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ENCLOSURE No. 12 TO SUBMISSION No. 040/8 of 14th JULY 1919.

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From.... Lieut. J.A.Lorimer, R.N.V.R.
To..... Commodore Commanding, British Aegean Squadron.
Date.... JULY 10th 1919.

Submitted,
that the following report has been received from
Lieutenant. B. Hodder, R.N.V.R., British Representative at Aidin.

(sgd) J.A.Lorimer

Lieut. R.N.V.R.

Lieut. Colonel Temple R.M.A. and I left Smyrna by special train on 26/6/19, 10 a.m. destined for Aidin via Sochia. At Camaria (Kemer) station next to Sochia we met a number of Turkish refugees who had left Dermenjik, a Turkish village on the main line, because they said that Greek soldiers had occupied their village, and they were afraid. We pacified them as well as we could and proceeded on our journey arriving at Sochia the same day at 4 p.m., remained there the night and at 10 a.m. the next morning left for Aidin where we arrived at 2.30 p.m. On our way we passed Dermenjik where we interviewed the Greek Officer in command as also the Mudir of the village, re the exodus of the Moslem population. We told them that it was very essential that should be at once restored, but finding that the Mudir was not a fit person to be in charge of the village we took him on with us to Aidin, with the object of handing him over to the Mutesarriff in exchange for a more capable man.

On our way to Aidin we heard alarming reports that 55 Christians had been brutally murdered at Carabunar, but on passing through that station we found that only 11 had been killed, the exaggerated reports of the mutilation of women and children being untrue.

At Aidin Col. Temple and I paid a visit to the Mutesarriff, as also to Lieut. Col. Skinas in command of the Greek troops, we then returned to the Rly station, where the Colonel left me at Aidin to take up duties and he at 5.30 p.m. on 27th June, left by special train for Smyrna.

The following morning as prearranged at 10 a.m. I left Aidin with a party of Workmen and 10 Armed ~~Guards~~ Turkish Guards to repair the Railway Bridge at Clchak Chai, about a mile Aidin side of Omurlu several sleepers had been placed across the line, taking these off, we proceeded slowly, but were held up by Turkish irregulars who enquired our business and then allowed us to approach the Rly station where we met about 250 Turkish Regular soldiers and approx. 1000 ~~to~~ Irregulars, the former reported that the latter were about from 5000 to 6000 strong and the officer in command of the regulars said that it was impossible for him to keep them under control, as they intended to march on Aidin and oust the Unan (Greek), I told them to do his best to pacify the Irregulars as I trusted the Great Powers would make some pacific arrangements.

The irregulars told me that I could take the Railway men on to repair the bridge, as they had no objection to the railway working. Also they would render every assistance in repairing the telegraph communication, that they would do same about to within a couple of miles from Aidin, and asked me to procure them wire and "sulphate of copper" for telegraph batteries.

We then left Omurlu and arriving at the damaged bridge left the labour party and their guards there to repair the bridge, while I proceeded on as far as Nazli. There I found the whole population in a state of terror, as they said the Turkish Gendarmie were not sufficient to cope with the outlaws, though they were pleased to say that no excoesses of importance had taken place since my last visit and report on the situation. I told them that I would get

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permission for the post train to pass through on the morrow, and if possible come myself to guard same through danger zone.

I then returned to Omurlu having picked up the labour party for traffic. Arriving during my absence of 4/5 hours they had made good Ultimatum which on my arrival at Aidin they asked me to hand over to the Mutessarif, as also one each for the Beledir Reis and Bishop. The ultimatum was to the effect that they gave a three days notice to the Greek soldiers to quit Aidin, providing they did so, they assured them that the Christian population would be protected in every way, but if they did not accede the consequences to Aidin would be most disastrous, they would burn and pillage the whole town, this three days warning they gave, so that there might be time for the civilian christians to be conveyed to a place of safety thus imperilling their lives.

Arriving at Aidin I found that hostilities had already started between the Greek soldiers and another band of Irregulars who were advancing on from the direction of the Meander Bridge. The Greeks had burnt several villages situated near the hills to the south of Aidin where the Maroon station used to be, the Greeks were holding this position and were being attacked by the Irregulars from the Meander Bridge.

I went up to the Konak and handed the ultimatum to the Mutessarif and sent a Greek soldier with the other missives to the Beledir and Bishop. Both the Mutessarif and I considered the ~~site~~ situation most serious.

Sniping and machine gun fire was very fierce throughout the whole of Saturday night. On Saturday morning the Greeks who had evacuated the hills south of Aidin had now taken up their position in the town and on Trallis above Aidin and from there they brought their field guns into play on the advancing Turks, the latter however soon replied with their field guns and shrapnel was bursting in all directions about Trallis where the Greek soldiers were.

Aidin was in a state of terror, every house was closed as bullets were flying about in all directions. I tried to get some one to go up into the town to bring me news, but neither Greek nor Turk would venture outside so I decided to go myself, no one would accompany me. I was fired on, on my way up, getting as far as MacAndrews and Forbes new factory I took shelter there. This is close to the station, which place I wished to reach, but the cross fire was so great that it was impossible to continue my journey with safety. After waiting in the factory 3 hours I decided to return to my house, walking in the middle of the road and trusting to fate to get home and Mr. and Mrs. Pengelly who had been left alone felt more comfortable with my presence.

The Greeks, Sunday afternoon, began to retire from the town and in doing so set fire to the Turkish houses, also Mosques. It was not long before there was a conflagration throughout the Turkish quarters.

On Sunday evening (dusk) Yuruk Ali, the chief in command of the Turkish irregulars sent word that he wished to see me, so I went outside in a sheltered garden adjoining M & F's ~~factory~~ property, met the chief with 6 of his braves and after introducing ourselves I invited him to my quarters. He and his secretary came leaving his men outside on guard. I gave them refreshments and cigarettes.

Yuruk Ali then told me that he wished me to communicate with the Greek Commandant, whom he said with the greater part of his army had evacuated the town and inform him that provided he evacuated the district entirely and did not return again, he would guarantee the safety of the christians. A letter to this effect was written in French by the Secretary and signed by me and taken by Yuruk Ali to find someone to convey same to Greek commander, as I told Yuruk Ali that I had no one to send.

I then thanked him for his kindness in having respected the American property and the British residents here and entreated him to keep his men in hand, not allowing them to behave cruelly to the Christians.

He replied Hodder Effendi "I have not come here to war against innocent people, women and children, but we do not and will not have the HELLENES here, we will drive them out. They may come back and drive us out again, but we shall continue to fight for our country to the last man, and he hoped the Great Powers would intervene to guard against bloodshed."

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Monday 30th June 1919. The whole town of Aidin is practically evacuated by Hellenic troops, and entirely in the hands of Turkish Irregulars. Colonel Chifik Bey and Shukri Bey with about 200 regulars arrived in the town from Chinar and took up their quarters near the Konak and tried to restore order in the town with their men and a force of Gendarmie. All the Greek civilians left their houses in panic and followed the Greek troops to the hills, but were ordered by the Commandant to return to their homes as he could not be hampered with them. So they returned and took shelter in the French school under the protection of two French nurses and their three French guards. These nurses and their guardians, I am told from every source, behaved most graciously and with great fortitude, in helping the Christians, whom they eventually took to the Knoak, a large and spacious building with its outbuildings affording shelter to approx. 4000 souls.

Fire started in the Greek quarter on Monday evening and raged throughout the night.

On Tuesday morning 1st. July I went to the Knoak and met Colonel Chefik Bey, and enforced upon him the necessity of his protecting the Christians against the Irregulars. He said he would do everything he could, as far as his small force was able and that he was taking steps to feed them. This I conscientiously am of the opinion he did as far as I could see and gather from hearsay.

I then went and interviewed the Christians and saw a most pitiable sights, terror and panic depicted in every face and entreaties for my help. I pacified as well as I was able and assured them that I would do all I could for them. The nuns and their three guardians left for Chinar by carriage that morning with an escort as at Chinar they would be safe under the protection of the Italians, they I hear having 250 soldiers in that place. I then consulted Chefik Bey as to the advisability of transferring these people somewhere else, as such a vast horde in one building would lead to disastrous consequences. To this end I went to the Rly. station got a train ready and started by taking a trainload of these people to Nazli and Denizli. On my return from Nazli I brought back to Aidin with me (Wed. 2nd) two British families that were there as I thought the British community would be safer altogether under my wing at Aidin, until I could take means of conveying them to a safer place. From Nazli I despatched a telegram to Navinet, Consple, and on my return to Aidin I sent three other telegrams one to Cons/ple (Navient) one to B.N.R. Smyrna also another to latter address but by special messenger via Sochia to Seljouk (Ayasolouk) trusting that he would be able to get the connection by Rly. service as all ray. communication by telegram is severed between here and Smyrna.

Wednesday I despatched another trainload of women and children children both Islams and Greeks, approx 500 to Diner or any intermediate stations above Nazli that could afford accomodation.

In the meantime I tried to get means of transferring my British community (11 in all) to a place of safety and had decided to take them to Chinar and then on to KULUK on the off chance of assistance from the Italians, who are occupying these parts. While arranging for carriages which were promised on the morrow, there was a rumour that Hellenic troops were returning via Carabunar, and though I got no official information from Chefik Bey to this effect, a general exodus of the population Islam population started from Aidin wending their way by thousands towards the Meander Bridge, which is about 8 miles from Aidin across the plain and leads to Chinar, Milas and Kuluk (seaport). This exodus continued throughout the whole afternoon and evening and eventually in the rear came Chefik Bey with his soldiers. He called on me saying that he had information that the Hellenic troops were returning hence his reason for ordering the Islam population to retire to a place of safety to the hills on the opposite side of the Meander Bridge. He told me that up to the time of his arrival at Aidin, after the evacuation of the Hellenic troops, he had done his best to protect and provide for the Christians, he left a few Islams in my charge whom he trusted I would look after, but he said Hodder Effendi this is a serious affair as "I understand" the animosity of the Musselmen population towards the Hellens, there will be continual warfare and much bloodshed between them unless the powers intervene to alter the situation. We then said Goodbye he taking with

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him half a dozen soldiers that he had left to guard us. I thinking too that it was best he should take them away as I could not give them my guarantee for their safety when the Hellenes came. I omitted to mention that Yuruk Ali gave us 6 of his "braves" to protect us for a couple of days.

Wednesday night passed and Thursday at early dawn (3/7/19) no signs of the arrival of Greek troops. We all thought it must be a false alarm. Up to 7 a.m. no sign, then 4 Turkish Irregulars passed by our house and asked for a little oil to oil their ~~rifles~~ rifles which was given them. Soon after another Irregular appeared and I went and spoke to him, asked him what the situation was and why the exodus of all the Muslims. He said "By God I do not know". I asked him if he was alone - No - he said there were others with him, he whistled and 5 others came over the hedge and joined us. I gave them tea and cigarettes, then asked one of them to go in the town and bring a friend of mine Mr. Suyougogglu who would explain the situation, (giving him my card to take with him) after an hour he returned bringing my card back with him, he said he had approached the Knoch and had seen Greek soldiers inside, so they said goodbye to me and cleared off. In about an hour's time I saw a cavalcade of horsemen and foot soldiers which were soon distinguishable as Hellenes, and a short while after from the town of Aidin a great number of foot soldiers passed from the town of Aidin to join their comrades at the foot hills. Shrapnel fire from the Meander Bridge soon began to play on the Greek troops, the Greeks however rapidly advanced and I heard that by evening the Bridge was captured by them.

Friday morning, 4.7.1919, from sound of cannon fire there seems to be hard fighting taking place in vicinity of bridge, which lasted all day.

On Saturday however from my observation post I saw on the hills beyond the bridge, shell fire, and I could see that the Greeks had the Turks on the run.

A train arrived from Smyrna at mid-day bringing the American Military Attache Lt. Col. A. Poillon and Mr. Yantis of the Cary Tobacco Co; these gentlemen called on me and I hurriedly gave them a rough sketch of the situation of events during the past few days, and as they were returning to Smyrna by special train almost immediately I advised our British community to leave for Smyrna by this opportunity which was kindly granted them. My J. Calvert who was in touch with all that has happened here until the time of his departure? I asked on his way down to Smyrna to write out a rough summary of the situation and immediately on arrival to hand same to Lt. John Lorimer R.N.V.R. to be dealt with as required.

On the afternoon of Saturday I went up to the town and met the Greek Commander, and talked the situation over with him, I told him that I trusted he had brought sufficient troops with him this time to protect what was left of the Christian population. Sad tales were told of the Irregulars calling out Greeks from the Knoch and then murdering them, many of these well known to me, the chief reason for murdering them was because they had played a conspicuous and very demonstrative part on the arrival of the Hellenes at Aidin, in giving dinners and jollifications in general, and as I presume, ribaldry insults to the Turks when opportunity offered. Pitiably tales were told of women and children having done to death away on the hills, I told the Commandant that I would like to go and see the ravine where these reported atrocities were still in evidence, so it was arranged that he would send me a horse on the following morning, Sunday to go with one of his officers and a photographer.

We rode away next morning, Sunday 6/7/19, passing through Trallis to the hills and valleys beyond, The soldiers on the way said that they had a brush with the Irregulars during the morning and that they had driven them off, I saw one man that they had shot; we rode on sending scouts ahead as we were in the danger zone.

At last we came to a ravine where I saw and counted 11 women 8 children (girls and boys) and 3 men who had been cruelly done to death they had been butchered I should say on the night of the exodus of the Greek troops as they were in an advanced stage of decomposition. Returning we came to the outskirts of the town again and in various places I counted a further lot of 13 women; 15 children (boys and girls) and 22 men some of these however were near the Greek houses, in the streets and I counted the remains of 8 children that had been burnt in one house.

No doubt.....

No doubt there is a sad tale to tell more than two thirds of Aidin has been destroyed by fire; I should estimate that 400 Christians have been murdered and burnt; there must be about 3000 homeless Greeks and practically the whole of the Islam (25,000) population have left the town, seeking refuge in the hills and villages across the Meander.

Sunday evening an automobile arrived here bringing a few Italian Officers and men, I have since heard that the Italians have lodged a protest to the Greek Commander for sending his troops across the Meander Bridge and occupying the heights of the mountains beyond also burning the Turkish villages across the Meander; the Greek in command I am told replied that while the Turks opposed and harassed his troops on this side of the Meander he should follow them up to that stage where they could not effect them on this side by their guns.

Monday I went up to identify one of the Irregulars who had been shot. On him was found his photograph and sundry papers which point out that he must have been in the Regular Turkish Army. I have not the slightest doubt that the Turkish regulars are aiding and abetting Irregulars in rendering them all the assistance they can, and I hear from many sources that Italians are doing the same.

I am told that the Greeks on the evacuation of Aidin lost approx. 500 of their soldiers killed and wounded out of 1500.

The new Greek strength that arrived numbers approx. 10,000; their losses so far is not known.

Aidin, 8th July 1919.

(Sgd) Ben Hodder

Lt. R.N.V.R.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's obedient servant,

(Sgd) BEN HODDER