

in due course handed over for trial to the French, who, however, refused to deal with the suborning charge and decided to take action only on that of smuggling, the sentence for which we well knew would be insufficient to keep him out of harm's way, and with which the British military authorities were not directly concerned. (Mokaddam was, as it turned out, acquitted on the smuggling charge.) M. Helleu was therefore asked either to have Mokaddam tried on a charge of suborning or to hand him over to the Ninth Army for deportation on the grounds of military security. Unfortunately, Mokaddam is a candidate for election in the new Lebanese Parliament and, moreover, is strongly supported in his candidature by the French. The French authorities strongly object to any interference on our part with his standing for election, and, for the moment, the local British authorities have agreed, in order to avoid a serious breach with the French, to their request that Mokaddam should be allowed to return to Tripoli and to stand for election, though he will be confined to his house under strict surveillance. The case is serious owing to its reaction on military discipline and security, and further representations to the French authorities are under consideration.

On the 17th June the Lebanese Government issued two decrees amending the electoral law; one altering the method of calculating the number of Deputies allotted to each district and introducing new principles in computing the total population of the Lebanon, the other increasing the number of Deputies from 42 (22 Christian and 20 Moslem) to 54 (32 Christian and 22 Moslem), thus increasing the Christian majority from 2 to 10. It was also stated that the date of election would be announced on the 23rd June. Both decrees gave rise to violent Moslem opposition. A representative gathering of Moslems threatened to boycott the elections unless the decrees were rescinded, and formal protests were made by a Moslem deputation, not only to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires and to the French, but also to the representatives of the United States, Iraq and Egypt.

Dr. Tabet was obviously perturbed by the opposition aroused, and on the 26th June his Government announced that the election would be held on the 26th and 27th September. He also informed the Moslems that there would be a fresh census of the population before the election, but as there is good precedent for all Lebanese resident abroad, most of whom are Christians, to be represented in the Chamber, although they do not vote, this information is hardly likely to assuage Moslem feeling.

Dr. Tabet has thus gone back on his undertaking to hold the Lebanese election at about the same time as that to be held in Syria, where the primary election will take place on the 10th July and the secondary on the 25th July. He has also given the lie to his own previous statement that he did not intend to increase the number of Deputies. In taking these measures it seems fairly clear that Dr. Tabet has acted under pressure from the French, who have played on his desire "to save the Lebanon from the Moslems," and who hope, by increasing the number of Christian Deputies and by prolonging the electoral campaign, to facilitate the return to Parliament of as many pro-French candidates as possible.

The regrouping of the Iraqi Cabinet, foreshadowed for some weeks, was announced on the 24th June. The most important changes were those involved by the appointment as Minister of the Interior of Saleh Jabr, former Minister of Finance, and of Abdul Illah Hafiz as Minister of Education. In the opinion of His Majesty's Ambassador the new Cabinet is probably as good as any that could be formed in view of the paucity of material at the present time. The reshuffle has aroused little comment locally, and is regarded as hardly more than another new deal from the old pack. Nuri Pasha, who had intended to leave Bagdad on a visit to Cairo on the 28th June, was unfortunately taken ill on the 24th, and was compelled to cancel his arrangements.

The financial situation in Persia is causing very grave concern to His Majesty's Minister and to the American Financial Adviser in Tehran. In their joint opinion the Persian Government will not be in a position to meet its obligations during the current Persian month ending on the 22nd July, and during the next Persian month the situation will become even more serious. By the end of the financial year there will be an estimated deficit of 800 million rials, and Dr. Millspaugh's proposal to increase salaries of Government employees by 50 per cent., which he regards as vital to the success of his various schemes, will involve a further expenditure of 500 million rials. Persian Government funds tied up in grain reserves or other essential commodities would amount to another

425 millions. The total deficit at the end of the financial year is therefore likely to be no less than 1,725 million rials.

If funds are not forthcoming from outside, Persia is thus threatened with bankruptcy. Dr. Millspaugh has therefore decided to advise the Prime Minister to approach the British and American Governments through their local representatives with a request for a short-term credit of 500 million rials to finance the purchase of the grain crop, and further to ask the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company for an advance against royalties payable in 1943-44. These proposals are, of course regarded by Dr. Millspaugh as no more than a temporary stop-gap pending the discussion of a larger Allied loan.

At a secret session of the Majlis held on the 27th June, the Prime Minister is credibly reported to have read to the Deputies a letter from Dr. Millspaugh, explaining the facts of the financial situation, and urging them to pass without more delay three Bills that have already been before that body for some time. These Bills deal respectively with income tax, the issue of Treasury bonds and the appointment of additional American advisers. It is, however, believed that the Majlis even now refuses to appreciate the gravity of the situation. Fortunately, the present Majlis has not long to live. A royal proclamation was published on the 22nd June, declaring that it would come to an end on the 22nd November, 1943, and the Minister of the Interior was instructed to make arrangements for the new election, voting for which should take place between the 28th August and the 6th October.

The article containing an account of the interview given by Ibn Saud, which appeared in the issue of *Life* on the 31st May (see *Summary* No. 192), was followed by a reply by Rabbi Stephen Wise from the Zionist point of view in the issue of the same journal published on the 21st June. The series was completed in the next issue of *Life* by a strong anti-Zionist article by the Jewish millionaire, Lessing Rosenwald of Chicago.

#### THE FAR EAST.

In the absence of any considerable military operations in the Far East the Chinese press has recently been consoling its public with hopeful speculations about future events. Hopes have been centred on three possibilities—an outbreak of war between Japan and the U.S.S.R., a great increase of the American air force in China and of American aircraft for the Chinese air force, and finally a reopening of the Burma Road during the next dry season, *i.e.*, between October and April. Comment on the first of these possibilities is a rather delicate matter for Chinese publicity, and it is noticeable that the press refrains on the subject of Soviet neutrality from the chiding tone sometimes adopted in dealing with alleged British or American shortcomings. The *I Shih Pao* of the 25th June, however, went so far as to declare that the existence of a neutrality agreement between Japan and the U.S.S.R. was "really abnormal," that Japan had never abandoned her intention of attacking the U.S.S.R., and that the latter ought to forestall the move by attacking Japan first; if she were to do so, her Allies would help her by opening a Second Front in Europe. Chinese propaganda has apparently given up the attempt to alarm the U.S.S.R. by reports of great Japanese military concentrations in Manchuria—it is no doubt realised by now that the Russians do not rely on Chungking for information as to what goes on across the Amur—but dark hints of a great new Japanese offensive, which might be against Siberia, have been thrown out in comment on the recent Extraordinary Session of the Japanese Diet. Meanwhile, by way of expressing solidarity with the U.S.S.R., the *Shihsi Hsin Pao*, Dr. H. H. Kung's newspaper, has given vigorous support to the Soviet appeal for a Second Front in Europe, which it declares to be "very much justified"; Britain and the United States, it argues, should no longer leave the U.S.S.R. "to bear the burden alone," or think that their aid in material and supplies is commensurate with the immense loss of life suffered by the Russian people. Such remarks no doubt reflect a genuine fellow-feeling on the part of the Chinese, who feel their position *vis-à-vis* Britain and the United States to be similar as regards the question of "second fronts," but there may also be an element of flattery designed to induce the U.S.S.R. to modify its neutrality somewhat in Far Eastern affairs. Official acts also point to an endeavour to strengthen good relations with Moscow. In the celebrations of United Nations Day the British, American and Soviet flags were carried together in a group with no distinction between belligerent and neutral, and in a telegram to Marshal Stalin on the anniversary of the outbreak of the Soviet-German war,

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