MEMORANDUM

RESPECTING

THE SETTLEMENT OF TURKEY AND THE ARABIAN PENINSULA.

[Maps illustrating this Memorandum issued separately.]

1. THIS paper is divided into three parts: (A) "Commitments," in which a summary is given of treaties, agreements, and understandings at present binding upon His Majesty's Government; (B) "Desiderata," in which the lines of settlement necessary or desirable in British interests are sketched out; and (C) "Policy," in which suggestions are put forward for the revision of "commitments" in the direction of "desiderata," if and when opportunities offer in the course of negotiations.

2. The first part deals mainly with questions of fact, the second with aims, and the third with action, and it has therefore seemed convenient to keep them distinct.

3. The problems of Ottoman finance have been dealt with separately, and in regard to the questions of Constantinople, the Black Sea Straits, the Dodekannese, Cyprus, and the Italian claims in Anatolia, reference should also be made to the series of memoranda dealing with the settlement of Southern and South-Eastern Europe.

* See memoranda printed for the Treasury in 1916, 1917, and 1918, and annexes to memoranda dealing with the settlement of Southern and South-Eastern Europe (section on European Turkey).
It will be convenient to give, first, a schedule of the principal treaties, agreements, and understandings in which these commitments are embodied, and then to analyse their bearing both in general and in regard to different areas.

Under the Anglo-Turkish Conventions of the 29th July, 1913, and the 9th March, 1914, the Arabian Peninsula south and east of a line prolonging the frontier of the Aden Protectorate north-eastward to latitude 20°, and thence running due north to a point on the Arabian coast of the Persian Gulf approximately south of Bahrein Island, was recognised as a British sphere. Nearly all the independent Arab rulers in this area had previously entered into permanent relations with His Majesty's Government, and the remainder have done so subsequently. And since these relations are altogether in the interests of Great Britain, and are most unlikely to be called in question by any other Power, it seems superfluous to discuss them in this memorandum.

Our bipartite agreements with Turkey lapsed with the war, and bind neither her nor us unless or until they are specifically renewed. Our agreements with Russia regarding the war and the peace settlement lapsed either when there ceased to be a Central Russian Government recognised by the Allies, or when the Bolshevik Government made peace with Germany. This leaves the following agreements to be taken into account:

1. "Règlement organique" of the Lebanon vilayet, dated June 9, 1861.
2. "Règlement organique" of the Lebanon vilayet, dated September 6, 1864.
3. Treaty of Berlin, dated July 13, 1878, article 61, relative to ameliorations and reforms in the Ottoman provinces inhabited by Armenians.
4. Proclamation by the Government of India, dated November 2, 1914, regarding the Moslem holy places.*
5. Assurance, dated November 3, 1914, made by the British Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Sheikh of Kuwait.
6. Assurance, dated November 22, 1914, made by the British Resident in the Persian Gulf to the Sheikh of Mohammerah.†
7. Treaty, dated April 26, 1915, with Italy.
8. Treaty, dated April 30, 1915, and ratified November 6, 1915, with the IdriSI Sayyid of Sabia (see Political Intelligence Department, Foreign Office, "Special" 4).
9. Understanding with King Husein of the Hejaz. (Not embodied in any single instrument, but see Political Intelligence Department, Foreign Office, "Special" 3.)
12. Agreement, dated August 18, 1917, with Italy.‡
13. Letter, dated November 2, 1917, from Mr. Balfour to Lord Rothschild, regarding Jewish Zionist aspirations.

* A briefer version of this proclamation was circulated to the Gulf Chiefs on the 3rd November, 1914.
† This Arab ruler and his tribesmen are nominally Persian subjects and their country Persian territory, and strictly therefore they fall outside the scope of the present memorandum. But the future of Mohammerah is bound to be considered in relation to that of Mesopotamia and the Arabian Peninsula.
‡ This agreement was made (a) "subject to the consent of Russia," which has never been given; and (b) in pursuance of article 9 of the treaty of the 26th April, 1915 (No. 7 above), which makes it in effect conditional upon the execution of the Anglo-French Agreement of the 16th May, 1916, and of the parallel agreements (now void) which France and Great Britain made with Russia, this contingent character being also expressly laid down in article 8 of No. 12. Technically, therefore, No. 12 is invalid; but Great Britain and France are bound by No. 7 to take Italian claims into consideration if they ultimately obtain advantages in the Middle East for themselves. The full text of Article 9 of No. 7 will be found on p. 17 of the present memorandum.
I.—General Commitments.

(i.) His Majesty’s Government have not committed themselves to giving up any of their pre-existing rights, relations, facilities, or other interests, political or economic, in this region (e.g., territorial possessions, protectorates, capitulations, concessions to British subjects, &c.).

(ii.) They have declared in a general way that the non-Turkish populations shall be liberated from Turkish misrule, and given an opportunity of national life and economic development.

(iii.) They have pledged themselves, in general or specifically, that the legitimate interests of the Moslem world, Jewry, the Roman Catholic Church, and other international bodies in shrines and holy cities situated in this region, or in territories in this region where they have traditional claims, shall not be prejudiced in the settlement, or even that they shall be secured more satisfactorily than hitherto.

They have also pledged themselves to the satisfaction, if possible, of specific desiderata of their Allies, and they are morally bound to take all legitimate interests of their Allies into consideration.

(iv.) They have entered into positive permanent liabilities, both military and political, towards certain independent Arab rulers, and have assured the inhabitants of certain occupied territories specifically that they shall not be put back under Turkish rule.

II.—Commitments in Different Areas.

(1.) As regards European Turkey and Anatolia, His Majesty’s Government are not pledged to the extinction of an independent Turkish National State, but they did provisionally agree (see Schedule, No. 12) that Italy shall establish such direct or indirect administration or control as she desires in the Green Area, and shall have political and economic priority in Area C, though the latter is to form part of an independent State (presumably Turkey). Italian rights in the Green Area and Area C are subject to the following limitations: Smyrna is to be a free port for British and French trade; the existing Ottoman customs tariff is to remain in force for twenty years; and there are to be no internal customs barriers between any of the “coloured” or “lettered” areas.

The British-owned Aidin Railway in the Green Area is protected by a mutual undertaking on the part of Great Britain, Italy, and France (No. 12) that the interests of each Power in the areas assigned to the others shall be scrupulously respected.

His Majesty’s Government have not consented to any modification of the Capitulation Treaties in European Turkey or Anatolia, or in any other part of the former territories of the Ottoman Empire; but since these treaties are bipartite only, they have lapsed with the war and will have to be renewed specifically if their maintenance is desired.

As regards the control of the Black Sea Straits, His Majesty’s Government are no longer bound by their qualified acceptance of the Russian circular telegram of the 4th March, 1915, in which Russia claimed those portions of the littoral of the Straits which are coloured yellow on the map. Their hands are now entirely free in regard both to the control of the Straits and to the disposal of Constantinople.

(2.) As regards the Dodecanese group of islands, which are still nominally Ottoman territory, but have been occupied by Italy since 1911, we have pledged ourselves that Italy shall obtain complete sovereignty over them (No. 7, article 8).

As regards Cyprus, we are pledged not to cede it to any third Power without the previous consent of France (No. 11, article 4).

(3.) As regards Armenia, we are bound, perhaps juridically and certainly morally, by article 61 of the Berlin Treaty (No. 3), under which Turkey is pledged to introduce ameliorations and reforms into the provinces inhabited by Armenians. This article was substituted, at our instance, for article 16 of the superseded Treaty of San Stephano, which provided that the Russian troops should remain in occupation of these provinces until satisfactory reforms were carried out. Turkey has actually omitted to carry out her pledge for forty years, in spite of repeated protests from His Majesty’s Government, and has added the massacres of 1895-7, 1909, and 1915 (the worst of all) to her record of misrule.

It is clearly incumbent upon us to put an end to these wrongs to humanity and violations of an international treaty to which we are a party, now that it lies within our power to do so.
We are, however, committed in regard to the south-western half of Armenia (Sivas, Kharput, Diarbekir, Cilicia) by its inclusion in the Blue Area, where we have agreed (No. 11) that France shall establish such direct or indirect administration or control as she desires. But we have a free hand in the Yellow Area, which was assigned to Russia, and in those districts west of the Yellow Area and north of the Blue which equitably should be included in an Armenian State.

We are also parties to an undertaking, made to Italy by France, that Mersina and all other harbours on the Cilician coast shall be free ports for Italian trade with the Green Area.

Note.—The future of Russian Armenia will have to be considered in connection with that of Turkish Armenia, but it falls outside the scope of the present memorandum.

(4.) Arab Countries and Kurdistan.

The Arab countries concerned are the Arab provinces of Turkey and the Independent States of the Arabian Peninsula—the Aden Protectorate on the mainland and islands, especially the Protectorate of Bahrein, being excluded.

Our commitments in this area are as follows:—

(a.) His Majesty's Government are parties to the "Reglements organiques" of the Lebanon vilayet (Nos. 1 and 2 in the Schedule).

(b.) They have treaties, agreements, and understandings with the Sultans of Mokalla and Maskat, Chiefs of "Trucial Oman," Sheikh of Koweit and Al Katar, Husain Saud, the Idrisi and other independent Arab rulers, and with the Sheikh of Mohammerah, who is an autonomous ruler under the sovereignty of Persia.

Some of these commitments are nearly a century old, others (including the most important) have been entered into during the war. They vary greatly in scope and strictness, as the parties to them differ in power and in the closeness of their contact with Great Britain; but there is a standard "trucial" pattern (see below) to which they more or less approximate.

(c.) Subject to the maintenance of all the above obligations and rights, and so long as there is no detriment to the interests of France, His Majesty's Government are pledged to King Husein (by a letter to him dated the 24th October, 1915, from the High Commissioner (Cairo)) that not merely his own dominions in the Hejaz, but also the Red and Brown Areas, the Akka-Haifa Enclave, Areas A and B, and the whole mainland of the Arabian Peninsula south of Area B, with the exception of the Aden Protectorate, shall be "Arab" and "Independent."

We are not committed to the establishment of a unitary State or of a Confederation of States in this area, nor to any suzerainty of King Husein outside the Hejaz. King Husein claimed the boundaries of Arab independence to which we have assented, not in his own name, but as the spokesman of the various populations, and our pledge was given to him in this capacity only.

Nor are we committed to him, or to anyone, in regard to the Caliphate. His Majesty's Government have consistently maintained that this is a question to be decided by the Moslems themselves, and they have merely expressed a pious hope that "an Arab of true race will assume the Caliphate at Mecca and Medain."

As a result of agreements with King Husein, other independent rulers, and our Allies, we have obtained a special position for ourselves, to the exclusion of other outside Powers, in the greater part of the Arab area, with certain important exceptions, which appear when our commitments are analysed province by province.

* Subject to the same limitations regarding customs tariffs as Italy has agreed to in the Green Area, and to an undertaking not to cede her rights (except to the Arab State or Confederation) without the previous consent of Great Britain. France has also agreed that Alexandretta (which is included in the Blue Area and should probably be reckoned to Armenia) shall be a free port for British and Italian trade with the Red Area and Areas A and B.

† Message from Lord Kitchener to Sherif Abdullah, son of King Husein, despatched on the 31st October, 1914, the date on which war broke out between Great Britain and Turkey.
III.—Commitments in the different Arab Countries (including Kurdistan).

1. The Arabian Peninsula, excluding the Hejaz.

(a) We have treaties with the independent rulers enumerated above (Part I, section 4), the standard of which has been set by the series concluded in the years 1820, 1839, 1853, and 1892 with the “Trucial Chiefs” of the Oman coast.

The fundamental points in a “trucial treaty” are the following:

(1) The native Governments agree to keep the peace, and to refer their disputes with one another to the arbitration of His Majesty’s Government.

(2) His Majesty’s Government undertake to arbitrate, to enforce their awards, and to watch over the peace.

(3) The native Governments undertake to abstain from relations with outside Powers other than Great Britain, and not to receive representatives of such Powers without His Majesty’s Government’s consent; further, that they will not alienate or lease territory to any outside Power except Great Britain, nor grant concessions to any foreigners except British subjects.

(4) His Majesty’s Government undertake to protect the native Governments against unprovoked aggression by outside Powers.

It may be noted that it has been the practice of His Majesty’s Government to limit their obligations to the keeping of the peace and defence against unprovoked aggression at sea, but that this limitation has not been specified in the treaty concluded during the war with Bin Saud (No. 10). This is an important departure from precedent.

Our treaty with the Idrisi (No. 8) is much looser than the “trucial” kind. We also made an agreement in 1915 with the Sheikh of Mavia, who rules a district of great strategical importance immediately beyond the frontier of the Aden Protectorate, but it has become void through his siding with the Turks. We have no commitments to Imam Yahya of Sanaa (Yemen), or to Bin Rashid, Amir of Jebel Shammar; and Bin Rashid’s recent act in acknowledging the overlordship of King Hussein probably precludes the establishment of direct relations hereafter between him and His Majesty’s Government.

(b) We have pledged ourselves to King Hussein (No. 9) that the whole mainland of the peninsula with the exception of the Aden Protectorate (within its pre-war limits) shall be “independent” and “Arab”; in other words, we have pledged ourselves to the expulsion of the Turks but in other respects to the status quo. We have declared further, in a Foreign Office statement dated the 11th June, 1918, in reply to a memorial from Syrians resident in Egypt, that, “in regard to areas in Arabia which were free and independent before the outbreak of war, and areas emancipated from Turkish control by the action of the Arabs themselves during the present war, His Majesty’s Government recognise the complete and sovereign independence of the Arabs inhabiting these areas, and support them in their struggle for freedom.”

(c) We are pledged to France and provisionally to Italy, and they to us (No. 11, article 10, and No. 12, article 7), that we “will not ourselves acquire and will not consent to a third Power acquiring territorial possessions in the Arabian Peninsula, nor consent to a third Power installing a naval base either on the east coast, or on the islands, of the Red Sea. This, however, shall not prevent such adjustment of the Aden frontier as may be necessary in consequence of recent Turkish aggression.”

In subsequent discussions the French Government have recognised that Great Britain has “special political interests” in the Arabian Peninsula.

The three Powers are also pledged to consider measures regarding the arms traffic. No definite arrangement has yet been agreed upon, but there have been discussions between French and British representatives, in which the French proposed to leave it to the discretion of His Majesty’s Government to take the necessary steps for stopping “any trade capable of fomenting disturbances, such as the arms trade, slave trade, &c,” in the Arabian Peninsula.

2. The Hejaz.

The Hejaz is covered by our general commitments to France, Italy, King Hussein, and the Syrian memorialists regarding the independence of the Arabian Peninsula (see above), and we were pledged specifically that the Holy Places, including Jeddah, should be immune from attack during the war (No. 4).

We have also recognised Hussein as an independent ruler with the style and title of “His Lordship the King of the Hejaz.”

Hussein, on his part, has never accepted this title, and regards himself as “His Majesty the King of the Arabs” (the style and title under which he was crowned at Mecca in 1916). Our understanding with him, in his capacity of local ruler, amounts to little more than a recognition of independence and a provisional arrangement for the joint conduct of the war:

[920—1]
The French Government have consented (No. 11, article 11) that "the negotiations with the Arabs as to the boundaries of the Arab State or Confederation (i.e., the negotiations with King Husein) shall be continued through the same channel as before" the Agreement of 1916 (i.e., through His Majesty's Government), and they have observed: this understanding in practice—for instance, in the negotiations regarding King Husein's title, referred to above.

On the other hand, there has been a French military mission at Jeddah and a French Moslem agent at Mecca. And the latter was not only instructed to deal with the Hejaz Government regarding pilgrimage facilities for the Moslem subjects of France (a matter in which His Majesty's Government could not, and would not desire to, prevent the maintenance of direct relations between the Hejaz and other outside Powers), but was given written instructions regarding certain purely political questions, which were communicated at the time to His Majesty's Government by the French Ambassador. This has created an awkward precedent, and in subsequent negotiations (which were not, however, carried to a conclusion) we virtually admitted that France has a status in the Hejaz which is in some manner an exception to the general political priority of Great Britain in the Arabian Peninsula.

It may be expected, moreover, that Italy will claim any privileges that are acquired by France.


(a.) His Majesty's Government are pledged to King Husein that the whole of this area shall be "independent" and "Arab," but King Husein has consented that Great Britain shall take "special measures of administrative control" in the former Turkish vilayets of Basra and Bagdad (together = Iraq). King Husein suggested that this régime should be short, and that he should be compensated for it by a contribution from Mesopotamian revenues, but His Majesty's Government have not committed themselves to any such payment, nor to any limitations on their control, either of period or function.

As regards those parts of Jezireh which go naturally with Iraq (see below), King Husein has neither been asked to concede, nor has conceded, any reservations in regard to the independence assented to by us.

(b.) France and Italy have agreed (No. 11, article 2, and No. 12, article 1) that Great Britain shall establish such direct or indirect administration or control in the Red Area as she desires and may think fit to arrange with the Arab State or Confederation (see below), and that she shall have political and economic priority in Area B (which covers part of Mesopotamia). France has also agreed to guarantee to Great Britain a "given supply" of water from the Tigris and Euphrates in Area A for Area B.

His Majesty's Government on their part are pledged to France to recognise and uphold an independent Arab State or Confederation, under the suzerainty of an Arab chief, in Area B; not to code their rights in the Red Area to any third Power, except the Arab State or Confederation, without the previous consent of the French Government (No. 11, article 9); and not to extend the Bagdad Railway northwards beyond Samarra, until a railway connecting Bagdad with Aleppo via the Euphrates Valley has been completed.

Further, that in the Red Area and Area B the existing Ottoman customs tariff is to remain in force for twenty years, and that there are to be no internal customs barriers between any of the "coloured" or "lettered" areas.

Moreover, those parts of Jezireh which go naturally with Iraq (that is, at least the parts east of the line Verdi-Jeziret Ibn Omar, including Jebel Sinjar and Mosul) are included in Area A, in which we have agreed that France shall have political and economic priority, under the same conditions as we in Area B.

(c.) We are also pledged to the Sheikh of Kuwait (No. 5), the Sheikh of Mohammerah and Bin Saud, that Basra shall never again be subject to Turkish authority. The same assurance has been given verbally to the notables of Basra vilayet, and the Viceroy of India, in a speech delivered at Basra on the 3rd February, 1915, to a local deputation, indicated plainly, though not expressly, that Turkish administration would not be restored.

(d.) As regards the (Shia) Holy Cities in Mesopotamia, they were included specifically in the Government of India's Proclamation concerning Moslem Holy Places (No. 4), and in the similar assurance to the Gulf Chiefs, but reference to them was carefully avoided in our negotiations with King Husein. Lord Grey of Fallodon also avoided discussion of their status in his conversation with the Aga Khan on the subject...
of the Arab movement and the Caliphate in 1915. On the occasion of the occupation of the Bagdad district by the British forces in 1917, His Majesty's Government informed the Persian Government that the British military authorities would do all in their power to protect the Shias Holy Places.

Our commitments, written, verbal, or implicit, to the "Mujtahids" and inhabitants of these Holy Cities since our occupation of Bagdad vilayet can only be reported upon adequately by the Chief Political Officer attached to General Marshall's Army, and this is also true of our commitments to the rest of the population in Mesopotamian occupied territory.

(ec.) In reply to a memorial by Syrians resident in Egypt, His Majesty's Government declared on the 11th June, 1918, that, "in areas formerly under Ottoman dominion occupied by the Allied forces during the present war, it is the wish and desire of His Majesty's Government that the future government should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed," and that "this policy has and will continue to have the support of His Majesty's Government." We have since declared jointly with France (No. 14) that:

"The aim which France and Great Britain have in view in prosecuting the war is not merely to attack, but also to liberate, and they have agreed to recognise such governments as soon as they are effectively established. So far from desiring to impose specific institutions upon the populations of these regions, their sole object is to ensure, by their support and effective assistance, that the governments and administrations adopted by these regions of their own free will shall be exercised in the normal way. The function which the two Allied Governments claim for themselves in the liberated territories is to ensure impartial and equal justice for all; to facilitate the economic development of the country by encouraging local initiative; to promote the diffusion of education; and to put an end to the divisions too long exploited by Turkish policy."


This country may be defined as the territory south of the Bohtan River, and east of the Tigris and the Jebel Hamrin, which has hitherto belonged to Turkey, and is bounded on the east by the Persian frontier.

We are pledged to King Hussein that the parts of this territory south of a line running west-and-east from Jeziret-ibn-Omar, on the Tigris, through Amadia, to the Persian frontier, shall be "independent" and "Arab."

We are also pledged to France (No. 11, Article 1) that the same parts shall be included in the independent Arab State or Confederation which is to be recognised and upheld by us, and this pledge has been adhered to provisionally by Italy (No. 12, Article 1).

It has also been agreed that in these parts France shall have political and economic priority north of a line running up the Lesser Zab River, through Khoi Sanjak to the Persian frontier and Great Britain a similar priority south of that line.

We have a free hand in the parts of Kurdistan north of the Jeziret-Abadina line, since they were included in the Yellow Area assigned to Russia. These parts contain the settlements of the Nestorian Christians (Assyrians) in the upper valley of the Greater Zab, and we are under a certain obligation to secure their future, since they were under the auspices of an Anglican Mission before the war, and have suffered atrocities during it at the hands of the Turks and Kurds.

We are thus committed to the partition of Kurdistan into three sections, in the two largest of which certain rights are secured to ourselves, the French, and the Arabs, but none to the Kurds.

5. Syria (including parts of Jezireh that do not go with Iraq).

(a.) Lebanon: In the protocol signed at Constantinople on the 6th September, 1864, by the representatives of Turkey, Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia,
the Ottoman Government declared, "in accord with the representatives of the other Powers," that they maintained all the provisions of the Règlement organique of the Lebanon, and of the additional Act, of the 9th June, 1861. The text of the Règlement, with certain modifications, was attached to the above protocol.

The Règlement defines the boundaries of the Lebanon vilayet, provides that it shall be administered by a Christian Governor, calls into being an Administrative Council, and lays down details of local government, justice, finance, and contributions to the Ottoman Treasury.

Since the protocol to which this Règlement is attached is not a mere bipartite agreement between Great Britain and Turkey, it cannot be regarded as having simply lapsed with the war. His Majesty's Government are probably bound by it juridically as regards, at any rate, the other parties to it who are at present their Allies, and morally as regards the inhabitants of the Lebanon, in the sense that the specific rights of autonomy secured to them under the Règlement ought not to suffer detriment through the abolition of Ottoman suzerainty, but ought to be secured to them, if they so desire, under whatever régime may be established in this and other adjoining territories which Turkey will have to cede at the peace.

It may be noted that these obligations to the Lebanon might be incompatible with the rights that have been accorded by His Majesty's Government to France in the Blue Area (see below), though this of course would depend upon the use France chose to make of them.

(b. We are pledged to King Husein that Syria and Syrian Jezireh east and south of the boundary between the Blue Area and Area A shall be "independent" and "Arab," so long as there is no detriment to the interests of France.

(c) In that part of Syria which is covered by the Blue Area (i.e., in the Blue Area south of the Alexandretta-Kilis line) we have agreed that France shall establish such direct or indirect administration or control as she desires and may think fit to arrange with the Arab State or Confederation, and that she shall have political and economic priority in Area A (which includes the whole of Syrian Jezireh and part of the Bedouin country that depends on Syria).*

The French Government, on their part, are pledged to us to recognise and uphold an independent Arab State or Confederation, under the suzerainty of an Arab chief, in Area A; not to cede their rights in the Blue Area to any third Power, except the Arab State or Confederation, without the previous consent of Great Britain (No. 11, article 9); and not to extend the Bagdad Railway southwards beyond Mosul, until a railway connecting Bagdad with Aleppo, via the Euphrates Valley, has been completed.

Further, that, in the Blue Area and Area A, the existing Ottoman customs tariff is to remain in force for twenty years, and that there are to be no internal customs barriers between any of the "coloured" or "lettered" areas.

Moreover, the Trans-Jordan country, and part of the Bedouin country that depends on Syria (that is, the districts along the Hejaz Railway from Deraa to Maan, and the Ruweilah-Anazeh country round the Wady Sirhan), are included in Area B, in which France has agreed that His Majesty's Government shall have political and economic priority, under the same conditions as France in Area A. Part of the Syrian Bedouin country, again, lies south of Area B, and is presumably reckoned to the Arabian Peninsula, in which the "special political position" of Great Britain has been recognised by France in subsequent discussions (see III. 1 above).

Besides this, France has agreed (No. 11, Article 5) that there shall be free railway transit across the Blue Area from Alexandretta for British trade with Areas A and B and the Red Area, and that His Majesty's Government may carry a railway from Haifa to Bagdad (see Palestine below) through Area A.

(d) Our statement to the Syrian memorialists and our joint declaration with France (No. 14) apply to the future of Syria as well as that of Mesopotamia (see above).

6. Palestine (west of Jordan).

(a) We are pledged to King Husein that this territory shall be "Arab" and "independent."

(b) France (No. 11, Article 4) and provisionally Italy (No. 12, Article 4) have "accorded" the ports of Akka and Haifa to Great Britain, but His Majesty's Govern-

* That is, the countries of the Pedian Anazeh (between Home and the Euphrates), the Siman Anazeh (between Damascus and Ber-el-Zor), and a corner of the Wul'd Ali and Ruweilah-Anazeh country, which is mostly included in Area B and the Peninsula Area south of it.
ment have agreed, on their part, that these ports shall be free for French and Italian trade with the Blue Area and Areas A and B.

c. France has agreed (No. 11, Article 7) that Great Britain may build, administer, and be sole owner of a railway from Haifa to Bagdad, and that she shall have a perpetual right to transport troops along such a line at all times.

d. In the Brown Area, Great Britain, France (No. 11, Article 3), and provisionally Italy (No. 12, Article 3) have agreed that an "international administration" shall be established, the form of which shall be decided upon in consultation with the other Allies and the representatives of King Hussein.

e. Moslem Holy Places in Palestine (i.e., the Mosque of Omar, and Abraham's Tomb at Hebron, the latter of which is excluded from the Brown Area) are implicitly included in the Government of India's proclamation (No. 4).

f. His Majesty's Government have conveyed (No. 13) to the Zionist Federation the statement that "they view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

g. The draft proclamation prepared for General Allenby's entry into Jerusalem was not issued officially, either on that occasion or subsequently, but it has been published in the English press, and was referred to in the statement of British policy issued by the Foreign Office on the 11th June, 1918, in reply to a memorial from Syrian resident in Egypt.

IV.—Summary.

(i.) European Turkey and Anatolia: Free hand in Constantinople and on the littoral of the Straits; commitments to Italy in Anatolia (No. 12).

(ii.) Black Sea Straits: Free hand.

(iii.) Dodecanese: Commitment to Italy (No. 7).

(iv.) Cyprus: Commitment to France (No. 11).

(v.) Armenia: Commitments under Treaty of Berlin (No. 8) and to France (No. 11) and Italy (No. 12) in parts; in remainder, free hand.

(vi.) Arab Countries in General and Kurdistan: Commitments under the "Réglements organiques" of the Lebanon Vilayet (Nos. 1 and 2) and to various independent Arab rulers, King Hussein (No. 9), France (No. 11), and Italy conditionally (No. 12).

(vii.) Arab Federation: Free hand.

(viii.) Caliphate: Free hand.

(ix.) Arabian Peninsula, excluding Hejaz: Commitments to various independent Arab rulers, King Hussein (No. 9), France (No. 11), and Italy (No. 12).

(x.) Hejaz: Commitments to King Hussein (No. 9), France (No. 11), and Italy (No. 12), and (regarding Holy Places) to Moslem world (No. 4).

(xi.) Mesopotamia: Commitments to King Hussein (No. 9), France (No. 11), Notables of Basra Vilayet, Sheikhs of Koweit (No. 5) and Mohammedah, Bin Saud, Moslem world (No. 4) as regards Moslem Holy Places in general, Persia as regards Shia Holy Places in particular.

(xii.) Kurdistan: Commitments in parts to King Hussein and France; in parts free hand.

(xiii.) Syria: Commitments under "Règlements organiques" of the Lebanon (Nos. 1 and 2), and to King Hussein (No. 9) and France (No. 11).

(xiv.) Palestine: Commitments to King Hussein (No. 9), France (No. 11), Italy (No. 12), the Moslem world regarding Moslem Holy Places (No. 4), and the Zionist Federation (No. 13).

The Brown Area covers practically all the rest of Palestine west of Jordan, with the exception of a few square miles at either extremity.

I.—General Desiderata.

(1.) Maintenance of pre-existing British rights, relations, facilities, and other British interests, political and economic, in this region.

(2.) A settlement of the whole of this region (which as lying between Egypt and India is of direct interest to the British Empire) on a stable and friendly basis.

"Stability" means the establishment of an effective Government, or Governments, acceptable to the populations; "friendliness" means the intention of such Governments neither to pursue a policy hostile to the British Empire nor to serve the interests of a third Power pursuing such a policy.

(3.) That in carrying out such a settlement no arrangements shall be entered into that are likely to prejudice seriously the good relations of the British Empire with the Moslem world, Jewry, the Roman Catholic Church, or any other international body legitimately interested in the future of this region or in shrines or holy cities situated in it.

A fortiori, all new arrangements, however desirable in themselves, are subordinate to the maintenance of good relations with our Allies, so long as our own vital interests are preserved.

(4.) That, in view of the above considerations, the desired settlement shall be secured with the least possible increase of political and military liabilities for the British Empire.

II.—Desiderata in Different Areas.

(1.) In European Turkey and Anatolia His Majesty's Government have no interest in preventing the maintenance of an independent Turkish National State, and the substitution of some satisfactory alternative for the Capitulations in this area; but some effective safeguard must be found for the non-Turkish elements in the population, and especially for the Greeks in Smyrna and other important centres on the west coast of Anatolia.

With regard to the Black Sea Straits, it is indispensable that they should be under effective international control; but His Majesty's Government are prepared to discuss the methods by which this control is to be established and have not committed themselves to any particular solution in advance.

With regard to the future of Constantinople, the establishment of such control over the Straits would satisfy British strategical and economic desiderata. But since the prestige with which the Ottoman Sultan is invested by the possession of Constantinople is one of his chief supports in the retention of the Caliphate, and since the transference of the Caliphate from the Turks to the Arabs is distinctly desirable from the British point of view (see below), the expulsion of Turkey from Constantinople may perhaps be regarded as a British desideratum on political grounds. In view, however, of ancient rivalries for the possession of Constantinople, there are considerable and, it may be, convincing objections to this course.

(2.) As regards the Dodekanese group of islands, it is desirable that they should be accorded to Greece by some friendly arrangement between the Greek and Italian Governments, since they are purely Greek in population. And as regards Cyprus, it would be well that His Majesty's Government should recover freedom to offer it if they desire, and if that is the desire of the inhabitants, to Greece.

(3.) In Armenia it is desirable to establish an independent State that would secure equal justice for all religions and nationalities; this State eventually to be self-governing, but to be reconstructed for a term of years by a third Power; this Power to be friendly to Great Britain, and to be capable of building up Armenia into an effective barrier against Pan-Turanianism, and also against the aggression of foreign Powers in the direction of the Arab countries.

For the reconstruction of Armenia by an outside Power to be effective, Armenia would need a coast-line on the Mediterranean from which access to the interior would be feasible. So long as equality for all elements in the population is secured, it is desirable that Armenia should be given a wide extension in the direction of Anatolia, and that the frontiers of the latter country should be confined to districts where the Turks undoubtedly constitute the bulk of the population.
III.—Desiderata in the different Arab Countries (including Kurdistan).

1. The Arabian Peninsula, excluding the Hejaz.

Independence for all effective local Governments, and the conclusion of treaties, on the "trucial pattern" (see Part One, Section III), with all that have not already made treaties or agreements with Great Britain.

It is to be noted that the rulers with whom His Majesty's Government had treaties before the war were nearly all coastal chiefs, with no hinterland except the uninhabited south-eastern desert, and therefore without suzerainty over Bedouin tribes. Their subjects lived by pearl fishing and coastal trade, and breaches of the peace on their part generally occurred at sea. On the other hand, the rulers with whom His Majesty's Government have made treaties during the war are mostly chiefs of inland tribes and oases, drawing their power from the interior and apt to under these treaties, to the keeping of the peace at sea. The federation of the independent Arab States is a question for the Arabs themselves. It is a British desideratum in so far as the establishment of a united independent Arab Power (even though merely nominal) might counteract any odium we may incur with Moslem opinion as the chief agents in the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire (the sole remaining representative of Islamic power and independence before the war). On the other hand, this rather improbable advantage would have to be balanced against the possible detriment to the peacefulness and effectiveness of the independent Governments which a premature attempt at federation might involve. And Great Britain could not allow a precarious federal scheme to prejudice the "trucial" relations between herself and various independent Arab rulers, by which the peace is effectively kept already over a considerable part of the Arabian peninsula. Nor could she admit that the establishment of a federation should prevent the extension of "trucial" relations to other local Arab Governments with which she is not yet in treaty relationship, if such extension appeared necessary for the effective maintenance of peace over the whole Arab area.

The consumption of the Caliphate by an Arab house is a question for the Arabs to settle with other Moslems, and His Majesty's Government can take no open initiative in the matter. At the same time, it is desirable that, except in Syria, where the question must be left open for the moment, this intervention should as far as possible be the monopoly of the British Empire; it can only be maintained by a trucial system; a trucial system to be effective to disturb the peace—it is desirable that, except in Syria, where the question must be left open for the moment, this intervention should as far as possible be the monopoly of the British Empire.

The grounds of this claim are as follows: The peace of the Arab countries is a vital interest of the British Empire; it can only be maintained by a trucial system; a trucial system to be effective must be in the hands of a single Power, since, if the responsibility is divided, the local rulers who are to be kept in order will attempt to maintain anarchy by playing off one mediator against the other; and if this position is to be a monopoly, Great Britain has an overwhelming claim to it as the Power which has established a trucial system in any part of Arabia hitherto.

On the other hand, this claim to a special political position in the Arab countries does not imply a similar economic claim in the same area. His Majesty's Government will continue to take all legitimate official action for preserving and increasing British trade and concessions in their Arabian territories and protectorates, and in the independent Arab countries, but they do not aim at securing a paramount economic position in the whole of this area by means of a political monopoly. British desiderata in the Arab countries may be summed up as a British Monroe Doctrine for Arabia, but with certain qualifications, which appear when these desiderata are analysed province by province.
break the peace over questions of demarcation and tribal allegiance, over which sea-power gives us no control.

If we undertake to keep the peace throughout the Peninsula, we must therefore be prepared, in the last resort, to intervene directly on land, not only in case of aggression by outside Powers, but for the enforcement of our awards between the Arab rulers themselves. This problem has already been raised by our Treaty with Bin Saud, and by the difficulties that have arisen in the interior between him and King Husain.

2. The Hejaz.

It is extremely desirable that the Hejaz Government should accept a treaty with His Majesty's Government embodying an arbitration clause, since, if any one Government in the Peninsula remains outside the trucial system, the effectiveness of the whole system is endangered.

On the other hand, Great Britain would find it difficult to apply the same sanctions as in other parts of the Peninsula, since any landing of troops in the Hejaz, or even a blockade of the coast (especially in the pilgrimage season) would excite Moslem feeling against us everywhere; and a treaty giving us the right to do this would be regarded as a betrayal of independence on the part of any ruler of the Hejaz who concluded it.

As regards the renunciation of relations with any outside Power except His Majesty's Government, there would be no less occasion for a clause providing against alienations of territory or concessions, since the ruler of the Hejaz would be deterred from alienating any of the sacred territory to a non-Moslem Power by Moslem opinion, and concessions to foreign subjects, even if they were operated through Moslem employees, would also be very unpopular (though the case might arise if other distance was greater). Our main object might be obtained by a clause debarring the ruler of the Hejaz from leasing or alienating the sacred territory to any Power whatever, without that exception in favour of ourselves which, in the case of the Hejaz, would be offensive to Moslem opinion. But the question of concessions is more difficult, since public works will be needed in the Hejaz, and demanded by the inhabitants, which it will be impossible to carry out without foreign participation.

The elimination of all political relations with outside Powers except through His Majesty's Government is of course entirely out of the question in the case of the Hejaz. This element in a trucial treaty can only be reconciled with independence in cases in which the external relations of the local Government contracting are in fact almost exclusively with the British Empire. But in the Hejaz, the presence of the Holy Cities, and the annual pilgrimage to them, creates relations of the highest importance between the Hejaz Government and every Power in the world which has Moslem subjects. The fact of these relations constantly puts the independence of the Hejaz to the test, and an attempt by Great Britain to become a recognised intermediary in these relations would not be tolerated by other Powers, or by the Islamic world, even if the ruler of the Hejaz were willing to condescend to it himself. On the other hand, it would be unfortunate if His Majesty's Government's special trucial rights were to be confined to relations between the ruler of the Hejaz and his Arab neighbours, and we should aim rather at obtaining a clear recognition from other outside Powers that their direct relations with the Hejaz should extend to questions affecting the Pilgrimage, and to these alone.

In the Hejaz, then, British desiderata seem to be limited to the conclusion of a "trucial treaty" on a restricted basis, and for the maintenance of predominant influence we have to depend in part upon our present relations with King Husain, our position in Egypt and the Red Sea, and the relations we hope to establish with the surrounding Arab countries.


In this country the backward state of the population, its religious and social disunion and past misgovernment, combined with the potential resources of the country, their present neglect, and the great undertakings necessary to develop them, make a "trucial" system inadequate, and necessitate the conduct of internal administration by a foreign Power—at any rate, for a transitional period, the duration of which it is impossible to define.

It is a British desideratum that this should devolve, to the exclusion of all other Powers, upon Great Britain. And since the necessity is as great in Jezireh as in Iraq, and parts of Jezireh are geographically hardly separable from Iraq, it is a British desideratum that British administration in Mesopotamia should extend to such parts of Jezireh also.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government have stated that they do not desire to annex Mesopotamia, partly because they do not wish to commit themselves beforehand to permanent political and military liabilities of such wide scope, and partly because they are anxious to give play to the Arab national revival when and where it is accompanied by the capacity to realise itself in an effective way.
His Majesty's Government therefore desire to administer Mesopotamia for an indefinite period as mandatories of the Arabs, which may be done in several different ways:—

(a.) As mandatories of the local population (a method which might involve the rather objectionable sham of a titular local sovereign).

(b.) As mandatories of the head of an Arab Federation, if such were to be formed (a method which would avoid the embarrassments of (a), since the head of the Federation would presumably be the local sovereign of the Hejaz, and would not be seated in the administered provinces).

(c.) A possible compromise between the above alternatives would be the appointment of one of King Hussein's sons as local ruler of Mesopotamia, with British administrative assistance. It is understood that Sherif Abdullah may be a candidate for this office.

4. Kurdistan (within the boundaries specified above in Part One, III, 4).

The Power paramount in this country will command the strategic approaches to Mesopotamia and control the water supply of the eastern affluents of the Tigris, on which the irrigation of Mesopotamia largely depends. It is therefore essential that the paramount Power in Kurdistan and Mesopotamia should be the same; in other words, that Great Britain should have an exclusive position in Kurdistan as opposed to any other outside Power.

At the same time, the arguments against annexation apply even more strongly to Kurdistan than to Mesopotamia. It is desirable that the county should form an independent confederation of tribes and towns, and that His Majesty's Government should assume functions intermediate between the administrative assistance, amounting to direct responsibility for the conduct of government, which they intend to undertake in Mesopotamia, and the mere control of external relations, to which they propose to limit themselves in the case of the independent rulers of the Arabian Peninsula. In the hills British control should be exerted with the least direct intervention possible. In the lowlands bordering on Mesopotamia, where there are important oil-fields and other natural resources, it may have to approximate to the Mesopotamian pattern.

The Nestorian settlements in the upper valley of the Greater Zab, where the Kurds, under Turkish instigation, have worked havoc during the war, should be formed into an autonomous enclave, under the Government of the Nestorian Prince-Patriarch, with a constitution modelled on that of the Lebanon—the necessary outside assistance to be given by Great Britain.

5. Syria (including parts of Jezireh not assigned to Mesopotamia).

His Majesty's Government have less direct political interest in Syria than in any other of the Arab countries. So far as its internal affairs are concerned, they merely desire that it shall be independent under an effective Government friendly to the British Empire. But the inhabitants of the Lebanon vilayet, who as Ottoman subjects enjoyed administrative autonomy under guarantee of the Powers, ought not to be forced into any relation with the rest of Syria of which they do not approve.

Syria is more capable than other Arab countries of providing such a Government for itself on European lines. But if foreign assistance is needed in the internal administration (and it will in any case be needed to a lesser degree and for a shorter time than in Mesopotamia), His Majesty's Government are content, as in the case of Armenia, to see this assistance given by a friendly Power on the invitation of the native inhabitants. This disinterestedness in the internal affairs of Syria, however, does not hold if the conduct of them is found to affect prejudicially the relations between Syria and other Arab countries in which Great Britain is interested—particularly Mesopotamia, the Ruweilah-Anazeh country (through which a British railway from Haifa to Irak would run), and the Hejaz—

(a.) Economic relations: Alexandretta is the natural Mediterranean port for Jezireh, and Tripoli might become so for Irak, while Damascus is the focus of trade for a large part of the Ruweilah-Anazeh country, Jebel Shammar, and Hejaz. It is a British desideratum that there should be free transit across Syria between these ports and centres and their hinterlands.

(b.) Political relations: Syria has an open frontier towards the desert, and is therefore bound to be involved in the demarcation and allegiance controversies of the Arabian Peninsula. Whether Syria be self-governing or assisted in her internal administration by a foreign Power other than Great Britain, it seems important, for the reasons advanced above in the case of the Hejaz, that the "trucial" relations of those
independent Peninsula rulers whose spheres border upon Syria should be so arranged as to preclude the possibility of a Power which gave administrative assistance to Syria interfering in purely Peninsula affairs.

The interaction of tribal politics throughout the Arab countries has been put forcibly in a memorandum of the 20th January, 1917, by Sir Arthur Hirtzel:—*

"No part of Arabia can be completely indifferent to Great Britain, which is the only Power that at present has a foothold in the country. Our hold is limited to a narrow fringe along the coast . . .; its security depends ultimately upon the tranquillity of the interior. Since we are unable to intervene in or control the interior, it is essential to exclude all possible seeds of disturbance.

"Arabia is not a State in any effective sense, but a fortuitous concourse of tribes . . . under chiefs, the limits of whose sway are determined not by frontiers, but by the tribes which they for the time being control. Their politics are closely interwoven, and a quarrel may run right across the continent."

These considerations were embodied in a memorandum of the 29th August, 1917, on French and British interests in the Arabian Peninsula by Lord R. Cecil;—†

"There exists no more fruitful source of trouble in these semi-civilised countries than a condition of things in which tribal combinations can entertain the hope of enlisting one European Power against another."

"His Majesty's Government are convinced that the avoidance of internal strife in Arabia can only be secured through the retention by Great Britain of the influence which this country has so long held throughout the Peninsula as the European Power most closely concerned with the internal peace and external politics of Arabia."

These principles clearly apply to Syria, in so far as her open frontier on the east and south-east makes her a party to the tribal politics of the Peninsula; and this is the point at which the question of French administration in Syria touches vital British interests.

6. **Palestine** (including Safed and Hebron, but excluding Akaba and the country east of Jordan).

British desiderata may be analysed as follows:—

(a.) Strategic: Palestine adjoins the Sinai Peninsula, the Suez Canal, and Akaba, and a British railway from Akka-Haifa to Irak would traverse Palestine in its first section. It is therefore a British desideratum that if the effective government of Palestine demands the intervention of a single outside Power in its administration, that Power should be either Great Britain or, failing that, the United States. An international administration would not, perhaps, have the same drawbacks as a single foreign (even though friendly) administering Power, but it may be doubted whether it would secure the political desiderata set out below.

(b.) Political: In view of the interests, often conflicting, of several international religious communities in Palestinian holy places, it is a British desideratum that there should be an administration capable of conciliating these interests, and this for two reasons ; (1) To ensure orderly government in a country where disorder would react upon neighbouring countries in which Great Britain is interested; and (2) to prevent the possibility of any of the international bodies interested in Palestine feeling resentment against Great Britain as a party to an arrangement there which they might consider unfair to themselves.

In particular, His Majesty's Government desire to insure reasonable facilities in Palestine for Jewish colonisation, without giving Arab or general Moslem opinion an opportunity for considering that Great Britain has been instrumental in handing over free Arab or Moslem soil to aliens.

From this point of view it is desirable that Palestine, whatever its administration and whatever the facilities granted to non-Arab elements in its population, should nominally be included in an Arab Confederation; so that in Palestine, as well as in Mesopotamia, the establishment of such a confederation is from one point of view a British interest.

(c.) Economic: It is a British desideratum that there should be free transit across Palestine between Akka-Haifa and the Anazeh country, the Hejaz, Jebel Shammar, and Irak.

(d.) Trucial: In this one respect British desiderata in Palestine are less exacting than in Syria. The frontiers of Palestine specified above would lie entirely in settled territory, and a Palestinian Government would not therefore be involved in perpetual demarcation and allegiance disputes with its neighbours. A trucial treaty with Great Britain for the settlement of disputes with adjoining Arab States might therefore be

---

* Foreign Office/132784/98808/1917.
† Foreign Office/165801/93808/1917.
dispensed with, but this would no longer be the case if the area of Palestine were extended to the east and south.

This raises the question of the future frontier between Palestine and Egypt. On the one hand, it seems desirable that all cultivated or cultivable land on the southern borders of Palestine, in the neighbourhood of Gaza, Rafa, and Beersheba, should go to Palestine. But, on the other hand, it would be preferable, for the reasons suggested above, that the Palestinian State should not have jurisdiction over Bedouin tribes. The tribes south of the Rafa-Beersheba line and west of the Wady Arabah go naturally with those of the Sinai Peninsula, and the pre-war frontier between Turkey and Egypt, which separated them, was a quite arbitrary line.

It might be desirable, therefore, to attach this triangle of formerly Turkish territory to Egypt. But the consent of the inhabitants would have first to be manifested in some clear form, in order to preclude any possibility of misinterpretation. For, since Egypt is a British Protectorate, the attachment of these tribes to Egypt might otherwise be represented as an annexation of free Arabs to the British Empire.

IV.——Summary.

(i.) European Turkey and Anatolia: Sovereign independence (the balance of advantage, as regards Constantinople, remaining in doubt).
(ii.) Black Sea Straits: Effective international control.
(iii.) Dodecanese: Friendly settlement between Italy and Greece.
(iv.) Cyprus: A free hand for ourselves.
(v.) Armenia: Independence, with equal rights for all nationalities, and with assistance of an outside Power for a term of years.
(vi.) Arab Countries in General: Maintenance of existing British possessions, protectorates, and treaties; widest local independence compatible with this; widest extension of British trucial system to independent Arab States; least possible interference of outside Powers in local internal administration.
(vii.) Arab Federation: Desirable, but without prejudice to (vi).
(viii.) Caliphate: To be settled by the Moslems themselves.
(ix.) Arabian Peninsula, excluding Hejaz: British trucial treaties with all independent States.
(x.) Hejaz: Independence; British trucial treaty to cover all foreign relations except those involved in the pilgrimage.
(xi.) Mesopotamia: Independence, with British administrative assistance (subject to no limitations of period or function).
(xii.) Kurdistan: Same desiderata as in Mesopotamia.
(xiii.) Syria: Independence, with outside administrative assistance if necessary; free transit for trade between Syrian ports and hinterland; independent Peninsula rulers whose spheres border on Syria, to have trucial treaties with Great Britain.
(xiv.) Palestine: Independence; administrative assistance to be either American or preferably British; free transit for trade between Palestinian ports and hinterland; British trucial treaty only in case Palestine includes country east of Jordan.
Part Three. Policy.

I.—General Lines.

1. It would appear from the survey given in Parts One and Two above that the greatest discrepancies between British commitments and desiderata are those which arise out of the claims of Italy in Anatolia and of France in Syria and Jezireh.

2. The entry of Italy into the Green Area and Area C would be bitterly and justifiably opposed by the inhabitants. The majority are Turks, there is an important Greek minority, and most nationalities of the Levant are represented at Smyrna; but the Italian colony is only one among many, the Italians have no traditional claim and no vested interests, and there is nothing to show that they are capable of looking after the country. On the contrary, their record in colonial enterprises elsewhere indicates that they would be oppressive and incompetent. The population would probably oppose Italian intervention on the plea of self-determination, and are quite capable of "driving them into the sea, or at any rate confining them to a few strategical points on the coast. As parties to the Italian claim we, and the other Allies, would suffer the greatest moral damage from such a situation, and the results of Italian reverses in Tripoli have shown how dangerously the Pan-Islamic movement would be fostered by a similar reaction against an invader on the part of the Turks in Anatolia. It may be added that Great Britain has important material stakes in the Green Area in the shape of the Smyrna trade and the Aidin Railway (the only railway enterprise in Turkey which has paid its own way). In spite of Italy's undertakings under the Agreement (No. 12, see above), it is practically certain that, if the Italians came on the scene, the Aidin Railway as a British enterprise would be doomed.

3. In Syria (leaving the Lebanon vilayet on one side) the difficulty regarding the French claims is equally serious. The French are not wanted by the Arabs, the Arabs have established an effective administration there, not only in the four Syrian towns (Damascus, Homs, Hama, Aleppo) assigned to Area A, but in considerable portions of the Blue Area—for instance, the Anti-Lebanon district and Latakia. It is fairly clear that they would resist the imposition upon them of any foreign "assistance" which they did not ask for themselves, and the idea of French assistance is obnoxious to them.

As regards British interests, they are much more directly affected by our pledges to France in this region than by our provisional pledges in Anatolia to Italy. Area A includes part of Kurdistan and Jezireh, and these territories—at least as far west as a line drawn across Jezireh roughly from Jeziret-Ibn-Omar on the Tigris to Verdi on the Euphrates—go naturally with Lower Mesopotamia, and are perhaps essential for the irrigation and general development of that country. Again, the boundary between Areas A and B separates the settled country east of Jordan (between Deraa and Maan) from Syria, though the population on either side is inseparable in social relations and political sympathy. And it also partitions into three arbitrary sections the country of the Ruweilah-Anazeh tribes, whose Chief, Nuri Shaalan, is one of the most powerful independent rulers in Arabia. If the line between Areas A and B were to be maintained, we should have the choice between carrying out this arbitrary partition (a solution which it would probably be impossible to enforce) or allowing Trans-Jordania and the Ruweilah country to realise their natural destiny and gravitate towards Syria. The latter solution is indeed bound to come to pass, but if this were combined with the enforcement of French claims under the Agreement, the result would be to carry French influence into the heart of the Arabian peninsula, and to give France such a footing in all tribal disputes concerning demarcation and allegiance as would make the establishment of a British "trucial" system in Arabia impossible.

4. It seems most desirable, therefore, that we should attempt, at least in these two cases, to obtain a thorough revision of the Agreements as they stand, and this leads on to a consideration of any contingent elements there may be in the text of the documents.

In the Agreement with France (No. 11) there is nothing contingent at all, but the Agreements with Italy (Nos. 7 and 12) both contain contingent clauses. Moreover, in the latter agreement* (No. 12) the contingent clause refers not merely to the Italian claims but to the whole series of Agreements regarding Turkey, and France, in subscribing to the document in which this clause is contained, would appear to have

* It is assumed in the following paragraphs, for the purposes of argument, that No. 12 is valid. But if its validity is not recognised (see footnote on p. 2 above), then the contingent clause in it falls to the ground like the other articles, and article 9 of No. 7 alone has to be taken into account in this connection.
admitted thereby that the clause applies retrospectively to the earlier Agreement between her and Great Britain (No. 11).

5. In the two Agreements with Italy the following contingencies were provided for:

(a) **Total or Partial Partition of Turkey.**

"In a general way France, Great Britain (and Russia) recognise that Italy is interested in the balance of power in the Mediterranean, and that, in case of the total or partial partition of Asiatic Turkey, she ought to obtain an equitable share in the Mediterranean region adjoining the province of Adalia, where Italy has already acquired rights and interests which have been dealt with in an Anglo-Italian Convention. The zone which will eventually be attributed to Italy will be delimited, when the time comes, with consideration for the existing interests of France and Great Britain." (No. 7, Article 9.)

This article came into operation with the conclusion of the Anglo-French Agreement (No. 11), and was duly carried out in a second Agreement with Italy (No. 12).

(b) **The incomplete realisation of arrangements provided for in the several Agreements concerning Turkey.**

"The interests of Italy have equally to be taken into consideration in case modifications are made in the zones of interest of the Powers." (No. 7, Article 9.)

This was duly taken into account in the second Agreement:

"It is understood that, if at the conclusion of peace the advantages contemplated in the agreements made between the Allied Powers regarding the partition to each of them of a part of the Ottoman Empire cannot be secured in their entirety to one or more of the said Powers, then in any alteration or arrangement of the zones of interest of the Ottoman Empire which takes place at the conclusion of the war, the maintenance of the balance of power in the Mediterranean shall receive equitable consideration in conformity with Article 9 of the Agreement of London, dated the 26th April, 1915." (No. 12, Article 8.)

(c) **Maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire.**

"The interests of Italy shall equally be taken into consideration in case the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire is maintained." (No. 7, Article 9.)

6. Of these three contingencies (c) (the maintenance of Turkish integrity) is already ruled out, and (a) (the total or partial partition of the Ottoman Empire among the Allied Powers) is an anachronism.

The falling out of Russia, the intervention of America, and the general development of the international situation have made the principles of nationality and democracy and the right of self-determination, in which these principles are translated into action, not merely one element among others in the aims of the Allies, but the essential aim and expression of their cause.

This general development has profoundly affected the local situation in the Middle East, and the native peoples themselves—Arabs, Armenians, Jewish colonists, Nestorians, and latterly also the Greeks—who in the earlier stages of the war, and during the greater part of the period during which the Agreements were made, were contributing comparatively little towards their own liberation—have taken a constantly greater part, while the Allied Powers, with the single exception of Great Britain, have shouldered less and less of the burden of war against Turkey. (Russia has fallen out altogether, France has contributed practically nothing since the Dardanelles, Italy nothing at all at any stage.) Under these circumstances the only conceivable satisfactory settlement of the countries formerly subjected to Turkey lies along the lines of the joint declaration recently made by the French Government and His Majesty's Government. The liberated peoples of Turkey are bound to have "national Governments and administrations, deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the native populations." Outside Powers cannot impose specific institutions.
upon the populations of these regions, and will have to limit themselves to “ensuring
by their support and effective assistance that the Governments and administrations
adopted by these regions of their own free will shall be exercised in a normal way.”

In other words, the peoples must be free to form what political groupings they
choose, to establish what Governments they choose within these groupings, and to
invite whatever outside Power they choose to assist them, without their freedom of
choice being hampered by dictation or compulsion at any point.

This being established, it will be convenient to consider the situation with regard
to contingency (5), which was that the arrangements agreed upon among the Allies
might have to be altered or only realised in part. This contingency has, in fact, been
brought into operation by the changes in the situation discussed above, and it is now
incumbent upon His Majesty’s Government to give “equitable consideration to the
maintenance of the balance of power in the Mediterranean” in whatever “alteration
or arrangement of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire” will result, under the new
order of things, from the war.

It is, indeed, almost certain that this new order in Turkey will itself automatically
maintain the balance of power in the Mediterranean as between the Allies. For, in
place of the Ottoman Empire, as it existed before the war, there will arise no French,
Italian, or British dominions or protectorates assigned to each Power on some ratio,
whether equitable or not, but entirely new and independent national States, and the
frontiers of the Allied Powers towards Turkey will remain where they stood under the
status quo.* Some, or even all, of these new States will no doubt desire foreign
assistance for setting them on their feet, and will be at liberty to ask for the good
offices of whatever Power they choose; but, in accepting such an invitation, the Power
which is freely chosen will in no sense be obtaining any of the “advantages” mutually
agreed upon in the various treaties, even though that Power is invited voluntarily by
the inhabitants of an area which had been pledged to it under the Agreements over
the inhabitants’ heads. The choice will be theirs, not ours, and we cannot be respon­
sible for maintaining the balance of power where it is affected by action other than
our own.

The above considerations suggest a line of policy which might be taken, in regard
to French and Italian claims, by His Majesty’s Government. Our Allies cannot in
principle contest that the populations of Turkey, including the Turks themselves, are to
constitute their own Governments, as this is specifically accepted in the joint Anglo­
French Declaration, from which Italy cannot dissent. For are any of them likely to
propose that the new independent national States shall be left severely to themselves
in case they ask for foreign assistance. It seems to follow inevitably that there should
not only be freedom for the Arabs, Turks, Armenians, &c, to invite what Power they
like, but that the various Powers should be free towards each other to accept such
invitations. Any private arrangements among the Powers by which some agreed to
refuse invitations of assistance for the benefit of others, would obviously be simply a
roundabout method of imposing those very restrictions on the liberties of the new
States which we are professing to rule out.

At the same time, we are bound in loyalty to take the balance of power into
equitable consideration in any manner which the new circumstances may permit, and we
can at least make sure that, in the areas allocated to each Power under the Agree­
ments, that Power shall have the fullest opportunity for obtaining the suffrages of the
inhabitants, and shall have no impediment placed in its way by the other Powers. We
should do well, however, to make it clear from the outset that we cannot either prac­tise
or countenance any form of coercion, and that, as we shall not exert pressure upon
the inhabitants of the areas originally assigned to us to opt for our assistance, so also we
shall not consider ourselves debarred from accepting an invitation from the inhabitants
of other areas, if they genuinely and spontaneously turn to us.

The upshot, then, is this. The contingency calling for a revision of the Agree­
ments has in fact arisen owing to the general consensus that the peoples of Turkey
must determine their destinies themselves, and by the terms of our pact we are bound
to give equitable consideration to the maintenance of the balance of power in adapting
the Agreements to the new circumstances. We propose to do so by preserving equality
of opportunity for the several Allies to secure, by the free choice of the inhabitants of
their respective areas, such part of the rights accorded to them in these areas under the

* This applies only to the balance of power in respect of Turkey, since, when the whole Mediterranean
is taken into account, Italy’s gains in the Adriatic will upset the balance to her advantage and to the
disadvantage of Great Britain and France.
Agreements as is compatible with the liberties of the inhabitants laid down in the Joint Anglo-French Declaration of November 1918. 

These suggestions are put forward tentatively, but there is a genuine case for revision, and these are lines on which we might be able to present it without placing ourselves at any stage in a false position.

Proposals in detail for the different regions are given in Section II below.

II.—Detail.

(i.) European Turkey and Anatolia.

(a.) Constantinople.—From the point of view of British interests, the arguments for and against leaving Constantinople under Turkish sovereignty are very evenly balanced. Against leaving it is the fact that its retention might enable the Ottoman Sultan to retain the Caliphate. In favour of leaving it is the rivalry among traditional claimants, which a transfer of ownership might bring to a head. We shall see more clearly when the question is actually under discussion, and we should not be too hasty in making up our minds.

(b.) Anatolia.—A policy in regard to the Italian claims has been suggested in Section I above. We should hold firmly to our general principles of "no annexations" and "self-determination," and let the local application follow of itself. Smyrna and the Aegean littoral, which are largely inhabited by Greeks, will be certain to oppose any suggestion of Italian ascendancy. But it is perhaps not inconceivable that the Turks in the region adjoining Adalia, which alone was contemplated as the Italian zone originally, might seek Italian support and assistance.

(ii.) Black Sea Straits.

The control of the Straits, as a strategic and commercial highway, is a separate question from that of the territorial sovereignty over the littoral and Constantinople, and we should not allow the settlement of the latter question to prejudice the former, which is of greater importance to us.

Our interests require effective international control, that is, control by a single mandatory Power, and the Power designated must of course be acceptable to us. We shall be well advised to work for the appointment of the United States, failing which, some mixed International Board of Control, on the model of the Danube Commission, may become inevitable.

(iii.) Dodecanese.

If we were not bound to Italy by the Treaty of 1915 (No. 7), we could, and perhaps should, use our friendly offices with Italy to secure the transfer of the sovereignty over these islands from Turkey to Greece. Italy has no more moral justification for remaining there than for entering Anatolia, but His Majesty's Government are not free to take this line, since we have promised Italy "complete sovereignty" over the Dodecanese under the original treaty (No. 7, Article 8), on the strength of which Italy entered the war. The best way to approach the solution of this question might be to deal with it in connection with the settlement of the Northern Epirus question and others outstanding between Italy and Greece: in other words, to treat it as a South-East European rather than a Middle Eastern problem.

(iv.) Cyprus.

The disposal of Cyprus may be treated either as a Middle Eastern or a South-East European problem. It was not included in the Middle-Eastern Agreements (except for the servitude to France, which was entered into by His Majesty's Government under No. 11, Article 4), but it was involved in the earlier negotiations with Greece. The population of the island is Greek, with a small Turkish minority. On the other hand, it has to be considered geographically in relation to the Anatolian, Cilician, and Syrian coastline.

Juridically, Great Britain's title to possess Cyprus is perfectly good. We acquired the right to "occupy and administer" it under the Cyprus Convention with Turkey, of the 4th June, 1878, in the event of Kars-Arslahan-Batum being retained by Russia, and on the condition of assisting the Ottoman Government by force of arms to defend their remaining Asiatic territories against any subsequent Russian aggression. The Convention, being bipartite only, lapsed with the outbreak of war, and Cyprus, as an occupied enemy territory, was annexed by His Majesty's Government.
Nevertheless, it will be well to bear in mind (a) that the population is Greek, and (b) that we have already offered the island to Greece during the war, and that at a time when Greece was not yet an ally or a belligerent.

His Majesty's Government are not, indeed, called upon to make any sacrifice of territory which is legitimately under British sovereignty. It is only if a political situation should arise in which it would be useful for His Majesty's Government to have in hand a pawn convenient for negotiating a general settlement that a possible cession of Cyprus to Greece might come up for consideration. To what extent, however, such cession would affect important strategical interests of this country is a question which could only be answered by the naval and military authorities. In this connection it may be noted that, when the functions of an "assisting Power" are defined, it must be laid down clearly that an invitation to provide assistance shall not carry with it the right to make use of strategic points in the assisted country. For instance, if France assists Armenia (see below), there must be no question of a French naval base being established at Alexandretta.

Armenia.

The general principle of "self-determination" applies to Armenia, but in this particular case the principle of "equal rights for all nationalities" should take priority, since throughout the country there is a mixed population with divergent economic interests and traditional feuds, which cannot be got rid of so easily as the Turkish administration that fomented them. The maintenance of this principle should be the first duty of the mandatory Power.

It would be expedient to extend the area of Armenia as widely as possible, so as to include all territories north of the Arab boundary in which there is a mixed population of Turks, Armenians, and Kurds. This would at the same time condues to a stable settlement, and would indirectly be of advantage to His Majesty's Government. The choice of a mandatory virtually lies between France and America. If France were chosen, she would obtain a sphere of activity in this direction far wider than that accorded to her under the Agreement of 1916 (see the boundaries of the Blue Area), and this should make her more ready to forgo her claims, under that Agreement, in Syria, in case these claims were not confirmed by the choice of the Syrians themselves. It would be to our advantage, for the same reason, to encourage Russian Armenia to unite with Turkish Armenia under a single regime, and to favour the extension of French assistance to the other Caucasian countries, which will be in need of help from outside and will hardly be able to obtain it from Russia.*

* See memorandum by Sir Eyre Crowe, circulated to the Eastern Committee.

The attitude of the Armenians may be gathered from the communication recently addressed to the French and the British Governments by their National Delegation at Paris. They claim the right to set up an independent Armenian State under the joint protection of the "Allied Great Powers,"† one of whom is to be asked to act as a mandatory " for the organisation and administration of the new State for a term of years. An organic statute drawn up by the Protecting Powers would lay down the main lines of the administration of the new State during the period of transition, sanctioning the convocation of a Constituent Assembly, at a date approximately defined, which would determine the form of government to be adopted permanently, subject to the approval of the Protecting Powers. The provisional administration to last long enough, but only so long, as will be necessary to enable the survivors of the deported Armenians, and Armenians from other parts, to return to their National Home."

The principle of equality for all elements in the population is not disputed. On the other hand, in settling the proportional claims of these various elements to a voice in the government of the country, it should be laid down in Armenia that the dead and the exiles should be taken into account, and Armenian immigrants from other parts of the world into Armenia should be given the same facilities as Jewish immigrants into Palestine (see below) for settling down in their ancestral homes.

Arab Countries in General and Kurdistan.

We should apply the general principles of self-determination and free choice of assisting Power, and should ask King Hussein formally to accept these principles in lieu of the territorial boundaries of "Arab Independence" which we are pledged to him to
obtain. On the new basis the Arabs would gain more in Syria than they would lose in Kurdistan, and we shall have an opportunity of suggesting it if and when we recognise King Husein as "King of the Arabs," which will be a change from a territorial to a national title. If he subscribes to "self-determination," His Majesty's Government will be in a stronger position for handling the difficulties between him and the other independent Arab rulers to whom they are committed—especially Bin Saud.

(ii.) Arab Federation.

We should be well advised not to make up our minds on this question till we see whether the different Arab countries opt for the same assisting Power or for different Powers in different cases. If both Syria and Mesopotamia opted for us, it would be an advantage to have some very loose political connection between them and the Hejaz. This could be arranged by obtaining the appointment of sons of King Husein to the Syrian and Mesopotamian thrones.

(viii.) Caliphate.

We should abstain from all direct action, whether covert or avowed; but we can influence the choice of the Moslem world indirectly—for example, by our policy in regard to Constantinople.

(ix.) Arabian Peninsula, excluding Hejaz.

The principles of self-determination and free choice of assistance apply here also, but we should make it clear that our existing treaties and relations with various independent chiefs are pro-eminently applications of this principle, since we have never exercised coercion in establishing them. We should obtain a formal recognition from the other parties to the Peace Conference of such existing treaties, and of our exclusive right to make similar treaties with the remaining rulers of the Peninsula, if they on their side are willing to make them with us.

(x.) Hejaz.

We shall have to take up again with the French Government the abortive negotiations of 1917, and endeavour to obtain their agreement to the principle that their direct relations with the Hejaz Government shall be restricted entirely to pilgrimage affairs.

If the French can be induced to agree, to this, a precedent will be set against which it will be difficult for Italy, Holland, and lesser Moslem Powers to stand out.

The French will probably try to obtain our assent to French economic penetration of the Hejaz (and especially to the installation of a French bank at Jeddah) in return for a recognition on their part of our political priority. But we should be well advised to resist such suggestions, since they would open the way for a return of French influence by another channel.

It may be impossible to embody any of these arrangements regarding the Hejaz in formal instruments binding upon all parties concerned.

(xi.) Mesopotamia.

We shall be on safe ground here in taking our stand upon the principle of free option, since it is evident that the inhabitants do not wish us to withdraw.

We could also put forward our ancient commercial relations with the country, and claim our right to extend the Pax Britannica from the Persian Gulf, where the benefits of our presence are admitted by all, to its Mesopotamian hinterland. This historical line of argument might, it is true, give an opening to the traditional claims of France in Syria and Palestine, and would in appearance traverse our general line of policy, which is to rest the settlement, not on the claims of outside Powers, but on the self-determination and free choice of the native populations. Nor would a recital of benefits conferred in the Gulf carry much weight if it did not appear to impress a population that was neighbour to the Gulf and had had an opportunity of witnessing our activities there for the past hundred years.

The desire of the people of Mesopotamia for us to remain there is really the best proof that our past work in the Gulf has been as good as we assert, and our case ultimately stands or falls by it, whichever line of argument we take. We had therefore better take our stand regarding Mesopotamia upon the choice of the inhabitants, which is not, after all, in doubt. Nevertheless, it may become necessary to proclaim a sort of Monroe Doctrine, in our favour, in regard to these regions. It seems imperative
to leave no doubt that, whatever happens in these territories, Great Britain cannot allow any other Power to acquire predominant rights there.

(xii.) Kurdistan.

It would be almost equally safe to rely here too upon the choice of the inhabitants, though it might also be well to point out that the country is bound up with Mesopotamia geographically and economically, and could not lead a satisfactory existence if dissociated from it.

(xiii.) Syria.

It will be advisable to draw a distinction between the Lebanon (within the old boundaries of the autonomous vilayet, with the inclusion of the Beirut enclave) and the remainder of the Syrian area. It is understood that Sherif Feisal and the non-Lebanese Syrian Arabs are willing that the Lebanon should maintain its separate existence, unless, or until, it desires to merge itself in the larger Syrian body politic, and that it should receive assistance from France, so long as it is clearly established that the French are invited by the free choice of the Lebanese. Considerable opposition to the paramountcy of French influence at Beirut may, however, be offered by the United States, since the Presbyterian College at Beirut is one of the most important American missionary institutions in the Middle East, and it would be in danger of being throttled by the rival Jesuit Mission under a French or Francophil régime.

British interests, on the other hand, would not suffer appreciably by the acceptance of French assistance in the Lebanon, and we can safely maintain an impartial attitude in case of disagreement between France and America. It will be all the more important not to thwart French aspirations in the Lebanon if we intend, as regards the remainder of Syria, to pursue the policy suggested in Section I above. It is understood that the Syrians are determined to assert their right of self-determination and free choice of assistance, that they have no intention of asking for the assistance of France, and that their choice will almost certainly fall upon Great Britain. We, on our part, have simply to affirm the general principle, and to allow the local application to work itself out. But since in Syria, unlike Anatolia, the result may not merely be to the disadvantage of an Ally, but also, in all probability, to our own advantage, it is particularly desirable that in this case our action should be so indisputably loyal and correct as to leave no ground for permanent French ill-feeling.

It may be best, therefore, to be perfectly frank with the French Government, and to tell them beforehand that we insist upon the Syrians exercising a genuinely free choice, and that we shall do nothing on our part to bias their decision, but that we think it not impossible that they will opt for us, and that, if they do, we intend to accept the invitation.

(xiv.) Palestine.

The problem of Palestine cannot be solved entirely on the principles of self-determination and free choice of assistance. As in Armenia, there will be a mixed population, and there will be one element in that population, in this case the Jewish colonists, which, for special reasons, will be entitled to a position more than mathematically proportionate to its numbers at the start. Moreover, in Palestine there are international religious interests so important, and so difficult to reconcile, that they almost overshadow the internal problems of the native inhabitants.

For these reasons, the desires of the inhabitants, or of the several sections of them, will have, to some extent, to take the second place. The assisting Power will be bound to act not merely as their mandatory, but as the mandatory of the world, and in cases where local and international interests conflict, the former may often have to give way.

It is essential, therefore, that the mandatory should be impartial and effective. An "international administration," in the literal sense of mixed executive bodies, would evidently be the very worst régime which could be devised to meet the special Palestinian conditions, and should be decidedly ruled out. The practical choice lies between a mandate to the United States or a mandate to Great Britain.* It is understood that the Arabs would be less opposed to Zionist aspirations in Palestine if these were to be realised under British auspices.
altogether easy to discern, and it might be wise to keep an open mind on the question till we see how the general discussion of the Middle Eastern settlement goes, and to take the general situation into account in eventually making our decision.

As regards boundaries, the Zionists are certain to ask for the country east of Jordan, but there are no Jewish agricultural colonies there, and the inhabitants have clearly manifested their desire to join the Syrian Arab State.

In the case of the southern frontier there are strong arguments, on grounds of tribal geography, for attaching the triangle south of the Rafa-Beersheba line and west of the Wady Arabah to Egypt (see Desiderata III, 6, above), and it is not improbable that this solution would be favoured by the tribes concerned. But this aim is of minor importance from the British point of view, and would not be worth pressing if it seemed likely to give our Allies an opening for representing that we were making a special exception in our own favour to the principle of “No Annexations” as applied to Ottoman territory, while insisting upon “Independence” in areas which, under the Agreements, had been assigned to them.

The acceptance by all parties of the principle of “free choice” as the general basis of settlement in Turkey and the Arabian Peninsula is the paramount interest from the British point of view.

Foreign Office,
November 21, 1918.