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SECRET

WAR CABINET.

G.T. 891.

REPORT OF MESOPOTAMIA COMMISSION.

Remarks by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff with regard  
to its publication.

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Secretary  
War Cabinet.

I am returning herewith the report of the Mesopotamia Commission. I think it is regrettable that the report should be published during the war, as it reflects great discredit on many high officials and on the manner in which the operations were planned and conducted, both from a General Staff and Administrative standpoint. The result of this must be to encourage the enemy, and seriously to diminish the confidence of the public and fighting services in their leaders. I consider it my duty to point this out, although as the Commission was appointed, I presume the Report must be published.

Subject to the above, the passages which, from a purely military point of view, should be omitted are those marked in blue pencil on pages 12, 24, 43 and 97, and the passages in Part V containing references to the impolicy of evacuating Baghdad once it has been occupied. These references tend to indicate to the enemy the importance which we attach to the retention of Baghdad, and may cause him to make special efforts for its recapture.

I notice, also, that the report contains many references to our policy in Mesopotamia, but I presume that the Foreign Office and India Office will express an opinion as to the advisability of retaining them.

(Sgd) W.R. ROBERTSON,

General.

Chief of the Imperial General  
Staff.

WAR OFFICE.

31st May 1917.