NOTE ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN MESOPOTAMIA
SUBSEQUENT TO OCTOBER 1, 1920.

THE review of the civil administration of Mesopotamia published as a White Paper on the 3rd December, 1920, gives a full report of the British administration in Iraq from the date of the occupation of the Basrah vilayet in 1914 up to the month of October 1920. A further report for the year 1921 is now being prepared, and will be published as soon as it is completed. The following brief summary has been prepared in order to explain the events which have led to the recognition of His Majesty Feisal as King of Iraq.

His Excellency Sir Percy Z. Cox, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., arrived at Basrah on the 1st October, 1920, and assumed charge of his office as High Commissioner for Mesopotamia under a salute of seventeen guns. Having spent four days at Basrah in continuous consultation with representatives of all elements of the population of the place, his Excellency embarked, on the 5th October, on the S.1 en route for Baghdad.

On the way up river the High Commissioner held receptions of local notables at Qurnah, Qalat Salih, Amarah and Kut-el-Amarah, and thus had favourable opportunities of ascertaining the views and wishes of the people of those districts, as also he had had previously at Nasiriyah, which he visited by air during his stay at Basrah.

On the 11th October, 1920, he arrived by special train from Kut at Baghdad at 5 p.m. and was received by a large gathering of officers and of the notables of the capital headed by the G.O.C.-in-chief. The next two weeks were spent by the High Commissioner in close consultation with the notables and people of Baghdad and its surroundings in a series of public and private audiences. His Excellency furthermore paid a visit to Mosul on the 16th October, returning the following day, after seeing and taking into consultation the notables of that place.

As the result of the consultations above-mentioned the High Commissioner was in a position to formulate his policy in respect of the setting up of a National Government of 'Iraq by the 23rd October, 1920, when he paid a personal visit to His Highness the Naqib of Baghdad to invite him to form a Provisional Council of State to carry on the administration of the country under the High Commissioner's control pending the convocation of a representative National Assembly to decide upon the future constitution of the State and to frame an organic law in connection therewith. The Naqib, after some heart-searching, accepted office from a sense of duty to his country.

The negotiations leading up to the formation of a Council of State were largely conducted orally between his Excellency and His Highness the Naqib, and the details of the scheme for setting up a Provisional National Government were worked out in the same way, but the documents printed in Appendix may be of interest as marking the successive stages arrived at in the course of those negotiations, which may be said to have reached their culminating point in the first formal meeting of the Council of State on the 13th November, 1920, which the High Commissioner attended to explain his policy and their responsibilities to the assembled Ministers, and to obtain their acceptance of the working instructions framed for them.

The military position at that time and during the days in which the provisional Government was being constituted was roughly as follows:—

(1.) On the lower Euphrates the column from Nasiriyah was within six miles of Samawah and the town was relieved on the 14th October. Lower down the line the tribes inhabiting the edges of the Hammar lake continued to make desultory attacks on the block-houses protecting the Basrah-Nasiriyah line. The storm centre was the 'alim, Mirza Muhammad, who had originated the trouble on the Hai, and from Butnijah encouraged the insurgents to resistance.
(2.) In the Hitli district, Tuwairij was occupied on the 12th October, and Karbala submitted unconditionally on the following day. Kufah was relieved on the 17th. The submission of Najaf followed automatically, and the hostile tribes withdrew to Abu Bukhair. The effect of these successes was soon apparent in the unconditional surrender of leading insurgents. 

(3.) Hit had been reoccupied on the 4th October, but Nigris al Qa'ud, the hostile Dulaim Shaikh, maintained at Hadithah a menacing attitude. 

(4.) On the Diyalah the conference with tribal leaders on the 20th September, had resulted in a number of submissions, but the Bani Tanim did not come in till the 24th October, and even then the control was by no means complete. The terms which had been accepted by the tribes were not adhered to. 

(5.) Though conditions were improving in the Kifri district, there was still a considerable amount of lawlessness, and the Dilo chiefs, and others responsible for the murder of Captain Salmon had not been brought to book. 

(6.) In Sulaimani, where peace had hitherto been preserved, a section of the Hamawand raided to within six miles of the town towards the end of October. 

(7.) In Mosul Wilayat the intrigues of the Turkish Qaimmaqam of Jazirat ibn 'Umar kept the tribes restless. The agitation culminated in a raid by the Albu Hamad and others on the Sharqat road in which the well-known Arab Nationalist, Sharif Effendi Faruqi, met with his death. He had been some time in Mosul, and was returning to Egypt. 

Minor disorders, such as those which persisted north and east of Baghdad were not, however, of great significance. The salient feature of the period immediately after the High Commissioner's arrival was the rapid success of the operations on the middle Euphrates. The fall of Kufah and the submission of Karbala and Najaf sealed the fate of the tribal rising and profoundly discredited the programme of the extremists, while it gave encouragement to those who had moderate views and were prepared to co-operate with the High Commissioner in establishing a National Government. 

Outside the areas of disturbance, public opinion was far from uniform. In the greater part of the Basrah Wilayat there was no enthusiasm for an Arab Government. The merchants and people of Basrah City, who had grown rich under the British Administration, did not evince a desire for any material change. On the Tigris the tribal lessees of Government estates had found in security of tenure and immunity from the rapacity of native officials, advantages which went far to reconcile them to the regular payment of taxes. Some of the Shai'khs had lent a favourable ear to Nationalist propaganda, hoping thereby to throw off all authority, but they had been slow to move, and the sight of British reinforcements had acted as a timely restraint. Before the High Commissioner's arrival the effervescence had subsided, and he found a general anxiety as to the results of replacing the British by a national administration, which was somewhat allayed by his assurances that Arab officials would not be left without British guidance. 

But in Baghdad and Mosul there was a strong desire for the immediate establishment of national institutions. Though the soberer members of the community were convinced of the error committed by the extremists in rousing rebellion, and realised that British help and advice were essential to found and guide the new State, there yet existed an undercurrent of sympathy with the insurgents, coupled with a wish for complete and immediate independence. Among all classes, no matter what was the colour of their political views, there was a lively hope that the advent of Sir Percy Cox would bring about a sudden amelioration of the situation. 

The High Commissioner lost no opportunity of making it universally clear that he would welcome any measures, including the intervention of influential inhabitants of the country, which would tend to persuade the tribes of the futility of further resistance, and on the 17th October he issued a proclamation in which he explained that he had returned to Mesopotamia in order to give shape to the fixed intention of His Majesty's Government of assisting the leaders of the people to create a National Government under the guidance of Great Britain. He declared himself to be at a loss to know for what object the tribesmen were still fighting, and he
expressed his wish that they should put themselves into communication with the nearest Political Officer in case any misunderstanding existed which could be removed.

Since the first week of August, a Committee composed of ex-Deputies of the Turkish régime, under the presidency of Saiyid Talib Pasha of Basrah, had been engaged in revising the Turkish electoral law in preparation for the election of a representative assembly which should decide on the form of Government desired by the people of Mesopotamia. But it was self-evident, as the High Commissioner was careful to point out, that any elective assembly convened to interpret the will of the people on such a vital issue must be fully representative of every element of the population and every part of the country, and no elections could be complete while certain districts still remained unpacified. Some time must therefore elapse before the register of electors could be compiled and necessary arrangements completed. To have delayed action, however, for a period of several months would have disappointed public expectation and might well have destroyed confidence in the benevolent announcements made by His Majesty's Government. Moreover, the High Commissioner found himself confronted with questions of policy affecting the future of the 'Iraq with which he did not feel justified in dealing without consultation with representatives of the people of the country. He judged it therefore necessary to institute a provisional Government which should conduct the administration under his guidance and control until the meeting of the National Assembly.

The high social and religious position of the Naqib of Baghdad, and the universal respect which he enjoys, pointed to him as the most suitable person to form and preside over a provisional Council of State. A strong body of opinion in Baghdad was in favour of entrusting to him these duties, and this desire was quickened by the fear that in the event of his refusal they would devolve on Saiyid Talib, a contingency contemplated with the strongest apprehension by the best elements of the intelligentsia both in Baghdad and Mosul. The Naqib has hitherto constantly refused to take part in public affairs. Age and ill-health might well have excused him from emerging from the seclusion of a Darwish: nevertheless, when on the 23rd October the High Commissioner proposed to him that he should undertake the formation of a Cabinet, he consented after some heart-searching to do so.

It was agreed that for present purposes the three Wilayets and the different communities of the 'Iraq must be represented on the Council, and invitations were sent by the Naqib to nineteen persons, eleven of whom were asked to be members of Council without portfolio. The Cabinet was to be constructed as follows:—

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President</th>
<th>The Naqib</th>
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<tr>
<td>Minister of the Interior</td>
<td>Saiyid Talib Pasha</td>
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<tr>
<td>of Finance</td>
<td>Sasun Effendi Haskail</td>
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<tr>
<td>of Justice</td>
<td>Hasan Effendi Pachahji</td>
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<td>for Education</td>
<td>'Izzat Pasha</td>
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<td>for Defence</td>
<td>Ja'far Pasha al'Askari</td>
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<td>for Public Works</td>
<td>Muhammad Effendi Fadhil</td>
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<tr>
<td>for Commerce</td>
<td>'Abdul Latiff Pasha Mandil</td>
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<td>of Auqaf</td>
<td>Mustafa Effendi Alusi</td>
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After the Naqib, Sasun Effendi was probably the man who carried most weight. A member of one of the most distinguished Jewish families of Baghdad, he had been elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1908, when representative institutions were conferred on the Turkish Empire by the Constitution. He had sat in every subsequent Parliament, and in 1913 had held a ministerial appointment. His wisdom and integrity are universally appreciated, and when in the early summer of 1920, the Nationalist agitations were at their height in Baghdad, it was commonly said that Sasun Effendi would be offered the Ministry of Finance in the independent Arab Government which was to be inaugurated under the auspices of Yusuf Suwaidi and Saiyid Muhammad Sadr. Hasan Effendi Pachahji is a lawyer of considerable distinction, generally accounted to be the ablest advocate in Baghdad. 'Izzat Pasha is a native of Kirkuk, of Turkish descent. He had held high military office under the Ottoman Government, and has a great reputation throughout Mesopotamia. Ja'far Pasha, one of the Amir Faisal's Major-Generals, had recently returned to Baghdad, which is his native town, after serving for a year as Governor of Aleppo under the Arab Government of Syria. Muhammad Effendi
Fadhil, a leading citizen of Mosul, had been one of the deputies for Mosul under the Turks, and is now acting as Mayor of the town. Abdul Latif Pasha Mandil is a distinguished native of Basrah, of Najd origin, a landowner and a merchant. Mustafa Effendi Alusi belongs to one of the best-known learned families of Baghdad, and has held the post of Qadhi in many parts of the Ottoman dominions, including Mecca.

Those asked to join the Government without portfolio were: Hamdi Pasha Baban, a Kurd and head of the old ruling family of Sulaimaniyah; Abdul Majid Effendi Shawi, Mayor of Baghdad; Abdul Rahman Pasha Haidari and Fakhri Effendi Jamil Zadah, notables of Baghdad; Ahmad Pasha Sani', a notable of Basrah; Abdul Jabbar Pasha Khaiyat and Daud Yusufani, leading Christians of Baghdad and Mosul respectively; and four Shi'ahs, namely, Abdul Ghani Kubbah, head of the principal Shi'ah family of Baghdad; Saiyid Hadi Qaswini, of Hillah; Ajil Pasha ibn 'Ali Samarlad, formerly paramount Shaikh of the Zubaid; and the Amir Muhammad Saihud, paramount chief of the Bani Rab'ah.

It was not considered probable that Hasan Effendi Pachahji would accept office. His private practice is lucrative, and he has constantly refused to relinquish it for public employment. His refusal, therefore, caused no surprise. But when Sasun Effendi and Hamdi Pasha Baban declined the Naqib's invitation, a serious situation arose. In both cases, in spite of the excuses put forward, the underlying reason was unwillingness to serve in any Cabinet of which Saiyid Talib Pasha was a member. Hamdi Pasha held to his decision, but Sasun Effendi, whose absence from the Council would have produced a deplorable effect, was persuaded to reconsider his attitude. It was pointed out to him that while it would have been impossible to omit so prominent a man as Saiyid Talib from the Provisional Government, the latter's future position would depend on whether he could prove himself to be of value to his country and his compatriots. After a short hesitation and further exchange of views with the Naqib, Sasun Effendi got the better of his apprehensions and accepted the Ministry of Finance. The episode was instructive. It showed how deep-seated was the mistrust and fear inspired by Saiyid Talib's post, and how prevalent the belief that the British authorities intended to support his pretensions, whatever might be the will of the people. Ja'far Pasha admitted in private that if he had not hesitated to enter the Cabinet, it was only with the object of defeating Saiyid Talib, whose ambitions he regarded as a menace to the country.

Mustafa Effendi Alusi was offered and accepted the Ministry of Justice, left vacant by Flasan Effendi, and for the moment the Ministry of Auqaf remained unfilled. Saiyid Hadi Qazwini declined to take part in the Council, excusing himself on a plea of ill-health. All the other invitations were accepted.

Some days were necessarily occupied in communication with Ministers-elect in the Basrah and Mosul Wilayats and in their gradual assembly at Baghdad. Meanwhile, the Naqib had some preliminary discussions with those already in Baghdad, and at the same time was in daily consultation with the High Commissioner in regard to rules of procedure to be prescribed for the conduct of the business of the Council, and for regulating the relations of the Ministers with their advisers.

The High Commissioner met the full Council on the 10th instant, when the draft instructions as finally approved by him and the Naqib were formally accepted by the Council which from that date entered on its functions. In the course of the meeting the High Commissioner's co-operation was asked in the direction of an amnesty to some of the political deportees. The High Commissioner expressed his readiness to go through the list and inform the Council which persons it seemed possible to allow to return.

The next few months were spent in reorganising the administration on the new lines. In all but the most unsettled areas in the country Arab executive officials were appointed as mutasarrifs and kaimakams, British officers taking the place of advisers to the Arab officials concerned. Meanwhile, there was a growing feeling in Iraq in favour of the selection of an Arab ruler. The candidates whose names were freely mentioned were: Shereef Feisal, son of the King of the Hedjaz; the Naqib of Baghdad; Saiyid Talib Pasha; the Sheikh of Mohammerah; Ibn Saud; the Agha Khan; and the Turkish Prince Bourhan-ed-Din. His Majesty's Government were anxious to meet the wishes of the majority of the population in their choice of a ruler, subject to the important reservation that he must be an individual upon whom they could rely to enable them to fulfil their international
obligations. Of the candidates mentioned above, it was clear that only three would be at all likely to command the support of the majority of the people of Iraq. These three were the Shereef Feisal, the Naqib and Saiyid Talib. The supporters of Feisal were confident that if he were permitted to come to the country and show himself to the people he would be universally acclaimed. They repeatedly enquired whether there would be any objection to his presenting himself as a candidate. His Majesty's Government decided that they would place no obstacles in the way of his candidature, and that if he were chosen he should have their support.

On the 1st March, 1921, a new Department was formed under the Colonial Office to deal with the mandated and other territories in the Middle East. The Secretary of State for the Colonies found that in order to acquaint himself with local conditions it would be necessary for him to hold a conference at some convenient centre where he could meet and discuss outstanding questions with the civil and military officials in the areas whose control had been transferred to the Colonial Office. The most convenient place was Cairo, and a conference was held there between the 12th and the 23rd March, in the course of which the question of the future of Iraq was discussed at length with Sir Percy Cox and the other responsible officials concerned.

During the absence of Sir Percy Cox a strong campaign of propaganda was carried on by Saiyid Talib, ostensibly in favour of the Naqib, but in fact with the intention of eventually himself becoming ruler of Iraq. In spite of his activities, the Shereefian party daily grew stronger in proportion as it was more generally realised that British support would not be withdrawn and that there was no fear of the Arab ruler being left an entirely free hand.

Sir Percy Cox returned to Mesopotamia on the 5th April, and immediately announced that a general amnesty would be declared at an early date, which would include all who were concerned in the disturbances of 1920, with the exception of a few individuals who had committed heinous crimes, such as the murder of British officers and offences of a similar nature. This amnesty was published on the 30th May and created a very favourable impression locally.

Meanwhile, on the 14th April Saiyid Talib permitted himself to give utterance to unseemly threats of recourse to armed force against His Majesty's Government, and had the temerity to associate the name of His Highness the Naqib with these menaces. The High Commissioner felt that he would be failing in his duty, both to the people of Iraq and to the British Government, if he for a moment tolerated such action on the part of a person in the responsible position of Saiyid Talib Pasha. He accordingly arranged, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, for the deportation of Saiyid Talib from the country. His disappearance from the scene was universally welcomed, and messages of thanks were received by the High Commissioner from all parts of the country.

At the beginning of June telegrams were received from the King of the Hedjaz, announcing that Feisal was shortly leaving for Iraq. The Sheikh of Mohammerah publicly renounced his candidature in favour of the Emir, whom he invited all patriots to support. At a meeting of the Council of State held on the 11th June, the Naqib proposed that the national Government should make proper provision for the reception of their distinguished visitor. On the 21st June Ibn Saud wrote to Sir Percy Cox, announcing his intention to accept whatever decision might ultimately be arrived at by His Majesty's Government and the people of Iraq as to the future ruler of that country. At the same time, he wrote a friendly letter to Feisal himself.

Feisal arrived at Basrah on the 23rd June, and delivered an eloquent and judicious speech, in which he described himself as standing before the people as a simple individual, and assured his audience that he would be the first to pay allegiance to whomsoever the people of Iraq chose as their ruler. On his arrival in Bagdad he was received by the High Commissioner and the Commander-in-chief. The Ministers and officials of the Arab Government were introduced to him, and he proceeded through the streets, which were decorated and packed with people, through a dense and cheering crowd. During the next few weeks his popularity increased, and it became clear that any doubts that might have been entertained locally were already dissipated by his tactful behaviour and engaging personality.

On the 11th July, on the notice of His Highness the Naqib, the Council of State passed a unanimous resolution declaring the Emir Feisal King of Iraq, provided that his government would be a constitutional, representative and democratic government, limited by law. In accordance with the prescribed procedure, this
resolution was not operative unless and until the High Commissioner confirmed it. Sir Percy Cox was of the opinion, in which Feisal entirely concurred, that this resolution was not sufficient without a specific expression of the assent of the people of Iraq as a whole. A referendum was accordingly taken, of which the results were known on the 19th August. In an electorate of about 1,000,000, the votes represented a proportion of 96 per cent. for Feisal, and His Majesty's Government accordingly decided to recognise him as King of Iraq. On the 23rd August his recognition was publicly accorded.

APPENDIX.

I.—Letter from His Excellency the High Commissioner to His Highness the Naqib of Baghdad.


To—His Highness the Naqib, Baghdad.

Your Highness,

Whereas, in pursuit of the desire of His Majesty's Government to set up a National Government in 'Iraq and to secure the association of the inhabitants of the country in the work of administration meanwhile, and in virtue of my powers as High Commissioner, I have found it necessary and desirable, pending the convocation of a National Assembly to decide as to the precise form of Government in the future, to set up a Council of State to conduct the administration of the country under my control;

And whereas the great prestige and respect which Your Highness enjoys among all classes and communities of the population clearly indicated yourself as President of such a Council:

I begged Your Highness to accept that position in the confident hope that, even at some personal inconvenience, you would regard it as a public duty to your country to do so, and thereby to identify yourself publicly with the first step in the direction of setting up a National Government for 'Iraq.

It is with great satisfaction that I have received your intimation of your acceptance of the position, and at the same time I have the honour to say that the list of members proposed for seats on the Council of State and the statement of duties to be assigned to them meet with my entire approval. I accordingly request Your Highness to take the necessary steps to give effect to your proposals at your early convenience.

P. Z. COX,
High Commissioner

II.—Specimen of Letters and Telegrams addressed by His Highness the Naqib of Baghdad to the persons selected as Members of the Council of State.

Dated October 25, 1920.

To—His Honour Abdul Latif Pasha al-Mandil, Notable of Basrah.

Whereas his Excellency the High Commissioner and Representative of His Britannic Majesty in Mesopotamia has desired me to form an Administrative Council for the purpose of managing the affairs of the country, under his Excellency's supervision pending the convocation of the General Assembly, the elections to which will, as you are aware, be carried out as soon as possible, and whereas the organisation of the administration in Mesopotamia and the endeavour to restore public peace, especially at the present juncture, are incumbent upon and becoming to every straightforward and sensible person in view of the mischief they avert and the benefit they confer, I have found it necessary to accept the authority delegated to me by his Excellency for that purpose, and I have great pleasure in inviting you to lend me a helping hand and to become a member of this Body by accepting the portfolio of Commerce, and I request you to inform me, by telegraph, if you accept this post, and, in that case, to come to Baghdad at your earliest convenience.

ABDUR RAHMAN.
Naqib al Ashraf, Baghdad.
III.—Personnel of Council of State as finally formed by His Highness the Naqib of Baghdad

President of Council—
His Highness the Naqib of Baghdad.

Minister for the Interior—
Saiyid Talib Pasha al Naqib.

Minister of Finance—
Sasun Effendi Eskell.

Minister of Justice—
Mustafa Effendi al Alusi.

Minister of Defence—
Jafar Pasha al Askari.

Minister of Education and Health—
Izzat Pasha Kirkukli.

Minister of Works and Communications—
Vacant.

Minister of Commerce—
Abdul Latif Pasha al Mandil.

Minister of Auqaf—
Muhammad Ali Fadhil.

Ministers without portfolio—
Abdul Ghani Effendi al Kubba.
Abdul Jabbar Pasha al Khaiyat.
Abdul Majid Beg al Shawi.
Abdul Rahman Pasha al Haidari.
Ahmad Pasha al Sani.
Ajl Pasha al Samarmad.
Dand Effendi al Yusufani.
Fakhri Effendi Jamil Zada.
Muhammad al Saihud Amir Rabia.
Saiyid Hadi al Qazwini.

Secretary to the Council—
Saiyid Husain al Afnan.

IV.—Proposed Distribution of Headquarters Departments among Ministries.

(a.) Ministry of Interior—
General Administration.
Police.
Land Revenue and Excise.
Agriculture.
Jails.
Printing and Publishing.

(b.) Ministry of Finance—
Finance.
Accounts.
Audit.
Ottoman Debt and special revenues.

(c.) Ministry of Justice—
Judicial, &c.
Tapu.

(d.) Ministry of Defence—
Levies.
Gendarmes.
Local Forces.

(e.) Ministry of Education and Health—
Education.
Health Services.
Municipalities (as temporary measure).

(f.) Ministry of Works and Communications—
Buildings.
Roads.
Railways.
Posts and Telegraphs.
Irrigation.
Surveys.

(g.) Ministry of Commerce—
Commerce.
Customs.
Port.

(h.) Ministry of Auqaf—
Waqfs.
Trusts.

V.—Press Communiqué issued by His Excellency the High Commissioner on November 7, 1920.

The High Commissioner desires to keep the public informed as far as possible as to the measures which he finds it expedient to take in order to give effect to the wishes of His Majesty’s Government, that all that is possible should be done to facilitate and expedite a decision on the part of the people of Iraq as to the precise form of government which they desire, and, pursuant to that decision, to promote the early establishment of such a Government under the guidance of Great Britain as Mandatory.

The position is that the question of choice is one which must be decided by the people themselves, and this can only be properly done by the convocation of a National Congress fully representative of the people.
Electoral regulations are being devised by the Committee of ex-Deputies now sitting, and all possible steps will be taken to expedite action on their recommendations and to start the electoral machinery in the settled districts, but it must be obvious to all that in certain localities the business of election cannot proceed until the inhabitants have made their submission to Government, and settled down to normal conditions. In any case, the work of the elections can hardly be completed in less than two or three months. Meanwhile, in order, firstly, that the leaders of the people may participate more fully in the work of Government, and secondly, to obviate disappointment on the part of the peaceable and loyal elements of the population at the delay involved by the elections, the High Commissioner has decided to invite His Highness the Naqib to assist patriotically towards this end by forming and presiding over a Council of State, which, under the High Commissioner's guidance, will direct the Government pending the decision of the Congress and the framing of the law of the Constitution.

The names of the gentlemen who have accepted His Highness the Naqib's invitation to become members of the Council will be notified in due course, as also the duties assigned to them as soon as details are finally completed. Those who share the High Commissioner's desire to hasten the Assembly of the Congress and the realisation of their decision can best assist him by co-operating in the task of bringing about forthwith the submission of the disturbed districts, so that the re-establishment of law and order may not be delayed, and the elections may proceed.

The High Commissioner, in conclusion, wishes to make it clear that the establishment of the Council of State now created, with a view to applying itself to the work of reconstruction under contemplation, will in no wise prejudice the work of the National Congress and the free decisions at which it will arrive.

VI.—Proclamation.

Whereas by Notification, dated the 17th June, 1920, it was announced that His Majesty's Government had authorised the calling of a General Elective Assembly for the purpose of preparing an organic law for 'Iraq;

And whereas it is considered expedient that, pending the convocation of such General Assembly and the framing thereby of an organic law, the Government of the country should be conducted, subject to my supervision and direction, by a provisional National Government:

Now, therefore, I, Major-General Sir P. Z. Cox, G.C.I.E., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., by virtue of the authority vested in me as High Commissioner for Mesopotamia, do hereby proclaim as follows:

1. There shall be constituted a Council of State consisting of a President, Ministers for the following Departments: Interior, Finance, Justice, Auqaf, Education and Health, Defence, Public Works, Commerce, and such other members without portfolios as may be nominated.

2. Until the organic law is promulgated and brought into effect, the Council of State and Ministers shall be responsible for the conduct, subject to my supervision and control, of the administration of Government, excluding foreign affairs, military operations and in general military affairs, except such military affairs as concerns solely the locally recruited forces.

Made at Baghdad this 11th day of November, 1920.

P. Z. COX,
High Commissioner for Mesopotamia.

VII.—Instructions for the Council of State (as finally issued).

I. The Council of State should realise that at any rate until the convening of a National Assembly for the purpose of deciding the future Constitution of 'Iraq, I, as High Commissioner, am personally and directly responsible to His Majesty's Government for the administration of the country. Accordingly, in the event of difference of opinion between myself and the Council of State in reference to matters under disposal, the final decision will rest with me.

II. In view of the fact that the elections for an Assembly and its convocation must necessarily take some time, I have decided upon taking preparatory measures...
for the conduct of the actual administration (with the exception of such questions as concern foreign policy and military considerations) under my supervision by the formation of a Council of State under the presidency of His Highness the Naqib as President. Such Council shall consist of Ministers, some of whom will preside over the various Departments of State, while the others will be Members of Council without portfolio.

III. The Head of each State Department will be the Minister in charge of it and the administration of such department will vest in him subject—

(a.) To the control of the Council over the action of the Ministers.
(b.) To the hearing of the views expressed by the British officers selected by me as advisers to the several departments.

As regards the functions of these Advisers, they are to be not executive but advisory, but I trust that the Council and the members in charge of Departments will realise that the officers whom I select for the post of Adviser, having been so selected owing to their long experience of the working of the administration and their knowledge of the conduct of the departments attached to the said Ministries, it is necessary both that attention should be paid to their views and that the latter should be taken into careful consideration.

(c.) To the fact that in the last resort supreme control will vest in my own person.

IV. It seems to me that the best method of conducting the affairs of the departments of State will be by the reference of all matters concerning a particular Ministry to its Minister through his Adviser, and it will be incumbent on the latter to refer communications and papers so received to his Minister without delay, in order that the Minister may be able to take action for the disposal of the matter after consulting the Adviser. Similarly, if a Minister desires to initiate action in regard to any matter concerning his Ministry, it is necessary either that he should call his Adviser into consultation in the first instance or that he should send his orders to the department concerned through the Adviser so that the latter may be able to put forward his views before the matter takes final shape.

V. Such being the position, it is necessary to make provision for the contingency of a difference of opinion on any matter between the Minister and his Adviser, thus:—

(a.) If in any case the Adviser tenders advice to his Minister and the latter feels unable to accept such advice, the Minister should call the Adviser into consultation. If they are unable to arrive at an agreement after discussion of the matter, and if the Adviser considers the matter of sufficient importance to be pursued further, he will have the right to ask the Minister to refer the matter to the Council of State for consideration. It will then be incumbent on the Minister to suspend action on the matter until the next meeting of the Council, when the subject will be brought before it.

(b.) In the interval which occurs while the matter is being referred to the Council the Minister and Adviser have full discretion to refer the matter to me as High Commissioner. I shall thus have an opportunity of conveying my views to the Council of State without the least prejudice to the procedure provided for in Article 10 of this programme.

VI. As regards the Council, it is necessary that it should hold regular meetings at least once a week or even more, as may be necessary.

VII. To facilitate the business of efficient administration the Council requires a competent Secretary and a clerical staff, for the appointment of whom steps should be taken without delay.

VIII. All business to be brought before the Council meeting for discussion should be initiated by the Minister concerned to the Secretary of the Council, who will prepare a list of agenda for each meeting in time for circulation—

(a.) To the High Commissioner,
(b.) To all Ministers and Advisers,

at least twenty-four hours before the time fixed for the meeting.

As a general rule no question not included on the agenda paper should be discussed at such meeting. At any rate, no formal resolution should be taken on it.
except in the case of any matter of great urgency the prompt disposal of which is essential.

IX. The Secretary will attend all meetings of the Cabinet and will prepare a record of the proceedings of such meetings in the form of a list and statement of matters in respect of which resolutions have been passed. These lists will be circulated within twenty-four hours of such meeting under the Secretary’s signature—

(a.) To the High Commissioner.
(b.) To all Ministers and Advisers.

Each Minister will be responsible to give effect to resolutions of the Council affecting it and to report such action to the Secretary for the information of the Council at subsequent meetings. In accordance with the usual practice the deliberations of the Council are to be considered confidential and it is not permitted to disclose them outside the Council.

X. All resolutions of the Council will be final, subject to their confirmation by myself as head of the Government. I must also reserve for myself the right inherent in me as High Commissioner to veto or modify on grounds of expediency any resolution passed by the Council.

XI. In order that the Council may be kept informed of all matters appertaining to the subjects included in the agenda, the presence of the Adviser will be necessary at the meetings of the Council while any matter affecting the Ministry to which he belongs is under discussion. He will have the right in the course of the proceedings to tender his advice regarding the matter under consideration, but he will not take part in the recording of votes.

XII. It is my confident hope that the instructions above set forth in regard to the working of the Council of State and the several Ministries and their relations with myself on the one hand and with the Advisers on the other will conduce to the smooth progress of the administrative machinery at Headquarters.

As regards the central departments at present engaged in the work of administration, in view of the fact that for several years past they have been working smoothly, the attachment of them to the new scheme of Government, after the necessary adjustments, should offer no serious difficulty. As regards the administration of the provinces, it is probable that we shall be confronted with a good many difficulties—but In Shallah they will admit of solution.

XIII. As you all know, the administration of the various districts and sub-districts of ‘Iraq is still, as it has been for some time past, conducted by an organisation of British Political Officers, with suitable local personnel in minor administrative posts as D.A.P.O.’s and Mudirs, &c.; some districts are still in a disturbed state and British troops are still present therein; consequently in such places it is difficult to make the change from British to indigenous personnel in the immediate circumstances; on the other hand, there are districts in which it is possible to take the necessary steps in the desired direction as soon as competent personnel is forthcoming.

XIV. And whereas it is among the duties of the Council of State to devise administrative measures to promote the speedy pacification of the provinces, the said Council should give their early attention to the selection of experienced and suitable candidates from indigenous elements of the population for appointment by degrees to those posts where such appointment is expedient. Having done so, they should formulate their proposals with the names of candidates recommended in each case for my consideration and orders.

VIII.—Copy of Letter from High Commissioner to each Member of the Electoral Law Committee, dated November 12, 1920.

Sir,

I have been informed by the President of the Committee for the ‘Iraq Elections that the said Committee has now completed the task for which it was convened by Sir A. T. Wilson, Acting Civil Commissioner, in August last, and that the draft Electoral Law prepared by it is now ready for submission to me.

I have accordingly directed that the Committee shall be considered dissolved with effect from the 7th November, 1920 (the date of the above-mentioned letter to the President), and I desire to mark the occasion by recording my very high appreciation of the manner in which you have acquitted yourself of the task entrusted to you as a member of the said Committee. For three months you have laboured in a
cause which, I am convinced, will prove of great and lasting benefit to your Country, and I feel sure that, when the Electoral Law, which you have helped to frame, assumes its final form and is put into operation in connection with the election of members to the National Assembly, which it is my intention to convene as soon as possible, your fellow-countrymen will realise that you have amply earned the thanks which I now convey to you on their behalf and on my own.

I hope that it will be my good fortune to see you hereafter continuing to take as prominent a part in the public life of your country as you have done during the past three months by participating in the framing of an Electoral Law for 'Iraq.

P. Z. COX,
High Commissioner for Mesopotamia.

IX.—List of Advisers appointed by His Excellency the High Commissioner to the Various Ministries.

Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior — Mr. H. St. J. B. Philby, C.I.E., I.C.S.

" " Finance — Lieut.-Col. S. H. Slater, C.I.E., I.C.S.

" " Justice — Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, K.C.M.G., C.I.E.

" " Augaf — (No appointment yet made.)

" " Defence — Mr. E. L. Norton, I.C.S. (acting).

" " Education — Major-General E. H. de Vere Atkinson, C.B., C.M.G., C.I.E.

" " Works and Communications — Mr. C. R. Watkins, C.I.E. (subject to his acceptance).


MEMORANDUM.

The Council met informally on Wednesday, the 10th November, 1920, and the draft instructions framed by the High Commissioner were read over and discussed.

Section 1 thereof was accepted.

Section 2 was accepted, but the Minister of Defence asked for an explanation as to his present functions before the convocation of the Assembly. It was resolved that an enquiry be made from his Excellency the High Commissioner in that connection.

Section 3 was accepted.

Section 4 was accepted, but the Council resolved that the wording should be: “It will be incumbent on the Adviser to refer communications and papers so received to his Minister without delay, in order that the Minister may be able to take action for the disposal of the matter after consultation with the Adviser.”

Section 5 was accepted.

Section 6 was accepted.

Section 7 was accepted, and the Council suggested the appointment of Saiyid Husain Effendi Afnan as Secretary, and agreed that he should nominate a sufficient number of clerks and submit their names to the Council for approval.

Sections 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 were accepted.

Sections 13 and 14 were accepted, but the Council suggested the amendment of the wording as follows:—

“And whereas it is among the duties of the Council of State to devise means for ensuring peace and order outside (in the provinces), the Council thinks it advisable that the Ministry of Interior be permitted to find and select experienced and suitable officials from the indigenous elements of the population for appointment by degrees to those posts when such appointment is expedient. Having done so, it will submit their names and their duties to the Council and these will, after confirmation, be submitted to his Excellency the High Commissioner for orders.”

His Excellency the Minister for Education, Izzat Pasha, asked for ten days’ leave to proceed to Kirkuk on private affairs, and stated that he would ask the
Minister of Interior, his Excellency Saiyid Talib Pasha, to act for him. The Council agreed to this.

It was decided that the next meeting should take place on Saturday next, the 13th November, 1920, at 8 o'clock (Arabic time).

It was then resolved as follows: Whereas the pacification of the provinces is a matter of great importance and this depends on the improvement of certain conditions in the provinces and seeing that one of the improvements is the pardoning of some of the deportees who have not committed an unpardonable offence, among them being Shaikh Mukhif, it would be desirable therefore that, if the Government agreed to pardon him, and to order his return to Baghdad, reliable securities be taken from him pledging him to obedience and submission to the orders of the Government so that no trouble may be caused by him in future. This action will be useful for the purpose of attaining the object we have referred to above, viz., the pacification of the country and the encouragement of the insurgents to submit. Should there be no reason which is unknown to us, we would request that action be taken in this direction.

The said request should apply to certain other deportees, viz., Shaikh Ahmad al Shaukh Daud, Jafar al Shabibi, Muhammad Effendi al Mustafa al Khalil, Saiyid Khairi Effendi Hindawi, Rauf Effendi and his companions from amongst the people of Hillah, viz., Saiyid Ahmad ibn Saiyid Salim, Jabbar ibn Hassani, Ali ibn Hammadi al Hasan, Saiyid Abdul Salama Effendi al Khatib and Tawfiq Effendi ibn Mulla Laila, and Abdul Rahman Effendi ibn Hasan Effendi of Kirkuk.

Dated November 10, 1920.

True Copy:

Abdul Rahman,
Naqib al Ashraf, Baghdad.


Office of the High Commissioner, Baghdad, November 12, 1920.

To—His Highness Saiyid Abdul Rahman Effendi al Naqib.

I am directed by his Excellency the High Commissioner to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your report on the proceedings of the Council of State at its meeting of yesterday, the 10th November, 1920. His Excellency notes with pleasure that the draft of instructions issued by him for the guidance of the Council has met with its general approval and has directed me to make the following observations on the points of detail raised by the Council.

As regards the remarks made against paragraph 2 of the draft, his Excellency would like to discuss the question of the present functions of the Minister of Defence with Jafar Pasha al Askari, and will arrange a meeting with him.

As regards paragraph 4, the wording proposed by the Council is approved by his Excellency. The words "it will be incumbent on the latter (i.e., the Adviser) to refer communications and papers so received to his Minister without delay, in order that the Minister may be able to take action for the disposal of the matter after consultation with the Adviser" are being substituted for the words "it will be incumbent . . . . disposal of the matter" in the original draft of this section.

As regards paragraph 7, his Excellency the High Commissioner is pleased to approve the appointment of Sayid Husain Effendi al Afnan as Secretary to the Council, and hopes that he will be able to take up his appointment at an early date. The question of his staff should be taken up by the Council in consultation with the Ministry of Interior.

As regards paragraphs 13 and 14, his Excellency notes the views expressed by the Council, and has in accordance therewith decided to substitute the following for the wording of the original draft of paragraph 14 in the hope that it will meet the wishes of the Council, namely:

"Paragraph 14. And whereas it is among the duties of the Council of State to devise administrative measures to promote the speedy pacification of the provinces, the said Council should pay their early attention to the selection of experienced and suitable candidates from indigenous elements of the population for appointment by degrees to those posts when such appointment is expedient. Having done so, they should formulate their proposals with the names of candidates recommended in each case for my consideration and orders."
With regard to the application of Izzat Pasha, Minister of Education, for ten days' leave to visit Kirkuk on private affairs, I am directed by his Excellency to express the hope that he will defer going on leave for a few days in order to be present at the next meeting of the Council on Saturday, the 13th November, 1920, at 2 p.m., when his Excellency the High Commissioner hopes to have the pleasure of a formal meeting with the Council.

Finally, with regard to the views expressed by the Council regarding the pardon or release of certain individuals at present under detention in connection with the recent disturbances, I am directed to inform you that the matter will receive his early and sympathetic consideration with a view to the necessary action in cases in which such action can be taken without prejudice to the interests of the State. The High Commissioner will communicate again with the Council as soon as he has examined the record.

H. St. J. B. PHILBY,
for Secretary.