POLICY AND FINANCE IN MESOPOTAMIA, 1922-23.

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

THE Cairo Conference plans which were approved in principle by the Cabinet contemplated a reduction of the garrison of Mesopotamia during the present year to a 12-battalion scale; and it was provisionally estimated by the War Office financial expert who accompanied me that this 12-battalion garrison would cost about 4¾ millions in the financial year 1922-23. However, on further examination of the position, the War Office now estimate that the 12-battalion garrison will aggregate 18,000 men instead of 13,000, and will cost 10 millions instead of 4¾. All this will be additional to the Air Force and the levies. It is, of course, quite impossible for me to reconcile such a charge with any forecasts or undertakings I have given to Parliament. In addition, we are led to believe that there will very likely be arrears of financial settlements with India, which will fall on the estimates of next year, or possibly require a supplementary estimate this year.

2. General Haldane has pursued with great steadfastness the policy of reducing the garrison. He is already down to 20 battalions, and expects to reach as low a figure as 8 or 9 only by the end of the year. He thinks Mesopotamia very unsuitable for white troops on account of the great heat and bad climate and the lack of barrack accommodation, which latter can only be secured at great capital expense. He therefore contemplated retaining only 2 white battalions in the 12-battalion scheme, as originally proposed by the Cairo Conference. However, the War Office have notified me that they wish to keep at least 7 white battalions in Mesopotamia, and appear to be under the impression that Mesopotamia will afford a permanent resting-place for these British units. They are therefore standing by the
12-battalion scheme at a cost of 10 millions.* Ten millions for 12 battalions averaging 917 men works out at more than £900 a year for every infantry soldier, irrespective of colour. This is due to the elaborate staffs and administrative services which are necessary to the control and well-being of white troops in such a country. The Royal Army Service Corps alone have estimated that they will require 100 clerks at headquarters for the supply and movement of these troops; and in addition, the Royal Army Medical Corps, the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, the Royal Army Signalling Corps, the Army Chaplains, and the Army Education Branch must all be fully represented. For every two white infantry soldiers maintained in the country there must be at least one other white soldier to sustain them. Followers on a large scale are also necessary, because the white troops cannot in this climate do heavy fatigue work.

3. I cannot in any circumstances face this prospect or anything like it. The kind of organisation of the British army which fits it to face a German army under modern conditions is far too costly for a poor, starving, backward, bankrupt country like Mesopotamia. To throw such a weight upon it is to crush it; and if no other way can be found than this of holding the country, we had much better give up the Mandate at once.

4. The Cairo Conference also contemplated as a third stage in the reduction of the garrison and of the expense, the adoption of Air Marshal Trenchard's scheme of air control under the Royal Air Force. The Air Marshal has worked out the details of this scheme, which are appended, but this must be read in conjunction with the report of the Middle East Conference. It comprises 8 squadrons of the Royal Air Force, 3 armoured-car companies, 2 armoured trains and 4 gunboats, 1 Indian pack battery, and 4 battalions of infantry, only 2 of which would be white and none of which would be on a mobile basis, at a total cost of approximately £4 million a year. With such a force, plus local levies and the Arab army, Air Marshal Trenchard is willing to assume responsibility for the internal security of Mesopotamia. Such a system could, I think, with careful pruning be maintained within the limits of the financial undertakings I have given to Parliament.

5. At the Cairo Conference it was contemplated that General Haldane would relinquish his command in October on the garrison falling to a level which no longer required the services of a Lieutenant-General. I contem-

* Actual War Office figures are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure on works and lands</td>
<td>£1,428,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenditure</td>
<td>£7,159,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add for demobilization and clearing-up charges</td>
<td>£1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>£9,587,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
plated that he should be succeeded by General Ironside, who would undertake
the further reduction of the garrison and the eventual handing over of the
control to the Royal Air Force. Every step that has been taken since has
been in accordance with this intention. General Ironside is now in England
and is prepared to go out to Mesopotamia in October for the specific purpose
of effecting the transference of responsibility to the Royal Air Force within
one year. At present the Royal Air Force have only partial supply services
of their own, and it is necessary that their administrative officers should be
trained or borrowed from the army and the administrative establishments
reconstructed \textit{ab initio} on about one-tenth of the present scale. In addition,
the Royal Air Force should take over the 3 armoured-car companies (one of
which will later become a light caterpillar car company), the armoured trains
and armed steamers on the river. All this will be found set out in Air Marshal
Trenchard’s scheme.

6. The state of the country has greatly improved during the year. The
political arrangements which are to form the foundation of our future
position in Mesopotamia are far advanced and are progressing favourably.
The Emir Feisal is being generally acclaimed by the people, both townsmen
and tribesmen, and Sir Percy Cox proposes to proclaim him King on the 15th
instant. Though the local levies are not progressing as quickly as I should
have hoped, they have already relieved several of the garrisons held by Imperial
troops and will shortly be responsible for practically everything outside
Bagdad. The power of the Air Force to prevent disorder has been
increasingly demonstrated, and General Haldane now states that had he had
the same Air Force last year as he now has he could very likely have stopped
the rebellion from spreading beyond the Lower Euphrates area. He also
states that the Royal Air Force has now been tested against enemy in marsh­
land, in mountain country, and in scrub; and that he has revised his
judgment in regard to them in a far more favourable sense. The Arab
army is also making progress, though slow. I wish to make it perfectly
clear that I have from the outset contemplated holding Mesopotamia not by
sheer force, but by the acquiescence of the people of Mesopotamia as a whole
in a Government and Ruler whom they have freely accepted, and who
will be supported by the Air Force, and by British organised levies, and by
4 Imperial battalions. At a later stage I contemplate still further reductions,
and look forward eventually to the country being in the condition of an
independent Native State friendly to Great Britain, favourable to her
commercial interests, and casting hardly any burden upon the Exchequer.
But this prospect will be utterly ruined if we have cast on us the ponderous
weight of a numerous British garrison with its elaborate and inevitably costly
paraphernalia.

7. I would remind the Cabinet that I have relieved the War Office
Estimates of the whole charge in respect of Mesopotamia. I have presented
Estimates to Parliament covering the whole field and have assumed all the
burden and unpopularity which attaches to our position in Mesopotamia. I
consider that is the most I can do for the War Office. It would not be fair
to the policy of the Government in regard to Mesopotamia to burden it with
extraneous Army charges not justified by any local need. Moreover, having
assumed full financial responsibility, I am bound to claim full financial
control. I cannot continue in the position of asking Parliament for
Estimates nine-tenths of which are made out for me by another Department.
If Mesopotamia is to be retained, it can only be by introducing the
same cheap, makeshift machinery which the Colonial Office have
successfully employed and are employing in East and West Africa. In
these Protectorates the Colonial Office has absolute control over every
penny of the expenditure, whether on civil or military purposes, it raises its
own troops, chooses its own commanders, audits its own accounts and takes full
responsibility for every act, military or civil, necessary for maintaining
internal order. These conditions have prevailed for many years. I ask to be
 accorded the same measure of freedom in regard to Mesopotamia as the
Colonial Office has in regard to East and West Africa. I should propose to
settle with the Treasury the amount of money necessary as a grant-in-aid, and
and with the funds so obtained and funds locally raised to hire or recruit such
forces as are necessary, to dispose of these forces as may be considered best,
and to prescribe in minute and frugal detail their administrative establishment.
I am sure this was intended when these onerous responsibilities were trans­
ferred to the Colonial Office.

8. All the above is of course without prejudice to the overriding and
persistent right and duty of the War Office and of the General Staff to
prevent their troops from being placed in positions which they consider unduly
dangerous or under conditions detrimental to their health or efficiency.

9. If I am to present Estimates to Parliament next year in accordance
with the pledges which have already been given upon reduction of expenditure,
I must ask from my colleagues assent to the following general decisions of
policy, all of which are indispensable to the saving of money which must be
made:

(a.) Full financial control of all expenditure in Mesopotamia to be
vested in the Colonial Office as from 1st October, 1921.
(b.) General Ironside to succeed General Haldane on that date on a one
year's commission, with the definite task of inaugurating the Air
Force scheme within 12 months.
(c.) The garrison to be reduced to approximately 8 or 9 battalions with
everything else reduced in due proportion by the end of the
present financial year.
(d.) The Air Force scheme as outlined by Air Marshal Trenchard to be
inaugurated as from 1st October, 1922, all air and military forces
in the country being responsible through the Governor to the Colonial Office.

(e.) Any Indian troops required by the Colonial Office from the 1st October, 1921, onward to be paid for by direct arrangement between the Colonial Office and the India Office.

(f.) The Estimates for 1922–23 should be framed upon the above basis, i.e., the 8 or 9 battalion scheme with reduced administrative staffs ruling for the first half of the financial year, and being succeeded for the second half by the 4-battalion Royal Air Force scheme.

(g.) All arrears of expense and other capital charges already incurred to be settled without fail within the present financial year, thus enabling a fair start to be made in 1922–23.

10. If the Cabinet will take these decisions of principle, I have no doubt that the details can be arranged satisfactorily between the Departments concerned. On this assumption I will indicate the system and basis by which we hope to maintain internal order in Mesopotamia during the financial year 1922–23:

11. The government of the country will be conducted by an Arab administration under King Feisal, who will act in general accordance with the advice tendered him by the High Commissioner, Sir Percy Cox. All the outlying districts will be garrisoned solely by the local levies and the Arab army, no Imperial troops, British or Indian, being employed. Bagdad itself will be the main air centre, and here will be assembled 1,800 high-class armed white personnel of the Royal Air Force. This force is quite capable of protecting itself in its cantonment against a rising or local disorder in the town or surrounding country. It is capable also of feeding itself indefinitely by air. Radiating from this centre, the aeroplanes will give support to the political officers and the local levies in the various districts, and will act against rebellious movements when necessary. The 3 armoured car companies will be based on the same workshops as those which maintain the aeroplane squadrons. 2 or 3 battalions of infantry will be quartered at Bagdad, and 1 or 2 at Basra to maintain local order. These battalions will not be expected to operate as mobile forces at any distance from the towns where they are stationed. I should be quite ready to take 2 white battalions, provided they can be quartered at Bagdad. But if the War Office object to this, Indian battalions will serve the purpose at a lower cost. In the event of a general rising necessitating the evacuation of the country, all the Imperial personnel in Bagdad can be brought down the river by the armed vessels, for which special barges carrying high galleries capable of commanding the banks at low water, with machine guns and trench mortar fire, are being prepared by General Haldane. Thus we have every hope of carrying on at a moderate cost, and if the worst comes to the worst we shall
retain the means of withdrawing from the country without the need of sending up an expedition. This is the best plan we have been able to make within the financial limits, which are inviolate.

12. As I told the House of Commons, I cannot give an absolute guarantee that any scheme we may pursue in Mesopotamia will infallibly succeed, or that troubles will not arise in this vexatious country. But there is no other way in which the promises made to Parliament for reduction in cost can be kept. Moreover, it would not be right to spend a larger sum upon retaining our position in Mesopotamia. Politically, I do not believe we could defend it, and from an Imperial point of view it would be a misapplication of limited and overstrained resources. I think it is the best we can do in all the circumstances; and up to the present, at any rate, everything has gone better than we dared to hope. Although I fear the courses I propose will be considered drastic from the point of view of cutting down, and although they undoubtedly involve risk, I believe there is a good prospect of success being achieved.

In conclusion, I should like to put on record the obligation of the Colonial Office to the War Office, and especially to Generals Congreve, Redcliffe and Haldane, for the assistance they have rendered the Colonial Office in the present year. If we desire to part company with the War Office at an early date, it is not because we do not value their loyal and skilful aid, but because we simply cannot afford it.

W. S. C.

*Colonial Office,*

*August 4, 1921.*
(Paraphrase Telegram.)

The High Commissioner for Mesopotamia to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

(Received Colonial Office 5.50 a.m., August 6, 1921.)

(No. 366.) [Dated August 5.]

Secret and Private. Your Secret and Private telegram of 2nd. Many thanks for your kind encouragement. Assuming Feisal’s safe accession our subsequent progress according to programme will depend mainly on external factors as yet uncertain, viz., attitude of Bolsheviks in Persia, of Bin Saud on South, and of Turks on Northern front.

Your telegram was much mutilated, and I await corrections in case matter is urgent. I may say meanwhile, subject to confirmation, that personally I am hopeful that we may progress with reasonable safety on lines you contemplate, provided fortune favours in directions above indicated.

Feisal may take alarm at prospect of reduction to 8 battalions in 1922–23 when estimating his coming responsibilities as King, but G.O.C. and I will do our best to enable him to value Air Force.

As to comparative value of white battalions and proposal to keep 7 in Mesopotamia, it is my opinion that 1 white battalion in four is advisable and that, taking into account other white personnel, it is sufficient, and that from local point of view, whether political or military, there is no justification for retention of 7 white battalions. On this point I am entirely with you.—HIGH COMMISSIONER.
SECRET.

I ATTACH a Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff on the Air Force Scheme of Control in Mesopotamia.

Air Ministry, August 5, 1921.

Secretary of State for Air.

I submit the appended Memorandum, which contains proposals for the assumption by the R.A.F. of responsibility for the control of Iraq as from October 1922. As these proposals are in substantial accord with the scheme of control which was approved by the Cairo Conference, I have not thought it necessary here to recapitulate the scheme itself. My present supplementary proposals are in every case based on the provision of a total of 8 squadrons in Iraq.

I should be glad if, with your approval, it may be forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

(Signed) H. TRENCHARD.

Chief of the Air Staff.

Air Ministry, Kingsway, W.C. 2, August 5, 1921.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR DEFENCE OF IRAQ BY THE ROYAL AIR FORCE.

(In continuation of scheme submitted to Middle East Conference.)

1. It is proposed that 1 squadron of Vickers Vimy machines should be transferred from Egypt to Iraq in November of this year, provided accommodation can be found for them by that date. I am afraid that War Office concurrence will be necessary, as the squadron to be moved (No. 70) is at present under the Army. The service machines should be supplemented by as many of the new type of passenger-carrying machines as can be delivered by that date. A second Vickers Vimy squadron, similarly equipped, should be transferred to Iraq from Egypt by air in February or March 1922. This implies that the number of squadrons in Iraq will be raised from 6 to 8 at an earlier date than was contemplated when the matter was discussed in Cairo, and will involve some readjustment as between Air Ministry and Middle East votes in the charges for air services for the financial year 1921-22. New expenditure involved will not exceed £5,000.

2. It is further proposed to take steps to obtain the additional personnel for the depot in accordance with the arrangements proposed at Cairo. No additional unprovided expenditure in the present financial year will be involved.

Supply of Armoured Cars.

3. There are at present 3 armoured-car companies, and I understand that the G.O.C. in Iraq recommends that 2 of them should be replaced as early as possible by tanks. I am, however, of opinion that the armoured cars should be retained, pending the production of a light tropical tank or caterpillar suitable for the country. A suitable design has been prepared, but it is not likely to be in production, according to my information, for 18 months at least. As soon as the new tanks become available, 1 of the armoured-car companies should be replaced by tanks, and later on, if the tanks make good, a second armoured-car company should similarly be replaced.

To meet immediate necessities, however, the armoured cars will, in my opinion, be of great value, and my view is confirmed by General Ironside, who is at present in England.

4. The armoured car and tank companies will require a personnel of approximately 12 officers and 180 other ranks per company. It is clear that, in the first instance, it will be convenient for the necessary personnel to be supplied by the War Office, but I propose that the Army personnel should be replaced unit by unit, according as Air Force personnel can be trained for this purpose.
As regards cost, it will probably make very little difference whether they are provided from the Army or from the Air Force, as in either case the repair work would be carried out in workshops which, in any case, have to be provided for other purposes. These would be Squadron workshops, and, in the case of the Army, the Army Service Corps M.T. workshops. In either case, moreover, the armoured car personnel should be trained in fitter's work for the repair of their own cars. It must be clearly understood that the provision of the armoured car and tank companies is an integral part of the Air Force Scheme of Control. The original scheme provided for a number rising to a maximum of 6. This should still be aimed at, but, as a beginning the 3 at present existing in Iraq will suffice.

Auxiliary Services. (These include supplies, signals, ordnance, military police, medical, veterinary and sanitary services.)

5. The Air Force, of course, contains a considerable number of officers who have previous experience of administrative services with the Army, but their number is insufficient to supply the full number required for these services. It must be a matter for mutual arrangement between the War Office and the Air Ministry of how many officers (with a few other ranks) should be lent for these duties and for what period. As a preliminary measure I have taken steps to attach a few Air Force Officers in Iraq to the Army Headquarters, in order that they may learn the work of these services.

Armoured Trains and Gunboats.

6. The arrangements for the supply of armoured car personnel will apply also to the armoured trains and gunboats. The small number of personnel required for this purpose is also included in the estimate of 3 millions, but it is presumed that the existing equipment would be transferred from the War Office to the Air Ministry without charge, if the responsibility for control is transferred to the Air Force.

7. It will also be desirable that 1 Indian Pack Battery should be retained in the country, and this will have to be provided from Army sources. Army Estimates for the present year show 2 Pack Batteries, R.G.A., and 6 Native Pack Batteries in Iraq.

8. The maintenance of efficient wireless communication both between Egypt and Iraq, and in Iraq itself, is, as I pointed out in my original paper, essential to the proper working of the Air Scheme of Control. One of the principal assets of the air in the maintenance of internal order in the country will be the fact that the air is able to answer requests for assistance with a celerity of which no other arm is capable. Wireless personnel are necessary both for maintaining touch between the Central Air Stations and detachments of Arab troops, and also for communications with the Political Officers. The establishment of the Area Headquarters of the Air Force accordingly makes provision for 80 wireless personnel in addition to the normal wireless establishment for a force of 8 squadrons.

Method of operating Scheme of Air Control.

9. The tactical and strategical principles which should govern the system of Air Control were, to some extent, explained in the Memorandum prepared for the Cairo Conference, and they were further elaborated at the Conference itself with the concurrence of Sir Percy Cox, General Haldane, Air Vice-Marshal Salmond and others familiar with the conditions. Broadly speaking, the proposal is to concentrate the Air Force in two main stations. In addition, there should be 1 aerodrome at Mosul, which would be capable of accommodating 2 squadrons if necessary, and a number of other aerodromes which would have small supplies of spares, petrol, &c. These latter aerodromes would be at posts where levies are normally stationed. Finally, other aerodromes would be prepared simply as landing grounds in order to make all parts of the area accessible to the political authorities travelling by air.

10. Ordinary policing duties would be undertaken by the Arab levies, supplemented by the regular system of what may be called "air route marches," which would be provided for the frequent patrolling of certain areas as required by varying local conditions. The aeroplanes would land, sometimes with and sometimes without the Political Officers, and visit the local Chief and even bring him in to Baghdad if required to see the Chief Political Officer. This would correspond to route marches by infantry, and, from the experience we have so far had in Iraq, would be of substantial moral effect.

11. If a tribe became restive in an area where there were no levies a demonstration by air would take place over its villages and a message would be dropped to tell the
Chief that hostile action against him would have to be taken if he did not come in. This demonstration would be repeated for three or four times, and, if then necessary, offensive action from the air should be initiated, in the first instance, by attacks on the enemy's flocks and cattle and then, if he is still obdurate, on his villages. If the threat of disturbance was from a tribe in the neighbourhood where levies had not been able to bring the tribe to order then the air detachment should go to the nearest safe aerodrome and from that base initiate demonstrations as above against the tribe concerned. On no account whatever should forces of levies and aircraft work together in minor operations of this kind. If the levies cannot do a particular piece of work then the air unit should do it alone.

The Air Scheme is based on the principle that, if the Arabs have nothing to fight against on the ground and no loot or rifles to be obtained and nobody to kill, but would have to deal only with aeroplanes which are out of their reach, they are certain to come in, and there will be no risk of disasters or heavy casualties such as are always suffered by small infantry patrols in uncivilised countries.

12. If combined operations ever become necessary on a larger scale they can, of course, be carried out on accepted lines for co-operation between Air and Ground Forces, but I anticipate that in the great majority of cases where infantry have had to be used in the past they will not need to be used in the future.

Defence of Main Air Station.—It is important that the barracks at Baghdad for the squadrons and armoured cars should be sited suitably for defence. This aspect of the question is being fully explored on the spot by Sir Geoffrey Salmond. Barbed-wire posts must be made and placed tactically to the best advantage. For this purpose a large amount of barbed wire will be required, and probably several little sangored outposts. Similar arrangements on a smaller scale will be required at Basra.

Without making any allowance for the retention of the infantry garrison at Baghdad, which is dealt with in paragraph 16 below, I estimate the garrison of white troops to be stationed there, which would consist of the personnel of 5 or 6 squadrons and of 3 armoured-car companies, would amount to at least 1,850 troops, supplied with every resource in the way of armament and with a high percentage of officer personnel. It is, in my opinion, inconceivable that any rising that was not provided with guns, on the European basis of equipment, could capture or inflict serious losses on a force so constituted.

Regard must also be had to the existence of the Arab levies, and, in the light of past experience, it is improbable that, even in the event of a serious rising, the whole of these levies would desert or mutiny. Under normal conditions the levies would, of course, be responsible for the guarding of the aerodromes. In case of disturbance they would be supplemented in the first instance by armoured car personnel, then by the personnel of the repair depot, and in the last resort by drawing upon the personnel of the squadrons. I am well aware that the use of technical personnel for this purpose is open to the objection that, if they are so used, machines cannot be kept in the air. This objection is well founded as regards long-continued diversion from their normal duties.

It must also be borne in mind that the opening of the cross-desert air route provides a new source of reinforcement to the garrison, both of supplies and of personnel. On the assumption that communications were cut with the coast, it must be remembered that 1 squadron of Vickers Vimy machines (commercial) could maintain a garrison of 1,500 men with all necessities in the shape of food, ammunition, fuel and medical stores. Two such squadrons would be held in Iraq, in addition to 6 others for offensive purposes and reconnaissances.

13. Possibility of Evacuations of the Garrison.—It is, however, necessary to consider the possibility of evacuation of the garrison being ordered in the event of a general rising. An evacuation by inferior numbers is always a difficult operation of war, whether for the Army or for the Air Force, and generally requires large reinforcements. If, however, such a decision had to be taken, we should be no worse off than if it was a case of evacuating an army garrison and of calling for large reinforcements from India for the purpose. It is, indeed, almost certain that the evacuation of an air garrison of the size already indicated would be an easier process, as the presence of aircraft and reinforcing aircraft from Egypt should make it possible to evacuate the garrison in the last resort with fewer reinforcements than would be necessary for a larger number of Army troops.

14. River Communications.—In regard to the questions both of evacuation and of maintaining the garrison at Baghdad against encirclement, I would draw particular attention to recent experiments carried out by General Haldane (following a suggestion...
made at Cairo Conference) for the arming of river barges, towed by gunboats, of
sufficient elevation to command the banks of the river. I understand that General
Haldane had expressed his personal opinion that with 4 such vessels access by water
could always be kept open.

15. Location of Infantry Garrison.—The Cairo Conference recommended the
retention of a brigade of infantry, and inclined to its being stationed at Amara, on
account, among other reasons, of the shorter lines of communication as compared with
those at Baghdad. I earnestly hope that this decision may be reconsidered.

I have already made it clear that, in my view, the Air Force troops, even without
the support of the native levies, could in the last resort maintain themselves for a
sufficient period against any probable form of attack. At the same time the presence
at Baghdad of the 4 battalions would constitute a material addition to the security of
the aerodrome and depot and freedom of the employment of the squadrons and
armoured cars, and would provide a further guarantee for keeping open communication
by air between Baghdad and Egypt. This is a point of the first importance to the
working of the Air Scheme as a whole. The presence of the Army garrison at Baghdad
would greatly facilitate the administration of the air units, by making it no longer
necessary for them to provide for their own defence on the ground. Moreover, the
stationing at one centre of the main body of the Air Force and Army troops would tend
to economy of administration and greatly to improve the amenities of life for the
personnel of both services. In connection again with the location of the Army garrison,
the report by General Haldane in regard to the keeping of the river line open is of
importance, and I cannot but feel that if the Cairo Conference had had before it the
information now available on this subject that Amara might not have been recommended
as against Baghdad.

I appreciate that the stationing of 4 battalions at Amara, would offer some
advantage as providing a pivot for the introduction, if required, of reinforcements from
India; and it would no doubt serve as some protection to the Persian oil fields, though
these, it may be remarked, have so far shown little need for military protection. I do
not think that these or the other considerations adduced at Cairo outweigh the
advantages which, as I have already indicated, would follow from the stationing of the
main part of the Infantry Brigade at Baghdad where, moreover, the prestige and
morale effect of their presence would be far greater. The arrangement which I would
urge is that 2 white and 1 Indian battalions should be stationed at Baghdad and
1 Indian battalion at Basra.

A statement is appended summarising in terms of numbers and of cost the above
proposals:

(1.) Air Force establishment for 8 squadrons with area head-
quarters, 2 group headquarters, central air communication
station, extra wireless personnel for intelligence and com-
munication duties—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Officers</th>
<th>Other Ranks</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Total Cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>330</td>
<td>2,209</td>
<td>866</td>
<td>1,904,000</td>
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(2.) 3 armoured car companies—

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<th>Followers</th>
<th>Total Cost (£)</th>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>190,800</td>
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(3.) 2 armoured trains and 4 gunboats—

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Other Ranks</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Total Cost (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50,000</td>
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(4.) 1 pack battery (Indian)—

<table>
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<th>Officers</th>
<th>Other Ranks</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Total Cost (£)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>72,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Carried forward ... 2,230,800
Brought forward ... £2,230,000

(5.) 4 infantry battalions (2 British/2 Indian)—

British—
56 officers ... £578,900
2,924 other ranks ... 6,600
132 followers ... 3,000

Indian—
26 officers ... £264,800
38 Indian officers ... 1,840 other ranks ... 100 followers ... 5,000

850,300

(6.) Administrative services (for units comprised in 1 to 5 above)—

Medical and sanitary ... £49 327 196
Signals ... 4 108 ... 
Works ... 10 189 ... 
Ordnance ... 9 290 ... 

Total ... 480,000

400 followers

(7.) Contingencies £600,000

(8.) Local labour, 500 £25,000

Total ... £4,186,100

(9.) Total personnel—

British other Indian other Officers. ranks. Officers. ranks. Followers. Local labour.
562 38 5,934 2,296 1,814 500

Explanatory Notes.

1. The above figures exclude, both as regards the Air Force and Army units, any "overhead" charges in respect of contributions to training establishments in England or elsewhere, pensions, charges, &c.

2. The estimated cost of the Air Force units has been prepared in the Air Ministry.

3. The cost of the 4 Infantry Battalions is based on the maintenance figures for units in Iraq, as shown in the Army Estimates for 1921-22.

4. The estimate of cost of the Administrative Services is based on the best figures at present available.

5. The numbers of followers are calculated: (1) for the R.A.F. units: on experience of existing Air Force establishments in Iraq; (2) for Armoured Cars, Armoured Trains, &c., and Auxiliary Services: on the same scale as for the R.A.F. units; (3) for Infantry Battalions and Pack Battery: on scale of authorised establishments for the British Army in India, and for units of the Indian Army.

6. It is hoped that the Administrative Services may be still further reduced as time admits of further investigations. They will not, anyhow, in my opinion, be increased.

7. The above figures do not include the building of barracks. It is impossible to say quite what this will amount to for the Air Force, but it will be in the neighbourhood of a total of £720,000, including barracks for Armoured-Car Companies, spread over the years as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>£</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1921-22</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-23</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923-24</td>
<td>320,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I have not included the works services for the Army, as I do not know how much they have got out there that would be available.
On the assumption that the programme could be satisfactorily carried out, the Conference decided that the garrison of Mesopotamia could be reduced to a total of 23 battalions as fast as shipping could be made available. Proportionate reductions of staffs, auxiliary services of all kinds, followers and animals would follow. It was estimated that the resultant saving in the estimate for Palestine and Mesopotamia in 1921-22 would amount to 5½ millions, provided that prompt action was taken at all points. A further saving would result if the Government of India could be induced to shorten the time during which Indian troops remained on Imperial charge after repatriation to India. It was not proposed that the garrison should be reduced below the 23 battalion scale until after the hot weather. Meanwhile, steps were recommended in order to facilitate a further reduction in October.

Assuming that the country remained quiet internally and was not disturbed from outside, that the Arab Government proved a success, and that good progress was made in the training of the local levies and the development of the Arab Army, it was hoped that a further reduction in the Imperial garrison to a 12 battalion scale, with further resultant savings, might take place in October, but this would, of course, be contingent upon events.

The Conference then discussed the normal or permanent garrison for Mesopotamia, which it was hoped to reach some time in the year 1922-23.

A scheme for the control of Mesopotamia by the Royal Air Force was submitted by the Chief of the Air Staff and approved in principle by the Conference. If this scheme were brought into operation the Imperial garrison in Mesopotamia would eventually be reduced to 1 brigade and 1 pack battery. The alternative would be the retention in Mesopotamia of an Imperial garrison of 12 battalions of infantry, 1 cavalry regiment, 1 field battery, 1 pack battery, 1 sapper and miner company, and 5 squadrons of the Royal Air Force. The Conference recommended that in calculating the comparative advantages of these two alternatives, consideration should be given to the vital necessity of preparing and training an Air Force adequate to war requirements, the importance of testing the potentialities of the Air Force, the need for giving to superior officers and staffs the experience in independent command and responsibility, and the provision of an all-British military and commercial air route to India.

Extracts from Speech of June 14 on Middle Eastern Services Supplementary Estimate

If, as I say, our anticipations are not overthrown by events, I expect, and propose, that the Estimates for next year, 1922-23, for the normal current expenditure in both Palestine and Mesopotamia together—apart, that is to say, from terminal charges and special charges which may result from the evacuation and demobilisation of the troops—will not exceed £9,000,000 or £10,000,000; and I may remind the House that that amount has only a pre-war value of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000. If this further saving of approximately £18,000,000, as compared with the expenditure of the present year, or of £28,000,000, as compared with that of last year, can really be achieved, it will constitute a very considerable relief to the British taxpayer. It will mean that our expenditure in these two countries will have been reduced to more or less manageable proportions, and will enable us to carry out in a fair and reasonable manner the obligations and pledges into which we have entered.

Hitherto, in the financial argument, I have treated Palestine and Mesopotamia as one, but now the path bifurcates, and I must deal with each country separately. I will take Mesopotamia first.

If we are successful in the plans we are pursuing, by the end of the financial year, the Arab ruler and Arab Government will be installed at Baghdad. The Arab Army is already partly formed under the administration of Ja'afar Pasha, the present Mesopotamian Secretary of State for War.
The cost of the Arab Army will be defrayed from Mesopotamian revenues, but there are, in addition to that, Arab levies which will gradually be absorbed in the Arab Army and will pass out of our expense, Kurdish levies, and a certain number of Assyrian levies which I have been endeavouring to form out of the refugees who have so long enjoyed our reluctant hospitality. This force of levies is engaged in taking over outlying stations from the British troops, and so enabling the garrison and the expense to be reduced. Behind the Arab Army and behind these levies there will stand at the end of the year about 12 battalions of British and Indian infantry.

These 12 battalions with their ancillary units will, it is considered, be sufficient to hold Baghdad and the river communications which connect it with the sea. Last of all in our arrangements for maintaining public security, but by no means least of all, comes the powerful Air Force which is now stationed in the country, and which is being somewhat increased. There are at present 6 squadrons of aeroplanes in Mesopotamia, and next year there will be two more.

As I have said, the normal cost of the military and aviation arrangements for Mesopotamia in the coming year, on the basis I have described, will not exceed £7,000,000 or £8,000,000, but I must not be understood as presenting the exact estimate a year and a half before the time.

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Extracts from a Speech on Colonial Office Vote, July 14.

I come to say a few words about Mesopotamia.

So far from anything having happened in the interval since I spoke, to make the authorities on the spot think they will not be able to reduce the force there next year to 12 battalions, they have now submitted a proposal to reduce it to 8 battalions in the course of next year.

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Extract from a Speech on Navy Estimates, August 3, 1921.

Great reductions in expenditure are being effected. Resolute efforts to effect these reductions are being taken. I hope myself, in my own small way, to contribute a reduction of nearly 20,000,000 on Mesopotamia alone.

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Extract from a private letter from General Haldane to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated Baghdad, June 25, 1921.

"...I sent home a telegram a few days ago regarding the work of the Air Force since my return from Cairo. I waited until I had no doubt that the test I had always maintained they must undergo before I would be prepared to depart from the attitude I took, had been carried out. The test was one that covered air operations in the desert, over marshy country and the hilly borders of Kurdistan, so that it may be regarded as a representative one. Wholesale reduction on the strength of the result would of course be unwise, but I think that it shows that disturbances can be checked or prevented from arising by the speedy arrival of aircraft, and that unless, which is improbable, rebellion were to arise in every corner at once, the sudden arrival of aeroplanes on several days should act as a preventative. Indeed, I now think that had I had sufficient aircraft last year I might have prevented the insurrection spreading beyond the first incident at Rumaithah. I do not admit that I have changed my mind or gone back on anything I have said in the past. The matter was
too serious a one in my position, as being responsible for the safety of the country, for me to accept the claim made by the Royal Air Force without proof. And what I have said above, I must qualify by the remark that in this country with its extremes of climate one cannot always depend on the R.A.F. That has been shown during the recent air operations and I have what I call a 'black list' of the failures, which is kept very carefully, and it also includes successes.

That reminds me that on your suggestion at Cairo I had plans made for a barge with a gallery 25 feet above the water line, to be towed by one of the river gunboats. Such an arrangement is now under construction, and the gallery will be capable of taking a dozen machine guns, so that a considerable fire could be brought to bear on either bank. The barge will also carry two Stokes mortars, the crews for which are being trained. With four such vessels I think the Arabs could not stop troops and supplies coming up the Tigris.

Extract from a Private Letter from Air Vice-Marshal Salmond to Air Marshal Trenchard, dated Baghdad, July 9, 1921.

"I lunched with the Commander-in-Chief to-day. He is very pleased with the Air Force, as he has said in his cables. They have been doing very good work in all the turbulent areas, especially at Rowanduz, where they finally demolished the town, which has always been the centre of trouble there, with the result that the Agha has come in and made a complete surrender. The Marsh Arabs are now being dealt with, and if the R.A.F. are successful, as they will be, with them, then the Commander-in-Chief will be a complete convert as far as I can see. He certainly is doing his best to carry out the Cairo Conference."