This PDF was generated on 16/09/2019 from online resources as part of the Qatar Digital Library's digital archive.

The online record contains extra information, high resolution zoomable views and transcriptions. It can be viewed at:
http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100000000602.0x00019e

Reference	IOR/L/PS/12/2872
Title	Coll 17/16(1) 'Iraq. The Assyrian Crisis'
Date(s)	17 Jun 1933-31 Aug 1933 (CE, Gregorian)
Written in	English in Latin
Extent and Format	1 volume (514 folios)
Holding Institution	British Library: India Office Records and Private Papers
Copyright for document	Unknown

About this record

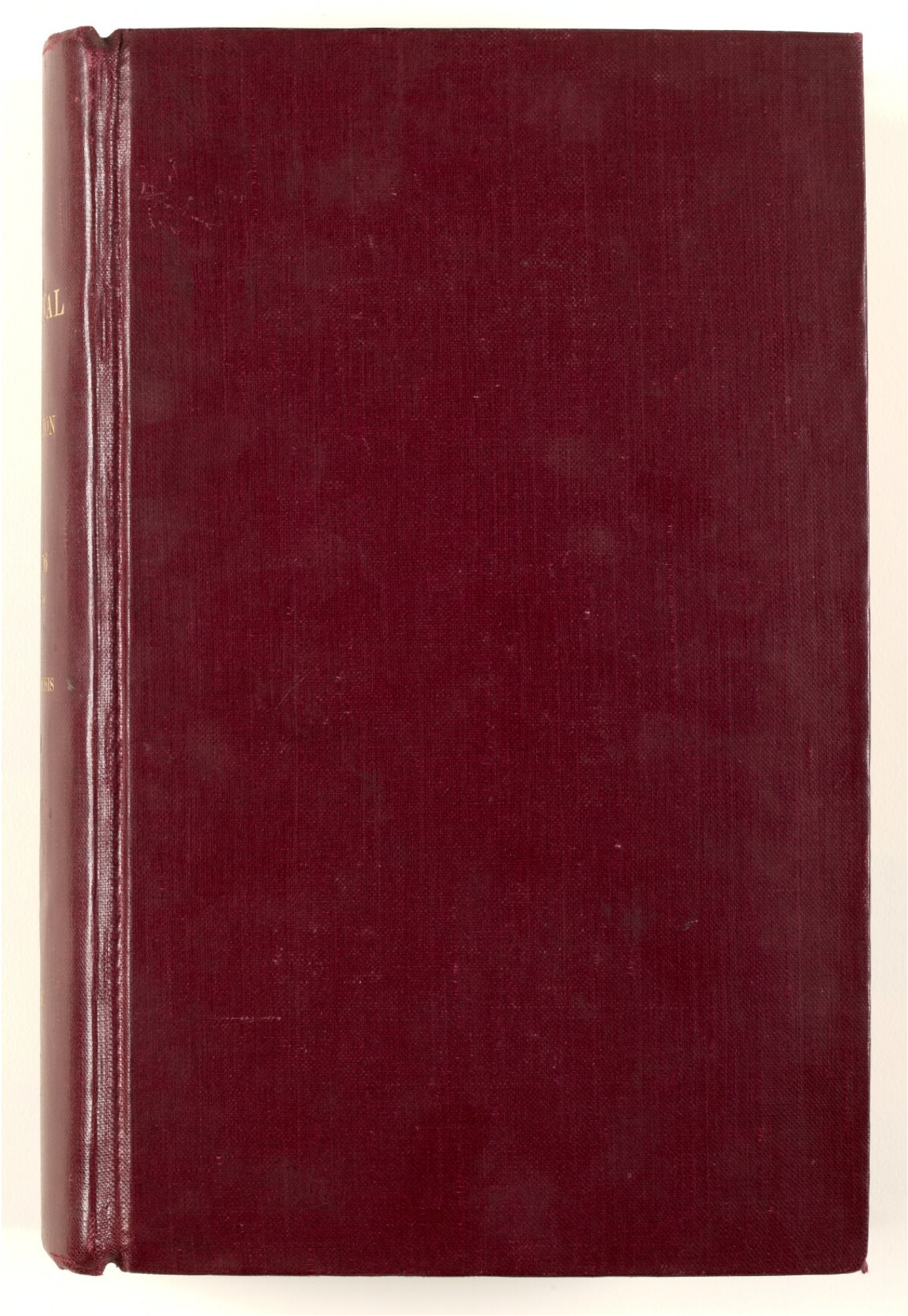
The volume contains papers regarding the Assyrian Crisis in Iraq during 1933. It primarily consists of correspondence between HM Ambassador to Iraq (Sir Francis Humphrys), HM Chargé d'Affaires to Iraq (George Ogilvie-Forbes), and the Foreign Office.

The papers document the negotiations between Mar Shimun XXIII Eshai – the Patriarch of the Church of the East – and the Government of Iraq, regarding: the spiritual and temporal authority claimed by the Mar Shimun; the Assyrian Settlement Scheme; areas designated for settlement; and clashes between Assyrians, Iraqis and Kurds.

Ogilvie-Forbes and Humphrys reported on the movement of Assyrians into Syria, requests to the Syrian and French authorities that they be allowed to remain, proposals to disarm the group, and clashes with Iraqi troops when numbers of Assyrians returned to Iraq. The papers also document the proposed arrest or exile of the Mar Shimun by the Government of Iraq, and the volume also contains copies of letters exchanged by the Mar Shimun, the Iraqi Interior Ministry, and King Faisal.

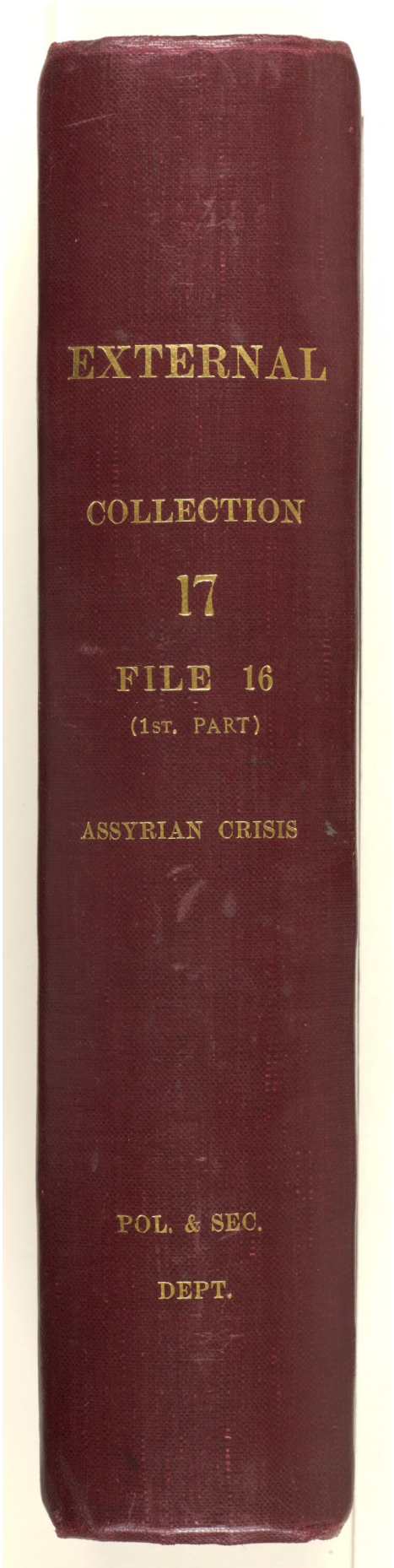
The papers document the worsening crisis, including reports of looting and village burning at Dohuk [Dahūk], the murder of Assyrian prisoners by Iraqi armed forces led by Bakr Sidqi, and the Simele Massacre of August 1933. These papers include reports submitted by the Head of the British Military Mission in Iraq (Major General Rowan Robinson), the Administrative Inspector at Mosul (Colonel R S Stafford), and Major D B Thomson of the Assyrian Settlement Office. The file concludes with reports on the Simele Massacre, arrangements for the arrival of Mar Shimun and his family in Cyprus, the work of the Refugee Relief Commission in Mosul and Dohuk, and the establishment by the League of Nations of a Small Minorities Commission to investigate the crisis.

The volume includes a divider which gives a list of correspondence references contained in the volume by year. This is placed at the end of the correspondence (folio 1).



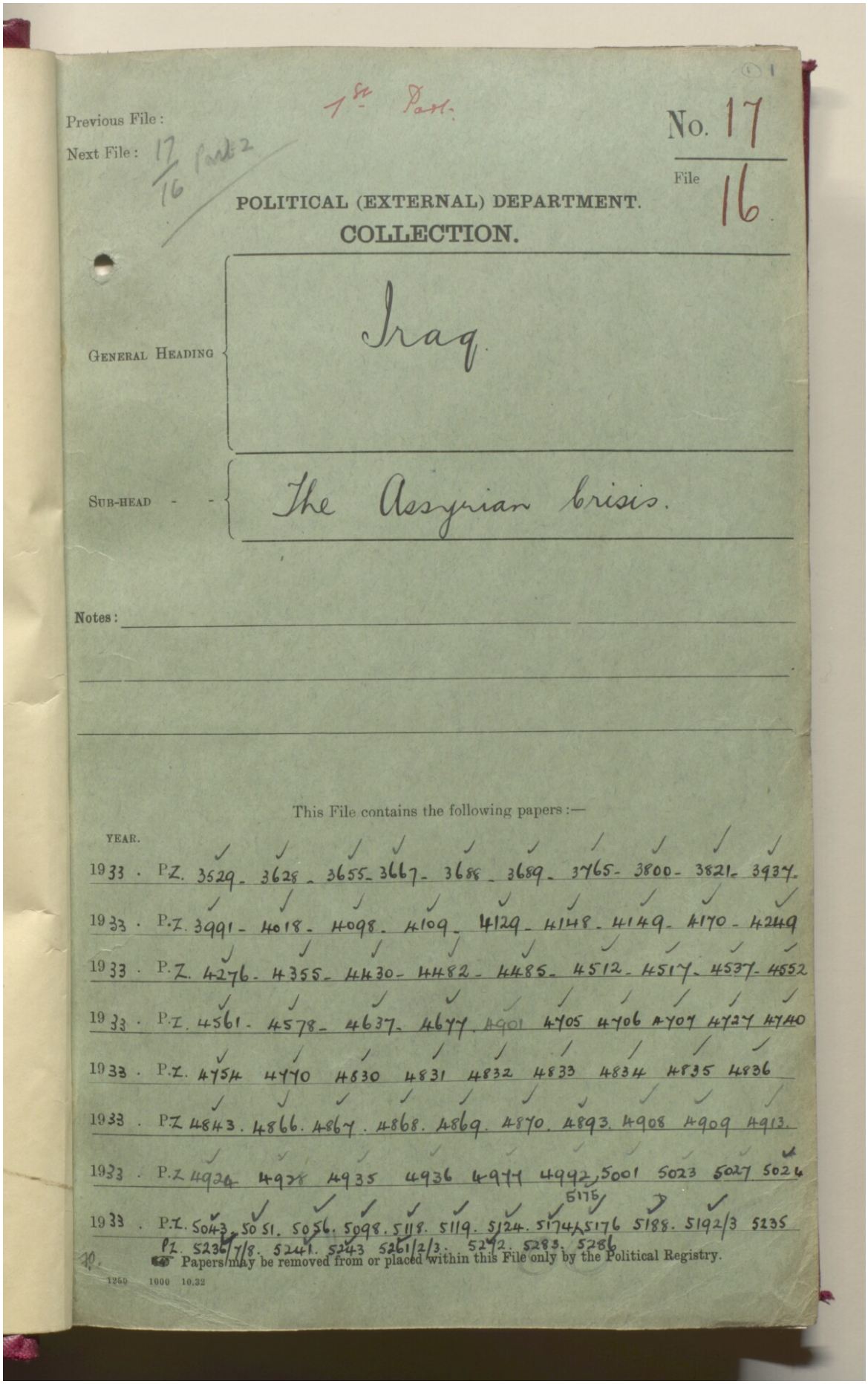
Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000002


EXTERNAL
COLLECTION
17
FILE 16
(1ST. PART)
ASSYRIAN CRISIS
POL. & SEC.
DEPT.

Coll 17/16(1) 'Iraq. The Assyrian Crisis' [tail] (6/1036)





Previous File : 1st Part.

Next File : 17/16 Part 2

No. 17

File 16

POLITICAL (EXTERNAL) DEPARTMENT.

COLLECTION.

GENERAL HEADING { Iraq.

SUB-HEAD - - { The Assyrian crisis.

Notes :

This File contains the following papers :—

YEAR.

1933 . P.Z. 3529 - 3628 - 3655 - 3667 - 3688 - 3689 - 3765 - 3800 - 3821 - 3937.

1933 . P.Z. 3991 - 4018 - 4098 - 4109 - 4129 - 4148 - 4149 - 4170 - 4249

1933 . P.Z. 4276 - 4355 - 4430 - 4482 - 4485 - 4512 - 4517 - 4537 - 4552

1933 . P.Z. 4561 - 4578 - 4637 - 4677 - 4901 4705 4706 4709 4724 4740

1933 . P.Z. 4754 4770 4830 4831 4832 4833 4834 4835 4836

1933 . P.Z 4843 . 4866 . 4867 . 4868 . 4869 . 4870 . 4893 . 4908 4909 4913 .

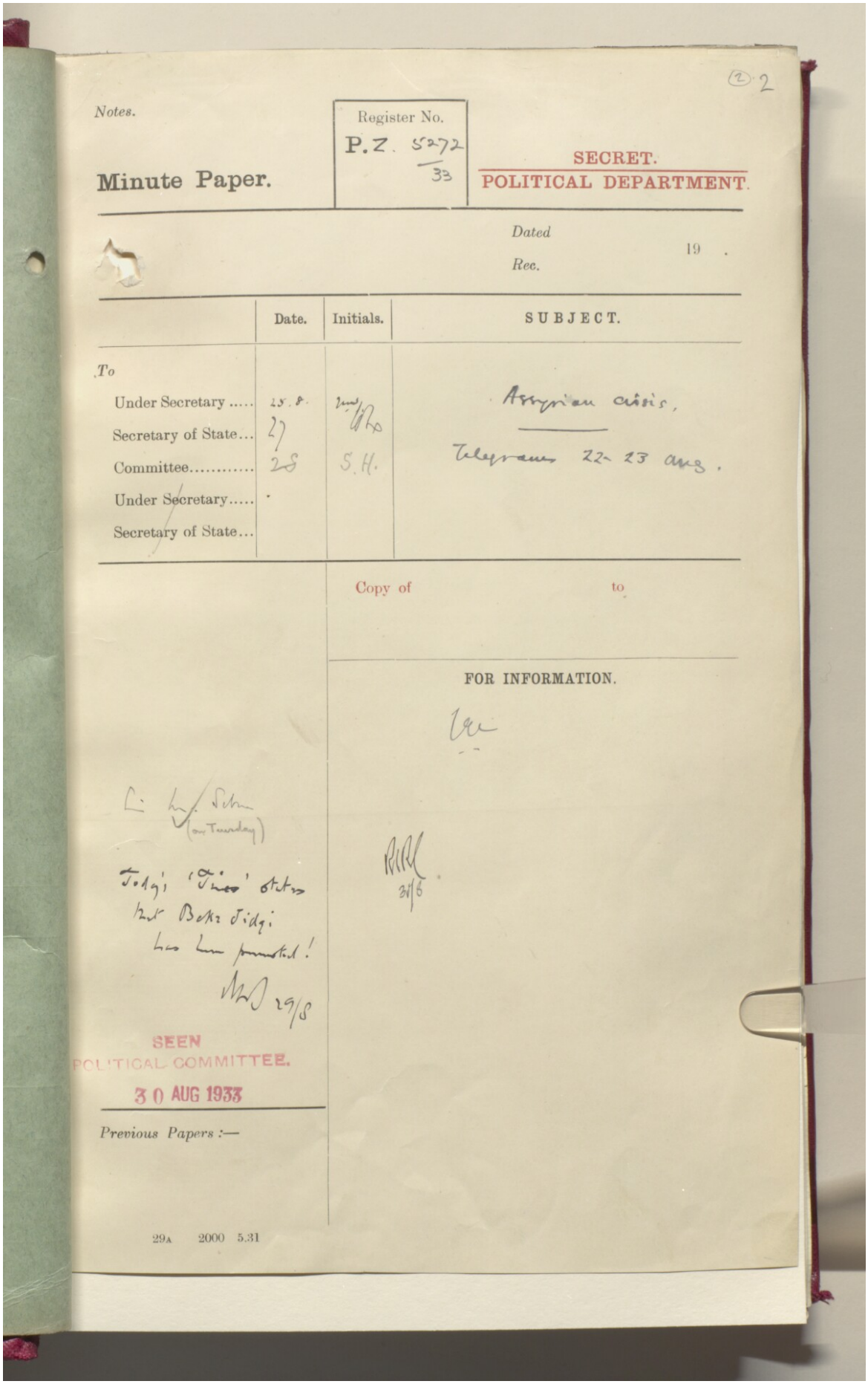
1933 . P.Z 4926 4928 4935 4936 4977 4992, 5001 5023 5027 5026

1933 . P.Z. 5043 . 5051 . 5056 . 5098 . 5118 . 5119 . 5124 . 5174, 5175 5176 5188 . 5192/3 5235

P.Z. 5236/7/8 . 5241 . 5243 5261/2/3 . 5272 . 5283 . 5286

☞ Papers may be removed from or placed within this File only by the Political Registry.

1250 1000 10.32



(2) 2

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z. 5272
33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	25.8.		Assyrian crisis,
Secretary of State...	27		
Committee.....	28	S.H.	Telegrams 22- 23 Aug.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

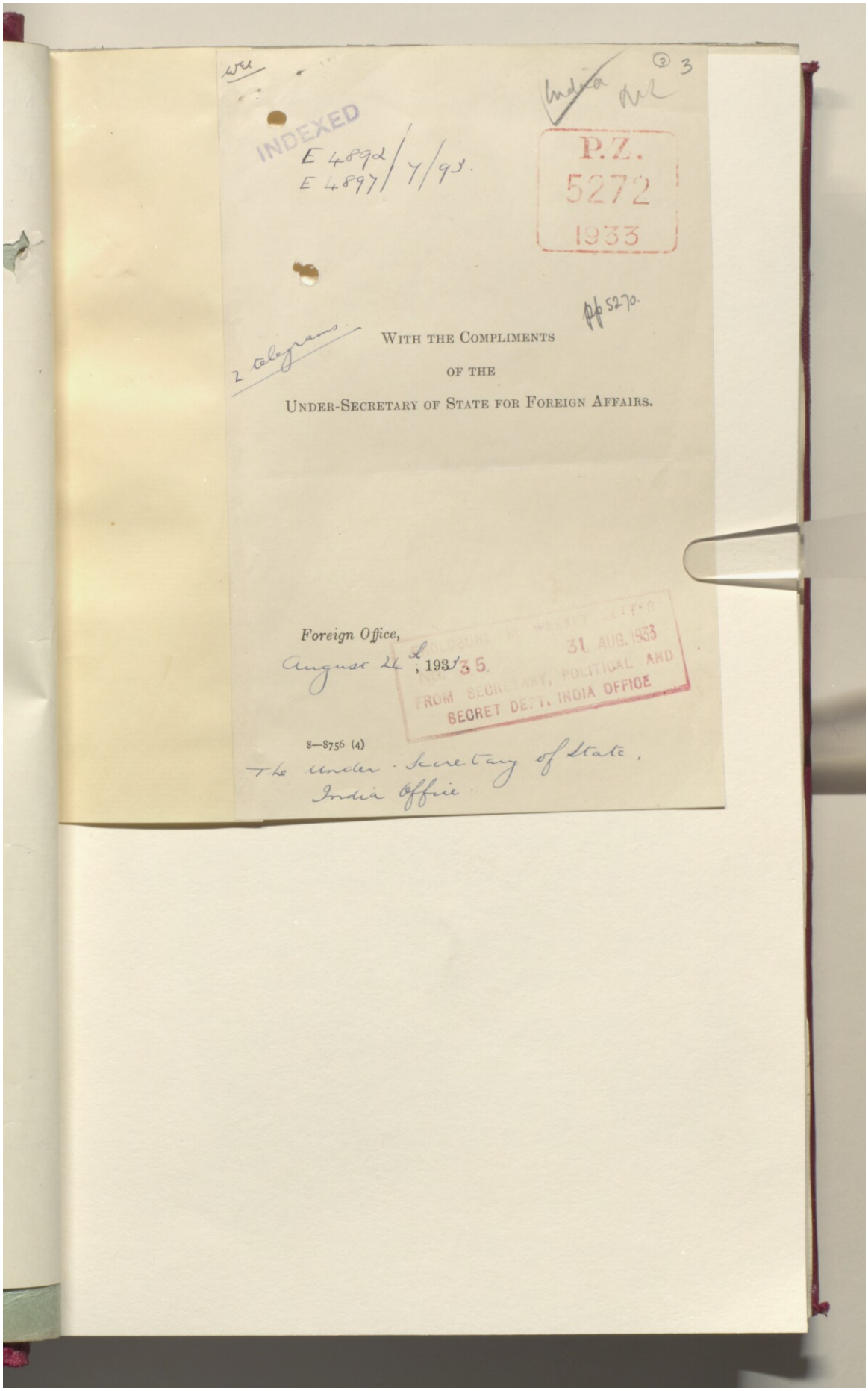
Copy of to

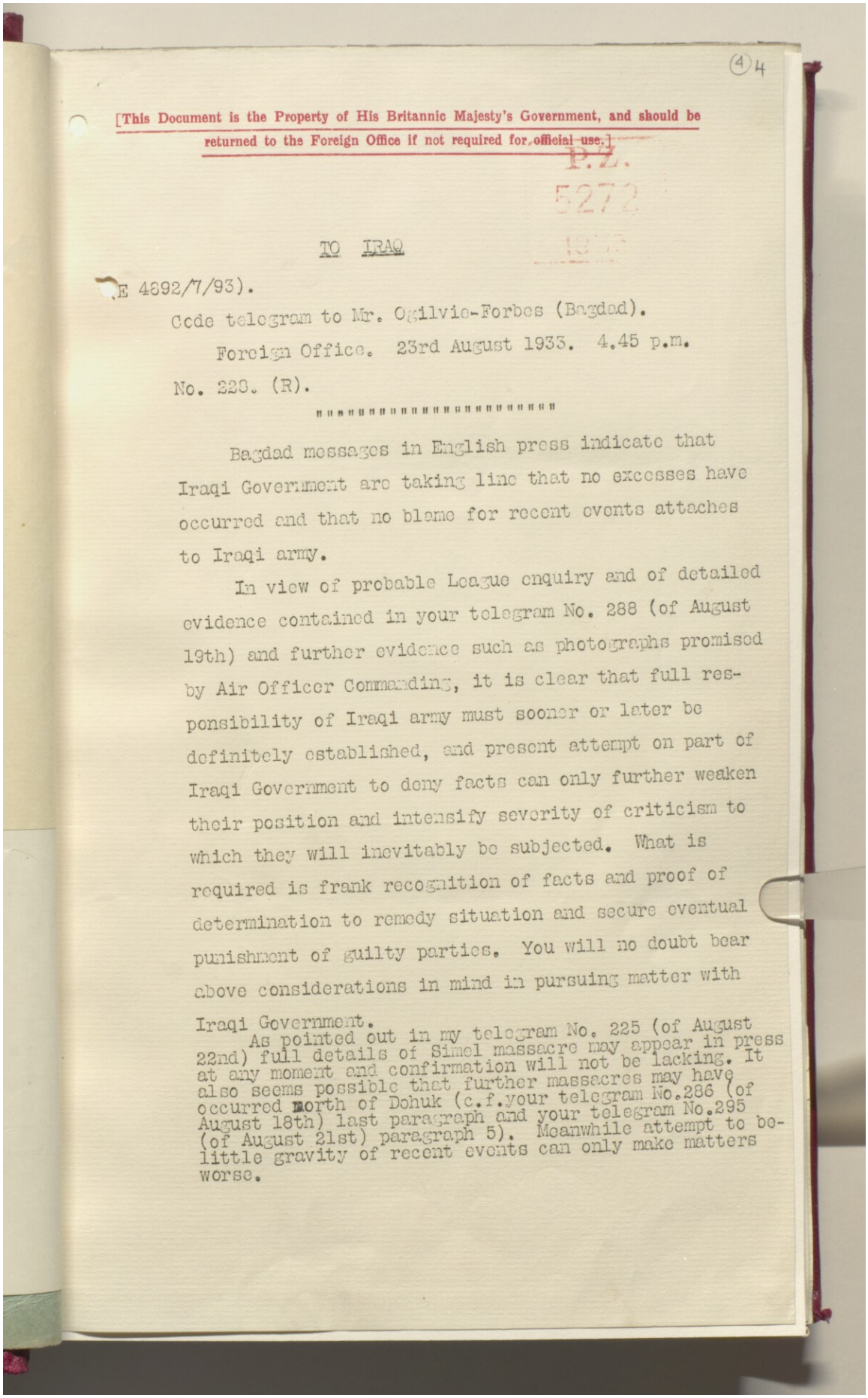
FOR INFORMATION.

Previous Papers :—

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
30 AUG 1933

29A 2000 5.31


INDEXED
E 4892/
E 4897/ 7/93.
P.Z.
5272
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 24, 1933
31 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The Under-Secretary of State,
India Office



④4

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5272

TO IRAQ

E 4892/7/93).

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

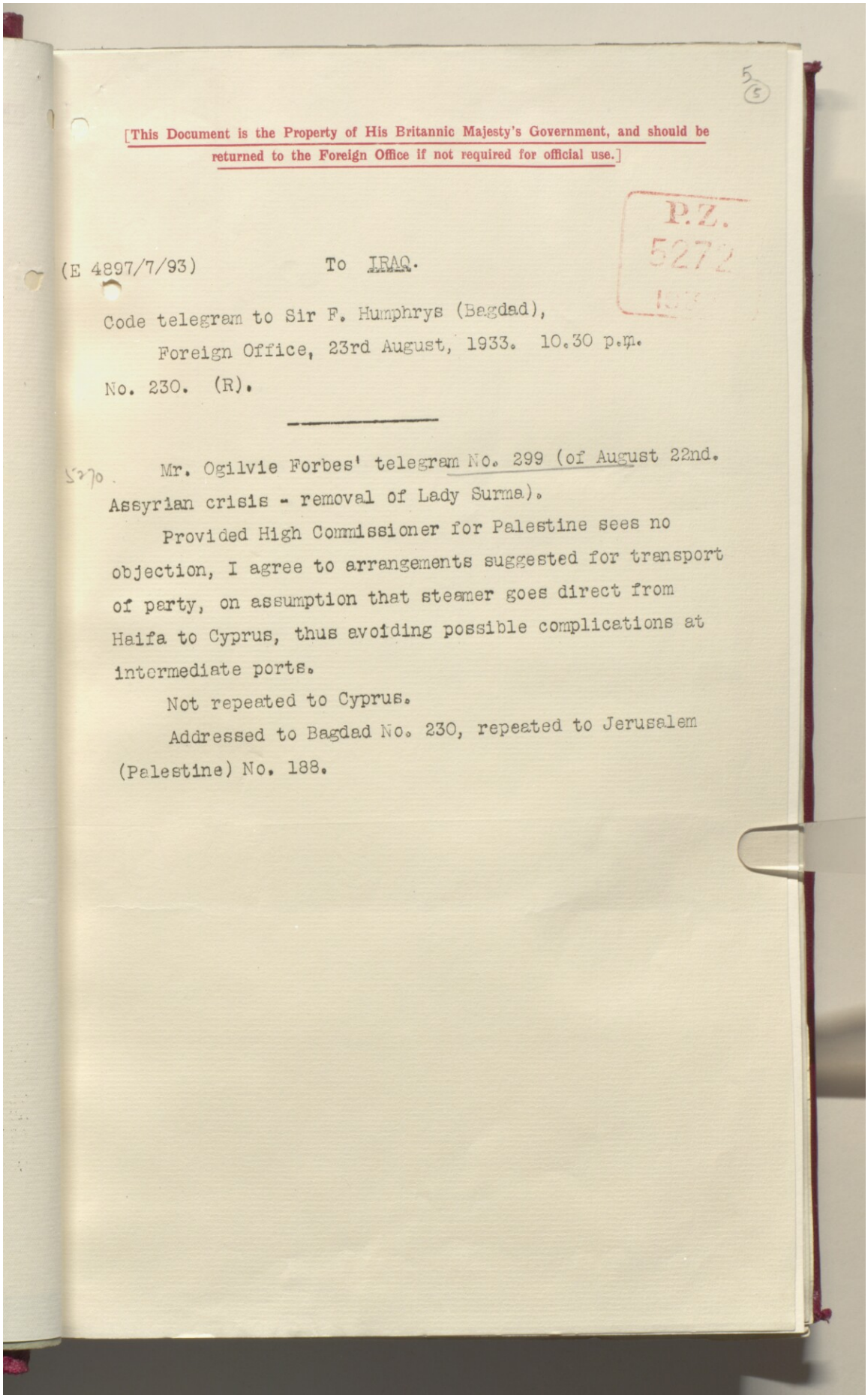
Foreign Office. 23rd August 1933. 4.45 p.m.

No. 229. (R).

Bagdad messages in English press indicate that Iraqi Government are taking line that no excesses have occurred and that no blame for recent events attaches to Iraqi army.

In view of probable League enquiry and of detailed evidence contained in your telegram No. 288 (of August 19th) and further evidence such as photographs promised by Air Officer Commanding, it is clear that full responsibility of Iraqi army must sooner or later be definitely established, and present attempt on part of Iraqi Government to deny facts can only further weaken their position and intensify severity of criticism to which they will inevitably be subjected. What is required is frank recognition of facts and proof of determination to remedy situation and secure eventual punishment of guilty parties. You will no doubt bear above considerations in mind in pursuing matter with Iraqi Government.

As pointed out in my telegram No. 225 (of August 22nd) full details of Simel massacre may appear in press at any moment and confirmation will not be lacking. It also seems possible that further massacres may have occurred North of Dohuk (c.f. your telegram No. 286 (of August 18th) last paragraph and your telegram No. 295 (of August 21st) paragraph 5). Meanwhile attempt to belittle gravity of recent events can only make matters worse.



5
(5)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5272

(E 4897/7/93) To IRAQ.

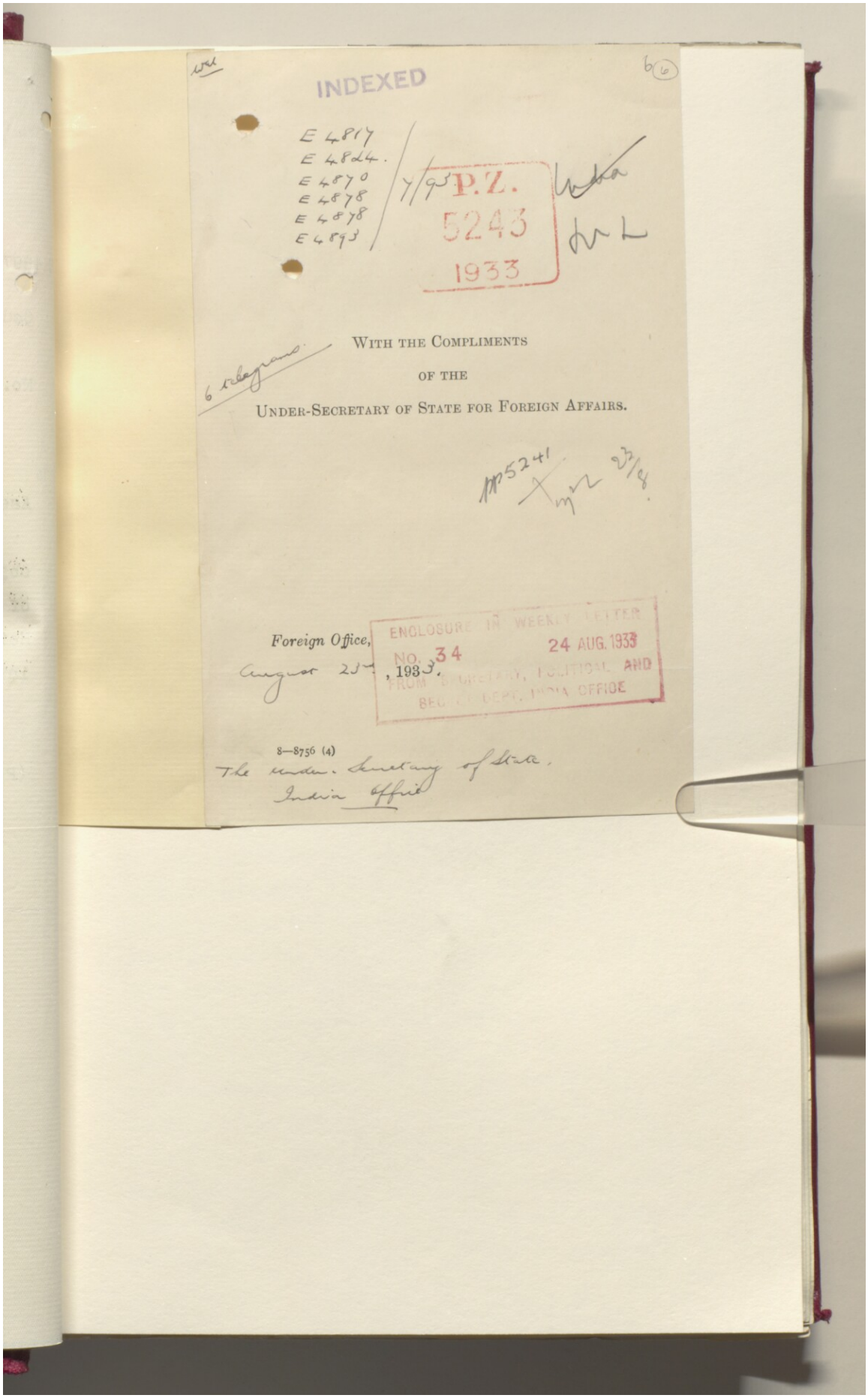
Code telegram to Sir F. Humphrys (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 23rd August, 1933. 10.30 p.m.
No. 230. (R).

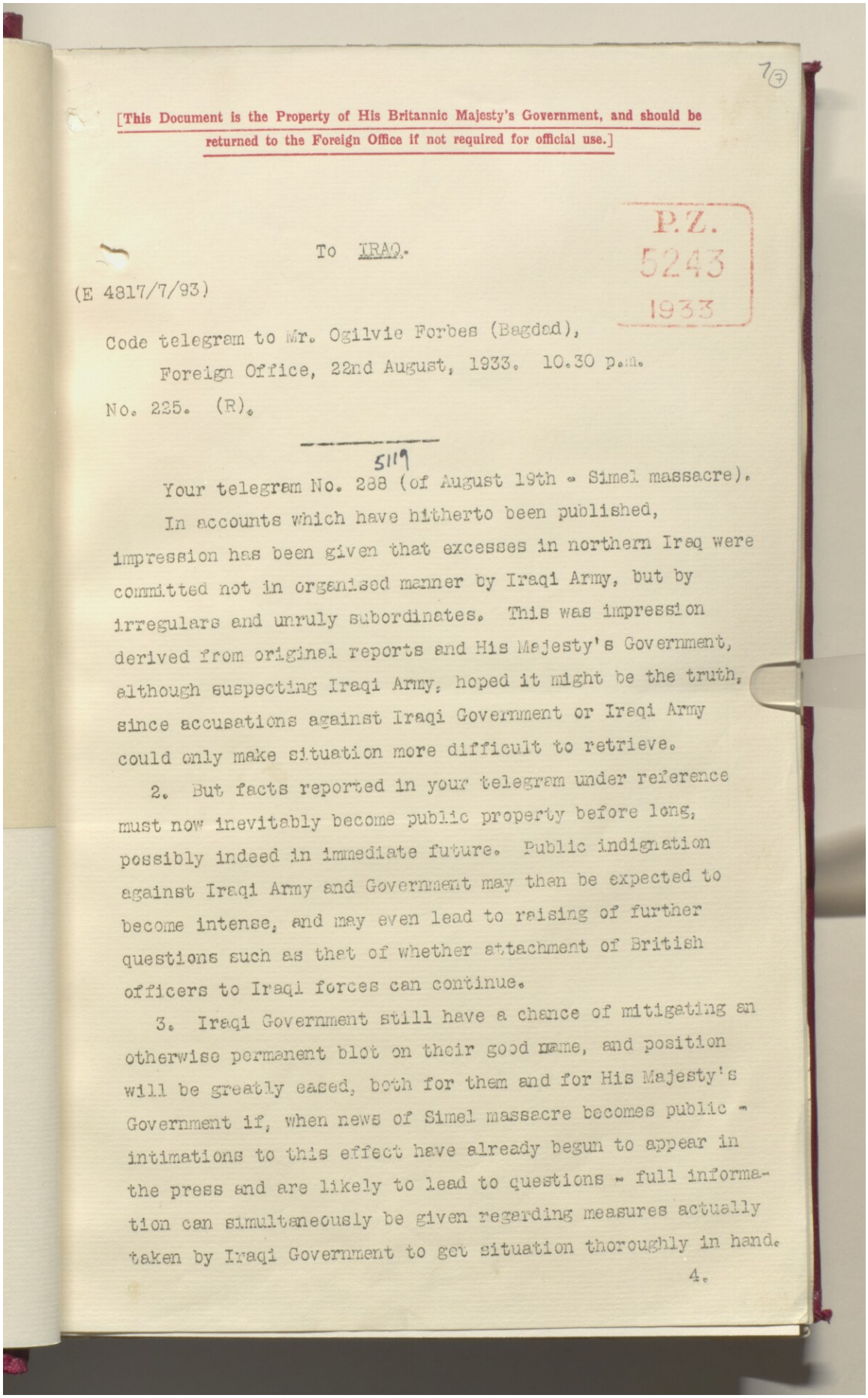
5270. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes' telegram No. 299 (of August 22nd. Assyrian crisis - removal of Lady Surma).

Provided High Commissioner for Palestine sees no objection, I agree to arrangements suggested for transport of party, on assumption that steamer goes direct from Haifa to Cyprus, thus avoiding possible complications at intermediate ports.

Not repeated to Cyprus.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 230, repeated to Jerusalem (Palestine) No. 188.


INDEXED
E 4817
E 4824.
E 4870
E 4878
E 4878
E 4893
P.Z.
5243
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 23
, 1933.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34
24 AUG. 1933
8—8756 (4)
The Under-Secretary of State,
India Office



7(7)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5243
1933

To IRAQ.

(E 4817/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 22nd August, 1933. 10.30 p.m.
No. 225. (R).

5119

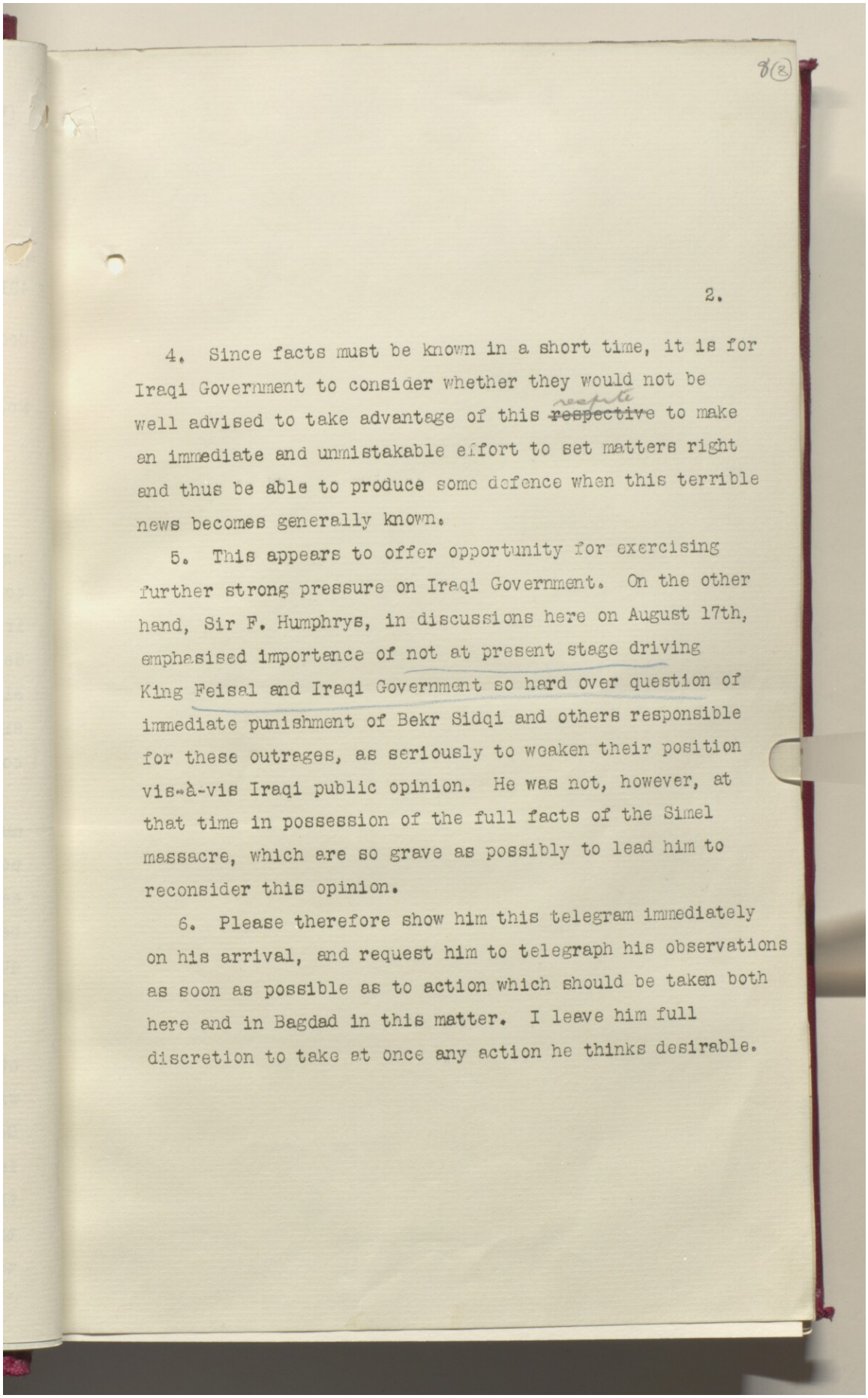
Your telegram No. 288 (of August 19th - Simel massacre).

In accounts which have hitherto been published, impression has been given that excesses in northern Iraq were committed not in organised manner by Iraqi Army, but by irregulars and unruly subordinates. This was impression derived from original reports and His Majesty's Government, although suspecting Iraqi Army, hoped it might be the truth, since accusations against Iraqi Government or Iraqi Army could only make situation more difficult to retrieve.

2. But facts reported in your telegram under reference must now inevitably become public property before long, possibly indeed in immediate future. Public indignation against Iraqi Army and Government may then be expected to become intense, and may even lead to raising of further questions such as that of whether attachment of British officers to Iraqi forces can continue.

3. Iraqi Government still have a chance of mitigating an otherwise permanent blot on their good name, and position will be greatly eased, both for them and for His Majesty's Government if, when news of Simel massacre becomes public - intimations to this effect have already begun to appear in the press and are likely to lead to questions - full information can simultaneously be given regarding measures actually taken by Iraqi Government to get situation thoroughly in hand.

4.

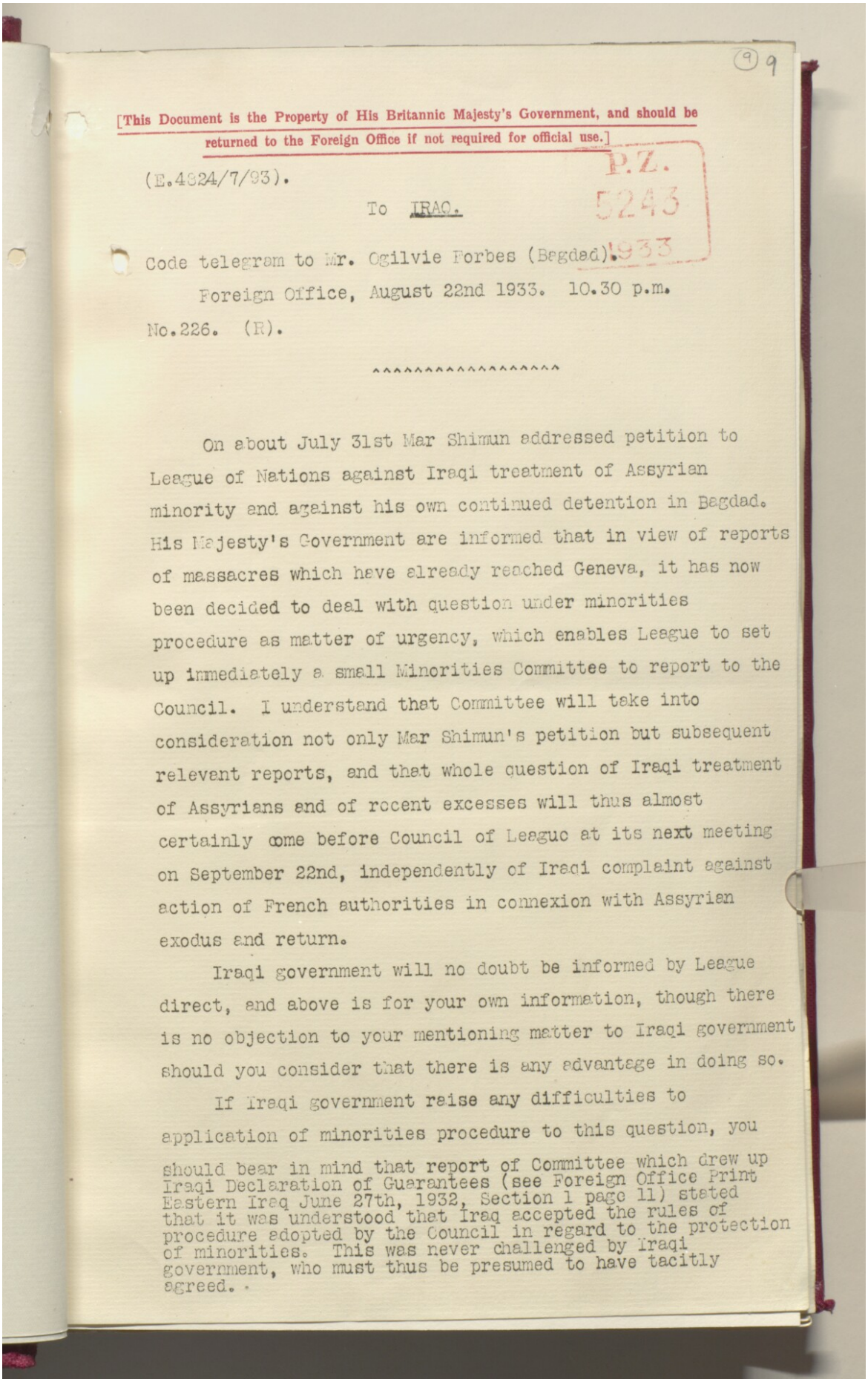


8(8)

4. Since facts must be known in a short time, it is for Iraqi Government to consider whether they would not be well advised to take advantage of this ~~respective~~ respite to make an immediate and unmistakable effort to set matters right and thus be able to produce some defence when this terrible news becomes generally known.

5. This appears to offer opportunity for exercising further strong pressure on Iraqi Government. On the other hand, Sir F. Humphrys, in discussions here on August 17th, emphasised importance of not at present stage driving King Feisal and Iraqi Government so hard over question of immediate punishment of Bekr Sidqi and others responsible for these outrages, as seriously to weaken their position vis-à-vis Iraqi public opinion. He was not, however, at that time in possession of the full facts of the Simel massacre, which are so grave as possibly to lead him to reconsider this opinion.

6. Please therefore show him this telegram immediately on his arrival, and request him to telegraph his observations as soon as possible as to action which should be taken both here and in Bagdad in this matter. I leave him full discretion to take at once any action he thinks desirable.



(9) 9

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5243 1933

(E.4824/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 22nd 1933. 10.30 p.m.

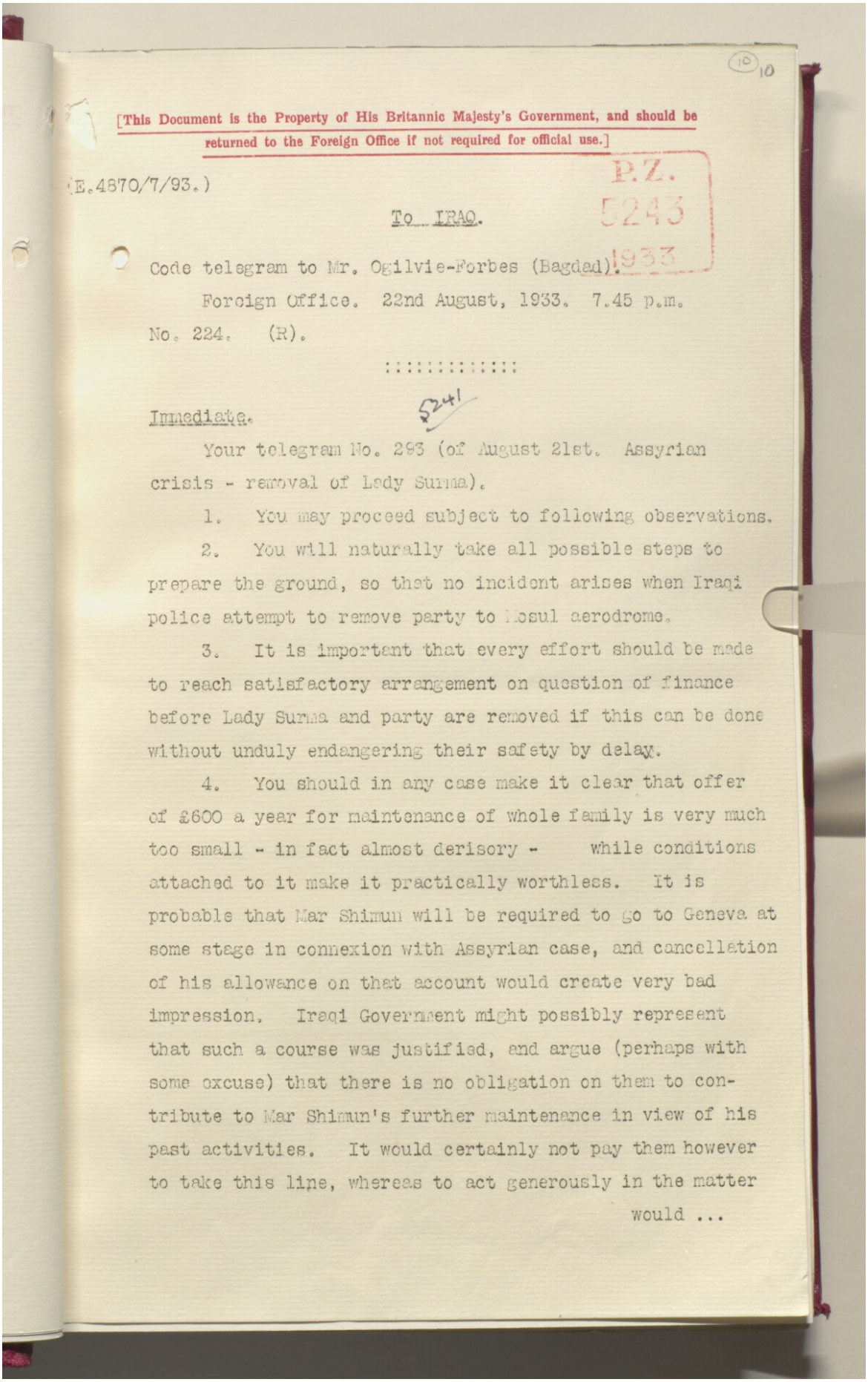
No.226. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

On about July 31st Mar Shimun addressed petition to League of Nations against Iraqi treatment of Assyrian minority and against his own continued detention in Bagdad. His Majesty's Government are informed that in view of reports of massacres which have already reached Geneva, it has now been decided to deal with question under minorities procedure as matter of urgency, which enables League to set up immediately a small Minorities Committee to report to the Council. I understand that Committee will take into consideration not only Mar Shimun's petition but subsequent relevant reports, and that whole question of Iraqi treatment of Assyrians and of recent excesses will thus almost certainly come before Council of League at its next meeting on September 22nd, independently of Iraqi complaint against action of French authorities in connexion with Assyrian exodus and return.

Iraqi government will no doubt be informed by League direct, and above is for your own information, though there is no objection to your mentioning matter to Iraqi government should you consider that there is any advantage in doing so.

If Iraqi government raise any difficulties to application of minorities procedure to this question, you should bear in mind that report of Committee which drew up Iraqi Declaration of Guarantees (see Foreign Office Print Eastern Iraq June 27th, 1932, Section 1 page 11) stated that it was understood that Iraq accepted the rules of procedure adopted by the Council in regard to the protection of minorities. This was never challenged by Iraqi government, who must thus be presumed to have tacitly agreed.



(10) 10

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5243 1933

(E.4870/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 22nd August, 1933. 7.45 p.m.

No. 224. (R).

::::::::::::::

5241

Immediate.

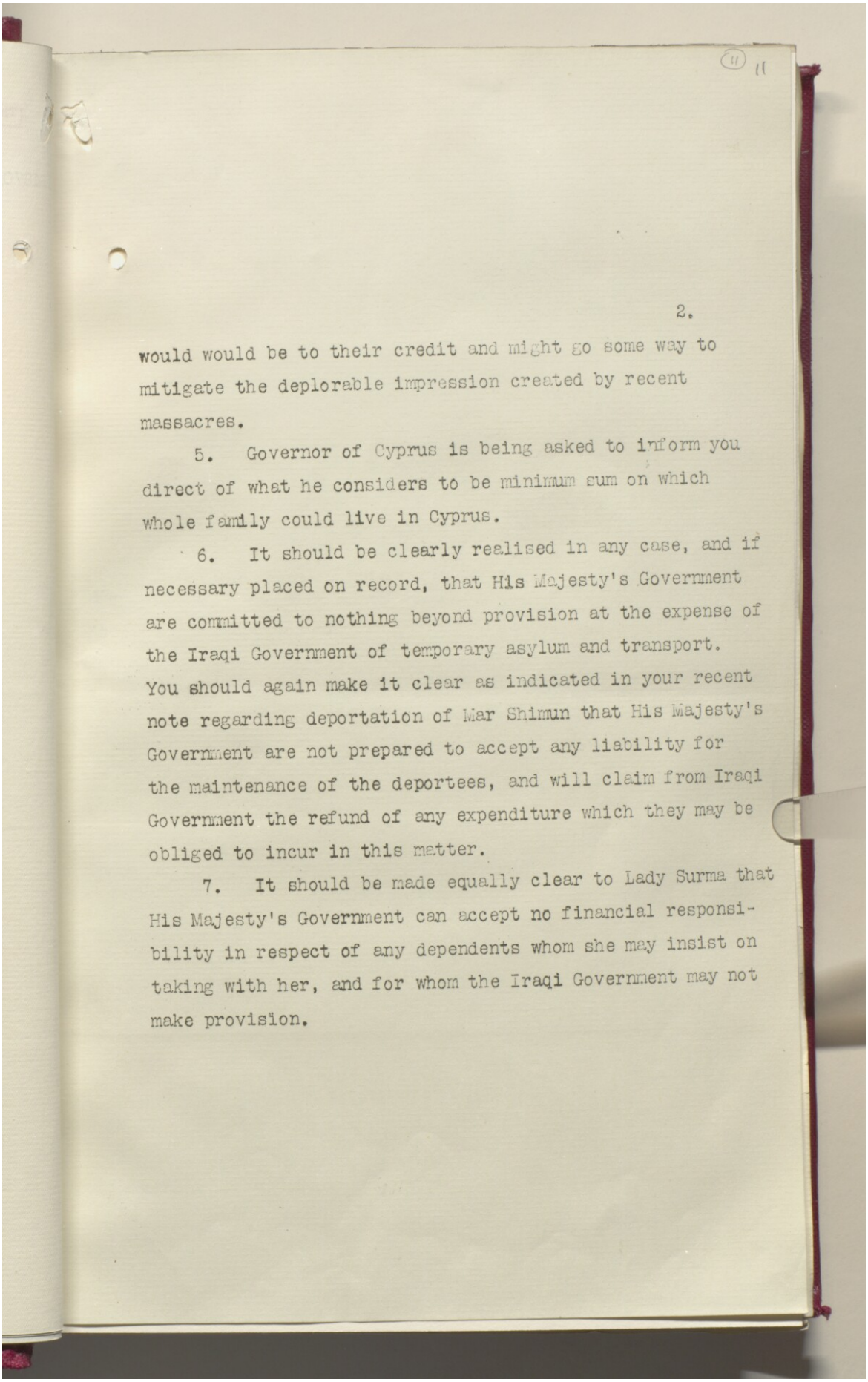
Your telegram No. 293 (of August 21st. Assyrian crisis - removal of Lady Surma).

1. You may proceed subject to following observations.

2. You will naturally take all possible steps to prepare the ground, so that no incident arises when Iraqi police attempt to remove party to Mosul aerodrome.

3. It is important that every effort should be made to reach satisfactory arrangement on question of finance before Lady Surma and party are removed if this can be done without unduly endangering their safety by delay.

4. You should in any case make it clear that offer of £600 a year for maintenance of whole family is very much too small - in fact almost derisory - while conditions attached to it make it practically worthless. It is probable that Mar Shimun will be required to go to Geneva at some stage in connexion with Assyrian case, and cancellation of his allowance on that account would create very bad impression. Iraqi Government might possibly represent that such a course was justified, and argue (perhaps with some excuse) that there is no obligation on them to contribute to Mar Shimun's further maintenance in view of his past activities. It would certainly not pay them however to take this line, whereas to act generously in the matter would ...



(11) 11

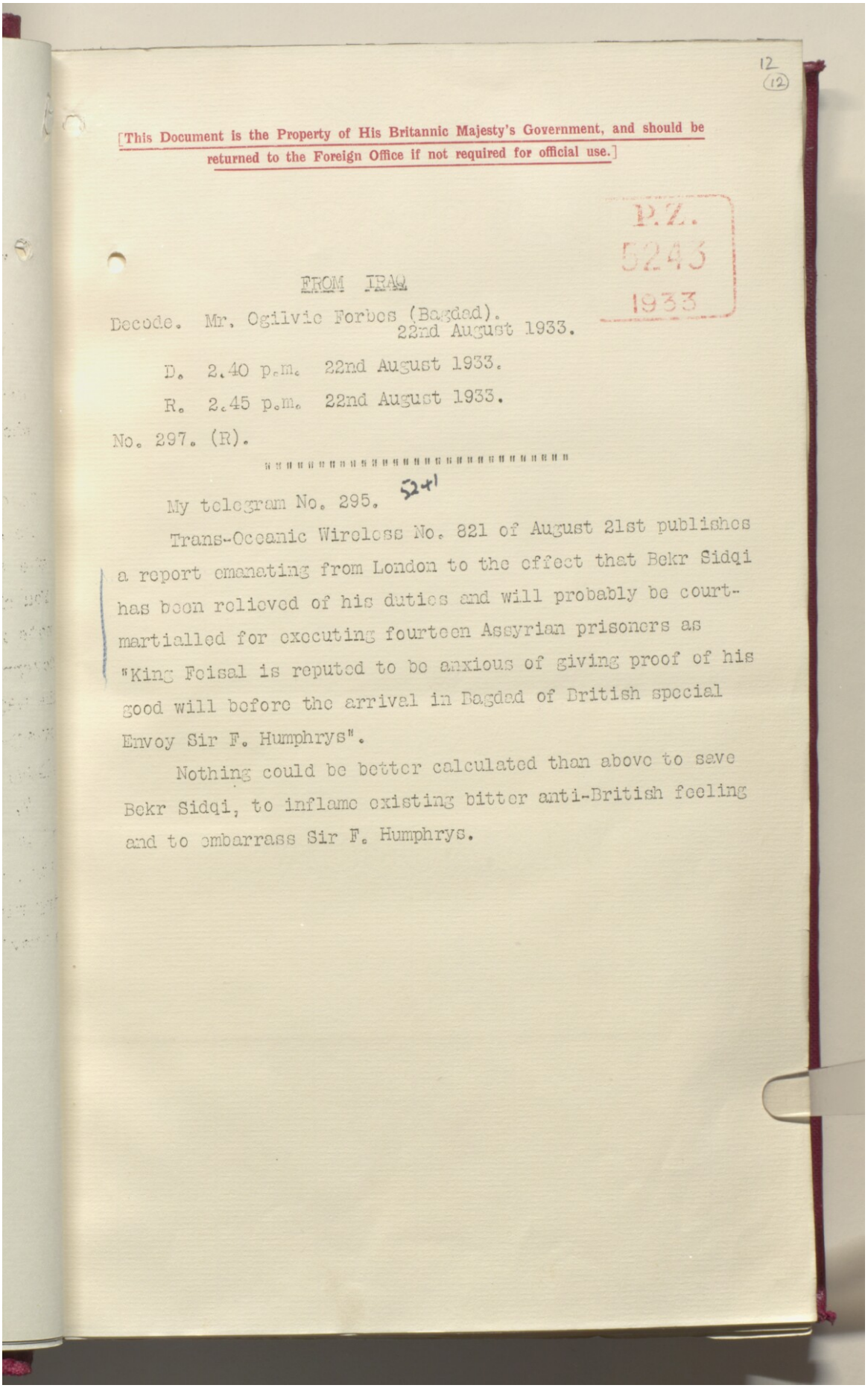
2.

would would be to their credit and might go some way to mitigate the deplorable impression created by recent massacres.

5. Governor of Cyprus is being asked to inform you direct of what he considers to be minimum sum on which whole family could live in Cyprus.

6. It should be clearly realised in any case, and if necessary placed on record, that His Majesty's Government are committed to nothing beyond provision at the expense of the Iraqi Government of temporary asylum and transport. You should again make it clear as indicated in your recent note regarding deportation of Mar Shimun that His Majesty's Government are not prepared to accept any liability for the maintenance of the deportees, and will claim from Iraqi Government the refund of any expenditure which they may be obliged to incur in this matter.

7. It should be made equally clear to Lady Surma that His Majesty's Government can accept no financial responsibility in respect of any dependents whom she may insist on taking with her, and for whom the Iraqi Government may not make provision.



12
(12)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5243
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
22nd August 1933.

D. 2.40 p.m. 22nd August 1933.

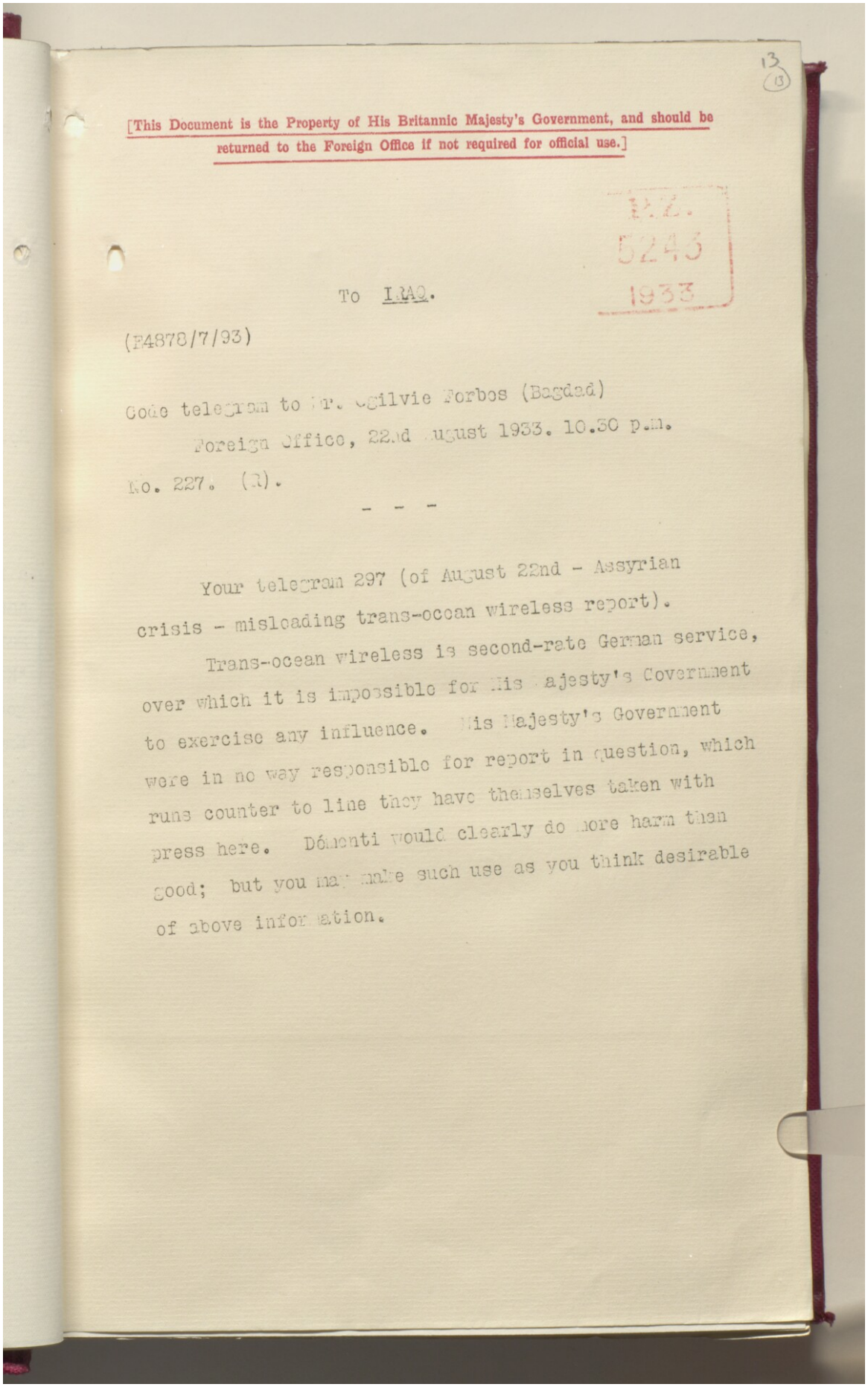
R. 2.45 p.m. 22nd August 1933.

No. 297. (R).

My telegram No. 295. 5241

Trans-Oceanic Wireless No. 821 of August 21st publishes a report emanating from London to the effect that Bekr Sidqi has been relieved of his duties and will probably be court-martialled for executing fourteen Assyrian prisoners as "King Feisal is reputed to be anxious of giving proof of his good will before the arrival in Bagdad of British special Envoy Sir F. Humphrys".

Nothing could be better calculated than above to save Bekr Sidqi, to inflame existing bitter anti-British feeling and to embarrass Sir F. Humphrys.



13
(13)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

E.Z.
5243
1933

To IRAQ.

(F4878/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)

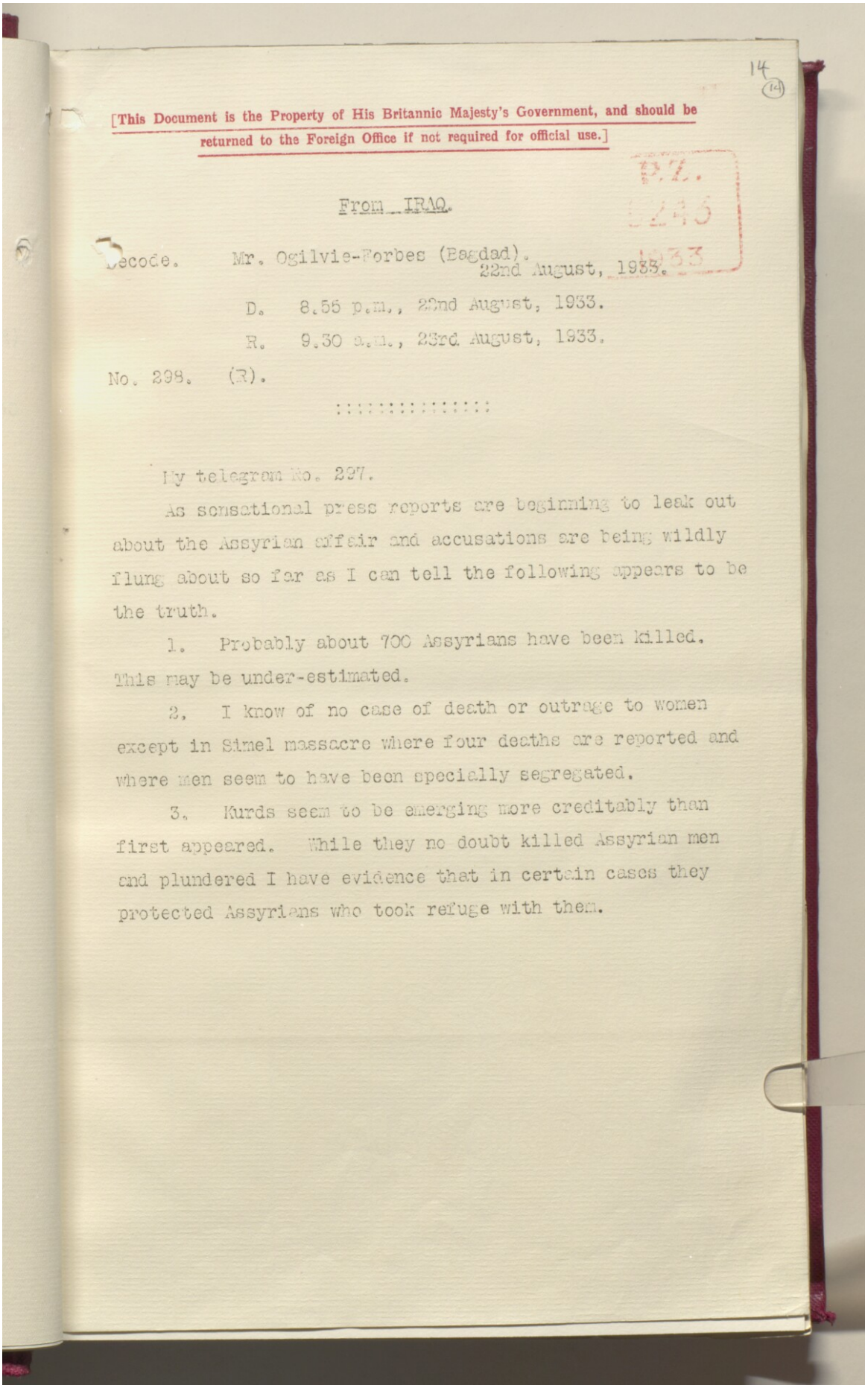
Foreign Office, 22nd August 1933. 10.30 p.m.

No. 227. (R).

- - -

Your telegram 297 (of August 22nd - Assyrian crisis - misleading trans-ocean wireless report).

Trans-ocean wireless is second-rate German service, over which it is impossible for His Majesty's Government to exercise any influence. His Majesty's Government were in no way responsible for report in question, which runs counter to line they have themselves taken with press here. Démenti would clearly do more harm than good; but you may make such use as you think desirable of above information.



14

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 245 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad). 22nd August, 1933.

D. 8.55 p.m., 22nd August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m., 23rd August, 1933.

No. 298. (R).

::::::::::::::

My telegram No. 297.

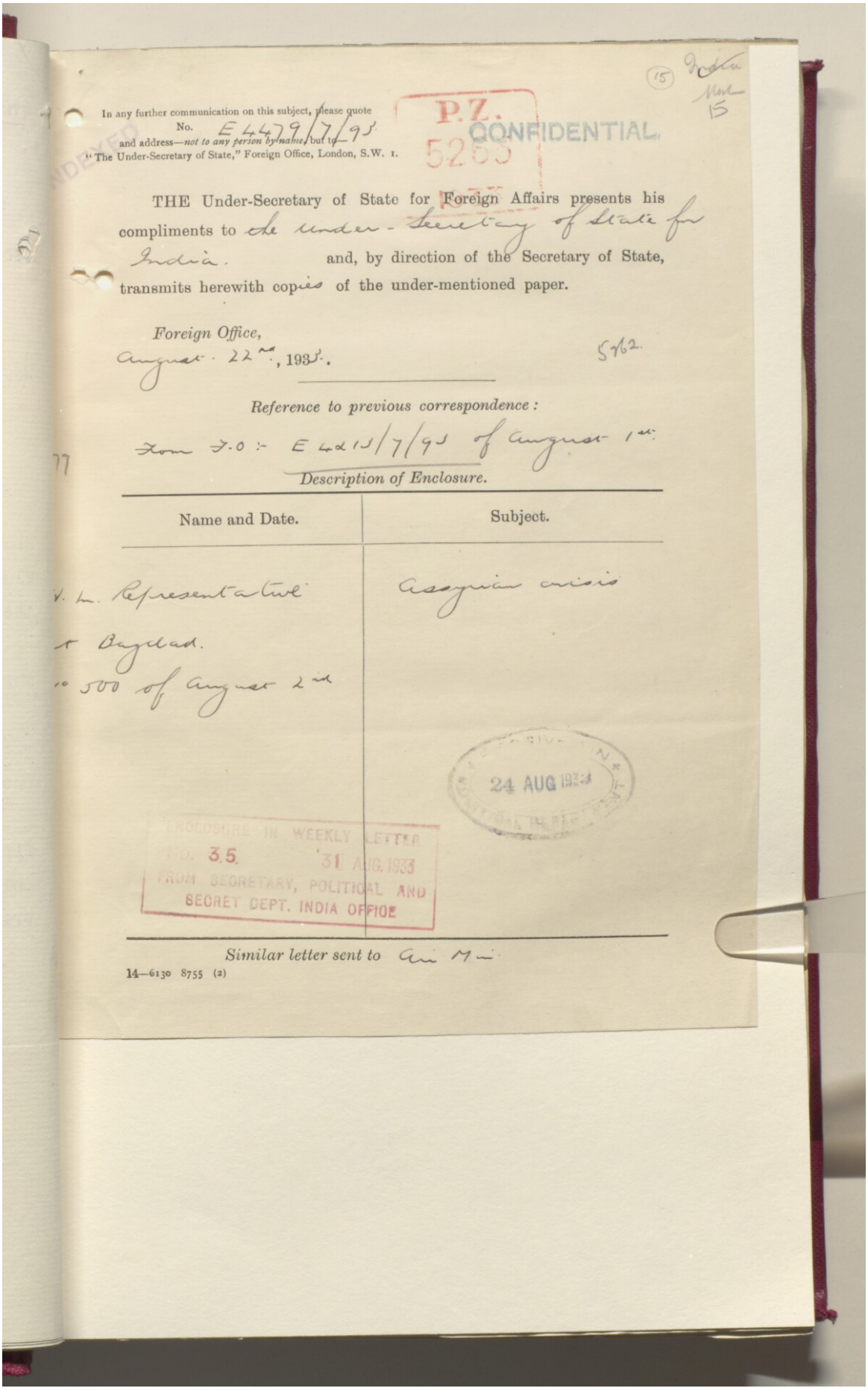
As sensational press reports are beginning to leak out about the Assyrian affair and accusations are being wildly flung about so far as I can tell the following appears to be the truth.

1. Probably about 700 Assyrians have been killed. This may be under-estimated.

2. I know of no case of death or outrage to women except in Simel massacre where four deaths are reported and where men seem to have been specially segregated.

3. Kurds seem to be emerging more creditably than first appeared. While they no doubt killed Assyrian men and plundered I have evidence that in certain cases they protected Assyrians who took refuge with them.

(15) India Mon 15



In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4479/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 5263

CONFIDENTIAL

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.

5262.

Reference to previous correspondence:

From F.O.:- E 4213/7/93 of August 1st.

Description of Enclosure.

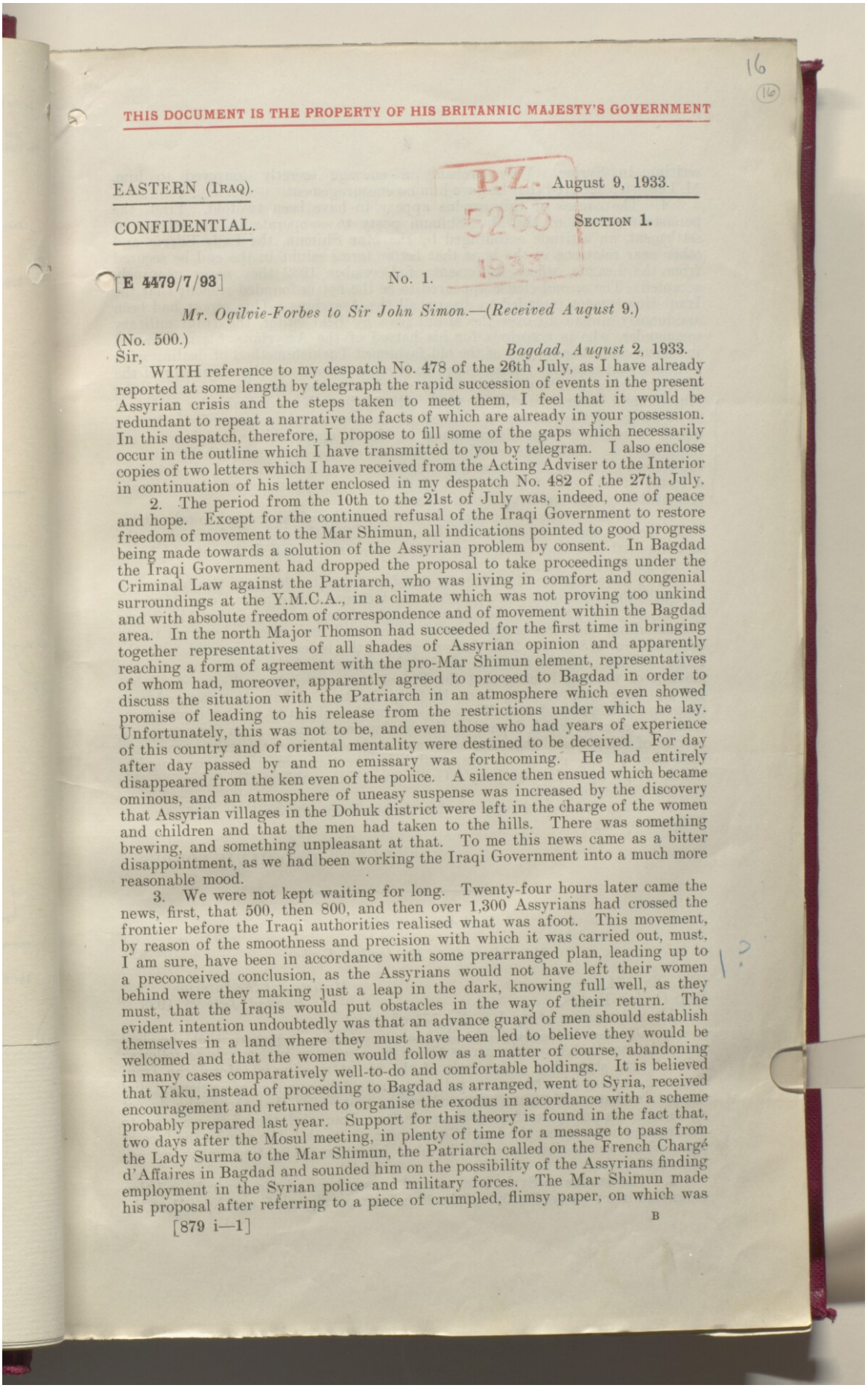
Name and Date.	Subject.
V. M. Representative at Bagdad. No 500 of August 2nd	Assyrian crisis

24 AUG 1933

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 35 31 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min.

14—6130 8755 (2)



16
(16)

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z. 5263 1933

EASTERN (IRAQ). August 9, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 4479/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 9.)

(No. 500.)

Sir, *Bagdad, August 2, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 478 of the 26th July, as I have already reported at some length by telegraph the rapid succession of events in the present Assyrian crisis and the steps taken to meet them, I feel that it would be redundant to repeat a narrative the facts of which are already in your possession. In this despatch, therefore, I propose to fill some of the gaps which necessarily occur in the outline which I have transmitted to you by telegram. I also enclose copies of two letters which I have received from the Acting Adviser to the Interior in continuation of his letter enclosed in my despatch No. 482 of the 27th July.

2. The period from the 10th to the 21st of July was, indeed, one of peace and hope. Except for the continued refusal of the Iraqi Government to restore freedom of movement to the Mar Shimun, all indications pointed to good progress being made towards a solution of the Assyrian problem by consent. In Bagdad the Iraqi Government had dropped the proposal to take proceedings under the Criminal Law against the Patriarch, who was living in comfort and congenial surroundings at the Y.M.C.A., in a climate which was not proving too unkind and with absolute freedom of correspondence and of movement within the Bagdad area. In the north Major Thomson had succeeded for the first time in bringing together representatives of all shades of Assyrian opinion and apparently reaching a form of agreement with the pro-Mar Shimun element, representatives of whom had, moreover, apparently agreed to proceed to Bagdad in order to discuss the situation with the Patriarch in an atmosphere which even showed promise of leading to his release from the restrictions under which he lay. Unfortunately, this was not to be, and even those who had years of experience of this country and of oriental mentality were destined to be deceived. For day after day passed by and no emissary was forthcoming. He had entirely disappeared from the ken even of the police. A silence then ensued which became ominous, and an atmosphere of uneasy suspense was increased by the discovery that Assyrian villages in the Dohuk district were left in the charge of the women and children and that the men had taken to the hills. There was something brewing, and something unpleasant at that. To me this news came as a bitter disappointment, as we had been working the Iraqi Government into a much more reasonable mood.

3. We were not kept waiting for long. Twenty-four hours later came the news, first, that 500, then 800, and then over 1,300 Assyrians had crossed the frontier before the Iraqi authorities realised what was afoot. This movement, by reason of the smoothness and precision with which it was carried out, must, I am sure, have been in accordance with some prearranged plan, leading up to a preconceived conclusion, as the Assyrians would not have left their women behind were they making just a leap in the dark, knowing full well, as they must, that the Iraqis would put obstacles in the way of their return. The evident intention undoubtedly was that an advance guard of men should establish themselves in a land where they must have been led to believe they would be welcomed and that the women would follow as a matter of course, abandoning in many cases comparatively well-to-do and comfortable holdings. It is believed that Yaku, instead of proceeding to Bagdad as arranged, went to Syria, received encouragement and returned to organise the exodus in accordance with a scheme probably prepared last year. Support for this theory is found in the fact that, two days after the Mosul meeting, in plenty of time for a message to pass from the Lady Surma to the Mar Shimun, the Patriarch called on the French Chargé d'Affaires in Bagdad and sounded him on the possibility of the Assyrians finding employment in the Syrian police and military forces. The Mar Shimun made his proposal after referring to a piece of crumpled, flimsy paper, on which was

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00002b

writing in Syriac. Very probably a message secretly conveyed to him. M. Lépissier declared that he gave him no encouragement.

4. The causes of this exodus appear to have been twofold. First, the persistent refusal of the Mar Shimun party to co-operate in the scheme of settlement, an attitude encouraged by the Mar Shimun, the Lady Surma and other near relations in the hope that better terms might in the end be secured from the League, whose settlement of December 1932 they never genuinely accepted. The second clause appeared to be the not unfounded rumour that the Iraqi Government intended to disarm all the Assyrians. This report had been assiduously spread all over the Mosul liwa by Bekr Sidqi, the Iraqi military commander, who is notorious for his hatred of the Assyrians, his unbalanced judgment and his advocacy of the old-fashioned Turkish method of dealing with a recalcitrant minority. Bekr Sidqi, be it remembered, was the originator of the stone-throwing incident of last May, which was the immediate cause of the Mar Shimun being invited to Bagdad. His Majesty King Feisal, who professed to be aware of the failings of this officer, on two occasions assured me that he would be removed from his command in Mosul, undertakings which were not implemented. There was certainly a witness on the first and probably also on the second occasion. If, therefore, there eventuates suffering and bloodshed as a result of any act of Bekr Sidqi, I desire to place on record that a grave responsibility rests on King Feisal personally.

5. The Assyrians of the Mar Shimun party therefore decided to take at his word the statement somewhat lightly made by the Mutessarif of Mosul at the meeting with the Assyrians, that if they were not satisfied they would be at liberty to leave the country.

6. I have described by telegram the steps taken by the Iraqi Government to deal with the exodus, the conversations which ensued between the Prime Minister and myself, the views of the Adviser to the Interior and of the Air Officer Commanding, and some suggestions of my own. I have also transmitted in my despatch No. 478 of the 26th July a copy of the letters I exchanged with the Prime Minister on the question of the disarmament of the Assyrians. At the moment of writing I learn that the French authorities have disarmed all but 150 and have removed them from the Iraqi frontier. I have just received your telegrams Nos. 149 and 150. These must form the subject of further communications, the terms of which depend on the developments arising from the impending arrival of King Feisal this afternoon, and so for the present I will say no more than that I fully realise the responsibilities, be they moral or more tangible, which weigh upon His Majesty's Government in moulding the future of this ancient Christian people.

7. I am sending a copy of this despatch by air mail the 3rd August. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

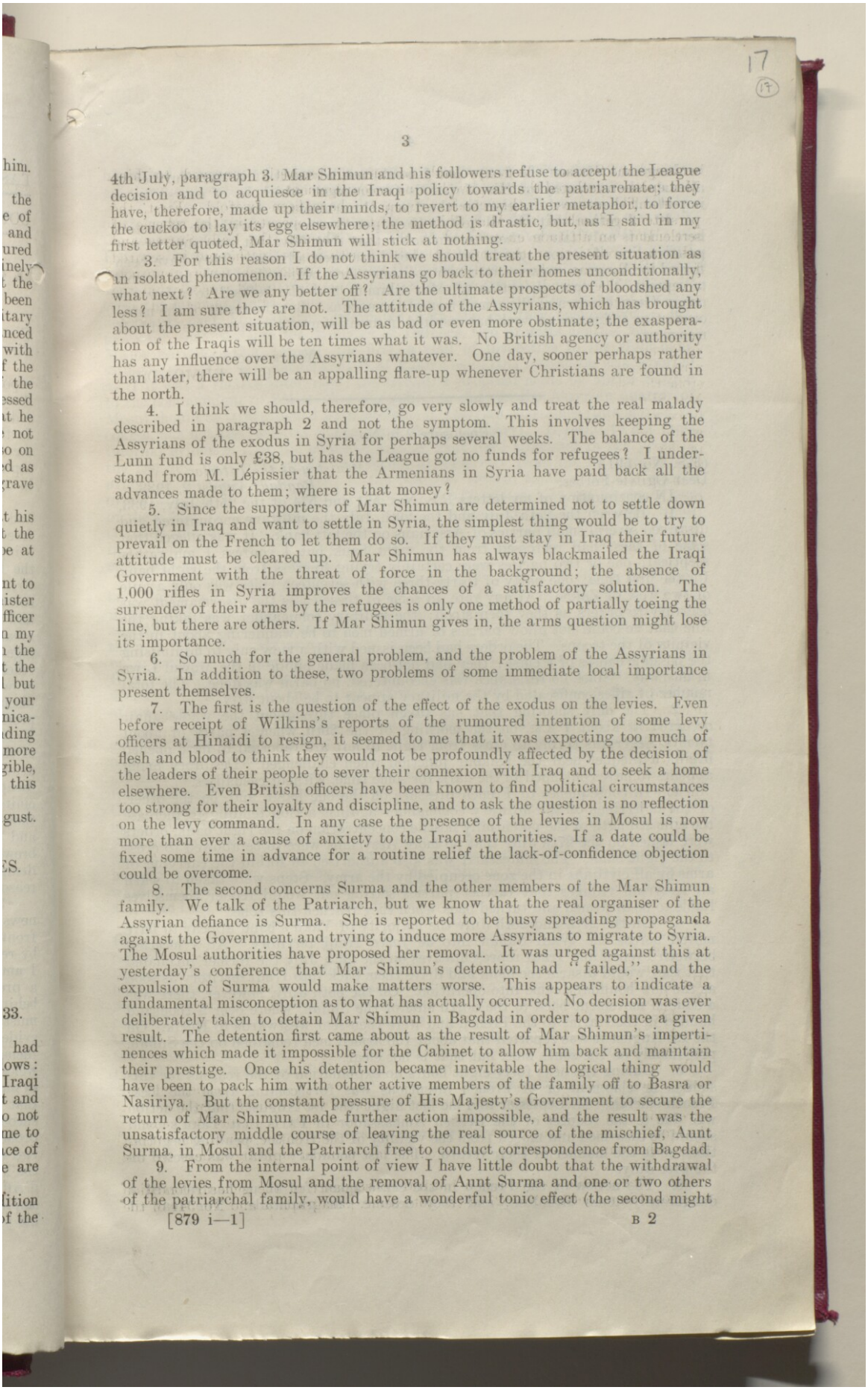
Mr. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

(P.S. No. 574.) *Ministry of the Interior,*
Dear Ogilvie-Forbes, *Bagdad, July* 25, 1933.

IN continuation of my P.S. No. 571 of to-day.

1. On the 24th July the kaïmakam, Zakho, reported that he had received from the Assyrians across the river a petition in English as follows: "We beg to state that as a result of the recent meeting at Mosul the Iraqi Government pointed out to us its policy regarding the question of settlement and the patriarchate. We were informed by the mutessarif that those who do not agree with his policy are free to emigrate from Iraq, and, therefore, we came to the frontier and request the Iraqi Government not to close the way in the face of those who want to join us. We have no intention of fighting unless we are made to."

2. The exodus to Syria is a natural consequence of the general condition diagnosed in my letters No. 527 of the 26th June, paragraph 5, and No. 541 of the



4th July, paragraph 3. Mar Shimun and his followers refuse to accept the League decision and to acquiesce in the Iraqi policy towards the patriarchate; they have, therefore, made up their minds, to revert to my earlier metaphor, to force the cuckoo to lay its egg elsewhere; the method is drastic, but, as I said in my first letter quoted, Mar Shimun will stick at nothing.

3. For this reason I do not think we should treat the present situation as an isolated phenomenon. If the Assyrians go back to their homes unconditionally, what next? Are we any better off? Are the ultimate prospects of bloodshed any less? I am sure they are not. The attitude of the Assyrians, which has brought about the present situation, will be as bad or even more obstinate; the exasperation of the Iraqis will be ten times what it was. No British agency or authority has any influence over the Assyrians whatever. One day, sooner perhaps rather than later, there will be an appalling flare-up whenever Christians are found in the north.

4. I think we should, therefore, go very slowly and treat the real malady described in paragraph 2 and not the symptom. This involves keeping the Assyrians of the exodus in Syria for perhaps several weeks. The balance of the Lunn fund is only £38, but has the League got no funds for refugees? I understand from M. Lépissier that the Armenians in Syria have paid back all the advances made to them; where is that money?

5. Since the supporters of Mar Shimun are determined not to settle down quietly in Iraq and want to settle in Syria, the simplest thing would be to try to prevail on the French to let them do so. If they must stay in Iraq their future attitude must be cleared up. Mar Shimun has always blackmailed the Iraqi Government with the threat of force in the background; the absence of 1,000 rifles in Syria improves the chances of a satisfactory solution. The surrender of their arms by the refugees is only one method of partially toeing the line, but there are others. If Mar Shimun gives in, the arms question might lose its importance.

6. So much for the general problem, and the problem of the Assyrians in Syria. In addition to these, two problems of some immediate local importance present themselves.

7. The first is the question of the effect of the exodus on the levies. Even before receipt of Wilkins's reports of the rumoured intention of some levy officers at Hinaidi to resign, it seemed to me that it was expecting too much of flesh and blood to think they would not be profoundly affected by the decision of the leaders of their people to sever their connexion with Iraq and to seek a home elsewhere. Even British officers have been known to find political circumstances too strong for their loyalty and discipline, and to ask the question is no reflection on the levy command. In any case the presence of the levies in Mosul is now more than ever a cause of anxiety to the Iraqi authorities. If a date could be fixed some time in advance for a routine relief the lack-of-confidence objection could be overcome.

8. The second concerns Surma and the other members of the Mar Shimun family. We talk of the Patriarch, but we know that the real organiser of the Assyrian defiance is Surma. She is reported to be busy spreading propaganda against the Government and trying to induce more Assyrians to migrate to Syria. The Mosul authorities have proposed her removal. It was urged against this at yesterday's conference that Mar Shimun's detention had "failed," and the expulsion of Surma would make matters worse. This appears to indicate a fundamental misconception as to what has actually occurred. No decision was ever deliberately taken to detain Mar Shimun in Bagdad in order to produce a given result. The detention first came about as the result of Mar Shimun's impertinences which made it impossible for the Cabinet to allow him back and maintain their prestige. Once his detention became inevitable the logical thing would have been to pack him with other active members of the family off to Basra or Nasiriya. But the constant pressure of His Majesty's Government to secure the return of Mar Shimun made further action impossible, and the result was the unsatisfactory middle course of leaving the real source of the mischief, Aunt Surma, in Mosul and the Patriarch free to conduct correspondence from Bagdad.

9. From the internal point of view I have little doubt that the withdrawal of the levies from Mosul and the removal of Aunt Surma and one or two others of the patriarchal family, would have a wonderful tonic effect (the second might

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00002d

be dangerous without the first); but I would not advise it if it were further to alienate the sympathy of His Majesty's Government, which is, of course, more important than anything else for the Iraqi Government.

10. I gather that His Majesty's Government are angry with the Ministers here. It is only fair to them to remember that they have not persisted in any positive line of action against which they have been advised. They have been forced by Assyrian vagaries into two positions, from which they have felt unable to retreat, the open detention of Mar Shimun and the refusal to allow the unconditional return of the armed men of the exodus. But the result of the many conflicting influences at work has resulted in unsatisfactory compromises and half measures.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

(P.S. No. 591.) *Ministry of the Interior,*
Dear Ogilvie-Forbes, *Bagdad, August* 2, 1933.

IN continuation of my letters P.S. Nos. 571 and 574 of the 25th July, 1933.

1. Between the 25th July and the 29th July the military encountered and disarmed several small parties of Assyrians on the left bank. It was alleged that some of these had recrossed from the right bank, but I confess I am rather sceptical; one or two parties were certainly trying to cross from the right bank for the first time; one party of thirty-three with seventeen rifles was only a mile or two west of Zakho. At any rate, in some of these cases the disarmament was contrary to orders as they then stood; the military commander was taking the line that he could not allow parties of armed men to be wandering about in the vicinity of the troops. The orders had been issued with a view only to minimising the possible causes of a clash; they had not been made public in the Mowul Liwa in any way. Since no resistance was encountered, no harm was done. The total number of rifles confiscated by the military appear to be about fifty.

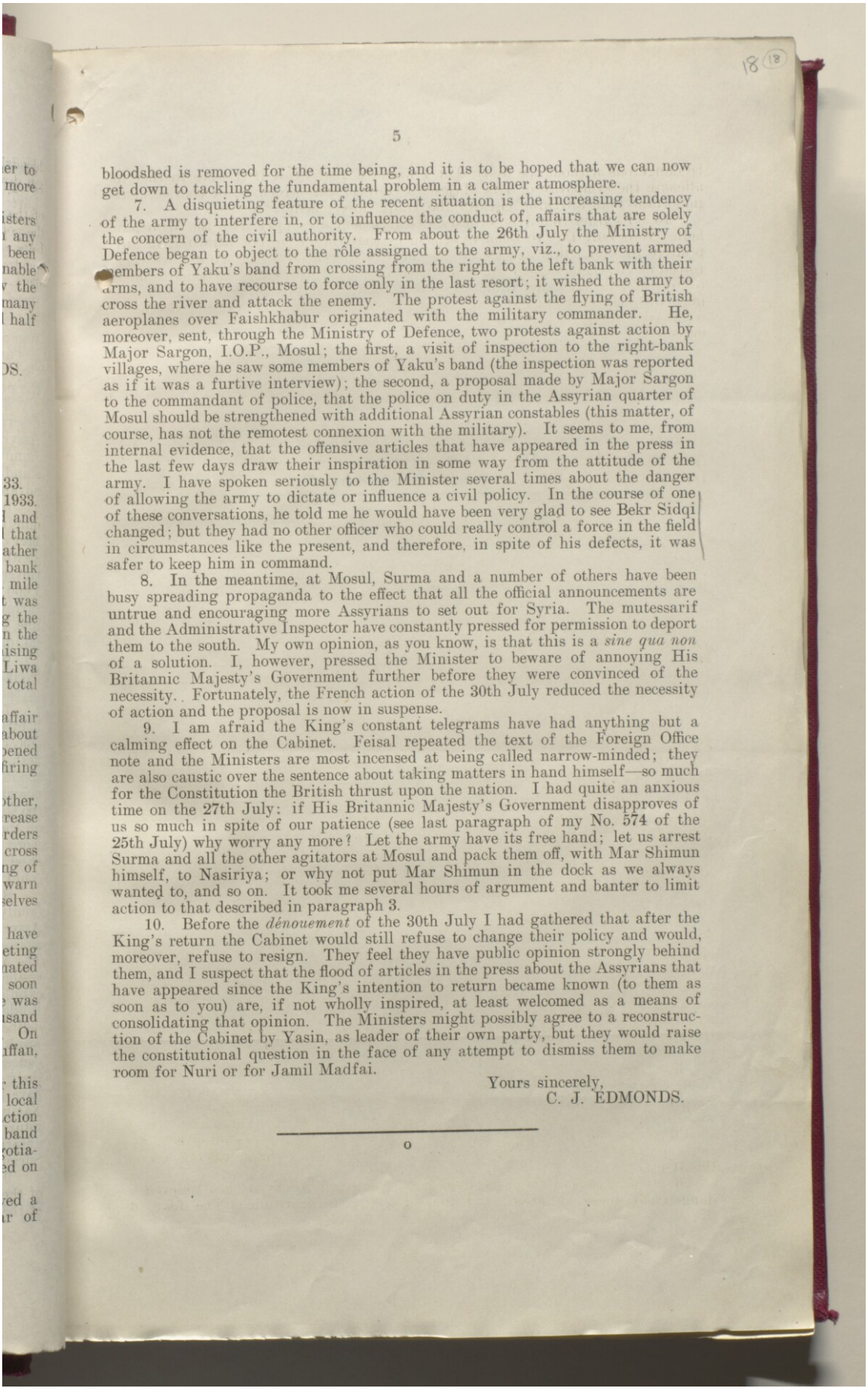
2. The only shooting that has taken place throughout the whole affair occurred at about 1 A.M. on the morning of the 30th, when a party of about twenty Assyrians trying to cross from right to left are reported to have opened fire on a picquet near the Khabur junction when challenged. Desultory firing appears to have continued in the dark for some time, without casualties.

3. In consequence of French pressure on the one hand, and, on the other, of the objections of the military commander against action tending to increase the rifle strength of the potentially hostile concentration on the right bank, orders were issued on the 27th July that no more Assyrians were to be allowed to cross to the right bank. The mutessarif was also authorised to forbid the carrying of arms by all civilians in the zone occupied by the army. Steps were taken to warn all Assyrian villages that further parties setting out would render themselves liable to be disarmed and turned back when they reached this zone.

4. On the 27th and 28th July the majority of Yaku's band appear to have moved across the Wadi Suffan into *de facto* Iraqi territory. At a meeting between French and Iraqi representatives on the 29th July the former intimated that they would disarm the band and drive them back into Iraqi territory as soon as the new boundary came into operation. On the 30th July, however, there was a sudden movement back to the north side of the Suffan, where over a thousand handed in their arms to the French and were then sent westwards to Herik. On the 1st August it was reported that about 150 armed men remained on the Suffan, presumably on the south side, but that is not clear.

5. During the next forty-eight hours no explanation of the reasons for this sudden development or of French intentions was forthcoming from the local French officials. M. Lépissier told me last night (the 1st August) that the action was due to the request of the British Ambassador in Paris that Yaku's band should be disarmed and moved from the vicinity of the frontier, pending negotiations as to the manner of their return. The last boundary pillar was erected on the 31st July.

6. The action of the French in the sense asked for by us has relieved a dangerously tense situation, and they deserve our gratitude. The fear of



bloodshed is removed for the time being, and it is to be hoped that we can now get down to tackling the fundamental problem in a calmer atmosphere.

7. A disquieting feature of the recent situation is the increasing tendency of the army to interfere in, or to influence the conduct of, affairs that are solely the concern of the civil authority. From about the 26th July the Ministry of Defence began to object to the rôle assigned to the army, viz., to prevent armed members of Yaku's band from crossing from the right to the left bank with their arms, and to have recourse to force only in the last resort; it wished the army to cross the river and attack the enemy. The protest against the flying of British aeroplanes over Faishkhabur originated with the military commander. He, moreover, sent, through the Ministry of Defence, two protests against action by Major Sargon, I.O.P., Mosul; the first, a visit of inspection to the right-bank villages, where he saw some members of Yaku's band (the inspection was reported as if it was a furtive interview); the second, a proposal made by Major Sargon to the commandant of police, that the police on duty in the Assyrian quarter of Mosul should be strengthened with additional Assyrian constables (this matter, of course, has not the remotest connexion with the military). It seems to me, from internal evidence, that the offensive articles that have appeared in the press in the last few days draw their inspiration in some way from the attitude of the army. I have spoken seriously to the Minister several times about the danger of allowing the army to dictate or influence a civil policy. In the course of one of these conversations, he told me he would have been very glad to see Bekr Sidqi changed; but they had no other officer who could really control a force in the field in circumstances like the present, and therefore, in spite of his defects, it was safer to keep him in command.

8. In the meantime, at Mosul, Surma and a number of others have been busy spreading propaganda to the effect that all the official announcements are untrue and encouraging more Assyrians to set out for Syria. The mutessarif and the Administrative Inspector have constantly pressed for permission to deport them to the south. My own opinion, as you know, is that this is a *sine qua non* of a solution. I, however, pressed the Minister to beware of annoying His Britannic Majesty's Government further before they were convinced of the necessity. Fortunately, the French action of the 30th July reduced the necessity of action and the proposal is now in suspense.

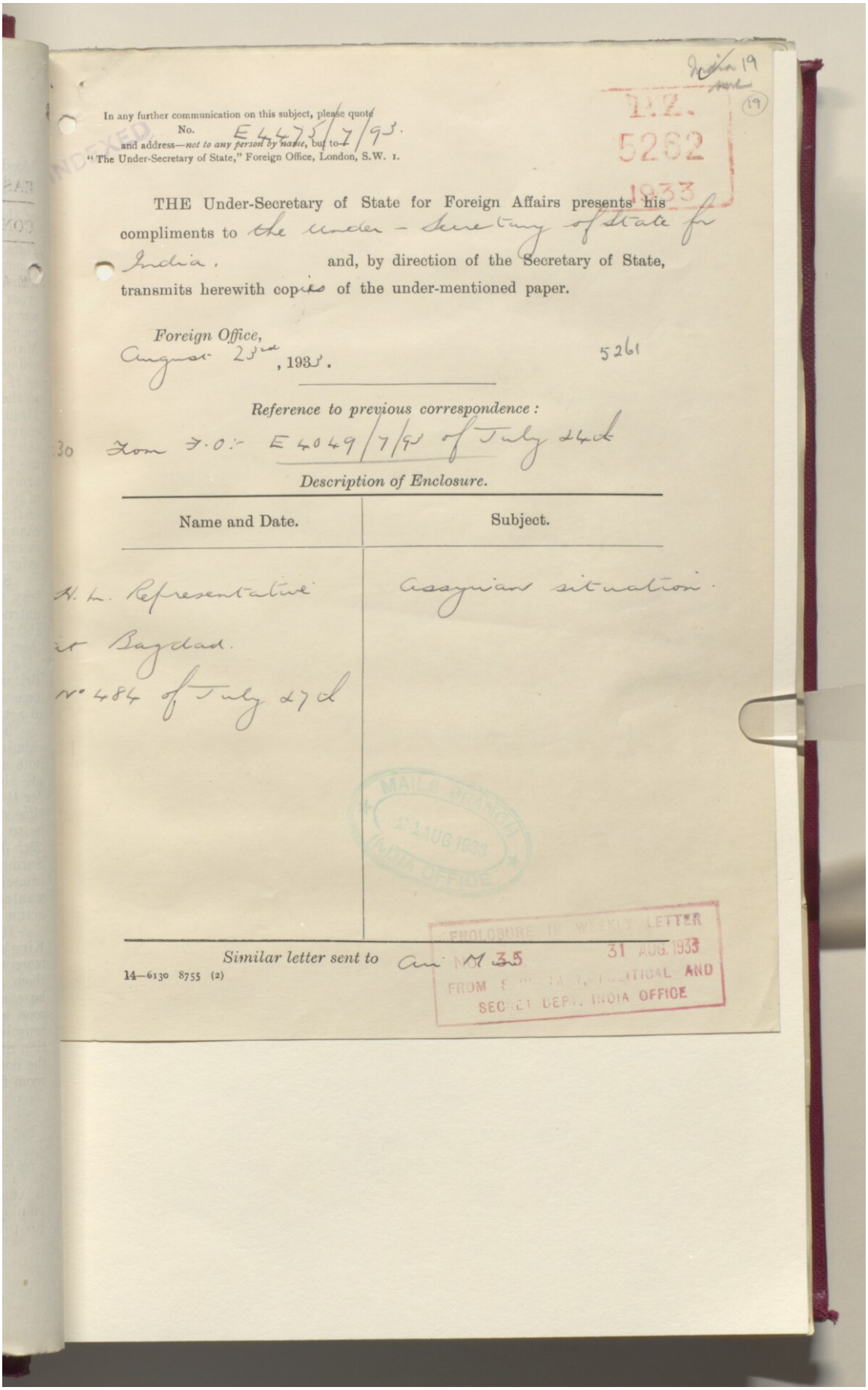
9. I am afraid the King's constant telegrams have had anything but a calming effect on the Cabinet. Feisal repeated the text of the Foreign Office note and the Ministers are most incensed at being called narrow-minded; they are also caustic over the sentence about taking matters in hand himself—so much for the Constitution the British thrust upon the nation. I had quite an anxious time on the 27th July: if His Britannic Majesty's Government disapproves of us so much in spite of our patience (see last paragraph of my No. 574 of the 25th July) why worry any more? Let the army have its free hand; let us arrest Surma and all the other agitators at Mosul and pack them off, with Mar Shimun himself, to Nasiriya; or why not put Mar Shimun in the dock as we always wanted to, and so on. It took me several hours of argument and banter to limit action to that described in paragraph 3.

10. Before the *dénouement* of the 30th July I had gathered that after the King's return the Cabinet would still refuse to change their policy and would, moreover, refuse to resign. They feel they have public opinion strongly behind them, and I suspect that the flood of articles in the press about the Assyrians that have appeared since the King's intention to return became known (to them as soon as to you) are, if not wholly inspired, at least welcomed as a means of consolidating that opinion. The Ministers might possibly agree to a reconstruction of the Cabinet by Yasin, as leader of their own party, but they would raise the constitutional question in the face of any attempt to dismiss them to make room for Nuri or for Jamil Madfai.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

---

o



In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4475/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

INDEXED

I.O.L. 5262 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 23rd, 1933.

5261

Reference to previous correspondence:
30 from F.O.:- E 4049/7/93 of July 24th

Description of Enclosure.

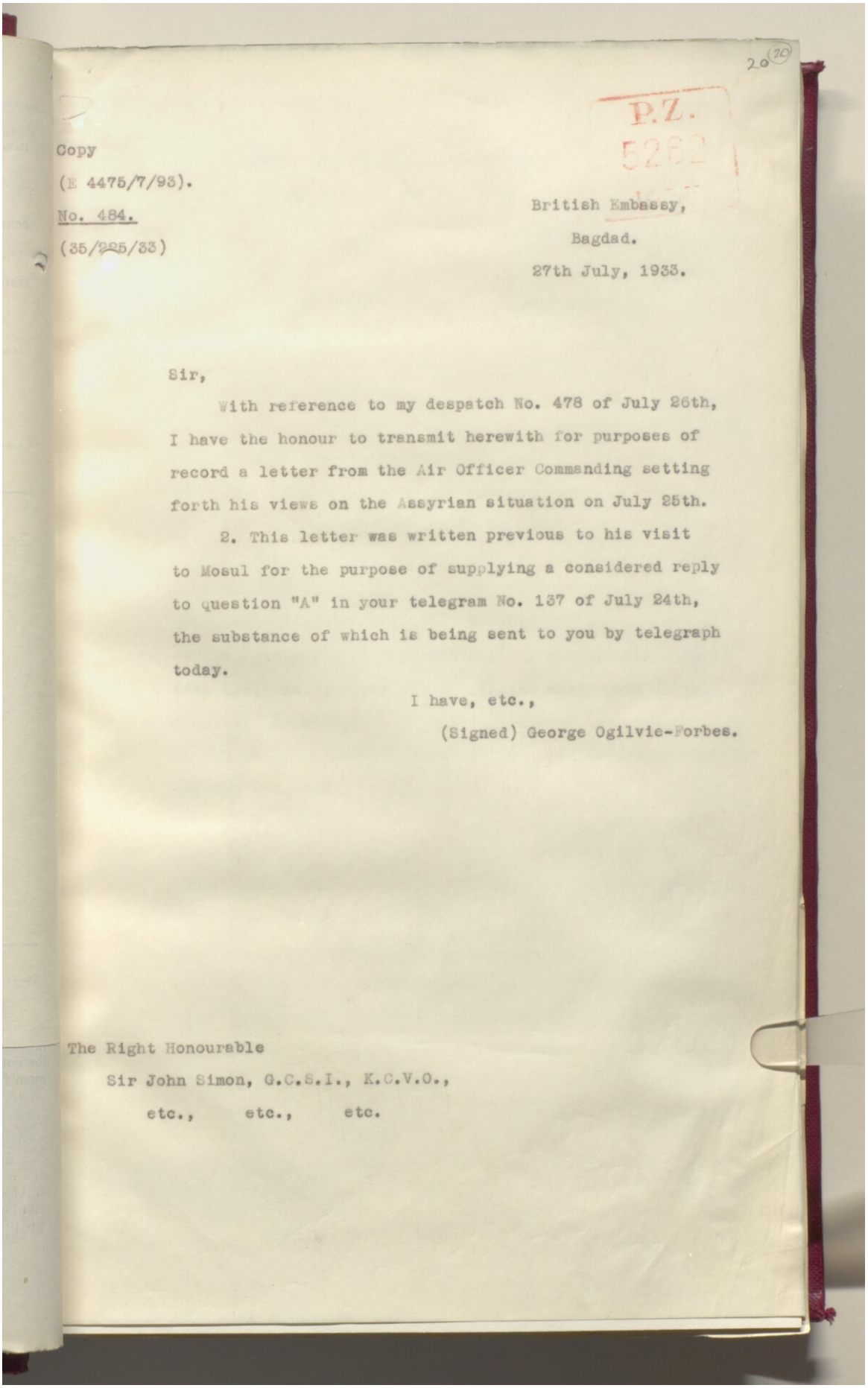
Name and Date.	Subject.
H. M. Representative at Baghdad. No. 484 of July 27th	Assyrian situation.

MAILS BRANCH 21 AUG 1933 INDIA OFFICE

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER 31 AUG. 1933 FROM POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Am. M 35

14—6130 8755 (2)



20 (20)

P.Z.
5262

Copy
(E 4475/7/93).
No. 484.
(35/225/33)

British Embassy,
Bagdad.
27th July, 1933.

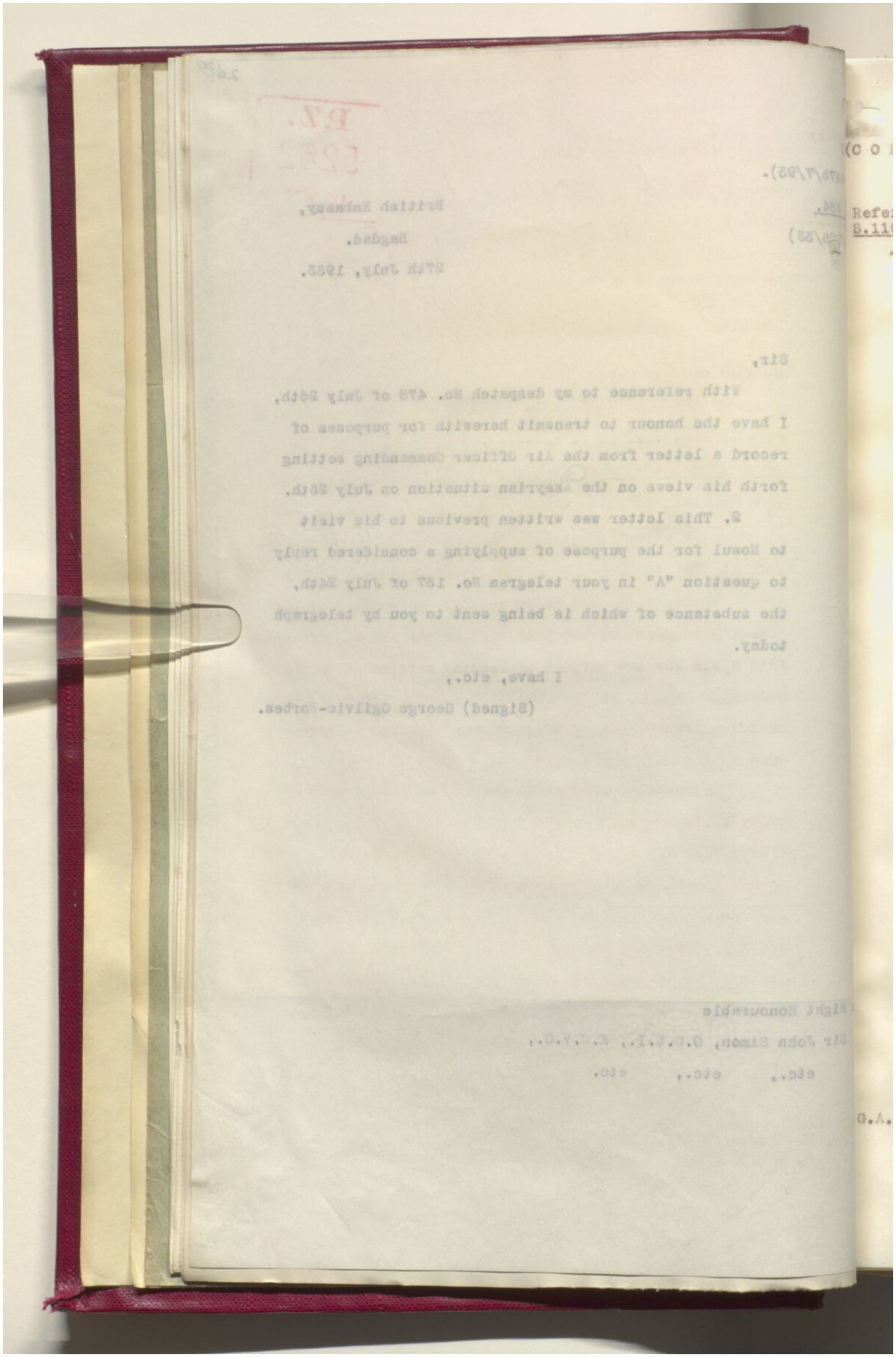
Sir,

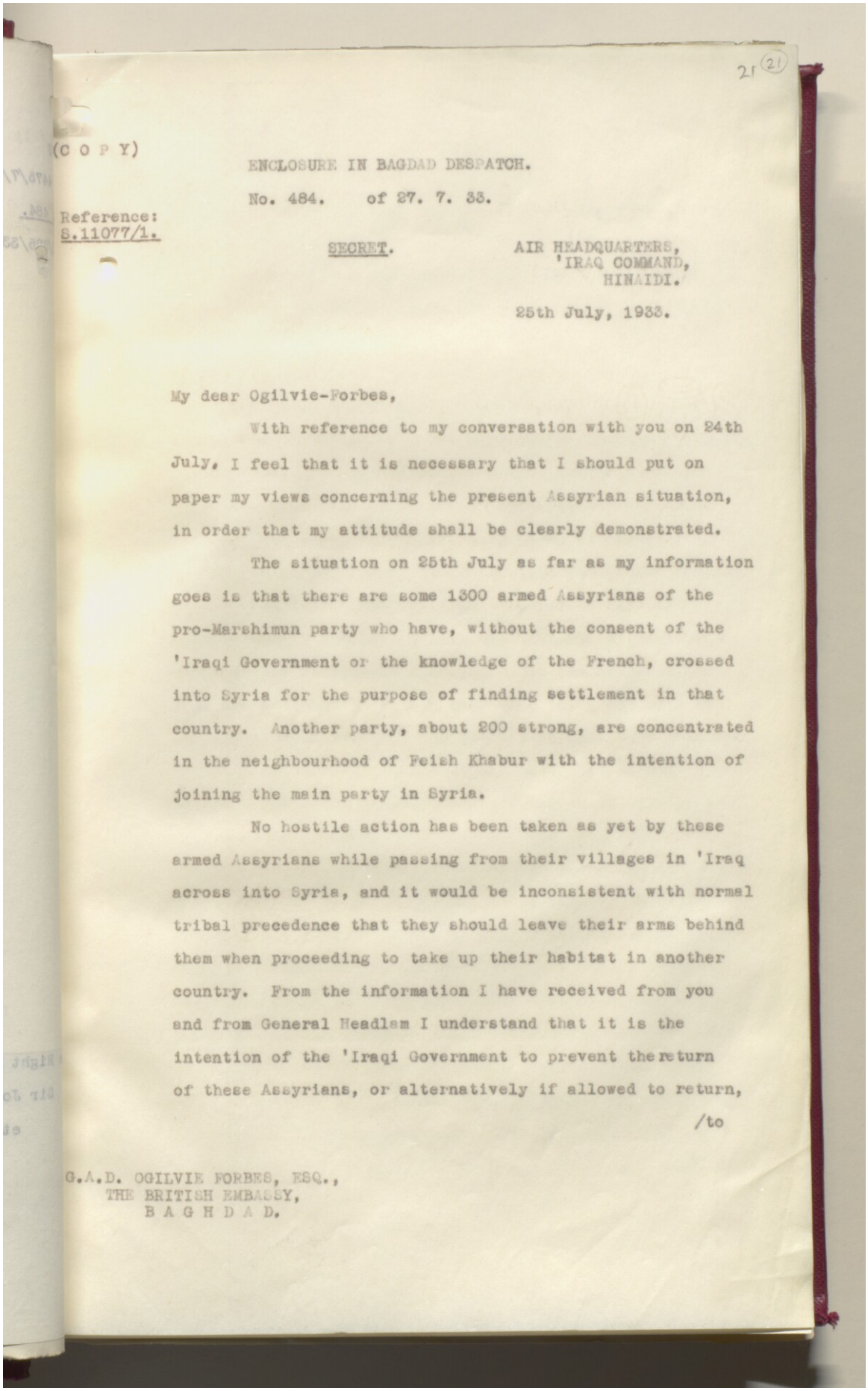
With reference to my despatch No. 478 of July 26th, I have the honour to transmit herewith for purposes of record a letter from the Air Officer Commanding setting forth his views on the Assyrian situation on July 25th.

2. This letter was written previous to his visit to Mosul for the purpose of supplying a considered reply to question "A" in your telegram No. 137 of July 24th, the substance of which is being sent to you by telegraph today.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) George Ogilvie-Forbes.

The Right Honourable
Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.





21 (21)

(C O P Y)

ENCLOSURE IN BAGDAD DESPATCH.

No. 484. of 27. 7. 33.

Reference:
S.11077/1.

SECRET.

AIR HEADQUARTERS,
'IRAQ COMMAND,
HINAIDI.

25th July, 1933.

My dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

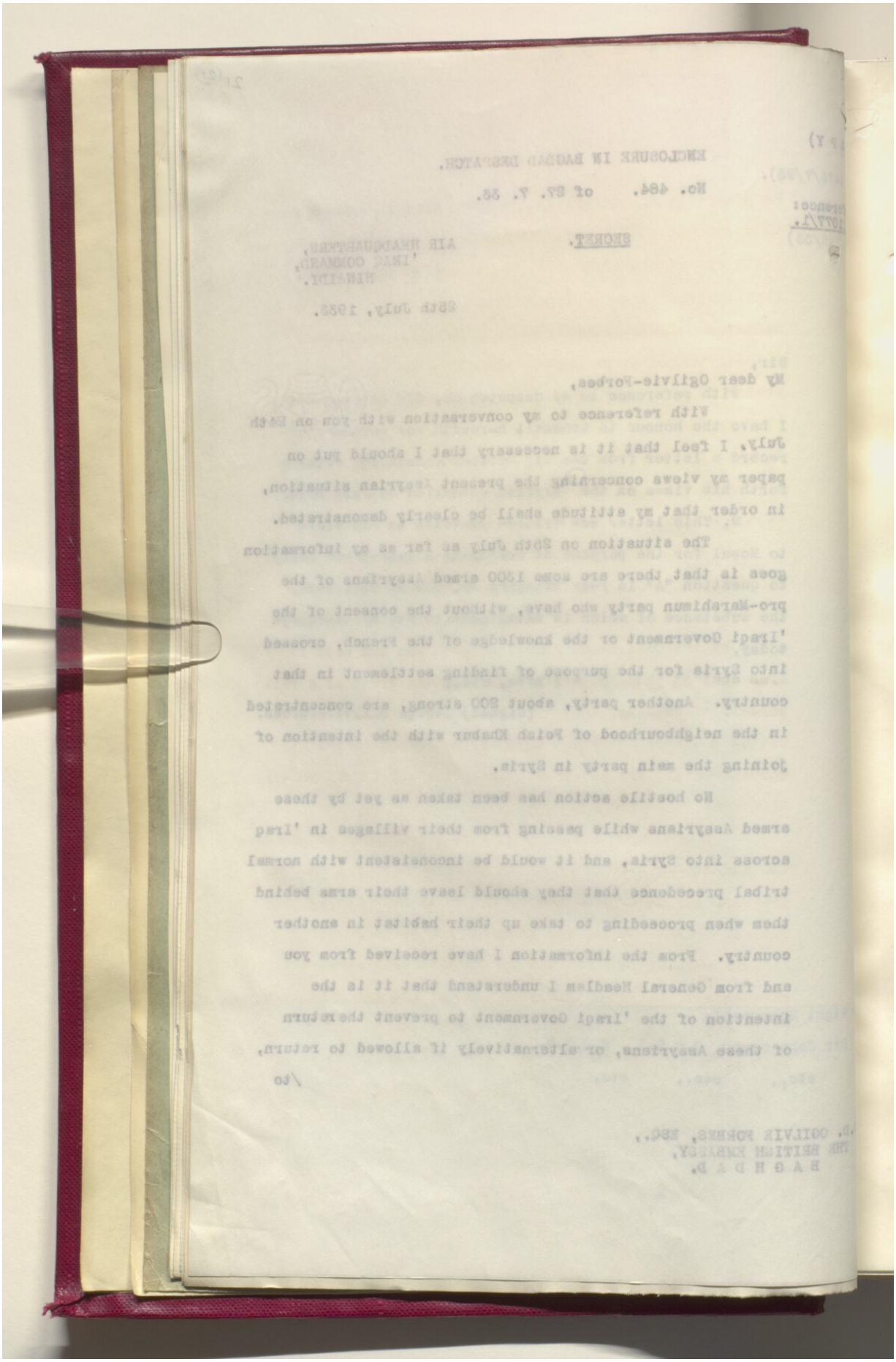
With reference to my conversation with you on 24th July, I feel that it is necessary that I should put on paper my views concerning the present Assyrian situation, in order that my attitude shall be clearly demonstrated.

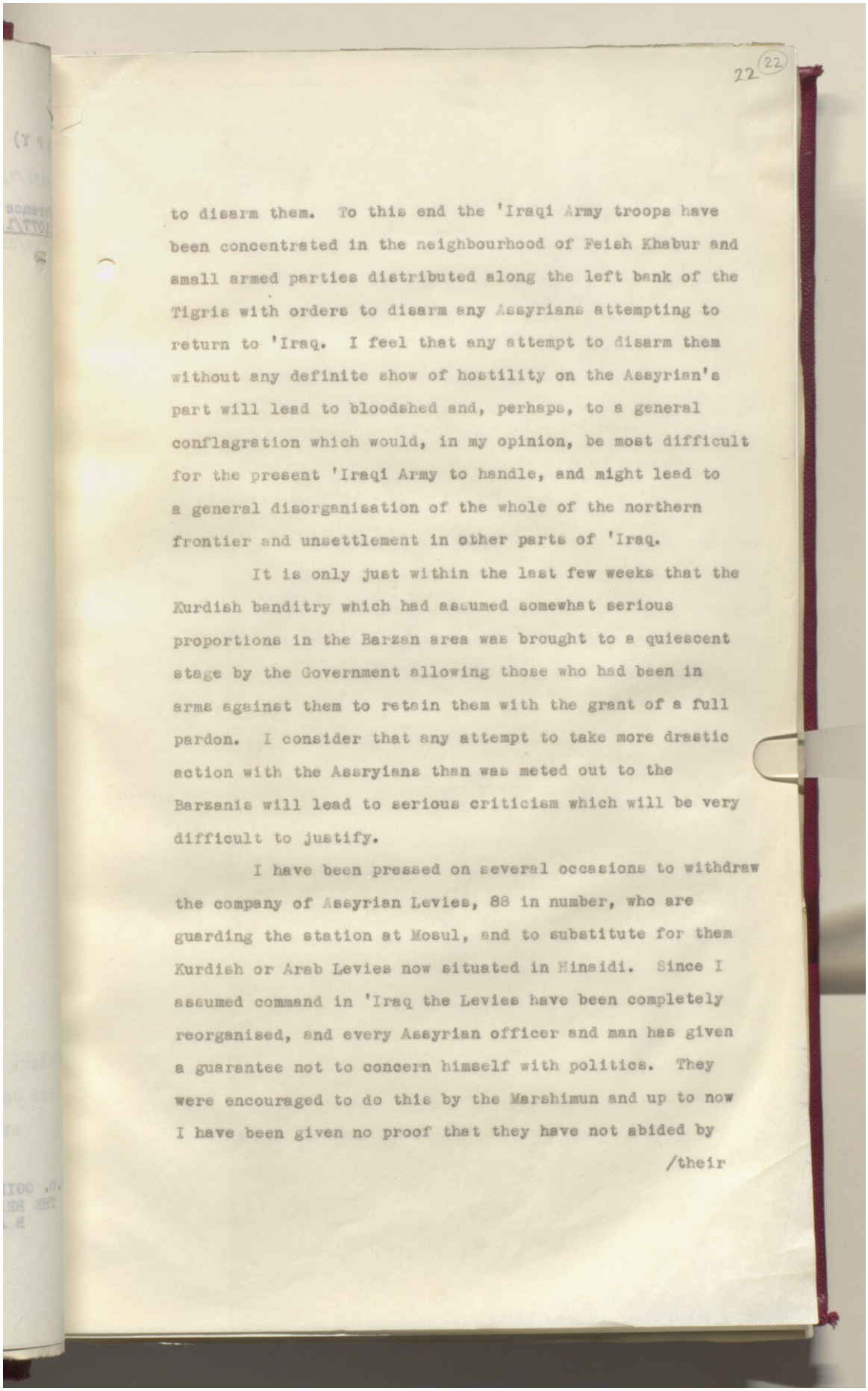
The situation on 25th July as far as my information goes is that there are some 1300 armed Assyrians of the pro-Marshimun party who have, without the consent of the 'Iraqi Government or the knowledge of the French, crossed into Syria for the purpose of finding settlement in that country. Another party, about 200 strong, are concentrated in the neighbourhood of Feish Khabur with the intention of joining the main party in Syria.

No hostile action has been taken as yet by these armed Assyrians while passing from their villages in 'Iraq across into Syria, and it would be inconsistent with normal tribal precedence that they should leave their arms behind them when proceeding to take up their habitat in another country. From the information I have received from you and from General Headlam I understand that it is the intention of the 'Iraqi Government to prevent the return of these Assyrians, or alternatively if allowed to return,

/to

G.A.D. OGILVIE FORBES, ESQ.,
THE BRITISH EMBASSY,
B A G H D A D.



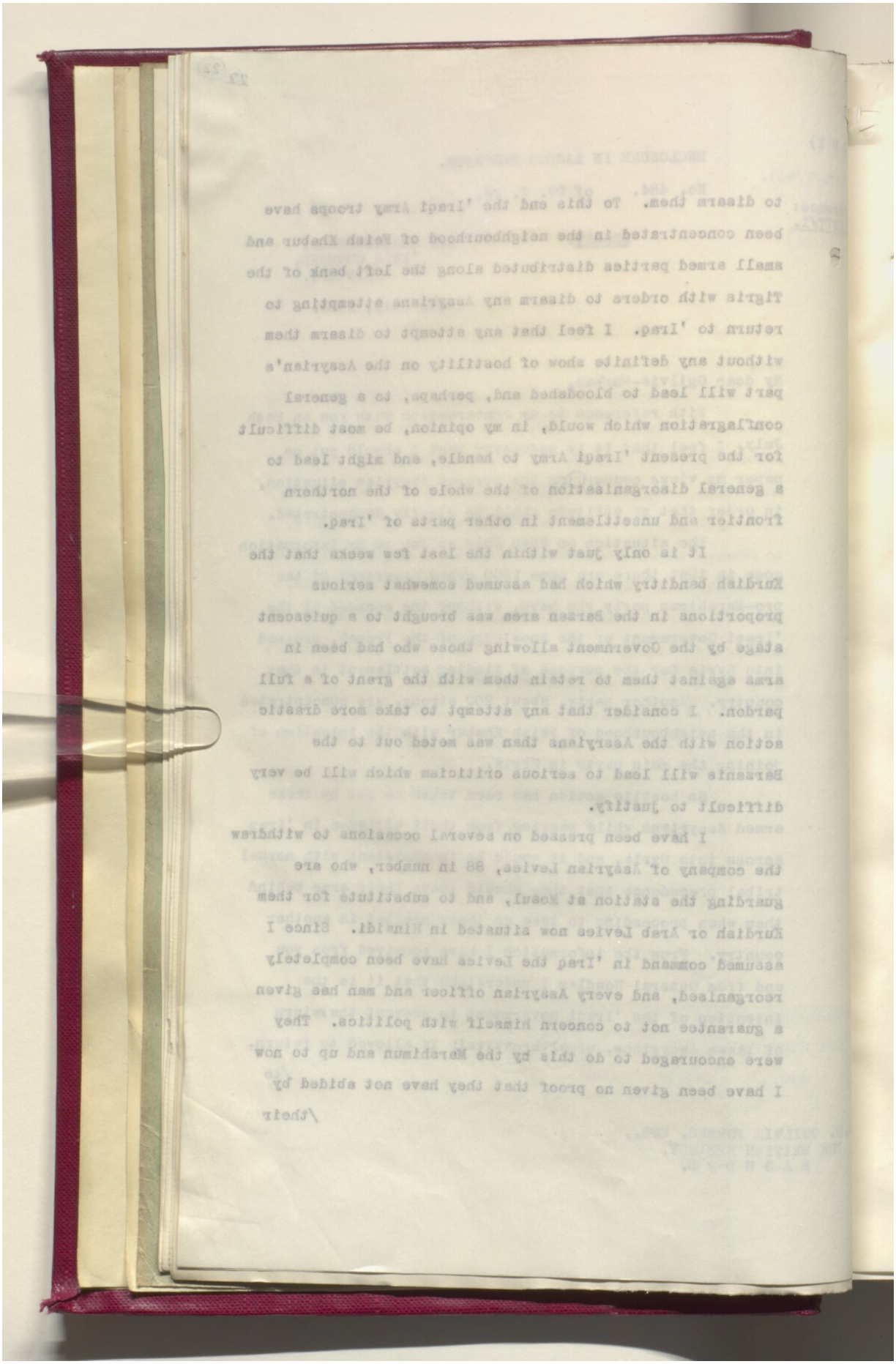


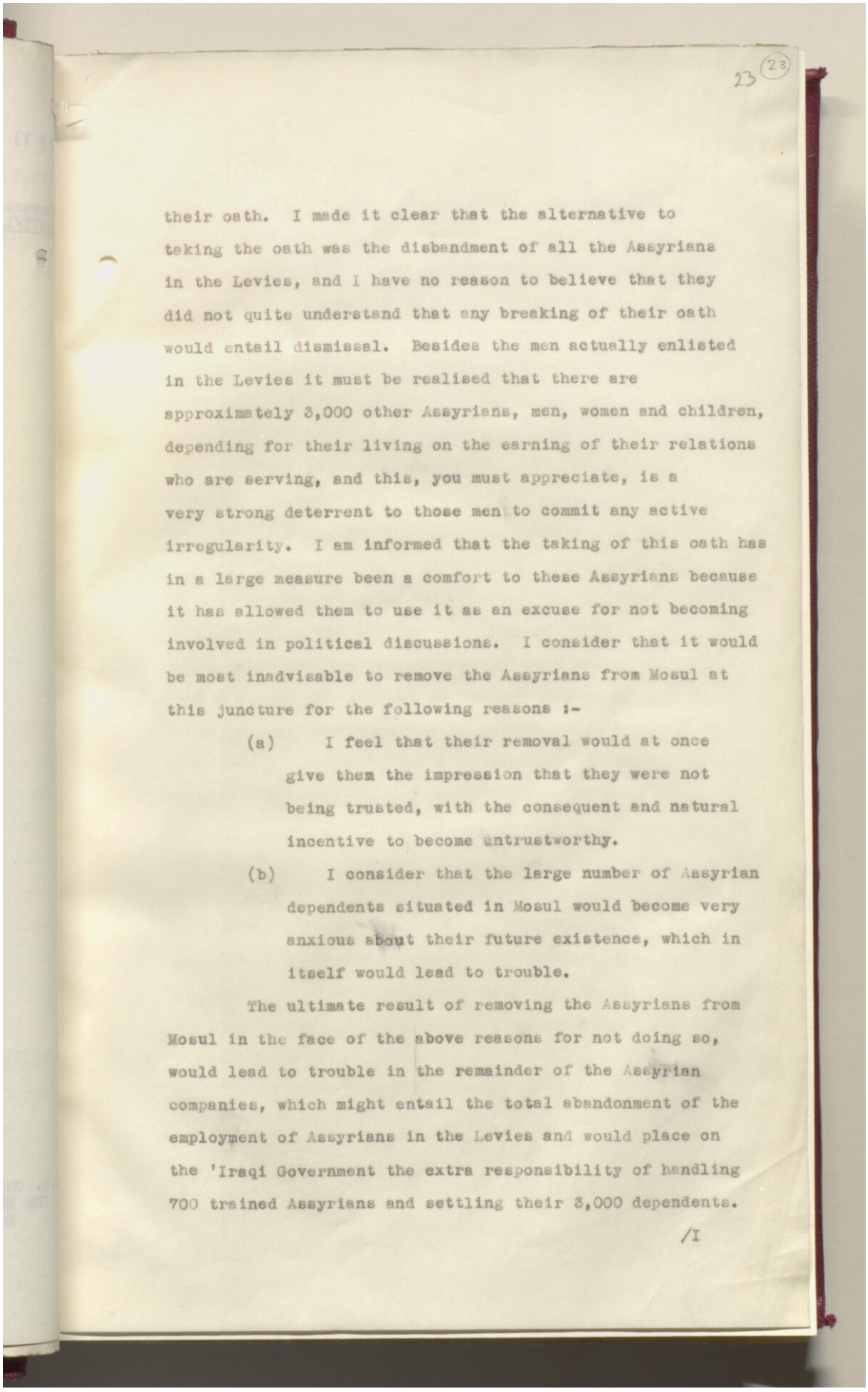
to disarm them. To this end the 'Iraqi Army troops have been concentrated in the neighbourhood of Feish Khabur and small armed parties distributed along the left bank of the Tigris with orders to disarm any Assyrians attempting to return to 'Iraq. I feel that any attempt to disarm them without any definite show of hostility on the Assyrian's part will lead to bloodshed and, perhaps, to a general conflagration which would, in my opinion, be most difficult for the present 'Iraqi Army to handle, and might lead to a general disorganisation of the whole of the northern frontier and unsettlement in other parts of 'Iraq.

It is only just within the last few weeks that the Kurdish banditry which had assumed somewhat serious proportions in the Barzan area was brought to a quiescent stage by the Government allowing those who had been in arms against them to retain them with the grant of a full pardon. I consider that any attempt to take more drastic action with the Assryians than was meted out to the Barzanis will lead to serious criticism which will be very difficult to justify.

I have been pressed on several occasions to withdraw the company of Assyrian Levies, 88 in number, who are guarding the station at Mosul, and to substitute for them Kurdish or Arab Levies now situated in Hinaidi. Since I assumed command in 'Iraq the Levies have been completely reorganised, and every Assyrian officer and man has given a guarantee not to concern himself with politics. They were encouraged to do this by the Marshimun and up to now I have been given no proof that they have not abided by

/their





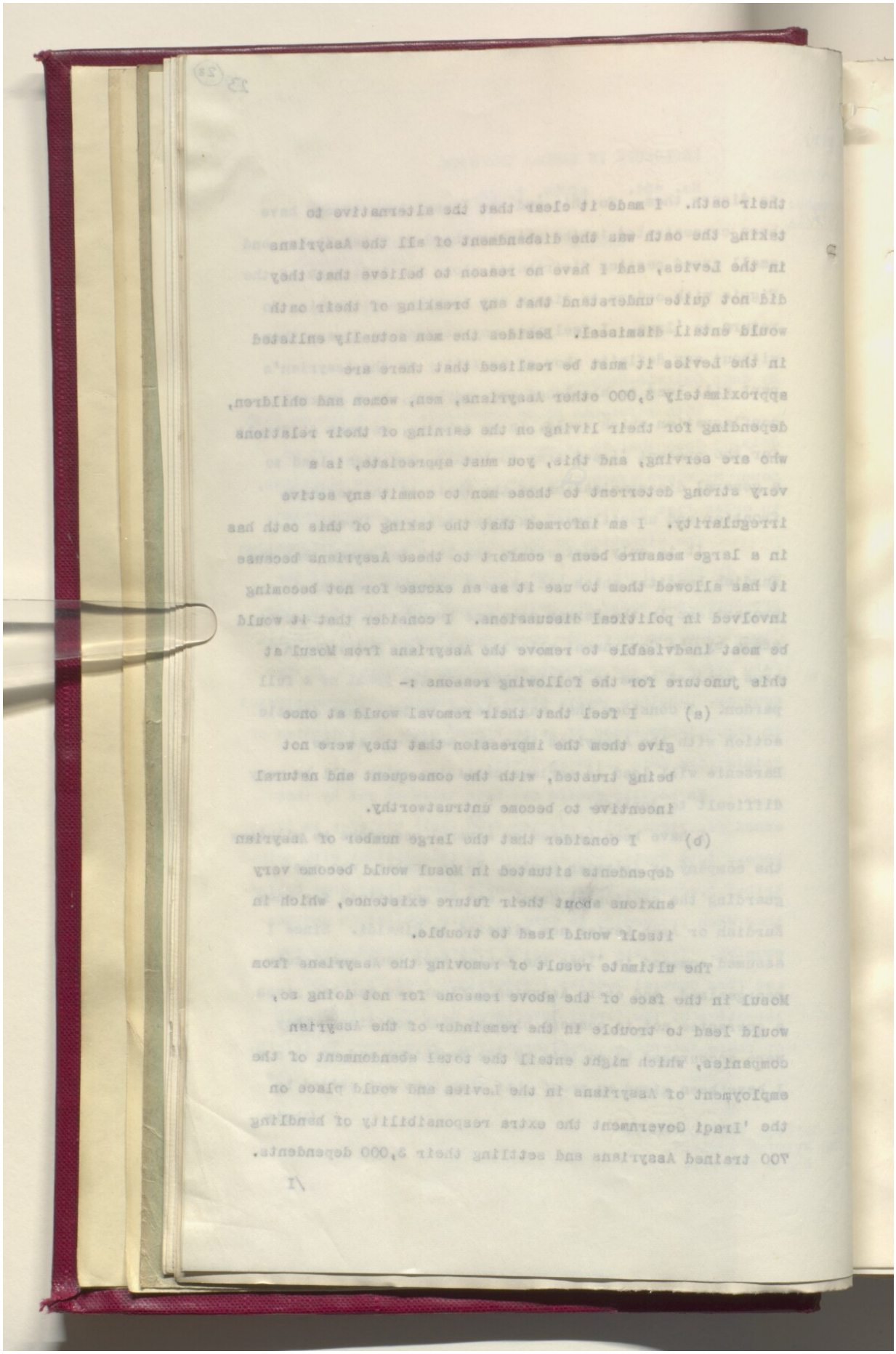
their oath. I made it clear that the alternative to taking the oath was the disbandment of all the Assyrians in the Levies, and I have no reason to believe that they did not quite understand that any breaking of their oath would entail dismissal. Besides the men actually enlisted in the Levies it must be realised that there are approximately 3,000 other Assyrians, men, women and children, depending for their living on the earning of their relations who are serving, and this, you must appreciate, is a very strong deterrent to those men to commit any active irregularity. I am informed that the taking of this oath has in a large measure been a comfort to these Assyrians because it has allowed them to use it as an excuse for not becoming involved in political discussions. I consider that it would be most inadvisable to remove the Assyrians from Mosul at this juncture for the following reasons :-

(a) I feel that their removal would at once give them the impression that they were not being trusted, with the consequent and natural incentive to become untrustworthy.

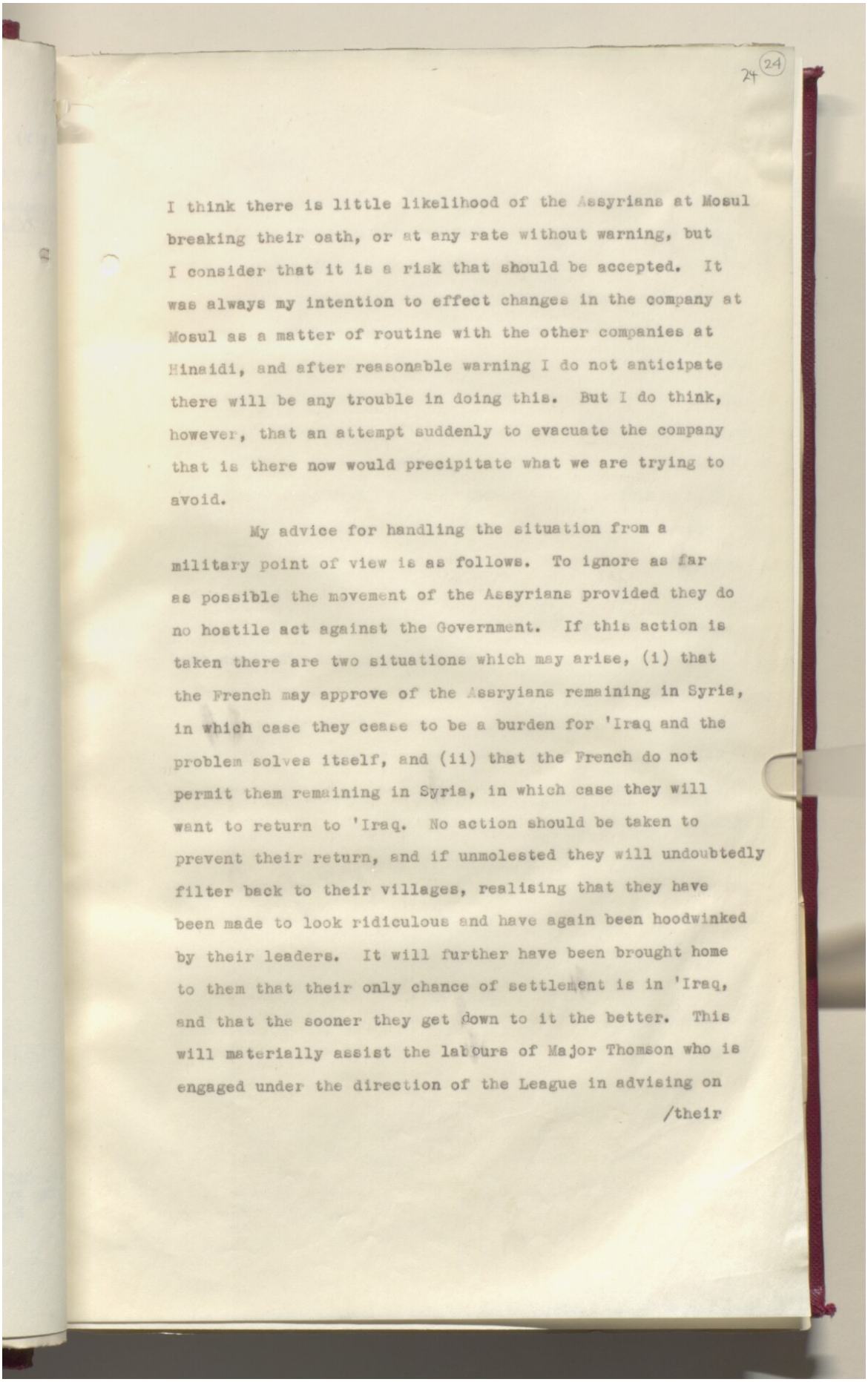
(b) I consider that the large number of Assyrian dependents situated in Mosul would become very anxious about their future existence, which in itself would lead to trouble.

The ultimate result of removing the Assyrians from Mosul in the face of the above reasons for not doing so, would lead to trouble in the remainder of the Assyrian companies, which might entail the total abandonment of the employment of Assyrians in the Levies and would place on the 'Iraqi Government the extra responsibility of handling 700 trained Assyrians and settling their 3,000 dependents.

/I



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00003a

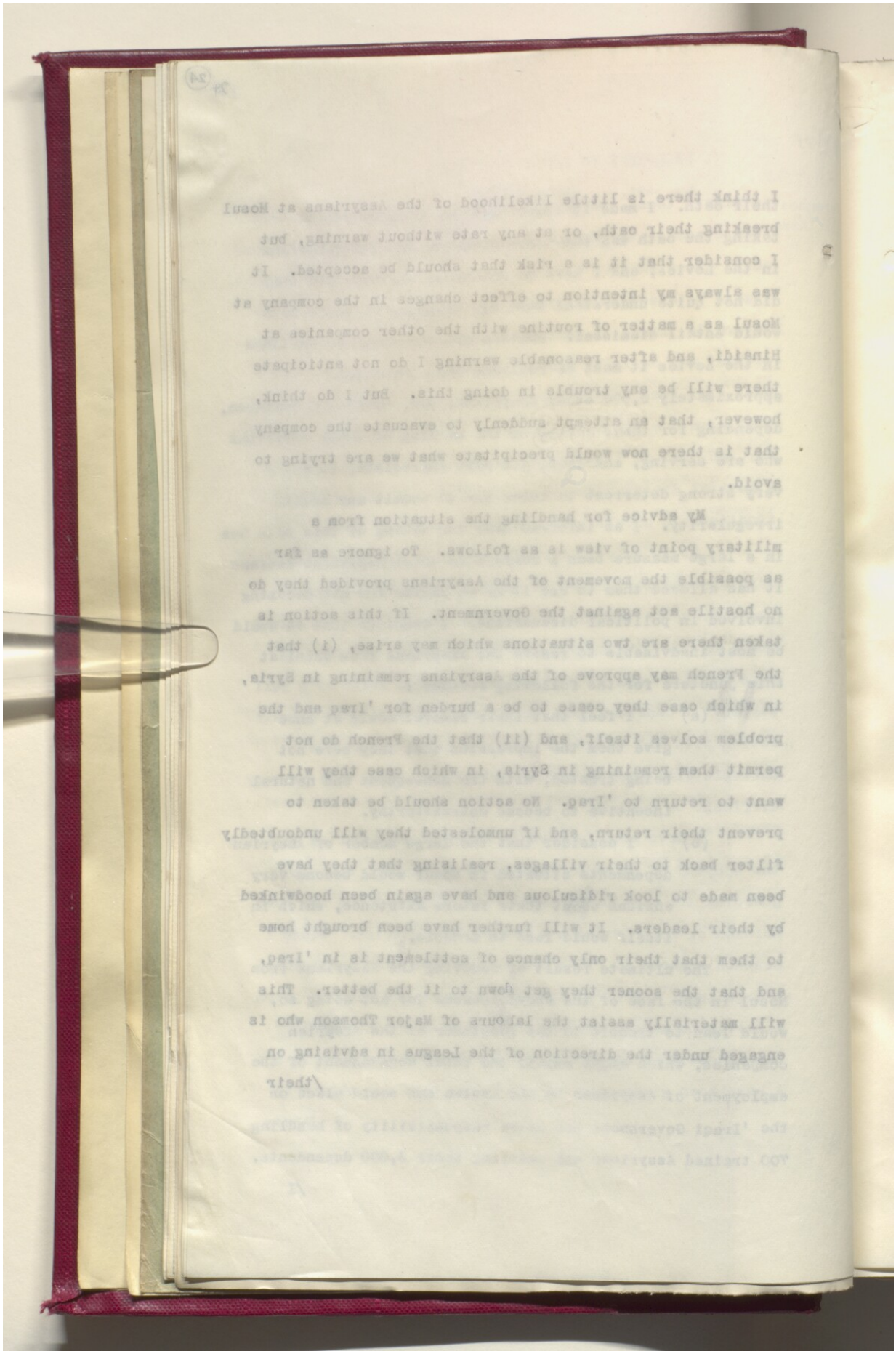


24 (24)

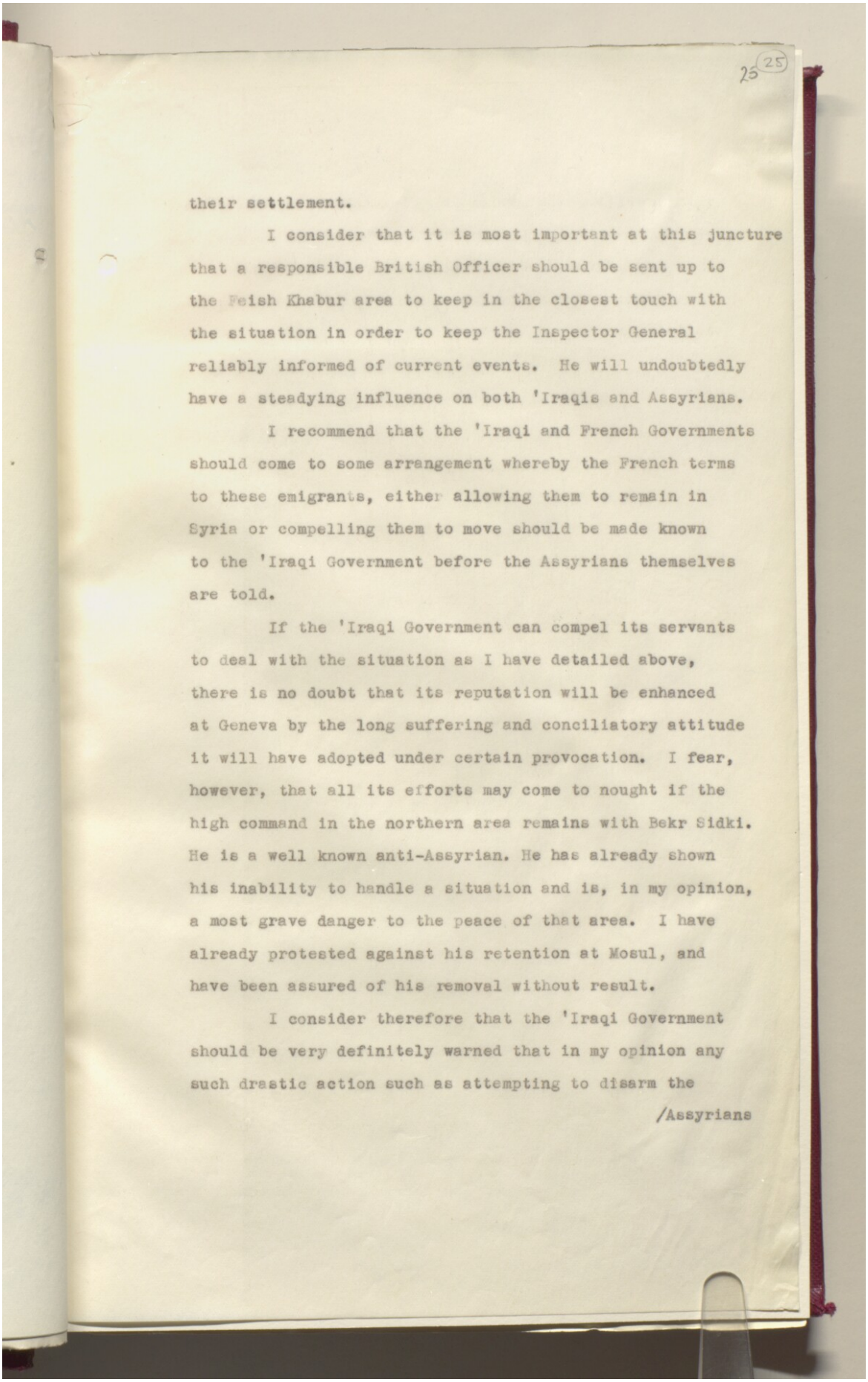
I think there is little likelihood of the Assyrians at Mosul breaking their oath, or at any rate without warning, but I consider that it is a risk that should be accepted. It was always my intention to effect changes in the company at Mosul as a matter of routine with the other companies at Hinaidi, and after reasonable warning I do not anticipate there will be any trouble in doing this. But I do think, however, that an attempt suddenly to evacuate the company that is there now would precipitate what we are trying to avoid.

My advice for handling the situation from a military point of view is as follows. To ignore as far as possible the movement of the Assyrians provided they do no hostile act against the Government. If this action is taken there are two situations which may arise, (i) that the French may approve of the Assryians remaining in Syria, in which case they cease to be a burden for 'Iraq and the problem solves itself, and (ii) that the French do not permit them remaining in Syria, in which case they will want to return to 'Iraq. No action should be taken to prevent their return, and if unmolested they will undoubtedly filter back to their villages, realising that they have been made to look ridiculous and have again been hoodwinked by their leaders. It will further have been brought home to them that their only chance of settlement is in 'Iraq, and that the sooner they get down to it the better. This will materially assist the labours of Major Thomson who is engaged under the direction of the League in advising on

/their



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00003c



25 (25)

their settlement.

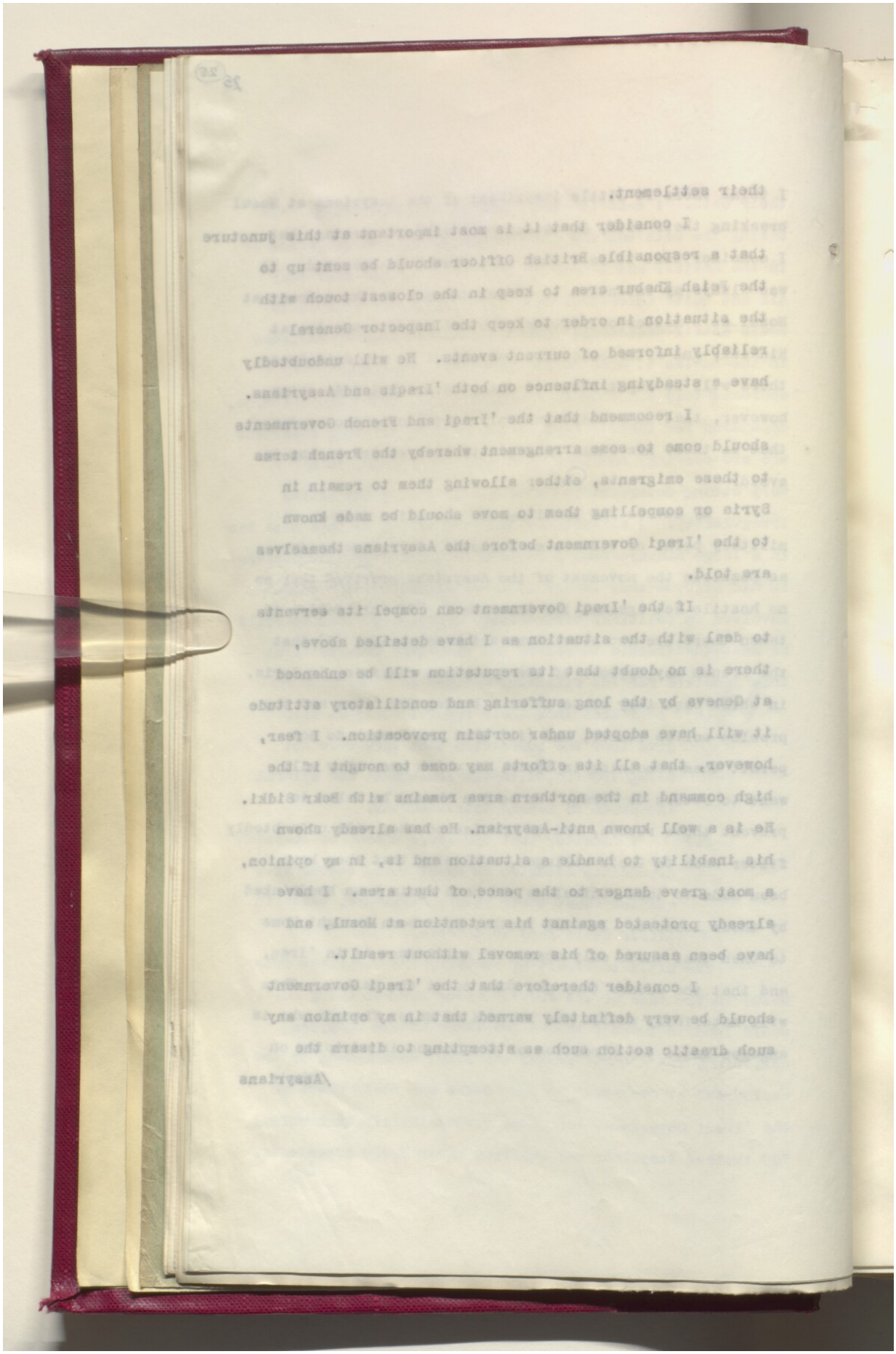
I consider that it is most important at this juncture that a responsible British Officer should be sent up to the Feish Khabur area to keep in the closest touch with the situation in order to keep the Inspector General reliably informed of current events. He will undoubtedly have a steadying influence on both 'Iraqis and Assyrians.

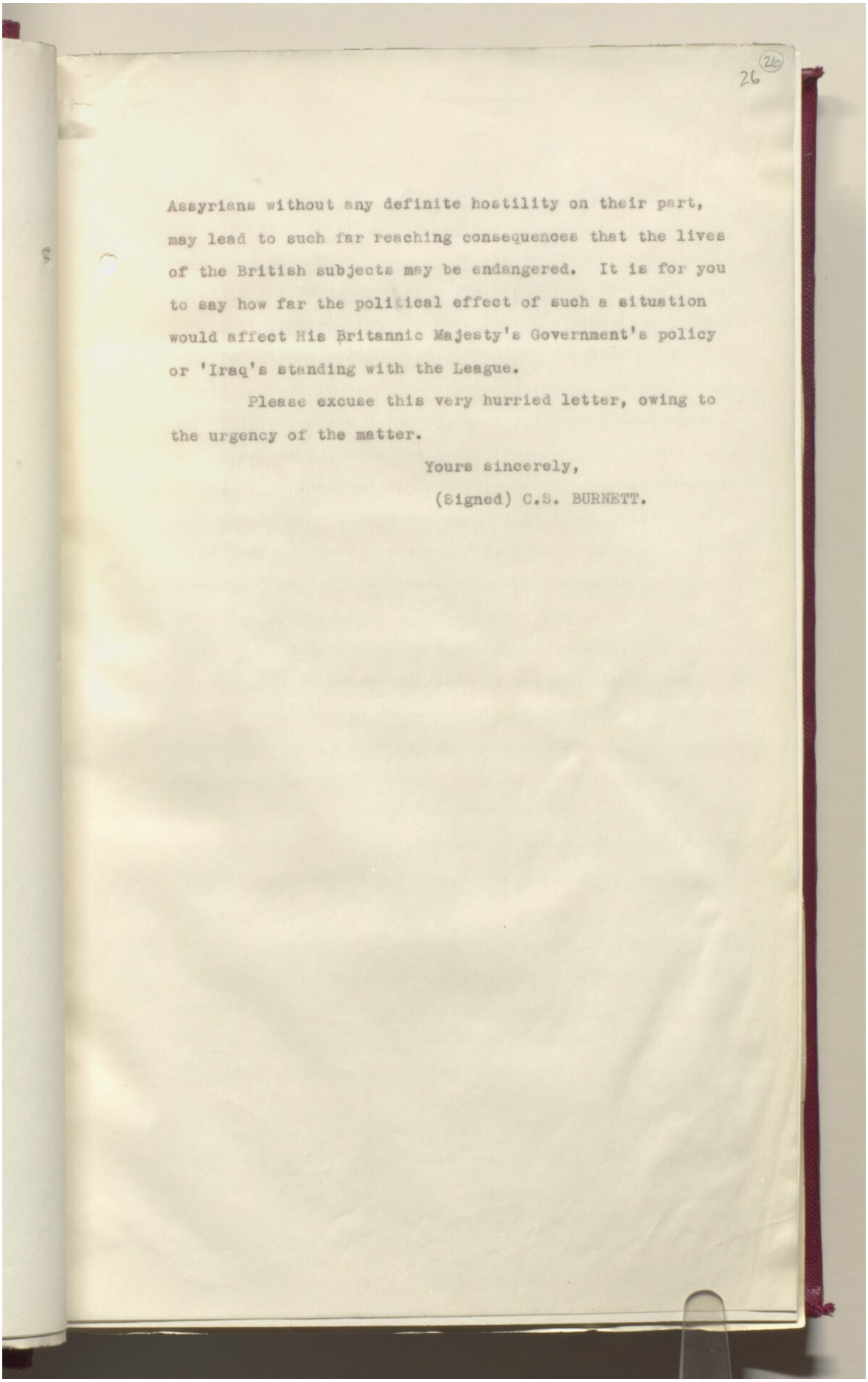
I recommend that the 'Iraqi and French Governments should come to some arrangement whereby the French terms to these emigrants, either allowing them to remain in Syria or compelling them to move should be made known to the 'Iraqi Government before the Assyrians themselves are told.

If the 'Iraqi Government can compel its servants to deal with the situation as I have detailed above, there is no doubt that its reputation will be enhanced at Geneva by the long suffering and conciliatory attitude it will have adopted under certain provocation. I fear, however, that all its efforts may come to nought if the high command in the northern area remains with Bekr Sidki. He is a well known anti-Assyrian. He has already shown his inability to handle a situation and is, in my opinion, a most grave danger to the peace of that area. I have already protested against his retention at Mosul, and have been assured of his removal without result.

I consider therefore that the 'Iraqi Government should be very definitely warned that in my opinion any such drastic action such as attempting to disarm the

/Assyrians





26 (26)

Assyrians without any definite hostility on their part, may lead to such far reaching consequences that the lives of the British subjects may be endangered. It is for you to say how far the political effect of such a situation would affect His Britannic Majesty's Government's policy or 'Iraq's standing with the League.

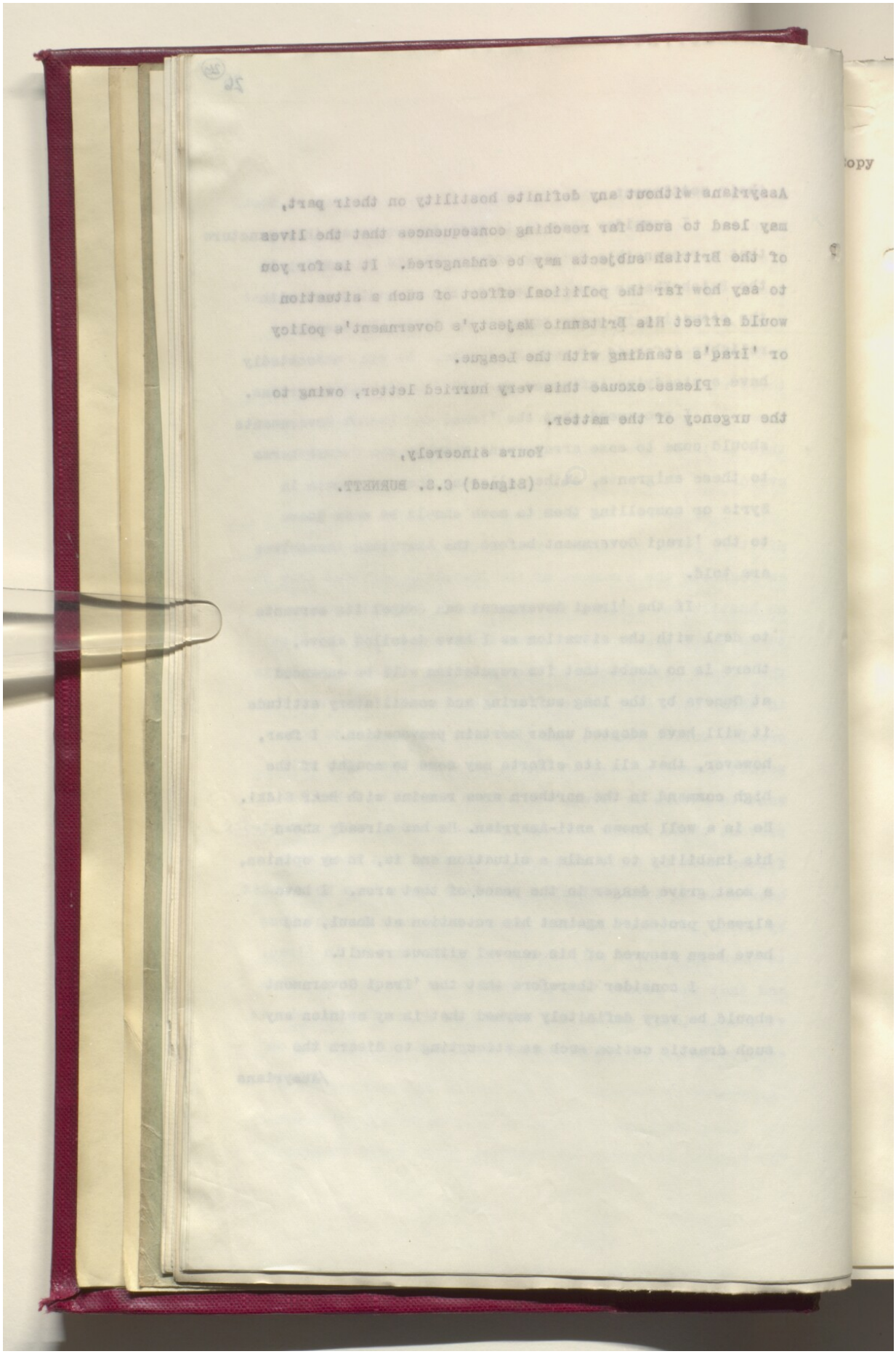
Please excuse this very hurried letter, owing to the urgency of the matter.

Yours sincerely,

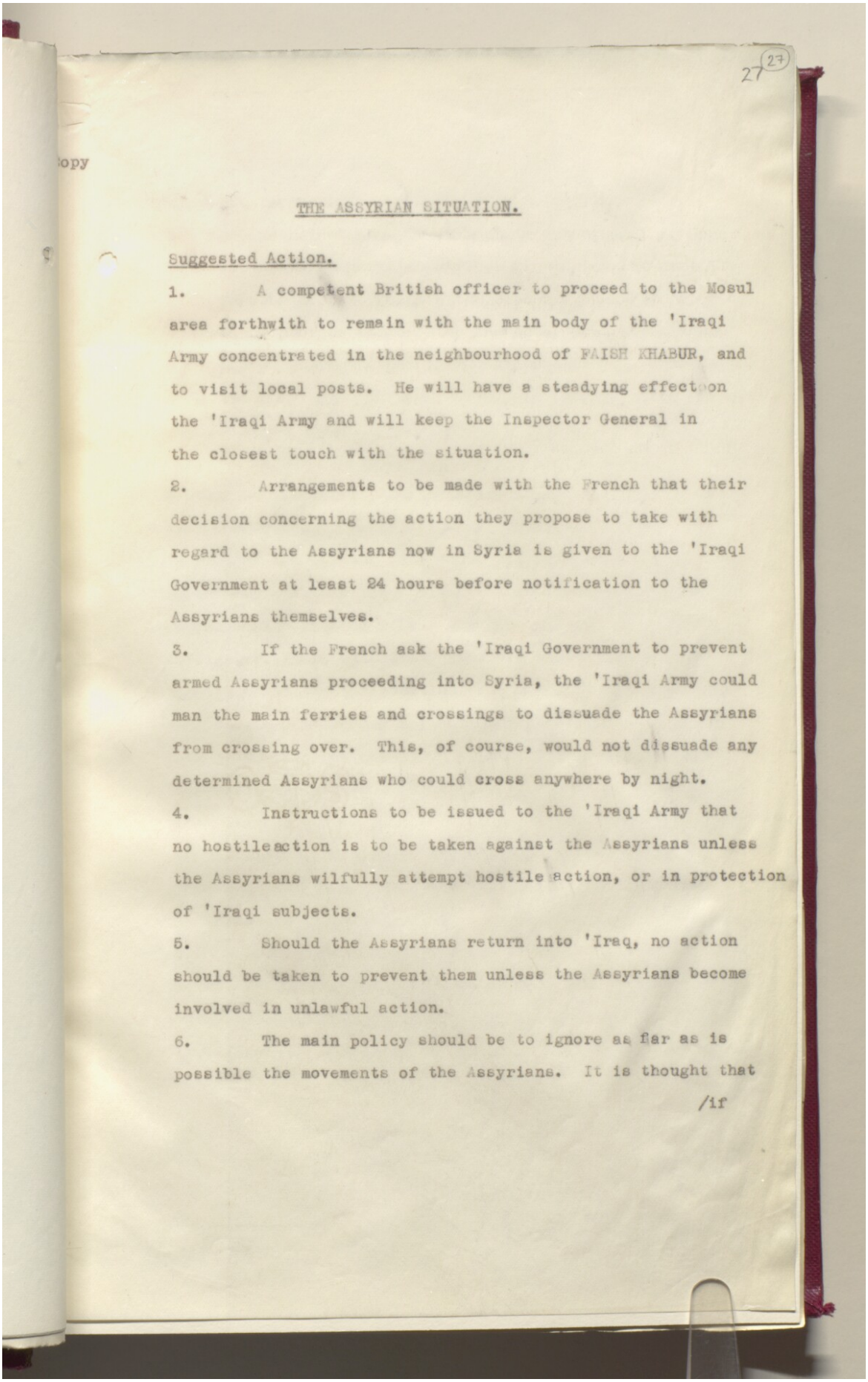
(Signed) C.S. BURNETT.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00003f



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000040



27 (27)

opy

THE ASSYRIAN SITUATION.

Suggested Action.

1. A competent British officer to proceed to the Mosul area forthwith to remain with the main body of the 'Iraqi Army concentrated in the neighbourhood of FAISH KHABUR, and to visit local posts. He will have a steadying effect on the 'Iraqi Army and will keep the Inspector General in the closest touch with the situation.

2. Arrangements to be made with the French that their decision concerning the action they propose to take with regard to the Assyrians now in Syria is given to the 'Iraqi Government at least 24 hours before notification to the Assyrians themselves.

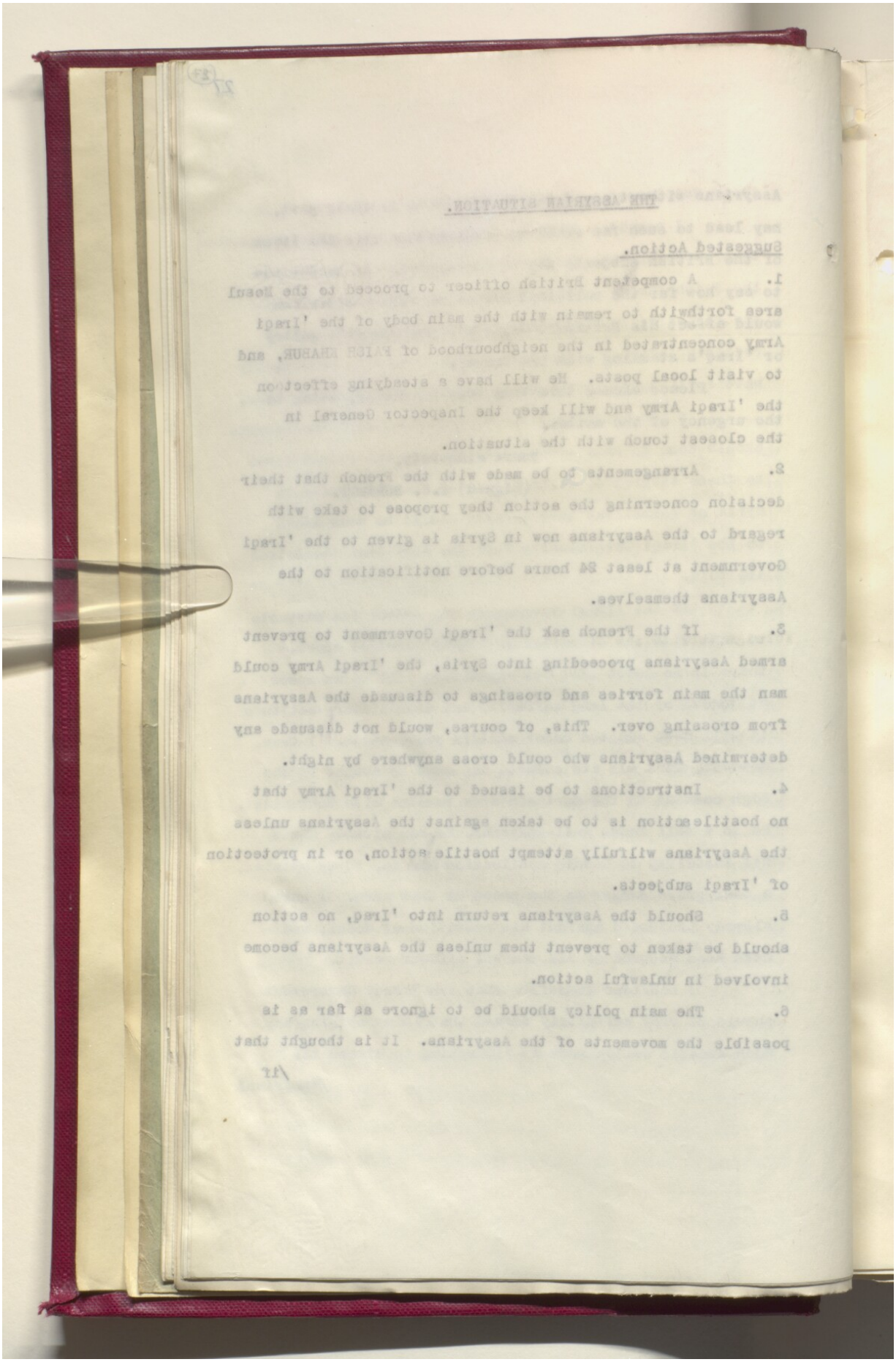
3. If the French ask the 'Iraqi Government to prevent armed Assyrians proceeding into Syria, the 'Iraqi Army could man the main ferries and crossings to dissuade the Assyrians from crossing over. This, of course, would not dissuade any determined Assyrians who could cross anywhere by night.

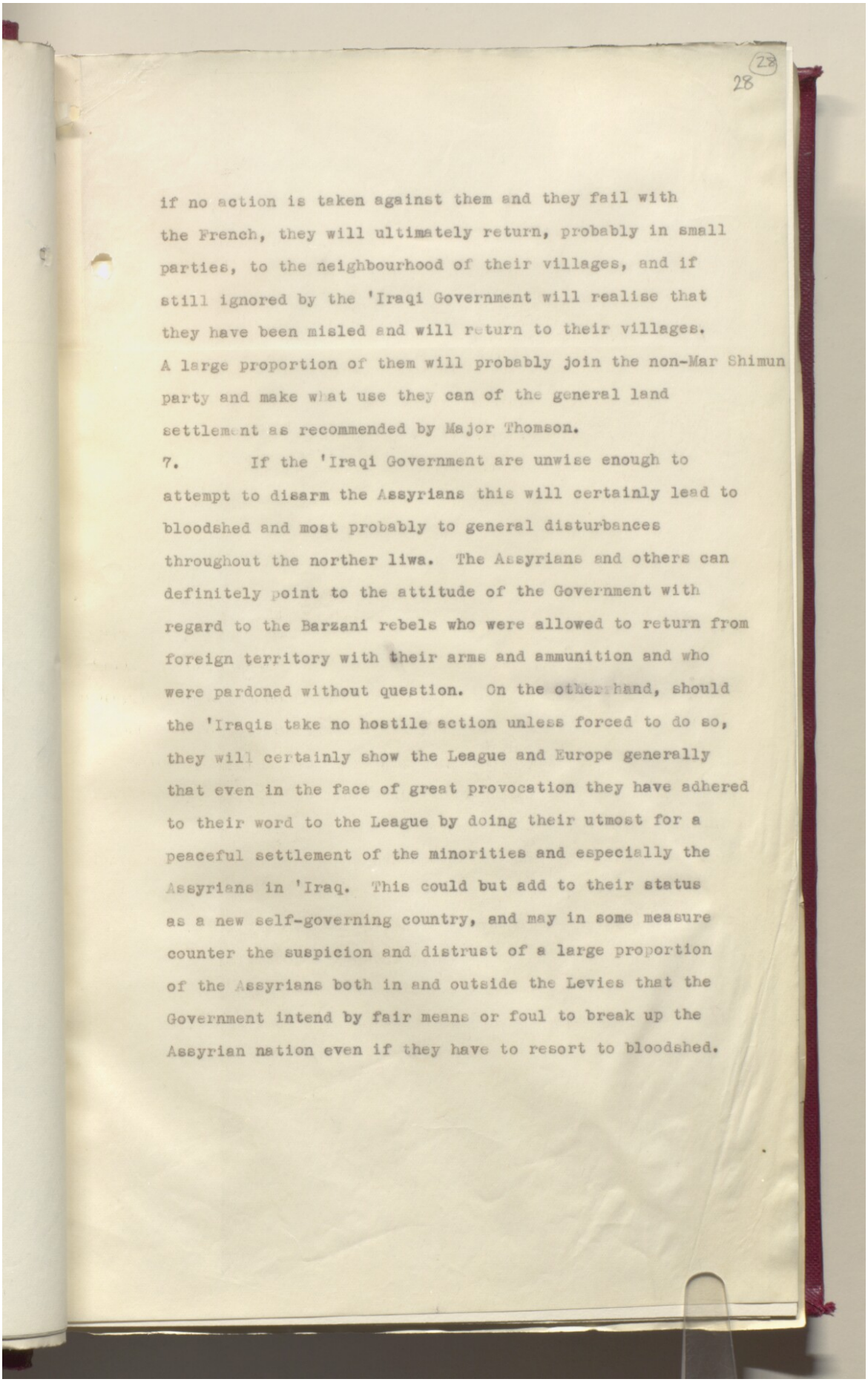
4. Instructions to be issued to the 'Iraqi Army that no hostile action is to be taken against the Assyrians unless the Assyrians wilfully attempt hostile action, or in protection of 'Iraqi subjects.

5. Should the Assyrians return into 'Iraq, no action should be taken to prevent them unless the Assyrians become involved in unlawful action.

6. The main policy should be to ignore as far as is possible the movements of the Assyrians. It is thought that

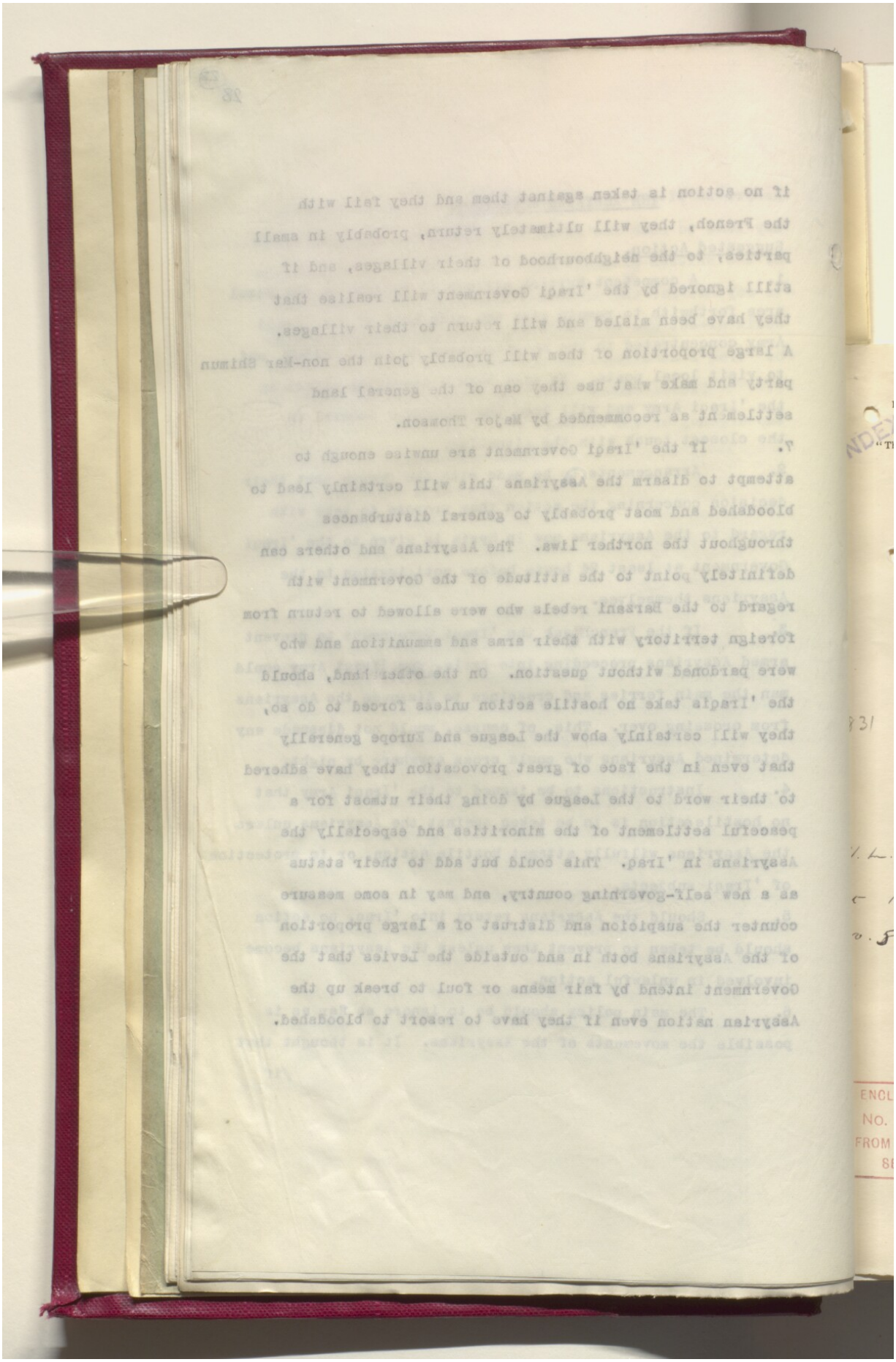
/if



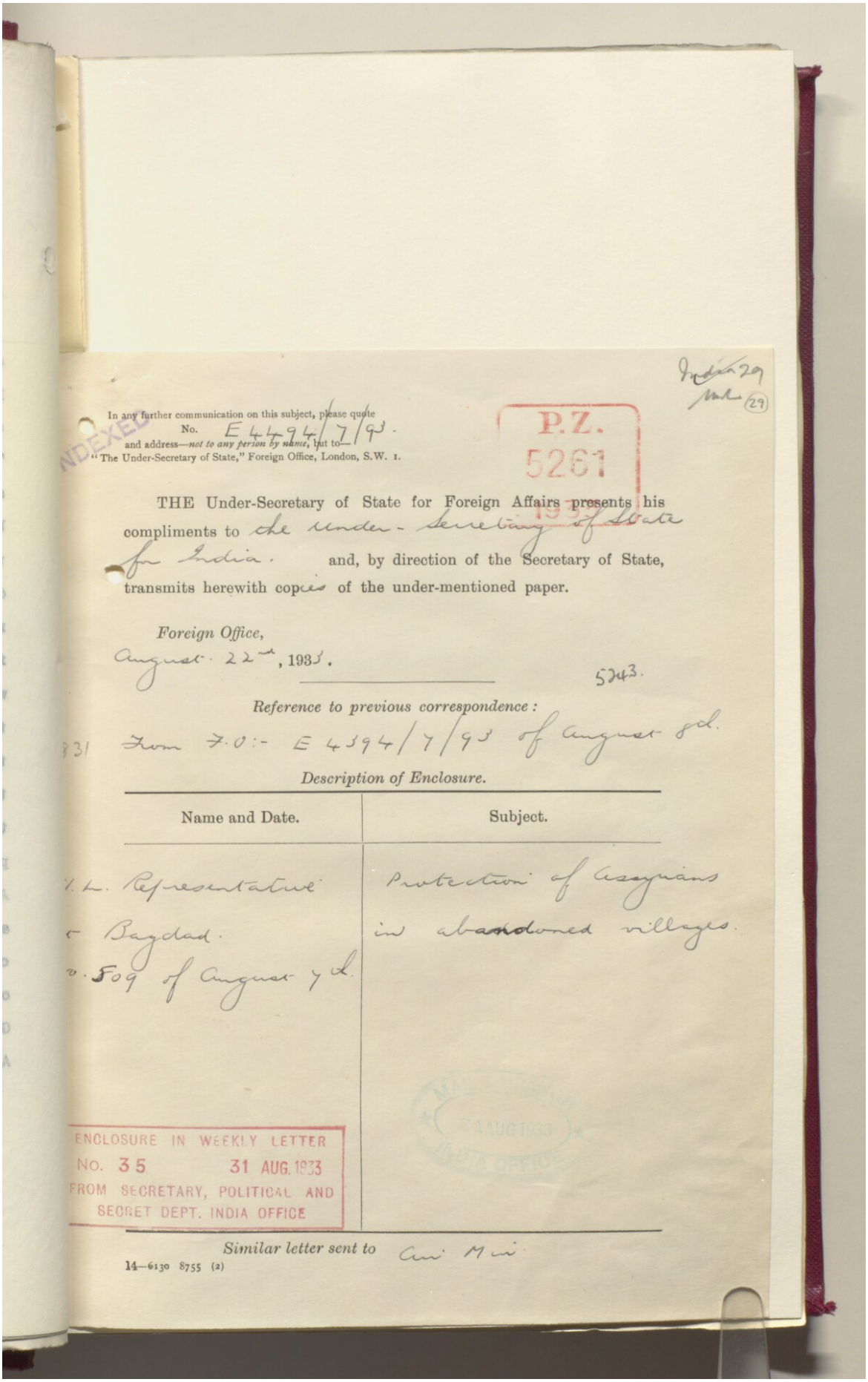


if no action is taken against them and they fail with the French, they will ultimately return, probably in small parties, to the neighbourhood of their villages, and if still ignored by the 'Iraqi Government will realise that they have been misled and will return to their villages. A large proportion of them will probably join the non-Mar Shimun party and make what use they can of the general land settlement as recommended by Major Thomson.

7. If the 'Iraqi Government are unwise enough to attempt to disarm the Assyrians this will certainly lead to bloodshed and most probably to general disturbances throughout the norther liwa. The Assyrians and others can definitely point to the attitude of the Government with regard to the Barzani rebels who were allowed to return from foreign territory with their arms and ammunition and who were pardoned without question. On the other hand, should the 'Iraqis take no hostile action unless forced to do so, they will certainly show the League and Europe generally that even in the face of great provocation they have adhered to their word to the League by doing their utmost for a peaceful settlement of the minorities and especially the Assyrians in 'Iraq. This could but add to their status as a new self-governing country, and may in some measure counter the suspicion and distrust of a large proportion of the Assyrians both in and outside the Levies that the Government intend by fair means or foul to break up the Assyrian nation even if they have to resort to bloodshed.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000044



India 29
Mid (29)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4494/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z.
5261

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.

5243.

Reference to previous correspondence:

831 From F.O.:- E 4394/7/93 of August 8th.

Description of Enclosure.

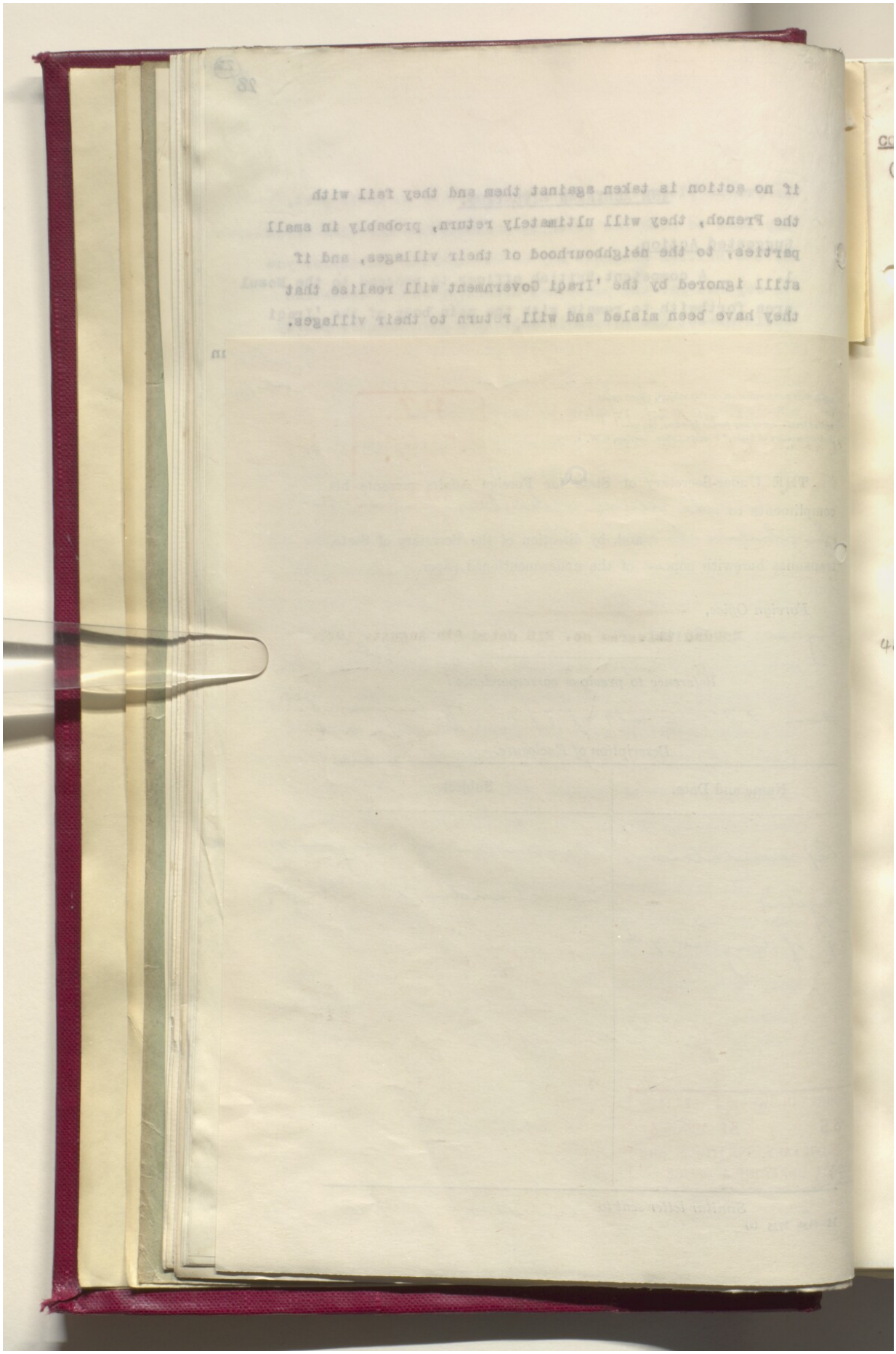
Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative at Baghdad. No. 509 of August 7th.	Protection of Assyrians in abandoned villages.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 35 31 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

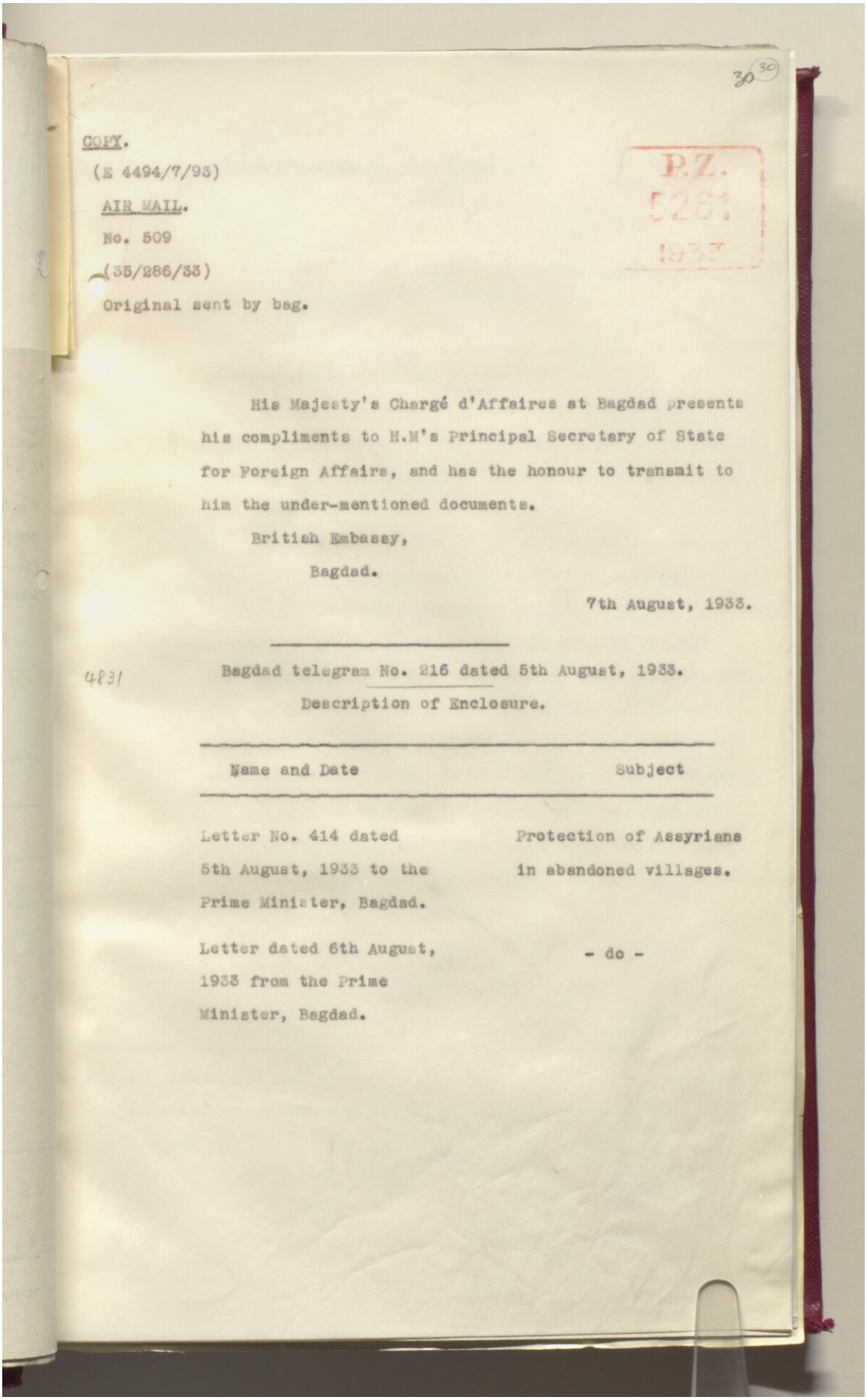
MAIL ROOM
31 AUG 1933
INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min.

14—6130 8755 (2)



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000046



30 30

COPY.

(E 4494/7/93)

AIR MAIL.

No. 509

(35/286/33)

Original sent by bag.

P.Z. 5261 1933

His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad presents his compliments to H.M's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him the under-mentioned documents.

British Embassy,

Bagdad.

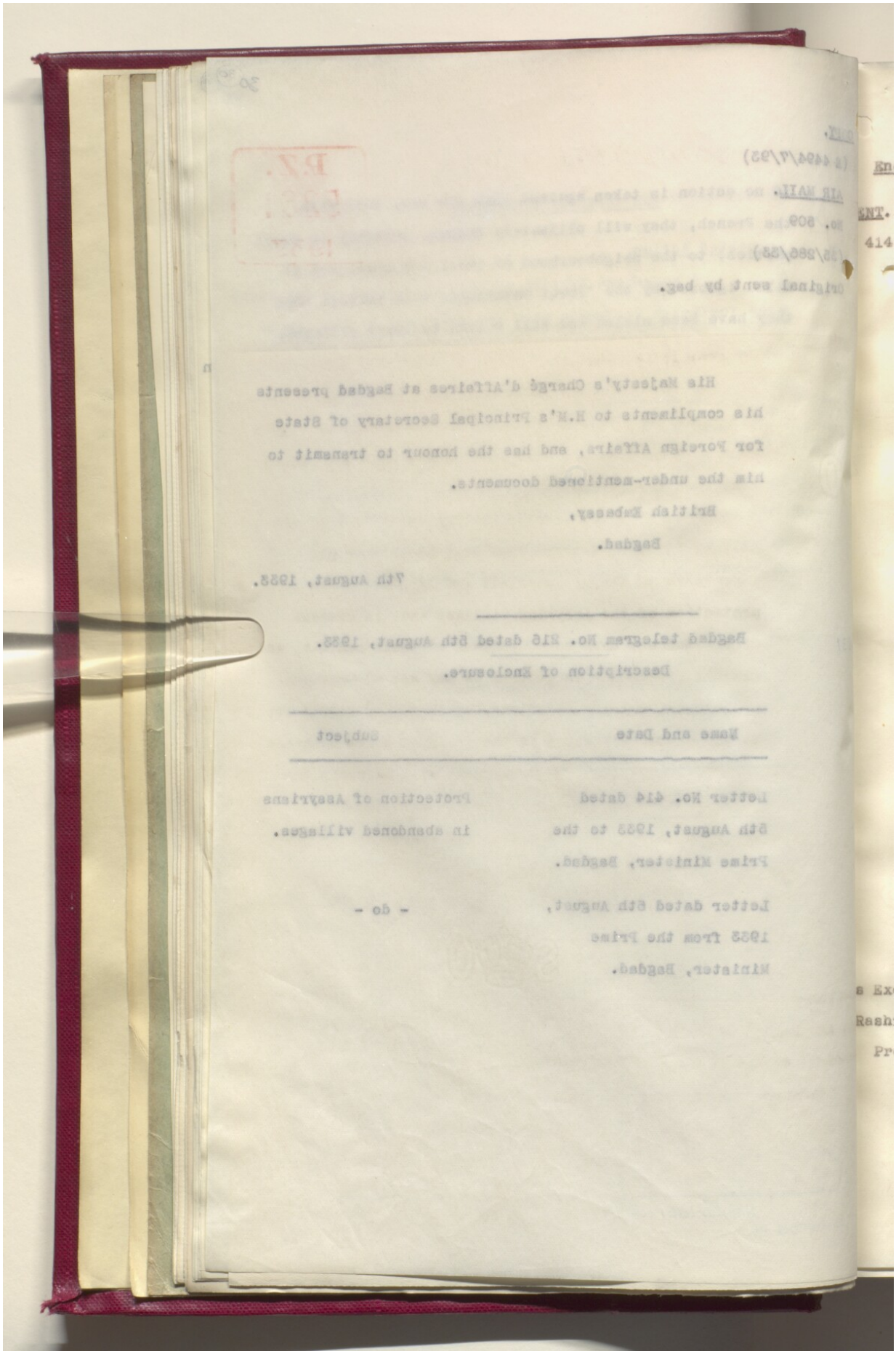
7th August, 1933.

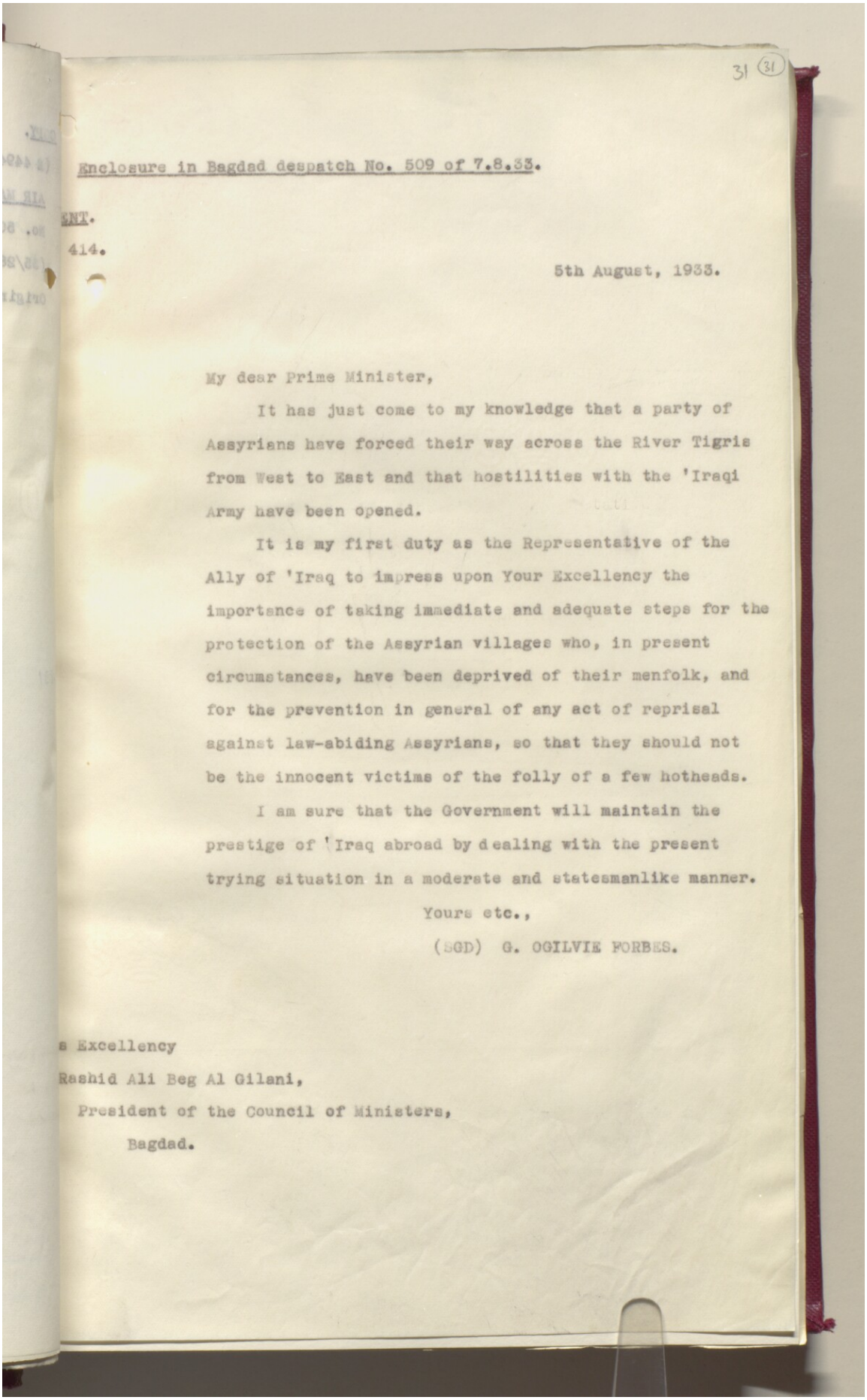
4831

Bagdad telegram No. 216 dated 5th August, 1933.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date	Subject
Letter No. 414 dated 5th August, 1933 to the Prime Minister, Bagdad.	Protection of Assyrians in abandoned villages.
Letter dated 6th August, 1933 from the Prime Minister, Bagdad.	- do -





31 (31)

Enclosure in Bagdad despatch No. 509 of 7.8.33.

ENT.

414.

5th August, 1933.

My dear Prime Minister,

It has just come to my knowledge that a party of Assyrians have forced their way across the River Tigris from West to East and that hostilities with the 'Iraqi Army have been opened.

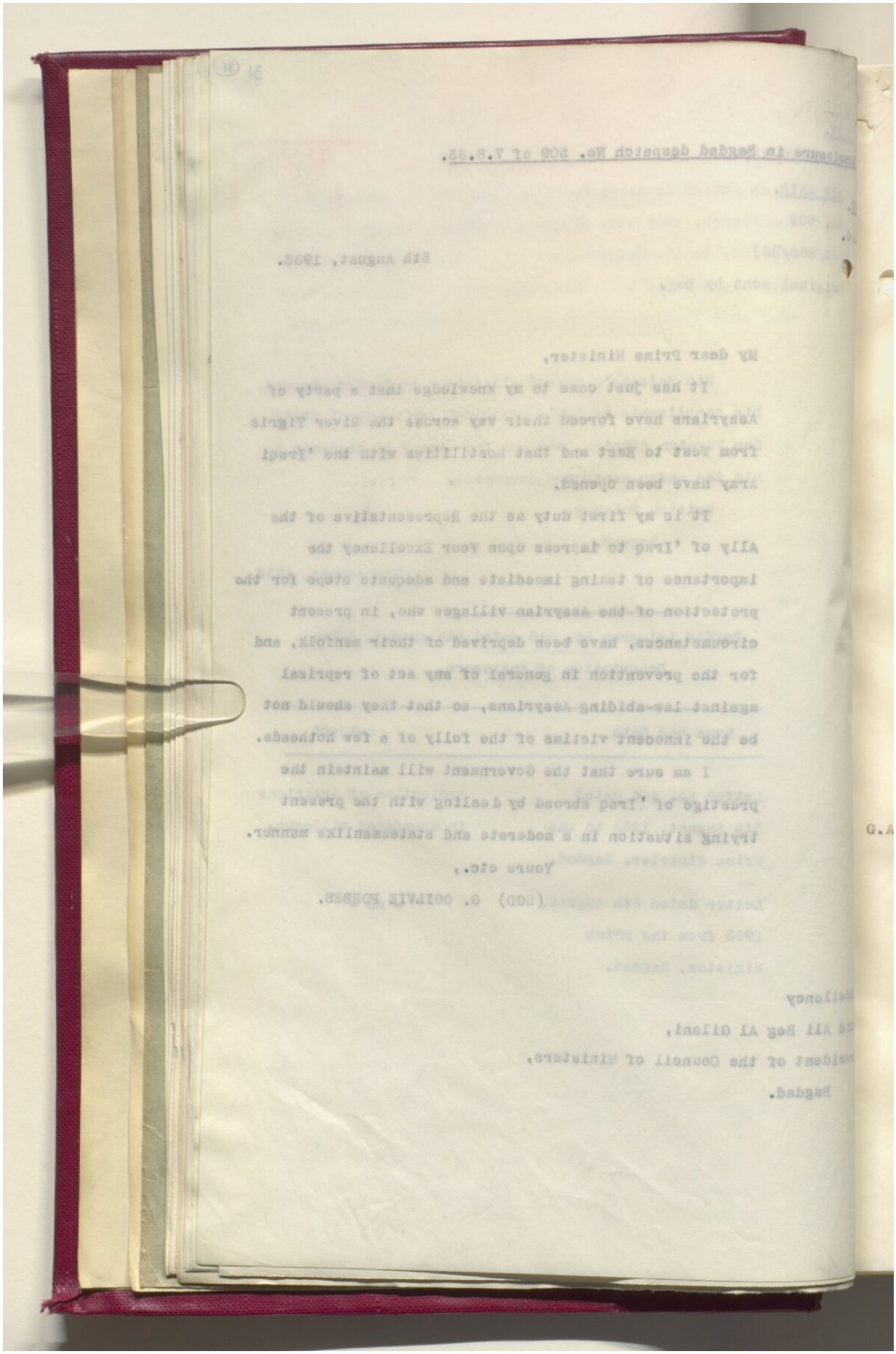
It is my first duty as the Representative of the Ally of 'Iraq to impress upon Your Excellency the importance of taking immediate and adequate steps for the protection of the Assyrian villages who, in present circumstances, have been deprived of their menfolk, and for the prevention in general of any act of reprisal against law-abiding Assyrians, so that they should not be the innocent victims of the folly of a few hotheads.

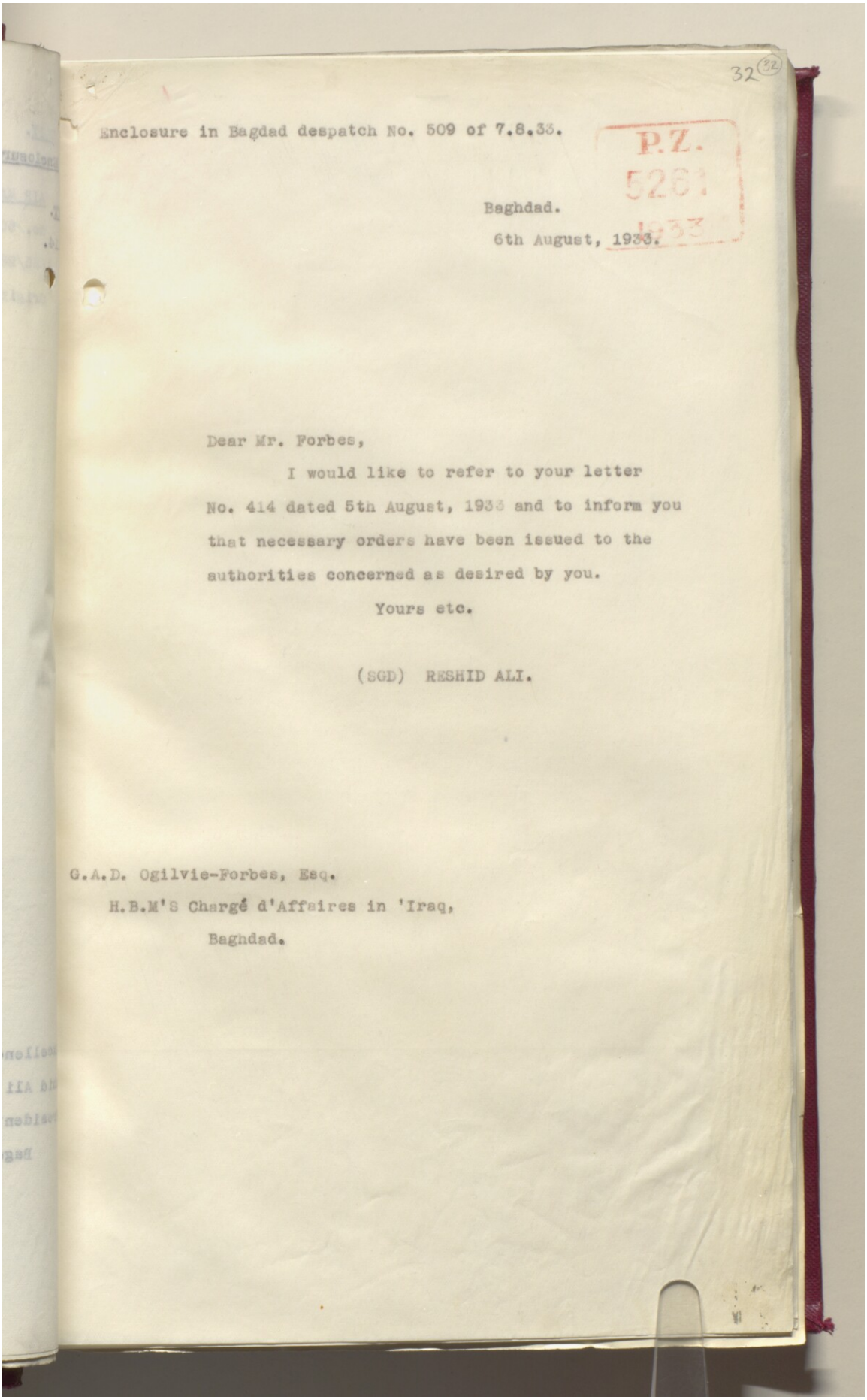
I am sure that the Government will maintain the prestige of 'Iraq abroad by dealing with the present trying situation in a moderate and statesmanlike manner.

Yours etc.,

(SGD) G. OGILVIE FORBES.

s Excellency
Rashid Ali Beg Al Gilani,
President of the Council of Ministers,
Bagdad.





32 (32)

Enclosure in Bagdad despatch No. 509 of 7.8.33.

P.Z. 5261 1933

Baghdad.
6th August, 1933.

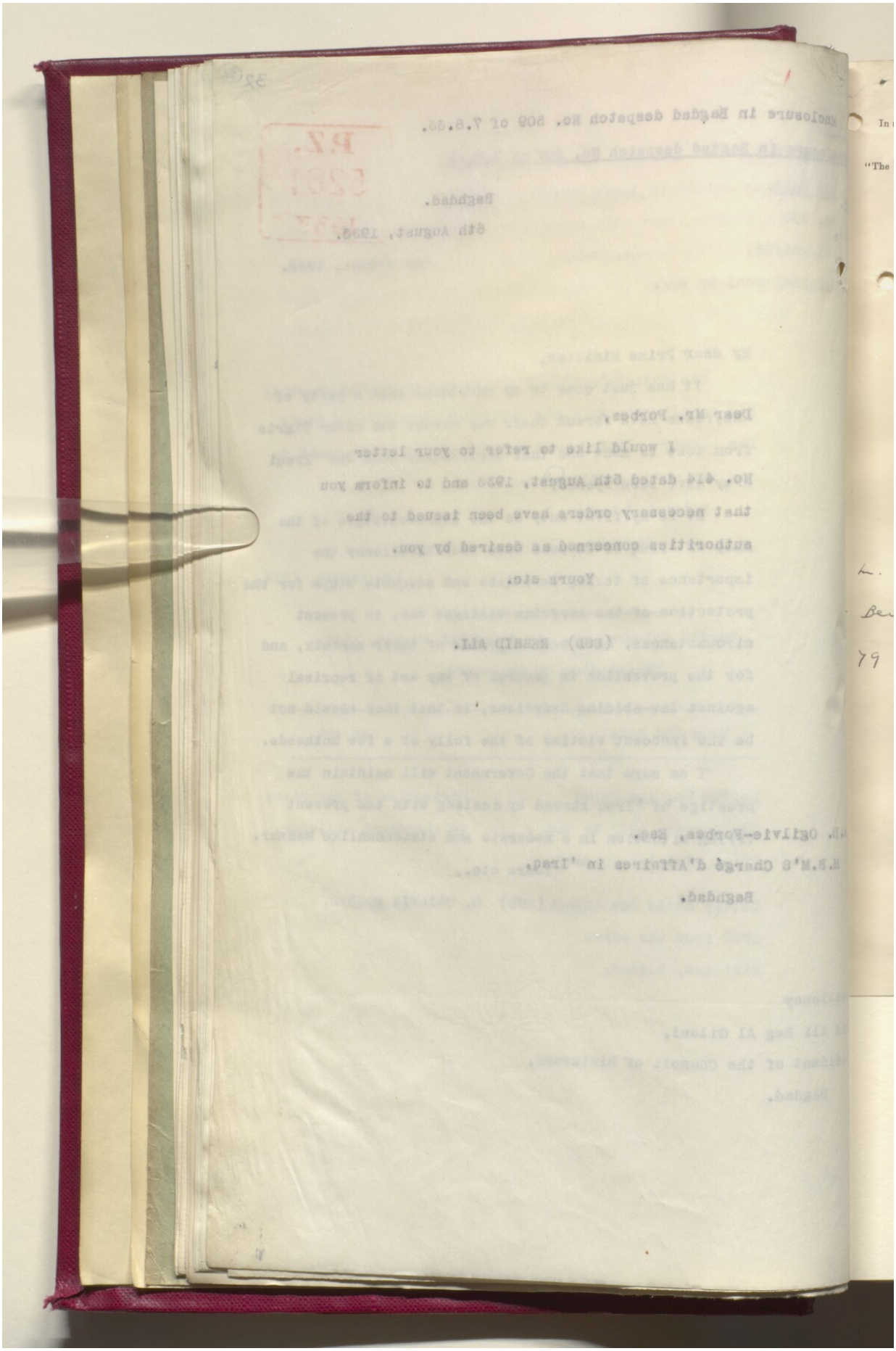
Dear Mr. Forbes,

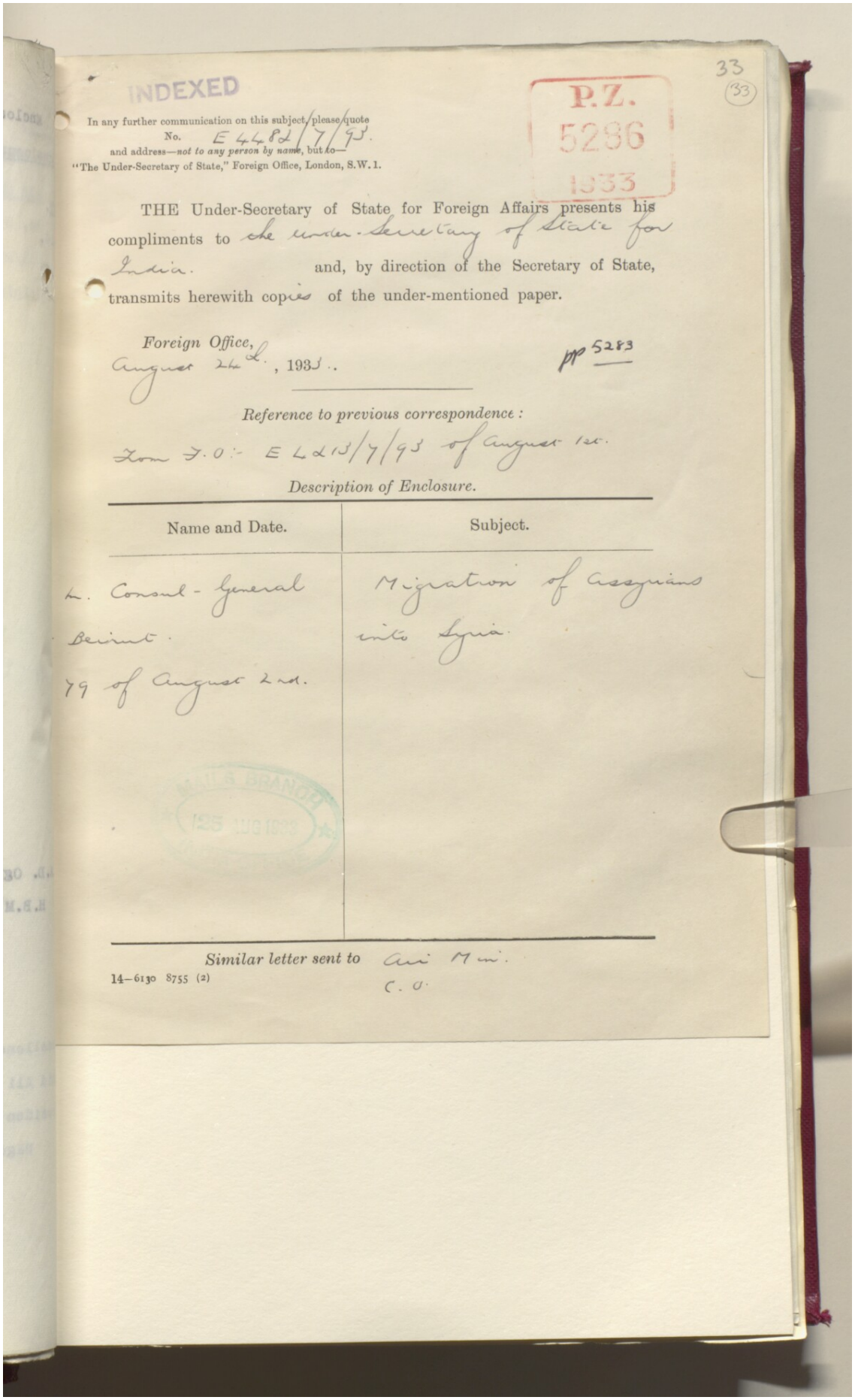
I would like to refer to your letter No. 414 dated 5th August, 1933 and to inform you that necessary orders have been issued to the authorities concerned as desired by you.

Yours etc.

(SGD) RESHID ALI.

G.A.D. Ogilvie-Forbes, Esq.
H.B.M'S Chargé d'Affaires in 'Iraq,
Baghdad.





INDEXED

33
(33)

P.Z.
5286
1933

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4482/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 24th, 1933.

pp 5283

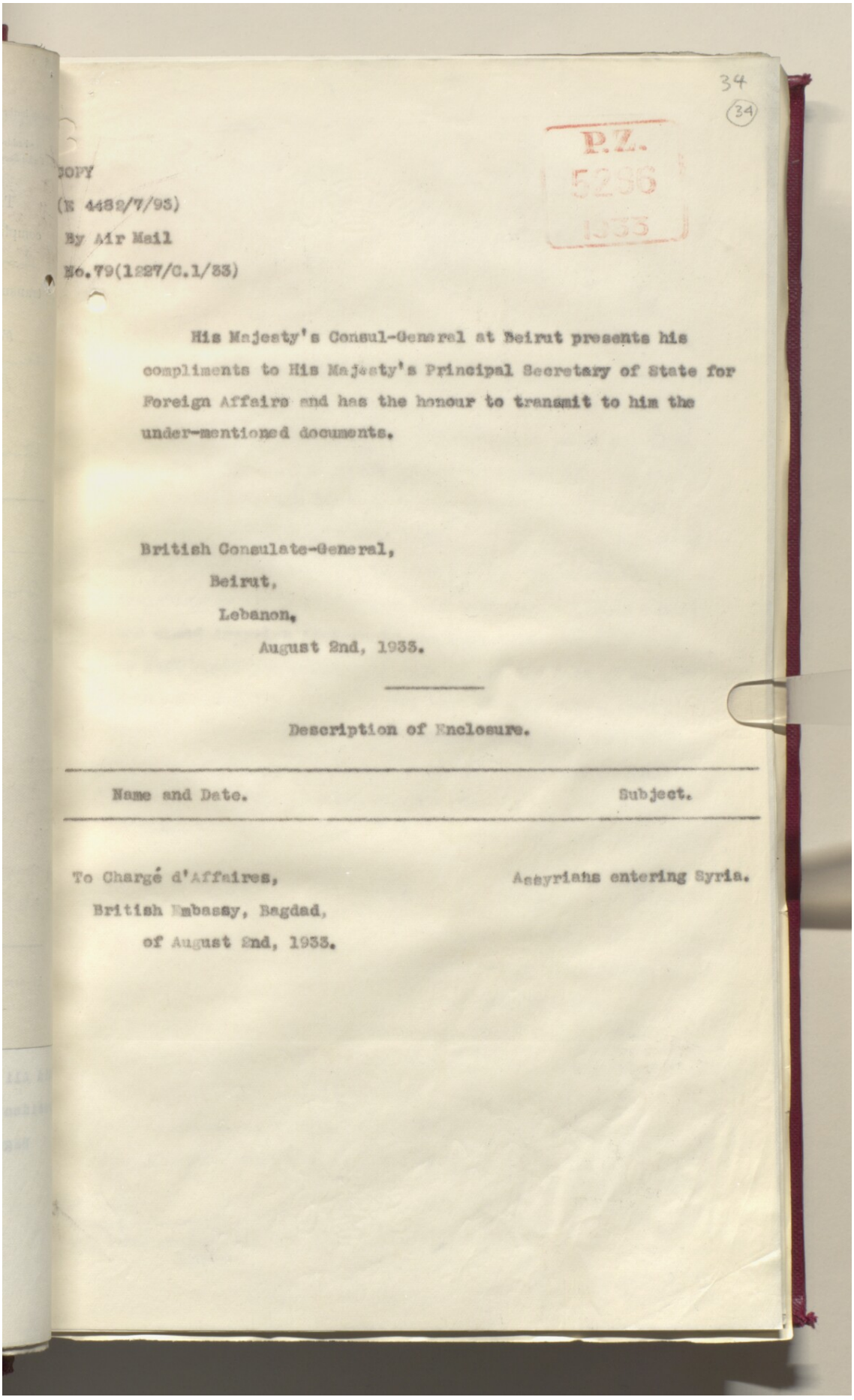
Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.:- E 4213/7/93 of August 12th.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H. Consul-General Beirut. 79 of August 2nd.	Migration of Assyrians into Syria.

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14—6130 8755 (2)



34

(34)

P.Z.
5286
1933

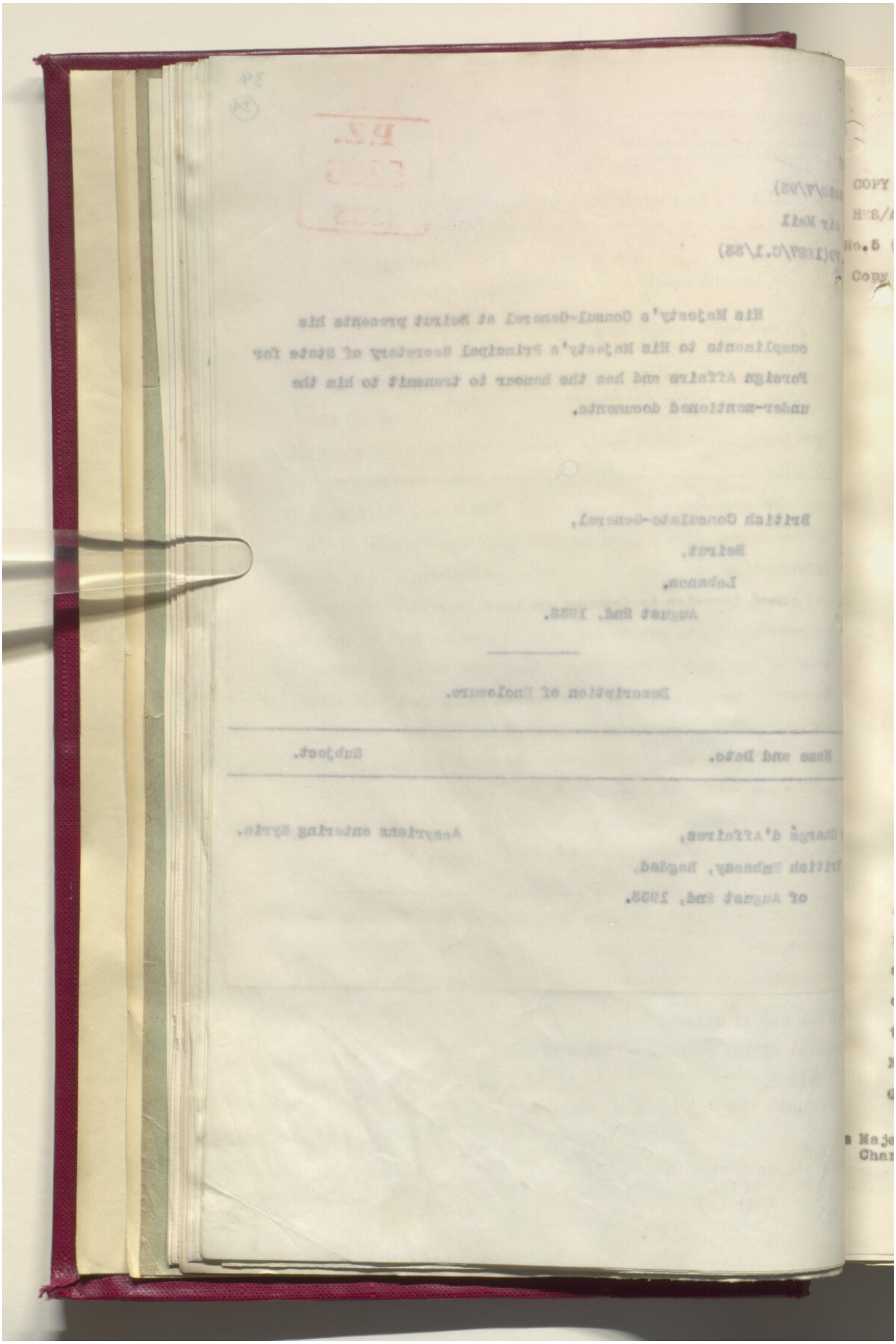
COPY
(E 4482/7/93)
By Air Mail
No.79(1227/C.1/33)

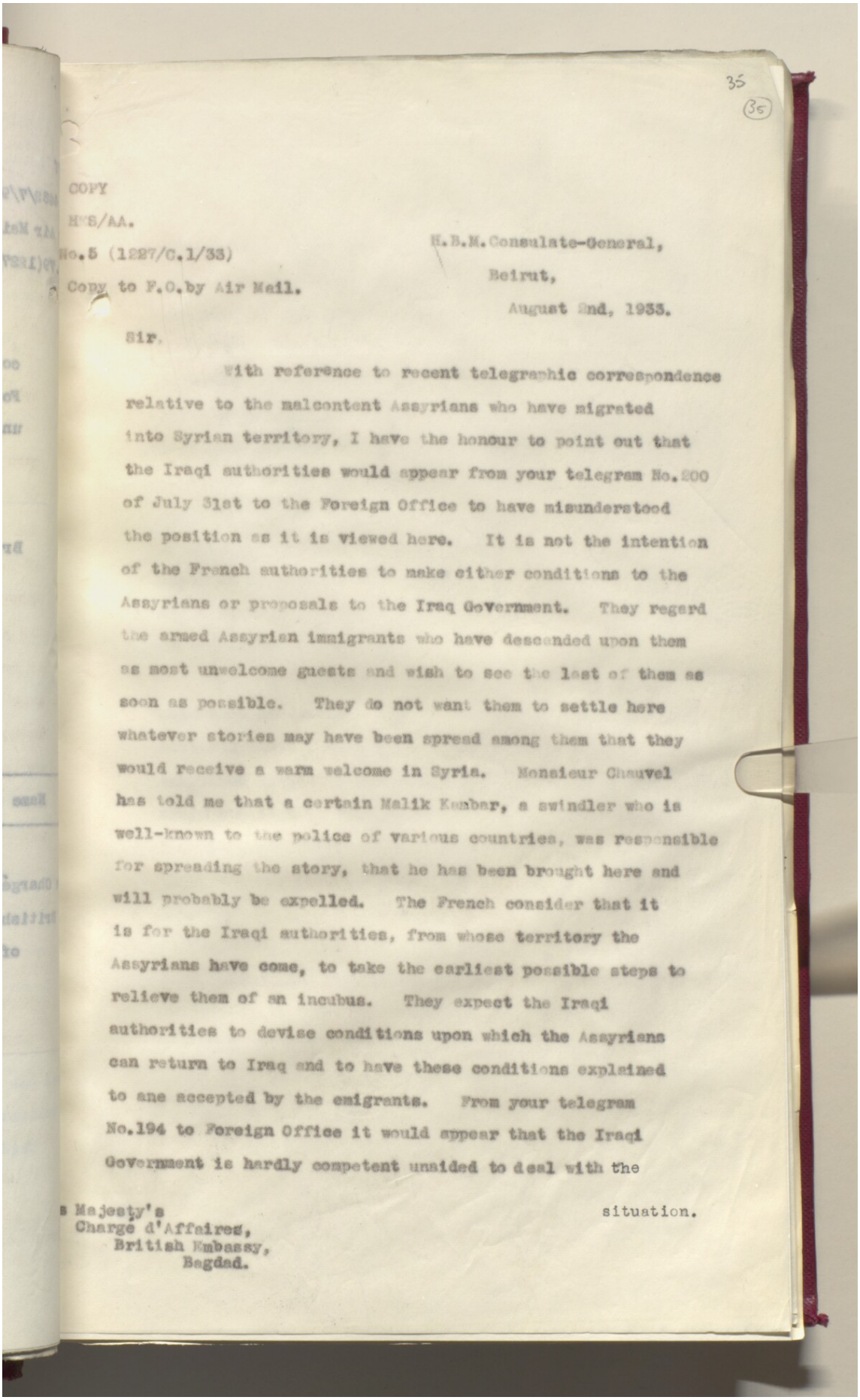
His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and has the honour to transmit to him the under-mentioned documents.

British Consulate-General,
Beirut,
Lebanon,
August 2nd, 1933.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To Chargé d'Affaires, British Embassy, Bagdad, of August 2nd, 1933.	Assyrians entering Syria.





35
(35)

COPY

H^S/AA.

No.5 (1227/C.1/33)

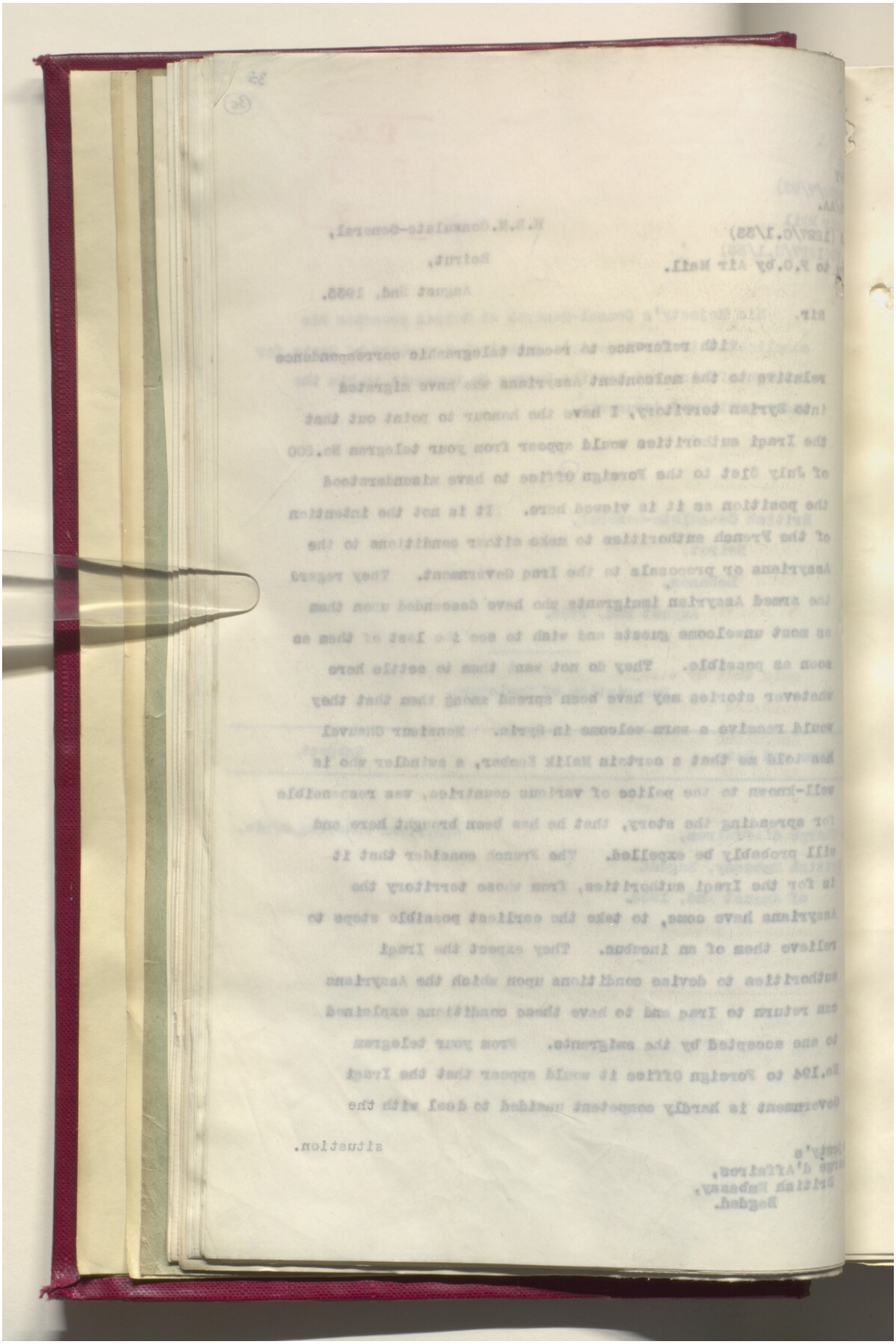
Copy to F.O.by Air Mail.

H.B.M.Consulate-General,
Beirut,
August 2nd, 1933.

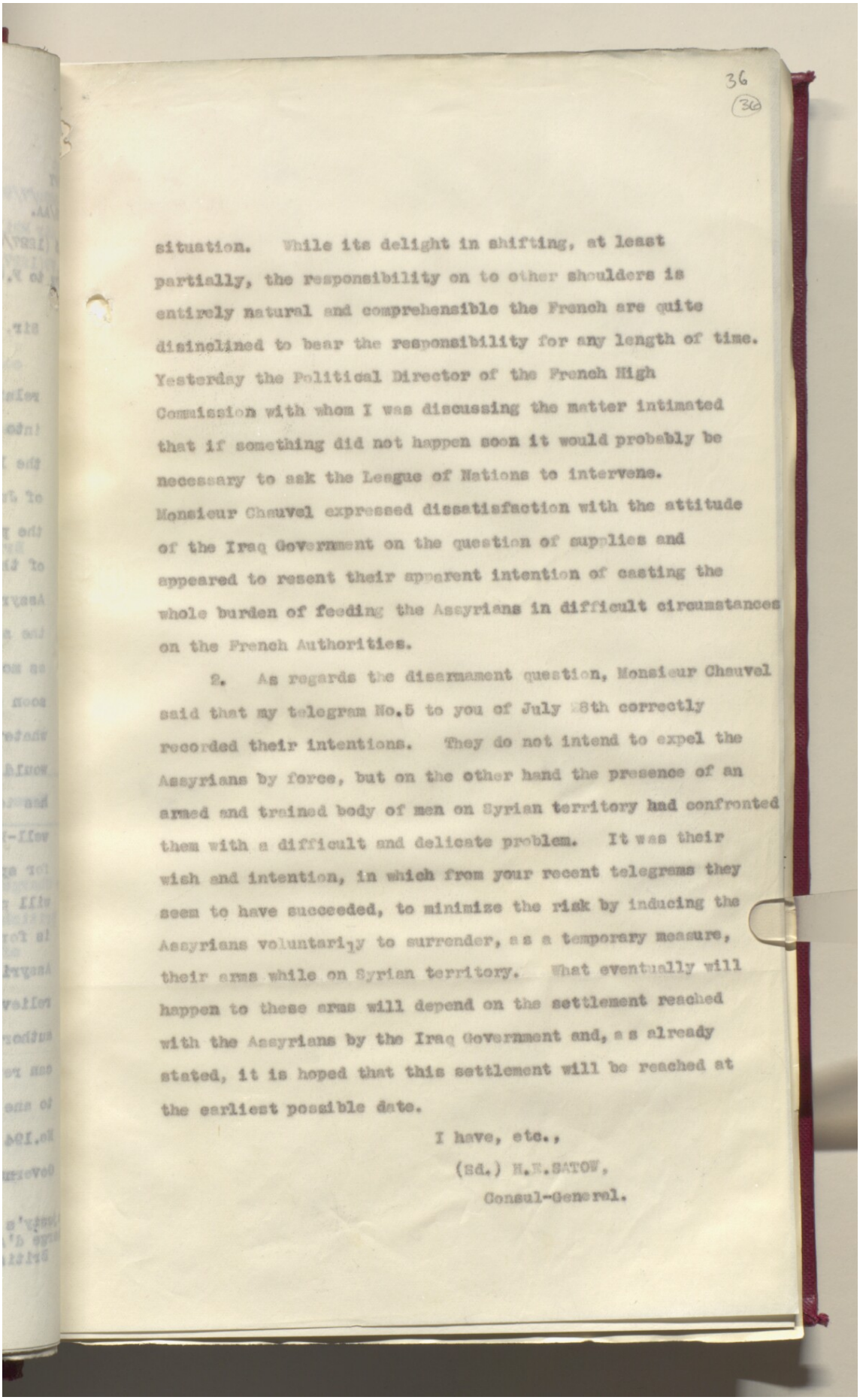
Sir,

With reference to recent telegraphic correspondence relative to the malcontent Assyrians who have migrated into Syrian territory, I have the honour to point out that the Iraqi authorities would appear from your telegram No.200 of July 31st to the Foreign Office to have misunderstood the position as it is viewed here. It is not the intention of the French authorities to make either conditions to the Assyrians or proposals to the Iraq Government. They regard the armed Assyrian immigrants who have descended upon them as most unwelcome guests and wish to see the last of them as soon as possible. They do not want them to settle here whatever stories may have been spread among them that they would receive a warm welcome in Syria. Monsieur Chauvel has told me that a certain Malik Kenbar, a swindler who is well-known to the police of various countries, was responsible for spreading the story, that he has been brought here and will probably be expelled. The French consider that it is for the Iraqi authorities, from whose territory the Assyrians have come, to take the earliest possible steps to relieve them of an incubus. They expect the Iraqi authorities to devise conditions upon which the Assyrians can return to Iraq and to have these conditions explained to and accepted by the emigrants. From your telegram No.194 to Foreign Office it would appear that the Iraqi Government is hardly competent unaided to deal with the situation.

s Majesty's
Charge d'Affaires,
British Embassy,
Bagdad.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000052



36
(36)

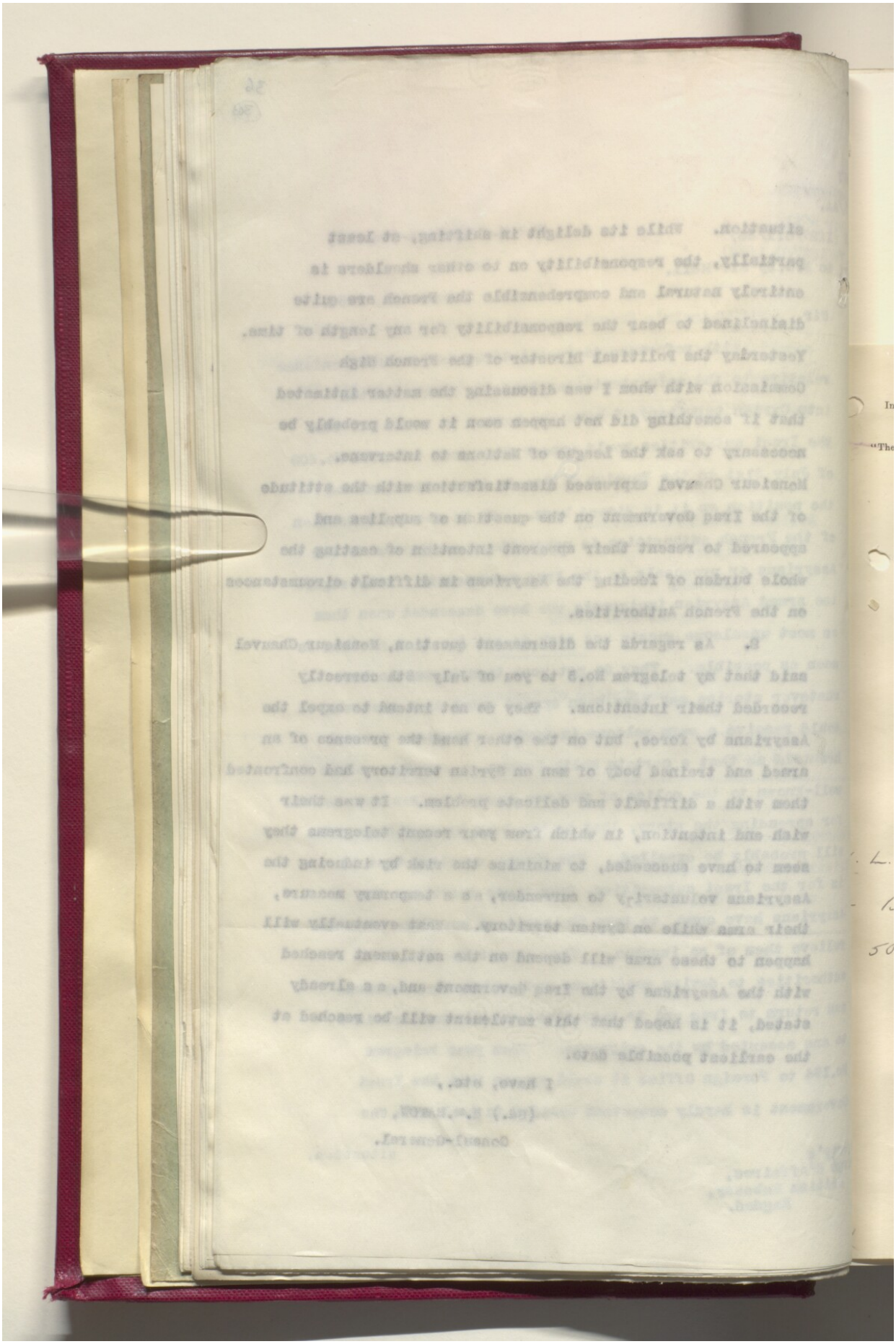
situation. While its delight in shifting, at least partially, the responsibility on to other shoulders is entirely natural and comprehensible the French are quite disinclined to bear the responsibility for any length of time. Yesterday the Political Director of the French High Commission with whom I was discussing the matter intimated that if something did not happen soon it would probably be necessary to ask the League of Nations to intervene. Monsieur Chauvel expressed dissatisfaction with the attitude of the Iraq Government on the question of supplies and appeared to resent their apparent intention of casting the whole burden of feeding the Assyrians in difficult circumstances on the French Authorities.

2. As regards the disarmament question, Monsieur Chauvel said that my telegram No.5 to you of July 28th correctly recorded their intentions. They do not intend to expel the Assyrians by force, but on the other hand the presence of an armed and trained body of men on Syrian territory had confronted them with a difficult and delicate problem. It was their wish and intention, in which from your recent telegrams they seem to have succeeded, to minimize the risk by inducing the Assyrians voluntarily to surrender, as a temporary measure, their arms while on Syrian territory. What eventually will happen to these arms will depend on the settlement reached with the Assyrians by the Iraq Government and, as already stated, it is hoped that this settlement will be reached at the earliest possible date.

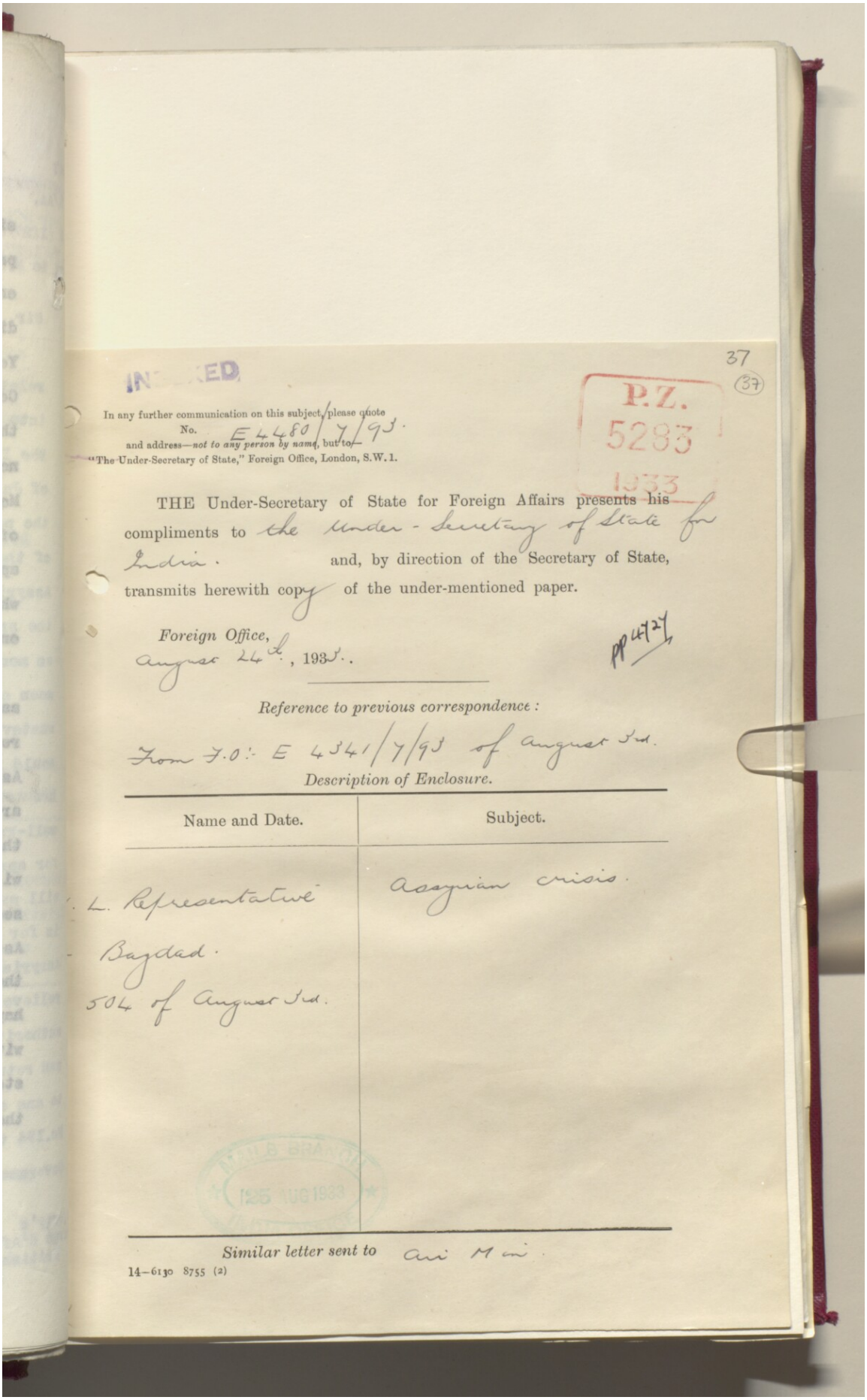
I have, etc.,

(Sd.) H.E.SATOW,

Consul-General.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000054



INDEXED

37
(37)

P.Z.
5283
1933

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4480/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 24th, 1933.

PP 4727

Reference to previous correspondence:

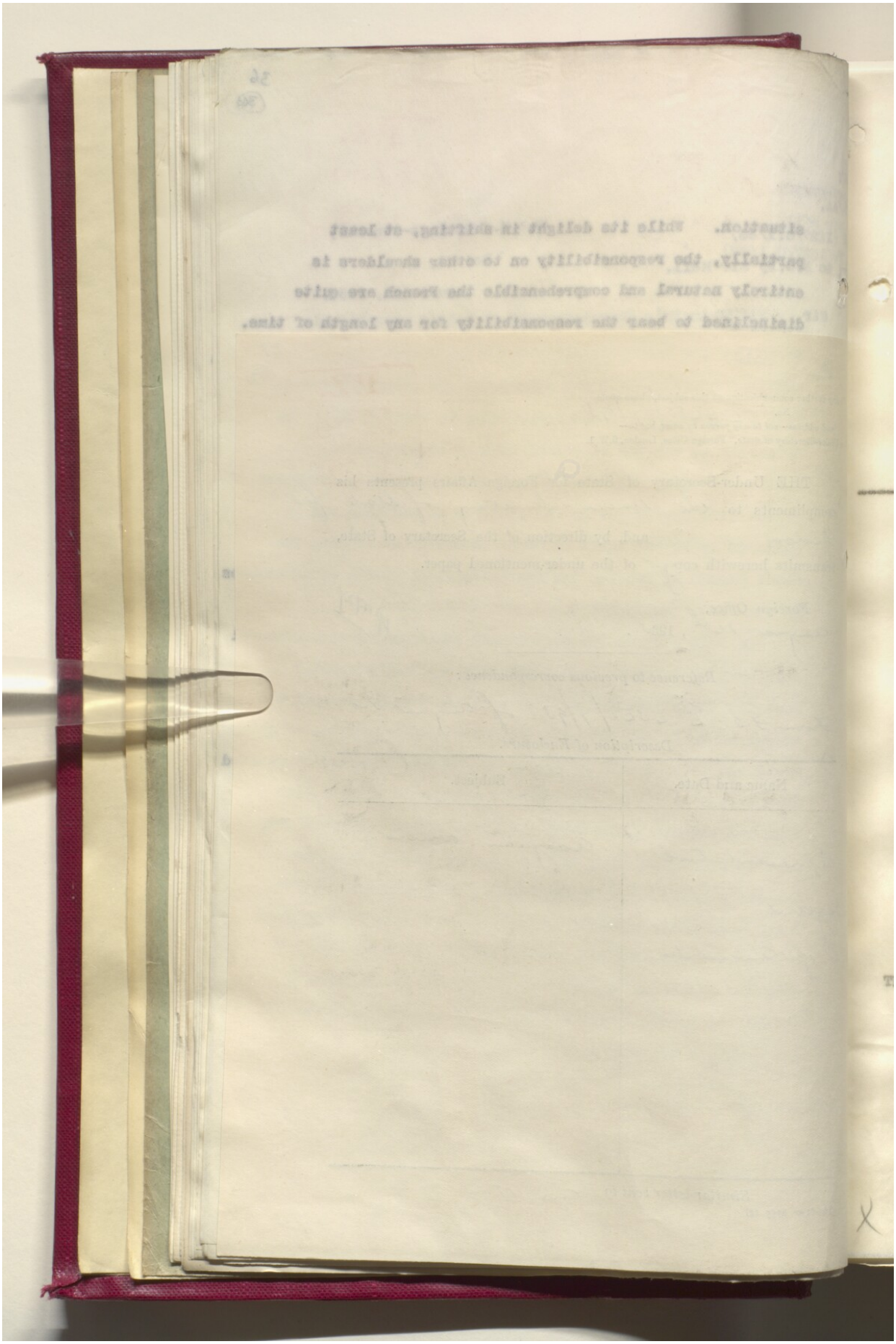
From F.O.:- E 4341/7/93 of August 3rd.

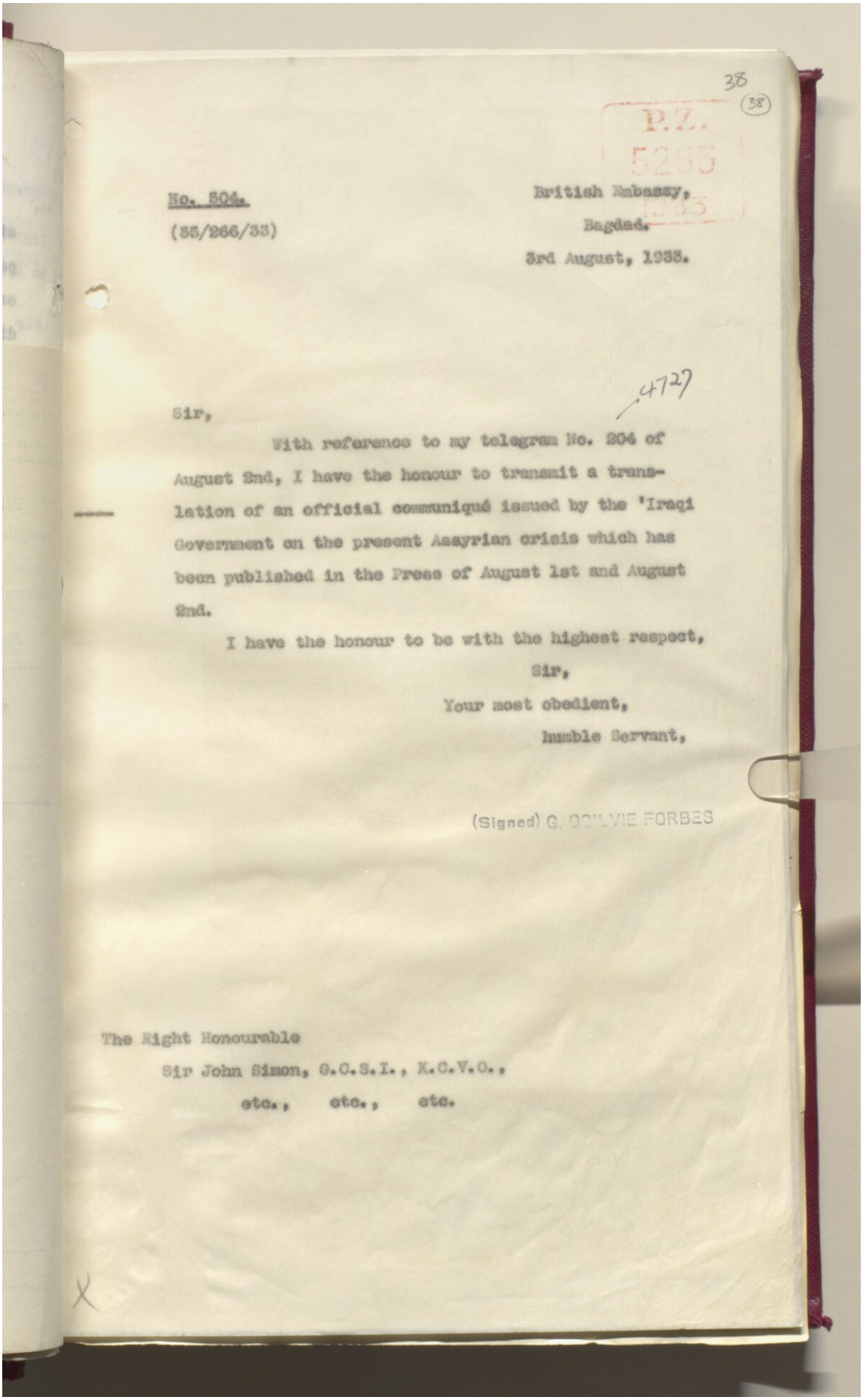
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. 504 of August 3rd.	Assyrian crisis.

Similar letter sent to Air Min.

14–6130 8755 (2)





38

(38)

P.Z.
5283

No. 504.
(55/266/33)

British Embassy,
Bagdad.
3rd August, 1933.

4727

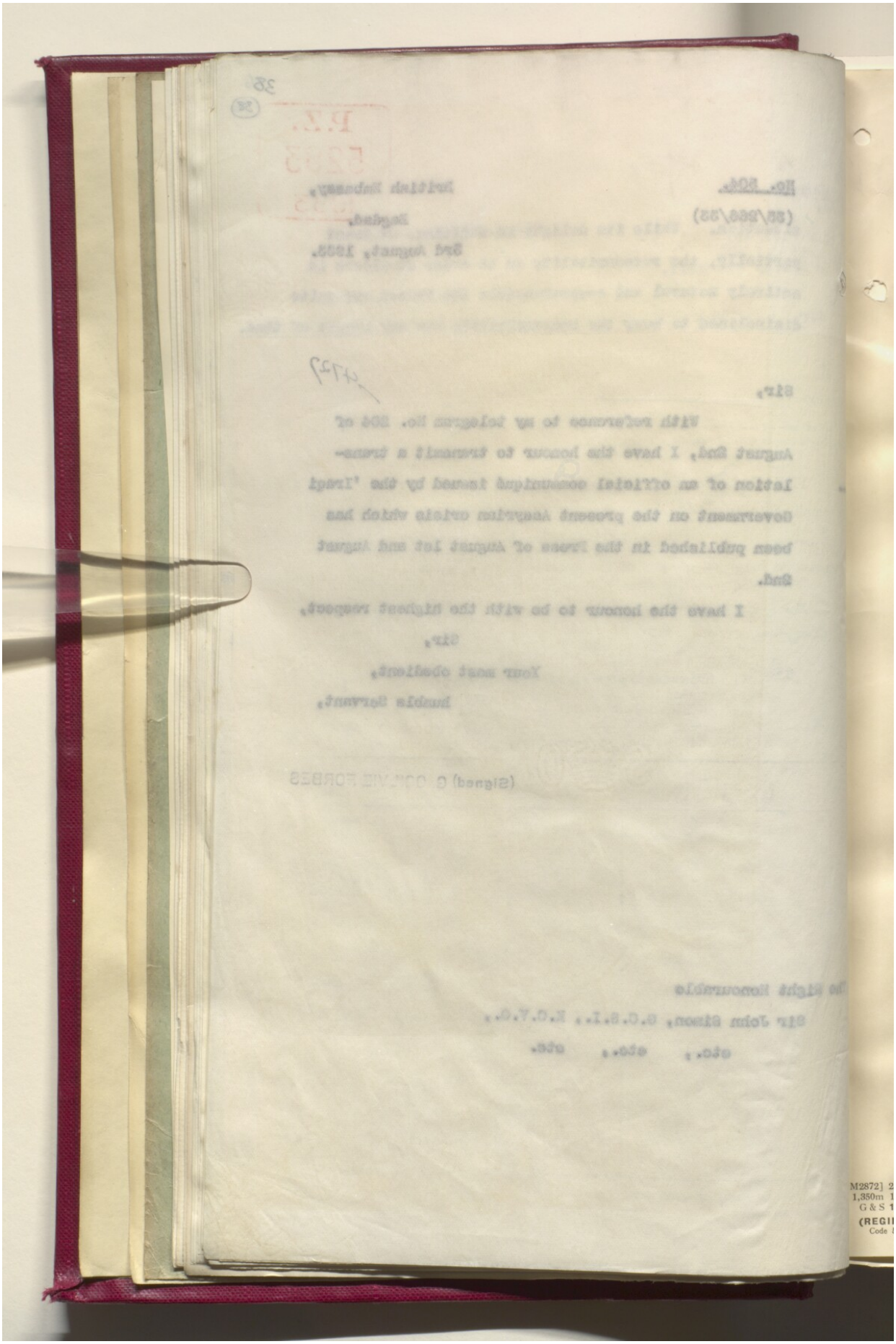
Sir,

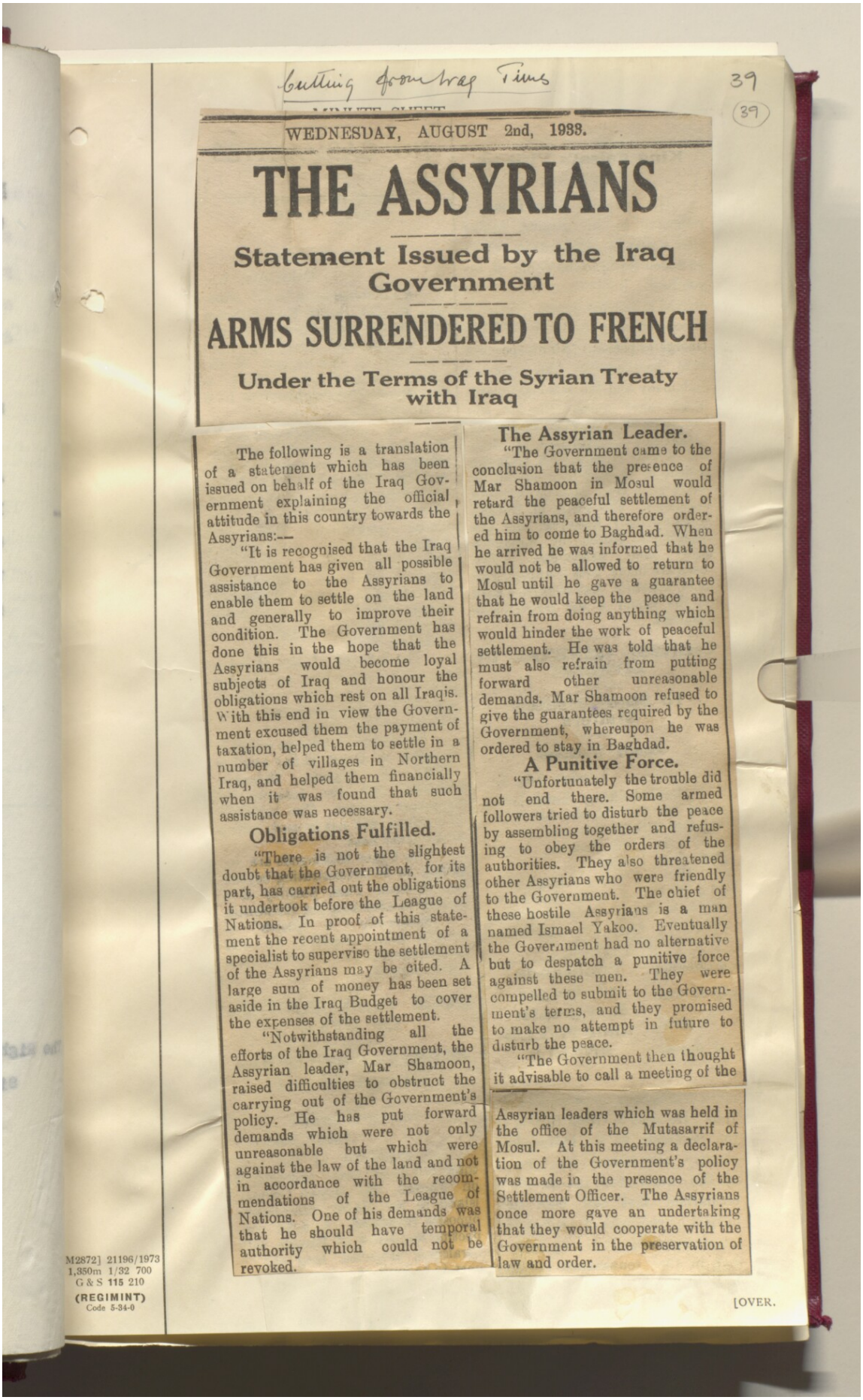
With reference to my telegram No. 204 of August 2nd, I have the honour to transmit a translation of an official communiqué issued by the 'Iraqi Government on the present Assyrian crisis which has been published in the Press of August 1st and August 2nd.

I have the honour to be with the highest respect,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble Servant,

(Signed) G. OGILVIE FORBES

The Right Honourable
Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.





Cutting from Iraq Times

39
(39)

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 2nd, 1933.

THE ASSYRIANS

Statement Issued by the Iraq Government

ARMS SURRENDERED TO FRENCH

Under the Terms of the Syrian Treaty with Iraq

The following is a translation of a statement which has been issued on behalf of the Iraq Government explaining the official attitude in this country towards the Assyrians:—

"It is recognised that the Iraq Government has given all possible assistance to the Assyrians to enable them to settle on the land and generally to improve their condition. The Government has done this in the hope that the Assyrians would become loyal subjects of Iraq and honour the obligations which rest on all Iraqis. With this end in view the Government excused them the payment of taxation, helped them to settle in a number of villages in Northern Iraq, and helped them financially when it was found that such assistance was necessary.

Obligations Fulfilled.

"There is not the slightest doubt that the Government, for its part, has carried out the obligations it undertook before the League of Nations. In proof of this statement the recent appointment of a specialist to supervise the settlement of the Assyrians may be cited. A large sum of money has been set aside in the Iraq Budget to cover the expenses of the settlement.

"Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Iraq Government, the Assyrian leader, Mar Shamoon, raised difficulties to obstruct the carrying out of the Government's policy. He has put forward demands which were not only unreasonable but which were against the law of the land and not in accordance with the recommendations of the League of Nations. One of his demands was that he should have temporal authority which could not be revoked.

The Assyrian Leader.

"The Government came to the conclusion that the presence of Mar Shamoon in Mosul would retard the peaceful settlement of the Assyrians, and therefore ordered him to come to Baghdad. When he arrived he was informed that he would not be allowed to return to Mosul until he gave a guarantee that he would keep the peace and refrain from doing anything which would hinder the work of peaceful settlement. He was told that he must also refrain from putting forward other unreasonable demands. Mar Shamoon refused to give the guarantees required by the Government, whereupon he was ordered to stay in Baghdad.

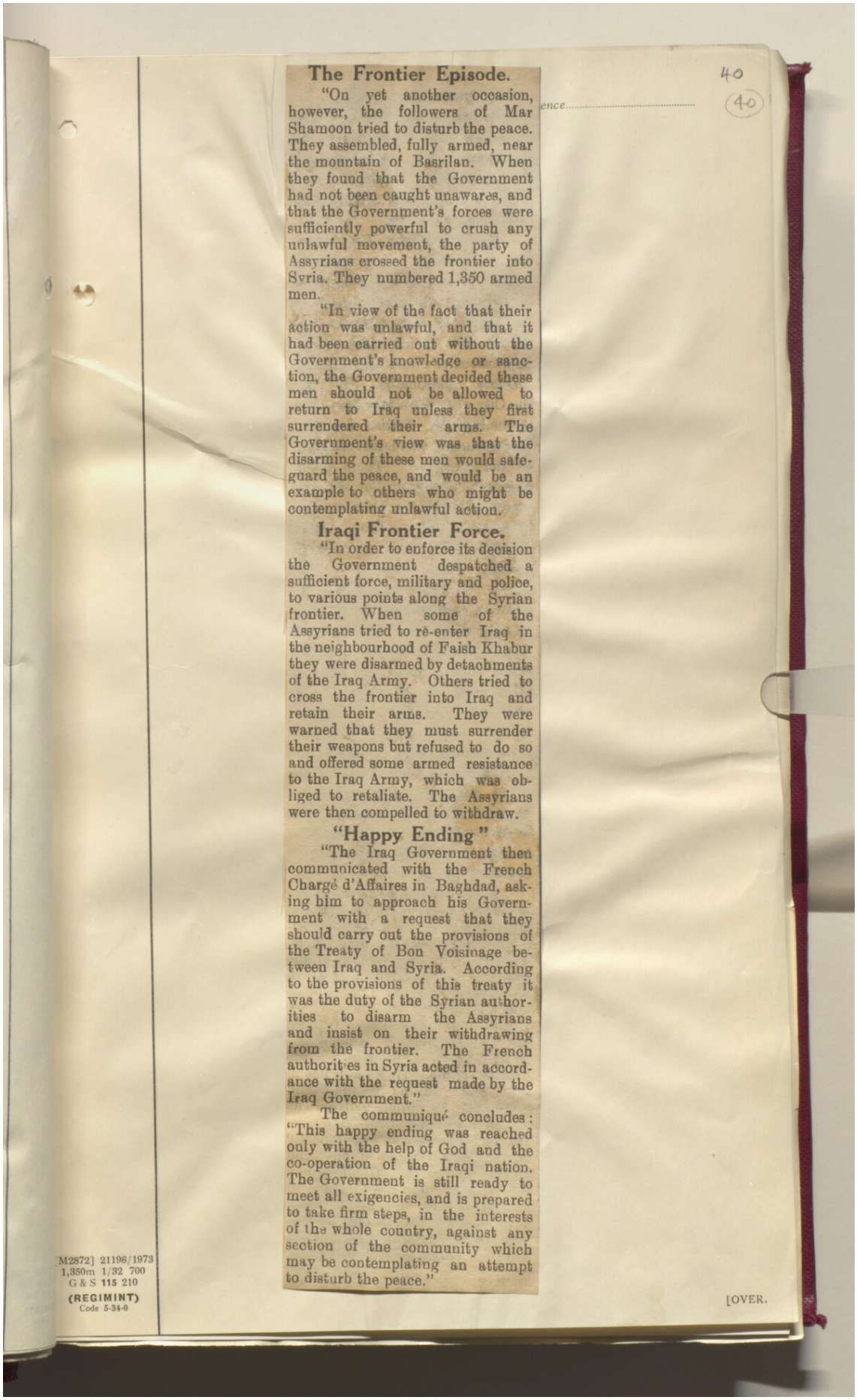
A Punitive Force.

"Unfortunately the trouble did not end there. Some armed followers tried to disturb the peace by assembling together and refusing to obey the orders of the authorities. They also threatened other Assyrians who were friendly to the Government. The chief of these hostile Assyrians is a man named Ismael Yakoo. Eventually the Government had no alternative but to despatch a punitive force against these men. They were compelled to submit to the Government's terms, and they promised to make no attempt in future to disturb the peace.

"The Government then thought it advisable to call a meeting of the Assyrian leaders which was held in the office of the Mutasarrif of Mosul. At this meeting a declaration of the Government's policy was made in the presence of the Settlement Officer. The Assyrians once more gave an undertaking that they would cooperate with the Government in the preservation of law and order.

[OVER.

M2872] 21196/1973
1,350m 1/32 700
G & S 115 210
(REGIMINT)
Code 5-34-0



40

(40)

ence.....

The Frontier Episode.

"On yet another occasion, however, the followers of Mar Shamoon tried to disturb the peace. They assembled, fully armed, near the mountain of Basrilan. When they found that the Government had not been caught unawares, and that the Government's forces were sufficiently powerful to crush any unlawful movement, the party of Assyrians crossed the frontier into Syria. They numbered 1,350 armed men.

"In view of the fact that their action was unlawful, and that it had been carried out without the Government's knowledge or sanction, the Government decided these men should not be allowed to return to Iraq unless they first surrendered their arms. The Government's view was that the disarming of these men would safeguard the peace, and would be an example to others who might be contemplating unlawful action.

Iraqi Frontier Force.

"In order to enforce its decision the Government despatched a sufficient force, military and police, to various points along the Syrian frontier. When some of the Assyrians tried to re-enter Iraq in the neighbourhood of Faish Khabur they were disarmed by detachments of the Iraq Army. Others tried to cross the frontier into Iraq and retain their arms. They were warned that they must surrender their weapons but refused to do so and offered some armed resistance to the Iraq Army, which was obliged to retaliate. The Assyrians were then compelled to withdraw.

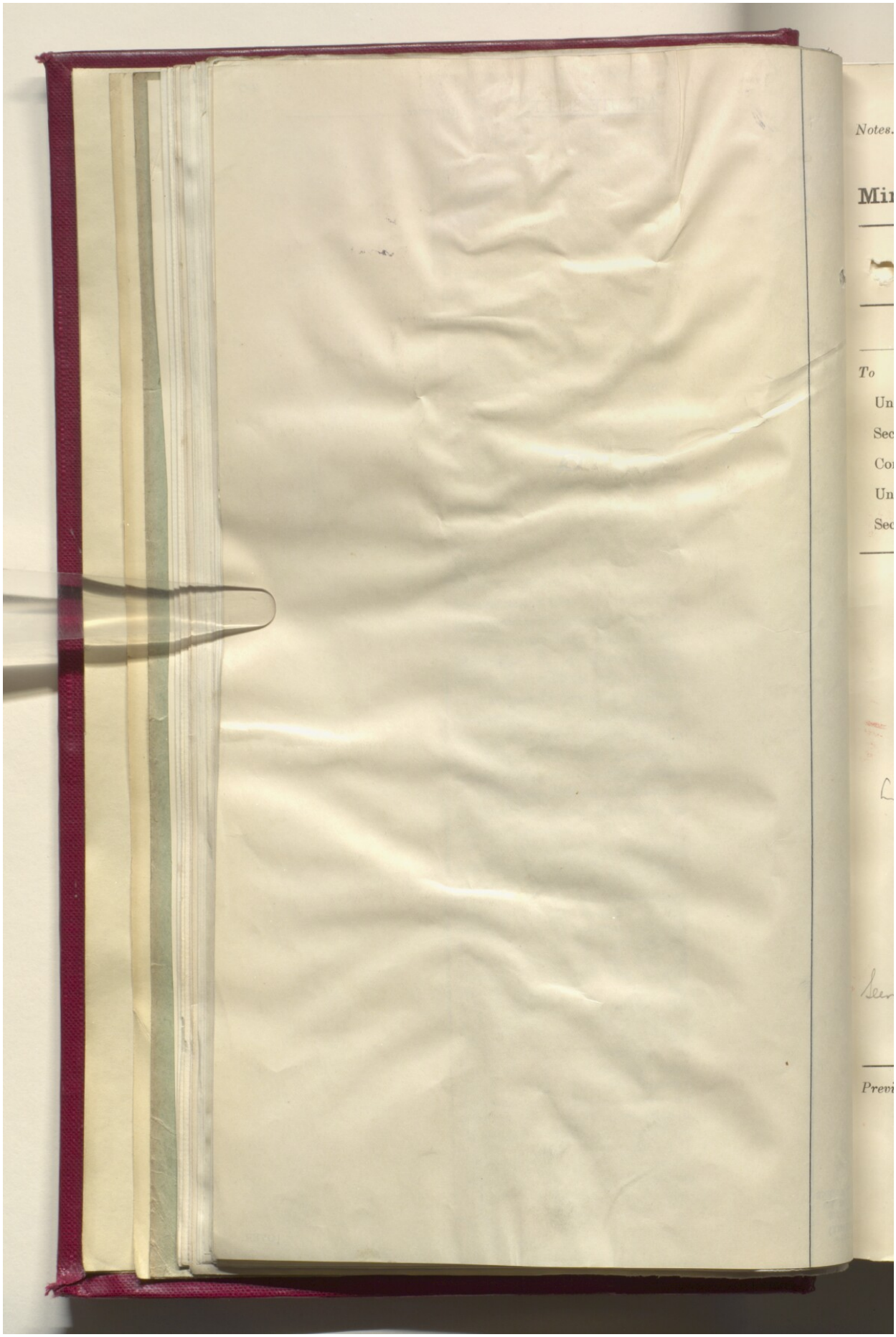
"Happy Ending"

"The Iraq Government then communicated with the French Chargé d'Affaires in Baghdad, asking him to approach his Government with a request that they should carry out the provisions of the Treaty of Bon Voisinage between Iraq and Syria. According to the provisions of this treaty it was the duty of the Syrian authorities to disarm the Assyrians and insist on their withdrawing from the frontier. The French authorities in Syria acted in accordance with the request made by the Iraq Government."

The communiqué concludes: "This happy ending was reached only with the help of God and the co-operation of the Iraqi nation. The Government is still ready to meet all exigencies, and is prepared to take firm steps, in the interests of the whole country, against any section of the community which may be contemplating an attempt to disturb the peace."

[OVER.

M2872] 21196/1973
1,350m 1/32 700
G & S 115 210
(REGIMINT)
Code 5-34-0



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Public Domain
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00005c

41 (41)

Notes.

Register No.
PZ
5241/33.

Minute Paper.

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated 19 .
Rec.

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	24. 8.	[illegible]	Assyrian crisis.
Secretary of State...	27	[illegible]	
Committee.....	28.	S.H.	Telegrams &c. to 22 Aug.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Two very interesting papers are attached — the record of the discussions with Sir F. Humphrys presided over by the Prime Minister on 17 August (PZ 5237) and a Note of 15 August (PZ 5236) by Maj Genl Rowan Robinson (head of the British Military Mission in Iraq).

I also attach the latest telegrams (below the papers referred to above)

[illegible] 23/8 33.

Sir M. Sykes (on Tuesday) [illegible] 29/8

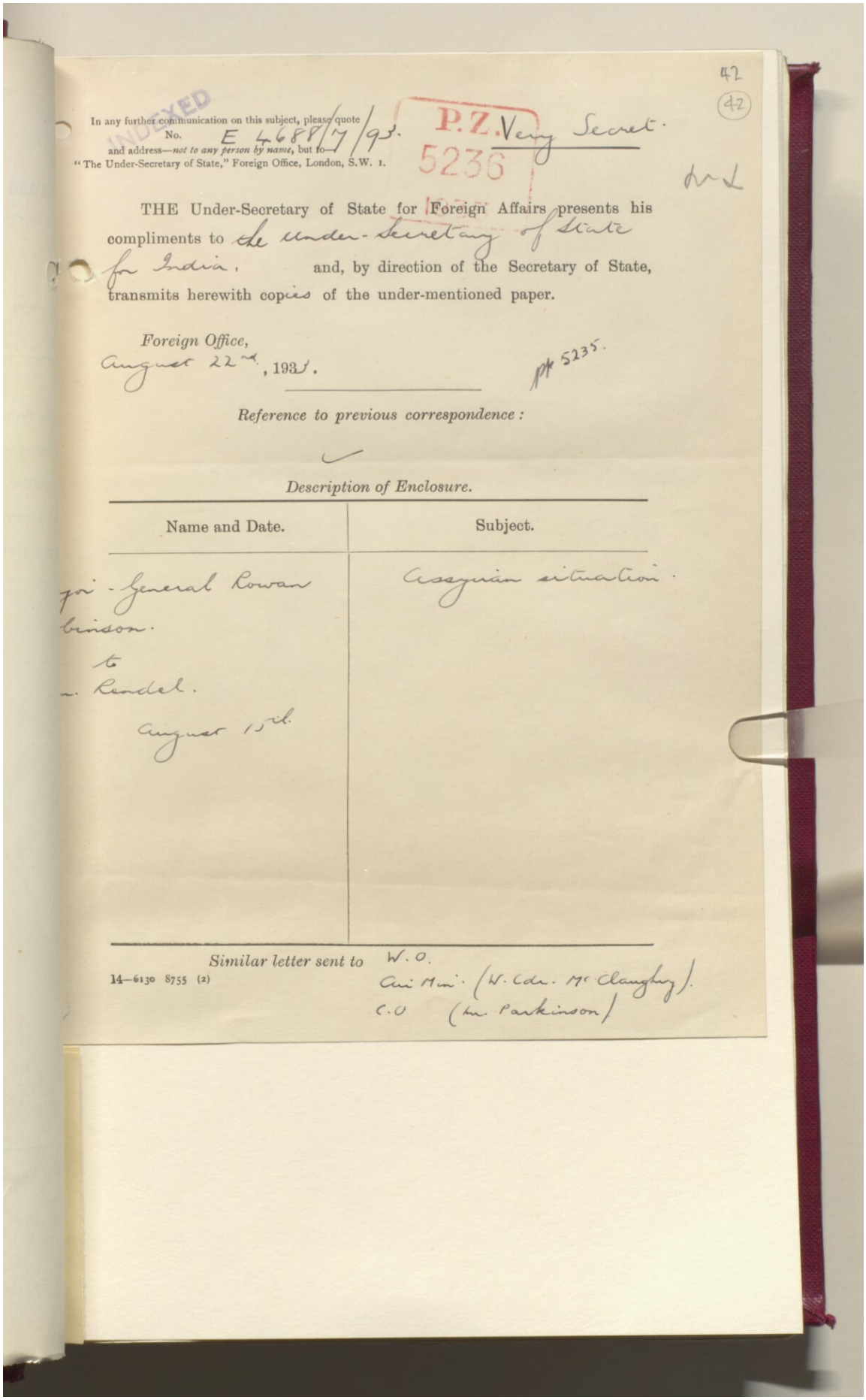
Secy - Political Committee on 30/8/33
See 5272 above.

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00005d



42
(42)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4688/7/93. and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 5236 Very Secret.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.

P.P. 5235.

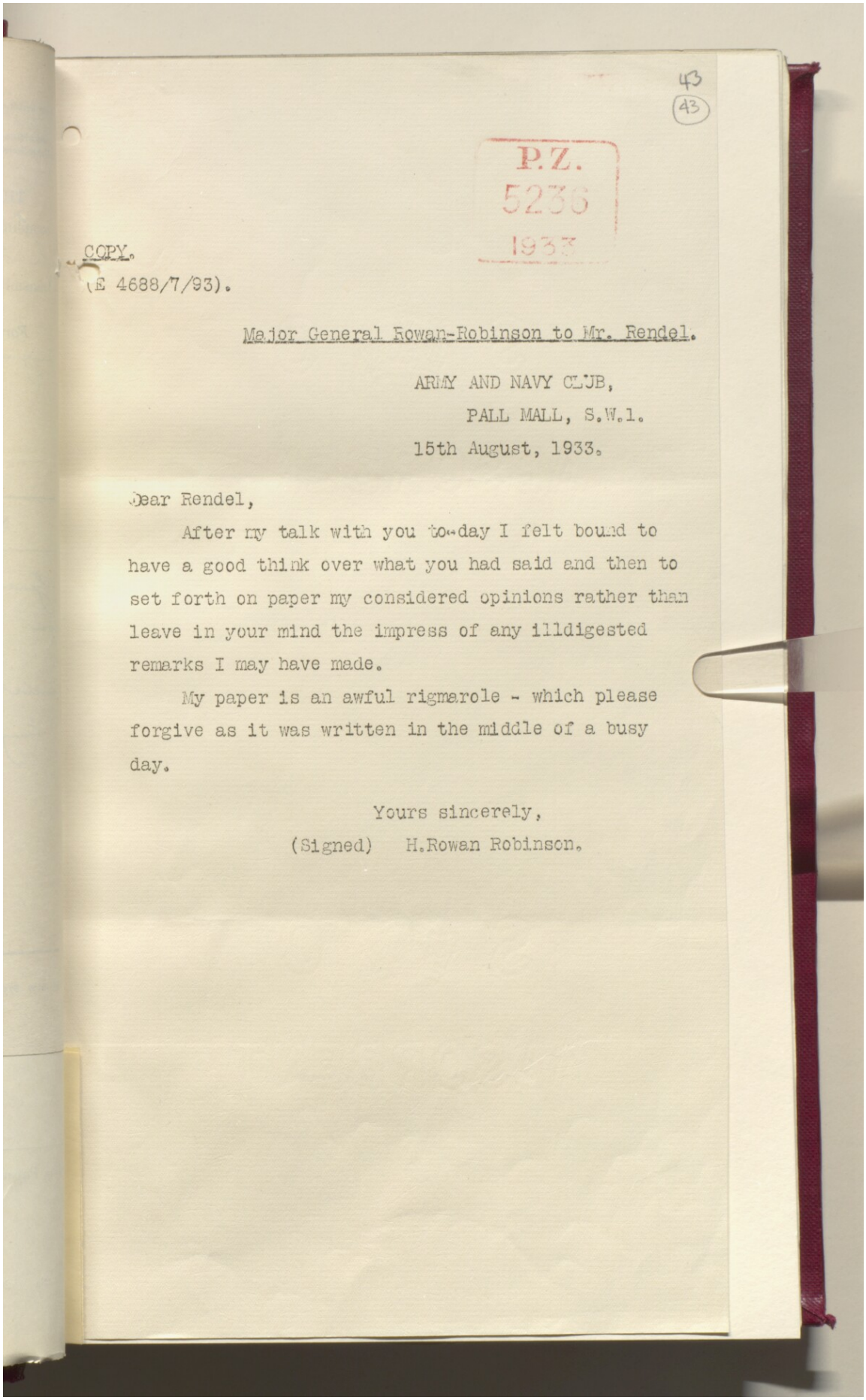
Reference to previous correspondence:

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Air-General Rowan Robinson. to Mr. Randel. August 15th.	Assyrian situation.

Similar letter sent to W.O. Air Min. (W. Cdr. McClaughry). C.O. (Mr. Parkinson)

14—6130 8755 (2)



43
(43)

P.Z.
5236
1933

COPY.
(E 4688/7/93).

Major General Rowan-Robinson to Mr. Rendel.

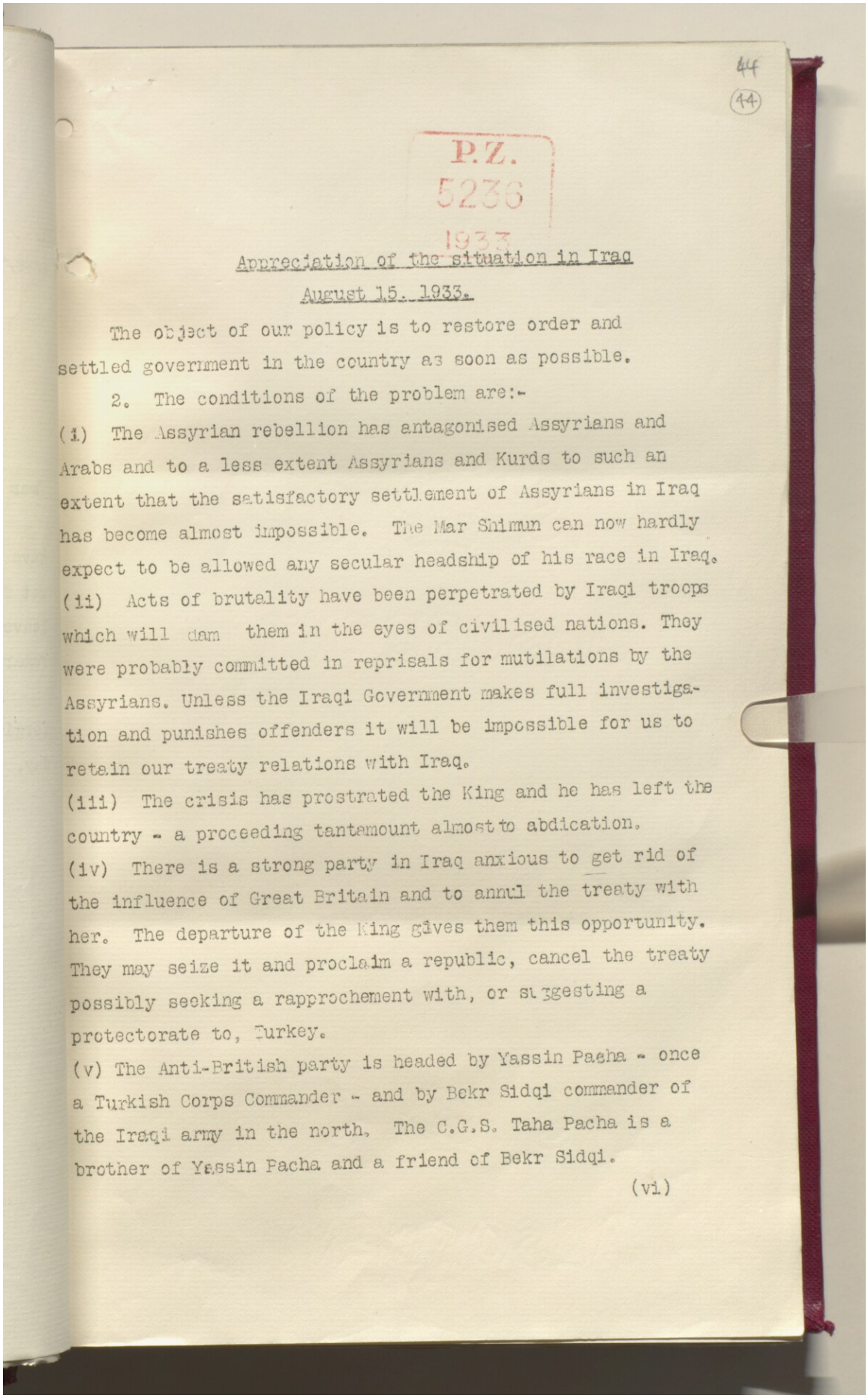
ARMY AND NAVY CLUB,
PALL MALL, S.W.1.
15th August, 1933.

Dear Rendel,

After my talk with you to-day I felt bound to have a good think over what you had said and then to set forth on paper my considered opinions rather than leave in your mind the impress of any illdigested remarks I may have made.

My paper is an awful rigmarole - which please forgive as it was written in the middle of a busy day.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) H.Rowan Robinson.



44
(44)

P.Z.
5236
1933

Appreciation of the situation in Iraq

August 15. 1933.

The object of our policy is to restore order and settled government in the country as soon as possible.

2. The conditions of the problem are:-

(i) The Assyrian rebellion has antagonised Assyrians and Arabs and to a less extent Assyrians and Kurds to such an extent that the satisfactory settlement of Assyrians in Iraq has become almost impossible. The Mar Shimun can now hardly expect to be allowed any secular headship of his race in Iraq.

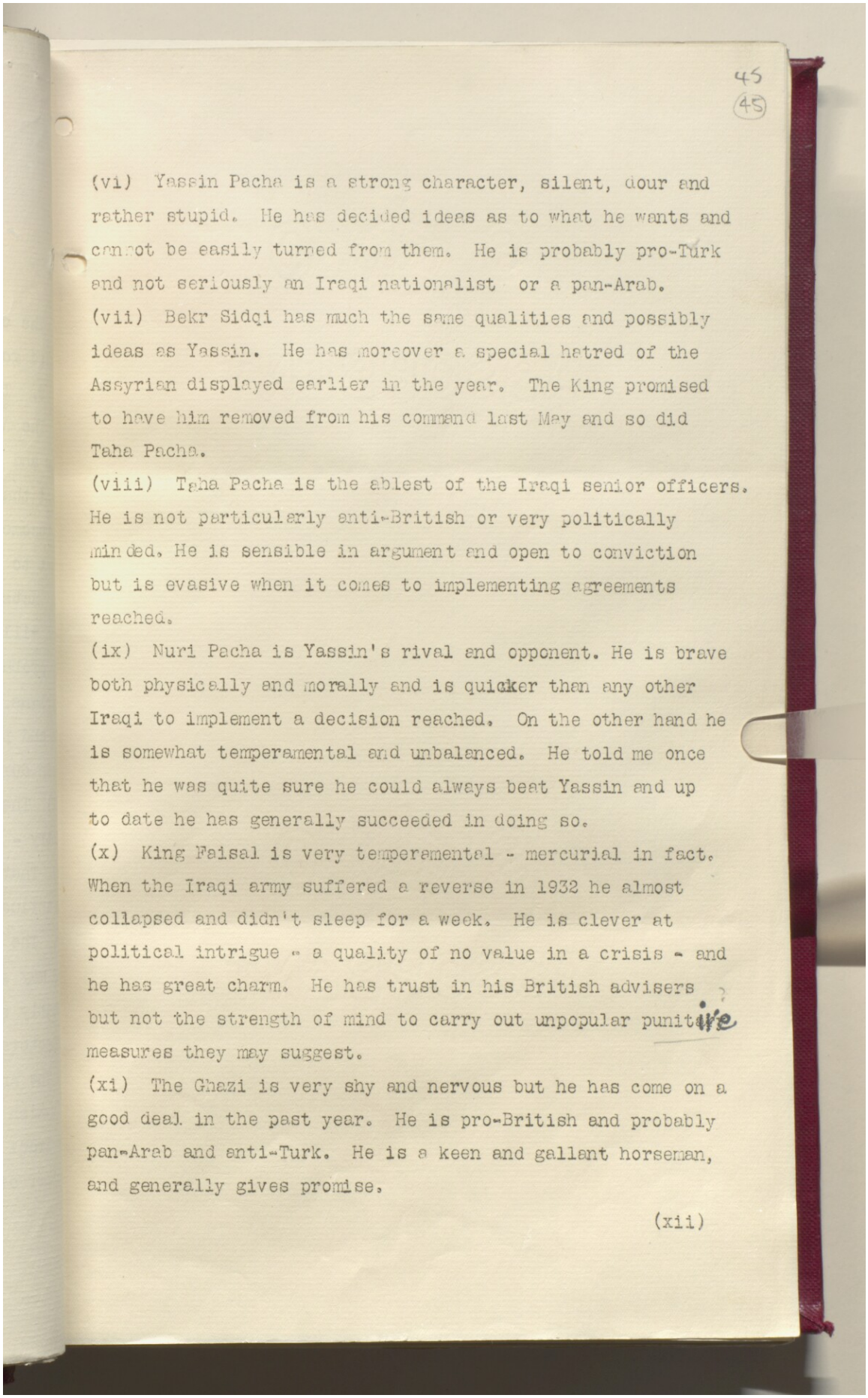
(ii) Acts of brutality have been perpetrated by Iraqi troops which will dam them in the eyes of civilised nations. They were probably committed in reprisals for mutilations by the Assyrians. Unless the Iraqi Government makes full investigation and punishes offenders it will be impossible for us to retain our treaty relations with Iraq.

(iii) The crisis has prostrated the King and he has left the country - a proceeding tantamount almost to abdication.

(iv) There is a strong party in Iraq anxious to get rid of the influence of Great Britain and to annul the treaty with her. The departure of the King gives them this opportunity. They may seize it and proclaim a republic, cancel the treaty possibly seeking a rapprochement with, or suggesting a protectorate to, Turkey.

(v) The Anti-British party is headed by Yassin Pasha - once a Turkish Corps Commander - and by Bekr Sidqi commander of the Iraqi army in the north. The C.G.S. Taha Pacha is a brother of Yassin Pacha and a friend of Bekr Sidqi.

(vi.)



45
(45)

(vi) Yassin Pacha is a strong character, silent, dour and rather stupid. He has decided ideas as to what he wants and cannot be easily turned from them. He is probably pro-Turk and not seriously an Iraqi nationalist or a pan-Arab.

(vii) Bekr Sidqi has much the same qualities and possibly ideas as Yassin. He has moreover a special hatred of the Assyrian displayed earlier in the year. The King promised to have him removed from his command last May and so did Taha Pacha.

(viii) Taha Pacha is the ablest of the Iraqi senior officers. He is not particularly anti-British or very politically minded. He is sensible in argument and open to conviction but is evasive when it comes to implementing agreements reached.

(ix) Nuri Pacha is Yassin's rival and opponent. He is brave both physically and morally and is quicker than any other Iraqi to implement a decision reached. On the other hand he is somewhat temperamental and unbalanced. He told me once that he was quite sure he could always beat Yassin and up to date he has generally succeeded in doing so.

(x) King Faisal is very temperamental - mercurial in fact. When the Iraqi army suffered a reverse in 1932 he almost collapsed and didn't sleep for a week. He is clever at political intrigue - a quality of no value in a crisis - and he has great charm. He has trust in his British advisers but not the strength of mind to carry out unpopular punitive measures they may suggest.

(xi) The Ghazi is very shy and nervous but he has come on a good deal in the past year. He is pro-British and probably pan-Arab and anti-Turk. He is a keen and gallant horseman, and generally gives promise.

(xii)

(xii) The Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people having just achieved independence are anxious to display it. British advisers are popular personally and their advice is generally taken privately. But strong political attacks are always made on any Iraqi official known to take British advice.
(xiii) The position of the R.A.F. is a difficult one. It requires defence both immediate and general.

Immediate protection is afforded by the Air Defence Force - a mixed force of Assyrians, Arabs and Kurds of whom the Assyrians preponderate. Only those on the spot can say how far the Assyrians can be trusted. But any worsening of their case on further provocation may break their loyalty.

As regards general protection, the safety of the R.A.F. in Iraq depends on our prestige. Their 3 aerodromes, even given a faithful defence force, are quite indefensible and it is not a feasible military proposition to send troops to their aid in an emergency.

3. Let us now consider the cases that may arise: the worse case is that in which the King abdicates and an anti-British, pro-Turkish party headed by Yassin seizes the reins of government proclaims a Republic, renounces the alliance with Britain and makes overtures to Turkey.

If such a Government feels sure of popular support, it will demand the immediate withdrawal of the R.A.F. If our prestige and financial and diplomatic pressure fail to enforce withdrawal of that demand we have no other weapon to use. As leaders in the anti-bombing campaign we can hardly bomb the principal cities of Iraq. Anarchy would certainly ensue after our departure, and some neighbouring country might take advantage of the situation to obtain possession.

The middle case is that in which the King abdicates and

a

a Republic is formed, but the treaty of alliance and financial engagements are upheld. This would not last long, for anti-British influence would grow and soon lead to the denouncement of the treaty. In the meantime the position of the R.A.F. would be insecure.

The best case is that in which the King remains in power or abdicates in favour of the Ghazi or King Ali. Whatever King was on the throne might be expected to form the nucleus of a strong pro-British, pro-treaty, anti-Turkish block which would have a reasonable chance of preserving the status quo.

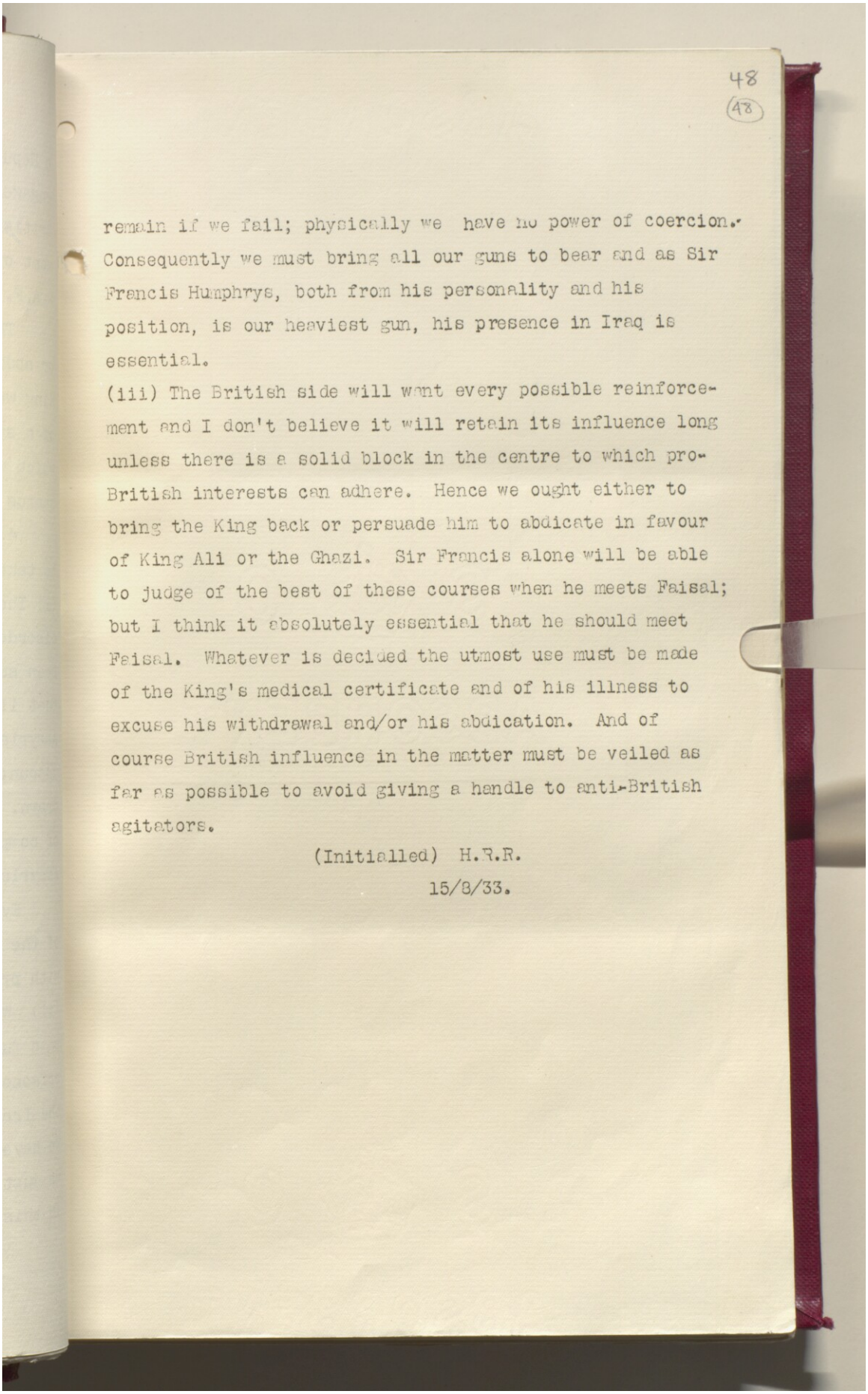
4. The following appear to be the necessary actions to be taken:-

(i) The immediate matter is the suppression of the Assyrian disorders and the liquidation of Assyrian question. It has been suggested that the Mar Shimun be deported. My opinion is that if it was unsound to detain him in Baghdad when the Assyrians were a potential menace it would be still more unsound to deport him when the teeth of the Assyrians had been drawn. Such action would give the Assyrian nation a feeling of complete helplessness and might break the loyalty of the Assyrians of the Air Defence Force.

Every endeavour should be made to complete the surrender of the Assyrian rebels and to furnish the Assyrians generally with protection pending the liquidation of their case.

(ii) We must insist, as a pre-requisite to all our dealings, on a full examination into the shooting of the Assyrian prisoners and on the punishment of the offenders. As I know the Iraqis they will make every endeavour to avoid this. We have got no weapons but finance, diplomacy and prestige and we must make all these tell to the utmost because if we fail in this point we fail all along the line. Morally we cannot

remain

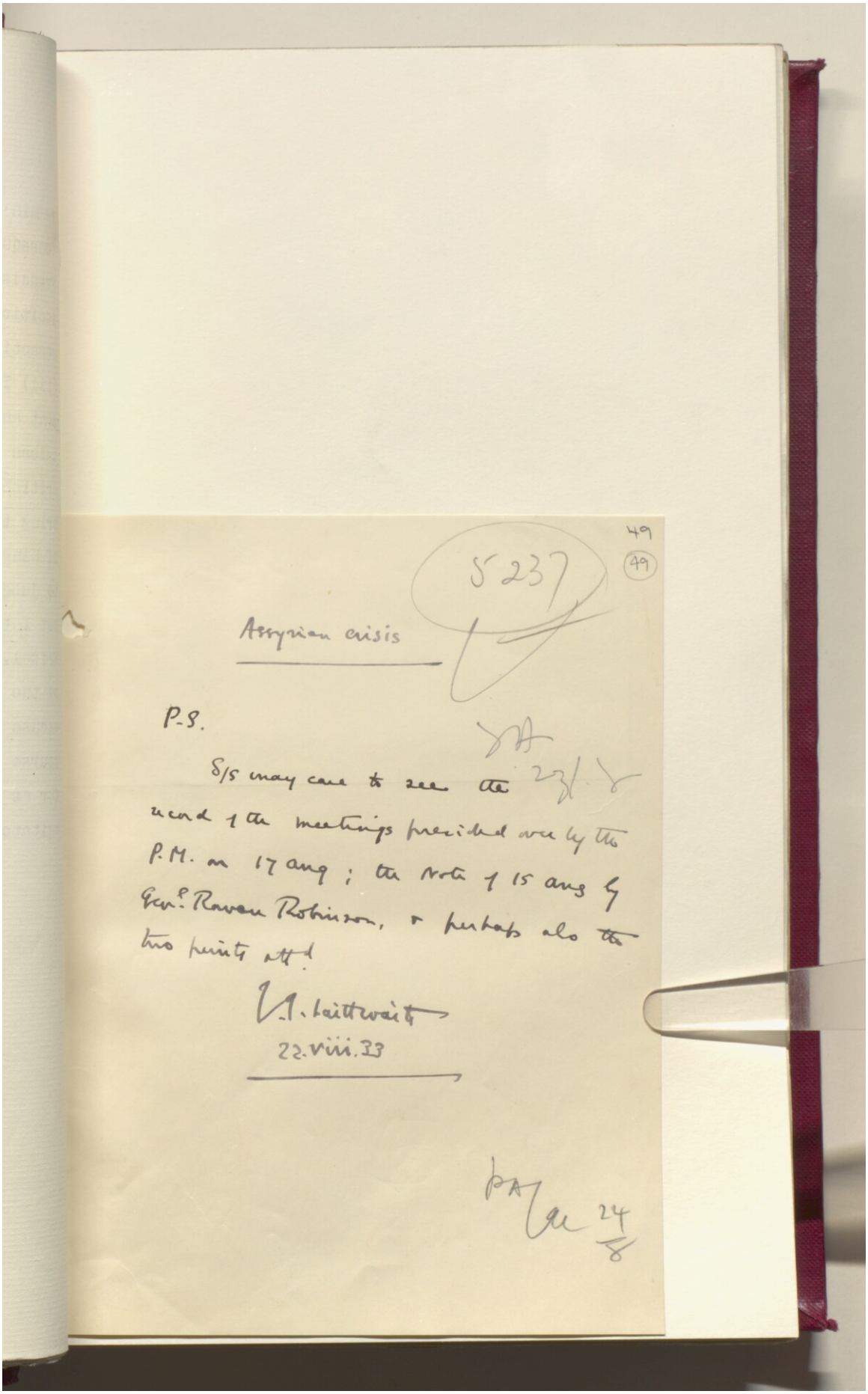


remain if we fail; physically we have no power of coercion. Consequently we must bring all our guns to bear and as Sir Francis Humphrys, both from his personality and his position, is our heaviest gun, his presence in Iraq is essential.

(iii) The British side will want every possible reinforcement and I don't believe it will retain its influence long unless there is a solid block in the centre to which pro-British interests can adhere. Hence we ought either to bring the King back or persuade him to abdicate in favour of King Ali or the Ghazi. Sir Francis alone will be able to judge of the best of these courses when he meets Faisal; but I think it absolutely essential that he should meet Faisal. Whatever is decided the utmost use must be made of the King's medical certificate and of his illness to excuse his withdrawal and/or his abdication. And of course British influence in the matter must be veiled as far as possible to avoid giving a handle to anti-British agitators.

(Initialled) H.R.R.

15/8/33.



49

(49)

5237

Assyrian crisis

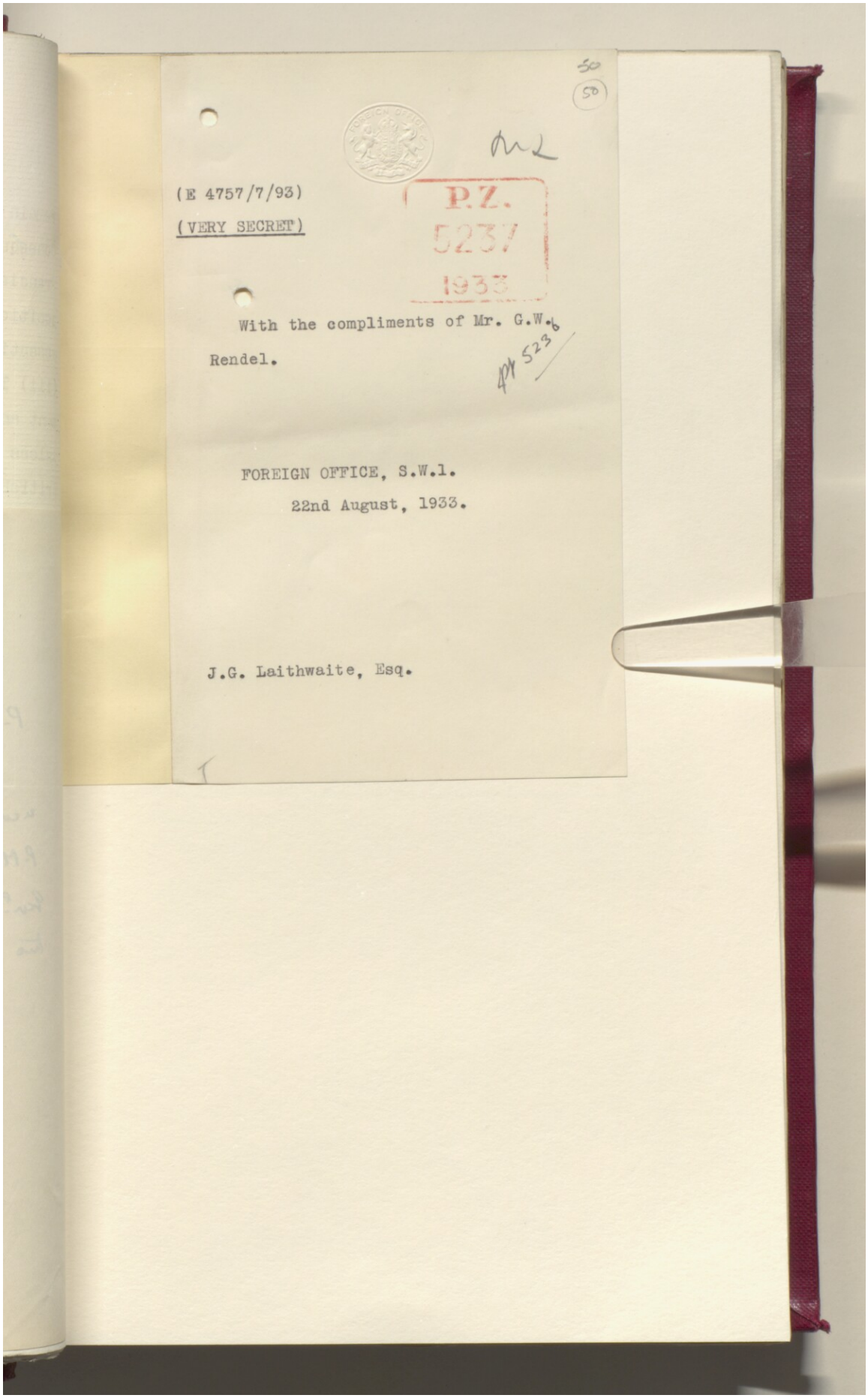
P.S.

S/S may care to see the record of the meetings presided over by the P.M. on 17 aug; the note of 15 aug by Gen.l Rowan Robinson, & perhaps also the two points att.d

V.A. Laithwaite
22.viii.33

PA 24/8

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x00006d



50
(50)

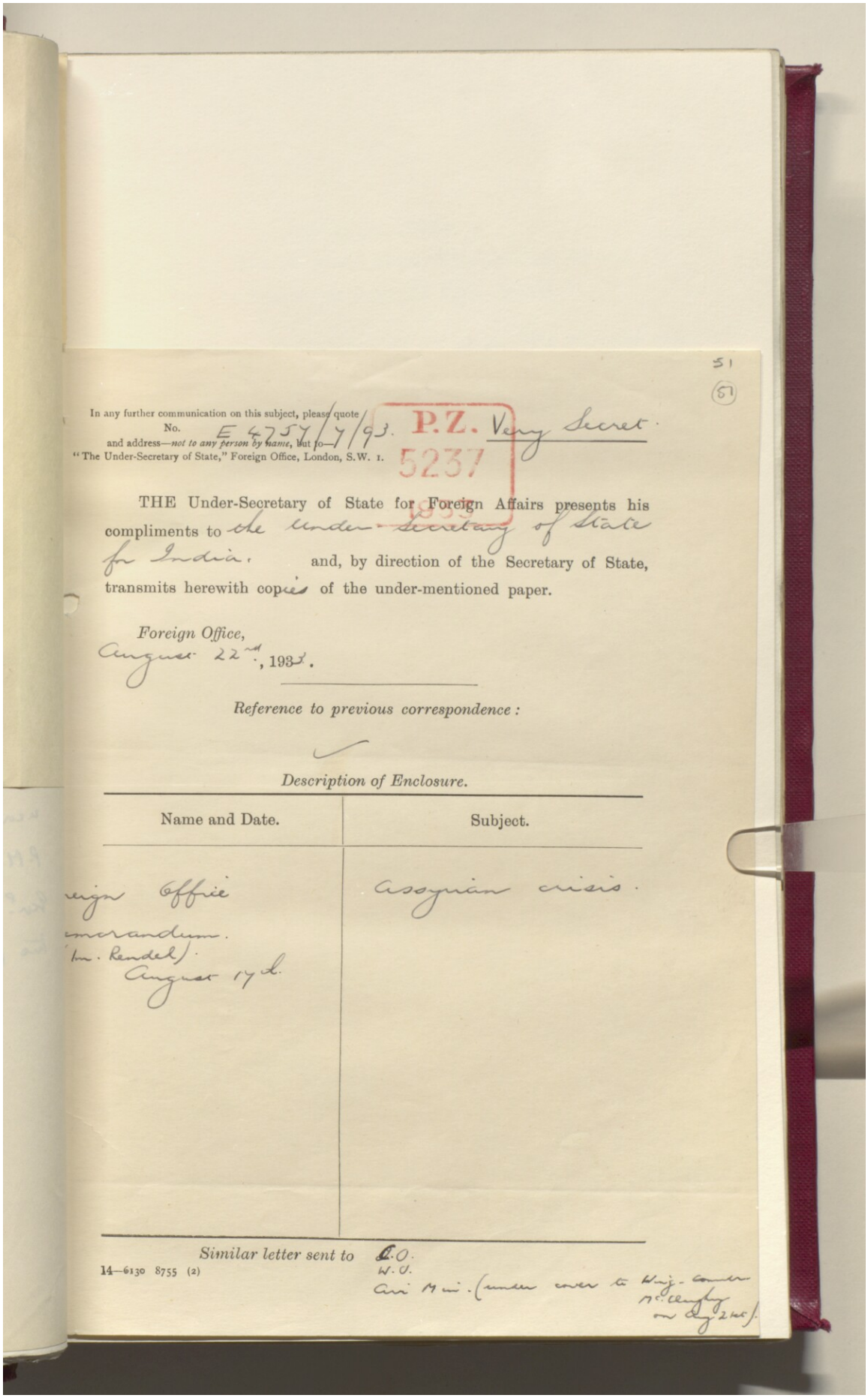
(E 4757/7/93)
(VERY SECRET)

P.Z.
5237
1933

With the compliments of Mr. G.W.
Rendel.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.
22nd August, 1933.

J.G. Laithwaite, Esq.



51

(51)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4757/7/93. P.Z. 5237 Very Secret.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

Description of Enclosure.

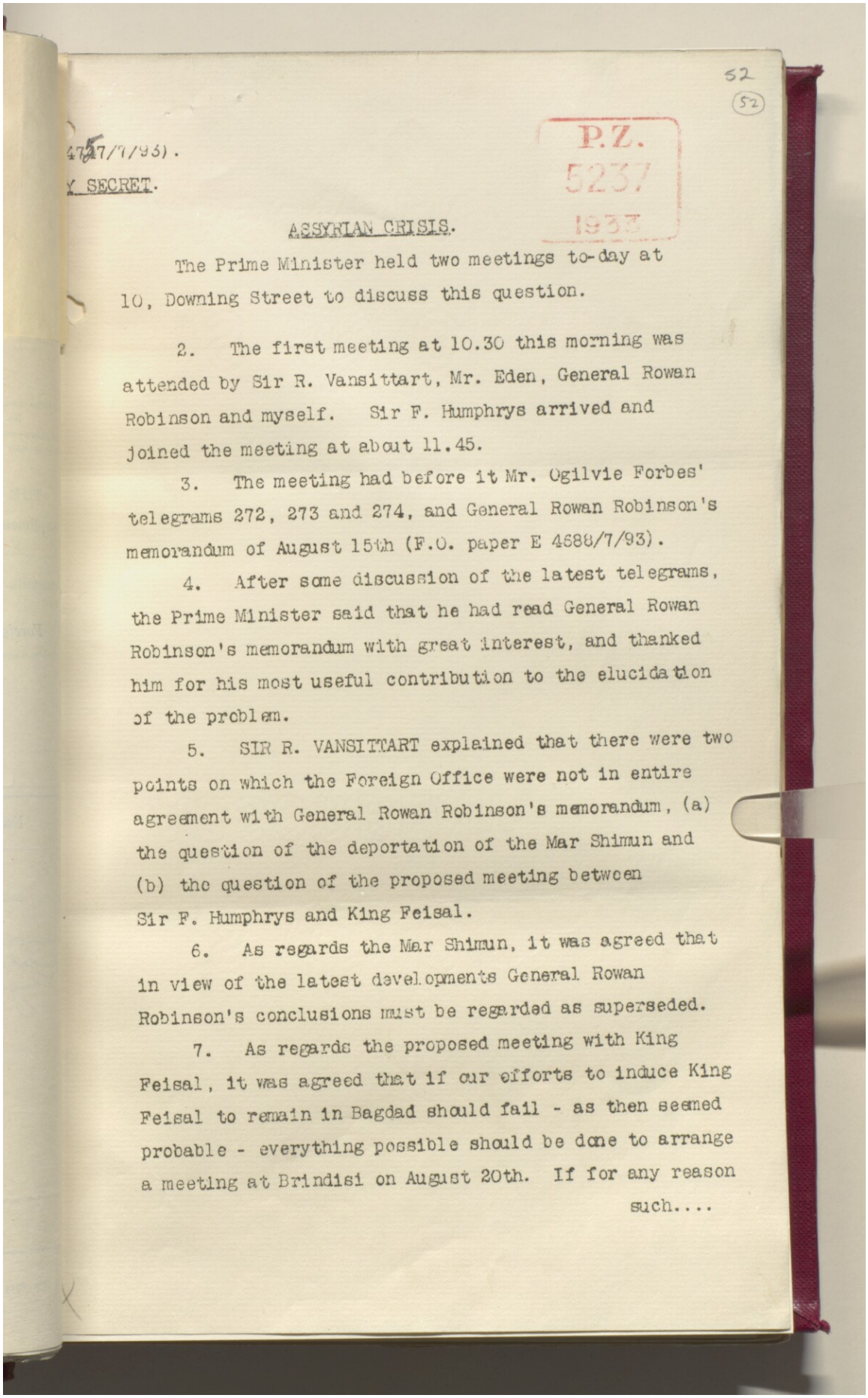
Name and Date.	Subject.
eign Office emorandum. (Mr. Rendel). August 17th.	Assyrian crisis.

Similar letter sent to C.O. W.O. Air Min. (under cover to Wing-Commdr McClughy on Aug 21st).

14—6130 8755 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000071



52
(52)

4787/7/93).

P.Z.
5237
1933

SECRET.

ASSYRIAN CRISIS.

The Prime Minister held two meetings to-day at 10, Downing Street to discuss this question.

2. The first meeting at 10.30 this morning was attended by Sir R. Vansittart, Mr. Eden, General Rowan Robinson and myself. Sir F. Humphrys arrived and joined the meeting at about 11.45.

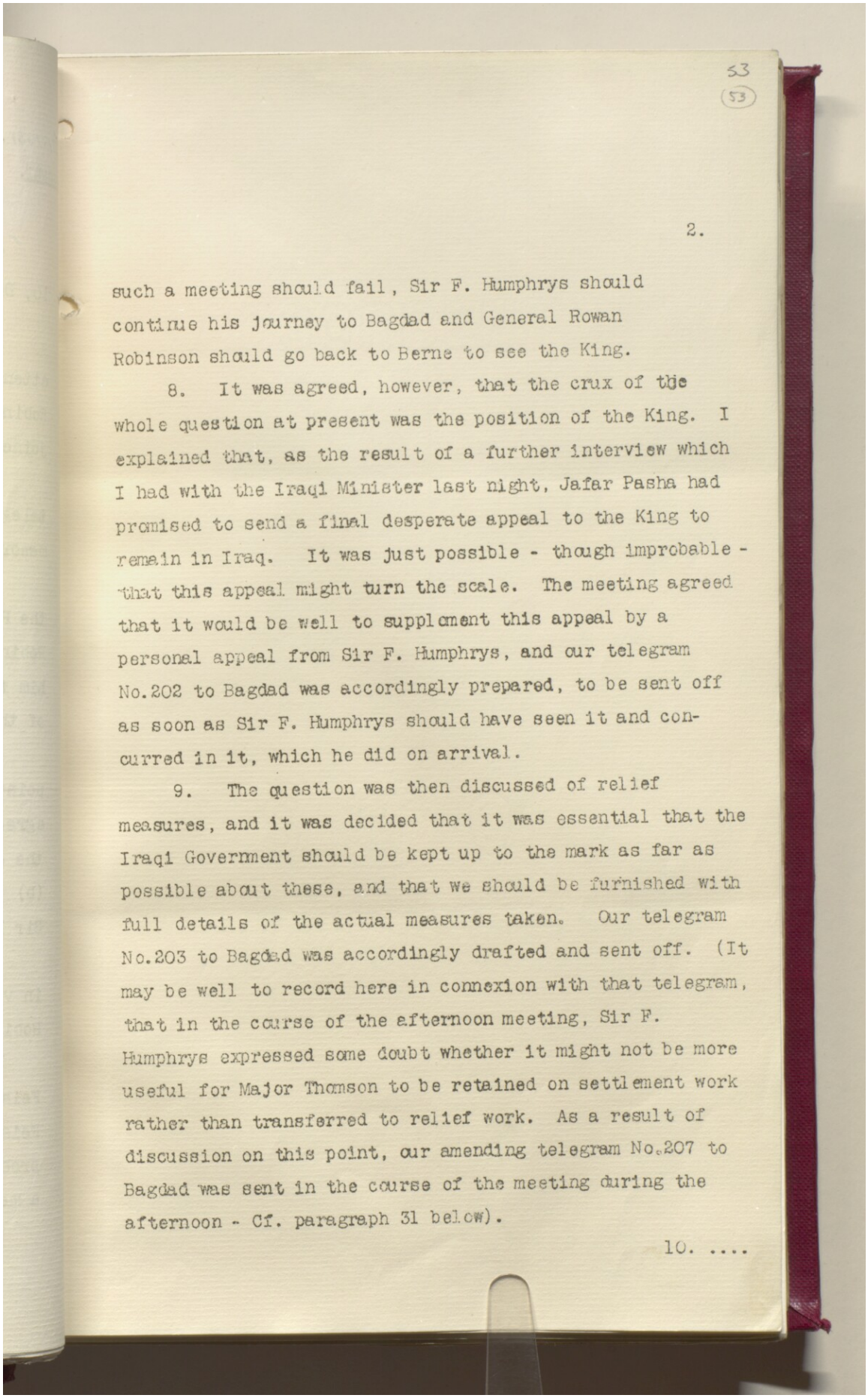
3. The meeting had before it Mr. Ogilvie Forbes' telegrams 272, 273 and 274, and General Rowan Robinson's memorandum of August 15th (F.O. paper E 4688/7/93).

4. After some discussion of the latest telegrams, the Prime Minister said that he had read General Rowan Robinson's memorandum with great interest, and thanked him for his most useful contribution to the elucidation of the problem.

5. SIR R. VANSITTART explained that there were two points on which the Foreign Office were not in entire agreement with General Rowan Robinson's memorandum, (a) the question of the deportation of the Mar Shimun and (b) the question of the proposed meeting between Sir F. Humphrys and King Feisal.

6. As regards the Mar Shimun, it was agreed that in view of the latest developments General Rowan Robinson's conclusions must be regarded as superseded.

7. As regards the proposed meeting with King Feisal, it was agreed that if our efforts to induce King Feisal to remain in Bagdad should fail - as then seemed probable - everything possible should be done to arrange a meeting at Brindisi on August 20th. If for any reason such....



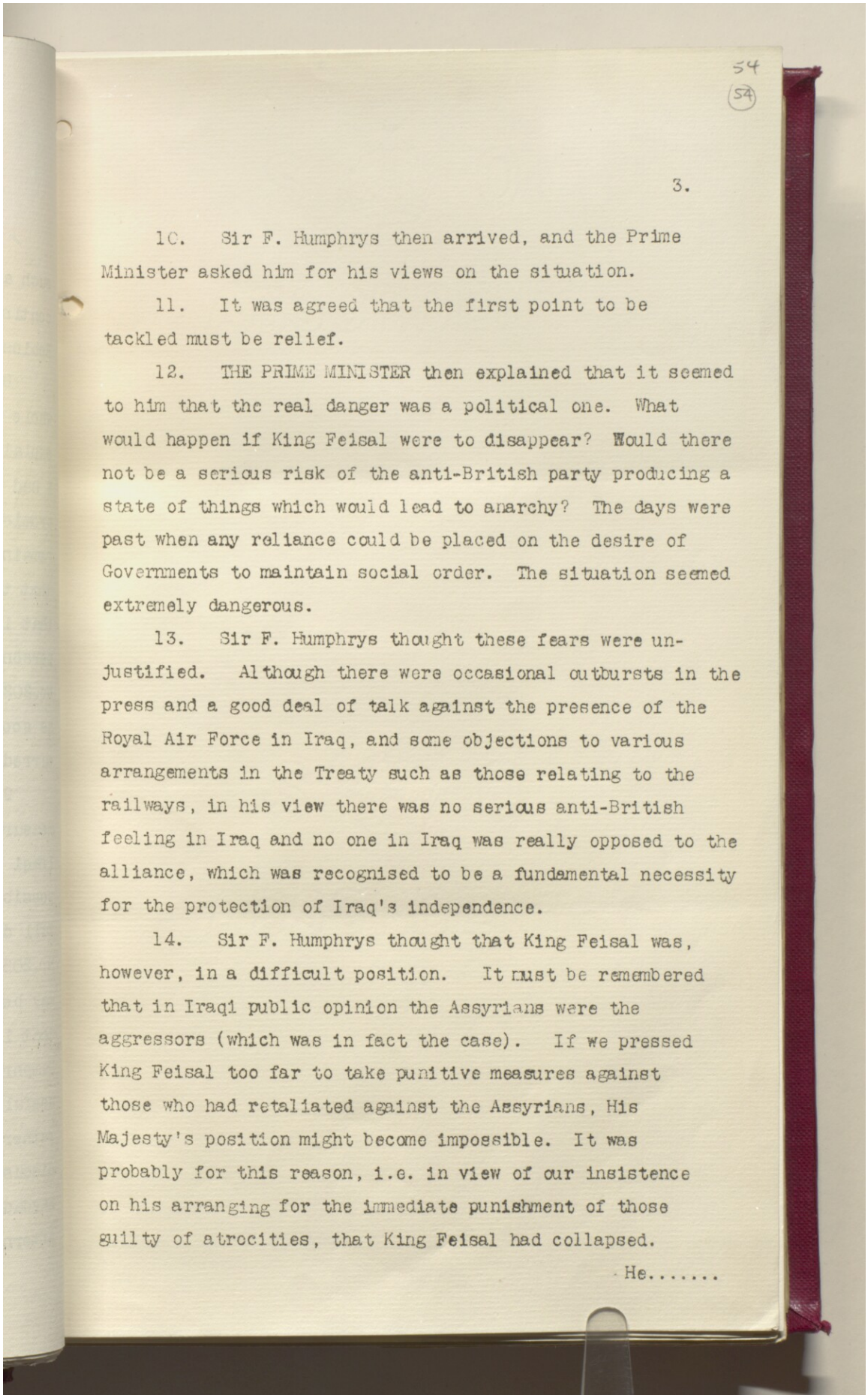
53
(53)

such a meeting should fail, Sir F. Humphrys should continue his journey to Bagdad and General Rowan Robinson should go back to Berne to see the King.

8. It was agreed, however, that the crux of the whole question at present was the position of the King. I explained that, as the result of a further interview which I had with the Iraqi Minister last night, Jafar Pasha had promised to send a final desperate appeal to the King to remain in Iraq. It was just possible - though improbable - that this appeal might turn the scale. The meeting agreed that it would be well to supplement this appeal by a personal appeal from Sir F. Humphrys, and our telegram No.202 to Bagdad was accordingly prepared, to be sent off as soon as Sir F. Humphrys should have seen it and concurred in it, which he did on arrival.

9. The question was then discussed of relief measures, and it was decided that it was essential that the Iraqi Government should be kept up to the mark as far as possible about these, and that we should be furnished with full details of the actual measures taken. Our telegram No.203 to Bagdad was accordingly drafted and sent off. (It may be well to record here in connexion with that telegram, that in the course of the afternoon meeting, Sir F. Humphrys expressed some doubt whether it might not be more useful for Major Thomson to be retained on settlement work rather than transferred to relief work. As a result of discussion on this point, our amending telegram No.207 to Bagdad was sent in the course of the meeting during the afternoon - Cf. paragraph 31 below).

10. ....



54
(54)

10. Sir F. Humphrys then arrived, and the Prime Minister asked him for his views on the situation.

11. It was agreed that the first point to be tackled must be relief.

12. THE PRIME MINISTER then explained that it seemed to him that the real danger was a political one. What would happen if King Feisal were to disappear? Would there not be a serious risk of the anti-British party producing a state of things which would lead to anarchy? The days were past when any reliance could be placed on the desire of Governments to maintain social order. The situation seemed extremely dangerous.

13. Sir F. Humphrys thought these fears were unjustified. Although there were occasional outbursts in the press and a good deal of talk against the presence of the Royal Air Force in Iraq, and some objections to various arrangements in the Treaty such as those relating to the railways, in his view there was no serious anti-British feeling in Iraq and no one in Iraq was really opposed to the alliance, which was recognised to be a fundamental necessity for the protection of Iraq's independence.

14. Sir F. Humphrys thought that King Feisal was, however, in a difficult position. It must be remembered that in Iraqi public opinion the Assyrians were the aggressors (which was in fact the case). If we pressed King Feisal too far to take punitive measures against those who had retaliated against the Assyrians, His Majesty's position might become impossible. It was probably for this reason, i.e. in view of our insistence on his arranging for the immediate punishment of those guilty of atrocities, that King Feisal had collapsed.

He.....

55
(55)

He had had such collapses before in similar circumstances, and Sir F. Humphrys was not inclined to regard the situation as quite so threatening as it appeared.

15. In his view, what we should now do was to concentrate on preventing further trouble, and leave over the question of punishment for some subsequent enquiry, possibly to be carried out by a League Commission, which should be international, so that His Majesty's Government might not be left to bear the whole odium for any unpleasant findings or recommendations.

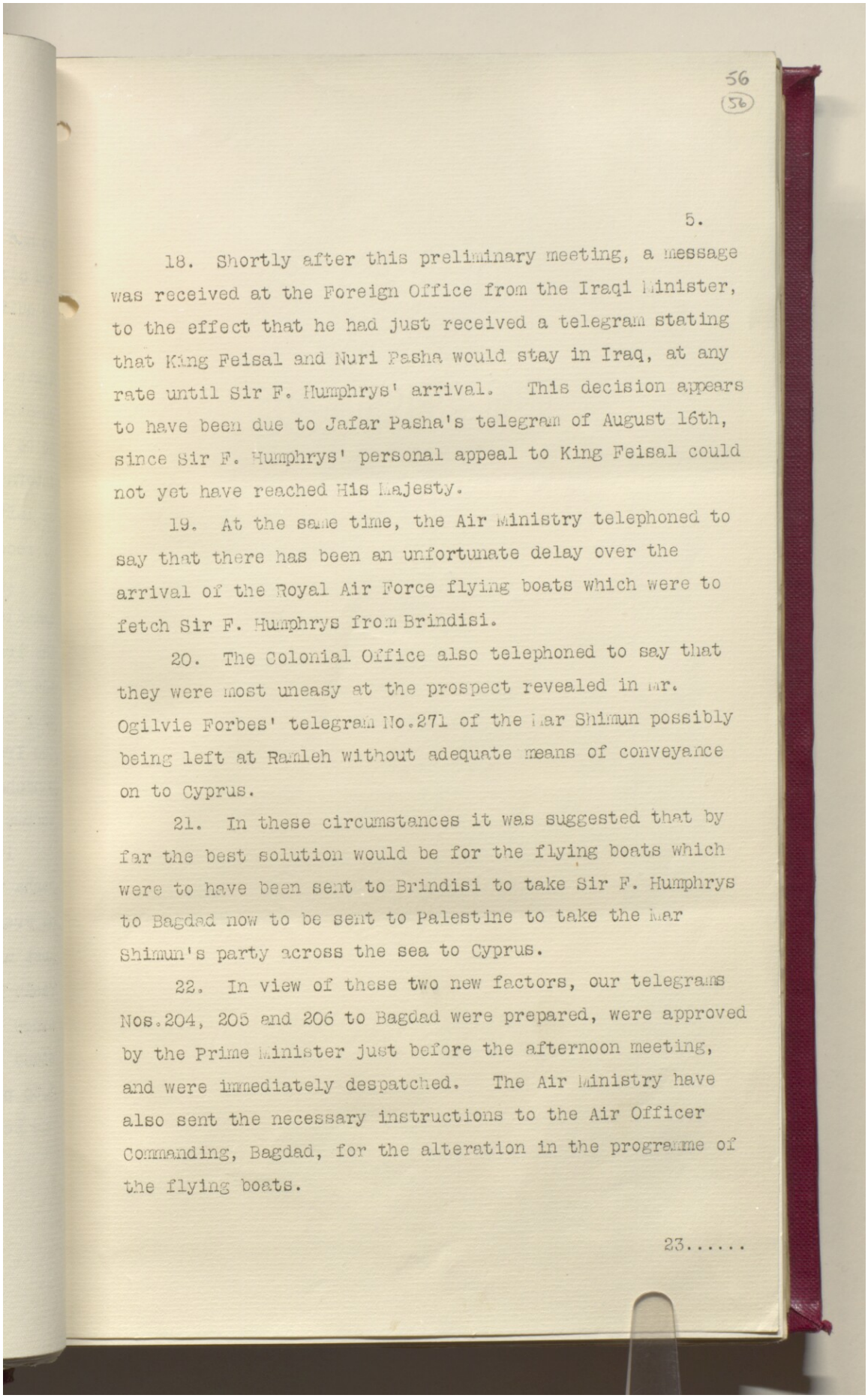
16. To sum up, SIR F. HUMPHRYS thought that the immediate task was to stop any continuation or extension of the trouble in the north, and ensure adequate protection for the remaining Assyrians, etc. Punishment should be left over till later, since, if we were to drive King Feisal and the Iraqis too far at this stage with a view to securing punishment, King Feisal's personal position might indeed become precarious.

17. If King Feisal were to fail completely, and Yasin Pasha were to succeed in creating a republic with himself as President - a contingency which Sir F. Humphrys thought most unlikely - Sir F. Humphrys was convinced that even Yasin Pasha would be in favour of the British alliance since it was generally recognised that Iraq could not stand alone without it. The meeting then adjourned till 3.30 p.m. to enable Sir F. Humphrys to study some papers and see the Iraqi Minister in London.

18....

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x000079



56
(56)

5.

18. Shortly after this preliminary meeting, a message was received at the Foreign Office from the Iraqi Minister, to the effect that he had just received a telegram stating that King Feisal and Nuri Pasha would stay in Iraq, at any rate until Sir F. Humphrys' arrival. This decision appears to have been due to Jafar Pasha's telegram of August 16th, since Sir F. Humphrys' personal appeal to King Feisal could not yet have reached His Majesty.

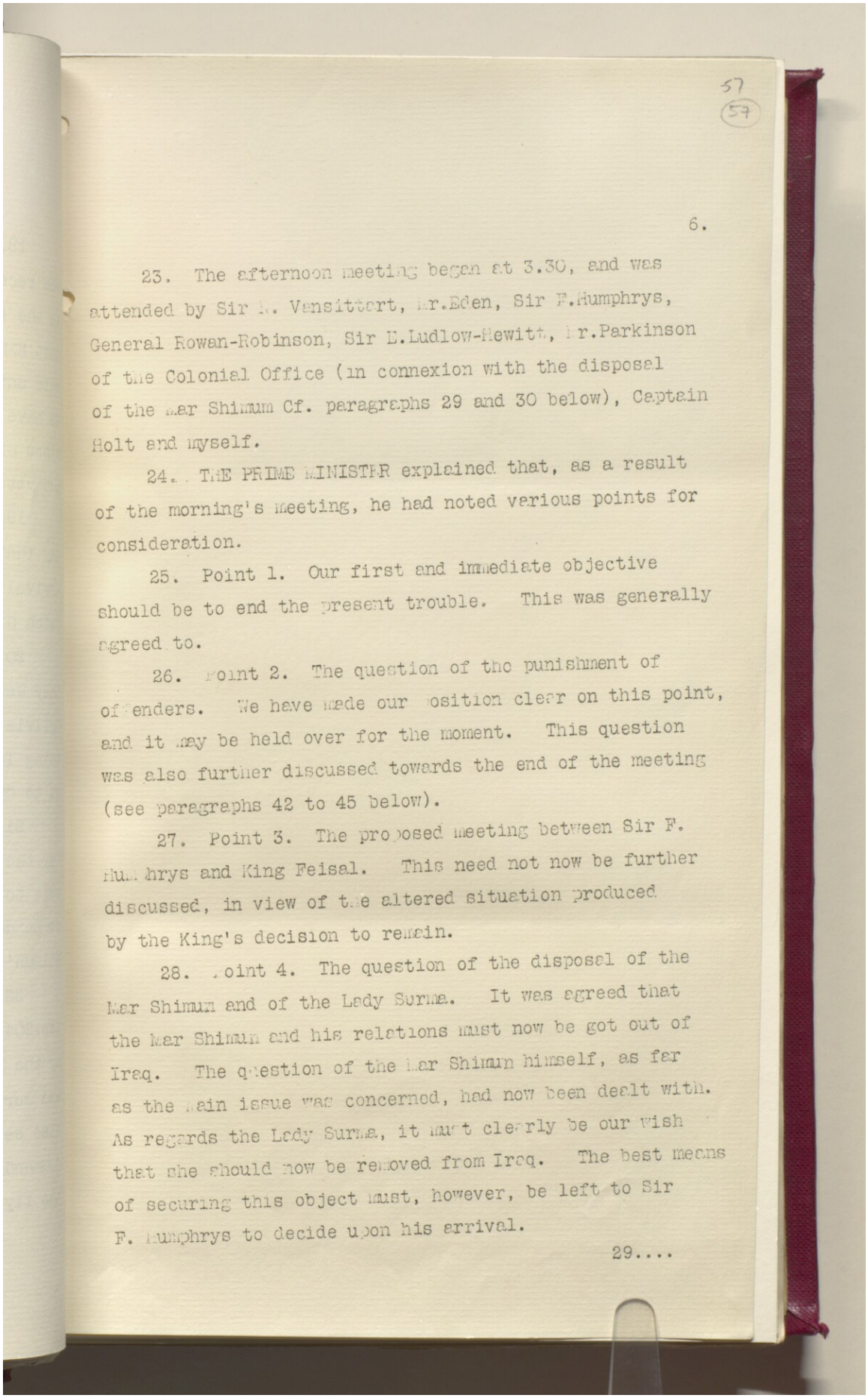
19. At the same time, the Air Ministry telephoned to say that there has been an unfortunate delay over the arrival of the Royal Air Force flying boats which were to fetch Sir F. Humphrys from Brindisi.

20. The Colonial Office also telephoned to say that they were most uneasy at the prospect revealed in Mr. Ogilvie Forbes' telegram No.271 of the Mar Shimun possibly being left at Ramleh without adequate means of conveyance on to Cyprus.

21. In these circumstances it was suggested that by far the best solution would be for the flying boats which were to have been sent to Brindisi to take Sir F. Humphrys to Bagdad now to be sent to Palestine to take the Mar Shimun's party across the sea to Cyprus.

22. In view of these two new factors, our telegrams Nos.204, 205 and 206 to Bagdad were prepared, were approved by the Prime Minister just before the afternoon meeting, and were immediately despatched. The Air Ministry have also sent the necessary instructions to the Air Officer Commanding, Bagdad, for the alteration in the programme of the flying boats.

23.....



57
(57)

6.

23. The afternoon meeting began at 3.30, and was attended by Sir R. Vansittart, Mr.Eden, Sir F.Humphrys, General Rowan-Robinson, Sir E.Ludlow-Hewitt, Mr.Parkinson of the Colonial Office (in connexion with the disposal of the Mar Shimun Cf. paragraphs 29 and 30 below), Captain Holt and myself.

24. THE PRIME MINISTER explained that, as a result of the morning's meeting, he had noted various points for consideration.

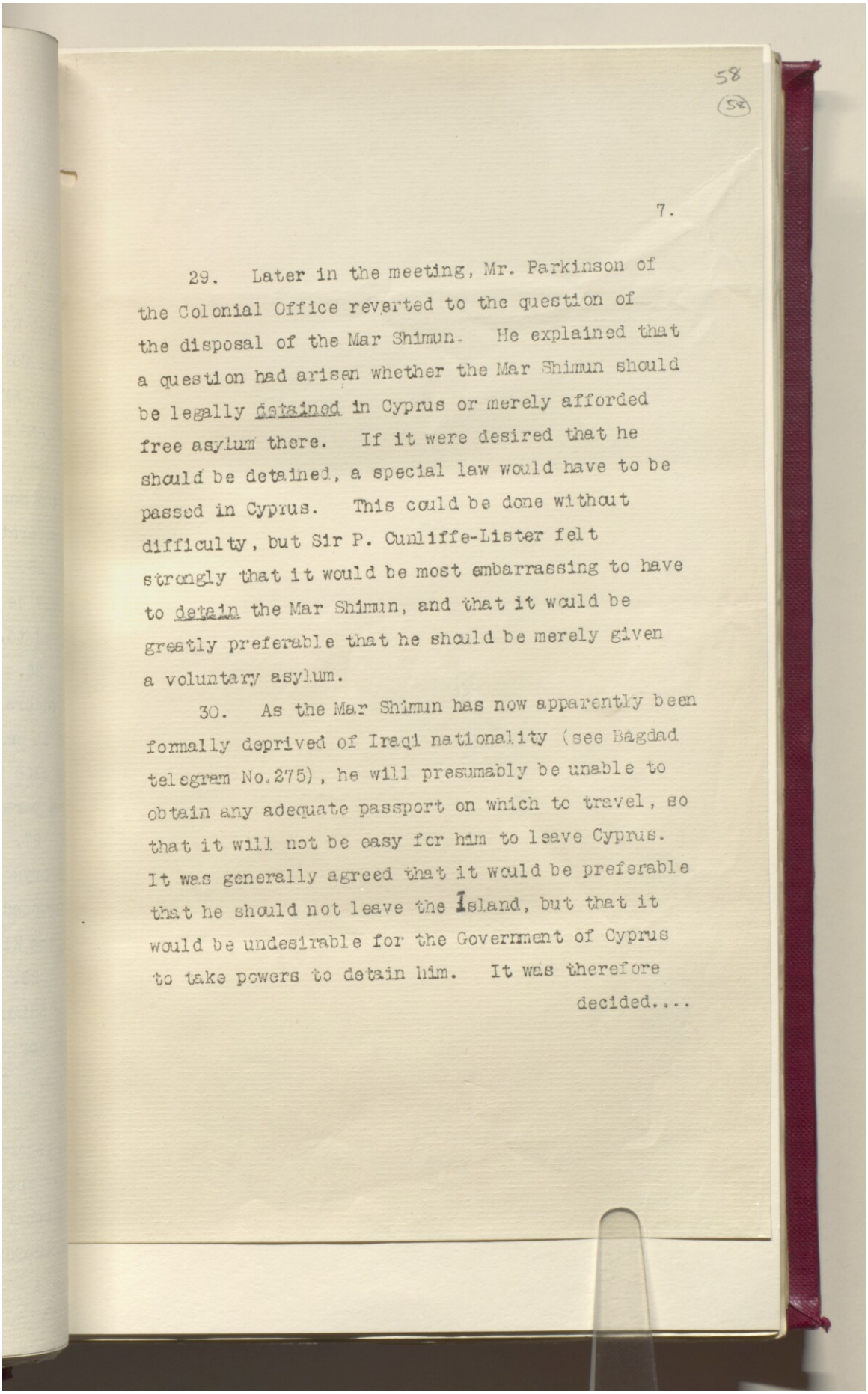
25. Point 1. Our first and immediate objective should be to end the present trouble. This was generally agreed to.

26. Point 2. The question of the punishment of offenders. We have made our position clear on this point, and it may be held over for the moment. This question was also further discussed towards the end of the meeting (see paragraphs 42 to 45 below).

27. Point 3. The proposed meeting between Sir F. Humphrys and King Feisal. This need not now be further discussed, in view of the altered situation produced by the King's decision to remain.

28. Point 4. The question of the disposal of the Mar Shimun and of the Lady Surma. It was agreed that the Mar Shimun and his relations must now be got out of Iraq. The question of the Mar Shimun himself, as far as the main issue was concerned, had now been dealt with. As regards the Lady Surma, it must clearly be our wish that she should now be removed from Iraq. The best means of securing this object must, however, be left to Sir F. Humphrys to decide upon his arrival.

29....

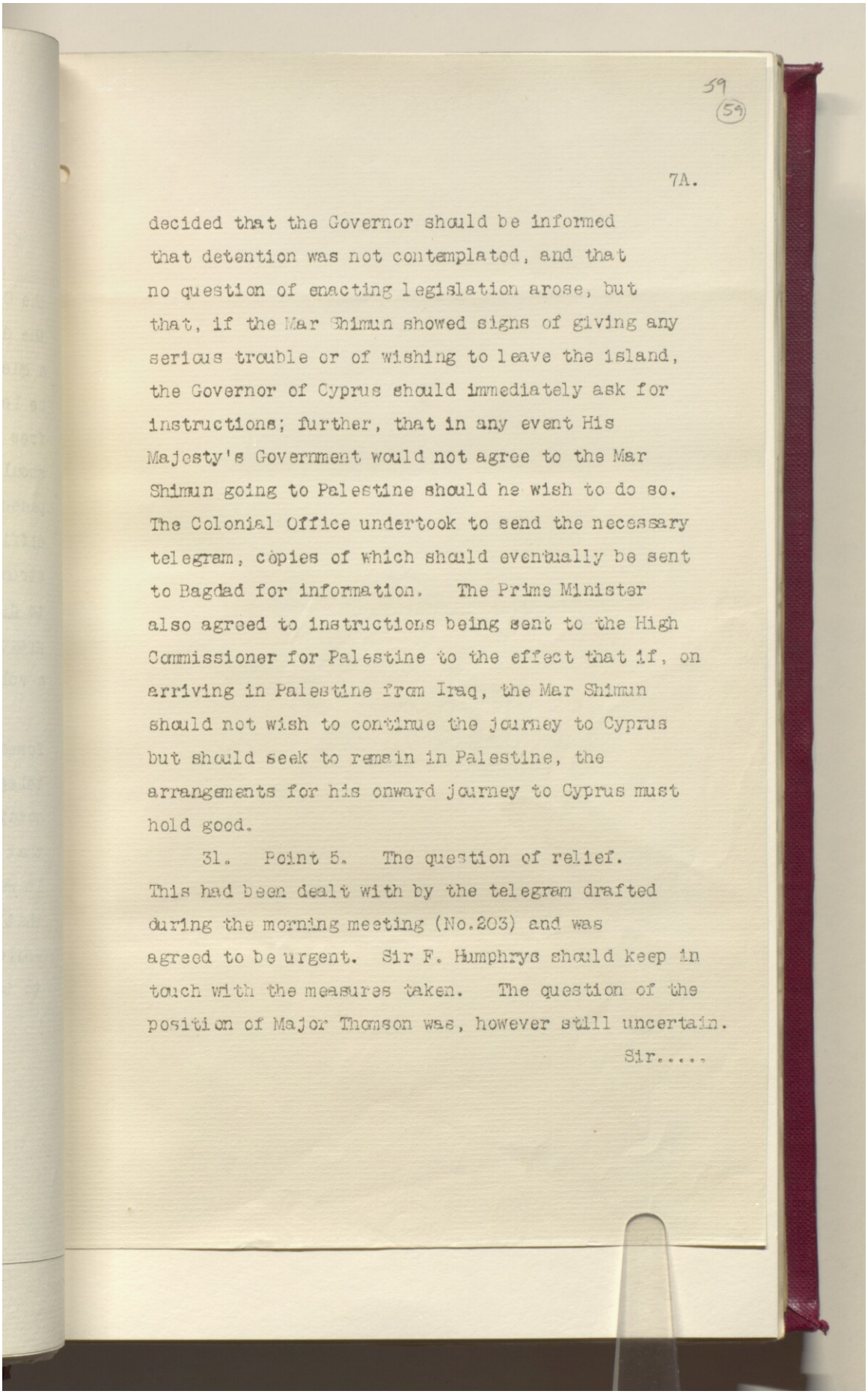


58
(58)

7.

29. Later in the meeting, Mr. Parkinson of the Colonial Office reverted to the question of the disposal of the Mar Shimun. He explained that a question had arisen whether the Mar Shimun should be legally detained in Cyprus or merely afforded free asylum there. If it were desired that he should be detained, a special law would have to be passed in Cyprus. This could be done without difficulty, but Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister felt strongly that it would be most embarrassing to have to detain the Mar Shimun, and that it would be greatly preferable that he should be merely given a voluntary asylum.

30. As the Mar Shimun has now apparently been formally deprived of Iraqi nationality (see Bagdad telegram No.275), he will presumably be unable to obtain any adequate passport on which to travel, so that it will not be easy for him to leave Cyprus. It was generally agreed that it would be preferable that he should not leave the Island, but that it would be undesirable for the Government of Cyprus to take powers to detain him. It was therefore decided....



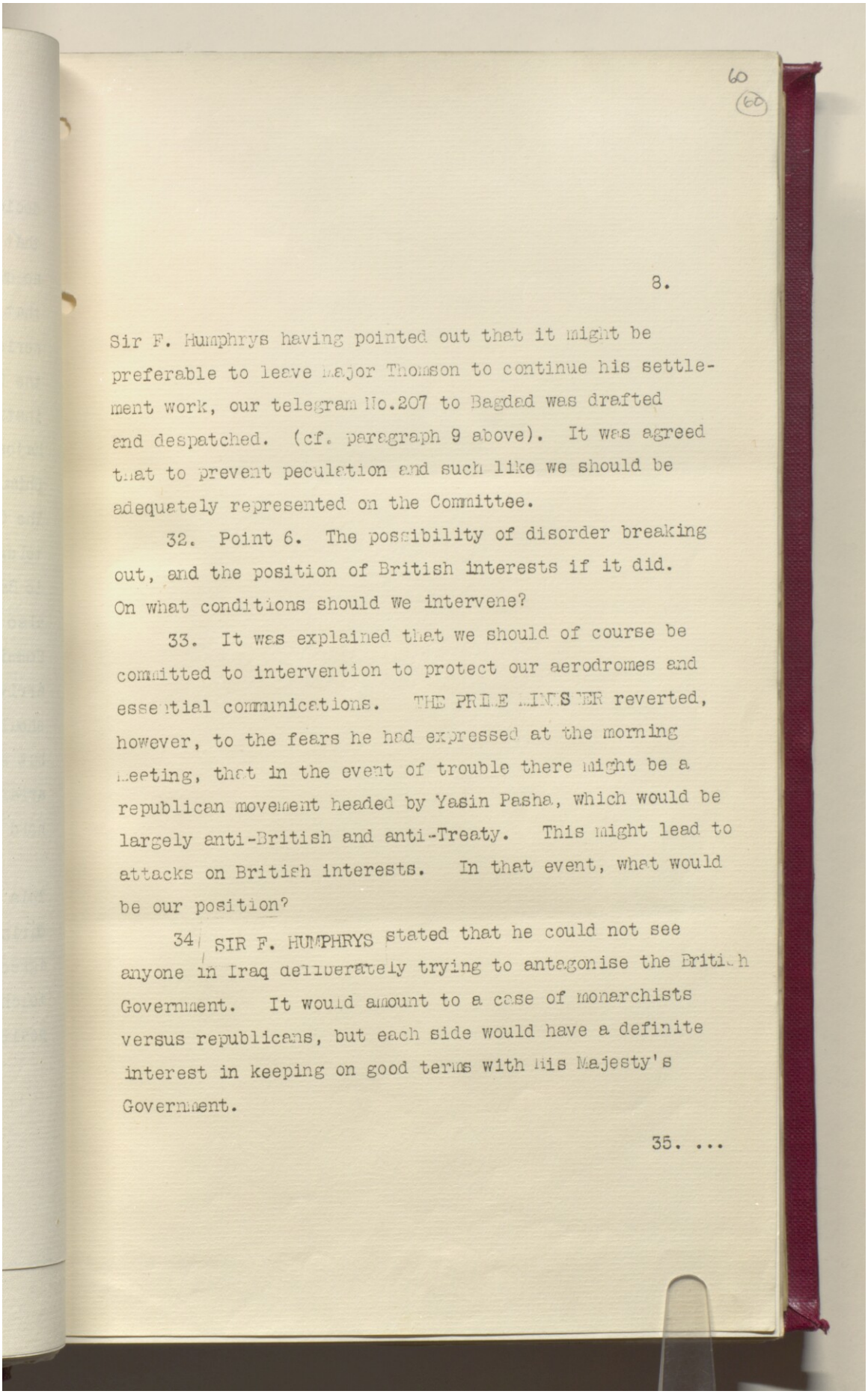
59
(59)

7A.

decided that the Governor should be informed that detention was not contemplated, and that no question of enacting legislation arose, but that, if the Mar Shimun showed signs of giving any serious trouble or of wishing to leave the island, the Governor of Cyprus should immediately ask for instructions; further, that in any event His Majesty's Government would not agree to the Mar Shimun going to Palestine should he wish to do so. The Colonial Office undertook to send the necessary telegram, copies of which should eventually be sent to Bagdad for information. The Prime Minister also agreed to instructions being sent to the High Commissioner for Palestine to the effect that if, on arriving in Palestine from Iraq, the Mar Shimun should not wish to continue the journey to Cyprus but should seek to remain in Palestine, the arrangements for his onward journey to Cyprus must hold good.

31. Point 5. The question of relief. This had been dealt with by the telegram drafted during the morning meeting (No.203) and was agreed to be urgent. Sir F. Humphrys should keep in touch with the measures taken. The question of the position of Major Thomson was, however still uncertain.

Sir.....



60
(60)

8.

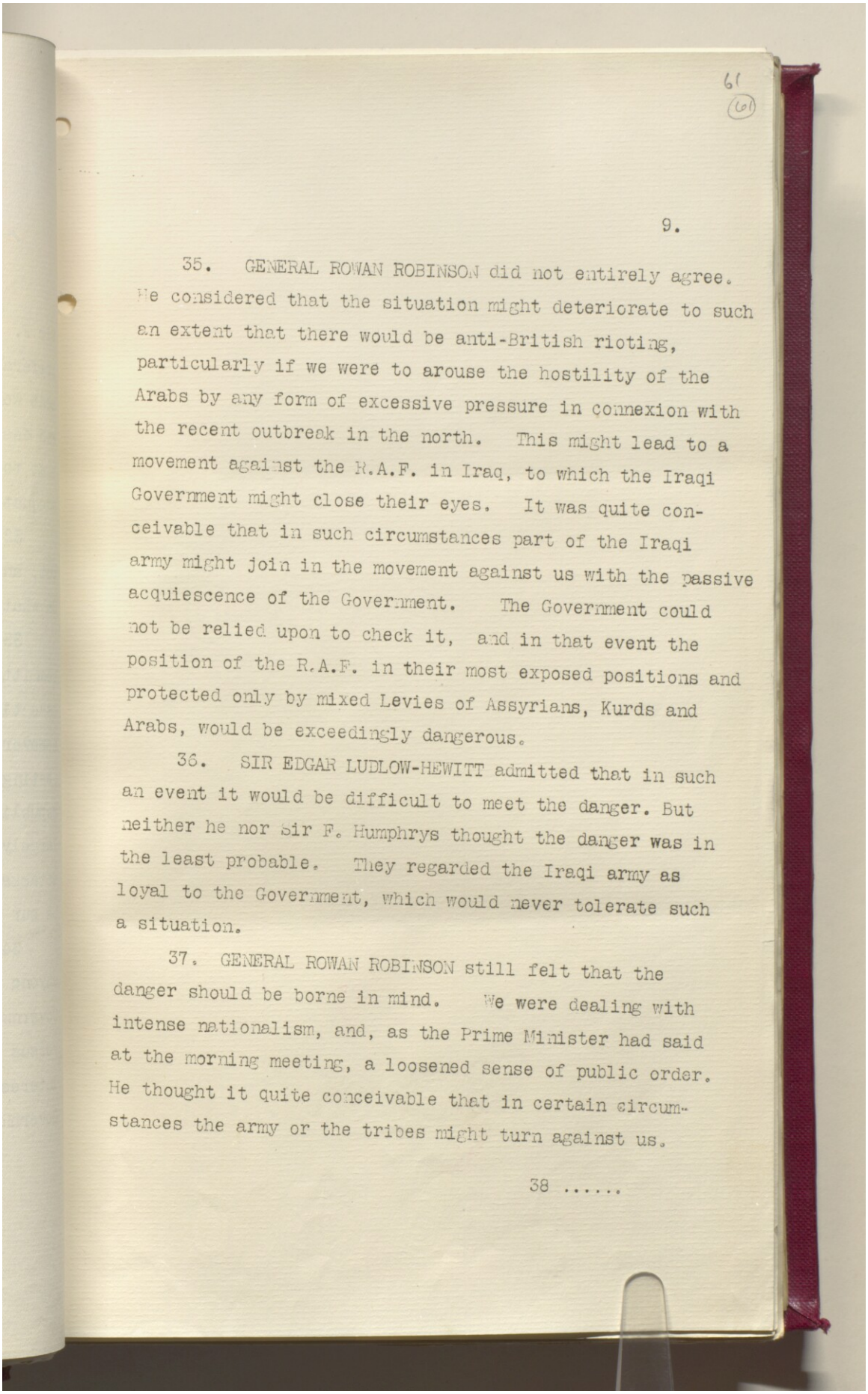
Sir F. Humphrys having pointed out that it might be preferable to leave Major Thomson to continue his settlement work, our telegram No.207 to Bagdad was drafted and despatched. (cf. paragraph 9 above). It was agreed that to prevent peculation and such like we should be adequately represented on the Committee.

32. Point 6. The possibility of disorder breaking out, and the position of British interests if it did. On what conditions should we intervene?

33. It was explained that we should of course be committed to intervention to protect our aerodromes and essential communications. THE PRIME MINISTER reverted, however, to the fears he had expressed at the morning meeting, that in the event of trouble there might be a republican movement headed by Yasin Pasha, which would be largely anti-British and anti-Treaty. This might lead to attacks on British interests. In that event, what would be our position?

34. SIR F. HUMPHRYS stated that he could not see anyone in Iraq deliberately trying to antagonise the British Government. It would amount to a case of monarchists versus republicans, but each side would have a definite interest in keeping on good terms with His Majesty's Government.

35. ...



61
(61)

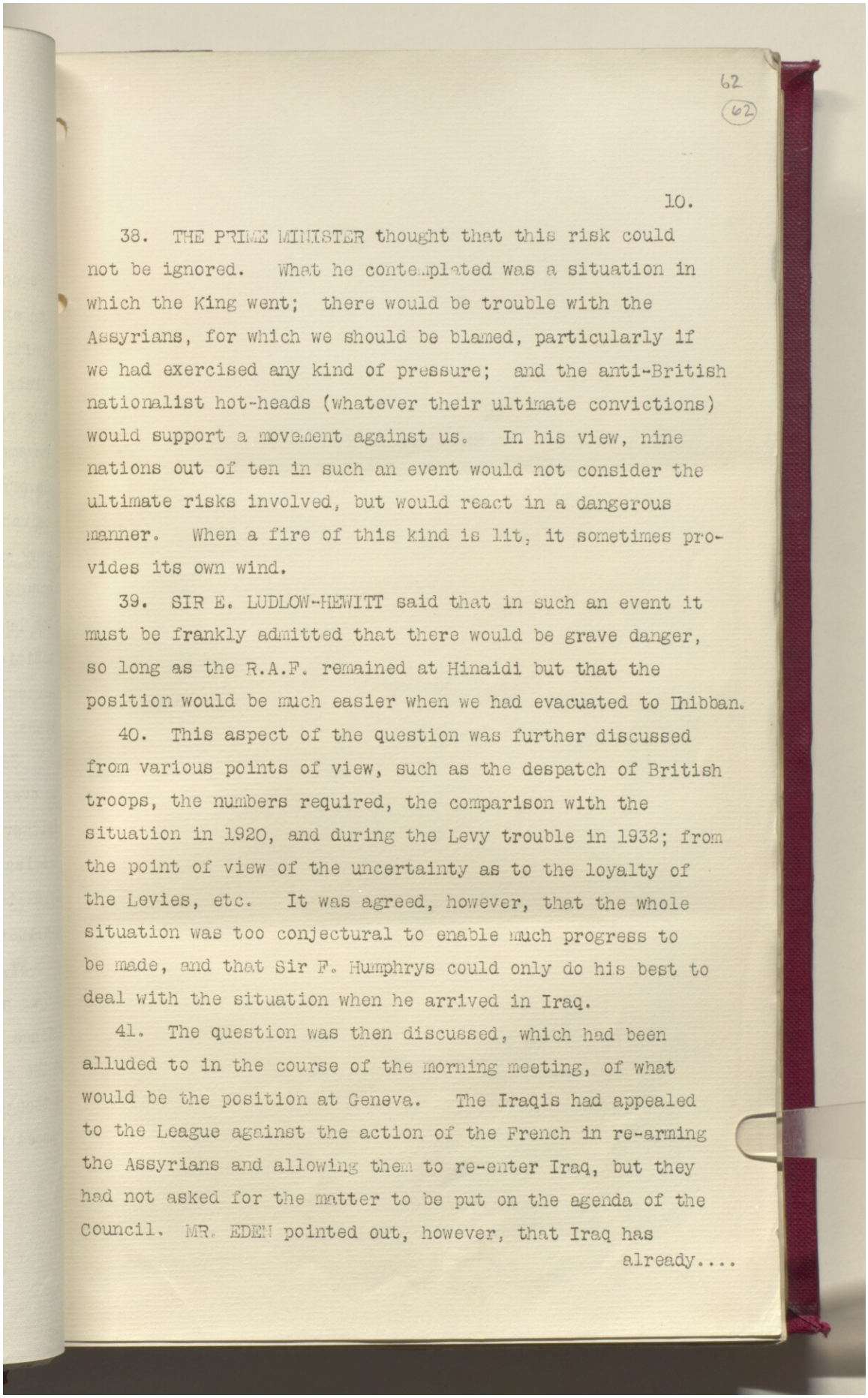
9.

35. GENERAL ROWAN ROBINSON did not entirely agree. He considered that the situation might deteriorate to such an extent that there would be anti-British rioting, particularly if we were to arouse the hostility of the Arabs by any form of excessive pressure in connexion with the recent outbreak in the north. This might lead to a movement against the R.A.F. in Iraq, to which the Iraqi Government might close their eyes. It was quite conceivable that in such circumstances part of the Iraqi army might join in the movement against us with the passive acquiescence of the Government. The Government could not be relied upon to check it, and in that event the position of the R.A.F. in their most exposed positions and protected only by mixed Levies of Assyrians, Kurds and Arabs, would be exceedingly dangerous.

36. SIR EDGAR LUDLOW-HEWITT admitted that in such an event it would be difficult to meet the danger. But neither he nor Sir F. Humphrys thought the danger was in the least probable. They regarded the Iraqi army as loyal to the Government, which would never tolerate such a situation.

37. GENERAL ROWAN ROBINSON still felt that the danger should be borne in mind. We were dealing with intense nationalism, and, as the Prime Minister had said at the morning meeting, a loosened sense of public order. He thought it quite conceivable that in certain circumstances the army or the tribes might turn against us.

38 .....



62
(62)

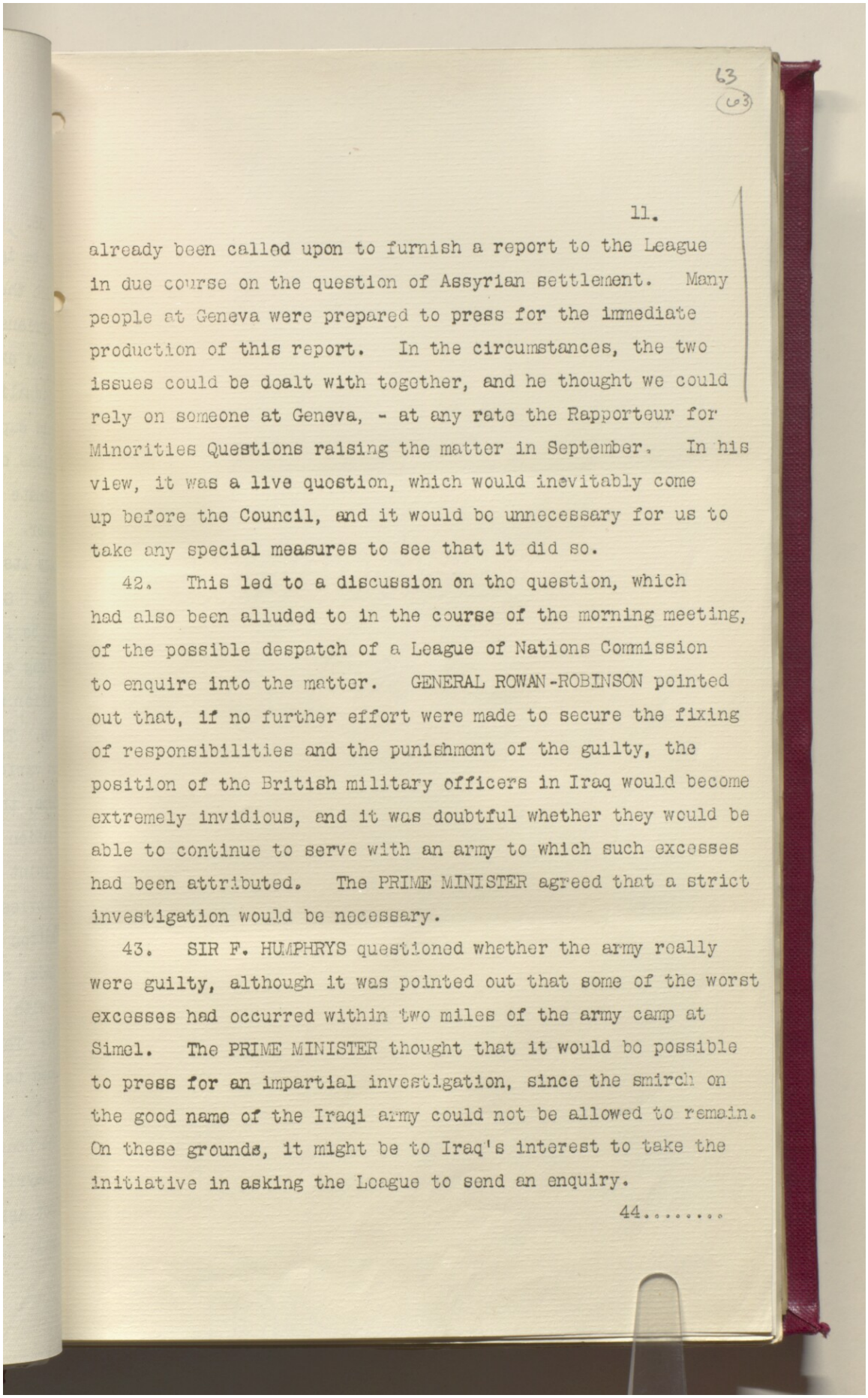
10.

38. THE PRIME MINISTER thought that this risk could not be ignored. What he contemplated was a situation in which the King went; there would be trouble with the Assyrians, for which we should be blamed, particularly if we had exercised any kind of pressure; and the anti-British nationalist hot-heads (whatever their ultimate convictions) would support a movement against us. In his view, nine nations out of ten in such an event would not consider the ultimate risks involved, but would react in a dangerous manner. When a fire of this kind is lit, it sometimes provides its own wind.

39. SIR E. LUDLOW-HEWITT said that in such an event it must be frankly admitted that there would be grave danger, so long as the R.A.F. remained at Hinaidi but that the position would be much easier when we had evacuated to Dhibban.

40. This aspect of the question was further discussed from various points of view, such as the despatch of British troops, the numbers required, the comparison with the situation in 1920, and during the Levy trouble in 1932; from the point of view of the uncertainty as to the loyalty of the Levies, etc. It was agreed, however, that the whole situation was too conjectural to enable much progress to be made, and that Sir F. Humphrys could only do his best to deal with the situation when he arrived in Iraq.

41. The question was then discussed, which had been alluded to in the course of the morning meeting, of what would be the position at Geneva. The Iraqis had appealed to the League against the action of the French in re-arming the Assyrians and allowing them to re-enter Iraq, but they had not asked for the matter to be put on the agenda of the Council. MR. EDEN pointed out, however, that Iraq has already....



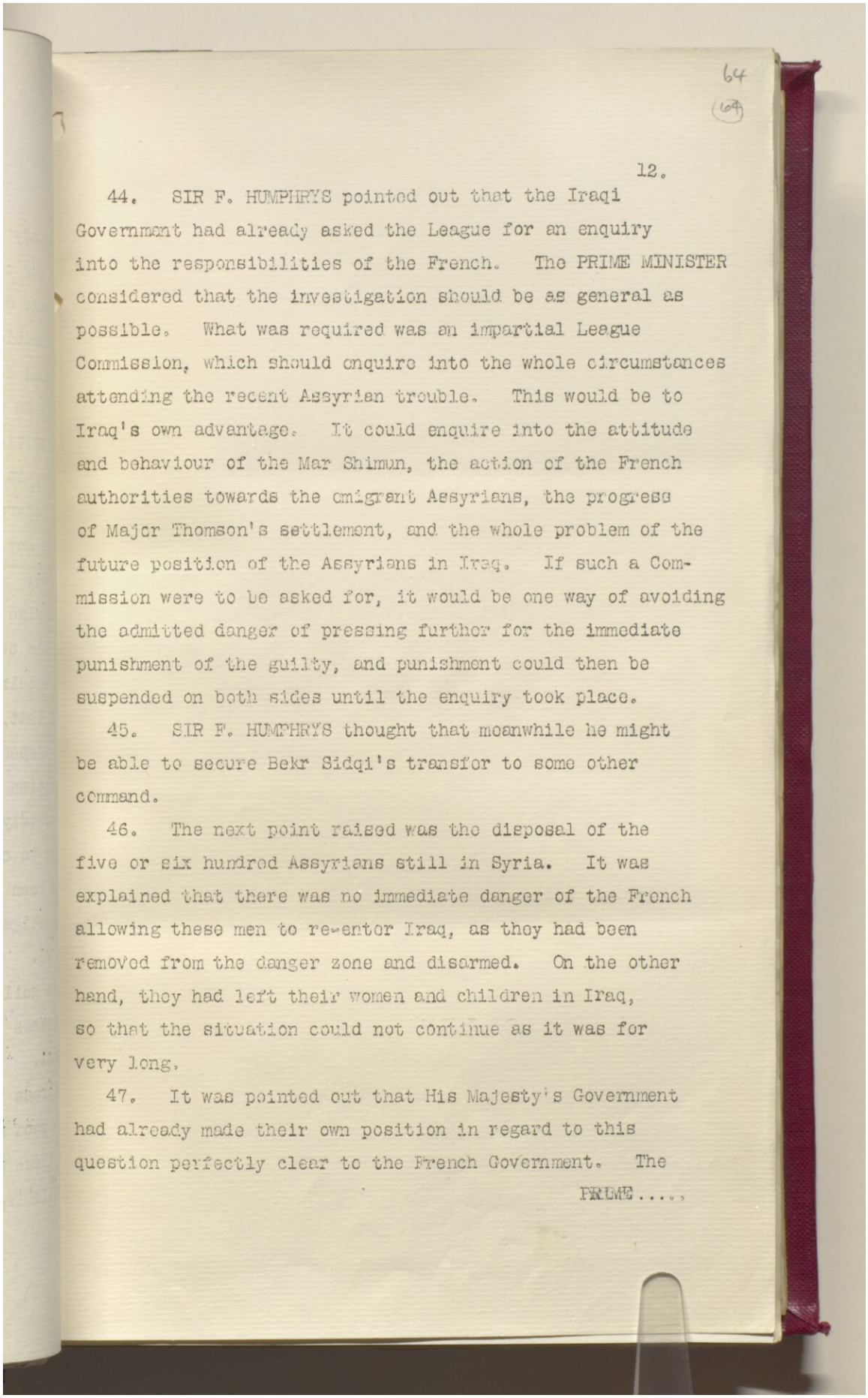
63
(63)

already been called upon to furnish a report to the League in due course on the question of Assyrian settlement. Many people at Geneva were prepared to press for the immediate production of this report. In the circumstances, the two issues could be dealt with together, and he thought we could rely on someone at Geneva, - at any rate the Rapporteur for Minorities Questions raising the matter in September. In his view, it was a live question, which would inevitably come up before the Council, and it would be unnecessary for us to take any special measures to see that it did so.

42. This led to a discussion on the question, which had also been alluded to in the course of the morning meeting, of the possible despatch of a League of Nations Commission to enquire into the matter. GENERAL ROWAN-ROBINSON pointed out that, if no further effort were made to secure the fixing of responsibilities and the punishment of the guilty, the position of the British military officers in Iraq would become extremely invidious, and it was doubtful whether they would be able to continue to serve with an army to which such excesses had been attributed. The PRIME MINISTER agreed that a strict investigation would be necessary.

43. SIR F. HUMPHRYS questioned whether the army really were guilty, although it was pointed out that some of the worst excesses had occurred within two miles of the army camp at Simel. The PRIME MINISTER thought that it would be possible to press for an impartial investigation, since the smirch on the good name of the Iraqi army could not be allowed to remain. On these grounds, it might be to Iraq's interest to take the initiative in asking the League to send an enquiry.

44.....



64
(69)

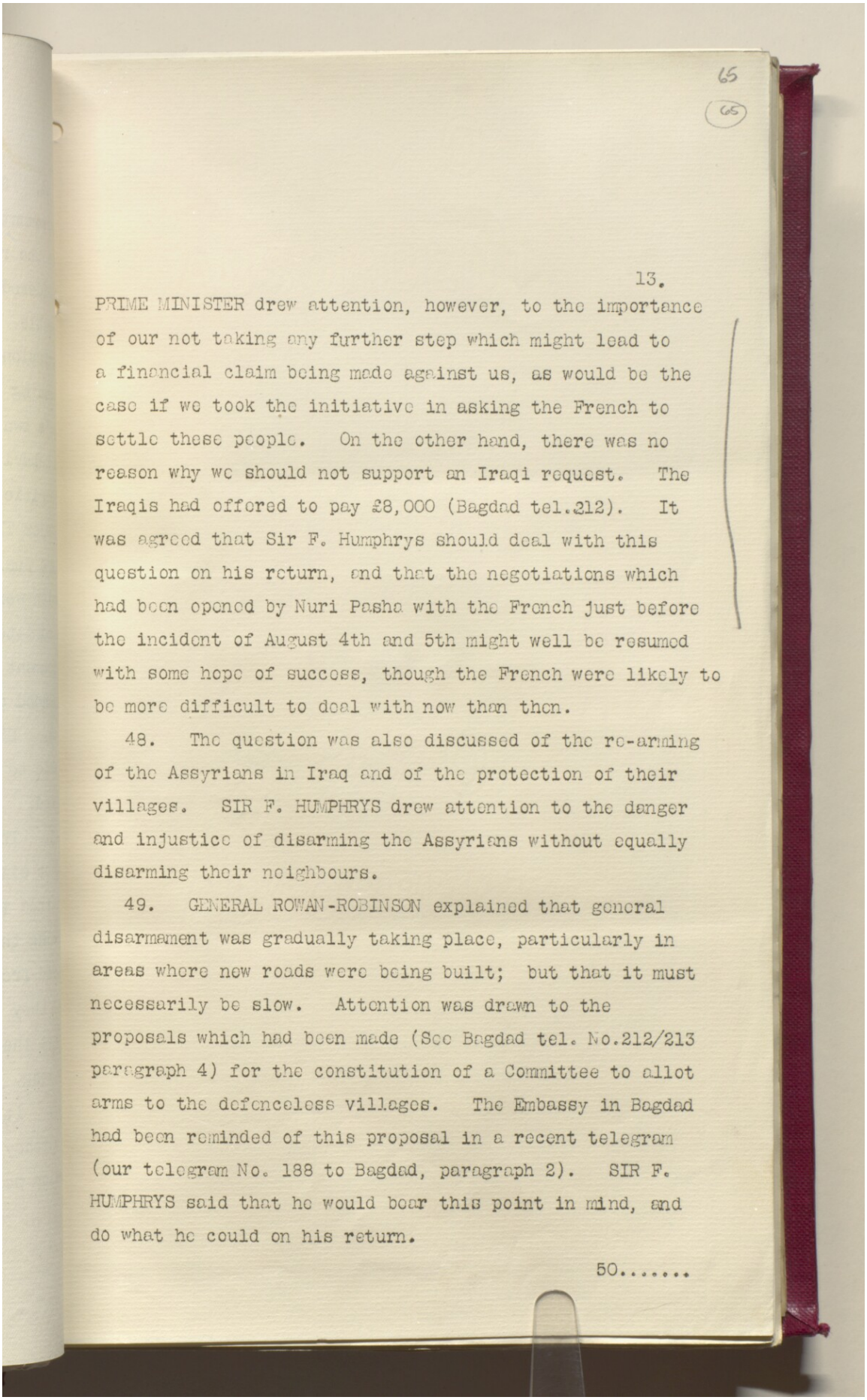
44. SIR F. HUMPHRYS pointed out that the Iraqi Government had already asked the League for an enquiry into the responsibilities of the French. The PRIME MINISTER considered that the investigation should be as general as possible. What was required was an impartial League Commission, which should enquire into the whole circumstances attending the recent Assyrian trouble. This would be to Iraq's own advantage. It could enquire into the attitude and behaviour of the Mar Shimun, the action of the French authorities towards the emigrant Assyrians, the progress of Major Thomson's settlement, and the whole problem of the future position of the Assyrians in Iraq. If such a Commission were to be asked for, it would be one way of avoiding the admitted danger of pressing further for the immediate punishment of the guilty, and punishment could then be suspended on both sides until the enquiry took place.

45. SIR F. HUMPHRYS thought that meanwhile he might be able to secure Bekr Sidqi's transfer to some other command.

46. The next point raised was the disposal of the five or six hundred Assyrians still in Syria. It was explained that there was no immediate danger of the French allowing these men to re-enter Iraq, as they had been removed from the danger zone and disarmed. On the other hand, they had left their women and children in Iraq, so that the situation could not continue as it was for very long.

47. It was pointed out that His Majesty's Government had already made their own position in regard to this question perfectly clear to the French Government. The

PRIME.....



65

(65)

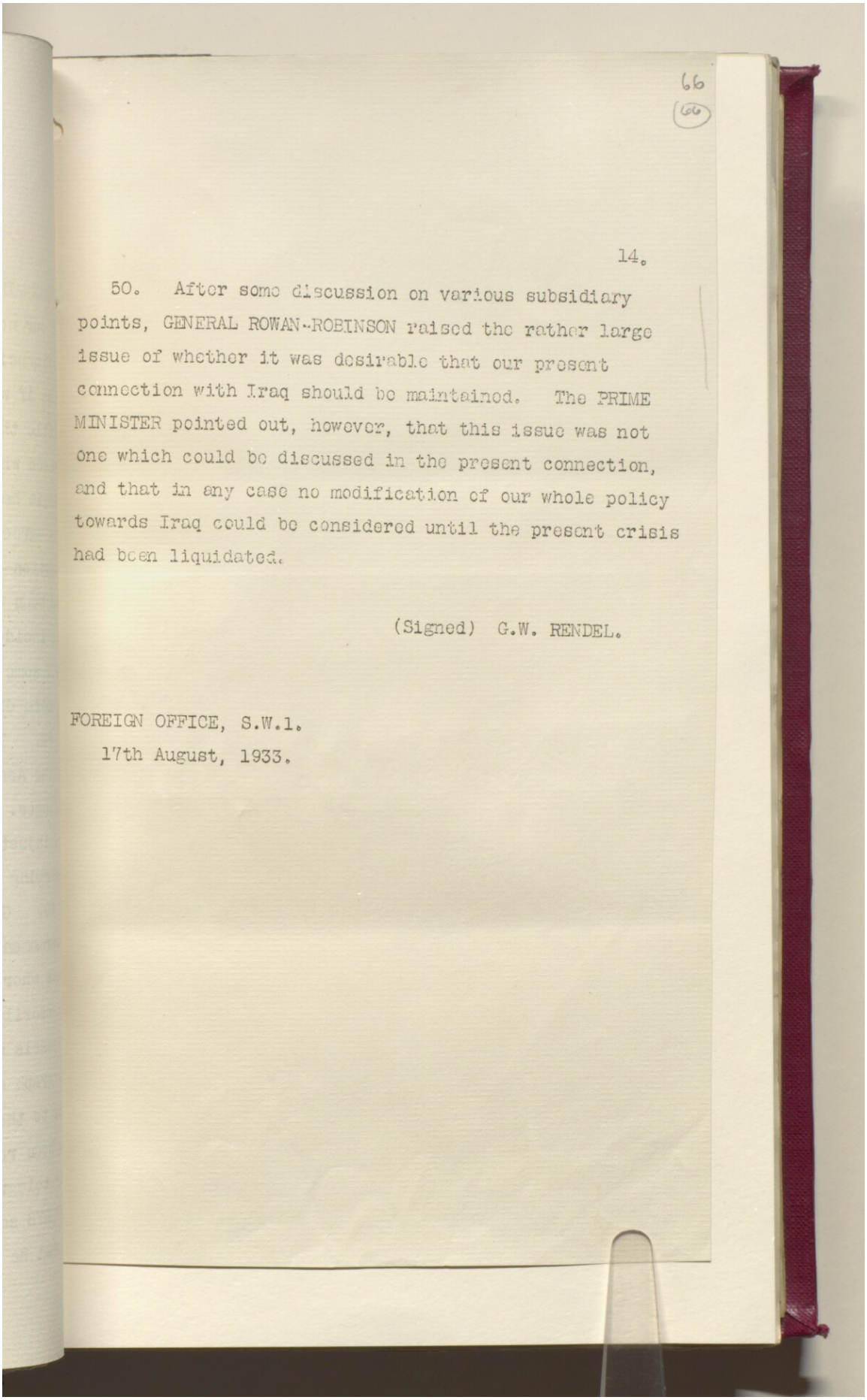
13.

PRIME MINISTER drew attention, however, to the importance of our not taking any further step which might lead to a financial claim being made against us, as would be the case if we took the initiative in asking the French to settle these people. On the other hand, there was no reason why we should not support an Iraqi request. The Iraqis had offered to pay £8,000 (Bagdad tel.212). It was agreed that Sir F. Humphrys should deal with this question on his return, and that the negotiations which had been opened by Nuri Pasha with the French just before the incident of August 4th and 5th might well be resumed with some hope of success, though the French were likely to be more difficult to deal with now than then.

48. The question was also discussed of the re-arming of the Assyrians in Iraq and of the protection of their villages. SIR F. HUMPHRYS drew attention to the danger and injustice of disarming the Assyrians without equally disarming their neighbours.

49. GENERAL ROWAN-ROBINSON explained that general disarmament was gradually taking place, particularly in areas where new roads were being built; but that it must necessarily be slow. Attention was drawn to the proposals which had been made (See Bagdad tel. No.212/213 paragraph 4) for the constitution of a Committee to allot arms to the defenceless villages. The Embassy in Bagdad had been reminded of this proposal in a recent telegram (our telegram No. 188 to Bagdad, paragraph 2). SIR F. HUMPHRYS said that he would bear this point in mind, and do what he could on his return.

50.....



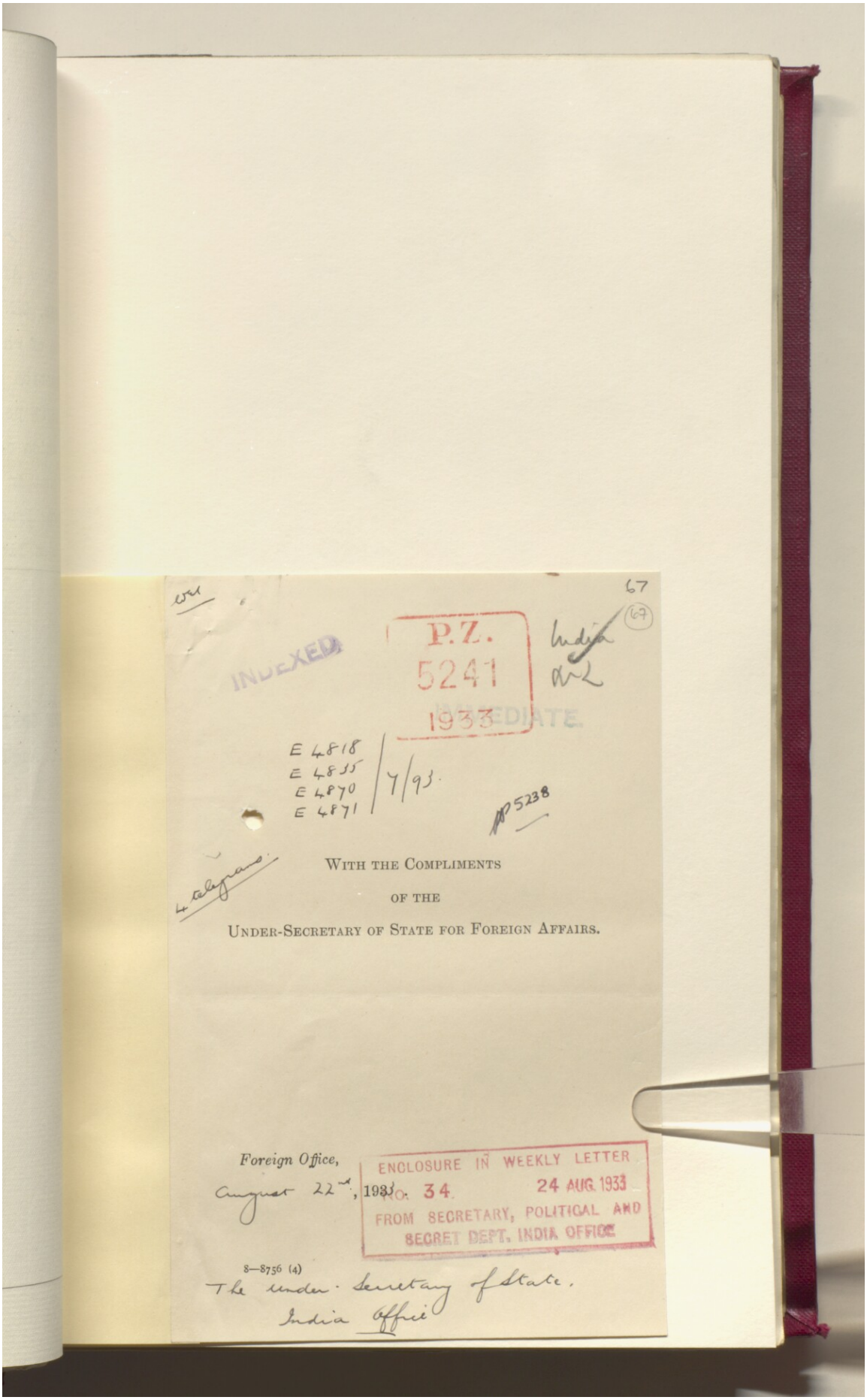
66
(66)

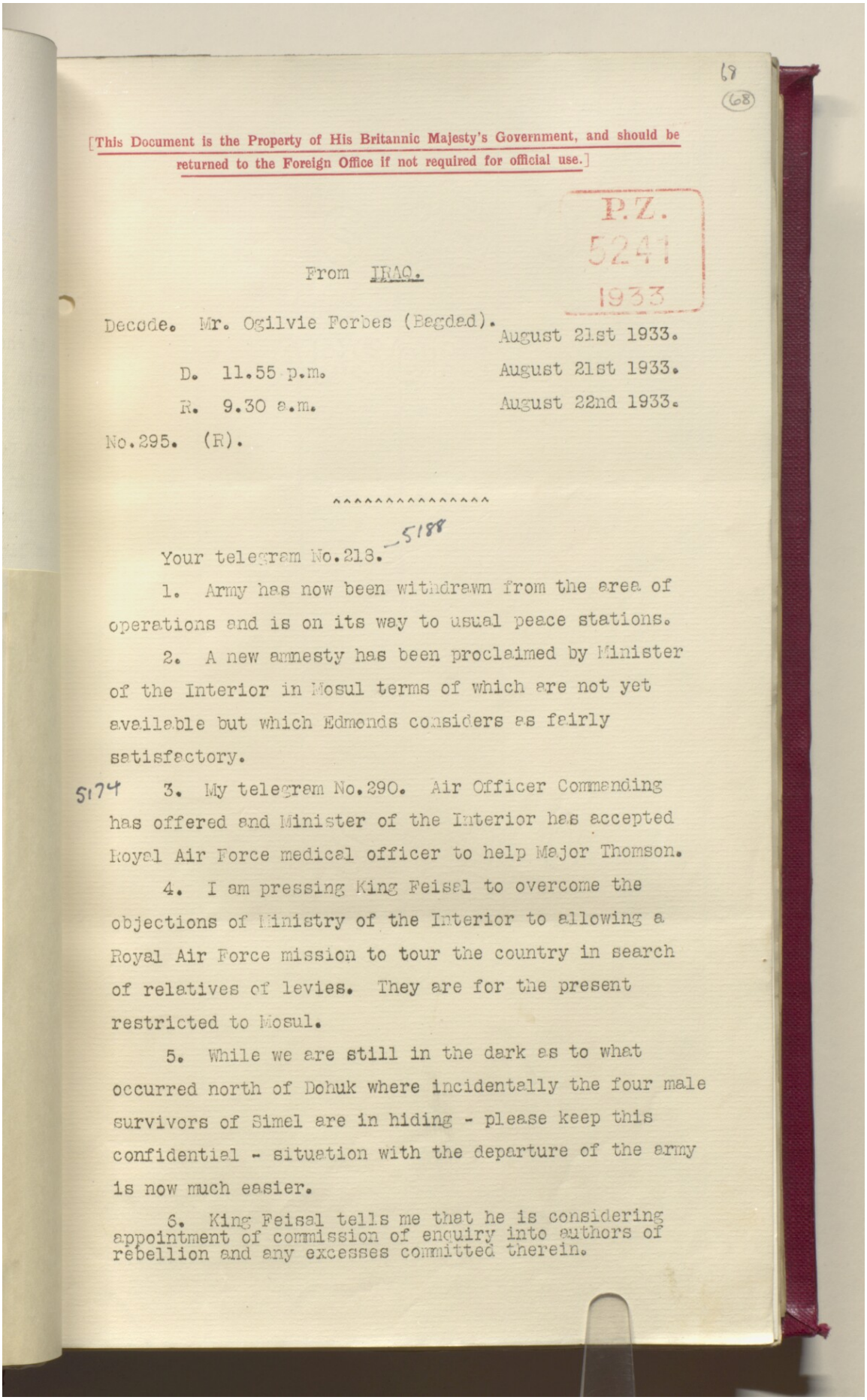
14.

50. After some discussion on various subsidiary points, GENERAL ROWAN-ROBINSON raised the rather large issue of whether it was desirable that our present connection with Iraq should be maintained. The PRIME MINISTER pointed out, however, that this issue was not one which could be discussed in the present connection, and that in any case no modification of our whole policy towards Iraq could be considered until the present crisis had been liquidated.

(Signed) G.W. RENDEL.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.
17th August, 1933.


67
INDEXED
P.Z.
5241
1933
IMMEDIATE
E 4818
E 4835
E 4870
E 4871
7/93.
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34. 24 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The under-Secretary of State,
India Office



68
(68)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5241
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Begdad). August 21st 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. August 21st 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. August 22nd 1933.

No.295. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

Your telegram No.218. 5188

1. Army has now been withdrawn from the area of operations and is on its way to usual peace stations.

2. A new amnesty has been proclaimed by Minister of the Interior in Mosul terms of which are not yet available but which Edmonds considers as fairly satisfactory.

5174 3. My telegram No.290. Air Officer Commanding has offered and Minister of the Interior has accepted Royal Air Force medical officer to help Major Thomson.

4. I am pressing King Feisal to overcome the objections of Ministry of the Interior to allowing a Royal Air Force mission to tour the country in search of relatives of levies. They are for the present restricted to Mosul.

5. While we are still in the dark as to what occurred north of Dohuk where incidentally the four male survivors of Simel are in hiding - please keep this confidential - situation with the departure of the army is now much easier.

6. King Feisal tells me that he is considering appointment of commission of enquiry into authors of rebellion and any excesses committed therein.

69
(69)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5241
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
21st August, 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 21st August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 22nd August, 1933.

No. 293. (R).

5188

Your telegram No. 221, paragraph 1.

Air Officer Commanding is not in favour of temporarily lodging Lady Surma under British protection and we consider her continued stay in Mosul for a few days can be risked.

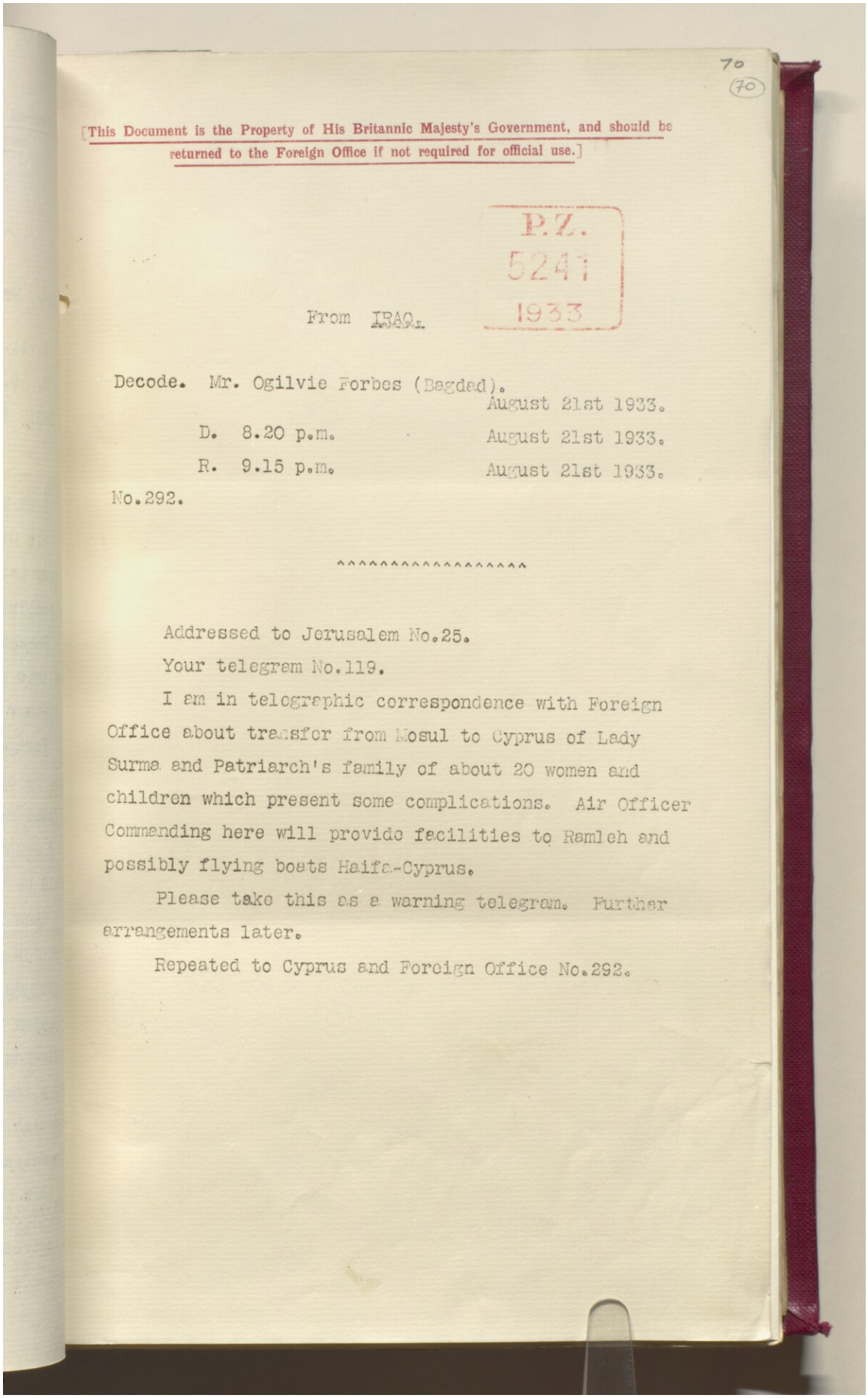
Paragraph 2. The King raised question of her deportation this morning and requested removal to British territory. No further note from Iraqi Government is necessary.

Paragraph 3. B. This can easily be obtained. C. Party would be conveyed under adequate police escort from residence to Mosul aerodrome and thence emplaned direct to Palestine. D. I doubt if party can be limited much below 20 which should be taken as maximum to be catered for.

King Feisal has offered to pay £600 a year from privy purse for maintenance of the whole patriarchal family. This to include Patriarch's present allowance and is offered on condition that money will not be used for anti-Iraq propaganda. For example Mar Shimun is expected not to spend this allowance for expenses in Geneva. Iraqi Ministers have also made it clear that this subsidy must come from King Feisal and not appear in Budget.

Air Officer Commanding is prepared to transport party to Palestine on two or three days' notice. If flying boats are to be used from Haifa he would like this done soon as he desires the return of these craft.

I am briefly warning Cyprus and Jerusalem. May we go ahead?



70
(70)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5241
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
August 21st 1933.

D. 8.20 p.m. August 21st 1933.

R. 9.15 p.m. August 21st 1933.

No.292.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

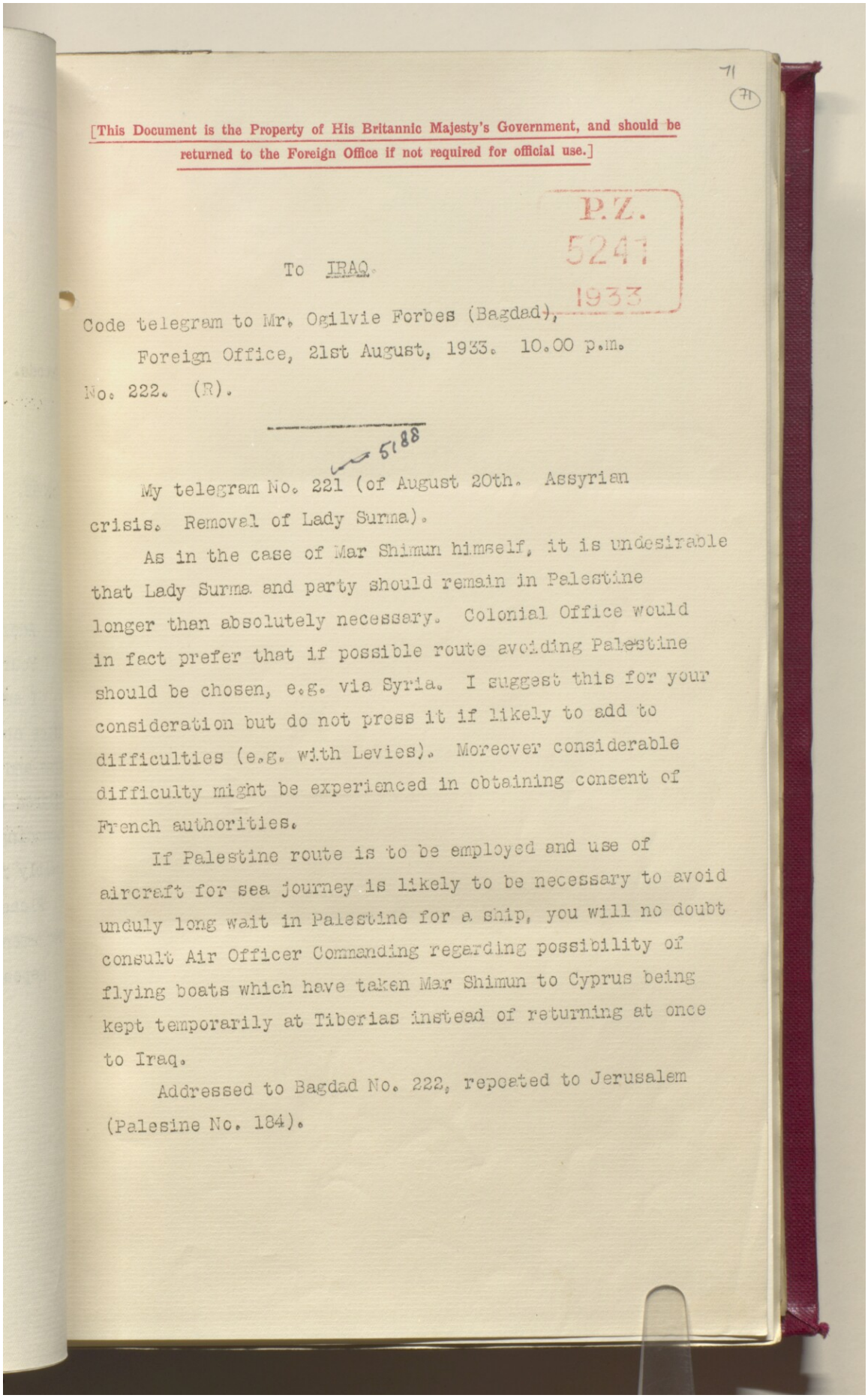
Addressed to Jerusalem No.25.

Your telegram No.119.

I am in telegraphic correspondence with Foreign Office about transfer from Mosul to Cyprus of Lady Surma and Patriarch's family of about 20 women and children which present some complications. Air Officer Commanding here will provide facilities to Ramleh and possibly flying boats Haifa-Cyprus.

Please take this as a warning telegram. Further arrangements later.

Repeated to Cyprus and Foreign Office No.292.



71

(71)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5247
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 21st August, 1933. 10.00 p.m.
No. 222. (R).

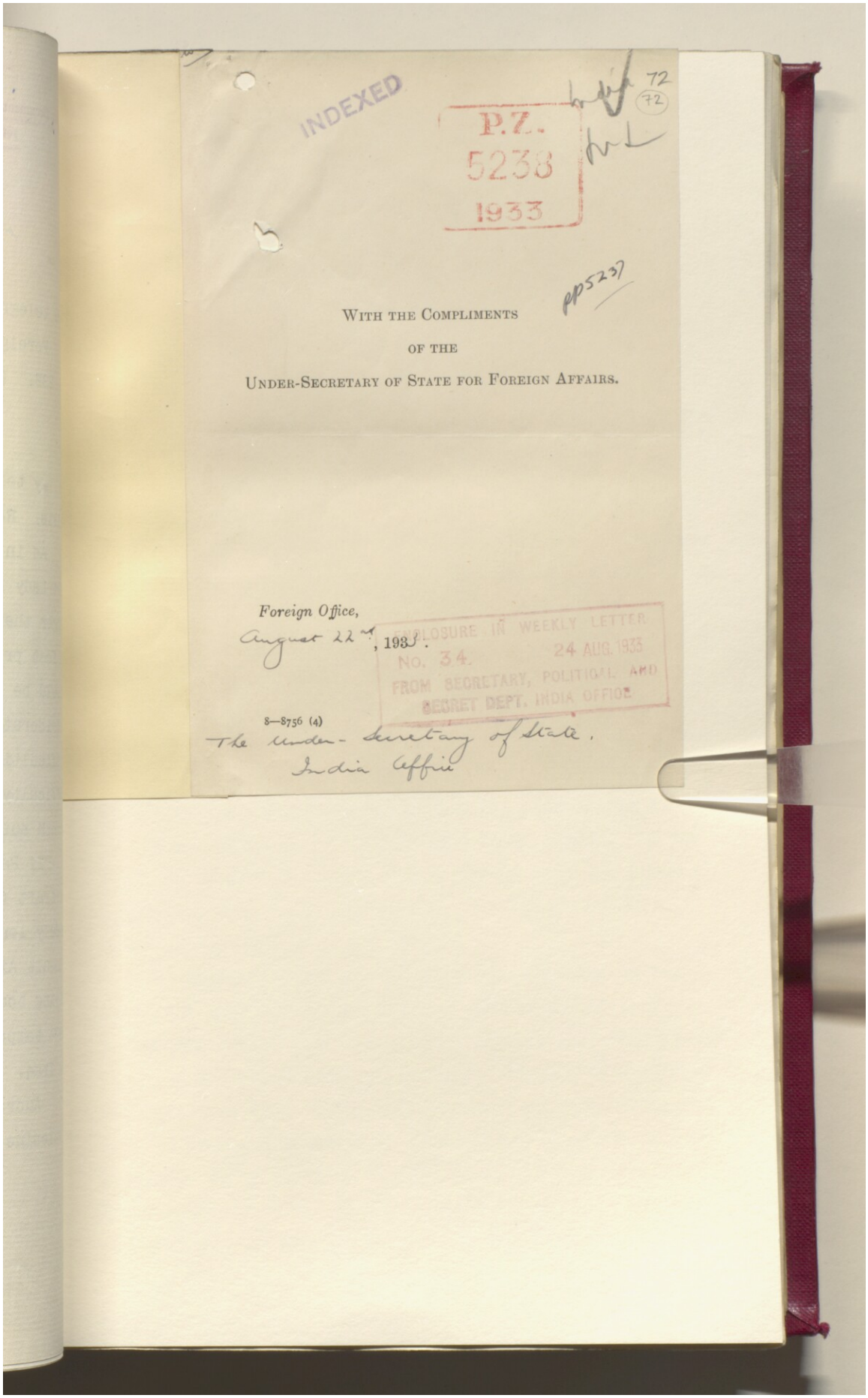
5188

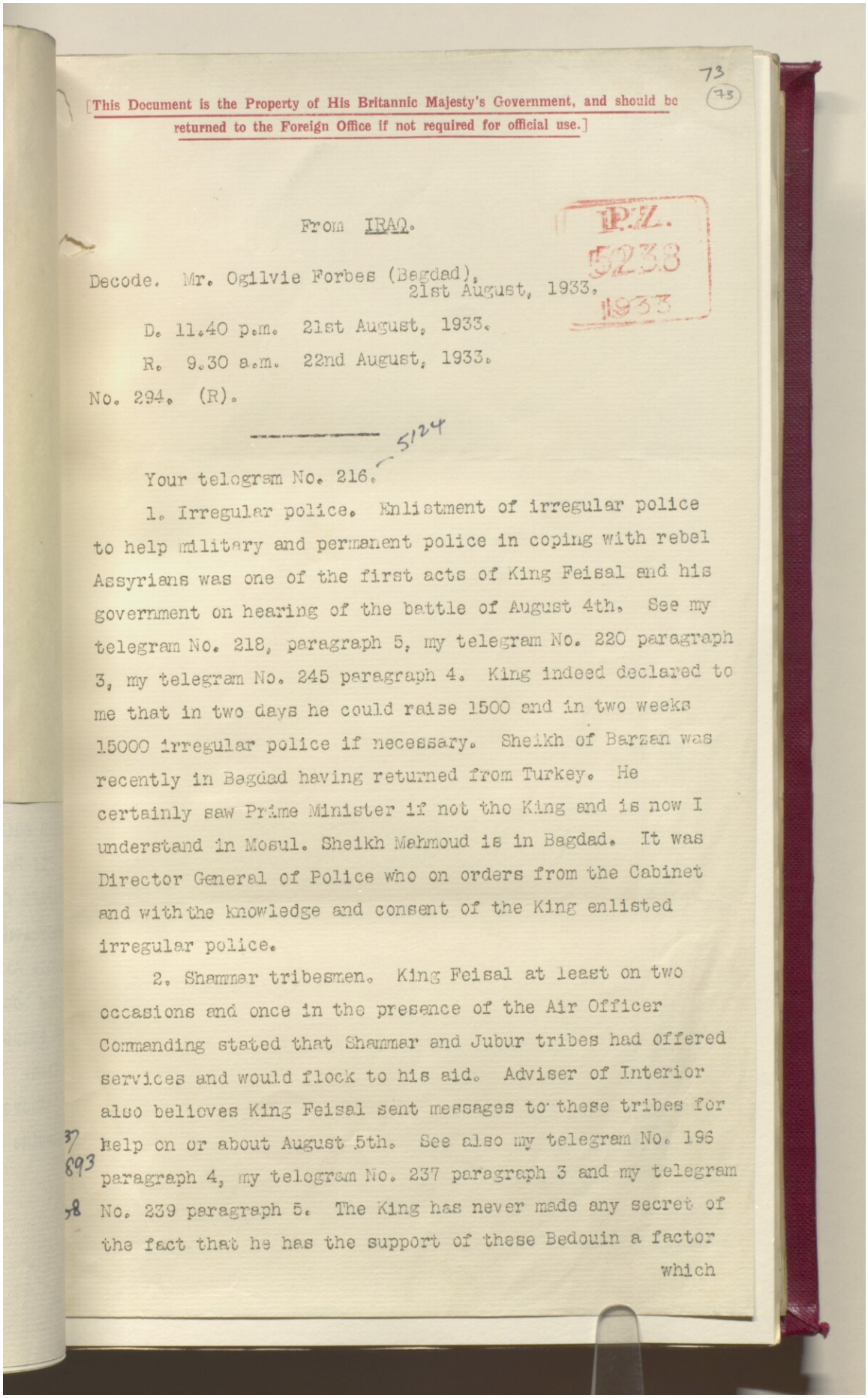
My telegram No. 221 (of August 20th. Assyrian crisis. Removal of Lady Surma).

As in the case of Mar Shimun himself, it is undesirable that Lady Surma and party should remain in Palestine longer than absolutely necessary. Colonial Office would in fact prefer that if possible route avoiding Palestine should be chosen, e.g. via Syria. I suggest this for your consideration but do not press it if likely to add to difficulties (e.g. with Levies). Morecver considerable difficulty might be experienced in obtaining consent of French authorities.

If Palestine route is to be employed and use of aircraft for sea journey is likely to be necessary to avoid unduly long wait in Palestine for a ship, you will no doubt consult Air Officer Commanding regarding possibility of flying boats which have taken Mar Shimun to Cyprus being kept temporarily at Tiberias instead of returning at once to Iraq.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 222, repeated to Jerusalem (Palesine No. 184).


INDEXED
P.Z.
5233
1933
72
72
pp5237
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The under-secretary of State,
India Office



73
(73)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5233 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad), 21st August, 1933.

D. 11.40 p.m. 21st August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 22nd August, 1933.

No. 294. (R).

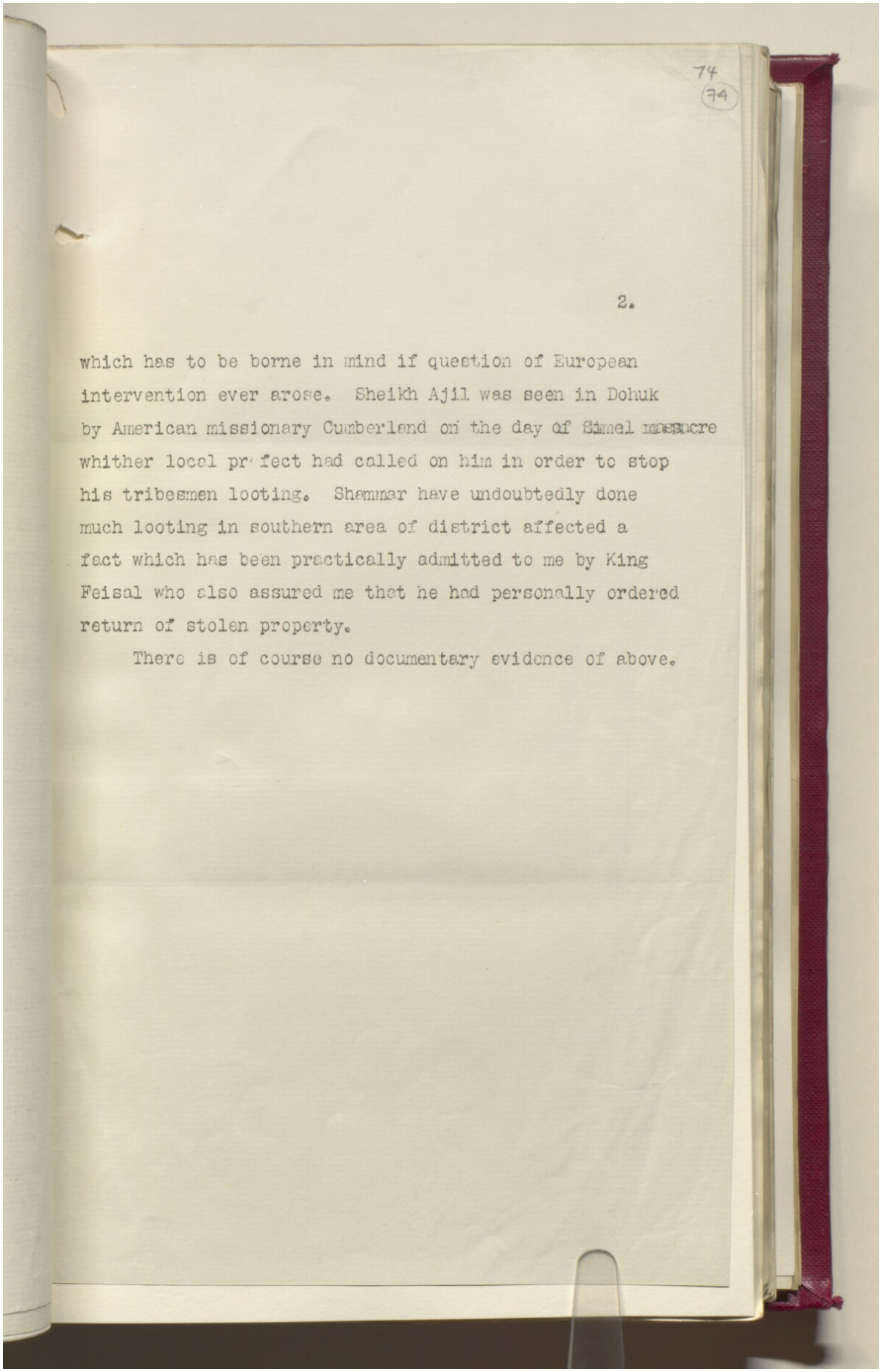
5124

Your telegram No. 216.

1. Irregular police. Enlistment of irregular police to help military and permanent police in coping with rebel Assyrians was one of the first acts of King Feisal and his government on hearing of the battle of August 4th. See my telegram No. 218, paragraph 5, my telegram No. 220 paragraph 3, my telegram No. 245 paragraph 4. King indeed declared to me that in two days he could raise 1500 and in two weeks 15000 irregular police if necessary. Sheikh of Barzan was recently in Bagdad having returned from Turkey. He certainly saw Prime Minister if not the King and is now I understand in Mosul. Sheikh Mahmoud is in Bagdad. It was Director General of Police who on orders from the Cabinet and with the knowledge and consent of the King enlisted irregular police.

2. Shammar tribesmen. King Feisal at least on two occasions and once in the presence of the Air Officer Commanding stated that Shammar and Jubur tribes had offered services and would flock to his aid. Adviser of Interior also believes King Feisal sent messages to these tribes for help on or about August 5th. See also my telegram No. 196 paragraph 4, my telegram No. 237 paragraph 3 and my telegram No. 239 paragraph 5. The King has never made any secret of the fact that he has the support of these Bedouin a factor which

37/893/38

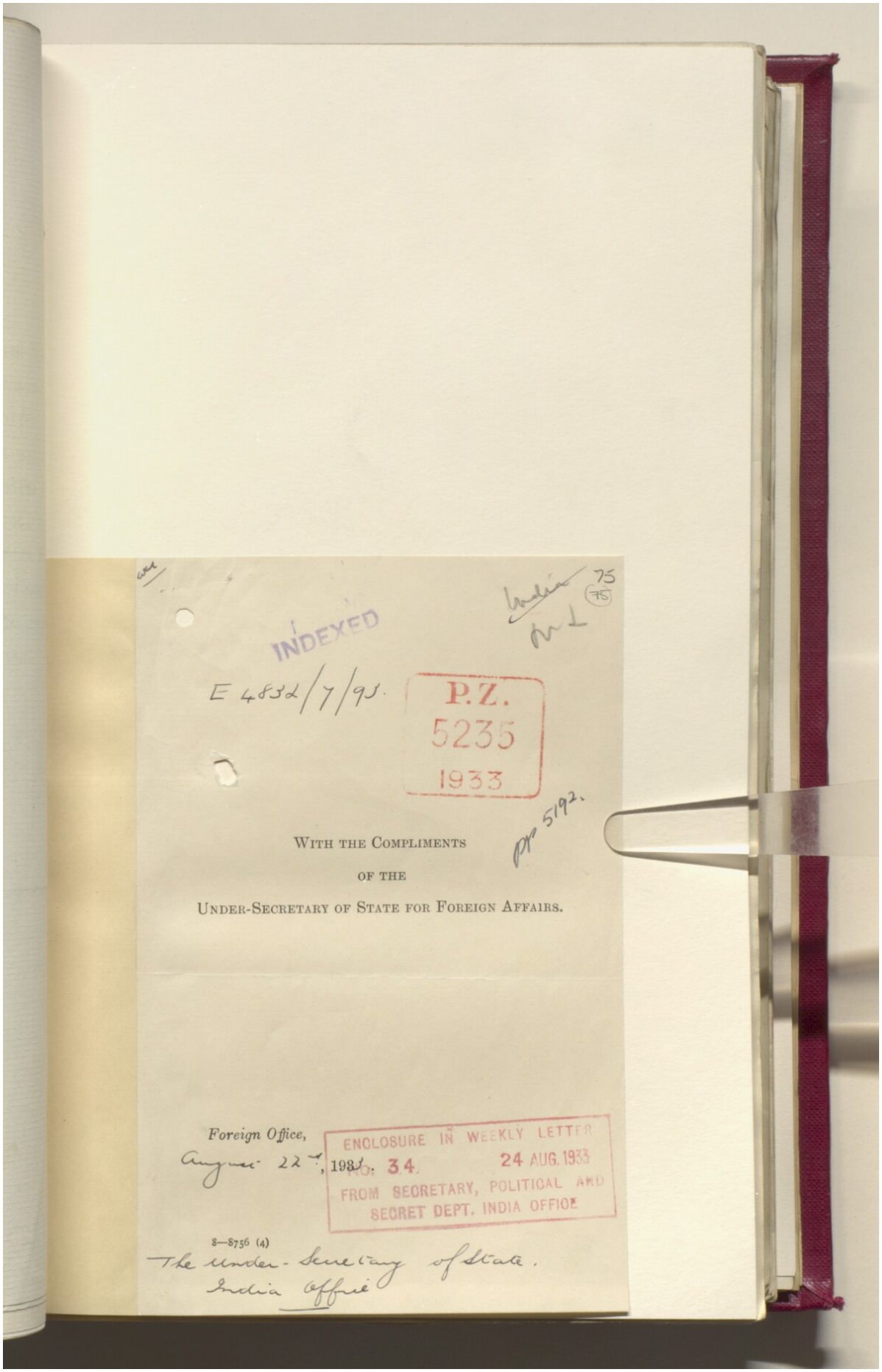


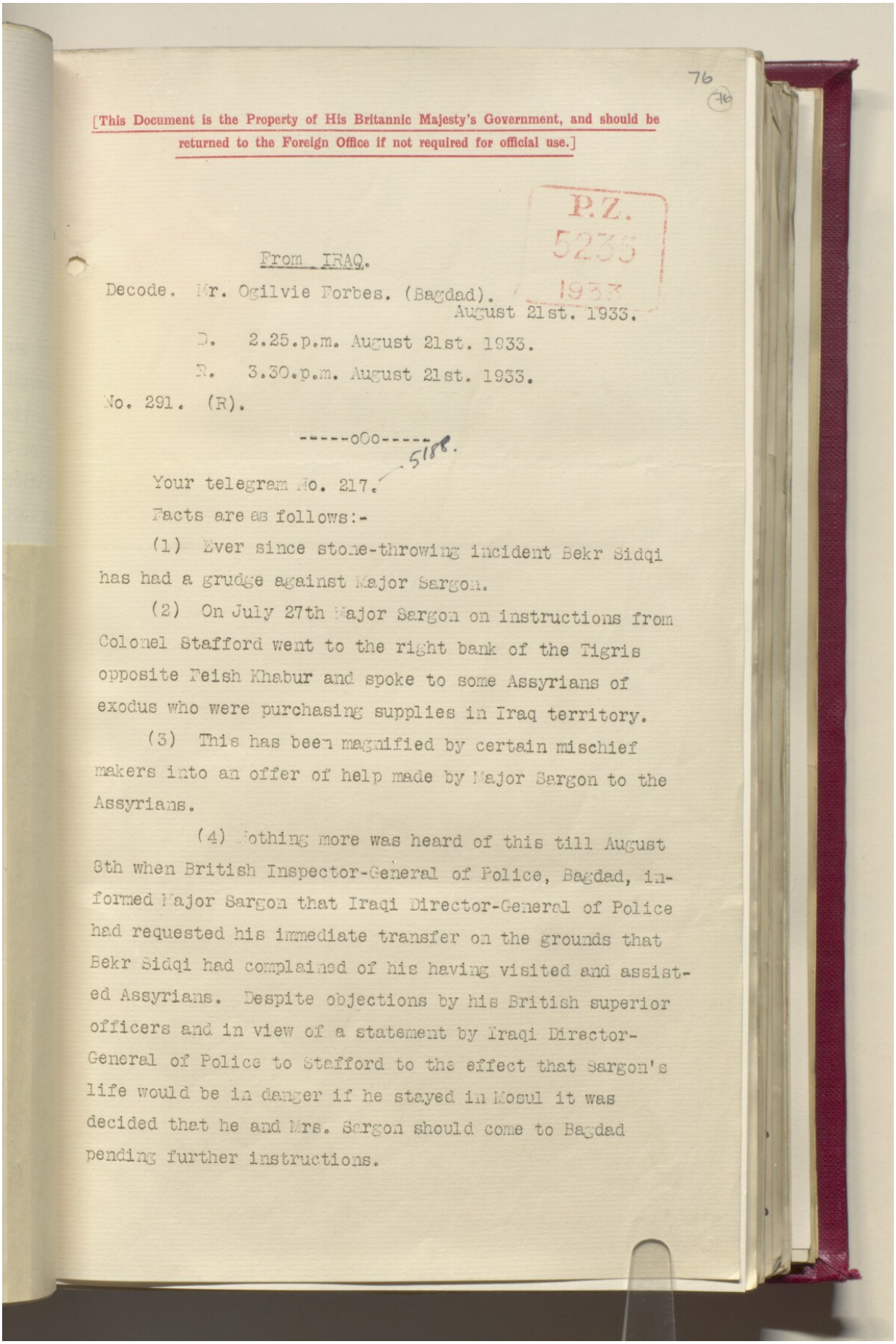
74
(74)

2.

which has to be borne in mind if question of European intervention ever arose. Sheikh Ajil was seen in Dohuk by American missionary Cumberland on the day of Simel massacre whither local prefect had called on him in order to stop his tribesmen looting. Shammar have undoubtedly done much looting in southern area of district affected a fact which has been practically admitted to me by King Feisal who also assured me that he had personally ordered return of stolen property.

There is of course no documentary evidence of above.


INDEXED
E 4832/7/93.
P.Z.
5235
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 22nd, 1933.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34.
24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The Under-Secretary of State.
India Office



76

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5235 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad). August 21st. 1933.

D. 2.25.p.m. August 21st. 1933.

R. 3.30.p.m. August 21st. 1933.

No. 291. (R).

-----oOo-----

5188.

Your telegram No. 217.

Facts are as follows:-

(1) Ever since stone-throwing incident Bekr Sidqi has had a grudge against Major Sargon.

(2) On July 27th Major Sargon on instructions from Colonel Stafford went to the right bank of the Tigris opposite Feish Khabur and spoke to some Assyrians of exodus who were purchasing supplies in Iraq territory.

(3) This has been magnified by certain mischief makers into an offer of help made by Major Sargon to the Assyrians.

(4) Nothing more was heard of this till August 8th when British Inspector-General of Police, Bagdad, informed Major Sargon that Iraqi Director-General of Police had requested his immediate transfer on the grounds that Bekr Sidqi had complained of his having visited and assisted Assyrians. Despite objections by his British superior officers and in view of a statement by Iraqi Director-General of Police to Stafford to the effect that Sargon's life would be in danger if he stayed in Mosul it was decided that he and Mrs. Sargon should come to Bagdad pending further instructions.

77

(77)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).
23rd August, 1933.

D. 12.15 p.m., 23rd August, 1933.

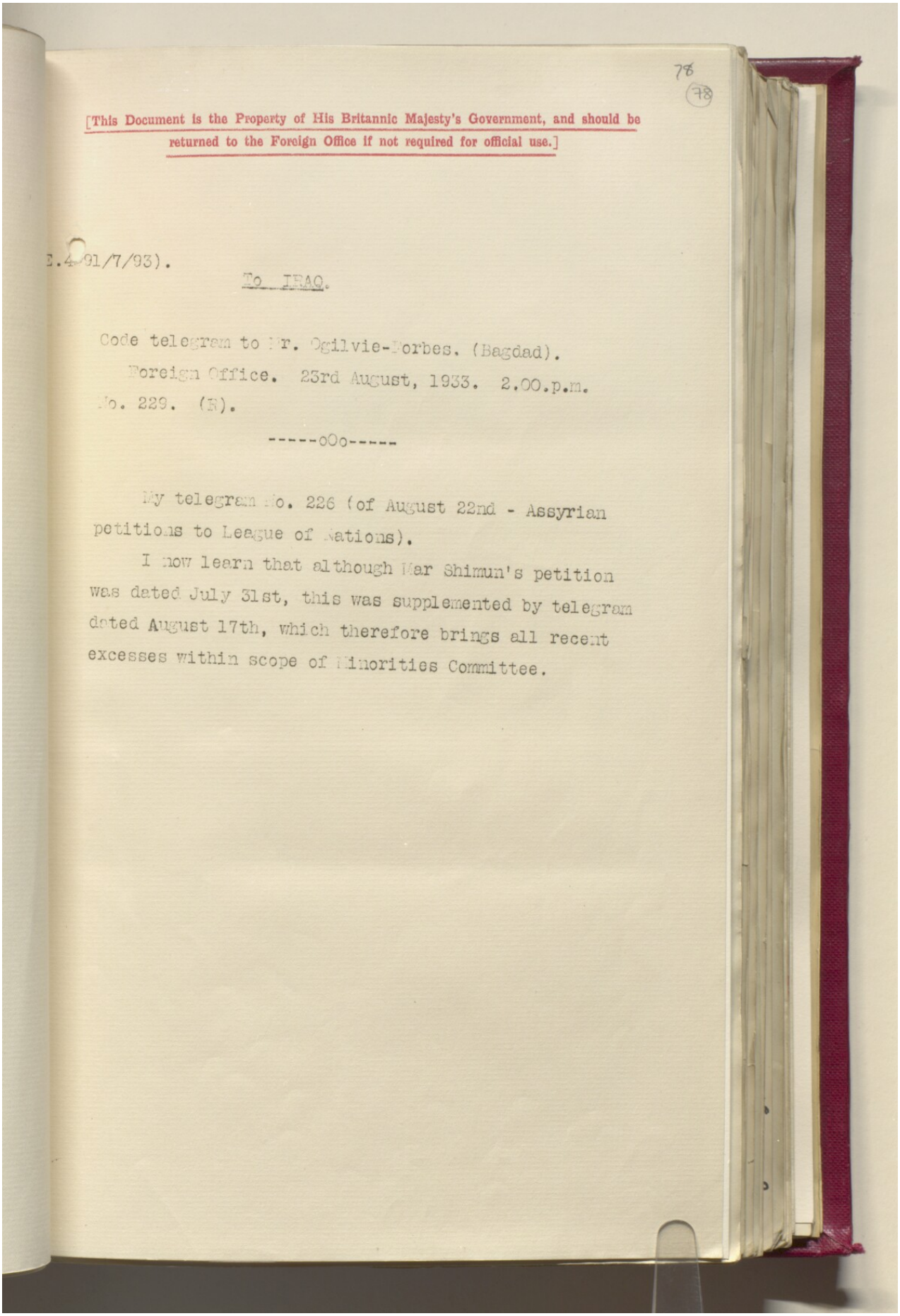
R. 11.40 a.m., 23rd August, 1933.

No. 300. (R).

::::::::::::::

Your telegram No. 224 noted.

Lady Surma and party have arrived safely at the Y.M.C.A.



78
(78)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

E.4491/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes. (Bagdad).
Foreign Office. 23rd August, 1933. 2.00.p.m.
No. 229. (R).

-----oOo-----

My telegram No. 226 (of August 22nd - Assyrian petitions to League of Nations).

I now learn that although Mar Shimun's petition was dated July 31st, this was supplemented by telegram dated August 17th, which therefore brings all recent excesses within scope of Minorities Committee.

79
(79)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
22nd August, 1933.

D. 8.55 p.m., 22nd August, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m., 23rd August, 1933.

No. 299. (R).

::::::::::::

Your telegram No. 222.

(1) I learn after intervention by Chaldaean Patriarch Lady Surma decided to come to Bagdad and left Mosul this morning for railhead at Kirkuk with the whole patriarchal family including month old baby and four servants, twenty-three in all, under a police escort.

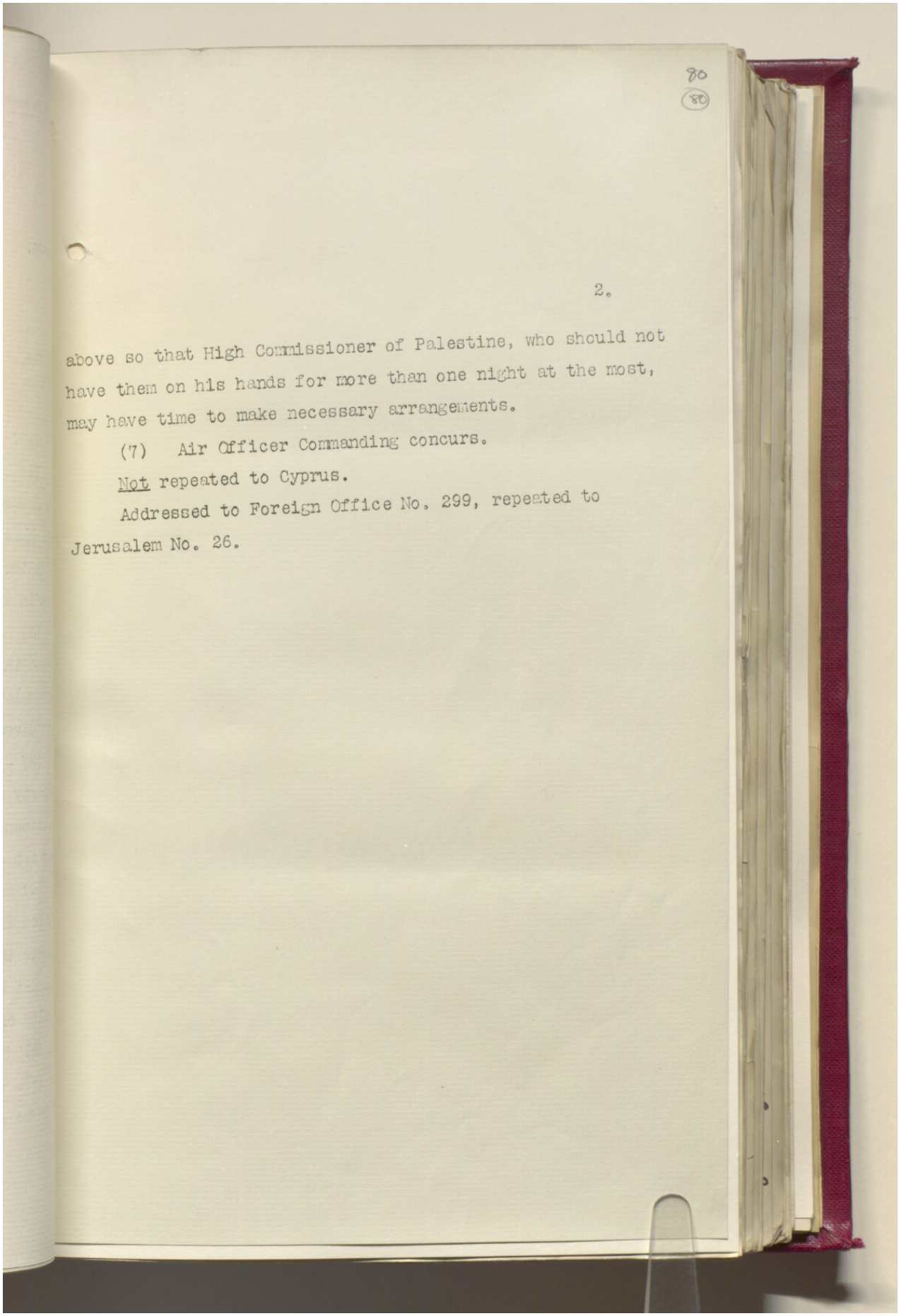
(2) She apparently acted on her own initiative and without informing either myself or Air Officer Commanding. I am anxious for the safety of the party and have requested Iraqi Government to see to it.

(3) Air Officer Commanding is unwilling to receive the party at Hinaidi except in great emergency which has not yet arisen. They will probably go to the Y.M.C.A. under their own arrangements.

(4) My telegram No. 293. Air Officer Commanding does not wish to use flying boats for transporting them and suggests that they might be sent by steamer leaving Haifa on August 30th. I agree. He offers to fly them to Ramleh or Haifa on that day or on August 29th.

(5) There are many objections to Syrian route.

(6) My telegram No. 293, last sentence. Please inform me soon whether we may forward this family as suggested above ...



80
(80)

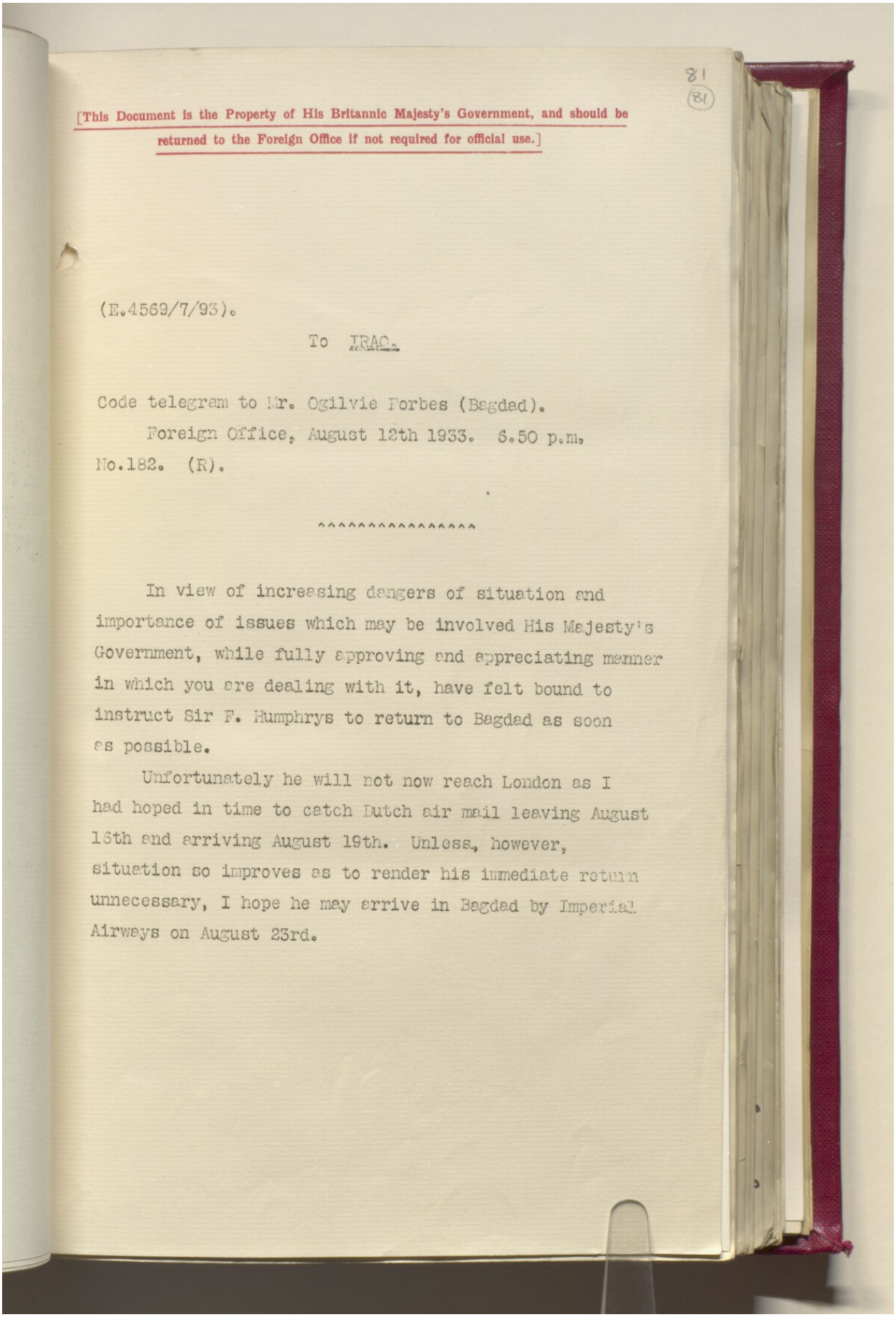
2.

above so that High Commissioner of Palestine, who should not have them on his hands for more than one night at the most, may have time to make necessary arrangements.

(7) Air Officer Commanding concurs.

Not repeated to Cyprus.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 299, repeated to Jerusalem No. 26.



81
(81)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

(E.4569/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

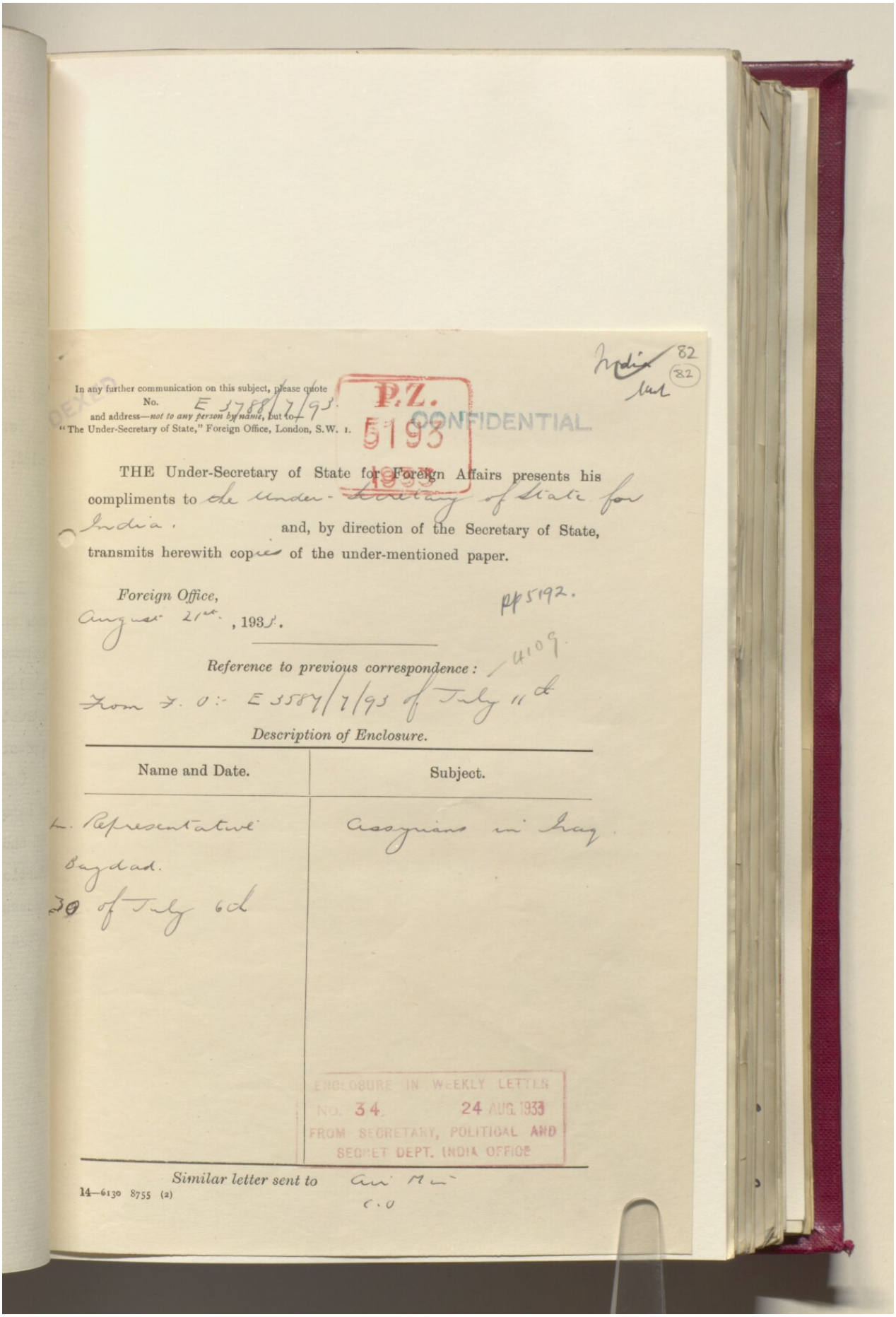
Foreign Office, August 12th 1933. 6.50 p.m.

No.182. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

In view of increasing dangers of situation and importance of issues which may be involved His Majesty's Government, while fully approving and appreciating manner in which you are dealing with it, have felt bound to instruct Sir F. Humphrys to return to Bagdad as soon as possible.

Unfortunately he will not now reach London as I had hoped in time to catch Dutch air mail leaving August 16th and arriving August 19th. Unless, however, situation so improves as to render his immediate return unnecessary, I hope he may arrive in Bagdad by Imperial Airways on August 23rd.



India 82 (82)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3788/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 5193 1933

CONFIDENTIAL.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 21st, 1933.

pp 5192.

Reference to previous correspondence: 4109.

From F. O:- E 3587/7/93 of July 11th

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
L. Representative Bagdad. 30 of July 6th	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min
C.O

14—6130 8755 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x0000af

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z. 5193 1933

EASTERN (IRAQ). July 12, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3788/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(*Received July* 12.)

(No. 430.)

Sir, *Bagdad, July* 6, 1933.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 419 of the 29th June, the two principal features of the present Assyrian crisis during the course of the week have been—

(i) The question of the return of the Mar Shimun to Mosul; and
(ii) The reaction produced by the Mar Shimun's letter to the Minister of the Interior, dated the 29th June and delivered on the 1st July.

2. The various arguments for and against the return of the Mar Shimun to Mosul have been discussed at length in the telegraphic correspondence which has passed between us. Moreover, the situation is constantly changing. It may, indeed, have entirely changed by the time you receive this despatch. So I will limit myself to summing up the arguments for and against and the actual position as it is to-day.

3. In favour of the return of the Mar Shimun to the north it is contended that—

(i) This would induce a considerable section, nay, the majority of the Assyrian people, who are specially devoted to the person and to the aspirations of the Patriarch to cease opposition to or to co-operate with the settlement.
(ii) That his presence amongst his people would instil them with confidence in the good faith of the Iraqi Government, which confidence has been somewhat shaken by the unwise conduct of certain high officials in the Iraqi civil and military administration.
(iii) That if he were allowed to return and left quietly alone, he could not hold himself out as a martyr for the Assyrian people and could gradually be ignored.
(iv) That his continued detention against his will would be very unfavourably viewed abroad, especially by those who doubted either Iraq's willingness to keep her word or her ability to govern herself with success.

4. On the other hand, the arguments against allowing him to return are as follows:—

(i) He was summoned to Bagdad to give an assurance of loyalty and co-operation in the form of signing a simple letter of acknowledgment. He refuses and is accordingly suspect.
(ii) It is well known that he intends to do all he can to impede the present settlement. He can do less harm in Bagdad than in the north.
(iii) He has offended the dignity of the Minister of the Interior. He cannot get off scot free without amends.
(iv) He will almost certainly be a party in some quarrel picked or the victim of some incident provoked by local Iraqi authorities in the north, several of whom, such as the General Officer Commanding, Mosul, and the Director-General of Police, are itching to have at him. He can be better looked after here.

5. In addition to the above arguments for and against, there are two overriding considerations, in this case against. They are—

(i) The Iraqi Government were thoroughly frightened by Yaku. His sudden and unexpected collapse has correspondingly elated them. They have incurred trouble and expense in concentrating nearly half of their army to overawe the Assyrians, who, incidentally, are thoroughly

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x0000b1

nervous and cowed. Threatened as they consider themselves to be in the Euphrates area, where the King's writ does not run in two liwas out of three, they want once and for all to have done with the Assyrians and the Assyrian question by disarming them partially, totally, or worse. The Acting Adviser to the Interior has, rightly I consider, been straining every effort to prevent them from thus ravaging the Assyrians in the north, by dangling before them the bait of the Mar Shimun in Bagdad.

(ii) The second overriding consideration is the constant desire of the Iraqi Government to take proceedings against the Mar Shimun under the criminal law, a craving which is for ever being stimulated by the wilful provocation of that stubborn young man. I have hitherto succeeded in keeping him out of the courts. How long this protection will be effective I do not know, as I have no legal control over the Mar Shimun. Moral suasion over the Iraqi Government is my only instrument. *Quem Deus vult perdere prius dementat.*

6. The second event of the week, which has effectually kicked the scale in the wrong direction, was the Mar Shimun's letter to the Minister of the Interior of the 29th June, a copy of which was sent to you by air mail in my despatch No. 422 of the 3rd July. Before he actually delivered it he came to see me in order to hand to me the copy destined for His Majesty's Government. Indeed, he half hesitatingly hinted that, if the Minister took action that evening to let him return to Mosul, the letter might not be delivered after all. I understand he also sounded Mr. Edmonds with the same object. I told the Mar Shimun that as he was inviting my comments he would have them straight from the shoulder. Stop all this letter writing—he had written another letter the same day—except for one of two sentences. He knew quite well to what I was referring. Then the difficulty in the way of his return would disappear. Of course he again declined to do so on the well known plea that he must consult his people first.

7. He said he had also come to draw my attention to the anti-Assyrian agitation which had broken out in Mosul and in the Bagdad press, particularly the inflammatory speech of a Deputy from Mosul on the occasion of a question in Parliament. I enclose a translation of this question, answer and further comment. I said he had nobody but himself to blame for this outburst of anti-Assyrian feeling.

8. Now for his letter. You will observe that in the first paragraph he definitely challenges the Minister of the Interior to show legal justification for his detention in Bagdad. The first reaction of Hikmet Beg was to stop settlement at once and to put the Mar Shimun into the dock, his offence being aggravated by the circulation of the letter to the representatives of foreign Governments. I went to see the Prime Minister and persuaded him to take no action for the present. In fact, we have a respite for a week, subject, of course, to any future folly on the part of the Mar Shimun.

9. You will also observe that the Mar Shimun offers allegiance and the draft Community Law only after the settlement, which, he implies, must be worked out in accordance with his wishes. Otherwise he claims an alternative settlement. I think by this he means the right to have a home found for his people elsewhere than in Iraq. In other words, His Majesty's Government or the League is the cuckoo that lays the Assyrian egg, but the fledgling has the right to object to the nest and if so it is incumbent on the cuckoo to find another nest to the liking of the young one.

10. I have submitted in my telegram No. 158 of the 5th July my views as to how this letter might be answered in such a way as to cover a possible formula for the return of the Mar Shimun to Mosul. But I fear that this would-be martyr may not play up.

11. The Mar Shimun, always shadowed by a group of Criminal Investigation Department detectives, who permanently station themselves outside his residence at the Y.M.C.A., has been in most cases delivering his letter personally to the foreign heads of mission. To the Turkish Legation, however, he sent a messenger. The German Minister, who regarded his visit rather as a joke, told me he was tickled by the Mar Shimun's embarrassment when he reminded him that some of his troubles might have been due to the Assyrians having gone to

war against the Germans. The French Chargé d'Affaires, who is grateful for help afforded over the Syrian frontier question, has been quite communicative, and has told me that the Mar Shimun declared to him that he was a prisoner both of the Iraqi and of His Majesty's Governments. The United States Minister, who is already annoyed at being jockeyed by Mr. Lampard, the local head of the Y.M.C.A., into seeing the Mar Shimun on a private pretext, informs me that he will refuse to receive him again or to discuss this subject.

12. I also enclose a précis of an interesting account by Colonel Stafford, the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, of the whole Assyrian situation, and also a copy of Major Thomson's first report to the Minister of the Interior on his settlement work. His comment on the suitability of the Dashtazi area, for the adaptation of which the Chamber of Deputies has just voted 13,000 dinars, makes not very encouraging reading. But sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

13. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail on the 7th July. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Extract from Proceedings of Parliament, June 30, 1933.

(Translation.)

SA'ID CHALABI HAJI THABIT, Deputy for Mosul, put the following question addressed to the Prime Minister :—

"1. What is the attitude of the Assyrians *vis-à-vis* the Iraqi Government? Did the Government adopt the necessary measures for the prevention in future of any aggression by the Assyrians on the tranquil residents of other villages, in view of the fact that the Assyrians are heavily armed?

"2. From where did the Assyrians get these arms? Does his Excellency the Prime Minister not fear that the possession of arms by the Assyrians may disturb public security?

"3. What interests do the British have in Diana, which necessitated the establishment of a British consulate there?"

The Prime Minister, on the 28th June, made the following statement in reply :—

"The attitude of the Assyrians towards the Government has undergone no change. All that has happened is that a number of Assyrians having attempted to disturb the peace and declined to obey Government orders, the Government were compelled to take effective steps for their punishment, whereupon they submitted. The Government are now adopting measures to prevent the future recurrence of incidents of this kind.

"There has been no acts of aggression against villagers on the part of the Tiaris. The Government are prepared to mete out strong punishment to anyone who may disturb the peace or violate the laws.

"As to the honourable Deputy's query regarding the origin of the arms in the possession of the Assyrians, I think that the honourable Deputy is aware of the origin of these arms and that it is not hid from him. There is no cause for anxiety concerning public peace. Nevertheless, the Government consider it their duty to adopt all necessary measures for the removal of all that is calculated to lead into a disturbance of the public peace in future.

"As regards the third clause of the question of the honourable Deputy, I am examining its contents and hope to be able to answer it on a future occasion.

"As regards the statement of the honourable Deputy concerning the settlement of Assyrians, I think it needs some explanation. Gentlemen, you are aware of the fact that the Government are carrying out the settlement of the Assyrians in accordance with a decision of the League of Nations. There

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x0000b3

is, however, nothing to compel the Government to settle them in one single locality. The Government share with the honourable Deputy the feeling that this country is the home of his forefathers and that its soil is mixed up with their blood. Neither conscience nor law allows us to expel any member of the natives of this country from his property which is under his possession, or to rob him of his right to exercise possession thereof, in order to make it over to another party. This is what I am able to say on the subject, having regard to my present situation."

In reply to the above, Deputy Sa'id Chalabi, the questioner, made a lengthy statement, which may be summarised as follows :—

He denied the Tiaris the right to call themselves or to be called Assyrians, asserting that they were given this appellation by the English during the occupation for certain imperialistic purposes. Except for a small section, they were alien to Iraq, having come into it from Persia, Turkey and Russia, under encouragement from the imperialistic authorities.

Proceeding, he accused the Assyrians of having been a danger to public peace and to the inhabitants of Iraq, recalling, in support of his contention, the two bloody incidents of Mosul and Kirkuk between the Assyrians and the Arab natives of these towns. He said :—

"Why have the Government not considered the question of disarming this element? I know the source from which they obtained their arms during the mandatory régime. That régime has passed away, and I request the Government to disarm them [*i.e.*, the Assyrians], or else allow neighbouring villages to arm themselves."

Turning to the question proper of the settlement of the Assyrians, he said :—

"The Tiari comedy is a wonderful one. We know the aim behind their settlement in the north. We have allotted for this purpose an extensive stretch of land. They are now being settled by a British expert, and the Government intends allotting a sum of 13,000 I.D. for the construction of quarters for these ungrateful ones, who do not acknowledge the kindness they have been shown by this country. I suspect that it is intended by the Assyrian question to create (for Iraq) a problem similar to the Zionist problem in Palestine. It appears as if the Government have struck the Barzanis only in order to settle the Assyrians in their place. We do not agree to their being settled in one single locality *en bloc*. We cannot trust them, because they are non-Moslems, and foreign hands are always toying with them."

The British Vice-Consulate, Diana.

Turning to this affair (which formed subject of that part of his question to which the Prime Minister deferred the reply to a future occasion), Sa'id Chalabi said :—

"As regards the question of the British consulate, Diana. What interests does that institution possess there? What are those officers doing in the villages and towns? Their doings are well known. We had thought that the mandatory era had come to an end. Iraq was the home of our forefathers. We do not agree that it should be dealt with in this manner. (Applause.) Our ally has certain interests and benefits, which we shall safeguard as long as our own rights are respected. I want her to be plain as to what she wants from us, and not to resort to such harmful methods."

In reply to the above remark the Prime Minister said :—

"The honourable Deputy refers to intrigues being carried out in the country by 'officers' [*sic*]. I beg the honourable Deputy to allow me to say that I am not aware of any such intrigues going on. If, however, any such intrigues actually exist they must be suppressed, and they should come to an end together with the defunct régime. But this does not depend entirely upon the Government exercising watchfulness and taking action, but also on members of the public showing interest and knowing their national obligations."

Replying to the above, Deputy Sa'id Chalabi declared :—

"Yes, the people should co-operate with the Government in such matters. We are ready for the defence of our country. I hope that the rumour that 1,000 Assyrian families are to be settled in the north will prove untrue."

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Précis of Report, dated June 21, 1933, by Colonel R. S. Stafford, Administrative Inspector, Mosul, to Adviser, Ministry of Interior, on the Subject of the Assyrians.

COLONEL STAFFORD has only been in Mosul for one month. The following are his first impressions on the Assyrian question :—

The intensive propaganda of the Mar Shimun and his followers has exaggerated the importance of the Assyrian question as a whole. Iraqi Government have a stronger case than is generally realised. Its full strength was unfortunately not displayed at Geneva last year.

The Assyrians are neither poor nor on the edge of starvation. There are about 5,500 Assyrian families in Iraq. Of these 4,500 are settled, not necessarily all on the land. Maximum number of Assyrian "houses" to be settled is 900, probably less. Only one section of the Assyrian people require settlement on a considerable scale, the Ashuti (Tiyari Zair) tribe. They are pastoral rather than agricultural (400 to 500 houses). It should be remembered that some Assyrians who already have employment in the towns desire allotments of land to be cultivated for them by other people. This is unreasonable, and implies giving Assyrians preference over Arabs and Kurds.

The most suitable area for settlement is Dashtazi, which could accommodate 1,000 families, *i.e.*, nearly all the families requiring land.

The Assyrian Advisory Board, under the presidency of Malik Khoshaba, stated that 10,000 Assyrians required settlement. This is an exaggeration, as this figure includes many who are already settled in privately-owned villages, but who are uncertain of the security of their tenure. Unfortunately, the same insecurity applies to all Iraqi subjects.

Assyrian conditions of life in the country are equal to those of the Kurds. Colonel Stafford saw no signs of destitution or under-nourishment, even amongst the landless. If there is destitution it is amongst the unemployed Assyrians in the towns. It is hoped that the Iraqi Government will employ such people, especially ex-levy officers, in the army and police. This is of great importance, as it will increase confidence.

Recent history shows that the temporal power of the Mar Shimun is not as strong as generally supposed. It was only in 1915 that the Assyrians rallied to the leadership of the Mar Shimun. The British authorities also found it more convenient to deal with one leader. It is noteworthy that the special adherents of the Mar Shimun, who do most of the agitation, are already settled. It is the anti-Mar Shimun section (the Ashutis) who really require settlement.

Probably a majority of the Assyrians still support the Mar Shimun, but to a lesser extent in the future. Only one of the four Nestorian bishops supports him. It is, nevertheless, important to bear in mind that, while the party *for* the Mar Shimun are devoted to him, the party against him are only dissatisfied with him; there are few really strongly opposed to him. Action against the person of the Mar Shimun would have the effect of increasing the number of his followers.

The Mar Shimun's complaint, that local officials are unsympathetic, is not justified as applied to the Assyrians in general. As applied to the Mar Shimun in particular, it is true, but that is the Mar Shimun's own fault.

A further complaint of his, that the majority of the Advisory Settlement Committee is opposed to him politically and is Presbyterian in religion, is also due to his own fault, as he has declined to appoint his own nominees.

Colonel Stafford, while placing on record the fact that the Mar Shimun cannot in modern conditions be granted temporal power, hopes that this demand is put forward on unselfish motives in the interests of the Assyrian people as a whole.

Recommendations as to Immediate Policy.

(1) Settle those Assyrians who really require settlement. Unfortunately, the Mar Shimun, either openly or secretly, will oppose this, and will disseminate false reports about the intentions of the League of Nations. Major Thomson is the most suitable person to combat this propaganda by personal interviews with the Assyrian leaders. This he is doing.

(2) Avoid, if possible, direct action against the Mar Shimun himself. This would tend to unite the Assyrians against the Iraqi Government. It is, however, probable that the Mar Shimun is encouraging Assyrians to oppose the Government and decline settlement, *e.g.*, despite notices in the press, no applications for land have been received from Bagdad, very few from Mosul. This propaganda may even go further, and encourage disobedience to the Government, in which case the Assyrians should be told that they will be treated like other Iraqis and punished if they break the law.

(3) It is almost certain that if the Mar Shimun returns to Mosul he will try to upset the settlement. In that case the Government should increase the prestige of the opposition party, which, though numerically weaker, contains three or four bishops and persons of education, and a certain number of Maliks, such as the Malik Khoshaba, and at the same time ignore the Mar Shimun. A Syriac newspaper might be started, and Assyrians notified that no complaints conveyed through the Mar Shimun will be considered. At the same time, it should be made clear that the Government does not interfere with the Mar Shimun's spiritual position.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the question is one of extraordinary difficulty, the most difficult that Colonel Stafford has had to deal with since he came to the East twenty years ago. The Iraqi Government should publish to the world its Assyrian policy, possibly on the following lines :—

(i) To treat them in the same way as the Arabs and Kurds, so that they may be contented Iraqi citizens.

(ii) To fulfil undertaking given to League to take every possible step to settle landless and jobless Assyrians. Major Thomson's presence is a proof of this.

(iii) Not to interfere with Mar Shimun as a religious leader, but to insist that, in temporal matters, his position shall be no different from the other religious leaders.

It is also to be hoped that the Iraqi Government will not be compelled to use force, in which eventuality the Iraqi Government will have to show that it has acted with the greatest forbearance.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Major Thomson to Minister of the Interior.

(Secret.) *Assyrian Settlement Office,*
Mosul, June 28/29, 1933.

Your Excellency,

I HAVE now been one month in Iraq studying the problem of the Assyrian settlement.

The whole issue has been embarrassed since my arrival by the refusal of the Mar Shimun to agree with the Iraq Government on the extent of his powers and duties as Patriarch of the Assyrian Church and people. In consequence the atmosphere of mistrust, suspicion and non-co-operation has become accentuated and it has been found exceedingly hard to dispel.

Since my arrival in Mosul a good deal of time has been spent in interviewing those Assyrian leaders who have come to see me. I have also visited Assyrian villages and explained the question of settlement to some seventy maliks.

The reply I have received as regards settlement by the Assyrians in Iraq has been the same with few exceptions, namely, "We will do as we are ordered by the Mar Shimun." This reply, in view of the present attitude of the Mar Shimun

must lead to an *impassé* unless we can succeed by some other means in persuading the people to accept settlement.

Recent events have brought us into close touch with several of the Assyrian maliks and leaders who had previously held aloof. Discussion with these people has emphasised the belief which I had already formed, that the Mar Shimun had not fully and clearly explained to them his failure to get agreement from the League of Nations on the chief points which he submitted.

Consequently, I feel that only by freely and clearly explaining the true facts amongst the Assyrian leaders can we succeed eventually in making them understand the real position of affairs, namely :—

1. That the Government is wholeheartedly prepared to assist the Assyrians in their settlement in Iraq.
2. That as settled members of the Iraqian people they will enjoy all the benefits which fall to Iraqian subjects in Iraq, as regards security, tenure of land, education, medical aid, &c.
3. That there is no question of any commission being appointed for Assyrian settlement other than myself.
4. That this is their last chance of settlement by a foreign authority and that failing their acceptance of his advice and proposals they will have to accept whatever conditions of settlement the Iraqian Government is prepared to offer.

I have gathered in the course of my interviews that the maliks of the seven chief Assyrian tribes who asked the Mar Shimun to go to Geneva and plead their cause there now feel that the Mar Shimun as their representative still has these desires as basis of his policy. They suggest that if they could meet the Mar Shimun and further discuss the question, they could then modify their requests in accordance with general policy for their settlement which, I believe they now realise, is the only feasible one in the circumstances.

I consider that the Mar Shimun's attitude in Bagdad is largely influenced by his failure at Geneva and his consequent desire to obtain some *quid pro quo* which he can show to his followers as a result of his efforts. I hope, however, that the time is now near for a rapprochement locally both as between the two parties of the Assyrians and also *vis-à-vis* of the Iraq Government.

To this end I trust that it will be possible to persuade the maliks to use their influence directly with the Mar Shimun and induce him to abandon his attitude of non-co-operation and disobedience of the Government's order, and so ensure a settled future for the Assyrian people in Iraq.

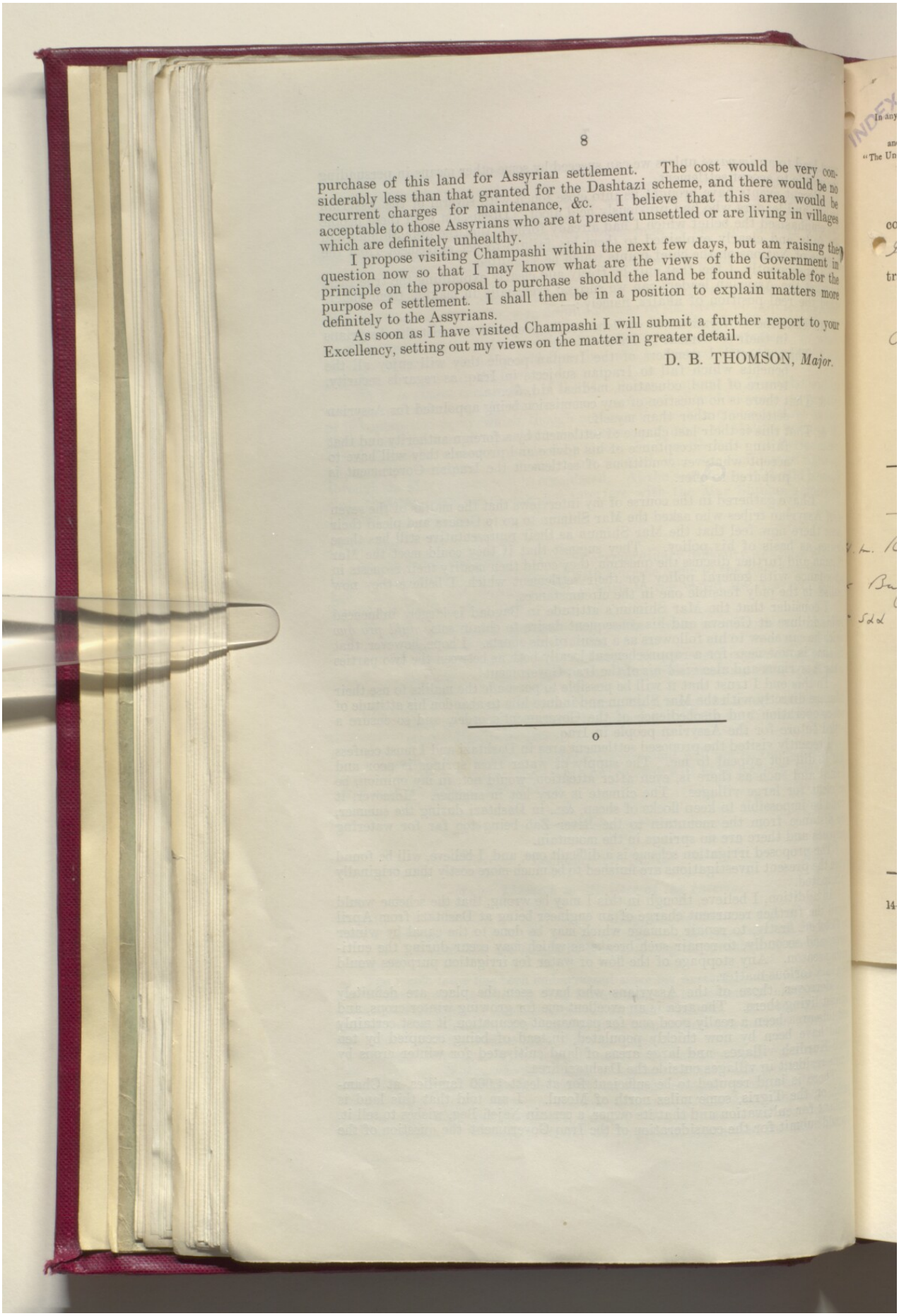
I recently visited the proposed settlement area in Dashtazi and I must confess that it did not appeal to me. The supply of water from springs is poor and limited and such as there is, even after attention, would not, in my opinion, be sufficient for large villages. The climate is very hot in summer. Moreover, it would be impossible to keep flocks of sheep, &c., in Dashtazi during the summer, the distance from the mountain to the River Zab being too far for watering purposes and there are no springs in the mountain.

The proposed irrigation scheme is a difficult one, and, I believe, will be found when the present investigations are finished to be much more costly than originally anticipated.

In addition, I believe, though in this I may be wrong, that the scheme would entail the further recurrent charge of an engineer being at Dashtazi from April to October, firstly, to repair damage which may be done to the canal by winter rains, and secondly, to repair such breaks as which may occur during the cultivating season. Any stoppage of the flow of water for irrigation purposes would be a very serious matter.

Moreover, those of the Assyrians who have seen the place are definitely against living there. The area is an excellent one for growing winter crops, and had this area been a really good one for permanent occupation, it most certainly would have been by now thickly populated, instead of being occupied by ten small Kurdish villages, and large areas of land cultivated for winter crops by Kurds resident in villages outside the Dashtazi area.

There is land reputed to be sufficient for at least 1,000 families at Champashi, on the Tigris, some miles north of Mosul. I am told that this land is excellent for cultivation and that its owner, a certain Nejefi Beg, wishes to sell it. I would submit for the consideration of the Iraq Government the question of the



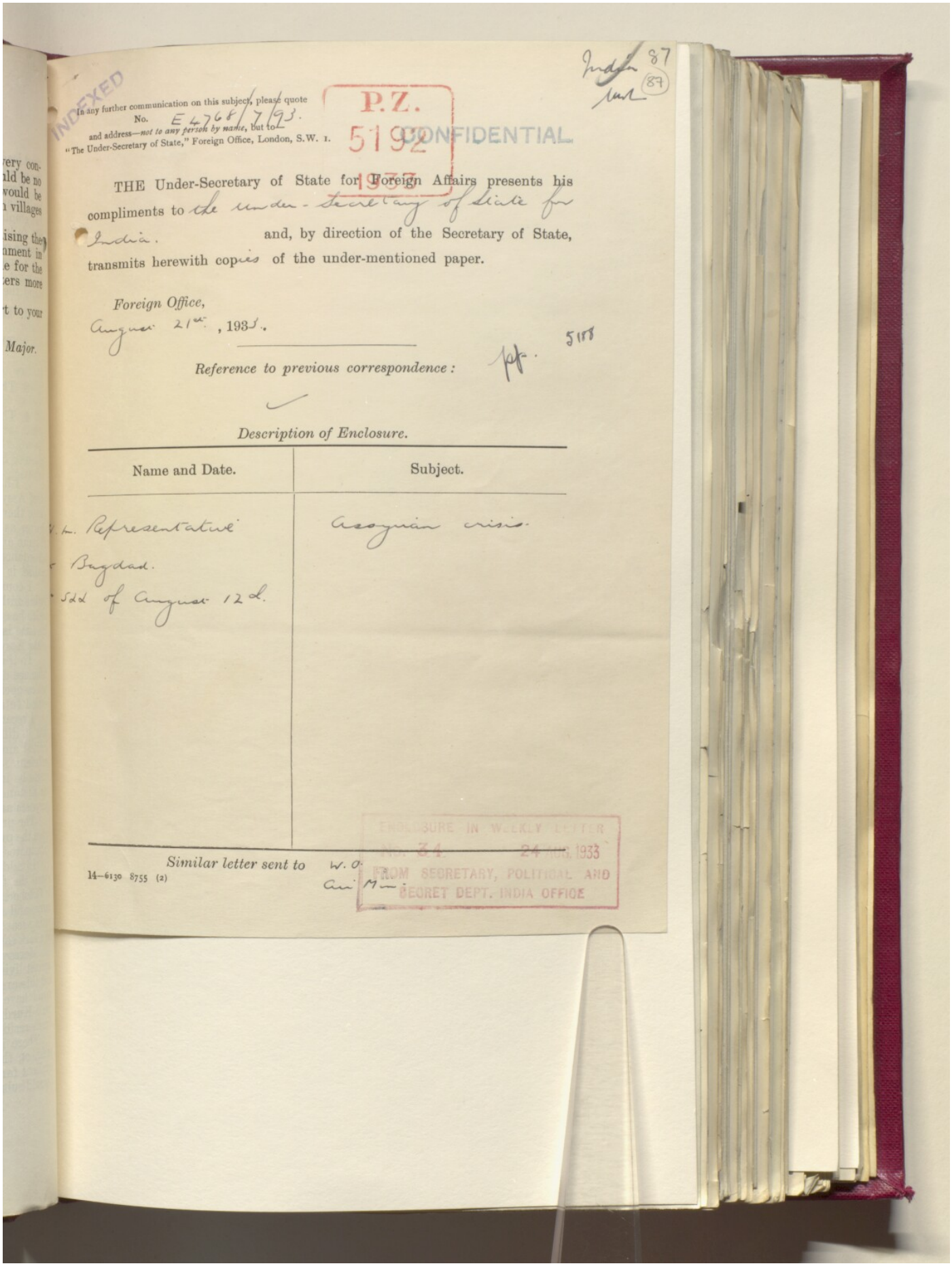
purchase of this land for Assyrian settlement. The cost would be very considerably less than that granted for the Dashtazi scheme, and there would be no recurrent charges for maintenance, &c. I believe that this area would be acceptable to those Assyrians who are at present unsettled or are living in villages which are definitely unhealthy.

I propose visiting Champashi within the next few days, but am raising the question now so that I may know what are the views of the Government in principle on the proposal to purchase should the land be found suitable for the purpose of settlement. I shall then be in a position to explain matters more definitely to the Assyrians.

As soon as I have visited Champashi I will submit a further report to your Excellency, setting out my views on the matter in greater detail.

D. B. THOMSON, *Major.*

o



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4764/7193.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 5192 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

India 87 (89)

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the under-secretary of state for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
August 21st, 1933.

5188

Reference to previous correspondence: 1 pr.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative at Baghdad. No. 522 of August 12th.	Assyrian crisis.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to W.O. Air Min.

14—6130 8755 (2)

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z. 5192 1933

EASTERN (IRAQ).

CONFIDENTIAL.

August 18, 1933.

SECTION 1.

[E 4768/7/93]

No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(*Received August* 18.)

(No. 522.)

Sir, *Bagdad, August* 12, 1933.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 515 of the 9th August on the subject of the present Assyrian crisis, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copies of two letters from the Acting Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, enclosing interesting and valuable reports by Colonel Stafford, Acting Administrative Inspector in the Mosul district, which go far towards clearing up the circumstances in which fighting broke out on the 4th August between the Assyrians and the Iraqi armed forces.

2. A telegram which I received on the 10th August from His Majesty's consul at Mosul confirmed the remarks about the tension in Mosul town at the end of Colonel Stafford's report, No. S/291, of the 7th August. Mr. Monypenny stated that the Christian population of Mosul were in constant fear of attack by Moslems, and that although the authorities (including the Administrative Inspector himself), were confident that they could maintain order, there had already been a disturbance in the town leading up to the shooting of an Assyrian. However, a further telegram from Mr. Monypenny to-day (the 12th August) reports that the situation is now easier.

3. The position of the Assyrians in Iraq who have not left their villages to join the rebels remains one of considerable danger, and isolated attacks on them by Kurds have already been reported (see paragraph 5 of Colonel Stafford's report No. S/291).

4. Daoud Mar Shimun, the father of the patriarch, called on His Majesty's consul at Mosul on the 7th August, and complained that the Iraqi authorities were instigating the Kurds to attack Assyrians. He alleged that the Kaïmakams of Rowanduz, Dohuk and Amadia were arming the Kurds, and that Assyrian villages in the Dohuk area were being robbed daily. Daoud added that the arrest and removal from Mosul on the 6th August of seven Assyrian leaders (reported in my telegram No. 237) had further embittered the Assyrian community, who would now never be willing to settle in Iraq. In any case, they could have no confidence in the Iraqi Government; over 100 Assyrians, he maintained, had been murdered in Kurdistan in the last few years without a single murderer being brought to justice.

5. I am informed by Mr. Edmonds that it is not correct that villages are being looted "daily" by the Kurds. The first cases of this sort since the exodus occurred only on the 8th August, and the damage appears to have been confined to property.

6. Mr. Monypenny reports that His Majesty's vice-consul at Diana was successful in stopping an emigration of Assyrians from Diana village. A party of villagers had already set out to join their compatriots on the Syrian border, but Mr. Chapman-Andrews sent messengers after them and was able to persuade them of their folly in leaving their village undefended and at the mercy of the Kurds. The men were induced to return and there seems to have been no further move by Assyrians from villages in the Diana area. Meanwhile the commander of the Iraq army battalion at Diana has surrounded his camp with wire and has mounted machine guns to cover the village—in the opinion of His Majesty's vice-consul a quite unnecessary act of panic.

I have, &c.

G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x0000bb

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Mr. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

(Secret.) *Bagdad, August* 9, 1933.

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

I SEND herewith copy of Stafford's S/291 of the 7th August, 1933, which gives a most interesting, and our first connected, account of the events of the 4th and 5th August.

Before receipt of this I had already asked the Minister to forbid the panicky employment of Kurdish lashkars when the first news of these events reached the qadhas.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Memorandum by the Administrative Inspector, Mosul and Arbil Liwas.

(No. S/291. Secret.)

IN paragraph 5 of my S/290 of the 5th August, 1933, I gave my opinion that the French authorities would not commit so definitely an unfriendly act to the Iraqi Government as to return the arms to the Assyrians. Events have proved that I was wrong.

On the afternoon of the 4th August the French did give back the arms. What makes this action more blameworthy is that (1) the Iraq Political Officer, in the course of the meeting with Captain Larist on the 2nd August, particularly requested that, if it was the intention of the French authorities to return the rifles, they should first inform the Iraqi authorities. Captain Larist noted this request in his pocket-book. (2) About 2 P.M. on the afternoon of the 4th August Lazar Effendi (Mudir of Dohuk), who was acting as Assistant Political Officer, crossed over to Khaniq, as the French were taking over the police post. He met a French officer there. This officer said nothing whatever about the return of the rifles to the Assyrians. It is, of course, possible that the blame for the extraordinary conduct of the French authorities must be entirely attached to the local French officers. The superior authorities may have ordered the return of the rifles and the immediate expulsion of the Assyrians, which orders were carried out at once by local authorities, who must have known full well what the result would be. It is, however, common knowledge that the French authorities would welcome any trouble in the north of Iraq, which might strengthen their claim for the continuation of their mandate in Syria. In any case, it is quite obvious that no credence can be given to any statement of the French. This will have to be remembered when their account is received of what occurred on the evening of the 4th August. It is certain that this account will be distorted.

2. I have seen Makki Beg, the Political Officer, and Lazar Effendi, the Acting Political Officer, and from their accounts and from other reports which I have received I have been able to obtain some idea of what happened on the evening and night of the 4th August.

Naturally, much still remains obscure, but the following is at least a rough outline :—

(*a*) As noted above, Lazar Effendi was in Khaniq police post at 2 P.M. While he was there Werda, Mukhtar of Simmel village, spoke to him and said that a number of Assyrians wished to return to Iraq. Lazar Effendi told him that they could do so, but would have to return their rifles. Werda said that he understood that.

(*b*) At about 5 P.M. the French authorities brought down two lorries to the head of Wadi Suffan. These lorries were full of Assyrian rifles, which were given to their owners. The Assyrians were then told to leave Syrian territory at once.

(c) At about 6 P.M. Aziz Agha, Mukhtar of Faish Khabur village, telephoned to the Political Officer at Dairabun camp, saying that Assyrians were crossing the river about 500 yards above Faish Khabur. The Political Officer instructed him to send some of his people (Aziz Agha is a Chaldean Christian) to tell the Assyrians that they must surrender their rifles if they came into Iraq.

(d) On receipt of the above news the G.O.C. troops sent a company to meet the Assyrians. It appears to have been thought that these Assyrians intended surrendering their rifles. Verbal orders were given to the officer commanding the company (1) not to open fire unless fired on; (2) to avoid firing shots which would drop in Syrian territory.

This company proceeded to meet the Assyrians until they were fired at without warning. One of the first shots killed one of the officers.

Comment.—There is reason to think that at least a part of the Assyrians did intend to surrender. Certain of the leaders were determined to prevent this at all costs. It is stated that Yaku was one of the first to cross the river and that it was he who was the first to open fire on the Iraq army troops.

(e) The company, which was heavily outnumbered, returned the fire, but was forced to retire to some small hills lying between the river and the camp (north-west of Dairabun). A squadron of cavalry was sent to reinforce them. In the meantime night fell. The company sent back repeated requests for ammunition. Finally the G.O.C. sent a lorry with three boxes of ammunition. This lorry was ambushed. Four of the six soldiers were killed by rifle fire. The driver is said to have had his throat cut. The dead soldiers are said to have been mutilated.

Comment.—All stories of atrocities should be accepted with reserve. They are the usual accompaniment of the commencement of hostilities.

(f) The Assyrians later (about 10 P.M.) appeared to have attacked the Iraq army pickets situated to the north and north-east of the main camp. These attacks were pressed hard, but were gallantly resisted. Finally, just before dawn No. 7 picket was captured. The officer in charge and three soldiers were killed. The tents and blankets were then set on fire, and this has given rise to the story that the bodies were deliberately burnt. This may be true, but it is by no means proved. This picket was recaptured shortly after dawn with artillery and air assistance.

Comment.—It is not clear why these attacks were pressed so strongly. Heavy rifle fire would have been sufficient to contain the posts, while the main body stepped past to the north, if this was their intention.

3. What happened on the morning of the 5th August and all yesterday is still most obscure. There has been very little information as to the movements of the Iraq army forces or regarding the location of the Assyrians. It appears, however, to be definite that—

(a) A considerable body of Assyrians still remain on the right bank near Wadi Suffan.

Comment.—It is possible that a number of the Assyrians do not wish to engage in open warfare with the Iraq forces. An air reconnaissance on the evening of the 6th August reported that 150 Assyrians were bathing in the river. This does not suggest that they had any immediate offensive intention.

(b) The Faish Khabur and other army posts on the river have been abandoned. Thus the Assyrians are free to cross the river as they like.

(c) Air reconnaissances report considerable crossing and recrossing of the river. The recrossing of the river may have been parties taking back wounded. Of these it is reported that forty-five have been taken to Derik in Syria (nearly opposite Jeziret-bin-Omar).

Comment.—All reports regarding casualties should be accepted with considerable reserve. It is reported that Yaku and Qasha Gergis of the Tkhuma, a very violent agitator, are among the wounded.

(*d*) Some rifles taken from dead Assyrians had papers affixed bearing name of owner. This is sufficient proof—not that any more is necessary—that the French did return the rifles.

(*e*) A report has been received that a fight occurred on the right bank of the Khabur between the Assyrians and a Turkish post in which a Turkish officer and three men were killed.

4. As noted above, the locations of the Assyrians remain uncertain. It appears that they have split into small bands. They lie hidden by day and move at night. A few of such bands have been rounded out. Their general intention is also uncertain. It is, however, probable that they intend to move up towards Dohuk and possibly towards Amadiyah. This last is confirmed by the statement of an Assyrian who surrendered himself to the police south of the Jebel Bekhair and who has been brought into Mosul. I am submitting a separate report regarding his statements. He said among other things that (1) the rank and file had been completely deceived by the lying stories of the leaders; (2) that these leaders would never surrender alive.

5. The attitude of the Kurds gives cause for anxiety. The employment of Kurdish patrols under their own leaders is dangerous. I have not yet been able to ascertain the true facts of the encounter which took place near Majal Makht on the 5th August and which resulted in two Assyrians being killed and two wounded. Two things, however, are clear: (1) That these Assyrians could not possibly have belonged to those who crossed into Syria. It was quite impossible for them to have recrossed into Iraq on the evening of the 4th August and to have reached Majal Makht twenty-four hours afterwards.

Later.—It appears that they belonged to a party which had originally intended to go over to Syria, but who had changed their minds and were going back to their villages. They ought not to have been fired on.

(2) Ibrahim Agha of Karamarg is not a fit man to be in charge of independent patrols. He has a stormy past.

6. Reports were received on the 6th August that a number of Assyrians from Diana and Batas were going to leave their villages and move westward. They actually appeared to have done so, but returned almost at once. Steps had been taken to prevent them getting through, but these appear to have included bringing in Kurdish bands. The commandant of police was taking measures to control these bands. But the employment of such bands is somewhat dangerous. It is not difficult to imagine the Kurds getting out of hand. Nothing could damage the good name of Iraq more than this.

7. Owing to intensive propaganda on the part of certain agitators, for instance, Yunis Bahri (the Iraq globe-trotter) and an ex-army officer, Ismail Sabri, there has been much excitement in Mosul. The atrocity stories have been circulated. A meeting which was planned to be held yesterday was forbidden. The local authorities fully realise the danger of the situation, and have taken every possible step to prevent trouble. Nevertheless, the Christians of the town express considerable nervousness. It is to be noted that much of the agitation is of a violently anti-British character.

8. In consequence, it was not considered advisable to carry out the deportation order as far as it concerned Surma Khanum and Daoud Effendi. It was feared that they—or their supporters—might resist. One shot fired might bring in the town mob, and if this happened it was feared that the levies, who are confined to camp, might break out fearing for the safety of their families. If this happened, a catastrophe would have followed. As it was, seven persons were deported, of whom Malik Andrews was the only one of note. Perhaps it would have been better not to deport anyone at all, if it was not considered desirable to deport Mar Shimun. For it may now be thought either (1) the Government is afraid to take action against Mar Shimun's family, or (2) that the Government made a mistake in deporting some persons and leaving the prime cause of all the trouble. For it is undoubted that Surma Khanum is this. The question of her deportation, which must be carried out if possible, will be further discussed on the arrival in Mosul of the Minister of Defence and the Director-General of Police.

9. I must here point out that the difficulties, already very great, of the civil authorities have been greatly increased by the almost entire absence of news from the army. Not only are the movements, in fact, even the position of the head-

quarters of the army, unknown, but no information has been received as to the location of the Assyrians. It would appear that the time has arrived for the civil authorities to intervene if possible in order to prevent unnecessary bloodshed. It is to be borne in mind that the great majority of the rank and file are poor, deluded fools. On the other hand, the leaders who have led them astray deserve the severest punishment.

R. STAFFORD,
Administrative Inspector.

Mosul, August 7, 1933.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Mr. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

Bagdad, August 9, 1933.

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

I SEND herewith Stafford's S/292 of the 7th August, 1933, reporting the most interesting statement taken from a prisoner.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

Enclosure 4 in No. 1.

Memorandum by the Administrative Inspector, Mosul and Arbil Liwas.

(No. S/292. Secret.)

ON the 6th August an Assyrian named Kapu Selim gave himself up to the Government forces south of Jebal Bakhair and close to the main Zakho road. He was brought into Mosul. This morning in my office the Political Officer and the Assistant Political Officer, Lazar Effendi (an Assyrian), questioned him.

His statement was as follows :—

His name is Kapu Selim, of the Tkhuma, living in Basirian village. He is a cultivator, and had never served in the levies. He has a wife and three children. He did not at first leave his village when the others did, but was induced to do so later. The leaders told them that the French had promised them land in Syria, and further that the Iraqi Government had decided to split them up in small groups in different villages and also disarm them. The party, about 700 in number, left the mountains above Basirian and proceeded along the foothills to the river. Part of them crossed at Chailiki, but the majority at Faish Khabur. Their leader was Yacu, son of Malik Ismail, with Loco, of the Tkhuma, as second in command.

They encamped on both banks of the Wadi Suffan. They had taken food with them and at first also brought food from a canteen. *After three days the French fed them free.* The French told them that if they crossed into French territory they must give up their arms. Their leaders told them that the French said that if they came they would be given lands, exempted from taxation for five years, and probably return their rifles. Five hundred then crossed into Syria and surrendered their arms. About forty had no rifles, of whom he was one. Later the leaders said that the French now said they could not accept them because they had heard that some of the Assyrians wanted to go back to Iraq. This man states that there was, in fact, a strong divergence of opinion among these Assyrians, and that two-thirds of them wanted to return to Iraq (*Comment*—this confirms previous reports), but the leaders were stopping them. It was originally intended that the others, about 400 in number, should also cross into Syria the next day and give up their rifles. Yacu, however, prevented this on the grounds that there had been a fight near Amadiyah between Government forces and the Assyrians, and it was therefore necessary for arms to be retained.

At about 5 P.M. on the 4th August the French returned their rifles and told them to leave Syrian territory at once. They asked the French whether they were to fight the Iraq forces or not. The French replied that this was not the concern of the French. About 700 then started crossing. The others, including this

man, did not do so because firing started. When they crossed they found the road blocked by Iraq troops. The Assyrians were carrying two white flags and intended to surrender. (*Comment*—It is possible that some of them really did mean to surrender, but their leaders precipitated violent action.) He states that the troops were the first to open fire. He admits that four men (not soldiers), came and told them that they must give up their arms. He denies all knowledge of what happened during the fighting as he was not involved in it. He crossed the next day with the intention of giving himself up. He never possessed a rifle (*Comment*—He had not one when he surrendered).

When asked as to intentions of Assyrians, he said that he thought that they intended to go in small groups to the Amadiyah district and concentrate there. He was certain that the leaders at any rate would never surrender and would fight to the death. The Assyrians were formed into military formations immediately they crossed the river. It is stated that there are upwards of 500 to 600 rounds of ammunition per rifle (*Comment*—presumably carried on mules). Only about thirty rounds per rifle were handed over to the French. He says they have no machine guns (*Comment*—this is contrary to reports. The troops say they were fired on by a machine gun). He said he only heard of two Assyrian casualties, one killed, the priest of Badi village, and one wounded, the son of Qasha Girgiz, of the Tkhuma (who is one of the most violent agitators).

He said he wanted to go back to his village and settle down quietly.

R. STAFFORD,
Administrative Inspector.

Mosul, August 7, 1933.

---

o

91 (91)

Notes.

Register No. P.Z 5188/33.

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Minute Paper.

Dated 19 .
Rec.

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	23.8.	[illegible]	Assyrian Crisis.
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	27	[illegible]	Telegrams 16-20 ang.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Sir F. Humphrys is on his way out; the King has agreed to await his arrival; the Mar Shimun has been safely deported to the Cyprus, & the situation is slightly easier. But the Kings attitude continues to leave something to be desired, & fresh incidents such as the Simel massacre (Baghdad Tel^m: 288 or PZ5119)^x do not decrease the difficulties which we & Iraq are likely to have to face at Geneva.

[illegible] 21/8 33

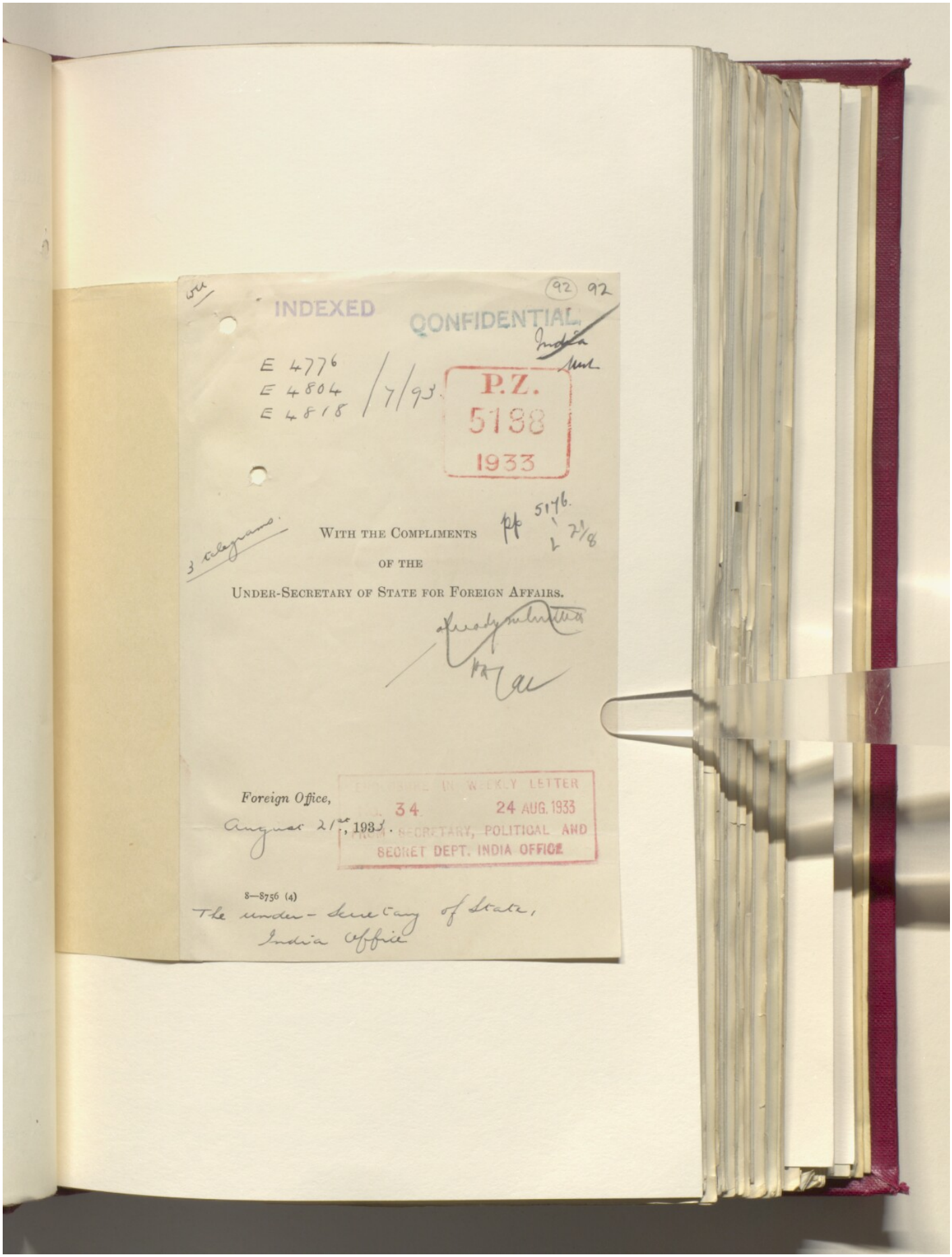
[illegible] 29/8
Sir M. Seton (on Tuesday)
Private Secretary [illegible] 28/8

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31

x The details are new. It appears from the Mosul Despatch summarised in the Tel^m that 380 Assyrians (who apparently were supporters of the Govt. or had at any rate not taken up arms against it) were shot

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338446.0x0000c1
192


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
E 4776
E 4804
E 4818
7/93
P.Z.
5188
1933
92
92
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 21st, 1933.
34
24 AUG. 1933
SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The under-secretary of state,
India Office

93

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5183 1933

To IRAQ.

(E 4804/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 19th August, 1933. 2.25 p.m.
No. 218. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 284 (Interview of August 18th with King Feisal).

It is evident that King Feisal still fails to realise the importance to himself and his country of the issues at stake. You should therefore lose no opportunity of tactfully and patiently impressing their real gravity upon him, using and developing the arguments contained in my telegrams Nos. 184 (of August 12th), 199 (of August 15th), 213 (of August 18th) and 214 (of August 18th), provided you can do so without causing him to lose control and fly off at a tangent - a tendency which seems to emerge from your telegram under reply. This would be most undesirable before the impending return of Sir F. Humphrys. Meanwhile I must take exception to King Feisal's remark about "dictation". Sole object of His Majesty's Government has been to fulfil the rôle of friend and ally by giving Iraq best advice in Iraq's own interests. It is for Iraq to decide whether or not to accept this advice, but if she rejects it she is running grave risk of disaster.

His Majesty's Government realise provocation which Iraqi Government have received from Assyrians. But this is no justification for what has since occurred and will be forgotten unless Iraqi Government at once take effective measures in face of the excesses committed against the Assyrians in the north.

95
(95)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5133
1933

(E.4776/7/93.)

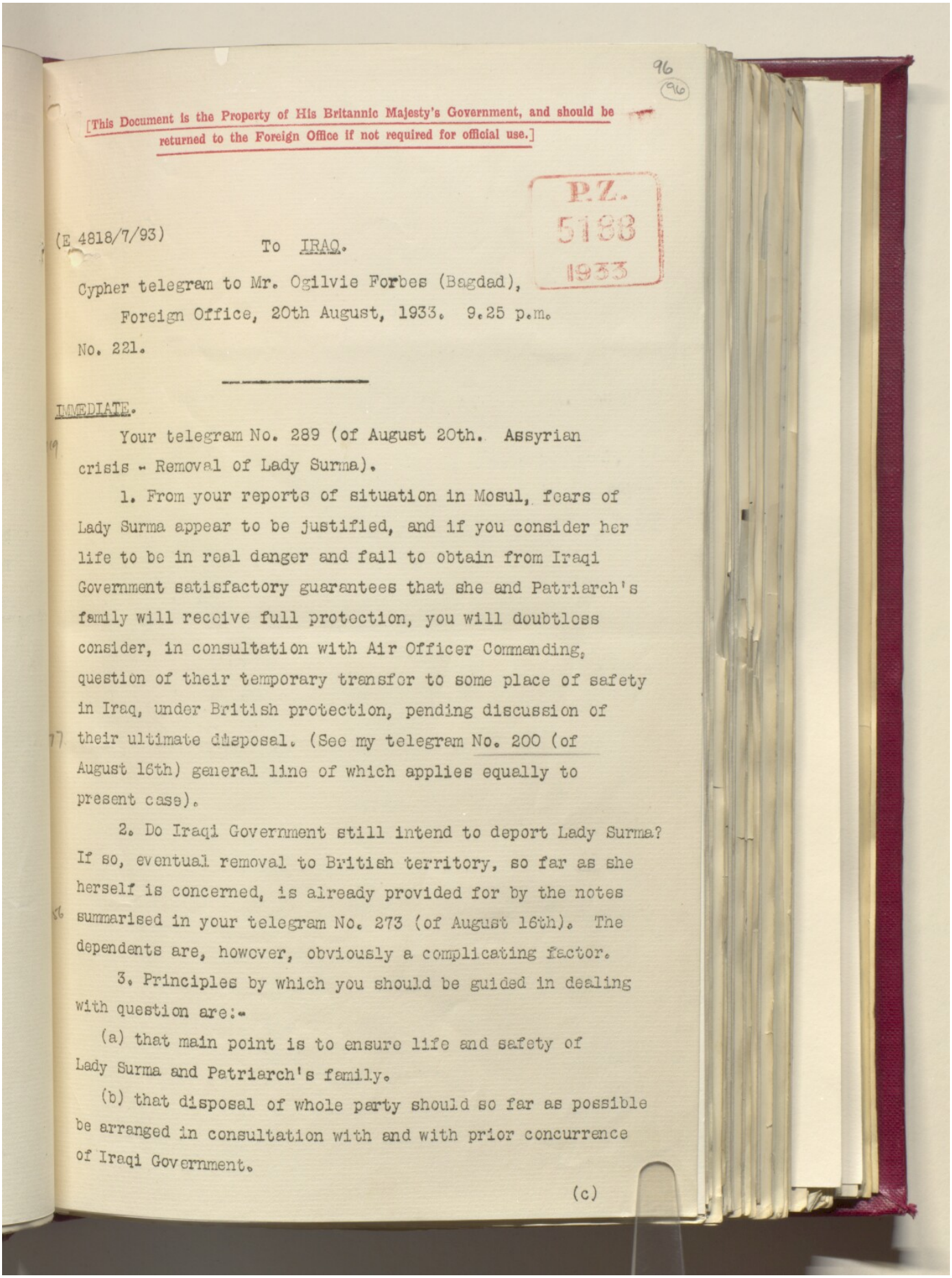
To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 19th August, 1933, 11.45 a.m.
No.217. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Your telegram No.279 (of August 18th. Assyrian relief) paragraph 4 (Captain Sargon).

Where was Captain Sargon? In what circumstances was he sent away and his life threatened? Please telegraph full information.



96
(96)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5183
1933

(E 4818/7/93) To IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 20th August, 1933. 9.25 p.m.
No. 221.

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 289 (of August 20th. Assyrian crisis - Removal of Lady Surma).

1. From your reports of situation in Mosul, fears of Lady Surma appear to be justified, and if you consider her life to be in real danger and fail to obtain from Iraqi Government satisfactory guarantees that she and Patriarch's family will receive full protection, you will doubtless consider, in consultation with Air Officer Commanding, question of their temporary transfer to some place of safety in Iraq, under British protection, pending discussion of their ultimate disposal. (See my telegram No. 200 (of August 16th) general line of which applies equally to present case).

2. Do Iraqi Government still intend to deport Lady Surma? If so, eventual removal to British territory, so far as she herself is concerned, is already provided for by the notes summarised in your telegram No. 273 (of August 16th). The dependents are, however, obviously a complicating factor.

3. Principles by which you should be guided in dealing with question are:-

(a) that main point is to ensure life and safety of Lady Surma and Patriarch's family.

(b) that disposal of whole party should so far as possible be arranged in consultation with and with prior concurrence of Iraqi Government.

(c)

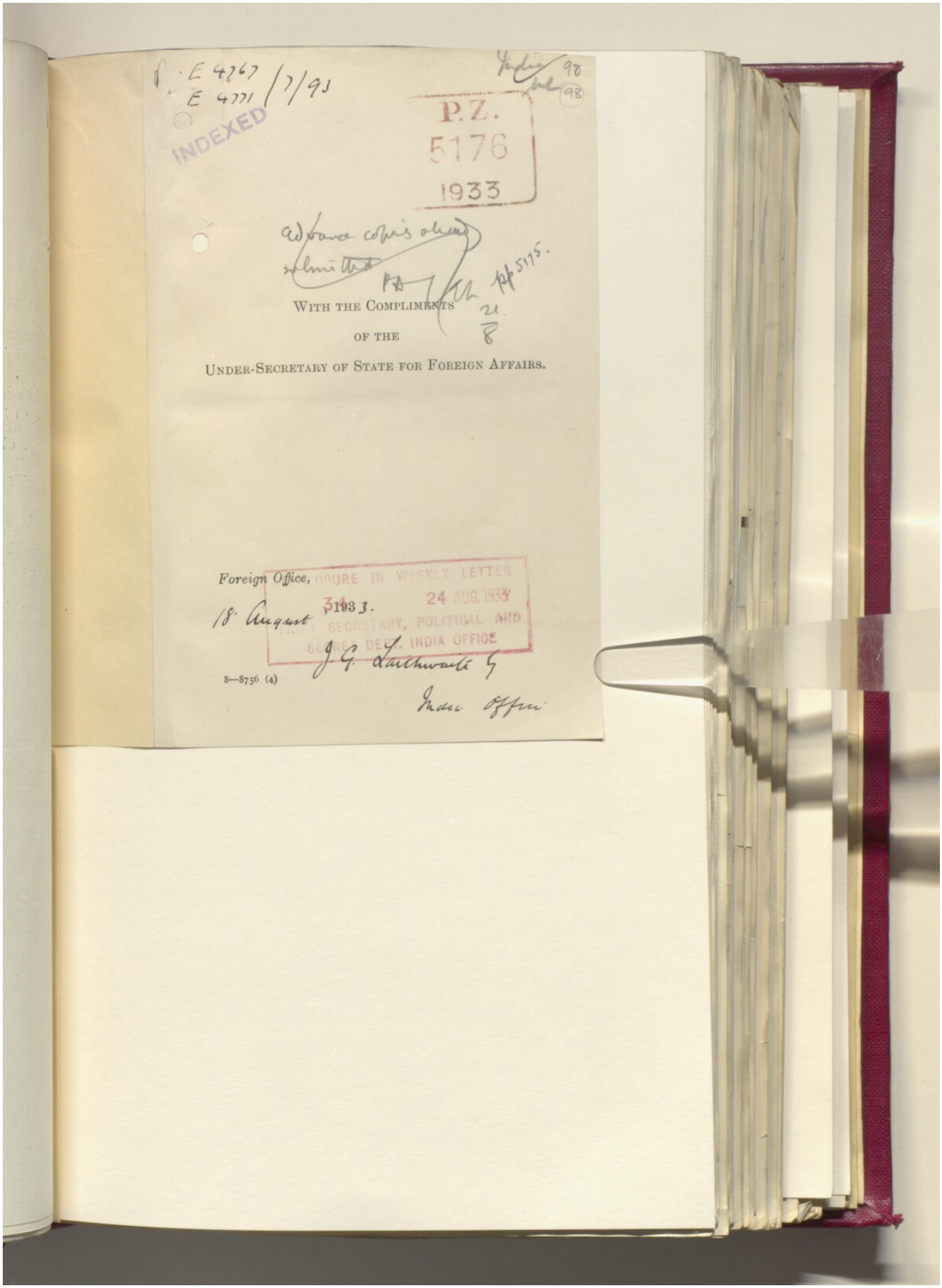
97
(97)

(c) that the political responsibility of His Majesty's Government should be reduced to a minimum and that His Majesty's Government should not be committed to any expense unless absolutely necessary in order to save life.

(d) Size of party should be reduced by exclusion of any non-essential dependents, if this can be done without leaving them in imminent danger.

4. Governor of Cyprus is being asked whether there is any objection to reception of party in Cyprus if need arises.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x000005


E 4767
E 4771
INDEXED
P.Z.
5176
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
18 August, 1933.
24 AUG 1933
8—8756 (4)

99 (99)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5176
1933

To IRAQ.

(E 4771/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 18th August, 1933. 1.30 p.m.
No. 214. (R).

a full massacre
bringing the total up to
about 700

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 280 (of August 17th. Assyrian crisis. Massacre of Assyrians by Iraqi troops).

The information as to the deliberate and cold-blooded massacre by Iraqi Government troops will be the culminating blow to Iraqi Government's reputation. You will see from my telegram No. 172 (of August 10th) that I suspected Iraqi troops from the start. And you will also observe that this information, coming on top of the massacre of prisoners reported in your telegram No. 240 (of August 10th) more than justifies my insistence with the Iraqi Government that Bekr Sidqi, the officer in command, should be punished. The time and method for this will no doubt be a matter for the Iraqi Government, who are showing no haste. Their position would, as I have pointed out in paragraph 2 of my telegram No. 184 (of August 12th), be stronger if this were done before the meeting at Geneva. I cannot well press this further, in any case pending the imminent return of Sir F. Humphrys. But at least this fresh horror does seem to make it imperative that, irrespective of any ulterior visitation, the responsible officer should be immediately transferred.

The question of the transfer of the troops concerned will be taken up by Sir F. Humphrys on his arrival.

100
(100)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.S. 5178 1933

TO IRAQ

(E 4767/7/93).

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 18th August 1933. 12.5 p.m.

No. 213. (R).

MOST IMMEDIATE. 5090

Your telegram No. 277 (of August 17th - development of anti-Christian agitation and extension of trouble to Chaldeans).

I am much disturbed by news that trouble is assuming definitely anti-Christian character and that other innocent (and much larger) Christian communities such as Chaldeans are becoming involved.

Iraq will already have greatest difficulty in avoiding public disgrace next month at Geneva. If present report is confirmed extension of trouble to Christians in general will completely nullify any defence on grounds of Assyrian provocation or initiative in attack.

You should seek immediate interview with Minister for Foreign Affairs, call his attention to the extreme gravity of this report, and urge him with all the suasion at your command to see that immediate steps are taken to establish facts, and, if they are as reported, to ensure that immediate measures are taken to put an instant stop to this disgraceful situation, which, if allowed to continue, will do irreparable harm to Iraq's already badly shaken reputation. You cannot too strongly emphasise this aspect of the question.

It will not be enough merely to deny the statements and to produce unconvincing assurances that all is well. When inevitable enquiry takes place such statements unless borne out by facts, will only further weaken Iraqi defence.

Please report result of your representations by telegram.

101

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5173 1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 17th August 1933. 12.45 p.m.

No. 203. (R).

- - -

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 199 (of August 15th) paragraphs 4 and 5 and your telegram No. 272 (of August 17th) paragraphs 3 and 4 and your telegram No. 274 paragraph 3 (Relief of Assyrians).

Please ascertain and telegraph immediately precisely what concrete measures of relief have up till now been taken, what sum has been allotted, what committee appointed and with what British officials, and what supplies made available. Public opinion here is now becoming roused and it is essential to have this information at the earliest possible moment. In particular I wish to know whether authorisation has now been given to both Colonel Stafford and Major Thomson to take part in relief measures. The objection put forward by King Feisal in paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 272 is untenable, and I trust it is no longer being seriously urged.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5175
1933

102
(102)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. August 17th. 1933. 12.10.p.m.

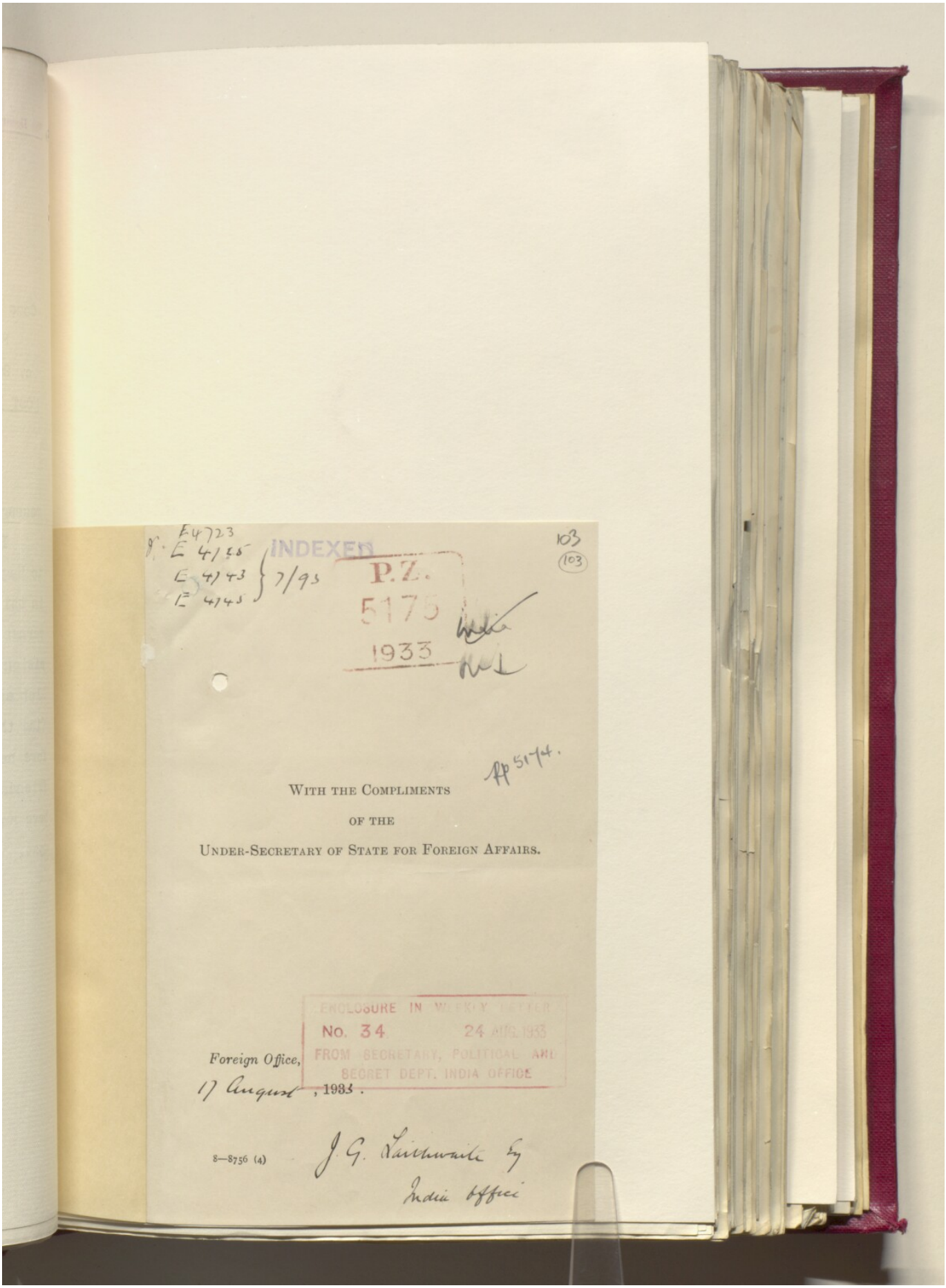
No. 202. (R).

MOST IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

Please deliver immediately following personal message from Sir F. Humphrys to King Feisal:-

I have this moment returned to London on my way to Bagdad and find to my consternation that Your Majesty in this grave crisis is about to leave Bagdad. I earnestly appeal to Your Majesty to reconsider this decision. I propose myself to be in Bagdad on August 21st and it would be a great disappointment to me to find that Your Majesty had already departed. I therefore beg of you most earnestly for the sake of our friendship at least to await my arrival so that I may have an opportunity of consulting Your Majesty on the spot.



E 4723
E 4155
E 4743
E 4745
INDEXED
7/93
P.Z.
5175
1933
103
(103)

With the Compliments

of the

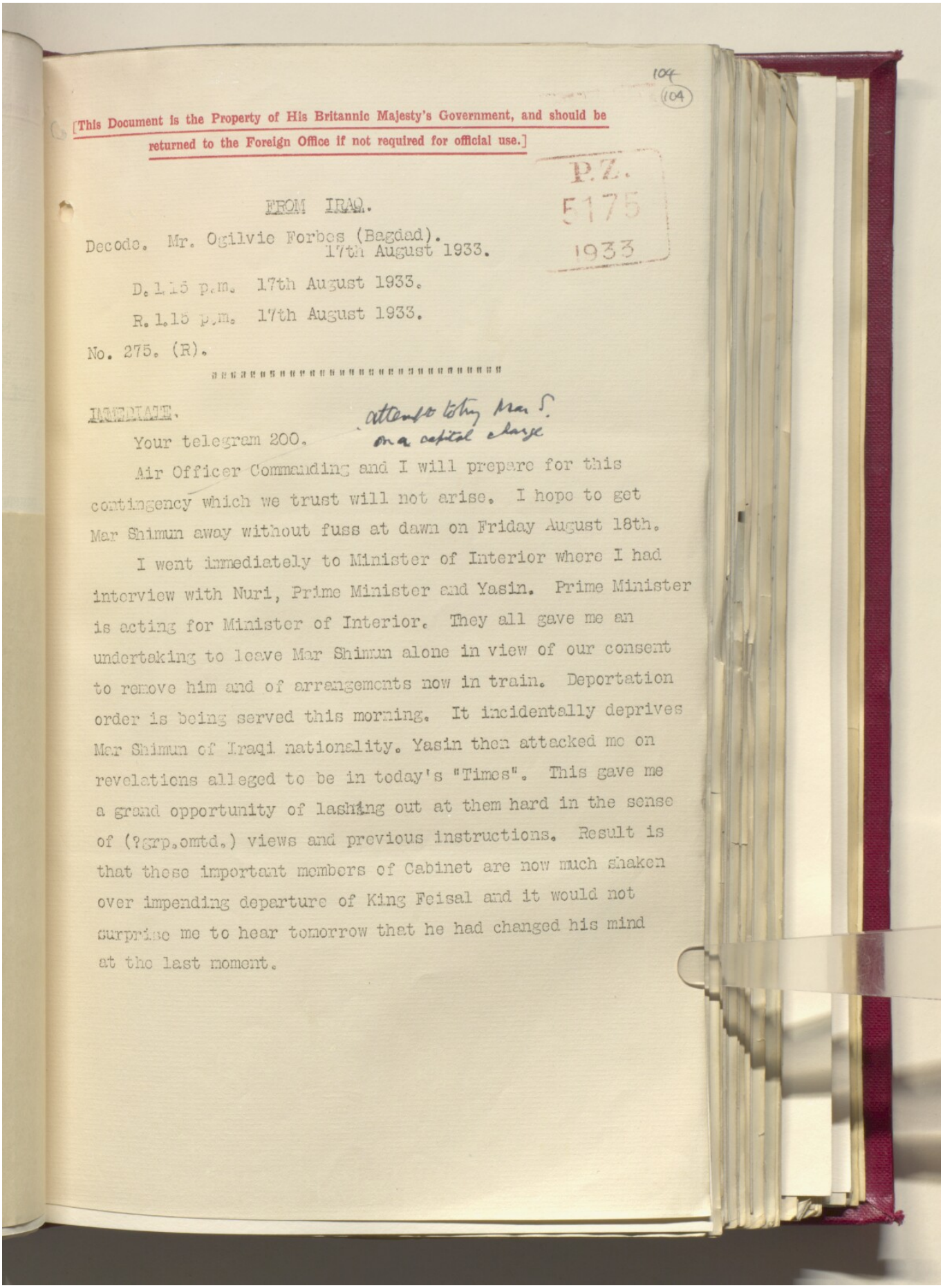
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Foreign Office,
17 August, 1933.

8—8756 (4)

J. G. Laithwaite Esq
India Office



104
(104)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5175
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
17th August 1933.

D. 1.15 p.m. 17th August 1933.

R. 1.15 p.m. 17th August 1933.

No. 275. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

attend to stay Mar S. on a capital charge

Your telegram 200.

Air Officer Commanding and I will prepare for this contingency which we trust will not arise. I hope to get Mar Shimun away without fuss at dawn on Friday August 18th.

I went immediately to Minister of Interior where I had interview with Nuri, Prime Minister and Yasin. Prime Minister is acting for Minister of Interior. They all gave me an undertaking to leave Mar Shimun alone in view of our consent to remove him and of arrangements now in train. Deportation order is being served this morning. It incidentally deprives Mar Shimun of Iraqi nationality. Yasin then attacked me on revelations alleged to be in today's "Times". This gave me a grand opportunity of lashing out at them hard in the sense of (?grp.omtd.) views and previous instructions. Result is that these important members of Cabinet are now much shaken over impending departure of King Feisal and it would not surprise me to hear tomorrow that he had changed his mind at the last moment.

105
(105)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5175 1933

P.Z. 5175 1933

* ATTENDED*
From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad), 16th August, 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 16th August, 1933.
R. 8.00 a.m. 17th August, 1933.

No.273. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegram No.270.

I have received note from Iraqi Government informing me that

(1) Iraqi Government consider Mar Shimun and family as the prime instigators of Assyrian rising,

(2) Iraqi Government intend, either to prosecute them on the capital charge of conspiring against the safety of the state, or to deport them to Transjordan via Rutba by car on August 17th,

(3) Iraqi Government prefer the latter alternative but "have weighty reasons for considering that the matter of deportation would be much facilitated, for all concerned, if His Majesty's Government would consent to receive * ~~them~~ * temporarily, until their future is decided by the League of Nations; at some place in British territory and would arrange for their transport thither." Persons concerned are Mar Shimun, his father, brother and Lady Surma.

I have already warned Jerusalem and Cyprus in my telegram No.21 repeated to you as my telegram No.271 and have replied to Iraqi Government that His Majesty's Government will agree on the condition that Iraqi Government refund expenses and take no action regarding the deportation

106
(106)

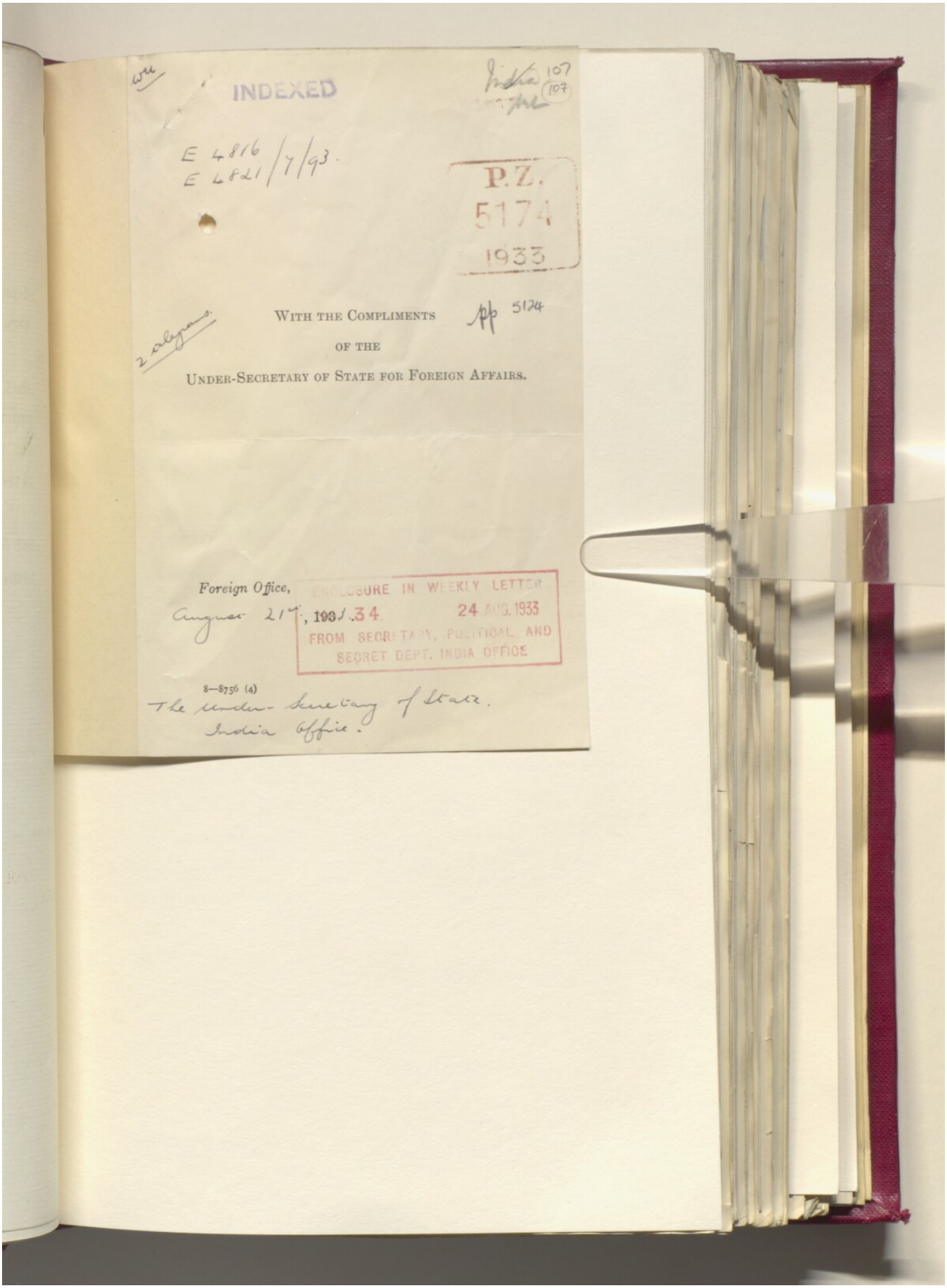
2.

deportation until we have had time to make the necessary arrangements.

* *

I have told Nuri that we will not be hurried and that Iraqi Government must not act on deportation order if it is not carried out by dawn on Friday and that anyhow removal of Lady Surma must come later.

The King is insistent on getting rid of Mar Shimun and family before he leaves on August 18th.


INDEXED
E 4816/1/93.
E 4821
P.Z.
5174
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
Foreign Office,
August 21st, 1933.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
8—8756 (4)
The Under-Secretary of State.
India Office.

108
(108)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5174 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
19th August, 1933.

D. 1.15 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

R. 1.40 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

No. 287. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 286.

5174

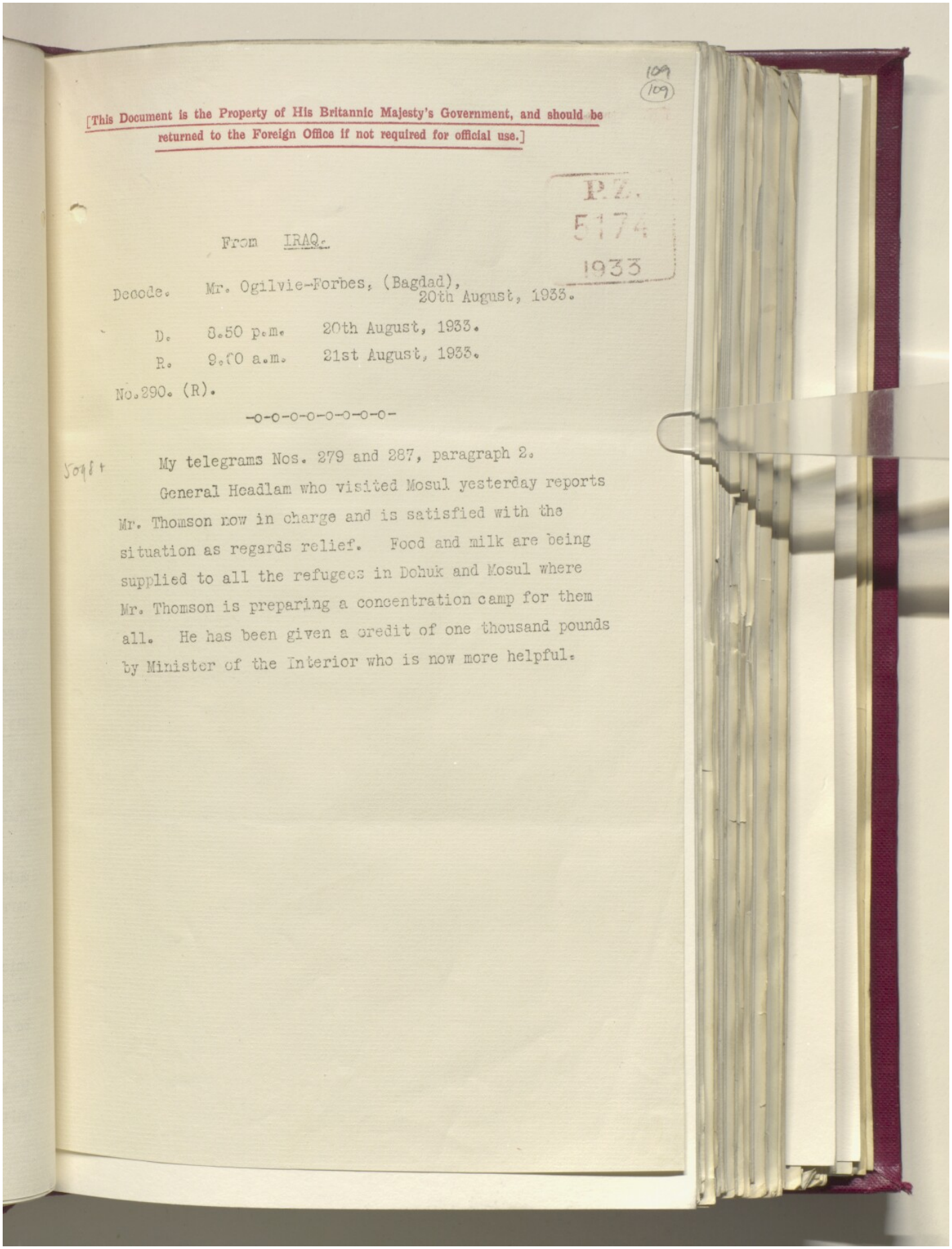
(1). The King assured me this morning in the presence of the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Yasin that he would be personally responsible for safety of Christians in Mosul. He nevertheless contended that reports received by you were alarmist and lacking in foundation. I then pulled out of my pocket and without disclosing authorship read to him Mosul despatch No. 45, substance of which is being telegraphed to you. His Majesty did not like this but assured me he would call Moslem and Christian leaders to meet at a feast of reconciliation.

(2) He also assured me that Major Thomson had been made Chairman of Refugee Relief Committee.

(3) He further showed me a pigeon post message, very undecypherable but probably emenating from Derik taken from a carrier pigeon near Tel Afar.

(4) In reply to my pressure for a proclamation of amnesty which would ease the situation His Majesty replied that Cabinet were considering the matter, but had not yet decided who were to be excluded therefrom.

(5) The King concluded in his usual optimistic strain saying that Sir F. Humphrys would arrive here to find the situation quite normal.



109
(109)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5174
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
20th August, 1933.

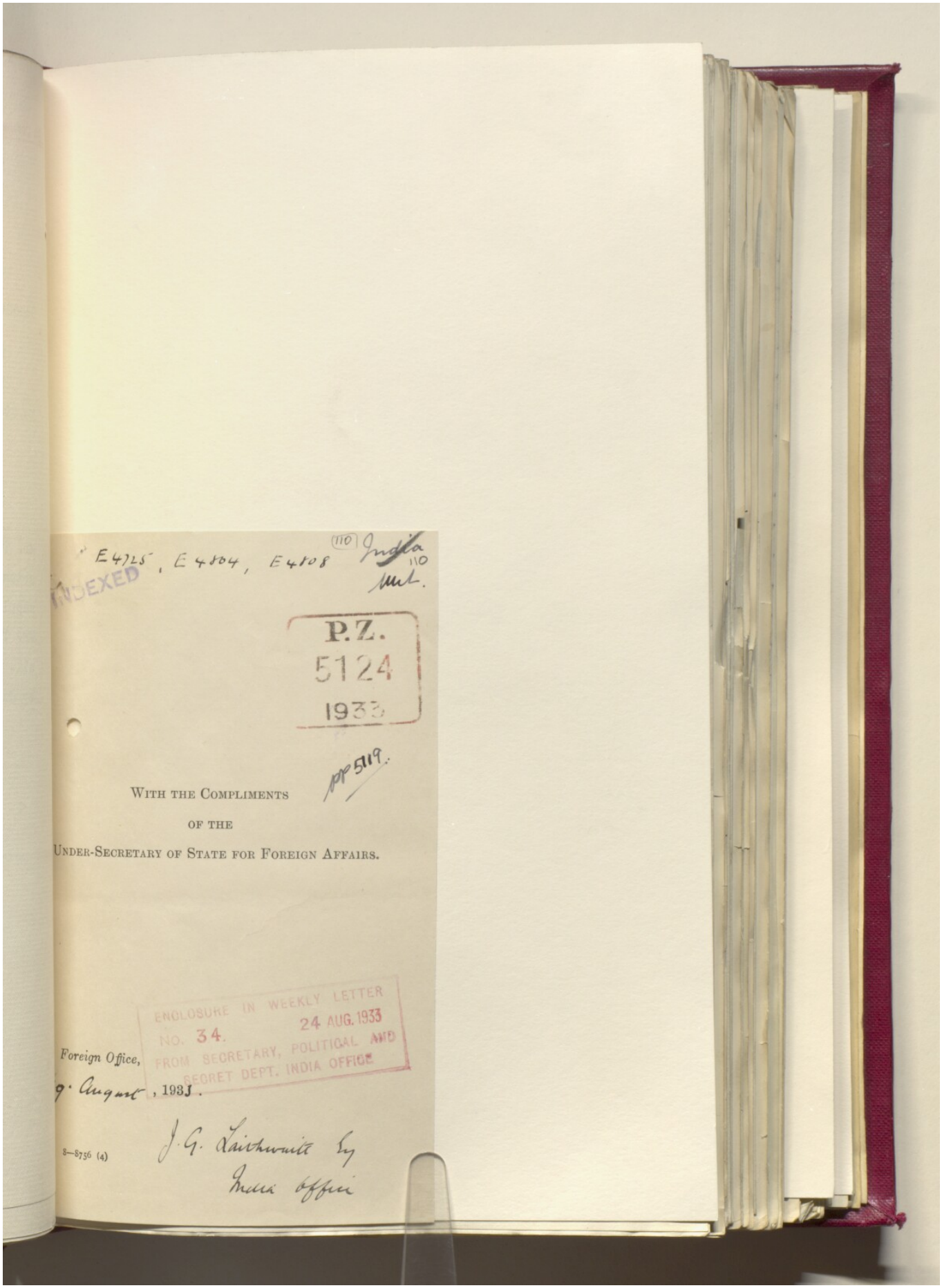
D. 8.50 p.m. 20th August, 1933.
R. 9.f0 a.m. 21st August, 1933.

No.290. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegrams Nos. 279 and 287, paragraph 2.

General Headlam who visited Mosul yesterday reports Mr. Thomson now in charge and is satisfied with the situation as regards relief. Food and milk are being supplied to all the refugees in Dohuk and Mosul where Mr. Thomson is preparing a concentration camp for them all. He has been given a credit of one thousand pounds by Minister of the Interior who is now more helpful.



E4725, E4804, E4808 (110) India 110 Mul.

INDEXED

P.Z. 5124 1933

pp 5119.

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS

OF THE

UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER NO. 34. 24 AUG. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Foreign Office,

9 August, 1933.

J. G. Laithwaite by India Office

8—8756 (4)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x00001f

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5124
193

E. 4725/7/93.

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
Foreign Office. 18th August, 1933. 5.15 p.m.
No. 216. (R).

XXXXXXXXX

-5056

Your telegram No. 274 (of August 16th: Assyrian Crisis).

Statement in paragraph 3 regarding responsibility of King Feisal may be most important. Please telegraph your grounds for this assertion.

112
(112)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5124
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
18th August, 1933.

D. 3.00 p.m. 18th August, 1933.

R. 3.50 p.m. 18th August, 1933.

No. 284. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

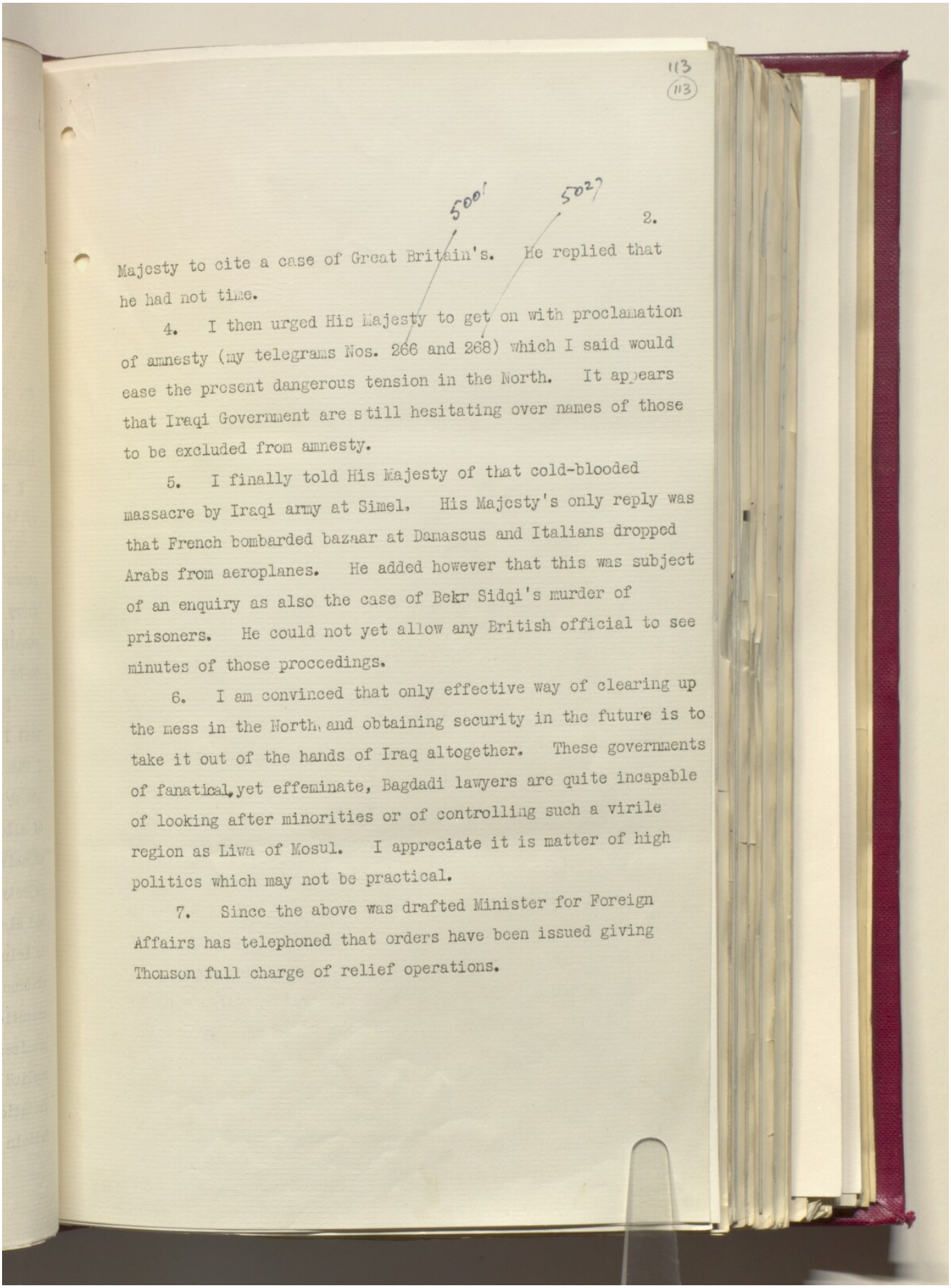
5098

I am of course not satisfied with the situation reported in my telegram No. 279.

2. King Feisal asked me to visit him this morning. He seems in normal health and wanted to explain that he was sorry that His Majesty's Government should think that he was running away from the situation which His Majesty still held to be not serious.

3. I changed the subject as soon as possible and said that I was not satisfied with measures being taken for relief. I then went over the ground covered by your telegram No. 203 and my telegram No. 279, emphasising most urgently the necessity of allowing Stafford and Thomson and British officials to organize relief and to spend the money which according to His Majesty Ministry of the Interior had in plenty. I added I had also heard there had been a hitch over sending Wilkins up to help and that Ministry of the Interior continued to be obstructive. I told His Majesty that you regarded it as most essential that there should be action and not talk and promises with regard to this relief work. His Majesty replied that though Iraq was a small power she would not accept dictation from great powers, several of whom including Great Britain had also cases of massacre and neglect. I asked His Majesty

5098



113
(113)

5001 5027

2.

Majesty to cite a case of Great Britain's. He replied that he had not time.

4. I then urged His Majesty to get on with proclamation of amnesty (my telegrams Nos. 266 and 268) which I said would ease the present dangerous tension in the North. It appears that Iraqi Government are still hesitating over names of those to be excluded from amnesty.

5. I finally told His Majesty of that cold-blooded massacre by Iraqi army at Simel. His Majesty's only reply was that French bombarded bazaar at Damascus and Italians dropped Arabs from aeroplanes. He added however that this was subject of an enquiry as also the case of Bekr Sidqi's murder of prisoners. He could not yet allow any British official to see minutes of those proceedings.

6. I am convinced that only effective way of clearing up the mess in the North and obtaining security in the future is to take it out of the hands of Iraq altogether. These governments of fanatical, yet effeminate, Bagdadi lawyers are quite incapable of looking after minorities or of controlling such a virile region as Liwa of Mosul. I appreciate it is matter of high politics which may not be practical.

7. Since the above was drafted Minister for Foreign Affairs has telephoned that orders have been issued giving Thomson full charge of relief operations.

114
(114)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5124
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
18th August 1933.

D. 11.25 p.m. 18th August 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 19th August 1933.

No. 286. (R).

IMPORTANT.

Your telegram No. 213.

It is in Mosul district that christians are being terrorized and have suffered from raids of Shammar tribe who have taken advantage of breakdown of machinery of government. Both yesterday and today I made representations which have succeeded in reducing to a minimum triumphant entry into Mosul of Bekr Sidqi's troops stained with the blood of Simel. I immediately called on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and made the following demands:

1. Suppression of five agitators mentioned in Mosul despatch No. 44.

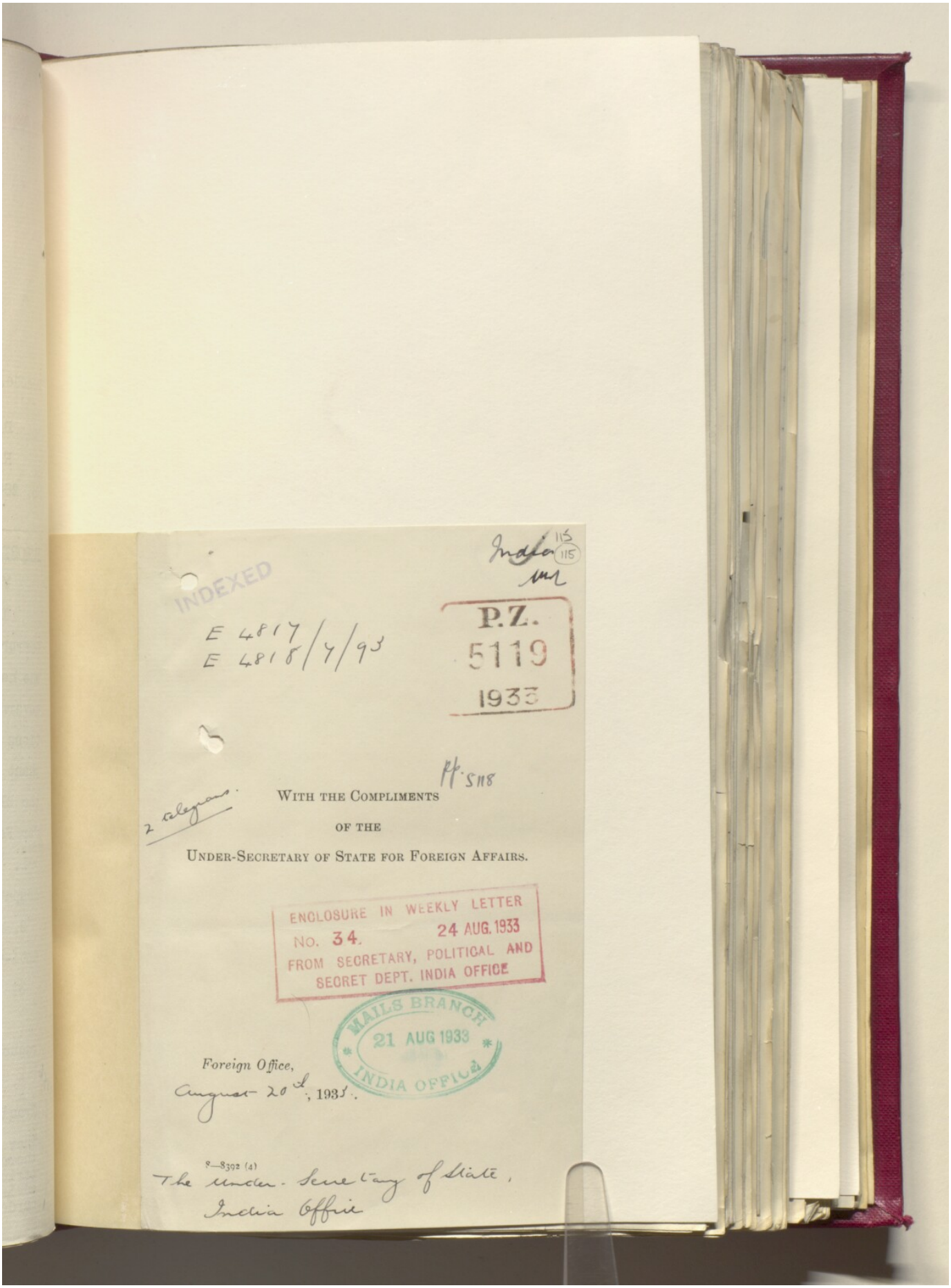
2. Mosul police to be instructed to nip in the bud any anti-Christian movement.

3. Last but not least promulgation of amnesty.

Nuri who seemed affected promised to place above request at once before the King.

My telegram No. 274. I have strong suspicion that Iraqis have something to hide in the hills above Dohuk. They are most unwilling to allow British officers to go there. Head of military mission fears that if he sends an officer there may be an "accident". I have accordingly advised him not to run the risk of British officers being murdered.

5056



India 115 115

INDEXED

E 4817/7/93
E 4818/7/93

P.Z.
5119
1933

Pp. 5118

2 telegrams.

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS

OF THE

UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

MAILS BRANCH
21 AUG 1933
INDIA OFFICE

Foreign Office,
August 20th, 1933.

8—8392 (4)

The Under-Secretary of State,
India Office

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x000029

116
(116)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5119
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad), 19th August, 1933.

D. 9.00 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 20th August, 1933.

No. 288. (R).

5118

PORTANT.

My telegram No. 287, first paragraph.

Mosul despatch No. 45 August 18th reports Stafford and Thomson visited Simel on August 17th and ascertained facts of massacre there by Iraqi Army of about 350 Assyrians.

2. It appears that Simel being guarded by police and inhabited by Assyrians, supporters of the government, became on August 10th a place of refuge for women and children and (?) (who had not taken up arms against the government) from neighbouring villages which were being plundered by Kurds.

3. Later in the morning some Iraqi armoured cars arrived and collected rifles voluntarily surrendered by Assyrians who felt they were now safe under the protection of Iraqi Army.

4. On August 11th Iraqi Army troops arrived in Simel and shot men down with machine guns in centre of village. Some escaped into houses but were shot down through the windows together, it is believed, with a few women and children of whom there are also 3 or 4 wounded. One wounded man survived.

5. No report of what occurred was allowed to reach Mosul for three days. On August 17th some 400 women and children left abandoned amongst rotting corpses were sent by Administrative Inspector to Dohuk where there are 1500 in all.

They

They are utterly destitute and kept alive by a little bread and melons. About 400 were brought into Mosul by lorries on August 17th and left unprotected in some khans where they are exposed to threats and insults from population. Stafford is trying to arrange with Minister of the Interior for all women and children to be brought into a concentration camp at Mosul.

6. Iraqi Army was to march into Mosul August 18th beneath triumphant archos. Christian population is terrified although Minister of the Interior has assured His Majesty's Consul that there is no danger. As I have already reported this entry passed off without serious incident.

7. His Majesty's Consul also reports although a large number of villages near Dohuk have been looted and burnt by Kurds, the latter have refrained from killing Assyrians and have even sometimes protected them. This disposes of Iraqi attempt to shift the blame for these murders from Iraqi Army on to Kurds, a lie which Prime Minister has apparently succeeded in inducing "Times" correspondent in Bagdad to report to London. See trans-oceanic wireless August 18th No. 812.

118

(118)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5119
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
20th August, 1933.

D. 12.50 a.m. 20th August, 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 20th August, 1933.

No. 289.

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 283.

Lady Surma has sent emissary to ask that His Majesty's Government should move her and the Patriarch's family from Mosul to British territory.

Her message is that (i) she fears for her life and for lives of her household as a result of some unofficial raid by Iraq army now returning to Mosul; (ii) she will refuse to leave at the orders of Iraq Government unless she has guarantee of British protection; (iii) she insists that whole family accompany her.

She states that party consists of nineteen women and children including Mar Shimun's mother and his brothers and sisters.

I am of course pressing Iraqi Government adequately to protect them. Adviser to Interior considers Iraq Government would be glad to see family depart and while I have made it clear to her that he has no authority in any way to commit His Majesty's Government to principle of removal and lodging he will try to persuade Iraqi Government to grant fixed annual allowance for whole of Patriarch's family.

Air Officer Commanding would be prepared to facilitate departure from Iraq.

State of tension in Mosul makes consideration of this question necessary.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 289, repeated to Jerusalem No. 24 and Cyprus.

119
(119)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
19th August, 1933.

D. 1.15 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

R. 1.40 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

No. 287. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 286.

(1). The King assured me this morning in the presence of the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Yasin that he would be personally responsible for safety of Christians in Mosul. He nevertheless contended that reports received by you were alarmist and lacking in foundation. I then pulled out of my pocket and without disclosing authorship read to him Mosul despatch No. 45, substance of which is being telegraphed to you. His Majesty did not like this but assured me he would call Moslem and Christian leaders to meet at a feast of reconciliation.

(2) He also assured me that Major Thomson had been made Chairman of Refugee Relief Committee.

(3) He further showed me a pigeon post message, very undecypherable but probably emenating from Derik taken from a carrier pigeon near Tel Afar.

(4) In reply to my pressure for a proclamation of amnesty which would ease the situation His Majesty replied that Cabinet were considering the matter, but had not yet decided who were to be excluded therefrom.

(5) The King concluded in his usual optimistic strain saying that Sir F. Humphrys would arrive here to find the situation quite normal.

120
(120)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad), 20th August, 1933.

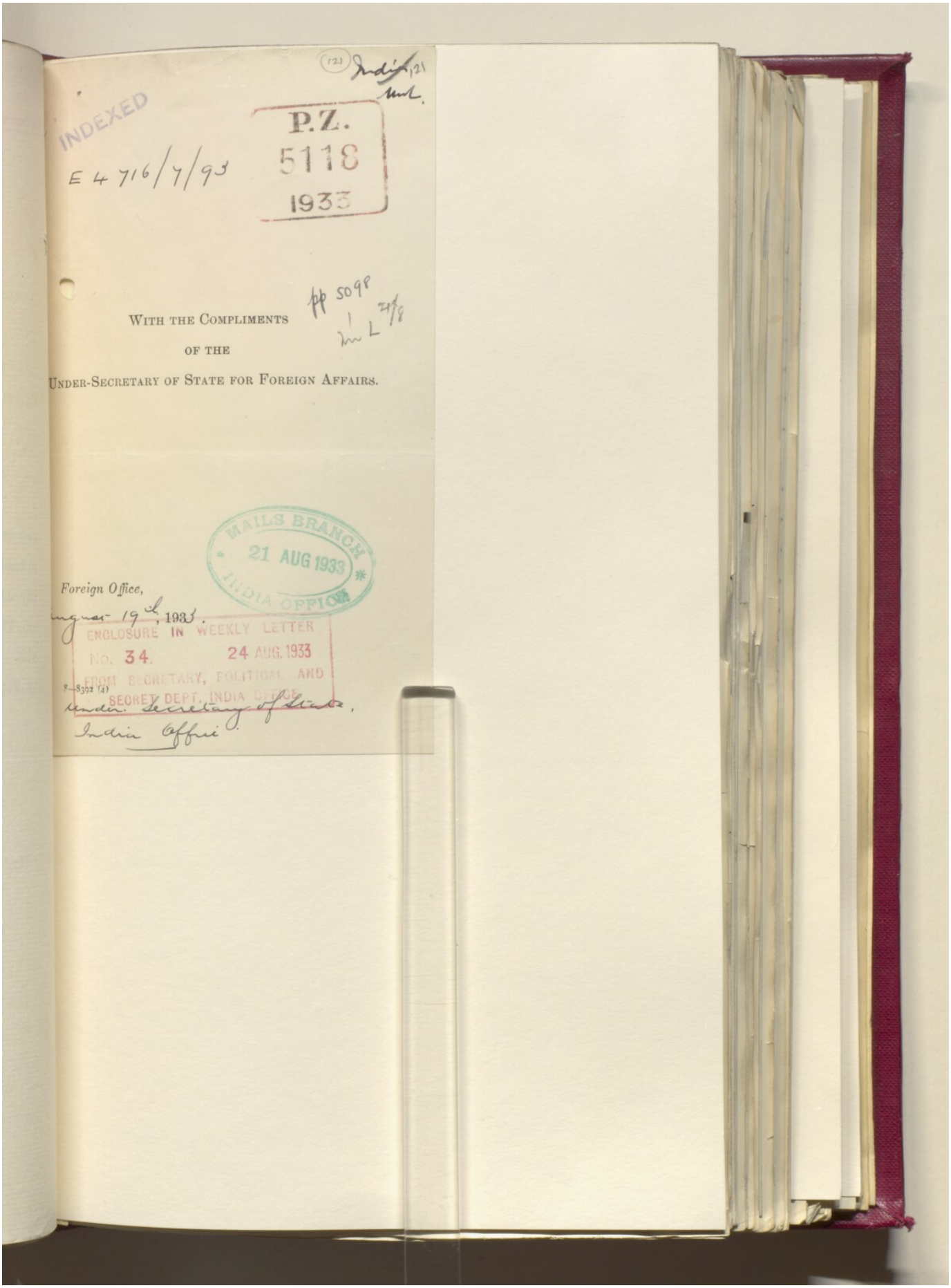
D. 8.50 p.m. 20th August, 1933.
R. 9.10 a.m. 21st August, 1933.

No.290. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegrams Nos. 279 and 287, paragraph 2.

General Headlam who visited Mosul yesterday reports Mr. Thomson now in charge and is satisfied with the situation as regards relief. Food and milk are being supplied to all the refugees in Dohuk and Mosul where Mr. Thomson is preparing a concentration camp for them all. He has been given a credit of one thousand pounds by Minister of the Interior who is now more helpful.


INDEXED
E 4716/7/93
P.Z.
5118
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
MAILS BRANCH
21 AUG 1933
INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 34.
24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

122
(122)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5118
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
19th August, 1933.

D. 1.15 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

R. 1.40 p.m. 19th August, 1933.

No. 287. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 286.

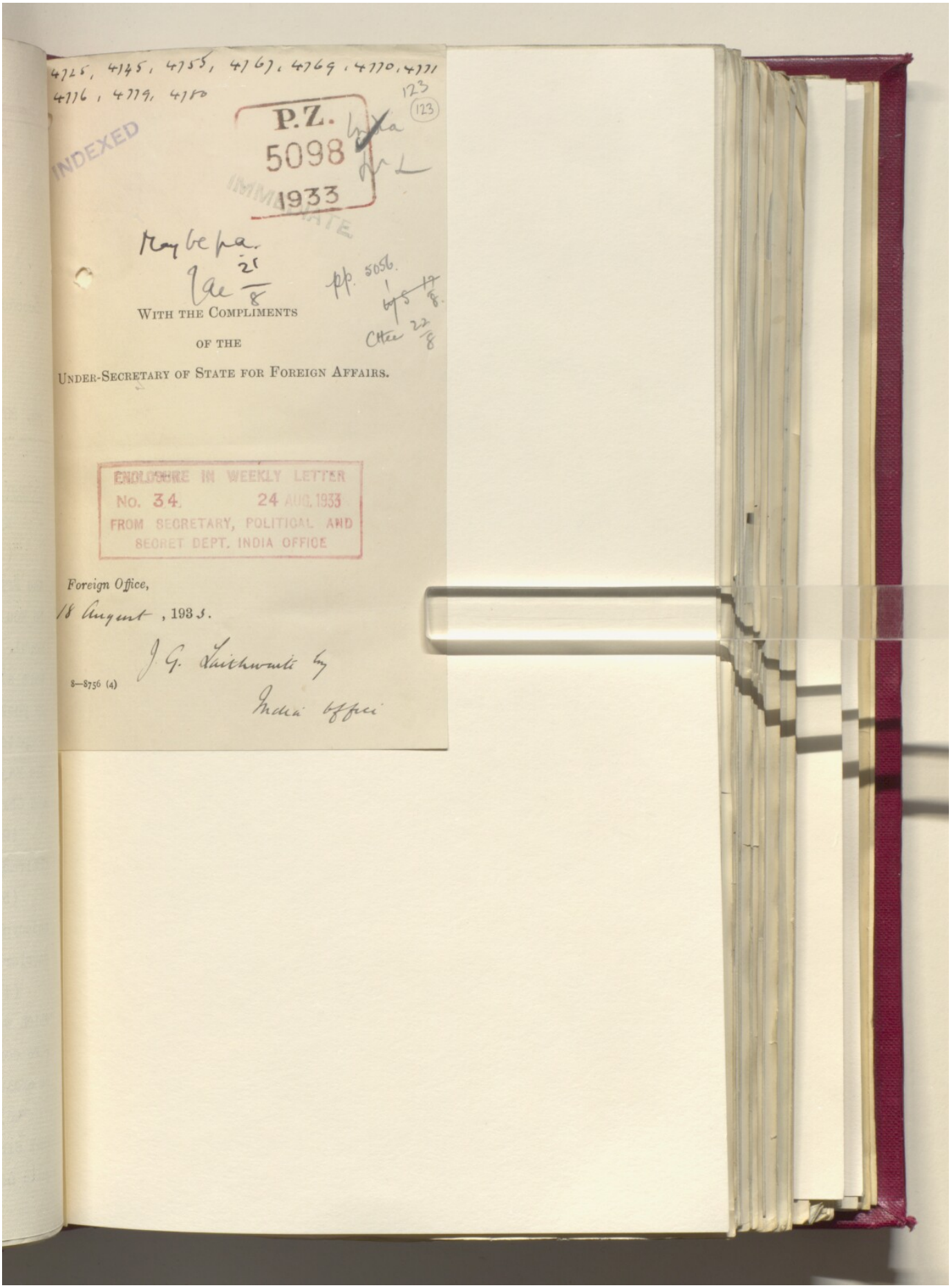
(1). The King assured me this morning in the presence of the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Yasin that he would be personally responsible for safety of Christians in Mosul. He nevertheless contended that reports received by you were alarmist and lacking in foundation. I then pulled out of my pocket and without disclosing authorship read to him Mosul despatch No. 45, substance of which is being telegraphed to you. His Majesty did not like this but assured me he would call Moslem and Christian leaders to meet at a feast of reconciliation.

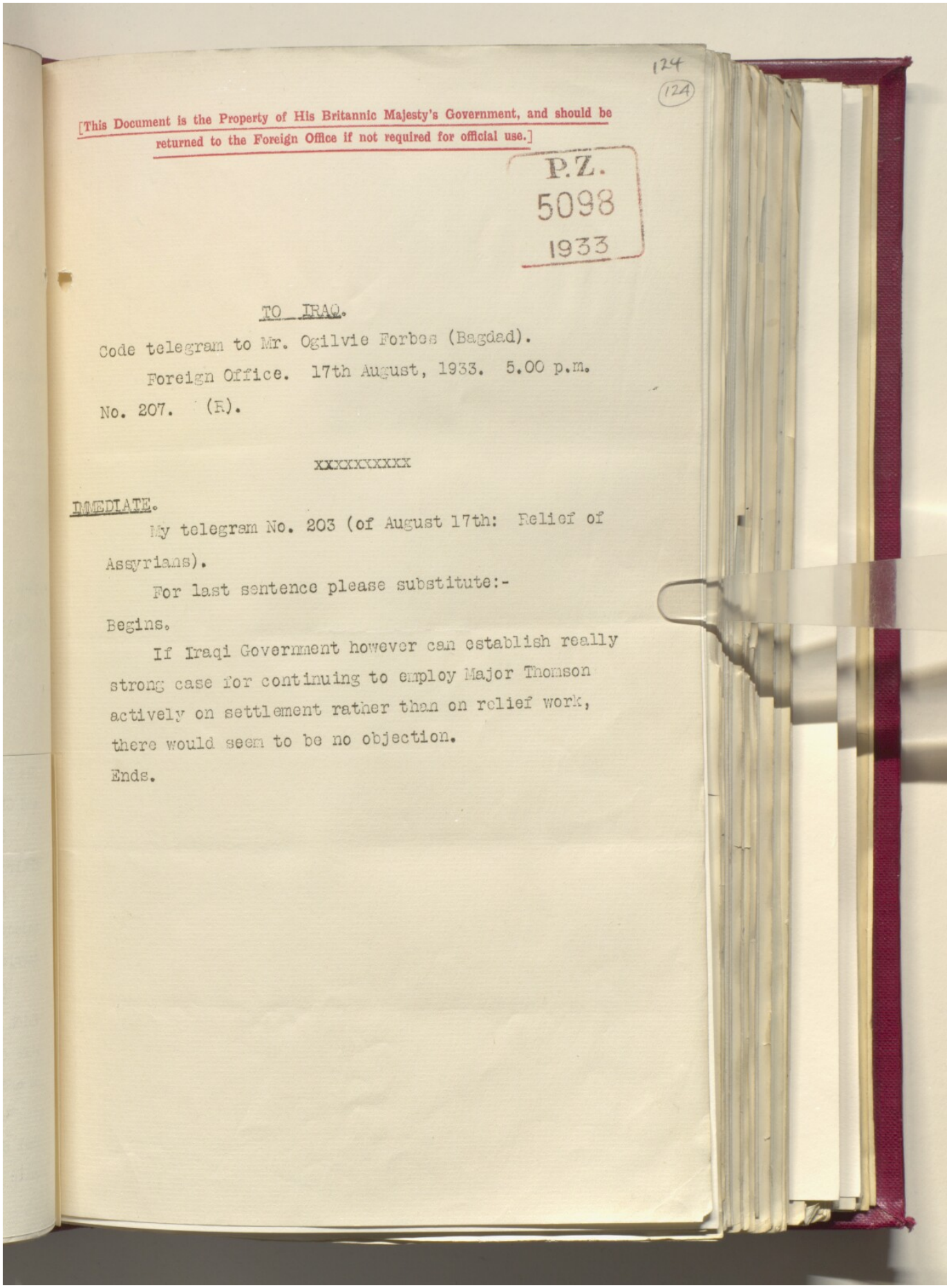
(2) He also assured me that Major Thomson had been made Chairman of Refugee Relief Committee.

(3) He further showed me a pigeon post message, very undecypherable but probably emenating from Derik taken from a carrier pigeon near Tel Afar.

(4) In reply to my pressure for a proclamation of amnesty which would ease the situation His Majesty replied that Cabinet were considering the matter, but had not yet decided who were to be excluded therefrom.

(5) The King concluded in his usual optimistic strain saying that Sir F. Humphrys would arrive here to find the situation quite normal.


4725, 4745, 4755, 4767, 4769, 4770, 4771
4776, 4779, 4780
INDEXED
P.Z.
5098
1933
IMMEDIATE
123
(123)
pp. 5056.
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
18 August, 1933.
8—8756 (4)



124
(124)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 17th August, 1933. 5.00 p.m.

No. 207. (R).

xxxxxxxxxx

IMMEDIATE.

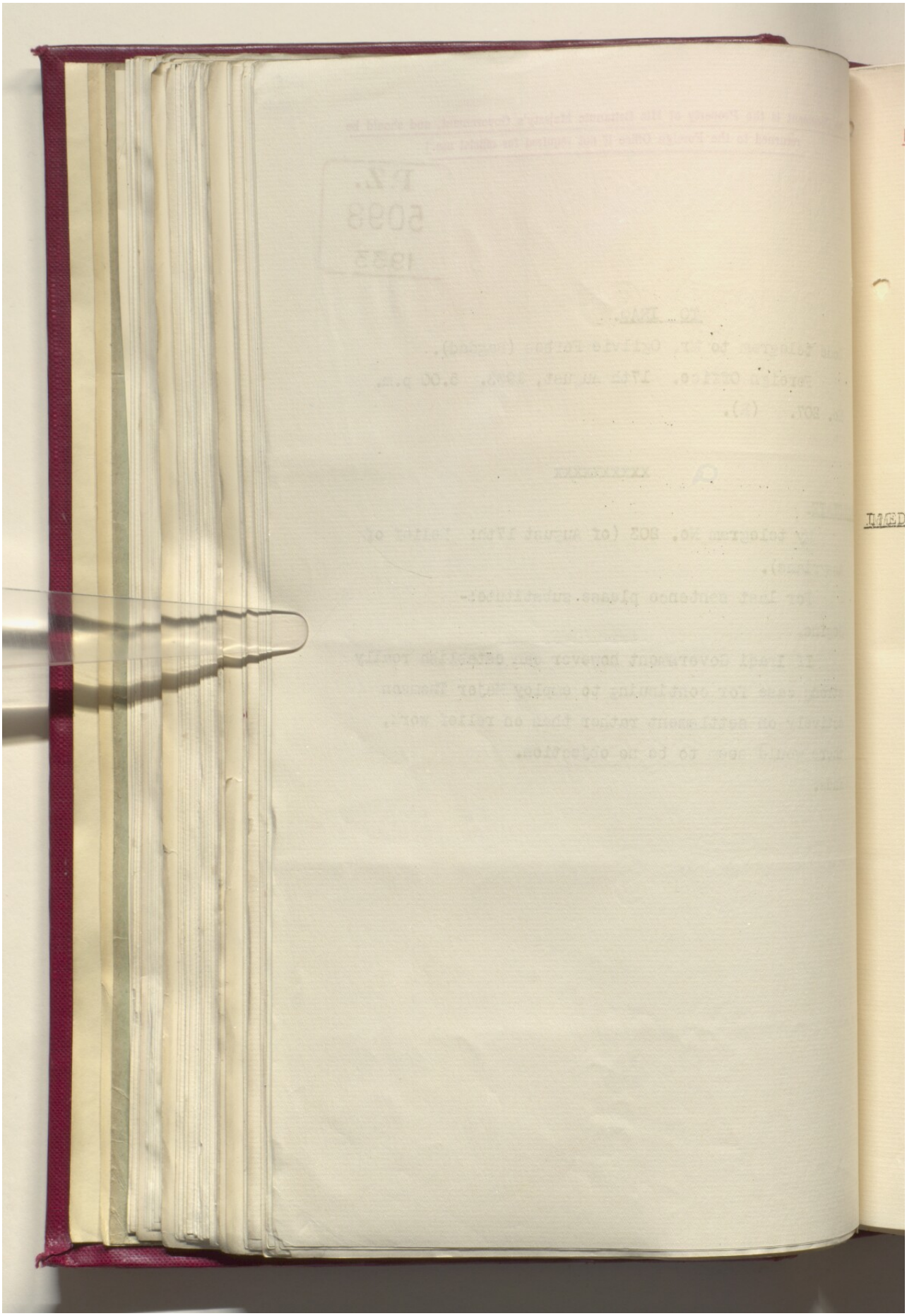
My telegram No. 203 (of August 17th: Relief of Assyrians).

For last sentence please substitute:-

Begins.

If Iraqi Government however can establish really strong case for continuing to employ Major Thomson actively on settlement rather than on relief work, there would seem to be no objection.

Ends.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x00003c

125
(125)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 17th August, 1933. 5.00 p.m.

No. 206. (R).

XXXXXXXXX

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegrams Nos. 271 (of August 16th) and 275 (of August 17th - Mar Shimun).

There are serious objections to Mar Shimun remaining in Palestine for longer than time absolutely necessary for transshipment.

Please immediately arrange air transport accordingly via Palestine with Air Officer Commanding, Iraq. I understand Air Officer Commanding, Palestine, will provide for air transport to Cyprus.

Repeated to Jerusalem Cyprus.

126
(126)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 17th August, 1933, 6.15 p.m.

No. 208. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

My telegrams Nos. 206 (of August 17th: Mar Shimun) and 205 (of August 17th: flying boats for Sir F. Humphrys).

Air Ministry would much prefer to send or at least accompany Mar Shimun by flying boats, which may not however be available for twenty-four hours. If you can safely delay Mar Shimun's departure long enough to render this possible, it will be very satisfactory.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 208, repeated to Jerusalem and Cyprus.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

127
(127)

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 17th August, 1933. 4.00 p.m.

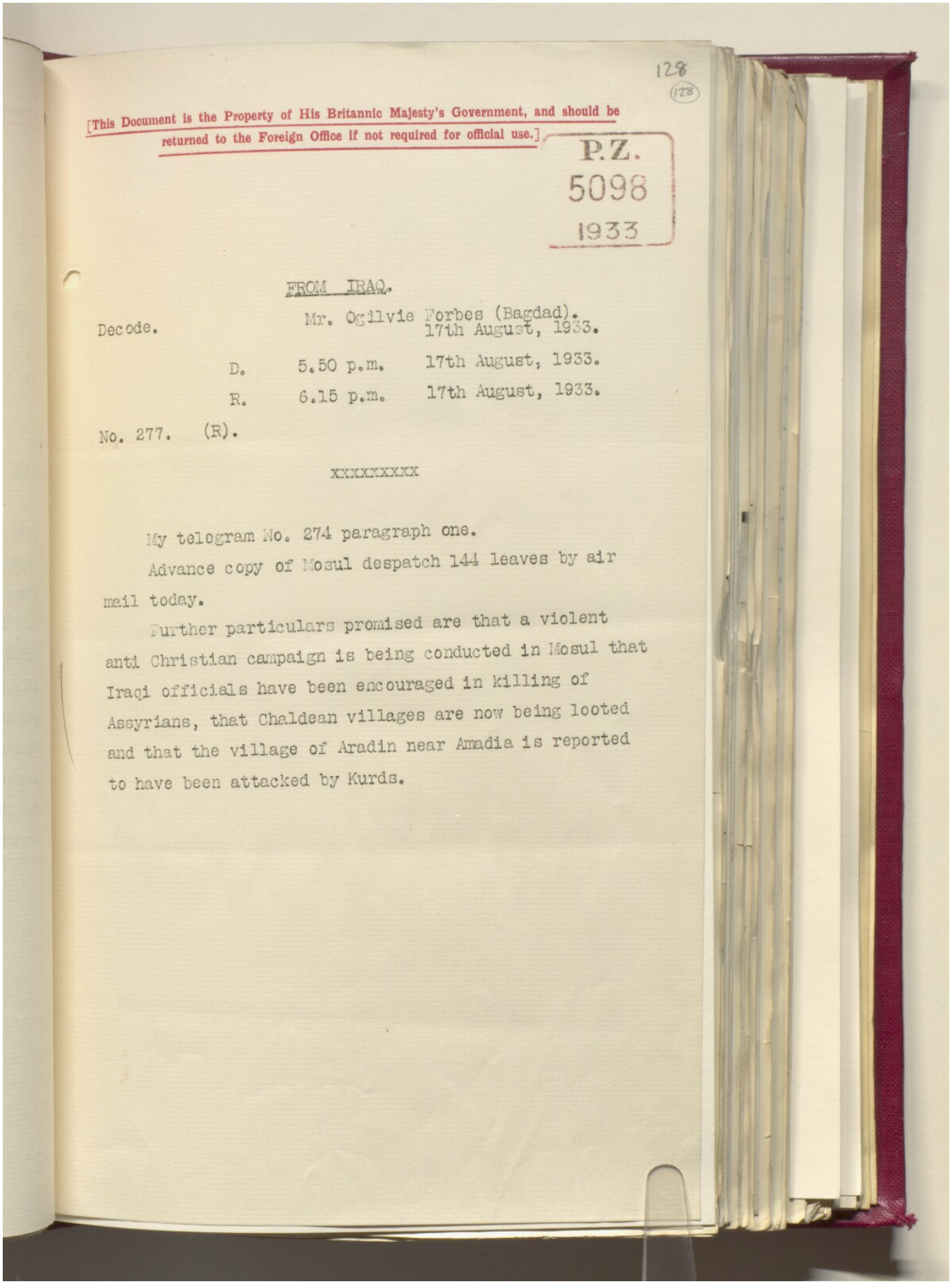
No. 205. (R).

XXXXXXXXXX

IMMEDIATE.

Air Ministry inform me that flying boats which were to take Sir F.Humphrys from Brindisi to Bagdad on August 20th have been delayed by dust storms and other difficulties.

In view of King Feisal's decision to await Sir F. Humphrys' arrival (see my immediately preceding telegram) I consider that Sir F.Humphrys may now safely postpone his arrival until August 23rd. He will therefore travel by Imperial Airways, leaving Brindisi August 21st, and flying boats will not be required for his transport. Please inform Air Officer Commanding immediately.



128
(128)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 17th August, 1933.

D. 5.50 p.m. 17th August, 1933.

R. 6.15 p.m. 17th August, 1933.

No. 277. (R).

xxxxxxxxx

My telegram No. 274 paragraph one.

Advance copy of Mosul despatch 144 leaves by air mail today.

Further particulars promised are that a violent anti Christian campaign is being conducted in Mosul that Iraqi officials have been encouraged in killing of Assyrians, that Chaldean villages are now being looted and that the village of Aradin near Amadia is reported to have been attacked by Kurds.

129
(129)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 17th August 1933.

D. 4.17 p.m. 17th August 1933.

R. 9.45 p.m. 17th August 1933.

No. 278. (R)

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram 275, last sentence, and your telegram 202.

King not accessible tonight but Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Imperial Airways state that journey has been postponed till Friday 25th. He will therefore be here on Sir F. Humphrys' arrival.

130
(130)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

From IRAQ.

Telegram (en clair) from Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
August 18th 1933.

D. 9.25 a.m. August 18th 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. August 18th 1933.

No.279A.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

MOST IMMEDIATE.

Addressed to Jerusalem No.22.

Your telegram No.114.

Patriarch and party left by air at 4/45 for Ramleh. Air Officer Commanding Palestine will no doubt inform you of movements of aeroplane. Many thanks for speedy arrangements.

Repeated to Foreign Office No.279sic and Cyprus.

131
(131)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 17th. 1933.

D. 10.5.p.m. August 17th. 1933.

R. 10.45.p.m. August 17th. 1933.

No. 230. (R).

-----oOo-----

My telegram No. 267 and my telegram No. 269.

Stafford has informed Adviser to the Interior he is positive that massacre was perpetrated by Iraqi army who collected Assyrians on one day and killed them on the morrow.

132

(132)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5098 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 18th. 1933.

D. 12.30.a.m. August 18th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. August 18th. 1933.

No. 279. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

Your telegram No. 203.

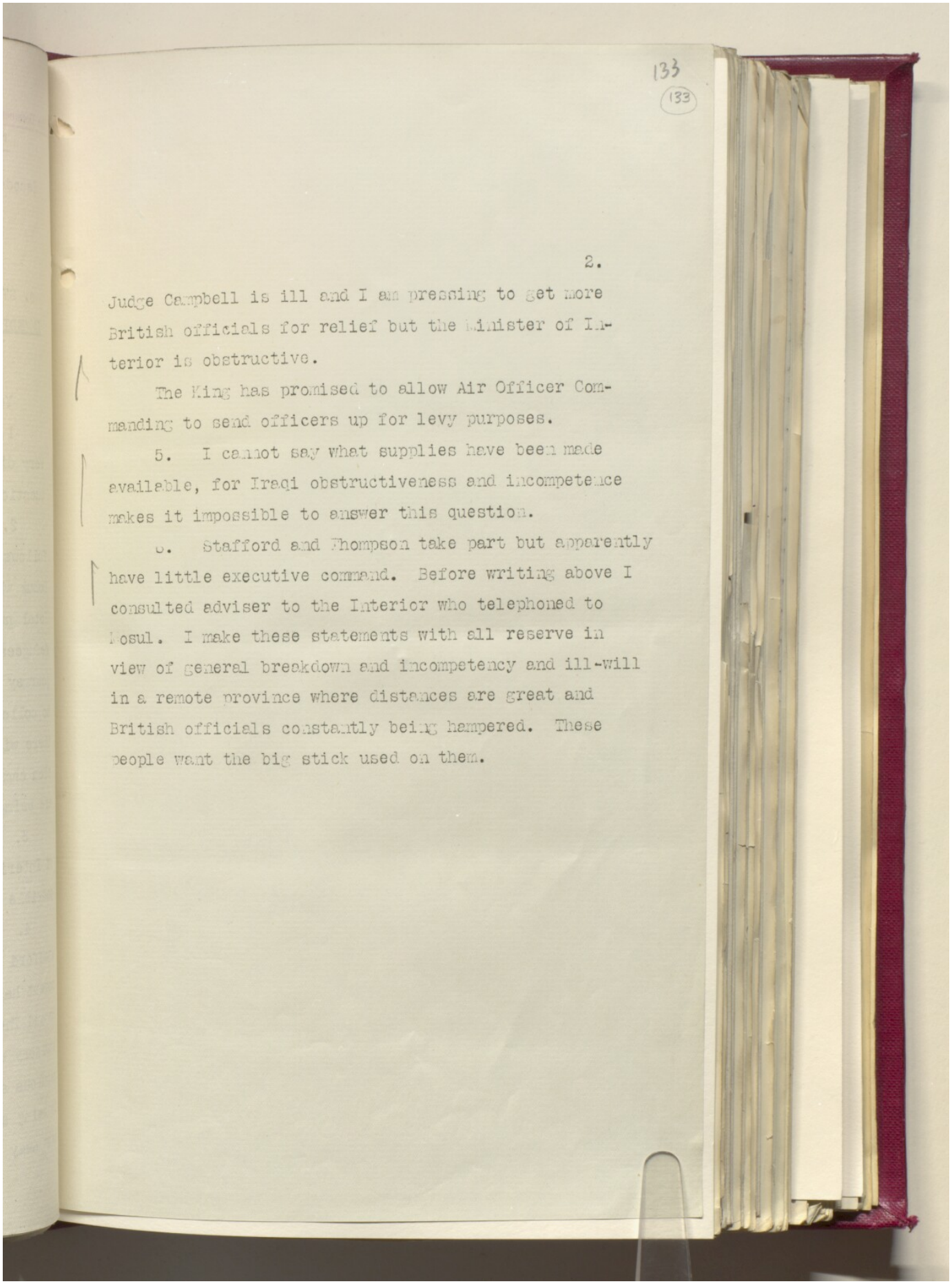
1. For reasons which you will understand it is very difficult to furnish a precise answer to all your questions.

2. Concrete measures of relief appear to be as follows: Food has been sent to Simel and subsequently Dohuk whilst 700 of Simel refugees have been transferred. Total number in Dohuk 1200. The remaining 500 Simel refugees have been transferred to Mosul an arduous journey of 38 miles (grs.omit.) climate. It is intended to collect all the refugees estimated at present at 1700, there will probably be more, eventually in a concentration camp at Mosul. It is understood that all the above are being fed.

3. Beyond a statement by government that Minister of Interior has ample funds to draw on it has not been possible to ascertain the sum allotted.

4. Local Iraqi committees have been appointed. Stafford who is grossly overworked and may break down any moment has been offered chairmanship of main committee. He and Thompson are doing their utmost, the latter in an advisory capacity and with no command. Organization seems nebulous and unbusinesslike. Wilkins of police Bagdad is being sent up to help in place of Sargon who has been sent away by Bekr Sidqi under threats to his life.

Judge.....



133
(133)

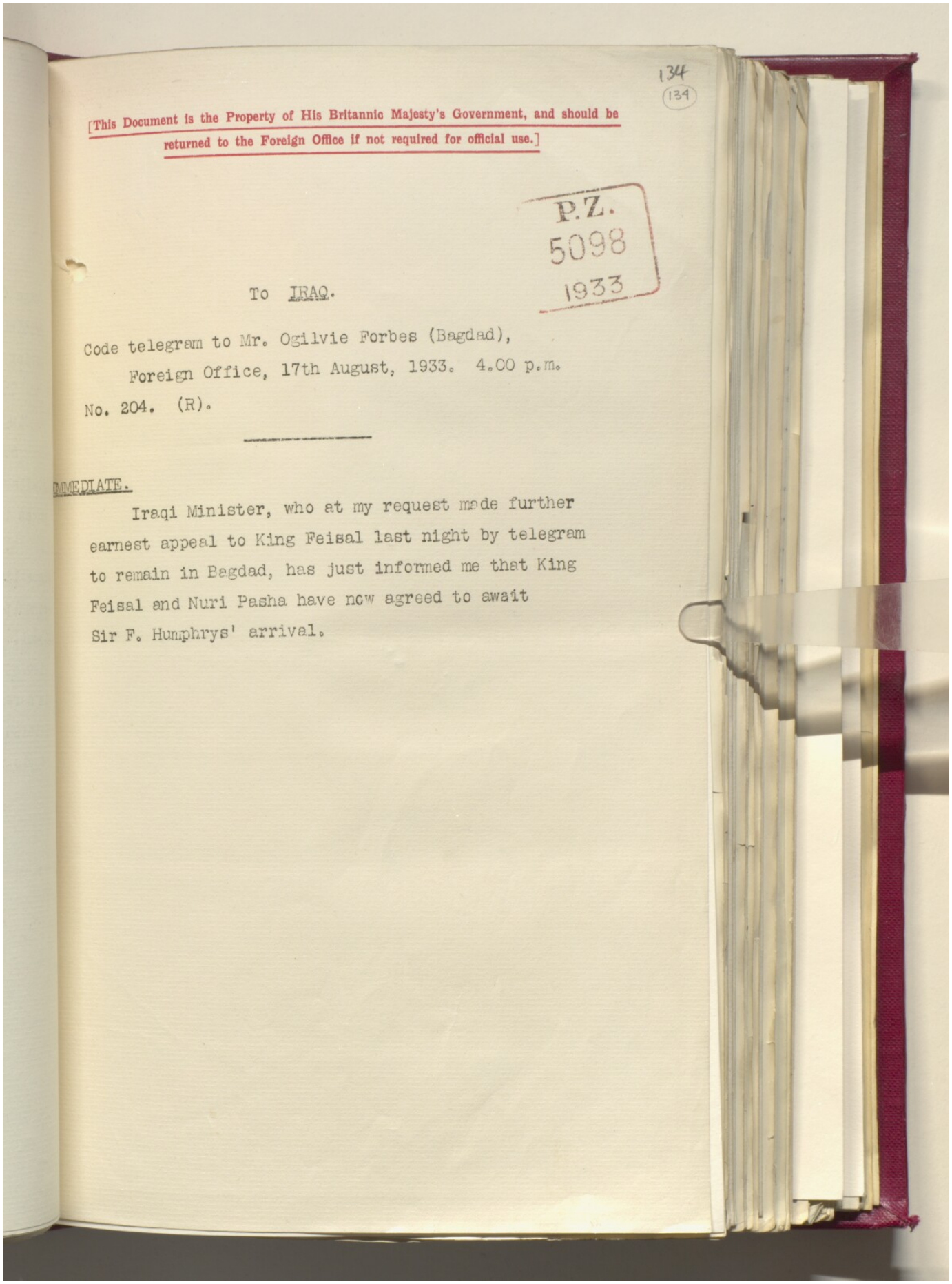
2.

Judge Campbell is ill and I am pressing to get more British officials for relief but the Minister of Interior is obstructive.

The King has promised to allow Air Officer Commanding to send officers up for levy purposes.

5. I cannot say what supplies have been made available, for Iraqi obstructiveness and incompetence makes it impossible to answer this question.

6. Stafford and Thompson take part but apparently have little executive command. Before writing above I consulted adviser to the Interior who telephoned to Mosul. I make these statements with all reserve in view of general breakdown and incompetency and ill-will in a remote province where distances are great and British officials constantly being hampered. These people want the big stick used on them.



134
(134)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5098
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 17th August, 1933. 4.00 p.m.
No. 204. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

Iraqi Minister, who at my request made further earnest appeal to King Feisal last night by telegram to remain in Bagdad, has just informed me that King Feisal and Nuri Pasha have now agreed to await Sir F. Humphrys' arrival.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

135
(135)

P.Z.
5098
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)
18th August 1933.

D. 10.30 a.m. 18th August 1933.

R. 10.35 a.m. 18th August 1933.

No. 280. A.

- - -

IMPORTANT.

Your telegram No. 208 was received too late to alter arrangements especially in view of local tension and excitement. Delay in departure would have been most dangerous.

Addressed to the Foreign Office, repeated to Jerusalem No. 23 and Cyprus.

136
(136)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
5056/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			Assyrian crisis, 16-17 Aug.
Under Secretary	17.8	[illegible]	1. Mr Ogilvie Forbes' interview with King Feisal.
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	19	[illegible]	2. Further manoeuvres.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The interview is amusing reading, but the Chargé d'Affaires has reported it in so sparkling a style as possibly to do himself some injustice.

[illegible] 17/8

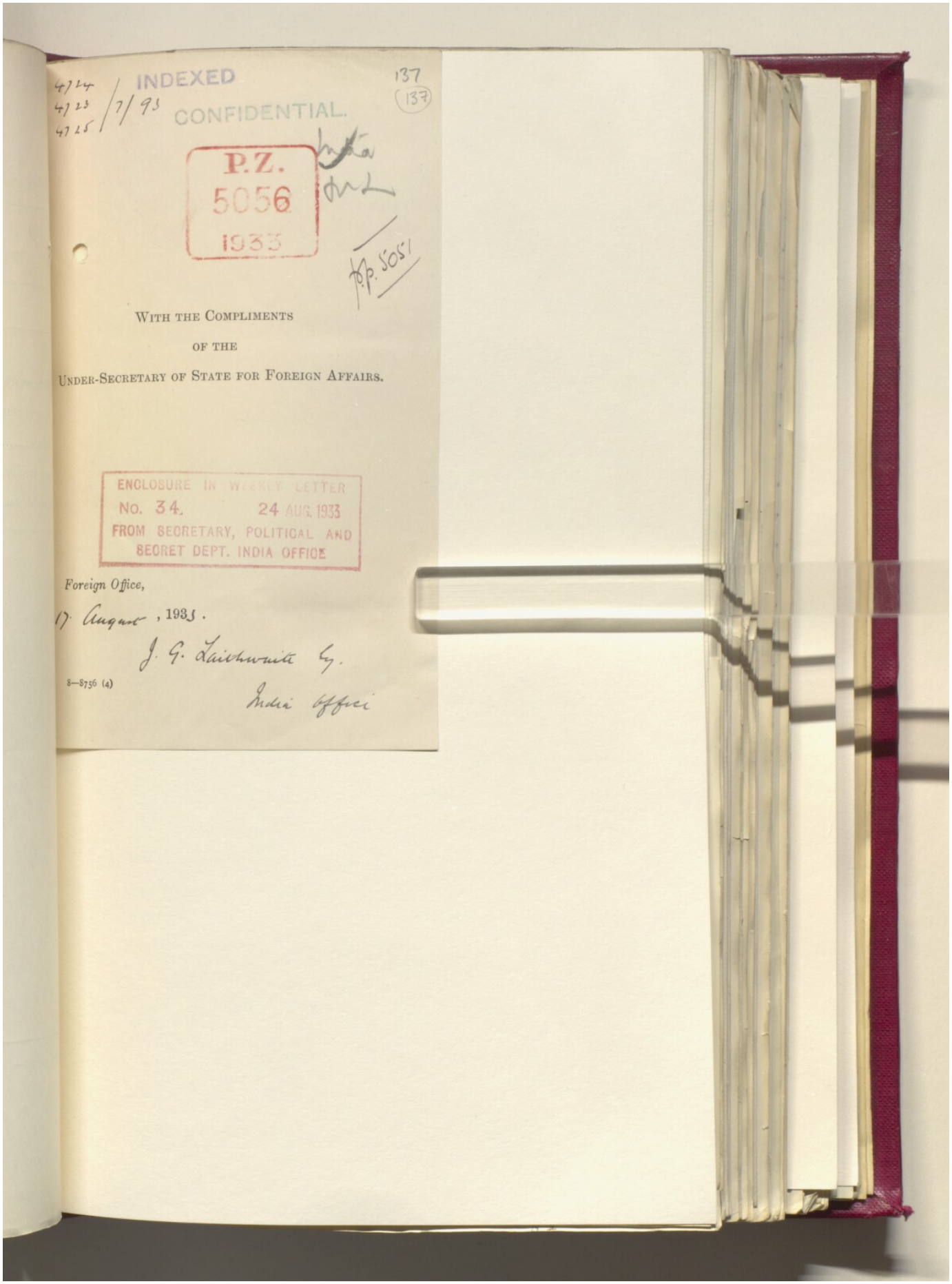
[illegible] 2578

Lin. Sec. [illegible] 19/8
Private Secretary
[illegible] 21/8.

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
29 AUG 1935

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31


4724
4723
4725
INDEXED
7/93
CONFIDENTIAL.
137
(137)
P.Z.
5056
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34. 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
17 August, 1933.
J. G. Laithwaite Esq.
India Office
8—8756 (4)

138
138

P.Z.
5056
1933

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
16th August, 1933.

D. 9.40 p.m. 17th August, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 17th August, 1933.

No.272.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMPORTANT.

6027 My telegram No.269 last paragraph.

1. I found King Feisal in his pyjamas squatting on his bed.

2. I first told him of horror and disgust you felt at Simel massacre. He feigned surprise and said that bodies were equally divided and were of those killed in action. I enquired if it was customary for Moslems to leave their dead rotting for six days on high road. The King then reached for eau de cologne bottle.

3. I then enquired what action was being taken for relief. King replied that there was plenty of money available for supplies were being brought up and compensation paid for loctings. I doubt it.

4. I then asked why they would not use Major Thomson? The King replied that Major Thomson was a foreigner and on a special job. I said that you considered this disgraceful.

5. I then asked for facilities for levies to examine local situation. The King replied that he would consider this sympathetically. He will not.

6. After a copious lotion of eau de cologne he asked what I thought of Iraqi case. I replied it used to be good until August 5th but now it seemed a pretty poor one because

of

139
(139)

of (1) Bekr Sidqi, (2) Kurdish auxiliary police, (3) Shaimmar raiders, (4) obstruction even to well wishing British officers, (5) recent massacres and finally (6) because it seemed as if he was going to be the King who ran away.

7. His Majesty then sank back on to his pillow.

140
(140)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5056

From Iraq.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 16th. 1933.

D. 11.55.p.m. August 16th. 1933.

R. 8.00.a.m. August 17th. 1933.

No. 273. (R).

-----oOo-----

5077

My telegram No. 270.

I have received note from Iraqi Government informing me that

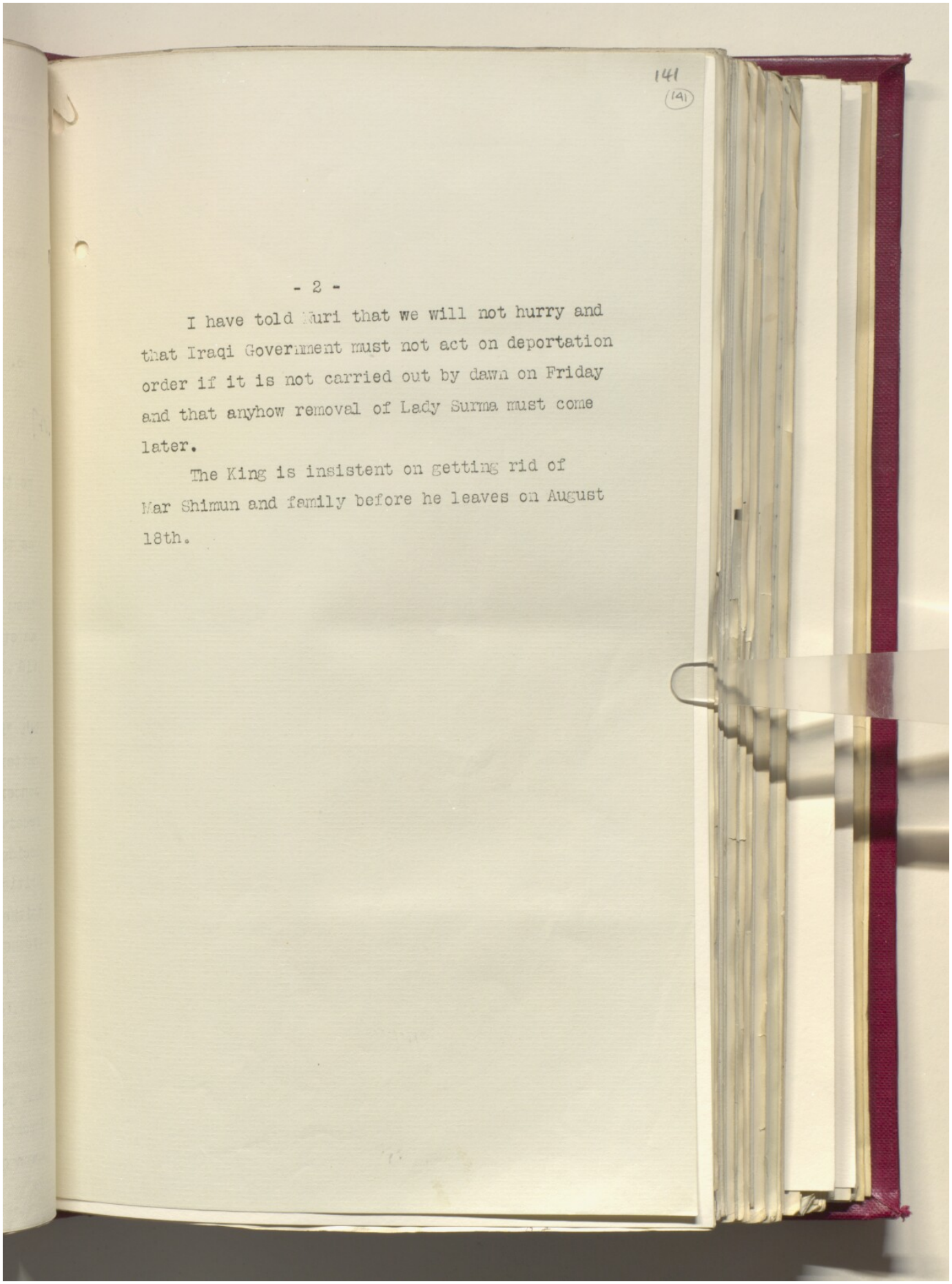
(1) Iraqi Government consider Mar Shimun and family as the prime instigators of Assyrian rising,

(2) Iraqi Government intend, either to prosecute them on the capital charge of conspiring against the safety of the state, or to deport them to Transjordan via Rutba by car on August 17th,

(3) Iraqi Government prefer the latter alternative but "have weighty reasons for considering that the matter of deportation would be much facilitated, for all concerned, if His Majesty's Government would consent to receive them (sic) temporarily, until their future is decided by the League of Nations; at some place in British territory and would arrange for their transport thither." Persons concerned are Mar Shimun, his father, brother and Lady Surma.

I have already warned Jerusalem and Cyprus in my telegram No. 21 repeated to you as my telegram No. 271 and have replied to Iraqi Government that His Majesty's Government will agree on the condition that Iraqi Government refund expenses and take no action regarding the deportation until we have had time to make the necessary arrangements.

I .....



141
(141)

- 2 -

I have told Nuri that we will not hurry and that Iraqi Government must not act on deportation order if it is not carried out by dawn on Friday and that anyhow removal of Lady Surma must come later.

The King is insistent on getting rid of Mar Shimun and family before he leaves on August 18th.

142
(142)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5056
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
16th August 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 16th August, 1933.

R. 8.00 a.m. 17th August 1933.

No. 274. (R).

507 Your telegram No. 199.

His Majesty's Consul at Mosul reports today that a party of 290 or 300 Assyrians with no survivors were killed in Dohuk area. These are quite separate from the 315 at Simel. He added that about 700 Assyrians have in all been killed, of whom only 100 in action. Further particulars later.

2. Bread and melons are being sent to women and children. I hope for better report from Edmonds tomorrow.

3. King Feisal, not Bekr Sidqi, is to blame for the irregular police and Shammar tribe who apparently are continuing their looting.

143
(143)

Notes.

Register No.
P.Z 5043
5051
33

Minute Paper.

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			Assyrian crisis.
Under Secretary	17. 8.	[illegible]	Telegrams 15-16 August.
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	19	[illegible]	
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

1. Sir F. Humphrys is returning & will reach Brindisi on 20 Aug.
2. The Iraqi Govt. are now anxious to deport the Mar Shimun, which will dispose of our apprehensions of his possible fate if tried on a capital charge (see F.O. tel. 200 of 16 Aug)
3. Note the account of an interview on 14 Aug. with the Iraqi Minister (PZ 5024 at bottom of file)

[illegible] 17/8 33

Sir M. Seton [illegible] 19/8
Private Secretary

Previous Papers :—

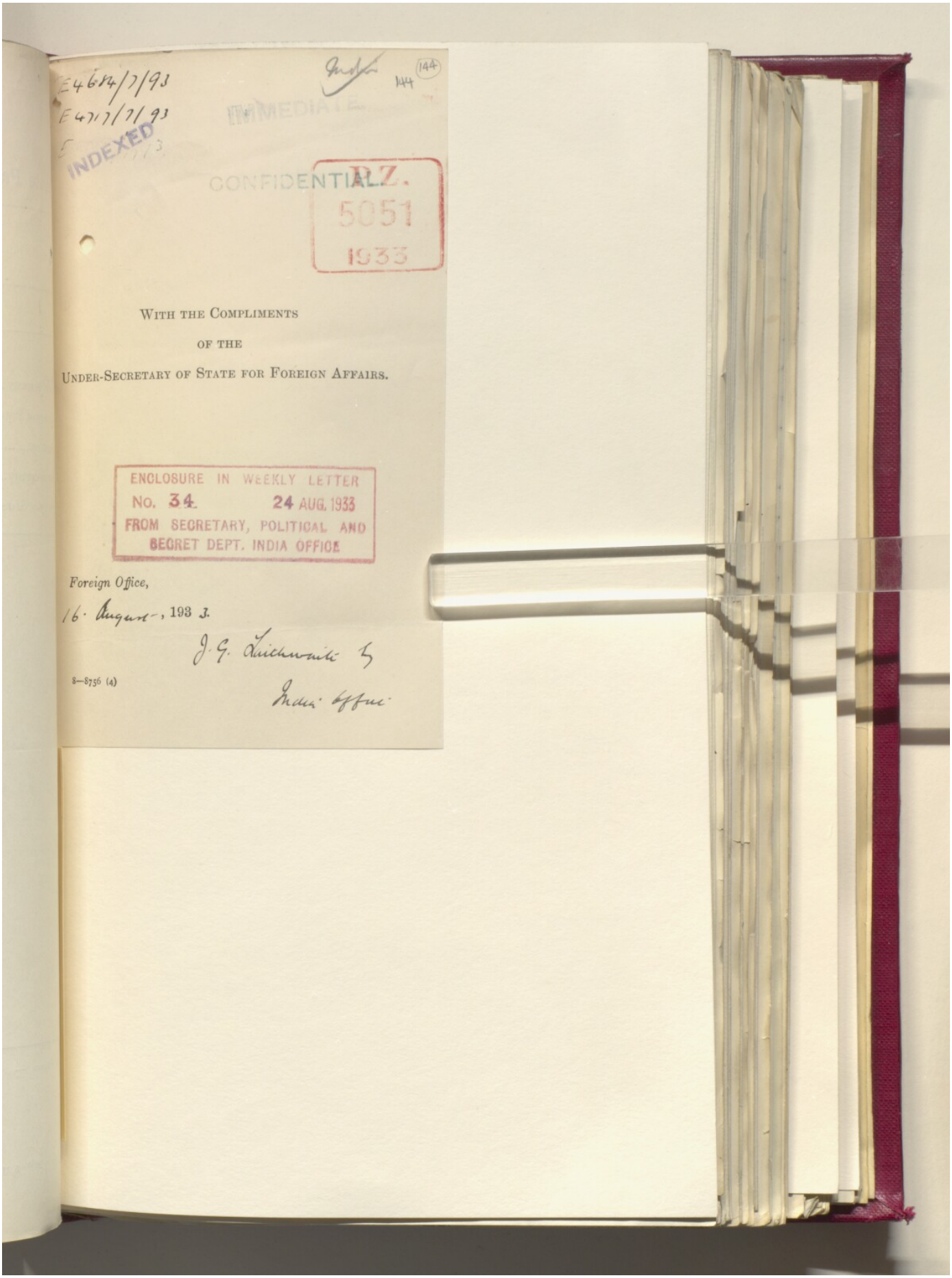
29A 2000 5.31

*Mr. Forbes says they "desire" it. Presumably he has obtained from them a deportation order so as to fix the responsibility.

[illegible]

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x000061


E4684/7/93
E4717/7/93
INDEXED
144
CONFIDENTIAL
R.Z.
5051
1933
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 34 24 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
16 August, 1933.
J. G. Laithwaite
India Office.
8—8756 (4)

145
(145)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5051
1933

(E 4684/7/93).

TO IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 16th August, 1933, 2.50 p.m.

No. 200.

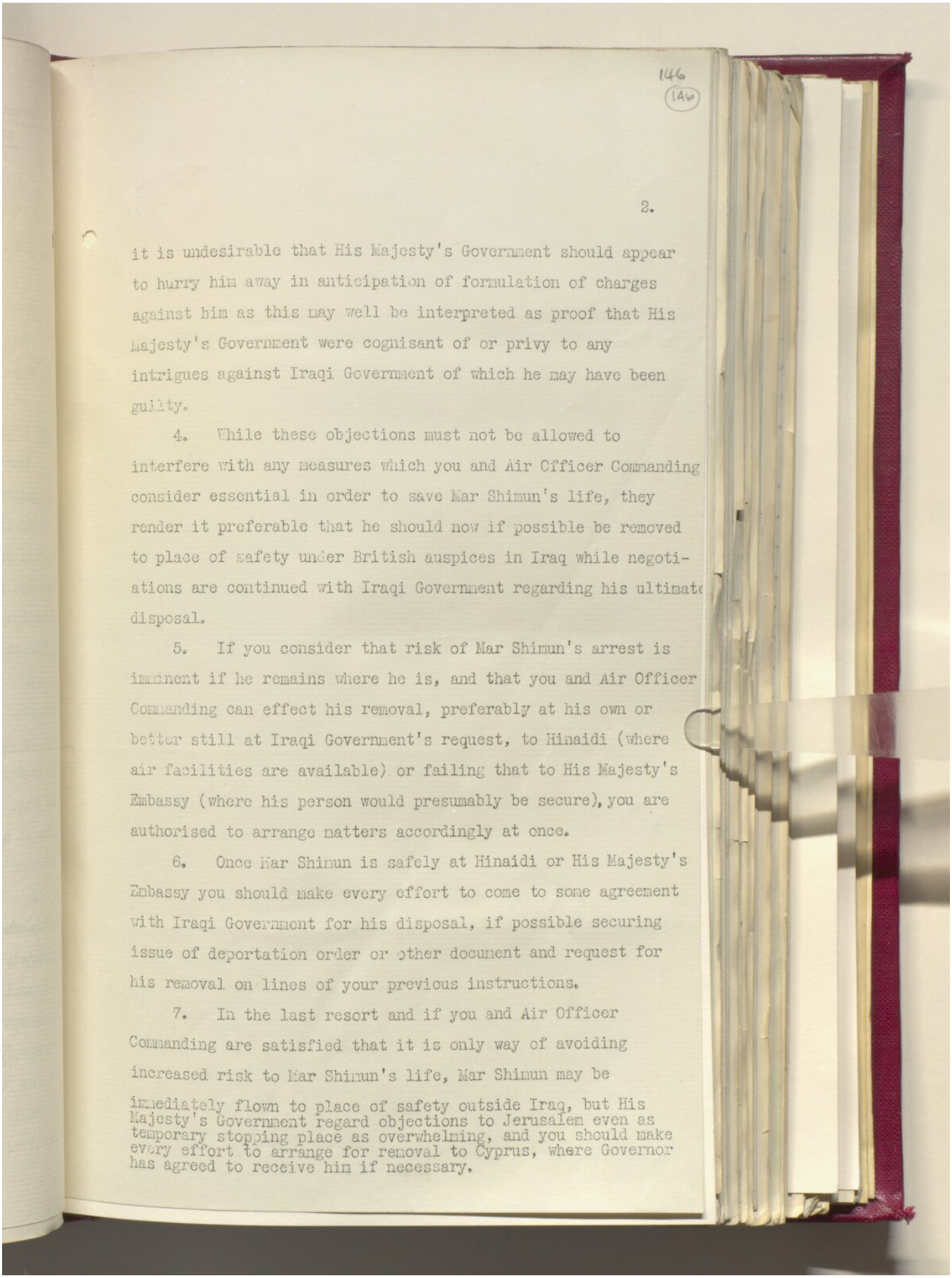
MOST IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 270 (of August 15th: Assyrian crisis - Mar Shimun).

If Iraqis were to arrest Mar Shimun and decide to try him on capital charge, it would probably become impossible for us to save his life. This possibility completely changes the situation and necessitates immediate action on our part on different lines.

2. I have therefore considered whether we should not be justified in forthwith removing Mar Shimun from Iraq without waiting for issue of deportation order by Iraqi Government. The deplorable excesses in the north and the failure of the King and Iraqi Government to implement any of their assurances to us makes it no longer necessary for us to seek to protect Iraqi Government against consequences of their own follies.

3. The main essential is to safeguard Mar Shimun's life. On the other hand it would be preferable that he should not be completely removed from Iraq without some agreement with Iraqi Government being reached regarding reasons for his removal and arrangements for his future, since if we were to spirit him away prematurely it would probably be much more difficult to arrange not only for his own future but for his future relations with his people, as the Iraqi Government would be able to divest themselves of all responsibility for what had occurred. Moreover it



146
(146)

2.

it is undesirable that His Majesty's Government should appear to hurry him away in anticipation of formulation of charges against him as this may well be interpreted as proof that His Majesty's Government were cognisant of or privy to any intrigues against Iraqi Government of which he may have been guilty.

4. While these objections must not be allowed to interfere with any measures which you and Air Officer Commanding consider essential in order to save Mar Shimun's life, they render it preferable that he should now if possible be removed to place of safety under British auspices in Iraq while negotiations are continued with Iraqi Government regarding his ultimate disposal.

5. If you consider that risk of Mar Shimun's arrest is imminent if he remains where he is, and that you and Air Officer Commanding can effect his removal, preferably at his own or better still at Iraqi Government's request, to Hinaidi (where air facilities are available) or failing that to His Majesty's Embassy (where his person would presumably be secure), you are authorised to arrange natters accordingly at once.

6. Once Mar Shimun is safely at Hinaidi or His Majesty's Embassy you should make every effort to come to some agreement with Iraqi Government for his disposal, if possible securing issue of deportation order or other document and request for his removal on lines of your previous instructions.

7. In the last resort and if you and Air Officer Commanding are satisfied that it is only way of avoiding increased risk to Mar Shimun's life, Mar Shimun may be immediately flown to place of safety outside Iraq, but His Majesty's Government regard objections to Jerusalem even as temporary stopping place as overwhelming, and you should make every effort to arrange for removal to Cyprus, where Governor has agreed to receive him if necessary.

147
(147)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5051
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
18th August, 1933.

D. 3.25 p.m. 16th August, 1933.

R. 3.45 p.m. 16th August, 1933.

No. 271.

IMMEDIATE.

Addressed to Jerusalem No. 21.

Iraqi Government desire to deport Mar Shimun and family and His Majesty's Government have agreed to provide transport and temporary asylum in Cyprus.

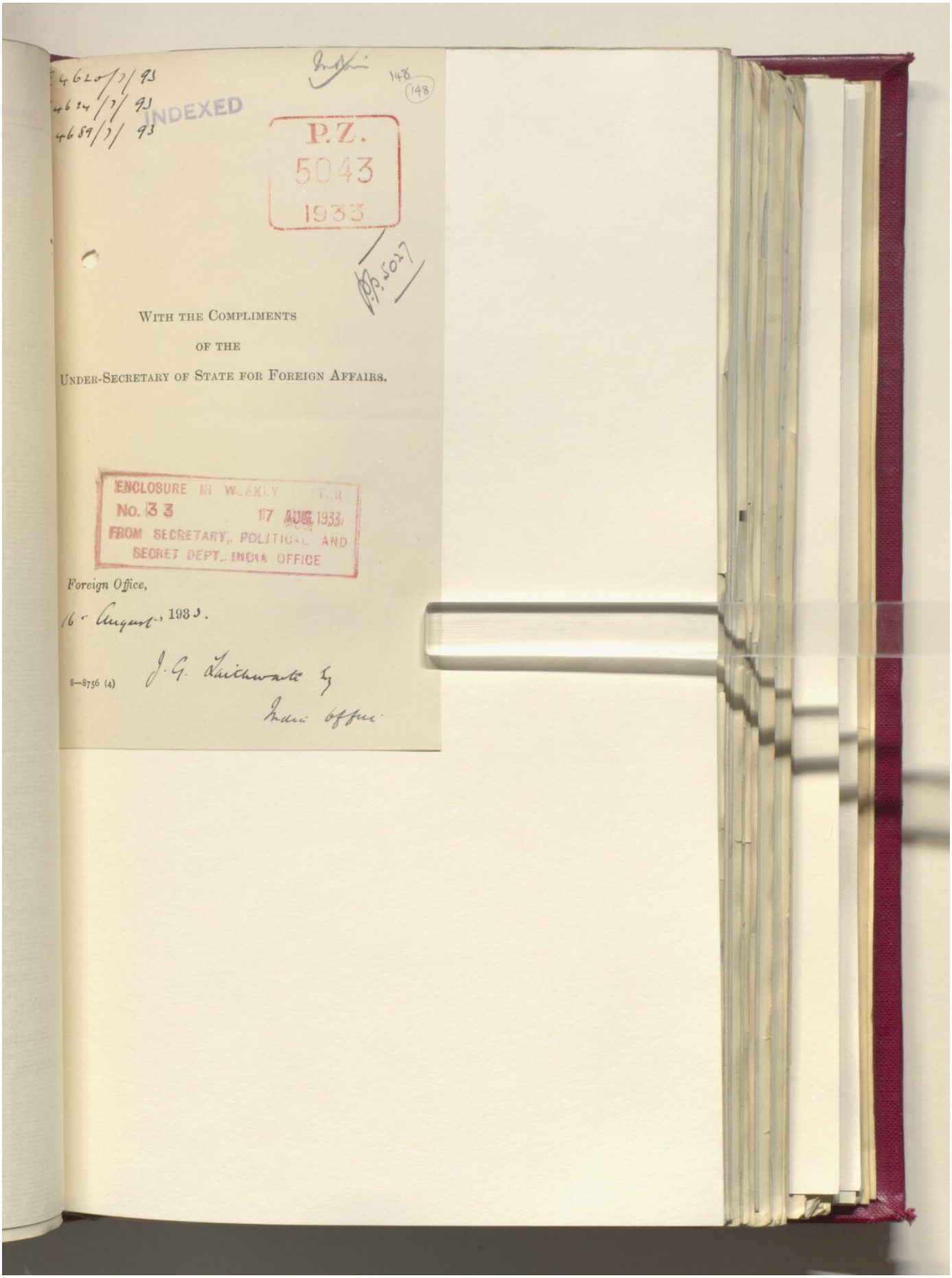
Air Officer Commanding Iraq is prepared to despatch them by air leaving Bagdad at dawn on Friday August 18th landing them at Ramleh.

Party will consist of Mar Shimun, Daoud Mar Shimun, Theodore Mar Shimun, one Assyrian attendant, two Assyrian levies detailed by Air Officer Commanding on special duty to see Patriarch settled in his final destination. Six persons in all.

Please arrange reception and eventual forwarding to Cyprus and telegraph urgently whether you can receive them on Friday August 18th.

I regret shortness of notice which for political reasons is inevitable. Lady Surma, aunt of Patriarch, may follow later.

Repeated to Foreign Office No. 271 and Governor of Cyprus unnumbered.


INDEXED
P.Z.
5043
1933
148
(148)
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT., INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
16 August, 1933.
8—8756 (4)

149
(149)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

(E.4620/7/93.)

P.Z. 5043 1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad).

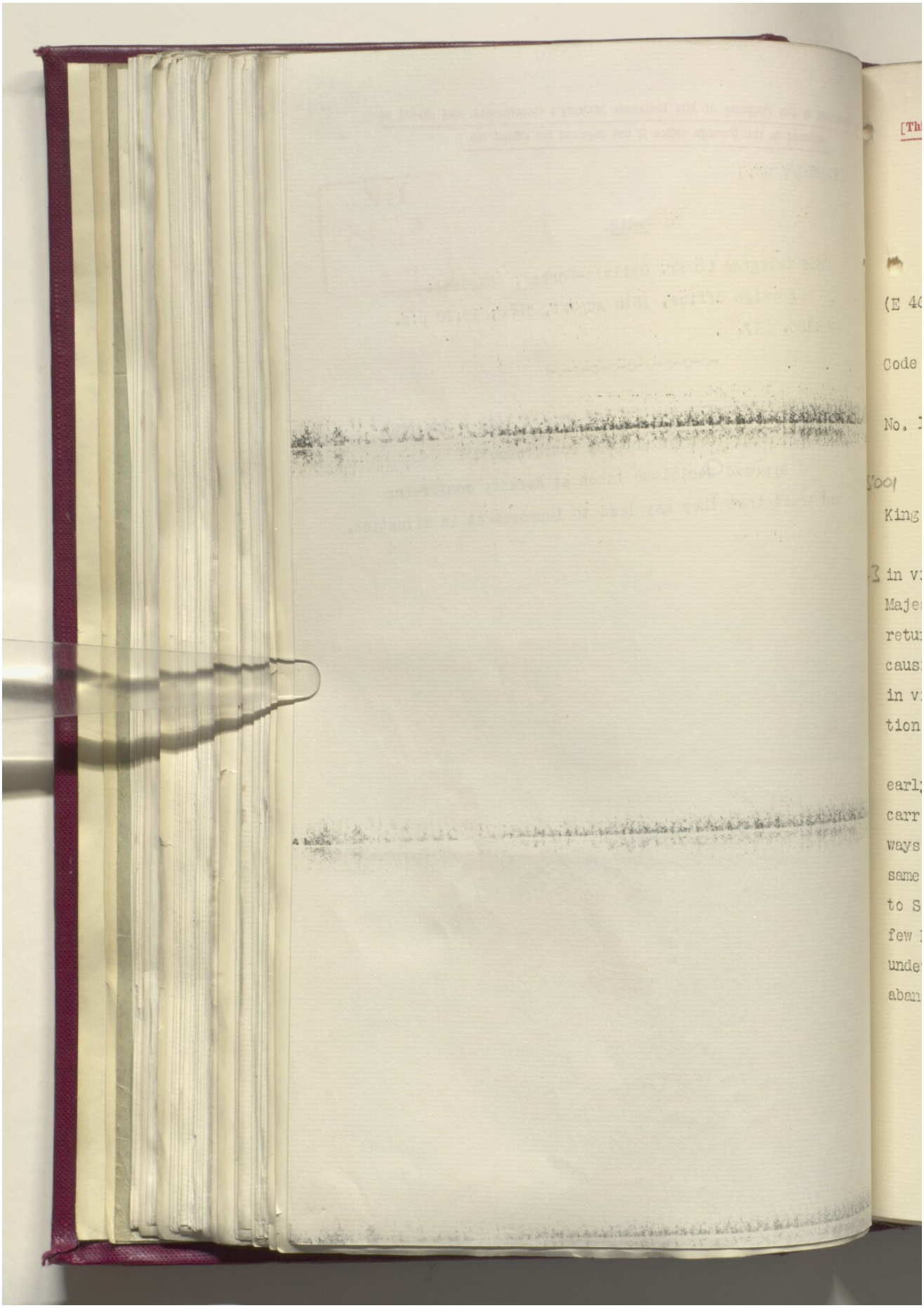
Foreign Office, 15th August, 1933, 10.30 p.m.

No.196. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

5001 Your telegram No.266 (of August 14th - Assyrian crisis - decisions of Embassy conference).

I approve decisions taken at Embassy conference and trust that they may lead to improvement in situation.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x00006e

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5043
1933

150
(150)

(E 4624/7/93).

TO IRAQ

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 15th August 1933. 10.30 p.m.

No. 198. (R).

Your telegram No. 265 (of August 14th - Assyrian crisis - King Feisal's desire to meet Sir F. Humphrys in Berne).

For reasons stated in other telegrams (and even more now in view of your telegram No. 267 (of August 15th)), His Majesty's Government still consider Sir F. Humphrys's immediate return to Iraq essential. Proposed meeting at Berne, besides causing great delay, could serve no useful purpose, particularly in view of King Feisal's complete failure to deal with situation in Iraq.

Sir F. Humphrys will therefore now arrive at Brindisi early on the morning of Sunday, August 20th. If King Feisal carries out his intention of leaving Bagdad by Imperial Airways on August 18th, he will presumably arrive at Brindisi the same morning. If so, there would be no insuperable objection to Sir F. Humphrys delaying his departure from Brindisi for a few hours in order to meet King Feisal, but it must be clearly understood that there can be no question of Sir F. Humphrys abandoning his return to Iraq as a result of the interview.

151 (151)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5043 1933

FROM IRAQ

Telegram from Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

D, 8th August 1933.

R. 16th August 1933.

No. 8. (Saving).

Beyrout telegram No. 12.

Nuri has given me the following account of statements made to him by French High Commission, Beyrout.

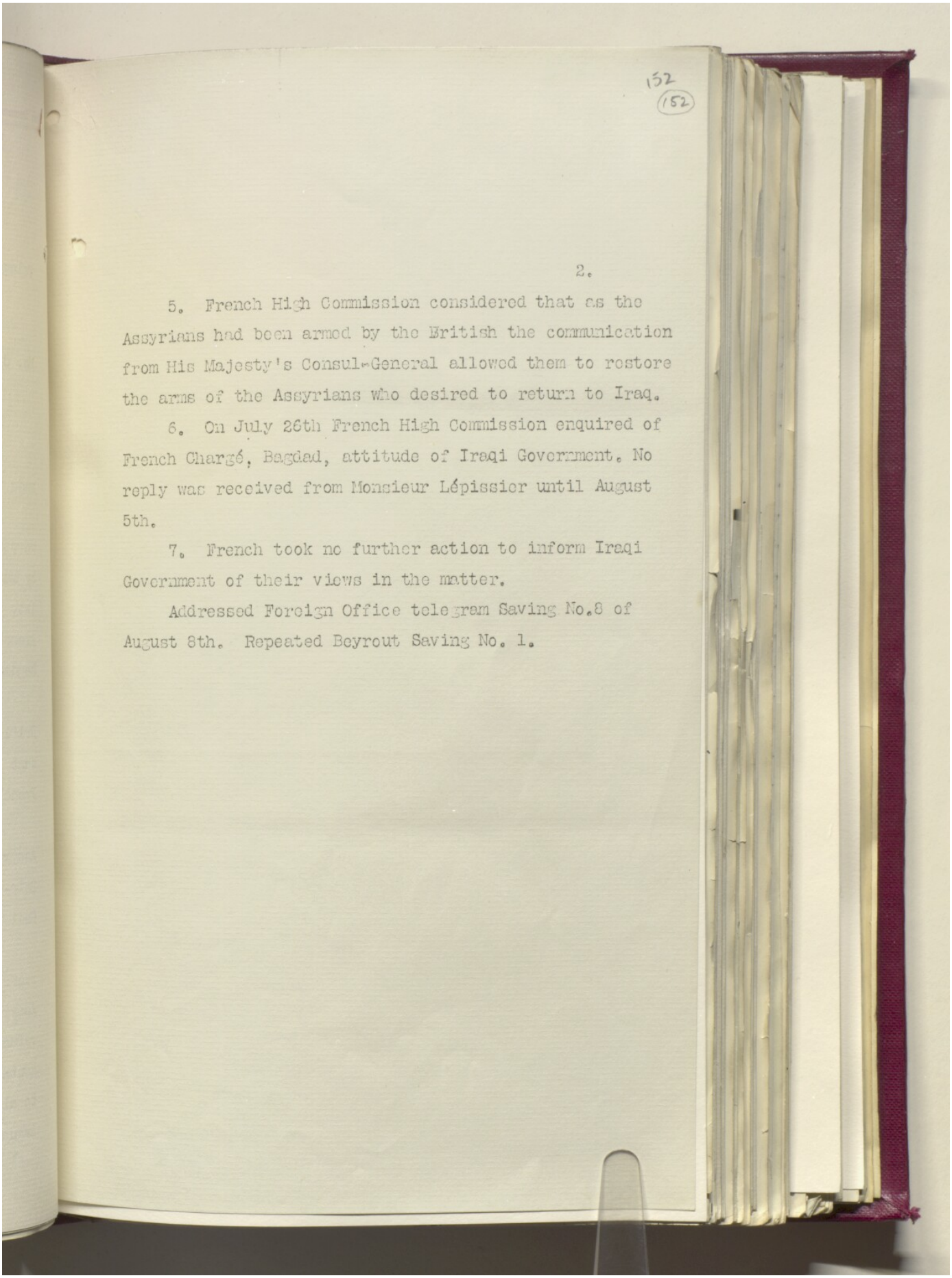
1. On July 18th the French authorities at Deir-ez-Zor were visited by Yaku and Luco, who brought a letter signed by Mar Shimun asking French to admit 300 Assyrian families into Syria and adding that 5,000 families would follow. French refused and informed French Chargé d'Affaires, Bagdad accordingly.

2. On July 20th French Consul, Mosul, heard from a British official name uncertain that two other Assyrians went into Syria with same object. This was reported by French Chargé, Bagdad.

3. On July 21st French Chargé reported that 100 Assyrian families had crossed into Syria and on July 22nd Deir-ez-Zor reported that 500 Assyrians had arrived at Wadi Sufan.

4. On July 24th His Majesty's Consul-General, Beyrout, requested High Commission not to use force against the Assyrians and to try to persuade them to return. If they refused then they should be disarmed and kept till arrangements were made for their disposal. French were asked not to allow any more to cross into Syria. French Chargé, Bagdad, was informed of above.

5.....



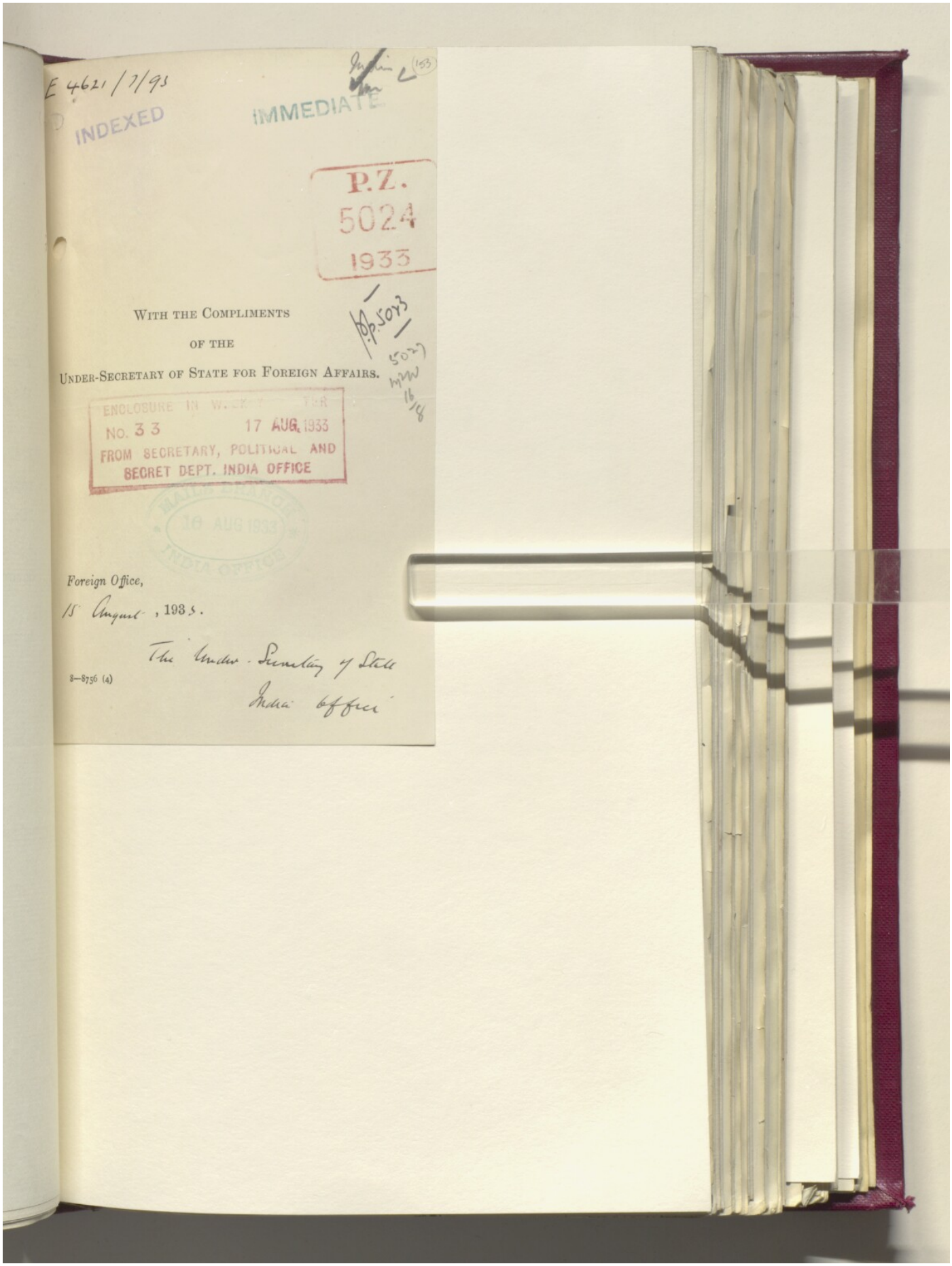
152
(152)

5. French High Commission considered that as the Assyrians had been armed by the British the communication from His Majesty's Consul-General allowed them to restore the arms of the Assyrians who desired to return to Iraq.

6. On July 26th French High Commission enquired of French Chargé, Bagdad, attitude of Iraqi Government. No reply was received from Monsieur Lépissier until August 5th.

7. French took no further action to inform Iraqi Government of their views in the matter.

Addressed Foreign Office telegram Saving No.8 of August 8th. Repeated Beyrout Saving No. 1.


E 4621/7/93
INDEXED
IMMEDIATE
P.Z.
5024
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
18 AUG 1933
INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
15 August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State
India Office
8—8756 (4)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

153
(154)

P.Z.
5024
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
Foreign Office, August 14th 1933. 11.30 p.m.
No.193. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

I asked the Iraqi Minister to call this afternoon, in order that I might speak to him about the Iraqi situation.

2. I began by saying that the optimistic information which the Minister had given me in the course of our interview of August 12th (see my telegram No.184) had unfortunately proved false. The reports we had received indicated that the situation was most serious. I gave him the substance of paragraph 2 of your telegram No.255 (of August 13th) and referred to the statements in the Air Officer Commanding's telegram No. Z 231 of August 13th to the Chief of the Air Steff, regarding the burning of villages south of Dohuk within easy reach of Mosul, and the refusal of the Iraqi government to allow a British officer, accompanied by representatives of the Levies, to visit the northern area - a refusal which would give everyone the definite impression that there was something to conceal. Meanwhile the question of the fate of the Mar Shimun was still causing serious difficulty. Further, not only had nothing yet been done regarding the punishment of Bekr Sidqi and the perpetrators of the outrage on the Assyrian prisoners, but, notwithstanding the King's personal and categorical assurance, there was no indication that any disciplinary action against Bekr Sidqi was in contemplation.

3. In the midst of this dangerous and critical situation

154
(155)

situation, and with all these grave questions unsettled, King Feisal was on the point of leaving Iraq. How would the world regard His Majesty's conduct? Inevitably he would be accused of evading his responsibilities and shirking his obvious duty. His Majesty's action would in fact be little short of suicidal. I wished to ask the Minister to call King Feisal's most earnest attention to the disastrous impression which His Majesty's action would create. In doing this I was merely performing the act of a friend.

4. Moreover the Iraqi government, as I had pointed out in our last interview, had now appealed to Geneva. Their actions would be most critically examined. The burning of the villages and the outrage on the prisoners would inevitably create a storm of criticism. The first question asked would be what action had been taken to redress the situation, to re-establish peace and order and to punish the guilty. What answer could King Feisal make to such questions if he had hurried away before any of these matters were adequately dealt with?

5. His Majesty's Government viewed the situation so gravely that they had instructed Sir F. Humphrys to return to Bagdad immediately by the quickest possible route. How would King Feisal explain his own departure at a moment when the gravity of the crisis had necessitated Sir F. Humphrys' return?

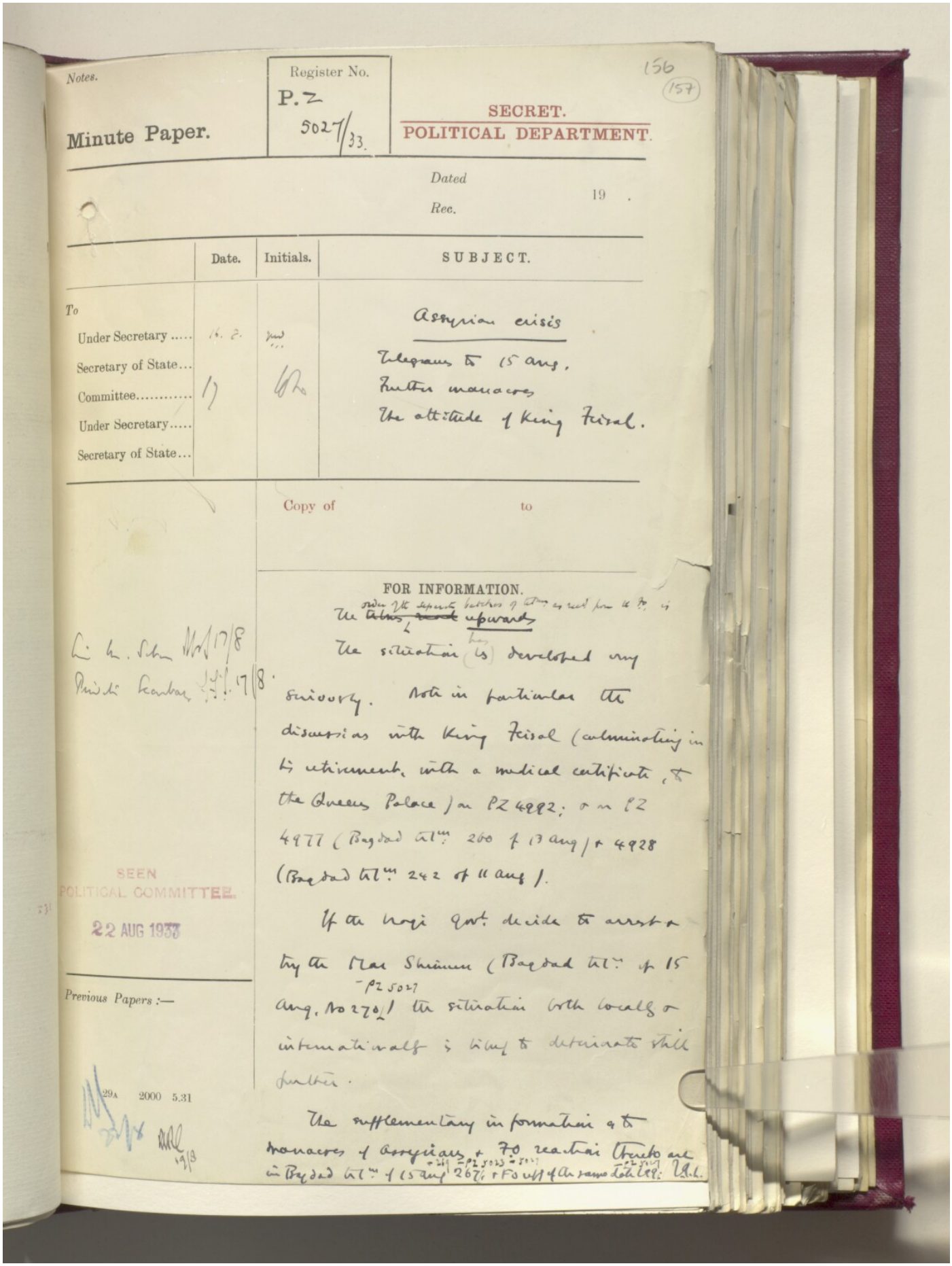
6. I added that this question had not yet been taken up by public opinion, but that the Iraqi government could be sure that public outcry would not be long delayed. When it came, King Feisal's precipitate departure might make the Iraqi position almost untenable.

7. Jafar Pasha, who appeared to receive the news of

King

155
(156)

ing Feisal's departure with consternation, said that he entirely shared these views. He felt that the King would be unable to claim any right in future to deal with serious questions if he left Iraq at this moment. He regarded the information I had given him on the situation in northern Iraq as extremely grave, and he agreed that the whole future reputation of Iraq was at stake. Moreover these developments would produce a deplorable reaction in Syria, where the French would be able to point to them as a strong argument for delaying the emancipation of Syria. Jafar Pasha was obviously much upset by what I had told him, and promised to telegraph the substance of our conversation to Bagdad immediately and make an earnest appeal to the King to reconsider his decision.



Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No. P.Z 5027/33.

156 (157)

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated 19 .
Rec.

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			Assyrian crisis
Under Secretary	16. 8.	[illegible]	Telegrams to 15 Aug.
Secretary of State...			Further manacres
Committee.....	17	[illegible]	The attitude of King Feisal.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The ~~telms~~ order of the separate batches of telms as recd from the F.O. is ~~read~~ upwards

The situation has ~~is~~ developed very seriously. Note in particular the discussions with King Feisal (culminating in his retirement, with a medical certificate, to the Queens Palace) on PZ 4992; & on PZ 4977 (Bagdad telm. 260 of 13 Aug) & 4928 (Bagdad telm. 242 of 11 Aug).

If the Iraqi Govt. decide to arrest & try the Mar Shimun (Bagdad telm. of 15 Aug. No 270 - PZ 5027) the situation both locally & internationally is likely to deteriorate still further.

The supplementary information as to manacres of Assyrians & F.O. reaction thereto are in Bagdad telm. of 15 Aug 267 + 269 - PZ 5023 - 5027 & F.O. reff of the same date 199 - PZ 5027. [illegible]

[illegible] 17/8
[illegible] 17/8.

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
22 AUG 1933

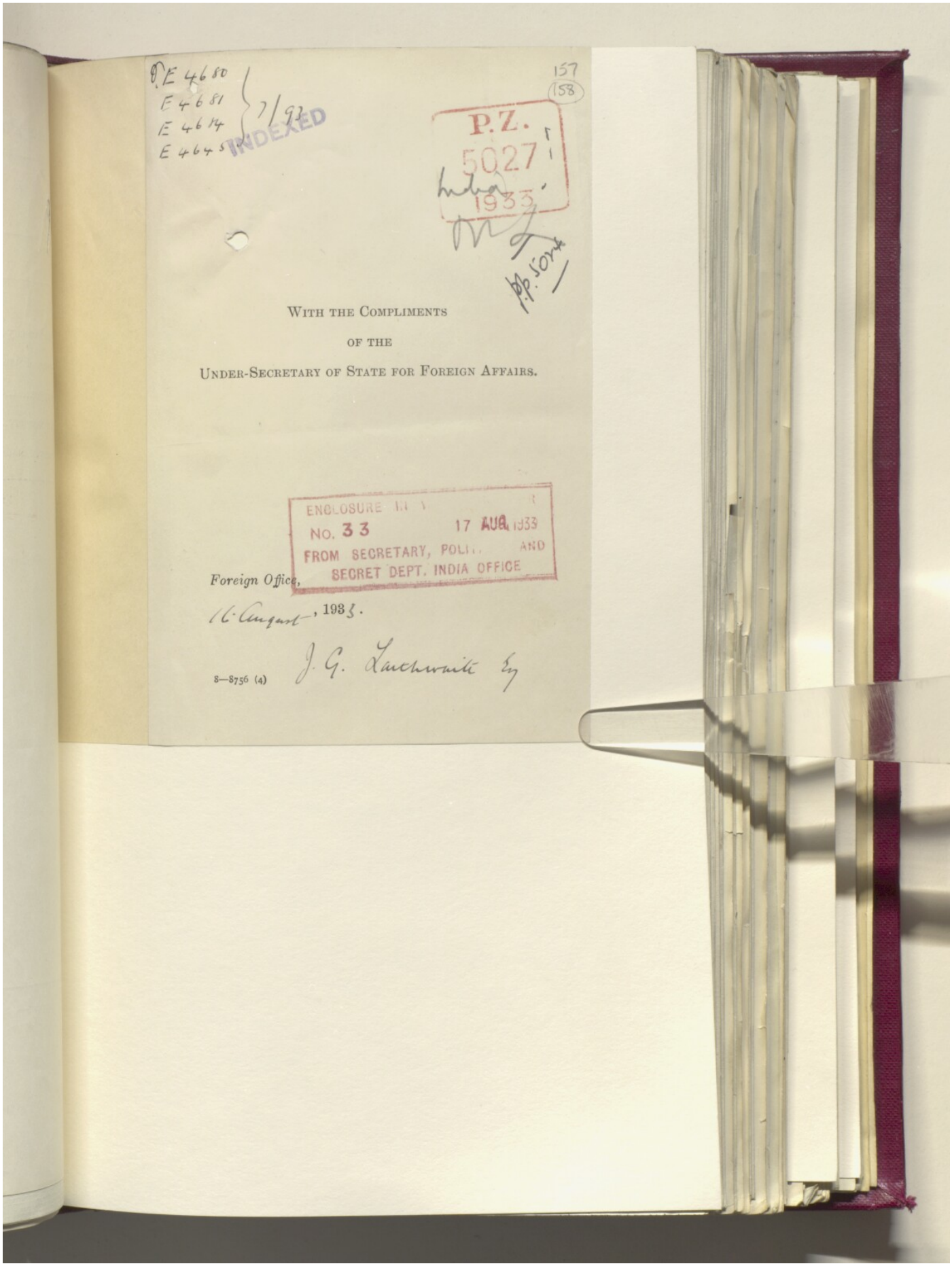
Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31

[illegible] 19/8

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x00007d


E 4680
E 4681
E 4614
E 4645
7/93
INDEXED
157
158
P.Z.
5027
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLI.. AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
16 August, 1933.
J. G. Lauchlan Esq
8—8756 (4)

158
159

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5027 1933

(E.4645/7/93). To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 15th August, 1933, 10.00 p.m.
No.199. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

I am shocked at the lamentable and horrible news contained in your telegram No.267 (of August 15th), which fully justifies my worst fears as to the way in which the situation was being handled in the north.

2. The news of this massacre and of the consequent misery and destitution which will of course soon become widely known, will have a deplorable effect on the reputation of Iraq. Nothing can now avert this, but the consequences of the attacks to which Iraq will justly be exposed may be somewhat mitigated if the Iraqi Government can be made to realise the gravity of the situation and the fact that they are themselves responsible for it, and to take really effective steps to make such amends as lie in their power.

3. I note that the irregular police recently recruited by Bekr Sidki are mainly to blame, and that much of the looting was done by Shammar tribesmen, who were presumably those whom you recently reported as being brought to the scene under Bekr Sidki's auspices. Whether Iraq will be able to re-establish her position and reputation or not, will depend primarily on how effectively measures are taken to secure the punishment not only of Bekr Sidqi himself, who must obviously bear the main immediate responsibility

159
(160)

responsibility for the present catastrophe, but also of all guilty parties, particularly among the irregular police who were enlisted for the ostensible purpose of averting such a development. In the interests of the future of Iraq, His Majesty's Government therefore earnestly hope that these essential disciplinary measures will be taken without delay.

4. Meanwhile the most immediate need is clearly for effective relief. It is outrageous that the Iraqi Government should make difficulties about allowing Major Thomson, who obviously has quite exceptional qualifications, to take part in the relief work. Unless there is some objection of which I am unaware, you should therefore strongly press that both Colonel Stafford and Major Thomson, and any other British officials whom you consider suitable, should be given full powers to carry out relief measures without delay.

5. It is also essential that they should be furnished with really adequate funds on a generous scale from Iraqi sources. The financial position of Iraq is such that funds could without difficulty be made available. You should make every effort to ensure that these funds are sufficient, if necessary pointing out that, whatever may have been the faults and follies of the Assyrians, it is the Iraqi Government who will be regarded as directly responsible for the present disaster by the outside world, and that if appeals have to be made to private charity abroad to supplement the funds allocated by the Government, each appeal will amount to a public condemnation of

160
(161)

of Iraq and will deal a further blow to Iraq's good name. For this reason I am deferring an immediate appeal to charity in this country on the lines you suggest under point 5, but should the Iraqi Government fail to provide adequate resources, such an appeal will, of course, have to be made.

6. As regards point 4 in your telegram there are unfortunately no public funds onwhich you could be authorised to draw in order to advance money for this purpose, but His Majesty's Embassy and Consulates may certainly give all assistance which lies in their power with a view to facilitating the work of relief.

7. I approve the measures you have hitherto taken, but you should supplement them immediately by firm representations to the Iraqi Government on the above lines.

161
(162)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5027
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
15th August 1933.

D. 11.35 p.m. 15th August 1933.

R. 7.00 a.m. 16th August 1933.

No. 270. (R).

5001 Your telegram No. 191, paragraph 8.

With great reluctance, fully realising bother entailed and despite the hopes that Iraqis would be so elated with their so called success in the North as not to be interested any more in Mar Shimun, I handed note to Nuri this evening who also informed me that Minister of the Interior has been telephoning that Mar Shimun should not now be deported, as, from evidence just collected, he wishes to arrest and try him on a capital charge. King also, on his alleged sick bed, has an obsession for expulsion of Mar Shimun and that is why Ministers have so pestered me, as it is desired to take action against Mar Shimun before the King leaves on Friday August 18th. I think that I can persuade them not to hurry matters with Lady Surma who, surrounded by forty determined women and with some sick children presents a problem which not even Minister of the Interior cares to face.

Air Officer Commanding still pleads for Jerusalem Y.M.C.A. even for a short time.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

162
(163)

P.Z.
5027
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)
15th August 1933.

D. 11.30 p.m. 15th August 1933.

R. 6.30 a.m. 16th August 1933.

No. 269. (R).

- - -

IMPORTANT.

3or3 My telegram No. 267 most immediate.

Adviser of Ministry of the Interior informs me that 315 Assyrian bodies have been discovered to-day near Simel in villages now occupied by panic-stricken women and children. Edmonds visits scene to-morrow. Figures I gave in my telegram under reference would therefore appear to be under-estimated. Kurdish so-called police are suspected of this outrage which took place within two miles of army camp. There were 300 not 200 Assyrians killed who did not partake in the rising.

I shall speak to the King most severely to-morrow morning at 9 a.m.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

163
164

P.Z.
5027
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 15th. 1933.

D. 7.00.p.m. August 15th. 1933.

R. 9.00.p.m. August 15th. 1933.

No. 268. (E).

-----oOo-----

My telegram No. 267.

At Embassy Conference this morning it was arranged that Edmonds should be flown to Mosul August 16th in order:-

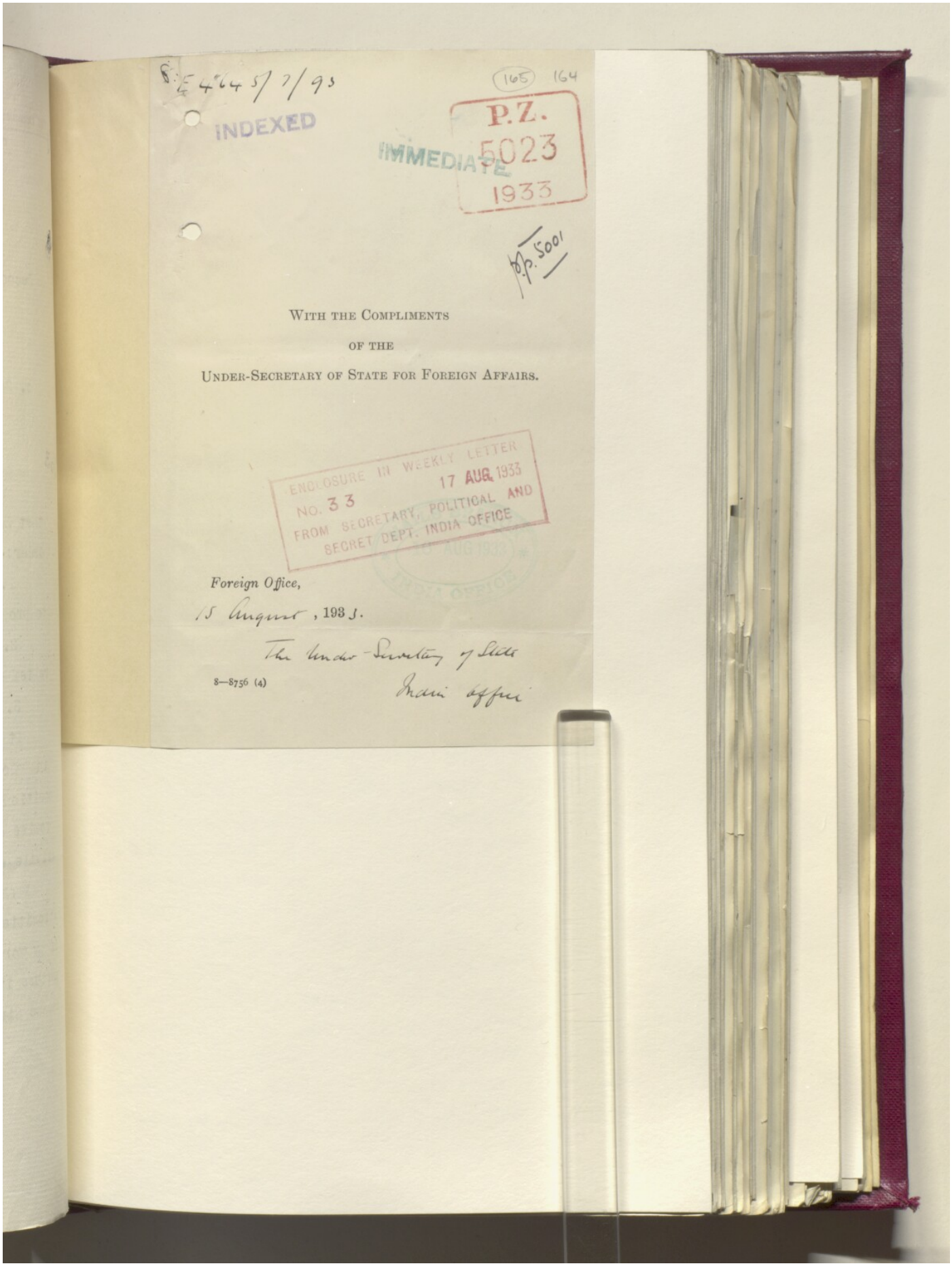
1. To obtain agreement of Minister of the Interior to programme outlined in my telegram No. 266.

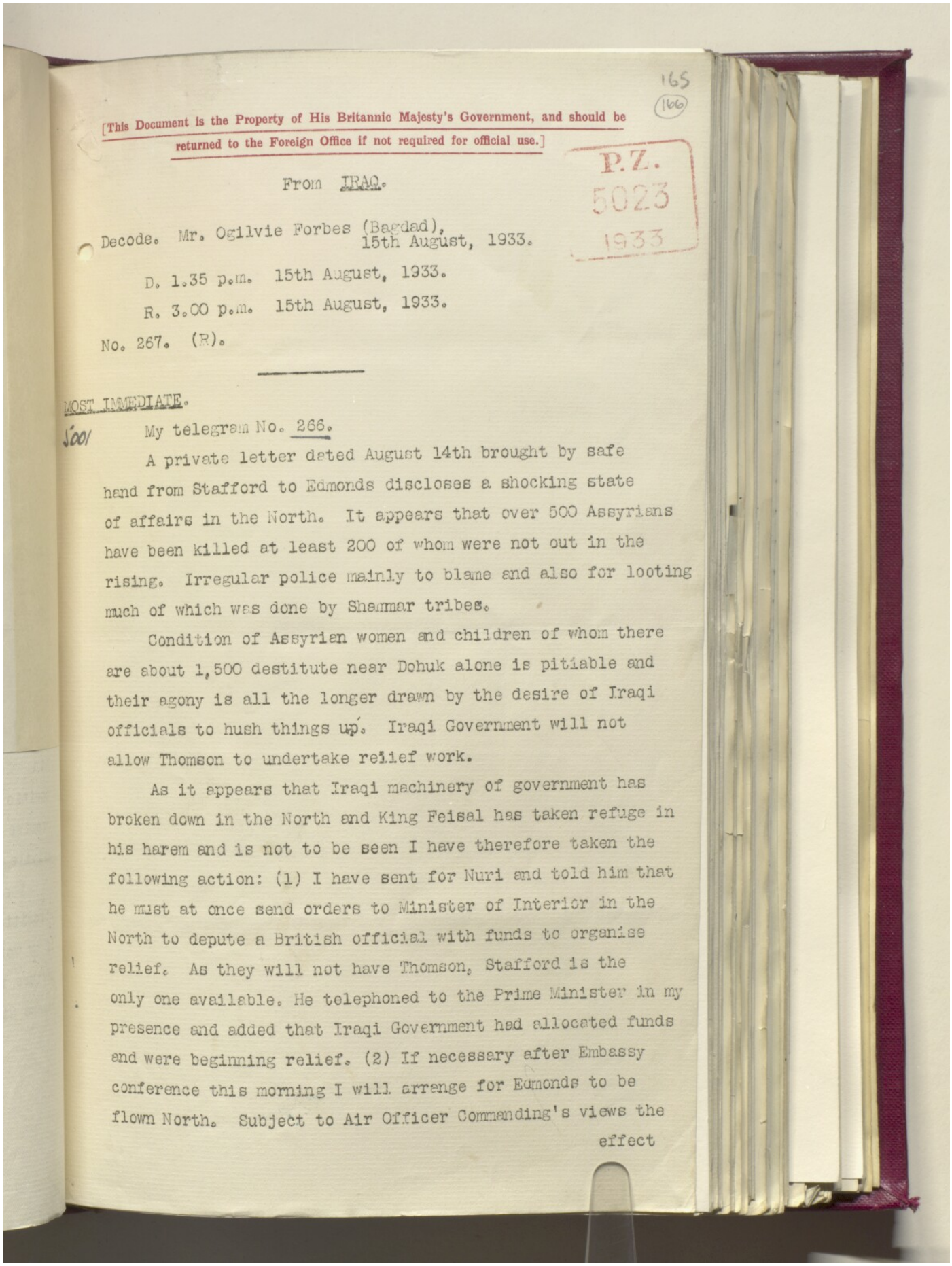
2. To secure appointment of British members on relief committees.

3. To secure early disbandment of irregular police.

It has not been possible today for me to see the King who remains in the Queen's palace pleading indisposition. I have nevertheless succeeded in obtaining promise of interview even in Queen's palace - a rare privilege for one of my sex - at 9.a.m. on August 16th.

I shall speak to His Majesty most strongly on atrocities revealed in my telegram under reference, and if my words cause relapse which further delays his departure it will be so much the better as he cannot then escape Sir F. Humphrys.


E 4645/7/93
INDEXED
(165) 164
P.Z.
IMMEDIATE 5023
1933
P.P. 5001
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 33
17 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
15 August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State
India office
8—8756 (4)



165
166

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5023 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad), 15th August, 1933.

D. 1.35 p.m. 15th August, 1933.

R. 3.00 p.m. 15th August, 1933.

No. 267. (R).

MOST IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 266.

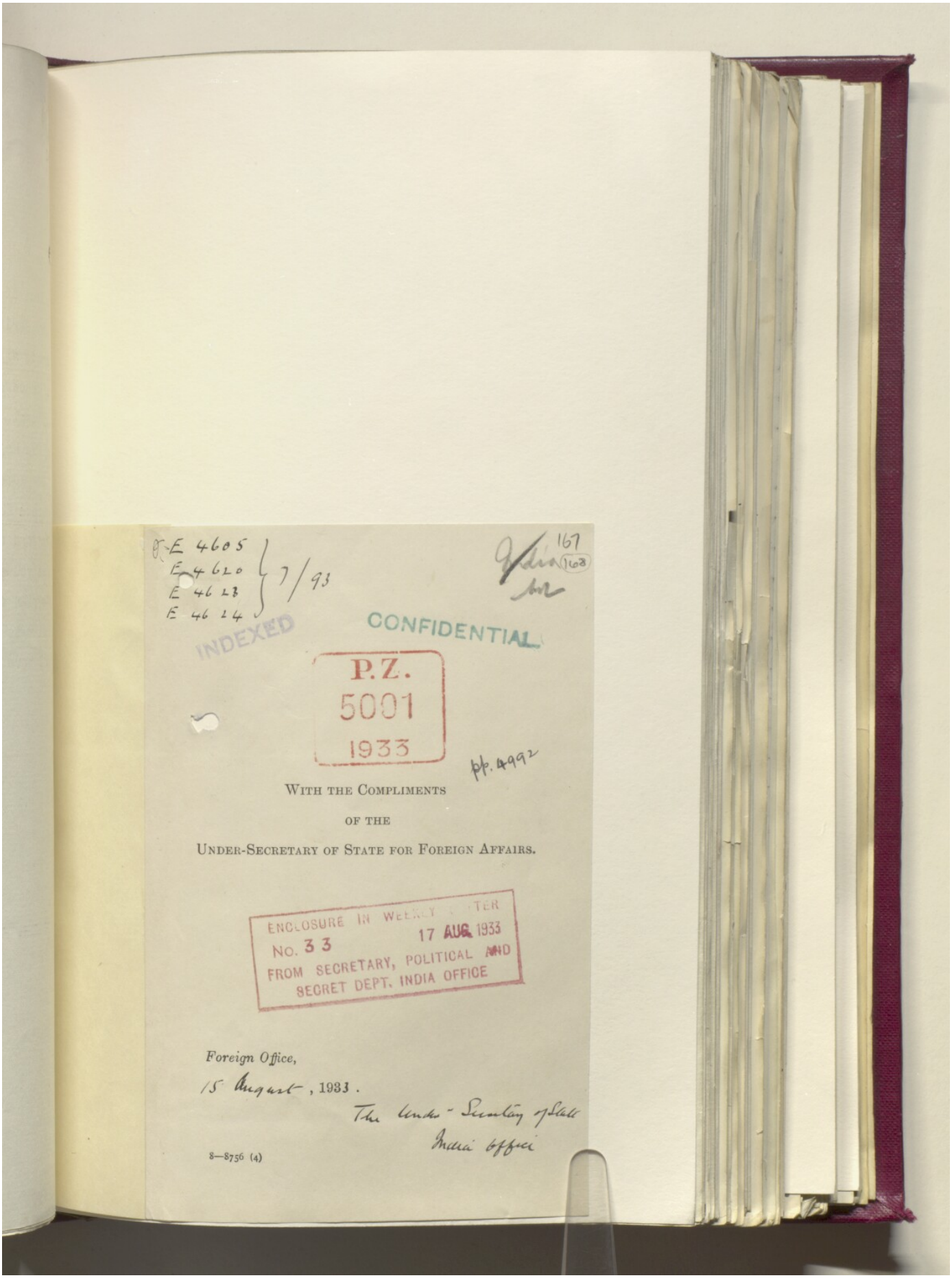
A private letter dated August 14th brought by safe hand from Stafford to Edmonds discloses a shocking state of affairs in the North. It appears that over 500 Assyrians have been killed at least 200 of whom were not out in the rising. Irregular police mainly to blame and also for looting much of which was done by Shammar tribes.

Condition of Assyrian women and children of whom there are about 1,500 destitute near Dohuk alone is pitiable and their agony is all the longer drawn by the desire of Iraqi officials to hush things up. Iraqi Government will not allow Thomson to undertake relief work.

As it appears that Iraqi machinery of government has broken down in the North and King Feisal has taken refuge in his harem and is not to be seen I have therefore taken the following action: (1) I have sent for Nuri and told him that he must at once send orders to Minister of Interior in the North to depute a British official with funds to organise relief. As they will not have Thomson, Stafford is the only one available. He telephoned to the Prime Minister in my presence and added that Iraqi Government had allocated funds and were beginning relief. (2) If necessary after Embassy conference this morning I will arrange for Edmonds to be flown North. Subject to Air Officer Commanding's views the effect

166
(167)

effect of condition of women and children on levies is more serious than risk of ill treatment of Mar Shimun whom Iraqis will seize at any moment. (3) I am sending a word of encouragement to Stafford through His Majesty's Consul at Mosul. (4) I consider we should devote all machinery of His Majesty's Embassy and Consulate towards helping these women and children, that you should authorise me to advance funds if necessary which I would issue to Edmonds, Stafford or other British officials. (5) I also suggest that you might interest Archbishop of Canterbury and Assyrian and other charities in the United Kingdom with a view to immediate provision of relief funds or stores as I have no trust in Iraqi arrangements.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x000093

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5091
1933

(168)
(169)

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
14th August, 1933.

D. 12.35 p.m. 14th August, 1933.

R. 2.35 p.m. 14th August, 1933.

No. 261. (R).

XXXXXXXXXX

IMPORTANT.

My telegram No. 260, your telegram No. 181.

My telegram No. 260, in view of eagerness of Iraqi government to force the pace was necessarily written in a great hurry. I have now had an opportunity of discussing with my legal Secretary and Adviser to the Interior complicated legal aspect of deportation.

Under Article 7 of Constitution deportation of Iraqis is forbidden. If therefore Mar Shimun is an Iraqi subject this is illegal. Under provisions of Iraq nationality law I am advised that there is little doubt that Mar Shimun is an Iraqi .

Edmonds points out however that Mar Shimun has always refused to admit Iraqi nationality and Iraqi government would only be too willing to adopt the same view.

If therefore Mar Shimun and family refuse to leave voluntarily deportation order will be issued in due legal form. If Mar Shimun subsequently establishes his Iraqi nationality, Iraqi government could not refuse to readmit and might be liable for damages for wrongful deportation.

Best..

169
(170)

2.

Best way to avoid awkward issue would be to induce Mar Shimun and family to leave voluntarily. I am sounding Nuri on these lines with a view to getting him to write me a letter asking me to see Mar Shimun and privately advise him and family to leave the country voluntarily.

This may not come off but it is worth trying. Failing which deportation is inevitable.

170
(171)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5001
1933

TO IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),

Foreign Office. 14th August, 1933. 4.52 p.m.

No. 190.

xxxxxxxxx

MOST IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 261 (Assyrian crisis - proposed removal of Mar Shimun).

You should not approach Mar Shimun in sense suggested in penultimate paragraph pending further instructions which will be sent to you as soon as possible.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

F.O. 5001 1933

171 (172)

TO IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 14th August 1933. 11.15 p.m.

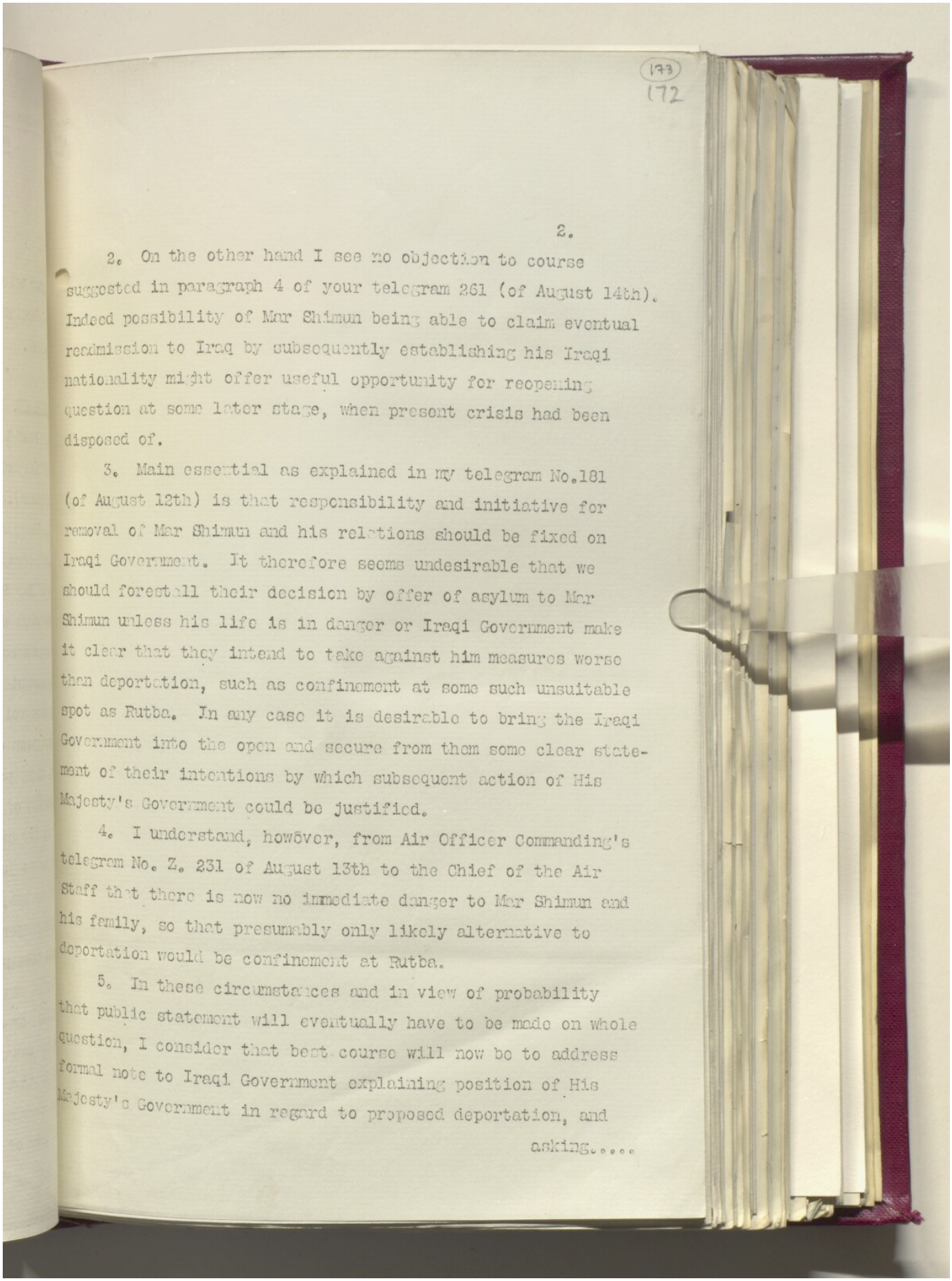
No. 191.

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegrams Nos. 260 and 261 (of August 13th and 14th - Assyrian crisis - proposed removal of Mar Shimun and his relations).

1. There are serious objections to course advocated in penultimate paragraph of your telegram 261 (of August 14th) since (a) if Mar Shimun left as result of your advice, His Majesty's Government would be represented as responsible for all future consequences of his departure from Iraq and his apparent abandonment of his people; (b) if your advice were not taken, but were followed up as it presumably would be by issue of deportation order by Iraqi Government, His Majesty's Government might possibly be exposed to accusation or at least suspicion of having instigated Iraqi action after their own initiative had failed. (c) In any case it would be difficult for you to justify your advice by any grounds which Mar Shimun could accept, since if you were to represent that his life was in danger, obvious reply would be that Iraqi Government should take proper steps to afford him protection, and your statement could be represented as intimating that Iraqis were unwilling or unable to do so; while if you were to suggest that his departure would ease the situation, his natural reply would be that he had no reason to facilitate matters for the Iraqi Government and that he could not abandon his people in their hour of need.

2.....



(173)
172

2.

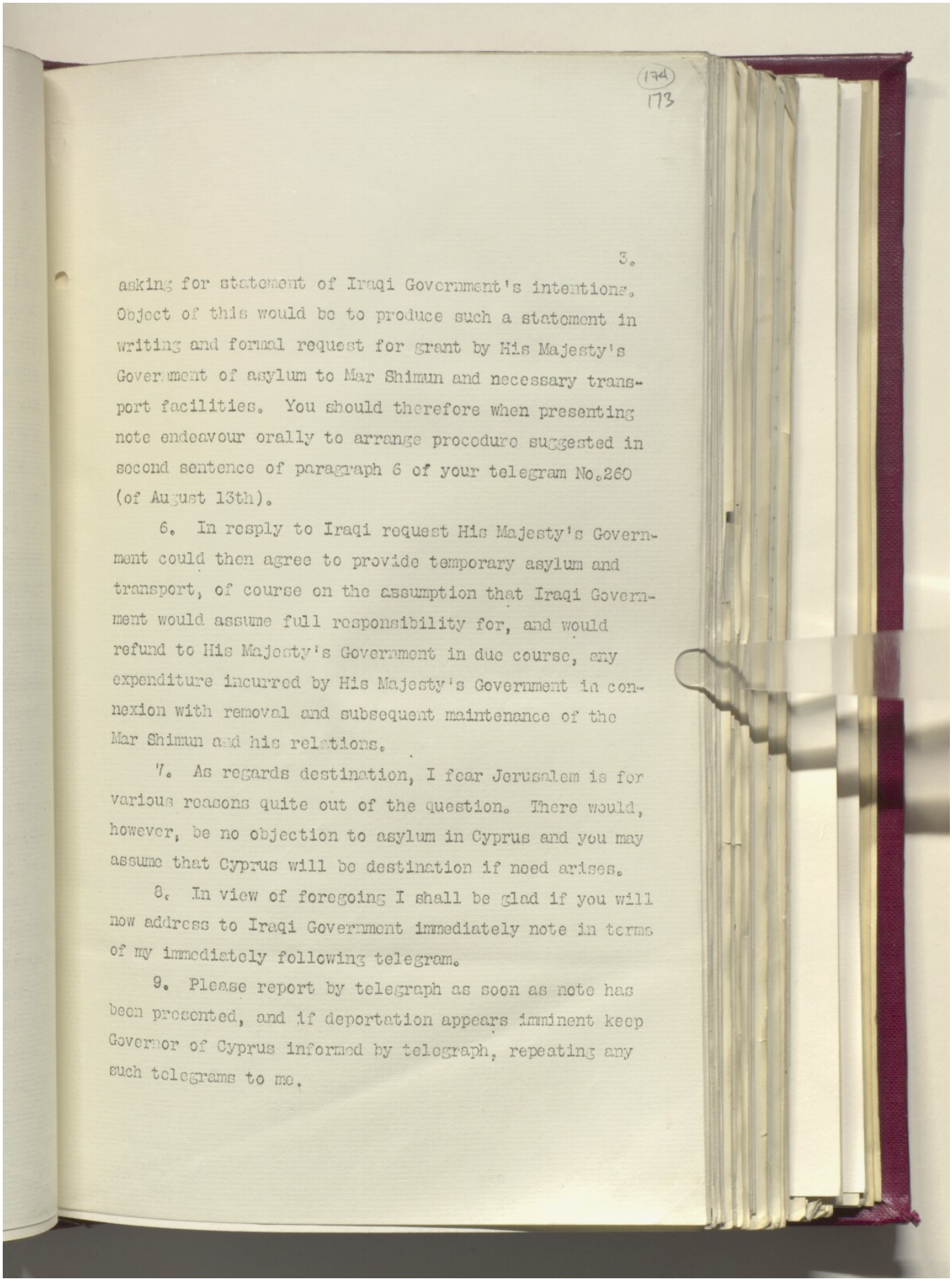
2. On the other hand I see no objection to course suggested in paragraph 4 of your telegram 261 (of August 14th). Indeed possibility of Mar Shimun being able to claim eventual readmission to Iraq by subsequently establishing his Iraqi nationality might offer useful opportunity for reopening question at some later stage, when present crisis had been disposed of.

3. Main essential as explained in my telegram No.181 (of August 12th) is that responsibility and initiative for removal of Mar Shimun and his relations should be fixed on Iraqi Government. It therefore seems undesirable that we should forestall their decision by offer of asylum to Mar Shimun unless his life is in danger or Iraqi Government make it clear that they intend to take against him measures worse than deportation, such as confinement at some such unsuitable spot as Rutba. In any case it is desirable to bring the Iraqi Government into the open and secure from them some clear statement of their intentions by which subsequent action of His Majesty's Government could be justified.

4. I understand, however, from Air Officer Commanding's telegram No. Z. 231 of August 13th to the Chief of the Air Staff that there is now no immediate danger to Mar Shimun and his family, so that presumably only likely alternative to deportation would be confinement at Rutba.

5. In these circumstances and in view of probability that public statement will eventually have to be made on whole question, I consider that best course will now be to address formal note to Iraqi Government explaining position of His Majesty's Government in regard to proposed deportation, and

asking.....



(174)
173

3.

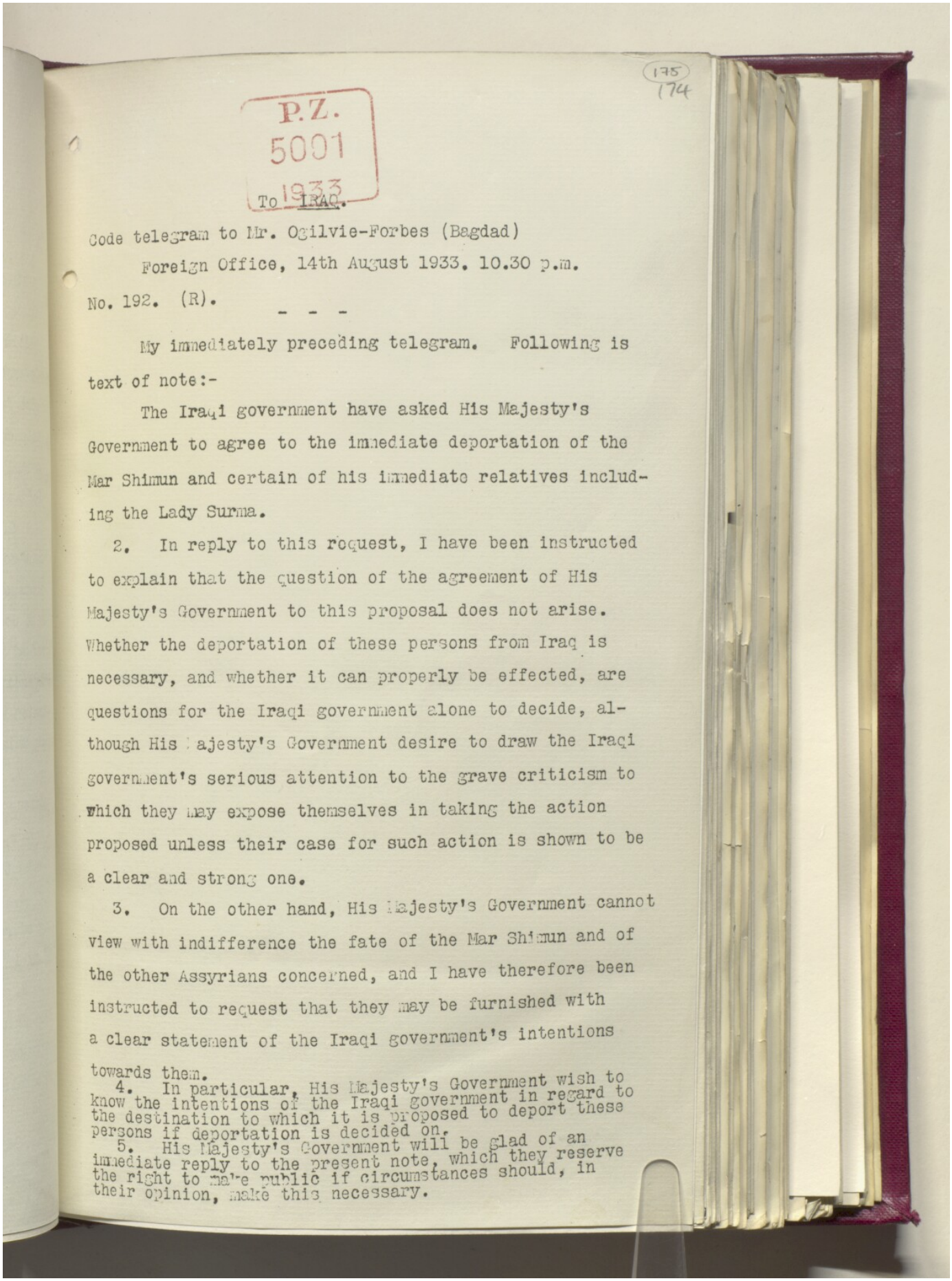
asking for statement of Iraqi Government's intentions. Object of this would be to produce such a statement in writing and formal request for grant by His Majesty's Government of asylum to Mar Shimun and necessary transport facilities. You should therefore when presenting note endeavour orally to arrange procedure suggested in second sentence of paragraph 6 of your telegram No.260 (of August 13th).

6. In reply to Iraqi request His Majesty's Government could then agree to provide temporary asylum and transport, of course on the assumption that Iraqi Government would assume full responsibility for, and would refund to His Majesty's Government in due course, any expenditure incurred by His Majesty's Government in connexion with removal and subsequent maintenance of the Mar Shimun and his relations.

7. As regards destination, I fear Jerusalem is for various reasons quite out of the question. There would, however, be no objection to asylum in Cyprus and you may assume that Cyprus will be destination if need arises.

8. In view of foregoing I shall be glad if you will now address to Iraqi Government immediately note in terms of my immediately following telegram.

9. Please report by telegraph as soon as note has been presented, and if deportation appears imminent keep Governor of Cyprus informed by telegraph, repeating any such telegrams to me.



175
174

P.Z.
5001
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 14th August 1933. 10.30 p.m.

No. 192. (R).

- - -

My immediately preceding telegram. Following is text of note:-

The Iraqi government have asked His Majesty's Government to agree to the immediate deportation of the Mar Shimun and certain of his immediate relatives including the Lady Surma.

2. In reply to this request, I have been instructed to explain that the question of the agreement of His Majesty's Government to this proposal does not arise. Whether the deportation of these persons from Iraq is necessary, and whether it can properly be effected, are questions for the Iraqi government alone to decide, although His Majesty's Government desire to draw the Iraqi government's serious attention to the grave criticism to which they may expose themselves in taking the action proposed unless their case for such action is shown to be a clear and strong one.

3. On the other hand, His Majesty's Government cannot view with indifference the fate of the Mar Shimun and of the other Assyrians concerned, and I have therefore been instructed to request that they may be furnished with a clear statement of the Iraqi government's intentions towards them.

4. In particular, His Majesty's Government wish to know the intentions of the Iraqi government in regard to the destination to which it is proposed to deport these persons if deportation is decided on.

5. His Majesty's Government will be glad of an immediate reply to the present note, which they reserve the right to make public if circumstances should, in their opinion, make this necessary.

(176) 175

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 5001 1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 15th August 1933.

D, 0.30 a.m. 15th August 1933.

R. 7.30 a.m. 15th August 1933.

No. 266. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 188. First paragraph.

I agree that time-limit is far too short. It was intended to coincide with standstill order. Telephone message has been sent to Minister of the Interior in the North to extend it.

Proclamation has nevertheless been distributed by all civilian and military departments and through Christian omissaries in touch with Assyrians. By this morning it had reached Amadia district. As a result already 153 Assyrians have come in, been disarmed and, I understand returned to villages. One hundred more expected.

Second paragraph. See proposals at the end.

Third paragraph. Proclamations were telephoned from the palace to Ministerof the Interior in Mosul where Air Officer Commanding fortunately happened to be for the day. He flew back with a copy. No British official was consulted.

Fourth paragraph. At the Embassy conference this morning we reached the following decisions:

1. To induce the Government to publish another amnesty to the effect that they consider in view of the Assyrians killed.....

177
176

killed and the rifles confiscated rebel Assyrians have been sufficiently punished and that they may now return peacefully to their villages.

2. To urge the Government to send to abandoned villages Iraqi officials accompanied by British police officers or some unemployed British judges in order (a) to rearm the defenceless as contemplated in my telegrams Nos.212 and 213, (b) to arrange to house the homeless women and children an important matter hitherto overlooked, (c) to keep rough note of the damage done by looting.

3. If we can get this plan carried out and if Assyrians continue coming in at the same rate as at present we have every hope that the phase of guerilla warfare will be at an end and that the phase of reconstruction will begin.

4. In order to get a move on and to avoid delay caused by the cowardly collapse of the King and the absence of the Minister of the Interior in the North, Edmonds has already written for the Prime Minister a memorandum proposing the above which he has also communicated to Minister of the Interior. If we consider that there is unreasonable delay, Royal Air Force will fly Edmonds North much though I want him here for passing of Mar Shimun.

5. I repeat if we can get the above practical proposals carried out, amateur Kurdish police curbed and Mar Shimun and family satisfactorily transplanted before Iraqi Government strike at them, it is the considered opinion of the Air Officer Commanding, the Head of Military Mission, the Adviser of Ministry of the Interior and myself that the worst is over.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

178
177

P.Z.
5001
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

August 14th 1933.

D. 12.30 a.m. August 15th 1933.

R. 6.00 a.m. August 15th 1933.

No.264. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

My telegram No.261.

By the request of Minister for Foreign Affairs I sent for Mar Shimun, his father and brother, who took the line that they were unwilling to desert their people. While they may have second thoughts, we must not count on their going volunterily. Apparently Lady Surma has number of women and children dependent on her which adds a further complication. With regard to Iraqi nationality Mar Shimun stated that he was "no more a Iraqi that any other Assyrian" so I do not think he will claim Iraqi nationality.

I am concerting with the adviser of Ministry of Interior and Air Officer Commanding the best means of carrying out this ticklish job.

Your telegram No.190 just received. I am sorry if I have made tactical error. You have no idea how I am being pressed over this wretched Mar Shimun.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
5001
From IRAQ. 1933

179
178

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
14th August, 1933.

D. 12.30 a.m. 15th August, 1933.

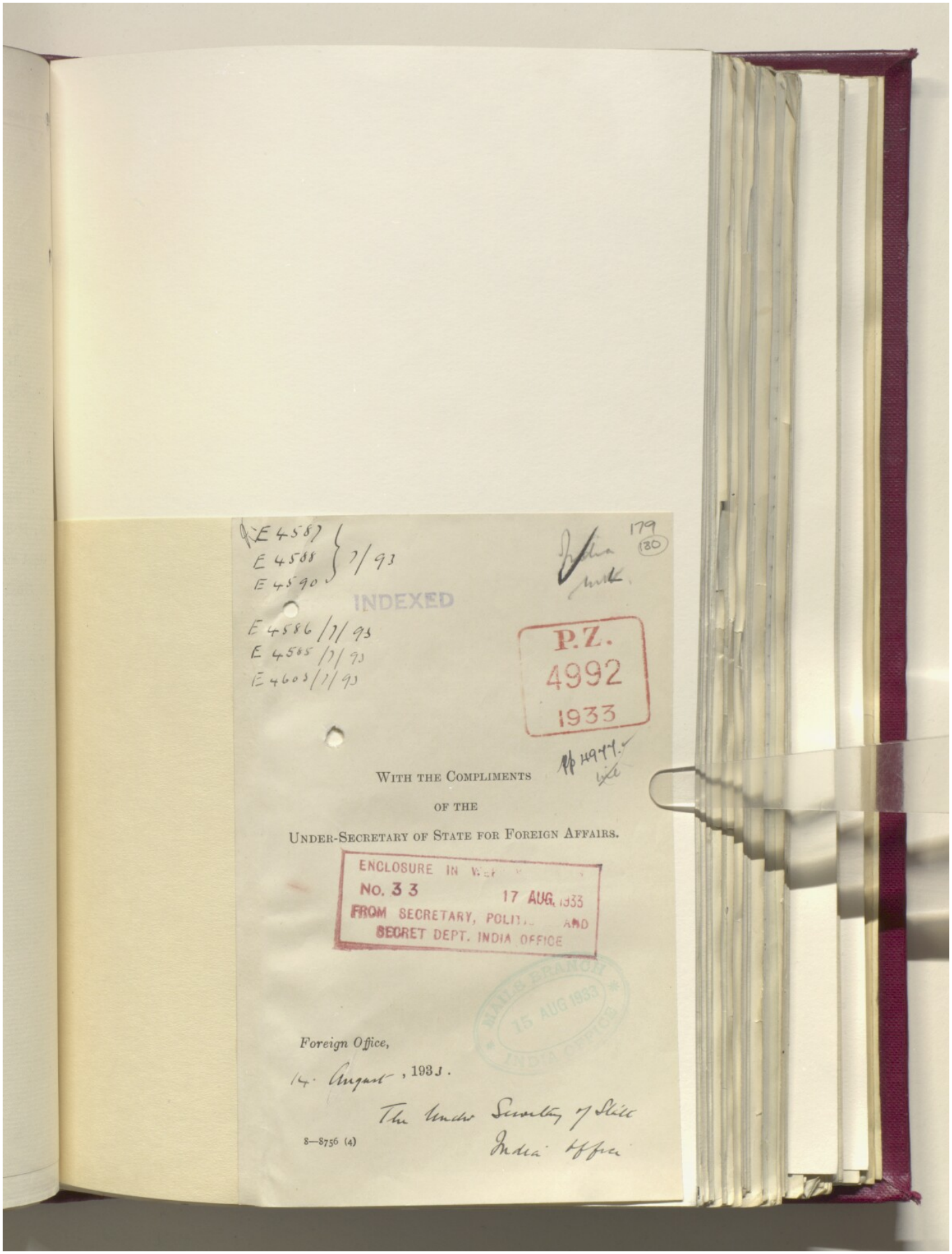
R. 6.00 a.m. 15th August, 1933.

No.265. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegram No.262.

Nuri, after once more confirming King's determination to go, proposed Sir F. Humphrys should meet him in Berne on or about Monday 21st August, where decision as to return could be finally reached. He stoutly maintains return unnecessary.


E 4587
E 4588
E 4590
7/93
179
180
INDEXED
E 4586/7/93
E 4585/7/93
E 4603/7/93
P.Z.
4992
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33
17 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLIT
AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
14. August, 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
India Office
8—8756 (4)

180
(181)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

P.Z. 4992 1933

Code. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad), 13th August, 1933.

D. 9.00 p.m. 13th August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 14th August, 1933.

No.255. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegram No.253.

I have today received urgent appeal from Mar Shimun to His Majesty's Government requesting immediate intervention with a view to stopping atrocities by Kurds armed by the Iraqi Government on semi-abandoned Assyrian villages.

It is true that several Assyrian villages near Simel have been plundered and burnt and their inhabitants almost certainly mishandled. This is confirmed by the R.A.F. reconnaissance yesterday, our only means of investigating as Iraqis will not allow British officers in so-called war zone.

I am bringing this to the notice of the King as additional evidence that all is not well in the north and calling on him to stop it as he will certainly hear more about it at Geneva.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4992 1933

181 (182)

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
13th August 1933.

D. 9.00 p.m. 13th August 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 14th August 1933.

No. 256. (R).

Your telegram No. 183 last two paragraphs and my telegram No. 253.

King Feisal who in my opinion is displaying moral cowardice, is deliberately rushing matters and is evasive over Bekr Sidqi and absolutely declines to await proposed arrival of Sir F. Humphrys. He contends that Europe is more important theatre for discussion of Iraqi affairs and that local situation when Mar Shimun has been eliminated at very early date will be normal. I disagreed but in vain.

Having failed to obtain accommodation tomorrow August 14th His Majesty and Nuri intend to leave by Imperial Airways Friday August 18th.

182
(183)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4992
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
13th August 1933.

D. 9.00 p.m. 13th August 1933.

R. 8.00 a.m. 14th August 1933.

No. 257. (R).

Your telegram No. 184.

Both Air Officer Commanding and I reverted to the subject of Bekr Sidqi with the King this morning towards the end of our interview regarding the removal of Mar Shimun. We were not able to pursue this subject for long as the King complained of fatigue, had recourse to smelling salts, and desired the audience to end.

I shall continue haunting him with this.

183
184

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4992
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 13th August 1933.

D. 9.00 p.m. 13th August 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 14th August 1933.

No. 259. (R).

Your telegram No. 186.

Air Officer Commanding is replying to Air Ministry in terms which should allay their anxiety.

While danger on Friday was considerable we consider that Iraqi Government has now taken the proper precautions.

184
(185)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4992
1933

X AMENDED COPY X

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)
13th August 1933.

D. 10.45 p.m. 13th August 1933.

R. 6.30 a.m. 14th August 1933.

No. 230. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

- - -

Your telegrams Nos. 181, 183, 185.

1. I took Air Officer Commanding as witness and support in interview with King and Nuri on this urgent matter.

2. Bearing in mind the last paragraph of your telegram No. 181, I again enquired whether they would not be satisfied with the detention of Mar Shimun's family in Y.M.C.A., under guard if necessary. Both replied definitely: no. Moreover, they intended to expel them from the country as soon as possible, and were only holding their hand pending hearing from me.

3. I then said that, in compliance with their request, His Majesty's Government would favourably consider proposal of finding them a temporary asylum and transporting them from Iraq on condition

(1) that initiative and all responsibility were taken by Iraqi Government; and

(11) it was clearly understood that this was without prejudice to question of eventual re-admission.

4. While agreeing with the first condition, adding that he would willingly continue Mar Shimun's allowance, King declared emphatically that in no circumstances would he allow Mar Shimun, or dissident Assyrians, to return to Iraq. Their presence, he said, was the cause of the whole

185
(186)

whole trouble and, unless His Majesty's Government gave a written undertaking guaranteeing Iraq from all the evils of the future results of the sojourn of these people in his country, he would not hear of it. I fear therefore that it is useless and a waste of essential and valuable time to argue this point further.

5. As I pointed out in a previous telegram, the King intends to rush matters, finish with Mar Shimun, and return to Europe immediately; and if we delay too long we may one morning hear that Mar Shimun has either been thrust over the frontier or deposited at Rutba or elsewhere.

6. I have recorded our caveat over question of re-admission and the best that can be done is to get Edmonds to influence Minister of the Interior to draft to Mar Shimun and family a letter in polite language requesting them, on such and such legal grounds, to leave the country, with silence over the question of re-admission. I shall then endeavour to obtain from Iraqi Government a communication informing me of the above and requesting facilities for removing and granting him temporary accommodation. This I would pass on to Air Officer Commanding and we would make arrangements with Iraqi government for collecting Lady Surma and then emplaning on board two victories whole party, accompanied by two representative levies who would be given leave for the purpose by Air Officer Commanding.

7. Air Officer Commanding, who is now preparing the ground with the levies, would require two or three days notice. I now await your instructions about destination, with regard to which I venture to support Air Officer Commanding's recommendation of Jerusalem from levy point of view.

8. Position of Lady Surma is uncertain. According to the latest reports, she has locked herself with other women in her house in Mosul.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

186
(187)

P.Z.
4992
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
14th August, 1933.

D. 12.55 p.m. 14th August, 1933.

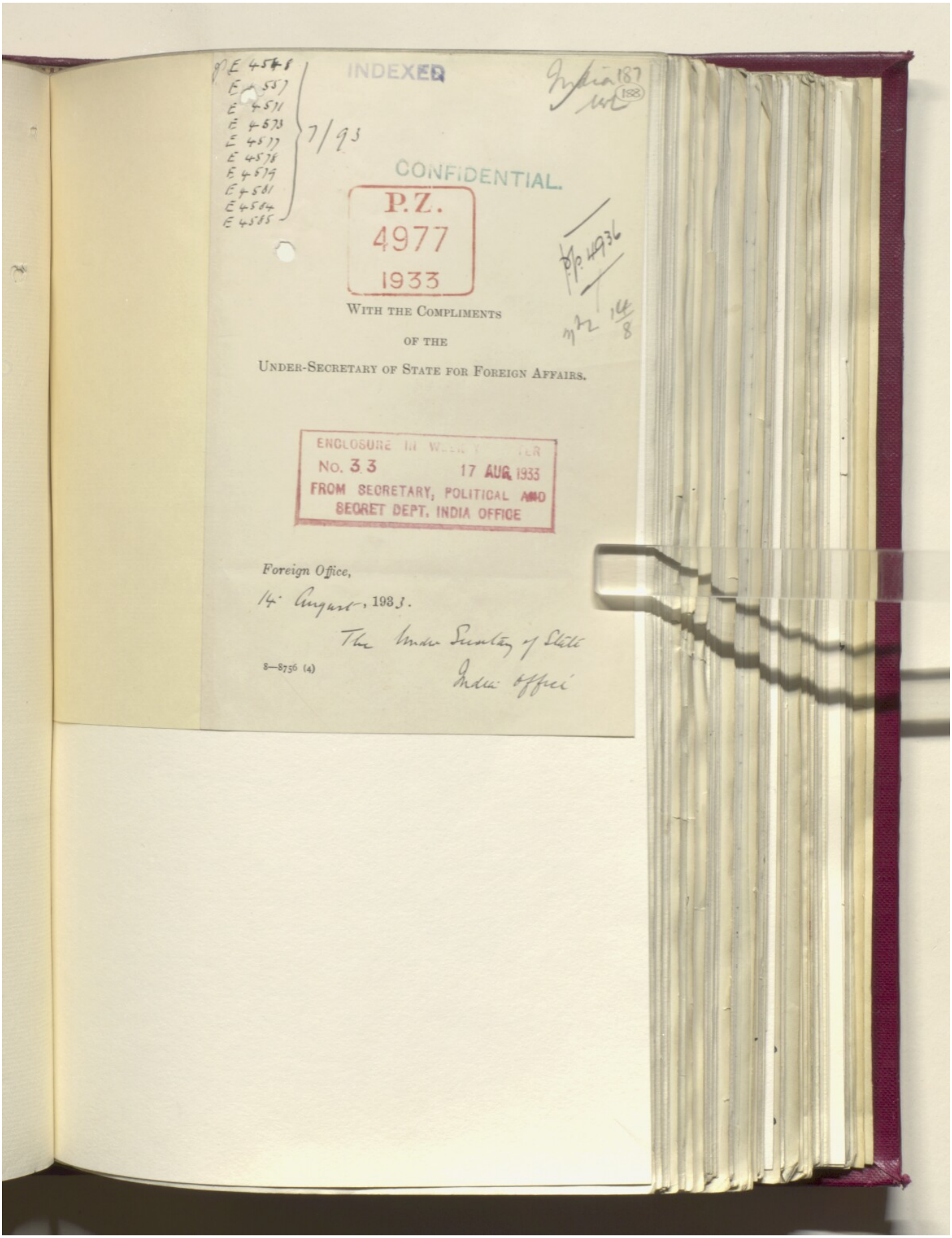
R. 1.40 p.m. 14th August, 1933.

No. 262. (R).

My telegram No. 256.

King has now obtained medical certificate prescribing two days' complete rest and an immediate return to cooler climate thereafter.

He has taken refuge in Queen's palace and is consequently invisible. I am accordingly tackling Nuri in view of his special friendship with Sir F. Humphrys but I do not anticipate success as this is a set plan.


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL.
P.Z.
4977
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
14 August, 1933.
8—8756 (4)

188
189

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

(E.4570/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 12th August, 1933. 7.30 p.m.
No.184. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Your telegram No.242 (of August 11th - Assyrian crisis - murder of prisoners).

Iraqi Minister called this morning and confirmed to me, on instructions from King Feisal, His Majesty's personal assurance that rigorous enquiry would be held and perpetrators of outrage suitably punished.

I took opportunity to emphasise to Jafar Pasha grave view which I took of this incident. Iraqi Government had now raised whole Assyrian question with the League of Nations by their appeal against action of the French in Syria. There were many people at Geneva who had been most reluctant to agree to emancipation of Iraq and her admission to membership of the League. There was moreover much interest in Assyrian question and conduct of Iraqi Government would be subjected to severest scrutiny. If Iraqi Government could show that immediate rigorous and impartial enquiry had been held and adequate steps taken to punish those responsible, their position at Geneva when question was raised - as it inevitably would be - would be greatly strengthened. If they could not point to such action they might find situation at Geneva exceedingly unpleasant.

Moreover, although press in this country had hitherto not given question much prominence, news of this incident might now be published at any moment and lead to public outcry. It would be far

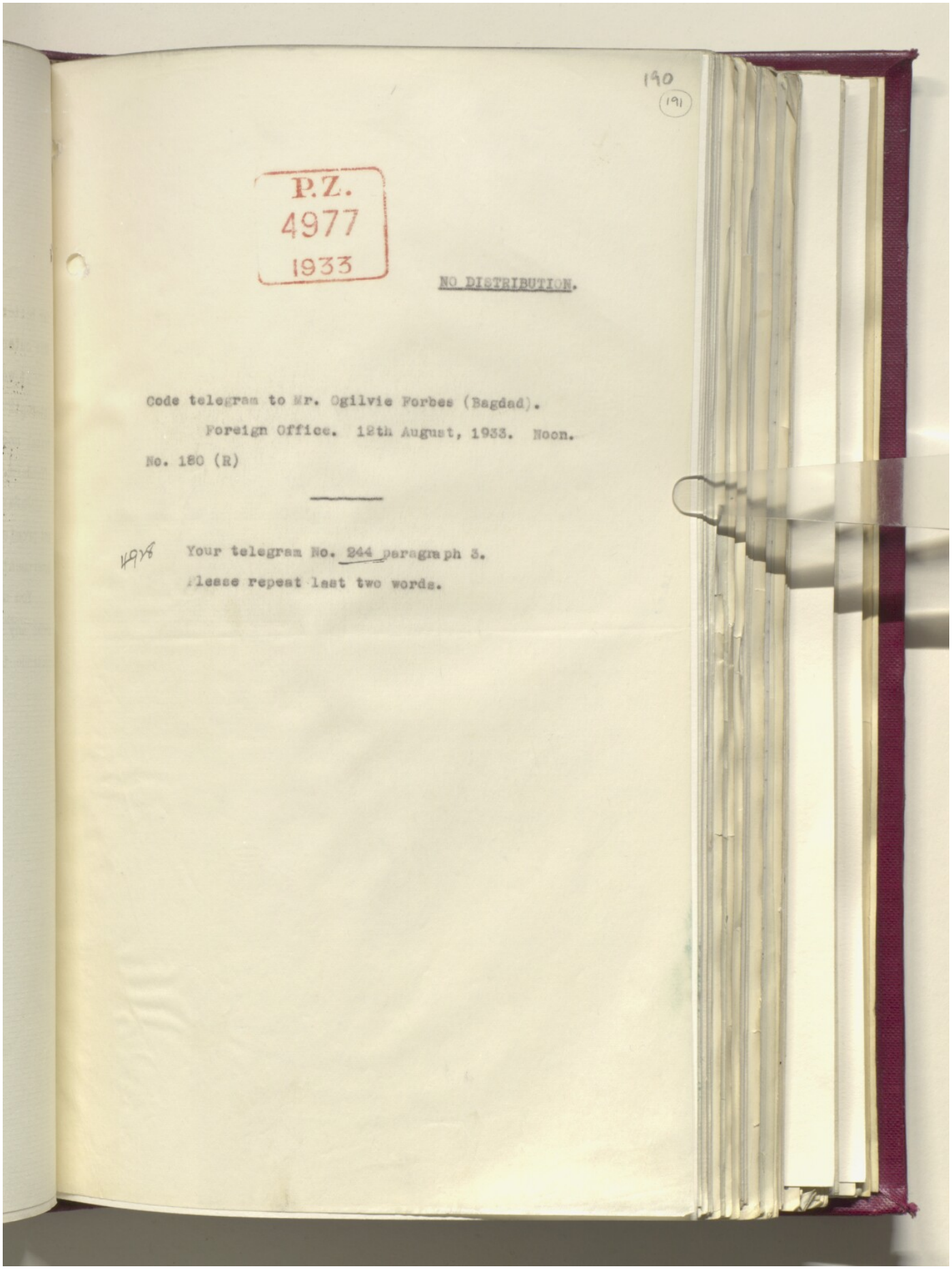
189
(190)

far better for Iraqi Government to take necessary action before this outcry broke out than to wait to do so until afterwards.

It was therefore entirely with a view to Iraq's own best interests that I had instructed you so strongly to urge on King Feisal need for immediate rigorous enquiry and punishment of offenders.

Jafar Pasha said that he entirely agreed with these views and promised to telegraph gist of our conversation to Iraqi Government forthwith.

You should, if you consider it desirable, or if King Feisal shows any signs of not pursuing matter with sufficient energy, continue to press matter on above lines.



190
191

P.Z.
4977
1933

NO DISTRIBUTION.

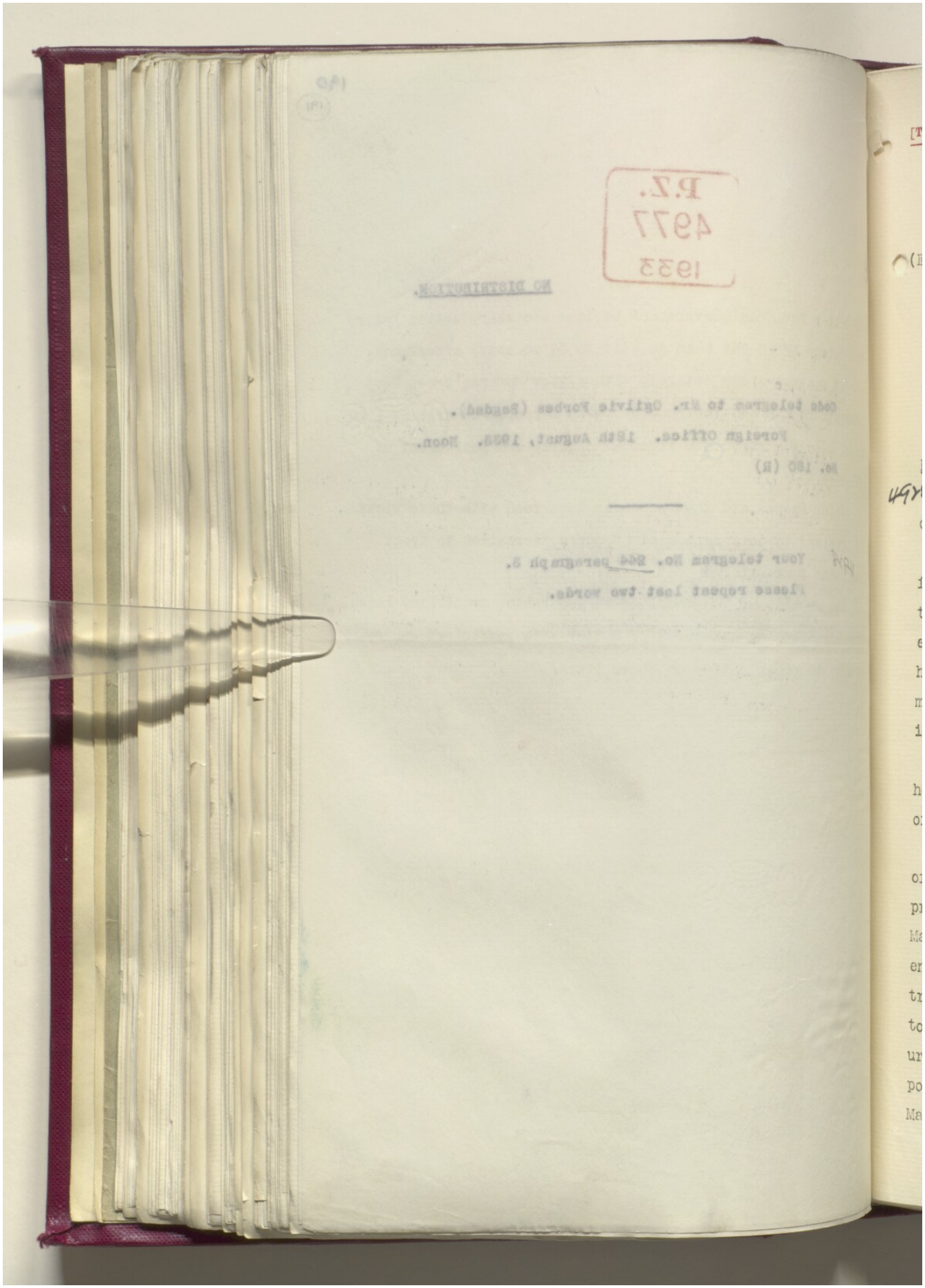
Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 12th August, 1933. Noon.

No. 180 (R)

Your telegram No. 244 paragraph 3.

Please repeat last two words.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338447.0x0000c2

191
192

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
To 1933

(E.4657/4548/7/93).

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 12th 1933. 6.35 p.m.

No.181.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

MOST IMMEDIATE.

4978 Your telegram No.244 (of August 11th. Assyrian crisis. Proposed deportation of Mar Shimun and his family).

I agree that in view of changed circumstances resulting from outbreak of fighting in the north, of personal danger to which Mar Shimun appears to be exposed, and of dangerous effect which continuance of present situation is likely to have on levies, continued presence of Mar Shimun in Bagdad may produce worse results than his deportation and that it is impracticable to press for his unconditional release.

2. Responsibility for a decision to deport him must however rest with Iraqi government, and it is not a question of His Majesty's Government formally agreeing to it.

3. In these circumstances, while I do not take threat of abdication seriously, His Majesty's Government would be prepared, in the event of Iraqi government deciding to deport Mar Shimun and taking the necessary legal steps to that end, to make the necessary arrangements, including air transport and supply of escort, for his temporary removal to some suitable place. I am consulting Colonial Office urgently regarding possible destination. Jerusalem is not possible but we are endeavouring to arrange for Cyprus or Malta. Further instructions on this point will be sent to you

192
(193)

2.

you as soon as possible.

4. Procedure will need carefully working out both from point of view of effect on levies and from that of reducing to a minimum risk of this measure being utilised later for purposes of propaganda against either Iraqi government or His Majesty's Government.

5. While therefore I am prepared to authorise above course owing to dangers of Mar Shimun remaining in Iraq, it is important that there should be sound legal basis for any action taken by Iraqi government and that it should not be possible to represent it as having been necessitated solely by incapacity of Iraqi government to guarantee Mar Shimun's safety.

6. It should be made quite clear that responsibility for decision to deport rests with Iraqi government and that action of His Majesty's Government is confined to making arrangements for Mar Shimun's transport and accommodation in conditions assuring his safety and comfort. Fact that His Majesty's Government are making these arrangements will I hope sufficiently reassure levies and help to ease situation.

7. Similar considerations apply to deportation of the Lady Surma, though it would be preferable if possible to arrange for her to be deported separately.

8. Permanent exclusion of Mar Shimun from Iraq at this stage might still further complicate problem of eventual settlement of Assyrian question. It would be regarded at Geneva as attempt to prejudge issue, and Iraqi case would thereby be still further weakened, more

especially

193
194

3.

especially as it may be matter of great difficulty to find suitable permement residence for Mar Shimun elsewhere. Further, permament exclusion of Mar Shimun from Iraq at this stage might well be interpreted as triumph for the Iraqi government, which it is obviously desirable to avoid. You should therefore make every effort to get deportation orders or any other documents which are issued by Iraqi government so worded as to allow of possible readmission of Mar Shimun and his family after settlement of present crisis.

9. You will of course realise that His Majesty's Government are only acquiesing in deportation of Mar Shimun and his family as lesser of two evils. Objections to removal, from other than purely local point of view are serious; and should any change in the situation occur before deportation is actually effected such as to make it possible to avoid it altogether without involving risks anticipated in your telegram, you should if still practicable hold your hand.

194
195

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
From IRAQ
1933

(E4571/7/93)

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 12th August 1933. 7.45 p.m.

No. 183.

- - -

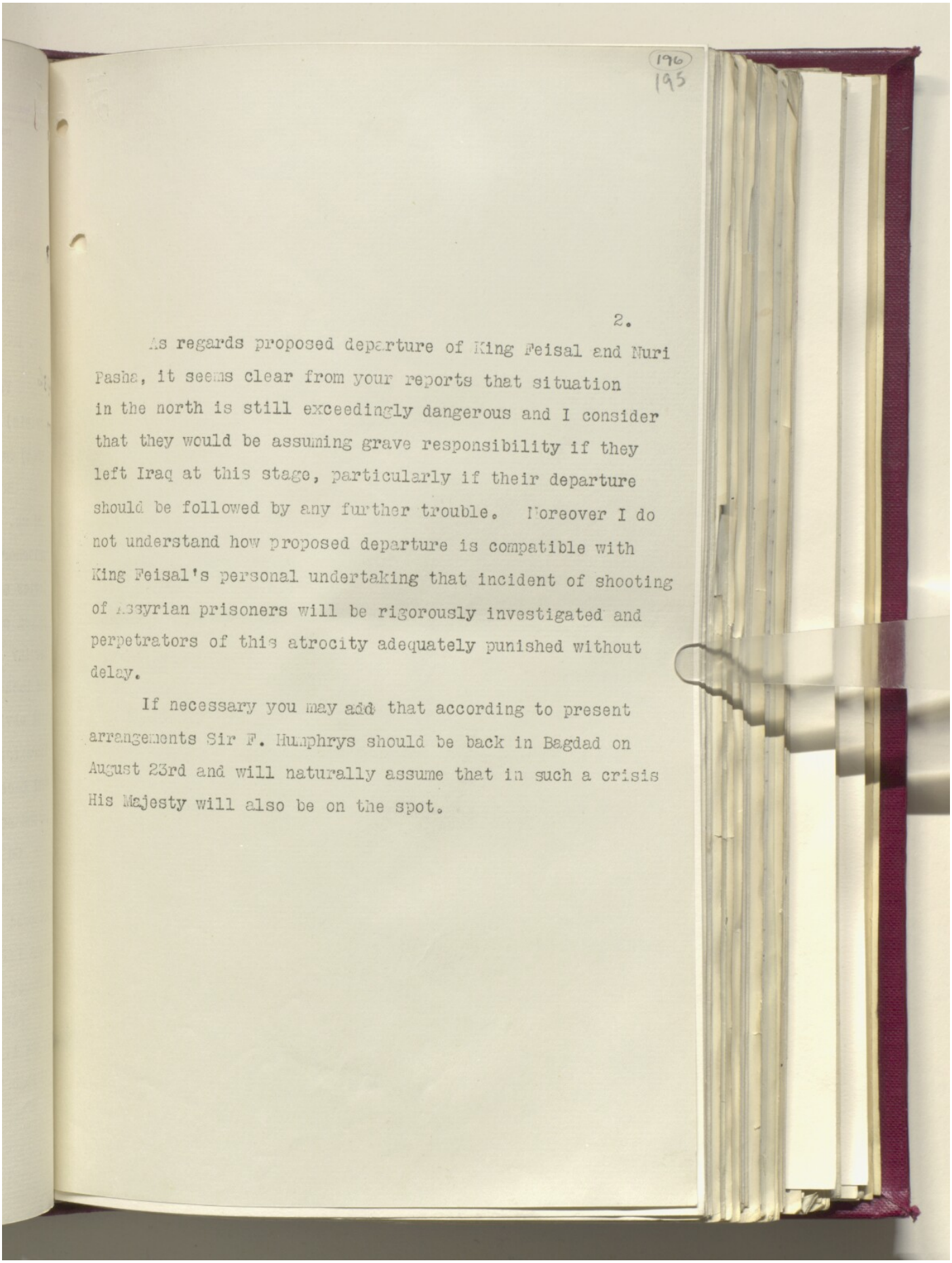
4936 Your telegram No. 248 (of August 12th - Assyrian
4977 crisis) was received after my telegram No. 181 (of August 12th) had been drafted.

Rutba seems most unsuitable place for detention of Mar Shimun. If he is kept in the fort he will be an obvious prisoner, which can hardly fail to have worst effect on levies and create worst impression at Geneva, while if he is camped outside will he not be exposed to serious danger from Beduin? Moreover, apart from serious climatic objections, and lack of reasonable comfort or suitable amenities, it will obviously be impossible to detain him and his family there for any length of time and problem of their return may well become acute before any settlement of Assyrian problem in the north is in sight.

On the other hand objections to enforced removal of Mar Shimun from Iraq are serious and if you consider that proposed compromise presents real advantages and that objections indicated above can be overcome, I am reluctant to instruct you definitely to oppose it.

Please telegraph immediately your further observations
4977 in the light of this telegram and of my telegram No. 181 (of August 12th).

As

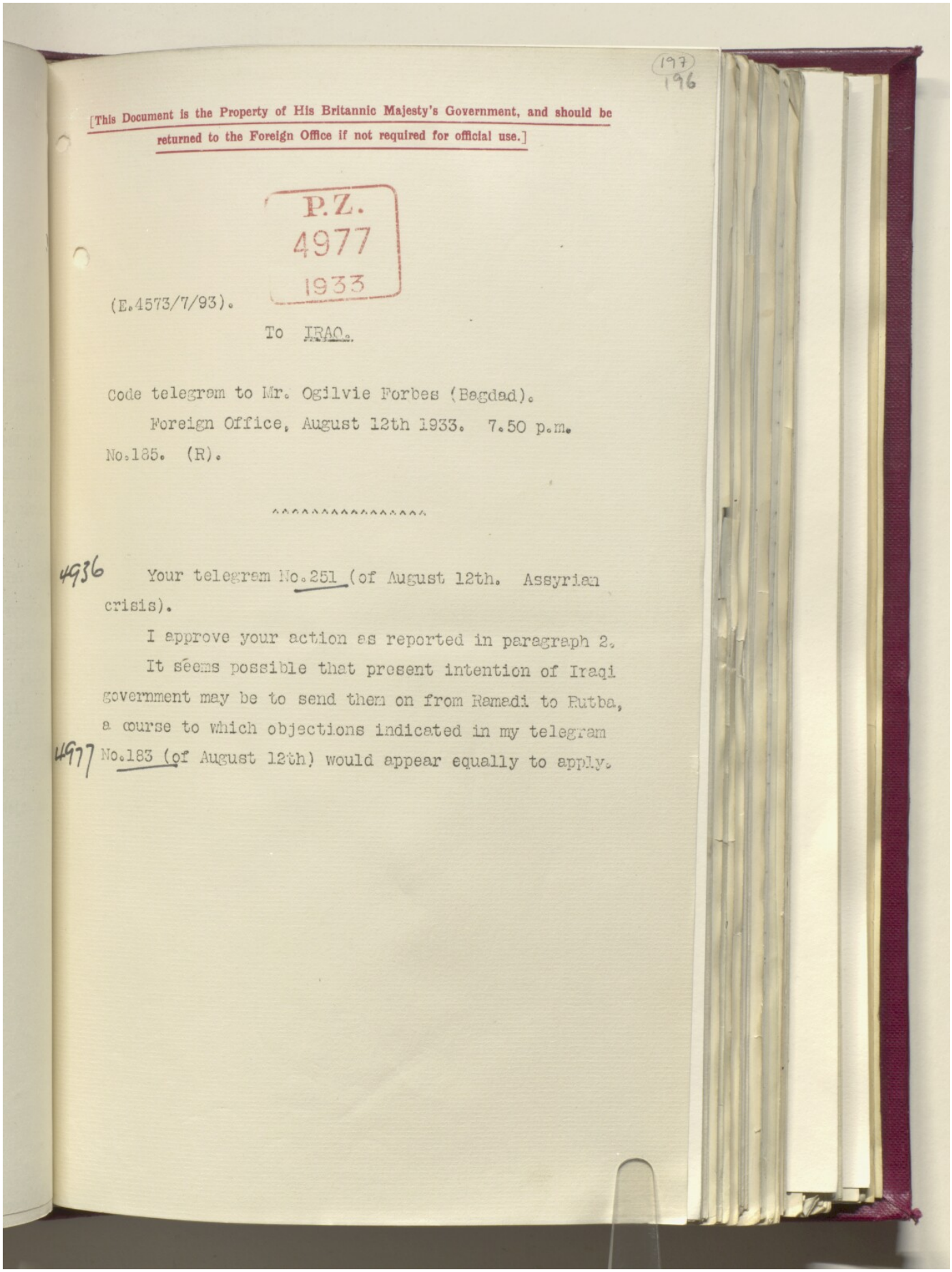


196
195

2.

As regards proposed departure of King Feisal and Nuri Pasha, it seems clear from your reports that situation in the north is still exceedingly dangerous and I consider that they would be assuming grave responsibility if they left Iraq at this stage, particularly if their departure should be followed by any further trouble. Moreover I do not understand how proposed departure is compatible with King Feisal's personal undertaking that incident of shooting of Assyrian prisoners will be rigorously investigated and perpetrators of this atrocity adequately punished without delay.

If necessary you may add that according to present arrangements Sir F. Humphrys should be back in Bagdad on August 23rd and will naturally assume that in such a crisis His Majesty will also be on the spot.



197
196

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4977 1933

(E.4573/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 12th 1933. 7.50 p.m.

No.185. (R).

4936 Your telegram No.251 (of August 12th. Assyrian crisis).

I approve your action as reported in paragraph 2.

It seems possible that present intention of Iraqi government may be to send them on from Ramadi to Rutba, a course to which objections indicated in my telegram 4977 No.183 (of August 12th) would appear equally to apply.

198
197

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

From ~~IRAQ~~.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad) 12th August 1933.

D. 11.30 p.m. 12th August 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 13th August 1933.

No. 254. (R).

- - -

Following is text of the proclamations issued to-day by Minister of the Interior in Mosul.

First notice.

To Assyrian rebels.

The government hereby notify that (1) government allow you a respite of 60 hours commencing from 12.00 i.e. from noon Saturday August 12th in order to offer within that time your submission on condition that you surrender your arms to the nearest government headquarters or military or police posts.

(2) The actions of the government disciplinary forces against you will cease during the 60 hours mentioned.

(3) If this period expires and you have not offered your submission and obedience and surrendered your arms to the authorities mentioned in paragraph one then armed forces of the government will resume chasing you definitely and attack you severely.

(4) Take this valuable opportunity and accept advice so that regret may not befall you.

Second notice.

Any persons surrendering according to terms of notice just issued can consider his life safe and he will be allowed to return to his village.

(199)
198

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

To IRAQ

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 13th 1933. 2.45 p.m.

No.188.(R).

F.Z. 4977 1933

IMMEDIATE.

4977 Your telegram No.254 (of August 12th. Assyrian crisis - Iraqi government's proclamations to rebels).

Time limit given in first proclamation for surrender of rebels, even though extended beyond 48 hours 4908 originally contemplated in your telegram No.239 (of August 10th), is much too short. If proclamation is merely being posted in Mosul and no steps are being taken to bring it to immediate notice of rebels, e.g. by dropping it from aircraft in rebel areas, it seems almost impossible that it can reach rebels in time.

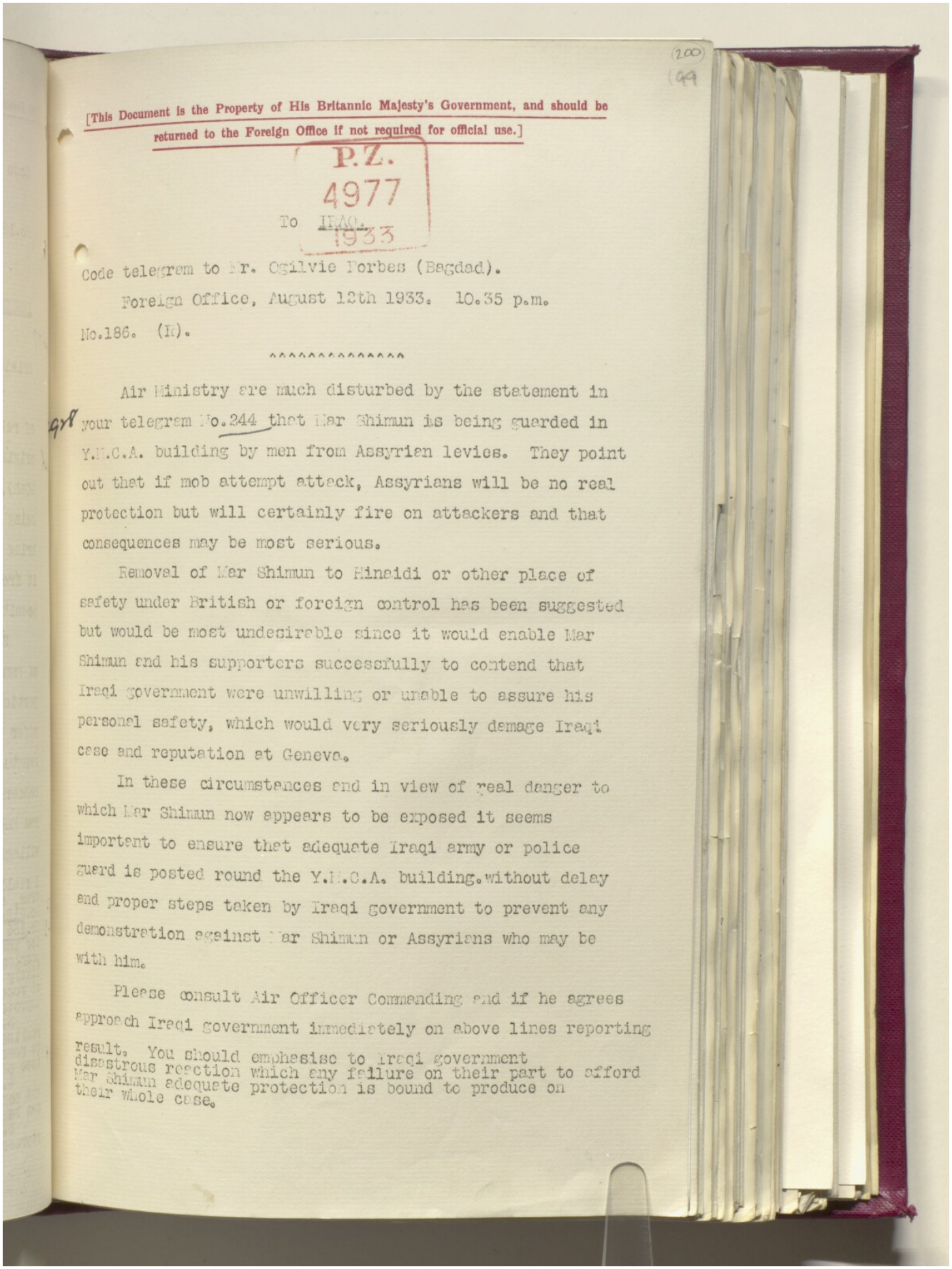
2. Second proclamation contains only vaguest offer of amnesty and seems unlikely to strike rebels as particularly generous. It amounts to little more than offer to spare their lives, and nothing is said about eventual return of arms for protection of villages concerned or of guarantee of their safety meanwhile. As you know question of protection of disarmed Assyrian villages is one of most important factors in situation.

I realise that the detailed arrangements for return of 4754 arms, as contemplated in paragraph 4 of your telegram 4843 No.212/213 (of August 4th) and approved in my telegram No.164 (of August 8th), might be regarded as unsuitable for inclusion in text of proclamation at this stage, but proclamation making no mention at all of this point is likely to carry very little weight, particularly in view of recent Kurdish attacks on villages which have remained unprotected.

3. I cannot help suspecting that Iraqis themselves realise inadequacy of proclamations and that this may 4908 be reason why texts were not shown to you in advance (see paragraph 4 of your telegram No.239 (of August 10th))

4. Please consult A.O.C. and advisers concerned, and consider urgently whether and if so what measures can be taken to remedy situation.

5. You are of course authorised to make representations to Iraqi government on above lines.



(200)
(99)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 12th 1933. 10.35 p.m.

No.186. (R).

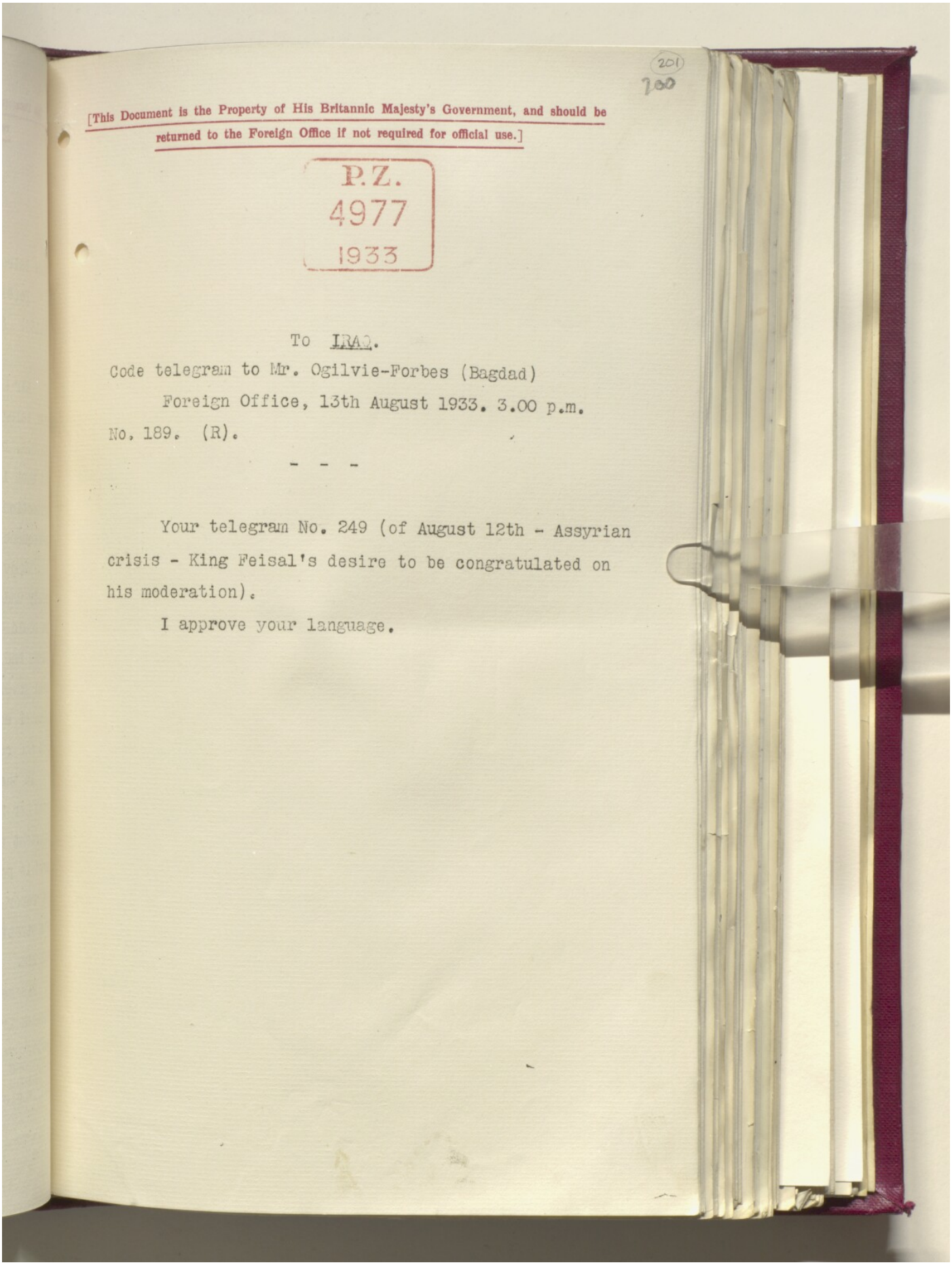
^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

Air Ministry are much disturbed by the statement in your telegram No.244 that Mar Shimun is being guarded in Y.M.C.A. building by men from Assyrian levies. They point out that if mob attempt attack, Assyrians will be no real protection but will certainly fire on attackers and that consequences may be most serious.

Removal of Mar Shimun to Hinaidi or other place of safety under British or foreign control has been suggested but would be most undesirable since it would enable Mar Shimun and his supporters successfully to contend that Iraqi government were unwilling or unable to assure his personal safety, which would very seriously damage Iraqi case and reputation at Geneva.

In these circumstances and in view of real danger to which Mar Shimun now appears to be exposed it seems important to ensure that adequate Iraqi army or police guard is posted round the Y.M.C.A. building without delay and proper steps taken by Iraqi government to prevent any demonstration against Mar Shimun or Assyrians who may be with him.

Please consult Air Officer Commanding and if he agrees approach Iraqi government immediately on above lines reporting result. You should emphasise to Iraqi government disastrous reaction which any failure on their part to afford Mar Shimun adequate protection is bound to produce on their whole case.



201
700

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 13th August 1933. 3.00 p.m.

No. 189. (R).

- - -

Your telegram No. 249 (of August 12th - Assyrian crisis - King Feisal's desire to be congratulated on his moderation).

I approve your language.

202
202

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). August 12th 1933.

D. 11.5 p.m. August 12th 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. August 13th 1933.

No.253. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

IMMEDIATE.

4936 My telegram No.248.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me this morning that King Feisal was unwell, was not receiving, and desired to return to Europe by Dutch air mail August 14th. As booking was uncertain he asked whether in principle A.O.C. could provide a Victoria as far as Egypt. A.O.C. cannot owing to evacuation of summer camp.

I told Nuri that I considered that unless the King was grevely ill it was too soon for him to return especially after the arrest of Mar Shimun's relations and probably of Lady Surma and in view of conditions in the north which I regarded, pace Nuri and King, as not yet satisfactory.

I said that I was certain that you would agree with me especially in view of rather disquieting news brought back from Mosul, from whom arrest of Mar Shimun's relations had been concealed by the Minister of the Interior. Nuri gave rather unconvincing reply that Ministers would have greater sense of responsibility with the King away, and his departure would confirm impression that situation was no longer serious, an opinion with which I and the A.O.C. do not agree.

Having consulted British doctor attending the King I learn that he is only suffering from heat worry and indigestion and it will not kill him to stay a few more days. I am therefore endeavouring to persuade His Majesty to stay till Friday 18th at least.

In circumstances now consider it essential in the interest of peace and order in Iraq that you consent to proposal regarding Mar Shimun and family made in my telegram No.244 and my telegram No.251.

Ministry have promised me to lodge Assyrians in Y.M.C.A. with Patriach. This will allay uneasiness of levies.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4977
1933

203
202

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 13th August 1933. 2.15 p.m.

No. 187. (R).

- - -

IMMEDIATE.

4977 Your telegram No. 253 (of August 12th - Assyrian crisis - King Feisal's desire to return to Europe).

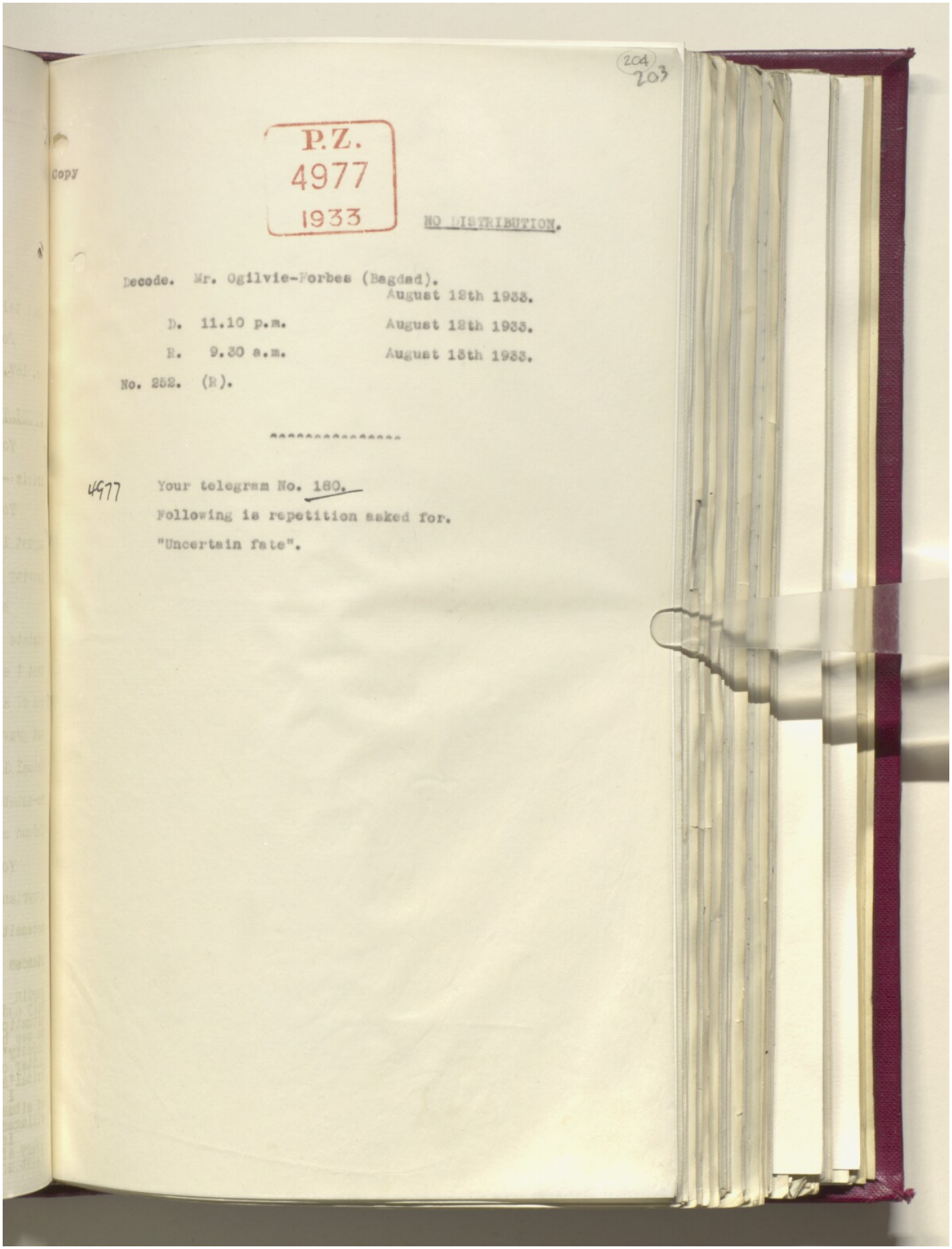
You will have seen from my telegram No. 183 (of 4977 August 12th) that I see gravest objection to King Feisal leaving Iraq during present critical situation.

While His Majesty's Government obviously cannot dictate to His Majesty in this matter, you may inform him that I entirely share your views, and make such use as you 977 can of arguments contained in my telegram No. 183, pointing out grave objections which seem to me to exist to King Feisal leaving Iraq before the situation is genuinely re-established in the north and the question of the Mar Shimun and his relations is satisfactorily disposed of.

You may remind King Feisal that it was mishandling of Assyrian question by his ministers during his absence which necessitated His Majesty's return, and that in these circumstances it is impossible not to feel serious misgivings regarding manner in which they will deal, without His Majesty's help and guidance, with the much more delicate and dangerous situation which has now developed. It is also difficult to see how adequate punishment of Bekr Sidqi, which His Majesty's Government, in Iraq's own interests, regard as matter of highest importance, could be secured in King Feisal's absence.

I entirely share your and A.O.C's opinion as to danger of situation in the north, where Kurdish raids on Assyrian villages seem to me particularly disquieting feature.

In these circumstances you should continue to make every effort to persuade His Majesty to remain in Iraq at least until Sir F. Humphrys' return.



204
203

Copy

P.Z.
4977
1933

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).
August 12th 1933.

D. 11.10 p.m. August 12th 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. August 13th 1933.

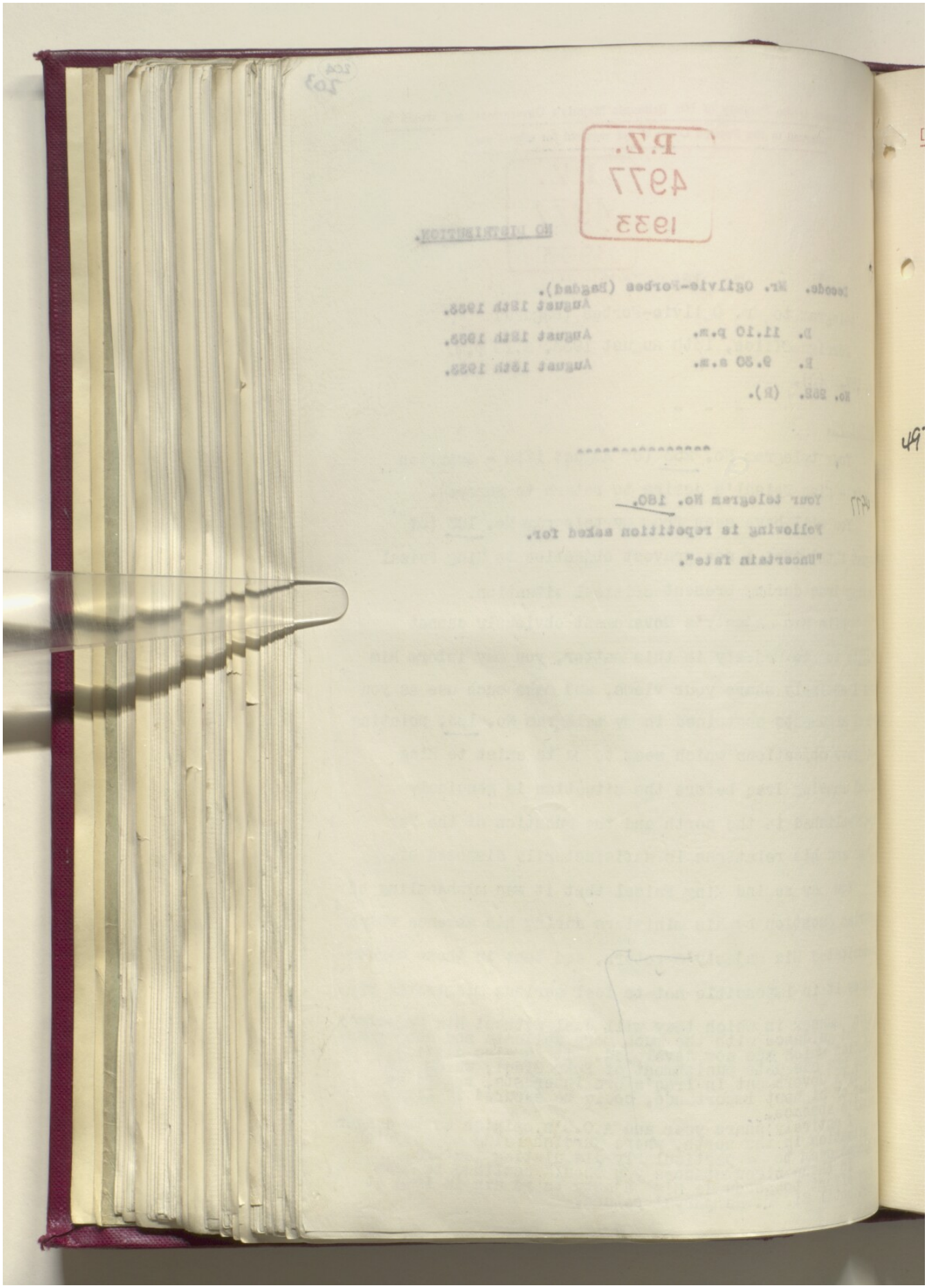
No. 252. (R).

****

4977 Your telegram No. 180.

Following is repetition asked for.

"Uncertain fate".



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000014

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

205
204

4977

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Baghdad).

August 13th. 1933.

D. 10.45.p.m. August 13th. 1933.

R. 6.30.a.m. August 14th. 1933.

No.260. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

4977 Your telegrams Nos. 181, 183, 185.

1. I took Air Officer Commanding as witness and support in interview with King and Nuri on this urgent matter.

2. Bearing in mind the last paragraph of your telegram No. 181, I again enquired whether they would not be satisfied with the detention of Mar Shimun's family in Y.M.C.A., under guard if necessary. Both replied definitely: no. Moreover, they intended to expel them from the country as soon as possible, and were only holding their hand pending hearing from me.

3. I then said that, in compliance with their request, His Majesty's Government would favourably consider proposal of finding them a temporary asylum and transporting them from Iraq on condition

(1) that initiative and all responsibility were taken by Iraqi Government; and

(11) it was clearly understood that this was without prejudice to question of eventual re-admission.

4. While agreeing with the first condition, adding that he would willing continue Mar Shimun's allowance, King declared emphatically that in no circumstances would he allow Mar Shimun, or dissident Assyrians, to return to Iraq. Their presence, he said, was the cause of the

whole/

(2a) 203

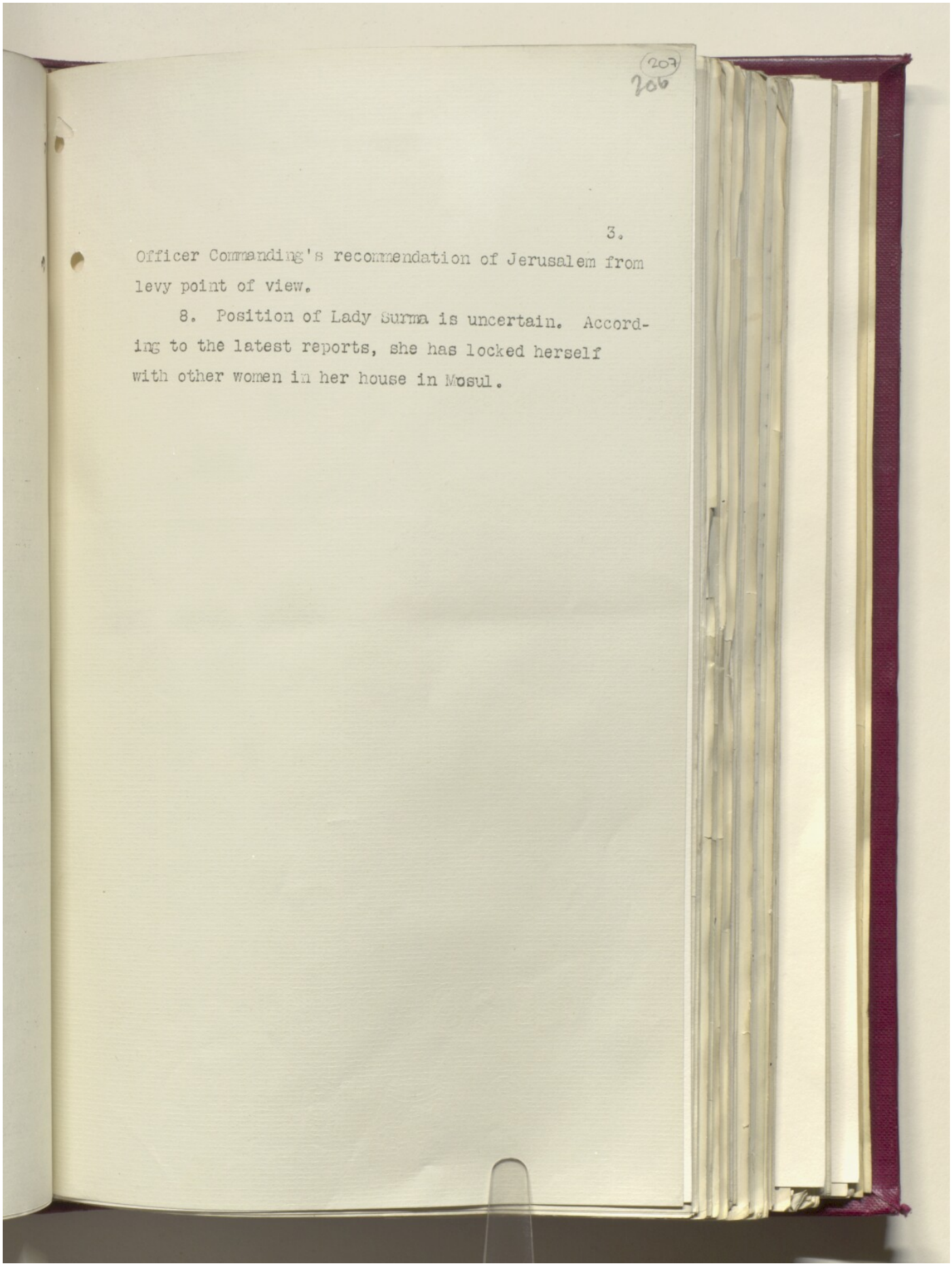
whole trouble and, unless His Majesty's Government gave a written undertaking guaranteeing Iraq from all the evils of the future results of the sojourn of these people in his country, he would not hear of it. I fear therefore that it is useless and a waste of essential and valuable time to argue this point further.

5. As I pointed out in a previous telegram, the King intends to rush matters, finish with Mar Shimun, and return to Europe immediately; and if we delay too long we may one morning hear that Mar Shimun has either been thrust over the frontier or deposited at Rutba or elsewhere.

6. I have recorded our caveat over question of re-admission and the best that can be done is to get Edmonds to influence Minister of the Interior to draft to Mar Shimun and family a letter in polite language requesting them, on such and such legal grounds, to leave the country, with silence over the question of re-admission. I shall, then endeavour to obtain from Iraqi Government a communication informing me of the above and requesting facilities for removing and granting him temporary accommodation. This I would pass on to Air Officer Commanding and we would make arrangements with Iraqi Government for collecting Lady Surma and then emplaning on board the two victims' whole party, who would be given leave for the purpose by Air Officer Commanding.

7. Air Officer Commanding, who is now preparing the ground with the levies, would require two or three days notice. I now await your instructions about destination, with regard to which I venture to support Air

Officer/

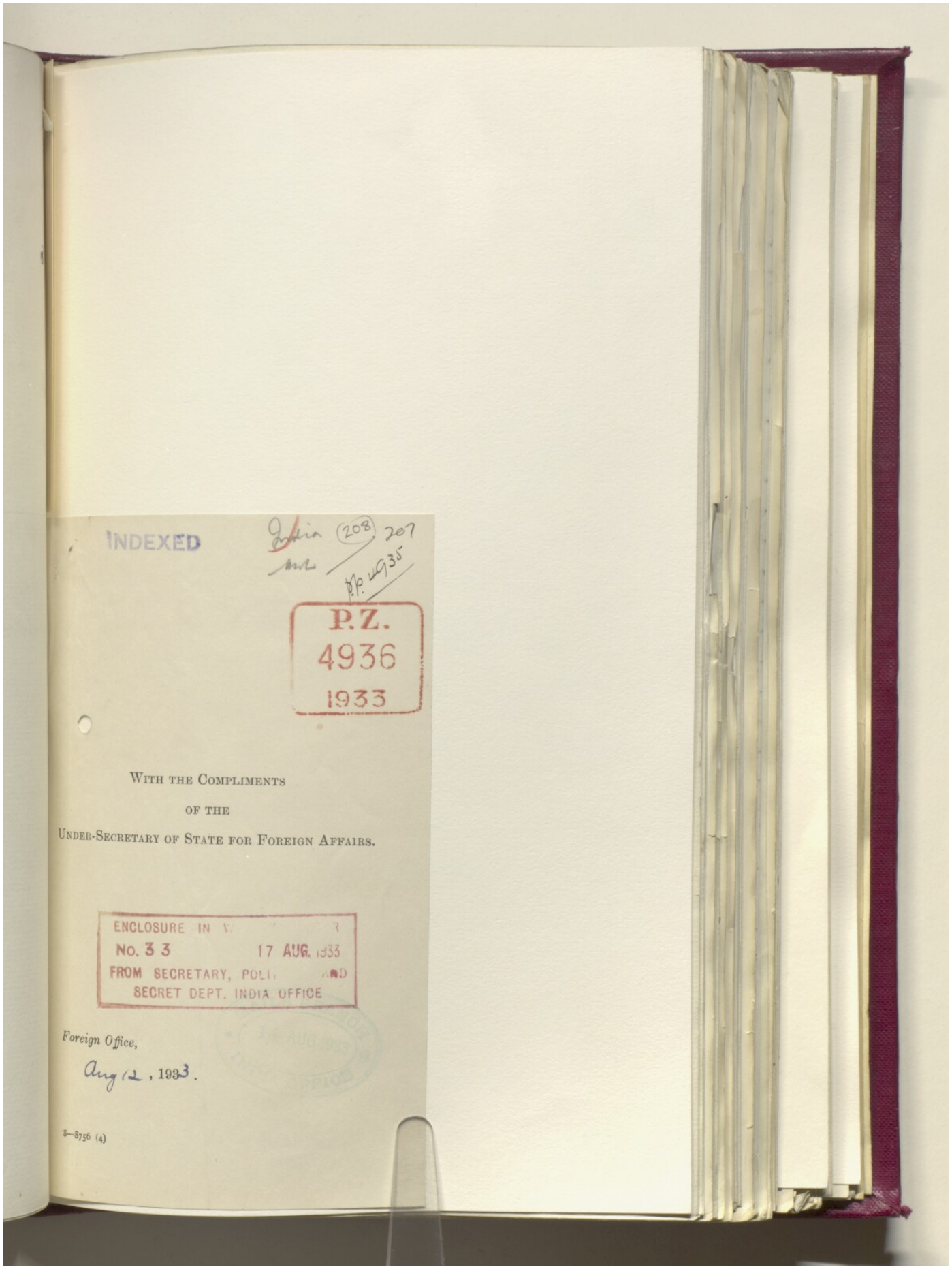


207
206

3.

Officer Commanding's recommendation of Jerusalem from levy point of view.

8. Position of Lady Surma is uncertain. According to the latest reports, she has locked herself with other women in her house in Mosul.


INDEXED
(208) 207
pp. 4935
P.Z.
4936
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 3 3
17 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLI
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
Aug 12, 1933.
8—8756 (4)

208
209

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4936
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad).
12th August, 1933.

D. 2.25 p.m. 12th August, 1933.

R. 3.15 p.m. 12th August, 1933.

No.250. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

1933 My telegram No.246.

1. Iraqi Government estimate that about 600 Assyrians are in Syria, 150 killed and 200 surrendered to date. This would leave 300 or 400 still outstanding, many of whom it is believed are secreting themselves in Chaldaean villages.

2. Minister of the Interior whom R.A.F. flew to Mosul yesterday is making use of Chaldaean Patriarch and other Christians for approaching Assyrians. The King assures me that he is offering amnesty for rank and file. This if true is satisfactory. Minister is accompanied by Stafford.

3. Yesterday in Bagdad passed without incident, Government forbidding all demonstrations. This is also satisfactory. Otherwise nothing special to report.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.250, repeated to Beirut No.33.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4936
1933

209
210

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)
12th August 1933.

D. 1.35 p.m. 12th August 1933.

R. 2.30 p.m. 12th August 1933.

No. 248. (R).

- - -

IMPORTANT.

4938 My telegram No. 244.

King Faisal and Nuri speak of moving Mar Shimun and family to Rutba, whereupon they would both return to Europe as they consider crisis would then be over.

I urged them to take no action until I had heard from you.

I understand the King and government would willingly continue Mar Shimun's allowance if only they could rid themselves of his presence.

210
(211)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4936
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
12th August, 1933.

D. 2.25 p.m. 12th August, 1933.

R. 3.25 p.m. 12th August, 1933.

No.251. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

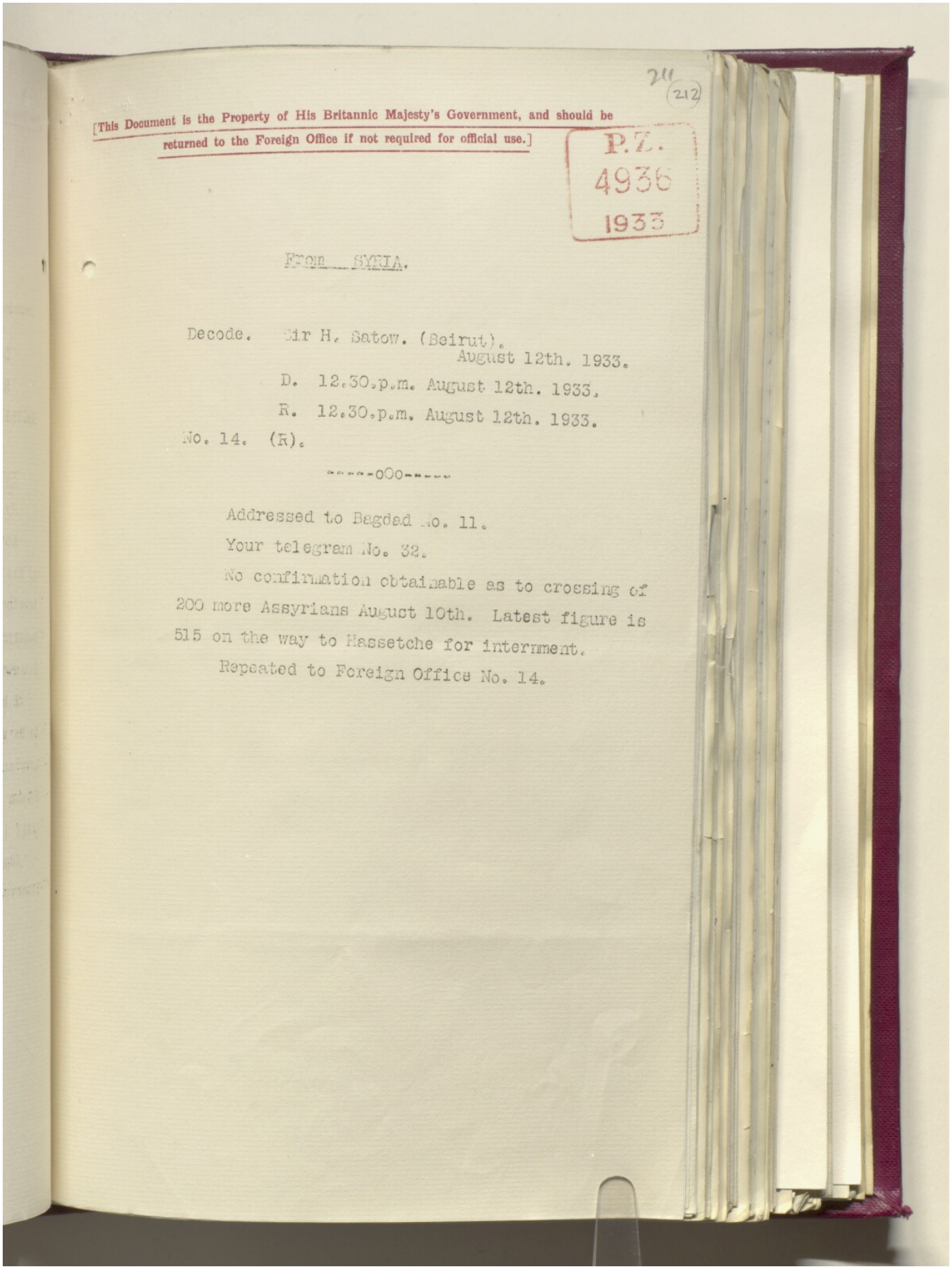
IMPORTANT.

My telegram No.248.

Adviser to the Interior has just informed me that by order of his Minister now in Mosul the father and brother of Mar Shimun together with another Assyrian have been arrested and are being conveyed to Ramadi. Lady Surma is to have interview with Minister. Result not yet known.

I have told Edmonds that I consider this precipitate action to be very foolish and that to allay inevitable misgivings in Levy and Assyrian circles these men must be lodged with Mar Shimun in Y.M.C.A. Bagdad and that Lady Surma must not be touched until I had heard from you.

Edmonds says he can arrange this. It is better for him to intervene than for me.



211 (212)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4936 1933

From SYRIA.

Decode. Sir H. Satow. (Beirut).
August 12th. 1933.
D. 12.30.p.m. August 12th. 1933.
R. 12.30.p.m. August 12th. 1933.
No. 14. (R).

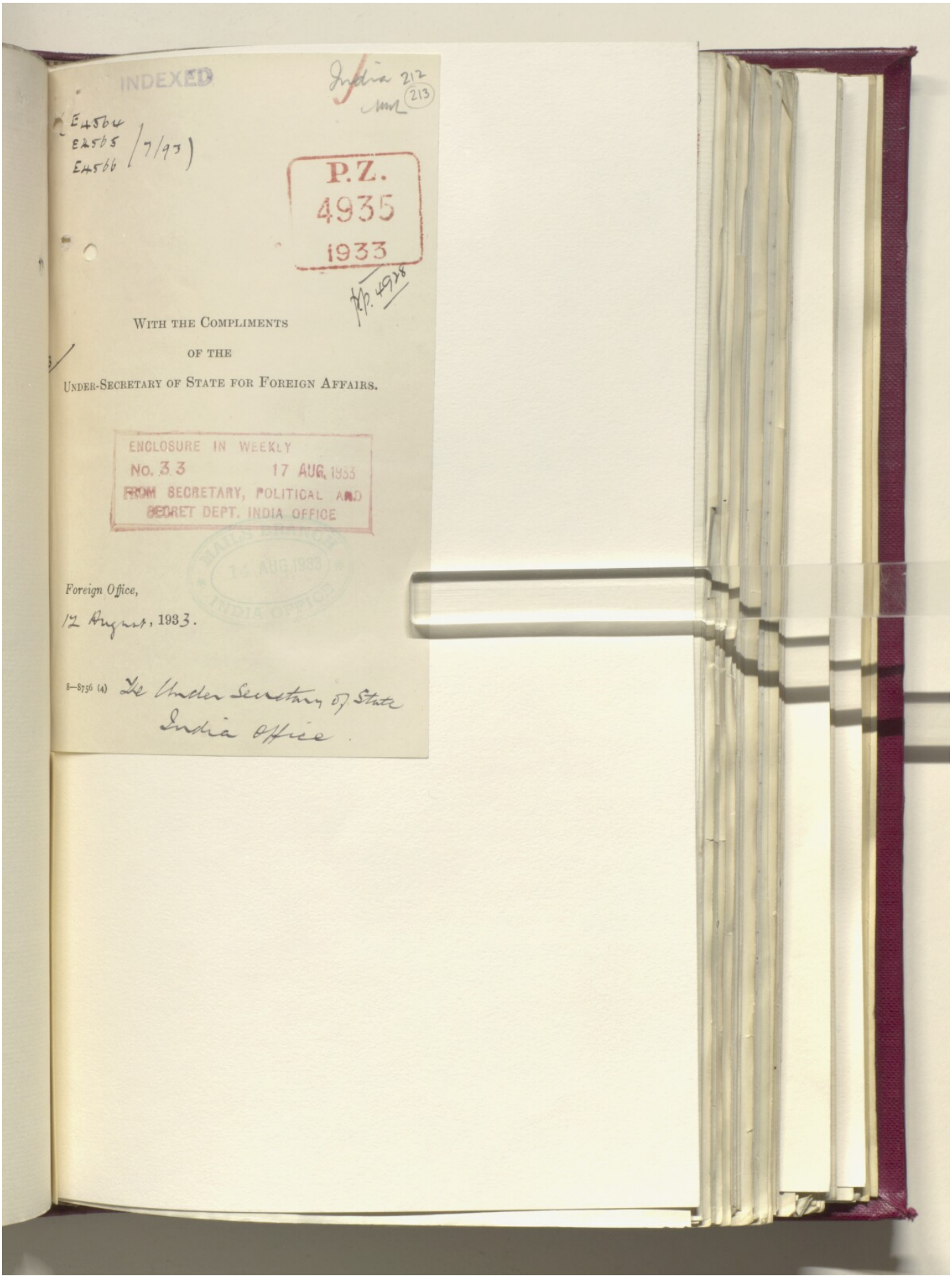
-----oOo-----

Addressed to Bagdad No. 11.

Your telegram No. 32.

No confirmation obtainable as to crossing of 200 more Assyrians August 10th. Latest figure is 515 on the way to Hassetche for interment.

Repeated to Foreign Office No. 14.


INDEXED
India 212
213
E4564
E4565
E4566
(7/93)
P.Z.
4935
1933
P.P. 4928
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY
No. 33 17 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
MAILS DESPATCH
14 AUG 1933
INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
12 August, 1933.
8—8756 (4)
The Under Secretary of State
India Office.

213
214

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4935
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 11th. 1933.

D. 12.40.a.m. August 12th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. August 12th. 1933.

No. 246. (R).

-----oOo-----

4935 My immediately preceding telegram.

Situation this evening is as follows:-

1. In the north 70 Assyrians were captured near Dohuk and sent back to their villages presumably disarmed.

2. At Badi there was encounter between 20 Assyrians and police. Two Assyrians killed, two wounded, two prisoners.

3. Near Amadia parties of Assyrians in mountains have been shooting at sight.

4. There was a panic yesterday amongst Christians in Mosul after shooting of one Assyrian. Situation improved this morning. Nevertheless I have satisfied myself that His Majesty's Consul there has made arrangements in conjunction with the Royal Air Force for protection of British colony of about fifteen. If the situation further improves I have instructed him to proceed to Diana for a day and report on the position ~~to~~ of His Majesty's Vice Consul there.

5. At Baiji there was a fracas between Arabs and 140 Assyrians in employ of Iraq Petroleum Company. No lethal weapons used. Affair has been temporarily patched up.

6. It is in Bagdad itself that the situation has/

214
(215)

has been dangerous, owing to the funeral of Iraqi victims of the alleged Assyrian atrocities, violent press notices and reported intention of lynching Mar Shimun this has naturally unsettled the levies who are anxious for their families in the north and also inhabitants of the two Assyrian encampments. No incident hitherto.

7. Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that 200 more Assyrians have re-crossed into Syria. I am requesting latest figures of Beirut and repeating to you.

8. Otherwise army and police seem to be observing stand-still order.

215
216

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4935
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
11th August, 1933.

D. 4.00 a.m. 12th August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 12th August, 1933.

No. 245. (R).

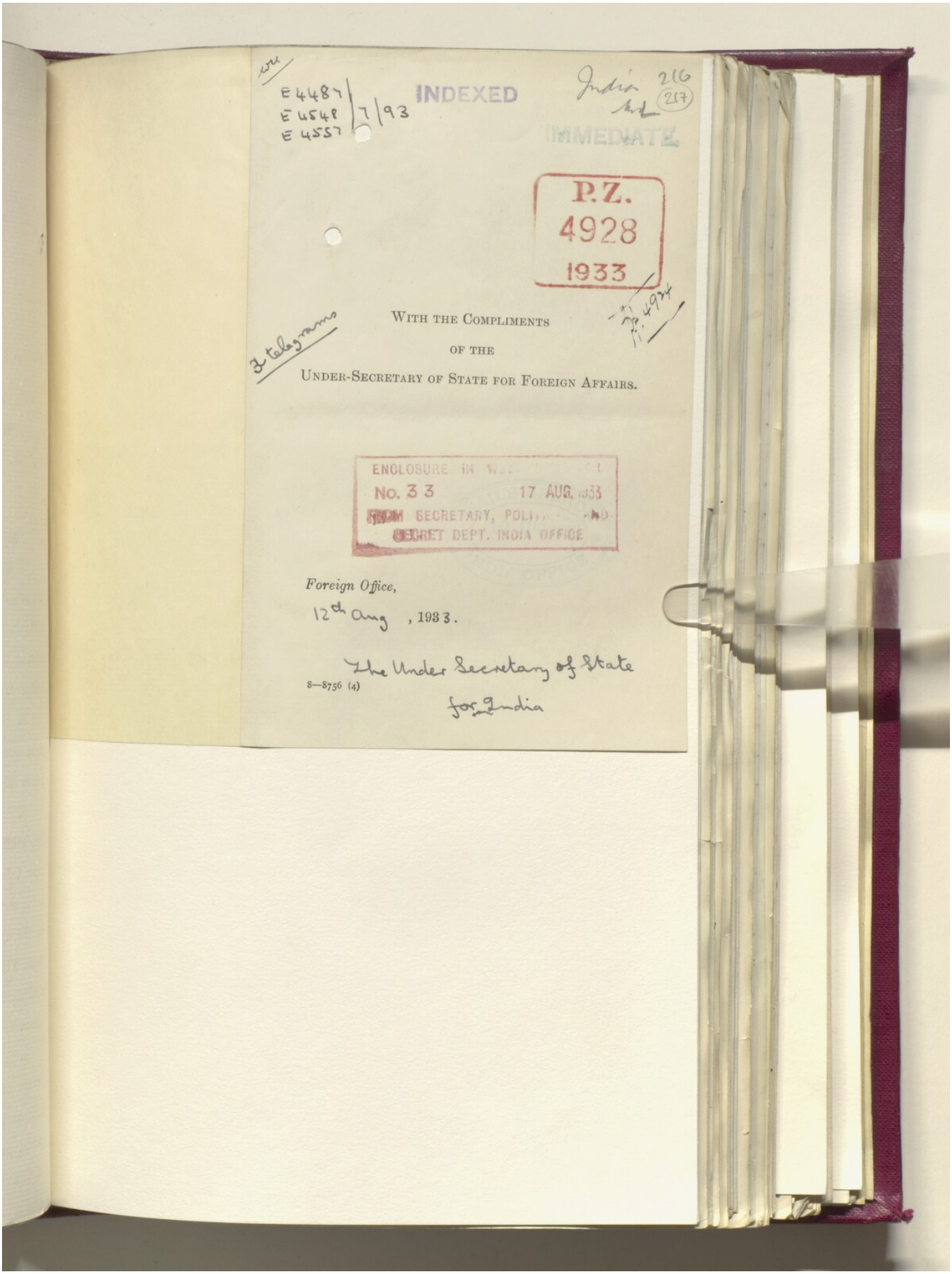
4908 Your telegram No. 172.

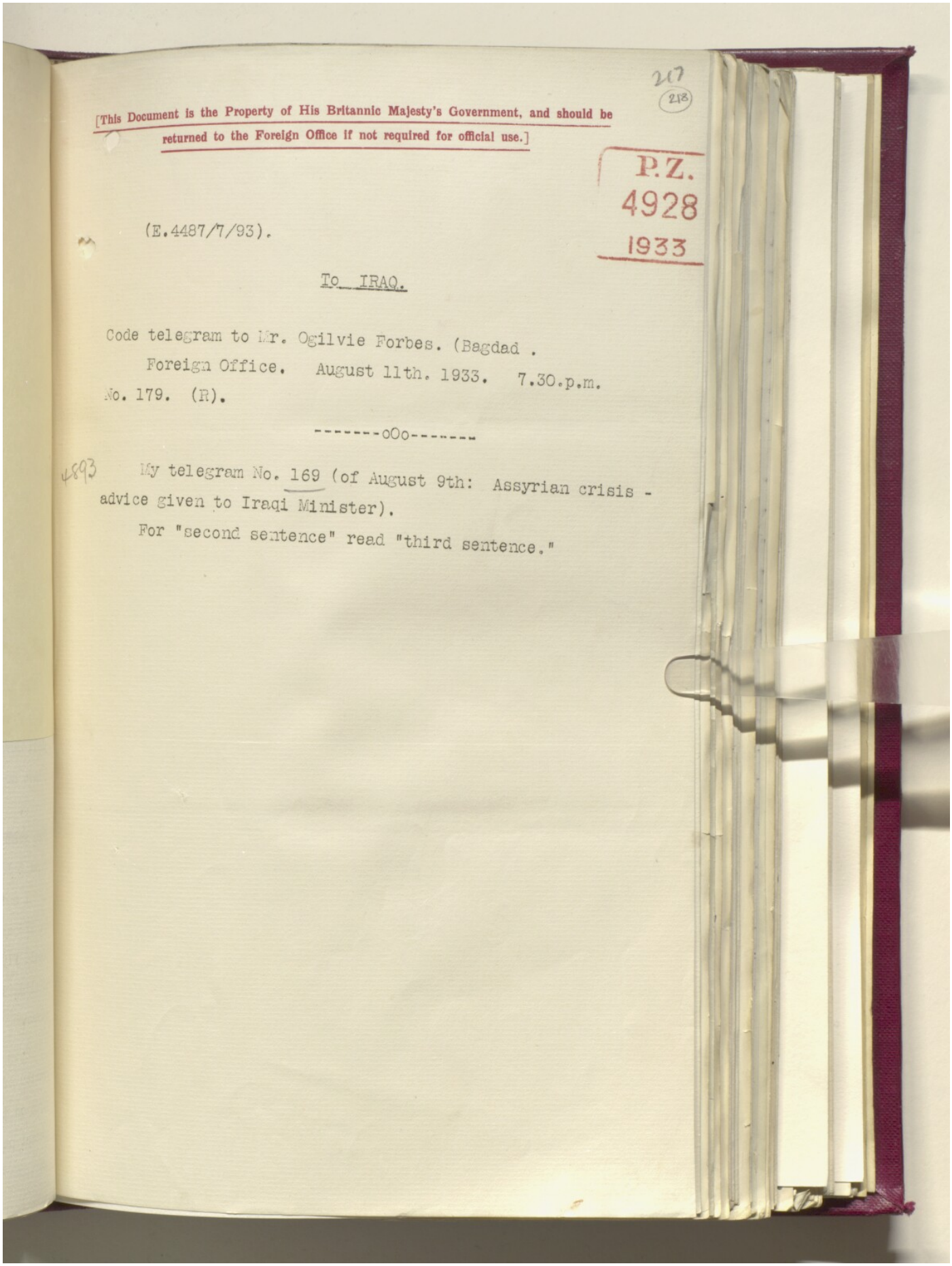
I think true facts are that a proposal to surrender about 100 Assyrians was magnified by extremely inefficient Iraqi officers into an intention of a general surrender en masse. Hearing of this the equally inefficient Iraqi Air Force mistook bodies of army or police for surrendering Assyrians.

2. I admit above is not altogether convincing but we shall never know the truth till we get a reliable British report. I have no information of another massacre by Bekr Sidqi.

3. With regard to British air observers Major Allfrey has been sent to Dohuk. This is a face saving compliance with reque t I made to King of Iraq in my telegram No. 239 paragraph 3. I note with satisfaction authority given me in your telegram No. 176 and I have arranged with Air Officer Commanding that he should fly to Mosul on Sunday to study requirements. Anxiety of situation today in Bagdad prevents him from proceeding there sooner. See my immediately following telegram.

4. Reports regarding Kurdish raids are true. Indeed the problem of protection of semi-deserted Assyrian villages from Kurds on the one hand and amateur police on the other hand at present out-shadows that of hostilities against Assyrians, a great many of whom have apparently doubled back to Syria.


E 4487
E 4548
E 4557
7/93
INDEXED
India 216
217
IMMEDIATE
P.Z.
4928
1933
3 telegrams
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33
17 AUG. 1933
SECRETARY, POLI
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
12th Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8756 (4)



217
218

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4928
1933

(E.4487/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad .
Foreign Office. August 11th. 1933. 7.30.p.m.
No. 179. (R).

-------oOo-------

4893 My telegram No. 169 (of August 9th: Assyrian crisis - advice given to Iraqi Minister).

For "second sentence" read "third sentence."

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

218
219

P.Z.
4928
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
11th August, 1933

D. 2.25 p.m. 11th August, 1933.

R. 5.00 p.m. 11th August, 1933.

No.242. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

4908 Immediately on the receipt of your telegram No.174 early this morning I went to see King Feisal. Nuri was also present.

I said much though I desired information on general situation I had come for one solemn and most serious purpose. I then read out your telegram to His Majesty line for line omitting "grimace" with Nuri translating into Arabic. I went over the ground again and said you wanted an immediate enquiry into conduct of Bekr Sidqi and his Kurds and their punishment if guilty without respect for persons. King Feisal went scarlet in the face and rocking from side to side said he was already making enquiry, a statement which I doubt. He said His Majesty's Government must not single out one special case of atrocity nor must they believe bazaar rumours. I replied that His Majesty's Government had no intention of singling out a special case but desired all cases of atrocity be they Iraqi or Assyrian to be thoroughly investigated and punished. Nor was this bazaar rumour though indeed report was in bazaar as a result. I repeated circumstances described in my telegram No.240.

King Feisal again promised an enquiry but said it must be secret as otherwise it would make position of British Military Mission impossible. He adjured me to tell you that His Majesty as

219
220

2.

as a noble Arab would hold himself personally responsible that justice was done.

I requested His Majesty as an earnest of his goodwill to send Iraqi Minister at once to Foreign Office to confirm above undertaking. He promised to do so. Please inform me. I shall continue to press him on this matter.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

220
221

P.Z.
4928
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes. (Bagdad). August 11th. 1933.

D. 9.55.p.m. August 11th. 1933.

R. 9.00.a.m. August 12th. 1933.

No. 244. (R).

Immediate.

-----oOo-----

4843 Your telegram No. 163, paragraph 7.

Question of Mar Shimun and family is again becoming urgent.

2. As result of recent fighting both King and Nuri whatever may have been their views in Great Britain are now determined on their deportation. In this they are supported by whole of government and by acting adviser to Interior. For a month I have been fighting a lone battle for his release and to prevent something worse. Now matters are coming to a head. King Feisal supported by Nuri told me this morning that unless His Majesty's Government agreed to deportation preferably abroad His Majesty would abdicate as in his view he could not carry on government of the country with Mar Shimun fomenting armed resistance. While we must take abdication threat with a big grain of salt - King Feisal was smarting under my admonitions about Beqr Sidki, see my telegram 242 - matter has now come to a head.

3. Already rumours are circulating that Iraqi Government have intentions against Mar Shimun and that mob wishes to lynch him. This is unsettling levies and the matter is of grave concern to Air Officer Commanding who last night gave permission for certain levies to sleep near his room in Y.M.C.A. Air Officer Commanding is

strongly/

strongly of the opinion that in present state of tension any action by Iraqi Government against Mar Shimun and family might serve to strain loyalty and discipline of levies and other Assyrians here would certainly infinitely rather see Patriarch removed to (gr.undec.).

4. I therefore consider we must take this Assyrian bull by the horns and most seriously suggest that only solution is for His Majesty's Government to move Mar Shimun and family to some place of safety such as Jerusalem or Malta. I fully appreciate expense and other arguments against this proposal. Air Officer Commanding sees no objection from Royal Air Force point of view and levies would be reassured by the thought that he was in British protection.

5. Please give this matter your urgent consideration for there is a limit to time I can whip Iraqis off.

222
223

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.24908
33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated

Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	14. 8.	[illegible]	Assyrian crisis.
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	15	[illegible]	1. Massacre of 14 unarmed assyrians under Iraqi Commander.
Under Secretary.....			2. Recall of Sir F. Humphrys.
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Baghdad tel^m 240 of 10 aug. seems to leave little doubt of the manoeuvre; & F.O. have impressed the gravity of the view which they take of the news on the Change of Affairs (F.O. tel. 174 of 10 aug.)

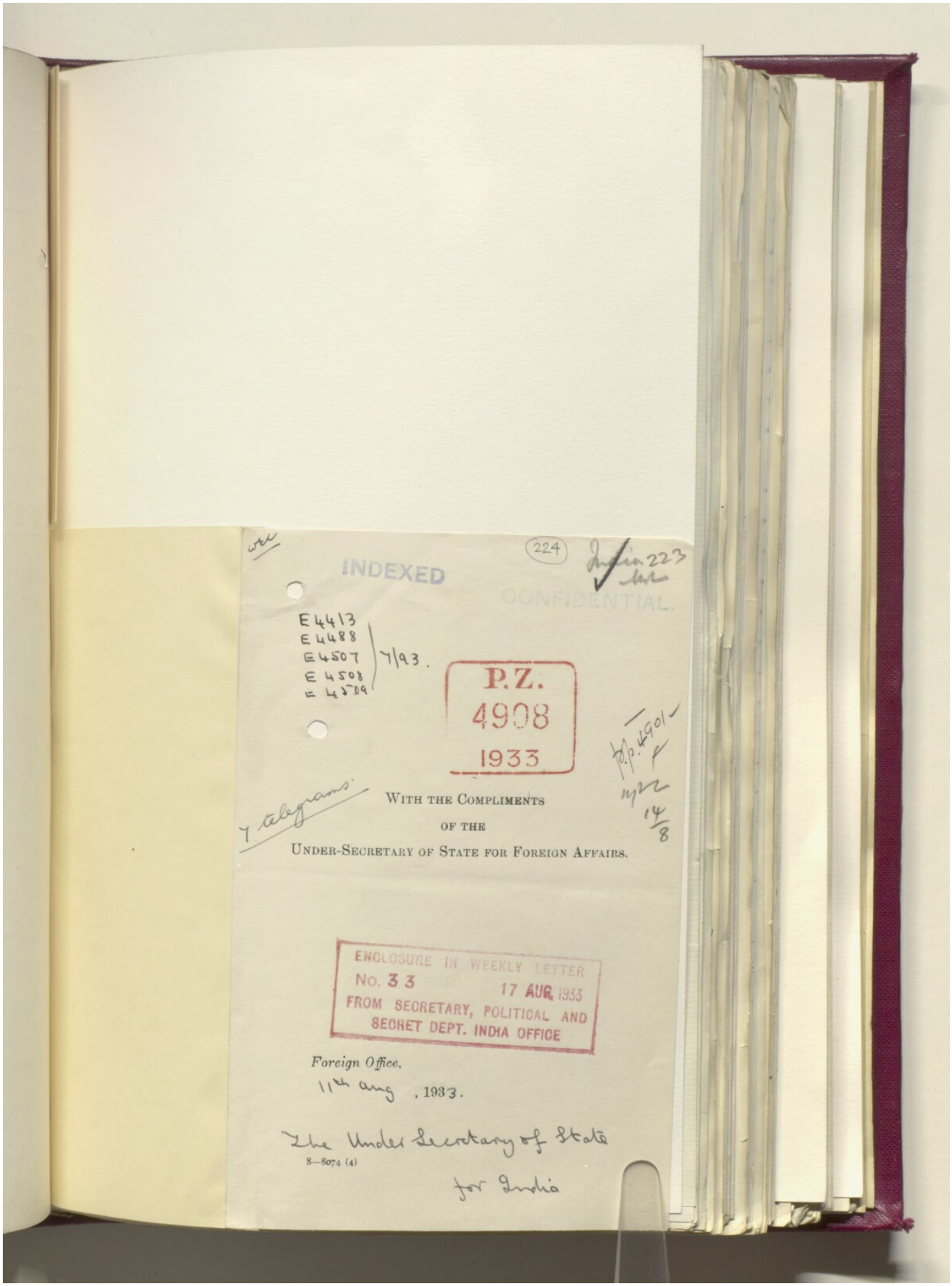
I.L. 14/8

MRL 18/8

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
19 AUG 1933

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31


224
INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL.
E 4413
E 4488
E 4507
E 4508
E 4509
7/93.
P.Z.
4908
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
11th aug, 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

224
(225)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

F.Z. 4908 TO IRAQ. 1933

E. 4488/7/93.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 10th August, 1933. 6.15 p.m.

No. 172.

xxxxxxxxxx

Immediate.

Sequence of events as described in your telegrams 4893 up to No. 238 (of August 9th) causes me grave uneasiness.

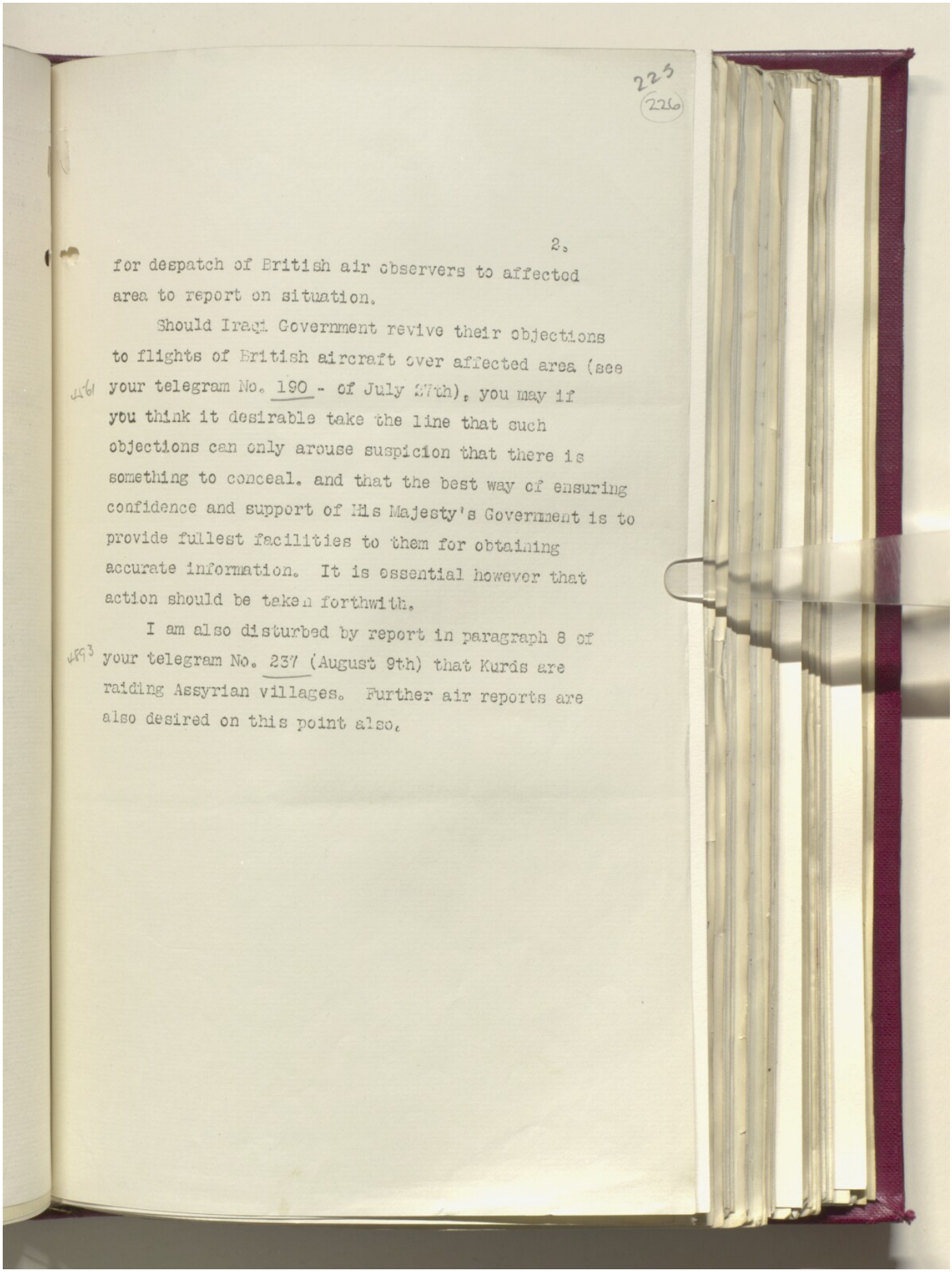
First, rebels are reported to have surrendered and report is apparently confirmed by military and civil advisers.

Shortly afterwards, according to paragraph 1 of 4893 your telegram No. 237, aircraft observe 1,000 Assyrians with white flags, and Iraqi army "mingling with them".

Immediately following this, it is categorically stated that Assyrians have not surrendered, with implication that hostilities are continuing.

First report appears to be confirmed by white flags seen from aircraft. Is it not possible that Iraqi army (which still appears to be under command of notorious Bekr Sidqi) may have got out of hand and attacked surrendering Assyrians, and that this may be reason for hurried issue of denial of report of surrender?

It is of utmost importance to ascertain true facts. Please therefore concert immediately with Air Officer Commanding with a view if possible to arranging for...



225
226

2.

for despatch of British air observers to affected area to report on situation.

Should Iraqi Government revive their objections to flights of British aircraft over affected area (see your telegram No. 190 - of July 27th), you may if you think it desirable take the line that such objections can only arouse suspicion that there is something to conceal, and that the best way of ensuring confidence and support of His Majesty's Government is to provide fullest facilities to them for obtaining accurate information. It is essential however that action should be taken forthwith.

I am also disturbed by report in paragraph 8 of your telegram No. 237 (August 9th) that Kurds are raiding Assyrian villages. Further air reports are also desired on this point also.

226
227

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4908
1933

(E.4413/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, August 10th 1933. 6.10 p.m.

No.173.

^^^^^^^^^^^

4835 Your telegram No.226 (of August 7th. Assyrian crisis - Iraq Air Force).

Our main preoccupation was not so much safety of Iraqi aircraft (although difficulties between Iraqi Air Force and Air Defence Force would have been most unfortunate) as serious objection of principle to Iraqi aircraft carrying out probably somewhat indiscriminate bombing operations against a Christian minority from R.A.F. aerodrome. From this point of view transfer to Simel might present considerable advantages. As seen from this end I should prefer it. If, however, you and A.O.C. agree that, in view of assurances now obtained by A.O.C. regarding limitation of air action (see his telegram No. Z 221 of August 8th to Chief of Air Staff), or for any other reason, alternative 1 is not open to objection or is definitely preferable, you need not re-open question, more especially as I greatly hope that, if indeed military phase is not already over, 4843 representations which you have been instructed in my telegram No.163 (of August 8th) to make to King Feisal may lead to discontinuance of air action.

227
228

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4908
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
August 10th 1933.

D. 12.40 p.m. August 10th 1933.

R. 2.35 p.m. August 10th 1933.

No.239. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

IMMEDIATE.

4893 My telegram No.238.

The King sent for me early this morning to say how sorry he was that I had been deceived regarding surrender of Assyrians. His Majesty said that the whole government had been similarly deceived. These reports which were to be the subject of a disciplinary enquiry emanated from Iraqi troops and air craft on Assyrian front.

2. I had previously discussed the matter with Air Officer Commanding who is strongly of the opinion, in view of what has occurred, that one of his Royal Air Force officers should be appointed as observer with full powers to go where he pleases and to communicate with Air Headquarters. The mere presence of a British officer would also discourage atrocities. It is now abundantly clear that owing to Iraqi jealousy of British we cannot get satisfactory information from either civil or military authorities in the north. Even King Feisal himself is misled.

3. I was therefore decidly cold to King Feisal this

228
229

this morning and after pointing out that I and His Majesty's Government had been fooled I demanded the attachment of Royal Air Force officer as above. The King said he would have to refer this to the Cabinet. In the circumstances I hope you will support any such request Air Officer Commanding and myself may think fit to make.

4. The King told me that the Minister of the Interior was flying north today with a proclamation text of which has not been shown to me inviting Assyrians to return to villages in 48 hours a period which the Minister has power to extend. During this period there will be a stand-still order for police and military. Administrative inspector at Mosul will be with the Minister. The above sounds satisfactory provided terms of proclamation are unobjectionable.

4893 5. My telegram No.237 3rd paragraph. I warned the King again about these Sham(?mar) tribesmen. He knew of their presence, admitted their object was plunder but assured me that they were now across the 4637 river. See also my telegram No.196.

6. Civil authorities at Mosul have issued proclamation to the effect that all motor traffic in motion after dark will be shot at. As Air Officer Commanding is withdrawing his summer camp I am taking steps to have this order modified.

7. Air Officer Commanding concurs.

229
230

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4908
1933

To IRAQ.

(E4508/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 10th August 1933. 8.15 p.m.

No. 176. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

- - -

4908 Your telegram No. 239 (of August 10th - Assyrian crisis), paragraphs 2 and 3 (request for facilities for British R.A.F. observer).

4908 You will see from my telegram No. 172 (of August 10th), which was drafted before receipt of your telegram 239, that I also am impressed by urgent need for appointment of one or more British R.A.F. observers with full freedom of movement. You may therefore inform King Feisal that your request not only has strongest support of His Majesty's Government but is made on their specific instructions and that they attach serious importance to the matter.

230
231

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4908
1933 IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 10th August, 1933.

D. 1.30 p.m. 10th August, 1933.

R. 3.10 p.m. 10th August, 1933.

No. 240. (R).

xxxxxxxxxx

Immediate.

4893 Your telegram No. 168.

Following for Sir R.Vansittart.

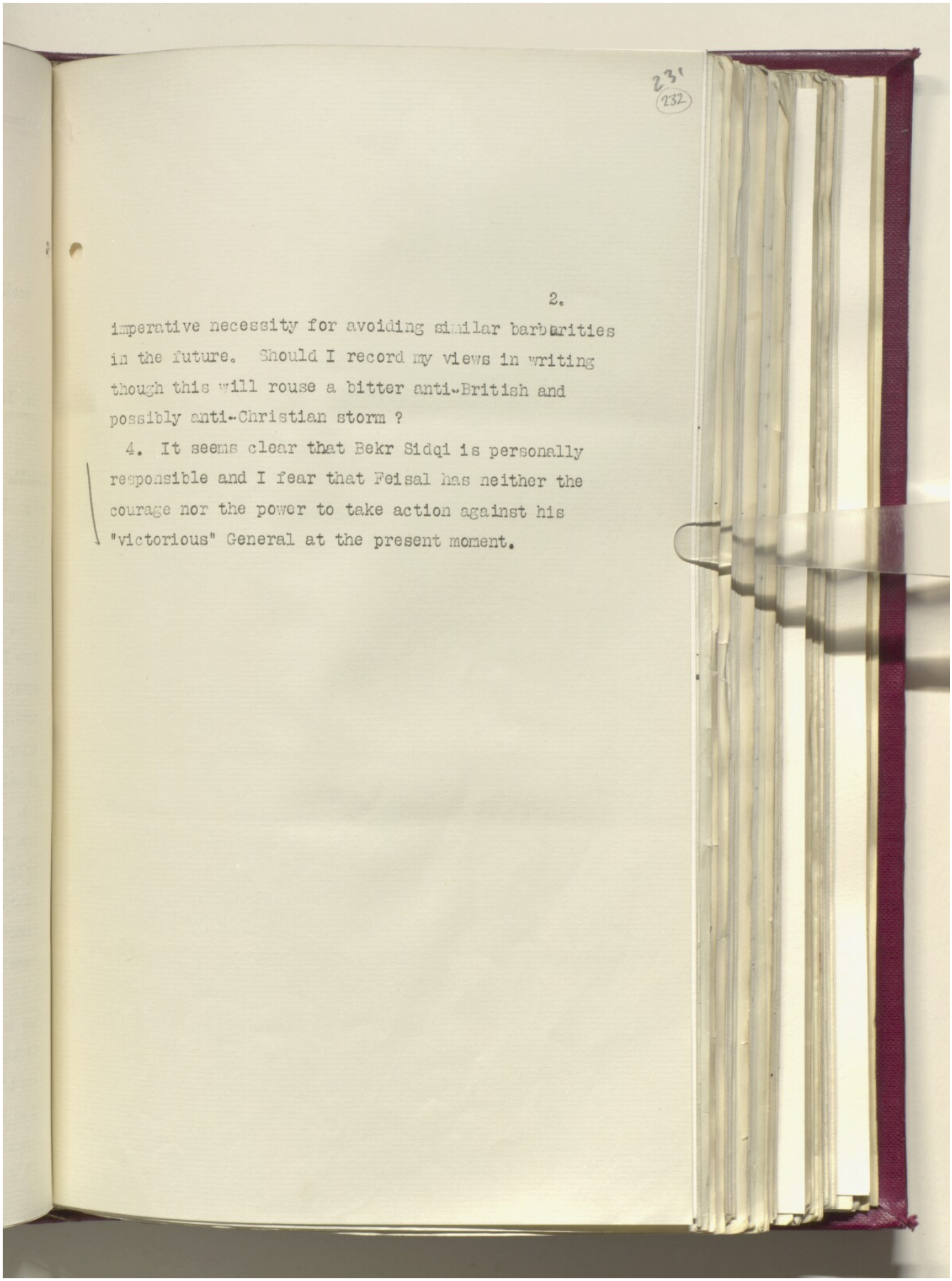
General Headlam has informed member of my staff as follows:

1. Fourteen Assyrians without arms were brought into Iraqi lines by Kurds and shot forthwith by order of Bekr Sidqi who was enraged by alleged (grp. omtd.)ing and mutilation of Iraqi dead and wounded after original attack by the Assyrians on Iraqi picket.

2. Unfortunately Major Allfrey who could probably have prevented massacre was absent in Mosul at the time by Inspector General's orders. General Headlam considers the shooting was ordered in a fit of uncontrollable rage and that there is no reason to suppose that future prisoners will be so treated.

3. I again spoke to the King about this atrocity in
4890 the sense of your telegram No. 166 yesterday morning. He made a grimace, said that enquiry was being made and if facts were true some one would be punished. I am using every opportunity to bring home to him the great harm that this incident will do to Iraq and

imperative...



imperative necessity for avoiding similar barbarities in the future. Should I record my views in writing though this will rouse a bitter anti-British and possibly anti-Christian storm ?

4. It seems clear that Bekr Sidqi is personally responsible and I fear that Feisal has neither the courage nor the power to take action against his "victorious" General at the present moment.

232
233

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4908
1933

(E4509/7/93) To NORWAY.

Telegram (en clair) to Sir F. Humphrys (R.M.S. Atlantis, approaching Lynden, North Norway

Foreign Office, 10th August 1933. 8.00 p.m.

No:- (By Wireless).

- - -

IMMEDIATE.

In view latest serious developments am reluctantly obliged ask you return to your post via London immediately. If no quicker route possible, you should leave Trondjem August 13 by 19.15 train for Oslo where Legation will arrange air journey via Copenhagen and Brussels arriving Croydon evening August 14. Please confirm.

Vansittart.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4908 1933

To IRAQ.

(E4507/7/93)

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 10th August 1933. 6.30 p.m.

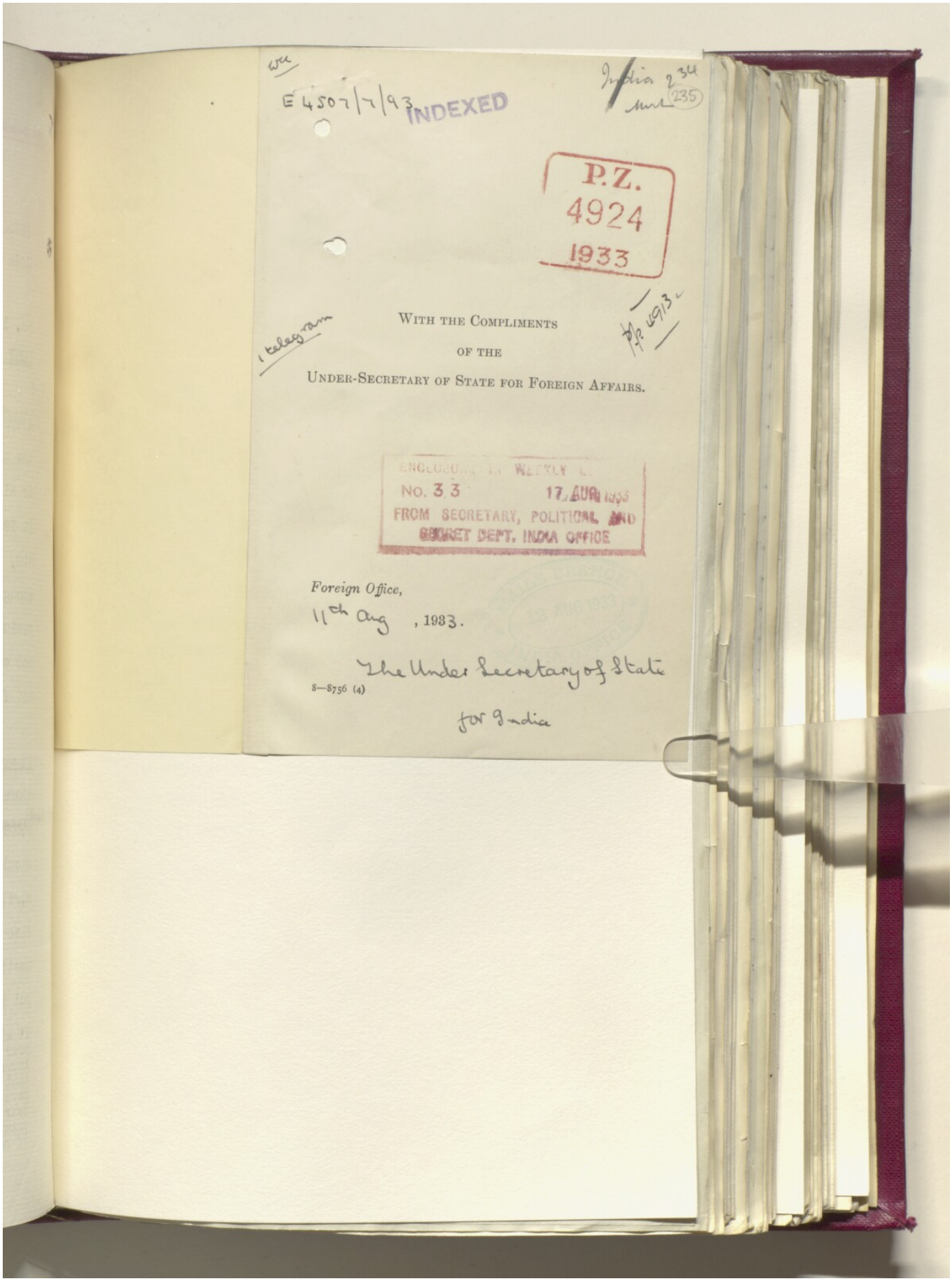
No. 174. (R).

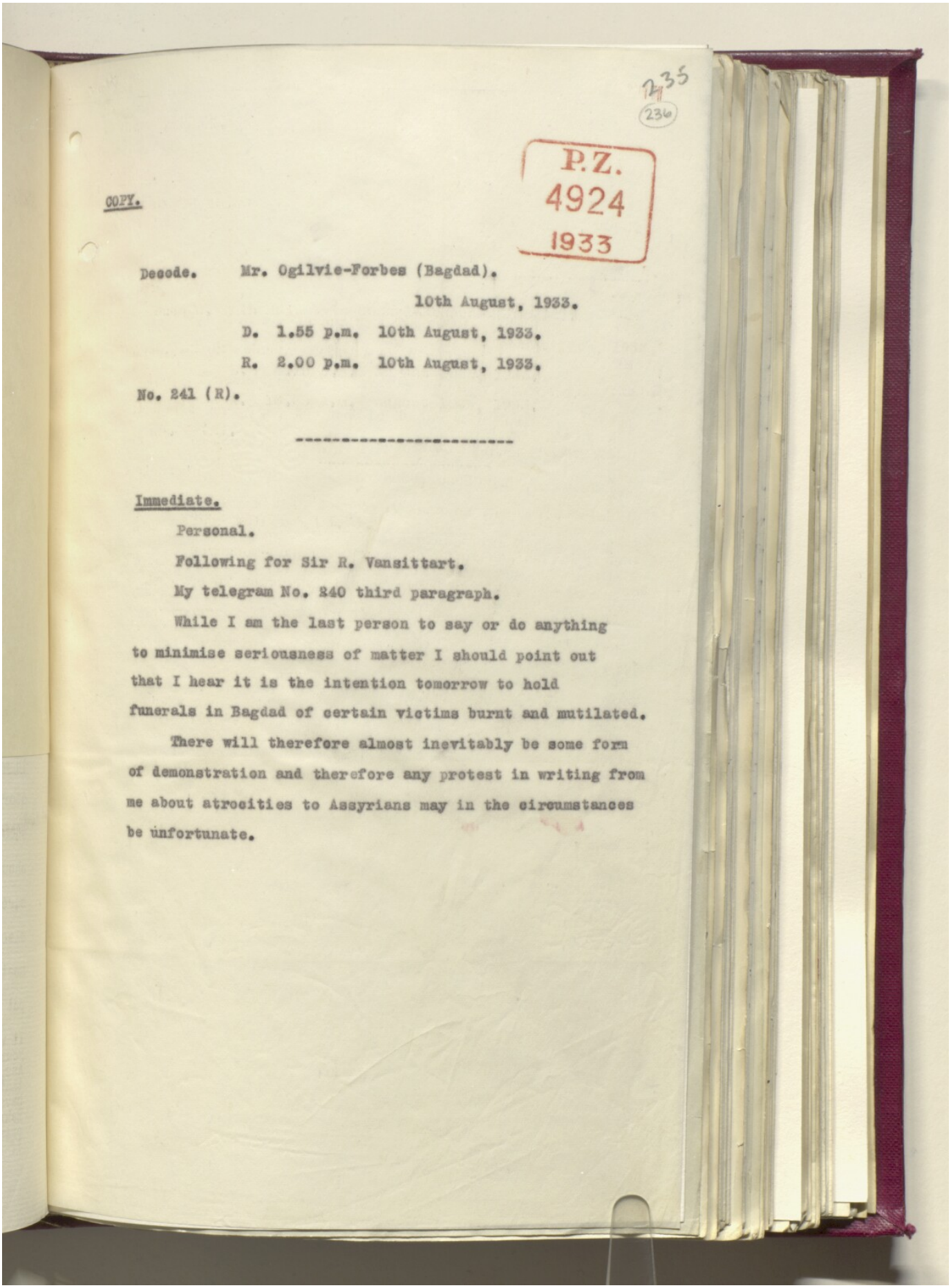
MOST IMMEDIATE.

4908 Your telegram No. 240 (of August 10th) shows that Assyrian prisoners have indeed been massacred. I take the gravest possible view of this, and you must at once do all in your power to make King Feisal do likewise. It is the best and most friendly advice that you can give him, and you should put it to him as such. It is not enough to "make a grimace and say that someone would be punished". The persons to be punished are obviously not only the actual "massacreurs" but Bekr Sidqi first and foremost.

I see no reason why you should press King Feisal in writing if you think this will rouse an unnecessary storm. I had not particularly contemplated that you should act in writing. The essential point is that you should act. For you may be sure, and King Feisal may be sure, that when this inevitably becomes public there will also be a storm in other quarters; and his position for meeting it will be very weak indeed if he has not already put himself right by adequate punishment of culprits.

It will be no answer to say - a possibility indicated in your telegram No. 241 (of August 10th) - that the Assyrians mutilated victims. The answer to that is that two blacks do not make a white. If Assyrians have committed atrocities, they should be punished like Bekr Sidqi. But the indiscriminate massacre of prisoners will surely blacken the reputation of Iraq, if not corrected.


E 4507/7/93 INDEXED
India 234
(235)
P.Z.
4924
1933
Telegram
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
11th Aug, 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8756 (4)



2735
(236)

P.Z.
4924
1933

COPY.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

10th August, 1933.

D. 1.55 p.m. 10th August, 1933.

R. 2.00 p.m. 10th August, 1933.

No. 241 (R).

Immediate.

Personal.

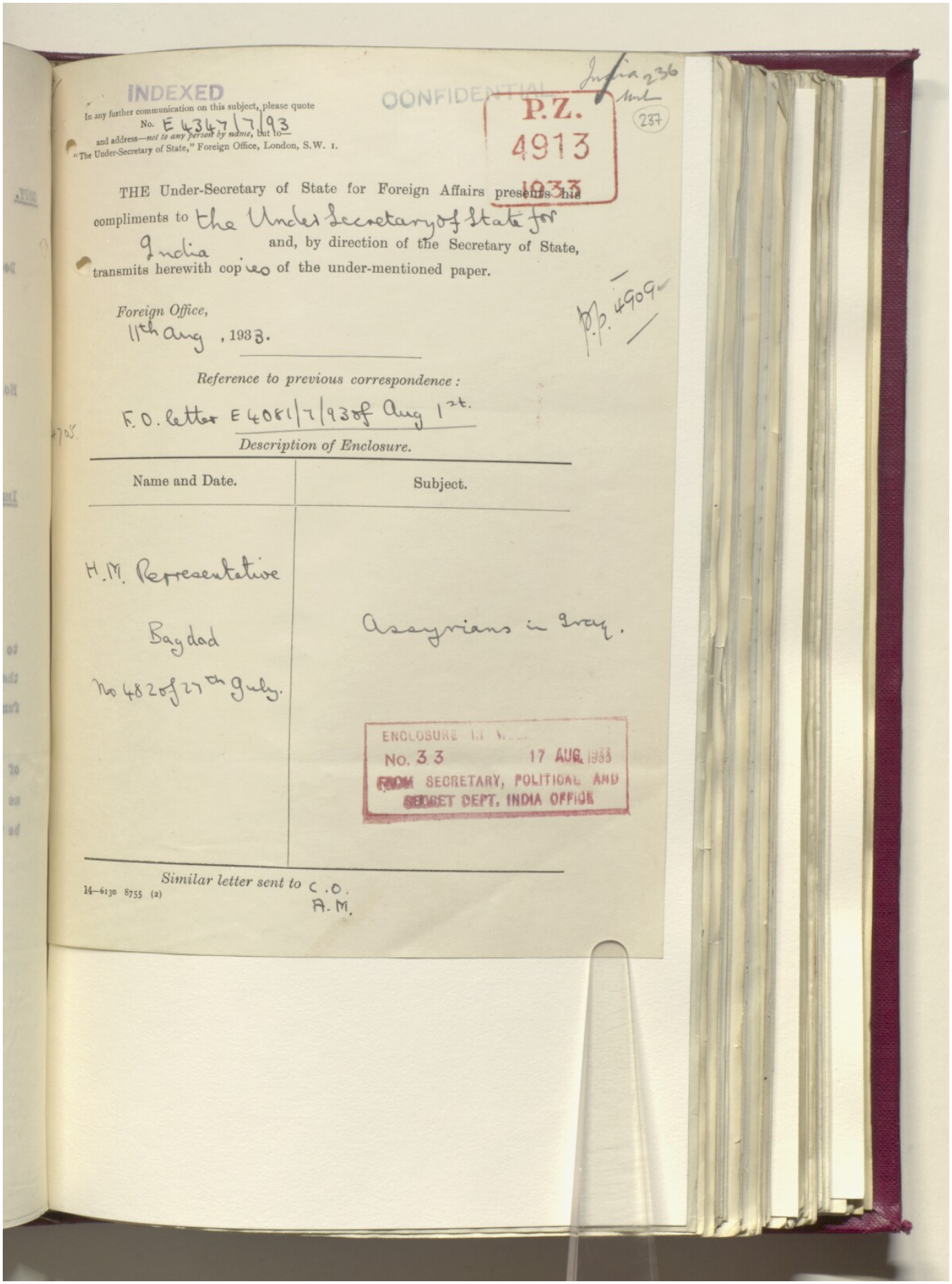
Following for Sir R. Vansittart.

My telegram No. 240 third paragraph.

While I am the last person to say or do anything to minimise seriousness of matter I should point out that I hear it is the intention tomorrow to hold funerals in Bagdad of certain victims burnt and mutilated.

There will therefore almost inevitably be some form of demonstration and therefore any protest in writing from me about atrocities to Assyrians may in the circumstances be unfortunate.

P.Z.
4924
1933



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4347/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

India 236
237

P.Z. 4913 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

P.P. 4909

Foreign Office,
11th Aug, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 4081/7/93 of Aug 1st.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad No 482 of 27th July.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33 17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O.
A.M.

14—6130 8755 (2)

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z. 4913 1933

EASTERN (IRAQ). August 4, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 4347/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 482.)

Sir, *Bagdad, July 27, 1933.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 462 of the 19th July, I have the honour to transmit herewith an interesting report by the Acting Adviser to the Interior on the Assyrian exodus up to and including the 25th July.

2. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail, the 27th July. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Mr. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

(P.S. No. 571.)

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes, *Bagdad, July 25, 1933.*

REFERENCE correspondence ending with my P.S. No. 557 of the 15th July, 1933.

1. You will remember that on the 11th July, at the second meeting in Mosul, the leaders of the Mar Shimun party had given the impression that the explanations given them had carried a certain degree of conviction; they undertook to be obedient as long as they were in Iraq, but intimated that they would wish to consult Mar Shimun as to whether they should stay or leave (Stafford's S/236 of the 11th July, 1933, paragraph 5). Yaku and Luko then promised to come down to Bagdad and endeavour to persuade Mar Shimun to sign the Cornwallis draft; the wilder spirits were reported to be still talking of leaving Iraq.

2. Yaku and Luko were supposed to have left Mosul for Bagdad on Friday, the 14th July, but, as you know, never turned up. It now transpires that they went across to Syria and interviewed the French Special Service Officer at Aindivar, the administrative headquarters of the Bec de Canard; the interview took place, one may suppose, on or about the 16th July. In the meantime messages had evidently been sent to Mar Shimun, for on the 15th or 16th July he called on the French Chargé d'Affaires to sound him regarding a move to Syria and employment in the French military units. From M. Lépissier's account of the interview, I gather that, while he disclaimed, on the part of the French Government, any desire to get involved in the political or settlement issue, he was not entirely categorical in turning down the desire to enlist, as he was unaware of the policy of the military. From other accounts it seems clear that the French officers at Aindivar did not, when seeing Yaku and Luko, stifle all hopes of enlistment. It is now alleged that this was not Yaku's first visit to Syria.

3. Since both Mar Shimun and Yaku are reported to have referred to Colonel Stafford's remarks on the 10th July about military service in Syria, I attach, for convenience, the relevant passage from his statement.* It is clear that the possibility was only mentioned to be dismissed as impracticable, and the references to it as an encouragement to them to decide on emigration are quite disingenuous.

4. Both Yaku and Mar Shimun evidently sent encouraging messages back to Mosul regarding the results of their interviews with the French authorities. On the 20th July it was reported in Mosul that Yaku and Luko had gone to Syria and that villagers of the Dohuk area were being encouraged to emigrate from Iraq. The same evening concentrations of armed Assyrians were reported near the group of villages north-west of Dohuk. On Friday, the 21st, Major Sargon,

(1) Not printed.

[879 d—1]

Inspecting Officer of Police, visited a number of these villages and confirmed that they were entirely empty of the able-bodied men, who had gone off to the hills with their arms, ammunition and mules; the women and children remained, and were in some places markedly truculent. At each village the reason for the exodus was said to be the intention of the Government to take the arms of the Assyrians. At the Mosul meeting this alleged intention had been categorically denied, and the constant repetition of the allegation indicates intensive propaganda; Mar Shimun had made the same allegation to M. Lépissier. This was the argument used to bring out the rank and file by the leaders, whose motives, as I shall show in a following letter, were very different.

5. On Friday morning there was a belief that the movement to the hills was preparatory not to an exodus to Syria, but to the presentation of certain demands in support of the familiar ambitions of Mar Shimun. But the arrival of the first party of 150 armed men at Faishkhabur, followed by, it was reported, another thousand that night and the next day, showed that the earlier rumours had been well-founded. Smaller parties crossed on Sunday, the 24th.

6. On Saturday, the 23rd, the French Chargé d'Affaires protested to the Iraqi Government against this armed incursion. The Iraqi Government, on its side, called upon the Syrian authorities to disarm and remove to a distance the recalcitrant Assyrians who had crossed the boundary without Iraqi permission, as required by articles 5 and 6 of the "Accord provisoire." The French Chargé d'Affaires was also informed that the Assyrians who had crossed would not be allowed back except on condition of being disarmed.

7. On the 22nd July additional police reached the area as follows:—

	Men.
Left bank—	
Faishkhabur	107
Shailki	70
Right bank—	
Tall Abu Dhahir	50
Tall Ugla	30

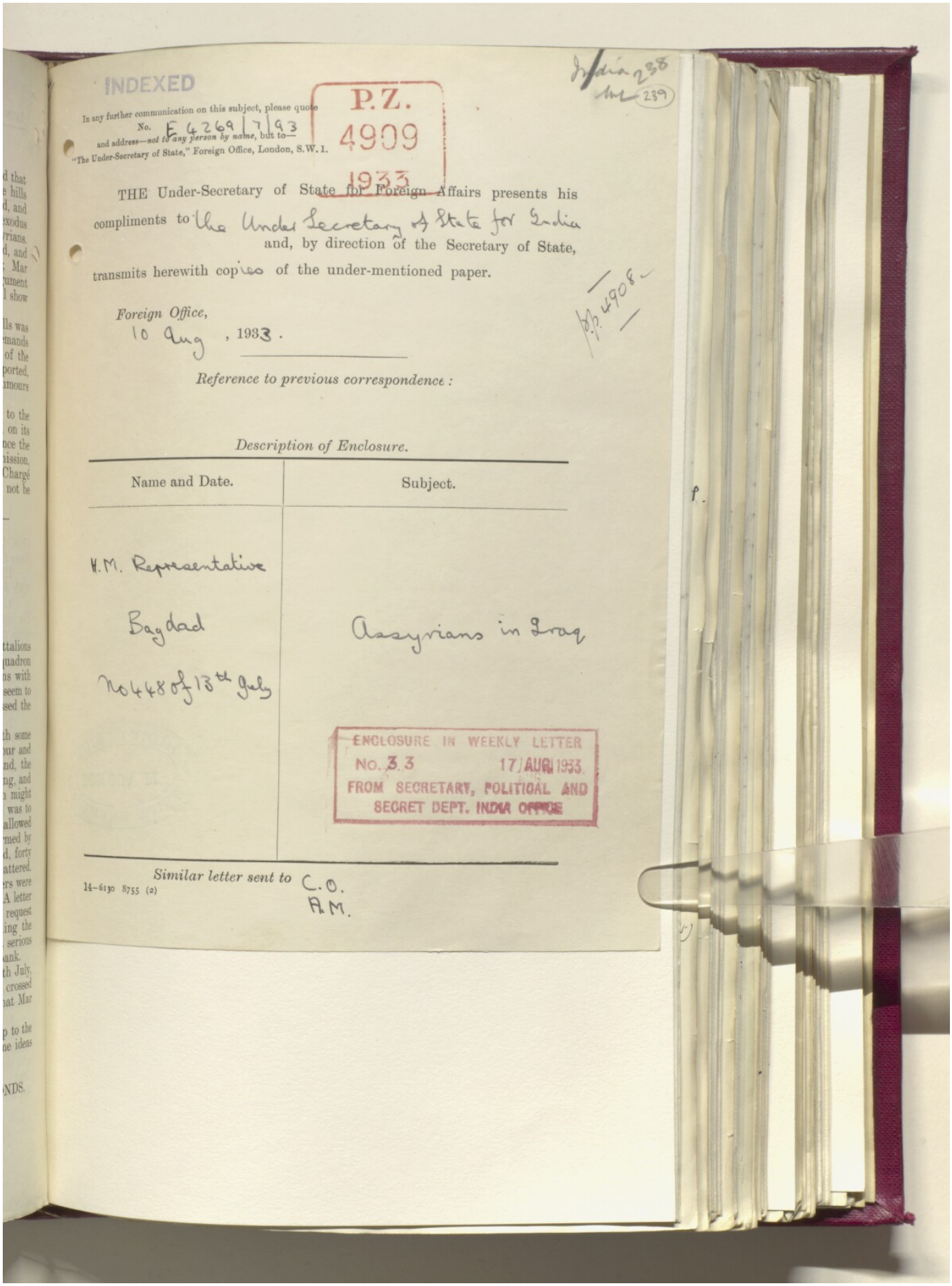
On the 24th and 25th July the Iraqi army column, comprising four battalions of infantry, motor machine-gun company, one mountain battery and one squadron of cavalry, arrived in the area east of the Tigris and took up positions with orders to prevent any recrossing by the Assyrians. All reports, however, seem to indicate that there are as yet no practicable fords; all parties that crossed the river used ferries.

8. On the morning of the 25th July a party, stated to be 100, with some Ashutis, under another ex-levy officer named Yaku, arrived at Faishkhabur and demanded to cross. The Minister was in a dilemma. On the one hand, the French had demanded that the Assyrians should be prevented from crossing, and the troops were now on the spot; on the other hand, forcible prevention might precipitate fighting. He eventually issued instructions that an attempt was to be made to persuade them to go back; if they persisted they were to be allowed to cross. But before these instructions had arrived the Assyrians, alarmed by the presence of troops and the delay, broke away. One party of, it is said, forty encountered a military patrol; sixteen were rounded up; the remainder scattered. I happened to be with the Minister when the news was received, and orders were issued that they should be released with their arms and allowed to cross. A letter was also written to the French Chargé d'Affaires reminding him of the request to remove the refugees from the vicinity of the frontier, and explaining the impossibility of preventing new arrivals from crossing, without risk of a serious engagement, as long as the first batch remained in position on the right bank.

9. M. Lépissier, who was dining with me on the evening of the 25th July, informed me that his information gave the number of Assyrians who had crossed as 700, considerably less than the Iraqi figure. He also informed me that Mar Shimun was to see him on the 26th July.

10. In this letter I have confined myself to a narrative of events up to the evening of the 25th July. In another letter I will try to put down some ideas and conclusions.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.



INDEXED

P.Z. 4909 1933

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4269/7/93 and address—not to any person by name, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
10 Aug, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

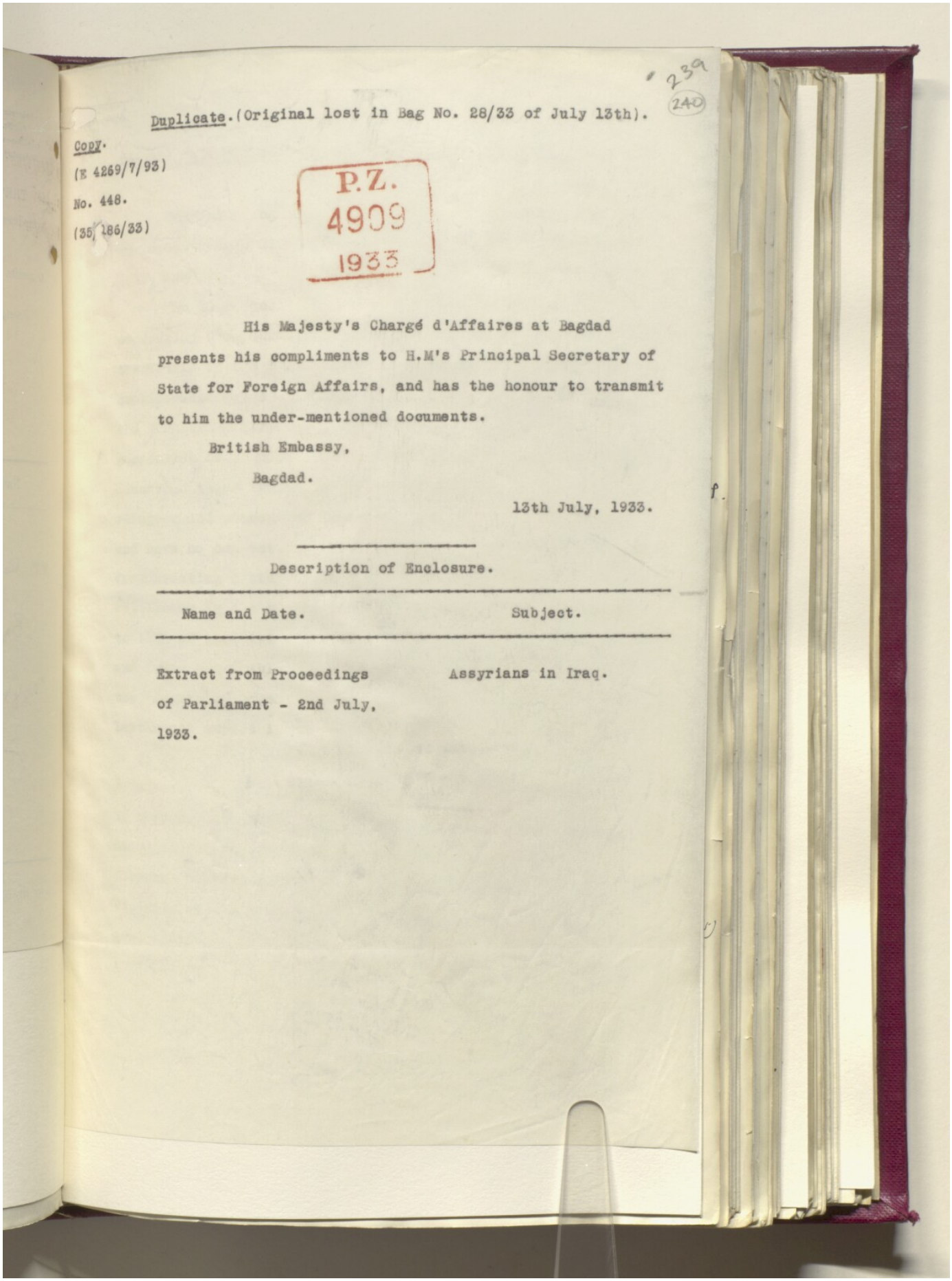
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad No 448 of 13th July	Assyrians in Iraq

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 33 17 AUG 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)



239
240

Duplicate.(Original lost in Bag No. 28/33 of July 13th).

Copy.
(E 4269/7/93)
No. 448.
(35/186/33)

P.Z.
4909
1933

His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad presents his compliments to H.M's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him the under-mentioned documents.

British Embassy,
Bagdad.

13th July, 1933.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Extract from Proceedings of Parliament - 2nd July, 1933.	Assyrians in Iraq.

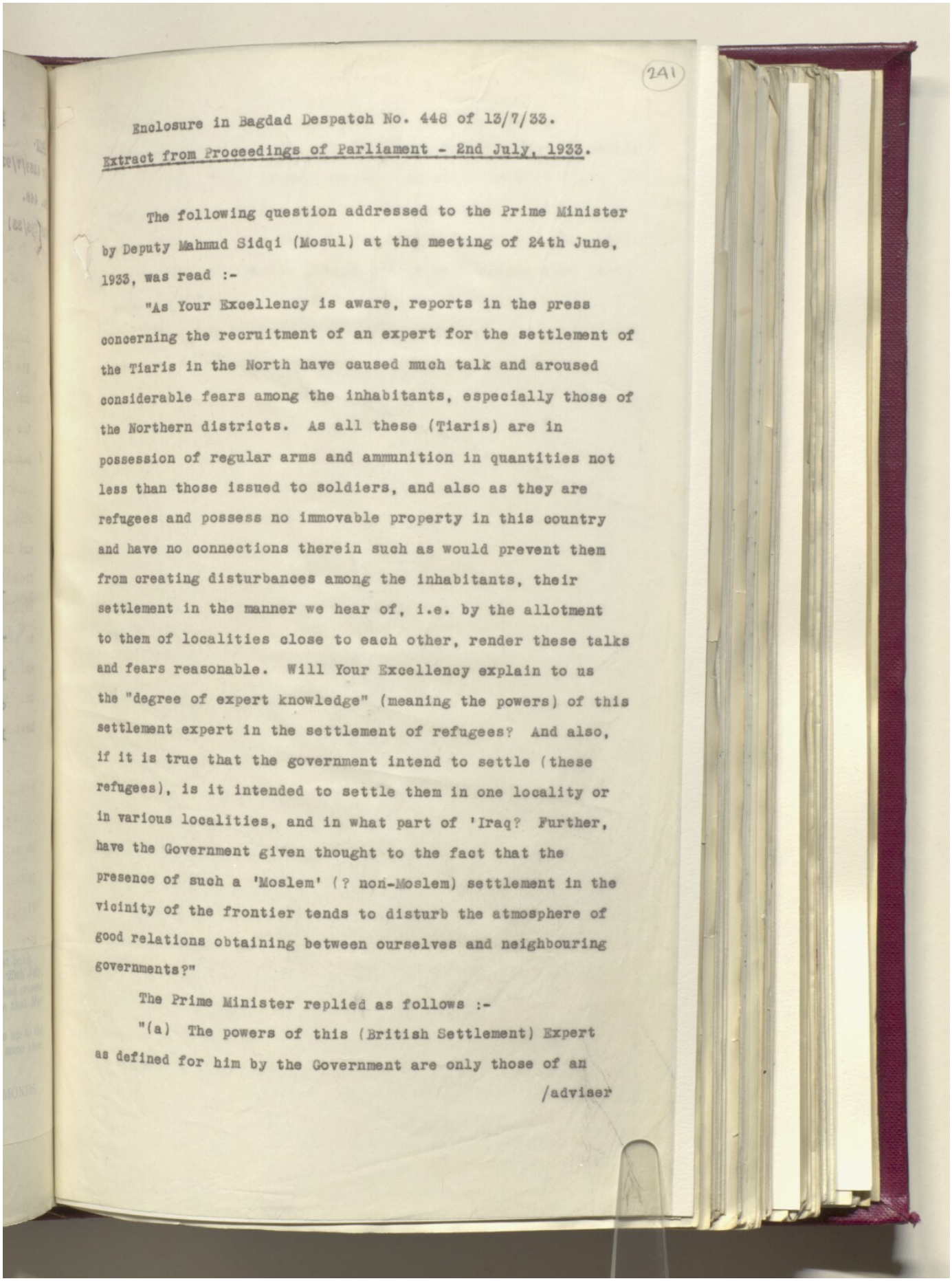
engagement, as long as the first batch remained in position on the right bank.

9. M. Lépissier, who was dining with me on the evening of the 26th, informed me that his information gave the number of Assyrians who had crossed as 700, considerably less than the Irhoi figure. He also informed me that Mr. Shimun was to see him on the 26th July.

10. In this letter I have confined myself to a narrative of events up to the evening of the 25th July. In another letter I will try to put down some observations and conclusions.

Yours sincerely,

C. J. EDMONDS



241

Enclosure in Bagdad Despatch No. 448 of 13/7/33.

Extract from Proceedings of Parliament - 2nd July, 1933.

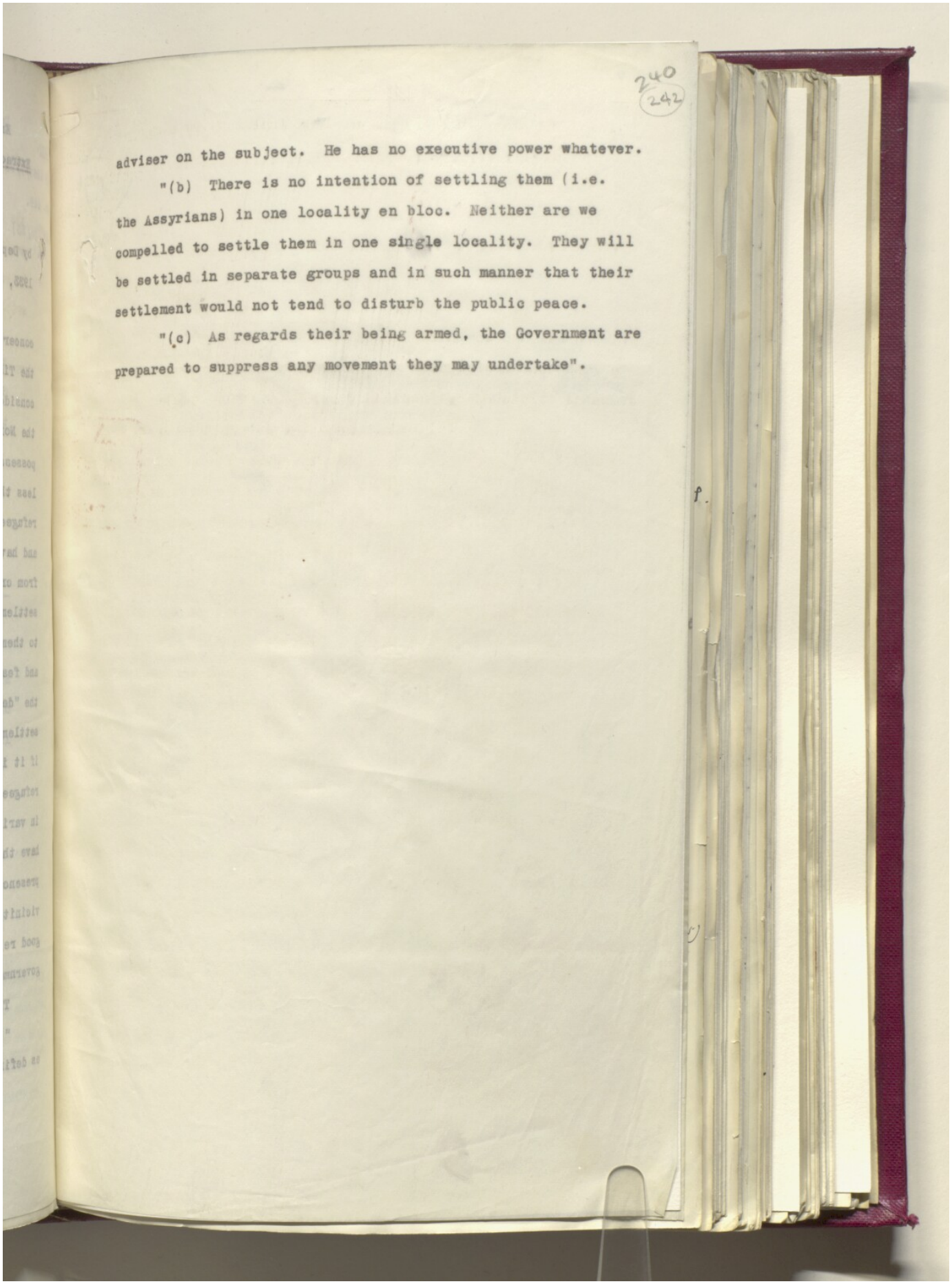
The following question addressed to the Prime Minister by Deputy Mahmud Sidqi (Mosul) at the meeting of 24th June, 1933, was read :-

"As Your Excellency is aware, reports in the press concerning the recruitment of an expert for the settlement of the Tiaris in the North have caused much talk and aroused considerable fears among the inhabitants, especially those of the Northern districts. As all these (Tiaris) are in possession of regular arms and ammunition in quantities not less than those issued to soldiers, and also as they are refugees and possess no immovable property in this country and have no connections therein such as would prevent them from creating disturbances among the inhabitants, their settlement in the manner we hear of, i.e. by the allotment to them of localities close to each other, render these talks and fears reasonable. Will Your Excellency explain to us the "degree of expert knowledge" (meaning the powers) of this settlement expert in the settlement of refugees? And also, if it is true that the government intend to settle (these refugees), is it intended to settle them in one locality or in various localities, and in what part of 'Iraq? Further, have the Government given thought to the fact that the presence of such a 'Moslem' (? non-Moslem) settlement in the vicinity of the frontier tends to disturb the atmosphere of good relations obtaining between ourselves and neighbouring governments?"

The Prime Minister replied as follows :-

"(a) The powers of this (British Settlement) Expert as defined for him by the Government are only those of an

/adviser

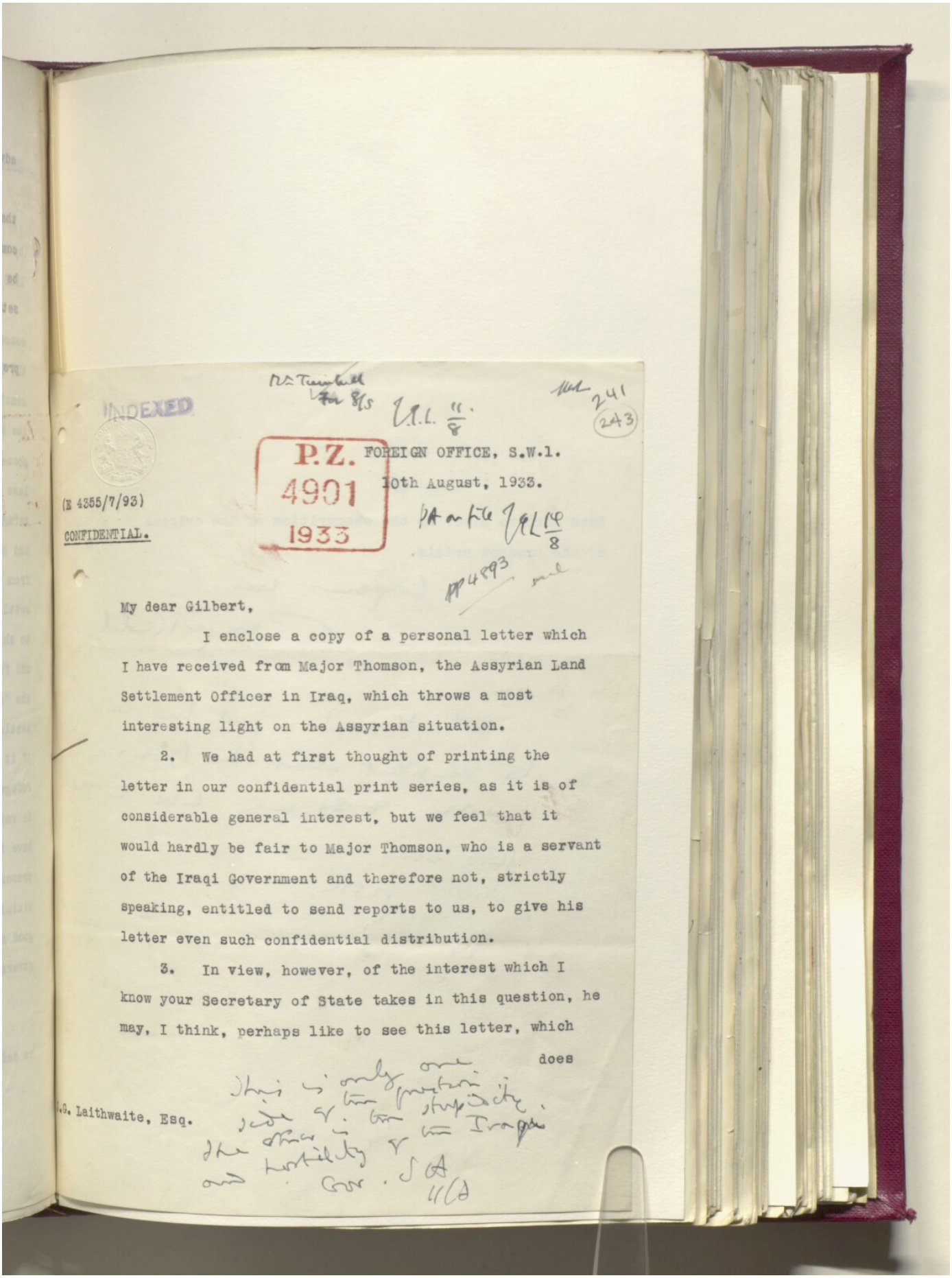


240
242

adviser on the subject. He has no executive power whatever.

"(b) There is no intention of settling them (i.e. the Assyrians) in one locality en bloc. Neither are we compelled to settle them in one single locality. They will be settled in separate groups and in such manner that their settlement would not tend to disturb the public peace.

"(c) As regards their being armed, the Government are prepared to suppress any movement they may undertake".



INDEXED

P.Z. 4901 1933

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

10th August, 1933.

(E 4355/7/93)

CONFIDENTIAL.

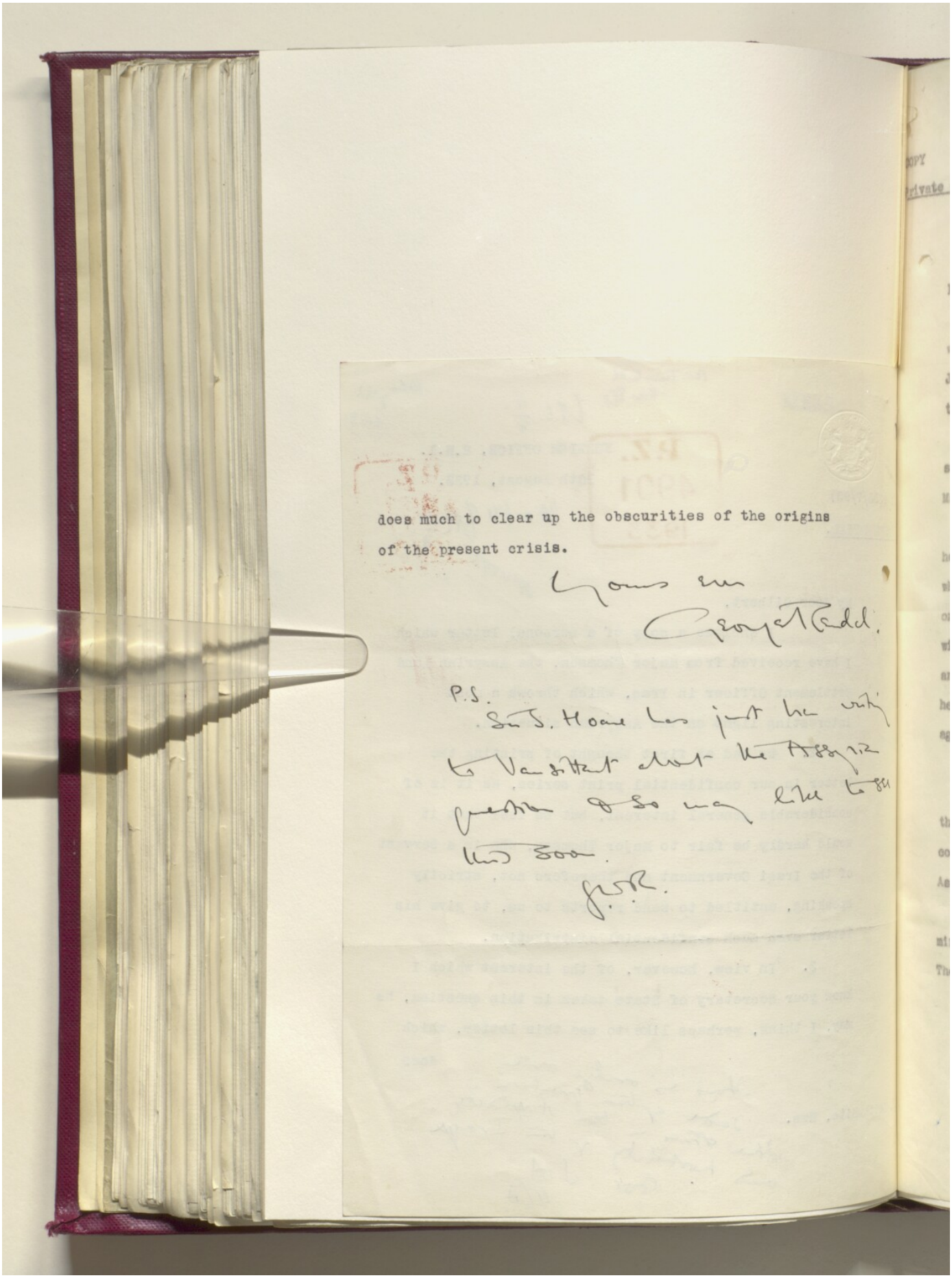
My dear Gilbert,

I enclose a copy of a personal letter which I have received from Major Thomson, the Assyrian Land Settlement Officer in Iraq, which throws a most interesting light on the Assyrian situation.

2. We had at first thought of printing the letter in our confidential print series, as it is of considerable general interest, but we feel that it would hardly be fair to Major Thomson, who is a servant of the Iraqi Government and therefore not, strictly speaking, entitled to send reports to us, to give his letter even such confidential distribution.

3. In view, however, of the interest which I know your Secretary of State takes in this question, he may, I think, perhaps like to see this letter, which does

W.G. Laithwaite, Esq.



does much to clear up the obscurities of the origins of the present crisis.

Yours ever

George Rendel.

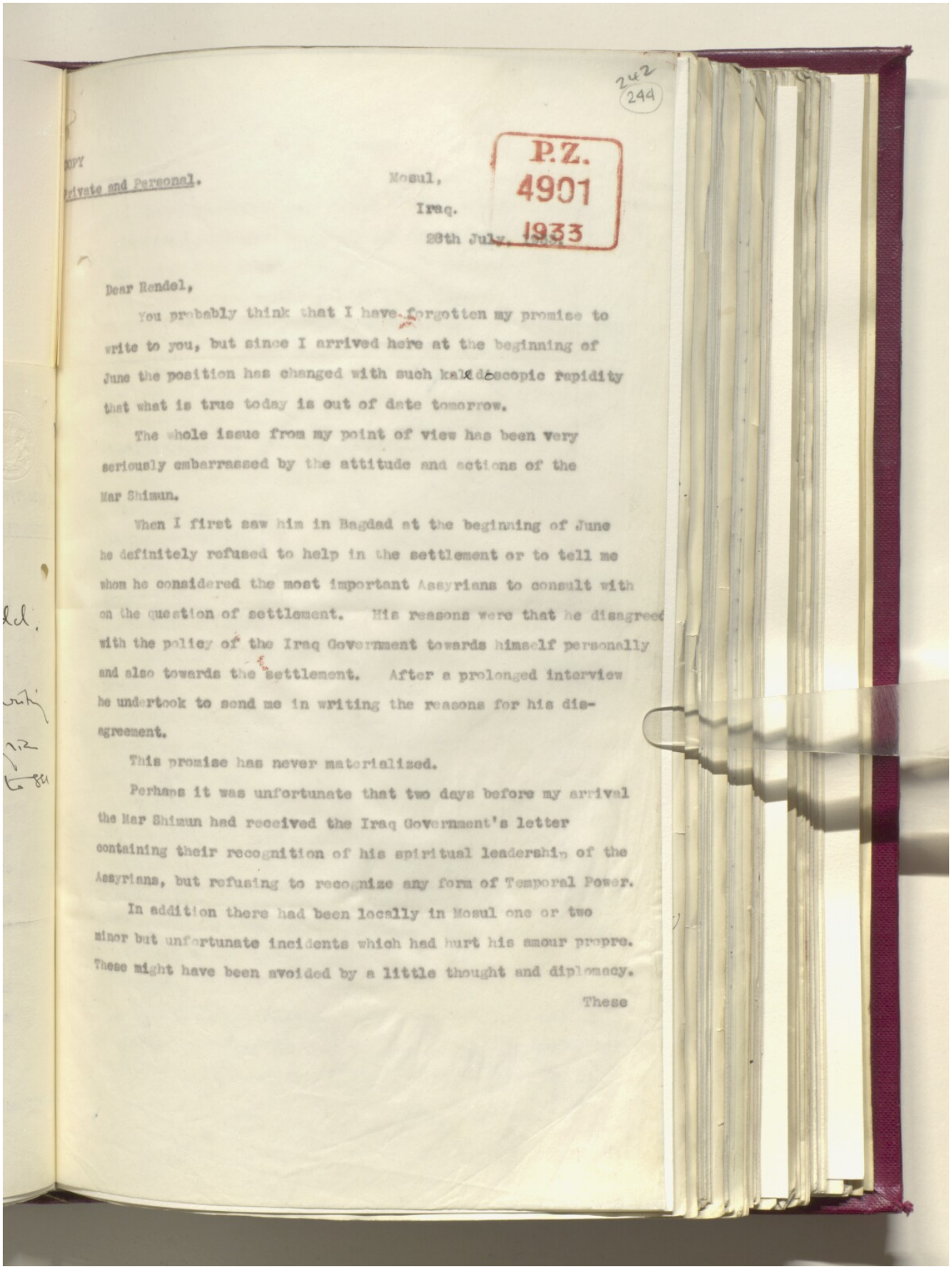
P.S.

Sir J. Hoare has just been writing to Vansittart about the Assyrian question & so may like to see this soon.

G.W.R.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000062



242
244

P.Z.
4901
1933

COPY
Private and Personal.

Mosul,
Iraq.
26th July, 1933.

Dear Rendel,

You probably think that I have forgotten my promise to write to you, but since I arrived here at the beginning of June the position has changed with such kaleidoscopic rapidity that what is true today is out of date tomorrow.

The whole issue from my point of view has been very seriously embarrassed by the attitude and actions of the Mar Shimun.

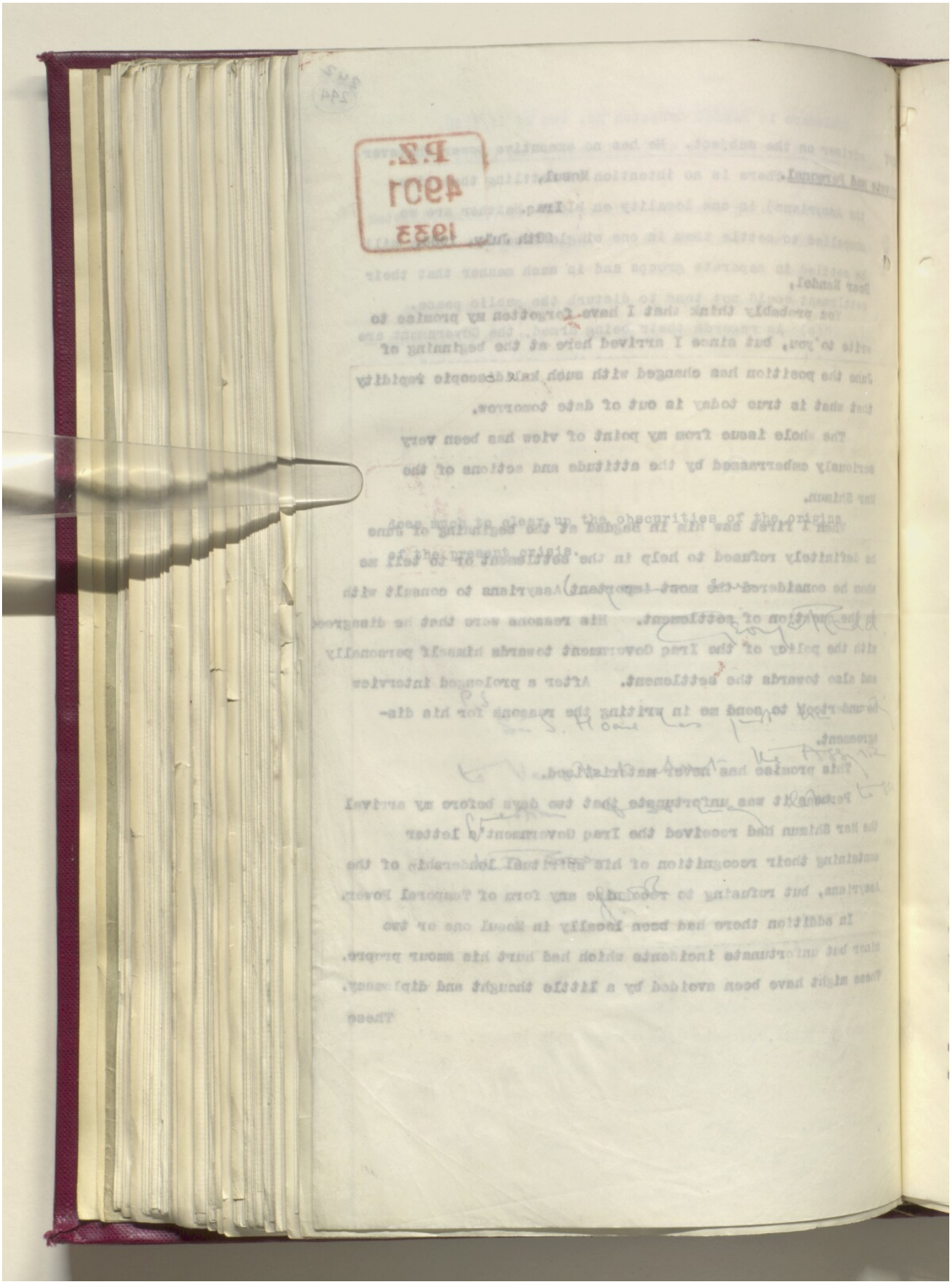
When I first saw him in Bagdad at the beginning of June he definitely refused to help in the settlement or to tell me whom he considered the most important Assyrians to consult with on the question of settlement. His reasons were that he disagreed with the policy of the Iraq Government towards himself personally and also towards the settlement. After a prolonged interview he undertook to send me in writing the reasons for his disagreement.

This promise has never materialized.

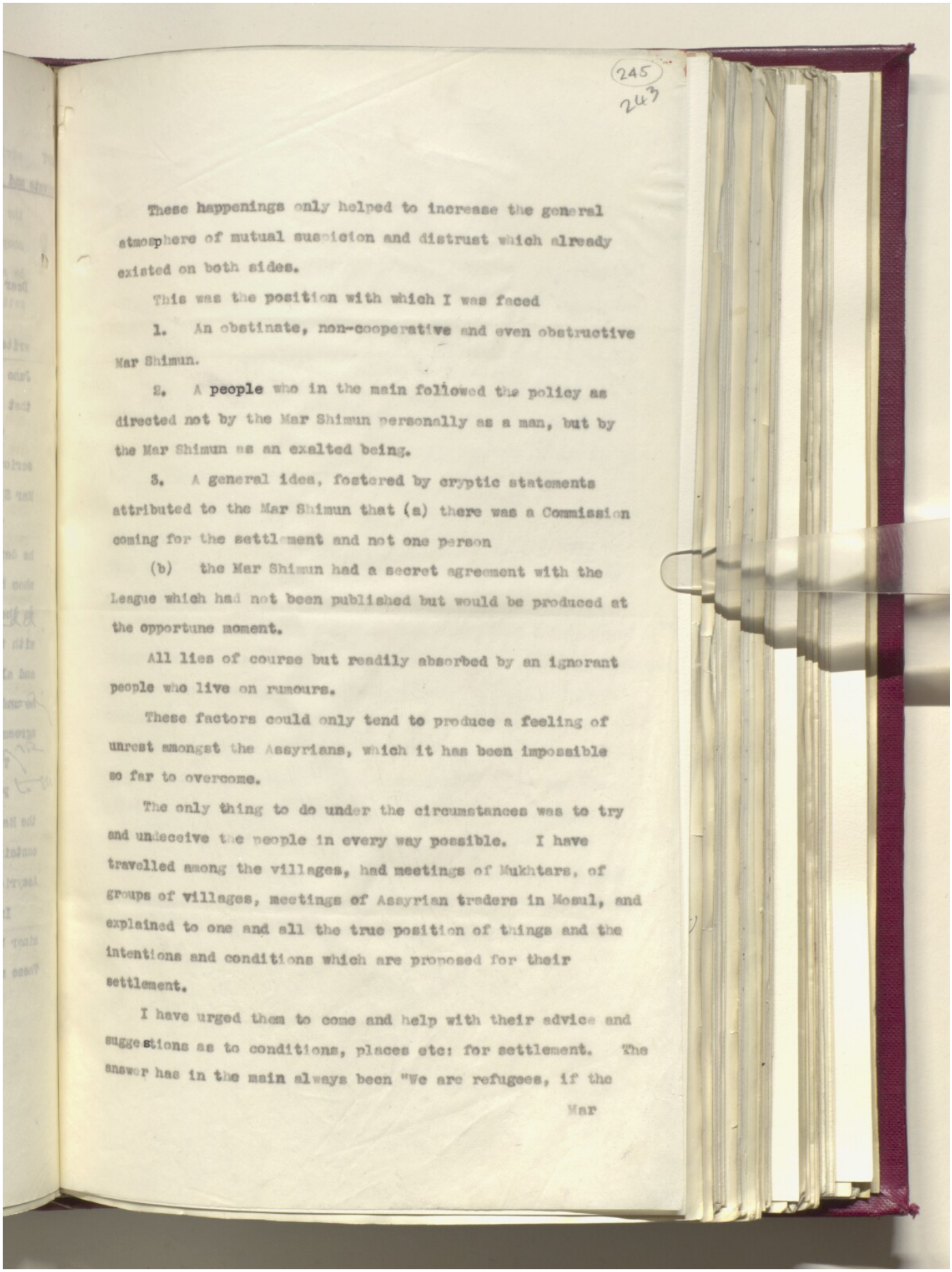
Perhaps it was unfortunate that two days before my arrival the Mar Shimun had received the Iraq Government's letter containing their recognition of his spiritual leadership of the Assyrians, but refusing to recognize any form of Temporal Power.

In addition there had been locally in Mosul one or two minor but unfortunate incidents which had hurt his amour propre. These might have been avoided by a little thought and diplomacy.

These



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000064



245
243

These happenings only helped to increase the general atmosphere of mutual suspicion and distrust which already existed on both sides.

This was the position with which I was faced

1. An obstinate, non-cooperative and even obstructive Mar Shimun.

2. A people who in the main followed the policy as directed not by the Mar Shimun personally as a man, but by the Mar Shimun as an exalted being.

3. A general idea, fostered by cryptic statements attributed to the Mar Shimun that (a) there was a Commission coming for the settlement and not one person

(b) the Mar Shimun had a secret agreement with the League which had not been published but would be produced at the opportune moment.

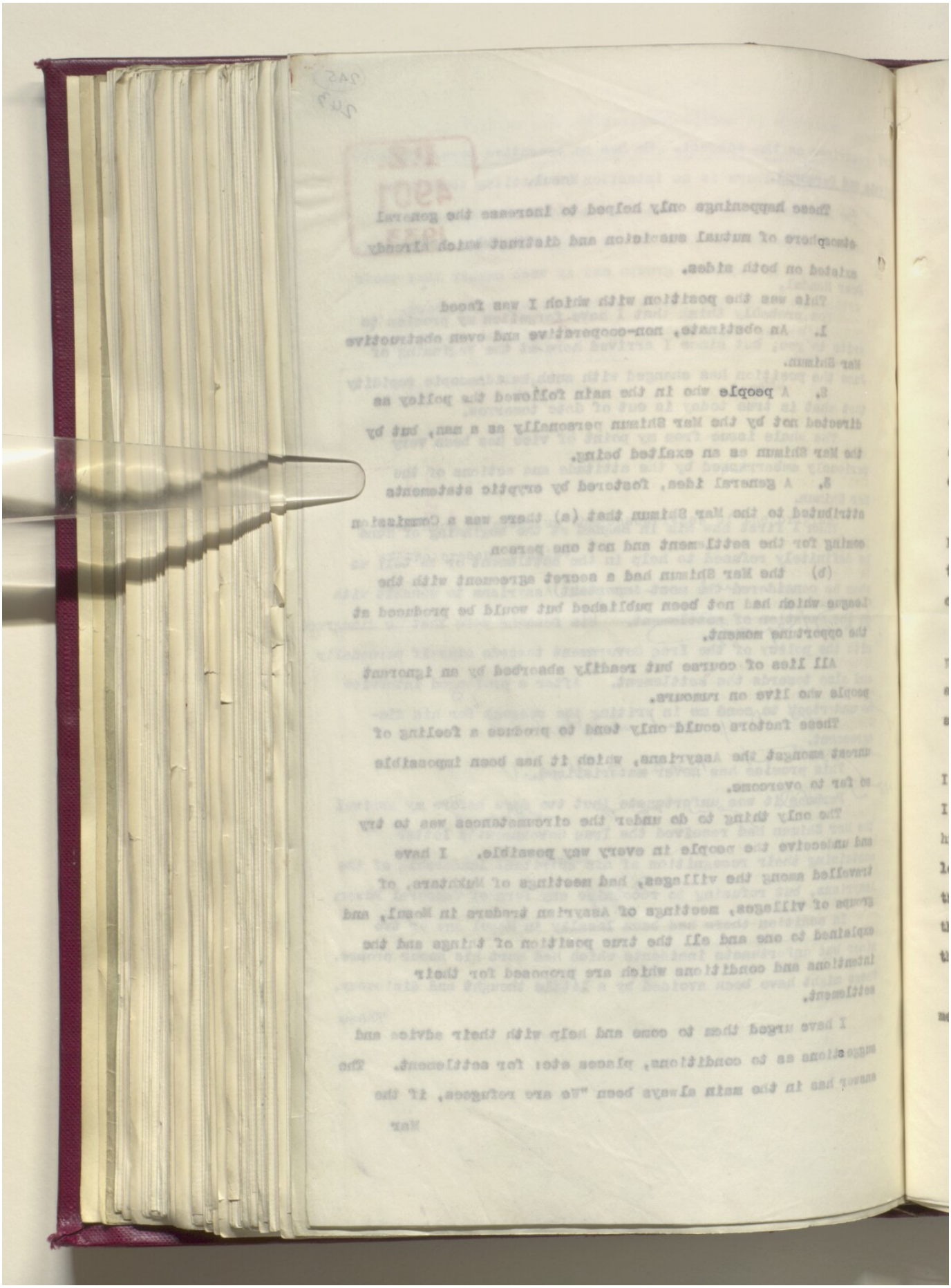
All lies of course but readily absorbed by an ignorant people who live on rumours.

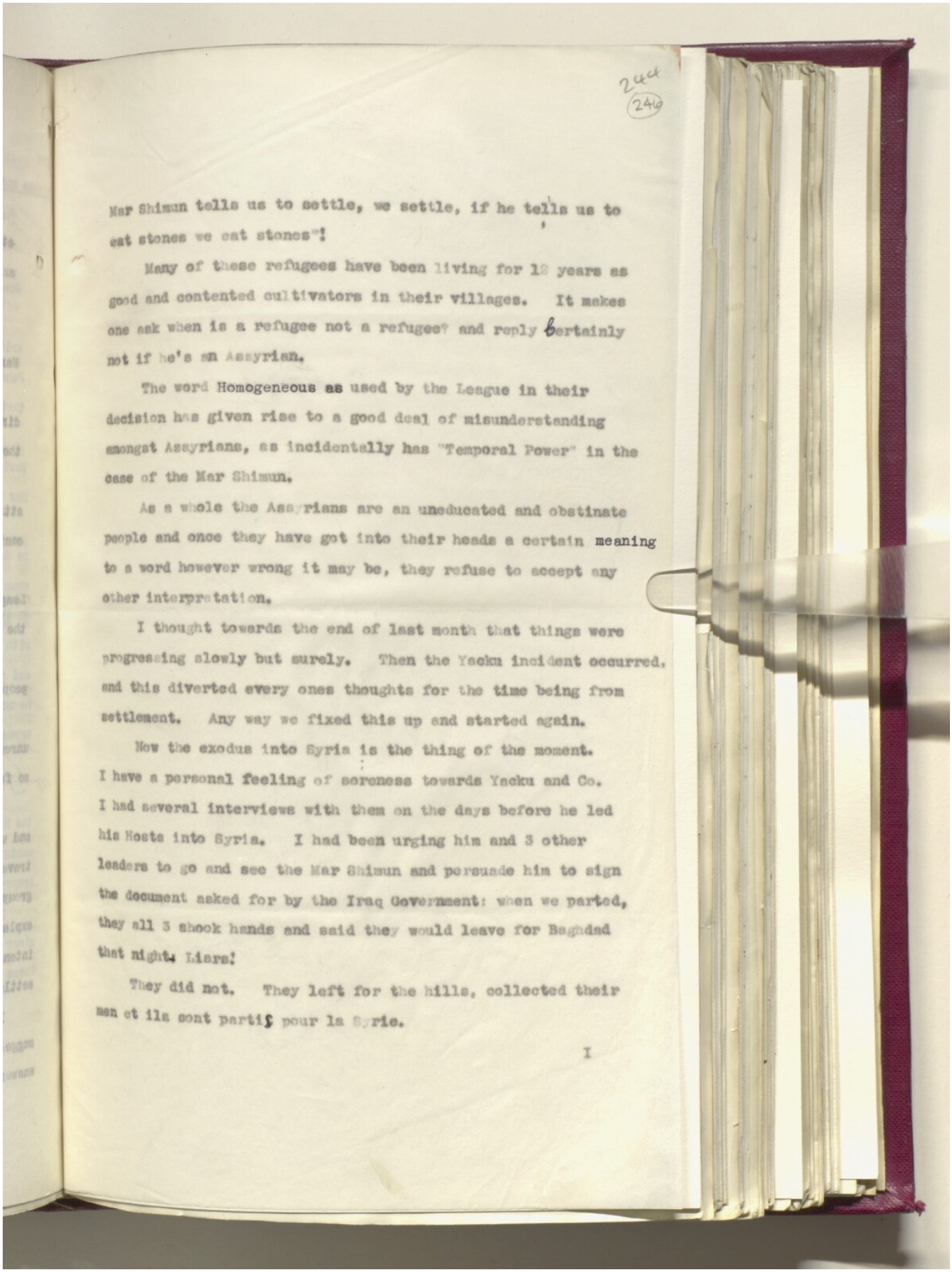
These factors could only tend to produce a feeling of unrest amongst the Assyrians, which it has been impossible so far to overcome.

The only thing to do under the circumstances was to try and undeceive the people in every way possible. I have travelled among the villages, had meetings of Mukhtars, of groups of villages, meetings of Assyrian traders in Mosul, and explained to one and all the true position of things and the intentions and conditions which are proposed for their settlement.

I have urged them to come and help with their advice and suggestions as to conditions, places etc: for settlement. The answer has in the main always been "We are refugees, if the

Mar





246d
(246)

Mar Shimun tells us to settle, we settle, if he tells us to eat stones we eat stones"!

Many of these refugees have been living for 12 years as good and contented cultivators in their villages. It makes one ask when is a refugee not a refugee? and reply certainly not if he's an Assyrian.

The word Homogeneous as used by the League in their decision has given rise to a good deal of misunderstanding amongst Assyrians, as incidentally has "Temporal Power" in the case of the Mar Shimun.

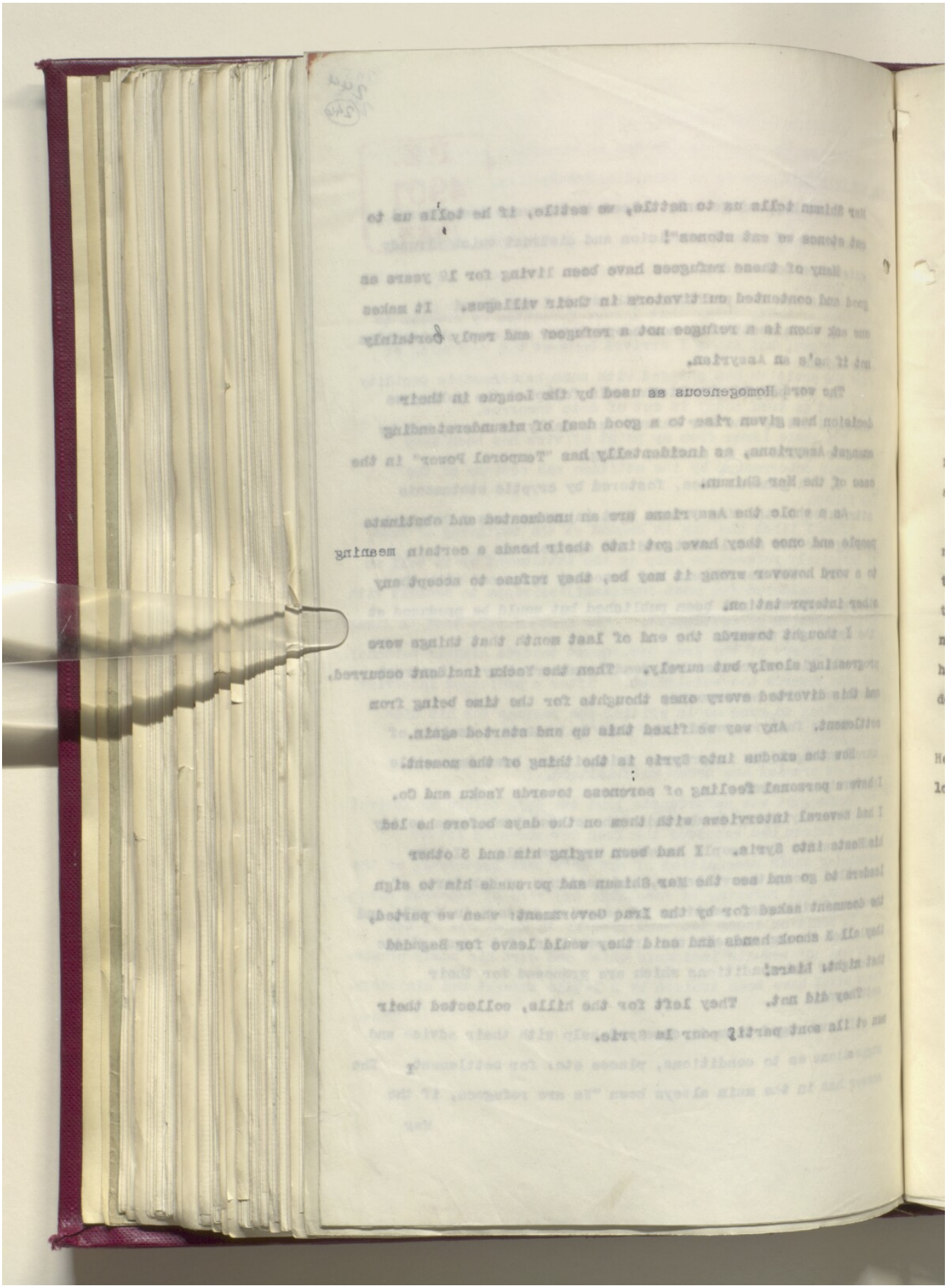
As a whole the Assyrians are an uneducated and obstinate people and once they have got into their heads a certain meaning to a word however wrong it may be, they refuse to accept any other interpretation.

I thought towards the end of last month that things were progressing slowly but surely. Then the Yacku incident occurred, and this diverted every ones thoughts for the time being from settlement. Any way we fixed this up and started again.

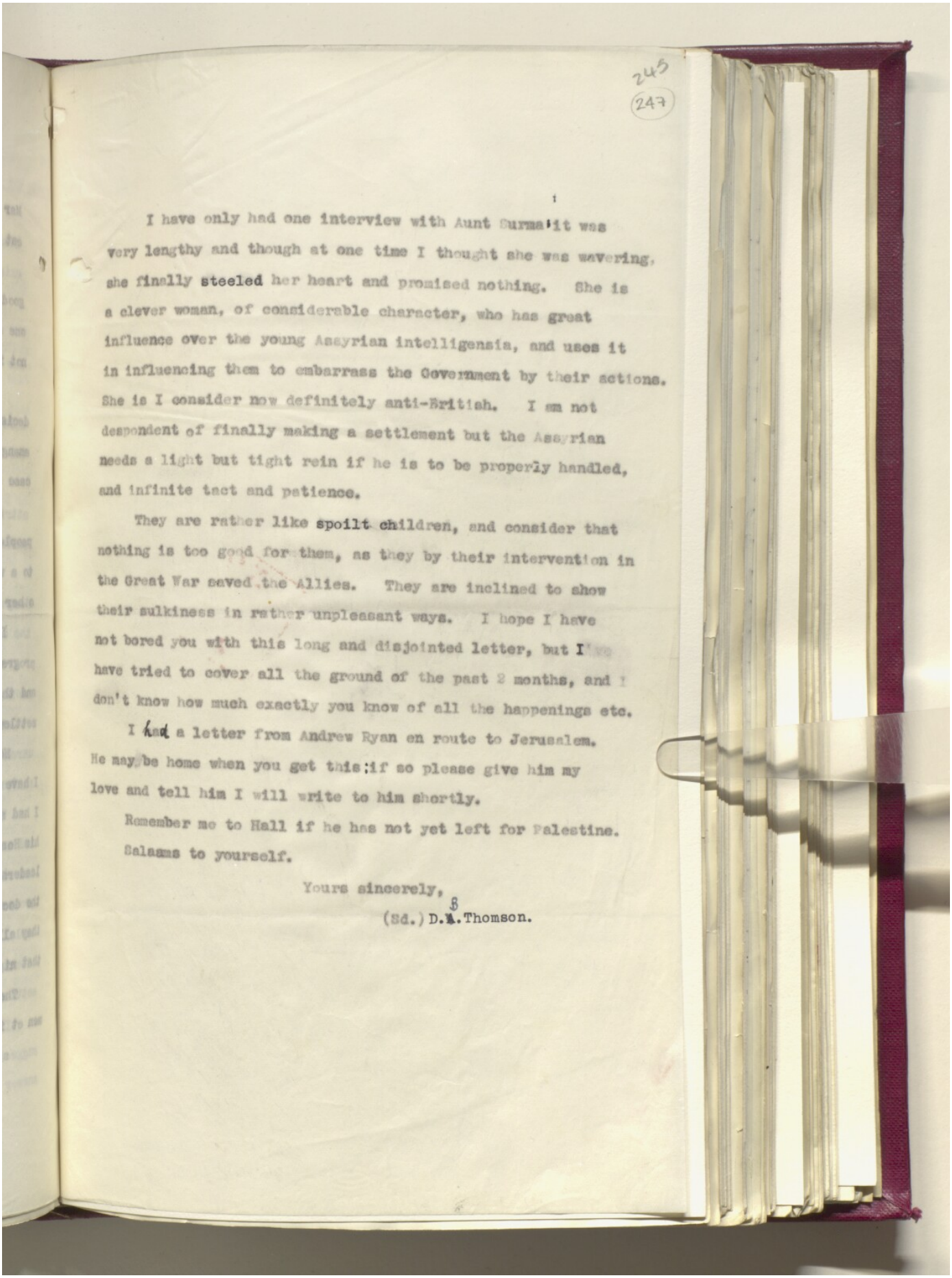
Now the exodus into Syria is the thing of the moment. I have a personal feeling of soreness towards Yacku and Co. I had several interviews with them on the days before he led his Hosts into Syria. I had been urging him and 3 other leaders to go and see the Mar Shimun and persuade him to sign the document asked for by the Iraq Government: when we parted, they all 3 shook hands and said they would leave for Baghdad that night. Liars!

They did not. They left for the hills, collected their men et ils sont partis pour la Syrie.

I



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000068



245
247

I have only had one interview with Aunt Surma; it was very lengthy and though at one time I thought she was wavering, she finally steeled her heart and promised nothing. She is a clever woman, of considerable character, who has great influence over the young Assyrian intelligensia, and uses it in influencing them to embarrass the Government by their actions. She is I consider now definitely anti-British. I am not despondent of finally making a settlement but the Assyrian needs a light but tight rein if he is to be properly handled, and infinite tact and patience.

They are rather like spoilt children, and consider that nothing is too good for them, as they by their intervention in the Great War saved the Allies. They are inclined to show their sulkiness in rather unpleasant ways. I hope I have not bored you with this long and disjointed letter, but I have tried to cover all the ground of the past 2 months, and I don't know how much exactly you know of all the happenings etc.

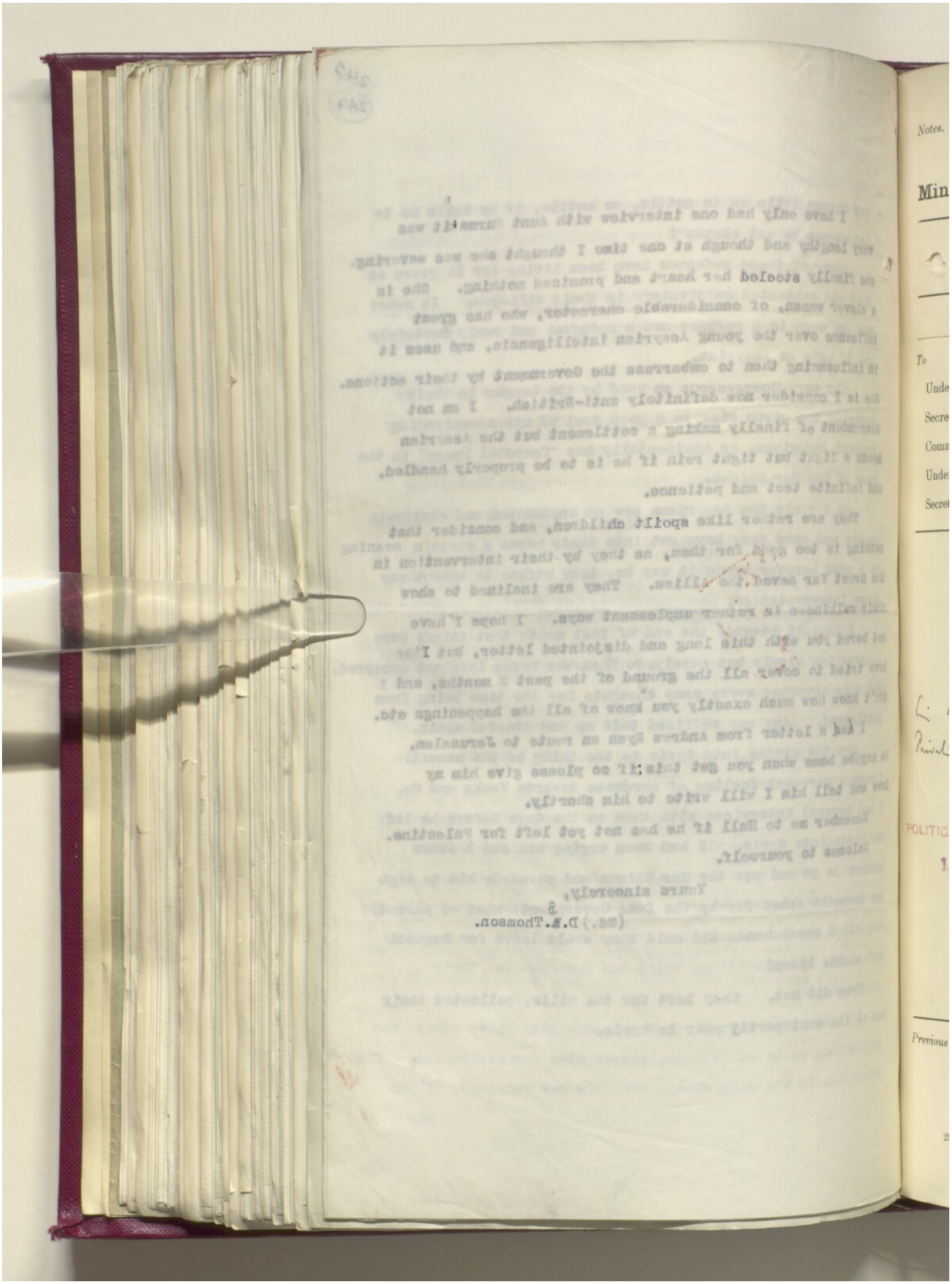
I had a letter from Andrew Ryan en route to Jerusalem. He may be home when you get this; if so please give him my love and tell him I will write to him shortly.

Remember me to Hall if he has not yet left for Palestine.

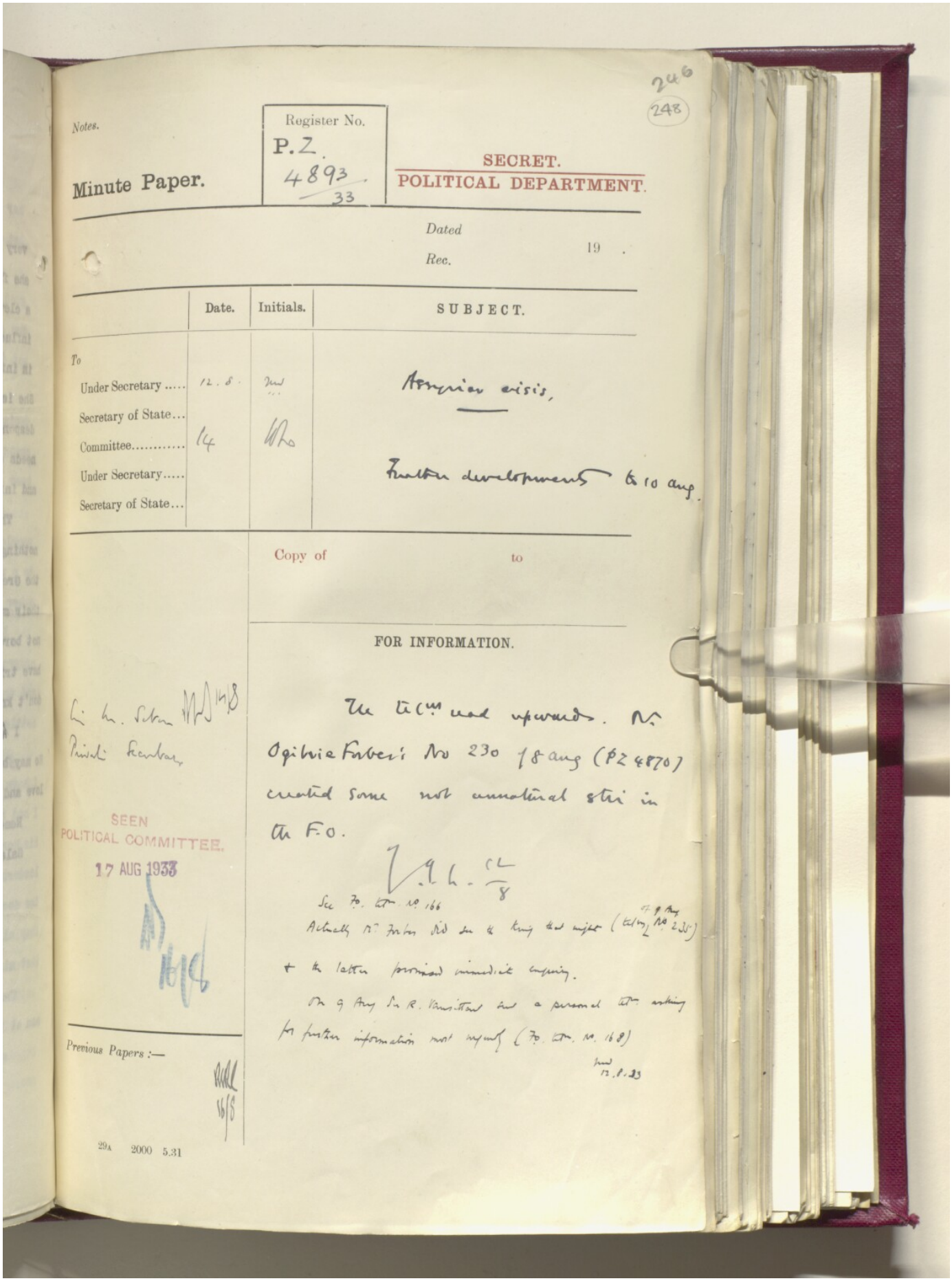
Salaams to yourself.

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) D.A. Thomson.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x00006a



246
(248)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
4893
33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	12.8.	[illegible]	Assyrian crisis,
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	14	[illegible]	
Under Secretary.....			Further developments to 10 aug.
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The telm read upwards. Mr Ogilvie Forbes's No 230 of 8 aug (PZ 4870) created some not unnatural stir in the F.O.

[illegible] 8

See Fo. telm. No. 166

Actually Mr Forbes did see the king that night (telm of 9 Aug No. 235) + the latter promised immediate enquiry.

On 9 Aug Sir R. Vansittart sent a personal telm asking for further information most urgently (Fo. telm. No. 168)

[illegible] 12.8.33

Sir M. Seton [illegible] 14/8
Private Secretary

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
17 AUG 1933

[illegible] 16/8

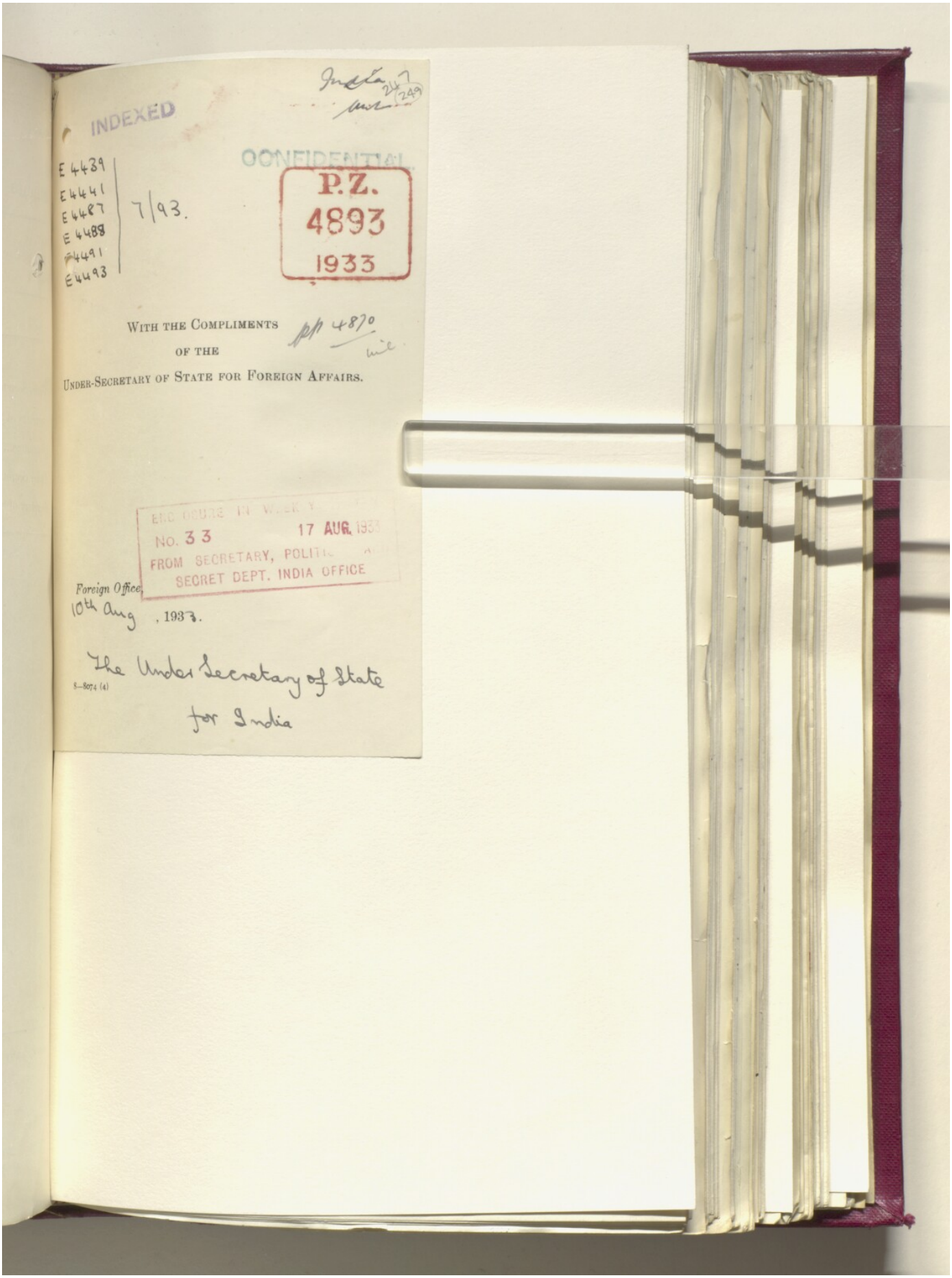
Previous Papers :—

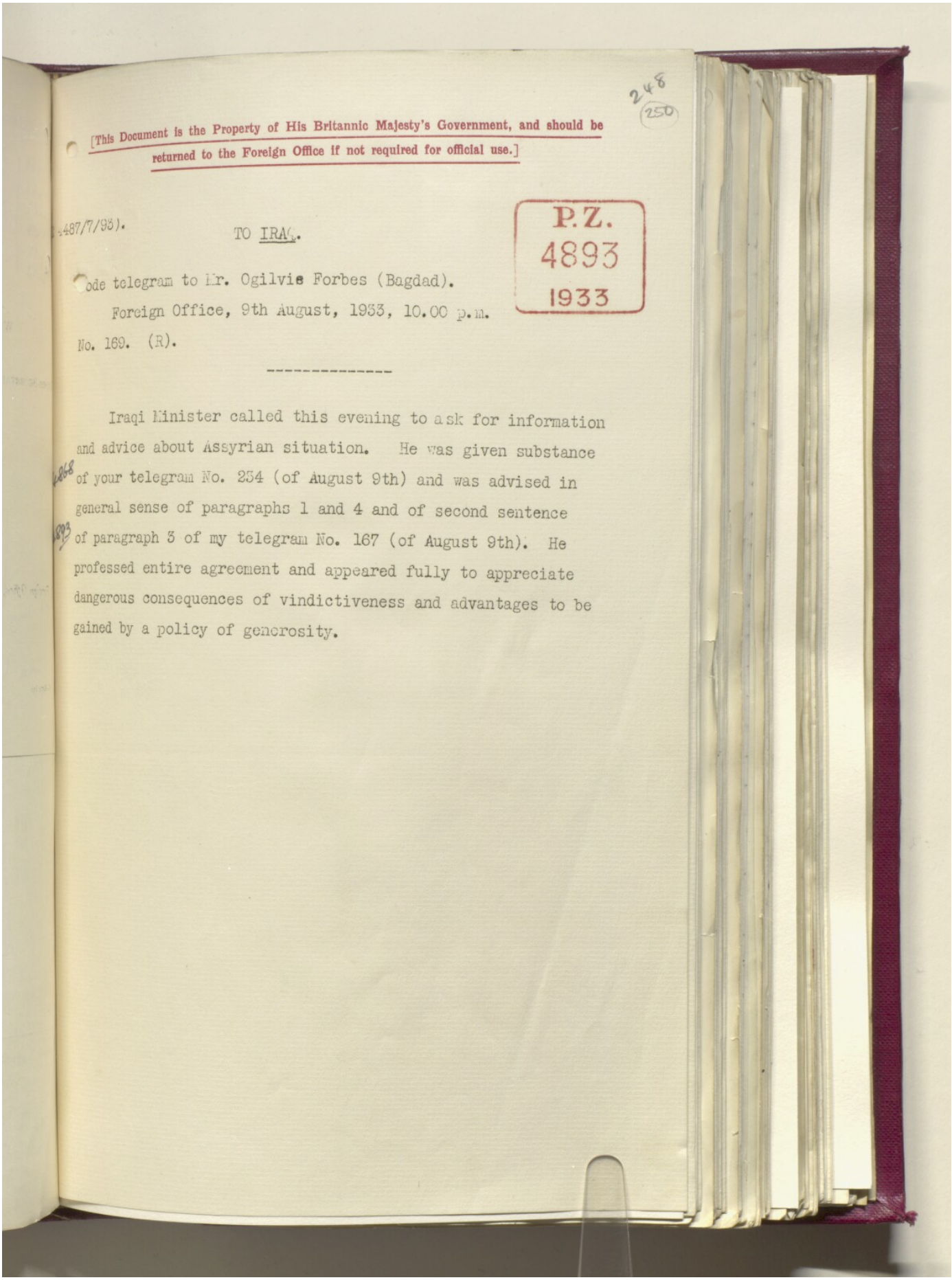
[illegible] 16/8

29A 2000 5.31

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x00006b


INDEXED
E 4439
E 4441
E 4487
E 4488
E 4491
E 4493
7/93.
CONFIDENTIAL
P.Z.
4893
1933
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
NO. 33
17 AUG.
FROM SECRETARY, POLIT
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
10th Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)



248
250

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4893
1933

4487/7/93).

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 9th August, 1933, 10.00 p.m.

No. 169. (R).

Iraqi Minister called this evening to ask for information and advice about Assyrian situation. He was given substance of your telegram No. 254 (of August 9th) and was advised in general sense of paragraphs 1 and 4 and of second sentence of paragraph 3 of my telegram No. 167 (of August 9th). He professed entire agreement and appeared fully to appreciate dangerous consequences of vindictiveness and advantages to be gained by a policy of generosity.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

249
(251)

P.Z.
4893
1933

TO IRAQ.

(E 4441/7/93).

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
Foreign Office. 9th August 1933. 10 p.m.
No. 168. (R).

****

4869

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 235 (of August 9th - Assyrian crisis - alleged murder of Assyrian prisoners).

Personal. Following from Sir R. Vansittart:

I am anxious to know the truth regarding this most serious report at the earliest possible moment.

Please telegraph any further information, and what action has actually been taken. Matter is most urgent.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

250
252

P.Z.
4893
1933

(E.4439/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 9th August, 1933, 5.00 p.m.
No.167. (R).

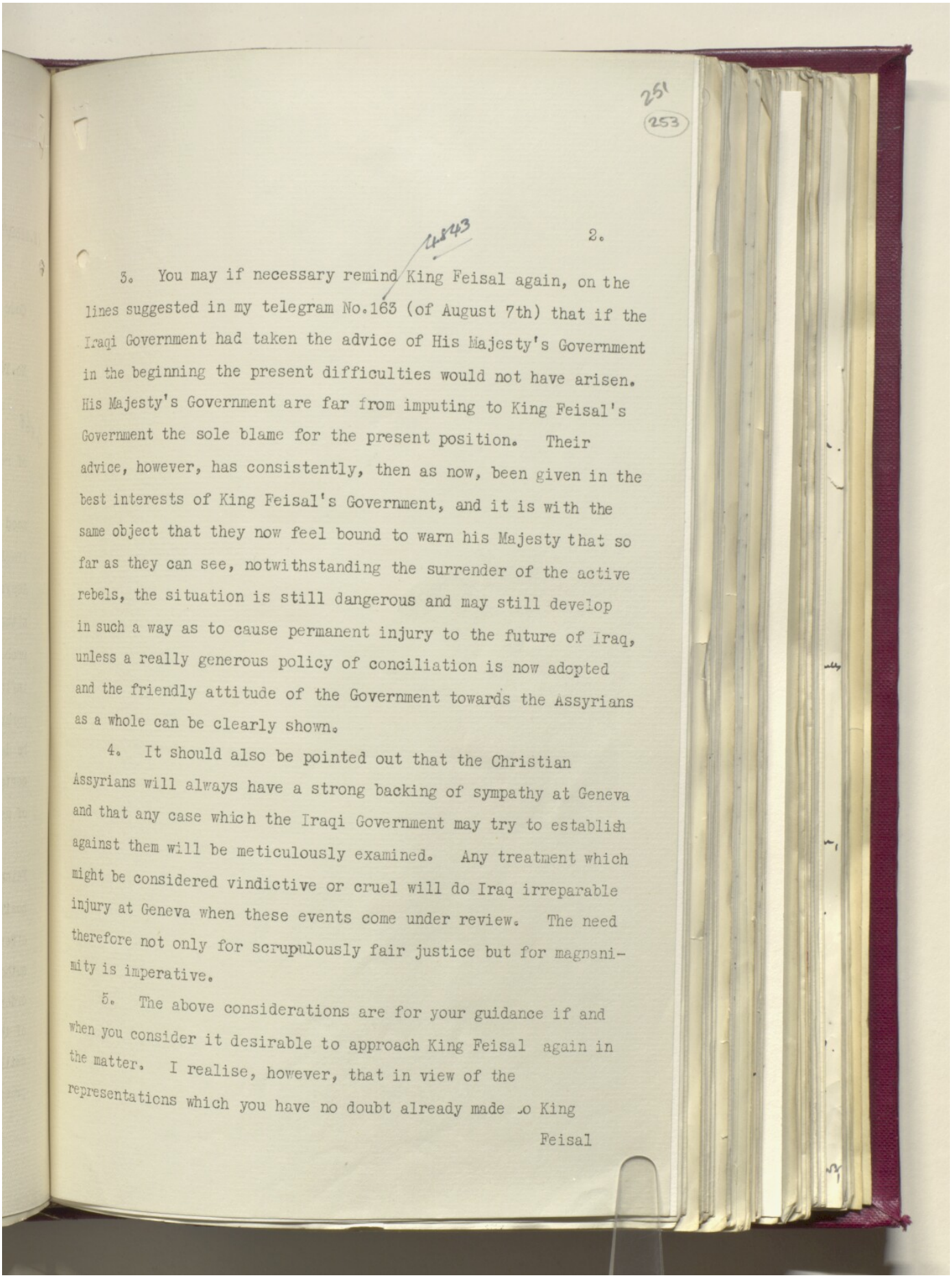
-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

4888 Your telegram No.234 (Assyrian crisis - reported surrender of rebels).

If this news is confirmed, it will be most satisfactory, but need for policy of conciliation will be greater than ever, and Iraqi case at Geneva may well stand or fall by manner in which Assyrian question is now dealt with. In these circumstances situation will still need very careful watching and it will probably be necessary for you to continue to exert all your influence with King Feisal and Iraqi Government with a view to persuading them to refrain from reprisals (which will no doubt be demanded by section of Iraqi public opinion with support of certain Iraqi civil and military officials), and to adopt policy of genuine conciliation and pacification.

2. In giving such advice you should of course urge King Feisal to avoid any action which might lead to a resumption of hostilities or to further bloodshed, and to limit punishment of offenders to absolute minimum necessary to re-establish authority of Iraqi Government and secure maintenance of law and order. It should be pointed out that any revival or extension of the trouble will render it infinitely more difficult to settle without risk of still more serious injury to Government's prestige.

3.



251
253

4843

2.

5. You may if necessary remind King Feisal again, on the lines suggested in my telegram No.163 (of August 7th) that if the Iraqi Government had taken the advice of His Majesty's Government in the beginning the present difficulties would not have arisen. His Majesty's Government are far from imputing to King Feisal's Government the sole blame for the present position. Their advice, however, has consistently, then as now, been given in the best interests of King Feisal's Government, and it is with the same object that they now feel bound to warn his Majesty that so far as they can see, notwithstanding the surrender of the active rebels, the situation is still dangerous and may still develop in such a way as to cause permanent injury to the future of Iraq, unless a really generous policy of conciliation is now adopted and the friendly attitude of the Government towards the Assyrians as a whole can be clearly shown.

4. It should also be pointed out that the Christian Assyrians will always have a strong backing of sympathy at Geneva and that any case which the Iraqi Government may try to establish against them will be meticulously examined. Any treatment which might be considered vindictive or cruel will do Iraq irreparable injury at Geneva when these events come under review. The need therefore not only for scrupulously fair justice but for magnanimity is imperative.

5. The above considerations are for your guidance if and when you consider it desirable to approach King Feisal again in the matter. I realise, however, that in view of the representations which you have no doubt already made to King Feisal

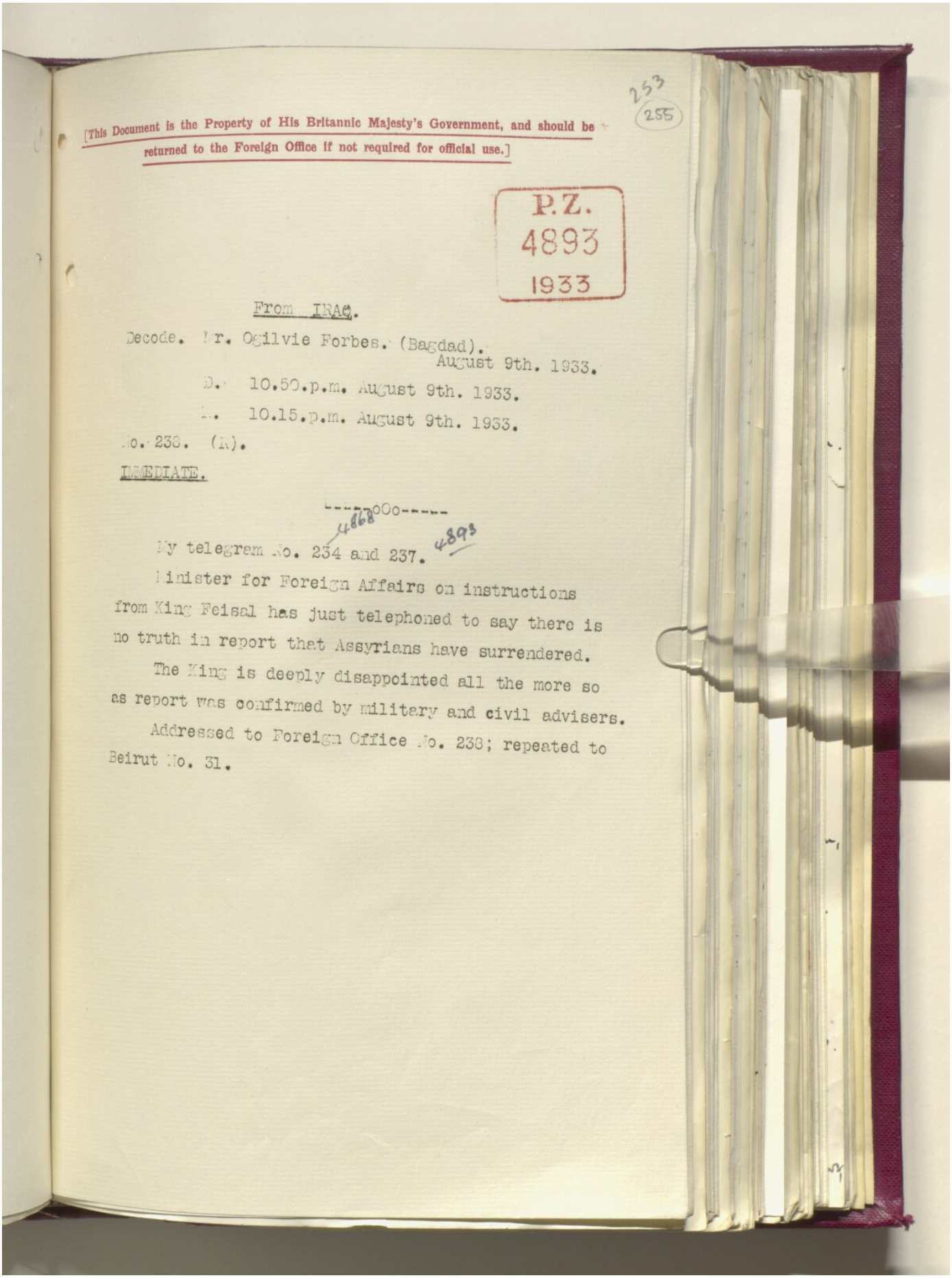
252
(254)

24843

3.

Feisal following on my telegram No.163, you may not wish to approach him again so soon on similar lines (this applies particularly to first sentence of paragraph 3 above - a point which you may prefer not to labour further) and I am content to leave it entirely to your discretion to decide how and when to give this advice, provided that it is given.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000077



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

253
255

P.Z.
4893
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 9th. 1933.

D. 10.50.p.m. August 9th. 1933.

R. 10.15.p.m. August 9th. 1933.

No. 238. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

----oOo----

My telegram No. 234 and 237. 4868 4893

Minister for Foreign Affairs on instructions from King Feisal has just telephoned to say there is no truth in report that Assyrians have surrendered.

The King is deeply disappointed all the more so as report was confirmed by military and civil advisers.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 238; repeated to Beirut No. 31.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4893 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 9th, 1933.

D. 10.00.p.m. August 9th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. August 10th. 1933.

No. 237. (R).

-----oOo-----

My telegram No. 234. 4868

1. According to air reports about 1,000 Assyrians are massed near Dohuk with white flags and the army is mingling with them.

2. Seven supporters of the Lady Surma have been removed from Mosul to Nasiriya.

3. Tribesmen, horse and foot, from the right bank of the Tigris have been sighted halted south-west of Simel. I am warning the King about this to-night when I shall read him the lecture contained in your telegram No. 163. 4843

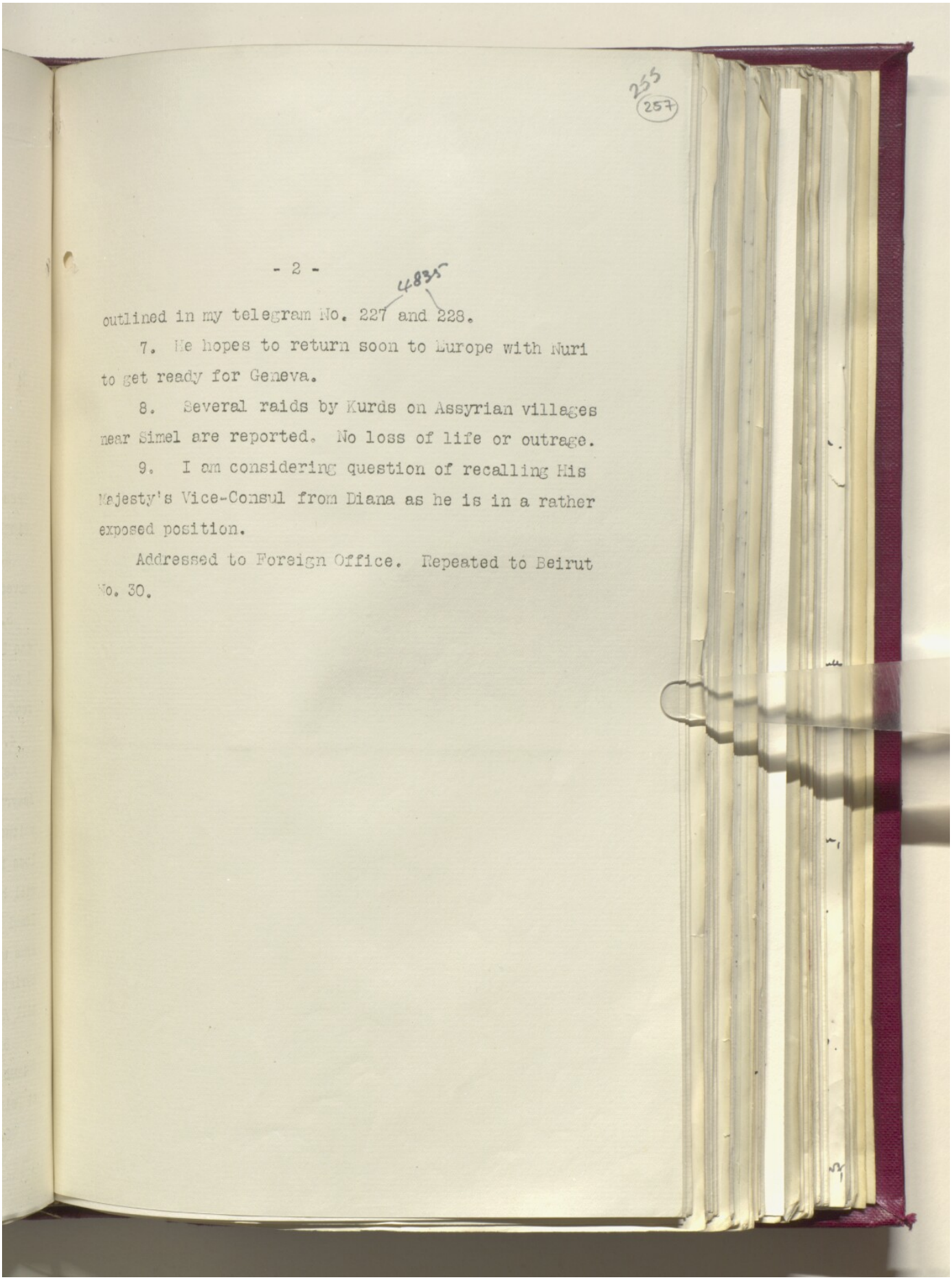
4. My telegram No. 231. 4866

Aeroplanes now returned report that there are 515 Assyrians including Yaku with 350 animals at Vanik, whither all found in Syria will be sent for interment. Luco is wounded at Derik with five others. No Assyrians will be allowed to return to Iraq unless by invitation of Iraqi Government or the League. The French assert that arms were returned to Assyrians because they were outside Syrian territory, the new frontier not becoming definitive till August 5th.

5. My saving telegram No. 8 reports that Mar Shimun on July 18th sent Yaku with a letter to the French at Deirazzor requesting admission for Assyrians.

6. The King has promised to carry out the policy

outlined/



255
257

- 2 -

4835

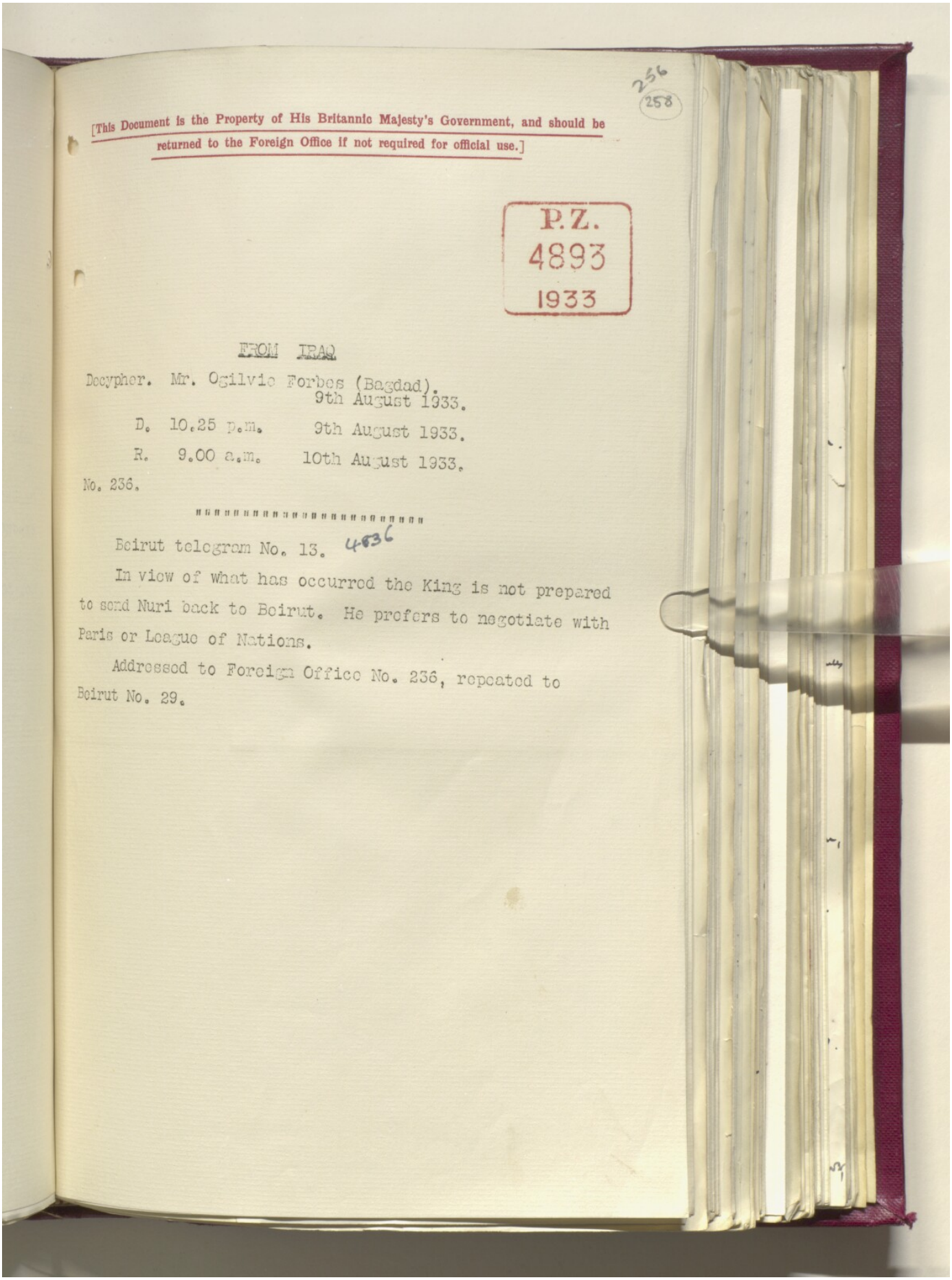
outlined in my telegram No. 227 and 228.

7. He hopes to return soon to Europe with Nuri to get ready for Geneva.

8. Several raids by Kurds on Assyrian villages near Simel are reported. No loss of life or outrage.

9. I am considering question of recalling His Majesty's Vice-Consul from Diana as he is in a rather exposed position.

Addressed to Foreign Office. Repeated to Beirut No. 30.



256
258

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4893
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
9th August 1933.

D. 10.25 p.m. 9th August 1933.

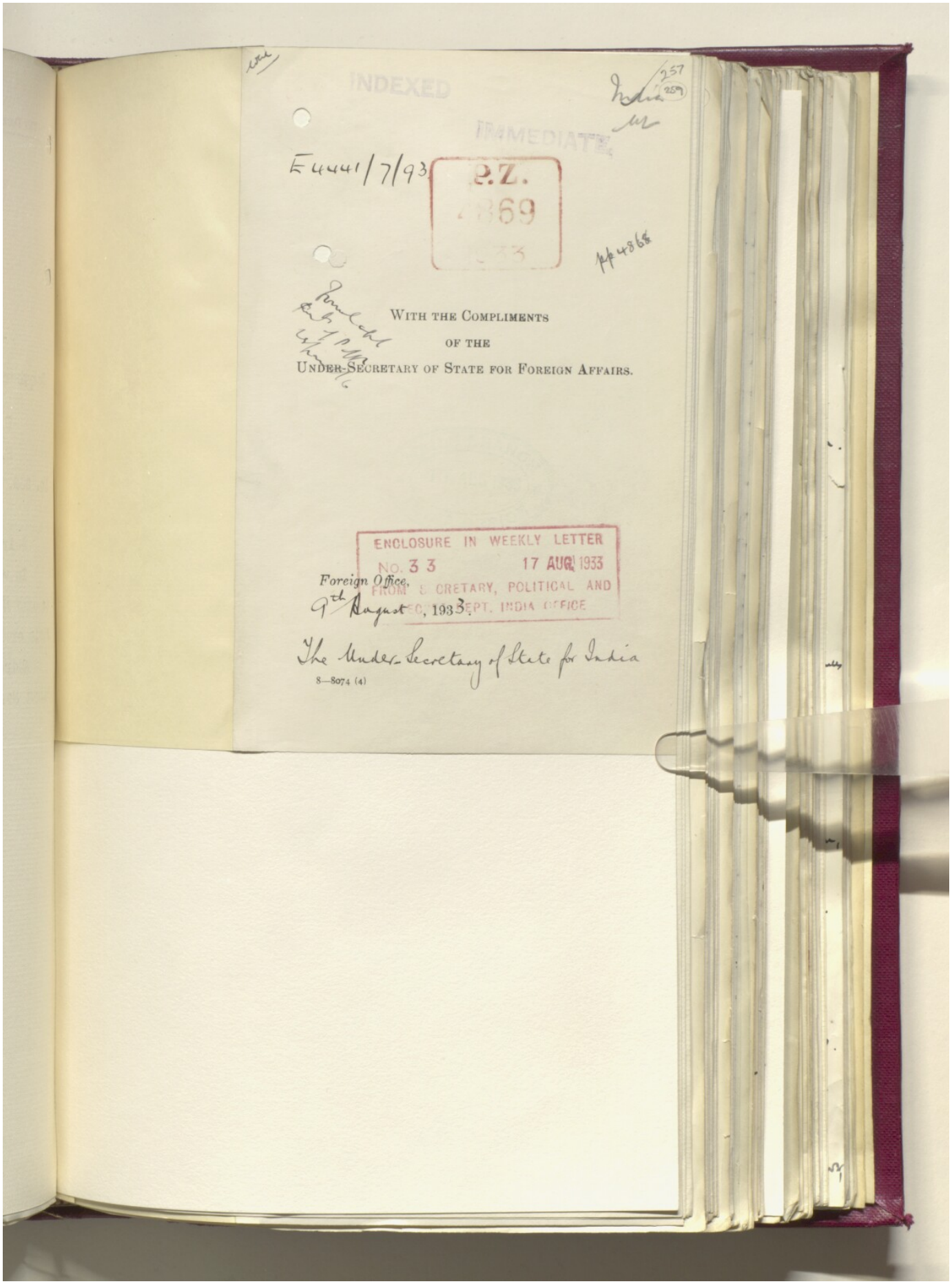
R. 9.00 a.m. 10th August 1933.

No. 236.

Beirut telegram No. 13. 4836

In view of what has occurred the King is not prepared to send Nuri back to Beirut. He prefers to negotiate with Paris or League of Nations.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 236, repeated to Beirut No. 29.


INDEXED
IMMEDIATE
E 4441/7/93
P.Z.
4869
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
Foreign Office,
9th August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State for India
8—8074 (4)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

2.Z. 69

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
9th August 1933.

D. 9.30 a.m. 9th August 1933.

R. 10.45 a.m. 9th August 1933.

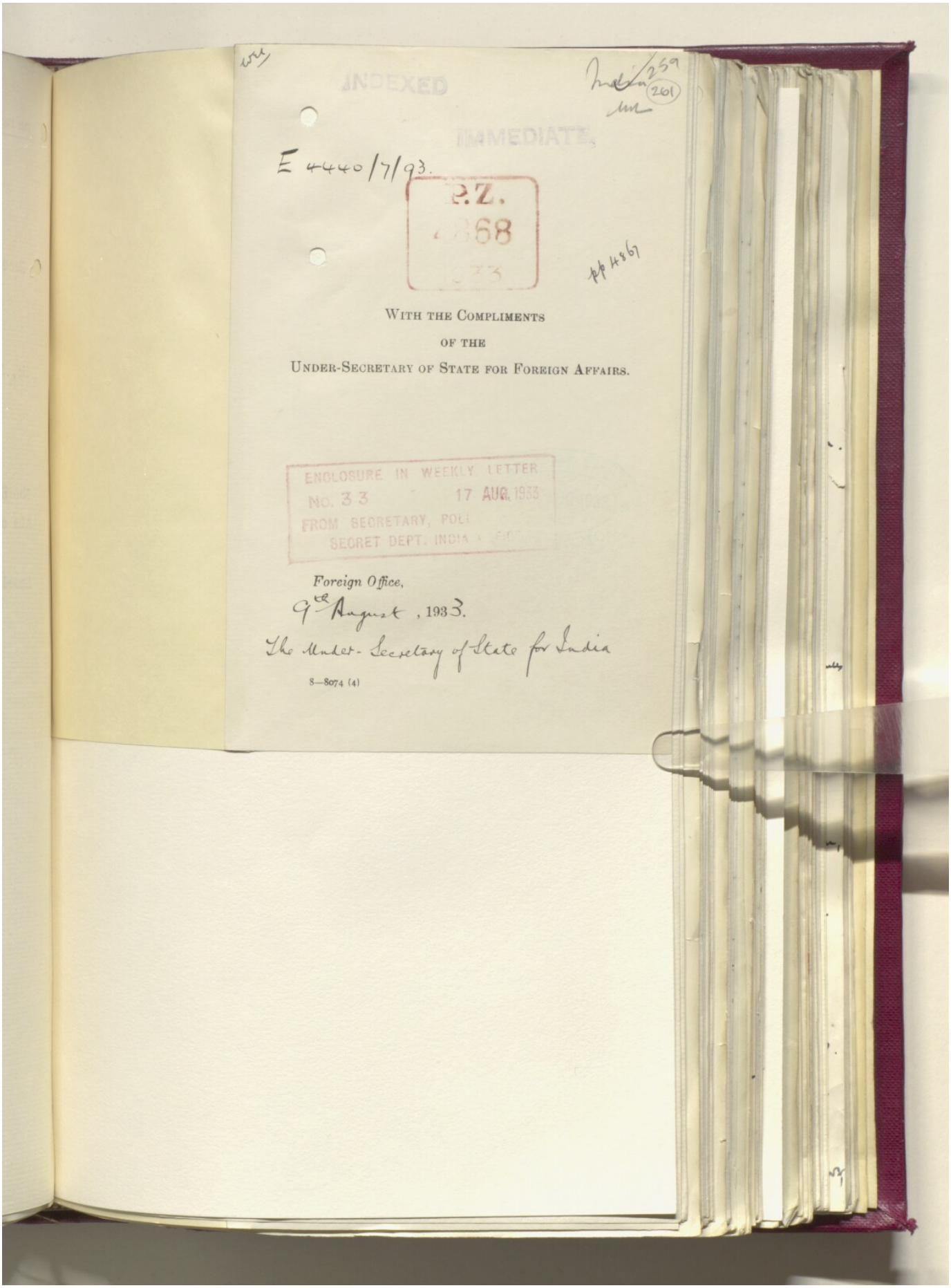
No. 235. (R).

"""""""""""""""""""""

Your telegram No. 166.

On receipt of further information I went to see the King last night and in the presence of witness informed him of what I had heard.

The King was incredulous and promised to make immediate enquiry.


INDEXED
IMMEDIATE
E 4440/7/93.
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLI
SECRET DEPT. INDIA
Foreign Office,
9th August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State for India
8—8074 (4)

260
(262)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

Z.Z.
68

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
9th August 1933.

D. 9.30 a.m. 9th August 1933.

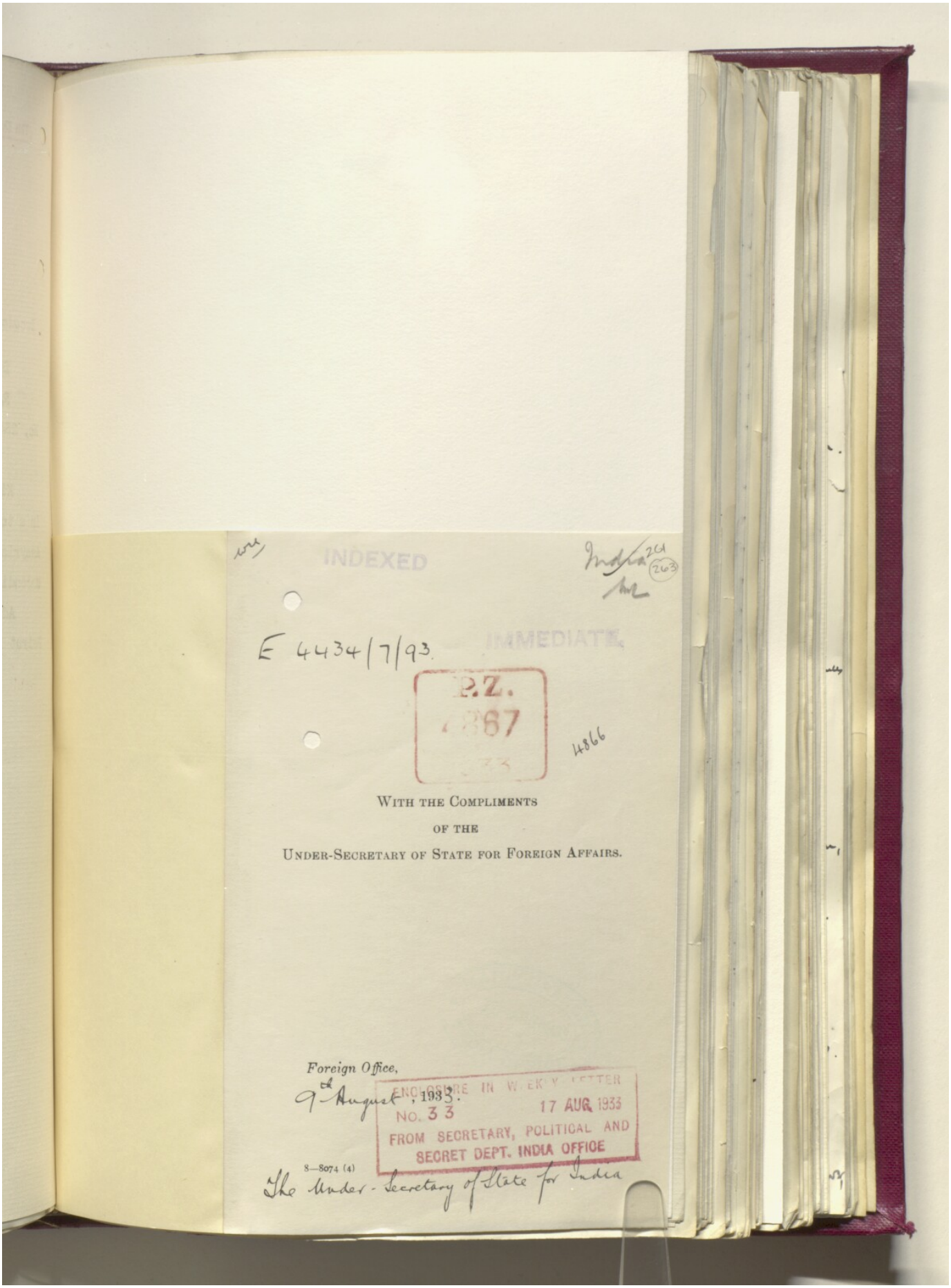
R. 10.00 a.m. 9th August 1933.

No. 234. (R).

"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

King Feisal telephoned to me early this morning in a tone of joyful emotion to the effect that rebel Assyrians had gathered together and decided to surrender unconditionally. I am seeking confirmation.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 234, repeated to Beirut No. 28.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338448.0x000089

262
(264)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

2.Z.
4367

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
8th August, 1933.

D. 11.30 p.m. 8th August, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 9th August, 1933.

No. 233. (R).

XXXXXXXXXX

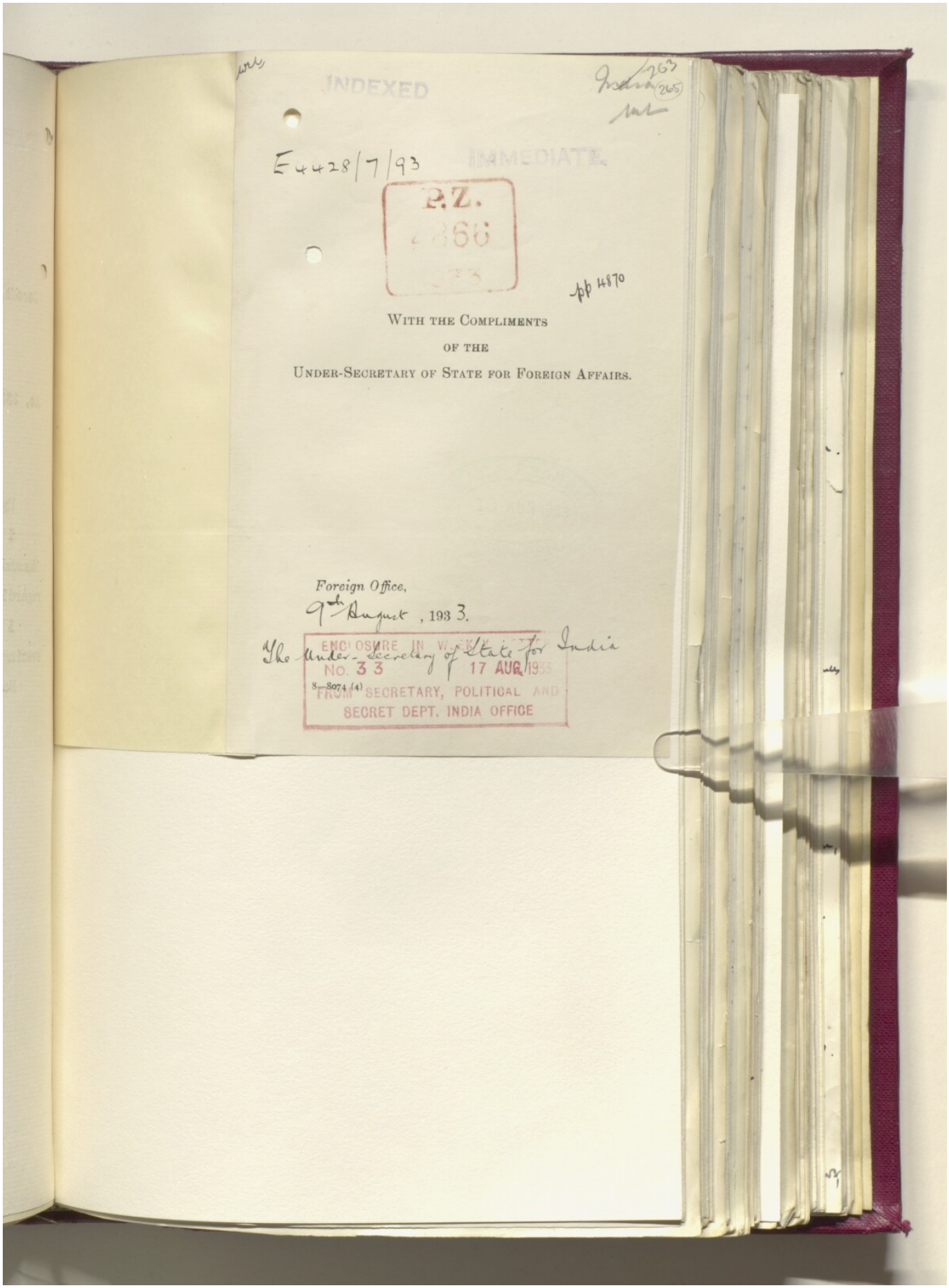
My telegrams Nos. 227 and 228.

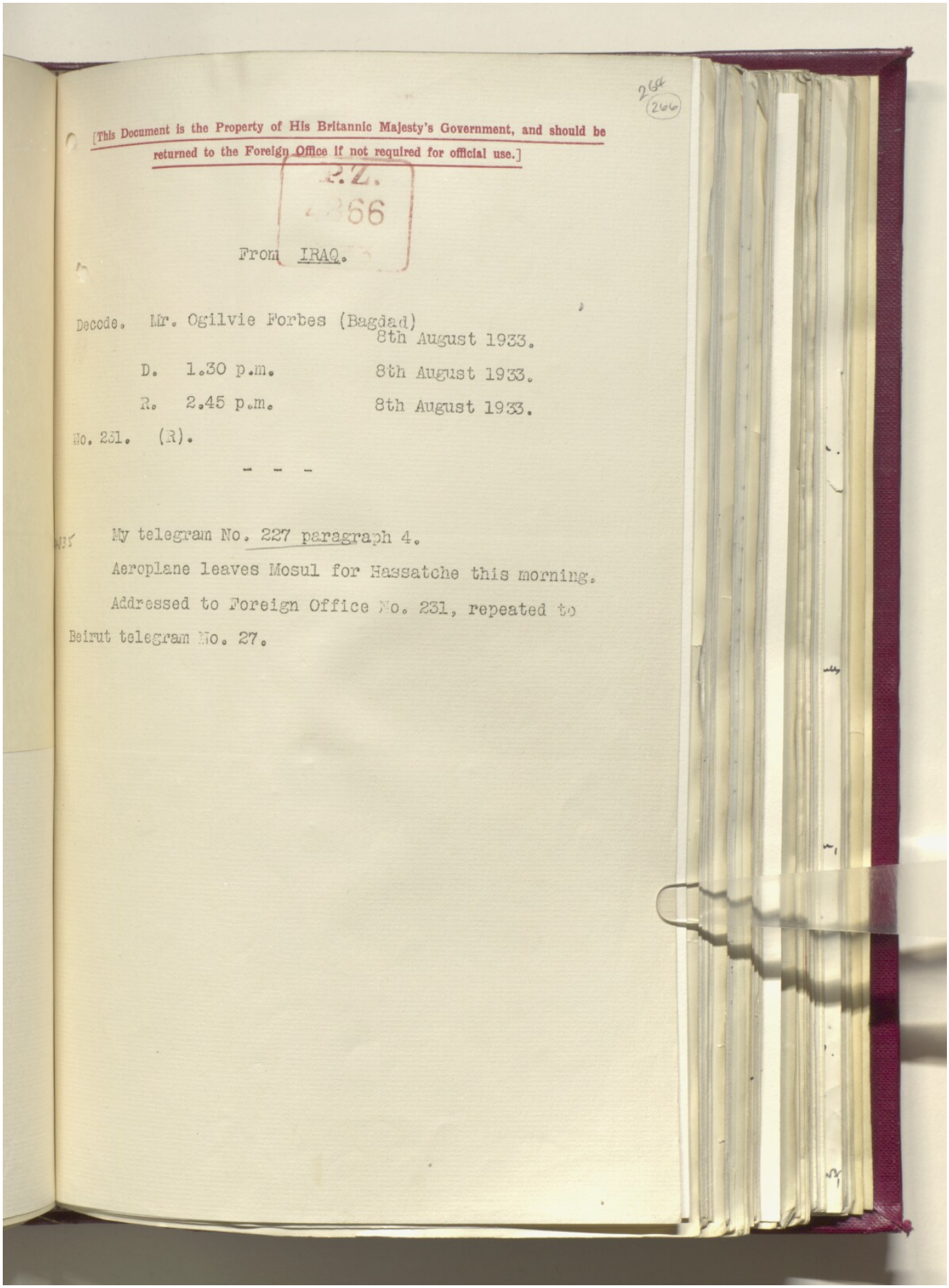
I called conference of advisers and Air Officer Commanding this morning. We are in general agreement regarding policy laid down in above telegrams.

I found the King much calmer and happier this evening.

Nothing of interest to report.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 33 17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE


INDEXED
E 4428/7/93
IMMEDIATE
P.Z.
4868
pp 4870
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
Foreign Office,
9th August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State for India
ENCLOSURE IN
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

2.2.
366

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad) 8th August 1933.

D. 1.30 p.m. 8th August 1933.

R. 2.45 p.m. 8th August 1933.

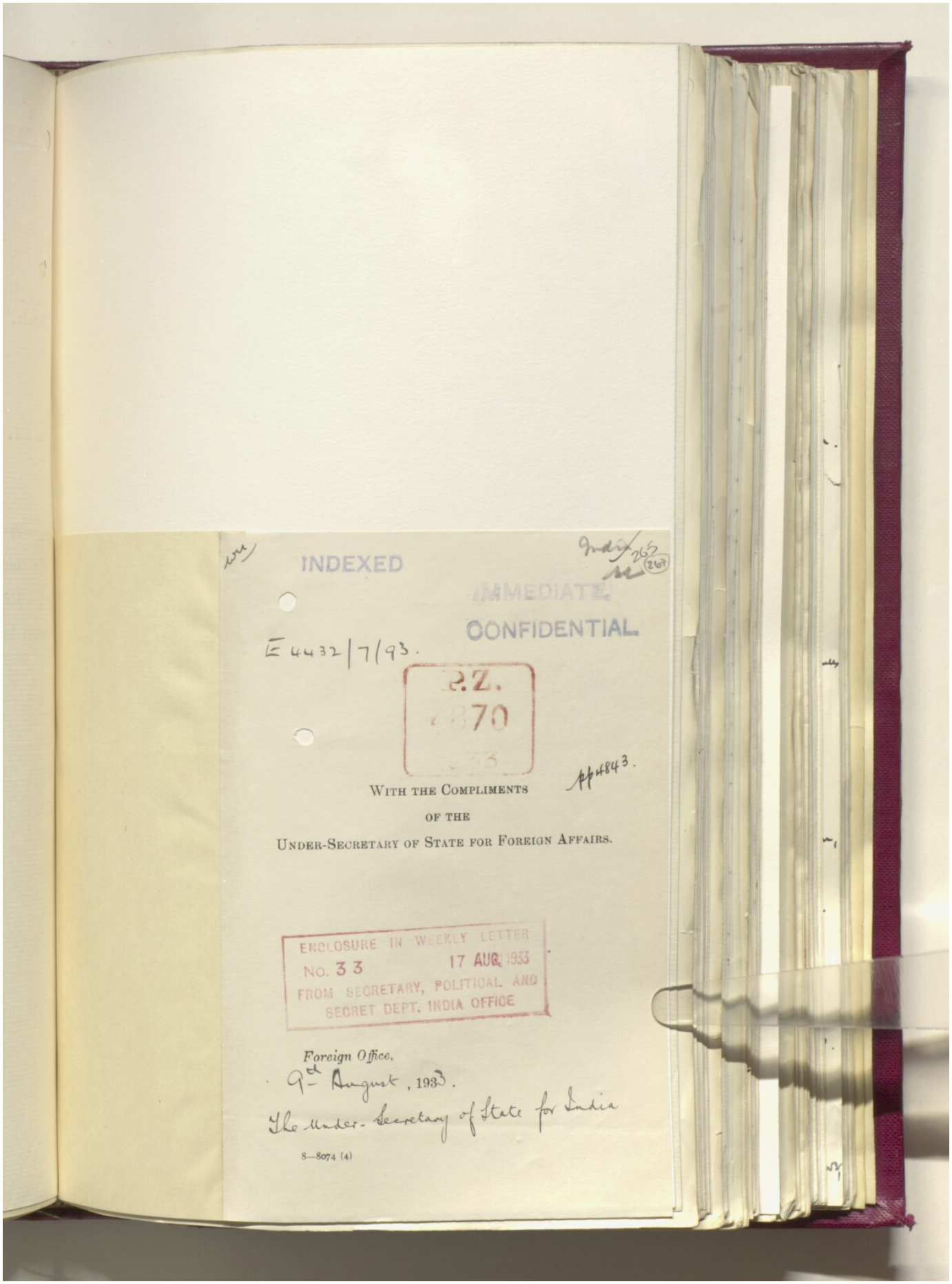
No. 231. (R).

- - -

My telegram No. 227 paragraph 4.

Aeroplane leaves Mosul for Hassatche this morning.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 231, repeated to Beirut telegram No. 27.


INDEXED
IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL
E 4432/7/93.
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 33
17 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
9th August, 1933.
The Under-Secretary of State for India
8—8074 (4)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

266
(268)

R.Z.
70

TO IRAQ

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 8th August 1933. 10 p.m.

No. 166.

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 230 (of August 8th: Assyrian crisis - alleged murder of Assyrian prisoners).

Report in paragraph 1 causes me serious anxiety. Unless there is overwhelming reason of which I am unaware for not approaching the King, case appears to call for immediate representations in strongest terms. I need hardly call attention to disastrous effect which report if substantiated would have on Iraq's whole case.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

2.Z. 70

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
August 8th 1933.

D. 2.45 p.m. August 8th 1933.

R. 4.00 p.m. August 8th 1933.

No.230.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

SECRET.

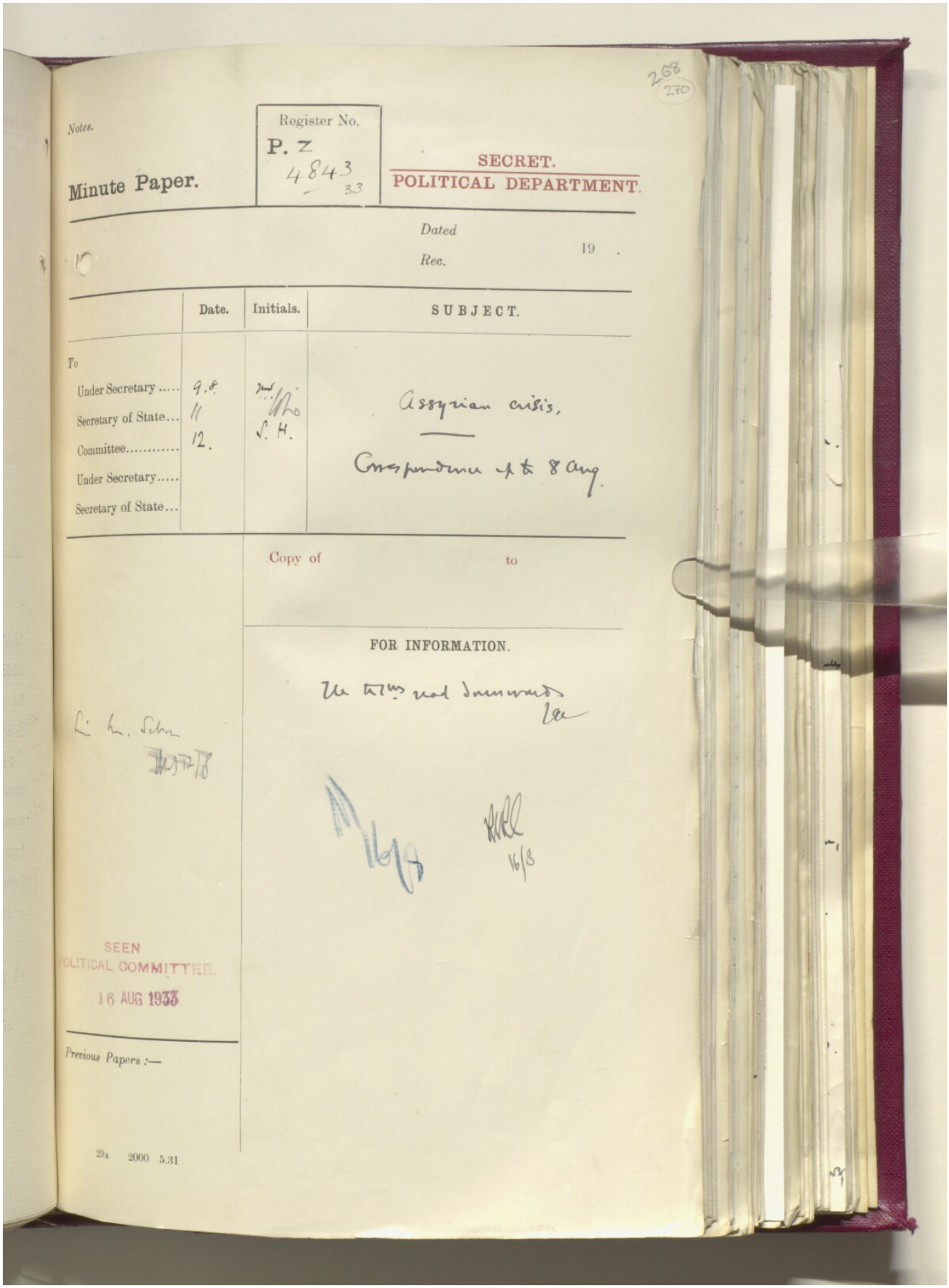
My immediately preceding telegram.

Head of military mission has shown me mutilated telegram from Major Allfrey to the effect that Bekr Sidqi is killing Assyrian prisoners indiscriminately he thought. Full report has been promised when facts known.

I do not think the time is yet ripe for me to mention the matter to the King but you may rest assured that I shall not overlook it. Bekr Sidqi has also made some professional blunders and Headlam hopes that he will be removed on that score.

My telegram No.227 last paragraph. Report at present not true.

268
270



Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P. Z
4843
33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	9.8.		Assyrian crisis,
Secretary of State...	11		
Committee.....	12.	S. H.	Correspondence up to 8 Aug.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The telms read downwards

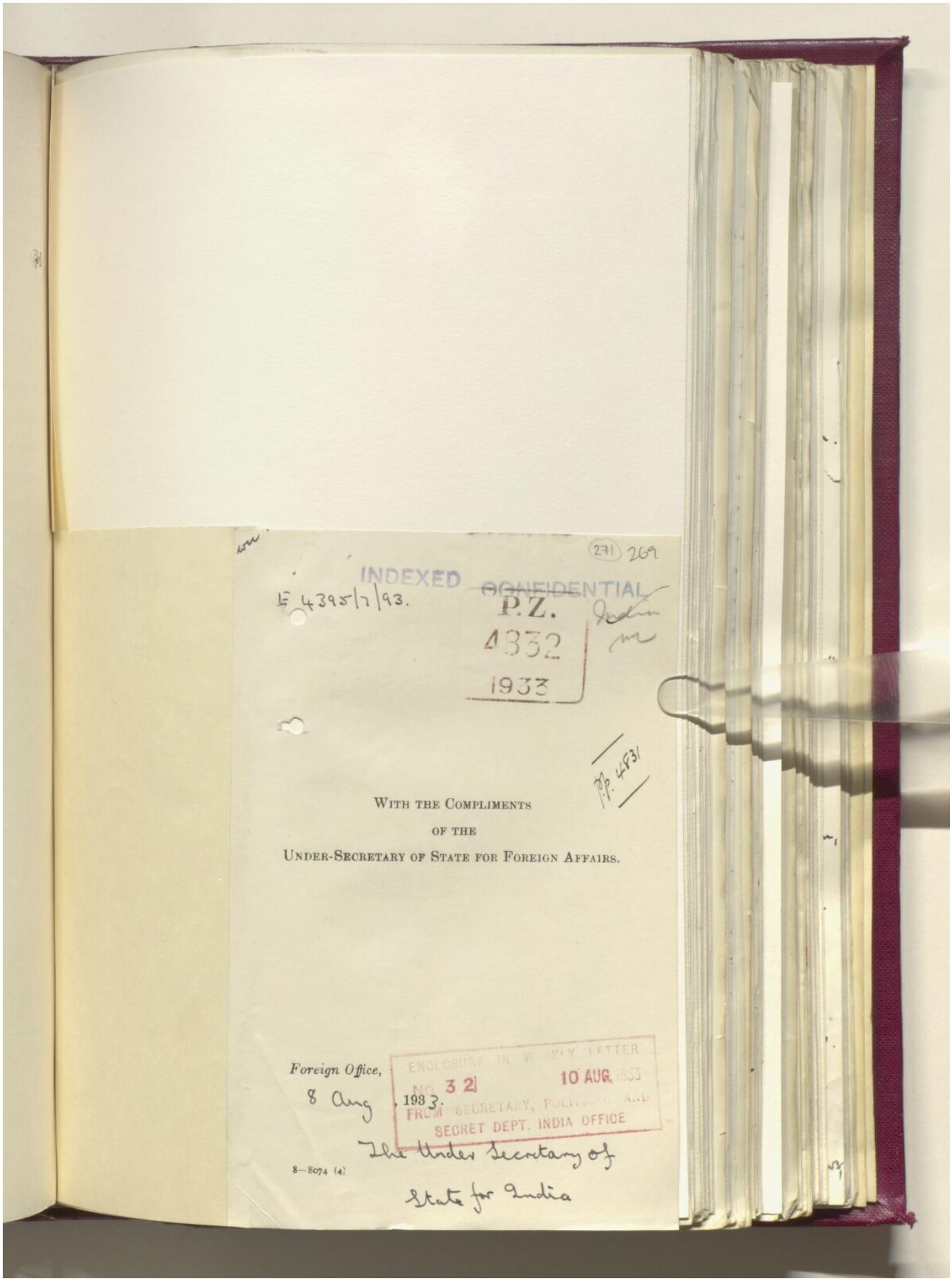
16/8

16/8

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE
16 AUG 1933

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31



271 269

INDEXED

E 4395/7/93.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

P.Z.
4332
1933

pp. 4531

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS

OF THE

UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Foreign Office,

8 Aug, 1933.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 32 10 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

The Under Secretary of
State for India

8—8074 (4)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

270
272

P.Z.
4332
1933

From SYRIA.

Decypher. Sir H. Batow (Beirut).
4th August, 1933.

D. 3.45 p.m. 4th August, 1933.

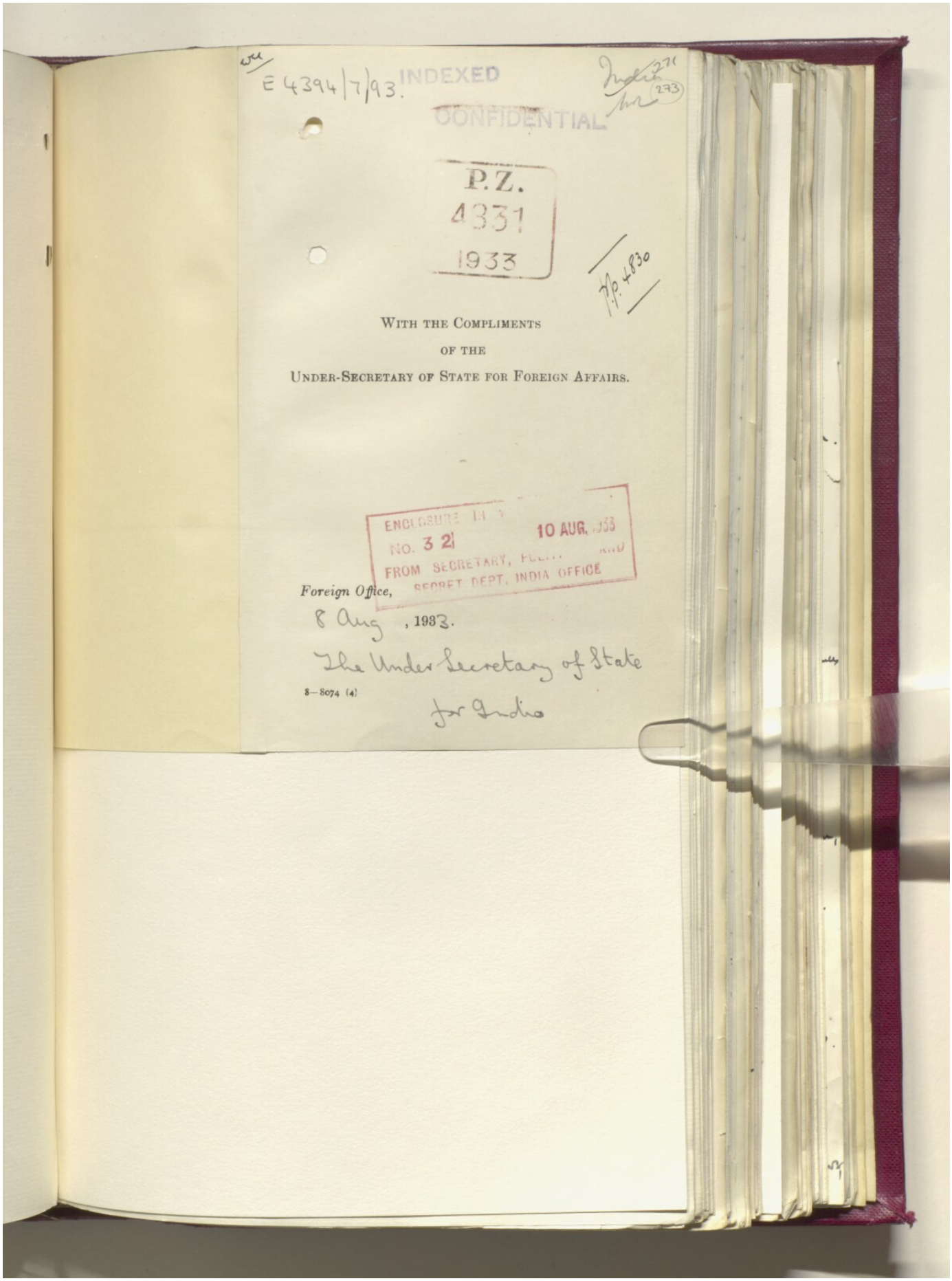
R. 5.25 p.m. 4th August, 1933.

No. 10.

4740 Your telegram No. 5.

Nuri is said to be due here today. If he comes with proposals such as you suggest he will fail. Local French authorities unless overruled by Paris will not accept Assyrians on any terms because if they did all those now in Iraq would migrate to Syria. Not only would this be very unpopular with Syrian Government but also cost of settlement would be very great. A rough estimate is over 40 million francs. Only hope seems to be that Iraqi Government will as a temporary measure and pending settlement by Major Thomson allow return with some rifles (see Bagdad 4430 telegram No. 178). Otherwise matter may be referred to Geneva.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 10, repeated to Bagdad No. 7.


E 4394/7/93. INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
P.Z.
4331
1933
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN
NO. 321
10 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, FOREIGN AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
8 Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

272
274

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4331
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
5th August, 1933.

D. 11.20 a.m. 5th August, 1933.

R. 12.15 p.m. 5th August, 1933.

No. 214. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No. 213.

Last night a party of Assyrians fought their way back from west to east bank of the Tigris and established themselves in the hills near Zakho where Iraqi army are this morning engaged in rounding them up. Number of casualties as yet unknown. Several Iraqi wounded.

This party number 150 odd Assyrians who had not yet surrendered to French. Iraqis complain that crossing of river was supported by fire from Assyrians on French bank who ought to have been disarmed.

I fear that this outbreak of fighting entirely alters the situation postulated in my telegram No. 208 and my telegram No. 209 and as events will move very rapidly I am using my discretion in dealing with them. I shall see the King this morning.

Addressed to Foreign Office telegram No. 214, repeated to Beirut telegram No. 18.

273
275

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4331
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
5th August 1933.

D. 12.45 p.m. 5th August 1933.

R. 12.50 p.m. 5th August 1933.

No. 216. (R).

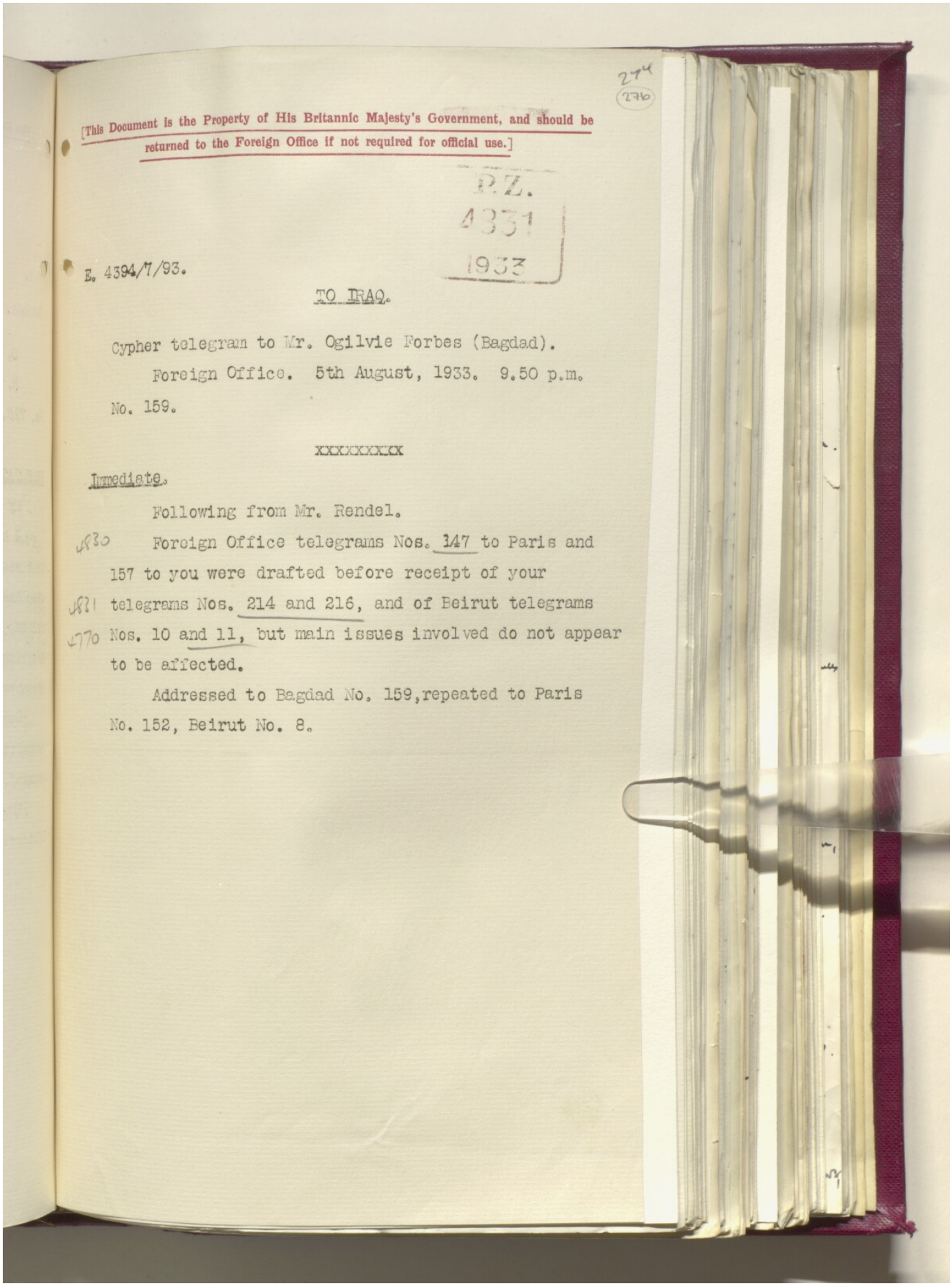
IMMEDIATE.

4831 My telegram No. 214.

I have not yet been able to see the King and in order that you should have information before the week-end my first step has been to request Iraqi Government verbally and in writing to see that adequate protection is afforded to Assyrians in Iraq with a view to preventing reprisals or a Massacre of the Innocents.

Operations still proceeding in Zakho hills. Iraqi casualties to date two men killed and two officers and 13 men wounded.

There is nothing more I can do for the present. Air Officer Commanding concurs.



274
276

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4331 1933

E. 4394/7/93.

TO IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 5th August, 1933. 9.50 p.m.

No. 159.

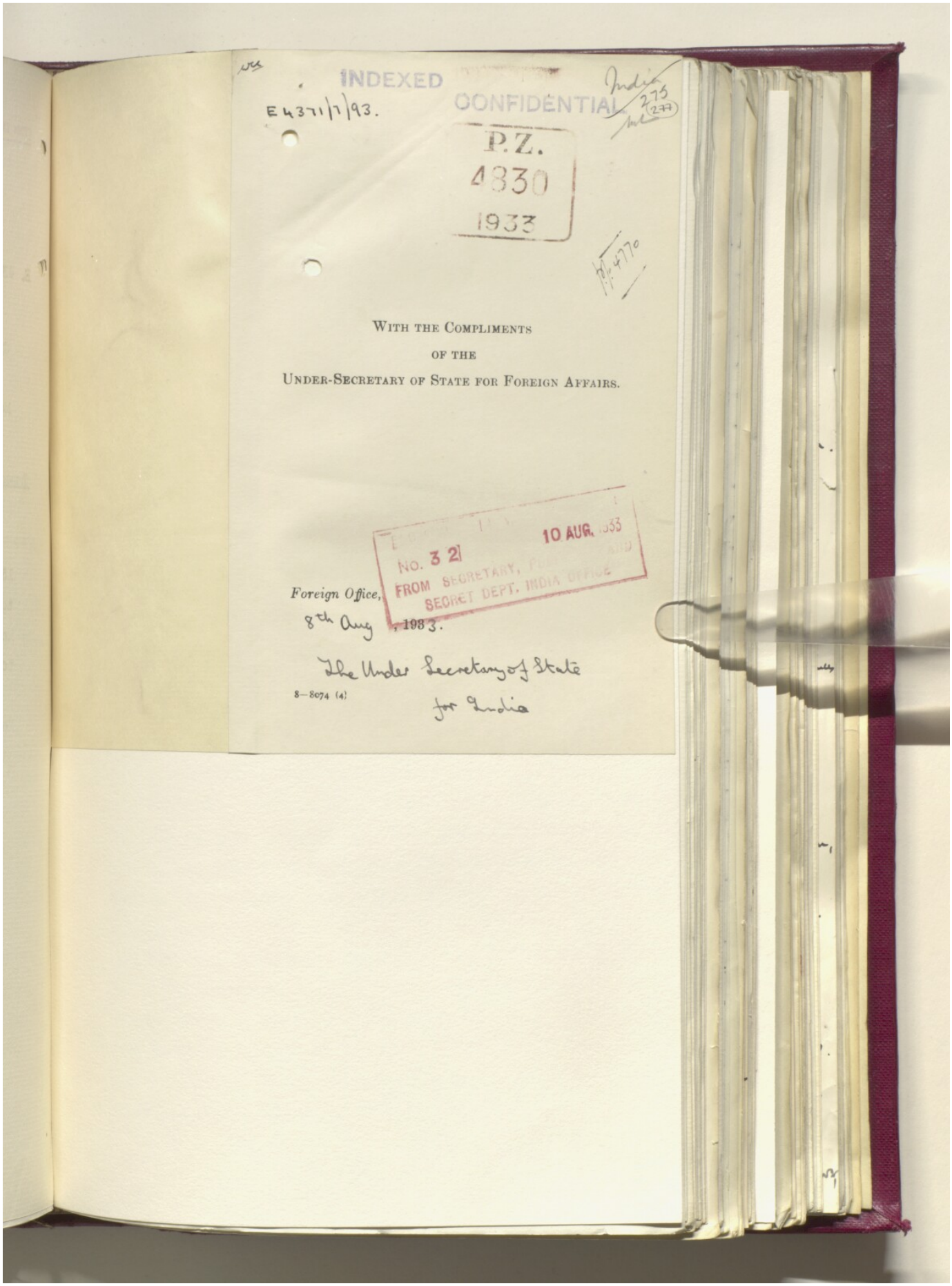
xxxxxxxxx

Immediate.

Following from Mr. Rendel.

J830 Foreign Office telegrams Nos. 147 to Paris and 157 to you were drafted before receipt of your J831 telegrams Nos. 214 and 216, and of Beirut telegrams J770 Nos. 10 and 11, but main issues involved do not appear to be affected.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 159, repeated to Paris No. 152, Beirut No. 8.


INDEXED
E 4371/7/93.
CONFIDENTIAL
P.Z.
4330
1933
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
10 AUG.
NO. 3 21
FROM SECRETARY,
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
8th Aug, 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

276
(278)

This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.

P.Z. 4330 1933

(E 4371/7/931).

TO FRANCE

Cypher telegram to Lord Tyrrell (Paris).

Foreign Office. 5th August 1933. 6.40 p.m.

No. 147.

IMMEDIATE.

Bagdad telegrams Nos. 212 and 213 (of August 4th - Assyrian question).

Confidential.

You will have seen from recent telegraphic correspondence that His Majesty's Government strongly favour proposal that emigrant Assyrians should be settled in Syria and rejoined there by their women and children. As these Assyrians appear all to be personal followers of the Mar Shimun, whose personal relations with the Iraqi Government are likely to be difficult for some considerable time, permanent emigration of this section of the Assyrians from Iraq would greatly ease problem of dealing with the remainder. Moreover any other solution would necessarily involve serious difficulties of various kinds.

2. Position of His Majesty's Government, however, is most delicate as they cannot assume any responsibility in connexion with policy or actions of Iraqi Government, and no contribution towards expenditure involved could be made from British funds.

3. Moreover practical difficulties of settlement in Syria may prove considerable since apart from difficulty of arranging for transfer of women and children it seems somewhat doubtful whether it will be possible to find in Syria high lying land for settlement of the type which the Assyrians have hitherto always insisted on.

4.....

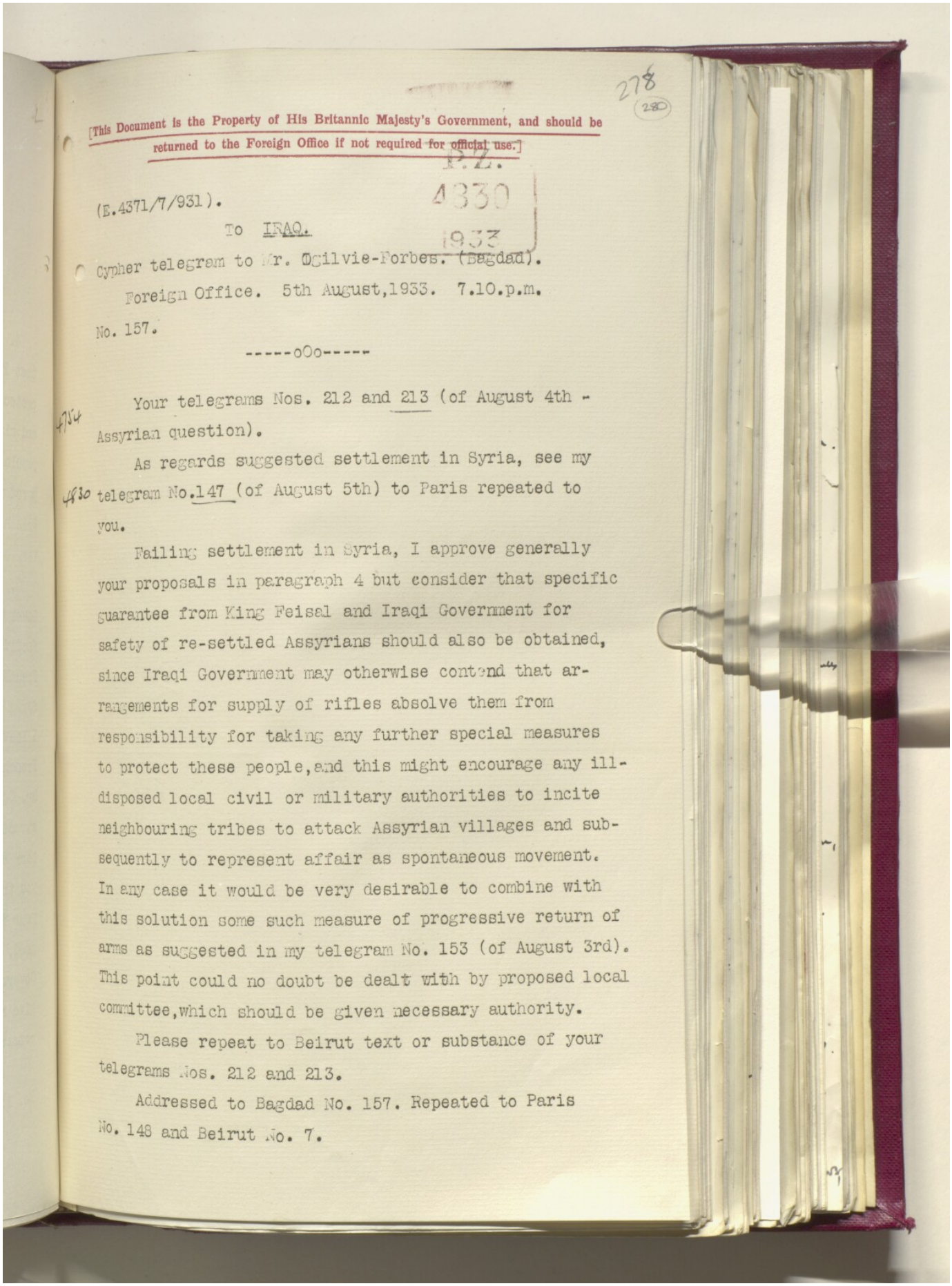
277
279

2.

4. Further there seems to be some reason to believe that French in pursuance of their policy of acting as protectors of Christian communities in the Middle East and also of making most of diversity of elements in population of Syria, may, for their own reasons, be prepared to welcome Assyrians as permanent settlers in French mandated territory. This however is for your own very confidential information only.

5. In these circumstances, although His Majesty's Government are anxious to do whatever may be possible to facilitate an agreement between Iraqi Government and French authorities in Syria providing for settlement in Syria of emigrant Assyrians and their women and children, I leave it to your judgment whether or not to press French Government further in the matter. In view of Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes' strongly expressed opinion that instructions from Paris will be required if any satisfactory agreement is to be reached locally, you may, if you think it desirable, and if you are satisfied that your further intervention would not do more harm than good, discuss whole question informally with French Government and do what you can to encourage them to give necessary instructions to local authorities to conclude agreement on lines proposed.

Addressed to Paris No. 147, repeated to Bagdad No. 155 and Beirut No. 6.



278
(280)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4330 1933

(E.4371/7/931).

To IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Gilvie-Forbes. (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 5th August, 1933. 7.10.p.m.

No. 157.

-----oOo-----

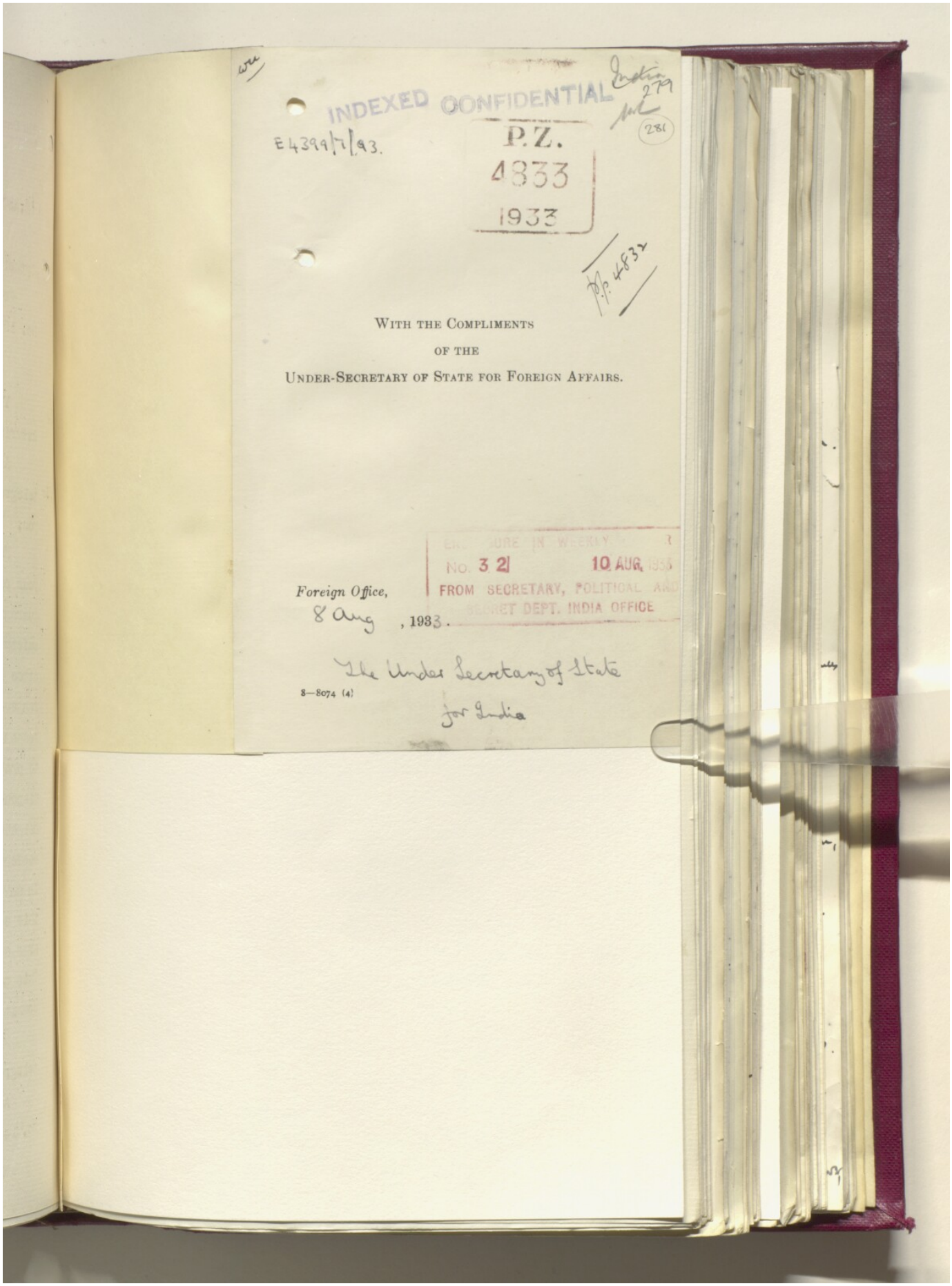
4754 Your telegrams Nos. 212 and 213 (of August 4th - Assyrian question).

As regards suggested settlement in Syria, see my 4830 telegram No.147 (of August 5th) to Paris repeated to you.

Failing settlement in Syria, I approve generally your proposals in paragraph 4 but consider that specific guarantee from King Feisal and Iraqi Government for safety of re-settled Assyrians should also be obtained, since Iraqi Government may otherwise contend that arrangements for supply of rifles absolve them from responsibility for taking any further special measures to protect these people, and this might encourage any ill-disposed local civil or military authorities to incite neighbouring tribes to attack Assyrian villages and subsequently to represent affair as spontaneous movement. In any case it would be very desirable to combine with this solution some such measure of progressive return of arms as suggested in my telegram No. 153 (of August 3rd). This point could no doubt be dealt with by proposed local committee, which should be given necessary authority.

Please repeat to Beirut text or substance of your telegrams Nos. 212 and 213.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 157. Repeated to Paris No. 148 and Beirut No. 7.


INDEXED CONFIDENTIAL
E 4399/7/93.
P.Z.
4833
1933
P.Z. 4832
With the Compliments
of the
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
No. 32
10 AUG.
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
8 Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

280
282

This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.

P.Z.
4833
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode & Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 5th August, 1933.

D. 7.40 p.m. 5th August, 1933.

R. 9.45 p.m. 5th August, 1933.

Nos. 217 & 218.

IMPORTANT. "R" begins.

4831

My telegram No. 216.

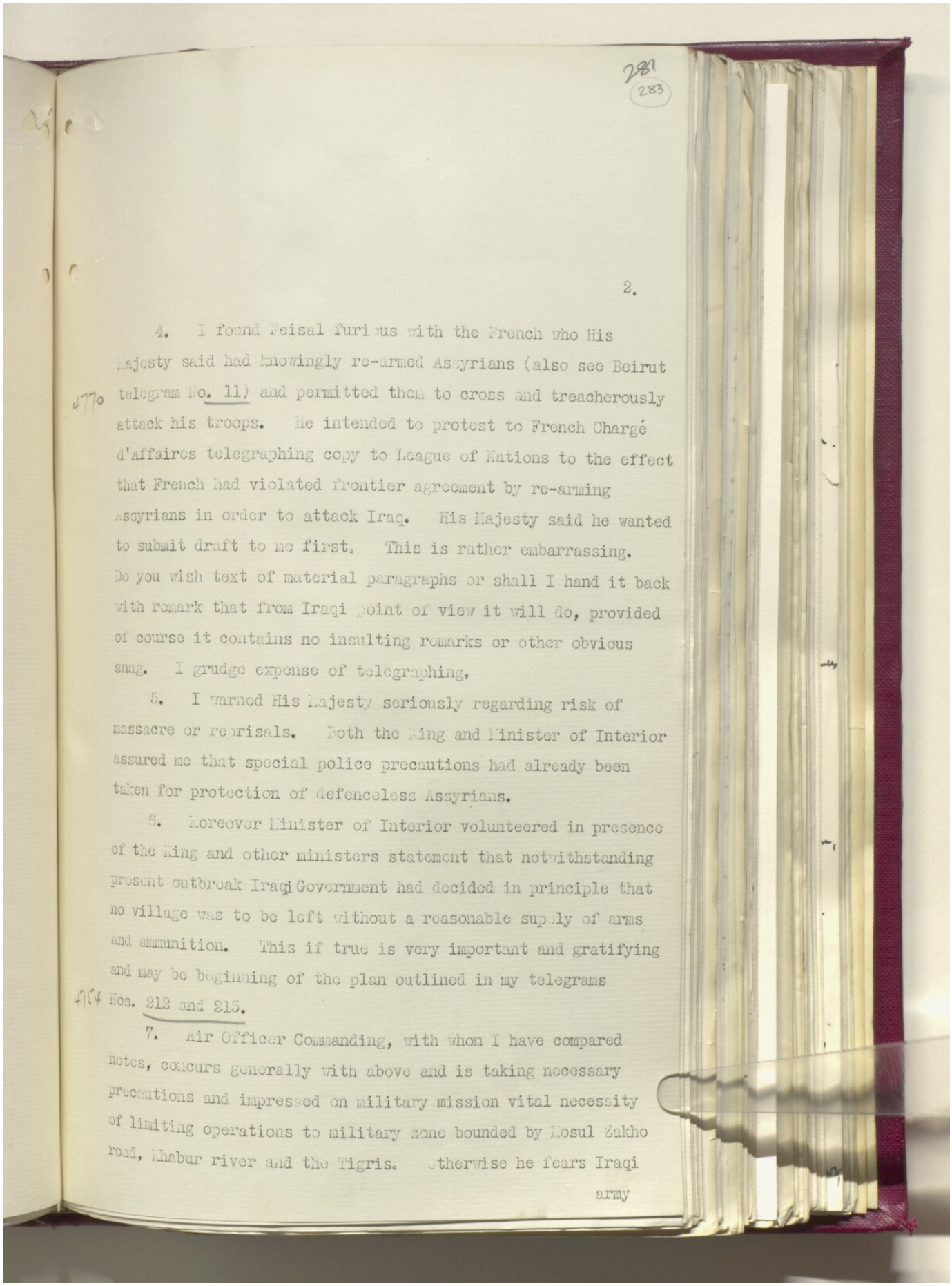
1. I have now seen the King together with the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Minister of Defence.

2. The present position is as follows: on August 4th party of some 200 Assyrians announced the intention of returning to Iraq from French bank of river and were informed that permission was granted provided they gave up their arms. They came over at dusk north of Faishkhabur and instead of surrendering arms rushed the Iraqi sentries, captured a post, attacked and apparently drove back the Iraqi supports at Dairabun and betook themselves to the Bekhair mountains south of Zakho. Iraqi forces are now engaged in rounding them up using aeroplane bombing. Casualties to date, Iraqis 3 killed, 16 wounded, Assyrian casualties unknown. Number of attackers may have been more than 150. Impossible to estimate in the dark and confusion. In the meantime about 400 are said to be massing on the right bank probably in preparation for another crossing tonight.

3. Iraqi dispositions are two battalions and other arms at Dairabun, the same and headquarters at Basitka Bala, one squadron of cavalry at Zakho and about six posts on river from Faishkhabur southward.

End of "R".

4.



281
283

2.

4. I found Feisal furious with the French who His Majesty said had knowingly re-armed Assyrians (also see Beirut 4770 telegram No. 11) and permitted them to cross and treacherously attack his troops. He intended to protest to French Chargé d'Affaires telegraphing copy to League of Nations to the effect that French had violated frontier agreement by re-arming Assyrians in order to attack Iraq. His Majesty said he wanted to submit draft to me first. This is rather embarrassing. Do you wish text of material paragraphs or shall I hand it back with remark that from Iraqi point of view it will do, provided of course it contains no insulting remarks or other obvious snag. I grudge expense of telegraphing.

5. I warned His Majesty seriously regarding risk of massacre or reprisals. Both the King and Minister of Interior assured me that special police precautions had already been taken for protection of defenceless Assyrians.

6. Moreover Minister of Interior volunteered in presence of the King and other ministers statement that notwithstanding present outbreak Iraqi Government had decided in principle that no village was to be left without a reasonable supply of arms and ammunition. This if true is very important and gratifying and may be beginning of the plan outlined in my telegrams 4754 Nos. 212 and 213.

7. Air Officer Commanding, with whom I have compared notes, concurs generally with above and is taking necessary precautions and impressed on military mission vital necessity of limiting operations to military zone bounded by Mosul Zakho road, Khabur river and the Tigris. Otherwise he fears Iraqi army

282
(284)

3.

army in pursuit of Assyrians will get involved in the mountains with disastrous effect on Kurds etc. I emphasised desirability of the above on the King this evening. His Majesty expressed complete agreement but said that it would be necessary to summon all available military reinforcements for the purpose. This meant withdrawing two Iraqi battalions in Mosul which Minister of Defence hesitated to do because he feared that Assyrian troops in the air defence force might attempt to destroy Iraqi aeroplanes housed in Mosul aerodrome. I have just received an urgent note from Iraqi Government on this subject. I promised His Majesty I would draw Air Officer Commanding's attention to the matter and (? assured) him that the Air Vice Marshal was confident of loyalty of Assyrian levies.

8. His Majesty spoke of visiting area affected.

283
285

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4333 1933

TO IRAQ

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
Foreign Office. 6th August 1933. 6 p.m.

No. 161.

Your telegram No. 217 (of August 5th: Assyrian crisis) 4833
paragraph 2 (Iraqi air action).

Air Ministry point out that Iraqi aircraft operating against Assyrians are presumably based on Mosul Royal Air Force aerodrome which is guarded by Assyrians in air defence force. Apart from obvious objections to and dangers of this situation position may become most embarrassing for Royal Air Force who may find it difficult to disclaim responsibility for action which may be taken by Iraqi aircraft.

Please consult Air Officer Commanding immediately on this point with a view to taking such action as may be possible to reduce these risks.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

284
(286)

P.Z.
4353
1933

To FRANCE.

Code telegram to Lord Tyrrell (Paris).

Foreign Office, 6th August, 1933, 5.45 p.m.

No. 157. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

Bagdad telegrams Nos. 217, 218 and 219 (of August 5th) and Beirut telegram No. 11 (of August 5th: Assyrian crisis).

If these reports are correct, action of French authorities in restoring arms to Assyrians and allowing them to attempt to re-enter Iraq by force and without any prior arrangement with Iraqi authorities seems most unfortunate.

Please make immediate unofficial representations to French Government pointing out that extremely dangerous situation is likely to develop over wide area unless measures are taken without delay to bring it under proper control and to prevent further passage of Assyrians from Syria to Iraq except by agreement with Iraqi authorities. Situation seems in fact to be developing on lines I feared in final paragraph of my telegram No. 123 (of July 24th) to you and in final paragraph of my telegram No. 154 (of August 4th) to Bagdad.

Addressed to Paris No. 157, repeated to Bagdad No. 162 and Beirut No. 10.

285
287

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4333
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 5th August, 1933.

D. 10.30 p.m. 5th August, 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 6th August, 1933.

No. 219. (R).

XXXXXXXXXX

Immediate.

My telegram No. 218.

In view of imminence of further attack Air Officer Commanding is strongly of opinion that a British officer be attached to French or Assyrian front with a view to establishing liaison. I concur but King Feisal will not agree to officer being appointed from Iraq as he at present considers Syria to be an enemy country.

286
288

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

4333
1933

TO IRAQ

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 6th August 1933. 5.50 p.m.

No. 160.

"""""""""""""""""""""

4833 Your telegram No. 219 (of August 5th: Assyrian crisis).

I am not clear as to precise intention of proposal. If King Feisal regards Syria as "an enemy country" and will not agree to officer being appointed from Iraq, how will "liaison be possible? Moreover some time must necessarily elapse before requisite arrangements could be concerted with French authorities and before officer from some other command could be put in possession of essential information and reach affected area. Meanwhile it looks from Beirut telegram No. 1 (of August 4th) as though large proportion of Assyrians might be back in Iraq before any such arrangement could be carried out. Please telegraph further details of what is proposed.

Addressed to Bagdad No. 160, repeated to Paris No. 156 and Beirut No. 9.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

287
289

P.Z.
4353
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
6th August 1933.

D. 2.00 a.m. 7th August 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 7th August 1933.

No. 220.

My immediately following telegram summarises military position to date and line I am taking with Iraqi Government to limit area of operations.

Last night the King sent for me for the third time about midnight. The Prime Minister and Ministers of Finance, Interior and War were also present. Following were the main points discussed:

(1) His Majesty was literally raving over French. He said that by rearming Assyrians and letting them across without previous arrangement with Iraq they had played a dirty trick and their object was to discredit Iraq and policy of Iraqi independence. He declared that French would be responsible for any deplorable results of this Assyrian affair. He said that his Arab pride was roused and he would like to kill all the French. He wanted to expel French Chargé d'Affaires who, he said, was intriguing with Mar Shimun and would not reply to Iraqi representations. I advised His Majesty against that course, pointing out that he could not take such action against a diplomatist without very definite and very serious evidence and that he would be raising unto himself a quite unnecessary political difficulty when the time came to negotiate settlement of Assyrian problem. I do not think His Majesty will carry out this threat.

2.....

2. His Majesty and Ministers were evidently very worried over military situation and afraid that Assyrians from Syria would attack and defeat Iraqi army detachments opposed to them. You will see from my immediately following telegram that these fears were not justified.

3. I then reminded him again about steps to be taken to maintain order in defenceless villages. He said that in addition to action already taken and reported in my telegram No. 218 Minister of Defence would fly to Mosul today to enlist 1,000 extra police to be used in combing out mountains.

4. He again expressed concern over attitude of Assyrian levies towards Iraqi aeroplanes being loaded with bombs on Mosul aerodrome. I assured His Majesty that I was constantly keeping this matter before the attention of Air Officer Commanding.

5. His Majesty finally wished to know whether you considered this affair called for a special meeting of council of the League.

6. I saw His Majesty again this morning. He read out drafts of proposed protests to His Majesty's Government, French Government and League. They are recital of Iraqi case concluding with a protest against French action in re-arming Assyrians and allowing them to return to attack Iraq. His Majesty also wanted me to help him with drafting of personal appeal to French President. I discouraged him from so doing pointing out that an appeal to President's higher feelings followed in the same breath by a curt summons to the tribunal of League would not have much effect. In the circumstances please cancel my question in paragraph 4 of my telegram No. 218.

Addressed to the Foreign Office No. 220, repeated to Beirut No. 19.

289
(291)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4353
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
6th August, 1933.

D. 10.25 p.m. 6th August, 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 7th August, 1933.

No. 221. (R).

IMPORTANT

My telegram No. 219.

0833

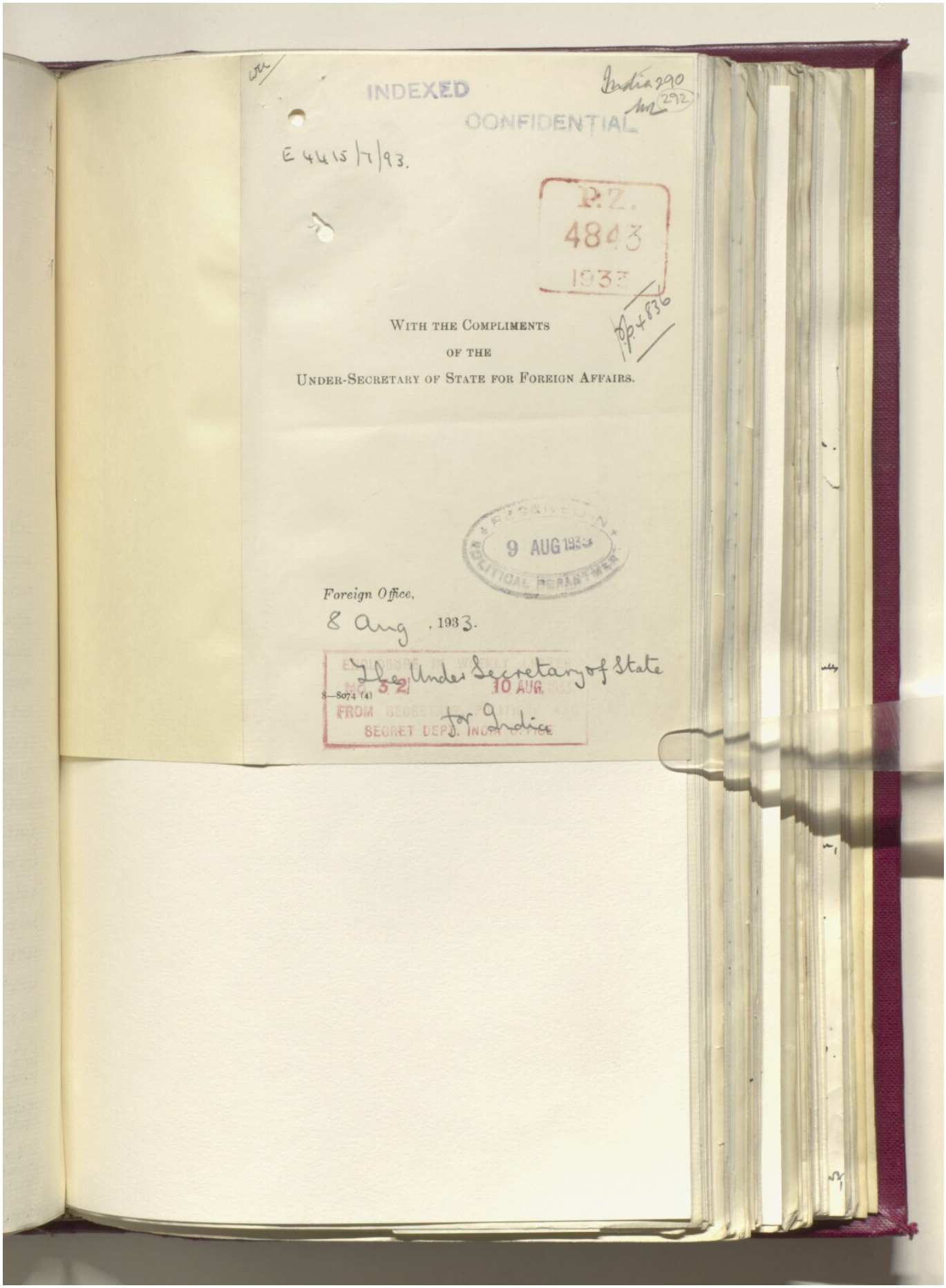
Reference half-inch map Zakho and Aski Mosul sheets in military position today is as follows:- Yesterday morning August 5th advance guard of Assyrians who had broken through north of Feishkhabur attacked Iraqi force at Dairabun with the object of diverting their attention while remainder of Assyrians crossed the river at the same point. Crossing was effected unopposed, Iraqi post having been wiped out and it is believed that nearly all the Assyrians have returned to Iraq and may even be east of Mosul Zakho road by now probably making for their villages. Action at Dairabun was broken off at 13.30 Assyrians leaving 29 dead, no wounded. A few isolated parties have been dealt with by motor machine gun patrols. About 200 Assyrians are reported to be preparing to cross the Tigris probably tonight. It is believed that all the emigrating Assyrians are now accounted for and it is intended to concentrate Dairabun Basitka Balah forces at some suitable point on Mosul Zakho road and await orders which according to present arrangements may take the form of distributing battalions in quarters over the northern area. I am continuing to press government not to indulge in major operations east of that road for reasons given in my telegram No. 218.

0833

Attitude of police, especially the newly enlisted, towards returning Assyrians will require watching as I already have reports of minor incidents from Amadia district.

Owing to reports that invading Assyrians burnt the bodies of two Iraqi officers and mutilated others, special police precautions are being taken to prevent anti-Assyrian demonstrations this afternoon in Bagdad.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 221, repeated to Beirut No. 20.


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
India 290
292
E 4615/7/93.
P.Z.
4843
1933
pp 4836
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
RECEIVED
9 AUG 1933
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT
Foreign Office,
8 Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
10 AUG.
FROM SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

291
(293)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4843
1933

To IRAQ.

(E 4402/7/93)

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad)

Foreign Office, 8th August 1933, 3.55 p.m.

No. 163.

- - -

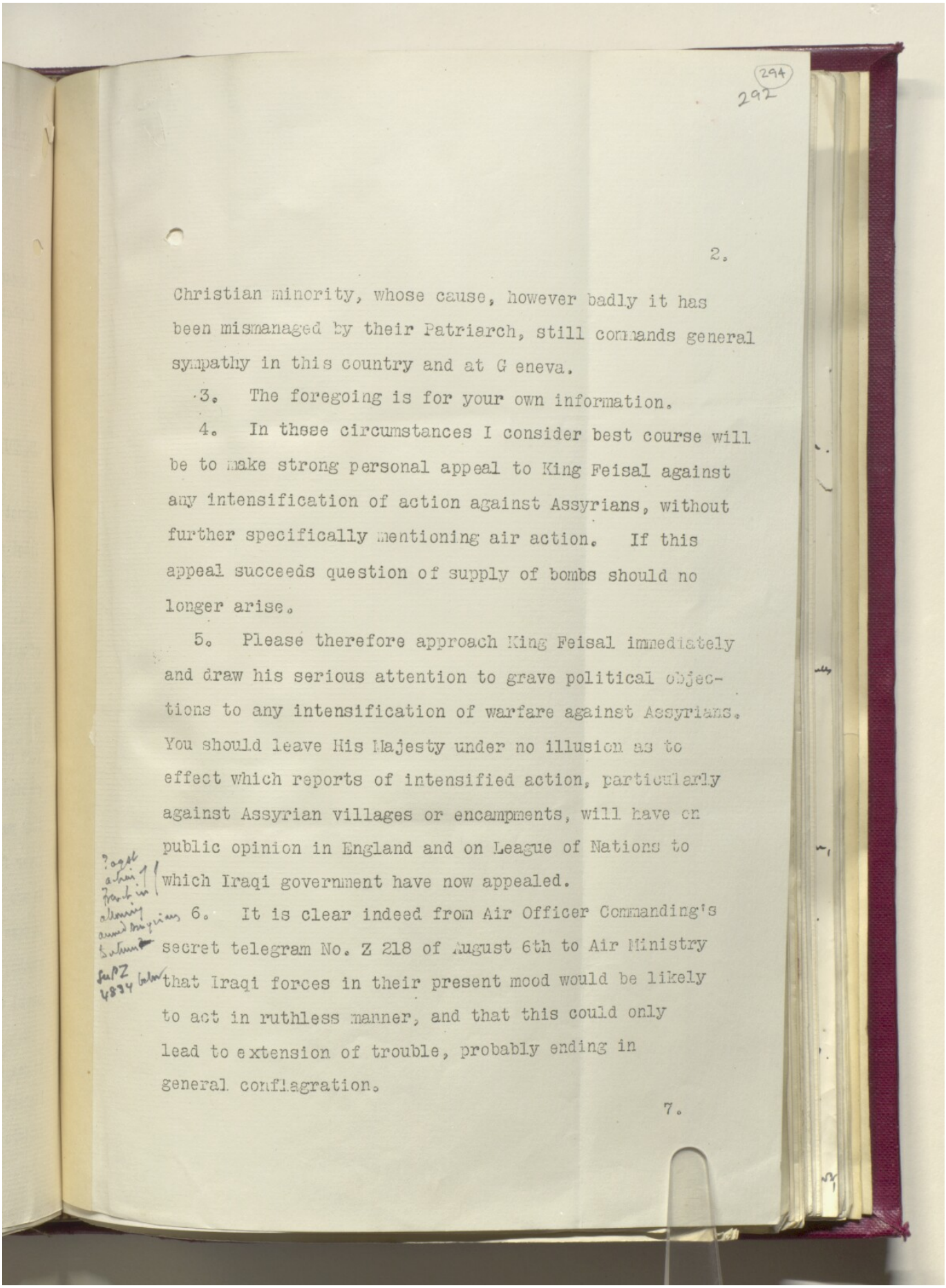
IMMEDIATE.

Air Officer Commanding's telegram No. Z 220 of August 7th to Air Ministry (Assyrian crisis - bombs for Iraqi aircraft).

Confidential.

1. Treaty position is difficult as Article 5 (2) of military annexure to treaty is not subject to any rider or qualification and no question of international relations arises under Articles 1 or 9 of treaty. It might therefore be difficult to defend refusal to supply bombs, particularly if Iraqi government were to represent that they were essential for re-establishment of internal order for maintenance of which they are now responsible. We are however further exploring possibility of contending, in case of need, that bombs cannot be spared from British stocks, or that article was only intended to refer to normal supply of stocks from England.

2. On the other hand, apart from general objections to use of bombs in this particular case, it is in the highest degree undesirable that bombs of British manufacture and supplied by R.A.F. should be used against a Christian



294
292

2.

Christian minority, whose cause, however badly it has been mismanaged by their Patriarch, still commands general sympathy in this country and at Geneva.

3. The foregoing is for your own information.

4. In these circumstances I consider best course will be to make strong personal appeal to King Feisal against any intensification of action against Assyrians, without further specifically mentioning air action. If this appeal succeeds question of supply of bombs should no longer arise.

5. Please therefore approach King Feisal immediately and draw his serious attention to grave political objections to any intensification of warfare against Assyrians. You should leave His Majesty under no illusion as to effect which reports of intensified action, particularly against Assyrian villages or encampments, will have on public opinion in England and on League of Nations to which Iraqi government have now appealed.

6. It is clear indeed from Air Officer Commanding's secret telegram No. Z 218 of August 6th to Air Ministry that Iraqi forces in their present mood would be likely to act in ruthless manner, and that this could only lead to extension of trouble, probably ending in general conflagration.

7.

293
(295)

3.

7. Present situation has been brought about largely as a result of disregard by Iraqi government of strongly expressed advice of His Majesty's Government (a) not to detain Mar Shimun in Bagdad, thus giving his followers a dangerous grievance, and (b) not to attempt in any circumstances to disarm returning Assyrians by force. Iraqi government, in contradiction to Nuri Pasha's statement on July 28th of their intentions, have followed neither of the alternatives which he described, and have neither released the Mar Shimun nor re-admitted the Assyrians with their arms. On the contrary, by both continuing the detention of Mar Shimun and by proclaiming at the same time their intention of disarming returning Assyrians, if necessary by force, they have precipated crisis and incurred grave responsibility for results.

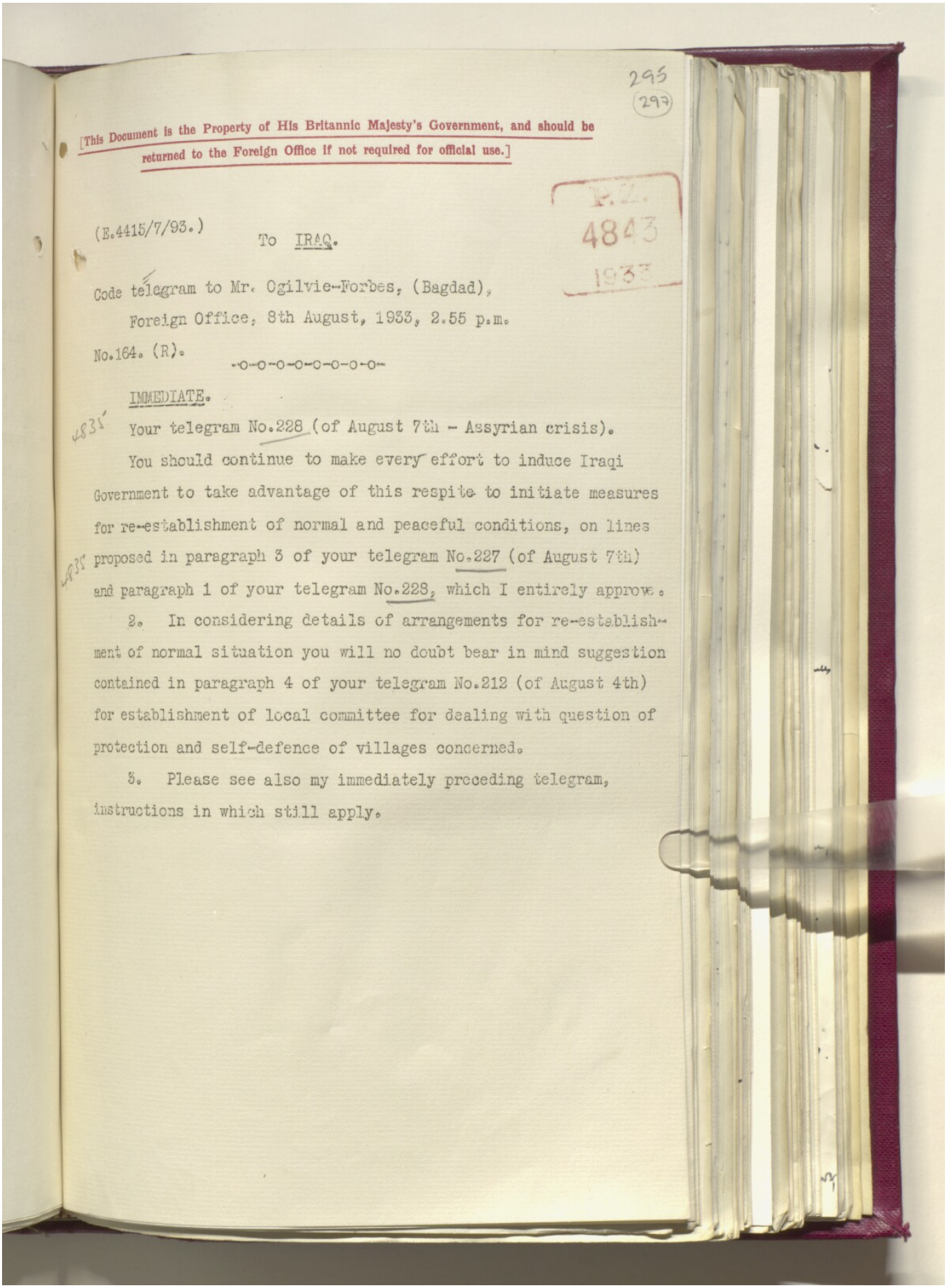
8. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government regard King Feisal as morally bound to restrict operations against Assyrians to narrowest possible limits and to make every effort to facilitate early adoption of policy of conciliation.

9. You should add that King Feisal's hands will be much strengthened at Geneva, where the whole matter must, owing to his own action inevitably arise, if Iraqi's come there with an unchallengeable record of moderation and wisdom - and this is the line which we who have been the friends

294
(296)

friends and counsellors of Iraq most earnestly desire that in his own interest and in that of the reputation of his country he will adopt.

10. Meanwhile, pending King Feisal's reply to above representations and further information as to efforts made by Iraqi government to re-establish peace, you will be unable to give an answer to Iraqi government's request for supply of bombs. I much hope however that in view of détente reported in your telegram No. 228 (of August 7th) this issue will not now be pressed.



295
(297)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

F.Z. 4843 1933

(E.4415/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),

Foreign Office, 8th August, 1933, 2.55 p.m.

No.164. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

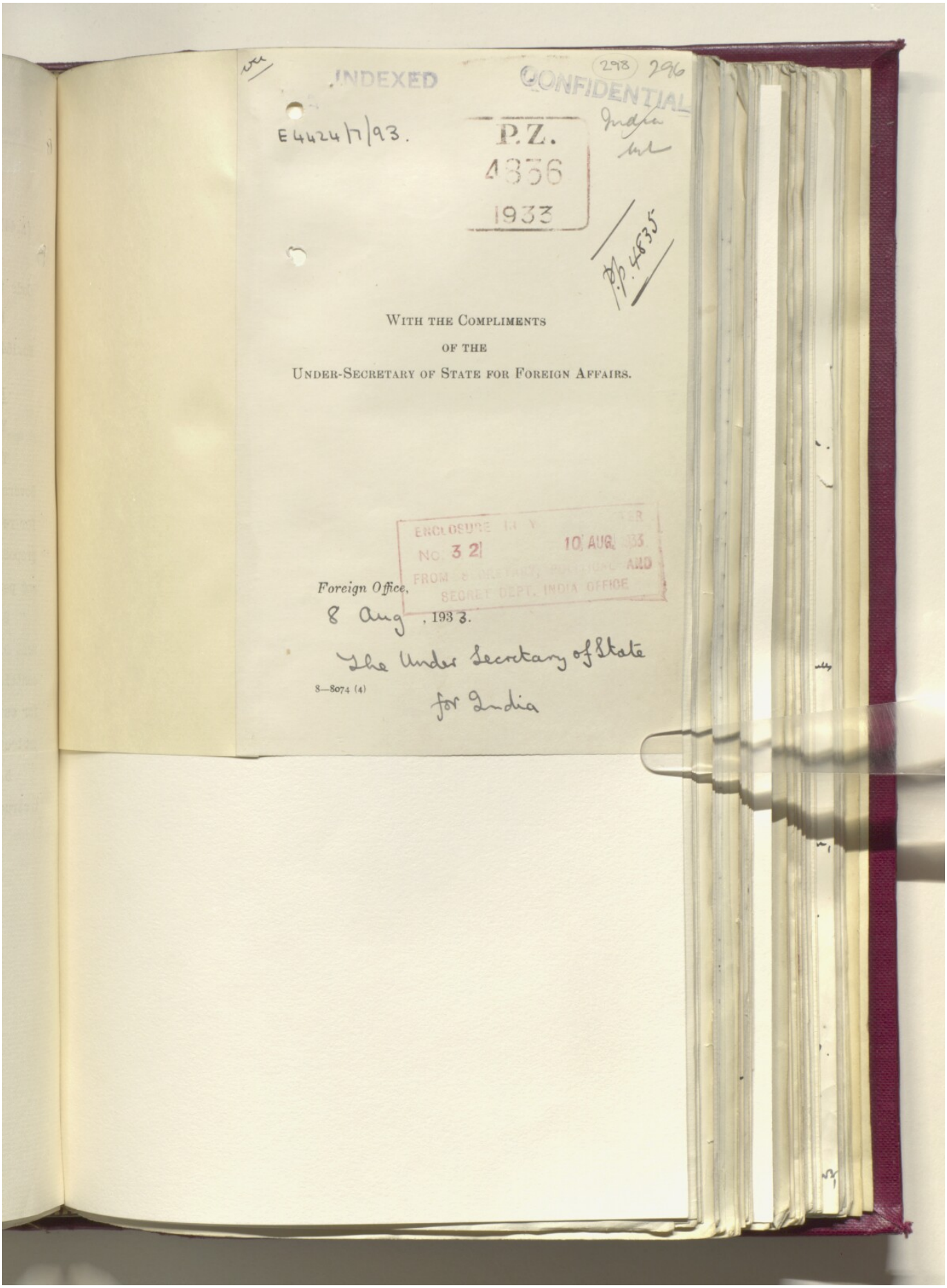
IMMEDIATE.

4835 Your telegram No.228 (of August 7th - Assyrian crisis).

You should continue to make every effort to induce Iraqi Government to take advantage of this respite to initiate measures for re-establishment of normal and peaceful conditions, on lines 4837 proposed in paragraph 3 of your telegram No.227 (of August 7th) and paragraph 1 of your telegram No.228, which I entirely approve.

2. In considering details of arrangements for re-establishment of normal situation you will no doubt bear in mind suggestion contained in paragraph 4 of your telegram No.212 (of August 4th) for establishment of local committee for dealing with question of protection and self-defence of villages concerned.

3. Please see also my immediately preceding telegram, instructions in which still apply.


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
298
296
E 4424/7/93.
P.Z.
4356
1933
P.P. 4835
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN
NO. 3 2
10 AUG
AND
FROM
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office,
8 Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

297
299

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4356
1933

From SYRIA.

Decypher. Sir H. Satow. (Beirut).
August 8th. 1933.

D. Noon. August 8th. 1933.

R. 12.15.p.m. August 8th. 1933.

No. 13.

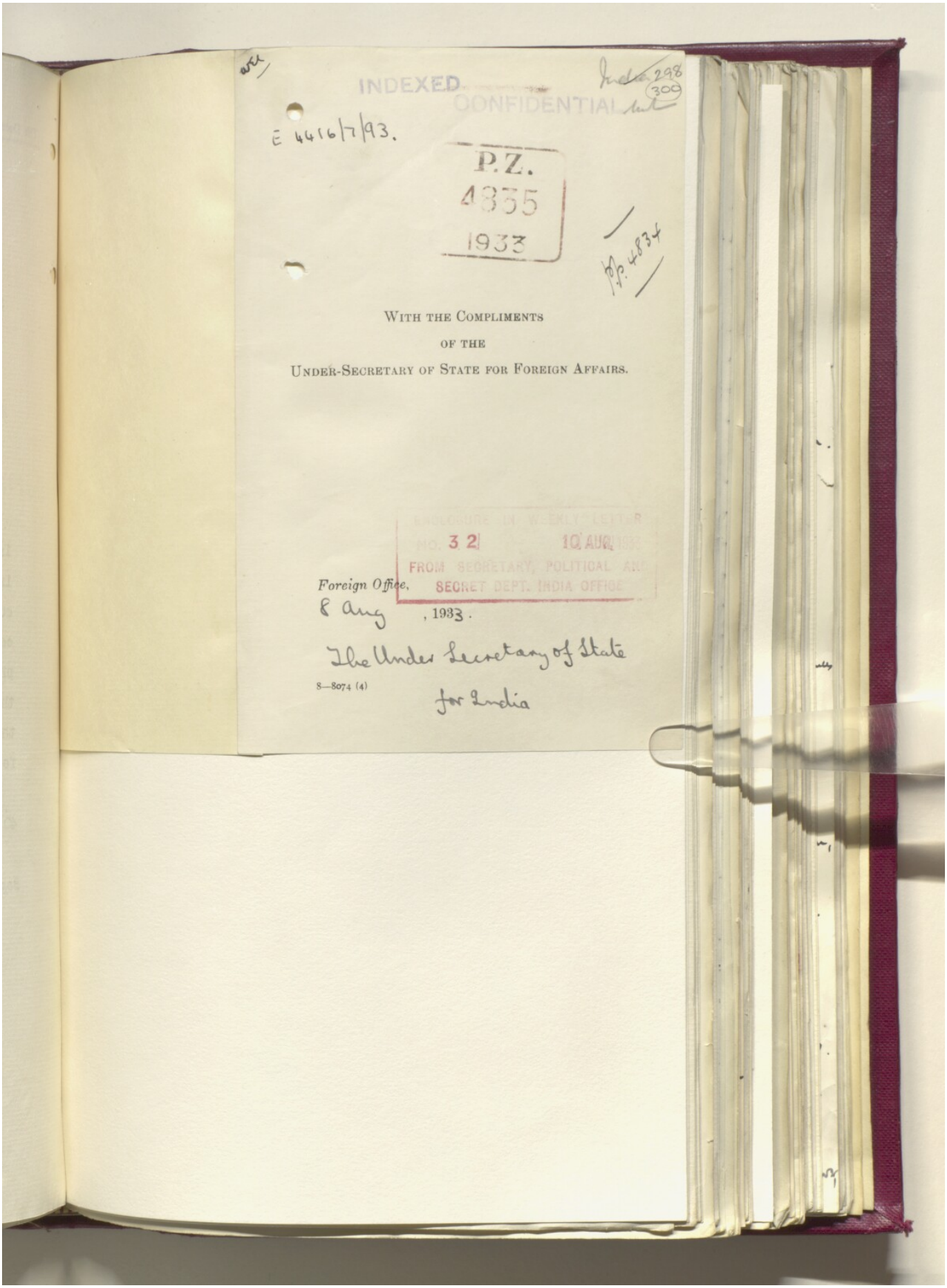
-----oOo-----

4835 My telegram No. 12.

I learn that French are now prepared in principle to initiate negotiations with a view to permanent settlement in Syria of limited number of dissidents. In these circumstances it would be well if Nuri who despite unceremonious departure seems to have made favourable impression could come again. This more likely to be useful than preparation of protests as French would not, I think, be averse to reference to League of Nations. They feel they too have something to say.

By last evening 392 Assyrians had re-crossed and 40 more were expected last night.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 13; repeated to Bagdad No. 10.


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
E 4416/7/93.
P.Z.
4355
1933
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
Foreign Office,
8 Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)

299
(301)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

FROM FRANCE

P.Z. 4335 1933

Decode. Lord Tyrrell (Paris). 7th August 1933.

D. 4.30 p.m. 7th August 1933.

R. 9.00 p.m. 7th August 1933.

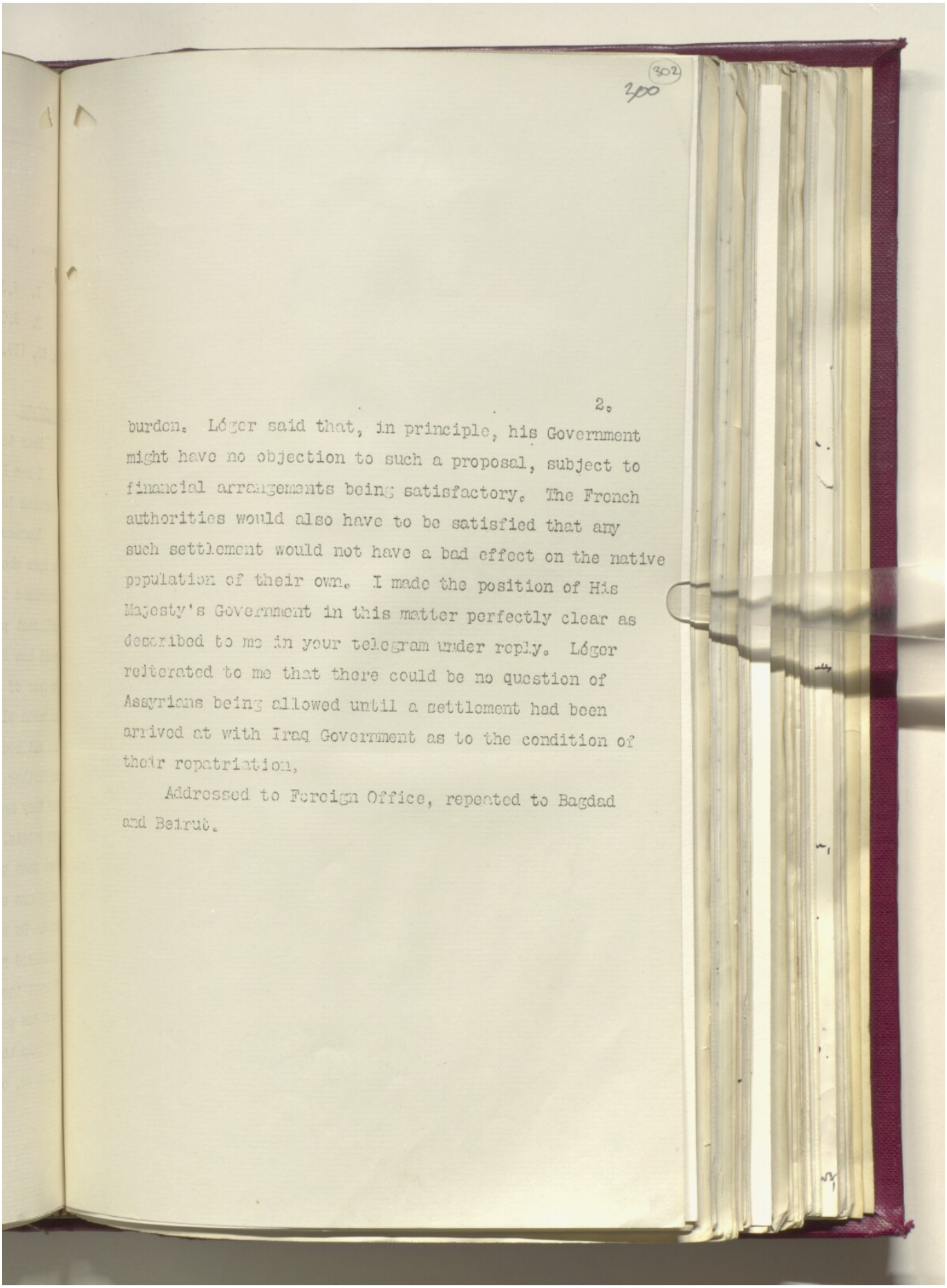
No. 63. (R).

IMMEDIATE. J870 J833

Your telegrams Nos. 147 and 157.

I saw Léger this morning with regard to Assyrian incursion into Syria.

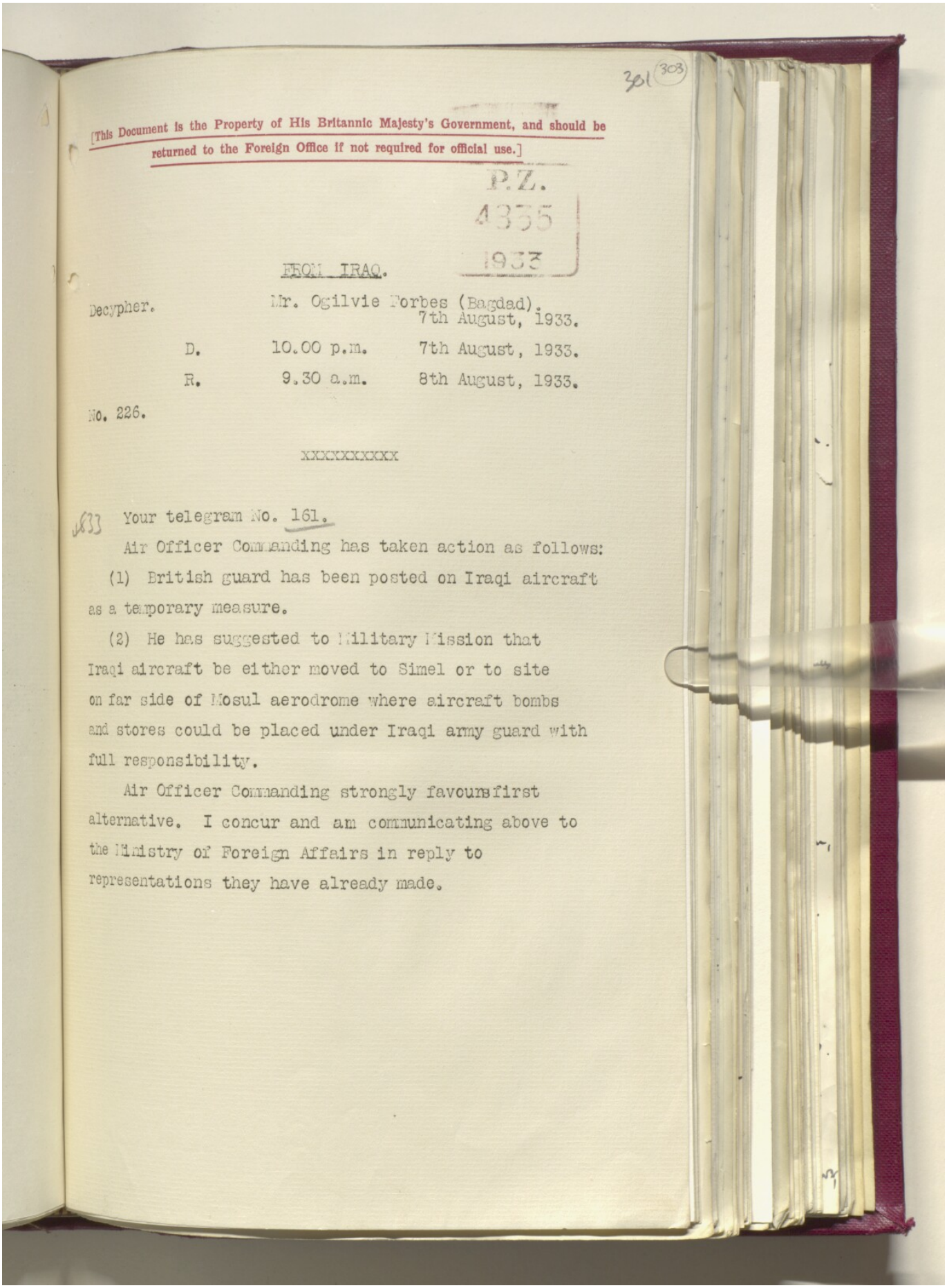
Impression I gathered was that the French authorities had been wholly unprepared for this incursion and though determined to disarm incursionists they had not on the spot sufficient physical force to carry out their intention. The result has been that a certain number of Assyrians broke away for fear of being disarmed and this led to the conflict which has taken place. Léger told me that instructions would be sent out today to insist upon the disarming and interning of any further Assyrians. Reproach he made to Iraq Government was that they had not warned the French authorities that Assyrians were rebels. Local authorities assumed when incursion took place that these were nomadic tribes who, dissatisfied with conditions of life in Iraq, were seeking new settlements in Syria. On being informed by Nuri Pasha that Assyrians were considered rebels, the French Government are now in a position to treat them as such, and will do so. Léger said that Nuri Pasha was proposing that Syrian authorities should allow Assyrians to settle in Syria, to which Iraq Government had no objection, of which they were prepared to bear the financial burden.....



302
300

burden. Léger said that, in principle, his Government might have no objection to such a proposal, subject to financial arrangements being satisfactory. The French authorities would also have to be satisfied that any such settlement would not have a bad effect on the native population of their own. I made the position of His Majesty's Government in this matter perfectly clear as described to me in your telegram under reply. Léger reiterated to me that there could be no question of Assyrians being allowed until a settlement had been arrived at with Iraq Government as to the condition of their repatriation.

Addressed to Foreign Office, repeated to Bagdad and Beirut.



301 (303)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4355 1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 7th August, 1933.

D. 10.00 p.m. 7th August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 8th August, 1933.

No. 226.

XXXXXXXXXX

633 Your telegram No. 161.

Air Officer Commanding has taken action as follows:

(1) British guard has been posted on Iraqi aircraft as a temporary measure.

(2) He has suggested to Military Mission that Iraqi aircraft be either moved to Simel or to site on far side of Mosul aerodrome where aircraft bombs and stores could be placed under Iraqi army guard with full responsibility.

Air Officer Commanding strongly favours first alternative. I concur and am communicating above to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in reply to representations they have already made.

302
(304)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 7th. 1933.

D. 1.25.a.m. August 7th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. August 8th. 1933.

No. 227. (R).

-----oOo-----

My telegram No. 226.

1. Position today is that all Assyrians except about 100 left in charge of camp in Syria and 47 wounded at ~~Derik~~ Dohuk are now east of Mosul. Zakho Road. There have been sporadic encounters with Iraqi forces and 95 seem to have been killed to date.

2. Both columns of army are concentrating on Dohuk to await further orders. 1,000 new police being recruited in ~~Derik~~ Dohuk, Zakho Amadia and Mosul.

3. Policy. The Government are adopting waiting attitude to see how Assyrians declare themselves. Both Air Officer Commanding and I for military and political reasons respectively are urging that government should proclaim policy of amnesty for rank and file and trial of leaders and finding of villages implicated as soon as possible otherwise both police and returning Assyrians being in doubt will attack each other. Government as yet undecided and will take no action for three or four days.

4. (? My) telegram No. 223. King Feisal now wants Royal Air Force aeroplanes to visit Duck's Bill instead of Iraqi aeroplanes. I understand from French Chargé d'Affaires there is no objection. Landing probably Hassatche. Air Officer Commanding concurs and will detail special Royal Air Force officer. (?Repatriation). Please facilitate arrangements as soon as possible.

5. I .....

303
(305)

5. I have been approached indirectly by Mar Shimun to the effect that his father and Aunt Surma have disappeared from Mosul. I have informed him that in present circumstances I cannot deal with him direct but as a fellow Christian I will make enquiry.

See text of my immediately following telegram.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 227; repeated to Beirut.

304
306

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4355 1933

FROM IRAQ

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
7th August 1933.

D. 12.25 a.m. 8th August 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 8th August 1933.

No.238. (R).

My immediately preceding telegram.

Having passed from phase pitched battle to that of guerilla warfare, and a pause occurring, both Air Officer Commanding and I feel we should give a lead to Iraqis who do not quite know what to do. We feel it is most important that both rebel and would be rebel Assyrians should know the intentions of the Government which should be tempered with justice for ringleaders, and mercy for rank and file.

Apart from military arguments in favour of above course, first question of League, to whom appeal has been made will be what is Iraq Government doing to stop bloodshed? Moreover Iraqis are quite incapable of maintaining with success policy of repression.

We cannot guarantee that Iraqis will follow this advice but I hope for at least four days respite.

305
307

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4355
1933

From SYRIA.

Decode. Sir H. Satow. (Beirut).
August 7th. 1933.
D. 7.30.p.m. August 7th. 1933.
R. 9.30.a.m. August 8th. 1933.

No. 12. (R).

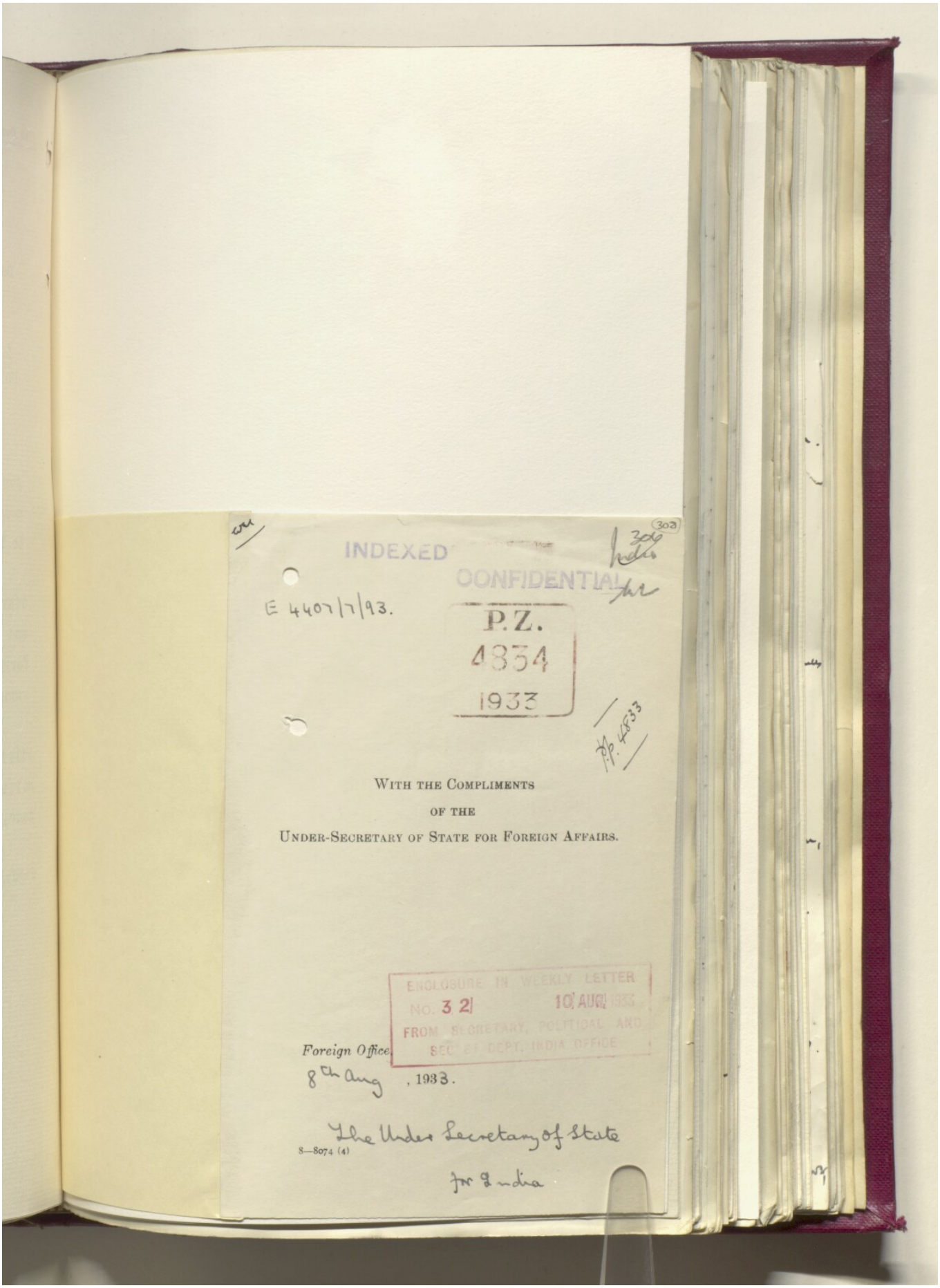
-----oOo-----

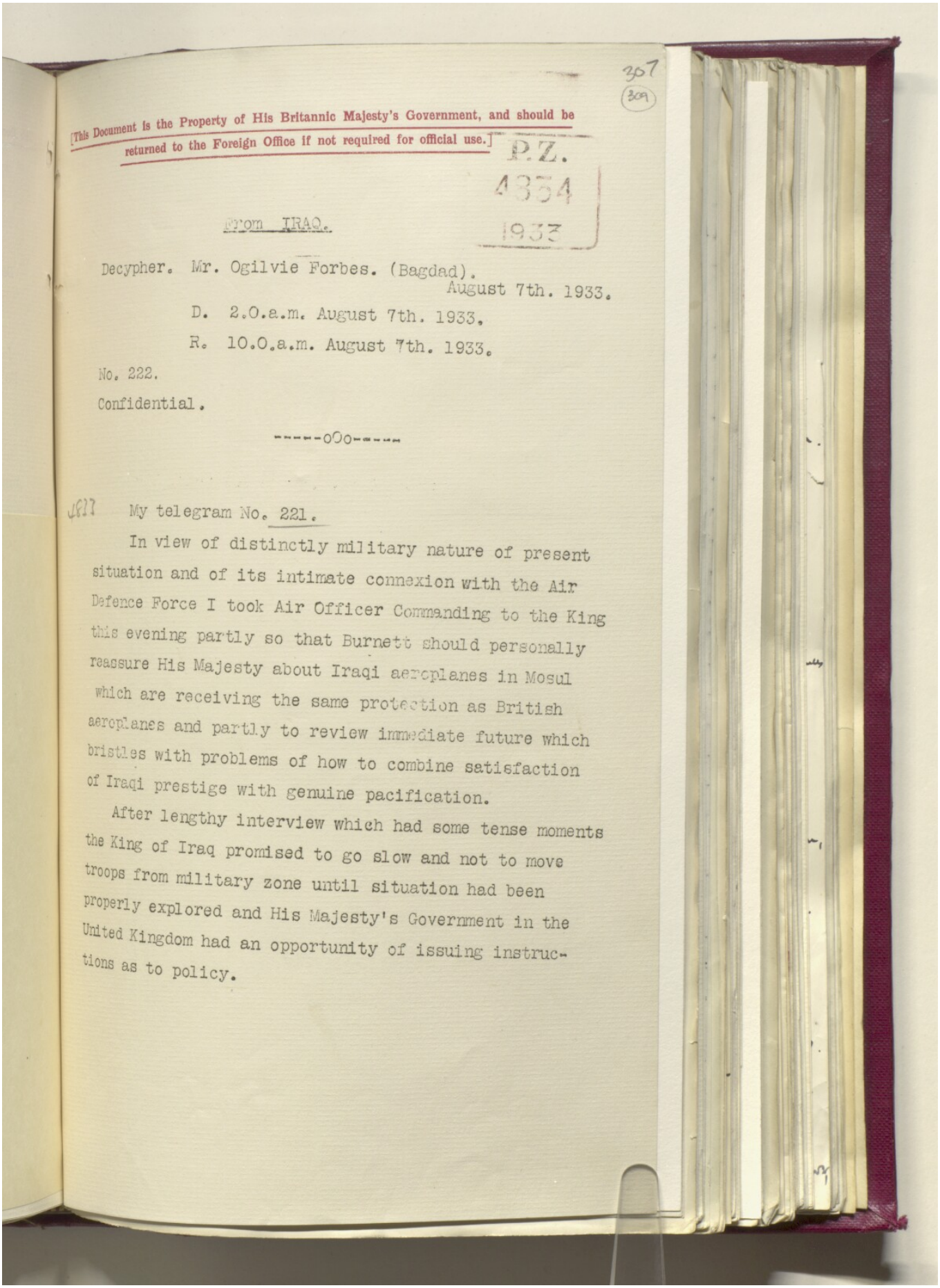
Acting French High Commissioner states that 325 Assyrians recrossed into Syria. Now considered as rebels against Iraqi Government and have been disarmed and are to be sent to Hassetche. French Government approves.

French here now appear less averse to receiving Tiari if as Nuri told them they only number 1,200 or so and they will not be followed by others. Matter referred to Paris. Nuri after a friendly discussion left suddenly this morning without even informing French.

Iraqi aeroplane dropped a bomb on Syrian soil killing one Assyrian and wounding three. French military authorities much excited and protest will be made.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 12; repeated to Bagdad No. 9.


INDEXED
CONFIDENTIAL
E 4407/7/93.
P.Z.
4354
1933
WITH THE COMPLIMENTS
OF THE
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 32
10 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
Foreign Office
8th Aug , 1933.
The Under Secretary of State
for India
8—8074 (4)



307
309

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4334
1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 7th. 1933.

D. 2.0.a.m. August 7th. 1933.

R. 10.0.a.m. August 7th. 1933.

No. 222.

Confidential.

-----ooo-----

4817 My telegram No. 221.

In view of distinctly military nature of present situation and of its intimate connexion with the Air Defence Force I took Air Officer Commanding to the King this evening partly so that Burnett should personally reassure His Majesty about Iraqi aeroplanes in Mosul which are receiving the same protection as British aeroplanes and partly to review immediate future which bristles with problems of how to combine satisfaction of Iraqi prestige with genuine pacification.

After lengthy interview which had some tense moments the King of Iraq promised to go slow and not to move troops from military zone until situation had been properly explored and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom had an opportunity of issuing instructions as to policy.

308
310

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4334
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
August 7th.1933.

D. 12.45.p.m. August 7th. 1933.

R. 1.30.p.m. August 7th. 1933.

No. 223. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

Addressed to Beirut No. 21.

King Feisal wishes to send to the "Duck's Bill" Iraqi officer accompanied by a British officer in Iraqi aeroplane in order to obtain precise information. Iraqi Government will approach the French Chargé d'Affaires for facilities. I have already privately informed French Chargé d'Affaires. Air Officer Commanding concurs and is prepared to send Royal Air Force officer if necessary although a British officer attached to Iraqi army would be preferable.

Repeated to Foreign Office.

309
(311)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4334
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
7th August, 1933.

D. 10.00 p.m. 7th August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 8th August, 1933.

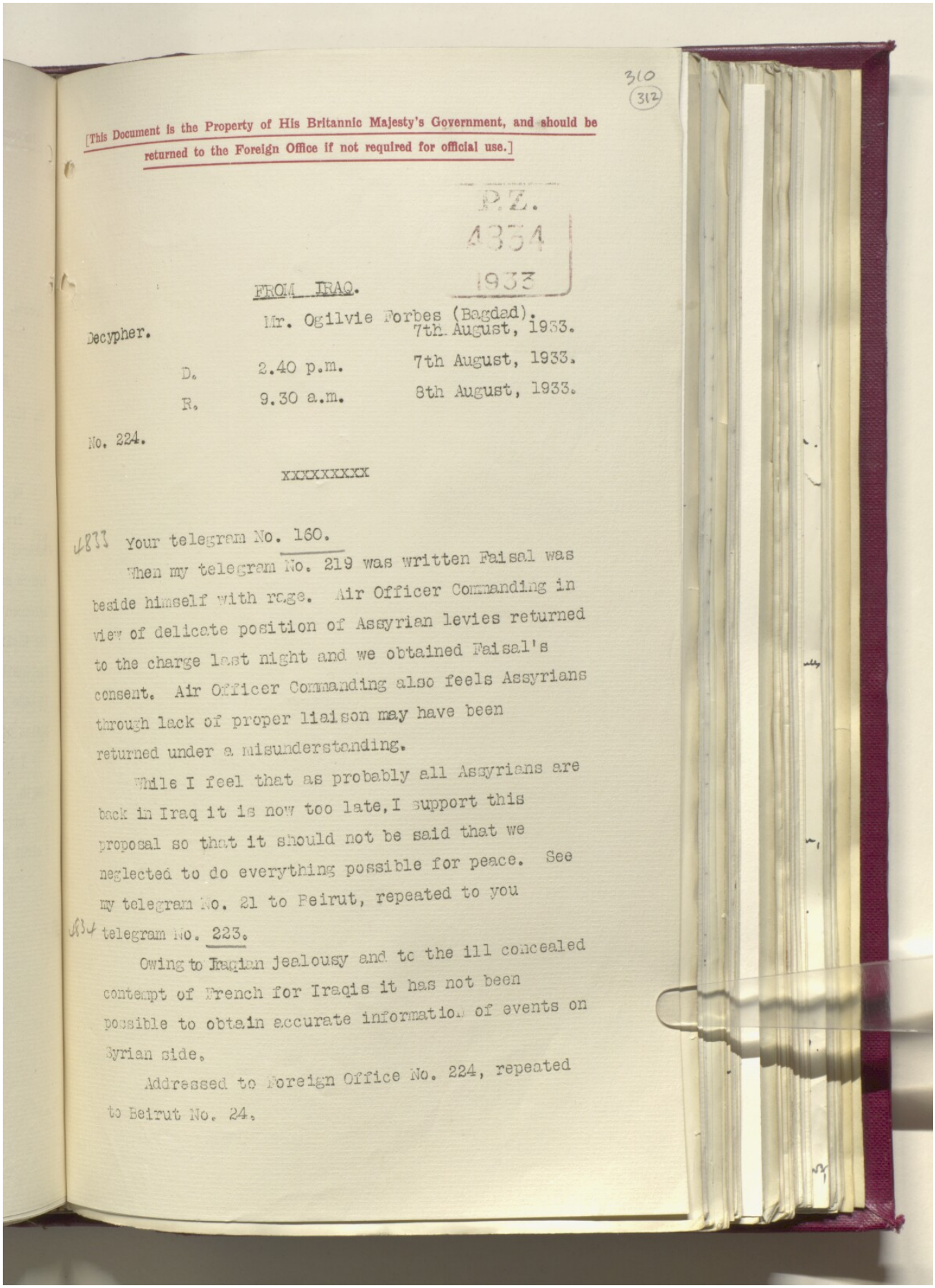
No. 225. (R).

4833 My telegram No. 220 paragraph 6.

Iraq Government yesterday addressed telegram to Secretary General of League of Nations protesting against failure of French mandate in Syria to implement provisional frontier agreement by rearming Assyrians and by making Syria a base for their attacking Iraq. Mandatory of Syria is held responsible for all moral and material losses and request is made that matter be brought as soon as possible to the notice of all members of the League of Nations.

I have received a similar communication but of greater length. Copy of both by air mail.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 225, repeated to Beirut No. 25.



310
(312)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4354
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 7th August, 1933.

D. 2.40 p.m. 7th August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 8th August, 1933.

No. 224.

xxxxxxxxx

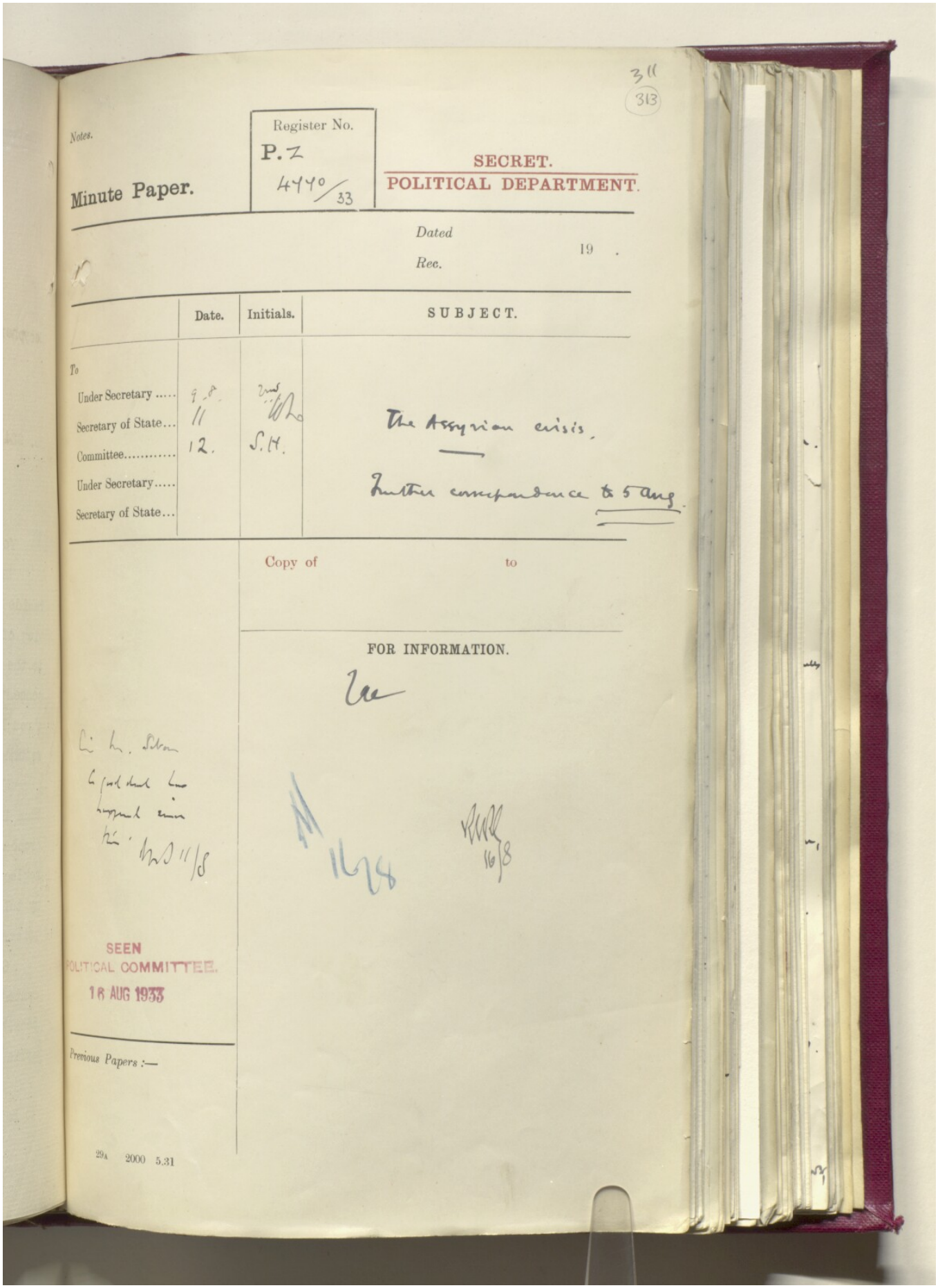
4877 Your telegram No. 160.

When my telegram No. 219 was written Faisal was beside himself with rage. Air Officer Commanding in view of delicate position of Assyrian levies returned to the charge last night and we obtained Faisal's consent. Air Officer Commanding also feels Assyrians through lack of proper liaison may have been returned under a misunderstanding.

While I feel that as probably all Assyrians are back in Iraq it is now too late, I support this proposal so that it should not be said that we neglected to do everything possible for peace. See my telegram No. 21 to Beirut, repeated to you 4894 telegram No. 223.

Owing to Iraqian jealousy and to the ill concealed contempt of French for Iraqis it has not been possible to obtain accurate information of events on Syrian side.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 224, repeated to Beirut No. 24.



311
313

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z
4440/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	9.8.		The Assyrian crisis.
Secretary of State...	11		Further correspondence to 5 Aug.
Committee.....	12.	S.M.	
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

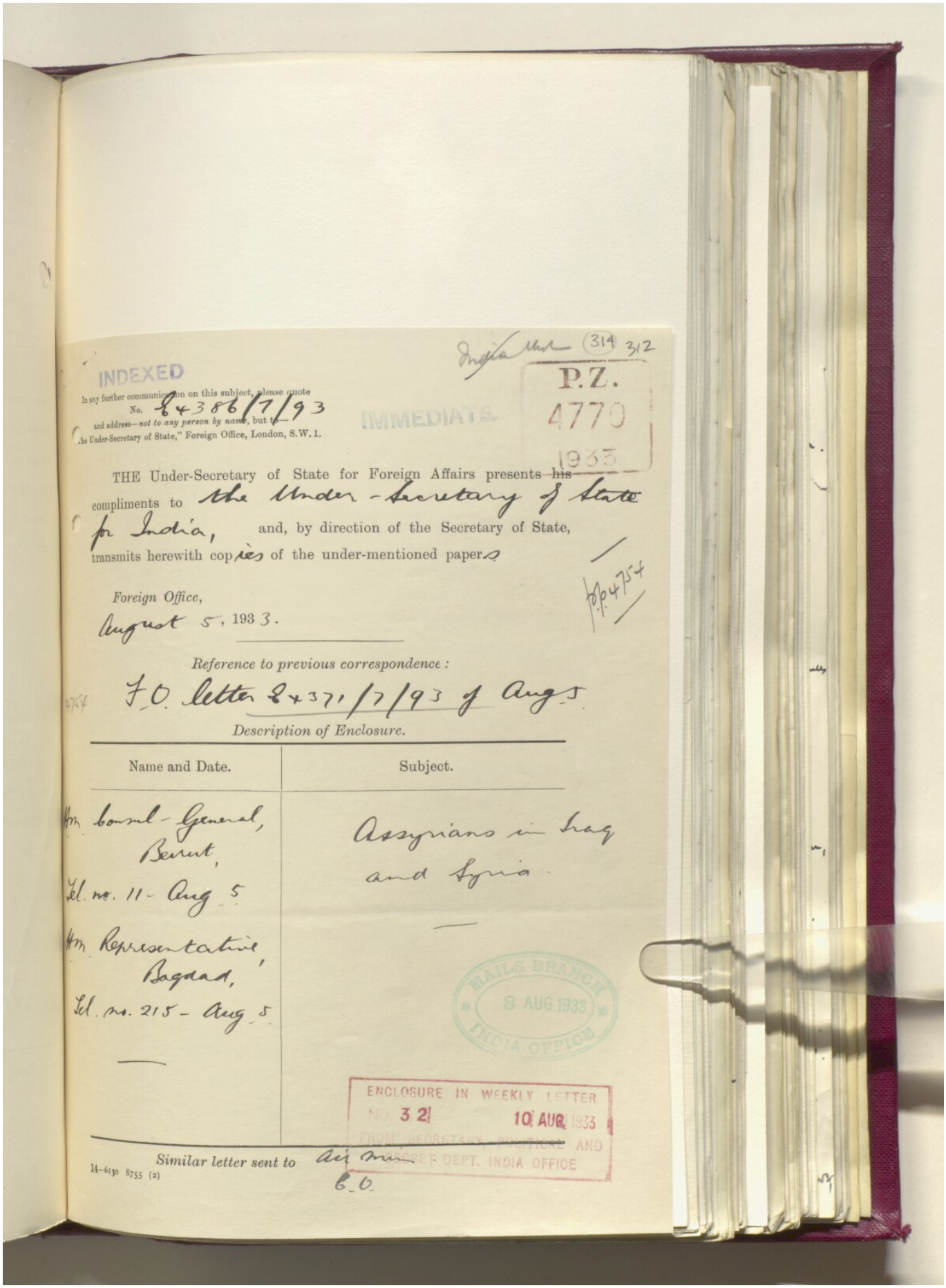
Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
16 AUG 1933

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4386/7/93 and address—not to any person by name, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

India Office (314) 312

P.Z. 4770 1933

IMMEDIATE

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

pp 47/54

Foreign Office,
August 5, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4371/7/93 of Aug 5

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Hm. Consul-General, Beirut, Tel. no. 11 - Aug 5	Assyrians in Iraq and Syria.
Hm. Representative, Bagdad, Tel. no. 215 - Aug 5	

MAILS BRANCH 8 AUG 1933 INDIA OFFICE

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 321 10 AUG 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14-6130 8755 (2)

313
(315)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4770
1933

From SYRIA.

Decode. Sir H. Satow, (Beirut),
5th August, 1933.

D. 11.10 a.m. 5th August, 1933.

R. 11.20 a.m. 5th August, 1933.

No.11. (R).

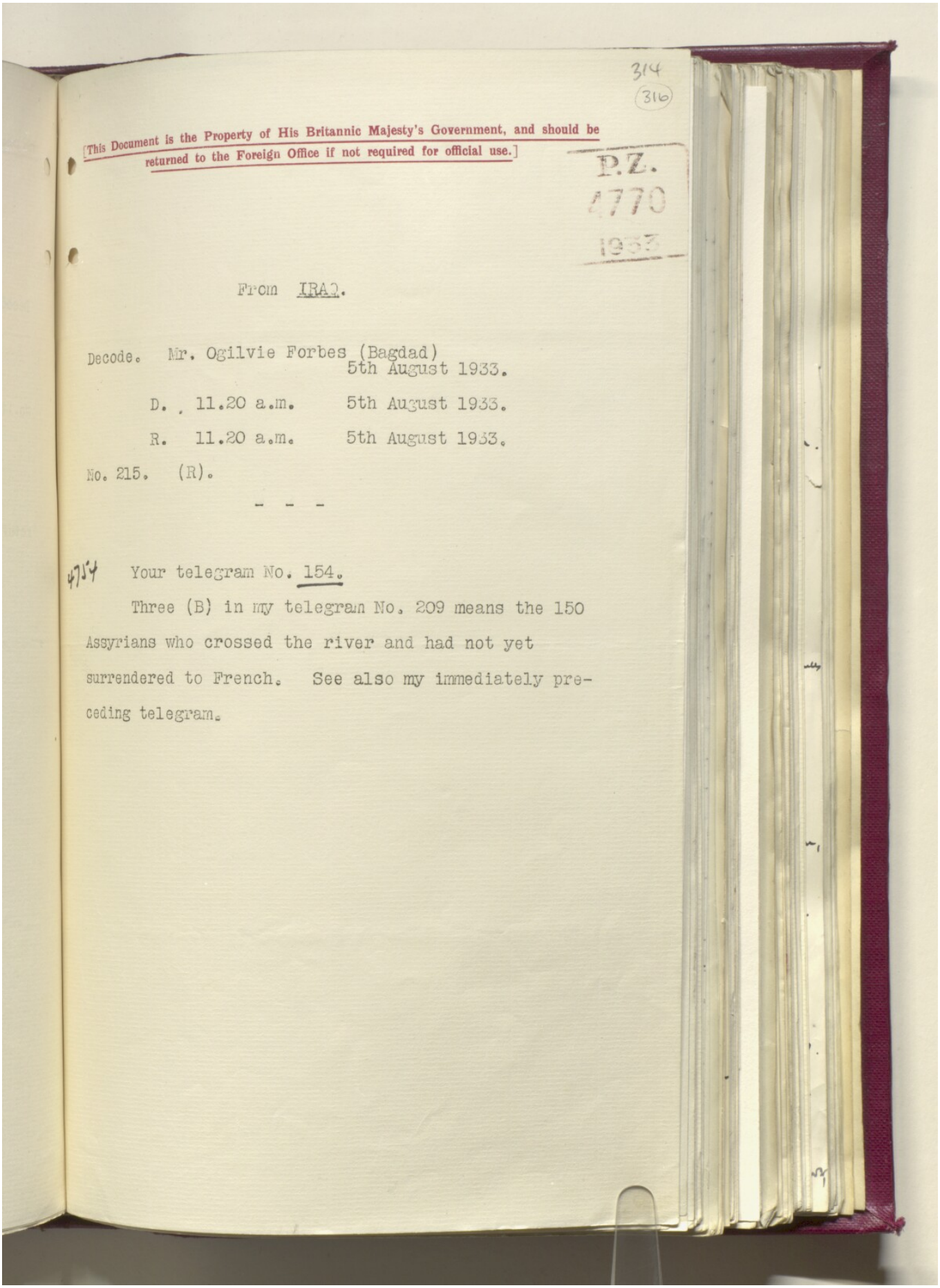
-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My telegram No.10.

French High Commissioner states that 500 Assyrians returned to Iraq. Arms restored to them on departure.

Nuri due here this morning.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.11, repeated to Bagdad No.8.



314
(316)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4770
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad)
5th August 1933.

D. 11.20 a.m. 5th August 1933.

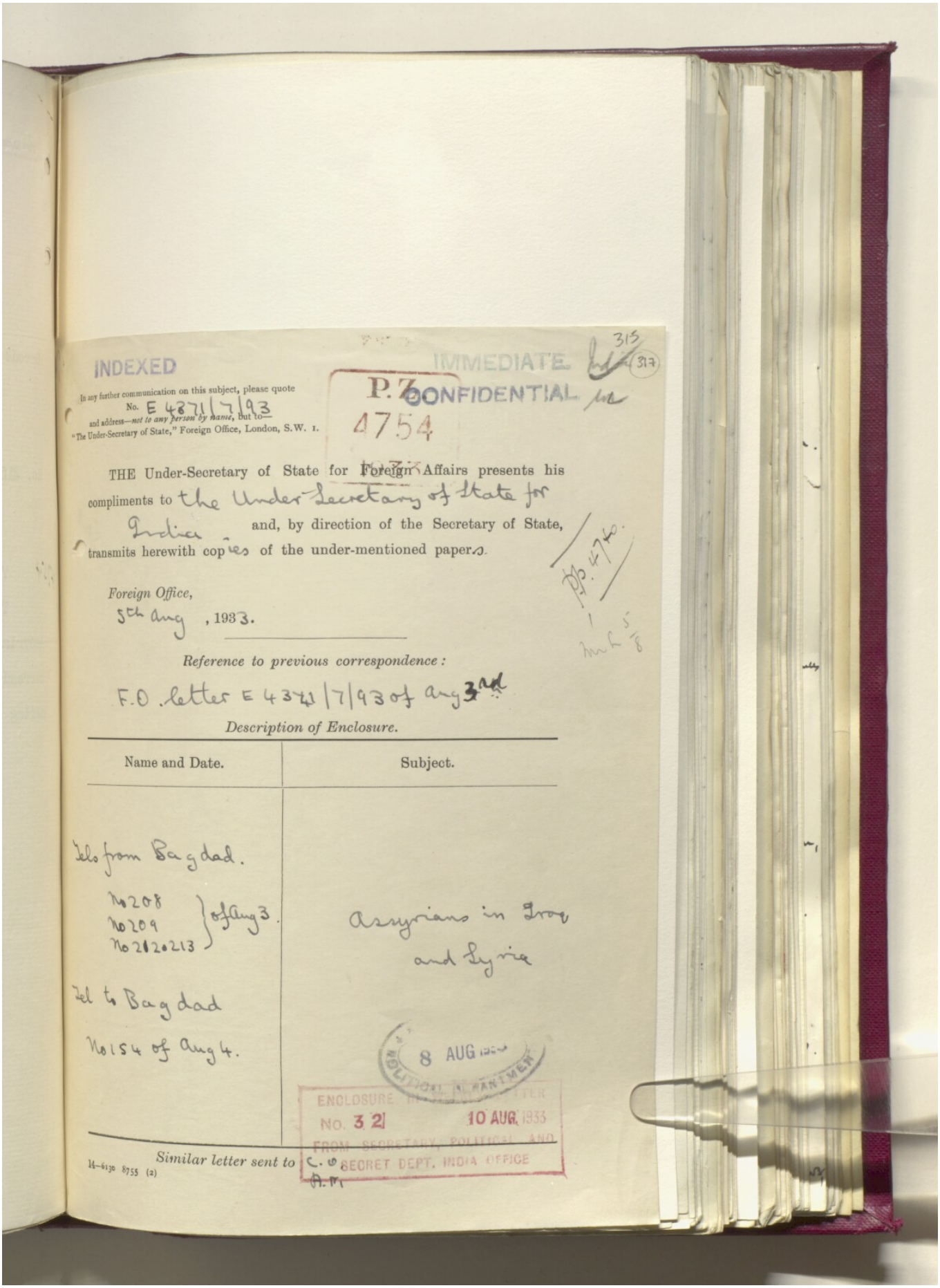
R. 11.20 a.m. 5th August 1933.

No. 215. (R).

- - -

4754 Your telegram No. 154.

Three (B) in my telegram No. 209 means the 150 Assyrians who crossed the river and had not yet surrendered to French. See also my immediately preceding telegram.



INDEXED

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

315 (317)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4371/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to— "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4754

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

pp. 4754.

Foreign Office,
5th Aug, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4371/7/93 of Aug 3rd

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Tels from Bagdad. No 208 No 209 No 212 0213 } of Aug 3.	Assyrians in Iraq and Syria
Tel to Bagdad No 154 of Aug 4.	

8 AUG 1933 POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

ENCLOSURE IN LETTER NO. 32 10 AUG. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)

316
318

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4754
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 3rd August, 1933.

D. 6.5 p.m. 3rd August, 1933.

R. 9.30 p.m. 3rd August, 1933.

No. 208.

xxxxxxxxxx

Immediate.

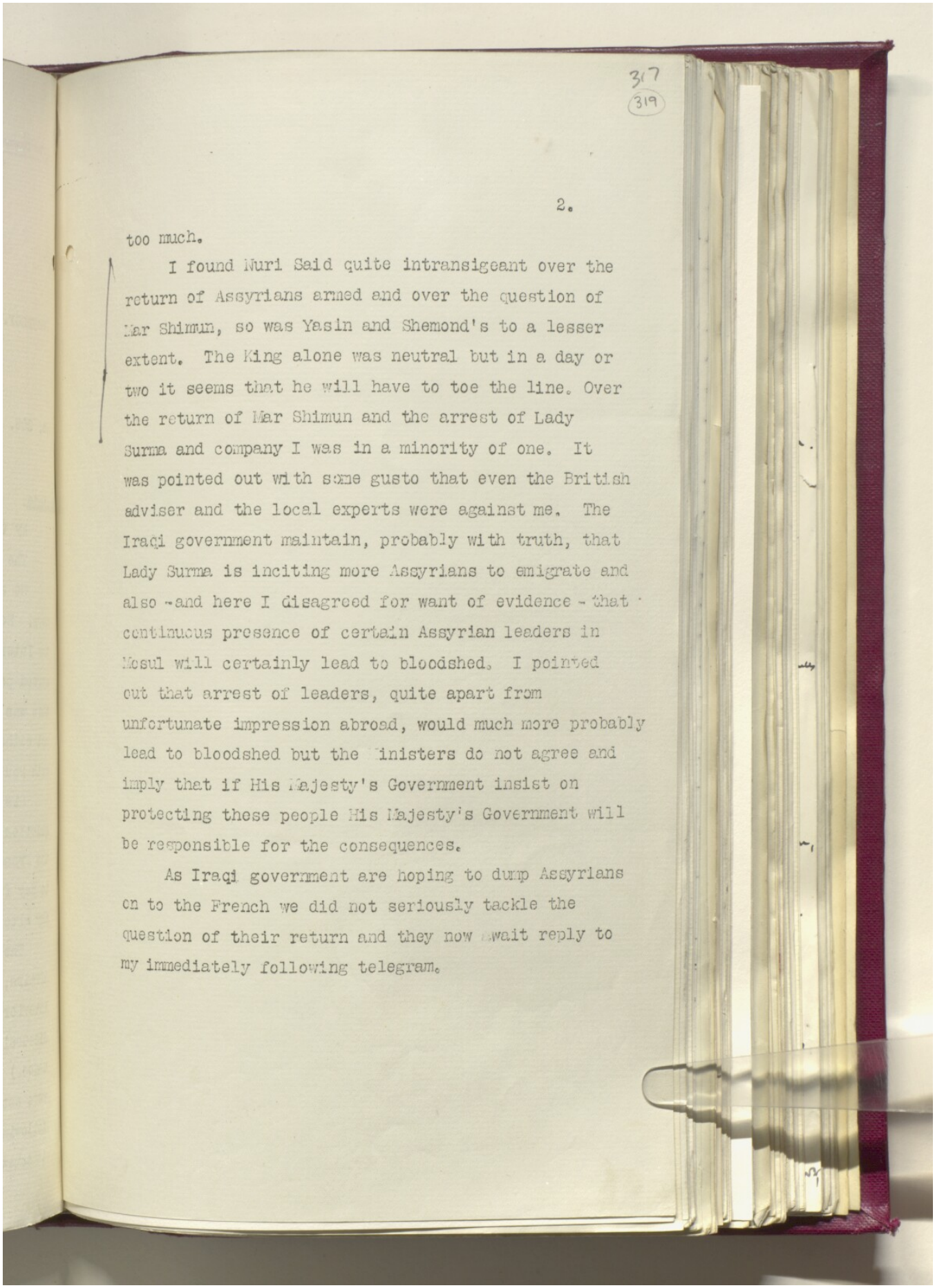
My telegram No. 204.

The King sent for me this morning.

He said he hoped to be in Iraq only two or three days. Before he went His Majesty desired Minister of the Interior, Embassy and Cabinet should have an agreed policy in dealing with Assyrians problem. I said this was an excellent idea provided the Cabinet did not act either previous to any necessary consultation with you or against His Majesty's Government's advice.

His Majesty thought the best way of settling the question of Assyrians immigration was to try to induce the French to take them. For this he would be prepared to pay from £2,000 to £3,000 but not to give French any alternative concession.

The Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance and Minister of the Interior were then introduced and after a lengthy discussion of intentions of the Iraqi government (grp. undec.) certain questions to His Majesty's Government were set forth as in the text of my immediately following telegram. English of penultimate sentence is somewhat cumbrous but I cannot myself alter it too...



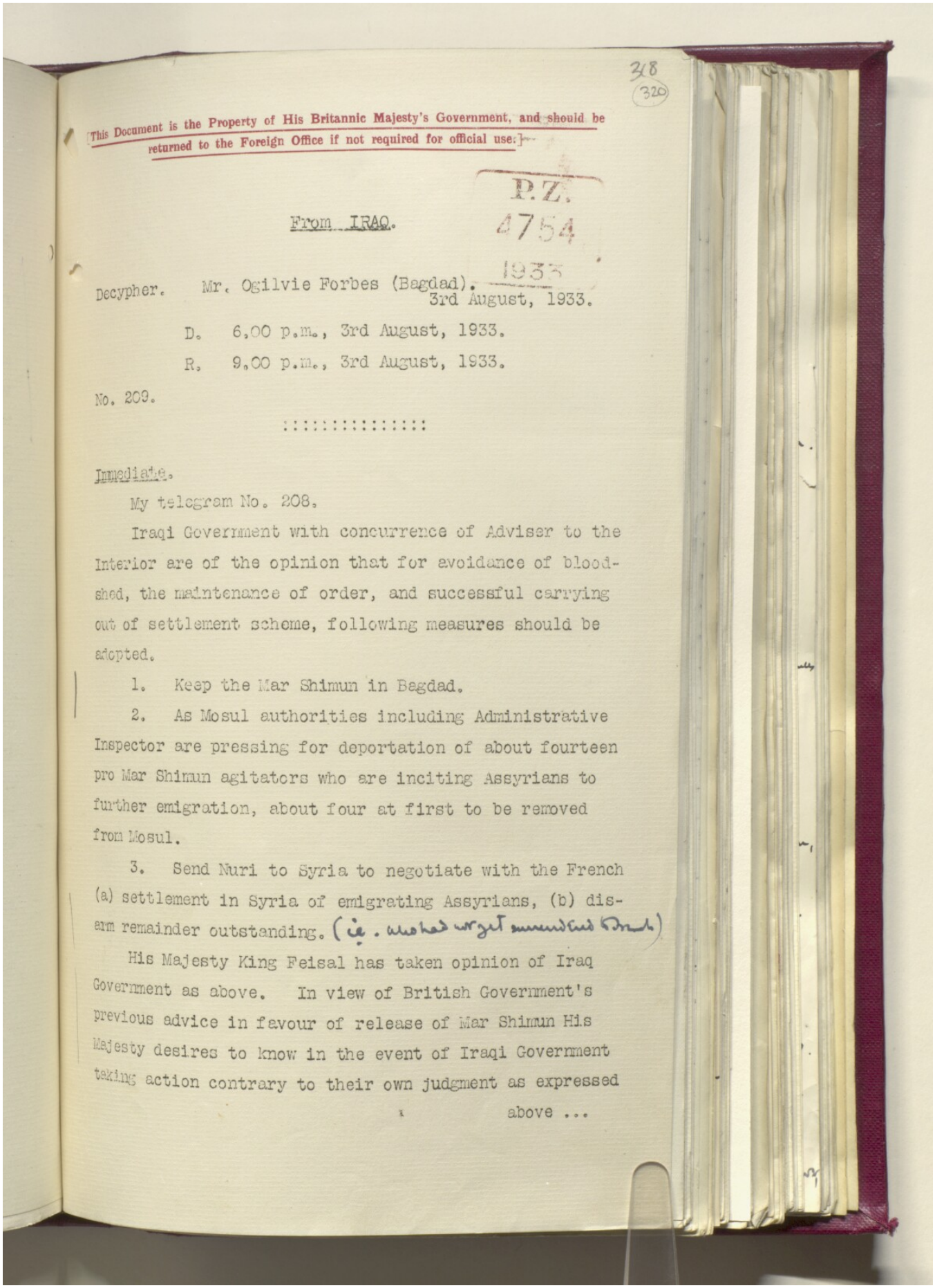
317
(319)

2.

too much.

I found Nuri Said quite intransigeant over the return of Assyrians armed and over the question of Mar Shimun, so was Yasin and Shemond's to a lesser extent. The King alone was neutral but in a day or two it seems that he will have to toe the line. Over the return of Mar Shimun and the arrest of Lady Surma and company I was in a minority of one. It was pointed out with some gusto that even the British adviser and the local experts were against me. The Iraqi government maintain, probably with truth, that Lady Surma is inciting more Assyrians to emigrate and also -and here I disagreed for want of evidence - that continuous presence of certain Assyrian leaders in Mosul will certainly lead to bloodshed. I pointed out that arrest of leaders, quite apart from unfortunate impression abroad, would much more probably lead to bloodshed but the Ministers do not agree and imply that if His Majesty's Government insist on protecting these people His Majesty's Government will be responsible for the consequences.

As Iraqi government are hoping to dump Assyrians on to the French we did not seriously tackle the question of their return and they now await reply to my immediately following telegram.



318
(320)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4754
1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 3rd August, 1933.

D. 6.00 p.m., 3rd August, 1933.

R. 9.00 p.m., 3rd August, 1933.

No. 209.

::::::::::::::::

Immediate.

My telegram No. 208.

Iraqi Government with concurrence of Adviser to the Interior are of the opinion that for avoidance of bloodshed, the maintenance of order, and successful carrying out of settlement scheme, following measures should be adopted.

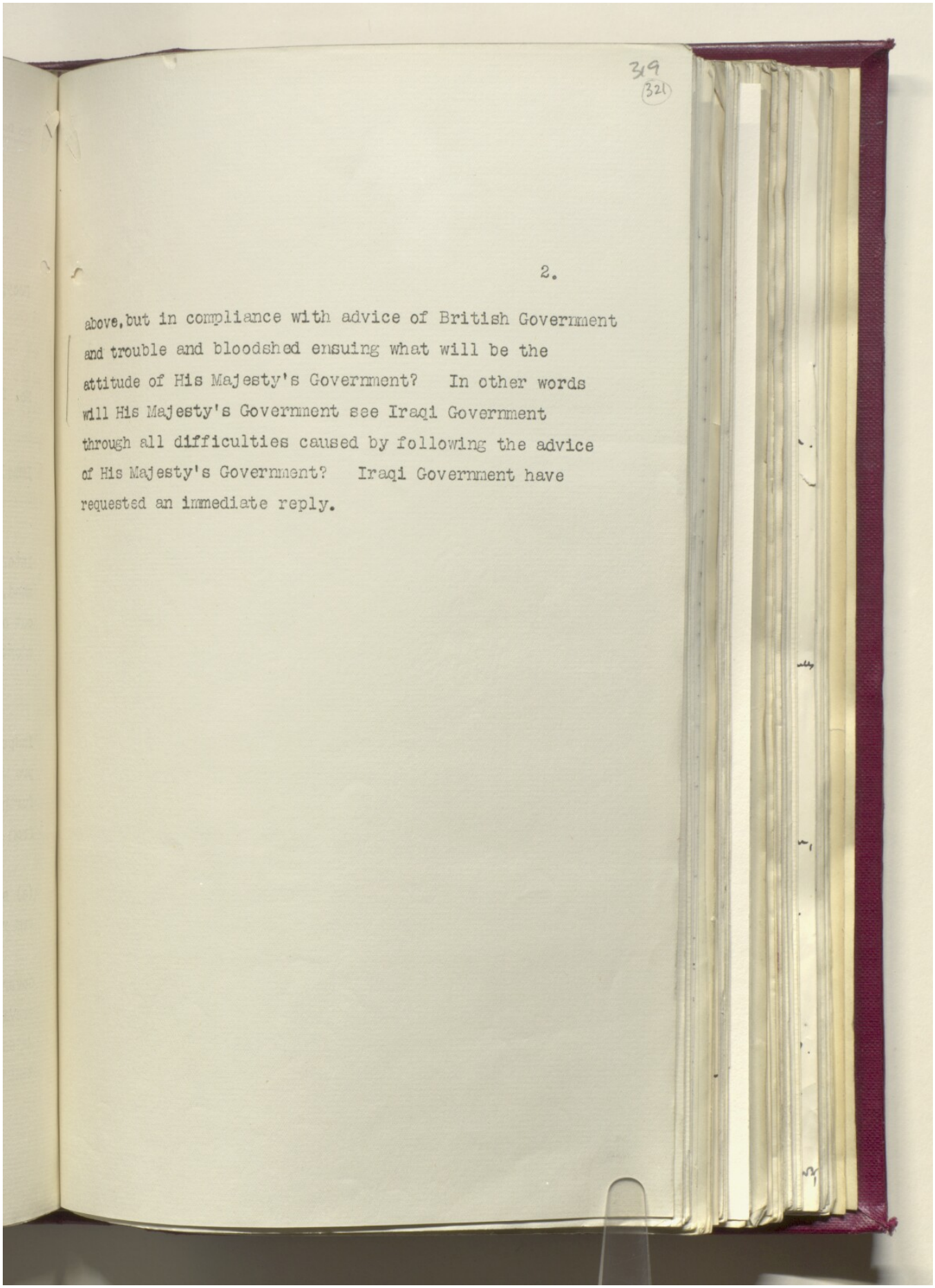
1. Keep the Mar Shimun in Bagdad.

2. As Mosul authorities including Administrative Inspector are pressing for deportation of about fourteen pro Mar Shimun agitators who are inciting Assyrians to further emigration, about four at first to be removed from Mosul.

3. Send Nuri to Syria to negotiate with the French (a) settlement in Syria of emigrating Assyrians, (b) disarm remainder outstanding. (i.e. who had not yet surrendered to French)

His Majesty King Feisal has taken opinion of Iraq Government as above. In view of British Government's previous advice in favour of release of Mar Shimun His Majesty desires to know in the event of Iraqi Government taking action contrary to their own judgment as expressed

above ...



319
(321)

2.

above, but in compliance with advice of British Government and trouble and bloodshed ensuing what will be the attitude of His Majesty's Government? In other words will His Majesty's Government see Iraqi Government through all difficulties caused by following the advice of His Majesty's Government? Iraqi Government have requested an immediate reply.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x000035

320
322

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4754
1933

From Iraq.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes.

August 3rd. 1933.

D. 2.10. p.m. August 4th. 1933.

R. 3.40.p.m. August 4th. 1933.

No. 212. & 213.

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

Personal. Your telegram No. 150.

Following for Sir R. Vansittart:-

Following are my considered comments on the present situation and best means of solution.

1. Ideal solution would be for French to absorb Assyrians. Iraqi Government is now prepared to offer inducement up to £8,000. It seems most unlikely French will agree. Beirut certainly will not without direct orders from Paris. It is absolutely essential that immediate pressure be brought to bear on Paris if this solution is to be attained. In view of King's desire to return to Europe as soon as possible Iraqi Government last night without waiting reply to my telegram No.209 decided to send Nuri to Beirut by air today to put this question to the French. He is certain to receive direct refusal unless Paris can restrain Beirut. I asked him to see me before he left and warned him of the necessity to ménager the French. To rush matter with Beirut in this way is to court failure.

2. In the event of French refusing Nuri tells me it is the intention of the Iraqi Government to (?gr.omit.) French to keep Assyrians disarmed and away from frontier until League of Nations has been requested to find a

place/

321
323

place for them in some foreign colony. Iraqi Government are confident these Assyrians if returned will (quickly) (spoil) any scheme for settlement. Acceptance by French or League of Nations of Iraqi proposals would of course involve immediate release of Mar Shimun.

3. Assuming above proposals fail problem is how to arrange for the return of Assyrians (1) without courting danger of massacre, (2) in a manner acceptable to Iraqi amour propre. King Feisal would of course give guarantee for their lives and safety for what it is worth. But what comforts me much more than any guarantee of Feisal is the fact that I am advised by local experts that no massacre would occur unless ordered by the Iraqi Government, which is inconceivable. After all Assyrians will at the very outside have lost only one quarter of their rifles and if following proposal is adopted it will be much less.

4. I propose following practical solution. Assyrians to be returned disarmed and with adequate police not military escort. Composition of local committee including British Administrative Inspector of Mosul and/or Inspector of Police to be formed to visit abandoned villages and find out (1) if possible total number of rifles originally held, (2) number of rifles taken away by absentees. Any village found to be lacking in reasonable means of self-defence to have suitable quantity of rifles and ammunition restored. Committee to draw on French for rifles and ammunition required for this purpose.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x000039

322
(324)

3.

5. I understand that scheme of above nature would be acceptable to Iraqi Government and should satisfy those who fear for safety of disarmed Assyrians.

6. Your telegram No. 153 now being decyphered appears to agree with much of this proposal. In the meantime I reiterate urgent necessity of pressure on Paris in the sense of paragraph 1 above.

323
325

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4754
1933

E 4357/7/93.

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 4th August, 1933. 7.45 p.m.

No. 154. (R).

xxxxxxxxxx

Immediate.

Your telegrams Nos. 208 and 209 (of August 3rd: Assyrian Crisis).

Attitude of King Feisal and Nuri Pasha towards proposed release of Mar Shimun is in complete contradiction with which they adopted while in Europe, and in still more striking contradiction to statements made by Nuri Pasha at Foreign Office on July 28th. This is of course surprising and disappointing. Proposal to arrest and deport Lady Surma seems open to all objections which originally applies to detention of Mar Shimun.

The advice given to Iraqi government by His Majesty's Government is that which the latter believe to be in the best interests of the former. If Iraqi government choose to disregard it, and the advice is justified by the sequel, it is they who will have to face the consequences, and not His Majesty's Government who will assume responsibility for any consequence of its adoption. The Iraqi government must therefore consider and decide for themselves in the light of the foregoing.

Please inform King Feisal accordingly.

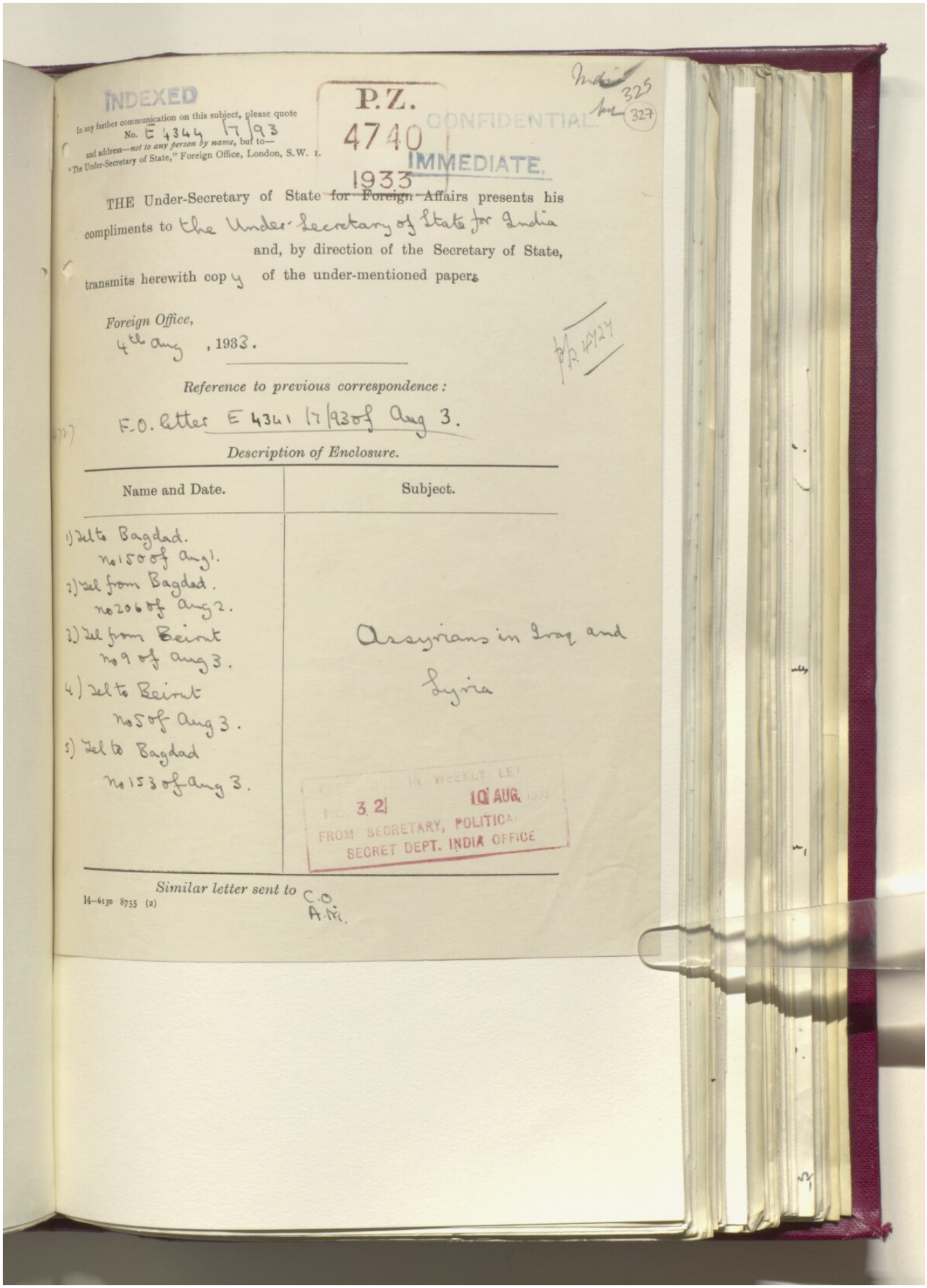
What is the precise meaning of (b) in your paragraph 3. I take it for granted that this cannot imply

an...

324
(326)

imply an intention of disarming the Assyrians who have remained in Iraq.

As to 3 (a) I agree of course that this is now the best course to pursue, and an agreement with the French on the subject of settlement would provide an unobjectionable solution. But it seems at present from Beirut telegram No. 6 (of August 3rd:) to you (repeated as No. 9 to Foreign Office) that the French may be contemplating restoration of arms to any returning Assyrians. If the negotiations for settlement in Syria were to fail and French to proceed on these lines, there might in view of proclaimed Iraqi intention to disarm the Assyrians, be a dangerous clash. The only possible compromise on this point in such an eventuality which I trust will not arise is that suggested in my telegram No. 153 (of August 3rd) coupled of course with a guarantee of safety in the short intervening period by King Feisal and Iraqi government.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4344 17/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4740 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

IMMEDIATE.

India 325 327

THE Under-Secretary of State for ~~Foreign~~ Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
4th Aug, 1933.

P.P. 4424

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. Letter E 4341 17/93 of Aug 3.

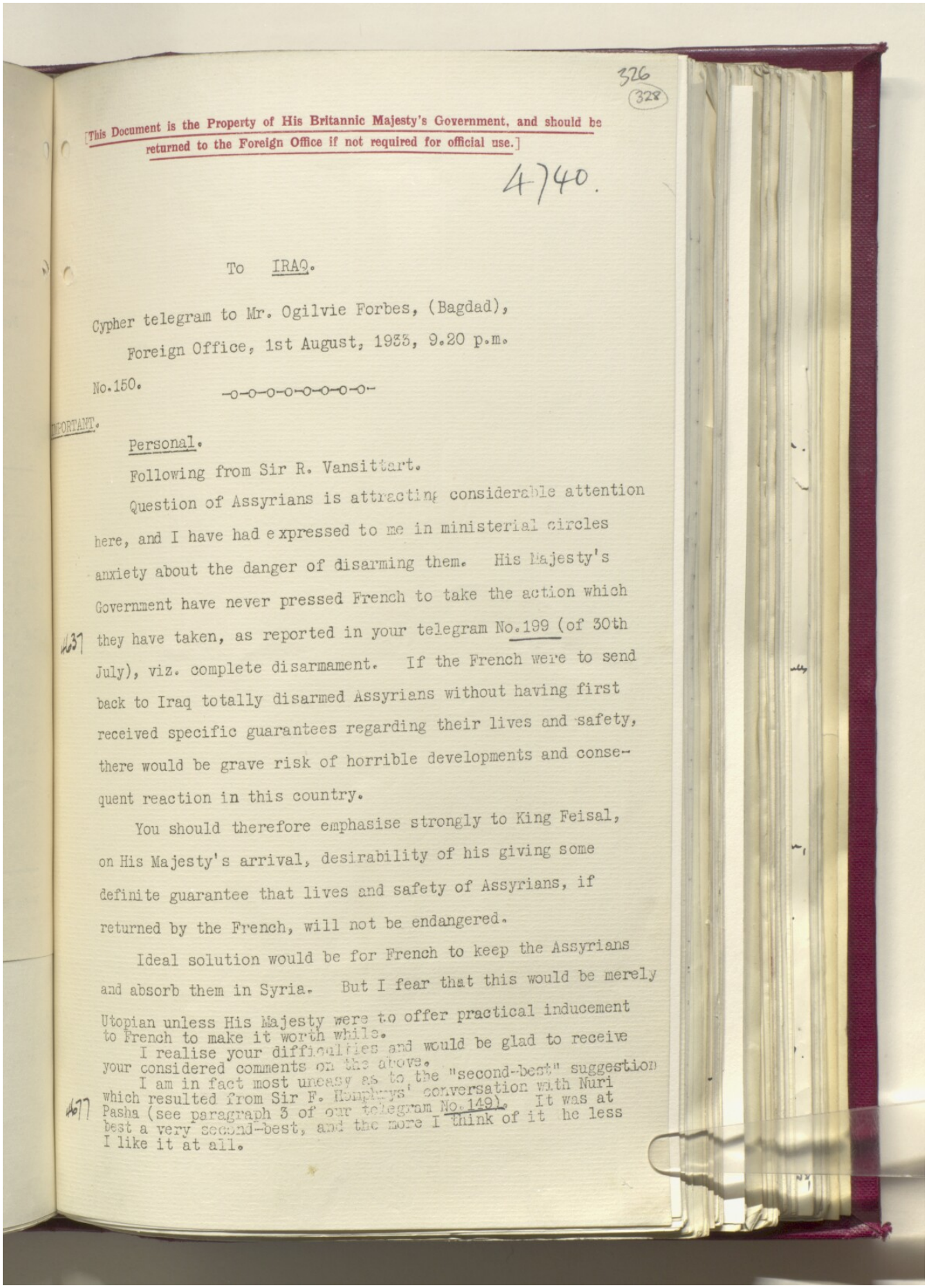
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
1) Tel to Bagdad. No 150 of Aug 1. 2) Tel from Bagdad. No 206 of Aug 2. 3) Tel from Beirut No 9 of Aug 3. 4) Tel to Beirut No 5 of Aug 3. 5) Tel to Bagdad No 153 of Aug 3.	Assyrians in Iraq and Syria

ENCLOSED IN WEEKLY LET... No. 32 10 AUG 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14—6130 8755 (2)



326
(328)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

4740.

To IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),

Foreign Office, 1st August, 1933, 9.20 p.m.

No.150.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMPORTANT.

Personal.

Following from Sir R. Vansittart.

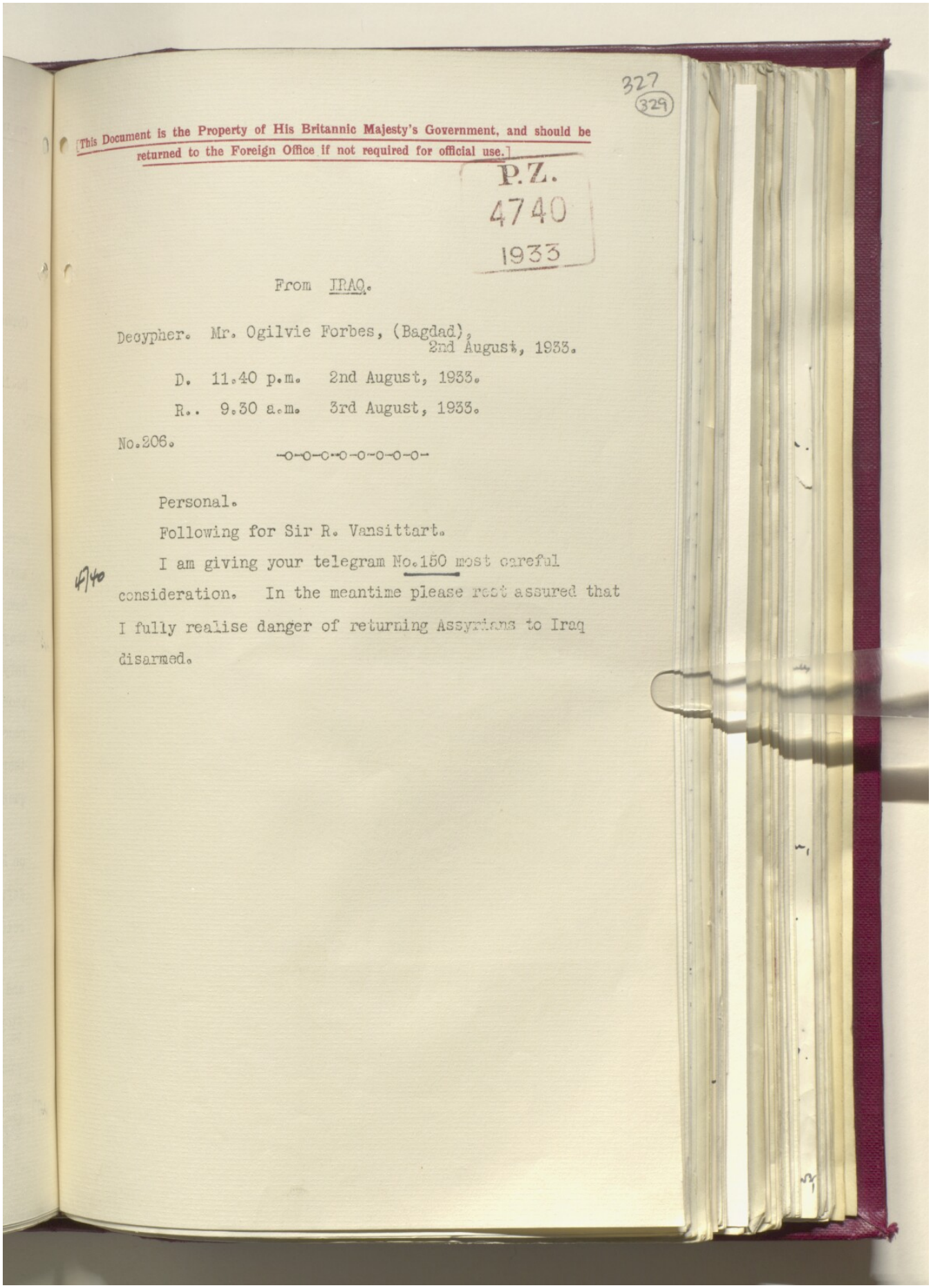
Question of Assyrians is attracting considerable attention here, and I have had expressed to me in ministerial circles anxiety about the danger of disarming them. His Majesty's Government have never pressed French to take the action which 4637 they have taken, as reported in your telegram No.199 (of 30th July), viz. complete disarmament. If the French were to send back to Iraq totally disarmed Assyrians without having first received specific guarantees regarding their lives and safety, there would be grave risk of horrible developments and consequent reaction in this country.

You should therefore emphasise strongly to King Feisal, on His Majesty's arrival, desirability of his giving some definite guarantee that lives and safety of Assyrians, if returned by the French, will not be endangered.

Ideal solution would be for French to keep the Assyrians and absorb them in Syria. But I fear that this would be merely Utopian unless His Majesty were to offer practical inducement to French to make it worth while.

I realise your difficulties and would be glad to receive your considered comments on the above.

I am in fact most uneasy as to the "second-best" suggestion 4677 which resulted from Sir F. Humphrys' conversation with Nuri Pasha (see paragraph 3 of our telegram No.149). It was at best a very second-best, and the more I think of it the less I like it at all.



327
329

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4740
1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
2nd August, 1933.

D. 11.40 p.m. 2nd August, 1933.

R.. 9.30 a.m. 3rd August, 1933.

No.206.

-o-o-o--o-o-o-o-o-

Personal.

Following for Sir R. Vansittart.

4740

I am giving your telegram No.150 most careful consideration. In the meantime please rest assured that I fully realise danger of returning Assyrians to Iraq disarmed.

328
330

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4740
1933

FROM SYRIA

Decypher. Sir H.E. Satow (Beirut).
3rd August 1933.

D. 2.45 p.m. 3rd August 1933.

R. 3.00 p.m. 3rd August 1933.

No. 9.

Addressed to Bagdad telegram No. 6.

Your telegram No. 17.

Terms are as indicated in my telegram No. 5 to you, repeated to Foreign Office as telegram No. 8, that arms have been surrendered temporarily to be kept by the French so long as Assyrians remain in Syria. When time comes for them to leave, arms will be returned. Whether they take back into Iraq all or any of them depends on terms of agreement made between (?French) and Iraqi Government.

My despatch No. 5, sent by bag today, of which copy tomorrow to Foreign Office by air mail represents local French views and intention.

Repeated to Foreign Office telegram No. 9.

329
331

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4740
1933

(E.4252/7/93).

TO SYRIA.

Cypher telegram to Sir H. Batow. (Beirut).

Foreign Office. August 3rd. 1933. 5.00.p.m.

No. 5.

-----oOo-----

4677 Bagdad telegram No. 200 (of July 31st - Assyrian crisis).

Confidential.

Nuri Pasha paid brief visit to London on July 28th before leaving with King Feisal for Bagdad.

In discussion with him and Sir F. Humphrys it was agreed that best solution would be for French to allow Assyrians to be rejoined by their women and children from Iraq and to settle permanently in Syria. His Majesty's Government would much prefer this solution, since only alternative which Iraqis at present seem likely to be willing to accept would be return of Assyrians to Iraq without their arms; and view has hitherto generally been taken that Assyrians could not remain unarmed among armed and possibly hostile neighbours without being exposed to serious risks.

Do you consider that French authorities are likely to accept Assyrians and their women and children as permanent settlers? If so, can you give any indication whether they are likely to require refund of expenditure incurred, or any other quid pro quo from Iraqi Government? Any suggestions you can make with a view to facilitating an agreement between Syrian and Iraqi authorities would be welcome.

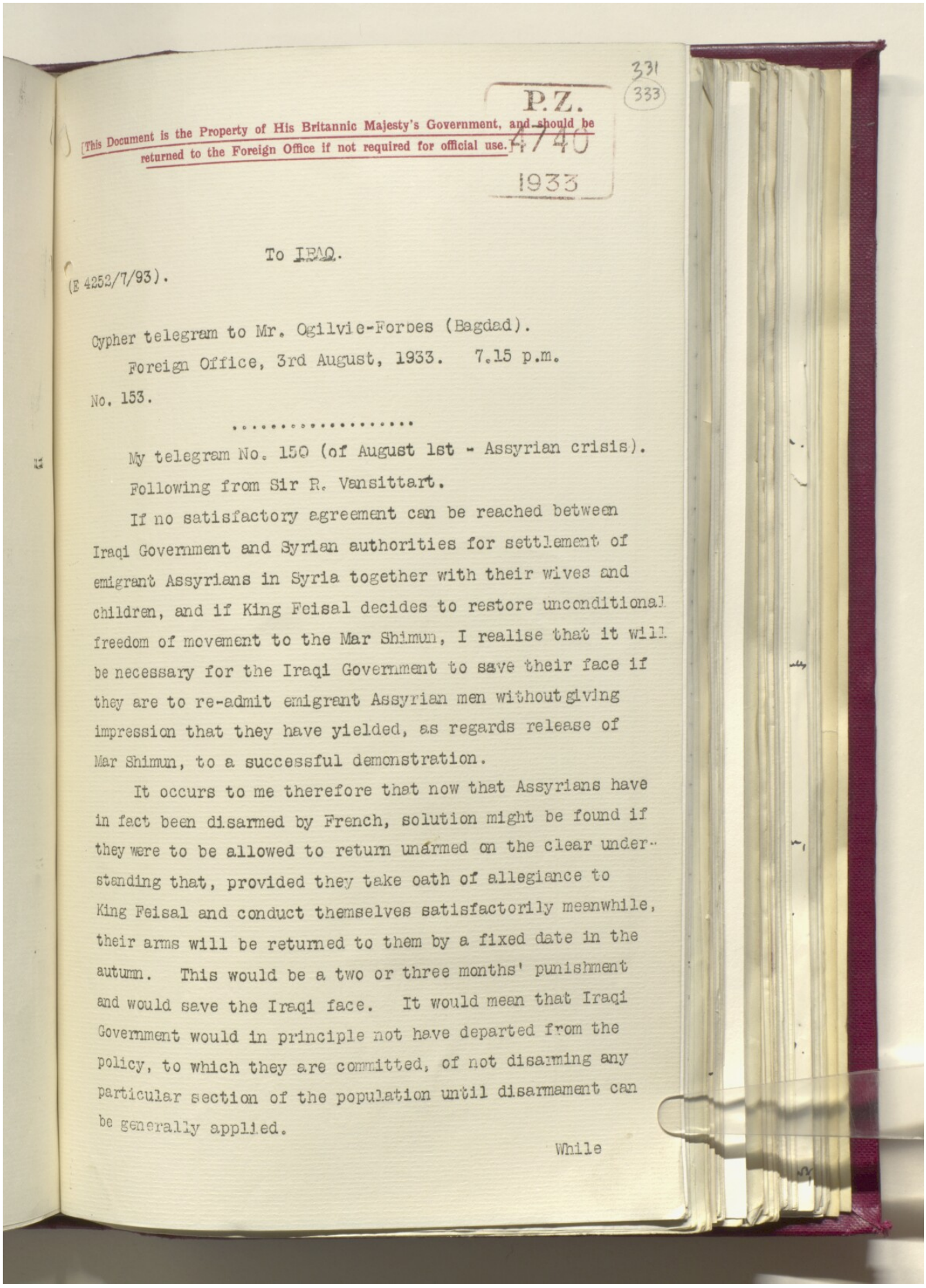
While His Majesty's Government of course no

longer/

330
332

longer have any direct responsibility for Iraqi affairs and it would not be practicable for them themselves to incur further expenditure in connexion with Assyrians, they are anxious to do whatever may be possible to facilitate an early favourable solution of this question.

Addressed to Beirut No. 5. Repeated to Bagdad No. 151 and Paris No. 134 (Saving).



This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.

P.Z. 4740 1933

331 (333)

To IRAQ.

(E 4252/7/93).

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 3rd August, 1933. 7.15 p.m.

No. 153.

.....

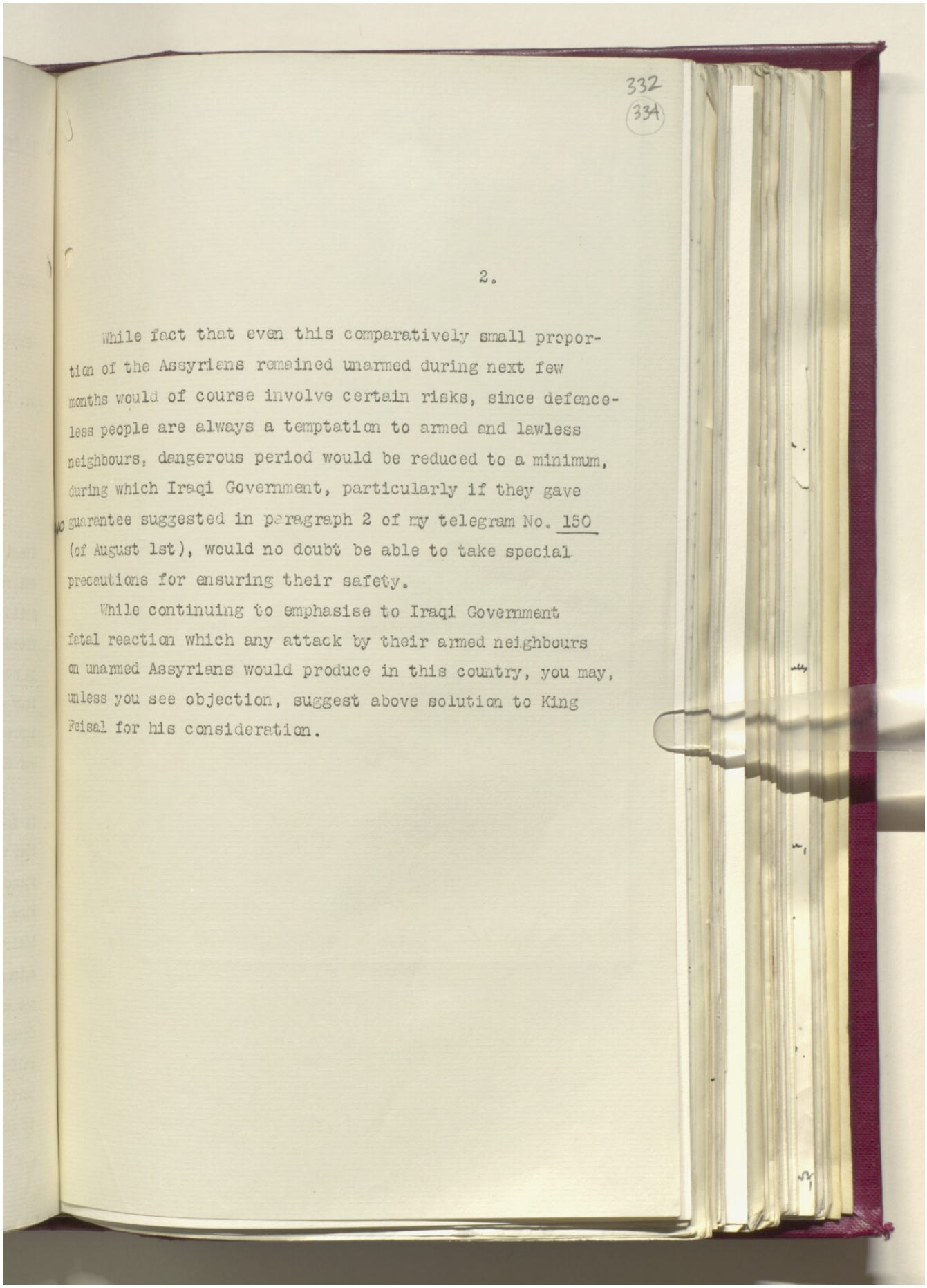
My telegram No. 150 (of August 1st - Assyrian crisis).

Following from Sir R. Vansittart.

If no satisfactory agreement can be reached between Iraqi Government and Syrian authorities for settlement of emigrant Assyrians in Syria together with their wives and children, and if King Feisal decides to restore unconditional freedom of movement to the Mar Shimun, I realise that it will be necessary for the Iraqi Government to save their face if they are to re-admit emigrant Assyrian men without giving impression that they have yielded, as regards release of Mar Shimun, to a successful demonstration.

It occurs to me therefore that now that Assyrians have in fact been disarmed by French, solution might be found if they were to be allowed to return unarmed on the clear understanding that, provided they take oath of allegiance to King Feisal and conduct themselves satisfactorily meanwhile, their arms will be returned to them by a fixed date in the autumn. This would be a two or three months' punishment and would save the Iraqi face. It would mean that Iraqi Government would in principle not have departed from the policy, to which they are committed, of not disarming any particular section of the population until disarmament can be generally applied.

While



332
(334)

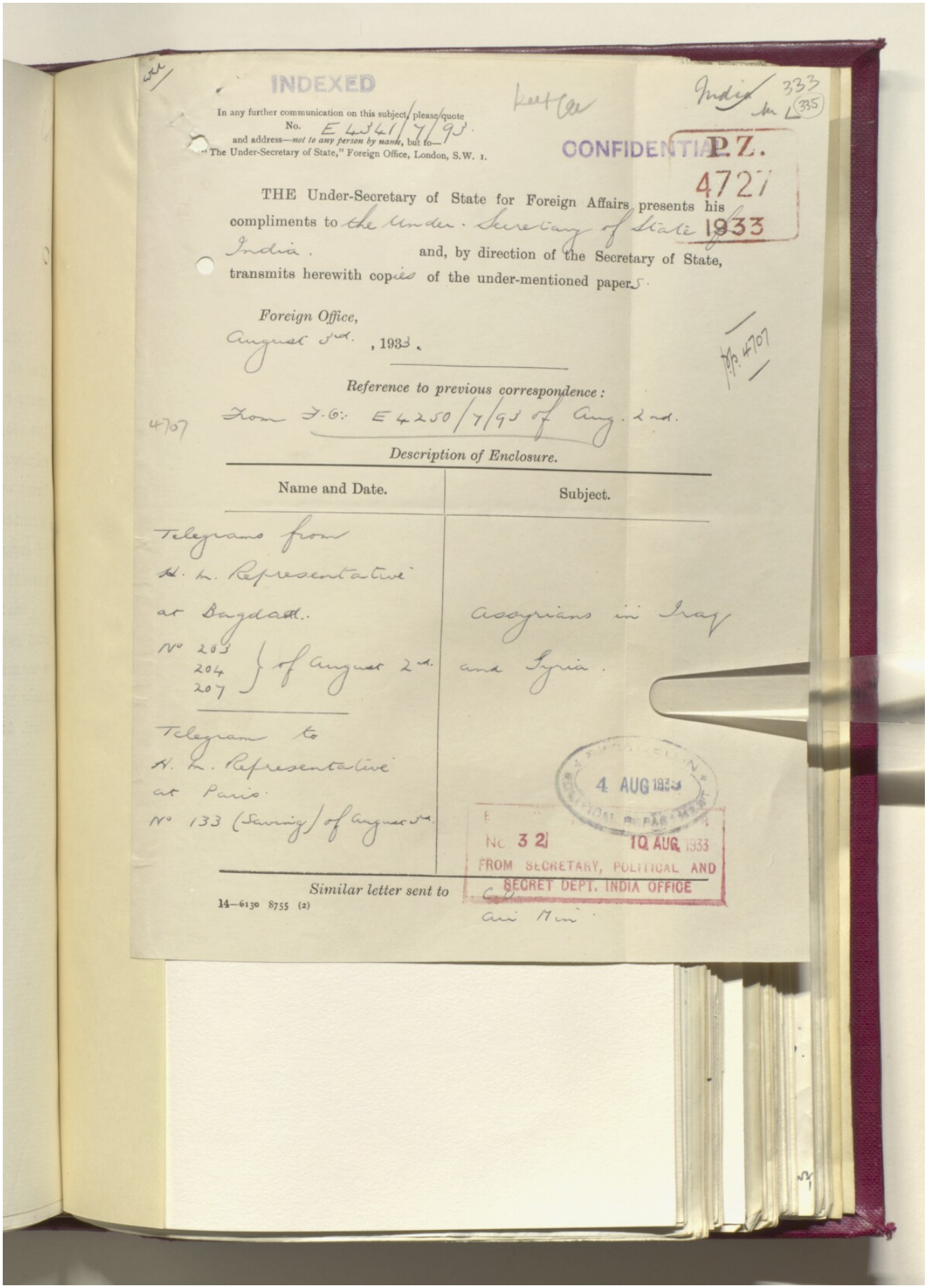
2.

While fact that even this comparatively small proportion of the Assyrians remained unarmed during next few months would of course involve certain risks, since defenceless people are always a temptation to armed and lawless neighbours, dangerous period would be reduced to a minimum, during which Iraqi Government, particularly if they gave guarantee suggested in paragraph 2 of my telegram No. 150 (of August 1st), would no doubt be able to take special precautions for ensuring their safety.

While continuing to emphasise to Iraqi Government fatal reaction which any attack by their armed neighbours on unarmed Assyrians would produce in this country, you may, unless you see objection, suggest above solution to King Feisal for his consideration.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x00004f



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4341/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4727 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
August 3rd, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.: E 4250/7/93 of Aug. 2nd.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegrams from H. M. Representative at Baghdad. No 203, 204, 207 of August 2nd.	Assyrians in Iraq and Syria.
Telegram to H. M. Representative at Paris. No 133 (Saving) of August 3rd.	

Similar letter sent to C.O. Air Min.

14—6130 8755 (2)

4 AUG 1933

No. 32 10 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

334
336

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4727
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
2nd August, 1933.

D. 11.50 p.m., 2nd August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m., 3rd August, 1933.

No. 203. (R).

::::::::::::::

4707 My telegram No. 202.

Yesterday's and today's press publish an official communiqué by Iraqi Government on the Assyrian question.

In statement of the Iraqi case Mar Shimun is accused of obstruction and of claiming temporal power and circumstances of his detention in Bagdad are summarized. Communiqué then states that a punitive force had to be sent to ensure submission of rebel Yaku. After describing Mosul meeting, it states that 1,350 armed Assyrians, followers of Mar Shimun, assembled in the mountains and tried to disturb the peace but finding Iraqi Government ready for them they crossed into Syria where they were disarmed by the French at the request of the Iraqi Government. Iraqi Government have decided that they shall not return unless disarmed and in order to enforce that decision Iraqi army have already had to disarm returning Assyrians. In some cases there was armed resistance to which Iraqi army was obliged to retaliate.

Communiqué ends with an invocation of Divine assistance and expression of determination to deal firmly with disturbers of the peace.

See my immediately following telegram.

335
337

This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4727
1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 2nd August, 1933.

D. 11.30 p.m. 2nd August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 3rd August, 1933.

No.204.

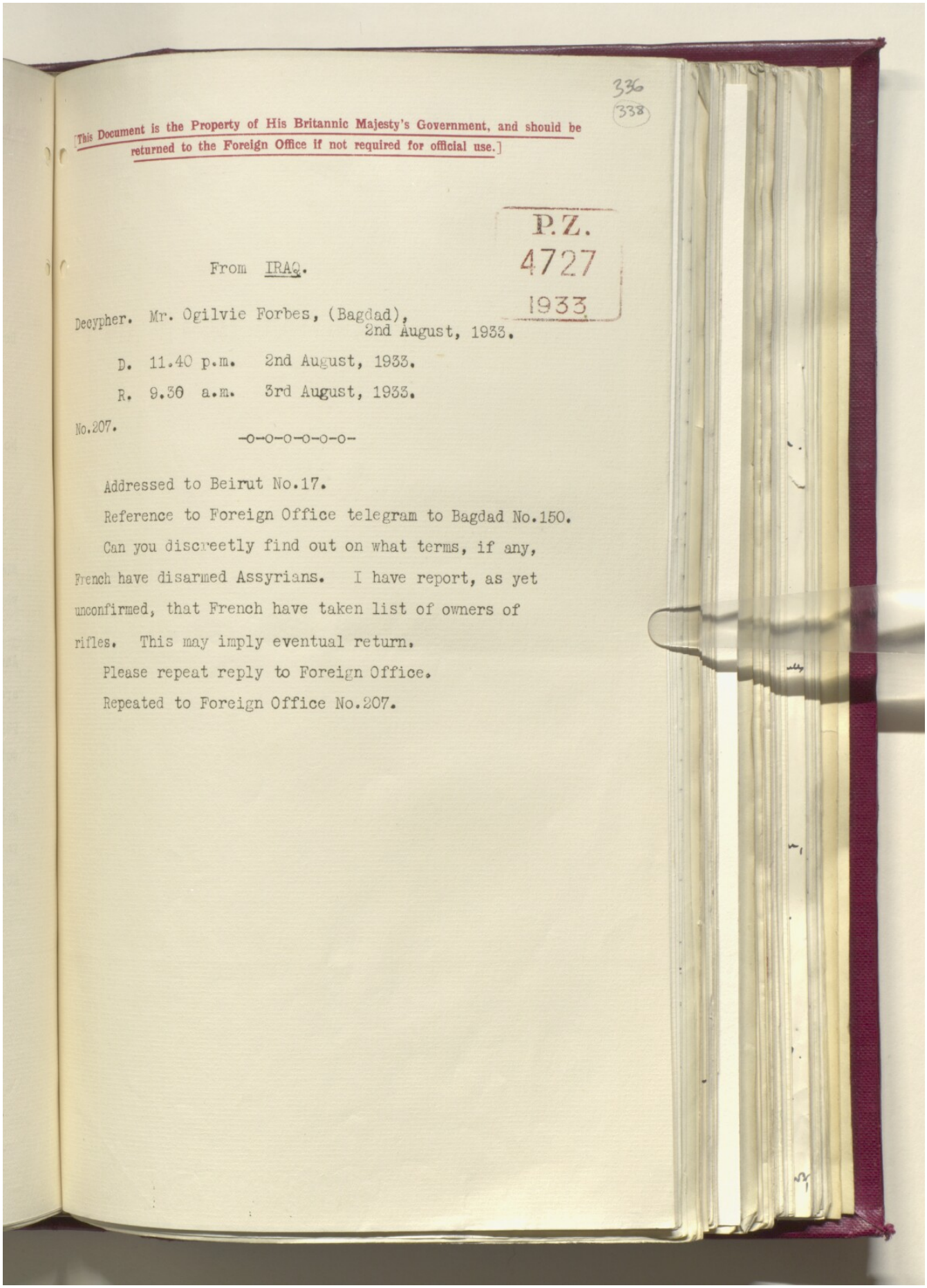
-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My immediately preceding telegram.

Such a communique in justification of Iraqi Government and in condemnation of Mar Shimun and emigrating Assyrians was in the circumstances inevitable.

Assertions regarding hostile intentions of emigrating Assyrians and of prowess of Iraqi army in disarming by force are either untrue or exaggerated. Note also how buck is passed to French by request to disarm Assyrians under bon voisinage agreement.

Publication of Iraqi Government's intentions regarding disarmament of any returning Assyrians is of course intended to make it more difficult for King Feisal to order any modification.



336
(338)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4727
1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
2nd August, 1933.

D. 11.40 p.m. 2nd August, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 3rd August, 1933.

No.207.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Addressed to Beirut No.17.

Reference to Foreign Office telegram to Bagdad No.150.

Can you discreetly find out on what terms, if any, French have disarmed Assyrians. I have report, as yet unconfirmed, that French have taken list of owners of rifles. This may imply eventual return.

Please repeat reply to Foreign Office.

Repeated to Foreign Office No.207.

337
339

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4727
1933

(E.4150/7/93).

To FRANCE.

Telegram (en clair) to Lord Tyrrell (Paris).

Foreign Office, August 3rd 1933.

No.133. Saving.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

Mr. Harvey's telegram No.178 Saving (of July 27th. Assyrian Crisis - expense of maintaining Assyrian refugees in Syria).

Position of His Majesty's Government is delicate, since they no longer have any responsibility for Iraqi affairs. Their intervention was therefore limited to warning French government - on grounds of humanity and with a view to preservation of tranquillity in Middle East generally - of the dangers which might follow if certain action were taken.

In these circumstances His Majesty's Government - who have already incurred very heavy expenditure over Assyrians when they first arrived as refugees in Iraq - could not themselves make any contribution towards expenses now being incurred by the French authorities.

On the other hand, His Majesty's Government fully appreciate that French government, may well expect to obtain reimbursement of at any rate part of expenditure incurred.

If French government raise question, you may explain

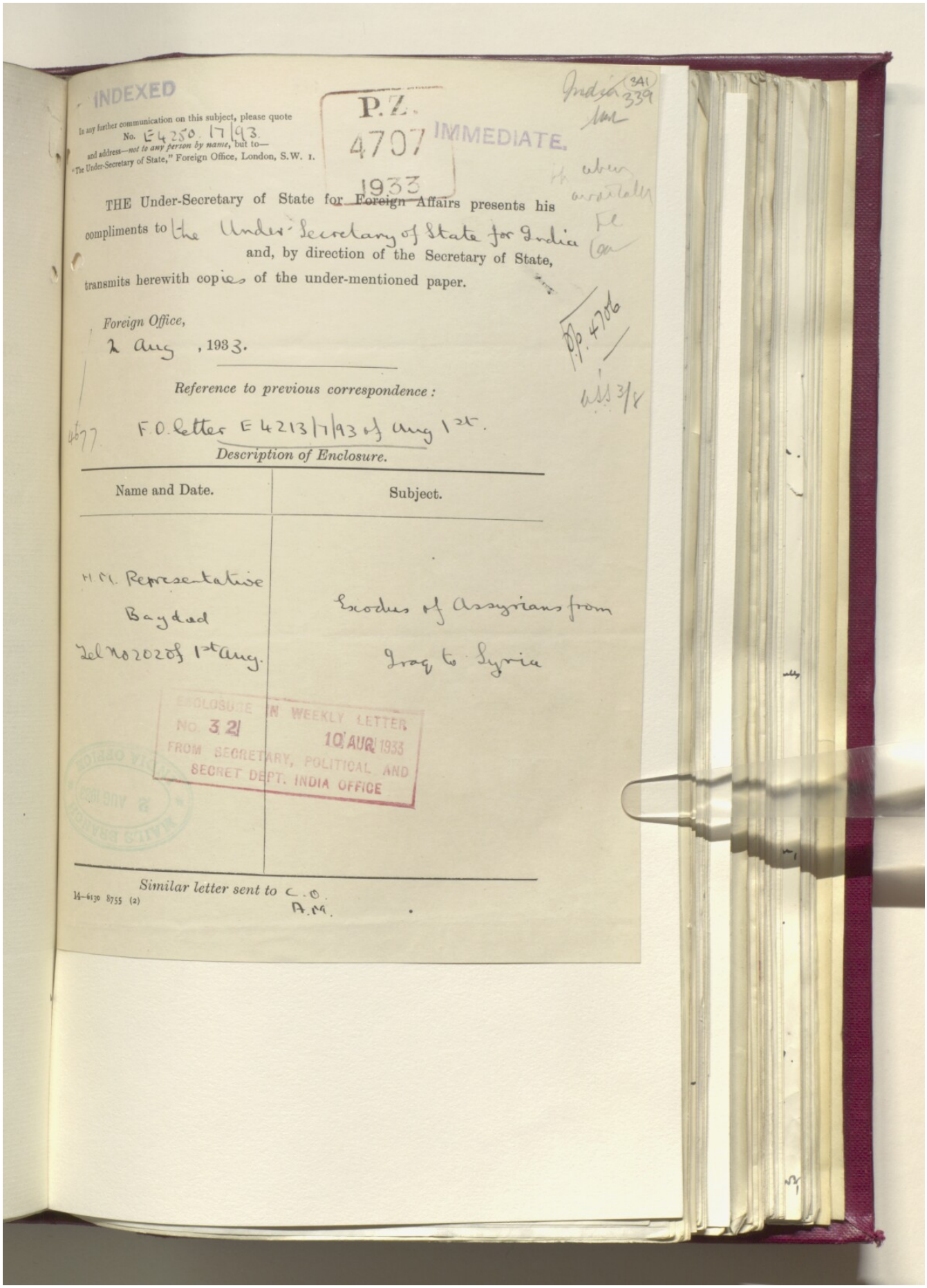
338
340

2.

explain position unofficially and say that His Majesty's Government will gladly support with Iraqi government any reasonable claims of French Government by whatever means may seem practicable and likely to prove effective at the right moment; but it is impossible for His Majesty's Government to express any definite views as to best method of settling matter until it can be seen how crisis develops.

I have in mind that, if, as His Majesty's Government would consider far best, Syrian authorities should eventually accept Assyrians as permanent immigrants (which would mean accepting also their women and children still in Iraq), this would affect question of Iraqi financial responsibility; but to say so specifically would be likely to deter French from agreeing to this solution.

Addressed to Paris No.133 Saving, repeated by Saving telegram to Bagdad by bag and in cypher by post to Beirut for information.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4250 17/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4707 1933 IMMEDIATE.

India (341) 339

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
2 Aug, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. Letter E 4213/7/93 of Aug 1st.

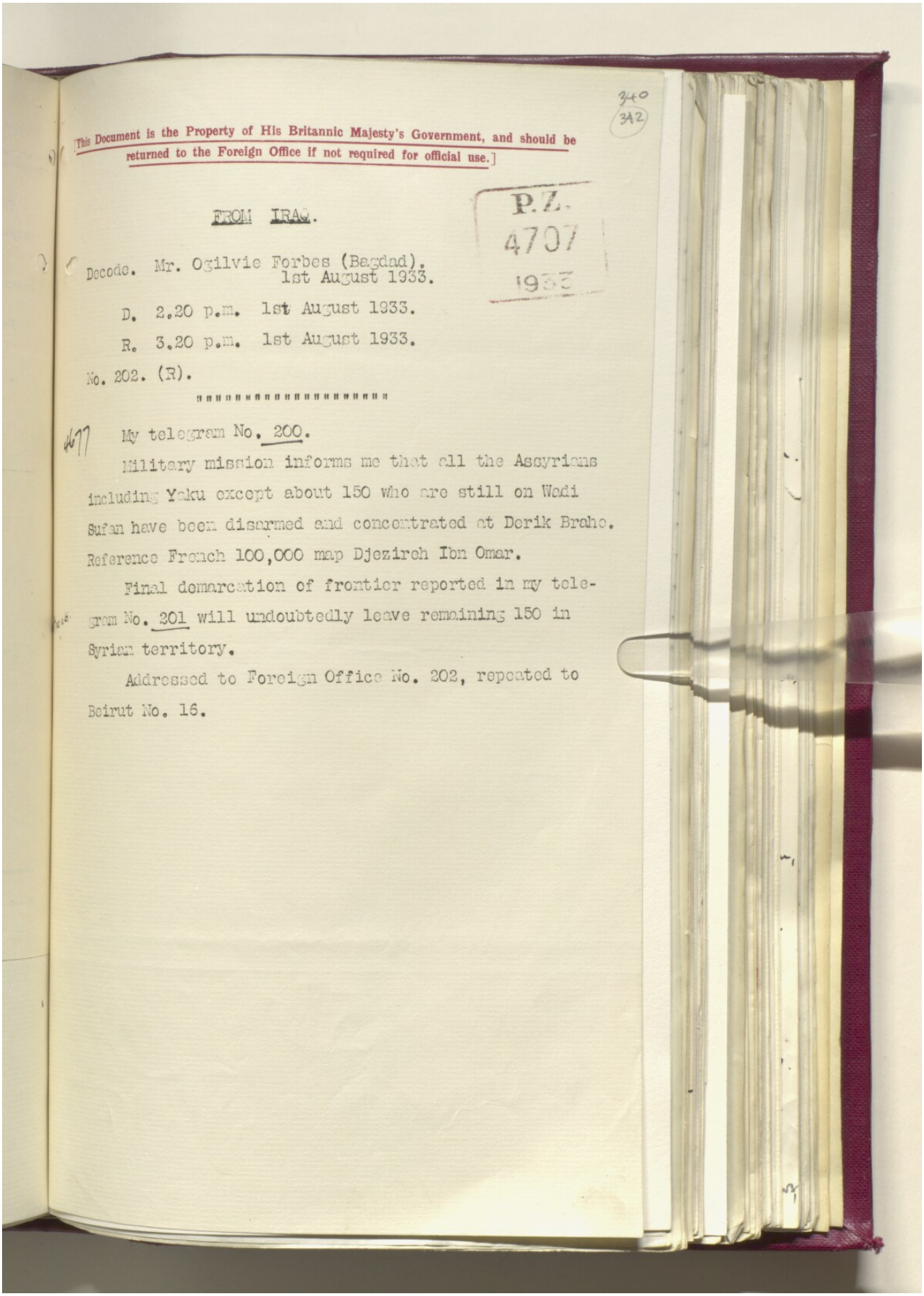
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Baghdad Tel No 202 of 1st Aug.	Exodus of Assyrians from Iraq to Syria

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER NO. 321 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE 10 AUG 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14–6130 8755 (2)



340
342

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4707
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
1st August 1933.

D. 2.20 p.m. 1st August 1933.

R. 3.20 p.m. 1st August 1933.

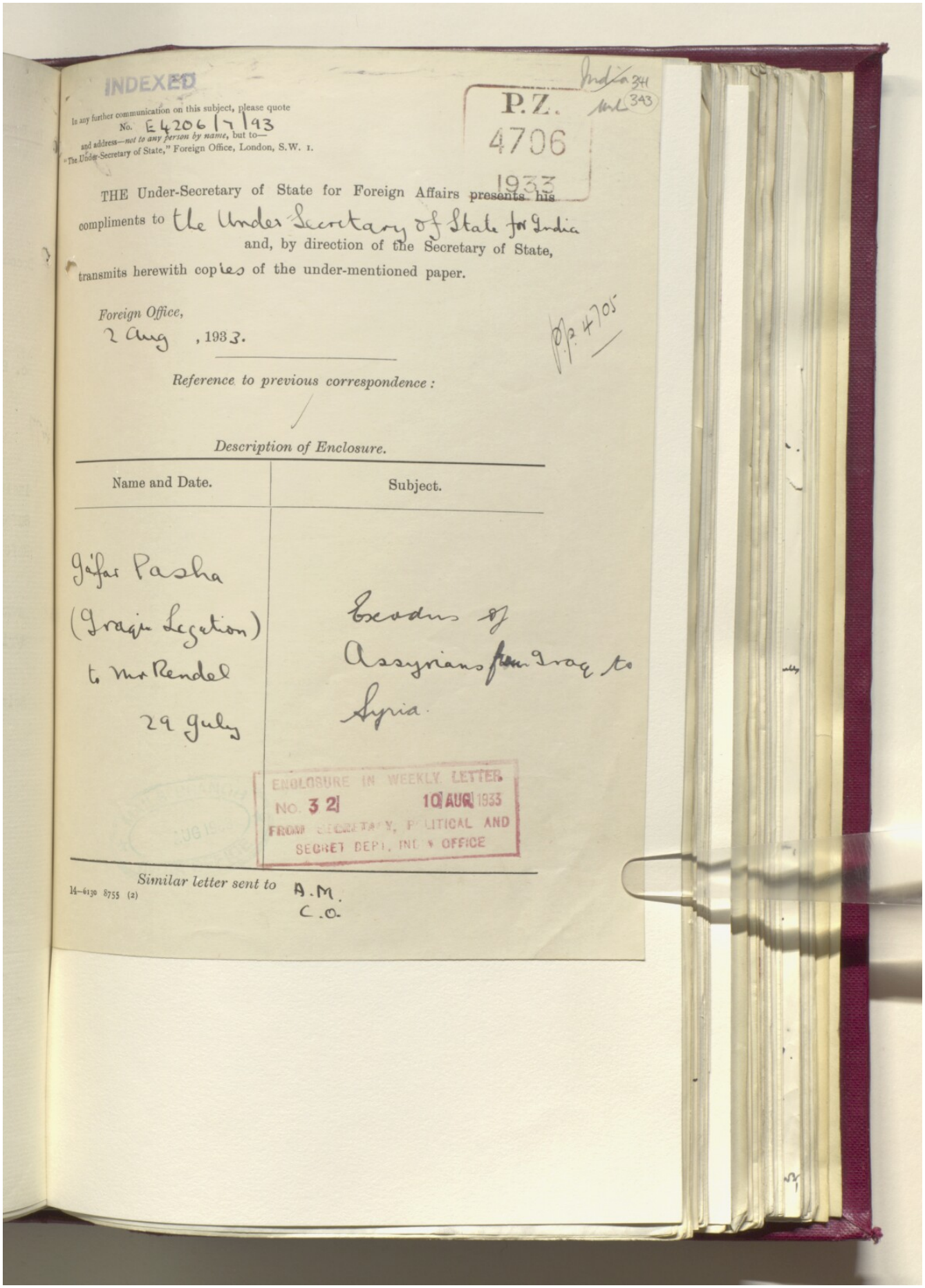
No. 202. (R).

477 My telegram No. 200.

Military mission informs me that all the Assyrians including Yaku except about 150 who are still on Wadi Sufan have been disarmed and concentrated at Derik Brahe. Reference French 100,000 map Djezireh Ibn Omar.

Final demarcation of frontier reported in my telegram No. 201 will undoubtedly leave remaining 150 in Syrian territory.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 202, repeated to Beirut No. 16.



INDEXED

India 341
343

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4206/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z.
4706
1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
2 Aug , 1933.

P.Z. 4705

Reference to previous correspondence:

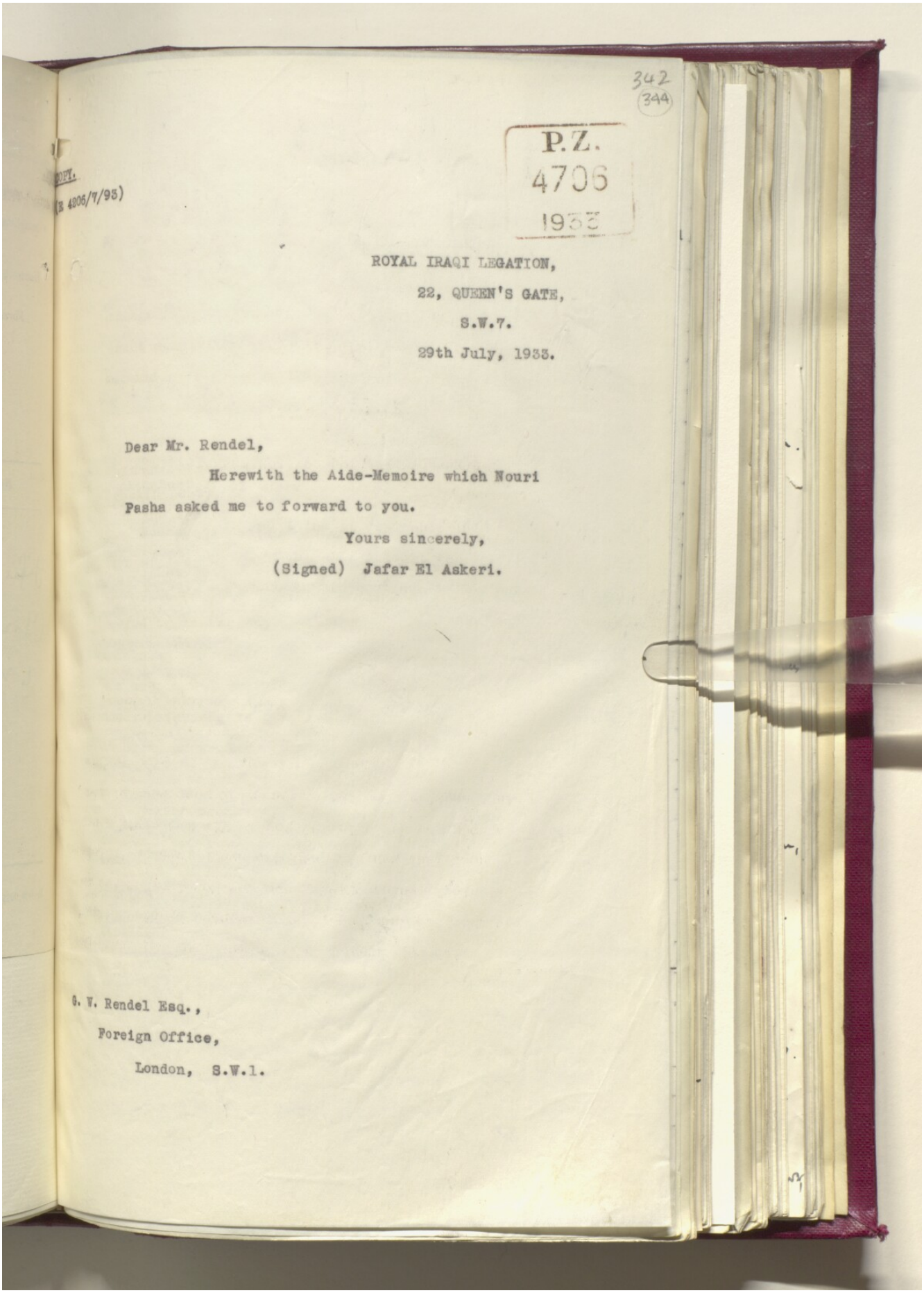
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Jafar Pasha (Iraqi Legation) to Mr Rendel 29 July	Exodus of Assyrians from Iraq to Syria.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 32 10 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to A.M. C.O.

14—6130 8755 (2)



342
(344)

P.Z.
4706
1933

(E 4806/7/93)

ROYAL IRAQI LEGATION,
22, QUEEN'S GATE,
S.W.7.
29th July, 1933.

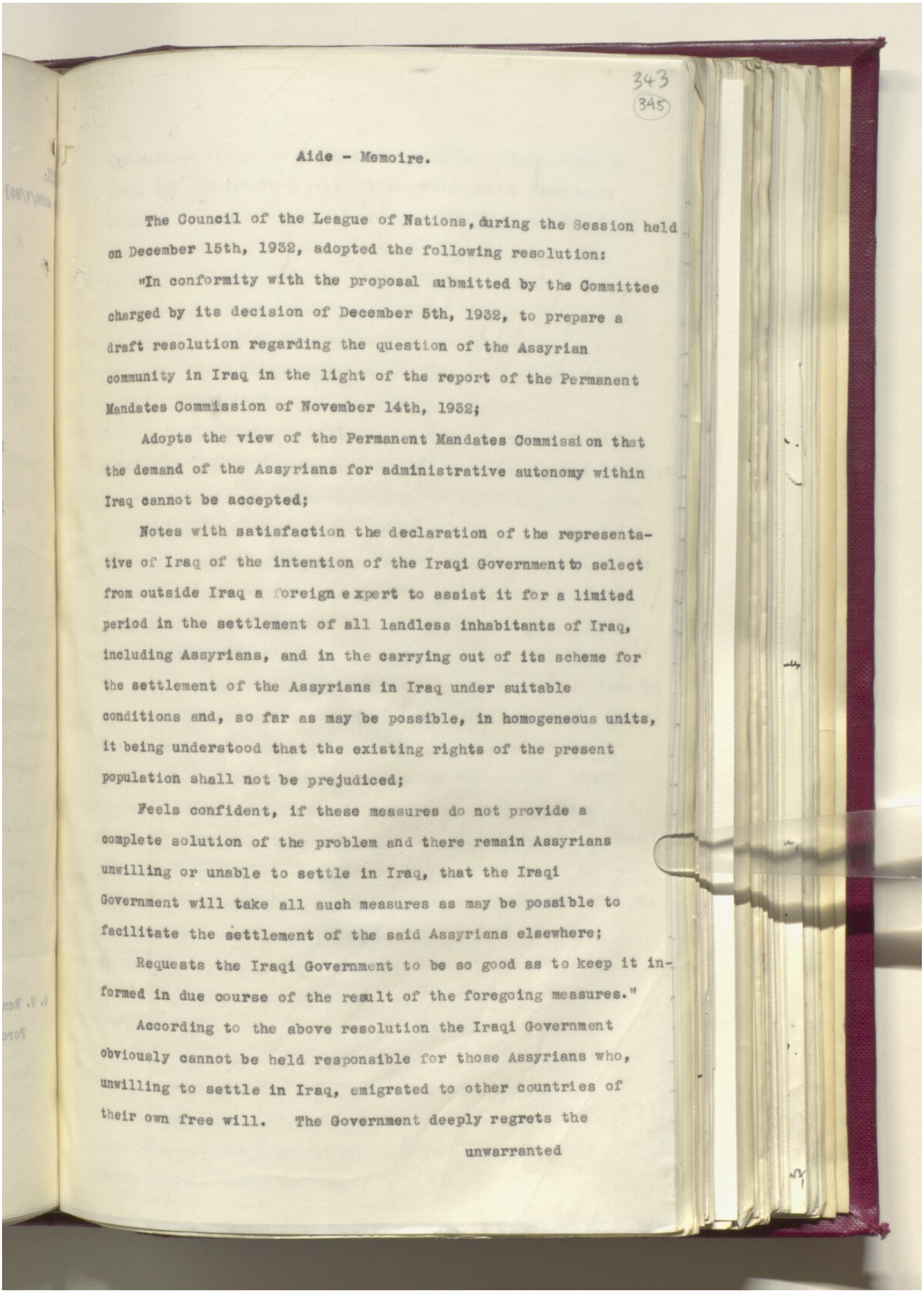
Dear Mr. Rendel,

Herewith the Aide-Memoire which Nouri Pasha asked me to forward to you.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) Jafar El Askeri.

G. W. Rendel Esq.,
Foreign Office,
London, S.W.1.

P.Z.
4705
1933



343
345

Aide - Memoire.

The Council of the League of Nations, during the Session held on December 15th, 1932, adopted the following resolution:

"In conformity with the proposal submitted by the Committee charged by its decision of December 5th, 1932, to prepare a draft resolution regarding the question of the Assyrian community in Iraq in the light of the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission of November 14th, 1932;

Adopts the view of the Permanent Mandates Commission that the demand of the Assyrians for administrative autonomy within Iraq cannot be accepted;

Notes with satisfaction the declaration of the representative of Iraq of the intention of the Iraqi Government to select from outside Iraq a foreign expert to assist it for a limited period in the settlement of all landless inhabitants of Iraq, including Assyrians, and in the carrying out of its scheme for the settlement of the Assyrians in Iraq under suitable conditions and, so far as may be possible, in homogeneous units, it being understood that the existing rights of the present population shall not be prejudiced;

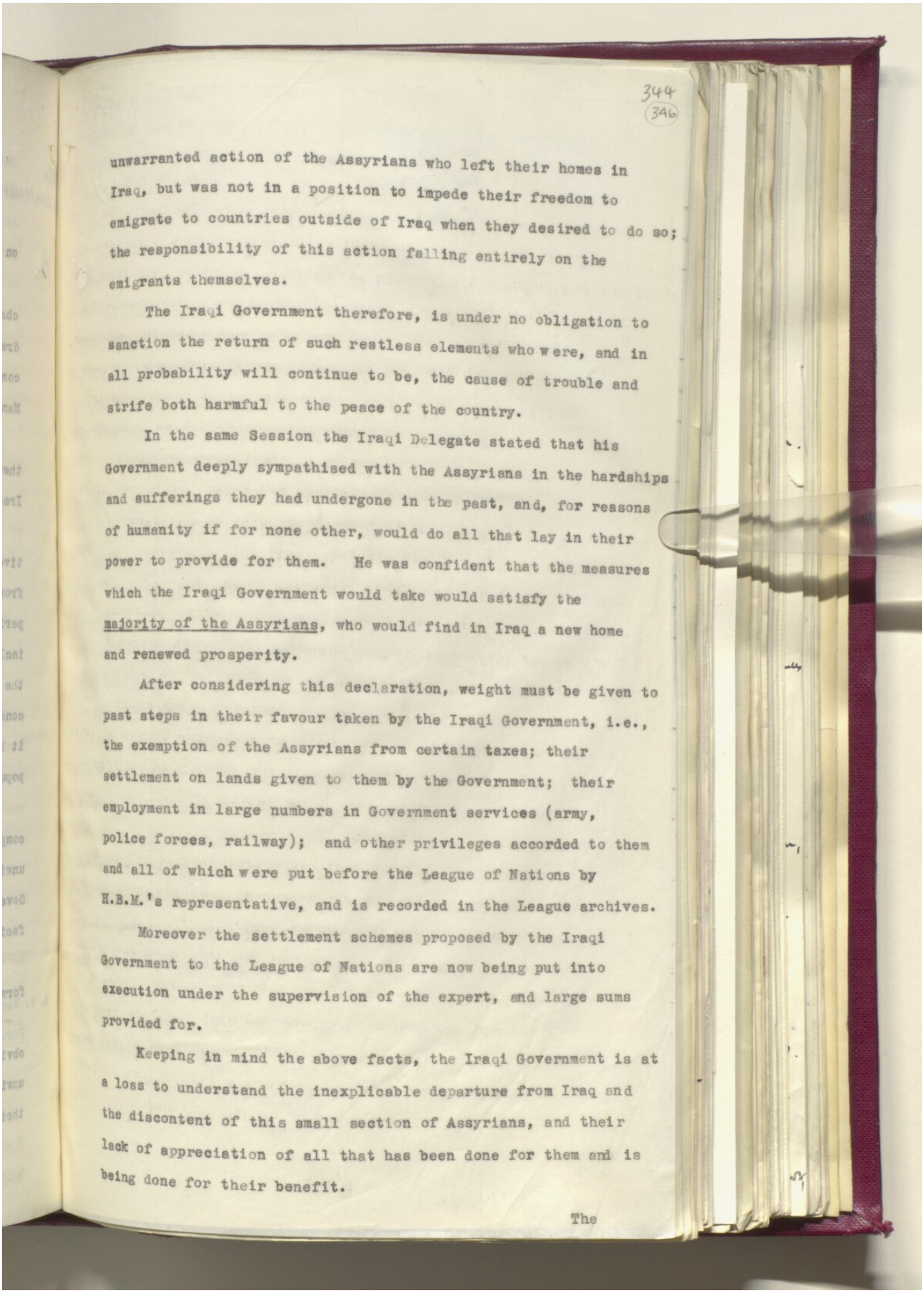
Feels confident, if these measures do not provide a complete solution of the problem and there remain Assyrians unwilling or unable to settle in Iraq, that the Iraqi Government will take all such measures as may be possible to facilitate the settlement of the said Assyrians elsewhere;

Requests the Iraqi Government to be so good as to keep it informed in due course of the result of the foregoing measures."

According to the above resolution the Iraqi Government obviously cannot be held responsible for those Assyrians who, unwilling to settle in Iraq, emigrated to other countries of their own free will. The Government deeply regrets the

unwarranted

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x000066



344
(346)

unwarranted action of the Assyrians who left their homes in Iraq, but was not in a position to impede their freedom to emigrate to countries outside of Iraq when they desired to do so; the responsibility of this action falling entirely on the emigrants themselves.

The Iraqi Government therefore, is under no obligation to sanction the return of such restless elements who were, and in all probability will continue to be, the cause of trouble and strife both harmful to the peace of the country.

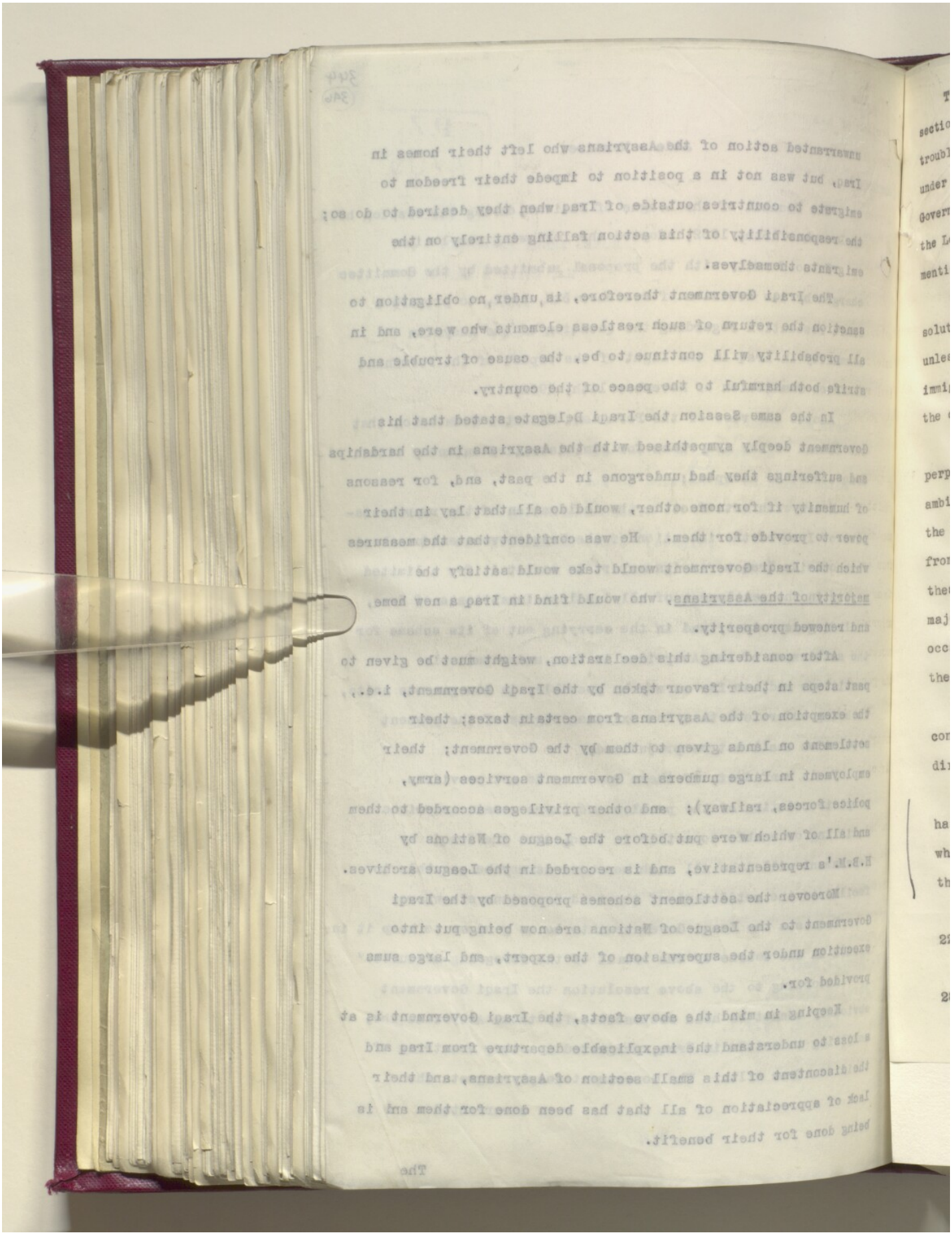
In the same Session the Iraqi Delegate stated that his Government deeply sympathised with the Assyrians in the hardships and sufferings they had undergone in the past, and, for reasons of humanity if for none other, would do all that lay in their power to provide for them. He was confident that the measures which the Iraqi Government would take would satisfy the majority of the Assyrians, who would find in Iraq a new home and renewed prosperity.

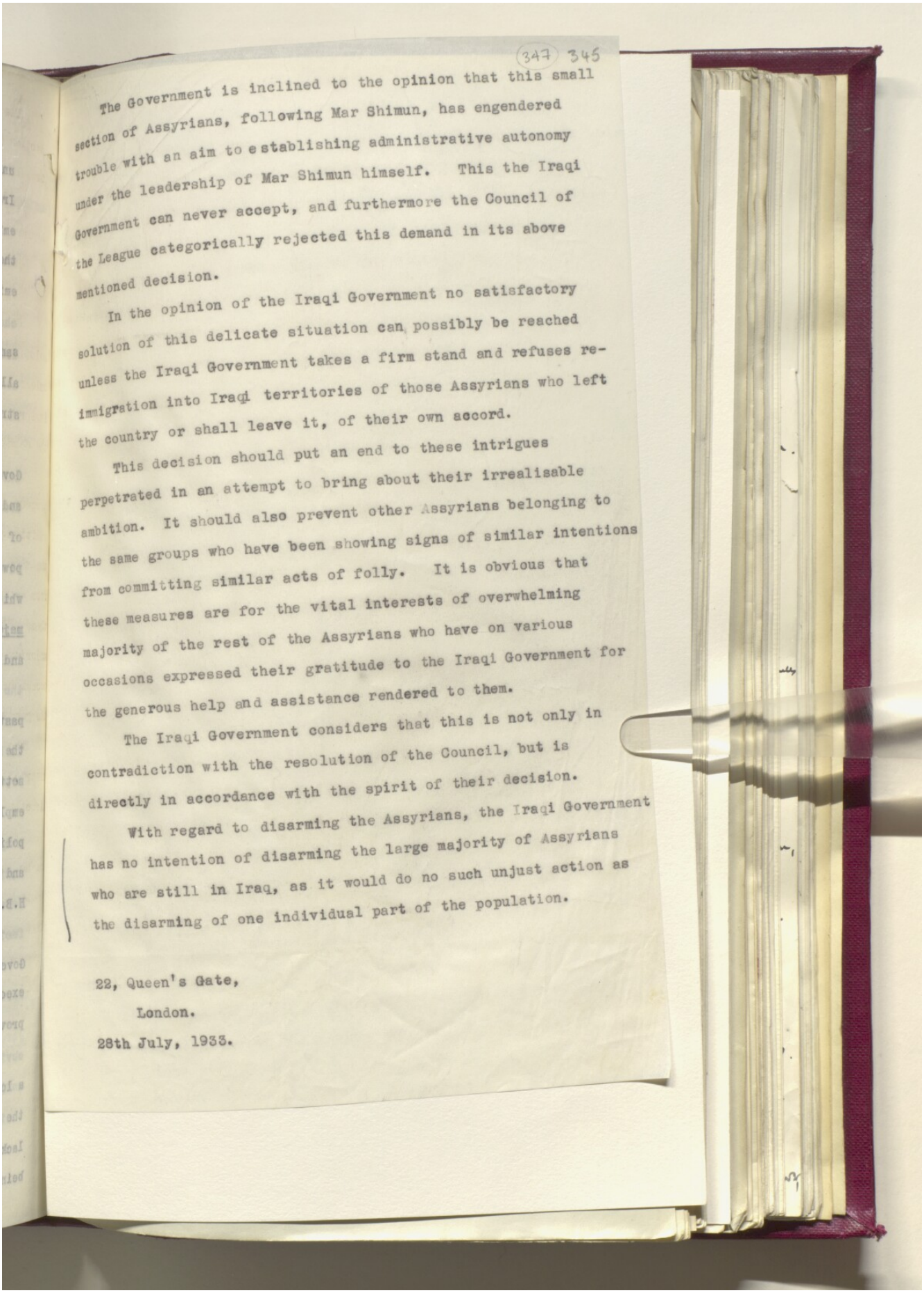
After considering this declaration, weight must be given to past steps in their favour taken by the Iraqi Government, i.e., the exemption of the Assyrians from certain taxes; their settlement on lands given to them by the Government; their employment in large numbers in Government services (army, police forces, railway); and other privileges accorded to them and all of which were put before the League of Nations by H.B.M.'s representative, and is recorded in the League archives.

Moreover the settlement schemes proposed by the Iraqi Government to the League of Nations are now being put into execution under the supervision of the expert, and large sums provided for.

Keeping in mind the above facts, the Iraqi Government is at a loss to understand the inexplicable departure from Iraq and the discontent of this small section of Assyrians, and their lack of appreciation of all that has been done for them and is being done for their benefit.

The





(347) 345

The Government is inclined to the opinion that this small section of Assyrians, following Mar Shimun, has engendered trouble with an aim to establishing administrative autonomy under the leadership of Mar Shimun himself. This the Iraqi Government can never accept, and furthermore the Council of the League categorically rejected this demand in its above mentioned decision.

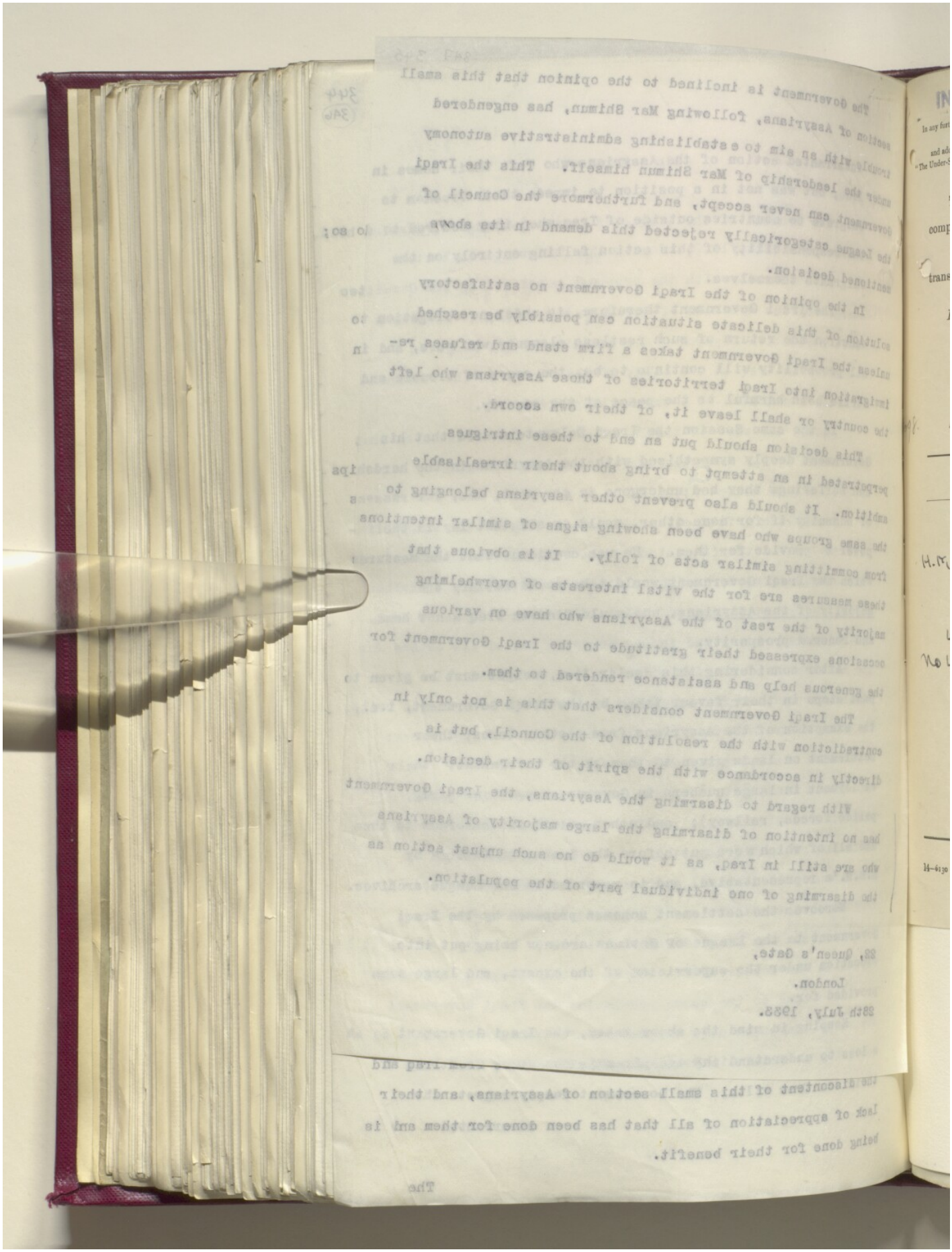
In the opinion of the Iraqi Government no satisfactory solution of this delicate situation can possibly be reached unless the Iraqi Government takes a firm stand and refuses re-immigration into Iraqi territories of those Assyrians who left the country or shall leave it, of their own accord.

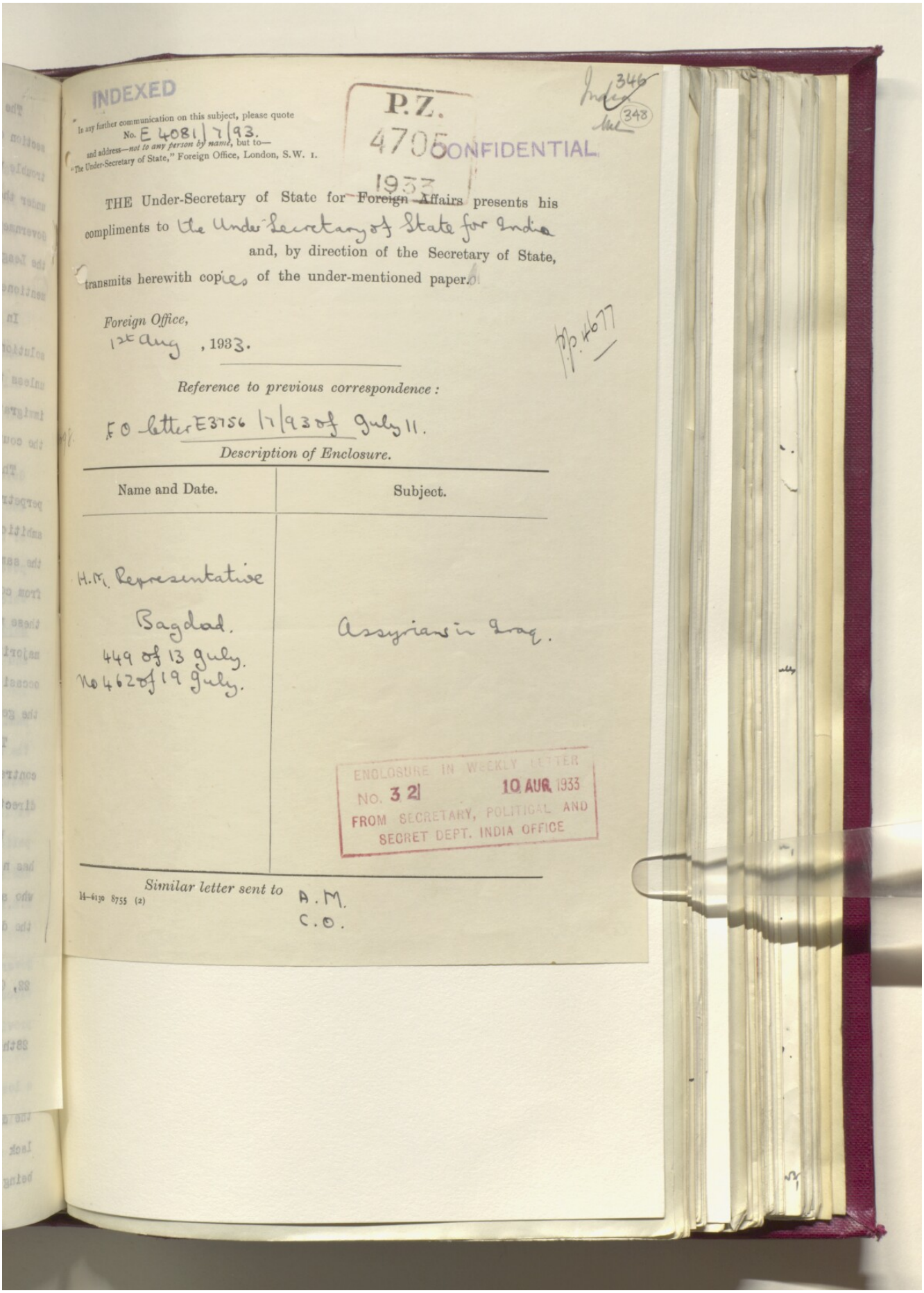
This decision should put an end to these intrigues perpetrated in an attempt to bring about their irrealisable ambition. It should also prevent other Assyrians belonging to the same groups who have been showing signs of similar intentions from committing similar acts of folly. It is obvious that these measures are for the vital interests of overwhelming majority of the rest of the Assyrians who have on various occasions expressed their gratitude to the Iraqi Government for the generous help and assistance rendered to them.

The Iraqi Government considers that this is not only in contradiction with the resolution of the Council, but is directly in accordance with the spirit of their decision.

With regard to disarming the Assyrians, the Iraqi Government has no intention of disarming the large majority of Assyrians who are still in Iraq, as it would do no such unjust action as the disarming of one individual part of the population.

22, Queen's Gate,
London.
28th July, 1933.





INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4081/7/93. and address—*not to any person by name*, but to— "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4705 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

Index 346 348

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
1st Aug, 1933.

pp. 4677

Reference to previous correspondence:

FO letter E3756 1/7/93 of July 11.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. 449 of 13 July. No 462 of 19 July.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER NO. 32 10 AUG 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to A.M. C.O.

14—6130 8755 (2)

347
349

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z.
4705
1933

EASTERN (IRAQ).

CONFIDENTIAL.

July 18, 1933.

SECTION 1.

[E 3901/7/93]

No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(*Received July* 18.)

(No. 449.)

Bagdad, July 13, 1933.

Sir,

I CLOSED my despatch No. 430 of the 6th July with a brief comment on Major Thomson's references to the Dashtazi settlement area. This matter has been to me the cause of some concern. If Major Thomson's criticisms are true, there is danger that by tacitly approving expenditure by the Iraqi Government for settling Assyrians in what is already known to be poor, if not useless, land both His Majesty's Government and the British officials concerned in selecting the ground, doing surveys and preparing the estimates would make themselves a laughing stock. I have accordingly suggested to Mr. Edmonds that this point should receive immediate attention before the Iraqi Government commit themselves to spending the sum voted. The acting Financial Adviser also confirms Major Thomson's fear that the Dashtazi scheme may cost considerably more than the £13,000 assigned, and considers that it will be difficult to obtain a supplementary grant from Parliament.

2. I understand that Major Thomson is of opinion that the Champaishi area, which he suggests as an alternative, could accommodate all the Assyrian families who are in need of land. Although it is low-lying on the Tigris, about 42 miles north-west of Mosul, it is close to mountains and to areas already settled by Assyrians, and many Assyrians would like to settle there. I am also informed that the land was bought by its present owner for about £2,000, that he might be willing to sell, and that it is of such a nature that settlement could be speedily begun. Once a start was made the waverers would flock to register their claims.

3. I enclose copy of a letter(1) from Mr. Edmonds covering correspondence(1) with the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, on the subject of the Mar Shimun's return. From this you will see that Colonel Stafford somewhat hesitatingly arrives at the conclusion that, while the Mar Shimun's return would be eventually desirable, he should not be allowed to return on his own terms and against the wishes of the Iraqi Government.

4. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail on the 13th July. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

(1) Not printed.

[851 s—1]

348 350

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

EASTERN (IRAQ).

CONFIDENTIAL.

P.Z July 25, 1933.

4709 SECTION 2.

1933

[4081/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon. (*Received July* 25.)

(No. 462.)

Bagdad, July 19, 1933.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 449 of the 13th July, the most important event during the past ten days in the story of the Assyrian crisis has been the meeting of maliks and other leaders called at Mosul on the 10th July by the Acting Governor on the suggestion of Colonel Stafford and Major Thomson. It seemed at first that the proceedings would unfortunately be marred by the presence and the speeches of certain uninvited guests. After the Acting Governor had read out a detailed statement of the Government's policy, Colonel Stafford and Major Thomson were requested to address the meeting. I enclose a précis of their speeches. Questions were then invited, and it soon became clear that opinions were sharply divided. A number of questioners proclaimed complete sympathy with the policy of the Government; others regretted the absence of the Mar Shimun. An inflammatory speech by an uninvited guest caused some excitement, and set the pro- and the anti-Mar Shimun parties at loggerheads. It was felt necessary to adjourn the meeting until the next day.

2. That same evening Colonel Stafford received a communication to the effect that the party in favour of the Mar Shimun would decline to attend the adjourned meeting. It was accordingly arranged that on the 11th July two meetings should be held—one for the party against the Mar Shimun, the other for the Patriarch's special adherents. The first passed off quite satisfactorily, and all present, about forty in number, expressed their loyalty to the King and their obedience to the Iraqi Government.

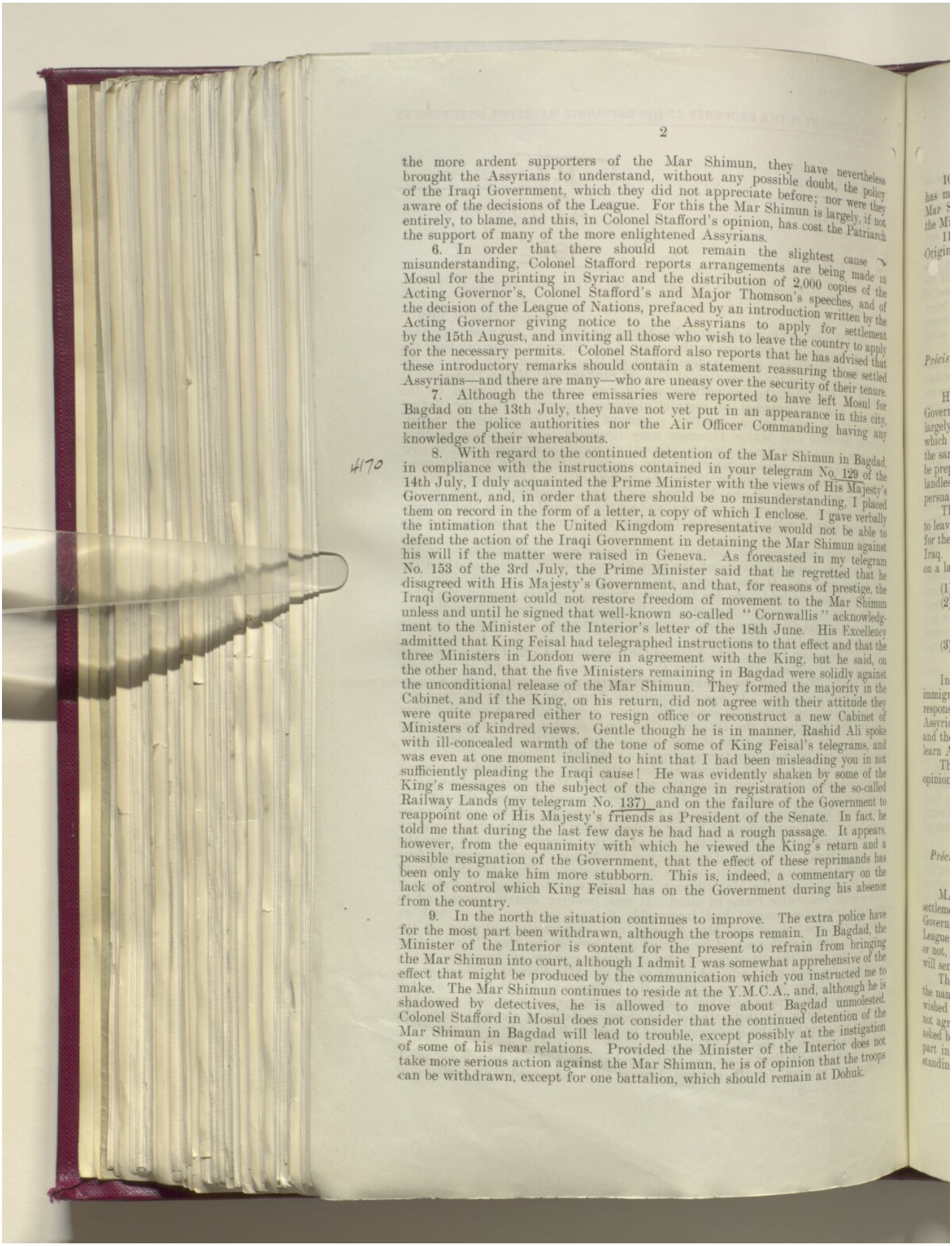
3. The second meeting, which lasted for over two and a half hours, disclosed the anxiety of certain Assyrians for the security of their tenure of privately owned lands. Nearly all the speakers said that the presence of the Mar Shimun was absolutely essential. It was explained to them that the Mar Shimun was free to return immediately he signed the simple acknowledgment required from him by the Minister of the Interior. The draft of this acknowledgment was read out. At the same time it was pointed out that the Government were determined not to grant any temporal power to the Mar Shimun.

4. In the opinion of Colonel Stafford the result was that those present acknowledged that they understood the policy of the Government and promised obedience so long as they were in Iraq. They reserved, however, the right to consult the Mar Shimun as to whether they should remain in this country or go elsewhere. The Commandant of Police explained that those who wished to leave Iraq were free to do so, but if they stayed in the country they must obey the laws of the land. At the end of the meeting, the Acting Governor requested four representative maliks to remain behind, and suggested to them that they should go to Bagdad to see the Mar Shimun and endeavour to bring the Patriarch into a more reasonable frame of mind. It was, however, clearly pointed out to them that the Government had irrevocably decided on their policy, both as regards the position of the Mar Shimun and as regards settlement of the Assyrians, and that this would be carried out wherever the Mar Shimun might be. At the same time it appeared that a certain number of Assyrians would not apply for land until advised to do so by the Mar Shimun. Those people would suffer irreparable harm, whereas the Government would not be affected at all. The maliks promised they would think the matter over, and eventually decided that Yaku, the instigator of the abortive rising of the 25th June, the Malik Luco and the Malik Andreas should proceed to Bagdad in order to explain the local situation to the Mar Shimun.

5. Colonel Stafford considers that these meetings have done much good. While they will not, for the moment, have greatly influenced the allegiance of

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x00006f



the more ardent supporters of the Mar Shimun, they have nevertheless brought the Assyrians to understand, without any possible doubt, the policy of the Iraqi Government, which they did not appreciate before; nor were they aware of the decisions of the League. For this the Mar Shimun is largely, if not entirely, to blame, and this, in Colonel Stafford's opinion, has cost the Patriarch the support of many of the more enlightened Assyrians.

6. In order that there should not remain the slightest cause for misunderstanding, Colonel Stafford reports arrangements are being made in Mosul for the printing in Syriac and the distribution of 2,000 copies of the Acting Governor's, Colonel Stafford's and Major Thomson's speeches, and of the decision of the League of Nations, prefaced by an introduction written by the Acting Governor giving notice to the Assyrians to apply for settlement by the 15th August, and inviting all those who wish to leave the country to apply for the necessary permits. Colonel Stafford also reports that he has advised that these introductory remarks should contain a statement reassuring those settled Assyrians—and there are many—who are uneasy over the security of their tenure.

7. Although the three emissaries were reported to have left Mosul for Bagdad on the 13th July, they have not yet put in an appearance in this city, neither the police authorities nor the Air Officer Commanding having any knowledge of their whereabouts.

4170

8. With regard to the continued detention of the Mar Shimun in Bagdad, in compliance with the instructions contained in your telegram No. 129 of the 14th July, I duly acquainted the Prime Minister with the views of His Majesty's Government, and, in order that there should be no misunderstanding, I placed them on record in the form of a letter, a copy of which I enclose. I gave verbally the intimation that the United Kingdom representative would not be able to defend the action of the Iraqi Government in detaining the Mar Shimun against his will if the matter were raised in Geneva. As forecasted in my telegram No. 153 of the 3rd July, the Prime Minister said that he regretted that he disagreed with His Majesty's Government, and that, for reasons of prestige, the Iraqi Government could not restore freedom of movement to the Mar Shimun unless and until he signed that well-known so-called "Cornwallis" acknowledgment to the Minister of the Interior's letter of the 18th June. His Excellency admitted that King Feisal had telegraphed instructions to that effect and that the three Ministers in London were in agreement with the King, but he said, on the other hand, that the five Ministers remaining in Bagdad were solidly against the unconditional release of the Mar Shimun. They formed the majority in the Cabinet, and if the King, on his return, did not agree with their attitude they were quite prepared either to resign office or reconstruct a new Cabinet of Ministers of kindred views. Gentle though he is in manner, Rashid Ali spoke with ill-concealed warmth of the tone of some of King Feisal's telegrams, and was even at one moment inclined to hint that I had been misleading you in not sufficiently pleading the Iraqi cause! He was evidently shaken by some of the King's messages on the subject of the change in registration of the so-called Railway Lands (my telegram No. 137) and on the failure of the Government to reappoint one of His Majesty's friends as President of the Senate. In fact, he told me that during the last few days he had had a rough passage. It appears, however, from the equanimity with which he viewed the King's return and a possible resignation of the Government, that the effect of these reprimands has been only to make him more stubborn. This is, indeed, a commentary on the lack of control which King Feisal has on the Government during his absence from the country.

9. In the north the situation continues to improve. The extra police have for the most part been withdrawn, although the troops remain. In Bagdad, the Minister of the Interior is content for the present to refrain from bringing the Mar Shimun into court, although I admit I was somewhat apprehensive of the effect that might be produced by the communication which you instructed me to make. The Mar Shimun continues to reside at the Y.M.C.A., and, although he is shadowed by detectives, he is allowed to move about Bagdad unmolested. Colonel Stafford in Mosul does not consider that the continued detention of the Mar Shimun in Bagdad will lead to trouble, except possibly at the instigation of some of his near relations. Provided the Minister of the Interior does not take more serious action against the Mar Shimun, he is of opinion that the troops can be withdrawn, except for one battalion, which should remain at Dohuk.

10. In short, as already reported by telegraph, the situation in the north has much improved, and the impending visit of the Assyrian maliks to the Mar Shimun may result in the Patriarch reconsidering his attitude towards the Minister of the Interior.

11. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail, the 20th July. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Précis of Speech by Colonel Stafford, Acting Administrative Inspector, Mosul, at the Meeting of the Assyrians held on July 10, 1933.

HE was much impressed by lack of contact between the Assyrians and Government officials. Result has been misunderstanding and suspicion. This is largely the fault of the Assyrians themselves, and is an intolerable situation, which must end. Assyrians must either recognise they are Iraqi citizens, with the same rights and duties as the other inhabitants of the country, or they must be prepared to leave Iraq. There is no middle path. This is the last chance that landless Assyrians will have of obtaining holdings in Iraq, and anyone who persuades them not to apply for settlement is doing them irreparable harm.

The Iraqi Government will give every facility to those Assyrians who wish to leave Iraq, but they are not responsible for finding a place outside the country for them to go to. Nor has the League of Nations promised to find lands outside Iraq. It seems unlikely that any country will be prepared to receive Assyrians on a large scale. As regards the neighbouring countries :—

(1) Turkey will not accept Assyrians at any price.
(2) Persia would accept small groups, but on hard conditions, *i.e.*, surrender of arms, scattered settlement, no permanency of tenure, no financial assistance.
(3) Syria. The French are full up with Armenian refugees, and have no land to offer Assyrians.

In view of the present economic crisis all countries in the world are refusing immigration. Therefore the real future for Assyrians lies in Iraq. All responsible Iraqis are anxious to settle the Assyrian question and to make the Assyrians contented Iraqi citizens. It is the duty of the Assyrians to reciprocate, and they must therefore rid themselves of their present spirit of aloofness and learn Arabic or Kurdish.

The time has now come for the Assyrians to decide once and for all. In the opinion of Colonel Stafford they cannot do otherwise than remain.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Précis of Statement made by Major D. B. Thomson to the Assyrian Meeting held on July 10, 1933.

MAJOR THOMSON has come to advise the Iraqi Government in the settlement of Assyrians in accordance with a promise made by the Iraqi Government to the League of Nations. The resolution of the Council of the League of Nations has been read to the meeting. Whether settlement is made or not, Major Thomson must write a full report for the Iraqi Government, who will send a copy to the League.

The Mar Shimun has definitely refused to assist in settlement or to furnish the names of the Assyrian leaders who advised him, and whom Major Thomson wished to see. The Mar Shimun based his refusal on the ground (1) that he did not agree with the Government's settlement policy; and (2) that he had been asked by the Government to give an assurance that he would not take an active part in the administration of the Assyrians. There has been much misunderstanding over the phrase "temporal power." All the Government asks is that

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x000071

the Mar Shimun will give an assurance that he does not claim the right to exercise powers similar to those of an administrative official of the Iraqi Government in his dealings with the Assyrians. This is a perfectly reasonable demand. The Mar Shimun promised to give his reasons in writing for differing with the Government's policy. Although this was over a month ago, Major Thomson had heard nothing from the Patriarch, and in the meanwhile he has done nothing to facilitate the settlement, and is still in disagreement with the Government in Bagdad on the question of his personal position. If the Mar Shimun really understands the decision of the League and the request of the Iraqi Government, and if he has the welfare of the Assyrians really at heart, he should instruct his maliks to co-operate with Major Thomson. The present policy of "wait and see" will only end in alienating the sympathies of the world from the cause of the Assyrian people.

If the maliks consider the presence of the Mar Shimun to be essential, they should use all their influence to urge him to comply with the Government's wishes.

Major Thomson was there to help the Assyrians, and if his advice was not taken it is their responsibility. This was their last chance. They must make up their minds once and for all to settle in Iraq. No other country will offer better terms.

As regards method of settlement, Major Thomson will endeavour, in so far as is possible, to arrange for the settlement of each village by members of the same tribe. Very few applications for land registration have come in. Remember that when the time comes for settlement it will be a case of first come first served. Therefore, register without delay. Those who live in unhealthy villages will be considered when the landless have been provided for. But those who already have employment in Bagdad or elsewhere and apply for land to be worked by others will not be considered until those who work their own holdings have been dealt with.

Various areas will be considered for settlement—Dashtazai, Champaishai and Gaz Fakdah. The Iraqi Government has voted 13,000 dinars. The comments of the Assyrian leaders on these places will be welcome, and Major Thomson will always be ready to receive any Assyrian and explain points on which there may be any difficulty or doubt. The Iraqi Government desires to help the Assyrians in every way possible, and in Colonel Stafford and himself they have two absolutely fair and impartial helpers.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Prime Minister of Iraq.

My dear Prime Minister, *July* 17, 1933.

YOUR Excellency may remember that, when we were discussing the subject of the Mar Shimun on the 3rd July, I informed you that I would probably have to convey to you a message from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in the sense of restoring to the Assyrian Patriarch his freedom of movement.

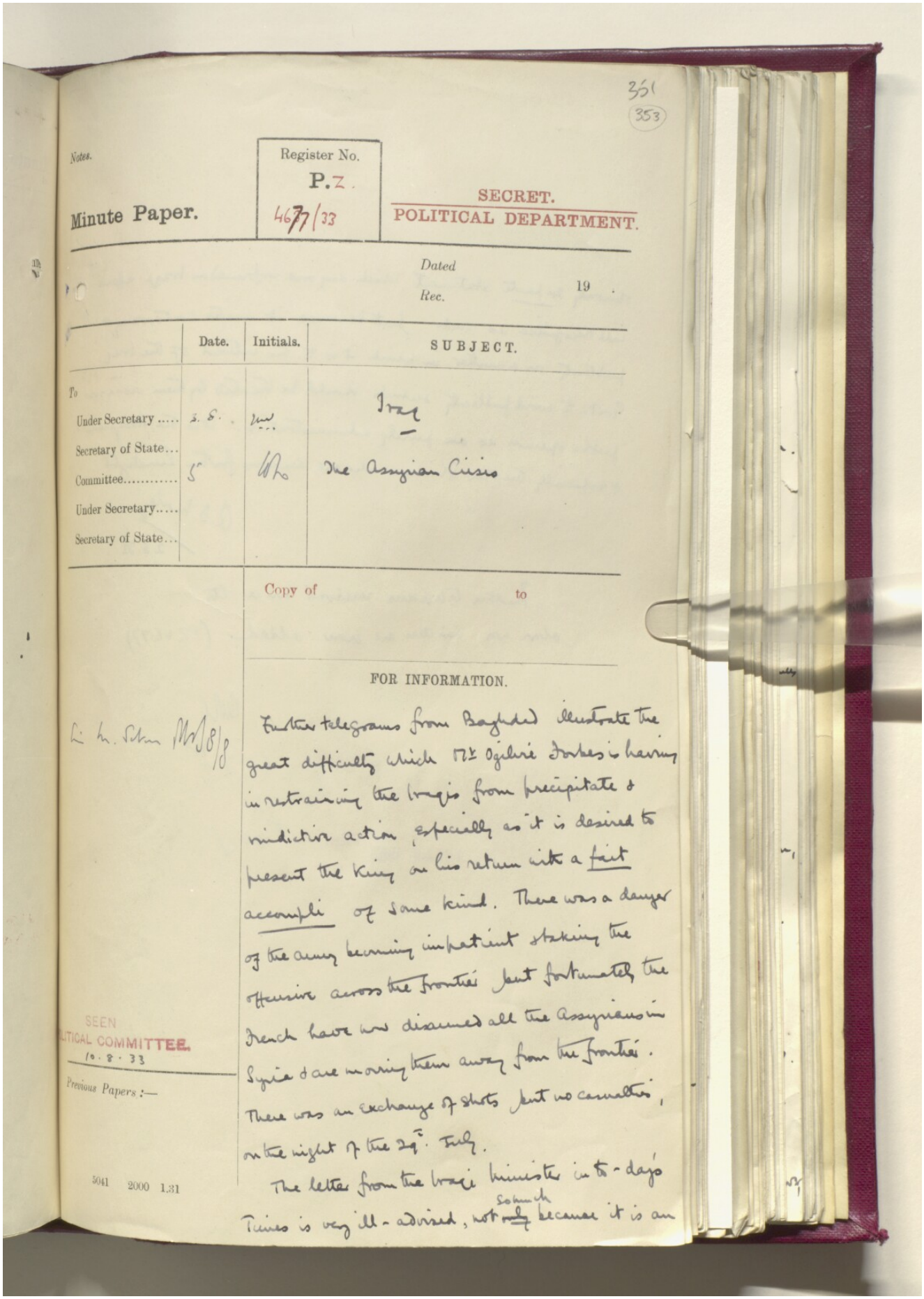
His Majesty's Government, in conjunction with His Majesty King Feisal and your Cabinet colleagues at present in Great Britain, have been giving the matter their most careful consideration. In order that the Iraqi Government should be under no misapprehension as to their views, I have been instructed to state that they are definitely of opinion that, great though the internal difficulties may be, the objections to detaining the Mar Shimun in Bagdad against his will are still greater because of the adverse criticism in Europe which the reputation of the Iraqi Government will incur. This view is also shared by His Majesty King Feisal and the Iraqi Ministers at present in London.

His Majesty's Government therefore hope that the Iraqi Government will see their way to relieving the Mar Shimun of any impression that his liberty of movement is being restricted.

Yours sincerely,
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

This page cannot be made available due to copyright or data protection restrictions.

This page cannot be made available due to copyright or data protection restrictions.



351
(353)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
4677/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	S. S.	[illegible]	Iraq
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	5	[illegible]	The Assyrian Crisis
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Sir M. Seton [illegible] 8/8

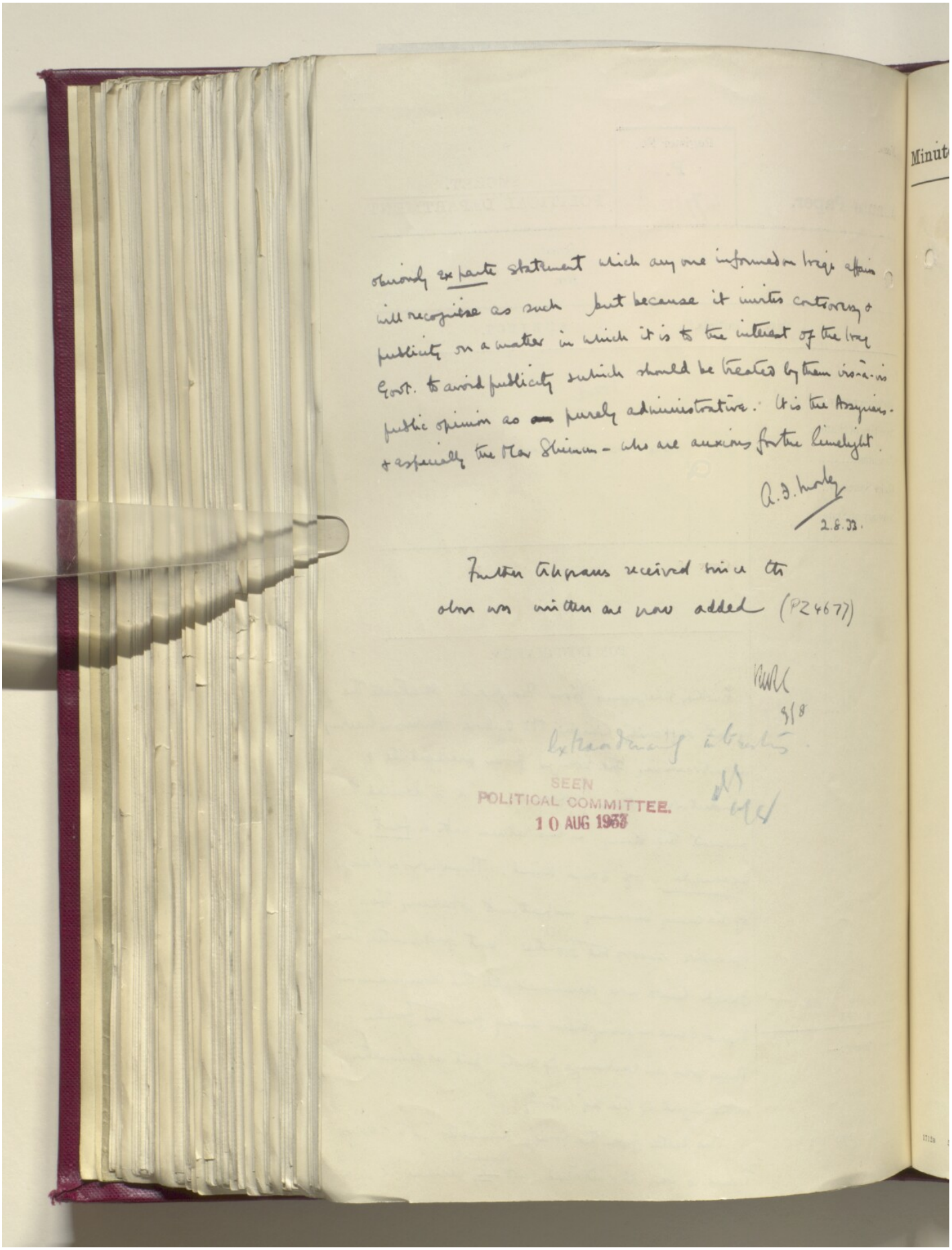
Further telegrams from Baghdad illustrate the great difficulty which Mr Ogilvie Forbes is having in restraining the Iraqis from precipitate & vindictive action, especially as it is desired to present the King on his return with a fait accompli of some kind. There was a danger of the army becoming impatient & taking the offensive across the frontier but fortunately the French have now disarmed all the Assyrians in Syria & are moving them away from the frontier. There was an exchange of shots but no casualties, on the night of the 29th July.

The letter from the Iraqi Minister in to-day's Times is very ill-advised, not ~~only~~ so much because it is an

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
10.8.33

Previous Papers :—

5041 2000 1.31



obviously ex parte statement which anyone informed on Iraq affairs will recognise as such but because it invites controversy & publicity on a matter in which it is to the interest of the Iraq Govt. to avoid publicity which should be treated by them in a-is public opinion as purely administrative. It is the Assyrians & especially the Mar Shimun - who are anxious for the limelight.

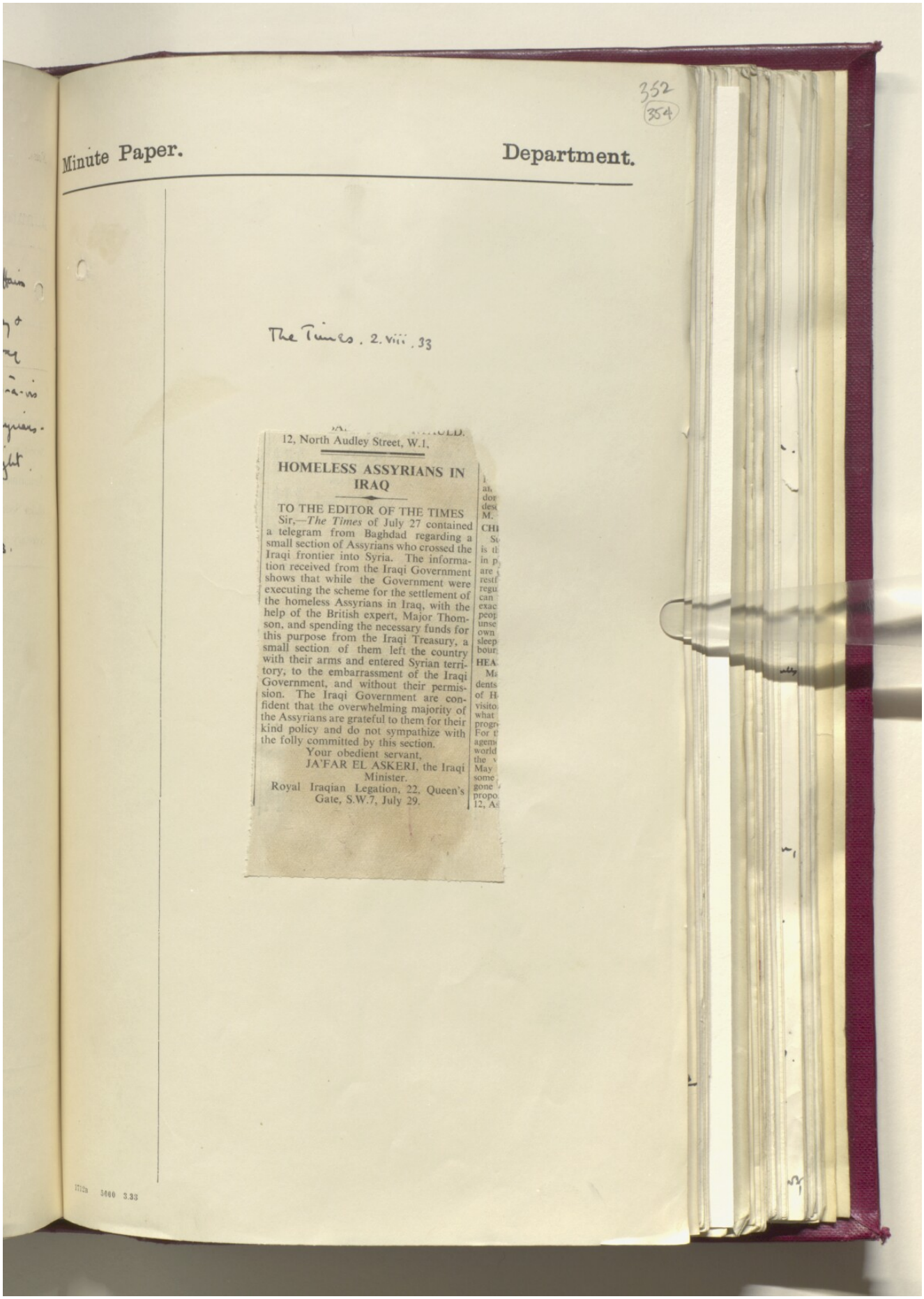
A. J. Harley
2.8.33.

Further telegrams received since the above was written are now added (P2467)

9/8

Extraordinary about

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
10 AUG 1933



352
354

Minute Paper. Department.

The Times. 2. viii. 33

12, North Audley Street, W.1.

HOMELESS ASSYRIANS IN IRAQ

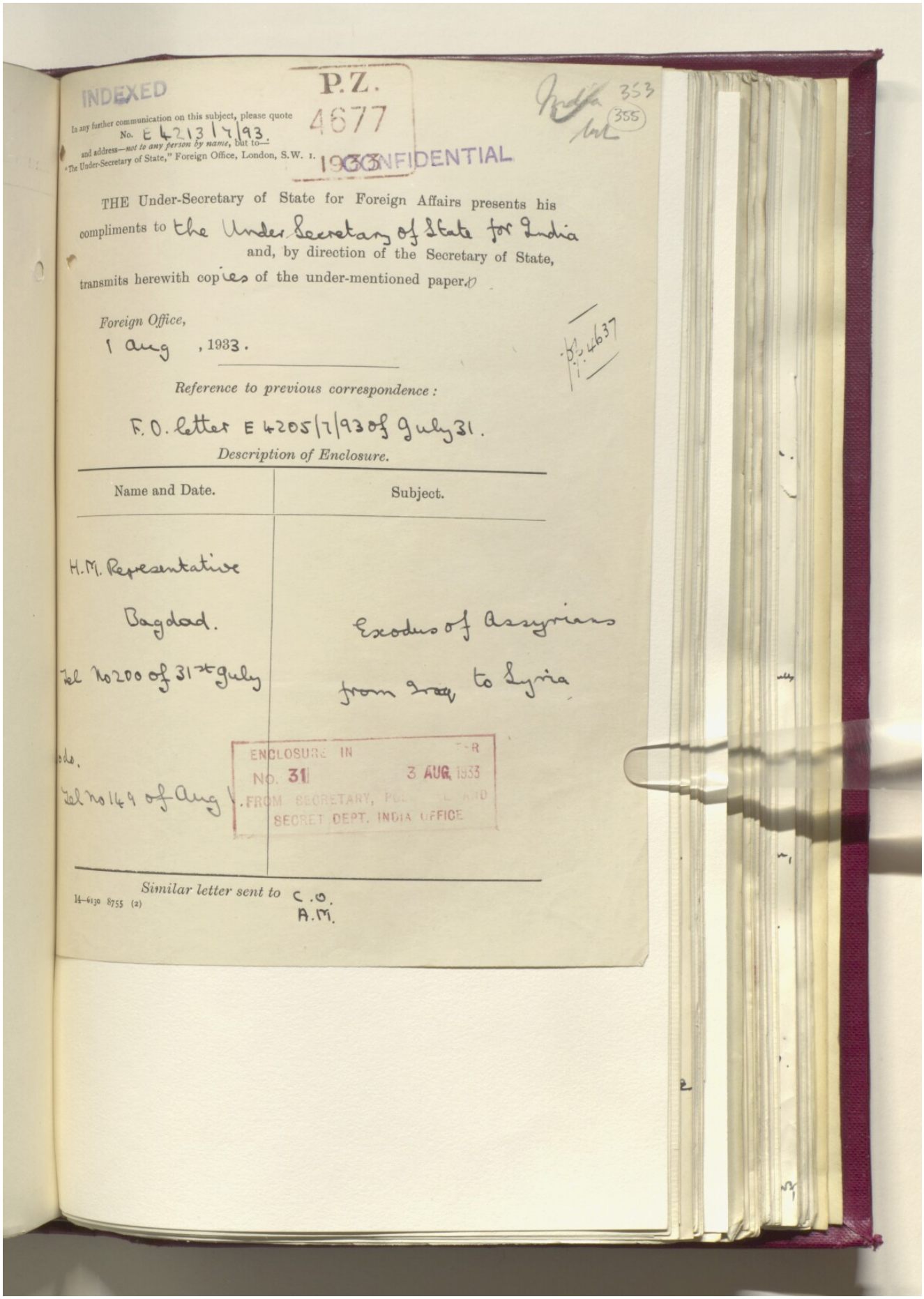
TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—*The Times* of July 27 contained a telegram from Baghdad regarding a small section of Assyrians who crossed the Iraqi frontier into Syria. The information received from the Iraqi Government shows that while the Government were executing the scheme for the settlement of the homeless Assyrians in Iraq, with the help of the British expert, Major Thomson, and spending the necessary funds for this purpose from the Iraqi Treasury, a small section of them left the country with their arms and entered Syrian territory, to the embarrassment of the Iraqi Government, and without their permission. The Iraqi Government are confident that the overwhelming majority of the Assyrians are grateful to them for their kind policy and do not sympathize with the folly committed by this section.

Your obedient servant,
JA'FAR EL ASKERI, the Iraqi Minister.

Royal Iraqian Legation, 22, Queen's Gate, S.W.7, July 29.

17112h 5000 3.33



INDEXED

P.Z. 4677 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4213/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

India 353 355

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
1 Aug, 1933.

f.s. 4637

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4205/7/93 of July 31.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tel No 200 of 31st July	Exodus of Assyrians from Iraq to Syria
do. Tel No 149 of Aug 1	

ENCLOSURE IN [illegible]R
NO. 31 3 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POL[illegible] AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14—6130 8755 (2)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

354
356

4677

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
July 31st. 1933.

D. 2.30.p.m. July 31st. 1933.

R. 4.40.p.m. July 31st. 1933.

No. 200. (R).

--------oOo--------

4637 My telegram No. 199.

Position not clear. French Chargé d'Affaires has no information nor is it known here what conditions if any French have made to Assyrians nor what proposals they intend to make to Iraqi Government.

Disarmament of Assyrians by the French has nevertheless immensely eased the situation. Prime Minister is delighted and I took opportunity of urging him to hold his hand over intended arrest of Lady Surma and other Assyrians. I understand that nothing will be done pending King Feisal's arrival.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 200; repeated to Beirut No. 15.

355
(357)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

4677

(4082/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 1st August, 1933. 12.15 p.m.

No. 149.

::::::::::::::

Confidential.

Assyrian crisis.

Nuri Pasha arrived from Berne on July 28th and explained that King Feisal had decided to pay forthwith brief visit to Bagdad to deal with situation, but wished this kept secret as long as possible. Nuri was rejoining His Majesty at Brindisi, whence they would arrive in Bagdad by air on August 2nd, returning to Switzerland as soon as possible.

King Feisal and Nuri Pasha entirely shared view of Sir F. Humphrys and of His Majesty's Government that summoning of Mar Shimun to Bagdad and his subsequent detention there had been serious mistakes. First essential was to arrange for release of Mar Shimun, even if it should involve fall of Government. This would, however, make it most difficult to allow return of emigrant Assyrians, since Mar Shimun's release would be attributed to successful Assyrian demonstration, which would be regarded as having gone unpunished.

After much discussion, in which Sir F. Humphrys took part, it was provisionally agreed that best solution would be that already suggested in your telegrams,

i.e., ...

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x00007d

356
358

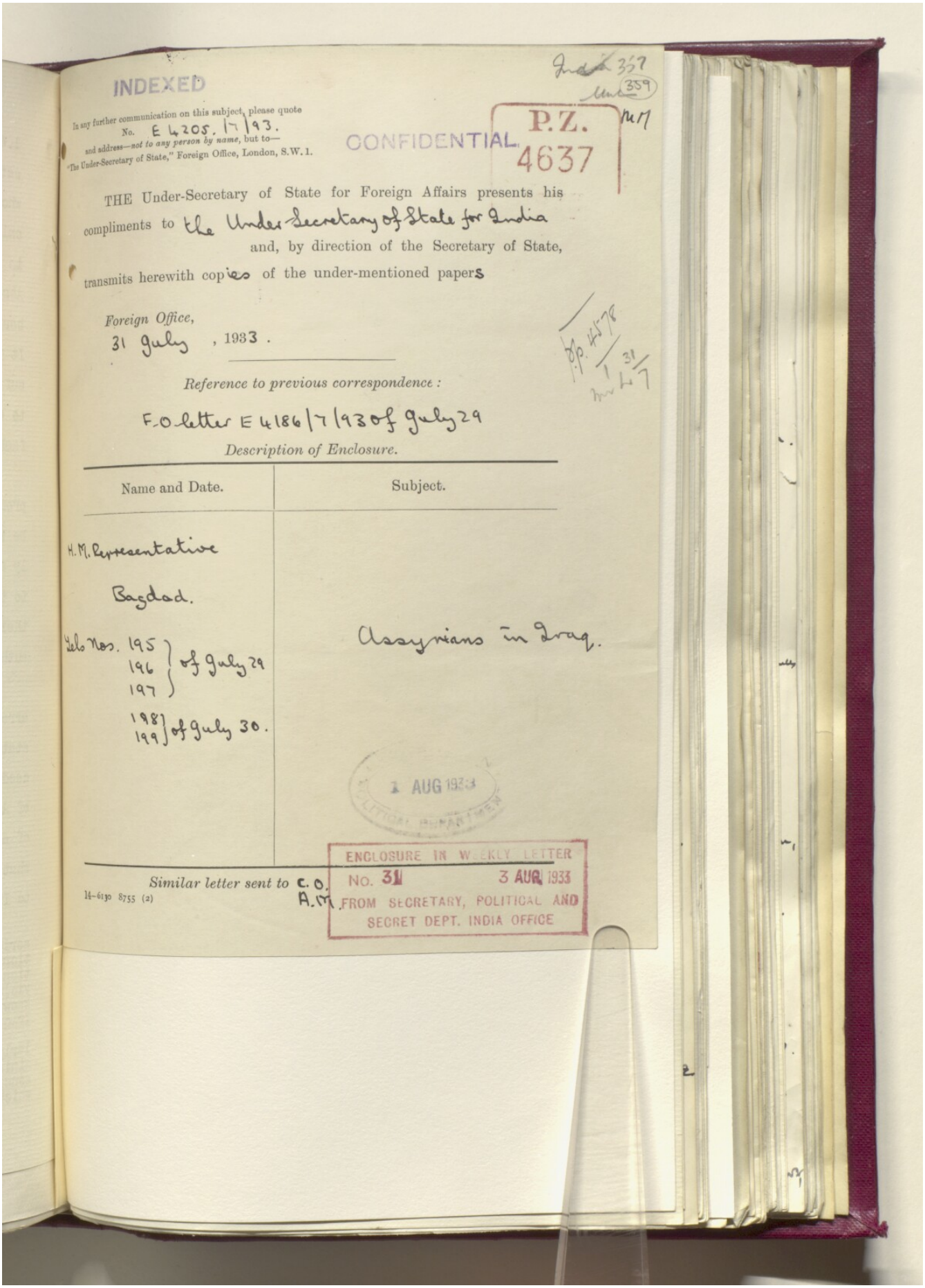
i.e., that French authorities should allow Assyrians to settle in Syria and accept their women and children, whose emigration from Iraq, Iraqi Government would be only too glad to facilitate. Next best alternative, in spite of obvious objections, would be to allow Assyrians to return to Iraq, but only after they had been peaceably disarmed by French authorities in Syria. It was felt that loss of their arms would constitute sufficient punishment and act as sufficient deterent to other groups inclined to demonstrate in similar fashion.

Nuri Pasha was at first inclined to take uncompromising line that Assyrians could in no circumstances be re-admitted, with or without their arms, but eventually abandoned this attitude when his attention was drawn to the extremely difficult situation which would arise if their women and children were not allowed by the French authorities to rejoin them in Syria.

I understand that King Feisal will probably also arrange for issue of a proclamation to the Assyrians stating that Iraqi Government, while determined to proceed with land settlement schemes, expect co-operation of Assyrians, whom they desire to warn that, in the event of any further unauthorised migration, no assurance whatever can be given that they will be allowed to return to Iraq.

Opportunity was taken to point out to Iraqi Ministers serious reaction which any further mishandling of situation would produce on public here and in Geneva. Situation had been rendered all the more awkward by recent violent anti-British campaign in Iraqi press, which, when known here, would further alienate public sympathy from Iraqi Government.

Above is for your confidential information, particularly as policy provisionally agreed on here with Iraqi Ministers may not be followed by King Feisal or may need considerable modification in light of local situation which His Majesty may find on his arrival.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4205/17/93. and address—*not to any person by name*, but to— "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4637

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers

Foreign Office,
31 July , 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4186/17/93 of July 29

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad.	
Tels Nos. 195, 196, 197 of July 29	Assyrians in Iraq.
198, 199 of July 30.	

1 AUG 1933

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 31 3 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)

358
(360)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4637

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 29th July, 1933.

D. 6.12 p.m. 29th July, 1933.

R. 2.55 p.m. 29th July, 1933.

No. 195. (R).

XXXXXXXXX

Addressed to Beirut No. 13.

Your telegram No. 5.

Iraqi government intend to stop supplies crossing river as they regard emigrating Assyrians as offenders against the law.

They are also preventing any further crossings into Syria and want French to withdraw Assyrians from frontier zone.

Repeated to Foreign Office No. 195.

359
361

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4637

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
July 29th. 1933.

D. 3.30.a.m. July 30th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. July 30th. 1933.

No. 196. (R).

-----oOo-----

4578 My telegram No. 194.

His Majesty's Consul at Mosul has sent me copy of printed notice issued by Acting Governor in Arabic and Syriac which though not yet officially promulgated has leaked out from the printing press. It is in two parts. First part informs the Assyrians of the exodus that they will not be allowed to cross the Tigris unless they surrender their arms. The second part is also addressed to the Assyrians who crossed to Syria and reads - "We inform you that any of you seen armed on the right bank of the Tigris in Iraq will be killed immediately and without hesitation."

I informed the Prime Minister that this was an incitement to treat the Assyrians like mad dogs, to be shot at sight, and that he must stop and cancel it at once. He admitted that it went too far and undertook to bring the matter up at the Council meeting this afternoon. The adviser to the Interior knew nothing about it. I also drew the Prime Minister's most serious attention to persistent rumour that Sheikh Ajil on a recent visit to Bagdad had been approached by a high government official - I did not say it was the Prime Minister himself - with a view to using Shammar tribes to help "disarming" Assyrians on the right bank of the Tigris. He of course denied the allegation but I warned him that His Majesty's Government had .....

362
360

had their eyes on this matter.

In reply to Iraqi Government's protest regarding the R.A.F. flying over Assyrian districts I reminded him that under the treaty the R.A.F. had the right to fly anywhere they wished in Iraq and, while reserving the full liberty of the A.O.C., the Air Vice-Marshal would as a matter of courtesy limit the number of flights over the areas in question. The A.O.C. concurs.

The Prime Minister also summarised Iraqi Government's attitude regarding disarmament of Assyrians which was that they intended to disarm only (1) Assyrians of the exodus, (2) any Assyrians who tried to cross the river in either direction and all civilians who enter the military area which has been proclaimed between the Tigris and Mosul-Zakho road.

His Excellency also hoped that the French would remove Assyrians further inland as in the present trying climate Iraqi army were becoming impatient and might have to take the offensive across the river.

Please see my immediately following telegram.

(363)
361

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4637

* AMENDED COPY *

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 29th July, 1933.

D. 3.00 a.m. 30th July, 1933.

R. 10.00 a.m. 30th July, 1933.

No.197.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

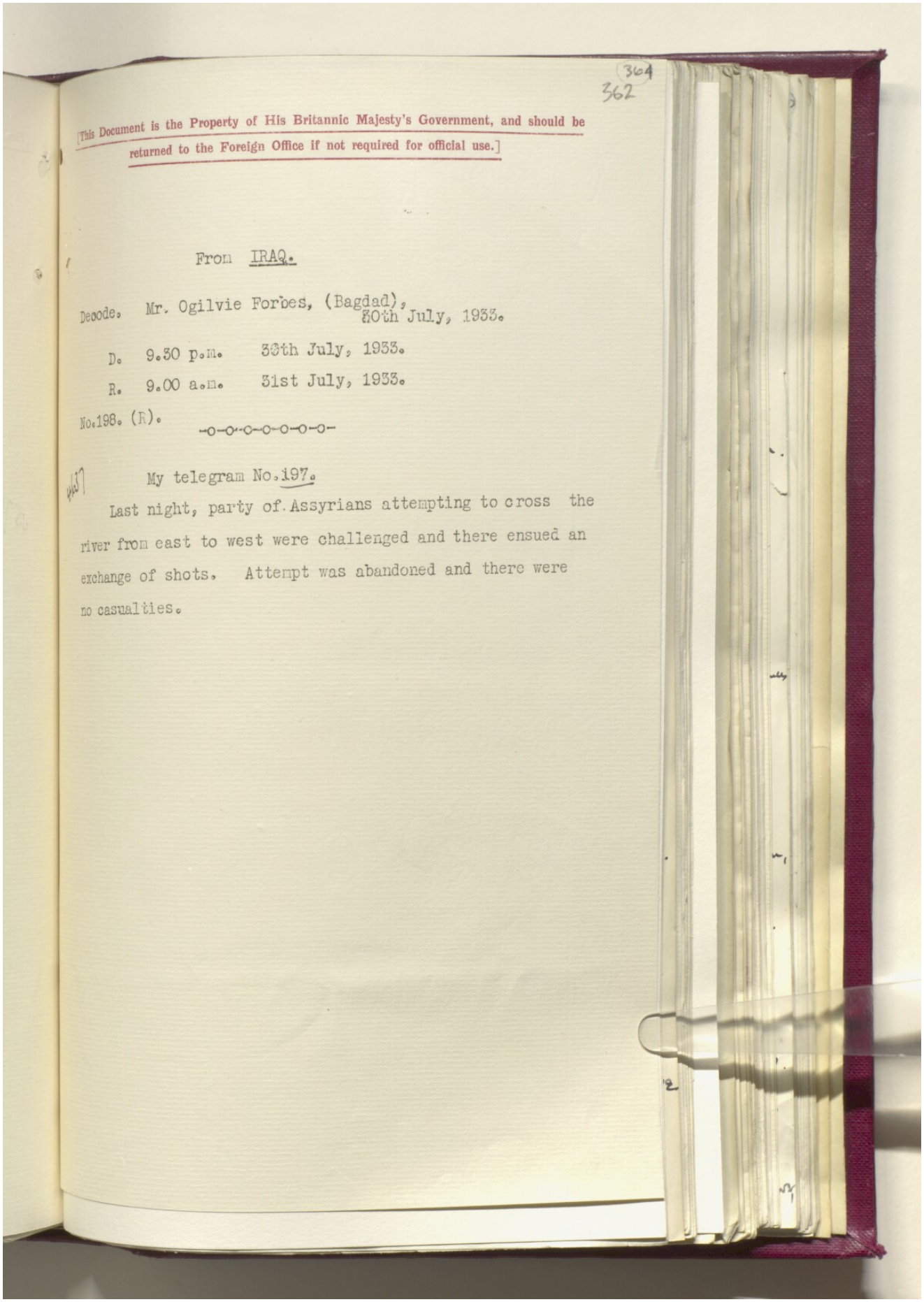
4578

My immediately preceding telegram and my telegram No. 194, third paragraph.

At conference this morning necessity was emphasized of a reliable civilian being available to assist Iraqis in eventual tripartite conversations between Iraqis, Yaku and French and to steady the extremists. Captain Sargon and Major Thompson are the only persons available. We realise however that it will be difficult to induce the Assyrians of the exodus to listen to any British official even from Sir F. Humphrys downward and it therefore may be necessary to have a foreigner. Moreover we are far from popular here with Iraqis by reason of our constant action in restraint.

* *

We note with pleasure the speedy arrival of King Feisal though he is an optimist if he thinks he can settle this problem "without delay". We feel Cabinet who do not want the King to return wish to face Feisal with a fait accompli such as wholesale arrest of Mar Shimun's family or the rounding up of Assyrians who are camped just outside Syrian frontier. We accordingly decided we must do everything possible to make Iraqis mark time and delay action until Feisal arrives.



364
362

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 30th July, 1933.

D. 9.30 p.m. 30th July, 1933.

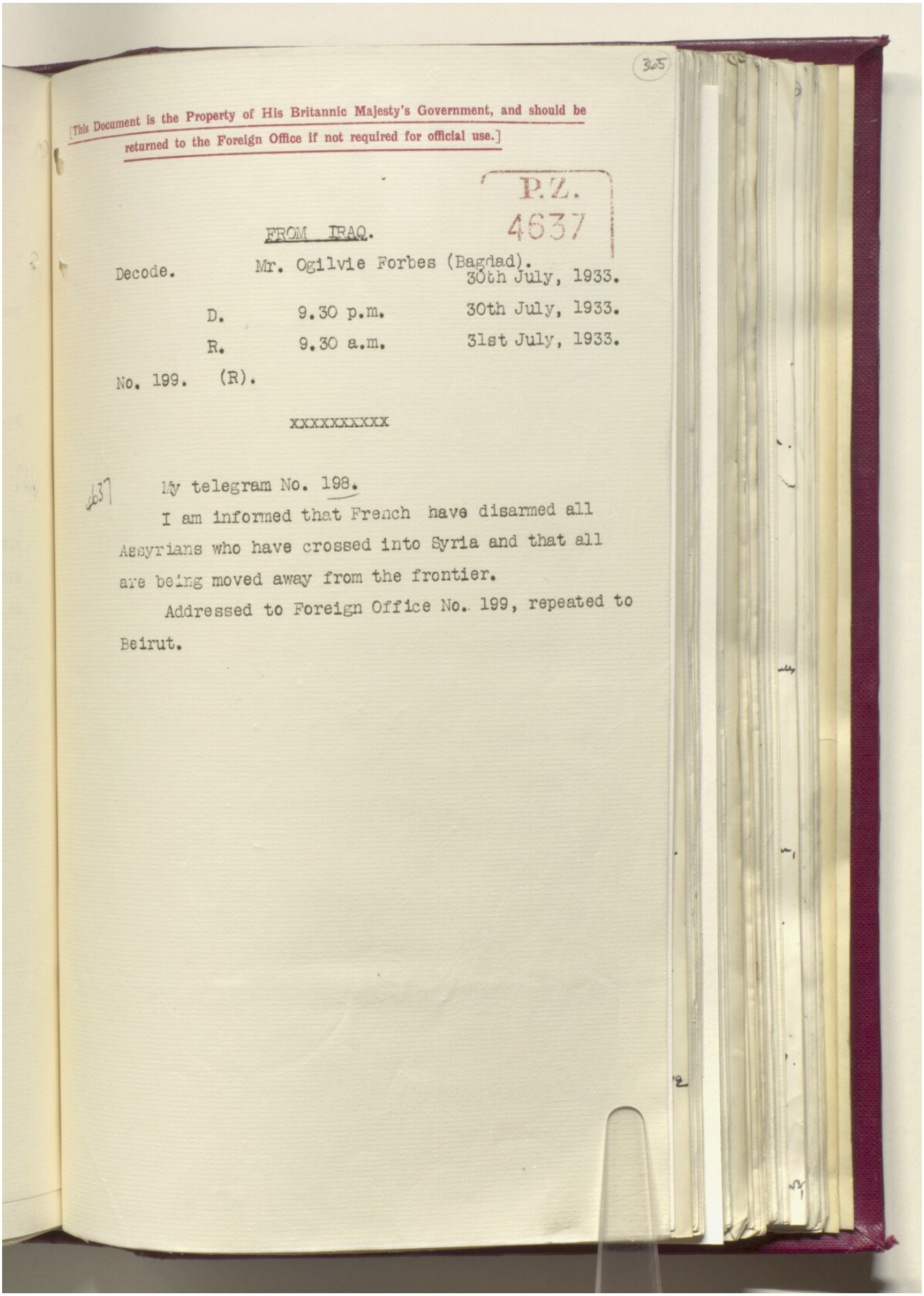
R. 9.00 a.m. 31st July, 1933.

No.198. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

[463] My telegram No.197.

Last night, party of Assyrians attempting to cross the river from east to west were challenged and there ensued an exchange of shots. Attempt was abandoned and there were no casualties.



365

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4637

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 30th July, 1933.

D. 9.30 p.m. 30th July, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 31st July, 1933.

No. 199. (R).

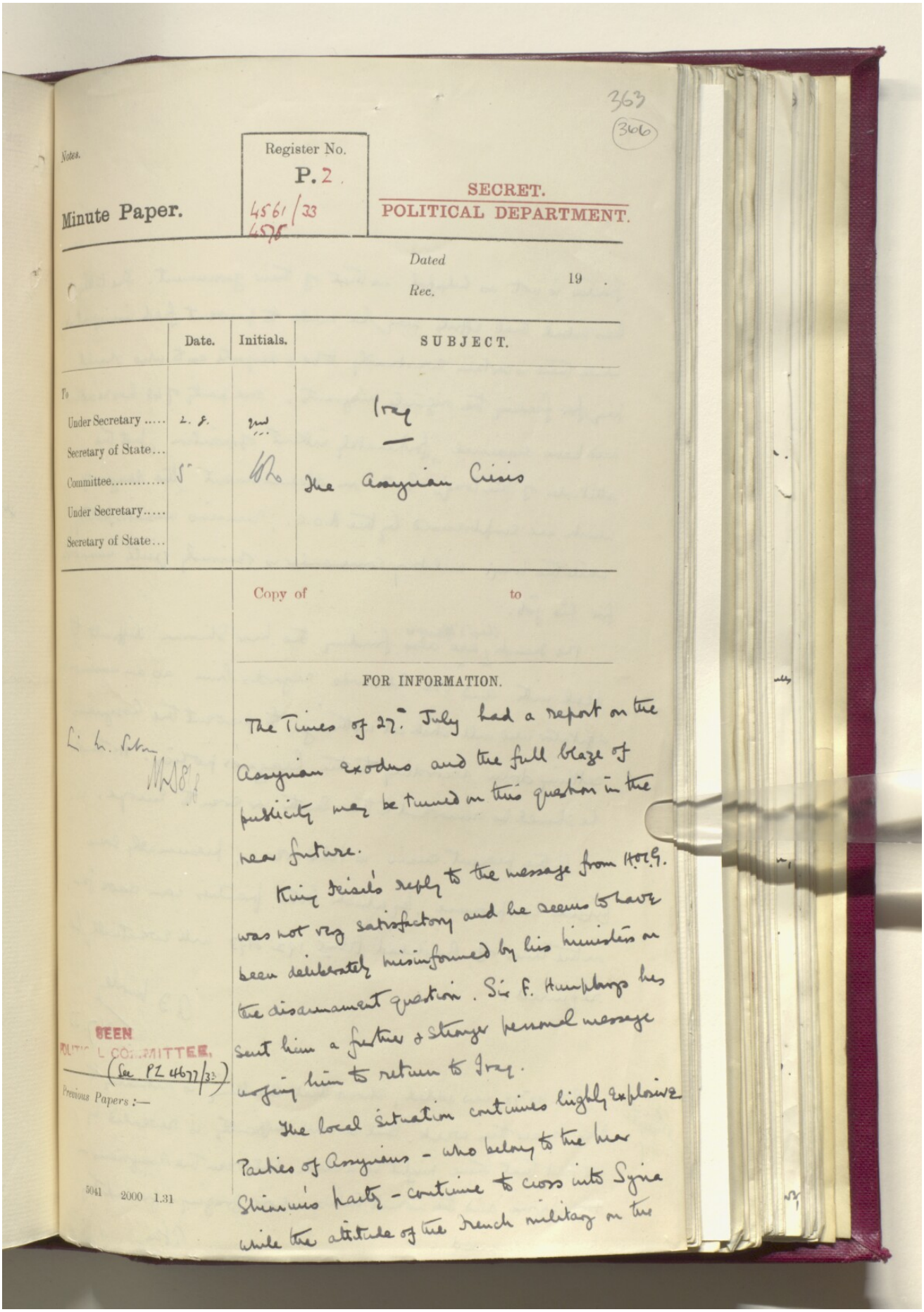
XXXXXXXXXX

4637

My telegram No. 198.

I am informed that French have disarmed all Assyrians who have crossed into Syria and that all are being moved away from the frontier.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 199, repeated to Beirut.



363
(366)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P. 2
4561/33
4575

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	2. 8.	[illegible]	Iraq
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	5	[illegible]	The Assyrian Crisis
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The Times of 27th July had a report on the Assyrian exodus and the full blaze of publicity may be turned on this question in the near future.

King Feisal's reply to the message from H.O.L.G. was not very satisfactory and he seems to have been deliberately misinformed by his Ministers on the disarmament question. Sir F. Humphrys has sent him a further & stronger personal message urging him to return to Iraq.

The local situation continues highly explosive. Parties of Assyrians - who belong to the Mar Shimun's party - continue to cross into Syria while the attitude of the French military on the

Sir M. Seton
[illegible]

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
(See PZ 4677/33)

Previous Papers :—

5041 2000 1.31

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x00008f

frontier is not as helpful as that of their government. The latter has asked that efforts may be made to prevent fresh immigration, while there is certain eventually to be a dispute as to who should pay for feeding the original migrants. One party of 48 has returned and been disarmed, fortunately without opposition, but the attitude of the Iraqi Govt. on disarmament, the dangers of which are emphasised by the A.O.C., remains unsatisfactory, while the Iraqi military commander is obviously quite unsuitable for his job.

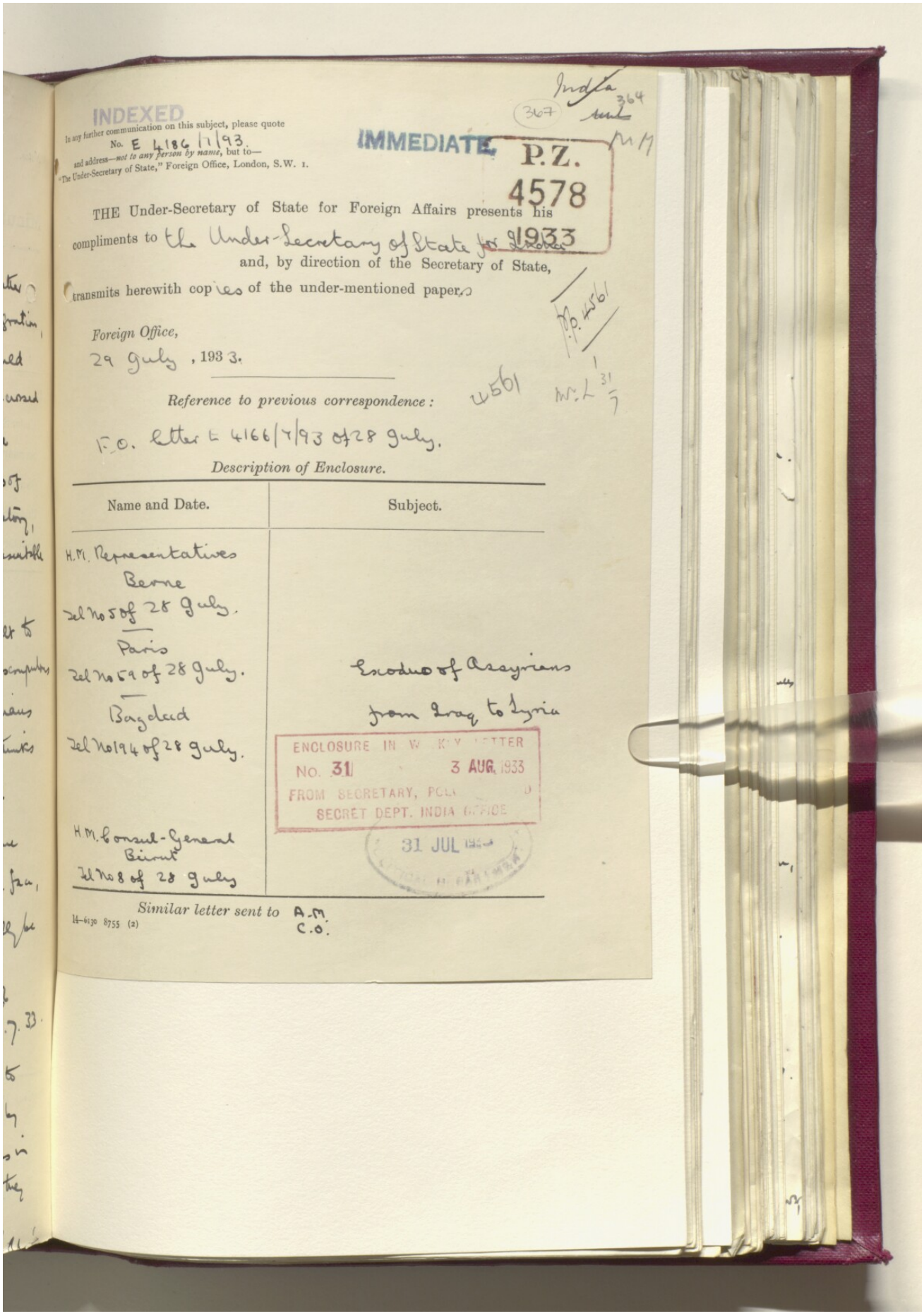
The French Chargé d'Affaires also finding the Iraq Shimun difficult to deal with and Mr. Edmonds regards him as an unscrupulous agitator who will stick at nothing to prevent the Assyrians settling down according to the League's policy. He thinks he should be removed to the South or even to Europe.

If the present crisis is tided over, presumably some crisis compromise, by which both parties can save face, on the lines of Baghdad telegs 192 & 193 will eventually be required.

A.J. Harding
31.7.33.

P.Z. 4578, now added, shows that the King is returning to Iraq by air this week. But a new difficulty is revealed by the fact that there might be a clash between the Assyrians in Syria and the nomad tribes whose grazing-grounds they have occupied.

Office of Baghdad 2 Aug.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4186/1/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

India 364
367

IMMEDIATE P.Z. 4578 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
29 July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 4166/1/93 of 28 July.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representatives Berne Tel No 5 of 28 July. — Paris Tel No 59 of 28 July. — Bagdad Tel No 194 of 28 July. H.M. Consul-General Beirut Tel No 8 of 28 July	Exodus of Assyrians from Iraq to Syria

ENCLOSURE IN W. K.Y. LETTER
NO. 31 3 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL & SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

31 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to A.M. C.O.

14—6130 8755 (2)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

365
368

P.Z.
4578
1933

From SWITZERLAND.

Decode. Mr. Dodds (Berne), 28th July, 1933.

D. 4.10 p.m. 28th July, 1933.

R. 5.30 p.m. 28th July, 1933.

No. 5. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No. 18.

King of Iraq to whom I conveyed Sir Francis Humphrys' message informs me that he proposed to leave Berne by air on July 30th arriving at Bagdad August 2nd. He expects to find a solution without delay and in that event return here to complete his cure. His Majesty has instructed Nuri Pasha, who should arrive in London today to inform you of this proposal and of his views.

His Majesty desires that his projected arrival at Bagdad should be secret.

Despatch follows today.

366
(369)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From FRANCE.

P.Z.
4578
1933

Decode. Mr. Harvey (Paris). 28th July, 1933.

D. 4.15 p.m., 28th July, 1933.

R. 6.00 p.m., 28th July, 1933.

No. 59. (R).

::::::::::::::

Bagdad telegram No. 184.

I informed Ministry of Foreign Affairs today that according to latest telegram I had seen from Bagdad Bekr Sidqi was expecting to meet French military commander on (? July 26th) and that British officer had been attached to him. Ministry expressed great satisfaction at this. They were rather concerned by reports that Iraqi authorities far from trying to prevent Assyrians crossing the frontier were actually almost urging them to do so. The difficulty for the French administration lay in the fact that Syrian area concerned was a grazing ground for nomad tribes in the summer and there was no little danger of a clash between them and the newcomers especially if latter's numbers were increased any further.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 59 July 28th, repeated to Bagdad.

367
370

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

P.Z. 4578 1933

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). 28th July, 1933.

D. 2.10 p.m., 28th July, 1933.

R. 4.15 p.m., 28th July, 1933.

No. 194. (R).

::::::::::::::::

4561 My telegram No. 190.

Second paragraph.

British Inspector of Police, Mosul, has visited emigrant Assyrians and found them camped in Wadi Sufan on de facto frontier line, many of them on Iraqi side. New frontier line, as you know, will be finally demarcated in about ten days and after erection of last pillar these Assyrians will be legally in French territory.

Captain Sargon, who has not yet furnished full report, found the older men less truculent than younger. His Majesty's Consul-General, Beirut, informs me that the French are anxious for information regarding conditions of return of Assyrians and emissary of Iraqi Government who will put those terms to Assyrians. I fear that in present circumstances this is looking rather far ahead. In order to reach business-like arrangement within a reasonable time it would be necessary for Iraqi emissary to have competent British adviser.

Third paragraph.

Edmonds tells me difficulty in obtaining information is now not so acute and that my remark about being starved of information applied equally to Iraqi civilian officials.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 194, repeated to Beirut No. 12.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

368
371

FROM SYRIA

P.Z.
4578
1933

Decode. Sir E. Satow (Beirut).
28th July 1933.

D. 2.15 p.m. 28th July 1933.
R. 3.15 p.m. 28th July 1933.

No. 8. (R).

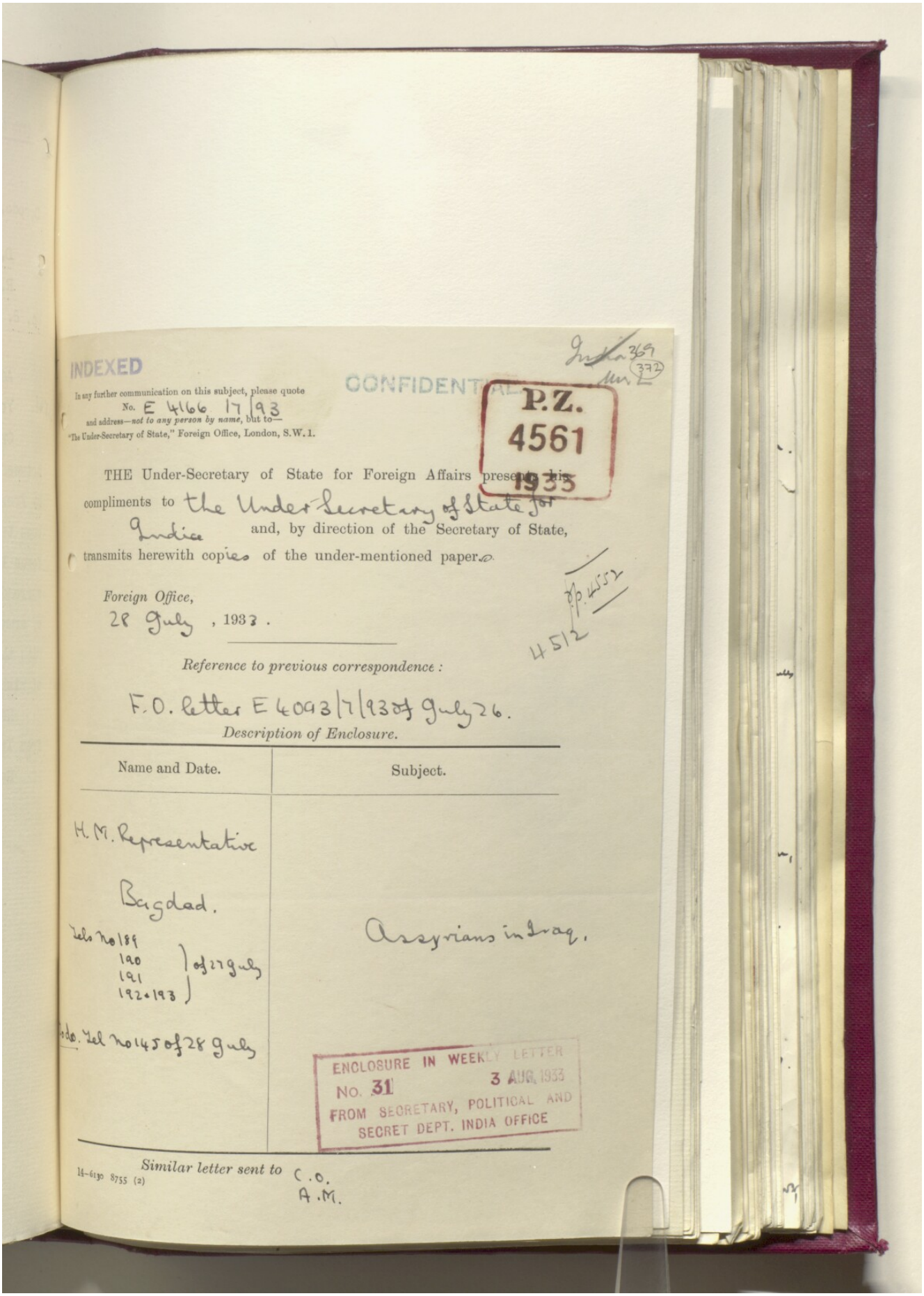
Addressed to Bagdad No. 5.

4561 Your telegram No. 190 to Foreign Office.

On pointing out at High Commission contradiction between attitude of French officers and instructions promised by French Government I was told that such instructions had been twice clearly given. It is not intention to expel by force but it is desired to obtain temporary voluntary surrender of arms while in Syrian territory. Ultimate fate of arms will depend on settlement reached by Iraqi Government with the Assyrians. Local authorities will be again reminded of wishes of French Government.

Have you any reply to give as to furnishing of supplies from Iraq, see my telegram No. 3?

Repeated to Foreign Office No. 8.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4166 17/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4561 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
28 July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4093/7/93 of July 26.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tels No 189 190 191 192 193 of 27 July	Assyrians in Iraq.
Ditto. Tel No 145 of 28 July	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 31 3 AUG 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

370
373

P.Z.
4561
1933

FROM IRAQ

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
27th July 1933.

D. 2.30 p.m. 27th July 1933.

R. 5.30 p.m. 27th July 1933.

No. 189.

My telegram No. 182 and your telegram No. 137. 4482

Following is summary of air officer commanding's reply to question (A). begins:

If French accept Assyrians, Settlement problem will be considerably eased. If French reject Assyrians and Iraqi Government do not try and disarm them no serious situation should arise. But if Iraqi government attempt forcibly to disarm Assyrians a very serious situation would spread rapidly over North and possibly over the rest of Iraq with with it would be most difficult for Iraqi army to cope. Attitude of emigrating Assyrians hitherto not aggressive, movement well conducted evidently with the idea of possible return as families have been left behind. No serious situation should arise unless Iraqis try to force the issue which would be difficult to justify in view of favourable treatment accorded to Barzanis. Air defence force have not been affected, nor will they be unless the whole of the Assyrian community is involved in active operations. In this event Arabs and kurds could be enlisted at short notice and Royal Air Force and unaffected levies could carry on in the meantime.

Air Officer Commending is watching the situation carefully and has been assured by senior Assyrian officers that levies will take no action without previous consultation with British officers and himself. Ends.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

371
(374)

P.Z.
4561
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad), 27th July, 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 27th July, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 28th July, 1933.

No. 190. (R).

My telegram No. 189.

Further party of eighty crossed into Syria on July 26th.

At meeting between French and Iraqi officers French stated they would expel all Assyrians from their territory and claim to have done so to south of line on right bank though this in fact is inexact. Consequently Iraqi military commander professes to expect an attempt to force passage back across river and has objected further to Assyrians being allowed to cross to Syrian side. Government is issuing warning to Assyrian villages that any fresh parties starting out render themselves liable to be disarmed on reaching left bank. Attitude of French officer is not in accordance with instructions in your telegram 4 to Beirut. Nervousness of Iraqi military commander would be allayed by withdrawal of Assyrians from vicinity of right bank.

Iraqi military commander whose conduct of operations causes anxiety is in complete control of intelligence service and adviser to interior is being starved of information which often reaches him second hand through me. At conference this morning we decided to try to improve arrangements.

Iraq Government have protested against Royal Air Force flying over area. Their note is being suitably dealt with.

Administrative inspector Mosul is pressing for immediate arrest

372
375

arrest and removal of Lady Surma and certain other Assyrians suspected of organizing further exodus. I made it quite clear that you would strongly disapprove of such action.

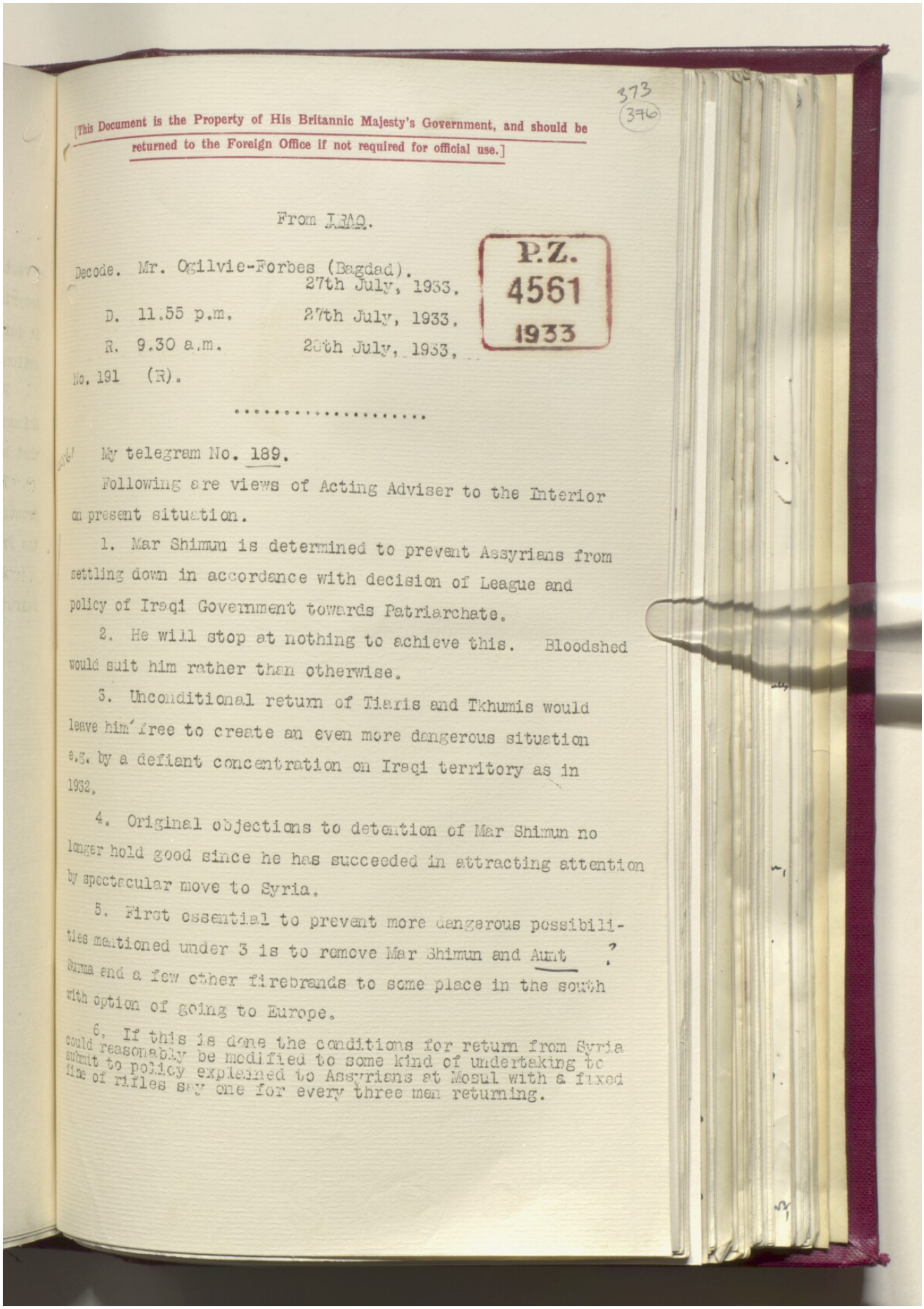
French Chargé d'Affaires has informed me that Mar Shimun visited him yesterday to disclaim responsibility and that his attitude was most unhelpful.

In contrast to action of the French military on the frontier he mentioned incidentally that he was sure that the French would do something to feed Assyrians.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 190, repeated to Beirut No. 11.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x0000a1



373
(376)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

P.Z. 4561 1933

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad). 27th July, 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 27th July, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 28th July, 1933.

No. 191 (R).

.....

My telegram No. 189.

Following are views of Acting Adviser to the Interior on present situation.

1. Mar Shimun is determined to prevent Assyrians from settling down in accordance with decision of League and policy of Iraqi Government towards Patriarchate.

2. He will stop at nothing to achieve this. Bloodshed would suit him rather than otherwise.

3. Unconditional return of Tiaris and Tkhumis would leave him free to create an even more dangerous situation e.g. by a defiant concentration on Iraqi territory as in 1932.

4. Original objections to detention of Mar Shimun no longer hold good since he has succeeded in attracting attention by spectacular move to Syria.

5. First essential to prevent more dangerous possibilities mentioned under 3 is to remove Mar Shimun and Aunt Surma and a few other firebrands to some place in the south with option of going to Europe.

6. If this is done the conditions for return from Syria could reasonably be modified to some kind of undertaking to submit to policy explained to Assyrians at Mosul with a fixed fine of rifles say one for every three men returning.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

374
377

P.Z.
4561
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
& Decypher. 27th July 1933.

D. 11.55 p.m. 27th July 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 27th July 1933.

Nos. 192 & 193.

"R" begins:

482 Your telegram No. 137.

Pending decision as to general policy and specific action in this new and unexpected phase of Assyrian (?crisis), here are some necessarily dis-connected considerations which have arisen at our Conferences and which may be of use.

(1) Disarmament. Presumably no objection to return of Assyrians on basis of voluntary disarmament. For example they might be prepared to return to their women and abandoned holdings in return for surrendering the whole or part of their ~~arms~~ arms to Iraqi Government or to some third party.

(2) Compromise. Head of Military Mission considers something should be done to satisfy Iraqi prestige. He suggests fine on Assyrians for their behaviour, e.g. £100 and 100 rifles. It might be possible to induce Iraqis to put them back on those terms, though I doubt it.

(3) Legal aspect. Have Assyrians broken laws on passports and armed Assembly? Iraqis will argue that they have. On the other hand their exodus has been most orderly and their rifles part of everyones normal equipment. Circumstances are unprecedented in modern times. An inversion of Jameson Raid. "R" ends.

(4) If French could be induced to accept Assyrians it would be best solution of all. We should also remember that Assyrians in their stubbornness may well refuse to budge and public opinion would not allow them to starve.

375
378

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4561
1933

E. 4121/7/93.

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

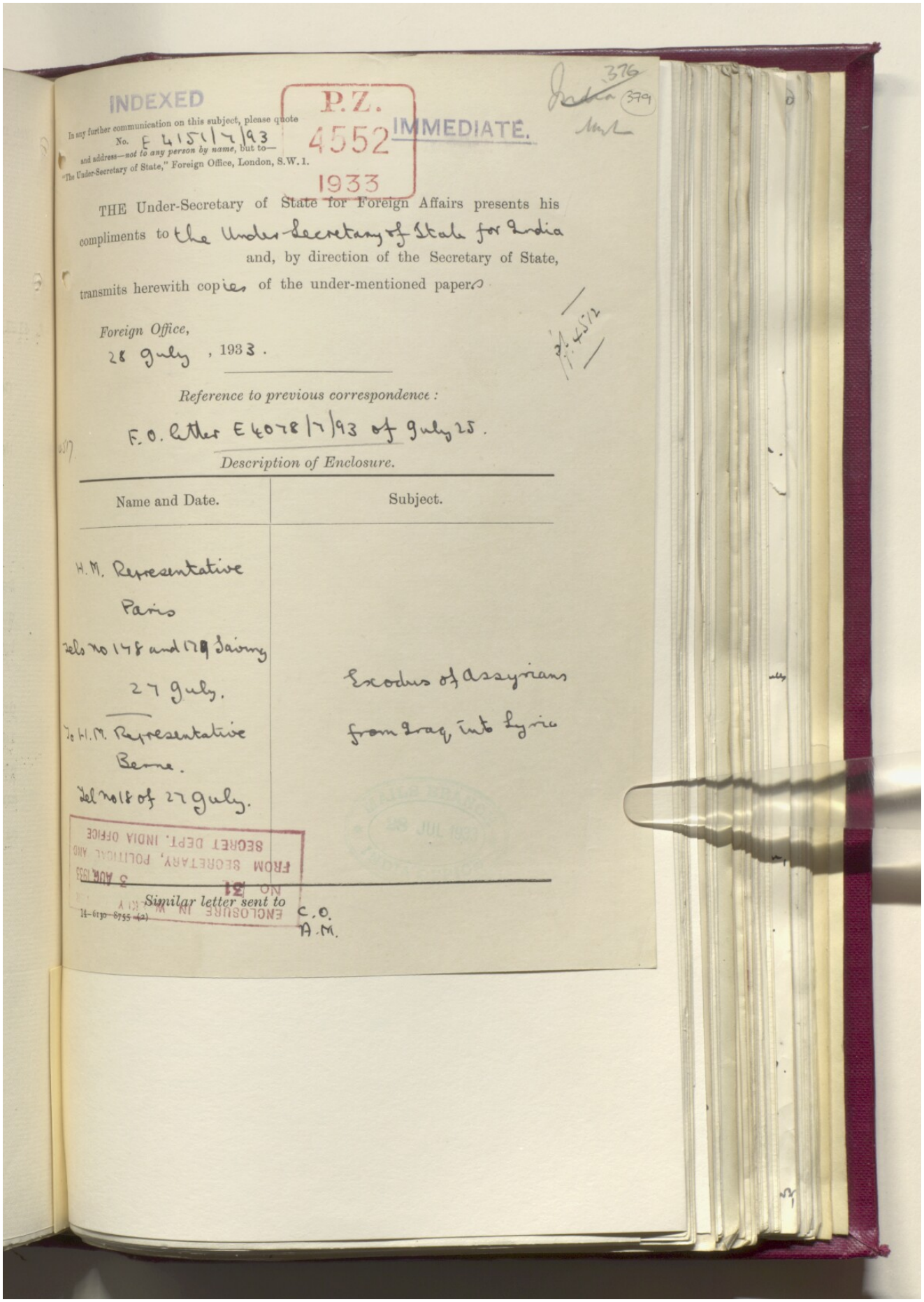
Foreign Office. 28th July, 1933. 12.45 p.m.

No. 145. (R).

xxxxxxxxx

In view of article in "Times" of 27th July from Bagdad correspondent, describing Assyrian exodus question may now be actively taken up in press, and by public opinion here.

If you wish you may inform Iraqi government and draw their attention to fact that, unless situation is better handled in future than it has been hitherto, strong anti-Iraqi agitation may develop in this country and undo good results which might have followed from King Feisal's visit.



INDEXED

P.Z. 4552 1933

IMMEDIATE.

376 (379)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4151/7/93 and address—not to any person by name, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
28 July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 4078/7/93 of July 25.

Description of Enclosure.

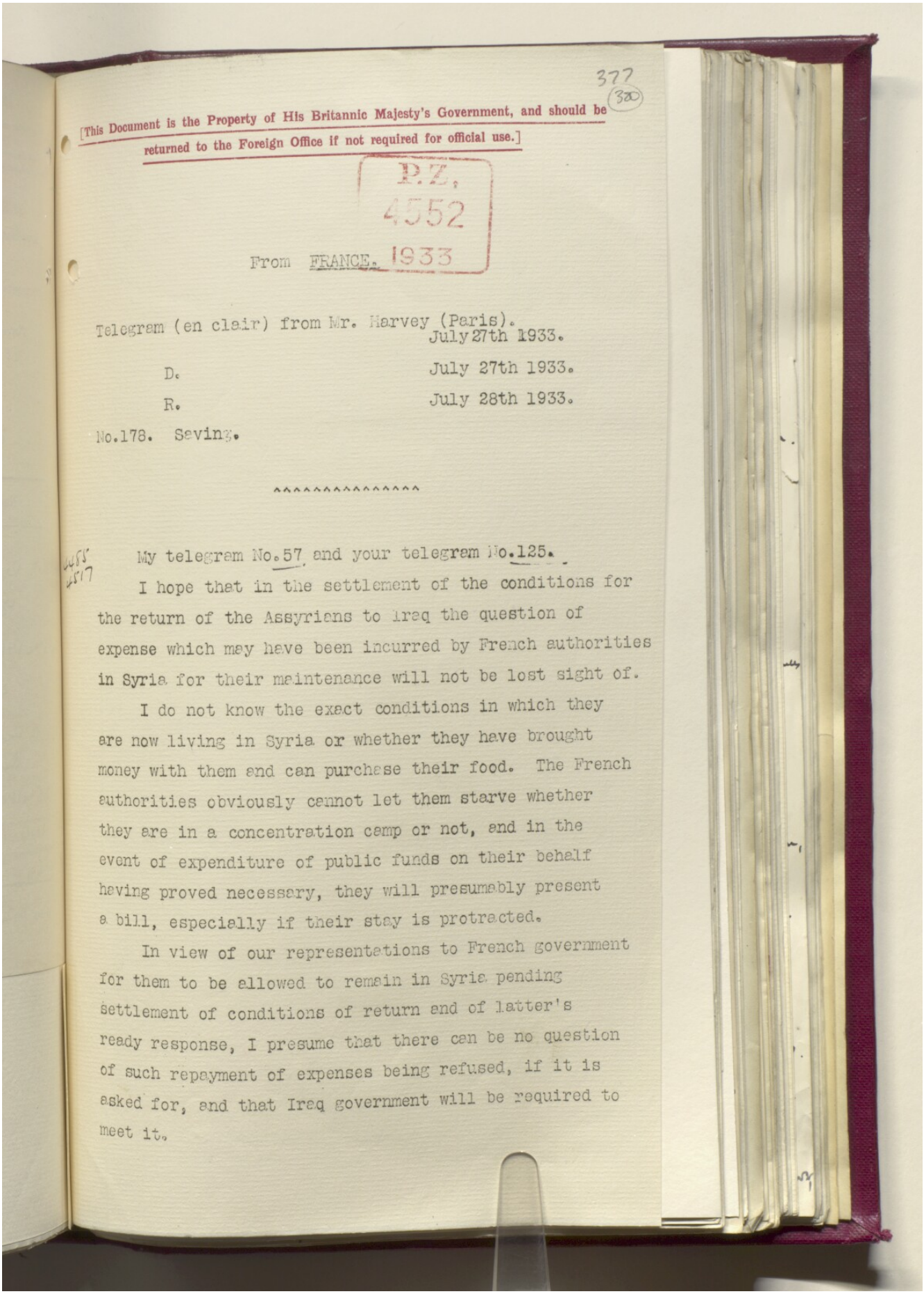
Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Paris Tels no 178 and 179 Saving 27 July. To H.M. Representative Berne. Tel no 18 of 27 July.	Exodus of Assyrians from Iraq into Syria

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY NO. 31 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE 3 AUG. 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130-8755-(2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence 768
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x0000a9



377
380

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4552 1933

From FRANCE.

Telegram (en clair) from Mr. Harvey (Paris).
July 27th 1933.

D. July 27th 1933.

R. July 28th 1933.

No.178. Saving.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

2485
2517

My telegram No.57 and your telegram No.125.

I hope that in the settlement of the conditions for the return of the Assyrians to Iraq the question of expense which may have been incurred by French authorities in Syria for their maintenance will not be lost sight of.

I do not know the exact conditions in which they are now living in Syria or whether they have brought money with them and can purchase their food. The French authorities obviously cannot let them starve whether they are in a concentration camp or not, and in the event of expenditure of public funds on their behalf having proved necessary, they will presumably present a bill, especially if their stay is protracted.

In view of our representations to French government for them to be allowed to remain in Syria pending settlement of conditions of return and of latter's ready response, I presume that there can be no question of such repayment of expenses being refused, if it is asked for, and that Iraq government will be required to meet it.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

378
(381)

P.Z. 4552 1933

FROM FRANCE

Telegram (en clair) from Mr. Harvey (Paris).

D. 27th July 1933.

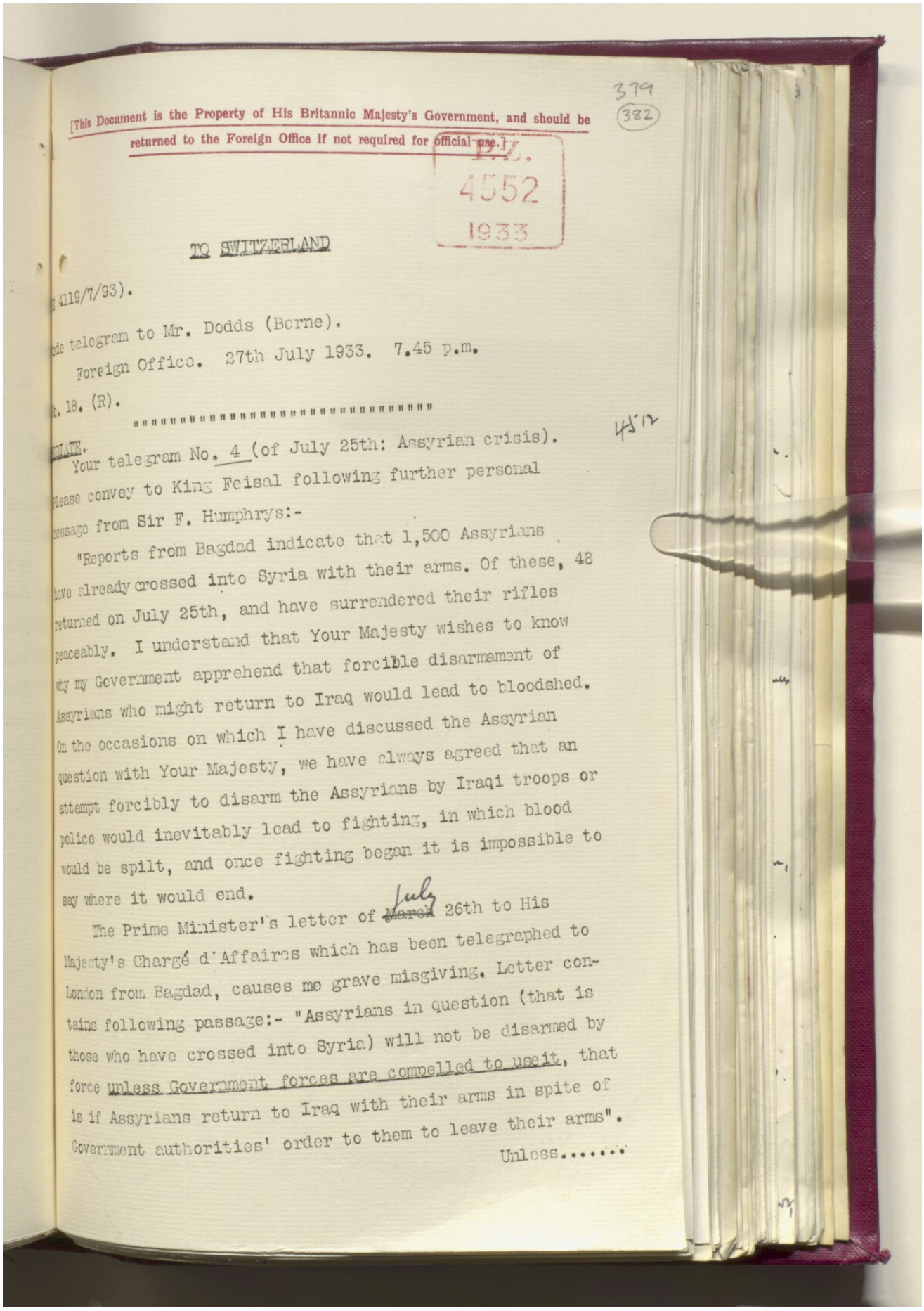
R. 8.30 a.m. 28th July 1933.

No. 179 (Saving).

My telegram No. 57.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs state that parties consisting of 600 tents have already passed Syrian frontier and it is reported that more are on the move. They earnestly trust that it may be possible to prevent these also crossing frontier as great difficulty would be caused to French administration by any further arrivals. It has already been necessary to move troops to area concerned. French undertaking not to expel parties already in Syria must not be regarded as extending to large additional parties.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.179 Saving; repeated to Bagdad in code.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4552 1933

379
382

TO SWITZERLAND

4119/7/93).

ode telegram to Mr. Dodds (Berne).

Foreign Office. 27th July 1933. 7.45 p.m.

. 18. (R).

"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""

4512

DRAFT.

Your telegram No. 4 (of July 25th: Assyrian crisis).

Please convey to King Feisal following further personal

message from Sir F. Humphrys:-

"Reports from Bagdad indicate that 1,500 Assyrians have already crossed into Syria with their arms. Of these, 48 returned on July 25th, and have surrendered their rifles peaceably. I understand that Your Majesty wishes to know why my Government apprehend that forcible disarmament of Assyrians who might return to Iraq would lead to bloodshed. On the occasions on which I have discussed the Assyrian question with Your Majesty, we have always agreed that an attempt forcibly to disarm the Assyrians by Iraqi troops or police would inevitably lead to fighting, in which blood would be spilt, and once fighting began it is impossible to say where it would end.

The Prime Minister's letter of ~~March~~ July 26th to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires which has been telegraphed to London from Bagdad, causes me grave misgiving. Letter contains following passage:- "Assyrians in question (that is those who have crossed into Syria) will not be disarmed by force unless Government forces are compelled to use it, that is if Assyrians return to Iraq with their arms in spite of Government authorities' order to them to leave their arms".

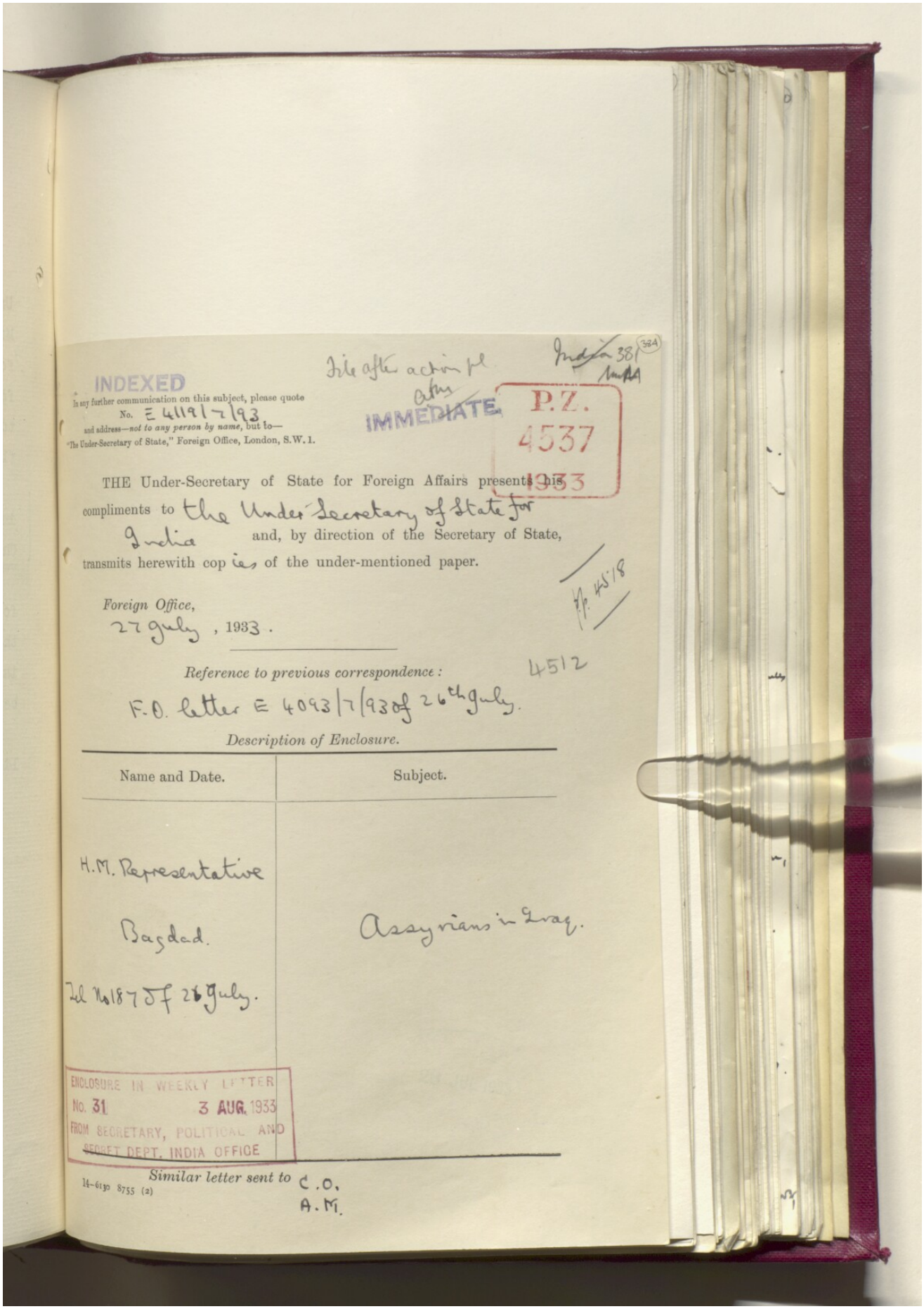
Unless.....

Unless therefore Your Majesty can persuade the Prime Minister by telegram to prevent steps being taken forcibly to disarm the returning Assyrian refugees, I feel that the time has come for Your Majesty to return to Bagdad and to intervene personally to avoid a conflagration which we should all deplore.

I have reason to believe that your Ministers misinformed Your Majesty in saying that His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad concurred in their attitude.

I also feel strongly that some means should be found for putting an end to the forcible detention of the Mar Shimun at Bagdad and saving the Government's face in the matter. I appeal to Your Majesty to take action before it is too late".

Addressed to Berne No. 18, repeated to Bagdad No. 144.



INDEXED

File after action pl

India 381 (384)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4119/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

IMMEDIATE

P.Z. 4537 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Pp. 4518

Foreign Office,
27 July, 1933.

4512

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 4093/7/93 of 26th July.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tel No 187 of 26 July.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 31 3 AUG. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338449.0x0000b3

382 385

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4537 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
July 26th. 1933.

D. 11.55.p.m. July 26th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. July 27th. 1933.

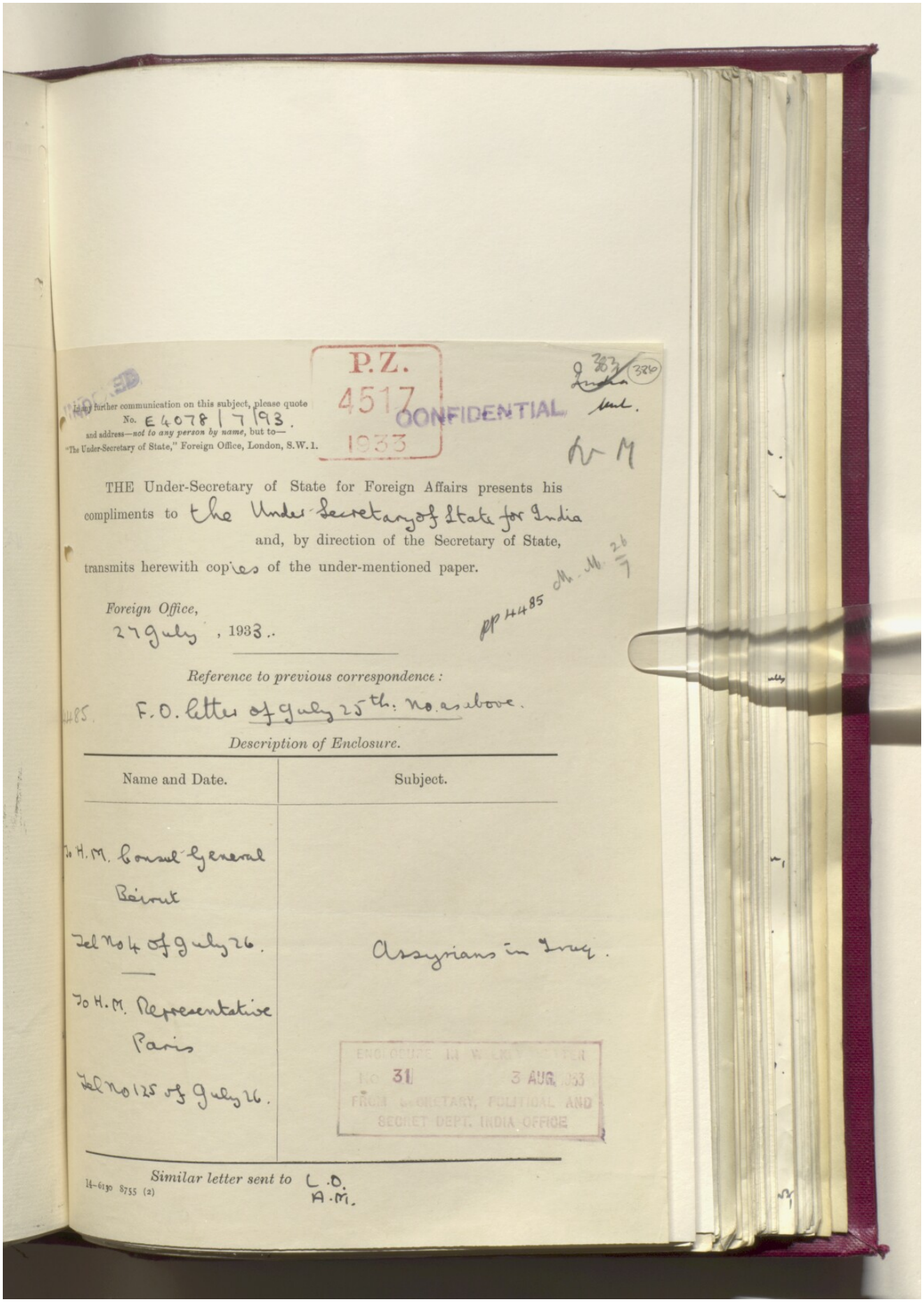
No. 187. (R).

-----oOo-----

4514 My telegram No. 183.

Prime Minister in a letter of July 26th contends that although Iraqi Government are doing their best to implement undertakings made to League and accepted by Assyrians an important section of pro- Mar Shimun Assyrians have crossed into Syria armed and of their own free will in breach of passport regulations. Iraqi Government therefore is under no obligation to take them back and if they desire to return cannot admit them with their arms. Following is exact text of material paragraph:

"Assyrians in question will not be disarmed by force unless government forces are compelled to use it i.e. if Assyrians return to Iraq with their arms despite government authorities' order to them to leave their arms. The Government feel strongly that it is only carrying out its duty in this matter."



INDEXED

P.Z. 4517 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

383 (386)

India

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 4078 | 7 | 93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
27 July, 1933.

pp 4485 M. M. 26/7

Reference to previous correspondence:

4485. F.O. letter of July 25th: no. as above.

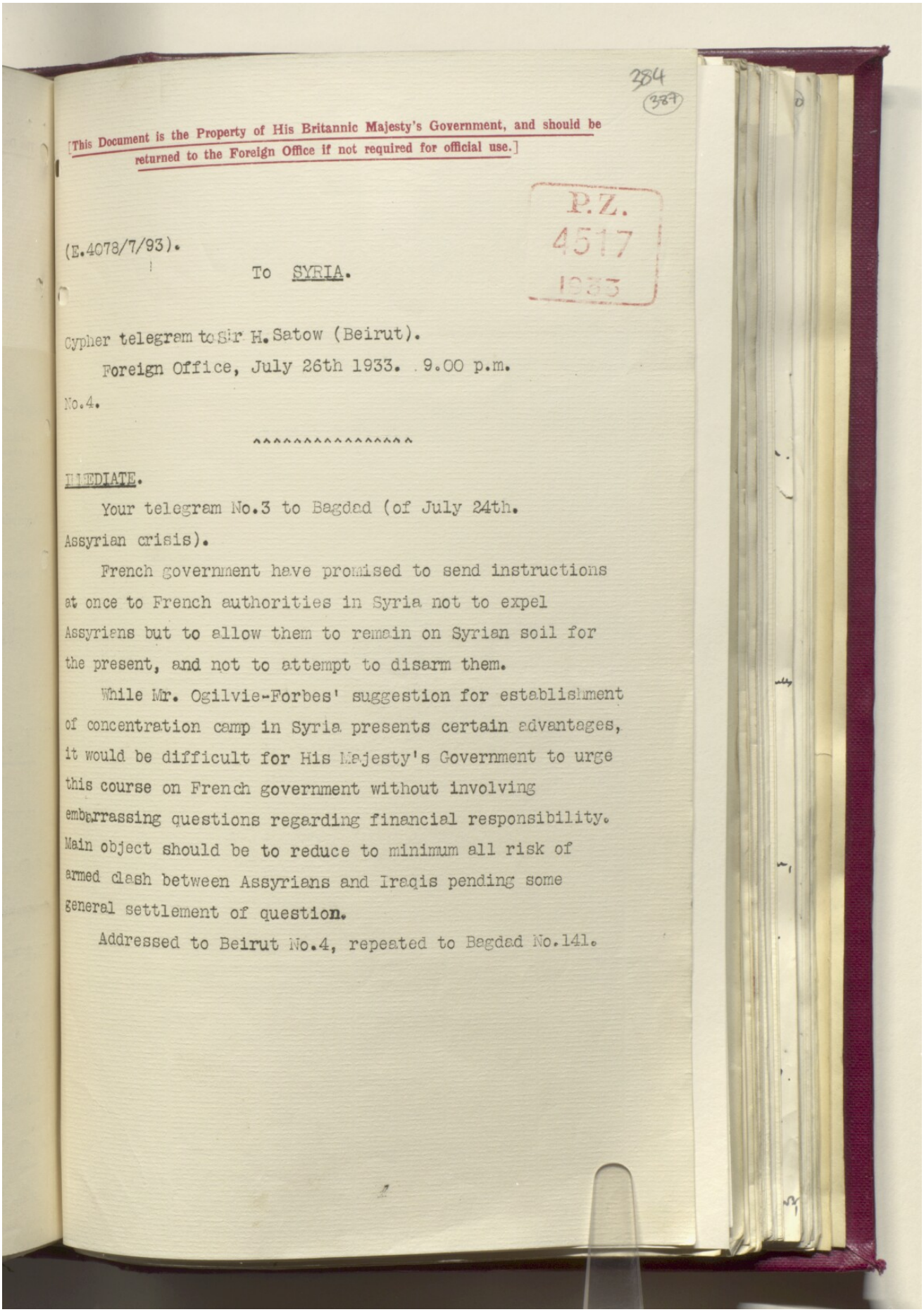
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To H.M. Consul General Beirut Tel No 4 of July 26.	Assyrians in Iraq.
To H.M. Representative Paris Tel No 125 of July 26.	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No 31 3 AUG. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to L.O. A.M.

14-6130 8755 (2)



384
(387)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4517
1933

(E.4078/7/93).

To SYRIA.

Cypher telegram to Sir H. Satow (Beirut).

Foreign Office, July 26th 1933. 9.00 p.m.

No.4.

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegram No.3 to Bagdad (of July 24th. Assyrian crisis).

French government have promised to send instructions at once to French authorities in Syria not to expel Assyrians but to allow them to remain on Syrian soil for the present, and not to attempt to disarm them.

While Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes' suggestion for establishment of concentration camp in Syria presents certain advantages, it would be difficult for His Majesty's Government to urge this course on French government without involving embarrassing questions regarding financial responsibility. Main object should be to reduce to minimum all risk of armed clash between Assyrians and Iraqis pending some general settlement of question.

Addressed to Beirut No.4, repeated to Bagdad No.141.

385
(388)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4517
1933

4073/1/93.

TO FRANCE.

Telegram (en clair) by telephone to Mr. Harvey (Paris).

Foreign Office. 26th July, 1933. 6.25 p.m.

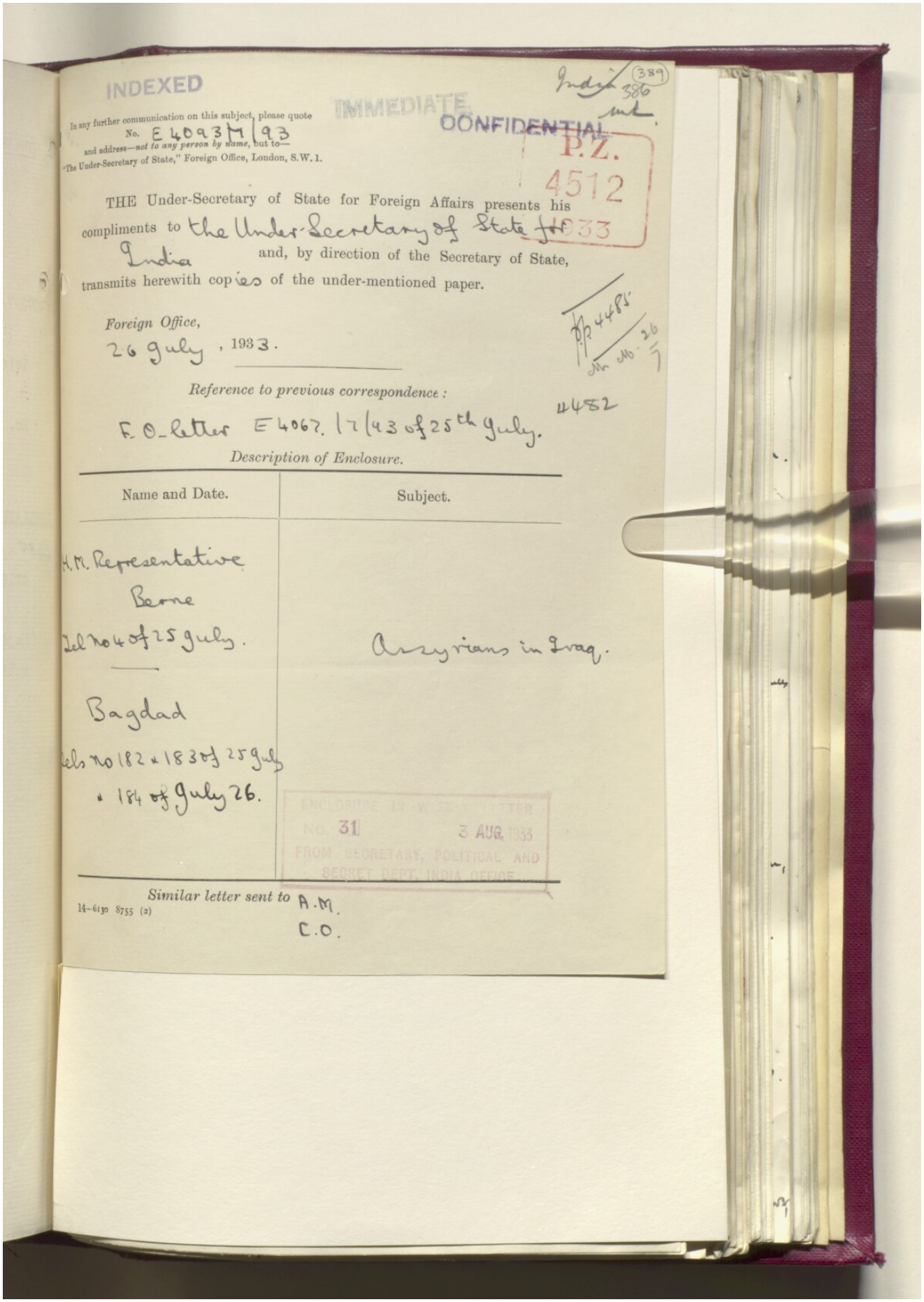
No. 125.

xxxxxxxxxx

IMMEDIATE.

4485 Your telegram No. 57 (of July 23rd: Assyrian crisis).

Please express to French government His Majesty's Government's warm appreciation of their action.



INDEXED

India (389) 386

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4093/M/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

IMMEDIATE CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4512

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
26 July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 4067/17/43 of 25th July.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Berne tel No 4 of 25 July.	Assyrians in Iraq.
Bagdad tels No 182 & 183 of 25 July & 184 of July 26.	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER NO. 31 3 AUG. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to A.M. C.O.

14–6130 8755 (2)

387
(390)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

FROM SWITZERLAND

Decode. Mr. Dodds (Berne). 25th July 1933.

D. 8.25 p.m. 25th July 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 25th July 1933.

No. 4. (R).

P.Z. 4512 1933

IMMEDIATE.

Your telegrams Nos.16 and 17.

I conveyed messages personally to the King of Iraq. His Majesty desires me to reply as follows to you and Sir F. Humphrys.

"His Majesty has already wired to Bagdad to postpone until his return any decision about disarming Assyrians on their return from Syria.

2. If by tomorrow evening no satisfactory reply comes from Bagdad, i.e. if Government there find difficulty in carrying out His Majesty's instructions to postpone decision he will then return to Bagdad.

3. His Majesty would like to know more precisely why his (sic) government fear proposal to disarm on their return the small number who have left Iraq would lead to bloodshed. He heard yesterday from Bagdad that this proposal was approved by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires there and by adviser to Minister of the Interior. In any case those who have left Iraq are not likely in His Majesty's opinion to return for some weeks by which time His Majesty would have returned to Bagdad in the normal course of events having concluded his three weeks cure here. He could by then have discussed matter fully with British representative at Bagdad.

4. Nuri Pasha is returning to London tomorrow as soon as reply from Bagdad is received and will discuss the matter".

Repeated to Bagdad.

388
(391)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4512
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
July 25th. 1933.

D. 4.43.a.m. July 26th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. July 26th. 1933.

No. 182. (R).

------oOo------

4487 Your telegram No. 137.

This morning I called a conference with Air Officer Commanding head of Military Mission and adviser to Minister of the Interior a practice which will be continued so long as the crisis lasts.

I read out to them a letter which I have addressed to Prime Minister solemnly calling on Iraqi Government in the name of His Majesty's Government not to attempt forcibly to disarm Assyrians.

Following are the answers to your questions:

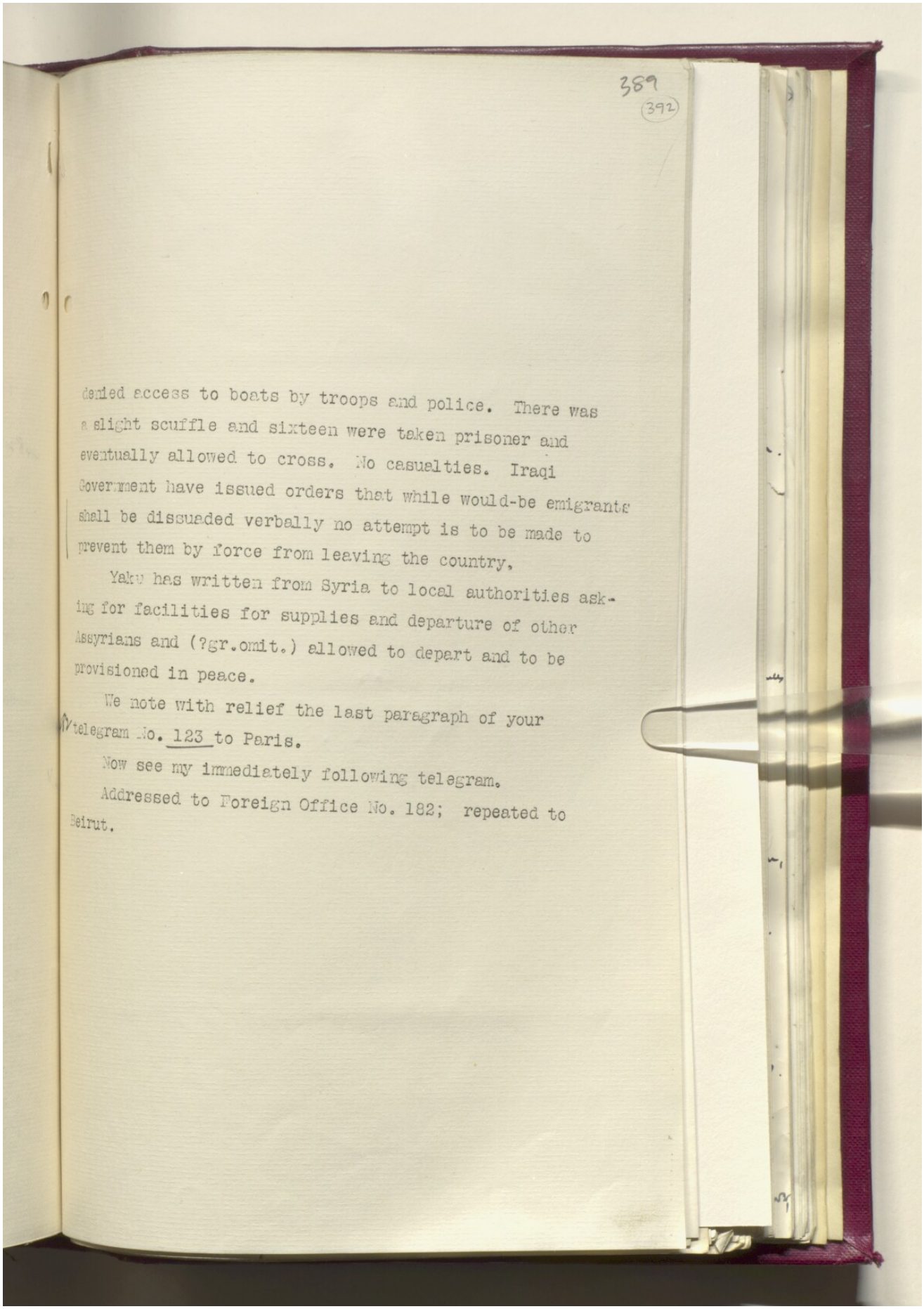
A. Air Officer Commanding would prefer to reply on his return from Mosul tomorrow or Thursday.

B. Assyrians in question are mainly of Tiari Zor and Tkhuma tribes with a few Ashutis. They all belong to Mar Shimun's party.

C. Situation is still fluid. The more Assyrians leaving Iraq for good the easier it will be for Mr. Thompson to find holdings for the rest. Many emigrating Assyrians have abandoned good farms which will presumably be available for the landless. Mr. Thompson is carrying on with his work of finding suitable places. I have called for a more detailed report with special reference to the present situation.

There was a slight incident at Faishkhabur this morning. Party of one hundred wishing to cross were

denied/



389
(392)

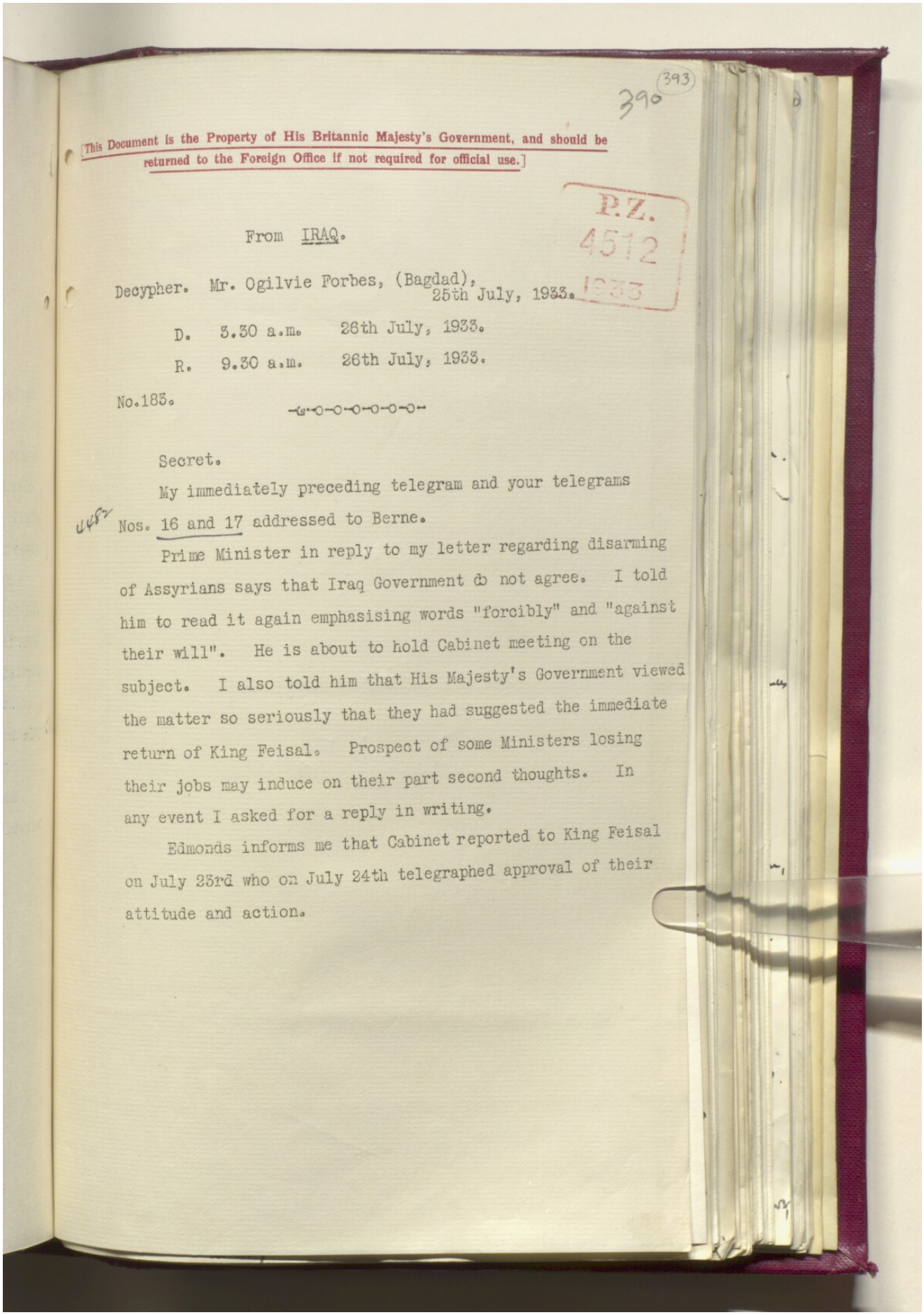
denied access to boats by troops and police. There was a slight scuffle and sixteen were taken prisoner and eventually allowed to cross. No casualties. Iraqi Government have issued orders that while would-be emigrants shall be dissuaded verbally no attempt is to be made to prevent them by force from leaving the country.

Yaku has written from Syria to local authorities asking for facilities for supplies and departure of other Assyrians and (?gr.omit.) allowed to depart and to be provisioned in peace.

We note with relief the last paragraph of your telegram No. 123 to Paris.

Now see my immediately following telegram.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 182; repeated to Beirut.



390 (393)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4512 1933

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 25th July, 1933.

D. 5.30 a.m. 26th July, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 26th July, 1933.

No.183.

Secret.

My immediately preceding telegram and your telegrams Nos. 16 and 17 addressed to Berne.

Prime Minister in reply to my letter regarding disarming of Assyrians says that Iraq Government do not agree. I told him to read it again emphasising words "forcibly" and "against their will". He is about to hold Cabinet meeting on the subject. I also told him that His Majesty's Government viewed the matter so seriously that they had suggested the immediate return of King Feisal. Prospect of some Ministers losing their jobs may induce on their part second thoughts. In any event I asked for a reply in writing.

Edmonds informs me that Cabinet reported to King Feisal on July 23rd who on July 24th telegraphed approval of their attitude and action.

394
391

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4512
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
26th July, 1933.

D. 12.20 p.m., 26th July, 1933.

R. 1.30 p.m., 26th July, 1933.

No. 184. (R).

::::::::::::::::

Important.

My telegram No. 183.

Military Mission inform me that about 48 Assyrians re-crossed last night into Iraq at Faishkhabur and point further south and that they were disarmed without opposition. A few others who eluded police are reported to have stated that they were returning to their homes as French did not want them. I have warned adviser to Minister of the Interior who was not aware of this to do everything possible to prevent police provoking conflict by trying to disarm these returning Assyrians against their will as there is danger of conflict with isolated parties trickling back before conditions of return have been clearly established.

General Headlam has attached Major Allfrey to Bekr Sidqi who expects to meet French military commander today.

Addressed to Foreign Office No. 184, repeated to Beirut No. 10.

392
395

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
4430/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	29. 7.		Iraq — The Assyrian Crisis
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	5. viii		
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Sir H. Seton. M/8/8

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Please refer to the minute on P.Z. 4149, not yet seen by Committee. Despite the refusal by the P.M. to accept the advice of H.M.G. to restore free movement to the Mar Shimun this readiness to resign was the question, there was at first some improvement due to the Govt. for the time being abandoning the intention of taking provocative action against him or his followers & to the discovery that the Mar Shimun's influence was less & his followers more reasonable than had been supposed.

A fresh crisis has now developed, which has driven Mr Ogilvie Forbes to an outburst at Iraqi incompetence. About 1000 Assyrians have crossed into Syria leaving their women & children behind, but

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE,
(See PZ 4644/33)

Previous Papers :—

5041 2000 1.31

but probably intending to send for them if they can come to an agreement with the French. But the French have protested & demanded that the Iraqis should take them back, which they are reluctant to do unless they are disarmed, which, in Sir F. Humphrey's opinion, would be contrary to the Govts. pledge that they should receive the same treatment as other Iraq inhabitants & would drive them into open rebellion; and in any case they are unlikely to surrender their arms without a fight either with the French or the Iraqis.

Meanwhile the F.O. are taking the matter up with Paris. (As the matter is now one of foreign relations, our locus standi becomes a little stronger). It is to be hoped that the French Govt. will be more helpful than the Syrian Govt. can be expected to be locally, and will not insist on precipitate action. Something like the formation of temporary concentration camps in Syria certainly seems required.

A. J. Morley

25.7.33

PZ 4430/33

Mr. Ogilvie Forbes's invitation[x] is understandable. The handling of this case by the Iraq Govt., & their reaction to the advice (or instructions) received from Feisal, his Ministers, & Sir F. Humphrys in London, are not very encouraging for the future. In another area it will be remembered that the challenge, instigated, in the Shaikhtiria by the Govt., by the local fellaheen & the Sh. of Koweit's title to his Fao properties similarly developed once the King & the Ambassador were out of the way; & ~~[illegible]~~.

~~[illegible]~~

V.A.L. 25/7.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000002
801

393
(396)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
4485/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated

Rec. 19

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			Iraq — The Assyrian Crisis: further telegrams.
Under Secretary			
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....			
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

The file is already under submission but further telegrams are put forward at once in view of their great interest. The latest news from Baghdad states that there are now 1,320 Assyrians in Syria who are maligning the British as well as Iraq. There is the greatest danger of violence between others who wish to cross the frontier & the Iraq troops stationed on the frontier under a strongly anti-Assyrian commander. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes has already impressed on the Iraqis by implication, and has now been officially instructed to make them realize the folly of any forcible disarmament of the Assyrians. Sir Francis Humphrys directly connects the present development with the continued

Previous Papers :—

5041 2000 1.31

detention of the Mar Shimun.

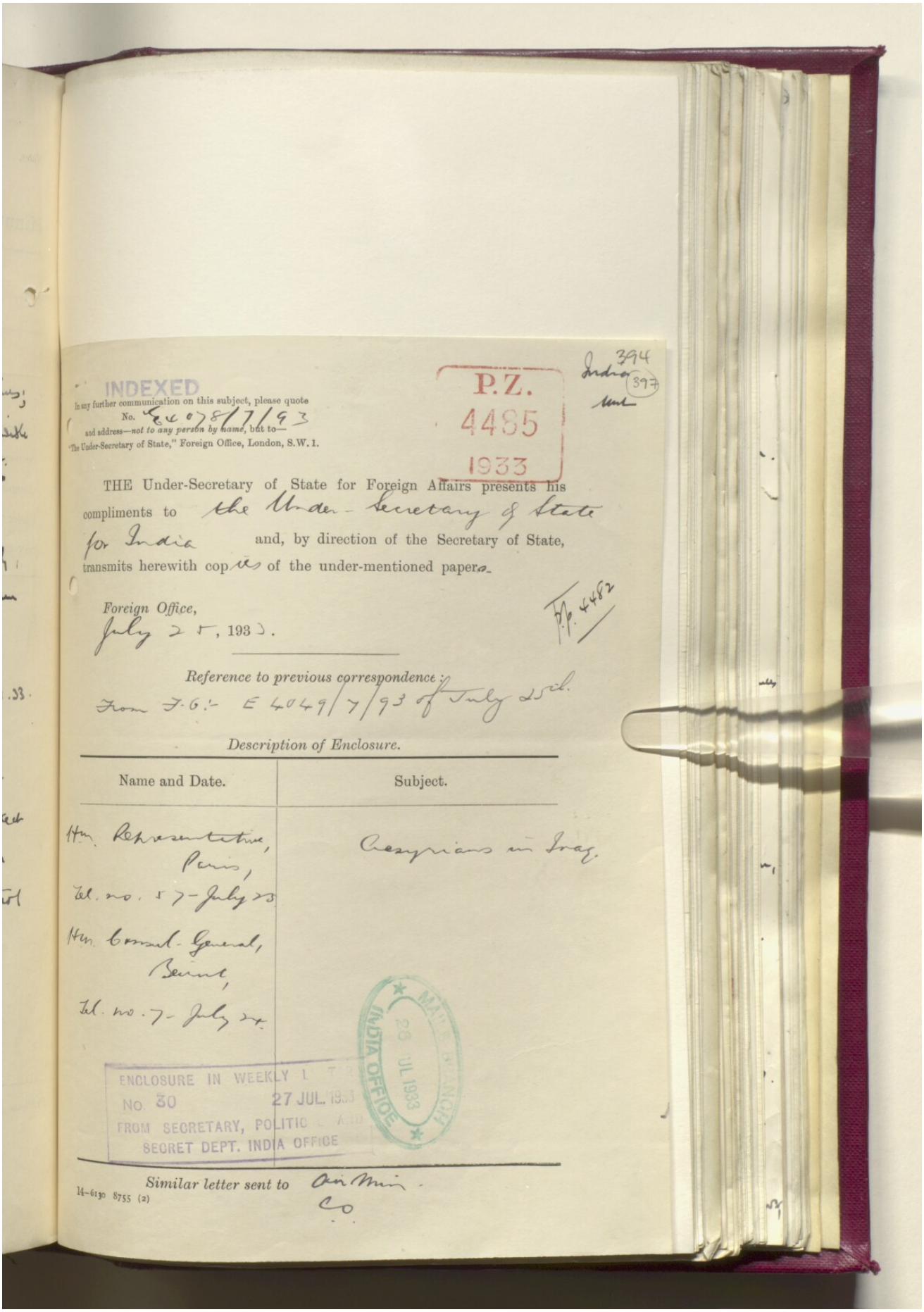
The French Govt. have fortunately agreed to instruct the Syrian Govt. at once not to expel or disarm the Assyrians; the local authorities had in fact already been taking a sensible attitude (cf Beirut telg.), but there appear to be difficulties in the way of the establishment of a concentration camp.

Meanwhile H.M.G. and Sir Francis Humphrys privately have telegraphed to the King in Switzerland urging him to return to Baghdad immediately.

A.J. Harley
26.7.33.

The situation is now beginning to attract public attention (cf. todays Times). It is likely to affect Iraq and it on either Iraq or H.M.G. (as the sponsor for admission to the League) unless it is brought under control without delay.

T.L. 27/7/33.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4078/7/93

and address—not to any person by name, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4485 1933

394 India (397)

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

F.P. 4482

Foreign Office,
July 25, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.:- E 4049/7/93 of July 25th.

Description of Enclosure.

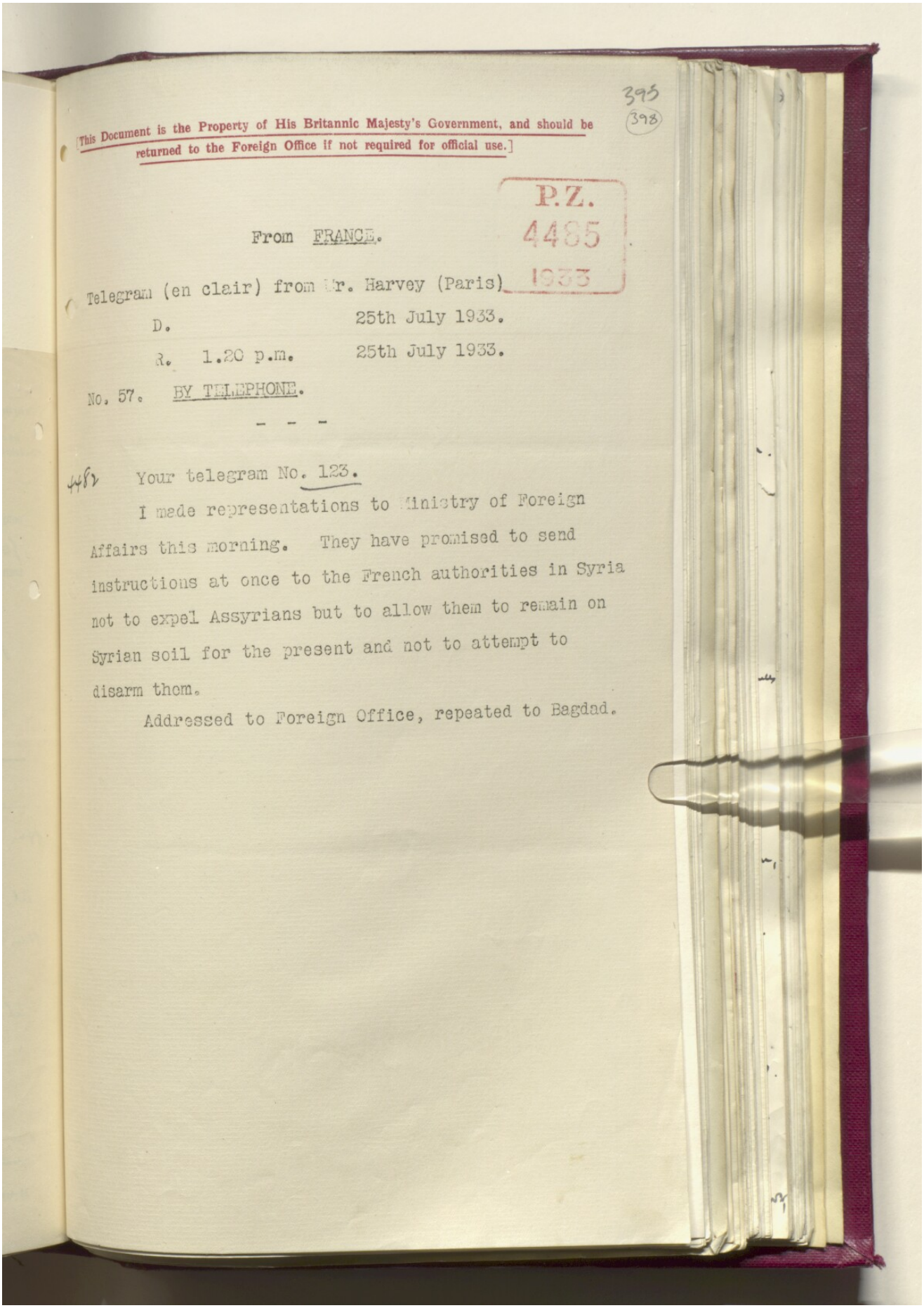
Name and Date.	Subject.
Hon. Representative, Paris, Tel. no. 57 - July 23	Assyrians in Iraq.
Hon. Consul-General, Beirut, Tel. no. 7 - July 24	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY [illegible]
No. 30 27 JUL. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITIC[illegible]
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

MAIL BRANCH INDIA OFFICE 28 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to Air Min. Co.

14-6130 8755 (2)



395
398

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4485 1933

From FRANCE.

Telegram (en clair) from Mr. Harvey (Paris)
D. 25th July 1933.
R. 1.20 p.m. 25th July 1933.
No. 57. BY TELEPHONE.

- - -

448 Your telegram No. 123.

I made representations to Ministry of Foreign Affairs this morning. They have promised to send instructions at once to the French authorities in Syria not to expel Assyrians but to allow them to remain on Syrian soil for the present and not to attempt to disarm them.

Addressed to Foreign Office, repeated to Bagdad.

396
(399)

This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4485
1933

From SYRIA.

Decode. Sir H. Satow (Beirut). 24th July, 1933.

D. 5.00 p.m., 24th July, 1933.

R. 6.15 p.m., 24th July, 1933.

No. 7. (R).

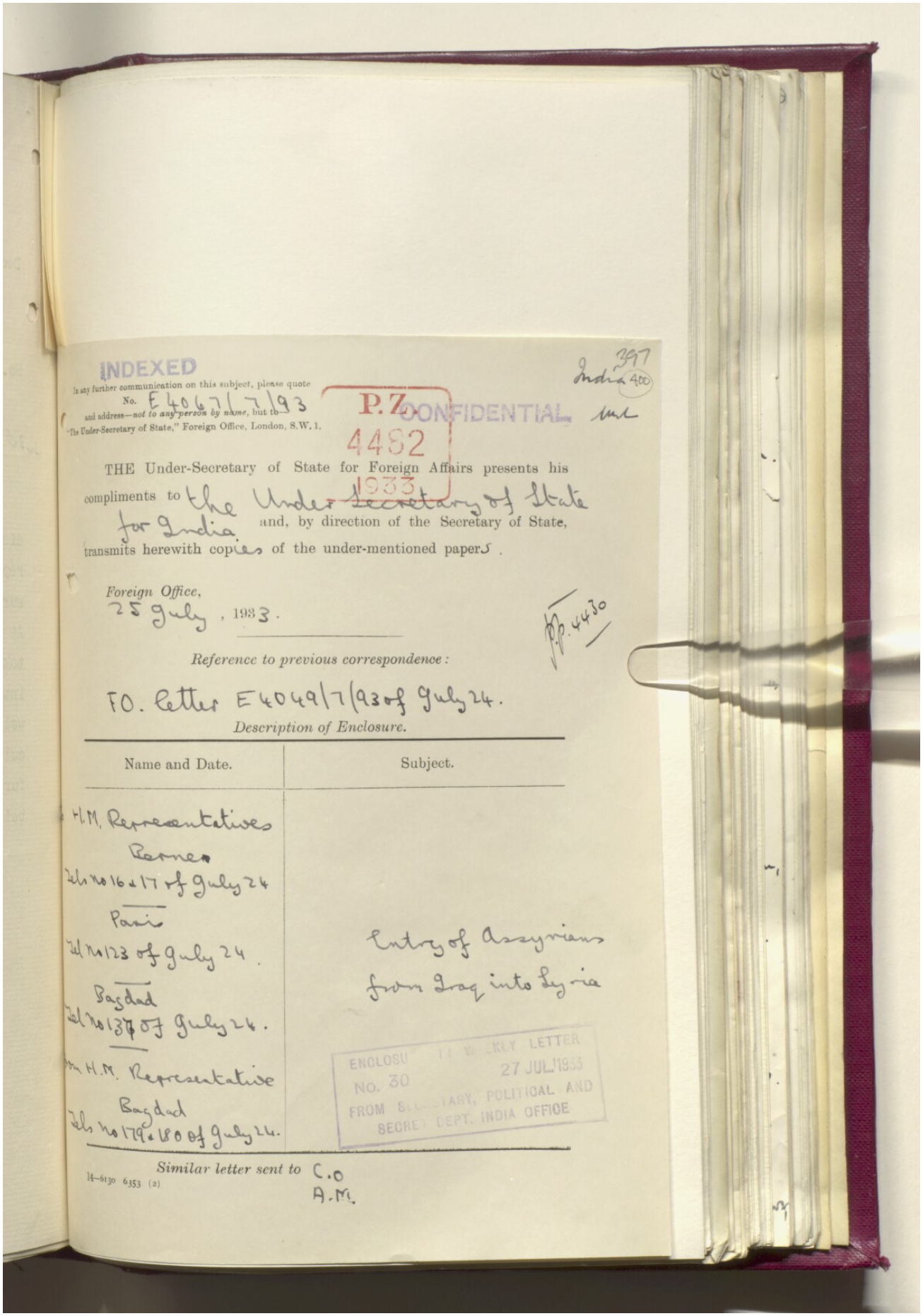
::::::::::::

4430 Addressed to Bagdad No. 3.

Your telegram No. 178 to the Foreign Office.

French have no instructions as yet from Paris but are disposed to be helpful. It is not their intention to repel Assyrians by force but will try to persuade them to surrender arms pending negotiation of conditions of return. At present according to information received here steps taken to prevent them re-crossing frontier or penetrating into Syria further. Suggestion as to concentration camp well received but provisioning presents material difficulties beside entailing expense. Could not supplies be furnished from Iraq and distributed in Syria, details being arranged by local authorities in co-operation?

Repeated to Foreign Office No. 7.



INDEXED

397
India 400

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4067/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4482 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the ~~Under-Secretary of State~~ for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
25 July, 1933.

P.P. 4430

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. Letter E 4049/7/93 of July 24.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representatives Berne Tels Nos 16 & 17 of July 24 Paris Tel No 123 of July 24. Bagdad Tel No 137 of July 24. From H.M. Representative Bagdad Tels Nos 179 & 180 of July 24.	Entry of Assyrians from Iraq into Syria

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 30 27 JUL 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O
A.M.

14—6130 6353 (2)

398
(401)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4482
1933

(E.4049/7/93.)

To SWITZERLAND.

Code telegram to Mr. Dodds, (Berne),

Foreign Office, 24th July, 1933, 10.30 p.m.

No.16. (R).

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

Please convey following message from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to King Feisal of Iraq at Bellevue Hotel. If His Majesty has already left and is still in Switzerland message should be sent to him wherever he is by special messenger.

Begins -

"Recent telegrams from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad show that Assyrian situation is developing most dangerously. Between 800 and 1,200 armed Assyrians are reported to have crossed into Syria and further bodies are moving in same direction from Amadia district. Iraqi Government are not attempting to stop movement but troops and police are being posted along frontier with orders not to allow Assyrians to return unless they surrender their arms.

His Majesty's Government view this situation with grave concern. They hold firmly to their opinion that any attempt forcibly to disarm Assyrians in advance of any general plan for disarmament of tribes would be folly and could only lead to bloodshed, with grave consequences. Manner in which matter has been handled by those Iraqi Ministers who have remained in Bagdad causes them greatest uneasiness, and unless whole problem is dealt with on new and more far-sighted lines, it seems probably that serious crisis will develop

which

399
(402)

which will do lamentable injury to Iraq's good name in this country and at Geneva, and undo much of work which has been so successfully accomplished during last few years.

In these circumstances His Majesty's Government feel bound to call Your Majesty's serious attention to the situation and to urge on Your Majesty advisability of immediately returning to Bagdad to take situation personally in hand. If this is done situation may well be retrieved and peaceful and satisfactory settlement reached with this important element of population of Iraq, fortunes of which have been followed with so much sympathy and anxiety in this country".

Ends.

Addressed to Berne No. 16, repeated to Bagdad No.134.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

400
(403)

P.Z.
4482
1933

(4249/7/93.)

To - SWITZERLAND.

Code telegram to Mr. Dodds, (Berne),
Foreign Office, 24th July, 1933, 10.00 p.m.

No.17. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

My immediately preceding telegram.

Please also convey to King Feisal following personal message from Sir Francis Humphrys.

Begins -

"I venture to express the hope that Your Majesty will give the most serious consideration to the message from His Majesty's Government which has been conveyed to you today through His Majesty's Legation at Berne. This message has been prepared in consultation with me.

Your Majesty will remember that we both agreed in London that the forcible detention of the Mar Shimun in Bagdad was unwise and that forcible disarmament of the Assyrians must be avoided at all costs as it would inevitably lead to bloodshed. Unless therefore Your Majesty is confident that your Ministers in Iraq will act in accordance with these views I feel that nothing but Your Majesty's personal intervention is likely to save the situation from taking an increasingly dangerous course. Your Majesty told me shortly before leaving London that unless this situation could be cleared up satisfactorily you would feel obliged to return to Bagdad, and, though I am most reluctant to suggest any curtailment of Your Majesty's rest and holiday, there seems to me to be no alternative."

Ends.

Addressed to Berne No.17, repeated to Bagdad No.135.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

(404)

(E.4049/7/93.)

To FRANCE.

P.Z. 4462 1933

Code telegram to Mr. Harvey, (Paris),

Foreign Office, 24th July, 1933, 10.30 p.m.

No.123. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

4430 Bagdad telegram No.178 (of July 23rd. Assyrian crisis).

Earlier telegrams referred to go to you by tonight's bag, and you will find history of crisis in telegram sections and recent Foreign Office Weekly Summaries.

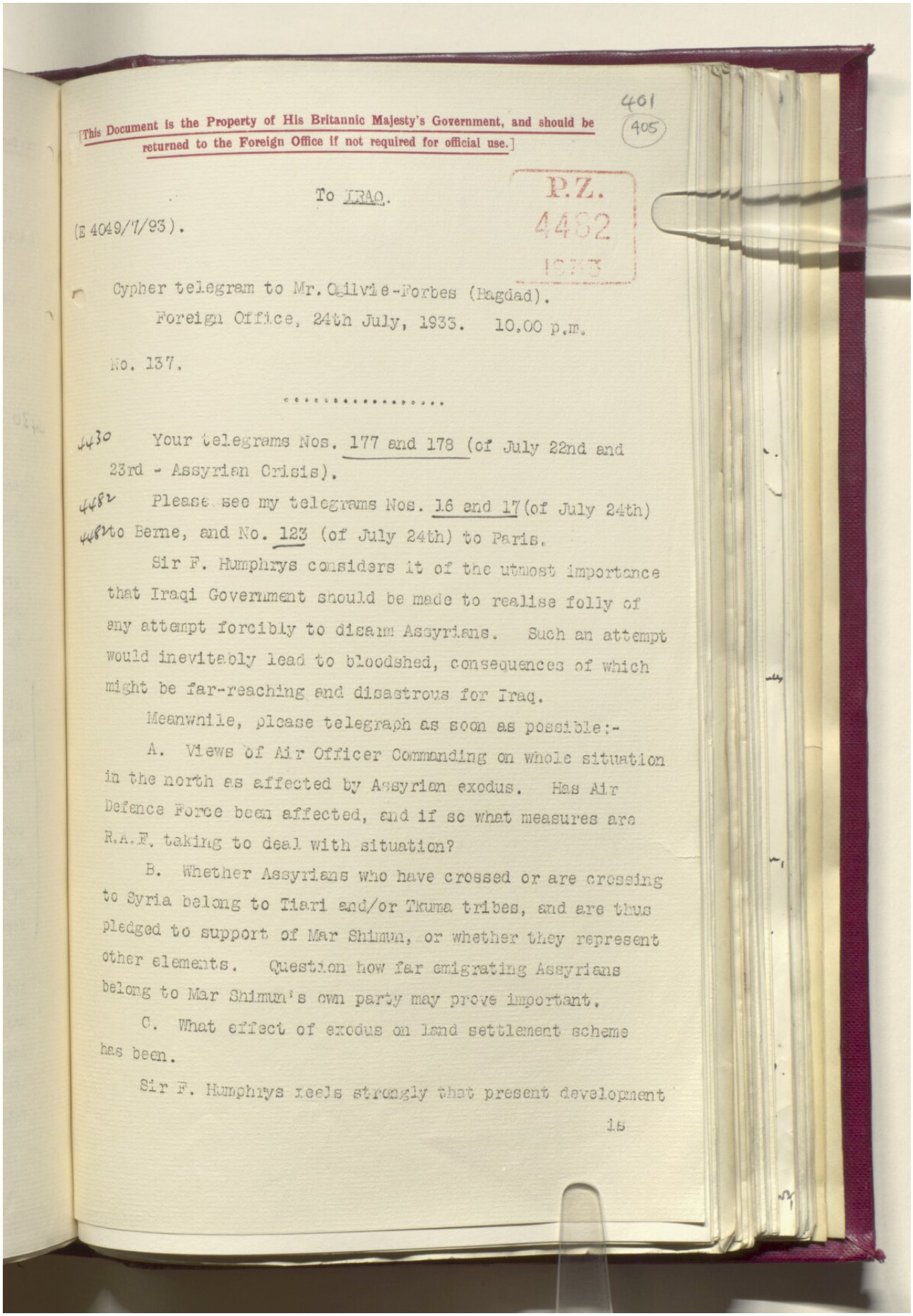
His Majesty's Government view recent developments with grave concern, and are impressing on King Feisal, who is in Switzerland, desirability of his returning to Iraq as soon as possible.

I am also instructing His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad to impress on Iraqi Government in strongest terms objections to any attempt forcibly to disarm Assyrians if they try to return to Iraq.

Meanwhile, it is important in interests of all parties concerned and of maintenance of general tranquillity in Middle East that everything possible should be done to reduce risk of any clash or bloodshed, consequences of which might be serious and far-reaching.

Please therefore approach French Government immediately, and draw their earnest attention to dangers which would attend any attempt on part of French authorities forcibly to expel Assyrians from Syria or otherwise to drive them back into Iraq before satisfactory arrangements have been made for their return.

Addressed to Paris No. 123, repeated to Bagdad No.136.



401
405

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4482 1933

To IRAQ.

(E 4049/7/93).

Cypher telegram to Mr. Gilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 24th July, 1933. 10.00 p.m.

No. 137.

.....

4430 Your telegrams Nos. 177 and 178 (of July 22nd and 23rd - Assyrian Crisis).

4482 Please see my telegrams Nos. 16 and 17 (of July 24th) 4482 to Berne, and No. 123 (of July 24th) to Paris.

Sir F. Humphrys considers it of the utmost importance that Iraqi Government should be made to realise folly of any attempt forcibly to disarm Assyrians. Such an attempt would inevitably lead to bloodshed, consequences of which might be far-reaching and disastrous for Iraq.

Meanwhile, please telegraph as soon as possible:-

A. Views of Air Officer Commanding on whole situation in the north as affected by Assyrian exodus. Has Air Defence Force been affected, and if so what measures are R.A.F. taking to deal with situation?

B. Whether Assyrians who have crossed or are crossing to Syria belong to Tiari and/or Tkuma tribes, and are thus pledged to support of Mar Shimun, or whether they represent other elements. Question how far emigrating Assyrians belong to Mar Shimun's own party may prove important.

C. What effect of exodus on land settlement scheme has been.

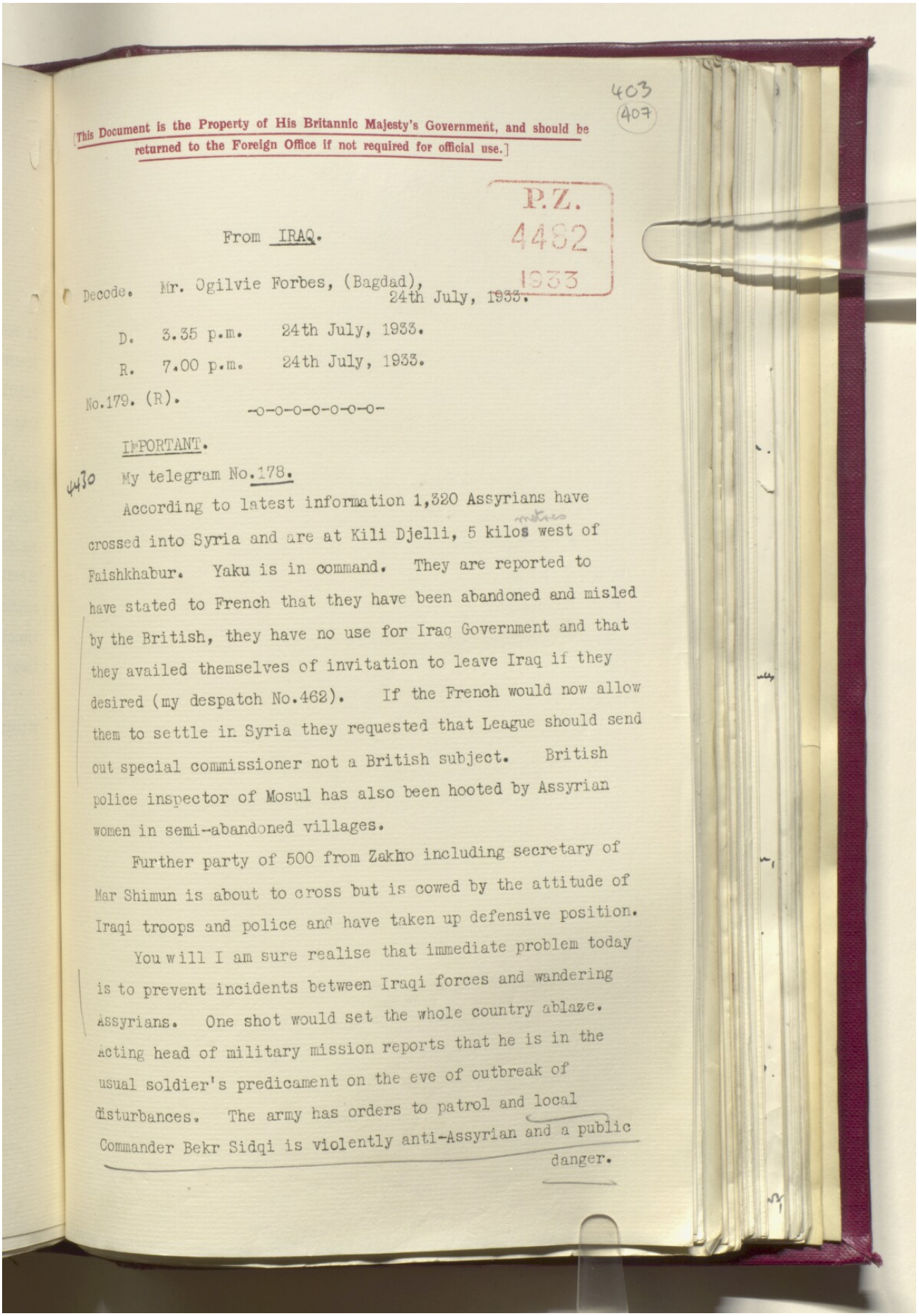
Sir F. Humphrys feels strongly that present development is

402
(406)

is due in large measure to continued detention by Iraqi Government of Mar Shimun in Bagdad. In his view, it is not surprising that Maliks refused to proceed to Bagdad, where they no doubt feared similar detention.

While your suggestion for establishment of concentration camp in Syria is at first sight attractive, its adoption might lead to embarrassing questions regarding financial responsibility, particularly if camp were established at direct request of His Majesty's Government. In these circumstances it seems sufficient at present stage to warn French Government of grave objections to any attempt on their part to expel Assyrians by force and this is being done.

I appreciate manner in which you are dealing with the situation.



403
407

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4482 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 24th July, 1933.

D. 3.35 p.m. 24th July, 1933.

R. 7.00 p.m. 24th July, 1933.

No.179. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMPORTANT.

My telegram No.178.

According to latest information 1,320 Assyrians have crossed into Syria and are at Kili Djelli, 5 kilos (metres) west of Faishkhabur. Yaku is in command. They are reported to have stated to French that they have been abandoned and misled by the British, they have no use for Iraq Government and that they availed themselves of invitation to leave Iraq if they desired (my despatch No.462). If the French would now allow them to settle in Syria they requested that League should send out special commissioner not a British subject. British police inspector of Mosul has also been hooted by Assyrian women in semi-abandoned villages.

Further party of 500 from Zakho including secretary of Mar Shimun is about to cross but is cowed by the attitude of Iraqi troops and police and have taken up defensive position.

You will I am sure realise that immediate problem today is to prevent incidents between Iraqi forces and wandering Assyrians. One shot would set the whole country ablaze. Acting head of military mission reports that he is in the usual soldier's predicament on the eve of outbreak of disturbances. The army has orders to patrol and local Commander Bekr Sidqi is violently anti-Assyrian and a public danger.

404
(408)

danger. Risk of incidents is therefore very real. I accordingly called on the Prime Minister this morning and impressed on him once more how essential it was that Iraqi forces should avoid provocation and not attempt to disarm Assyrians. I also drew his attention to Bekr Sidqi's failings. His Excellency assured me that strict orders had been given not to molest those Assyrians who were in Iraq nor to prevent by force any from leaving and Bekr Sidqi had been specially warned that he must obey instructions. Hitherto no Assyrians have attempted to return. This is not likely for a few days and if suggestion for concentration camp is adopted, should not occur except by agreement with Iraqis.

Air Officer Commanding and head of military mission fully concur with my action in restraining Iraqi Government.

Addressed to the Foreign Office No.179, repeated to Beirut No.8.

405
409

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4482
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
24th July, 1933.

D. 1.20 a.m. 25th July, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 25th July, 1933.

No.180. (R).

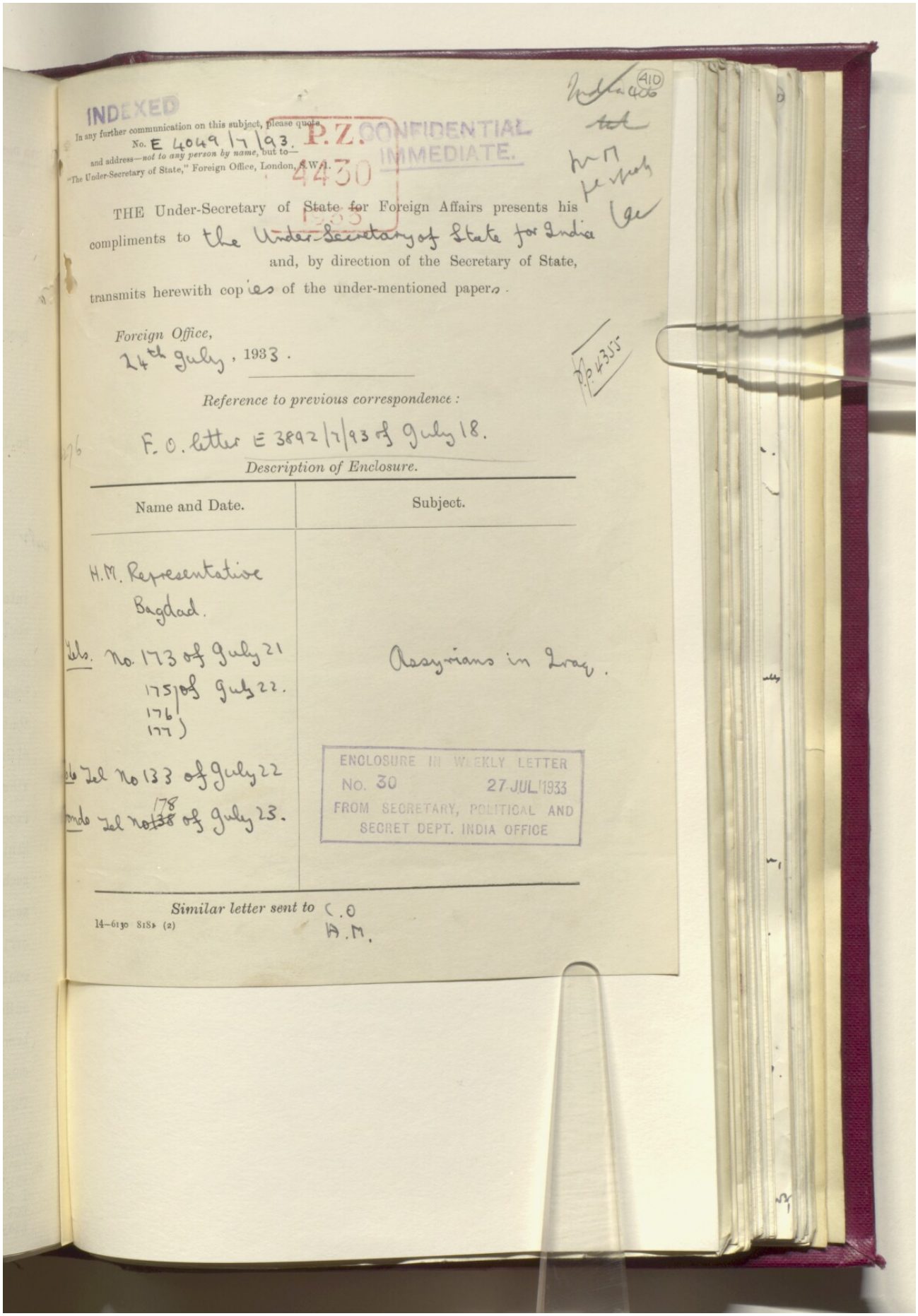
-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMPORTANT.

4482 My telegram No.179.

It having come to my knowledge that Iraqi Government intended sending message to absconding Assyrians that they would not consider allowing them to return unless they were completely disarmed I called on Prime Minister at his private house this evening and reminded him of his undertaking to me that Iraqi Government would take no action which would be either irrevocable or difficult to withdraw from until the views of His Majesty's Government had been received. His Excellency after telephoning to Minister of the Interior and Minister of Defence, assured me that Iraqi Government had no such intention. He admitted however that a message in that sense had been sent to the Governor of Mosul and that the officer whom they proposed to send over the border into Syria would no doubt communicate this view to the French local authorities. French Chargé d'Affaires had from the beginning been already so informed. I therefore urged him in the circumstances neither to publish nor to convey this to Assyrians. This he said he would do.

I am doing everything possible in consultation with Air Officer Commanding and British advisers both to prevent an incident and to head the Iraqi Government off line of action which would embarrass solution of the problem. Nevertheless I should warn you it is going to be extremely difficult if not impossible to induce Iraqi Government to allow these Assyrians back with their arms.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 4049/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4430 CONFIDENTIAL IMMEDIATE.

410

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
24th July, 1933.

P.p. 4335

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 3892/7/93 of July 18.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad.	
Tels. No. 173 of July 21 175 of July 22. 176 177)	Assyrians in Iraq.
do Tel No 133 of July 22	
do Tel No 178 of July 23.	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 30 27 JUL 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O
H.M.

14—6130 818 (2)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

R.Z. 4430 1933

407 (411)

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes.(Bagdad).
July 21st. 1933.

D. 11.55.p.m. July 21st. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. July 22nd. 1933.

No. 173. (R).

-----oOo-----

4276 My telegram No. 171.

After two weeks of peace and good progress we are now about to enter trying phase in Assyrian crisis.

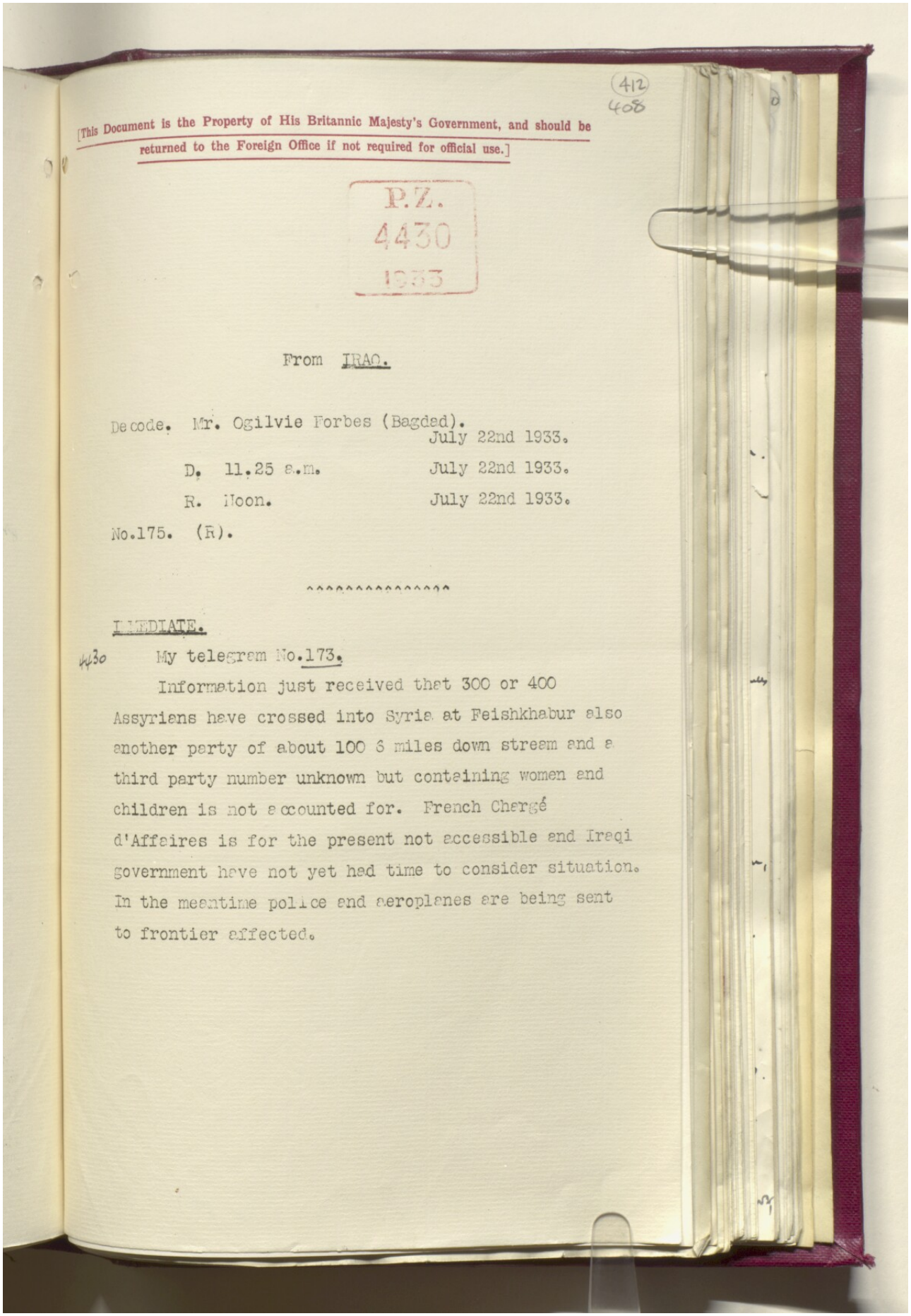
Maliks have not appeared in Bagdad as arranged; moreover Yatu and Lucos whereabouts are unknown.

About 300 pro Mar Shimun Assyrians decided to try their luck in Syria. They subsequently changed their minds and have withdrawn to the mountains north of Dohuk leaving Assyrian villages in the neighbourhood of Simel to women and children. While I understand this is their normal method of taking council in private usual crop of wild rumours is forthcoming and Iraqi Government are alarmed and consequently blame Mar Shimun.

Edmonds accordingly came to warn me today that if this sort of thing happens at frequent intervals he cannot continue preventing Iraqi Government from taking more serious action against Mar Shimun.

I wish I could make some constructive suggestion. As His Majesty's Government no longer control affairs in Iraq we are reduced to the position of passive onlookers who will receive the blame in any event. Faisal is proving a broken reed.

Please forgive this outburst but I feel with indignation that if we were in charge in this country Assyrian question, which is being so messed about by people who desire no settlement, would be easily capable of solution.



(412)
408

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
4430
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). July 22nd 1933.

D. 11.25 a.m. July 22nd 1933.

R. Noon. July 22nd 1933.

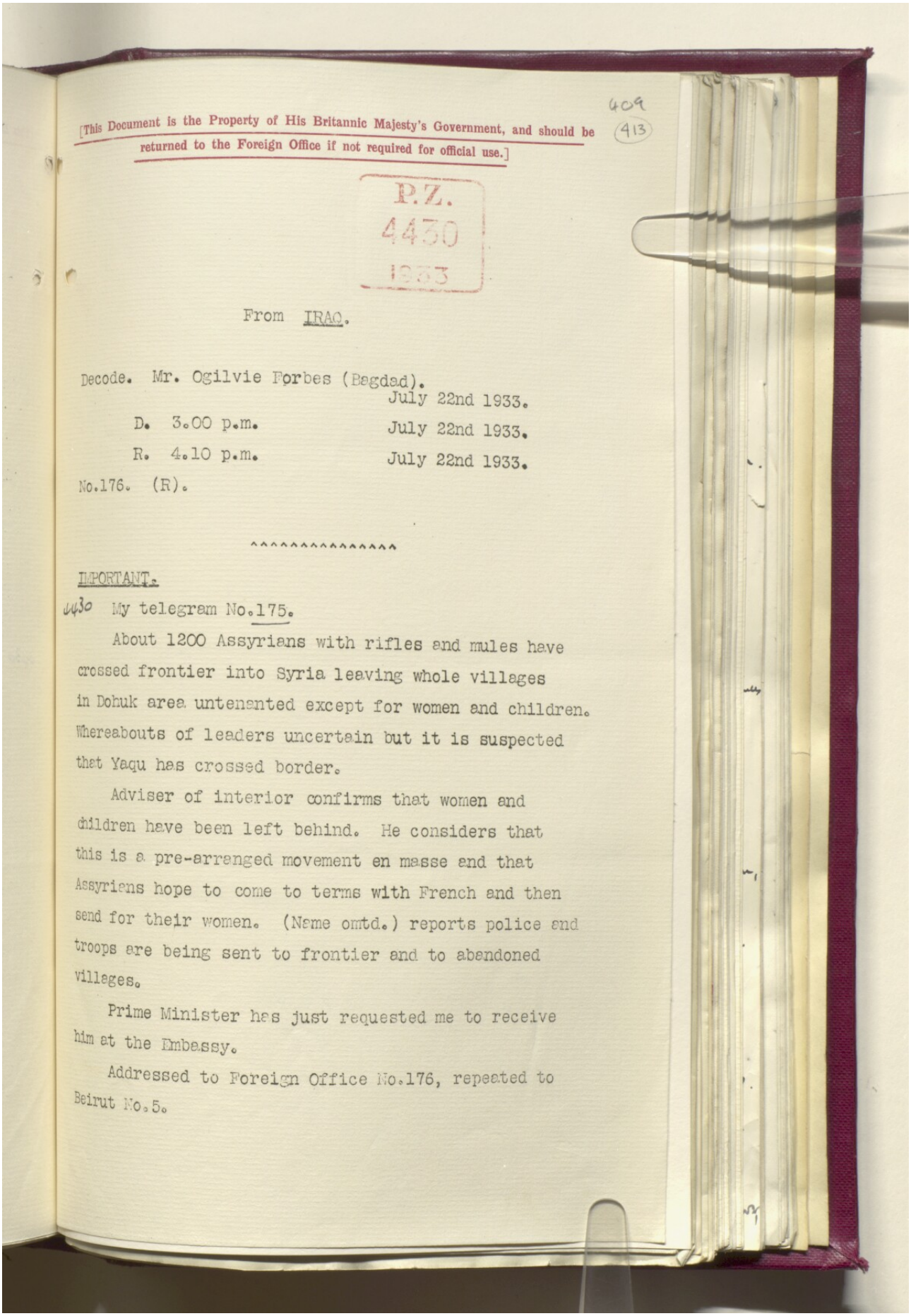
No.175. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

IMMEDIATE.

4430 My telegram No.173.

Information just received that 300 or 400 Assyriens have crossed into Syria at Feishkhabur also another party of about 100 6 miles down stream and a third party number unknown but containing women and children is not accounted for. French Chargé d'Affaires is for the present not accessible and Iraqi government have not yet had time to consider situation. In the meantime police and aeroplanes are being sent to frontier affected.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

409
413

P.Z.
4430
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
July 22nd 1933.

D. 3.00 p.m. July 22nd 1933.

R. 4.10 p.m. July 22nd 1933.

No.176. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

IMPORTANT.

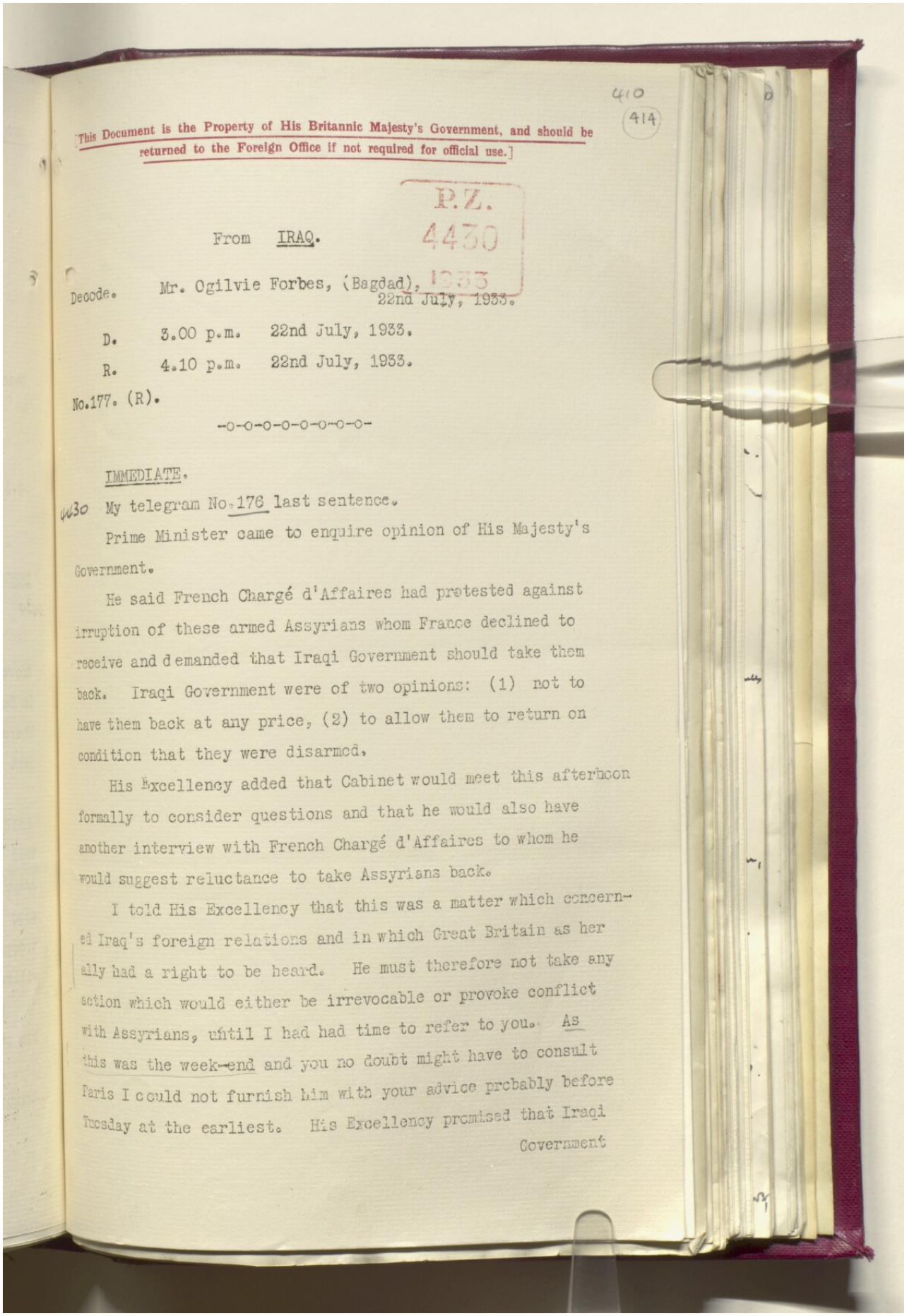
4430 My telegram No.175.

About 1200 Assyrians with rifles and mules have crossed frontier into Syria leaving whole villages in Dohuk area untenanted except for women and children. Whereabouts of leaders uncertain but it is suspected that Yaqu has crossed border.

Adviser of interior confirms that women and children have been left behind. He considers that this is a pre-arranged movement en masse and that Assyrians hope to come to terms with French and then send for their women. (Name omtd.) reports police and troops are being sent to frontier and to abandoned villages.

Prime Minister has just requested me to receive him at the Embassy.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.176, repeated to Beirut No.5.



410
414

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4430 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 22nd July, 1933.

D. 3.00 p.m. 22nd July, 1933.

R. 4.10 p.m. 22nd July, 1933.

No.177. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

4430 My telegram No.176 last sentence.

Prime Minister came to enquire opinion of His Majesty's Government.

He said French Chargé d'Affaires had protested against irruption of these armed Assyrians whom France declined to receive and demanded that Iraqi Government should take them back. Iraqi Government were of two opinions: (1) not to have them back at any price, (2) to allow them to return on condition that they were disarmed.

His Excellency added that Cabinet would meet this afternoon formally to consider questions and that he would also have another interview with French Chargé d'Affaires to whom he would suggest reluctance to take Assyrians back.

I told His Excellency that this was a matter which concerned Iraq's foreign relations and in which Great Britain as her ally had a right to be heard. He must therefore not take any action which would either be irrevocable or provoke conflict with Assyrians, until I had had time to refer to you. As this was the week-end and you no doubt might have to consult Paris I could not furnish him with your advice probably before Tuesday at the earliest. His Excellency promised that Iraqi Government

411
(415)

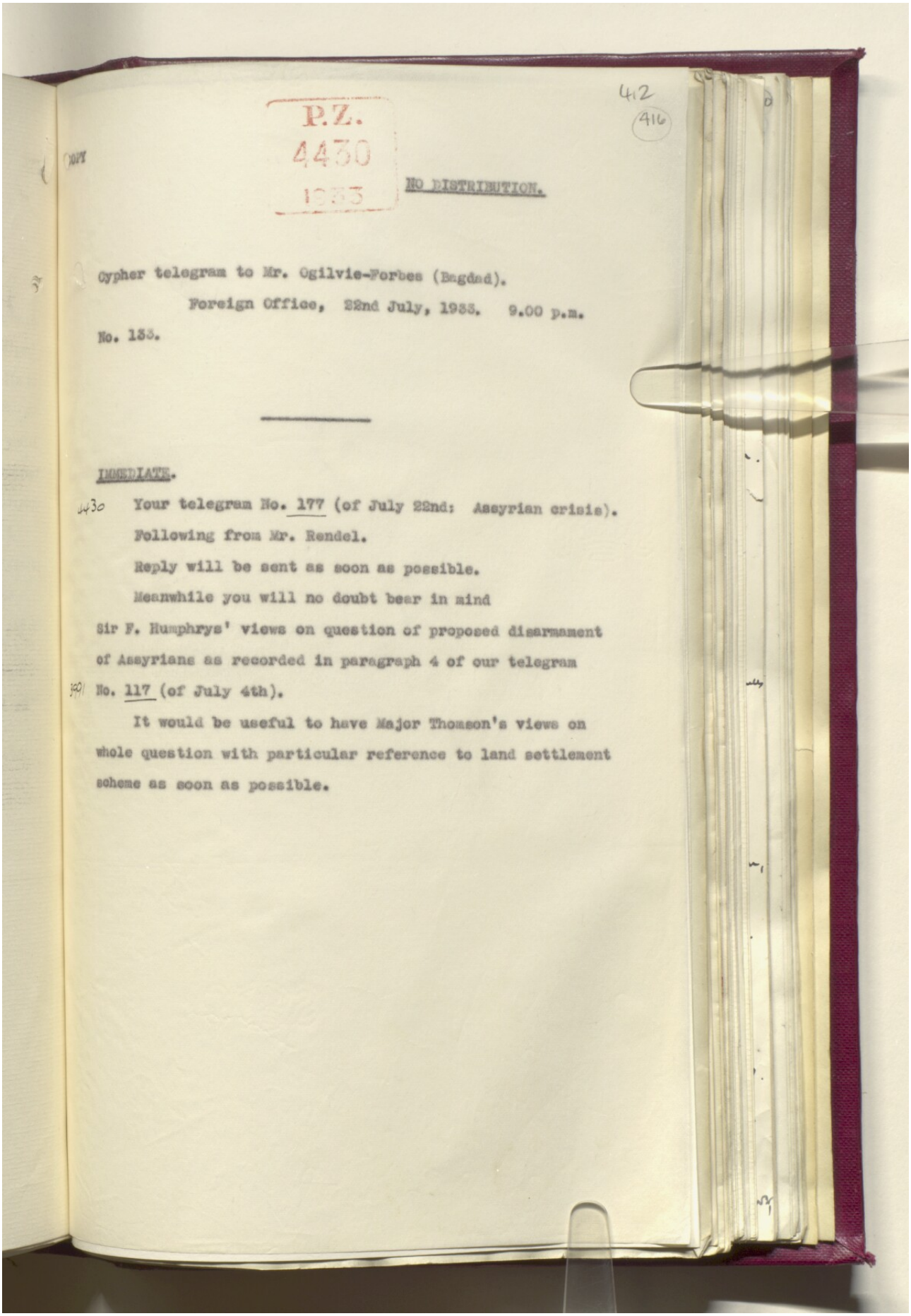
2.

Government would not take precipitate action. In fact he treated the affair rather as a joke and not tragically which is all to the good.

While therefore he may take at first an uncompromising line with French Chargé d'Affaires this will be I think for bargaining purposes and it may be possible to induce Iraqi Government to take Assyrians back disarmed.

Please give me the necessary guidance as soon as possible.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.177, repeated to Beirut No.6.



412
(416)

P.Z.
4430
1933

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office, 22nd July, 1933. 9.00 p.m.

No. 133.

IMMEDIATE.

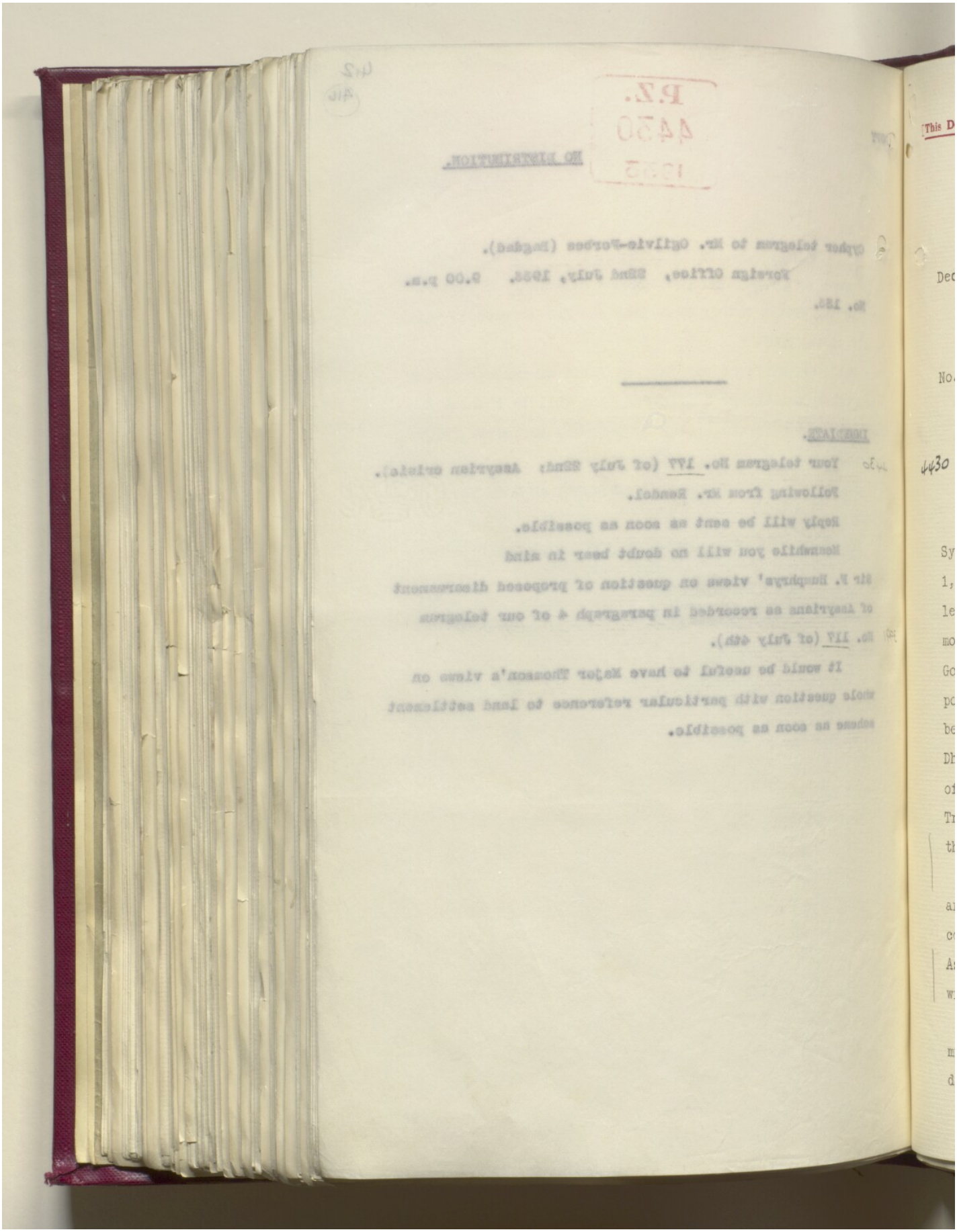
4430 Your telegram No. 177 (of July 22nd: Assyrian crisis).

Following from Mr. Rendel.

Reply will be sent as soon as possible.

Meanwhile you will no doubt bear in mind Sir F. Humphrys' views on question of proposed disarmament of Assyrians as recorded in paragraph 4 of our telegram No. 117 (of July 4th).

It would be useful to have Major Thomson's views on whole question with particular reference to land settlement scheme as soon as possible.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

413
(417)

P.Z.
4430
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 23rd July, 1933.

D. 9.0 p.m. 23rd July, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 24th July, 1933.

No.178. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

4430 Your telegram No.133.

Situation today was as follows:

Exact number of Assyrians who have already crossed into Syria is uncertain but it is estimated at between 800 and 1,200 armed men. Iraqi Government do not yet know names of leaders though Yaku is suspected. More Assyrians are moving towards Syria, ~~time~~ this time from Amadia district. Iraqi Government have issued no orders to stop them. Troops and police are being posted on river bank and at ferrying points between junction of Tigris and Khabur rivers and Tel Abu Dhahir from which point it is proposed to throw out a line of outposts barring passage down right bank of Tigris. Troops have orders not to allow Assyrians to recross unless they surrender their arms.

It is considered this movement is result of plan probably arranged last year and carried out with the knowledge and consent of Lady Surma and Mar Shimum. It is feared that the Assyrians will not surrender their arms without a fight either with French or Iraqis.

Assuming that the French will not receive them Iraqis must take them back. Problem is how without a fight over disarmament. In the present unhealthy internal political situation

414
(418)

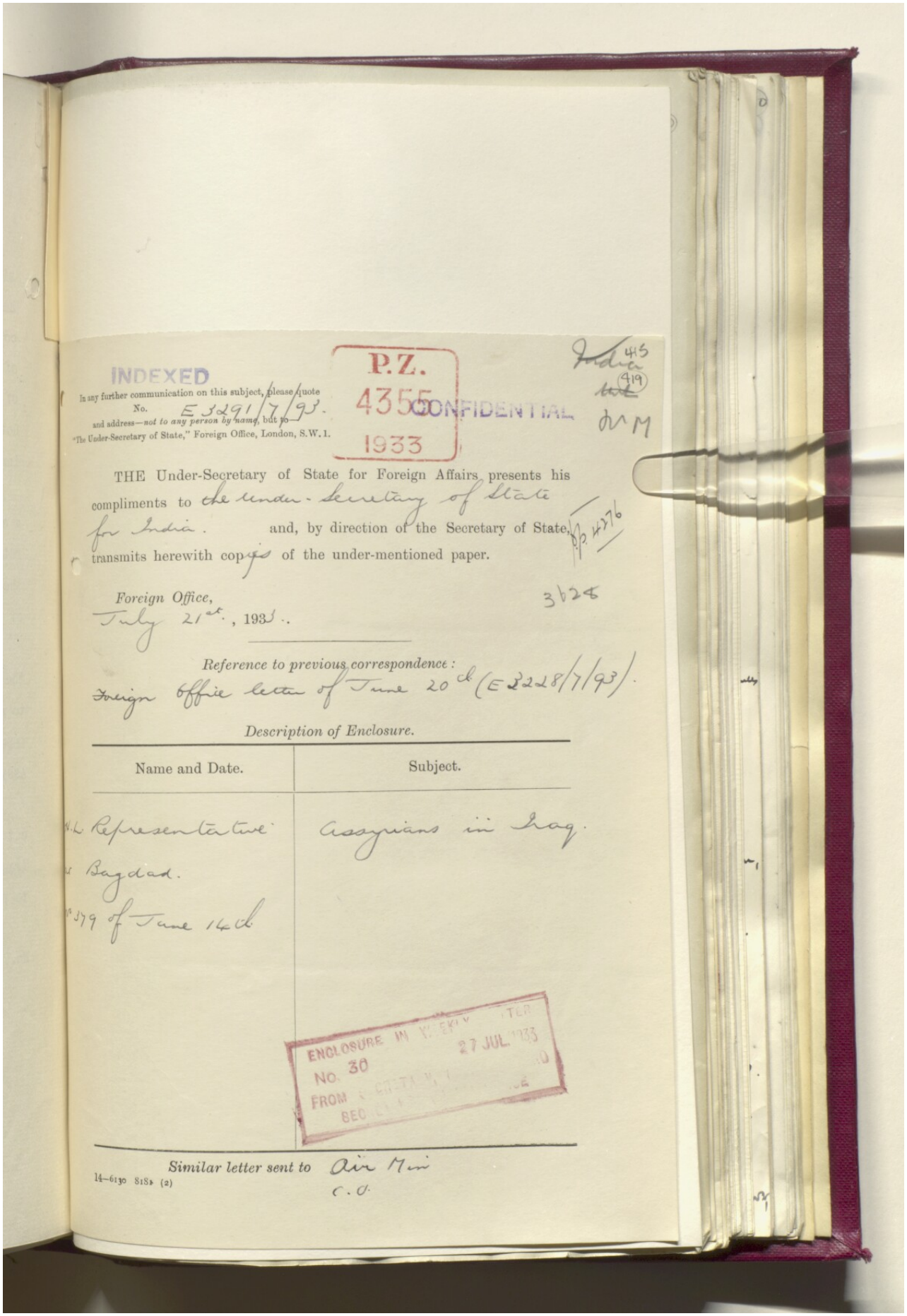
situation Iraqi Government cannot indefinitely tolerate that half of their army should be tied up in Mosul district to cope with the vagaries of Assyrians. Every major movement of troops is also expensive. Quite apart from the question of prestige it will therefore be difficult to induce the Iraqi Government not to insist on disarmament as a condition of allowing them back.

Possible solution might be for the French to establish a concentration camp pending negotiations with Iraqis for the return of Assyrians. This would avoid bloodshed either at the hands of the French or Iraqis and solve imminent problem of providing for large body of hungry armed men.

If above suggestion meets with acceptance Edmonds considers the Iraqi Government might agree to allow returning Assyrians to retain small number of rifles for each village. It is important that the French should on no account drive the Assyrians back before terms of return have been arranged.

It is possible that the Assyrians if pushed back may cut across Turkish territory into their own country behind Iraqi forces on the Tigris. There are not sufficient troops to prevent this.

Addressed to Foreign Office No.178, repeated to Beirut No.7.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3291/7/93.
and address—not to any person by name, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

P.Z. 4355 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

India 415 (419)

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

P.Z. 4376

3628

Foreign Office,
July 21st, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
Foreign Office letter of June 20th (E 3228/7/93).

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.L. Representative at Bagdad. No. 379 of June 14th	Assyrians in Iraq.

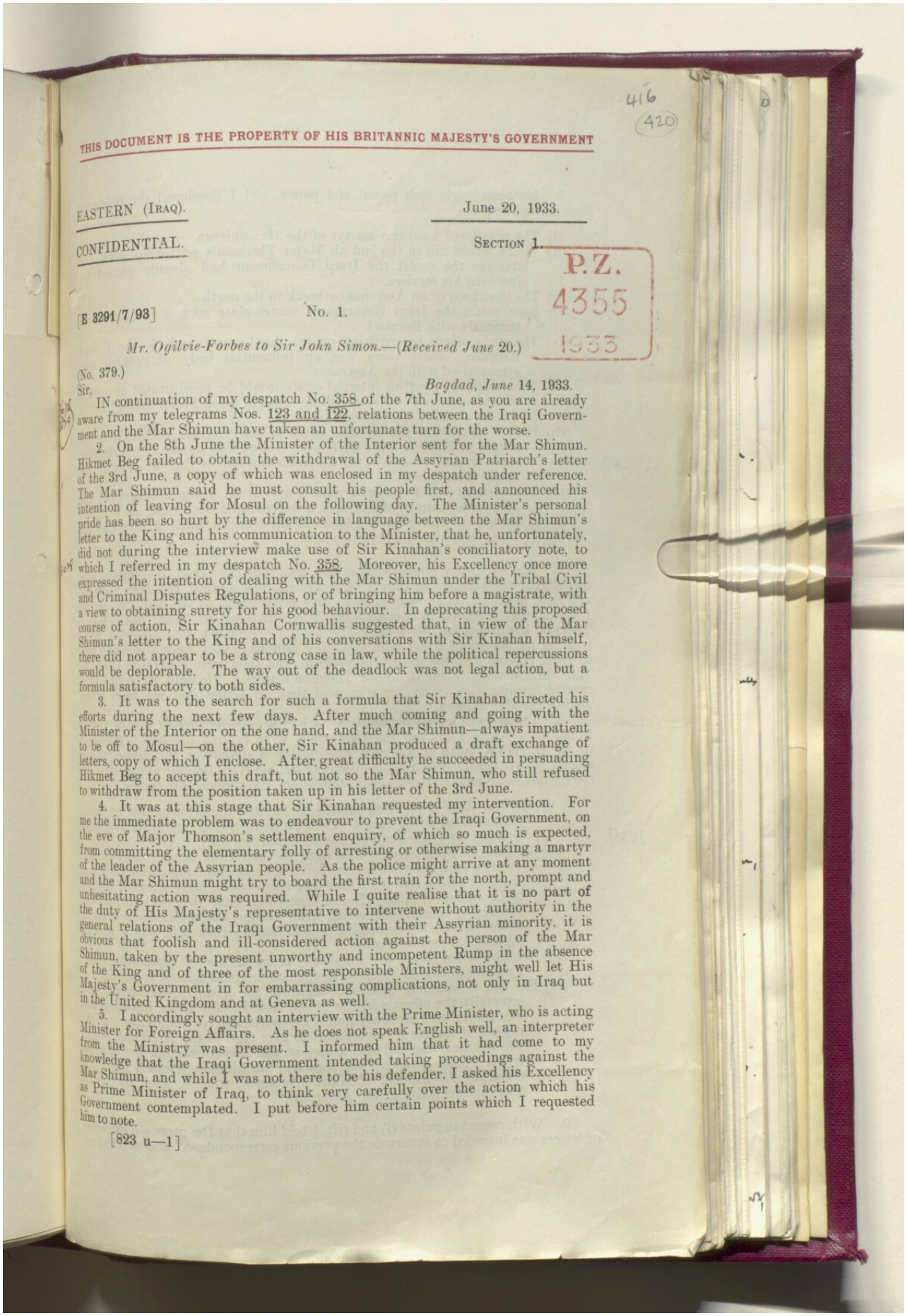
ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 30 27 JUL 1933 FROM SECRETARY OF STATE SECRETARY OF STATE

Similar letter sent to Air Min
C.O.

14—6130 818 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000031



416
420

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

EASTERN (IRAQ). June 20, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

P.Z. 4355 1933

[E 3291/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(*Received June* 20.)

(No. 379.)

Sir, *Bagdad, June* 14, 1933.

IN continuation of my despatch No. 358 of the 7th June, as you are already aware from my telegrams Nos. 123 and 122, relations between the Iraqi Government and the Mar Shimun have taken an unfortunate turn for the worse.

2. On the 8th June the Minister of the Interior sent for the Mar Shimun. Hikmet Beg failed to obtain the withdrawal of the Assyrian Patriarch's letter of the 3rd June, a copy of which was enclosed in my despatch under reference. The Mar Shimun said he must consult his people first, and announced his intention of leaving for Mosul on the following day. The Minister's personal pride has been so hurt by the difference in language between the Mar Shimun's letter to the King and his communication to the Minister, that he, unfortunately, did not during the interview make use of Sir Kinahan's conciliatory note, to which I referred in my despatch No. 358. Moreover, his Excellency once more expressed the intention of dealing with the Mar Shimun under the Tribal Civil and Criminal Disputes Regulations, or of bringing him before a magistrate, with a view to obtaining surety for his good behaviour. In deprecating this proposed course of action, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis suggested that, in view of the Mar Shimun's letter to the King and of his conversations with Sir Kinahan himself, there did not appear to be a strong case in law, while the political repercussions would be deplorable. The way out of the deadlock was not legal action, but a formula satisfactory to both sides.

3. It was to the search for such a formula that Sir Kinahan directed his efforts during the next few days. After much coming and going with the Minister of the Interior on the one hand, and the Mar Shimun—always impatient to be off to Mosul—on the other, Sir Kinahan produced a draft exchange of letters, copy of which I enclose. After great difficulty he succeeded in persuading Hikmet Beg to accept this draft, but not so the Mar Shimun, who still refused to withdraw from the position taken up in his letter of the 3rd June.

4. It was at this stage that Sir Kinahan requested my intervention. For me the immediate problem was to endeavour to prevent the Iraqi Government, on the eve of Major Thomson's settlement enquiry, of which so much is expected, from committing the elementary folly of arresting or otherwise making a martyr of the leader of the Assyrian people. As the police might arrive at any moment and the Mar Shimun might try to board the first train for the north, prompt and unhesitating action was required. While I quite realise that it is no part of the duty of His Majesty's representative to intervene without authority in the general relations of the Iraqi Government with their Assyrian minority, it is obvious that foolish and ill-considered action against the person of the Mar Shimun, taken by the present unworthy and incompetent Rump in the absence of the King and of three of the most responsible Ministers, might well let His Majesty's Government in for embarrassing complications, not only in Iraq but in the United Kingdom and at Geneva as well.

5. I accordingly sought an interview with the Prime Minister, who is acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. As he does not speak English well, an interpreter from the Ministry was present. I informed him that it had come to my knowledge that the Iraqi Government intended taking proceedings against the Mar Shimun, and while I was not there to be his defender, I asked his Excellency as Prime Minister of Iraq, to think very carefully over the action which his Government contemplated. I put before him certain points which I requested him to note.

[823 u—1]

6. He accordingly took pencil and paper, and I developed the following lines of argument :—

(i) The mistake of making a martyr of the Mar Shimun.
(ii) Which would nip in the bud all Major Thomson's settlement work, and damage the credit the Iraqi Government had already gained for invoking his services.
(iii) The likelihood of an Assyrian outbreak in the north.
(iv) How would the Iraqi Government contemplate such a trouble simultaneously with Barzan?
(v) The unfortunate repercussion on (*a*) the League, and (*b*) the United Kingdom, where there was an influential body of opinion who sympathised with the Assyrians.
(vi) The possibility that an internal crisis would be precipitated of such a nature as to involve the immediate recall of King Feisal. Did he wish the Royal visit to be a fiasco?
(vii) Had he considered the possible effect of an Assyrian outbreak on the Shiahs of Kerbela and Nejef, who, it was well known, were showing signs of unrest (see also my despatch No. 357 of the 7th June on the Abdul Rassaq case)?
(viii) The certainty of forming a united anti-Iraqi front amongst all the Assyrians, many of whom were now contented with their lot.
(ix) After all, the Mar Shimun's letter to the King of the 31st May met the Iraqi Government's requirements.

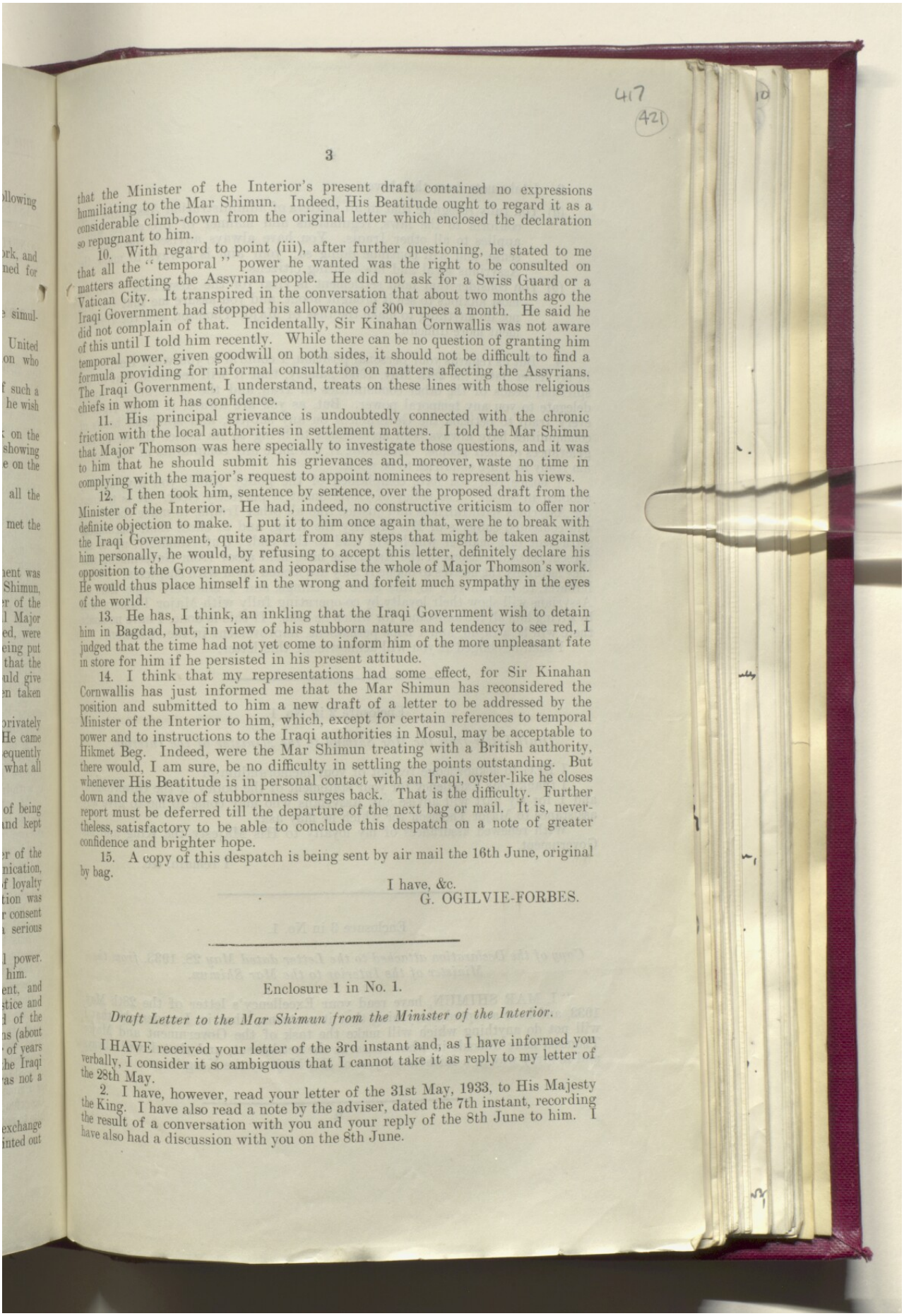
7. His Excellency replied that it was true that the Iraqi Government was considering the question of taking legal proceedings against the Mar Shimun, and that, moreover, as he had failed to give satisfaction to the Minister of the Interior, they intended to prevent him from returning to Mosul until Major Thomson had completed his work. The Iraqi Government, he contended, were treating the Assyrians better than any other minority; they were also being put to great expense over the settlement problem, and they were convinced that the Mar Shimun would undo all Major Thomson's work. He said he would give careful consideration to my remarks, and that no action had yet been taken against the Mar Shimun.

8. I then sent for the Mar Shimun. I had previously invited him privately to luncheon, where I had purposely refrained from talking business. He came to me, therefore, quite at his ease, and not in a defensive and consequently argumentative mood. I asked him quietly to tell me from the beginning what all the trouble was about. To cut a long story short, his version was that—

(i) He was offended at being invited to Bagdad under suspicion of being connected with the recent Mosul stone-throwing incident, and kept waiting for five or six days (my despatch No. 325).
(ii) Despite his loyal letter to the King, he had from the Minister of the Interior received what he considered to be an insulting communication, together with a still more insulting enclosure, a declaration of loyalty to be signed by him. It has transpired that this declaration was inserted by special order of the King without the knowledge or consent of Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, who considers that this was a serious mistake. I enclose a copy.
(iii) He would not make a "blanket" renunciation of temporal power. From his people he received it, they alone could take it from him.
(iv) He had a standing grievance against the Iraqi Government, and especially the officials in the Mosul district, for petty injustice and hindrances to the Assyrians. He particularly complained of the neglect of the Iraqi Government to give title to the Assyrians (about 450 families) who had been settled on the land for the number of years which legally entitled them thereto. He bitterly resented the Iraqi Government's support of Malik Khoshaba, who, he said, was not a true representative of the Assyrians.

9. With regard to points (i) and (ii), I told him that the proposed exchange of letters was intended to supersede the previous correspondence, and pointed out

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000034



that the Minister of the Interior's present draft contained no expressions humiliating to the Mar Shimun. Indeed, His Beatitude ought to regard it as a considerable climb-down from the original letter which enclosed the declaration so repugnant to him.

10. With regard to point (iii), after further questioning, he stated to me that all the "temporal" power he wanted was the right to be consulted on matters affecting the Assyrian people. He did not ask for a Swiss Guard or a Vatican City. It transpired in the conversation that about two months ago the Iraqi Government had stopped his allowance of 300 rupees a month. He said he did not complain of that. Incidentally, Sir Kinahan Cornwallis was not aware of this until I told him recently. While there can be no question of granting him temporal power, given goodwill on both sides, it should not be difficult to find a formula providing for informal consultation on matters affecting the Assyrians. The Iraqi Government, I understand, treats on these lines with those religious chiefs in whom it has confidence.

11. His principal grievance is undoubtedly connected with the chronic friction with the local authorities in settlement matters. I told the Mar Shimun that Major Thomson was here specially to investigate those questions, and it was to him that he should submit his grievances and, moreover, waste no time in complying with the major's request to appoint nominees to represent his views.

12. I then took him, sentence by sentence, over the proposed draft from the Minister of the Interior. He had, indeed, no constructive criticism to offer nor definite objection to make. I put it to him once again that, were he to break with the Iraqi Government, quite apart from any steps that might be taken against him personally, he would, by refusing to accept this letter, definitely declare his opposition to the Government and jeopardise the whole of Major Thomson's work. He would thus place himself in the wrong and forfeit much sympathy in the eyes of the world.

13. He has, I think, an inkling that the Iraqi Government wish to detain him in Bagdad, but, in view of his stubborn nature and tendency to see red, I judged that the time had not yet come to inform him of the more unpleasant fate in store for him if he persisted in his present attitude.

14. I think that my representations had some effect, for Sir Kinahan Cornwallis has just informed me that the Mar Shimun has reconsidered the position and submitted to him a new draft of a letter to be addressed by the Minister of the Interior to him, which, except for certain references to temporal power and to instructions to the Iraqi authorities in Mosul, may be acceptable to Hikmet Beg. Indeed, were the Mar Shimun treating with a British authority, there would, I am sure, be no difficulty in settling the points outstanding. But whenever His Beatitude is in personal contact with an Iraqi, oyster-like he closes down and the wave of stubbornness surges back. That is the difficulty. Further report must be deferred till the departure of the next bag or mail. It is, nevertheless, satisfactory to be able to conclude this despatch on a note of greater confidence and brighter hope.

15. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail the 16th June, original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Draft Letter to the Mar Shimun from the Minister of the Interior.

I HAVE received your letter of the 3rd instant and, as I have informed you verbally, I consider it so ambiguous that I cannot take it as reply to my letter of the 28th May.

2. I have, however, read your letter of the 31st May, 1933, to His Majesty the King. I have also read a note by the adviser, dated the 7th instant, recording the result of a conversation with you and your reply of the 8th June to him. I have also had a discussion with you on the 8th June.

3. I take note from the above—

(*a*) You fully recognise that in all matters of administration Assyrians must conform to the laws, regulations and manner of procedure which applies to all other Iraqis. You have always advised them in this sense, and will continue doing so; your aim is always to make the Assyrians loyal and law-abiding citizens.

(*b*) You consider that land settlement is vital for the Assyrians. You are most anxious to see it brought about, and you assure me that you will not do anything to make the task of Major Thomson and the Government more difficult.

4. But as regards your personal position, I confirm to you what I explained in my letter dated the 28th May, 1933, namely, that it will resemble that of the spiritual heads of the other communities in Iraq, and the Government cannot delegate to you any temporal power. But, as you are aware, it is the right of every Iraqi to petition the Government on any subject, and spiritual heads of communities have always been accustomed to bring to its notice the needs and grievances of their people. Therefore, if you have any complaints at any time I am ready to cause enquiries to be made.

I notice that you have complained of the policy which you say is being adopted in Mosul. The policy of Government is perfectly clear. It is to treat the Assyrians with fairness and justice like all other Iraqis, to make them loyal and contented subjects of His Majesty the King, and to effect their permanent settlement in a manner which will lead to this end. Unfortunately, up to the present certain sections of the Assyrians have held aloof from Government, and they have only themselves to blame if they are looked upon with suspicion. I wish, however, to put an end to this state of things, and I sincerely hope that all Assyrians will show their loyalty by co-operating fully with Major Thomson and by giving him all the assistance for which he asks. If this is done, I have no doubt there will be a rapid, and I hope permanent, improvement in the situation.

I shall be obliged if you will acknowledge this letter.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Draft Letter from the Mar Shimun to the Minister of the Interior.

I BEG to acknowledge receipt of your memorandum of

I thank your Excellency for your statement of the policy of the Government, and I for my part will advise any Assyrians who may come to me to give any assistance to Major Thomson for which he may ask.

With renewed assurances of my loyalty to His Majesty the King and his Government.

I remain, &c.

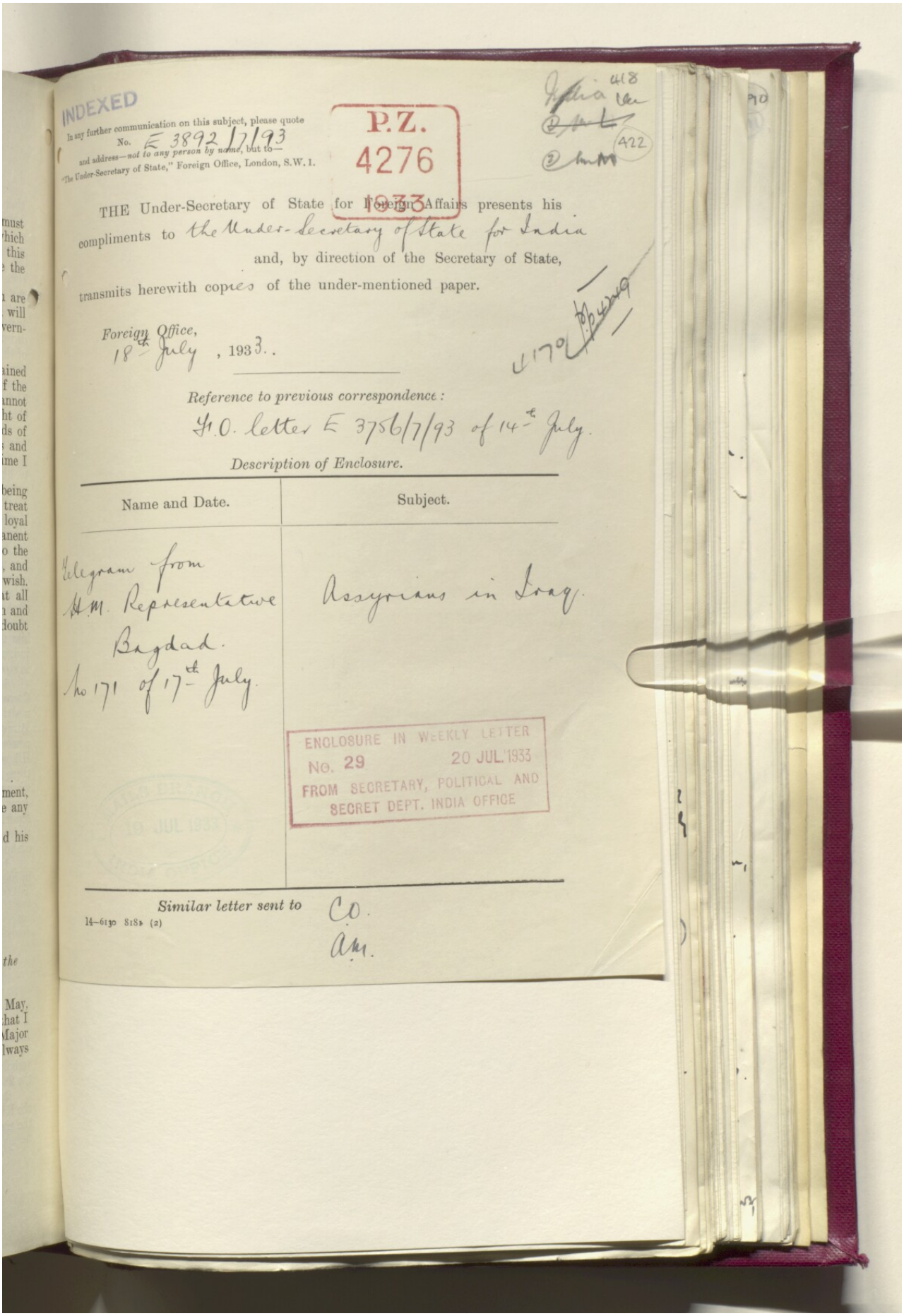
Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Copy of the Declaration attached to the Letter dated May 28, 1933, *from the Minister of the Interior to the Mar Shimun.*

"I, MAR SHIMUN, have read your Excellency's letter of the 28th May, 1933, and have accepted everything that it contains; that is, I undertake that I will not do anything which will make the task of the Government and Major Thomson more difficult in what concerns the settlement, and that I will always and in every way be a faithful subject of His Majesty the King."

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000036



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3892/7/93 and address—not to any person by name, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4276 1933

418 422

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office, 18th July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

I.O. letter E 3756/7/93 of 14th July.

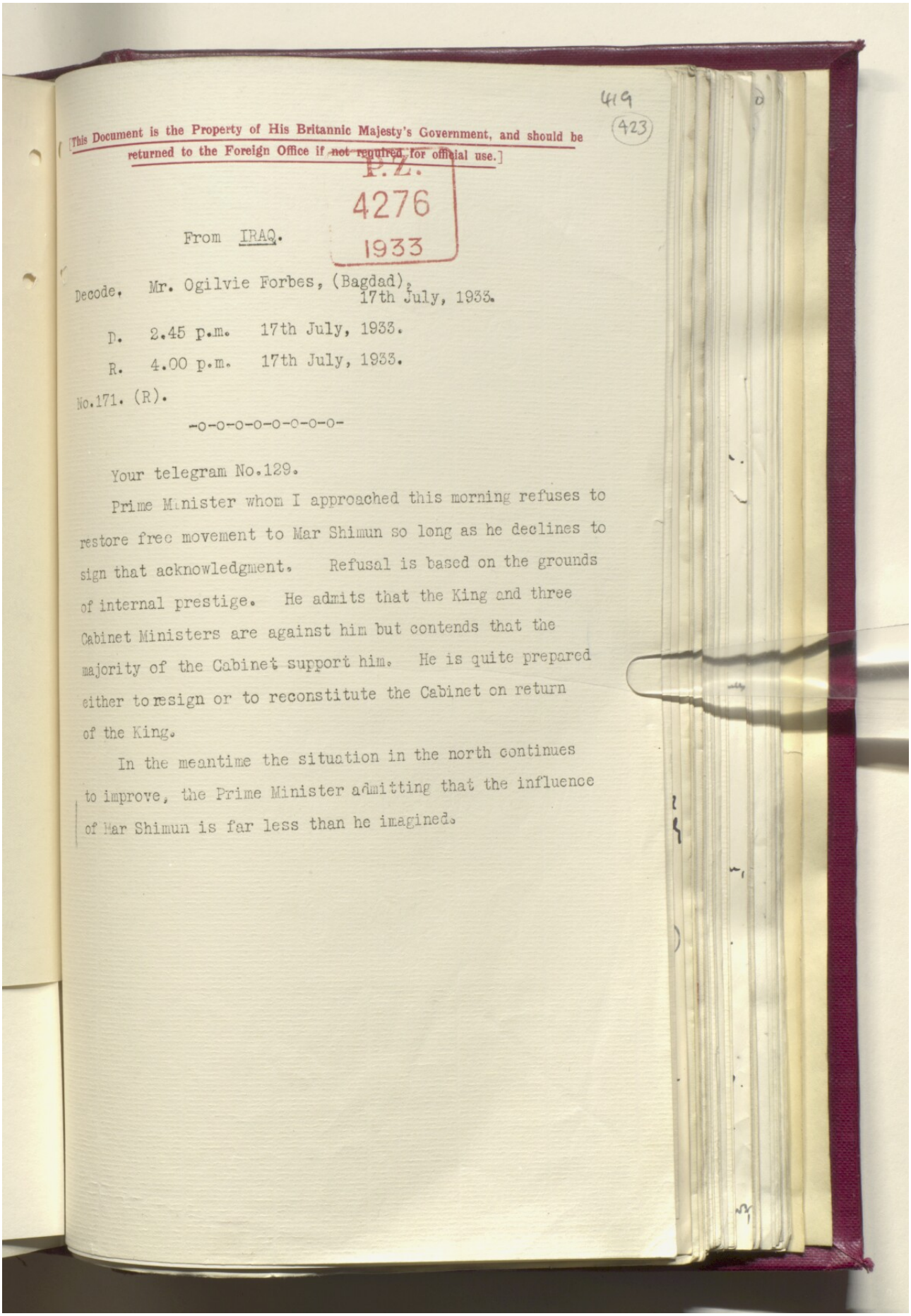
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegram from H.M. Representative Bagdad. No 171 of 17th July.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 29 20 JUL. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. Am.

14—6130 818 (2)



419
(423)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 4276 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad), 17th July, 1933.

D. 2.45 p.m. 17th July, 1933.

R. 4.00 p.m. 17th July, 1933.

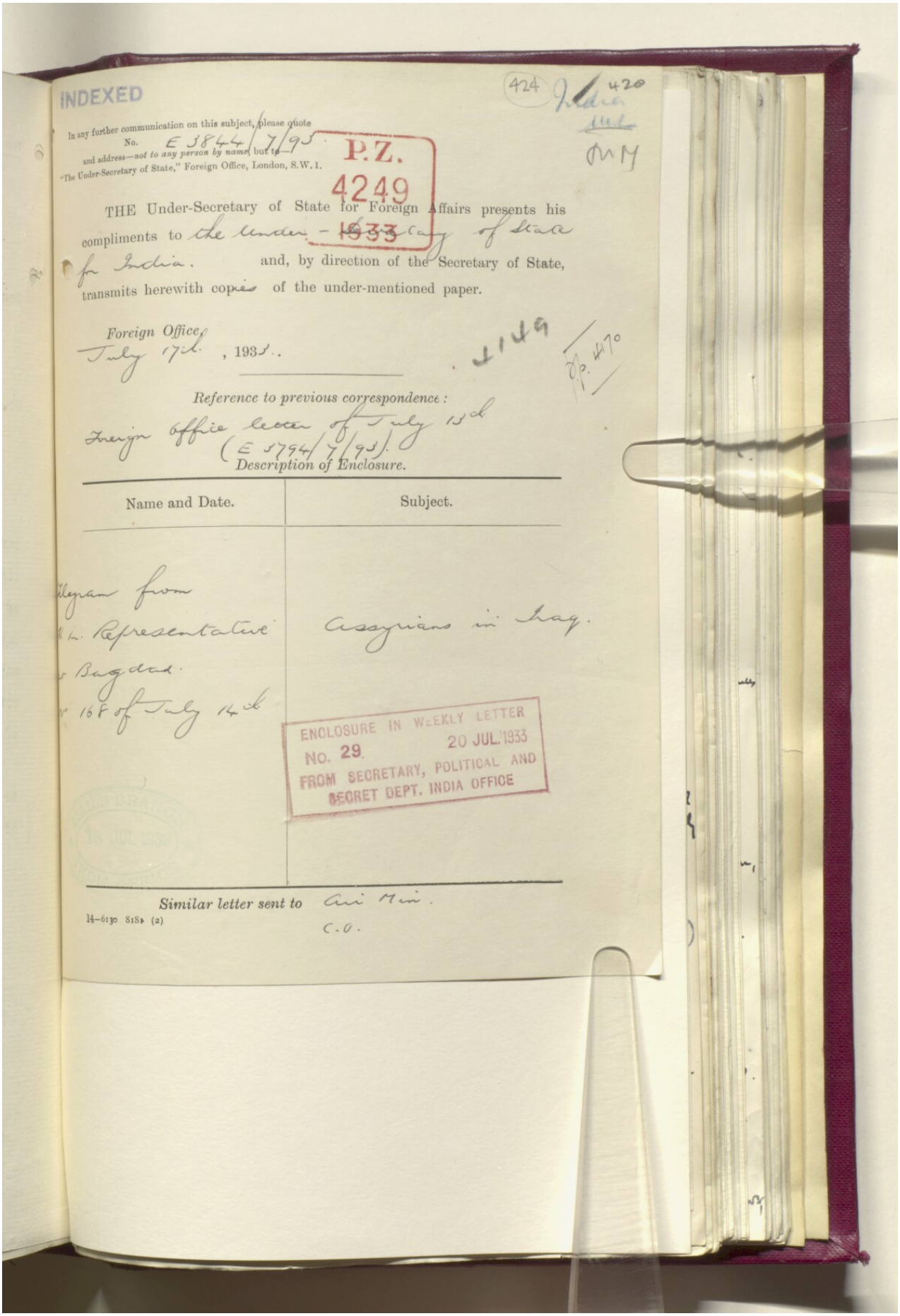
No.171. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

Your telegram No.129.

Prime Minister whom I approached this morning refuses to restore free movement to Mar Shimun so long as he declines to sign that acknowledgment. Refusal is based on the grounds of internal prestige. He admits that the King and three Cabinet Ministers are against him but contends that the majority of the Cabinet support him. He is quite prepared either to resign or to reconstitute the Cabinet on return of the King.

In the meantime the situation in the north continues to improve, the Prime Minister admitting that the influence of Mar Shimun is far less than he imagined.



INDEXED

424 India 420

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3844/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4249 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
July 17th, 1933.

1149

pp. 470

Reference to previous correspondence:
Foreign Office letter of July 13th (E 3794/7/93).

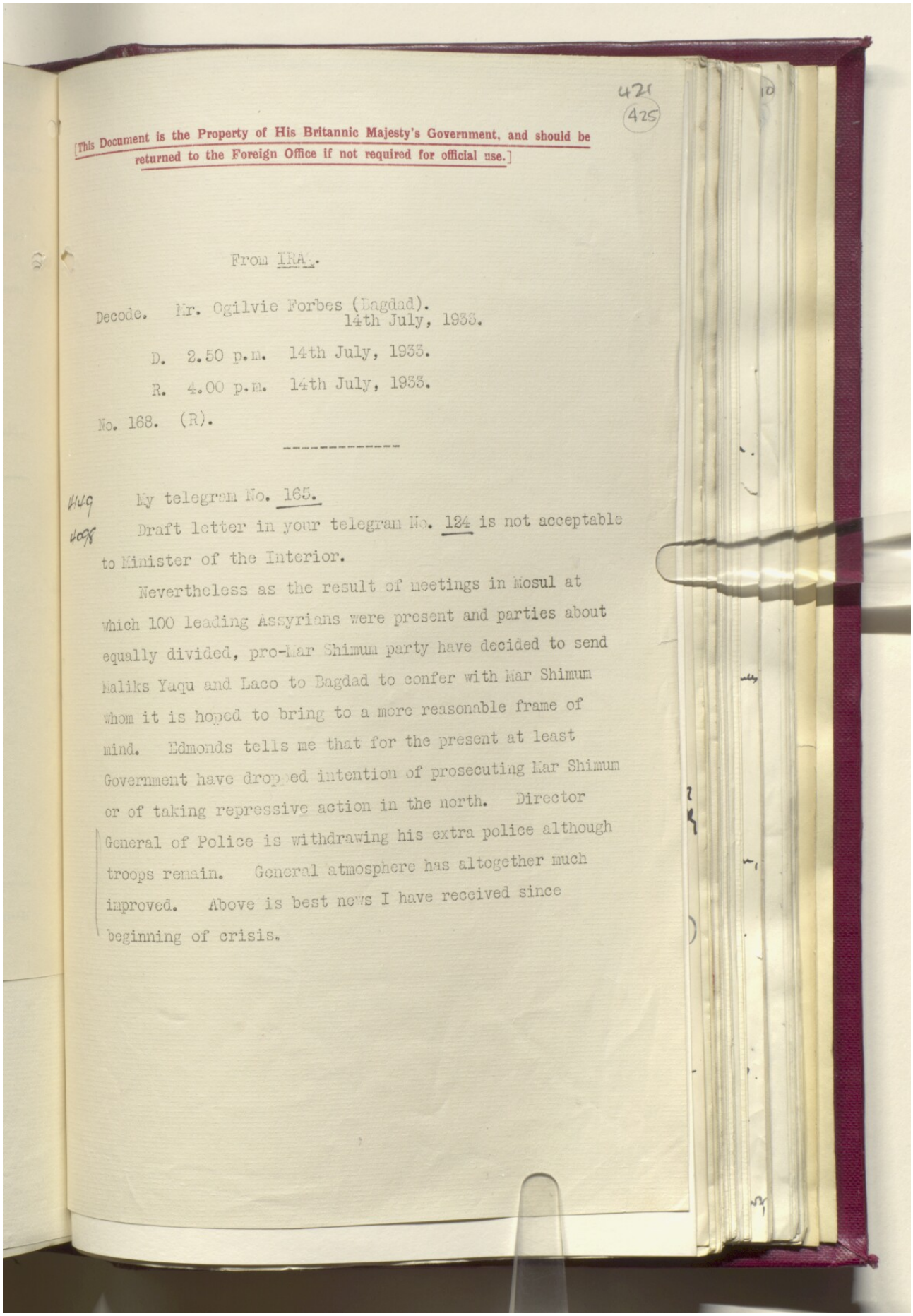
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegram from H.M. Representative at Baghdad. No 168 of July 14th	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 29. 20 JUL. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14–6130 818 (2)



421
425

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
14th July, 1933.

D. 2.50 p.m. 14th July, 1933.

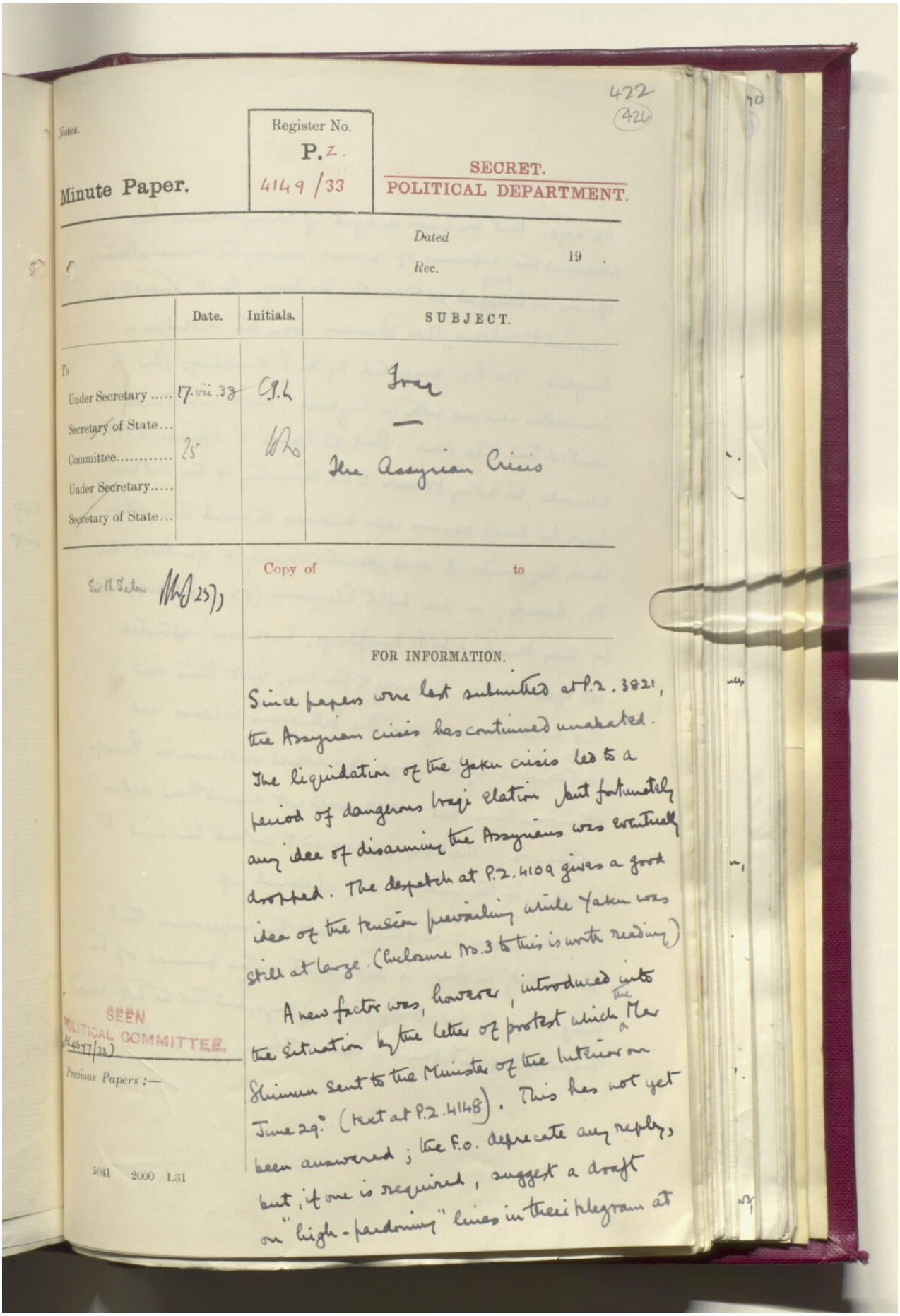
R. 4.00 p.m. 14th July, 1933.

No. 168. (R).

My telegram No. 165.

Draft letter in your telegram No. 124 is not acceptable to Minister of the Interior.

Nevertheless as the result of meetings in Mosul at which 100 leading Assyrians were present and parties about equally divided, pro-Mar Shimun party have decided to send Maliks Yaqu and Laco to Bagdad to confer with Mar Shimun whom it is hoped to bring to a more reasonable frame of mind. Edmonds tells me that for the present at least Government have dropped intention of prosecuting Mar Shimun or of taking repressive action in the north. Director General of Police is withdrawing his extra police although troops remain. General atmosphere has altogether much improved. Above is best news I have received since beginning of crisis.



422
(426)

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P.Z.
4149/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	17.VII.33	C.J.L	Iraq — The Assyrian Crisis
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	25	W.O.	
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Sir H. Seton W.O. 25/7

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

Since papers were last submitted at P.Z. 3821, the Assyrian crisis has continued unabated. The liquidation of the Yezidi crisis led to a period of dangerous Iraqi elation but fortunately any idea of disarming the Assyrians was eventually dropped. The despatch at P.Z. 4109 gives a good idea of the tension prevailing while Yezidi was still at large. (Enclosure No. 3 to this is worth reading)

A new factor was, however, introduced into the situation by the letter of protest which Mar Shimun sent to the Minister of the Interior on June 29th (text at P.Z. 4148). This has not yet been answered; the F.O. deprecate any reply, but, if one is required, suggest a draft on "high-pardoning" lines in their telegram at

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
(4/4647/33)

Previous Papers :—

5041 2000 1.31

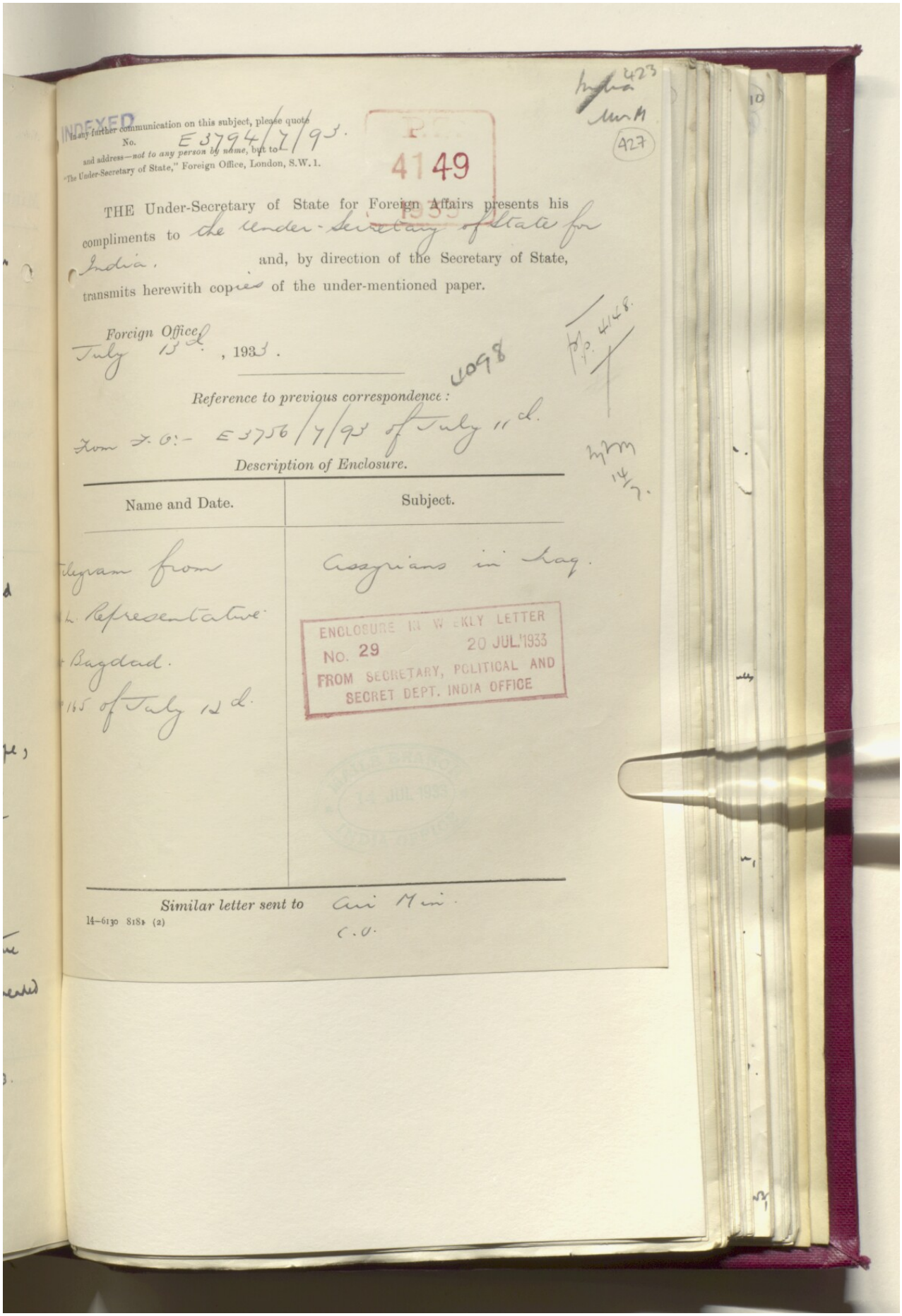
P.Z. 4098. But the main subject of correspondence has concerned the difference of opinion among the various British officials in ~~Bagdad~~ Iraq as to whether the Iraqi Govt. should be advised to release the Mar Shimun from his detention in Bagdad. The F.O., supported by Sir F. Humphrys & Sir K. Cornwallis who are both in England, have consistently wanted this to be done. But the Chargé d'Affaires & Mr. Edmonds, the Acting Adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, have for local reasons been anxious to avoid this step, which they considered would almost certainly be fruitless. The F.O., however, in their latest telegram (P.Z. 4170), supported by King Feisal & Sir F. Humphrys, have now instructed Mr. Ogilvie Forbes to convey to the Iraqi Govt their view that local reasons against the Patriarch's release are outweighed by the danger of adverse criticism in Europe, & to inform them that H.M.G. could not defend their action at Geneva. The King is prepared to curtail his visit to Europe, if the matter is not cleared up.

The papers more & more leave the impression that tranquillity in Iraq is dependent on the presence of the King and of Sir Francis Humphrys, but that the hot-headed temperament of the Patriarch is much to blame. R. F. Morley

17.7.33.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000040



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E3794/7/93.

and address—*not to any person by name*, but to "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

4149

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office
July 13th, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.:- E3756/7/93 of July 11th.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegram from H.M. Representative Bagdad. 165 of July 12th.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
NO. 29 20 JUL 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14—6130 818 (2)

424 (428)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

4149
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
12th July, 1933.

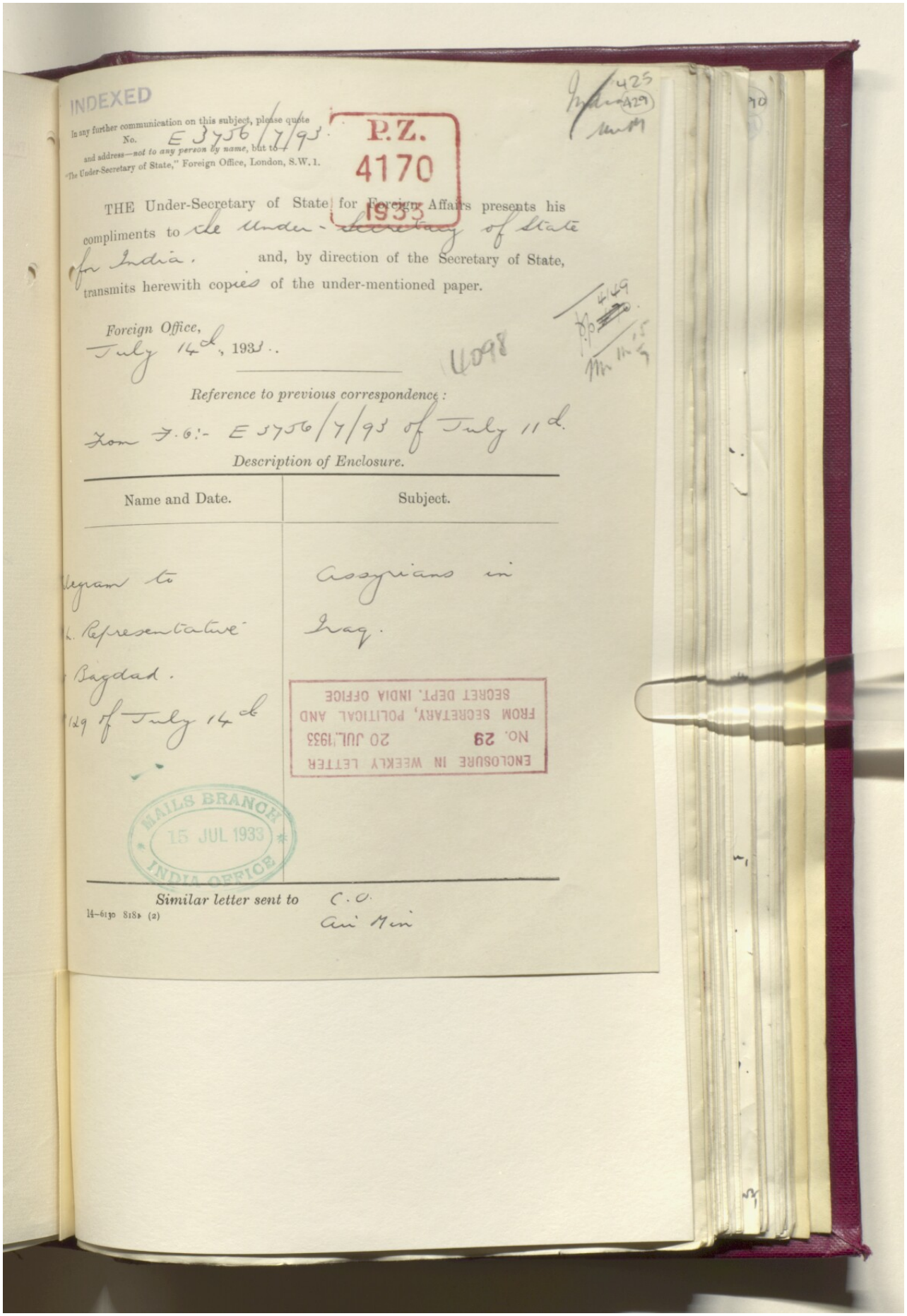
D. 2.00 p.m. 12th July, 1933.

R. 1.50 p.m. 12th July, 1933.

No. 165. (R).

4098 My telegram No. 163 last paragraph.

Edmonds informs me that meeting passed off on the whole satisfactorily and that deputation of Maliks of Mar Shimun party will probably come to Bagdad in order to induce patriarch to sign acknowledgement provided they can obtain safe conduct from Iraq Government.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3756/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4170 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
July 14th, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.:- E 3756/7/93 of July 11th.

Description of Enclosure.

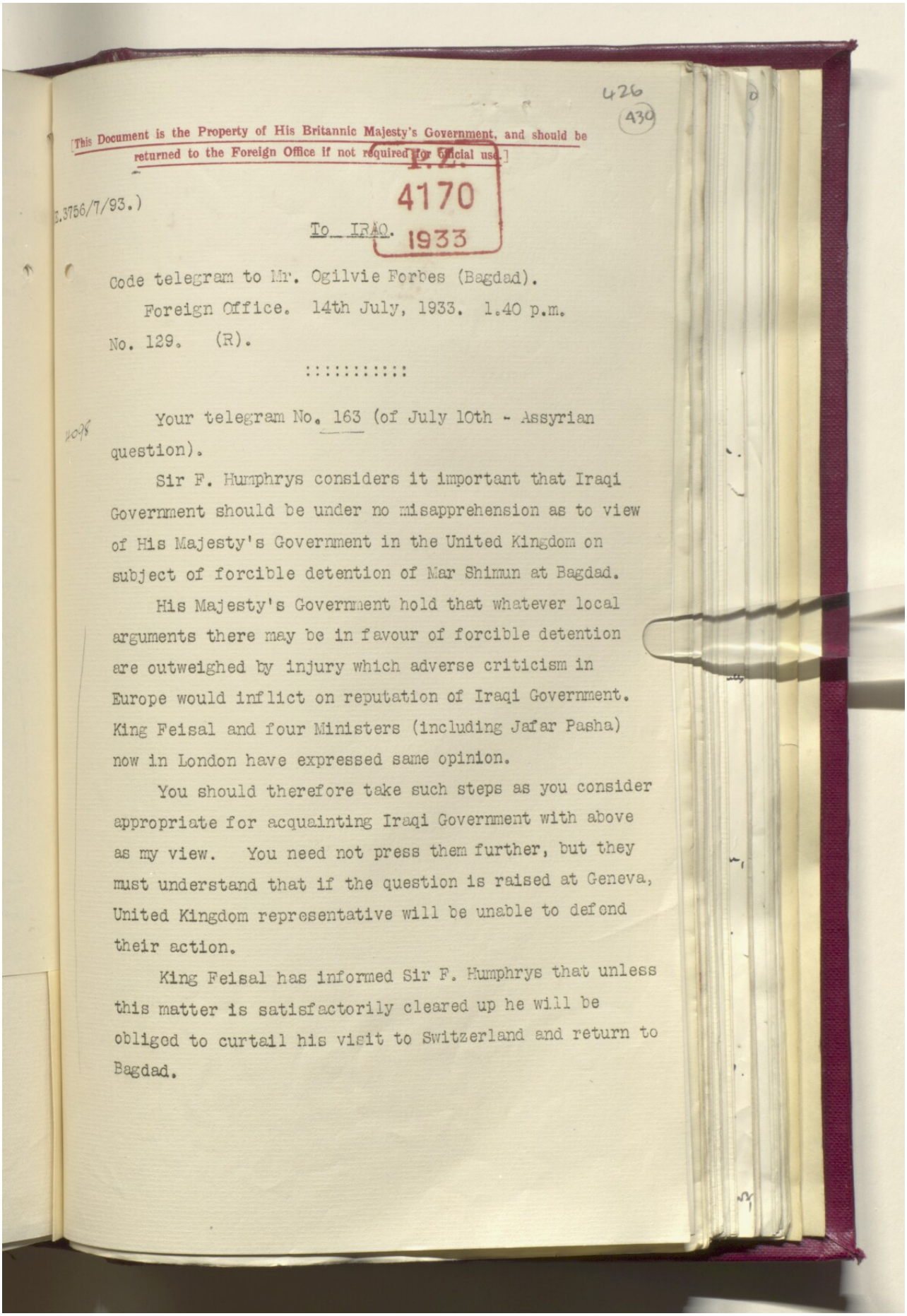
Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegram to H. Representative Bagdad. 129 of July 14th	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
No. 29 20 JUL 1933

MAILS BRANCH 15 JUL 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. Air Min

14–6130 818 (2)



426
430

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

E.3756/7/93.)

I.Z. 4170 1933

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 14th July, 1933. 1.40 p.m.

No. 129. (R).

::::::::::::

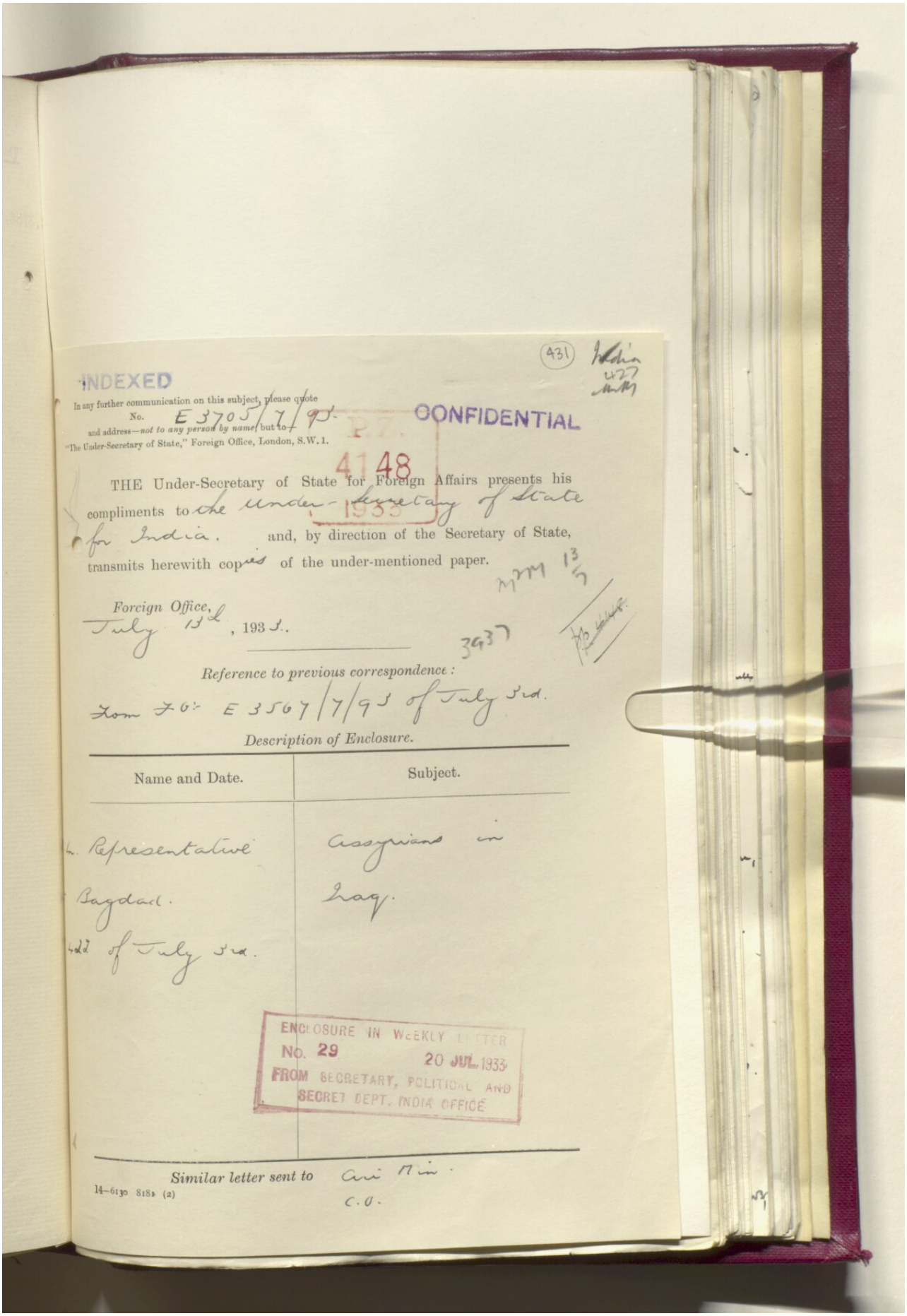
Your telegram No. 163 (of July 10th - Assyrian question).

Sir F. Humphrys considers it important that Iraqi Government should be under no misapprehension as to view of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom on subject of forcible detention of Mar Shimun at Bagdad.

His Majesty's Government hold that whatever local arguments there may be in favour of forcible detention are outweighed by injury which adverse criticism in Europe would inflict on reputation of Iraqi Government. King Feisal and four Ministers (including Jafar Pasha) now in London have expressed same opinion.

You should therefore take such steps as you consider appropriate for acquainting Iraqi Government with above as my view. You need not press them further, but they must understand that if the question is raised at Geneva, United Kingdom representative will be unable to defend their action.

King Feisal has informed Sir F. Humphrys that unless this matter is satisfactorily cleared up he will be obliged to curtail his visit to Switzerland and return to Bagdad.



(431)

INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3705/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name* but to "The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

4148
1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
July 13th, 1933.

3937

Reference to previous correspondence:

From F.O.: E 3567/7/93 of July 3rd.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
1. Representative Baghdad. 422 of July 3rd.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 29 20 JUL 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14–6130 818a (2)

THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

428
432

4148
1933

EASTERN (IRAQ). July 6, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3705/7/93]

No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(*Received July* 6.)

(No. 422.)

HIS Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Bagdad presents his compliments to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and has the honour to transmit to him copy of a letter, dated the 29th June, 1933, from Mar Shimun to the Minister of the Interior, Bagdad, respecting the Assyrian settlement.

Bagdad, July 3, 1933.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Mar Shimun to the Minister of Interior, Bagdad.

Bagdad, June 29, 1933.

Your Excellency,

I BEG to state that the action of the Government now confirmed by your letter of the 24th June, detaining me in Bagdad against my will for no just cause, is illegal; and that any responsibility of what may happen when the news reaches my people rests with the Government.

I also wish to point out that the methods adopted by the local officials in dealing with the Assyrian settlement policy is contrary to the "Fundamental Law" or the guarantees given by the Iraq Government to the League of Nations on the 30th May, 1932. Therefore I am arranging to place the documentary evidence before the proper authorities.

I am quite prepared to suffer any further injustice that the Government may put on me, but in no way will I submit to the methods which have been used to make me sign documents which betray my people into accepting an unreal fulfilment of the promises and recommendations of the League of Nations.

Finally, I again repeat, as per my previous correspondence with your Excellency, and also through your British advisers:—

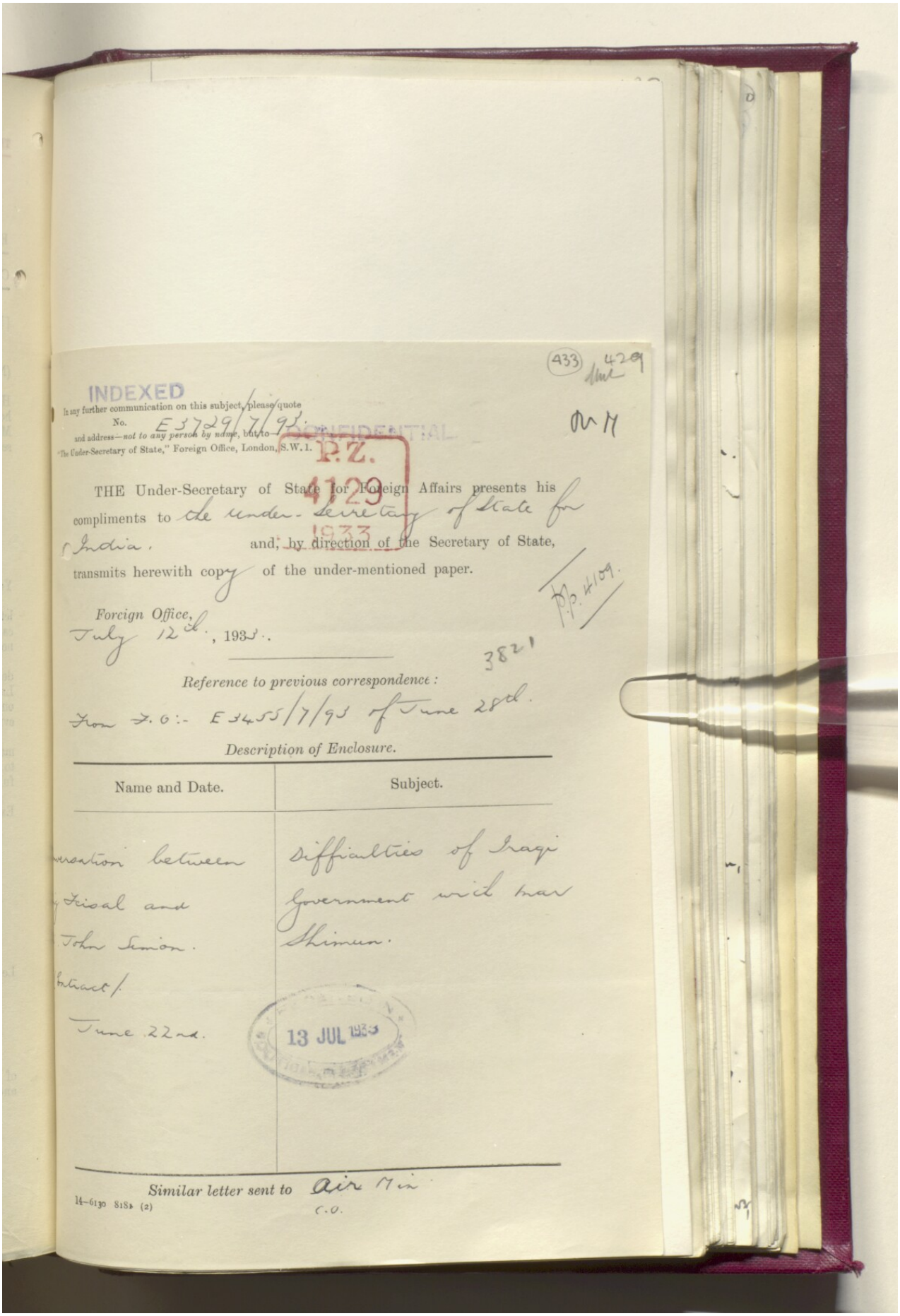
(*a*) I am willing to assist in the settlement of the Assyrians in Iraq.
(*b*) After settlement I will give the required promises in writing to do my utmost to make my Assyrian people as one of the most loyal and law-abiding subjects of His Majesty and his Government.
(*c*) I will then make preparations in accordance with the canons of my Church, for drafting of a law according to your Excellency's suggestion and conformable to article 6 of the Fundamental Law.

If this is not agreeable to the Government, I claim the right to ask the League of Nations for the alternative settlement scheme.

I am, &c.
ESHAI SHIMUN,
By the Grace of God, Catholicos Patriarch of the Assyrians.

P.S.—May I draw your Excellency's attention to the inflammatory speech of an honorary Deputy, recorded and broadcasted in *Al Istiklal* of the 29th June, and other local papers, inciting hatred towards the Assyrians.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x00004b



(433) 4289

INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3729/7/93

and address—*not to any person by name, but to*—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4129 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the under-secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copy of the under-mentioned paper.

P.Z. 4129.

Foreign Office, July 12th, 1933.

3821

Reference to previous correspondence:

From F.O.:- E 3455/7/93 of June 28th.

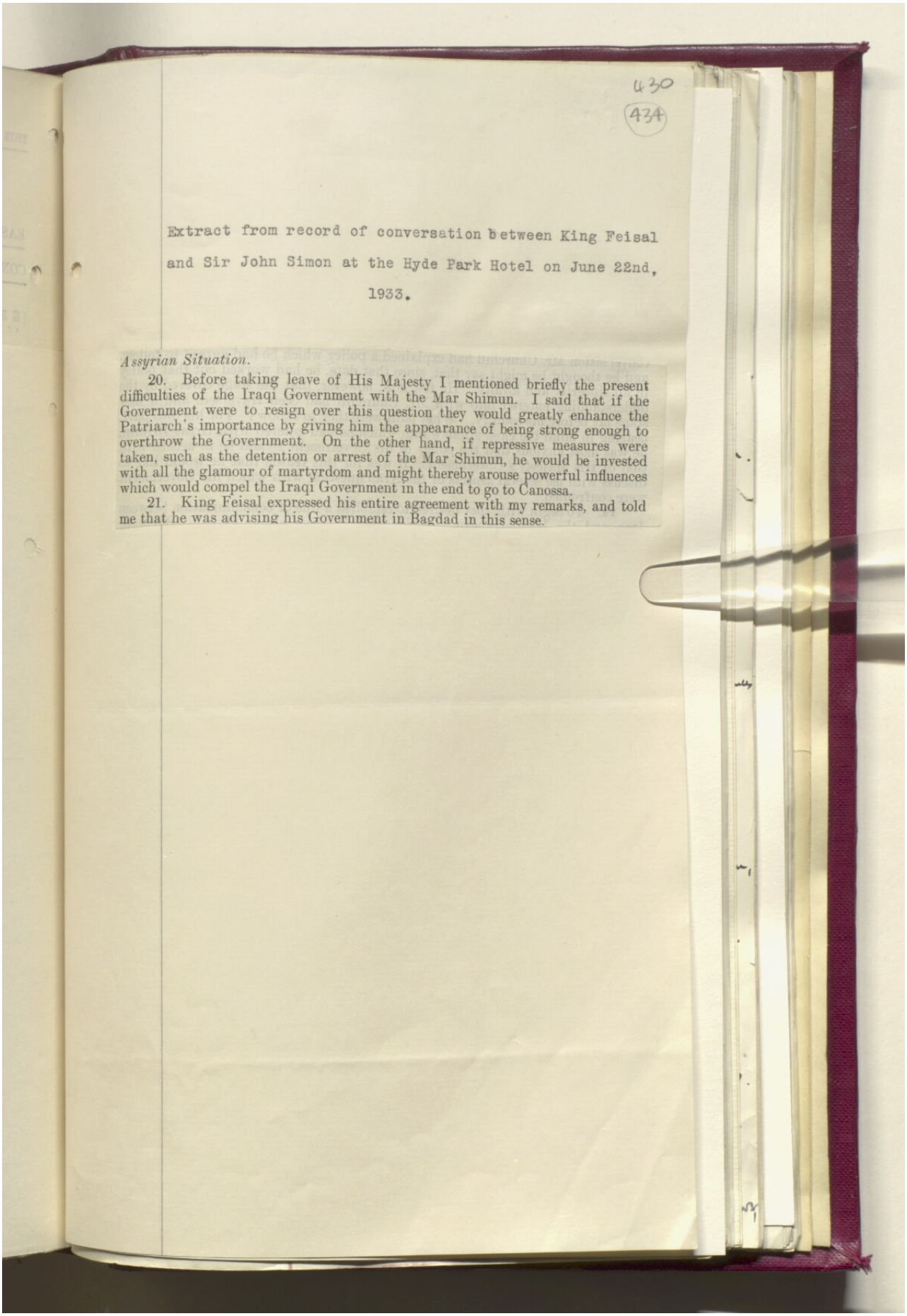
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
versation between Feisal and John Simon. Extract. June 22nd.	Difficulties of Iraqi Government with Nuri Shimun.

13 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14—6130 818 (2)



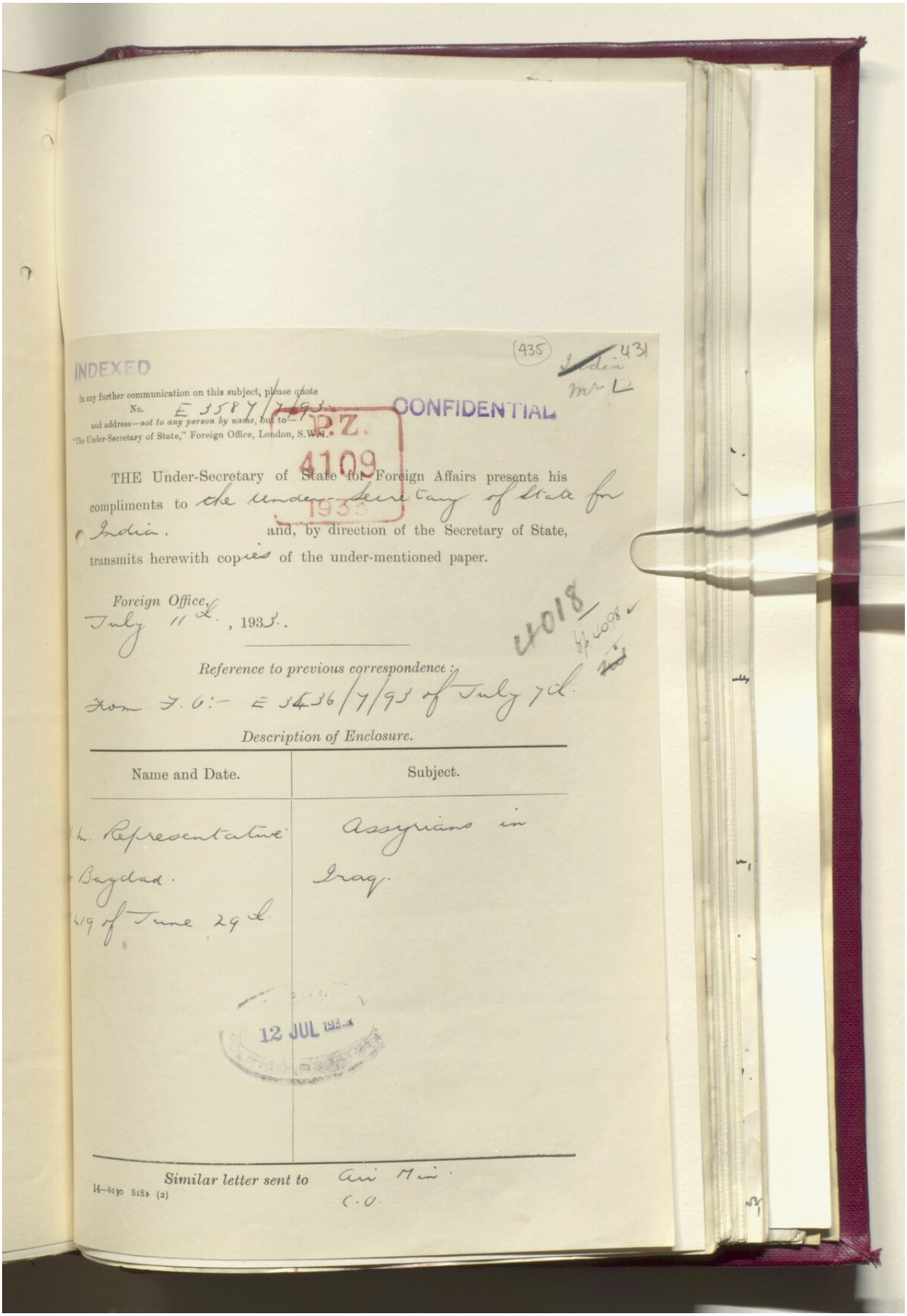
430
434

Extract from record of conversation between King Feisal and Sir John Simon at the Hyde Park Hotel on June 22nd, 1933.

Assyrian Situation.

20. Before taking leave of His Majesty I mentioned briefly the present difficulties of the Iraqi Government with the Mar Shimun. I said that if the Government were to resign over this question they would greatly enhance the Patriarch's importance by giving him the appearance of being strong enough to overthrow the Government. On the other hand, if repressive measures were taken, such as the detention or arrest of the Mar Shimun, he would be invested with all the glamour of martyrdom and might thereby arouse powerful influences which would compel the Iraqi Government in the end to go to Canossa.

21. King Feisal expressed his entire agreement with my remarks, and told me that he was advising his Government in Bagdad in this sense.



(435) ~~India~~ 431
Mr L

INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3587/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.Z. 4109 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India, and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
July 11th, 1933.

4018
Bp. 4098

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O:- E 3436/7/93 of July 7th.

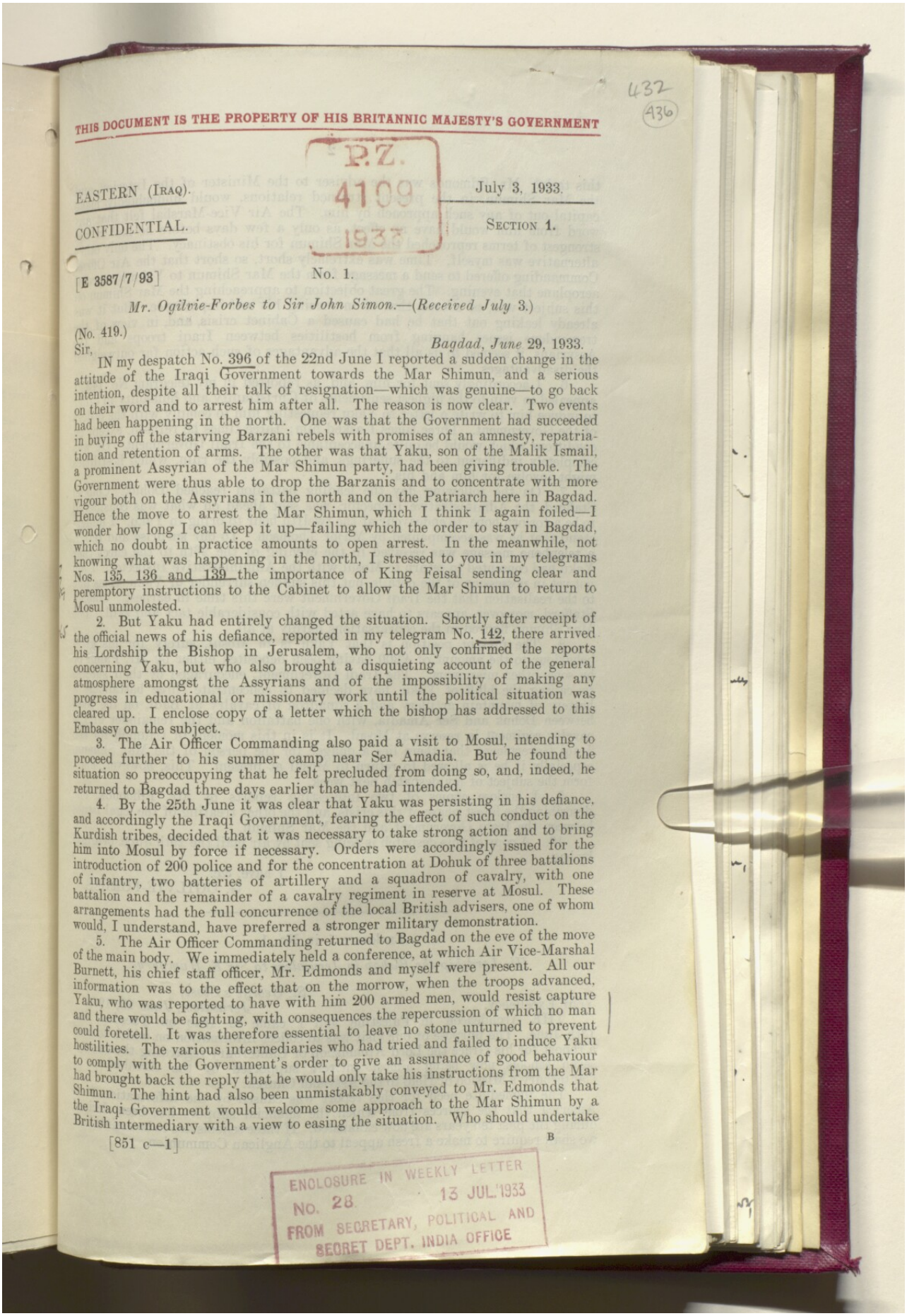
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad. 419 of June 29th.	Assyrians in Iraq.

12 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to Air Min. C.O.

14-6130 8181 (2)



THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

P.Z. 4109 1933

EASTERN (IRAQ). July 3, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3587/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 419.)

Sir, *Bagdad, June 29, 1933.*

IN my despatch No. 396 of the 22nd June I reported a sudden change in the attitude of the Iraqi Government towards the Mar Shimun, and a serious intention, despite all their talk of resignation—which was genuine—to go back on their word and to arrest him after all. The reason is now clear. Two events had been happening in the north. One was that the Government had succeeded in buying off the starving Barzani rebels with promises of an amnesty, repatriation and retention of arms. The other was that Yaku, son of the Malik Ismail, a prominent Assyrian of the Mar Shimun party, had been giving trouble. The Government were thus able to drop the Barzanis and to concentrate with more vigour both on the Assyrians in the north and on the Patriarch here in Bagdad. Hence the move to arrest the Mar Shimun, which I think I again foiled—I wonder how long I can keep it up—failing which the order to stay in Bagdad, which no doubt in practice amounts to open arrest. In the meanwhile, not knowing what was happening in the north, I stressed to you in my telegrams Nos. 135, 136 and 139 the importance of King Feisal sending clear and peremptory instructions to the Cabinet to allow the Mar Shimun to return to Mosul unmolested.

2. But Yaku had entirely changed the situation. Shortly after receipt of the official news of his defiance, reported in my telegram No. 142, there arrived his Lordship the Bishop in Jerusalem, who not only confirmed the reports concerning Yaku, but who also brought a disquieting account of the general atmosphere amongst the Assyrians and of the impossibility of making any progress in educational or missionary work until the political situation was cleared up. I enclose copy of a letter which the bishop has addressed to this Embassy on the subject.

3. The Air Officer Commanding also paid a visit to Mosul, intending to proceed further to his summer camp near Ser Amadia. But he found the situation so preoccupying that he felt precluded from doing so, and, indeed, he returned to Bagdad three days earlier than he had intended.

4. By the 25th June it was clear that Yaku was persisting in his defiance, and accordingly the Iraqi Government, fearing the effect of such conduct on the Kurdish tribes, decided that it was necessary to take strong action and to bring him into Mosul by force if necessary. Orders were accordingly issued for the introduction of 200 police and for the concentration at Dohuk of three battalions of infantry, two batteries of artillery and a squadron of cavalry, with one battalion and the remainder of a cavalry regiment in reserve at Mosul. These arrangements had the full concurrence of the local British advisers, one of whom would, I understand, have preferred a stronger military demonstration.

5. The Air Officer Commanding returned to Bagdad on the eve of the move of the main body. We immediately held a conference, at which Air Vice-Marshal Burnett, his chief staff officer, Mr. Edmonds and myself were present. All our information was to the effect that on the morrow, when the troops advanced, Yaku, who was reported to have with him 200 armed men, would resist capture and there would be fighting, with consequences the repercussion of which no man could foretell. It was therefore essential to leave no stone unturned to prevent hostilities. The various intermediaries who had tried and failed to induce Yaku to comply with the Government's order to give an assurance of good behaviour had brought back the reply that he would only take his instructions from the Mar Shimun. The hint had also been unmistakably conveyed to Mr. Edmonds that the Iraqi Government would welcome some approach to the Mar Shimun by a British intermediary with a view to easing the situation. Who should undertake

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER NO. 28 13 JUL 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

this task? Mr. Edmonds was the adviser to the Minister of the Interior, and the Mar Shimun, in the present strained relations, would undoubtedly make capital out of any such approach by him. The Air Vice-Marshal felt that any word from him would have no effect, as only a few days before he had in the strongest of terms reproached the Mar Shimun for his obstinacy. The only other alternative was myself. Time was extremely short, so short that the Air Officer Commanding offered to send a message from the Mar Shimun to Yaku by special aeroplane that evening. The great objection to approaching the Mar Shimun on this subject was, of course, that of increasing his self-importance. But it was already leaking out that he had caused a Cabinet crisis, and, in view of the tremendous issues hanging from hostilities between Iraqi troops and the Assyrians, it seemed to us all that the advantages of such action far outweighed the disadvantages.

6. I accordingly sent for him, and, as reported in my telegram No. 142, I appealed in vain to the highest sentiments of Christianity and humanity in order to induce him to write a letter to Yaku requesting him to comply with the orders of the Government. Three times I asked him; three times he refused, except on conditions which would be quite unacceptable to the Iraqi Government. He was completely indifferent to the sufferings, and possibly the ruin, which hostilities might involve for him and his.

7. On the following day the leading battalion reached Dohuk. Colonel Stafford, the Administrative Inspector, was sent ahead on what was considered to be a forlorn hope, to endeavour at the twelfth hour to bring in Yaku. I understand that he was accompanied by Major Thomson. To our surprise and relief, a telephone message was received in the evening of the 26th to the effect that Yaku had consented to return to Mosul with the Administrative Inspector. I am not yet in possession of the details, but this sudden surrender of Yaku seems due to the realisation that the Iraqi Government were this time in earnest. Colonel Stafford, moreover, appears to have acted with considerable tact and skill. The Mar Shimun figured in the conversations hardly at all.

8. The present position is that Yaku is in Mosul, surety for his good behaviour to the amount of £300 having been deposited either by Mr. Panfil or by some other missionary. The Iraqi Government, encouraged by their success in calling the bluff of Yaku, have decided to concentrate three battalions, a battery of mountain artillery and a squadron of cavalry at Badi, on the road between Dohuk and Ser Amadia, with one battalion and the remainder of the cavalry regiment in reserve at Mosul. It is in this moment of triumph for the Iraqi Government that there lies a danger for the person of the Mar Shimun, especially if he is allowed to return to Mosul at present. This, however, must form the subject of my despatch next week.

9. I enclose copies of two interesting reports by Mr. Edmonds, one describing the latest phase of this crisis, and the other treating of the legal issues between the Iraqi Government and the Mar Shimun.

10. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail the 29th June, original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

His Lordship the Bishop in Jerusalem to Sir F. Humphrys.

St. George's Close,
Jerusalem, June 23, 1933.

Your Excellency,

THE Archdeacon in Palestine and I came to Iraq on Tuesday, the 13th June. The purpose of our visit was to collect information on which to base a report for his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury regarding the twenty-seven schools now being almost entirely supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Mission of Help to the Assyrian Church.

The immediate need for this report was caused by the information from America that the sources from which the financial support has been derived during the past ten years are now exhausted. If these schools are to be maintained we shall require to make a fresh appeal to the Anglican Communion.

In making our enquiries we found ourselves at every turn faced by a political situation so sensitive that we were unable to attain, or even pursue, our objective, without being compelled to listen to many things which were not strictly within our sphere. We propose to send to your Excellency a copy of our report to the archbishop.

At every stage we made it a primary duty to call upon the local authorities and explain the purpose of our visit. We would desire to record our sense of gratitude for the cordial and sympathetic way in which they received us.

The archdeacon leaves for Jerusalem on Sunday, the 25th, and I return on Wednesday, the 28th.

Believe me, &c.
GEORGE FRANCIS,
Bishop in Jerusalem.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Mr. C. J. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

(P.S. No. 523. Secret and Personal.)

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes, *Bagdad, June* 25, 1933.

IN continuation of my P.S. 519 of the 22nd June, 1933.

1. On the 22nd June I had a long talk with the Bishop of Jerusalem, who had kindly brought down the full and able report from Stafford (S. 206 of the 21st June, 1933), on the Assyrian question, which has been sent to you separately. The bishop, who had come out to enquire in what way the Anglican and American Episcopal Churches could assist the Nestorian Church in its spiritual life, related to me at some length his experiences and observations during a short tour he had just made in the Dohuk and Amadiya districts. His narrative emphasised that there is, under the political differences, a deep emotional loyalty to the Mar Shimun as Patriarch among the majority of Assyrians, and confirmed our view that the premature arrest or prosecution of Mar Shimun would serve to combine in opposition to Government many Assyrian elements that would normally give no trouble whatever. I advised the bishop to see you, and, indeed, happened to be with you later when he called. It was clear that he could be counted on to use all the influence of his sacred office to induce Mar Shimun to see reason.

2. In the course of the morning Mar Shimun rang up to say that he had received no intimation from the Ministry instructing him to stay; he gave the impression that failing such instructions he proposed to leave, notwithstanding your advice. I told him to telephone to the Minister and advised him on no account to attempt to leave without his express concurrence. Fortunately, Mar Shimun at once got Hikmat Beg, who told him clearly to stay in Bagdad, and promised, subject to the Prime Minister's approval, to confirm the intimation in writing on Saturday.

3. On Saturday, the 24th June, I found the Minister much calmer. He asked my opinion on Mar Shimun's request for written confirmation of orders not to leave. I advised that this should be given and in the following form: "I confirm my answer given to you by telephone on Thursday, that I do not wish you to leave Bagdad for the present, pending further intimation." I had gathered that for some days at any rate Mar Shimun would not leave in defiance of written orders; the important thing at the moment was to provide against the possibility of a sudden departure, a chase and the hauling back of the Patriarch.

4. In the meantime constant reports were being received of the vagaries of Yaku, son of Malik Ismail. You will remember that early in the month he had come into Dohuk with an armed following to ensure that he should not be detained by the Kaïmakam. On the 14th June, 1933, he came in to see Major Thomson similarly escorted, and was refused an interview in consequence. On the 19th June Yaku was reported to be loitering on the Dohuk–Amadiya road with a band of armed men (variously estimated at between 100 and 300, and, it is said, admitted by Yaku himself to have been eighty), at the time when Malik Khoshaba and other members of the Assyrian Settlement Advisory Committee were motoring to Amadiya. Yaku was interviewed in turn by the Kaïmakam of Amadiya, Major Sargon, Rev. Mr. Panfil, and various minor officials who endeavoured to

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000055

persuade him to come in. His letters contain among other demands as conditions precedent to his coming in: (1) that the police reinforcements sent to Dohuk must be withdrawn; (2) that agreement must be reached between the Government and Mar Shimun on the manner of land settlement; (3) that his tribe must not be forced to accept chiefs whom they dislike; (4) that an Assyrian, named Warda, imprisoned in Dohuk must be released. Other Assyrians were reported to have refused to come in to Dohuk, and the general atmosphere of defiance of Government was unsettling the Kurds.

5. On the same day, the 24th June, the mutessarif and the director-general of police asked for a military column to be sent to Dohuk. At the request of the Minister I spoke on the telephone to Stafford at Dohuk; he told me that he regarded the situation as serious, and that the best chance of avoiding a clash and bloodshed was for the Government to make an overwhelming demonstration of force in the Dohuk–Amadiya area. I informed Hikmat Beg that I agreed with this appreciation. The Chief of the Staff was then summoned. It was arranged that the battalion now standing by at Mosul should march at once for Dohuk, and that two more battalions, two batteries of artillery and a squadron of cavalry should follow as soon as possible. Hikmat Beg emphasised to Taha Beg that this was in no way a punitive expedition; the rôle of the army was to make a demonstration of force with a view to avoiding bloodshed; Yaku was still a police matter; on the 25th, at Stafford's suggestion, I asked the Minister to ensure that Bekir Sudqi should not be put in command of the force.

6. On the morning of the 25th June I heard from you that King Feisal had telegraphed out instructions that Mar Shimun was not to be molested pending his return. I asked the Minister what effect the instructions would have on his attitude. I gathered it would have very little, except that perhaps he would not precipitate legal action if Mar Shimun did not challenge the legal validity of the intimation that he should not leave Bagdad. The Government had now been obliged to send a large expedition; was it also to let Mar Shimun, the prime cause of the trouble, return with successful defiance of the Government to encourage him? The Minister said that he was still anxious for a satisfactory solution that would make the despatch of the troops, and the resultant expenses, unnecessary. He agreed that Stafford should go out and make one last effort to persuade Yaku to come in, and hoped that somebody British would still persuade Mar Shimun to sign the short statement required, and even to tell Yaku to come in. It is hardly necessary to recall that both the Bishop of Jerusalem and yourself have failed to persuade this obstinate young man to do either.

7. Up to the last moment I have held (and a private letter from Colonel Stafford written on the morning of the 25th June still expresses the same view), that Mar Shimun would have best been allowed to return to Mosul and ignored, while individual law-breakers like Yaku were dealt with severely. The King's instructions to the Cabinet, however, arrived when the despatch of a large military column had already become an imperious necessity, and even with these instructions in mind I should hesitate to press an unwilling Minister for Mar Shimun's release from the invitation to stay. From what you tell me of your interview with him this evening, the 25th June, and his intransigent and defiant attitude, I now incline to think that the time is past when Mar Shimun can safely be allowed to return to Mosul. One might risk it oneself, but only if every subsequent move were in one's own hands.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

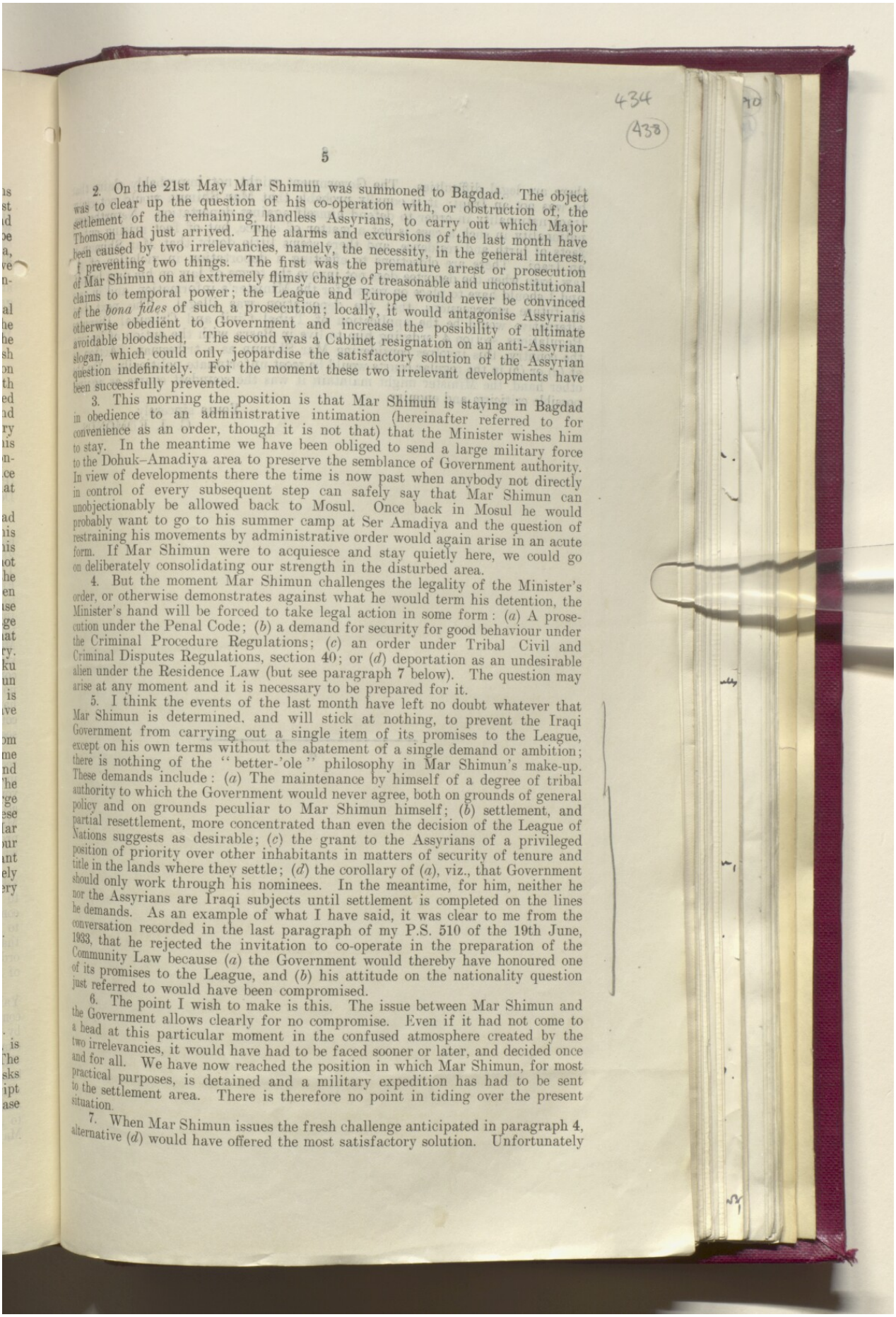
Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Mr. C. J. Edmonds to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes.

(P.S. No. 527.) *Bagdad, June* 26, 1933.

Dear Ogilvie-Forbes,

THE narrative of the Mar Shimun affair, in so far as I am concerned, is brought up to date by my P.S. 523 of yesterday evening, the 25th June. The situation has been changing so rapidly that any attempted appreciation risks being out of date before the ink is dry, or at any rate before the manuscript is typed. Nevertheless, yesterday evening does seem to mark the end of a phase and the moment is perhaps opportune to pause to take stock.



2. On the 21st May Mar Shimun was summoned to Bagdad. The object was to clear up the question of his co-operation with, or obstruction of, the settlement of the remaining landless Assyrians, to carry out which Major Thomson had just arrived. The alarms and excursions of the last month have been caused by two irrelevancies, namely, the necessity, in the general interest, of preventing two things. The first was the premature arrest or prosecution of Mar Shimun on an extremely flimsy charge of treasonable and unconstitutional claims to temporal power; the League and Europe would never be convinced of the *bona fides* of such a prosecution; locally, it would antagonise Assyrians otherwise obedient to Government and increase the possibility of ultimate avoidable bloodshed. The second was a Cabinet resignation on an anti-Assyrian slogan, which could only jeopardise the satisfactory solution of the Assyrian question indefinitely. For the moment these two irrelevant developments have been successfully prevented.

3. This morning the position is that Mar Shimun is staying in Bagdad in obedience to an administrative intimation (hereinafter referred to for convenience as an order, though it is not that) that the Minister wishes him to stay. In the meantime we have been obliged to send a large military force to the Dohuk–Amadiya area to preserve the semblance of Government authority. In view of developments there the time is now past when anybody not directly in control of every subsequent step can safely say that Mar Shimun can unobjectionably be allowed back to Mosul. Once back in Mosul he would probably want to go to his summer camp at Ser Amadiya and the question of restraining his movements by administrative order would again arise in an acute form. If Mar Shimun were to acquiesce and stay quietly here, we could go on deliberately consolidating our strength in the disturbed area.

4. But the moment Mar Shimun challenges the legality of the Minister's order, or otherwise demonstrates against what he would term his detention, the Minister's hand will be forced to take legal action in some form: (*a*) A prosecution under the Penal Code; (*b*) a demand for security for good behaviour under the Criminal Procedure Regulations; (*c*) an order under Tribal Civil and Criminal Disputes Regulations, section 40; or (*d*) deportation as an undesirable alien under the Residence Law (but see paragraph 7 below). The question may arise at any moment and it is necessary to be prepared for it.

5. I think the events of the last month have left no doubt whatever that Mar Shimun is determined, and will stick at nothing, to prevent the Iraqi Government from carrying out a single item of its promises to the League, except on his own terms without the abatement of a single demand or ambition; there is nothing of the "better-'ole" philosophy in Mar Shimun's make-up. These demands include: (*a*) The maintenance by himself of a degree of tribal authority to which the Government would never agree, both on grounds of general policy and on grounds peculiar to Mar Shimun himself; (*b*) settlement, and partial resettlement, more concentrated than even the decision of the League of Nations suggests as desirable; (*c*) the grant to the Assyrians of a privileged position of priority over other inhabitants in matters of security of tenure and title in the lands where they settle; (*d*) the corollary of (*a*), viz., that Government should only work through his nominees. In the meantime, for him, neither he nor the Assyrians are Iraqi subjects until settlement is completed on the lines he demands. As an example of what I have said, it was clear to me from the conversation recorded in the last paragraph of my P.S. 510 of the 19th June, 1933, that he rejected the invitation to co-operate in the preparation of the Community Law because (*a*) the Government would thereby have honoured one of its promises to the League, and (*b*) his attitude on the nationality question just referred to would have been compromised.

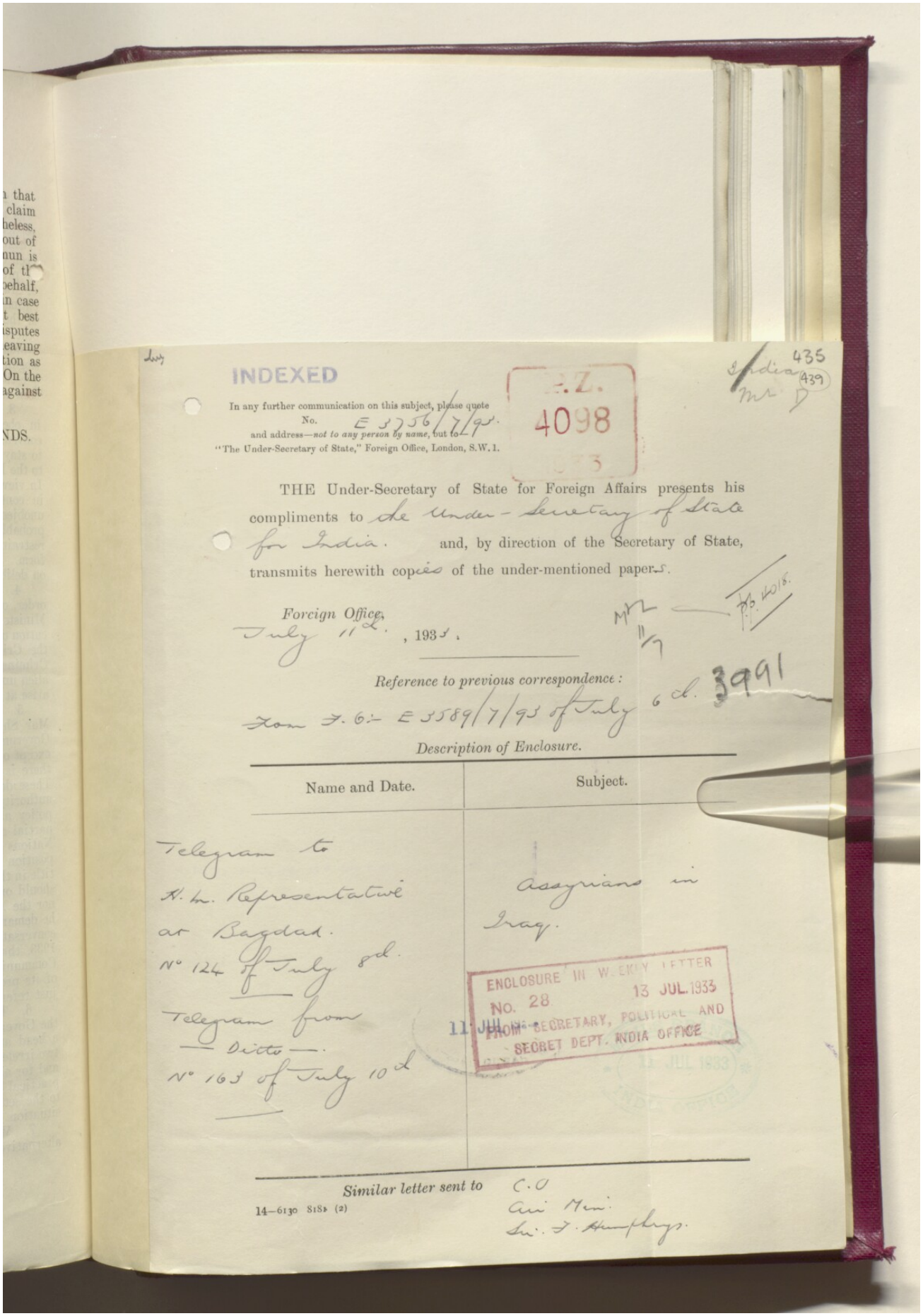
6. The point I wish to make is this. The issue between Mar Shimun and the Government allows clearly for no compromise. Even if it had not come to a head at this particular moment in the confused atmosphere created by the two irrelevancies, it would have had to be faced sooner or later, and decided once and for all. We have now reached the position in which Mar Shimun, for most practical purposes, is detained and a military expedition has had to be sent to the settlement area. There is therefore no point in tiding over the present situation.

7. When Mar Shimun issues the fresh challenge anticipated in paragraph 4, alternative (*d*) would have offered the most satisfactory solution. Unfortunately

there are legal difficulties. The Government might not improbably claim that he was not an Iraqi; it is equally probable that Mar Shimun would not claim Iraqi nationality in order to defend himself against deportation. Nevertheless, nationality in such a case is not a matter of choice, but of fact arising out of facts of birth and residence, and there seems little doubt that Mar Shimun is an Iraqi. There are objections to effecting a deportation in violation of th law, even when the deportee does not invoke the terms of law on his own behalf, and I should have to place on record for the Minister's information, and in case of future repercussions, that the deportation was illegal. The next best alternative would be the application of Tribal Civil and Criminal Disputes Regulations, section 4, ordering him to live in Basra with the option of leaving the country; this involves considering Mar Shimun as a tribesman. Action as at (*a*) or (*b*) in the regular courts would be most unfortunate politically. On the other hand, the Minister might maintain it was the soundest course as against possible criticism and enquiry.

Yours sincerely,
C. J. EDMONDS.

o



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3756/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

E.Z. 4098

India 435 (439) Mr D

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India. and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
July 11th, 1933.

Mr L 11/7 — P.S. 4018.

Reference to previous correspondence:
From F.O.:- E 3589/7/93 of July 6th. 3991

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
Telegram to H.M. Representative at Bagdad. No 124 of July 8th. Telegram from — Ditto —. No 163 of July 10th	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 28 13 JUL. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

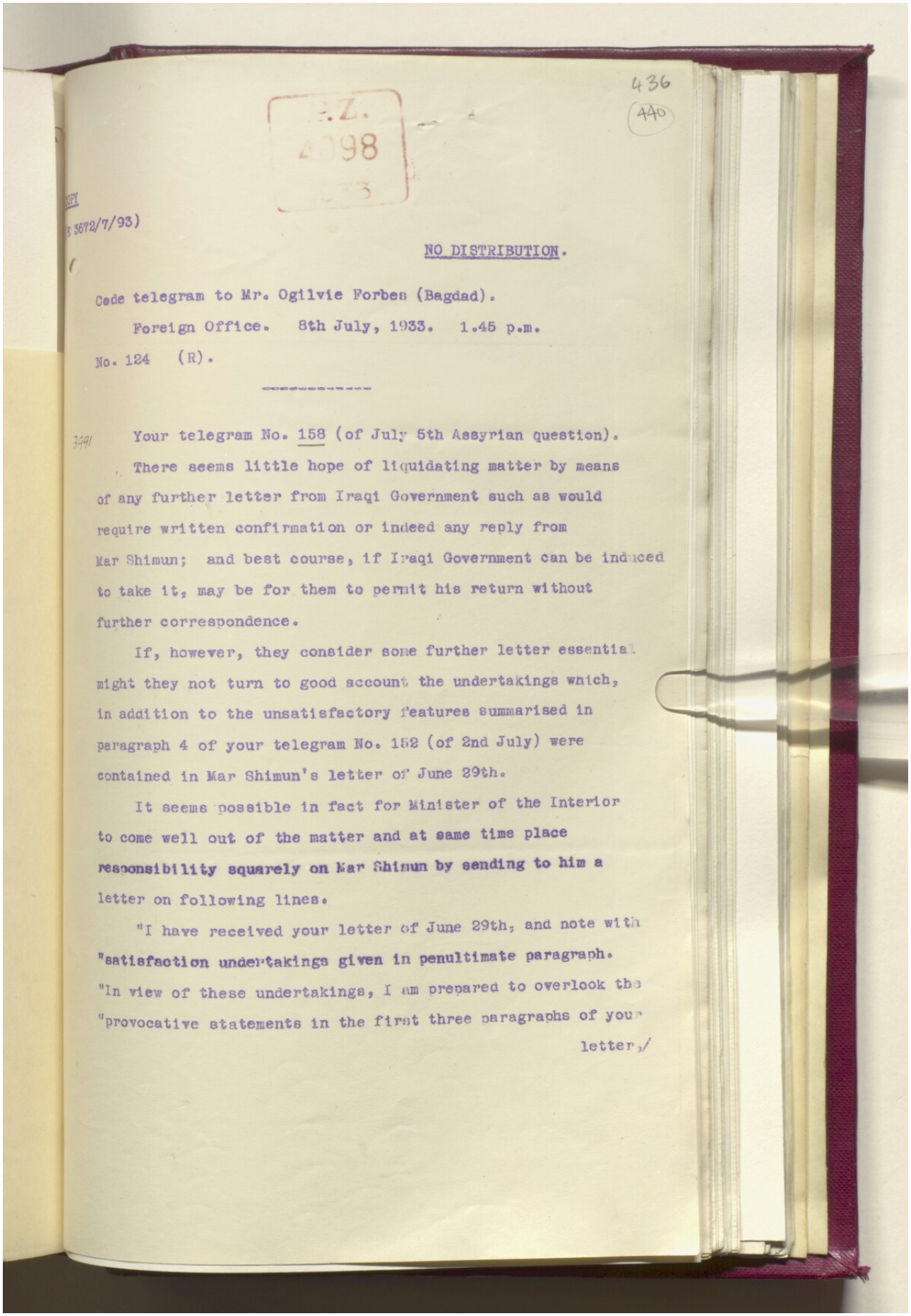
11 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O
Air Min.
Sir F. Humphrys.

14—6130 8181 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000059



436
440

E 3672/7/93)

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 8th July, 1933. 1.45 p.m.

No. 124 (R).

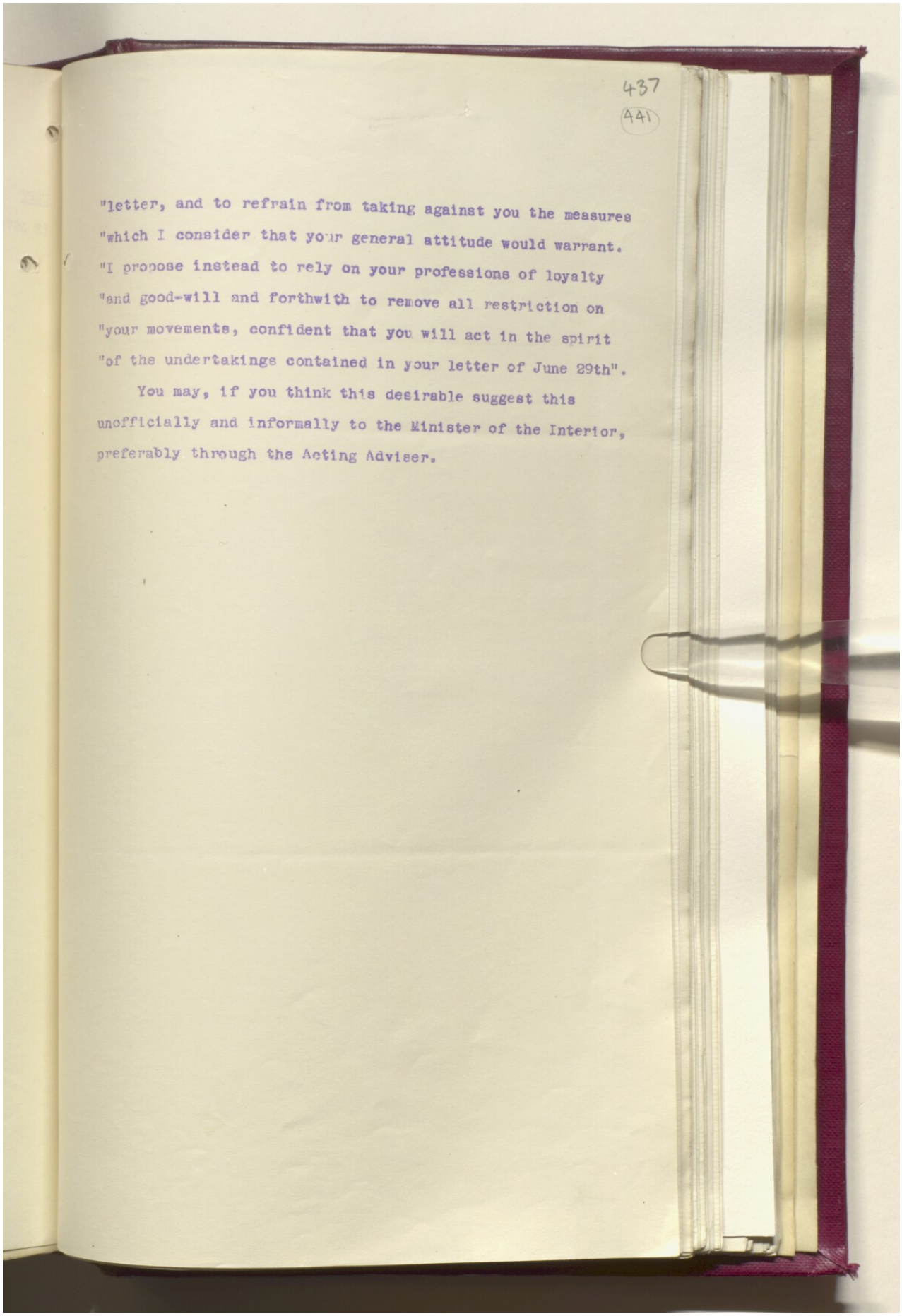
3991 Your telegram No. 158 (of July 5th Assyrian question).

There seems little hope of liquidating matter by means of any further letter from Iraqi Government such as would require written confirmation or indeed any reply from Mar Shimun; and best course, if Iraqi Government can be induced to take it, may be for them to permit his return without further correspondence.

If, however, they consider some further letter essential might they not turn to good account the undertakings which, in addition to the unsatisfactory features summarised in paragraph 4 of your telegram No. 152 (of 2nd July) were contained in Mar Shimun's letter of June 29th.

It seems possible in fact for Minister of the Interior to come well out of the matter and at same time place responsibility squarely on Mar Shimun by sending to him a letter on following lines.

"I have received your letter of June 29th, and note with "satisfaction undertakings given in penultimate paragraph. "In view of these undertakings, I am prepared to overlook the "provocative statements in the first three paragraphs of your letter,/



437
441

"letter, and to refrain from taking against you the measures
"which I consider that your general attitude would warrant.
"I propose instead to rely on your professions of loyalty
"and good-will and forthwith to remove all restriction on
"your movements, confident that you will act in the spirit
"of the undertakings contained in your letter of June 29th".

You may, if you think this desirable suggest this unofficially and informally to the Minister of the Interior, preferably through the Acting Adviser.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

438
442

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
10th July, 1933.

D. 2.40 p.m. 10th July, 1933.

R. 4.10 p.m. 10th July, 1933.

No. 163. (R).

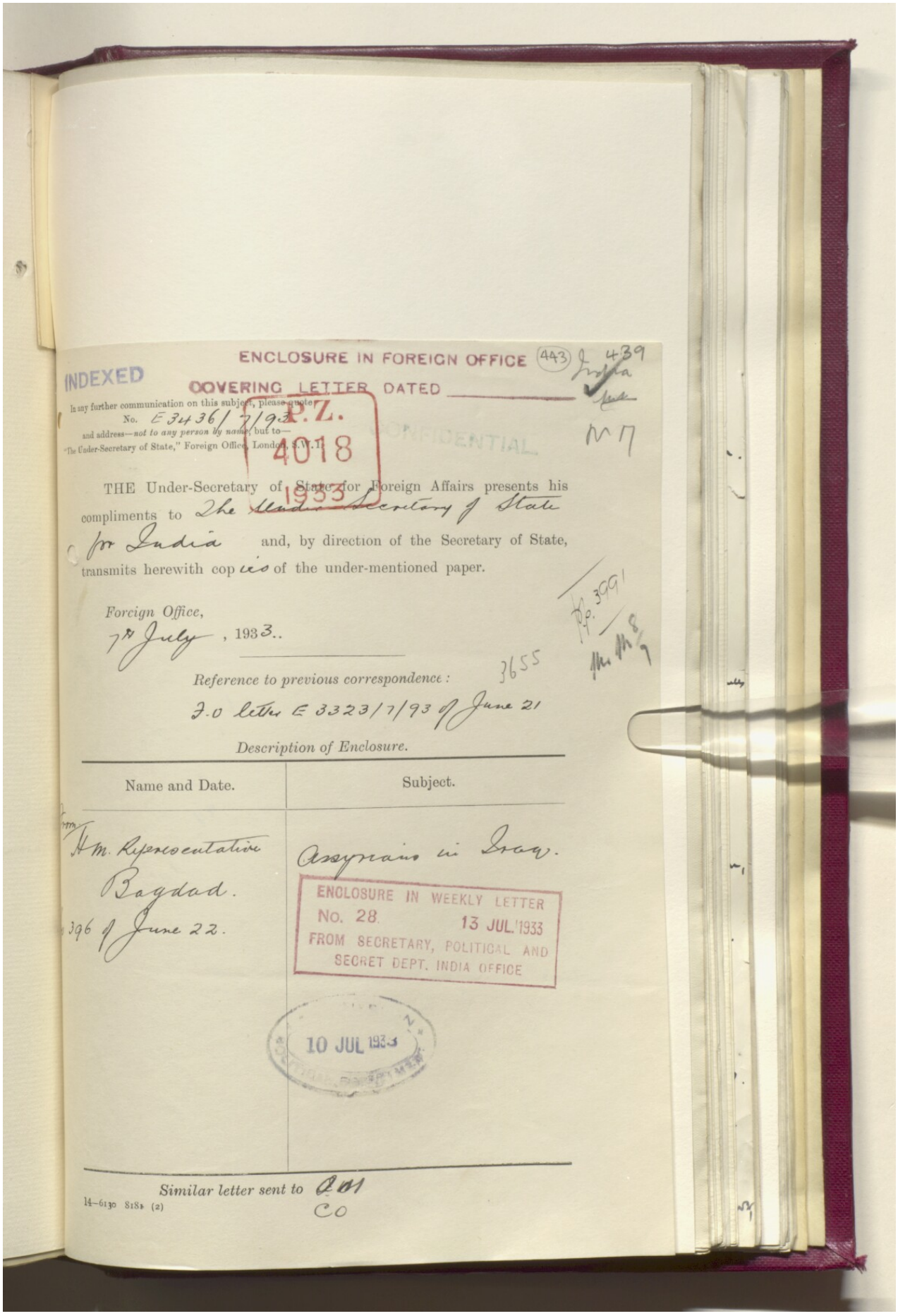
4098 Your telegram No. 124.

Acting adviser of the Interior feels he cannot yet recommend to the Iraqi Government the return of Mar Shimun to the North. In this view he is now supported by the administrative inspector of Mosul who considers Mar Shimun should not be allowed to return on his own terms and in face of opposition of the Government (pace King Feisal and his entourage in London) Edmonds further points out we are not yet out of the wood in the North where the situation is still delicate and the Iraqis need a great deal of restraining.

He is therefore playing for more time and is trying to dissuade the Iraqi Government from answering Mar Shimun's letter for the present.

In view however of your and Sir F. Humphrys' opinion that Mar Shimun should be allowed free movement he will show to the Minister of the Interior the draft contained in your telegram as expressing unofficial view of this Embassy and suggest Minister must make his choice.

A meeting of Maliks has been summoned in Mosul today at which it is the intention to explain how Mar Shimun has concealed the truth and misled them. In view of Mar Shimun's constant plea that he must consult his people before acknowledging Minister of the Interior's letter of June 18th in the form we all desire, I have suggested and Edmonds agrees that the Maliks be shown the correspondence and their concurrence in the draft reply of Mar Shimun be invited.



ENCLOSURE IN FOREIGN OFFICE (443) 439

INDEXED

COVERING LETTER DATED _____

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3436/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 4018 1933

CONFIDENTIAL

M 7

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
7th July, 1933.

Pp. 3991

3655

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 3323/7/93 of June 21

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
From H.M. Representative Bagdad. No. 396 of June 22.	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 28. 13 JUL. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

10 JUL 1933

Similar letter sent to CO

14-6130 8181 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000061

ENCLOSURE IN FOREIGN OFFICE
COVERING LETTER DATED
THIS DOCUMENT IS THE PROPERTY OF HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT
P.Z. 4018 1933

440
444

EASTERN (IRAQ). June 27, 1933.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[E 3436/7/93] No. 1.

Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Sir John Simon.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 396.)

Sir, *Bagdad, June 22, 1933.*

I WILL now resume the narrative of the present Assyrian crisis.

2. In the last paragraph of my despatch No. 379 of the 14th June I stated that the Mar Shimun had submitted to Sir Kinahan Cornwallis a redraft of the Minister of the Interior's letter to him couched in terms which would be acceptable to his Beatitude. For convenience of reference I enclose, set out in parallel columns, the draft to which the Minister of the Interior has very reluctantly agreed and the draft desired by the Mar Shimun (enclosure No. 1). It will be observed that the Mar Shimun, in paragraph 3 (*a*), wishes to add a sentence referring to the League and to homogeneous settlement, subjects rather delicate in present circumstances.

3. In paragraph 3 (*b*) the positive is substituted for the negative. The Mar Shimun objects to the implication that he has been obstructive.

4. In paragraph 4 the crucial question of temporal power is raised. The Mar Shimun has cut out the reiteration of the Government's refusal to delegate temporal power and inserted an assurance covering the "traditional and established customs" of "your," *i.e.*, his Assyrian, people. The Mar Shimun has constantly avoided giving a definition of temporal power and has always neglected to specify what are those traditional and established customs. One of the rights which he makes no secret of claiming, and which the Iraqi Government equally deny, is the privilege of appointing in certain cases tribal chiefs ("maliks") and sectional headmen.

5. The rest of paragraph 4 is redrafted in such a manner as to throw the blame on to the local authorities in Mosul. Here, no doubt, the Mar Shimun is, to a certain extent, right. But he has also omitted the reference to those Assyrians who are opposing the Government.

6. Sir Kinahan Cornwallis having proceeded on leave, Mr. C. J. Edmonds, the Acting Adviser to the Interior, informed the Mar Shimun that his version of the draft was quite unacceptable to the Iraqi Government. Mr. Edmonds tried the device of diverting the correspondence from such controversial subjects as temporal power and culpability of officials, and drafted a letter for the Mar Shimun to address to the Minister of the Interior in general terms, in which he disclaimed any intention of demanding rights or privileges inconsistent with the law of Iraq, adding the hope that he would be free to bring any needs or grievances to the notice of the Government and that any representations which he might make would receive due consideration (enclosure No. 2). The Mar Shimun at first took no objection to this eminently moderate and reasonable draft, promised that he would think it over and return next day. On the following day, the 16th June, his attitude had completely changed. Not only did he refuse it, but he even had neglected to bring the paper with him. He informed Mr. Edmonds that it was a ramp and a trap, that his people were becoming restless with his prolonged stay in Bagdad, and that he wished to return to Mosul as soon as possible.

7. In the meanwhile the Minister of the Interior had been further considering the Mar Shimun's counter-draft (enclosure No. 1, right-hand column). He was very indignant. He informed the acting adviser that, as the Mar Shimun would not send a satisfactory answer, he ought to be prosecuted. The British Embassy had prevented his being sent to the courts, therefore the only course open to him was to resign, and he would probably carry the rest of the Cabinet with him. He had also decided that his draft to the Mar Shimun should issue, for him to take or leave. This was done on the 18th June (enclosure No. 1, left-hand column).

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000063

8. The Cabinet had, in the meanwhile, met and decided that Hikmet Beg's resignation should stand over till after the State visit to London, when the whole Cabinet would place their resignations in the hands of the King, who would be asked to return to Iraq forthwith.

9. On the following day the Regent sent for me. The Prime Minister, an interpreter and another official were present. As reported in my telegram No. 130, the Prime Minister informed me that, inasmuch as the Mar Shimun had been invited to come to Bagdad on the advice of the British Adviser to the Interior, had not accepted a letter from the Minister of the Interior drafted by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, had also by his recent conduct rendered himself liable to criminal proceedings, which proceedings had been stayed by my action as representative of Great Britain, the ally of Iraq, the Minister of the Interior had no alternative but to resign, and the rest of the Cabinet desired to follow suit. His Royal Highness wished to know my opinion on the matter.

3652 10. There then ensued a conversation lasting wellnigh three hours, a summary of which was sent in my telegram No. 130 of the 19th June. I feel I may have done myself an injustice in that telegram by not adding to the four points on which I summed up that lengthy interview :—

(i) An exhortation to consult King Feisal first, on which the Prime Minister would not commit himself, and

(ii) A further exhortation to leave the Mar Shimun alone and get on with the job of settlement. The more comfortably the Assyrians were installed and settled in their holdings, the less likely were they to risk their all for some subtle formula of temporal power for the Patriarch. As for his Beatitude, give him a subsidy suitable to his position, and if he did not behave himself it could always be cut down without the "scandale" of putting him in the dock.

11. Both the Regent and the Prime Minister asked me whether I could not do something to induce the Mar Shimun to make amends to the offended dignity of the Minister of the Interior, in which case the resignations might be reconsidered. It was, of course, understood that the Mar Shimun would be allowed to return to Mosul unmolested. I said I would try. After three interviews, I succeeded in persuading him to agree to a letter (enclosure No. 4) dictated by me, which begins on a note of respect to the Minister and ends on one of loyalty to Iraq. It issued, but it was too late.

12. The Cabinet were evidently out for blood. While I was in the middle of this despatch my writing was interrupted by a telephone message from Mr. Edmonds to the effect that his Minister had changed his mind and intended after all to prosecute the Mar Shimun. The police would take action that same afternoon. I immediately went to the Prime Minister, intending, if necessary, to see the Regent as well. I asked him what he meant by this, and told him to ring up the Minister of the Interior to confirm whether this was true. It was. A Cabinet Council was about to meet to consider the matter. I told him to keep his hands off the Mar Shimun. He knows our point of view perfectly well. He replied that he would, provided I induced the Mar Shimun to agree to the Minister of the Interior's letter, which, he reminded me again, was drafted by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis! This Government conveniently ignore the fact that their British advisory staff do not introduce their nationality into their work. I said that, while I could not promise to comply with his request, I would ask the Mar Shimun not to leave Bagdad for the present. I subsequently heard that, in view of this interview, the Cabinet had decided to suspend action for the present.

3667 13. I accordingly sent to you my telegram No. 135, Immediate, suggesting that King Feisal be moved to issue peremptory orders to allow the Mar Shimun to return to Mosul unmolested, and asking whether you approved the idea of my intervention in the correspondence between the Mar Shimun and the Minister of the Interior. This is a prospect which I frankly dread, for a reason given in the last paragraph of this despatch summing up the situation. I also sent for the Mar Shimun and warned him to stay here for the present. He very reluctantly agreed, saying his people were becoming restive at his continued absence from Mosul. This may be so, but in present circumstances it is obviously better that he should be here in Bagdad within my reach and in contact with headquarters, rather than in Mosul at the mercy of some foolish and panic-stricken Governor or Police Director.

14. To sum up. The more I think over this Assyrian problem, the more the conviction is growing on me that neither the present Iraqi Government nor the Mar Shimun really want a settlement. The Iraqis for religious, racial and economic reasons, the Mar Shimun because he sees he is to be squeezed out. I am sure the Minister of the Interior is determined either to resign or to arrest the Mar Shimun, and the Mar Shimun himself is spoiling for a fight in which he would figure as a martyr. How then are we to inspire the Iraqis with a will to settle the Assyrian question and how to rid ourselves of this turbulent Patriarch? This is a problem which will not wait, but which must form the subject of another despatch.

15. A copy of this despatch is being sent by air mail on the 23rd June. Original by bag.

I have, &c.
G. OGILVIE-FORBES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

Draft from Minister of Interior to Mar Shimun as desired by Minister of Interior and eventually sent on June 18, 1933.

I HAVE received your letter of the 3rd instant and as I have informed you verbally, I consider it so ambiguous that I cannot take it as reply to my letter of the 28th May.

2. I have, however, read your letter of the 31st May, 1933, to His Majesty the King. I have also read a note by the adviser, dated the 7th instant, recording the result of a conversation with you and your reply of the 8th June to him. I have also had a discussion with you on the 8th June.

3. I take note from the above—

(*a*) You fully recognise that in all matters of administration, Assyrians must conform to the laws, regulations and manner of procedure which applies to all other Iraqis. You have always advised them in this sense and will continue doing so; your aim is always to make the Assyrians loyal and law abiding citizens.

(*b*) You consider that land settlement is vital for the Assyrians. You are most anxious to see it brought about and you assure me that you will not do anything to make the task of Major Thomson and the Government more difficult.

[823 dd—1]

Draft from Minister of Interior to Mar Shimun as desired by the Mar Shimun.

(The same.)

. . . . loyal and law abiding citizens. On the other hand, the Government fully realise that the Assyrians, unlike other communities, are refugees and homeless and the idea behind the League of Nations by a homogeneous settlement is to substitute their homelands and make them contented subjects.

(*b*) You consider that land settlement is vital for the Assyrians. You are anxious to see it brought about and you assure me that you will do everything possible to make the task of Major Thomson's and the Government's easier.

B 2

4. But as regards your personal position I confirm to you what I explained in my letter dated the 28th May, 1933, namely, that it will resemble that of the spiritual heads of the other communities in Iraq, and the Government cannot delegate to you any temporal power. But, as you are aware, it is the right of every Iraqi to petition the Government on any subject, and spiritual heads of communities have always been accustomed to bring to its notice the needs and grievances of their people. Therefore if you have any complaints at any time I am ready to cause enquiries to be made.

I notice that you have complained of the policy which you say is being adopted in Mosul. The policy of Government is perfectly clear. It is to treat the Assyrians with fairness and justice like all other Iraqis; to make them loyal and contented subjects of His Majesty the King and to effect their permanent settlement in a manner which will lead to this end. Unfortunately, up to the present, certain sections of the Assyrians have held aloof from Government and they have only themselves to blame if they are looked upon with suspicion. I wish, however, to put an end to this state of things and I sincerely hope that all Assyrians will show their loyalty by co-operating fully with Major Thomson and by giving him all the assistance for which he asks. If this is done, I have no doubt that there will be a rapid, and I hope permanent, improvement in the situation.

I shall be obliged if you will acknowledge this letter.

4. But as regards your personal position I confirm to you that it will resemble that of spiritual heads of other communities in Iraq and that the traditional and established customs of your Assyrian people will be privileged to remain. You will have the right to petition His Majesty the King or his Government regarding the needs and grievances of your people.

I notice you have complained of the policy which you say is being adopted in Mosul. I will issue instructions to the mutessarif of Mosul liwa to conform to the Government's policy and the contents of this letter, and I hope you will make known to Major Thomson your proposals for settling the Assyrians.

The policy of the Government is perfectly clear. It is to treat the Assyrians with fairness and justice like all other Iraqis, to make them loyal and contented subjects of His Majesty the King and to effect the permanent settlement in a manner that will lead to this end.

I therefore sincerely hope that you will advise all the Assyrians to show their loyalty by co-operating fully with Major Thomson and by giving him all the assistance for which he asks. If this is done I have no doubt that there will be a rapid, and I hope permanent, improvement in the situation.

I shall be obliged if you will acknowledge this letter.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

Draft by Assistant Adviser, Ministry of Interior, for Letter from Mar Shimun to Minister of Interior, June 15, 1933.

(Not acceptable to Mar Shimun.)

I HAVE now been in Bagdad and am anxious to return to Mosul not later than . I should be grateful if you would kindly fix a time for me to call to see you before I leave.

2. From my interview with your Excellency and various conversations with Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, I have gathered that certain passages of my letter of have conveyed an impression different from the impression I wished to convey.

3. I do not claim for myself or the Assyrian people any rights or privileges inconsistent with the constitutional and other laws of Iraq.

4. But as Patriarch I feel that it is my duty, in accordance with ancient practice, to be free at all times to bring the needs and grievances of my people to the notice of His Majesty the King and the Government, and trust that any

representations I may have to make may always receive the consideration which, coming from one in my position, they deserve.

5. I also request that the Government will preserve, with as little change as possible, the ancient customs of the Assyrian people, as in the case of the other tribal populations of Iraq.

Enclosure 3 in No. 1.

Draft Mar Shimun to the Minister of the Interior, June 19, 1933.

(Rejected by the Minister.)

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 18th June, 1933.(1)

I understand from my conversations with Mr. Edmonds that the references to history in my letter of the 3rd June, 1933, have created an impression different from that which I wished to convey. I was not, of course, claiming temporal power in the sense of temporal power delegated to me by the Governments named, but was referring to the traditional customs of the Assyrians, which I desire to see maintained.

If your Excellency agrees to this, will you kindly instruct the authorities concerned.

As regards the work of Major Thomson, I am, of course, anxious to see it crowned with success, and will do my best to co-operate if the work of settlement is carried out in a manner which, in my opinion, promises satisfactory results.

My ideas on this subject are set forth in my correspondence with Sir Kinahan Cornwallis.

With assurances, &c.
MAR SHIMUN.

Enclosure 4 in No. 1.

Draft Letter of Farewell which Mar Shimun, on June 20, 1933, *Promised Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes to Address to the Minister of the Interior.*

Your Excellency,

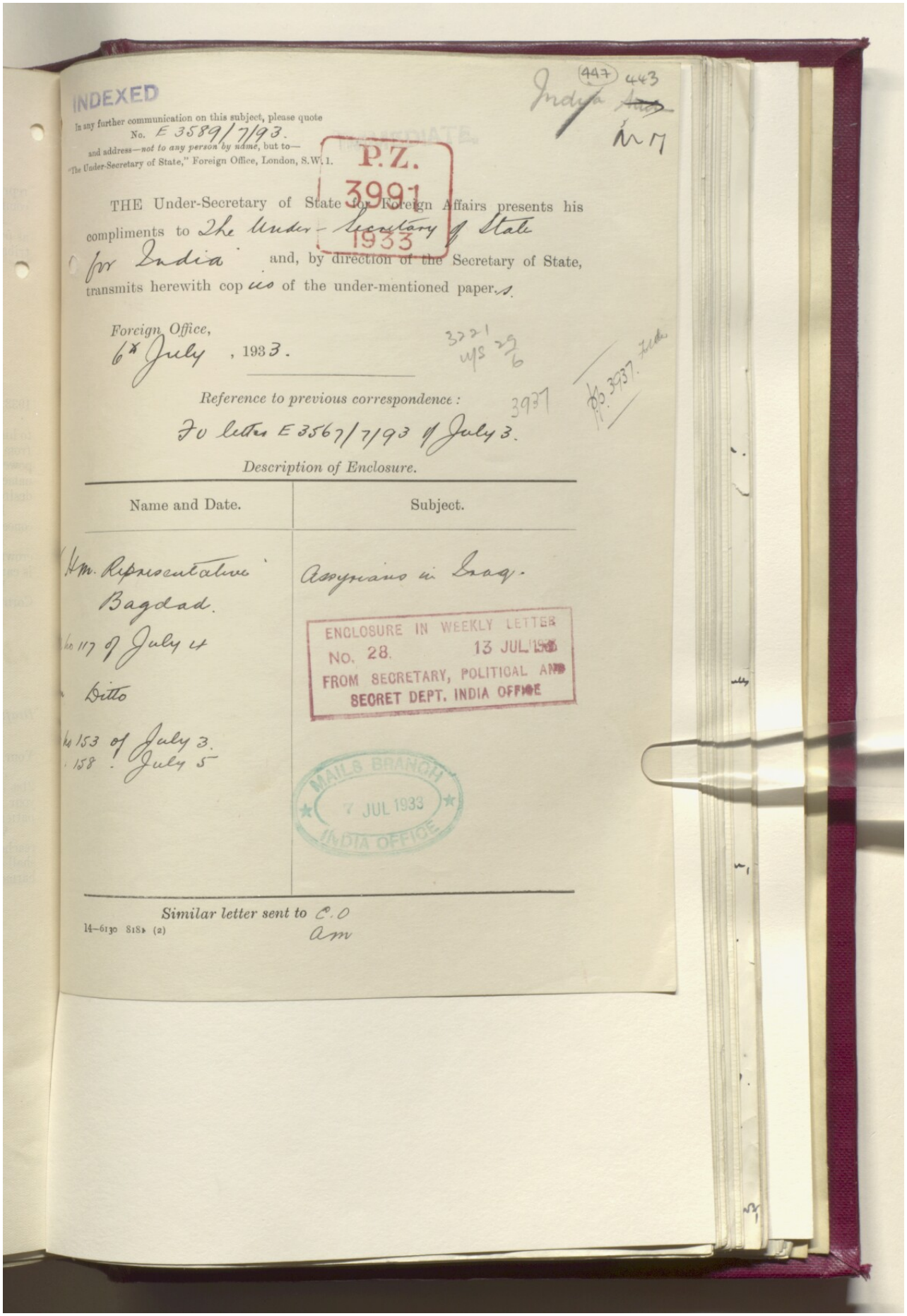
AS arranged with you this morning, I return to Mosul to-morrow, the 21st June, but I do not wish to leave Bagdad without expressing once more to your Excellency my appreciation of your courtesy in receiving me and of the patient hearing which you have given to me.

While, unfortunately, there are several points on which we have not yet reached an understanding, I nevertheless wish to assure your Excellency that I shall do all in my power to encourage the Assyrian people to live in peace and harmony with their fellow subjects in Iraq.

Yours, &c.
MAR SHIMUN.

(1) See enclosure No. 1.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000067



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3589/7/93.
and address—not to any person by name, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

(447) 443
India ~~Aud~~
M 17

IMMEDIATE.

P.Z.
3991
1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
6th July, 1933.

3221
u/s 29/6

3937

P.Z. 3937. Folder

Reference to previous correspondence:

To letter E 3567/7/93 of July 3.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad.	Assyrians in Iraq.
No 117 of July 4	
Ditto	
No 153 of July 3.	
158 July 5	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 28. 13 JUL 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND
SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

MAILS BRANCH
7 JUL 1933
INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O
am

14-6130 8181 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000069

444
448

P.Z.
3991
1933

E.3567/7/93.)

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 4th July, 1933, 10.00 p.m.
No.117. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

3937 Your telegram No.152 (of July 2nd. Assyrian question).

I appreciate difficulty caused you by disagreement among British advisers about Mar Shimun's return. I understand that on such occasions Sir F. Humphrys usually calls conference of advisers concerned, and, failing unanimity, follows majority recommendation. If you decided to adopt similar course, Edmonds opinion will not presumably prevail against that of other three, but I am content to leave question of conference to your discretion.

Sir K. Cornwallis considers that opportuneness or otherwise of Mar Shimun's return to Mosul must depend to a large extent on progress which is being made by land settlement scheme. If Major Thomson and Iraqi Government can secure general co-operation of majority of Assyrians in land settlement scheme, he agrees that Mar Shimun's return could do no harm.

Viewing matter from this end, I realise how difficult it may be in the circumstances for Iraqi Government now to allow Mar Shimun to return to Mosul in the absence of satisfactory guarantees which he may continue to refuse to give. At same time, his detention in Bagdad can do no good. It may do positive harm, and it would seem better for Iraqi

Government

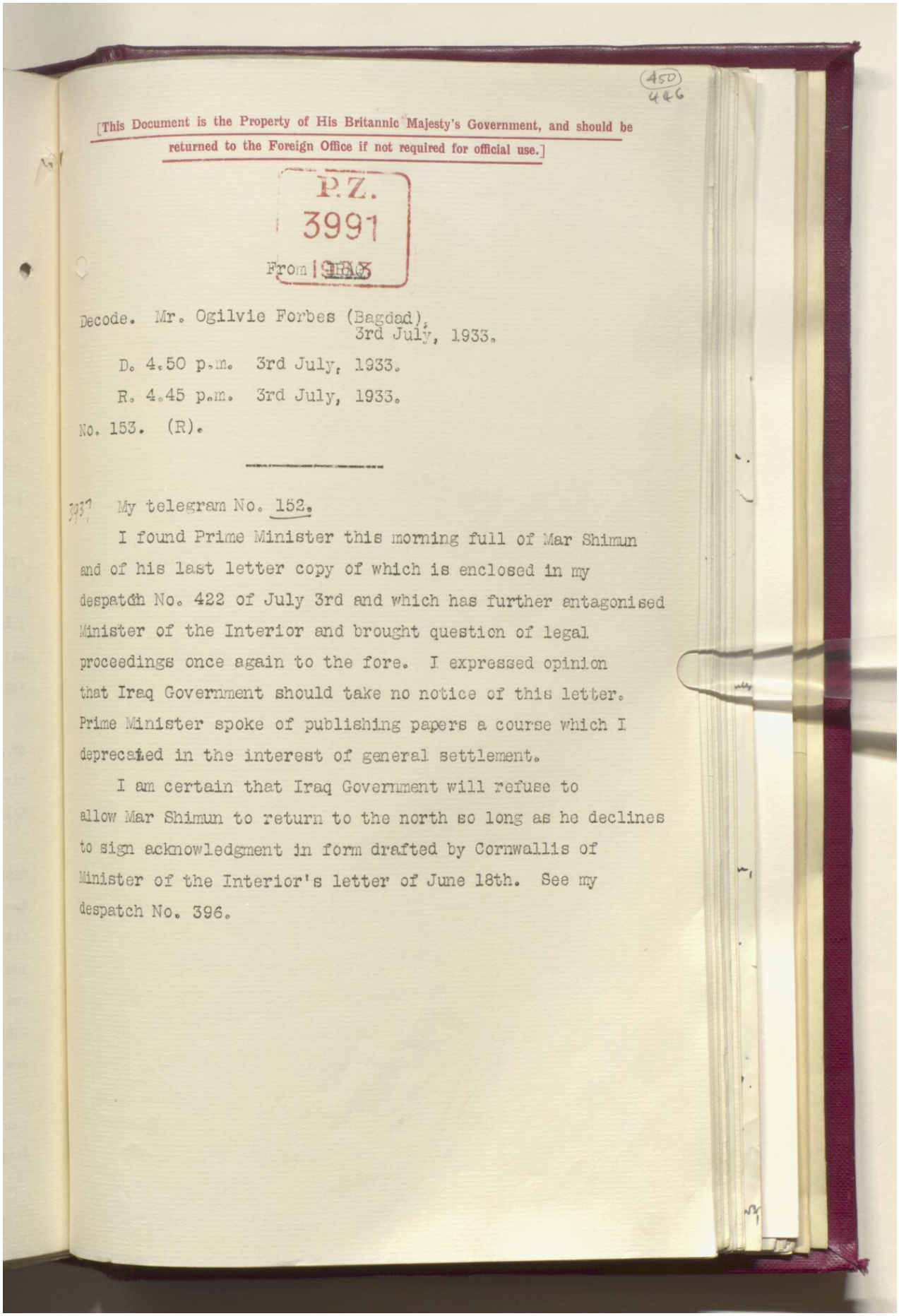
Government to let him go without guarantees, simply informing him that they rely on his honour to refrain from making trouble. In order to avoid misunderstanding, you may express above views to Iraqi Prime Minister, though His Majesty's Government cannot dictate to Iraqi Government with whom alone responsibility for decision must lie.

Attempt to disarm Assyrians would, in Sir F. Humphrys' opinion, be contrary to Iraqi Government's pledge that in this matter Assyrians would receive same treatment as other inhabitants of Iraq; it would inevitably drive Assyrians, with ample justification, into open rebellion; and would be folly.

Above views both on Mar Shimun's detention and disarmament of Assyrians are shared by King Feisal and his entourage. Sir F. Humphrys hopes to induce King Feisal to send further telegram on the subject to his Government.

Sir K. Cornwallis endorses above views as regards proposed disarmament of Assyrians, and feels that strong representations to the Iraqi Government on this subject would be fully justified. In his view wisest policy for Iraqi Government to follow would be to treat Assyrians in the north with utmost generosity and endeavour to enlist their full co-operation in land settlement scheme, in order, as far as possible, to bring about their gradual detachment from Mar Shimun.

In view of this consensus of opinion here, you should do your best to dissuade Iraqi Government from any attempt to disarm Assyrians.



(450)
446

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3991
From IRAQ 1933

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
3rd July, 1933.

D. 4.50 p.m. 3rd July, 1933.

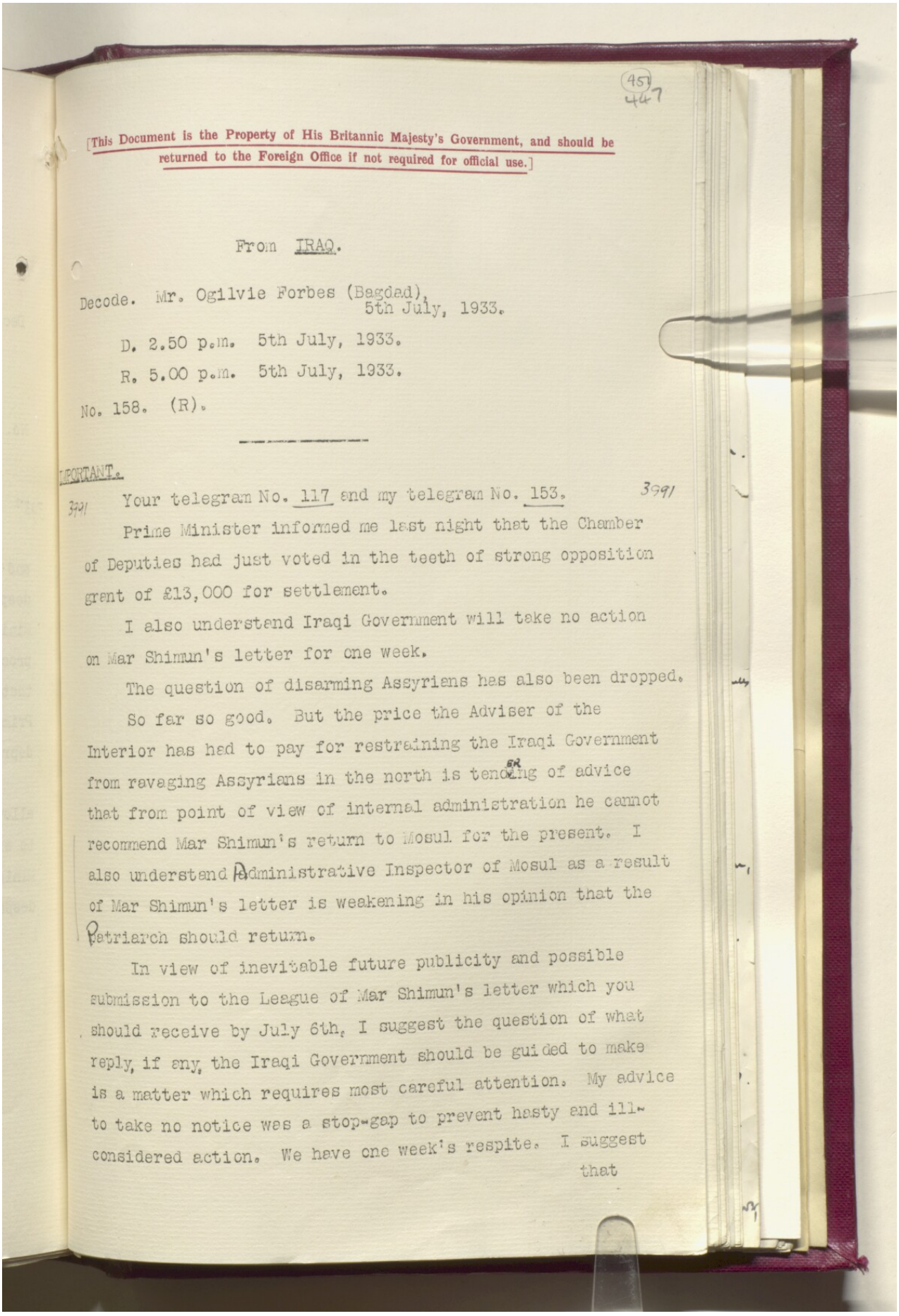
R. 4.45 p.m. 3rd July, 1933.

No. 153. (R).

My telegram No. 152.

I found Prime Minister this morning full of Mar Shimun and of his last letter copy of which is enclosed in my despatch No. 422 of July 3rd and which has further antagonised Minister of the Interior and brought question of legal proceedings once again to the fore. I expressed opinion that Iraq Government should take no notice of this letter. Prime Minister spoke of publishing papers a course which I deprecated in the interest of general settlement.

I am certain that Iraq Government will refuse to allow Mar Shimun to return to the north so long as he declines to sign acknowledgment in form drafted by Cornwallis of Minister of the Interior's letter of June 18th. See my despatch No. 396.



451
447

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
5th July, 1933.

D. 2.50 p.m. 5th July, 1933.

R. 5.00 p.m. 5th July, 1933.

No. 158. (R).

IMPORTANT.

3991 Your telegram No. 117 and my telegram No. 153. 3991

Prime Minister informed me last night that the Chamber of Deputies had just voted in the teeth of strong opposition grant of £13,000 for settlement.

I also understand Iraqi Government will take no action on Mar Shimun's letter for one week.

The question of disarming Assyriens has also been dropped.

So far so good. But the price the Adviser of the Interior has had to pay for restraining the Iraqi Government from ravaging Assyrians in the north is tending of advice that from point of view of internal administration he cannot recommend Mar Shimun's return to Mosul for the present. I also understand Administrative Inspector of Mosul as a result of Mar Shimun's letter is weakening in his opinion that the Patriarch should return.

In view of inevitable future publicity and possible submission to the League of Mar Shimun's letter which you should receive by July 6th, I suggest the question of what reply, if any, the Iraqi Government should be guided to make is a matter which requires most careful attention. My advice to take no notice was a stop-gap to prevent hasty and ill-considered action. We have one week's respite. I suggest that

(452)
448

2.

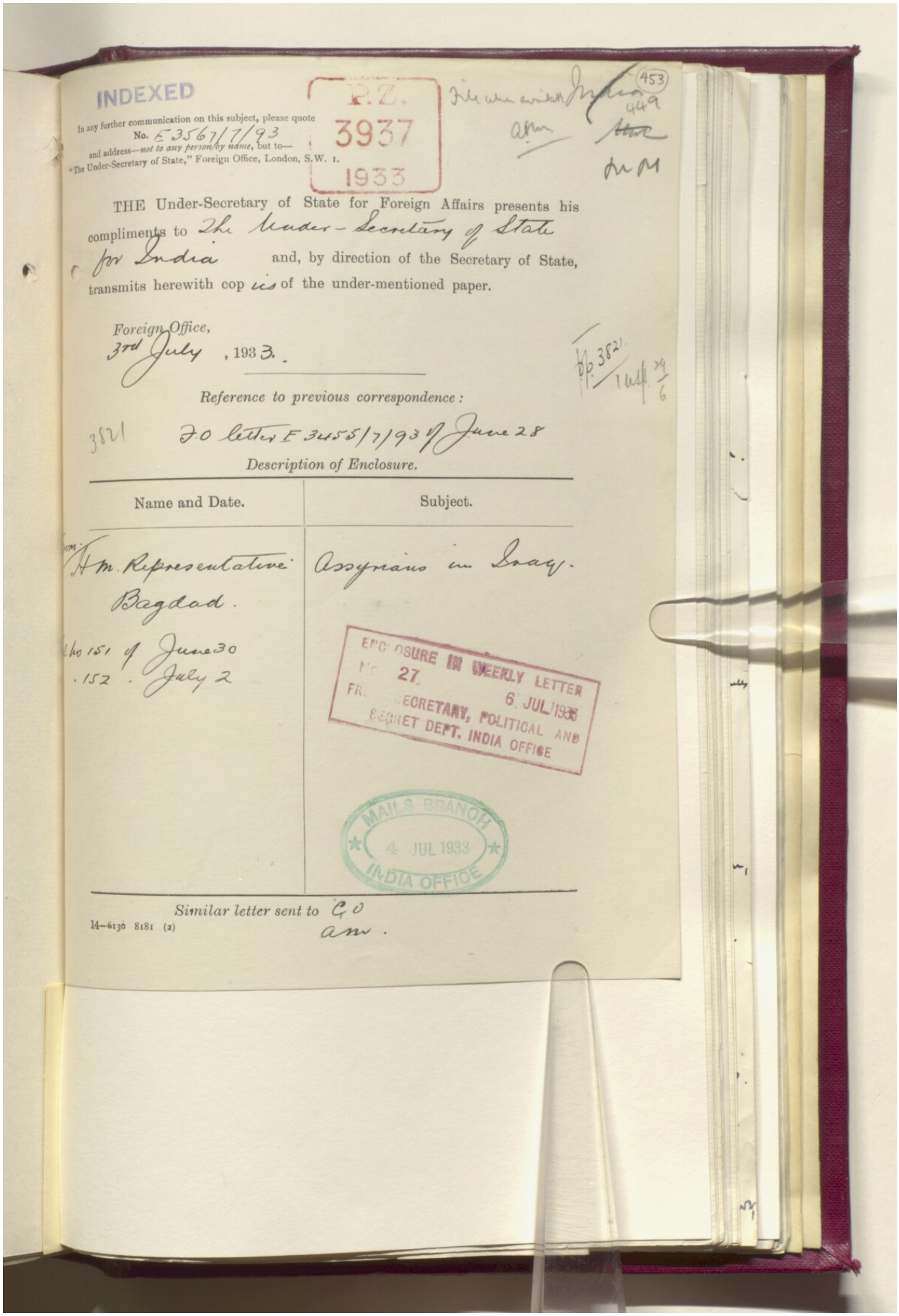
that attempt might be made to induce the Iraqi Government to reply in the following sense.

"You are perfectly free to return to Mosul provided you will undertake not to impede (or alternatively to co-operate in) present settlement of scheme."

Edmonds thinks the Minister of the Interior might agree to the above but would expect written confirmation from Mar Shimun.

If Mar Shimun refuses to accept this reply he will come out very bad in the eyes of the world while on the other hand His Majesty's Government and the Iraqi Government will be seen to have done their best.

The Air Officer Commanding (?and Edmonds) concur.



INDEXED

P.Z. 3937 1933

File when available India 453 449

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3567/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
3rd July, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

3821 F.O. letter E 3455/7/93 of June 28

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
From: H.M. Representative Bagdad. Cl. No 151 of June 30 .152 . July 2	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 27 6 JUL 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

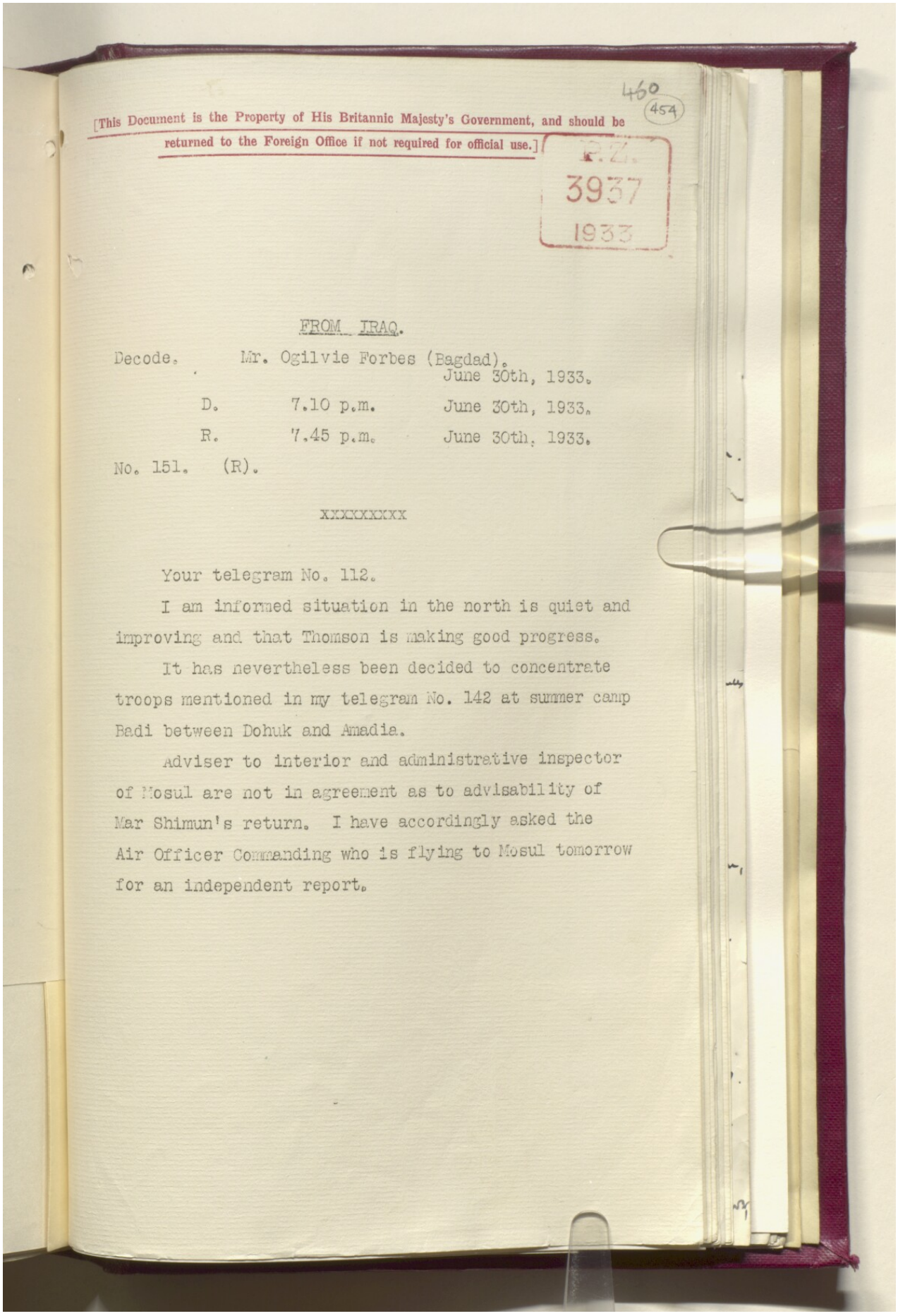
MAILS BRANCH 4 JUL 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. am.

14—6130 8181 (2)

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000075



460
454

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

F.Z.
3937
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). June 30th, 1933.

D. 7.10 p.m. June 30th, 1933.

R. 7.45 p.m. June 30th, 1933.

No. 151. (R).

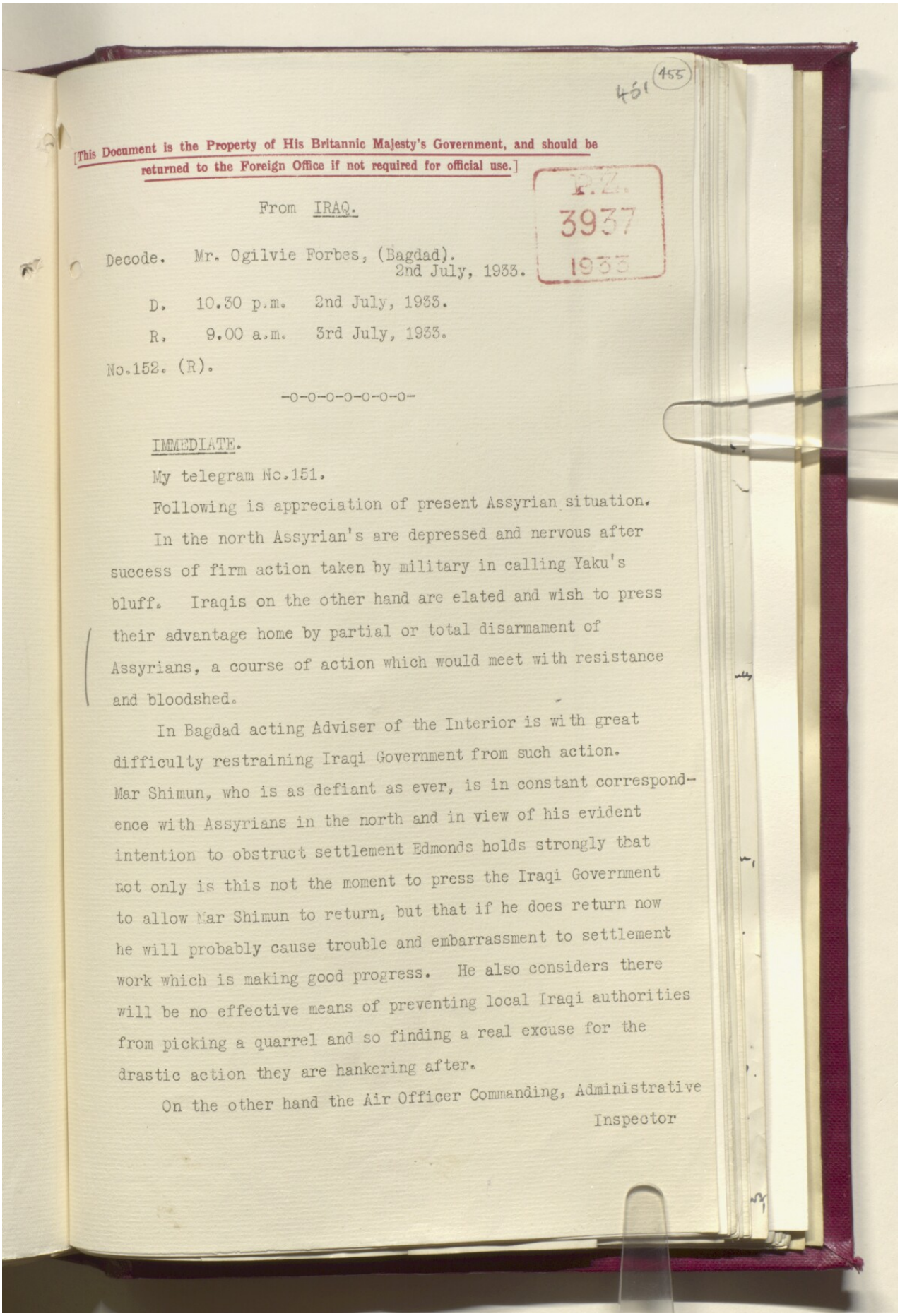
XXXXXXXXX

Your telegram No. 112.

I am informed situation in the north is quiet and improving and that Thomson is making good progress.

It has nevertheless been decided to concentrate troops mentioned in my telegram No. 142 at summer camp Badi between Dohuk and Amadia.

Adviser to interior and administrative inspector of Mosul are not in agreement as to advisability of Mar Shimun's return. I have accordingly asked the Air Officer Commanding who is flying to Mosul tomorrow for an independent report.



451 (455)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 3937 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad).
2nd July, 1933.

D. 10.30 p.m. 2nd July, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. 3rd July, 1933.

No.152. (R).

-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-

IMMEDIATE.

My telegram No.151.

Following is appreciation of present Assyrian situation.

In the north Assyrian's are depressed and nervous after success of firm action taken by military in calling Yaku's bluff. Iraqis on the other hand are elated and wish to press their advantage home by partial or total disarmament of Assyrians, a course of action which would meet with resistance and bloodshed.

In Bagdad acting Adviser of the Interior is with great difficulty restraining Iraqi Government from such action. Mar Shimun, who is as defiant as ever, is in constant correspondence with Assyrians in the north and in view of his evident intention to obstruct settlement Edmonds holds strongly that not only is this not the moment to press the Iraqi Government to allow Mar Shimun to return, but that if he does return now he will probably cause trouble and embarrassment to settlement work which is making good progress. He also considers there will be no effective means of preventing local Iraqi authorities from picking a quarrel and so finding a real excuse for the drastic action they are hankering after.

On the other hand the Air Officer Commanding, Administrative Inspector

(456)

452

x He later changed sides (P.Z. 4098)

2.

Inspector of Mosul, and Thomson, consider that presence of Mar Shimun would increase confidence and that his obstruction is a risk to be accepted.

Deepy impressed as I am with Sir F. Humphrys' and other arguments referred to in your telegram No.112, after most careful consideration I feel I must support Edmond's view as I know only too well what a struggle we are having to save Mar Shimun from legal proceedings, quite apart from the question of his return. A new disquieting factor in the situation is a letter from Mar Shimun to the Minister of Interior delivered on July 1st and circulated to foreign representatives in Bagdad challenging legality of patriarch's detention, opposing settlement on present lines, and claiming the right to ask the League for alternative scheme. Copy is being sent to you by air mail July 3rd.

In view of above difference of opinion onna problem on which there seems good arguments on both sides do you wish me to press Iraqi Government to allow Mar Shimun to return to the north? You will of course realise that Prime Minister will almost certainly refuse or attempt to hold His Majesty's Government responsible for any consequences which Iraqis themselves might provoke. Another telegram from King Feisal, for what it is worth, will also be necessary.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x00007b

(457)
453

Notes.

Minute Paper.

Register No.
P. Z
3821
~~3765~~/33

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	29. 6.	[illegible]	Iraq
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	8. iii	[illegible]	The Assyrian crisis.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

In view of their ~~[illegible]~~ topical interest these telegrams are put forward without the file, which is already under submission.

Although the King telegraphed to Iraq deprecating the arrest of Mar Shimun & was satisfied that this would make it clear that he was not to be detained in Baghdad against his will, it appears from Baghdad telm No. 142 rather doubtful whether he is at liberty to leave*. But the position is greatly complicated by the defiant slawless attitude adopted by an influential follower of Mar Shimun in the North, whom the Patriarch rather truculently has virtually refused to call off. Meanwhile the Iraqi Govt. have

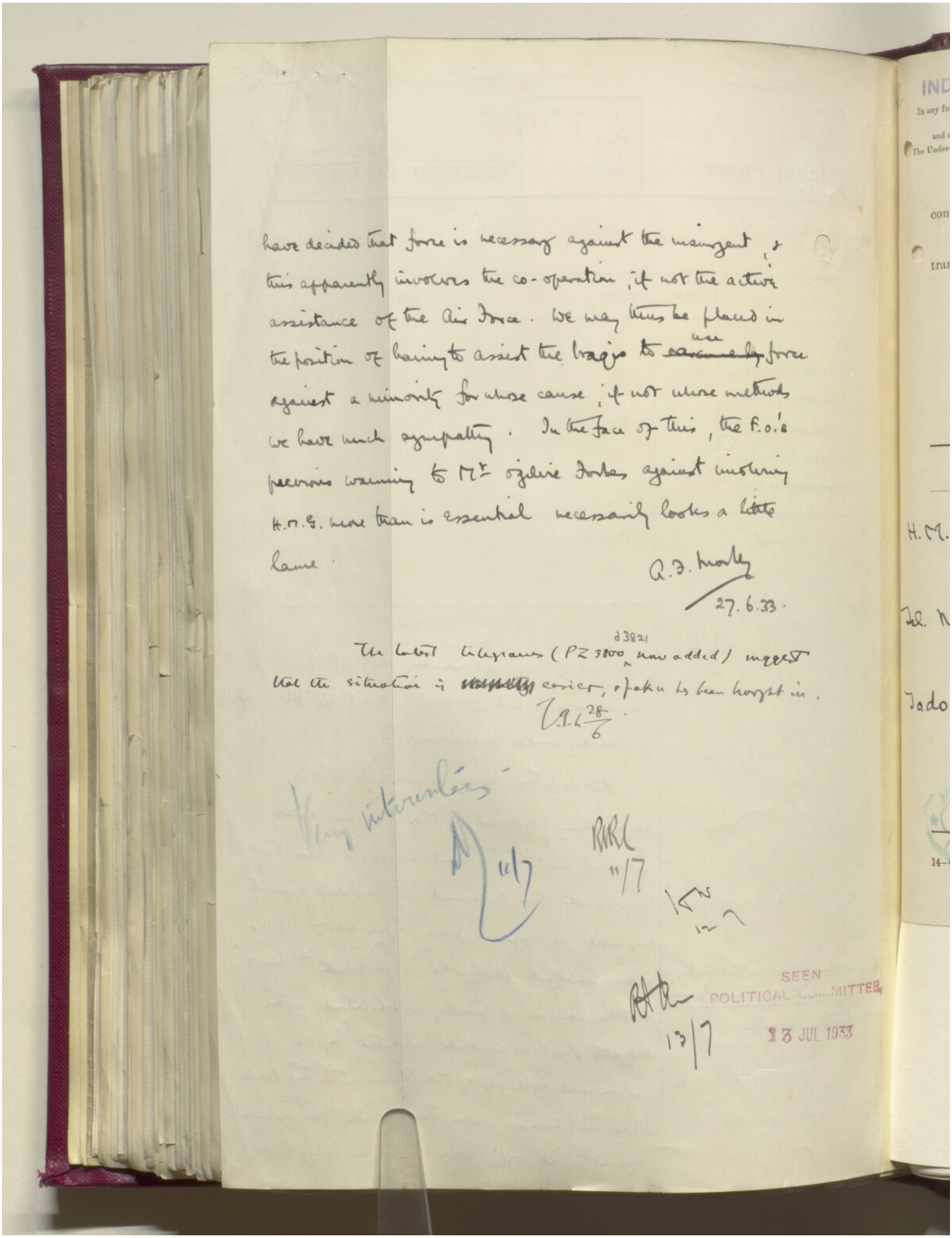
SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
15 JUL 1933

*Baghdad telm. 144 states that the Govt. "are not inclined" to comply with Faisal's instructions. Afm. 24/6

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
924
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x00007d



have decided that force is necessary against the insurgent; & this apparently involves the co-operation, if not the active assistance of the Air Force. We may thus be placed in the position of having to assist the Iraqis to ~~[illegible]~~ use force against a minority for whose cause, if not whose methods we have much sympathy. In the face of this, the F.O.'s previous warning to Mr Ogilvie Forbes against involving H.M.G. more than is essential necessarily looks a little lame.

A. J. Morley
27.6.33.

The latest telegrams (PZ 3800 d 3821 now added) suggest that the situation is ~~[illegible]~~ easier, & a lot has been brought in.

[illegible] 28/6

Very interesting

[illegible] 11/7

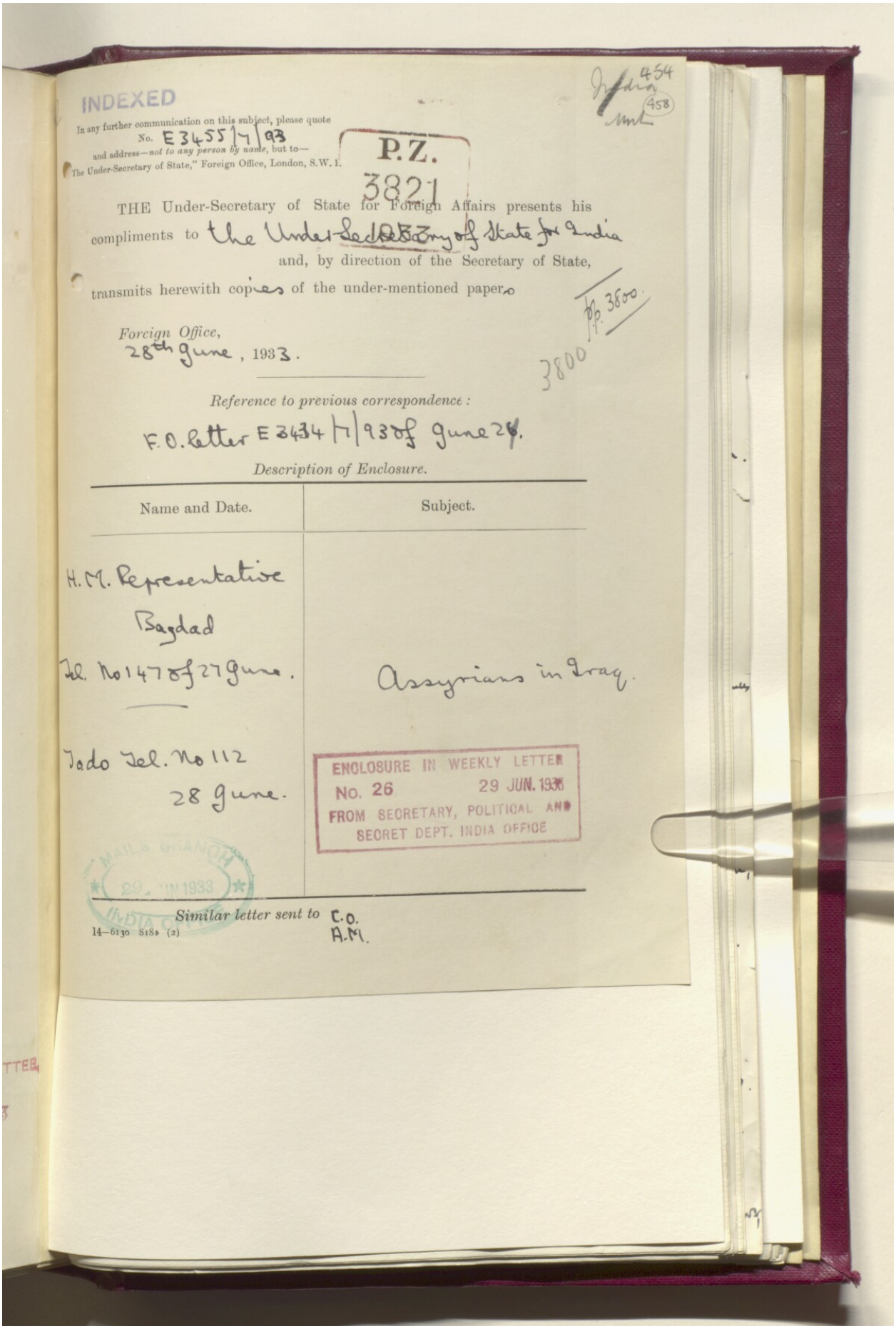
RRL 11/7

[illegible] 12/7

[illegible] 13/7

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE
13 JUL 1933

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
925
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x00007e



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3455/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 3821

India 454 (458)

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

pp. 3800. 3800

Foreign Office,
28th June, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

F.O. letter E 3434/7/93 of June 28.

Description of Enclosure.

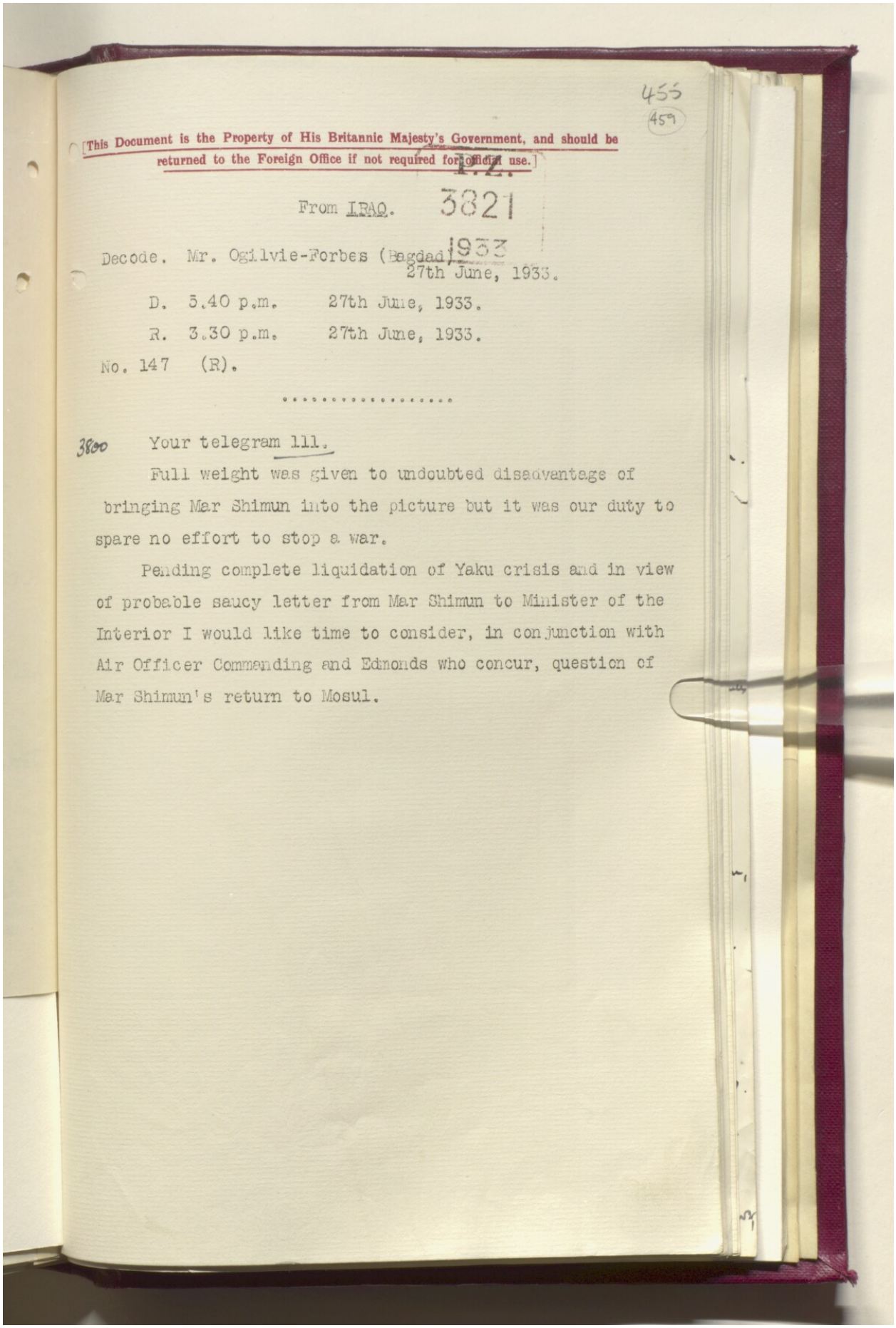
Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Bagdad Tel. No 147 of 27 June.	Assyrians in Iraq.
Todo Tel. No 112 28 June.	

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 26 29 JUN. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

MAILS BRANCH 29 JUN 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14—6130 818 (2)



455
459

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

F.Z. 3821
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie-Forbes (Bagdad) 27th June, 1933.

D. 5.40 p.m. 27th June, 1933.

R. 3.30 p.m. 27th June, 1933.

No. 147 (R).

.....

3800 Your telegram 111.

Full weight was given to undoubted disadvantage of bringing Mar Shimun into the picture but it was our duty to spare no effort to stop a war.

Pending complete liquidation of Yaku crisis and in view of probable saucy letter from Mar Shimun to Minister of the Interior I would like time to consider, in conjunction with Air Officer Commanding and Edmonds who concur, question of Mar Shimun's return to Mosul.

460
456

This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.

F.Z.
3821

(E.3455/7/93).

TO IRAQ. 1933

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 28th June. 1933. 2.30.p.m.

No. 112. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

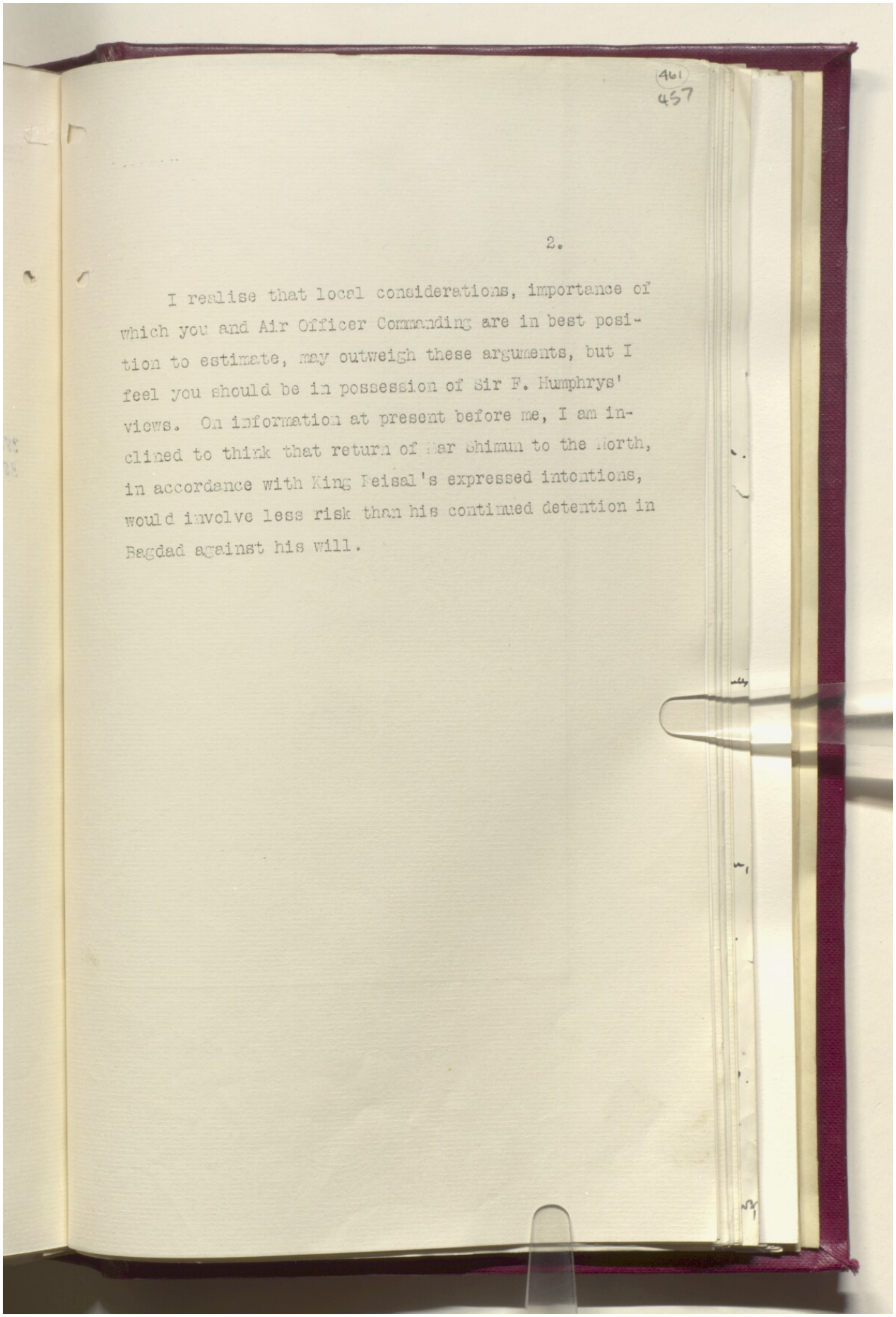
3800
3821

Your telegrams Nos. 144 (of June 26th) and 147 (of June 27th - Assyrian crisis).

Sir F. Humphrys informs me that just before leaving London for Scotland on June 25th King Feisal had a further telegram sent to the Iraqi Government explaining that he and his Ministers were "definitely not in favour of forcibly detaining the Mar Shimun."

Sir F. Humphrys himself feels that it would be greatly preferable that the Mar Shimun should be allowed to return to the north (where he would presumably retire to his summer camp at Ser Amadia), since, apart from reasons already advanced, his continued detention in Bagdad (1) would give the Assyrians a further grievance, (2) would enable the Mar Shimun to disclaim responsibility for restraining his people in the north, (3) would mean that the affair would be likely to drag on indefinitely, since it is unlikely to be easier to release the Mar Shimun later than it is at present, and (4) may involve grave risk of Mar Shimun succumbing to the heat (as he nearly did last year) in which case his death would be attributed to the Iraqi Government's action and he would become even more of a martyr than he is at present.

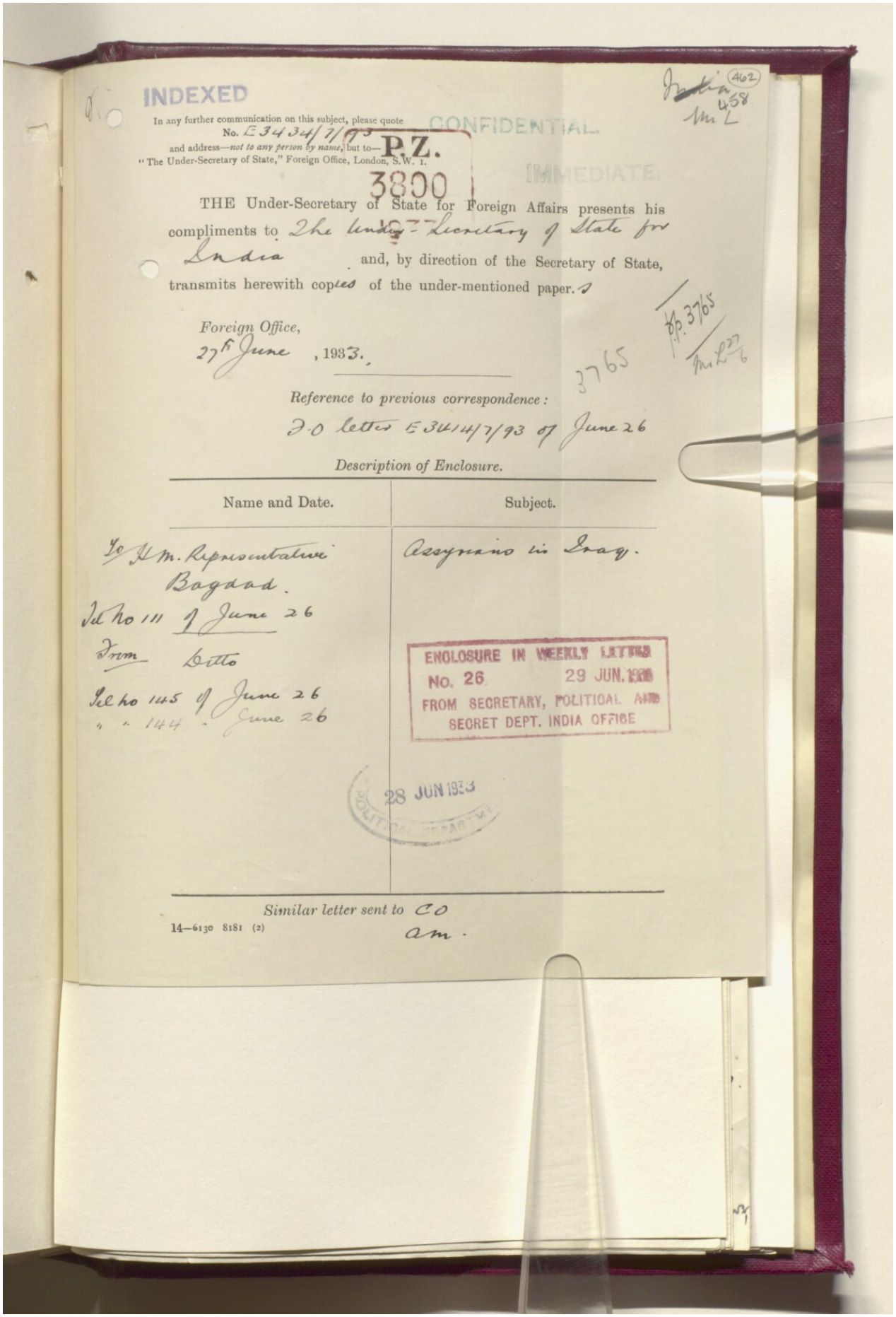
I .....



461
457

2.

I realise that local considerations, importance of which you and Air Officer Commanding are in best position to estimate, may outweigh these arguments, but I feel you should be in possession of Sir F. Humphrys' views. On information at present before me, I am inclined to think that return of Mar Shimun to the North, in accordance with King Feisal's expressed intentions, would involve less risk than his continued detention in Bagdad against his will.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3434/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL.

IMMEDIATE.

P.Z. 3800

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
27th June, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O letter E 3414/7/93 of June 26

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To H.M. Representative Bagdad. Id No 111 of June 26 From Ditto Id No 145 of June 26 " " 144 " June 26	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 26 29 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

28 JUN 1933

Similar letter sent to CO am.

14—6130 8181 (2)

459
463

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 3800

3414/7/93.)

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 26th June, 1933, 5.45 p.m.
No.111. (R).

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

IMMEDIATE.

3765 Your telegram No.142 (of June 25th - Assyrian crisis) is being repeated to Sir F. Humphrys who is with King Feisal in Scotland.

Meanwhile, unless you and the Air Officer Commanding are satisfied that the return of the Mar Shimun to Mosul in present circumstances would seriously aggravate the dangers of the situation, you should if possible induce Iraqi Government, in accordance with King Feisal's expressed intention and assurance to Sir F. Humphrys, to remove all restriction on Mar Shimun's movements. You may point out that if impression is created that he is being forcibly detained in Bagdad present trouble among Assyrians is likely to assume most serious proportions and lead to deplorable effect on public opinion in this country and at Geneva. Moreover from the point of view of the Iraqi Government themselves it would be agregious blunder to do anything of nature to enable Mar Shimun to assume character of a martyr.

As regards suggestion that Mar Shimun should act as an intermediary with Yaku, while you are in the best position to judge as to advisability of this step, is there not danger that if Mar Shimun's assistance is invoked his importance will be enhanced, both in his own eyes and in those of his followers, and his pretentions and claims proportionately increased?

464
460

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3800

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
26th June, 1933.

D. 8.30 p.m. 26th June, 1933.

R. 9.30 p.m. 26th June, 1933.

No. 145. (R).

IMPORTANT.

3765 My telegram No. 142.

Administrative inspector of Mosul has just reported that with the help of Major Thomson he has succeeded in bringing Yaku in. He will recommend that concentration of troops be cancelled.

Very little mention of Mar Shimun in negotiations with Yaku who is reported to have stated that he would not have been influenced by Patriach.

While danger of Assyrian outbreak does not now seem imminent I shall furnish considered opinion when we are finally clear of this Yaku incident.

461
(465)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3800

FROM IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). June 26th, 1933.

D. 8.30 p.m. June 26th, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. June 27th, 1933.

No. 144.

XXXXXXXXX

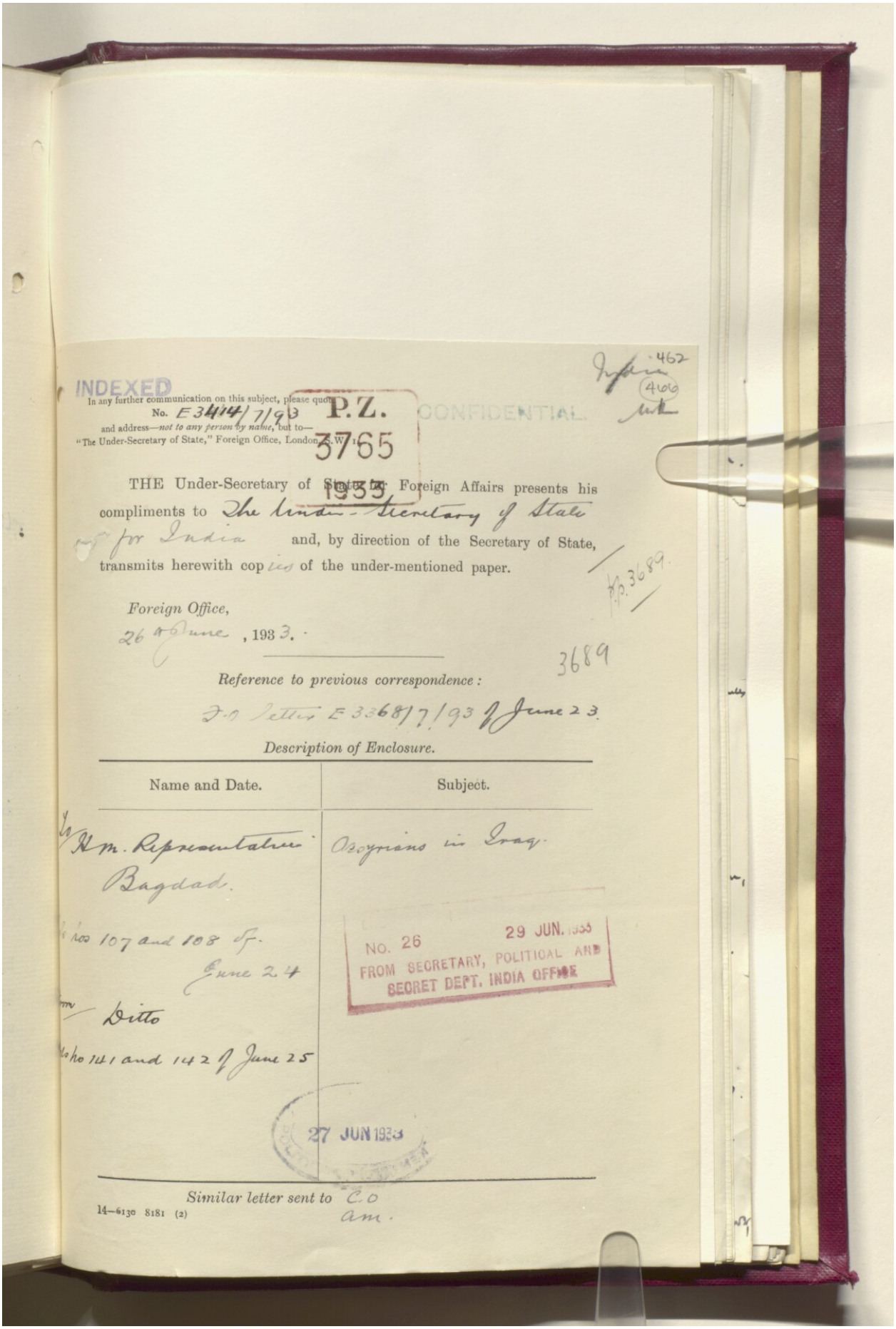
3765 My telegram No. 142.

Mar Shimun's condition number (1) would not be acceptable. Moreover Iraq government in view of recent developments are not inclined to comply with Faisal's instructions re detention of Mar Shimun.

After careful consideration I am of opinion in present circumstances it is just as well that Mar Shimun should stay in Bagdad. By going to Mosul with Yaku still defiant he would be in a position to make more trouble and also run grave risk of being victim of some incident provoked at instigation possibly of Iraqi local authorities many of whom are bitterly anti Assyrian. Edmonds concurs.

We must of course be prepared for public protest by Mar Shimun and probably some more offended Iraqi dignity. This nevertheless seems the lesser of two evils.

I am therefore not expressing either to Iraq government or to Mar Shimun any views as to advisability or otherwise of Mar Shimun's return. As Mar Shimun rejected my advice in my telegram No. 139 no responsibility rests with His Majesty's Government for any consequences.



INDEXED

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3414/7/93 P.Z. 3765 CONFIDENTIAL
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

462
466

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

P.Z. 3689

Foreign Office,
26 June, 1933.

3689

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 3368/7/93 of June 23.

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To H.M. Representative Bagdad.	Assyrians in Iraq.
No. 107 and 108 of June 24	
From Ditto	
No. 141 and 142 of June 25	

NO. 26 29 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

27 JUN 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O am.

14—6130 8181 (2)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

463
467

P.Z.
3765
1933

(E.3368/7/93).

TO IRAQ.

Code
and
Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 24th June. 1933. 3.55.p.m.

Nos. 107 and 108.

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

(Beginning of R).

Your telegram No. 139 (of June 23rd - Assyrian crisis).

King Feisal telegraphed on June 23rd to Iraqi Prime Minister and to Regent strongly deprecating arrest of Mar Shimun, which he explained would create most unfavourable atmosphere and destroy satisfactory results of visit and hope of successful conclusion of negotiations on various issues, and instructing them to postpone all action until his return. His Majesty has assured Sir F. Humphrys that this instruction will make it clear that Mar Shimun must not be detained in Bagdad against his will.

(End of R).

It would be useful to me to have your views by telegram on risk of Assyrian outbreak if Mar Shimun returns to Northern Iraq. You will no doubt consult local British officials.

I approve action you have taken in this matter and fully realise extreme difficulty of situation. It is of course important that His Majesty's Government should not assume more responsibility than necessary as both parties are likely to be only too ready to father any future difficulty on them. I am satisfied that you fully appreciate this point.

463
(468)

P.Z.
3765
1933

NO DISTRIBUTION.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Baghdad).
June 25th, 1933.

D. 11.00 p.m. June 25th, 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. June 26th, 1933.

No. 141.

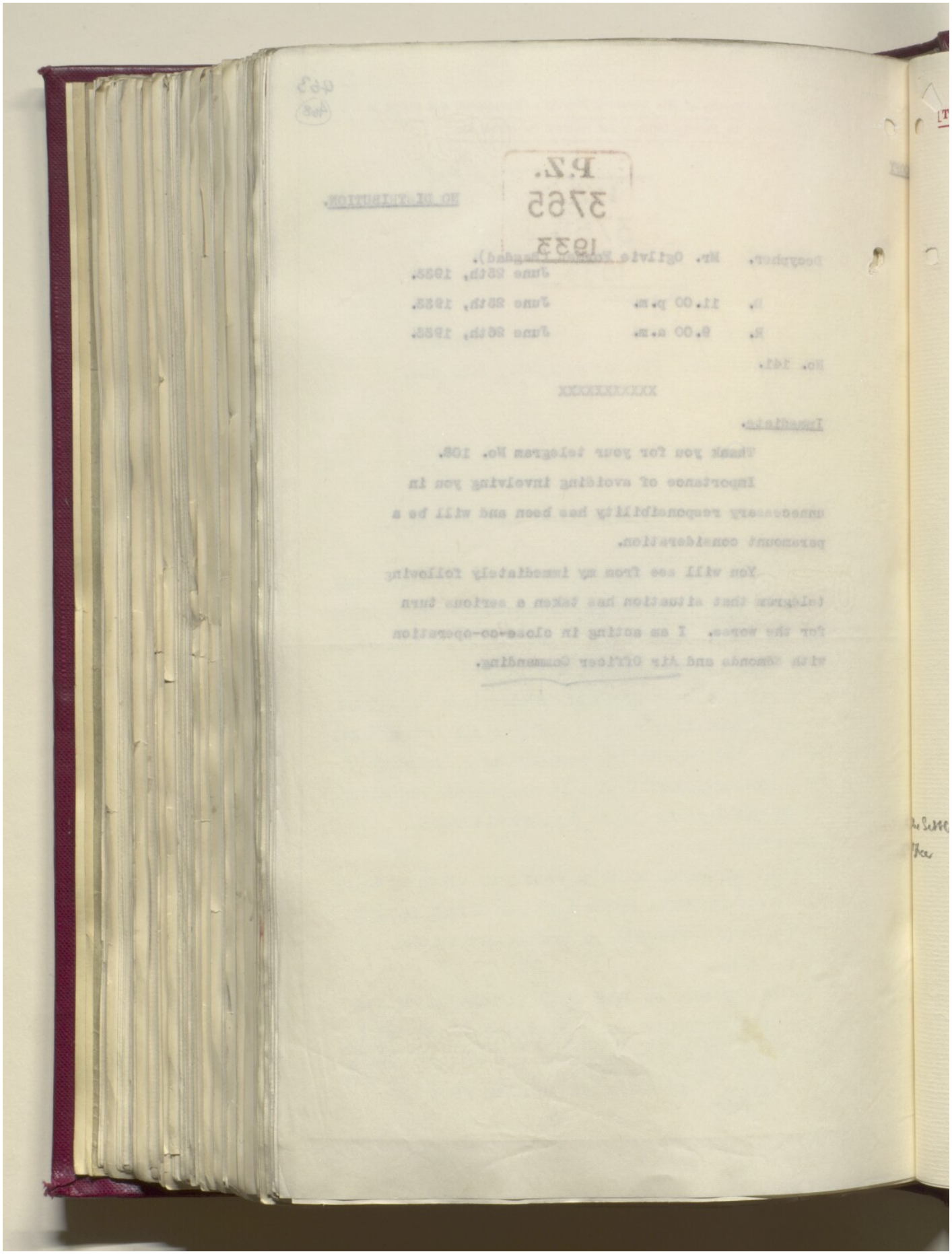
XXXXXXXXXX

Immediate.

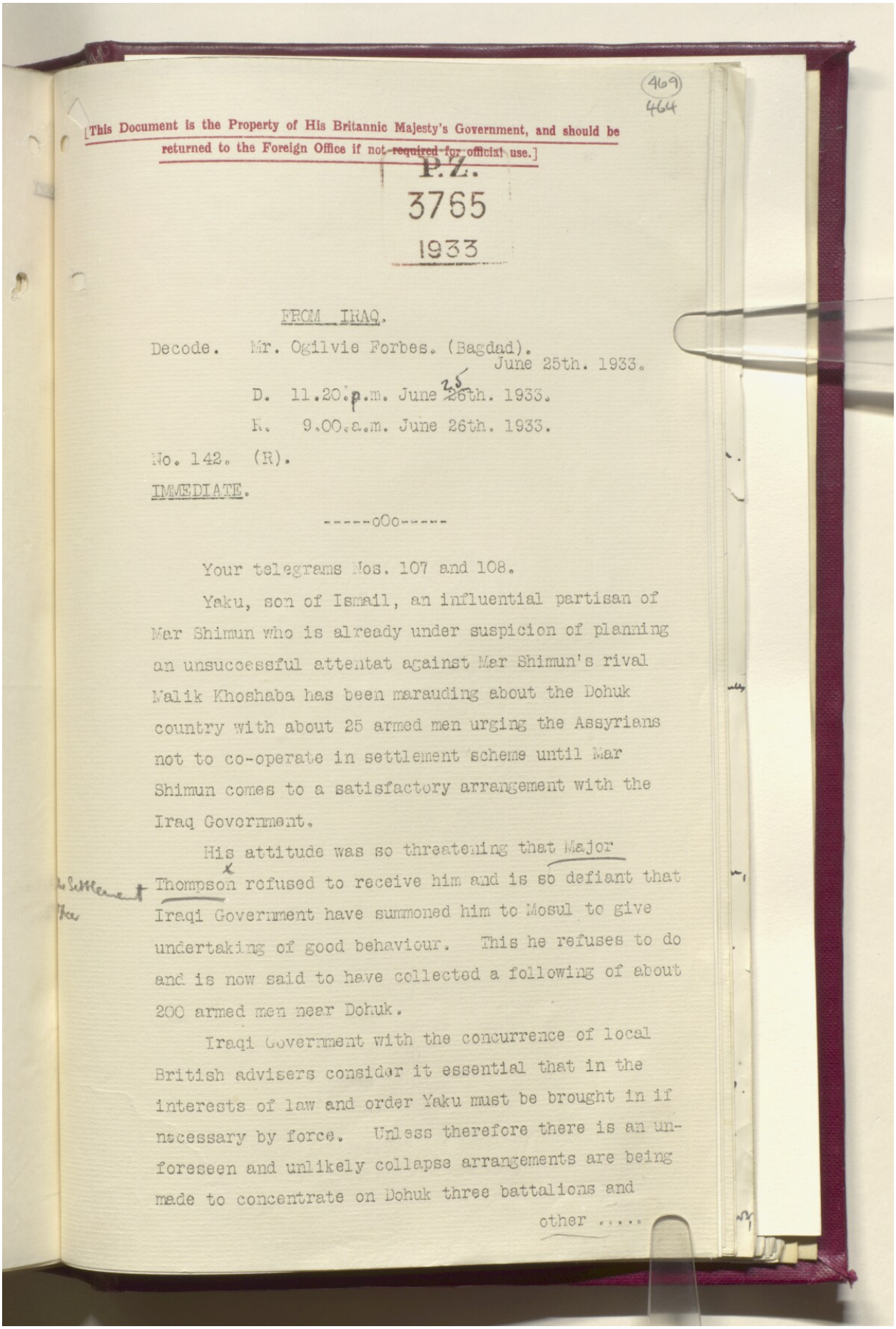
Thank you for your telegram No. 108.

Importance of avoiding involving you in unnecessary responsibility has been and will be a paramount consideration.

You will see from my immediately following telegram that situation has taken a serious turn for the worse. I am acting in close co-operation with Edmonds and Air Officer Commanding.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x000094



(469)
464

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3765
1933

FROM IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
June 25th. 1933.

D. 11.20 p.m. June 25th. 1933.
R. 9.00 a.m. June 26th. 1933.

No. 142. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

-----oOo-----

Your telegrams Nos. 107 and 108.

Yaku, son of Ismail, an influential partisan of Mar Shimun who is already under suspicion of planning an unsuccessful attentat against Mar Shimun's rival Malik Khoshaba has been marauding about the Dohuk country with about 25 armed men urging the Assyrians not to co-operate in settlement scheme until Mar Shimun comes to a satisfactory arrangement with the Iraq Government.

His attitude was so threatening that Major Thompson refused to receive him and is so defiant that Iraqi Government have summoned him to Mosul to give undertaking of good behaviour. This he refuses to do and is now said to have collected a following of about 200 armed men near Dohuk.

Iraqi Government with the concurrence of local British advisers consider it essential that in the interests of law and order Yaku must be brought in if necessary by force. Unless therefore there is an unforeseen and unlikely collapse arrangements are being made to concentrate on Dohuk three battalions and other ....

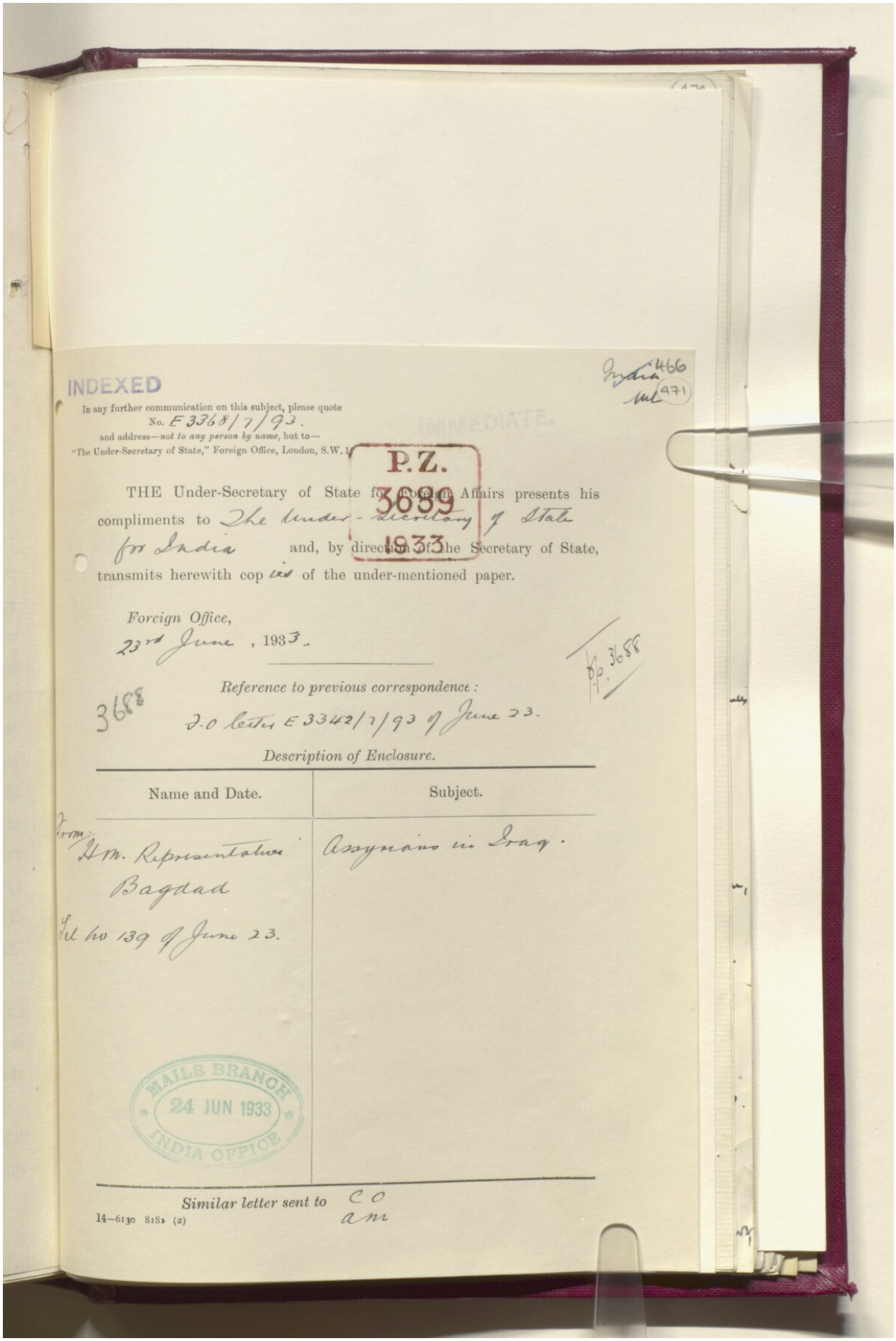
470
465

other arms with one battalion in reserve at Mosul. Move to begin probably June 26th. 200 police are also being drafted into a large proportion from Barzan, where Iraqis have had a paper victory. Air officer commanding has visited Mosul and generally confirms the above.

As a result of conference held this afternoon between myself, air officer commanding and acting adviser it was decided that efforts at reconciliation with Yaku by local intermediary including Panfil and Bishop in Jerusalem having failed I should make a final appeal to Mar Shimun to call Yaku off by means of a personal letter to be conveyed by special aeroplane since Yaku has always declared that he will obey on orders from the Patriarch. It is of course out of the question for the Iraqi Government to approach Mar Shimun in the present circumstances. Although I appealed to him on the highest motives of religion and humanity and as well wisher of Assyrian people I regret that Mar Shimun declined to comply unless (1) he received formal notice from the Iraqi Government cancelling their order restricting his movements or (2) Iraqi Government officially sent him to Yaku as an intermediary. I fear neither condition will be accepted though I will sound the Prime Minister on (1) tomorrow.

He also added some rather impertinent remarks about undertakings from Sir F. Humphrys in 1932 and said he was about to circularise Iraqi Government's foreign legations and others about his detention in Bagdad.

Threatening situation in the north has naturally complicated the problem of Mar Shimun's return to Mosul. Further report tomorrow after I have seen the Prime Minister.



INDEXED

India 466
(471)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3365/7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

IMMEDIATE.

P.Z. 3689 1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
23rd June, 1933.

P.P. 3688

3688

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 3342/7/93 of June 23.

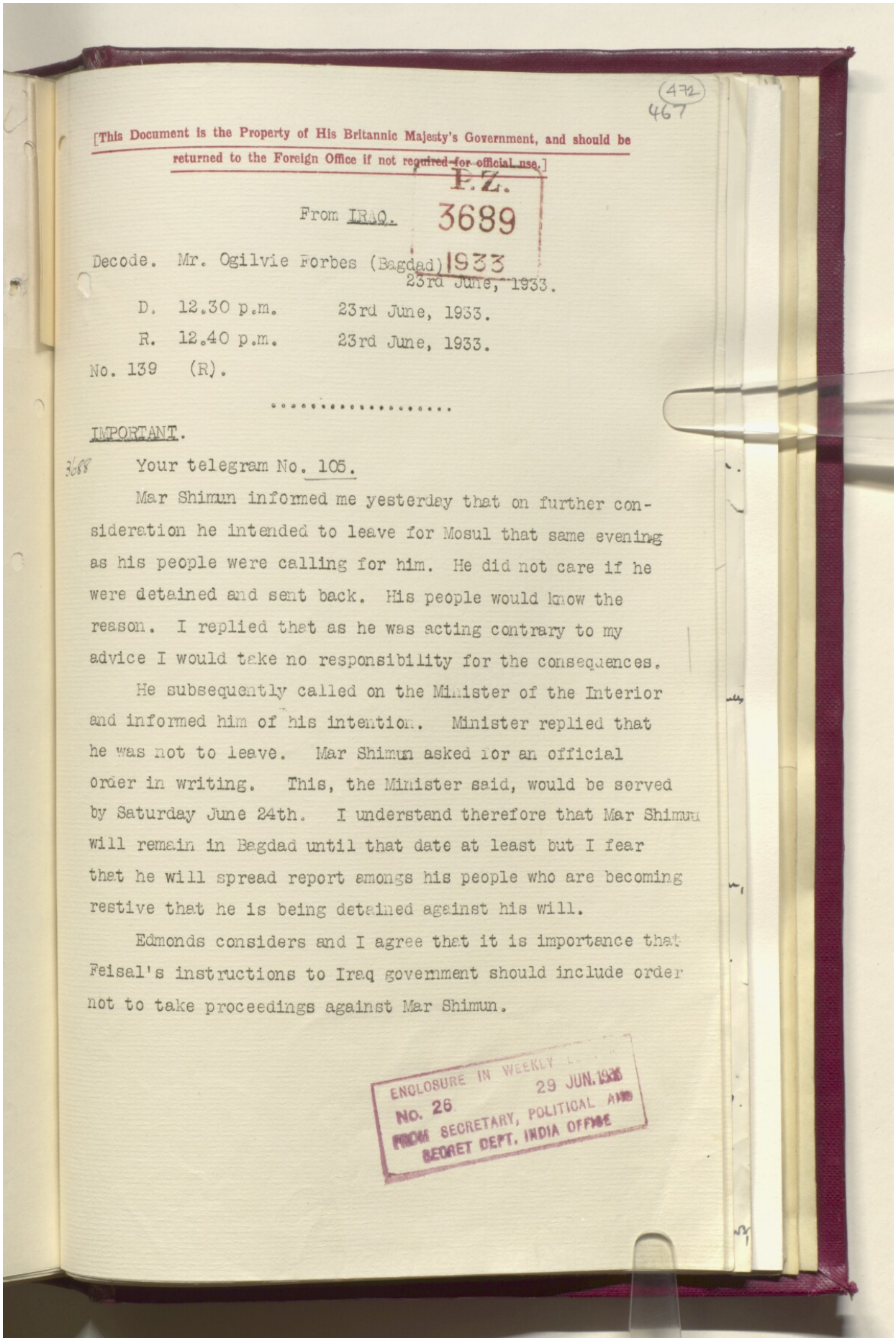
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
From H.M. Representative Bagdad Tel No 139 of June 23.	Assyrians in Iraq.

MAILS BRANCH 24 JUN 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C O am

14—6130 818 (2)



(472)
467

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 3689 1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad) 23rd June, 1933.

D. 12.30 p.m. 23rd June, 1933.

R. 12.40 p.m. 23rd June, 1933.

No. 139 (R).

.....

IMPORTANT.

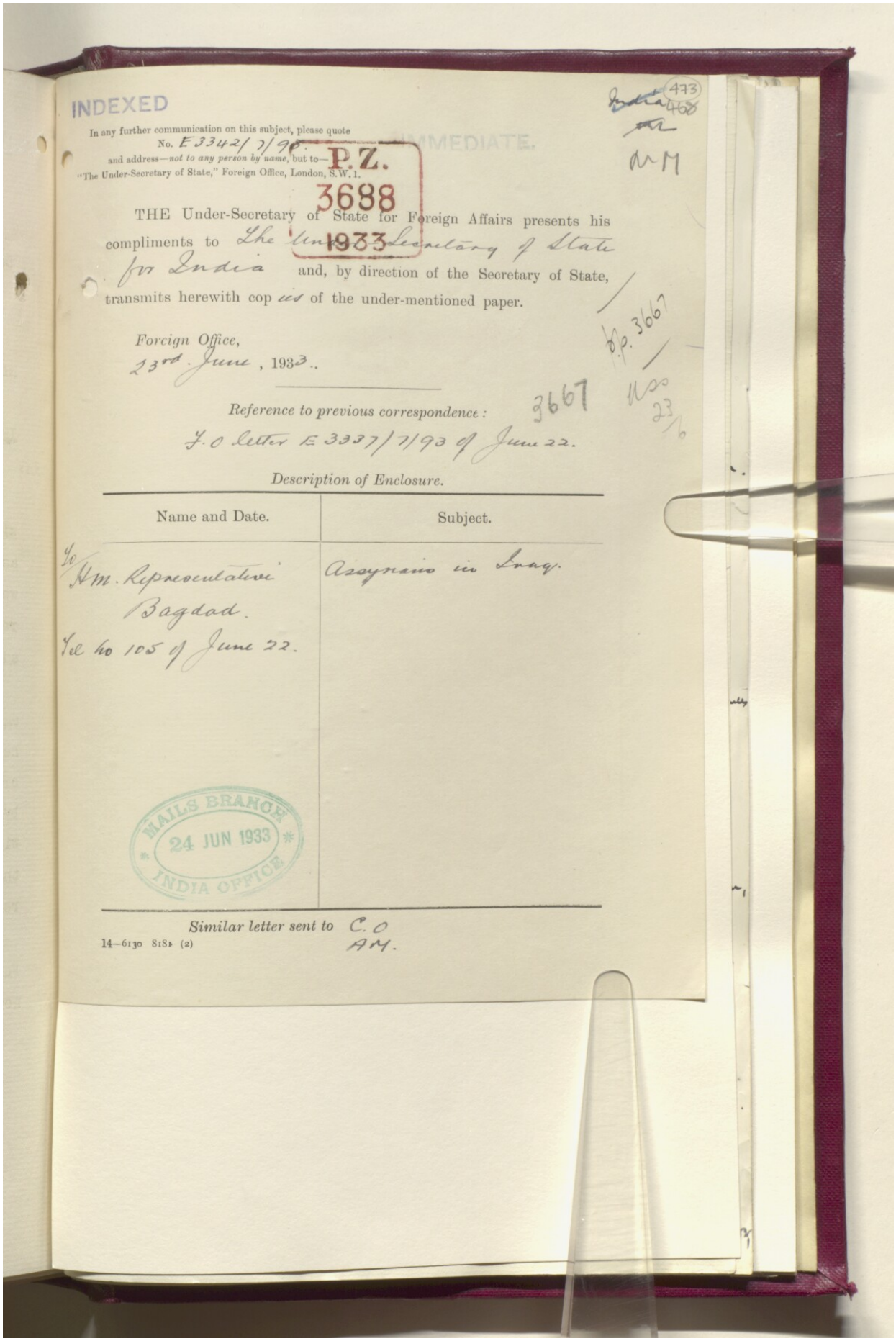
3688 Your telegram No. 105.

Mar Shimun informed me yesterday that on further consideration he intended to leave for Mosul that same evening as his people were calling for him. He did not care if he were detained and sent back. His people would know the reason. I replied that as he was acting contrary to my advice I would take no responsibility for the consequences.

He subsequently called on the Minister of the Interior and informed him of his intention. Minister replied that he was not to leave. Mar Shimun asked for an official order in writing. This, the Minister said, would be served by Saturday June 24th. I understand therefore that Mar Shimun will remain in Bagdad until that date at least but I fear that he will spread report amongs his people who are becoming restive that he is being detained against his will.

Edmonds considers and I agree that it is importance that Feisal's instructions to Iraq government should include order not to take proceedings against Mar Shimun.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY [illegible]
NO. 26 29 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE



INDEXED

473

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3342/ 7/93.
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 3688 1933

IMMEDIATE.

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith cop ies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
23rd June, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O letter E 3337/7/93 of June 22.

3667

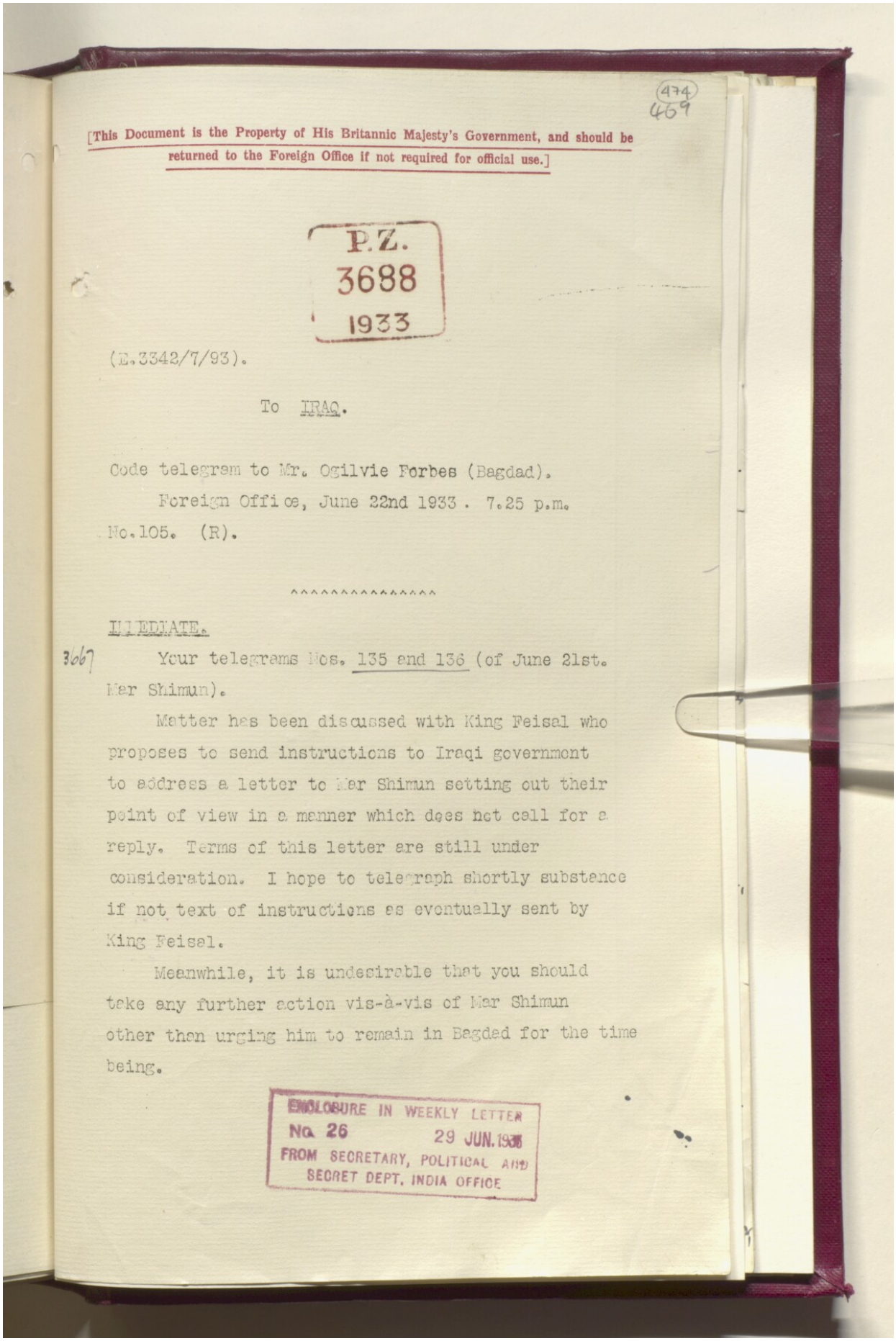
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
To H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tel no 105 of June 22.	Assyrians in Iraq.

MAILS BRANCH 24 JUN 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to C.O AM.

14—6130 818 (2)



(474)
469

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3688
1933

(E.3342/7/93).

To IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
Foreign Office, June 22nd 1933. 7.25 p.m.
No.105. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

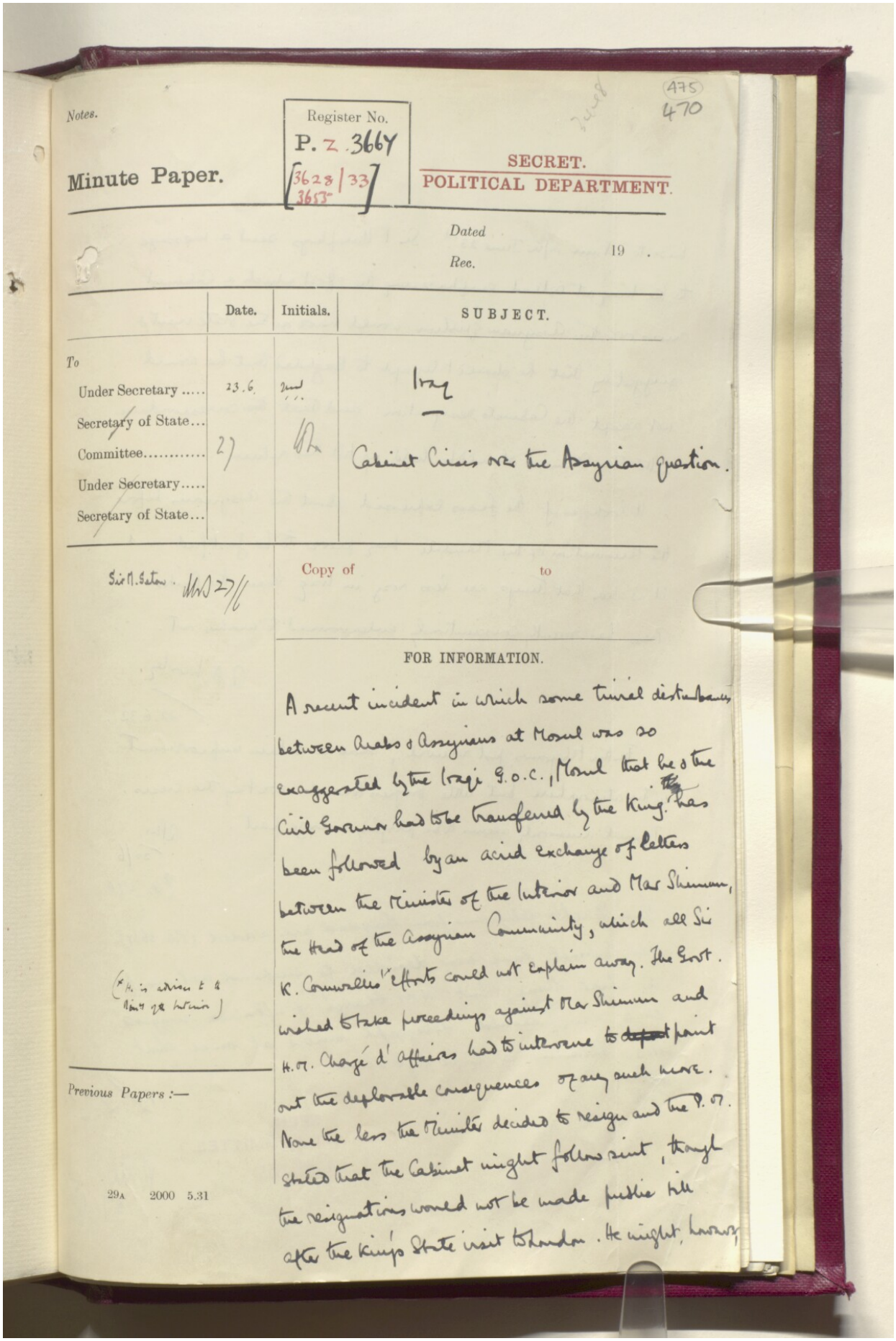
IMMEDIATE.

3667 Your telegrams Nos. 135 and 136 (of June 21st. Mar Shimun).

Matter has been discussed with King Feisal who proposes to send instructions to Iraqi government to address a letter to Mar Shimun setting out their point of view in a manner which does not call for a reply. Terms of this letter are still under consideration. I hope to telegraph shortly substance if not text of instructions as eventually sent by King Feisal.

Meanwhile, it is undesirable that you should take any further action vis-à-vis of Mar Shimun other than urging him to remain in Bagdad for the time being.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER
No. 26 29 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE



(475)
470

Notes.

Register No.
P. Z. 3664
[3628/33
3653]

Minute Paper.

SECRET.
POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dated
Rec. 19 .

	Date.	Initials.	SUBJECT.
To			
Under Secretary	23.6.	[illegible]	Iraq
Secretary of State...			
Committee.....	27	[illegible]	Cabinet Crisis over the Assyrian question.
Under Secretary.....			
Secretary of State...			

Sir M. Eaton. [illegible] 27/6

Copy of to

FOR INFORMATION.

A recent incident in which some trivial disturbances between Arabs & Assyrians at Mosul was so exaggerated by the Iraqi G.O.C., Mosul that he & the Civil Governor had to be transferred by the King has been followed by an acrid exchange of letters between the Minister of the Interior and Mar Shimun, the Head of the Assyrian Community, which all Sir K. Cornwallis' (*) efforts could not explain away. The Govt. wished to take proceedings against Mar Shimun and H.M. Chargé d'affaires had to intervene to ~~depart~~ point out the deplorable consequences of any such move. None the less the Minister decided to resign and the P.M. stated that the Cabinet might follow suit, though the resignations would not be made public till after the King's State visit to London. He might, however,

(* H. is advised to the Minister of the Interior)

Previous Papers :—

29A 2000 5.31

have to return after June 23rd. Sir F. Humphrys sent a message to the King at Ostend emphasising the effect which a Cabinet crisis over the Assyrian question would have on the State visit & suggesting that he should telegraph to Baghdad that he would not accept the Cabinet's resignation and that the correspondence with Mar Shimun should be held up till his return.

It looks as if the fears expressed about the Assyrians before the termination of the Mandate may prove to be justified and it is clear that things are less rosy in Iraq than the British Press has recently conscientiously endeavoured to make out.

A. J. Morley
22.6.33.

Further telegrams, just received, show a certain improvement in the atmosphere but little progress towards averting the crisis. Personal animosity seems to be playing a large part.

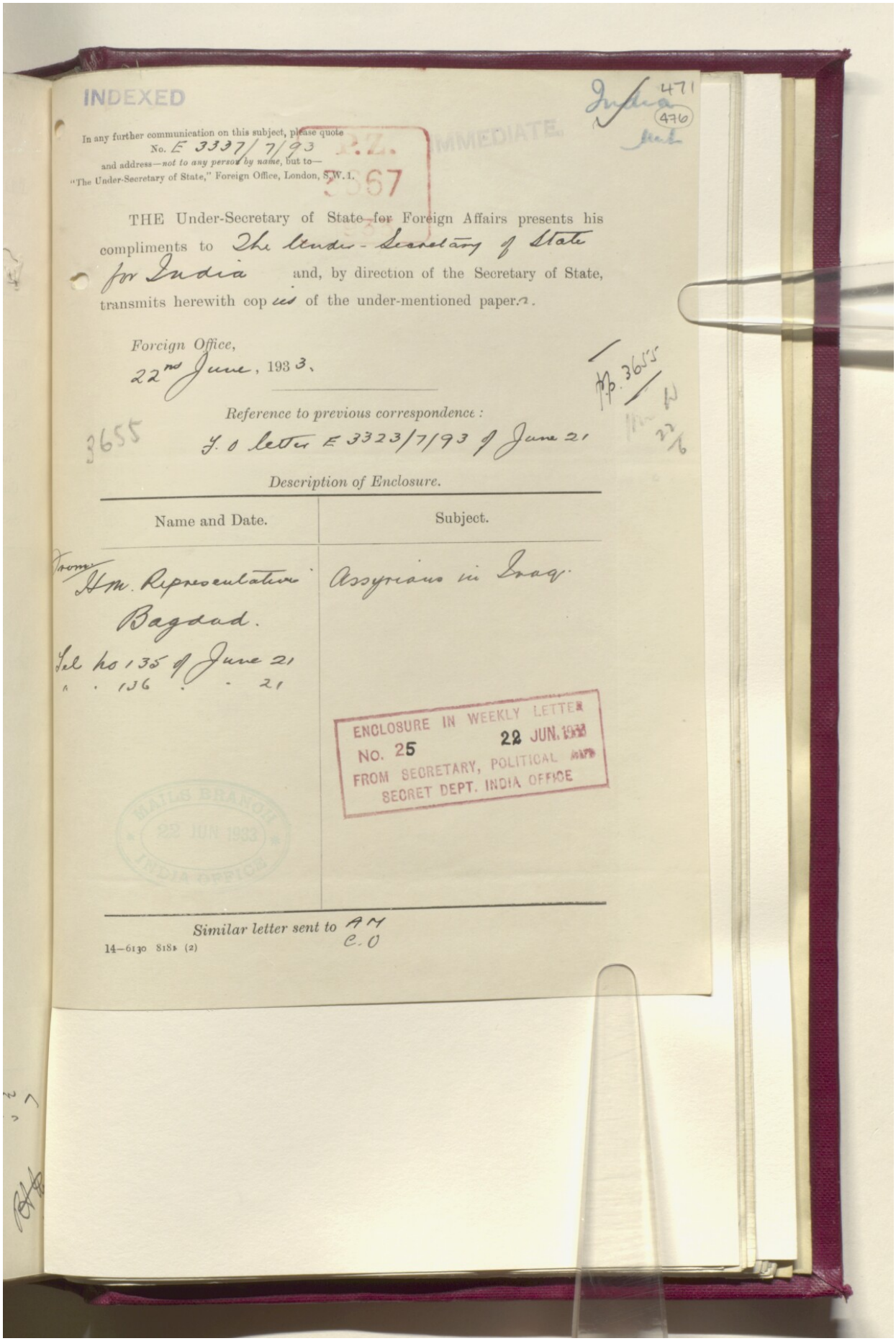
AFM.
22/6
[illegible] 22/6

Two further telegrams from Bagdad are added (P.Z. 3664) The Cabinet have now decided to suspend action for a short time, but H.M. Chargé d'affaires suggests that King Feisal should telegraph orders at once that Mar Shimun is to be left alone.

AHS
23/6.

SEEN
POLITICAL COMMITTEE.
14 JUL 1933

[illegible]
3.7.



INDEXED

India 471 (476)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E 3337/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

A.Z. 3567

IMMEDIATE

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
22nd June, 1933.

Hp. 3655

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O letter E 3323/7/93 of June 21

3655

Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
From H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tel No 135 of June 21	Assyrians in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 25 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE 22 JUN. 1933

MAILS BRANCH 22 JUN 1933 INDIA OFFICE

Similar letter sent to A.M. C.O

14—6130 818 (2)

472
(477)

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

From IRAQ. 3867

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). June 21st July, 1933.

D. 1.40 p.m. 21st June July, 1933.

R. 3.35 p.m. 21st June July, 1933.

No. 135. (R).

IMMEDIATE.

3653 My telegram No. 132.

Having been informed this morning by Adviser to the Interior that Minister of the Interior, largely owing to disconcerting reports from Mosul, had changed his mind and intended to send Mar Shimun to the Courts, I immediately sought interview with Prime Minister intending eventually to go to the Regent if necessary.

I solemnly warned him against proposed action which he did not deny. He replied that no step would for the present be taken provided I induced Mar Shimun to accept draft from Minister of the Interior enclosed in my despatch No. 379 which he pointed out was prepared by Cornwallis.

As Mar Shimun had arranged to leave for Mosul this evening and is therefore in imminent danger of arrest or detention, I have told him that owing to further developments he must not leave Bagdad for the present.

I suggest that action as follows be taken (2 gr und) Feisal to send peremptory orders to the Cabinet to allow Mar Shimun to return to Mosul unmolested. These instructions if necessary to be issued also through the Foreign Office and Embassy to avoid all excuse of telegraphic delay.

Am I authorised to try to induce Mar Shimun to accept draft and to warn him that if he declines His Majesty's Government will not be responsible for the consequences. Please reply urgently as constant desire of Mar Shimun to leave for Mosul may at any moment precipitate crisis.

Edmonds concurs.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

473
(478)

R.Z.
3367
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad). June 21st 1933.

D. 8.35 p.m. June 21st 1933.

R. 9.00 a.m. June 22nd 1933.

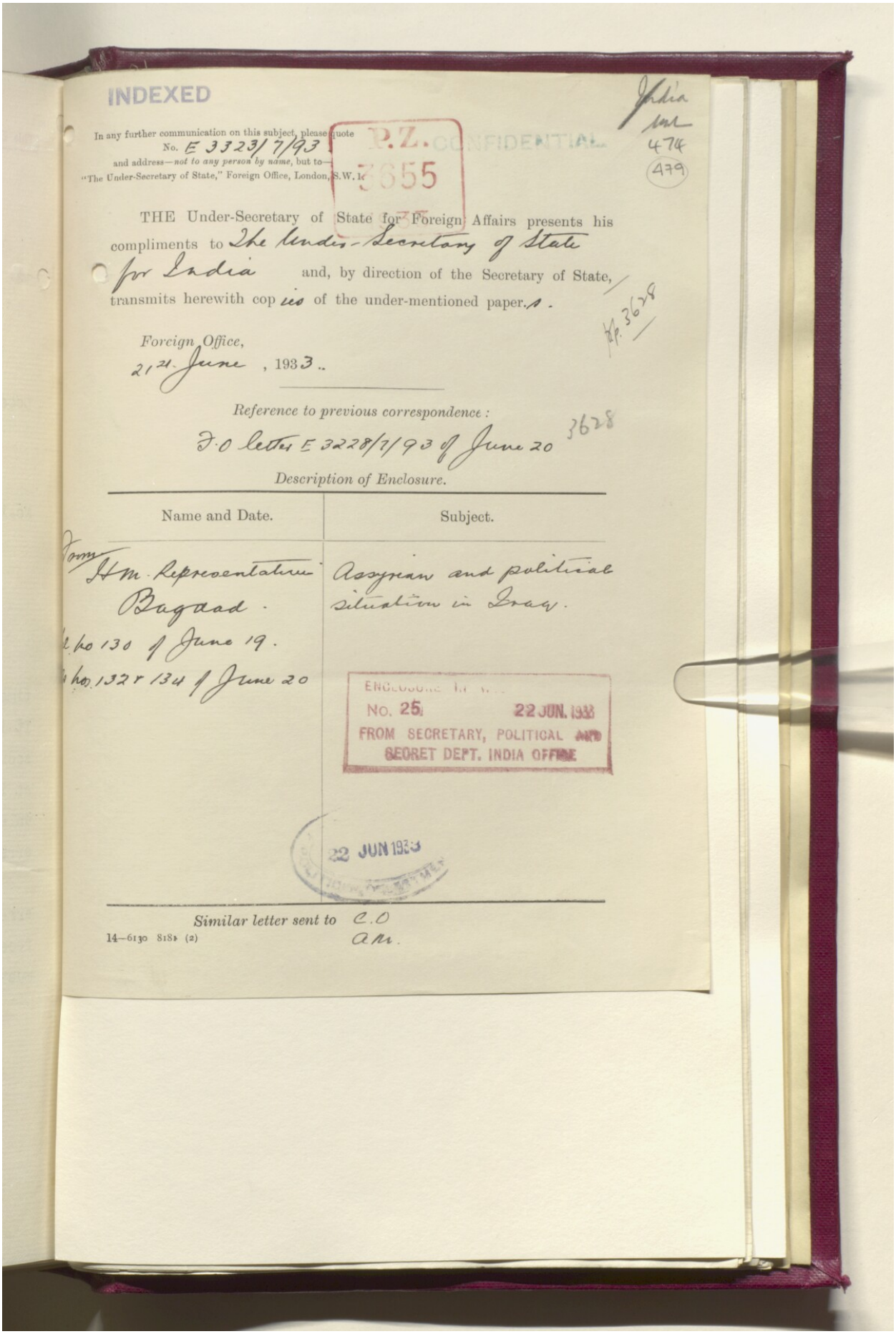
No.136. (R).

^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^^

My telegram No.135.

Cabinet have decided to suspend action for a short time in the hope that Mar Shimun may agree to draft. It is important that I should have your instructions soon re intervening with Iraq government in the matters at issue between the Patriarch and the government as unless the King sends orders as suggested they may arrest him at any moment.

The volte face by the Cabinet in the direction of arresting Mar Shimun may be the result of instructions received from Feisal that they are not to resign. He must also tell them to leave Mar Shimun alone.



INDEXED

India
Mil
474
(479)

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3323/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 3655

CONFIDENTIAL

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Ref. 3628

Foreign Office,
21st June, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O. letter E 3228/7/93 of June 20

3628

Description of Enclosure.

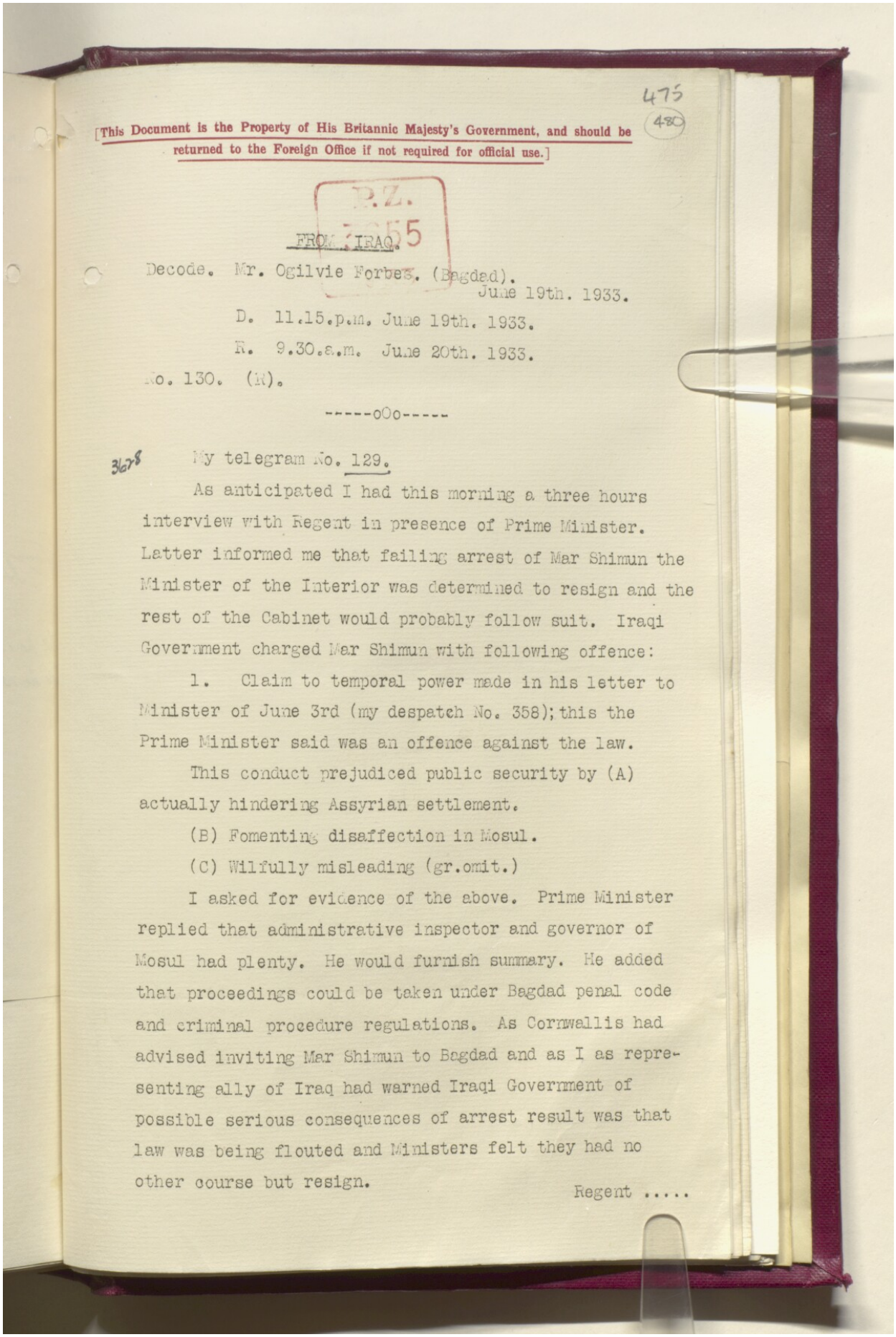
Name and Date.	Subject.
From H.M. Representative Bagdad.	Assyrian and political situation in Iraq.
tel. No. 130 of June 19.	
tel. No. 132 & 134 of June 20	

ENCLOSURE IN ...
NO. 25 22 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

22 JUN 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O
Am.

14—6130 818 (2)



475
480

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z. 3655

FROM : IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).
June 19th. 1933.

D. 11.15.p.m. June 19th. 1933.

R. 9.30.a.m. June 20th. 1933.

No. 130. (R).

-----oOo-----

3678 My telegram No. 129.

As anticipated I had this morning a three hours interview with Regent in presence of Prime Minister. Latter informed me that failing arrest of Mar Shimun the Minister of the Interior was determined to resign and the rest of the Cabinet would probably follow suit. Iraqi Government charged Mar Shimun with following offence:

1. Claim to temporal power made in his letter to Minister of June 3rd (my despatch No. 358); this the Prime Minister said was an offence against the law.

This conduct prejudiced public security by (A) actually hindering Assyrian settlement.

(B) Fomenting disaffection in Mosul.

(C) Wilfully misleading (gr.omit.)

I asked for evidence of the above. Prime Minister replied that administrative inspector and governor of Mosul had plenty. He would furnish summary. He added that proceedings could be taken under Bagdad penal code and criminal procedure regulations. As Cornwallis had advised inviting Mar Shimun to Bagdad and as I as representing ally of Iraq had warned Iraqi Government of possible serious consequences of arrest result was that law was being flouted and Ministers felt they had no other course but resign.

Regent .....

476
(481)

Regent then asked my opinion on proposed action. On lines of second paragraph of my telegram under reference I said it would be deplorable if government resigned now on Assyrian issue basing my arguments on the following lines:

(1) It would make Assyrian question party ~~to the~~ issue,

(2) It would do great harm to Iraq both at home and abroad,

(3) It would ruin settlement scheme,

(4) It would be hailed by Mar Shimun as a personal triumph and make him far more difficult to deal with.

It transpired in conversation that crux of the trouble is offence taken by Minister of the Interior at Mar Shimun's letter of June 3rd which he considers derogatory to the dignity of his office. Therefore failing punishment or amends from Mar Shimun he must resign.

I stated that for obvious reasons I had refrained from close association with Mar Shimun but on three occasions I had seen him I had been trying to induce him to send reply satisfactory to Minister. Prime Minister thanked me and hinted if such a reply was forthcoming even at the eleventh hour Cabinet crisis might be staved off. While I have no great hopes, Mar Shimun is dining with me this evening when Edmonds and I shall make a further effort.

Interview was altogether most friendly.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

477
(482)

From---IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, (Bagdad),
20th June, 1933.

D. 6.00 p.m. 20th June, 1933.

R. 10.00 p.m. 20th June, 1933.

No.132.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

3678 Your telegram No.104 last paragraph.

I made that suggestion. But I had private information that intention of Cabinet was not to inform the King until after State visit, consequently evasive reply of the Prime Minister that the matter would be considered by Council of Ministers is not surprising. Sir F. Humphry's message to King Feisal may therefore be very helpful.

I fear oral statement to Mar Shimun would not be sufficient to prevent resignations. What is wanted at present is a satisfactory statement by Mar Shimun.

The latter is now engaged in critical interview with Minister of the Interior for which I have done everything possible to make His Beatitude conciliatory.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

478
483

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad), 20th June, 1933.

D. 8.50 p.m. 20th June, 1933.

R. 9.30 a.m. 21st June, 1933.

No. 134. (R).

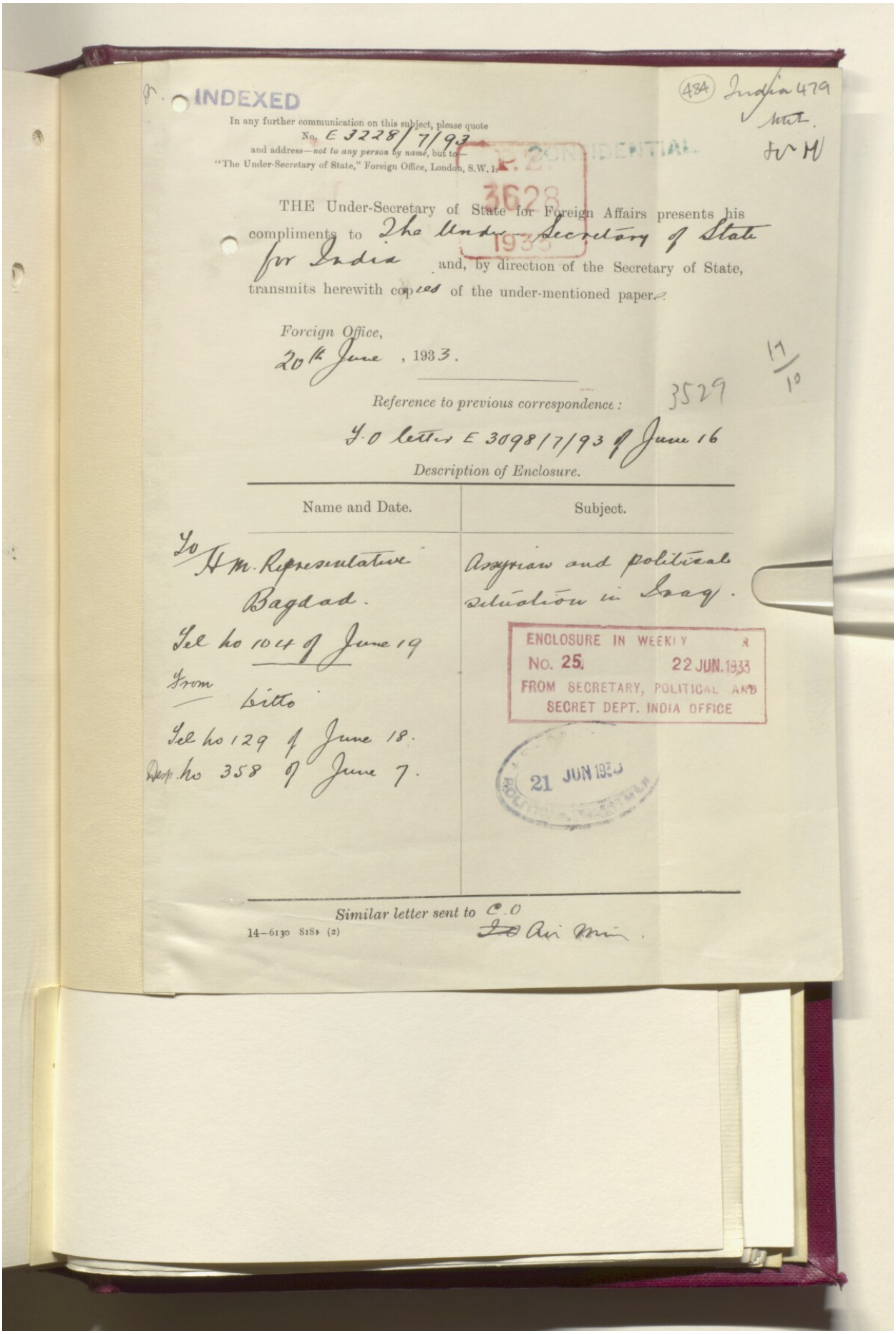
---

365 My (? tel.) despatch No. 132

This morning's interview between the Minister of the Interior and Mar Shimun was fruitless but harmonious. Mar Shimun was informed that he was at liberty to return to Mosul.

He promised me that he would before departure address to the Minister a polite letter the draft of which I dictated to him expressing thanks for reception and courteous hearing and giving assurance that he would do all in his power to encourage Assyrians to live in peace and harmony with Iraqi fellow-subjects.

Such a letter may help towards reconsideration of resignation of Cabinet. If not it can do no harm. More than this I cannot do. Next step lies with the Cabinet.



INDEXED

(484) India 479

In any further communication on this subject, please quote
No. E 3228/7/93
and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—
"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

3628
1933

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to The Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned paper.

Foreign Office,
20th June, 1933.

17/10

3529

Reference to previous correspondence:
F.O letter E 3098/7/93 of June 16

Description of Enclosure.

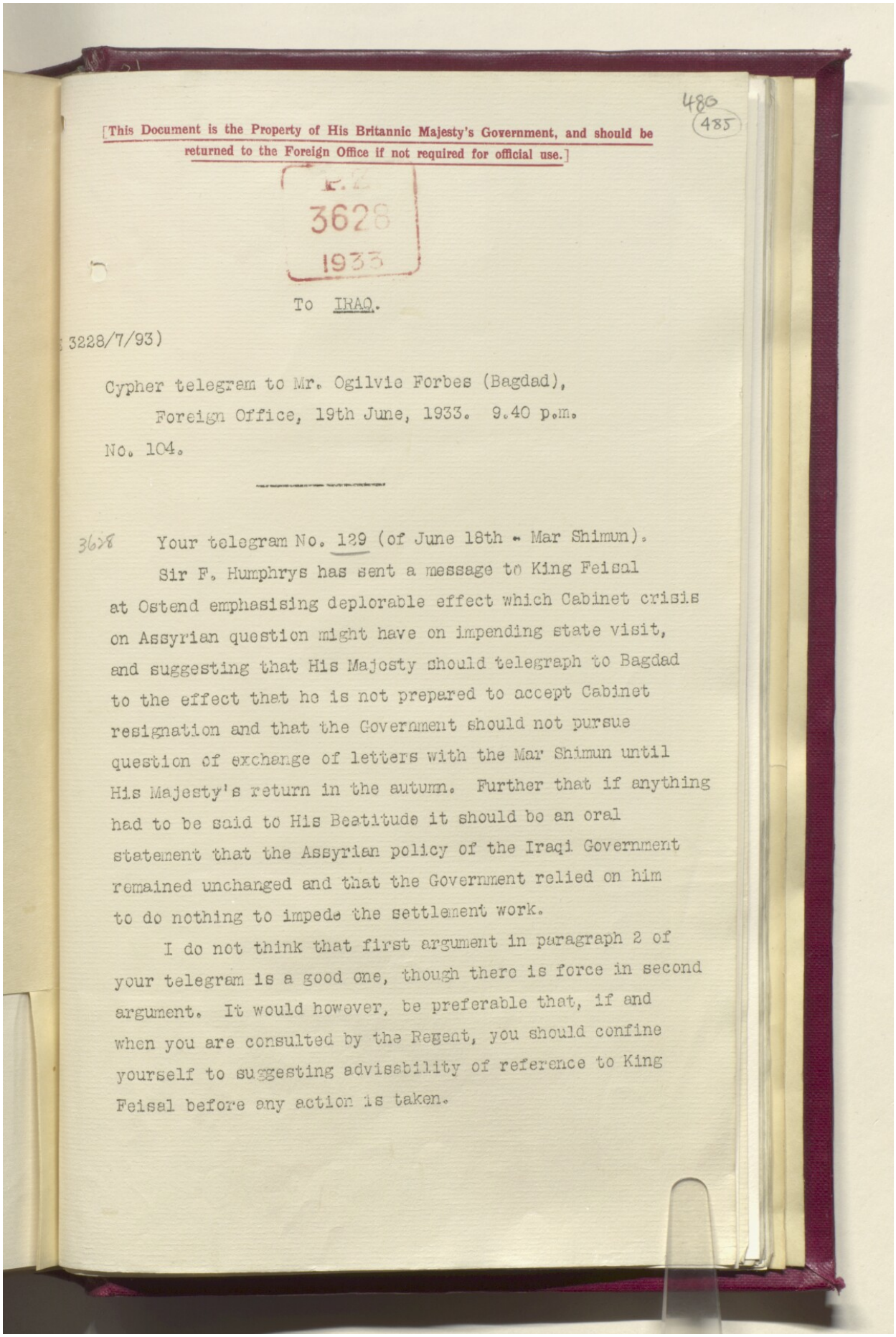
Name and Date.	Subject.
To H.M. Representative Bagdad. Tel no 104 of June 19 From ditto Tel no 129 of June 18. Desp. no 358 of June 7.	Assyrian and political situation in Iraq.

ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY
NO. 25 22 JUN. 1933
FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE

21 JUN 1933

Similar letter sent to C.O
~~India~~ Air Min.

14—6130 818 (2)



480
485

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

E.Z
3628
1933

To IRAQ.

3228/7/93)

Cypher telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
Foreign Office, 19th June, 1933. 9.40 p.m.
No. 104.

3628 Your telegram No. 129 (of June 18th - Mar Shimun).

Sir F. Humphrys has sent a message to King Feisal at Ostend emphasising deplorable effect which Cabinet crisis on Assyrian question might have on impending state visit, and suggesting that His Majesty should telegraph to Bagdad to the effect that he is not prepared to accept Cabinet resignation and that the Government should not pursue question of exchange of letters with the Mar Shimun until His Majesty's return in the autumn. Further that if anything had to be said to His Beatitude it should be an oral statement that the Assyrian policy of the Iraqi Government remained unchanged and that the Government relied on him to do nothing to impede the settlement work.

I do not think that first argument in paragraph 2 of your telegram is a good one, though there is force in second argument. It would however, be preferable that, if and when you are consulted by the Regent, you should confine yourself to suggesting advissability of reference to King Feisal before any action is taken.

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

481
(486)

From IRAQ.

Decypher. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
18th June, 1933.

D. 2.50 p.m. 18th June, 1933.

R. 5.40 p.m. 18th June, 1933.

No. 129.

IMPORTANT.

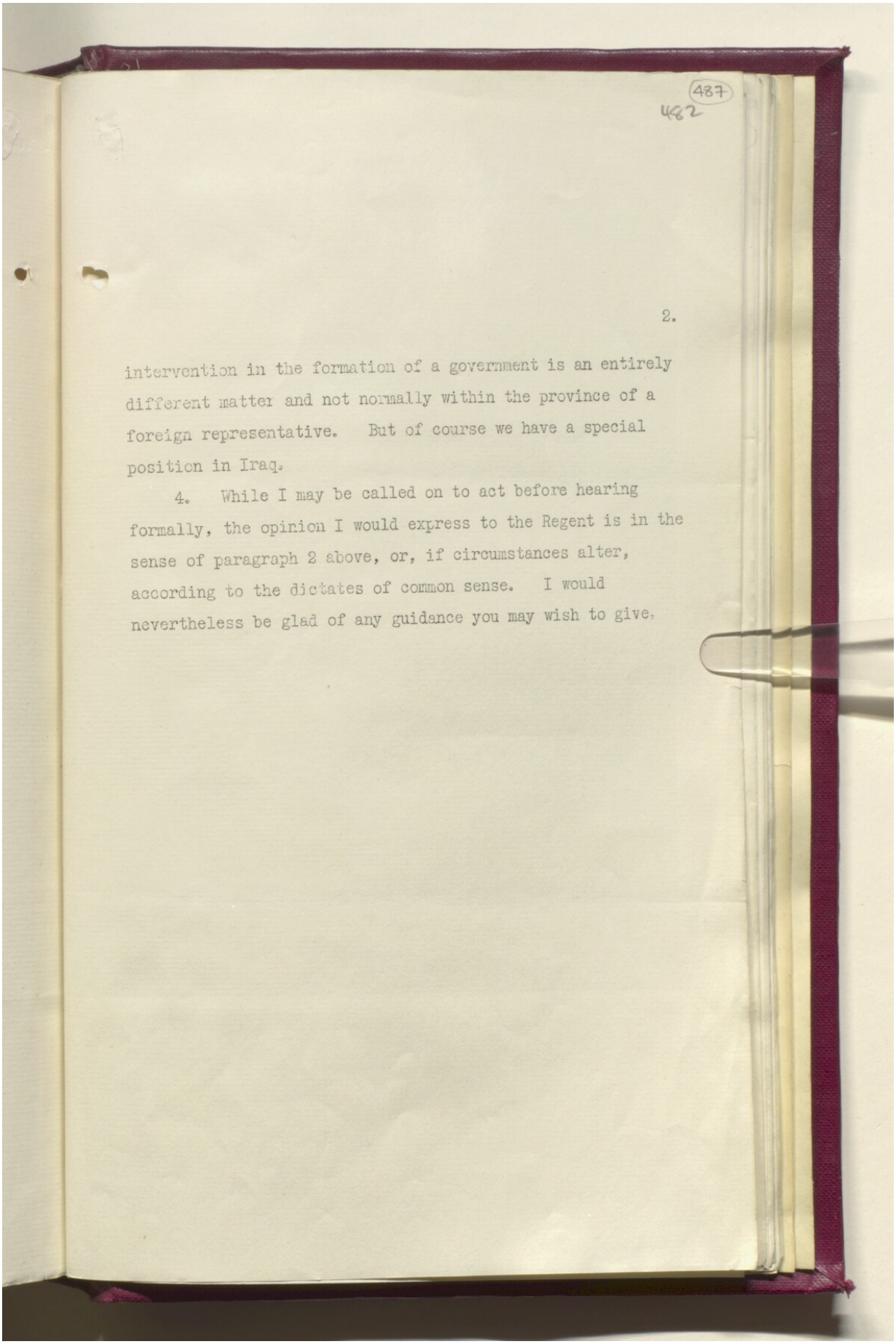
My telegram No. 126.

Cabinet crisis is now impending. Mar Shimun has changed his mind again and raised further objections to draft letter from Minister of Interior reported in my telegram No. 123. Cabinet is considering situation and Prime Minister has informed the Regent that although he will comply with my advice not to arrest Mar Shimun, Minister of Interior intends to resign and the rest of the Cabinet may follow suit. It is proposed that these resignations shall not be published till after state visit. If the whole Cabinet resigns it is considered that King Faisal may have to return soon after June 23rd.

2. Resignation of the Cabinet over an Assyrian issue is to be deplored because (1) it commits present members of the Government and their followers to anti-Assyrian policy in the future, and (2) it would increase Mar Shimun's conceit and stubbornness. I have informed (gr. undec.) acting adviser to the Interior that this is my view..

3. As the Regent may consult me on the situation question arises as to the nature of advice I should tender. I have intervened with success to save Mar Shimun from arrest but

intervention



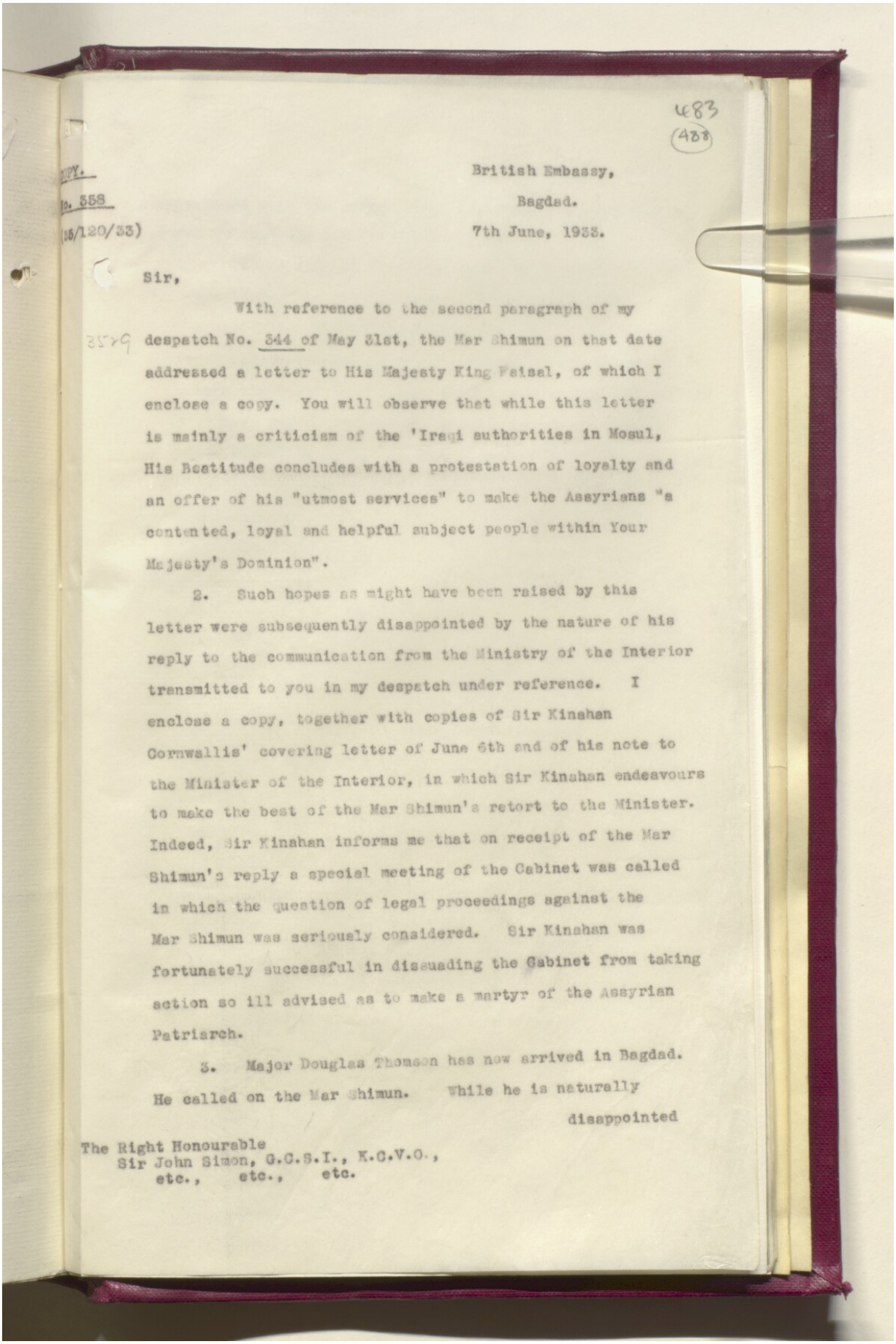
487
482

intervention in the formation of a government is an entirely different matter and not normally within the province of a foreign representative. But of course we have a special position in Iraq.

4. While I may be called on to act before hearing formally, the opinion I would express to the Regent is in the sense of paragraph 2 above, or, if circumstances alter, according to the dictates of common sense. I would nevertheless be glad of any guidance you may wish to give.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x0000b9



483
(488)

COPY.
No. 358
(35/120/33)

British Embassy,
Bagdad.
7th June, 1933.

Sir,

With reference to the second paragraph of my despatch No. 344 of May 31st, the Mar Shimun on that date addressed a letter to His Majesty King Faisal, of which I enclose a copy. You will observe that while this letter is mainly a criticism of the 'Iraqi authorities in Mosul, His Beatitude concludes with a protestation of loyalty and an offer of his "utmost services" to make the Assyrians "a contented, loyal and helpful subject people within Your Majesty's Dominion".

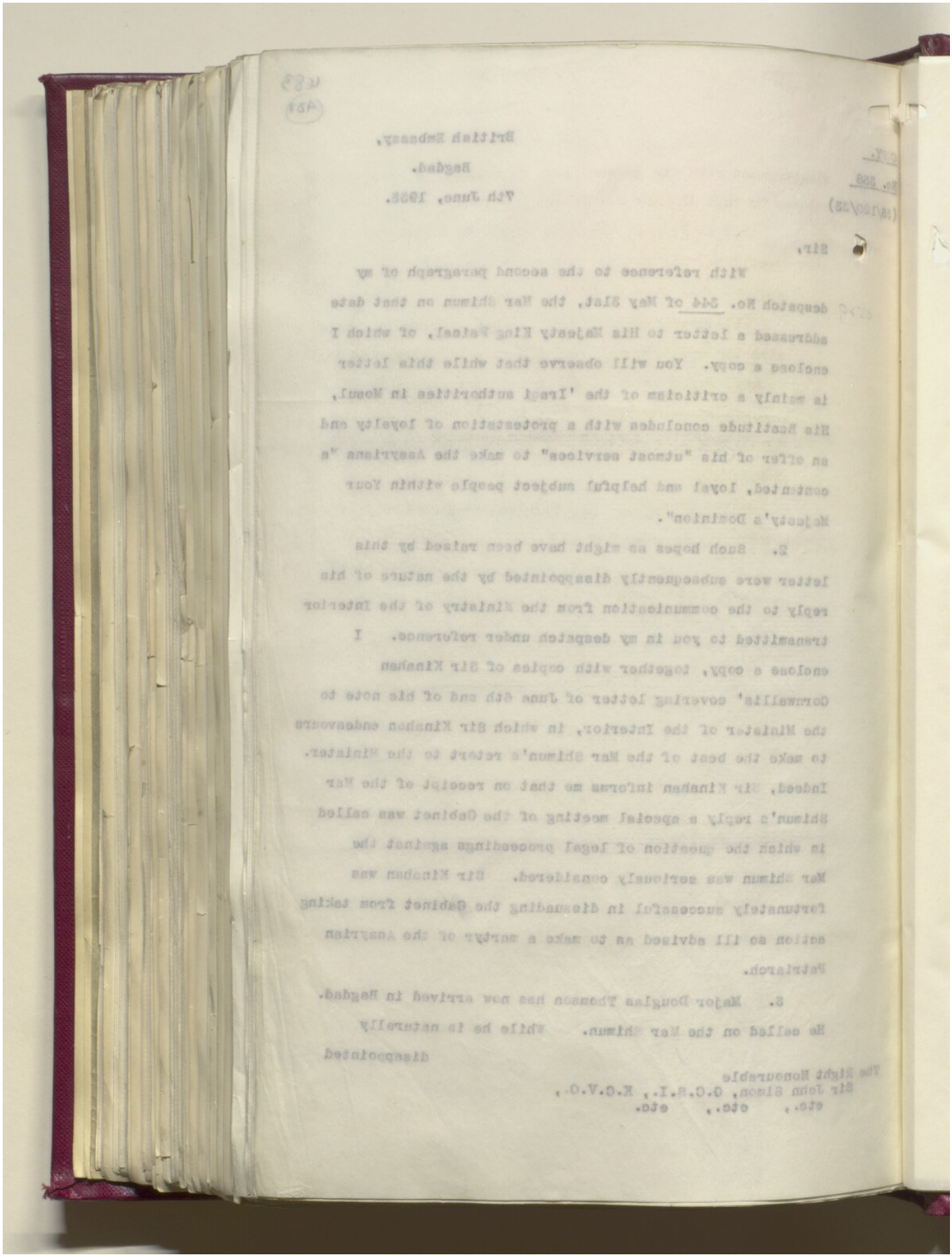
2. Such hopes as might have been raised by this letter were subsequently disappointed by the nature of his reply to the communication from the Ministry of the Interior transmitted to you in my despatch under reference. I enclose a copy, together with copies of Sir Kinahan Cornwallis' covering letter of June 6th and of his note to the Minister of the Interior, in which Sir Kinahan endeavours to make the best of the Mar Shimun's retort to the Minister. Indeed, Sir Kinahan informs me that on receipt of the Mar Shimun's reply a special meeting of the Cabinet was called in which the question of legal proceedings against the Mar Shimun was seriously considered. Sir Kinahan was fortunately successful in dissuading the Cabinet from taking action so ill advised as to make a martyr of the Assyrian Patriarch.

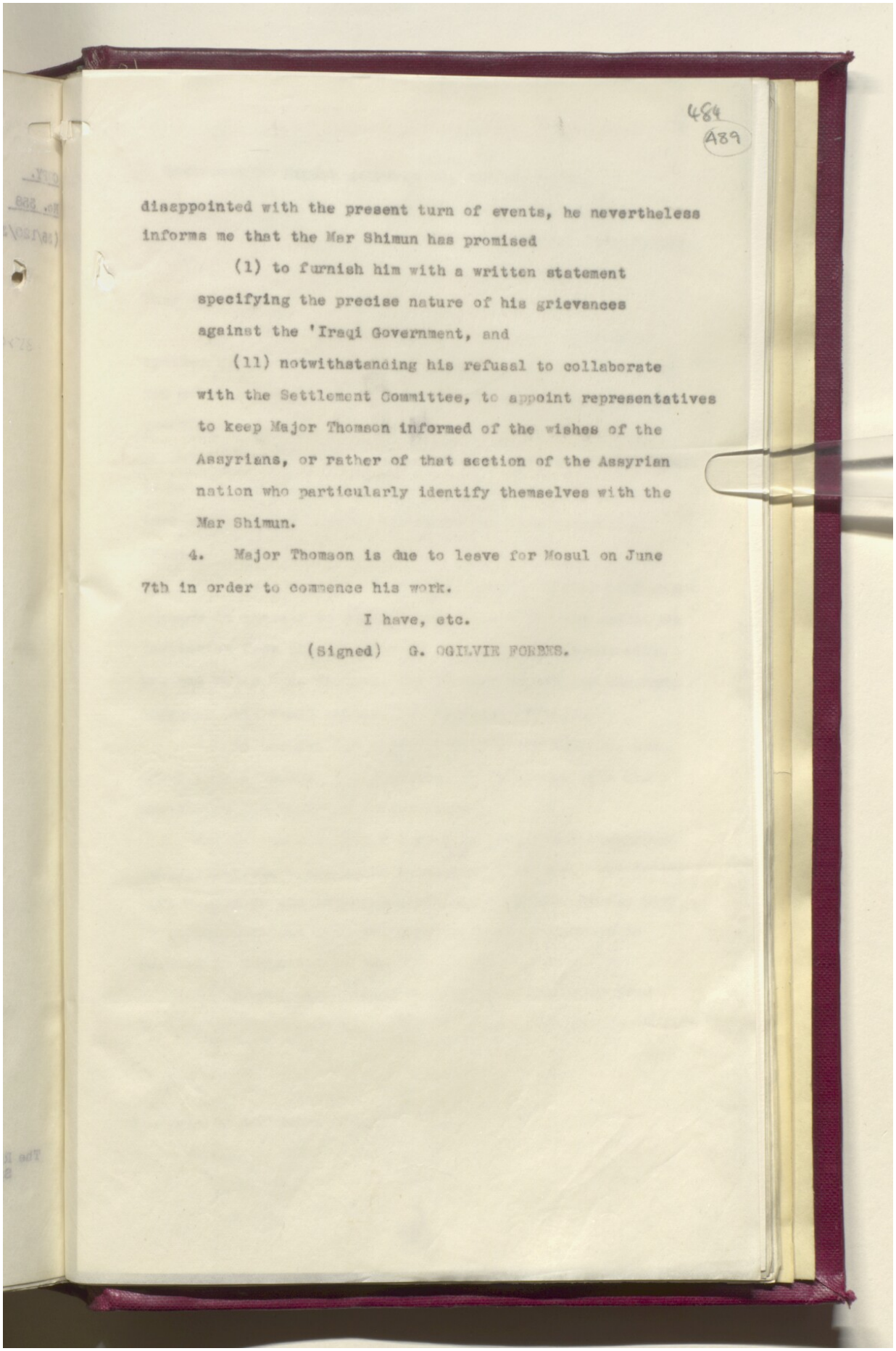
3. Major Douglas Thomson has now arrived in Bagdad. He called on the Mar Shimun. While he is naturally disappointed

The Right Honourable
Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x0000bb





484
489

disappointed with the present turn of events, he nevertheless informs me that the Mar Shimun has promised

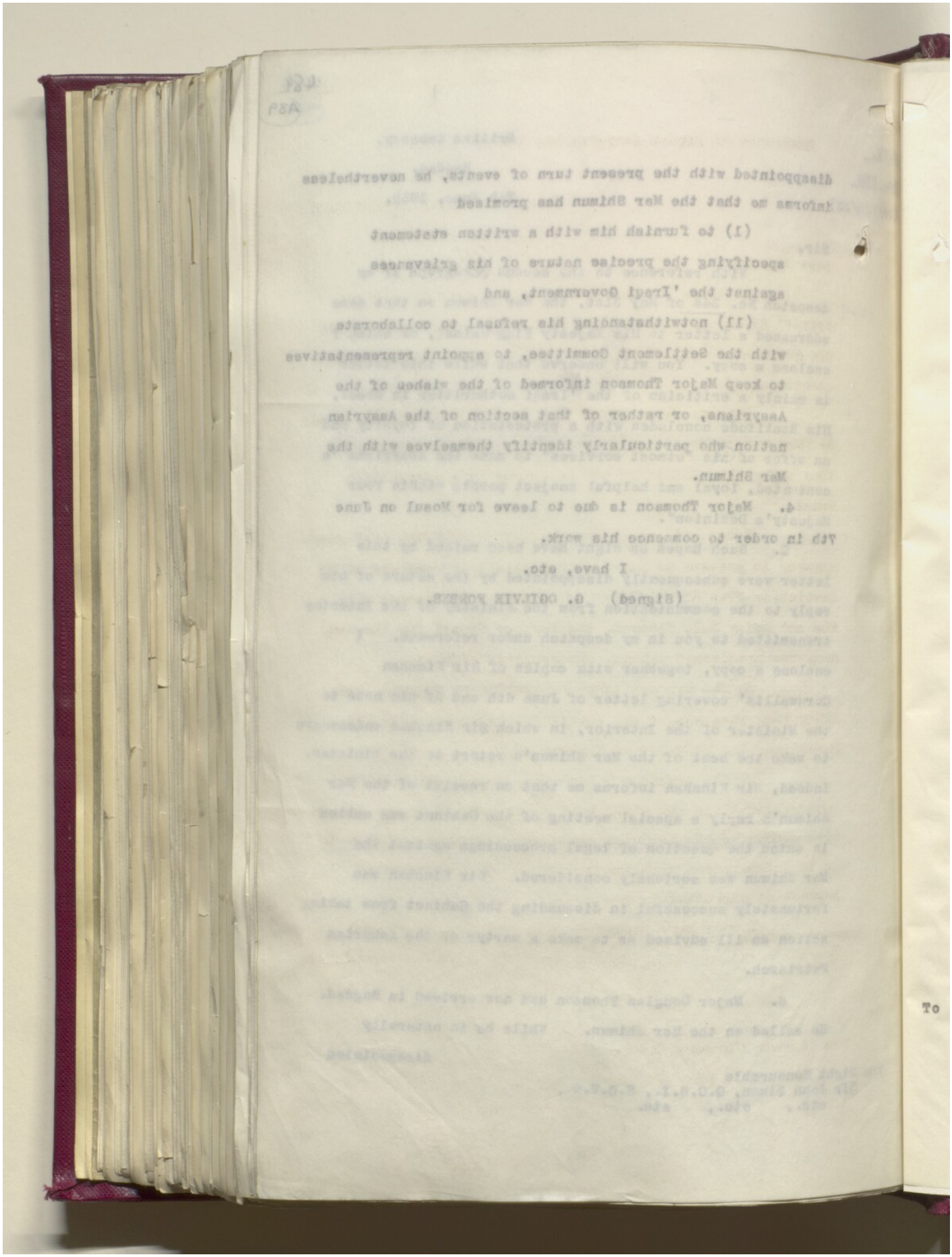
(i) to furnish him with a written statement specifying the precise nature of his grievances against the 'Iraqi Government, and

(ii) notwithstanding his refusal to collaborate with the Settlement Committee, to appoint representatives to keep Major Thomson informed of the wishes of the Assyrians, or rather of that section of the Assyrian nation who particularly identify themselves with the Mar Shimun.

4. Major Thomson is due to leave for Mosul on June 7th in order to commence his work.

I have, etc.

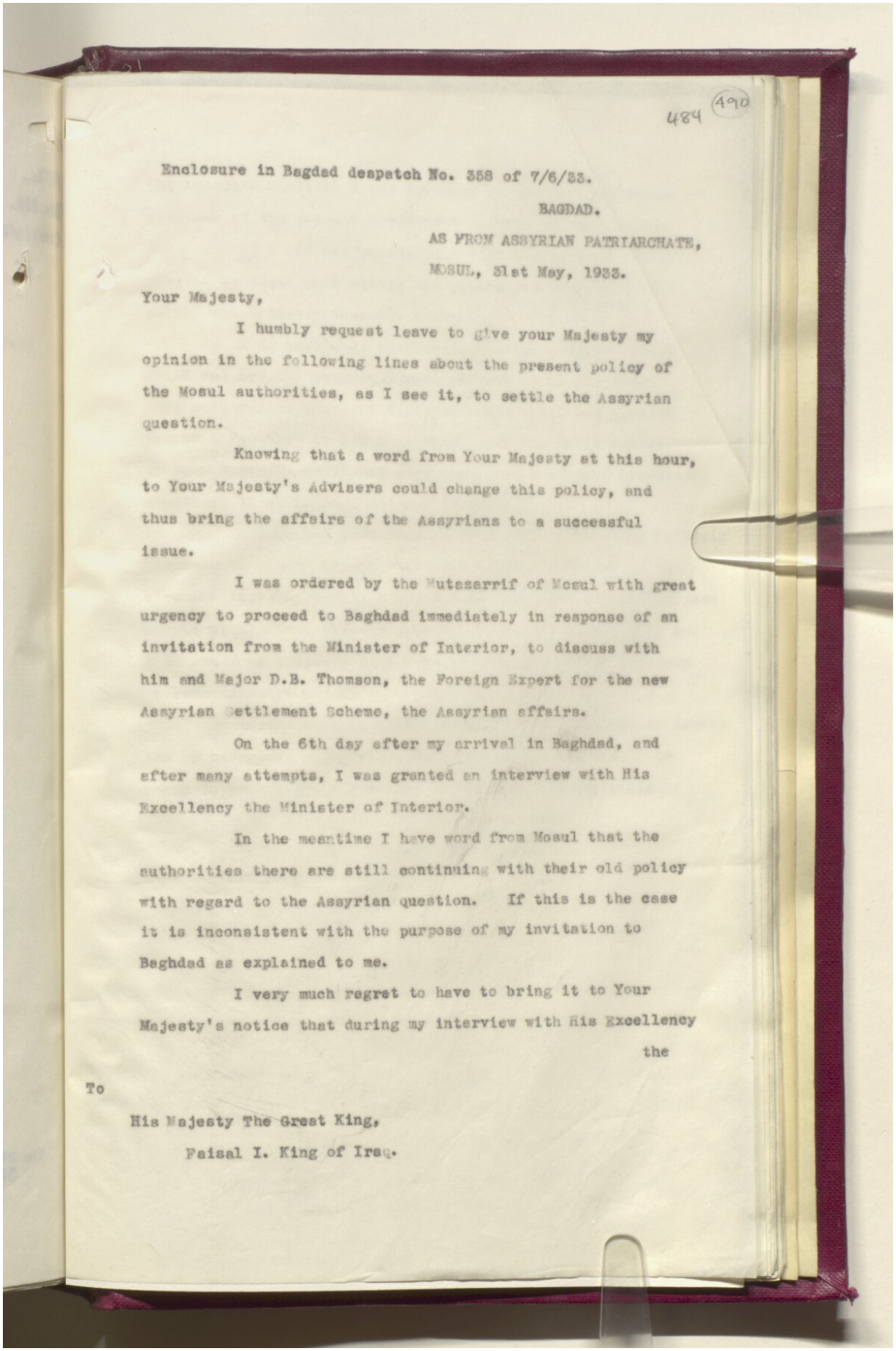
(Signed) G. OGILVIE FORBES.



To

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338450.0x0000be



484 (490)

Enclosure in Bagdad despatch No. 358 of 7/6/33.

BAGDAD.

AS FROM ASSYRIAN PATRIARCHATE,

MOSUL, 31st May, 1933.

Your Majesty,

I humbly request leave to give your Majesty my opinion in the following lines about the present policy of the Mosul authorities, as I see it, to settle the Assyrian question.

Knowing that a word from Your Majesty at this hour, to Your Majesty's Advisers could change this policy, and thus bring the affairs of the Assyrians to a successful issue.

I was ordered by the Mutasarrif of Mosul with great urgency to proceed to Baghdad immediately in response of an invitation from the Minister of Interior, to discuss with him and Major D.B. Thomson, the Foreign Expert for the new Assyrian Settlement Scheme, the Assyrian affairs.

On the 6th day after my arrival in Baghdad, and after many attempts, I was granted an interview with His Excellency the Minister of Interior.

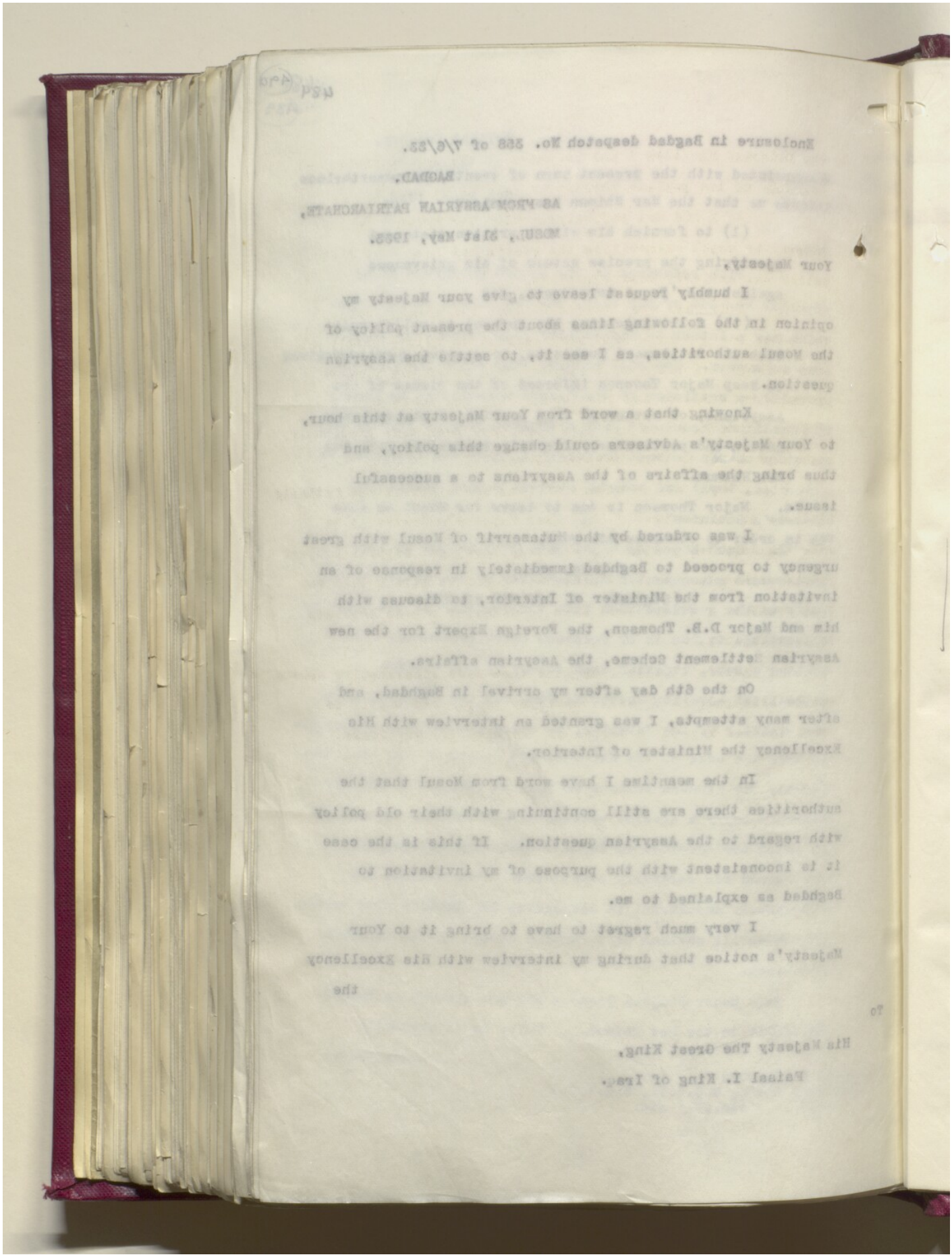
In the meantime I have word from Mosul that the authorities there are still continuing with their old policy with regard to the Assyrian question. If this is the case it is inconsistent with the purpose of my invitation to Baghdad as explained to me.

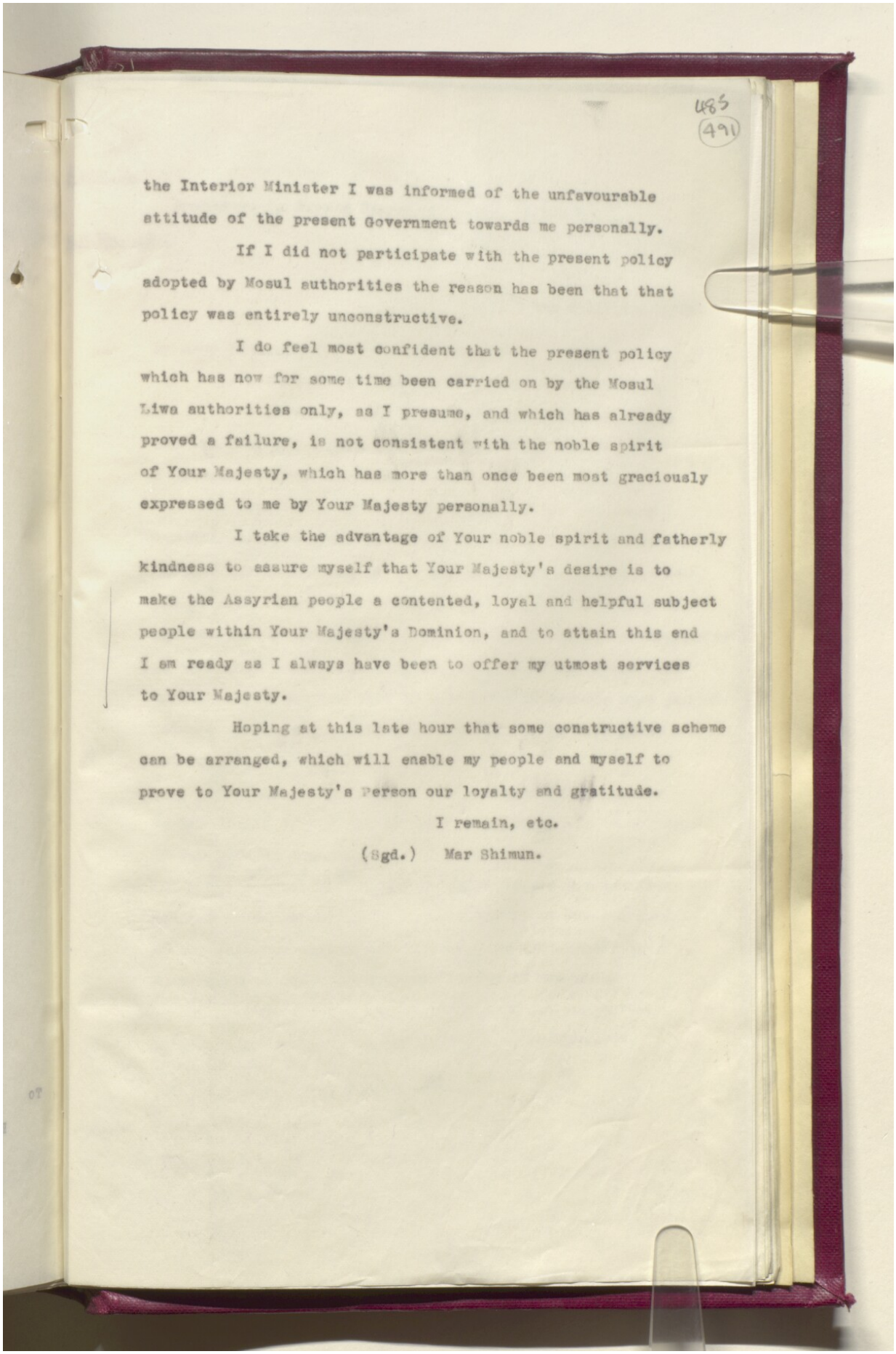
I very much regret to have to bring it to Your Majesty's notice that during my interview with His Excellency the

To

His Majesty The Great King,

Faisal I. King of Iraq.





485
(491)

the Interior Minister I was informed of the unfavourable attitude of the present Government towards me personally.

If I did not participate with the present policy adopted by Mosul authorities the reason has been that that policy was entirely unconstructive.

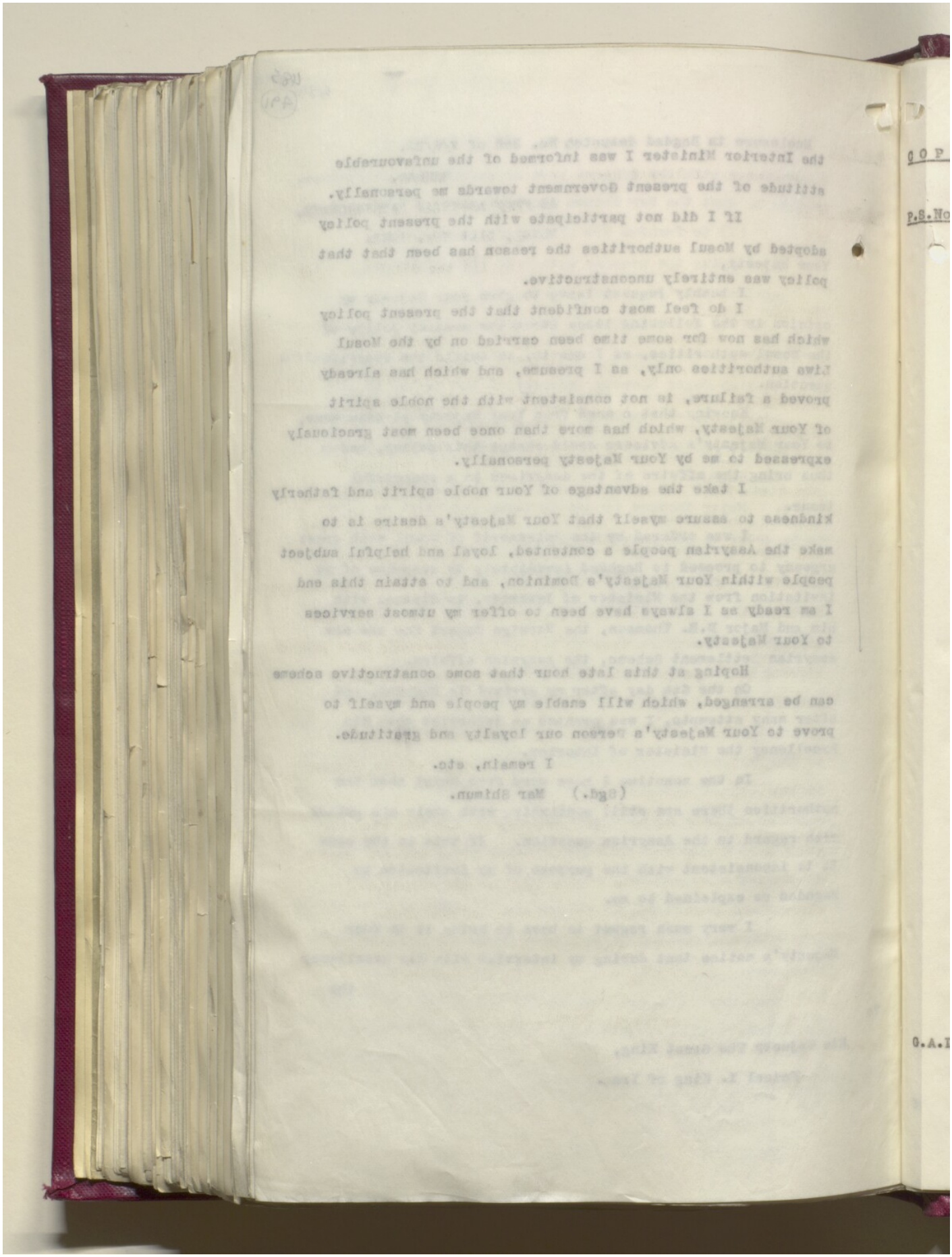
I do feel most confident that the present policy which has now for some time been carried on by the Mosul Liwa authorities only, as I presume, and which has already proved a failure, is not consistent with the noble spirit of Your Majesty, which has more than once been most graciously expressed to me by Your Majesty personally.

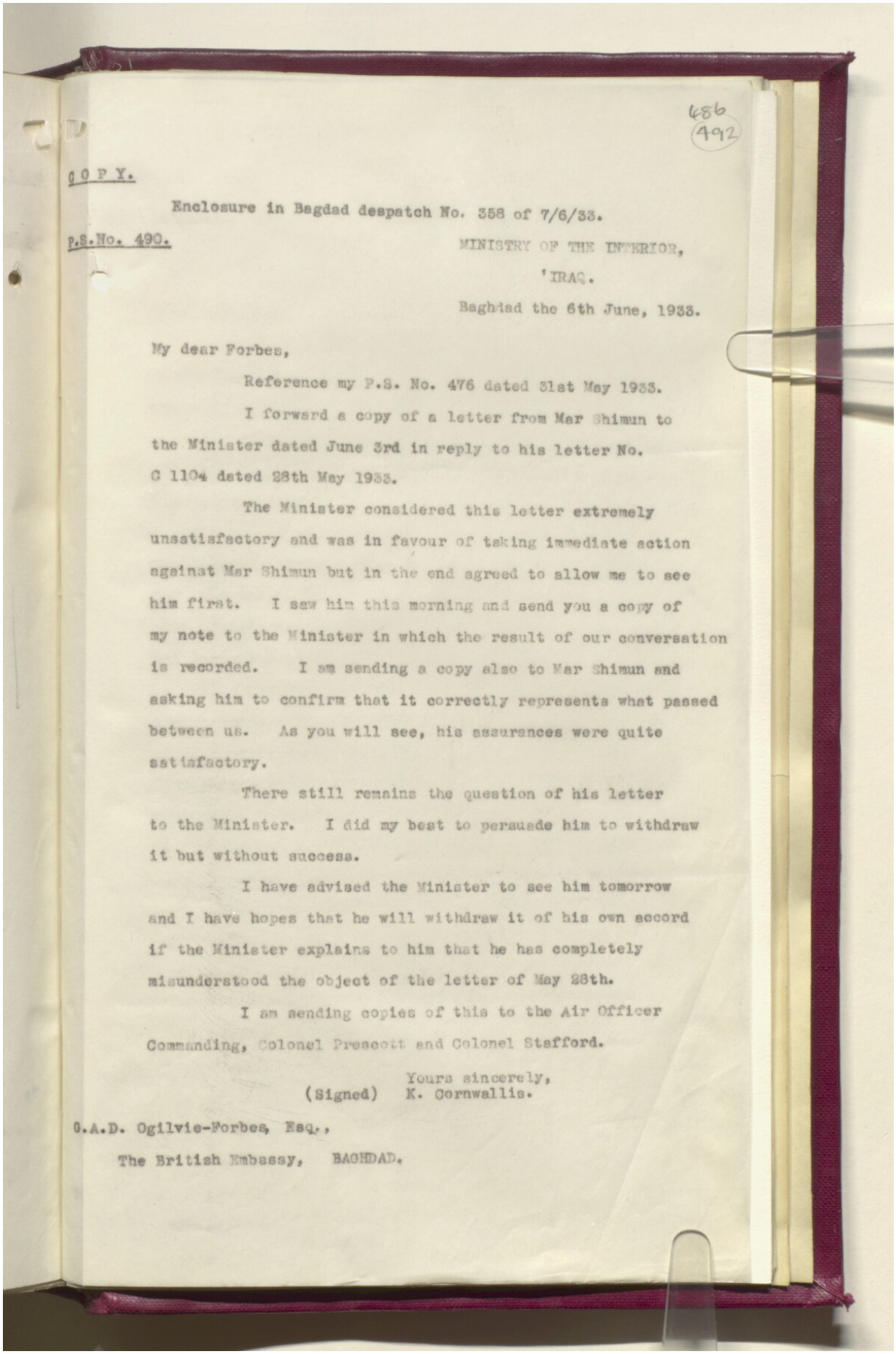
I take the advantage of Your noble spirit and fatherly kindness to assure myself that Your Majesty's desire is to make the Assyrian people a contented, loyal and helpful subject people within Your Majesty's Dominion, and to attain this end I am ready as I always have been to offer my utmost services to Your Majesty.

Hoping at this late hour that some constructive scheme can be arranged, which will enable my people and myself to prove to Your Majesty's Person our loyalty and gratitude.

I remain, etc.

(Sgd.) Mar Shimun.





486
492

COPY.

Enclosure in Bagdad despatch No. 358 of 7/6/33.

P.S.No. 490.

MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR,
'IRAQ.
Baghdad the 6th June, 1933.

My dear Forbes,

Reference my P.S. No. 476 dated 31st May 1933.

I forward a copy of a letter from Mar Shimun to the Minister dated June 3rd in reply to his letter No. C 1104 dated 28th May 1933.

The Minister considered this letter extremely unsatisfactory and was in favour of taking immediate action against Mar Shimun but in the end agreed to allow me to see him first. I saw him this morning and send you a copy of my note to the Minister in which the result of our conversation is recorded. I am sending a copy also to Mar Shimun and asking him to confirm that it correctly represents what passed between us. As you will see, his assurances were quite satisfactory.

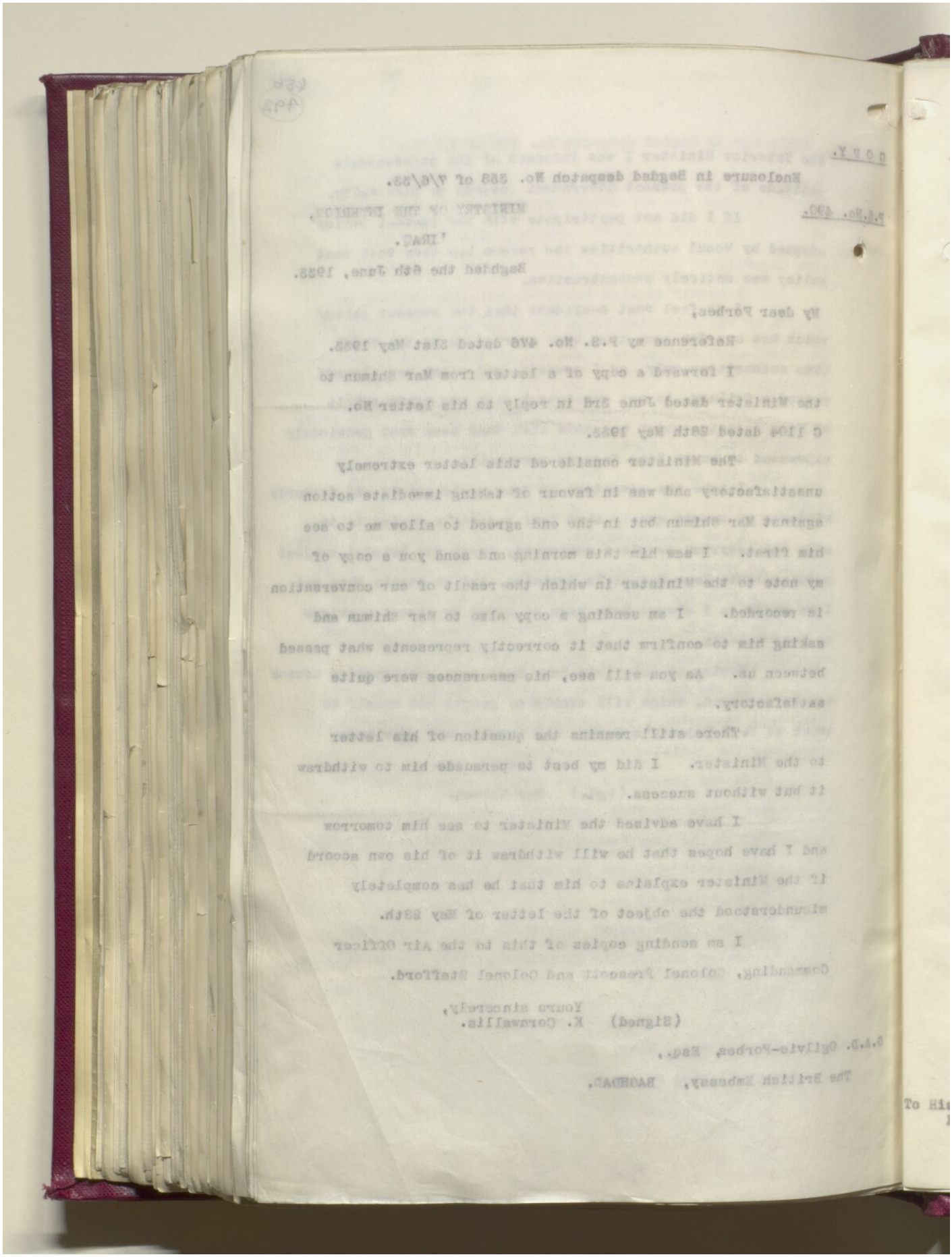
There still remains the question of his letter to the Minister. I did my best to persuade him to withdraw it but without success.

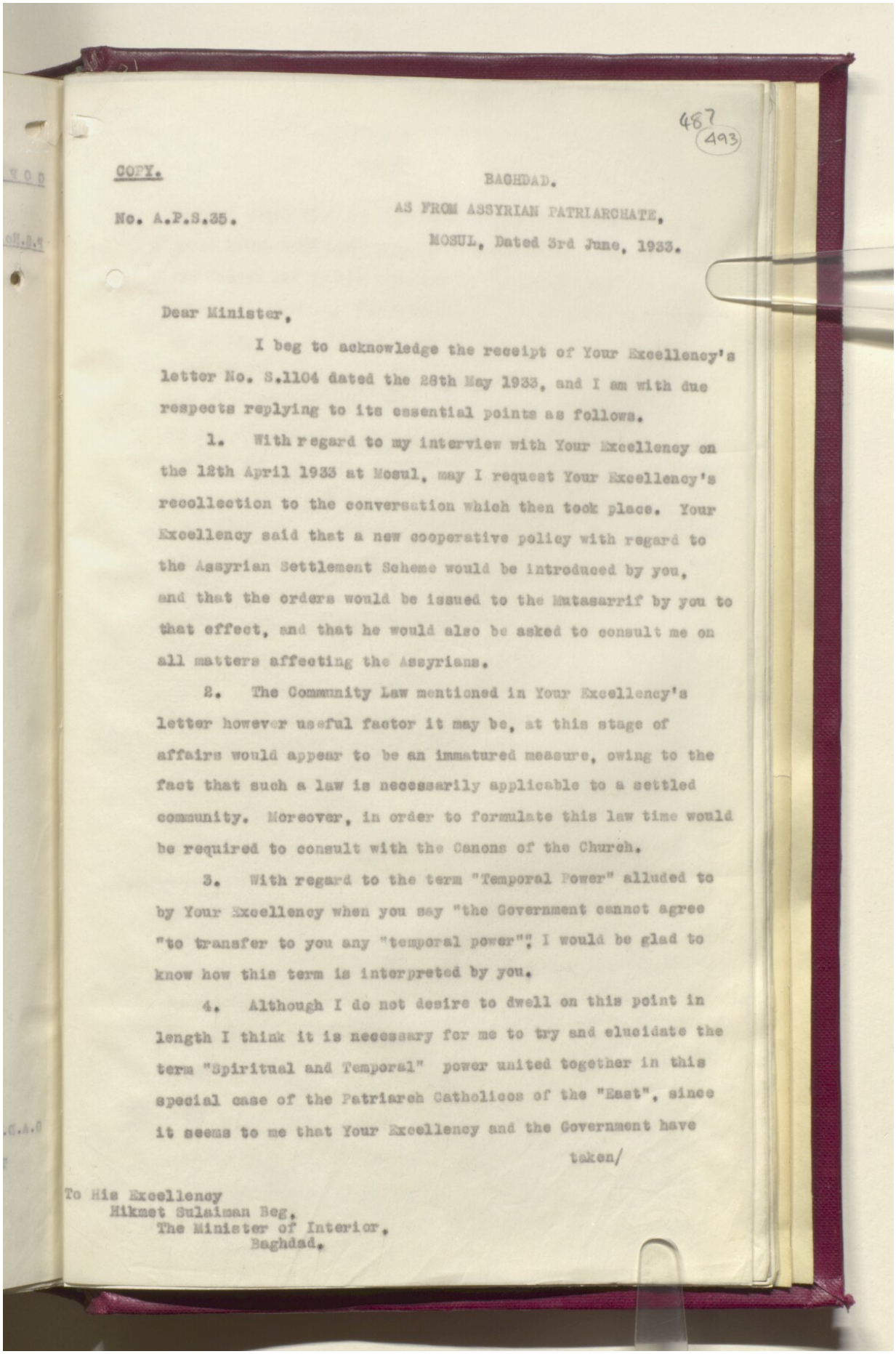
I have advised the Minister to see him tomorrow and I have hopes that he will withdraw it of his own accord if the Minister explains to him that he has completely misunderstood the object of the letter of May 28th.

I am sending copies of this to the Air Officer Commanding, Colonel Prescott and Colonel Stafford.

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) K. Cornwallis.

O.A.D. Ogilvie-Forbes, Esq.,
The British Embassy, BAGHDAD.





487
493

COPY.

BAGHDAD.

No. A.P.S.35.

AS FROM ASSYRIAN PATRIARCHATE,
MOSUL, Dated 3rd June, 1933.

Dear Minister,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's letter No. S.1104 dated the 28th May 1933, and I am with due respects replying to its essential points as follows.

1. With regard to my interview with Your Excellency on the 12th April 1933 at Mosul, may I request Your Excellency's recollection to the conversation which then took place. Your Excellency said that a new cooperative policy with regard to the Assyrian Settlement Scheme would be introduced by you, and that the orders would be issued to the Mutasarrif by you to that effect, and that he would also be asked to consult me on all matters affecting the Assyrians.

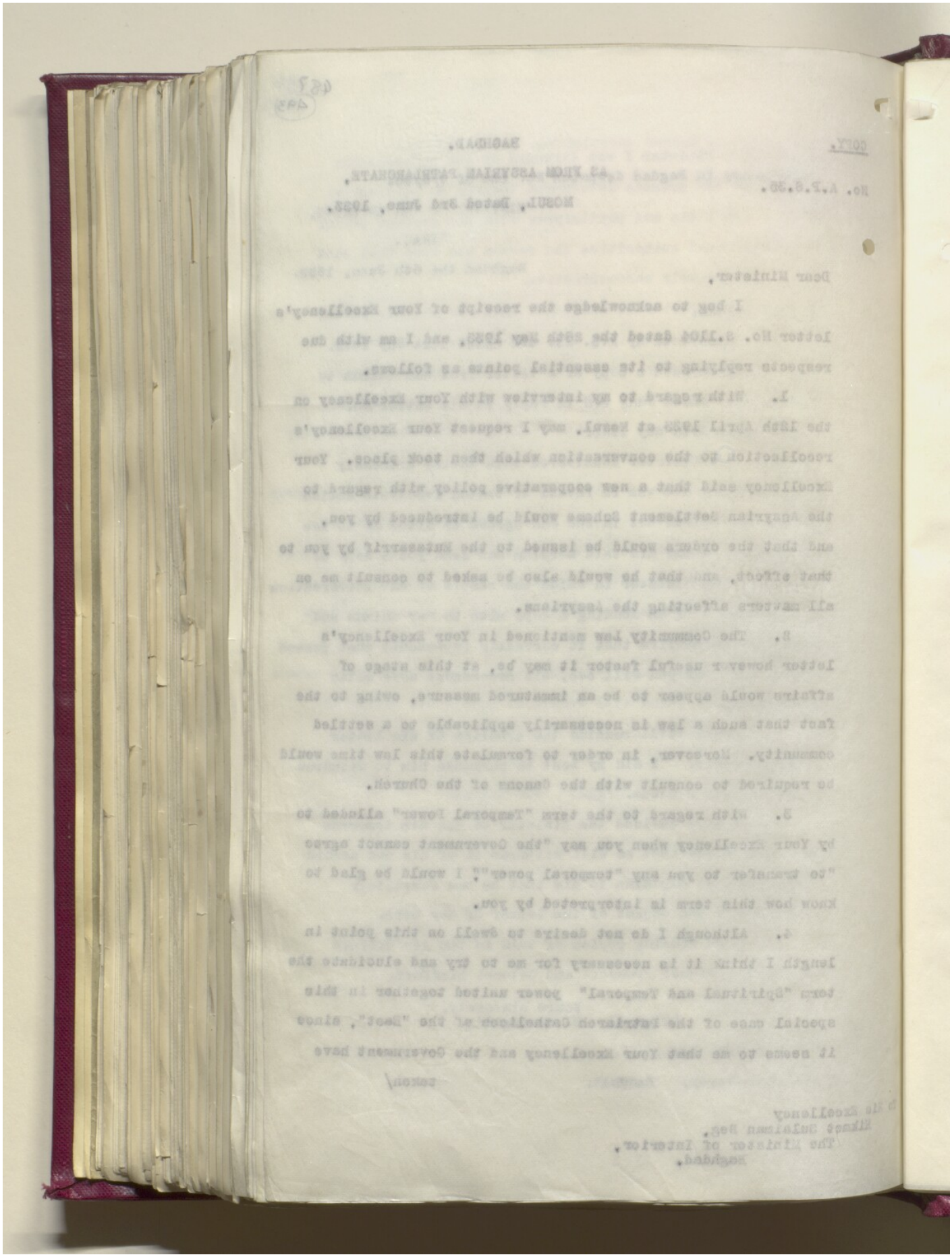
2. The Community Law mentioned in Your Excellency's letter however useful factor it may be, at this stage of affairs would appear to be an immatured measure, owing to the fact that such a law is necessarily applicable to a settled community. Moreover, in order to formulate this law time would be required to consult with the Canons of the Church.

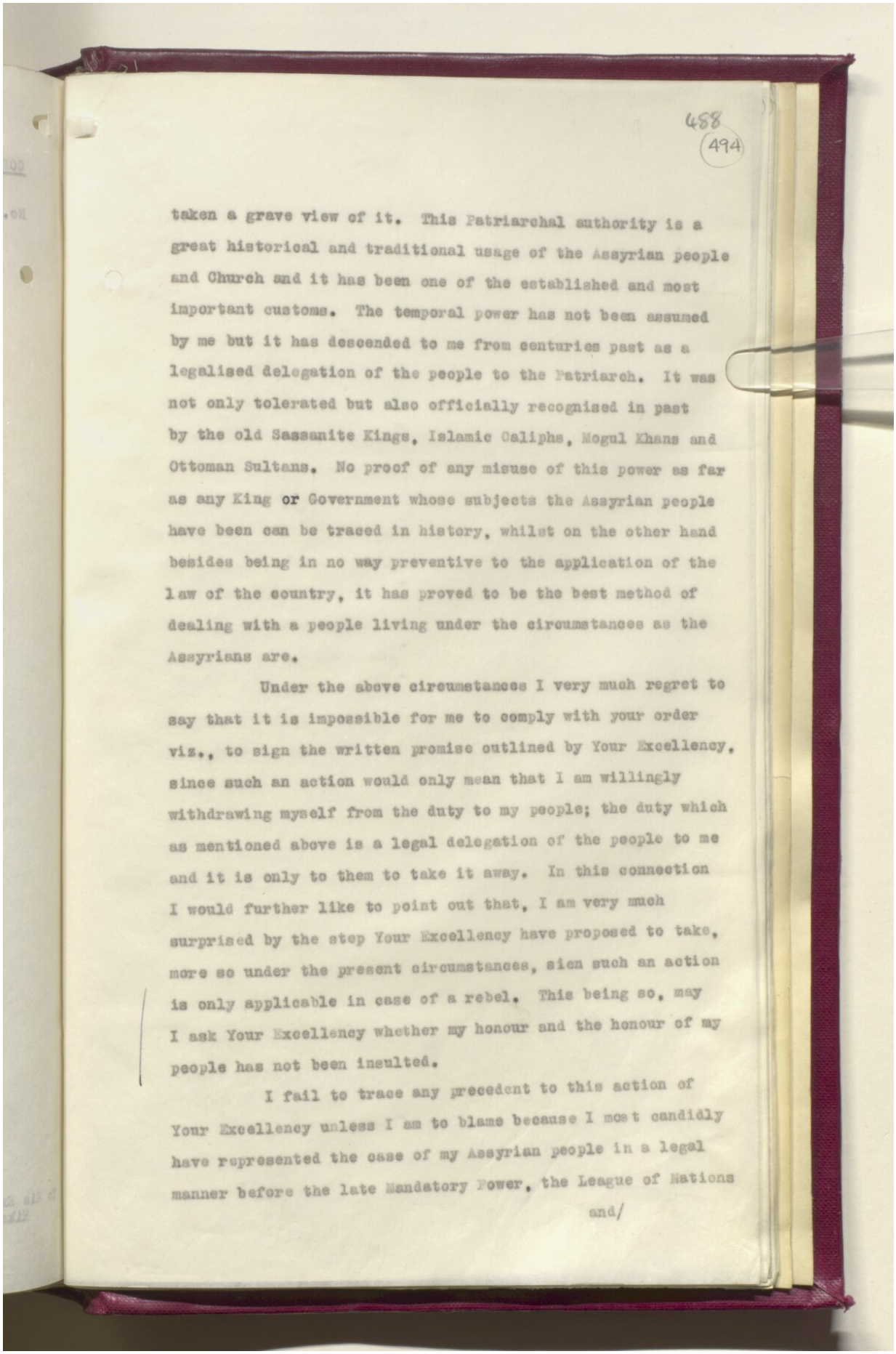
3. With regard to the term "Temporal Power" alluded to by Your Excellency when you say "the Government cannot agree "to transfer to you any "temporal power"; I would be glad to know how this term is interpreted by you.

4. Although I do not desire to dwell on this point in length I think it is necessary for me to try and elucidate the term "Spiritual and Temporal" power united together in this special case of the Patriarch Catholicos of the "East", since it seems to me that Your Excellency and the Government have

taken/

To His Excellency
Hikmet Sulaiman Beg,
The Minister of Interior,
Baghdad.



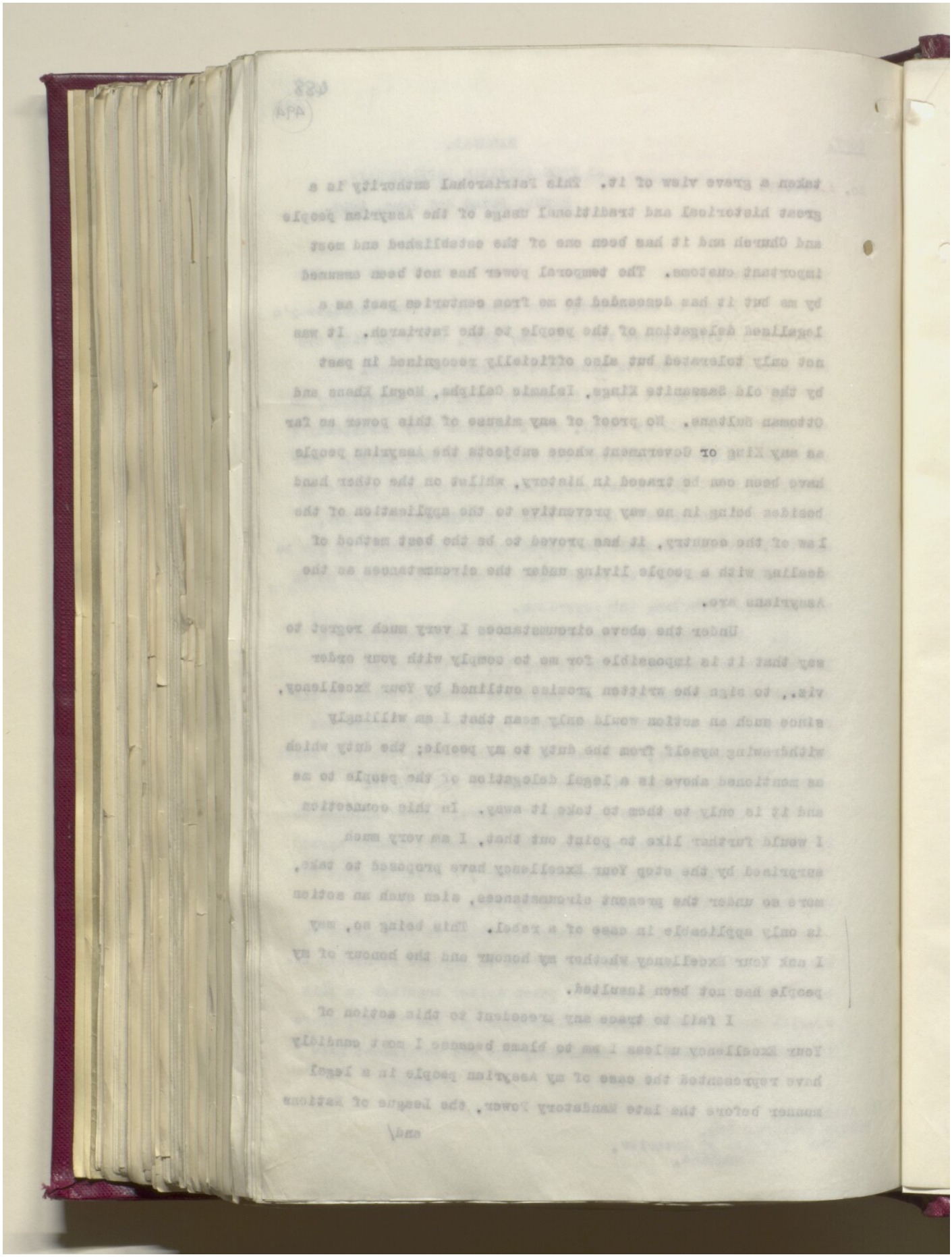


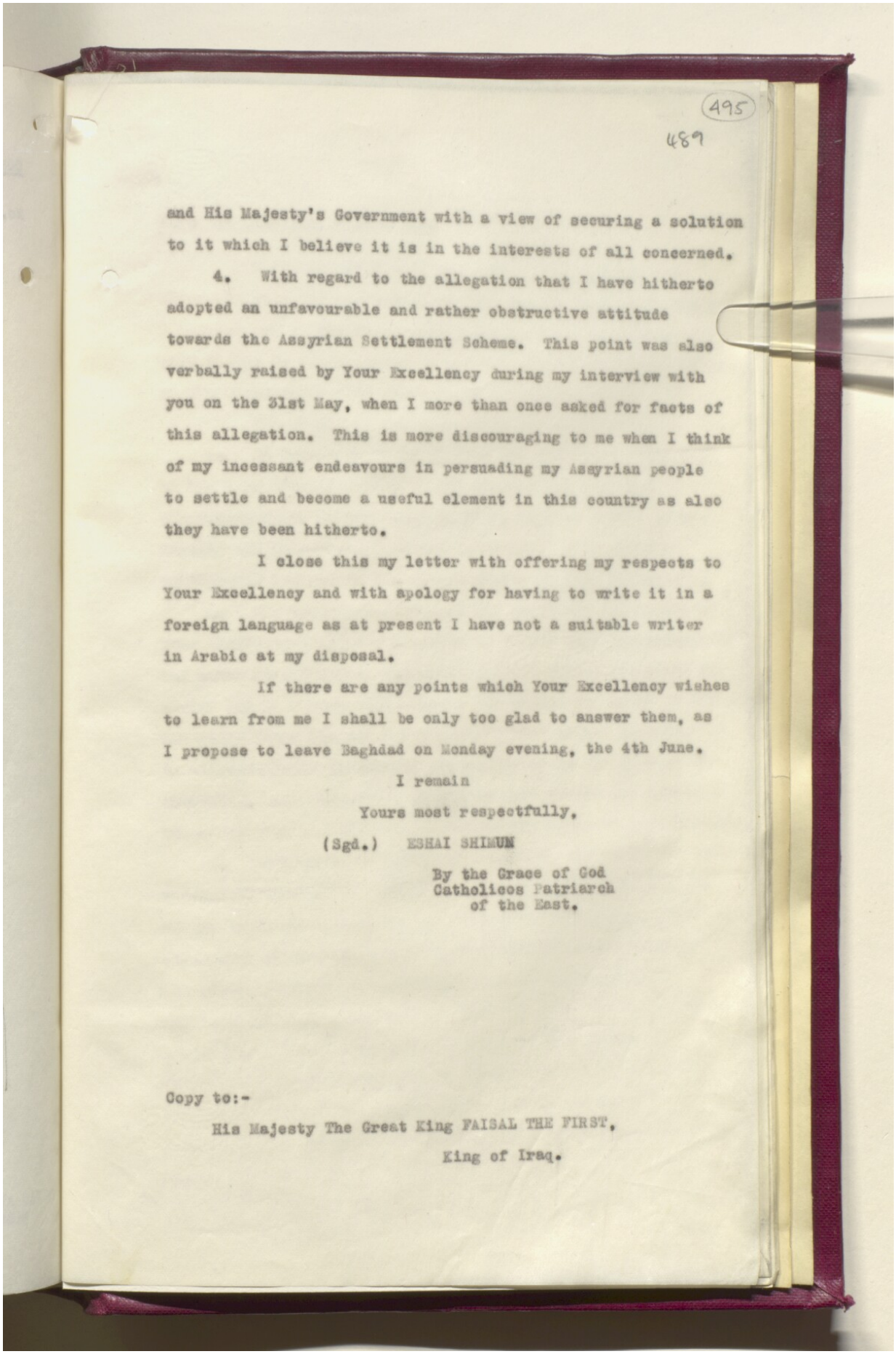
taken a grave view of it. This Patriarchal authority is a great historical and traditional usage of the Assyrian people and Church and it has been one of the established and most important customs. The temporal power has not been assumed by me but it has descended to me from centuries past as a legalised delegation of the people to the Patriarch. It was not only tolerated but also officially recognised in past by the old Sassanite Kings, Islamic Caliphs, Mogul Khans and Ottoman Sultans. No proof of any misuse of this power as far as any King or Government whose subjects the Assyrian people have been can be traced in history, whilst on the other hand besides being in no way preventive to the application of the law of the country, it has proved to be the best method of dealing with a people living under the circumstances as the Assyrians are.

Under the above circumstances I very much regret to say that it is impossible for me to comply with your order viz., to sign the written promise outlined by Your Excellency, since such an action would only mean that I am willingly withdrawing myself from the duty to my people; the duty which as mentioned above is a legal delegation of the people to me and it is only to them to take it away. In this connection I would further like to point out that, I am very much surprised by the step Your Excellency have proposed to take, more so under the present circumstances, sion such an action is only applicable in case of a rebel. This being so, may I ask Your Excellency whether my honour and the honour of my people has not been insulted.

I fail to trace any precedent to this action of Your Excellency unless I am to blame because I most candidly have represented the case of my Assyrian people in a legal manner before the late Mandatory Power, the League of Nations

and/





(495)

489

and His Majesty's Government with a view of securing a solution to it which I believe it is in the interests of all concerned.

4. With regard to the allegation that I have hitherto adopted an unfavourable and rather obstructive attitude towards the Assyrian Settlement Scheme. This point was also verbally raised by Your Excellency during my interview with you on the 31st May, when I more than once asked for facts of this allegation. This is more discouraging to me when I think of my incessant endeavours in persuading my Assyrian people to settle and become a useful element in this country as also they have been hitherto.

I close this my letter with offering my respects to Your Excellency and with apology for having to write it in a foreign language as at present I have not a suitable writer in Arabic at my disposal.

If there are any points which Your Excellency wishes to learn from me I shall be only too glad to answer them, as I propose to leave Baghdad on Monday evening, the 4th June.

I remain

Yours most respectfully,

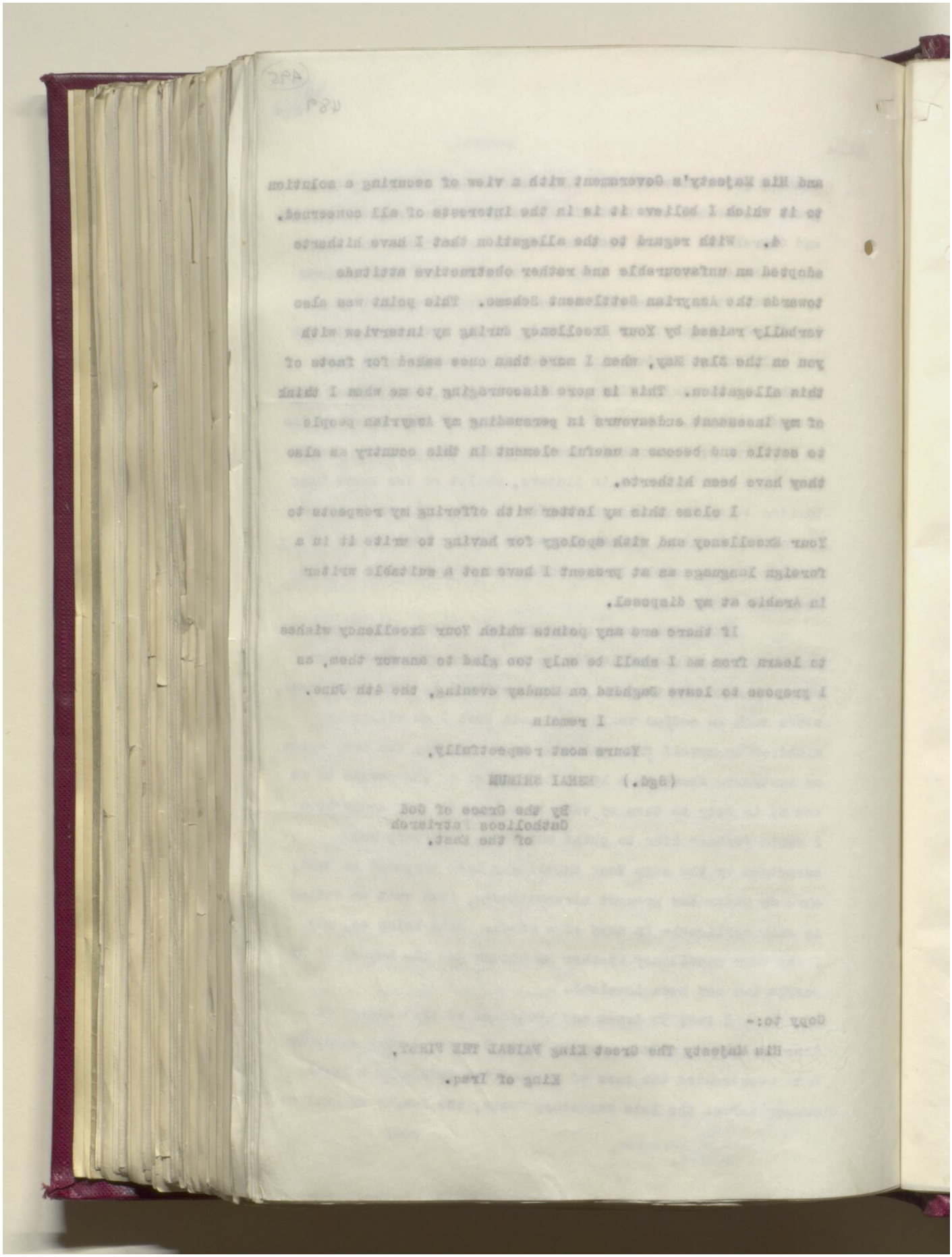
(Sgd.) ESHAI SHIMUN

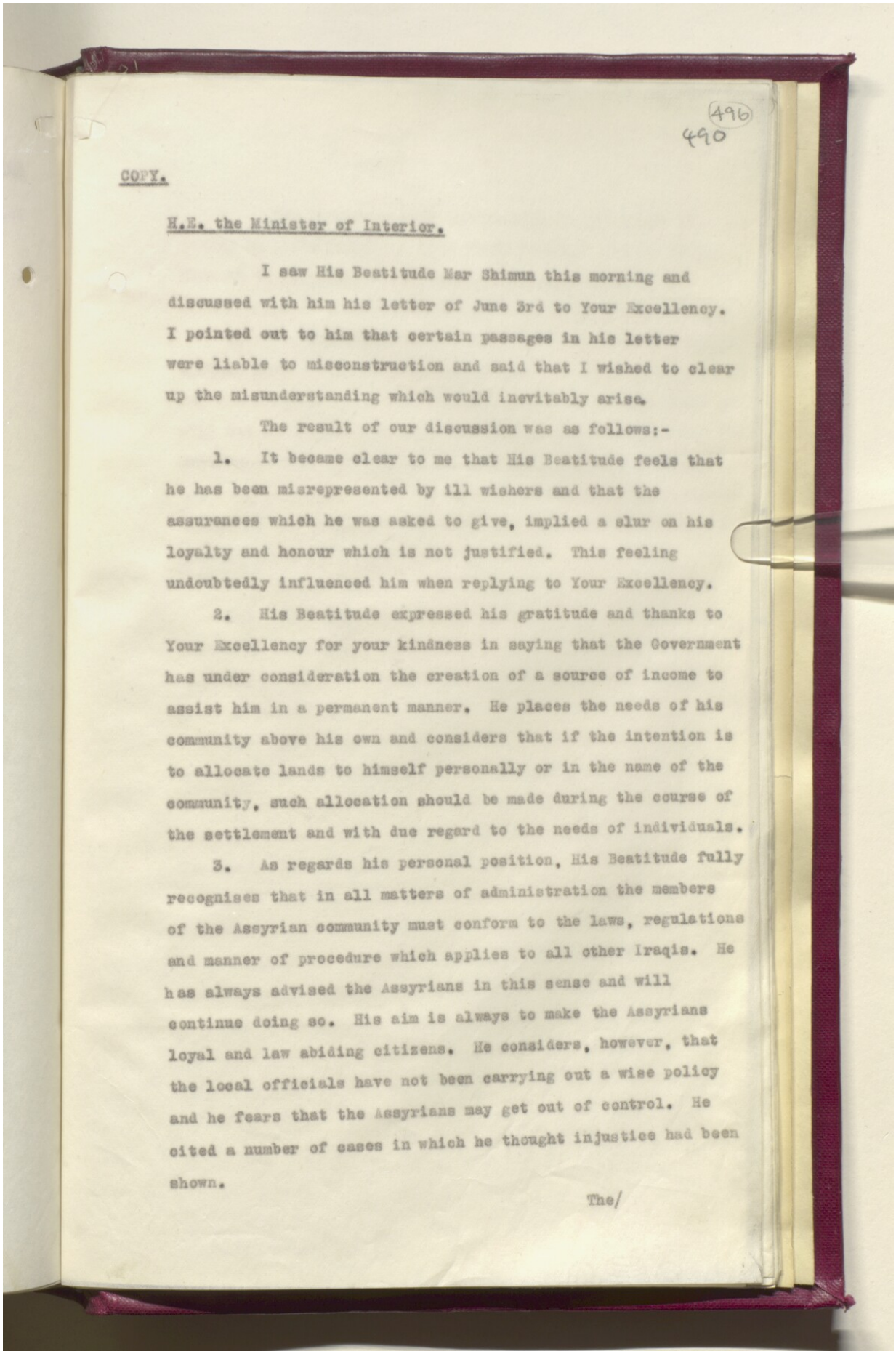
By the Grace of God
Catholicos Patriarch
of the East.

Copy to:-

His Majesty The Great King FAISAL THE FIRST,

King of Iraq.





(496)
490

COPY.

H.E. the Minister of Interior.

I saw His Beatitude Mar Shimun this morning and discussed with him his letter of June 3rd to Your Excellency. I pointed out to him that certain passages in his letter were liable to misconstruction and said that I wished to clear up the misunderstanding which would inevitably arise.

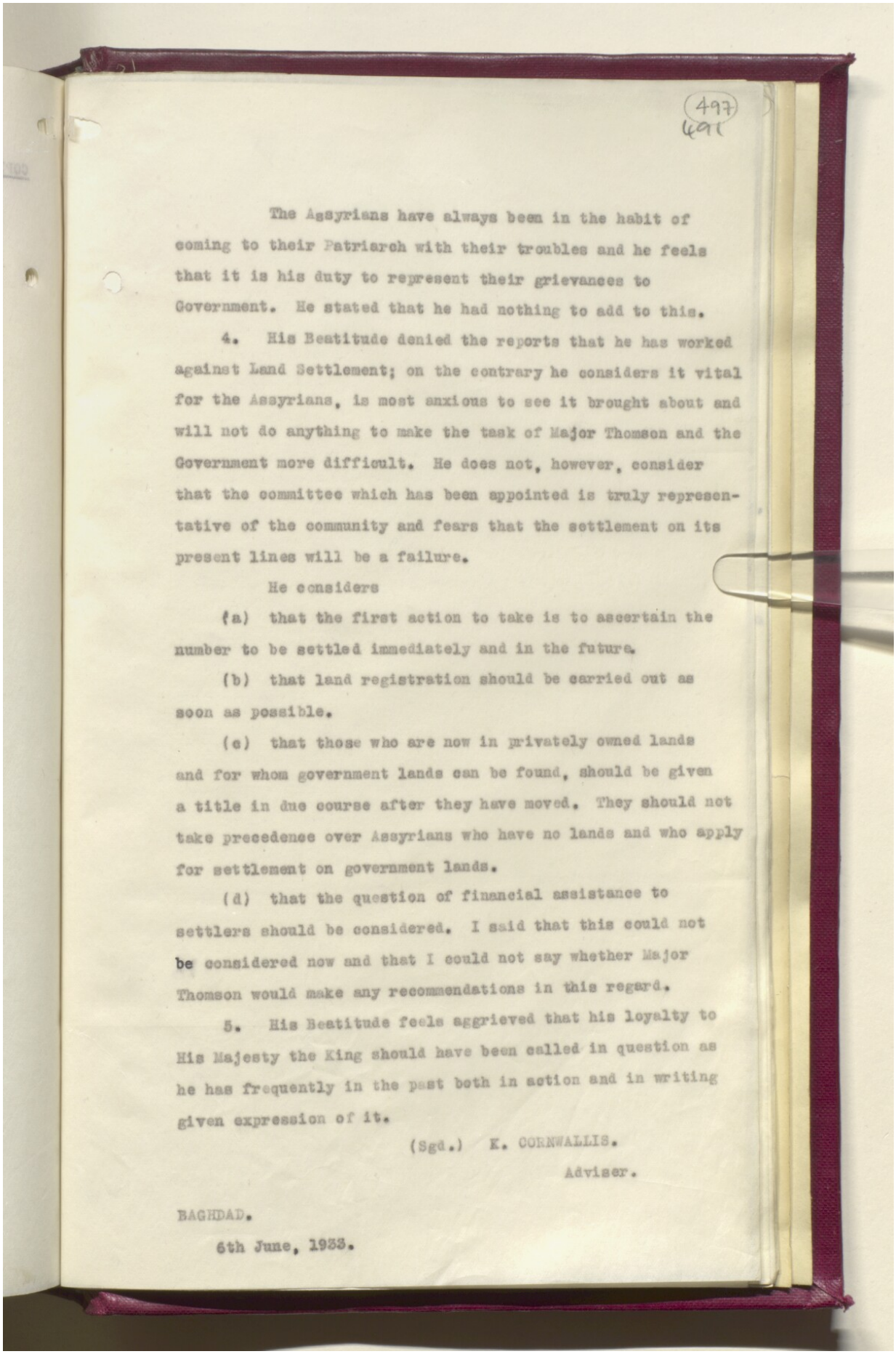
The result of our discussion was as follows:-

1. It became clear to me that His Beatitude feels that he has been misrepresented by ill wishers and that the assurances which he was asked to give, implied a slur on his loyalty and honour which is not justified. This feeling undoubtedly influenced him when replying to Your Excellency.

2. His Beatitude expressed his gratitude and thanks to Your Excellency for your kindness in saying that the Government has under consideration the creation of a source of income to assist him in a permanent manner. He places the needs of his community above his own and considers that if the intention is to allocate lands to himself personally or in the name of the community, such allocation should be made during the course of the settlement and with due regard to the needs of individuals.

3. As regards his personal position, His Beatitude fully recognises that in all matters of administration the members of the Assyrian community must conform to the laws, regulations and manner of procedure which applies to all other Iraqis. He has always advised the Assyrians in this sense and will continue doing so. His aim is always to make the Assyrians loyal and law abiding citizens. He considers, however, that the local officials have not been carrying out a wise policy and he fears that the Assyrians may get out of control. He cited a number of cases in which he thought injustice had been shown.

The/



497
497

The Assyrians have always been in the habit of coming to their Patriarch with their troubles and he feels that it is his duty to represent their grievances to Government. He stated that he had nothing to add to this.

4. His Beatitude denied the reports that he has worked against Land Settlement; on the contrary he considers it vital for the Assyrians, is most anxious to see it brought about and will not do anything to make the task of Major Thomson and the Government more difficult. He does not, however, consider that the committee which has been appointed is truly representative of the community and fears that the settlement on its present lines will be a failure.

He considers

(a) that the first action to take is to ascertain the number to be settled immediately and in the future.

(b) that land registration should be carried out as soon as possible.

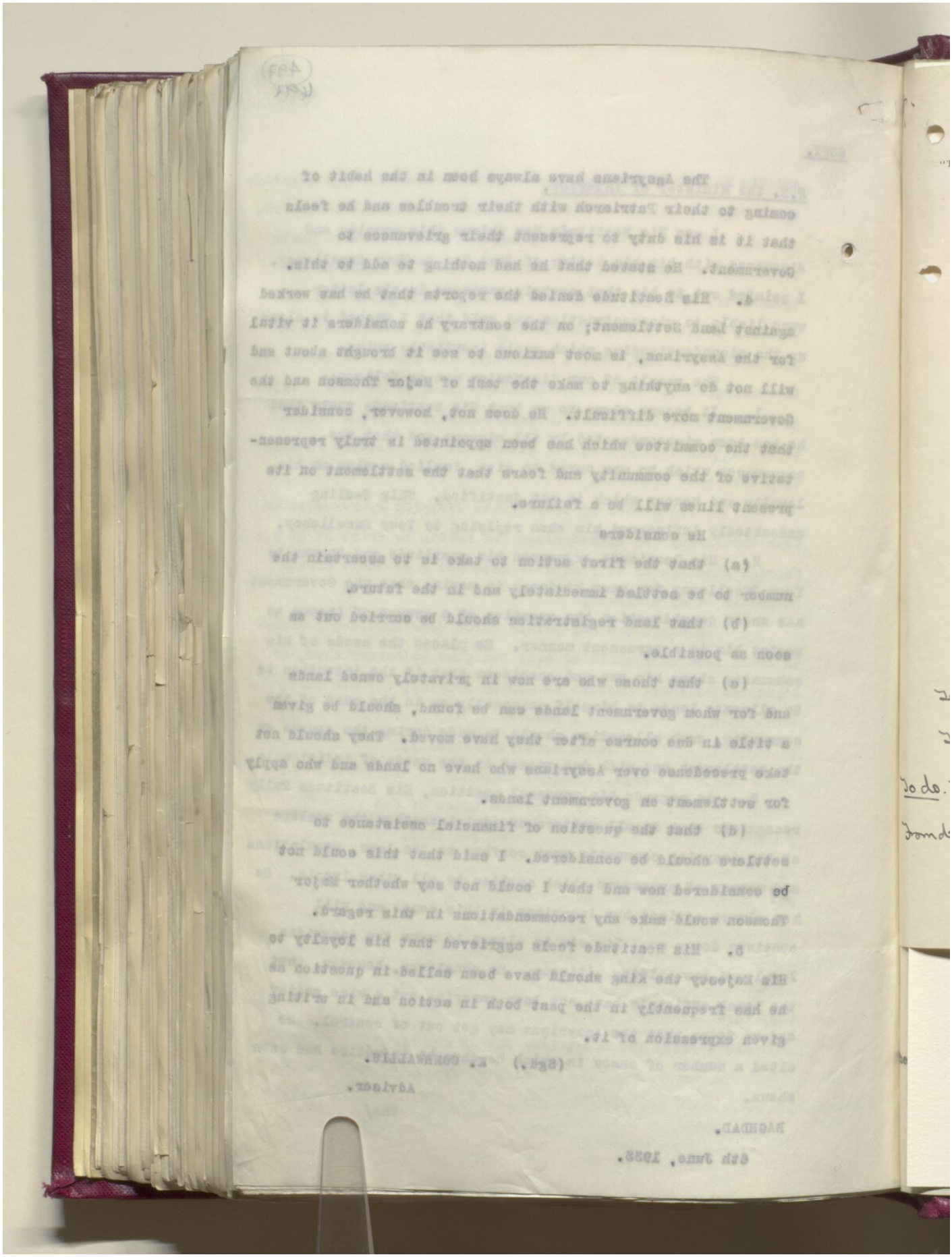
(c) that those who are now in privately owned lands and for whom government lands can be found, should be given a title in due course after they have moved. They should not take precedence over Assyrians who have no lands and who apply for settlement on government lands.

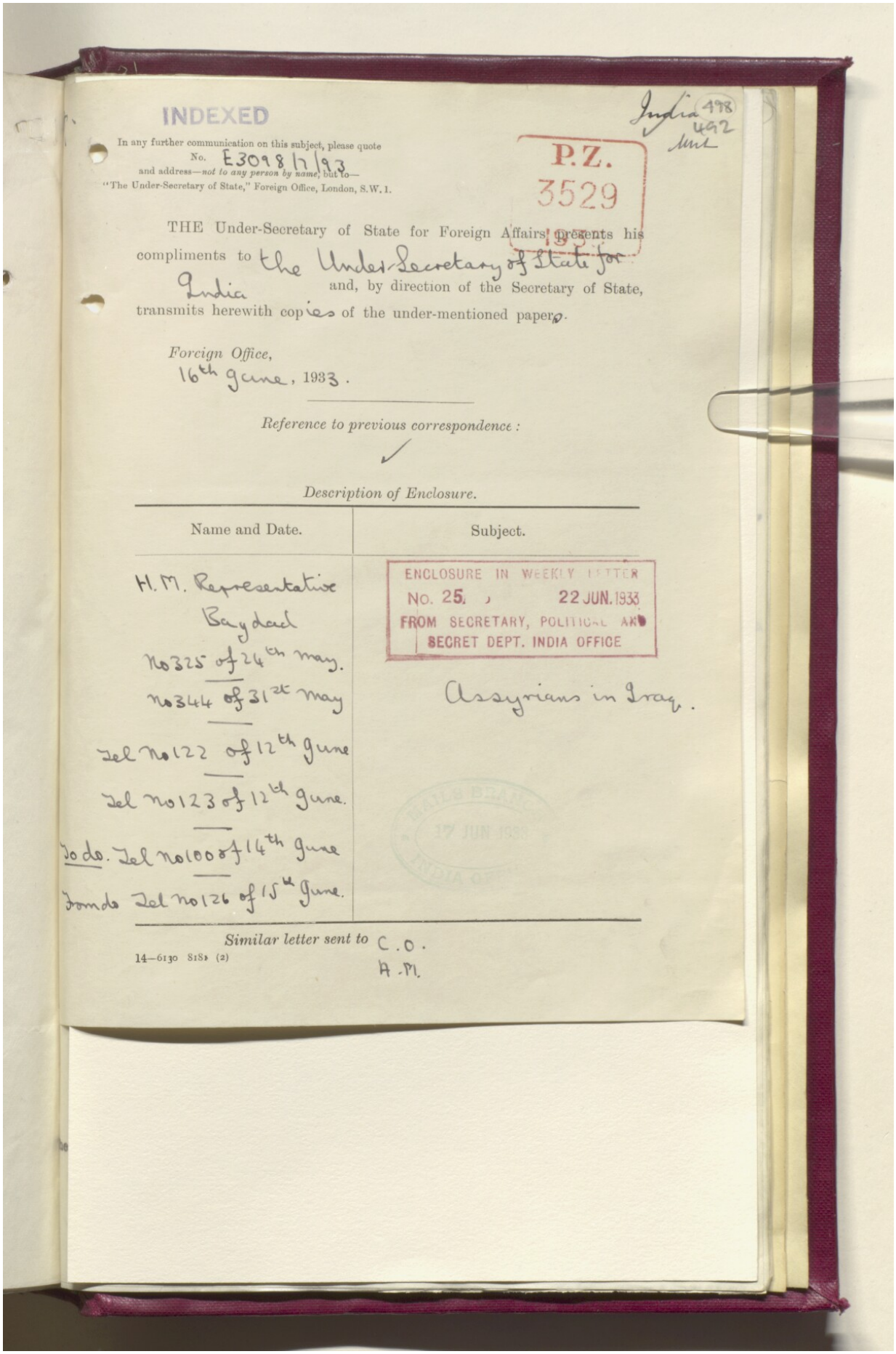
(d) that the question of financial assistance to settlers should be considered. I said that this could not be considered now and that I could not say whether Major Thomson would make any recommendations in this regard.

5. His Beatitude feels aggrieved that his loyalty to His Majesty the King should have been called in question as he has frequently in the past both in action and in writing given expression of it.

(Sgd.) K. CORNWALLIS.
Adviser.

BAGHDAD.
6th June, 1933.





INDEXED

India 498 492

In any further communication on this subject, please quote No. E3098/7/93 and address—*not to any person by name*, but to—"The Under-Secretary of State," Foreign Office, London, S.W.1.

P.Z. 3529 193

THE Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for India and, by direction of the Secretary of State, transmits herewith copies of the under-mentioned papers.

Foreign Office,
16th June, 1933.

Reference to previous correspondence:

✓

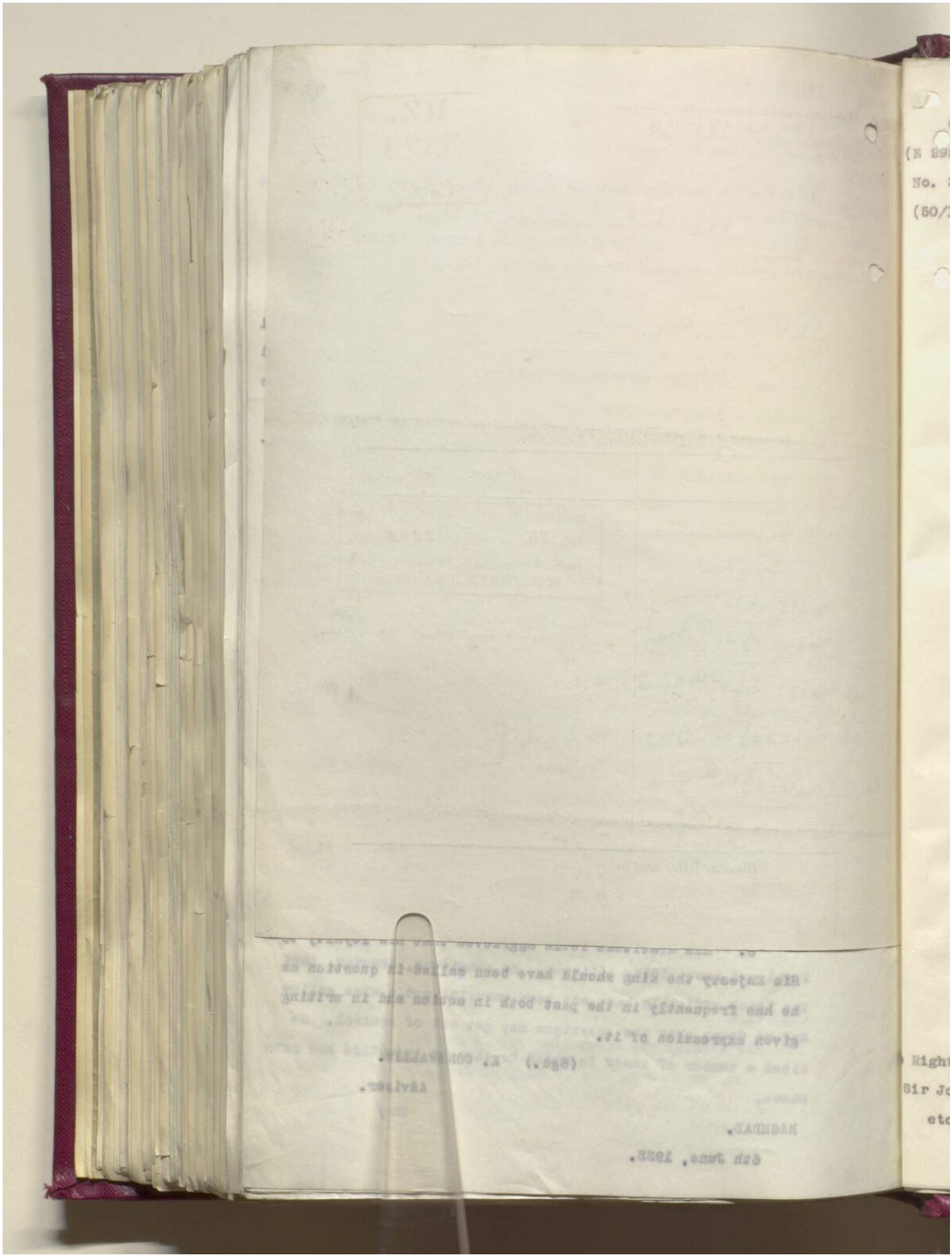
Description of Enclosure.

Name and Date.	Subject.
H.M. Representative Baghdad No 325 of 24th May.	ENCLOSURE IN WEEKLY LETTER No. 25 22 JUN. 1933 FROM SECRETARY, POLITICAL AND SECRET DEPT. INDIA OFFICE
No 344 of 31st May	Assyrians in Iraq.
Tel No 122 of 12th June	
Tel No 123 of 12th June.	
To do. Tel No 100 of 14th June	
From do Tel No 126 of 15th June.	

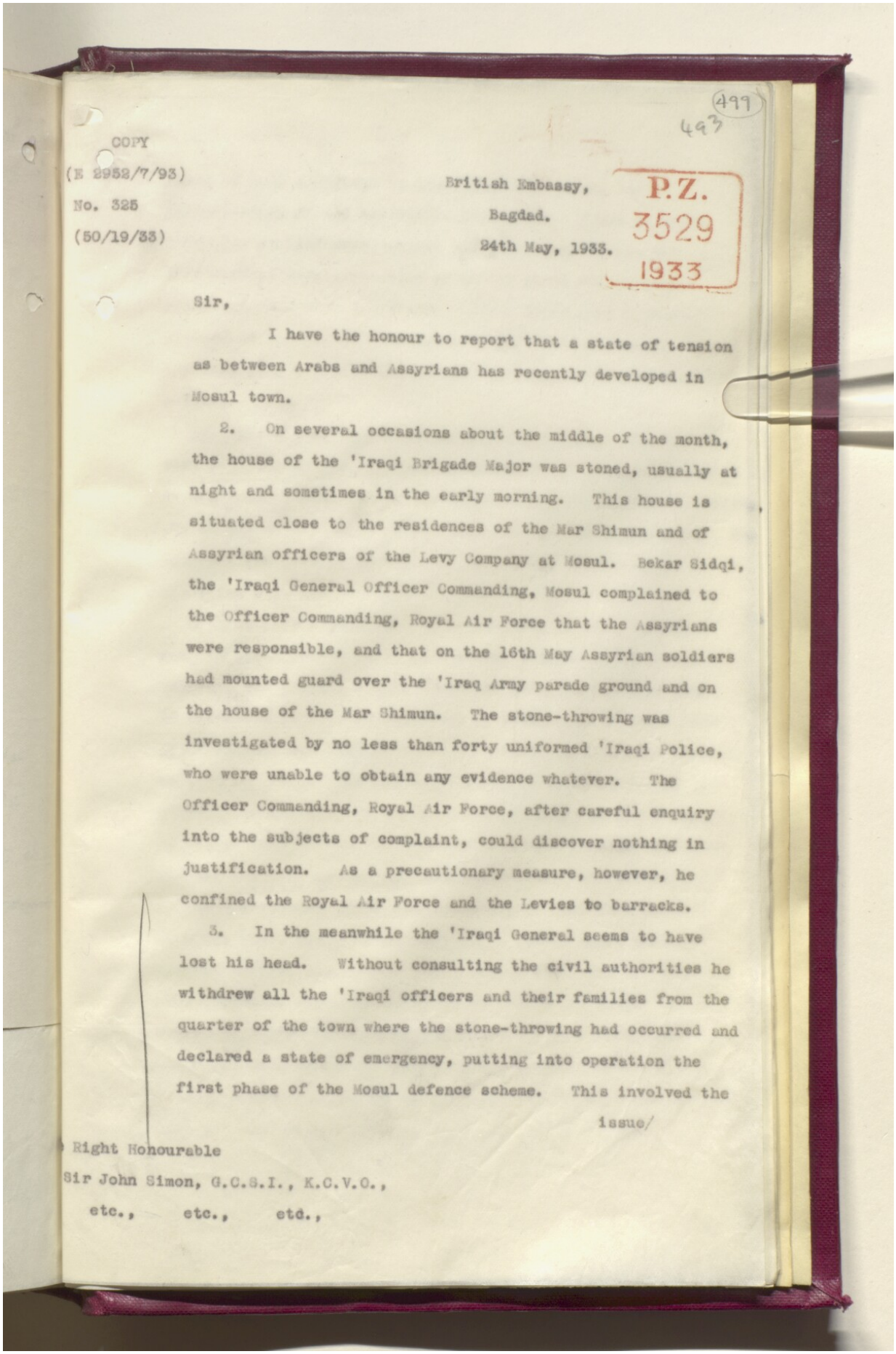
Similar letter sent to C.O. A.M.

14—6130 S1S» (2)

MAILS BRANCH 17 JUN 1933 INDIA OFFICE



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338451.0x000008



499
493

COPY

(E 2952/7/93)

No. 325

(50/19/33)

British Embassy,
Bagdad.
24th May, 1933.

P.Z.
3529
1933

Sir,

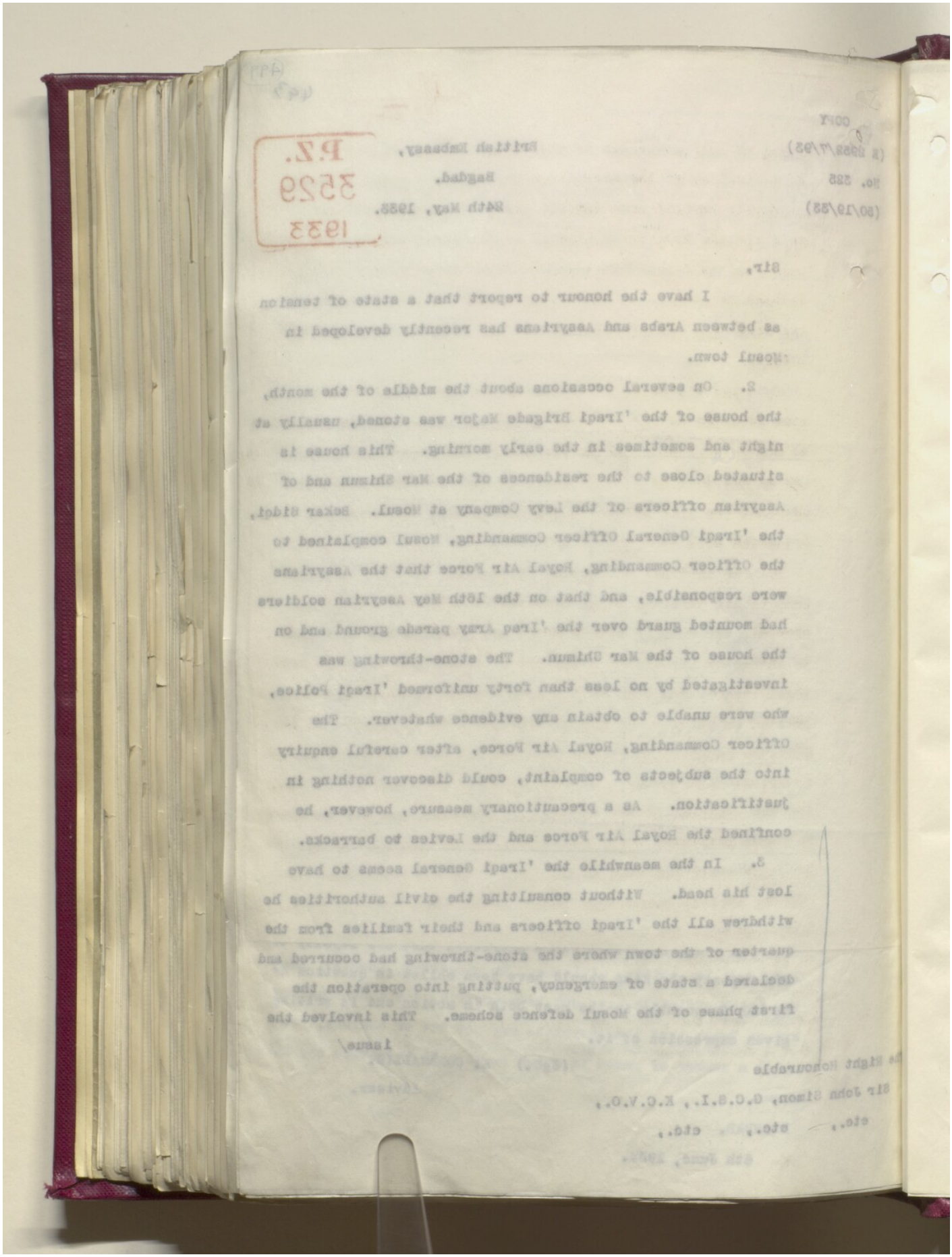
I have the honour to report that a state of tension as between Arabs and Assyrians has recently developed in Mosul town.

2. On several occasions about the middle of the month, the house of the 'Iraqi Brigade Major was stoned, usually at night and sometimes in the early morning. This house is situated close to the residences of the Mar Shimun and of Assyrian officers of the Levy Company at Mosul. Bekar Sidqi, the 'Iraqi General Officer Commanding, Mosul complained to the Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force that the Assyrians were responsible, and that on the 16th May Assyrian soldiers had mounted guard over the 'Iraq Army parade ground and on the house of the Mar Shimun. The stone-throwing was investigated by no less than forty uniformed 'Iraqi Police, who were unable to obtain any evidence whatever. The Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force, after careful enquiry into the subjects of complaint, could discover nothing in justification. As a precautionary measure, however, he confined the Royal Air Force and the Levies to barracks.

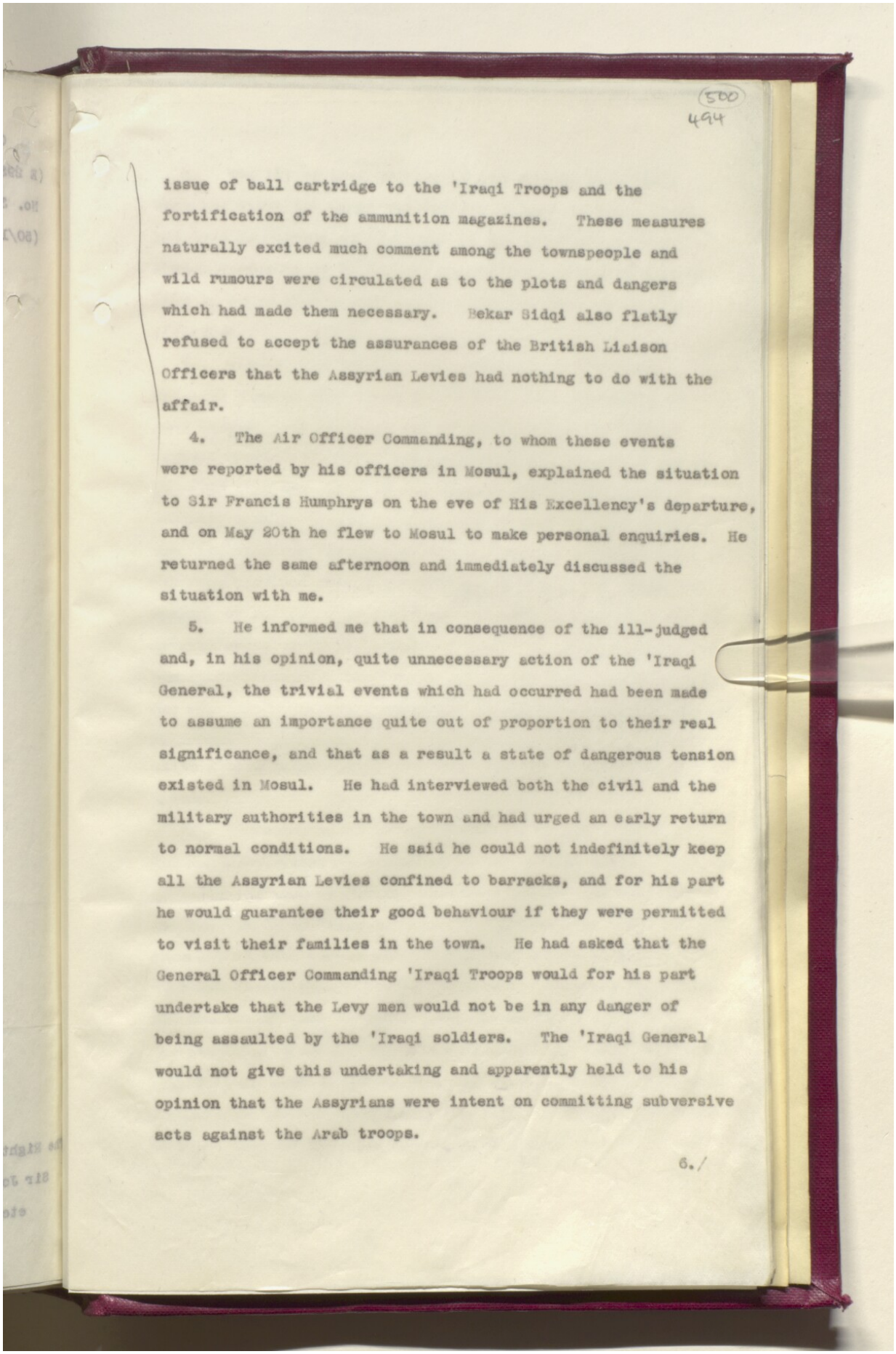
3. In the meanwhile the 'Iraqi General seems to have lost his head. Without consulting the civil authorities he withdrew all the 'Iraqi officers and their families from the quarter of the town where the stone-throwing had occurred and declared a state of emergency, putting into operation the first phase of the Mosul defence scheme. This involved the

issue/

Right Honourable
Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.,



P.Z.
35259
1933



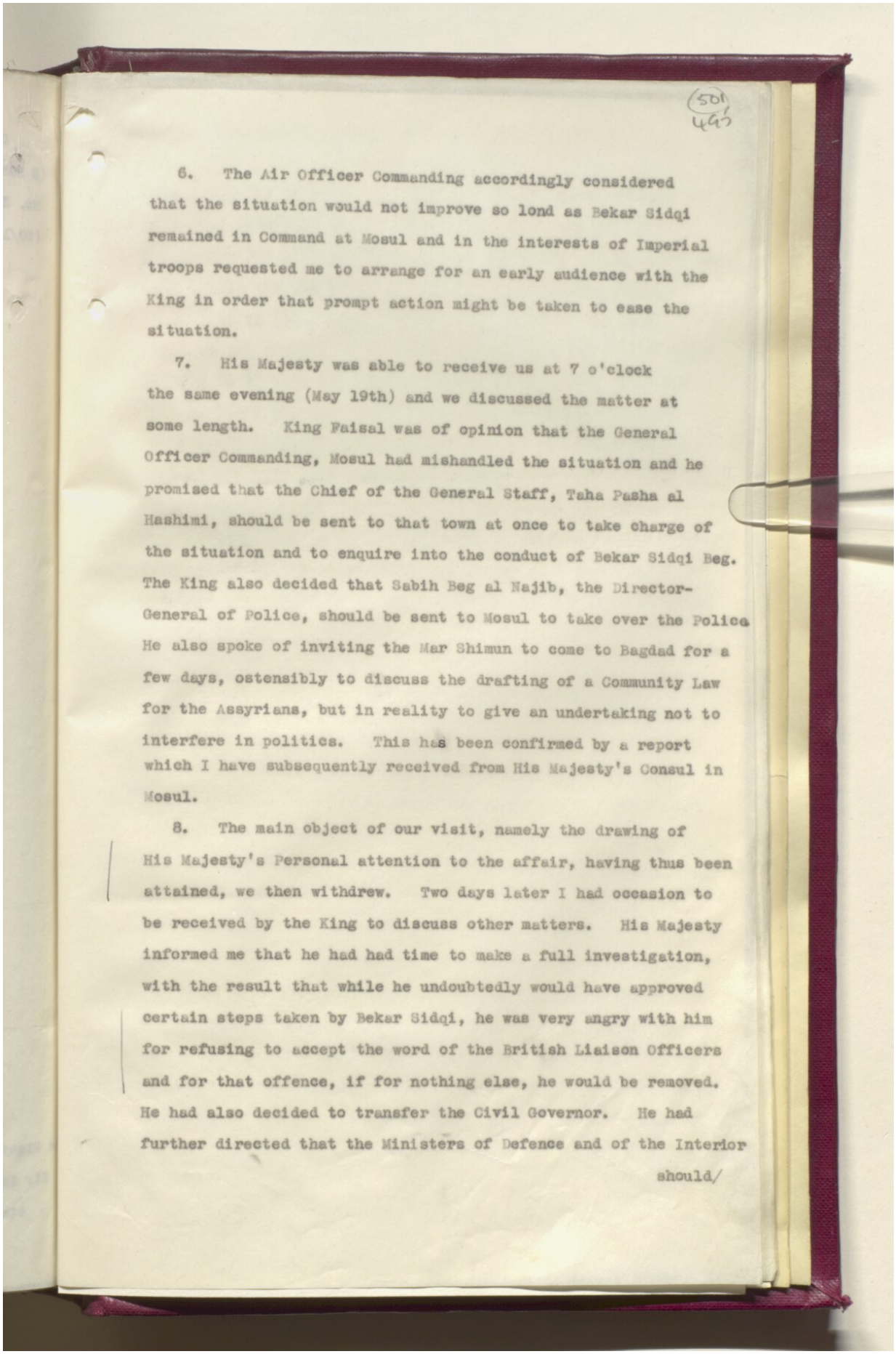
(500)
494

issue of ball cartridge to the 'Iraqi Troops and the fortification of the ammunition magazines. These measures naturally excited much comment among the townspeople and wild rumours were circulated as to the plots and dangers which had made them necessary. Bekar Sidqi also flatly refused to accept the assurances of the British Liaison Officers that the Assyrian Levies had nothing to do with the affair.

4. The Air Officer Commanding, to whom these events were reported by his officers in Mosul, explained the situation to Sir Francis Humphrys on the eve of His Excellency's departure, and on May 20th he flew to Mosul to make personal enquiries. He returned the same afternoon and immediately discussed the situation with me.

5. He informed me that in consequence of the ill-judged and, in his opinion, quite unnecessary action of the 'Iraqi General, the trivial events which had occurred had been made to assume an importance quite out of proportion to their real significance, and that as a result a state of dangerous tension existed in Mosul. He had interviewed both the civil and the military authorities in the town and had urged an early return to normal conditions. He said he could not indefinitely keep all the Assyrian Levies confined to barracks, and for his part he would guarantee their good behaviour if they were permitted to visit their families in the town. He had asked that the General Officer Commanding 'Iraqi Troops would for his part undertake that the Levy men would not be in any danger of being assaulted by the 'Iraqi soldiers. The 'Iraqi General would not give this undertaking and apparently held to his opinion that the Assyrians were intent on committing subversive acts against the Arab troops.

6./



(501)
493

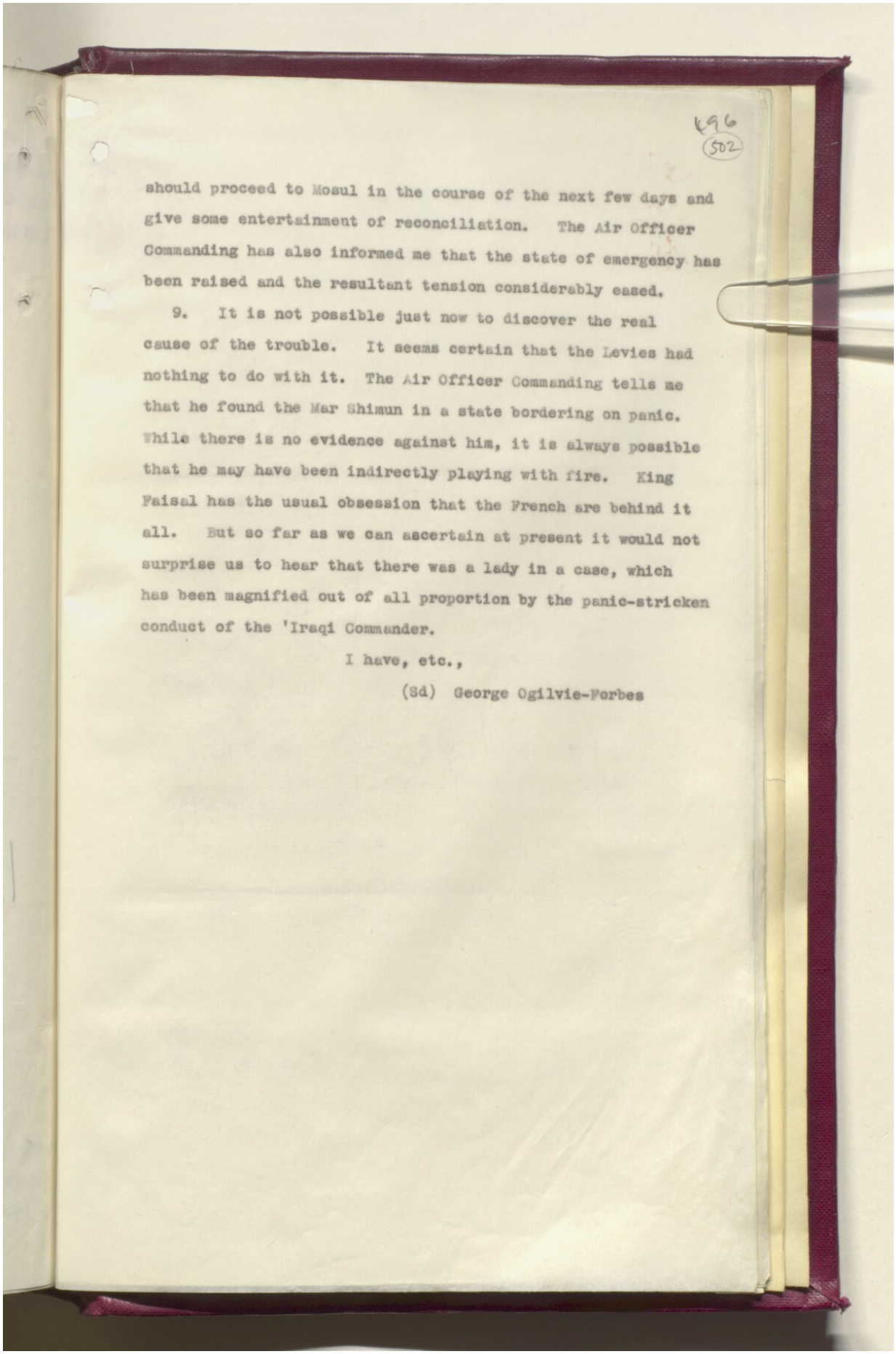
6. The Air Officer Commanding accordingly considered that the situation would not improve so lond as Bekar Sidqi remained in Command at Mosul and in the interests of Imperial troops requested me to arrange for an early audience with the King in order that prompt action might be taken to ease the situation.

7. His Majesty was able to receive us at 7 o'clock the same evening (May 19th) and we discussed the matter at some length. King Faisal was of opinion that the General Officer Commanding, Mosul had mishandled the situation and he promised that the Chief of the General Staff, Taha Pasha al Hashimi, should be sent to that town at once to take charge of the situation and to enquire into the conduct of Bekar Sidqi Beg. The King also decided that Sabih Beg al Najib, the Director-General of Police, should be sent to Mosul to take over the Police. He also spoke of inviting the Mar Shimun to come to Bagdad for a few days, ostensibly to discuss the drafting of a Community Law for the Assyrians, but in reality to give an undertaking not to interfere in politics. This has been confirmed by a report which I have subsequently received from His Majesty's Consul in Mosul.

8. The main object of our visit, namely the drawing of His Majesty's Personal attention to the affair, having thus been attained, we then withdrew. Two days later I had occasion to be received by the King to discuss other matters. His Majesty informed me that he had had time to make a full investigation, with the result that while he undoubtedly would have approved certain steps taken by Bekar Sidqi, he was very angry with him for refusing to accept the word of the British Liaison Officers and for that offence, if for nothing else, he would be removed. He had also decided to transfer the Civil Governor. He had further directed that the Ministers of Defence and of the Interior

should/

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338451.0x00000e



496
502

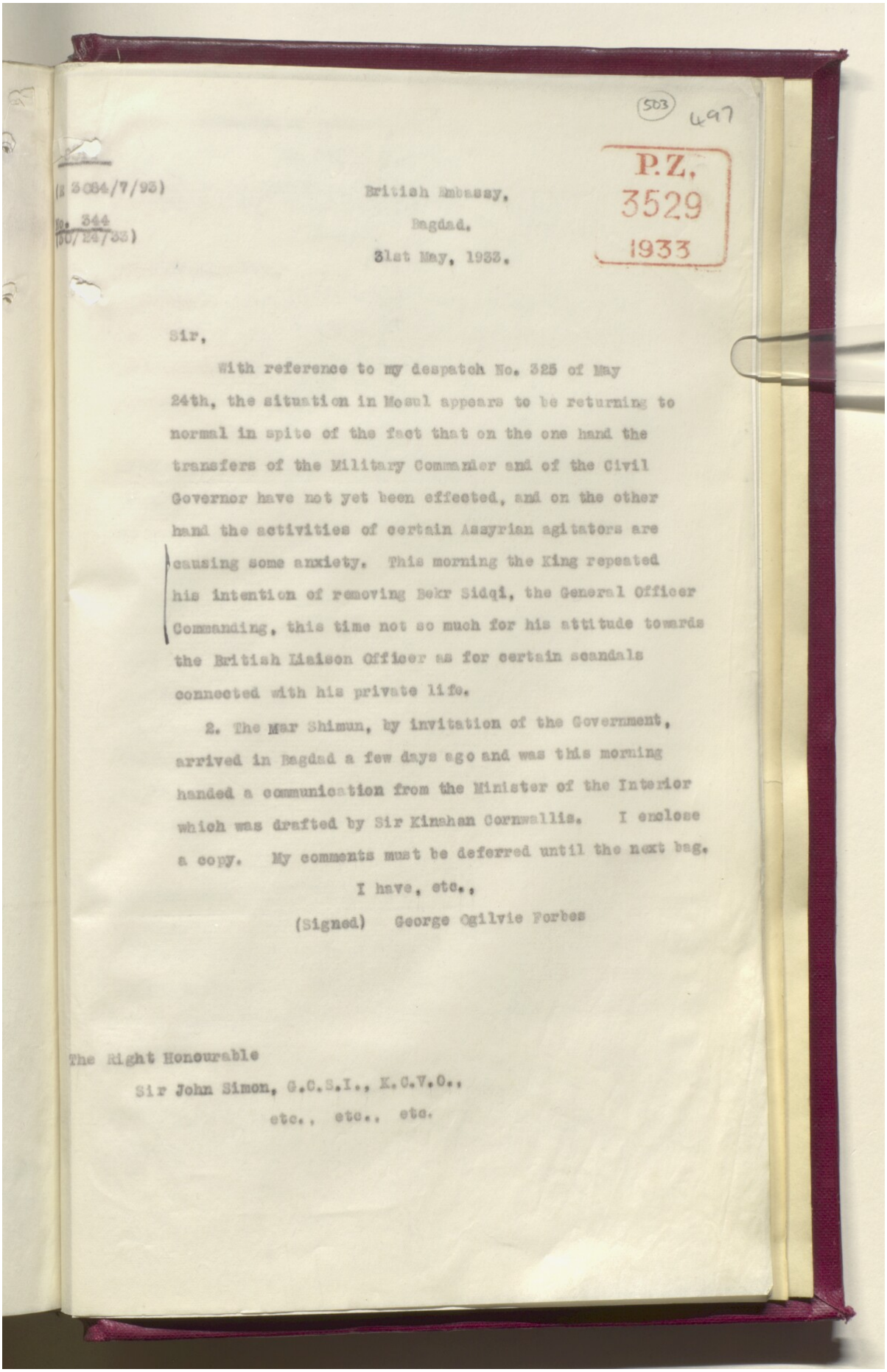
should proceed to Mosul in the course of the next few days and give some entertainment of reconciliation. The Air Officer Commanding has also informed me that the state of emergency has been raised and the resultant tension considerably eased.

9. It is not possible just now to discover the real cause of the trouble. It seems certain that the Levies had nothing to do with it. The Air Officer Commanding tells me that he found the Mar Shimun in a state bordering on panic. While there is no evidence against him, it is always possible that he may have been indirectly playing with fire. King Faisal has the usual obsession that the French are behind it all. But so far as we can ascertain at present it would not surprise us to hear that there was a lady in a case, which has been magnified out of all proportion by the panic-stricken conduct of the 'Iraqi Commander.

I have, etc.,

(Sd) George Ogilvie-Forbes

Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338451.0x000010



(503) 497

P.Z. 3529 1933

(E 3084/7/93)

No. 344
(50/24/33)

British Embassy,
Bagdad.
31st May, 1933.

Sir,

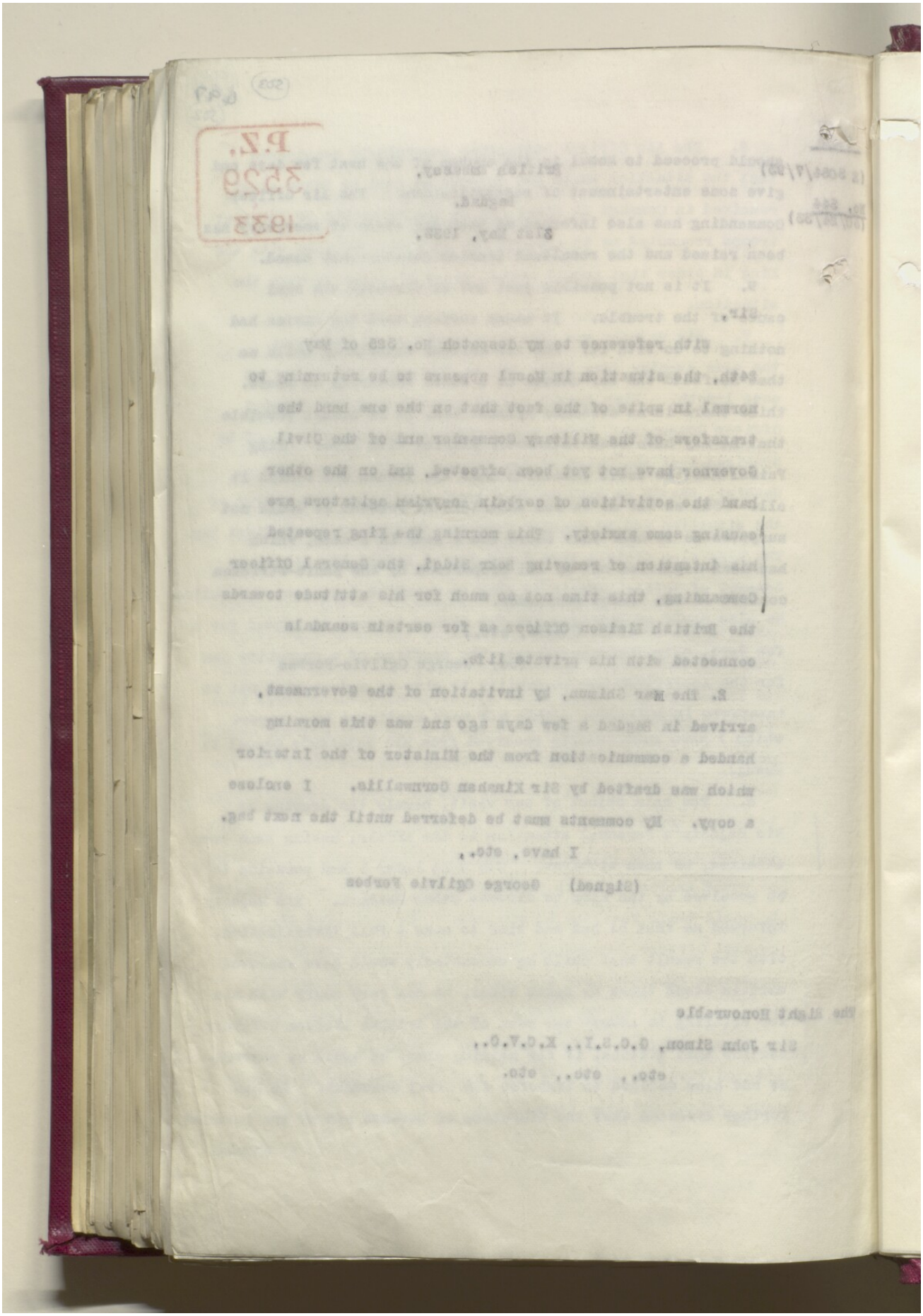
With reference to my despatch No. 325 of May 24th, the situation in Mosul appears to be returning to normal in spite of the fact that on the one hand the transfers of the Military Commander and of the Civil Governor have not yet been effected, and on the other hand the activities of certain Assyrian agitators are causing some anxiety. This morning the King repeated his intention of removing Bekr Sidqi, the General Officer Commanding, this time not so much for his attitude towards the British Liaison Officer as for certain scandals connected with his private life.

2. The Mar Shimun, by invitation of the Government, arrived in Bagdad a few days ago and was this morning handed a communication from the Minister of the Interior which was drafted by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis. I enclose a copy. My comments must be deferred until the next bag.

I have, etc.,

(Signed) George Ogilvie Forbes

The Right Honourable
Sir John Simon, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.



504 498

ENCLOSURE IN BAGDAD DESPATCH.

No. 344 of 31/5/33.

Translation of memorandum No. C/1104 dated 26th May, 1933, from the Ministry of the Interior to Mar Sham'un.

After compliments,

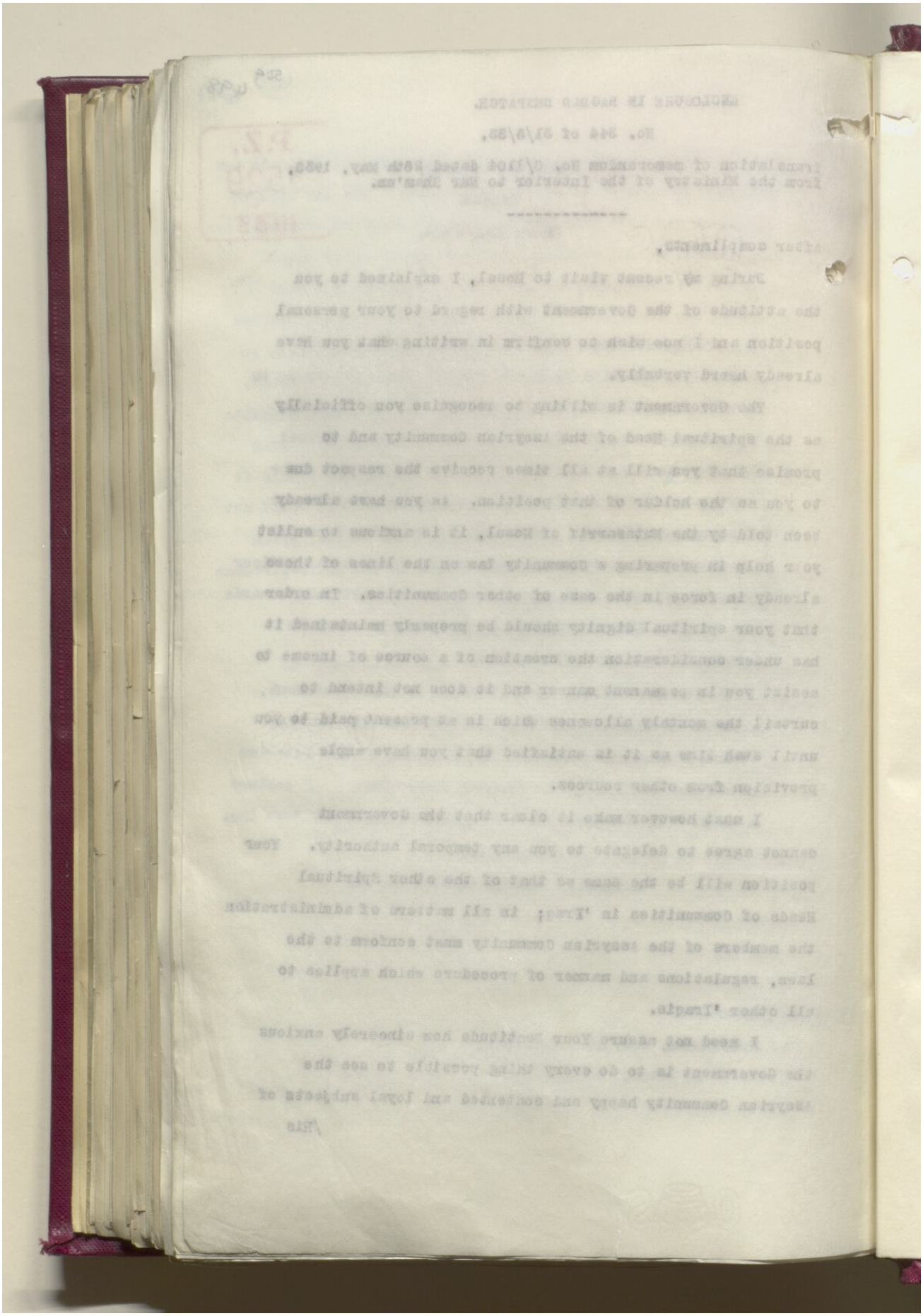
During my recent visit to Mosul, I explained to you the attitude of the Government with regard to your personal position and I now wish to confirm in writing what you have already heard verbally.

The Government is willing to recognise you officially as the spiritual Head of the Assyrian Community and to promise that you will at all times receive the respect due to you as the holder of that position. As you have already been told by the Mutasarrif of Mosul, it is anxious to enlist your help in preparing a Community Law on the lines of those already in force in the case of other Communities. In order that your spiritual dignity should be properly maintained it has under consideration the creation of a source of income to assist you in permanent manner and it does not intend to curtail the monthly allowance which is at present paid to you until such time as it is satisfied that you have ample provision from other sources.

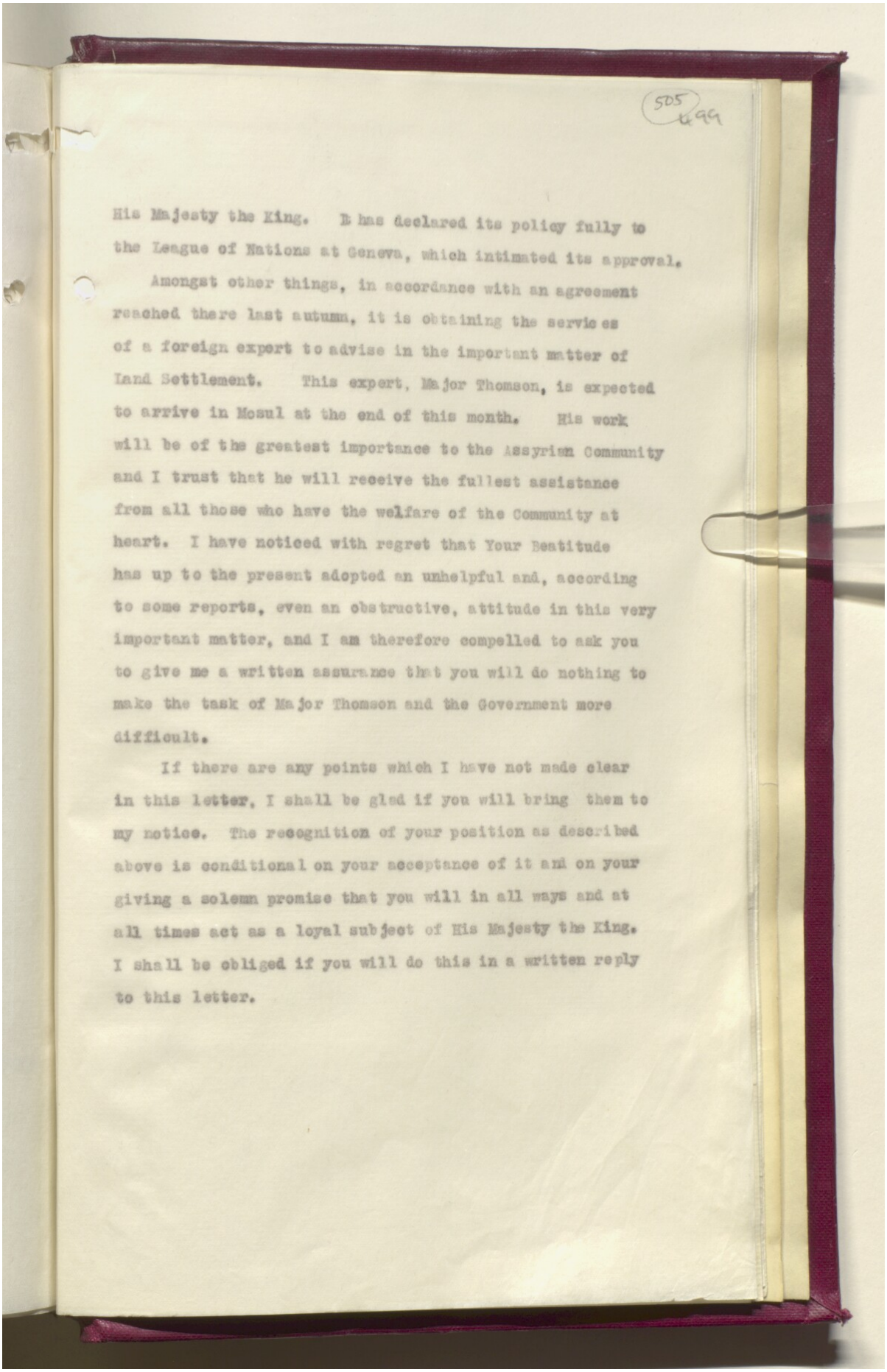
I must however make it clear that the Government cannot agree to delegate to you any temporal authority. Your position will be the same as that of the other Spiritual Heads of Communities in 'Iraq; in all matters of administration the members of the Assyrian Community must conform to the laws, regulations and manner of procedure which applies to all other 'Iraqis.

I need not assure Your Beatitude how sincerely anxious the Government is to do every thing possible to see the Assyrian Community happy and contented and loyal subjects of

/His



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Unknown
View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338451.0x000014

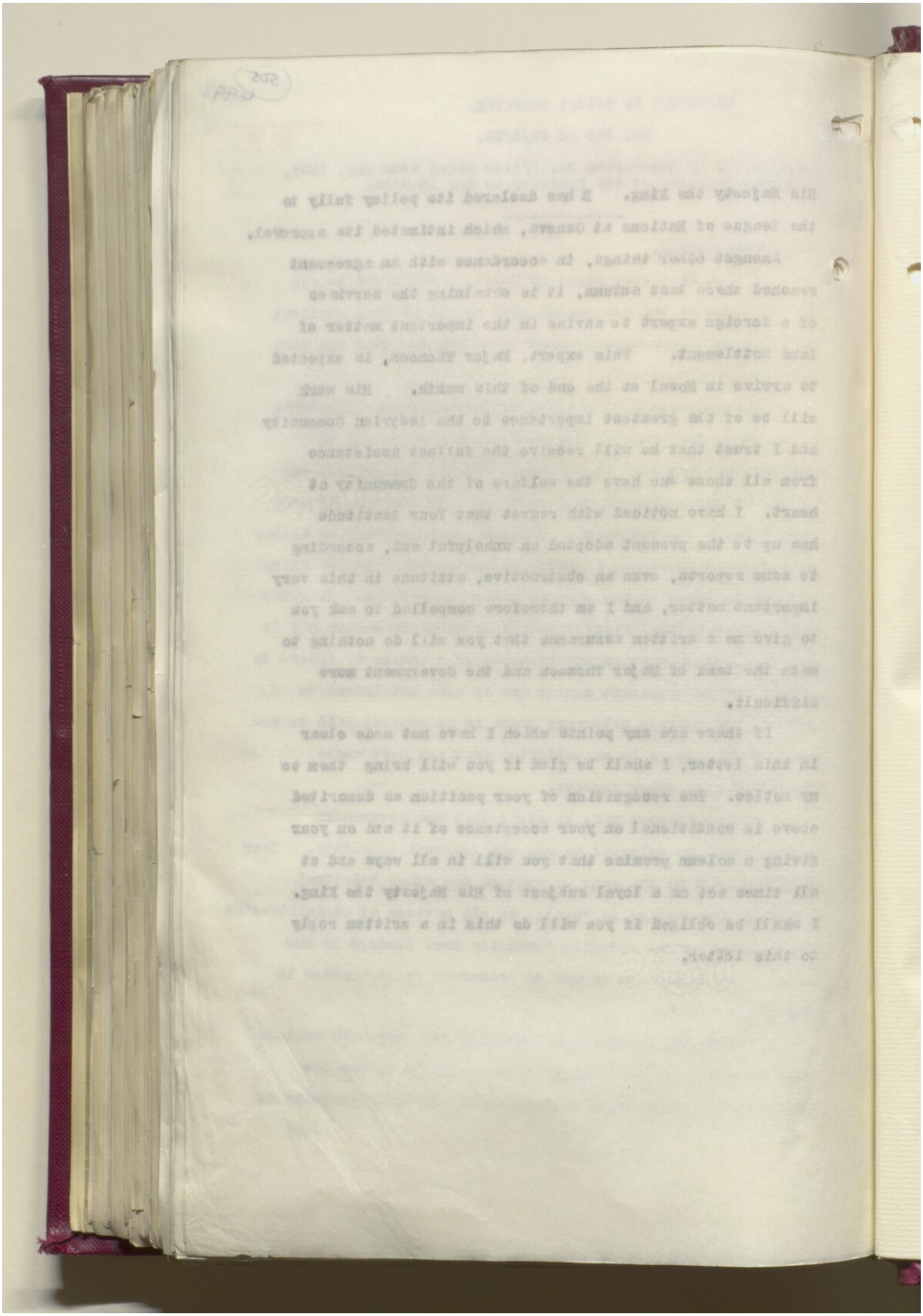


505
499

His Majesty the King. It has declared its policy fully to the League of Nations at Geneva, which intimated its approval.

Amongst other things, in accordance with an agreement reached there last autumn, it is obtaining the services of a foreign expert to advise in the important matter of Land Settlement. This expert, Major Thomson, is expected to arrive in Mosul at the end of this month. His work will be of the greatest importance to the Assyrian Community and I trust that he will receive the fullest assistance from all those who have the welfare of the Community at heart. I have noticed with regret that Your Beatitude has up to the present adopted an unhelpful and, according to some reports, even an obstructive, attitude in this very important matter, and I am therefore compelled to ask you to give me a written assurance that you will do nothing to make the task of Major Thomson and the Government more difficult.

If there are any points which I have not made clear in this letter, I shall be glad if you will bring them to my notice. The recognition of your position as described above is conditional on your acceptance of it and on your giving a solemn promise that you will in all ways and at all times act as a loyal subject of His Majesty the King. I shall be obliged if you will do this in a written reply to this letter.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

500
506

P.Z.
3529
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
12th June, 1933.

D. 10.00 p.m.: 12th June, 1933.
R. 9.30 a.m., 13th June, 1933.

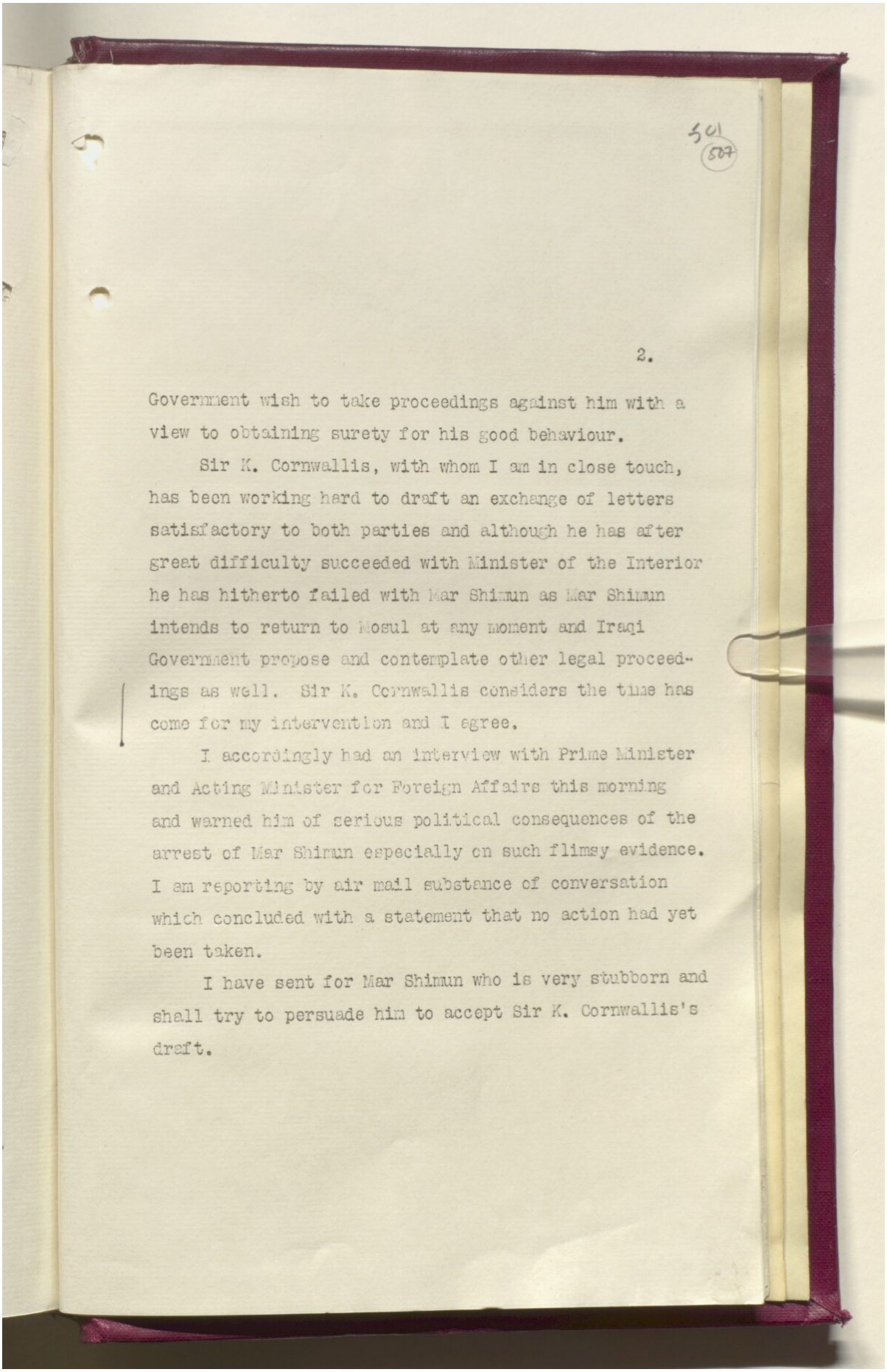
No. 122. (R).

::::::::::::::

My despatch No. 344.

Assyrian situation is rapidly developing in a direction which is causing concern. In my despatch No. 358 of June 7th I reported that Mar Shimun on May 31st addressed a letter to King Feisal protesting loyalty on behalf of himself and people. I also stated that Mar Shimun on June 3rd replied to communication from Minister of Interior, copy of which was enclosed in my despatch No. 344, in an unfortunately worded letter in which he refused to waive claim to temporal power or to sign undertaking demanded by Minister adding that Minister's proposed action was insulting. He also demurred to statement that he was obstructive over settlement scheme. Some of the acerbity of this reply is due to the insertion by the King into Ministry of the Interior's letter of May 28th, without Sir K. Cornwallis's knowledge, of a form of undertaking which gave special offence to Mar Shimun and which of course does not appear in copy of letter as sent to you.

Nevertheless Mar Shimun's reply which coming so soon after his satisfactory letter to the King is unnecessarily rude, has caused such offence that Iraqi Government ...



501
507

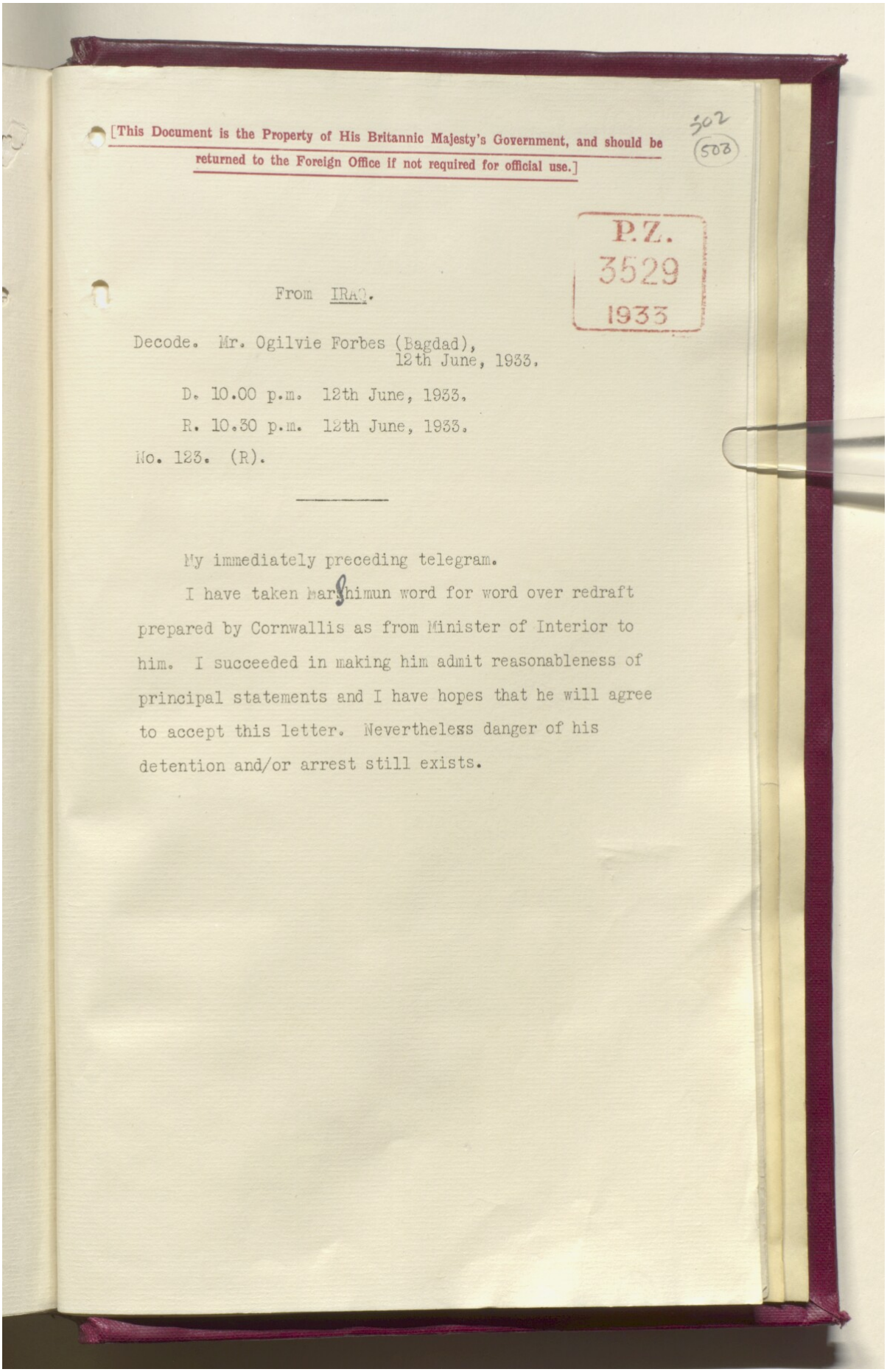
2.

Government wish to take proceedings against him with a view to obtaining surety for his good behaviour.

Sir K. Cornwallis, with whom I am in close touch, has been working hard to draft an exchange of letters satisfactory to both parties and although he has after great difficulty succeeded with Minister of the Interior he has hitherto failed with Mar Shimun as Mar Shimun intends to return to Mosul at any moment and Iraqi Government propose and contemplate other legal proceedings as well. Sir K. Cornwallis considers the time has come for my intervention and I agree.

I accordingly had an interview with Prime Minister and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs this morning and warned him of serious political consequences of the arrest of Mar Shimun especially on such flimsy evidence. I am reporting by air mail substance of conversation which concluded with a statement that no action had yet been taken.

I have sent for Mar Shimun who is very stubborn and shall try to persuade him to accept Sir K. Cornwallis's draft.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

502
(503)

P.Z.
3529
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad),
12th June, 1933.

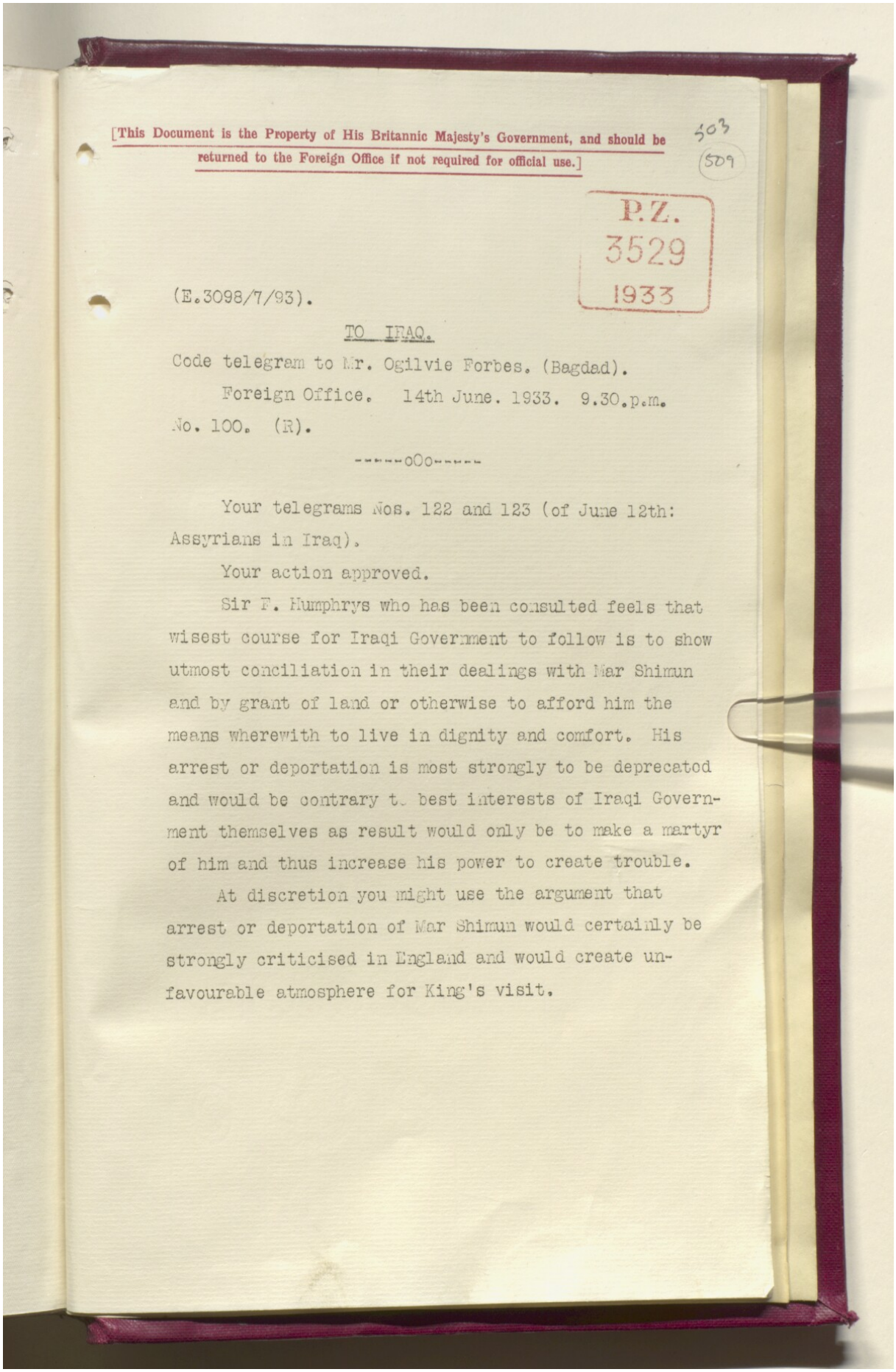
D. 10.00 p.m. 12th June, 1933.

R. 10.30 p.m. 12th June, 1933.

No. 123. (R).

My immediately preceding telegram.

I have taken Marshimun word for word over redraft prepared by Cornwallis as from Minister of Interior to him. I succeeded in making him admit reasonableness of principal statements and I have hopes that he will agree to accept this letter. Nevertheless danger of his detention and/or arrest still exists.



[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

503
509

P.Z.
3529
1933

(E.3098/7/93).

TO IRAQ.

Code telegram to Mr. Ogilvie Forbes. (Bagdad).

Foreign Office. 14th June. 1933. 9.30.p.m.

No. 100. (R).

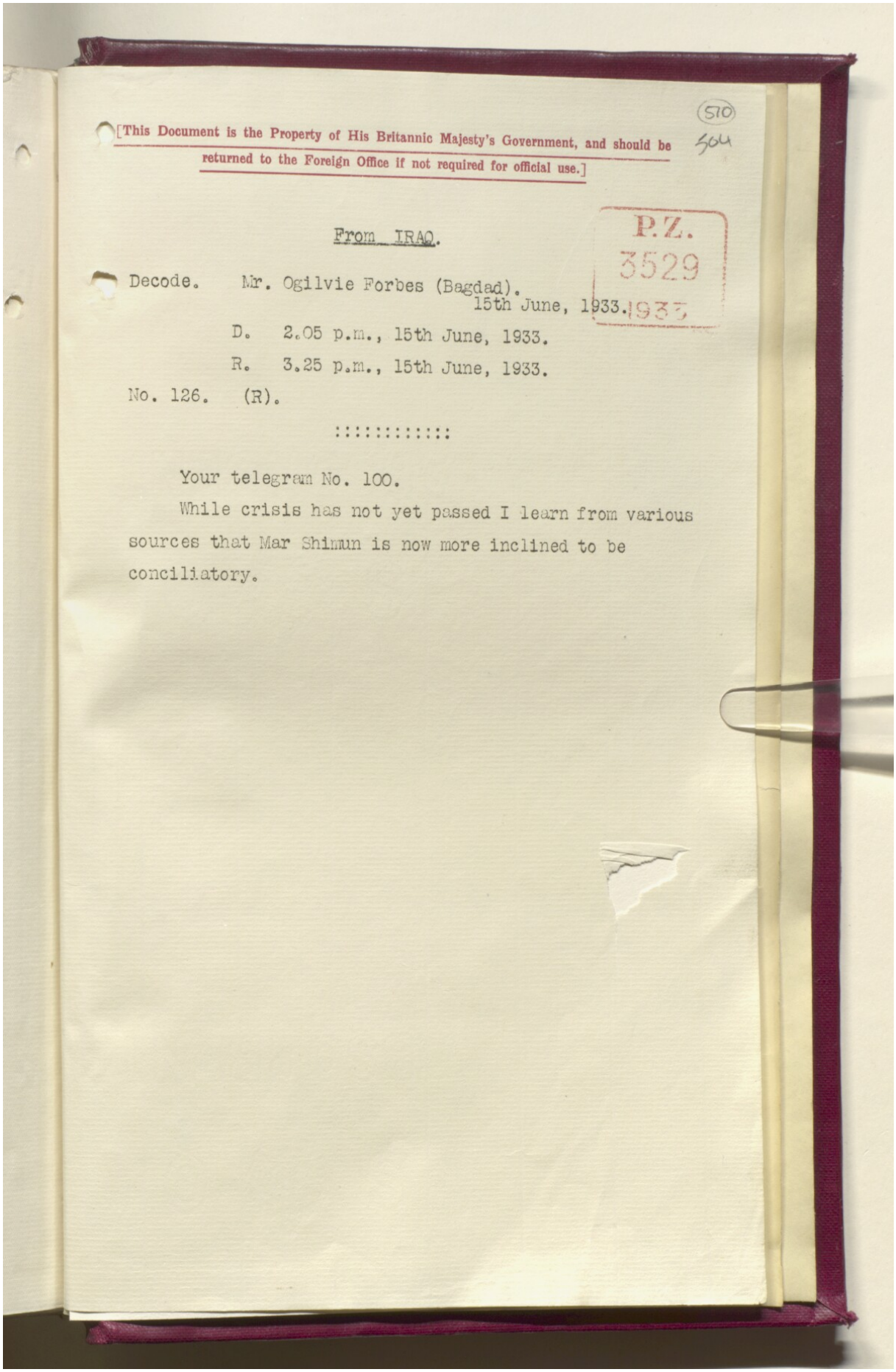
------oOo------

Your telegrams Nos. 122 and 123 (of June 12th: Assyrians in Iraq).

Your action approved.

Sir F. Humphrys who has been consulted feels that wisest course for Iraqi Government to follow is to show utmost conciliation in their dealings with Mar Shimun and by grant of land or otherwise to afford him the means wherewith to live in dignity and comfort. His arrest or deportation is most strongly to be deprecated and would be contrary t. best interests of Iraqi Government themselves as result would only be to make a martyr of him and thus increase his power to create trouble.

At discretion you might use the argument that arrest or deportation of Mar Shimun would certainly be strongly criticised in England and would create unfavourable atmosphere for King's visit.



(510)
564

[This Document is the Property of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and should be returned to the Foreign Office if not required for official use.]

P.Z.
3529
1933

From IRAQ.

Decode. Mr. Ogilvie Forbes (Bagdad).
15th June, 1933.

D. 2.05 p.m., 15th June, 1933.

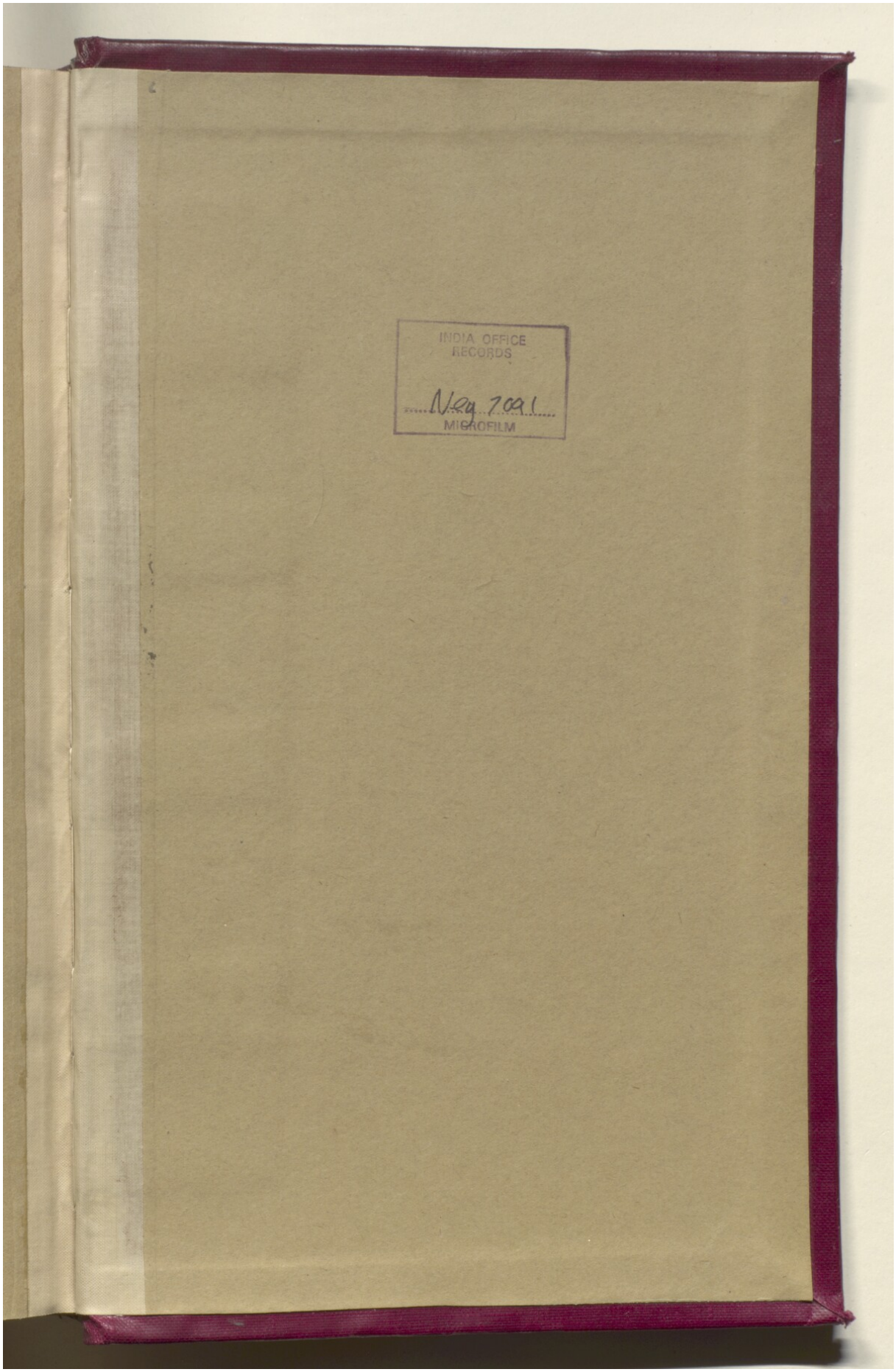
R. 3.25 p.m., 15th June, 1933.

No. 126. (R).

::::::::::::

Your telegram No. 100.

While crisis has not yet passed I learn from various sources that Mar Shimun is now more inclined to be conciliatory.



Reference: IOR/L/PS/12/2872. Copyright for this page: Open Government Licence

View on the Qatar Digital Library: http://www.qdl.qa/en/archive/81055/vdc_100086338451.0x000025