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ANNEX 1478 b.

Official No. : C. 535. 1933. I.

PROTECTION OF MINORITIES IN IRAQ.

I. PETITIONS, DATED AUGUST 16TH AND 30TH AND SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1933,
FROM THE MAR SHIMUN, CATHOLICOS PATRIARCH OF THE ASSYRIANS
CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF THE ASSYRIAN MINORITY IN IRAQ*Note by the Secretary-General :*

At the request of the representatives of Mexico, the Irish Free State and Norway, the question forming the subject of these petitions has been included in the agenda of the Council on the basis of two previous petitions from the same petitioner (see document C.504.1933.I).

The Secretary-General has now the honour to circulate, for the examination of the Council, three new petitions, with annexes, from the Mar Shimun, dated, respectively : Baghdad, August 16th, and Nicosia (Cyprus), August 30th and September 12th, 1933.

Any observations the Iraqi Government may wish to present thereon will be communicated to the Council as soon as they reach the Secretariat.

List of Documents.

	Page
I. LETTER OF AUGUST 16TH, FORWARDING THE REPORT OF AUGUST 4TH, 1933.	1786
II. REPORT OF AUGUST 30TH, 1933	1808
III. REPORT OF SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1933	1813

I. Report of August 4th, 1933.

As from Patriarchate, Mosul,
c/o Y.M.C.A., Baghdad,
August 16th, 1933.

*To the Secretary-General,
League of Nations,
Geneva.*

I humbly beg leave to send you a copy of my report, with copies attached of the official documents, and translations of various speeches, and a copy of a report made by an eyewitness of many years' experience of this country and its people. I have made my report in this way not to express bitter feelings, but that the League and the world may make unbiased judgments.

Since writing this report so much has, and is taking place, such as massacre of the women, children and old men which were left in the villages, the robbing and burning of the latter, as revenge taken by the police and Arab army, and certain Kurdish and Arab tribes, because of their defeat and failure to subdue the spirit of the Assyrians who resisted the Government's policy, first by leaving the country to prepare for the exit of all, according to the alternative policy which the Government officials told them (see report of meeting held in Mosul July 14th, 1933).¹

The Government received this decision from the leaders and a copy was sent to me (copy attached to my report).

The circumstances of my forced detention in Baghdad made it difficult to tell the outside world, but I have been able to send out letters and cablegrams through various friends as in this case, with the hope that they reach their destination. So far I have received no acknowledgments.

I beg your help in that an International Commission will be sent out to investigate both sides of this question at the earliest possible moment.

I fully realise that this communication is not coming to you through the proper channels as laid down in the League's regulations, but under the circumstances I have no other alternative.

(Signed) Eshai SHIMUN,
By the Grace of God, Catholicos
Patriarch of the Assyrians.

¹ According to the annexes to the report, this meeting took place on July 10th, 1933.— *Note by the Secretary-General.*

THE PRESENT ASSYRIAN SITUATION, AUGUST 4TH, 1933.
THE OFFICIAL REPORT BY MAR SHIMUN, PATRIARCH OF THE ASSYRIANS.

INTRODUCTION.

It is not an easy matter for me as Patriarch of the Assyrian Church to make a report under the present circumstances.

I am held in Baghdad under Government detention, my residence watched day and night by plain-clothes police and my mail censored and confiscated.

The reason given through the *Iraq Times* and local Press by the Government, is that I have refused to give the guarantees required by the Government.

Attached is the translation copy of the guarantees which I refused to sign, and a copy of my reasons. I must say that a very brave effort was made by Sir Kinahan Cornwallis and Major Edmunds, the British Advisers to the Minister of Interior, to produce a document which both the Minister on behalf of the Government, and I on behalf of my people, could agree to sign. This was helped by the Acting British Ambassador, Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, the British Air Vice-Marshal Burnett, and his intelligence officers.

These efforts beginning on May 21st and continuing to June 25th (much of which is in writing) ended in the Arab Government threatening to resign and my being detained as a prisoner in Baghdad. My reply to the Minister detaining me in Baghdad, copies of which were sent to the various legations in the city, is also attached to this report.

Mr. Ogilvie Forbes, the British diplomat who was sympathetic to me, informed me that I was to be detained in Baghdad and again a few days later told me that His Majesty, King Faisal, had cabled to the Prime Minister from England to release me from detention. No word of such was sent to me by the Government in any shape or form, in fact neither the Arab nor the British officials have had any communication with me since June 25th. Since then I have been separated from my people and home in Mosul, and have been obliged to maintain a double establishment at my own expense.

Before giving my conclusions on the cause of the present situation it is necessary to report at least some of the Assyrian side of the question. I therefore wish to make a summary of such under four periods :

1. From June 1932 the time when it was broadcasted that the mandatory Power in Iraq would cease, till the time when I was delegated by my people to proceed to Geneva to plead their cause before the League of Nations.
2. From the time of proceeding to Geneva, to my return to Mosul on January 11th, 1933.
3. From January 16th to my coming to Baghdad on May 26th.
4. From May 26th to June 25th when I received my detention order in Baghdad (1933).

FIRST PERIOD.

In June 1932 on the eve of the termination of the British mandate in Iraq, the Assyrians, still refugees, after a long and bitter experience of broken promises, from the time they gave and lost practically their all for the Allied cause, until the hour of writing, decided to make a determined effort to get their question settled before Iraq entered the League of Nations.

Those Assyrians who were enlisted under contract with the British Government in the levies, gave the authorities a month's notice to terminate their contracts, stating very definitely their reasons. Those scattered in the various Kurdish districts asked their leaders to make a final petition which was submitted to the League of Nations via the mandatory Power. Sir Francis Humphrys, the then British High Commissioner, in his anxiety to prevent the levies resignation taking effect, requested my help.

Having been dangerously ill, I was ignorant of the levies action until this time. The many definite and helpful promises made by Sir Francis in his letters through me (see copies attached) satisfied the Assyrians that we could expect much, and so trusting his word, the levies withdrew their notice, and continued to carry out their duties ; and my people in the villages to wait patiently for the fulfilment of his promises.

I was asked by my people and encouraged by Sir Francis to go to Geneva to represent the cause of my people, the necessary expenses being subscribed by the refugees.

Before concluding this period, I want it to be known that the levies action on the one hand, and my going to Geneva on the other, was considered to be the unforgivable crime of the so-called " Patriarchal Temporal Power " and was the reason for the beginning of the Iraqi Government's present policy — viz., breaking the power of the people's chosen leaders, and attempting to scatter the people: a very definite breach of the fundamental law.

SECOND PERIOD.

At Geneva, the question of the Assyrians was sidetracked until after the entry of Iraq into the League of Nations although the Permanent Mandates Commission did examine the Assyrian Petition on November 14th, 1932, and endorsed its Rapporteur's conclusions,¹ with unbiased judgment, it became no longer legal as the mandate no longer existed. The essential point to which it drew the Council's attention was the Assyrians need to be settled in a "homogeneous group". The Rapporteur further stated:

"They (the Assyrians) are encamped there in conditions which in most cases are precarious and miserable. They are refugees. We find an expression of insecurity inspired in the Assyrians, not only by climate . . . but especially by the scattering of this community among populations of other races . . . The root cause of the state of unrest revealed by the petition resides in the fact that it has not been possible to collect the Assyrians of Iraq into a 'homogeneous group'. It has not been proved to the satisfaction of impartial observers that lands combining the requisite conditions for settlement of the Assyrians in a *homogeneous group* do not exist in Iraq."

Sir Henry Dobbs in his "Statement of Proposals" for the settlement of the Assyrian people in Iraq copy to Lady Surma dated May 1924 states:

"His Excellency the High Commissioner has ascertained that there are more than sufficient deserted lands, the property of the Iraqi Government to the north of Dohuk in Amadia and the northern hills upon which the latter class of persons could be permanently settled."

In the appendix to the Iraqi Prime Minister's letter dated August 2nd, 1932, which was presented to the League of Nations, the following facts appear: In the Mosul Liwa Settlement Scheme 1927 the Council of Ministers had made provision to settle in various places of the Mosul Liwa, various tribes of the Assyrians, numbering altogether 7,500 people, but those actually settled there now are only 686 families. As pointed out in my notes on this report, which I presented to the Council of the League on November 3rd, 1932, there is still room for another 4,500 persons in this district of Mosul, if the report of the Iraqi Government on past settlement for 1927 is correct. But the administrative inspector who undertook settlement in 1930 said "there was no suitable area in the Mosul Liwa where Ashutis (= Lower Tiari) could be settled together".

Thus from all this it will be realised that a "homogeneous group" was the finding of the Permanent Mandates recommendation after fully examining the Assyrian petition. The committee who were authorised by the Council to produce a solution to the problem, seems to have overlooked this in the resolution which it presented and which was passed by the Council on December 11th, 1932,² especially in the declaration by the Iraqi representatives which I quoted:

"Notes with satisfaction the declaration by the representative of Iraq of the intention of the Iraqi Government to select from outside Iraq, a foreign expert to assist them for a limited period in settlement of all landless inhabitants of Iraq, including Assyrians; and in the carrying-out of their scheme for the settlement of the Assyrians of 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."

I appeal to those who see the difference between the words of the Mandates Commission's endorsement, and that produced by this resolution—viz., "homogeneous group" and "homogeneous units". That alteration of group into units was just sufficient to destroy the whole spirit of the League's intention, for it enables the Arab Government to scatter the people into units, instead of settling a group. Thus I returned to my people from the League of Nations (who had in the past assigned our old homes to Turkey, in the settlement of the Iraq and Turkish boundary dispute) empty handed, still refugees and at the mercy of an Arab Government.

I had to inform the League that the third (Assyrian) petition (which Iraq's representative referred to) in which certain Assyrians professed their satisfaction with their present status under the Iraqi Government that the signatures were partly forged, and partly obtained under improper pressure exerted by Government officials, and that I was prepared to substantiate these statements. To-day I discover that 65 per cent are forged and the rest signatures of men who have no following. The fact is, that the Iraqi

¹ See Annex 1418 to the Minutes of the Sixty-ninth Session of the Council (*Official Journal*, December 1932, pages 2290-2296).— *Note by the Secretary-General*.

² See Minutes of the Council meeting held on December 15th (not 11th), 1932 (*Official Journal*, December 1932, pages 2285-2290).— *Note by the Secretary-General*.

Government is unable to carry out its policy towards the Assyrians and the present situation is evidence of this. Before leaving Geneva I, as the representative head of the Assyrians, submitted a protest to the Permanent Mandates Commission in writing, and asked them to reconsider their decision otherwise disaster was bound to occur to my unfortunate people (see my petition of December 16th, 1932). Just before my departure from Geneva I received a letter from the Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri Pasha, informing me that I should not return direct to my home in Mosul, but via Baghdad to see the Acting Prime Minister. I took this invitation at its face value. On the frontier of Iraq I was treated with the utmost vigilance by the authorities, and made to sign a statement that on arrival in Baghdad I would report to the police. I have since realised that this was an expression of the Government's disapproval of my going to the League of Nations. However, whilst in Baghdad I had an audience with His Majesty King Faisal, who as always, graciously expressed his goodwill towards my people and myself, as did the Acting Prime Minister.

As was customary in the past, on my return to Mosul, I called together the Assyrian leaders to report to them all that had taken place at Geneva. For this, I was informed by the Government's representative in Mosul that I had no power to do so without his sanction. The meeting was finally permitted and took place on January 16th, 1933. I explained to the chiefs the decision of the League, asking them to remain loyal to the Iraqi Government and to wait and see what the settlement would be.

THIRD PERIOD.

The following period was a real foretaste of the type of rule we had expected, and I was surprised to find that it had already begun during my absence in Geneva. Those of us conversant with "the minorities guarantees" not only wonder why they were so easily broken, but why the Arab Government appointed over the people as leaders, certain Assyrians as their representatives who were paid to carry out a policy of sowing dissension among the people, and a settlement scheme which was bound to fail: it was in the spirit of units or a scattering, and a settlement covering only a very small proportion of the refugees. The people's real leaders were not only ignored, but were ordered to give guarantee that they would not interfere, failing which they were to be imprisoned. No business could be done with the Government's settlement or otherwise, except through those paid Assyrians appointed by Government to force on the people its will.

For nearly seven months this state of affairs has been going on, and my people through their leaders sought my advice. I protested where possible, and asked the people to again wait patiently for the coming of the new Foreign Settlement Expert, as per the Iraqi Government's promise to the League of Nations. In the meantime pressure was being brought to bear on the people and their leaders to profess that they were happily settled and force was being exhibited to make them sign documents accordingly. In fact we now realise that the great idea was to stage a sham settlement scheme to influence the Foreign Settlement Expert to carry on with the Government's settlement policy, which had already failed. When I asked the officials to substantiate their accusations blaming me for the failure, they failed to do so: but adopted the same methods with me as with the people's leaders, and tried in every possible way to destroy the Patriarchal influence over the people, giving out the old falsehood that I was fighting for my own family and its position (see the conversation recorded by Sir K. Cornwallis's note attached, in which I refused to be treated apart from the people's settlement).

FOURTH PERIOD.

On May 22nd I was called to the Mutassarif's office in Mosul and told by him that the Minister of the Interior wished me to go to Baghdad to discuss the Assyrian Settlement with him and the Foreign Expert, Major Thomson. Because of the Baghdad heat and my health, I asked that I would not be detained more than four days. On reaching Baghdad I informed the Minister of the Interior of my arrival, and was kept six days waiting before an interview with him. In the meantime, the Foreign Expert had arrived in Mosul at the time I was called to Baghdad. Now I realise, I was brought to Baghdad on false pretences. I therefore sent a special letter to His Majesty King Faisal (see attached copy) but received no reply as His Majesty left for Europe next day. During my interview with the Minister, Assyrian settlement and the Foreign Expert were not mentioned in the conversation that took place. I was informed of the unfavourable attitude of the Iraqi Government towards me, and that I should receive a letter accordingly in which I should be asked to sign guarantees (see copies of the Minister's letter and my answer). To this day no definite accusation of any wrong I have done has ever been told to me. The only possible thing the Government can say against me is that I refused to be a party to the present policy which had incensed the people before I got back from Geneva. It was officially stated in the Press that Major

Thomson was in Iraq "purely in an advisory capacity and he will have no executive powers". My one meeting with Major Thomson only confirmed the Government's attitude towards the Assyrian settlement scheme. I did my utmost to change this policy. Advisers did their best, but as will be seen from copies of the official documents, nothing happened except my continued detention in Baghdad.

The threat of the Government to resign brought things to a standstill, as far as I was concerned, and no official, Arab or British, has been to see me or transacted business with me since. The exception being that I took a copy of my protest against detention to the British Ambassador, as I did to the other diplomatic representatives.

CONCLUSION.

From this time on the Government officials in Mosul did their utmost to force the Assyrians to submit to their policy which ignored the sacred minorities guarantees given to the League of Nations. On the other hand, the idea that we were refugees, wanting to be subjects and not serfs, did not occur to them. They forgot that we were tribal people and had traditional customs going back for at least 1,900 years. They demanded guarantees from us before they satisfied us that we would be settled (in a homogeneous group?), where we could live and not starve. We had already had experience of land settlement which had been altered three times. We had no guarantees from the Arab Government of land settlement except broken ones; in fact we had no chance to accept or reject settlement, but were imprisoned if we refused to give guarantees accepting their policy.

By the attached reports it will be seen what has been happening. The Arab Press has published articles full of hatred towards the Assyrians and myself. The reports of speeches made in the Parliament are most bloodthirsty and inflammatory. The Army Commander in Mosul threatened to exterminate the Patriarchal House and the Assyrians in that city, and made the Arabs very hostile towards the Assyrians there. The police arrested my private chaplain and some other Assyrians. Why? It eventually transpired that one of his officers living in the same block of houses as myself, was very annoyed by the mysterious throwing of stones into his courtyard on several nights. His Moslem servant was giving the customary warning of an immoral woman in the house. Even the *Iraq Times* published the Government reports which were full of untruths, ridiculous fabrications and contradictions. I attach the speeches of the Mosul officials which were given at the meetings on July 10th and 11th. Can anyone wonder why the Assyrians chose to leave Iraq, when they were told to go if they were not satisfied? My people were led to believe that their final settlement would be at least in homogeneous groups or units and that their lost lands and homes would be replaced in Iraq, and they would be enabled to settle down again in peace after nearly twenty years of refugee life. This was not to be:

1. They had either to accept the Government policy of being as now scattered as serfs to Kurdish Aghas as their landlords, and with a Government tax to pay as well in most cases, or if they settle on Government land, it would be liable to be taken away any time, at the whim of some local official, as past experience has shown. The British officials left in the country having no executive power, are even an incentive to the local officials doing whatever they like, and being ignorant of the law of the land and also the fundamental law. Politics being their only qualification for office.

2. They must fight for their rights, or,

3. Leave the country.

The first meant starvation and persecution. The second spelt disaster. The third was the only possible alternative to those Assyrians unable to agree to the Government's policy.

Attached is a letter which those who crossed the frontier into Syria sent to the Minister of the Interior of Iraq.

No British official now left to deal with the Assyrian case, has any real first-hand knowledge of my people, or what they have suffered during the past nineteen years.

The League of Nations betrayed us

(1) By giving our old lands and homes to Turkey;

(2) By handing us over to an Arab Government.

At the moment of closing this report I have knowledge of the burning of an Assyrian village, the local papers are full of news of fighting between Assyrians and Arabs on the

frontier, the deporting of some of my relations and Assyrian notables from Mosul, and carrying away of cattle and other properties from the villagers.

(Signed) Eshai SHIMUN,
By the Grace of God, Catholicos
Patriarch of the East.

Appendices.

COPY AND TRANSLATION RECEIVED ON JUNE 1ST, 1933.

No. U. 1104 Baghdad,
28/5/1933.

Honourable Mar Shimun,

During my last visit to Mosul, I informed you of the Government's attitude with regard to your personal position.

I wish now to confirm in writing what you heard from me verbally. The Government desires to recognise your Spiritual See (leadership) over the Assyrian people, and is promising that you will maintain the honour due to your above-mentioned position for always, and as previously the Mutassarif of Mosul has already informed you that the Government desires to obtain your assistance in establishing a Community Law, on the same basis of the rules at present in force with regard to other peoples.

In order that you may maintain your spiritual leadership, in a fitting manner, the Government is at present discussing the means of finding a permanent income towards your support, and it is not the intention of the Government to decrease the monthly allowance which at present is paid to you, until such time when the Government is satisfied that you are in receipt of sufficient income from other sources.

I must however inform you that the Government cannot agree to transfer to you the temporal power and your position will be the same as that of other spiritual heads of other people in Iraq, and that all the Assyrians should conform to all the administration rules and regulations which are enforced on all other Iraqis.

It is needless to assure you of the Government's sincere desire to fulfil whatever is possible to see the Assyrian people satisfied and happy, and that your people may become one of the most faithful subject peoples to His Majesty the Great King; the Government by its declaration before the League of Nations has fully declared itself to this effect, and this policy has been accepted and approved. I am to state that the Government, according to the agreement of last autumn, has been making efforts to secure the services of a foreign expert, to advise in the important question of settlement, and this foreign expert who is Major Thomson will very likely arrive at Mosul at the end of this month, the most important and greatest part of his work will be for the Assyrian peoples. I very strongly hope that he will get full assistance from all those who wish good of this people.

I very much regret to say that according to certain reports which have reached us, your honourableness have up to the present adopted a non-assisting and obstructive attitude towards this important question. I therefore deem it very essential to ask you to give a written guarantee that you will never take an action, which may be an obstacle to the work of Major Thomson, and cause difficulty to the Government.

If there are any points which are not mentioned in this letter, I shall be glad if you draw my attention to them. The Government's official recognition of your above-mentioned position is subject to your desire to accept it, and your giving a definite promise that you will always and in every way be as one of the most faithful subjects of His Majesty the Great King. I shall be very glad to receive your written reply to this letter as per attached text.

(Signed) Hikmat SLIMAN,
Minister of Interior.

The text referred to is as follows :

"I Mar Shimun have studied the letter from Your Excellency No.U.1104 dated May 28th, 1933, and have accepted all it contains.

"I do hereby promise that I will never do anything which may be an obstacle to the duties of Major Thomson and the Government of Iraq, namely in whatever it concerns the settlement scheme: that I will always and in every way remain as one of the most faithful subjects of His Majesty the Great King."

No. AP/S/35.

Baghdad,
as from Assyrian Patriarchate,
Mosul, dated June 3rd, 1933.

Dear Minister,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's letter No.U.1104, dated May 28th, 1933, and I am with due respects replying to its essential points as follows:

1. With regard to my interview with Your Excellency on April 12th, 1933, at Mosul, may I request Your Excellency's recollection to the conversation which then took place. Your Excellency said that a new co-operative policy with regard to the Assyrian Settlement Scheme would be introduced by you, and that the orders would be issued to the Mutassarif 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 a 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.

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 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, Moghul 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 has proposed to take, more so under the present circumstances, since 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 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 May 31st 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, June 4th.

I remain,
Yours most respectfully,
Mar SHIMUN.

To His Excellency Hikmat Sliman Beg,
The Minister of Interior, Baghdad.

Copy to His Majesty the Great King Faisal the First.

Ministry of the Interior,
Iraq Baghdad.

June 6th, 1933.

[Urgent.]

D. O. No. C/288.

Beatitude,

I send you a copy of a note which I have written to His Excellency the Minister of Interior on our conversation of this morning.

I shall be grateful if you will confirm that it correctly represents what passed between us.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) K. CORNWALLIS.

His Beatitude Eshai Shimun,
Assyrian Patriarch,
Baghdad.

His Excellency 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 considered 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 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.

(Signed) K. CORNWALLIS,
Adviser.

Baghdad, June 6th, 1933.

Baghdad,
as from the Assyrian Patriarchate,
Mosul, dated June 8th, 1933.

Dear Sir Kinahan,

I thank you for your letter of the 6th sending me a copy of the notes of my interview with you on that morning, which you have sent to His Excellency the Minister of Interior, and I thank you for the interest and labour for the affairs of my people.

On the whole the notes do correctly represent what passed between us. There are, however, some things I would like to state differently and again other things recorded.

For instance, *Paragraph 1*, the last thought. May I state no feelings influenced my reply to His Excellency. The fact is that I could not reply to the letter of the Government otherwise before consulting my people.

In *Paragraph 2* and elsewhere in these notes I would like that the word "community" be understood to mean the Assyrian people.

Paragraph 3. The importance of this paragraph would be better understood if it is realised that the Assyrians, unlike other communities, are refugees and homeless, and the idea behind the League of Nations by a homogeneous settlement is to replace their homelands and make them contented loyal subjects. This is not being done, on the contrary, after twelve years, there is not one instance where an Assyrian has received title deed substitute of his lost home. The Assyrian refugees, however, voted for the Mosul vilayet to be included in Iraq for this purpose.

With regard to the last part of paragraph 3, I would like to add that the traditional customs of the people should not be interfered with as at present. The same privileges are maintained by other tribal people in Iraq.

In conclusion, I would appeal to you to see my position as it now is, and advise me as to how I can possibly fulfil my duty to my people as well as comply with the requests from all sides.

1. Major Thomson as the Expert Adviser requests my assistance to bring about a Settlement Scheme.
2. You as the Adviser to the Ministry of Interior asked me for my views to present them to the Minister of Interior, and send you copies of my proposals to Major Thomson.
3. His Excellency the Minister who represents the Government has ordered me to retire from all temporal affairs of my people.

Therefore, under these circumstances, it becomes impossible for me to comply with any of these requests.

I have under preparation proposals for a Scheme of Settlement which will be in the interests of all concerned.

The presentation of these proposals depends on the change of the present policy.

(Signed) Mar SHIMUN.

DRAFT LETTER TO HIS BEATITUDE MAR SHIMUN
FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE MINISTER OF INTERIOR.

I have received your letter of the 3rd inst. and as I have informed you verbally, I consider it so ambiguous that I cannot take it as a reply to my letter of May 28th.

2. I have, however, read your letter of May 31st, 1933, to His Majesty the King. I have also read a note by the adviser dated 7th inst., recording the result of a conversation with and your reply of June 8th to him. I have also had a discussion with you on June 8th.

3. I take note from the above :

(a) You fully recognise that in matters of administration, Assyrians must conform to 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.

Baghdad,
as from Assyrian Patriarchate,
Mosul, May 31st, 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 Mutassarif 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 sixth 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 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 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.

The Residency,
Baghdad, June 18th, 1932.

Beatitude,

I have received your letter of June 17th, together with two copies of the petition of the Assyrian leaders of the same date, one of which is addressed to me and the other to the Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

This petition puts forward a number of demands of far-reaching effect and great importance and raises issues which cannot be settled without a reference to the League of Nations. It therefore is quite impossible for me to give an undertaking by June 28th, that the demands made in the petition will be approved. The petition must be forwarded to the League for consideration, and as it is demanded that the claims put forward in it must be adopted by the Council of the League, no undertaking can be given concerning them without the League's authority. I am forwarding the Assyrian leaders' petition at once to my Government for onward despatch to the League, and Your Beatitude may be assured that it will receive the earliest possible consideration.

In the meantime, your people have everything to lose from precipitate action and since, as I have shown, it is quite impracticable to make a reply to the petition by June 28th, I urge you to advise Assyrian levies to postpone the execution of their resolution to cease serving, until such time as a reply is received from the League.

If Your Beatitude does not so advise them, and if they persist in leaving the levies and joining in the national movement, to which reference is made in the last paragraph of the petition, before an answer is given to you, I must warn Your Beatitude that the Assyrians will be regarded as having offered a grave discourtesy to the League, who will have been given no possible opportunity to reply before your ultimatum expires. Moreover, in such circumstances the Assyrians could not reasonably expect to obtain any future employment in the Government services.

I must ask you to send me an immediate answer by the hand of Captain Holt.

(Signed) F. H. HUMPHRYS.

His Beatitude
The Most Reverend Eshai Mar Shimun,
Assyrian Patriarch.

No. S.O. 851.

The Residency,
Baghdad, June 22nd, 1932.

Beatitude,

I have received your letter of June 20th by the hand of Captain Holt. There occurs in this letter the following passage which I do not understand :

" At this morning's meeting it was unanimously agreed by the leaders that a final reply could not be given to Your Excellency's letter with regard to the question of postponement of the resolution of the Assyrian levies."

Captain Holt tells me that he pointed out to Your Beatitude that, if this was not in fact the final reply, he would stay in Ser Amadiyah until he obtained it. He tells me, however, that he was informed by Your Beatitude that this was the last word of the leaders and that they refused to postpone the resignation of the Assyrian levies unless I accepted all their demands, except that relating to Hakkari, by June 28th. I have already explained that it is not within my power to accept demands of this nature, which will have to be carefully considered by my Government in London and by the League of Nations at Geneva ; nor is a representative of the Iraqi Government empowered to accept them without the approval of the Iraqi Parliament, since the demands involve alterations to the fundamental laws of Iraq in regard to minorities which can only be agreed to with the consent of the League of Nations.

I have informed Your Beatitude that I am unable to understand what the Assyrians have to gain by giving up their present service which is worth nearly a lakh of rupees a month to them, and by disqualifying themselves for further service in the future. On the other hand, they have a very great deal to lose by such short-sighted behaviour, which cannot fail to appear to the British Government and people as singularly ungrateful and inopportune.

I would finally point out that the fact that an earlier petition which was submitted by the Assyrian leaders to the Permanent Mandates Commission last November to the effect that it would be no longer possible for the Assyrians to remain in Iraq after the termination of the British mandate is still under the consideration of the League, makes it still more incomprehensible that the Assyrian leaders should expect a reply to an entirely new set of demands of the most complicated and far-reaching nature before the petition can even have been seen by the League. In giving such an ultimatum, Your Beatitude cannot fail to realise that the Assyrian leaders are putting themselves in the wrong with the British Government and the League of Nations.

There is nothing more for me to say in this matter, except to express my deep regret at the unnecessary sufferings which the Assyrians seem determined to bring on themselves. I am making arrangements to take over the duties vacated by those Assyrians who desire to leave and to entrust them to British troops until other Iraqis have been recruited to replace them.

But the door is still open.

(Signed) F. H. HUMPHRYS.

His Beatitude
The Most Reverend Eshai Mar Shimun,
Assyrian Patriarch.

High Commissioner's Office,
Baghdad, June 28th, 1932.

Beatitude,

In spite of everything that has occurred I am still prepared to offer following conditions for levy service.

On condition that you and the other leaders will give a solemn undertaking not again to interfere with the discipline of the Assyrian levies, and on condition that all ranks give undertakings to serve loyally and truly, levies will be maintained at present strength, until an answer is given by the League to the Assyrian petition of June 17th, or until December 15th, whichever is the earlier date. If, however, levies have definitely decided that they do not wish to serve at Basra, one company must be reduced to allow for the formation of a company of other Iraqis to take over from the Assyrians at Basra.

On receipt of the answer from the League, arrangements will be made to retain such men as it may be desired, to recruit for the forces to be formed under the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930.

It is impossible for me to give you a reply in precise terms as to what demands in the Assyrian petition will, and what will not be considered as reasonable, and in conformity with the general policy of my Government and the League. I cannot at this stage commit myself further than to inform you that such questions as recognition of Patriarch, land settlement, representation in Parliament, schools, dispensaries, retention of rifles, and conditions of service in the Iraqi forces, are recognised by me as reasonable subjects for consideration and that the earliest and most sympathetic attention to these matters will be pressed by me on the Iraqi Government, and, through my Government,

You may be assured of the sincere goodwill of the British Government and myself and of our desire to do all that is possible for the welfare of the Assyrian people. I cannot believe that you will deliberately reject my advice to give up hasty action and to await the decision of the League, so that these important issues may be discussed in a calm atmosphere.

(Signed) F. H. HUMPHRYS.

His Beatitude
The Most Reverend Eshai Mar Shimun,
Assyrian Patriarch.

The Residency,
Baghdad, June 28th, 1932.

Personal.

Beatitude,

I was very glad to receive your message this evening and as requested I am sending you a signed copy of my telegram of June 27th.

You know that I shall do everything in my power to help you and your people at Geneva. I will even do my best to find a solution in regard to Hakkari though you will realise that this is an international question of great delicacy.

All I ask from Your Beatitude and the Assyrian leaders is that they should assist me by maintaining the levies in loyal service and the people in a calm spirit until the decision of the League of Nations has been received.

I know that I can rely on your help in this.

With my kindest regards to Lady Surma and Your Beatitude. I was so sorry that I missed seeing her in Baghdad owing to my illness.

(Signed) Francis HUMPHRYS.

High Commissioner's Office,
Baghdad, July 3rd, 1932.

Beatitude,

Thank you for your message of July 2nd. I note that you are prepared to send another letter to the levies at Hinaidi, Mosul, Diana and Sulaimania, in accordance with my draft copy of which is enclosed, after you have explained it fully to the leaders on July 5th.

It is true that my Government and myself are doing our best to obtain the reply of the League of Nations to your national petition before the termination of the mandate, which is expected to take place in September, but I know that you will understand that it is impossible for me to guarantee that the League will communicate their reply by this date. It is for this reason that I have asked that instructions should be sent to the levies to serve loyally until the receipt of the League's reply, rather than until the end of September. I have from the first impressed on Your Beatitude the importance of delaying the decision of the levies to resign until they have had an opportunity to study the reply of the League to the national petition. I feel sure that Your Beatitude will agree with me that this is a reasonable act of courtesy, both to the British Government and the League of Nations, and it is in reality in the best interests of the levies themselves.

I promise you that I will continue to do everything I can to obtain the League's reply as early as possible. The validity of the League's decision will not be affected by the date on which it is received.

(Signed) F. H. HUMPHRYS.

His Beatitude,
The Most Reverend Eshai Mar Shimun,
Assyrian Patriarch.

STATEMENT MADE BY SAYED CHABALI HAJI THABIT IN THE IRAQI PARLIAMENT
ON JUNE 28TH, 1933.

(VIDE *Al Istoclal*, No. 1929, of June 29th, 1933.)

Gentlemen,

I have to throw light on the public opinion, specially on that of our Press, regarding this misleading name Assyrians, which is in common use. As you are aware, this term is only recently coming into being. There is nobody who reasonably deserved this name; if there is any, we are the first to grasp it, as we are the original inhabitants of this country and take this from the physical and not political point of view. The same question arises in Egypt; it is called Pharaohs', but really Mosul is Arab even before the Islam. I regret to note that our Press still stick to this mysterious name. The group which calls itself Assyrians should be named Tyaris; they intermingle with the Assyrians and Chaldeans, this is confirmed by their being bilingual. If, for example, there is any of them who can decipher the tablets maintained in our Museum, he can make us believe that they are descendants of the Great Assyria. Proverb, " (if) he passed the examination

The Tyaris can be divided into the following sub-sections : (1) Tyari Bila, (2) Tyari Zair, (3) Tyari Jilu, (4) Tyari Bazi, (5) Tyari Dizi ; they all go under the name Tyari.

These in the pre-war days inhabited in Hikkari, Juliamerk, Bash Gala, and Van in Turkish territories with their religious headquarters in Qudshanus, (2) Persia, their headquarters in Urmia, (3) Russia and (4) part of them lived in Barwari villages in the outskirts of a mountain which is named after them — viz., Tyari Mountain in the vicinity of Amadia, and their headquarters being in Ashita where their religious leader resides, who puts his untimely claims before the Government. These villages are within the Turkish border, but some of them happily are situated in the Iraqi side ; they are genuine Iraqis ; they are entitled to share the benefits of our country ; ours is theirs, and theirs ours.

The above-mentioned Tyaris are therefore aliens, and not former inhabitants of this country. They are nearly 20,000 who fled from Persia, Russia and Turkey, with the strong desire of the Colonial Office. When they poured into Mosul and began living by illegal means, the inhabitants there were somewhat indisposed, and cried to get rid of them ; but, unfortunately, their pleadings were not listened to until some unhappy event took place in Mosul. The Mosulawis cried loudly and insisted on their being removed to their former homes or at least scattered in the villages, to avoid further accidents. It was prophesied at that time that their settling together would jeopardise the general security and disturb peaceful citizens. The Government migrated them to Kirkuk ; as though Kirkuk was not Iraq. They caused there the most bloody accident Kirkuk has ever seen, and made hundreds of our martyrs to lose their dear lives. This happened during the celebrations of " Id-al-Fatir ".

I cannot help weeping when I remember that doomed event ; still, some mysterious hand plays havoc and moves them to and fro. Recently one of their priests (Rev. Bedari), who resides in Mosul, published the most notorious article against the poor government. The police authorities on the spot confiscated his cursed pamphlets, but the said priest was able to dispose some fifty copies and distribute them among the prominent people. May I ask His Excellency as to the steps taken against such behaviour?

This wretched and corrupt people was housed and fed in Iraq and were expected to be loyal and dutiful subjects, but, on the contrary, after being surfeited and ungrateful to the hospitality shown by their hosts claim humorous rights. Experience, however, shows that these are armed to the teeth and are in a position to inflict the severest blow on the Government ! We are not so coward but we wait to see what steps will be taken against those interlopers, what is the Government's attitude towards them in this respect, and why she keeps quiet and postpones their punishment and to make it known from what source they obtained their arms. We therefore request and recommend their being stripped of their arms forthwith, or, at least, arm their neighbours for defensive measures.

We cannot clearly understand the programme of their settling together in Zibar area. The Government further sanctioned 13,000 dinars for their settlement, and the settlement officer intends to settle some of them in Barzan area ; as though we dislodged the Barzanis to make room for those, and to breed the poisonous germ in the head of the Government.

These will, at any rate, be an obstacle in the way of the Government ; we therefore should scatter them in all the liwas to be able to rule them peacefully. We understand that they imagine special status, but they cannot be attained to, and we cannot at our will create a difficult situation similar to that already created in Palestine (Zionists).

Further, what is the British Consulate at Dianna? And what are the intelligence officers scattered in the country? And what is this mythical hand which turns this unseen machine? We were under the impression that this game would come to an end with the Mandate, but they wish to restart it in an independent State. We can wait no longer, everything is ripe, we request the Government to take punitive measures against them.

Gentlemen, the most important problem to solve is, to remedy this bleeding wound ; to do this, we shall cry and cry loudly.

The soil of this country is formed of the bones and blood of our ancestors. How can we close our eyes and be indifferent in defending our sacred fatherland? (*Applause.*) Our ally wants many things in this country of their adoption, we must guard it against any intruders.