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http://www.qdl.qa/العربية/archive/81055/vdc_100000000465.0x0002e2

المراجع	IOR/L/MIL/5/776
العنوان	"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها"
التاريخ/ التواريخ	١٩١٤-١٩١٦ (ميلادي)
لغة الكتابة	الإنجليزية في اللاتينية
الحجم والشكل	ملف واحد (٩٣ ورقة)
المؤسسة المالكة	المكتبة البريطانية: أوراق خاصة وسجلات من مكتب الهند
حق النشر	<u>رخصة حكومة مفتوحة</u>

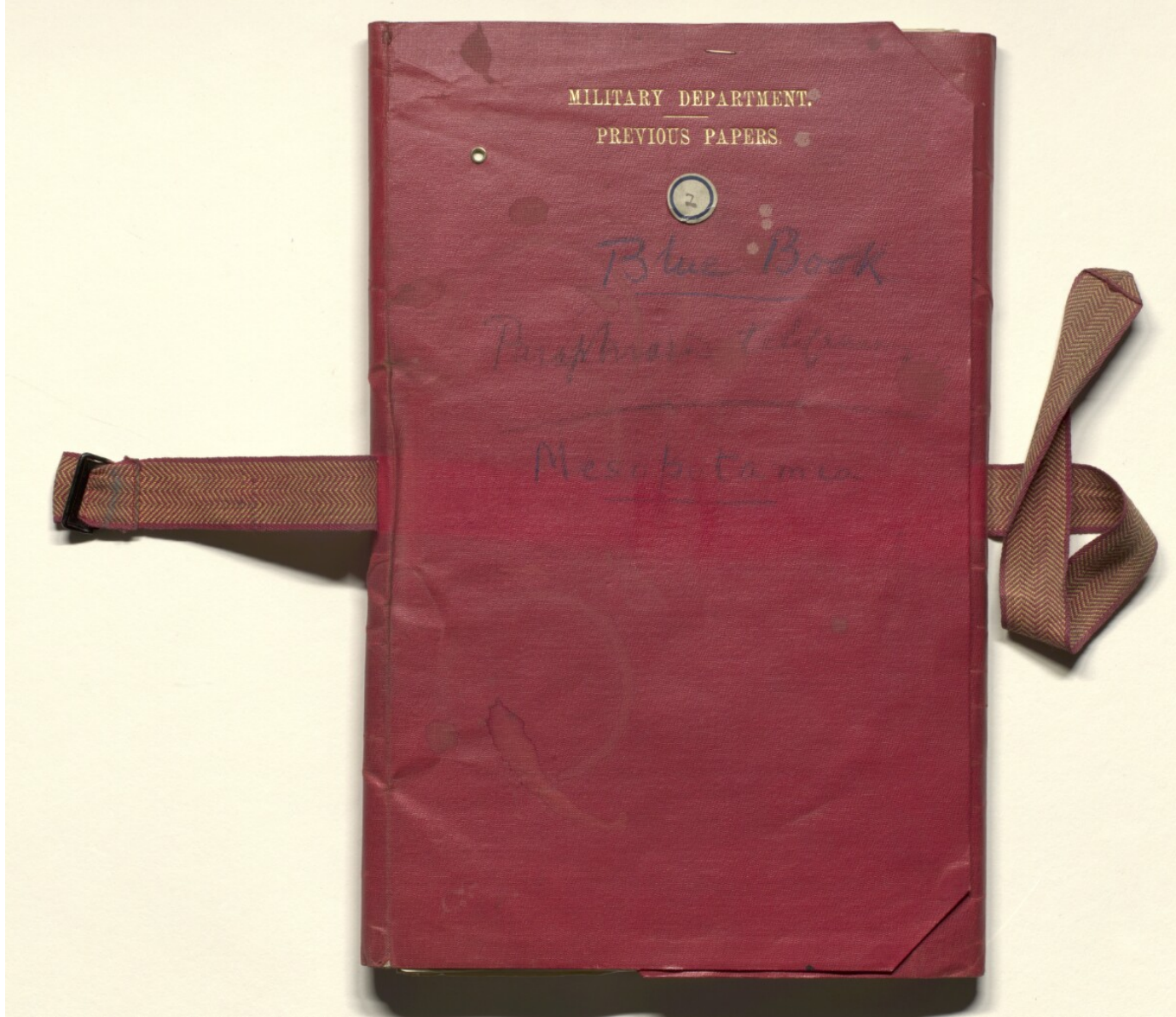
حول هذا السجل

يتألف الملف من نسخ جاهزة للطباعة من كتاب أزرق مقترح عن بلاد الرافدين [أي تقرير رسمي برلماني بريطاني بخصوص حملة بلاد الرافدين، ١٩١٤-١٩١٨]. تتكون الأوراق من برقيات رسمية منسوخة مرقمة ومكتوبة بصياغتها الأصلية وتم إعادة صياغتها (لا سيما من قائد قوة المشاة خلال السنيتين ١٩١٥-١٩١٦، الفريق أول السير جون إكلز نيكسون، ونائب الملك ووزير الدولة لشؤون الهند) وهي تتعلق بعمليات عسكرية خلال التقدم من البصرة في ١٩١٥. قُدمت النسخ الجاهزة للطباعة لوزير الدولة لشؤون الهند، وهي تتضمن ملاحظات بقلم جون إيفلين شكبرج من مكتب الهند.

وُضعت الأوراق ضمن ملف مذيل بالنص: "الإدارة العسكرية". "أوراق سابقة" وموسوم بالرقم "٢".



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [أمامي] (١٨٩/١)



المرجع: IOR/L/MIL/5/776 حق النشر: [رخصة حكومة مفتوحة](#)

اعرض على مكتبة قطر الرقمية: http://www.qdl.qa/العربية/archive/81055/vdc_100087953644.0x000002

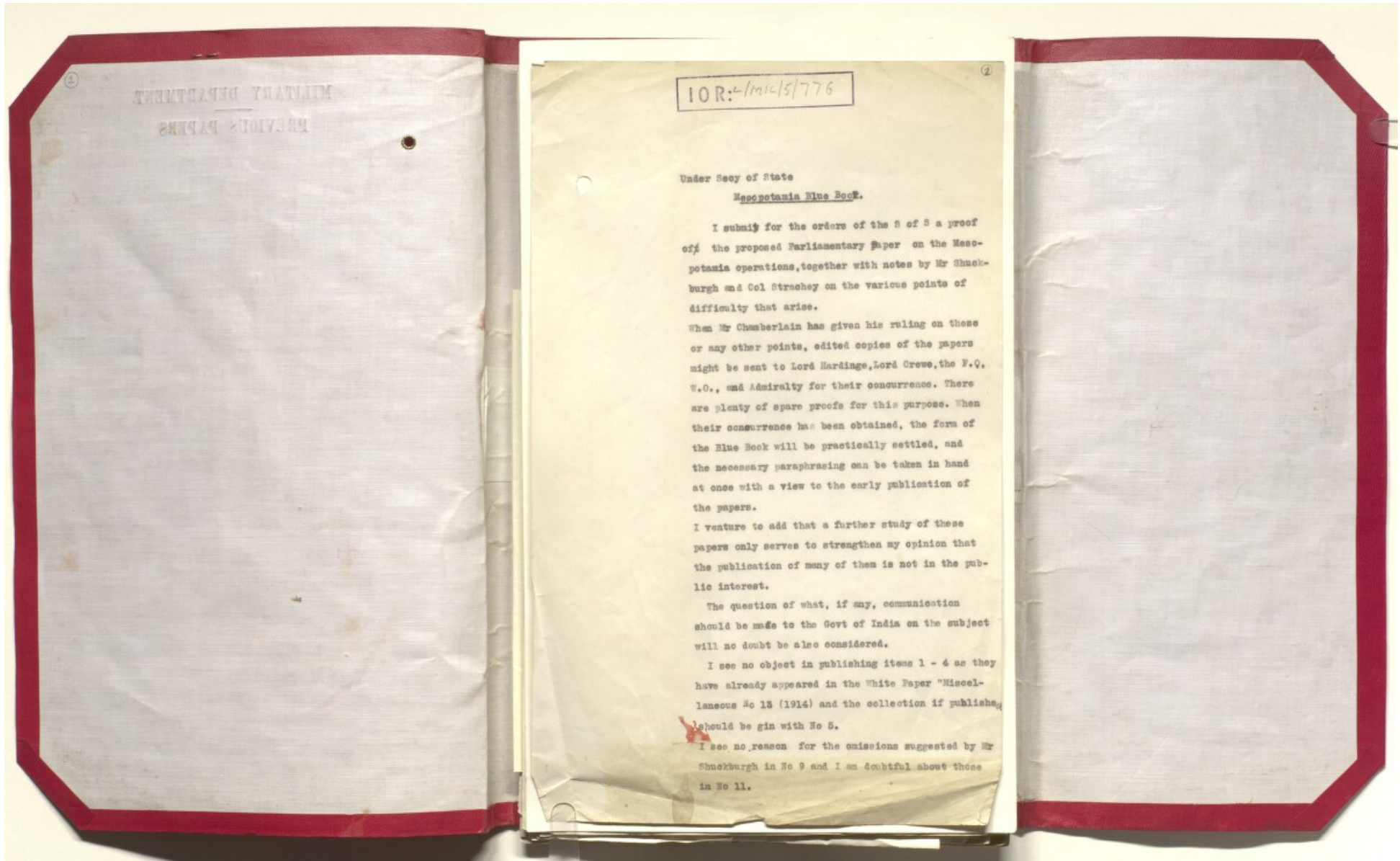


"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [أمامي-داخلي] (١٨٩/٢)



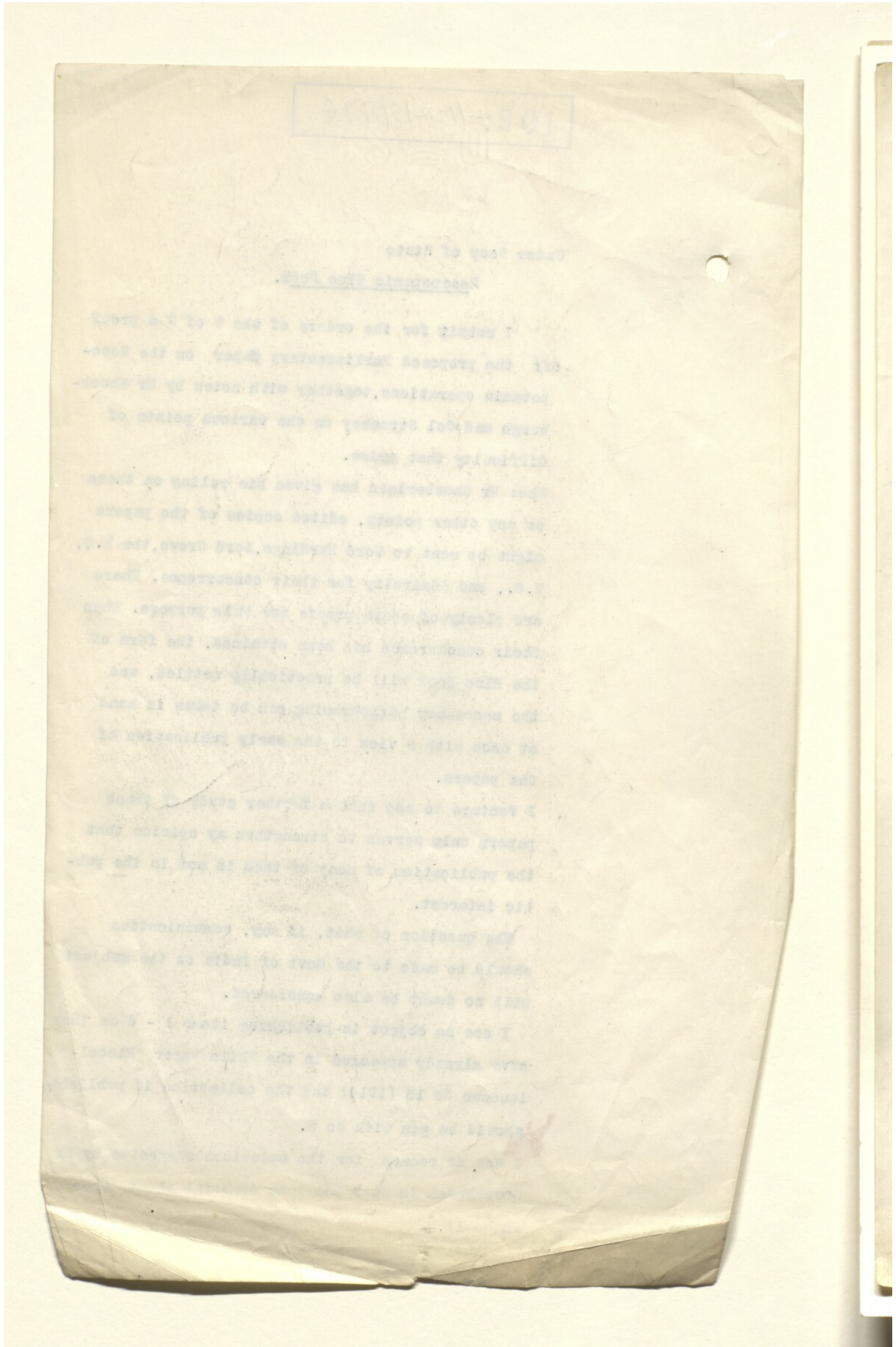


"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢و] (١٨٩/٣)





"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [ظ٢] (١٨٩/٤)



(3)

No 12 might be omitted: it is neither exclusively nor mainly concerned with the Mesopotamian problem. No 14 on the contrary should be included though already published. No 18 might be omitted.

It is for consideration whether the published telegrams 19 - 43 should be included. Some of them may help to make the story complete but many are in part or in toto irrelevant. Telegram 41 - 61 complete Part I but it is for consideration whether it is worth while giving Nos 56 and 57. Their contents have already appeared in published 'despatches'.

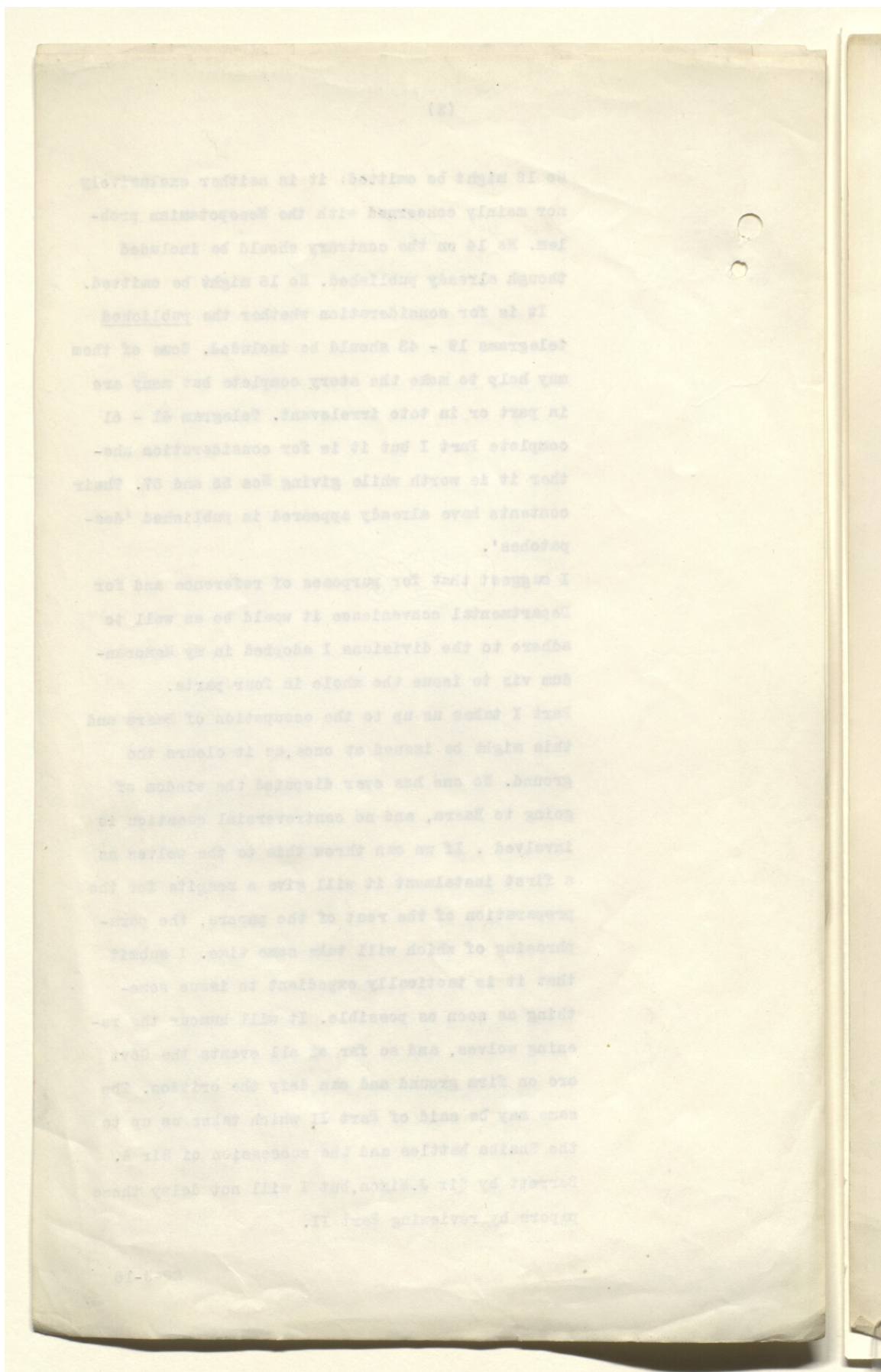
I suggest that for purposes of reference and for Departmental convenience it would be as well to adhere to the divisions I adopted in my Memorandum viz to issue the whole in four parts.

Part I takes us up to the occupation of Basra and this might be issued at once, as it clears the ground. No one has ever disputed the wisdom of going to Basra, and no controversial question is involved. If we can throw this to the wolves as a first instalment it will give a respite for the preparation of the rest of the papers, the paraphrasing of which will take some time. I submit that it is tactically expedient to issue something as soon as possible. It will humour the ravening wolves, and so far at all events the Govt are on firm ground and can defy the critics. The same may be said of Part II which takes us up to the Shaiba battles and the succession of Sir A. Barrett by Sir J. Nixon, but I will not delay these papers by reviewing Part II.

20-5-16



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [ظ3] (١٨٩/٦)





④

M
191 .

MINUTE.

Paraphrased telegrams for Blue Book.

Sir E.Barrow,

Herewith the following:-

1 . Collection of telegrams & unparaphrased but in type and marked by Mr Shuckburgh with notes to show the portions to be paraphrased by W.O.,Admiralty, F.O.,and Political Dept.Also those portions which do not require paraphrasing having already been done or not being telegraphic.

It is understood that the above collection represents the telegrams approved for publication prior to the despatch of the file to W.O.,Admiralty and F.O.

2. Paraphrases of certain Political Dept telegrams sent by Mr Shuckburgh to Col Mann.

3. Paraphrased collection of above collection as done in the India Office (Military Dept):-

Nos 1 - 119 by Col Strachey
Nos 120 - 175 by Col Harris (~~Nos 120-175~~ *with note 4 pages to Harris*)
Nos 176 - 242 by ColMunn

4. Duplicates of part of No 3.

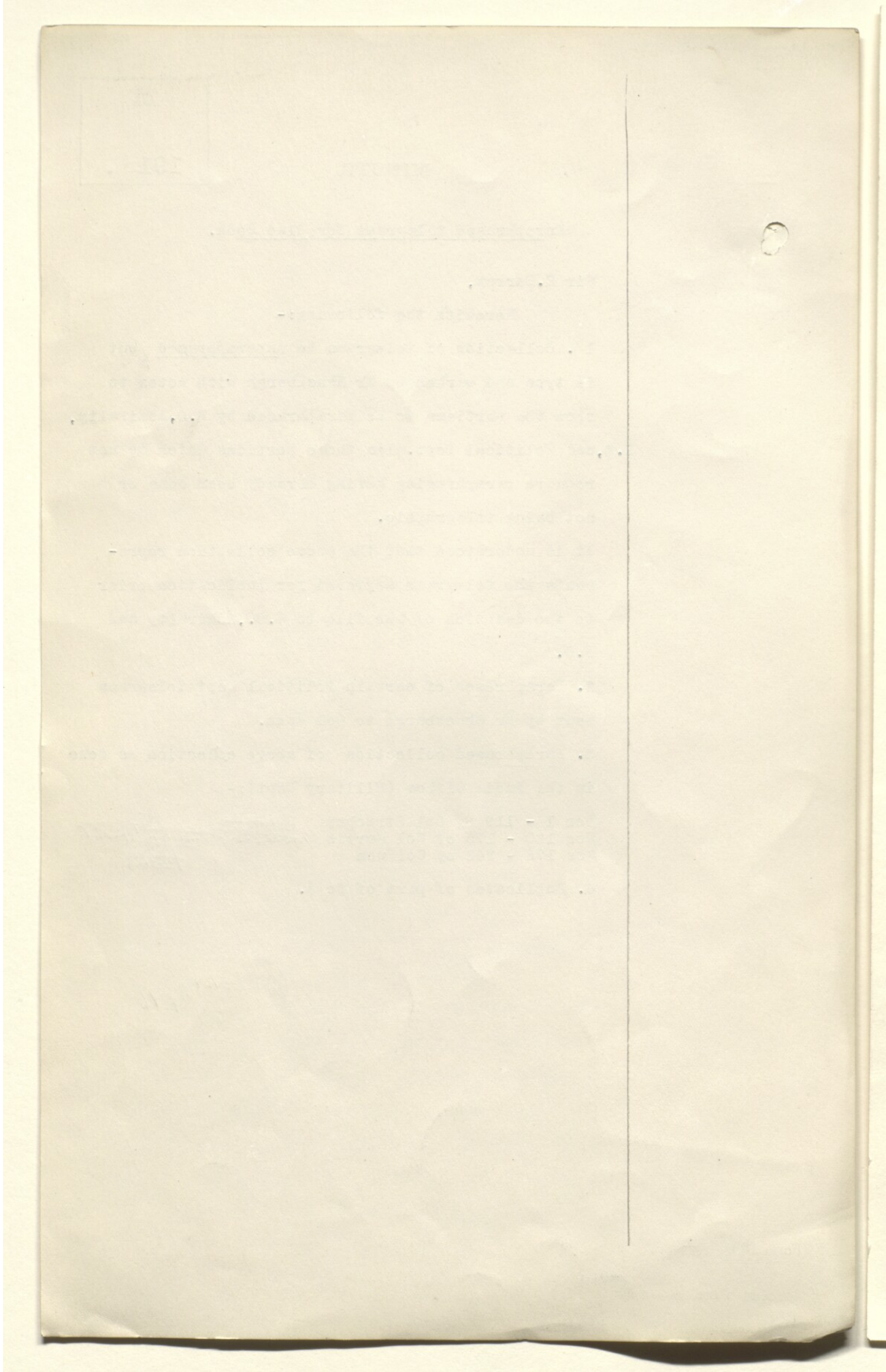
Strachey
27.6.66

(Form 16.)


10426. I. 1102. 2000.-9/1915.



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٤ظ] (١٨٩/٨)



(5)



Sir E. Bawa,

Herewith 2 revised
proofs of the Blue Book.

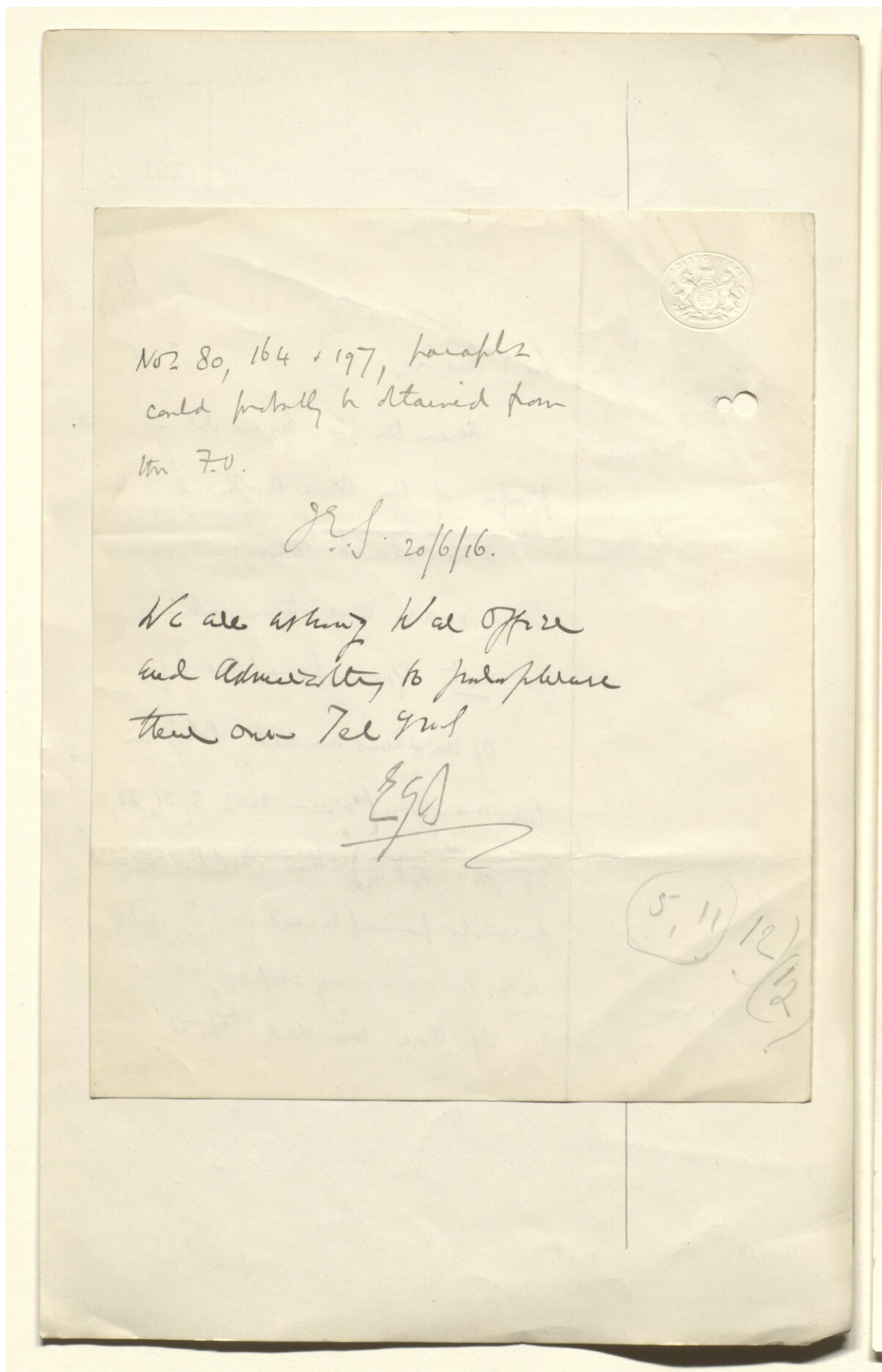
I have struck through in
blue pencil those items which
do not require paraphrasing.

Of the items marked "Pol." in
the margin (viz.:- nos 3, 31, 33,
34, 40 + 82) this Dept. can
furnish paraphrases. I will
take the necessary steps.

Of those marked F.O.,
viz.:-



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [هظ] (١٨٩/١٠)



No 80, 164 + 197, Karachi
could probably be obtained from
the F.O.

J.S. 20/6/16.

We are asking the Office
and Administration to find pleasure
there over Tel gram

E.G.D.

5-11-12/12

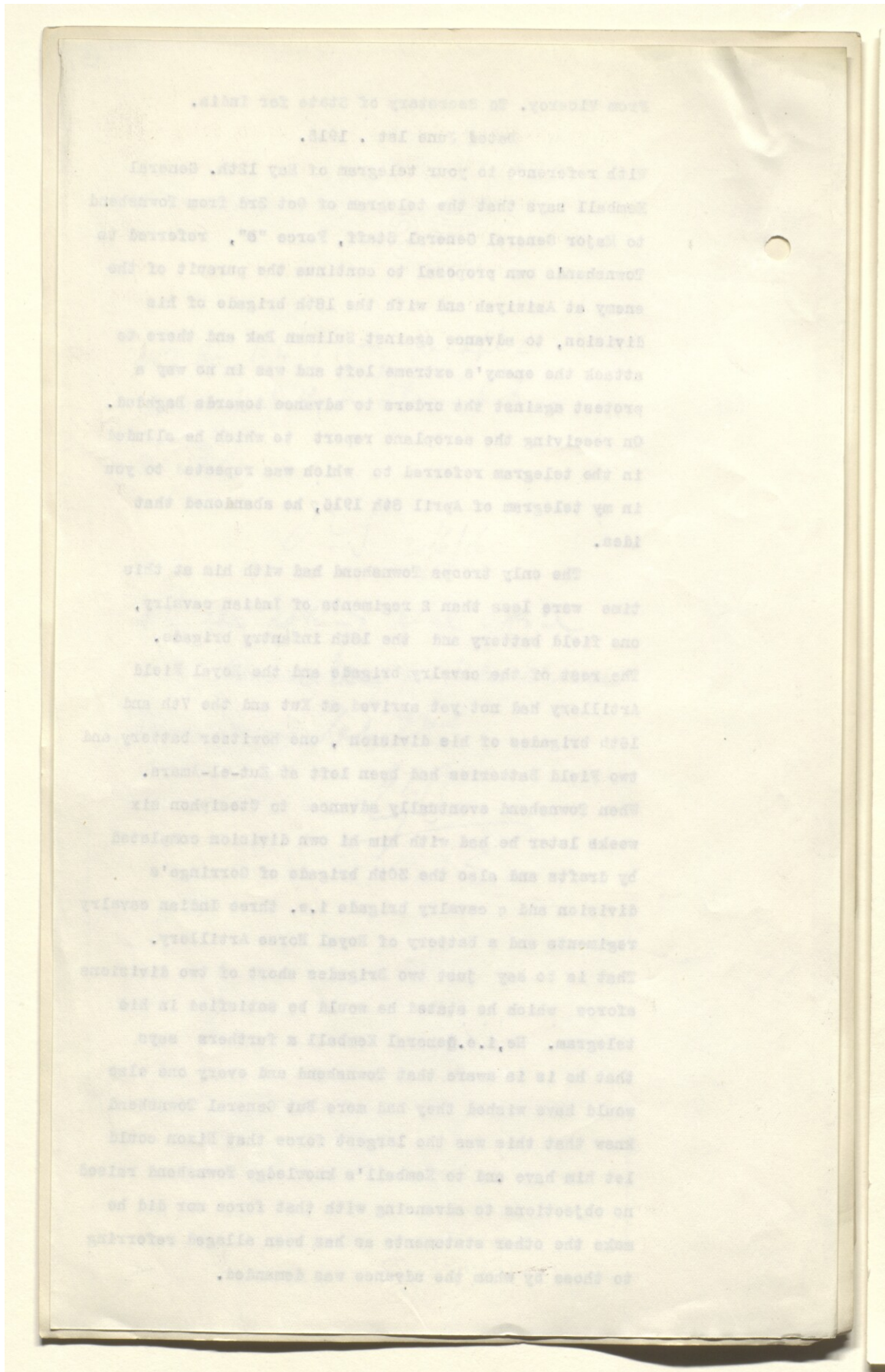
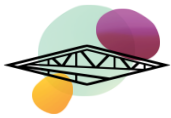


From Viceroy. To Secretary of State for India.

Dated June 1st . 1915.

With reference to your telegram of May 12th. General Kemball says that the telegram of Oct 3rd from Townshend to Major General General Staff, Force "B", referred to Townshend's own proposal to continue the pursuit of the enemy at Aziziyah and with the 18th brigade of his division, to advance against Suliman Pak and there to attack the enemy's extreme left and was in no way a protest against the orders to advance towards Baghdad. On receiving the aeroplane report to which he alluded in the telegram referred to which was repeated to you in my telegram of April 8th 1916, he abandoned that idea.

The only troops Townshend had with him at this time were less than 2 regiments of Indian cavalry, one field battery and the 18th infantry brigade. The rest of the cavalry brigade and the Royal Field Artillery had not yet arrived at Kut and the 7th and 16th brigades of his division, one howitzer battery and two Field Batteries had been left at Kut-el-Amara. When Townshend eventually advanced to Ctesiphon six weeks later he had with him his own division completed by drafts and also the 30th brigade of Gorrings' division and a cavalry brigade i.e. three Indian cavalry regiments and a battery of Royal Horse Artillery. That is to say just two Brigades short of two divisions a force which he stated he would be satisfied in his telegram. He, i.e. General Kemball & further says that he is aware that Townshend and every one else would have wished they had more But General Townshend knew that this was the largest force that Nixon could let him have and to Kemball's knowledge Townshend raised no objections to advancing with that force nor did he make the other statements as has been alleged referring to those by whom the advance was demanded.



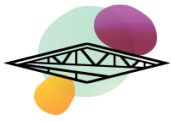


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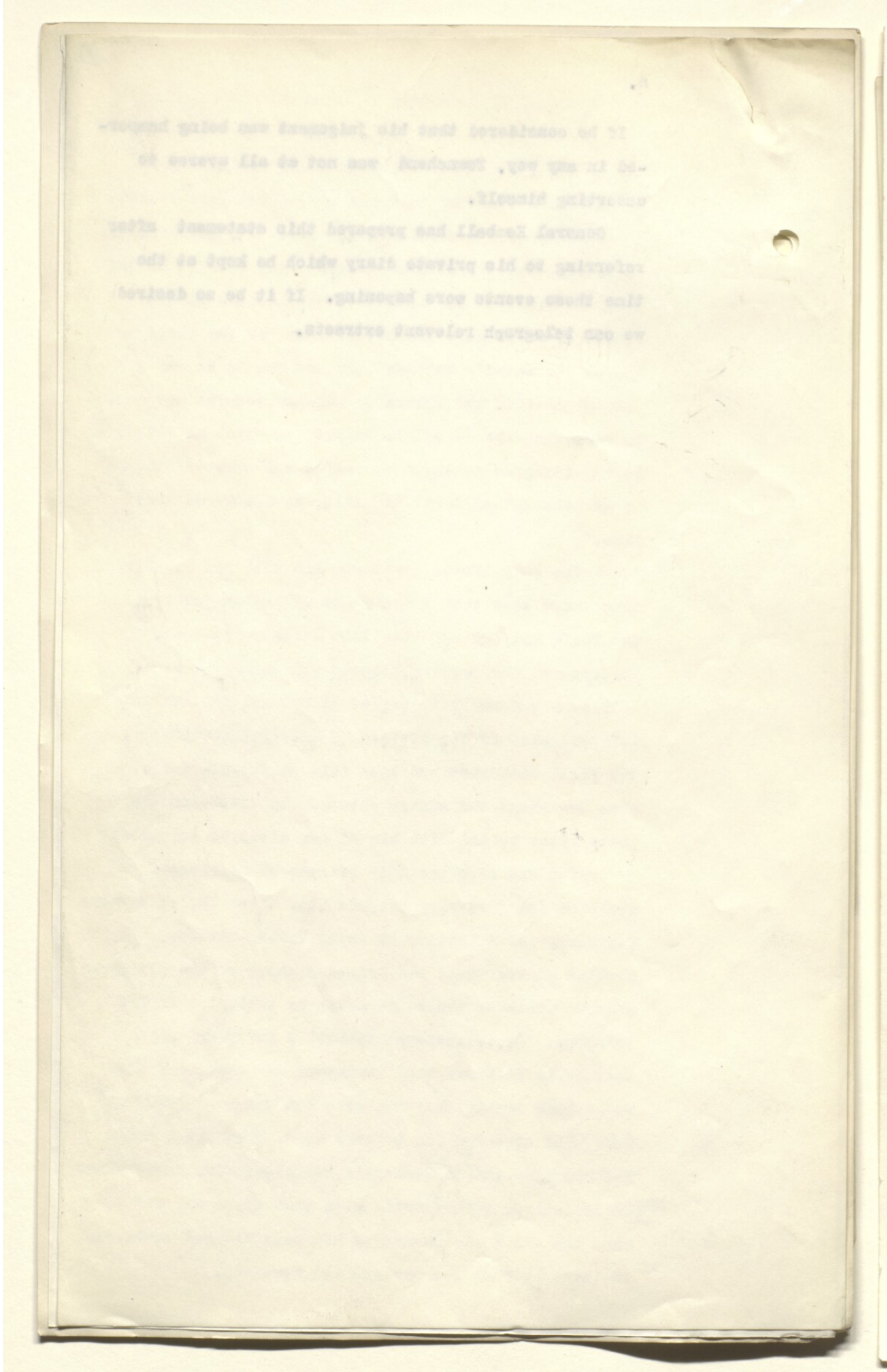
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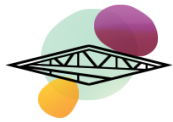
If he considered that his judgement was being hampered in any way, Townshend was not at all averse to asserting himself.

General Kemball has prepared this statement after referring to his private diary which he kept at the time these events were hapening. If it be so desired we can telegraph relevant extracts.



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [ظ٧] (١٨٩/١٤)





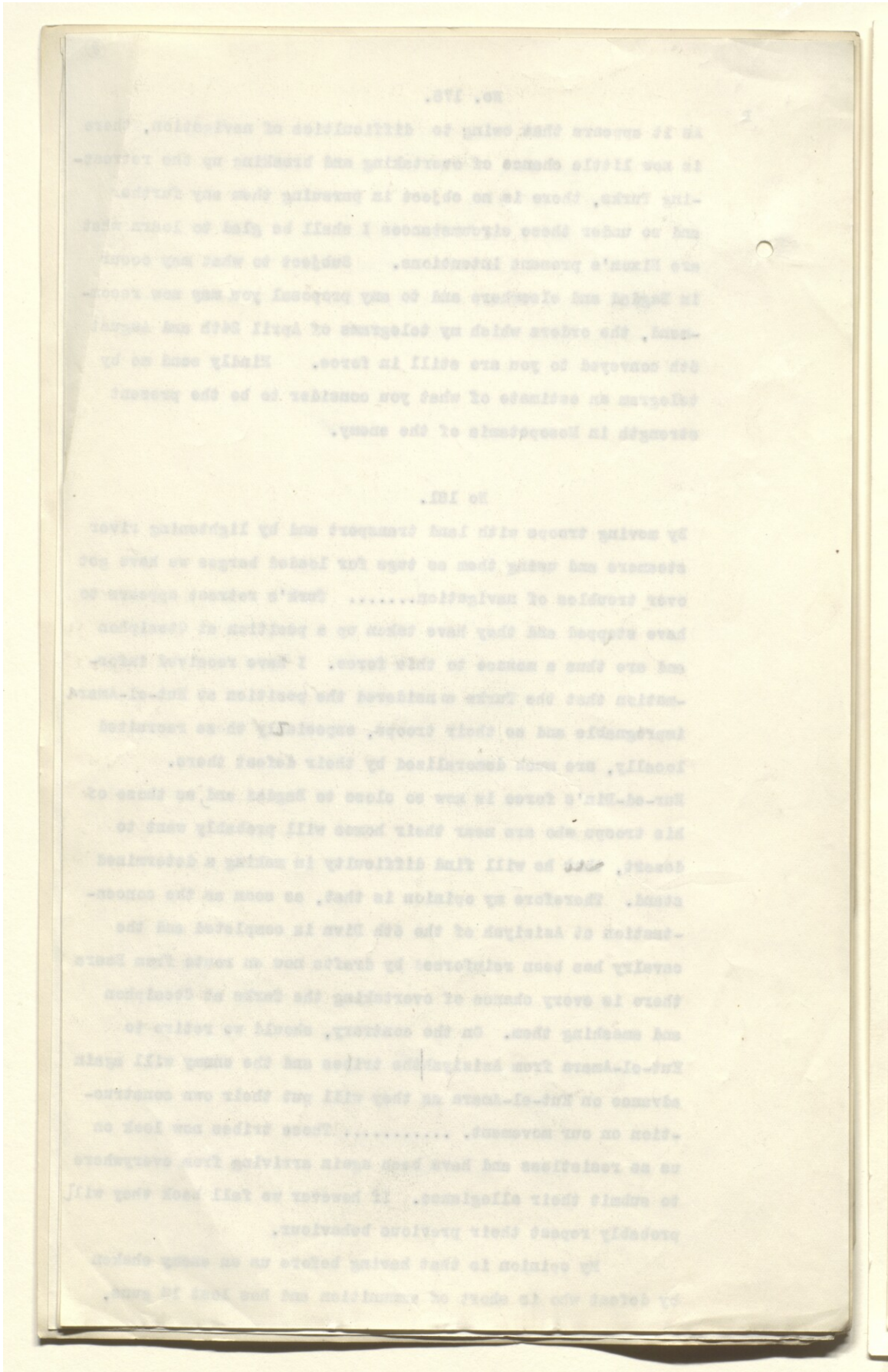
No. 178.

As it appears that owing to difficulties of navigation, there is now little chance of overtaking and breaking up the retreating Turks, there is no object in pursuing them any further and so under these circumstances I shall be glad to learn what are Nixon's present intentions. Subject to what may occur in Bagdad and elsewhere and to any proposal you may now recommend, the orders which my telegrams of April 24th and August 6th conveyed to you are still in force. Kindly send me by telegram an estimate of what you consider to be the present strength in Mesopotamia of the enemy.

No 181.

By moving troops with land transport and by lightening river steamers and using them as tugs for loaded barges we have got over troubles of navigation..... Turk's retreat appears to have stopped and they have taken up a position at Ctesiphon and are thus a menace to this force. I have received information that the Turks considered the position at Kut-el-Amara impregnable and so their troops, especially those recruited locally, are much demoralized by their defeat there. Nur-ed-Din's force is now so close to Bagdad and, as those of his troops who are near their homes will probably want to desert, ~~that~~ he will find difficulty in making a determined stand. Therefore my opinion is that, as soon as the concentration at Aziziyah of the 6th Divn is completed and the cavalry has been reinforced by drafts now en route from Basra there is every chance of overtaking the Turks at Ctesiphon and smashing them. On the contrary, should we retire to Kut-el-Amara from Aziziyah the tribes and the enemy will again advance on Kut-el-Amara as they will put their own construction on our movement. These tribes now look on us as resistless and have been again arriving from everywhere to submit their allegiance. If however we fall back they will probably repeat their previous behaviour.

My opinion is that having before us an enemy shaken by defeat who is short of ammunition and has lost 13 guns,



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it is obviously desirable to finish him while the opportunity is present for military reasons. I have hopes of annihilating him now that he has taken refuge in a position against which we can manoeuvre. I do not see any reason which would warrant our not taking advantage of such a chance. Bagdad, from the military standpoint, is the principal junction in the enemy's line of advance and a centre from which he obtains large supplies, which it is vitally important for us to wrest from him and this is a reason for its occupation in addition to the political effect that would be caused thereby.

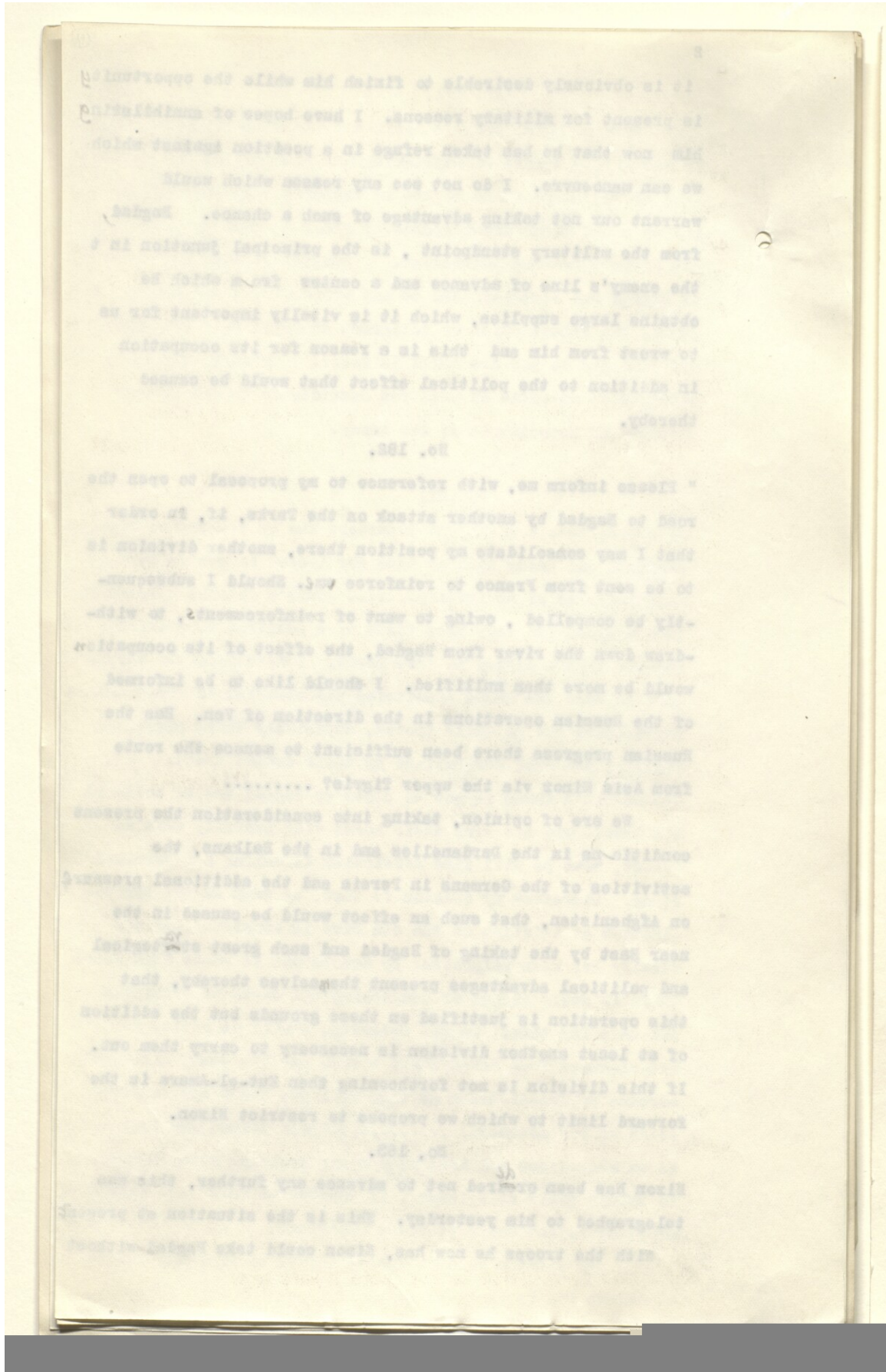
No. 182.

" Please inform me, with reference to my proposal to open the road to Bagdad by another attack on the Turks, if, in order that I may consolidate my position there, another division is to be sent from France to reinforce ~~me~~. Should I subsequently be compelled, owing to want of reinforcements, to withdraw down the river from Bagdad, the effect of its occupation would be more than nullified. I should like to be informed of the Russian operations in the direction of Van. Has the Russian progress there been sufficient to menace the route from Asia Minor via the upper Tigris?

We are of opinion, taking into consideration the present conditions in the Dardanelles and in the Balkans, the activities of the Germans in Persia and the additional pressure on Afghanistan, that such an effect would be caused in the near East by the taking of Bagdad and such great ^{va} strategical and political advantages present themselves thereby, that this operation is justified on these grounds but the addition of at least another division is necessary to carry them out. If this division is not forthcoming then Kut-el-Amara is the forward limit to which we propose to restrict Nixon.

No. 183.

Nixon has been ^{de} ordered not to advance any further, this was telegraphed to him yesterday. This is the situation at present. With the troops he now has, Nixon could take Bagdad without





3

much difficulty, capturing and destroying enemy river craft at the same time, by which means Turkish offensive down the river, in the near future, would be rendered practically impossible. Nevertheless, unless he received reinforcements of one division, he would not be able to maintain himself there, exposed to attack by fresh troops from Aleppo or Mosul. To go to Bagdad and subsequently to have to withdraw through pressure from the enemy, would be a very great political mistake. Under these circumstances he must stay at Kut-el-Amara unless reinforcements can be sent him to Mesopotamia from somewhere else than India. At the same time, the fall of Bagdad would have a very great political effect in the middle East, and would to some extent balance the unfavourable impression which our lack of success in Gallipoli has created.

No. 184

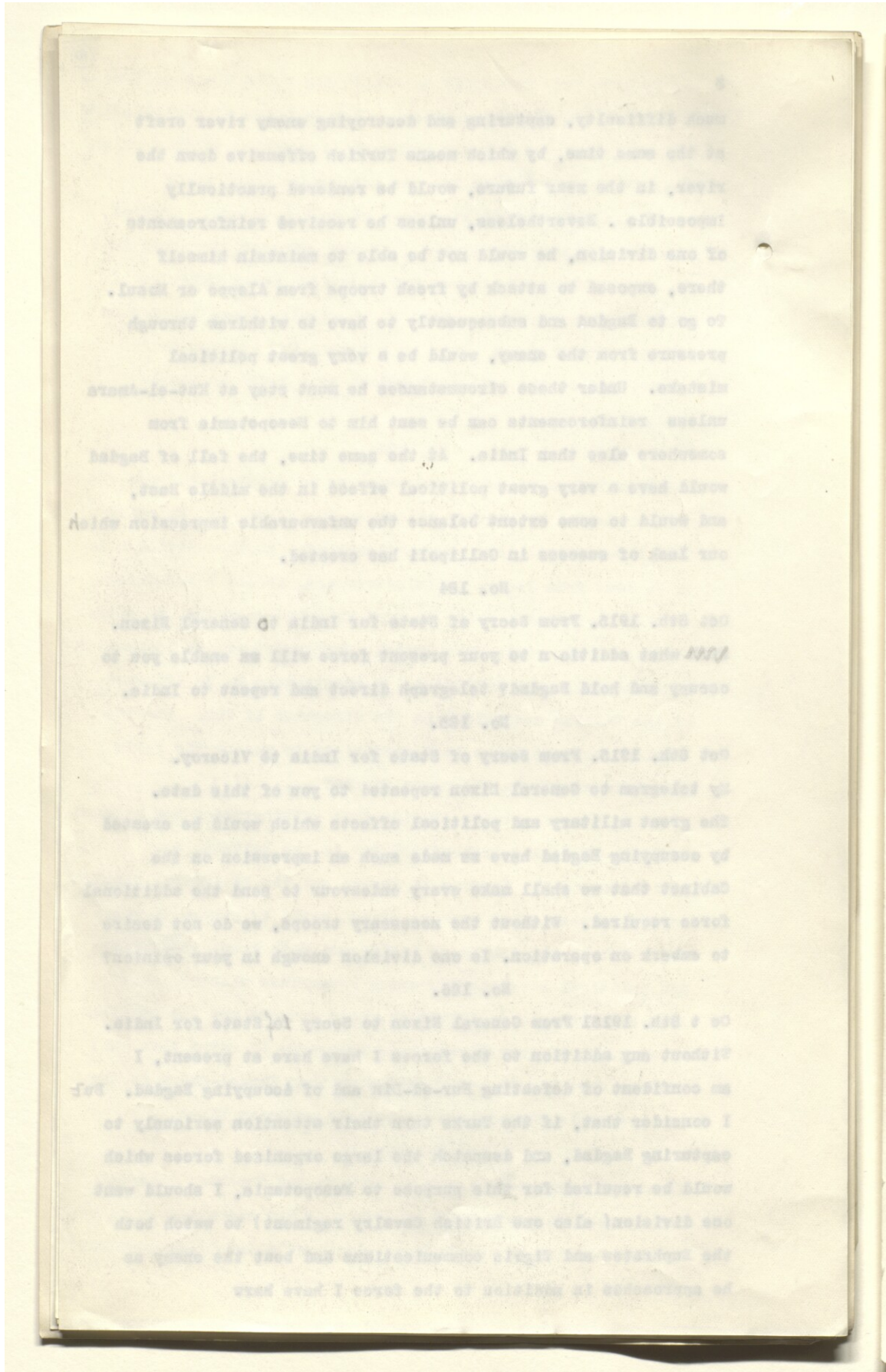
Oct 8th. 1915. From Secy of State for India to General Nixon.
~~NWA~~ what addition to your present force will ~~en~~ enable you to occupy and hold Bagdad? telegraph direct and repeat to India.

No. 185.

Oct 8th. 1915. From Secy of State for India to Viceroy.
My telegram to General Nixon repeated to you of this date. The great military and political effects which would be created by occupying Bagdad have ~~en~~ made such an impression on the Cabinet that we shall make every endeavour to send the additional force required. Without the necessary troops, we do not desire to embark on operation. Is one division enough in your opinion?

No. 186.

Oct 8th. 1915 From General Nixon to Secy of State for India.
Without any addition to the forces I have here at present, I am confident of defeating Mur-ed-Din and of occupying Bagdad. But I consider that, if the Turks turn their attention seriously to capturing Bagdad, and despatch the large organized forces which would be required for this purpose to Mesopotamia, I should want one division (also one British Cavalry regiment) to watch both the Euphrates and Tigris communications and beat the enemy as he approaches in addition to the force I have ~~here~~





4.

I also consider that the best position from which to do this is Bagdad.

No. 190.

Oct 9th. 1915. From Viceroy to Secy of State for India.
Reference to Nixon's telegram of 8th inst and your's of same date. Glad to hear of Cabinet's decision. Having consulted with Commander-in-Chief I consider that Nixon can best form an opinion as to the number of troops he requires, so we understand that when he speaks of a division, he means a complete division with its divisional cavalry and guns and proper proportion of British troops. He asks for a regiment of cavalry in addition to this. Although we are ready to accept his opinion, we also think that, as India cannot supply the drafts to ensure the British units now with him being maintained up to full strength, it will be necessary for these to be sent from home. The Indian units will be kept up to strength by us. Further we are of opinion that the reinforcements should get to Bagdad not later than one month after it has been taken, for we calculate that this is the time that must elapse before the Turks can concentrate in sufficient strength to attempt to retake it.

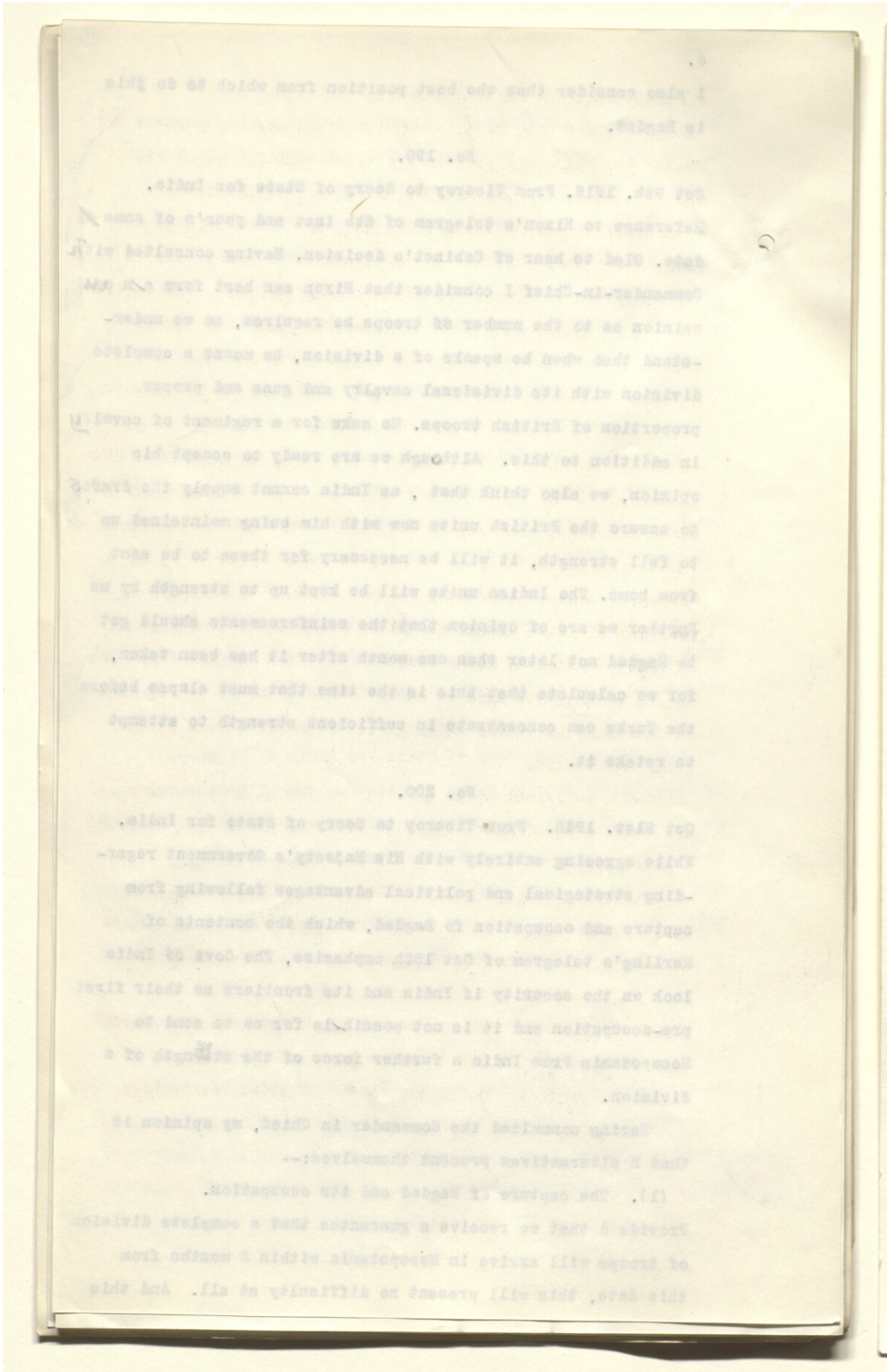
No. 200.

Oct 21st. 1915. From Viceroy to Secy of State for India.
While agreeing entirely with His Majesty's Government regarding strategical and political advantages following from capture and occupation of Bagdad, which the contents of Marling's telegram of Oct 15th emphasise, The Govt of India look on the security of India and its frontiers as their first pre-occupation and it is not possible for us to send to Mesopotamia from India a further force of the strength of a division.

Having consulted the Commander in Chief, my opinion is that 3 alternatives present themselves:--

(1). The capture of Bagdad and its occupation.

Provided that we receive a guarantee that a complete division of troops will arrive in Mesopotamia within 2 months from this date, this will present no difficulty at all. And this





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solution would be the most satisfactory one.

(2). To attack the Turks, make a raid on Bagdad, release the female English captives, capture the few stores and steamers that remain and from a position S. of it, dominate the city by patrols up the river..... This would not require a whole additional division to accomplish, but would only be the second best alternative from a political point of view.

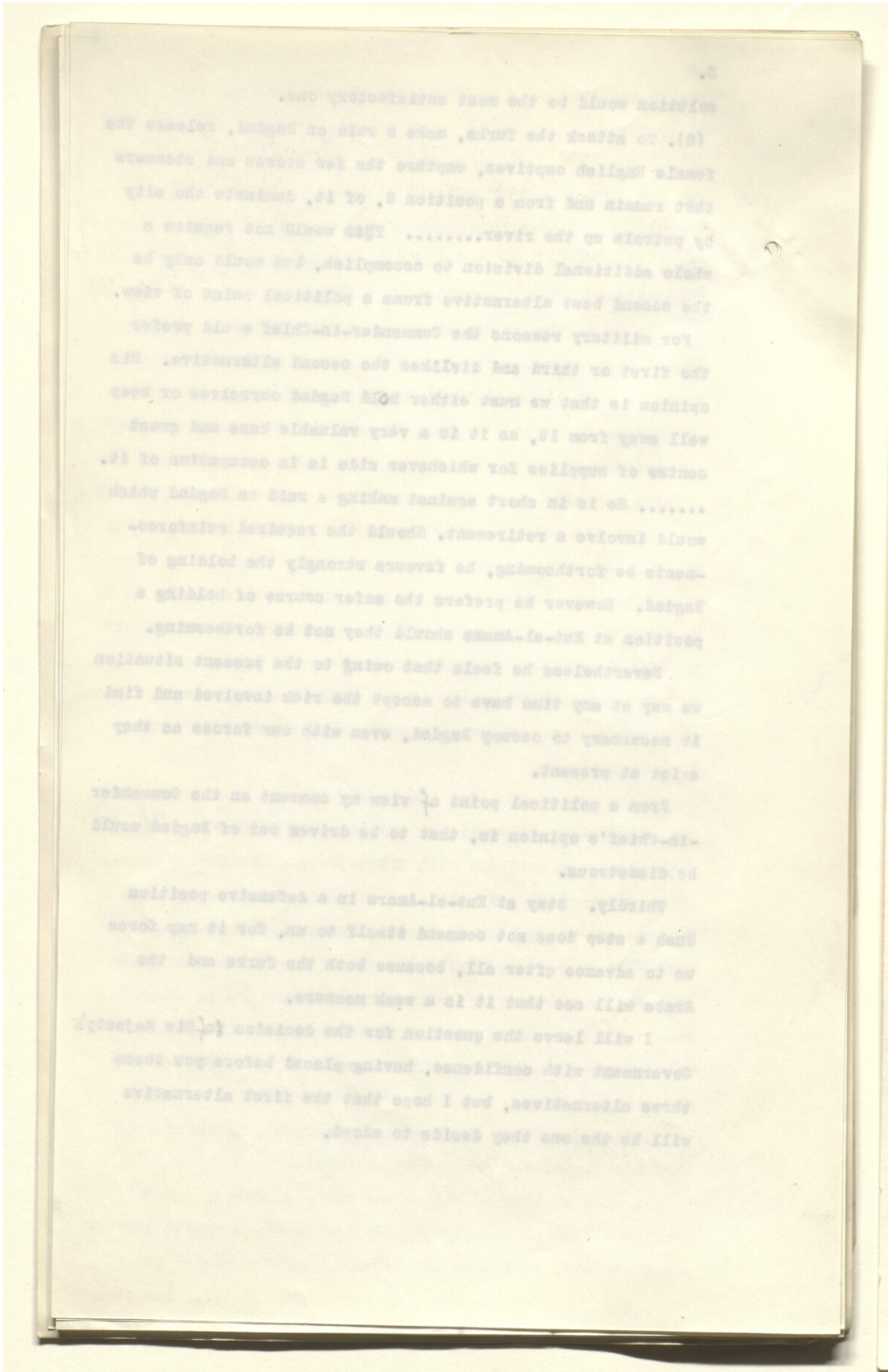
For military reasons the Commander-in-Chief would prefer the first or third and dislikes the second alternative. His opinion is that we must either hold Bagdad ourselves or keep well away from it, as it is a very valuable base and great centre of supplies for whichever side is in occupation of it. He is in short against making a raid on Bagdad which would involve a retirement. Should the required reinforcements be forthcoming, he favours strongly the holding of Bagdad. However he prefers the safer course of holding a position at Kut-el-Amara should they not be forthcoming.

Nevertheless he feels that owing to the present situation we may at any time have to accept the risk involved and find it necessary to occupy Bagdad, even with our forces as they exist at present.

From a political point of view my comment on the Commander-in-Chief's opinion is, that to be driven out of Bagdad would be disastrous.

Thirdly. Stay at Kut-el-Amara in a defensive position Such a step does not commend itself to us, for it may force us to advance after all, because both the Turks and the Arabs will see that it is a weak measure.

I will leave the question for the decision of His Majesty's Government with confidence, having placed before you these three alternatives, but I hope that the first alternative will be the one they decide to adopt.





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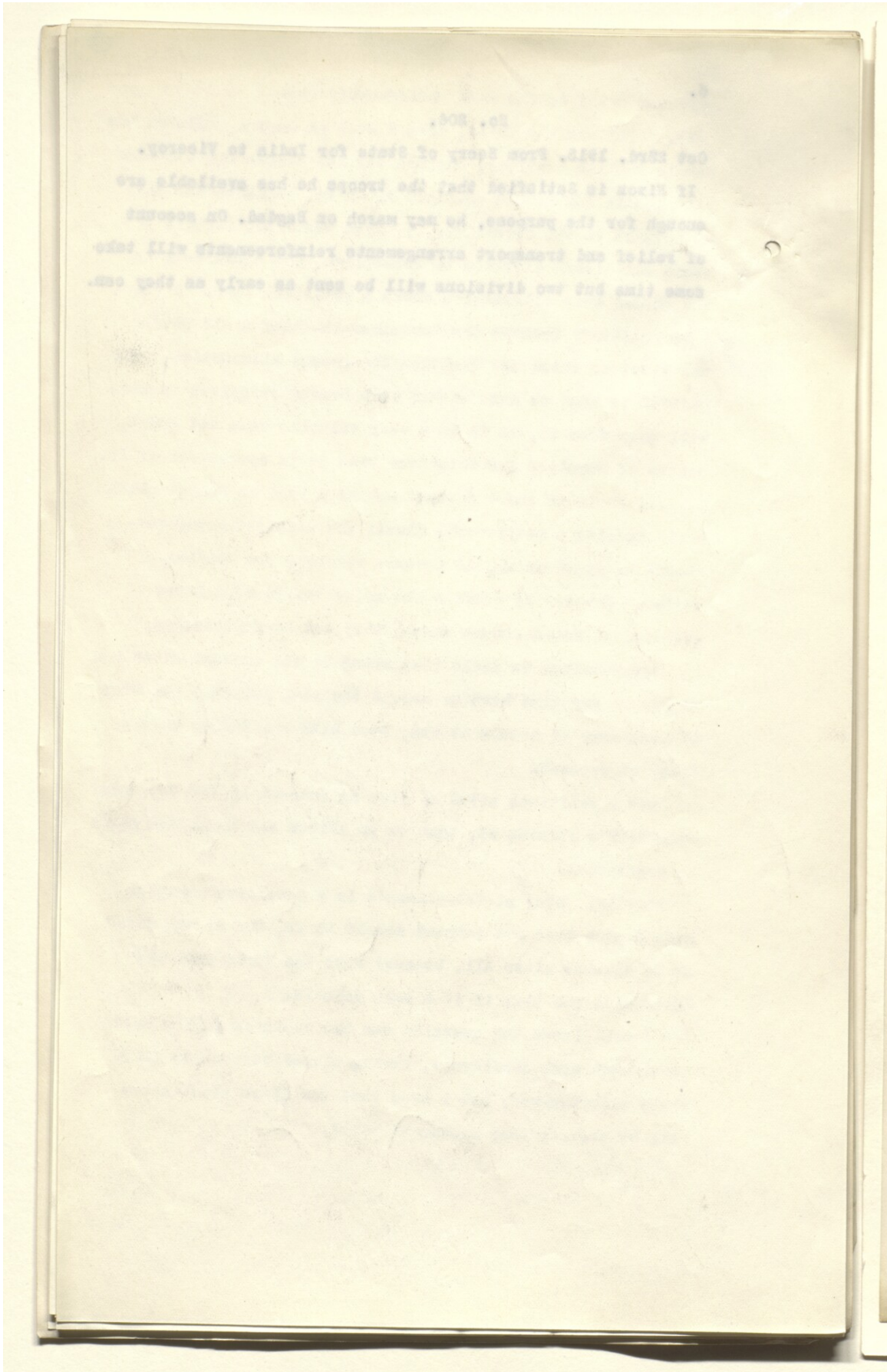
No. 204.

Oct 23rd. 1915. From Secy of State for India to Viceroy.

If Nixon is Satisfied that the troops he has available are enough for the purpose, he may march on Bagdad. On account of relief and transport arrangements reinforcements will take some time but two divisions will be sent as early as they can.



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [١٣ ظ] (١٨٩/٢٦)





No. 178.

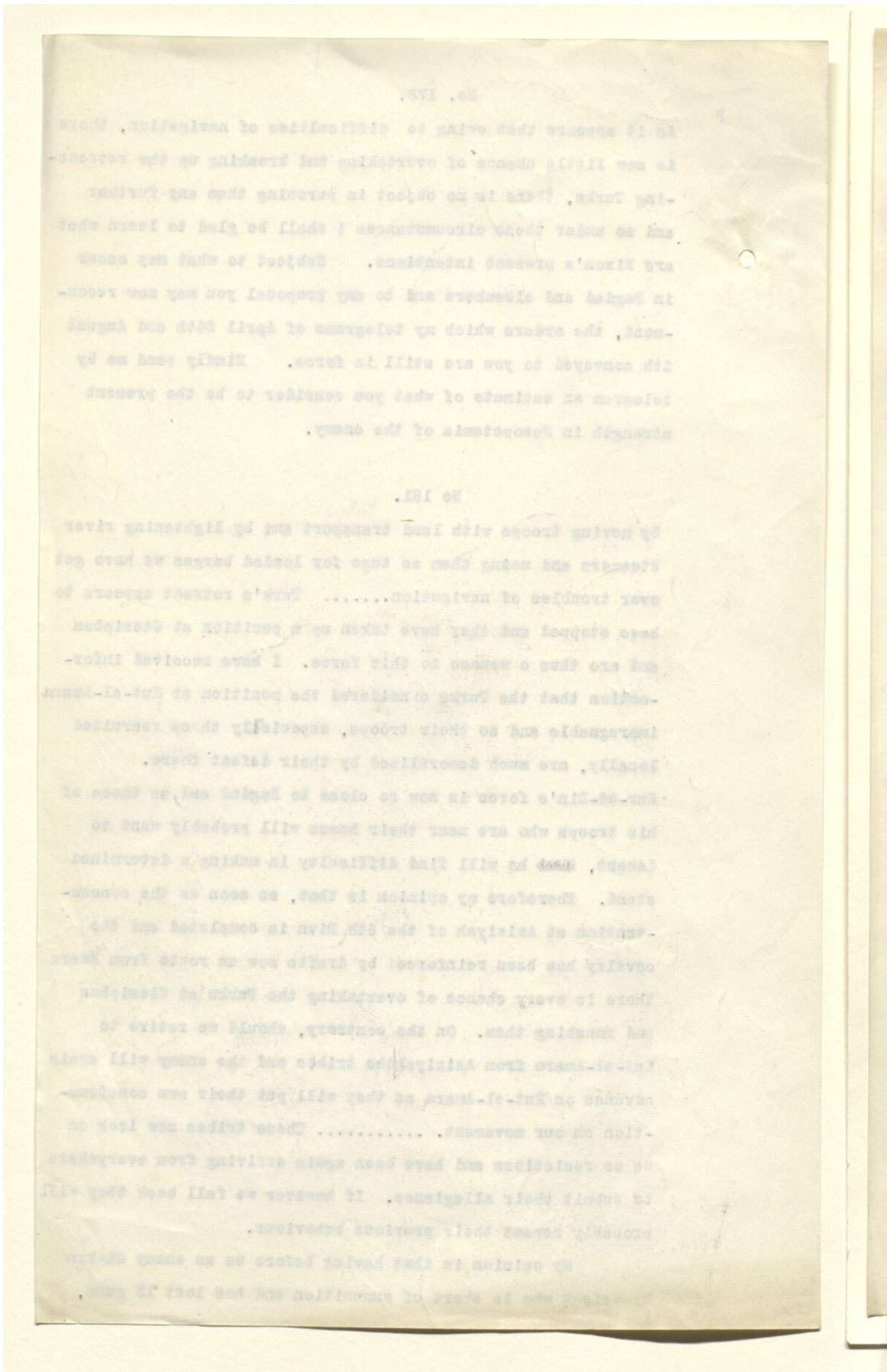
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As it appears that owing to difficulties of navigation, there is now little chance of overtaking and breaking up the retreating Turks, there is no object in pursuing them any further and so under these circumstances I shall be glad to learn what are Nixon's present intentions. Subject to what may occur in Bagdad and elsewhere and to any proposal you may now recommend, the orders which my telegrams of April 24th and August 6th conveyed to you are still in force. Kindly send me by telegram an estimate of what you consider to be the present strength in Mesopotamia of the enemy.

No 181.

By moving troops with land transport and by lightening river steamers and using them as tugs for loaded barges we have got over troubles of navigation..... Turk's retreat appears to have stopped and they have taken up a position at Ctesiphon and are thus a menace to this force. I have received information that the Turks considered the position at Kut-el-Amara impregnable and so their troops, especially those recruited locally, are much demoralized by their defeat there. Nur-ed-Din's force is now so close to Bagdad and, as those of his troops who are near their homes will probably want to desert, ~~that~~ he will find difficulty in making a determined stand. Therefore my opinion is that, as soon as the concentration at Aziziyah of the 6th Divn is completed and the cavalry has been reinforced by drafts now en route from Basra there is every chance of overtaking the Turks at Ctesiphon and smashing them. On the contrary, should we retire to Kut-el-Amara from Aziziyah the tribes and the enemy will again advance on Kut-el-Amara as they will put their own construction on our movement. These tribes now look on us as resistless and have been again arriving from everywhere to submit their allegiance. If however we fall back they will probably repeat their previous behaviour.

My opinion is that having before us an enemy shaken by defeat who is short of ammunition and has lost 13 guns,





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it is obviously desirable to finish him while the opportunity is present for military reasons. I have hopes of annihilating him now that he has taken refuge in a position against which we can manoeuvre. I do not see any reason which would warrant our not taking advantage of such a chance. Bagdad, from the military standpoint, is the principal junction in the enemy's line of advance and a centre from which he obtains large supplies, which it is vitally important for us to wrest from him and this is a reason for its occupation in addition to the political effect that would be caused thereby.

No. 182.

" Please inform me, with reference to my proposal to open the road to Bagdad by another attack on the Turks, if, in order that I may consolidate my position there, another division is to be sent from France to reinforce me. Should I subsequently be compelled, owing to want of reinforcements, to withdraw down the river from Bagdad, the effect of its occupation would be more than nullified. I should like to be informed of the Russian operations in the direction of Van. Has the Russian progress there been sufficient to menace the route from Asia Minor via the upper Tigris?

We are of opinion, taking into consideration the present conditions in the Dardanelles and in the Balkans, the activities of the Germans in Persia and the additional pressure on Afghanistan, that such an effect would be caused in the near East by the taking of Bagdad and such great strategic and political advantages present themselves thereby, that this operation is justified on these grounds but the addition of at least another division is necessary to carry them out. If this division is not forthcoming then Kut-el-Amara is the forward limit to which we propose to restrict Nixon.

No. 183.

Nixon has been ordered not to advance any further, this was telegraphed to him yesterday. This is the situation at present. With the troops he now has, Nixon could take Bagdad without



It is obviously desirable to limit the operations
in respect for military reasons. I have hopes of establishing
the law that he has taken refuge in a position against which
we can maneuver. I do not see any reason which would
warrant our not taking advantage of such a chance. Indeed,
from the military standpoint, as the original position in
the enemy's line of advance and a center from which he
obtains large supplies, which it is vitally important for us
to wrest from him and this is a reason for the operation
in addition to the political effect that would be caused
thereby.

No. 182.

* These letters are, with reference to my proposal to open the
road to Baghdad by another attack on the Taurus, it is clear
that I am consolidating my position there, another division is
to be sent from Vienna to reinforce it. Should I subse-
quently be compelled, owing to want of reinforcements, to with-
draw down the river from Baghdad, the effect of the operation
would be more than nullified. I should like to be informed
of the Russian operations in the direction of Van. Has the
Russian progress there been sufficient to menace the route
from Asia Minor via the upper Euphrates.....

As a matter of opinion, taking into consideration the present
conditions in the Balkans and in the Helms, the
activities of the Germans in Syria and the additional pressure
on Alexandria, that such an effort would be caused in the
near East by the taking of Baghdad and such great political
and political advantages present themselves thereby, that
the operation is justified on these grounds but the station
of at least another division is necessary to carry them out.
If this division is not forthcoming from the East in the
forward line to which we propose to transfer it.

No. 183.

Nixon has been ordered not to advance any further, this was
referred to him yesterday. This is the situation at present
with the troops he now has. Nixon could take Baghdad without



3

much difficulty, capturing and destroying enemy river craft at the same time, by which means Turkish offensive down the river, in the near future, would be rendered practically impossible. Nevertheless, unless he received reinforcements of one division, he would not be able to maintain himself there, exposed to attack by fresh troops from Aleppo or Mosul. To go to Bagdad and subsequently to have to withdraw through pressure from the enemy, would be a very great political mistake. Under these circumstances he must stay at Kut-el-Amara unless reinforcements can be sent him to Mesopotamia from somewhere else than India. At the same time, the fall of Bagdad would have a very great political effect in the middle East, and would to some extent balance the unfavourable impression which our lack of success in Gallipoli has created.

No. 184

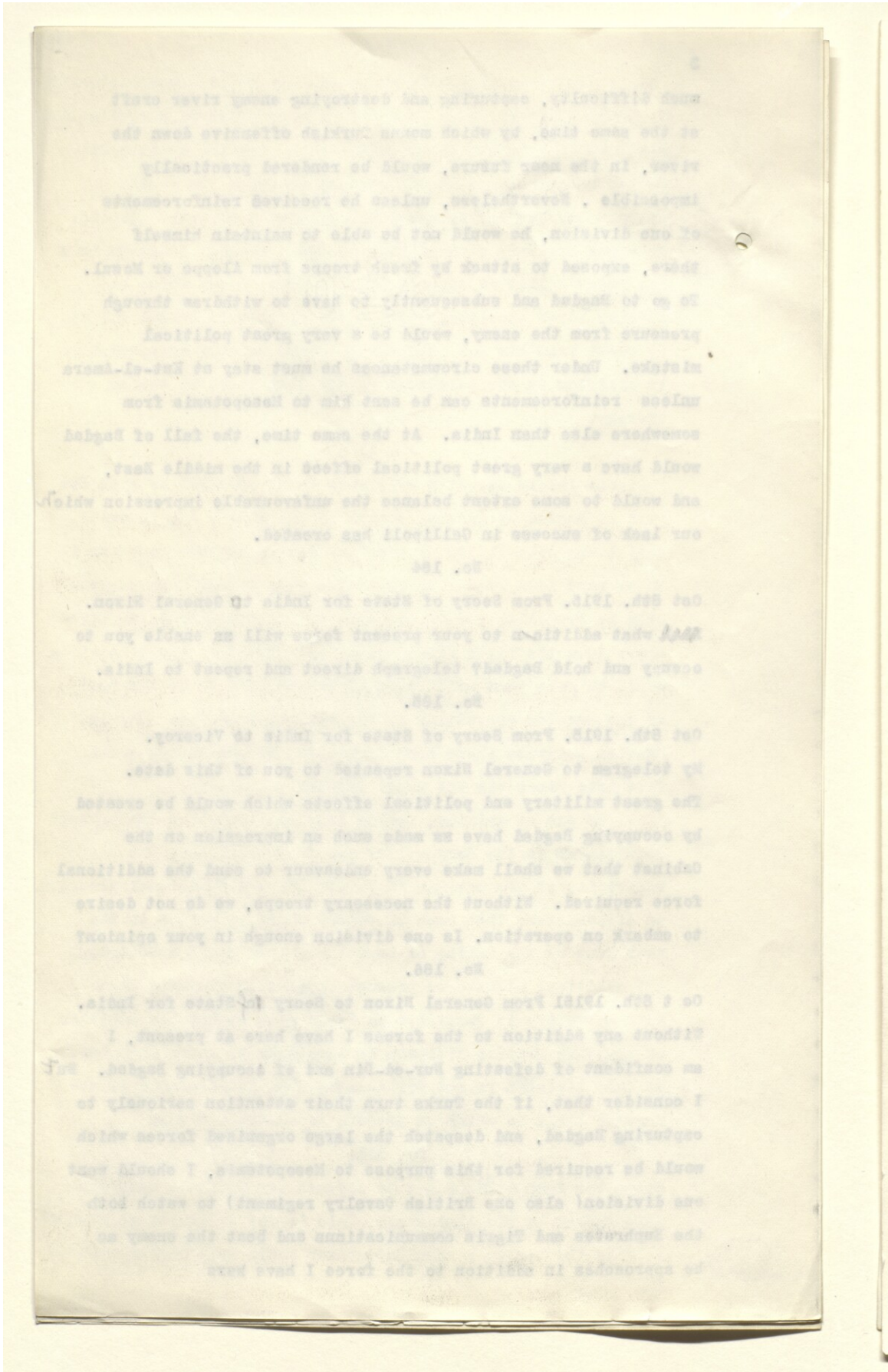
Oct 8th. 1915. From Secy of State for India to General Nixon.
~~What~~ what addition to your present force will ~~en~~ enable you to occupy and hold Bagdad? telegraph direct and repeat to India.

No. 185.

Oct 8th. 1915. From Secy of State for India to Viceroy.
My telegram to General Nixon repeated to you of this date. The great military and political effects which would be created by occupying Bagdad have ~~en~~ made such an impression on the Cabinet that we shall make every endeavour to send the additional force required. Without the necessary troops, we do not desire to embark on operation. Is one division enough in your opinion?

No. 186.

Oct 8th. 1915 From General Nixon to Secy of State for India.
Without any addition to the forces I have here at present, I am confident of defeating Nur-ed-Din and of occupying Bagdad. But I consider that, if the Turks turn their attention seriously to capturing Bagdad, and despatch the large organized forces which would be required for this purpose to Mesopotamia, I should want one division (also one British Cavalry regiment) to watch both the Euphrates and Tigris communications and beat the enemy as he approaches in addition to the force I have ~~here~~





4.

I also consider that the best position from which to do this is Bagdad.

No. 190.

Oct 9th. 1915. From Viceroy to Secy of State for India.
Reference to Nixon's telegram of 8th inst and your's of same date. Glad to hear of Cabinet's decision. Having consulted with Commander-in-Chief I consider that Nixon can best form an opinion as to the number of troops he requires, so we understand that when he speaks of a division, he means a complete division with its divisional cavalry and guns and proper proportion of British troops. He asks for a regiment of cavalry in addition to this. Although we are ready to accept his opinion, we also think that, as India cannot supply the drafts to ensure the British units now with him being maintained up to full strength, it will be necessary for these to be sent from home. The Indian units will be kept up to strength by us. Further we are of opinion that the reinforcements should get to Bagdad not later than one month after it has been taken, for we calculate that this is the time that must elapse before the Turks can concentrate in sufficient strength to attempt to retake it.

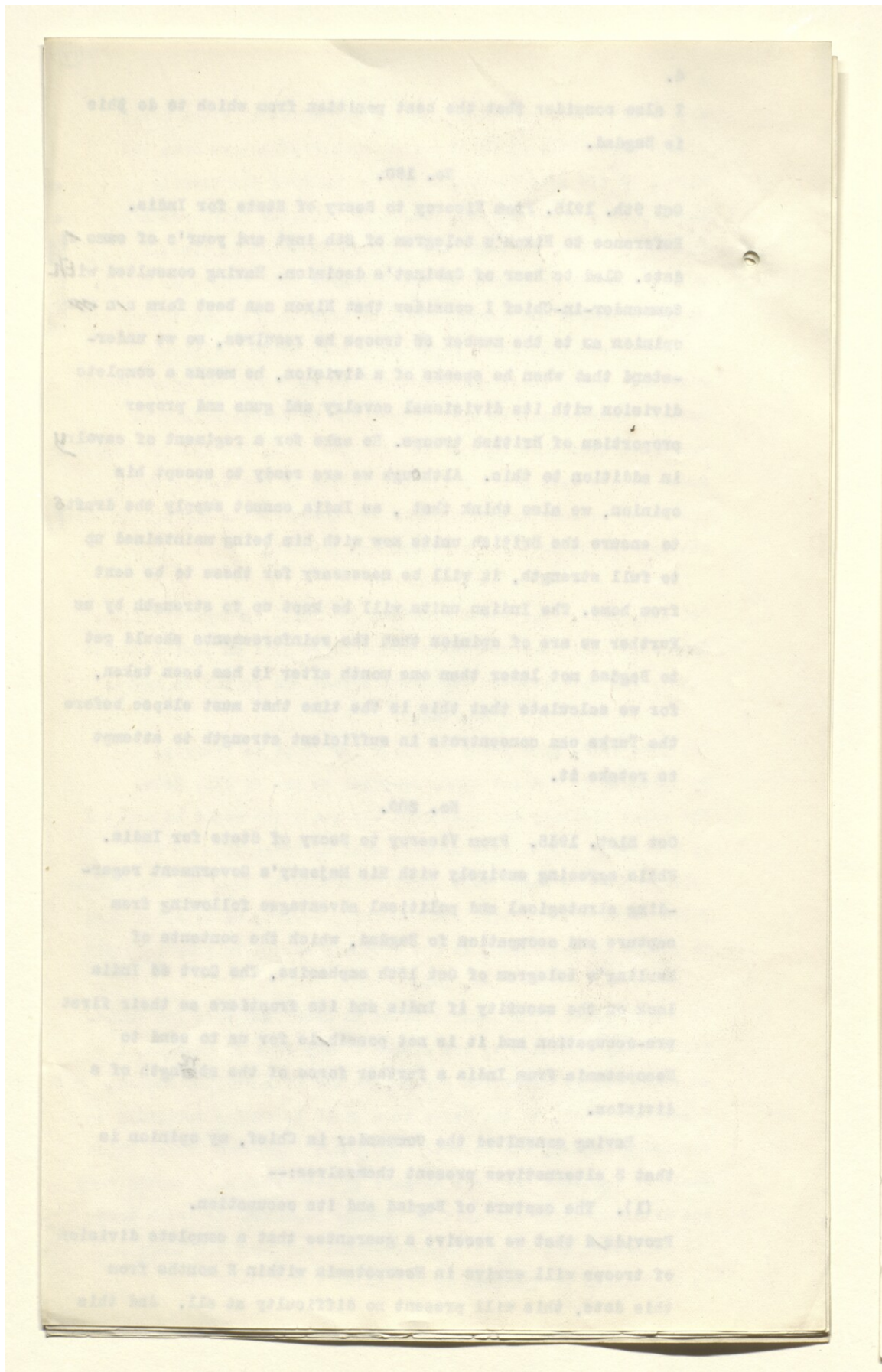
No. 200.

Oct 21st. 1915. From Viceroy to Secy of State for India.
While agreeing entirely with His Majesty's Government regarding strategical and political advantages following from capture and occupation of Bagdad, which the contents of Marling's telegram of Oct 15th emphasise, The Govt of India look on the security of India and its frontiers as their first pre-occupation and it is not possible for us to send to Mesopotamia from India a further force of the strength of a division.

Having consulted the Commander in Chief, my opinion is that 3 alternatives present themselves:--

(1). The capture of Bagdad and its occupation.

Provided that we receive a guarantee that a complete division of troops will arrive in Mesopotamia within 2 months from this date, this will present no difficulty at all. And this





5.

solution would be the most satisfactory one.

(2). To attack the Turks, make a raid on Bagdad, release the female English captives, capture the few stores and steamers that remain and from a position S. of it, dominate the city by patrols up the river..... This would not require a whole additional division to accomplish, but would only be the second best alternative from a political point of view.

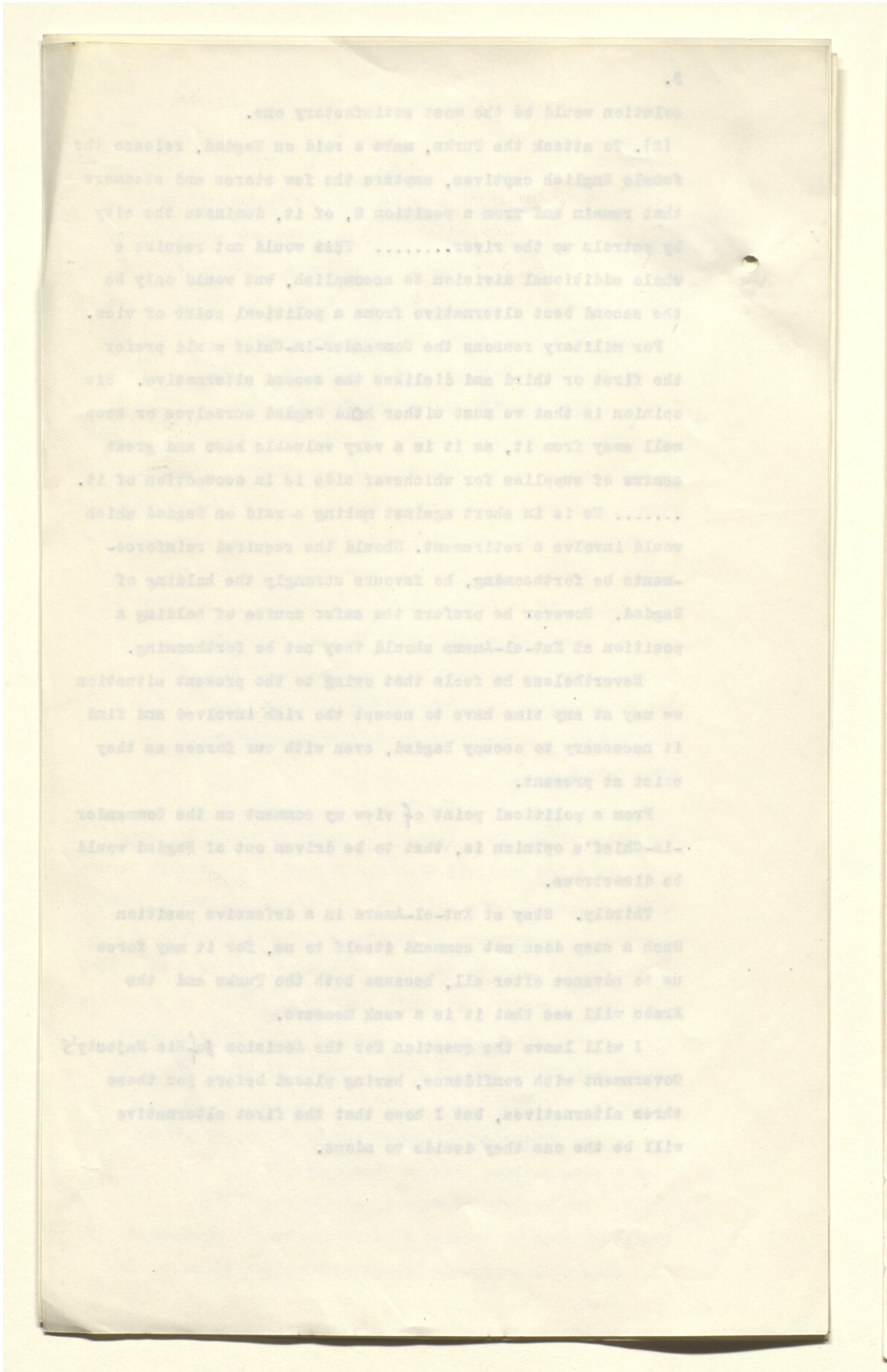
For military reasons the Commander-in-Chief would prefer the first or third and dislikes the second alternative. His opinion is that we must either hold Bagdad ourselves or keep well away from it, as it is a very valuable base and great centre of supplies for whichever side is in occupation of it. He is in short against making a raid on Bagdad which would involve a retirement. Should the required reinforcements be forthcoming, he favours strongly the holding of Bagdad. However he prefers the safer course of holding a position at Kut-el-Amara should they not be forthcoming.

Nevertheless he feels that owing to the present situation we may at any time have to accept the risk involved and find it necessary to occupy Bagdad, even with our forces as they exist at present.

From a political point of view my comment on the Commander-in-Chief's opinion is, that to be driven out of Bagdad would be disastrous.

Thirdly. Stay at Kut-el-Amara in a defensive position. Such a step does not commend itself to us, for it may force us to advance after all, because both the Turks and the Arabs will see that it is a weak measure.

I will leave the question for the decision of His Majesty's Government with confidence, having placed before you these three alternatives, but I hope that the first alternative will be the one they decide to adopt.





6.

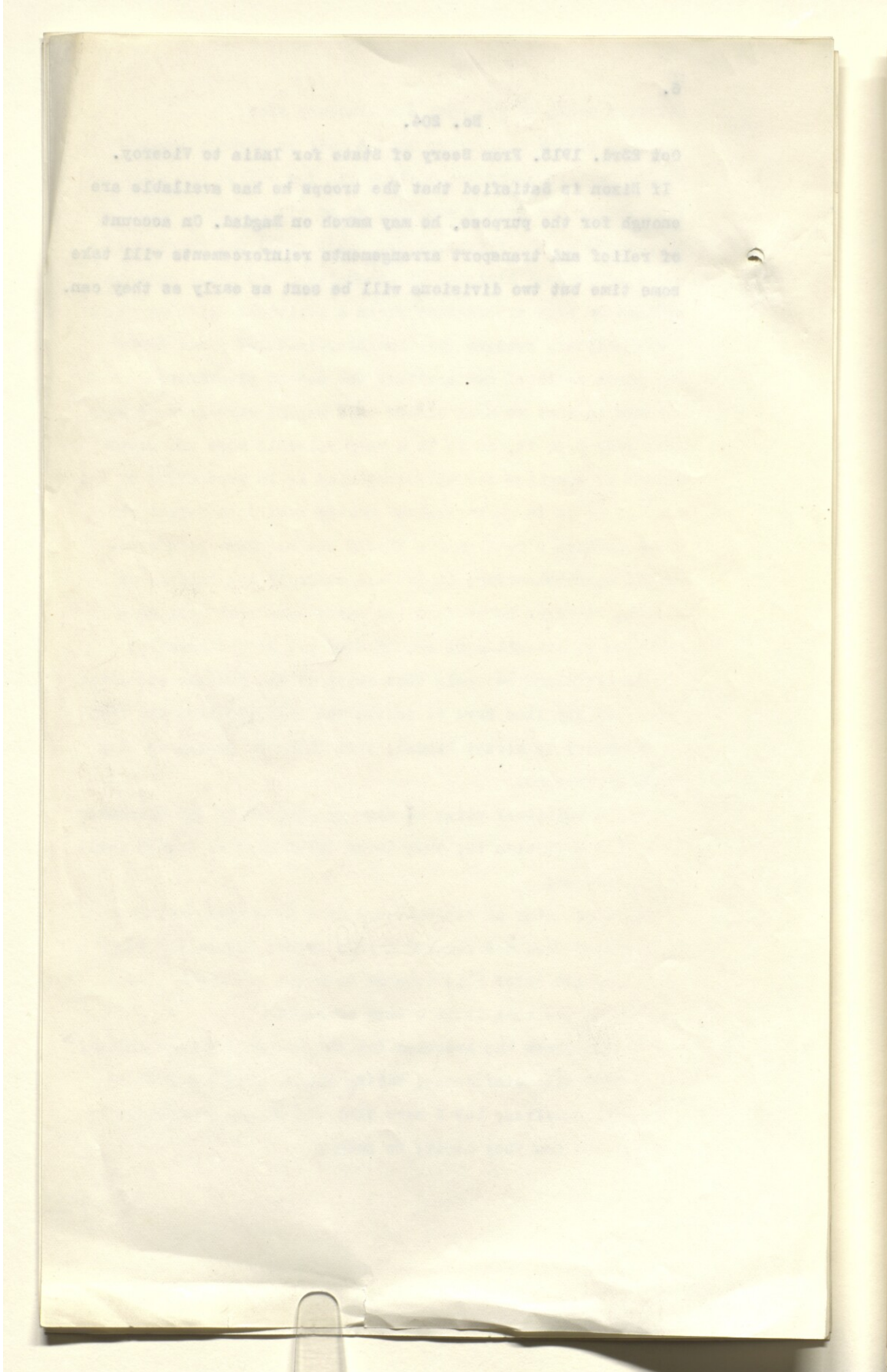
No. 204.

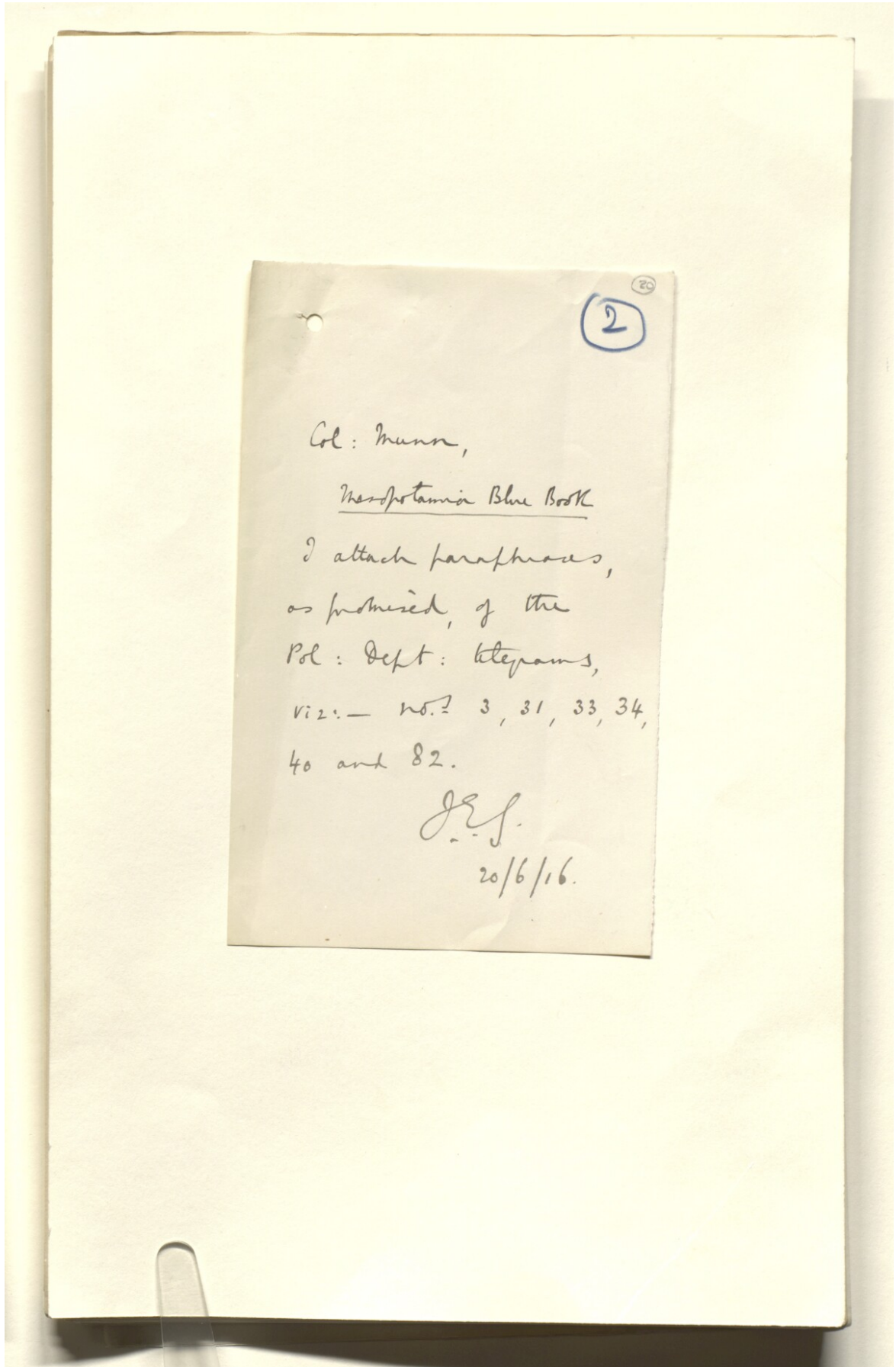
Oct 23rd. 1915. From Secy of State for India to Viceroy.

If Nixon is Satisfied that the troops he has available are enough for the purpose, he may march on Bagdad. On account of relief and transport arrangements reinforcements will take some time but two divisions will be sent as early as they can.



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [١٩ ظ] (١٨٩/٣٨)





(2)

Col: Munn,

Mesopotamia Blue Book

I attach paraphrases,
as promised, of the

Pol: Dept: ktegrams,

viz: - nos. 3, 31, 33, 34,

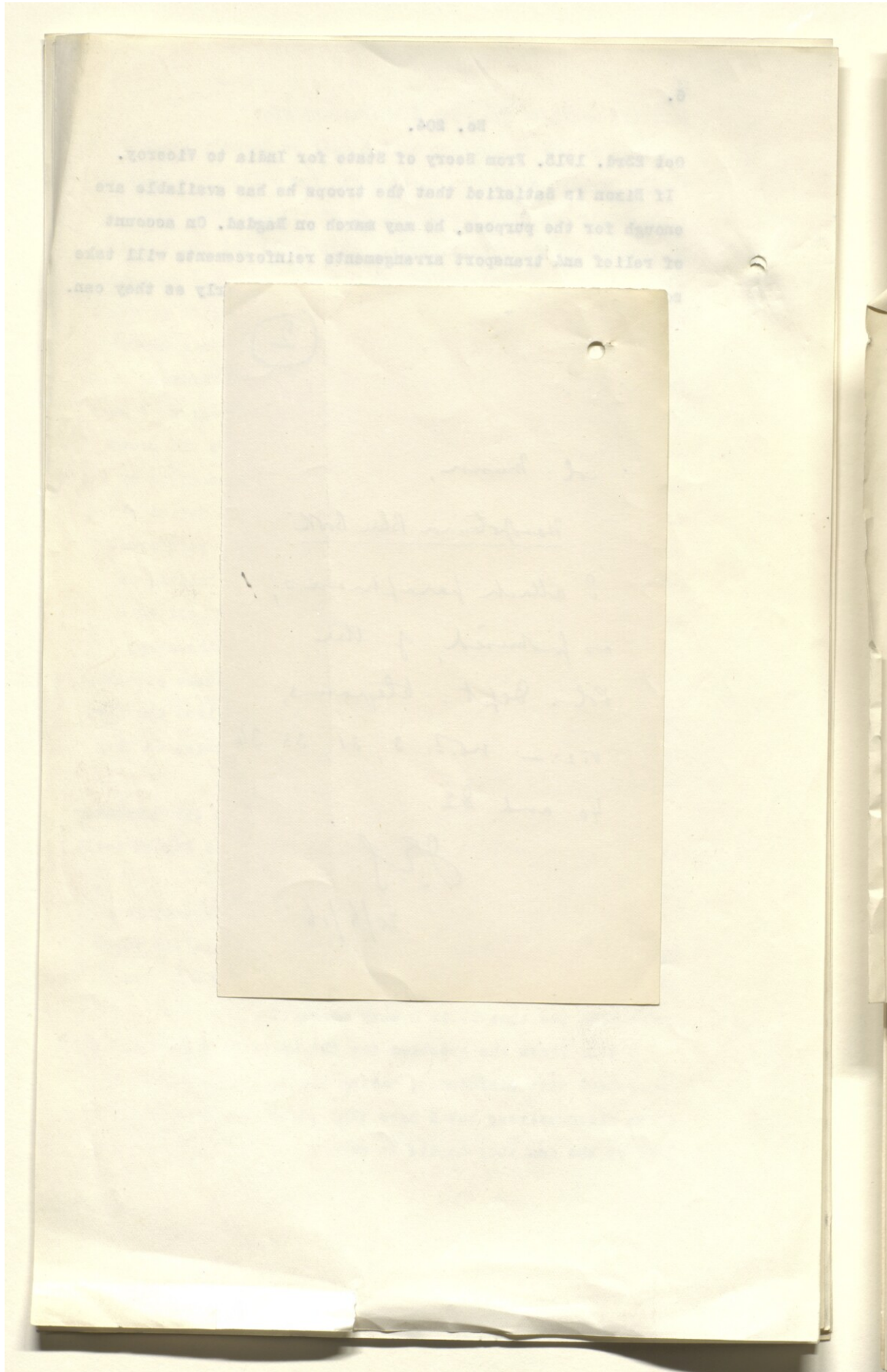
40 and 82.

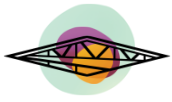
J.R.F.

20/6/16.

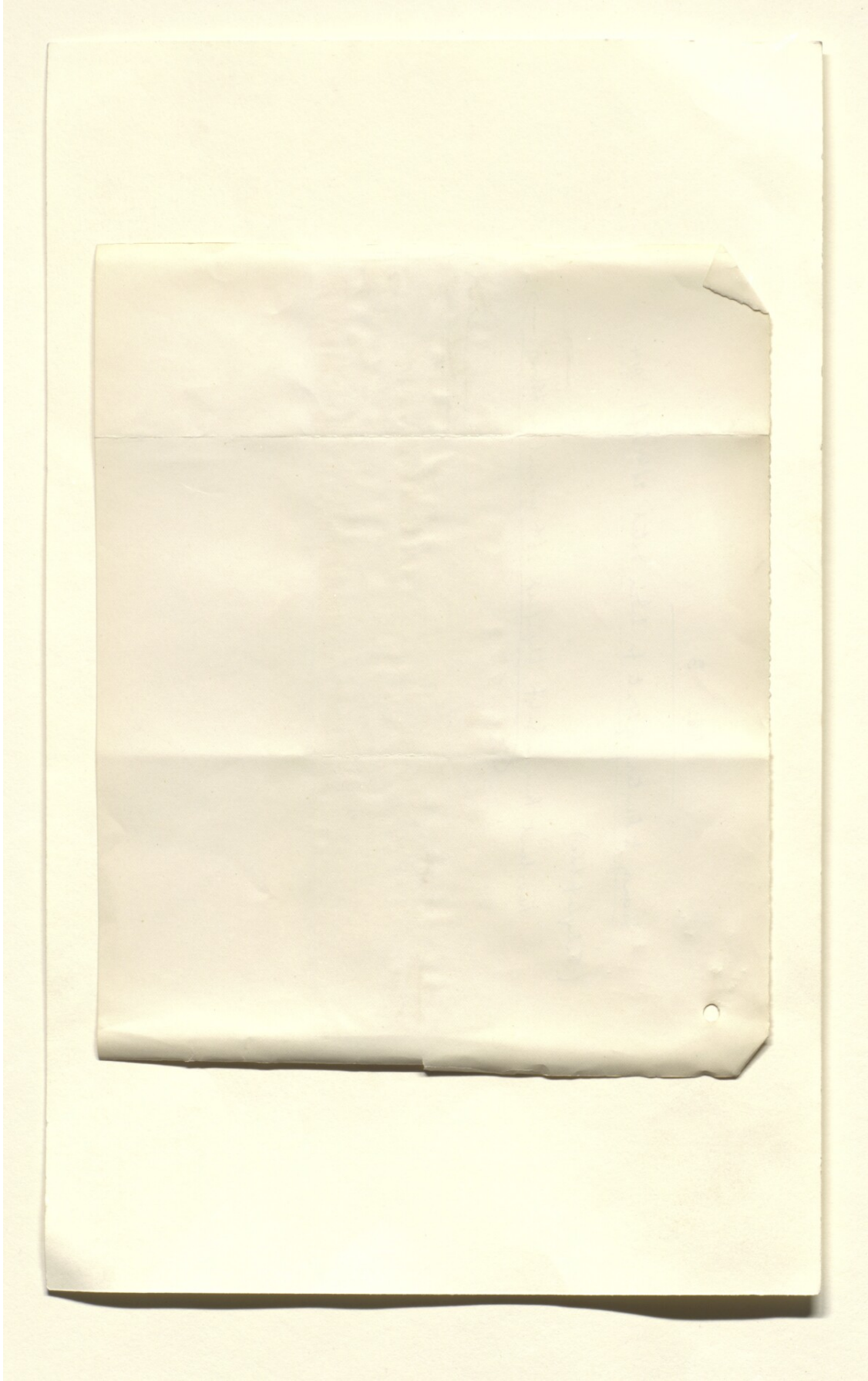


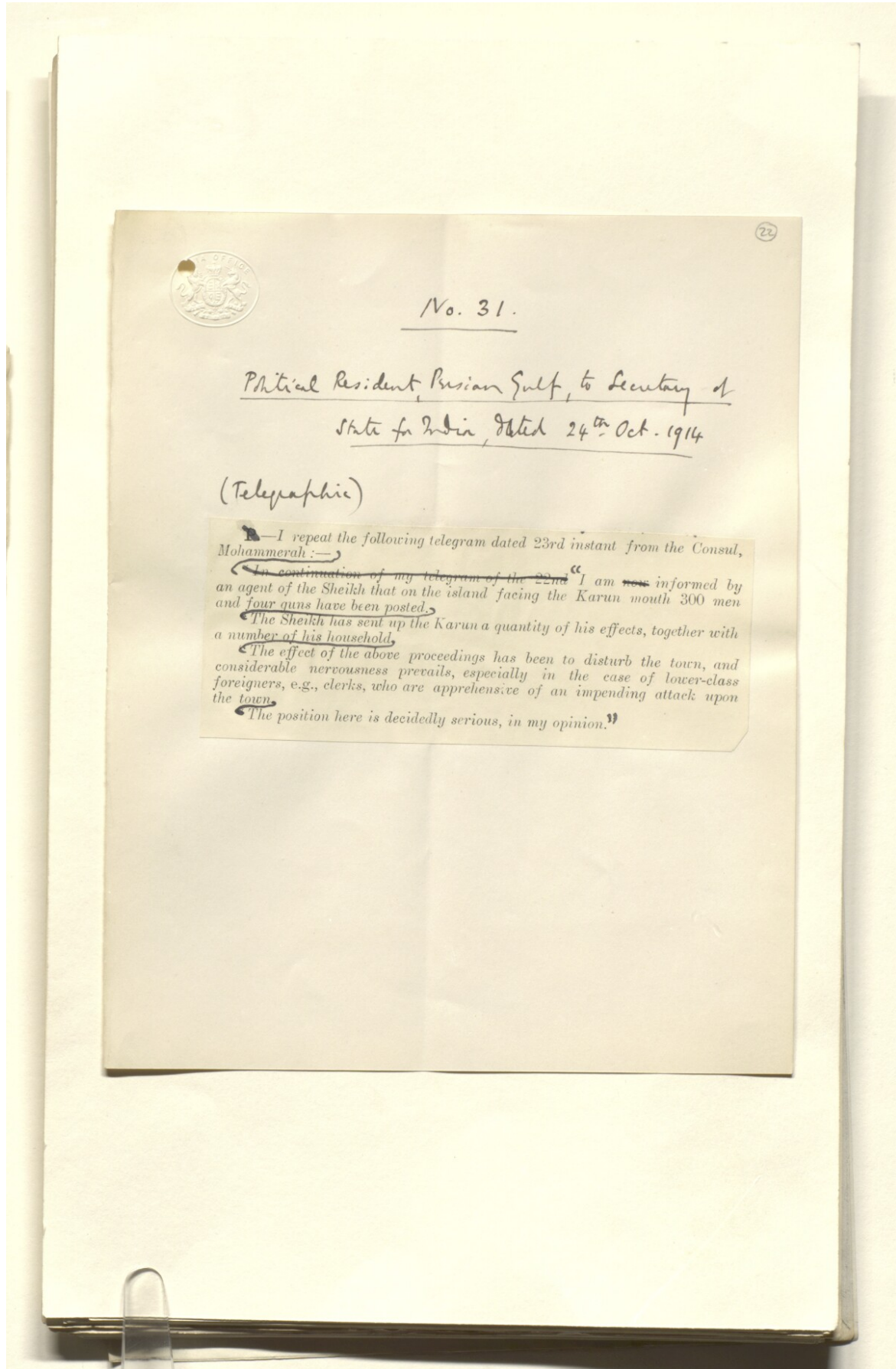
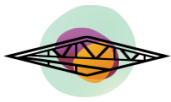
"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٠ ظ] (١٨٩/٤٠)





"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢١ظ] (١٨٩/٤٢)





22

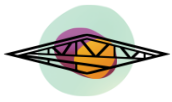


No. 31.

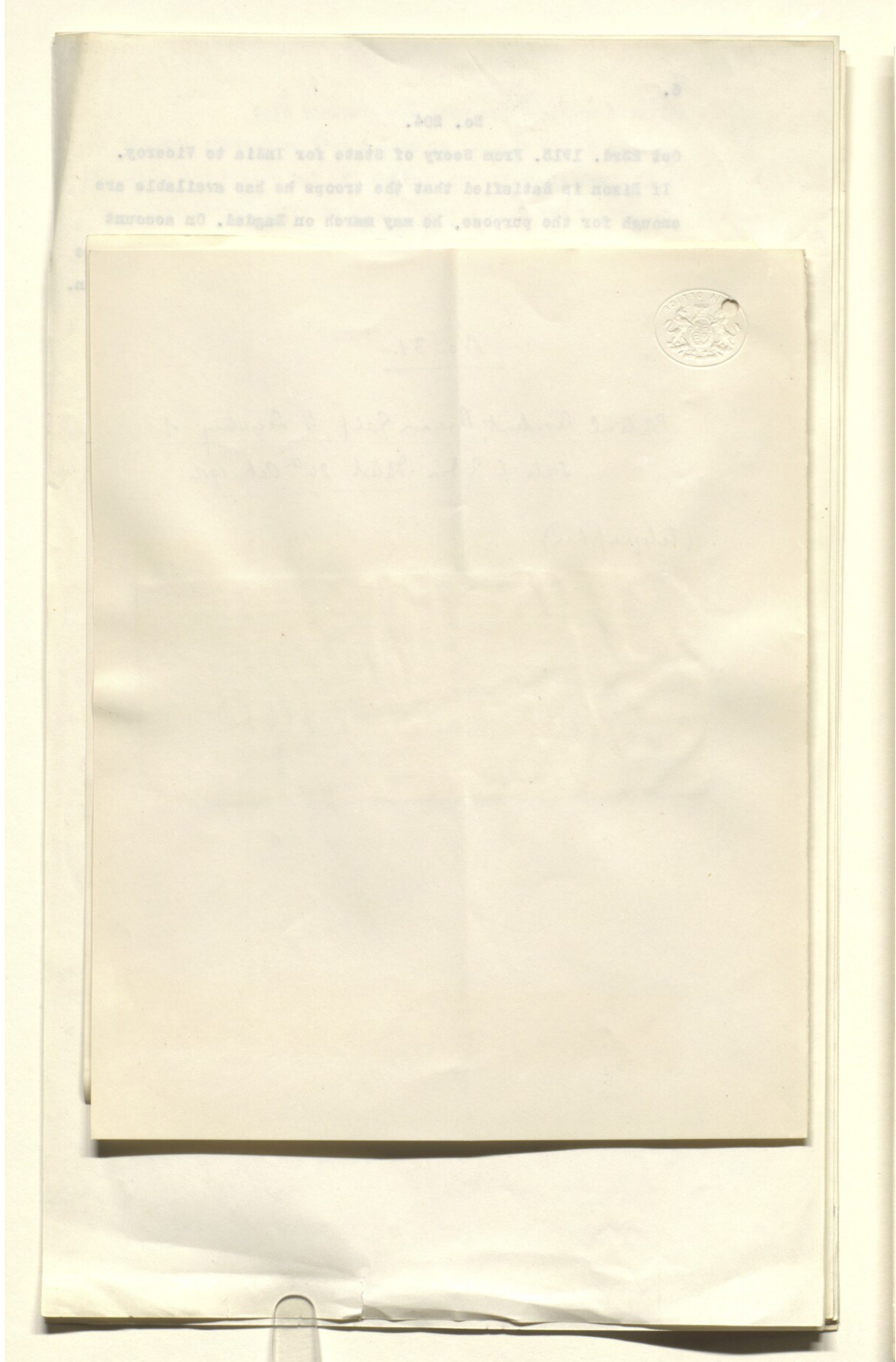
Political Resident, Persian Gulf, to Secretary of
State for India, Dated 24th Oct. 1914

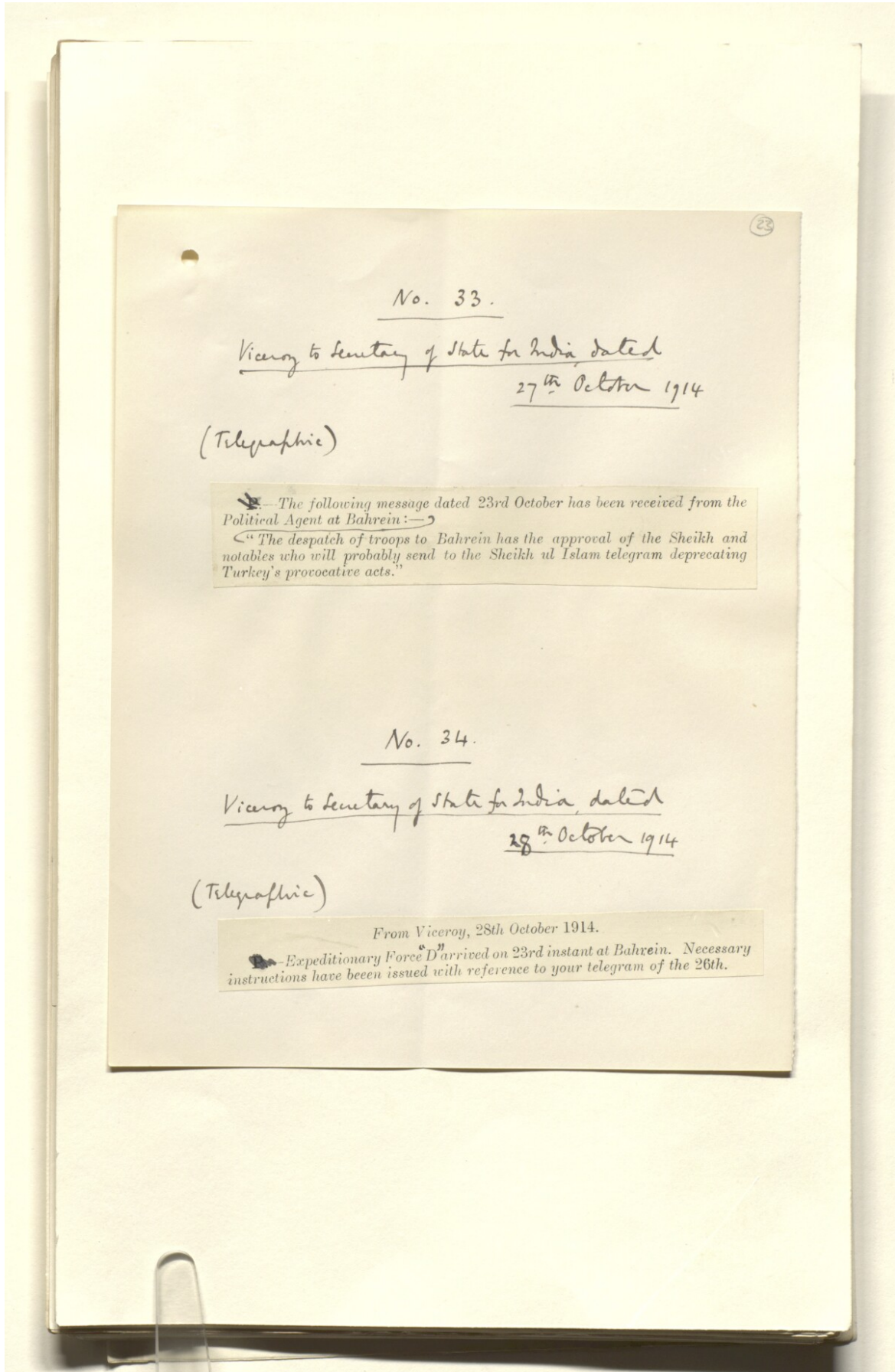
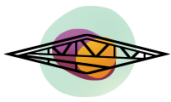
(Telegraphic)

I repeat the following telegram dated 23rd instant from the Consul, Mohammedrah:—
"In continuation of my telegram of the 22nd I am now informed by an agent of the Sheikh that on the island facing the Karun mouth 300 men and four guns have been posted.
The Sheikh has sent up the Karun a quantity of his effects, together with a number of his household.
The effect of the above proceedings has been to disturb the town, and considerable nervousness prevails, especially in the case of lower-class foreigners, e.g., clerks, who are apprehensive of an impending attack upon the town.
The position here is decidedly serious, in my opinion."



"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٢ ظ] (١٨٩/٤٤)





No. 33.

Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, dated
27th October 1914

(Telegraphic)

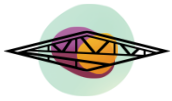
The following message dated 23rd October has been received from the Political Agent at Bahrein:—
"The despatch of troops to Bahrein has the approval of the Sheikh and notables who will probably send to the Sheikh ul Islam telegram deprecating Turkey's provocative acts."

No. 34.

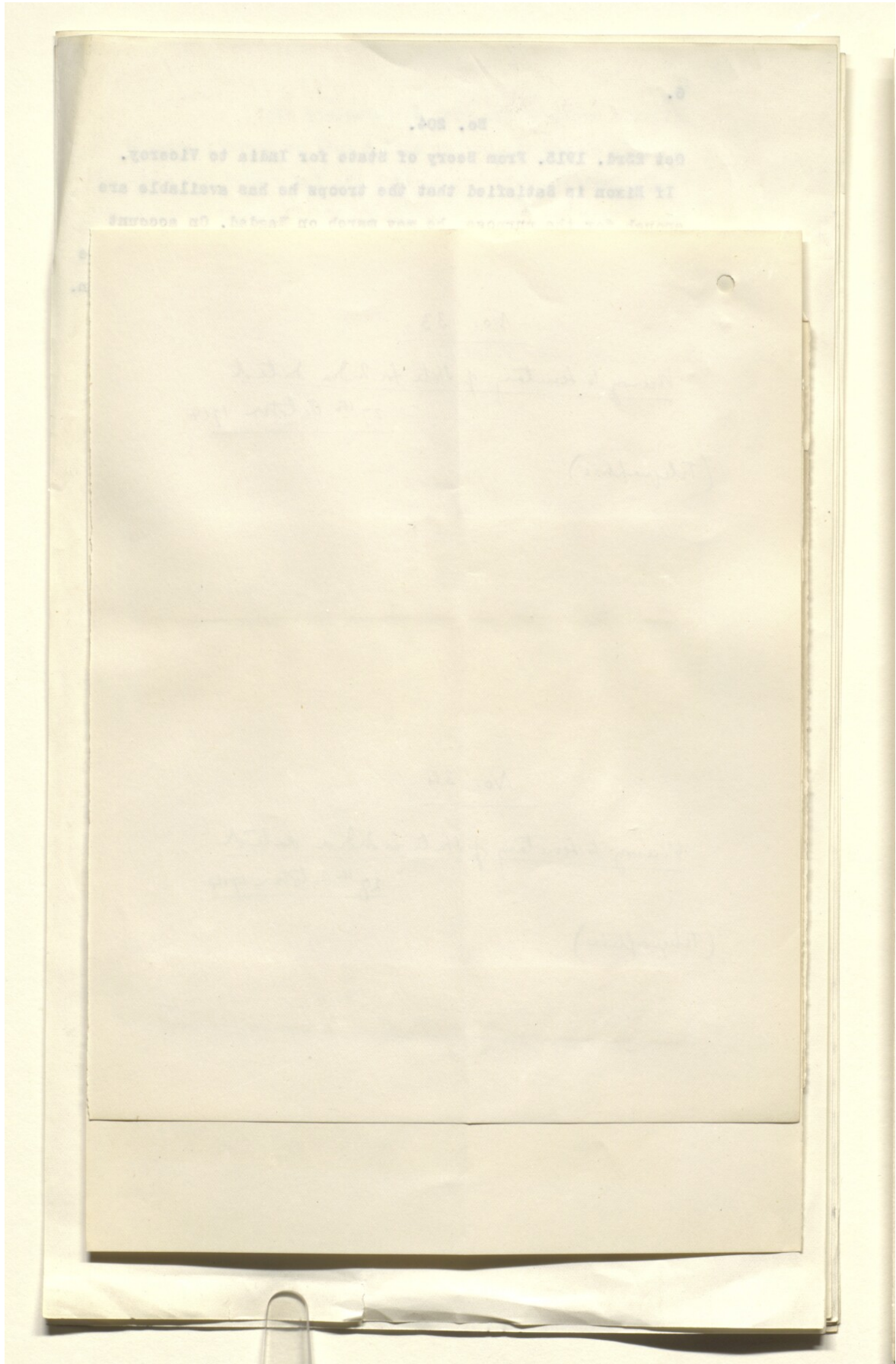
Viceroy to Secretary of State for India, dated
28th October 1914

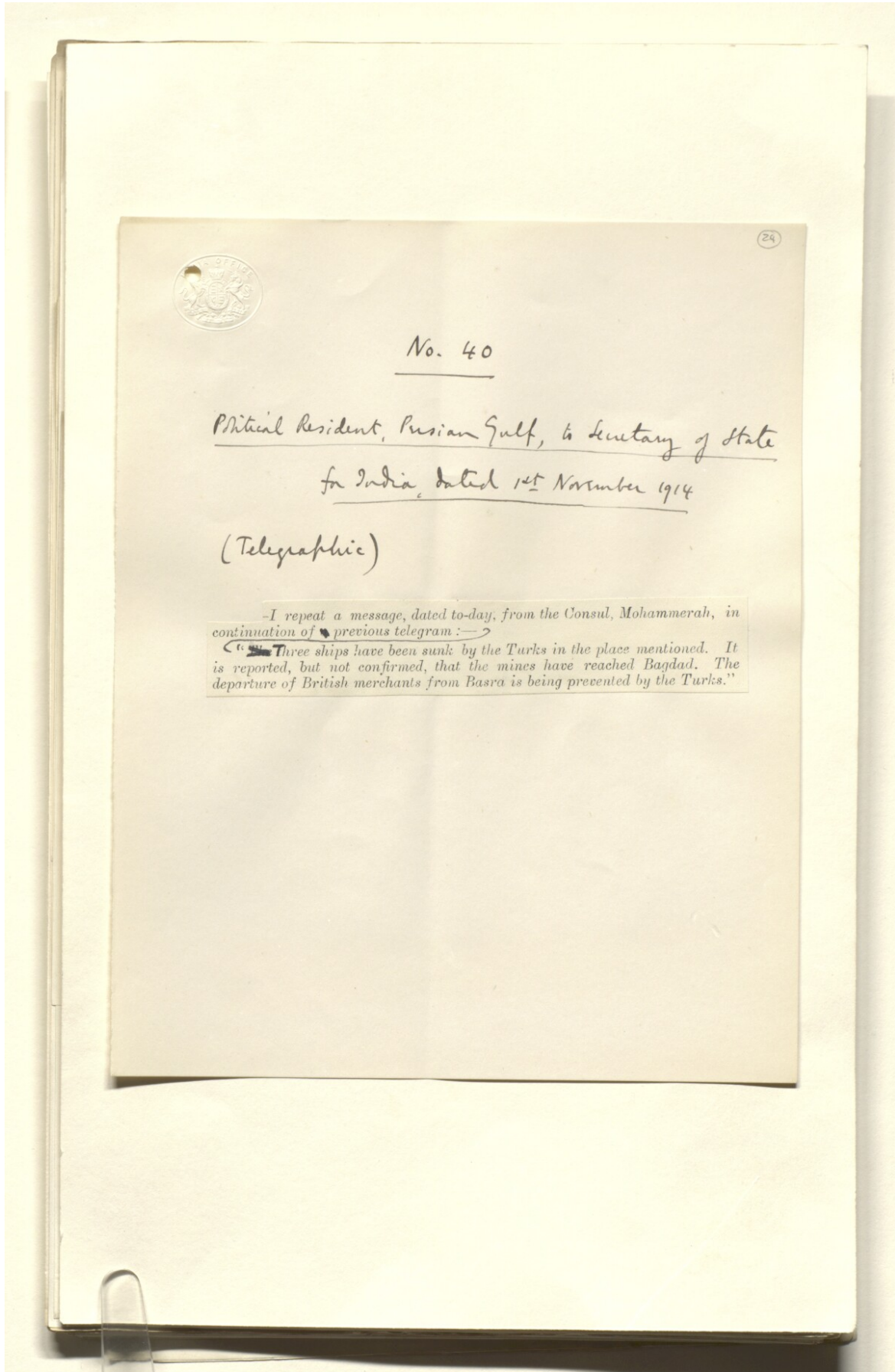
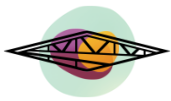
(Telegraphic)

From Viceroy, 28th October 1914.
Expeditionary Force D'arrived on 23rd instant at Bahrein. Necessary instructions have been issued with reference to your telegram of the 26th.



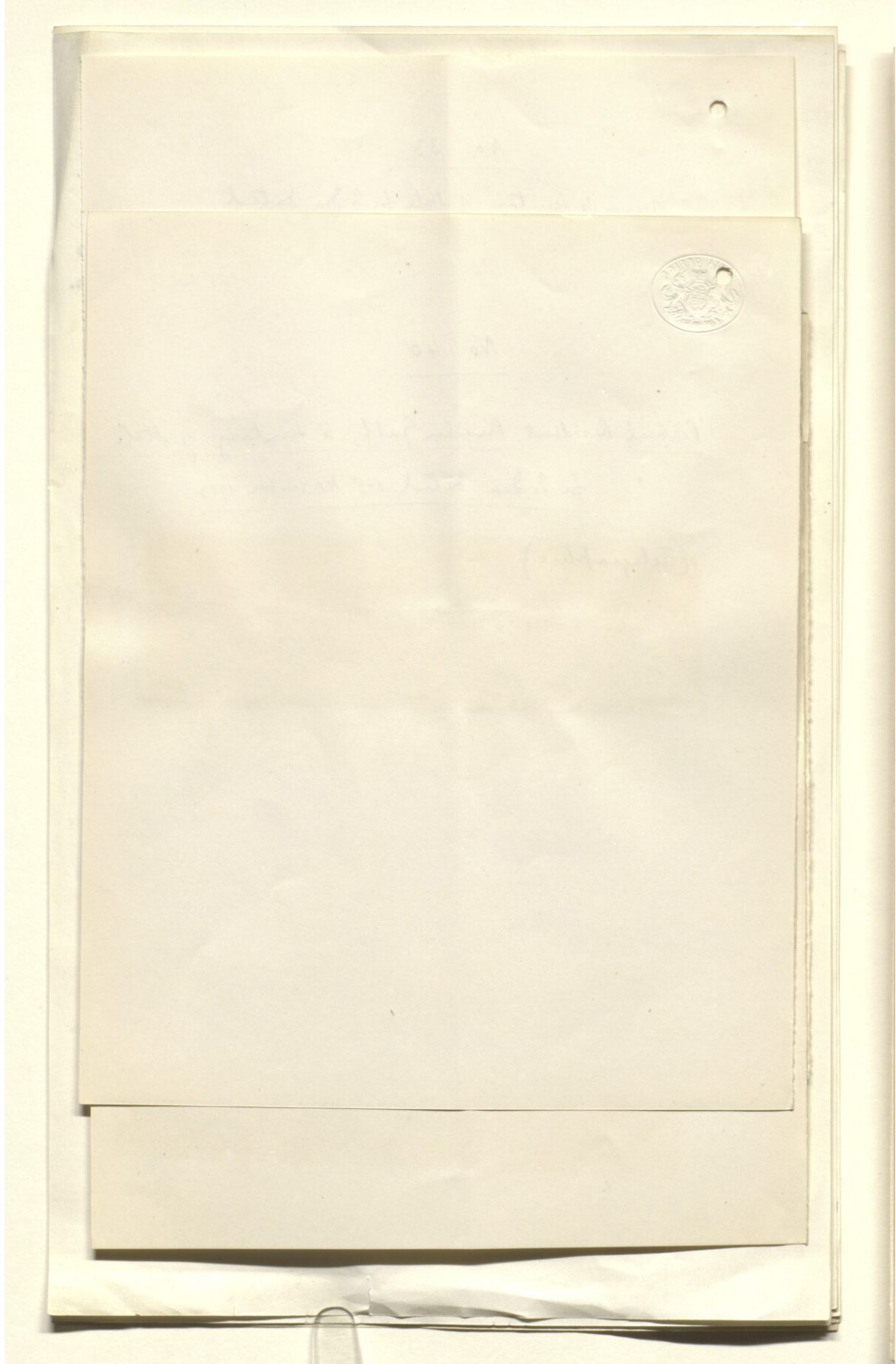
"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٣ ظ] (١٨٩/٤٦)

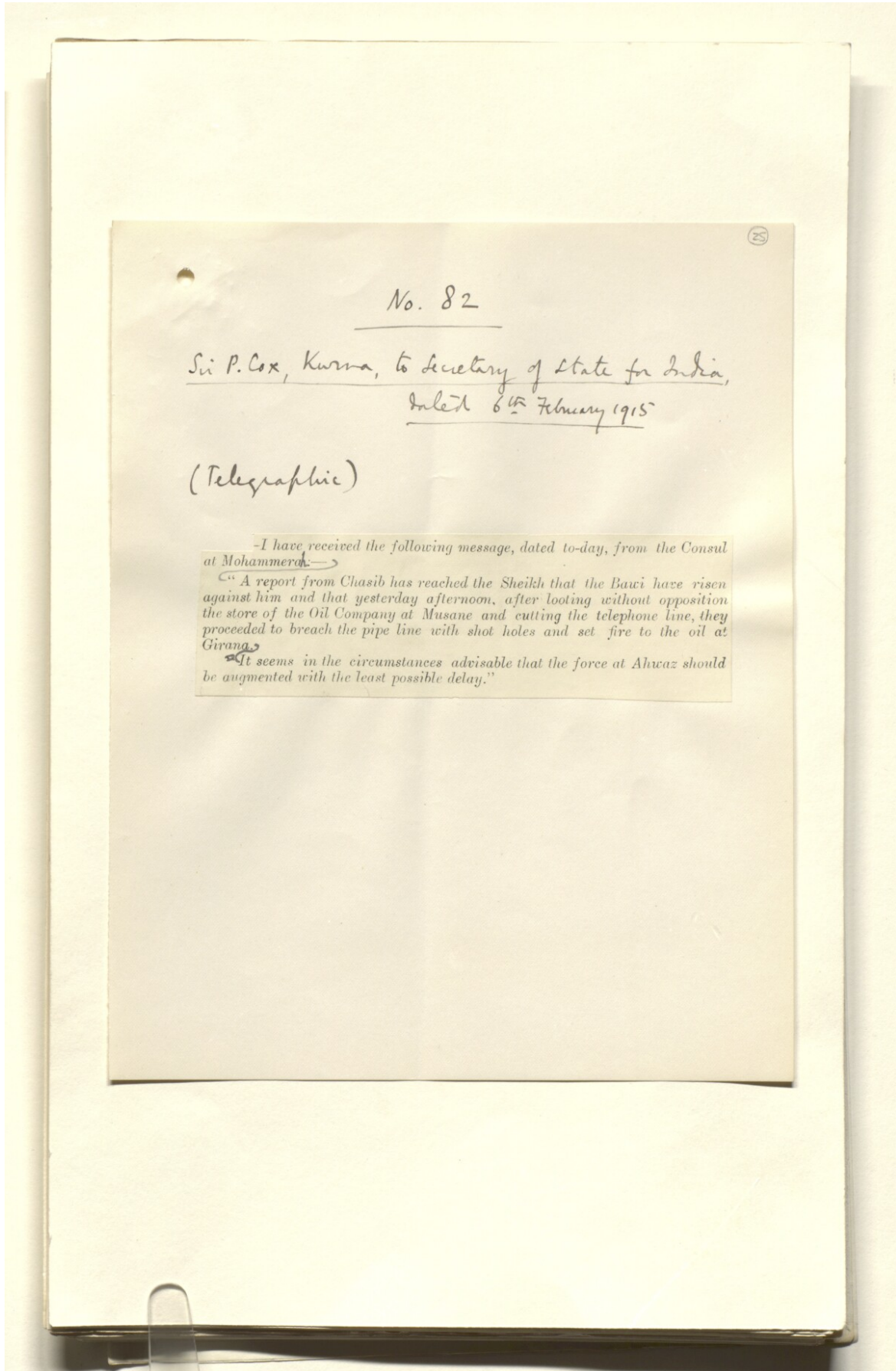
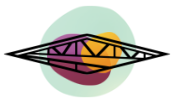






"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٤ ظ] (١٨٩/٤٨)





No. 82

Sir P. Cox, Kurma, to Secretary of State for India,
dated 6th February 1915

(Telegraphic)

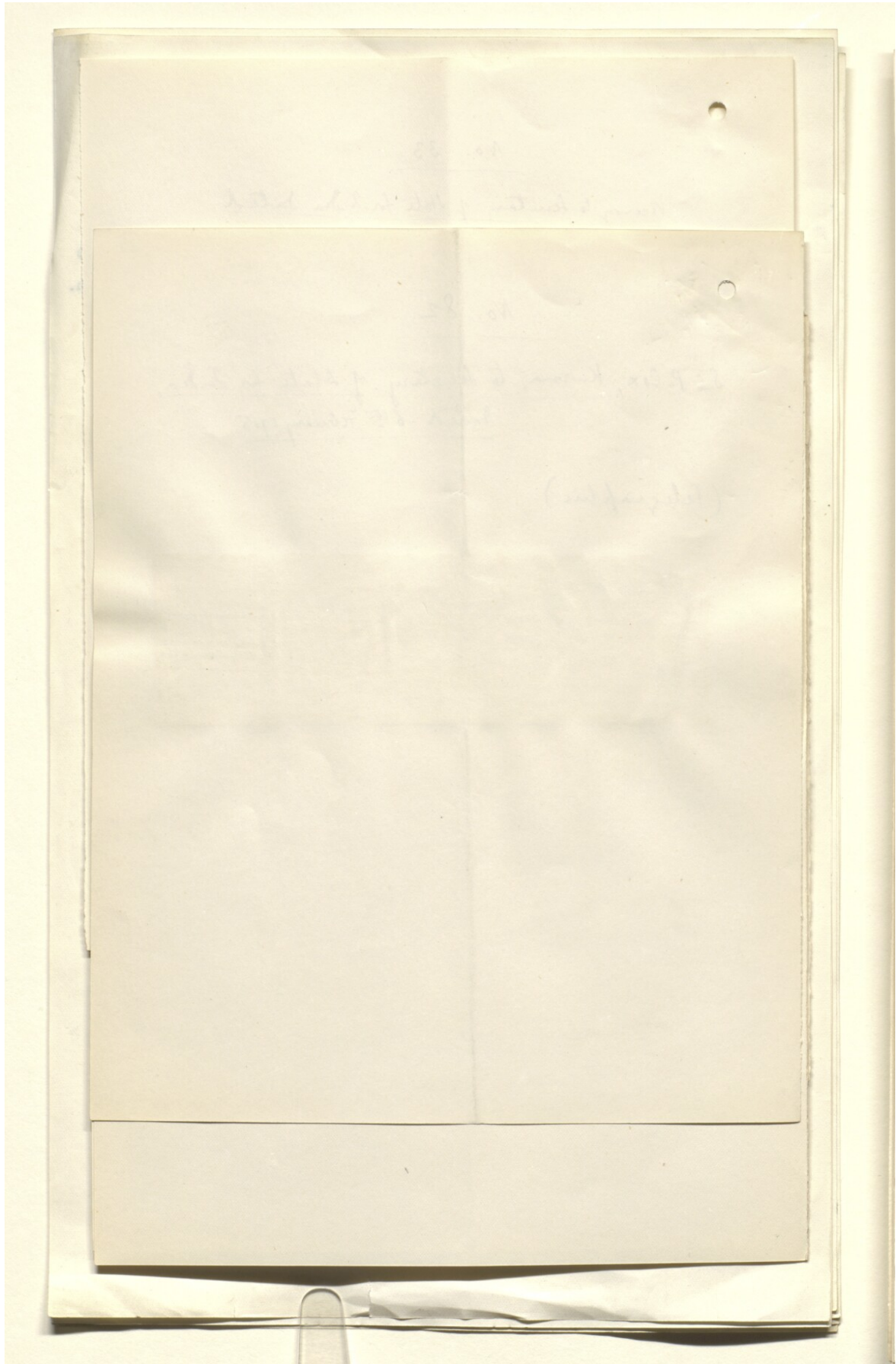
-I have received the following message, dated to-day, from the Consul at Mohammerah-

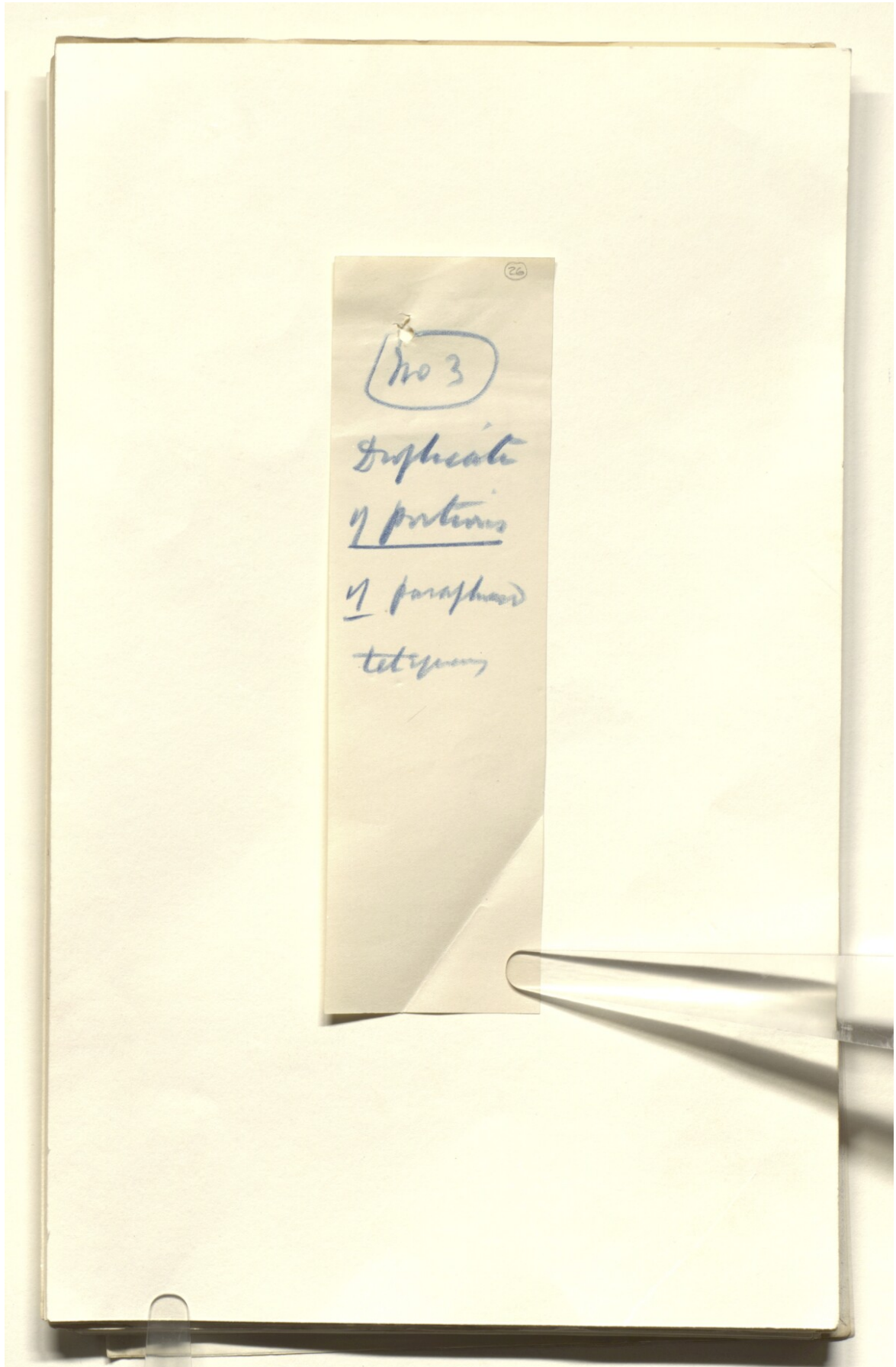
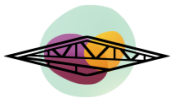
"A report from Chasib has reached the Sheikh that the Bawi have risen against him and that yesterday afternoon, after looting without opposition the store of the Oil Company at Musane and cutting the telephone line, they proceeded to breach the pipe line with shot holes and set fire to the oil at Girana."

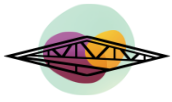
"It seems in the circumstances advisable that the force at Ahwaz should be augmented with the least possible delay."



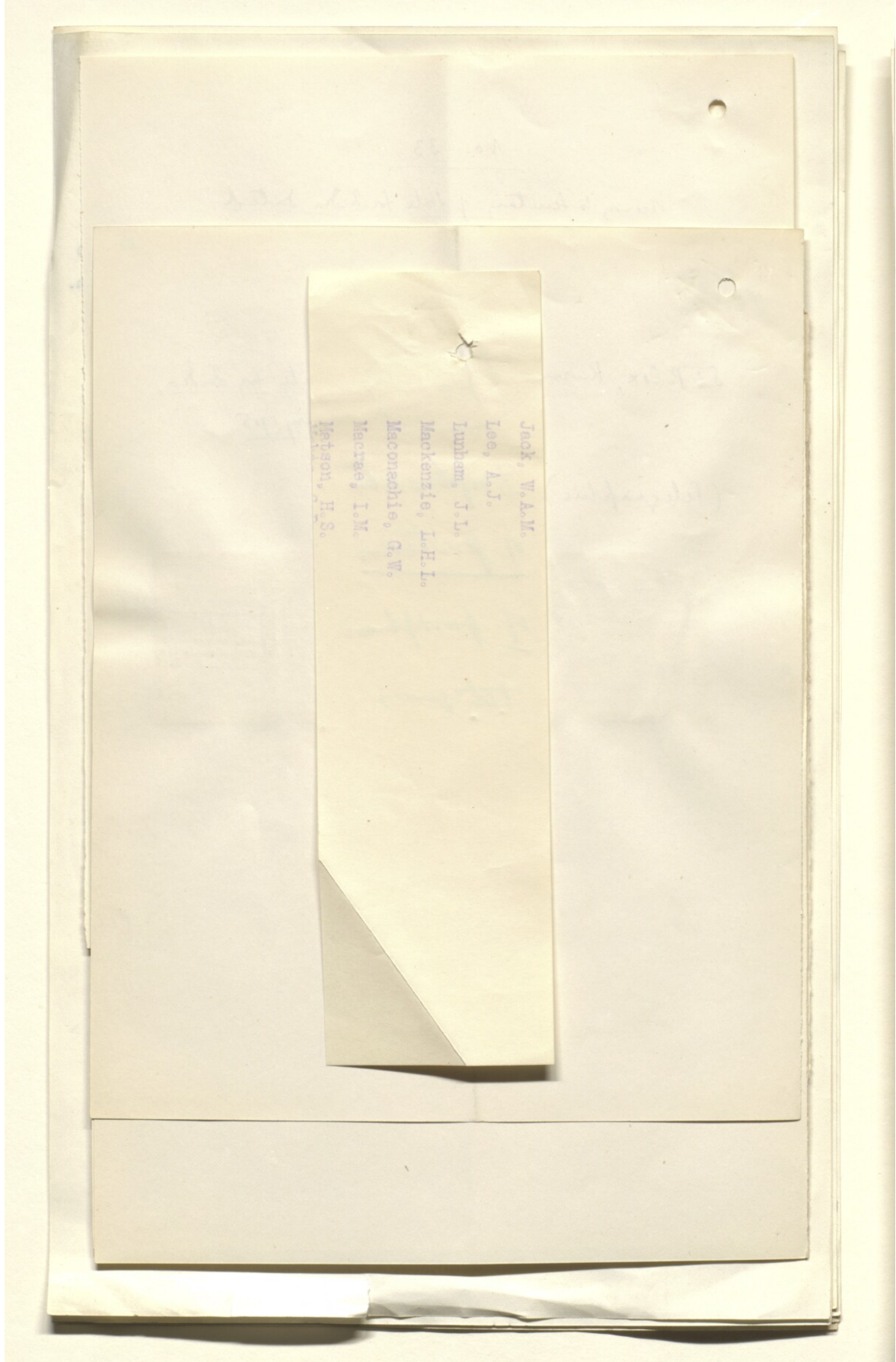
"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٥ ظ] (١٨٩/٥٠)







"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٢٦ ظ] (١٨٩/٥٢)





7 (cont)

27
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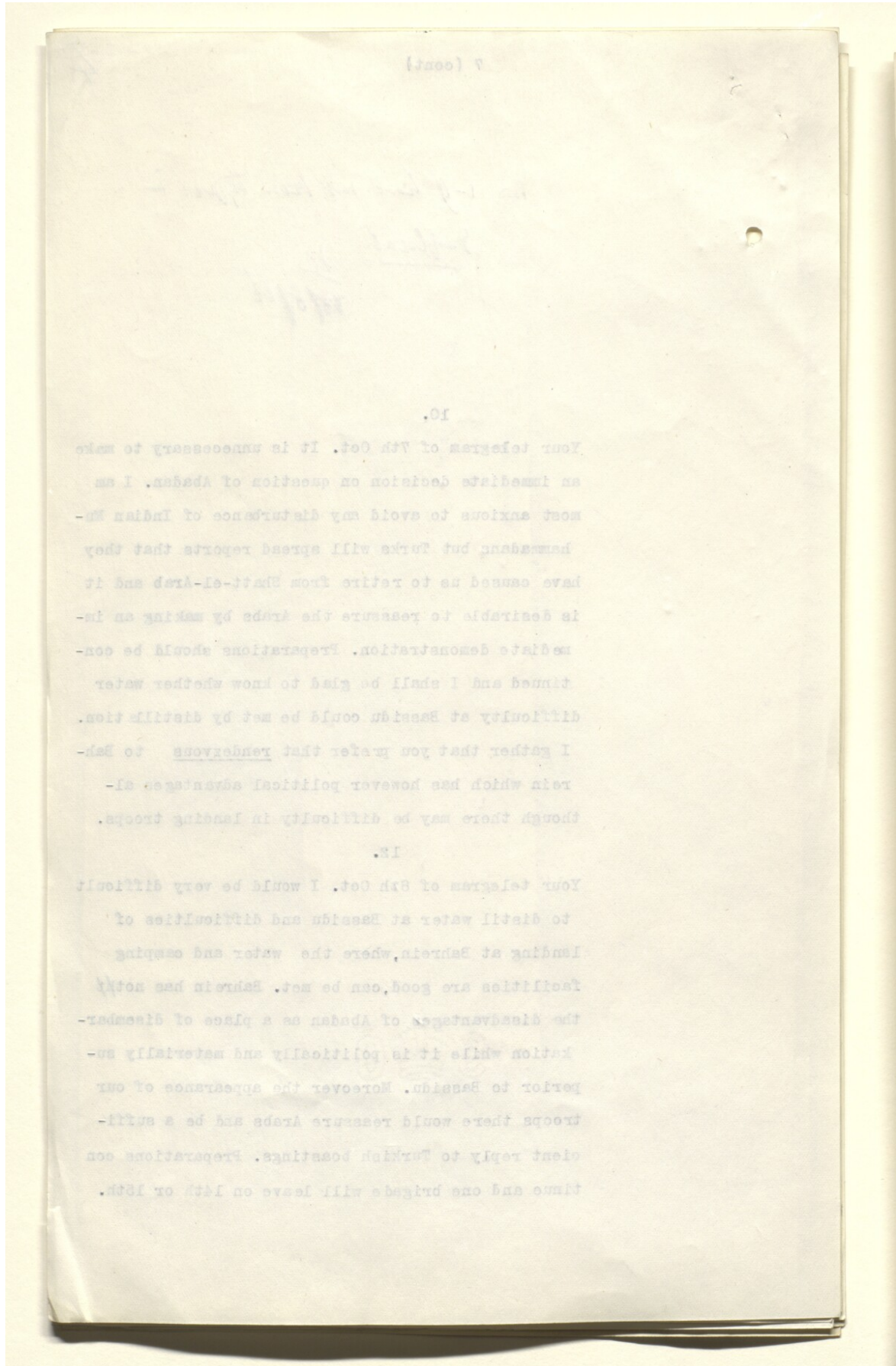
nos 1-4 have not been typed in
duplicate
13
2/11/68

10.

Your telegram of 7th Oct. It is unnecessary to make an immediate decision on question of Abadan. I am most anxious to avoid any disturbance of Indian Muhammadans but Turks will spread reports that they have caused us to retire from Shatt-el-Arab and it is desirable to reassure the Arabs by making an immediate demonstration. Preparations should be continued and I shall be glad to know whether water difficulty at Bassidu could be met by distillation. I gather that you prefer that rendezvous to Bahrein which has however political advantages although there may be difficulty in landing troops.

12.

Your telegram of 8th Oct. I would be very difficult to distil water at Bassidu and difficulties of landing at Bahrein, where the water and camping facilities are good, can be met. Bahrein has not the disadvantages of Abadan as a place of disembarkation while it is politically and materially superior to Bassidu. Moreover the appearance of our troops there would reassure Arabs and be a sufficient reply to Turkish boastings. Preparations continue and one brigade will leave on 14th or 15th.





18.

We have decided on sending the advanced force to Bahrein for although there will no doubt be difficulties in landing and re-embarkation water is reported to be plentiful ~~whh~~ there while non-existent at Bassidu. Troops should reach Bahrein about 23rd.

38

Get ready for immediate despatch another brigade of 6th Division. Admiralty will arrange for escort.

39.

Advanced force at Bahrein should at once proceed to Fao and after occupying that place clear the Turks out of the Shatt-el-Arab as far as Shumshumiyah, after which it will await reinforcements. Arab Chiefs near Aden and in Gulf should be informed of our action.

41.

It is reported that mines have been received at Fao for defence of mouth of river.

43.

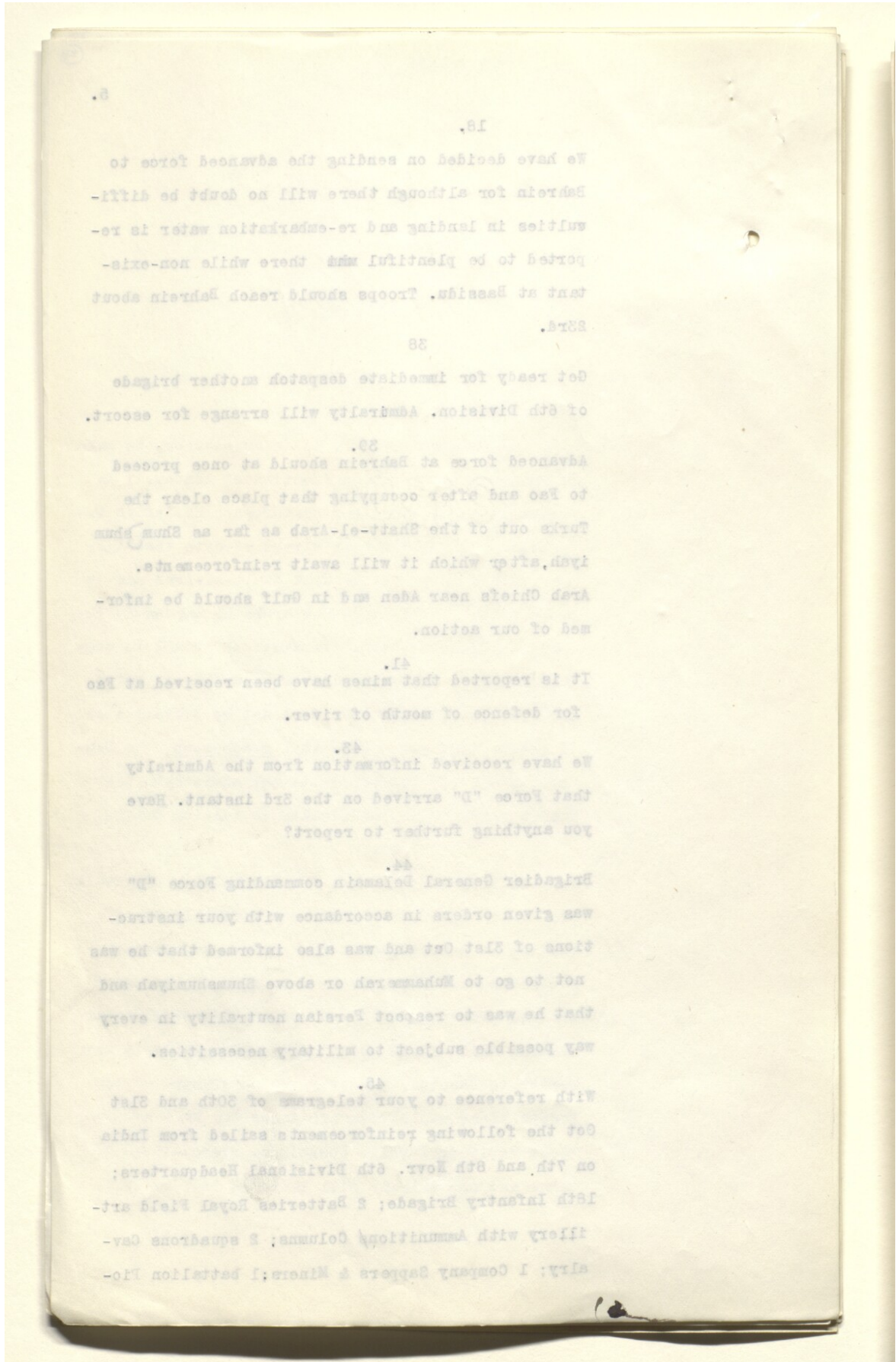
We have received information from the Admiralty that Force "D" arrived on the 3rd instant. Have you anything further to report?

44.

Brigadier General Delamain commanding Force "D" was given orders in accordance with your instructions of 31st Oct and was also informed that he was not to go to Muhammerah or above Shumshumiyah and that he was to respect Persian neutrality in every way possible subject to military necessities.

45.

With reference to your telegrams of 30th and 31st Oct the following reinforcements sailed from India on 7th and 8th Novr. 6th Divisional Headquarters; 18th Infantry Brigade; 2 Batteries Royal Field artillery with Ammunitions Columns; 2 squadrons Cavalry; 1 Company Sappers & Miners; 1 battalion Pion-





45 (cont)

6.

Pioneers; Signal Company and Hospitals. Remainder of division will sail very shortly.

46.

Your telegram of 31st Oct and mine of 9th Nov. General Barrett's troops will reach Shatt-el-Arab from about 15th and remainder of division about 28th Nov. He has discretion to advance on Basra if after consulting Delamain he considers that his present force is sufficiently strong.

47.

On a report that Saihan was occupied by about 1000 of the enemy I sent 3 battalions and 2 Mountain Batteries supported by H M S Odin and Espiegle to attack under the command of Brigadier General Delamain. Our troops inflicted severe losses on the enemy whose entrenched camp was taken in a very creditable manner. We captured 2 machine guns and some prisoners including a Turkish Major.

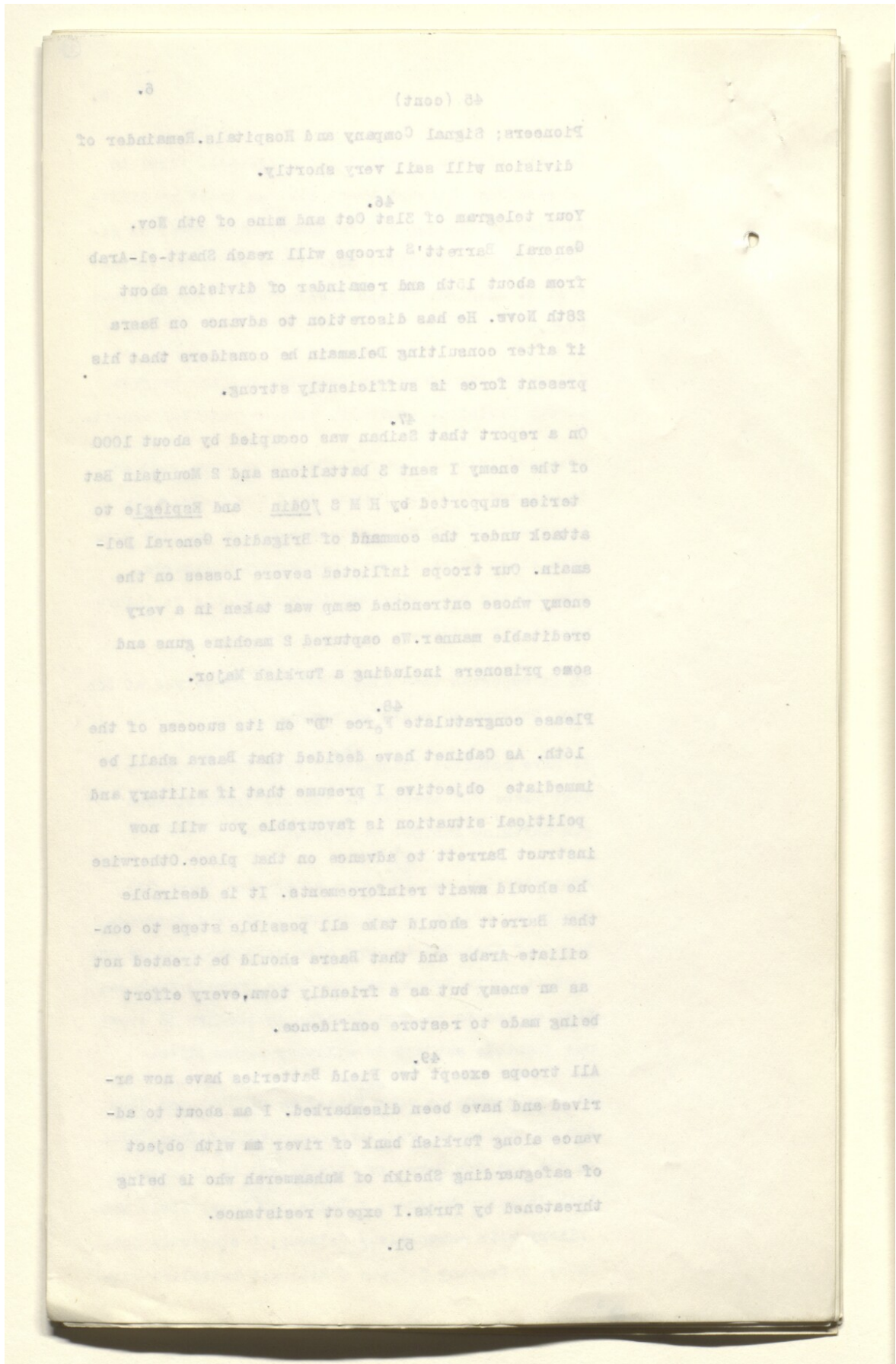
48.

Please congratulate Force "D" on its success of the 16th. As Cabinet have decided that Basra shall be immediate objective I presume that if military and political situation is favourable you will now instruct Barrett to advance on that place. Otherwise he should await reinforcements. It is desirable that Barrett should take all possible steps to conciliate Arabs and that Basra should be treated not as an enemy but as a friendly town, every effort being made to restore confidence.

49.

All troops except two Field Batteries have now arrived and have been disembarked. I am about to advance along Turkish bank of river ~~the~~ with object of safeguarding Sheikh of Muhammerah who is being threatened by Turks. I expect resistance.

51.





7.

51.

Enemy about 4.500 strong with 12 guns was found to be posted in a strongly entrenched position near Zain 9 miles up ~~stream~~ stream on right bank. We encountered considerable resistance but on his left flank being turned the enemy retired abandoning his camp with reserve ammunition and transport and with a loss of 2 guns and a number of prisoners. Our casualties were about 300 and were due to the difficulties of advance in heavy rain over an open and level plain. The men behaved splendidly and are pleased with their success. The Medical Staff worked exceedingly well under heavy fire.

52.

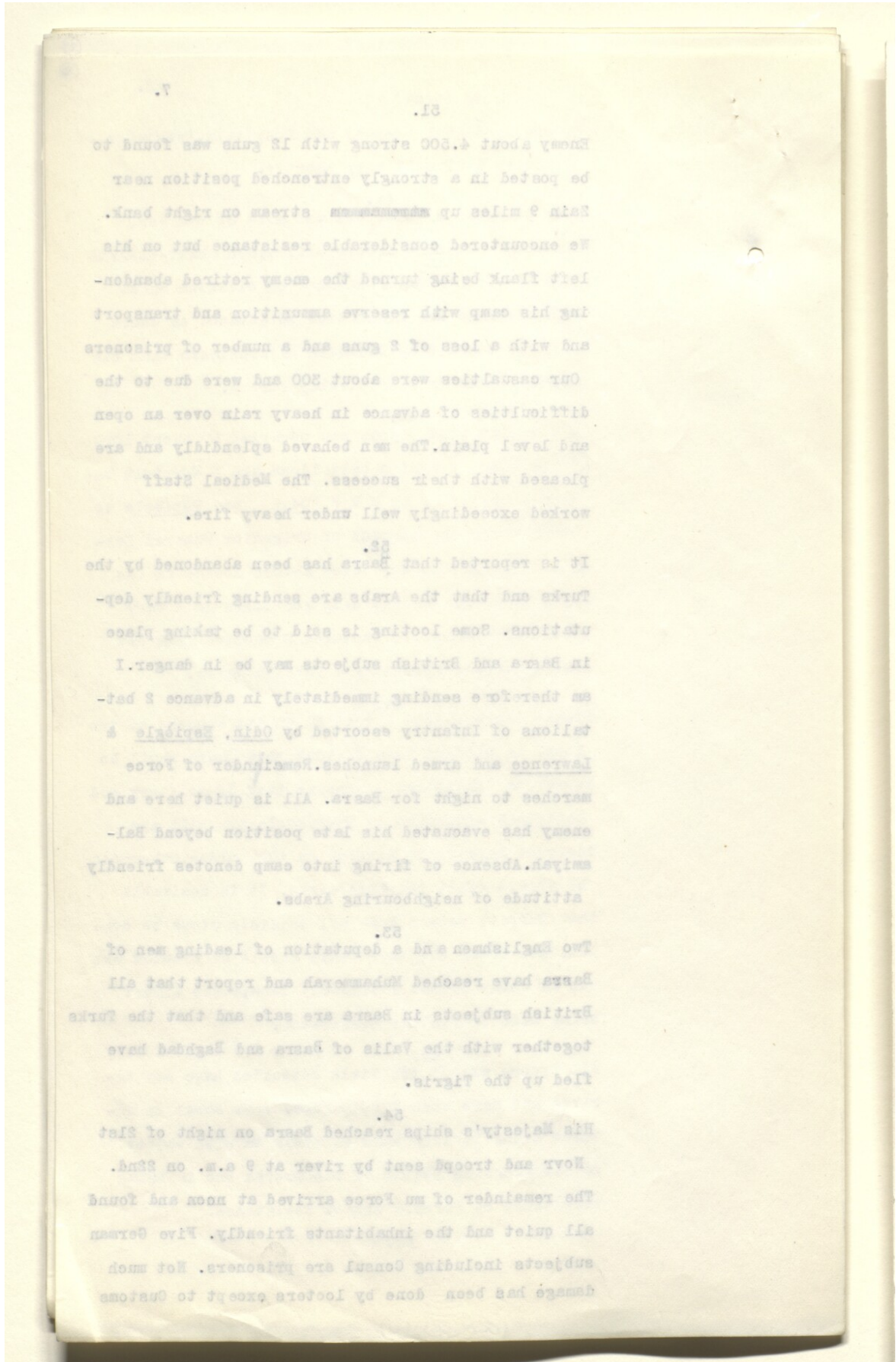
It is reported that Basra has been abandoned by the Turks and that the Arabs are sending friendly deputations. Some looting is said to be taking place in Basra and British subjects may be in danger. I am therefore sending immediately in advance 2 battalions of Infantry escorted by Odin, Espiègle & Lawrence and armed launches. Remainder of Force marches to night for Basra. All is quiet here and enemy has evacuated his late position beyond Balamiyah. Absence of firing into camp denotes friendly attitude of neighbouring Arabs.

53.

Two Englishmen and a deputation of leading men of Basra have reached Muhammerah and report that all British subjects in Basra are safe and that the Turks together with the Valis of Basra and Baghdad have fled up the Tigris.

54.

His Majesty's ships reached Basra on night of 21st Novr and troopd sent by river at 9 a.m. on 22nd. The remainder of mu Force arrived at noon and found all quiet and the inhabitants friendly. Five German subjects including Consul are prisoners. Not much damage had been done by looters except to Customs





54 (cont)

Customs house which has been partly destroyed. The Turks left 8 guns and many wounded in the town. It may take some time to remove obstructions in the river.

55.

The leading men of Basra were assembled this morning at a central point to which the troops made a ceremonial march through the streets. The Union Jack was hoisted and cheers given for the King with salutes fired by Navy. A proclamation was read by Sir P.Cox in which it was stated that Turkish flag and administration had now been replaced by British flag. This was very well received by populace. It is estimated that 2,000 ~~men~~ wounded Turks came in to Basra after the action of the 17th. Many Arabs who were mobilized by Turks were left behind and are said to be much dissatisfied by the treatment they had received.

The share of the Royal Navy in the operations has been ~~many~~ an important one and I am much indebted to the hearty and prompt assistance which has always been afforded.

56. The following telegram has been received from Cox. I am consulting the Commander-in-Chief and when I know how far the proposals are feasible from the military point of view I will give you my conclusions.

"Sir A.Barrett & I have been considering the topographical details which would be of importance in the event of an advance to Baghdad and in order that complete proposals may be submitted we should be glad to learn the intentions of Government as regards this matter. The problem is as follows.

It is generally believed locally that the Turkish troops who recently opposed us are now completely demoralised and that those in Baghdad are not likely to offer serious resistance. The Arabs in Baghdad are



8

(cont) ٥٤

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It is generally believed locally that the Turkish
 troops who recently opposed us are now completely de-
 moralized and that those in Baghdad are not likely
 to offer serious resistance. The Arabs in Baghdad are



56 (cont)

reported by notables here to be already friendly and it is considered probable that we should be welcomed in Baghdad as we were welcomed ~~in~~ at Basra.

As to the tribes on the road to Baghdad the Mun-tafik Sheikh Ajaimi has intimated his desire to hand over to us 4000 rifles which he seized or received from the Turks and I have hopes of securing if not the active cooperation of the tribes at least their neutrality. It is probable that Baghdad would fall very easily into our hands if the advance is made during the present cold season and before the very great effect of the recent defeat has worn off. It seems to me after very careful consideration of the pros and cons difficult to avoid the conclusion that we must take over Baghdad but if we do so we can not again evacuate it because the Arabs would have co-operated with us on the clear understanding that the Turkish regime had permanently disappeared. It must also be remembered that there are about 30 British subjects at Baghdad who need release."

57.

With reference to telegram from Cox dated 23rd Novr we ~~are~~ are not prepared to sanction at present an advance to Baghdad but approve an advance to Kurna as soon as Sir A.Barrett is in a position to undertake this operation. As we should have to control the whole area from Kurna to the sea both politically and in a military sense it seems desirable that Basra should be considered as the headquarters of the major portion of the Division.

60.

Two Infantry battalions and two guns supported by Naval escort established themselves yesterday at a point on the left bank 5 miles below Kurna where the enemy is in considerable strength.



٥٠

(cont)

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it is considered probable that we should be welcomed
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dallah Sheikh Ajmal has indicated his desire to hand
over to us 4000 rifles which he asked or received
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Turkish regime had permanently disappeared. It must
also be remembered that there are about 30 British
subjects at Baghdad who need release."

٥١

With reference to telegram from Cox dated 23rd Nov
we cannot see not reported to sanction at present an
advance to Baghdad but approve an advance to Kirkuk
as soon as Sir A. Barrett is in a position to undertake
this operation. As we should have to control the
whole area from Kirkuk to the sea both politically and
in a military sense it seems desirable that there
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portion of the Division.

٥٢

Two Infantry battalions and two guns supported by
naval escort established themselves yesterday at a
point on the left bank 5 miles below Kirkuk where the
enemy is in considerable strength.



60 (cont)

Reinforcements will be sent if necessary as soon as returning river flats are available. An outpost is to be established at Shaiba to the north of Zubaide and half a battalion of Indian Infantry has proceeded there

61.

In an action opposite Kurna Lieutenant Colonel Fraser drove the enemy from their position on the left bank taking 70 prisoners, including 3 officers, and 2 guns. The Turks surrendered their entrenchments on being charged by with the bayonet by the 110th Mahrattas.

Sloops and Flats with field guns assisted the operations but owing to lack of means of crossing river under shell fire we did not find it possible to attack Kurna which is strongly held by the enemy and our troops withdrew 4 miles to the south. With the reinforcements which I am sending with General Fry to-day ten Royal Field Artillery guns and 4½ battalions will be available for further operations.

62.

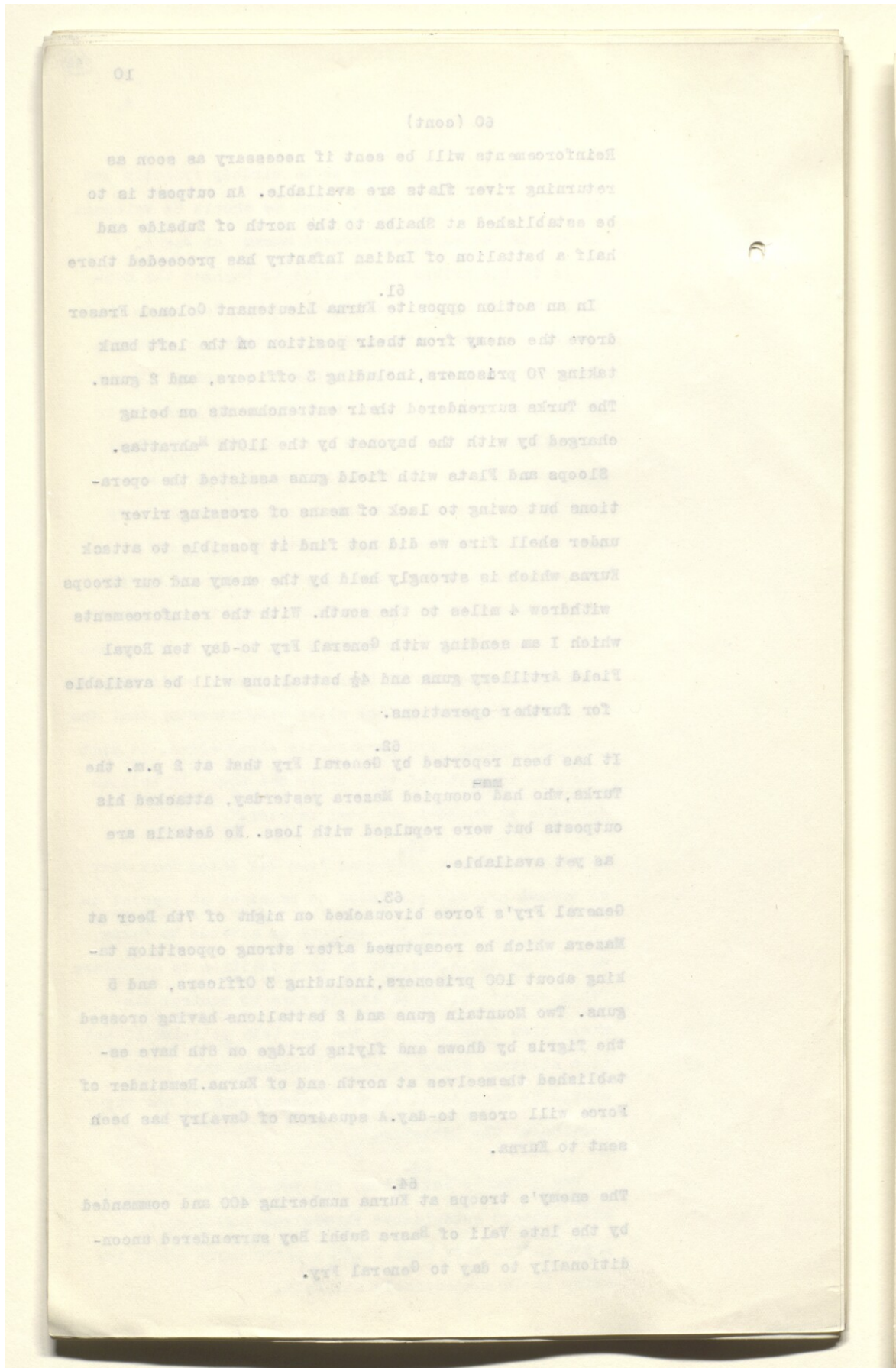
It has been reported by General Fry that at 2 p.m. the Turks, who had occupied Mazera yesterday, attacked his outposts but were repulsed with loss. No details are as yet available.

63.

General Fry's Force bivouacked on night of 7th Decr at Mazera which he recaptured after strong opposition taking about 100 prisoners, including 3 Officers, and 5 guns. Two Mountain guns and 2 battalions having crossed the Tigris by dhows and flying bridge on 8th have established themselves at north end of Kurna. Remainder of Force will cross to-day. A squadron of Cavalry has been sent to Kurna.

64.

The enemy's troops at Kurna numbering 400 and commanded by the late Vali of Basra Subhi Bey surrendered unconditionally to day to General Fry.





65.

It is now reported by General Fry that the enemy's force surrendering at Kurna amounted to 969 men with 42 Officers 2 Mountain and 2 field guns.

66.

It appears from statements made by Turkish Officers who were captured at Mazera on 7th Decr that the enemy's forces there and at Kurna amounted to some 3000 men with 9 guns of which we have taken or destroyed 7. The main portion of the Turkish garrison of Basra has retired in the direction of Nasiriyeh and Suk-es-Shuyukh. According to prisoners there were 5 battalions of Infantry, 600 Cavalry and field and mountain guns at Baghdad under Abduk Hamid Pasha on 25th Novr with further forces en route for that place.

67.

1000 prisoners reached Basra yesterday from Kurna.

68.

Please refer to telegram from Chief of the General Staff dated 10th Decr. As it may be desirable to eject Turks from the district of Nasiriyeh which lies across communications with Baghdad by Shatt-el-Hai and by Euphrates and also protects the Muntafik Arabs please consider practicability of such an operation. It is understood that Suk-es-Shuyukh is 2 or 3 days distant by water from Kurna. We should secure complete control of access to Gulf and of Arabs on Euphrates by the occupation of Basra, -/Kurna and Nasiriyeh.

70.

Our information does not at present justify a decision on the subject of the occupation of Nasiriyeh suggested in your telegram of 14th Decr. and we should prefer to wait until the situation is clearer. It is true that our political situation would be consolidated by the permanent occupation of Nasiriyeh but we do not yet know its actual military value and there are reports of reinforcements coming to the enemy from Syria.



11

66. It is now reported by General Fry that the enemy's force surrendering at Kurra amounted to 200 men with 2 Officers 2 Mountain and 2 Field guns.

67. It appears from statements made by Turkish officers who were captured at Kurra on 15th Dec that the enemy's force there and at Kurra amounted to some 2000 men with 2 guns of which we have taken or destroyed 1. The main portion of the Turkish garrison of Kurra has retired in the direction of Hadiyah and Shuykh.

68. According to prisoners there were 2 battalions of Infantry 600 Cavalry and field and mountain guns at Hadiyah under Abdul Hamid Khan on 15th Nov with further force en route for that place.

69. 1000 prisoners reached Bama yesterday from Kurra.

70. Please refer to telegram from Chief of the General Staff dated 10th Dec. As it may be desirable to eject Turks from the district of Hadiyah which lies across communications with Hadiyah by Shatt-el-Bat and by Hadiyah and also protects the Muntakik Arabs please consider practicability of such an operation. It is understood that Shuykh is 2 or 3 days distant by water from Kurra. We should secure complete control of access to Gulf and of Arabs on Hadiyah by the occupation of Bama, Kurra and Hadiyah.

71. Our information does not at present justify a decision on the subject of the occupation of Hadiyah suggested in your telegram of 14th Dec. and we should prefer to wait until the situation is clearer. It is true that our political situation would be consolidated by the permanent occupation of Hadiyah but we do not yet know its actual military value and there are reports of reinforcements coming to the enemy from Syria.



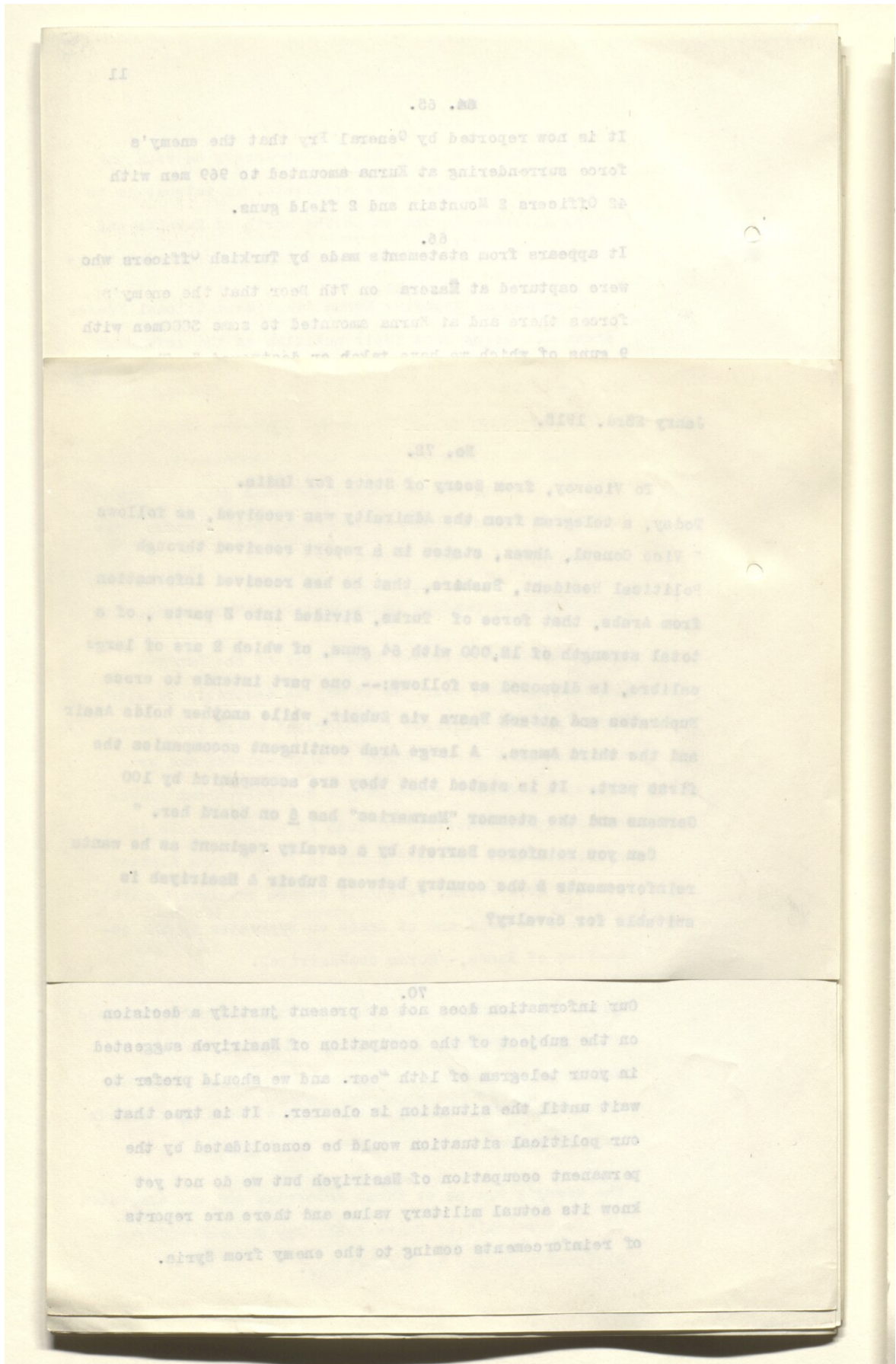
Janry 23rd. 1915.

No. 72.

To Viceroy, from Secry of State for India.

Today, a telegram from the Admiralty was received, as follows
" Vice Consul, Ahwaz, states in a report received through
Political Resident, Bushâre, that he has received information
from Arabs, that force of Turks, divided into 3 parts, of a
total strength of 12,000 with 64 guns, of which 2 are of large
calibre, is disposed as follows:-- one part intends to cross
Euphrates and attack Basra via Zubeir, while another holds Azair
and the third Amara. A large Arab contingent accompanies the
first part. It is stated that they are accompanied by 100
Germans and the steamer "Marmariss" has 6 on board her. "

Can you reinforce Barrett by a cavalry regiment as he wants
reinforcements & the country between Zubeir & Hasiriyah is
suitable for cavalry?





70 (cont)

To spare more troops from India would be difficult and it would be a mistake unless obliged by military considerations to occupy places which we could not ~~again~~ again evacuate without loss of prestige. The question of the military value of Nasiriyeh in view of a possible Turkish advance on Euphrates is being considered.

71.

Yours of the 2nd instant. I concur and we should ~~am~~ not act until matters are clearer.

73.

We are obliged to you for the information conveyed in your telegram of 23rd Jany. The question had been discussed with Barrett who had reconnoitered 25 miles to west of Zobeir. The 12th Brigade has been mobilized in case of necessity and transports are ready while a Cavalry regiment though somewhat difficult to spare might be arranged for. We are sending Barrett 2 armoured motors and 2 lorries suitable for desert but aeroplanes would be useful in lieu of Cavalry.

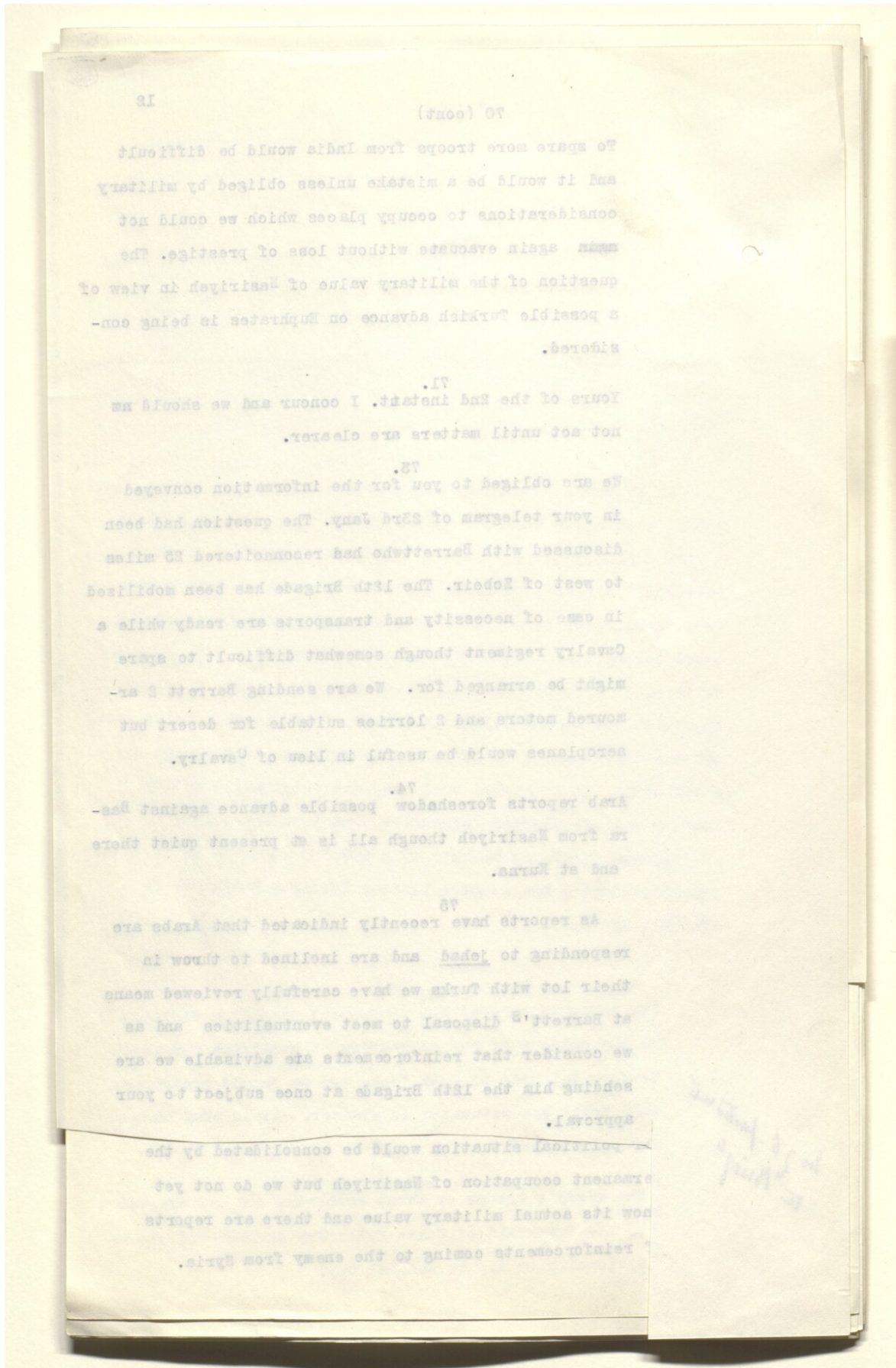
74.

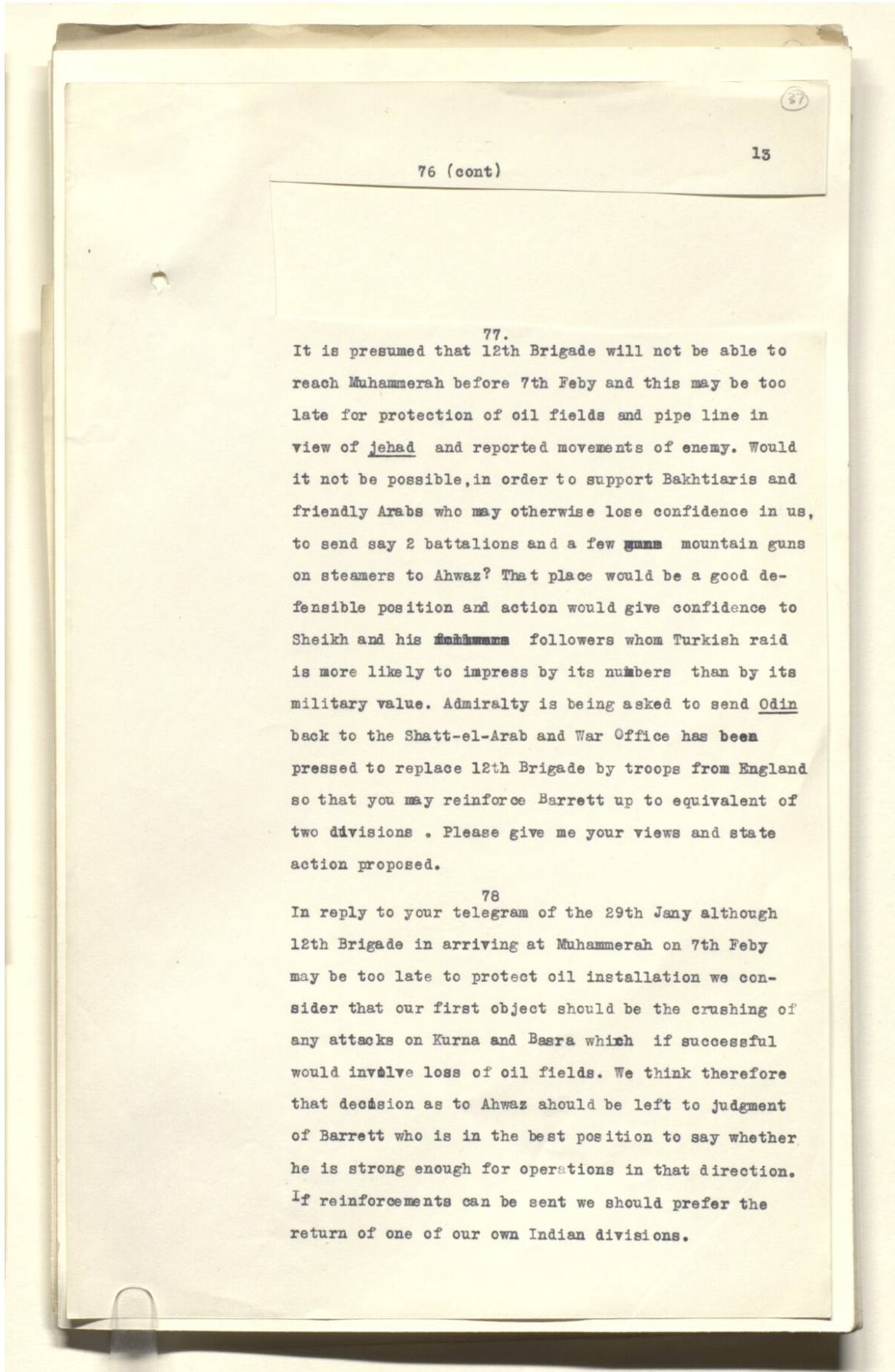
Arab reports foreshadow possible advance against Basra from Nasiriyeh though all is at present quiet there and at Kurna.

75

As reports have recently indicated that Arabs are responding to jihad and are inclined to throw in their lot with Turks we have carefully reviewed means at Barrett's disposal to meet eventualities and as we consider that reinforcements are advisable we are sending him the 12th Brigade at once subject to your approval.

no 76 - forwarded to the British





76 (cont)

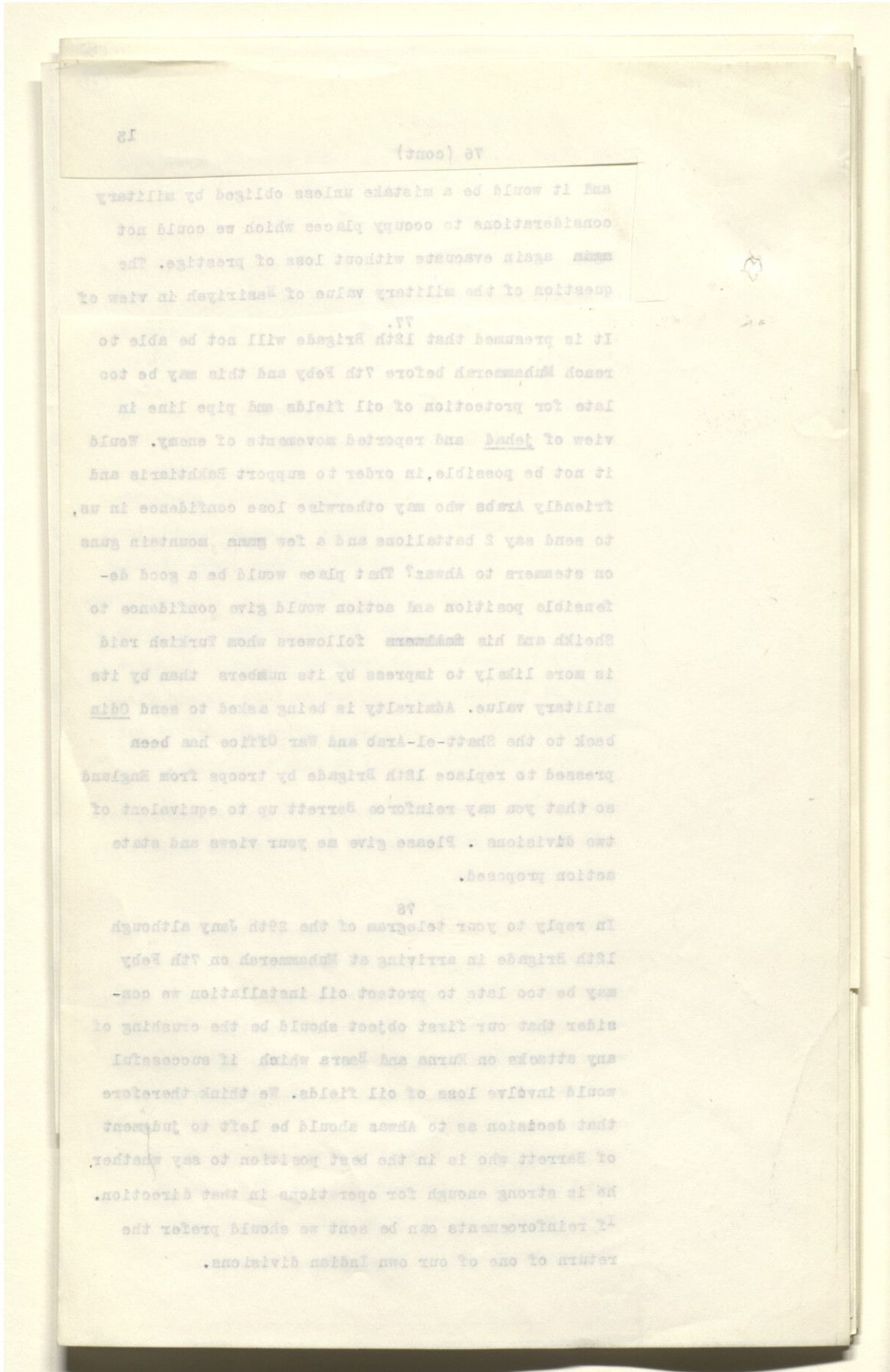
13

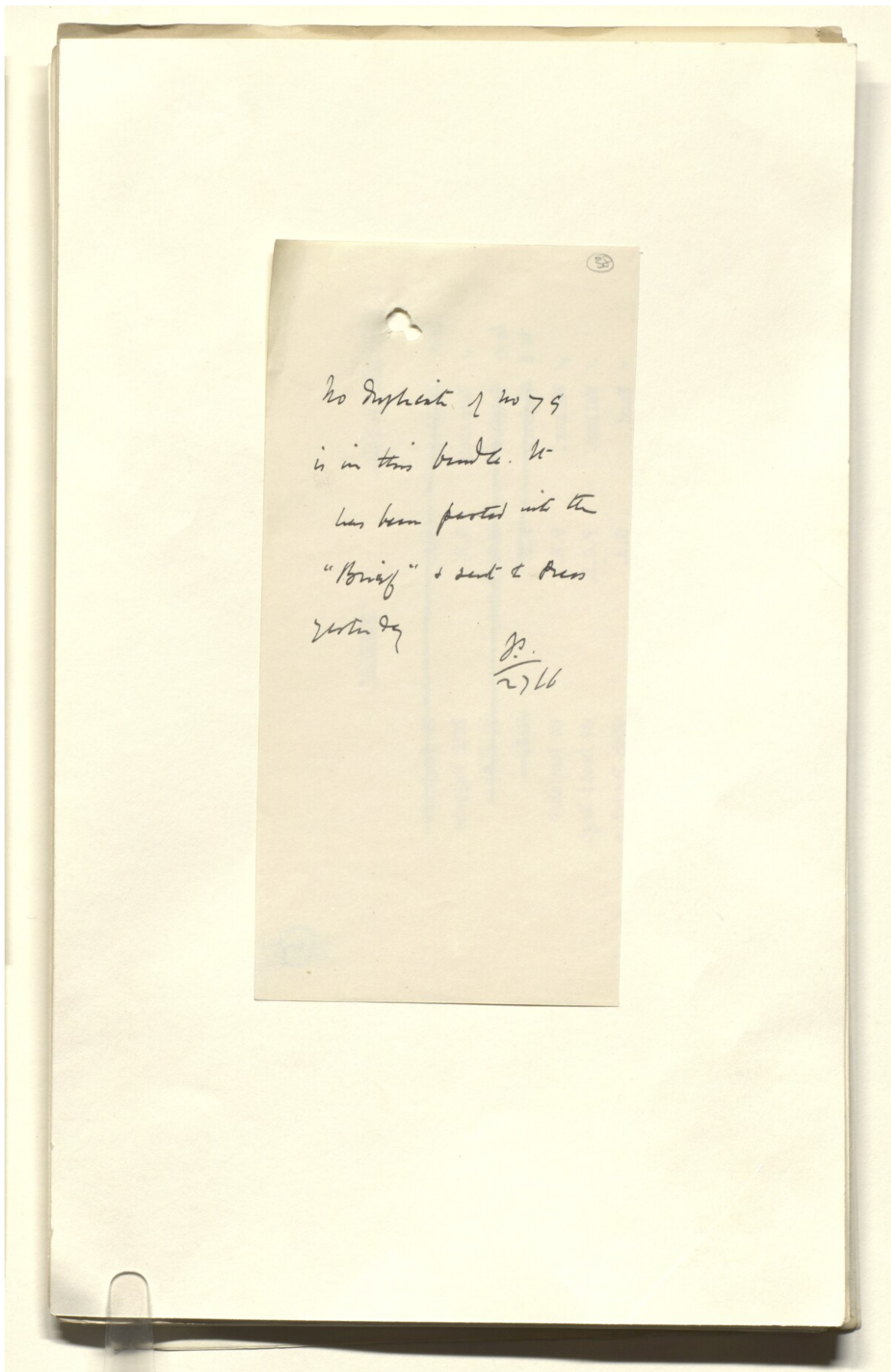
77.

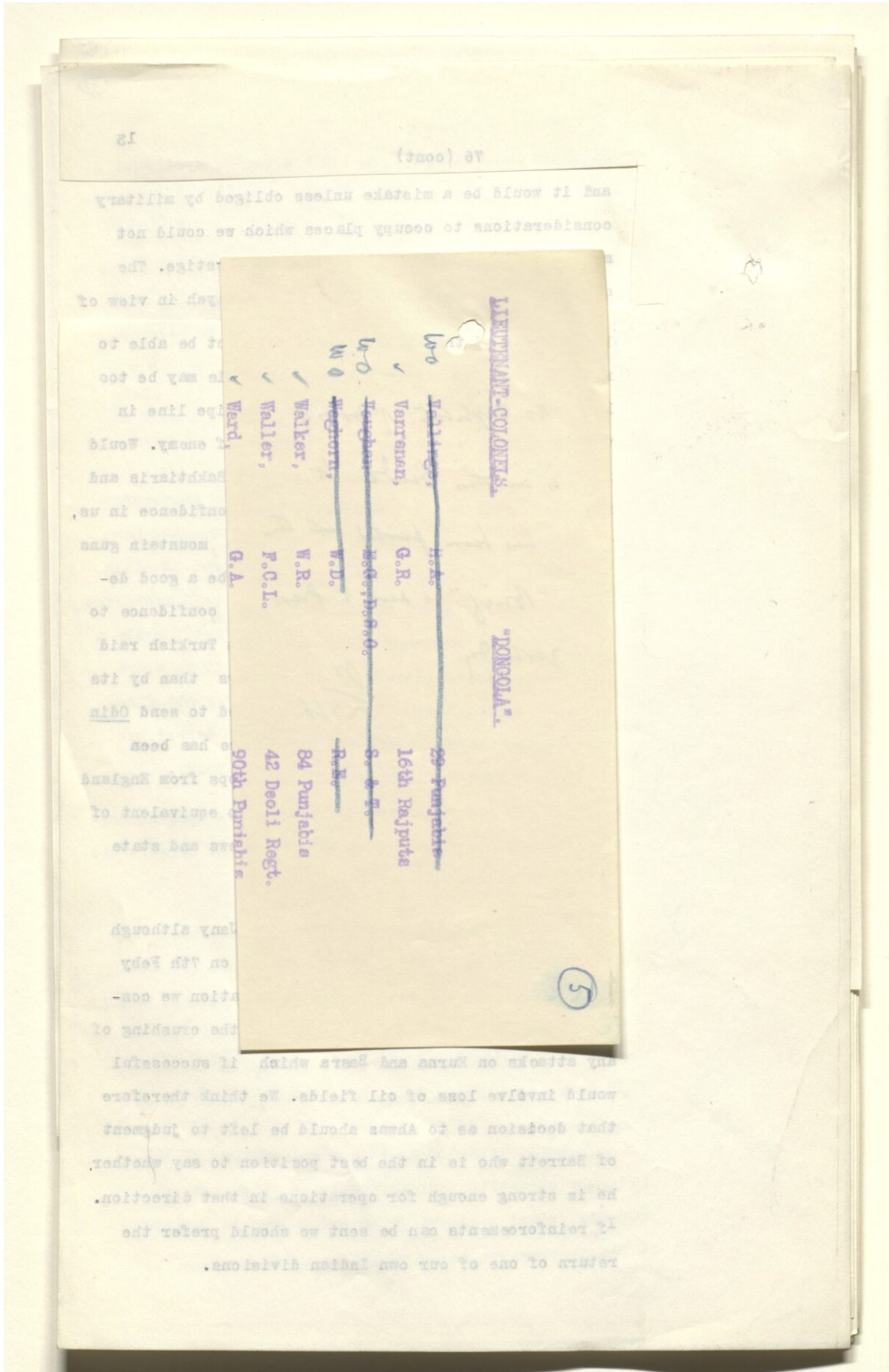
It is presumed that 12th Brigade will not be able to reach Muhammerah before 7th Feby and this may be too late for protection of oil fields and pipe line in view of jehad and reported movements of enemy. Would it not be possible, in order to support Bakhtiaris and friendly Arabs who may otherwise lose confidence in us, to send say 2 battalions and a few guns mountain guns on steamers to Ahwaz? That place would be a good defensible position and action would give confidence to Sheikh and his followers whom Turkish raid is more likely to impress by its numbers than by its military value. Admiralty is being asked to send Odin back to the Shatt-el-Arab and War Office has been pressed to replace 12th Brigade by troops from England so that you may reinforce Barrett up to equivalent of two divisions. Please give me your views and state action proposed.

78

In reply to your telegram of the 29th Jany although 12th Brigade in arriving at Muhammerah on 7th Feby may be too late to protect oil installation we consider that our first object should be the crushing of any attacks on Kurna and Basra which if successful would involve loss of oil fields. We think therefore that decision as to Ahwaz should be left to judgment of Barrett who is in the best position to say whether he is strong enough for operations in that direction. If reinforcements can be sent we should prefer the return of one of our own Indian divisions.









81.

With reference to my telegram of January 29th - War Office is unable to send you reinforcements to complete a second Division in Mesopotamia or to replace the 12th Brigade and I gather that you will therefore consider it unsafe to dispatch more troops from India to the Gulf. Is this so? The position will be clear if your opinion is to the effect that you are unable to despatch reinforcements but that the need of them is urgent. It is undoubtedly the case that the Turks are massing troops in Mesopotamia and there is also the menace on the Karun, so that my conviction is that we should make up Barrett's Force to a strength of 2 Divisions.

83.

We consider that it is essential to divert "5th Battery, Royal Horse Artillery to Busra instead of to England on account of increasing Turkish forces. We are therefore effecting this move and trust that you will approve.

85.

In reply to your telegram of February 6th. Your action in regard to "S" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, is approved.

86.

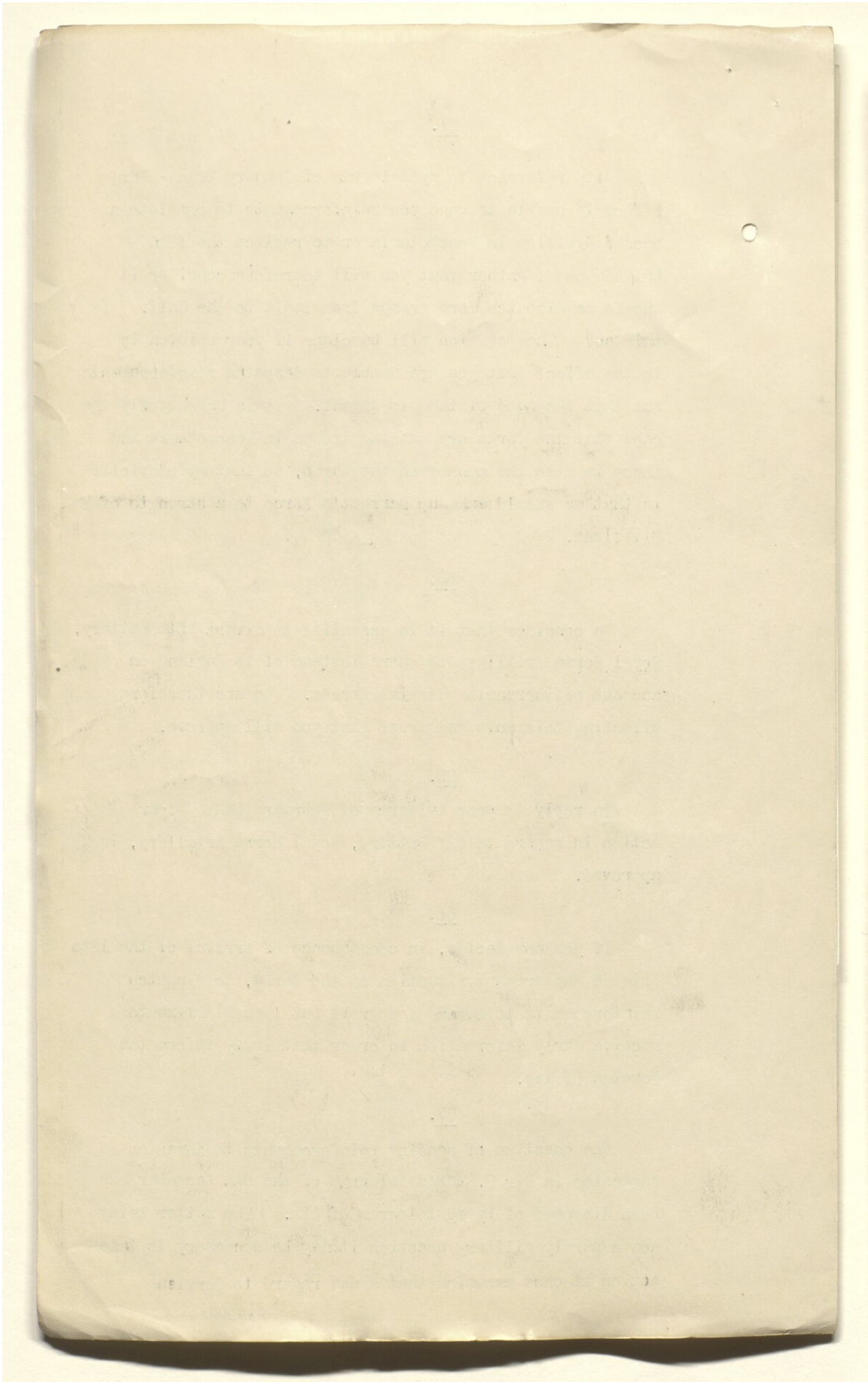
If you now decide, in consequence of arrival of the 12th Brigade and present situation on the Karun, to dispatch reinforcements to Ahwaz I approve but I should like to receive early information in order that I may inform the Foreign Office.

87.

The question of sending reinforcements to Ahwaz as suggested in Sir P. Cox's telegram of the 6th December has been disposed of by my telegram of 8th. The matter being now a purely military question it may be necessary to take action at once assuming that a due regard to Turkish dispositions



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dispositions in directions of Nasiriyeh and Kurna and to Barrett's strength admits.

88.

I have not yet as received your reply to my telegram of 6th and 5th February. The War Office have intimated that they are unable to send reinforcements either to Aden or to India until the situation on the Suez Canal is assured. Please therefore, let me know at once what action you suggest in case the position in Mesopotamia necessitates the immediate dispatch of more troops, an emergency which in my opinion is more than possible. The need of prompt action was exemplified by the course of events on the Karun for the Arabs would possibly not have destroyed the pipe line or risen against us if we could have sent up a sufficient force in good time.

89.

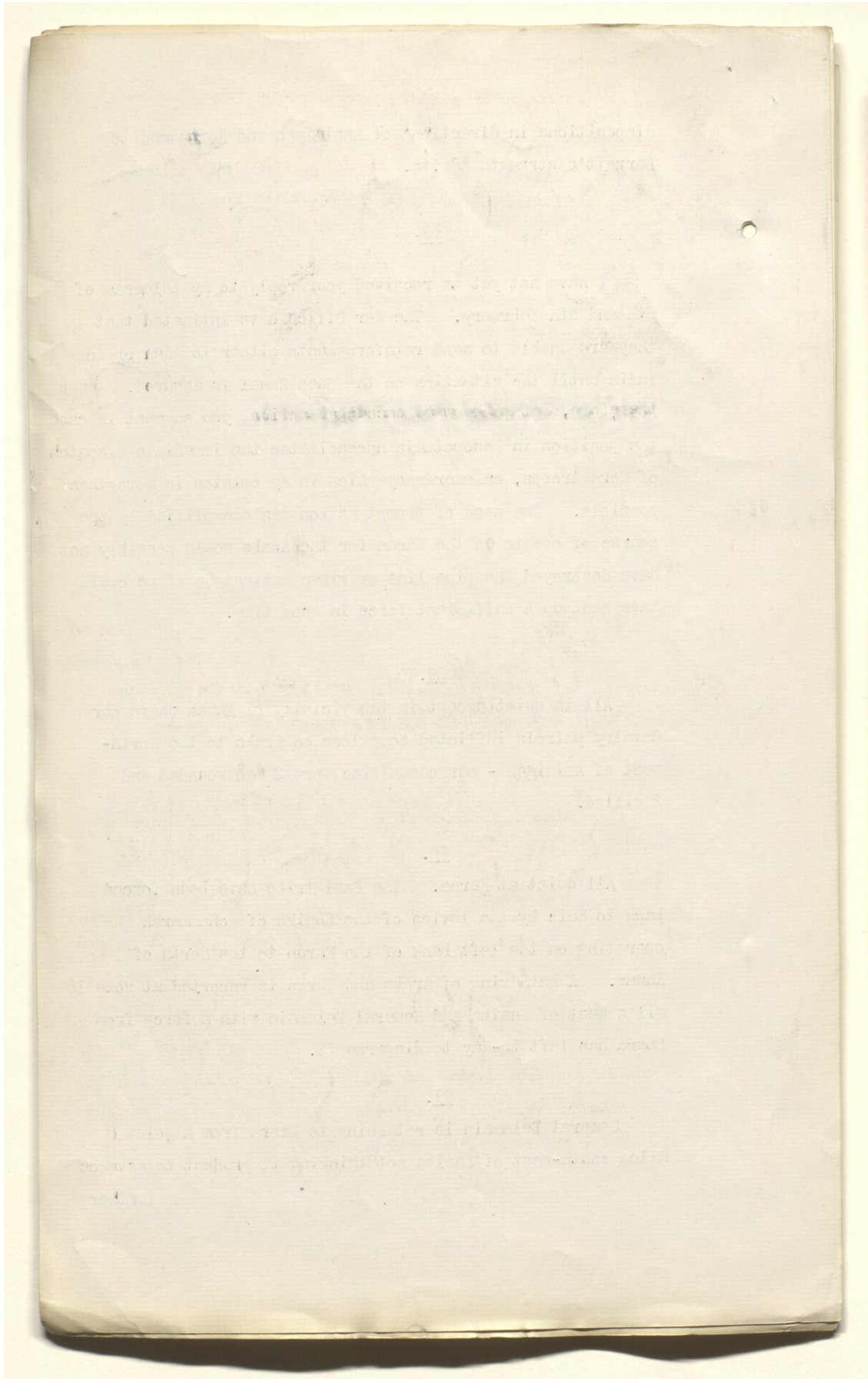
All is quiet except in the vicinity of Ahwaz where our Cavalry patrols inflicted some loss on Arabs to the North-west of Aminigeh - our casualties were 2 men wounded and 2 killed.

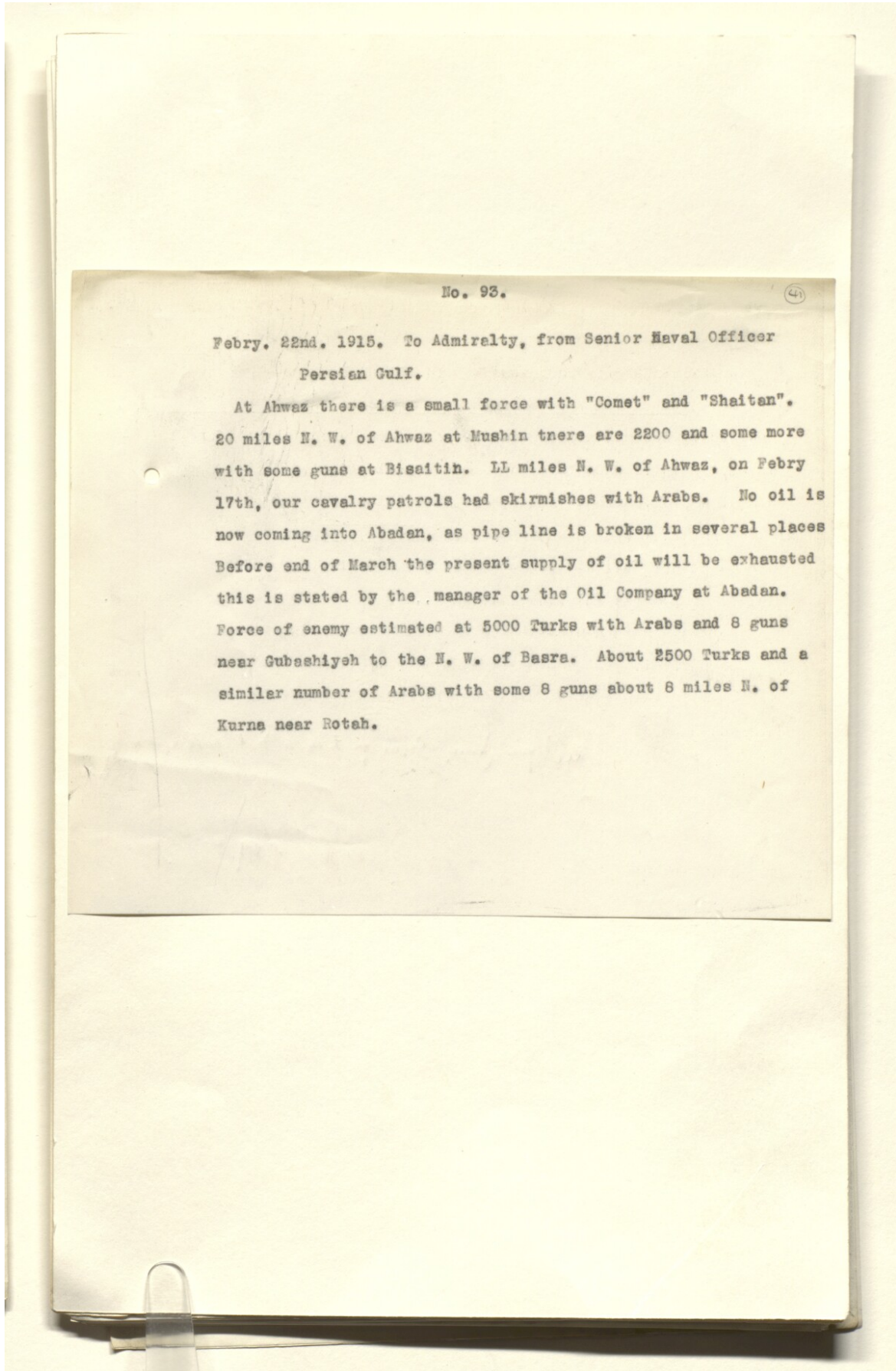
90.

All quiet at Kurna. The Bawi tribe have been forced back to Wais by the levies of the Sheikh of Mohammerah operating on the left bank of the Karun to the North of Ahwaz. A gathering of Arabs and Turks is reported at some 15 miles west of Shaiba and General Delamain with a force from Basra has left to-day to disperse it.

91.

General Delamain is returning to Basra from a point 8 miles south-west of Shaiba not thinking it prudent to advance further





No. 93.

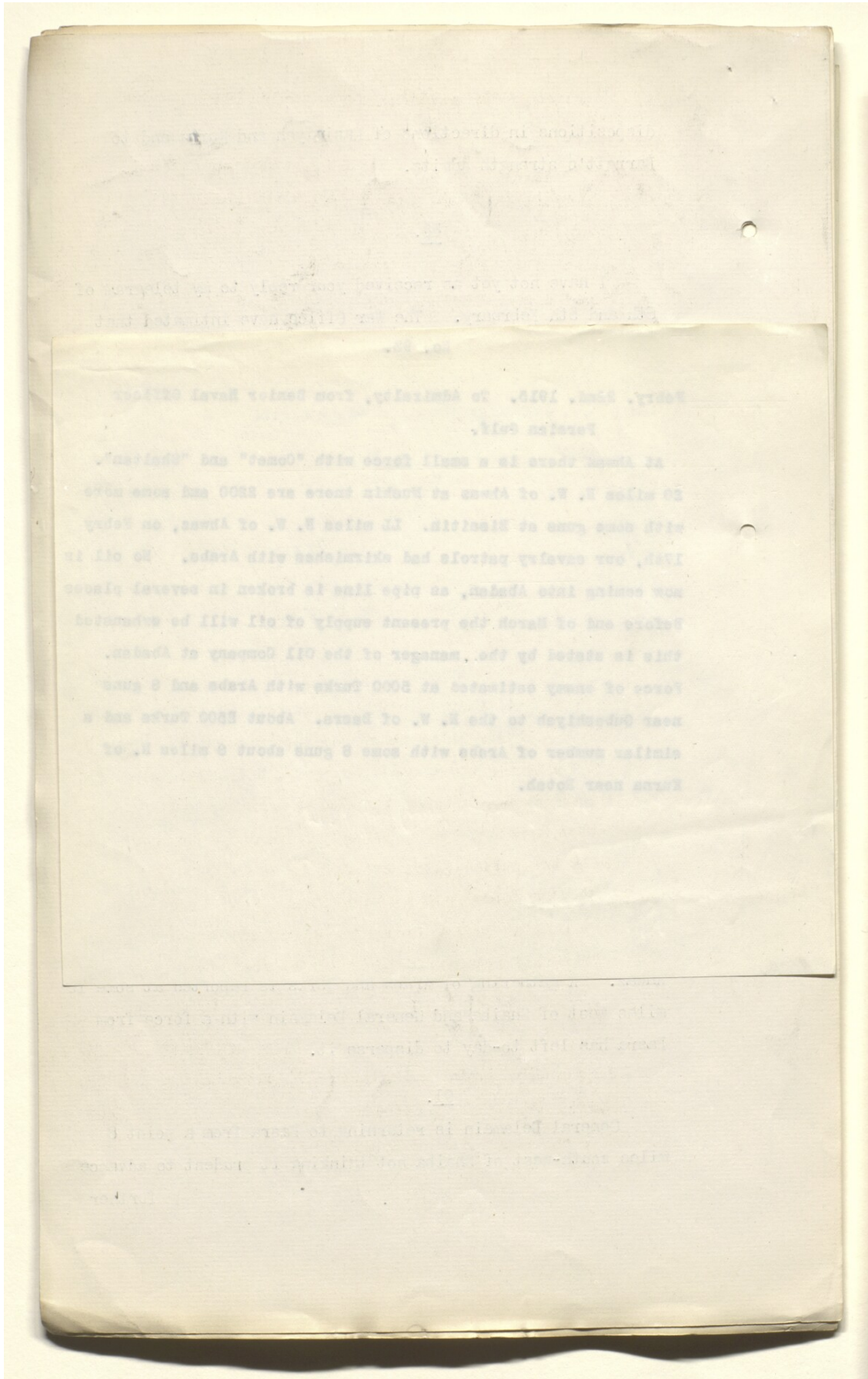
41

Febry. 22nd. 1915. To Admiralty, from Senior Naval Officer
Persian Gulf.

At Ahwaz there is a small force with "Comet" and "Shaitan".
20 miles N. W. of Ahwaz at Mushin there are 2200 and some more
with some guns at Bisaitin. 11 miles N. W. of Ahwaz, on Febry
17th, our cavalry patrols had skirmishes with Arabs. No oil is
now coming into Abadan, as pipe line is broken in several places
Before end of March the present supply of oil will be exhausted
this is stated by the manager of the Oil Company at Abadan.
Force of enemy estimated at 5000 Turks with Arabs and 8 guns
near Gubeshiyeh to the N. W. of Basra. About 2500 Turks and a
similer number of Arabs with some 8 guns about 8 miles N. of
Kurna near Rotah.



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42
further with his present force. All quiet in other directions.
The floods at Kurma are increasing.

94.

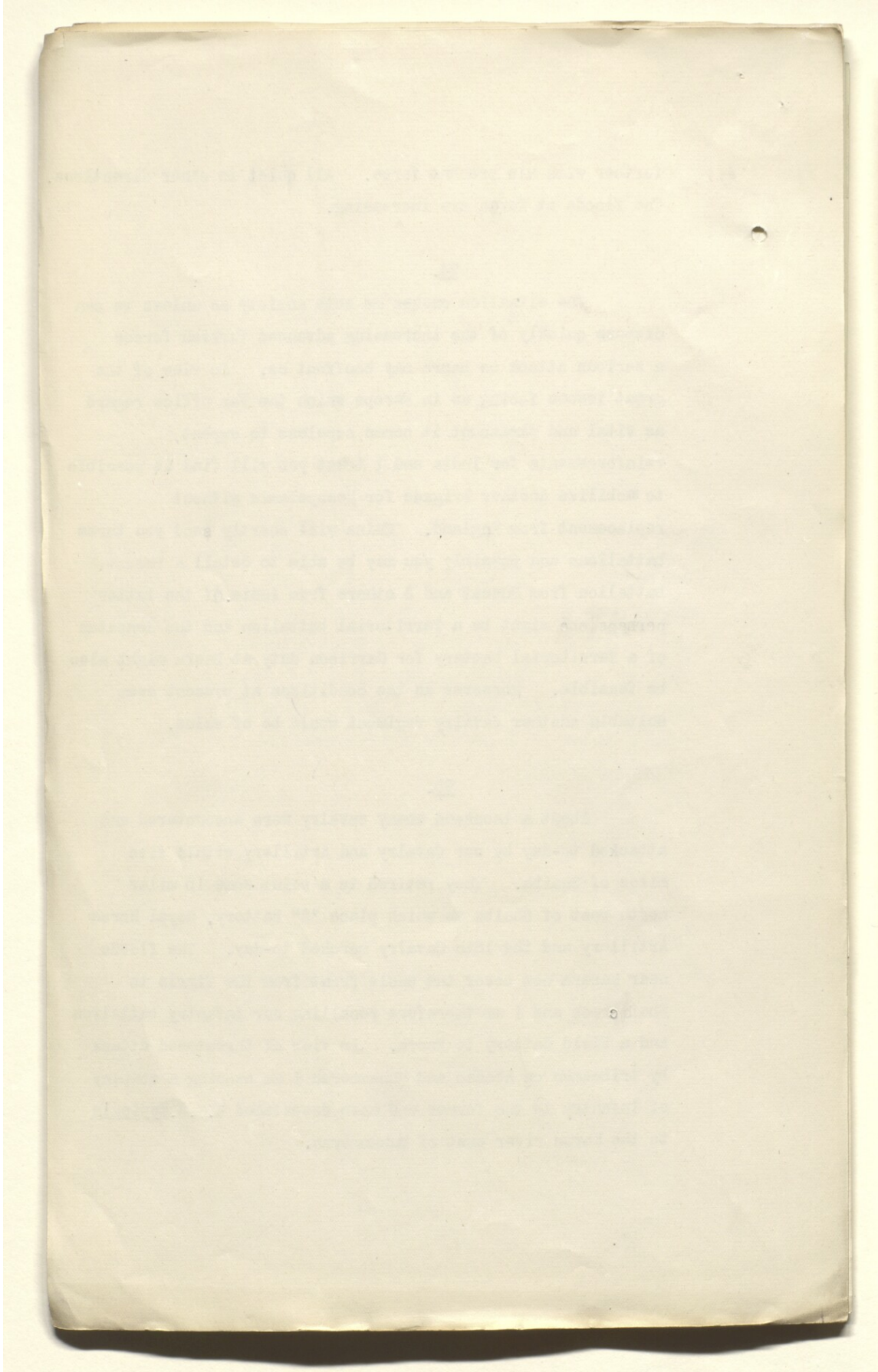
The situation causes me some anxiety as unless we can dispose quickly of the increasing advanced Turkish forces a serious attack on Basra may confront us. In view of the great issues facing us in Europe which the War Office regard as vital and paramount it seems hopeless to expect reinforcements for India and I trust you will find it possible to mobilize another Brigade for Mesopotamia without replacement from England. China will shortly send you three battalions and possibly you may be able to detail a battalion from Muscat and 3 others from India. Of the latter perhaps one might be a Territorial battalion and the despatch of a Territorial battery for Garrison duty at Basra might also be feasible. Moreover as the conditions at present seem suitable another cavalry regiment would be of value.

95.

About a thousand enemy cavalry were encountered and attacked to-day by our Cavalry and Artillery within five miles of Shaiba. They retired to a point some 15 miles north west of Shaiba to which place "S" Battery, Royal Horse Artillery and the 16th Cavalry marched to-day. The floods near Mazera now cover the whole front from the Tigris to Shaib creek and I am therefore recalling our Infantry battalion and a Field Battery to Basra. In view of threatened attack by tribesmen on Abadan and Muhammerah I am sending a company of Infantry to the former and have despatched H.M.S. Espiegle to the Karun river east of Muhammerah.



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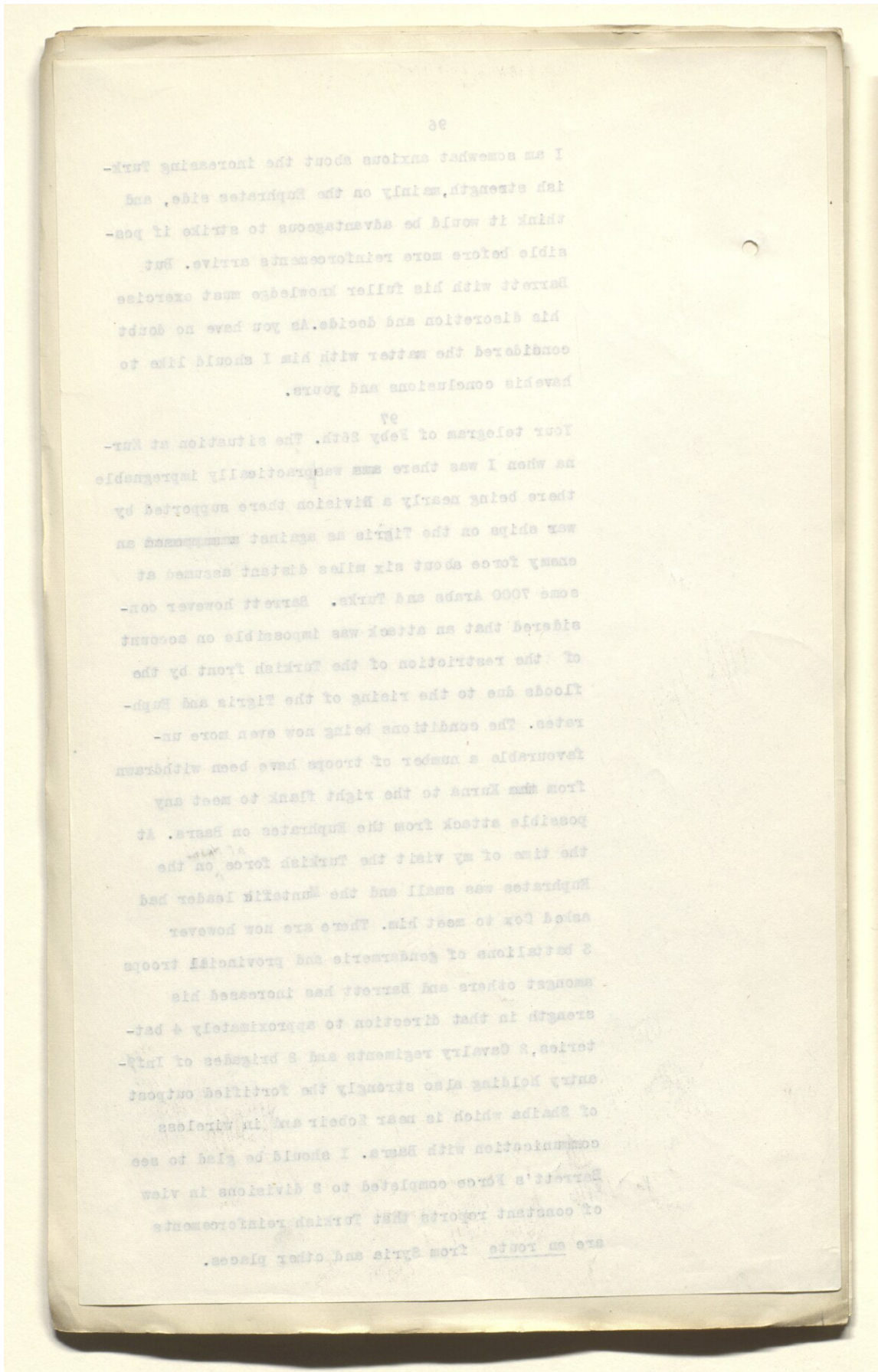


96

I am somewhat anxious about the increasing Turkish strength, mainly on the Euphrates side, and think it would be advantageous to strike if possible before more reinforcements arrive. But Barrett with his fuller knowledge must exercise his discretion and decide. As you have no doubt considered the matter with him I should like to have his conclusions and yours.

97

Your telegram of Feb 26th. The situation at Kurna when I was there ~~was~~ was practically impregnable there being nearly a Division there supported by war ships on the Tigris as against ~~an~~ an enemy force about six miles distant assumed at some 7000 Arabs and Turks. Barrett however considered that an attack was impossible on account of the restriction of the Turkish front by the floods due to the rising of the Tigris and Euphrates. The conditions being now even more unfavourable a number of troops have been withdrawn from ~~the~~ Kurna to the right flank to meet any possible attack from the Euphrates on Basra. At the time of my visit the Turkish force ^{at Nasri} on the Euphrates was small and the Muntafik leader had asked Cox to meet him. There are now however 3 battalions of gendarmerie and provincial troops amongst others and Barrett has increased his strength in that direction to approximately 4 batteries, 2 Cavalry regiments and 2 brigades of Infantry holding also strongly the fortified outpost of Shaiba which is near Zobeir and in wireless communication with Basra. I should be glad to see Barrett's Force completed to 2 divisions in view of constant reports that Turkish reinforcements are en route from Syria and other places.





97 (cont)

Meanwhile we have despatched to Mesopotamia ^{another} ~~a~~ battery of heavy guns and a Cavalry regiment.

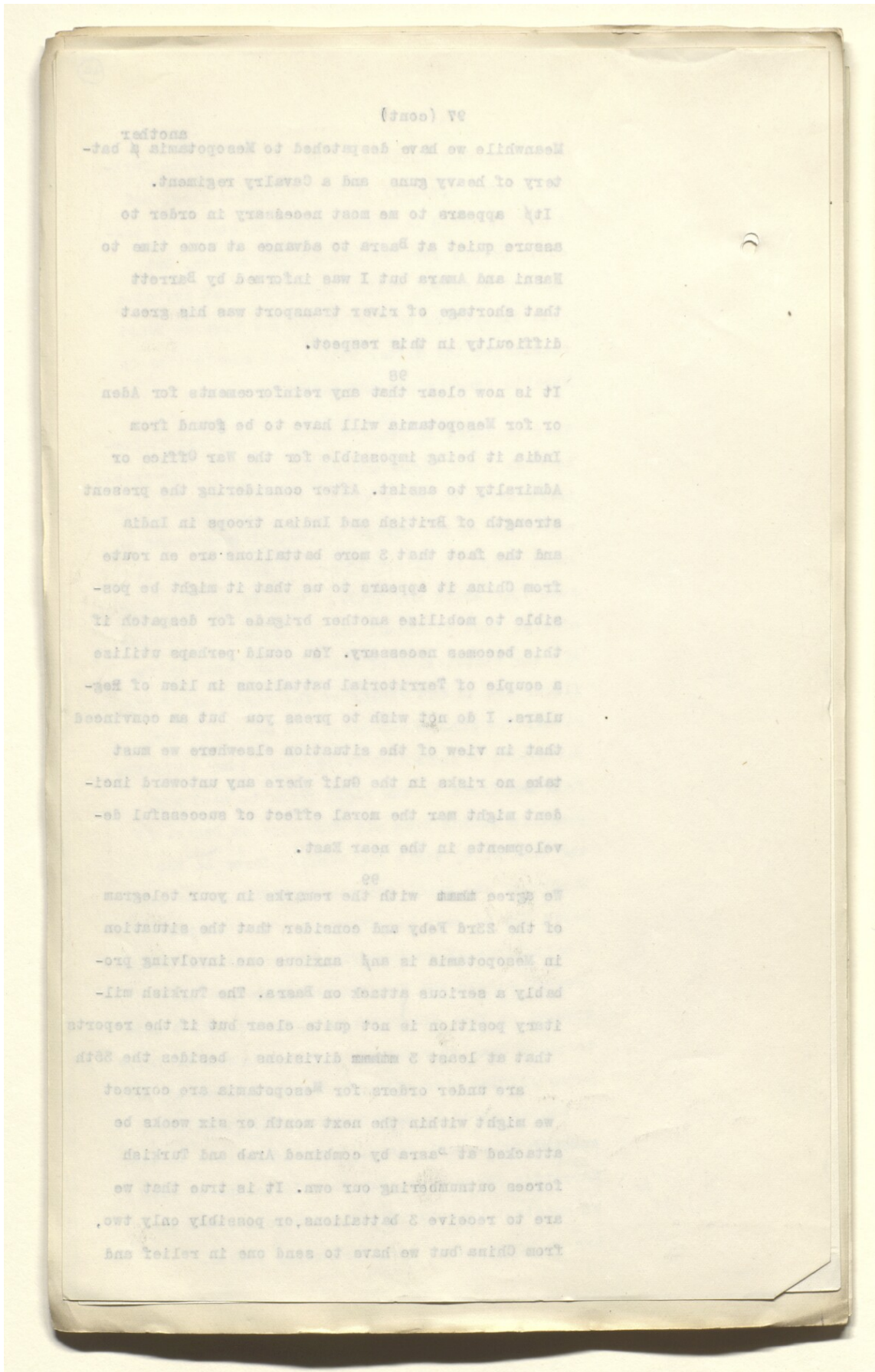
It appears to me most necessary in order to assure quiet at Basra to advance at some time to Nasri and Amara but I was informed by Barrett that shortage of river transport was his great difficulty in this respect.

98

It is now clear that any reinforcements for Aden or for Mesopotamia will have to be found from India it being impossible for the War Office or Admiralty to assist. After considering the present strength of British and Indian troops in India and the fact that 3 more battalions are en route from China it appears to us that it might be possible to mobilize another brigade for despatch if this becomes necessary. You could perhaps utilize a couple of Territorial battalions in lieu of Regulars. I do not wish to press you but am convinced that in view of the situation elsewhere we must take no risks in the Gulf where any untoward incident might mar the moral effect of successful developments in the near East.

99

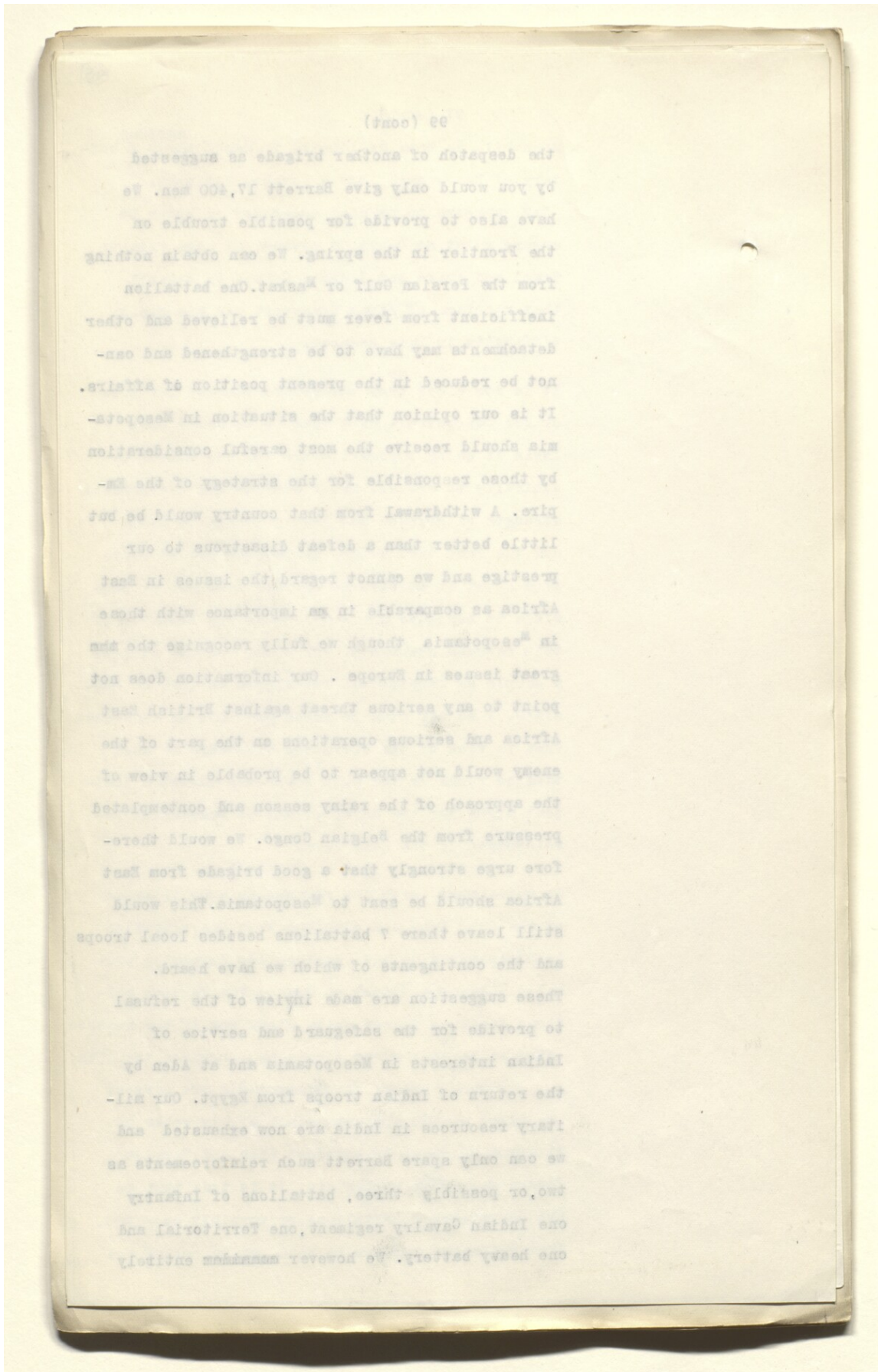
We agree ~~tham~~ with the remarks in your telegram of the 23rd Feby and consider that the situation in Mesopotamia is an anxious one involving probably a serious attack on Basra. The Turkish military position is not quite clear but if the reports that at least 3 ~~divisions~~ divisions besides the 35th are under orders for Mesopotamia are correct we might within the next month or six weeks be attacked at Basra by combined Arab and Turkish forces outnumbering our own. It is true that we are to receive 3 battalions, or possibly only two, from China but we have to send one in relief and





99 (cont)

the despatch of another brigade as suggested by you would only give Barrett 17,400 men. We have also to provide for possible trouble on the Frontier in the spring. We can obtain nothing from the Persian Gulf or Maskat. One battalion inefficient from fever must be relieved and other detachments may have to be strengthened and cannot be reduced in the present position of affairs. It is our opinion that the situation in Mesopotamia should receive the most careful consideration by those responsible for the strategy of the Empire. A withdrawal from that country would be but little better than a defeat disastrous to our prestige and we cannot regard the issues in East Africa as comparable in importance with those in Mesopotamia though we fully recognize the great issues in Europe. Our information does not point to any serious threat against British East Africa and serious operations on the part of the enemy would not appear to be probable in view of the approach of the rainy season and contemplated pressure from the Belgian Congo. We would therefore urge strongly that a good brigade from East Africa should be sent to Mesopotamia. This would still leave there 7 battalions besides local troops and the contingents of which we have heard. These suggestions are made in view of the refusal to provide for the safeguard and service of Indian interests in Mesopotamia and at Aden by the return of Indian troops from Egypt. Our military resources in India are now exhausted and we can only spare Barrett such reinforcements as two, or possibly three, battalions of Infantry one Indian Cavalry regiment, one Territorial and one heavy battery. We however ~~cannot~~ entirely





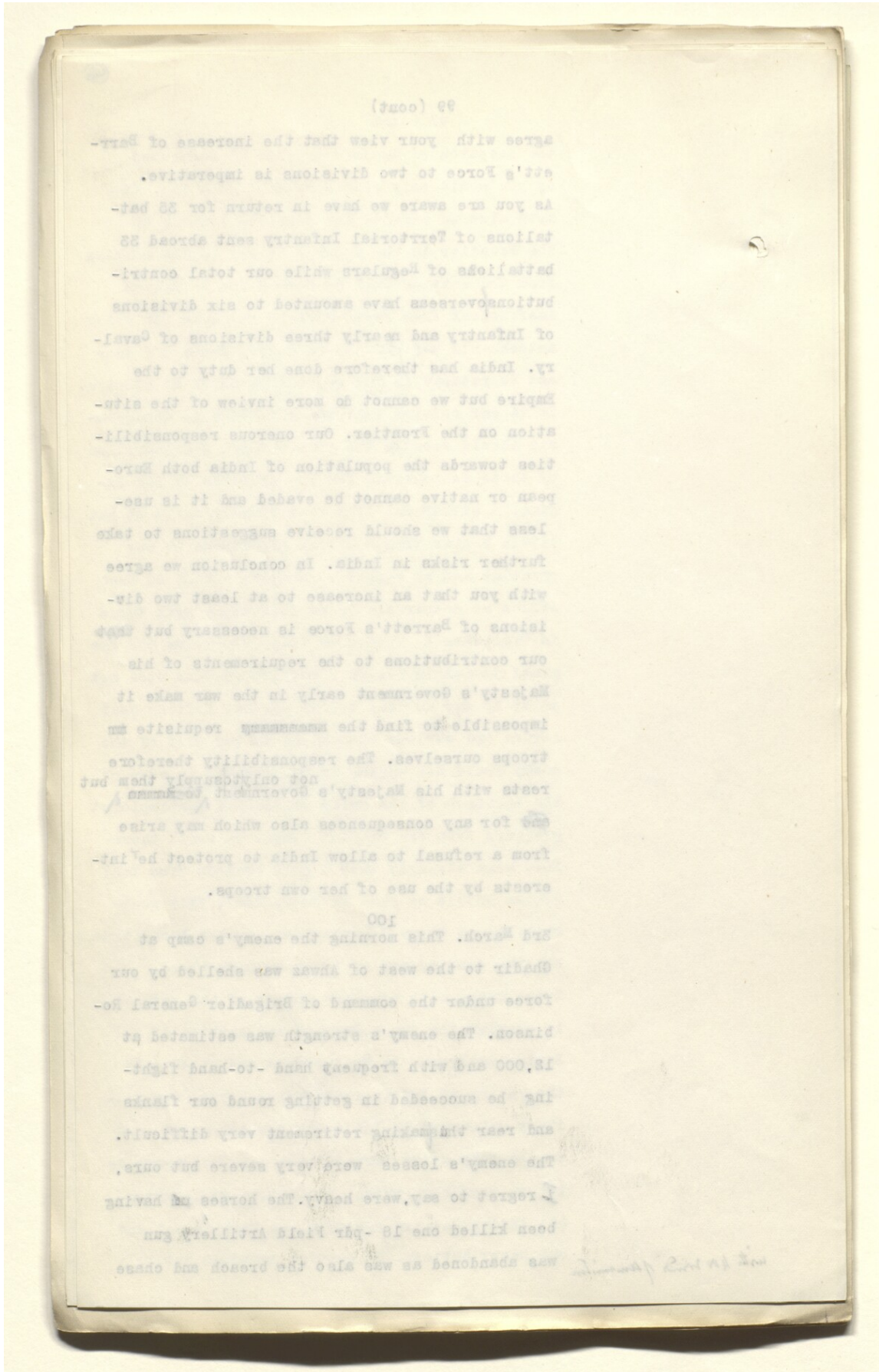
99 (cont)

agree with your view that the increase of Barrett's Force to two divisions is imperative. As you are aware we have in return for 35 battalions of Territorial Infantry sent abroad 33 battalions of Regulars while our total contributions overseas have amounted to six divisions of Infantry and nearly three divisions of Cavalry. India has therefore done her duty to the Empire but we cannot do more in view of the situation on the Frontier. Our onerous responsibilities towards the population of India both European or native cannot be evaded and it is useless that we should receive suggestions to take further risks in India. In conclusion we agree with you that an increase to at least two divisions of Barrett's Force is necessary but ~~that~~ our contributions to the requirements of his Majesty's Government early in the war make it impossible to find the ~~necessary~~ requisite ~~in~~ troops ourselves. The responsibility therefore rests with his Majesty's Government ^{not only to supply them but} ~~to~~ ~~supply~~ ~~them~~ ~~but~~ ~~for~~ for any consequences also which may arise from a refusal to allow India to protect her interests by the use of her own troops.

100

3rd March. This morning the enemy's camp at Ghadir to the west of Ahwaz was shelled by our force under the command of Brigadier General Robinson. The enemy's strength was estimated at 12,000 and with frequent hand-to-hand fighting he succeeded in getting round our flanks and rear ~~thus~~ making retirement very difficult. The enemy's losses were very severe but ours, I regret to say, were heavy. The horses ~~and~~ having been killed one 18-pdr Field Artillery gun was abandoned as was also the breach and chase

with 400 rounds of ammunition





(47)

100 (cont)

casualties
of a mountain gun. Our ~~men~~ were 62 killed and wounded 127. I appears that Ghadir had been heavily reinforced on the previous night and that Bani Turuf tribes with Ghazban and Said-Nameh were present. Reinforcements of British and Indian Infantry and of Royal Field Artillery are being despatched.

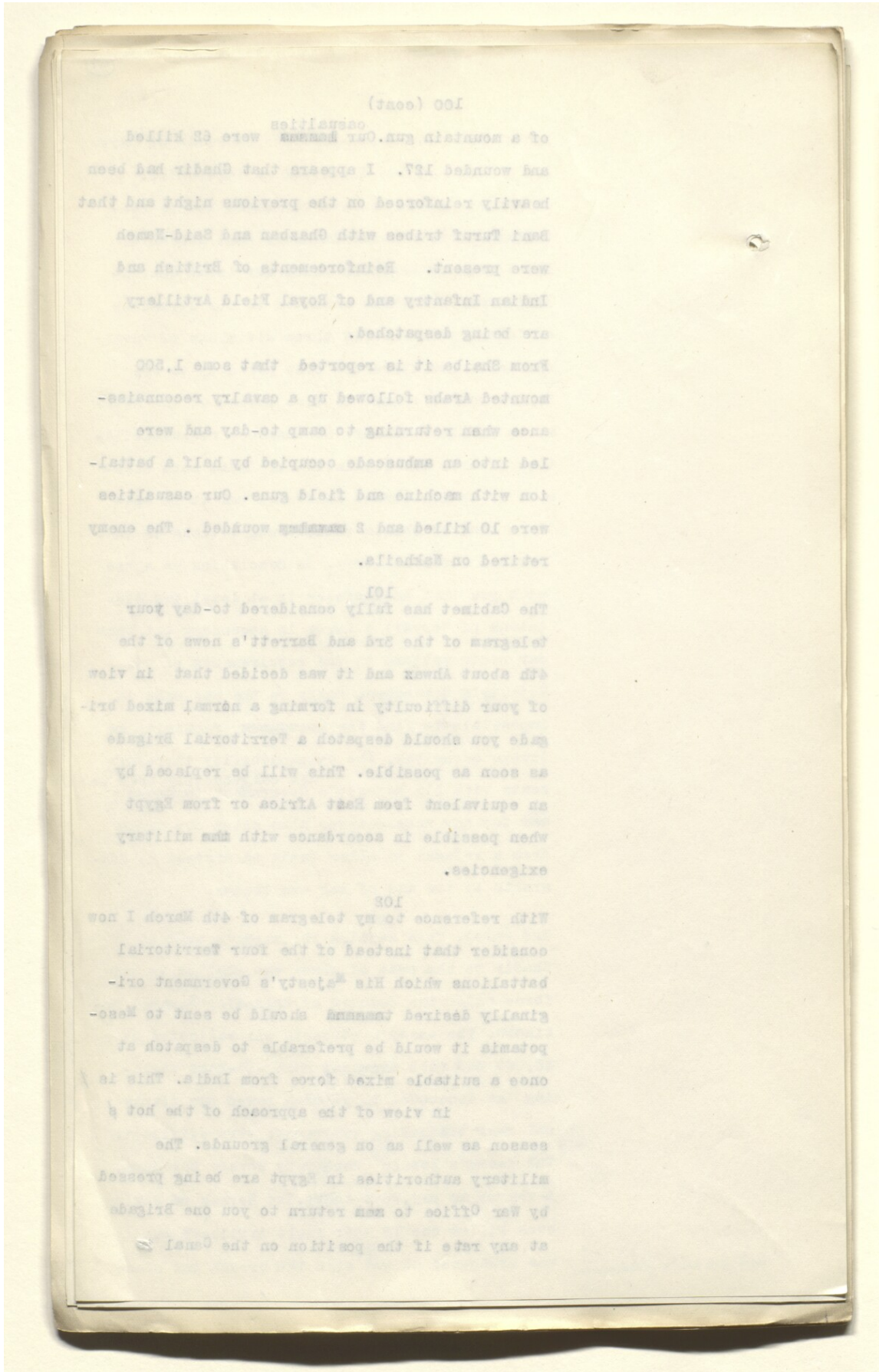
From Shaiba it is reported that some 1,500 mounted Arabs followed up a cavalry reconnaissance when returning to camp to-day and were led into an ambush occupied by half a battalion with machine and field guns. Our casualties were 10 killed and 2 ~~wounded~~ wounded. The enemy retired on Nakheila.

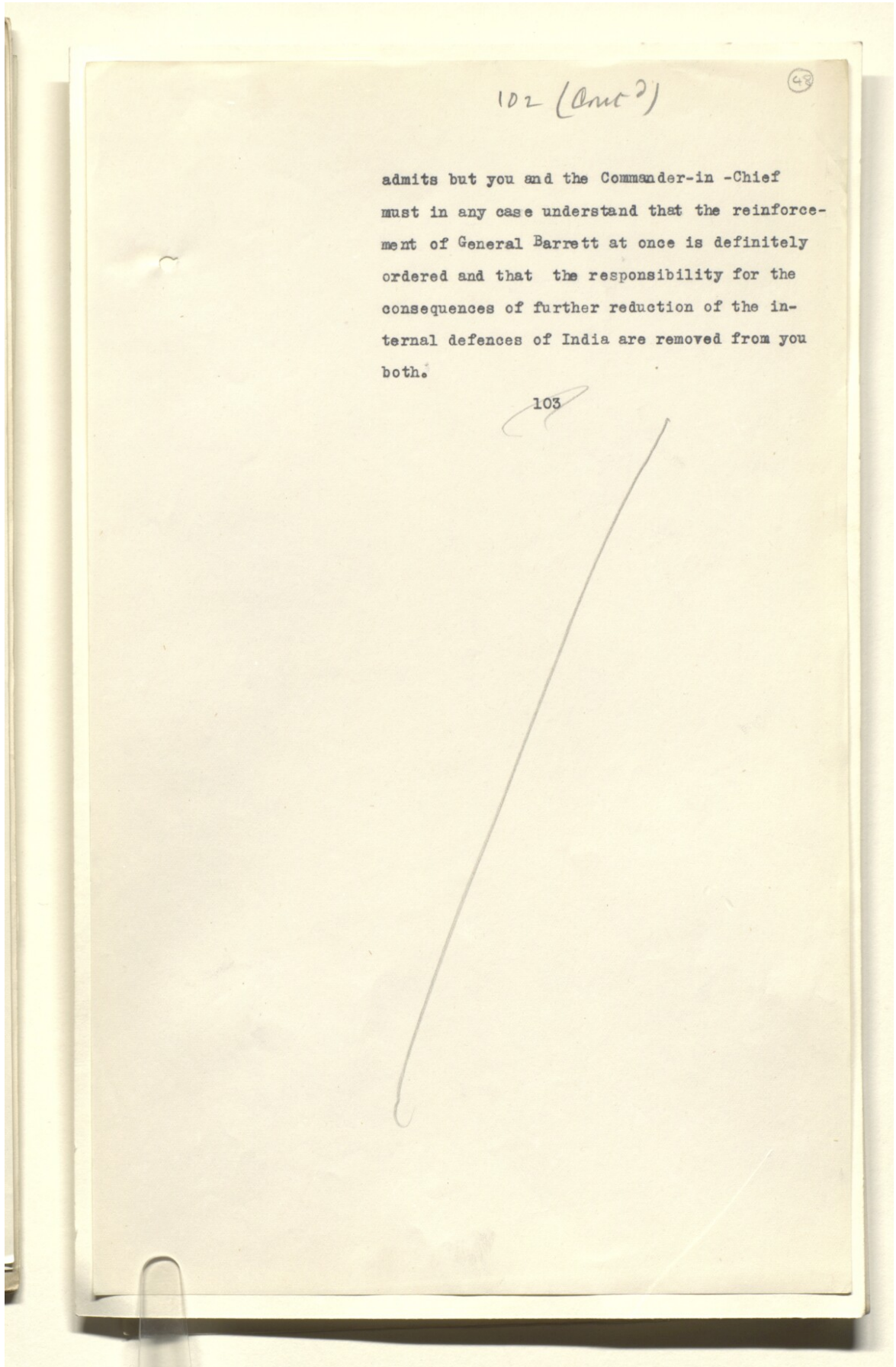
101

The Cabinet has fully considered to-day your telegram of the 3rd and Barrett's news of the 4th about Ahwax and it was decided that in view of your difficulty in forming a normal mixed brigade you should despatch a Territorial Brigade as soon as possible. This will be replaced by an equivalent from East Africa or from Egypt when possible in accordance with ~~the~~ military exigencies.

102

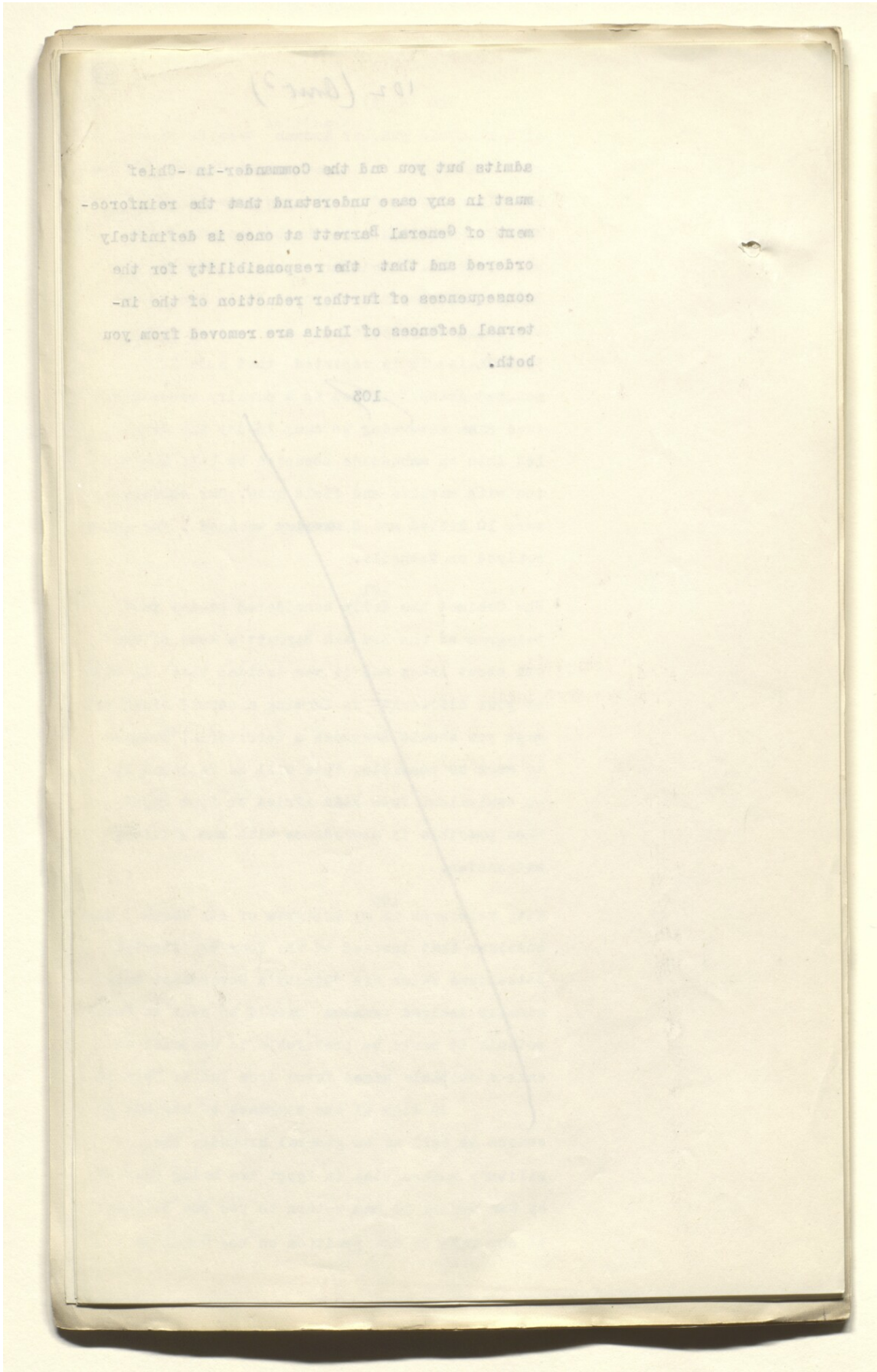
With reference to my telegram of 4th March I now consider that instead of the four Territorial battalions which His Majesty's Government originally desired ~~to be sent~~ should be sent to Mesopotamia it would be preferable to despatch at once a suitable mixed force from India. This is /
in view of the approach of the hot /
season as well as on general grounds. The military authorities in Egypt are being pressed by War Office to ~~send~~ return to you one Brigade at any rate if the position on the Canal is

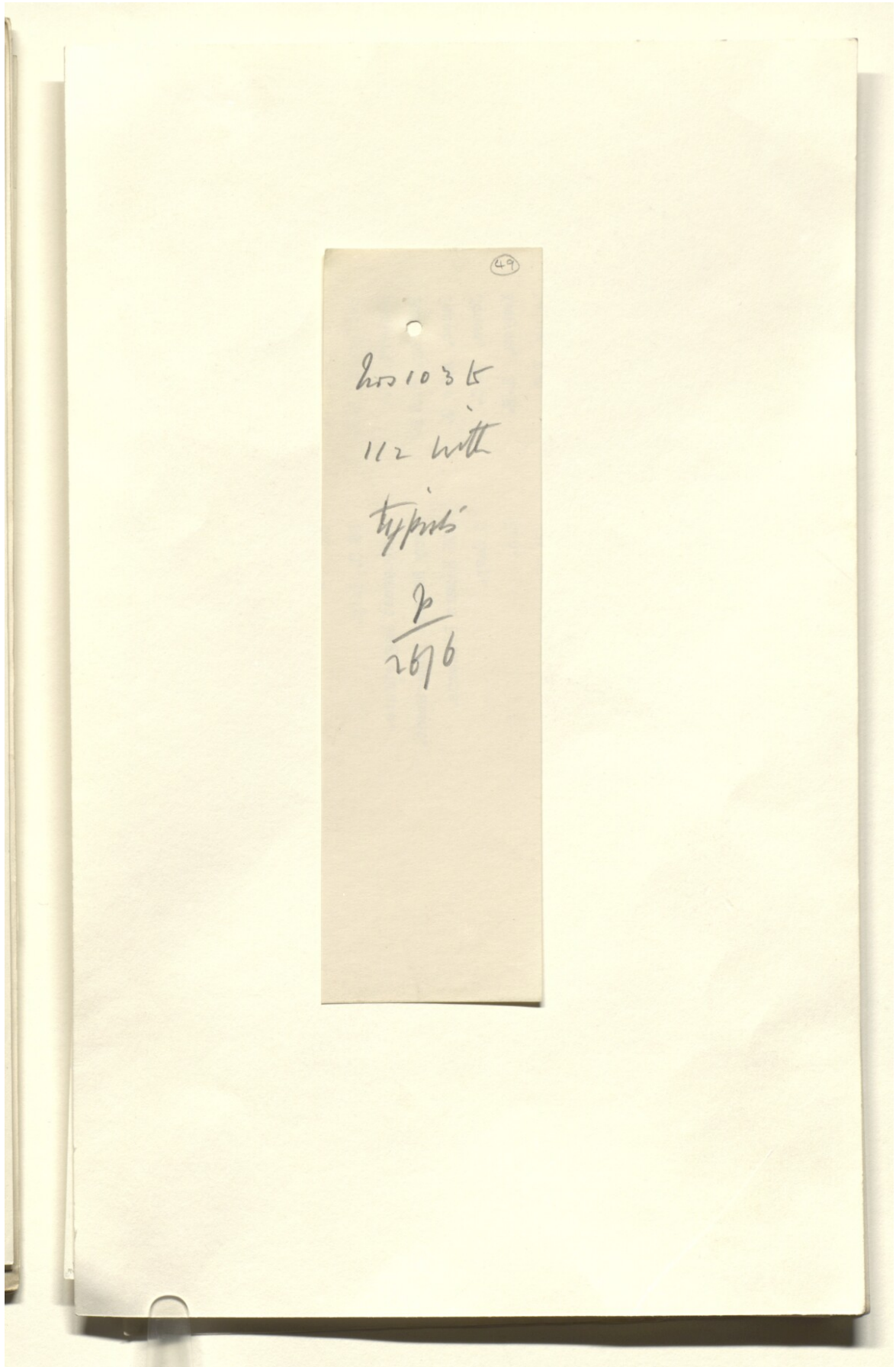


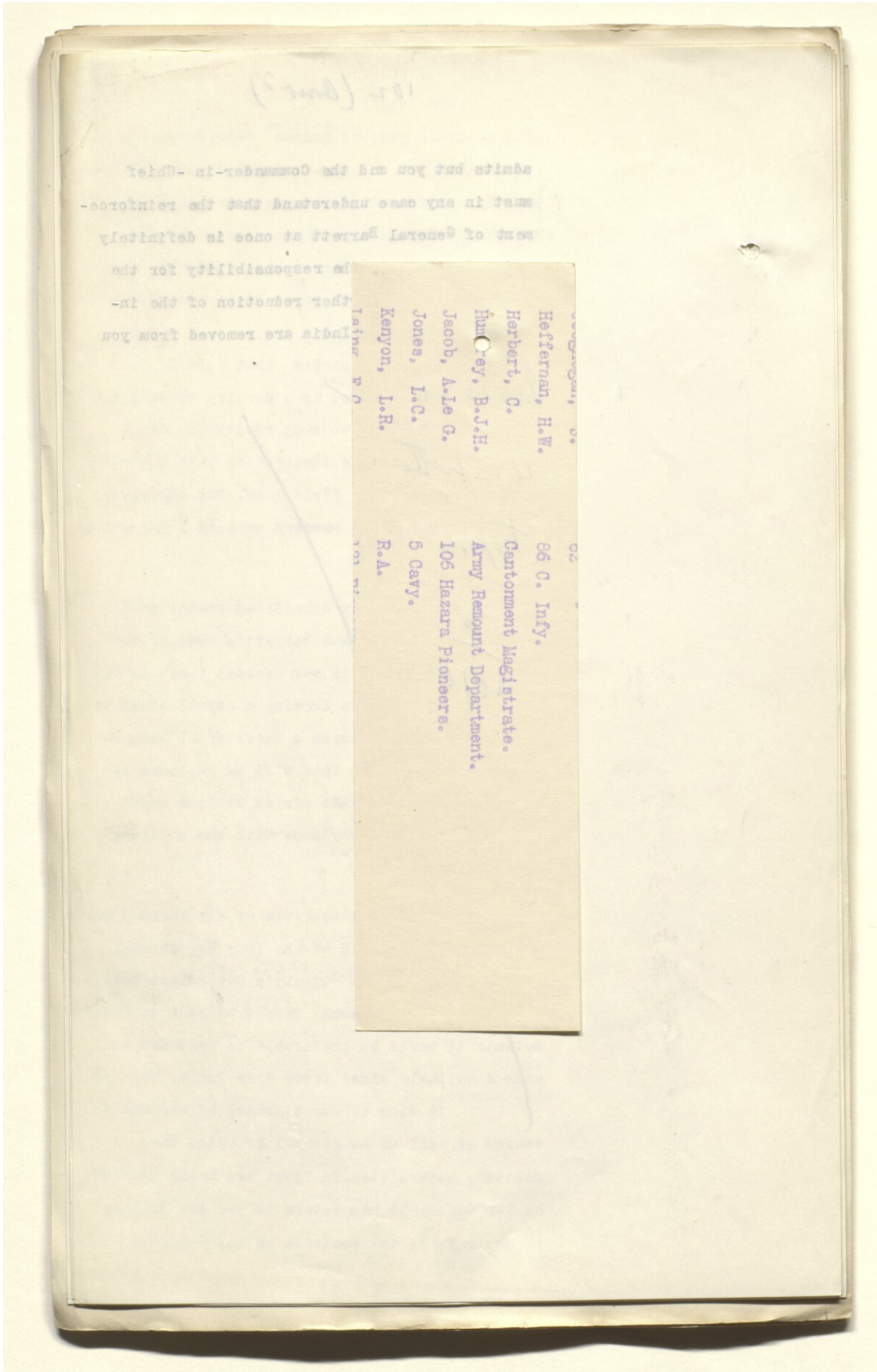




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No. 103.

March 5th. All quiet at Ahwaz. Cavalry patrols unmolested. Confirmation has been received of the estimated losses to enemy of 200 to 300 men including the brother of the Sheikh of the Beni Turuf tribe killed and brother of Ghazban and 10 or 12 Sheikhs wounded.

The enemy are apparently making preparations for defence and to abandon the offensive. Our reinforcements have reached Ahwaz making the strength 3 battalions of Infantry and 6 Field and Mountain Guns. All quiet in other directions.

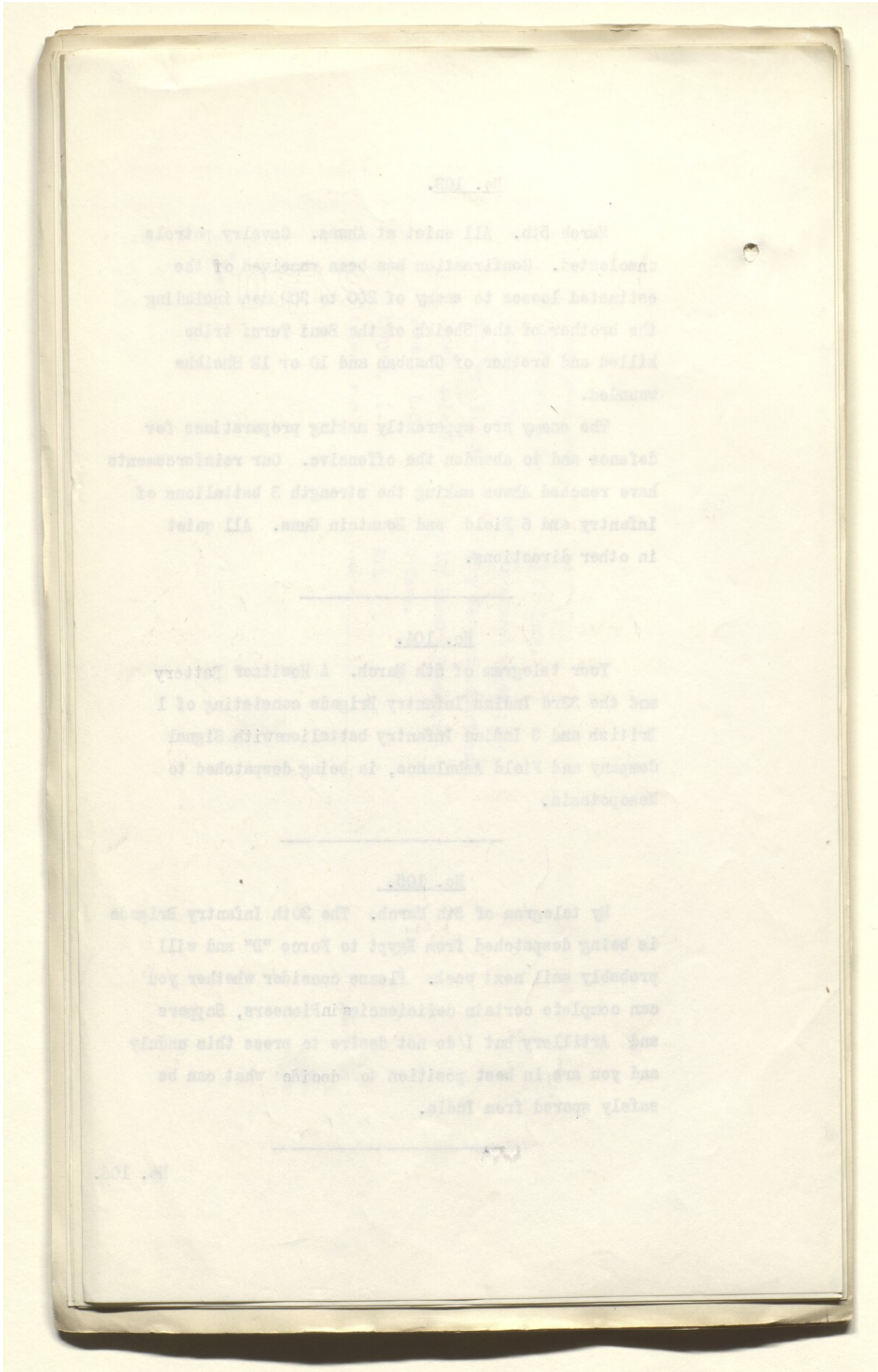
No. 104.

Your telegram of 5th March. A Howitzer Battery and the 33rd Indian Infantry Brigade consisting of 1 British and 3 Indian Infantry battalions with Signal Company and Field Ambulance, is being despatched to Mesopotamia.

No. 105.

My telegram of 5th March. The 30th Infantry Brigade is being despatched from Egypt to Force "D" and will probably sail next week. Please consider whether you can complete certain deficiencies in Pioneers, Sappers and Artillery but I do not desire to press this unduly and you are in best position to decide what can be safely spared from India.

No. 106.





108.

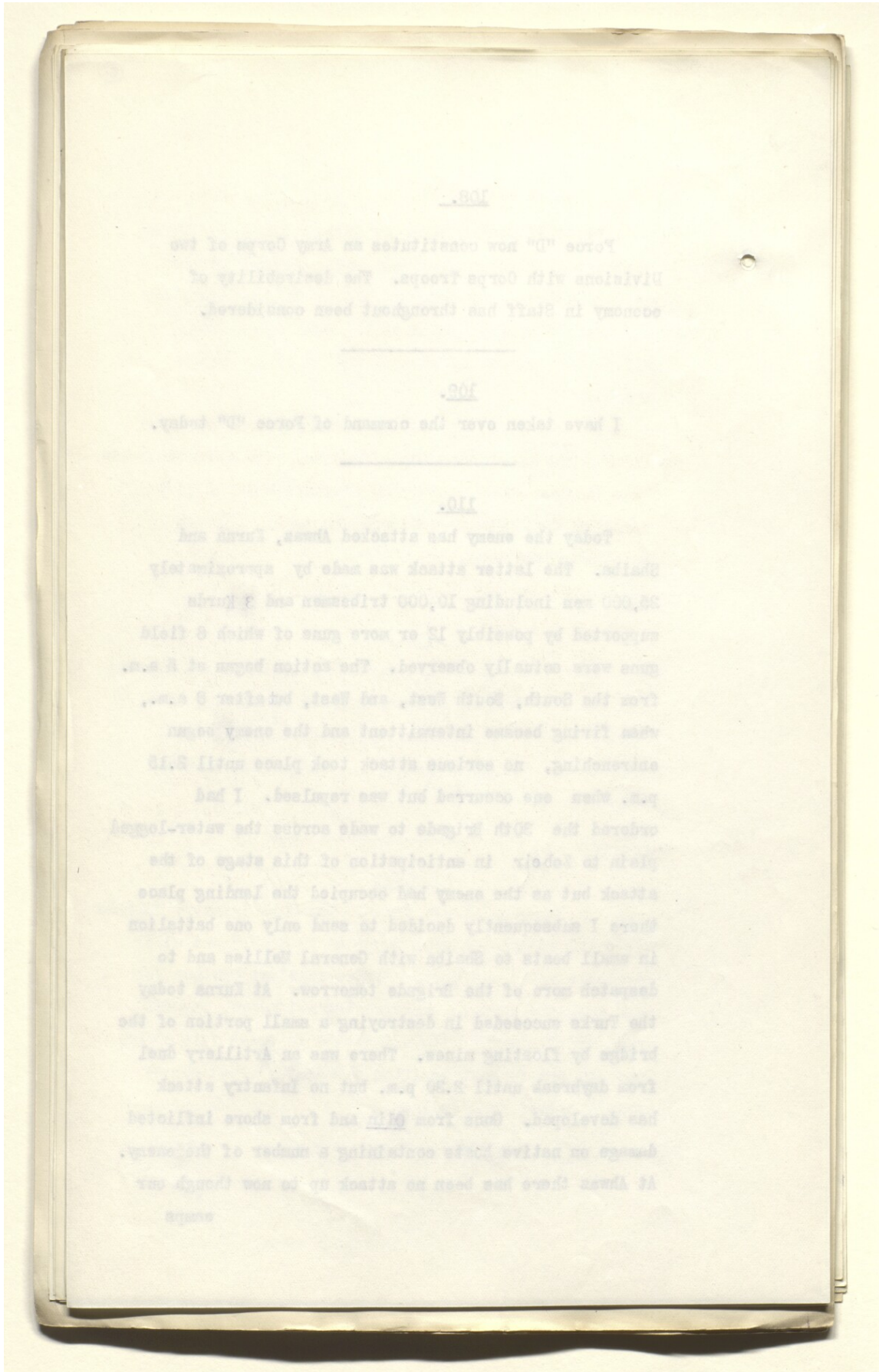
Force "D" now constitutes an Army Corps of two Divisions with Corps Troops. The desirability of economy in Staff has throughout been considered.

109.

I have taken over the command of Force "D" today.

110.

Today the enemy has attacked Ahwaz, Kurna and Shaiba. The latter attack was made by approximately 25,000 men including 10,000 tribesmen and 3 Kurds supported by possibly 12 or more guns of which 8 field guns were actually observed. The action began at 5 a.m. from the South, South West, and West, but after 8 a.m., when firing became intermittent and the enemy began entrenching, no serious attack took place until 2.15 p.m. when one occurred but was repulsed. I had ordered the 30th Brigade to wade across the water-logged plain to Zobeir in anticipation of this stage of the attack but as the enemy had occupied the landing place there I subsequently decided to send only one battalion in small boats to Shaiba with General Melliss and to despatch more of the Brigade tomorrow. At Kurna today the Turks succeeded in destroying a small portion of the bridge by floating mines. There was an Artillery duel from daybreak until 2.30 p.m. but no Infantry attack has developed. Guns from Qilin and from shore inflicted damage on native boats containing a number of the enemy. At Ahwaz there has been no attack up to now though our camps

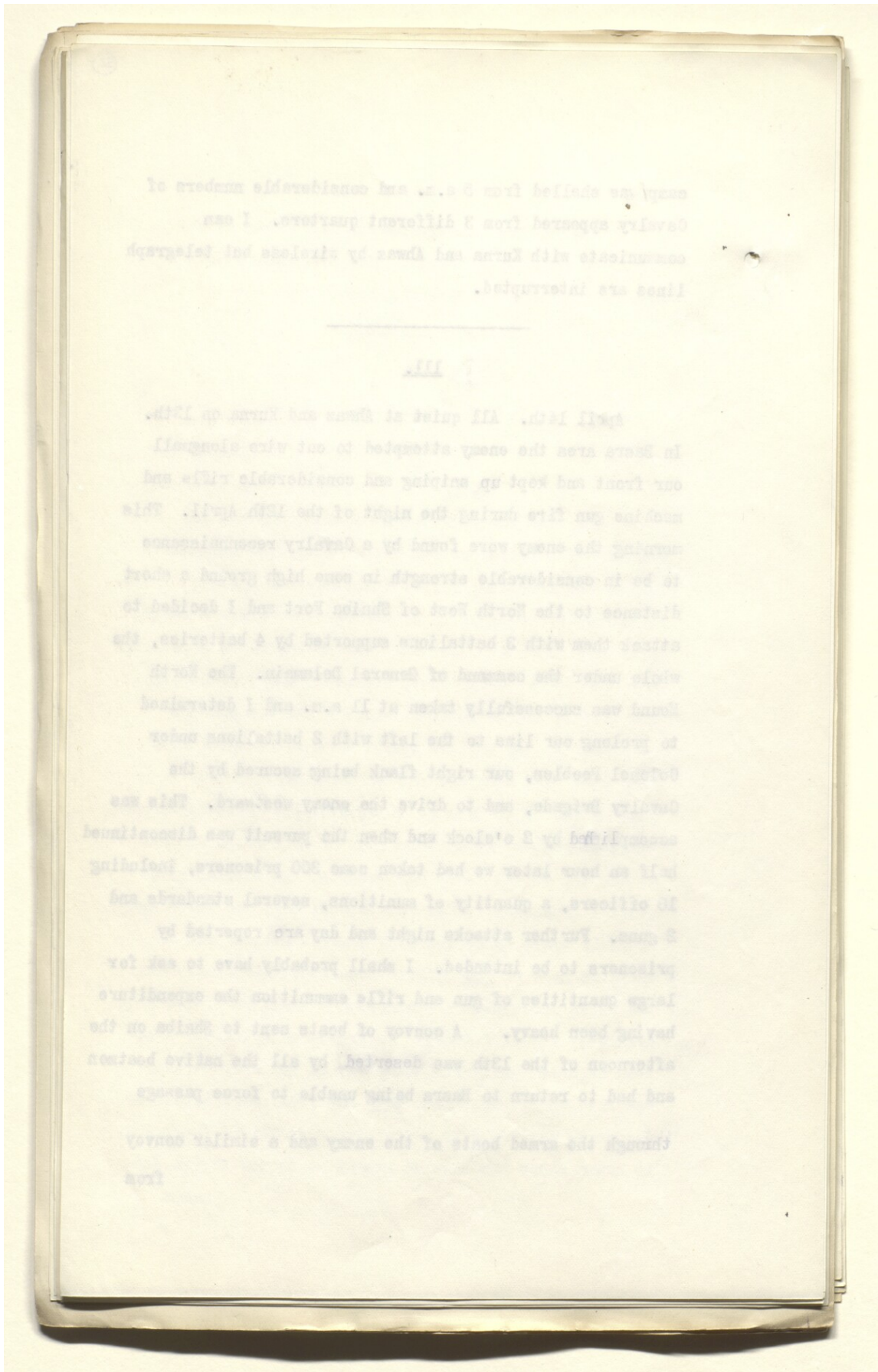




camp was shelled from 5 a.m. and considerable numbers of Cavalry appeared from 3 different quarters. I can communicate with Kurna and Ahwaz by wireless but telegraph lines are interrupted.

III.

April 14th. All quiet at Ahwaz and Kurna on 13th. In Basra area the enemy attempted to cut wire along all our front and kept up sniping and considerable rifle and machine gun fire during the night of the 12th April. This morning the enemy were found by a Cavalry reconnaissance to be in considerable strength in some high ground a short distance to the North West of Shaiba Fort and I decided to attack them with 3 battalions supported by 4 batteries, the whole under the command of General Delamain. The North Mound was successfully taken at 11 a.m. and I determined to prolong our line to the left with 2 battalions under Colonel Peebles, our right flank being secured by the Cavalry Brigade, and to drive the enemy westward. This was accomplished by 2 o'clock and when the pursuit was discontinued half an hour later we had taken some 300 prisoners, including 18 officers, a quantity of munitions, several standards and 2 guns. Further attacks night and day are reported by prisoners to be intended. I shall probably have to ask for large quantities of gun and rifle ammunition the expenditure having been heavy. A convoy of boats sent to Shaiba on the afternoon of the 13th was deserted by all the native boatmen and had to return to Basra being unable to force passage through the armed boats of the enemy and a similar convoy from

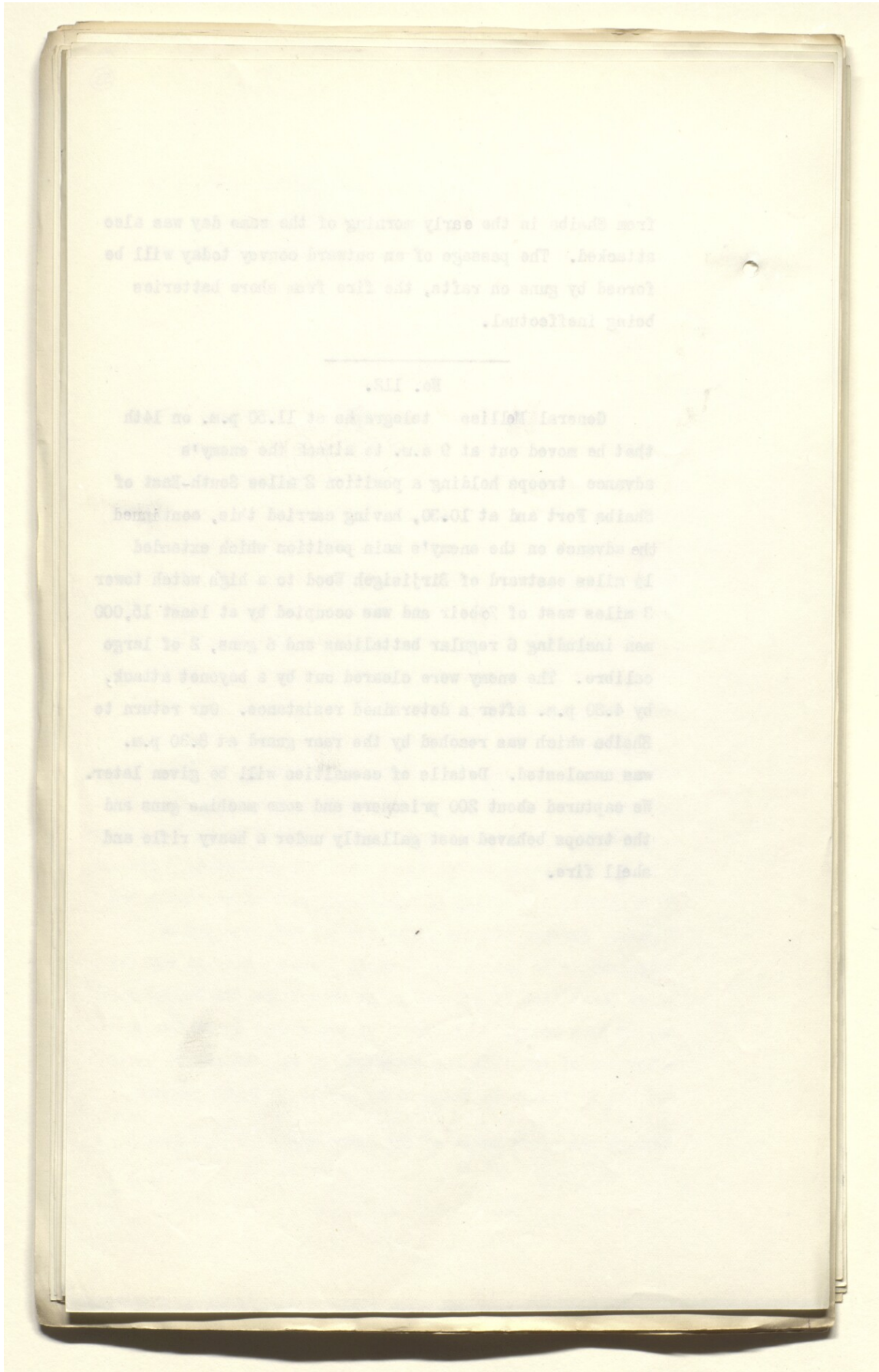




from Shaiba in the early morning of the same day was also attacked. The passage of an outward convoy today will be forced by guns on rafts, the fire from shore batteries being ineffectual.

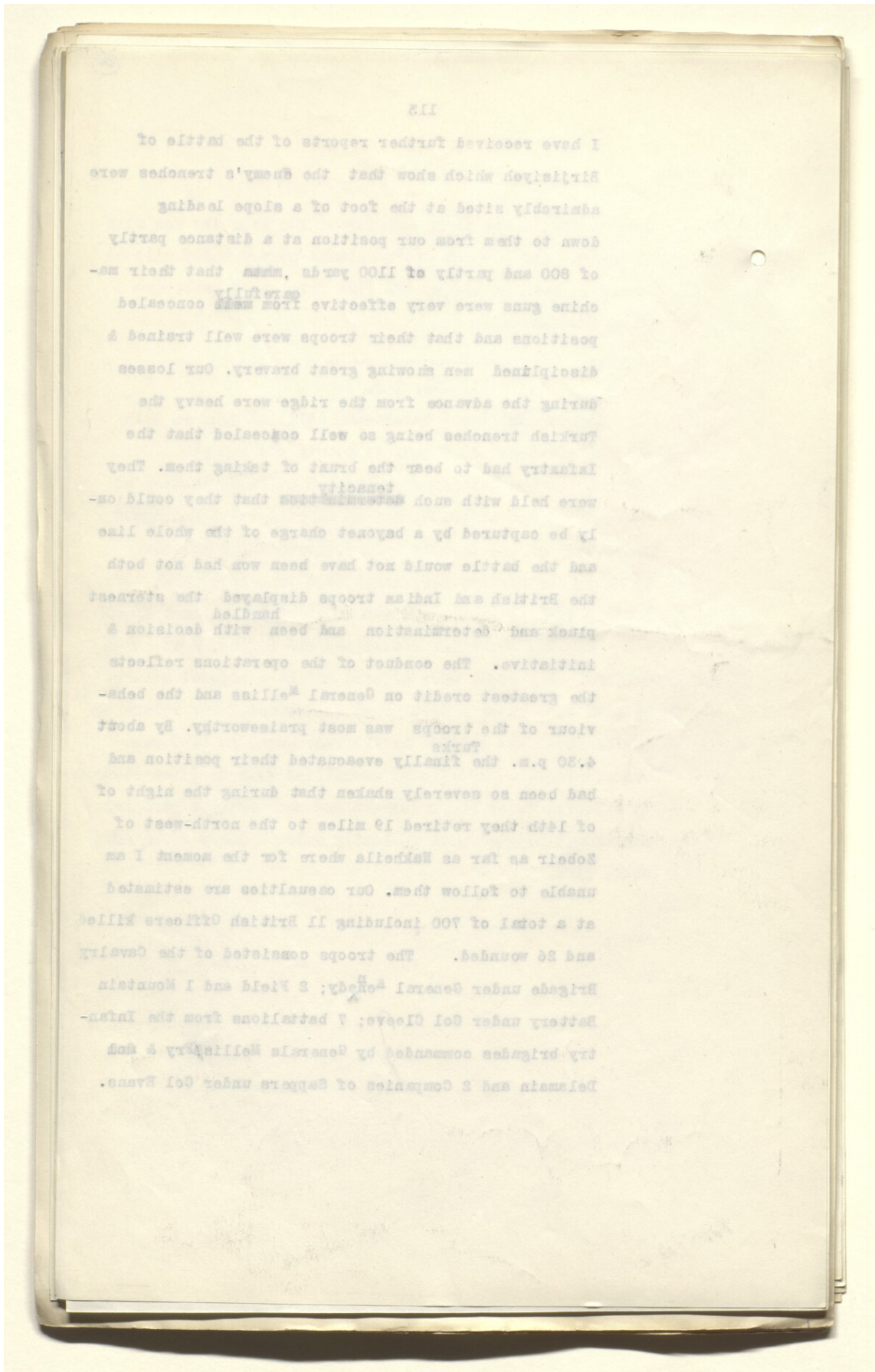
No. 112.

General Melliss telegraphs at 11.50 p.m. on 14th that he moved out at 9 a.m. to attack the enemy's advance troops holding a position 2 miles South-East of Shaiba Fort and at 10.30, having carried this, continued the advance on the enemy's main position which extended $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles eastward of Birjisigeh Wood to a high watch tower 3 miles west of Zobeir and was occupied by at least 15,000 men including 6 regular battalions and 6 guns, 2 of large calibre. The enemy were cleared out by a bayonet attack, by 4.30 p.m. after a determined resistance. Our return to Shaiba which was reached by the rear guard at 8.30 p.m. was unmolested. Details of casualties will be given later. We captured about 200 prisoners and some machine guns and the troops behaved most gallantly under a heavy rifle and shell fire.





I have received further reports of the battle of Birjisiyeh which show that the enemy's trenches were admirably sited at the foot of a slope leading down to them from our position at a distance partly of 800 and partly of 1100 yards, ~~which~~ that their machine guns were very effective from ~~well~~ ^{carefully} concealed positions and that their troops were well trained & disciplined men showing great bravery. Our losses during the advance from the ridge were heavy the Turkish trenches being so well concealed that the Infantry had to bear the brunt of taking them. They were held with such ~~determination~~ ^{tenacity} that they could only be captured by a bayonet charge of the whole line and the battle would not have been won had not both the British and Indian troops displayed the sternest pluck and determination and been ^{handled} with decision & initiative. The conduct of the operations reflects the greatest credit on General Melliss and the behaviour of the troops was most praiseworthy. By about 4.30 p.m. the ^{Turks} finally evacuated their position and had been so severely shaken that during the night of 14th they retired 19 miles to the north-west of Zobeir as far as Nakheila where for the moment I am unable to follow them. Our casualties are estimated at a total of 700 including 11 British Officers killed and 26 wounded. The troops consisted of the Cavalry Brigade under General ~~Kenny~~ ^{Kenny}; 2 Field and 1 Mountain Battery under Col Cleeve; 7 battalions from the Infantry brigades commanded by Generals Melliss, Fry & ~~and~~ Delamain and 2 Companies of Sappers under Col Evans.





114

A report has been received from General Milliss dated Shaiba 15th April 10.30 a.m. saying that ~~there~~ no enemy remain in Birjisiyeh, Zobeir or Old Basra and that in the Turkish camp to the south of the watch tower on the flank of his position on the 14th were found tents, large quantities of munitions and kit, food both cooked and uncooked, nearly three quarters of a million rounds of small arm ammunition and over 450 cases of gun ammunition. All the above are being removed or destroyed. I am sending Cavalry to Shwebda ^{7 miles west of Zobeir,} to ascertain whether any enemy remain there and to-morrow I shall search for a suitable defensive position and site for camp for a brigade near Zobeir. ~~There~~ Clouds of dust indirection of enemy appear to show that he is continuing his retirement to the north west. After General Barrett's departure I sent General Melliss to take command and reinforce Shaiba and place the Staff of the 6th Division at his disposal. He speaks in high terms of their work and I will later submit recommendations about them.

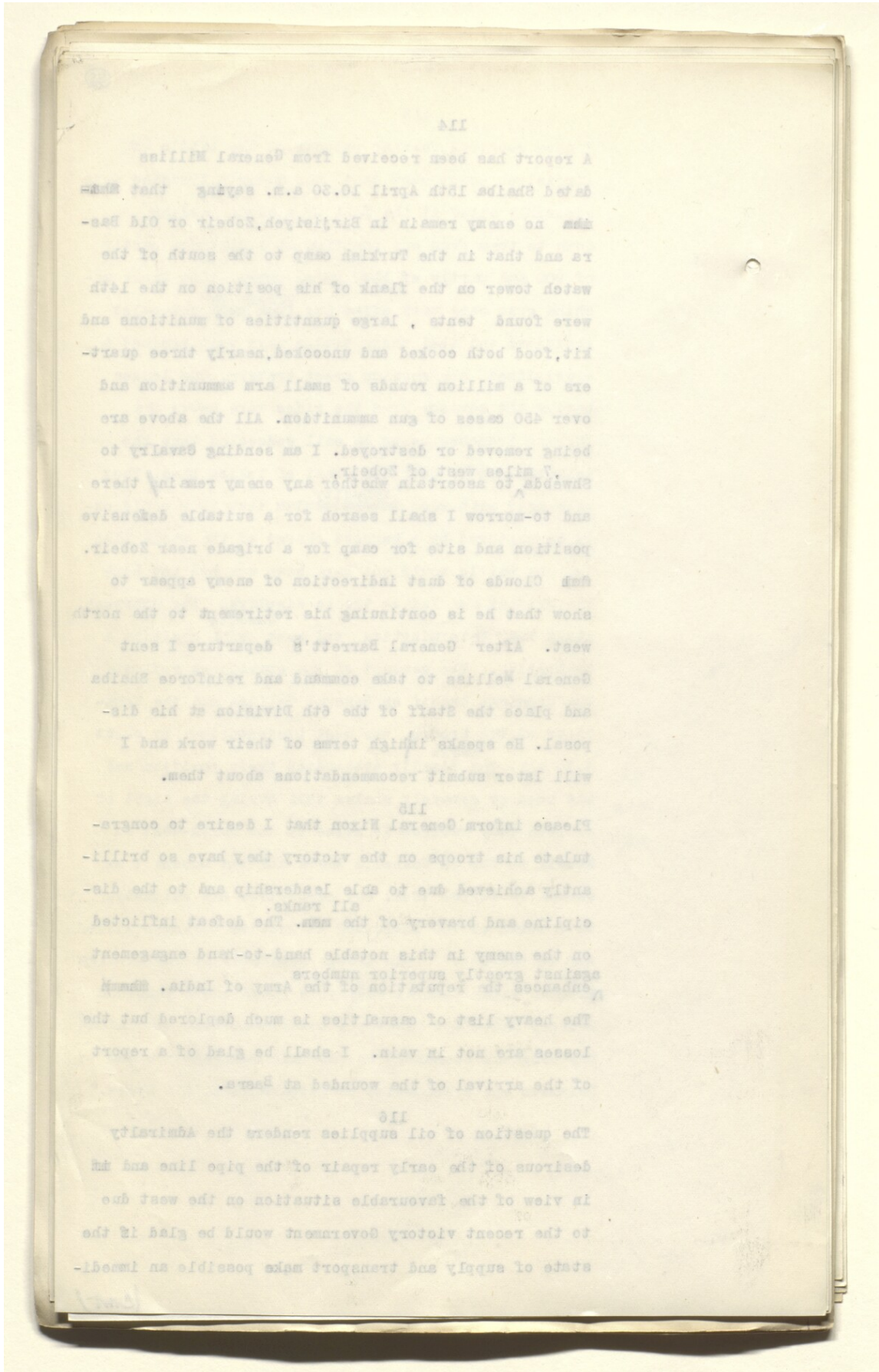
115

Please inform General Nixon that I desire to congratulate his troops on the victory they have so brilliantly achieved due to able leadership and to the discipline and bravery of the ~~all~~ ranks. The defeat inflicted on the enemy in this notable hand-to-hand engagement against greatly superior numbers ~~enhances~~ the reputation of the Army of India. ~~The~~ heavy list of casualties is much deplored but the losses are not in vain. I shall be glad of a report of the arrival of the wounded at Basra.

116

The question of oil supplies renders the Admiralty desirous of the early repair of the pipe line and ~~in~~ in view of the favourable situation on the west due to the recent victory Government would be glad if the state of supply and transport make possible an immedi-

(CMI)





116 (cont)

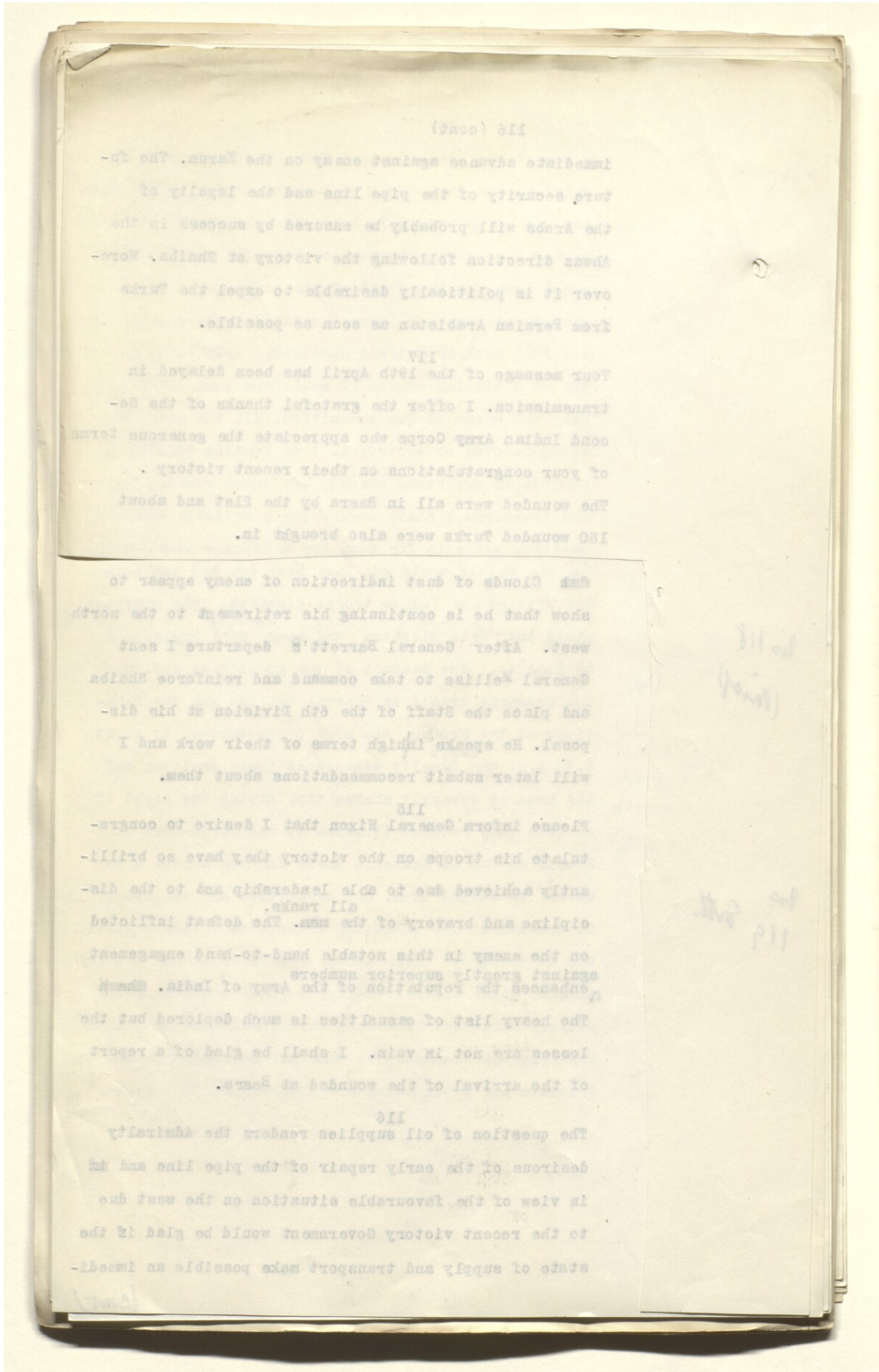
immediate advance against enemy on the Karun. The future security of the pipe line and the loyalty of the Arabs will probably be ensured by success in the Ahwaz direction following the victory at Shaiba. Moreover it is politically desirable to expel the Turks from Persian Arabistan as soon as possible.

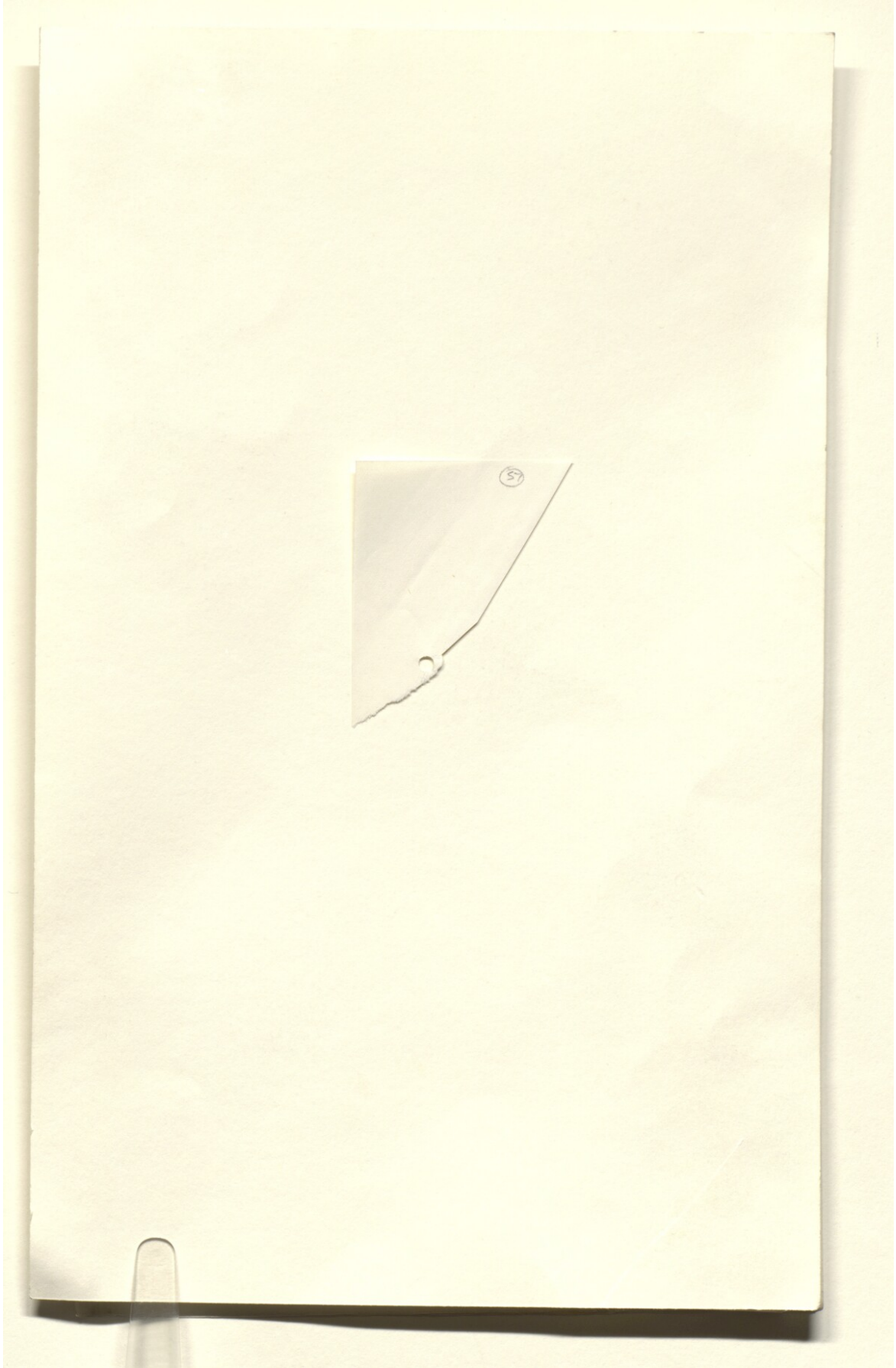
117

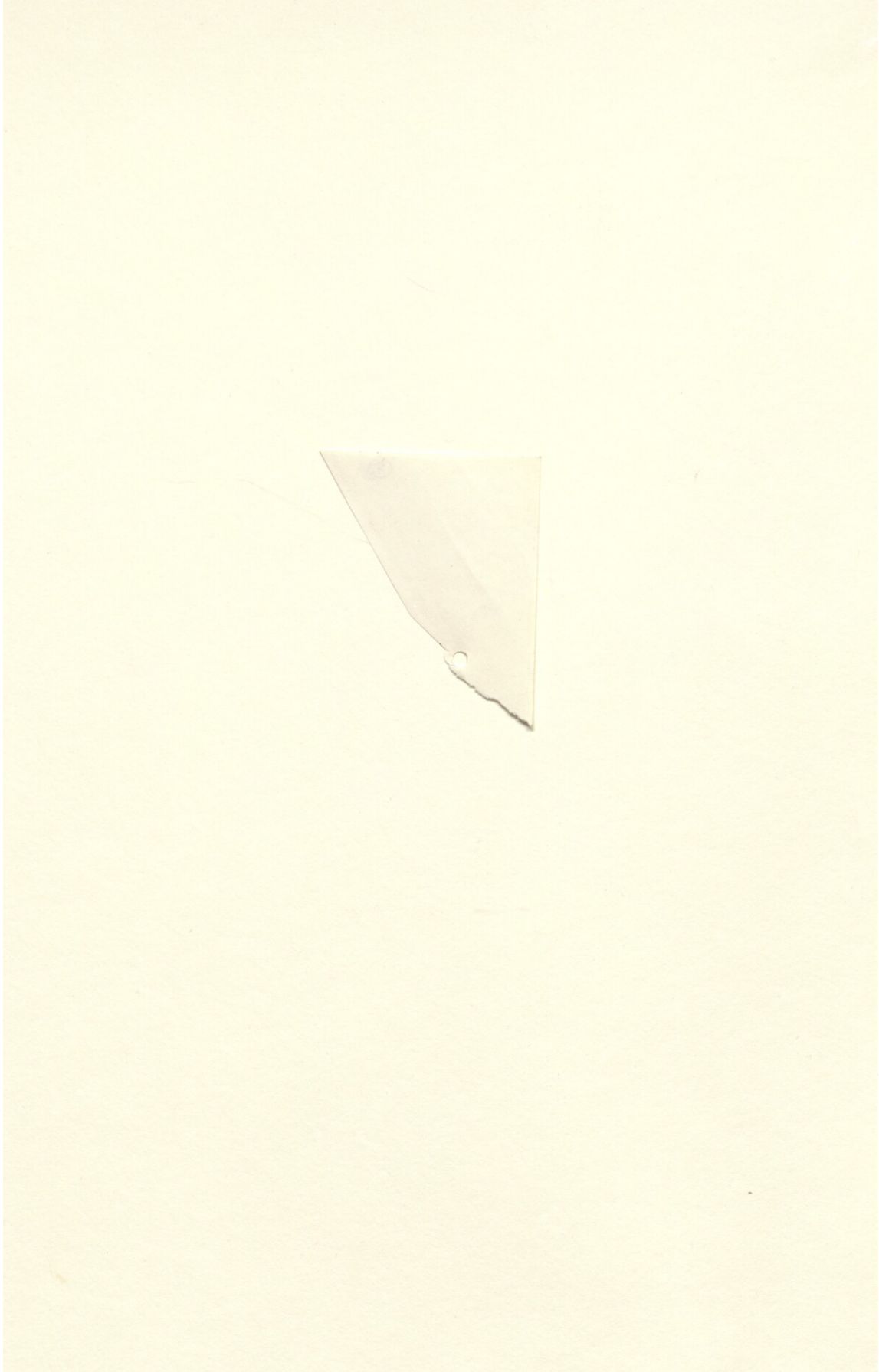
Your message of the 19th April has been delayed in transmission. I offer the grateful thanks of the Second Indian Army Corps who appreciate the generous terms of your congratulations on their recent victory. The wounded were all in Basra by the 21st and about 180 wounded Turks were also brought in.

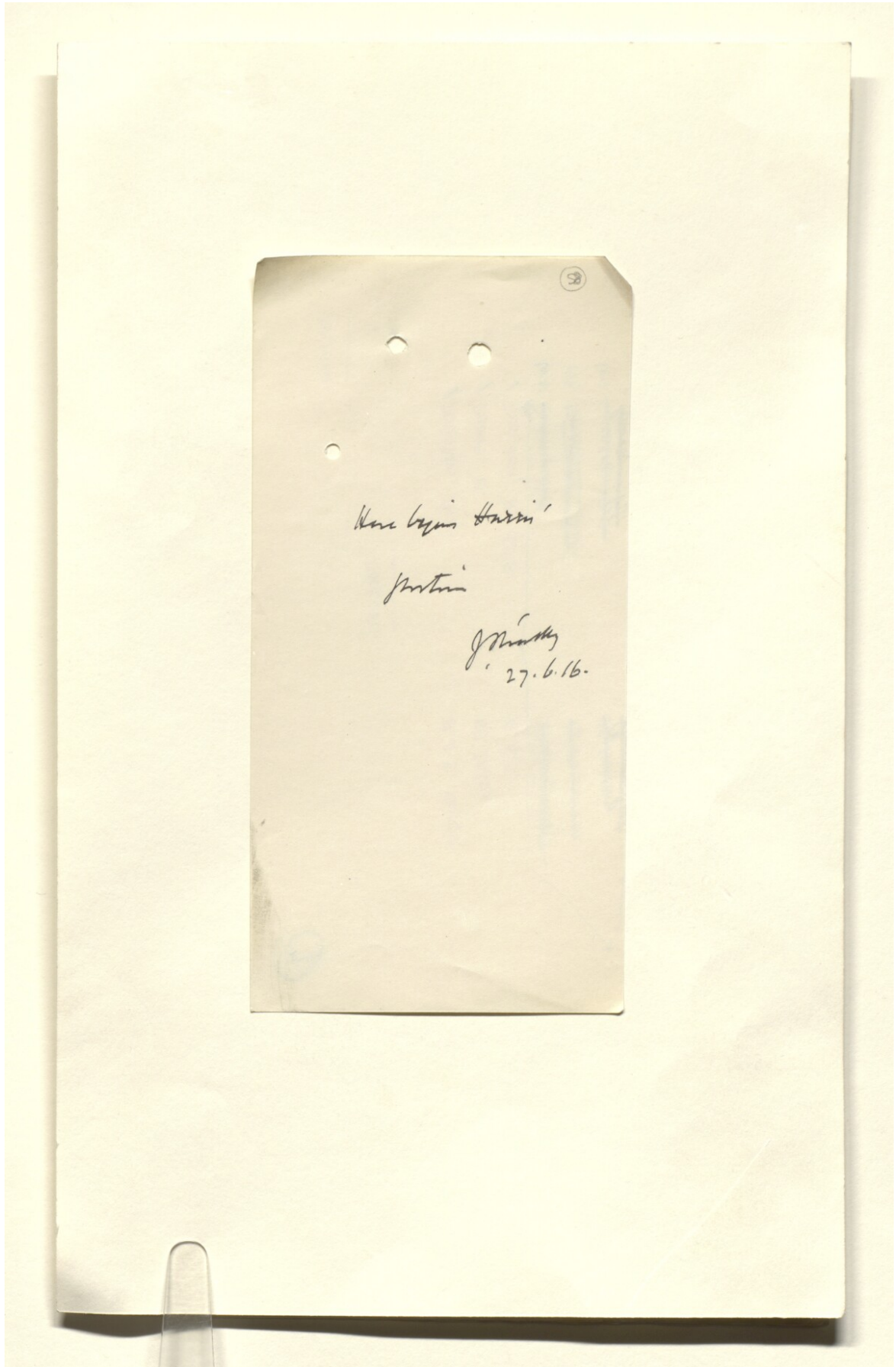
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No
119 with











No.120.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA DATED 28TH
APRIL, 1915.

Advance made on 28th at 5 p.m. from Sabeh on point on right
bank Karum opposite Farsiat by Gorrings's Force.

No.121.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA DATED 29TH
APRIL, 1915.

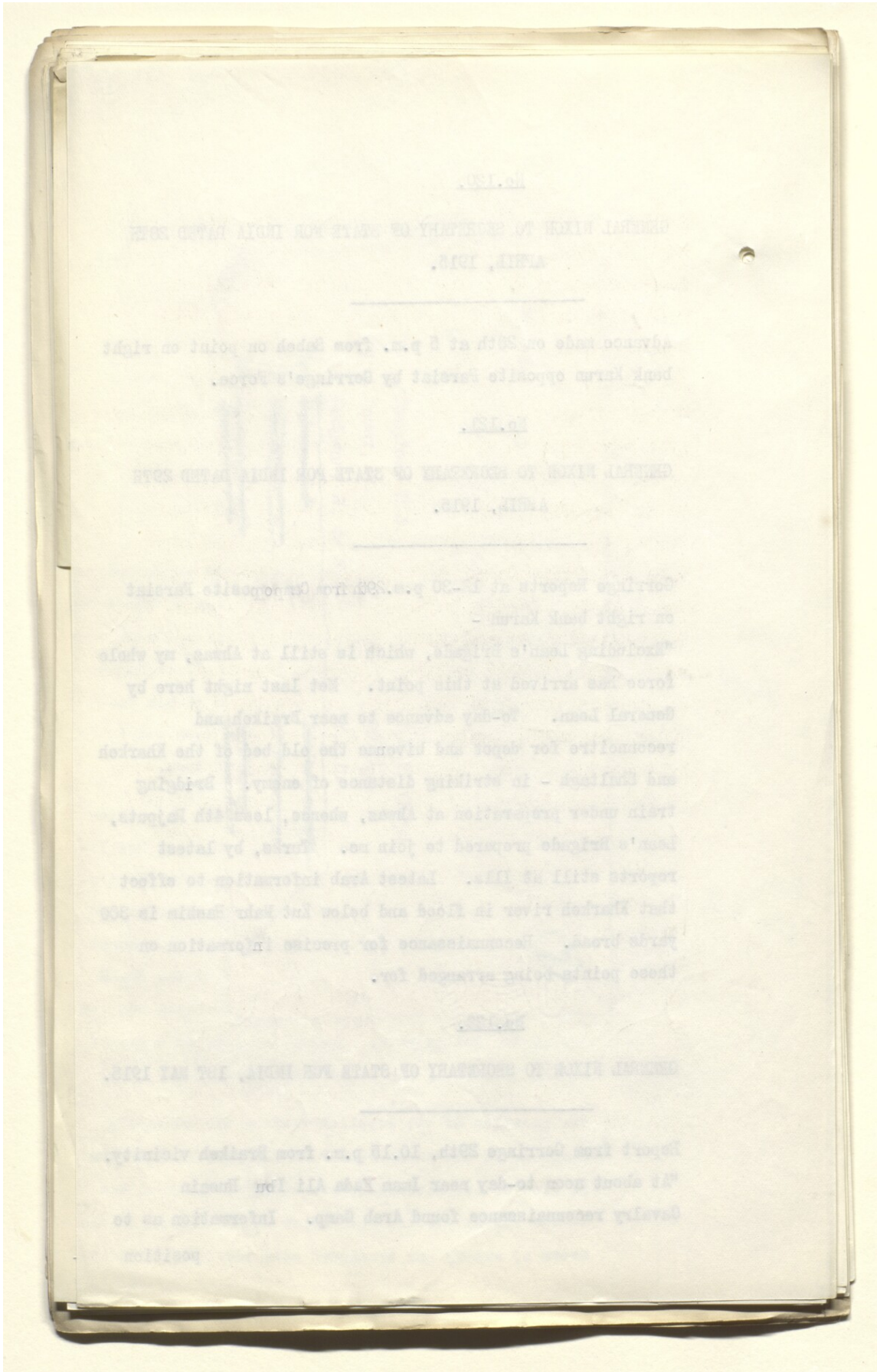
Gorrings Reports at 12-30 p.m., 29th from Camp opposite Farsiat
on right bank Karum -

"Excluding Lean's Brigade, which is still at Ahwaz, my whole
force has arrived at this point. Met last night here by
General Lean. To-day advance to near Braikheh and
reconnoitre for depot and bivouac the old bed of the Kharkeh
and Shaltagh - in striking distance of enemy. Bridging
train under preparation at Ahwaz, whence, less 4th Rajputs,
Lean's Brigade prepared to join me. Turks, by latest
reports still at Illa. Latest Arab information to effect
that Kharkeh river in flood and below Kut Nahr Hashim is 300
yards broad. Reconnaissance for precise information on
these points being arranged for.

No.122.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, 1ST MAY 1915.

Report from Gorrings 29th, 10.15 p.m. from Braikheh vicinity.
"At about noon to-day near Imam Zada Ali Ibu Husain
Cavalry reconnaissance found Arab Camp. Information as to
position



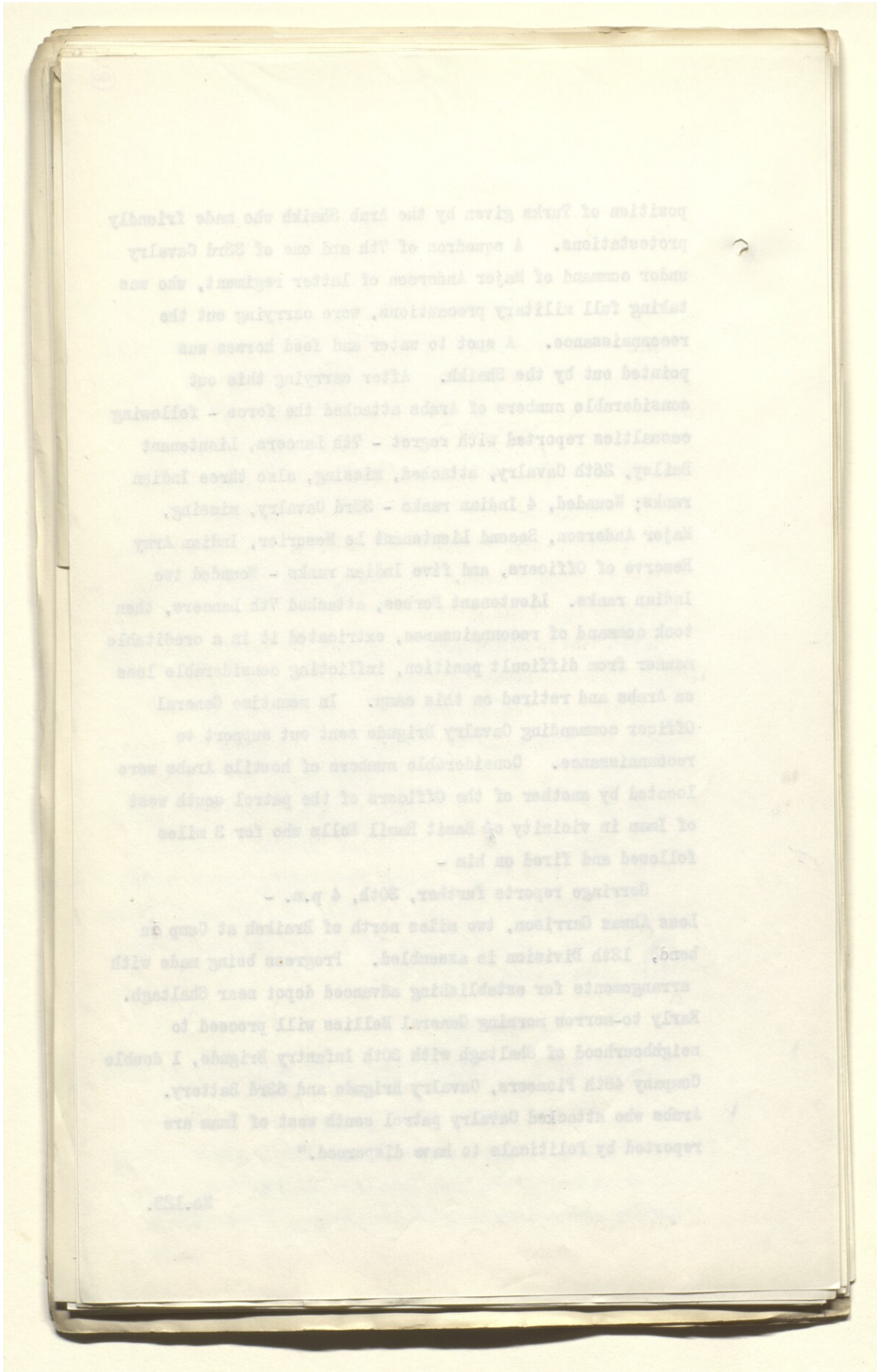


60

position of Turks given by the Arab Shaikh who made friendly protestations. A squadron of 7th and one of 33rd Cavalry under command of Major Anderson of latter regiment, who was taking full military precautions, were carrying out the reconnaissance. A spot to water and feed horses was pointed out by the Shaikh. After carrying this out considerable numbers of Arabs attacked the force - following casualties reported with regret - 7th Lancers, Lieutenant Bailey, 26th Cavalry, attached, missing, also three Indian ranks; Wounded, 4 Indian ranks - 33rd Cavalry, missing, Major Anderson, Second Lieutenant Le Mesurier, Indian Army Reserve of Officers, and five Indian ranks - Wounded two Indian ranks. Lieutenant Forbes, attached 7th Lancers, then took command of reconnaissance, extricated it in a creditable manner from difficult position, inflicting considerable loss on Arabs and retired on this camp. In meantime General Officer commanding Cavalry Brigade sent out support to reconnaissance. Considerable numbers of hostile Arabs were located by another of the Officers of the patrol south west of Imam in vicinity of Bamit Ramil Wells who for 3 miles followed and fired on him -

Gerringe reports further, 30th, 4 p.m. -
Less Ahwaz Garrison, two miles north of Braikheh at Camp ān bend, 12th Division is assembled. Progress being made with arrangements for establishing advanced depot near Shaltagh. Early to-morrow morning General Melliss will proceed to neighbourhood of Shaltagh with 30th Infantry Brigade, 1 double Company 48th Pioneers, Cavalry Brigade and 63rd Battery. Arabs who attacked Cavalry patrol south west of Imam are reported by Politicals to have dispersed."

No.123.





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No.123.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA. *data 2nd May, 1915.*

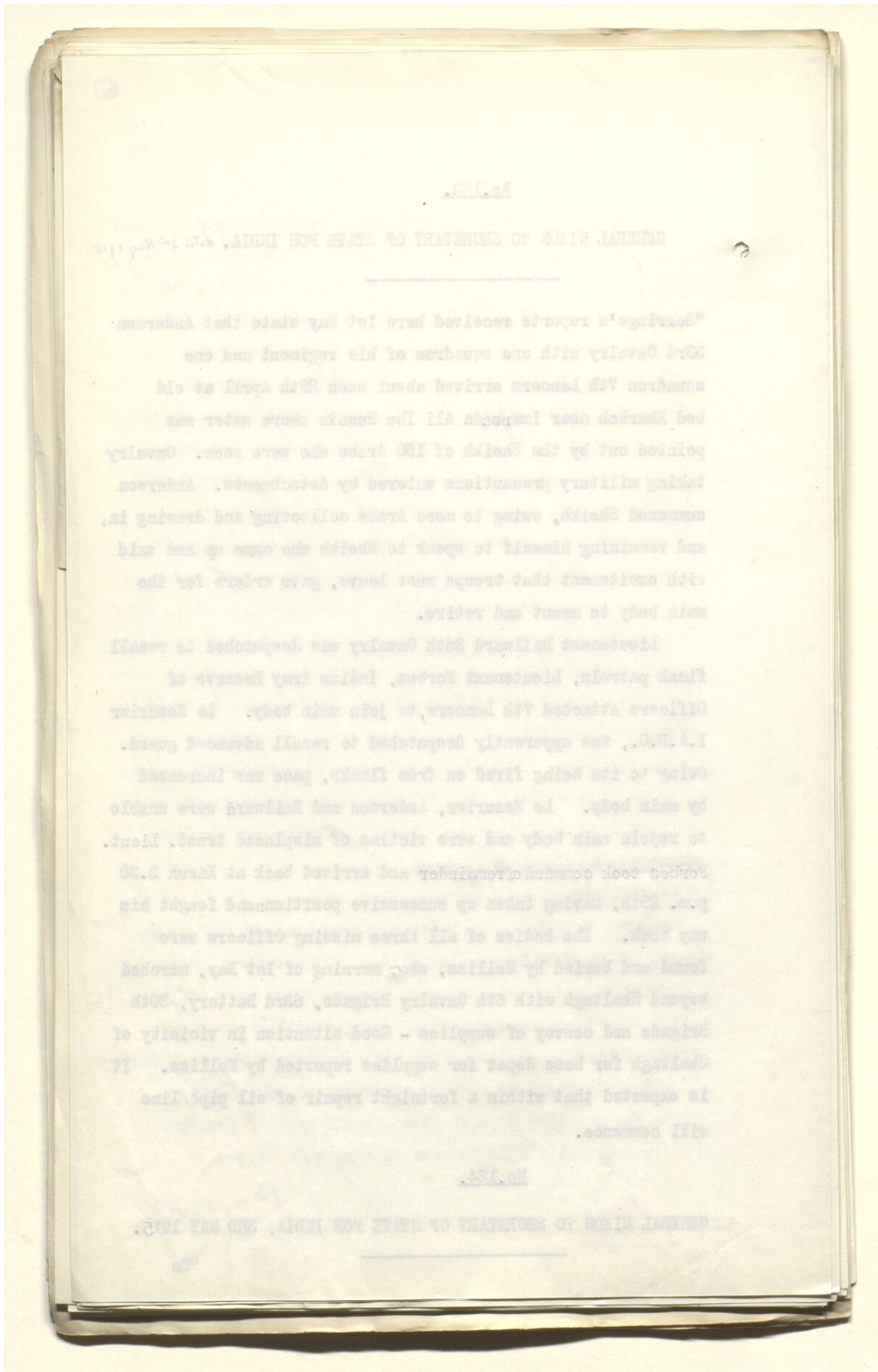
"Gorrings reports received here 1st May state that Anderson 33rd Cavalry with one squadron of his regiment and one squadron 7th Lancers arrived about noon 29th April at old bed Kharkeh near Imanzada Ali Ibu Husain where water was pointed out by the Sheikh of 150 Arabs who were seen. Cavalry taking military precautions watered by detachments. Anderson summoned Sheikh, owing to more Arabs collecting and drawing in, and remaining himself to speak to Sheikh who came up and said with excitement that troops must leave, gave orders for the main body to mount and retire.

Lieutenant Bailward 26th Cavalry was despatched to recall flank patrols, Lieutenant Forbes, Indian Army Reserve of Officers attached 7th Lancers, to join main body. Le Mesurier I.A.R.O., was apparently despatched to recall advanced guard. Owing to its being fired on from flanks, pace was increased by main body. Le Mesurier, Anderson and Bailward were unable to rejoin main body and were victims of misplaced trust. Lieut. Forbes took command of remainder and arrived back at Karun 3.30 p.m. 29th, having taken up successive positions and fought his way back. The bodies of all three missing Officers were found and buried by Melliss, who, morning of 1st May, marched beyond Shaltagh with 6th Cavalry Brigade, 63rd Battery, 30th Brigade and convoy of supplies - Good situation in vicinity of Shaltagh for base depot for supplies reported by Melliss. It is expected that within a fortnight repair of oil pipe line will commence.

No.124.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, 3RD MAY 1915.

"On





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"On 1st May four miles below Kut Nahr Hashim hostile Arabs were overtaken as they were crossing river Kharkeh by Cavalry reconnaissance on Karun line. Abandoning all their effects they succeeded in crossing. Advanced base depot in vicinity Shaltagh continues to be stocked with supplies by Gorringe who expects to complete on 4th instant the concentration of his whole force there and to commence on same date the passage of the Kharkeh. The 4th Rajputs remain to garrison Ahwaz.

No.125.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA DATED 7TH MAY 1915.

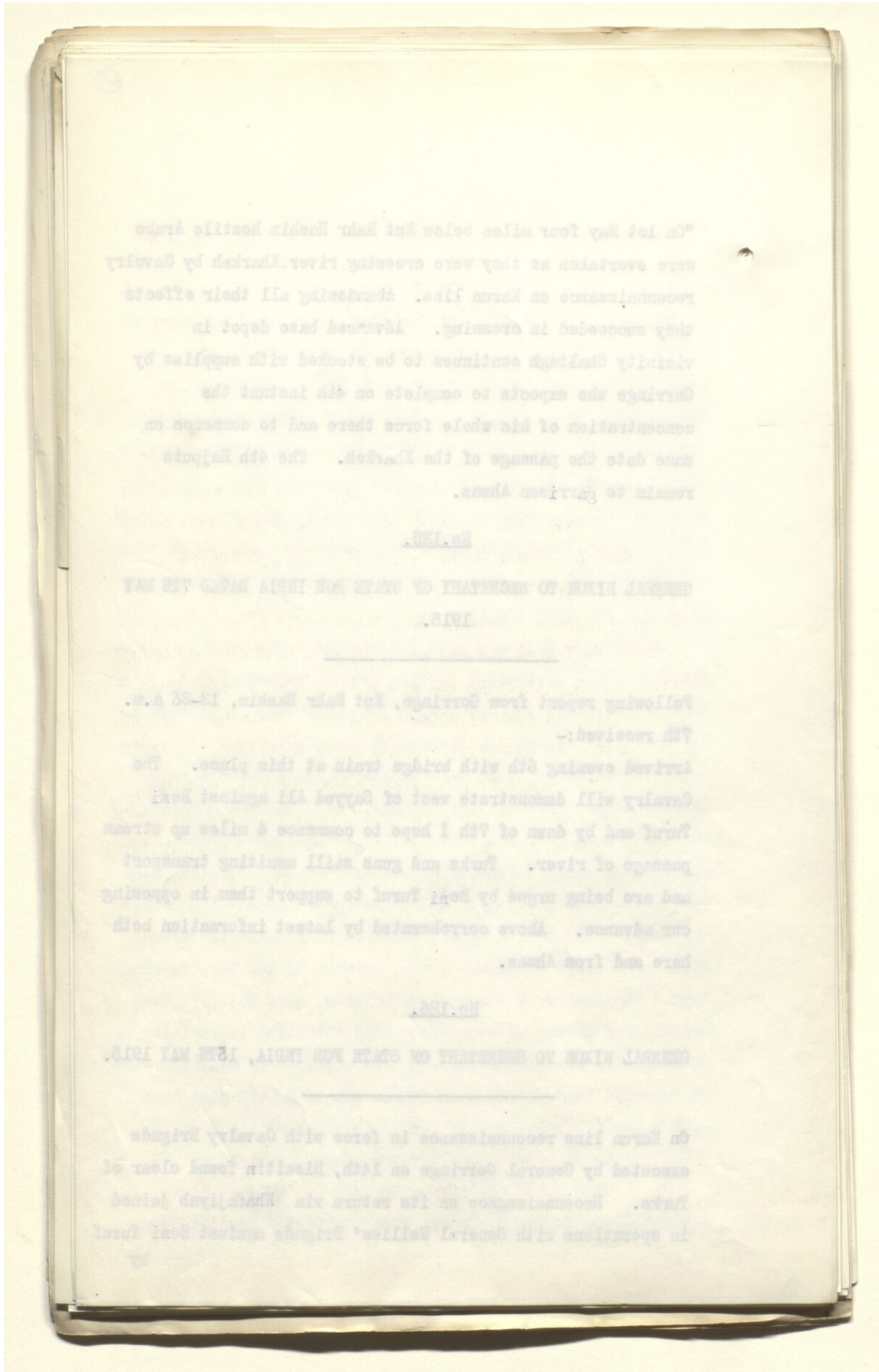
Following report from Gorringe, Kut Nahr Hashim, 12-26 a.m. 7th received:-

Arrived evening 6th with bridge train at this place. The Cavalry will demonstrate west of Sayyed Ali against Beni Turuf and by dawn of 7th I hope to commence 4 miles up stream passage of river. Turks and guns still awaiting transport and are being urged by Beni Turuf to support them in opposing our advance. Above corroborated by latest information both here and from Ahwaz.

No.126.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, 15TH MAY 1915.

On Karun line reconnaissance in force with Cavalry Brigade executed by General Gorringe on 14th, Bisaitin found clear of Turks. Reconnaissance on its return via Khafajiyah joined in operations with General Melliss' Brigade against Beni Turuf
by





by whom our patrols were attacked on 12th. Intense heat.

No.127.

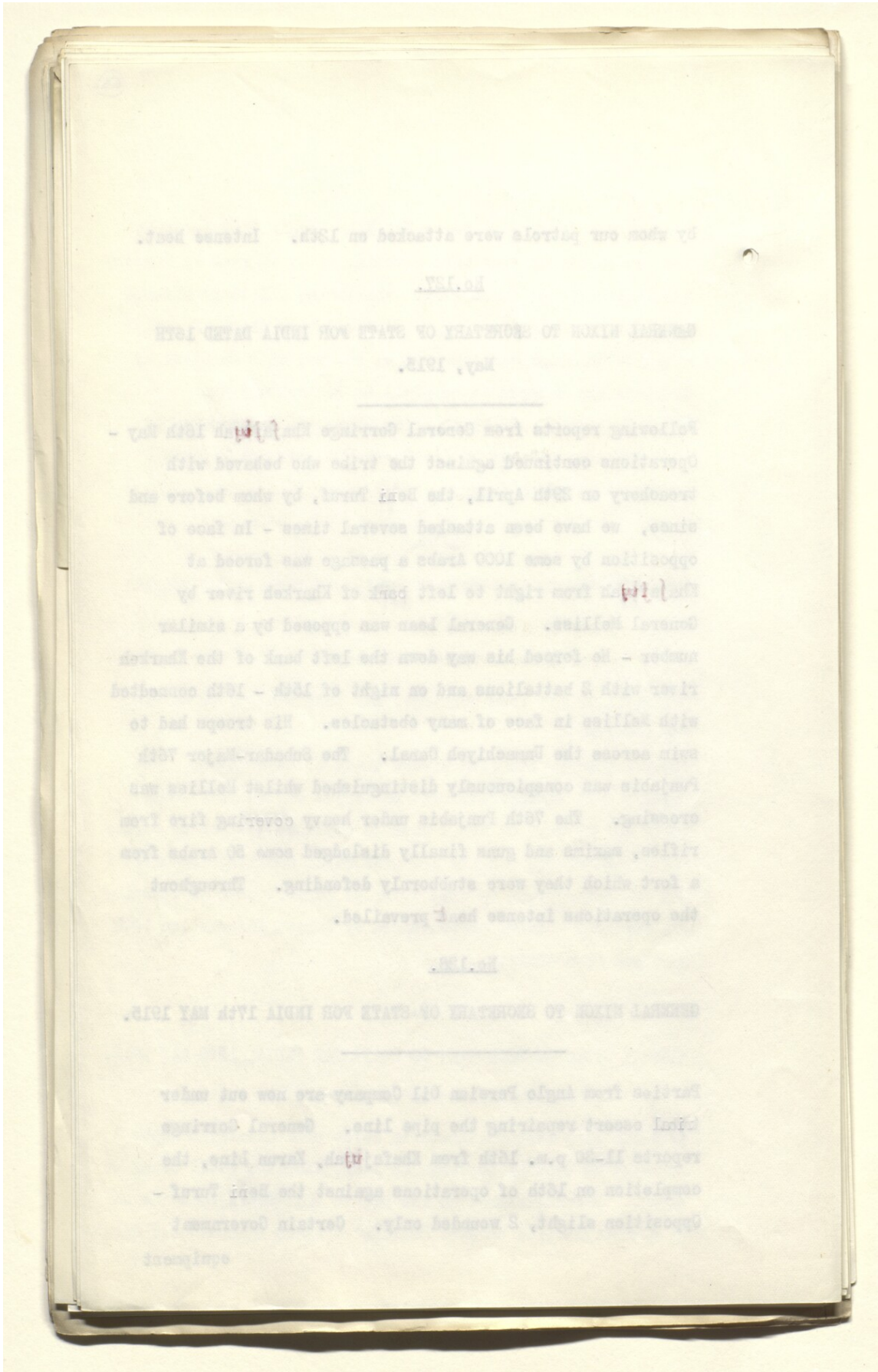
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA DATED 16TH
May, 1915.

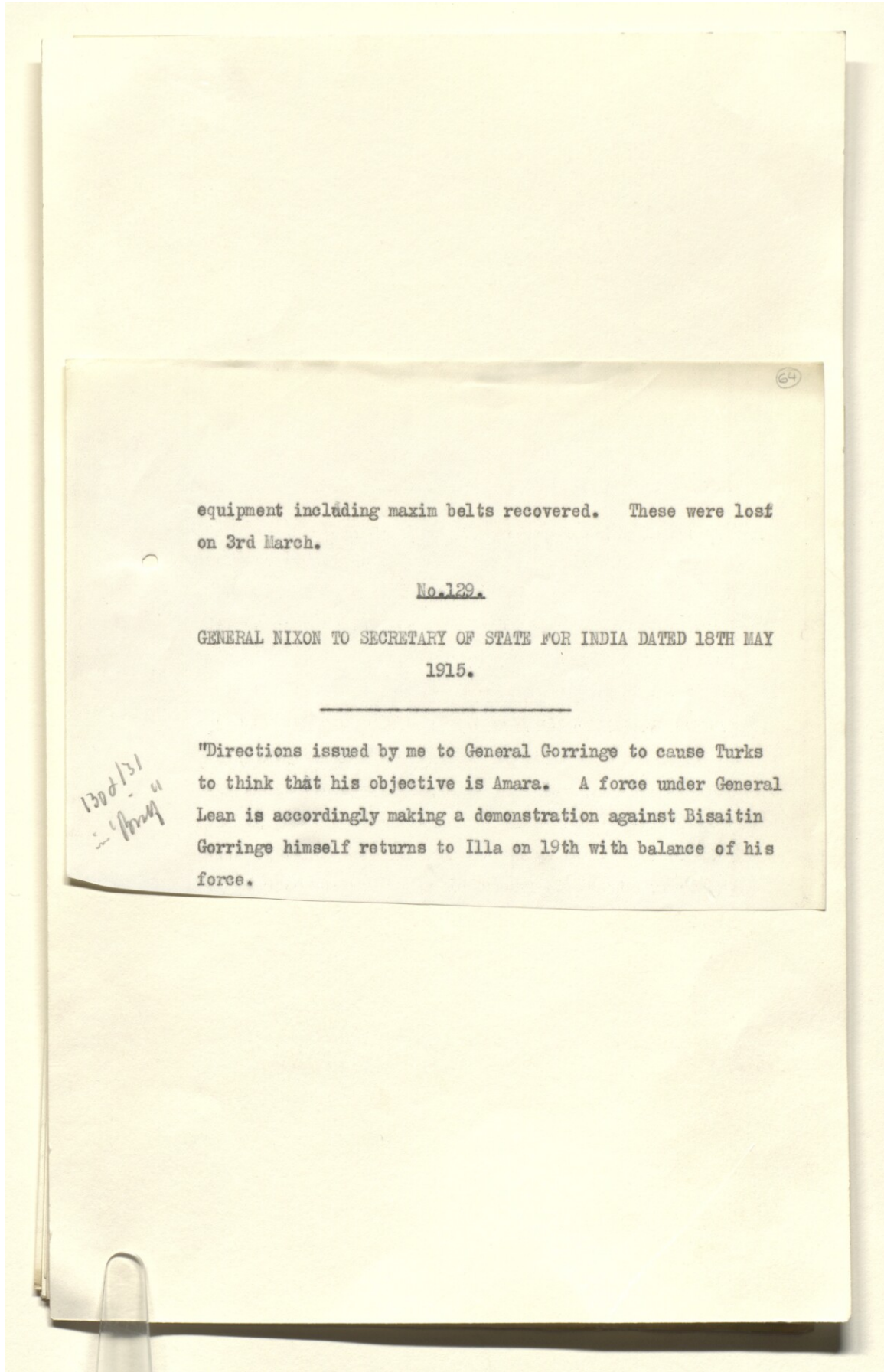
Following reports from General Gorringe Khafajjah 16th May -
Operations continued against the tribe who behaved with
treachery on 29th April, the Beni Turuf, by whom before and
since, we have been attacked several times - In face of
opposition by some 1000 Arabs a passage was forced at
Khafajjah from right to left bank of Kharkeh river by
General Melliss. General Lean was opposed by a similar
number - He forced his way down the left bank of the Kharkeh
river with 2 battalions and on night of 15th - 16th connected
with Melliss in face of many obstacles. His troops had to
swim across the Unmachiye Canal. The Subadar-Major 76th
Punjabis was conspicuously distinguished whilst Melliss was
crossing. The 76th Punjabis under heavy covering fire from
rifles, maxims and guns finally dislodged some 50 Arabs from
a fort which they were stubbornly defending. Throughout
the operations intense heat prevailed.

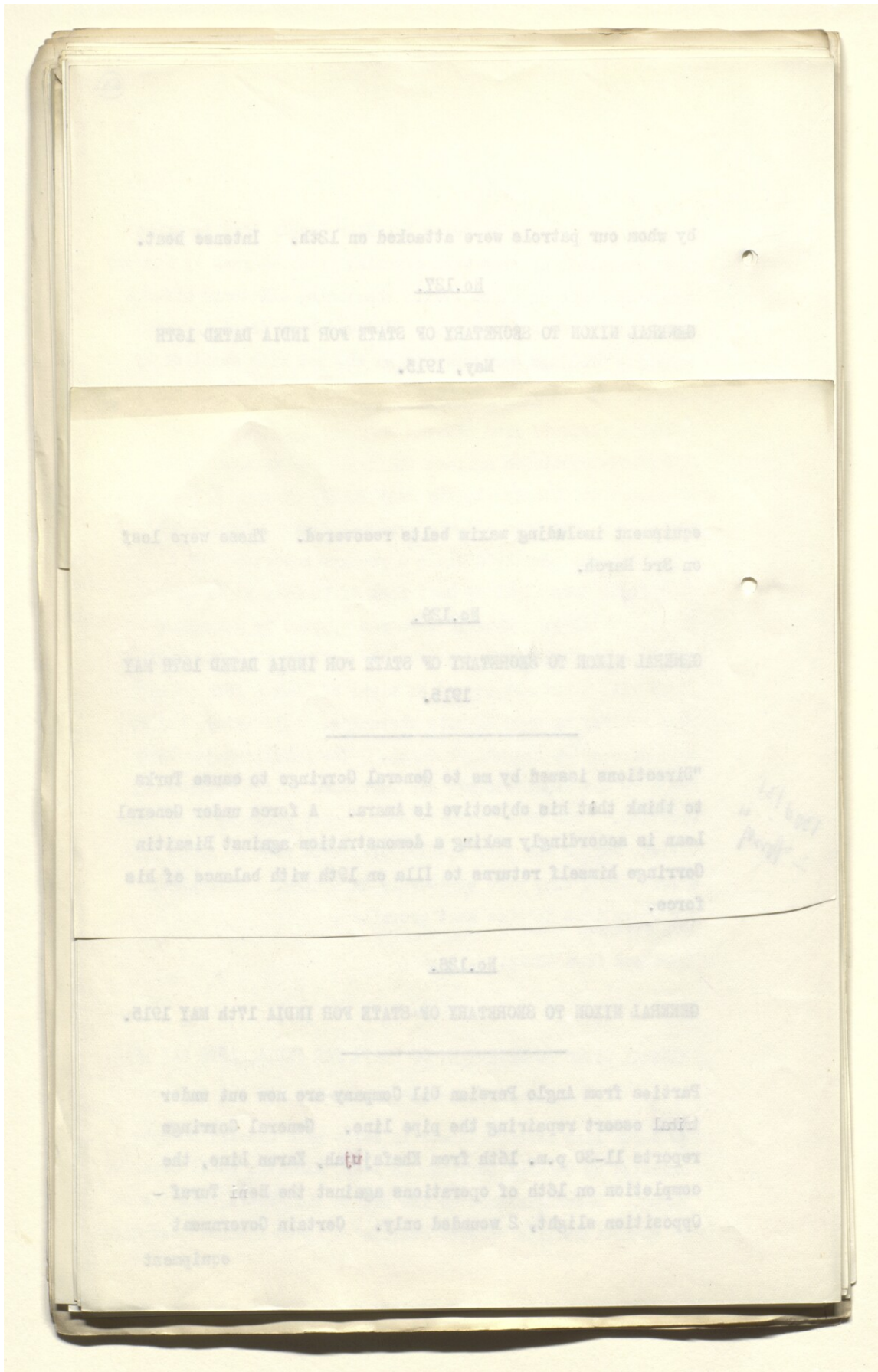
No.128.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA 17th MAY 1915.

Parties from Anglo Persian Oil Company are now out under
tribal escort repairing the pipe line. General Gorringe
reports 11-30 p.m. 16th from Khafajjah, Karun Line, the
completion on 16th of operations against the Beni Turuf -
Opposition slight, 2 wounded only. Certain Government
equipment

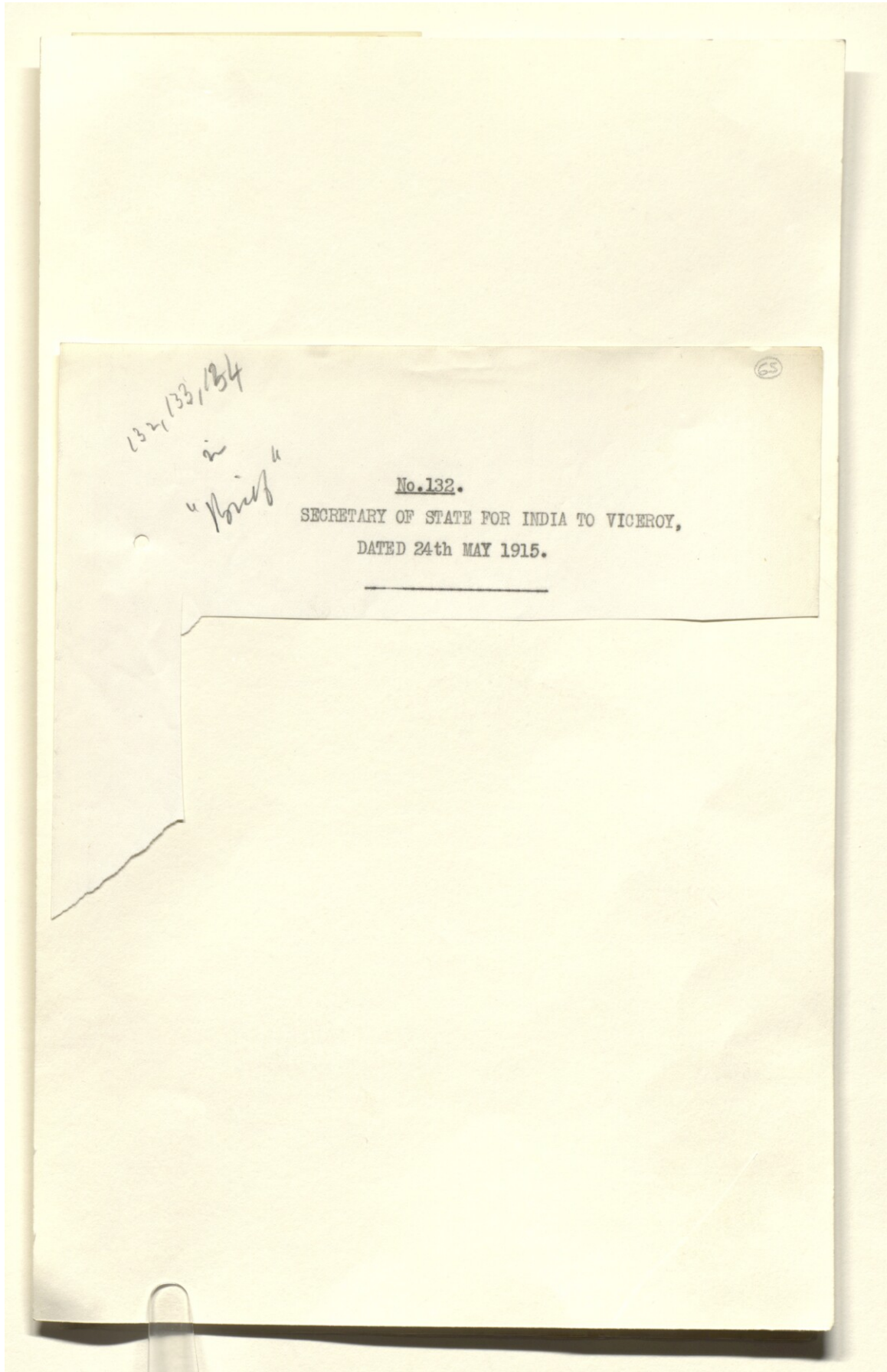


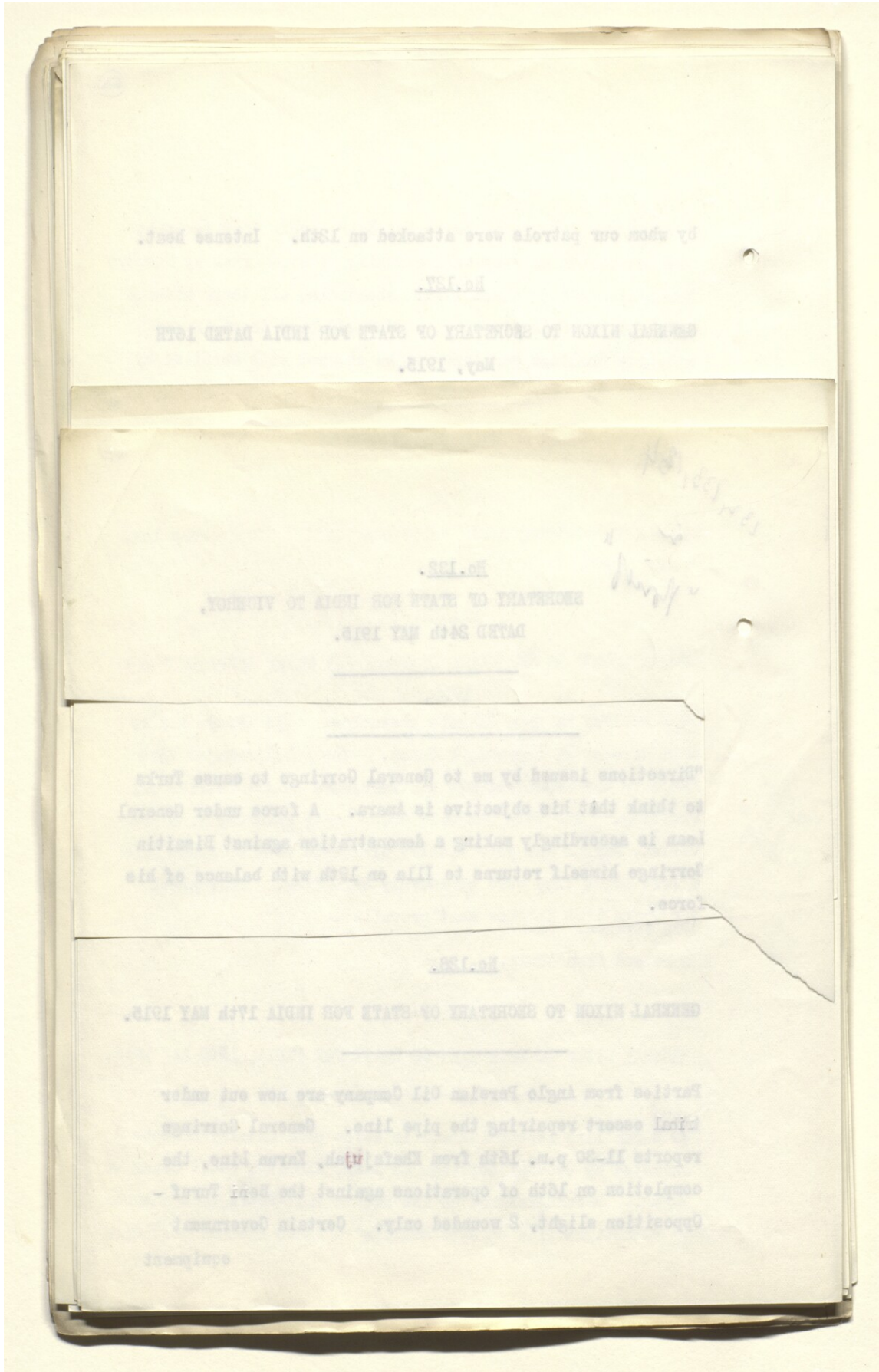


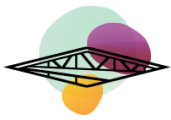




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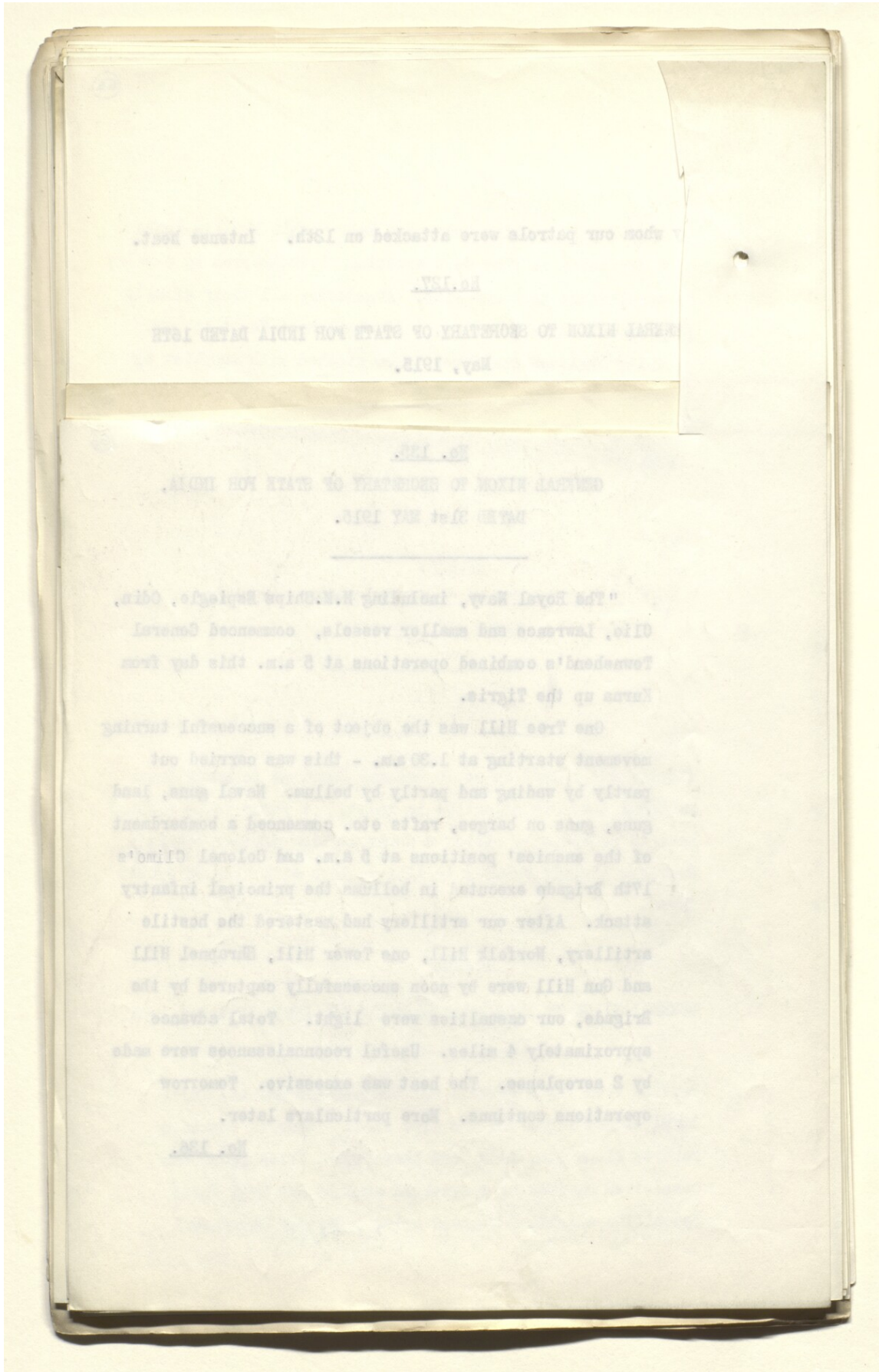
No. 135.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 31st MAY 1915.

"The Royal Navy, including H.M. Ships Espiegle, Odin, Clio, Lawrence and smaller vessels, commenced General Townshend's combined operations at 5 a.m. this day from Kurna up the Tigris.

One Tree Hill was the object of a successful turning movement starting at 1.30 a.m. - this was carried out partly by wading and partly by bellum. Naval guns, land guns, guns on barges, rafts etc. commenced a bombardment of the enemies' positions at 5 a.m. and Colonel Climo's 17th Brigade executed in bellums the principal infantry attack. After our artillery had mastered the hostile artillery, Norfolk Hill, one Tower Hill, Shrapnel Hill and Gun Hill were by noon successfully captured by the Brigade, our casualties were light. Total advance approximately 4 miles. Useful reconnaissances were made by 2 aeroplanes. The heat was excessive. Tomorrow operations continue. More particulars later.

No. 136.





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No. 136.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 1st June 1915.

"Including wounded 241 prisoners, three 16 pounders complete, also 100 rounds ammunition, now reported captured. Returns not yet received but our casualties are slight. Six submarine mines picked up by Naval mine sweepers and several land mines, heavily charged, were discovered and harmlessly exploded by the Royal Engineers. To the accuracy of the concentrated artillery fire, mainly of the Naval guns and the Hampshire territorial howitzers, was largely due the small number of Casualties. Above despatched 5.30 a.m.

No. 137.

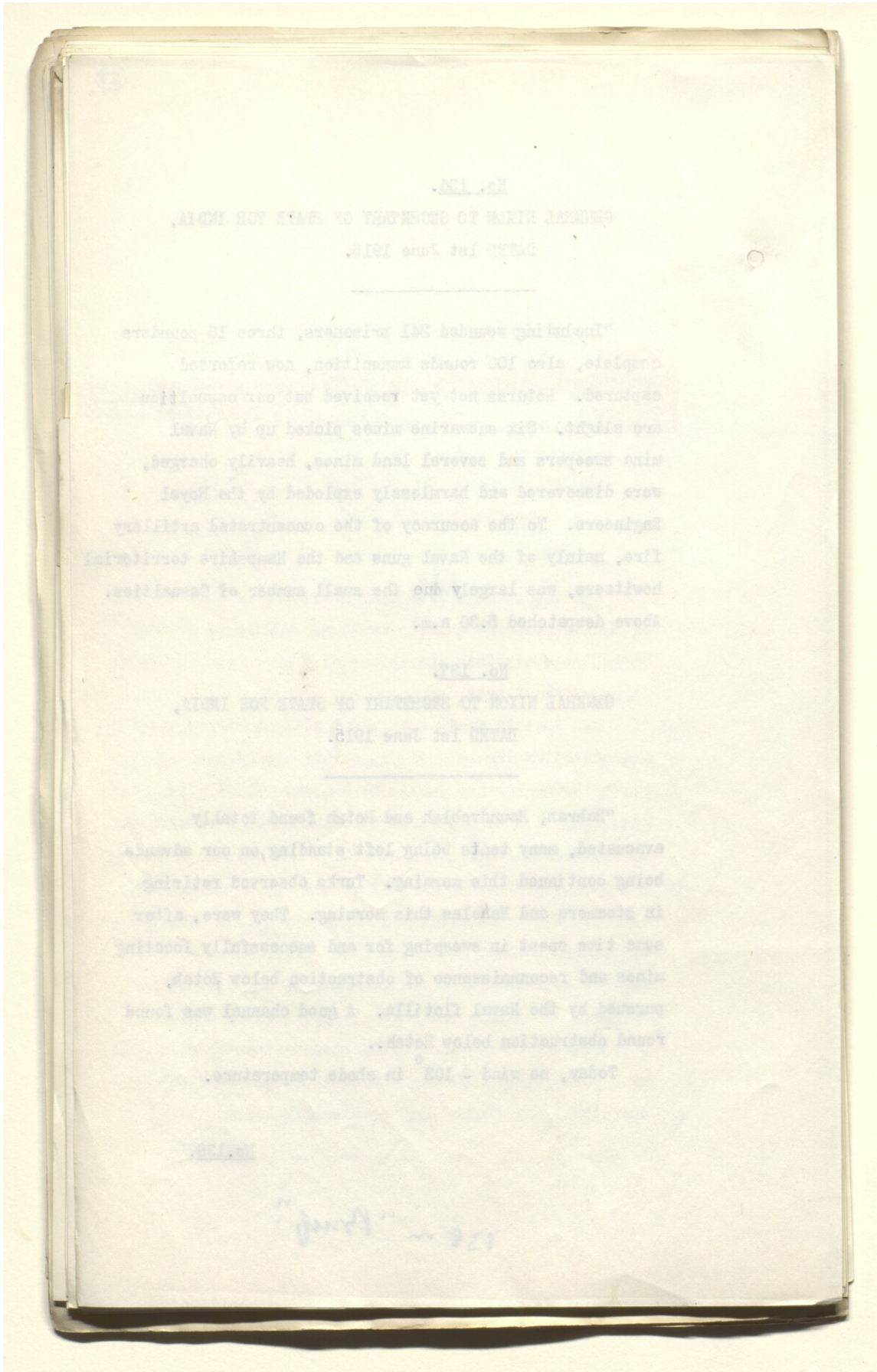
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 1st June 1915.

"Bahran, Meundveblah and Rotah found totally evacuated, many tents being left standing, on our advance being continued this morning. Turks observed retiring in steamers and Mahelas this morning. They were, after some time spent in sweeping for and successfully locating mines and reconnaissance of obstruction below Rotah, pursued by the Naval flotilla. A good channel was found round obstruction below Rotah..

Today, no wind - 103° in shade temperature.

No. 138.

138 in "Munif"

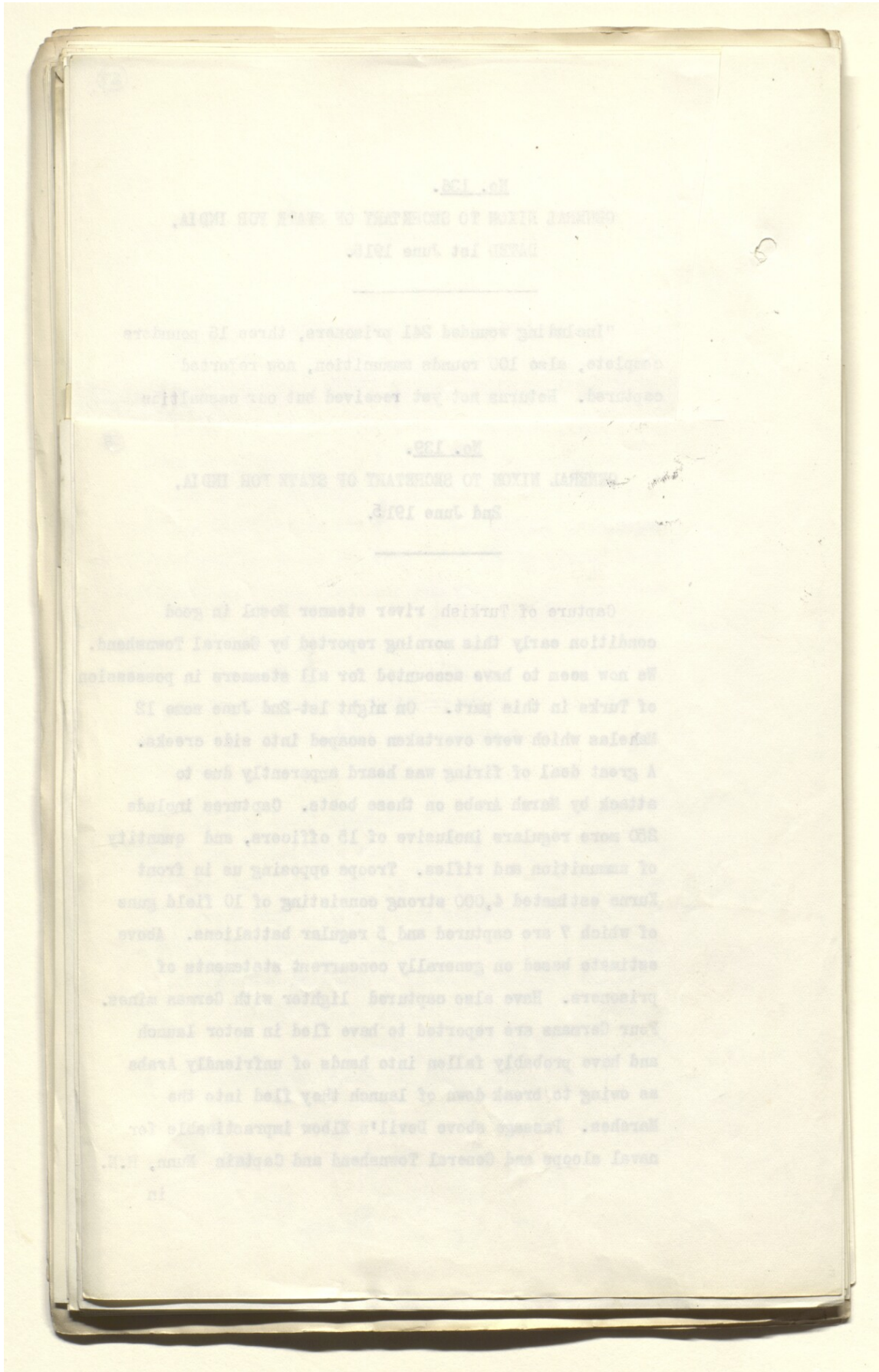




No. 139.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
2nd June 1915.

Capture of Turkish river steamer Mosul in good condition early this morning reported by General Townshend. We now seem to have accounted for all steamers in possession of Turks in this part. On night 1st-2nd June some 12 Mahelas which were overtaken escaped into side creeks. A great deal of firing was heard apparently due to attack by Marsh Arabs on these boats. Captures include 250 more regulars inclusive of 15 officers, and quantity of ammunition and rifles. Troops opposing us in front Kurna estimated 4,000 strong consisting of 10 field guns of which 7 are captured and 5 regular battalions. Above estimate based on generally concurrent statements of prisoners. Have also captured lighter with German mines. Four Germans are reported to have fled in motor launch and have probably fallen into hands of unfriendly Arabs as owing to break down of launch they fled into the Marshes. Passage above Devil's Elbow impracticable for naval sloops and General Townshend and Captain Nunn, R.N. in



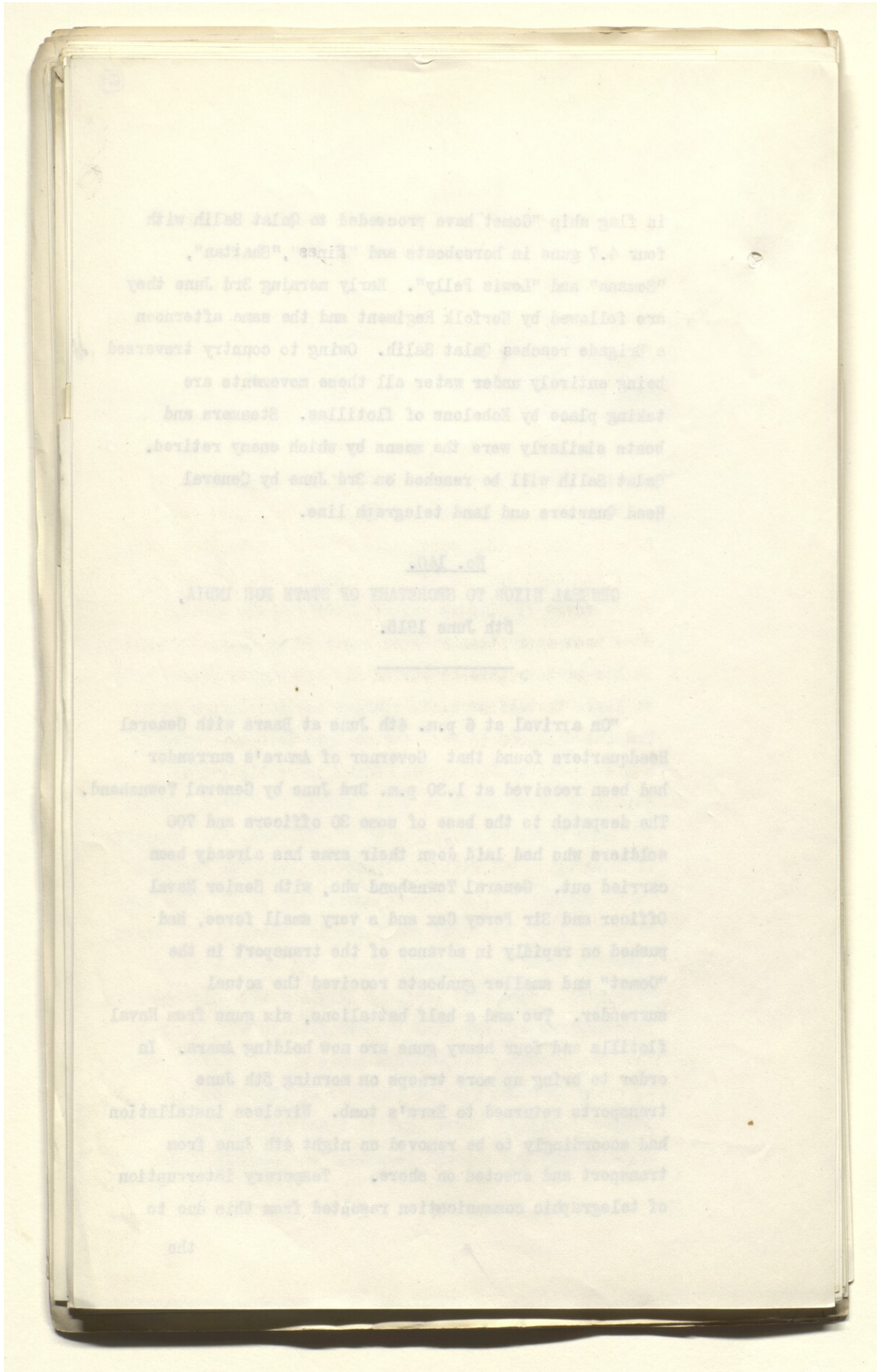


in flag ship "Comet" have proceeded to Qalat Salih with four 4.7 guns in horseboats and "Minas", "Shaitan", "Semana" and "Lewis Pelly". Early morning 3rd June they are followed by Norfolk Regiment and the same afternoon a Brigade reaches Qalat Salih. Owing to country traversed being entirely under water all these movements are taking place by Echelons of flotillas. Steamers and boats similarly were the means by which enemy retired. Qalat Salih will be reached on 3rd June by General Head Quarters and land telegraph line.

No. 140.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
5th June 1915.

"On arrival at 6 p.m. 4th June at Basra with General Headquarters found that Governor of Amara's surrender had been received at 1.30 p.m. 3rd June by General Townshend. The despatch to the base of some 30 officers and 700 soldiers who had laid down their arms has already been carried out. General Townshend who, with Senior Naval Officer and Sir Percy Cox and a very small force, had pushed on rapidly in advance of the transport in the "Comet" and smaller gunboats received the actual surrender. Two and a half battalions, six guns from Naval flotilla and four heavy guns are now holding Amara. In order to bring up more troops on morning 5th June transports returned to Ezra's tomb. Wireless installation had accordingly to be removed on night 4th June from transport and erected on shore. Temporary interruption of telegraphic communication resulted from this due to
the





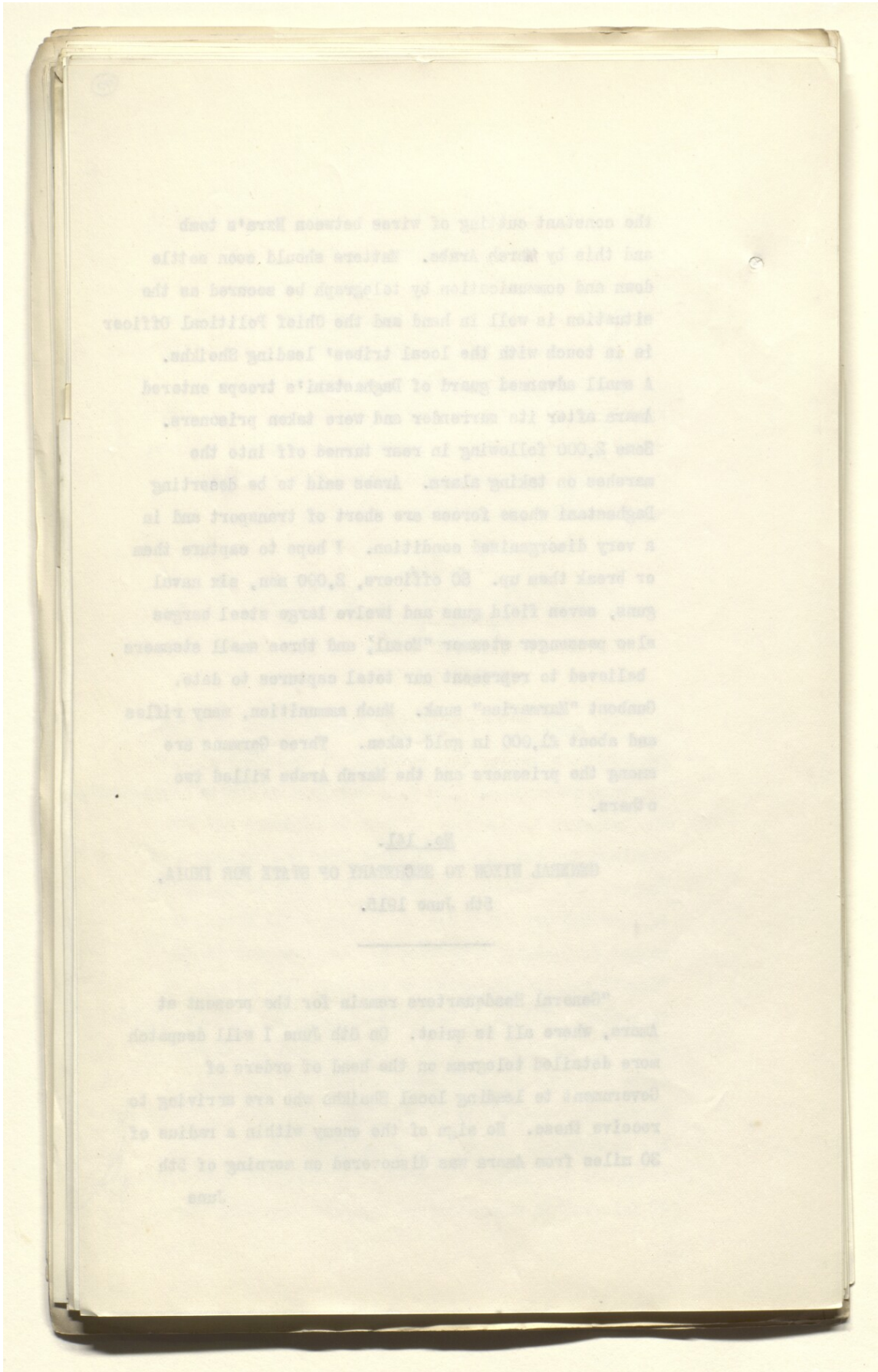
70

the constant cutting of wires between Ezra's tomb and this by Marsh Arabs. Matters should soon settle down and communication by telegraph be secured as the situation is well in hand and the Chief Political Officer is in touch with the local tribes' leading Sheikhs. A small advanced guard of Daghestani's troops entered Amara after its surrender and were taken prisoners. Some 2,000 following in rear turned off into the marshes on taking alarm. Arabs said to be deserting Daghestani whose forces are short of transport and in a very disorganised condition. I hope to capture them or break them up. 80 officers, 2,000 men, six naval guns, seven field guns and twelve large steel barges also passenger steamer "Mosul," and three small steamers believed to represent our total captures to date. Gunboat "Marmariss" sunk. Much ammunition, many rifles and about £1,000 in gold taken. Three Germans are among the prisoners and the Marsh Arabs killed two others.

No. 141.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
5th June 1915.

"General Headquarters remain for the present at Amara, where all is quiet. On 6th June I will despatch more detailed telegram on the head of orders of Government to leading local Shaikhs who are arriving to receive these. No sign of the enemy within a radius of 30 miles from Amara was discovered on morning of 5th
June





June by a careful aeroplane reconnaissance. A visit was paid to Daghestani's unimportant entrenchments, about 15 miles east of Amara, which face North East. His forces reported to be retiring in demoralised condition, part of them having thrown away their arms, by land up Tigris, by naval reconnaissance which extended 40 miles up the Tigris. Today capture made of a heavy field gun of Daghestani. Communications have been established by land telegraph. Abundant supplies locally of grain, fodder, sheep, and beef. As compared with Kurna and Basra climate far less trying and drier. Troops in excellent health and spirits.

No. 142.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO VICEROY,
7th June 1915.

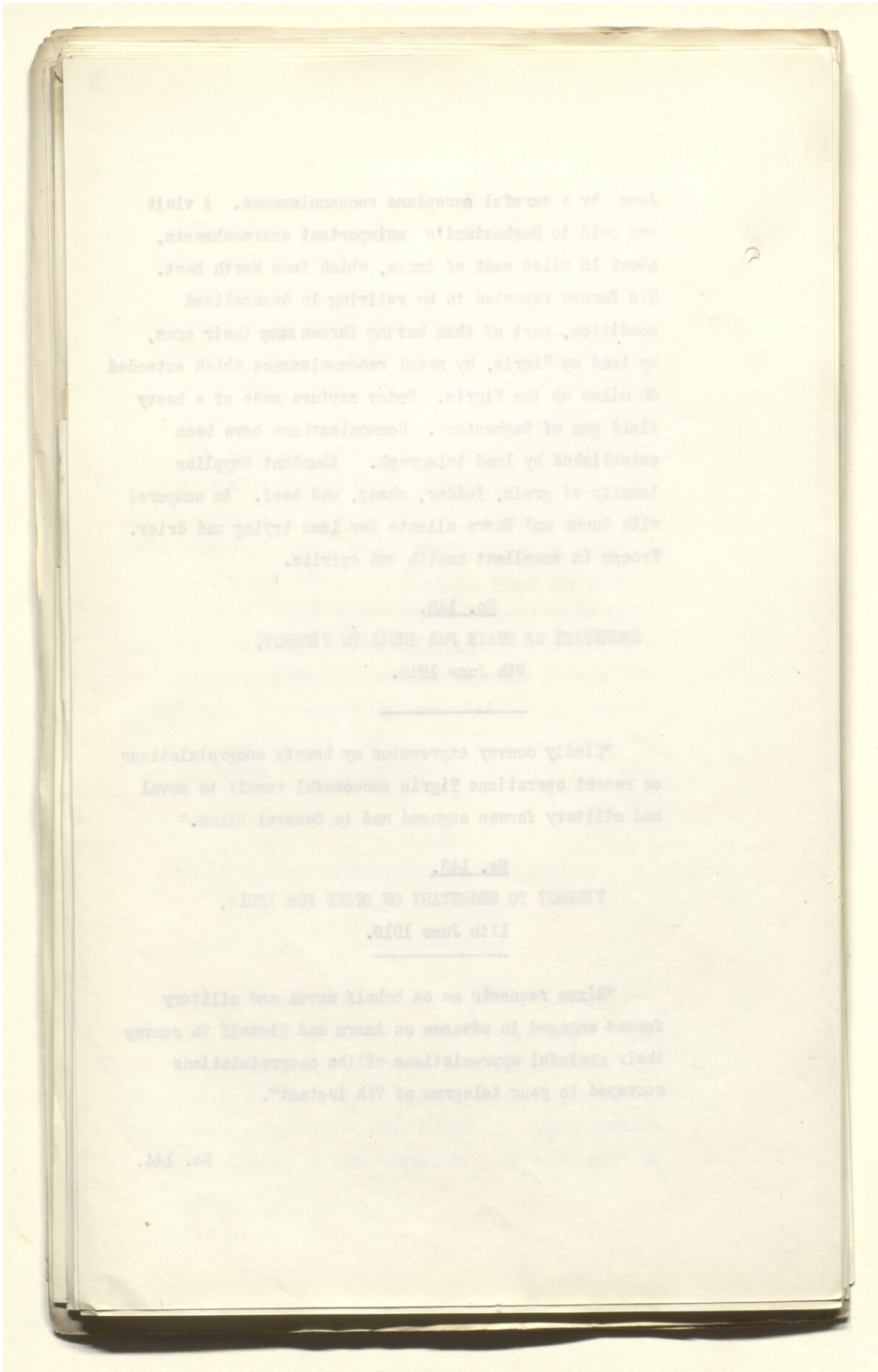
"Kindly convey expression my hearty congratulations on recent operations Tigris successful result to naval and military forces engaged and to General Nixon."

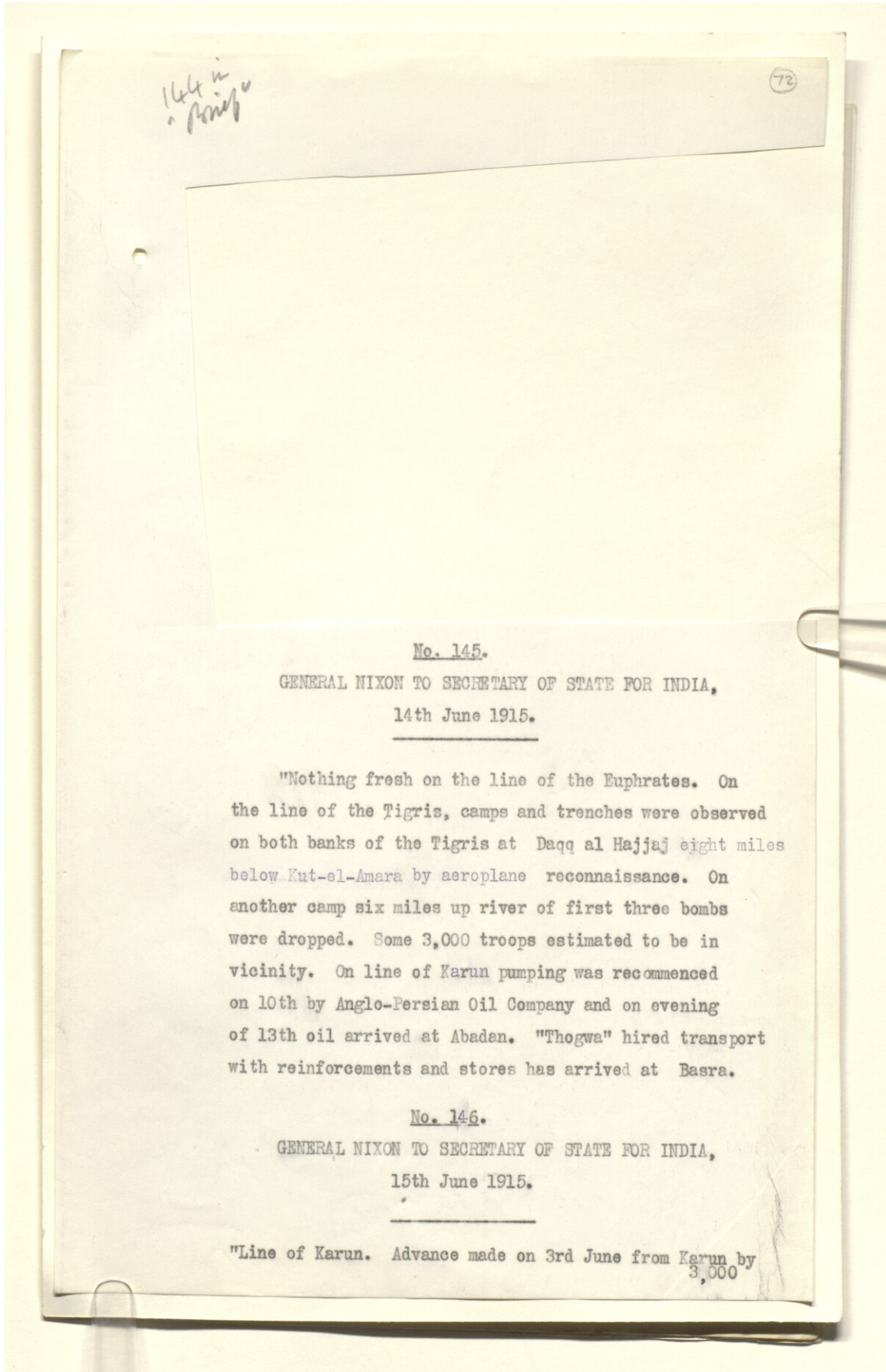
No. 143.

VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
11th June 1915.

"Nixon requests me on behalf naval and military forces engaged in advance on Amara and himself to convey their grateful appreciations of the congratulations conveyed in your telegram of 7th instant".

No. 144.





No. 145.

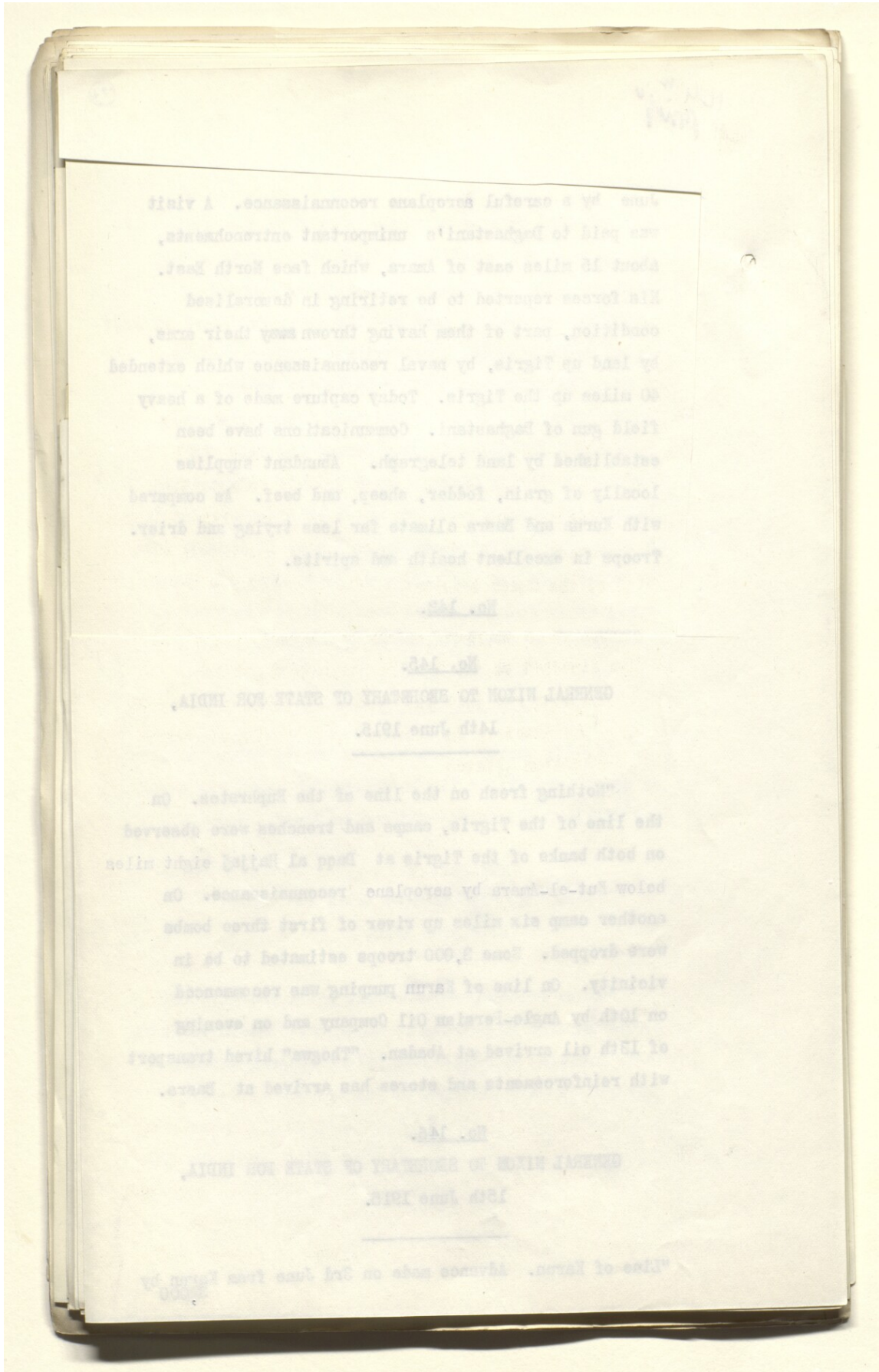
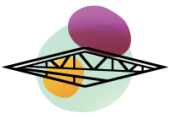
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
14th June 1915.

"Nothing fresh on the line of the Euphrates. On the line of the Tigris, camps and trenches were observed on both banks of the Tigris at Daqq al Hajja eight miles below Kut-el-Amara by aeroplane reconnaissance. On another camp six miles up river of first three bombs were dropped. Some 3,000 troops estimated to be in vicinity. On line of Karun pumping was recommenced on 10th by Anglo-Persian Oil Company and on evening of 13th oil arrived at Abadan. "Thogwa" hired transport with reinforcements and stores has arrived at Basra.

No. 146.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
15th June 1915.

"Line of Karun. Advance made on 3rd June from Karun by
3,000





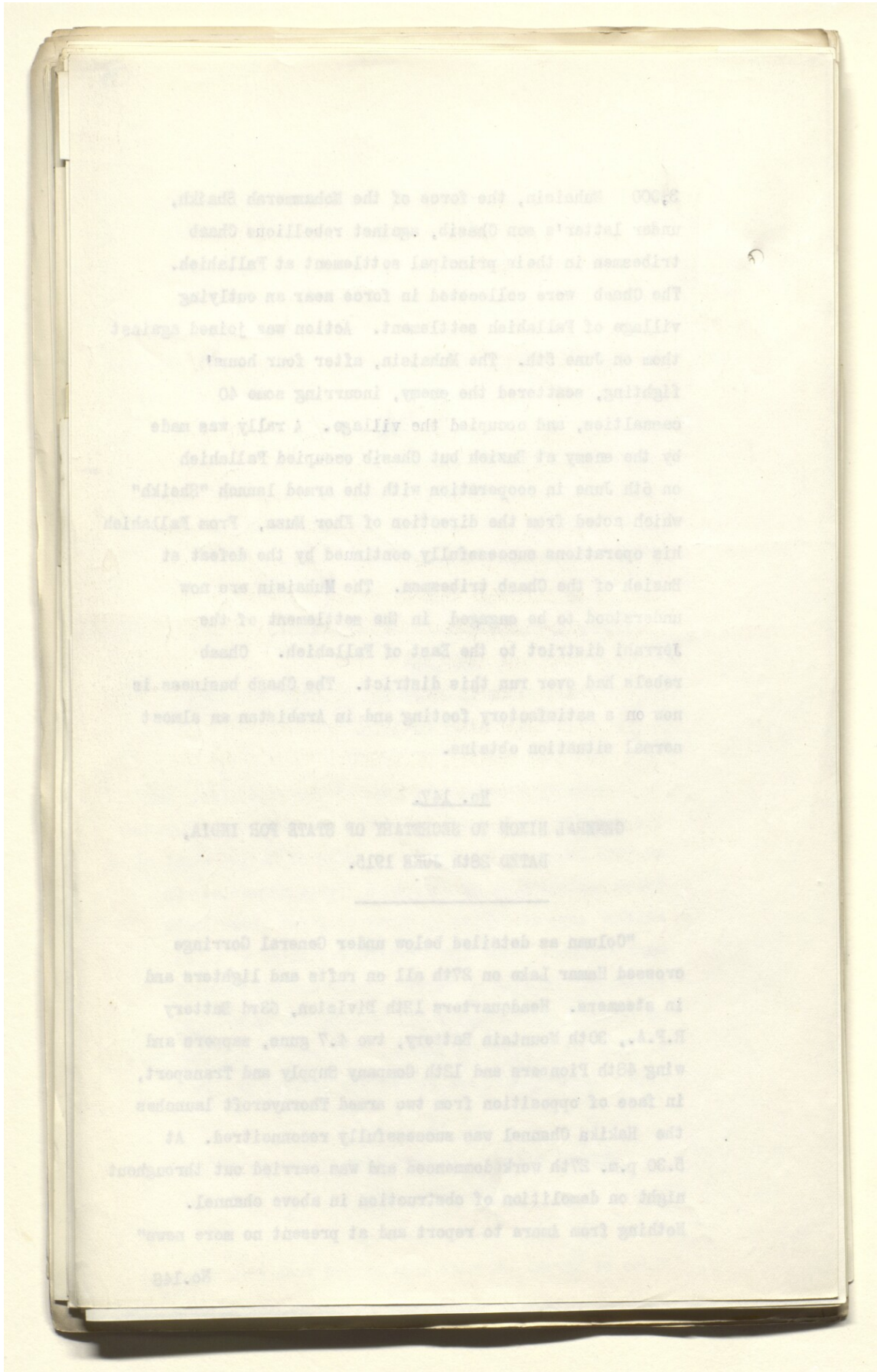
3,000 Muhaisin, the force of the Mohammerah Shaikh, under latter's son Chasib, against rebellious Chaab tribesmen in their principal settlement at Fallahieh. The Chaab were collected in force near an outlying village of Fallahieh settlement. Action was joined against them on June 5th. The Muhaisin, after four hours' fighting, scattered the enemy, incurring some 40 casualties, and occupied the village. A rally was made by the enemy at Buzieh but Chasib occupied Fallahieh on 6th June in cooperation with the armed launch "Sheikh" which acted from the direction of Khor Musa, From Fallahieh his operations successfully continued by the defeat at Buzieh of the Chaab tribesmen. The Muhaisin are now understood to be engaged in the settlement of the Jerrahi district to the East of Fallahieh. Chaab rebels had over run this district. The Chaab business is now on a satisfactory footing and in Arabistan an almost normal situation obtains.

No. 147.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 28th JUNE 1915.

"Column as detailed below under General Gorringe crossed Hamar Lake on 27th all on rafts and lighters and in steamers. Headquarters 12th Division, 63rd Battery R.F.A., 30th Mountain Battery, two 4.7 guns, sappers and wing 48th Pioneers and 12th Company Supply and Transport, in face of opposition from two armed Thornycroft launches the Hakika Channel was successfully reconnoitred. At 5.30 p.m. 27th work commenced and was carried out throughout night on demolition of obstruction in above channel. Nothing from Amara to report and at present no more news"

No.148





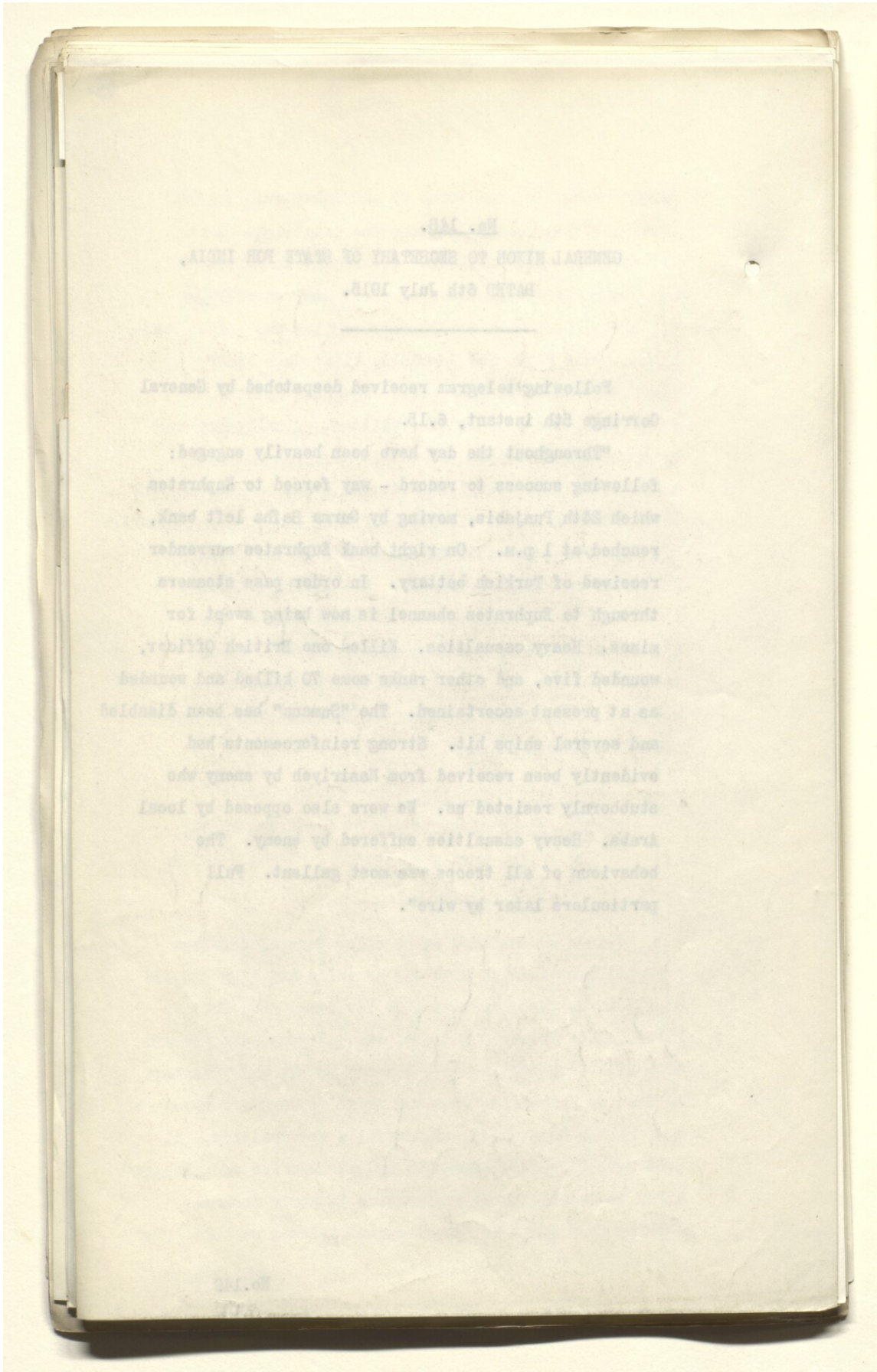
No. 148.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 6th July 1915.

Following telegram received despatched by General
Gorrings 5th instant, 6.15.

"Throughout the day have been heavily engaged:
following success to record - way forced to Euphrates
which 24th Punjabis, moving by Gurma Safha left bank,
reached at 1 p.m. On right bank Euphrates surrender
received of Turkish battery. In order pass steamers
through to Euphrates channel is now being swept for
mines. Heavy casualties. Killed one British Officer,
wounded five, and other ranks some 70 killed and wounded
as at present ascertained. The "Sumana" has been disabled
and several ships hit. Strong reinforcements had
evidently been received from Nasiriyeh by enemy who
stubbornly resisted us. We were also opposed by local
Arabs. Heavy casualties suffered by enemy. The
behaviour of all troops was most gallant. Full
particulars later by wire".

No.149

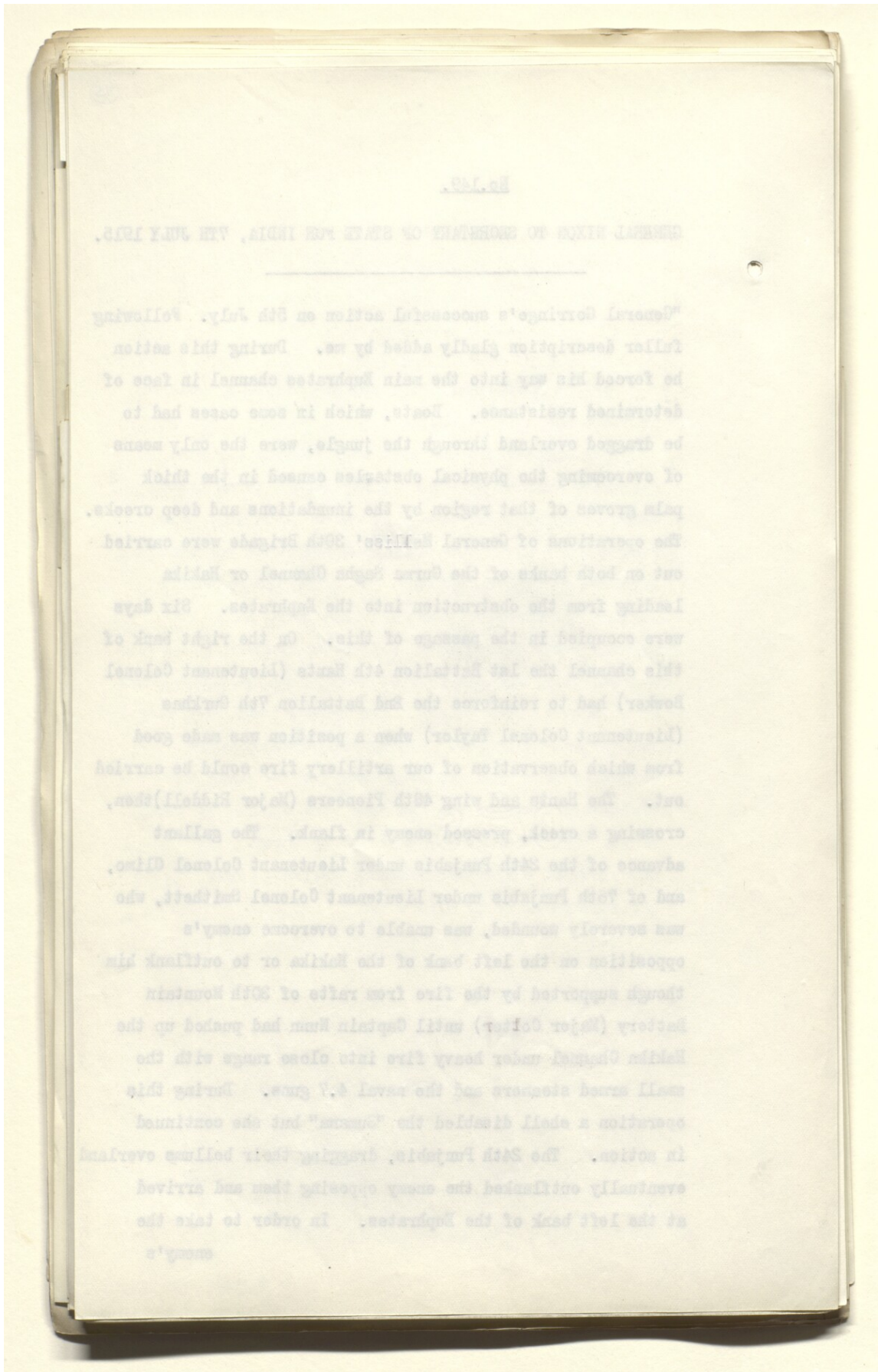




No.149.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, 7TH JULY 1915.

"General Gorringe's successful action on 5th July. Following fuller description gladly added by me. During this action he forced his way into the main Euphrates channel in face of determined resistance. Boats, which in some cases had to be dragged overland through the jungle, were the only means of overcoming the physical obstacles caused in the thick palm groves of that region by the inundations and deep creeks. The operations of General Melliss' 30th Brigade were carried out on both banks of the Gurma Sagha Channel or Hakika leading from the obstruction into the Euphrates. Six days were occupied in the passage of this. On the right bank of this channel the 1st Battalion 4th Hants (Lieutenant Colonel Bowker) had to reinforce the 2nd Battalion 7th Gurkhas (Lieutenant Colonel Taylor) when a position was made good from which observation of our artillery fire could be carried out. The Hants and wing 48th Pioneers (Major Riddell) then, crossing a creek, pressed enemy in flank. The gallant advance of the 24th Punjabis under Lieutenant Colonel Climo, and of 76th Punjabis under Lieutenant Colonel Smithett, who was severely wounded, was unable to overcome enemy's opposition on the left bank of the Hakika or to outflank him though supported by the fire from rafts of 30th Mountain Battery (Major Colter) until Captain Nunn had pushed up the Hakika Channel under heavy fire into close range with the small armed steamers and the naval 4.7 guns. During this operation a shell disabled the "Sumana" but she continued in action. The 24th Punjabis, dragging their bellums overland eventually outflanked the enemy opposing them and arrived at the left bank of the Euphrates. In order to take the enemy's





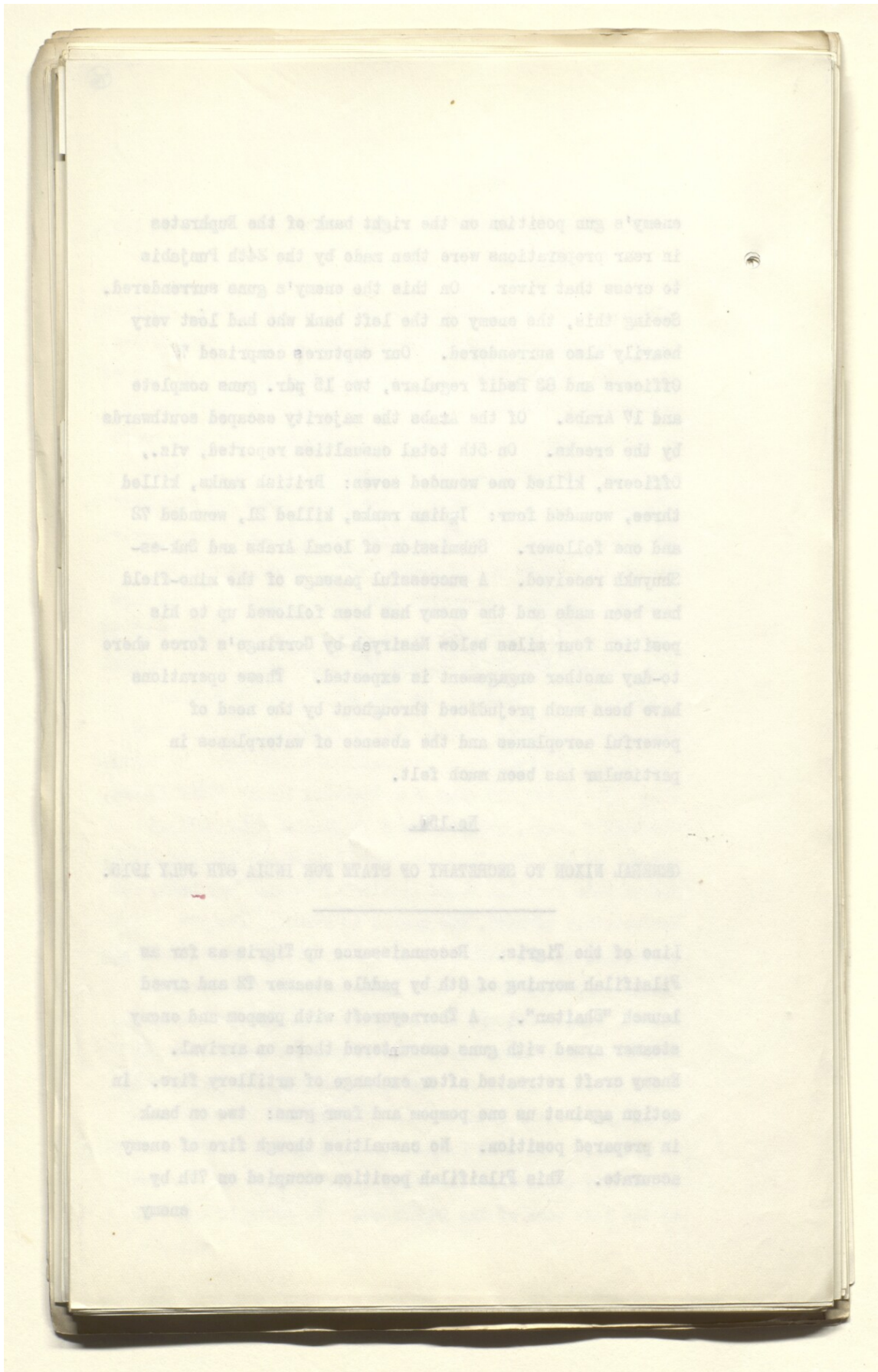
76

enemy's gun position on the right bank of the Euphrates in rear preparations were then made by the 24th Punjabis to cross that river. On this the enemy's guns surrendered. Seeing this, the enemy on the left bank who had lost very heavily also surrendered. Our captures comprised 7 Officers and 83 Redif regulars, two 15 pdr. guns complete and 17 Arabs. Of the Arabs the majority escaped southwards by the creeks. On 5th total casualties reported, viz., Officers, killed one wounded seven: British ranks, killed three, wounded four: Indian ranks, killed 21, wounded 72 and one follower. Submission of local Arabs and Suk-es-Shuyukh received. A successful passage of the mine-field has been made and the enemy has been followed up to his position four miles below Nasiryeh by Gorrings's force where to-day another engagement is expected. These operations have been much prejudiced throughout by the need of powerful aeroplanes and the absence of waterplanes in particular has been much felt.

No.150.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA 8TH JULY 1915.

Line of the Tigris. Reconnaissance up Tigris as far as Filailah morning of 8th by paddle steamer T2 and armed launch "Shaitan". A Thorneycroft with pompom and enemy steamer armed with guns encountered there on arrival. Enemy craft retreated after exchange of artillery fire. In action against us one pompom and four guns: two on bank in prepared position. No casualties though fire of enemy accurate. This Filailah position occupied on 7th by enemy





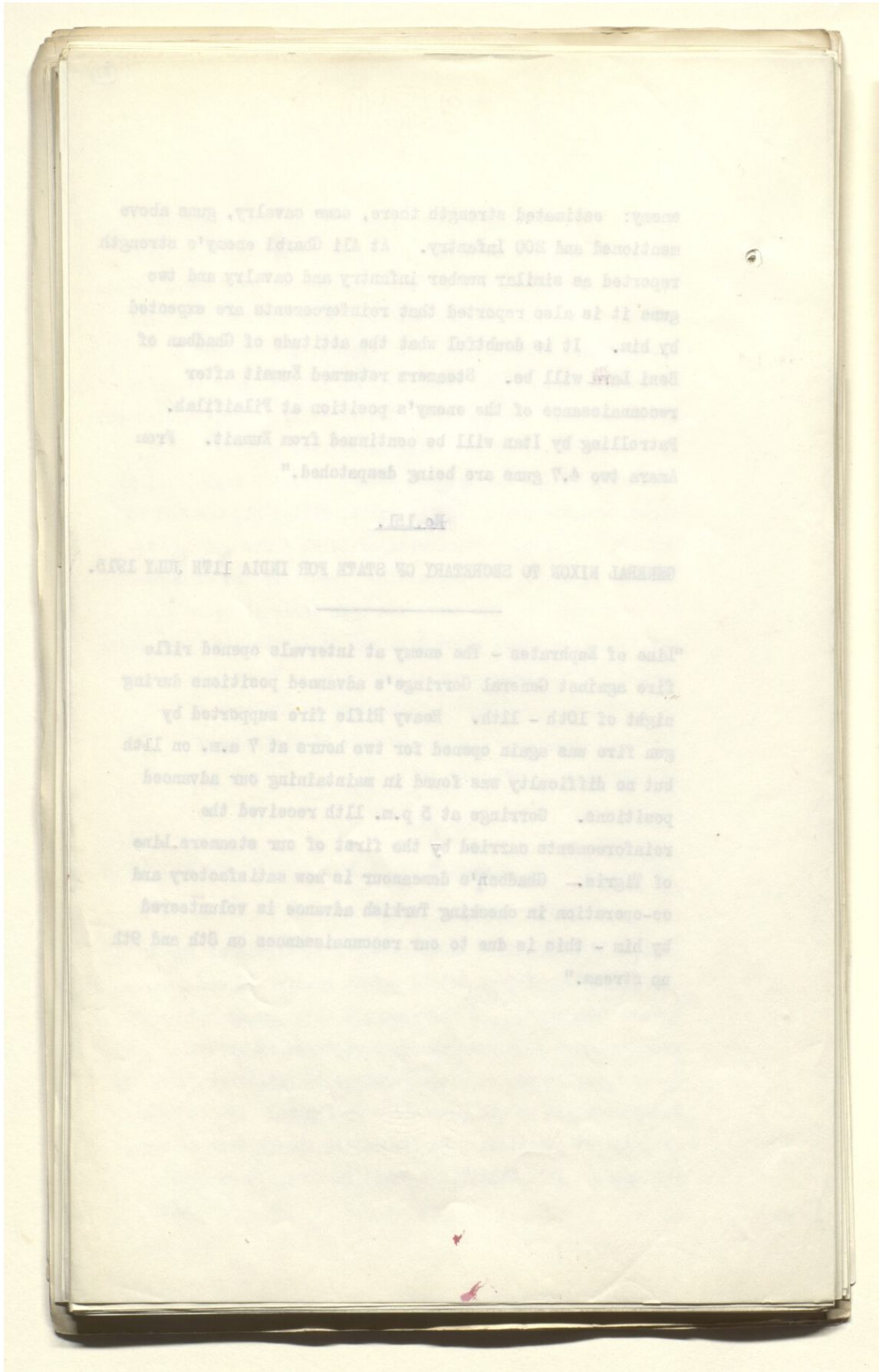
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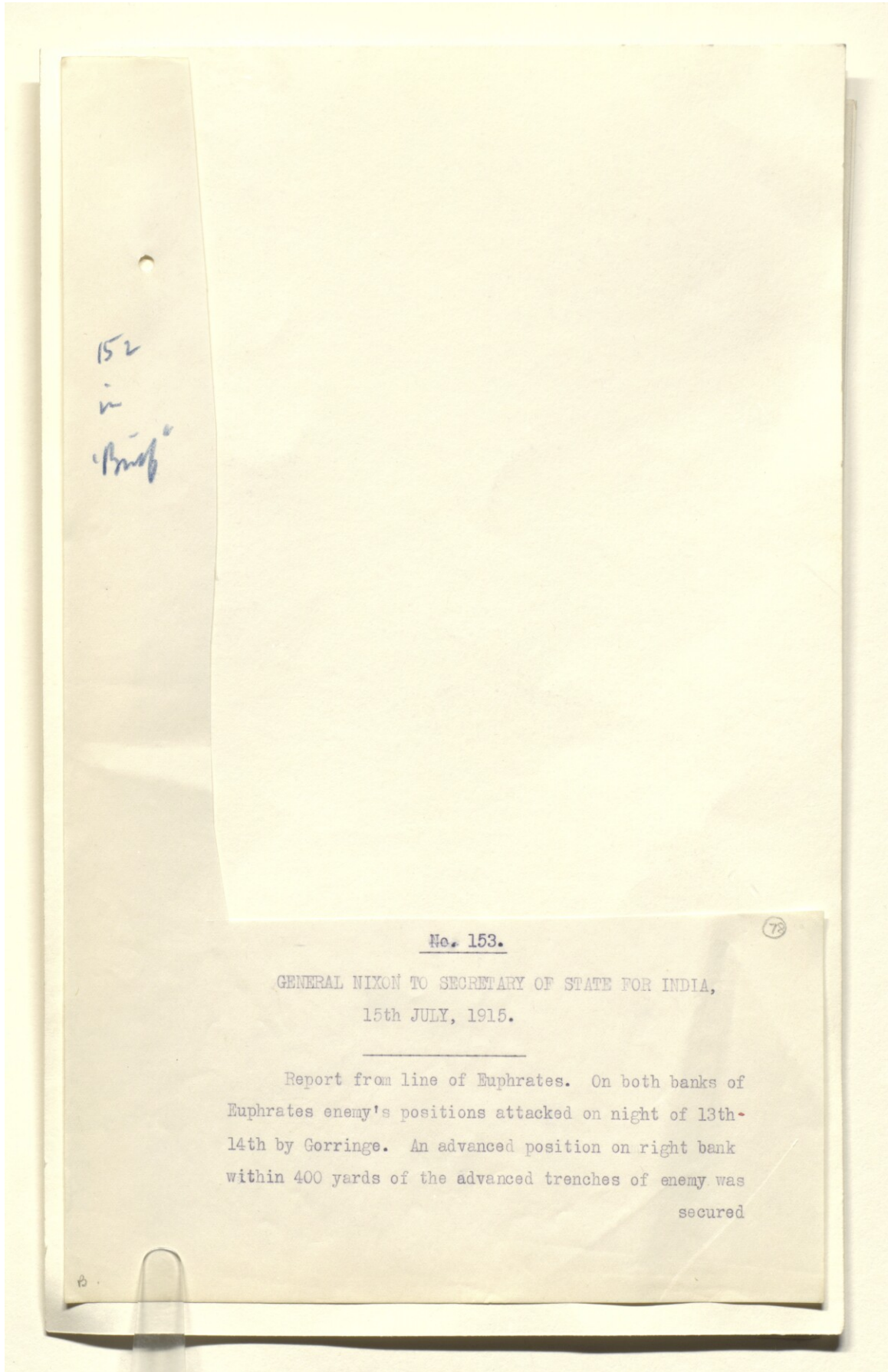
enemy: estimated strength there, some cavalry, guns above mentioned and 200 Infantry. At Ali Gharbi enemy's strength reported as similar number infantry and cavalry and two guns it is also reported that reinforcements are expected by him. It is doubtful what the attitude of Ghadban of Beni Lara⁷¹¹ will be. Steamers returned Kumait after reconnaissance of the enemy's position at Filaililah. Patrolling by Itan will be continued from Kumait. From Amara two 4.7 guns are being despatched."

No.151.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA 11TH JULY 1915.

"Line of Euphrates - The enemy at intervals opened rifle fire against General Gorrings advanced positions during night of 10th - 11th. Heavy Rifle fire supported by gun fire was again opened for two hours at 7 a.m. on 11th but no difficulty was found in maintaining our advanced positions. Gorrings at 5 p.m. 11th received the reinforcements carried by the first of our steamers. Line of Tigris.- Ghadban's demeanour is now satisfactory and co-operation in checking Turkish advance is volunteered by him - this is due to our reconnaissances on 8th and 9th up stream."





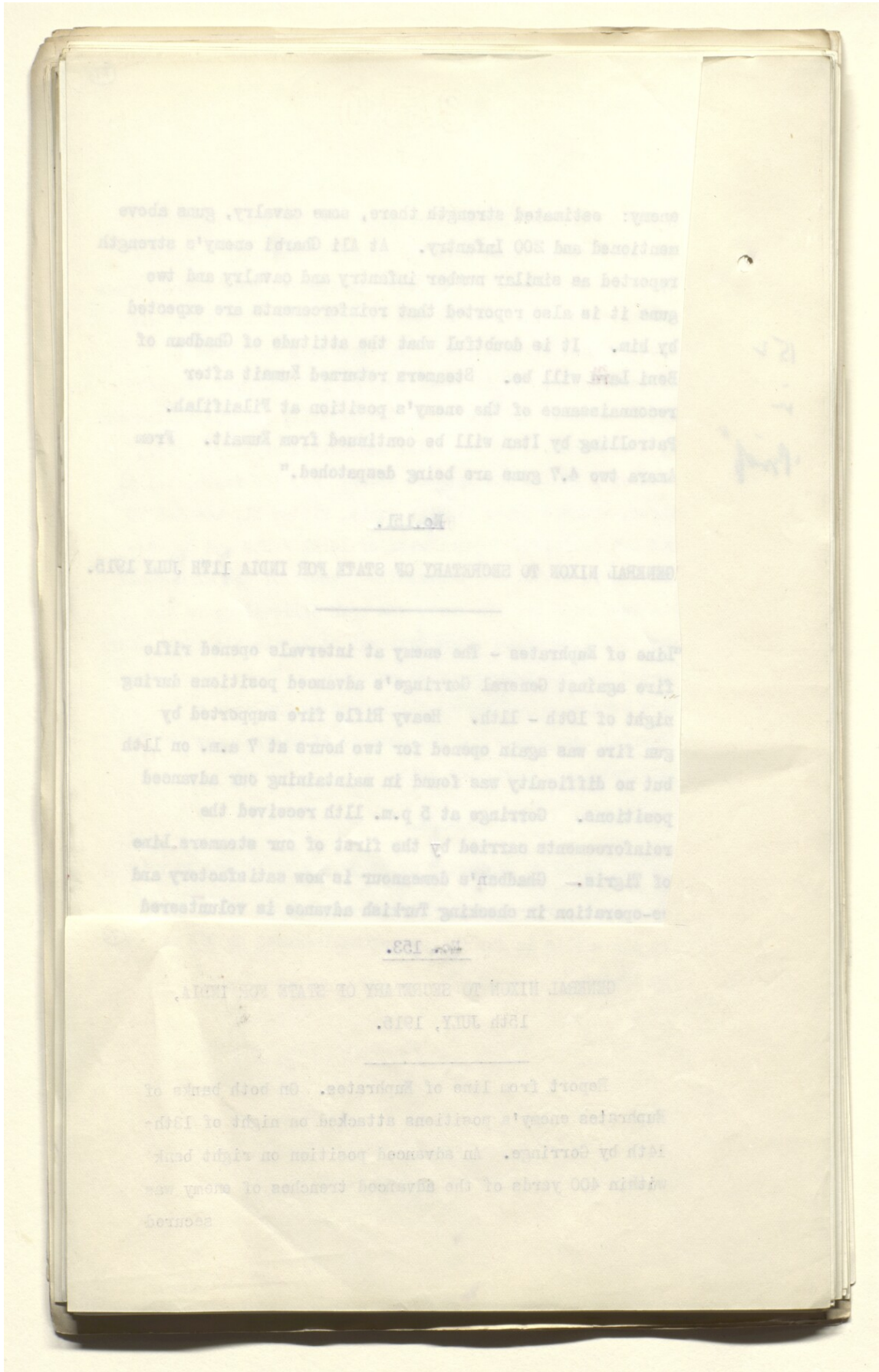
152
in
Brief

No. 153.

78

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
15th JULY, 1915.

Report from line of Euphrates. On both banks of Euphrates enemy's positions attacked on night of 13th-14th by Gorringe. An advanced position on right bank within 400 yards of the advanced trenches of enemy was secured



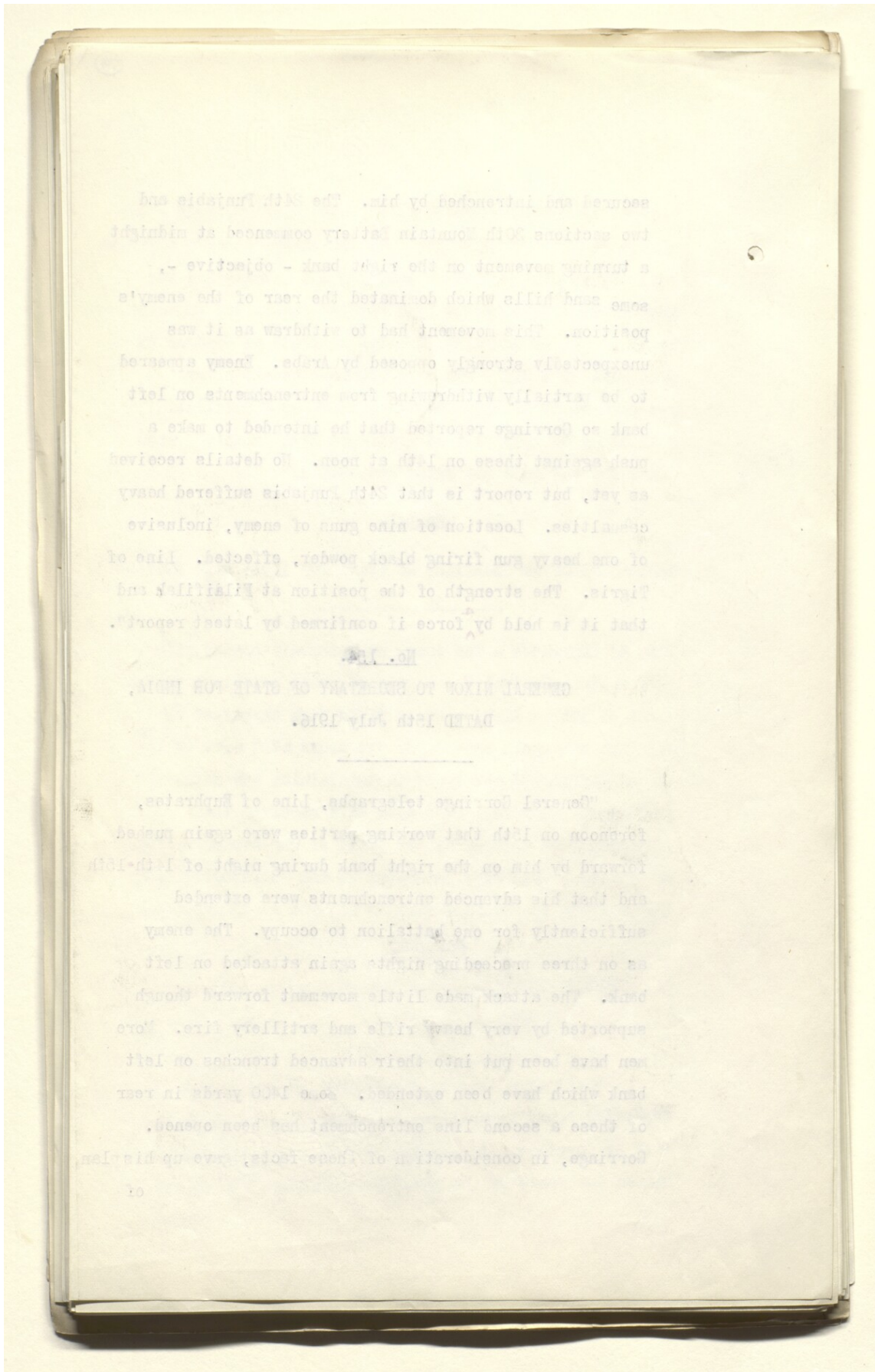


secured and intrenched by him. The 24th Punjabis and two sections 30th Mountain Battery commenced at midnight a turning movement on the right bank - objective -, some sand hills which dominated the rear of the enemy's position. This movement had to withdraw as it was unexpectedly strongly opposed by Arabs. Enemy appeared to be partially withdrawing from entrenchments on left bank so Gorringe reported that he intended to make a push against these on 14th at noon. No details received as yet, but report is that 24th Punjabis suffered heavy casualties. Location of nine guns of enemy, inclusive of one heavy gun firing black powder, effected. Line of Tigris. The strength of the position at Filafilah and that it is held by force if confirmed by latest report".

No. 154.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 15th July 1916.

"General Gorringe telegraphs, Line of Euphrates, forenoon on 15th that working parties were again pushed forward by him on the right bank during night of 14th-15th and that his advanced entrenchments were extended sufficiently for one battalion to occupy. The enemy as on three preceeding nights again attacked on left bank. The attack made little movement forward though supported by very heavy rifle and artillery fire. More men have been put into their advanced trenches on left bank which have been extended. Some 1400 yards in rear of these a second line entrenchment has been opened. Gorringe, in consideration of these facts, gave up his plan
of





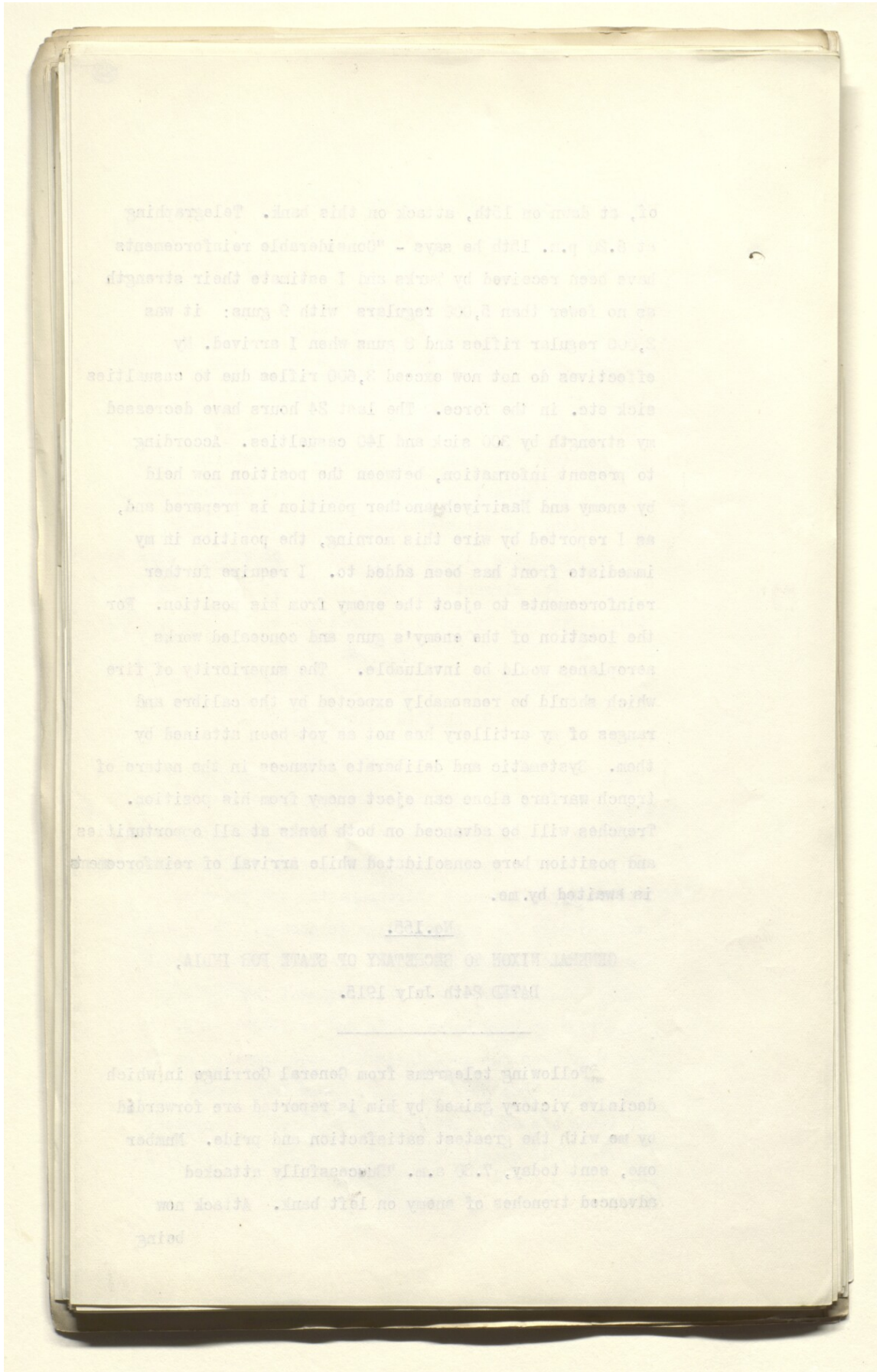
of, at dawn on 15th, attack on this bank. Telegraphing at 6.20 p.m. 15th he says - "Considerable reinforcements have been received by Turks and I estimate their strength as no fewer than 5,000 regulars with 9 guns: it was 2,000 regular rifles and 8 guns when I arrived. My effectives do not now exceed 3,600 rifles due to casualties sick etc. in the force. The last 24 hours have decreased my strength by 300 sick and 140 casualties. According to present information, between the position now held by enemy and Nasiriyeh another position is prepared and, as I reported by wire this morning, the position in my immediate front has been added to. I require further reinforcements to eject the enemy from his position. For the location of the enemy's guns and concealed works aeroplanes would be invaluable. The superiority of fire which should be reasonably expected by the calibre and ranges of my artillery has not as yet been attained by them. Systematic and deliberate advances in the nature of trench warfare alone can eject enemy from his position. Trenches will be advanced on both banks at all opportunities and position here consolidated while arrival of reinforcements is awaited by me.

No.155.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,

DATED 24th July 1915.

Following telegrams from General Gorringe in which decisive victory gained by him is reported are forwarded by me with the greatest satisfaction and pride. Number one, sent today, 7.30 a.m. "Successfully attacked advanced trenches of enemy on left bank. Attack now being



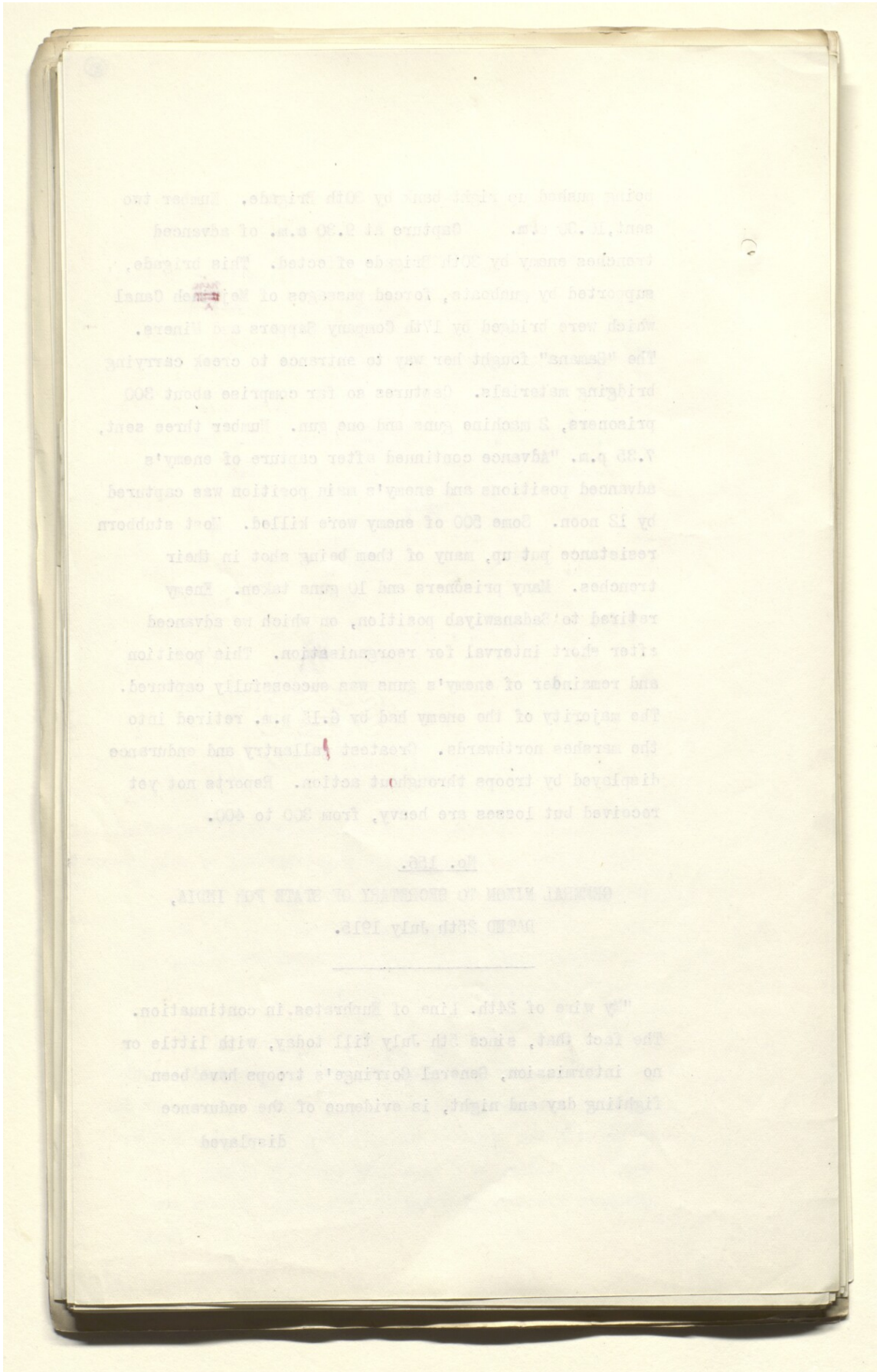


being pushed up right bank by 30th Brigade. Number two sent, 10.30 a.m. Capture at 9.30 a.m. of advanced trenches enemy by 30th Brigade effected. This brigade, supported by gunboats, forced passages of Mejs^{un}eh Canal which were bridged by 17th Company Sappers and Miners. The "Samana" fought her way to entrance to creek carrying bridging materials. Captures so far comprise about 300 prisoners, 2 machine guns and one gun. Number three sent, 7.35 p.m. "Advance continued after capture of enemy's advanced positions and enemy's main position was captured by 12 noon. Some 500 of enemy were killed. Most stubborn resistance put up, many of them being shot in their trenches. Many prisoners and 10 guns taken. Enemy retired to Sadanawiyah position, on which we advanced after short interval for reorganisation. This position and remainder of enemy's guns was successfully captured. The majority of the enemy had by 6.15 p.m. retired into the marshes northwards. Greatest gallantry and endurance displayed by troops throughout action. Reports not yet received but losses are heavy, from 300 to 400.

No. 156.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 25th July 1915.

"My wire of 24th. Line of Euphrates. in continuation. The fact that, since 5th July till today, with little or no intermission, General Gorrings troops have been fighting day and night, is evidence of the endurance displayed





displayed by them. The atmosphere has been of the closest and heaviest humidity and 113 degrees shade temperature has been common. Guns, ammunition and stores have had to be moved without assistance of animals, and it is difficult to describe authentically the hardships and exertions of trench warfare under these conditions. It would be difficult to overestimate the severity of a test consisting, after 20 days of such work, in an attack on a series of entrenched positions.

No. 157.

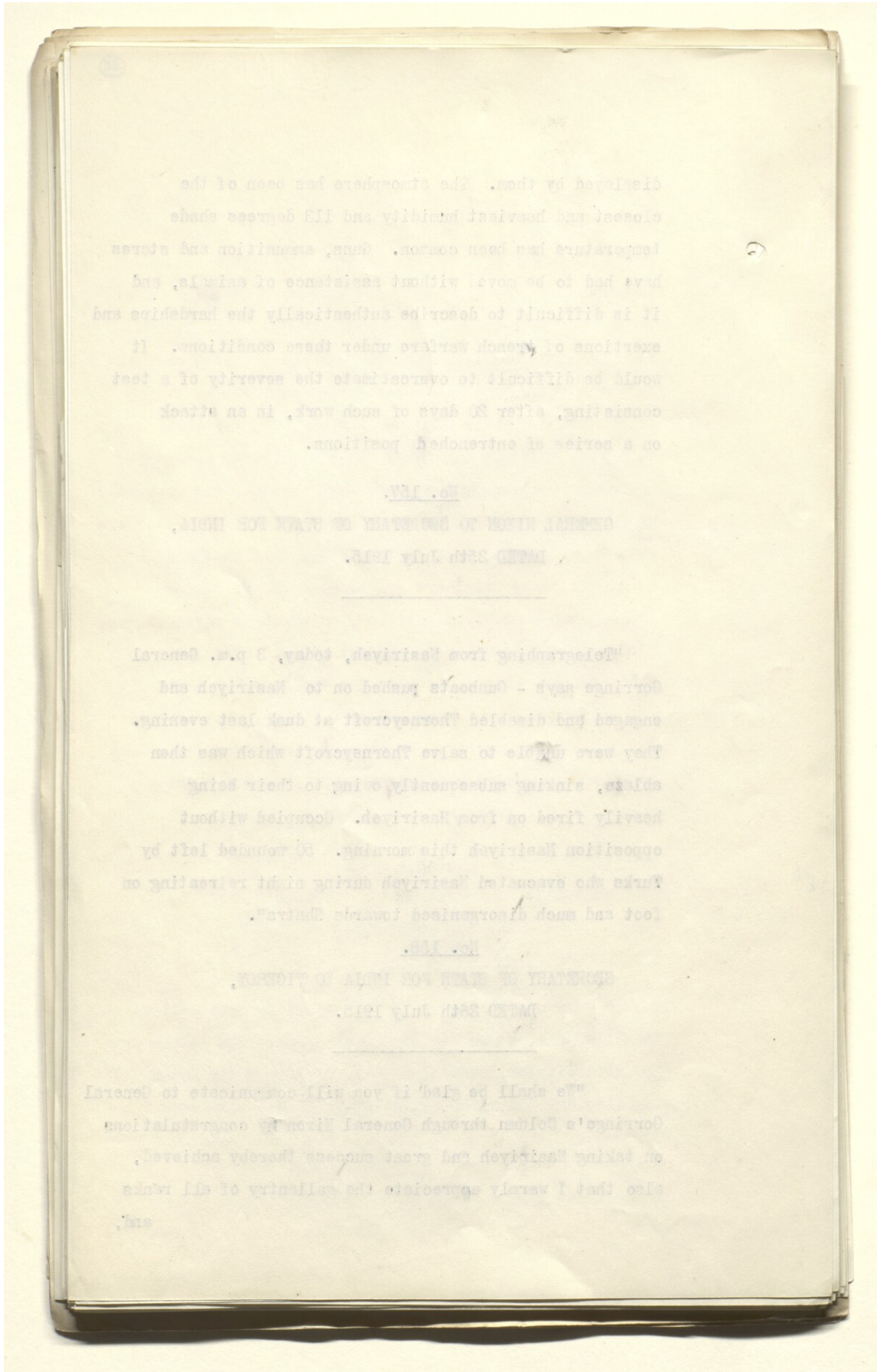
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 25th July 1915.

"Telegraphing from Nasiriyeh, today, 3 p.m. General Gorringe says - Gunboats pushed on to Nasiriyeh and engaged and disabled Thorneycroft at dusk last evening. They were unable to salve Thorneycroft which was then ablaze, sinking subsequently, owing to their being heavily fired on from Nasiriyeh. Occupied without opposition Nasiriyeh this morning. 50 wounded left by Turks who evacuated Nasiriyeh during night retreating on foot and much disorganised towards Shatra".

No. 158.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO VICEROY,
DATED 26th July 1915.

"We shall be glad if you will communicate to General Gorringe's Column through General Nixon my congratulations on taking Nasiriyeh and great success thereby achieved, also that I warmly appreciate the gallantry of all ranks and,



displayed by them. The atmosphere has been of the
closest and heaviest humidity and its decrease shade
temperature has been common. Guns, ammunition and stores
have had to be moved without assistance of animals and
it is difficult to describe authentically the hardships and
exertions of French warriors under these conditions. It
would be difficult to overestimate the severity of a task
consisting, after 30 days of such work, in an attack
on a series of entrenched positions.

No. 121.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 24th July 1918.

Information from Hestrich, today, 3 p.m. General
Gorringe says - Gendets pushed on to Hestrich and
engaged and disabled Thornycroft at dusk last evening.
They were unable to seize Thornycroft which was then
obliterated, sinking apparently owing to their being
heavily fired on from Hestrich. Gendets without
opposition Hestrich this morning. 30 wounded left by
Turks who evacuated Hestrich during night retreating on
foot and each dispatched towards Shara.

No. 122.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO GENERAL,
DATED 24th July 1918.

"We shall be glad if you will communicate to General
Gorringe's Column through General Nixon the congratulations
on taking Hestrich and great success thereby achieved.
also that I warmly appreciate the gallantry of all ranks
and



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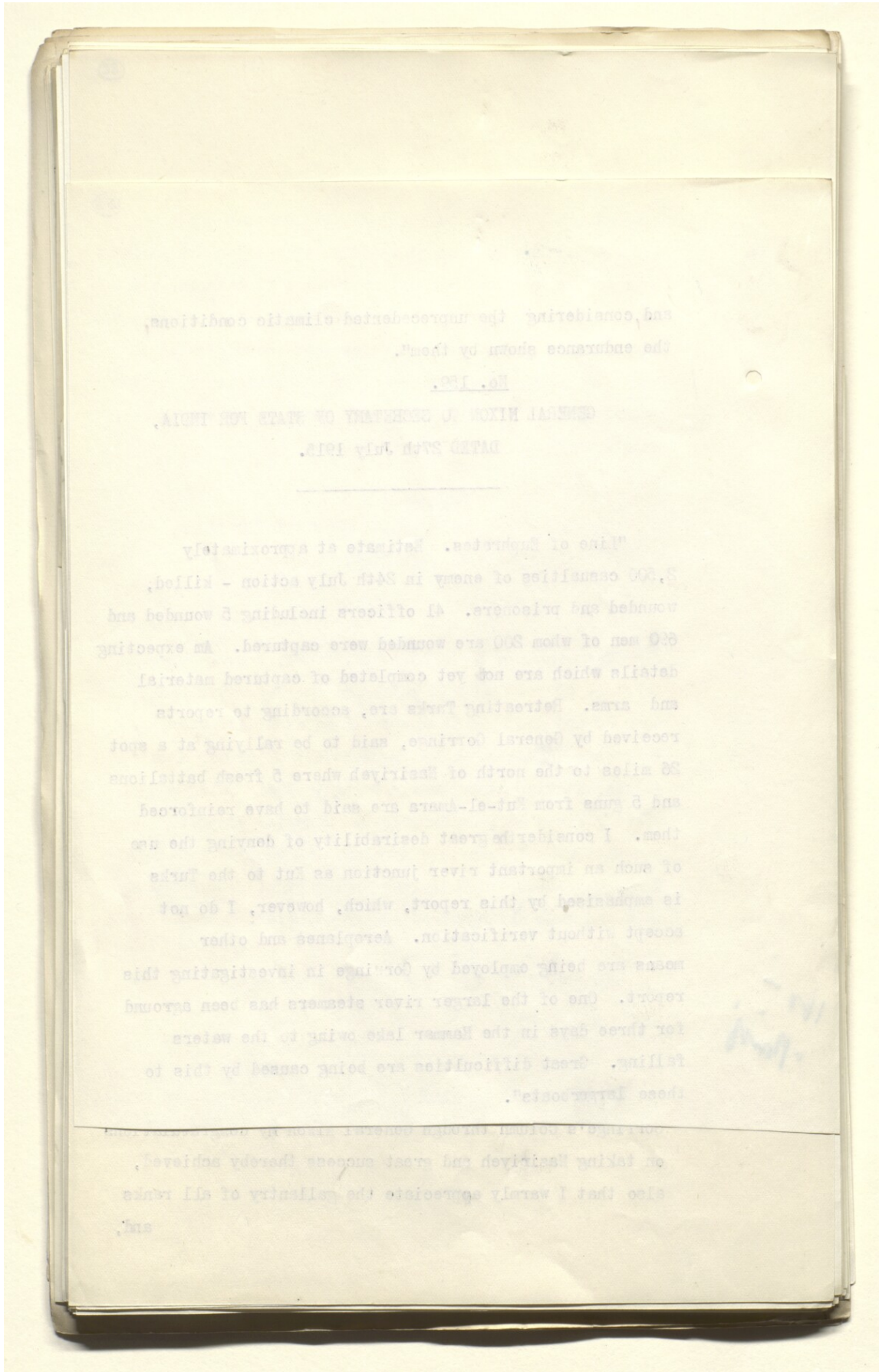
and, considering the unprecedented climatic conditions,
the endurance shown by them".

No. 159.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 27th July 1915.

"Line of Euphrates. Estimate at approximately
2,500 casualties of enemy in 24th July action - killed,
wounded and prisoners. 41 officers including 5 wounded and
690 men of whom 200 are wounded were captured. Am expecting
details which are not yet completed of captured material
and arms. Retreating Turks are, according to reports
received by General Gorringe, said to be rallying at a spot
26 miles to the north of Nasiriyeh where 5 fresh battalions
and 5 guns from Kut-el-Amara are said to have reinforced
them. I consider the great desirability of denying the use
of such an important river junction as Kut to the Turks
is emphasised by this report, which, however, I do not
accept without verification. Aeroplanes and other
means are being employed by Gorringe in investigating this
report. One of the larger river steamers has been aground
for three days in the Hammar lake owing to the waters
falling. Great difficulties are being caused by this to
these larger boats".

160 in
"Nixon"



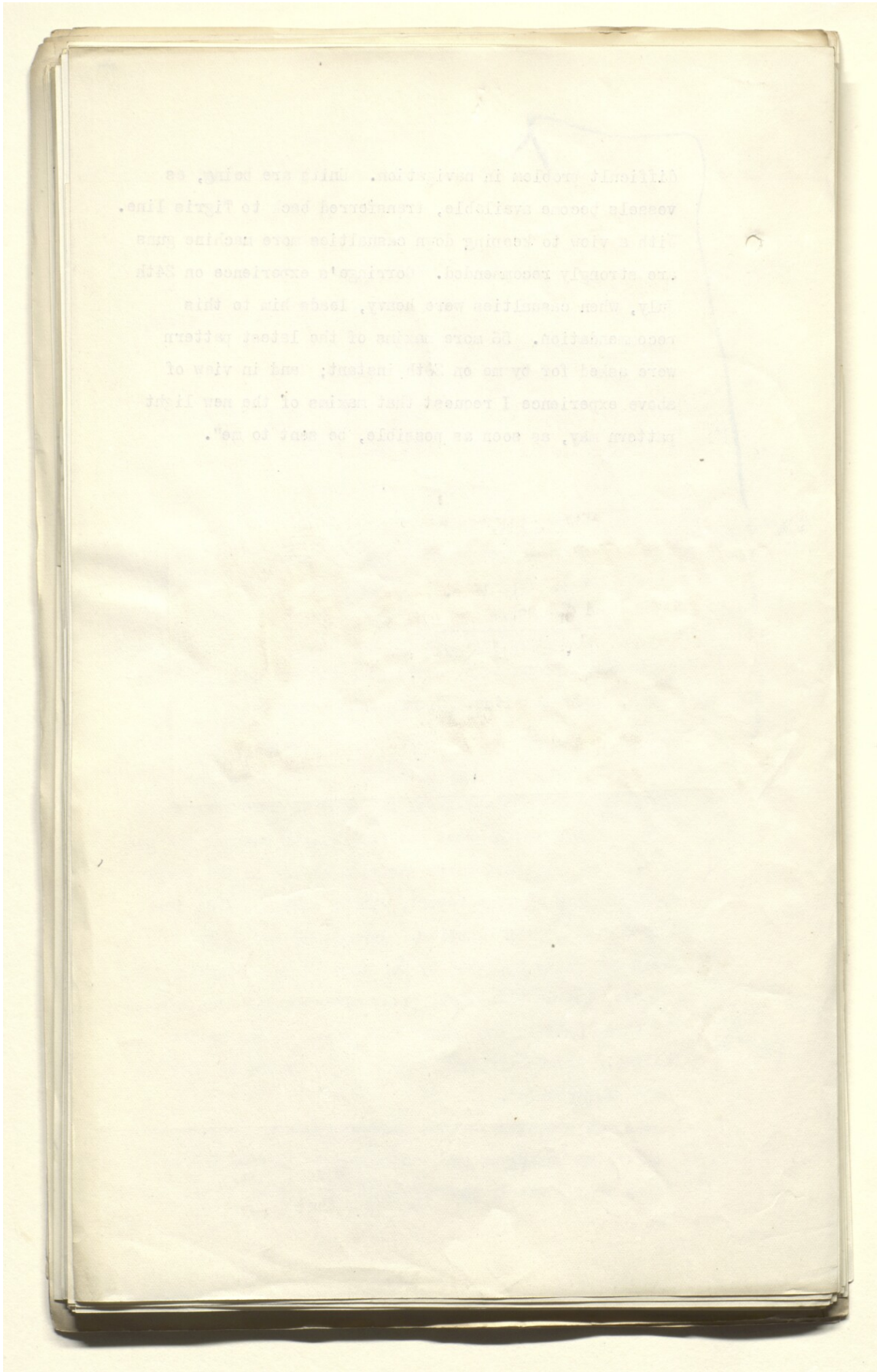


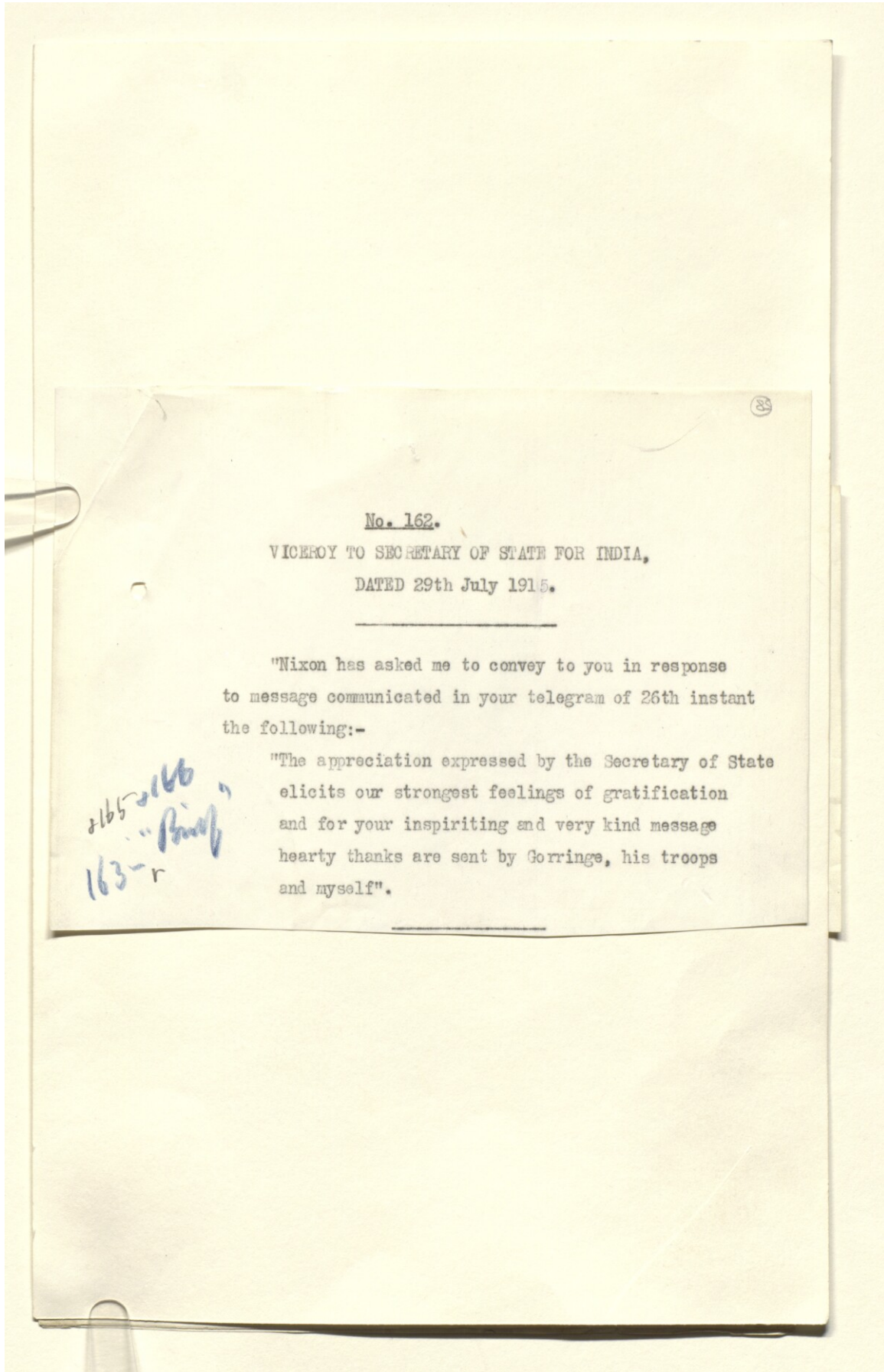
difficult problem in navigation. Units are being, as vessels become available, transferred back to Tigris line. With a view to keeping down casualties more machine guns are strongly recommended. Gorringe's experience on 24th July, when casualties were heavy, leads him to this recommendation. 56 more maxims of the latest pattern were asked for by me on 20th instant; and in view of above experience I request that maxims of the new light pattern may, as soon as possible, be sent to me".

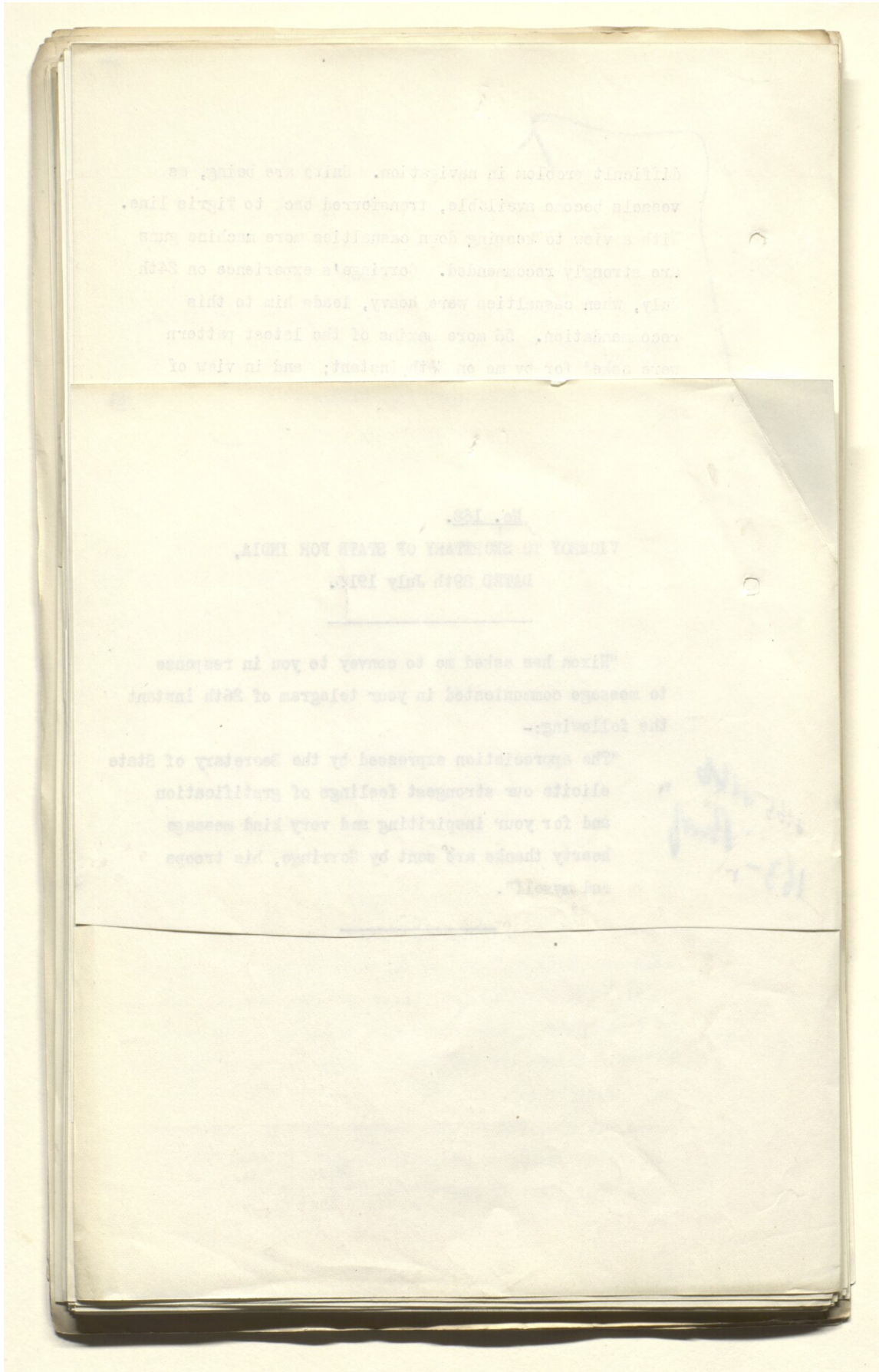
No. 161.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 28th July 1915.

"Gorringe has begun to evacuate sick and wounded from Nasiriyeh, Euphrates line. Hammar Lake presents
difficult







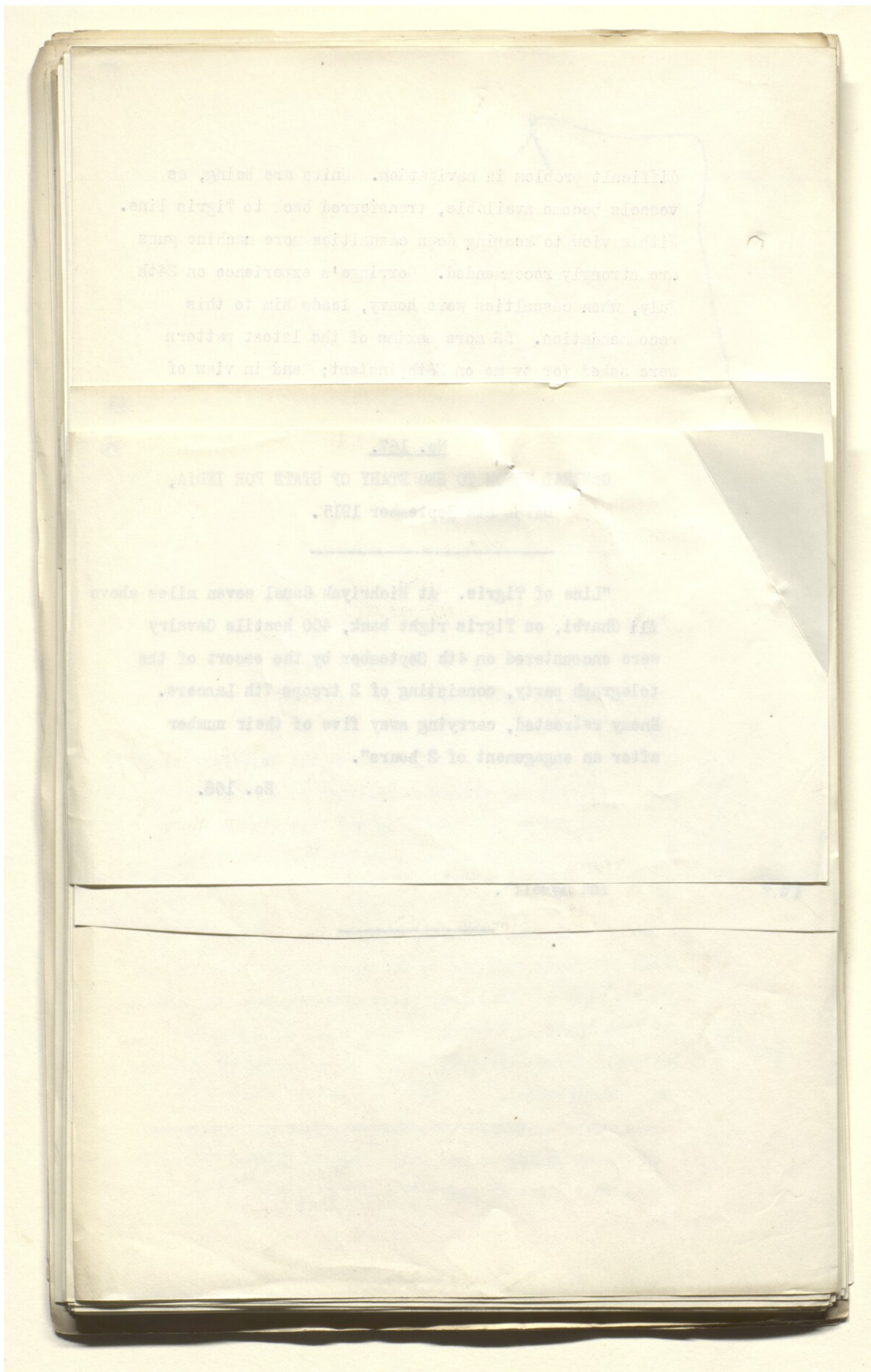


No. 167.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 5th September 1915.

"Line of Tigris. At Michriyah Canal seven miles above Ali Gharbi, on Tigris right bank, 400 hostile Cavalry were encountered on 4th September by the escort of the telegraph party, consisting of 2 troops 7th Lancers. Enemy retreated, carrying away five of their number after an engagement of 2 hours".

No. 168.





168.

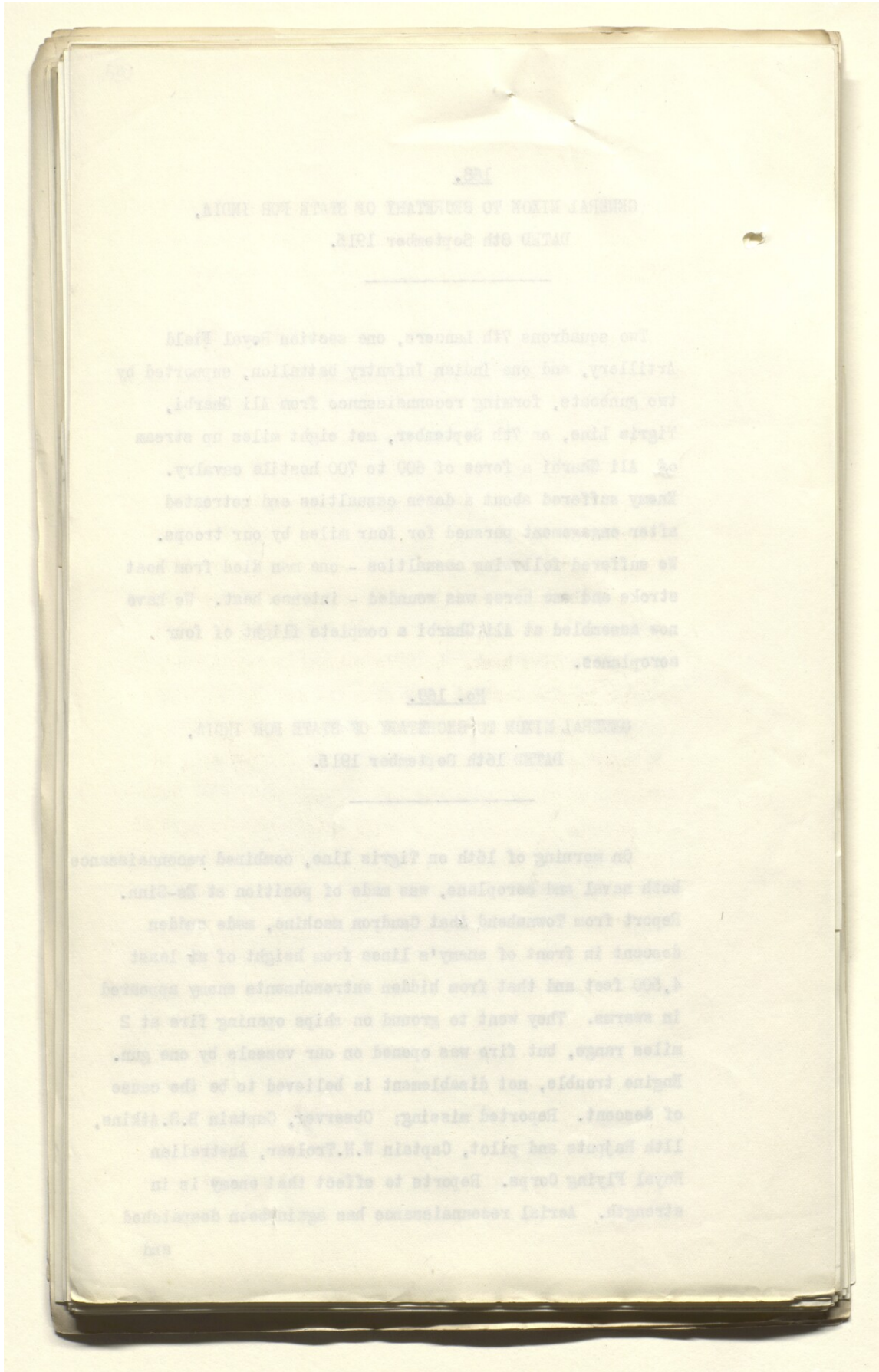
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 8th September 1915.

Two squadrons 7th Lancers, one section Royal Field Artillery, and one Indian Infantry battalion, supported by two gunboats, forming reconnaissance from Ali Gharbi, Tigris Line, on 7th September, met eight miles up stream of Ali Gharbi a force of 600 to 700 hostile cavalry. Enemy suffered about a dozen casualties and retreated after engagement pursued for four miles by our troops. We suffered following casualties - one man died from heat stroke and one horse was wounded - intense heat. We have now assembled at Ali Gharbi a complete flight of four aeroplanes.

No. 169.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 16th September 1915.

On morning of 16th on Tigris line, combined reconnaissance both naval and aeroplane, was made of position at Es-Sinn. Report from Townshend that Caudron machine, made sudden descent in front of enemy's lines from height of at least 4,500 feet and that from hidden entrenchments enemy appeared in swarms. They went to ground on ships opening fire at 2 miles range, but fire was opened on our vessels by one gun. Engine trouble, not disablement is believed to be the cause of descent. Reported missing; Observer, Captain B.S. Atkins, 11th Rajputs and pilot, Captain W.N. Treloar, Australian Royal Flying Corps. Reports to effect that enemy is in strength. Aerial reconnaissance has again been despatched
and





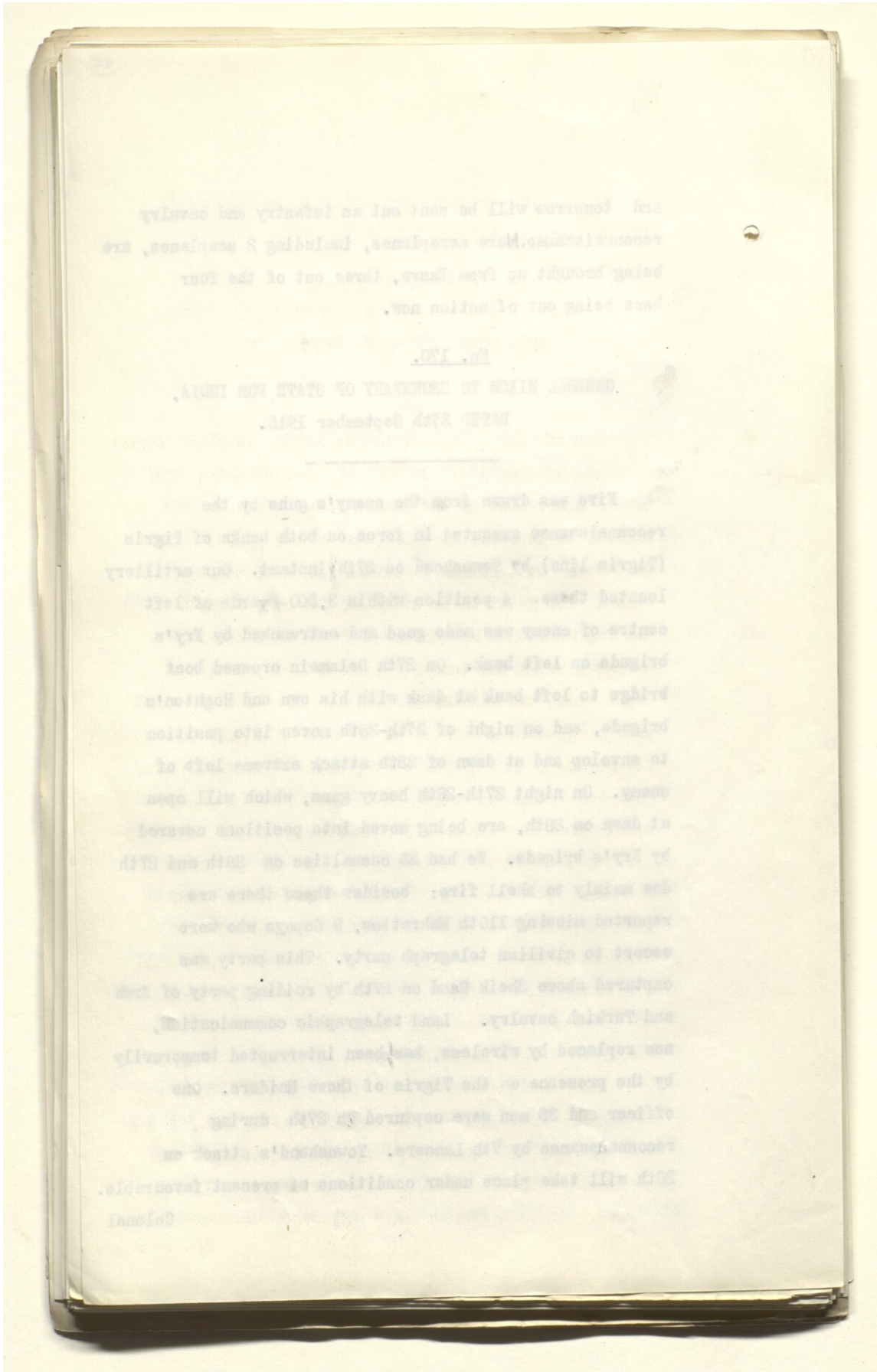
and tomorrow will be sent out an infantry and cavalry reconnaissance. More aeroplanes, including 2 seaplanes, are being brought up from Basra, three out of the four here being out of action now.

No. 170.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 27th September 1915.

Fire was drawn from the enemy's guns by the reconnaissance executed in force on both banks of Tigris (Tigris line) by Townshend on 27th instant. Our artillery located these. A position within 3,500 yards of left centre of enemy was made good and entrenched by Fry's brigade on left bank. On 27th Delamain crossed boat bridge to left bank at dusk with his own and Houghton's brigade, and on night of 27th-28th moves into position to envelop and at dawn of 28th attack extreme left of enemy. On night 27th-28th heavy guns, which will open at dawn on 28th, are being moved into positions covered by Fry's brigade. We had 26 casualties on 26th and 27th due mainly to shell fire: besides these there are reported missing 110th Mahrattas, 9 Sepoys who were escort to civilian telegraph party. This party was captured above Sheik Saad on 27th by raiding party of Arab and Turkish cavalry. Land telegraphic communication, now replaced by wireless, has been interrupted temporarily by the presence on the Tigris of these Raiders. One officer and 35 men were captured on 27th during reconnaissance by 7th Lancers. Townshend's attack on 28th will take place under conditions at present favourable.

Colonel





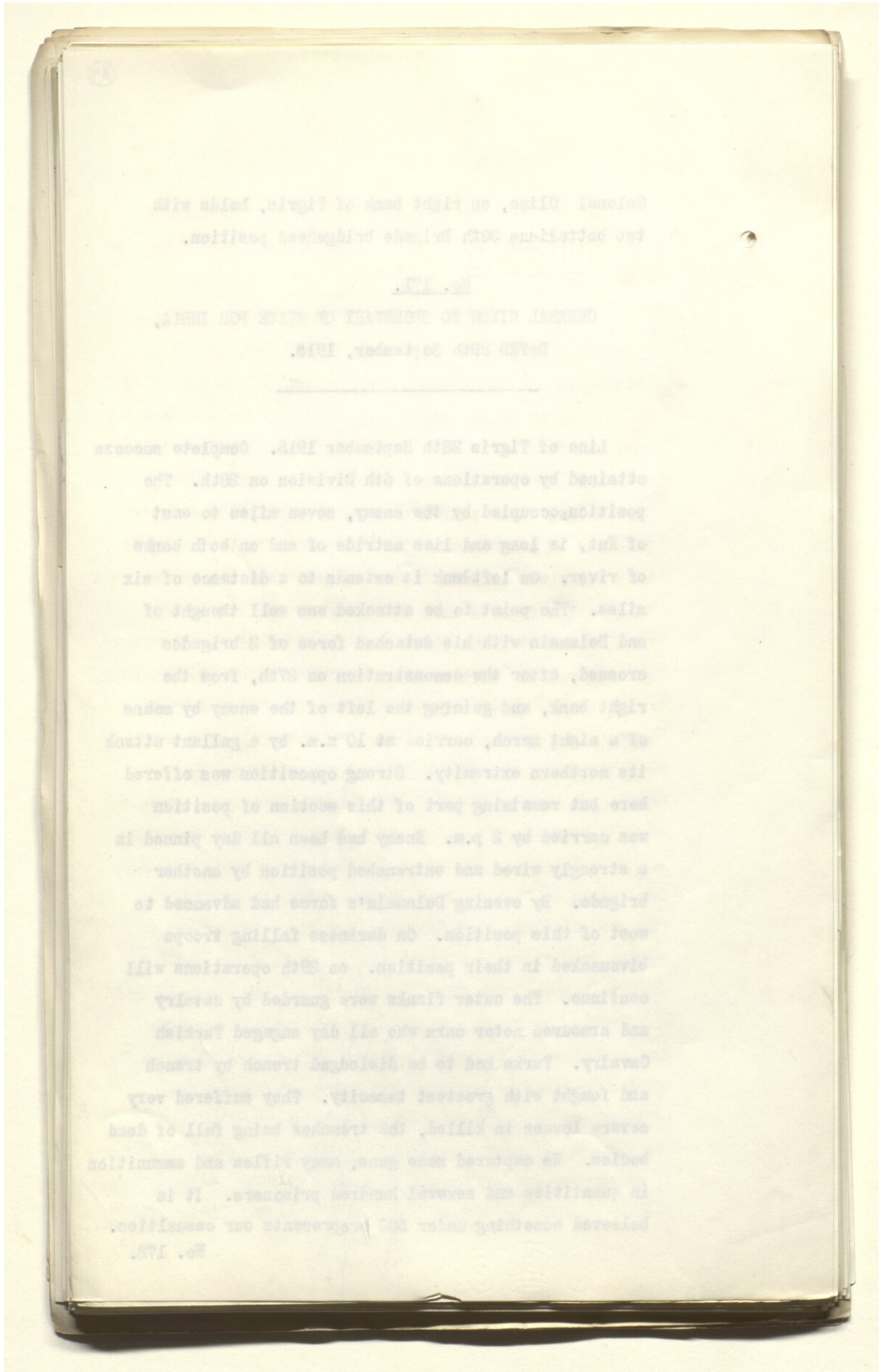
Colonel Climo, on right bank of Tigris, holds with two battalions 30th Brigade bridgehead position.

No. 171.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 29th September, 1915.

Line of Tigris 28th September 1915. Complete success attained by operations of 6th Division on 28th. The position occupied by the enemy, seven miles to east of Kut, is long and lies astride of and on both banks of river. On left bank it extends to a distance of six miles. The point to be attacked was well thought of and Delamain with his detached force of 2 brigades crossed, after the demonstration on 27th, from the right bank, and gaining the left of the enemy by means of a night march, carried at 10 a.m. by a gallant attack its northern extremity. Strong opposition was offered here but remaining part of this section of position was carried by 2 p.m. Enemy had been all day pinned in a strongly wired and entrenched position by another brigade. By evening Delamain's force had advanced to west of this position. On darkness falling troops bivouacked in their position. on 29th operations will continue. The outer flanks were guarded by cavalry and armoured motor cars who all day engaged Turkish Cavalry. Turks had to be dislodged trench by trench and fought with greatest tenacity. They suffered very severe losses in killed, the trenches being full of dead bodies. We captured some guns, many rifles and ammunition in quantities and several hundred prisoners. It is believed something under 500 represents our casualties.

No. 172.





No. 172.

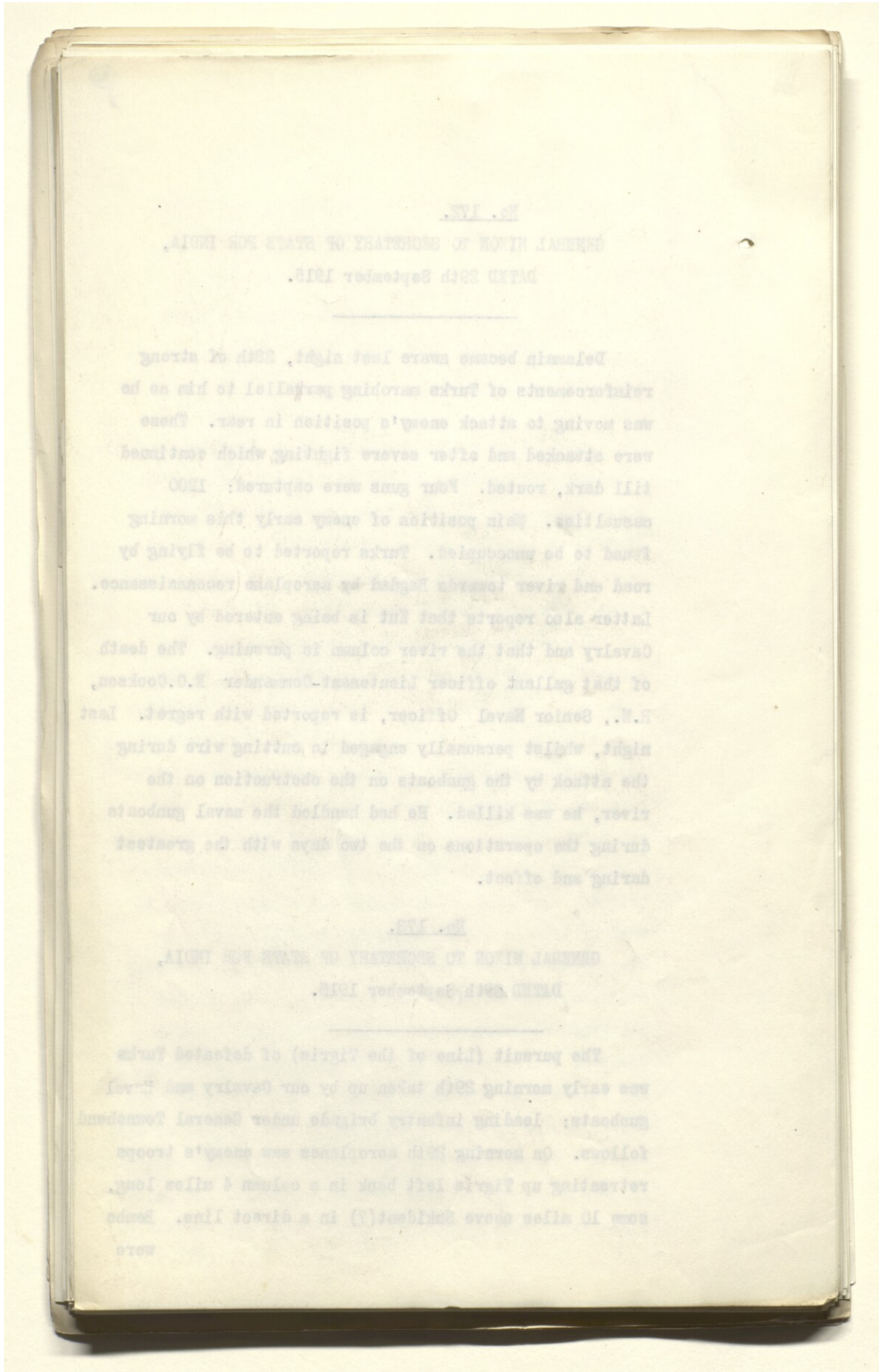
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 29th September 1915.

Delamain became aware last night, 28th of strong reinforcements of Turks marching parallel to him as he was moving to attack enemy's position in rear. These were attacked and after severe fighting which continued till dark, routed. Four guns were captured: 1200 casualties. Main position of enemy early this morning found to be unoccupied. Turks reported to be flying by road and river towards Bagdad by aeroplane reconnaissance. Latter also reports that Kut is being entered by our Cavalry and that the river column is pursuing. The death of that gallant officer Lieutenant-Commander E.C. Cookson, R.N., Senior Naval Officer, is reported with regret. Last night, whilst personally engaged in cutting wire during the attack by the gunboats on the obstruction on the river, he was killed. He had handled the naval gunboats during the operations on the two days with the greatest daring and effect.

No. 173.

GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 29th September 1915.

The pursuit (Line of the Tigris) of defeated Turks was early morning 29th taken up by our Cavalry and Naval gunboats: leading infantry brigade under General Townshend follows. On morning 29th aeroplanes saw enemy's troops retreating up Tigris left bank in a column 4 miles long, some 10 miles above Sukident(?) in a direct line. Bombs were





were also dropped on large steamer which is believed to be Khalifa, by the aeroplane. Steamer is thought to have suffered injury. She made for the bank forthwith. Field of battle is being cleared up by one brigade. 1650 prisoners captured in all so far and more are being brought in. The latest and most approved principles are shown, from an inspection of the position captured, to have been applied in the designing and construction of the defences. Remarkable thoroughness and study of detail is displayed. Ranges were marked by flags, arrangements for covering the retirement and embarkation of troops were made and for miles communication trenches extended. The system of contact and observation mines was elaborate. Our Engineers exploded without accident a number of these, but during the action mines caused severe casualties. Everywhere the field of fire was open and flat. During the late battle the composition of Nur-ed-din's force was as follows - Cavalry 6 squadrons - guns, six - infantry battalions 35th and 38th and in addition four extra battalions comprised of other formations. 7,000 to 8,000 regular troops, which were assisted by a large number of tribesmen, is believed to have been his total strength. One mile below Kut is the location of General Headquarters. For the last two days temperature distinctly lower. A large proportion of the wounded are but slightly injured and are doing well as a body. The troops are in excellent health and spirits.

No. 174.

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO VICEROY,

DATED 30th September 1915.

I shall be glad if my congratulations on Force "D"'s further brilliant achievement may be conveyed to Sir

John Nixon

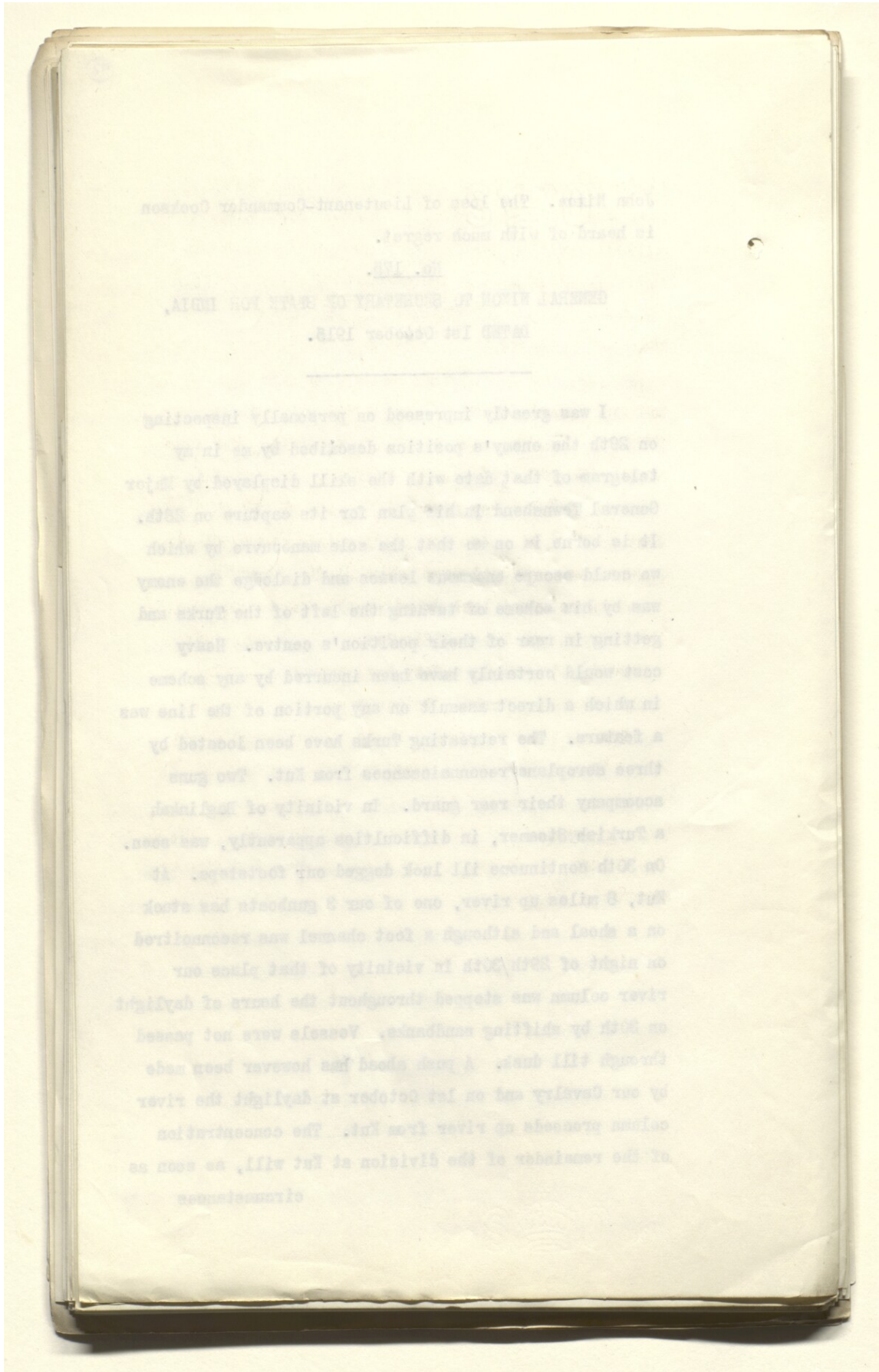


John Nixon. The loss of Lieutenant-Commander Cookson is heard of with much regret.

No. 175.

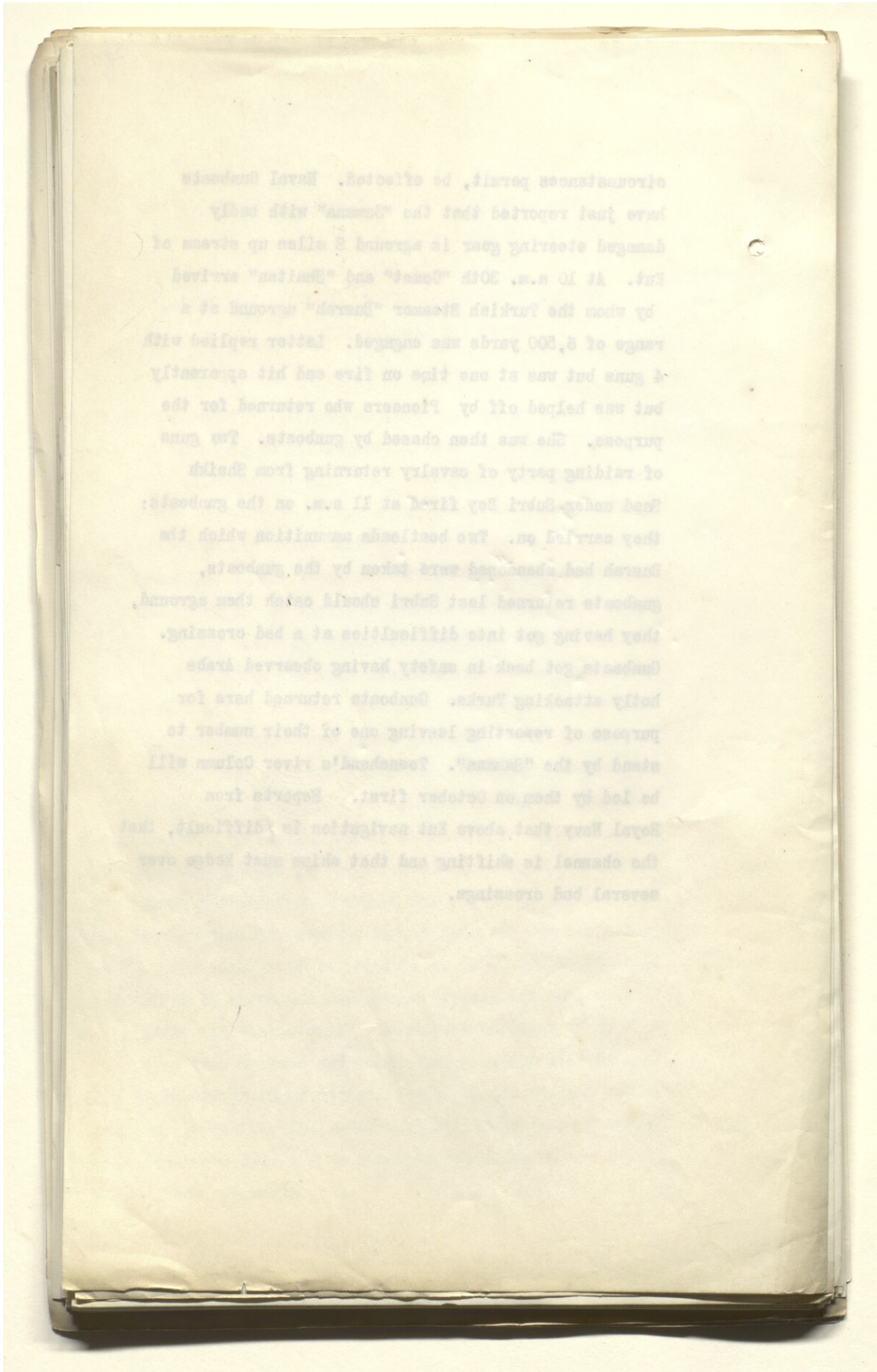
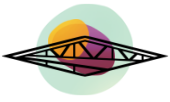
GENERAL NIXON TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA,
DATED 1st October 1915.

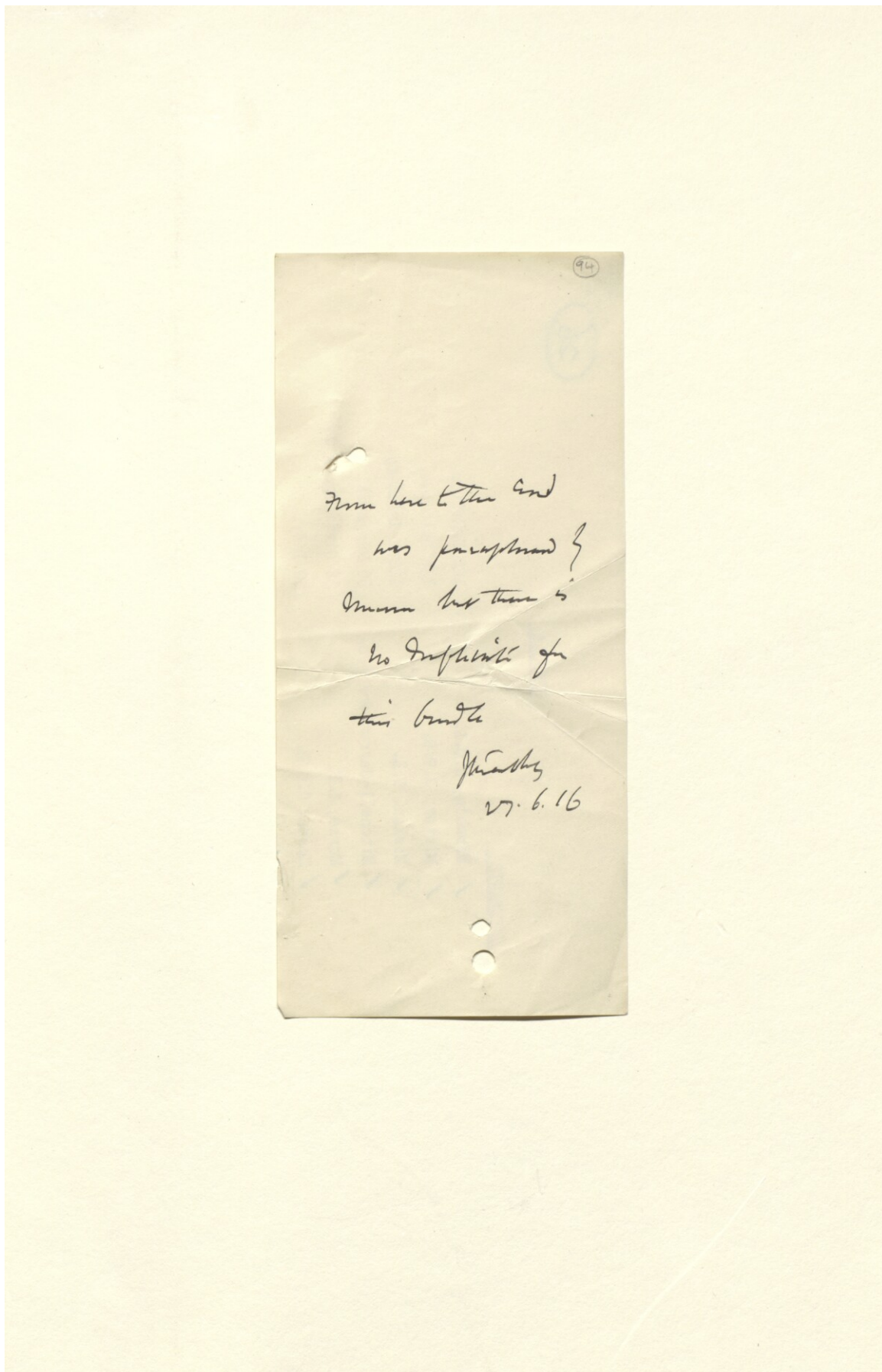
I was greatly impressed on personally inspecting on 29th the enemy's position described by me in my telegram of that date with the skill displayed by Major General Townshend in his plan for its capture on 28th. It is borne in on me that the sole manoeuvre by which we could escape enormous losses and dislodge the enemy was by his scheme of turning the left of the Turks and getting in rear of their position's centre. Heavy cost would certainly have been incurred by any scheme in which a direct assault on any portion of the line was a feature. The retreating Turks have been located by three aeroplane reconnaissances from Kut. Two guns accompany their rear guard. In vicinity of Baglinkah a Turkish Steamer, in difficulties apparently, was seen. On 30th continuous ill luck dogged our footsteps. At Kut, 8 miles up river, one of our 3 gunboats has stuck on a shoal and although a foot channel was reconnoitred on night of 29th/30th in vicinity of that place our river column was stopped throughout the hours of daylight on 30th by shifting sandbanks. Vessels were not passed through till dusk. A push ahead has however been made by our Cavalry and on 1st October at daylight the river column proceeds up river from Kut. The concentration of the remainder of the division at Kut will, as soon as circumstances





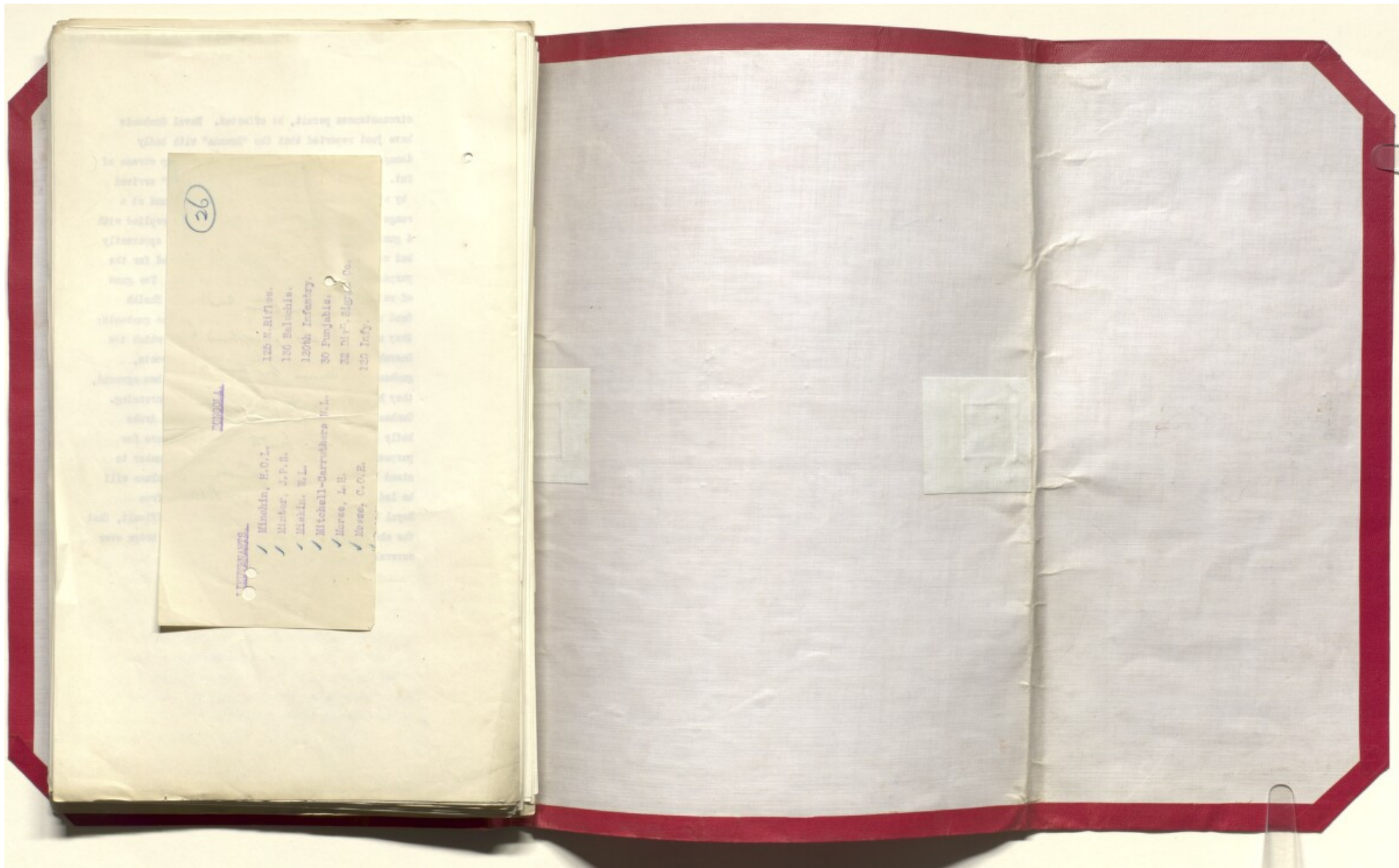
circumstances permit, be effected. Naval Gunboats have just reported that the "Samana" with badly damaged steering gear is aground 8 miles up stream of Kut. At 10 a.m. 30th "Comet" and "Shaitan" arrived by whom the Turkish Steamer "Busrah" aground at a range of 6,500 yards was engaged. Latter replied with 4 guns but was at one time on fire and hit apparently but was helped off by Pioneers who returned for the purpose. She was then chased by gunboats. Two guns of raiding party of cavalry returning from Sheikh Saad under Subri Bey fired at 11 a.m. on the gunboats: they carried on. Two boatloads ammunition which the Busrah had abandoned were taken by the gunboats, gunboats returned lest Subri should catch them aground, they having got into difficulties at a bad crossing. Gunboats got back in safety having observed Arabs hotly attacking Turks. Gunboats returned here for purpose of reporting leaving one of their number to stand by the "Samana". Townshend's river Column will be led by them on October first. Reports from Royal Navy that above Kut navigation is difficult, that the chanel is shifting and that ships must kedge over several bad crossings.

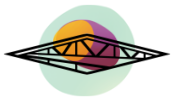






"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [٤٩ ظ] (١٨٨/١٨٩)





"كتاب أزرق. برقيات أعيد صياغتها" [خلفي] (١٨٩/١٨٩)

