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COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE.

ASIATIC TURKEY.

Report of a Committee.

2, Whitehall Gardens, S.W.,
June 30, 1915.

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TERMS OF REFERENCE.

THE Prime Minister desires that a Committee, composed as follows:—

The Rt. Hon. SIR MAURICE DE BUNSEN, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O. (*Chairman*);

Mr. G. R. CLERK, C.B., C.M.G. (*Foreign Office*);

SIR T. W. HOLDERNESS, K.C.B., K.C.S.I. (*India Office*);

Admiral SIR H. B. JACKSON, K.C.B., K.C.V.O. (*Admiralty*);

Major-General C. E. CALLWELL, C.B. (*War Office*);

Lieut.-Col. SIR MARK SYKES, Bart., M.P.;

SIR H. LLEWELLYN SMITH, K.C.B. (*Board of Trade*);

Lieut.-Col. M. P. A. HANKEY, C.B., *Secretary* (*Secretary, Committee of Imperial Defence*);

Mr. W. H. M. SELBY, M.V.O., *Assistant Secretary* (*Foreign Office*);

Lieut.-Col. W. DALLY JONES, *Assistant Secretary* (*Assistant Secretary, Committee of Imperial Defence*);

shall meet to consider the nature of British desiderata in Turkey in Asia in the event of a successful conclusion of the war, with special reference to the memoranda on the subject which have lately been drawn up by the Foreign Office, India Office, War Office, Admiralty, and the Defence Committee.

April 8, 1915.

Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey.

1. EARLY in March last the Russian Government, anticipating an early and successful issue to the operations which had been started at the Dardanelles, communicated to the allied Governments its claims in regard to Constantinople. These claims, put shortly, were for the possession of Constantinople, the European coast from the Black Sea to the end of the Dardanelles, the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, the islands in the Sea of Marmora, and Imbros and Tenedos.

2. In return, Russia promised scrupulously to respect the special interests of France and Great Britain in the area claimed, and to view with sympathy the claims which those Powers entertained in regard to other regions of the Ottoman Empire.

3. His Majesty's Government agreed generally to the Russian proposals, "subject to the war being prosecuted to a successful conclusion, and to Great Britain and France realising their desiderata in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere," and expressly asked for commercial freedom for merchant vessels in the Straits, and for the creation of a free port at Constantinople for goods in transit to and from territory other than Russian. They added that, before formulating other British desiderata in the Ottoman Empire, it would be necessary to consult both the French and Russian Governments and to consider the whole question of ulterior British and French interests in Asiatic Turkey, but they made two definite and important observations: (1) That among the British desiderata would be a revision of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 respecting Persia, and (2) that when the fact that Russia was to have Constantinople at the end of the war became public, His Majesty's Government would state that they had throughout all the negotiations stipulated that in all circumstances Arabia and the Moslem holy places should remain under independent Moslem rule.

4. The French Government were more precise in announcing their counter-claims to Russia. They demanded Cilicia and Syria, in which latter term they included Palestine and the Christian Holy Places, though they did not specify the precise form of their claim—whether annexation or protectorate or sphere of interest. It would appear that Russia is ready to accede to the French claim to Cilicia and Syria proper, but will demur strongly to the inclusion of Palestine.

5. In reply to the stipulations made by His Majesty's Government, Russia consented to freedom of

passage for merchant shipping and freedom of transit for goods from or to non-Russian territory; agreed that the Moslem Holy Places should remain under independent Moslem rule, while thinking that the Khalifate should be separated from Turkey; and accepted, under certain conditions, the inclusion of the neutral zone in Persia in the British sphere.

6. The next step was therefore for His Majesty's Government to formulate their definite desiderata in Asiatic Turkey. In the following pages the Committee appointed by the Prime Minister to consider the nature of those desiderata have the honour to submit the conclusions they have reached.

7. It is, of course, obvious that British desiderata in Asiatic Turkey are circumscribed by those of other Powers, and that any attempt to formulate them must as far as possible be made to fit in with the known or understood aspirations of those who are our Allies to-day, but may be our competitors to-morrow.

8. France has already given a fairly clear indication of what she will claim; Russia's geographical position, accentuated by the possession of Constantinople, makes it possible to assume with some confidence the essential lines of her development in Asiatic Turkey; Italy demands a field for enterprise round Adalia; and Greece has dreams of expansion in Asia Minor, which her participation in the war may yet convert into reality.

9. On the other hand, by their terms of reference, the Committee are to a great extent freed from the necessity of taking into consideration the most serious outside limitation of all, that of Germany, since the Committee's conclusions apply only in the event of a successful conclusion of the war, which presupposes that when terms of peace with Turkey come to be discussed, Germany will not be in a position to intervene, either to assert fresh claims or to maintain her existing privileges.

10. There is a further limitation which the Committee have borne in mind, namely, the necessity of maintaining a just relation between the prospective advantages to the British Empire by a readjustment of conditions in Asiatic Turkey, and the inevitable increase of Imperial responsibility. Our Empire is wide enough already, and our task is to consolidate the possessions we already have, to make firm and lasting the position we already hold, and to pass on to those who come after an inheritance that stands four-square to the world.

11. It is then to straighten ragged edges that we have to take advantage of the present opportunity, and to assert our claim to a share in settling the destiny of Asiatic Turkey. That claim is valid because it springs from one of the cardinal principles of our policy in the East, our special and supreme position in the Persian Gulf. From that principle, and from the developments, often unconscious, of the policy necessary to maintain it, other claims and aspirations have arisen; but therein lies their justification.

12. It does not, however, appear necessary for the Committee to trace the gradual growth and development of British interests in the Persian Gulf and Asiatic Turkey. It will be sufficient for the purposes of this Report to enumerate what appear to them to be our desiderata in those regions:—

(i.) Final recognition and consolidation of our position in the Persian Gulf.

(ii.) The prevention of discrimination of all kinds against our trade throughout the territories now belonging to Turkey, and the maintenance of the existing important markets for British commerce there, or compensatory advantages for their loss.

(iii.) Fulfilment of pledges given, or under consideration, to the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammera, the Emir of Nejd (Bin Saud), the people of Basra (Persian Gulf region), Said Idriss, Imam Yahya, and Sheikh Mavia (in the Yemen); and, generally, maintenance of the assurances given to the Sherif of Mecca and the Arabs.

(iv.) Security for the development of undertakings in which we are interested, such as oil production, river navigation, and construction of irrigation works.

(v.) Development of the corn supply which an irrigated Mesopotamia is expected to provide, and of a possible field for Indian colonisation.

(vi.) Maintenance of our strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the Persian Gulf, and security of our communications, with the minimum increase of naval and military expenditure and responsibility.

(vii.) To ensure that Arabia and the Moslem Holy Places remain under independent Moslem rule. Dependent upon this, we should seek for a settlement which will appeal to, or at least not antagonise, Indian Moslem feeling, and will provide a satisfactory solution of the question of the Khalifate.

(viii.) A satisfactory solution of the Armenian problem.

(ix.) A settlement of the question of Palestine and the Holy Places of Christendom.

13. Of the above desiderata the last three may, for the moment, be set aside, as they are questions which could be discussed and settled in concert with other Powers, even were we going otherwise to disinterest ourselves entirely in Asiatic Turkey.

14. But the mere enumeration of the first six shows how the Persian Gulf and the growth of our position there dominate our policy, and compel us for good or ill to claim our share in the disintegrating Turkish Empire. We have hitherto sought to combine our Persian Gulf interests with the maintenance of Turkey; in this spirit we negotiated, just before the war, a series of agreements with Turkey and Germany, designed to save a part of what is now included among our desiderata from the advancing wave of German competition, but intended also to strengthen the economic life and prosperity of Turkey. Events, however, passed beyond our control, and now it is for us to aim for a final settlement, without the handicaps imposed upon us by the conditions under which Hakkı Pasha was able to negotiate.

15. It is comparatively easy to formulate our desiderata: it is very difficult to lay down how to shape the opportunity now at hand for attaining them. It has seemed to the Committee that any attempt to set up a system of protectorates would be destined to break down, for the rivalry of the Powers would force each of them to extend their protectorates to the limits of their neighbours' spheres, and there would be the clash and confusion of different systems of protectorate administrations with one another and with an obstructive central Turkish Government. Nor would any scheme of internationalisation seem practicable: it is a desperate remedy at best, and to extend it to large areas in Asiatic Turkey would be to invite disaster. In short, there must either be clearly defined territories, recognised as separate units, some independent, some belonging to European Powers, or the Ottoman Empire must continue, subject to certain necessary limitations. After careful study of the political, financial, commercial, and military considerations involved, the Committee see four possible solutions:—

- (A.) The limitation of Turkish sovereignty to a Turkish Kingdom in Anatolia, and the partition of the rest of the present Ottoman Empire among the various European Powers.
- (B.) Subject to certain necessary territorial exceptions, the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire as a State, nominally independent, but under effective European control, the control being exercised by individual Powers in zones of political and commercial interest.
- (C.) Subject to certain necessary territorial exceptions, the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in Asia as an independent State, in name and fact, under the same form of government and with the same rights, liabilities, and responsibilities as before the war.
- (D.) Subject to certain necessary territorial exceptions, the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire as an independent State, but the form of government to be modified by decentralisation on federal lines.

16. In the following paragraphs the Committee seek to show what is involved in each of the four courses, and what seem to them their respective advantages and defects:—

COURSE (A).—PARTITION.

17. If partition among the Powers is decided on, the first necessity is to determine the limits of the area which, on political, strategic, commercial and other considerations, His Majesty's Government would desire to annex to the British dominions.

Maps Nos. I and II.

18. When war broke out with Turkey, His Majesty's Government gave assurances to the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammerah and to the Amir of Nejd that Basra would never again be allowed to be subject to Turkish authority. Moreover, the inhabitants of the town of Basra itself had been given a formal assurance by the Viceroy of India that "the future will bring them a more benign rule" than that of the Turk. His Majesty's Government seem, therefore, committed to

Political Considerations.

some form of permanent control and occupation of Basra port and of the country from Basra to the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab. The succeeding sections, dealing with strategic and commercial considerations, will show that it is practically impossible to limit the area to be annexed to this small region; but there are also two further important political considerations, the one following from the other, to be borne in mind.

19. Under any scheme, whether of zones of influence or of partition, certain areas will be claimed and absorbed by France and Russia. Whether these areas be large or small, they will in due course follow the inevitable law and extend beyond the limits originally assigned to them, if the territory beyond their borders is desirable in itself, and is in the hands of an incapable and stagnant administration. And the expansion will continue until brought to a stop by meeting an equally, or more, efficient administration. If therefore British administration ends, say, at Kurna, the day will come when the real master of Bagdad and owner of Mesopotamia will be France or Russia, and once more the direct menace of a rival European Power will challenge our supremacy in the Persian Gulf.

20. Furthermore, in such a situation—a powerful European State controlling the riches of Mesopotamia—our position as gate-keeper at Basra becomes beset with difficulty, and sooner or later the pressure will burst through the barrier and we shall be swept aside, or have to fight to maintain a precarious foothold.

Strategic

21. The Committee have carefully considered a Note by the Viceroy, wherein his Excellency would limit the acquisition of territory to sovereign rights in the Basra vilayet, and a protectorate over Bagdad, as well as a further Note by the Political Secretary, India Office, pointing out that Basra by itself is untenable and that Bagdad commands it. They share this latter view and they agree with the conclusion arrived at that the northern limit of annexation should not be drawn south of a line from Fatha on the Tigris to Ana on the Euphrates, thus including Bagdad and the greater part of the Mesopotamian area which will eventually come under irrigation.

22. Further consideration of the military problem shewed, however, that it would not be wise or safe to stop short at the Fatha-Ana line. We cannot maintain permanently in Mesopotamia a force of such size as could successfully cope with an invasion from the north. We require, therefore, a frontier where an enemy's advance can be delayed until the arrival of reinforcements, and, in spite of the reluctance which the Committee understand is felt by the Commander-in-Chief in India to the inclusion of Mosul in the British sphere, they think that such a frontier can only be found along the ranges of hills to the north of the Mosul vilayet. Further, the possession of Mosul would meet two important requisites of a military occupation of the Bagdad and Basra vilayets. It would provide good hill stations for white troops, a certain number of whom must always be quartered in the trying climate of southern Mesopotamia, and its native Kurds and Arabs afford excellent material for

recruits. The Committee have the less hesitation in adopting this view, as they gather that the Commander-in-Chief's objections are based mainly on the demands which the occupation of Mesopotamia would be likely to make upon the military resources of India. Such hesitation would be justified if the responsibility for the military defence of Mesopotamia were to be placed wholly or mainly on India, but the Committee see no reason for this assumption.

23. In the event of an invasion of Mesopotamia by Russia, it is unlikely that India would be able to spare troops for its defence, while in such an emergency the difference between success and disaster may well lie in the rapidity with which reinforcements can reach the threatened area. From this consideration it becomes a military necessity to provide a back door into Mesopotamia from the Eastern Mediterranean. The most natural choice would apparently be Alexandretta which is the best harbour on the coast of Syria and is already connected with the Bagdad railway system. Its annexation would have the double advantage of giving us the facilities we require for reinforcing Mesopotamia from the Mediterranean, and of denying to foreign Powers the only harbour in Syria which is susceptible of being developed into a naval base. A glance at Map I, however, will show that these advantages are difficult of realisation, and that the disadvantages are very great. The French would hardly welcome a wedge of British territory, as shown on the map, cutting their own zone in half, severing its communications from north to south, and depriving them of the only good harbour in this region. But even if they did permit it our railway would be at their mercy, and would approach closer to Russian territory than is desirable. Moreover, if Alexandretta were acquired by Great Britain, France could not be refused the southern part of Syria, which would bring her frontier into Arabia, a situation which we could scarcely tolerate. In these circumstances, it appears desirable to exclude Alexandretta from the limits of British interests and to replace it by Haifa, which, though not such a good natural harbour as Alexandretta, is capable of development into a sufficiently good port, and of connection by railway with Mesopotamia.

24. From the point of view of British trade and commerce, it would be best that the whole of Asiatic Turkey should remain open, under the tariff of 15 per cent. *ad valorem*, which had been practically accepted in July last, for throughout the country British or British-Indian trade is predominant, and with increased facilities of communication and better organised administration, would naturally tend to expand. We are, however, contemplating a situation where large and important areas will be annexed by France, Russia, and Italy and possibly also by Greece, and though we may try to secure by agreement equality of treatment for a number of years, it is more prudent to assume that those areas will, to a large extent, be lost to British commerce. It becomes, therefore, of great importance to ensure that the regions left to our trade shall be extensive, capable of development, and self-supporting, and that it shall be in our power to prevent all and any unfair competition.

Commercial.

25. Considered in this light, the possession of Basra alone is of little value commercially. It is merely the entrance to Mesopotamia, of which the trade distributing centre is in Bagdad. Whoever holds Bagdad commands not only our trade with Mesopotamia, but also that with north-west Persia: with Bagdad and Basra both in our possession, Basra may develop at the expense of Bagdad, but if those places are held by different Powers it will inevitably be Basra that declines.

26. Further, the acquisition of Bagdad would also guard the chain of oil-wells along the Turco-Persian frontier, in the development of which the British Government has a large and direct interest. And oil again makes it commercially desirable for us to carry our control on to Mosul, in the vicinity of which place there are valuable wells possession of which by another Power would be prejudicial to our interests. Mosul too secures the full command of the area which will eventually come under irrigation and of the water supply for that purpose; its possession is therefore called for if we are to take full advantage of our opportunity to create a granary which should ensure an ample and unhampered supply of corn to this country.

Industrial Enterprise.

27. British industrial enterprise in Asiatic Turkey and the interests created by it are practically concentrated in the region included in the vilayets of Basra, Bagdad, and Mosul. There British enterprise has long maintained river navigation, and enlarged opportunities for it in that respect had been secured just prior to the war. British engineering firms have been engaged upon large schemes of irrigation; there are extensive oil deposits, the exploitation of which was being obtained in part for British concessionnaires; the conservancy of the Shatt-el-Arab was to be British; and by the agreement which had been negotiated with the Germans, we had secured British participation in the construction and management of the riverain ports. Elsewhere, the one considerable British interest of the kind is the Smyrna-Aidin Railway, for which an extension had been negotiated with the Turks, though it is true that schemes in which British capital was concerned were in contemplation, and in some instances had made a little progress elsewhere in Asia Minor, such as the Meander Valley irrigation scheme, some port works, and some projected railways.

Communications.

28. Commercial and strategic considerations therefore combine to make the Committee regard the vilayets of Basra, Bagdad, and the greater part of Mosul as the area of the greatest interest to Great Britain in the event of a partition of Turkey. There remains the question of communication between that area and the outside world. The Committee understand that the view still holds that India would commercially lose, and that British traders would benefit less than their European competitors, by the opening of railway communication between the Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamia. Further, the Committee believe that, provided there is no discrimination whatever, direct or indirect, against British railway-borne traffic, it is relatively unimportant, commercially speak-

ing, whether such railway communication is in our hands or not.

29. Unfortunately, it is improbable that in practice we should be able to secure absence of discrimination on foreign-owned railways. If the French lines were capably administered and were ready to co-operate in improving the general development of the country the prospects would be much easier. It would not matter to Great Britain whether goods were landed at Haifa or Tripoli or Alexandretta, so long as they arrived at their destination; but this would entail arrangements with regard to rolling-stock, harbour dues, customs, &c., and a spirit of businesslike goodwill hard to imagine, unless French concessionnaires should change their whole habit of thought. No agreements or understandings are sufficient to break through the dead weight of intrigue and incompetent pettiness which is characteristic of their methods; if, therefore, the French concessionary policy is to remain what it is, British enterprise would do well to make itself as self-contained as possible in its own sphere, and await developments. For these reasons the Committee consider that it is important to guard against discrimination and to make sure of adequate facilities by linking the railway system within the British annexed area to the Eastern Mediterranean by a British railway. As shown above, such a railway is strategically necessary in event of annexation, and they have reason to believe that it will in any event be commercially profitable. The existing cereal produce of the Sinjar and the vilayet of Mosul, regions equidistant from the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf, may supply a certain amount of freight westwards, and the imports of agricultural machinery and general goods for those districts would provide a balance of eastward traffic. Such a line would also prove attractive to pilgrims from Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, Mesopotamia, and even Bombay, as it would enable them to join the actual Haj pilgrimage at Damascus and thus perform the whole pilgrimage. In this connection it may be noted that the Hedjaz Railway, in spite of inefficient administration and large grants to keep the Bedouin quiet, shows a substantial profit from pilgrim traffic alone.

30. For these reasons the Committee consider that a British-owned railway from the Mediterranean to Mesopotamia is strategically necessary and commercially desirable. From Haifa the line would run through Mezerib* and Tadmor (Palmyra) to some point on the Euphrates such as Abu Kemal (near Deir on the map) whence there would be branches to Mosul and Bagdad. It is true that a line from Homs to Tadmor would divert much traffic to Tripoli, but competition and rate-cutting would lead to pooling the traffic, and in any case while in such an eventuality the Haifa-Euphrates line might become chiefly strategic between Mezerib and Tadmor, it would remain a business line from the Euphrates to Tadmor, and from Haifa to Mezerib.

31. The Committee therefore hold that, from all the above points of view, while it is desirable that British

* Mezerib is about 60 miles east of Haifa, at the junction of the railways from that place and Damascus.

commerce should be safeguarded in the whole of the area at present under the Ottoman flag, Great Britain has a special interest in the disposition of the territory which lies to the south of the line Haifa-Tadmor-Sinjar-Zakhu-Amadia-Rowanduz (see Map II).

The Limits of the British Area.

32. The sum of the foregoing considerations is that, under a policy of partition, British desiderata would be adequately met by the annexation of the vilayets of Basra, Bagdad, and the greater part of Mosul, with a port on the Eastern Mediterranean, at Haifa, and British railway connection between this port and the Persian Gulf.

33. Assuming that His Majesty's Government put forward this claim to their Allies, how is it likely to clash with their aspirations? We know (paragraph 4) that France has pretty definite ideas, and it would be prudent to assume that Russia, consciously or unconsciously, will seek for territorial connection between Batoum and Constantinople, together with at least an extensive hinterland round the coast from Trebizond to Sinope, while Italy has earmarked the south-west corner of Asia Minor for herself. But neither Italian nor Russian aspirations at present clash with our desiderata: it is with France that our difficulties will arise.

34. The French sphere will start, if France is to realise her claims, from Mersinn, and possibly further west, and enclose Alexandretta in a liberally defined Syria. We know that the French also include Palestine in their demands, but the Committee feel that the world-wide interests affected by the destiny of the Holy Land will not allow this. As compensation for this loss France might be invited to extend her territory eastward so as to include the Nestorian region west of Lake Urmia, where she has missionary interests. This would provide a buffer between British and Russian territory on that part of the frontier, which is the least satisfactory from a strategical point of view. The British sphere, as outlined in the preceding pages, must enclose the greater part of the three vilayets in a line which, starting from the Persian Gulf, follows the Turco-Persian boundary to opposite Rowanduz, then turns north-west past that place to Amadia, whence it runs west and south-west along the Jebel Sinjar and the River Khabur to its junction with the Euphrates.

35. Were it possible to keep the three vilayets self-contained, the boundary might at this point be continued parallel to the right bank of the Euphrates down to the Gulf, with an extension to the westward to include Nejef. We have, however, to allow for connection with the Mediterranean. To do this, the line must be continued from the junction of the Khabur and the Euphrates, south-west past Tadmor to Acre, just north of Haifa, then follow the coast as far as the boundary of Egypt, include the whole Sinai peninsula, and then run from Akaba to the Persian Gulf.

36. The political aspect of the Arab question raised by the Akaba-Persian Gulf line will be dealt with more fully later on; all that concerns us now is to outline a frontier

between the territory to be annexed by Great Britain or France and Arabia. The country through which the frontier will run is mostly desert, with no marked natural features, but a line starting from Akaba, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, running thence to Maan, on the Hedjaz Railway, thence eastwards in a northerly curve to the limits of Koweit, would correspond roughly to a fair division between Arabia proper and those Arabs who belong to the districts of Damascus and Mesopotamia.

37. The above scheme entails one serious international difficulty: it removes Palestine from the French, only to include it in the British sphere. Suggestions for the actual settlement of the intricate problem of the sacred places scarcely come within the scope of the Committee's labours, but as regards this particular difficulty they think that His Majesty's Government should be prepared to make no claim themselves to the possession of the Holy Places, and to leave their future to be decided as a separate question, in discussion with those who stand for the national and religious interests involved.

38. An examination of the above scheme of partition would not be complete without a statement of the naval and military liabilities which we should incur, if it were adopted.

39. Dealing first with the naval liabilities, it appears probable that France would sooner or later establish a naval base at Alexandretta, with perhaps a submarine and torpedo-boat station at Beirut. Italy also would be in a position to establish a naval base at Marmaris. This would add materially to our difficulties in keeping open our maritime communications in the Eastern Mediterranean in the event of war with either of these Powers, as we should have to detach naval forces to this area in order to control any hostile squadrons based on these ports. This would entail the establishment of a fortified secondary naval base at Alexandria, as well as the provision of a protected harbour for transports, and a submarine base at Haifa.

40. The military liabilities entailed by annexation would be extensive. The widely-scattered territories composing the British Empire are either insular or else are separated by sea or inhospitable tracts from the dominions of the great military powers of Europe. The isolation of India has been the keynote of our Indian policy, with the result that a moderate military establishment has hitherto been sufficient to provide for its defence and the reinforcement of its garrison.

41. The Anglo-Russian convention with regard to Persia was thought to observe this principle by maintaining the political independence of that country and by interposing between two zones of interest a neutral zone where neither Russia nor Great Britain claimed predominance. But, as matters have turned out, we have now to anticipate the possibility that the neutral zone will disappear and that the northern zone will become Russian territory. Our frontier of interest in Persia will, in that case, become conterminous with the Russian political boundary, and a serious breach will be made in our cherished policy of isolation.

The Defensive Liabilities Involved.

42. But the gravity of this change would be greatly accentuated if by our acquisition of political dominion in Mesopotamia we should find ourselves in contact there with a long line of Russian frontier. It is unnecessary to elaborate this point. We mention it to draw attention to the fact that the defence of this new territory would involve a re-examination of the postulates on which our military establishments and Imperial strategy are based.

43. With Russia as our immediate neighbour in Mesopotamia we should have to make provision for the defence of the annexed territory against a nation which put in the field in Manchuria an army exceeding three quarters of a million men. If good railway communications were provided, Russia might maintain a still larger army for the invasion of Mesopotamia.

44. The nature of the frontier proposed in this Report, which, for the most part, runs along the crests of mountain ranges, traversed by but few passes, mostly difficult, except where a belt of French territory is interposed as a buffer State, would obviate the necessity for maintaining a very large army in Mesopotamia itself. Moreover, the latent resources of this region are so great that in a few years Mesopotamia ought to be in a position to pay for its own defence. Nevertheless, it would be necessary to make extensive provision for reinforcing this territory in the event of invasion; for neglect to do so would expose us to the risk of a blow to our prestige, which might entail the loss of our eastern possessions. Further, it must be admitted that, in the event of a Franco-Russian combination against us, such as was contemplated in the decade ending in 1904, the French would be in a position to render the Haifa-Euphrates Railway valueless.

45. However, the acceptance of these possible military liabilities, in the event of our Allies insisting on a partition of the Ottoman Empire as the solution of the problem, seems the inevitable alternative to accepting the grave risk of seeing a European Power established on the Persian Gulf, an eventuality which it has hitherto been the settled aim of British policy to prevent.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Scheme (A).

46. The advantages of the partition scheme may be summed up as follows:—

(1.) Greater freedom to restore and develop the swamped and buried wealth of Mesopotamia than would be possible under a scheme of zones of interest. Though we might seem to be working purely for our own ends, we should have to find the capital, the science, and the energy from which would result a definite gain to mankind as a whole. It would be no small claim to the gratitude of posterity to have given back to cultivation 12,000,000 acres of fertile soil.

(2.) If Mesopotamia were British territory, it would in time of emergency provide a British granary which should go far to relieve us of dependence on foreign harvests.

(3.) It would give an unrestricted opening for British commerce and industry, and we could develop oilfields and establish Indian colonists with reference solely to our own interests and convenience.

(4.) It would mark a definite limit to any Russian advance southwards—even unconscious, or semi-conscious, such as is inevitable if Mesopotamia is left under a weak Government.

(5.) It would put an end, once for all, to the German dream of a high road to India from Berlin via Vienna, Sofia, Constantinople, and Bagdad.

(6.) It should form a basis for a definite and lasting settlement.

(7.) It would settle the fate of German concessions without more ado.

47. Against this, we have to set:—

(1.) The fact that any intention of the Allies to dismember most of Asiatic Turkey would mean prolonging the war far beyond the fall of Constantinople. At that moment we might be able to get a fairly satisfactory peace, but we should not get the Turks to yield Armenia, Cilicia, Syria, Mosul, and Mesopotamia, without further fighting.

(2.) The character of the war would be changed. We proclaimed at the outset that our quarrel was with the German-led Government at Constantinople, not with the Turkish people.

(3.) Indian Moslem feeling would be painfully, and possibly dangerously, affected.

(4.) We should have destroyed the political power of Islam as represented by Turkey, and at the same time, by our annexation of Mesopotamia, have made it clear to all Moslems that any hope of an Arab Khalifate acquiring material wealth and prosperity sufficient to restore a Moslem State that would count among the Governments of the world was from henceforth impossible.

(5.) What we should gain in openings for British commerce in Mesopotamia might not compensate us for the loss, sooner or later, of our existing markets in what would be French and Russian territory.

(6.) We should increase our direct responsibilities and our expenditure for defence, while at the same time offering a larger area for attack and a wider field for those who seek to weaken our prestige.

(7.) The probability that naval bases would be created by France and Italy in the territory annexed by them, to the detriment of our strategic position in the Eastern Mediterranean.

COURSE (B).—ZONES OF INTEREST.

48. The alternative (B) propounded in paragraph 15, assumes the maintenance of a Turkish Empire in Asia, wherein the Allied Powers have assigned to them certain recognised zones, each Power having in its zone an admitted priority of industrial enterprise.

49. Since British desiderata remain the same under either scheme, it is clear that the zone of interest under the second, or scheme (B), must remain much as that described in regard to scheme (A). It might at first sight seem that, as under this scheme, we should not assume direct political responsibility for the

Map No. III.

government of Mesopotamia, the strategic considerations which rendered access from the Mediterranean, and therewith large increase of territory west of the Euphrates, necessary, disappear, and we might rest content with the first frontier described in paragraphs 34 and 35, since commercial considerations may strengthen the arguments for, but do not of themselves necessitate, a trunk line from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf.

50. The Committee feel, however, that the ultimate contingency of annexation being forced on His Majesty's Government must not be lost sight of, and that it would be shortsighted to neglect now to provide the safeguards which their enquiry has convinced them can alone establish annexation on a secure basis. Furthermore, we propose and intend that in our zone of interest, British commerce and industry shall find a favourable field for expansion, and we may be sure that our Allies will deal with their zones in the same spirit. That means, in effect, that we shall find our trade hampered and eventually driven out of valuable markets where it is at present supreme, and it is therefore of the greatest importance to ensure the absence of any restraints on commercial development in our own zone. This can only be effected with certainty by holding in our own hands an approach to Mesopotamia from the west.

51. The Committee assume then that the British zone will be that described in paragraphs 34 and 35; a triangle whose base is from Akaba to the Persian Gulf, and whose sides run from Acre on the west and Basra on the east to Mosul at the apex. They further assume that the French area will be as already claimed by them; that Russia may put forward substantial pretensions in Armenia and Anatolia; and that Greece and Italy will insist on fields for enterprise in Western Asia Minor.

52. It may prove difficult to induce France and Italy to consent to abandon all territorial expansion. Russia in any case gets Constantinople; Greece, if she comes in, Smyrna; and Great Britain will retain the whole or a considerable part of the Basra vilayet. Thus the Eastern and Western gates of Turkey will be British and Russian, and it is natural to expect that France and Italy will demand their own doors with their own latch-keys. On the other hand, it was our special and recognised position in the Persian Gulf, and the necessity for us to consolidate that position, which led to the capture of Basra, and to the assurances we gave to the local chiefs and inhabitants. It is admitted that Russia's reward shall be Constantinople, and that Smyrna may have to be given to Greece. The problem to be settled by the Allies is the fate of Turkey, shorn of Constantinople, the European provinces, Basra, and possibly Smyrna, and it is reasonable to propose that, apart from the assignation of Constantinople to Russia, Basra to Great Britain, and Smyrna to Greece, the Turkish Empire should not be further dismembered, especially as France and Italy get large compensation in Europe. In that Empire, however, each Power, including Italy, has special interests in various regions, and they should communicate to one another the limits of the areas where they consider they are entitled to acquire a privileged position. Our area would be that described in paragraphs 34 and 35.

53. If our Allies are willing to entertain this proposal at all, the real difficulty will be to find the compromise between French and British aspirations. But if, as the Committee hope, we may count on Russian support in return for sympathy for Russian views in regard to Palestine, and if due weight is given to the large and fertile district which, under this course, is left available for France and French colonists, and which does not at present form part of her aspirations, the difficulty should not prove insuperable.

54. Once agreement can be reached in principle on the question of mutual recognition of zones of interest, wherein the respective Powers shall have priority in all matters of industrial enterprise, it will be necessary to lay down the terms of: (a), a treaty between Turkey and the Powers by which the former recognises the position of the Powers, and gives adequate safeguards to ensure the due execution of the measures necessary thereto; and (b), a convention between the Powers recording their rights and privileges as recognised by one another.

55. It is sufficient here to refer briefly to the general lines to be followed in order to reach these objectives. In the case of (a) the basis would be the cession by Turkey of her European, and certain portions of her Asiatic, possessions, and the continuance of her sovereignty over her other dominions, subject to conditions. The conduct of financial affairs by the Ottoman Government would be controlled as far as it affected the Allies, and preferential treatment with recognition of the interests of the Allied Powers in Turkish dominions would be provided for. Such matters as a guarantee to Christian missions and schools, and the prohibition of the importation of arms would also be dealt with. As regards (b) the convention would recognise Constantinople as a free port, and generally provide for a mutual understanding between the Powers, and respect for their several interests. The main heads suggested for these treaties will be found in more detail in Schedules I and II.

56. A third form of convention would also seem to be necessary, namely, one between the Ottoman Government and each individual Power in regard to its own zone of interest. These conventions would have to be communicated to all the Powers party to the first two conventions. In our case, such a convention would accord definite recognition to the assurances that we have given to certain Sheikhs, as stated in paragraph 18, and would provide for, and safeguard, our general interests in the British sphere. The heads of a convention with these objects in view are detailed in Schedule III.

57. There are further certain problems peculiar to this scheme which must be alluded to before any estimate of its advantages and disadvantages can be framed. These problems are concerned with the new seat of the Central Turkish Government, the measure of advice and control to be exercised over that Government, and the position of the Ottoman Bank as it would affect the British zone.

The Turkish Capital.

58. In the provisions of the conventions outlined above, no mention is made of the administrative Capital and seat of the Central Government, as this question, important though it be, is one of such intimate and domestic concern to Turkey that it can probably better be dealt with in the course of the negotiations than by inclusion in a draft treaty. From a British point of view the primary consideration is that the Capital of the Ottoman Empire shall not be situated in the zone of interest of any other Power, since, as the rulers of a larger number of Mohammedan subjects than any other nation, we cannot afford to see the Khalifate exposed to foreign influences. It is equally unlikely that the other Powers would permit the transfer of the Capital to the British zone, and there is no city in that zone to which the Turkish Government would willingly remove itself. The best solution would be to enclose the Capital in a district of limited area outside the zones of interest of the Powers. The Turkish Government would no doubt prefer some town in Anatolia, such as Eskişehir or Konia, but either of these places would be an island entirely surrounded by the Russian zone—see Map III.—and Russian influence would soon predominate, in spite of the nominal independence of the Turkish province.

59. Another possibility would be the creation of a fairly extensive Turkish zone, outside of, and entirely independent of, the foreign zones of interest. But, for the reasons given subsequently (paragraphs 62 and 63), it is not practicable for the allied Powers to leave the Central Turkish Government free from all restraint, and, even if it were, the natural result would be to leave an open field in the Capital for German intrigue and enterprise, which would thwart in every way the full development of the various zones of interest.

60. Damascus suggests itself as a possible alternative. A distinct province could be constituted there, lying between the French and British zones, and it would not be unreasonable to hope that Russia, having gained so great a prize as Constantinople, and posing as a Christian Orthodox, and not as a Moslem, Power would acquiesce in the establishment of the Capital outside her zone.

61. The great obstacle would be the Turkish Government, who would be certain to object to removal to Damascus, which is an Arab city, and would scent the danger that the existing Turkish dynasty might in a few years be supplanted by an Arab one. The Allies might, however, find a lever for imposing this condition upon the Turkish Government, who when driven out of Constantinople, must find a livelihood for the great horde of officials and their dependents who are now employed in Stamboul. Turkey in Asia will have neither funds nor work for these hangers-on, whose misery will breed endless trouble, and the Allies could guarantee the funds for pensioning them off, in return for the transfer of the seat of Government to Damascus. The Committee are well aware that this solution is problematical, but the question of the Capital is a real and practical difficulty, which must be faced if the scheme of zones of interest be adopted. It seems to them that it is essential for the success of that scheme that the Capital shall neither be

actually in the zone of any one Power, nor completely surrounded by the zone of any one Power, and the only town suitable for a capital city which fulfils those requirements seems to be Damascus.

62. In considering scheme (B), the question must arise whether some provision should not be made for securing administrative reforms in the Central Ottoman Government. The scheme would place the Powers in their several zones of interest in a position to bring about reforms in the local administration, and to secure that a proper proportion of the local revenues should be allocated to, and duly spent on, local objects. But unless they are also able to bring influence to bear on the Central Government, the development of the various zones will run the risk of being hampered by recalcitrant local officials, whom the central administration will refuse to call to order, or by financial corruption and disorder in the civil administration itself, or even by the executive control being usurped by military adventurers.

63. This certainly implies the imposition of a distinct limitation on Turkey's rights of independent sovereignty, but the Allies, by allotting to themselves certain zones of interest, pledge themselves, in the eyes of the world and, more especially, of the inhabitants of those zones, to something better than a continuance of Turkish maladministration. The zones cannot be treated merely as private preserves for concession-hunters, whose interests will be pushed by an energetic Ambassador and an enterprising bank at the Turkish capital. They must mean, if they are to have any justification, that the welfare of their inhabitants shall progress *pari passu* with their material development, and for this it is essential to devise some restraint upon obstruction and maladministration at the seat of Government.

64. The form of such restraint is not easy to prescribe. International bodies are normally cumbrous and discordant in their working and yet some form of international body there may have to be, in order to ensure that when advice has to be tendered or a demand for action formulated, the Turkish Government may realise that it is the Powers speaking as a whole, and may not be able to play off one Power against another *ad infinitum*. It will probably be necessary to constitute a permanent international Board, on which Turkish representatives would also sit. The members of this Board could deal with minor cases direct with the various departments concerned, but, when they spoke collectively to the Turkish Government, would have the right by treaty to insist that effect be given to their demands.

65. The question of the position of the Ottoman Bank in the British sphere requires special consideration. The Ottoman Bank, which is nominally Anglo-French as far as Constantinople is concerned, is in reality French. Its present position is that it has an open credit of 1,500,000*l.* for the Ottoman Imperial Government. It handles all Imperial loans. It transacts a good deal of Government business in the provinces, including work belonging to the Public Debt, and, besides ordinary banking, it has a system of advances on goods to local merchants, known as "avances sur

*Advice to the Central
Government.*

*Position of the Ottoman
Bank.*

marchandises." Its interests in French ventures are considerable, such as investments in the Régie Centrale, Tobacco Régie, &c.

66. It is in fact a combination of the State Bank of Turkey and a bank such as the Deutsche Bank, and in its latter capacity we shall find firmly established in the British zone an institution which may not fit in with our policy, and which will certainly pursue a financial and industrial policy of its own, using for that purpose its strong position with the Central Government. On the other hand, Turkey still existing as the Sovereign Power in the British zone, it will be difficult to oust the Ottoman Bank from its recognised position as agent for Turkish Government business, and, indeed, to do so may, besides rousing determined French opposition, dislocate the financial administration of Turkey. Perhaps the solution will be to insist that in the British zone the Ottoman Bank shall confine its operations solely to its work as a Government agent, and to employ for industrial and commercial purposes a British bank, such as the Eastern Bank of India, which is now already established at Basra.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Scheme (B).

67. The advantages and disadvantages of the scheme of zones of interest are summarised in the succeeding paragraphs, but any consideration of the scheme must also take into account the handicap under which it labours from the start by the necessity to impose distinct and effective limitations on Turkish sovereignty, if it is to be adopted. The scheme would be far more attractive if Turkey could be trusted ever so little to reform her habits, but not only is that unthinkable, but it must be remembered that with the loss of Constantinople the authority of the Ottoman Government will be largely diminished. There is no town with the prestige and authority of Stamboul. When the lawless tribes of Asia Minor and Kurdistan see the Sublime Porte in being, within reach of their mountain strongholds, they will lose much of what little respect is left for the Ministers of the Sultan. Familiarity may have its proverbial consequence, and that, combined with an influx of starving officials, may easily lead to a condition of anarchy. The Turkish Government will need outside support, and without firm support it will be unable to stand at all.

68. The advantages of the scheme may be said to be:—

(i.) The plan might be adopted as a basis for negotiation immediately on the fall of Constantinople, and our forces freed for action against our enemies elsewhere.

(ii.) The machinery of government could, with comparatively little alteration, continue to operate without any breach of continuity. The existing forms could be adapted to meet changed circumstances where necessary.

(iii.) Strategic considerations, especially the creation and establishment of naval bases, need not preoccupy us.

(iv.) It is more consistent with our original attitude in regard to the war, and it would leave an outwardly independent Moslem State. It should therefore tend to soothe apprehension in India.

(v.) It affords all those economic advantages that

would result from annexation, though possibly to a slightly smaller extent, and in addition offers some prospect of retaining our existing markets in other parts of Asiatic Turkey.

69. On the other hand, there are the following disadvantages :—

(i.) The danger of friction between two or more Powers from their loosely defined rights; such friction might lead to a general conflagration.

(ii.) The danger of one Power converting its interest, at a moment of international tension elsewhere, into definite occupation and thus precipitating a widespread catastrophe.

(iii.) The collapse of the scheme in the event of war between any two of the Powers parties to it.

(iv.) The weakness inherent in an arrangement which, whatever our own view of it, would probably be regarded by the other Powers as merely provisional and temporary, until opportunity offered for the next step—a tendency which we should have continually to labour to oppose.

(v.) The ineffective nature of Turkish Government, which might force us into :—

(a.) Increasing interference in local administration, and thereby gradual acceptance of the burden of a protectorate, with neither authority nor recognised position;

(b.) A strained position with France or Russia, or possibly both, such as has been developing between Russia and ourselves in Persia;

(c.) Active intervention on behalf of either Turk or Arab against the other.

(vi.) The difficulty of maintaining in practice what amounts to a system of excluding the commerce and enterprise of all nations except that of the allied Powers.

COURSE (C).—THE MAINTENANCE OF AN INDEPENDENT OTTOMAN EMPIRE ORGANISED AS AT PRESENT.

Map No. IV.

70. Under this scheme Turkey would continue as an independent Empire outside of Europe on some such terms as the following :—

(1.) That Turkey cedes to Russia Constantinople and the rest of its European territory, except such portion as may be ceded to Bulgaria, and the peninsula which separates the Gulf of Ismid from the Black Sea.

(2.) That in certain contingencies Turkey cedes to Greece Smyrna and a suitable hinterland.

(3.) That Turkey cedes to Great Britain the whole or part of the Basra vilayet.

(4.) That Turkey recognises the independence of the Sheikh of Koweit and certain Arab chiefs to whom Great Britain has given assurances to this effect.

(5.) That Turkey agrees to accept such modifications of the Bagdad Railway agreement as may be arrived at subsequently between Germany and the Allies.

(6.) That Turkey agrees to apply an Armenian reform scheme on the lines of that adopted last year, but suspended owing to the war.

(7.) That Turkey agrees to complete and ratify the agreements negotiated with Great Britain before the war.

with respect to railway discrimination, river navigation conservancy, irrigation works, industrial and other claims, and other matters, subject to such modifications as may flow from the war.

(8.) That, with the exception of the above, the sovereign rights, obligations, and responsibilities of Turkey remain as before the war.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Scheme (C).

71. The advantages of the above scheme are as follows:—

(a.) Owing to its comparative simplicity it should render possible the conclusion of a separate peace with Turkey with less discussion and loss of time than would be required in the case of the other schemes. Turkey would be completely eliminated from the field of warlike operations, and the final peace negotiations would be relieved of the consideration of her affairs, since the Bagdad Railway concession, which includes practically all German minor concessions, would be merely subject for discussion between the Allies and Germany, the position of Turkey being already recognised.

(b.) Great Britain would appear to realise, for the present at any rate, almost the whole of the desiderata enumerated in paragraph 12 of this Report.

(c.) As regards Russia, her immediate desires would be realised to the full: she would obtain Constantinople, and the Armenian question would be dealt with in a manner which she has already accepted.

(d.) As regards France, her numerous concessions in Palestine, Syria, Armenia, and Anatolia, her interest in the Ottoman Bank, the Régie, and the Public Debt, the Bagdad Railway, the Trans-Persian Railway (*Société d'Etudes*), her financial attachment to Russia, and the immense advantages conceded to her under the loan of the 15th April, 1914, would all tend to make such a settlement highly satisfactory. Her position in the Ottoman dominions under such an agreement would be better than under any arrangement of spheres, as it would assure to her a predominant share of enterprise throughout the Empire, except to some extent in the region covered by the agreements contemplated in paragraph 70 (7). Moreover, owing to the close relationship of French to Russian finance, it is to be anticipated that the financial clearing-house of Turkey would be still at Constantinople, from which point of vantage the influence of the French financiers of Pera and Galata would remain as before.

(e.) As regards Greece, her aspirations would be realised as fully as she could hope.

72. At first sight it would appear that this scheme would meet our requirements and save a great deal of trouble, but on further examination it will be found that this is not the case. It is unfortunate that the difficulties of this alternative are chiefly British difficulties, and, moreover, are likely to be more appreciable to the next generation than to this one. The question is too complex to permit of a crisp list of disadvantages being drawn up, and can only be criticised in the light of analysis.

73. The first outstanding factor arising out of this agreement would be the political and financial status of Turkey. The Ottoman Government would have to found

a new Capital and to create a new centre of administration. Unless all indications are false, or unless outside pressure is exerted, that Capital would be somewhere in Anatolia, hemmed in between Constantinople in the hands of Russia, and Armenia where Russia's influences must inevitably predominate. Turkey would thus become politically Russia's vassal: she could never afford to act contrary to Russian desires, nor to adopt an internal or external policy of which Russia disapproved. The whole of the littoral from Kum Kale to Trebizond would be at Russia's mercy. The Armenian administration would be whatever Russia chose; it would be pro-Turkish when Russia desired to check Armenian revolutionary activity, or pro-Armenian when Russia wished to curb Turkish policy.

74. As regards France, Turkey would be as much a financial vassal to her as she would be politically to Russia. The existing French concessions would probably be exploited to the limit of the interpretation of the clauses relating to guarantees, the terms of the agreement over the last great French loan would be rigorously applied, and fresh concessions and guarantees would be obtained. No matter what the issue might be of the European war, short of the Allies submitting to German terms, France would have an equal or preponderating voice in the management and exploitation of the Bagdad Railway.

75. Thus, just as Russia's word would be law in Turkey politically, the word of French financial groups would be final in all matters regarding exploitation and enterprise. This situation is one which, so far as Great Britain is concerned, is, if possible, to be avoided. Great Britain cannot co-operate with nor yet compete with the French financial policy, nor the Russian political policy; she cannot descend into the labyrinth of Levantine finance and support concession-hunters by diplomatic and even military pressure as France does, nor can she maintain relations with agents and political societies as Russia does; it is not in consonance with British policy, and in Turkey these are the only means by which political or financial power is to be achieved or maintained. Thus from the beginning we are as a nation at a disadvantage. Commercially we may hold our own, but our trade will have to fight a long battle with the various interests which will control the enterprise and development of the Empire. Sooner or later, unless spheres be defined, the development of Turkey will probably bring us into opposition with France or Russia.

76. Meanwhile, it must not be forgotten that both Turkey and Germany are not going to forgive us for our part in the war. Though Turkey may be the vassal of Russia in effect, it is quite possible for a vassal, particularly a client-vassal, to foster ill-feeling between a patron he dislikes and an enemy on whom he desires to be revenged. Germany, no matter how she may be defeated in this war, is still going to have a commercial and financial existence, and it may be quite possible for her to re-establish her influence in Turkey under what might appear to be French auspices. The attitude of the French financiers to the Bagdad Railway is too

plain for such a possibility to be lightly dismissed. We have therefore to consider that two active influences will be constantly at work to promote suspicion and misunderstanding between ourselves and our Allies. The Turks will foster ill-feeling between us and Russia, the Germans through finance between us and France.

77. In these circumstances, even the material advantages which we should seek to secure to Great Britain by the completion and ratification of the various agreements made with Hakki Pasha in 1913-14 might be difficult to realise. These agreements were based on the hypothesis that both Turkey and Germany would carry them out in a friendly spirit. From Turkey but little goodwill can be expected for years to come, and France, who will probably step into Germany's place in these agreements, cannot be counted on for cordial co-operation.

78. Other opportunities for Turco-German intrigue will be offered by our agreements with the Arab chiefs; by the nebulous position of the Armenian question; by the certain retention in the Ottoman family of the Khalifate, which will be a rallying point for disaffection in Egypt and India; and by the weakness of our position at Basra, to which the Turkish army may become a formidable menace.

79. Lastly, it is not in the nature of things for Turkey to proceed on an even and progressive path; debts, massacres, rebellions, and revolutions will provoke crises in the future as in the past, and once again when the moment is ripe the question of partition will arise, and we may be confronted with the alternative of having to oppose our present Allies or endanger our position in the Persian Gulf. In event of such a crisis, the policy of allowing things to drift may have landed us in an unfavourable situation. Railway and other concessions may have ousted us from all claim to any territory, political propaganda may have sapped our influence with the population, and we may be forced to yield without any possibility of resistance. In coming to a decision on this grave question we must take certain considerations into account. Without any desire for fresh responsibilities or encumbrances, we have to face the fact that now is an opportunity of settling once for all our position on the Persian Gulf, and that if we miss it now we miss it at the initiation of a new era, which must differ strategically and politically from anything that has existed in the past.

80. Under a scheme either of zones of interest or partition we shall stand square with our Allies, with instruments we can adhere to, boundaries we can see, and interests we can respect, and consequently we shall be able to unite with them in a co-operative policy with permanent purpose and unanimity. Under the agreement now under consideration we should be at the mercy of every wind that blows, we should have nothing to guide us or our Allies except the caprices of financiers and go-betweens, and we should for ever be condemned to trim and tack according to the varying nature of the situation, and give our present enemies a fresh opportunity to promote disintegration and disunion among the Allies.

COURSE (D).—MAINTENANCE OF AN INDEPENDENT OTTOMAN EMPIRE WITH A DECENTRALISED SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION.

Map No. V.

81. There is, however, a development of the preceding plan which, subject to the maintenance of the conditions laid down in paragraph 70, would, in the opinion of the Committee, offer many of the advantages of that scheme, but at the same time obviate some of its dangers and difficulties. Turkey in Asia falls ethnographically and historically into five great provinces—Anatolia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine, and Irak-Jazirah (see Map V). The Committee exclude Arabia, as its circumstances are peculiar, and it will require separate treatment. The Turkish Empire is about to lose the centre of administration, whence the affairs of these territories have been directed or misdirected for centuries, and a new centre will have to be created, without the prestige and traditions of Stamboul. The moment is therefore favourable to strengthen the local administrations, to free them for the vampire-hold of the metropolis, to give them a chance to foster and develop their own resources.

82. It may be unusual for nations in making terms of peace with an enemy to impose stipulations with regard to the form of government which the enemy State shall adopt, but in making peace with Turkey the Allies are in an unprecedented position. One of the terms of peace is *ex hypothesi* that Constantinople shall change hands; thus the whole engine of Ottoman Government is overturned at the very outset. If the Ottoman Empire is to continue it is therefore necessary to replace the centralised machine which has been destroyed by something else.

83. Now Turkey has hitherto imposed on a heterogeneous collection of peoples a uniform rule which has been centralised at Constantinople, whereas, since the reforms of Sultan Mahmud the Powers of Europe have consistently endeavoured to ameliorate the evils of Turkish rule by securing, or attempting to secure, some form of local administration in harmony with local conditions in the Lebanon, Armenia, Samos, and Macedonia.

84. Thus the idea of decentralisation is no novelty to the various inhabitants of Turkey, while the Allies themselves and the various Ottoman peoples have suffered from the results of a highly centralised system, which has enabled a small party of individuals to engross the whole power of the Empire in their hands, and, irrespective of the wishes of the dynasty or its subjects, place the military resources of the State at the disposal of Germany. The Allies may therefore fairly claim to safeguard both themselves and the Ottoman peoples from a recurrence of these evils.

85. This could perhaps be achieved by stipulating in the terms of peace that the Ottoman Government adopt a measure of devolution which would satisfy the aspirations of the Arabs and Armenians to have a voice in the administration of their immediate affairs, and at the same time put an end to the dangers of centralisation.

86. Of the five great provinces or Ayalets, Anatolia represents the territory of the pure Turk, Armenia might possibly be subdivided into Armenia proper and Kurdistan, and the remaining three regions are all Arab, though each region has its own characteristics, which give it an individuality of its own. These Ayalets lend themselves naturally to the establishment within their borders of a form of local government on some such lines as are described in more detail in Schedule IV of this Report, and there is no inherent obstacle to our stipulating, as a condition of peace, for the grant of local administrative powers. The scheme must, however, be put before the Sublime Porte cut and dried, with a certain amount of detailed elaboration, since in this matter details are of essential importance; a mere agreement with the Ottoman Government to grant some form of autonomy in local affairs would be worthless owing to the capacity of Turkish officials for delay, prevarication, and bad faith.

87. Such a scheme leaves the way open for future possible developments without committing Great Britain to actual steps. It is in harmony with the aspirations of large sections of Ottoman subjects in all regions. In the event of its failing there is always a good chance of there arising several autonomous States, Turkey Proper in Anatolia, an Armenian and an Arab federation, under a nominal suzerainty of the Sultan. And, in the worst event, Great Britain will still have time to consider her position and to obtain a commercial and strategic frontier. It will be noticed that Ayalets 4 and 5 correspond with the areas allotted to Great Britain under partition or zones of interest, and that Ayalet 3 includes the greater part of what has been taken as the special French sphere. We are thus favourably placed, in the event of the complete breakdown of the scheme, for securing our political and commercial interests, and indeed there seems no valid reason why the division of Turkey into these Ayalets need necessarily preclude an understanding among the Allies as to the areas in which each of them claims to have special interests.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Scheme (D).

88. The advantages of this scheme, if it could be adopted by the Allies, are considerable, and to Great Britain they are of especial benefit. They may be enumerated as follows:—

(1.) If there is any vitality in the Ottoman Empire and any possibility of its continuance except as an international fiction, the adoption of this scheme would give the peoples of that Empire a full and rational opportunity of helping themselves by freeing them from the distant but powerful tyranny under which they have hitherto suffered.

(2.) The scheme is in consonance with the political theories of the Allies, and would meet a hope long cherished by both Arabs and Armenians.

(3.) If the Imperial machine prove unworkable, there would still remain the nucleus of future independent Turkish, Armenian and Arab States.

(4.) By granting local autonomy in Palestine the question of the Holy Places would be left in an unprejudiced position.

(5.) This scheme promises Great Britain one especial advantage, since it would enable His Majesty's Govern-

ment to avoid assuming any immediate military responsibility without in any way compromising Great Britain's position in event of it being necessary to assume such responsibility at a later date. Thus presuming that the scheme is successful, and that the Ottoman Empire endures, beyond developing our enterprise in Ayalets 4 and 5 and advancing our trade interests in those regions, we should be freed from all military charges; on the other hand, supposing that the Ottoman Empire falls to pieces at any time, we should still be able to pursue our policy with regard to Ayalets 4 and 5; we might declare them independent States under our protection, or annex them, or declare them to be our sphere of influence in a divided Ottoman Empire, according to the circumstances.

(6.) It may further turn out that the people of Basra, given an opportunity of forming part of a locally administered district composed of the three vilayets, may prefer this to remaining under British rule. Given that adequate safeguards for our own direct interests and for those of Koweit, Mohammera, and Bin Saud, can be secured—and there is no patent reason why this should not be so—it might no longer be necessary for us to assume the responsibility entailed by the permanent occupation of Basra. This question is, however, one which primarily affects the Government of India, with whom it would rest to say whether they would be prepared to risk what might amount to little more than substituting, as far as Basra is concerned, the intrigues of a local Mesopotamian administration for those of the Turkish Imperial Government.

89. The disadvantages of this scheme are not direct and obvious; they reside rather in the practical obstacles which the scheme may encounter, first among the Allies, then from the Turkish Government and Turkish obstruction, and lastly, owing to the difficulty of getting the local Governments started in the various Ayalets.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS COMMON TO THE FOUR SCHEMES.

90. There remain for consideration those questions which were included in paragraph 12 among our desiderata, but which require settlement whatever may be the ultimate fate of Turkey in Asia.

Arabia.

91. The first of these is the position of Arabia. Arrangements as regards the status of Arabia were included in the settlement with Turkey rendered abortive by the outbreak of war. If these arrangements had been carried out, one of the results would have been that Turkey would have recognised the south-eastern portions of Arabia as shown in map VI as outside Turkish territory, while we should have admitted the remainder of Arabia to be part of Turkish territory, subject to certain stipulations as regards Koweit. Since that time, however, we have entered into, and in some cases completed, negotiations with several of the Chiefs in what was to have been the Turkish area, including the Sheikh of Koweit, the Amir of Nejd (Bin Saud), the Sheikh of Mavia, Said Idriss, and the Grand Sherif of Mecca. These negotiations

vary in detail, but they have this much in common that in every case they offer a guarantee of independence in some form or another as a return for effective or successful support in the war against Turkey. It still remains to be seen in some cases whether the Chiefs will fulfil their part of the bargain.

92. It must be confessed that, in the absence of any central or predominant Government or chief in Arabia, and of the hesitation of the Arabs to meet the advances of His Majesty's Government and proclaim their own independence, it is not easy to give any more practical proofs of our friendliness than we have already done. On the other hand, it seems undesirable to leave things as they are, for shadowy though Turkish suzerainty may have been, yet there was hardly an Arab chief or tribe who did not, at some time or other, acknowledge its existence in return for substantial help against the local Arab enemy, and therefore the Ottoman Government can still plausibly claim the lordship of Arabia and all that that implies.

93. In seeking a solution of the problem, the following British desiderata in Arabia must be kept in view:—

(1.) To fulfil our undertakings with such of the Chiefs as shall have responded to our advances.

(2.) That there shall be peace in the Persian Gulf, to ensure which the Power or Powers in the Arabian hinterland must be friendly to us.

(3.) That the thoroughfare of the Red Sea should be kept open, to ensure which no potential hostile Power should be allowed to acquire a naval base on the Arabian coast or islands.

(4.) That the arms traffic should be stopped.

(5.) That Koweit and the British area and sphere of interest in Mesopotamia should be secured against infringement from Central Arabia.

94. One method of achieving this would be to place the whole of Arabia under a British protectorate or to make it a British sphere of influence, though it would be of a different kind from that contemplated elsewhere, and of a purely negative character, without administrative interference. This, however, appears inconsistent with the undertaking referred to in paragraph 3 of this report—that in all circumstances Arabia and the Moslem Holy Places should remain under independent Moslem rule. In the circumstances, the Committee consider that our desiderata will best be realised by stipulating that Turkey should recognise the independence of the territories comprising the kaza of Koweit and the sanjak of Nejd, withdraw all its troops from Arabia, and undertake, in accordance with a scheme which the Allied Powers will propose for acceptance, to grant complete administrative autonomy to the chiefs and States in such other parts of Arabia as may be recognised to be under Turkish sovereignty, and to abstain from all interference in their external and internal affairs. We should also require Turkey to guarantee administrative autonomy to the district containing the Shi-ite shrines of Kerbela and Nejef.

Armenia.

95. A large section of public opinion in this country will expect and require that the treaty of peace with

Turkey will include a settlement of the Armenian question. The Committee do not consider that they are either desired or qualified to put forward suggestions on this subject; indeed, it is possible that little more will be necessary than an amended form of the plan of inspectors-general, which was on the point of being put into practice when the war began, or the question may solve itself by Armenia becoming a Russian possession. But the Committee think it right to note that some settlement must be included in the terms of peace.

Palestine.

96. Still less do the Committee desire to offer suggestions about the future destiny of Palestine, but since that territory has been included within the geographical limits assigned to the British sphere in the two schemes, of partition, and of zones of interest, they desire to repeat that they see no reason why the sacred places of Palestine should not be dealt with as a separate question. They have felt free to deliberate on the assumption that the French claim will be rejected, since they are convinced that the forces opposed are too great for France ever to make that claim good, but for the same reason they consider that it will be idle for His Majesty's Government to claim the retention of Palestine in their sphere. Palestine must be recognised as a country whose destiny must be the subject of special negotiations, in which both belligerents and neutrals are alike interested.

CONCLUSIONS.

97. For over 100 years there has been one constant phenomenon in the political history of Europe. Dynasties have come and gone, States have expanded or been absorbed, boundaries have shifted backwards and forwards, but steadily, inevitably, whether as the result of war or of a peace congress, Turkey has lost territory in Europe: the reforms of Mahmûd II, the efforts of Abdul Mejid to continue them, the diplomatic skill of Abdul Hamid were alike unavailing to arrest the process, and, under Mohammed V, the Turk is being driven from his last foothold on this side of the Bosphorus.

98. So long as the Turk remained in Europe no permanent settlement was possible, but it is possible to hope that with his disappearance from this continent a final and stable situation may be achieved. The Committee have therefore sought for a solution which, while securing the vital interests of Great Britain, will give to Turkey in Asia some prospect of a permanent existence. They feel that the best chance of this lies in the adoption of the scheme of decentralisation (D). Partition scheme (A) reduces Turkey to a petty kingdom in Anatolia, and zones of interest (scheme (B)) require for their safe and successful working an assumption of authority by the Powers which would render the independence of Turkey a shadow of a name; while to leave the Ottoman Empire, organised as at present, with its centralised Government (scheme (C)), would be fraught with the gravest danger, both political and economic, to the future interests of Great Britain.

99. The conclusion of the Committee is then that decentralisation, if attainable on the lines indicated in this Report, offers on the whole the best solution, in the interests both of Turkey and Great Britain: that zones of interest are preferable to partition: and that the suggestion for the continuance of the Ottoman Empire, constituted as it is to-day, has nothing to recommend it beyond its deceptive appearance of simplicity.

100. The deliberations of the Committee have proceeded on the assumption of a successful conclusion of the war against Turkey and Germany; it is, however, conceivable that the war may reach a stage in which an otherwise desirable general peace could be obtained which would leave Germany with some of her rights in Turkey intact. In such a case the views expressed by the Committee might have to be reconsidered, but they are of opinion that in any event it is desirable—

(i.) That the special interests of Great Britain in all future and existing enterprises in the region to the south of the line Haifa-Rowanduz should be formally recognised by the Treaty Powers;

(ii.) That as a minimum of our demands in the peace negotiations with Germany, Great Britain should stipulate for the cessation of all German activity south of that line, and for such modifications of the Bagdad Railway agreement as will secure to Great Britain the control over its concessions within the aforesaid region;

(iii.) That Turkey should accept the following desiderata:—

Recognition and consolidation of our position in the Persian Gulf, maintenance of markets for British produce, no discrimination on railways, fulfilment of our pledges to Koweit, Mohammerna, &c., and security for interests already acquired, especially irrigation works and navigation of the Shatt-el-Arab and the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates.

(Signed) MAURICE DE BUNSEN, *Chairman*,
GEORGE R. CLERK.
T. W. HOLDERNESS.
H. B. JACKSON
CHAS. E. CALLWELL, M.-G.
H. LLEWELLYN SMITH.

M. P. A. HANKEY, *Secretary*.
WALFORD SELBY, *Assist. Secretary*.
W. DALLY JONES, *Assist. Secretary*.

June 30, 1915.

Note.—Lieut.-Col. Sir M. Sykes was unable to append his signature, owing to absence abroad, but had previously expressed his concurrence with the Report.

SCHEDULE I.

HEADS OF TREATY BETWEEN TURKEY AND THE ALLIED
POWERS.

(Under Scheme (B).)

(1.) Turkey to cede its European possessions (except such portion as may be ceded to Bulgaria) and a strip on the Asiatic side of the Bosphorus to Russia, and the vilayet of Basra (or alternatively a specified part of this vilayet) to Great Britain. To recognise the independence of the territories comprising the kaza of Koweit and the sanjak of Nejd, to withdraw all its troops from Arabia, and to undertake, in accordance with a scheme which the Allied Powers will propose for acceptance, to grant complete administrative autonomy to the chiefs and States in such other parts of Arabia as may be recognised to be under Turkish sovereignty, and to abstain from all interference in their external and internal affairs; also to guarantee administrative autonomy to the district containing the Shiite shrines of Kerbela and Nejef.

(2.) The sovereignty of Turkey over all its other dominions to remain, but to be exercised in accordance with the present convention and subject to the limitations of the Capitulations, until the Powers are satisfied that they can be abolished.

(3.) Each of the Allied Powers to be guaranteed throughout Turkey perpetual most-favoured-nation treatment in the matter of customs duties on their merchandise, and both most-favoured-nation and national treatment in all other matters that concern commerce, industry, shipping, and navigation, including taxes, dues, and charges, both central and local, and railway and steamboat rates and facilities.

(4.) Import duties at rates not exceeding 15 per cent. *ad valorem* (or the equivalent in specific duties according to a tariff to be settled by mutual agreement hereafter) to be levied under the supervision of the Ottoman Debt Commission, and the net proceeds of the duties after providing for the amount due to the Commission to be paid over by them to the central and local governments in proportions to be determined hereafter by agreement with the Allied Powers.

(5.) The Turkish Government to recognise that each of the three Allied Powers possesses special interests within certain parts of the Turkish dominions, the boundaries of which are shown on the annexed map.

(6.) The Turkish Government to undertake that, within the sphere of interest of each Power, it will cede no territory and alienate no sovereign rights, except with the consent of that Power.

(7.) Subject to the overriding provisions of Article 3, the Turkish Government undertakes that, within the sphere of interest of each Power, it will appoint no foreign official except with the consent of that Power, and will act on the advice of high officers appointed on the recommendation of that Power (and irremovable, except with its consent) in all matters concerning the financial, industrial, and commercial development of the area (including such matters as transport, conservancy, irrigation, concessions, public contracts, and local taxation) and the administration of secular justice and police.

(8.) Within [6] months from the conclusion of peace the Turkish Government will notify to the Allied Powers all the valid concessions, contracts, and permits affecting their respective spheres of interest which have been already granted to any foreign person, firm, company, or group (including Turkish companies or groups under foreign control).

The Powers shall not be bound to take into consideration any concessions, contracts, and permits, except those notified in accordance with the provisions of this article.

Within [12] months from the receipt of this information the Power in question will notify the Turkish Government which, if any, of these concessions, contracts, or permits, other than those held by nationals of one of the Allied Powers, it requires to be cancelled or modified by substituting its own control for that of the foreign nationality. The Turkish Government shall within [6] months give effect to these requirements on equitable terms as to compensation to be settled hereafter.

(9.) Christian missions and schools to be guaranteed the possession of their rights and privileges and their status to be recognised.

(10.) The right of subjects of the Allied Powers and their protected persons to own land within their respective spheres of influence to be recognised.

(11.) The Ottoman Government to prohibit the importation of arms and ammunition.

SCHEDULE II.

HEADS OF CONVENTION AMONG ALLIED POWERS.

(Under Scheme (B).)

(1.) Constantinople shall be a free port.

(2.) The customs duties on goods imported into territories ceded by Turkey shall not be higher or other than those of the Turkish tariff for the time being.

(3.) Within the territories ceded to any of the Allied Powers, the other Allied Powers shall enjoy complete and unconditional most-favoured-nation treatment as regards customs duties, and national treatment in all other matters relating to commerce, industry, navigation, taxation, charges, and transport facilities.

There shall be complete freedom from transit duties, and suitable facilities for transshipment and *entrepôt* trade.

(4.) If complaint is made by one of the Allied Powers that the principle of equal treatment laid down in Article 3 of the joint Treaty with Turkey is being infringed, owing to the action of any of the high officers appointed on the recommendation of another of the Powers, the latter Power will use its influence to secure an equitable adjustment, and if the question cannot be settled by arrangement, recourse will be had to arbitration.

(5.) Each of the Allied Powers agrees to recognise and support all valid concessions, contracts, and permits already granted to nationals of any of the other Allied Powers within its sphere of interest. Lists of such arrangements to be interchanged, and any difference arising under this undertaking to be settled by arbitration.

Nevertheless, each Power reserves the right within its sphere of interest to expropriate the holders of any concessions, contracts, or permits on giving twelve months' notice, and paying such compensation as, in default of agreement, shall be settled by arbitration.

Similarly, the holder of any such concession, contract, or permit can, by giving twelve months' notice within [5] years after the conclusion of peace, require the Power in whose sphere of interest it is situated to expropriate him on the above terms.

(6.) None of the Allied Powers will, without the consent of the others, acquire or occupy any additional territory, or increase the area of its sphere of interest, in Turkey.

(7.) The settlement of questions of schools and missions.

(8.) The Powers interested to bind themselves to use their influence to secure the enforcement of the prohibition of the importation of arms and ammunition rigidly in their several spheres.

SCHEDULE III.

HEADS OF CONVENTION BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT.

(Under Scheme (B).)

(1.) Recognition of assurances given by His Majesty's Government to Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammedah, Bin Saud, Mavia, Saïd Idriss, and others, such as the Imam Yahya, with whom we may come to an understanding in the course of the war.

(2.) No concessions to be granted, either to British subjects or foreigners, except in agreement with His Majesty's Government.

(3.) The British conservancy of the Shatt-el-Arab to be responsible for the conservancy of the Tigris and Euphrates, with, possibly, a Turkish assessor.

(4.) An Anglo-Turkish Department, under a British chairman, to superintend irrigation and agriculture.

(5.) Troops of the Ottoman Government stationed in the British sphere to be, as far as possible, locally recruited, and the number limited by agreement with the British Government.

(6.) The right to station consular guards at British consulates, and to maintain stationnaires and necessary tenders at Bagdad and Mosul, and the right of these vessels to navigate the rivers freely, to be recognised.

SCHEDULE IV.

OUTLINE OF SYSTEM OF OTTOMAN GOVERNMENT
REORGANISATION.

(Under Scheme D.)

(1.) That henceforth there shall be complete severance between local and Imperial affairs.

(2.) That the Imperial Government shall confine itself to the following administrations :—

Customs.
Land Tax.
Sheep Tax.
Income Tax.
Railways (trunk).
Army (active).
Posts and Telegraphs.
High Courts of Judicature.
Foreign Relations.

(3.) That for the purpose of local administration the Empire shall be separated into five "Ayalets," or regions (see Map V) :—

1. Anatolia.
2. Armenia.
3. Syria.
4. Palestine.
5. Irak-Jazirah.

(4.) That the Ayalet administrations shall be responsible for :—

*Gendarmerie.
Lower Courts of Judicature.
Local Militia.
Evcaf.
Tithes.
Education.
Roads.
Mines (concessions).
Forests (concessions).
Branch railways.
Irrigation.
Agriculture.

(5.) That the system of local Government, with the exception of Armenia, should be as follows :—

(a.) That each region should have a Governor-General appointed by the Imperial Government (if possible, a member of the Imperial House).

(b.) That each region as regards local affairs mentioned in clause 3 should be governed by an elected assembly, "Medjliss," which should be empowered to administer and control local business. That the Medjliss should appoint Heads of Departments who would form a Cabinet on whose advice the Governor would act.

(c.) That, subject to due safeguards for foreign interests, provision be made to enable the Heads of Departments to employ foreign advisers without reference to the Imperial Government.

(d.) That Valis, Mutessarifs, and Kaimakams should

be appointed by the Imperial Government, but it should be within the power of the local Government to dismiss them.

(e.) That it should be within the power of the local Government to reduce or increase the number of functionaries in the region.

(f.) That it should be within the power of the local Government to define the territorial subdivisions within the boundaries of the local Government.

(g.) The administration of Imperial Civil Departments would rest with the Governor-General, and he should be provided with a staff for the purpose. These could be organised as are now the Régie and the Ottoman Public Debt. They would fall into three Departments:—

1. The three Imperial Taxes.
2. The Customs.
3. The Posts and Telegraphs.

(h.) The Army would have to be reorganised on a territorial basis, and local garrisons should be locally recruited. For the purpose of maintaining order, the garrison would be at the disposal of the Governor-General.

(6.) With regard to Armenia, a provisional administration would be necessary on the lines of the reform adopted in 1914, and a mixed commission should be appointed for the purpose of elaborating a permanent local administration for that Ayalet.

(7.) That the proclamation of the adoption of this system of reorganisation should be made forthwith, and that the Medjlisses of the four Ayalets exclusive of Armenia should be summoned at once.

SCHEDULE V.

NOTE ON THE KHALIFATE.

THE meaning of the word Khalifa, anglice, Caliph, lacks precision, in the Koran "man" as opposed to lower animals or angels is called "God's Khalifa on earth"—in the dictionaries we get such expressions as vicar, lieutenant, representative." The first Caliph, Abu Bekr, was chosen after heated argument to avoid strife between other candidates, the second, Omar, commanded by no means unanimous support, and appointed a committee of selection to choose his successor, which never exercised its functions, the third Othman perished in a revolution, and Ali, the last "orthodox" Caliph, was confronted by his rival Moawiya from the beginning of his reign. The only synod or council Islam has known met to decide between the claims of Ali and Moawiya, the rivals were represented by advocates, and Ali's counsel was persuaded by his opponent's trickery to renounce Ali's claim. Thereafter the line of Moawiya was recognised by the majority of Moslems, though a number of dissentients, including Shias and other sects, adhered to Ali and his descendants. The line of Moawiya eventually succumbed on the ground that Abbas was actually chosen by the prophet and should have reigned in the

first instance and that the Khalifate belonged to his descendants.

The Abbasid line replaced the Ommayyads in Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt, but not in North Africa or Spain. The extinction of the house of Ali with the disappearance of the 12th Imam offered an opportunity for the ending of the Shia schism, but instead made the breach irreparable owing to the fabrication of a prophecy that the 12th Imam would return to the world at the "end of time," since when there has been a succession of imposters, Mahdis, and false prophets pretending to be the 12th Imam returned. The most remarkable of these was the Bab who appeared in 1844.

The Abbasids, beginning as absolute rulers over an immense empire, degenerated into the nominal suzerains of a number of independent kingdoms, and ended as the puppets of their palace officials. When the heathen Mongols captured Bagdad, the last survivor of the Abbasid line took refuge in Egypt, was recognised as Caliph by the Mamluk Sultan, given a pension, and retained as a Court functionary. The Abbasid Caliphs remained in this subordinate position until Selim, the Ottoman Sultan, conquered the Mamluks in 1517, and carried off the puppet Caliph to Constantinople. After some consideration, Selim prevailed on the Abbasid to transfer the Khalifate to the Ottoman Dynasty along with the rosary, banner, and cloak of the prophet. The Ottoman intention was to re-establish a universal militant Khalifate, but this was thwarted by Shah Ismail of Persia, who established the Shia sect as the State religion of Persia, as the best means of closing Ottoman pretensions in the East. From the Sunni point of view, the transfer of the Khalifate does not appear to be irregular; the Khalifate is not hereditary, as is shown by the first four Orthodox Caliphs, that the Caliph should be of the tribe of the Koraysh is not an argument that appeals to any but Arabs of pure descent; the fact that the Caliph could appoint his successor and grant titles, would support the idea that he could transfer his office; further, amongst ordinary Sunnis there has never been a movement to establish a rival Khalifate up to the present time. However, it must be remembered that in North Africa, Persia, and Southern Arabia, the Khalifate has never been recognised, while in the Sudan, Northern Arabia, Palestine, and South Mesopotamia its hold is weak.

Having reviewed in brief the descent of the Khalifate, it is possible to consider the power and influence of the political idea and theological meaning of the office on the Moslem world. As has been explained, Shias reject the scheme in its entirety, and to Sunnis the Khalifate is only a detail and not an essential of Islam. In order to appreciate the meaning of the Khalifate it is worth considering what the theoretical ideal of a Sunni Moslem would be.

He would conceive Islam as an international world State, the citizens of which would be Sunni Moslems who accepted the Koran as a final dispensation, and construed it in the light of the Sunnat or traditions, and were subject to the Sheriat or sacred law.

The Caliph would be the chief ruler, and the machinery of government would be carried on through his vassals and lieutenants. Non-Moslems would be tolerated in this State as inferior subjects with limited

religious and political rights. All regions beyond the control of the Caliph's lieutenants would be hostile in the Roman sense, and it would be sinful for Moslems to take up permanent residence in such countries.

It may be fairly assumed that some such ideal is subconsciously present in the minds of all Sunni Moslems of all classes, both ignorant and educated.

According as he is situated a Sunni Moslem will square his position with this subconscious ideal. An Egyptian, Afghan, or subject of the Nizam would consider himself as the subject of a Moslem prince who owed his title to the Caliph, his predecessors, or predecessors lieutenants.

A Sunni Moslem dwelling in a non-Moslem State would, if he considered the matter, regard himself as a subject of the Caliph dwelling in a country in which he remained because it was impossible for him to remove elsewhere. In fact he would recognise his position as analogous to that of a non-Moslem dwelling in a Moslem country. This, indeed, is the primary difficulty of the Sunni Moslem, and explains why more interest is taken in the Khalifate in India than elsewhere. Since a Sunni cannot admit theoretical religious equality in a Moslem State he cannot really accept the equality offered him by a non-Moslem Government, because the very fact that Government is not Moslem removes from him that political ascendancy essential to the theory of Sunni Mohammedanism.

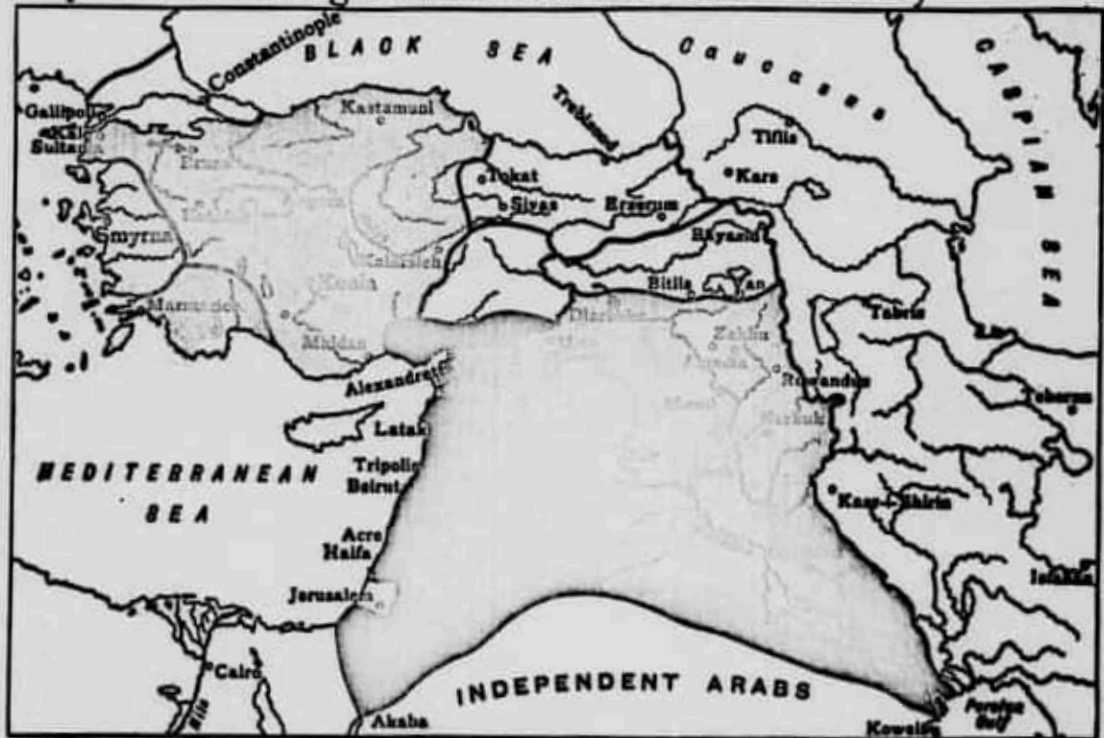
However, though this is the case, the importance of the Khalifate must not be exaggerated. The Caliph's position is neither that of a Pope in religious matters nor Cæsar in civil affairs. According to Sunni theories Islam is fixed and sufficient, the Caliph can make no new laws, no dogmatic pronouncements, nor change any matter of religious discipline, it is doubtful whether he can proclaim a general religious war, and it is pretty certain he cannot call on distant individuals to take part in a local one. The Caliph may dispense titles, make and confirm appointments, a Moslem's duty is to contribute to the Caliph's upkeep, pray for him, and reverence his office, but beyond this there is little a Caliph may demand from a Moslem, or a Moslem owes the Caliph.

A Caliph may be deposed for crime, folly or incompetence by representatives of Islamic learning, but these representatives, such as the Sheikh-ul-Islam, Ulema and others, have no real sanction, since in theory they are not members of a priesthood, but merely Moslems who have devoted themselves to special studies. Thus Caliphs have been deposed and again reinstated on the ground that those who deposed them acted without sufficient knowledge or corruptly.

The increase of pilgrimage among Sunni Moslems has given rise to the idea that the possession of the holy places carries the Khalifate along with it, though historically this is not the case. This idea may be attributed to the policy of the ex-Sultan, who encouraged pilgrimage in order to enhance the prestige of the Khalifate.

Another observation which may be made is, that though it is possible for a Sunni to accept a Moslem prince who is the vassal of a Christian Power, or a Caliph who is the puppet of his own lieutenants, it would be contrary to the subconscious ideas of a Sunni for a Caliph to be even indirectly controlled by a Christian Power or Powers.

Map I including Alexandretta in British Territory



2nd. SCHEME OF ANNEXATION
replacing Alexandretta by Haifa

Map II



Map III

ZONES OF INTEREST



1st. SCHEME OF ANNEXATION including Alexandretta in British Territory



2nd. SCHEME OF ANNEXATION replacing Alexandretta by Haifa



Map III ZONES OF INTEREST



Map IV OTTOMAN INDEPENDENCE



Map V OTTOMAN DEVOLUTIONARY SCHEME



Map showing the areas of the 5 Ayalets

1. ANATOLIA 2. ARMENIA 3. SYRIA 4. JAZIRAH-IRAK 5. PALESTINE

==== Red line = Northern Boundary of British Sphere of enterprise

		Zones
French		
Russian		
Greek (possible)		
Italian (possible)		
British		
Ottoman		
Independent Arabs		
Special administrations		

0 50 100 200 300 400 500 English Miles

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Map V OTTOMAN DEVOLUTIONARY SCHEME

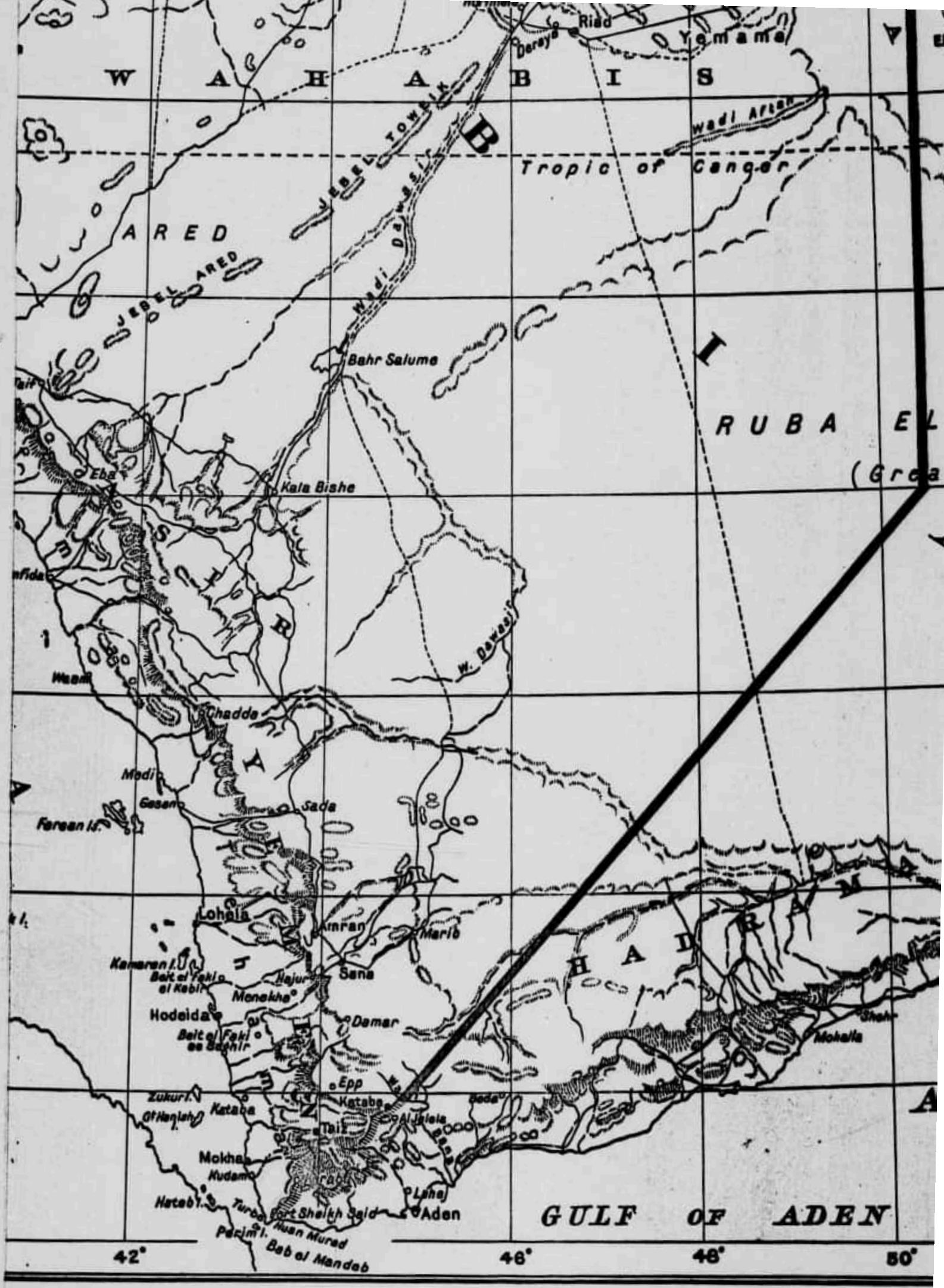


Map showing the areas of the 5 Ayalets
 1. ANATOLIA 2. ARMENIA 3. SYRIA 4. JAZIRAH-IRAK 5. PALESTINE
 ■■■■ Red line = Northern Boundary of British Sphere of Enterprise

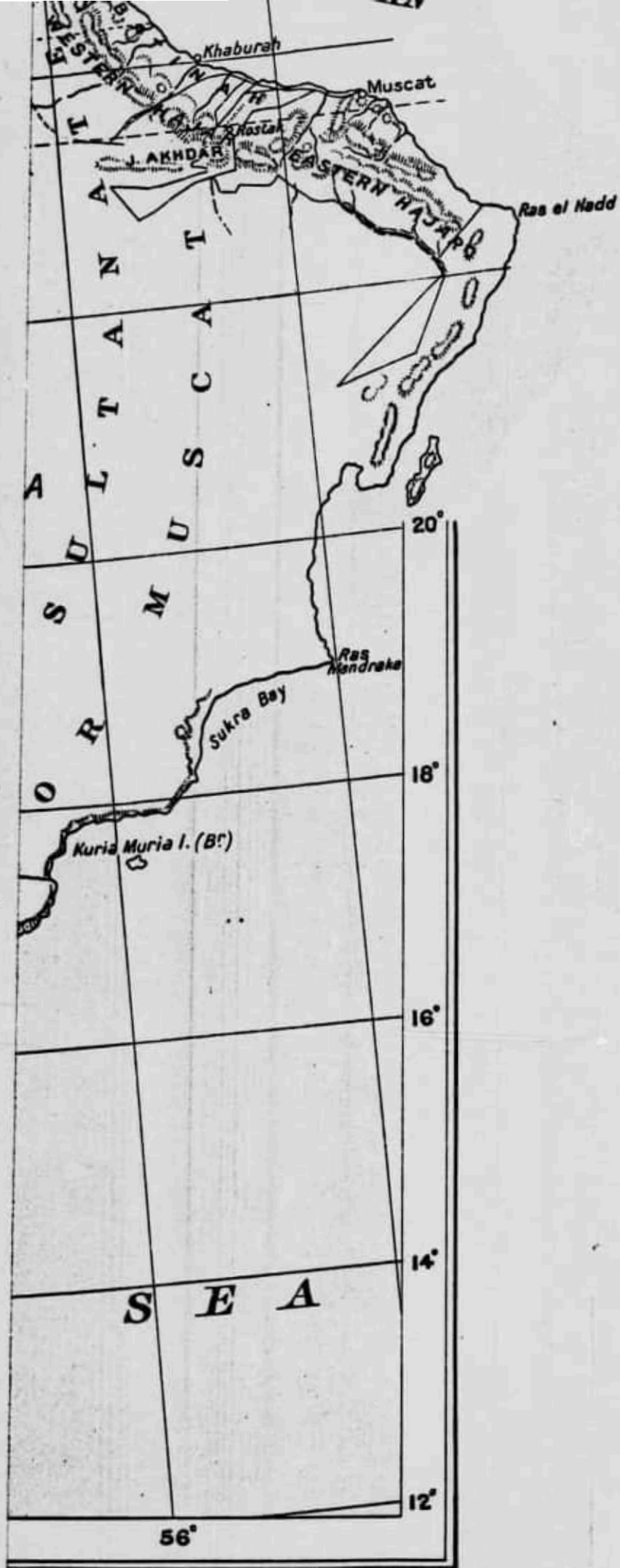
		Zones
French		
Russian		
Greek (possible)		
Italian (possible)		
British		
Ottoman		
Independent Arabs		
Special administrations		

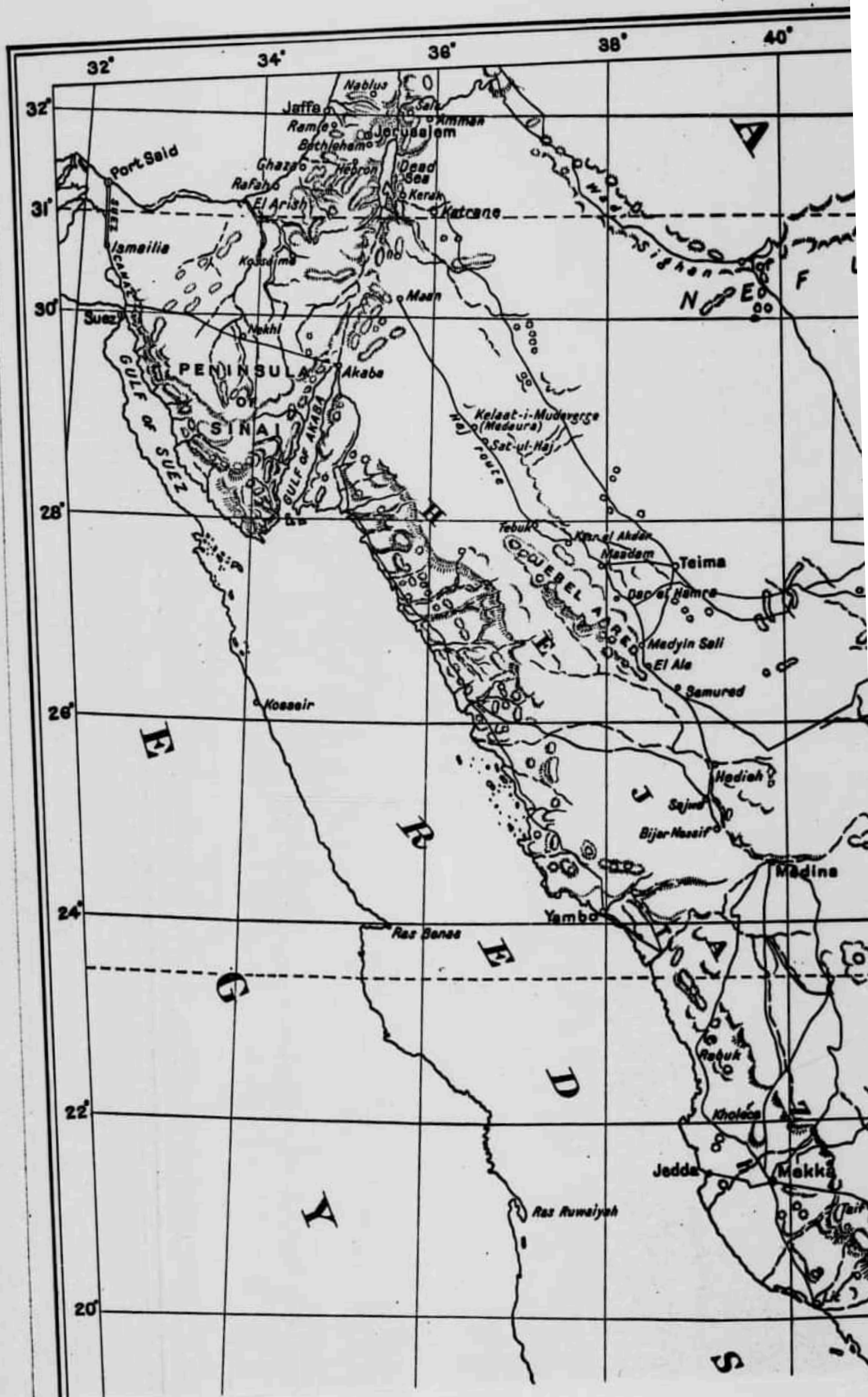
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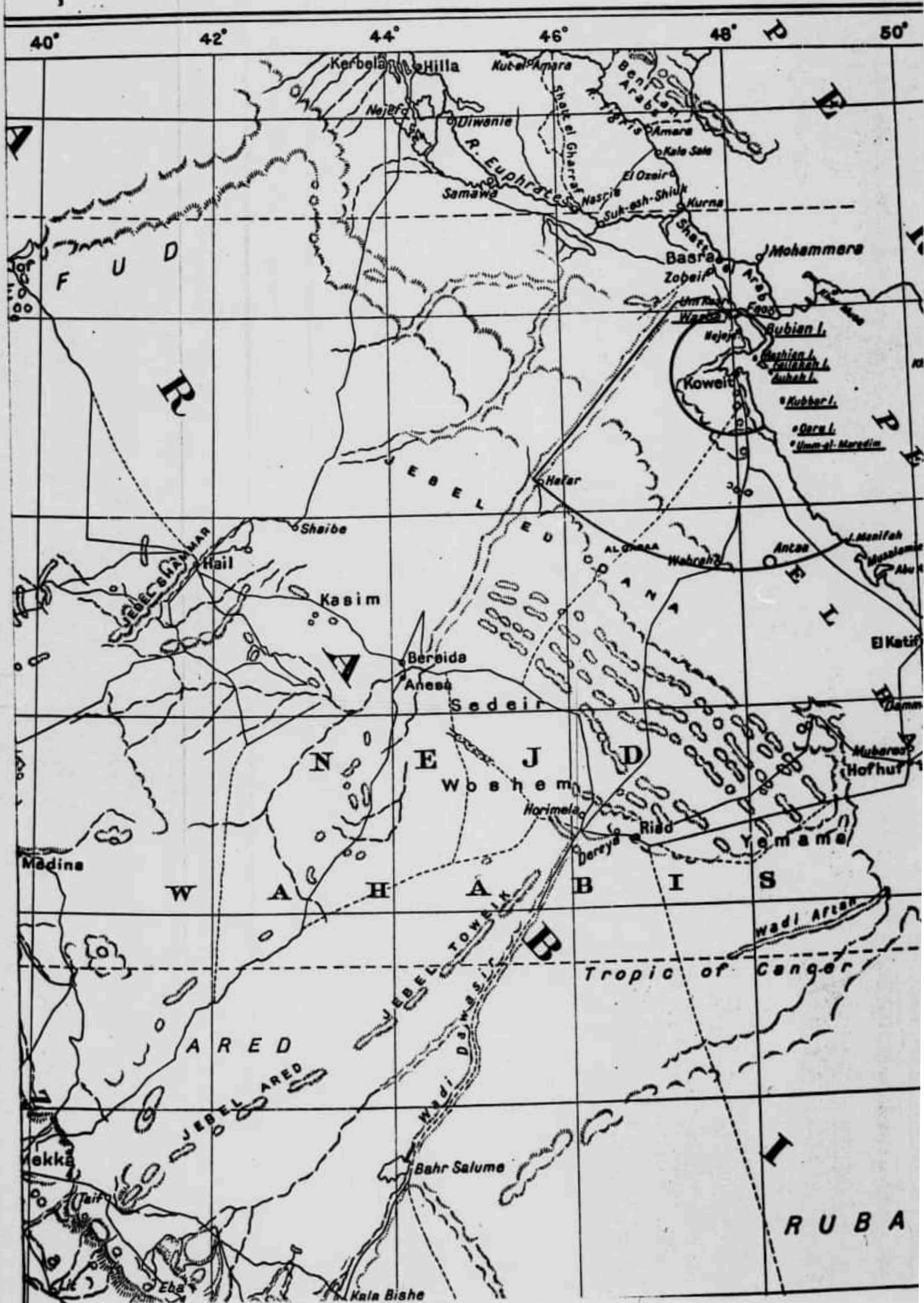








MAP VI.



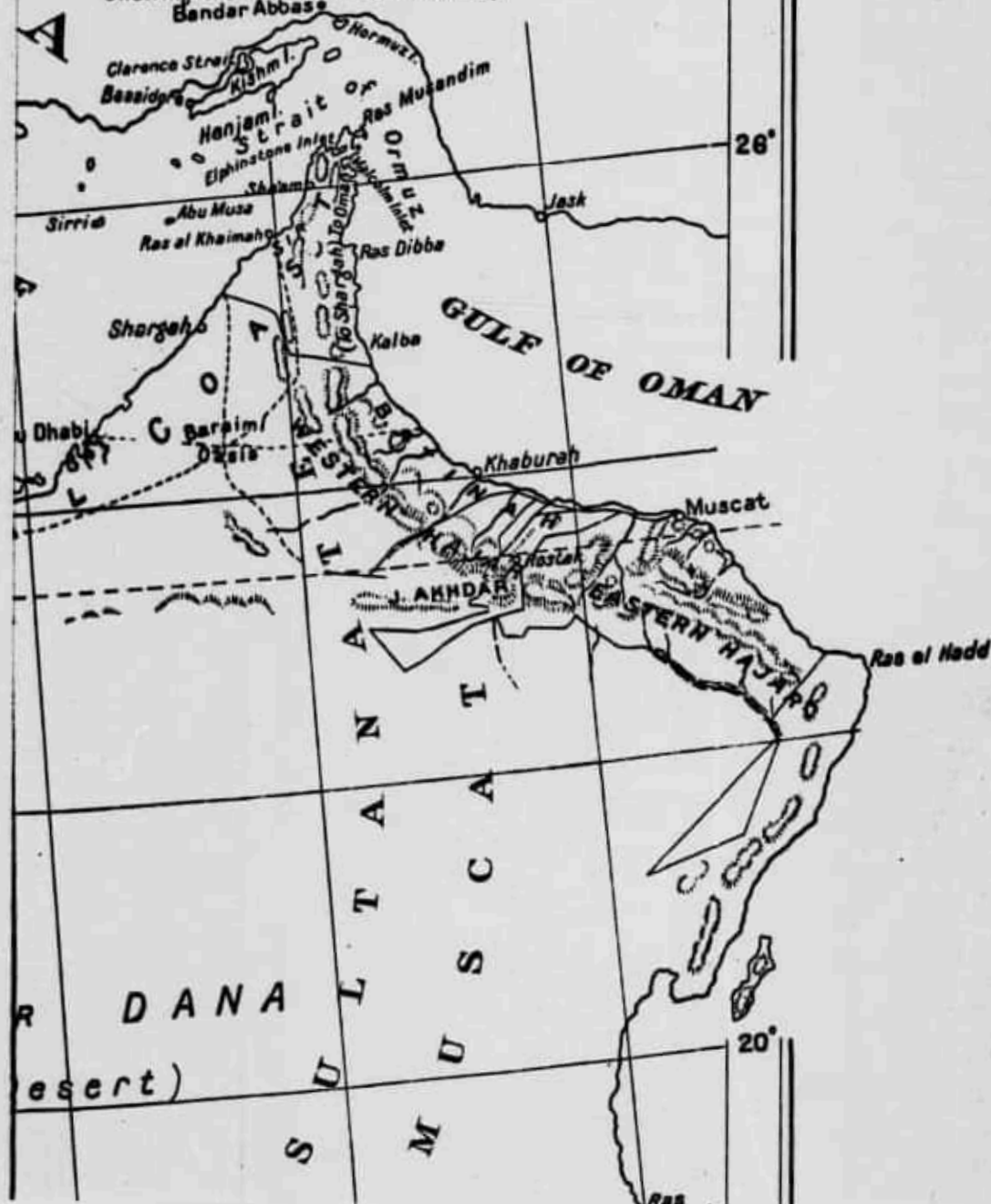


Scale 1:5,000,000 or 1:014" to 80 Miles

0 100 200 300

0 100 200 300 400 500

1. *Identical Boundary as delimited in 1903-1905*
 2. *Turkish Territory not to be alienated*
 3. *Medi Bana to Latitude 20° in the Ruba el Khali*
 4. *the Anglo Turkish Convention of July 29, 1913*
 5. *the Boundary of the Turkish Sandjak of Nejd*
 6. *the Anglo Turkish Convention of July 29, 1913*
 7. *and by tribes dependent on the Sheikh of Kuwait*
 8. *the Anglo Turkish Convention of July 29, 1913*
 9. *Showing the Limits of inner Kuwait*
 10. *Bandar Abbas*



Any direct control over the Caliph by Christian Powers would therefore probably result either in his office being rejected or Sunni Moslems cherishing a deep resentment against those who controlled him or were even responsible for his being so controlled.

Further, it is essential for a Caliph's acceptance that he should not appear to be imposed on the Sunni Moslems as the nominee of non-Moslems.

In the interests of Great Britain it would therefore be advantageous that, on the one hand, the Ottoman dynasty should retain some territory where it had complete independence and, at the same time, that the independence of the Sherif of Mecca should be recognised. Non-Moslem Sunnis would then have an opportunity of choosing for themselves whether the title should be retained in the present family or should be confided to the Sherif of Mecca.

In event of Ottoman control being removed from Hejaz it is very possible that the Sherif might assume the title for himself, his connection with the holy places, his intercourse with pilgrims, combined with independence, would give him an especial claim in the eyes of non-Ottoman Sunnis.

While the importance of the office of Caliph should not be exaggerated, equally it should not be minimised, owing to the peculiar position of Indian Sunni Moslems, whose nationalist aspirations (for want of a better term) must centre on the Caliph. A Caliph who could pose to our Moslem subjects as an oppressed martyr in Christian hands, or a Caliph who could be accused of being the nominee of Christians, would be equally dangerous or harmful.

CHRONOLOGICAL STATEMENT OF THE DESCENT OF THE KHALIFATE.

Period I.

Orthodox Caliphs, A.D. 632-661.

Dissentients nil, until dispute between Moawiya and Ali.

Period II.

Ommayad Caliphs, A.D. 661-750.

Dissentients: Followers of Ali, Kharijites, and latterly Abbāsids; mostly in Persia, Central Arabia, and South Mesopotamia.

Period III.

Abbasid Caliphs: At Bagdad A.D. 750-1258.

Dissentients:

- (1.) Followers of Ali, N.B. 12th Imam, disappears A.D. 874 Persia, Arabia, Mesopotamia under Alial influence.
- (2.) Ommayads of Cordoba, 756-1031, Spain, North Africa.
- (3.) Fatimites, A.D. 909-1171, Tunis, Egypt, Syria.
- (4.) Imams of Sana and Sa'da, in Yemen.
- (5.) Carmathians, Central Arabia, circa 1000.
- (6.) Assassins, in Persia and North Syria, circa A.D. 1085-1260.

Period IV.

Abbasid Caliphs, at Cairo, under Mamluk tutelage,
A.D. 1258-1517.

Dissentients: Persians, North Africans, Southern
Arabs, Syrians.

Period V.

Ottoman Khalifate, A.D. 1517 to present day.

Dissentients: Persians, North Africans, Senussi,
Mahdists, Wahabis.