

Confidential.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Geneva, March 11th, 1932.

PERMANENT MANDATES COMMISSION.

IRAQ.

Letter, dated March 11th, 1932, from the Government of Great Britain, transmitting a petition dated October 23rd, 1931, from His Beatitude the Mar Shimun and others, and a petition dated October 20th, 1931, from representatives of the Assyrians in Iraq, and also a memorandum (with Appendix) containing the observations of the Government of Great Britain on the petitions.

London, 11th March, 1932.

To the Secretary-General.

I am directed by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to you herewith, in original¹⁾, a petition in the Assyrian language addressed by His Beatitude the Mar Shimun on behalf of the Assyrians of Iraq to the Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission, together with an English translation provided by the petitioner and two copies of a memorandum containing the observations of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom on the petition.

2. I am to request that you will be good enough to communicate these documents to the Permanent Mandates Commission.

(Signed) C.W. PAXTER.

Note by the Secretariat. 1) The original in Arabic has been deposited in the archives of the Secretariat.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

Mosul, October 23rd, 1931.

To:

His Excellency,
the Chairman of the Mandate's Commission,
to the League of Nations.
GENEVA.

Reference the attached document I beg to inform your Excellency. The Assyrian Nation which is temporarily living in 'Iraq, having placed before their eyes the dark future, and the miserable conditions, which are undoubtedly waiting to meet them in 'Iraq, after the withdrawal of the Mandate, they unanimously held a conference with me in Mosul, on the 20th October, 1931. In this conference were present the temporal and spiritual leaders of the Assyrian Nation as a whole, as the above related document shows the names thereof, and the future condition was most fully discoursed on the two following points - (Can we live in 'Iraq, or not?) On the conclusion of a very long discussion, it was unanimously decided by all the members that it is impossible for us to live in 'Iraq, and the will of all the members was entrusted to me, through the said document signed by them that I may work through any way that I may deem possible for the immigration of the Assyrians out of 'Iraq. This being so, I, with the undermentioned signatories who are the responsible leaders of the Assyrian Nation, submit before your Commission our Nation's

humble request, which in centuries past numbered in millions, but owing to the numerous persecutions and massacres that surrounded us, we are now reduced to a very small number. And up to the present we have preserved our language and our faith throughout all the persecutions and massacres that have befallen us. The near past condition of our nation has been fully made known to you, through the Official workers of our Nation. This being so, we do not see it necessary to relate every condition in detail, but we are positively sure that if we remain in 'Iraq, in a few years time we shall be wiped out of existence. This being so, we implore your mercy to take care of us, and immigrate us to one of the countries under the rule of one of the Western Nations any of which you may deem proper. And if this is not possible, that you may request the French Government to accept us in Syria, and take us under its responsibility, because we can no longer live in 'Iraq, and we will leave.

Copy to:-

His Excellency,
the High Commissioner in 'Iraq.
His Excellency the Foreign Minister,
L O N D O N,
England.

ad. Esai Shimun,
by the Grace of God,
Catholicos Patriarch,
of the East.

Add: His Beatitude Mar shimun, etc.

Yoseph Khamishu, Metropolitan.
Zia Sargis by Grace, Bishop.
KHOSHABA. M. YOSEPH.
ZIA. M. SHAMIZDIN.
MALIK ANDREWS OF JELU.
MALIK MAROGIL.
MALIK KHANANU OF TEHOCCA.
MALIK KHAMO OF RAZ.
MALIK ISMAEL OF UPPER TIARY.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

Mosul, October 20th, 1931.

We the Chiefs and representatives of the Tribes of the Assyrian Nation, that our names are under-mentioned, having considered the future of our Nation in 'Iraq, we gathered unanimously to Mosul, to His Beatitude Mar Shimun Patriarch.

Having fully discussed the said case, we came to decide that our living in 'Iraq, after the withdrawal of the Great Britain's Mandate, is impossible.

This being so, we requested the Patriarch, as the head of our Nation, to struggle in every way that he may deem possible, for the fulfilment of our above related decision, that is to say immigrate us out of this country. And in the affirmation of our decision we are hereby attaching our signatures.

SIGNATORIES.

YOSEPH KHANISHO, METROPOBITAN.
ZIA SARGIS, by the Grace of God, Bishop.
MALIK ANDREWS, OF JELU.
MALIK NIMRUD, OF JELU.
MALIK KHANANU, OF EKROCLA.
SHIMUN BARMHISHU.
ZIA ODISHU.
RAYES ODISHU OF RUMTHA.
SUL'KA OF BOHTAN.
SHAMASHA TALYA.
SHAMASHA SAIPO.
DINKHA BACUS.
REVD. TOCLA ARCHDEACON OF ASEITA.
BOKU RAYES OSHANA.
RAYES JAJJU HORLIZD.
KHALIS SHIMUN.
BACUS AIWASS.

SIGNATORIES (Contd.)

SHIMUN MOOSHI
YOSEPH ADAM.
MA LIK YOKHANAN OF TEHOCMA.
MALIK WARDA OF DIZEN.
MALIK DAVID.
MAKSUT LAWANDU.
SHAMASHA SELIMUN OF GUNDIRTA.
REVD. SAEDA.
SHIEHU ISPENDIAR.
RAYES SHINU OF UPPER TIARY.
RAYES WARDA, OF SIMELI.
SAWA OF TAAL.
RAYES ATHNIEL.
MALIK KHAMO, OF BAZ.
MALIK ISMAEL, OF UPPER TIARY
ZIA SHALIZDIN.
DAVID KHOSHABA.
MALIK MAROGII.
RAYES HAROON.
HAROON SHIMUN.
LIRA ISHU.
YONAN MALIK GIWRGIS.
SORU PUBBU.
SHAMASHA ISHU.
RAYES NISSAN YALDA.
RAYES DINKHA OF SADT.
SHAMASHA ISRAELI OF ZAWITA.
SHAMASHA GANDALU.

MEMORANDUM

of observations by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the petition submitted by representatives of the Assyrians in Iraq dated the 20th of October, 1931, and on the letter from His Beatitude the Mar Shimun and others dated the 23rd of October, 1931, with which the above petition was forwarded to the Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission.

1. Notes are attached in an appendix on the identity of the signatories to the petition.
2. It was reported in October, 1931, by the Administrative Inspector, Mosul, that His Beatitude the Mar Shimun had summoned a meeting of Assyrian Bishops and Maliks in Mosul. The discussions were secret and no information on the subject was communicated to the Administrative Inspector by His Beatitude. At the same time there was wide-spread talk of emigration among the Assyrians. The Administrative Inspector concluded his report with the statement that the Mutassarif had personally instructed the Muzimmaqams of Dohuk and Zakho to do their best to convince the Assyrians of the Government's good intentions towards them but that he (the Administrative Inspector) feared that little good would result so long as His Beatitude the Mar Shimun persisted in agitating in Mosul. It remains to observe that, whereas the letter forwarding the petition was dated 23rd October, 1931, and was marked "copy to His Excellency the High Commissioner in

Iraq", no copy was received by the High Commissioner until November 26th, after the petition had been published in the Press.

3. As regards the text of the petition and the accompanying letter, no specific charges or grievances are recited. The two documents merely record the opinion of the signatories that it will be impossible for the Assyrians to remain in Iraq after the termination of the mandate. The letter further appeals to the Permanent Mandates Commission to arrange for the emigration of the Assyrians to a country under the rule of one of the western nations or, failing this, to Syria.

4. In regard to the suggestion that the Assyrians should emigrate to a western state or to Syria, His Majesty's Government can only observe that, if the French Government or any other European Government could offer compact accommodation in suitable hill-country for the Assyrian nation in Syria or elsewhere and were prepared to finance their transport thither, and to guarantee them such permanent conditions as would make it worth their while to emigrate en masse, neither His Majesty's Government nor the Iraqi Government, if the Assyrians themselves desired to accept the offer, would feel justified in opposing their wishes, in spite of the undoubted loss to the State of Iraq, which would be involved. Such a contingency however seems so remote that His Majesty's Government have not considered that any useful purpose would be served by their approaching the French Government or any other Government in the matter. It is understood that such vacant lands as are available in Syria are being settled with Armenian refugees and that in any case no mountain villages such as

the Assyrians have been accustomed to inhabit would be available for settlement.

5. In view of the very full consideration which not only the Permanent Mandates Commission, but also the Council of the League of Nations have already given to the position of the Assyrians in Iraq, His Majesty's Government do not propose to comment further on the thesis that it will be impossible for the Assyrians to remain in Iraq after the termination of the mandate. It is sufficient to refer to the reply which the Permanent Mandates Commission during their 20th Session ⁽¹⁾ suggested should be returned by the Council of the League to Captain Hormuzd Rassam's petition, namely that the League of Nations will continue to ensure that the rights of the minorities are respected, with all the greater zeal and sympathy if it is convinced that these minorities are loyally contributing to the security and prosperity of the State of Iraq. His Majesty's Government regret that His Beatitude the Mar Shimun and the other signatories should have submitted at this juncture a petition which suggests that the Assyrians are not disposed to make their contribution to the security and prosperity of the State of Iraq. His Majesty's Government feel confident however that, as soon as the Assyrians are convinced that the visions, in which they have been encouraged to put their faith, of an autonomous Assyrian State within Iraq or of wholesale Assyrian emigration elsewhere are impossible of realisation, they will become a most useful section of the Iraqi nation. It is therefore, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, in the best interests both of the Iraqi Government and of the Assyrians themselves that such visions should be finally dispelled at the earliest possible moment.

Note by the Secretariat:

APPENDIX.

1. JOSEPH KHANANISHU. Metropolitan of SHAMSDIN. Represents the group of villages around NERI. Not living in HARIR.
 2. ZIA SERGIS. Bishop of JILU.
 3. MALIK ANDREUS. Present Malik of JILU.
 4. MALIK NIMERUD. Who held the Malikship before No. 3.
 5. MALIK KHANANU. An Officer of the 2nd Assyrian Battalion. The present Malik.
 6. SHIMUN BARKISHU. Rais of ZERNE. Lower Tiari.
 7. ZIA AUDISHU. Rais of ASHITHA.
 8. AUDISHU. Rais of RUMTHA. Lower Tiari.
 9. SUIAKA. Of BAHTAN.
 10. SHAMASHA TALYA. Raid of L'GIPPA. Lower Tiari.
 11. SHAMASHA SAIPO. Son of former Rais of L'GIPPA.
 12. DINKHA BACUS. Lower Tiari.
 13. TOMA. Archdeacon of ASHITHA. Lower Tiari.
 14. BUKU. Son of Rais OSHANA of ASHITHA.
 15. RASI JAJJU HORMIZD. ASHITHA.
 16. KHAMIS SHIMUN. Lower Tiari.
 17. BACUS AIWAZ. Lower Tiari.
 18. SHIMUN MUSHI. Not known.
 19. YOSEPH ADAM. Not known.
 20. MALIK TUHMANAN. Former Malik of TEHUMA.
 21. MALIK WERDA. Malid of DIZ.
 22. MALIK DAVID. Former Malik of TEHUMA.
 23. NAKSUT LA'WANDU. Lower Tiari (Rais).
 24. SHAMASHA SHLIMUN. Deacon TEHUMA.
 25. QASHA SADHA. Priest, TEHUMA.
 26. SHIKHU. Of DIZ.
 27. RAIS SHINU. Rais of Upper TIARI.
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| 28. | RAIS WERDA. | Of BENWAR (JULAMBEEK). |
| 29. | SAWA. | Rais of TAL. |
| 30. | ATNIEL. | Rais of LIWAN (Upper TIAHI). |
| 31. | MALIK KHAMU. | Malik of BAZ. |
| 32. | MALIK ISMAIL. | Of Upper TIARI. Chief of the
Maliks. |
| 33. | ZIA SHAMSDIN. | Son of Malik of SALABEKAN. |
| 34. | DAVID KHOSHABA. | Son of Malik KHOSHABA of
Lower Tiari. |
| 35. | MALIK MAROGIL. | ALBEK near BASHKALA. |
| 36. | RAIS HARUN. | Not known. |
| 37. | HARUN SHIMUN. | Not known. |
| 38. | LIRA ISHU. | Of JILU. |
| 39. | YOWAN MALIK GIWIRGIS. | TKHUMA. |
| 40. | SORA BUBBU. | Not known. |
| 41. | SHAMASHA ISHU. | Chief of IYAL (Mar Bishu
group). Uncle of MAR SHIMUN. |
| 42. | RAIS NISAN YALDA. | DIZ. |
| 43. | RAIS DINKHA. | SAT near ORANAR. |
| 44. | SHAMASHA ISRAEL. | Deacon of ZAWITHA. Lower
Tiari. |
| 45. | SHAMASHA GANDAU. | Not known. |
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