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SECRET.

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WAR CABINET.BAGDAD.

I circulate draft proclamation for publication in Bagdad, if and when our troops occupy it, as agreed between Sir W. Sykes and representatives of the Foreign Office and India Office.

A very early decision on its terms is requested.

I am myself uneasy about the wide terms of the promise conveyed in para. 7 and fear that they may easily lead to charges of breach of faith in future, if circumstances render it impossible for us to give the complete freedom which they may be held to promise. I am not aware that the Cabinet has ever definitely decided what the exact political position of the Bagdad Vilayet should be, and I doubt whether it is possible to decide that question at this moment.

I therefore suggest an alternative formula which I think equally suitable under present circumstances and less fraught with danger for the future.

(INTLD). A.C.

10/3/1917.

SECRET.B A G H D A D.DRAFT PROCLAMATION.To the People of Baghdad.

1. In the name of my King and in the name of the people over whom he rules, I address you as follows:-
2. Our military operations have as their object the defeat of the enemy, and the driving of him from these territories. In order to complete this task, I am charged with absolute and supreme control of all regions in which British troops operate, but our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators.
3. Since the days of Halaka your city and your lands have been subject to the tyranny of strangers, your palaces have fallen into ruins, your gardens have sunken in desolation, and your forefathers and yourselves have groaned in bondage. Your sons have been carried off to wars not of your seeking, your wealth has been stripped from you by unjust men and squandered in distant places.
4. Since the days of Midhat, the Turks have talked of reforms, yet do not the ruins and wastes of to-day testify the vanity of those promises?
5. It is the wish not only of my King and his peoples, but it is also the wish of the great nation with whom he is in alliance, that you should prosper even as in the past, when your lands were fertile, when your ancestors gave to the world literature, science, and art, and when Baghdad city stretched from Kadhimain to Dialah.
6. Between your people and the dominions of my King there has been a close bond of interest. For 200 years have the merchants of Baghdad and Great Britain traded together in mutual profit and friendship. On the other hand, the Germans and Turks who have despoiled you and yours, have, for 20 years, made Baghdad a centre of power from which to attack the dominions of the British and the Allies of the British in Persia and Arabia, therefore the British Government cannot remain indifferent as to what takes place in

our country now or in the future, for in duty to the interests of the British people and their Allies, the British Government cannot risk that being done in Baghdad again which has been done by the Turks and Germans during the war.

But you people of Baghdad are not to understand from this that it is the wish of the British Government to impose upon you alien institutions. But remember it rests with those who are well advised among you to prepare the way so that the British people may when the time comes give freedom to those who have proved themselves worthy to enjoy their own wealth and substance under their own institutions and laws. In Hejaz the Arabs have expelled the Turks and Germans who oppressed them and proclaimed the Sherif Hussein as their King, and his Lordship rules in independence and freedom, and is the ally of the nations who are fighting against the power of Turkey and Germany; so, indeed, are the noble Arabs, the Lords of Koweyt, Nejd, and Asir.

Many noble Arabs have perished in the cause of Arab freedom, at the hands of those alien rulers, the Turks, who oppressed them. It is the determination of the Government of Great Britain and the great Powers allied to Great Britain, that these noble Arabs shall not have suffered in vain. It is the hope and desire of the British people and the nations in alliance with them, that the Arab race may rise once more to greatness and renown among the peoples of the earth, and that it shall bind itself together to this end in unity and concord.

O people of Baghdad remember that for 800 years you have suffered under Powers which have ever endeavoured to set one Arab house against another in order that it might profit by your dissensions. This policy is abhorrent to Great Britain and her Allies, for there can be neither peace nor prosperity where there is enmity and misgovernment. Therefore I am commanded to invite you, through your nobles and elders and representatives, to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the political representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British Army so that in due time you may be in a position to unite with your kinsmen in North, East, South and West in realising the aspirations of your race.

Alternative formula proposed by Mr. Chamberlain:-

.. alien institutions. It is the desire of the British Government that the Arabs of Irak and Baghdad shall in future be free from oppression and enjoy their wealth and substance under institutions and laws congenial to them ..

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.. misgovernment. Therefore I am commanded to invite you, through your nobles and elders and representatives, to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the political representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British Army, so that you may be united with your kinsmen in North, East, South & West in realising the aspirations of your race.

From General Maude, Basra, 6th March 1917.
Received 12.10 p.m. 8th March.

(Addressed to Foreign, Delhi; repeated to
Secretary of State for India).

X.1140 (6th). Should we occupy Bagdad scope of civil administration will be greatly increased and number of civil and political officers will be urgently required.

Government will, I am sure, appreciate immense importance of starting civil administration of Bagdad Vilayet on satisfactory lines with adequate staff, and I trust that utmost may be done to comply with Cox's requisitions for individual officers.

Draft Telegram to Government of India.

Foreign Secret. Maude's telegram 6th March. His Majesty's Government do not underrate the importance of sound administration in Bagdad, and fully appreciate efficiency of that introduced by your officers in Basra. But the basis of their policy is the Arab State, and they are not prepared to approve the extension of direct British administration to Bagdad Vilayet. Until the war is over and the whole set of problems connected with the Arab State have been cleared up with King Husain and the other Allies, the predominant considerations in Bagdad must be political rather than administrative. His Majesty's Government therefore wish it to be clearly understood that, whatever may be ultimate decision, the existing administrative machinery is, as far as possible, to be preserved for the present, with the substitution of Arab for Turkish spirit and personnel. The façade must be

Arab. While, therefore, Vilayet should remain under martial law for the security of the occupying force, the inhabitants should be formally invited to participate in the civil administration with British co-operation. Every effort should be made to induce representative men to come forward for this purpose, and the British officers to be lent should be strictly limited to minimum necessary as advisers.