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"مذكرة بخصوص الكويت"

المكتبة البريطانية: أوراق خاصة وسجلات من مكتب الهند

IOR/L/PS/18/B133A

ديسمبر ١٩٠٥ (ميلادي)

الإنجليزية في اللاتينية

مجلد واحد (٧ أوراق)

رخصة حكومة مفتوحة

المؤسسة المالكة

المرجع

التاريخ/ التواريخ

لغة الكتابة

الحجم والشكل

حق النشر



حول هذا السجل

هذا الملف عبارة عن مذكرة بخصوص الكويت كتبها مسؤول وزارة الخارجية ر. ف. هاركورت [روبرت فينابلز فيرنون هاركورت].

المذكرة مُقسّمة كما يلي:

• سرد عام - النشاط التركي - تفاهات مع تركيا وألمانيا؛

• الحدود الكويتية؛

• الوكيل السياسي؛

• علم الكويت؛

• مكتب بريد الكويت؛

• السياسة العامة.

تتناول المذكرة وضع بريطانيا في الكويت وتطور علاقات بريطانيا مع حاكم الكويت الشيخ مبارك الصباح.

يحتوي الملحق المرفق بالمذكرة (الأوراق ١١ و-١٢) على نسخة من الاتفاقية الموقعة بين الحكومة البريطانية والشيخ مبارك الصباح حاكم الكويت في يناير ١٨٩٩، وترجمة لرسالة مرسلّة إلى مبارك من المقدم ميد [مالكولم جون ميد] في يناير ١٨٩٩، ونسخة من مذكرة بخصوص الكويت كتبها لوزارة الخارجية مركز لانسدون [هنري تشارلز كيث بيتي-فيتزموريس، المركز الخامس للانسداون] في مارس ١٩٠٢.

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Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. December 1905.

CONFIDENTIAL

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Memorandum respecting Koweit.

General Narrative—Turkish Activity—Understandings with Turkey and Germany.

A DETAILED account of the political status of Koweit, and of the questions which have arisen in connection with it, will be found in Confidential Memorandum No. 7596 of the 30th October, 1901.

At present the situation is governed by an Agreement concluded in January 1899 (see Appendix) by which, in return for the good offices of His Majesty's Government, the Sheikh binds himself to cede no territory and to receive no Representative of any foreign Power without British sanction.

After the summer of 1900 various incidents began to point to a renewal of Turkish interest in Koweit.

Sir N. O'Connor,
No. 275,
August 7, 1900.

In August the first of several attempts was made to induce Sheikh Mubarak to visit Bussorah, and he found some difficulty in avoiding direct communication with the Turkish authorities.

In October the order of the Svetiaz was conferred upon him as "Kaimakam" of Koweit, and the "Ikdam" of the 10th November announced that at Mubarak's request a mosque erected by him was to be called after the name of the Sultan, the Sheikh again being given the full title of Mubarak-es-Sabah Pasha, Kaimakam of Koweit.

But an opportunity for more effective intervention, of which the Turkish Government were not slow to avail themselves, was afforded by the growing dissension between Mubarak and the neighbouring Ruler of Nejd. The affair, which on its merits was little more than an intertribal squabble, led to political results of

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such importance that it is necessary to describe in some detail the course of the struggle.

The quarrel arose from a raid by Sheikh Abdur Rahman-bin-Faisal upon Nejd territory with the connivance and assistance of Mubarak, the movement being supported on the north by Sadun Pasha, a Turkish subject, Chief of the Montefik Bedouins.

Mr. de Bunsen,
No. 63,
Telegraphic,
October 3, 1900.

At the first news of disturbances, it was at once proposed to send Colonel Kemball, the British Resident in the Persian Gulf, to Koweit "to counsel Mubarak to avoid giving the Turks an excuse for interference," and as the Agreement of 1899 had promised the good offices of Her Majesty's Government the Resident was also to be instructed "to endeavour to warn the Amir of Nejd that no attack on Koweit would be permitted."

November 14,
1900.

Preliminary measures were to be taken to protect the Sheikh, but no force was to be landed without reference to the home authorities.

Shortly afterwards, however, reports were received that the crisis was over, and at Colonel Kemball's own request his visit was postponed. It appeared that Mubarak was able to hold his own, and the presence of a ship of war would give him undue encouragement.

India Office,
December 10,
1900.

A despatch from the Consul at Bussorah summed up the situation. A conflict had been averted, though at the cost of a considerable increase of Turkish prestige. The Vali, Mohsin Pasha, having prevailed upon both sides to keep the peace, had induced Mubarak to accompany him to Bussorah, there to make solemn professions of allegiance to the Sultan, and to promise to cease "coquetting with foreign Powers." The result seemed to an independent observer likely to "prove a considerable blow to any pretensions of Mubarak to being an independent Sheikh."

Mr. Wratislaw,
No. 44,
November 22,
1900.

A declaration of some importance was made about this time with regard to the status of Koweit. An Arab native of Koweit, concerned in a case of smuggling arms into Persia, had been claimed as a Turkish subject by the Turkish at Bushire. The Resident at Bushire was informed by the Foreign Office, in answer to his inquiry whether he should contest the claim, that—

Mr. Lyle, in
Mr. Mackenzie's
letter, December
28, 1900.

"although Her Majesty's Government had promised their good offices to the Sheikh of Koweit, the district has

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never been formally placed under British protection. Her Majesty's Government cannot, therefore, claim natives of Koweit as British protected persons."

Late in December Mubarak was reported to be making fresh preparations for an attack on Nejd, and the second phase of the quarrel begins.

No. 59,
February 10, 1901.

In February Sir N. O'Conor expressed his opinion on the general situation.

An outbreak of hostilities, his Excellency observed, would scarcely fail to bring the Turks again into the field.

"Her Majesty's Government may thus be placed in a difficult position, and be forced either to raise an unpleasant question with the Ottoman Government, or to assert effective control over Koweit, or else sacrifice the privileged position acquired by the Convention of January 1899. It is hardly to be expected that the Sheikh of Koweit will respect an Agreement from which he derives no security and little material advantage."

His Excellency was strongly averse to doing anything which would "encourage the Sultan's anxiety in regard to British policy in the Persian Gulf," and he suggested that the Amir of Nejd should be approached through his Bussorah Agent, while the Porte might be informed that Colonel Kemball would use every effort to restrain the Sheikh.

On the 28th February the Viceroy telegraphed that the advice of the British Resident at Bushire had been already tendered to Mubarak (though, as afterwards appeared, not personally but through the newsagent) and refused. The proposed visit, therefore, did not seem likely to have any result, while "a second failure might even be embarrassing."

As in November, hostilities were allowed to begin without any formal remonstrance on the part of the British authorities.

Sir N. O'Conor,
No. 11,
Telegraphic,
March 29, 1901.

On the 29th March the complete defeat of the Koweit forces was reported, and it was rumoured that the Sheikh had been killed in action. If the report was true it was obvious that Mubarak's death would seriously endanger the Agreement of 1899, and a ship of war was placed under orders. Colonel Kemball visited Koweit (April 18). He found the Sheikh alive, but was satisfied that he had been severely defeated. Nothing was said to the Amir.

Mohsin Pasha had remained comparatively inactive since his diplomatic success of Novem-

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ber, but the defeat of Mubarak now brought on Turkish interference in a more acute form. A Turkish Field-Marshal left Bagdad for Bussorah on the 19th April, followed on the next day by Turkish troops. It was generally believed that the Ottoman Government intended to make use of force with a view to the deposition of Mubarak.

A British gun-boat was ordered to Koweit, and Sir N. O'Connor was definitely authorized, in the event of hostilities being resumed, to warn the Porte "to refrain from any action against the Sheikh in view of our arrangement with him."

But the astute policy of Mohsin Pasha again prevented matters from coming to a head. The Turkish Field-Marshal stopped short of Koweit, and the Vali himself, with a small escort, paid a friendly visit to the Sheikh. He was unable to enforce proposals for the establishment of a Turkish garrison, but Mubarak accompanied him to Fao, renewed his protestations to the Sultan, and returned to Koweit after a second act of apparently spontaneous loyalty.

Mr. Wratishaw,
No. 30,
June 1, 1901.

On the 28th May the Amir of Nejd appealed for British protection, but, after consultation with the Viceroy, the India Office expressed the opinion, in which the Foreign Office concurred, that it was not advisable to—

"incur the difficulties and embarrassments which must ensue from the declaration of a Protectorate over either the territories of the Chiefs of Koweit and Nejd."

India Office,
June 14, 1901.

The Viceroy, however, pointed out that some answer must be given to the Chiefs, and Colonel Kemball again visited Koweit with general instructions to find some *modus vivendi* between the Sheikh and the Amir, while maintaining our hold upon the Sheikh.

Early in August he saw Mubarak, who suggested the Sheikh of Mohammerah as intermediary, and Mr. Wratishaw was subsequently authorized to assist communication between the latter and the agent of the Amir.

Telegram
communicated by
India Office,
August 14, 1901.

But renewed rumours of Turkish concentration again raised the larger diplomatic question.

In July Sir F. Lascelles had had a conversation with Dr. Rosen, of the German Foreign Office, upon the prospects of the prolongation of the Anatolian Railway to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf, and the general situation in Asiatic Turkey.

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An expression used by his Excellency describing the Sheikh as "technically a subject of the Sultan but enjoying a considerable amount of independence," which on a previous occasion had passed without comment (see Sir F. Lascelles' No. 156 of the 15th June, 1900), now drew from the German Representative an assertion that the Sheikh was "merely a subject of the Sultan."

To Sir F. Lascelles,
No. 128,
Telegraphic,
August 10, 1901.

It was therefore pointed out to Sir F. Lascelles that the German Government might take advantage of his language to argue that the Sultan could dispose of the territory of the Sheikh.

To Sir N. O'Connor,
No. 103,
Telegraphic,
August 10, 1901.

The view that the Sheikh was simply a subject of the Sultan was one that Her Majesty's Government were totally unable to accept, and his Excellency was instructed to use language on the lines of Sir N. O'Connor's despatch No. 130 of the 10th April, 1900, viz., that Her Majesty's Government had an Agreement with the Sheikh which, although not opposed to the *status quo*, yet prevented him from making any concession of territory to another Power without their consent. (See Memorandum No. 7596 of the 30th October, 1901.)

Sir N. O'Connor was at the same time authorized to state, if occasion arose, that if Koweit were threatened, Her Majesty's Government would use force to prevent attack.

Important communications now took place at London and Constantinople.

Sir N. O'Connor,
Nos. 92, 93,
Telegraphic,
August 21, 1901.

Considerable pressure was being exercised on the Ottoman Government by the German and Russian Embassies, and though a proposal of the Vali of Bussorah to use force against the Sheikh had been rejected by the Council of Ministers, Tewfik Pasha informed Sir N. O'Connor that Koweit was regarded as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire.

A warning given by the Commander of the "Perseus" to the Captain of a Turkish corvette off Koweit that no troops would be permitted to land was largely magnified in transmission, and occasioned further protests from the Turkish Government.

Sir N. O'Connor,
No. 102,
Telegraphic,
August 29, 1901.

To Sir F. Lascelles,
No. 306,
September 3, 1901.

Tewfik Pasha inquired on the 29th August whether Her Majesty's Government intended to establish a Protectorate, and on the same day the German Embassy in London received a pressing instruction to state that a British Protectorate would be contrary to the Treaty of Berlin, and that in view of her interest in Koweit as the future terminus of the Anatolian Railway, Ger-

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many would be compelled to regard such a proceeding as an unfriendly act.

The reply in each case was that His Majesty's Government had no such intention, Sir N. O'Connor adding the reservation "provided that Turkey did not force our hands by interfering with the Sheikh."

On the 3rd September Count Metternich called to say "that if by threats of force His Majesty's Government prevented the Sultan from landing troops at Koweit, they were refusing to recognize the Sultan's authority with which they had stated (in a Memorandum communicated by the King to the German Emperor, see p. 7) that they did not desire to interfere in those parts, and that the German Government considered that Koweit formed unquestionably part of the territories belonging to the Sultan."

Sir T. Sanderson promised to report his observations to Lord Lansdowne, and said he could at once state that His Majesty's Government had no desire to disturb the *status quo*.

Next day telegrams were communicated by Anthopoulos Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador in London, protesting against the reported intention to declare a British Protectorate and describing the Convention of 1899 as without validity, but the Sultan had meanwhile been advised by the German Government to be satisfied with the assurances given to Count Metternich, and to ask for their repetition.

On the 6th September Sir N. O'Connor was sent for by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The assurances given by his Excellency on this occasion were considered by the Ottoman Government "of a nature to terminate the present controversy," and Anthopoulos Pasha was instructed to ask for their confirmation.

The following note was accordingly addressed to him:—

"The Marquess of Lansdowne to Anthopoulos Pasha.

"Foreign Office,

"Your Excellency, September 11, 1901.

"I have taken note with satisfaction of the telegram from the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, communicated by you on the 9th instant, in which his Excellency states that the Turkish Government will not send troops to Koweit, and will maintain the *status quo* there, on condition that His Majesty's Government will abstain from occupying that place or establishing a British Protectorate there.

Anthopoulos
Pasha,
September 6, 1901.

To Sir N. O'Connor,
No. 209,
September 11,
1901.

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"I have pleasure in confirming the assurance which has been given to his Excellency by His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that, provided the Turkish Government abstain from sending troops to Koweit and respect the *status quo* there, His Majesty's Government will not occupy that place or establish a British Protectorate over it.

"I am, &c.
(Signed) "LANSDOWNE."

To Sir N. O'Connor,
No. 130,
Telegraphic,
September 7, 1901.

In a Secret telegram dated the 7th September, Lord Lansdowne, while pointing out that "the situation requires very careful handling as our arrangement with the Sheikh is not very precise, and it was entered into without the knowledge or concurrence of the Porte," instructed Sir N. O'Connor that "we cannot recede from our position, and if Porte should insist on raising question of their rights we may have to convert into something much more precise the present indefinite understanding with the Sheikh."

On the 9th September a further communication was made to Count Metternich.

To Sir F. Lascelles,
Nos. 304 and 312,
September 11 and
12, 1901.

A Memorandum upon various subjects, including Koweit, drawn up by Lord Lansdowne for the King's personal use, and handed by His Majesty to the German Emperor at their recent meeting, had elicited a formal reply from the German Government which Count Metternich had left at the Foreign Office on the 3rd.

It was now explained to him that the Memorandum, which had been hastily prepared, was a purely informal and unofficial document. The statement referred to by Count Metternich on the 3rd was a repetition of Sir N. O'Connor's language in 1900, which might be more correctly described as having stated that His Majesty's Government have no desire to interfere with the Sultan's authority *as it exists* in those parts.

There could be no doubt that this authority was of a very limited description. The Sheikh belonged to a class of native Chiefs enjoying a large measure of practical independence with whom His Majesty's Government found it necessary to have direct relations for the sake of the maintenance of tranquillity and the protection of British trade.

Therefore, although ready to maintain the *status quo*, His Majesty's Government had been unable to acquiesce in attempts recently made by Turkey to impose on the Sheikh conditions from which he had hitherto been free. They had considered it

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a matter for direct and friendly discussion with the Porte, who now regarded the incident as closed, and Count Metternich was informed of the assurances exchanged.

Lord Lansdowne subsequently informed Count Metternich that it was necessary to bear in mind that where minor Eastern States were concerned it was not unusual to find that they owed a divided allegiance to more than one Power.

To Sir F. Lascelles,
No. 325,
September 28,
1901.

The German Memorandum above referred to states that Koweit has an importance for Germany merely as the proposed terminus of the Bagdad Railway, and gives an undertaking that the Manager of the Railway Company will be instructed to come to an understanding with the British Government when the time for purchasing land for a railway terminus and a landing-place at Koweit shall have come. Shortly afterwards Count Metternich confirmed this assurance in conversation with Lord Lansdowne, adding that the railway might be made five years or fifty years hence, or not at all, but that when it was made it was important for Germany to find a peaceful condition of things in that part of the Gulf.

To Sir F. Lascelles,
No. 337,
October 16, 1901.

In spite of the Agreement for preserving the *status quo* in Koweit, the Turks began soon to display considerable activity. A Turkish official, the "Nakib" of Bussorah, visited Koweit in a Turkish ship with a message from the Porte to the Sheikh threatening forcible ejection. Strong representations were addressed by His Majesty's Government to the Porte, and British ships were placed under orders for the purpose of defending Koweit in the event of an attack by the Turks or the Amir of Nejd. The result of this action was that the Turkish Government disowned the Nakib, who was not, the Ambassador declared, an agent of the Porte, but merely a "kind of Bishop."

Indirectly the Turks were concerned in a more serious affair. Sheikh Mubarak of Koweit had originally obtained his position by murdering his elder brothers and their sons. The nephews, assisted by one Yusuf Ibrahim, retaliated in 1902, by making a piratical raid on Koweit, the success of which was only prevented by prompt action on the part of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing." In an encounter with the raiders a British seaman was killed. Turkish complicity in the affair was proved, dilatory and evasive tactics were adopted by the Turkish authorities

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Sir N. O'Connor, in a subsequent inquiry into the facts, and it was
No. 529, considered necessary to make a strong protest at
December 2, 1902. the Porte on the subject.

Koweit Boundary.

In 1902 questions began to arise as to the extent, geographically speaking, of the Sheikh of Koweit's authority. At the time of the Agreement the limits of Koweit territory had never been discussed, and considerable uncertainty prevailed on the subject. We had obtained a hold over Koweit, and in this manner could claim to be consulted as to the terminus of the Bagdad Railway, but it now began to seem quite possible that the Company would be able to make arrangements with the Turks for a *débouché* on the Persian Gulf in territory to which the Sheikh could make no claim.

A gun-boat was sent in February to report on several outlying portions of so-called Koweit territory. Small Turkish posts were found at Um Kasr on the Khor Abdulla, and on Bubian Island, to the north of Koweit. Sir N. O'Connor (telegram No. 30 of the 11th March, 1902) thought that the Sheikh's claims to these places were shadowy and unreliable, though we might protest against Turkish occupation of them as a breach of the *status quo*. This was accordingly done, and a desultory discussion has continued up to the present time regarding Bubian Island. A small Turkish post still remains there, and Sir N. O'Connor continues to press for its withdrawal. It is believed that the Turks would withdraw the post if the British Government consented to abolish the post of Political Agent to Koweit, which they have recently established (see that section of the present Memorandum), but there is no question of agreeing to such a "bargain"; the two matters are to be kept distinct. If the Turks refuse to remove their post, it has been proposed by the India Office, after a reasonable delay, to make a counter-move by establishing and maintaining a post on behalf of the Sheikh. Mubarak has agreed to this course, subject to assurances of our support, financial and otherwise. Lord Lansdowne was not of opinion that any immediate action was necessary, and recommended that the question should be referred to the Defence Committee before further steps were taken.

India Office,
July 20, 1905.

To India Office,
August 9, 1905.

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As regards Um Kasr (on the mainland of Eastern Arabia, some 50 miles to the north of Koweit), the position is unsatisfactory. Its importance as a possible *débouché* for the Bagdad Railway is considerable (see Bagdad Railway Memorandum), but the Sheikh's claims to it are so weak as to be hardly worth putting forward. If the Germans try to deal direct with the Turks on the subject, our *locus standi* for putting forward the authority of Koweit would be a doubtful one.

Political Agent.

We still maintain the position that there is no British protectorate over Koweit, and that the *status quo* of 1901 continues to exist. But the Government of India (who have always favoured an active policy in regard to Koweit affairs generally) urged that, as we were without a Representative there, our information was spasmodic and unreliable, and our hold on the Sheikh uncertain. They wished accordingly to appoint a Resident Political Agent at Koweit, as at Bahrein. This was thought here to be incompatible with the assurances given to the Porte that the *status quo* would be scrupulously regarded, and Lord Lansdowne refused to agree to such an appointment. He suggested, however, in a letter to the India Office that a *via media* might be found; an officer might be deputed by the Resident in the Gulf to visit Koweit, from time to time repeating his visits as occasion required until his stay became practically permanent. The position obviously was a difficult one, and a somewhat awkward misunderstanding arose on the subject. Captain Knox was selected for a temporary mission to Koweit—he was to visit the place and come away again—but the Government of India argued that by agreeing to his being sent to Koweit the home Government had accepted their original view, and that a *permanent* appointment of a "Political Agent to reside at Koweit" had been made. This had not been the intention, and a discussion ensued which ended by the temporary withdrawal of Captain Knox, with the understanding that he should return at intervals. He is now under orders to return to Koweit. The position we take up, as regards the Turkish Government, is that His Majesty's Government, while they have appointed no permanent Agent to Koweit and consider that the *status quo* of 1901

India Office,
August 1, 1903.

To India Office,
August 13, 1903.

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continues to exist, reserve absolutely the right to dispatch an officer to that place as occasion requires at their uncontrolled discretion as to time and length of stay.

There is a voluminous correspondence on the subject in the autumn of 1904 (see especially India Office, 19th November, and our reply of 25th November).

We have discouraged the idea of a "mission of inquiry" into the interior which the Government of India put forward, and have expressed strongly the opinion that British influence should be rigidly confined to the coast.

Koweit Flag.

India Office,
March 10, 1905.

The Sheikh at present flies the Turkish flag. He has been recommended to adopt a distinctive ensign for shipping purposes while retaining the present flag for use in Koweit itself.

Koweit Post Office.

1904-5.

It has been proposed to establish a British Post Office at Koweit. After some discussion it was decided that the proposal might raise inconvenient questions with the Porte, and the British Agency surgeon, who has proceeded to Koweit in his professional capacity, is not as yet to perform the duties of postmaster.

General Policy.

A Memorandum, written in 1902 by Lord Lansdowne with regard to Koweit and Persian Gulf affairs generally, is given in Appendix No. 2.

Under the heading El Katr will be found a later expression of opinion on the same subject.

(Signed) R. V. HARCOURT.

Foreign Office,

December 11, 1905.

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APPENDIX.

No. 1.

Agreement with the Sheikh of Koweit, January 23, 1899.

(Translation of Arabic bond.)

Praise be to God alone (*tit.* in the name of God Almighty) (" Bissim Illah Ta'alah Shanuhu ").

THE object of writing this lawful and honourable bond is that it is hereby covenanted and agreed between Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm John Meade, I.S.C., Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident, on behalf of the British Government on the one part, and Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, Sheikh of Koweit, on the other part, that the said Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, of his own free will and desire, does hereby pledge and bind himself, his heirs and successors, not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Koweit, or at any other place within the limits of his territory, without the previous sanction of the British Government; and he further binds himself, his heirs and successors, not to cede, sell, lease, mortgage, or give for occupation, or for any other purpose, any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power without the previous consent of Her Majesty's Government for these purposes. This engagement also to extend to any portion of the territory of the said Sheikh Mubarak which may now be in the possession of the subjects of any other Government.

In token of the conclusion of this lawful and honourable bond, Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm John Meade, I.S.C., Her Britannic Majesty's Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Sheikh Subah, the former on behalf of the British Government, and the latter on behalf of himself, his heirs and successors, do each, in the presence of witnesses, affix their signatures on this, the 10th day of Ramazan, 1316, corresponding with the 23rd day of January, 1899.

(Signed) M. J. MEADE, Political Resident
in the Persian Gulf.

Witnesses:
(Signed) E. WICKHAM HORE,
Captain, I.M.S.
J. CALCOTT GASKIN.

(Signed) MUBARAK-AL-SUBAH.
(L.S.)

Witness:
(Signed) MUHAMMAD RAHIM BIN ABDUL NEBI SAFFER.
(L.S.)

(Translation of Arabic letter.)

Lieutenant-Colonel Meade to Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Subah.

(Secret.)

(After compliments.)

January 23, 1899.

IN view of the signing to-day of the Agreement, so happily concluded between you, Sheikh Mubarak-bin-Subah, on behalf of yourself, your heirs and successors, on the one part, and myself, on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, I now assure you, as Sheikh of Koweit, of the good offices of the British Government towards you, your heirs and successors, as long as you, your heirs and successors, scrupulously and faithfully observe the conditions of the said bond.

The three copies of the bond will be sent to India to be ratified by his Excellency Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Her Imperial Majesty's Viceroy and Governor-General in Council, and, on their return, one copy, duly ratified, will be conveyed to you, when I will take measures to send you, as agreed, a sum of 15,000 rupees from the Bushire Treasury. A most important condition of the execution of this Agreement is that it is to be kept absolutely secret, and not divulged or made public in any way without the previous consent of the British Government.

No. 2.

Memorandum by the Marquess of Lansdowne.

THE situation at Koweit is becoming more and more embarrassing, and the time has come for looking it in the face.

We have saddled ourselves with an impossible client in the person of the Sheikh. He is apparently an untrustworthy savage, no one knows where his possessions begin and end, and our obligations towards him are as ill-defined as the boundaries of his Principality. We have

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distinctly announced that he does not enjoy British "protection;" on the other hand, we once made him a present of 1,000*l.*, and promised him our "good offices," whatever that may mean. When we made this promise we were, I feel no doubt, thinking of Koweit proper, if there is such a thing, and not of Boobyan or other outskirts over which the Sheikh has rights of one sort or another. We have up to the present sheltered ourselves not unsuccessfully, during our discussion with the Turks on the one side and foreign Governments on the other, behind the plausible announcement that we desired to maintain the *status quo* in regard to Koweit. But I doubt whether any one really knows what the *status quo* is. We have, at any rate in my opinion, no right to tell the Turks that they may not move troops for the purpose of putting down a rebellion in the Nejd region, or that they must not look out for a suitable terminus of the Baghdad Railway for fear of disturbing the *status quo*.

If matters are left as they are, we shall involve ourselves in a very unsatisfactory dispute. And we shall, as Admiral Bosanquet has lately pointed out, be obliged to keep the squadron on sentry go at the head of the Gulf in order to maintain the peace.

We might, it seems to me, explain (1) to the Porte (2) to the Sheikh and (3) to the foreign Powers immediately interested the objects of our policy.

I should be inclined to say that our engagements to Koweit do not extend beyond the district adjoining or close to the bay of that name, and to endeavour to obtain the adhesion of the Porte and of the Sheikh to an approximate definition of that district. It may be necessary to reconcile the Sheikh by the payment of another 1,000*l.*; or of an even larger sum.

I would make it clear to the Turks that we do not want to stand in the way of an arrangement under which the terminus of the line might be placed at some spot other than Koweit to their advantage if they can make anything out of it.

As to the foreign Powers, I have already explained to most of them that we are not going to oppose the railway project, provided British capital receives a share at least equal to that of any other Power in respect of construction, management, and orders for materials; and I have added that while we do not grudge a débouché for international commerce in the Gulf, and have no wish to make it into a British lake, we shall resist to the utmost all attempts by other Powers to obtain a foothold on its shores for naval or military purposes.

This, I take it, is the "bed rock" of our policy in the Gulf, and we shall pursue that policy, not in virtue of ambiguous understandings with local Chiefs, but as the predominant Power in Southern Persia and in the Gulf—the Power whose commercial interests in those regions far exceed those of other Powers, the Power to whose efforts in the past it is due that the waters of the Gulf are open to the trade of the world, and whose duty it will be in the future to protect the new trade route. If it is understood that we have to be reckoned with, whoever builds the railway, and wherever it finds a terminus, because we are that Power, we can regard with indifference the local intrigues of any number of Sheikhs and Emirs.

Vide draft telegram herewith for your concurrence.

(Signed) LANSDOWNE.

Foreign Office, March 21, 1902.

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