expected to take place in September. He expected a reply to the petition before that date.

However, after receiving an assurance that the High Commissioner would do everything he could to obtain the reply as early as possible, and after another conference with the leaders on 6th July, further letters were issued by the Mar Shimoun in accordance with the High Commissioner's conditions.

The letters arrived at the various levy units on 10th July, and on 12th July all officers and men gave individual undertakings to abide by their terms. All restrictions were then removed. On this day also the High Commissioner gave authority for arrangements to be made for the return of the 1st Battalion Northamptonshire Regiment to Egypt.

By 16th July, all Levy units had been re-armed and had resumed their normal guard duties in relief of the British troops, who commenced their return journey to Egypt on 18th July.

It is difficult to say how far the arrival of the Northamptonshire Regiment influenced the Mar Shimoun's sudden change of heart, but there is no doubt that their arrival completely altered the whole aspect of the situation. Up to that time the Assyrian felt that they had the upper hand, but from the moment the Northamptonshire Regiment appeared it was apparent to everybody, Iraqis as well as Assyrian, that the British Government were not disposed to be trifled with. It was impossible for the Assyrians to know to what extent we were prepared to make use of this battalion in compelling the Assyrians to obey orders. The Assyrian leaders and the Assyrian troops themselves might well have concluded that the British Government would not have gone to the trouble and expense of drafting this battalion into Iraq without intending to make use of the force which was thus placed at its disposal. The one thing which it was certain both the leaders of the Assyrians and the Assyrian soldiers themselves would wish to avoid was any physical conflict with the British authorities, and the arrival of this battalion, with its threat of the use of force, undoubtedly gave rise amongst the Assyrian soldiers to great anxiety. In my opinion the sudden appearance of the battalion was the principal cause of the reopening of negotiations by the Mar Shimoun, with the happy results which subsequently transpired.

The general conduct and bearing of the officers and men of the Northamptonshires were beyond praise. The battalion undoubtedly made a great impression on the Assyrians and brought home to them something of the disgrace of their own behaviour. It is worth mentioning, perhaps, that without any initiative on the part of their officers the men of "D" Company at Hinaidi, who up to the 29th June were playing games and associating freely in a friendly way with the Assyrian soldiers, would have nothing whatever to do with them from the moment they showed sign of insubordination. This was typical of the admirable spirit which prevailed in the battalion.

Colonel T. S. Murhead, the officer commanding the battalion was in every way most helpful and did all he could to assist in the difficult task of controlling the Levies at Hinaidi.

During the critical period Brigadier J. G. Browne, C.M.G., C.B.E., D.S.O., displayed the greatest firmness and good judgment in dealing with the insubordinate Assyrian at Hinaidi. At one time the situation at the Levy barracks at Hinaidi was very difficult and most disquieting. The men were openly insubordinate and refused to obey all orders. That the situation did not deteriorate was largely due to the firmness of the Company Commanders, who did not hesitate to arrest and confine the worst offenders, and in particular to the personal influence of Brigadier Browne himself, through which the situation was kept well in hand.

The special precautions by means of which the Assyrians were kept confined to their camp were ordered on 29th June and remained in force until 12th July. These precautions entailed a considerable amount of extra work of a very trying nature, including the manning of posts on the roads day and night during very hot weather. The conduct of all concerned throughout this difficult period was admirable, and in general all the airman, including those of the flying squads and other engaged in special duties, showed admirable keenness and uncomplaining readiness to endure considerable discomfort and hardship in the heat of an Iraqi midsummer.

The ready manner in which the Iraqi Government came to our assistance and provided guards, either of the Iraqi Army or Police, wherever required should be recorded, together with an appreciation of the services of the Iraqi Railways for their readiness to co-operate in controlling railway traffic, should that have proved necessary.

Further negotiations followed the publication of the National Pact. It was finally arranged that the Mar Shimoun should proceed to Geneva and present the demands in person to the Council of the League. He was given a special *laissez passer* to go, since, despite his protestations of loyalty, the Mar Shimoun had not yet taken out Iraqi nationality papers and so had no passport. The Mar Shimoun complained, nevertheless, that difficulties were placed in the way. However, he went in the end, though it does not appear that he was told that not only Iraq but Great Britain would resist his demands. The Mar Shimoun left Mosul in October. He failed completely at Geneva. The proceedings there have already been described. He returned to Mosul at the end of December. Whether on his return he would have accepted the situation with the best grace possible is, perhaps, in any event doubtful, but during his absence certain things had happened which were bound to make him all the more suspicious of the good faith of the Iraqi Government.