

CURRENT MAGAZINES

JEW AND ARAB IN PALESTINE

The Future of Palestine—The Right Hon. Malcolm MacDonald, M.P., in *The Listener*.

Settlement in Southern Palestine—Major C. S. Jarvis, in *The National Review*
Palestine, the Wider Hope—Editorial, in *The Round Table*.

WHEN the British Government, six weeks ago, intimated that it would abandon the scheme for a Jewish "National Home" in Palestine, a sequence of sombre historical reflections must have been stirred in many a mind. If only the *Balfour Declaration* of 1917 had been fulfilled (as it might well have been, within twenty years, but for frustrating causes all too easy to indicate), what a wholesome difference it would have made to that "Jewish problem" which now constitutes at once the horror and the shame of Europe! With Germany, Italy, Poland, Rumania in mind, recalling what in those countries has been and still is the fate of the world's most persecuted race—of the only race, indeed, still excluded by name from the scope of inter-racial goodwill—what shall we think of the motives which resisted and of the tactics used to defeat this project of settlement? The words of Lord Balfour's letter from the British Foreign Office to Lord Rothschild, under date November 2nd., 1917, come back to memory:

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 other countries.

Those words sounded well in 1917, and in a sense now they read still better, because they express at least a purpose in comparison with which so many subsequent purposes seem unutterably mean. It was no great surprise when we learned from our newspapers, one morning in the last week of May, that the British House of Commons had shown fierce anger at Mr. Chamberlain's proposal to drop the National Home project, and that his normal majority had fallen off on that issue by more than one-half, despite the pressure of a three-line whip.

But it would be far too simple an account of what has happened in these last twenty years to say that the good intentions of the conciliator were defeated by the recurrent rage of anti-Semitism. No doubt anti-Semitism was a factor, but there was more than that, and—as usual—neither all the faults nor all the merits belong to one side. Lord Northcliffe ventured a suggestive comment at an early stage, when he said that the new British policy would make of Palestine a second Ireland. *Absit omen!* One remembers, too, how conspicuous was the administration of Arthur James Balfour, at Dublin Castle half a century ago, in developing the Irish problem. It is not hard to reconstruct, however little one may endorse either its statement of fact or its line of reasoning, the train of thought which passed through Lord Northcliffe's mind as the Jerusalem of 1922 made him think of the Dublin of 1916.

He reflected, no doubt, as he watched the Arab inhabitants kept in control by a British occupying army, on how in Ireland too the natives had been forced, under British bayonets, to admit "planters" of alien stock to their soil; how the covenant made by Lawrence with Arab leaders, like the ill-starred *Treaty of Limerick* and many another forsworn Anglo-Irish pledge, had been held of no account as against supposed advantage to the British from its violation; how the familiar plea about Jewish efficiency enabling the Arabs to develop Palestine as their native sluggishness would never have allowed them to develop it themselves was like the claim for Ulster planters that they showed the Irish for the first time what could be made of Ireland; and how the wild refusal of the Children of the Desert to be thus industrialized by force was like the splendid obstinacy of Celt against Saxon, never better expressed than in a saga of Israel itself (from its old poetic, not its modern commercial age)—"God forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto you."

It is a point perhaps scarcely fair to emphasize, but inevitable to remember, that the *Times* and the *Daily Mail* and other organs of the group known as "the Northcliffe Press" were the most powerful advocates of just that policy in Ireland which is here cited as a warning to those who would try the like in Palestine. Was it in a penitential mood that the newspaper peer bethought himself in Jerusalem of those sinister measures which he had worked so hard and so long to perpetuate in Dublin?

From the flood of publications which this controversy has produced I select *Palestine, the Reality*, by Mr. J. M. N. Jeffries, as not merely the latest but the most complete, and among the most stimulating (because the most provocative) of single sources for the British reader. I select this book as text, though profoundly dissenting—for reasons soon to be made clear—from the writer's general conclusion. It at least brings together with lucid skill the more important facts, and—unlike many others who write on this subject—Mr. Jeffries knows his own mind about what should be done. To follow the sequence of his argument, in a short article, may preserve at least a certain orderliness of criticism.

I shall first summarize the case as he sees it.

I.

According to the story by Mr. Jeffries, Palestine has been for the last sixteen or seventeen years a scene constantly of strife and often of bloodshed because the Arabs, who are its rightful owners, have had to fight for the retention of their country against assault by Jews, whom Great Britain has not only encouraged but helped to dispossess them. He acknowledges that Israel, during a remote period, was the controlling race in that section of southern Syria, and that "Holy Places" there, very precious to her for their ancient religious associations, bring Jews still on pilgrimage. But he points out that Israel was dispersed to the four corners of the earth some eighteen hundred years ago, and that for at least thirteen centuries Palestine has been Arab. Moreover, he argues that even in respect of antiquity the Jewish title is inferior to the Arab, for it was lineal ancestors of the present Arabs that the Jews originally dispossessed.

Under the Turkish régime, which lasted almost exactly four hundred years (from 1516 until 1918), this particular feud was quiescent. Arabs and Jews, temperamentally so different, never liked each other, but the proportion of Jews in Palestine was then insignificant, and they came nearer than at any time before or since to at least apparent friendship with Arabs through their common subjection to the Turk. Palestine, however, and the rest of Syria, formed no more than a tiny fraction of the Arab areas which Turkey then dominated: these included also Mesopotamia, and the whole Arabian peninsula. Though the subject races might show little sign of discontent, they were biding their

time. Hope of successful revolt against the Ottoman tyrant was never extinguished, and the Great War, which involved Turkey in such desperate struggle with European Powers, brought the chance.

Mr. Jeffries recalls the record of negotiation between British and Arab diplomatists, with its issue in the covenant between Hussein, Shereef of Mecca, and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner for Egypt, on 25th October, 1915. He describes in moving terms the magnitude and intensity of the service rendered by the Warriors of the Desert, whose bond—as Lawrence said—was “most heavily honored”. And then he asks what happened to the obligations undertaken by the other party. It was their pledge that, if and when with Arab assistance the Turk should be overthrown, Great Britain would “recognize and support the independence of the Arabs within the limits and boundaries proposed by the Shereef of Mecca”. Was that done, after the victory? Mr. Jeffries argues that this engagement was shamefully broken, in the *Balfour Declaration* of November, 1917, and in the policies pursued ever since to carry that Declaration into effect.

He tells of the amazement of the Arabs at discovering how the Allies, for whom they had sacrificed so much, were bound by a pledge at their expense, given two years after the Hussein-McMahon negotiation, to their old enemies, the Jews. He describes the horror with which they realized that a part of Syria, in which their own race preponderated over all other races combined in the proportion of nine to one, was to be made, under British bayonets, a Jewish National Home. He pictures the years of persistent attempt to fulfil this: the Jews pouring in, by tens of thousands, to be settled on lands which had been Arab for many centuries, while a British army of occupation held native anger in check, and the period of Turkish dominance escaped at such cost began to seem by comparison a period of Arab self-respect and freedom. Mr. Jeffries speaks of wave after wave of Jewish immigrants, threatening before long to achieve a Jewish numerical majority, and with the arrogant demeanour of *parvenu* victors. One would gather from this section of his book that the newcomers were as remote as possible from the Israel of wistful romance: not of the sort haunted by memories of a shrine, but rather of the sort preoccupied with schemes for a new project in light and power! As I read Mr. Jeffries on the *Rutenberg Concession*, the ancient idealist Israel of Old Testament poetry and prophecy seems to fade away, and there

comes to mind a modern, intensely practical Israel, with characteristics which a speech by Hitler or Goebbels, more than the *Psalter* or the *Book of Isaiah*, will serve to disclose.

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But if we suppose the National Home scheme to have been so dishonest, so unjust, so disastrous in consequence, what motive can we suppose to have actuated its British promoters? The worse we think it, the more mysterious we must account its contrivance by British leaders not stupid, not ignorant of the Near East, not without repute for character and conscience in public policy. "Unlawful in issue," writes Mr. Jeffries, "arbitrary in purpose, and deceitful in wording, the *Balfour Declaration* is the most discreditable document to which a British Government has set its hand within memory." Why, then, did a British Government so set its hand? The answer we are offered is threefold, with aspects as different as possible: in terms partly of millennial dream, partly of the sternest political opportunism, partly of personal and self-conscious obstinacy.

Ideas of a separate and sovereign Jewish State in the Holy Land had haunted imaginative minds ever since the appeal of the young Jew from Budapest, Theodor Herzl by name, had reached an audience far beyond the first Zionist Congress at Basel to which, in 1897, it was addressed. Mr. Jeffries reminds us how there was then a tremendous opportunity for Jewish propagandism. The civilized world had just been amazed and horrified by the anti-Semitic outburst at the Dreyfus trial, which Herzl had been sent to France by the *Neue Freie Presse* of Vienna to study and describe. With uncanny insight the young journalist had detected even in the foreign public, so susceptible to his attack on the injustice of a French court-martial, a certain racial temper which circumstances might yet make unjust in the same way. A quiescent anti-Semitism, in short, all over Europe, varying from the persecution which the authorities publicly condemned but at which they secretly connived, through all degrees of reluctant and fitful tolerance! Mr. Jeffries notes how Herzl's book, entitled *The Jewish State*, published in 1896, when the Dreyfus affair was holding wide and intense European attention, was the outcome of such resolute analysis, and how its argument for a restored National Home as place of refuge for the dispersed of Israel fascinated interest abroad. The Sultan Abdul Hamid, neither a sentimentalist nor a man of marked sensitiveness on racial injustice,

but with a keen eye for maturing commercial chances, then said he would sell Palestine outright for such a project, at the price of \$50,000,000. More suggestive was the effect which Herzl produced on the mind of Arthur James Balfour, already leader of the Conservative party in the British House of Commons, and plainly destined to go far in public influence. Within six years, as Prime Minister, Balfour offered to the Zionist Organization the grant of six thousand square miles in British East Africa for a Jewish National Home. But it was to Zion, not an alternative to Zion, that the wistful memories of the exiles turned—as the Israelitish minstrel had found them turn so long before, “by Babel’s streams”.

Fourteen years later, through a combination of coincidences in the Great War, Zionism became all of a sudden a practical possibility. The dream of those who dream from the heart was to be taken up by men whose imaginative habits were more disciplined. Mr. Lloyd George was Prime Minister in 1917, and although he has moods in which he will justify Zionism by parallel with Welsh national aspiration, invoking the bards of Wales to illustrate the poetry of the *Psalter*, it was on coldly prosaic grounds that he authorized the *Balfour Note*. He authorized it not as a sentimentalist, but with the stern realism of one to whom in the Ministry of Munitions a certain Jewish chemist of genius had proved indispensable, and to whom the availability of like services might be indispensable again. He had also in mind the rallying of “international Jewry” to the cause of the Entente: that world-wide force whose exertion on the enemy side is even yet the pretext for implacable Nazi revenge. Mr. Lloyd George secured that fighting alliance, at a moment intensely critical, when Russia had withdrawn from the Entente, French armies were in mutiny, and the Italian forces had collapsed on the field. It was indeed time for a British leader to bethink himself of new friendships. That this one was secured by announcement of the Jewish National Home policy, is not in dispute: but Mr. Jeffries thinks that its value fell far below Mr. Lloyd George’s sanguine expectations. The critic likewise contends that the services of Dr. Weizmann, that chemist of genius who sought for himself no reward, but only the rendering of belated justice to his long oppressed countrymen, have been enormously exaggerated by a British Minister seeking to excuse the exorbitant price at which these services were recompensed. In any case, says Mr. Jeffries, the payment should have been made from the purse of the party

indebted, not—as Mr. Lloyd George attempted to make it—out of “trust funds” held for a third party. This is one of the more interesting and expressive of the images under which our mordant satirist has depicted the National Home transaction. Another is in the passage which declares that the *Balfour Note* has no more validity than the pledge given by a bigamist to a second woman, while the first exhibits unchallenged her certificate of marriage!

Finally, what sort of motives must we suppose, on this record of so unjust a proceeding, to have determined Arthur James Balfour? We have been prepared for the answer by an account of his developing concern, during years long before the Great War, for the cause of a Jewish State. It remains, in the view of Mr. Jeffries, to dwell upon the moods of a dilettante philosopher, tempting him, when entrusted with high practical affairs, to obstinate persistence in a course which will make his initial theory seem to have been right. If the facts will not square with the theory, so much the worse for the facts:

He pursued politics with iron determination, and yet it was out of politics, despite his tennis and his golf, that he won his supreme entertainment. In all his statesmanship there was a strain of recreation, and he would not be balked of it. He was like a man who *will* have his exercise, and goes trudging over other people's gardens and wheatfields in the honest cause of health. The Arab acres of Palestine lay on the route of Balfour's mental exercise, and he led his Zionist companions into them, exclaiming on the emptiness of the site and its suitability for occupation as he trampled the corn and strode past the vociferating owners.¹

Such, in summary, is the case presented by our pro-Arab spokesman, not to justify, but to explain and extenuate those measures of violence to which, when forbidden normal methods of redress and even refused a hearing, the Arabs at length had recourse.

II.

In comment upon this case, it will be well to keep carefully apart (i) those historical or ethnographic sections dealing with the ancient title to “ownership” of Palestine, and (ii) those other sections concerned with contracts, Anglo-Arab or Anglo-Jewish, made in 1915 and 1917.

Argument about which race is the “rightful” or “natural” owner of a country, when it carries us back over many centuries,

1. J. M. N. Jeffries, *Palestine*, p. 189.

is an exercise rather of antiquarian interest than of practical usefulness. Lord Northcliffe's comparison with Ireland seems here quite fitting; the conferences with Mr. De Valera in 1921, about which Mr. Lloyd George complained that they had spent so long "getting as far as Strongbow" in the historical review, come back to mind when one is asked to examine this Palestinian question in the light of what happened to the Canaanites under the sword of Joshua. "To whom did Palestine originally belong"? A hard question indeed, just as it would be a hard question to raise about the original ownership of any country, and one whose announcement—unless it were made in unmistakably antiquarian mood—the present inhabitants might hear with alarm. But we do definitely take for granted, except in a few cases such as Palestine and Ireland, that the antiquarianism in such a matter will be harmless, and in general we now recognize that to answer the question who was first in a country does not in itself tell us who should hold the country now. Since, however, this ethnographic proceeding is so much to the mind of the pro-Arab enthusiast, let us look for a moment at his case.

It is agreed that at the time of the *Balfour Declaration* the Arabs in Palestine outnumbered Jews by about nine to one. This statement, in the sphere of arithmetic (a science still objective, international, not yet what Hitler would call "folkish") is confirmed by statistics from the date nearest to 1917 at which a census was taken. It is likewise agreed that a great numerical preponderance of Arabs had existed there for a very long time. But when our analyst begins to argue about the comparative "rights" of these racial groups, based upon the record of "how they originally got there", the agreement ceases. Conquest as a title to land is elsewhere thought good, at least when the victors have held the place for a very considerable time: it is the basis of that *de facto* recognition which of late has been accorded very quickly indeed to the new rulers of Abyssinia, of Albania, of Spain. But appeal to such title will this time serve both sides. Both have used force, and against the thirteen hundred years of Arab tenure in Palestine must be set a tenure earlier and nearly as long by Jews: it began with their capture of the Holy Land as set forth in books called *Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Deuteronomy*, *Joshua*, no doubt familiar, or at least easily accessible, to Mr. Jeffries.

His monograph indeed shows that our critic has been pursuing research with vigor in the Old Testament. He is

especially pleased with the verse in *Joel*, "What have you to do with me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the coasts of the Philistines?" This he somehow construes as an early authoritative renunciation of the claim which Zionism now seeks to establish. But his principal interest in Old Testament enquiry is to relieve the pro-Arab (that is to say, the anti-Zionist) movement from the reproach that it would frustrate the restoration of Israel apparently promised in Holy Scripture. With this purpose he has been most diligent in bringing together the relevant scriptural texts, and ingenious in devising methods for their exegesis which will make it seem that they have already been fulfilled. On that speculative excursion I do not propose to follow him. But it does seem relevant to point out that, while relieving his case from conflict with the prophecies of Scripture, Mr. Jeffries has incurred a far greater risk of the same kind by identifying the cause of his Arab *protégés* with that of Canaanites, Amorites, Jebusites and others whom the Chosen People supplanted. His effort to conciliate pious critics will be undone if he asks them to include at least six books of the Old Testament under the same scornful abuse which he has poured on the *Balfour Declaration*. Fixing national rights by such historical research, in disregard of the interests which fairly belong to groups in the present (with neither guilt for the crimes nor credit for the achievements of remote ancestors) is a hopeless project. A Jewish claim and an Arab rebuttal so supported are equally pointless. The present case illustrates once more the remark of Froude, that Clio is a Muse quick to support you with "evidence" for whatever you want to believe. Or the lament in *Coningsby*: "History is difficult to turn to with a new thing when you are not in the habit of it. I never could manage charades."

But, dismissing such sterile enquiries into an ancestry so far back that even the ethnologists hesitate to say anything definite about it, what are we to make of an alleged breach of faith with living people? Were Jews bribed into service to the Allies in 1917 by an act of shameless infidelity to the covenant sworn two years before with the Arabs? This turns on interpretation of a single sentence in the letter of Sir Henry McMahon to the Shereef of Mecca, dated Nov. 2, 1915:

The districts of Mersina and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Hama, Homs and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits and boundaries.

Was this understood by the negotiating parties to exclude Palestine from application of the promise that Arab independence would be recognized and supported by Great Britain? Mr. Jeffries argues that since Palestine lies not west but south-west of a line connecting the four towns mentioned, the excluding clause was obviously not meant to apply to it. A glance at the map, however, while it shows the clause to have been somewhat loosely drawn if it was intended in the wider application, is far from decisive on the pro-Arab side.

That "west" covers here "south-west" is strongly suggested when we notice the principle put forward for excluding any Arab area at all. The areas excepted, writes Sir Henry McMahon, "cannot be said to be purely Arab". If, then, Palestine, whose population was similarly mixed, did not in Sir Henry's mind come under the qualifying clause, there was a strange incoherence in his thought. Looking back upon it, he acknowledges nothing of the kind. In a letter to the *Times*, written two years ago, he put the point with clearness:

I feel it my duty to state, and I do so definitely and emphatically, that it was not intended by me in giving this pledge to King Hussein to include Palestine in the area in which Arab independence was promised.

I also had every reason to believe at the time that the fact that Palestine was not included in my pledge was well understood by King Hussein.

This is surely corroborated by the acquiescence of King Hussein in the *Balfour Declaration* when its meaning was explained to him, and by his angry message denouncing Feisal as a traitor if he should make that Declaration a pretext for withdrawal from the war. It is further corroborated by a subsequent letter from Feisal himself¹, whose language Mr. Jeffries has indeed a hard task to explain away:

We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy upon the Zionist movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best, in so far as we are concerned, to help them through. We will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home.

III.

If, then, those best entitled to speak for the Arabs were at first content with the *Balfour Declaration*, and sympathetic with the Zionism it was meant to promote, what happened

afterwards to change that mood, and to develop the present fury of Arab resistance. Two possibilities suggest themselves. Perhaps those qualifying clauses in the Declaration, which assured Arabs of safeguard for their interests under the new Palestinian régime, were not honored in practice? Or perhaps the acquiescent Arab leaders of 1919 had undertaken more than they could fulfil, and the rank and file of their Movement rebelled with increasing success against the concessions they had made. The two possibilities are not strictly alternative; they may supplement each other. Plainly, too, the exploitation of each by foreign influences, unconcerned for "justice to the Arabs" (or to anyone else), but eager to make the maximum of trouble anywhere for Great Britain, would help to explain how in the last few years Palestine has become so like a scene of Black Shirt or Brown Shirt outrage.

There is nothing in the record to indicate that Great Britain as the Mandatory Power was remiss in insisting on the guarantees for Arab rights. Mr. Churchill, charged as Colonial Secretary with large responsibilities in the early period, laid great emphasis on the distinction between making Palestine a Jewish National Home and providing a National Home for the Jews *in* Palestine. The latter, he said, not the former, was the project which Great Britain had undertaken, and it implied that other races in the country would keep their status unimpaired. Obviously if there was to be a Jewish National Home at all, Jews must be not only permitted but encouraged to emigrate thither from foreign lands where they were uncomfortable. But the limits imposed upon the number of such emigrants, the conditions with which they must comply, the areas and terms of their settlement upon Palestinian land, were all worked out with the best judgment that the mandatory authorities could bring to bear, keeping in mind the "absorptive capacity" of the place, and the method by which the qualities of incoming Jews might work to their mutual benefit with those of the long resident Arabs.

The visitor to Palestine of ten years ago, before the movement of progressive industry was arrested by violence, could see on all sides enormous benefit through the new Jewish contribution of brain and money and hard work. Not only was he startled at that time, when Governments elsewhere had come to their wits' end in financial embarrassment, to find one place where nobody was unemployed, where there was no superfluity but a serious shortage of labor, where banks and financial houses

were perplexed about the best disposal of their recurring surplus. Consequences of such exceptional equipment judiciously applied were appearing already in social progress at a speed elsewhere unknown. The visitor saw prosperous cities and towns, supplied with the agencies of modern convenience, where a few years before had been only an arid waste; large stretches of country transformed through scientific public hygiene from malarial swamps, which every European was warned to avoid, into places of wholesome and attractive residence; the rapid completion of real roads and effective means of transit by which those who knew the Palestine of another time were amazed; a development of water-power, of machinery, of manifold electrical possibilities not only for the comfort of urban dwellers but also for agriculture on such a scale as had never entered into the imagination of the Arab farmer. It was indeed a unique spectacle of three great factors—money, brain, industry—working at tremendous speed together. The Jewish settlers, determined to restore the land they thought theirs, brought with them wealth, scientific talent, devotion. We have seen this blend at work in the crisis of war: this time it was working for industrial progress. No wonder that Palestine advanced fast and far.

That the newcomers were without faults, sometimes gross faults, is not suggested. They had racial antipathies, and a special temptation is that of a people long oppressed, long conscious of high powers to which scope has been forbidden, when given a sudden opportunity to assert themselves. "We should be the last to be unfair, because we have been so long the victims of unfairness"—that sounds well, and it is no doubt true: but the qualities a race will show are often different from those it *should* show, and among the dispositions of which we must take psychological note is the one called revenge. Was not the recognition of this among the deeper reasons for setting up a system of Mandates? It was not just because certain new countries were "as yet unable to stand alone" that a supervising Power was placed in charge of them, for a period not definitely fixed, but to be determined by trial.

The Arabs had thus a great opportunity, while Palestine was developing through Jewish effort, but under close British supervision and control, to insist on constitutional safeguards. Wherein the local dangers lay, they well understood, and of the general character of such dangers in a Near-Eastern as in a Far-Eastern country, British administrators had abundant

experience to warn them. Time, too, was for once on the right side; there was no hurry, no risk that by quick expiration of the Mandate a Jewish control temporarily conceded would be rendered unchangeable. The Jews themselves wanted nothing of the kind. It was the Chairman of the Palestine Zionist Executive who declared to the *Shaw Commission* that he thought the Mandate should go on "for ever".

But the opportunity was missed. The Arabs obstinately refused to cooperate, blocked every practical suggestion put forward in the best spirit to achieve an inter-racial peace that would have meant much for all. Obscure as some of the motives were, others are plain enough, not only to those desirous but to those even patient of their discovery. The Arab land-owning class, for example, the small aristocracy of land known as *effendis* in contrast with the *fellaheen*, felt the alarm of their circle everywhere at laborers getting higher pay and encouraged to discontent with that rank in which it had pleased Providence to place them. So they have hinted, with Hitler and Mussolini and General Araki and certain leading spirits in the British House of Lords whose sources of income are still feudal, that higher pay for the laboring class (such as the Jewish employer was offering) would produce the awful state of affairs known as "Communism". In another mood, and to an audience unprepared for that sort of argument, they dwelt—in the spirit of Ruskin and William Morris—upon the idyllic charm of primitive Arab agriculture, which vulgar Jewish modernizers were displacing with machinery, and on how the poetic type of farmer, celebrated in Vergil's *Georgics*, though he earns less money, is a far nobler product than the farmer dehumanized by mechanization. The very public health measures, which one might have hoped that even an *effendi* would acknowledge to be serviceable, were dismissed as too dear at the price. In an aphorism surely coined by either Joseph Goebbels or Julius Streicher, we were told that malaria is not so bad after all, for "Better a plague of mosquitoes than a plague of Jews"! The resistance to the National Home project found here its unsurpassable expression.

IV.

We cannot, then, explain the change in Arab temper by disappointed hopes, for there was no such disappointment. The safeguards promised were vigilantly provided, in so far as the Mandatory Power, working not only without Arab co-operation but against bitter Arab resistance, could provide them.

What of the alternative explanation, that the Arab leaders of later years were of an altogether different mood from those who, in 1919, approved the *Mandate for Palestine*? They were indeed very different from the men who concerted with Colonel T. E. Lawrence the "revolt in the desert". It is among the legends industriously circulated by pro-Arab writers that Lawrence regarded the National Home scheme as a breach of faith with the Arabs. He thought, indeed, that at the peace settlement the Arabs were betrayed, but not in respect of that particular project; his own sympathies were with Zionism¹. It was when counsellors very different from Lawrence had operated upon their minds that Arab *intransigence* developed, and when Mr. Lloyd George suggests certain foreign interference, it is not difficult—having regard to dates—to guess who interfered.

At all events, it became plain that no adjustment of detail would serve, and that the Arabs would be content with nothing short of racial predominance. There has never existed in that area of southern Syria known geographically (not politically) as "Palestine" a sovereign Arab State; but under cover of the clause about preserving the status of non-Jewish races the creation of such a State is now demanded. This would translate numerical preponderance into a machine of permanent political control. The "National Home for Jews" must, so interpreted, be no more than an opportunity for Jews to live there in such numbers as the Arab ruling class may sanction, and only as colonists or settlers under an Arab Government. In no circumstances would their separate nationality be recognized, or would they be conceded a "home" in the sense which includes at least the right of internal regulation after a dweller's own mind. Effort after effort has been made to conciliate this Arab temper, even to the extent of the proposal in the *Peel Report* that the tiny area of Palestine be partitioned, and that only a section of it *not including Jerusalem* be assigned to the Jews. But assigning any part of the territory, however small, to Jews is an act of self-denial for world reconstruction beyond what the Arabs can be persuaded to perform, even though importuned by Powers without whose sacrifice of men and treasure not a foot of Arab soil would have been liberated from the Turk. Each attempt at compromise has called forth new resistance in a campaign of riot and outrage and assassination after the familiar Nazi or Fascist sort.

1. Cf. *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 276n., in which Lawrence wrote that Mr. Churchill had found solutions for the Arab grievance "fulfilling (I think) our promises in letter and spirit, where humanly possible." "So", Colonel Lawrence continues, "we were quit of the war-time Eastern adventure with clean hands." Mr. Churchill's solutions included fidelity to the plan for a Jewish National Home, whose repudiation he now

The case of the "Holy Places" is typical. Even amid the austerities of Turkish tyranny, Jews had been permitted to honor with periodic exercises of devotion the sole surviving fragment of their ancient Temple, and for this ritual purpose had been given access to the "Wailing Wall". But, to borrow an Old Testament aphorism, they were soon to find the little finger of Arab intolerance thicker than the Turkish loins. Under pretext that Moslems too had a centre of devotion in the area which contains the Wailing Wall, because their Prophet had stabled his horse there to await his return from an official trip to Heaven (whither he had been recalled as an ambassador for instructions) the Arabs have contrived difficulty after difficulty for Jewish worshippers. Here is one illustration, among many, of the temper with which it is fruitless to negotiate, because the removal of each grievance is but an incentive to find a new grievance, where the will is not to agree but to quarrel.

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What is the next step to be? Is it to be surrender? Are Arab terrorist methods to succeed in Palestine? Are the Jews who emigrated thither by hundreds of thousands, and who expended there millions upon millions of dollars, on the faith of a British, a French and an Italian (!) guarantee, to be told that since "realism" has displaced "idealism" in world affairs, that guarantee is now worthless? If so, next Nazi broadcast may be expected to prove wittier than usual on the topic of "so-called virtuous nations". Mr. John Gunther states the issue well: "If the White Paper is put completely into effect, the result will be that the Jewish National Home in Palestine follows Abyssinia, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Spain, and parts of China and Lithuania down the greased appeasement chute."

If there is indeed to be such humiliation, the fault will not lie with Great Britain, as Mandatory Power, nearly so much as with the Powers which betrayed the League, for the National Home was a League enterprize, dependent for its success upon the success of the new collective system symbolized by Geneva. The purpose, the methods, and the chief agents of that betrayal are well known: they are not British.

How much can yet be salvaged, from a wreck in which this Palestinian disgrace is but a fragment, one does not dare to guess. Cynics say that the story of Alexander the Great, distressed because no more worlds remained for him to conquer, may soon be matched by a story about Nazi and Fascist dictators reaching the saturation point in boast over humiliated democracy. One could wish that the cynics this time had a less plausible case.

H. L. S.