

*Col Jones*  
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Memorandum on Mr. Austin Chamberlain's Amendment of the  
Proposed Proclamation to the people of Baghdad.

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I have read the amendment, and I consider that it will

be understood by the Arab Nationalist party to mean that Baghdad is to be a part of the Indian Empire, a prospect which would be abhorrent to them for a variety of reasons.

The Arab is above all proud, he does not want favours granting him. If we desire to get on with the Arabs we must not patronize but we must be firm.

The difference between the two paragraphs is this, the original paragraph, if properly translated, will mean "If you support us you will be our equals in internal affairs which you will manage yourselves, if you do not we have a free hand"

- The amendment means "Whether you behave well or ill we shall give you good treatment, but we shall settle your affairs for you".

I am certain if we take the line of trying to rule Arabs as we rule Indians we shall fail. We shall introduce the social colour distinction and antagonise the whole Arab movement; we shall have the intellectuals against us from the very start, and it is the intellectuals who will rule public opinion when peace comes.

For the moment Baghdad is probably a stricken deserted city, and the proclamation will have little local effect, but the influence of the proclamation in Syria, Mesopotamia and Arabia, will I make no doubt be very great. Further it will force the hands of the French. M. Picot sincerely desires to work the Arab state, but he has repeatedly told me of the opposition to which he is subjected, by colonial expansionists who only desire to impose dominion by force on the Arabs.

If we set up autonomy as our ideal we get the sympathy of every Arab nationalist, we make it almost impossible for the French to go in for forcible dominion, and we pave the way

way for a better state of things in Egypt. If we offer benefits in a "white man's burden" tone of voice we pave the way for discontent, and a coalition between the Arabic speaking Egyptian Nationalists and the Arab intellectuals. Our path is beset with dangers; if we are courageous, we have every prospect of being supreme in region B, and beloved in region A. If we do not play up to Arab racial pride in Baghdad then we shall make Baghdad a restless appanage instead of a centre of influence.

Baghdad is a natural capital of practically all the inhabited areas of region B. If we make it an Arab capital we shall control the Arabs, because we shall control Baghdad commercially, and by Clause 6 we can maintain troops there.

Baghdad will be a centre of education and civilization for all the Arabic speaking world; if it is restless, hostile, or sullen, our influence will wane; if it is friendly our influence will wax. It will never accept our open dominion, but if we play our cards properly by means of "advisers" instead of "rulers" and back Arab nationalism, we shall have a permanent footing at little cost.

The Arab ideal has been local autonomy ever since the constitution of 1908, it is the desire for local autonomy which has had such disastrous results for the Turks. There is much in a name, the Arabs will not object to the presence of British troops and a British General, British advisers and British merchants, but they will never endure either the idea of a British Governor-General, or an outwardly British direct controlled civil service.

Further it must be remembered that the Turks never denied the Arabs either social equality or executive power. Field-Marshal Mahmud Shefket, Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army, was a Baghdadi and virtually an Arab, Izzet the great 2nd Secretary of Abdul Hamid was a Damascene,  
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that is to say that the two most powerful persons in the Empire were men of Arab extraction. It is impossible to approach a people with an intellectual class which has produced men who have held such offices in the same spirit as one might approach tribesmen or natives who accept European superiority as a matter of course.

The political conditions and possibilities in the area between Kut and Kerkuk are entirely different to the conditions between Kut and Basra. The Southern area is a country which has relapsed into complete barbarism and anarchy, and is inhabited practically by savages with no intellectual class, and I am pretty sure the Arab nationalist party would be glad to see us rule it. The Northern area has been the centre of organised government from time immemorial, and has sent an annual quota to the military and civil service schools and consequently has in peace time a large intellectual class. The members of this class are it is true scattered, and terrified, but it is of the greatest importance to demonstrate to them that their ideals are not contrary to ours, and to leave the door open for them to come in on our side without loss of dignity. Of course everything depends on our capacity to hold Baghdad, and it will require some considerable period of occupation to prove this to people who will remember that the Arab leaders who took our part at Kut were hanged, and that though we exchanged prisoners with the Turks we were unable to protect those who had taken our side.

(Initialed) M.S.

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10th March, 1917.