

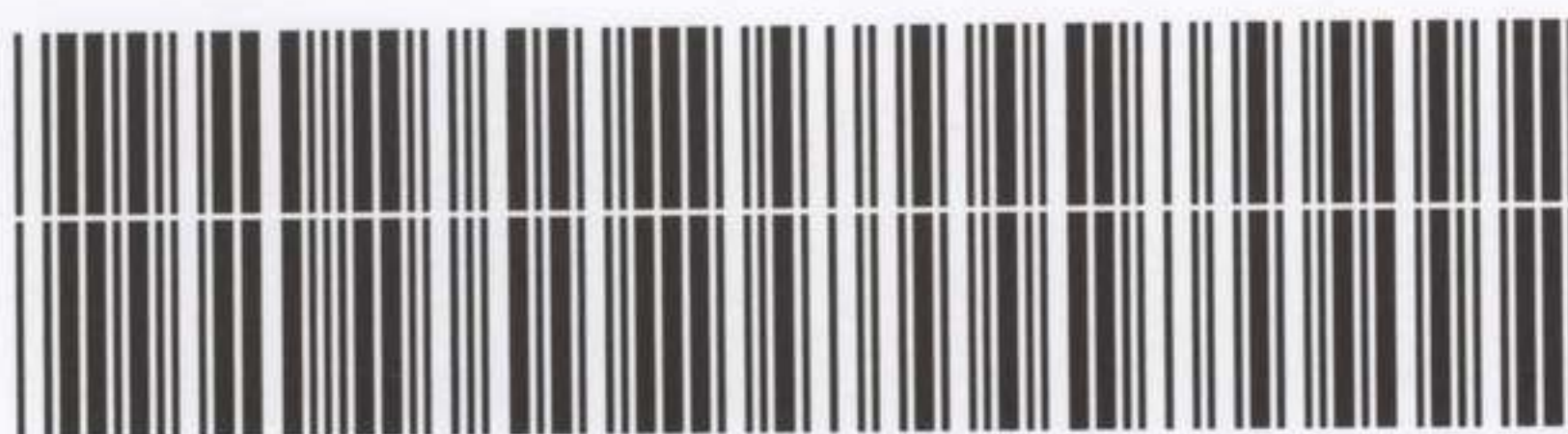
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**Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,**  
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September 1918



AWM4-1/10/19



EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY  
OF

INTELLIGENCE (POLITICAL) G.H.Q., E.E.F.,

SEPTEMBER 1918.

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20th.

The War Office states that information has reached the Vatican from Palestine that the position of Catholics in the East is very serious as they have received no financial assistance from their fellow Catholics elsewhere for some time and only inadequate sums direct from the French Government.

It is alleged that Protestants in Palestine are carrying on active propaganda amongst Catholics and are appropriating for this purpose money sent by Catholics of North America. It is stated further that a pastor who is teaching Protestant Catechism has ousted the sisters of St. Joseph at an orphanage at CAIFA. The Pope trusts that if these allegations are verified, steps may be taken to alleviate position of Catholics and allow them to receive financial aid from their co-religionists.

Foreign Office emphasize the necessity of avoiding any action in Palestine implying differentiation between Protestants and Catholics.

21st.

The Chief Political Officer informed the Foreign Office on Sept. 16th that M. Picot's representative on the French Mission visited and reproached the Father Custodian of the Franciscans for having given consent to the removal of the wall in the Church of the Nativity of Bethlehem without referring the matter to the French Mission. The Foreign Office has now replied stating that the grounds on which Monsieur Picot's representative claims to meddle with questions of local administration of this sort are not understood, and he should be warned in an unofficial manner to refrain from doing so for the future.

24th.

With reference to the question of alleged Protestant propaganda against Catholics which was raised by the Vatican, the Commander-in-Chief has informed the War Office that the policy which has been strictly observed up to the present and which will be continued is that Military Administration is entirely impartial and favours no religious community more than another. No propaganda is being carried out by Protestants in Palestine amongst Catholics, and there is no trace of misappropriation of Catholic funds as suggested. HAIFA was only occupied by British troops yesterday afternoon. As regards private charity, any funds subscribed by Catholics will be welcome and the Military Administration will

/ensure



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ensure that the wishes of the subscribers will be carried out in distributing the funds.

26th.

In the newly occupied areas of Palestine, conditions are satisfactory. No appreciable damage has been done to persons or property, as retirement of the enemy was so hurried. The harvest has been good and the inhabitants have sufficient for present needs, although the area under cultivation is less than usual. Owing to Turkish requisition, animals are short. The Kasas of NABLOUS, SELFIT, JENIN and HAIFA are being taken over at once by the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration. So far as has been ascertained at present religious institutions are intact but further report will be made when details are available. Population though somewhat stunned by the rapid march of events, is everywhere very friendly.

Entire staff of municipality and also Ottoman Public Deb officials remained. Imperial Ottoman Bank is open and carrying on business. Sanitary conditions good and no serious food shortage. Large majority of population genuinely pleased at British occupation irrespective of creed or race. Austrian Consul remained but German Consul and Manager of Deutsche Palestina Bank escaped. A thorough search will be made in both Consulates and Banks for records. Large proportion of Government records have been destroyed, but remainder have been collected. There is a number of Jewish refugees from ATHLIT, ZIMMARIN, JAFFA and other colonies. As soon as it is possible to do so, these will be repatriated.

27th.

The Foreign Office states that permission for the BANCO DI ROMA to open in Palestine has again been asked for by Italian Ambassador, and asking what substantial military or political objections there are to this.

Further banking facilities in Palestine appear to be undoubtedly needed, and seeing that the CREDIT LYONNAIS and the IMPERIAL OTTOMAN BANK have already got a footing there, it would be difficult to persist in a refusal.

To decline to treat Palestine as an International Zone in matters which are clearly unconnected with the Military situation is to embark on a course of action which could not well be justified in ROME. Moreover, anything which would help to establish Entente trade connections and provide agricultural credit during the war, while tending at the same time to meet DEUTSCHCE Bank competition on its conclusion deserves to be encouraged. It is proposed, therefore, unless there are strong objections, to accede to the ITALIAN request. A condition would, however, be made that the BANCO DI ROMA should bring their own gold with them in specific proportion to the capital which they propose ear-marking for their new venture.

/The



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The Chief Political Officer in reply to the above has stated that in consideration of changed situation, there is no longer any objection to the opening of a branch of the BANCO DI ROMA in Palestine. It is necessary to impose the condition contained in the above communication from the Foreign Office.

The following are points on occupation of NABLUS (SHECHEM). The town was practically undamaged. Local Arab officials were still present and resumed their duties at once. The usual business is being transacted and the administration is now normal. No scarcity of supplies, and the population appears prosperous with the exception of the usual poorer classes. All shops are open. Impression gained is that the new conditions give satisfaction to the inhabitants.

Widespread enthusiasm over the complete defeat of the Turkish Armies is indicated by reports from Governors of the various provinces in territory occupied previous to recent advance. In JERUSALEM, a large deputation of notables of all Communities conveyed the congratulations of the city to the Military Governor and Chief Administrator. Arab Bedouins, it appears, are especially gratified at the occupation of MAAN by Arab Army. There has been an undercurrent of fear hither-to, lest the Turks might return, but recent events have now completely dissipated this.

26th.

The War Office has informed the Commander-in-Chief that the following undertaking, in regard to the recognition of Arab status in Area (A), has been given French Government by H.M. Government:-  
"The British Government adhere to their declared policy with regard to SYRIA, to wit, that in the event of its falling into the sphere of influence of any European Power, that Power should be FRANCE. They are furthermore of opinion that this policy should be made perfectly patent in FRANCE and elsewhere alike.

An immediate discussion should take place in PARIS or LONDON as to the exact course which should be followed by the two Governments in the event of General Allenby marching his men into Syria; but, in any event, it is understood that wherever officers are required to carry out duties of a civil nature, these officers should (provided the French Government expresses no opinion to the contrary) be not English but French, without prejudice, be it understood, to the supreme authority of the C. in C. while the country is in the occupation of the military."

/Discretion



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Discretion re definition of civilian duties rests, consequently with the C.in C. and his supreme authority remains unimpaired.

Following is the reading of Clause 1 of the Anglo-French Agreement:-

"That in the areas (A) and (B), marked on the annexed map, France and Great Britain are prepared to recognize and uphold an independent Arab State or a confederation of Arab States under the suzerainty of an Arab Chief. That in Area (A) FRANCE, general area (B) GREAT BRITAIN, shall have priority of local loans and enterprise generally.

That in Area (A) FRANCE, general Area (B) GREAT BRITAIN, shall alone, at the request of the Arab State, or confederation of Arab States, supply advisers and Foreign functionaries."

FRANCE and GREAT BRITAIN have undertaken jointly to uphold the independence of any Arab State that may be sent in Area(A).

29th.

The Commander-in-Chief has informed the War Office that it is not his intention to extend the jurisdiction of the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration under General MONEY into the area of FRENCH influence. Wherever administration may be needed in the French "BLUE" area, FRENCH military officers will be appointed, who will be under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief through the Chief Political Officer.

The existing O.E.T.A. Administration is not being extended to places EAST of JORDAN in the "B" area, such as AMMAN and ES SALT, but a BRITISH officer will be appointed to safeguard the interests of the inhabitants until such time as an ARAB administration may be brought into being. As far as the "A" area, and notably the Administration which it is anticipated will be already in existence and FRENCH liaison officers will be appointed as may be necessary. The Commander-in-Chief will continue to use the Chief Political Officer as the medium of communication with the FRENCH Political Mission.

Whilst ensuring by the above procedure that the supreme control remains in his hands, the C-in-C hopes at the same time to safeguard ARAB and FRENCH interests.



REPORT ON PROPAGANDA IN OCCUPIED ENEMY  
TERRITORY DURING THE MONTH  
OF SEPTEMBER 1918.  
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A. NEWLY OCCUPIED TERRITORY.

In consequence of the successful operations commencing on September 19th the area of propaganda was trebled. The inhabitants of the new territory had been long deprived of any reliable news from the outside world, and steps were instantly taken to provide all the new districts with regular news.

Previously to the beginning of the offensive, the two Advanced Intelligence Officers East and West had been provided with large consignments of a Special Leaflet in Arabic and Hebrew entitled 'The World War', briefly recounting the various phases up to and including the great Allied offensive in France during July, August and the beginning of September; they were also given a large number of copies of the 'Palestine News' (Arabic and Hebrew editions) the 'Mokattam' and the 'Kawkab'. These were to be distributed as widely as possible in newly occupied territory on the eastern and western halves of the front.

By September 24th all enemy formations west of the JORDAN and south of TIBERIAS had been broken up and it became possible to send propaganda direct to Local Intelligence Officers and Military Governors. This is now the case at HAIFA, NAZARETH, TUL KERAM and NABLUS. At HAIFA, for instance, the German propaganda reading room was at once taken over and provided with our own newspapers in English, Arabic and Hebrew, besides suitable Posters and Photographs. Some difficulty in distribution was encountered owing to the extreme pressure on transport, but packets of papers were sent north in all cars and now the Army Post Office has begun to deliver in the new districts.

To begin with, 500 copies of the 'Motattam' were distributed daily from G.H.Q.: this figure has now been increased to 1,000 copies daily. The 'Mokattam' is by far the best paper for this purpose as it is thoroughly pro-British and pro-Ally in sympathy, and carries great weight throughout the Arabic speaking world. A very wide distribution of the Arabic and Hebrew 'Palestine News' is also made: this paper publishes the full despatched of the two accredited War Correspondents, and is valuable for the evidence it gives of the progress and good government of South Palestine during the British occupation. The 'Kawkab' and the 'Egyptian Mail' are also distributed. Around Zimmarin on the road to HAIFA there is a knot of Jewish Colonies where English is understood. Throughout the whole period all Intelligence Officers and Military Governors received the 'Daily Reuter Summary' in English, Hebrew and Arabic, which also contained the daily Palestine communique.

As soon as possible steps will be taken to organise reading rooms, readers, etc., as in Southern Palestine. At present the greatest need is for illustrated matter, particularly the 'Hakikat' which is quite invaluable as propaganda. 5,000 copies could easily be disposed of in Occupied Enemy Territory.

/A



A very large number of excellent photographs showing German troops in France, the Ukraine and Helsingfors, German submarines and aeroplanes have been found in the new territory. It is most important, therefore, for us to have a constant supply of photographs of British and Allied subjects. The photographs of different parts of The British Empire mentioned in Propagander Report for July and asked for in our No. I.13495/D.P of the 9/8/18 would be very suitable indeed. No reply has yet been received to this request.

A captured German document, a translated copy of which is attached, is of considerable interest in this connection as it shows the great importance attributed to propaganda by the German Authorities in Palestine.

#### B. OLD OCCUPIED ENEMY TERRITORY.

The effect of the operations superseded that of any propaganda. Steps were taken to ensure that regular daily communiques in Arabic and Hebrew reached all districts without delay.

It was decided that the time had come when more should be done for the Jewish Colonies, not so much by way of direct propaganda but with the idea of giving them greater facilities for keeping themselves informed of the world's affairs. Accordingly, it has been arranged through the Secretary of the Zionist Commission that reading rooms shall be opened in RICHON-LE-ZION, REHOBETH, GEDERA and NESS ZION. The reading rooms will be entirely self-governing, but certain papers are being supplied by General Staff (Intelligence). They will afford an easy means of bringing suitable literature before a wide Jewish public. In accordance with this policy, copies of the 'Times' and the Principal English Reviews have been ordered for the Tel Aviv Library.

It must be borne in mind that crude propaganda is more likely than not to have a contrary effect with a highly educated and critical public such as the Jewish Colonists. Being imaginative with a natural bent for theory, they are impressed by our ideals and our literature rather than by the hard facts and figures of the war.

#### JERUSALEM.

Propaganda proceeded satisfactorily. The local reader has become very popular, and is a great favourite among the Moslems. At first people were somewhat inclined to disbelieve his statements, but as events have proved him right, everything he reads now is unreservedly believed. He has been the guest of several important Moslems who heartily thanked him for the good news he read out.

The number of subscribers to the library has increased in consequence of the reduction of the rates of subscription.

Throughout the remainder of the old Occupied Enemy Territory propaganda was carried on as usual.



EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY  
OF  
INTELLIGENCE (POLITICAL) G.H.Q., E.E.F.,  
OCTOBER 1918.

Diary not held at Historical Section,  
LONDON.



EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY  
OF  
INTELLIGENCE (POLITICAL) G.H.Q., E.E.F.,

NOVEMBER 1918.

Diary not held at Historical Section,  
LONDON.