

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF ZIONISM AND PALESTINIAN NATIONALISM

The awakening of Arab consciousness in modern times and the consequent rise of Arab nationalism can be attributed, *inter alia*, to the activities of the Zionists and to the impact of the First World War. The Palestinians were part of the Arab World sharing with it many of its internal developments as well as some of its external influences. Zionism was particularly influential in shaping their current politics and in determining their political destiny.

Along its historic continuum, Palestine became the object of conflicting political claims and intense religious attachments. For centuries, Arabs and Jews have developed deep roots and emotional attachments to it. In time, the roots and the attachments became important in the development of two separate, but conflicting nationalisms: Arab nationalism and Zionism. Both nationalisms strove to ultimately gain control of Palestine.

Historically, the Palestinian question can be related to the problem of Western intervention--cultural penetration in the form of ideas of nationalism and political penetration in the form of colonial rule. However, while Jewish nationalism originated in the intellectual and emotional responses to the Pogroms of East Europe, the nationalism of the Arabs was a direct reaction to Ottoman (Turkish) oppression and European colonialism.

One should keep in mind that the two nationalisms appeared around the same time, towards the end of the nineteenth century, and reached the peak of their political strength later in the twentieth century. In the meantime, they were tied to the outcome of political decisions made in Europe. Although their aspirations were to be realized in Palestine, far away from Europe, their fortunes and misfortunes depended heavily on the politics of Europe, particularly those of the big powers.

The Zionist Movement

Enlightenment and secular philosophy radically changed conditions in the Jewish communities of eastern and central Europe. Ideas of nationalism and freedom had their influence on secular Jews but were not attractive among Orthodox Jews who entertained messianic hopes for salvation from persecution in

natio Christiana in the biblical promise of return to the promised land, i.e. Palestine. However, modern secular trends did affect the revival of the Hebrew language and culture. The Ideas of equality and freedom brought by the European emancipation and modern nationalism produced a number of conflicting trends : assimilation V. separatism and exclusivism, modernism V. traditionalism, and secularism V. religionism or sectarianism as represented by Jewish orthodoxy. The leaders of the traditionalists resented what appeared to be the intrusion of secular notions upon the "religious quietism" associated with the messianic beliefs of Jewish orthodoxy.

The Jewish secularists (Maskilim) labored very hard to alleviate the inhuman hardships and to improve the deplorable conditions of the Jewish ghettos in East Europe and Russia. They sought assimilation in the dominant national cultures of the countries where they lived, as a solution to the social-political discrimination and economic hardships they suffered in these gentile societies.

However, the persistence of anti-semitism contributed to the creation of the Zionist movement which argued for political separatism and against assimilation. Indeed Zionism could be seen as an inspirational movement, an alternative to the oppression and humiliation of the European ghettos to which they were confined and isolated. Yet the ideology never was a uniform creed or a monolithic movement.

The Historical Roots of Zionism : The word Zion came from its hebrew counterpart for a dry, rocky hill. Historically, it referred to one of the ridges upon which Jerusalem was built. Eventually, Zion and Jerusalem became synonymous words expressing, since the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem by the Romans in 73 A.D., a deep yearning for a miraculous return to the promised land.(1)

The movement which came to symbolize the meaning of the return to Zion emerged as a unique type of nationalism or as someone depicted it "a patriotism without a country." It was rooted in ideas as old as the Jewish "Dispersion," but as an organized political movement its history begins in 1897 when, under the able leadership of Theodor Hertzl, the First Zionist Congress convened in Basle to draw up a program of action and establish the foundation of what became known as the Zionist Organization.(2) Although the question of where the Jewish home should be was not finally settled until the meetings of the Sixth Congress in 1903,(3) it was in this congress that a resolution was passed creating "... in Palestine ... a home for the Jewish people [to be] secured by public law."(4) In his opening address to the First Congress, Hertzl tried to clarify the Jewish dilemma in the following words:

"Since time immemorial the world has been misinformed about us. The feeling of solidarity with which we have been so frequently and violently reproached was in the process of disintegration when we were attacked by anti-semitism. Anti-Semitism gave it new strength. We have returned home, as it were. Zionism is a return to Jewishness even before there is a return to the Jewish land . . . consequently, our movement will be embarked on a sensible cause of action only if it strives for guarantees under public law."(5)

To secure public and legal guarantees for a Jewish home in Palestine, the First Zionist Congress adopted the following program:

1. The appropriate promotion of colonization with Jewish agriculturists, artisans, and tradesmen.
2. The organization and gathering of all Jews through suitable local and general institutions, according to the laws of the various countries.
3. The promotion of Jewish national feeling and consciousness.
4. Preparatory steps for the attainment of such Government consent as necessary in order to achieve the aim of Zionism.(6)

Unfortunately, the Zionist movement showed, at least in its early stages, almost total ignorance of the fact that Palestine had Arab population well-entrenched in its soil for many centuries. This was evident in the frequent use of their putative and polemical slogan "a land without a people for a people without a land."(7)

Initially, Hertzels main objective was to secure large sums of money to secure a legal guarantee, a charter to bring about the large-scale settlement of Jews as anticipated by the First Zionist Congress. Although personally, Hertzels had no specific preference to place for the Jewish home, he became convinced that if Palestine were to be the place, its "keys" were to be found in either Berlin or Constantinople. He thus, set out to secure the consent of the Turkish Sultan, and later the German Kaizer, for the initial construction of his Zionist project.

Fortunately, for the Zionists, Hertzels was known for his genius and abilities in cultivating well placed and influential men like the Baron de Rothschild.

The opportunity to make contacts with the Turkish Sultan seemed to be available at the time. The political realities of the Ottoman Empire made it vulnerable and highly susceptible to external influences offering the possibility of

financial aid. The Turkish economy was in a bad shape and the Empire was heavily in debt. Hertzl's strategy was to make a financial offer to Abdul Hamid II, the Turkish Sultan, in return for his support for the Zionist project in Palestine. In June of 1896, he came to Istanbul, the Turkish capital, and through Philip de Newlinski he sought the Sultan's consent for the issuance of a Turkish charter which would allow Jews to settle and colonize Palestine in return for the payment of twenty million British Pounds.(8)

To the surprise and dismay of Hertzl and the Zionists, the Sultan refused the offer. However, later in 1901, through intermediary, one by the name of Arminius Vambery, Hertzl was granted an audience with the Sultan.(9) At the time, Hertzl knew that the Sultan wished to gain control of the management of Turkey's public debt which had fallen under the control of the European powers.(10) In the meeting, Hertzl found the Sultan agreeable, believing the Zionist project was feasible. The Sultan thought Zionist assistance could very well free the Turkish economy of Europe's nagging influence and tormenting intervention. Unfortunately, for Hertzl and the Zionists, the Sultan balked at the idea of issuing the charter. At the time, the Ottoman state already overburdened and vexed by the Armenian dilemma and the Sultan did not wish to complicate matters further by injecting another troublesome issue into the affairs of his empire.(11) Nevertheless, in the next few years, the Zionists would be able to quietly settle thousands of Jews in Palestine. By 1908, they had acquired 156 square miles of Palestinian land in which twenty six Jewish colonies were established.(12)

Hertzl's next try was with the German Kaizer, Willhelm II. However, the German monarch, although sympathetic, thought "German patronage of the Zionist movement might in the end cost more than it was worth in difficulties with other powers, which had, or aspired to have a stake in Palestine."(13)

After several years of fruitless efforts, Hertzl despaired of ever obtaining the support of the Turks for a charter to colonize Palestine. Already, in 1900, he had turned to the British for the fulfillment of Zionist aspiration. He expressed his optimism that the British might be the government to help the Zionists in a speech of the Fourth Zionist Congress meeting in London in August of 1900:

"England, great England, free England, England looking over all the seas, will understand our aspirations. From here the Zionist idea will take its flight further and higher that we are sure."(14)

At the time, the British Colonial Secretary was Joseph Chamberlain who, according to his biographer Julian Amery, was sympathetic to the Zionist cause out of humanitarian considerations.(15) However, he later thought a "Jewish Colony in Sinai might prove a useful instrument for extending British influence in Palestine proper when the time came for the inevitable dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire."(16) Chamberlain's desire to find a territorial solution to the Jewish problem was further accentuated by Arthur Balfour Prime Minister from 1902 till 1905. In 1904, the British government proposed to settle Jews in East Africa in what was known as the "Uganda Plan." Hertzl, after failure with the Sultan and the Kaizer, seemed ready to give the plan his most serious consideration.(17) However, most Zionists were against it and professed instead the idea of colonizing Palestine.

Balfour became an ardent supporter of Zionism. One writer believes "... he was ... strongly infused, like the Evangelicals and the Puritans, with the Hebraism of the Bible."(18) His niece and biographer, Blanche Dugdale, wrote that her uncle was a deeply religious man who believed very strongly that "Christian religion and civilization owe to Judaism an unmeasurable debt, shamefully ill-repaid."(19)

In 1917, Balfour became the Foreign Minister in George Lloyd's cabinet which issued the historic document known by his name. That document, "the Balfour Declaration," promises the Jews a "national home" in Palestine.

Hertzl died in 1904. When the Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917 the leader of the Zionists was Chaim Weizmann, a British citizen of Russian extraction. The new leader was a well-known scientist and a dedicated Zionist. He was instrumental in bringing about the Balfour Declaration. One writer described the events leading up to the Declaration in these words:

"The Diplomatic manoeuvres culminating in the Balfour Declaration were of crucial importance in establishing a framework in which Zionism could extend itself far beyond its own natural limits. Couched in vague language and short of any direct commitment, the Declaration implicitly recognized the existence of a special Jewish connection with Palestine and the right of the Zionists to represent the Jewish people in this regard."(20)

Some writers believe Zionist manipulation of British politics was effective because of its coincidence with a particular view of British interests :

"The British government believed that the Jews had great influence in America, upon whose financial resources it came to depend, and in Russia, where leaders of the various revolutionary were Jewish, and whose armies Britain desperately wanted to keep in the war; and the Ottoman Empire whose ruling Junta contained both Jews and those Muslim converts from Judaism known as Donmeh."(21)

Whatever the rationale behind the Declaration, the document was a great Zionist triumph. It should be remembered that Jewish presence in Palestine was, until the turn of the century, very limited, a mere five percent of the total population possessing less than one percent of the land. The opening of the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration and Jewish colonization, which were promised in the Balfour Declaration, meant that the Zionists could hope for the realization and fulfillment of their aspiration.

As we shall see later, Zionist success seemed very threatening to the Arabs of Palestine who constituted the vast majority of the then existing population and owned most of the land in the country. These Arabs were in Palestine for centuries and they felt they were indigenous to the land while the new comers of Jews were outsiders even though Jews always had kept contact with Palestine since their dispersion and historic expulsion by the Romans. No doubt the Balfour Declaration was the beginning of a tragic conflict between Arabs and Zionist Jews that would last until our time and possibly far beyond into the future.

BRITISH WARTIME PROMISES

The roots of the Arab-Zionist conflict go back to the 1880's long before the British government issued the controversial Balfour Declaration. During that period, Jews known as the Halutzim (pioneers), began to settle in parts of Palestine. According to Bernard Wasserstein, the new Yishuv were mainly refugees from the anti-semitism of Tsarist Russia, who were ardent Jewish nationalists highly influenced by Tolstoyan socialism.(22) This new Yishuv created the friction

between Arabs and Jews and in the experience of the early Jewish settlements lies the genesis of the conflict between Arabs and Zionist Jews.

British Pledges to the Arabs: The awakening interest of Arabs in their cultural heritage and traditions gave birth to Arab nationalism in the key cities of the Fertile Crescent. The nascent Arab national movement had its political organization and strength in Syria, particularly in Damascus, but its "most effective leadership arose in the Hejaz section of Arabia."(23)

During World War I, the Allied Powers were deeply interested in a quick Turkish defeat, one that would cost them less in life and money.(24) The British, in particular, thought this objective would be better served if they could bring about an Arab revolt which enhance the defeat of the Turks from within their empire. To accomplish their goal, they had to make several pledges to Sharif Hussein of the Hejaz, a descendant of the prophet Mohammed and a likely leader of the hoped for revolt. Hussein brought Arab nationalism to the forefront of regional and international politics. He was greatly assisted by his two sons, Faisal and Abdullah.(25)

Initially, the first contacts with Sharif Hussein were made by Lord Kitchener,(26) who sent him a message on October 31, 1914, pledging British support for the Arab struggle for freedom, provided the Arabs participated in the war on the side of the Allies.(27) While the British government was giving strong assurances to the Arabs that their independence from Turkey would be established as soon as the war ended, it was also assuring the Zionist Jews of its sympathy with their aspirations in Palestine.(28)

On May 23, 1915, Arab nationalist leaders issued a protocol, to be known later as the "Damascus Protocol,"(29) defining the conditions under which they would be prepared to cooperate with Great Britain against Turkey. On the basis of this Protocol, Arab national leaders pledged to fight the Turks under Hussein's leadership, and they openly declared that they would enter the War on the side of the Allied powers.

In 1915, Sir Henry McMahon the High Commissioner of Egypt, represented the British Government in the effort to reach an agreement with the Arabs.(30) The correspondence between him and Sharif Hussein covered the period between July 14, 1915 and January 30, 1916. All in all, ten letters were exchanged, of which eight related to Arab territorial questions.(31) In the correspondence with McMahon Hussein defined Arabs' aims as they stated in the "Damascus Protocol" which emphasized Arab independence and unity in all regions where Arabs preponderated.(32) However, in a letter dated July 14, 1915, "Hussein had

requested independence in an area which included roughly the Arabian Peninsula (except Aden) Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Palestine."(33) Not surprisingly, McMahon was reluctant to recognize Arab independence in such vast areas, and he expressed British position in his letter of October 24, 1915, in which he specifically excluded territories "West of Damascus, Hama and Aleppo," on the grounds that they were not "purely Arab." The remaining territories were promised independence after the war.

These letters created a lot of confusion and controversy later. The biggest controversy involved Palestine. According to W.F. Abboushi's interpretation, "the Arabs ... argued that McMahon could not have intended to exclude Palestine from independence, since the area was as much 'purely Arab' as those areas he had included."(34) The British stubbornly rejected the inclusion of Palestine in the area promised independence after the end of the war. This was officially brought to the Arabs' attention by Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for the colonies, in his memorandum, known to the Arabs as the 'Black Memorandum', dated June 3, 1922.(35) Later events revealed the nature of British intentions to confuse the issue when in 1916, it signed a secret agreement with France (The Sykes-Picot Agreement) promising that Palestine would be international. From an Arab point of view, British promises to the Arabs and to France were in conflict with each other.(36)

British Counterpledges: In the spring of 1916, Britain, France, and later Russia entered into an agreement for the disposition of enemy territory in the Levant. The agreement mentioned earlier, was known as the 'Sykes-Picot Agreement'. It was negotiated and ratified without the knowledge of the Sharif Hussein. According to the Arabs, it contained provisions which were clearly incompatible with the Hussein-McMahon pledges. Roughly, in the Arab areas, the 'Sykes-Picot Agreement' provided for :

- (a) an independent Arab State or a federation of Arab States, in a part of what is now geographically known as Saudi Arabia and Yemen;
- (b) France in Lebanon and Syria, and Britain in Iraq and Transjordan . . .
- (c) Parts of Palestine to be placed under an international administration of which the form will be decided upon after consultation with Russia, and after subsequent agreement with the other Allies and the representatives of the Sharif of Mecca.(37)

According to George Antonius, King Hussein came to know of the Tripartite Agreement (Sykes-Picot) after the Communists came to power in Russia in December 1917:

"The Bolshevik party had seized power in Russia a month previously, and one of their first acts had been to publish certain secret documents from the archives of the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Amongst those were the texts of the Agreement of 1916, which the Turks lost no time in forwarding to Hussein with an offer for a Turco-Arab separate peace."(38)

Turkey, under the Triumvirate leadership of Enver, Tala'at and Jamal Pasha, tried to offset Allied influence in the area by persuading the Arabs to rescind their 1915 commitments to the Allied Powers. A secret emissary was dispatched to 'Aqaba carrying a letter from Jamal Pasha to Amir Faisal urging the Arabs

". . . to concert their real effort against the Allies, with the rationale that the promises given by the British were mendacious; and the only course left for the Arabs to take was to return to the Ottoman fold and secure their legitimate rights by coming to an understanding with the Turks."(39)

The letter also reminded Faisal of the grave consequences of the 'Sykes-Picot Agreement' on the Arabs. However, "Hussein instructed Faisal to send Jamal a curt rejection of his peace overtures."(40) This episode of intrigue came to an end when Great Britain reassured the Arabs that it would honor its pledges and would stand by the Arabs in their struggle for independence and freedom.

The Balfour Declaration (1917): British commitments to the Zionists were not made very easily. The Zionist lobby in London played an important role in obtaining them. As mentioned earlier, Dr. Chaim Weizmann was, at the time, the leading figure among the British Zionists. His reputation as one of the most outstanding chemists in England, made him influential in British political circles. His scientific contributions helped the Allies during the war.(41) His close relations with influential men like C.P. Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, and Henry Wickham Steed, the editor of the London Times, made possible his contacts, with Foreign Secretary Arthur J. Balfour.(42) Moreover, he managed to convince important Christian figures to organize the influential British Palestine Committee which urged the support of Weizmann on political, military, and humanitarian grounds. At the time, many Zionist leaders had become convinced

that a 'Legally secured home' in Palestine could be more readily obtained from Britain than Turkey or Germany. Consequently, the Zionists threw their lot openly with the British, who offered to allow the formation of a Jewish Corps to assist in the war effort. Eventually, three Jewish battalions of the "Royal Fusileers" actually served in Palestine during the war.(43)

After several months of hard and difficult negotiations, the Balfour Declaration was agreed upon. The document was "carefully produced and more consciously worded, and whatever is to be found in [it] was put into it deliberately."(44) It is rather ironic, that the Declaration was issued more than a month before the British entered Jerusalem, and almost a year before the entire country was brought under their control.(45) The Declaration stated:

"His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."(46)

In order to understand fully the impact on the Arabs of this controversial historic document, it is important to discuss briefly the background for it and the motives behind it. The reasons which impelled the British to issue the Declaration were best elucidated by George Antonius in his classic The Arab Awakening:

"In actual fact, the British Government was moved mainly by two considerations. One was political: to win the powerful Zionist elements in Germany and Austria, who were actually in negotiation with the Control Power for the issue of a Turkish 'B.D', by providing them with a positive interest in an Entente victory; and, at the same time, to mitigate the hostility of Jews, who had been so active in overthrowing the Tsarist regime, an incentive to keep Russia in the war. The other was the imperialistic motive, first propounded by Kitchener, of securing Palestine or a portion of it as a

bulwark to the British position in Egypt and an over land link with the East."(47)

However, Weizmann gave a very different rationale for British issuance of the Balfour Declaration. In an address to the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London delivered on June 9, 1936, Weizmann said :

"The suggestion that is often heard that the Balfour Declaration was made ... for imperialist or any other similar vulgar reason is entirely false. I think one fact may disapprove this legend. When the British Government agreed to issue the famous Balfour Declaration, it agreed on one condition: that Palestine should not be the charge of Great Britain."(48)

Basically, Leonard Stein's monumental work on the Balfour Declaration, confirmed Weizmann allegation. He stated that the Declaration was not an "impetuous or sentimental act of the British Government," it was a deliberate decision of British policy contrived at, after full consultation with the United States and the Allied Nations.(49) Consequently, it was not surprising to see the Arabs react indignantly and manifest deep frustration with the Balfour Declaration. For them the British position represented a crude policy and blatantly unfair way of rewarding their Arab ally during the war.

In order to allay Arab fears the British Government, urged the Zionists to try to be conciliatory with the Arabs. According to the American 'Special agent' in Cairo, William Yale:

"British political officers - he mentioned in particular, Colonel Symes - (later, Chief Secretary to Government of Palestine (1925-28) and Governor-General of the Sudan) - were doing their best to make the Declaration acceptable to the Syrian nationalist leaders then in Exile in Egypt."(50)

The British also tried to calm Hussein's anxieties by sending their special emissary, Commander D.G. Hogarth,(51) to Jeddah carrying a carefully formulated message to the newly self-proclaimed monarch.(52) The message reaffirmed the determination of the Allied Powers to ensure "that the Arab race

shall be given full opportunity of once forming a nation in the world."(53) The message confined, inter-alia that the protection of the Holy places of all three religions must be treated as a matter of international concern.(54)

King Hussein was receptive to Hogarth's message. However, he made some reservations which were described in John and Hadawi's Palestine Diary 1914-45 :

"The King would not accept an independent Jewish state in Palestine, nor was I, sic [Hogarth] instructed to warn him that such a state was contemplated by Great Britain. He probably knows nothing of the actual or possible economy of Palestine, and his ready assent to Jewish settlement there is not worth very much. But I think he appreciates the financial advantage of Arab cooperation with the Jews."(55)

Hogarth's message reestablished Hussein's confidence in British pledges. Consequently, the King sent messages to Arab-leaders assuring them that the British did not think Jewish settlement and Arab independence are not incompatible in Palestine.(56) Further-more, the Zionists went further in their attempt to allay Arab fears regarding their ultimate designs. In May 1918, Weizmann and Ormsby-Gore visited Faisal in his camp near 'Aqaba to reassure him that Zionism was not striving to establish a Jewish government in Palestine. They stressed that Jewish assistance in the development of Palestine promised great benefits for both people, Arabs and Jews.(57) Faisal reaffirmed the Arab position on Palestine, that it was an 'Arab Country' and any Jewish settlement was and would be in Arab domain and under Arab suzerainty.(58)

This meeting between Weizmann and Faisal was preparatory to the famous agreement between the two men which was signed in London in early January 1919, and which "full cooperation was pledged toward joint efforts in the upbuilding of Palestine."(59)

The Zionist Commission: The Zionists had been successful in extracting from the British Government a commitment for their cherished Jewish National Home, and they set out to implement it with vigor and extreme dedication. Since Palestine was for many centuries populated by Arabs and there were in the country no more than 56,000 they knew that to accomplish their ultimate objective they had two difficult tasks : increasing the number of Jews in Palestine and the purchase of Arab lands for settlement. Without the fulfillment of these tasks there could be no Jewish national home in Palestine.

In April 1918, a 'Zionist Commission' was authorized by the British Government, to go to Palestine to determine the feasibility of the Jewish National Home.(60) The Zionist Commission was headed by Weizmann and four dedicated British Jews : Sir Leon Simon, a high civil servant and a Hebraist, Dr. David Eder, a pioneer psychiatrist and a socialist, Israel Sieff, a student of Weizmann, and Joseph Gowen, a businessman who was close friend of Hertzfel.(61)

Officially, the Commission's responsibility was :

"To carry out, subject to General Allenby's authority, any steps required to give effect to the Government's declaration in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."(62)

Furthermore, two important functions of the Commission were :

1. To form a link between the British authorities and the Jewish population of Palestine; and
2. to help in establishing friendly relations with the Arabs and other non-Jewish communities.(63)

However, in Cairo (en route to Palestine) the Commission had been warned by Sir Reginald Wingate that "the Arabs were nervous and suspicious of Zionist aims;"(64) he urged the Zionist leaders to encounter Arab leaders to allay their fears and apprehensions, and if possible, to bring about union and cooperation between Jews and Arabs.

Nevertheless, one of the principle responsibilities of the Zionist Commission was the development of Jewish institutions of self- government. Those had been started during the Ottoman regime without the regime's permission, but with little interference by it. In many speeches delivered by Weizmann, the main emphasis dwelt on the Zionist's immediate objective, "a British Palestine which would act fairly and justly to all groups which inhabit the country."(65) According to a British source, Arab notables received Weizmann's statement with complete satisfaction. However, later the Commission would arouse Arabs' suspicion as to the Commission's interpretation of the Balfour Declaration.(66)

The Paris Peace Conference: On June 16, 1918, in response to a formal inquiry by seven Arab spokesmen from different parts of the Ottoman Empire, then residing in Cairo, the British Government publicly assured the Arabs that it would abide by its earlier pledges. The British reiterated their position concerning the Arab territories (including Palestine) by stating "that the future government of

those territories should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed."(67)

However, the British were silent about the conclusion drawn by the seven Arab spokesmen that Britain was "not free to dispose of Palestine without regard for the wishes and interests of the inhabitants of Palestine."(68)

In 1918, President Wilson's Fourteen Points emphasized the principle and the right of national self-determination and this gave more hope to the Arabs that they would be able to achieve their national goals and aspirations in Palestine and elsewhere in the Arab World.(69)

Later in the 1930's reports by various British Royal Commissions admitted that all these statements and promises mentioned earlier, gave the Arabs the impression that the British were going to set up an independent Arab state that would include Palestine.(70)

In 1919, the Allied Powers sent their delegations to the Paris Peace Conference. The Zionists were invited to attend the great gathering. Their delegation included prominent personalities who were well versed in Western ways and understood Western "psychology" and culture. At the time of the Conference, the Zionists pressed their claims to Palestine on the basis of the Balfour Declaration, as well as on the bases of historic, religious and humanitarian reasons. In particular, the Zionist delegates asked the Conference to

- (a) Include the Balfour Declaration in the peace treaty;
- (b) promote Jewish immigration to Palestine and their settlement of the land;
- (c) Provide for the establishment of a Jewish Council for Palestine to be recognized under law as representing the Jews of Palestine as well as other Jews in the Diaspora;
- (d) oppose making Palestine an exclusive Arab State or an internationalized one and set it up as a British mandate.(71)

It is important to note that the Zionists were not awarded all their requests at the Conference, but they did bolster their position later when the Palestine Mandate was established. On the other hand, the Arab point of view was completely disregarded at the Conference. Amir Faisal, their spokesman, failed to present effectively the Arab case, mainly because he did not understand Western cultural ways and big power politics. However, because of his fear regarding French imperialistic interests in the Near East, he signed (January 3, 1919) an agreement with Weizmann in which he accepted Jewish immigration to Palestine, on condition that Allied Powers' promise to the Arabs were fulfilled.

The King-Crane Commission: At the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George, M. Clemenceau and M. Orlando of Italy agreed to send international commission of inquiry to ascertain the wishes and aspirations of the people of the Near East. However, Britain, France and Italy failed to participate in the work of the Commission:

"Britain and France backed out rather than find themselves confronted by recommendations from their own appointed delegates which might conflict with their policies."(72)

The United States went ahead and sent H.C. King, then President of Oberlin College in Ohio, and C.R. Crane, an American businessman and a prominent member of the Democratic party, to the Near East as members of the Commission of Inquiry. They submitted their report to the Paris Peace Conference on August 28, 1919, and a summary of the report was cabled to President Wilson on August 30, 1919. The cable stated:

"We are recommending for Syria first that whatever administration go in, be a true mandatory under League of Nations; second that Syria including Palestine and Lebanon be kept a unity according to desires of great majority; third that Syria be under a single mandate; fourth that Amir Faisal be King of the new Syrian State; fifth that extreme Zionist program be seriously modified; sixth that America be asked to take single mandate for Syria; seventh that if for any reason America does not take the mandate, then it be given to Great Britain."(73)

It is important to note that Palestine be kept as part of Syria, and that only part of the Zionist program be carried out.(74) The Commission's rationale for curbing the "extreme Zionist program":

". . . the erection of such a Jewish state [cannot] be accomplished without the gravest trespass upon the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."(75)

It is to be noted also that the feeling against Zionist aspirations was not confined to the Arabs of Palestine, but was shared by people throughout Syria, as this feeling was expressed and articulated by the 'General Syrian Congress',(76)

in several of its resolutions.(77) The American Commission felt that the Peace Conference should seriously consider a reduced Zionist program. This meant a limitation on Jewish immigration and a total rejection of the Zionist dream of making Palestine a Jewish commonwealth. The Commission recommended that :

"There would then be no reason why Palestine could not be included in a United Syrian State, just as other portions of the country, the Holy Places being cared for by an International and Interreligious Commission, somewhat as at present, under the oversight and approval of the Mandatory and of the League of Nations. The Jews, of course, would have representation upon this commission."(78)

The Palestine Mandate: Although the seeds of the Arab-Zionist conflict had been sown by the end of World War I, far more serious troubles were to take place in the early 1920's. All three parties, the Arabs, the Zionists and the British, were not willing to make the required effort and concessions to reconcile differences. During the Mandate, Arab and Zionist attitudes and actions became increasingly irreconcilable while British policies continued to be vague and divisive.

The Arabs believed that the British Mandate for Palestine came with the sole objective of achieving the 'Jewish National Home' by providing the Jews with the legal basis for achieving the reality of the Jewish national home. However, the British Mandate tried its utmost to isolate the Palestinians from the Arab main stream and negating the fulfillment of their national aspirations.(79)

Palestine was gradually occupied between 1917 and 1918, during the First World War by British forces under General Allenby. However,

"this occupation did not involve any annexations, because the principles which President Wilson propounded towards the end of the War, were incorporated in Article 22 of the covenant of the League of Nations--namely, the rejection of any territorial acquisition by conquest and the recognition of the right of self-determination of peoples."(80)

When the War was over, the Allies, in conformity with President Wilson's Fourteen points, recognized the principle of self-determination for smaller nations.(81) However, "the Mandate system was accepted by the Allied and Associated powers as the vehicle for the execution of the policy of the Balfour Declaration, and after a period of delay, the Mandate for Palestine was approved by the League of

Nations and the United States."(82) The Mandate was mainly concerned with specific obligations; the establishment of the National Home, and the safeguarding of the Arab rights. However, the Mandate involved a general obligation the primary purpose of which was expressed in the first paragraph of Article 22 of the Covenant.(83)

However, in practice, Palestine was ruled like a crown-colony, despite the provisions of the Mandate that called for the introduction of self-governing institutions.(84) From December 1917 through June 1920, Palestine was occupied enemy territory governed by military officers who "were obliged by the Hague Convention of 1908 to maintain the status quo in the territory under their control."(85) On July 24, 1922, the Mandate for Palestine was approved by the Council of the League of Nations, and on December 22, 1923, it went into effect.(86)

It is worth mentioning that Mandates were classified A,B or C according to the particular territory's level of readiness for self-rule. However, all occupied Arab Lands were classified as "A" which meant that the tutelage period was to be relatively short.(87) The principle of the Mandate system was stated in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations as follows :

"Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development when their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory, until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principle consideration in the selection of the Mandatory . . ."
 ."(88)

The League's permanent Mandates Commission (PMC) in Geneva practiced limited supervisory powers over mandate territories and the British Government reported to it annually on conditions in the Palestine Mandate.(89)

Obviously, the inclusion in the Mandate of the Balfour Declaration was contrary to the wishes of the Palestinian Arabs While for the Jews it was the first internationally binding pledge of support. Consequently, the Zionists' political claims to Palestine were greatly strengthened, and, as for the Palestinians whose

wishes had been ascribed by the King-Crane Commission and were subsequently ignored, the Mandate proved to be disappointing.

The Arabs had always regarded the Mandate as illegal. When the Mandate was drawn up its principles did not fully conform with the League's Covenant nor with the pledges previously made to them by the Allies, nor even with the White Paper of 1922. In addition, the Mandate said nothing about the provisional independence of Palestine, while it encouraged Jewish immigration and settlement.

British official statements, including the reports of Royal Commissions, admitted that the Mandate contained conflicting obligations and irreconcilable responsibilities. This fact too was obvious to the Arabs. According to one of their spokesmen:

"On the one hand, it [the Mandate] was designed to conform to the training of the inhabitants in self-government by developing self-governing institutions; and on the other hand, it facilitated Jewish immigration by incorporating the Balfour Declaration."(90)

Moreover, according to W.F. Abboushi, "generally, the Arabs believed that the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate Agreement violated their right to self-determination."(91) Consequently, the Arabs were bitter, because they regarded the whole Mandatory system unjust, undemocratic and contrary to all the promises which had been made to them. According to Fred J. Khouri, the Arabs opposed the Mandate on several grounds :

"They denied the Mandate's legal validity on the grounds that, contrary to the terms of the League Covenant, Palestine was not provisionally recognized as independent and the wishes of the inhabitants were not the principle consideration in the selection of the mandatory power as required by the Covenant. The Arabs were especially aroused because, whereas numerous articles of the mandatory agreement referred to the Jewish Community by name, the Arabs, 90 percent of the population, were referred to merely as the other sections of the population."(92)

Moreover, from the beginning it was clear to the Arabs "that, if Palestine were to be turned into a Jewish national home, this would involve the indefinite denial of self-government until such time as the Jews were strong enough to take over the government."(93) Arab opposition to the Mandate and the policy of the Balfour Declaration remained obstinate and unrelenting throughout the period of

the Mandate. When appeals, protest, demonstrations and strikes failed to move the Mandatory Power to fulfill its pledges to the Arabs, they resorted to outright confrontation and violence. In fact, the first violent expression of Arab feelings took place as early as 1920, when "the period of diplomacy ended and the area was sealed by the San Remo Conference." (94) Only a year later, in 1921, the second violent outburst followed. However, between 1922 and 1929, Jewish immigration was relatively limited and the country experienced a few years of relative calm. Unfortunately, a major outburst took place in 1929 which was followed by others until in 1936 the Arabs staged their major rebellion which lasted for three years, until 1939. To deal with these disturbances, riots, and rebellions, four British Commissions were organized to investigate their causes. (95) Their findings were always the same in so far as the "root" causes of the outbursts were concerned : the Arabs felt alienated by British failure to honor their promises and the injection of the Balfour Declaration into the Palestine Mandate. (96)

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Encyclopedia Judaica, Vol. 16, Jerusalem, 1972, p. 1032.
- (2) Leonard Stein, The Balfour Declaration, New York, 1961, p. 3.
- (3) Walter Lehn and Sami Hadawi, Zionism and the Lands of Palestine, as cited from the proceedings of an International Symposium for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination, Tripoli, 1977, p. 61.
- (4) Nahum Sokolow, History of Zionism, vol. I, London, 1910, p. XXIV.
- (5) Harry N. Zohn, Theodor Hertzl: Zionist Writings, Essays and Addresses, vol. I, New York, 1973, pp. 133-135.
- (6) J.C. Hurewitz, Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East, vol. I, New Jersey, 1956, p. 209. See also Sokolow's, History of Zionism 1600-1918, vol. II, London, 1919, p. 268.
- (7) William B. Quandt, Fuad Jabber and Ann M. Lesch, The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism, Berkeley, 1973, p. 11.
- (8) Newlinski was a polish noble and a renegade who earned his living in European capitals spying for the Turkish Sultan, Abdul Hamid II. See N.M. Gelber, 'Philip Michael de Newlinski', Hertzl Year Book, edited by Raphael Patai, New York, 1959, pp. 113-152.
- (9) Raphael Patai, ed. The Complete Diaries of Theodore Hertzl, London, 1960, pp. 960-963.
- (10) Mim Kemal Oke, "The Ottoman Empire, Zionism and the Question of Palestine", International Journal of the Middle East, vol. 14, 1982, p. 330.
- (11) Ibid., p. 332.
- (12) Sokolow, History of Zionism, vol. II, pp. 228-239.
- (13) Stein, The Balfour Declaration, p. 21. For more information, see Abdel-Wahhab al-Kayyali, Al-Jzour al-Tarikhyyah Lil-Tahaluf al-Sahyuni al-Imperiali (The Historical Roots of Zionist and Imperialist Alliance), as cited from the Symposium on Zionism and Racism, Baghdad, 1976, pp. 15-16.
- (14) Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 16, pp. 1167-1168. See also, Alex Bein, Theodor Hertzl. Philadelphia, 1945, p. 346; and Regina Sherif, "Christians for Zion, 1600-1919", Journal of Palestine Studies, Spring / Summer, vol. V, 1976, p. 134.
- (15) Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, vol. IV, London, 1951, p. 260.
- (16) Ibid., p. 261.
- (17) Israel Pocket Library, History from 1880, Israel, 1973, p. 16.
- (18) Barbara Tuchman, Bible and Sword, London, 1956, pp. 198-199.
- (19) Blanche E.C. Dugdale, Arthur Balfour: First Earl Balfour, 2 vols. New York, 1937, vol. I, p. 324.
- (20) Alan Taylor, "Zionism and Jewish History", Journal of Palestine Studies, vol. I, Winter, 1972, p. 45.
- (21) William R. Polk, The Elusive Peace: The M.E. in the 20th 33 Century, New York, 1979, p. 33. For an elaborate analysis on what impelled the British to issue the Controversial Balfour Declaration, see W.F. Abboushi's, The Unmaking of

Palestine, Cambridshire, 1985, pp. 4-6. See also, David Lloyd George, War Memories, London, 1933, vol. II, p. 50.

(22) Bernard Wasserstein, British Officials and the Arab Jewish Conflict in Palestine, London, 1971, p. 11.

(23) Fred Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, 2nd ed., New York, 1976, p. 7.

(24) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 1.

(25) Alfred Lilienthal, The Zionist Connection: What Price Peace? New York, 1978, p. 15.

(26) Lord Kitchener acted as a British Agent in Egypt and then as a Secretary of State for War.

(27) Lilienthal, Zionist Connection, p. 15.

(28) Henry Cattan, Palestine: The Road to Peace, London, 1970, p. 9.

(29) As cited by R. John and S. Hadawi's, Palestine Diary, pp. 30-31, the 'Damascus Protocol' stated: "The recognition by Great Britain of the independence of the Arab countries lying within the following frontiers: North: The Line Mersin_Adana to parallel 37 N. and thence along the line Birejek-Urga-Mardin-Kidiat-Jazirat (Ibn 'Unear)-Amadia to the Persian frontier; East: The Persian frontier down to the Persian Gulf; South: The Indian Ocean (with the exclusion of Aden, whose status was to be maintained). West: The Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea back to Mersin. The abolition of all exceptional privileges granted to foreigners under the capitulations. The conclusion of a defensive alliance between Great Britain and the future independent Arab State. The grant of economic preference to Great Britain."

(30) See cmd. 5957, 1973.

(31) See cmd. 5957, correspondence between Sir Henry McMahon and Sharif Hussein, July 1951-March 1916, Letters No. 1-10, pp. 3-18, however, George Antonious in his classic, The Arab Awakening, New York, 1946, cites only 8 letters.

(32) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 157-158.

(33) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 1, see also the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and Palestine, London, 1937, p. 11.

(34) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 2. See also, Howard M. Sacher, The Course of Modern Jewish History, New York, 1958, p. 371.

(35) See cmd. 1700, 1922, see also Wasserstein, British Officials and the Arab Jewish Conflict, p. 14.

(36) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 2.

(37) John & Hadawi, Palestine Diary, p. 55. See also E.L. Woodward and R. Butler, eds., Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, 1st series, vol. IV, pp. 241-251. See also J.C. Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, New York, 1950, pp. 18-19.

(38) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 253. See also, Bahjat Sabri, Filastine Khilal al-Harb al-Alamiyyeh al-Oula wa ma Ba'daha 1914-1920, (Palestine during World War I and after 1914-1920), Jerusalem, 1982, p. 97; and F. Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, p.8.

(39) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 256.

(40) Ibid.

- (41) Sachar, The Course of Modern Jewish History, p. 372.
- (42) Lillienthal, The Zionist Connection, p. 13.
- (43) Ibid.
- (44) J.M.N. Jeffries, "Palestine the Reality", chapter 11, as cited in Walid Khalidi's, From Haven to Conquest, Beirut, 1971, p. 173.
- (45) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, pp. 3-4.
- (46) Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, p. 25.
- (47) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 261; for further information see, Emile Touma, Juzour al-Qadiyyah al-Filastiniyah, (The Roots of the Palestine Problem), Jerusalem, 1976, pp. 82-85, see also, Akram Zu'aitir, Al-Qadiyyah al-Filastiniyah, (The Palestine Problem), Egypt, 1955, pp. 46-48.
- (48) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 246. See also, Doreen Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922: Seeds of Conflict, London, 1972, pp. 7-19.
- (49) Norman and Hellen Bentwich, Mandate Memories 1918-1948, London, 1965, p. 9.
- (50) Stein, The Balfour Declaration, p. 632.
- (51) "D.G. Hogarth was a distinguished archaeologist with special knowledge of the Near and Middle East, and served during the War as head of the Arab Bureau". As cited in John and Hadawi's, Palestine Diary.
- (52) See cmd. 5964, 1939.
- (53) Stein, The Balfour Declaration, p. 632. See also Geoffrey Furlonge, Palestine is my Country: The Story of Mousa Alami, London, 1969, p. 61. And, Khayriyyeh Qasimiyyeh, "Tatawor al-Qadiyyah al-Filastiniyah fi 'Ahd al-Hukumah al-Arabiyyah fi Dimashk", (The Evolution of the Palestine Problem during the Arab Government's reign in Damascus), Shu'un Filastiniyah, (Palestine Affairs), vol. I, Beirut, 1977, p. 57.
- (54) John & Hadawi, Palestine Diary, p. 98. See also Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 267-270, for more detailed account of the Hogarth's message.
- (55) Ibid., p. 99.
- (56) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 269. See also Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, p. 8.
- (57) Zu'aitir, The Palestine Problem (Arabic), pp. 96-100, see also Qasimiyyeh, "Tatawor al-Qadiyyah al-Filastiniyah", p. 57, and Lillienthal, The Zionist Connection, p. 19.
- (58) John & Hadawi, Palestine Diary, p. 103.
- (59) Lillienthal, The Zionist Connection, p. 19.
- (60) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 7.
- (61) Norman & Hellen Bentwich, Mandate Memories, pp. 26-27.
- (62) Wassertein, British Officials and the Arab Jewish Conflict in Palestine, p. 31.
- (63) Ibid., p. 39. See also 'Issa al-Sifri, Filastin Bayn al-Intidab wa al-Sahyunieh, (Palestine between the Mandate and Zionism), Jaffa, 1937, p. 29.
- (64) Ibid., p. 36.
- (65) Minutes of the meeting at the Shepherd's Hotel in Cairo, March 27, 1918, CZA L3/285 (Central Zionist Archives).

- (66) Palestine Government, Survey of Palestine, 1948-49, vol., p. 16.
- (67) Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 434.
- (68) Cmd. 3530, 1929, p. 127. The Declaration to the Seven is quoted in Antonius, p. 433; however, the reply of the committee to the seven is quoted in Julia E. Johnson, Compiler, Palestine: Jewish Homeland, New York, 1946, p. 12.
- (69) H.W. Temperley, ed. A History of the Peace Conference of Paris, London, 1924, p. 141.
- (70) See cmd. 3530, 1929, p. 127; and cmd. 5974, 1939, p. 45.
- (71) Lloyd George, Memories of the Peace Conference, London, 1929, pp. 747-748.
- (72) Quoted in Doreen Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922, p. 70.
- (73) Harry N. Howard, The King-Crane Commission, Beirut, 1963, p. 218. However, for recommendations of the King-Crane Commission report, see U.S. Department of State, papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference 1919, Washington, 1947, XII, pp. 767-799.
- (74) As quoted in Woodward and Butler, Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, p. 256, and Hurewitz, Struggle for Palestine, pp. 66-74, and for a detailed account of the King-Crane report, see Walter Laqueur, The Israel Arab Reader, New York, 1969, pp. 23-31.
- (75) Khalidi, From Haven to Conquest, p. 215; see also Qasimiyeh, "Tatawor al-Qadiyyah al-Filastiniyah", pp. 63-64.
- (76) The General Syrian Congress was held in Damascus between 1919 and 1920, and was attended by delegates from what later became Iraq, Syria, Trans-Jordan, Palestine and Lebanon. The Congress elected Faisal King of a Unified Syria which included all those territories except Iraq.
- (77) For a full text of the 'Resolutions of the General Syrian Congress' (Damascus, July 2, 1919), see Antonius, Arab Awakening, Appendix G, pp. 440-442.
- (78) Antonius, Arab Awakening, Appendix H, p. 450.
- (79) Bayan N. al-Hout, Al-Qiyadat wa al-Mou'assasat al-Siasiyah Fi Filastin 1917-48 (The Leaderships and Political Organizations in Palestine, 1917-48), Beirut, 1981, pp. 127-128.
- (80) Henry Cattan, Palestine, The Arabs and Israelis: The Search for Justice, London, 1969, p. 10.
- (81) Zu'aitir, al-Watha'iq al-Filastiniyah, p. 70.
- (82) Palestine Royal Commission, Official Communique No. 9/37, 1036, p. 4.
- (83) Ibid., see also Ahmad 'Adel Al-Jader, Athr Qawanin Al-Intidab al-Baritani fi Iqamat al-Waten al-Qawmi al-Yahudi fi Filastin (The Implications of British Mandatory Laws in Creating the Jewish National Home), Baghdad, 1982, p. 57.
- (84) Ann M. Lesch, The Frustration of a Nationalist Movement, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1974, p. 74.
- (85) Ibid.
- (86) cmd. 1708, British Parliamentary Papers, 1922, pp. 3-5.

- (87) Ingrams, Palestine Papers 1917-1922, p. 94.
- (88) For a full text of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, see Great Britain Parliamentary Papers, 1920, Treaty Series No. 11, cmd. 964, pp. 11-12, see also Laqueur, The Arab-Israel Reader, pp. 34-42, and M. Darwazah, al-Qadiyyah al-Falastiniyah. However, for further observations on the Mandate see Zu'aitir, Watha'iq al-Haraka, pp. 70-72.
- (89) Lesch, The Frustration of a Nationalist Movement, p. 69.
- (90) Mousa Alami, The Future of Palestine, Beirut, 1970, p. 14.
- (91) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 15.
- (92) Khouri, The Arab-Israeli Dilemma, p. 17.
- (93) Alami, The Future of Palestine, pp. 15-17.
- (94) Abboushi, The Unmaking of Palestine, p. 12.
- (95) The Palin Commission of 1929, mentioned in A Survey of Palestine, vol. I, p. 17. For the Haycraft Commission of 1921, see cmd. 1540 in A Survey of Palestine, vol. I, p. 18. For the Shaw Commission of 1930, see cmd. 3530, *Ibid.*, pp. 24-25; and for the Royal (Peel) Commission of 1937, see cmd. 5947, *Ibid.*, p. (96) Sami Hadawi, Bitter Harvest: Palestine 1914-1967, New York, 1967, p. 60