APPROACH TO PALESTINE
To

ALBERT HOURANI

from whose unpublished work
on Palestine
much of the first part of this book
has been derived
To write news in its perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found.... An ambassador is said to be a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country: a news-writer is a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit. To these compositions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame and indifference to truth are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell today what he intends to contradict tomorrow; he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant....

In a time of war the nation is always of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy; they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarcely anything awakens attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins....

Among the calamities of war be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates, and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relater of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

SAMUEL JOHNSON
The Idler, 11th November 1758
PREFACE

ALMOST every man who served in the Middle East has taken an interest in the problem of Palestine. Almost every writer who has sniffed the Levant has given his views about it. During the last thirty years, experts have made frequent reports, and Arabs and Jews have protested with words and gunpowder before a worldwide gallery. Millions of impassioned phrases have poured from a thousand quivering pens. Good-natured men in the West have sacrificed time and money to hurl themselves into the cause of either side with the abandon of converts. Political campaigns in Western countries have been influenced by events in an Eastern country the size of Wales. And the more the actors protest and the more the partisans in the gallery cheer, the less likely it becomes that the problem will be settled justly. For the problem of Palestine is distorted because it is generally argued in terms either of emotion or of political or strategic expediency.

The minds of men are rightly filled with horror at the fate of European Jewry. But in the West, in addition to the horror, there is a sense of guilt. Britain and America could have done more to help the Jews than they have done. And anti-Semitism is always lurking. Now and then it erupts in the East End of London or in New York. But it simmers in both countries, though it is more obvious in the States where Jews are refused admittance to various hotels and clubs. The rich Jew is marked; the rich Gentile is unnoticed. Fascism showed how easy it was to stir up envy and hatred of the Jews. Smug racial discrimina-
tion in the West shows how easy it is to keep resentment simmering.

The two democracies regard the fate of Jews in Europe with horror mixed with guilt. The Zionists regard starving Jews in Europe as we would regard starving Britons in Europe who were not allowed admittance into England. The Arabs look on them as potential recruits to the forces of the enemy within their gates. The word ‘Jew’ has a highly emotional content.

The problem is also discussed in terms of expediency. The British Government, for instance, is concerned with the pipe-line from Iraq which runs out at Haifa and with the need for security across the lines of communication of the British Empire. But those who discuss Palestine in terms of expediency reach imponderables such as the relative weight of the Jewish influence on the American Senate compared with the weight of anti-British sentiment in Baghdad.

The problem has been so confused by emotion and expediency that Gentiles often do not pause to consider whether Zionism is the solution of the Jewish problem. It is too easily assumed that the rights of Jews and Arabs are of equal weight and cancel each other. Indeed the popular view of the problem is that it springs from a conflict of two rights, and that it is therefore Britain’s duty to hold the balance between the two. But surely it is necessary to enquire whether the conflict is really one of right against right, and whether the two sets of claims are equally valid? It would be neither just nor wise to hold the balance evenly between right and wrong.

All that this little book hopes to do is to provide a short means of approach to the problem. The first section makes no claim whatsoever to originality. (Indeed, much of it has been taken verbatim from the unpublished work of Albert Hourani.) It is merely an attempt to shorten that
PREFACE

approach to the problem which lies through the past. The second section makes no claim to objectivity. On the contrary; it is deliberately presented subjectively as being what the writer saw in Palestine in March 1947.

The approach has been made without emotional prejudice.

The ordinary Englishman who believes we have expended much effort in giving Jewry 'a local habitation and a name' is apt to feel angry that this effort, which he believes has been entirely humane, should have produced in the second generation so violent a reaction. But anger clouds the problem. The Jewish reaction is against centuries of oppression. It is not surprising that Jews are clever; it is surprising that so many of them are kind and gentle.

Lastly, it is wrong to assume that if a man is fond of the Arabs he must be 'against' the Jews. Both Arabs and Jews are Semitic. But economics and a narrow nationalism have accentuated the points of difference between them. And in the East they have grown provincial in outlook. The waste of their ability is sad; for the world has much to learn from the Semitic genius.
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Part One

HISTORICAL
I

THE PAST

'The present problem of Palestine, indeed, is unintelligible without a knowledge of the history that lies behind it. No other problem of our time is rooted so deeply in the past.'


During the course of the second millenium B.C. three new racial elements were injected into the lands which lie along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. These were the races of the Philistines and the Israelites in the south and the Aramaeans in the north. It is important to stress that the Israelites and Aramaeans, because they were Semites, were in time able to absorb the Canaanite and Amorite inhabitants of the land they subdued, but the Philistines were unable to do this. They were not Semites but Aegean foreigners from Crete:

'uncircumcised strangers with whom it was impossible for the Semites to amalgamate. The final victory of Israel over the Philistines was as natural a result as the victory of Saladin over the Crusaders.'¹

By about 1100 B.C. the Israelites had conceived the idea of one indivisible God and had incorporated what they believed to be His commandments in the Mosaic Code. The Book of Exodus clearly shows the primitive tribal society, little different from the life of Semitic tribes

¹ The Ancient History of the Near East, by H. R. Hall.
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today, as its laws illustrate:

‘And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a
rod, and he die under his hand; he shall be surely
punished.
‘Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall
not be punished: he is his money.
‘If men strive, and hurt a woman with child so that
her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he
shall be surely punished, according as the woman’s hus-
band will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges
determine.
‘And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life
for life.
‘Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.
‘Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for
stripe....
‘And if one man’s ox hurt another’s that he die; then
they shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it;
and the dead ox also they shall divide.
‘Or if it be known that the ox hath used to push in
time past, and his owner hath not kept him in; he shall
surely pay ox for ox; and the dead shall be his own....
And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and
lie with her; he shall surely endow her to be his wife.
‘If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he
shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.
‘Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.’
Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to
death.’

The period of the Judges was a period of tribal
disunion and constant conflict with the neighbouring foes.
It is a period of a nation in the making. But on Solomon’s

1 The Old Testament, Book of Exodus. Ch. 21 v. 20—56 and
Ch. 22 v. 16—19.
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death a decline set in. The northern tribes broke away and established a separate Kingdom centred round Samaria. During the years 715-721 B.C. Palestine was conquered. The northern Kingdom was incorporated in the Assyrian Empire, Samaria was destroyed, and the wealthier section of the population were deported. About 585 B.C. the southern Kingdom of Judah was conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem was sacked and most of the people were deported to Babylon.

In 539 B.C. Cyrus occupied Babylon and permitted the exiles to go back to Judea. But some remained in Iraq. During the next four centuries the Mosaic law became a binding code of social life as well as of religious observance.

Three events changed the nature of the Jewish people and their history. The first was the spread of Hellenism. An attempt was made to force the Jews to adopt Greek gods and ways of life. Against this the Jews revolted under the Maccabees, and from 150 B.C. onwards, they not only recovered their independence but extended their control. The second event was the imposition of Roman rule. In 63 B.C. Pompey stormed Jerusalem. Never since then has Palestine been an independent State. Though Palestine was now an unruly Roman Province, it was in the Roman period that the Jews acquired those characteristics of a trading and urban people which they still retain. However, the national spirit of the Jews was so strong that in 70 and in 132 A.D. there were various revolts against Roman authorities, until Rome determined to make further revolts impossible. In 135 A.D. Jerusalem was destroyed and its site ploughed up. Many of the population were put to death and many more carried off into slavery. The third event was the rise of Christianity and its rejection by the Jews. This fundamentally changed the attitude of the Jews to the surrounding world and
the surrounding world to the Jews.

After 135 A.D. the population of Palestine steadily diminished, while the Jews who had spread themselves all over the world increased and multiplied. The dispersed Jews acquired the over-sensitive, suspicious mentality of refugees. They withdrew into a closed community, because of their desire to preserve their heritage and religion. Their very image of the Messiah changed. He became the Saviour who would lead the dispersed people back to Israel. Socially they withdrew into a select group governing their communal life by their own religious code. It was their failure to establish normal relations with the surrounding world as much as the Gentiles' distrust of them which created the Ghetto.

'Ve the history of Jewish Palestine, thus ended,' concludes the 1937 report, 'had been enacted for the most part in a country about the size of Wales: but it constitutes one of the great chapters in the story of mankind. By two primary achievements—the development of the first crude worship of Jehovah into a highly spiritual monotheism, and the embodiment of this faith and of the social and political ideals it inspired in immortal prose and poetry—the gift of Hebraism in ancient Palestine to the modern world must rank with the gifts of ancient Greece and Rome. Christians, moreover, cannot forget that Jesus was a Jew who lived on Jewish soil and founded His gospel on a basis of Jewish life and thought.'

For five hundred years Palestine remained under Roman and Byzantine rule. But in 621 A.D. the Prophet Mohammed began to preach in Arabia, and the Moslem religion was the result of his teaching. The enthusiasm produced by the new religion caused a vast surge of energy amongst the Arabs living in the Arabian Peninsula. The tide of Islam pushed sea-ward across the desert and

1 Palestine Royal Commission Report, July 1937.
poured over Syria, Iraq, Persia and Egypt, along the whole length of the North African coast and eventually to Spain. Within one hundred years of the death of the Prophet, the Arabs had conquered an Empire which extended from the Pyrenees to the plains of India. The Arabs who occupied Palestine in the seventh century were few, and they were soon absorbed into the already existing population. But they gave their language, their new religion and their traditions to that population. It is because of that cultural gift and not because of racial origin that the population is now called ‘Arab’. The Arabs of Palestine today are thus the descendents of people who lived there long before the Jews migrated from the oppression of Pharaoh in Egypt.

Essentially, however, the relevance of the past is this: The Zionists believe that they have an historic connexion with Palestine of three thousand years and they believe that they are the only independent State that ever existed in that country. The swarm of Jews in the Ghetto of Eastern Europe always felt themselves represented by the remnant of their race who were keeping a foot-hold in Palestine against the day of the coming of the Messiah. Their belief in the Divine Presence and their eventual return to Palestine mainly accounted for the courage and tenacity with which the dispersed Jews clung to their faith and endured persecution. The emotional climate amongst the dispersed Jews was thus always favourable to a return to Zion.

The Zionists therefore produce the argument that their historic connexion gives them a right to Palestine. But what are the grounds of right by which a nation, any nation, can claim the country which it occupies? Long possession. The Americans, the British, the French, the Germans and the Japanese have no claim to the countries in which they live, except possession. The Italians
have as much claim to Southern England by right of the Roman Conquest as the Jews have to Palestine by their occupation of it some two thousand years ago. The fact remains that Palestine is an Arab country. Its present population is 1,700,000, of whom 1,108,000 are Arabs who have lived there for three hundred years. Many of them are the descendents of people who lived there long before. During the centuries after the Moslem Conquest Palestine may have become poor and neglected, but to the Arabs it was always their country, their home, the land in which their people for centuries past had lived and left their graves. And in the religious life of the Moslem world, after Mecca and Medina, Jerusalem is the holiest city. It contains some of the most beautiful and sacred mosques. And from the Rock, by the Mosque al Aqsa Moslems believe that the Prophet ascended on his magic steed to heaven.

But it is not only Moslems and Jews who feel deeply concerned with Palestine. The mystical conviction that Palestine was Holy to the Christians found expression in the impulse of the Crusades. From 1095 onwards, a series of invasions, inspired partly by the vision of recovering the Holy Sepulchre and partly by more material aims, were launched from Christian Europe. An increasing flow of knights and pilgrims set out year by year to defend the Kingdom of Jerusalem which had been precariously established. They maintained the kingdom until towards the end of the twelfth century, and they held a foothold on the coast for another century, after which the whole of Palestine reverted to Moslem rule.

Palestine is thus holy to Moslems and Christians and Jews. But though there has always been a small Jewish minority in Palestine and a small Arabic-speaking Christian minority, the fact remains that Palestine is an Arab land.
THE DISPERSION

The dispersion had begun long before the 135 A.D. In Iraq, for example, a large Jewish community had grown out of the group of exiles who did not return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. By the time of the destruction of Jerusalem successive waves of emigration had increased the Jewish communities in Iraq and in Egypt and had flowed also into Syria and the Yemen and across the Mediterranean to Greece and Italy. Five centuries later another wave followed on the heels of the Arab Conquest along the north-west of Africa and into Spain. But a small number of Jews flourished throughout the centuries of medieval Arab rule in Palestine. According to Moslem doctrine Jews and Christians are 'people of the Book', believers in God, in Revelation and the Day of Judgment. They are neither to be persecuted nor forced to become Moslems. The era of persecution began, not in the Moslem world but in the Christian. Jews who had penetrated into Italy, Germany and England suffered from social restrictions. Usury was forbidden to the Christians by the Church and the Jew became a money-lender. The Jews were useful, but they were not liked. In addition to the normal distrust of anything that is foreign or strange, there was the general idea that on all Jews lay the guilt of the Crucifixion. During the period of the Crusades it soon became as much an act of piety to kill Jews in Europe as to kill Saracens in the Holy Land. From the time of the decline of the Roman Empire until the French Revolution Jews were excluded from Euro-
pean life, and were denied political and civil equality. But there was a difference in the treatment of Jews in western and in southern Europe. In the west, the Jews gained political and social equality, first in France as a result of the Revolution, then all over the country during the nineteenth century—in Italy in 1870, in Germany in 1871, in England in 1890. But in Eastern Europe a sort of territorial ghetto, the 'Pale of Settlement', had been established from the Baltic north of Warsaw to the Black Sea near Odessa to keep the Jews from penetrating Russia.

In 1881 the Tsar Alexander II was assassinated. The Jews were made the scapegoats. In 1881 the great Russian pogroms began. They lasted until 1905. Tens of thousands of refugees fled westward. But there was an essential difference in outlook between the Jewish residents in the west and the furtive, wretched newcomers from the east. The refugees settled once more in closed communities often without learning the language of the new country in which they were living. They turned in on themselves, they became all the more self-conscious of being Jews. Meanwhile, the culture and opportunities of Europe seemed to open themselves increasingly to the Jews of the west, and a proportion of them tried to assimilate themselves as much as they could with the people of the country in which they were living. Thus the Jews from the east were growing more conscious of the importance of Jewry as a nation, of the right of a Jew to be a Jew, while the Jews in England and in France and in Germany and America were doing their best to become English, French, German or American.

This conflict has remained in the Zionist movement. The aim of the Zionist is to return a considerable proportion of the Jews to Palestine. The inspiring power of Zionism lies in the Messianism of the Jews, their belief
that the fulfilment of their mission requires their return to Palestine and their careful preservation of customs and rights which keep the memory of Palestine alive in their minds.

When the Zionist movement began there were three important elements. First, there were the assimilated western Jews, of the type of Theodore Herzl, a Viennese playwright, the founder and president of the Zionist organization, who approached the Jewish question in western intellectual terms as a world problem to be solved, and who advocated Zionism as a political programme and not as an article of faith. Secondly, there were the Russian and eastern European Zionists, who cared little at the beginning for the political programme but for whom the essential thing was to return to Palestine in mass and to re-colonise the land. Thirdly, there were the religious Zionists who believed that a healthy Jewry required a spiritual and cultural centre, which must be in Palestine, where the Jewish religious heritage should be preserved and expanded.

The ‘Lovers of Zion’ as the eastern Europeans called themselves from 1880 onwards, established a number of agricultural colonies with the financial aid of Lord Rothschild and lived at peace with their neighbours. But when the western political Zionists established the Zionist organization with a specifically political programme, they gradually impregnated the whole movement with their political ideology. The first two elements fused, and the conflict in the movement became between the Nationalists who believed in a Zionist State and the religious Zionists who still believed that the Jews had a religious mission in the world and who entered Palestine as a man might enter a monastery. This conflict still remains in the Zionist movement today.
III

THE ARAB AWAKENING

MORE or less at the same time as the Zionist movement was gathering strength among the scattered Jews of Europe, the Nationalist movement was growing among the Arabs. The creative spirit of the Arab had been stirred to life by Islam and the Arab Conquests. But after the first few centuries of fertility it gradually decayed. The great Arab Empire collapsed in the fourteenth century under the waves of assaults from wild Turkish raiders from Central Asia. Political domination of the east passed from the Arabs to the Turks. But the Turks were never able to bring the Arabs to complete submission. Turkish garrisons held the big cities, but the country was in the hands of tribes and petty dynasties, most of them Arab.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the machinery of the Ottoman Government was in decay and the Arab cultural heritage was neglected. But in the second half of the nineteenth century the spirit of freedom and liberalism which spread through Europe penetrated the Arab world. The Arab communities began to be affected not only by the goods and armies of the western world but by its ideas and peoples. This was partly the result of the Christian missions, mainly French and American, and partly the result of the army officers, technicians and officials which the Ottoman and Egyptian Governments borrowed in order to strengthen themselves to meet the challenge of European power. Gradually there grew up an active and educated group, with Cairo and Beirut as their two main centres. The Arab zest for learning
revived and there sprang up an intense interest in western civilization.

This western influence has affected Arab Nationalism today. Young educated Arabs today are still attached by habit to their traditional way of life, yet they are fascinated by the ways of the western countries. They are in danger of becoming men forced to live in two worlds, to neither of which they belong. Arab society is still restless and self-divided, torn between the old world of its religion and tradition and the new world of the west. This makes Arab Nationalism at once sensitive and fiery. If the new self-conscious Arabs receive justice and friendship from the west, they will follow the sound course of taking all that is valuable from western life to enrich their own souls, but if they meet condescension or intolerance they will turn from the west taking nothing from it except its material strength.

Largely as the result of the impact of western civilization, the Arab world revived. For many years before the 1914 war, the Arab Province had been restive under the rule of the Sultan of Constantinople. Societies had been established for the study of the Arab golden age and the revival of Arabic literature. In 1908, the Young Turks came into power; but it was soon realised that their 'Committee of Union and Progress' stood for 'Turkification'. Arab Nationalism was driven underground, and secret societies began to be formed in Paris, Constantinople, Cairo, Damascus and Beirut. Gradually the Arab movement spread, and with it the intention to plan if possible a general Arab rising and to create an independent and united Arab State with its capital at Damascus. Such was the position when on 31st October 1914 the Ottoman Empire entered the war against the allies.
IV

CONFLICTING PROMISES

TWO dangers were at once apparent to the Allied Powers. Syria and Palestine might be made the base for a Turco-German attack on the Suez Canal; and the prestige of the Caliphate might be used in an attempt to raise all Islam against the Allies in a Jihad or Holy War. To meet the first danger troops were concentrated in Egypt. To meet the second, negotiations were opened with Hussein, Sherif and Emir of Mecca and hereditary guardian of the Moslem Holy Places of Mecca and Medina. Hussein and his people had long cherished similar ideas of throwing off the Turkish yoke to those of the Syrian nationalists, and it was intimated to him that his participation in the War on the Allies' side might lead to that result. When the Sultan-Caliph proclaimed the Jihad at Constantinople in November, Hussein refused to allow it to be preached in the mosques of the Holy Cities. But he took no further action, and the next move came from the British Side. 1

The first episode in the squalid history of negotiations made by the British Government during the first world war began in the Middle East with the exchange of letters between Sir Henry McMahon, the High Commissioner in Egypt, representing the British Government, and the Arabs, represented by Sherif Hussein, Emir of Mecca. In return for the pledge given by Great Britain in this agreement to recognise an independent and united Arab State east of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, the Arabs entered the war in 1916. The Arabs, working from

1 Palestine Royal Commission Report, July 1937.

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CONFLICTING PROMISES

Akaba under Feisal and Lawrence, became the virtual right wing of Allenby's army in Sinai. That the Arabs rendered the Allied Cause valuable assistance and completely fulfilled their side of the bargain has never been questioned. The only point under dispute is whether the British pledge included Palestine or not. The correspondence between Hussein and McMahon which began in July 1915 and finished in January 1916 is too long and complicated to examine here. For over twenty years the British Government refused to publish the correspondence. When finally it was published in 1939, the Committee presided over by Lord Maugham, then Lord Chancellor, considered the Arab argument and informed the Arabs that their contention had 'greater force than had hitherto appeared' and continued:

'Furthermore, the United Kingdom representatives have informed the Arab representatives that they agree that Palestine was included in the area claimed by the Sherif of Mecca in his letter of July 14th 1915, and that unless Palestine was excluded from that area later in the correspondence it must be regarded as having been included in the area in which Great Britain was to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs. They maintain that on a proper construction of the correspondence Palestine was in fact excluded' (i.e. mainly because of the reservation made in regard to areas claimed by France). 'But they agree that the language in which its exclusion was expressed was not so specific and unmistakable as it was thought to be at the time.' ¹

But whether or not the British Government had intended to include Palestine in the promise of Arab independence, it is certain that the Arabs thought that it was included and that no attempt was made at the time to disillusion them. And Lord Grey, who was Foreign

¹ Cmd. No. 5964.
CONFLICTING PROMISES

Secretary when the McMahon pledge was given, admitted that there was inconsistency between the pledge given to the Arabs and the subsequent Balfour Declaration.

Now that Turkey was in the war, the Allies began to be concerned with the prospect of the disruption of the Ottoman Empire. The Sykes-Picot Agreement in which the Allies helped themselves to a slice of the Ottoman territories, was entered into by Great Britain with France and Russia in the Spring of 1916. It was an agreement which divided up units of the Ottoman Empire entirely in order to satisfy Allied greed, and it was done without any regard for the welfare of the peoples living in the territories thus divided. It was also a flagrant breach of the Hussein-McMahon Agreement. In November 1917, when the Bolshevik party gained power in Russia, they published the text of the Agreement, and the Turkish Commander-in-chief in Syria quickly sent copies of the Treaty to Hussein with the object of showing him that Great Britain had betrayed the pledges given to the Arabs. Hussein sent these communications to the British Government for an explanation. An explanation came in an official letter from Lt. Col. J. R. Bassett, the British Agent in Jedda. In it the British Government categorically reaffirmed their former pledge with regard to the liberation of the Arab peoples. No exception of Palestine was made in these reaffirmations and assurances.

Meanwhile, after several months of close communication with the Jewish leaders in England, on 2nd November 1917 the British Government issued, in the form of a letter from Mr. A. J. (later Lord) Balfour, then Foreign Secretary, to Lord Rothschild, a declaration of sympathy with Zionist aspirations, of which the following is the text:

'I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf
CONFLICTING PROMISES

of His Majesty’s Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet:

“His Majesty’s Government view with favour 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.”

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.” 1

The wording of the document is important. Zionists wanted the phrase, ‘the establishment of Palestine as the National Home’ used. The fact that the declaration speaks of ‘the establishment in Palestine of a National Home’ obviously shows the intention of supporting a smaller establishment. But although it did not promise them all that they had hoped, there is no doubt that the Balfour Declaration was welcomed everywhere by the Zionists as the foundation on which to build after the war. The Jews accepted the Declaration in good faith.

When the news of the Balfour Declaration reached Sherif Hussein, he was greatly disturbed by it and asked for a definition of its meaning and scope. Commander Hogarth was sent to him in January 1918 with the assurance that the realization of the Zionist idea would only be facilitated ‘in so far as would be consistent with the political and economic freedom of the Arab population’ 2 (whereas the Declaration only spoke of their civil and religious rights). Hussein’s anxiety was allayed, and he replied that in so far as the aim of the Balfour

1 The Balfour Declaration.
2 Cmd. No. 5964.
CONFICTING PROMISES

Declaration was to rescue Jews from persecution, he would use his influence to further that aim. But he made it plain that there could be no question of surrendering the Arab claim to sovereignty.

The British Government’s motives in producing the Balfour Declaration at the time were first to win over the powerful Zionist elements in Europe, and secondly, to secure Palestine as a bulwark to British possession in Egypt and as an overland route to the East. The war had shown that any foreign power in Palestine could menace the Suez Canal. In the Sykes-Picot carve-up, France claimed Syria. It therefore became important for Great Britain to interpose a buffer between Syria and the Suez Canal. It may be that the Zionists were given a plain hint that in return for the Declaration they would ask for British control at the Peace Conference. Seen in this light, the Declaration appears, not as an historic document for justice, but as part of a political bargain. One thing is certain. The contradiction between various declarations made by the British Government was the fault neither of the Jews, nor the Arabs but only of the British.

‘The plain fact is that contradictory promises of equal importance to the people concerned were made by the British authorities, and that in each case they were accepted in good faith by the recipient.’

The fears aroused by both the Balfour Declaration and the Sykes-Picot agreement caused a group of seven representative Arabs in Cairo to address a memorandum to the British Government. In reply, the British Government quoted the proclamation made by the Commander-in-chief on the occasion of the capture of Jerusalem in December 1917, i.e. only a month after the issuing

1 The Emergence of the Jewish Problem, James Parkes.
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of the Balfour Declaration. In this proclamation it was officially stated that the policy of the British Government towards Palestine was that the future government of that territory should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed. The Arab leaders were assured that this would always be the policy of H.M.G.

To sum up: during the years between 1914 and 1918 the British Government made various promises. The Jews definitely regarded the Balfour Declaration as a promise that Palestine should be their National Home. (They ignored the difference between the phrases ‘the establishment of Palestine as the National Home’ and ‘the establishment in Palestine of a National Home’.) It may or it may not be true that the decision of the Allied Powers after the war to open Palestine to the Jews was a breach of their promises to the Arabs. What is certain is that the general post-war settlements of the Arab world, as a whole, was a breach of those promises. The Arabs had fought on the Allied side in the hope of independence. When the war ended the more advanced parts of Arab Asia—geographically, Syria and Iraq—were placed under Mandatory Government which seemed likely to be little more than disguised colonial rule. Arab Asia was partitioned into a number of small, artificial units. (For instance, today there are eight frontier police checks between Amman and Damascus.) The enforcement of a Zionist Policy in Palestine was thus only a part of the unsatisfactory and unjust general policy imposed by the European powers upon the Arabs against their will. Thus from the beginning, resentment of broken promises intensified the Arab opposition to Zionism. The present conflict in Palestine is thus rooted in events of two thousand years ago. But the bloodshed and bitterness of today is caused by contradictory promises made by Great Britain twenty years ago for motives of self-interest.
THE ARABS: 1919—1939

The spectacular success of the Zionist immigrants during the years between the two wars has sometimes overlaid the development which was taking place in the Arab community. In agriculture, the Arab citrus groves were extended and improved. It was the Arab who first placed the Jaffa orange on the world market. Even today the Arab still owns more than fifty per cent of the area planted with citrus. The Arabs are still responsible for by far the larger proportion of the country's agricultural produce. In 1945 its value was LP 17,000,000, while that of Jewish produce was LP 4,500,000.

Many Englishmen who have noticed the change and improvement of conditions in Palestine have attributed it to the example and help of the Jews. But it is not only Arab Palestine which is changing and progressing; it is the whole Arab world. The inter-war years were a period of social change and of political evolution. There were two influences at work. The first of these was the struggle for national independence. The land which in 1914 was one unity had been split up by the Allies, so that France had the mandate over the Lebanon and Syria, while Britain had the mandate over Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq. The new countries thus formed became infected with a narrow nationalism. There was a frantic urge towards national independence. By 1939 all the countries surrounding Palestine had at last taken some steps towards self-government. The greater part of the Arabian

1 Much in chapters 5 to 9 has been taken verbatim from the unpublished work of Albert Hourani.
Peninsula was united under Ibn Saud in the independent kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Egypt and Iraq had negotiated Treaties of alliance with Great Britain and had been accepted as members of the League of Nations. Syria and the Lebanon had negotiated similar treaties with France, who had, however, failed to ratify them; but at least they possessed the form of constitutional self-government. Transjordan also was a self-governing principality in treaty relations with Great Britain.

The second influence was towards unity between the Arab countries. It is important to remember that before 1918 Arab Nationalism had aimed at the creation of a single state in Arab Asia. The second influence was a continuation of that aim. The more far-seeing Arabs saw that the different systems of law, government and education were increasing local vested interests. They realised that time was working against them, and therefore their movements towards unity became more urgent.

Both these developments had far-reaching effects on the Arabs in Palestine. While every other country moved slowly towards self-government, the Arabs found themselves subjected indefinitely to mandatory rule. They knew that it was Britain’s obligation towards the Zionists, under the Mandate, which prevented them from attaining self-government. They could see that as year by year the Jewish community became larger and nearer to becoming a majority, they were in danger of becoming a minority, of becoming subject to an alien government. Moreover, they saw their country being cut off from unity with the rest of the Arab world which had obtained independence. It is certain that Arab opposition to Zionism would not have been so violent if the Palestinian Arabs had not felt themselves being cut off from the body of the Arab nation.

On the 24th July 1922 the draft Mandate for Palestine
had been confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations. Even before the Palestine Mandate went into effect, Arab unrest had shown itself by riots in 1920 and 1921. The Churchill White Paper of 1922 was an effort to define the term 'National Home' with the intention of calming Arab fears. The Paper disclaimed the intention of creating a Jewish State in Palestine and defined the National Home in terms of a cultural Jewish community. Unfortunately, it spoke of the 'economic absorptive capacity' as a limiting factor to immigration. The Arabs were quick to realise that this economic standard was dangerous to them; for the Zionists were able to claim that it should be the sole criterion of immigration—irrespective of political considerations. But the National Home was still no more than an experiment. Some 16,000 Jews had entered Palestine in 1920 and 1921; the Arab population was about 600,000 and it seemed as if it would be a long time before the Jews could become a majority in the country.

The years between 1923 and 1926 were ones of relative peace. But by 1929 the population which in 1922 stood at 757,000, formed of slightly more than eleven per cent of Jews, had increased to 960,000, of whom more than sixteen per cent were Jews. In 1929 Arab dissatisfaction broke out in serious riots. The Shaw Commission, which was sent out to investigate, recommended a new statement of policy, and in October 1930, the Passfield White Paper was issued; but in deference to Zionist protest it was modified, and the second attempt to solve the Palestine problem failed. By 1936 the population had grown to 1,366,000 persons, of whom twenty eight per cent were Jews. There were more riots, and (more important) there was a general strike of the whole Arab population. Another commission was sent out to investigate the situation. The Peel Report was issued on 7th July 1937. It suggested
Partition. Its suggestions were rejected by both Arabs and Jews.

Two factors largely affected the Arab Revolt of 1936-9. The first was the extreme brutality of the methods used by the British to suppress it. Arab boys were executed for being found in possession of a few rounds of ammunition; Arab villages were razed to the ground; prisoners were tortured; heavy fines were imposed on any person suspected of harbouring a fugitive. The second factor was the effective support of the whole Arab world for the Arabs in Palestine. In the great towns of the Levant, committees for the defence of Palestine were formed. In the later period of the revolt, after the Arab Higher Committee had been declared illegal, the revolt was directed from the Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, and could not have continued without the active support of the peoples of these countries. The most important result of this was that the world at last recognised that the events in Palestine concerned not only Jews throughout the world, but also Arabs throughout the world. In 1939 the Arab Governments of Egypt, Saudi-Arabia, Yemen, Iraq and Transjordan were invited to participate together with representatives of Palestinian Arabs in the London conference to discuss the problem.
VI

THE JEWS: 1919—1939

A Zionist commission went to Palestine in the Spring of 1918 to form a link between the British, the Jews and the Arabs and to co-ordinate relief work. It found an impoverished Jewish nation reduced by the war to little more than 50,000. On the 3rd January 1919 Dr. Weizmann signed a vague and unofficial Treaty of friendship with the Emir Feisal. The text, which is in English, speaks of 'the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people', and says that 'the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine'.

However, Feisal's postscript in Arab to the agreement must also be remembered.

'Provided the Arabs obtain their independence as demanded in my Memorandum dated 4 January 1919, to the Foreign Office of the Government of Great Britain, I shall concur in the above articles. But if the slightest modification or departure were to be made I shall not then be bound by a single word of the present

1 Unofficially, according to Sir Ronald Storrs, then Military Governor of Jerusalem, its task was 'to produce certain faits accomplis creating an atmosphere favourable to the (Zionist) project, and stimulating to financial supporters, before the assembly of the Peace Conference'. Orientations, p. 405.

2 The Arab Awakening, George Antonius.
Agreement which shall be deemed void and of no account or validity, and I shall not be answerable in any way whatsoever.'

Faisal Ibn Husayn (in Arabic)
Chaim Weizmann.

The conflict between the two extremes of Zionism still continued. At one extreme were the spiritual or cultural Zionist who openly and sincerely gave up all ideas of political or a Jewish State in Palestine and advocated simply the establishment of a spiritual centre for the Jews, a symbol of the return to Zionism, a religious centre for the Jews scattered all over the world. At the other extreme were the Revisionists, who continued to state openly their maximum demands and to ask for the immediate establishment of a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan. Even Dr. Weizmann spoke of making Palestine ‘as Jewish as England is English’. The orthodox Zionists, however, decided to concentrate on one demand —immigration. They realised that this was the humanitarian method to gain their political end of dominating the country.

Meanwhile, the Jewish national home progressed. And the White paper of 1922 was able to describe it in the following words: ¹

¹ Cmd. No. 1700, p. 19.
direction of its religious affairs. Its business is conducted in Hebrew as a vernacular language, and a Hebrew press serves its needs. It has its distinctive intellectual life and displays considerable economic activity. This community, then, with its town and country population, its political, religious and social organisations, its own language, its own life, has in fact "national" characteristics.'

British opinion has been apt to reproach the Zionist leaders with their failure to work satisfactorily with their Semitic cousins. The explanation has been brilliantly put by James Parkes:

'An outsider might feel that he could properly reproach the Zionist leaders with neglecting their basic task when they failed to win the existing majority of the occupants of the country to their project. But a Zionist leader who did so would, in fact, have deserted and been rejected by his own people. They would never have accepted the abatement of their claims which his actions would have involved. The reason is simple. It is to be found in the fluctuating but steadily increasing pressure on Jewish populations elsewhere during all these years. Life worsened for millions of Jews until it became intolerable. A Zionist leader could only have one thought in his head—to insist all the time on the maximum possible demands, for those demands meant the lives of his people. Every other door was shut, or at best ajar. Only into Palestine could a Jew enter 'of right and not on sufferance'. Had the situation been different, had the optimistic expectations of the Peace Treaties materialized and only those Jews who were fired with the realisation of a vision and the fulfilment of a romantic dream sought to enter the country, then indeed the Home might have grown slowly and securely on a basis of Arab goodwill. But matters turned out differently. At the very moment
when the Zionist Commission entered the country Jews were being murdered in the Ukraine, and within a decade of the giving of the Declaration antisemitism was rampant throughout eastern Europe. Palestine was a refuge, not a romance, a necessity, not a luxury. This then is the answer to the "outsider" at the beginning of the paragraph—that it could not be expected that Zionist leaders would have done anything other than they did—press for the maximum in season and out of season, and leave the British to deal with the Arabs.¹

The persecution of the Jews in Europe certainly caused the Zionist policy to grow more extreme. Unfortunately, the persecution coincided with another development more fatal to the persecuted Jews in Europe than the Arab hostility to the Zionists in Palestine. Severe restrictions were placed upon immigration into the United States and the British Commonwealth. It was this that made the western Jews turn towards Palestine. Had it not been for these restrictions, immigration into Britain and America would have provided a safety valve to the pressure of immigrants into Palestine. The persecution in Germany turned the religious enterprise in Palestine into a relief organisation. It was felt that every man, woman and child brought into Palestine was one more person saved from torture and death.

The prodigious efforts of the Zionists to obtain and develop land were successful. Many opponents of Zionism have argued that because the Zionist State is uneconomical and supported by world Jewry, its achievements are not remarkable. But although it is true that money can buy land and machinery, it was not money that turned the distinguished Jewish professor into a brick-

¹ The Emergence of the Jewish Problem, James Parkes.
layer,¹ the musician into a farmer, the businessman into a crossing-sweeper; it was an ideal. Unless one can understand not only the terrible impetus to provide immediate refuge for tortured people in Palestine, but also the concept of a new country, where the Jews of the world could speak their own language, worship in their own religion, and enjoy their own culture, the flaming passion which seared the hearts of the Zionists in the towns and villages of Palestine before the war is incomprehensible.

But though the sacrifice which individual Jews were prepared to make for the sake of creating a new country in Palestine was due to idealism, the persuasion of Jews living peacefully in Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Persia to come to Palestine during the period of Hitler aggression, was due to the determination of the Jewish Agency to convert State.

¹ 'During the two decades, Tel-Aviv developed from a garden suburb of Jaffa to a teeming industrial city, approaching 200,000 inhabitants, the biggest aggregation in the land... The valuable capital, however, which was introduced into the country was not of money, but the human capital of energy, brains and faith.' Judea Lives, by Norman Bentwich.
VII

THE BRITISH: 1919—1939

'If [H.M. Government's policy] is for facilitating the settlement of suitable and carefully selected Jewish colonists, then I feel sure no one will object to it. I thought that was what was meant when Mr. Balfour's original pronouncement was made. But if it is to permit irresponsible Zionists to manipulate the Government and ultimately to control the country, then it will certainly lead to very grave disaster. The permanent military charges will be very heavy. There will be continuous troubles throughout the country, checking its progress and reacting dangerously throughout the whole of the Middle East.'

Lord Sydenham,
Tuesday, 29th June 1920.

THE Mandate for Palestine was allotted to Great Britain by the Supreme Council at San Reno in 1920. The final draft of the Mandate was tentatively approved by the Council of the League of Nations in July 1922, and became effective in September 1923. No mention of any promise to the Arabs was in the Mandatory Statement, and there was not even an attempt to put them on the same footing as the Jews. The important parts of the statements are as follows:

¹ Most of the material in this chapter and the following chapter is taken from the unpublished work of Albert Hourani.
THE BRITISH 1919—1959

PREAMBLE

'The Council of the League of Nations:

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have agreed, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, to entrust to a Mandatory selected by the said Powers the administration of the territory of Palestine, which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire, within such boundaries as may be fixed by them; and

'Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on 2 November 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing should be done which might 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; and

'Whereas recognition had thereby been given to the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their national home in that country; and

'Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have selected His Britannic Majesty as the Mandatory for Palestine; and

'Whereas the mandate in respect of Palestine has been formulated in the following terms and submitted to the Council of the League for approval: and

'Whereas His Britannic Majesty has accepted the Mandate in respect of Palestine and undertaken to exercise it on behalf of the League of Nations in conformity with the following provisions; and

'Whereas by the afore-mentioned Article 22 (paragraph
8), it is provided that the degree of authority, control or administration to be exercised by the Mandatory, not having been previously agreed upon by the Members of the League, shall be explicitly defined by the Council of the League of Nations;

'Confirming the said mandate, defines its terms as follows:

**Article 2**

'The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, as laid down in the preamble, and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion.

**Article 3**

'The Mandatory shall, so far as circumstances permit, encourage local autonomy.

**Article 4**

'An appropriate Jewish agency shall be recognised as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration, to assist and take part in the development of the country.

'The Zionist organisation, so long as its organisation, and constitution are in the opinion of the Mandatory appropriate, shall be recognised as such agency. It shall take steps in consultation with His Britannic Majesty's Government to secure the co-operation or all Jews who
are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish national home.

Article 6

'The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced, shall facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish agency referred to in Article 4, close settlement by the Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes.

Article 7

'The Administration of Palestine shall be responsible for enacting a nationality law. There shall be included in this law provisions framed so as to facilitate the acquisition of Palestinian citizenship by Jews who take up their permanent residence in Palestine.

Article 11

'The Administration may arrange with the Jewish agency mentioned in Article 4 to construct or operate, upon fair and equitable terms, any public works, services and utilities, and to develop any of the natural resources of the country, in so far as these matters are not directly undertaken by the Administration. Any such arrangements shall provide that no profits distributed by such agency, directly or indirectly, shall exceed a reasonable rate of interest on the capital, and any further profits shall be utilised by it for the benefit of the country in a manner approved by the Administration.

Article 22

'English, Arabic and Hebrew shall be the official languages of Palestine. Any statement or inscription in
Arabic on stamps or money in Palestine shall be repeated in Hebrew, and any statement or inscription in Hebrew shall be repeated in Arabic. ¹

The Mandate system as a whole had been set out in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations; which stated that 'certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the tendering 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 principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory.' Those principles were not fully taken into account in the establishment of the British Mandate over Palestine; and the Arabs of Palestine have therefore always maintained that the Mandate, in so far as it contravenes the provisions of Article 22, is invalid. First the Mandate says nothing about the provisional independence of Palestine, and the mandatory administration in the last twenty years has not been that of a provisionally independent state receiving advice and assistance, but to all intents and purposes a crown colony. Secondly, the Mandate was granted to Great Britain, and the Mandatory was specifically enjoined to encourage Jewish settlement, in disregard of the findings of the King-Crane Commission ² which in 1919 reported to President Wilson that the majority of the inhabitants wanted no tutelage, but would prefer American to any other, and that they were strongly opposed to the execution of a pro-Zionist policy.

The truth is that the Mandate was drafted with two

¹ Mandate for Palestine. Cmd. No. 1760.
² This was to have been an international commission, but owing to the attitude of Britain and France, it ended by being exclusively American.
different sets of intentions in mind, and in two different spirits. On the one hand it was designed to conform as far as possible with Article 22 of the Covenant and with the Mandates over the surrounding countries. Thus Article 2 enjoined the Mandatory to take steps to secure the development of self-governing institutions and Article 3 recommended the encouragement of local autonomy, so far as circumstances permitted. On the other hand it was intended to carry out the promise contained in the Balfour Declaration. Thus Article 6 required the Administration to facilitate Jewish immigration and close settlement on the land, in co-operation with an appropriate Jewish agency; but with the proviso that the rights and position of other sections of the population should not be prejudiced.

It is apparent from these quotations that the mandatory Power was laid under two sorts of obligations which if not irreconcilable would at least be very difficult to reconcile with one another.

It is possible to argue that the multiplicity of British departments dealing with the Near East during the first world war was responsible for the confusion of promises. The Foreign Office, India Office, Arab Bureau in Cairo, Foreign Department in Delhi, the War Office and the Admiralty were all directly concerned with Arab policy. It is probable that at least part of the contradictory promises was the result of the lack of liaison between the various officers concerned. But after the first Great War, the incompatibility of the promises made respectively to the Arabs, the Jews and the French became obvious. In 1920-21 Arab disturbances broke out. The Heycroft Commission, appointed to investigate them, produced an explanation which still holds good: "The fundamental cause . . . was a feeling among the Arabs of discontent with, and hostility to, the Jews, due
to political and economic causes, and connected with Jewish immigration, and with their conception of Zionist policy as derived from Jewish exponents. It became obvious, moreover, that the Zionists were aiming for a Jewish majority in order to establish a Jewish State, but even so, Great Britain decided to proceed as if both promises were equally valid and equally capable of fulfilment.

The British Government started from the assumption that the claims of Arabs and Jews to Palestine were on the same level: that both had rights in the country and that to both of them Great Britain had incurred obligations which could not be disregarded. She had an obligation to facilitate Jewish immigration and settlement and the establishment of a National Home, and at the same time an obligation to safeguard the rights of the Arabs. Faced with this dual obligation and with the Arab insistence that the establishment of a Jewish National Home was itself an infringement of their rights, the British Government adopted two lines of policy: first it tried to interpret the concept of a National Home in such a way as to make it less unacceptable to the Arabs; and secondly, in so far as the claims of the two parties still remained incompatible it hoped to produce a change in the Arab attitude.

The first principle was already apparent in the refusal of the British Government to accept the Zionist draft of the Balfour Declaration. It inspired also the decision to exclude Transjordan from the scope of the British obligation to facilitate the establishment of a National Home. Finally it led to the issue of the Churchill White Paper of 1922, which defined the Jewish National Home more precisely than had previously been done, and declared that His Majesty’s Government had not ‘at any time contemplated . . . the disappearance or the subor-
dination of the Arabic population, language or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine.'

Looking back on the inter-war years, it seemed as if the British Government was actuated by a desperate optimism. When confronted with incompatibility between Jewish and Arab plans, it fell back upon the hopeful excuse that in time the prosperity and progress, which the Zionists would bring with them to Palestine together with the experience of living together in the same country, would reconcile the Arabs and Zionists and lead them to modify their political attitudes.¹

It was in this hope that the Government lived from 1922 to 1957, and it had one important consequence. So long as there was a possibility that sooner or later the Arabs would give up their opposition to Zionism, it was desirable to postpone the grant of self-governing institutions until such time as the Arab attitude had changed. If genuine self-government was established immediately, while the Arab majority was inflexibly opposed to Zionism, that would make impossible the fulfilment of British obligations to the Zionists. If, however, its establishment were postponed for some time, then the Arabs might become convinced of the advantages of Zionist settlement, and the representative institutions could safely be established without any danger of a conflict in regard to immigration. Hence arose one of the paradoxes of the Government's policy, that although the development of self-governing institutions was enjoined in the Mandate, in practice it was postponed because the

¹ In 1923 the Arabs refused the Palestine Government's offer of a legislative council.
majority of the population was known to be opposed to the other provisions of the Mandate. The majority was to be denied the right of controlling its political destiny until it should conform its policy to that of the minority, or until the minority had itself become a majority.

The report of the Royal Commission sent to investigate the disturbances of 1936 blasted the Government’s optimistic illusions. Starting from the assumption of the equal right of the two obligations, it stated categorically that all hopes of reconciling those obligations were vain; that the prospect of economic advantage, however great, would not remove the political objections of the Arabs to the establishment of the Jewish National Home; that Arab opposition was inflexible because based not simply upon a calculation of advantage or temporary suspicion and misunderstanding, but upon a conviction of right and the desire for independence; that the dual obligation could not be carried out under the mandatory system and that the Mandate was unworkable. It recognised also—and this was equally important—that the attempt to treat immigration as a technical question to be decided simply by reference to ‘economic absorptive capacity’ was unrealistic; immigration was essentially a political question.

The Peel report recommended partitioning Palestine into Jewish and Arab States. The Woodhead Commission did not arrive in Palestine until late in April. Its report was not published until November. It revealed that no plan of partition had been evolved which would offer much hope of success.

The British Government’s statement of policy which accompanied the publication of the Woodhead Report rejected partition as impracticable, but suggested that an agreement between the Arabs and the Jews might
still be possible. Representatives of the Palestinian Arabs were invited to confer with the British Government in London. The Arab delegation refused to meet with representatives of the Jews. There were conferences between the Government and the Jews, and the Government and the Arabs between 17th February and 17th March. The Committee presided over by Lord Maugham, then Lord Chancellor, considered the Arab argument, its conclusion was that:

‘His Majesty’s Government were not free to dispose of Palestine without regard for the wishes and interests of the inhabitants.’

On the 17th May 1939 the British Government published a new statement of policy. The 1939 White Paper announced that the obligation to foster any creation of a national home had been fulfilled and that Palestine with its existing population was to be prepared for self-government. The passage in which the White Paper summarised the implications of the Peel Report is so important as to deserve quotation in full:

‘In view of the Royal Commission, the association of the policy of the Balfour Declaration with the Mandate system implied the belief that Arab hostility to the former would sooner or later be overcome. It has been the hope of British Governments ever since the Balfour Declaration was issued that in time the Arab population, recognising the advantages to be derived from Jewish settlement and development in Palestine, would become reconciled to the further growth of the Jewish National Home. This hope has not been fulfilled. The alternatives before His Majesty’s Government are either (i) to seek to expand the Jewish National Home indefinitely by

1 Cmd. No. 5964.
immigration, against the strongly expressed will of the Arab people of the country; or (ii) to permit further expansion of the Jewish National Home by immigration only if the Arabs are prepared to acquiesce in it. The former policy means rule by force. Apart from other considerations, such a policy seems to His Majesty's Government to be contradictory to the whole spirit of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, as well as to their specific obligations to the Arabs in the Palestine Mandate. Moreover, the relations between the Arabs and the Jews in Palestine must be based sooner or later on mutual tolerance and goodwill; the peace, security and progress of the Jewish National Home itself require this. Therefore His Majesty's Government, after earnest consideration, and taking into account the extent to which the growth of the Jewish National Home has been facilitated over the last twenty years, have decided that the time has come to adopt in principle the second of the alternatives referred to above.'

In other words, whereas previously the grant of self-government to the Arab majority had been made dependent on their consent to Jewish immigration, from now onwards further Jewish immigration was to be made dependent on the consent of the Arab majority, expressed through self-governing institutions. At the same time, although this was a concession to the Arab view, the Arabs also were asked to make concessions. They were asked to abandon their National Pact which had refused to recognise all Zionist immigration imposed upon the Arabs, and to accept those Jews who had already entered Palestine as citizens of the Palestinian State; in other words to live with an unassimilated and restless minority of one third of the whole population permanently in their midst.
Thus the White Paper represents a compromise, a new attempt to define the point of balance between the two parties. It is not a departure from previous British policy, but is rather a new attempt to solve the same old problem, that of defining the two obligations in such a way as to make them compatible with one another. The concessions which it asked the Arabs to make were no less substantial for being an acceptance of an accomplished fact rather than consent to something new.

Like the Peel Report, however, the White Paper did not carry its thought to its logical conclusion. The logical implications of the principles it stated were first that self-government should be established immediately, and secondly that all immigration, land transfer and all other matters affecting the establishment of the National Home should be left for the decision of the National Government. Instead of this, immigration was to continue for another five years, although within limits; land transfer was to be regulated but not to be entirely stopped; and the establishment of self-government was pushed into an insufficiently defined and too distant future. For these reasons the Arabs rejected the White Paper.

The reaction of the Jews to the White Paper is brilli-
antly summarised by James Parkes:

'The indignation of Jews throughout the world at these proposals can easily be understood. They were based entirely on the British estimate of the maximum policy which the Administration could put into effect without provoking disorder, and took no account whatever of the harrowing problems confronting Jews in Europe, let alone the traditional Zionist view of Jewish rights and British obligations in Palestine. To get a full understand-
ing of the extent to which they appeared to Jews to be
a betrayal of every decent British tradition, it must be remembered that all other countries were closing their doors to the constant stream of refugees who wished to leave Central Europe. The Nazis had extended their persecution to the Jews of Austria and Czechoslovakia, and their influence was preponderant in the Jewish policies of Hungary, Rumania, and Poland. So desperate was the plight of the Jews that to many non-Jewish leaders also, in the churches as well as in all political parties, the appalling human need of hundreds of sufferers appeared legitimately to override all other considerations.

The Government, however, maintained its position, and absolutely refused to give way before its critics. It also ignored the condemnation of its policy by the Mandates Commission on the ground that the war had made a serious discussion of the issue before the Council—which alone could make a final pronouncement—impossible. When, on 28 February 1940, it issued the third part of its policy, the Land Transfers Regulations, it showed no relaxation whatever of its declared intention to produce a solution which would, in its opinion, satisfy legitimate Arab grievances, even at the cost of ignoring the tremendous emotional appeal created by the distress of the Jews in Europe.

The Regulation divided Palestine into three areas. In Municipal areas, the Haifa Industrial Zone and the greater part of the Maritime Plain, there were to be no restrictions on the sale of land to Jews. In Zone A, which included the hill country as a whole together with certain areas in Gaza and Beersheba sub-districts, the sale of land by Palestinian Arabs to any except Palestinian Arabs was prohibited. Sales by Palestinian Arabs to Jews were permitted under certain stringent con-
ditions in Zone B, which covered the Emed, Eastern Galilee, and northern and southern extremities of the Maritime Plain. In both Zones A and B possibilities of sale to Jews existed, where the land was not owned by Palestinian Arabs. From a practical standpoint it excluded Jews from settlement in the greatest part of the country, and left them complete freedom to acquire land in little more than one-twentieth of it.¹

Three months later war broke out.

Concluding this bare account of the inter-war period, three important counts must be stressed.

The first is that although the British Government might lay down a general policy which respected the idea of the dual obligation, the Zionists were so much better organised than the Arabs, and had so many ways of putting pressure upon the Government, both through the privileged status of the Jewish Agency and in other ways, that they could always tilt the balance in their favour.

Secondly, it must be stressed that on every occasion there were disturbances in Palestine the British Government sent out a Commission which produced a new policy—although it might differ only slightly from the old policy it replaced. Therefore the contestants were correct in reasoning that a display of violence was likely to produce a change of policy. And thus it was the British Government's vacillation as much as the Arabs or the Jewish desire for domination, which was mainly responsible for the disturbances between the two wars.

Lastly, those who have read the full texts which are available of the various promises made by the British Government between 1914 and 1919 cannot escape the grim

¹ *The Emergence of the Jewish Problem*, James Parkes.
conclusion that, although perhaps our multiplicity of departments may partially excuse us for the incompatibility of our promises, the attempt to justify and reconcile them inflicted misery on innocent Jews and Arabs throughout the Holy land.
VIII

THE JEWS AND THE WAR

'With the outbreak of the second world war, the Jewish Agency and the Jewish community in Palestine offered their support to the war effort, and agreed to lay aside their difference with the Mandatory. Even the Zionist extremists, the Revisionists, gave up for a time the campaign of violence with which they had greeted the 1939 White Paper. The Jewish Agency offered its services in the recruitment of men for recognised Jewish units to serve in Palestine, and when this offer was rejected, the Agency proceeded to organise the recruiting of Jews in response to the calls of the Army, Air Force and Navy, while at the same time maintaining its campaign to secure approval for the creation of a specifically Jewish military force, a campaign which was finally crowned with success in September 1944, when a Jewish Brigade Group was established. According to official figures, Jewish recruitment in Palestine for all types of military service, both combatant and non-combatant, between 1939 and 1945 reached a total of 27,028.'

20th April 1946.

ALTHOUGH the White Paper was not fully put into practice, the fact that it had been issued in itself radically changed the situation. Previous to 1939 it was the Arabs who were demanding a change of policy, while the Zionists had the much easier task of urging the maintenance of the 'status quo', that is to say, the
THE JEWS AND THE WAR

regulation of immigration by 'economic absorptive capacity'. After the issue of the White Paper, the Arabs became the champions of the 'status quo' and of the demand that the policy officially adopted should be carried out, while the Zionists found themselves in the new position of clamouring for a renewal of policy in Great Britain and America.

As the war proceeded, and the partial implication of the policy of the White Paper gradually began to be put into practice, Jewish resistance became more active, and illegal immigration was organised on a large scale. The land-transfer regulations also were evaded by means of fictitious titles, irrevocable powers of attorney and other legal devices. In 1944 alone the Jewish National Fund attained control of 100,000 dunums in the prohibited area by such means.

The struggle against the White Paper and the massacre of European Jewry led to a more positive and extreme formulation of policy than orthodox Zionists had previously thought fit to publish to the world. The Biltmore programme (published on 11 May 1942) calls for unlimited immigration and the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth, whereas previously official Zionism had been more ambiguous and guarded in its demands. The change, however, was less one of policy than of tactics; the Biltmore programme expressed what the Zionists had always wanted but had not thought it wise to state openly since the Arab reactions to the activities of the first Zionist Commission had taught them caution.

The tendency of Zionist bodies to become more extreme in their demands led among other things to the occurrence of terrorism on a large scale in the last years
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of the war. 1 Whenever terrorist acts occurred they were promptly disowned and denounced by the Jewish Agency, though for seven years the Agency had openly announced its intention of breaking the law of the land in regard to immigration and land-transfer.

The Jewish groups 2 which during the war immobilised large Jewish forces in Palestine were as follows:

First there was the Hagana, a Jewish army some 70,000 strong, which had started as being a Jewish advance organisation against Arab terrorism, and had grown into a large army controlling its own radio transmitters and under allegiance to the Jewish Agency and not to the Government.

The second group was the Irgun Zvai Leumi, which is a secret military organisation controlled by the Revisionists. Its strength is less than the Hagana, but its organisation is good and its discipline severe. Since 1945, the passionate zealots who belonged to it have blown up Government buildings and policy installations and have engaged upon a series of robberies and extortions to produce funds.

The third is the Stern group, a dissident faction, which was once part of the Irgun. It is the smallest but the most dangerous and the most extreme of the three groups. Jewish terrorists from the Stern group engaged throughout the war in a series of outrages culminating in the attempted assassination of Lord Moyne in Cairo on 6th November of that year (1945). 3

1 'A summary of terrorist outrages in Palestine between January 1 and October 6, includes incidents on twenty-eight separate days, in some cases in different places on the same day, and covers five columns of Hansard.' Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1945. Royal Institute of International Affairs, p. 158.
2 Throughout the war, Palestinians procured arms and ammunition from the Allies by bribery or stealth.
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'The Arab community in Palestine, though showing few signs of actual disaffection and offering slight response to Axis propaganda, showed itself largely indifferent to the outcome of the war. Out of a population twice as large as the Jewish only 12,445 persons were recruited for military service, a figure less than half the Jewish total. The flight of the Mufti, Haj Amin el Husseini, to Italy and Germany, and his active support of the Axis, did not lose for him his following, and he is probably the most popular Arab leader in Palestine today.'

Anglo-American Report,
20th April 1946.

WITH the outbreak of the Second World War the national revolt of the Arabs of Palestine came to an end. Had the Arabs possessed any assurance that should Great Britain be victorious they would not be subjected to Zionist domination they would have worked with all their might for the cause of the United Nations. In July and August 1940, at the dark moment of France's collapse, one of the most important of the Palestinian leaders, Jamal Effendi Husseini, then resident in Baghdad, entered into conversations with Colonel S. F. Newcombe, then travelling in the Middle East on behalf of the British Council and for Lord Lloyd. These conversations took place in the first instance with

1 I am grateful to Colonel S. F. Newcombe for most of the information contained in this chapter.
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the Iraqi Foreign Minister, General Nuri Pasha Said, and with the knowledge of Sheikh Yusuf Yasin, representative of King Ibn Saud, as observer, and the British Ambassador was kept informed. As a result of the conversations, an understanding was reached whereby the Arabs of Palestine would pledge full support for Great Britain and her allies in return for the immediate implementation of the terms of the White Paper of 1939. It is true that Colonel Newcombe had no authority to make any agreement and that he was travelling unofficially as regards Palestine, but officially for the British Council. Nevertheless the Arabs regarded these conversations as official; this is proved by the fact that Nuri Pasha offered to General Wavell two Iraqi divisions to serve under the latter in Libya in August 1940 (i.e. to declare war on the Axis) on condition that the White Paper was implemented at once.

The proposals were never recognised officially by the British Government and no reply was sent to Jemal. No step was taken to implement clause 10(4) of the White Paper, although clauses in regard to immigration and land-transfer were carried out: and no reply was sent to Nuri Said, who, on 16th December 1940 repeated the proposals and then resigned.

On the Arab side the most important political development of the last few years has been the establishment of the League of Arab States. The men who established the Arab League worked with the knowledge that a world-organisation would probably be set up at the conclusion of the war, and they therefore tried to build a structure which could be fitted into a world security system and would give the Arab countries the greatest possible weight in that system. From this point of view the Alexandria Protocol and the Cairo Pact were

1 Signed in September 1944.

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attempts to define the way in which and the conditions on which the Arab States would enter the world-community.

On the other hand, the majority of those who founded the League had been young in the Ottoman days and had memories of Ottoman unity, which made them feel clearly the inconveniences and evil consequences of the present artificial division of the Arab world; they knew also that division perpetuates itself, and the longer it continued the more difficult it would be to reconstitute the broken unity. Their object was to halt the present tendency to disintegration, to remove the bad effects it had already produced, and to set in motion another tendency towards co-operation and re-union. In other words they were trying to lay the foundation of a new Arab universal society to replace the old Ottoman unity which had been broken up.

The founders of the League were well aware that for the achievement of both these aims a solution of the problem of Palestine was all-important. Unless the Arab character of Palestine was assured, it would be impossible for Arab countries to have a normal relationship with the western world-community on the one hand, and to have satisfactory links of unity on the other. It was to mark this importance of the Palestine problem for the whole Arab world that Palestine, alone of the Arab regions deprived of self-government, was given representation on the Council of the League; that the Alexandria Protocol affirmed the interest of all Arab States in a satisfactory solution of the problem; and that the League members undertook to help the Palestinian Arabs in all ways, but particularly in their attempts to save Arab land from falling into the hands of the Zionists, and to explain their cause to the outside world.
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As the situation of the persecuted Jews in Europe became more desperate, the Zionists in America took an increasing part in the Zionist Organisation as a whole. Money began to flow from America in a steady stream in support of all missions to get Jews into Palestine.

It must be remembered that both Jewish and anti-Jewish propaganda in the States during the past twenty years had represented Britain as a greedy tyrant seeking every new field that he could grasp, or alternatively—and the difference between the two pictures passed un-noticed—propaganda has depicted Britain as a weak governess forced to seek the aid of one quarrelling pupil to suppress the other. Moreover, the treatment of the Jews in America by the Gentiles is an example of how far anti-semitism can go without violence. Jews are refused admittance into Gentile clubs, various hotels and building estates. Advertisements for building allotments sometimes contain the notice 'No Jews need apply'.

Criticism of Great Britain’s policy in Palestine provides a safety valve for America’s guilt caused by her own refusal to admit the refugees from Europe into her own country and her occasionally disgusting treatment of Jews amongst her own country-men. Thus the constant spate of Zionist propaganda fell upon fertile ground in the States. Liberal-minded Americans thumped the tables in their exclusive clubs in denunciation of Britain’s greed, perfidy and weakness in Palestine. It was therefore not surprising that American Zionists poured out
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money to help the subversive groups in Palestine,¹ and it was not surprising that American opinion sympathised with them. In 1943, and again in 1944 resolutions were introduced into both the United States Houses of Congress urging that the United States should ‘use its good offices . . . to the end that Palestine should be open for the free entry of the Jews’.² And in September 1945 President Truman sent a letter to Mr. Attlee in which he called on the British Government to open the gates of Palestine to an additional 100,000 of the homeless Jews in Europe.

In November 1945, President Truman agreed to the British Government’s proposal for a joint Anglo-American committee of enquiry. Its report was published within 120 days of the date on which the enquiry was begun. The Committee’s recommendations may be briefly summarized:

‘One hundred thousand Jews should be admitted immediately to Palestine, as far as possible in 1946. [It will be remembered that this was the number of immigration certificates for which President Truman asked last September.] But Palestine is to be neither a Jewish State nor an Arab State: “Jew shall not dominate Arab, and Arab shall not dominate Jew in Palestine”, and Palestine must ultimately become a State which guards

¹ In the Daily Express this day (15th May 1947) there is a report of a ‘Letter to the terrorists of Palestine’ published as a full-page advertisement in the New York Post and written by Ben Hecht, the American writer. This is what he wrote. ‘Every time you blow up a British arsenal, or wreck a British jail, or send a British railroad train sky-high, or rob a British bank, or let go with your guns and bombs at British betrayers and invaders of your homeland, the Jews of America make a little holiday in their hearts.’

² Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1945 (Royal Institute of International Affairs), p. 135.
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the rights and interests of Moslems, Jews, and Christians alike; and accords the inhabitants as a whole the fullest measure of self-government consistent with these principles, and with the interests in the Holy Land of Christendom and of the Moslem and Jewish faiths. For the present and for some time to come an independent Palestinian State or States would result in civil strife such as might threaten the peace of the world. Therefore the Government of Palestine should be carried on under the Mandate as at present, until it can become a trustee territory under the United Nations. Until that time, Palestine should be administered by the Mandatory so as to facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced. The Mandatory should proclaim the principle that Arab economic, educational, and political advancement in Palestine is of equal importance with that of the Jews, and should prepare measures to bridge the existing gap and raise the Arab standard of living to that of the Jews. In particular, with this end in view and in the interests of the conciliation of the two peoples, the educational system of both Jews and Arabs should be reformed, including the introduction of compulsory education within a reasonable time.

The Land Transfer Regulations of 1940, restricting land sales by Arabs to Jews in certain areas, should be rescinded and free sales permitted. But in the future, agreements regarding land must not contain any stipulations by which only members of one race, community, or creed may be employed. The Holy Places must be made safe from desecration and unsuitable uses. Various plans for large-scale agricultural and industrial development now in existence should only be examined and executed in full consultation and co-operation not only with the
Jewish Agency but also, since they are not wholly Palestinian in scope, with the Governments of the neighbouring Arab States directly affected. Finally, if the Report is adopted, it must be made clear beyond all doubt to both Jews and Arabs that any attempt by either side to use threats, terrorism, or illegal armed forces against its execution will be resolutely suppressed. The Jewish Agency should at once resume active cooperation with the Mandatory in the suppression of terrorism and of illegal immigration, and in the maintenance of law and order throughout Palestine.”

We have seen that it was the lack of a final solution which was largely due for the unrest in Palestine. The Anglo-American Committee Report contained several pious platitudes hoping that Arabs and Jews would work happily together, but it produced no solution to the problem of Palestine whatsoever. Perhaps it is hardly surprising that a joint committee of men who were inexpert in Middle East problems and who examined hastily and reported hastily should miss the essential psychological facts which determine the Palestine question. After the publication of the report, the British Government tried without success to reach an agreement with the Arabs and the Jews on proposals for Palestine which should bring to an end the existing state of Jewish terrorism and military occupation and lay the foundations for the developments of a peaceful Palestinian community. But on 18th February 1947 the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin, told the House of Commons

1 The World To-day, June 1946. Royal Institute of International Affairs.
2 For an interesting account of the hectic 120 days in which he and his eleven colleagues talked and lived the Jewish-Arab problem see Palestine Mission by Richard Crossman (Hamish Hamilton).
that the conference had failed and that the only course now open to the Government was to submit the problem to the judgment of U.N.O. His speech deserves to be quoted in full.

'I am very sorry to have to inform the House that the Conference with the Arabs and the consultations with the Zionist Organisation about the future of Palestine which have been proceeding in London have come to an end because it has become clear that there is no prospect of reaching by those means any settlement which would be even broadly acceptable to the two communities in Palestine. Ever since they took office the Government have laboured incessantly to find a solution of the Palestine problem. Most Members on this side of the House believed that no solution was to be found along the lines of the White Paper of 1939; and the Government therefore addressed themselves at once to the task of devising a different approach on which they could negotiate with the parties concerned. In view of the keen interest shown by American Jewry in the aspirations of Zionism, it was thought desirable that the Government of the United States should be associated with this endeavour; and as a result the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was appointed in November 1945. At the same time it was decided that Jewish immigration into Palestine should be temporarily continued at the rate of 1,500 a month notwithstanding the limit set by the White Paper, and an additional 21,000 Jews have been admitted since the White Paper terminated; and since July 1945, 29,000 have been admitted.

'When the Report of the Anglo-American Committee was received, we agreed with the United States Government that it should be examined by British and American officials. They jointly recommended the plan of
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Provincial Autonomy which was described in this House by my right hon. friend the Lord President of the Council on 31st July 1946. This plan gave a basis for negotiation with the parties concerned; and no time was lost in inviting them to confer with us. Neither of the two communities in Palestine accepted this invitation, but a conference with representatives of the Arab States was opened in London in September of last year. After an adjournment, due to the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Conference was resumed in January, the Palestine Arabs then joined in the discussions. The Jewish Agency have throughout refused to participate in the Conference, although informed that all proposals would be open for discussion, but it has been possible in this last phase to have conversations on an informal basis with representatives of the Agency.

"From the outset, both Arabs and Jews declined to accept as a basis for discussion the provincial autonomy plan put forward by His Majesty's Government. The Arabs put forward an alternative proposal, under which Palestine would achieve early independence as a unitary State with a permanent Arab majority. His Majesty's Government, seeing no prospect of negotiating a settlement on that basis, put forward new proposals of their own. These envisaged the establishment of local areas, Arab and Jewish, with a substantial degree of autonomy within a unitary State, with a central government in which both Arabs and Jews would share. These proposals provided that Jewish immigrants should be admitted over the next two years at the rate of 4,000 a month, and that thereafter the continuation of the rate of Jewish immigration should be determined, with due regard to economic absorptive capacity, by the High Commissioner in consultation with his advisory council, or, in the
event of disagreement, by an arbitration tribunal appointed by the United Nations. This plan, while consistent with the principles of the Mandate, added an element which has hitherto been lacking in our administration of Palestine, namely, a practical promise of evolution towards independence by building up, during a five-year period of trusteeship, political institutions rooted in the lives of the people. It was offered as a basis of discussion. These three solutions have already been made known in broad outline, and we intend to lay before the House later in the week a White Paper describing each of them in greater detail.

The latest proposals of His Majesty's Government were rejected outright by both the Arab delegations and the representatives of the Jewish Agency, even as a basis for discussion. I think it important that the House should understand clearly the reasons which prompted the two sides to reject this solution. For the Arabs, the fundamental point is that Palestine should no longer be denied the independence which has now been attained by every other Arab State; and that, in accordance with the accepted principles of democracy, the elected majority should be free to determine the future destiny of the country. They regard the further expansion of the Jewish National Home as jeopardising the attainment of national independence by the Arabs of Palestine, which all Arab States desire; and they are therefore unwilling to contemplate further Jewish immigration into Palestine. They are equally opposed to the creation of a Jewish State in any part of Palestine.

The Jewish Agency, on the other hand, have made it clear that their fundamental aim is the creation of an independent Jewish State in Palestine. With this in view they first proposed that His Majesty's Government should continue to administer the mandate on a basis
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which would enable them to continue to expand the Jewish National Home until such time as they had attained by immigration a numerical majority in Palestine and could demand the creation of an independent Jewish State over the country as a whole. When it was made clear that His Majesty's Government were unable to maintain in Palestine a mandatory administration under the protection of which such a policy could be carried out, the representatives of the Jewish Agency indicated that, while still maintaining the justice of their full claim, they would be prepared to consider, as a compromise, the proposal for the creation of "a viable Jewish State in an adequate area of Palestine". While they were not themselves willing to propose a plan of partition, they were prepared to consider such a proposal if advanced by His Majesty's Government.

'His Majesty's Government have thus been faced with an irreconcilable conflict of principles. There are in Palestine about 1,200,000 Arabs and 600,000 Jews. For the Jews the essential point of principle is the creation of a sovereign Jewish State. For the Arabs, the essential point of principles is to resist to the last the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in any part of Palestine. The discussions of the last month have quite clearly shown that there is no prospect of resolving this conflict by any settlement negotiated between the parties. But if the conflict has to be resolved by arbitrary decision, that is not a decision which His Majesty's Government are empowered as Mandatory to take.

'His Majesty's Government have of themselves no power, under the terms of the Mandate, to award the country either to the Arabs or to the Jews, or even to partition it between them. It is in these circumstances that we have decided that we are unable to accept the
scheme put forward either by the Arabs or by the Jews, or to impose ourselves a solution of our own. We have, therefore, reached the conclusion that the only course now open to us is to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations. We intend to place before them an historical account of the way in which His Majesty’s Government have discharged their trust in Palestine over the last 25 years. We shall explain that the Mandate has proved to be unworkable in practice, and that the obligations undertaken to the two communities in Palestine have been shown to be irreconcilable. We shall describe the various proposals which have been put forward for dealing with the situation, namely, the Arab Plan, the Zionist’s aspirations, so far as we have been able to ascertain them, the proposals of the Anglo-American Committee, and the various proposals which we ourselves have put forward. We shall then ask the United Nations to consider our report, and to recommend a settlement of the problem. We do not intend ourselves to recommend any particular solution.

‘Though we shall give immediate notice of our intentions, we see great difficulty in having this matter considered by the United Nations before the next regular session to the General Assembly in September. We regret that the final settlement should be subject to this further delay, particularly in view of the continuing strain on the British Administration and Services during this further period. We trust, however, that as the question is now to be referred to the United Nations all concerned will exercise restraint until their judgment is known.’

At Lake Success on May 15th the terms of reference for the special committee of inquiry on Palestine were adopted by the political committee of the United Nations Assembly. It was decided that the committee should be
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composed of eleven medium-sized and small Powers—Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Persia, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay, Yugoslavia, Australia, and India.

The terms of reference adopted are wide, and, in the main, general. The committee is to prepare not later than September 1 a report for the next session of the Assembly 'on the question of Palestine'—not just, as the British Government had proposed, on the future government of Palestine—and to make proposals for its solution. It is given the widest powers to ascertain and record facts, and 'investigate all questions and issues relevant to the problem of Palestine'.

It is to conduct investigations in Palestine and wherever it may deem useful. It is to receive and examine oral and written evidence, whichever it may consider appropriate in each case, from the mandatory Power, from representatives of the population of Palestine, and from governments and such organisations and individuals as it may think necessary. It is to give the most careful consideration to the religious interests in Palestine of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.¹

¹ The Times, 13th May 1947.
PART I

SOURCES

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The Old Testament
Part Two

PERSONAL
PERSONAL

MY TRUCK halted at the Security Post on the Jisr el Majami bridge between Transjordan and Palestine. A rosy-cheeked Military Policeman walked up. I looked into his solemn eyes and smiled. Then I produced my Arab Legion identity card. In March 1947 British civilians were not allowed into Palestine. But I had flown from Cairo to Transjordan, where I was given an honorary commission as a Major in the Arab Legion. With my Arab identity card I could go everywhere I wanted. And because my commission was not in the British Army I knew I would be free to write the truth. As the truck drove over the bridge and began to climb the gentle slope towards Afula I stared happily at the blue hills and the sunshine, and my mind turned back to the first time I went to Palestine.

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The train journey from Suez remains a confused blur of dust and pain and intense weariness. My wound throbbed painfully, but I was luckier than the others squashed closely together in the foetid carriage. We thought enviously of our neat white beds in the hospital which had been evacuated that morning because Rommel was pressing towards Alexandria. At last dawn came, and looked out on a radiant land. Bright red earth sparkled under a deep blue sky; the orange groves danced in the sunshine.

I had letters of introduction from a Jewish friend, and
during my convalescent leave in Jaffa I determined to examine the products of the Zionist experiment. While I wandered along the broad avenues of Tel Aviv, where modern architects, unleashed from the convention that buildings should conform to one architectural whole, have indulged their fancies in smooth white concrete, I noticed that the Jews in Palestine look unlike Jews in Berlin or London. They seem to have lost those particular features we associate with Jews. The nose is less prominent, the eyes less anxious. Relative security seems to have modified the Jewishness of those who were born there.

I hired a car to explore the neighbouring Jewish settlements. I was impressed (as I am impressed now) by the Zionist achievement. Vast stretches of sand-dunes have been transformed into flourishing orange groves. Prosperous farm-lands have been won from arid wastes. I saw clean trim buildings, spotless compact hospitals, gleaming factories and, above all, I saw a people glowing with vitality. One farm where I spent the day was run communally. There was no property of any kind. All was shared, even clothing. Two hundred men and women had abandoned their profession and wealth to work on the land in equality and comradeship. Each one I spoke with seemed full of happiness, and the community prospered. I found their settlements and factories and groves an impressive argument for Zionism. I said this to an Arab I met in a coffee-house in Jaffa.

‘They would be an impressive argument for Zionism,’ he said, ‘if Palestine belonged to the Jews. But it doesn’t. It belongs to the Arabs.’

When I reached Jerusalem I purchased copies of the Palestine Commission Reports, which I read late into the night. During the next few years, while attached
as a political officer to the Middle East Intelligence Centre, I read all the books I could get on the subject. (Thus began the approach which I have tried to summarise in the previous section.) I was in Palestine quite often during the war. But I never forgot that first vision of a country radiant with the colours of the sky and the sea and the sienna of the earth contrasting with the delicate grey green of the olive groves sedately climbing up the mountain side.

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In 1945 I visited the Middle East again. I can remember one incident vividly.

A swarthy man in a brown suit was sitting next to me at the bar of the Continental Hotel in Cairo, and he offered me a drink.

‘You don’t mind my addressing you?’

‘Heavens no,’ I said.

‘My friend will be late. And I must wait for half an hour.’

He was about twenty-five years old with heavy, broad shoulders and a wide mouth which seemed set in a perpetual smile. He was distinctly feline, I decided; and when he leant across me to reach for a match I smelled for an instant the hot musky smell of tigers of the zoo. Black hair curled thickly on the back of his long fingers.

‘I am a Palestinian Jew, you should know,’ he said later. ‘Does that disturb you?’

‘Not at all.’

‘But you are English, and the English hate us.’

‘Nonsense,’ I said. ‘Have another drink.’

He leant forward and put his arm round my neck before I could recoil. His breath stank of brandy.

‘I will tell you something else,’ he said in a low voice. ‘We Jews hate the English.’
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I moved discreetly from his reach.
‘We hate them,’ he said. As I looked at his eyes I realised what I suppose I should have noticed long before. He was drunk.
‘But we hate the Arabs more. Come closer and I will tell you something. But you must promise not to tell anyone.’
‘I don’t even know your name.’
‘You could find out. You should ask people here who know me, couldn’t you? Never mind. I don’t care. What proof have you got? I will tell you. My father has a factory between Tel-Aviv and Tulkarm, we employ only Jews. Before the war the Arabs used to raid us. There was a hill overlooking the factory. They would lie on this hill and fire at our men. One evening they killed one of our men. They killed a Jew.’
He drained his glass, and turned round on the bar stool so that he faced me.
‘That night in the darkness I went up with one of our foremen who handled the explosives we used for blasting at our works, and together we mined every yard of that hill. We worked until just before dawn when we covered up all trace of our work. But we had concealed a wire from the hillside to the shed which was my office. Each evening I sat in my office by the switch, waiting, waiting for the Arabs to come back.’
His hands were stuck deep into the pockets of his trousers, and he was breathing heavily.
‘Each evening I waited. Then one night the Arabs came back. They began firing at our men. But still I waited. I waited until from the flashes I could see there were many of them on the hill. Then I pressed the switch. There was a great flash and a loud explosion. The whole hillside crumbled into the valley. I walked out. The explosion was successful. No Arab body was
left whole. I would find the arm of a man here and a leg there. I collected all the remains I could find.’

He paused. His eyes were glittering. Then he finished his story in a voice hoarse with triumph.

‘An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,’ he said.

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Now, in March 1947, that man was probably gaining his revenge on his other enemy, the British. I turned to my driver.

‘Let’s stop for a bit.’

I got out. The sun was high in the sky. A bird was wheeling peacefully overhead. I took in deep breaths of the crisp, exhilarating air, and I gazed with happiness at the lovely country spread about us.

‘This,’ I felt, ‘is Holy Land.’ Then I noticed a thin scar running from east to west across the plain; it was the pipe-line from Iraq to Haifa, and it had been cut in two places last night. At that moment a Bren carrier clattered past as if to remind me that I was in a war zone.

But I knew that I could move about in Jewish areas without danger because I was in Arab uniform. The terrorists had declared war against the British. For the time being they did not want to murder Arabs. They reckoned it would be a mistake to take on both the British and the Arabs at the same time. So their war was against the British.

I got back into the car, and we drove on towards Afula. The central Emek hospital was across the road from the camp where I spent the night, and in the morning I wandered up the trim avenue which leads into its well watered grounds. I was gazing in admiration at the lawns and orange trees and flowers, when I saw
a man in a white coat advancing hurriedly towards me.
I spoke in English 'Good morning,' I said. 'What a
lovely hospital you've got.' The suspicion left his face.
'Would you like to see round it?' He asked immedi-
ately.
'This is a rural hospital working for the settlement,'
he said to me as he led me up to the concrete building.
'It is linked with the Trades Unions of Palestine. It has
a net-work of dispensaries in the villages.'
He spoke with a strong German accent.
As if I had asked a question, he said:
'I am from Berlin. I was a child specialist.'
'How long have you been here?'
'Fifteen years,' he replied.
'Now this section,' he said, 'is for the babies.'
We walked down a white shining corridors towards
the ward. I was afraid my boots would dirty the clean
scoured floors. In twenty white cots tucked up in spot-
less linen, lay twenty little blonde children.
'Yes,' he said. 'They are blonde now, but they grow
darker as they grow older.'
'How long did this hospital take to build?' I asked.
'Fifteen years,' he replied.
I looked at him but he would not look me in the face.
'Yes,' he said in a soft voice, 'I built it.'
And then, as if ashamed of his confession, he said
rather abruptly:
'Come, I will show you the kitchens.'
He led me into a high-ceilinged room flanked with
metal tureens. Three German servants with plump pink
hands were preparing lunch.
'Come into the canteen,' he said.
As we walked in he greeted the staff, and they smiled
at him. But when they saw me, some looked away and
some glared at me with hostility.
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When we got outside I asked:
'What do you think about the situation?'
With a gesture of resignation he said:
'I am a doctor. I care for the children. I only want
to be left alone to get on with my job.'

As I walked away, I could not help remembering an
Arab hospital I had seen in a village outside Palestine.
It was a new hospital, but the doctor in charge had
allowed it to decay. He took me to the surgery where
the swabs and mess of an operation of a week ago still
lay about the floor. I opened a cupboard and found a
whole set of surgical implements covered with rust. The
walls and floor were covered in filth. I shuddered at
the recollection. Suddenly I realised that I had fallen
all unconsciously into a delusion. Unconsciously I was
justifying the Zionist argument in favour of their being
given more land in Palestine, by comparing their hygienic
efficiency with the Arabs'. But does superior develop-
ment justify one country, one race, against another?
Did the splendid hospitals and autobahns of Germany
justify Germany in ruling France or England? If the
Arabs in Palestine are backward in technical develop-
ment it is the fault of long Turkish domination and,
more recently, it is due to the inefficiency of the Manda-
tory Power.

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In a Bar in Haifa a few evenings later, I met another
German Jew. He had a gentle, rather floppy face with
mouse-coloured, thin hair. As I walked in, I saw that
he expected me to ignore him. He was surprised when
I asked him to have a drink. I asked him what he
thought about the situation. He gave a side glance over
his shoulder at a couple who were talking in Hebrew at
the other end of the room before he replied.
'Are you English?' he asked.
'Yes.'
'You English think that every Jew is a friend of the terrorists. That is wrong. That is not true. But I and my father and my sister, we are little people. What could we do to stop terrorism?'

He gulped at his drink.
'What has my father done to deserve this misery?' he asked suddenly.
'My father had a little shoe shop in Berlin. And he was kind. And if he knew a man was poor, he would not make him pay. And all the neighbours liked him—until Hitler comes. Then he must get out and lose his business. And he must begin all over again here, right from the beginning. And now it looks that what he has built up he will lose again.

'Some Jews say we should return to help Germany. Germany can starve and writhe in agony and bloodshed for all I care. Why should we Jews return to help them? So that we can be killed and tortured by them again?

'I am told that there are many Jews in America. I would like to go there. One can live no longer in this country....

'Many, many Jews now would like to leave Palestine, but they dare not say so. I like the English, they have freedom to say what they like. Here one must be careful. If I got up and said I hated the Jewish Agency, I would be found later beaten up. This is no more a free country. My father is altogether broken. He sits all day and stares and stares. And I know what it is that he is seeing. He is seeing the ruin of the little refuge he helped to build.'

His floppy face was covered with sweat. He looked once again over his shoulder at the couple at the end
of the room. Then he drained his glass, and said goodnight.

He remains in my mind as a symbol of the pathetic hopelessness of the uprooted stock of Europe.

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It seemed to me, as I travelled round Palestine that too much time had been spent arguing the rights and wrongs of the business and far too little time in examining dispassionately the facts. Noble orations to the converted cannot transfer populations or transmute Jews into Arabs. There are probably over seven hundred thousand Jews in Palestine today. They are there—in the wide streets they have built and in the lovely orange groves they have planted on land that was desert. They vary in type from the old, religious gentle Zionist (who settled there before the Balfour declaration) to the sixteen year old, atheist, Russian-trained gangster who joins in a raid within three days of his secret landing. There are infinite variations in type and in attitude. All generalisation is therefore bound to be inaccurate. But I found that the Jews I met could be divided into precisely the same categories as the Germans I knew in Berlin before the war.

I found merchants and doctors who only wanted to get on with their jobs and to be left in peace. These were the moderates. Some approved of illegal immigration. All condemned terrorism. But moderates all over the world are generally the quiet, docile people. The tragedy of moderates is that they are ineffective. I asked these Jews, the friendly shopkeeper and the talkative barman, the old German specialist and the Australian tailor, I asked them why they did nothing to stop terrorism and illegal immigration. ‘But what can we
do to stop it?' they replied. 'How can we control the Jewish Agency? We're only little people of no importance. There's nothing we can do.' It was the same answer I used to hear in Germany, in Italy, and in Austria.

Many of the Jews in Palestine went there to escape an evil. They decided to build a new country. For the sake of their friends still in Europe and for the sake of their children they suffered great hardship. Slowly, painfully, the desert was made fertile, the avenues were constructed. And now the evil they sought to escape has come upon them.

Striding along the roads between the rich groves and over the blue hills of the Holy Land come bands of brown-skinned vigorous boys, flushed and bright-eyed, chanting their patriotic songs. The satchels clamped on the back of lean healthy bodies clad only in shorts, the defiant gaze, even (surprisingly enough) the curly blonde hair—all is the same as in Hitler Germany. Buses full of schoolchildren bellowing their slogans rush through the streets of Tel Aviv. And the parents cannot control them.

'I would not even know if my son belonged to the Irgun Zwei,' a shopkeeper said with tears in his eyes. 'He would not tell me. He tells me nothing.' The old man was leaning across the counter talking to me. As he spoke, three boys of about fourteen walked into the shop, barged violently against me, and ran out. I met Jews who were friendly, Jews who were nervous, men and women who openly supported the terrorists, people who said (with a backward glance to make sure that they were not overheard) that they loathed the Jewish Agency and longed to leave Palestine. The adults varied. But every single Jewish child I saw looked at me with unconcealed hatred. And every single one could speak
no language except Hebrew. Fascism has come to Palestine. And the Jewish young man is potentially more dangerous than the storm-trooper. He is more intelligent.

The more I travelled about Palestine the more obvious it became that the terrorist war was only against the British. One day a British jeep was blown up by a mine on a road which I had travelled along only shortly before. But the terrorists must have seen the keirchiefs of my Bedouins and let us go by. Their war is against the British. And our reaction has exposed us to contempt. The Government of Palestine has retired behind barbed wire. The Police Force and the main services have lost contact with the people.... Confined to the security zones of Jerusalem, the officials operate in a great void. The Government was always swollen in numbers and therefore inflexible and slow. Today it is ineffective. Never can so many have mismanaged so few. But though inefficiency is the price of being on the defensive, security is not the reward. Military security in Palestine was never brilliant. (It was hardly wise to place the Headquarters on the top two stories of an internationally visited hotel.) But today security is pathetically bad.

I visited most of the big Army and R.A.F. camps in Palestine. I was seldom asked to produce my identity card at the barriers. Usually the guard asked me to show him my truck's work ticket, on which I would have scrawled (if I remembered) the places from and to which we were travelling. My Arab driver's red Kafiya was often enough to satisfy the guard. (The Stern Gang will wear the red head-dress of the Arab Legion one day.) I got into the biggest petrol dump in Palestine without producing any form of identification at all. I did not even speak. I waved cheerfully at the guard. He waved, cheered back. And we drove straight through into the camp. The guards glanced at my uniform and
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waved on a person who might have been the leader of the Irgun Zwei. The best guards in Palestine today are the men of the Arab Legion, because they are constantly interested in their jobs. Most British soldiers get quickly bored by guard duties.

But what is the use of sentries if the enemy is already within the gate? Jews are employed in most large camps. In Sarafand (which is surrounded by Jewish settlements and could easily be mortared) over half the employees in the camp are Jews. The shops and canteens are Jewish. And the D.I.D. (Ration Stores) employs Jewish clerks who therefore see the precise strength and location of every British unit in the area.

The indifferent security is not the fault of the British soldier, who has generally shown restraint and kept discipline while every day his friends are being murdered. It is the fault of our senior officers. In the same way, our loss of prestige in Palestine is not the fault of the hard-working junior officials in the Palestine Government. It is due to the weak vacillation of the Home Government and to the lack of leadership in Palestine. The permanent officials feel they are being constantly let down by Whitehall. It is suspected that the evacuation of the women and children and 'non-essentials' from Palestine was ordered because Whitehall had decided to impose partition. Then the Cabinet got cold feet. But by that time the evacuation was complete. (Or almost complete. There are three underground groups now in Palestine. The Stern Gang, the Irgun Zwei and the British wives who went underground to escape being deported.)

Every time the terrorists commit some major outrage (minor incidents such as shooting at night into a British camp are not even reported in the Press) the Government of Palestine issues another ultimatum. On every
occasion the terrorists successfully disregard the ultimatum and gain more renown with their supporters at home and abroad. The British are on the defensive when they should be on the attack. The Government's decisions are irresolute when they should be bold.¹ Both Jews and Arabs can see that our decisions for the last twenty years have been influenced more by expediency than by justice. There was once an expression in Arabic used if one really meant to fulfil a promise: 'I give you the word of an Englishman.' That expression is never used today.

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It was given out in the Press that the main reason for imposing Martial Law was to be able to 'freeze' the terrorists by preventing all movement in the Jewish areas of Palestine. On the morning Martial Law was imposed on Tel-Aviv for the first time after the grim week-end of terrorists attacks, which included the blowing up of the officers' club in Jerusalem, I awoke in Jaffa.

I wanted to get into Tel-Aviv so I walked away from Jaffa until I arrived at a barrier guarded by troops and bren carriers and armoured cars. I smiled at the guard and saluted. He smiled and saluted back, and I walked straight into the middle of Tel-Aviv.

The town was deserted. It was as if a great wind had swept the dust and rubbish and cars and pedestrians

¹ Today, 1st August 1947, I have been given the opportunity to add this short paragraph to the above words which I wrote over a month ago. This morning a photograph of the corpses of two British sergeants, hanged by the terrorists, appeared in the Daily Express. Let us pray that the horror which has filled our hearts will urge us to demand a resolute policy in Palestine rather than excite in us a wave of blind anti-semitism which can only bring yet more misery on innocent people.
away from the streets. The avenues were very clean and empty. The roads were absolutely quiet. The concrete houses seemed to be dead, except that one could discern a stirring in the eye sockets. A curtain would twitch, a hand would appear, or one could see in a darkened room the figure of a man watching, immobile. The town was in suspense. In a central square, a troop of British soldiers were laying out their bedrolls for the night, while on the balcony above a lithe Jewess stood leaning on the balustrade, puffing at her cigarette with quick angry jerks.

In the suburbs a few children played furtively in the porches. I was unarmed. And people began to appear on the balconies. I was the only person walking in the street. A Jewish couple asked me in for a cup of tea. They came from Vienna. The little room might have been on the Kartner Strasse. They were past middle age and weary of politics.

‘This Martial Law,’ they told me, ‘is intended to punish us.’ And then the old question came. ‘But how can we stop the outrages? If the man next door was a terrorist we would not know.’

‘But the terrorists have been helped by the population,’ I said.

‘If one of them came here today, we would give him away, I promise you,’ the man replied. ‘That is if we could be sure he’d be killed and wouldn’t be able to get us afterwards for it,’ he added. ‘You see, we are not heroes.’

As I left Tel-Aviv, I came to the conclusion that we should be as ruthless with the terrorists as we were with the Arabs before the war. But we should do all we can to make friends with the moderate Jews. Anti-semitic orders of the day only strengthen the prestige of the extremists. Any display of anti-semitism by generals
or soldiers or Commissioners or clerks only drives more moderates into sympathy with the terrorists.

I drove down to Gaza and Beer Sheba. I found the Arabs' mood bitter. The worst drought for one hundred years had killed half the animals in Southern Palestine and ruined the crops. It was a pathetic sight to see the Beduin urging their feeble cattle northward in hope of pasture. The peasants asked for relief. They asked for loans of seeds and foodstuffs and for water-lorries to fill the cisterns. When I was there no help had yet come. And the Arabs said to me in their bitterness, 'The Government won't help us because they want us to be poor and starving so that we have to sell our land and they can establish a Jewish State.' The Government has now decided to allot LP 23,000 for relief. 'This sum,' comments the Arab daily Ad-Difaa, 'is only one thousandth of the budget of Palestine, and less than one per cent. of the sum which the Palestine Government allotted for the relief of illegal Jewish immigrants, who are not Palestine citizens and to whom the Government owes no legal or moral obligation whatever.'

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I drove to Jerusalem. The city is beautiful from the distance. The stone houses blend with the dappled hills. But the new town is harsh. The granite houses stand blankly in little plots of ground. The Y.M.C.A. towers blatantly on the summit and disowns the squat mass of the King David Hotel opposite. The air is sharp and thin. The streets are wide and barren of trees, I have always found Jerusalem an unfriendly town to look at. Today it is hideous and hostile. Coils of rusty barbed wire bristle round the hard stone buildings. Tanks and bren carriers clatter along the roads. A series of grim
barricades divide the windswept streets into three war zones. Sentries check vehicles and passes both in and out of each area; sometimes I was uncertain whether I had graduated from zone A to zone B or whether I was still in no-man’s-land. The inhabitants of the three contesting races who shared the Holy City, seemed to me imprisoned by barricades and fettered by prejudice.

The Arabs’ confidence in the Palestine Government’s ability to restore order has steadily been decreasing. They have every reason to be angered with Britain. As a result, partly of the incompetence of the Mandatory Power, the Arabs in Palestine are ill-educated and poor. Their politicians are provincial in outlook and lack experience of government, and one of their leaders is not allowed into the country. When the picture of the Mufti flashes on to the screen of an Arab cinema there is a roar of applause. You can see his picture in every coffee-house, in every cottage and office. He will continue to enjoy the prestige of leadership without the disadvantage of responsibility so long as he is not allowed into Palestine.

The Arab view is clear. Palestine no more belongs to the Jews than England belongs to the Italians by right of the Roman Conquest. The idea of partition is hotly opposed. Open covenants openly arrived at are impossible in Palestine because no leader will risk his reputation by compromising in public. Amongst the Arabs too the moderates are seldom heard. But there is no anti-semitism in the unpleasant form it takes in Europe or the United States. Arabs and Jews work well together on such joint enterprises as the Citrus Marketing Board. But how in ten years’ time will Arabs be able to work Jews who can only speak Hebrew? Events and propaganda are fast dividing Arabs and Jews, not joining them.
Part Three

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I had hoped, when I began to write this book, that by the time I reached the last chapter, I would be in a position to present with confidence what I believe to be the only final solution to the problem which I have tried to outline. But the moment has come; and I feel hesitant. There are, however, certain principles I can firmly proclaim.

The decision arrived at must be based on justice. Until the leaders concerned are prepared to base their diplomacy on justice, their actions will remain dangerously unpredictable, for at one moment they support the liberty of small nations and generally behave like adult members of the human family, but at the next instant they bargain with trade agreements and the whole apparatus of power politics. Honesty is the best policy for Britons and Jews and Arabs alike.

If the problems of the Jews and of Palestine are seen in this light certain facts stand out clearly.

First, the problem of the Jewish refugees can only be solved by free countries admitting Jews of their own free will. Great Britain and the United States have no right to demand of the Arabs sacrifices which they have so far given no signs of being willing to bear themselves. The plight of Jewry in Europe cries out to humanity for relief. Let all the free nations of the world take their share in helping these pitiable out-casts.

Secondly, Palestine is an Arab country. It cannot be a just policy to force upon a population settled in a
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country for 1,500 years a group of alien immigrants who openly proclaim their intention of seizing power and establishing their domination as soon as they have the strength. The refugees from Fascism brought the totalitarian technique to Palestine. Innocent settlements of religious Jews were perverted, and the sanctuaries were menaced. Farmers who had struggled to turn desert into oranges groves were infected with a narrow nationalism, their children were persuaded to join youth groups, and their young men and women were urged to special training in gangster warfare. Secret meetings, secret training, secret agents, torture and threats, all the accessories of oppression were brought to Palestine. The pure stream of the Jewish religion was poisoned. Zionism became a world-wide cabbala.

Violence breeds violence. Though there are thousands of Jews in Palestine who are appalled at the outrages of the extremists, in times of excitement their moderate views are disregarded, and violence increases. Until ways of alleviation are found, the misery of Jews in Europe, the wise, gentle Zionists who first settled in Palestine will be ignored. Until then every Jewish immigrant to Palestine is potentially one more recruit to a vicious gang.

Lastly, the policy of forcing the Arabs to accept more Jews in Palestine is justified by promises which are not regarded as valid by the Arabs, because, they say, those promises give away something which was never in Britain's possession. In 1939 the Maugham Committee examined, for the first time, the promises made to the Arabs and concluded that 'His Majesty's Government were not free to dispose of Palestine without regard for the wishes and interests of the inhabitants'. The Arabs feel that to force them to become in their own country a minority in an alien state would be a betrayal of all
the promises and assurances that have been given them. The exact words used in the Balfour Declaration of November 1917, should be remembered:

'His Majesty's Government view with favour 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 should 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.'

A decision about the refugees in Europe and the future of Palestine cannot become effective unless it has the support of the majority of the nations of the world. And it will not be final unless it is based on justice.

But is there any just solution which a group of impartial judges, after thoroughly examining at leisure all the evidence, could produce?

First, it is evident that since conflicting promises were made, no solution can satisfy both sides. Secondly, we have seen that it was the uncertainty in the position between the two wars which was largely responsible for the unrest in Palestine. Thirdly, since half a dozen commissions and scores of experts have failed to arrive at a generally agreed solution, it is obvious that there is no perfect solution. Palestine belongs to the Arabs, but the Jews are there, seven hundred thousand of them, on the strength of a promise Britain had no right to make. The judges' decision must be between the lesser of two evils. For the above reasons I believe that partition may be the only possible solution—a partition which would secure to the Jews that much ground which they have made predominantly Jewish, and no more.

The Peel Commission report in June 1937 said, in
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effect, this: We do not think that any fair-minded statesman would suppose that Britain ought either to hand over to Arab rule the Jews, whose entry into Palestine has been for the most part facilitated by the British Government; or that, if the Jews should become a majority, a million or so Arabs should be handed over to their rule. 'But, while neither race can justly rule all Palestine, we see no reason why, if it were practicable, each race should not rule part of it.' The following commission, in 1938, found that it was economically and physically impossible to create two independent, sovereign states in Palestine. And the proposal was abandoned.

But since the time of the Peel Commission two new factors have changed the situation. First, the Arab boycott of Jewish goods has effectively divided Palestine into two economic groups. Partition in trade already exists in Palestine. Secondly, the Fascist technique which the Jewish refugees brought with them from Germany has created a generation of fanatic youth, stubborn zealots who will never collaborate with the Arabs. This new generation speaks only Hebrew. Thus partition in language now exists in Palestine. Even so, partition is a drastic solution. But while expediency takes into account the stresses and strains and pressures of all parties concerned, justice is ruthless.

But what would be a just partition? Palestine is an Arab land. Certainly the Jewish area should be no larger than it is already. A very small Jewish State should be formed to make secure to the Jews what they have got. It would include only part of the coastal plain and the plain of Esdraelon east to the Sea of Tiberias. The frontier would have to be guaranteed by U.N.O. The Arabs fear Jews would use their small start as a bridgehead for further expansion. U.N.O. should make

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firm and solemn promise to the Arabs that once the frontier was drawn it would be final and that this would be the last sacrifice of their country they would be asked to make. Simultaneously, Arab Palestine would be granted independence so that it would be free to link up with Transjordan. Jesusalem and Haifa would become international cities. Tel Aviv would be ‘unscrambled’ from Jaffa by a special commission which would value and try to arrange for the exchange of properties the wrong side of the boundary line.

The Arabs minority left behind in the Jewish State presents a difficult problem. There should be no question of moving them by force. But big public work schemes should be started and large scale assistance to private enterprises should be made in order to offer to the Arabs left in the Jewish State, well-paid jobs and attractive prospects in the Arab State.

In the small Jewish State, supported by money from Jews all over the world, the people would enjoy their own language and religion and customs and culture in their own country. ‘A National Home’ would have been ‘established in Palestine’. And an independent Arab Palestine would link up with Transjordan and form a prosperous, virile and beautiful country.

I believe that now U.N.O. is seized of the problem, partition may be the solution it should recommend. But one thing is certain. Rather than inflame the hopes of the extremists on either side by promises which are not kept and by commissions which are not heeded, it would be wiser and kinder for Britain (or any other foreign power) to clear out of Palestine and to leave the Arabs and Jews free to work out their own relationship. This at least would force them to face the alternatives: agreement or war.