

ABSTRACT

The thesis discusses how the management of information available to the Asquith and Lloyd George Governments on Palestine, which because of its importance to the defence of the Suez Zone was an area of crucial strategic importance to the British Empire and should at least be British influenced, between 1914 and 1920, evolved into a strategy designed to acquire Palestine as a British dominated region within the British Empire. The thesis also discusses how Britain's original intention to support an Arab revolt against the Ottomans, and thereby create a friendly country in Palestine which would protect Suez, evolved into a strategy that sought to acquire Palestine itself. The thesis is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the appointment of Lord Kitchener as War Minister and how a changed foreign policy, forced on the Government by the Ottoman Empire's alliance with the Central Powers, was brought under his control, which enabled him to create a new British Vice-Royalty in North Africa and the Middle East. It also discusses British relations with the Arabs, responses to Arab nationalism and the obstacles to Lord Kitchener's desire for a new Vice Royalty presented by French interests that resulted in the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement, dividing the Ottoman Middle East territories between Britain and France. The second chapter covers the history of the British Government's involvement with Zionism together with the reasons and strategic implications for British support of Zionist aims of restoration in their 'Promised Land', British misconceptions of Jewish and Arab nationalism, British clashes with the French, and the nature of Arab nationalism in Palestine. The third chapter examines how the Paris Peace and San Remo Conferences led to a British mandate and changes to the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The final chapter examines the conflict between Arabs and Zionists over land ownership; the Military Government's handling of these disputes, and the consequent effect on British strategy to govern Palestine. Ultimately, British success in Palestine would be determined by the efficacy of their methods in dealing with the contentious issues of land, since both Arabs and Zionist claimed sole ownership.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
Abstract	1
Acknowledgements	4
Transliteration and abbreviations	5
Introduction:	6
Imperial and Middle Eastern Strategic Considerations	7
Zionism and the Question of Finance	8
Arab -Zionist Relations and Post War British Rule	8
The Historiographical Debate	9
Conclusion	19
Chapter 1: Britain, France and the Quagmire of Arab Independence	22
Protecting the Empire	25
Industrial Shortcomings	25
Kitchener Takes Control	27
A New Foreign Policy	33
Co-operating with France	36
Rise of Arab Nationalism	37
France Repositioned	42
France's Claim to Syria	42
Implementing Strategy on Palestine and Ottoman Territory	47
Negotiating Factors	55
Sykes' View of Palestine	62
De Bunsen's Strategic Recommendations	64
Flawed Intelligence, and Flawed Strategy	66
The Arab Bureau and Arab Independence	67
Overtures to Sharif Hussein	70
Mixed Messages	74
The Al-Faruqi Episode	76
Rival Chiefs	84
Guarantees of Independence	86
Hussein's Territorial Demands	90
Conclusion	92
Chapter 2: Al Haaretz Asher Arecha (To A Land Which I Will Show You).	98
Introduction	98
The Chosen People	100
The Price of Exile	103
Tradition in the Galut	104
The Promised Land	106
Haskalah and Aliyah	108
Forging a Nation	112
Rise of Chovevi Zion	114
Herzl and the Rise of Anti-Semitism	118
Belief in Restoration	121
Restoration and Early Twentieth Century British Politicians	128
Gaining British Support: Weizmann and his Promotion of Zionism	129
British Conundrums: Change of Strategy 1914	131
British Interest in Zionism Grows	132
Anti-Zionist Perspective of a Jewish State	143
A New Direction 1916: Zionists and the Lloyd George Government	147
French Interest 1915-17	151
Influencing America	154

	Influencing Russia 1917	156	
	Difficulties in the Path to Ultimate Success	158	
	The Balfour Declaration 2nd November 1917	160	
	Conclusion	164	
Chapter 3:	Defining Palestine		169
	Introduction	169	
	Arab Perspectives 1900-14	169	
	Pre Mandate Zionist Perspectives	171	
	Reconciliation Attempts	173	
	Other Cooperation Attempts	175	
	Post War Cooperation Attempts	176	
	Revising Sykes-Picot, 1917-19	177	
	The Mandate and its Boundaries	181	
	Conclusion	183	
Chapter 4:	Land Disputes		185
	Economics and Military Control	186	
	Strategy and Military Government	188	
	Political Realities	192	
	Arab Perspectives	199	
	Arab Self-Determination and the Military Administration	200	
	Aliyot (The First and Second Aliyah)	203	
	Economics of Land Categories	206	
	Effects of the Agricultural Background in Ottoman Palestine	208	
	Politics of Land Purchase	210	
	Whitehall Acts	212	
	Fundamental Antipathy	216	
	Conclusion	217	
Conclusion			223
Bibliography			237

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My passion for history has spanned the last five and a half decades though, until a few years ago, my desire to pursue history in an academic fashion was unrealisable. That it has remained an unquenchable desire for so many years is owed to the inspiration of my long retired Junior School form teacher, Mr. Sidney Danes.

Research and completion of this PhD thesis owes much to a number of people whose assistance, support, and advice was invaluable. First my thanks go to my supervisor, Professor Vanessa Martin, for her guidance.

After so many years in industry, it was clear that my writing skills needed considerable adjustment to meet the register required for a Doctoral thesis. Achieving this standard owes much to Dr. Peregrine Horden whose clear advice was of immense worth. His suggestions for alterations to parts of the first two chapters greatly improved their presentation and layout, and significantly facilitated writing the remainder of this thesis.

My thanks must also go to the late Emeritus Dr. Julian Chrysostimides, and Dr. Charalambos Dendrinis, of the Hellenic Institute. Their interest and questions on Jewish history and religious practice resulted in a more readable chapter on the two thousand year old theological basis for political Zionism, and our many discussions on history have been a significant highlight of this opus.

My research in the Central Zionist Archives in Jerusalem greatly benefited from the advice of Dr. Rochelle Rubinstein, the Deputy Director. Also, Roy Noy whose skill obtaining documents using the Archive's database allowed me valuable time for additional research.

Much of this thesis concerns Anglo-Jewry, a community whose opinions are always diverse. I am grateful to Rabbi Rachel Benjamin of South Bucks Jewish Congregation for the opportunity to use the Synagogue's Adult Education programme for presenting papers based on my research, as a means of testing my material on a highly partisan audience.

To my daughter Mrs. Jocelyn Waite and her husband Paul, both history teachers, my grateful thanks for their objective, incisive, and informed observations on the 'working museum of industrial archeology' that was British industry at the outbreak of the First World War. Similarly, my daughter, Mrs. Wendy Murray, showed exemplary patience enduring my loquacious responses to her questions, of considerable help in writing this complicated history.

Finally, my greatest thanks must be to my wife, Jeannine. Her unflagging encouragement and support over the past six years, her tolerance and understanding when I felt frustrated, raised my spirits whenever they were low. Without her love, support, and patience this thesis could not possibly have been accomplished.

A Note on the Transliteration

The transliteration system is basically that of the *Cambridge History of Judaism*. Well known place names such as Jerusalem, Haifa and Jaffa, have been rendered without diacritics, as have commonly used words of Hebrew origin found in the Oxford English dictionary, such as 'Torah' and 'Talmud'. Where an Israeli author has published a work in English their name has been rendered in the form they have chosen.

Abbreviations

CAB	War Cabinet Papers
CMND	Reports by Command of His Majesty the King
CZA	Central Zionist Archives
FO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
HMLRO	House of Lords Record Office
IJMS	International Journal of Middle East Studies
ISA	Israel State Archives
JBIIA	Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs
L/P & S	India Office Political and Secret
MECA	Middle East Centre Archive – St Antony's College, Oxford
MES	Journal of Middle Eastern Studies
SAD	Durham University Sudan Archive
TNA	The National Archive

INTRODUCTION

One of the most far-reaching outcomes of the First World War was the creation of Palestine, initially under Britain as the Mandatory, out of an ill-defined area of the southern Syrian boundary of the Ottoman Empire. This War was unique, both quantitatively and qualitatively, so determining strategy demanded a higher level of management skill to assemble myriad sources of information into an informative coherent picture for War Cabinet discussions. Though much historiography has examined specific aspects of Palestine the process that evolved British strategy has not been part of these works. This contribution to Palestine's historiography will examine how the decision making process was managed by those key British Ministers, civil servants, diplomats and military staff directly or indirectly involved in devising a plan that transformed the Middle East from an area conspicuous by its absence of geopolitical nation states into the divided and faction ridden countries of today.

British Strategy for the Middle East and Palestine evolved against a background where British support for the Ottoman Empire had ensured that the East Bank of Suez was protected, so when the Ottomans joined the Central Powers, in November 1914, the government was forced to rethink its strategy. Unlike policy that is only affected when contravened, strategy involves a long-term plan, which requires execution. Involvement in Palestine first had to determine the country's value to the British Empire, and the nature of British interest before creating a tactical plan designed to secure objectives. One of the difficulties facing Britain was that France regarded Palestine as its area of influence, which meant careful reflection over her likely reaction once Britain's intention to gain the country became clear. This thesis will examine the evolution of British strategy for Palestine between the outbreak of war and June 1920 when Sir Herbert Samuel became the first High Commissioner and led the civil government that replaced the Military Authority, in power since December 1917, to establish how and why Britain became involved. Primary and secondary sources will reveal how information was acquired and used, analyse the characters, backgrounds and bias of important British advisers and decision takers to consider the basis upon which their opinions and advice were formulated, and the way in which a strategy to protect Suez from a German backed Ottoman threat evolved. Management of the decision process will be viewed against the background of an imperialistic nation unprepared for the huge strain a European land war would place on its government, people and industry.

In 1914, there was neither a dedicated Secretary of State for War nor any significant government level preparation for managing a war that required priority over domestic issues. Accordingly, matters as varied as what size army was needed, how to raise it and how to conduct Foreign Affairs had to be coordinated through the War Cabinet, established in August 1914, which required a communication process for

reports and advice. One issue was the dilemma caused by the Middle East territories of the former friendly Ottoman Empire. Another was the government's lack of awareness over British industry's deficiency of modern machinery and its poorly trained and skilled work force that had to be reformed if it were not to hamper prosecuting the war.¹ Simultaneous to controlling major industrial structural improvement, the government also had to create an edifice for handling the demands of this new type of warfare. Accordingly, in writing this thesis it has been important to consider that the evolution of British strategy was not simply military. A political dimension was important to address Arab, French and Zionist aims, objectives and concerns. Thus, rather than considering a few items in great depth, but on essentially a narrow front, this work places the history in the context of a country unprepared for war, yet reliant on controlling the Suez Canal. This complicated history will reveal the complexities involved with developing a strategy, and the inconsistencies, confusion of objectives and misconceptions that arose. Also, what could and should have been known to the British Government so that they understood all facets of their decision to become involved in Palestine, which would have ensured their strategy was realistic.

Imperial and Middle Eastern Strategic Considerations

Holding and defending Suez, the 'jugular vein' of the British Empire, required both Egypt and Palestine either to come under direct British control or to be in the hands of a friendly nation. British control of Egypt, since 1882, secured the west bank and the Ottoman Empire's control of Palestine the east. Hence, when the Ottomans joined the Central Powers a serious threat was posed to the security of the canal, and to the 'troops from India who would be transported through it' on their way to the European theatre.² In 1914, a common British concern was the risk of an Ottoman attack on Suez.³ Therefore, the government's challenge was how to devise and implement a strategy for securing Palestine, which had no clearly defined frontiers or peoples, without diverting troops from Europe. British investment in India made Suez strategically vital, but was threatened by French interests in Syria and Palestine. Hence, British strategy consisted of encouraging an Arab revolt to remove the Ottomans, and simultaneously using the Zionists to combat French demands over Syria.⁴

Crucial to developing British strategy was the appointment of Field Marshal Lord Herbert Horatio Kitchener, the recently ennobled Earl of Khartoum, as Secretary of State for War. His approach to Emir

1 Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 84.

2 David Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East 1914-1922* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1989), p. 79.

3 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 100.

4 Elie Kedourie, 'Britain, France and the Last Phase of the Eastern Question' in *The Academy of Political Science*, 29 (1969), 189-97 (p. 190).

Hussein began Britain's involvement with Palestine, which was envisaged by the Earl to be part of a new Viceroyalty in the Middle East and North Africa. Earlier works have not covered the strategic importance of Lord Kitchener's connection with Foreign Affairs, or his encouragement of Sharif Hussein to head an Arab revolt against the Ottomans. Financing the revolt cost eleven million pounds by October 1916; the equivalent of one billion pounds in current values.⁵ Notwithstanding, the revolt was only of very limited benefit to the successful prosecution of the First World War in Palestine.

Zionism and the Question of Finance

Unable to finance the design and development of Palestine's infrastructure, the government encouraged Zionists to access world-Jewry's funds in exchange for resettlement. Though the British needed the Jews to finance Palestine's economic growth, this did not mean corresponding Zionist influence in its governance, which inevitably led to clashes between the Zionists and the Military Authorities in addition to those with the Arabs over land purchase. Significantly, the government failed to recognise the roots and longevity of Jewish attachment to Palestine. This would prove a key contribution to subsequent British difficulties, once the military government was installed in December 1917. Hence, this thesis will discuss the Biblical concepts of the 'Chosen People', the 'Promised Land' and the 'Messianic Era', and why they are an important dimension of Zionism that Whitehall needed to carefully consider before supporting Zionist claims to Palestine by issuing the Balfour Declaration. It will become clear that the strategic considerations facing Britain, during and immediately after the First World War, were sufficiently complex so that devising and implementing any strategy to fulfil the differing aspirations of Arabs, Jews and French was always going to be demanding. Also shown, will be how British wartime strategy evolved and the conflicts that flowed when exigencies devised to meet wartime requirements were less than successful in a peacetime environment.

Costs to devise and implement legal, transport, and economic infrastructures in Palestine, to unify it into a viable state, hugely exceeded that of supporting Sharif Hussein and the Arab Revolt. Britain had been crippled by the war and was forced to sell colossal quantities of overseas investments in addition to borrowing 3.7 billion dollars from the United States, which left Britain 'a permanent debtor [...], making it impossible for London alone to continue as the principal effective financial centre of the world'.⁶ Cost is obviously a consideration determining strategy, but other intangible long-term factors were at least as important.

Arab -Zionist Relations and Post War British Rule

Finding the resolve to defuse difficult issues of governance and religion complicated the installation of civilian rule. For centuries, Palestine had been mainly under Muslim rule that regarded Jews as inferior,

⁵ Assuming, 5% per annum compound interest.

⁶ Denis Judd, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present* (London: Harper Collins, 1996), p. 256.

subservient, dependent, weak and deserving neither equal legal status nor power.⁷ Adding to Arab rancor at what they saw as reversing centuries of the *status quo*, was their treatment at the hands of some Jewish settlers both before and during the Great War.⁸ Thus, relations between Arabs and Zionist settlers of the first two *aliyot* will be examined to show Zionist attempts at harmonious relations, the reasons they failed, and why Arab antipathy to change became antagonism as Samuel 'took for granted the Zionist analysis of the Jewish predicament'.⁹

Britain's involvement with Zionism arose from the necessity to protect Sue. Without Zionist access to the finance necessary with which to develop Palestine's infrastructure, protecting Suez would have been commensurately more difficult. Zionists, unsurprisingly, expected that in exchange for financing the country's economic development, they would have at least some voice in its governance. They also expected to purchase land from Arab land owners, which caused difficulties with Arab farmers. Methods adopted by the Military Government to handle these conflicts had a consequent effect on British strategy for Palestine. Ultimately, British success would be determined by the efficacy of their methods in dealing with the contentious issues of land, and Arab and Zionist claims to sole ownership.

Four months before the Ottoman Empire joined forces with the Central Powers, Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary at the British Residence in Cairo, received a letter from Abdullah ibn Hussein, the son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, the Emir of the Hejaz, asking the British Government to acknowledge Arab independence, guaranteed by treaty, for the defence of 'territory comprising the Levant, Mesopotamia and Arabia', and for British approval of 'an Arab Caliphate of Islam'.¹⁰ This followed an earlier meeting between Abdullah, Lord Kitchener and Storrs, and the Earl's subsequent instructions to Storrs that he continue the meetings and correspondence.

The Historiographical Debate

When Lord Kitchener returned to Britain to take up the post as Secretary of State for War, his successor, in 1915, as High Commissioner for Egypt, was Sir Henry McMahon. Elie Kedourie's book, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth*, traces the history of what became known as 'The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence'. Abdullah attempted to persuade the British to support Arab proposals for autonomy, which resulted from a Committee of Union and Progress, the Ottoman Government, threat to depose his father. Kedourie describes Abdullah's proposition as 'audacious', yet does not mention that British diplomats were encouraging the

⁷ Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881-1999* (London: John Murray, 2000), p. 47.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-56.

⁹ Elie Kedourie, *The Chatham House Version* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1970), p. 53.

¹⁰ Elie Kedourie, *In The Anglo-Arab Labyrinth* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 4.

subjects of a friendly nation to act against that nations interests.¹¹ Neither does Kedourie observe that Kitchener's instructions to Storrs might be seen as the start of a strategy for the British Government to gain influence in Arabia and the Middle East. Kedourie is careful to show that the attempt to recruit the British was, in reality, a way of resolving the quarrel between

'a centralising government [...] and an over mighty subject who had no desire to give up his quasi-independent status, his armed following, or his autocratic powers'.¹²

Kedourie shows that Sir Henry McMahon, the High Commissioner, failed to control his subordinates or to keep 'intelligence appreciation and policy recommendations strictly apart', yet makes no assessment of its effect on the decision making process.¹³ Neither does Kedourie show how locating the Arab Bureau at Cairo, from 1916, reduced the effectiveness of the India Office, which had long exercised charge over Arab affairs and intelligence analysis.

Palestine's strategic importance to British interests was recognised by Colonel Charles H. Churchill, a staff officer with the Expedition to Syria, between 1842 and 1852, who envisaged it forming 'part of a new independent state' where the Jews would play 'a conspicuous role in its revival'. Prophetically, he thought the Jews would obtain sovereignty of at least part of Palestine.¹⁴ To achieve this, he judged two things were required. 'Firstly, the Jews themselves will have to take up the matter universally and unanimously. Second the European Powers will aid them in their views'.¹⁵ Protecting Suez was essential to controlling Palestine, Mesopotamia and the route to India, and may be seen as the first step towards attaining the second of Churchill's two requirements examined by Isaiah Friedman in *The Question of Palestine*.¹⁶

Despite Lord Lansdowne's 1892 agreement with the Sublime Porte concerning the administration of the entire Sinai Peninsula the Ottoman Empire chose unsuccessfully, in 1906, to test the arrangement. This resulted in the Committee of Imperial Defence concluding that to secure Egypt it was essential to preserve intact the strip of desert country, about 130 miles broad, which was seen as forming a buffer to the Canal.¹⁷ Though British Middle East interests were then thought more likely to be threatened by German influence than from the Ottomans directly.

Herbert Samuel put the case for a Jewish state to be established in Palestine to Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, as early as November 1914, despite facing a formidable anti-Zionist body led by his cousin

11 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 5.

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*

14 Isaiah Friedman, *The Question of Palestine, 1914-1918, British-Jewish-Arab Relations* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 1.

15 Howard, M. Sachar, ed. *The Rise of Israel*, 39 vols. (London: Garland, 2000), 1, 56, Churchill to Montefiore, 11 Jun. 1841.

16 Friedman, *Question*, p. 3.

17 CAB 38/11/9, 1906.

Edwin Montagu. Samuel's principal argument was that it would assist British strategic interest, but he also believed that Jewish communities throughout the world would provide sufficient funds to buy out existing landowners and lay the foundations of the State.¹⁸ Friedman, in showing why their outlooks differed, examines Victorian understandings of 'nation' and 'religious community' in the pre-Emancipation era. Nevertheless, *The Question of Palestine* makes no mention of the nature of Zionism, its longevity and the origins of its claim to Palestine.¹⁹ Similarly, Friedman glosses over the role of Gilbert Clayton in the Al-Faruqi episode, which was of considerable importance to British strategic relations with the Arabs, and simply repeats Storrs' opinion that his 'balanced advice could not be hustled by a sudden crisis'.²⁰

Samuel, as with all Zionists, was particularly concerned over the fate of the three million three hundred thousand Russian Jews who, by May 1916, had been subjected to or expelled by pogroms even though 'hundreds of thousands were fighting in the Russian Army'.²¹ Anglo-Jewish leaders had warned the government, which felt powerless to intervene, about the pro-German disposition of American Jewry, the political and moral implications that undermined Britain's 'standing and good faith, and the unfavourable effect upon opinion in the United States'.²² Contrastingly, in Germany's zone of occupation Jews were freed and promised 'ultimate political liberation'.²³ Eventually, Sir George Buchanan, the British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, against diplomatic custom, unavailingly raised the subject with the Tsar, which left the British government in a dilemma.²⁴ Anti-Russian feeling within the American Jewish community was sufficiently powerful for their government to terminate the 1832 Commercial Treaty with Russia, and to prevent its renewal in 1914.²⁵ American Jews, the British Government believed, could significantly threaten the financing of the allied War effort; a singularly important factor when issuing the Balfour Declaration.

Although the *entente cordiale* was ten years old, in 1914, mutual suspicions lingered, and the French were causing difficulties. Friedman argues that the British desire to keep the Arab revolt alive was seen as a means of 'dislodging the French from Syria'.²⁶ However, it seems more likely that the British did not intend to exclude the French from the Middle East, but were keen to limit their influence so as to protect Egypt and the Suez Canal. Unless Britain held Palestine, the key to which was Haifa, this would be difficult. Haifa could be linked by rail to Cairo in the West, the Hedjaz in the East, and Basra in the North. Of similar importance was

18 Bowle, *Samuel*, p. 170.

19 Friedman, *Question*, pp. 25-37.

20 Storrs, *Orientalisms*, p. 155.

21 Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Harper, 1949), p. 196.

22 F.O. 371/2448/178994. Communication by Sir Gilbert Parker, 22 Oct. 1915.

23 Friedman, *Question*, p. 39.

24 F.O. 372/2448/16905. Letter from Sir Cecil Spring Rice to Sir Edward Grey, 27 Mar. 1915.

25 Friedman, *Question*, p. 43.

26 *Ibid.*

Alexandretta, in Syria, a natural harbour that 'commanded the entrance to the Suez Canal'.²⁷ Rivalry, born of imperialism, would not be easy to dispel and, though the French were supposed to be British allies, it offered no obstacle to British desires for a Protectorate over a substantial part of the Arab world; France could be compensated elsewhere.²⁸

Friedman's *A Twice Promised Land* examines the charge that the British Government made conflicting commitments to the French, Arabs and Jews, whose repercussions are seen in French resentment of what they perceived to be British military attempts to undermine their position in Syria. Furthermore, the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which was described by the Arabs as 'a product of greed and a startling piece of double dealing', buoyed their feelings of being cheated.²⁹ Zionists were no less aggrieved, and believed the British Government did not intend to fulfil the terms of the Mandate. Similarly, Palestinian Arabs claimed their plight arose from the Balfour Declaration, which they claimed violated the promise of independence in Sir Henry McMahon's October 1915 letter to Sharif Hussein. Though Friedman asserts there was no unilateral British commitment to the Arabs, he does not explain why Sharif Hussein came to believe the contrary. Friedman observes 'it soon became apparent that the Sharif regarded Arab unity as synonymous with his own kingship', but neither explains why, nor mentions Sharif Hussein's belief in the traditional Caliphate described in the first chapter.³⁰ Friedman states that McMahon's letter was simply political, non-binding and part of a series that were 'inconclusive and left in abeyance until the Peace Conference'.³¹ He evaluates Arab and British conceptions of 'vilayet', and 'the district (vilayet) of Damascus' that are key to Arab land claims in the Middle East, but examines neither their background nor their effect on British strategy. Land ownership was a major strategic issue, so it seems surprising that the correspondence with Sharif Hussein lacked detailed prior approval of Whitehall, which Friedman also fails to cover. Curiously, Friedman sees the Sykes-Picot Agreement as a result of this correspondence when in fact changes were concurrent and known to the French. He asserts that the Hussein-McMahon correspondence was a British attempt to gain Palestine from the French, and opines the Arab Revolt could only have been possible with French concessions over Syria. He does not mention that the Arabs were suspicious of French motives encouraging the revolt. Notably, Friedman makes no allusion to the British belief that Zionist development of Palestine's economy would gradually erode opposition.³² Palestine's population was 'small, backward, and poor, and the land was not richly endowed with natural gifts

²⁷ Friedman, *Question*, p. 43.

²⁸ F.O. 371/2480/2506. McMahon to Grey, 15 Feb. 1915.

²⁹ Isaiah Friedman, *A Twice Promised Land?* vol. 1: *The British, the Arabs and Zionism, 1915-1920* (New Brunswick: B.J. Transaction, 2000), p. xiii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

³² CZA, Z4/16044. Ussishkin's interview with Chief Administrator, 9 Oct. 1919.

that attract capital and enterprise', so this was especially important.³³ *A Twice Promised Land*, though to some extent an erudite and informative view of the British, the Arabs and Zionism, is weakened by lack of examining why Britain became entangled with Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration was neither promise nor guarantee, but simply a statement of support for a Jewish Home subject to protecting the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities and the status of Jews in other countries. Leonard Stein's, *The Balfour Declaration*, traces the history of 'the creation in Palestine of a home for the Jewish people secured by public law'.³⁴ Carefully, he separates the hope expressed by the Zionism of the Diaspora from that of 'an organised and articulate movement' created by Theodore Herzl at the 1897 First Zionist Congress in Basle.³⁵ Stein also describes British interest, from about 1839, in the idea of 'a restoration of the Jews to Palestine' and the lack of success that Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, encountered when raising it with the Ottomans. During the nineteenth-century, the British government had already attempted to prevent the French from conniving with the Ottoman Empire to allow the Sultan, Mahmud II, influence in Syria and Egypt.³⁶ Notwithstanding the similarities of British and Zionist interests, without Britain's declaration of war against the Ottoman Empire, on 5 November 1914, the Balfour Declaration might never have been made. War between the two previously friendly nations resulted in the dissection of the Ottoman Empire and the abandonment of Britain's traditional Eastern Policy, which opened the way for Jewish restoration. This point was made by the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, at the Lord Mayor's Banquet, on 9 November 1914.³⁷ On the same day Herbert Samuel, sitting in the Cabinet as President of the Local Government Board, raised Zionism with Lloyd-George, who 'was very keen to see a Jewish State established'.³⁸ Samuel, in a subsequent discussion with Sir Edward Grey, used Palestine's proximity to Egypt, the same argument advanced by Colonel Churchill sixty years earlier, in an appeal to gain support.³⁹

The Balfour Declaration is not only concerned with the more remote or immediate events surrounding its issuance. Also, it considers the personalities of the main protagonists, both Jewish and non-Jewish, Members of Parliament, the effect of the Russian Revolution, and France's response. Stein considers why Balfour, when commending the Declaration to the War Cabinet, left open the choice of the Protecting Power out of concern for American opinion. He also argues that the Zionists had to be drawn into acceptance, and to

33 F.O. 371/4187/2117. Report on Economic Development, 30 Dec. 1919.

34 Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (London: Jewish Chronicle Publications, 1983), p. 3.

35 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 3.

36 *Ibid*, p. 5.

37 *Ibid*, p. 103.

38 Samuel, *Memoirs* (London: Cresset, 1945), p. 139.

39 Bowle, *Viscount Samuel*, p. 170.

prove their desire for a British Trusteeship.⁴⁰ Though all were important, even more so was the question of the Arabs. In fact, this was so significant that at Sykes' first meeting with the Zionist leaders, in February 1917, he remarked that 'one would have to go carefully with the Arabs'.⁴¹ These relations weighed heavily on the more sophisticated Zionists whose depth of concern is conveyed in Harry Sacher's letters to Leon Simon, saying 'I don't want us in Palestine to deal with the Arabs as the Poles deal with the Jews'.⁴² Sykes succinctly observed that the Zionists had been allowed, indeed encouraged, to think of Palestine as 'Judea for the Jews'.⁴³ Oddly, these reservations do not appear to have been discussed by either the War Cabinet or the Foreign Office. When Bertie, the Ambassador to Paris, met Lloyd George, on 20 April 1917, and enquired how helping the Jews would affect the Arabs the Prime Minister seemed unconcerned. Apparently he believed that Great Britain could 'take all the difficulties in her stride'.⁴⁴ Lloyd George unambiguously enunciated British intentions, and noted in his diary that

'we shall be there by conquest and shall remain. We being of no particular faith and the only Power fit to rule Mohammedans, Jews, Roman Catholics and all religions'.⁴⁵

Though Lloyd George believed a British Protectorate was the solution, he did not envisage a Palestine 'as Jewish as England is English' explicitly rejected by a June 1922 White Paper.⁴⁶ *The Balfour Declaration's* weakness is that it does not discuss the predicament of the Jews in the Pale of Settlement during the nineteenth century who, oppressed by the Russians, sought relief from persecution and restoration to their 'Promised Land'. Memories of their land are constant with eschatological and other prayers in Jewish liturgy, and weekly readings from Torah, the Prophets and study of Talmud all encouraged Jews to believe in eventual restoration.

According to Walter Laqueur, in *A History of Zionism*, the French Revolution was the great divide for modern European History that started a 'new era for the Jews'.⁴⁷ Emancipation spread rapidly even to countries where 'improvement to Jewish status had been inconclusively discussed for many years'. *A History of Zionism* describes the difficulty for Jews in European countries, often little changed from medieval times, and analyses the circumstances that led to the Zionist movement. Laqueur traces its development through the sway of Jewish converts to Christianity as well as those who doggedly clung to their identity.⁴⁸ The many Jewish publications, activities, declarations, meetings and projects during the nineteenth-century national

40 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 605.

41 *Ibid*, p. 621.

42 *Ibid*, p. 622.

43 *Ibid*, p. 623.

44 *Ibid*, p. 628.

45 *Ibid*.

46 *Ibid*, p. 556.

47 Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken, 2003), p. 3.

48 Laqueur, *History*, p. 15.

revival are identified as the source from which the Zionist Movement, with its central vision of return, sprang.⁴⁹ Exile had not diminished the call of the Jewish home, which was continually expressed through prayer, study, and many false *messiahim*.

Interest in Palestine was not confined to the Jews. The Ottoman Empire was a widely discussed topic in European chanceries, and between 1839 and 1854 all major countries, including the United States, had established consulates in Jerusalem. Establishing an independent Jewish state in Syria was a subject of newspaper discussion, and many British 'ardent protagonists' implicitly accepted Britain's historical mission to lead the suffering Jews back to their home.⁵⁰ One nineteenth-century writer astutely recognised that Jewish emancipation was not a solution to continual denigration in many countries, saying 'nowhere were Jews welcomed or loved'. Nevertheless, in 1896, Zionism had no substantial and systematic drive apart from the few *Chovevi Zion* (lovers of Zion) groups limited to cultural and philanthropic work, and 'a few newspapers keeping alive the visions and dreams of national revival and return'.⁵¹ Theodore Herzl supplied the vision and drive from the impression made by the Dreyfus trial that led him to conclude Jewish safety meant having their own country where they could be autonomous. Essentially, *A History of Zionism* concentrates on Political Zionism as a national movement at a time of a 'romantic wave of national revival following the French revolution'.⁵² No reference is made to the Jews self-perception as a people, or why they are the only religion of antiquity to become a nation; both are intrinsic parts of Zionism.

Appointed Secretary of State for War, in August 1914, Kitchener would have been unsurprised when the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers. His letter to Lady Salisbury, the widow of Lord Salisbury the former Prime Minister, in December 1910, expressed concern over German influence at the Sublime Porte, saying

'things are not going well there for us; [...] The German is allowed to do as he likes.

There is a good deal of discontent, [...] probably war must be the outcome'.⁵³

Accordingly, his meeting with Abdullah and Storrs, in February 1914, and his instructions for Storrs to maintain contact, may have greater significance than hitherto supposed. Nonetheless, whilst Kitchener wanted to entice Sharif Hussein into the British camp with offers of the Caliphate, the Emir's notion of a sovereign Arab Kingdom also had to be dealt with.

George Antonius, in *The Arab Awakening*, recounts his view of Arab Nationalism by tracing the origin of the Arab Movement to Syria, in 1847, where under American patronage a literary society was established in

49 Laqueur, *History*, p. 40.

50 *Ibid*, p. 43.

51 *Ibid*, p. 83.

52 *Ibid*, p. 589.

53 George Arthur, *Life of Lord Kitchener*, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1920), 2, p. 306.

Beirut. As Islam advanced, the meaning of *Arab World* expanded from its birth among the nomads who roamed the area comprising the Euphrates and the centre of the Arab Peninsula to the southern boundaries of the Hedjaz and Najd, whilst a sedentary population occupied the Yaman and Hadramaut. Islamic forces, within a century of the death of Mohammed, had founded an Empire extending from the Iberian Peninsula in the west, along the southern shores of the Mediterranean to the Indus and Aral seas in the East.⁵⁴ However, his claim that third century migration into Syria and Iraq 'fundamentally altered the essential civilisations of these countries' must be open to doubt. Antonius is contradictory when asserting that the 'influence of the Arabic language did not go very deep' yet arguing that 'the whole population [...] adopted their language, their manners and ways of thought', which became the foundation of the modern Arab world,⁵⁵ and comprised those countries that remained 'impressed with Arab cultural and social influences' some of which he attributes to the arrival of Islam.⁵⁶ The Arab Awakening is traced to the upheavals of the 1860s that led to renewed activity in establishing schools, and an intensified effort among young thinkers agitating for liberation from Ottoman rule. These seeds of patriotism created a movement whose 'inspiration was Arab and whose ideals were national instead of sectarian'.⁵⁷ Mainly, Antonius endeavours to show that British promises to the Arabs were abrogated because of the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration. Whilst deploring violence, he is also clear that 'no lasting solution to the Palestine problem is to be hoped for until the injustice is removed', which meant displacing from their homes and villages a large Jewish population in favour of an Arab state.⁵⁸ There is no room in Palestine, Antonius says, 'for a second nation except by dislodging or exterminating the nation in possession'; the siren call of all who believe that violence will result in justice.⁵⁹

Essentially, Antonius endeavours to prove that from ancient times an Arab culture had predominated in the Middle East, which was subsequently destroyed by the conquests of the Ottoman Empire that endured until the founding of their National Movement. Then, led by Sharif Hussein, the Arabs obtained British pledges, also made to the French and the Jews, and subsequently broken in favour of a Jewish state. *The Arab Awakening* is a victim view of Arab history and relies on the concept of a specific Arab identity distributed throughout the Middle East by the third century, which was later quashed by the Ottomans for 350 years. Though the Arabs did gain some of the promised territories, Palestine was given to the Jews. British strategy, using this argument, is entirely liable for the result. Britain's involvement in the Middle East was as an imperial power, and war offered the opportunity to enlarge her Empire so that, in the words of Leopold Amery the

54 George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1965), pp. 13-15.

55 Antonius, *Awakening*, pp. 16-17.

56 *Ibid*, p. 18.

57 *Ibid*, p. 60.

58 *Ibid*, p. 409.

59 *Ibid*, p. 412.

Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet, Britain could gain control of all the territories from Cape Town to Cairo, thence to Palestine and India

'then all parts of the British Empire [...] will be in a position to render each other mutual support. [...] achieving this involves the retention [...] Of German East Africa, Palestine and Mesopotamia'.⁶⁰

Crucial to the success of such an ambitious strategy was sound planning, control, and the quality of British officials in Cairo and Khartoum to whom was delegated direct dealing with the Arabs. Eventually, the interpretation and accuracy of the intelligence received by British officials in Cairo concerning the Arabs and Arab nationalism, in their reports to the Foreign Office, would determine the success or failure of British strategy.

In *British Strategy and War Aims, 1914-1916*, David French discusses strategic concerns that resulted from the defeat at Gallipoli. Wary that the Germans could exploit the catastrophe by reinforcing the Ottomans to threaten the entire British position in the East,⁶¹ Sir Henry McMahon was instructed to vigorously combat the threat by negotiating an Arab revolt against their Ottoman suzerains.⁶² Whitehall believed that British interests required the expulsion of the Ottomans from Arabia and the imposition of a 'Monroe Doctrine' which allowed tribes to settle their own affairs assisted by Britain.⁶³ Yet, in supporting an Arab Revolt, the British were also concerned it could collapse, which would be a 'perfect disaster' and 'might result in the Sharif coming to terms with the Ottoman Empire to create *jihad* in India, Afghanistan, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Aden'.⁶⁴ Moreover, French pressure on Sharif Hussein threatened British supremacy in western Arabia, which for a century had been predicated on excluding foreign influence from the Red Sea.⁶⁵

Russia's collapse, during 1917, created a more potent threat to India and British Middle East interests. One war objective was to prevent the emergence of Germany as a world power through a middle European empire stretching from Hamburg and Belgium to the head of the Persian Gulf and Palestine. David French, in *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition, 1916-1918*, recounts how British strategists measured victory by the extent to which they frustrated German ambitions and maintained Britain's security in Western Europe, the Middle East and India.⁶⁶ To contain German ambitions, because British forces alone were insufficient to defeat Germany, this required the cooperation of France, Italy, Russia and the USA. Russia's

60 J. Barbes, D. Nicholson, ed. *The Leo Amery Diaries, 1896-1929* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), p. 173.

61 F.O. 800/95. Minute by Nicholson, 20 Dec. 1915.

62 David French, *British Strategy & War Aims 1914-1916* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), pp. 28-9.

63 CAB 16/36. Government of India to Mallet committee, 29 Sept. 1916.

64 French, *War Aims*, pp. 92-3.

65 *Ibid*, p. 93.

66 David French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition, 1916-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 10-11.

collapse, in 1917, left no ally in the east, so a British presence was needed to obstruct French and Italian ambitions for Ottoman territories. Hence, British strategists wanted an *entente* victory in France and Flanders, and a British one in Palestine and Mesopotamia.⁶⁷

When Lloyd George took office, in December 1916, his lack of an overall majority meant that major decisions relied on Labour and Conservative agreement. Furthermore, the recent appointment of General Robertson as Chief of the Imperial General Staff who viewed his authority widely and opposed Lloyd George's strategy, was a further impediment. V.H. Rothwell, in *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy, 1914-1918*, shows Robertson believed that concentrating military resources on the Western Front would lead to victory, which led to difficulties with Lloyd George who preferred to weaken and demoralise Germany by eliminating her allies.⁶⁸ British strategy relied on the Arabian areas of the Ottoman Empire being in the hands of a British friendly regime even if not under direct British control.⁶⁹ During 1917, the British Government, doubting military victory, re-appraised their war aims especially since the Russian Revolutionary Government sought peace.⁷⁰ With America now a belligerent, Whitehall had the opportunity to judge whether an enduring Anglo-American partnership, harnessing America's vast power, could benefit the world by dominating international affairs. To achieve this goal required caution so that the Americans did not perceive a Protectorate in Palestine as a cover for annexation.⁷¹

Britain's post-war strategy was compromised by wartime agreements with the Arabs and the French who, under the Sykes-Picot Agreement, gained most of Palestine. In *Winning the Peace*, Erik Goldstein reveals how Britain negotiated changes to the Sykes-Picot Agreement at the Peace Conference, which led to Palestine becoming a British Protectorate.⁷² Similarly, Goldstein examines British perception of the Arab movement as a way to link Egypt and India, and thus avoid a partnership with the French their international allies, but regional rivals.⁷³

In *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East*, John Darwin analyses Palestine's value to the defence of Egypt.⁷⁴ British strategy, he explains, was forced to change once the Ottomans joined the Central Powers and

67 French, *Coalition*, pp. 10-11.

68 V. H. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 5.

69 *Ibid*, pp. 10-11.

70 *Ibid*, pp. 26-27.

71 *Ibid*, pp. 96-100.

72 Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British diplomatic strategy, peace planning, and Paris Peace Conference, 1916-1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 153-7.

73 Goldstein, *Winning*, p. 131.

74 Darwin, John, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East: Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War 1918-1922* (London: MacMillan, 1981), p. 142.

created the secondary risk of a concerted effort to subvert Muslims in Egypt and India that would have threatened the fabric of the British Empire.⁷⁵ Strategic changes had to deal with French and Russian imperialism that threatened British hopes of dominating the route from the Cape to Cairo and the Middle East in order to protect the 'Southern British world'.⁷⁶ Moreover, British strategy, which had previously maintained a close informal partnership with the Ottoman Empire, changed to supporting the Sharifian dynasty's local rule when the Ottomans joined the Central Powers.⁷⁷ Britain, after the war, wanted to maintain local collaborations secured by her armies and exclude any imperial rival from the land approaches to Egypt or the Persian Gulf. These objectives dictated the political settlements ministers thought best suited to the divided Ottoman territories, which resulted in the Arabs being assured of a wide measure of political freedom that was bound to conflict with the Zionist agenda of autonomy, and the need for Jewish finance to construct Palestine's infrastructure.⁷⁸

Conclusion

Britain's war strategy for the Middle East was to protect India and the empire by securing Suez and controlling central Arabia, which was to be achieved by creating a new Viceroyalty where the main element was tactical control of Palestine. However, this new type of war engaged all levels of the country from the Government through to the people and industry, and posed a major threat to the British Empire. Existing historiography covers particular events, often in great depth, without adequately revealing the complicated wider picture confronting Britain which, whilst somehow protecting Suez from the French, also needed to maintain their support on the Western Front. Hence, the tactic of encouraging an Arab revolt was intended to remove the Ottomans from the Middle East. Undertakings Sharif Hussein believed given in correspondence with Sir Henry McMahon are the foundation of what Arabs believe was the *quid pro quo* for their aid. Because Kitchener was fundamental to formulating British strategy, this work will analyse why McMahon and the officials in Cairo, each of whom regarded himself as an expert, were able to provide and have accepted obviously faulty intelligence concerning the unity of the main Arab chieftains, which formed the basis of Kitchener's decision to encourage the Arabs to expel the Ottomans, thereby laying the foundations of the Viceroyalty he desired. It will be seen that the embellishments made to Kitchener's telegram to Cairo, in

⁷⁵ Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East*, pp. 153-4.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

September 1914, started a chain of events that enabled Sharif Hussein to conclude, deliberately or otherwise, that British help would fulfill his desire for an Arab Hashemite Kingdom.

Considering the importance of the Faruqi episode to British tactics, this paper will substantially review existing historiography and take a fresh approach to the entire event showing, in particular, the woeful neglect of reasonable professional standards from all associated with the appraisal of Faruqi that went unquestioned by Kitchener. Any kind of Arab Kingdom in the Middle East required dismembering the Ottoman Empire, and in reviewing the reasons for Asquith's apparent capitulation to a strategy that he did not favour, and which reversed a two hundred year old Foreign Policy, it will be seen that Kitchener's pervasive influence was of prime importance. Britain, faced with an Ottoman Empire infected with German militarism had to maintain control of the military gate to Egypt and Suez, if lost

'Palestine, armed and fortified, might not merely become a powerful wall of defence to the Ottoman armies on the south, but it would provide a rally port from which an attack might be made [...] upon the Sinai Peninsula and the valley of the Nile'.⁷⁹

French acquiescence was supremely important to controlling Suez, if Britain was to preserve post-war control. Since 1882, when France finally accepted Egypt as a British Protectorate, relations, although mitigated by the *entente cordiale*, had been strained. France viewed Syria, which included Palestine, as its sphere of influence, and justified the claim by looking back to the Crusades. Thus, when dismembering the Ottoman Empire, French desires had to be reconciled. In examining the background to the Sykes-Picot agreement the differing outlooks of the British and French will be seen as also the influence of Sir Mark Sykes's appointment to the de Bunsen committee. Sykes's opinions owed more to enthusiasm than considered strategic or commercial understanding, and it will be argued that serious character defects merited cautious appraisal before acceptance.

Herbert Samuel's the 'Future of Palestine' memorandum to the cabinet, in March 1915, was a seminal event for the vision of substantial Jewish resettlement in Palestine that needed carefully planned expectations before committing to a large-scale Jewish influx. Key to British comprehension was clarity over the exact nature of Zionism. Stein, in *The Balfour Declaration*, and Laqueur, in *A History of Zionism*, give this question little consideration. Both point to the centuries of Jewish persecution in Europe and the funding Jews would bring to Palestine. Neither examines the deeper implications of Jews self-perception as the 'Chosen People'

⁷⁹ CAB 24/4, G.182. 'German and Ottoman Territories captured in the War'. Memorandum by Lord Curzon, 5 Dec. 1917.

who were waiting for the most propitious moment to return to their 'Promised Land' which, together with notions of the 'Messianic Age', are important roots of Modern Political Zionism.

The British had set themselves some serious challenges if a new Viceroyalty, which after Kitchener's death, in June 1916, evolved into a Protectorate, had any serious chance of realisation. The following chapters will reveal just how difficult the task would become, its successes and failures.

Chapter 1: Britain, France and the Quagmire of Arab Independence

Appointing Kitchener as Secretary of State for War was a significant influence on Middle East strategy. Unprepared to confine himself to his direct ministerial duties, he was sufficiently powerful to ensure that changing a century old foreign policy, forced on the Government by the Ottoman Empire's alliance with Germany, was largely under his control. Little attention has previously been paid to his desire to create a new Vice-royalty, which paved the way for a Protectorate after his death, in 1916. It was instrumental to Britain becoming more deeply involved in the Middle East than might have otherwise pertained. Protecting Suez against a German backed Ottoman assault and fear of post-war hostilities against France in no small measure led Kitchener to explore and encourage Arab claims to the Middle East. This poorly thought out notion is in part the root of modern conflict between Israel and the Arabs over Palestine. Examining Kitchener's role and influence will reveal how the Arab Revolt became an important aspect of Britain's war strategy, and why Arabs believed a revolt against the Ottoman Empire would enable an independent kingdom, which inexorably led to the myth that Britain promised Palestine to the Arabs. Considered an Arab expert by the government, Kitchener's views were unreservedly accepted to the detriment of better informed dissenting opinion that was eschewed when evaluating strategy.

During the Great War, British strategy for the Middle East was aimed at protecting India, which meant keeping India's numerous Muslim subjects tranquil. Initially, this gained Whitehall's support, as it feared foreign troops in the Muslim Holy Land would make the followers of Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca, Emir of the Hejaz and potential British ally, oppose him.¹ Lord Curzon, the Viceroy between 1899 and 1905, opined 'as long as we rule India we are the greatest power in the world. If we lose it, we shall drop straight away to a third-rate power'.² Securing the trade routes to India and the Suez Canal required 'a vast fabric of secondary involvement' which made Britain, by 1914, a major Middle East Power in addition to an Asiatic Power.³ Strategic military and political responsibilities entailed by India led to British involvement with Arabia, the Sykes-Picot agreement which divided the Ottoman Middle East territories between Britain and France, and the Balfour Declaration.⁴ This chapter will study the strategic nature of the government's support for the Arabs consequent upon Ottoman entry into the War, and why the notion of Arab independence was useful to Hussein's ambition to extend his Hashemite Kingdom over a large part of the Middle East. Approaches to the Arabs are

1 David French, *British Strategy & War Aims 1914-1916* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), p. 90.

2 Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993), p. 76.

3 Barnett, *Collapse*, p. 77.

4 Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive (MECA). Hubert Young Papers, notes on 1919 Staff College lecture.

viewed in the context of a government fully occupied with a European war, whilst simultaneously attempting to resolve structural problems afflicting British industry. This combination allowed Kitchener to accept the opinions of his acolytes in Cairo and Khartoum and dabble in Arab affairs without consulting experts in the Foreign Office. Grey's ill-health and reluctance to confront Kitchener, whose status in the country made any challenge formidably difficult, was a permutation permitting him to shape Foreign Policy in the Middle East according to his own designs. However, France's long standing interest in Syria, which included Palestine, complicated realisation.

Mythology decreed French interest in Syria had existed since the first Crusade. In reality, this was largely a nineteenth century invention permitting successive French Governments to centre their Middle East interests on Syria, actively consider its acquisition for integration into the French Empire and legitimise French diplomatic, political, cultural and economic activity in the Levant.⁵ Accordingly, France's investment in the Ottoman Empire, between 1895 and 1914, was considerable and resulted in numerous communication enterprises, town planning, shipping, railways, urban management, natural resource exploitation and ownership of 75% of Ottoman public debt.⁶ Incorporation created a dilemma for France, which on the one hand did not wish the Ottomans aware of her desire for Syria and on the other did not want another Power gaining any share; 'it is good to remind others that we have not discarded our traditional interest in Syria'.⁷ French colonial leaders, still traumatised from Fashoda and the 1882 Egyptian crisis despite the *entente cordiale*, were anxious that France would be excluded from territory regarded as her own so, despite her alliance with Great Britain, France refused to negotiate over Syria. Poincaré, the French President, was torn between alliance with Britain and diplomatic efforts placing Syria at the centre of French power in the East.⁸ Traditionally, France's view of Syrian Arabs was that of fanatics assisting British territorial acquisition in the Persian Gulf, which complicated efforts to prioritise economic involvement in Syria, conflicted with Britain's defence of Suez and extending defensive depth into Palestine to protect Egypt.⁹

Russian demands over Constantinople and the Straits presented another obstacle for Britain. Ottoman control of the Straits threatened Russian exports, which drew Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister, to address Grey through the Russian Ambassador to Britain, Alexander Benckendorff, on 21 May 1914. Russia also feared German control over a large part of the Ottoman army would eventually

⁵ Vincent Cloarec, *La France et la Question de Syrie: 1914-1918* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 1998), p. 11.

⁶ Cloarec, *Question*, p. 19.

⁷ *Ibid*, p. 20, cites MAE, Turquie, 112, 82, note by Jean Gout, deputy director Asia-Oceania, 26 May 1909.

⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 27-8.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 22.

pose a similar threat.¹⁰ Ottoman control of the Straits was previously raised, in 1908, when Grey stipulated British war time strategy was for Ottoman freedom to control the Straits provided that, if she remained neutral, new regulations were not to 'place any of the belligerents at a disadvantage'.¹¹ Grey knew Russia wanted freedom of passage through the Straits to pursue operations against the Ottoman Empire, but it was not until he learnt, on 26 September 1914, she proposed violating Persian neutrality, which would have affected British interests, that he issued a general assurance concerning the fate of Constantinople and the Straits.¹² According to Churchill, Grey recognised as early as November 1914 the importance of encouraging Russia, and so instructed Buchanan to inform Sazonov 'the question of the Straits and of Constantinople should be settled in conformity with Russian desires'.¹³

The Gallipoli debacle lost Kitchener Cabinet support and forced him to 'reduce the powers and responsibilities' of his job as War Minister, but allowed him continuing authority to devise a strategic political agenda for the Middle East.¹⁴ France's claim to Syria and Palestine was a material impediment to Kitchener realising his dream of a new Viceroyalty. It caused Lieutenant Colonel Oswald Fitzgerald, Kitchener's private and military secretary, to enquire of Ronald Storrs about the French post-war position regarding Palestine. Storrs' reply, at the end of 1914, grudgingly allowed an 'extension of the inevitable French Protectorate over Lebanon, [...], but we cannot count on the permanence of any Entente, however Cordiale'.¹⁵ Such cynicism indicates little faith in the *entente cordiale* as a binding understanding between Britain and France, and was consistent with Britain's imperialistic vision of a new Viceroyalty that reflected the continuing colonial rivalry between the nations. British strategic fears were increased by France's Near Eastern threat to the Indian Empire's vital approaches that were exacerbated by centuries of suspicion as Britain's oldest enemy. Yet a new Viceroyalty would inevitably conflict with French interests in Lebanon, Syria and Palestine unless she could be persuaded to release her claim so Britain could acquire the ports of Haifa and Jaffa to protect Suez. This previously ill considered aspect of Britain's strategy for Palestine will be examined to show how and why it was important not to estrange France. Once Britain became committed to liberating the Arabs from the Ottomans, and it was apparent Arab support depended on the promise of an independent state in

10 F.O. 371/2735. Mallet to Grey, 2 June 1914.

11 William A. Renzi, "Great Britain, Russia and the Straits, 1914-1915" in *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 42, No. 1, (Mar. 1970), pp. 1-20, (p. 3).

12 Renzi, 'Great Britain, Russia and the Straits, *JMH*, 42, (pp. 4-6).

13 Winston S Churchill, *The World Crisis: 1911-1914*, 4 vols (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1923), 2, p. 198.

14 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 167.

15 TNA 30/57/31. Kitchener Papers document 0073, 28 Dec. 1914.

Syria, there was little choice other than to negotiate with France to relinquish her own desires.¹⁶ Sir Mark Sykes, another acolyte of Kitchener, was selected to lead British negotiators towards an agreement intended for each country to gain its territorial desires and avoid future confrontations.

Protecting the Empire

As Britain's ultimate strategic purpose was India's protection, 'the very foundation of British Power', and industrial power wins modern wars, India's ability to defray the cost of her defence from national resources was significant to British strategy. Contributing to these costs was important if their burden was not to fall directly onto British taxpayers. What significant contribution was India able to make towards its defence? Where industrial capacity was concerned

'only sixteen in every thousand males and two in every thousand females

were literate in English, the language of industry, administration and commerce'.¹⁷

Apart from chromium, manganese and jute the British in India had neither developed nor discovered other sources of strategic raw materials.¹⁸ India's army contributed approximately one and a half million volunteer soldiers, mostly serving in the Middle East, and representing 0.3 percent of her total population, half of whom were recruited in 1918. The British Isles and New Zealand raised 12.4 percent and 11.6 percent respectively; Australia and Canada raised about 8 percent each. Not only was India unable to contribute towards its defence, but to control 'internal order' fifteen thousand British troops were retained there throughout the war.¹⁹ Thus, Britain's immense diplomatic, political, military and strategic effort in the Middle East derived almost wholly from possessing India.²⁰ India's economic cost was known to the government for, in 1918, a *Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms* studied her economic contribution to Britain's victory, stating war made the military importance of economic development apparent, and products of industrial development

'coincide so nearly in kind [...] with the catalogue of munitions of war that the development of India's national resources becomes a matter of almost military necessity'.²¹

Failure to exploit natural resources or develop her industry had left India totally dependent on British products.

Industrial Shortcomings

War forced the government to recognise the extent to which sources of key raw materials, 'with which the whole Empire was endowed', had either been neglected or fallen into foreign hands

16 V. H. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 29.

17 Barnett, *Collapse*, p. 77.

18 CAB 24/1. British and Allied war resources: War Cabinet discussion, 12 Oct. 1915.

19 Rothwell, *War Aims* p. 79.

20 *Ibid*, p. 80.

21 London. Command 9109 (1918), p. 268. Report on Indian Constitutional Reform.

that left Britain reliant on the United States for eighty percent of her supplies of petroleum products.²²

This was not the only deficiency. Shortcomings in iron and steel works are described in the official *History of the Ministry of Munitions* as

‘small scale, old systems and uneconomical plant, their cost of production being so high

That competition with the steel works of the United States and Germany was becoming impossible’.²³

If the petroleum, steel and iron industries were backward, light engineering was virtually nonexistent. Britain had few precision industries capable of switching ‘to the mass manufacture of finely accurate shell fuses’, or any other product requiring mass manufacture to fine tolerances. Creating a light engineering industry disclosed the entire lack of a modern machine tool industry ‘capable of producing the sophisticated machines for the new production lines’.²⁴ Without machine tools, key to all modern large-scale production, neither instrumentation nor military equipment could be produced in quantities vital to fight the war, which reduced British industry, in 1914, to ‘a working museum of industrial archaeology’.²⁵ Hence, British power, in 1914-15, essentially comprised three elements. Despite its weaknesses there remained a huge industrial machine capable of modification and modernisation, and a vast inherited wealth available for purchasing American technology that would create the time needed to modernise and acquire vital American machinery, which British command of the seas allowed to safely cross the Atlantic.²⁶ Politicians had pitched the country into a modern war without the technology, capacity or skilled manpower able to produce the quantity and quality of armaments obligatory against a numerically and industrially superior enemy. These substantial deficiencies had evolved over the previous century, so energies needed for directing the war were dissipated to modernise industry by developing and deploying a new industrial strategy, and seeking quality civil servants and industrialists with the vision and ability to make the far reaching changes of perceptions to

‘what could be done by automatic and semi-automatic machinery, and by female and

unskilled labour [...] the prejudice of makers and workmen alike was in favour of

maintaining a skilled man to do by hand a job a girl could do with an automatic machine’.²⁷

Despite Britain’s manufacturing base resembling a ‘museum of industrial archaeology’ and the steady erosion of inherited wealth fighting a continental war the government, to protect India and the Empire,

²² Barnett, *Collapse*, p. 82.

²³ *Ibid*, pp. 84-5.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 85.

²⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 85-90.

²⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 90-1.

²⁷ Barnett, *Collapse* p. 88.

was about to upgrade British involvement in the Middle East. The importance of Suez to this strategy remained undiminished.

Kitchener Takes Control

On 28 July 1914, Winston Churchill met Kitchener over lunch to discuss war. As British High Commissioner to Egypt and veteran commander of Britain's imperial armies, he was responsible for the security of the Suez Canal and troop transports from India. Churchill's, the First Lord of the Admiralty, duty was for the troopships naval escort on the voyage to Europe. Kitchener, only in London for his investiture as Earl of Khartoum, intended to return to Egypt as soon as possible, so learning from Churchill that 'if war comes, you will not go back to Egypt' did not suit his ambition to be appointed Viceroy of India when the post became available, in 1915. An aspiration he feared would be blocked by politicians, whom he loathed.²⁸

At the outset of hostilities, Britain had been without a Secretary of State for War since the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, in 1912, assumed the office from Lord Haldane. Well known to the General Staff and instrumental to developing the Territorial Army made Haldane the obvious choice when war broke out, but his interest and knowledge of German philosophy attracted public supposition that he was pro-German, which alerted the *Daily Mail* to launch a campaign urging the government to appoint Kitchener, hero of the Sudan and South African wars, to the War Office.²⁹ There were drawbacks. Kitchener was ignorant of War Office organisation and the Army at home. His knowledge of younger men was less than that of the officers who had commanded them,³⁰ he seriously underestimated the Territorial Army's value, avoided the outside world as a whole and routed most communication through his sole almost constant companion, Lieutenant-Colonel Oswald Fitzgerald.³¹ Nevertheless, two days after the outbreak of war Asquith apathetically appointed him Secretary of State for War and described the appointment 'as a hazardous experiment, but the best in the circumstances I think'.³² Equally unenthusiastically, Kitchener 'agreed' to accept the seals of office on the understanding that he served for the duration of the war and 'once peace was signed would depart the War Office for ever'. Meanwhile, he accepted the task to found, build and furnish a huge military fabric in 'the spirit of a soldier'.³³ Promoting Kitchener to one of Britain's highest offices of state, where previously the principle of civilian authority prevented a serving army officer's appointment to high

28 Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill*, vol. 3: 1914-1916, *The Challenge of War* (London: Heinemann, 1971), p. 12.

29 Viscount Sir Edward Grey of Falloden, *Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916*, 3 vols (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), 2, p. 68.

30 Grey, *Twenty-Five Years*, 2, p. 68.

31 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 88.

32 Asquith, *Letters*, p. 157.

33 Arthur, *Kitchener*, 3, pp. 3-4.

political office, was due to public pressure rather than Kitchener's suitability. More accustomed to giving orders than taking them he might have found Cabinet discussion, where other ministers expected their opinions to be considered, difficult and distasteful. Surprisingly Asquith did not question the quality of Kitchener's opponents when winning the victories that made him seem to the public 'magical and larger than life', or the extent to which these victories equipped him to fight a modern war. Neither did Asquith question whether Kitchener possessed the strategic political grasp necessary to successfully transfer from Army operations to running a major department of state during a war. Instead, victories gained in distant lands and in places with, to the general public, strange sounding names lent Kitchener a glamour that made him appear 'the strong and silent hero of popular mythology'.³⁴ Indeed, his status was such that, compounded by the accepted wisdom of a short-lived war, the Cabinet deferred to his judgment even when contrary to accepted military opinion.³⁵ Kitchener symbolised strength, decision and success. Everything he

'touched "came off". There was a feeling that Kitchener could not fail, and the psychological effects of his appointment, the tonic to public confidence were instantaneous and overwhelming. And [...] gave, [...], a national status to the government'.³⁶

Though such status presented a challenge, the Cabinet's obligation was to evaluate his opinions rather than just accept them especially when it affected strategy. Emerging out of the 'provincial garrison community in Cairo', which significantly moulded his understanding of the Arab world, his distinctive outlook on Arab affairs formed during his years in Cairo was used to drive government strategy, which was implemented through his placemen in the Sudan and Cairo.³⁷ This claustrophobic atmosphere produced British officers who, mistakenly, considered themselves as Arab experts despite failing to demonstrate any real awareness of the different Arab peoples.³⁸ Furthermore, life in Cairo exhibited all the excitement,

'narrowness and provincialism of an England garrison town where British officials centred around the Sporting and Turf Clubs, and balls were held at leading hotels six nights out of seven. Most British officers were unconcerned with events beyond their little enclave, and the rivalry with France for position and influence in the Arabic-speaking world'.³⁹

³⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 82.

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 83.

³⁶ Violet Bonham Carter, *Winston Churchill as I Knew him* (London: Eyre & Spottiswood and Collins, 1965), p. 316.

³⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 84.

³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 85.

³⁹ Lord Edward Cecil, *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1921), p. 187.

When deferring to Kitchener the Cabinet was oblivious to the fact that his knowledge of the Middle East was scant, and his aides in Cairo and Khartoum upon whom he heavily relied for advice and intelligence were no better informed.⁴⁰ Crucially, Kitchener's appointment brought Fitzgerald and the staff remaining in Egypt and the Sudan to the centre of power, which allowed him to shape a new approach to the Middle East by delegating power to chosen officers who would guide and execute his strategy. This effectively transferred strategic policy making and information evaluation from

'the capital city of a world empire [...], to the colonial capitals of Egypt and Sudan where the prejudices of old hands went unchallenged and unchecked'.⁴¹

More or less a foreigner' in England, which he found more alien than Cairo or Calcutta, Kitchener preferred the opinions of placemen in Cairo to that of experienced members of the Foreign Office,⁴² and he turned to the former for the information and advice used to shape government strategy in the direction of a new Middle East Imperial domain for Britain where he could serve as Viceroy.⁴³

By the end of 1914 a quick end to the War seemed unlikely, so appointing a new High Commissioner to Egypt was imperative. Kitchener's personal selection was Sir Henry McMahon 'a colourless official from India on the verge of retirement'.⁴⁴ Although nominally in charge, Ronald Storrs, the Oriental Secretary, continued to report directly to Kitchener in common with all the key figures in Cairo and Khartoum deemed experts on the Middle East whose highly respected opinions were instrumental in Cabinet decisions. What credentials justified such esteem? Lieutenant-General Sir Francis Reginald Wingate, the most senior official, had succeeded Kitchener as Sirdar of the Egyptian Army and Governor-General of the Sudan. His entire military career had been in the East, principally in Military Intelligence. Concerning his understanding and knowledge of the Arabs, the journalist George Steevens had obsequiously written during Kitchener's Khartoum campaign how Wingate made sure he knew everything, and as

'for that mysterious child of lies, the Arab, Colonel Wingate can converse with him for hours, and at the end knows not only how much truth he has told, but exactly what truth he has suppressed [...]. Nothing is hid from Colonel Wingate'.⁴⁵

Epitomising the old hand, Wingate felt cut off, neglected and bitter at the little use he believed made of his Arab experience and, writing to Gilbert Clayton his Sudan agent in Cairo, on 18 February 1915, complained that his proximity to the Arabs

40 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 87.

41 *Ibid*, p. 85.

42 Lord Riddell, *Lord Riddell's War Diary, 1914-1918* (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson, 1933), p. 75.

43 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 84.

44 *Ibid*, p. 89.

45 George Steevens, *With Kitchener to Khartoum* (New York: Dodd, Meade, 1900), pp. 64-5.

'has given us opportunities for understanding the situation there, and the views of the Muslims of the Holy Places - better than many others; but clearly that view is not shared by either the Foreign Office or Indian authorities'.⁴⁶

Little in the General's background suggests he fulfilled any criteria usually attributed to specialist knowledge. Possibly, Steevens exaggeration was intended to influence politicians and the gullible public. Another incarnation of the old hand was Gilbert Clayton. Commissioned into the Royal Artillery in 1895, he was stationed in Egypt or the Sudan until becoming Private Secretary to Wingate, between 1908 and 1913, later serving simultaneously as Sudan Agent in Cairo and Director of Intelligence of the Egyptian Army. Sir John Maxwell, Commanding General in Egypt, and another subordinate of Kitchener, promoted Clayton to head the Military and Civil Intelligence Services in Cairo, which concentrated all political, and military intelligence collection and analysis for the entire Middle East into one pair of hands.⁴⁷ Such high ranking and experienced intelligence officers ought to have been able to ensure that intelligence appraisals provided to the Cabinet were accurate. Far from this being so, Cairo's intelligence apparatus was unaware, until 1916, that the Egyptian police network was thoroughly infiltrated by Ottoman spies.⁴⁸ Perhaps the most significant of Kitchener's advisers was Ronald Storrs. This Eastern Language and Literature graduate from Pembroke College, Cambridge, was highly valued by Kitchener, but seen elsewhere as

'a bright and witty man, haughty, crafty, cynical and a snob; a master of flattery and intrigue, with an eye for the ironic and the grotesque'.⁴⁹ Also, 'distant and patronising, tending to examine people as if they were rare insects'.⁵⁰

None seem obvious qualities for the sensitive role in which he had served for over a decade. Nevertheless, this lowly post inhibited neither Kitchener's esteem nor confidence in Storrs' ability as a specialist in Middle Eastern affairs.⁵¹ A more basic issue was the uninspired appointment, in January 1915, of Sir Henry McMahon as High Commissioner. Where high quality leadership, energy, authority, direction and diplomatic skills were essential, appointing a man whose career had hardly been scintillating seems strange. Peculiarly, Sir Charles Hardinge, the Viceroy to India and McMahon's previous superior, was not referred to before the promotion, and subsequently observed 'I [...] would not have advised it [...]. He is a nice man [...], but his ability is of a very ordinary type while his

46 Durham. University of Durham, Sudan Archive, Gilbert Clayton Papers, file 469/8, 18 Feb. 1918.

47 Fromkin, *Peace*, pp. 90-1.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

49 Segev, *One Palestine*, p. 60.

50 *Ibid.*

51 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 89.

slowness of mind and ignorance of French must be serious drawbacks'.⁵² A more forthright assessment was made by Hardinge to Sir Ronald Graham his close friend and adviser to the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior, stating McMahon was more suited to governing a frontier province than a civilised community with complex questions involving foreign interests.⁵³ These serious weaknesses were surmountable if McMahon had been surrounded with high quality officials to simplify issues and provide clear reasoning for recommended action. However, compounding grave failings was the little interest he showed in his duties, preferring to rely on Gilbert Clayton and others to conduct them vicariously.⁵⁴ Significantly, a despatch from the French minister in Cairo, DeFrance, after observing McMahon for six months, said he had acquired no authority in Egypt and none understood his value, what he thinks or wants. Critically, DeFrance noted, McMahon seemed ill informed on important questions and appears uninterested in Egypt as though only physically and provisionally occupying his office. His official duties were completed with dignity,

'but he seems inexistent [...]. When discussing business with him one has the feeling of talking to someone who has no cognisance of, who does not interest himself in the things which are being discussed [...] who does not seem to have the qualities necessary to direct, lead or to govern as the representative of the Protecting Power.'⁵⁵

That McMahon realised he owed his position to Kitchener was probably a weighty factor, but does not mitigate the major character and skills defects noted by De France. Since the British Residency at Cairo gathered and disseminated all intelligence throughout the Middle East to the Foreign and War Offices, Grey's lack of objection to McMahon's appointment either to the War Cabinet or the Prime Minister is curious. Less surprising is that McMahon was Kitchener's personal selection. Kedourie, probably accurately, drily observes 'it was precisely these failings which recommended McMahon to Kitchener who then had no need to fear a powerful personality might supplant him'.⁵⁶

One Cabinet task was to coordinate activities so action reflected the country's needs rather than those of any individual. How was it that Kitchener's strategic judgments went unchallenged by Grey or the Foreign and Colonial Office? Especially since neither Grey nor Asquith shared his 'comprehensive design for the post war Middle East'.⁵⁷ Kitchener's strategy, shared by most of the Cabinet and the India Office, was to control a convenient land route to India 'safe from disruption by France or Russia'. Kitchener calculated that controlling Alexandretta, the natural port on the Syrian

⁵² Segev, *One Palestine*, p. 35.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ MECA. Mervyn Herbert's Diaries, 9 April, 1916.

⁵⁵ Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, pp. 36-7.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

⁵⁷ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 140.

mainland opposite Cyprus, would allow a railroad to be constructed to unite the Mesopotamian provinces that would then fall under British power, but this first meant demolishing the Ottoman Empire.⁵⁸ Prior to the war, Grey's threefold strategy towards the Ottoman Empire was to maintain British interest in the Persian Gulf, protect British commercial interests in Asiatic Turkey, and preserve the territorial integrity of her Empire.⁵⁹ Once the Ottomans allied themselves with the Central Powers it forced the government to formulate a new strategy to protect Suez.⁶⁰ In reaching this decision the War Cabinet discussion partially revolved around the morality of whether Britain 'ought to do as well out of the war as her allies'.⁶¹ Asquith attuned to the reality of controlling and administering further large amounts of territory was sceptical, and, with Grey, doubted and distrusted this view; both believed post-war interests were to have taken and gained nothing especially when purely material considerations taking on Mesopotamia meant

'spending millions in irrigation & developments [...]; keeping quite a large army [...] in an unfamiliar country; tackling every kind of tangled administrative question, worse than we have ever had in India with a hornet's nest of Arab tribes'.⁶²

Asquith pithily expressed his opinion to some Cabinet members, described as 'a gang of buccaneers', when discussing the future of Ottoman territories.⁶³ Conversely, when confronted by the whole Cabinet he was only able to say that, though personally sympathising with Grey's view, 'we have already as much territory as we are able to hold'. Nevertheless, as Prime Minister he realised if other nations were to scramble for Ottoman territories and Britain gained nothing 'we should not be doing our duty'.⁶⁴ So, with little discussion, the Cabinet abandoned its century old policy of protecting Ottoman territories, and in the 150 days since the outbreak of the Ottoman war agreed to divide its territories hoping Britain would accrue some benefit.⁶⁵ Unable or unwilling to convince the cabinet of his concerns debased Asquith's authority and allowed Kitchener, his supporters and acolytes, in particular Ronald Storrs, to pursue his ambition for a new

'African and Near Eastern Viceroyalty including Egypt and the Sudan and across

58 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 141.

59 *Ibid.*

60 Marian Kent, 'Asiatic Turkey, 1914-1916' in *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey ed., F. H. Hinsley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 149.

61 Cloarec, *Question*, p. 28.

62 H. H. Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, ed. Michael and Eleanor Brock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 510.

63 *Ibid.*, p. 469.

64 CAB 42/2, 3 Mar. 1915.

the way from Aden to Alexandretta which would surely compare in interest and complexity, [...], with India itself'.⁶⁶

Though both Foreign and India Offices disagreed, Kitchener's stature left neither feeling able to overrule his judgment. Such esteem ensured he was

'more than the head of the War Office, more than a Cabinet Minister, more than an old hand at African and Asian affairs, more than the Empire's greatest soldier. He was a living legend West and East of Suez. He was Kitchener of Khartoum; and in the sunset of his career, the tall old soldier cast a long shadow over the future of the Middle East'.⁶⁷

Only longer term events would testify to the wisdom of Asquith and Grey allowing one man's reputation, no matter how respected, to move Britain's foreign policy onto a course they believed ill conceived.

A New Foreign Policy

Krivoshein, the Russian Minister of Agriculture, wrote to Buchanan, in September 1914, expressing Russian fears that belligerency would develop from the Ottoman alliance with the Central Powers.⁶⁸ Though personally welcoming Turkey's declaration of war on Russia, he thought the Turkish question could only finally be settled by Russia at Turkey's expense, and for Russia to

'obtain any material advantage from the war, [...] M. Sazanov's references to the Dardanelles question have been merely academic and left the impression that the Russians will insist on settling this question once and for all, though they will not raise the status of Constantinople'.⁶⁹

A day later the Straits were closed.

At the end of October 1914, an Ottoman attack on Russian territory gave Asquith the opportunity to state 'Great Britain must finally abandon the formula of Ottoman integrity whether in Europe or Asia'.⁷⁰

Bertie, the British Ambassador to France, informed the government of Germany's frantic efforts

'to detach Russia from her allies [...]. I notice some nervousness if Russia be not humored about Constantinople and the Straits by France and England'.⁷¹

65 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 142

66 Kew. The National Archive, Kitchener Papers, 30/57/45, document QQ18.

67 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 145.

68 Renzi, 'Great Britain, Russia and the Straits, 1914-1915, *JMH*, 42, (p. 4).

69 F.O. 438/3. Buchanan to Grey, 5 Sept. 1914.

70 CAB 41/35. Asquith to King George V, 3 Nov. 1914

71. F.O. 371/2449. Bertie to Grey, 11 Mar. 1915.

During November 1914, Grey instructed Buchanan to inform the Russian Government that 'the question of the Straits and Constantinople should be settled in conformity with Russian desires'.⁷² Any possibility that Russia might seek a separate peace with Germany was an overriding fear for the British, and they acceded to Russia's proposals on 12 March 1915, which was followed by France a month later.⁷³

Agreement over Constantinople, between Britain and France, was conditional upon Russia respecting their yet to be formulated desires for Ottoman Middle East lands, and upon bringing the war to a successful conclusion through the joint effort of all three countries. Grey admitted the agreement with Russia

'involved a complete reversal of the traditional policy of His Majesty's Government, and is in direct opposition to the opinions and sentiments at one time universally held in England and which have still by no means died out'.⁷⁴

At least as important a factor in British calculations was that if Russia possessed Constantinople and the Bosphorus, 'never again would Berlin reduce Turkey to a satellite and imperil British interests in the Levant'.⁷⁵ Buchanan's subsequent report to London added that the Turkish attitude, increasingly since the outbreak of war, was attracting Russian Government and public attention towards the question of the Dardanelles.

Initiating the break up of the Ottoman Empire commenced with a telegram from the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Sazanov, on 4 March 1915, to London and Paris requesting that Constantinople and the Bosphorus should be handed to Russia once victorious in the Dardanelles Campaign. Russia, in return, promised to listen 'with sympathetic understanding' to British and French aspirations in other regions of the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁶ Unsurprisingly, the French who regarded the Mediterranean as their sea were anxious at potential Russian rivalry. Grey was more concerned that pro-German elements in the Russian court would misrepresent British military intentions in the Dardanelles if assurances

⁷² Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis: 1911-1914*, 4 vols (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1923), 2, p. 198.

⁷³ CAB 42/2. War Council, 3 Mar. 1915.

⁷⁴ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 139.

⁷⁵ Renzi, 'Great Britain, Russia and the Straits', *JMH*, 42, (p. 19).

⁷⁶ Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 137.

concerning Constantinople were not provided. Later he explained that British policy had always been to keep Russia out of Constantinople and the Straits, and

‘it was our policy still. Britain was now going to occupy Constantinople in order that when Britain and France had [...] won the war, Russia should not have Constantinople at the peace’.⁷⁷

Both Asquith and Grey were sympathetic toward Russian access to a warm water harbour on the Bosphorus although it overturned a century or more of British Foreign Policy, however, as Asquith wrote ‘few things wd. give me greater pleasure than to see the Ottoman Empire finally disappear from Europe, & Constantinople to either become Russian [...] or, [...], neutralised’.⁷⁸ Russian concerns over Ottoman control of the Straits were genuine. Buchanan, the British Ambassador, paraphrased Czar Nicholas II in a report to Grey noting that closure of the Straits twice in the last two years had resulted in the Russian grain industry suffering very serious loss, and information had reached him from Vienna giving reason to believe the German position in Constantinople was nearly strong enough to

‘enable her to shut in Russia altogether in the Black Sea. Should she attempt to carry out this policy he would have to resist it [...] even should war be the only alternative’.⁷⁹

Grey’s strategy towards the Straits was to leave the Sublime Porte to decide access provided this did not affect Ottoman safety, which in wartime it would have done. Sceptical about Russia accepting such terms he wrote to Louis Mallet, the British Ambassador to Constantinople, concerned that in the near future Russia would revert to the Straits question, which ‘is the underlying motive in drawing attention to the consequences of the reorganisation of the Turkish fleet by British officers’.⁸⁰ Grey, subsequently acknowledged Russia would ‘never have stood five months of reverses in 1915 but for the hope of Constantinople. Even now the assurance of it is absolutely essential to keep Russia up to the mark’.⁸¹ This reveals the extent that Britain and France believed victory depended on Russia’s continuing involvement to inhibit the release of several German divisions for the Western front. A point against

⁷⁷ Grey, *Twenty-five Years*, pp. 180-1.

⁷⁸ Asquith, *Letters*, p. 300.

⁷⁹ F.O. 371/2092. Buchanan to Grey, 3 Apr. 1914.

⁸⁰ F.O. 371/2135. Grey to Mallet, 25 June 1914.

⁸¹ George Macaulay Trevelyan, *Grey of Fallodon* (London: Longmans, 1937), p. 321.

this strategy was the risk that Muslim opinion in India would view it as destroying an independent Islamic power, and agitate against Britain if the agreement's terms became known. In March 1915, the issue of Constantinople and the Straits arose again, which caused Asquith to observe 'it has become quite clear that Russia means to incorporate them in her own Empire'. Grey, though favourably disposed to Russian wishes, preferred to avoid any pledge prior to a post-war territorial settlement. Nevertheless, uncertain whether the question could be left until eventual peace negotiations, Grey said it 'was very important to avoid anything in the nature of a breach with Russia, or any action that would help make a separate peace'.⁸² Should this happen, Grey informed the Russians, Britain would state publicly that 'throughout negotiations His Majesty's Government stipulated Mussulman Holy Places and Arabia shall under all circumstances remain under independent Mussulman dominion'.⁸³ Grey's fear was that if the Allies' intention to dismember the Ottoman Empire was revealed it would mean assuaging Islam by establishing a Muslim state whose natural territory was in Arabia, home to Mecca and Medina the two holiest cities in Islam. Advantageously, no one

'contemplated foreign troops should occupy any part of Arabia. It was too arid a country to make it worth the while of any ravenous Power to occupy as a permanent pasture'.⁸⁴

Lloyd George may have believed this, however, Kitchener, while not necessarily expecting British occupation, perceived Arabia as a British Protectorate, and his dialogue with Abdullah continued before and after it was agreed with France and Russia that 'Great Britain shall be allowed to establish such direct and indirect administration or control [...] to arrange with an Arab State [...]'.⁸⁵

Co-operating with France

In July 1912, Churchill proposed to Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, integrating French and British Mediterranean fleets, and those between the Atlantic and North Sea. Churchill imagined the Royal Navy would protect France's coast, and France's navy could secure British assets in the Eastern Mediterranean. French diplomats were concerned that war would prove the French fleet was unable to protect both North African and Mediterranean basin communications with France and Egypt, so

⁸² CAB 42/2. War Council, 3 Mar. 1915.

⁸³ Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, pp. 22-3.

⁸⁴ Renzi, 'Great Britain, Russia and the Straits', *JMH*, 42, (p. 19).

⁸⁵ David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, 3 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 2, p. 669.

responded unfavourably. They also feared that integrating the fleets might weaken British standing with the Sublime Porte, which could reinforce the position of the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy that would potentially buttress Italian influence in the Levant, and threaten French interests in Syria.⁸⁶ Poincaré accepted Churchill's proposal because the Franco-British naval agreement enhanced the alliance with Britain that weakened German attempts, earlier in 1912, to obtain an alliance with Britain, and also gave France a free hand in Syria. Hence, an exchange of letters between Cambon and Grey led to establishing naval cooperation between the two Powers in the Mediterranean and the Channel from February 1913.⁸⁷ Factors that influenced France's presence in the Mediterranean were fear a dismembered Ottoman Empire might cause problems for Eastern Christian communities that needed French protection, special arrangements for French commercial interests in Syria, and Lebanese Christian requests for assistance in difficult times.⁸⁸ When Delcassé met Grey and Nicolson, in February 1915, he clarified the strength of France's wishes for Syria, his expectation that these would be conveyed to McMahon in Cairo, and stated that partitioning the Ottoman Empire meant French wishes for Syria and Alexandretta would not encounter any British opposition, saying

'I hope that Sir Edward will inform the High Commissioner to do his utmost to cease the campaign against the French that is in neither British nor French residents interests'.⁸⁹

Rise of Arab Nationalism

Prior to the First World War nascent Arab nationalism had little interest to Europe, and no Palestinian cities contributed towards the intellectual currents and programs of modernisation that gave Arab reawakening substance. War and the repressive policies of Djemal Pasha, the Ottoman Governor, resulted in Palestinian ideological support for pan-Arabism that was enhanced by the Arab revolt, Feisal's propaganda campaign, and indoctrinating recruits to his army into believing they were fighting for Palestine's liberation as part of a post-war independent Arab state.⁹⁰ Despite little interest in a national movement before the First World War, notions of Arab autonomy arose as the Ottoman Empire weakened. They coalesced around leaders who originated from religious families in important cities and

'had managed to preserve their wealth and social position under the protection of the

86 Cloarec, *Question*, pp. 28-9.

87 *Ibid*, p. 29.

88 *Ibid*, p. 30.

89 *Ibid*, p. 79 cites MAE, Guerre 1914-1918, 868, 37, Delcassé to Cambon, 13 Feb. 1915.

90 Porath, *Emergence*, pp. 70-1.

religious system, held religious office and so were linked with the religious hierarchy throughout the empire'.⁹¹

These families maintained and taught Arabic as a requisite introduction to religion and pride in Arab origin. Often descent from the prophet or one of the early Islamic heroes, merged with feelings of Arab responsibility for the community and past contribution to Islam, so that 'in a sense they could be regarded as spokesmen of 'Arab' consciousness".⁹² Nevertheless, as a political force, Arab nationalism only appeared late in the nineteenth century; emerging from two movements during the reign of Abdul Hamid II. Broadly, supporters of the Sultan believed 'only the monarchy and domination of the Muslim element preserved the unity of the empire, and only it could preserve what was left of the unity and independence of Islam'.⁹³ There were profound differences within the 'Young Ottoman' movement. Some 'wanted strict equality between races and religions, and sizeable autonomy for the provinces'.⁹⁴ Others argued for Ottoman domination of the State. Decentralisationists believed loyalty to the empire would be ensured by freedom. Young Ottoman cohorts thought freedom would lead to independence.⁹⁵ Ottoman claims to the Caliphate for the Sultan were regular by about the middle of the nineteenth-century, which offended Arabs who believed their tradition of Islamic learning had inherited the true doctrine of the Caliphate that connected with their pride in the Arab contribution to Islam. To them the Sultan was the necessary 'protector of Islam', and his claim to the caliphate was rejected in the belief that it would eventually come to Arabia.⁹⁶ Islamic modernists wanted to free Islam from what they saw as state despotism, which destroys the

'moral relationship of rulers and citizens with each other; it distorts the moral of the individual that destroys courage, integrity and the sense of belonging, both religious and national'.⁹⁷

Concerned to renew the original purity of their faith with an Arab Caliph, they viewed the true Islamic state as a just one where men are fulfilled by freedom and free to serve the community. This ideal meant creating a unified modern legal system combining proper religious education and a shift in the *umma* balance of power from Ottomans to Arabs. Logically, the Caliph would be descended from the line of the Quraysh, Mohammed's tribe, possess religious authority throughout the Muslim world, and

91 Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1738-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 261.

92 Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 261.

93 *Ibid.*, p. 262.

94 *Ibid.*, p. 265.

95 *Ibid.*

96 *Ibid.*, p. 266.

97 Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, pp. 272-3.

temporal authority in the Hedjaz.⁹⁸ These notions were the 'main force directing Arab Muslims towards nationalism', and significantly different from the Ottomans.⁹⁹

National feeling was not confined to Muslim Arabs. There also existed a 'nationalist' struggle amongst Christian Arab communities whose patriarchs jealously guarded customs and privileges dating from Roman times, and used Arabic or Syriac in their liturgies. This feeling was acute in the Orthodox community where Patriarchs were mainly Greek, but the laity and lower clergy Arabic speaking. From about 1875 discontent increased and spread as ethnic and linguistic differences surfaced and evolved into a secular form.¹⁰⁰ Despite different religions, both Christian and Muslim leaders were drawn to the dream of a sovereign Arab nation.¹⁰¹ Thus, by the outbreak of war the 'ideal of Arab independence was always smouldering', and, though the British decision to encourage the Arabs made no clear mention of Palestine, Arab imagination foresaw a great Arab Empire ruled by the old Arab nobility of Mecca, and to which 'the Arab population of Palestine could scarcely be indifferent'.¹⁰²

Writers like Neguib Azoury, the French educated Arab nationalist, fueled these hopes and ambitions. This Maronite Christian author of *Le reveil de la nation arabe* asserted there was a single Arab nation that included Arab Christians and Muslims.¹⁰³ Canvassing autonomy for 'geographical' Syria, embracing land from the Taurus Mountains to the Sinai desert, he argued language and religion united differing beliefs to express Arab culture and pride whereas faiths were really political and 'aroused artificially by external forces in their own interests'.¹⁰⁴ Azoury propounded Arab independence was necessary since Ottoman obstruction prevented Arabs from being 'among the most civilised nations in the world', and would not reform to improve the Arab position so independence was their only option.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, 'geographical' Syria included Palestine, which constituted 'a complete miniature of the future Arab Empire'.¹⁰⁶ Concerning Jewish activities in Palestine, Azoury attempted to prove 'from the Bible that they had never conquered the whole of Palestine, so their vulnerable kingdom was destroyed'.¹⁰⁷ Using this argument to attack Zionists, he asserted they 'wanted to avoid that error by occupying the "natural frontiers" of the country - Mount Hermon, the Suez Canal and the Arabian Desert'.¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless, whilst the Sultan was able to control opponents whose only common

98 Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 273.

99 *Ibid*, p. 266.

100 *Ibid*, pp. 273-4.

101 *Ibid*, pp. 276-9.

102 *Ibid*.

103 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, p. 49.

104 N. Azoury, *Le Réveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1905), p. 179.

105 Azoury, *Le Réveil*, pp. 25, 210, 232.

106 *Ibid*, p. IV.

107 Azoury, *Le Réveil* pp. 3-6.

108 *Ibid*, pp. 6-7.

interest was ending his despotism, Arab dreams of independence were mere fantasies. This changed when, from 1908, the Young Ottoman revolt forced the Sultan to restore the suspended constitution. A newly elected government allowed political action, free discussion and the formation of political groups where, from the first session, most Arab deputies worked in unison.¹⁰⁹ In 1909, Abdulhamid was deposed, which sundered common interest and forced to the surface Young Ottoman differences of vision. Although seeking constitutional government, they also wanted the empire to be preserved as a unit perceiving this would strengthen it against outside pressure by changing to a centralised, chiefly Ottoman Muslim ruled, polity where citizens' relationship with government was identical and individual, but distinct from members of political or racial communities within the empire.¹¹⁰ Most non-Muslims or non-Ottoman Muslims concept of liberty meant equality between communities. They preferred provincial autonomy to strengthening power and intervention of a central government.¹¹¹ Lack of a real Ottoman national identity meant policy was increasingly directed to furthering Ottoman interests inside and outside the empire to build a homeland of Ottomans,¹¹² which led to

'strengthening the hold of the Ottoman element in government [...] to turn other ethnic groups into Ottomans by insisting on the use of Ottoman in schools and government'.¹¹³

Emphasising central control and Ottoman nationalism left Arabs feeling excluded, and amplified differences that resulted in founding, in 1912, the 'Ottoman Party of Administrative Decentralisation' that demanded Arabic as an official language in provincial business, most local officials to be Arabs, sharing in central government and administrative autonomy in the Arab provinces. Young Ottoman reluctance to address these issues entrenched the position of Arabs who wanted autonomy, and advocated force to gain it. Already, in 1911, a letter addressed to Sharif Hussein from Arab deputies, said Arabs would rise 'if you wish to break the yoke which weighs on them; they recognise you as caliph of the prophet, the one man responsible for the interests of all Arab countries'.¹¹⁴

109 Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 280.

110 *Ibid.*, pp. 280-1.

111 *Ibid.*

112 *Ibid.*

113 Azoury, *Le Réveil*, p. 278.

114 *Ibid.*, p. 282.

In the years before 1914 a politically conscious group of young men entered public life. Pride in their Arab past was fostered by political ideas prevalent in Constantinople, Cairo and Beirut, which shaped their views to demand 'virtual or complete independence and anti-Ottoman dominance'. A common demand was that Arabs break from Ottoman repression of their culture and economic progress.¹¹⁵ Even before 1914, some nationalists looked to European Powers to improve their position. War, for them, was the opportunity to obtain independence for an 'Arab state under an Arab king, which many looked to the family of the Sharif of Mecca to provide' with English or French help.¹¹⁶ By 1918, with a British Administration in Palestine and Feisal in Damascus, their dream seemed on the verge of realisation. But, absence of any military and diplomatic strength meant the nationalist movement had to rely on Britain for whom good relations with France and support of Zionism were more valuable. One reason for the Feisal-Weizmann Agreement, intended to stimulate Jewish immigration on a 'large-scale, and as quickly as possible to settle [...] the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil' may have flowed from Arab desires to retain British support by seeking accommodation with the Jews.¹¹⁷ Weizmann believed Feisal's promise to influence 'his Arab brothers in favour of Zionism'. Abd-el-Haid, Feisal's personal secretary, said 'it was obvious why the Amir said these nice things [...] it doesn't hurt to say nice things'.¹¹⁸ Colonel French, Chief Political Officer to the Egypt Expeditionary Force, was also sceptical, and believed important Muslims and Christians in Palestine were anti-Zionist, and Weizmann's agreement with Feisal 'is not worth the paper it is written on [...], if it becomes [...] known among the Arabs, it will be [...] a noose about Feisal's neck, for he will be regarded by the Arab population as a traitor'.¹¹⁹ Desiring a complete break from the Ottoman Empire, Arab nationalists were at pains to invite 'Arab Christians and Jews to unite with your Muslim brothers'.¹²⁰ With a distinct sense of Arab identity only just emerging, nationalists had a limited choice of leaders sufficiently widely recognised to gather a broad following. Despite doubts

115 Azoury, *Le Réveil*, p. 284.

116 *Ibid.*, p. 285.

117 MECA. Feisal Papers. Feisal-Weizmann Agreement, 3 Jan. 1919.

118 CZA A153/149. Yellin to Dizengoff, 8 Jun. 1919

119 F.O. 608/99, pp. 476-82. Camp to French, 12 Aug. 1919.

120 Hourani, *Arabic Thought*, p. 285.

about the Sharif of Mecca, his standing as the Guardian of the shrines of Mecca and Medina and descent from the Prophet made him the favoured leader of the proposed new freedom movement.

Britain's Relations with France, 1914-16

France Repositioned

As discussed above, historic rivalry with Britain created very different perceptions of France's position in the Middle East. On 21 October 1915, Grey discussed Sharif Hussein's desire for Syria with Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador, and proposed the appointment of a French delegate to resolve the matter. Grey made clear Sharif Hussein had been advised of French interests in Syria 'to safeguard which special arrangements will be necessary'.¹²¹ Cambon, aware of Sharif Hussein's demands, fruitlessly tried to clarify whether they arose from Cairo's overtures or spontaneously.¹²² Since victory depended on British and French cooperation, mutual interest demanded differences reconciled and agreement reached over partitioning Ottoman territories. This made Kitchener's intention to exclude France from Syria unviable in the light of France's Central Committee for Syria manifesto commitment favouring autonomy. French observers in Damascus, during the 1910 Bedouin revolts in the Hauran and Karak districts, noticed an Arab Caliphate movement, which alerted them to the nascent national Arab movement whose impact they discounted because religious differences and disputes between Bedouins and settlers suggested it was transient. Further, convinced by different Syrian factions, the French understood aspirations for autonomy really meant change of protection, which they justified by regarding Syrians as too immature for autonomy.¹²³ Italian bombardment of Beirut, in February 1912, gave France the opportunity to reaffirm its interest in Syria. Poincaré acted quickly by dispatching diplomats to assess the condition of French academic and economic significance, which was seen as a means to encourage Syrian loyalty to France, yet avoid Muslim retaliation against Christians resulting from Italian action.¹²⁴

The Question of France's Claim to Syria

French commitment to Syria was clarified by the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber, in October 1914, who confirmed Palestine's 'indelible impression on the French Psyche'.

'The Mediterranean will not be free for us [...] unless Syria remains in our sphere of influence. By Syria must be understood, not a Syria mutilated and discrowned, but

121 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 114.

122 *Ibid.*, cites Cambon's telegraph, 21. Oct. 1915.

123 F. Brecher, 'French Policy Toward the Levant 1914 - 1918' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 29, 4 (October 1993), pp. 641-663 (p. 642).

124 Cloarec, *Question*, p. 24.

Syria in its entirety, that extends from El Arish to the Taurus'.¹²⁵

Capitulations, exemptions from Ottoman Law and taxation secured from the Sublime Porte during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, consolidated France's protection of Christians in Palestine and Syria.¹²⁶ British pledges, in the June 1878 Cyprus Convention, 'expressly recognised' these rights, and stated that British occupation of Cyprus did not jeopardise France's privileged position in Syria, the Lebanon and 'the Holy Places of Palestine'.¹²⁷ Also, under the Anglo-French Agreement, the *entente cordiale*, France gained British 'approval for consolidation of the French position in North Africa and Syria' in exchange for withdrawal from Egypt.¹²⁸ Poincaré, reassured by Grey, stated, in 1912, that France had no intention of renouncing her well established 'traditional mission' in the East; enhanced by the April 1914 agreement with the Ottomans that granted a free hand in Central and Southern Syria. Moreover, substantial loans to the Sublime Porte gained concessions to construct ports in Haifa, Jaffa, Tripoli and to develop the Syrian railway system.¹²⁹ In 1915, Cambon told Grey that France regarded Syria as a 'dependency', making it clear to Whitehall that Britain was not 'free to act' in any northern or southern region of Syria. Further confirmation of these interests came from Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State for India, confirming that France, not unreasonably, regarded both Palestine and Syria as her 'inheritance'.¹³⁰

Though knowing that it had long been an area of French interest, Kitchener attempted to obtain War Cabinet agreement to his Alexandretta scheme. Grey, for once, was purposeful and instructed McMahon, on 17 February 1915, to 'discourage any movement of the kind [...] as regards Alexandretta or of places near Syria such as Haifa or Gaza'.¹³¹ On 8 March 1915 Grey, in a personally drafted private telegram to McMahon, emphasised his previous warning that any claim to Syria by England would inevitably cause a break with France.¹³² Notably, General Barrow, the Military Secretary of the Political and Secret department of the India Office, opposed Kitchener's scheme for Alexandretta. He preferred Haifa, which could be easily connected by rail to Mesopotamia and Egypt, because he considered British interests were best served by consolidating her Oriental Empire with a border north of a line that included Palestine

'from Dan to Beersheba, the Upper Jordan and Mount Hermon, as well as the oases of Damascus and Palmyra, and thus enable us to construct an all-British railway from

125 Friedman, *Promised Land*, p. 15, cites Lèygues's address to the French Geographical Society in Oct. 1914.

126 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

127 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

128 *Ibid.*

129 A. J. Toynbee, *Turkey, A Past and Future* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917), p. 63.

130 CAB 27/1. 'Remarks by the Secretary of State for India', 6 Apr. 1915.

131 Friedman, *Question*, p. 100.

132 F.O. 800/48. Grey Papers, Grey to McMahon, 8 Feb. 1915.

Acre or Haifa through Damascus to Baghdad and the Gulf [...].¹³³

Alive to the political implications for Britain's relationship with France, and that the programme might exceed British military capability, he concluded with a pithy and prescient observation that influenced the de Bunsen Committee and became a constant feature in subsequent British strategy for Palestine, which he advocated should be neutralised and administered as an autonomous province by an International Commission under the protection of the Allied Powers. Abolishing, Barrow observed, direct Ottoman rule in Palestine was a 'political consummation' appealing to many, but it would create dissension among the Powers unless all accepted the new dispensation. Hence, attempting to

'acquire a special privileged position by one would be resented by the rest of the Powers and would speedily lead to that Armageddon in the valley of Esdraelon which has terrified the imagination of the world for ages past'.¹³⁴

This meant any British attempt to gain Alexandretta or Palestine would be perceived by the French as a threat to her Mediterranean and Syrian interests. Coincidentally, on the same day General Barrow submitted his report the Cabinet debated Samuel's memorandum the 'Future of Palestine' advocating British control.

Caught between stalwart defence of French interest on the one hand and the Emir's clearly pretentious demands on the other, Grey was in a predicament that exposed his loss of Foreign Policy control over the Middle East. Determined to protect French interests Grey wrote, in a minute dated 27 November 1915, 'I made it clear to Picot that we have no designs in Syria and (will) promise nothing about it to anyone (i.e. The Arabs) unless the French agree'.¹³⁵ Loyalty to an ally was an undeniable factor in his sensitivity to the French, but he also realised Britain's survival depended on the outcome of the war and was concerned over German peace offerings to France and Russia 'on comparatively favourable terms'. British dependence on her Allies, stressed in an 18 February 1916 memorandum, was greater than theirs on Britain, therefore

'we must therefore efface ourselves in the councils of the Allies [...] if we cannot make ourselves prevail by argument and influence, we must be very careful not to proceed to threats or pressure that might alienate our Allies'.¹³⁶

Preventing Russia succumbing to German peace overtures resulted in conceding Constantinople and the Straits, 'the richest prize of the entire war', in exchange for Russian recognition of British claims in

133 CAB 42/2/8. Barrow on the defence of Mesopotamia, 16 Mar. 1915.

134 *Ibid.*

135 F.O. 608/93. Negotiations with the French, 27 Nov. 1915.

136 Trevelyan, *Grey of Fallodon*, pp. 317-8.

Persia.¹³⁷ Should France agree peace terms with Germany it might have encouraged her to press claims to the Mediterranean, long regarded as a 'French sea', with direct consequences for Britain's proposed new Viceroyalty.

On 15 July 1915, Grey was surprised to receive a copy of a letter from Abdullah to Cairo purporting to speak on behalf of an 'Arab nation' and demanding that England acknowledge the independence of Arab countries over an area 'bounded on the east by Persia, on the south by the Indian Ocean, on the west by the Red Sea and the Mediterranean up to Mersina, and on the north by a line running from Mersina in the west through Urfa, Mardin and Amadia to the Persian border in the east'.¹³⁸ These Sharifian demands, subsequently called the 'Damascus Protocols', were also a great surprise to Sir Henry McMahon since they contradicted Wingate's reassuring letter that talks with Arab leaders indicated 'we must stick to Mesopotamia and I am inclined to think that they realise that parts of Syria and Palestine cannot [...] be incorporated in their future utopian sovereign state'.¹³⁹ Wingate, a lot closer to the situation, wrote to McMahon on 15 May 1915, and concluded that 'on the whole they are becoming more reasonable'.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, Wingate's years of experience with the Arabs, and his part in the December 1914 proclamation, question his meaning of more reasonable Arab demands especially with little evidence that the Emir had mitigated his desire for an Arab kingdom. Even without the years of experience, shared with Storrs and Cheetham, it is hard to understand how Wingate could believe Arabs would not have expected freely given undertakings to be honoured; almost the exact words used by Abdullah when he responded to the proclamation. The Damascus Protocols created a predicament for Grey whose scrupulous support of French Middle East interests is revealed in a message to Sir James Rennell Rodd, the British Ambassador to Rome, agreeing that there was no difficulty with Sharif Hussein's southern boundaries, but the north included Syria

'where we had always admitted French interest and the French would not make concessions to Sharif Hussein of places like Damascus without knowing what the limits of their sphere were to be'.¹⁴¹

A fundamental approach to negotiations is to ensure bargaining chips are available for surrender as discussions progress, so granting major concessions before talks commenced simply

137 Roger Adelson, *Sir Mark Sykes: Portrait of an Amateur* (London: Cape, 1975), p. 181.

138 F.O. 371/2486/34982. McMahon to F.O., 22 Aug. 1915.

139 F.O. 141/587/545. Wingate to McMahon 15 May 1915.

140 *Ibid.*

141 CAB 37/155/33. Grey to Rodd, 21 Sept. 1916.

weakened Britain's position. Cairo and Khartoum were naive both with their handling of Sharif Hussein and their view that France could be persuaded to relinquish her claim to Syria. Similar naiveté was exhibited in the belief that the major pledges in the proclamation would deter the Arabs, or the French, from demanding further or different concessions. All of which expose the fundamental flaw in British Imperial vision, as evinced by Cairo and Khartoum, which seems to have assumed it could, or should, surmount others' interests. Yet, Britain's key strategic issue was their failure to immediately reject the Emir's audacious territorial demands in the Damascus Protocol. What overriding interest persuaded the British to consider seeking French agreement to release their claim to Syria? Likewise, if Britain hoped France would accept Syria's loss, what could they offer in exchange to allow Syrian integration into an independent Arab nation? This question is best considered after probing the de Bunsen committee recommendations on which Ottoman territory should Britain claim, and what dispositions should be made to the Arabs in the light of Kitchener's approaches.

British failure to convince Sharif Hussein that he was not tolerable as King of an independent Arab Kingdom in the Middle East, but only as King of the Hejaz, complicated relations with France's claim to Syria that had been accepted by the government. Agreeing the division of Ottoman Middle East territories for Anglo-French appropriation was the purpose of the Sykes-Picot Agreement reached between Sir Mark Sykes, Britain's lead negotiator, and François George Picot for France. Negotiations were to decide how to fulfil each country's interests so as to avoid future friction, yet realise Arab wishes. Clearly, if Britain was prepared to support an Arab kingdom in the Middle East, even if only in areas where she was 'free to act without detriment to the interests of her ally, France', then how far should Britain accede to the believed longevity of French historical claims whether or not acceptable to Sharif Hussein?¹⁴² Furthermore, nationalist unrest in Syria and Mesopotamia exposed the notion of a new British dominated sphere of interest and a new Viceroyalty.

France at least had the merit of consistency in her diplomacy toward the Levant from 1915, and only sought 'international recognition of claims to dominance over Syria'.¹⁴³ This might have led the French to understand Grey's October initiative as offering 'a prospect for unprecedented English recognition of French claims to the Syrian region'. Thus, Foreign Office officials were highly amused when they received, from Sir Francis Bertie at the beginning of 1915, a copy of a *Le Matin* newspaper article that lyrically described French attachment to Syria and Palestine. Entitled '*La France du Levant*', it asserted the French Republic was destined to follow in the wake of the Crusaders and, referring to a

142 Brecher, *Reluctant Ally*, p. 14.

143 Brecher, 'French Policy Toward the Levant', *MES*, 29, (p. 645) cites MAE memorandum, 28 Oct. 1915.

wide variety of people from many walks of life, decided that the common factor in involvement with Syria was that all were French

'since those who departed to reclaim Christ's tomb from the infidels; all the Frances [...], who for so long have imagined themselves to be without an ideal or even honour; Eight centuries of battles, prayers, works, missions [...] where Europe meets Asia and Africa are finally going to win their reward'.¹⁴⁴

One dismissive comment from a Foreign Office official was 'Very French'. Nevertheless, the French were serious and intended to create a sphere of influence in Syria 'based on indirect rule through Arab Emirs loyal to France without whom her influence would be 'illusory'. Opportunistically, France viewed Gallipoli as her chance to gain concessions whilst Britain laboured under a 'transient apprehension that Hussein's political and military co-operation was required on an urgent basis'.¹⁴⁵ French policy for Palestine was nuanced to adjust for its special historical and religious circumstances, which gradually developed a three-tier approach to governing the northern part above Haifa and the Sea of Galilee. England was to be allowed direct rule over the south from Gaza to the Egyptian border and access to Haifa 'in recognition of that country's imperial requirements'.¹⁴⁶ British and French strategies differed little. The British, in reality Kitchener through Cairo, foresaw a puppet Arab kingdom financed by the Caliphate and the *haj*. France envisaged controlling a puppet kingdom through the Emirs. This facade of Arab self-government was necessary. Paris recognised Muslims were unlikely to be malleable to direct Christian rule, so proposed direct rule for northern Palestine 'sanctioned by the international community'.¹⁴⁷ Britain saw French rule over any of Palestine as a threat to Suez and India. However, any troop withdrawals from Europe to encourage and assist the Arab Revolt meant concessions to the French; unlikely to be cheap or easy to achieve.

Implementing Strategy on Palestine and Ottoman Territory

Although Grey had counseled a non-threatening approach to Russia and France, Kitchener and Cairo continued with activities objectionable to France. The main question, asked by the *Jewish Chronicle*, on 12 March 1915, was whose flag would fly over Palestine? Would it be French, British, Russian or Jewish?¹⁴⁸ Britain and Russia quickly agreed their claims to Ottoman territories, but the

144 F.O. 371/2180. Bertie to FO. 30 Dec. 1914.

145 *Ibid.*

146 Brecher, 'French Policy Toward the Levant', *MES*, 29, (pp. 645-6).

147 *Ibid.*, (p. 646).

148 *Jewish Chronicle*, 12 Mar. 1915.

French and Russians had difficulties over Palestine.¹⁴⁹ 'I should be grateful to your Excellency', the French Ambassador, Maurice Paléologue, wrote to Sergei Sazonov, on 14 March 1915, 'for informing His Imperial Majesty that the Government of the French Republic, [...], would like to annex Syria [...] with [...] the Gulf of Alexandretta and Cilicia up to the Taurus range'.¹⁵⁰

When Sazonov asked the French Ambassador to clarify what was meant by Syria his response affirmed it included Palestine where Russia had long disputed France's claim. Sazonov then asked Paléologue to confirm this was the view of the French Republic. He was concerned that should Russia be prepared to largely satisfy French desires for Syria and Cilicia proper 'it is indispensable to study the question with closer attention, if the Holy Places are involved'.¹⁵¹

Sykes' central role in the agreement with the French for partitioning Ottoman territories suggests an understanding of his personality and relationship with Kitchener is valuable to appreciating his role in the Sykes-Picot Agreement negotiations. This wealthy, Cambridge educated, Roman Catholic, Conservative baronet, was elected to the House of Commons in 1911, and regarded himself as a proud amateur rather than an expert. Highly observant he described his reactions honestly, but based his appraisal on personal experience that provided insight if little understanding. Yet, though clever with words, he lacked the objectivity necessary for Whitehall to take his reports seriously. Although more talented and ambitious than many British Orientalists, historians, civil servants or consuls at the time, he lacked the detailed knowledge that made them better at their respective tasks. However, to the less erudite or trained he appeared an expert on the East.¹⁵² Four years spent travelling in the Ottoman Empire combined with the published journal of his travels proved sufficient for him to be regarded as an expert on Ottoman affairs by the Conservative Party. Something of a dilettante, his strongly held opinions often changed quickly, which raises questions over his impartiality.¹⁵³ Roman Catholic and pro-French made him unprejudiced over French promotion of Catholic interests in Lebanon, and he benefited from the considerable assets of having lived and travelled in the East where he met and knew the views of Britain's soldiers and civil servants. When asked, as his first diplomatic assignment, to negotiate with the French he had held office for less than a year, but strong desire for a successful

149 Ronald Sanders, *the High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983), pp. 160-1.

150 J. C., Hurewitz, ed. *The Middle East and North Africa in World Politics: A Documentary Record*, 2 Vol. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1975), 2, p. 19.

151 Hurewitz, *Middle East*, 2, p. 19.

152 Adelson, *Sykes*, pp. 122-3.

153 *Ibid.*, pp. 146-7.

outcome placed him in the very weak position of wanting too much, too obviously.¹⁵⁴ Introduced by Fitzgerald to the War Office, in early 1915, Sykes was brought into Kitchener's orbit when the latter was seeking a young politician knowledgeable about the Middle East. Although one of the few with any knowledge, his depth of erudition based on four years travelling in the Ottoman Empire cannot have been very great. His influence on the de Bunsen committee stemmed from his perceived relationship with Kitchener, which was maintained by Fitzgerald acting as purveyor of Kitchener's instructions to the untried baronet. Fulfilling instructions, Sykes would telephone Fitzgerald each evening to report on the day's debate for transmission to Kitchener who, in turn, instructed Fitzgerald to relay expectations of the latter at meetings.¹⁵⁵ During the committee's proceedings, Sykes outlined and explored different territorial options. Prior to discussion, however, the nomenclature of the about to be divided Ottoman Empire territories had first to be decided. Biased by classics studied at their public schools, the names chosen differed from existing 'political subdivisions of the Ottoman Empire' that resulted in adopting 'the vague Greek terms used by Hellenistic geographers two thousand years earlier'.¹⁵⁶ Thus, the Arabic speaking areas of Asia to the north of Arabia became known as 'Mesopotamia' in the east, and 'Syria' in the west, though precise areas were undefined. Most evocative was Palestine, which was one of five largely sovereign provinces, and whose etymology derives from a corruption of Roman 'Syria-Palestina'; the name given to Judea by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after crushing the Bar Kochba rebellion in 135CE.¹⁵⁷ For a millennium prior to the second decade of the twentieth century, the nearest Palestine came to being a nation state was the geographic term, 'current in the Christian Western world', used to describe the Holy Land.¹⁵⁸ Paltry thought was given to the practicalities of imposing vague and little understood political subdivisions on a largely peripatetic people with only a loose alliance to local chieftains who, unaccustomed to the more structured Greco-Roman world of cities and towns, could only be confused by unclear questions of territorial entitlement.

The de Bunsen committee recommended British influence or control 'would be desirable in a wide swath across the Middle East from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf', and a railroad constructed from Haifa to Mesopotamia. Their greatest concern was that leaving the Ottoman Empire undivided endangered Britain's interests, and lost an opportunity to finally resolve the Asian problem.¹⁵⁹ Sykes, though, warned against French *cessionnaires* the British would encounter if they preferred Alexandretta to Haifa, and considered it impossible to cut through the characteristic dead weight of

154 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 189.

155 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 147.

156 *Ibid.*, p. 148.

157 Palestina is the Latin equivalent of Philistine.

158 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 148.

159 CAB 27/1. Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, 30 June 1915.

French intrigue and incompetent pettiness. So, if the French concessionary policy was to remain, 'British enterprise would do well to make itself self-contained [...] in its own sphere, and await developments'.¹⁶⁰ Essentially, Sykes used past distasteful British experience with the French and Russians, in Egypt and Persia respectively, to prejudice the outcome of any debate and quell any doubts over feasibility. Other than disagreeing with gaining the port of Alexandretta, which if pursued would have caused problems with the French, Sykes concurred with Kitchener's desire to divide Ottoman territories, and used Fitzgerald to arbitrate. Kitchener was 'ultimately reconciled' by stressing the strategic benefit of a thousand mile railroad from Haifa to the Euphrates.¹⁶¹ To members of the de Bunsen committee who might have been offended at Sykes presenting a strategic argument, he concentrated on the economic advantages of a railroad to developing southern Mesopotamia, saying 'it is a railway that, sooner or later, would be built for business purposes'. This rationale 'appealed to India Office planners and to the Admiralty's preoccupation with Persian Gulf oil'.¹⁶²

Economic arguments are always a useful way of persuading the less erudite to accept a plan by citing some perceived future benefit, however illusory. In this respect, the composition of the de Bunsen Committee could have profited from a member with detailed knowledge of the commercial realities of building, running and maintaining a thousand mile railroad, and particularly whether any genuine long-term commercial advantages actually existed. Some insight into railroad economics might have been available through the Board of Trade member even though based on United Kingdom railways operating in very different terrain, and in major centres of population. Sykes, no better informed about economics than the rest of the committee, and lacking any insight into constructing or operating a railroad, might have relied on the assumption that construction would prove relatively straightforward. Financing was one obvious hurdle. Capital raised by private subscription meant that shareholders would expect a return on their investment. Any delay in construction or cost overrun, endemic to this type of project, could mean that any dividend might be delayed for many years, or never declared. Oddly, the rationale for a railroad was unchallenged, and in particular the reality of need or the threat from airfreight or air travel. Was it too great an expectation of the committee to have carefully examined Sykes argument, or were members inhibited from deeper enquiry by lack of commercial and engineering knowledge? Committee members viewed Sykes as the quintessence of all Kitchener's authority, which added weight to perceptions of his expertise on the Ottoman Empire, particularly when he outlined and explored the advantages of various kinds of territorial settlement,

160 CAB 27/1. Sykes 'The Question of a Railway connecting Haifa with the Euphrates', 19 Apr. 1915.

161 TNA 30/57/91. Kitchener Papers, Sykes to Arthur, 12 Sept. 1916.

162 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 183.

such as Allied annexation of Ottoman territories, which he divided into spheres of influence that left the Empire intact but submissive, or decentralisation into semi-autonomous units rather than annexation.¹⁶³

Sykes was probably not an easy man to challenge, although

‘energetic, imaginative, independent and straightforward he was quickly roused to anger for a cause and he lived his convictions. He had exaggerated opinions about his dislikes and a heroic sense of his own importance’.¹⁶⁴

Nevertheless, he genuinely believed ‘the peoples of the Middle East could revive the greatness of their several pasts’, and that the ‘heroes of British Imperialism had been those who ruled the East without changing it’.¹⁶⁵ His hyperbole may also have persuaded the committee to accept a concept of devolution, intended to counter Ottoman rule, that allowed a ‘small party of individuals to engross the whole power of the Empire in their hands ‘to ‘free them from the vampire-hold of the metropolis’, so they could ‘foster and develop their own resources’.¹⁶⁶ Finally, since some recommendation had to be made to the War Cabinet, Sykes’ ‘devolution’ scheme for the Middle East that divided the Ottoman Empire into historical and ethnographic provinces consisting of Syria, Palestine, and Iraq-Jazirah was approved. Abandoning his previous conviction to maintain the Ottoman Empire’s integrity, Sykes wrote to Aubrey Herbert, his fellow pro-Ottoman MP and intimate friend, on 1 April 1915, stating Kitchener wanted him to attend a meeting of the Ottoman Society, saying

‘your Policy is wrong. Turkey must cease to be. Smyrna shall be Greek. Adalia Italian, Southern Taurus and North Syria French, Palestine British, Mesopotamia British and everything else Russian including Constantinople’.¹⁶⁷

There was no measured reasoning for this abrupt change of opinion.

By appointing Sykes as his personal representative on the de Bunsen committee, Kitchener ensured his ‘own line was hewed’, which was strikingly similar to the appointment of McMahon as High Commissioner for Egypt only a few months earlier.¹⁶⁸ Once again, Kitchener ensured all strategic controls and recommendations came through him even if not quite to the same extent as with Sykes, who was more independent. Where McMahon was weak and indecisive, Sykes was dogmatic believing only his view was right. Though, in opposite ways, both have left their mark on the Middle East. Surely, it is no coincidence both were acolytes of Kitchener.

163 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 148.

164 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 300.

165 *Ibid.*, pp. 300-1.

166 *Ibid.*

167 Margaret Fitzherbert, *The Man who was Greenmantle: A Biography of Aubrey Herbert* (London: John Murray, 1983), pp. 147-9.

168 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 149.

France appointed a career diplomat, François Georges-Picot, First Secretary in their London Embassy, to lead their negotiating team discussing the Ottoman Empire's partition. The differences between Picot and Sykes could hardly have been starker. Picot had formerly served as consul-general for France in Beirut, and was 'well acquainted with the various cultural and business interests who had launched a propaganda campaign for French acquisition of Syria'.¹⁶⁹ He was a member of 'a famous colonial dynasty, [...] and had served as an important bridge between the French Foreign Service and the colonialist movement'.¹⁷⁰ His father was one of the founders of the *Comité de l'Afrique Française* and a member of the *Comité de l'Asie Française*. Charles, his elder brother, was treasurer of the latter, which elected Picot on the eve of war.¹⁷¹

Two days after the discussions between Grey and Cambon, Picot left for Paris to spend a month preparing French desiderata, which gave time for the 'Syrian Party', 'feverishly active outside and inside the French cabinet and parliament', to influence his eventual proposals.¹⁷² Picot was sensitive to their activities and in common with Albert DeFrance, the French Minister in Cairo, and the previous deputy-director for the Levant at the Quai d'Orsay, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, anxious to claim Syria for France, chiefly from 'well founded suspicions that British officials in Cairo and Khartoum had extravagant ideas for a new British Viceroyalty'.¹⁷³ Proof that these suspicions were justified arises from Kitchener's second message to Abdullah, on 11 November 1914, opining that gaining Syria, 'which is not a remunerative position', would greatly weaken France whose real geographical position should be Tunis, Algeria and Morocco. Kitchener believed that it was 'sentiment [...], which induces France to keep up her influence in Syria and if we frankly said we do not want Syria, they would probably say the same and allow the formation of an Arab State [...].'¹⁷⁴

How Kitchener formed an opinion at such variance to historic evidence is unclear.

British troops landed at the head of the Persian Gulf the day after declaring war on the Ottoman Empire. By the end of the month, having captured Basra, the army was ready to advance through Mesopotamia. Sir John Maxwell, Commander-in-Chief of the British army in Egypt, realised he could press home his gains by intervening in Syria with a landing at Alexandretta that would 'not want

169 Jukka Nevakivi, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914-1920* (London: Athlone Press, 1969), p. 30.

170 Christopher Andrews and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas: The Climax of French Imperial Expansion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), p. 66.

171 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 66.

172 Nevakivi, *Arab Middle East*, p. 30.

173 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 66.

174 F.O. 800/102. Grey Papers, 11 Nov. 1914.

a very large force', would cut Ottoman communications with the south, and protect the Suez Canal.¹⁷⁵ Picot and DeFrance, 'haunted by memories of 1882' when Britain had, in their view, been allowed to usurp the French *mission civilisatrice* in Egypt, wanted an expeditionary force to forestall British intervention in Syria, which they regarded as 'very similar to those in which we found ourselves in Egypt. A similar attitude on our part now will have similar consequences'.¹⁷⁶ Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, convinced that both non-European and European conflicts would be decided on the Western Front, informed DeFrance that peace would 'reduce our adversaries once and for all to military impotence', and would

'assure the triumph of our cause in Turkey, give new and vigorous impetus to the whole range of our enterprises and realise the aspirations of the peoples of Syria and Lebanon'.¹⁷⁷

This ignored the inconvenient fact that British forces would first have to defeat the Ottoman Armies. The *Comité de l'Asie Française* was a key link between French official and private overseas investment. At a general meeting, on 21 April 1915, a resolution 'on the defence of French interests in Syria' was passed and handed to the French government.¹⁷⁸ Almost simultaneously, another resolution was handed over concerning French interests in Syria that was 'paraded before the *Groupe Sénatorial pour la Défense des Intérêts Français à L'étranger*' in a lecture by Pierre Etienne Flandin an old colonialist and leader of the 'Syrian Party'.¹⁷⁹ Picot, having returned to France, met leading officials at the Quai d'Orsay; all members of the *Comité de l'Asie Française* and 'partisans of a greater Syria under French control'.¹⁸⁰ They aimed to gain England's agreement to secure *la Syrie intégrale* from the Taurus Mountains to Sinai and from the Mediterranean to the desert. Picot's more ambitious ideas extended to include Jerusalem and Bethlehem, enlarging the southern border to include Ma'an, and the eastern border to Mosul.¹⁸¹ Delcassé disagreed believing Syria was 'virtually barren ground', and did not wish to 'risk a quarrel with the English over something of so little value'.¹⁸² Flandin, unable to persuade Delcassé, used the *Groupe Sénatorial* as his platform for pursuing the Syrian party's agenda by encouraging a strong campaign basing French claims to Syria on 'geographic necessity', and 'historic right'.¹⁸³ Flandin's high-flown rhetoric was indicative of French colonial logic that required every

175 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 68.

176 *Ibid*, cites A.E Guerre 867, Delcassé to DeFrance, 13 Nov. 1914.

177 *Ibid*, p. 68.

178 Nevakivi, *Arab Middle East*, p. 30, fn. 4.

179 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 68.

180 *Ibid*, p. 74.

181 *Ibid*.

182 *Ibid*, p. 75.

183 *Ibid*.

boundary extension of her empire to entail a buffer zone for security; a convenient excuse for acquiring greater territory. Flandin and the Syrian party had convinced themselves that French rule in the Maghreb was at risk from Britain and Russia if they did not hold Syria, which Flandin stressed as a 'right and a duty'.¹⁸⁴ Nevertheless, however deluded, they genuinely believed that Syria at heart was French, and that France 'over the centuries [...] has acquired an indisputable preponderance in Syria and Palestine. Our language has become almost as widely used as Arabic'; a rather perplexing exaggeration.¹⁸⁵ To the Syrian party, which implicitly believed in France's Civilising Mission, popularity in the country was more than an article of faith because

'Syrians are accustomed to see us as their guardians and their teachers.

Our flag has always appeared [...] as an emblem of hope and of salvation'.¹⁸⁶

By wrapping themselves in *le tricolore*, the Syrian party hoped to persuade the French parliament to admit their aims. One notable success was Paul Cambon, the French Ambassador to London who, on 31 August 1914, made clear to the Foreign Office, in a note drawn up by Picot, that 'we would not tolerate any infringement of our rights in Syria and Cilicia'. Another striking, if somewhat reluctant, convert to Picot's view was Maurice Bompard, the French ambassador to Constantinople who, although convinced Syria would be a 'deplorable' acquisition, admitted defeat telling Picot, in September 1914, public opinion had been roused and was unstoppable.

'Henceforth [...] we shall have no option but to add Syria to the too numerous lands we already control. It now remains for those who have been more far-sighted to reduce the burdens [...]. There is only one way of achieving this: to extend the limits of Syria to Egypt to the Taurus Mountains, and to push its hinterland [...] to include half the Baghdad railway'.¹⁸⁷

Bompard's reservations were identical to Asquith's who, when the War Cabinet discussed the future of the Ottoman Empire, in March 1915, also described additional territories as a burden and considered absorption inadvisable. There is a curious symmetry between England and France over the desirability and method of extending their Empires. Both Picot, representing the French 'Syrian party', and Kitchener heading England's 'Egyptian party', was convinced of the benefits from imperial expansion; though personal aggrandisement in Kitchener's instance cannot be overlooked. Both parties inflated their imperialistic designs with the pretence that Arabs would welcome what amounted to a facade of independence under British and French rule, but overlooked the obvious argument that at some future

184 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 75.

185 *Ibid.*

186 *Ibid.*

187 *Ibid.*

point genuine independence would be desired. Moreover, both the 'Egyptian party' and the 'Syrian Party' made a 'fundamental error of judgement' when they failed to take 'Arab nationalism seriously as a peacetime political force'.¹⁸⁸ Although the Quai d'Orsay recognised the need to garrison Syria there is little indication any such measure formed part of Cairo's plans for a new Viceroyalty.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, Britain, France and Russia 'faced problems converting their industrial bases from peacetime to wartime production'.¹⁹⁰ This was compounded as the Russian army retreated, in May 1915, by losses of equipment and areas of production replaced with British aid.¹⁹¹ Thus, negotiations presaging the Sykes-Picot agreement were not 'the product of cabinet policy in France or Britain, but of pressure from two groups of imperialists'.¹⁹² Despite differences in approach the desired effect was identical. For the British 'it was that the ignorance, the enthusiasm, and *parti pris* of the Cairo officials were hardly ever questioned or resisted in the Foreign Office [...] content to passively acquiesce'.¹⁹³ Whereas the Foreign Office simply succumbed to pressure from ambitions towards which it was fundamentally unsympathetic, the French Syrian Party was 'embedded in the Quai d'Orsay itself'.¹⁹⁴ But, this resolve to carve out more territory to augment their empires ignored rising Arab nationalism.

Negotiating Factors

Having secured the approval of the *Comité de l'Asie Française*, and French ambassadors to London and Constantinople, Picot was able to draft his own instructions 'which is a good way of ensuring that my instructions are satisfactory', he cynically observed to DeFrance.¹⁹⁵ Picot deplored the plan to partition the Ottoman Empire because 'its feeble condition' had offered France 'limitless scope' for moral and economic influence, but accepted the inevitable and demanded 'the whole of Syria broadly defined'.¹⁹⁶ Foreseeing tough bargaining, any concessions in advance of negotiations were refused which, unlike the British proclamation to Sharif Hussein, he considered 'deplorable in the highest degree. Our task is to make our demands and to abandon ground only foot by foot if compelled to do so, that way we shall always have some left'.¹⁹⁷ Little faith in Anglo-Arab negotiations persuaded the Syrian party to adopt a purely pragmatic approach. Picot told Sir Arthur Nicolson that 'if one family

191 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

189 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

190 Strachan, *First World War*, p. 141.

191 *Ibid.*, pp. 141-2.

192 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 90.

193 *Ibid.*

194 *Ibid.*

195 Hogarth, 'Wahabism and British Interests' in *Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs (JBIA)*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 70-81 (p. 72).

196 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 90.

197 *Ibid.*

or chief sides with the Allies, that will be quite enough to persuade another to do the opposite'.¹⁹⁸ From France's perspective, Anglo-Arab negotiations had finally inclined the Foreign Office to reach an accord over Syria, which made French reservations over Sharif Hussein and an Arab uprising irrelevant.¹⁹⁹ Picot warned Nicolson that 'to promise the Arabs a large state is to throw dust in their eyes. Such a state will never materialise. You cannot transform a myriad of tribes into a viable whole'.²⁰⁰ Picot was not alone expressing doubt over an Arab state. Grey, responding to Austen Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for India, protested over McMahon's disposal of Mesopotamia, saying 'the best comfort he could give me was that the whole thing was a castle in the air which would never materialise'.²⁰¹ Clayton was also unconvinced that Arab dreams were realistic, and observed to Wingate that India was obsessed with the fear of a powerful and united Arab state which could never exist unless created by Britain. Though not denying the menace of creating such a state, he did not believe that 'anyone would consider it [...] practical politics and it will have to be our business to see that it does not become a possibility, owing to our backing one horse [...]'²⁰² A month earlier, Clayton had been exhorting the government to respond immediately and favourably to Faruqi's demands for an independent Arab government; an inconsistency that seems to rest on his definition of independent. Neither Britain nor France envisaged the Arabs would believe the Powers supported the notion of a powerful and united Arab State, so vague and ambiguous language used by the Powers 'invited charges of duplicity and betrayal'.²⁰³ Hirtzel, in a sagacious and prophetic minute explaining intent, wrote

'Sir E. Grey does not think that (McMahon's) assurances matter much because the scheme will never materialise. But, it would surely be attributing too much stupidity to the Young Arab party to assume that they will not manoeuvre us into a position in which [...] we shall not get what we want without eating some very indigestible words'.²⁰⁴

Hirtzel's concern was that allowing Arabs to believe they were supremely important contradicted Grey's sceptical assurance to Chamberlain that any such scheme 'was a castle in the air'. This unease, though specifically aimed at the manner of McMahon's disposal of Mesopotamia, was no less pertinent to French imperial objectives for Syria.

198 F.O. 371/2486. Minutes of Anglo-French discussions, 23 Nov. 1915.

199 *Ibid.*

200 *Ibid.*

201 L/P & S/10/523, p. 3935/1915. Grey to Chamberlain, 27 Oct. 1915.

202 Wingate Papers, file 135/5. Clayton to Wingate, 12 Nov. 1915.

203 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 91.

204 L/P & S/10/523, p. 4024/1915. Minute by Hirtzel, 2 Nov. 1915.

On 23 November 1915, Anglo-French negotiations opened in London with talks between Nicolson and Picot. Enunciating France's position regarding Syria, Picot stated 'no French government would stand for a day which made any surrender of French claims in Syria'.²⁰⁵ Obdurately refusing to make any concessions, self-ordained when preparing for the negotiations, Picot dismissed Nicolson's argument that the risk of Arabs joining forces with the Ottomans presented 'a grave and immediate danger' to Egypt, India, and French North Africa and insisted Arab participation in the war against the Ottomans depended on the promise of a large Arab state. Nicolson thought the Syrian interior could still become a French sphere of influence even under Arab sovereignty, which left Picot unmoved responding 'nothing short of a French annexation of Syria would be admitted by the French public'.²⁰⁶ Poor intelligence left the Foreign Office unaware the Syrian party had always been ready to accept less than the formal 'French annexation of Syria' Picot demanded. Realistically, the Quai d'Orsay accepted that the huge cost of administering the Syrian interior would require troops to maintain order with a disorderly population that 'imposed on us particularly burdensome and complex responsibilities'.²⁰⁷ Hence, French rule in the post-war Middle East was predicated to be based on Greater Lebanon that comprised the pre-war Sanjak of Lebanon enlarged by as many non-Christian areas as could be safely dominated, Tripoli, and the fertile plains of the Bekaa valley. From this Lebanese vantage point, the French could maintain 'a watchful eye over the Syrian interior ruled by a loose federation of Emirs 'assisted' by a French resident under the nominal sovereignty of Sharif Hussein. Gôt, a *Comité de l'Asie Française* member, observed that if the Emirs came from Sharif Hussein's family they would be acceptable to Muslims, but lack of personal followers and family enemies in the

'country [...] will place them entirely in our hands. [...], the presence among these

Emirs of possible competitors will act as a salutary check on the Grand Sharif of Mecca'.²⁰⁸

Commencing on 21 December, the second round of negotiations opened with Picot announcing France would accept a zone of influence in the Syrian interior and surrender her right to direct rule. Of course, a similar concession was expected from Britain. Agreement was easy over the northern French zone, but encountered difficulties over Lebanon, Beirut and Tripoli, which Britain envisaged as forming 'a nominal part' of the new Arab state. Discussions on Palestine and Mosul were postponed.

Convinced of the dangers of a religious war between Christians and Muslims in Lebanon, France wanted military control over post-war Greater Lebanon. Cambon, prophetically, advised Aristide Briand, the French Prime Minister, that intense rivalries between rites and religions was enough 'to

205 F.O. 372/2486/181716. Clerk's observations after first meeting with Picot, 23 Nov. 1915.

206 *Ibid.*, minute of Anglo-French discussion, 23 Nov. 1915.

207 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 92.

208 *Ibid.*. Cites notes by Gôt, 2 and 12 Dec. 1915.

foresee internal strife in Lebanon once no external authority is there to curb it'.²⁰⁹ Yet, though believing Christian Lebanon would 'never tolerate even the nominal sovereignty of the Sharif', the French failed to advise British negotiators.²¹⁰ What Picot and Cambon viewed as a hardening of the British position was ascribed to the arrival of Sir Mark Sykes who, the French justifiably believed, had adopted

'the extreme positions of the Arabs and the English colonialists,
and had partially changed Sir Arthur Nicolson'.²¹¹

During the second round of talks, Sykes had emerged as Britain's main negotiator having easily impressed the Foreign Office, ill-informed on Arab affairs, 'as a very capable fellow with plenty of ideas but at the same time painstaking and careful'.²¹² What information did Sykes provide from his Middle East perambulations that influenced Nicolson to harden Britain's position?

Shortly after the de Bunsen committee had reported to the Government, on 30 June 1915, Sykes travelled to the East to discuss its recommendations with local officers and officials. His first stop was Cairo where Storrs introduced him to Gilbert Clayton who initiated meetings with 'disaffected leaders fleeing Ottoman Empire armies or journalists who had left Palestine and Syria'.²¹³ Sykes' efforts were only directed towards those pro-British elements whose interests lay in opposing the Ottoman Empire. Clayton, anxious that Cairo's view of the post-war Middle East was accepted by Sykes, who was suitably impressed by the Director of Intelligence's 'military bearing and forthrightness', may have encouraged this naiveté, so 'if Storrs had been like a younger brother to Sykes, Clayton was to be the elder'; an association that would become increasingly significant.²¹⁴ Untested and too easily impressed, Sykes wrote to the War Office from Cairo with his opinion of British and French rivalry claiming it was obvious there were forces provoking discord between the British and French regarding Syria, and claiming 'it is manifest that the idea is abroad, that Great Britain and France each desires the whole of Syria [...] for themselves'.²¹⁵ Perhaps influenced by his relationship with Clayton and Storrs, Sykes also advocated France relinquishes her Syrian claims to allow British control in return for compensation elsewhere. Francophobia, rife in Cairo, might have been difficult for a stronger character than Sykes to resist. But, rather too easily swayed amid extremes, he traced French and British rivalry to ambitions promoted by Franco-Levantine financiers.²¹⁶ Hence, when Sykes left Cairo for India he had been won over to Storrs' 'Egyptian Empire Scheme' that 'proposed a single Arabic-speaking entity under the

209 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 93.

210 *Ibid.*

211 *Ibid.*

212 F.O. 800/58. Grey Papers. Crewe to Bertie, 17 Dec. 1915.

213 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 189.

214 *Ibid.*

215 F.O. 882/13. Arab Bureau Papers. Sykes to Calwell, 14 Jul. 1915.

216 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 187.

spiritual rule of Sharif Hussein and the nominal temporal rule of the figurehead Egyptian monarch anticipated to be Kitchener'.²¹⁷ Sykes saw no inherent conflict between the 'Egyptian Empire' scheme and French Syrian claims, but preferred to believe 'only French clerics and concession-hunters cared about Syria', and a gang of cosmopolitan financiers labeling themselves the French group at Constantinople who remained in touch with 'the German Baghdad railway gang' through a Swiss intermediary.²¹⁸ Therefore, 'I believe that if the Entente loses the game they will be able to square it with the Germans later on'.²¹⁹ Sykes never understood the conflict between aspirations of French finance capitalism, whose internationalism he repeatedly denounced, and the colonial party whose nationalism he repeatedly accepted.²²⁰ This major weakness of hasty interpretation and generalisation, was scathingly noted by Lawrence, saying Sykes' impatience testing

'his materials before choosing his style of building, and taking an aspect of the truth would detach it from its circumstances, inflate it, twist it and model it [...] saw odd in everything and missed the even'.²²¹

Such character deficiencies may have been the reason Sykes neglected to prepare for a cooler reception in India than he might have supposed his ideas merited. He failed to muster persuasive arguments to rebut questions he should have anticipated when explaining Storrs' 'Egyptian Empire' notions. It was eminently likely that India, which had its own Government and army, would probably not respond well to instructions from such inexperienced 'War Office Emissary'.²²² Sykes reception in India was unenthusiastic. Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, was twenty years older, and with a lifetime in government service was one of Britain's most distinguished foreign policy professionals who earlier had been the officer in charge of the Foreign Office. His policy for Mesopotamia was annexation and invasion by India, so he regarded Sykes proposals of Arab independence as 'absolutely fantastic' and 'perfectly fatal'.²²³ Hardinge viewed Sykes as unable 'to grasp the fact that there are parts of the Ottoman Empire unfit for representative institutions'.²²⁴ The Viceroy's objections failed to change Sykes's opinion, but rather encouraged him to believe conflict between Cairo and Simla was harmful in itself, and the British tradition of allowing various offices to conduct their own affairs was sufficient when 'such sectors dealt with varying problems which were not related, but it is bad now that each

217 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 169.

218 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 187.

219 CAB 24/1-2. Evidence to the War Committee on the 'Arab Question', 16 Dec. 1915.

220 Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 94.

221 T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, p. 57.

222 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 189.

223 Cambridge. Cambridge University Library. Hardinge Papers, Hardinge to Chamberlain, 6 Aug. 1915.

224 *Ibid*, Hardinge to Chirol, 20 Aug. 1915 and to Chamberlain, 27 Aug. 1915.

sector is dealing in reality with a common enemy'.²²⁵ Consequently, Sykes explored establishing an overall bureau to assume charge of Arab affairs; guaranteed to meet Hardinge's opposition because it would intrude into areas within India's jurisdiction. Strategically, the idea was sound. Uniting all military and civil specialties into one central department focused solely on the Middle East, instead of consulting eighteen 'before an agreed decision could be reached', under a veteran Eastern specialist as its Director meant speedier reaction to events, turf wars averted and a common strategy developed.²²⁶ However, neither Kitchener nor the Foreign Office intended to surrender control over strategy and insisted that the Arab Bureau, as it was named, was merely a section of the Cairo Intelligence Department. In reality, Kitchener's influence and opinions continued undiminished, and the Foreign Secretary's deference unameliorated.²²⁷

Returning to London from his peregrinations at the beginning of December 1915, Sykes brought news of the 'electrifying possibility that the Arab half of the Ottoman Empire might come over to the Allied side'. A fantasy relayed by Clayton when Sykes stopped in Cairo on his return from India.²²⁸ Although this was the first intimation Sykes received that the Arabic speaking world could be a major factor in the war, it was sufficient to change his view of the areas politics. Previously, he understood the Middle East was subject to arrangements made between the rival Great Powers, which meant native interests had not significantly entered into his reckoning, but he was now won over into believing Arab armies could 'supply a key victory'.²²⁹

Sykes' return coincided with British withdrawal from Gallipoli, Allied reversals in the Balkans and Anglo-Indian disappointments in Mesopotamia that resulted in understandable scepticism towards further involvement in the East. In particular, the new Chief of the Imperial General Staff, General Sir William Robertson, regarded the Western front as the main theatre of war and the East as a 'side show'. This conception was not shared by Kitchener, Balfour, Lloyd George, and Hankey, Secretary to the War Cabinet; all welcomed the news of Arab importance as vindication when presented to the War Cabinet.²³⁰ Surprisingly, Sykes advocacy of the Arabs went uncontested and his opinions unquestioned, as also what he had learnt in Cairo that prompted his change from his previous 'pejorative vocabulary' of town Arabs of whom he had written 'they are a cowardly, insolent yet despicable, vicious as far as their feeble bodies will admit'; Bedouin Arabs he had described as 'rapacious greedy animals'.²³¹

225 T. E Lawrence, *Secret Despatches from Arabia* (London: The Golden Cockerel Press, 1939), p. 69.

226 Fromkin, *Peace*, pp. 170-1.

227 *Ibid.*, p. 171.

228 *Ibid.*, p. 180.

201 *Ibid.*, pp. 180-1.

230 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 196.

231 Kedourie, *Middle East*, p. 69.

Much significance was given to the opinions of this highly unseasoned man with inconsistent sentiments and only four years experience of travelling the Ottoman Empire, which, though providing valuable insight, was insufficiently profound to formulate wartime strategy. Extraordinarily, there was little attempt to assess Sykes track record and the War Cabinet seemed quite ignorant of his changed perspective of the Arabs from previous denigrating ridicule to championing them as 'key allies in the Middle East fighting'.²³² Moreover, the notion that Arabs could be more important than France, a modern industrial power which had mobilised eight million men, was entirely absurd. Patently, Sharif Hussein lacked the

'industrial, financial, military, or manpower resources, brought [...] only an uncertain prospect of subverting loyalty in the Ottoman camp, ought to have been deservedly ridiculed by the War Cabinet'.²³³

Believing Sykes expertise and al-Faruqi's story, sedulously conveyed by Clayton, encouraged Nicolson's attempt to persuade the French into making concessions, and disregard the opinions of Lord Hardinge and others with greater knowledge of the Arabs. The War Cabinet, which preferred Sykes' notion of Arab importance, despatched him to negotiate directly with Picot. Any agreement with France to control part of Syria would be at the expense of territory demanded in the Damascus Protocol, which Sharif Hussein continued to insist upon as imperative for an independent Arab nation.

Once Sykes applied himself to the negotiations, a preliminary agreement was reached by 3 January 1916. Both Sykes and Picot fulfilled their expectations when France was left to rule over Greater Lebanon, exert an 'exclusive influence over the rest of Syria, and a sphere of influence that extended to Mosul'.²³⁴ Mesopotamian provinces of Basra and Baghdad went to Great Britain. Palestine, coveted by Sykes for England, proved more difficult until a compromise was reached so Britain gained the ports of Acre and Haifa, and a belt for a railroad to Mesopotamia that left the rest of the country to come under an international administration able to take into account Russian aspirations for the Holy City. Areas inappropriate for direct rule were intended for a nominally independent Arab state or confederation of states, though in reality they were to be divided into French and British spheres of influence. Meanwhile, Picot and Cambon doubting Sharif Hussein could make a valuable contribution to the Allied cause, asked the French Foreign Minister to ratify the agreements as soon as possible lest the British became disillusioned and regret the extensive concessions made in exchange for being

²³² Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 181.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

allowed a free hand with the Sharif.²³⁵ Sykes' strategy, placed before the Government on 21 November 1915, was to get

'the Arabs to concede as much as possible to the French and to get our Haifa outlet and Palestine included in our sphere of enterprise in the form of French concessions to us. Thus we smooth the way for France with Syrians [...] where France has a traditional interest'.²³⁶

Confident he had fulfilled the demands of the Sharif and al-Faruqi, though considering Arab unity unlikely and unconvinced they did not regard it as anything more than an ideal, Sykes informed the War Cabinet that Arabs 'have no national spirit in our sense of the word, but they have got a sense of racial pride, which is as good'.²³⁷ Equating racial and national pride typifies Sykes' lack of any profound comprehension of different Arabs, and his poverty of knowledge over the East. He failed to realise Arabs were not homogenous, and national pride was meaningless to a tribal culture where loyalty lay to the strongest leader and to Islam. He also failed to grasp Arabs wanted a fully independent state and not a European protectorate when he advised the Cabinet that Arabs should be content with a confederation of Arabic speaking states, which 'under the aegis of an Arabian prince would satisfy their racial desire for freedom, simultaneously meeting their natural political customs'.²³⁸

Sykes' View of Palestine

When advocating Palestine as part of British interests, thereby protecting the East bank of Suez, Sykes warned the War Office that a military offensive was vital to defend the Lebanese Christian population from massacre by the Ottomans, who would otherwise become established in the Holy Cities, and install a puppet Sharif. Should these threats materialise, British prestige would 'suffer an irreparable blow'.²³⁹ Yet, though labouring under the erroneous impression the Young Arabs had received a rival offer from the Ottomans and Germany, Sykes was less swayed by Arab military value than Cairo and, when asked by Asquith, admitted their value was negative because if

'against us, [...] they add to the enemy's forces [...] but I do not count upon them as a positive force [...] even when they are armed [...] they do not fight to win'.²⁴⁰

It seems not to have occurred to Sykes or Asquith that if the Arabs were negative forces to Britain, they could only be the same to Germany. Simply because they added to enemy forces does not imply they added to his capability, and it seems unlikely the Germans would have welcomed allies who were

²³⁵ Andrews and Kanya-Forstner, *France Overseas*, p. 96.

²³⁶ F.O. 371/2490/108253. Sykes to Calwell, 14 July 1915.

²³⁷ F.O. 882/2. Memorandum on Anglo-French discussion, 21 Dec. 1915.

²³⁸ Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 200.

²³⁹ F.O. 371/24982. Sykes to D.M.O. 15-28 Nov. and 2 Dec. 1915.

²⁴⁰ CAB 42/6/9 and 42/6/10. Sykes, evidence to the War Committee, 16 Dec. 1915.

loath to fight. Notwithstanding Arab sensibilities, Sykes was clear diplomatic relations with France should take precedence over further negotiations with Sharif Hussein, and proposed a three point plan to the War Committee

- '(a) a French sphere extending from Acre in the south to Alexandretta in the north;
- (b) British control over the strip of land stretching from the sea coast of Haifa-Acre Bay to Kirkuk in Mesopotamia;
- (c) an international enclave of Jerusalem'.²⁴¹

Sykes also thought it important 'we should have a belt of English controlled country between Sharif Hussein and the French', which he regarded as being as much of the country south of Haifa as was not in the Jerusalem enclave.²⁴² This scheme received Cabinet approval on 4 February 1916.²⁴³

Originally, British desires encompassed no greater territory in Palestine than the area around Haifa. However, whilst in Petrograd, in March 1916, Sykes learnt from the British Embassy of proposals to make a declaration to the Jews regarding resettlement in Palestine, which was thought to appeal to 'a large and powerful section of the Jewish community throughout the world'.²⁴⁴ Picot was totally opposed.²⁴⁵ Grey and Nicolson were more concerned over maintaining good relations with France, vastly more important than territorial gains, and advised Sykes the matter should not have been discussed. If it subsequently arose, he was to clarify Britain had no interest in a protectorate in Palestine. Sykes' response was 'I have never mentioned Palestine to Picot without making it clear that His Majesty's Government have no ideas to protect Palestine'.²⁴⁶ Apologizing to Nicolson, he thought no harm had been caused to relations with France.²⁴⁷ This exchange was sufficient to convince Sykes of the worldwide importance of the Jews and Zionists, and he now believed Zionists were the key to the situation

'the problem is how are they to be satisfied? - with 'great Jewry' against us there is no possible chance of getting the thing thro'- it means [...], unease in Paris [...] Arabs all squabbling amongst themselves'.²⁴⁸

Formulating any feasible strategy is difficult when a key figure frequently changes his conviction. Originally, Sykes was convinced of the necessity to support Arab wishes, but then decided French desiderata had to be honoured, yet, by the middle of 1916, was persuaded Zionists were the crucial factor in Palestine's future. Once again, this time identifying all Jews as Zionists, he implied an

241 CAB 42/6/9 and 42/6/10. Sykes, evidence to the War Committee, 16 Dec. 1915.

242 *Ibid.*

243 F.O. 37/142/10. Note on Arab Question, 4 Feb. 1916.

244 Elie Kedourie, 'Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915-1916' in *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies* (London: Frank Cass, 1974), p. 238.

245 F.O. 371/2767/49669. Buchanan's telegram from St. Petersburg, 14 Mar. 1916.

246 *Ibid.*

247 Kedourie, *Political Memoirs*, p. 239.

248 *Ibid.*

inexistent homogeneity. In April 1917, Lloyd George, now Prime Minister, bluntly told Bertie that France would have to accept a British protectorate; acutely summed up by the British ambassador as '*J'y suis, J'y reste*' - here I am, here I stay'.²⁴⁹

Strategic Changes, 1914-18

De Bunsen's Strategic Recommendations

Having allowed Russia's demands over Constantinople and the Straits, and her promise to 'scrupulously respect the special interests of Britain', Asquith established the de Bunsen Committee, on 8 April 1915, to advise what additional territories war could secure for Britain.²⁵⁰ Three months later the committee reported. Remarkably short time was taken to consider the 'complicated imperial enigma - the dissolution of the old Ottoman Asiatic Empire by the British Empire'.²⁵¹ Committee members were drawn from the Foreign Office, the Admiralty, the India Office, the Board of Trade, and the War Office incremented by Kitchener placing Sir Mark Sykes as his personal nominee. Before starting work three issues were already clear, revising the 1907 Anglo-Russian Agreement concerning Persia, the post-war disposition of Constantinople to Russia and Arabia, and Muslim Holy places should continue under independent Muslim rule.²⁵² France, inevitably in view of her Syrian interests, also demanded Cilicia, Palestine, and the Christian Holy Places. Russia accepted all but Palestine. Thus, in drawing up its recommendations the Committee was

'circumscribed by those of other Powers, [...] any attempt to formulate them must [...] fit in with [...] aspirations of those who are our Allies today, but may be our competitors tomorrow'.²⁵³

Another limitation was that de Bunsen had to balance claiming territory in Asiatic Turkey, 'and the inevitable increase of Imperial responsibility'.²⁵⁴ Consequently, the Committee viewed its brief as consolidating existing possessions by 'straightening ragged edges' and thereby 'settling the destiny of Asiatic Turkey'. This was justified, claimed de Bunsen, because a cardinal principle of Britain in the East was the 'special and supreme position in the Persian Gulf'.²⁵⁵ Thus, strategic recommendations were limited to trade with territories currently under Ottoman suzerainty, fulfilling pledges made to various Arab Sheiks, maintaining Britain's position in the Eastern Mediterranean without adding to the cost, ensuring Arabia and the Muslim Holy Places remained under independent Muslim rule and avoid

249 Lady G. A. Lennox, ed. *The Diary of Lord Bertie of Thame* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), pp. 123, 312.

250 CAB 42/3. Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, Jul. 1915.

251 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 181.

224 CAB 42/3. Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, Jul. 1915.

253 *Ibid.*

254 *Ibid.*

255 *Ibid.*

antagonising Indian Muslims. De Bunsen was also expected to find solutions to 'the question of Palestine and the Holy Places of Christendom'.²⁵⁶ Formulating desiderata was comparatively easy, but the real difficulty was shaping them into a meaningful, coherent and implementable strategy. De Bunsen suggested four possible solutions:-

1. Limiting Turkish sovereignty to Anatolia and dividing the remainder of the Ottoman Empire among the European States
2. Maintaining the Ottoman Empire as a nominally independent state under European control
3. Maintaining the Ottoman Empire as an independent state with some territorial adjustments
4. Maintaining the Ottoman Empire as an independent state modified by decentralisation.²⁵⁷

No choice automatically presented, each had different difficulties, but the first was the most feasible because maintaining the Ottoman Empire in any form would have left Suez and the route to India unprotected should the empire, at some future date, join with Russia or France against Britain. Moreover, the vast sacrifice of men and material at Gallipoli would otherwise have been in vain. Likewise, Britain had assured the Arabs that Ottomans would never be allowed to regain Basra, which implied some form of permanent control, occupation of its port, 'and the surrounding countryside to the mouth of Shatt-el-Arab'.²⁵⁸ Britain's main concern was that the 'direct menace of a rival European Power will challenge our supremacy in the Persian Gulf'.²⁵⁹ Interestingly, though it would protect against a Russian invasion, Kitchener's demand for Alexandretta was rejected since France was unlikely to welcome a wedge of British territory that severed her connections and deprived her of the only good harbour in the region; 'moreover, if Alexandretta were acquired [...] France could not be refused the southern part of Syria which would bring her frontier into Arabia [...], which we could scarcely tolerate'. Hence Haifa, which was 'capable of development as a sufficiently good port and of connection by railway with Mesopotamia', was preferred to Alexandretta.²⁶⁰ Having resolved military requirements, the report considered the more tactical commercial, industrial and communication issues. It concluded that British desiderata would be met by annexing 'the vilayets of Basra, Baghdad, and the greater part of Mosul, with a port on the Eastern Mediterranean at Haifa, and British railway connections between this port and the Persian Gulf'.²⁶¹ This examination and assessment of interests in the Middle East also considered how British claims might be received by her allies, particularly France with whom 'difficulties will arise'; though 'no aspiration clash with Italy or Russia'.²⁶² Strangely, where elsewhere the report's

256 CAB 42/3. Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, Jul. 1915.

257 *Ibid.*

258 *Ibid.*

259 *Ibid.*

260 *Ibid.*

261 *Ibid.*

262 *Ibid.*

recommendations were clear, it is less than incisive over Palestine, and only stated that France included Palestine in a liberally defined Syria, and 'the actual settlement of the intricate problem of the sacred places' should be settled as a separate question, whilst simultaneously opposing any British claim for possession. In fact, the closest the report manages to any decisive proposal for Palestine is rejecting French demands arising from 'world-wide interests affected by the destiny of the Holy Land'.²⁶³

Because the report was prepared expeditiously, though comprehensively, there are weaknesses. Essentially, which even in 1915 seems ambitious, it supposes post-war imperialism lingers unchecked, takes no account of Zionism or the rise of Arab Nationalism, but assumes the Middle East and Arabia will be largely governed by France and Britain.

Development of the Arab Policy: Flawed Intelligence and Flawed Strategy

Successful strategies are constructed upon clear attainable long-term aims based on sound intelligence, sufficient resources, clear benefits, unity of purpose, and consistency of approach. Since strategies suitable for wartime do not necessarily translate into post-war conditions, if longer term change is required a thorough early evaluation of how it will work under peacetime conditions must be undertaken. Strategies need time to work, so it was important to distinguish whether only wartime exigencies dictated British involvement in Palestine. The deeply flawed September 1914 intelligence report, which generated Kitchener's first telegram and the whole sequence of messages and events resulting in the proclamation, meant, from inception, encouraging an Arab Revolt was not under complete control. A rigorous examination of the intelligence might have raised questions concerning the use of the Emir as a British ally, and especially his desire to become the King of an independent Arab Nation. Poor control over strategy is particularly evident from Sharif Hussein's 'the time is not yet ripe' cool reaction to the Proclamation which could, and should, have been foreseen by the ostensible experts in Cairo. This response might also have been intended as a bargaining tool for Britain to pronounce in his favour as King of the Arabs, which was an ambition implied by Abdullah stating that he would hold the British accountable for their promises. Acceptance and unquestioned flawed intelligence may also indicate that Kitchener's strategy against the Ottomans was predetermined, which may be indicated by his 1910 letter to Lady Salisbury over the possibility of an Ottoman war. Grey's aversion to debate with Kitchener the desirability of increased British Imperial duties removed any inhibitions to him making his own disposition.²⁶⁴ Already the leading advocate of British control over Alexandretta, Kitchener resolved 'partition will doubtless have to be undertaken', which changed the traditional role of the military as the enforcing branch of foreign affairs by making policy and shaping

263 CAB 42/3. Report of the Committee on Asiatic Turkey, Jul. 1915.

264 Klieman, 'Britain's War Aims', *Journal of Contemporary History*, (p. 243).

its execution.²⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the India Office repeatedly reminded Sharif Hussein of treaties with ibn Sa'ud and other ruling Arabian chiefs, which recognised their independence, and 'that both ibn Sa'ud and the Idrissi, like himself though on a lesser scale, were being subsidised and armed by us'.²⁶⁶

Divisions in the India Office between supporters of ibn Sa'ud and those of Sharif Hussein severely reduced any possibility of a permanently friendly 'united Arabia', and only diplomatic pressure, because Britain armed both sides, prevented an outbreak of hostilities between the two chieftains.²⁶⁷ A serious clash was predictable, which eventually came in May 1919. Moreover, as early as April 1915, Hardinge had expressed his opposition to Arab dominion over Arabia to Wingate, and argued that the Germans under Ottoman protection had seriously endangered British interests in the Persian Gulf that was a situation

'it would be folly to allow to recur and it is of no use for the Arabs to say [...] this would not happen under their rule, for it is always possible that it might, and Arabs have not a great reputation for honesty'.²⁶⁸

Conflict in the India Office over the Arabs, in a microcosm, mirrored the divided War Cabinet. Whereas the Political Department, in 1915, wanted the Ottoman Empire sacrificed to strengthen the Arabs, the Military Department wanted the Ottoman Empire as strong as possible against any future Russian threat.²⁶⁹ Thus, they 'fought by proxy [...] to settle by force of arms what they had been unable to resolve by memoranda'.²⁷⁰

The Arab Bureau and Arab Independence

With the establishment of the Arab Bureau at the Cairo Residency, in the spring of 1916, Arab affairs became concentrated in the hands of specialists drawn from the Government of India. Hardinge advised Nicolson that he 'had no confidence in Sir Mark Sykes', but since Clayton was to head the bureau would delegate a good officer.²⁷¹ Whereas, previously, opinions could have been tested against more seasoned experience of the Arabs, concentrating policy makers with the same outlook in Cairo meant dissenting opinions would, at best, find it difficult to gain a hearing. This is clear by the Foreign Department of the India Office noting

'we have come to the conclusion, after the experience of the last few months, that it is not suitable to make the Arab Bureau the mouthpiece of H.M.G.'s policy

265 CAB 27/1. Appendix X, 103ff. 1915.

266 Hogarth, 'Wahabism and British Interests' in *JBIA*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 70-81 (p. 72).

267 *Ibid.*, (p. 71).

268 P. Knightley, and C. Simpson, *The Secret Lives of Lawrence of Arabia* (London: Panther, 1971), p. 74.

269 CAB 42/2.

270 Knightley and Simpson, *Secret Lives*, p. 75.

273 F.O. 800/381. Nicolson Papers. Hardinge to Nicolson, 18 Feb. 1916.

[...] as regards the Arab Question'.²⁷²

Particular dismay was registered over failure to keep intelligence appraisals and policy endorsement apart, which was raised by the Indian authorities when informed that the Bureau was the 'central organ through which His Majesty's Government will lay down policy and principles', and with which the General Officer Commanding Department must work in 'strict conformity'.²⁷³ Having concentrated all intelligence in the Clayton's hands, any chance of the Government receiving balanced reports to decide upon strategy was negligible. Creating the Arab Bureau ensured its staff, all of whom effectively reported to Kitchener, regarded themselves as rather more than the 'informing agency' viewed by the Secretary of State for India, but more of an elite whose opinions carried considerable weight.²⁷⁴ Since Clayton and Storrs acted together to persuade Kitchener of a strategy they believed appropriate towards the Arabs it suggests a very assured atmosphere in the British Residency, which is incarnate in DeFrance's complaint that the British Agency was exhorting Syrians to believe Britain would ensure Syrian independence whose fate relied solely on England.²⁷⁵

French complaints over British intentions for Syria and Palestine began as early as February 1915 when Colonel Maucorps recorded that certain officials, Storrs amongst them, were campaigning for British intrusion in Syria. Maucorps distinguished between 'Palestine and Syria and that the British might undertake military action in Palestine, while respecting French rights in Syria'.²⁷⁶ Curiously, in December 1914, Storrs had written to Fitzgerald concerning Palestine,

'while we naturally do not want to burden ourselves with fresh responsibilities
[...] we are, I take it, averse to [...] too great an extension of the inevitable French
Protectorate over the Lebanon'.²⁷⁷

This appears an implicit acceptance in the Arab Bureau of French interests extending beyond the Lebanon, but differed from Kitchener's November 1914 letter to Grey and his later opinion that Syria should be made

'into a sort of Afghanistan uncontrolled and independent within, but carrying on
its foreign relations through us [...] the plan is not feasible unless we hold Syria'.²⁷⁸

Grey, always sensitive to French interests in the Levant, noted 'we cannot act as regards Syria'.²⁷⁹

Notably, Storrs' December 1914 memorandum had bypassed Grey and been sent directly to Fitzgerald

272 F.O. 371/2771/119279. Telegram from Viceroy, 20 Jun 1916.

273 F.O.371/2771/79197. Telegram to Viceroy, 26 Apr. 1916.

274 F.O. 372/2771/24279. McMahon to Grey, 25 Jan. 1916.

275 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 47.

276 *Ibid*, p. 47.

277 TNA 30/57/45. Kitchener Papers. Storrs to Fitzgerald, 28 Dec. 1914.

278 Storrs Papers. Box 11/3. Letter, 22 Feb. 1915.

who was Kitchener's conduit to vicariously conduct foreign policy in the Middle East and steer the government in the latter's desired direction by dangling to Sharif Hussein the idea of the Caliphate and leadership of an independent Arab nation. Rather *laissez faire* control by Kitchener of his subordinates in Cairo had led to unwise rhetoric over the nature of an independent Arab nation that Sharif Hussein had convinced himself would ultimately include Iraq and Syria. To ensure he understood this was unacceptable, Hogarth was despatched to 'clear British policy up with Hussein'. During January 1918, ten meetings were held with the Sharif where, instead of clarifying British expectations, Hogarth read the Foreign Office formula. What became known as the 'Hogarth Message' stated

'the Entente Powers are determined that the Arab race shall be given full opportunity of [...] forming a nation in the world. This can only be achieved by the Arabs themselves uniting, and that Great Britain and her Allies will pursue a policy with this ultimate unity in mind'.²⁸⁰

Assurances were also given that Palestine's Muslim Holy places would have a 'special regime'. Unfortunately, as Hogarth reported, Sharif Hussein identified Arab unity as 'synonymous with his own Kingship' and as 'a means to his personal aggrandisement' that was confirmed by his letter to Wingate, on 31 December 1917, saying 'Great Britain has planted a tree and it is natural that she will look after it until it [...] bears fruit'.²⁸¹ Where the 'special regime' for Palestine was concerned, Sharif Hussein may have regarded it as his entitlement for representing Muslim interests. Hogarth should not have been surprised at the Sharif's reaction having written, in April 1917, of 'the inability of the Arabs themselves to develop any system of imperial administration more adequate than the Patriarchal. They make no other contribution to the science of government'.²⁸² Doubts over Arab unity were common, and, on 30 October 1915, Aubrey Herbert advised Kitchener that 'the character of the people and the geography of the country are insuperable obstacles to any real unity for years and perhaps generations to come'.²⁸³ Lawrence also believed that 'Arab unity is a madman's notion [...] I am sure I never dreamed of uniting even the Hijaz and Syria. My conception was of a number of small states'.²⁸⁴ Clearly, Sharif Hussein was not slow to take advantage of the poor judgment exhibited in the embellishments to Kitchener's messages, and then interpret them to fulfil his own agenda.

279 F.O. 800/102. Grey Papers. 1914.

280 F.O. 371/3383/25577. D. G. Hogarth, 'Report on Mission to Jeddah', 15 Jan. 1918.

281 F.O. 371/3383/25577, King Hussein to Wingate, 9 Feb. 1918.

282 Efraim and Inari Karsh, 'Myth in the Desert, or Not the Great Arab Revolt' in *Middle Eastern Studies (MES)*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (April 1997) pp. 267-312, (p. 273).

283 F.O. 371/2486/164659. Aubrey Herbert to Kitchener, 30 Oct. 1915.

284 F.O. 882/26. 12 Mar. 1917.

Overtures to Sharif Hussein

On 7 September 1914, Milne Cheetham, acting High Commissioner of Egypt pending McMahon's arrival, advised the Foreign Office that the Ottoman government 'has made great efforts to come to an arrangement with the principal Chiefs in Arabia in order to secure, [...], at least their friendly neutrality'.²⁸⁵ Cheetham advised Kitchener that an immediate approach to Sharif Hussein was warranted. With the draft sanctioned by Grey, Kitchener responded immediately and instructed Storrs to 'send a secret and carefully chosen messenger from me to Sharif Abdullah to ascertain if the present German influence in Constantinople coerced

'Sultan [...] and Sublime Porte to acts of aggression and war against Great Britain, he and his father and the Arabs of the Hejaz would be with us or against us'.²⁸⁶

A day earlier, the Cairo Residency intelligence department had produced a paper, entitled 'Appreciation of Situation in Arabia', that reproduced Abdullah's inaccurate claim to Storrs that the Arabs were focussing and solidifying, and Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud of the Nejd, the Idrissi, and even Imam Yehia 'would before long be in complete unity with each other and with the Sharifate'.²⁸⁷ Kedourie suggests the paper was intended to 'urge a policy by simultaneously hinting at possibilities of anti-Ottoman action and sounding the alarm over Ottoman activities in Arabia'.²⁸⁸ Cheetham's real intent, which fits more logically with the notion of a new Viceroyalty, may have been to persuade the government to act on Storrs' earlier suggestion that 'by timely consultation with Mecca we might secure not only the neutrality, but the alliance of Arabia in the event of Ottoman aggression'.²⁸⁹ Since the intelligence paper had been seen by Clayton, it might seem likely that Wingate was party to the false claim of apparent unity between the main Arab Chieftains. As supposed Arab experts, it is surprising they were unaware that the Emir's standing with the Arab tribes was damaged by his ostensible support for their Ottoman suzerains, which they regarded as self-aggrandising, and ensured he was the bitter enemy of Abdul Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, Emir of the Nejd, the Idrissi, ruler of Asir the Red Sea coastal province northwest of Yemen, and Imam Yehia, King of Yemen.²⁹⁰ Moreover, as a supposed expert on Asia and Africa, and especially as War Minister, Kitchener should at least have enquired whether the intelligence was reliable before instructing Storrs, on October 5 1914, to dispatch a messenger to Sharif Hussein. Abdullah's response, received on 30 October, essentially repeated his February request for British

285 F.O. 371/2140/51344. Despatch No. 149 by Cheetham, 7 Sept. 1914.

286 F.O. 371/2139/52598. Telegram to Cheetham, 24 Sept. 1914.

287 F.O. 372/1973/87396. Despatch 204 by Cheetham, 13 Dec. 1914.

288 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 14.

289 *Ibid.*, p. 14.

290 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

support against any foreign aggression, particularly by the Ottomans, and to uphold the rights of his father as Emir, and the rights of his Emirate. Both of which he demanded the government guarantee 'these fundamental principles clearly and in writing'.²⁹¹

Storrs' proposal for a new Viceroyalty, the basis for developing Kitchener's conception of a British Protectorate, was posited as an attractive alternative to India. As Kitchener saw it, in a 1914 letter disregarding likely French objections, Syria should be 'organised as an Arab state under the Khalif, but also under European consular control and European guidance as regards Government'.²⁹² This reference to the Caliphate was intended to remind Grey of Kitchener's message to Abdullah, on 31 October 1914, expressing his hope that 'an Arab of the true race will assume the Khalifate at Mecca or Medina', which was the first time the question of the Caliphate had been raised.²⁹³ In exchange for their aid England, this message asserted, promised no internal intervention in Arabia, and would 'give Arabs all assistance against external foreign aggression'.²⁹⁴ A day later, Kitchener's epistle was embellished to read 'Britain would associate herself with the Arabs because their cause was freedom'. Before being sent to Abdullah, it added that if the Emir and Arabs in general assisted, Britain promised not to intrude internally and would 'guarantee independence, rights and privileges of the Sharifate against all external foreign aggression, in particular the Ottomans'.²⁹⁵ Doing so meant Britain would change from supporting the Ottomans to the

'noble Arab. [...]. It would be well if Your Highness would convey to your followers and devotees, [...], in every country, the good tidings of the freedom of the Arabs, and the rising of the sun over Arabia'.²⁹⁶

Vague sentiments of an Arab Nation and the Caliphate created the opportunity for Storrs and Cheetham to embellish the message. Kitchener 'had a long cherished idea of founding an independent Arab Caliphate', and was convinced that it should be passed to the Hashemite descendants of the Prophet.²⁹⁷ However, Storrs and Kitchener significantly misunderstood the Caliphate; both viewing it as a 'hereditary spiritual pope with no temporal power'.²⁹⁸ Sharif Hussein held to the traditional Sunni type of Caliphate 'involving temporal as well as a form of spiritual/religious authority or right to lead the

291 F.O. 371/1973/87396. Despatch 204 by Cheetham, 13 Dec. 1914.

292 F.O. 800/102. Grey Papers, 1914.

293 F.O. 371/2139/65589. Grey's telegram no. 303, 31 Oct. 1914.

294 *Ibid.*, Kitchener to Abdullah, 31 Oct. 1914.

295 Storrs Papers. Box II/4.

296 F.O. 371/1973/ 87396. Annex to Cheetham's no. 204, 13 Dec. 1914.

297 Arthur, *Kitchener*, p. 153.

298 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 33.

ummah that stemmed from his descent from the Quraysh and the Prophet.²⁹⁹ He no longer accepted the Sultan as Caliph because the Union Government had extinguished his power, and

‘robbed him [...] of the authority to choose the chief [...] of his honoured, exalted Privy Chamber, let alone to attend to the affairs of the Muslims, and the interests of true believers’.³⁰⁰

Storrs, convinced it should belong to the Sharifate of Mecca, opposed any changes to the Caliphate, and schemed to create a British protected puppet kingdom where loyalty would be retained by revenues from annual payments within the Muslim world, and the *haj*, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. Remarkably, neither Storrs nor Kitchener understood the Caliphate was a ‘consuming desire’ for Sharif Hussein.³⁰¹ This gulf of ignorance was astonishing since Sir Thomas Holderness, Permanent Under-Secretary for the Government of India, had warned, though it fell on stony ground,

‘if it is to be more than a mere empty claim, it must have the substance of an extensive temporal empire. Sharif Hussein could not, I imagine, make good a title to the Caliphate unless he established temporal ascendancy over the states and chiefdoms of Arabia’.³⁰²

In a private letter to Grey, on 15 May, Wingate accepted it may be futile to discuss forming a new state that was bereft of territory, capital and a ruler. Nevertheless,

‘however Utopian [...] there can be no doubt that when the psychological moment Comes all Muslim eyes will be turned to Great Britain to whom they look for support in this – perhaps the supreme crisis - in their religious and national existence, [...], it is for us to take the lead and to consolidate [...] the divergent views of various Muslim nationalities and communities’.³⁰³

Writing to Wingate, on 6 May 1915, Sir Sayid al-Mirghani, a very influential religious leader in the Sudan, advised Britain to publish a declaration about the Khalifate to help suppress the fears and qualms of many Muslims, and strengthen the Emir of the Hedjaz to gain other Muslims acknowledgement, which, if rendered secretly, meant

‘Great Britain could utilise the services of some of the Mohammedan Emirs [...] under her control and protection. If the Emir becomes strong enough in the Hedjaz [...] will then be acknowledged by the Muslims of Egypt, India and the Sudan’.³⁰⁴

299 Teitelbaum, ‘From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty’, *MES*, 34, (p. 107).

300 Dawn, *Ottomanism*, p. 82.

301 Teitelbaum, ‘From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty’, *MES*, 34, (p. 108).

302 London. India Office Records, L/P & S/10/523, p. 53/15. Memorandum from Holderness, 5 Jan. 1915.

303 F.O. 371/2486/77713. Wingate to Grey, 15 May 1915.

Though he recognised Muslim divergent views, Wingate failed to mention the difficulties of persuading them to accept Sharif Hussein as Caliph, let alone as King of an Arab Nation. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for India, opined that whilst the government should encourage Sharif Hussein to throw off the 'Ottoman yoke' and support him as independent ruler of the Hedjaz, military intervention should be excluded.³⁰⁵ Kitchener's lack of clarity might not have been important had his message been passed unchanged. Sharif Hussein was meant to understand he would have spiritual authority, but not temporal, and an Arab Nation was in the Hedjaz only. In any event, mutual enmity between himself, Ibn Sa'ud, the Idrissi, and Imam Yehia made unity under his leadership impossible.³⁰⁶ Clayton, meanwhile, fulsomely described Hussein as

'undoubtedly the most suitable candidate for the Caliphate from the British point of view, and that the peace terms with Turkey should include a proposal for the Sultan to renounce the Caliphate which Hussein could then assume'.³⁰⁷

Knowing the Ottoman Sultan was also Caliph, Kitchener's aspirations to supplant him required either the defeat of the Ottoman Empire or the Sultan to willingly relinquish the post. When writing to Lady Salisbury, in December 1910, forecasting war with the Ottomans as a likely result of German influence at the Sublime Porte, Kitchener might have visualised transferring the Caliphate to the Emir a year before the War Cabinet discussion; similarly, demolishing the Ottoman Empire might also have been a consideration. Allowing for Kitchener's swift reaction to the September 1914 intelligence paper, proposal for an Arab Nation, desire to transfer the Caliphate to 'an Arab of the true race', insistence on serving as a soldier, meeting with Abdullah in February, and his strategic military planning abilities, a predetermined plan to opportunistically use the Ottoman declaration of war to destroy its Empire seems credible.

Strategically, changes from Kitchener's original message were dangerous. By equating the 'cause of the Arabs' with the 'cause of freedom' it could easily have conveyed the mistaken impression that Britain was willing to support untrammelled Arab freedom. Storrs's comment concerning the 'good tidings of the freedom of Arabs' was open to the interpretation of Britain being prepared to help Arabs gain freedom, and allow Sharif Hussein to create an Arab kingdom with himself as head of a wide Arab movement. Similarly, when Storrs spoke of 'befriending and defending Islam no longer represented by the Turks, but the 'noble Arab', and guaranteeing independence against all foreign aggression it would

307 *Ibid.* Ali Mirghani to Wingate, 14 June 1915.

305 *Ibid.* Holderness to Nicholson 24 June 1915.

306 F.O. 371/2486/112369. Letter from Captain G. S. Symes to Sir Reginald Wingate, 19 Jul. 1915.

307 F.O. 371/141/587. Note by Clayton, 24 Jul. 1915.

be surprising if the Emir did not construe it as supporting his endeavours to create an Arab kingdom defended by Britain. British expectations in exchange for such specific undertakings are unclear. Only the vague term 'if the Emir and Arabs in general assist Great Britain in this conflict' conveys any meaning. How, 'assist', the keyword, was intended to be understood by either the Emir or the British is impossible to determine. Other aspects of Storrs' message ought to have aroused great government concern. Although Storrs composed the message, Milne Cheetham's approval was necessary before despatch. Neither sought agreement from Kitchener, the Foreign or India Offices, but heroically embroidered instructions without any control or referral. Kedourie suggests that Storrs and Cheetham thought their actions were 'in line with Kitchener's wishes', which overlooks the more important point that, as old hands, before rewriting the original message they should have first checked rather than assumed.³⁰⁸ A similar obligation was applicable to Kitchener. His poor control of subordinates, either from disinterest, laziness, or trust allowed egregious messages to be despatched in his name; lacking prior review. This poor control allowed Kitchener's telegram to be changed and consequently misinterpreted.

Britain and the Arabs, 1914-17

Mixed Messages

On 26 October 1914 Cheetham, in a telegraph from Cairo concerning the pan Arab movement, advised that its leaders had encouraged the British to understand that

'Arabs do not expect more from Great Britain than a benevolent attitude towards their aspirations for self-government and an assurance of her moral support, [...] for putting their plans in execution'.³⁰⁹

If, as Kedourie suggests, Cheetham and Storrs were 'merely giving expression to vague sentiments, devoid of any binding character, which might be useful in attracting and enticing the Sharif' their actions cannot be reconciled with their supposed experience. Predictably, Sharif Hussein interpreted the message as visualising 'a Muslim replacement for the Ottoman Empire, and not simply a truncated Hedjazi state controlled by a secular ruler'.³¹⁰ This strategically weak hyperbole was quickly apparent. During November 1917, Wingate, replacing McMahon as High Commissioner, noted, after a discussion with Colonel Wilson, the British representative in the Hedjaz, it was obvious King Hussein continued with

'his original pretensions concerning Syria, and apparently still nourishes illusions

308 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 20.

309 F.O. 371/2140/6358. Telegram 223 from Cheetham, 26 Oct. 1914.

310 Teitelbaum, 'From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty', *MES*, 34 (P. 109).

that through the good offices of His Majesty's Government he may be installed,
[...], as overlord of a greater part of the country'.

Concluding, Wingate suggested, 'as an immediate opportunist policy', it was worthwhile to 'encourage' Sharif Hussein's 'belief that an Arab State or Confederacy has been created of which he is Muslim Overlord'.³¹¹ So, on the one hand the British believed Hussein pretentious, but on the other regarded him in a different light to the other Arab Chieftains. This is reflected in a note for a proposed treaty with Imam Yehia, saying 'we should be careful to define our attitude towards King Hussein and our purpose supporting the principle of Arabian autonomy'.³¹² Autonomy meant independent Arab rulers governing their own territories based on 'principles of cohesion and co-operation in Arabia', rather than the existing discord and separation'.³¹³ Cairo's embellishments provided an unqualified and general commitment to guarantee the 'independence rights and privileges of the Sharifate' in exchange for vague expectations of assistance. Sharif Hussein, however, anticipated Whitehall would accept him as King of the Arabs ruling over a Middle East kingdom that included Iraq and Syria.³¹⁴ Of longer term magnitude was how an industrially declining nation, already heavily committed to a European War, could find the resources to satisfy these open ended commitments; even if possible in the short term. Kitchener was aware of industry's capacity and quality problems, but these failed to deter attempts to divert scarce resources to the Arabs.³¹⁵

Despite the caveat of Arab assistance, the quantity and quality of British pledges were much more specific. Unsurprisingly, when Storrs' messenger returned to Cairo, on 8 December 1914, he reported Sharif Hussein had 'strongly and repeatedly emphasised that the friendliness he felt towards Great Britain was greater than appeared in his response to the message of 1 November 1914'.³¹⁶ British payments to the Emir to stimulate an Arab Revolt doubtless encouraged him to choose his words when saying he was unable to act against the Ottomans 'due to his position in the world of Islam and the current political situation in the Hedjaz, until a suitable pretext arose'.³¹⁷ No enquiry ascertained what might constitute such a pretext. His desire for the Caliphate was expressed more cautiously, saying 'the Caliphate means this, that the rule of the book of God should be enforced, and this they do not do'. He considered Ottoman rule was contrary to religion.³¹⁸ Especially with a proposal emanating from

311 Teitelbaum, 'From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty', *MES*, 34 (P. 109).

312 MECA. Hubert Young Papers, file 1, proposed treaty with Imam Yehia.

313 *Ibid.*

314 Teitelbaum, 'From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty', *MES*, 34, (p. 110).

315 Busch, Briton, Cooper, *Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914 -1921* (London: University of California Press, 1971), p. 214.

316 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 20.

317 F.O. 371/2139/81133. Telegram 310 from Cheetham, 10 Dec. 1914.

318 L/P&S/18/B22. 'Shorthand note of discourse by Sharif Hussein', Nov. 1914.

Kitchener, any intimation of an Arab Caliphate might have encouraged Sharif Hussein into believing the moment was opportune to realise the ambition in his 14 July 1915 letter that demanded Britain 'agree to the proclamation of an Arab Caliphate for Islam'.³¹⁹ Abdullah's written response showed that he expected the British to honour their word as a basis for action and reference for the present and future, saying his country held 'most conscientiously to your suggestions, and has undertaken to carry out faithfully what we said in our previous letter and confirm in our present one'; adding 'we act upon the words of him who said, perform ye the promise ye make to God when ye pledge yourselves'.³²⁰ This sententiousness ought to have served as an admonition to the progenitors of the November message so they would realise their rhetoric was interpreted at face value and would be measured against subsequent action, which did not establish itself in the minds of British officials. Abdullah's response was arrogant, and implied the British were dependent on the Arabs instead of the exact opposite. These clever negotiations were intended to force Britain to honour their own hyperbole despite Sharif Hussein's ambitions relying on English power. Moreover, when he referred to the 'rule of the book of God' it implied that, contrary to the Ottoman Caliph, he would act in accordance with the Koran, which was an elliptical way to express high interest in the Caliphate as his rightful possession.

The Al-Faruqi Episode

Djemal Pasha's, the Ottoman Governor of Syria and Palestine, repressive measures against Arab nationalists had led to the arrest and deportation to Constantinople of Arab nationalists planning to defect and create an 'identity of Arab and British interests, and convey a message of friendship'.³²¹ Amongst these Arab nationalists was Lieutenant Muhammad Sharif al-Faruqi, a 24 year old Arab Ottoman officer claiming to be a member of the Arab secret society al- Ahd, which he may have joined after meeting Aziz Bey Ali al-Misri, on 10 September 1915. This founder of the Arab secret society, al- Ahd, was described by Lawrence as 'an idol for the Arab officers'.³²² Djemal Pasha ordered Faruqi posted to Gallipoli, which seemed a deliberate policy for alleged Arab plotters. In the autumn of 1915, Faruqi, who had learned from secret society officers in Damascus of the encouragement given to Sharif Hussein to lead an Arab revolt against his Ottoman suzerains if Britain agreed to support the Damascus Protocols (Sharif Hussein's land demands for an Arab Empire notified to the British earlier in 1915),

319 Antonius, *Awakening*, p. 414.

320 F.O. 371/1973/ 87396. Despatch 204 from Cheetham, 13 Dec. 1914.

321 Friedman, *Promised Land*, p. 19.

325T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1935), p. 59.

326 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 176.

crossed over to Allied lines claiming to have important data for British Intelligence in Cairo.³²³ Jointly, al-Misri and al-Faruqi stressed the need for British friendship upon secret societies deserters and the importance of impressing upon Britain 'the strength of the Arab movement and the sincere loyalty and attachment' of the Young Arabs to Sharif Hussein's cause.³²⁴ Clayton, the head of British Military Intelligence, impressed by Faruqi's assertion to be spokesman for al-Ahd, which appeared credible because of his apparent familiarity with the correspondence between the Sharif and the British, failed to verify the Lieutenant's claims.³²⁵ Purportedly speaking for Arab officers in Damascus, Faruqi demanded British acceptance of an independent Arab state within the frontiers demanded by the Emir of Mecca in the Damascus Protocols. Because Faruqi's and the Emir's demands were identical, Clayton deduced that the former 'would be speaking for hundreds of thousands of Ottoman troops and millions of Ottoman subjects'.³²⁶ After interrogating Faruqi, Clayton concluded that influential Arab leaders were open to reason, and would accept a less grand scheme than demanded in the Protocols. Clayton believed realism had prevailed so notions of an Arab Empire were almost certainly impractical, which he thought appreciated by Faruqi who probably realised that England, bound by obligations to her allies, could not rationally accept a powerful and united Arab Empire 'on the flank of the highway to India', but were now asking England's assistance to obtain

'a reasonable measure of independence and autonomous Government in those Arab Countries where England can fairly claim her interests are greater than those of her Allies [...] Syria is [...] included in their programme but they must realise that France has an aspiration in this region.'³²⁷

Clayton advised General Maxwell, the Commander of the Egyptian army, of his extremely interesting discussions with al-Faruqi whose

'aims are [...] very much more moderate and practical and do not appear to be tinged [...] by Muslim fanatics. Their leaders are not carried away by the dream of an Arab Empire but appear to be reasonable men, quite prepared to give and take'.³²⁸

Contradictions between Clayton's deduction that Arabs 'must realise France's aspirations' and Faruqi's bold statement that 'French occupation of Syria would be strenuously resisted by the Mohammedan population', which he later reduced to 'the inclusion of Damascus, Aleppo, Hama and Homs in the Arab

323 F.O. 371/2486/157740. Clayton 'Memorandum of the Young Arab Party', 11 Oct. 1915.

323 Wingate Papers, 135/4/10. Clayton to Wingate, 9 Oct. 1915.

Confederation', appear unnoticed. 'Our scheme', Faruqi claimed, 'embraces all Arab countries including Syria and Mesopotamia, but if we cannot have all, we want as much as we can get'.³²⁹ Surprisingly, Clayton, as head of all Middle East intelligence who could be expected to have had a network of informers, appeared unaware of Faruqi and Arab Secret Societies existences before interrogation; especially Faruqi's pompous claim to be 'a descendant of Omar ibn El Khattab, the second Khalifa of El Islam'.³³⁰ Neither was Faruqi questioned on whose authority he was negotiating with the British, or reducing Arab territorial demands to wanting 'as much as they could get'. This substantial change to earlier demands, and a curiously imprecise negotiating position, ought to have raised questions, chiefly from having earlier threatened Mohammedan resistance if France pressed claims to Syrian territory. Oddly, Faruqi, under no pressure to mitigate demands, sought nothing from Britain in exchange. Yet, Clayton accepted Faruqi's claim to be a prominent member of the Young Arab party whose family was esteemed amongst the Arabs.³³¹ In fact the only request, not even a demand, Faruqi made was that England 'assist them to obtain a reasonable measure of independence and autonomous movement'; wishes lower than concessions already offered by Cairo to Sharif Hussein in the December Proclamation. Under examination, Faruqi revealed that the Young Arab party had learnt of British negotiations with the Emir, and wished to be included because they trusted England and preferred 'a deal with her'. According to Faruqi, Germany and the Ottoman Empire had offered to meet Arab demands in full knowing the party's great influence in Syria and Mesopotamia. Thus, he demanded Britain reply favourably within a few weeks if they wished to avoid Arabs joining the Central Powers for the best terms possible.³³² Clayton, in a rather exultant report to Wingate, depicted the Secret Society leaders as 'reasonable men who were not carried away by the dream of an Arab Empire', which ignored Faruqi's threat and claim of German and Ottoman readiness to meet Arab demands 'in full'. Curiously, clearance was not obtained from the War and Foreign Offices before interrogating Faruqi, which was contrary to specific instructions from General Sir Ian Hamilton, the Commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, against committing Britain in any negotiations with 'deserters or emissaries from the Ottoman Empire without prior authorisation'.³³³ Clayton, arguably, was interrogating not negotiating with Faruqi, who was a deserter. Though, even if the letter of instructions was not breached, its spirit certainly was, and there was little point questioning Faruqi if useful results were not anticipated. Despite the lack of basic enquiries to establish Faruqi's credentials, Clayton

329 *Ibid.* Clayton 'Memorandum of the Young Arab Party', 11 Oct. 1915

330 F.O. 371/2486/34982. Enclosed with McMahon's despatch, 12 Oct. 1915.

331 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, pp. 73-4.

332 F.O. 371/2486/157740. Mohammed Sharif al-Faruqi's Statement, 12 Oct. 1915.

333 F.O. 371/2480/128226. Hamilton to War Office, 25 August 1915.

assumed a close liaison with Sharif Hussein. Apparently, Faruqi's familiarity with the main lines of Sharif Hussein's proposals somehow convinced Clayton he was 'accredited by the committee'.³³⁴ Clearly swayed by Faruqi's 'bona fides and importance', Clayton's report exaggerated Faruqi's actual standing in the Societies, stating the Lieutenant 'maintains that he is accredited by the Committee and that through him the reply to England may be given'.³³⁵ Actually, Faruqi admitted he had no authority to officially discuss any political programme, and had stated that if no agreement was reached with the emissaries who came to Jeddah 'I can, [...] Give answers to any questions you wish to make re the agreement and if necessary make modifications in its articles [...]'.³³⁶ These seem unlikely words for an accredited agent whose remit is to make binding agreements on behalf of a principal. Rather, they represent someone who, lacking real authority, tries to impress with 'large claims and beguiling promises'; simultaneously leaving 'open an avenue of retreat' should his interlocutors accept his words as binding commitments.³³⁷

Clayton's failure to investigate either Faruqi's background or the Young Arabs is difficult to understand from a highly experienced intelligence officer. This failure meant that when Faruqi asserted 'we the Arab party, are a power which cannot be disregarded. 90% of the Arab officers in the Ottoman army and a part of the Kurd officers are members of our Society' Clayton was prodigiously impressed, and reported that 'together with the experience of the past year, proposals now put forward are of very grave and urgent importance'. Subsequently, he repeated Faruqi's threat that 'if the proposals were rejected, or [...] the issue [...] evaded, the Young Arab party would definitely be thrown into the hands of the enemy'.³³⁸ Kitchener responded to Maxwell's telegram on 12 October, saying 'the Government were most desirous of dealing with the Arab question in a manner fitting to the Arabs', which used his influence to encourage Grey to ask McMahon for his view on 'the definite statement of sympathy and support from us, which the Arabs desire'.³³⁹ Maxwell, who received Clayton's report on 9 October, alerted Kitchener, seven days later, that he believed the Arabs would accept considerable modification.

'They will, I think, insist on Aleppo, Homs, Hama and Damascus [...]. Hence, if we can make the French realise that we are up against a big question of the future of Islam, they may be more inclined to agree to a settlement'.³⁴⁰

334 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 75.

335 *Ibid.*

336 *Ibid.*

337 *Ibid.*

338 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, pp. 75-6.

339 F.O. 371/2486/34982. Grey to McMahon, 14 Oct. 1915. .

340 F.O. 371/2486/152729. Maxwell to Kitchener, 16 Oct. 1915.

Once again Kitchener's acolytes were embellishing messages. Wingate's claim that the 'future of Islam' was threatened was hyperbole that relied on Clayton's judgment of Faruqi drawn from an interrogation lasting about a month, which in so short a period might seem precipitate. Clayton had failed to advise Wingate of his reasons for such far reaching deductions so it is startling that no enquiry was made by the latter, and interpreting the message as some imagined threat to Islam was even more startling. McMahon, after further conversations with Faruqi, accepted Clayton's judgment and cabled London that the Arab party needed immediate British pledges or

'they will throw themselves into the hands of Germany who, [...], has furnished them fulfillment of all their demands. [...] we may have all Islam in the East united against the Allies'.³⁴¹

Aubrey Herbert MP, the younger son of the Earl of Pembroke, continued the scaremongering. Having served as an Intelligence Officer under Clayton he interviewed al-Misri who impressed him as 'a man of striking personality' and revealed Germany had 'dazzling gifts to offer' because of which a crossroad had been reached, which meant the Arabs were now seeking an unambiguous alliance from England to encourage Arab officers to switch allegiance. Sir Thomas Holderness, the Permanent Under-Secretary for the Government of India, received Clayton's report on 6 November 1915, and stingingly noted the Arab deserter had to be taken at face value because the only authority he cited was Sharif Hussein, which was the best available, so any other information depended on the word of

'Colonel Clayton, General Maxwell and Sir H. McMahon, who profess themselves satisfied after long enquiries [...] a large and solid Arab party can be detached from the Ottomans, [...]. By this they mean that if we won over the party by the promise of an Independent Arabia, free from the Ottoman and under British guarantee of protection, there would be defections of Arab units [...], and a rally to our side [...] of important chiefs'.³⁴²

Holderness' cool reception was too late.

Clayton's report was remarkable enough from a Director of Military Intelligence, and even more so when fully upheld by Cairo and Khartoum. Yet, it was not the only opinion available. In 1914, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, had dismissed the idea of an Arab rebellion in Mesopotamia as unrealistic, saying

'I regard the scheme as unlikely to materialise both owing to poor quality of leaders and because tribes and sheikhs concerned are too backward to pay attention to Young

341 *Ibid.* McMahon to F.O. 18 Oct. 1915.

342 L/P & S/10/523, p. 4024/1915. Minute by Hirtzel, 2 Nov. and Holderness, 6 Nov. 1915.

Arab propaganda'.³⁴³

Likewise, Lawrence, when serving in the Cairo Intelligence Department under Clayton, had prepared a report, early in 1915, that provided a 'penetrating analysis' of the geographical and socio-political setting in Syria based on personal knowledge and information amassed within the Department. Syria was described as a 'vividly coloured religious mosaic unchanged from the past'.

'Between town and town, village and village, family and family, creed and creed, exist intimate jealousies, sedulously fostered by the Ottomans to render a spontaneous union impossible'.³⁴⁴

Originating from a one time subordinate, it seems surprising the memorandum was not consulted before Clayton produced his own report. Had this been done, the contrary conclusions might have instigated more careful study before writing to Wingate, but in unseemly haste to accept the tall tales of Misri and Faruqi, it was overlooked. It also escaped what should have been the critical gaze of British Intelligence in Cairo, and Wingate in Khartoum. It will be remembered that the journalist Steevens, had written, with unconscious irony, of Wingate that he was able to discern from an Arab not only 'how much truth he has told, but exactly what truth he has suppressed'. Clearly, Wingate's powers deserted him during the al-Faruqi episode. One last opportunity to provide a much needed note of caution and introduce some balance into Clayton's report was also lost. Scrutiny by the Oriental Secretary, Ronald Storrs, during his frequent contact with Sharif Hussein and Abdullah, could have easily ascertained the substance of Faruqi and Misri claims. Instead, Storrs wrote to Fitzgerald, that the Arab question was at an acute stage and Sharif Hussein and Clayton feel

'their time has come to choose between us and Germany. The latter promises all things but is mistrusted: the Arabs have more confidence in, and would accept much less from us. I have thrashed this out at great length with Clayton'.³⁴⁵

Only a few months earlier, Storrs had caustically dismissed the Damascus Protocols, Sharif Hussein's land demands for an Arab Empire, as unrealistic, but now accepted and recommend even more unrealistic claims accompanied by threats from the Arab Secret Societies. Possibly his letter to Fitzgerald, two days before Clayton's 'Memorandum on the Young Arab Party', was intended to impress Kitchener, to whom Storrs owed his position, and confirm in the former's mind the necessity of Arab support to achieve his new Viceroyalty. Such artifice might have been expected from Storrs' tendency

343 F.O. 371/2140/46261. Viceroy to IO. 8 Dec. 1914.

344 F.O. 882/26. T. E. Lawrence, 'Syria, The Raw Material', p. 112. Arab Bureau Bulletin, no. 42, 15 Feb. 1917.

345 TNA 30/57/47. Storrs to Fitzgerald, 10 Oct. 1915.

toward flattery and intrigue. Once again, opinions of those with real insight into the socio-religious and political conditions in the Middle East were dispensed with in favour of Kitchener's placemen.

Kedourie asks the obvious question concerning Clayton's competence, but says little about the contributions of Storrs, Wingate, McMahon and Maxwell whose almost identical involvements enabled Kitchener to issue his 13 October instructions that induced Grey to issue an avowal of sympathy and support to the Arabs. These weighty figures in Cairo and Khartoum, each acolytes of Kitchener, appear to have made a concerted attempt to convince the Cabinet of the importance, indeed the imperative, of acting upon Arab demands and change British Strategy, which relied upon convincing France to relinquish her claim to Syria. It could be expected the French would question the nature, analysis and weight of intelligence found so compelling as to merit the British rescinding previous agreements. Already distinctly unimpressed with Cairo's favourable view of Sharif Hussein's ability and commitment to an Arab Revolt, it seems likely the French would have questioned Clayton's competence. Would it, therefore, be reasonable to portray Clayton as incompetent? Kedourie believes there was 'a desire to form and influence policy', which is evidenced by a 9 October letter from Clayton to Wingate, stating that when reporting the Faruqi interview to London, he would rub 'in the fact that if we definitely refuse to consider the aspirations of the Arabs, we are running a grave risk of throwing them into the arms of our enemies'.³⁴⁶ Kedourie regards this letter as 'some evidence' that Clayton was not guilty of 'simple incompetence', but his desire to influence policy obstructed dispassionate evaluation.³⁴⁷ Yet, the question of incompetence relates to Clayton's failure to check Faruqi's interrogation statement by third party enquiry and ensure facts supported his opinion. Since the operative expression used by Clayton is 'the fact', the letter might also be seen as a deliberate and predestined intent to mislead London. If so, it is only incompetence in the sense that Clayton failed to act in the appropriate manner, not that he did not know his job. Indeed, if he did seek to mislead London by citing the dire consequences that would result from failure to 'consider Arab aspirations' he must have had a purpose. Clearly, he could not have expected any Foreign Office enquiry because knowing his opinion was unsubstantiated casts doubt on writing in such alarmist terms. Whether this arose from his desire to influence policy, as Kedourie states, is unclear.³⁴⁸ Likewise, as one of Kitchener's acolytes, Clayton's opinions were routinely influential so it is difficult to measure, without better evidence, why Kedourie should think he was trying to influence policy when his views were already influential. Logically, to give substance to Kedourie's view, Clayton may not have felt sufficiently influential. The phrasing of the letter might

346 Wingate Papers, 135/4. Clayton to Wingate, 9 Oct. 1915.

347 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, p. 77.

348 *Ibid.*

make it more likely Clayton had willfully decided against any dispassionate evaluation of intelligence, which suggests he was competent enough to appreciate the need, but chose hyperbole to argue the Arab case. In reality, records are inadequate for any exact conclusion.

Neither Kedourie's nor Friedman's analyses of the messages emanating from Cairo and Khartoum have commented that uncritical acceptance of the fictions related by al-Misri and al-Faruqi, when relayed virtually unchanged under the imprimatur of such senior officials who considered themselves and were regarded as Arab experts, effectively argued the Arab case for them. Strangely, London, Khartoum and Cairo do not appear to have considered that al-Misri and al-Faruqi ought to have substantiated their arguments directly to the more sceptical officials in the India Office. If a powerful reason existed for accepting the Arab view, Cairo and Khartoum could have constructed and elucidated a case leading to the same conclusion from verifiable fact rather than a desire to make facts fit the argument. Interestingly, when Faruqi met Sykes, on 15 November 1915, he claimed the Allies had first to land in force on the Syrian coast before any Arab uprising.³⁴⁹ Thereby, contradicting his earlier claim that thousands of Arab troops were ready to desert the Ottoman army once Britain had agreed the territorial demands of the Damascus Protocols.³⁵⁰

Arguably, the strangest part of the Faruqi story, which should have alerted Clayton, was the statement of mistrust for the Germans as the reason for preferring England;

'the power on which they can rely'. 'We would sooner have a promise of half from England than of the whole from The Ottoman Empire and Germany'.³⁵¹

Trust in the Central Powers was clearly lacking, or so the British were intended to accept. In isolation the statement is innocuous, but when viewed against the requirement of an urgent British response misgivings should have been aroused. According to Faruqi, unless acceptance was quickly forthcoming the German offer of meeting Arab demands in full would be admitted. But what was the urgency? There was never any suggestion the war would come to a swift conclusion, which might have cost the Arabs the opportunity for realising their demands, and even al-Faruqi and al-Misri must have thought negotiations with the British were a possibility. So if mistrust of the Germans was the reason for these approaches to Cairo, the threat was needless. Was it possible the Arabs had another agenda? A clue to what this may have been is a letter to Kitchener from Aziz al-Misri, in early 1916, saying 'Britain could not achieve her objectives in the Arab speaking Middle East unless she was willing to leave its peoples free to exercise full and genuine independence'. Those for whom he spoke wanted from Britain 'non

349 Fromkin, *Peace*, pp. 186-7.

350 Kedourie, *Labyrinth*, pp. 77-8.

351 Friedman, *Promised Land*, pp. 21-2.

pas une domination ou un protectorat - neither British domination nor a British protectorate'.³⁵² Proper enquiry would have uncovered this important point.

Rival Chiefs

Limited resources for prosecuting the Ottoman war forced Britain to use diplomacy as a means of consolidating and extending her influence. Simultaneously attempting to weaken Ottoman authority in the Arabian Peninsula through Sharif Hussein, though he was not the only Arab potentate Britain cultivated. While Kitchener was negotiating with Sharif Hussein, the Acting British Resident in Aden, Lieutenant-Colonel H. F. Jacob, was discussing with India methods to persuade Imam Yehia to sever his Ottoman dependency.³⁵³ Jacob recommended bringing the Imam under Britain's wing by resolving his dispute with the Idrissi of Asir.³⁵⁴ Nervous of Muslim opinion, possible Arab union and commitments that might be difficult to fulfil, the India Office rejected intercession but favoured al-Idrissi receiving assurances over the sanctity of the Holy Places, security of ports under his control, a promise of post-war autonomy and providing any munitions that could be spared.³⁵⁵ Hardinge, plainly lukewarm, was troubled that insufficient knowledge of either Idrissi or the Imam meant their reaction to any British offer was unpredictable.³⁵⁶ Whitehall was anxious that Italian interests in the Asir-Yemen area

'could only be warned off by a locally strong British position, which under the circumstances, could be secured by diplomacy only'.³⁵⁷

From the British perspective, even if an alliance with Idrissi made little difference in practical terms to the war in Arabia, its benefit was that it created 'a deadlock where al-Idrissi balanced Yehia, [...] that was something gained'.³⁵⁸ Of greater importance to Britain was the treaty with ibn Sa'ud, which was signed in December 1915. Although ibn Sa'ud was thought unlikely to actively take sides against the Ottomans, this was indirectly achieved by his fighting their ally, ibn Rashid. Furthermore, Whitehall calculated that the prospect of a severely diminished Ottoman post war influence in Basra improved the desirability of securing relations with ibn Sa'ud who would control a considerable part of central Arabia and the Persian Gulf coast. Alignment with ibn Sa'ud was against the background of his hostility toward

352 TNA 30/57/48. Kitchener Papers, document RR8, 12 Sept. 1916.

353 Busch, Britain, *India and Arabs*, p. 229.

354 L/P&S/10. 3086/15, 3539/14 to Foreign Dept. Govt. of India (FSI), 11 Sept. 1914.

355 *Ibid*, Viceroy to Secretary of State for India (SSI) 7, 13 & 31 Oct. 1914

356 L/P&S/10. 3086/15, 3539/14, nos. 4510 & 4666/14. SSI to Viceroy and Viceroy to SSI, 22 & 29 Nov. 1914.

357 *Ibid*, nos. 4721, 4903 & 4959/14. Viceroy to SSI, 20 Dec. 1914.

358 Busch, Britain, *India and Arabs*, p. 264.

Sharif Hussein, and the rise of Arab nationalism. Control of Mecca and Medina encouraged McMahon and Wingate to advocate Sharif Hussein's claims to Arab leadership despite India's doubts over the likelihood of an Arab revolt.³⁵⁹ Cairo's support of Sharif Hussein, and India's of ibn Saud, meant Britain's strategy needed to balance Sharif Hussein's ambitions to be King of an Arab nation against the likelihood of a future conflict with ibn Sa'ud who saw the Emir as weak and undependable. When the Sharif eventually disposed of his allegiance to the Ottoman Empire, he found his sovereignty was effective only in the Hedjaz. Elsewhere he was merely one of several Arab rulers dividing the allegiance of the Arabian Peninsula's tribes and oases. Nevertheless, his title to leadership meant he assumed that his relations with the British

'together with his prestige as hereditary Guardian of the Holy Cities, made it difficult [...] to accept ibn Saud, the Imam, the Idrissi, [...] his equals in fact, as his peers in honorary rank'.³⁶⁰

Ineradicable rivalry between Sharif Hussein and ibn Sa'ud meant British strategy to bring the Arabian Peninsula into its sphere of influence and secure Suez from the South was at risk if their hostility became open conflict. If any confrontation was lost by the Sharif it might have encouraged him to press demands for a Hashemite Kingdom more vigorously, which would place British strategy in a considerable dilemma and allow the Emir to seek concessions from the Ottoman Government.³⁶¹ Importantly, India's negotiations with the Idrissi, Imam Yehia, and ibn Sa'ud consolidated British hold on the southern and coastal flanks of the Arabian Peninsula, but strategically were less significant than the lack of a treaty with Sharif Hussein just as nascent Arab Nationalism was becoming more prevalent that he could exploit to further his own ambitions. Speaking to Lawrence, the Sharif stated that his view of the Caliphate was not just to be the

'spiritual leader of Islam or the political sovereign of the Muslim world, but that the office should be combined with a small temporal sovereignty [...] to secure the holder of it the independence necessary to his position'.³⁶²

359 F.O. 371/2769. McMahon to Grey, 29 Feb. 1916.

360 CAB 24/68. British Commitments to Hussein, 29 Dec. 1916.

361 Busch, Britain, *India and Arabs*, p. 264.

362 CAB 24/68. Cites Hussein's conversation with Lawrence, 28 Jul. 1917.

Cannily the Emir was unspecific concerning the size of this temporal sovereignty, which the British ought to have clarified especially when the Emir's ambitions for a Hashemite kingdom were well known. Disputes between the Emirs of the Hedjaz and the Najd were reflected in disagreement over Cairo's and Simla's influence in Whitehall; Cairo favouring Sharif Hussein, and Simla ibn Sa'ud. Subsequently, Sir John Shuckburgh, in the India Office, commented that the two rivals found their respective champions in India and Egypt, and the whole controversy was reflected in a conflict of view between the two administrations; 'it is scarcely to be supposed', Shuckburgh said, that 'this aspect of the case or the possibility of turning it to advantage is lost upon the chieftains themselves'.³⁶³ From a strategic vantage point the question was whether ibn Sa'ud would achieve Arab independence as the British standard-bearer against an Ottoman allied Sharif of Mecca.³⁶⁴ Britain had, nevertheless, at least ensured Italy had been 'warned off in the Red Sea', and that treaties with ibn Sa'ud and the Idrissi made England firm on the Arabian seaboard.

Guarantees of Independence

British deliberations on the Arabs role resulted in Cairo issuing, on 4 December 1914, 'An Official Proclamation from the Government of Great Britain to the natives of Arabia and the Arab provinces', probably composed by Storrs, and published as 'a message of peace and consolation from the Empire of Great Britain to the natives of Arabia, Palestine, Syria, and Mesopotamia'. Extraordinarily, the Proclamation opened by stating 'The Government of Great Britain informs you' though there seems little evidence Whitehall knew of its existence. Amongst several singular statements it also declared that Britain had no plans to

'possess any part of your country neither in the form of conquest and possession nor [...] protection or occupation. She also guarantees [...] that her allies [...] will follow the same policy'.

Moreover, the Proclamation added Britain guaranteed that if the Arabs united to drive out the Ottomans

'Great Britain and her allies will recognise your perfect independence and will [...] defend you if the Ottomans or others wish to transgress against you and will help you to establish your independence [...] without any interference in your internal affairs'.

It also proclaimed that Great Britain had always defended the Caliphate 'even if it was one of conquest and necessity as the Ottoman Caliphate', and Britain and the Muslims knew the 'Caliphate is a right to

³⁶³ CAB 27/24. Shuckburgh memorandum, 22 Sept. 1918.

³⁶⁴ Busch, Britain, *India and Arabs*, p. 264.

the Quraish tribe [...], and [...] Arabs are more powerful than the Ottomans in [...] government'. The Proclamation considers the Arab nation as best fitted for the Caliphate and Arab countries the most suitable, and if the Arabs help themselves Great Britain will assist in establishing an Empire for the Caliphate to administer their countries and would not want help 'fighting the Ottomans or others, but she wishes you to work for yourselves and unite in serving your cause and interests'.³⁶⁵ Playing on Muslim fears, it warned the Arabs against German mercenaries' ill advice to Unionists, certain Arab anti-union propaganda and propaganda from enemies of Islam 'whose aim was to gain Arab countries and abolish Mohammedan rule, independence, shut the holy places and routes to the Haramayn' all proclaimed in mosques, public places or published in papers, and 'designed to create fear of British or allied intentions'. Also, if the Arabs were to declare independence and take the reins of Government into their own hands then the British would 'give up those places [...] at once'.³⁶⁶ Storrs promised that England would adhere to pledges in the Proclamation unlike German ones intended to deceive Muslims, which meant committing Britain and France to an impressive scope and range of undertakings, but without either government's knowledge. Arguably, without Kitchener's protection it is questionable whether such commitments could ever have been given. The Proclamation also asserted that Britain had always supported the Turkish Caliphate, which 'sets at ease the consciences of one hundred million Muslims of our loyal subjects'.³⁶⁷ In this context the statement appears a *non sequitur* that might have been intended to reassure India's Muslims, and thereby negate the revolt feared by the Government of India.³⁶⁸ Because the Arab part of the Ottoman Empire was largely pro-German, it is surprising that Storrs failed to realise Arab unity against their suzerains was implausible.³⁶⁹ Yet, although one part of the Proclamation required Arabs to unite against the Ottomans, later it states the British would not expect any help in fighting them, which could be understood to mean that creating an Arab Empire was entirely at the expense of Britain and France; bizarrely overlooked by Cairo. Moreover, in a desire for the Arabs to realise their importance to Storrs' and Kitchener's plans, they committed both Britain and France even though it was known that the latter had long regarded Syria as their sphere of influence. It would appear that Storrs simply expected France to settle for 'channels of profit and consolidation in West Africa'; rather reflecting his penchant for cynical intrigue.³⁷⁰

Cairo's ambition to extend the British Empire in the Middle East showed little perception of inherent difficulties from potential Arab reaction. Furthermore, little deliberation was given as to

365 F.O.141/710. Official Proclamation from Government of Great Britain, 4 Dec. 1914.

366 *Ibid.*

367 F.O.141/710. Official Proclamation from Government of Great Britain, 4 Dec. 1914.

368 French, *British Strategy*, p. 89.

369 F.O. 371/2140/66662. Jeddah despatch, 12 Sept. 1914, encl. with Mallet's, 9 October 1914.

370 Storrs Papers. Box II/3. Letter 22 Feb. 1915.

whether Arab military capability was of any significance to the Allies or, which might have arisen from anxiety to gain the commitment of Sharif Hussein, the cost and logistic difficulties of training and equipping an Arab army. Strategically, the combination of the Proclamation, the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, and the Damascus Protocols were prejudicial to Britain, and lack of clarity referring to Arabs, independence, and Arab countries, created significant opportunity for Sharif Hussein to express his own territorial desires, as with the Damascus Protocols, and force Whitehall to reject these claims at the risk of losing potential support. Cabinet interest in these negotiations was of great importance, but significant burdens of British industry and distractions of a European war might have detracted from a detailed appraisal of Middle East strategy. Grey was equally imprecise with his messages to Cairo. On 14 April 1915, McMahon received a telegram asking him to inform Wingate he was authorised to state 'His Majesty's Government will make it an essential condition of any terms of peace that the Arabian Peninsula and its Muslim Holy Places should remain in the hands of an independent Muslim state'. On 14 May 1914, Grey learnt the message had been communicated to Sharif Hussein with the qualification that though Britain expected him to become the Caliph she would not influence Muslim opinion, which 'would be harmful'.³⁷¹ This, of course, was exactly Britain's aim. Five days later Grey authorised McMahon and Wingate to make a public announcement about the Arabian Peninsula, the Holy Places and the Caliphate according to his 14 April telegram.³⁷² Alarmed, Sir Arthur Hirtzel, Secretary of the Political Department of the India Office, noted it was 'a fatal document'.³⁷³ Arabia, transformed by this latest embellishment into the Arabian Peninsula would become an independent sovereign Muslim State that included the Muslim Holy Places. Once issued, and widely distributed in the Hedjaz, the wording was embellished once again, and a promise given on behalf of 'The Government of His Majesty King of England and Emperor of India' that the government would not 'annex one foot of land or suffer any other Power to do so'; thereby guaranteeing Arab independence from all foreign control. Although the India Office was traditionally responsible for Arab affairs, copies of Kitchener's two original messages were not sent to them until 12 December 1914, at which point Hirtzel astringently commented, about Storrs' embellishments, they were 'a guarantee given to the Grand Sharif in writing without the authority of H.M.G. and it is a startling document'.³⁷⁴ So startling that in the spring and summer of 1915, Lord Curzon was still pointing out, in response to Wingate's insistence on the importance of Sharif Hussein, that Britain had to defeat the Ottomans; 'why prejudge the issue of the war to a people

371 F.O. 371/2486/60357. McMahon to Grey, 14 May 1914.

372 F.O. 371/2486/63383. Grey's tel. no. 262, 19 May 1914.

373 L/P & S/10/46. An independent sovereign Muslim State 6, p. 2315/15. 20 May 1914.

374 F.O. 371/1973/87396. Enclosed with Cheetham's despatch 204, 13 Dec. 1914.

who are at this moment fighting against us [...] and known to be in the pay of the Germans?'³⁷⁵ G. R. Clerk, the head of the War Department at the Foreign Office, when learning of the leaflet, on 30 June 1915, was equally dismayed, and noted that it 'was unfortunately open to a wide interpretation and certainly goes further than anything we have authorised'.³⁷⁶ Sir Arthur Nicholson, the Permanent Under-Secretary, wrote 'the proclamation or leaflet is not a happy production'.³⁷⁷ Grey, who had received a private letter postulating the points already incorporated in the messages from Cairo to Abdullah, on 11 November 1914, knew Kitchener's views. Especially unrealistic was Kitchener's stance that the French could be induced 'to allow the formation of an Arab state that would enable the new Caliphate to have sufficient revenue to exist on', which dismissed in a few words long standing French interest in Syria.³⁷⁸ British control over Syria was advocated from concern that any Russian presence at Constantinople, or French presence in the Levant, threatened the security of Egypt, the Suez Canal, and India.³⁷⁹ Lloyd George, aware of prior French demands for Alexandretta, suggested Haifa in Palestine as a suitable alternative, which Kitchener rejected as 'of no use to us whatsoever'.³⁸⁰ Grey, as Foreign Secretary, should have intervened decisively and set down British policy, but psychologically ill-equipped for war he was unable to countermand Kitchener. Though he had effectively primed the country for war, Grey saw no reason for pride in his efforts and when people ill advisedly congratulated him, replied: 'I hate war, I hate war'.³⁸¹ Grey saw his weakness as 'the position of a civilian in a War Council who feels that from lack of military knowledge and training this position imposed upon him, is not glorious'.³⁸² Hence, 'if in peace he failed to give military factors sufficient weight in war he allowed them to be supreme'.³⁸³ Grey's position was made more difficult by the lack of clear direction over how the government should accomplish its business during wartime. Questions concerning whether foreign policy still existed or whether it had been lost in the struggle, and the beginning and end of the Foreign Secretary's duties needed clarifying by the Council of War.³⁸⁴ In the vacuum of differences created by these senior cabinet members, small wonder Kitchener was able to control and influence strategy. Even the role of the full cabinet, meeting frequently throughout August, September and October 1914, was unclear. Lack of role clarity at this level was reflected throughout the Foreign Office. So reports of

375 Durham. University of Durham, Sudan Archive, Reginald Wingate Papers, file 134/5, 9 Jun. 1915.

376 F.O. 371/2486/87023. Minute by Clerk, 1 July 1915.

377 *Ibid.*

378 F.O. 800/102. Grey Papers, 1914.

379 Aaron S Klieman, 'Britain's War Aims in the Middle East in 1915' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (1968), (p. 241).

380 CAB 42/2. 3 Mar. 1915.

381 Keith Robbins, *Sir Edward Grey: a biography of Sir Edward Grey of Fallodon* (London: Cassel, 1971), pp. 298-9.

382 Grey, *Twenty-Five Years*, 2, p. 70.

383 Robbins, *Grey*, p. 301.

384 *Ibid.*

Nicholson who had continued as Permanent Under-Secretary, that claimed 'under his rule the office is in a state of chaos. There is no discipline and the tail waggles the dog' are unsurprising.³⁸⁵

According to Kedourie, the scheme of an Arab union presided over by an Arab Caliph under the 'aegis and protection of Great Britain' would have seemed cogent and feasible to British officials in Cairo and Khartoum.³⁸⁶ Kedourie does not explain that, primarily, the British imperial view was to put what they believed in Britain's interests first, which is why their actions seemed perfectly consistent, and is borne out by a letter from Wingate to Clayton that argues accepting the Sharif's proposals is harmless because British promises would vanish if an embryonic Arab State comes to nothing. If it

'becomes a reality, we have quite sufficient safeguards to control it, and [...]

it is in our power to erect such barriers as would effectively prevent its becoming the menace which the Indian Government appears to fear'.³⁸⁷

Hardly a ringing endorsement for successfully creating the *de facto* and *de jure* Arab State advocated six months earlier.

Controlling an Arab State raised the question of how to deal with any challenge to British authority, which could not be guaranteed would never occur, that might need force to resolve. Hence, the government would have had to decide, as it had in India, whether a permanent garrison was necessary. Nearly one thousand eight hundred years earlier the Roman Empire, the Power at the time in the Middle East, needed five years to crush the Bar Kochba revolt in Judea. No leap of imagination is required to realise that an Arab State, acting in its own interests, might have had the potential to cause the government major difficulty, which was one of Asquith's considerations in opposing the expansion of the British Empire.

Hussein's Territorial Demands

Towards the end of April 1915, having stopped in Damascus en route to Constantinople, Faisal, the Emir's third son, met agents of the Arab secret societies al-Fattat and al-Ahd. He informed them that, in his opinion, the Ottoman Empire was corrupt and daily becoming less fitting as the guardian of Islam. Concurrently, he objected to British involvement because of previous European Powers attempts to seize Ottoman territory, so any alternative was preferable to 'infidel domination'.³⁸⁸ Yet, despite lack of faith in Ottomans as spiritual leaders of Islam, Arab independence at 'any price' was out of the question, and his father's solution was to seek 'real guarantees' by which he meant from

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

³⁸⁶ Kedourie, *Chatham House*, p. 18.

³⁸⁷ Wingate Papers. File 135/5. Wingate to Clayton, 15 Nov. 1915.

³⁸⁸ Baker, *King Husain*, p. 60.

'one or other power'.³⁸⁹ Thus, the opportunity to ally himself with the British 'encouraged the Emir to rid Ottomanism of what he considered was its one serious defect, Unionist centralism'.³⁹⁰ Wingate's April 1915 letter to Sharif Hussein, regarding the Arabian Peninsula and its Mohammedan Holy Places also stated it was impossible to define how much territory should be included in the state.³⁹¹ Three months later, McMahon received boundary proposals for an independent Arab area covering all of Arabic speaking South-West Asia, with the exception of Aden, from Sharif Hussein; the timing may not have been altogether coincidental. Storrs, who translated the proposal, caustically, but wittily, observed over what became known as the Damascus Protocols, 'in matters of commerce the fault of the Dutch is offering too little and asking too much'. Storrs opined, Sharif Hussein

'opened his mouth and the British Government their purse a good deal too wide.

[...] We could not conceal from ourselves (and with difficulty from him) that his pretensions bordered upon the tragicomic'.³⁹²

This was a crafty and cynical effort to disassociate himself from any responsibility for the 1914 Proclamation that encouraged the Damascus Protocols. Indeed, it would have been surprising if the Arabs had not been heartened by Wingate's proposals when so little was being asked in return for such substantial British help for them to realise their aspirations, which was particularly unwise as British diplomats knew Sharif Hussein had no genuine claim or mandate to be King of the Arabs when neither the Lebanese Christians nor the Mesopotamian Shia would have acknowledged a Sunni ruler, and his enemies Ibn Sa'ud, the Idrissi and Imam Yehia would never have accepted his suzerainty.³⁹³ However, British military reverses at Gallipoli left the government fearful that Germany would exploit the reverse, reinforce the Ottomans and threaten Britain's position in the east.³⁹⁴ Accordingly, McMahon was told to pursue negotiations with the Arabs more vigorously even though British officials were sceptical over prospects for the success of Arab independence. Nonetheless, fear of losing Sharif Hussein's influence with the Muslims of India meant 'we were in the end committed far more deeply in bullion, munitions [...], and promises very hard to fulfill, than most of us had dreamed of in 1914', which was a major reason for Britain's continued 'obligation of raising and maintaining his prestige to the limit of the possible'.³⁹⁵ This might also be seen as the price of Kitchener and his acolytes' collective failure to assess the longer-term impact of their strategy, and similar failing with hyperbole in correspondence to

389 Baker, *King Husain*, p. 60.

390 Dawn, *Ottomanism*, p. 53.

391 F.O. 371/141/710. Wingate to F.O., 15 Apr. 1915.

392 Storrs, *Orientalism*, pp. 160-1.

393 *Ibid.*

394 F.O. 800/95. Minute by Nicholson, 20 Dec. 1915.

395 *Ibid.*

Sharif Hussein that might have encouraged him to believe England would not object to his elevation as King of the Arabs. Succinctly put by Hogarth, who believed he was born to rule though

`probably, not [...] much farther than his eyes can see. If he is ever to be King of an Arab Nation, that [...] must be a federation of sovereign states with local autonomy so [...] his shadowy suzerainty will stand [...] for a symbol of unity and accord'.³⁹⁶

Conclusion

Before the Great War, British interests in the Middle East were focused on Persia and Protectorates in Egypt and the Sudan. Whilst Grey's foreign policy was predicated on supporting the Ottoman Empire to guard British interests in the Middle East, there was little cause for concern other than constant rivalry with the French for Arab influence. This changed when the Ottomans allied themselves with the Central Powers, which risked the importance of Suez as a vital strategic link for transporting troops and material from India to Britain, and for the security of the Empire. Hence, the government was forced to formulate a new strategy to protect Suez, India, the Empire and the stability of Europe from a threat with potential to reduce Britain to a third rate power. Withdrawing troops from Europe to provide security required French agreement, which even if forthcoming might have been at an unacceptable cost. Similarly, protecting India, whilst simultaneously fighting a war on the scale of the Great War was unprecedented, and neither government nor industry was prepared. Contributing to unpreparedness was the received wisdom that war would only last a few months; adequately reflected in the appointment of Kitchener as War Minister rather than his obvious suitability. Once appointed, Kitchener preferred to rely on the opinions and actions of his staff in Cairo who were imperialist to a man. Kitchener's elevation to the War Ministry increased their importance, and brought them closer to the centre of power, which created a propitious opportunity for them to use influence that hinged on unquestioned perceptions of Kitchener and his staff as Arab experts to greatly extend Britain's Empire. These assumptions were unsafe, and incremented by Kitchener's notion of creating a new Viceroyalty with himself as Vice Royal. Meanwhile, the Cabinet, discerning an opening to extend the Empire after defeating the Ottomans, allowed Kitchener to dictate a strategy that allied Britain and Sharif Hussein by ambiguously offering an independent Arab Nation, and the Caliphate. An error of judgment partly caused by a belief that the post was the Islamic equivalent of a Medieval Pope, but, also, because of failure to recognise the Emir's strong ambition to become Caliph. Although careful not to commit themselves to any frontiers for an Arab Nation, British proclamations and messages were open to the interpretation that Britain supported an Arab Kingdom in the Arabian Peninsula led by the Sharif though

³⁹⁶ Cairo. Arab Bureau, No. 77, 27 Jan. 1918.

it was always made clear Arab assistance was required to eject the Ottomans. Privately, however, the British did not believe a united Arab nation would ever materialise, which meant promises made were intended as a war-time strategy to undermine the Ottomans, protect Suez and maintain British influence. British strategy was bedeviled by differences between the Indian Government's support of ibn Saud and Cairo's of Sharif Hussein. Additionally, little attention was given to the strategic wisdom of the Indian Government's treaties with ibn Sa'ud, the Idrissi and Imam Yehia that secured the Southern approaches to Suez although the threat was much less obvious than from the North. Failure to protect the North by a similar treaty with the Sharif of Mecca might have persuaded the unrealistic territorial demands in the Damascus Protocol, which the British failed to quash and thereby encouraged the Sharif to believe Whitehall had no objection to him creating what would have amounted to a Hashemite kingdom in Syria and Palestine.

Appointing Sir Henry McMahon as the High Commissioner was less than fortuitous. A stronger more capable man was needed to mitigate the influence of Ronald Storrs. Aware he was Kitchener's personal choice might have made it difficult getting an answer out of him or of getting him to write a minute [...].³⁹⁷ Once presented with the Damascus Protocols, he allowed himself to be drawn into protracted correspondence with Sharif Hussein that resulted in a vague statement of where the frontiers to a sovereign Arab Nation might in the future be drawn. Throughout his term as High Commissioner, the Hedjaz was the only subject that interested McMahon, and even then he showed 'a pitiful lack of control and coordination'.³⁹⁸ More than any other, the High Commissioner should have been a strong link in the chain from Kitchener to Sharif Hussein. McMahon failed as a leader, in resolution, with command of his brief, executive ability, and in understanding the Arabs. Kitchener was too casual with terminology, Storrs too keen on intrigue and too cynical, and Sharif Hussein a lot wlier than was probably realised. McMahon's job was to ensure that representations to the Arabs were in Britain's long-term interests, and not just the short-term exigencies of War. Ultimately, responsibility for McMahon's selection must lie with Asquith. In reality the Government was really fighting two Wars. Whilst simultaneously trying to restructure the country's 'working museum of industrial archaeology', it was also fighting a physical war in Europe. In this context Palestine may have assumed a secondary importance that allowed Kitchener to avoid or evade proper accountability. Nevertheless, it is surprising Kitchener's involvement with Foreign policy was tolerated when he was essential to directing military operations in Europe, and equipping British industry to invest in machinery able to produce the scale

397 MECA, Mervyn Herbert Papers, diaries, 26 Apr. 1915.

398 *Ibid.* Nov. 1916.

and range of armaments needed on the Western Front. Had Grey's health not affected his control of Foreign Policy and prevented him challenging Kitchener, it seems unlikely the latter would have been able to dabble in areas of policy and strategy where he was least capable. Asquith disagreed with Kitchener's opinion on the future of the Middle East fearing Britain would be unable to counter troubles arising from 'a hornet's nest of Arab tribes' after gaining Ottoman territory, and should have barred this happening.³⁹⁹

Promises of an independent Arab nation did not consider whether the Arabs were able to govern themselves, which was strategically important because of the undertakings given to Sharif Hussein. Even if Britain only intended an independent Arab nation to be little more than a façade, the cost and likelihood of success merited very careful evaluation and its lack created predictable difficulties with Sharif Hussein whose seventeen years of byzantine intrigues in Constantinople ensured he was no political novice, and strengthens the likelihood he deliberately chose to interpret British promises as accepting his desire to become King of the Arabs. Interviewed by *The Times*, in April 1920, Sharif Hussein's son, Abdullah, laid down four criteria for the Caliphate

'descent from the Quaraiish, possession of the *haramayn*, Mecca and Medina, holding Damascus and the routes from Mesopotamia to the *haramayn* and the Caliph's possession of adequate temporal power to maintain his position'.⁴⁰⁰

He considered the latter the most important. Hence, before encouraging notions of an independent Arab Nation and Caliphate, Kitchener and his acolytes ought first to have been sure they sufficiently appreciated the Emir's ambitions. Yet, whilst negotiating with the Sharif, Whitehall was also arranging which parts of a divided Ottoman Empire would be controlled by the French, and how Palestine could become a home for the Jews. This assumed that Britain, after the war, could continue untrammled in its imperialistic traditions. Once, though, the 'genie of the Arab Empire was set free, it could not be bottled again'.⁴⁰¹ Likewise, of longer term importance was the rise of Arab nationalism. Though no British authorities regarded the concept of an Arab nation, at least not in the sense of autonomous countries, with any seriousness this rather dismissed Arab perceptions, and the desire of the Sharif of Mecca to utilise nationalism to become ruler of an Arab kingdom in the Middle East that required French concessions over Syria that would have meant sacrificing erroneously long held ideas of endurance. There was also the issue of which Middle East territories would come under British and

399 Asquith, *Letters*, p. 510.

400 Teitelbaum, 'From Chieftaincy to Suzerainty', *MES*, 34, (pp. 115-6).

401 Karsh, 'Myth in the Desert', *MES*, 33, (p. 287).

French control once the vacuum created by the Ottoman Empire's demise was filled if chaos was to be avoided.

To avoid creating a post war power vacuum, Sir Mark Sykes was appointed to lead the British negotiating team attempting an agreement with the French intended to provide the protective umbrella under which Arab states could develop. Though, Lloyd George regarded the subsequent Sykes-Picot Agreement as an 'egregious and foolish document', and was quite irate Palestine was 'inconsiderately mutilated' by this 'carving knife' which was a crude hacking of the Holy Land', he conceded it was 'the first promise of national liberation given by the Allies [...]. It guaranteed freedom to the Arabs from the shores of the Red Sea to Damascus'.⁴⁰²

Hindsight is always useful. However, what tends to be overlooked regarding the Sykes-Picot Agreement is that in the winter of 1916 Mark Sykes, who had just returned from his peregrinations with the de Bunsen committee recommendations, was persuaded by Cairo of the imminence of an Arab Revolt based on Faruqi's fantasies. Though, of course, they only drew credence from Kitchener's ambitions for a new Viceroyalty. Yet, the focus of British negotiations with France for the Sykes-Picot agreement was to 'smooth the way for the Arabs and their revolt against Turkey'. Success hinged on French concessions in the Syrian hinterland, and the use of troops drawn from the western front. Thus, as Hirtzel stated, 'French consent was therefore doubly necessary', which resulted in weakening Britain's position over Palestine.⁴⁰³ Even so, there has to be a possibility that better terms for Palestine could have been secured had Britain not insisted on the inclusion of Homs, Hama, Aleppo and Damascus for the Arabs. Though insisting that allocating these towns to the Arabs was solely responsible for weakening the British position is a generalisation. Grey, opposed annexation and greater imperial responsibilities, and wrote to Cambon, saying 'the acceptance of the whole project (the Asia Minor Agreement) [...] will involve the abdication of considerable British interests'. Regardless, he felt Britain had to take her rightful share when partitioning the Ottoman Empire.⁴⁰⁴

The Foreign Office's major blunder was to believe in Arab military importance. William Reginald Hall, head of the Intelligence Department at the Admiralty, saw the Agreement as defective, if not superfluous, as it inflated Arab military value which, he observed, was the negative one of denying them to the enemy; 'force', he felt, 'is the best Arab propaganda' because successful military operations would be far more stimulating than paper assurances. Also, in his opinion, it was erroneous to assume the Arabs desired unity under Franco-British aegis, and argued

402 Lloyd George, *Truth about the Peace Treaties*, 2, p. 756.

403 F.O. 608/107, p. 2256. 'The French Claims in Syria', 14 Feb. 1919.

404 E. L. Woodward and R. Butler, eds. *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* First Series, vol. 4. (London: HMSO, 1952), p. 245.

'they will never be united [...]. What they aim at is independence, and this ambition might one day turn against their protectors'.⁴⁰⁵

Where the British military were concerned, another difficulty with the Agreement was that by giving all the large towns a self-supporting railway line and nearly all the cultivable area in Syria and Northern Mesopotamia, it favoured France more than Britain who only secured a naval base at Haifa and the right to a defence garrison.⁴⁰⁶ Hall thought 'this is a high price to pay' and assurances necessary to occupy parts of Palestine and Moab

'with exclusive control of all railways, and the right to have and to fortify a naval base on the Syrian Coast. It is a strategic necessity there should be railway communication between the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia through territory [...] under British influence. This is essential now for the safety of Mesopotamia, and in the future will be imperative to safeguard British interests [...] which will run [...] from Egypt through Palestine, Mesopotamia and Southern Persia to Baluchistan and India'.⁴⁰⁷

This perception of continuous territory from Egypt to Mesopotamia with Palestine as a link under British control, though unoriginal, was a vital military objective. Britain's problem and Grey's in particular, was how to resolve the undertakings given to France, and simultaneously satisfy Arab demands, yet gain the Syrian hinterland.

British strategy for Syria and Palestine had changed since 1914. Originally, the Government had no interest in Syria, but the activities of the 'Egyptian Party' forced a rethink. Under Sykes-Picot, France ostensibly surrendered interest in the Syrian hinterland, but the French 'Syrian Party' regarded Syria as its historic right and objected to ceding any territory. Nonetheless, rising Arab nationalism and unrest in Syria were antipathetic to Sharif Hussein's claims for an independent Arab nation, and Kitchener's ambitions for a new Viceroyalty. In an attempt to reconcile these different stances, Sir Mark Sykes was appointed to negotiate an accord with France over Syria. But, Grey's great reluctance for England to gain from the demise of the Ottoman Empire created an indecisiveness that left British staff in Syria and Palestine who opposed the Agreement with little clear or steady direction. Fundamental to this rethink were the recommendations of the de Bunsen committee established by Asquith to consider

405 F.O. 371/2767/938. Hall, 'Memorandum on Proposed Agreement with the French'. Encl. Hall to Nicolson, 12 Jan. 1916.

406 Friedman, *Question*, p. 110.

407 F.O. 371/2767/938. Hall, 'Memorandum on Proposed Agreement with the French'. Encl. Hall to Nicolson, 12 Jan. 1916.

territorial desiderata in anticipation of Ottoman defeat. Arguably, without these Sykes' task of gaining French agreement over which territories she could claim would have been more difficult.

Although the Sykes-Picot Agreement tried to reconcile these differences implementation was always going to be difficult. Ancient imperial British and French rivalries made the chances of a workable solution rather slim, and were complicated further when Sykes decided Zionism was the key to resolving the issues of Syria, Palestine and the Middle East. A man of extremes of opinion pitched into this particular maelstrom was unlikely to change French notions of their *mission civilisatrice*. Indeed, it was not until the Paris Peace Conference that the modern shape of the Middle East began to evolve, which owes much to Lloyd George's intransigence over Palestine and Clemenceau, by now the French Prime Minister, accepting the British Mandate. However, it would be unfair not to give Sykes his due. Unbounded enthusiasm and a passionate belief in a Middle East returned to its indigenous inhabitants encouraged, in his opinion, an agreement with France though neither Sykes nor Picot intended this as the final word. Nevertheless, it was a start and had the British Government managed its strategy with more consistency, and applied better control over its 'Egyptian Party, 'tensions might have been more easily resolved. But, neither Britain nor France anticipated any change to their imperialistic traditions. Both imagined extending their empires was just a question of how much territory, and how to control acquisitions. Those who doubted the wisdom of gaining more territory were simply disregarded.

Chapter 2: *Al Haaretz Asher Arecha (To a Land Which I Will Show You)*¹

Introduction

This chapter will show the origin and development of Zionism as a religious, political, and historical movement that aimed to restore the Jews to their 'Promised Land' where they could once again become an autonomous nation. Key to success was finding a sympathetic Power to support their quest and encouraging sufficient Jews to emigrate, particularly from Eastern Europe where they existed rather than lived. Thus, in discussing this history it is necessary to show how *Haskalah*, heralded by the French Revolution, changed Jewish existence in Eastern Europe from the late eighteenth century, and how these changes were integrated into Jewish tradition. Likewise, how established British sympathy for Jewish resettlement, which originated with Christian Zionism's roots in millenarianism, affected Zionist relations with the British Government and established common interest between 1902 and 1914, which fused with Weizmann's diplomacy led to the 1917 Balfour Declaration.

Also explored are Jews' ancient Biblical traditions of the 'Promised Land', 'Chosen People', and the 'Messianic Era' that were important for the British Government to recognise in order to avoid discord and clarify strategic objectives. Although many Zionists rejected much of the religious background that incorporated these traditions this largely resulted from a

revolt against rabbinical control of Jewish destiny. Early Zionists in Eastern Europe believed language, history, literature, culture and religion all illustrated a rich Jewish civilisation rather than Judaism being the sole determinant of their identity'.²

Great emphasis on Jews' historical rationale meant Zionism's challenge was to forge a link between the traditional and modern to preserve the 'glorious past'. Zionism's religious and secular founders hoped that returning to their ancestral home would renew national life, and create a fresh spiritual and social harmony incorporating traditional and modern values derived from constructing an independent Jewish society liberated from the oppressive divisions of the Diaspora. For most Zionists the role of tradition and religion in national life was of supreme importance. Even those who 'rebelled against religion' needed to deal with it because, unlike other European nationalist movements, Jewish nationalism's legitimacy was rooted in its religious character, which created a broad overlap between religious tradition and ethnic identity particularly as, until the end of the nineteenth century, most European Jews were religiously observant and accepted rabbinic authority. For Zionism to achieve its dream each camp needed the other especially as the Jewish intelligentsia from which

¹ Genesis 12. 1.

² Colin Shindler, *A History of Modern Israel*, (Cambridge: CUP, 2008), p. 12.

the Zionist leadership sprang were a relatively small group with limited influence. Hence, to gain adherents the movement had to cooperate with the traditional leadership.³

Zionism's roots lie in an identity crisis forged from the conflict between 'religion and life' created by the rise of the modern state in Eastern Europe, so by examining how the Biblical traditions of the 'Chosen People', the 'Promised Land', and the 'Messianic Era' merged with Zionism it is clear that the Balfour Declaration did not make British difficulties in Palestine any easier especially as the one thing most Jews could agree upon, whatever their political or religious values, was that they formed

'a distinctive element in the midst of nations amongst whom they dwell which cannot be assimilated. No equality of rank appears in the intercourse of nations with the Jews'.⁴

Jews in nineteenth century Russia were mainly Chasidim, pious, who only accepted a literal interpretation of Torah, and whose religious observance was based on the understanding that until their Creator ushered in the Messianic Era their suffering could not change. Although originating from Chasidic backgrounds many Jews, like Sokolow and Weizmann, did not wholly accept such strict and inflexible interpretation, but simply sought ways of fulfilling *mitzvot* that allowed them to determine their future and help them overcome persecution.⁵ Thus Zionism fulfilled two needs. On the one hand it maintained traditional religious beliefs and values, and on the other offered the hope of an autonomous future in their 'Promised Land'.⁶ Consequently, a viable British Protectorate based on Zionist migration had to resolve the conflict between Jewish nationalism's desire for autonomy and Arab nationalism's adherence to the land. Yet any prospect of satisfying the Arabs over Zionist plans was complicated by uncertainty over how to reconcile French claims to Palestine as part of Syria. Any lack of British clarity over Zionist demands would inhibit an even handed approach to both Arabs and Jews, which could only earn the enmity of both and augment the difficulty of the British task. Interwoven, was the nature of proposed British rule that meant deciding whether the administration was to be a united and later independent Palestinian state of Arabs and Jews, a Jewish homeland under British protection, or an independent Jewish state. British lack of precision on these issues would confound their strategy throughout the mandate period. Complicating the issue of governance was that Jewish desire for autonomy was never

3 Ehud Luz, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Zionism in the Early Zionist Movement, 1882-1904* (Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1988), p. x.

4 Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. x.

5 Mitzvot: Derived from the root *tzav*, command, in this sense it is a God given directive, a holy ordinance.

6 Walter Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken, 2003), pp. 482-3.

simply about asserting a right of return to their ancient home, but also reflected their long centuries of persecution and separation. Thus, the full significance of the Balfour Declaration is best appreciated by understanding Jews historical attachment to their 'Promised Land', from ancient times until the rise of Political Zionism in the latter half of the nineteenth-century, so that limitations with British understanding of Zionism become clearer. Examining the major historical experiences that shaped the character of the Jews and 'forged their identity and outlook' suggests that when granting the Balfour Declaration the Government may not have fully appreciated Jews could regard it as fulfilling their centuries old desire of restoration and autonomy.⁷ Central to restoration is Jews' self-belief as the 'Chosen People', for what they were chosen and why it is inextricably tied to the Land of Israel. Accordingly, it is important to trace the link between Biblical tradition and Zionism to show how the former is an intrinsic part of the latter and whether the British understood or anticipated the foreseeable difficulties of its issuance. Jews' belief that they are the 'Chosen People', an innate though often ill-absorbed part of Zionism, is important to recognising the significance and longevity of the Jewish claim to Palestine so it is seen as an indissoluble part of the Jewish identity and not simply the product of persecution.

Many Zionists either only partly accepted Orthodox religious concepts or rejected them, which meant reconciling Orthodox Zionism with the totally secular, called Free Jews, and those less Orthodox Zionists who continued observing Biblical traditions. Despite ideological divisions, all Zionists shared a strong common national experience created over many generations to bridge the divide, and each was sure they were contributing to a desired harmony.⁸

Part 1: The Emergence and Background to Zionism

The Chosen People

God's promise to Abraham that '*Yzurecha etain et-haaretz*, to your seed will I give this land', is understood by Jews as a promise establishing their right to Israel.⁹ Jews attachment to the Land is more profound than this promise for it also incorporates their Biblical traditions of God's 'Chosen People' to be an 'or l'goyim', 'a light to the nations', and spread His Torah. A role that meant receiving and proclaiming His

⁷ M. A. Tessler, *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), pp. 1-2.

⁸ Yaacov Malkin, 'The Faith of Secular Jews' in *The Blackwell Reader in Judaism* eds. J. Neusner & A. J. Alan Peck (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 394.6.

⁹ Genesis 12. 7.

¹⁰ BCE: Before the Common Era.

existence, transmitting His ordinances, and establishing a society and a 'polity where men and women will live in a fashion pleasing to the Creator'.¹⁰ Based on these ordinances, Jews developed an ethical Law Code, Talmud, between 200BCE and 500CE.¹¹ Roman destruction and expulsion, in 135CE, ended the physical connection with the land and forced the Jews, if they were to survive political and territorial devastation, to transform themselves and continue as 'a people inextricably interwoven with that of a religion'.¹² Key to change was the role of Talmud, which is the tangible sign of Jewish chosenness, which

'guides the community of believers [...] in matters of spirituality, worship, the conduct of its daily life, and in all aspects of its national collective behaviour'.¹³

Put concisely, attachment to the land derives from a God given sense of communal oneness 'with which to fulfill its Divinely ordained mission' that was reinforced by weekly readings from Torah and study of Talmud; constant reminders of an ancient and glorious past.¹⁴ Even though Jews had long since

'yielded up their existence as an actual state, as a practical entity, they could [...] not submit to total destruction – they did not cease to exist spiritually as a nation'.¹⁵

Incrementing their sense of isolation and separateness was that, lacking a characteristic national life, 'they are everywhere as guests [...]. The nations never have to deal with a Jewish nation, but always with Jews'.¹⁶

Rabbinic rule discouraged action because belief in a Messiah to bring about political resurrection

'and the religious assumption that we must have been patiently awaiting a punishment inflicted on us by God, caused us to abandon every care for our national liberty, for our unity and independence'.¹⁷

11 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 7.

12 James Parkes, *A History of the Jewish People* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 7.

13 Lewis, *Middle East*, p. 30.

14 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 14.

15 Leon Pinsker, *Road to Freedom*, (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975), p. 77

16 *Ibid*, p. 89.

17 *Ibid*.

Whereas other European nations had broken 'religious fetters that hampered political action' eschatological-messianic bonds persisted for the Jews whose devotion to a religious ideal, allowed to wither by other nations to compromise with the real world, sapped any tendency to explore a national existence or political position in favour of present survival.¹⁸ Traditional Jewish leaders in Eastern Europe were insulated from modernisation, which prevented change by sealing Jews off from the outside world, radicalised Jewish youth, and made religion seem negative.¹⁹ Two notable exceptions were Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer of Thon, in Prussia, and Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai of Sarajevo. The former, in 1862, published *Drishat Zion*, Seeking Zion, advocating the Redemption of Israel would not come as a sudden miracle, but would be gradually achieved from Jews own efforts. He taught that home and fortune should be renounced before the Messianic era for the sake of Zion, and that, religiously, it was highly meritorious to live in Palestine. Thus, he declared it the responsibility of the many wealthy and politically influential European Jews to initiate steps towards resettlement. Comparing the Jews, as a nation, to the Italian Risorgimento and the national struggles of Poles and Hungarians, he rhetorically asked why these people sacrifice their lives for the land of their fathers while Jews, like men bereft of strength and courage, do nothing?²⁰ Earlier, in 1845, Rabbi Alkalai had published *Raglei Hamevesar*, Messenger of Good Tidings. This interpretation of Biblical passages argued that the Redeemer would not suddenly arrive. First, preparation in Palestine was required, and Jews should begin the build up by returning.²¹ Similarly, breaking with the orthodox tradition that held Hebrew as a sacred tongue, he insisted that 'common use of Hebrew' was the key to establishing Jewish unity.²² Importantly, whilst holding fast to

18 Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. xii, cites Yitzhak Baer, 'Ha-Erekh ha-Himukhi shel ha-Historiyah ha-Yisraelit', *Gilyonot* 12 (1941), pp. 129-30

19 *Ibid*, p. xv.

20 Laqueur, *History*, p. 55.

21 *Ibid*.

22 *Ibid*.

traditional religious views in all other respects, their idea that Jews could initiate the Messianic Era by their own efforts was a radical departure and in that sense might be seen as proto-Zionist.

The Price of Exile

Without their own country, Jews in the Diaspora were at the mercy of Christian and Islamic rulers. Regarded by Islam as tolerated unbelievers, but protected as non-Muslim subjects in a Muslim state, their status was *dhimmi* or *ahl al-dhimma*, people of the pact that was symbolised by social restrictions recognising Islam's supremacy, dominance of the Muslim state, and the *jizya* tax unpaid by Muslims.²³ Despite protection, internal autonomy, and freedom of worship, *dhimmis* were never allowed to forget their inferiority.²⁴

Jewish fortunes in the Christian world were similar. Succeeding generations of Jews were held responsible for the death of Christ, and Christianity taught that only stubbornness and blindness prevented Jews accepting the truth of the Jewish scriptures prophesying Jesus as the Messiah whom Jews had first to accept for salvation at the end of days. Becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire, in 395, Christianity allowed clerics to combine political authority and spiritual interest to convert Jews by whatever means seemed desirable, which led to centuries of persecution and humiliation that was largely the situation for European Jews. Ludwig Borne, a satirical eighteenth-century Frankfurt publisher, ironically wrote of the 'loving protection of the authorities' who forbade Jews

`to leave their streets on Sundays, so drunks could not molest them; they were not permitted to marry before the age of twenty-five, so their offspring should be strong and healthy; [...]; and if a Jew crossed the street and a Christian citizen shouted `pay your respects, Jud', the Jew had to remove his hat, no doubt to strengthen feelings of love and respect between Christian and Jew'.²⁵

Often confined to Ghettos, Jews were an easy and identifiable target on who to impose all societal misfortune, or attack in periodic bouts of Christian conversionary fervour.²⁶ Persistent fears of violence were a common feature in Eastern Europe where Jews lived in insular communities under the decree of rabbis 'who rendered judgments based on canons of Hebrew Law considered authoritative', which made Jewish life a blend of fear

²³ Lewis, *Middle East*, p. 210.

²⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 10-12.

²⁵ Laqueur, *History*, pp. 3-4, cites Ludwig Borne.

²⁶ Tessler, *Conflict*, pp. 21-2.

and anxiety produced by the long history of hostility and 'the joyful expectation of eventual redemption from belief in the coming of the Messiah'.²⁷ This pervasive outlook was accepted by many as an

'essential part of Judaism itself rather than as the pattern of social organisation according to which Jews happened to be living at a particular historical moment'.²⁸

By the end of the eighteenth-century, this ethos had survived for over a thousand years, which yielded timelessness about ghetto life and acceptance that, since the canon of Talmudic interpretation was practically closed, Judaism was similarly timeless and made the barriers of Jewish life closer. There was no conception

'that there are more than one way to be a Jew or that there was more than one possibility before the people – at any rate until the Messiah came to change the present dispensation'.²⁹

Tradition in the Galut³⁰

Jewish law is divided into Torah and Talmud.³¹ Torah, teaching, is the Pentateuch where laws, *mitzvot*, history, literature and constitutional law are found. Talmud, the oral law written down, derives from *limmud*, to learn,³² and consists of *Mishnah* and *Gemara*, which are the first post-Biblical codifications of Jewish law. *Mishnah*, repetition, is a digest of Tannaitic teachings by Rabbis known as Tanna, a 'researcher', who wrote down the views of the teachers of the first two centuries CE. *Gemara*, completion, originally meant 'a text upon which commentary is made'.³³ *Mishnah's* dialectical legal code plus the commentaries and

27 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 24.

28 *Ibid*, p. 24.

29 David Vital, *Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p.44.

30 Galut: Exile. Usually refers to the Jews of Eastern Europe.

31 Simon Federbush, 'The Talmud' in *The Great Jewish Books and their Influence on History* eds., Samuel Caplan, and Harold U. Ribalow (London: Vision Press, 1952), p. 60.

32 Louis Jacobs, *Concise Companion to the Jewish Religion* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), p. 260.

33 *Ibid*, p. 68.

explanations in *Gemara* constitute *halakhah*, from the root *halakh*, 'to go or 'to walk'; the body of rabbinic law 'governing both the spiritual and civil life of the Jews'.³⁴ Commentaries, rabbinic laws and explanations are supported and expounded by 'post-Biblical literature of Jews spiritual and historical experience'.³⁵ Without this corpus, attaining a unique peoplehood and political consciousness would seem unlikely. Constituting Jews Divine destiny, these comprehensive laws enjoin a 'pattern of behaviour' that is not limited to obligations 'of ritual worship owed by men and women to their Creator or even to the standards of personal morality with which they must struggle [...] in order to find grace in God's eyes, and to be granted their reward in the kingdom of life after Death'.³⁶

Sociological aspects of Jewish life that form a 'unified system of public law, as well as a religious doctrine and a code of personal status, [...] indeed a constitution' are equally important.³⁷ Social cohesion produced by Torah and Talmud forged the Jews into a nation and assured this antique religion survived into a peoplehood. Synthesising tradition with modern culture involved removing the walls of religion that inhibited Zionism. Thus, liberating Hebrew from its purely religious use, when the daily language was Yiddish, strengthened the Zionist movement amongst East European Jewry and enabled a cultural renaissance to redeem Jews from isolation, provide historical-cultural continuity and permit outside influences into Jewish tradition.³⁸

³⁴ Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 14.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

The Promised Land

Roman expulsion in 135CE was devastating, and Jews came to believe that only God 'would in the future bring about an ingathering of the exiles and restore the children of Israel to the Promised Land'.³⁹ Restoration came to reflect the notion of God's 'larger plan for the salvation of mankind'⁴⁰ that required a continuing and unbreakable link, so 'the true home of the Jews remained Jerusalem and the Land of Israel; the idea of eventual return [...] was never abandoned'.⁴¹ Zionism, had to connect Jews political history, destroyed with the temple, and their existence in later centuries, so that by 'conscientious study of our history, we must foster the awareness that although [...] scattered among the nations, we have always presented ourselves as a national entity'⁴² Thus,

'there was no distinction between the spiritual and the physical Palestine in the minds of most Jews. Although separated from the Holy Land by thousands of miles, to most it seemed closer than the neighbouring Christian communities, [...] regarded with hostility and fear'.⁴³

Jewish teachings declare the Messiah will announce himself in *Eretz Y'Israel* once mankind has created the right environment, which will 'usher in a new era where all men will worship the true God'.⁴⁴ Orthodox and Secular Orthodox Zionists believed the Messiah will herald the restoration of Jewish national independence in the Holy Land. Three factors underlie Jewish Messianic belief, loss

'of national independence and the attendant deprivations, the will to live dominantly and triumphantly as a rehabilitated people in its national home, and the unfaltering faith in

39 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 16.

40 *Ibid.*

41 Guenter Lewy, *Religion and Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 91.

42 Almog, *Zionism and History*, pp. 46-7.

43 Don Peretz, *The Government and Politics of Israel* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979), p. 13.

44 Jacobs, *Concise Companion*, p. 152.

Divine justice by whose eternal canons the national restoration was infallibly prescribed'.⁴⁵ Unshakeable faith that Jews are a nation whom God would eventually restore to their land has sustained them since the Roman exile and, more importantly, is 'inextricably bound up' with Orthodox Zionism.⁴⁶ This Messianic ideal encapsulates Jews' political, religious and spiritual destiny to ensure bonds of their peoplehood are not 'simply a shared recollection of a Divinely inspired history, but a firmly held conviction of a future gathering as united as [...] in the past'. This faith accounts for the Jews' existence as a distinct people bound together from a solidarity that clings to taboos created to ensure emphasise and perpetuate exclusiveness.⁴⁷ Intrinsic to the Messianic Age is restoration of their 'Promised Land' to its 'rightful place of leadership among the nations when the entire world will be freed from wickedness and sin'.⁴⁸ Conviction that the 'Diaspora was but a preliminary expiation of communal sin, a preparation for the coming of the Messiah and the return of a transfigured Holy Land' led Jews to believe consummation belonged to a 'remote and indefinite future'.⁴⁹ Certainty that communal sin would be expiated at a time of their creator's choosing encouraged and shaped passivity towards exile into the modern era without affecting intense attachment to *Eretz Y'Israel*, or a deep sense of community. Most Jews believed it inappropriate 'to initiate steps toward the reconstruction of their national home',⁵⁰ which might have indicated loss of faith and unwillingness to wait for their Creator's plan to fructify and 'would rupture the covenant between God and the Jewish people, and make illogical and illegitimate any proclamations of Jewish nationhood or any assertion

45 Abba Hillel Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), p. 129.

46 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 19.

47 Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Mercury Books, 1950), p. 61.

48 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 17.

49 Cohn, *Pursuit*, p. 61.

50 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 19.

of a continuing tie between Diaspora Jewry and the Land of Israel'.⁵¹

Since most Jews believed that living in a fashion pleasing to their Creator would 'hasten the onset of the Messianic Age' they gave little thought to any kind of physical involvement with *Eretz Y'Israel*.⁵² Consequently, the link to Palestine for all its emotional and religious associations,

'did not change the praxis of Jewish Life in the Diaspora [...]. The belief in the Return to Zion never disappeared, but [...] on the whole Jews did not relate to the vision [...] in a more active way than most Christians viewed the Second Coming'.⁵³

Whilst patiently awaiting their Divine destiny to unfold, Jews considered themselves as a nation long before the concept of a nation state attained a practical realisation in Europe. Even in exile, Jews had a body of Law, corpus of works, and myths normally associated with a nation state.

Haskalah and Aliyah

In the late eighteenth century, Ghetto timelessness was changing. Revolutionary France accorded Jews the right to be treated as individuals rather than just a political community, which was confirmed by the French National Assembly, in 1789, '*aux Juifs comme nation nous ne donnons rien; aux Juifs come individus nous donnons tout* - nothing for the Jews as a nation; everything for the Jews as individuals'.⁵⁴ Hence, allowing Jews more equality encouraged them to become citizens of their host countries, and 'brought an invitation [...] to leave their ghettos and participate in national life on a basis of equality and full partnership'.⁵⁵

Publication of Moses Mendelssohn's *Biur* in the late eighteenth-century, a lucid commentary on the Pentateuch using modern language, is often regarded as the start of *haskalah*, enlightenment. Derived from *sekhel*, 'the intellect', it refers to the attraction of general knowledge, secular learning, and Western culture.⁵⁶

51 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 19.

52 *Ibid*, p. 20.

53 Cohn, *Pursuit*, p. 61.

54 Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews, the Origins of Modern anti-65 65 Semitism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), pp. 359-61.

55 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 25.

56 Jacobs, *Concise Companion*, p. 83.

Haskalah incorporated various ideologies debating issues of the day, so 'ideas current among its adherents were rarely formulated with consistency and often mutually exclusive'.⁵⁷ Common dissatisfaction with their condition united these disparate elements, and resulted in a general belief that change could come through establishing a 'cultural *modus vivendi* between Jewry and the world around it'.⁵⁸ Two types of Jews, *maskilim*, enlightened ones, embraced *haskalah*. Assimilationists, who strove to surrender their own identity completely and unconditionally as 'a program for the final solution of the Jewish question: let the Jew become like everybody else yielding up his claim to chosenness and being relieved of his role as scapegoat'.⁵⁹ Prominent exponents of this view was the Berlin *haskalah* in Lithuania who wanted 'enlightenment' to replace Judaism. Rather than cultivate Jewish knowledge for its own sake they embraced western civilization, but did not accept Jews had always been the target of hatred, and not its originators.⁶⁰ Convinced they suffered for the sins of east European Jews they abandoned tradition to 'imitate the gentiles', which they thought would ensure their acceptance as equals. For them, Jewish nationhood was a hurdle opposing assimilation that had to be rejected even at the cost of sowing hatred amongst dissenting Jews.⁶¹ Smolenskin, a Russian Jew who wrote on national feeling, was contemptuous. Describing the theory 'as strange and preposterous' he argued the doctrine meant destruction of the unifying principle of the Jews as a nation, and abandoning the hope of redemption. This route, he reasoned, could only lead to conversion because it required cutting out all Jewish roots to be indistinguishable from gentiles.⁶² By creating a false doctrine that claimed religion was the keystone

⁵⁷ Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, p. 43

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ Arthur Hertzberg, ed. *The Zionist Idea* (New York: Atheneum, 1969), pp. 26-7.

⁶⁰ Hertzberg, *Idea*, p. 154.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 154-5.

⁶² *Ibid.*

to the House of Israel, and ignoring all other traditions, the Berlin *haskalah* made assimilation easier by removing 'all the bonds of love and solidarity that unite our people'.⁶³ Yet, Smolenskin did not abrogate the idea of Western culture to unite Jewish and universal values. Jews, he thought, should seek knowledge and avoid superstition, but neither should they be ashamed of their origins; 'be like other peoples, proud of your literature, jealous of your self-respect'.⁶⁴

The second type rejected conversion and, opting for a more traditional approach to *haskalah*, wished Hebrew revived and modernised. They also wanted 'an integration of the Jews' authentic and esteemed civilisation on the one hand and the broader modern and scientific world culture of Europe on the other'.⁶⁵ Eliezer ben Yehudah, who 'sought to revive Hebrew' and laid the foundation for it to develop into 'the language of daily life among Jews in Palestine', was a typical example.⁶⁶ Prophetically, in the review *Dawn*, in 1880, he wrote 'the Hebrew language can only live if we revive the nation and return it to its fatherland'.⁶⁷ Ben Yehudah endorsed the Zionism that wanted Jews to become a 'modern, secular nation, and thus end their peculiar history'.⁶⁸ Cultural synthesis provided the foundations for a new and progressive Jewish identity 'appropriate to the demands and opportunities of a century committed to emancipation'; essential roots for the three types of Zionists described.⁶⁹

Despite these foundations further impetus was necessary for Zionism to become a recognised political movement. Beneficial influences of enlightenment were concomitant with a growing trend of bias against Jews in the Russian state that changed in response to the impact of modernity on Russian society.

63 Hertzberg, *Idea*, pp. 156-7.

64 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 33.

65 *Ibid* p. 31.

66 *Ibid*.

67 Shlomo Avineri, *The Making of Modern Zionism, The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), p. 86.

68 Hertzberg, *Idea*, p. 158.

69 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 31.

Laws promulgated in 1780, by Catherine II, compelled Jews to register as merchants or townspeople and accorded them full rights, privileges and responsibilities. Though giving Jews a unique status in Europe it incurred resentment among Christians long accustomed to viewing them as social inferiors, religious pariahs, and commercial rivals who 'needed no further opportunities'.⁷⁰ Jews attempts at exercising their rights, chiefly by participating in municipal self-government, caused offence and violence. In an effort to pacify the Christian population, Russian administrators attempted to reform the Jews by moving them into 'productive' activities like handicrafts, manufacturing, and agriculture to render them 'harmless' having first removed their rights and introduced special regulations confining them to their local areas. This became the principle restriction on Jewish life that limited them mainly to Eastern Poland and the unsettled frontier areas in the south, which, initially, were intended to protect the established mercantile elements in Russia's urban centres. Eventually, efforts to expel Jews from the countryside combined with these restrictions and evolved into the 'Pale of Jewish Settlement' that was the most destructive and enduring legal burden on Russian Jewry.⁷¹ Following the emancipation of Russian peasantry, in 1861, and the construction of railroads throughout the Russian Empire, economic conditions in the Pale rapidly deteriorated. Concurrently, the Jewish population was increasing. But, employment chances were shrinking so that traditional Jewish trades became obsolete. Meanwhile, urban competition increased and resulted in a 'huge pauperised mass of unskilled or semi-skilled Jewish labourers whose economic conditions steadily worsened'.⁷² Such competitive conditions produced a glut of craftsmen that weakened the quality of goods and services, and caused price-fixing and collusion that forced Jews to fully exploit Christians and resulted in Jewish commercial honesty becoming the first casualty.⁷³ Legislation, in the century before the pogroms, to reform the Pale of Settlement and make Jews more 'productive' was undermined by social and political cares, and a belief that Jewish unproductiveness, parasitism, and

70 J. D. Klier and S. Lambroza, *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russia* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992), p. 4.

71 Klier, and Lambroza, *Pogroms*, p. 5.

72 *Ibid*, p.6.

73 *Ibid*.

exploitation arose from their teachings, especially Talmud that, according to 'experts', preached undying enmity towards Gentiles and encouraged Jews to harm them in ways that avoided retribution because of the endless exploitative opportunities commerce yielded. Reformers wanted to 'purify' Jewish religious ideology through modification or elimination of Talmud, which they believed would lose Jews their antisocial separatist features and acquire Christian virtues through merging with the native population.⁷⁴ Hence, resurgent anti-Semitism following the assassination of Czar Alexander II, in 1881, and the 1894 Dreyfus trial in France, provided momentum for political Zionism to emerge.

Forging a Nation

Zionism was not a homogeneous movement. Broadly, it comprised three main streams. For the purpose of clarity, and avoidance of terms like 'nationalist' that only inadequately convey these streams, they are designated as Orthodox Zionists who upheld traditional religious observance based on Talmud and Torah. Secular Orthodox who followed traditional teachings whilst not necessarily observing them all, so were regarded by the Orthodox as 'having seceded from the Jewish community and no longer their co-religionists'.⁷⁵ One example of an Orthodox Zionist, also a Maskil, was Ozer Weizmann whose son, Chaim, was born in Motol, one of the 'most forlorn corners of the Pale of Settlement', in 1874.⁷⁶ Weizmann himself was a Secular Orthodox Zionist whose religious values meant Orthodox Zionists would have viewed him as a *mishnagdim* even though he considered himself 'a deeply religious man although not a strict observer of religious ritual'.⁷⁷ His principal collaborator, Nahum Sokolow, became Secretary General of the World Zionist Congress. Born into a Russian rabbinic family, Sokolow developed similar views before becoming a journalist and securing a large following amongst Jews of all political and religious affiliations from Free Jews to anti-Zionist Orthodox Jews.

Free Jews, the third stream, were those who, 'while preserving in his heart a certain fondness for the traditions and values of the Jewish religion', amongst whom were atheists, desired restoration and a secular state.⁷⁸ Many Jews sought a secular revolution, rebelled against the 'Book' and slavery to the 'Written Word', whilst some still wanted to preserve inner fidelity to values implied by the Holy Writings. These latter, though rejecting religion, wanted the Hebrew language revived and believed in a Hebrew nation resident in Palestine, rather than a Jewish nation, using Hebrew as its language. Zionism allowed

74 Klier, and Lambroza, *Pogroms*, pp. 6-7.

75 Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. 17, cites Dov Aryeh Friedman, 'Hazut Kashah', *Ha Maggid*, 30 (1885).

76 Norman Rose, *Chaim Weizmann – A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), p. 7.

77 Rose, *Chaim Weizmann*, p. 267. Mishnagdim: One opposed to Chassidic Judaism

78 Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. 18, cites Shemaryahu Levin, *Mered Neurim*, p. 29 (Tel Aviv, 1937).

'the rejection of religious Judaism to go all the way, without removing individual Jews from the camp of Israel or sundering his connection with the Jewish people'.⁷⁹

Smolenskin attempted a consensus that transcended religious institutions, yet preserved Jewish unity by arguing religion was one means to preserve the nation 'because the national covenant is the main thing, and religion can only strengthen this covenant'. Religious values, he felt, were useful to unite the Jews, but religious observance a purely private affair because faith is a matter for God, but national unity

'is given into the hands of men; those [...] not strict in observing Divine commandments, but faithful to the national covenant are [...] more dear [...] than those who are eager to perform the word of God, but in whose eyes the honour and happiness of their people are as nothing'.⁸⁰

As faith foundations crumbled, Jewish Law became a divisive factor and its authority no longer part of the new reality. Ultimately, Smolenskin considered, Torah should not simply be the property of the orthodox, and that it and national unanimity were foci to unite all Jews. Consequently, he identified redemption in *Eretz Y'Israel* as an idea that could unite the Jewish people. Though, it failed to clarify the relationship between religion and nationalism.

Zionists, wanting to alter the pattern of Jewish life in Czarist Russia were prepared to 'shatter existing historical continuity'. Secular Orthodox Jews emphasised revolution, whilst the Orthodox Jews espoused continuity, and the Free Jews, arguing Jews only led a shadowy existence in the diaspora, wanted a historical leap from ancient Israel to modern Zionism. Thus, the three themes of historical continuity, revolutionary change, and classical restoration influenced early Zionist thinkers and appeared in various combinations often contradicting each other. Because Zionists understood the Jewish condition as an inherent state of alienation within host nations, it could only alter once Jews became a proper nation.⁸¹

Zionism was the Jews' response to European anti-Semitism that permeated society and challenged the assumptions of both traditional and liberal Judaism, and proclaimed the Jews as a separate entity designed to become a modern nation. This questioned the generally accepted view Jews only constituted a religious community. Zionism held Jews were linked by a primordial bond stronger than any other loyalty, which altered their Biblical antecedents into a 'direct lineage and portrayed modern Jewry as [...] heirs of ancient Judea'.⁸²

⁷⁹ Luz, *Parallels Meet*, pp. xii-xiii.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 22, cites Perez Smolenskin, 'Derekh la-'Avor Golim', *Ma'amarim* 4 vols, (Jerusalem: 1927), 3, p. 169.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, pp. 210-12.

⁸² Shmuel Almog, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1987), p. 11.

Direct links to their land sustained belief as an ancient people, and also reinforced ideas of difference, unacceptability, and restoration, which might have contributed to a feeling of 'chosenness' even if not necessarily in the Biblical sense of conveying their Creator's precepts among the nations, but more in the sense of separateness within host communities arising from different traditions and values. Yet, in seeking to maintain and modernise traditional concepts, the ancient Jewish philosophies of the 'Chosen People' and 'Messianic Era' had to evolve and become acceptable to Zionist mores and ideas. Nachman Syrkin, a radical Zionist, postulated that by renewing political life Judaism's encounter with world culture would be fruitful, and its Universalist values would become mankind's common possession. It was in this sense that he perceived the Jews to be the 'Chosen People', which modernised the traditional concept of conveying their Creator's precepts to other nations.⁸³ Nevertheless, until the mid-nineteenth century the great majority of Jews were traditionalists.

Rise of Chovevi Zion

In 1881, the Government of Czar Alexander III blamed 'Jewish exploitation' for 'abnormal' relations between Jews and Christians. Pogroms that resulted from measures to deny opportunities to despoil Jews' Christian neighbours had a dramatic impact on the Jewish community, and raised doubts over the long-standing commitment of their intellectuals to integration or assimilation, which created another force for the emergence of Zionism.

Hitherto, though socially ostracised and economically disadvantaged, Russian Jews had somehow survived. Pogroms, state encouraged violence to distract the Russian peasantry from their government's economic failings, changed that order, and left Jews fearing for their lives. Most Jews' anxiety over the growing crisis was caused by an increasingly Judeophobic press, ancient prejudices viewing them as a serious and social problem, and their growing presence in the borderlands 'where Polish and Russian nationalism vied for cultural and political domination'.⁸⁴

Succeeding his father, Alexander II, in 1881, Alexander III halted the gradual reforms that had been blamed on Jewish influence by Russian authorities who perceived Jews as 'the primary bearers of revolutionary

83 Nachum Syrkin, 'The Jewish Problem and the Socialist-Jewish State' in Marie Syrkin, *Nachman Syrkin, Socialist Zionist* (New York: Herzl, 1961), pp. 284-5.

84 Klier and Lambroza, *Pogroms*, p. 4.

85 Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, p. 51.

infection, and the source of all that was vicious in modern capitalism'.⁸⁵ Konstantin Pobedonostsev, one of the Czar's most influential unofficial advisors, Chief Procurator of the Holy Synod, and lay director of the Orthodox Church, alleged Jews were at the 'root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide [...] people as a whole fall into financial slavery to them'.⁸⁶ Jews were blamed for bringing pogroms on themselves by 'their wickedness' and the allegation was used as a pretext for persistent anti-Jewish violence.⁸⁷ Pogroms had clearly demonstrated assimilation into mainstream European society changed nothing. Moshe Leib Lilienblum, one of the great contributors to Zionist thought, wrote in 1883, civilization and progress fail to

'to eradicate anti-Semitic views, but indirectly [...] help them along [...] Anti-Semitism is the shadow of our new and fine contemporary civilisation; it will not more do away with anti-Semitism than light will destroy the shadow it casts'.⁸⁸

Born into a Lithuanian Orthodox family, he divided Talmud into *Torah she-min ha-shamyim* and *Torah she-be'al peh*, Laws made in heaven and man made verbal law respectively. He argued rules of religious rite in the latter needed reforming to rejoin Life and Law because Jewish national survival depended on the binding of Jews to religious observance.⁸⁹ In 1869, Lilienblum moved to Odessa where the tsarist authorities, unlike elsewhere in Russia where organizing country-wide Zionist societies was banned, permitted a Zionist committee exclusively composed of local residents. *Maskilim* in the Odessa society enjoyed an absolute majority that led to Orthodox loss of influence and, by the 1890s, changed the balance of power within the leadership, so fewer Orthodox Rabbis were attracted.⁹⁰ Odessa was an important centre for the Russian *haskalah* with a liberal, highly secular, and educated Jewish community. From 1881, violent attacks against this community caused Lilienblum to change his opinion from previously seeing anti-Semitism as a vestige of an earlier era, grounded in lack of education and religious fanaticism, to believing persecution was 'an act of state' that would continue.⁹¹ Attacks also increased interest in modern political Zionism that encouraged Jews, like Lilienblum, to conclude emigration to *Eretz Y'Israel* where they would not be strangers, and 'to which we have an historic right [...] not lost with our lost rule of the country', was the only solution.⁹² In 1882, he wrote

'let us gather our dispersed from Eastern Europe and go to our land with rejoicing; whoever is on the side of God and His people, let him say, "I am for Zion"'.⁹³

⁸⁶ Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, pp. 51, 59.

⁸⁷ Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 40.

⁸⁸ Avineri, *Modern Zionism*, p. 69.

⁸⁹ Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, pp. 112-3.

⁹⁰ Luz, *Parallels Meet*, pp. 65-6.

⁹¹ Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, p. 114. Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 39.

⁹² Klier and Lambroza, *Pogroms*, p. 67.

⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 67.

By the end of the nineteenth-century 40% of Russian Jewry was completely dependent on charity.⁹⁴ Jewish existence in Bessarabian towns and houses was described by Ussarov, the Governor of Bessarabia, in second-rate and back streets,

'huddled together in nooks and lanes amidst shocking poverty. They toil hard for a living so scanty that a rusty herring and a slice of onion is considered the tip-top of luxury and prosperity'.⁹⁵

Against this background, some Russian Jews began studying migration to Palestine and, influenced by the writings of Lilienblum and Pinsker, founded *Chovevi Zion*, Lovers of Zion.⁹⁶ One of the first and most active groups was *Bilu* an acronym for '*bet Ya'acov lechu ve nelcha*, O' House of Jacob, come ye, and let us go.'⁹⁷ Founded, in 1881, by high school and university students they dispatched a small group of settlers to Palestine; among the first of five waves of Jewish immigration known as *aliya*, ascent, between 1882 and 1903. The *Biluim* manifesto, issued in 1882,

'articulated the ideological themes that were coming together to produce and define modern [...] Zionism' by pronouncing that Jews should separate themselves physically from the world of Europe, and by reaffirming the God-given link between the Jewish people and *Eretz Y'Israel*.⁹⁸

Uniting a mixture of Biblical and Political Zionist themes, the manifesto addressed 'our brothers and sisters in Exile!' Quoting part of a verse from Mishnah 'if I help not myself, who will help me?'⁹⁹ Briefly relating Jews fate since the Roman Exile it describes the glory of the Temple that vanished in fire, kings and chieftains who exchanged their crowns and diadems for the chains of exile, and the spark of fire that engirdled the Temple which

'kept us alive while the towers of our enemies crumbled into dust, and this spark leapt into celestial flame and shed light on the heroes of our race and inspired them to endure the horror of the dance of death and the tortures of the autos-da-fé'

This spark was rekindled as a pillar of fire on the road to Zion, and recalled when rejecting assimilation's false dreams to remind Jews that

'they were a nation possessing a wise religion, a law, a constitution, a celestial Temple whose wall is [...] a silent witness to the glories of the past. [...]. We

94 Klier and Lambroza, *Pogroms*, p. 284.

95 Sachar, Howard, M., *The Course of Modern Jewish History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), p. 284.

96 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 42.

97 Isaiah 2, 5.

98 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 43.

99 Mishnah, *Pirkei Avot*, 1, 14. Hillel used to say: 'If, I am not for myself who will be for me? Yet, if I am for myself only, what am I? And if not now, when?'

want a home in our country. It was given to us by the mercy of God, it is ours
as registered in the archives of history'.¹⁰⁰

Combining memories of the destruction of the second Temple, in 70CE, and their subsequent suffering and persecution in exile with a reminder of the pillar of fire that guided them in the Sinai desert during forty years wandering under Moses, the Manifesto rejected assimilation as a solution, and believed only autonomy would free them from oppression. Moreover, invoking the abode of 'our Great One' represented their Creator's will for a 'reaffirmation of Jewish nationhood, the inevitability of anti-Semitism, and a need for the Jews to separate themselves physically from the world of Europe'.¹⁰¹ This manifesto not only established the link with ancient Israel, it also connects the past, present, and future to demonstrate how Jewish nationalism looks to its past as an essential condition for the future. Arguably, *Biluim's* real value was that it proved, despite the difficulties, that Jews could be re-established in *Eretz Y'Israel*, and build new settlements. *Biluim's* leaders were not international figures, little recognised beyond the Russian and Polish ghettos, but to Jews in the Pale of Settlement their publications showed migration to Palestine and a better life was possible. These publications were not just rhetoric because the nature of Jewish existence in Palestine was being questioned, which brought a dawning realisation that return would once again mean becoming 'agricultural people'.¹⁰² More importantly, *Chovevi Zion* challenged the notion of 'the inevitable order of things until the onset of the Messianic Era'.¹⁰³ By deciding their own future, *Chovevi Zion* created a model for subsequent generations and their disassociation of religion from social conditions was a considerable and essential change to the status quo. Despite lack of international recognition and influence, *Biluim's* contribution to Zionism was important and might be best summed up as 'preparation for immigration to Palestine'.¹⁰⁴ Change has to start somewhere and, notwithstanding the hardship of Jewish existence in the Pale of Settlement, by 1890 '*Chovevi Zion* had collected money, offered courses in Hebrew, Jewish history, and even provided instruction in self-defence'.¹⁰⁵ Establishing the first Kibbutz these Jews brought traditional celebrations of Jewish festivals, national holidays, personal milestones, and seasonal and agricultural events commemorated in Biblical times.¹⁰⁶ Whilst the kind of vigour needed to propel Zionism onto the world stage as a political movement was unavailable to *Chovevi Zion*, *Biluim* were possibly an underrated start.

100 Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin, *The Israel Arab Reader* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 3-4.

101 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 43.

102 *Ibid*, p. 42.

103 *Ibid*, p. 24.

104 *Ibid*, p. 42.

105 *Ibid*.

106 Amnon Rubinstein, 'Return of the Kibbutzim' *Jerusalem Post*, 10 Jul. 2007.

Huge challenges faced the first *aliyah* with both the journey to and conditions in *Eretz Y'Israel*. These *chalutzim*, pioneers, were unaware that four centuries of Ottoman rule had transformed a land 'once flowing with milk and honey' to a ravaged, blighted, and depopulated one where

'rains eroded its hillsides; its valleys became malarial gullies, its forests disappeared and its remaining vegetation was exposed to the goats, which the Bedouin nomads drove unhindered through the land'.¹⁰⁷

Herzl and the Rise of Anti-Semitism

By the end of the nineteenth-century anti-Semitism was reappearing in Western Europe. One of the most notorious instances, with unforeseen and unintended consequences for Zionism, Britain, and the Middle East, was the 1894 Dreyfus trial. Captain Alfred Dreyfus was a Jewish French Army officer whose wrongful imprisonment for treason proved a *cause célèbre* for those believing him innocent. From the 1890's, anti-Semitism in France was manifested by anti-Semitic activities, writings, and publications such as Edouard Drumont's two volume *La France Juive* (Jewish France), in 1886. Against a background of 'economic uncertainty and social dislocation' fuelled by the collapse of the Panama Canal Investment Company that left thousands of shareholders ruined, *La France Juive* 'railed against the financial ruin Jews were supposed to have inflicted'.¹⁰⁸ Ironically, this antagonism became the ultimate catalyst for Zionism.

Stationed in Paris, from 1891, as the correspondent for the *Neue Freie Presse*, Theodore Herzl found it a pivotal experience.¹⁰⁹ French anti-Semitism began to preoccupy Herzl and, influenced by Pinsker's *Auto-Emancipation*, he became more aware of anti-Semitism in his native Austria and published, in 1896, a booklet entitled *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) that commenced the process of establishing a sovereign Jewish nation. As an emancipated and assimilated Jew his booklet embracing Zionism is particularly significant, and its first sentence links ancient Israel to Zionism,

'the idea which I have developed in this pamphlet is an ancient one. It is the restoration of the

Jewish state [...] I have discovered neither the Jewish situation [...], nor the means to remedy it'.¹¹⁰

To friends and colleagues dismay, Herzl believed assimilation had not worked and anti-Semitism continued.¹¹¹

His concern for Europe's Jews did not exonerate them from 'certain asocial qualities' after being forced into ghettos that left them embodying the 'characteristics of men who had served a long prison term unjustly'.¹¹²

Emancipation on paper, Herzl recognised, differed from psychological emancipation unchanged from the

107 Sachar, *Modern Jewish History*, p. 308.

108 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 44.

109 Laqueur, *History*, p. 88.

110 *Ibid*, p. 84 cites *Der Judenstaat*.

111 *Ibid*, pp. 84-6.

112 *Ibid*, p. 88.

conditions of the ghetto, and he realised that both Jews and non-Jews had to psychologically adjust to altered conditions. Unoptimistically, he wrote in *Der Judenstaat* that it would be foolish to deny the Jewish question still existed since civilised nations appear unable to remove this

'misplaced piece of medievalism [...]. The Jewish question persists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers. Wherever it does not exist, it is brought in by Jewish immigrants [...]

I consider the Jewish question neither a social nor a religious one, [...]. It is a national question'.¹¹³

Deciding assimilation was no solution, he identified the Jewish dilemma as basically the same wherever they lived. Despite sincere efforts to merge with national communities, and seeking only to preserve the

'faith of our fathers' for which they were prepared to make the same sacrifices as their fellow citizens, they were treated as aliens although contributing to their host nation's wealth, arts and sciences. Hence, 'in the world as it now is [...] might takes precedence over right. It is without avail, therefore, for us to be loyal patriots'.¹¹⁴

Herzl proposed a Jewish state, which would be achieved by large numbers of Jews leaving Europe for Palestine. His mobilising tactic, to overcome arguments against an exodus, was to emphasise the varieties of persecution inflicted on Europe's Jews.¹¹⁵ Jews were attacked everywhere, their middle classes were exposed, attempts were made to obstruct their businesses, daily life was becoming intolerable, and Princes and governments failed to protect them.¹¹⁶ Such views disturbed many middle class Jews who had 'assumed that integration was both possible and desirable, fashioning their lives accordingly'.¹¹⁷ Herzl was convinced only a Jewish state would alleviate persecution and encourage the world to realise discrimination was unenlightened. Moreover, a Jewish state 'would take its place in the community of nations and in this collective sense the Jews would indeed become integrated into the modern world order'.¹¹⁸ His dream would take another five decades to attain. During the intervening years there was never any certainty it would or could be. Hence, the Balfour Declaration, proclaimed two decades after publishing *Der Judenstaat*, was an important signpost towards recreating a Jewish National Home. Notwithstanding, unlike Pinsker, Lilienblum, Smolenskin and others, Herzl's idea of the character of a Jewish State was secular rather than one 'uniquely and authentically Jewish that addressed the spiritual as well as the temporal needs of the Jews'.¹¹⁹ Ahad Ha'am, the pen name of Asher Ginzberg, born in Skvira near Kiev in 1856, Weizmann's teacher, editor of *hashiloah*, 'The Stream'

113 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 84.

114 *Ibid*, p. 86.

115 *Ibid*, p. 91.

116 Hertzberg, *Zionist Idea*, p. 29.

117 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 46.

118 *Ibid*.

119 *Ibid*, p. 46.

then the leading Hebrew cultural periodical, in his 1889 essay, *lo seh haderech*, 'The Wrong Way', wrote a sharp critique of the Zionism of the times, stating *Chovevi Zion* had ill-prepared settlers for life in Palestine. Moreover, Herzl's political Zionism was unappealing and failed to inspire its followers with a 'deeper attachment to national life and a more ardent desire for national well-being'.¹²⁰ To Ahad Ha'am, political Zionism was bound to fail because the majority of Jews could not emigrate, and it could not reduce anti-Semitism. He also doubted whether Jewish national consciousness and self-esteem were sufficient to create a healthy body for the Jewish national spirit. Western political Zionism may, he felt, be good for assimilated western Jews, but in Eastern Europe the 'political tendency could only harm the moral ideal of spiritual Zionism'.¹²¹ Despite his seeming religious inspiration, Ahad Ha'am was an agnostic who saw religion as one form of the national culture and though, in the past, Judaism, 'the national creative power', expressed itself through religion he was uncertain this could continue.¹²² Many Jews would remain outside Palestine, so a Jewish State required a national ethic with which all Jews could identify that would enhance the ethical and spiritual well-being of Jewish life in the *Diaspora*. This vision he encapsulated in 'The Jewish State and the Jewish Problem', published in 1897, proclaiming 'the spirit of Judaism will go forth to the great circumference, [...], to breathe new life [...] and preserve their unity'.¹²³ Ahad Ha'am's preoccupation 'with the rescue of Judaism as a spiritual entity' caused Zionists and non-Zionists to suspect that a Jewish majority in *Eretz Y'Israel* was not an essential condition. Particularly, as he failed to explain how his ideas of Jewish culture could be reconciled with political, social, and economic factors.¹²⁴ As an agnostic, his concept of Zionism was unappealing to orthodox Jews who wished to revive their Commonwealth in the 'Promised Land'. Neither did he recognise that the rapidly deteriorating Jewish situation in Russia conflicted with his idea of a Jewish state to become the spiritual centre of world Jewry. Probably, because he opposed political Zionism, and power politics in general, it prevented him realising Jews had to engage in both.¹²⁵ Ahad Ha'am tried to chart a middle course between the 'traditionalists and the inheritors of messianism and assimilation' that he regarded as dangerous extremes in favour of a Cultural Zionism that was widespread and universal rather than unique to Jews.¹²⁶

Herzl's vision and tireless approach to international leaders established Zionism as a political movement. However, on his death, in 1904, there was no certainty Zionism could transform itself into an

120 Laqueur, *History*, p. 163.

121 *Ibid.*

122 *Ibid.*, p. 164.

123 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 51.

124 Laqueur, *History* p. 165.

125 *Ibid.*, pp. 165-6.

126 Tessler, *Conflict*, pp. 51-2.

embryo government for a Jewish state, or even a state for the Jews. Although the British were sympathetic to Jewish restoration this did not mean autonomy, and sympathy was insufficient for the scale of return that was needed to generate the momentum required to persuade the world a Jewish state should be created. It was Chaim Weizmann's ability to know how to converse with the British establishment that propelled a political movement into an embryo state. First, support would be needed from a heavyweight statesman.

Part II: Britain's Interest in Palestine to 1914

Belief in Restoration

From Abraham's calling to the speeches of the last Prophets, Jews connection with the Land of Israel is unchanged. Nowhere else can they realise their Messianic dreams. No tyranny they endured detached the link between Jews and their land regarded as Promised by God.¹²⁷

St. Augustine, in *De Civitate Dei*, espoused that the Church embodied the millennial kingdom of God. This notion fructified in Britain after Henry VIII broke with Rome and made the bible the main religious guide, so that by the end of Elizabeth I's reign it was 'the book of books for Englishmen'. English Protestants, who were becoming more conscious of establishing the Kingdom of God, a belief shared by the Puritans, were strongly affected by Jews ascent from slavery to freedom and struggle for their Promised Land. Puritans, fighting for the Kingdom of God, identified themselves with the ancient Israelites and arrogated God's pledge to the Jews from profound faith in His Word, which created a particular Christian-Jewish Messianism, the doctrine of the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine.¹²⁸

Against a background of devastating war in Europe and religious upheaval in Britain, Menasseh ben Israel, the Rabbi of Amsterdam's Jewish Community and outstanding exponent of eschatology, published, in 1650, *The Hope of Israel* that Puritans linked to Jewish Messianic concepts. Linking theological speculation with politics seemed the answer of Israel to the call of the rising Restoration Movement, and expectations of the approaching Millennium.¹²⁹ Attempting to prove that Jewish restoration was inseparable from Jews readmission to England, the Rabbi claimed that God's conditions were the coming of the Messiah and the Kingdom of Heaven. Dedicated to the High Court, the Parliament of England, and the Council of State, *The Hope of Israel* left no doubt it was intended as a state document and theological treatise.¹³⁰ These ideas fitted well with Puritan eschatology based on Romans 9-11 interpreted to mean that Jewish conversion would bring the world future blessing. Thomas Brightman, described as the father of the Restoration doctrine was

127 Franz Kobler, *The Vision Was There: A History of the British Movement for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine* (London: Lincolns-Praeger, 1956), pp. 11-12.

128 Kobler, *Vision*, pp. 12-14.

129 *Ibid*, p. 25.

130 *Ibid*, p. 27.

convinced, in a view that influenced government circles, 'the rebirth of a Christian Israelite nation' would become 'the centre of a Christian world'.¹³¹

In 1621, Sir Henry Finch, a lawyer and Member of Parliament, published *The Worlds Great Restoration*. This held that Biblical references to Israel, Judah, Zion, and Jerusalem meant Jacob's descendants would conquer their foes, return to their land, and erect the church of Judah. Finch's conviction that Jews would eventually accept Christianity was widespread enough to be written into the *Westminster Larger Confession* and the 1658 Congregationalist 'Savoy Declaration'. During the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the writings and preaching of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitfield spread belief that the gospel would triumph against evil and bring God's blessings of peace and prosperity after the conversion of nations, including Israel, when Christ would return. Edwards speculated that the papacy would expire in 1866, Islam would be ruined, the Jews converted and heathens brought to Jesus; a notion which developed the concept of Palestine as the rightful Jewish homeland. Subsequently a proto-Zionist movement emerged, protected by the Protestant Church, convinced the Bible promised that Jews, once converted, would return to Palestine prior to the *Parousia*.¹³²

Expelled from England by Edward I, in 1290, permission to return was granted by Cromwell, in 1656, telling the Barebones Parliament, on 4 July 1653, that 'it may be as some think God will bring the Jews home to their station from the isles of the sea, and answer their expectations from the depths of the sea'.¹³³ Three factors inspired successful readmission of the Jews to England,

'sympathy for Hebraic idealism as expressed in the Bible, [...]; an intense sympathy and even shame for Jewish sufferings [...]; and a fervid hope for the fulfilment of the prophecy in the restoration of the Jews to Palestine, and of Palestine to the Jews'.¹³⁴

Manasseh ben Israel who came to London in October 1655 with his historic pamphlet, *The Humble Address*, which appealed for Jews to be granted resettlement permission in England to enjoy freedom of religion, self-administration, and the right to engage in commerce and trade, shared these beliefs. Addressed to Cromwell, it also specified the economic benefit Jewish merchants would bring and the Messianic argument linking return with readmission to England.¹³⁵ English protagonists for readmission culminated with the Whitehall

131 Stephen Sizer, *Christian Zionism Road-map to Armageddon?* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2004), pp. 28-9.

132 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, p. 29.

133 David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews in England, 1603-1655* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 190.

134 Alan Edelstein, *An Unacknowledged Harmony: Philosemitism and the Survival of European Jewry* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981), p. 143.

135 Kobler, *Vision*, p. 28.

Conference, on December 4, 1655. But it was the war against Spain, the following year, that gained Marranos, Jewish refugees from the Spanish Inquisition, legal standing to remain in Britain, and prepared the way for readmission as an important step towards restoration.¹³⁶ As the Restoration Movement developed, new notions took hold. In 1674 Samuel Lee, a notable scholar, published *Israel Redux or the Restoration of Israel*, stating God's covenant with Abraham was a legal charter. Literally interpreting the divine promise given to Abraham, 'to your seeds will I give this land', he accepted the boundaries therein as the frontiers of a future Jewish realm. Some Restorationists held that lack of a State was the principal cause of the undignified condition Jews had fallen into, which temporal power would redeem. Thomas Burnet, the Master of Charterhouse, held an important place in restorationism. His publication, *Appendix de Futura Judaeorum Restauratione*, rejected politics as the means to provoke millenarian changes, but presented restoration as the apogee of an inevitable world process that increased confidence in its eventuality so that it was accepted by later generations.¹³⁷ David Hartley, the physician and philosopher, in *On Man, His Frame, His Duty and His Expectations*, published in 1749, agreed that Jews constituted a united political entity and shared a common destiny. He perceived them as a living organism bound by a common language and extensive correspondence that he discerned as important links to restoration, and to which he added Jewish Messianic hopes. Jews, to him, were an historic force not merely a religious phenomenon. Hartley's intervention gained Jews general political interest that led to an anonymous tract, published in 1753, urging England to accomplish restoration. Some, whilst conceding the general point of restoration, believed Jews must first convert and accept that Jesus, contrary to all Jewish instruction, was the Messiah already come.¹³⁸

Between 1804 and 1830 the fall of several European monarchies caused widespread unrest in England, and seemed to signal the end of the world encapsulated by Napoleon's words 'remember that I march followed by the god of fortune and the god of war'.¹³⁹ Napoleon's conquests aimed to produce a confederated Europe of vassal monarchies, which led to predictions that ten European kingdoms, including England, were about to revive the Holy Roman Empire and form a United States of Europe in partnership with the Antichrist.¹⁴⁰ During his Syrian campaign, which sought to defeat the Ottomans, cut Britain off from her empire, and recreate Alexander the Great's Empire from France to India, Napoleon calculated that France could gain Jewish sympathy by appealing to them as the Rightful Heirs of Palestine and a unique nation deprived of their ancestral lands by thousands of years of conquest and tyranny, and offered French

136 Kobler, *Vision*, pp. 29-31.

137 *Ibid*, pp. 35-7.

138 *Ibid*, pp. 39-42.

139 John Abbot, *The History of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper, 1883), p. 121.

140 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, pp. 30-1.

patrimony. European Powers increasing preoccupation with the 'Eastern Question', where Britain and Prussia sided with the Sultan against Napoleon to prevent France gaining control of Egypt, led to a British military expedition in Palestine.¹⁴¹ These upheavals reawakened interest in prophecies that Napoleon would be destroyed in Palestine by a Western alliance of England and Russia. England was 'the great maritime power'¹⁴² interpreted as Isaiah's 'Isles of the Sea'¹⁴³ and 'ships of Tarshish'. Russia, England's ally, was seen as the book of Daniel's 'king of the North'.¹⁴⁴ Archaeological discoveries in Palestine increased interest, and were enhanced by a number of travelogues and military adventures that fired popular imagination that was partly shaped by a growing literary romanticism infatuated with the Hebrew world, and encouraged by important literary figures such as Browning, Byron, Walter Scott, Wordsworth and George Elliot. The latter attended synagogue services, held dialogues with Rabbis, and her book, *Daniel Deronda*, was subsequently described as 'the first truly Zionist novel in the history of non-Jewish fiction', and 'the apex of non-Jewish Zionism in the literary field'.¹⁴⁵ *Daniel Deronda*, published in 1876, idealised the Jews and envisioned a Jewish Commonwealth restored in Palestine, but discarded the notion that Jewish emancipation was linked to or dependent on conversion.¹⁴⁶ Elliot reasoned instead that 'restoration had become identified with a return to the Hebrew heritage'.¹⁴⁷ Further impetus came with the founding of the Palestine Exploration Fund, in 1865, by a group of distinguished British academics and clergymen amongst whom were James Finn, the Consul in Jerusalem, Lord Shaftesbury and Arthur Stanley, the Dean of Westminster Abbey. Though the Fund aimed to promote research into history, geology, archaeology, topography, the natural sciences of Biblical Palestine and the Levant, Finn and Shaftesbury, both avid Restorationists, primarily regarded it as a vehicle for achieving Jewish restoration.¹⁴⁸ During the nineteenth century, literal reading of the Bible and premillennial eschatology convinced many the Jews would soon convert and be restored to their land, which would herald the *Parousia*. Dispensationalists taught that the church was finished, and expected a future Jewish 'dispensation' that interpreted Christ's prediction 'not a single stone here will be left on another: everything will be destroyed' as foreshadowing the Church's demise.¹⁴⁹ Conferences, annually held between 1826 and 1830, decided Christian dispensationalism would not pass into the millennial state through greater gospel preaching, but would be terminated by

141 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, p. 56.

142 Isaiah 60: 9.

143 Isaiah 24:15.

144 Daniel 11: 6-12.

145 Regina Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed, 1983), p. 46.

146 Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, London: Jewish Chronicle, 1983) p. 15.

147 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 46.

148 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, p. 39.

149 Mathew 24.

judgements that destroyed it and restored Jews.¹⁵⁰ In 1839, a collective memorandum was sent, 'on behalf of many who wait for the redemption of Israel', to all 'Protestant Powers of North of Europe and America' to persuade sovereigns to fulfil God's will; the first instance of active intervention rather than pious anticipation. Foremost amongst those demanding intervention was Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who 'loved God's ancient people', its land and language, and was convinced that upheavals in the Middle East precipitated Jewish religious and national restoration.¹⁵¹ Shaftesbury, whose widowed mother was married to Palmerston, was an officer in the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews founded, in 1808, to hasten the *Parousia* by encouraging Jewish conversion. In January 1839, the *Quarterly Review* reported that a Christian who had recently travelled in Poland

'informs us that several thousand Jews in that country, and of Russia, have [...] bound themselves by an oath that, as soon as the way is open for them to go up to Jerusalem, they will immediately go'.¹⁵²

Shaftesbury opined protecting the Jews would gain Britain an advantage over France for control of the Near East, provide better access to India, and open new commercial markets for British products. Hence, in an article entitled 'State and Restoration of the Jews', he opposed various countries attempts to assimilate Jews and treated restoration as a religious, political, historical, and philosophical issue, and advocated a Jewish national homeland under Turkish rule with British protection. This could create a new era for the Jews who would be restored as the husbandmen of Judea and Galilee. Admittedly, his plea for restoration only came because Jews were 'a stiff-necked, dark hearted people, sunk in moral degradation, obduracy, and ignorance of the Gospel [...] they are not only worthy of salvation but vital to Christianity's hope of salvation'.¹⁵³

Palmerston, during the 1840s, attempted to influence the Sublime Porte into restoring the Jews so as to shore up the Sultan's power against invasion by Mehmet Ali, the ruler of Egypt, fearing any compromise to the integrity of the Ottoman Empire would offer 'France the encouragement to realise her dreams of a Great Arab State under Egyptian leadership and French patronage'.¹⁵⁴ Simultaneous to British, in August 1840, expulsion of Mehmet Ali from Syria, Palmerston wrote to Lord Ponsonby, British Ambassador in Constantinople, stating the Sultan should shield Jews because their great wealth would be advantageous if they were to return with his sanction and protection, and also 'the promulgation of some law in their favour would spread a friendly disposition [...] among the Jews in Europe' that would be advantageous 'to the Sultan's cause' and 'create

150 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, pp. 41-7.

151 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, p. 59.

152 Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, 1919), 1, p. 124, cites Lord Shaftesbury's diaries.

153 Earl of Shaftesbury, 'State and Prospects of the Jews' in *Quarterly Review*, 63 (1839), pp. 166-92.

154 Sanders, Ronald, *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983), p. 3.

useful friends in many countries by a single edict'.¹⁵⁵ Without losing its fundamental religious character the Reformation Movement, by 1845, had evolved into a fabric of cultural and political realisations that were no longer the prerogative of the visionaries and devout. Two people who represented opposing strands of the Movement were the former high colonial officials Edward Ledwich Mitford and Colonel Galwer. Mitford advocated a Jewish State, and Galwer methodical colonisation of Palestine within the Ottoman Empire. Mitford, in 1845, attributed qualities of 'fortitude and perseverance' to the Jews, and demanded a State 'under the guardianship of Great Britain'. He was also the first Restorationist to emphasise the problems of the indigenous population, which he suggested resolved by inducing the Ottoman Government to make Moslem inhabitants

'fall back upon the extensive and partially cultivated countries of Asia Minor, where they might be put in possession of tracts and allocations, [...] far superior in value to those abandoned'.¹⁵⁶

Galwer proposed establishing a colony funded by Christian nations under British Protection as compensation for previous wrongs to the Jews, and in gratitude for their spiritual values. The second half of the nineteenth-century saw mounting interest in Jews acquiring land in Palestine. In 1857, James Finn, the British Consul in Jerusalem, wrote to Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, advocating Jewish immigration because 'their affections are centred here', and recommended they be allowed to settle 'as agriculturists on the land'.¹⁵⁷ Shaftesbury, writing to Lord Clarendon, said 'the Sultan should be moved to issue a Firman granting [...] Jewish people power to hold land in Syria or any part of the Ottoman dominions'.¹⁵⁸ Politically, the turning points for the Restoration Movement were George Elliot's calling for a new Ezra, and Benjamin Disraeli's sixteen page essay proclaiming Restoration throughout Europe, the creation of a Jewish State under British protection, and asking whether, within fifty years, Palestine could be developed into 'a compact Jewish people one million strong speaking one language and animated by one spirit'.¹⁵⁹ Other major contributors were Edward Cazalet, an industrialist and politically astute economist with a thorough knowledge of the Near East, and Laurence Oliphant a diplomat, author, Member of Parliament and *Times* correspondent during the Franco-Prussian War. Cazalet advocated that a British Protectorate over Syria would more effectively protect Suez than annexing Egypt, and Britain's great historic task was to allow Jews to return to their country. In the *Land of Gilead*, published in 1882, Oliphant proposed that resettlement to fulfil Biblical prophecy should be split from

155 F.O. 78/390/134. Palmerston to Ponsonby, 11 Aug. 1840.

156 Kobler, *Vision*, pp. 76-7 cites Edward Mitford, *An Appeal in Behalf of the Jewish Nation in connection with British policy in the Levant* (London: Hatchard, 1845).

157 F.O. 78/1294. Finn to Clarendon, 15 Sept. 1857.

158 E. Hodder, *The Life and Works of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury*, 3 vols (London: Cassell, 1886), p. 493 cites Shaftesbury's diary, 17 May 1854.

159 Kobler, *Vision*, p. 95.

the political value, which should be evaluated on its own merits.¹⁶⁰ Another advocate for British defence was the Rev. George Nugee. In a letter to the British Ambassador at Constantinople, G. J. Goschen, stated that the Ottoman Empire should be compensated for giving up Palestine to allow reform by an 'Anglo-Jewish West Asian Company' that would cooperate with Jewish settlers until they themselves could complete the work and form an administration. Subsequently, in a pamphlet entitled *England and the Jews: their Destiny and her Duty*, published in 1881, he claimed British destiny was to enable restoration.¹⁶¹ By the last decade of the nineteenth century restoration seemed imminent. John William Dawson, the naturalist, believed the land would be more important in the future, and his publication, *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, in 1888, observed that a once flourishing land was now settled by 'motley tribes who have held it as mere tenants at will, and who were only brief landowners evidently waiting for those entitled to permanent possession of the soil'.¹⁶² In 1892, Colonel Conder, formerly Oliphant's collaborator, gave a paper to the London branch of *Chovevi Zion*. Entitled *Eastern Palestine* it advised Jews to acquire the largest available tract of land east of the Jordan for the Jews of Eastern Europe who seemed 'the future element of prosperous colonisation'. In 1894 Lord Roseberry, Salisbury's successor as Foreign Minister, gave his support.¹⁶³

Largely due to William Hechler, an Anglican priest and chaplain to the British Embassy at Vienna, in 1885, many senior British political figures supported the idea of a Zionist State. Indeed, two years before Herzl published *Der Judenstaat*, Hechler's booklet, *The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine*, spoke of the need to restore the Jews according to Old Testament prophecy.¹⁶⁴ Hechler, the son of missionaries, advocated a shift in Christian Zionist thinking from restoration dependent on Jewish conversion to it being Christian destiny.¹⁶⁵ Not only did Christians accept Britain's role in restoration as vital, so did Herzl who, in a letter to the Chairman of the Jewish Conference, in February 1898, said that when he first entered the Zionist Movement

'my eyes were directed towards England because I saw that by reason of the general situation of things there it was the Archimedean point where the lever could be applied'.¹⁶⁶

Restoration and Early Twentieth Century British Politicians

Originating from his Scottish upbringing, particularly the Old Testament training received from his mother, Arthur Balfour's interest in the Jews and their history resulted in an 'intellectual admiration and sympathy' for Jewish philosophy and culture that shaped his view over modern Jewish problems; of immense

160 Kobler, *Vision*, pp. 100-2.

161 *Ibid*, p. 104.

162 *Ibid*, pp. 106-7 cites Sir William Dawson, *Modern Science in Bible Lands* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1888).

163 *Ibid*, p. 107.

164 Sharif, *Non-Jewish Zionism*, p. 71.

165 Sizer, *Christian Zionism*, pp. 60-1.

166 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 18.

importance to him because he believed the Christian religion and civilisation owed Judaism an 'immeasurable debt shamefully ill repaid'.¹⁶⁷ His words convey the Christian Zionist concept of restoration to their 'Promised Land' by those uniquely qualified to organise God's Commonwealth, but say nothing about conversion either subsequent to restoration or prior. His understanding of Jews responsibility for their Commonwealth omitted the notion of living according to Divinely given precepts, the Jews' obligation to create God's Commonwealth, and thence spread His precepts abroad, or that many Jews would have understood restoration as approved by their Creator. Likewise, there seemed little cognisance that the Messianic Era requires that Jews accept their charge as the 'Chosen People' to live according to and disseminate God's precepts, which logically they could only achieve through self-government. These were important concepts to Orthodox Zionists who anticipated that restoration would restore ancient religious precepts. Secular Orthodox Zionists would have been less concerned, and Free Jews only wanted autonomy. Also, Balfour had not identified that although man 'has the right and the duty to apply his labour to the land' it does not belong to him, but was loaned by God.¹⁶⁸ If it could not belong to the Jews, it was unlikely they would accept any other nation had any rights especially Christian or Moslem nations after centuries of persecution. Despite difficulties, Balfour believed Zionism would be both long lasting and mitigate the tragedy that prevented Jews organising a social commonwealth as a refuge from oppression. He shared this opinion with Lloyd George who recalled that

'I was taught in school far more about the history of the Jews than about the history of my own land. I could tell you all the Kings of Israel. But I doubt whether I could have named half a dozen of the Kings of England [...]'.¹⁶⁹

Lloyd George was born into a patriotic élite Welsh family that provided leaders at a time of Welsh national revival and an egalitarian and democratic culture.¹⁷⁰ In Lloyd George's time, national revival gained impetus from the Church and the religious instincts of an emotional and visionary people whose outlet was Non-Conformism. Religion provided a common inspiration for Welsh poetry and music nurtured, as was Welsh political talent, by the Chapel where the style of preaching had a natural application that mobilised dissent against the mostly Anglican Welsh gentry, and was aided by the zeal and non-conformism of Protestant clergy helping to educate the Welsh speaking rural classes into greater literacy, which established an important link between non-conformism and education. Amongst the tenets of Welsh Chapel tradition, faith in the restoration of Jews to their rightful home was to that of Christian Zionists and Balfour. It was this background of a distinct culture and history that was probably the catalyst to an instinctive sympathy for Zionism that persuaded Lloyd

¹⁶⁷ Blanche Dugdale, *Arthur Balfour First Earl of Balfour*, 2 vols (London: Hutchinson, 1936), I, p. 433.

¹⁶⁸ Epstein, *Babylonian Talmud*, (London: Jews College, 1961), p. 13.

¹⁶⁹ David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, 4 vols (Boston: Little, Brown, 1934) 2, p. 720.

¹⁷⁰ John Grigg, *The Young Lloyd George* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), pp. 20-1.

George to respond positively to his understanding of Jews desire for autonomy. Amongst other politicians, Leopold Amery, the War Cabinet Secretary, wrote that

‘England was the only country where the desire of the Jews to return to their ancient homeland has always been regarded as a natural aspiration which ought not to be denied’.¹⁷¹

Whilst an interesting sentiment, Amery appeared not to realise that *tanach*, from where concepts of the ‘Chosen People’ and ‘Promised Land’ originate, does not cover all Jewish teaching.¹⁷² British officials did not realise that Jews perceived themselves as a nation, and not just a people originating from a specific part of the world to which Britain now deemed their return apposite.

PART III: Common Interests - Zionists and the British, 1906-1914

Gaining British Support: Weizmann and Promoting Zionism

Chaim Weizmann arrived in Britain, in the summer of 1904, to find a ‘divided listless and ineffective’ organisation riddled with personal rivalries.¹⁷³ Importantly for Weizmann, the English Zionist Federation (EZF) and the World Zionist Organisation (WZO), he was able to secure an appointment, on 25 July, with Earl Percy, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Sir Clement Hill, the Superintendent of the African Protectorates, to discuss Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe, and the attractiveness of a home in East Africa.¹⁷⁴ From both Zionist and British strategic viewpoints, the meetings were significant and established that Foreign Office officials took Zionism seriously enough to accept opposition to East Africa. Notably, Hill stated that ‘If I were Jewish, I would oppose such a project absolutely. For a Zionist there is nothing to look for in Africa’.¹⁷⁵ More significantly, Percy did not believe it in British interests to proceed with a scheme that the ‘Jews were lukewarm about’.¹⁷⁶ Lacking either British or Zionist approval for East Africa, Palestine was the only alternative, which left resettlement firmly recognised in Foreign Office minds especially when Weizmann created the impression of speaking ‘in the name of a larger body’ and approached British officials ‘in a self-assured and unapologetic manner’.¹⁷⁷ It is more than conceivable this early foray into ‘high diplomacy’ provided the basic entrée into British Government circles.¹⁷⁸ By 1906, doubtless amazed by this ‘high diplomacy’, Weizmann’s influence among some sections of the EZF was formidable and earned his election as vice president.

171 L. S. Amery, *My Political Life, War and Peace: 1914-1929*, 3 vols (London: Hutchinson, 1953), 2, p. 115.

172 Tanach: Acronym, for Torah, Neviim, and Ketuvim.

173 Jehuda Reinharz, *Zionist Leader: The Making of a Zionist Leader* (Oxford: OUP, 1985), pp. 216-7.

174 Reinharz, *Zionist Leader*, pp. 220-1.

175 *Ibid*, p. 220.

176 *Ibid*, p. 221.

177 *Ibid*.

178 *Ibid*, p. 222.

Now in an established position, on 9 January 1906 in the closing days of the general election campaign, Weizmann met Arthur Balfour, who had resigned as Prime Minister, on 4 December 1905, and was 'fighting to retain his seat in the East Division of Manchester'.¹⁷⁹ Their next meeting was thirteen years later, so the most logical reason for the meeting is that Balfour, attacked as an anti-Semite because of his support for the 1905 Aliens Act that prevented Jewish refugees from Russian pogroms seeking asylum in England, 'intended to send a signal to the Jewish community by meeting a man who was regarded as having influence among a segment of that community'.¹⁸⁰ Meeting Weizmann might also have sent out the subliminal message that Balfour's government 'were interested in the solution of the Jewish Problem'.¹⁸¹ He may also have calculated it would increase support for Conservative candidates in constituencies with large Jewish electorates.¹⁸² Gaining sympathy for the Zionist movement first meant convincing the British of its political substance, which is clear from Balfour's reference to a conversation with a distinguished British Jew who had appealed for government intervention on behalf of Romania's community. Balfour noted the profound difference between

'you and him! For you do not beg for anything – you demand; and people must listen

[...], because you are a statesman speaking for a powerful moral Government'.¹⁸³

Since Zionist aspirations had to accord with British strategic interests, it was axiomatic that sponsorship of a Jewish home in Palestine had to be of greater importance to Britain than France or Russia. Weizmann, in a letter to Israel Zangwill before first meeting Samuel, on 10 December 1914, showed he recognized this and stated his conviction that Palestine would fall within England's sphere after the war because it was a natural extension of Egypt, and the barrier separating Suez from the Black Sea. So, if any hostility arose

'we [...] could easily move a million Jews into Palestine within the next fifty to sixty

years, and England would have an effective barrier and we would have a country'.¹⁸⁴

Although, Winston Churchill's opposition to the Aliens Acts attracted widespread Jewish support Weizmann avoided becoming drawn into British politics unless it advanced Zionist aspirations.¹⁸⁵ Strategically, both for Britain and the Zionists, this was perceptive. Neither Weizmann nor the Zionists could afford to be too closely identified with any particular British Government especially when decisions taken by one are not

179 Reinharz, *Zionist Leader*, p. 270.

180 *Ibid.*, pp. 274-5.

181 *Ibid.*, p. 275.

182 *Ibid.*, p. 273.

183 Chaim Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, 22 vols (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1974) 7, p. 80. Letter to Ahad Ha'am, 13 Dec. 1914.

184 Stein, *Balfour* (London: Jewish Chronicle, 1983), pp. 126-7, cites Weizmann Papers, 10 Oct. 1914.

185 Reinharz, *Zionist Leader*, p. 276.

binding on another. Neither could any British Government be seen to be too closely identified with the Zionists without risking accusations of undue influence. For both, the appearance of a diplomatic process was vital.

Divisions within the Zionist leadership prevented a uniform approach to the British over Palestine in the years immediately before World War I. Ill health also barred any serious involvement by Weizmann with either the EZF or WZO for some time though he was re-elected as vice president of the EZF each year until 1914 when the outbreak of war finally dissolved divisions and provided the platform to make serious overtures for British support. Meanwhile, his project for founding a Hebrew University in Jerusalem, started in 1912, was another important strategy towards eventually establishing a Jewish state. Hence, with Weizmann's energies, between 1906 and 1914, directed inwardly towards reorganising the EZF there was little meaningful contact with the government again until 1914.

Part IV: Zionists, Britain and Opportunities from War

British Conundrums: Change of Strategy 1914

Until the Ottoman Empire allied itself with the Central Powers it had been used by Britain as a bulwark against Russian territorial designs on India, so as to protect the East bank of Suez. War forced a change in strategy and raised the question of how best to replace this protection, which to Kitchener meant gaining Ottoman territories for Britain by partitioning its Empire. Opposed by both Asquith and Grey, this strategy induced a revealing comment from the former who considered it a feat of great imagination believing

'a new country in Asia can be made as quickly as a new army in England [...]

it has taken many years to make the Punjab, (but) it is not yet self-supporting'.¹⁸⁶

Obligations from new territories, Asquith informed Admiral Fisher, required greater expenditure and more men. Both would be short at the end of the war and 'new territories will require new armies, new navies, new civil servants, new expenses, teachers, doctors. Where are these to come from?'¹⁸⁷ Though personally disinclined to extend the British Empire, Asquith lacked Cabinet support especially from Kitchener. Meanwhile, Zionists maintained pressure on British opinion with newspaper articles on Jews fighting in all armies sometimes against their own people, and often against their own vital interests.

If Whitehall intended the Jews to be restored, first a public declaration was needed to explain intent and show how Palestine would be governed. This required heavyweight political involvement determining how resettlement was in British interests and what form of rule was envisaged. Primarily, Britain needed very clear and realisable strategies ready for implementation to avoid disputes with the Jews, the Arabs or the French.

186 Oxford. Bodleian Library. H. H. Asquith, Papers, v. 27, pp. 93-9, 22 Apr. 1915.

187 *Ibid.*

British Interest in Zionism Grows

Serious consideration of Zionist ideals first meant establishing whether the government saw a significant Jewish presence in Palestine as appropriate to British aims. C. P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, close to Lloyd George, and 'attracted by the passionate religion of Zionism', suggested a meeting between Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Weizmann shortly after the outbreak of war.¹⁸⁸ Prior to the meeting, which paved the way for striking progress towards realising Zionist ideals, Scott advised the Chancellor would be interested to learn whether the Jews of Judea could be a link between East and West, a channel of ideas and enterprise towards the Arabs, and whether the present strength of Palestine's Jewish element meant it could rapidly expand,

'its relations to the local Arab population, [...]; the potential value of Palestine as a "buffer-State" and the means of evading [...] an undesirable extension of military responsibility; the best way of allaying Catholic and Orthodox jealousy in regard to the Holy Places – and the like'.¹⁸⁹

On 12 December 1914, Weizmann met Balfour who confirmed his own interest and sympathy for Zionism and the national aspect of the Jewish problem that he felt more easily resolvable after the war. Any resettlement problems, Balfour suggested, were economic not political. Political support was not confined to Balfour and Lloyd George. Lord Robert Cecil, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was among key Foreign Office officials who, after meeting Weizmann on 18 August 1915, propounded, in a note to Grey, that a British Protectorate in Palestine was the Zionist solution for the Jews, which should not be seen as a rescue from oppression, but because, even in England, a Jew always had to give

'an explanation of his existence and he was neither quite an Englishman nor quite a Jew, and that [...] was equally true with much more serious results in other countries'.¹⁹⁰

Subsequently, Weizmann apprised Scott of Samuel's 'lengthy conversation with Sir Edward Grey' who had expressed his sympathy for Jewish ideals over Palestine.¹⁹¹ Grey, envisaging difficulties with the French and a certain school of liberals in Britain, inclined towards a scheme that avoided added burdens on England; possibly some form of Protectorate.¹⁹² Responding, Weizmann stated French influence was predominant in Syria whereas in Palestine the only civilising pioneer work was by the Jews. Furthermore, French annexation, either strategically or politically, was undesirable for England, and he was certain there would be no Russian

188 Christopher Sykes, *Two Studies in Virtue* (London: Collins, 1953), p. 190.

188 Sykes, *Two Studies*, p. 140, cites Weizmann Papers.

190 F.O. 800/95. Grey Papers, Cecil to Grey, 18 Aug. 1915.

191 CAB 37/123/43. Samuel's original 'Future of Palestine' memorandum, 21 Jan. 1915.

192 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 153. Letter to Scott, 16 Feb. 1915.

objections.¹⁹³ His letter also stated 'of course, the form of Protectorate can be such as to involve as little responsibility for Britain as possible', which can be construed as implying ultimate autonomy.¹⁹⁴

On 15 January 1915, Samuel and Weizmann met Lloyd George. A few days earlier Samuel and Grey had worked on a draft memorandum entitled the 'Future of Palestine', which examined how restoring the Jews to their ancient home could improve Palestine's economy. Establishing an autonomous Jewish state, Samuel explained, was premature even though recent population increases were mostly Jewish immigrants whose new agricultural colonies already numbered 'about 15000 souls; in Jerusalem itself two-thirds [...] are Jews; but in the country, [...], they still probably do not number more than about one-sixth of the population'.¹⁹⁵ Sensibly, he admitted an early Jewish state even if supported and established by the Powers was impractical because 'A Jewish State, prosperous, progressive, and the home of a brilliant civilisation, might vanish in a series of squalid conflicts with the Arab population'.¹⁹⁶ Accordingly, Samuel postulated five options. Firstly, French annexation, which he did not think in British interests because another Power's proximity to the Suez Canal would menace

'the essential lines of communication of the British Empire. The belt of desert to the east of the Canal has proved an admirable strategic frontier against the Ottomans. But [...] an inadequate defence against a military expedition organised by a powerful Western State, and supported by the laying of a railway from El Arish'.¹⁹⁷

Samuel's second option was continuing Ottoman rule, which 'had left the population sunk in squalor and neglected, with vitality only in the Jewish and German colonies'. The Governors

'follow one another in rapid succession, are concerned only with the amount of money they can squeeze [...]. If Northern Syria goes to France and Mesopotamia to England, there seems [...] no reason for leaving Palestine, [...], as an Ottoman possession'.¹⁹⁸

His third option was Internationalism. This he viewed as a transition stage when it 'is a theatre of intrigue among the agents of the governing States'. He was also wary of growing German influence over Ottoman activity in Palestine, and feared that it could destabilise Egypt, and might result in eventual German control 'as

193 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 153, letter to Scott, 16 Feb. 1915.

194 *Ibid.*

195 F.O. 800/100. Grey Papers, pp. 482-506, Jan. 1915.

196 *Ibid.*

197 House of Lords Record Office, (HMLRO). Herbert Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. 'The Future of Palestine', 11 Mar. 1915.

198 *Ibid.*

dangerous to France in Northern Syria as to England in Egypt'. Moreover, Internationalising Palestine until one nation gained control would

'lay it under a dead hand. Continuous disagreements would be inevitable and would result in nothing being done for the development of the land and the progress of the people'.¹⁹⁹

Remaining options were an autonomous Jewish State or a British protectorate. Governing the majority Arabs with the support of the minority Jewish community meant there could be difficulties commanding obedience even if established by the Powers, and if a State

'so constituted did succeed in avoiding or repressing internal disorder, it is doubtful whether it would be strong enough to protect itself from external aggression on the part of the turbulent elements around it'.²⁰⁰

Furthermore, the 'aspiration of a Jewish State one century too soon might throw back its realisation for many centuries more'. Perceptive enough to recognise the magnitude of the task would be the same whoever governed Palestine, Samuel may also have supposed that long-term Jewish interest was best served by deferring ambitions of autonomy to more propitious conditions. He may also have considered that extensive British colonial experience equipped them better for local conditions, which may have caused him to favour a British Protectorate as the most strategically advantageous and imperialistic of his five options. Primarily, his objective was to protect Egypt by developing the harbours of Jaffa and Haifa, which would not require 'large sums'. Potential friction with the Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches was avoided by vesting 'their possession in an international commission' where they would 'have a leading voice'. Mohammedan holy sites should be 'declared inviolable', and 'local government should include one or more Mohammedans whose presence would guarantee [...] interests could be safeguarded'.²⁰¹ Most of the population would greet a British Protectorate because 'it is the solution of the question of Palestine which would be by far the most welcome to the Jews throughout the world'.²⁰² Zionists, under a British Protectorate, Samuel envisaged, would purchase land, develop Palestine's economy, control immigration so Jews could become the majority in the land, and even attain some self-government 'as the conditions of that day might justify'.²⁰³ England would earn Jewish appreciation so help towards its attainment, cherished by the Jews for so many centuries of suffering, 'cannot

199 Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. 'The Future of Palestine', 11 Mar. 1915.

200 *Ibid.*

201 *Ibid.*

202 *Ibid.*

203 *Ibid.*

fail to secure, [...], the gratitude of a whole race, whose goodwill, [...], may not be without its value'.²⁰⁴

Supporting these proposals meant the British Government would accrue prestige that

`would make a most powerful appeal to the people of the United Kingdom and the Dominions, particularly if it were avowedly a way of aiding the Jews to reoccupy the country'.²⁰⁵

Church sensitivities were not overlooked, and were appealed to by showing the potential for redeeming Christian Holy Places `from the vulgarisation to which they are now subject, so [...] Christian travellers would [...] give greater satisfaction to powerful sections of British opinion'.²⁰⁶ Samuel also recognised that `immense sacrifices' made by Britain merited some return, and noted the people would be `profoundly disappointed' if Allies were to gain great advantages and Britain none.²⁰⁷ Though carefully phrased, Samuel clearly envisaged an independent Jewish state sooner rather than later. Asquith, derided Samuel's memorandum as dithyrambic, and dismissed proposals for `carving up of the Ottoman's Asiatic domination' preferring to interpret Samuel's concept for Palestine as meaning that the scattered Jews would

`swarm back from all the quarters of the globe, and [...] obtain Home Rule. Curiously enough, the only other partisan of this proposal is Lloyd George, who, [...], does not care a damn for the Jews [...], but thinks it will be an outrage to let "agnostic, atheistic France"'.²⁰⁸

Asquith was disingenuous. Though he disagreed with the Cabinet's decision to partition Ottoman Middle East territories, he advanced no alternative despite knowing French territorial aims would jeopardise Britain's strategy. His dismissive sarcasm describing Samuel's memorandum as `dithyrambic', and of `Jews swarming back from all quarters of the globe', appear anti-Semitic, tactless, and unnecessarily acerbic responses to an erudite paper filling the strategic gap for Palestine that risked being created if Ottoman territories were not gained. Palestine was vital to protect Suez, so neglecting to ensure it became part of the British Empire threatened India and Egypt. Furthermore, far from being `dithyrambic', drafts of the report had been submitted to Grey from November 1914, and Samuel's notes reveal his strategic appreciation that Ottoman entry into the war made her empire's break up probable, which raised question over the future control of Palestine.

`The jealousies of the great European Powers would make it difficult to allot the country to any [...].Perhaps the opportunity might arise for the fulfilment of the ancient aspirations

204 Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. `The Future of Palestine', 11 Mar. 1915.

205 *Ibid.*

206 *Ibid.*

207 *Ibid.*

208 H. H. Asquith, *Memories and reflections, 1852-1927*, 2 vols (London: Cassell, 1928), 2, p. 65.

there of a Jewish State’.

Samuel concluded that Russian help re-establishing thousands of Jews living in her Empire would be a powerful and immediate influence on an embryo Jewish State. Britain could play a considerable part in its formation ‘because Palestine’s geographical situation, and its proximity to Egypt, would render its goodwill to England a matter of importance to the British Empire’.²⁰⁹ During discussions with Grey, Samuel explained that funds to buy out existing individual interests, to lay the foundations of the state, could be acquired by appealing ‘to the Jewish communities throughout the world’²¹⁰ Though Asquith disparagingly dismissed the report, its compilation had taken several months and Grey ‘was quite favourable to the proposal, and prepared to work for it if the opportunity arose’ with a proviso concerning French interests in Syria.²¹¹ Subsequently, in February 1915 when he met Lord Rothschild, Samuel addressed the fate of Jews in host nations who chose to remain, saying it would have to be clear that a British Protectorate in Palestine

‘must not be allowed to result in the Jews in Russia and elsewhere being regarded as Palestinians settled in those countries and not as citizens of them’.²¹²

Asquith’s response raises the question of whether he had prior knowledge of Samuel’s proposals. The memorandum’s first draft was received on 15 March, but on 28 January Asquith commented that the dispute over annexation, because three or four million European Jewish settlers would inspire those remaining, reads ‘almost like a new edition of Tancred brought up to date. [...] I am not attracted by this proposed addition to our responsibilities, [...]’.²¹³ Even when put before the Cabinet, Asquith’s view was unchanged despite Lloyd George’s support for restoration which he dismissed, saying ‘he does not care a damn for the Jews or their past or their future’.²¹⁴ According to Balfour, however, Lloyd George desired to ‘give the Jews their rightful place in the world; a great nation without a home is not right’.²¹⁵ Kitchener was also opposed, and advised the Cabinet ‘Palestine was of little value, strategic or otherwise, and did not have even one decent harbour’.²¹⁶ His opposition to Palestine may be attributed to a fixation that Russia and France would become post-war enemies of Britain. Were this to happen, French claims to Syria and Russian to the Dardanelle would change the strategic and economic situation in the Levant, threatening Egypt. Accordingly, whether or not to claim Alexandretta, which would need defending, depended upon the acquisition of Mesopotamia by troops brought

209 Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. ‘The Future of Palestine’, 11 Mar. 1915.

210 *Ibid.* Meeting with Sir Edward Grey, 9 Nov. 1914.

211 *Ibid.*

212 *Ibid.* Meeting with Lord Rothschild, 14 Feb. 1915.

213 Asquith, *Memories*, 2, p. 70.

214 Asquith, H. H., *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, ed., Michael and Eleanor Brock, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 510.

215 Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, *Middle East Diary 1917-1956* (London: Cresset Press, 1959), p. 34.

216 Asquith, *Letters*, pp. 477-8.

from the United Kingdom via the Suez Canal, Red Sea, and Persian Gulf that would take nearly a fortnight longer than moving them to Alexandretta, and on by rail.

‘Moreover, the enemy [...] is obviously Russia, and [...] any advance by Russian forces from the highlands of Armenia and Kurdistan must follow certain well-defined routes leading southwards, with their flank exposed to a British advance from about Aleppo. [...]’.²¹⁷

These fears were unrealistic. Particularly with existing doubts over Russian ability to continue in the war, it is surprising Kitchener could consider there was either capability or desire for another in the foreseeable future. Additionally, Alexandretta only protected Suez and India from a Russian threat whereas a force stationed in Palestine could protect Suez directly, and repulse any attack through the Mediterranean. Protecting Alexandretta questioned Kitchener’s judgment. It would require a significant increase in British military capability that, in turn, would threaten the French. Thus, the real reason for preferring Alexandretta might have related to his favouring an Arab kingdom with its boundary on the valley of the Tigris because he believed that an Arab kingdom containing the chief Islamic Holy Places, Mecca, Medina, and Kerbala was of greater economic value than Syria and Palestine, which made Alexandretta’s access to the Euphrates of superior commercial importance and best served British interests. In his opinion, taking Syria was only justified by its historical connection with Egypt.

‘But Jerusalem would be a perpetual source of friction with Russia and France and the compensation we should have to give France [...] would outweigh the advantage of Syria’.²¹⁸

This assessment of Palestine’s economic weakness was contradicted by the 1903 Commission of Examination that visited the Sinai Peninsula. Assuming sufficient capital investment, the Commission concluded Palestine, which was almost free of political difficulties, held ample potential for Jewish resettlement on

‘paying lines and self-supporting principles, [...]. The work as a whole would be serviceable to humanity by the redemption of what is now practically a desert, and [...] it might be found [...] this barren territory would become amenable to industry and science’.

Again Kitchener’s view was uncritically accepted, which might have made dissenting opinion more difficult to mount. Though personally opposed to gaining territories from the War, as Prime Minister Asquith must have recognised French or Russian gains would have raised public expectations in Britain. Unsurprisingly, Lloyd George disagreed with both Asquith and Grey over additional territories, and with Kitchener on the strategic importance of Palestine. Possibly, Lloyd George’s support for the Jews was fuelled by his dislike of the

²¹⁷ Lloyd George Papers, file C/16/2/3. ‘The War, Alexandretta, and Mesopotamia’, 16 Mar. 1915.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.* Note by Lord Hardinge, 23 Apr. 1915.

“Ottoman” whom he rather apocalyptically, hyperbolically, and graphically described to a cheering London crowd, on November 10, 1914, as the greatest enemy to Islam, which they had discredited by misgovernment.

‘What have the Ottomans contributed either to culture, to art, or to any aspect of human progress [...]? They are a human cancer [...], and now that the great day of reckoning has come [...] is to be called to a final account for his long record of infamy against humanity’.²¹⁹

Writing in the *New Statesman* ten days later, Albert Montefiore Hyamson referred to Asquith’s Guildhall speech on the Ottoman Empire, saying its end had been announced and

‘more than once in the past Turkey has received notice to quit Europe, but this is the first time that the liquidation of Turkey in Asia has become a definite prospect, and [...] the hopes of the Zionists have suddenly passed from an ideal into a matter of practical politics’.²²⁰

Hyamson reflected the points raised by Samuel, which might indicate a contribution to the latter’s submission especially when writing that ‘the necessity for some land in which Jews would be able to find a home where they would not be considered intruders could only be Palestine’. Nevertheless, concerned for the practicalities of governing the country, he recognised Jews were weaker and could not

‘stand alone. For many years, [...] centuries, they will need a protecting power while they grow into a nation. To give Palestine (Jews) self-government today would be a blunder and a crime’.

Choosing England as the Protective Power because her ‘sentimental, educational, and archaeological interests in Palestine, [...], and commercial interests dwarf those of all other powers into insignificance’, he concluded

‘if the inhabitants of Palestine were consulted as to the State in which they would prefer to give their allegiance [...], the overwhelming majority of the non-Jewish population would choose Great Britain. [...], as for the Jewish inhabitants, [...] they would certainly vote for Britain’.²²¹

Arguing, in common with Balfour, that Britain now had the opportunity to repay Christendom’s debt to Jewry ‘for the persecutions of the past nineteen hundred years’,²²² Hyamson considered only Britain was suitable to handle the payment and, ‘should remember her past and think of her future and secure to the Jews under her protection [...] building up a new Palestine on the ruins of her ancient home’.²²³ Curiously, neither Balfour nor

²¹⁹ *The Times*, 11 Nov. 1914.

²²⁰ Hyamson, *New Statesman*, 21 Nov. 1914.

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ *Ibid.*

Hyamson seemed to consider whether repaying Christendom's debt was appropriate, or even of any Jewish concern. Singularly, not even Hyamson appeared to realise that holding any Christian generation responsible for their antecedents' actions was futile, and no different from Church dogma holding succeeding generations of Jews responsible for the crucifixion. Although modern anti-Semitism includes elements of ancient anti-Semitism, Jews did not share Balfour's feelings about Christendom's debt. Nonetheless, his evaluation of their plight in Europe was sincere and aroused some astringent observations over Jews status in European states, and the violence and oppression they encountered that only succeeded in strengthening loyalty to their faith and people in a struggle to survive and maintain hope. Already unwanted in many European states, it made no material difference to Jews how restoration and autonomy were achieved.

In 1916, and now Foreign Secretary, Balfour noted the inherent contradiction in European countries treatment of Jews; none of which seemed particularly interested in Christendom's guilt. Possibly, despite his strong moral indignation whenever anti-Semitism was discussed, which might have shaped his Palestine strategy, deeper political motives existed.²²⁴ Responding to Lord Islington's 1922 attack in the House of Lords against accepting the mandate, Balfour admitted that materialistic considerations were not the only motive for the Declaration, which was only a partial solution to the abiding Jewish problem. In Balfour's view, Jews were entitled to help with developing

'those great gifts which, hitherto they have been compelled to bring to fruition in countries that know not their language, and belong not to their race. That is the ideal which I desire to see accomplished, [...] the aim which lay at the root of the policy I am trying to defend; [...] the ground which chiefly moves me'.²²⁵

Altruism seems one motive for the Foreign Secretary's support of Zionism. Another, with what might have been one eye on the future, was that Zionist endeavour protected by a British mandate could later bring gratitude and tangible benefits. His personal hope was 'that the Jews will make good in Palestine and eventually found a state'. As he remarked to Lady Rayleigh, in July 1915, 'Jews were too great a race not to count', and he was convinced 'that nothing but the Holy Land would satisfy their aspirations'.²²⁶ This image of 'their aspirations' reveals the inadequacy of British understanding of Jewish desire for Palestine. Balfour's sense of justice is undermined by his lack of understanding that restoration could only, to many Jews, come as a result of God's determination. Jews did not need the Land because there 'they could develop as a nation'; they already regarded themselves as one. So, when saying 'nothing but the Holy Land would satisfy their

²²⁴ Dugdale, *Arthur Balfour*, 2, p. 216.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, 2, p. 216-7.

²²⁶ Max Egremont, *Balfour: A Life of James Arthur Balfour* (London: Collins, 1980), p. 295, cites Meinhertzhagen letter, 18 Feb. 1918.

aspirations' following 'they ought to have a place' he failed to recognise that many Jews believed the land Holy because it was given to them by God, and not because three major faiths matured there, or because Judaism originated in Palestine. Zionism, for many Jews, was bound up more with restoration and eventual autonomy than any notion of Christendom paying its debt by sponsoring that renewal. Thus, any British impression of Zionist gratitude was simply deluded. For the Orthodox and Secular Orthodox Zionists, this was their land given by their Creator whose will was about to be fulfilled using the British as His instrument; no other nation had any claim. Free Jews, whilst often not subscribing to the concept of holding the land as a leasehold tenancy from their Creator where they could live and create their Commonwealth according to His precepts, nonetheless believed it was their right to return and establish self-rule.

As the Zionist cause gradually advanced much was owed to Samuel's paper and the predisposition of key figures in the Foreign Office for a Jewish dominion in Palestine. Grey, after his early involvement with Samuel's report, from 7 February 1915 had little further. Though remaining favourable to Zionist ideals, he doubted the desirability of establishing a Protectorate before ascertaining France's view, which concerned Samuel as this would question territorial 'dispositions after the war over [...] Northern Syria and, probably, of African colonies'.²²⁷

Zionist diplomatic efforts were successful in two separate ways. Firstly, the government's responses to specific difficulties indicated its interest in pursuing a dialogue. Secondly, Zionism had gained recognition as a serious movement worthy of further negotiations, which would also tend to indicate the government was generally interested in a Protectorate if the French could be persuaded to relinquish their claim. Moreover, Weizmann's access to the highest levels of government meant Zionist desires were regarded sufficiently seriously so that, by early March 1915, Whitehall was considering how to resolve Jewish hopes for Palestine and relieve Britain of the burden by granting 'organisation of the Jewish Commonwealth as an independent political unity entirely to the care of the Jews'.²²⁸ This was illogical. If Britain did not want another Power penetrating Palestine then it had to prevent its occurrence, which would entail as much responsibility as a Protectorate. Zionists welcomed attempts at finding a solution, but first needed certainty regarding British desires; they had no difficulty providing the means and immigrants. Weizmann, realising the cynicism of politics, postulated three benefits to Britain from Jewish resettlement

1. A strong Jewish community on the Egyptian flank is an efficient barrier to any danger from the North
2. Redemption would create eternal bonds of friendship with world Jewry, which is not a negligible factor because Jews, dispersed all over the world had often

²²⁷ Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. Conversation with Sir Edward Grey, 7 Feb. 1915.

²²⁸ Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 184. Letter to Scott, 23 Mar. 1915.

been poorly treated and would appreciate a virtuous act

3. Jews in Palestine were the best agents, natural interpreters of ideas in the Eastern countries and a bridge between the two civilisations that should carry weight with any politician who is prepared to look 50 years ahead.²²⁹

Divisions within the Anglo-Jewish Community threatened the progress made in Whitehall, which concerned Weizmann who observed 'it will be absolutely necessary that a very representative and confidence inspiring committee should appear before the British Government [...] to conduct the *pourparlers*'.²³⁰ Strategically this was correct. If the British sensed Zionists were unrepresentative of the Jewish Community there was little reason to continue a dialogue. Hence, any serious differences within Anglo-Jewry risked raising the spectre they would increase with resettlement, or destabilise Zionist unity.

By the autumn of 1915, the Foreign Office view of Zionism was increasingly favourable, which is clear from the exchange of telegrams and Foreign Office memoranda, during 1916, between Lord Crewe, O'Beirne, Nicolson, and Sykes accepting the idea of Jewish restoration, but carefully avoiding any indication of how or by whom the country would be governed. O'Beirne made clear that Zionism and British control of Palestine's railways had to be considered, and 'we would not give Jews a privileged position in Palestine for nothing, but that we expect wholehearted support from them in return'.²³¹

British desires for Palestine had to consider the French who preferred to avoid any public declaration and keep their post-war options open by refusing any commitment to large-scale Jewish migration. O'Beirne dismissed Lord Bertie's and French fears about Arab reaction, but admitted that, superficially, this might have some force since Arab leaders would be chilled if they realised an extensive Jewish colonisation scheme was contemplated. Nevertheless, it was not insoluble and much would depend

'on the value that we attach to the military co-operation which the Arabs are likely to give us in the war. I had always assumed that this value must be placed very low'.²³²

Lord Crewe, favourably disposed to Zionism, believed that a sensitive response from the Allies was 'a difficult question because Jewish opinion is considerably divided'.²³³ Moreover, doubts persisted over what and whether anything should be advised to the French. Following Lord Crewe's meeting with Cambon during the previous week to discuss British support for Jewish immigration, O'Beirne noted that rather expectedly the French dismissed the idea. Nevertheless, if the political objective was to turn world Jewry in the Allies favour

229 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 184. Letter to Scott, 23 Mar. 1915.

230 *Ibid.* Letter to Roszika Rothschild, 6 June 1915.

231 F.O. 371/2767. Hall to McDonogh, 25 Jan. 1916.

232 F.O. 371/2817, p. 38. O'Beirne minute, 19 Mar. 1916.

233 F.O. 371/2817/43776. Crewe to Nicolson, 8 Mar. 1916.

from being 'preponderantly hostile to us', it needed a full explanation.²³⁴ In March 1916, a memorandum was despatched to Bertie, in Paris, and Sir George Buchanan, in St. Petersburg, with instructions to seek the response of the respective governments.²³⁵ A few days later, Buchanan confirmed the Russian Government was sympathetic provided the Holy Places were excluded from the scheme and placed under international control.²³⁶ This coincided with a letter from Sykes in Petrograd to explain the Sykes-Picot agreement to the Russians. Whilst preparing for his mission, Sykes had read a memorandum from Captain Hall, the Admiralty's Director of Intelligence, opining that Kitchener's view of an 'Arab movement' in favour of the Allies had changed to preventing them joining the enemy. Hall had also informed Nicholson that

'what the Arabs wanted was independence. They will never be united. Opposition must be expected from the Jewish Interest [...] to any scheme recognising Arab independence and foreshadowing Arab predominance in the southern Near East'.²³⁷

Always easily enthused, Sykes wrote to Samuel, now Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, saying

'I imagine that the principal objective of Zionism is the realisation of the ideal of an existing centre of nationality rather than boundaries of an extent of territory'.²³⁸

Significantly, O'Beirne recognised the benefits of Jewish immigration for Palestine, whilst simultaneously dismissing the effect on Arab opinion because of their low military value that went to the heart of government concern over Arab reaction to a Declaration. Leopold Amery, War Cabinet Secretary from 1916, viewed resettlement in the pragmatic context of what was best for the post-war British Empire. Writing to Sir Edward Carson, the First Lord of the Admiralty, that only the Jews could create a strong enough Palestine against German-Ottoman oppression, and by enlisting

'Their interest on our side [...], we will gain a great deal. It would be a fatal thing if, after the War, the interest of the Jews throughout the world was [...] on the side of the Germans'.²³⁹

Lord Curzon presented the most cogent argument against British involvement. As Lord President of the Council he had visited Palestine before the war, concluding the

country was, for the most part, barren and desolate, [...] a less propitious seat for the future of the Jewish race could not be imagined. Moreover, how was it proposed to get rid of the existing majority of Mussalman inhabitants and to introduce the Jews in their place?'²⁴⁰

234 F.O. 371/2817/43776, O'Beirne memorandum, 8 Mar. 1916.

235 *Ibid.* Crewe to Buchanan and Bertie, 11 Mar. 1916.

236 *Ibid.*, 14 & 15 Mar. 1916.

237 F.O. 371/2767/8116. Hall to Nicolson 'Proposed Agreement with French', 12 Jan. 1916.

238 Samuel Papers, file SAM/H/1. Sykes to Samuel, 26 Feb. 1916.

239 Amery, *Diaries*, p. 170, cites letter from Amery to Carson, 4 Sept. 1917.

240 CAB 21/58, 4 Oct. 1917.

Amery also recognised the danger of unfavourable Arab reaction to large numbers of Jewish immigrants, and cautioned that it would be unwise to make too much

‘of a splash locally with Zionism until Arabs have a slice of the cake themselves, [...] and to get the French to come clearly with [...] disavowing any ideas of Colonial annexation and emphasising their adherence to the idea of Arab autonomy’.²⁴¹

Despite influential government support for resettlement, British understanding of Zionism was poor, which was well demonstrated by Balfour’s response to a claim, after meeting a delegation of foreign Zionists, in February 1919, that he had promised to ‘reconstitute Palestine as the Jewish National Home’. In an ensuing note to Lloyd George, he wrote

‘I find it very difficult to see the distinction, which to you seems so important, between that phrase and the phrase authorised by the Cabinet, namely “establishing in Palestine a national home for the Jews”’.²⁴²

Strangely, Balfour failed to grasp the difference between ‘reconstitution’ and ‘establishment’; arguably indicative of general insufficient British understanding of Zionist meaning over their National Home. Possibly, he was more at ease with ‘grand issues’ as in his ‘Memorandum respecting Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia’ where he noted the contradiction in allied policy between the independent nations of Palestine and Syria that he described as flagrant. Present inhabitants in Palestine were not to be consulted since the

‘Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, [...], is rooted in age-long traditions, [...], of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land’.²⁴³

Anti-Zionist Perspective of a Jewish State

Samuel’s memorandum glossed over differing views within Anglo-Jewry concerning restoration and the nature of a Jewish State. Britain was unlikely to wholeheartedly support Zionism unless sure it was sustained and encouraged by world Jewry. Hence, Zionists began a campaign to convince the government of the broad nature of their support as opposed to that of the anti-Zionists. One important result was that the Foreign Office, hitherto rather indifferent to Zionism, was forced to realise that Lucien Wolf and the Conjoint Foreign Committee (CFC) did not represent Anglo-Jewry’s views. The CFC, established to speak for the problems of oppressed Jewish minorities to the Foreign Office especially in Eastern Europe, was ‘the virtual foreign office of the Anglo-Jewish establishment’, and consisted of elected representatives from each

²⁴¹ CAB 21/58. Cites letter Amery to Hughes, 28 Feb. 1918.

²⁴² F.O. 371/2117/47756. Balfour to Lloyd George, 19 Feb. 1919.

²⁴³ E. L. Woodward, and R. Butler, eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* First Series, 6 vols (London: HMSO, 1952), 4, p. 345.

synagogue to the Board of Deputies of British Jews, founded in 1760, and the Anglo-Jewish Association, founded in 1871.²⁴⁴ Lucien Wolf, who believed Russian Jewry's aspiration to equal rights was threatened by their claim of separate nationhood, had gained privileged access to the Foreign Office on behalf of the Committee. In common with anti-Zionists, Wolf feared Zionist claims might affect their status as Englishmen. Edwin Montagu, Samuel's first cousin who became Secretary of State for India in 1917, rejected any concept of a Jewish State. His most important concern, in a March 1915 somewhat hysterical paper to Lloyd George, was his perception of conflict over Jewish nationality if they were allowed to make their home in Palestine. 'When it is known that Palestine is the Jewish State which is really their home, then I can foresee a world movement to get them away at any cost [...]'.²⁴⁵ Weizmann's strenuous efforts to gain official acceptance from Zionist Organisations world wide enabled him to inform Sir Ronald Graham, Assistant Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that by virtue of the letters and telegrams already submitted to the government it was no exaggeration to claim the great majority of the Jewish people favoured Zionism so

'it appears very desirable [...] that the British Government should give expression to its sympathy, supports Zionist aims and recognise the justice of Jewish claims'.²⁴⁶

Views upheld by 'eminent representatives of the Government', and Graham himself, which had been the negotiating basis for almost three years. Both Zionists and anti-Zionists were inclined to contradictory and imprecise use of the words state, citizenship, and nation that caused a great deal of tension between them. Creating a State called Palestine was, at its simplest, a matter of deciding on frontiers. Since a nation usually takes its name from people living in a particular geographic location, so the State of Palestine, created in 1920, drew its name from an anglicised version of the Latin for Philistine, *Palestina*. Nation assumes a people bound together by ethnic, religious or linguistic ties, but does not confer the status of citizenship accorded to those enjoying full political rights. Only a nation state confers citizenship where allegiance to the State earns the right to its protection. Hence, whilst the Jews regarded themselves as a people until they had a state of their own they were citizens of their birth nations with the responsibilities attached to citizenship, but frequently devoid of the protection this granted. Anti-Zionist fears that Jews would face a conflict of nationality, because as nationals of their birth country they could not also be nationals of a Jewish State, were exaggerated since only Jews living in Palestine could be nationals. Moreover, as Jews often lacked full citizenship rights in European countries small wonder Zionism was readily embraced. Nahum Sokolow clarified the status of Jews in Palestine at the commemoration of the Balfour Declaration, in Covent Garden on 7 November 1919. Asked

²⁴⁴ Sanders, *High Walls*, p. 312.

²⁴⁵ Lloyd George Papers, file C/25/14. Montagu to Lloyd George, 16 Mar. 1915.

²⁴⁶ Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 378-9. Letter to Sir Ronald Graham, 13 June 1917.

to define a "National Home", he said this had been clearly enunciated twenty-five years earlier at the adoption of the Basle programme. Though he did not know the meaning of a Jewish State, was it a Jewish Kingdom, a Jewish Republic or a Jewish Independent Commonwealth? Was there a Jewish State at the time of Judges? Did one exist in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah? Similarly, the notion that a national centre in Palestine would have any claim on the political allegiance of Jews in other countries was just as confusing and illogical. Both Montagu and Wolf paradoxically believed that a national centre in Palestine could somehow harm Jews in countries which regarded them as unwanted aliens, and whose governments, particularly the Russian, resisted pressure to cease persecution. Since the government of Palestine was to be British for the foreseeable future, political allegiance could only be to Britain, so fears of conflicts were confused, illogical, and irrelevant. This confusion was piquantly addressed by Lancelot Oliphant at the Foreign Office, saying 'when Jews fall out, it is none too easy for Christians to decide whether the Zionists or anti-Zionists are wrong'.²⁴⁷ Anti-Zionists considered that an option to go to Palestine would pressurise Russia to cease oppressing its Jews, which merited greater scepticism when previous international duress had made little difference. Reconciliation prospects between the CFC and the Zionists remained improbable, and even after Weizmann met Wolf, in August 1916, the argument over nationality remained unresolved.²⁴⁸ Subsequently, Sokolow was tasked with drafting A Programmatic Statement of the Zionist position. Completed in December 1916, it made five points

1. Basis of Settlement - Recognition of Palestine as the Jewish National Home.
2. Status of Jewish Population in Palestine Generally - Jews to possess and enjoy full national, political and civic rights in Palestine.
3. Immigration into Palestine - The Suzerain Government shall grant full and free rights of immigration to Jews of all countries.
4. The Establishment of a Chartered Company - to have the power to acquire and take over any concessions for works of a public character, which may have been or may hereafter be granted by the Suzerain Government, and the rights of pre-emption of Crown Lands or other lands not held in private or religious ownership.
5. Communal Autonomy - to be enjoyed by Jewish communities throughout Palestine in all matters bearing upon their educational, religious or communal welfare.²⁴⁹

If intended to reconcile anti-Zionists, the statement was unsuccessful and within a year, on 20 May 1917, the English Zionist Federation held a special conference in London that opened with Weizmann reviewing how post Revolutionary Russia would affect the Zionist Movement. Some Zionists believed the Revolution was a great stimulus, which Weizmann attacked as superficial and wrong since Zionism was

'never built [...] on the sufferings of our people in Russia or elsewhere. [...].

²⁴⁷ F.O. 371/2817/426081. Minute, 1 Dec. 1916.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.* Minute, 17 Aug. 1916.

²⁴⁹ Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 543.

The fundamental cause of Zionism was, and is, the ineradicable national striving of Jewry to have a home of its own - a national centre, a national home of Jewish life’.

Carefully, having hinted at self-determination, he added that constructing the right conditions for a State was a gradual and systematic process requiring patience, and though a ‘Jewish Commonwealth [...] is our final ideal [...]’. The way to achieve it lies through a series of intermediary stages’.²⁵⁰ Weizmann envisaged British protection, but avoided saying for how long, as the prerequisite for Jews to develop and implement machinery for the state to evolve. This was unacceptable to the Conjoint Committee which, in a letter to *The Times*, argued agreement was impossible with the Zionists, so the Committee would recommend to the government that Palestine is of historic interest, and would publicly declare that at the close of the war ‘the Jewish population will be secured in the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, equal political rights [...], reasonable facilities for immigration and colonisation, and such municipal privileges [...] as may [...] be necessary’.²⁵¹ Preferring to believe Jews were primarily a religious community, the Committee claimed they made no assumptions to separate national aspirations, and Zionism represented Jewish communities of the world as constituting one homeless nationality incapable of complete social and political identification with host nations, which viewed a homeland in Palestine as a necessity. Jews, according to the Committee, ‘were unconcerned with their political status and fully identified with the national spirit and interest of those countries’ they inhabited. Letters rejecting this swiftly followed from The Chief Rabbi of The British Empire, Dr. J. H. Hertz, Dr. Moses Gaster, the *Haham* of the English Sephardi Community, and Lord Rothschild.²⁵² From these committed Zionists and Anglo-Jewish community leaders some response was to be expected. The foreign editor of *The Times*, H. Wickham Steed, provided the unexpected. As his newspaper’s correspondent in Vienna, between 1902 and 1913, his experience of the Jewish question in one of the world’s more sensitive cities induced the Zionist solution. Writing *The Times* leader for May 29, he said the war brought to prominence the future of the Jews, which should receive careful and sympathetic attention. By this he meant ‘the important controversy [...] is [...], of the resettlement of a Jewish nationality in Palestine - upon the future of the Jewish people’.²⁵³ He believed the Zionist movement was important because it fired a new ideal for poverty stricken Jews in the ghettos of both the Old and New Worlds that had made Jews proud of their race and claim recognition for Jewry’s eminent services to mankind’s religious development and civilisation, so

‘attempting to define Jewish nationality in terms of religion the Conjoint Committee come dangerously near to begging the question which they raise; [...]. It may possibly be

250 Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, 2, pp. 54-58.

251 *The Times*. Letter from the Conjoint Committee, 24 May 1917.

252 Haham: Wise One, the title of the Chief Rabbi of the Sephardi Community.

253 Wickham Steed, *The Times*. Leader, 29 May 1917.

inconvenient to certain individual Jews that the Jews do constitute a nationality. The question is one of fact, not of argument'.²⁵⁴

Responses from the Chief Rabbi, Lord Rothschild and Weizmann were regarded by *The Times* as 'authoritative declarations which dispose of the contention Zionism is not representative of Jewish aspirations. We believe it in fact to embody the feelings of the great bulk of Jewry everywhere'.²⁵⁵

Steed grasped the point rejected by anti-Zionists. Nevertheless, resettlement and autonomy, implicit in Weizmann's May address, were different. Balfour made this clear in a 1919 letter to Lloyd George noting Britain favoured Palestine as a Jewish National Home only, and that if consulted the Arabs would be anti-Jewish. Britain saw Palestine as of exceptional world importance because the Jews

'have an historic claim to a home in their ancient land; provided that home can be given them without either dispossessing or oppressing present inhabitants'.²⁵⁶

Future self-determination was not excluded, only present.

A New Direction 1916: Zionists and Lloyd George's Government

In April 1916, Sokolow sent two memoranda to the Foreign Office dividing Palestine's hundred thousand Jews into two classes. First were the 'old inhabitants of the country, the strict orthodox Jews'. Second was the 'new element that arrived during the last generation; Ashkenazim from Eastern Europe and the younger generation of the old inhabitants'. These two classes were 'almost equal in number, but are entirely different with regard to their importance, political, intellectual, and commercial influence'. Sokolow stated the old inhabitants had no influence on the development of the country, or on the future of their own people. Mostly retired, they devoted their lives to prayer, 'religious settlements, and charitably endowed institutions supported by alms, gifts, and contributions'.²⁵⁷ Jews arriving from Eastern Europe, during the prior twenty to thirty years, were not just a generation younger, but possessed a totally different outlook and consisted of Agricultural colonists, gardeners, planters, tradesmen, artisans and professional men (doctors, engineers, teachers, lawyers). This, politically important active element represented Jews aiming to migrate to Palestine, and were the future united in their desire to establish a Jewish Commonwealth as an English protectorate. These people had immigrated

'for the purpose of living a free unfettered national Jewish life, and [...] this can only

254 Wickham Steed, *The Times*. Leader, 29 May 1917.

255 *Ibid.*

256 Lloyd George Papers, file F/3/4/12. Balfour to Lloyd George, 19 Feb. 1919.

257 F.O. 371/2817/63314. First of 'Two Papers on Zionism'. Mr. Sokolow and the Palestine Question, 3 Apr. 1916.

be achieved if the tradition of Great Britain is extended to the Holy Land'.²⁵⁸

Sokolow was equally clear an English protectorate was welcomed by the old inhabitants, saying

'there is sufficient reason to believe that even they would welcome an English protectorate, for which they have already prayed [...], and whenever granted to them they have never failed to appreciate with gratitude such protection'.²⁵⁹

These words had a message for the government. *Chalutzim*, pioneers, had made the difficult and perilous journey to Palestine to seek their own destiny. Often educated and skilled, they had fled Russian tyranny for the freedom to control their own fates, but, however benign the rule, they would have been subject to British wishes. Thus, when Sokolow wrote of 'living a free unfettered national Jewish life', he might have had British rule in mind. Accordingly, the government when supporting restoration should have recognised that, though welcoming British protection, nothing less than self-government would have been tolerable, even if not immediate. Sokolow made this clear in the final paragraph of the first memorandum where he remarked that since all political movements in the Ottoman Empire were strictly prohibited, Zionism was unable to develop sufficiently to secure general opinion. Zionists established institutions for agriculture, finance, and education, so 'there is no doubt that the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth being the object of Zionists [...], and of all Jewish organisations interested in Palestine, is the ideal aim of the whole Jewish population'.²⁶⁰ To ensure the British were in no doubt about Zionist aims, Sokolow's second memorandum rhetorically asked why Jews would welcome England as the Protective Power. The most important points were,

I. England is the Country which has everywhere shown clearly [...] she can [...] carry out the tasks of administering dependencies in a sensible and generous spirit.

II. England [...] protects and does not oppress the country, looks after the national needs and preserves the national ideas of others.

III. England has the greatest experience in the administration of new domains, and in solving complex national territorial problems.

IV. It was England's [...] sons who dreamed, spoke and wrote of restoring the Jewish land to the Jewish people long before the modern Zionist movement.

V. Because the British Protectorate of Egypt not only borders Palestine, but has and will have [...]. the closest economic relations with that country.

VI. The British Nation has always interpreted its interests in something more than the narrow sense of its own material advantage. [...].

VII. In a material and political sense the inclusion of Palestine in England's orbit would be of no small value.

A. Palestine will [...] become a flourishing province, and will strengthen England's position on

258 F.O. 371/2817/63314. First of 'Two Papers on Zionism'. Mr. Sokolow and the Palestine Question, 3 Apr. 1916.

259 *Ibid.*

260 *Ibid.*

[...] the Mediterranean.

B. Jews are certain to establish great commercial houses there and Agencies for the whole region. The advantages will fall to England before any outside nation.

C. English policy will gain an influential auxiliary [...] in all parts of the world where Jews exist, [...]. Their influence on public opinion, press and finance is fully recognised. These views are [...] deeply rooted as old traditions among the Palestinian Jews'.²⁶¹

Nevertheless, because it believed 'the time is not appropriate' the Foreign Office did not pursue the subject.²⁶²

Three years later, Earl Curzon sought the dictionary definition of a Commonwealth and found

"A State". "A body politic". "An independent Community". "A Republic". [...] What is the good of shutting our eyes to the fact that this is what the Zionists are after, and that British Trusteeship is a mere screen behind which to work for this end'?²⁶³

Change of government, in December 1916, brought Balfour and Lord Robert Cecil to the Foreign Office, Lloyd George to 10 Downing Street, and a more sympathetic view that eased the Zionist task. After the 1903 Kishinev Pogrom, Joseph Chamberlain, then Foreign Secretary, offered the Jews land in El Arish and Uganda. Lloyd George, acting for the Zionist Organisation, had drafted the agreement with the Foreign Office. Ultimately, the issue proved too controversial for both sides and was eventually voted against by a special Zionist convention, in 1905.²⁶⁴ Nonetheless, Lloyd George was keen on re-establishment though 'his elusive spirit never became enchained to Zionism, but he knew it far better than his colleagues and he liked it very much'. Possibly, his reasoning is reflected in a speech at Maidenhead, on 26 May 1905, saying, 'I do not believe in aristocracy, but I do believe in stock'.²⁶⁵ Sentiment for Zionism did not prevent Lloyd George expecting a realistic assessment of whether Palestine served Britain's post-war imperial interests. Weizmann had anticipated this in a letter to Israel Zangwill, a British Zionist, author, and playwright, in October 1914, where he described Palestine as a natural continuation of Egypt, and the barrier that separated it from Suez, Constantinople, the Black Sea, and hostility from the North. This provided England with an effective and strong obstacle, the Jews a home to which Russian Jewry could emigrate and could alleviate some of the pressure on them, so the Jews would no longer be '*morally the homeless*, however small our home may be'.²⁶⁶ Weizmann's strongly pro-British stance fitted comfortably with Lloyd George, and Zionism appealed to the 'poetic and

261 F.O. 371/2817/63314. First of 'Two Papers on Zionism'. Mr. Sokolow and the Palestine Question, 3 Apr. 1916.

262 *Ibid.* Minute by Oliphant, 5 Apr. 1916.

263 F.O. 608/99/2017. Minute by Curzon, 26 Jan. 1919.

264 Reinharz, *Zionist Leader*, p. 220.

265 Grigg, *Young Lloyd George*, p. 23.

266 Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 27-8. Letter to Zangwill, 19 Oct. 1914.

imaginative as well as to the romantic and religious qualities of his mind'.²⁶⁷ Childhood recollections evoked memories of sacred writings, and aroused a sentiment that might have persuaded Lloyd George towards greater British involvement, but strategic questions were decided on strictly rational grounds.²⁶⁸

Lloyd George established and presided over a War Cabinet where Balfour, whose closeness to the Prime Minister earned a privileged position, served as Foreign Secretary. It also brought Lord Milner, formerly High Commissioner to South Africa, to the inner circle. Milner, whom Lloyd George described to Ribot, the French Prime Minister, as the only independent mind among his colleagues, occupied a key position in the War Cabinet and became convinced British interests were best served by reaching an understanding with the Zionists.²⁶⁹ Milner's active interest in Zionism might have been generated from Samuel's memorandum, particularly the issue of French proximity to Suez, though he also believed the Jews might succeed with restoration. His view of Jews was more tolerant than was usual, and based on a moral imperative that saw anti-Semitism as an offence against civilised behaviour. In his opinion, Jews had their own traditions and loyalties to which they rightly adhered. So, in return for the right to full equality, they should accept the legal and moral obligations of their host State, and identify with its national life. Milner had great confidence in Jewish abilities, which he saw as of practical advantage to Great Britain in developing the Middle East.²⁷⁰ Lloyd George also introduced a Secretariat under Sir Maurice Hankey, and appointed Philip Kerr who had worked with Weizmann on the Balfour Declaration, in early 1916, and the Editor of *The Round Table*, as his expert foreign and Imperial affairs adviser. Two of the three key areas of strategy development, the Foreign Office and War Cabinet, were now sympathetic to Zionist aims. Only the War Office, presided over by Field Marshall Sir William Robertson, was uninterested in a Palestine campaign and disinterested in Zionism though opposed by General Sir George Macdonogh, the Director of Military Intelligence, who regarded Palestine as important to Imperial Defence and was impressed by Weizmann.²⁷¹ Other influential friends of Zionism were also close to power. In particular, Sykes, Amery, and Ormsby-Gore who either belonged to or were attached to the War Cabinet Secretariat with direct access to leading Ministers. Ormsby-Gore had been introduced to Zionism by Sykes, and later recorded how he was soon persuaded that, if it owed its opportunity to the British, a prosperous Jewish population in Palestine 'might be an invaluable asset as a defence of the Suez Canal against attack from the North, and as a station on the future air-routes to the East'.²⁷²

267 Viscount Samuel, *Memoirs* (London: Cresset, 1945), p. 143.

268 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 146.

269 *Ibid*, p. 310 cites Ribot's diary, 28 May 1917.

270 Stein, *Balfour*, pp. 313-6 cites guidance from Ormsby-Gore and Meinertzhagen.

271 *Ibid*, p. 319 cites Sir Charles Webster, *The Founder of the Jewish National Home* (Jerusalem, Rehovoth, c. 1955), p. 21.

272 Dugdale, *Arthur Balfour*, 2, p. 115.

French Interest 1915-17

Significantly, the issue of France's interest in Palestine was gradually being resolved. Weizmann visited Paris, in December 1915, for a conference with Baron Edmond de Rothschild, Francis Bertie, the British Ambassador, and Victor Berard, an eminent classical scholar, and key figure in influential French circles. During the conference, it became clear French statesmen attached no value to Palestine. Indeed, in Berard's opinion, shared with Bertie who added Britain would object to another great Power in Palestine, France would attempt to impose her own religious and civil values, which could cause strife and political difficulties with Russia.²⁷³ Whilst this may have lacked the imprimatur of the French Government, it was useful intelligence for the Foreign Office and opportune in the light of the recently commenced Sykes-Picot talks that resulted in an agreement ratified in May 1916. Insofar as the agreement concerned Palestine, Britain gained the country except the area north from Acre to the northern end of Lake Tiberias, which went to France; the Holy Places were destined for an international regime.²⁷⁴

Negotiations between the British and the Zionist Organisation, by early 1917, were entering a new stage; though French clarification over whether their claim to Syria included northern Palestine remained an outstanding issue. Weizmann feared that because the Jewish question was a long-term concern, it might suffer when the immediate priority was prosecuting the war. Writing to Scott regarding accompanying Mark Sykes to the East, he said it was of

'the utmost importance [...] we should *be there* as soon as possible, that the Palestinian people and Jews at large should realise that we mean business and mean to carry it out at once'.²⁷⁵

Zionist work could not begin until receiving some tangible expression of government intention. Ultimately, Zionist diplomacy was aimed at securing a favourable government statement regarding resettlement and eventual autonomy, which seemed little closer after Weizmann met Balfour on 22 March 1917. Difficulties with the French meant Balfour could not commit Britain to supporting Zionism even though he attached little 'value to France holding Palestine' believing their involvement inadvisable. Nevertheless, he informed Weizmann that

'Mr. Lloyd George took a view which was identical with the view I laid before

Mr. Balfour, namely that it is of great importance to Great Britain to protect Palestine'

This cabinet discussion makes clear Palestine was important.²⁷⁶

Whilst diplomacy remained in an indeterminate state, Zionism, in the country at large, was becoming more widely recognised. Writing to Sokolow, Weizmann noted that in the previous week 'practically every

273 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 256. Letter to Samuel, 19 Dec. 1915.

274 Laqueur, *History*, p. 190.

275 Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 346-7. Letter to Scott, 20 Mar. 1917.

276 *Ibid.* Letter to Scott, 23 Mar. 1917

paper wrote about Jewish Palestine under a British Protectorate [...]', and that 'feeling was very strong and more concrete than even a fortnight earlier'. More importantly, he had seen 'Mr. Lloyd George yesterday, who was very emphatic on the point of British Palestine'.²⁷⁷

French persistence in claiming all of Palestine, despite the Sykes-Picot Agreement's limits,²⁷⁸ placed Zionists in a difficult position.²⁷⁹ Though Whitehall did not seriously entertain French claims timidity in rejecting them left the Zionists as a potential 'playball of the two conflicting groups'.²⁸⁰ Nevertheless, according to Sir Harold Nicolson's account of a 1917 exchange with Balfour, British sympathy was giving way to the more concrete idea of creating a new powerful Jewish identity that could become 'a centre of intellectual life and a radiant nurse of science and the arts' and, since Balfour believed the Jews had been exiled, scattered and oppressed, 'in their native land, then the full flowering of their genius will burst forth and propagate [...]'.²⁸¹

Any British commitment to the Jews without French agreement over which Power would gain Palestine would have created genuine difficulties both during and after the war. French public sentiment regarded Palestine as their area of interest, so any precipitate action might have been regarded as pre-emptive, divisive, and might have impeded ultimate victory. Radically, in an effort to find a compromise, whilst ensuring British military control over Palestine, Sykes postulated Britain 'might secure all we wanted if we acted as the 'mandatories' of the powers, i.e. exercised a delegated authority'.²⁸² He also believed that, at the Peace Conference, Britain should be in military possession. Interestingly, in the vocabulary of international relations the word mandate makes, if not its first appearance, one of the earliest, and probably the first in this context.²⁸³

Negotiations with the government were progressing well enough for Weizmann to write to Louis Brandeis, the American Supreme Court Judge, and Woodrow Wilson's adviser on Jewish affairs, that he had 'no hesitation in saying that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister are in 'full sympathy with our aspirations' whose support could be 'reckoned on' despite persistent difficulties with the French.²⁸⁴ Lack of familiarity and little interest over Zionism amongst France's Jewish Community had improved as a result of Sokolow's meetings in Paris, which led to better understanding of the movement and acceptance of Jewish national claims. This was another major step forward that only left the important issue of

277 Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 350-1. Letter to Sokolow, 4 Apr. 1917.

278 Laqueur, *History*, p. 192.

279 Weizmann, *Letters*. Letter to Lord Rothschild, 7 Apr. 1917.

280 *Ibid*, p. 356. Letter to Scott, 7 April, 1917.

281 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 151, cites Sir Harold Nicolson in *The Jerusalem Post*, 2 Nov. 1952.

282 Trevor Wilson, ed. *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott, 1911-1928* (London: Collins, 1970, p. 369.

283 Sanders, *High Walls*, pp. 478-82.

284 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 358. Letter to Brandeis, 8 Apr. 1917.

suzerainty to be resolved with Britain.²⁸⁵ By the end of April 1917, negotiations were sufficiently advanced for Weizmann to meet Lord Robert Cecil and discuss three options for Palestine; a British Protectorate, an Anglo-French Condominium, and Internationalisation. Zionists argued that a British Protectorate was the most desirable because Jews knew Law and Order would be just, there would be no interference with Jewish colonising, and cultural development and autonomy would be allowed once the Jewish population was strong enough.²⁸⁶ Essentially, the meeting only confirmed what Samuel had put before Parliament in 1915, and Sokolow's memorandum to the Foreign Office the following year. Though already covered by Samuel in his 1915 memorandum, Cecil enquired why Zionists objected to a French administration. Weizmann's response stressed this was because it would be much less efficient, impose *esprit français*, which meant in effect exporting Catholicism, and Jews had no confidence in the French who might 'lean on elements [...] unfriendly to the Jewish population and to Jewish development'.²⁸⁷ Focusing on the Sykes-Picot Agreement granting France Northern Palestine between Lake Tiberias and Haifa, and a British railway to join the Bay of Haifa to Baghdad, Weizmann stated this would cut Palestine in two, and separate Galilee from Judea depriving 'Palestine of a very valuable part of the country'. Furthermore, Jewish colonies established around Lake Tiberias would suffer from annihilating thirty years of Jewish colonising. Similarly, possessing the Bay of Haifa was only strategically valuable if the hinterland was consolidated and populated by a loyal and civilised population, which would not otherwise ensue. Summing up, Weizmann said,

'a Jewish Palestine under a British Protectorate could not be interpreted simply as an annexation [...]. In view of the relation of the Jews to Great Britain, [...], it would be easily understood that Great Britain is [...] keeping the country in trust for the Jews'.²⁸⁸

Regarding the proposed visit to Egypt and Syria, Cecil agreed this could only be undertaken if it was to work for a Jewish Palestine under a British Protectorate, but explained the considerable difficulties that world Jewry would alleviate by confirming itself in favour.²⁸⁹ Attempting to seek answers to questions regarding British Policy for Palestine and the proposed visit to Egypt, Weizmann informed Scott that France was working for a condominium in Palestine, but it was unclear what sort of arrangement had been agreed or whether it was binding. Aptly, he commented that the arrangement 'was made at a time when people were dividing the skin of the bear which was not killed'. Subsequently, seeking Samuel's elucidation, he learnt the government was considering the arrangement. Particularly with the British army occupying Palestine, it seemed pertinent to

285 Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 358. Letter to Brandeis, 8 Apr. 1917.

286 *Ibid*, pp. 375-6. Note of interview with Cecil, 25 Apr. 1917.

287 Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 376-8.

288 *Ibid*, pp. 376-8.

289 *Ibid*, p. 378.

reopen the issue. Samuel was strongly in favour of the planned visit to Egypt with 'the definite purpose of working for a British Palestine and mobilising Jewish opinion both in and outside Palestine'. Wisely, Weizmann insisted 'the Foreign Office and British Government must give the possibility of doing this work, and they must make up their minds what they intend to do with Palestine'.²⁹⁰

Influencing America 1917

Jews, in the eyes of English observers, were a powerful pro- German force in American public opinion and political life. Certainly, by 1915, America's Jewish community was one of the most articulate, cohesive, and wealthy, which produced exaggerated, though not groundless, belief in their influence. Jews owned important newspapers, were an established presence among President Wilson's advisers, and Louis Brandeis had been appointed to the Supreme Court in January 1916 that gave legitimacy to Britain's supposition that America's two million Jews opinions were vital in an election year.²⁹¹

In December 1915, the Foreign Office received a report by a prominent American Zionist, Horace Kallen, Professor of Philosophy at Wisconsin University, who had studied American Jewish public opinion to substantiate his initial beliefs concerning sentiment towards Russia and Germany. Substantial anti-Russian feeling was no surprise, but, startlingly, pro-Germanism was only superficial.²⁹² Kallen opined that Allied activity could enhance Jewish rights in every country, and even a hint concerning nationalisation in

'Palestine would more than counterbalance similar German promises and would create an outlet for spontaneous pro-English, [...] sympathies of the Jewish masses'.²⁹³

Lucien Wolf, a week later, wrote to the Foreign Office declaring it urgent that Britain build the bridges to the Zionists he had sought in the previous spring.²⁹⁴ Mainly, American Jews were Russian immigrants, or their children, with bitter memories of Jewish life in the Pale, and many had relatives who remained. In stark contrast to Russian brutality, German behaviour in the occupied territories of Russian Poland was studiously correct so Jews, whose only interest was their oppressor's downfall, looked coldly on Russia's alliance with France and Britain.

Reports from Sir Cecil Spring Rice, the British Ambassador in Washington, to Grey, Balfour, and Sir Valentine Chirol, Foreign Department Director of the *Times*, observed 'American Jews are continually at work, and the Germans, and German Jews bankers, are toiling in a solid phalanx to compass our destruction'. Writing to Grey, on 13 November 1914, he said 'the Jews show a strong preference for the Emperor, and there

290 Weizmann, *Letters*, pp. 378-9. Letter to Scott, 26 Apr. 1917.

291 Sanders, *High Walls*, p. 323.

292 F. O. 371/2579. Kallen Memorandum, 9 Dec. 1915.

293 *Ibid.*

294 *Ibid.*, Wolf to Cecil, 16 Dec. 1915.

must be some bargain'. In 1915, Spring-Rice claimed the German element in the United States had been combining for thirty years and 'the active co-operation of the Jews has very much assisted'. In 1916, writing again to Grey, he wrote 'England's enemies had been marshalled against her by the Irish who lent their matchless power of political organisation to Jews, Catholics, and Germans'.²⁹⁵ Spring-Rice failed to understand how Jews intense anti-Russian feeling affected their attitude towards the War. Not only Jews were discontent over revelations of Russian treatment. General American opinion, probably sedulously fostered by German propaganda, was also uneasy. Russia's presence of itself was sufficient to convince most American Jews to contrast her inhumanity with German well-publicised conduct. Additionally, German efforts to restrain the Ottomans from persecuting Palestine's Jewish community, and vague perceptions that a victorious Germany would not overlook Zionist aspirations where there was no conflict with their own, were compared adversely with Allied support for Russia.²⁹⁶ Early in 1916, the Foreign Office, attempting to counteract this sentiment, invited the CFC to discreetly assist Allied propaganda with influencing American Jewish opinion. France followed and asked Professor Victor Basch, a French Jew of Hungarian extraction, to utilise personal contacts with American Jewish leaders. His subsequent report exposed insoluble obstacles because the Jews believed Russian mistreatment of their compatriots was tolerated by the Allies, which made 'us accomplices [...] it is certain that measures in favour of Jewish emancipation would be equivalent to a great battle lost by Germany'. Basch proposed Anglo-French assurances that the Peace Conference would press for redress of Jewish grievances and resettlement in Palestine.²⁹⁷ In 1915, Jacques Bigart, the secretary of the Alliance Israélite, suggested to Lucien Wolf that a propaganda committee should be established in London, as existed in France, to monitor Jewish response to Russia. After consulting Cecil, Wolf produced a memorandum, stating 'in any bid for Jewish sympathies very serious account must be taken of the Zionist Movement', adding that establishing a Jewish University and recognising Hebrew as one of the languages of the land would generate great fervour amongst American Jewry, in particular if Great Britain gained Palestine.²⁹⁸ A year later, the CFC recommended representations be made to Jewish opinion in neutral countries to create a more favourable impression of the Allies, which should urge the Russian Government to ameliorate the position of its Jewish community, and the Allied powers should issue a public statement on the Palestine question giving assurances that were aimed at 'the great organised strength of the Zionists in the United States'. Whilst not objecting to the creation of American Committees, Cecil noted that 'any attempt at the present moment to influence the British and French

295 Stephen Gwynn, ed. *Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice*, 2 vols (London: Constable, 1929), 2, pp. 242, 245, 285, 309.

296 Stein, *Balfour*, pp. 203-5.

297 *Ibid*, pp. 218-20.

298 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 220 cites CFC memorandum, 16 Dec. 1915.

Governments to intervene directly or indirectly in Russian internal questions would be a great mistake'.²⁹⁹ Failure to mention Palestine prompted Wolf to submit a formula to the Foreign Office, on 3 March 1916, concerning the question of post-war suzerainty, which suggested that if it came under French or British influence, Jewish historic interest in the country would be acknowledged. This anodyne formula was intended to reconcile Wolf's anti-Zionism with an appeal to American Zionist emotion without comprising his personal antipathy. Grey delayed responding until learning from the British Ambassadors in Paris and Petrograd the view of the respective Governments towards offering a plan which 'completely satisfy Jewish aspirations'. Grey added the scheme would be more attractive if, when able to cope with the Arab population, colonists could manage the country's internal affairs. Aware of Jewish hostility to an International Protectorate he intended 'to find an arrangement [...] so attractive [...] as to enable us to strike a bargain for Jewish support'. Edgar Suarès, President of the Alexandria Jewish community, in February 1916, noted support would come 'from the whole American Jewish community within perhaps one month and at most three given the empathy of the British Government'. When informed, on 23 February, of the Foreign Office positive changes towards Zionism, perhaps ensuing from Kallen's and Wolf's reports on American Jewry, and France's accord to the Sykes-Picot Agreement, timing was condign. Luckily, Zionist sympathisers in the Foreign Office increased with the arrival of Hugh J O'Beirne, former counsellor and Chargé d'Affaires in St. Petersburg and Sofia, who was convinced Britain should support Zionist claims though he accepted the problems with a six to seven hundred thousand Arab population, which could be surmounted by giving 'Jews [...] special colonising facilities'.³⁰⁰ Sir Arthur Nicolson was sceptical, and doubted the Zionist Movement's strength. Lord Eustace Percy, recently returned from Washington, believed hostile Jewish opinion might change entirely 'if an American protectorate was formed with the object of restoring Jews to Palestine'.³⁰¹ Perceptions of Jewish influence were pithily expressed by Lord Robert Cecil, saying 'I don't think it is easy to exaggerate the international power of the Jews'.³⁰²

Influencing Russia 1917

One of the arguments advanced in their cause by Zionists, which was intended to gain the support and sympathy of the outside world, was Russian oppression. As put succinctly by Balfour

'if you treat people unequally, they will hardly shine as patriots. Intolerance blindly labours to create justification for its own excesses. It's evident that Zionism will elevate the status

299 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 220, cites CFC memorandum 24 Feb. 1916.

300 F.O. 371/2671. O'Beirne memorandum, 28 Feb. 1916.

301 *Ibid.* Minute by Percy, 1 Mar. 1916.

302 *Ibid.*, Cecil minute, 3 Mar. 1916.

of many Jews'.³⁰³

This argument was weakened by the March 1917 Revolution that brought a Provisional Government to power so that, within one month of attaining power, they issued a decree annulling all religious or nationality restrictions on its citizens, which allowed Zionists freedom to enroll more Jews.³⁰⁴ Though, the Zionist case was never based on Jewish oppression, as Weizmann pointed out at the EZF conference on 20 May 1917, it seemed easing restrictions on Jews would undermine the oppression argument. Why it did not will become clear.

Increasingly, Russian revolutionary forces were under pressure for a peace without annexations. If Russia renounced any claims to Constantinople and the Straits to conclude a peace with the Ottomans, Palestine's suzerainty would be unchanged and blight Zionist hopes for self-determination. Fortunately, Britain eventually opposed a separate Ottoman peace, which may have resulted from a decision to gain Palestine. One important effect of the demise of the Czarist regime was that it deprived German propagandists the opportunity to identify the Allies with Russian anti-Semitism.³⁰⁵ Though these factors were not insignificant, more important to both Zionists and Britain was that a Czarist regime would be unlikely to welcome the Balfour Declaration. Also, Russia's fading war presence opened potentially direct conflict between Britain and France over Palestine. Should the Provisional Government either withdraw from the war or lose interest in Czarist support for Russian Orthodox Holy places, it would have removed a barrier to French claims for dominance in Palestine, and, additionally, would be an obstacle for British plans to ally the Zionists strong desire for a British Protectorate. Sykes felt that the 'new Government in Russia would be a good deal easier to deal with than the old'; understood to mean it would be less likely to oppose British claims to Palestine.³⁰⁶

As Russia's situation deteriorated, in the spring of 1917, Whitehall discerned an opportunity to turn this to British advantage by appealing to Zionist sentiment among the Jews, and at the end of April sought the views of the British Ambassador, Buchanan. Unusually, Sykes demonstrated some realism when advising Graham that the British Embassy would find it impossible to ascertain Russian Jewish feeling about Zionism, or the effect on pacifists responding to Zionist influence, as 'any enquiries emanating from an Embassy [...] would only provoke fear and suspicion and answers quite contrary to the facts'.³⁰⁷ Enquiries could only safely be made through Zionist leaders where they 'would be from a Jew to a Jew; allowance must be made for 1900 years of oppression, secretiveness, and distrust of Christians'.

303 Balfour, *Essays*, pp. 261-2.

304 Stein, *Balfour*, p. 339.

305 *Ibid*, p. 340.

306 *Ibid*, p. 344.

307 F.O. 141/805/1. Sykes to Graham, 28 Apr. 1917.

In the spring of 1917 the British Government, convinced of the potency of Zionism amongst Russian Jewry, although Jewish Bolsheviks were anti-Zionist, overestimated their influence in Russian affairs. This led the government into believing the Allied cause might benefit if it was thought to be associated with realising Zionist aspirations, which would provide Jews with a strong incentive to counter left-wing extremists and keep Russia in the war, or at least prevent a separate peace being made with the Ottomans gaining the Central Powers access to Russian resources. Though assumptions of Jewish influence and the size of Russian Jewry's support for Zionism were exaggerated their importance was strongly emphasised, in October 1917, as reasons to continue faltering negotiations towards the Balfour Declaration.³⁰⁸

Hence, in issuing the Balfour Declaration, especially when many Zionists opposed Allies seeing Britain as a staunch friend of the Czarist regime, it was anticipated this would persuade Jews to switch their potential support from the Central Powers, persuade the Bolshevik Jews to support Zionism, and, possibly, convince Russia to remain in the war.

Difficulties in the Path to Victory

Other pressures were mounting. Underestimation of Turkish resistance in Palestine meant the second attack on Gaza, in April 1917, failed. Additionally, Russia's Caucasus army disintegrated after the Revolution, which eliminated prospects of a combined Russo-British operation against the Ottomans amidst fear that the collapse would release considerable numbers of Ottoman troops into Palestine, or threaten the British in Mesopotamia.

Recent military reverses had depressed the British public, so the War Cabinet sought an impressive success to strengthen morale that would come from British entry into Jerusalem, and simultaneously deny Palestine to France.³⁰⁹ Notwithstanding, doubts were emerging over the possibility of victory and Lloyd George had no alternative strategy. Russia was a spent force, Italy had refused to attack, France needed time to recuperate, and the Salonika operation was hamstrung.³¹⁰ Moreover, difficulties with Tory allies and General Robertson, conflict with the General staff over the 'authority of the civil power in determining policy', and trying to curb unlimited demands for men all contributed to uncertain war aims that 'left British strategy in limbo'.³¹¹ Two months earlier, Scott noted that Lloyd George

'three weeks ago had put off the end of the war decisively to next year [...]; now he
Hardly less decisively put it off to 1919, and seemed to think no chance of military

308 Stein, *Balfour*, pp. 346-7.

309 Stein, *Balfour* p. 334, cites Scott *Journals*, 16 Mar. 1917.

305 Wilson, *Scott*, p. 310.

311 *Ibid*, pp. 323-5. Diary extract, 28 Dec. 1917.

victory till then'.³¹²

Some of this pessimism sprang from the situation on the Western Front where, though the fighting strength of the Armies had increased by the spring of 1917, the French declared their army had only sufficient strength for one more great battle.³¹³ Especially with Russia palpably failing, some new channel of pressure on Germany was appropriate, but was resisted by Generals who were convinced victory could only come from the European Front.³¹⁴ From the outset, Lloyd George had maintained that defeating Turkey and attacking Germany through the Balkans would win the war, which was a strategy described long afterwards by von Hindenburg, Chief of the German General Staff, as 'brilliant'.³¹⁵ Lloyd George was confident the resolute Turkish façade was just veneer, and part 'of the War Office's game to pretend they had formidable forces with ample reserves'.³¹⁶ Lacking political power to enforce his strategy, and compel the Generals to commandeer sufficient troops and equipment, persuaded Lloyd George towards the tactical approach of opening secret negotiations with Enver Pasha, one of the Young Turk leaders, to whom he offered substantial bribes in exchange for accepting British terms and leaving the war.

Meanwhile, once Sokolow agreed to intercede with Russian Jews on behalf of the Allies, French objections to Jewish resettlement in Palestine were overcome. Cambon, the French Ambassador, gave broadly sympathetic assurance of French support, on 4 June 1917, but without resolving the suzerainty issue.³¹⁷ By the end of 1917, Britain's main war objectives had moved from a meaningful European victory, thought impossible after three years of destruction and the ruin of European coalitions, to work on peace terms that accepted 'the importance of East Africa, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and the Imperial outlook generally'.³¹⁸ Though Graham's and Sykes's principal objective was a Jewish homeland in Palestine, to others Zionism's attraction was that Palestine would be British. Lloyd George, without declaring British intentions, placed no obstacle in the way of his colleagues stating their opinions. Of course, this apparent impartiality was tantamount to approval since its lack would have prevented ministerial openness.³¹⁹ Continuing government delays attracted criticism from *The Times* leader. It was no secret, the editorial declared, that Allied governments had been considering a statement about Palestine, which was timely, but questioned whether British statesmen realised the value of

312 Wilson, *Scott*, p. 307. Diary extract, 20 Oct. 1917.

313 Basil Liddell Hart, *A History of the First World War* (Trowbridge, Wilts: Redwood Press, 1973), p. 385.

314 *Ibid.*, p. 386.

315 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 265, cites von Hindenburg 'if ever there was a prospect of a brilliant strategic feat, it was here, why did England never make use of her opportunity'?

316 David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, 4 vols (Boston: Little, Brown, 1934), 4, p. 432.

317 Sanders, *High Walls*, p. 534.

318 L. S. Amery, *The Leo Amery Diaries, 1896-1929* (London: Hutchinson, 1980), p. 189.

319 Fromkin, *Peace*, pp. 292-4.

world wide Jewish sympathy from an explicit avowal of policy. Germany had quickly noted the threat from 'the association of the Allies with Jewish national hopes, and she has not been idle in attempting to forestall us'.³²⁰

One remaining obstacle was the anti-Zionist lobby, led by Montagu, which had succeeded in causing a great deal of perturbation for the Zionists. Weizmann's 1917 letter to Philip Kerr makes this evident. Referring to Balfour's and Lloyd George's approval, which lacked 'definite expression' and was 'causing harm not only to Zionism but also to interests of the British Government'.³²¹ Weizmann's use of the expression 'a handful of Englishmen of the Jewish persuasion who are always defeated and, therefore, work in the dark' betray irritation at what he believed was damaging the Zionist movement particularly when matters had reached 'a critical stage'.³²² This agitation was not so much against the anti-Zionists, but rather the importance awarded to their statements by British statesmen against an 'almost unanimous opinion of Jewish Democracy'. Ultimately, Weizmann realised that strategically it was essential to demonstrate all opinions had been canvassed, so the eventual declaration could be seen to be clearly supported by the majority of world Jewry.

Montagu's opposition was unyielding. Writing again to Lloyd George, in October 1917, he said any statement about Palestine as a national home would encourage anti-Semitic organisations and journals to enquire by what right a Jewish Englishman, at best 'a naturalised foreigner, has to take a prime part in the Government of the British Empire. Palestine is not now British. It belongs to our enemies'.³²³ This relentless opposition to a Declaration drew a riposte from Balfour that the majority of American and Russian Jews were in favour, and there was nothing inconsistent with a Jewish national focus in Palestine or the complete absorption of Jews into nationalities of other countries. Rather, Zionism represented

'the intense national consciousness held by certain members of the Jewish race.

They regarded themselves as one of the great historic races [...] whose original home was Palestine, [...] and had a passionate longing to regain [...] this ancient home'.³²⁴

The Balfour Declaration 2nd November 1917

In May 1917, French inactivity on the western front offered the Central Powers unimpeded progress against Russia and Italy. Field Marshal Douglas Haig, Commander in Chief, supported by Robertson, planned an ambitious strategic offensive in Flanders to control a key German railway junction, which if victorious would have been a significant political outcome for Lloyd George. Nevertheless, after the bloodshed on the Somme,

³²⁰ *The Times*, 26 Oct. 1917.

³²¹ Weizmann, *Letters*, p. 512. Letter to Kerr, 16 Sep. 1917.

³²² *Ibid.*, p. 511.

³²³ Lloyd George Papers, file f/39/3/30. Montagu to Lloyd George, 4 Oct. 1917.

³²⁴ David Lloyd George, *The Truth About the Peace Treaties*, 2 vols (London: Gollancz, 1938), 2, p. 1135.

in 1916, the cabinet was wary of further huge losses and agreed only to a battle that could be broken off. Robertson wanted a battle of attrition to wear down German forces by superior numbers; Haig did not agree thinking it possible to breakthrough German lines.³²⁵ By November 1917, early success had petered out at *Passchendale* leaving enormous casualties, drunkenness, desertion, psychological disorders amongst British troops, and discontent at home. Hence, by the end of 1917, both the army and the people were desperately tired.³²⁶

On 13 June 1917, one of Balfour's Foreign Office advisors laid before him a minute suggesting the time had arrived

'when we might meet the wishes of the Zionists and give them an assurance that His Majesty's Government is in general sympathy with their aspirations'.³²⁷

Just returned from the United States, the official, impressed by his conversation with Brandeis, felt there was good reason to suppose a British Declaration in favour of Zionism would be well received by Woodrow Wilson after Brandeis's 'very encouraging' conversation with the President.³²⁸ Meanwhile, Cambon had expressed French sympathies, on June 4, which meant they were unlikely to object to a British Declaration.³²⁹ Moreover, Zionists were being encouraged to impress upon American and Russian Jews that British control of Palestine would 'favour the building up of a Jewish Commonwealth'.³³⁰ Foreign Office fear of Germany courting the Zionists also made a declaration propitious. In fact the Berlin Zionist Executive had been in contact with the German Government, which might have persuaded the Foreign Office that German competition had to be taken seriously if it wanted to anchor the Zionist movement to Britain.³³¹ Concern about the rapidly deteriorating situation in Russia was uppermost in the cabinet's mind at meetings on October 4th and 31st. Increasing these concerns was the apathy of large numbers of American Jews towards the war, and the propaganda value of a Declaration.³³² Balfour actively urged the government to voice its intentions, and expressed to Lloyd George that assurance to Zionists would threaten Germany and, once received, Zionists world wide would vigorously work for the Allies. Once realising their aspirations depended on Allied support, and 'the expulsion of the Ottomans from Palestine, we shall enlist a most powerful element in our favour'.³³³

325 Strachan, *First World War*, pp. 244-6

326 *Ibid*, pp. 247-9

327 Dugdale, *Arthur Balfour*, 2, p. 232.

328 *Ibid*.

329 Stein, *Balfour*, pp. 462-3.

330 *Ibid*, p. 463.

331 *Ibid*, p. 464.

332 *Ibid*, p. 550.

333 Lloyd George Papers, file f/3/2/34(b). Balfour to Lloyd George, 25 Oct. 1917.

Centuries of British sympathy for Jewish resettlement and three years of diplomatic effort explaining its advantages combined to convince the Government into issuing the Balfour Declaration. Nevertheless, essentially this was a political document and little thought had been given to the reality of a large influx of Jews, or exactly what was meant by 'a national home'. Strategically, what now mattered was how the Declaration could be incorporated into the terms of the Mandate, and how to govern Palestine. Only reluctantly, and for no longer than essential would a British Governed Protectorate have been tolerated. Weizmann, made this clear in his 'Observations on Draft Mandate' report to Lloyd George, where he expressed deep regrets over the omission of several clauses, the most important of which were the omission of Articles three and five, and any mention of self-government, saying whilst

'Jewish opinion recognises that responsible government in Palestine cannot be fully achieved for many years [...] it is thought that the Mandate ought to contemplate its gradual and eventual realisation'.³³⁴

Regarding Article five, Weizmann, disturbed at the omission of the Jewish Agency receiving priority to develop public works, utilities, and natural resources, wondered if this was deliberate so as to improve the principle in the charter. Even so, the omission was deeply concerning as

'an economic policy of such far-reaching importance should be specifically expressed [...]. It is essential that the Jews [...] called upon to make unprecedented sacrifices for the upbuilding of Palestine, shall feel that the economic status is secured and safeguarded'.³³⁵

By 1920, the Zionist Organisation doubted British intentions; though Whitehall was perfectly clear. Palestine was to be a British Protectorate and Jewish resettlement did not imply self-government, which might in time come. Balfour, troubled about reducing Mandate commitments, shrewdly assessed the impact of successive changes to different editions, and observed that Jewish sentiment, also tact and judgment from the British administration, was needed for success, whilst Jewish financial assistance was essential to economic growth, so great effort was vital to lighten the Zionist leaders' task when appealing to their world-wide Co-religionists. Changes to successive Mandate editions increased these difficulties, and ameliorating the phrases most appealing to Zionist sentiment discouraged its friends.

'Whom do you please? Zionism has many enemies who would [...] be gratified if Zionism was abandoned. [...]. Zionism has many friends whose ardour will be cooled, and whose suspicions will be roused by the change of tone and manner in the Mandate [...] Zionist leaders, [...], have got a task of extraordinary difficulty before them. They may fail; but if

334 Lloyd George Papers, file F/92/16/4. ZO to Foreign Secretary, 11 Aug. 1920.

335 *Ibid*, ZO to Foreign Secretary, 11 Aug. 1920.

they fail we are involved in their failure; and it is not only right, but obviously prudent, too assist them in every way we can.³³⁶

Balfour was concerned that if Zionism failed, Britain's international standing might be affected if she appeared to be involved. Once again the British, as with Sharif Hussein, were egregious over their real intentions. The important difference was that Zionists would have 'to make a worldwide appeal to their Co-religionists' for extremely material sacrifices whereas little was asked from Sharif Hussein beyond a vague expectation of Arab support to liberate the Middle East from the Ottomans. If the 'genie had been let out of the bottle' by promises to the Arabs, the British Government's studied equivocation to the Zionists created a more difficult position whose reverberations would affect Britain throughout the Mandate period.

Although the government understood the propaganda value of supporting Zionism and the value of Jewish monetary investment to develop Palestine's infrastructure, they failed to comprehend its nature and viewed the Jewish presence there as providing a base for Britain to secure and develop the Empire. Neither did they understand that Zionism was not simply a political movement whose adherents were agitating to be restored in their land; it also absorbed the traditionalist view that the land was promised by their Creator. Thus, Jews perceived Zionism as the vehicle for their restoration, at least to the Orthodox and Secular Orthodox Zionists, where they could recreate their Commonwealth in accordance with God's precepts. This did not mean Jews would be hostile to Britain using Palestine as a platform from which to expand her Empire provided they had autonomy under British protection for the time being. Unfortunately, little notice was taken of the Zionist agenda though, unlike Sharif Hussein and the Hedjazi Arabs, Zionists were formidably organised and their well-connected businessmen could raise funds from world-Jewry. Failure to promptly dispel Zionist ideas of a Commonwealth encouraged Jews to believe the British would raise no objections. Belatedly, the Foreign Office attempted to resist the concept of a Jewish Commonwealth, and Major William Ormsby-Gore, one of three Assistant Secretaries to the War Cabinet, minuted that the Zionists should be clear

'that the American Jewish phrase [...] - a Jewish Commonwealth is unacceptable to His Majesty's Government & that extreme political demand are embarrassing to us'.³³⁷

He seemed unaware the notion of a Jewish Commonwealth did not originate in America, but was already known to the Foreign Office. Once again the British failed to appreciate the import of a Jewish Commonwealth and made no attempt at clarification by referring to the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Hertz, or the Chacham of the Sephardi Congregation, Dr. Herbert Gaster. Rather, the term was misunderstood as a political movement only, and

³³⁶ Lloyd George Papers, file F200/6/1. Balfour, 'Mandate for Palestine', 5 Nov. 1920.

³³⁷ F.O. 608/99/2017. Minute by Ormsby-Gore, 15 Feb. 1919.

misunderstood. This is partly explained by the notion of it being time for Christendom to repay its debt to the Jews. Balfour, echoing Christian Zionism, described the Jews as amongst adherents to the world's greatest religions who enjoyed a unique relationship between religion and country intimately bound with the long political history of

'a petty territory. No other religion's aspirations are expressed in language and imagery so dependent for meaning on the conviction that only from this land, only through this one history, only by this one people is full religious knowledge [...] Spread throughout the world'.³³⁸

Conclusion

Since the second-century Roman expulsion from Judea, Jews had been scattered throughout Europe. Settling wherever they were able to trade and living according to their traditions. However, trapped between the rise of Christianity and the advent of Nation States they found persecution was never far away particularly after Christianity became the established religion of European States. The Crusades and a new breed of clerics increased persecution, enforced conversion, or confiscated Jewish assets, often all three.³³⁹ This background stresses the importance of Orthodox and Secular Orthodox Zionism as an essential and intrinsic part of the modern movement. Their perception that they were the 'Chosen People' was an integral part of Jewish understanding that would have been instinctive to Jews in European Ghettos, and conferred a status that was in-existent amongst non-Jews in host nations with which emerging Zionism, as a modern nationalist movement, had to be reconciled. Though, not all Jews were necessarily concerned with Biblical tradition, they all understood their dissension could create hatred and persecution. This desire for restoration along with unity was reinforced and strengthened by weekly readings from Torah, which emphasised their chosenness and nationhood.

Haskalah, enlightenment, brought new ideas from Western Europe that weakened the authority of the Rabbonim in the Russian Ghettos and encouraged *Chovevi Zion* to restore Jews to the Holy Land. Overwhelmingly, Jews did not want to abandon tradition, but there were differences between the socialist Zionists wanting a clean break with the past, and other Zionists wanting to reconstitute in *Eretz Y'Israel*. Improving Jewish social conditions was of fundamental importance to Zionists who believed removing Jews from Russia was how this could be best achieved. Thus, Zionist support for a national political solution gradually became the *sine qua non* solution to the Jewish problem.³⁴⁰ Whereas Chasidic Jews passively

338 A. J. Balfour, 'A Brief Note on Zionism' in *Essays Speculative and Political* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1920), pp. 259-60.

339 John Richmond, 'The Church's Influence on the Expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290' (unpublished MA dissertation, Royal Holloway University of London, 2003), p. 2.

340 Vital, *Origins of Zionism*, pp. 314-5.

awaited the Messianic Era, Zionists of all kinds followed Rabbi Reines's declaration that there was no link between messianic hopes and national passivity, which imbued Jews with confidence that their own endeavour could hasten restoration.³⁴¹ Nonetheless, Zionism had to gain greater political support if it was to convince one of the Powers, effectively Britain or France, that it was in their interests to advance Jewish nationalism.

Seventy years before the Great War Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, envisaged Jewish restoration would help shore up the Ottoman Sultan's authority against Mehmet Ali, the Egyptian ruler. During the latter half of the nineteenth-century British Christian Zionists, believing it would make the *Parousia* imminent, countenanced the return of the Jews to their ancient home. Some Foreign Office officials, between 1916 and 1918, were Christian Zionists, though there is little evidence it gained Zionists more than a sympathetic hearing to present their arguments in favour of restoration and ultimate autonomy. Of greater British concern was the threat to the security of the Canal Zone that transformed British relationships with the Ottoman Empire and altered Britain's stance toward Palestine through mutual, though very different, interests with the Zionists. Whitehall had been aware of Zionism since Herzl testified before the 1902 Royal Commission of Alien Immigration, and presented it as the best solution to the problem of migration caused by persecution that would resolve agitation resulting from a large influx of Russian Jews into the East End.³⁴²

With regard to Weizmann as a recent arrival from Russia, the British may have had concerns over his political persuasion, but it seems unlikely he would have endeared himself, or had any subsequent influence, had he been a socialist as well as a Zionist. Of at least as much significance, was Weizmann's work with the EZF that enabled Zionists to present a uniform approach to ministers. Gaining serious political support for Zionist ideals made it essential to appear a statesmanlike and well organised body supported by world Jewry. In this context, Zionists convinced the British that American Jewry was a powerful voice in American government that could help bring America into the Allied camp and substantially benefit the war effort; a very influential and noteworthy factor in issuing the Balfour Declaration especially given the crisis on the Western Front.

France jealously guarded Syria and Palestine as her sphere of influence and believed her hold would be weakened if Britain were to gain Palestine. As it was Hirtzel, the Secretary to the Political Office of the Indian Government, thought it important to advise France of Syrian Arab objections to her control, though he also believed it likely the French 'will not take the statement seriously'. However, to avoid accusations of bad faith once the French discovered the real situation it was important Britain warn her ally.³⁴³ Cambon, the

338 Luz, *Parallels Meet*, p. 48, cites J. J. Reines, *Or Hadash al Ziyyon* (Vilna: 1902), sec. 9. Ch. 1.

339 Rose, *Chaim Weizmann*, p. 51.

343 F.O. 371/2767/39490. Hirtzel to FO, 28 Feb. 1916.

French Ambassador to London, dismissed the objections, remarking 'the Sharif would not be an Arab if he did not say something of that kind'.³⁴⁴

Old habits die hard, and a decade after the *entente cordiale* France was still regarded as a rival empire, even as a potential future enemy.³⁴⁵ Given the carnage on the Western Front, and the moral pressure of the *entente cordiale*, potential for future hostilities between the two nations might appear baseless. Indeed, Kitchener's indication that age-old rivalries could re-ignite after the War might seem more of a reflection of his own background in Egypt and the Sudan where competition with the French was one of the few distractions. Nevertheless, raising the issue of Palestine with the French risked raising the issue of post-war territorial dispositions, which the British preferred to avoid.

Britain's self-interest lay with a settled population protecting and developing the land she secured and governed. Controlling Palestine was vital for the Government to achieve this design, which by protecting Suez would ameliorate the German threat to Egypt and India. Accomplishing control made restoring the Jews a possible solution. Though, this was not going to be without its problems some of which related to Zionist understanding of restoration. Furthermore, economic restrictions in Russia encouraged the Jews to develop a more active approach to alleviating their conditions that ran parallel to their faith. British perception was that a grateful and industrious people would make the significant financial sacrifices to develop their land at little cost to Britain, whilst she governed. Nevertheless, there was discord within the Anglo-Jewish community between pro and anti-Zionists and within the Cabinet. Lord Curzon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, one of the Cabinet's most senior members, opined that

'granting Jews already in Palestine equal civil and religious rights was quite sufficient, but repatriating the Jews on a large-scale was sentimental idealism which would never be realised and His Majesty's Government should have nothing to do with it'.³⁴⁶

He failed to explain how the Government could ensure Jews would receive equal civil and religious rights, denied to them for centuries under Ottoman rule, without a British military presence.

To the British, with little understanding of the role of land in Palestine society, the issue became what economic difference would Jews make. In fact they had already done so. The first Jewish agricultural land purchase was in 1855, and in 1870 they had established an agricultural college near Jaffa. By the turn of the century about four and half thousand Jews were earning their living from the agricultural communities

344 F.O. 371/2767/40645. Nicolson to Grey, 2 Mar. 1916.

345 Lloyd George Papers, file C/16/2/3. 'The War, Alexandretta and Mesopotamia', 16 Mar. 1915.

346 CAB 21/58, 4 Oct. 1917.

established, since 1882, by *Chovevi Zion*.³⁴⁷ Moreover, Palestine had changed dramatically in the quarter of a century prior to the Great War. Between 1882 and 1903, many Jews fled Russian persecution to become the first *aliya*. Between 1904 and the outbreak of the First World War, a second *aliya* brought tens of thousands more settlers mainly Eastern European immigrants, which provided stability derived from a critical mass. Thus, at the outbreak of the war the Jewish population numbered about seventy-five thousand. This critical mass transformed the character of the *yishuv*, and began its evolution into a 'modern and integrated polity'.³⁴⁸

The problem for the Government was how to 'go a reasonable distance to meeting the objections, both Jewish and pro-Arab', without offending either or both. Thus, the Balfour Declaration promised nothing, and only stated that Britain favoured a Jewish Home in Palestine, which they would 'use their best endeavours' to achieve plus some scraps thrown in the direction of civil and religious tolerance. Since the Declaration was to be incorporated into the British Mandate for Palestine, and means were being sought to avoid offending either Zionists or Arabs, Weizmann's words might have been of some relief

'the policy propounded [...] is the active promotion of Jewish cultural development and fullest measure of local self-government, in order that [...] the country may become a purely self-governing Commonwealth under the auspices of an established Jewish majority'.³⁴⁹

When Lloyd George met a Manchester Jewish deputation, in September 1918, it expressed the hope that Germany's defeat heralded the New Era of peace and justice foretold in the Old Testament. Under Lloyd George's statesmanship, the British Empire had 'extended its mighty [...] hand to the Jewish people [...] to regain its ancient national home and realise its age-long aspirations'.³⁵⁰ When referring to 'national prophets and seers', the 'New Era of peace and justice', and regaining their 'ancient national home', the deputation might have implied that Jews saw 'New Era' as the time when the 'Chosen People' were to be restored to their 'Promised Land'. Some Jews might have regarded Lloyd George's values as Great Britain presaging the Messianic Age. Accordingly, it might have seemed that the phenomenon of temporary exile, accepted whilst Jews awaited restoration, was nearly ended. Indeed, Lloyd George when speaking of Jewish aspirations shared with the British might easily have appeared to be advocating Jewish desires, which found a

'natural response in the minds of those responsible for the government of this

347 Laqueur, *History*, p. 78.

348 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 61.

349 Lloyd George Papers, file f/86/8/2. Memorandum 'The Situation in Palestine', 21 Jul. 1921.

349 *Ibid.*

350 *Ibid.*

country because they are in permanent accord with the sentiments of the people of Great Britain'.³⁵¹

Balfour had also written that the uniqueness of the Jewish Race was the inter-relationship between religion and country as a result of which he believed Zionism was best able to mitigate Jewish inability to organise a social Commonwealth, and bring 'long lasting benefits for Jews as well as a refuge from religious and social persecution', despite difficulties.³⁵²

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*

³⁵² Balfour, *Essay*, pp. 259-60.

Chapter 3 – Defining Palestine

Introduction

This chapter will examine how Zionist negotiations with the Arabs, from 1908, were intended to create prosperity and harmonious relations, and clarify how Zionists in Palestine and Europe perceived and responded to the nature and derivation of Arab concerns. Each should have attracted British interest, so that they could benefit from the Zionist experience and, in recognising the differing positions of each community, ameliorate opportunities to destabilise an incoming administration.

Secondly, the chapter will consider the fact that when the Paris Peace Conference convened, in 1919, Britain had taken a major step towards achieving its strategic objectives in Palestine with the issuance of the Balfour Declaration that accepted the idea of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine. This, though significant because it hinted at British interest in Palestine, left other issues in abeyance that needed the conference to decide. Major subjects were defining Palestine's boundaries, which meant revising the Sykes-Picot agreement, securing a mandate for governing the country, and agreeing its precise terms. None was straightforward, which became obvious when decisions were deferred to an Allied Prime Ministers Conference at San Remo the following year where the 'work of fashioning the political map of the post-war Near East resumed'.¹ This fashioning, insofar as Britain was concerned, meant gaining Palestine to directly protect Suez.

By late 1918, the Sykes-Picot agreement was outdated and Britain was eager to escape promises made under wartime conditions particularly when her forces were victorious in the Middle East and her administrators controlled the area from Egypt to Persia. However, to avoid attracting adverse sentiment from the United States, the Allies could not annexe territories based on secret treaties. Britain, nevertheless, was anxious to control the routes to India, and neither wanted France nor the presence of unstable successors to the Ottoman Empire in the Middle East.²

Arab Perspectives 1900-14

In 1905, a conflict of interest between Jews and Arabs was predicted as irreconcilable by Neguib Azouri, a Christian Maronite Arab Nationalist, because 'Arab awakening and Jewish efforts to re-establish the ancient Kingdom of Israel are destined to struggle continuously with one another, until one prevails over the other'.³ Farid Kassab, a Greek Orthodox Arab studying dentistry in Paris, disagreed. Arguing, in a 1906 pamphlet, that Jewish settlers in Palestine were peaceable, inoffensive, belonged to the same race, and 'are more devoted to industry and agriculture than anyone else; they

¹ Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 157.

² Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916-1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 153.

³ N Azouri, *Le Réveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1905), p. 5.

did immense good in reviving their own barren land'.⁴ Unusually, Kassab was relatively positive about Jewish resettlement and refused to allow religious or economic prejudices, to which most Arabs would remain wedded, to blind him to obvious long-term benefits.

In Palestine, before the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, Arab awareness of Jewish newcomers, despite some unease about the expanding Jewish community, was limited to immigration issues rather than Zionism.⁵ Explicit anti-Zionism developed between the summer of 1908 and the outbreak of war, coincident with the 'first stirrings of Arab patriotism and national political activity' that reached maturity after the war.⁶ New newspapers, journals and political associations established during this period meant Palestine was experiencing similar forces, linked to Arab nationalism, as elsewhere in the Middle East. This increased concerns over how Zionism, growing incrementally 'rather than emerging as a full blown phenomenon', might affect Arab political aspirations.⁷ Some Jews sought to 'identify a basis for mutual cooperation', and some Arab organisations established contact with Zionists for similar reasons.⁸ Nonetheless, the 'Revolt of the Young Turks, in July 1908, is to be viewed as the beginning of open Jewish-Arab conflict, as well as the cradle of the Arab national movement'.⁹

Newspapers such as *Al-Quds* and *al-Asmai*, published in Jerusalem and Jaffa, reflected the new political tendencies. *Al-Asmai* was frequently critical of Zionist settlers and the plight of the Arab peasantry. *Filastin*, an influential newspaper, campaigned, in 1913, to establish a 'Palestinian Patriotic Society' of Arab notables from Nablus, Haifa, Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Gaza to prevent Zionist land purchase. Arabs feared Jewish economic competition and commercial influence, which increased Arab fears and created antagonism. Other factors were Zionist immigrants who retained their foreign citizenship instead of becoming Ottoman subjects, viewed as opposing the Arab character of Palestine, and the perception of vast Zionist resources that sustained immigration and land purchase.¹⁰ Arab hostility forced Zionists to create a special press unit, from January 1912, to watch, translate, and summarise the main Arab journal articles appertaining to Zionism and the *yishuv*.¹¹ Attacks were

4 N. J. Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism Before World War I* (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1976) pp. 50-1.

5 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, pp. 55-6.

6 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 128.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*, p. 128.

9 G. Shafir, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1882-1914* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989), p. 202.

10 Tessler, *Conflict*, pp. 130-1.

11 Yishuv: Settlement. This refers to Jews who lived in Palestine between 135CE and the Mandate.

responded to with articles favourable to Zionist aims, but avoided obvious Zionist inspiration.¹² Other efforts to obtain goodwill and show they were part of the community led Zionists to stand, fruitlessly, for the Ottoman Parliament between 1908 and 1912. Notwithstanding, anti-immigration Ottoman legislation undermined Jews' standing with the Arabs, which meant 'neither Christians nor Moslems would vote for Jews and the outcome was success for the opponents of the *yishuv*'.¹³ Moreover, two of the three Jerusalem members of the Ottoman Parliament were prominent anti-Zionists who 'exploited this important platform to propound the dangers of Zionism and necessity to foil its implementation in Palestine'.¹⁴

Until 1914, opposition to Zionism was limited by the institutional weaknesses of most Arab political groups which, despite harsh rhetoric, meant they were unable to implement any significant program.¹⁵ Political appeal was also tempered by grudging praise for Jewish accomplishments such as agricultural achievements and the rebirth of Hebrew.¹⁶ Although, anti-Zionism was mostly articulated by 'a narrow stream of intellectuals whose political influence appears [...] limited', the most active of which were Christian Arab Merchants 'particularly fearful of Zionist economic competition', concern was common among Christian and Muslim Arabs over land control. Mainly, in this period, Zionist relations with Muslims were better than with Christians, which cordiality significantly reduced as war neared, demonstrated by Raghīb al-Nashashībī, the candidate from Jerusalem in the 1914 elections, stating he would devote all his strength to eliminating Zionists and Zionism. Consequently, on the eve of war Muslim rather than Christian Arabs were Zionism's most important opponents.¹⁷

Pre Mandate Zionist Perspectives

European Zionist leader's remoteness from daily existence with Arabs led to the Zionists of the *yishuv* believing Europeans did not appreciate the real issues, and ignorance and disinterest prevented concrete ideas to create amity between the two communities.¹⁸ But, genuine difficulty caused by weak finances forced Zionists to concentrate their efforts on the strategic goal of gaining British support for 'the Zionist project in Palestine'.¹⁹ Moreover, Weizmann viewed the Palestinian Arabs as a tiny fraction of the larger Arab nation not as a separate community with national

12 N. Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy: Early Arab-Zionist Negotiation Attempts, 1913-1931* vol. 1 (London: Cass, 1983), p. 207.

13 Yaacov Ro'i, 'The Zionist Attitude to the Arabs 1908-1914' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 4. 3 (1968) 198-242 (p. 208).

14 Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement 1918-1929* (London: Cass, 1974), pp. 27-8.

15 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 131.

16 Y. Porath, *Emergence*, p. 29.

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*

19 Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 6.

aspirations.²⁰ Consequently, 'Zionist executives, and almost all currents in the Zionist movement, misjudged the strength of Arab nationalism and the weight of its opposition to Zionist aspirations'.²¹ In 1908, the Zionist Organisation opened its Palestine office, which, in effect, acknowledged Arab hostility amounted to more than localised and episodic anti-Jewish disturbances, but reflected 'a national hatred and jealousy'. An increasingly intense sense of insecurity had developed within the *yishuv* where Jews, constantly buffeted by Arab discontent and heavily exposed to their culture, prioritised relations with Arabs as a subject of concern which was articulated by *yishuv* writers such as Yitzhak Epstein, Yosef Luria and Nissim Malul.²² The latter wrote, in 1913, that 'we must consolidate our Semitic nationality and not obfuscate it with European culture'.²³ Without wanting to detract from Zionist aims, many in the *yishuv* believed that Zionism relied too greatly on Jewish-Arab cultural and political ambitions and relations to redress Arab complaints over Zionist activities.²⁴

Other *yishuv* Zionists warned against assimilating Jewish settlers into Arab culture that was perceived as a threat to Zionist political aspirations, and inimical to the preservation of their high standards of morality and civilisation. These Zionists felt division was a prerequisite to gaining a Jewish majority and urged Jews to 'keep their distance from the fellahin and their base attitudes'.²⁵ Some also asserted intercommunal conflict was unavoidable, so assisting Arabs would undermine the security of the *yishuv*. This view gained currency in the immediate pre-war years.²⁶ Integration and separation were opposites in a broad spectrum of Zionist reasoning over dealing with the Arabs. Complicating any approach was the belief that 'should a choice be required, the national cause of the Jewish people must be given priority'.²⁷ Thus, Zionists tended to devote their energies to creating their own society, rather than joining a foreign 'cultural and social milieu'.²⁸ Inevitably, this retarded efforts at stabilising relations, which caused Y. Radler Feldman to write to the Berlin Zionist Head Office, in March 1913, stating that in Palestine two contrary opinions co-existed, one underrated the Arab question, and the other exaggerated it so

'Jews who came within the last 30 years were unable [...] to establish friendly relations [...]. At the moment hatred [...] is being fanned by the press and

20 Shlaim, *Iron Wall*, p. 6.

21 Shafir, *Land, Labour and Origins*, p. 204.

22 *Ibid*, p. 203.

23 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 135.

24 *Ibid*, p. 136.

25 *Ibid*, p. 138.

26 *Ibid*, p. 137.

27 *Ibid*, p. 139.

28 Laqueur, *History*, pp. 217, 230.

animosity is becoming more frequent'.²⁹

Reconciliation Attempts

Nevertheless, some Zionists, even before 1914, made practical attempts at reconciliation and peaceful co-existence, and they attempted to create local goodwill by providing Arabs with free medical treatment, inviting Arab 'children to study in Jewish educational institutions or through commercial dealings that often produced patterns of mutual gratitude, dependence, and/or friendship'.³⁰ However, close encounters with Zionists only increased 'Arab fears, resentment or jealousy towards the newcomers'.³¹ Diplomacy also failed. Sokolow's April 1914 effort to explain Zionism to the Arab press was rebuffed by Rafiq al-Azm, an Arab Decentralist Party leader, saying Jews were perceived as distancing themselves completely from Arabs and were considered foreigners 'in language, school, commerce, customs, in their entire economic life. [...]. This is the reason for the grievance of the Arabs [...] against Jewish immigration. [...] they see their very existence threatened'.³²

Hoping higher-level diplomacy might help gain Arab acceptance, Zionists tried to convene a meeting with representatives from both sides to 'defuse a potentially explosive situation'.³³ Tentatively arranged for July 1914, it was continually postponed until war intervened and the opportunity lost. Were there any real grounds for optimism that a conference might create lasting understanding? Zionists were sceptical about reaching any accord with the Arabs. Consequently, they did not deploy their 'first line' personnel, but preferred to keep the talks "exploratory".³⁴ The Arab proposed agenda was equally unpromising, and required that

1. The Zionists should explain, as far as possible by producing documentary evidence, the aims and methods of Zionism and the colonisation of Palestine connected therewith.
2. Thereafter the Arabs will formulate their demands, acceptance of which would determine whether the Zionist Movement could be considered harmful to the Arabs or not.³⁵

Ominously, Zionists were effectively expected to concede all Arab demands. Yet, since Arab agreement hinged on whether they found anything about the Zionist Movement harmful, and land purchase opposed by the Arabs was at the heart of the movement, it is questionable how they could not have found Zionism harmful. Zionists also had doubts, particularly over the status of Arab negotiators. Victor Jacobson, the official Zionist agent in Istanbul, noted that every Arab leader claimed he was the only

29 Yaacov Ro'i, 'Zionist Attitude' *MES*, 4, (p. 235).

30 Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, p. 13.

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Ibid.*, p. 218 cites *al-Muqattam*, 14 Apr. 1914.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

34 *Ibid.*

35 CZA, Z3/1457, Ruppin to Zionist Action Committee, 23 Jul. 1914

real, 'the important one [...]. There is no way of knowing what truth there is in what they say, what is behind them. They do not have a *single* organisation'.³⁶

Relationships with the Ottomans also needed care. Though Arabs comprised a quarter of the Ottoman Parliament they mistrusted CUP attempts 'Ottomanising' the ethnically diverse Empire, which provided a useful pretext for Arabs to claim 'Ottoman indifference to the Zionist "danger"'.³⁷ Ottoman control of immigration and land sales made Zionists hesitate to risk poor relations by direct overtures to the Arabs, fearing this would 'alienate Ottoman sympathy'.³⁸ Conversely, Ottoman interests were best served by encouraging Zionists towards an Arab accord, though this risked serious political damage, so that greater numbers of Jews could return. From the Ottoman perspective, selling land to the Jews could have gained Jewish gratitude and access to their funds. Any resulting progress in Palestine's economy might have led to reduced Arab hostility.³⁹ This tactic of allowing Jewish settlement to improve Palestine's economy relied on Arab gullibility accepting the ploy, and resist demanding unacceptable concessions from Zionists. Dr. Yaacov Thon, the Deputy Director of the Zionist Organisation's Palestine office, recognising the danger, observed 'Arabs will not let themselves be played off with simple phrases, while we can hardly consent to such concessions as they would in fact demand from us'.⁴⁰ Subsequent discussions with the Arabs proved Thon shrewdness when he noted that, whilst the Zionist "bride" was being courted 'for her imagined riches, riches which she knew she did not really possess; [...], her persistent Arab "suitor" was already anticipating her possible infidelity [...] laying down stringent conditions'.⁴¹

Richard Lichtheim, Jacobson's deputy in Istanbul, attests to Zionists' thorough intelligence appraisal of Arab notions, observing they would remain natural opponents and do not

'care a straw for the "joint Semitic spirit". 'They want orderly government, just taxes and political independence. [...]. The Jew [...] is a competitor who threatens their predominance'.⁴²

This 'gulf' between the aims and interests of the two parties is indicative of the fundamental differences between Zionists and Arabs.⁴³

36 CZA, Z3: 65; L2: 34 II, 514.

37 Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, p. 15.

38 *Ibid*, p. 17.

39 *Ibid*, p. 23.

40 Ro'i, 'Zionist Attitude', *MES*, 4 (pp. 231-2), quoting Dr. Thon, undated.

41 Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, pp. 24-5.

42 Laqueur, *History*, p. 229, cites Richard Lichtheim, Oct and Nov. 1914.

43 Caplan, *Futile Diplomacy*, p. 27.

Other Cooperation Attempts

Not all Arab nationalists opposed Zionism, which became clear at the 1913 Paris Arab Congress when Sheikh Ahmad Tabbarah, a Beirut newspaper editor, noted that though some opposed non-Arab migration he, personally, was in favour and believed it beneficial. Subsequently, a resolution approved immigration that would 'contribute to the economic well-being' of Palestine, which 'was meant to indicate support for Jewish not Turkish immigration'.⁴⁴ The chairman of the congress, Abd al-Hamid al-Zahrani, advised a Zionist newspaper that Jews and Arabs should 'make common cause for the material and moral rehabilitation of our common land'.⁴⁵ On the Congress platform the Ottoman Decentralisation Party, formed in 1912 with branches in Syria, Iraq and Palestine that comprised of Christian and Muslim members led by Syrian émigrés, initiated an entente with the Zionists originating from a comment in *al-Ahram* by David Barkat, its editor, stating an entente was imperative between Zionists and Arabs.

'The Zionists are necessary for the country; the capital they will bring, their knowledge, intelligence and industriousness [...], will contribute [...] to the regeneration of the country'.⁴⁶

Another article supported Jewish immigration provided Jews became Ottoman subjects and refrained from political activity.

Cairo Syrians viewed Zionism from a broader pan-Arab perspective, and were inclined to accept that the economic benefit of Jewish immigration did not challenge Arab long-term political aspirations. Though many were cautious as to whether Jews might establish an independent state, would learn Arabic, or embrace Arab dreams, they were tolerant of a Jewish national home.⁴⁷ Rashid Rida, the highly regarded Muslim thinker and editor of *al-Manar*, believed it was imperative to reinforce *dar al-Islam* to meet the challenge of a technically superior Europe. This meant accepting Jewish aid without which there could be no development, poverty, and ruin.⁴⁸ His proviso to accepting aid was fear of Arabs drowning in debt, and though he believed they could learn from working beside Jews, was anxious Zionist land purchase would lead to control of the country.⁴⁹ Arabs sent mixed signals. Rashid Rida though favouring rapprochement with the Zionists, also felt differences might mean assembling Arab forces in opposition,

'first by forming societies and companies, and finally [...] armed gangs that will

44 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 141.

45 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, p. 162.

46 *Ibid*, p. 150.

47 *Ibid*, p. 142.

48 Neville Mandel, 'Attempts at Arab-Zionist Entente: 1913-1914' *Middle East Studies*, 1, 1 (October, 1964) 238-67 (p. 241), cites *al-Manar*, 14 (1911) pp. 713-7.

49 CZA. L2/94/. Letter by Nissim Malul, 7 Jul. 1914.

oppose (Zionists) by force. Some say that this is the first thing [...], because cauterisation is the only way'.⁵⁰

It seems likely that Rida, fearing the collapse of the Ottoman state, sought Zionist support for eventual Arab independence, though, strikingly, having expressed the need to reach agreement he mostly stressed forceful opposition.

Following the Decentralists' initiative, a preliminary verbal agreement was reached with the editor of *Le Jeune Turque* (Turkish Youth), in May 1913, and was initially implemented in conjunction with talks to convene an Arab-Jewish Congress in Cairo intended to reach agreement with Zionists over Jewish immigration into Syria and Palestine that could create a rapprochement between the Arab and Jewish worlds. In exchange, *Le Jeune Turque* agreed to support the Arab movement, whilst it remained compatible with the unity and integrity of the empire.⁵¹ Links between Arabs and Zionists continued until the outbreak of war when a combination of Ottoman hostility, Zionist hesitation, and Palestinian anti-Zionism, eliminated any positive developments or chance of any alliance.⁵²

Post War Cooperation Attempts

On 3 January 1919, Weizmann and Feisal, spurred by the British, met to create an accord on Palestine. The resultant Feisal-Weizmann agreement, which Weizmann believed would establish 'a real political entente', was intended to provide a co-operative basis of tolerance between Arabs and Jews. Feisal had stated that Jews and Arabs are 'very close in blood', but the Arabs wished for 'a great trustee' to avoid any 'clash of races' whilst any administration actively promoted the 'material prosperity of the country'.⁵³ The agreement committed both parties to conduct all relations between them by the most cordial goodwill and understanding, work together to encourage large scale Jewish immigration, protect the rights of the Arab peasants and tenant farmers, and safeguard freedom of religion. The Zionist movement undertook to assist Palestinian Arabs to develop their natural resources and establish a growing economy. The Arabs agreed to accept the Balfour Declaration and any disputes were to be arbitrated by the British Government; though Feisal's acceptance was conditional on the British discharging wartime promises of Arab independence. A major difficulty was that any agreement between the Zionists and Feisal would have struggled against basic fears of Jewish commercial ability, land purchase, and Muslim contempt for the Jews as *dhimmi*. In particular, any

⁵⁰ Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, p. 188, cites *Al-Manar*, 7, 4, (1914), p. 320.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 157.

⁵² Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 143.

⁵³ J. C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine*, 2 vols (New York: Horton, 1950), 2, pp. 38-9.

change to Jews' subservient status was certain to create even greater Moslem animosity, which was already inflamed by the Balfour Declaration that 'left much room for interpretation'.⁵⁴

Revising Sykes-Picot, 1917-19

In April 1917, concerned about the security of Egypt, the War Cabinet agreed to renegotiate the Sykes-Picot agreement to bring Palestine under British control rather than an international administration that was its original destination.⁵⁵ Thus, before Sykes became political officer to General Archibald Murray, the commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, Robertson impressed upon him 'the difficult relations with the French in this region' and 'stressed the 'importance, [...], of securing the addition of Palestine to the British area'.⁵⁶ On 14 August 1917, Sykes wrote to the Foreign Office, saying 'I believe the time has come when, in the interests of both Great Britain and France, discussion [...] would be desirable in regard to the Asia-Minor Agreement'.⁵⁷ He also warned that the Turkey-in-Asia problem should not be viewed from an imperialistic stance, or

'we shall find ourselves completely at variance with the strong moral forces which will weigh down the scales at the end of the war, with the result that our enemies, [...] gain their ends'.⁵⁸

This was Sykes' rather elliptical way of seeking revision to the Agreement with France. Clayton, in the same year, wrote to Lawrence admitting that Britain had to honour the Agreement. Although he thought that if ignored it would die of its own accord, he added 'it is in fact dead, and if we wait quietly, this fact will soon be realised'.⁵⁹ According to Sykes, writing to Percy Cox, British chief political officer in Mesopotamia, in the spring of 1917, one of the Agreement's virtues was that it did not violate President of the United States Woodrow Wilson's principles of national self-determination and non-annexation. Implacably opposed to the Agreement, Curzon, in 1917, described it as having been drawn up 'as a sort of fancy sketch to suit a situation that had not then arisen, and which it was thought extremely unlikely would ever arise; [...]'.⁶⁰ A year later, Sykes told Picot the agreement no longer applied because it was 'completely out of date'.⁶¹ Military concerns were expressed in minutes of the Eastern Committee, in December 1918, observing that it would be offensive 'if an enterprising and ambitious foreign power is placed on interior lines with reference to our position in the Middle

54 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 140.

55 David, French, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition 1916-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 133-5.

56 French, *Strategy*, pp. 133-5.

57 F.O. 371/3059. 14 Aug. 1917.

58 Sanders, *High Walls*, p. 588.

59 Fromkin, *Peace*, pp. 342-3.

60 Lloyd George, *Peace Conference*, 2, pp. 664-5.

61 Oxford. Bodleian Library, Milner Papers. Palestine file 140/21-2, 1918.

East'.⁶² When Lord Curzon revealed that the Foreign Office felt bound by the agreement, he noted it 'appeared now to be relying upon the Sykes-Picot Agreement from which the Eastern Committee had hitherto been doing their best to escape'.⁶³ Though Sykes believed the idea of Arab nationalism absurd, 'our Congress case will be good if we can say we are helping to develop a race on nationalist lines under our protection', he also believed the French 'will be ready to cooperate with us in a common policy towards the Arab speaking people'.⁶⁴ By July 1918, Sykes conceded the Agreement was defunct and had to be abandoned, so requested that the Eastern Committee seek French concord, saying 'the Agreement of 1916 was dead, and what was now required was some modification, or substitute'.⁶⁵ This simply acknowledged the reality of Allenby's 1918 victories that 'had already begun an effective revision' and left France unable to control Palestine.⁶⁶ Furthermore, Lloyd George had said that, having been concluded over two years earlier, the Agreement entirely overlooked the British won position in Turkey towards which 'our Allies had contributed little'.⁶⁷ Lack of trust between the British and French meant the latter perceived abrogating the Agreement in respect of Palestine simply cloaked British intentions for Syria. Lloyd George, unavailingly, tried to disabuse the French, as had British field officers by dishonestly saying France should not discard her claims in favour of Britain, but for a sovereign Arab nation led by Feisal, a view which contradicted their own assertions that Arabs were incapable of self-government.⁶⁸ This, perhaps, asked too much of French scepticism especially when Hogarth had stated Arab direction would be incompetent so a European Power 'must run things'. Clearly, if the French were excluded only one European Power was available.⁶⁹

Lloyd George was intoxicated by the possibility of a Middle East that would harbour a new Jewish civilisation in Palestine; safeguard Suez and its links to India, bring loyal obedient Arab states in the Fertile Crescent and the Tigris and Euphrates valleys under British control, especially if this meant excluding France.⁷⁰ From the British perspective, controlling Palestine, because of its proximity to Suez, was best achieved by keeping it in their hands; a view hardened by the Eastern Committee repeatedly stating that if France kept Palestine protecting Suez would necessitate a large British force in Egypt.⁷¹

62 Goldstein, *Winning*, p. 157.

63 Nevakivi, *Arab Middle East*, p. 74.

64 MECA, Sykes Papers, DR 588.25, 1917.

65 CAB 27/24. Eastern Committee minutes, 18 Jul. 1918.

66 Sanders, *High Walls*, p. 633.

67 CAB 23/8/482. War Cabinet meeting, 3 Oct. 1918.

68 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 345.

69 *Ibid*, pp. 345-6.

70 Margaret Macmillan, *Peacemakers* (London: John Murray, 2001), p. 393.

71 *Ibid*, p. 396.

Mutual suspicion between Britain and France had not been assuaged when to French dismay General Allenby captured Jerusalem, in December 1917. Suspicions increased with fears that France would be deprived, as Britain prepared another major Syrian offensive in the summer of 1918, 'of benefits that were rightfully hers by those who diverted troops at the crucial moment', or when the Military refused to hand over territories designated to France under the Agreement.⁷² Picot warned Sykes that 'the spiteful see it as evidence of hidden intentions. Even others are becoming anxious'. Neither French views nor Picot, described as 'rather a vain and weak man jealous of his own position and of the prestige of France', were regarded seriously.⁷³ Russia's exit from the war encouraged British hopes of dominating the Cape to Cairo route and the Middle East to secure the 'Southern British world' threatened by France's rejuvenated imperialism that made the British mistrust territorial concessions pledged under wartime agreements. Britain's imperial security made it vital to confine the French to the narrowest possible limits in Arab lands and abandon any claim to preponderance in northern Palestine, thereby avoiding future conflict and protecting Egypt's eastern approaches.⁷⁴ In the second half of August 1919, British ministers revised Middle East requirements. This resulted in agreeing to honour pledges given to the French concerning Syria. But the question of Palestine, and its development as a Jewish homeland, remained problematical especially as its frontier with French dominated Syria still needed delineating.⁷⁵

Neither France nor Britain, though, could afford to ignore Woodrow Wilson's desire to take the wishes of the indigenous populations seriously, having told Congress, in February 1918, that 'every territorial settlement in this war must be in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned'.⁷⁶ Gaston Domergue, a former French minister of colonies, summed up the dilemma well, saying 'the obstacle is America'.⁷⁷ In an attempt to convince the Americans, Domergue used their language to secure imperial goals 'we need a colonial empire to exercise, in the interests of humanity, the civilising vocation of France'.⁷⁸ Britain also recognised upsetting America was counter productive, so aimed her diplomacy at persuading America that Arab wishes were valued, and simultaneously hoped this would pressurise the French to release some of their entitlement under Sykes-Picot. They

⁷² Andrews & Kanya- Forster, *France Overseas*, p. 152.

⁷³ *Ibid*, pp. 158-9.

⁷⁴ John Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East: Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War 1918-1922* (London: MacMillan, 1981), pp. 153-4.

⁷⁵ Darwin, *Middle East*, pp. 170-1.

⁷⁶ MacMillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 397.

⁷⁷ Andrews & Kanya- Forster, *France Overseas*, p. 149.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 147.

also warned that if the only way out of British difficulties with the French, Arabs, or any others was playing the self-determination card suggested by Lord Curzon because 'we are more likely to benefit'.⁷⁹

Britain's problem was that promissory notes given to the Arabs, Zionists and French during the war were now redeemable. Thus, protecting Suez meant altering undertakings to the French and Arabs that were complicated by Feisal's claim to Syria, which was upheld and encouraged by Lawrence, designated under Sykes-Picot. Though the French perceived British use of Feisal as a scheme to weaken their case for Syria, the British had already warned Feisal that he may have to accept French overlordship which, contrary to the Arab stance, would not include Palestine.⁸⁰ More concerned with France's security in Europe, but ready to accept the British in the Middle East, Clemenceau also knew French public opinion expected a settlement that accorded with France's position because she had 'always played a great part there'.⁸¹

President Wilson returned to America, on 14 February 1919, and left Arab territorial issues to fester mainly because of British inability to decide whether they should honour Sykes-Picot and give Syria to France as preferred by the Foreign Office,⁸² or, as Curzon desired, remain to prevent a swath of French controlled area, feared by the military, from Armenia in the north to Palestine in the south.⁸³ Additionally, Lloyd George professed to feel an obligation to the Arabs that made him reluctant to abandon them to the French, saying 'we could not face the East again if we broke faith'.⁸⁴ Both may have been true, however delaying the withdrawal of British troops from Syria persuaded the French, if any persuasion was necessary, of British untrustworthiness. Balfour succinctly addressed this extraordinary muddle by blaming French unreasonableness partly on the

'essentially false position [...] we have placed ourselves by insisting on a military Occupation of a country which we do not propose to keep [...], excluding those whom we recognise are to have it [...]'⁸⁵

Addressing the Supreme Council, on 27 February 1919, Zionist unanimity was broken by Sylvain Lévy, a distinguished French scholar, who claimed, with the approval of the Quai d'Orsay, the French Foreign Ministry, that only a minority of French Jews were Zionists. He stated most Jews were

79 Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 397.

80 *Ibid*, p. 404.

81 *Ibid*.

82 Zeine, *Arab Nationalism*, p. 19.

83 Nevakivi, *Arab Middle East*, p. 98.

84 Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, pp. 403-4.

85 *Ibid*, p. 404 cites Balfour Papers, 49734/164-167, 8 Sept. 1919.

'Jewish in sentiment, but French above all', and wanted France's ancient rights in Palestine unchanged because, as a Mediterranean nation and a great force for civilisation in the world, France was the most suitable nation to take on the mandate.⁸⁶ Propaganda, Lévy asserted, was the reason France accepted the idea of a Jewish homeland, but there was no peacetime need to release her claim. France's real objective was to gain Palestine without appearing anti-Zionist. Finally, in April 1920, France gained a Mandate for Syria in exchange for a British Mandate over Palestine and Mosul.⁸⁷

The Mandate and its Boundaries

In April 1920, the victorious World War I allies, except the United States, met in San Remo, Italy, where Britain was awarded the mandate over Palestine. The mandate, technically, held the territory in trusteeship until the political system was sufficiently developed to warrant independence and admission to the League of Nations.

Three elements surrounded a mandate; boundaries, expectations of a mandatory, and the nature of its powers. Of these, the principal issue was the first.

Within the Ottoman Empire there was no political entity of 'Palestine'. Instead, the country was divided into three *sanjaks*.⁸⁸ Under the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement the Galilee and Acre, in the north, were designated for France and the remaining territory for international or British rule.⁸⁹ Thus, when Lloyd George rather airily reserved the right to retain Palestine's boundaries as being from 'Dan to Beersheba' without specifying whether this included the waters of the Litani and Jordan rivers, it was regarded by the French as increasing Palestine at the expense of Syria and abrogating the Sykes-Picot Agreement to which France continued wedded.⁹⁰ Britain, anxious to control the routes to India, neither wanted France or unstable successors to the Ottoman Empire established in the Middle East.⁹¹ Though ministers agreed that British supremacy in the Middle East permitted and required a system of political control over Palestine, Curzon wanted to exclude any foreign influence from this 'strategic buffer of Egypt', which united with Balfour's concern that any slackening of imperial control would endanger the Zionist settlers and the creation of a Jewish national home.⁹²

When the British proposed withdrawing their armies from Syria and Lebanon, in September 1919, it raised the question of how far south they should withdraw. Allenby and Lloyd George planned

86 Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, pp. 429-30.

87 John Marlowe, *The Seat of Pilate* (London: Cresset Press, 1959), p. 54.

88 Sanjak: Administrative division of the Ottoman Empire.

89 John J. McTague, 'Anglo-French Negotiations Over the Boundaries of Palestine, 1919-1920' in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 11, 2 (1982), 100-12 (p. 100).

90 Woodward & Butler, *DBFP*, 4, p. 610. Curzon to Derby, 8 Jan. 1920.

91 Goldstein, *Winning*, p. 153.

92 John Darwin, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East: Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War 1918-1922* (London: MacMillan, 1981), p. 156.

to retain the headwaters of the rivers Yarmuk, and East of the Jordan, the Jordan and Lake Tiberias all on the French side of the Sykes-Picot line. Hence, on 13 September 1919, the government presented the French with an *aide-memoire* announcing British withdrawal from Syria and Cilicia.⁹³ Clemenceau accepted this withdrawal, but would not concede the border definition within the *aide-memoire*.⁹⁴ Britain's argument for seeking a permanent border was that economic necessity made it essential, if agricultural development was to be successful, to include the headwaters of the Jordan and other waters north of the boundaries in the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Agreement with the French proved impossible and the meeting was adjourned on December 23.⁹⁵ Resuming, in February 1920, Lloyd-George protested that Britain was taking on a heavy burden with Palestine and that its prosperity required more than 'the barren rocks of Judea'. By which he meant that the northern waters on the French side of the Sykes-Picot Line were vital to Palestine, but insignificant to Syria.⁹⁶ Finally, after further difficult negotiations, the boundary between Syria and Palestine was determined by a joint Boundary Commission signed by Britain and France on 7 March 1923.⁹⁷

When drawing up the terms of the Mandate, the difficulties for Britain became apparent. Curzon told Balfour 'personally I am so convinced Palestine will be a rankling thorn in the flesh of whoever is charged with its Mandate, that I would withdraw from this responsibility while we yet can'.⁹⁸ Strategically, Britain's desire to protect Suez directly involved gaining Palestine. This, however, relied on gaining Jewish funds for development. Hence, Mandate terms had to encourage Zionists without affecting British control. Significantly, ambiguity in the most important Articles allowed Britain to interpret these terms favourably, whilst still being able to claim they were acting within them. Thus, under Article One of the Mandate, Britain gained full legislative and administrative powers, and under Article Two was liable for 'placing the country under such political, administrative, and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of a Jewish national home', yet, under Article Three, it had to promote local autonomy 'insofar as circumstances permitted'.⁹⁹ Similarly, Article 4 meant recognising 'an appropriate Jewish agency as a public body' to advise and cooperate with the administration over economic and social developments affecting the establishment of the Jewish national home', but subject to the control of the Administration. Importantly for Britain, the Mandate

93 CAB 21/153. British Peace Conference Delegates meeting, 10 Sept. 1919.

94 CAB 23/12/922. Meeting of the Five Principal Allied Powers, 15 Sept. 1919.

95 Woodward & Butler, *DBFP*, 4, pp. 595-603. Anglo French meeting, 23 Dec. 1919.

96 *Ibid*, 7, pp. 99-119, 173-85, Allied Conference, 17-21 Feb. 1920.

97 McTague, 'Boundaries of Palestine' in *JPS* 11, 2 (p. 109).

98 Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 434.

99 Laqueur & Rubin, *Reader*, p. 35.

was for an indeterminate period, did not create a Jewish State and, under Article Eleven, awarded Britain control of internal and external security.¹⁰⁰

Victorian strategies evolved by Palmerston, Gladstone, and Salisbury for the defence of India had made it a cardinal doctrine that no hostile power could be allowed to control Suez. Traditionally, British strategy was to maintain a close but informal partnership with the Ottoman Empire by strenuous resistance to undermining its political independence or territorial integrity. However, once the Ottomans joined the Central Powers, in 1914, a new long term strategy had to be evolved especially when Turkey was willing to act as an agent for Germany. Britain could now no longer protect the route to India cheaply by using the Royal Navy and a few battalions of the British and Indian armies, and the Indian Empire was unable to positively contribute to the security system built around it.¹⁰¹ Controlling Palestine enabled continuity of this Victorian strategy.

Conclusion

In the years that followed its signing, the Sykes-Picot Agreement became the target of bitter criticism. Lloyd George referred to it as an, "egregious" and "foolish" document; quite indignant that Palestine was 'inconsiderately mutilated' by the 'carving knife of the Sykes Picot Agreement, which was a crude hacking of the Holy Land'.¹⁰² As seen from the perspective of 1917 this was, perhaps, true, but in the winter of 1915–16 when negotiations were in full swing, the British did not fully appreciate Palestine's strategic importance since their overriding aim was to make an Arab uprising possible. Any Arab uprising, though, hinged on French concessions to Arab demands in the Syrian hinterland. British 'attitudes toward imperial expansion had radically changed in the interim', but France regarded Syria as sacrosanct, and were suspicious that British desire to control Palestine was an excuse for gaining Syria as well.¹⁰³ This suspicion was not unfounded since Maurice Hankey, the war cabinet secretary, had recorded Lloyd George as saying that he wanted to 'go back on the Sykes-Picot [...] to get Palestine for us and bring Mosul into the British zone and [...] keep the French out of Syria'.¹⁰⁴ Finally, when Lloyd George and Clemenceau, the French President, met, in December 1918, an accord was reached whereby Britain gained Palestine and Mosul, and France gained Syria.

Once territorial and boundary issues had been resolved with the French, the British were able to consider the Mandate. Since Zionist funds were essential to developing Palestine's economy, Britain, as the Mandatory, needed a free hand. Both were gained, but a more salient issue was whether the

100 Laqueur & Rubin, *Reader* pp. 34-42.

101 Darwin, *Middle East*, pp. 143-5.

102 David Lloyd George, *The Truth about the Peace Treaties* 2 vols. (London: Gollancz, 1938), 2, pp. 1023, 1025, 1115.

103 Morris, *Righteous Victims*, p. 78.

104 Fromkin, *Peace*, p. 374.

British understood the tensions between Palestine's communities, or the extent of Zionist attempts at conciliating the Arabs. In the years prior to the war, some attempt at cooperation had been made but as war grew closer the chances of reconciliation faded with growing Arab fears that Zionist economic prowess would leave them taking and governing the country. These issues should have concerned the British, but 'the strivings of Arab nationalism [...] were totally unknown' though sufficient sources of information were available in the Consular Service, the Mission field, and the Arab Bureau.¹⁰⁵ Perhaps typical of the British view of Palestinian Arabs was Clayton, stating they 'are not to be compared with the real Arab of the desert or [...] other civilised districts in Syria and Mesopotamia'.¹⁰⁶

What the British had failed to appreciate, in Ben Gurion's words to *Va'ad Zmani*, the *yishuv's* governing body, in June 1919, was that the Zionists saw no solution 'there is a gulf, and nothing can bridge it [...] we, as a nation, want this country to be *ours*: the Arabs, as a nation, want this country to be *theirs*'.¹⁰⁷ In reality, the question for Britain was how to gain a Protectorate yet simultaneously avoid internal conflict, which the next chapter will discuss.

105 Marlowe, *Pilates Seat*, p. 40.

106 Morris, *Righteous Victims*, p. 89.

107 Neil Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question 1917 -1925* (London: Cass, 1978), p. 42.

Chapter 4 - Land Disputes and the Making of British Strategy

Significant questions discussed in this chapter are British understanding of Zionist and Arab perceptions and how clashes with the French and Arabs were countered. These questions include the nature of Arab nationalism in Palestine, how it coloured relations between Arabs and Zionists, and whether British strategy to govern Palestine, in order to protect Suez, dealt with these relationships. Governing required an intelligence system to acquire information on Jewish and Arab views, the acumen to resolve questions of land ownership and Arab accusations of Zionist land theft, improving Arab agriculture from its parlous state and countering Arab enmity over Zionist land purchase. Because the issue of land ownership was the most important problem, and one which the British Military Administration had to evolve a strategy to deal with, this chapter encompasses all the issues surrounding land that include Arab concepts of nationalism, Feisal's propaganda campaign to recruit Palestinians to his army, the effect on the *fellaheen* of Zionist land purchase, and the ethos of the first two *aliyot* on the country's development. Similarly considered are agricultural practice and taxation under the Ottoman regime, which ensured survival for the *fellaheen* was due to chance rather than planning.

Successfully defusing the contentious land issue required an intelligence system to provide data and understanding of Jewish and Arab perspectives. Thus, this chapter commences with Allenby's installation of a Military Government, when he entered Jerusalem, in December 1917, and the predictable effect, on all Palestine's communities, of the Military acting as a civil government.

A central narrative of this entire history has been the British Government's failure to clarify its expectations of Palestine, and how these were to be realised. Elsewhere in this thesis it has been shown that there was very little consistency and much opposition to any involvement. Having installed a Military Regime, it was incumbent upon Whitehall to become more actively involved in governing the country, which had long been its intention. Instead, Whitehall resorted to sending a Zionist Commission led by Chaim Weizmann, in 1917, with a wide ranging brief to ascertain the facts of the situation in the country at the time, and facilitate uniting the different communities behind the Military Administration. Appointing and sending the Zionist Commission, only grudgingly accepted by the Military Administration, is indicative that the British viewed Zionism as a political movement and failed to understand that some of its roots lay in the Biblical traditions of the 'Chosen People', the 'Promised Land', and the 'Messianic Era'. As will be seen, clarifying British involvement was made more difficult because the Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, was unclear about his expectations, which at best were confused, and at worst contradictory.

From December 1917 until June 1920, Palestine was governed by a British Military Administration. It was essential, in taking control of a country devastated by four years of war, to devise a strategy to defuse Muslim, Jewish, and Christian tensions over land, religion, and territory that were exacerbated by large-scale Jewish relocation. One root of subsequent British difficulties lay in their ambiguous support of Sharif Hussein of Mecca, which was boosted by Arab fears that large-scale repatriation of Jews meant losing control of the land they regarded as their own. Another root was British failure to recognise the longevity of Zionist attachment to the land they believed given by Biblical tradition.

Economics and Military Control

Britain's prerequisite to protect Suez could not be met without developing Palestine's economy and infrastructure. So, whilst doing little to discourage Arab dreams of their own empire, Britain courted Zionists whose access to the financial resources of world Jewry was essential to finance growth. Lloyd George, though emotionally attached to the idea of a Jewish Commonwealth, pragmatically realised that supporting Jewish re-settlement would benefit British strategy by gaining access to development capital. But, large-scale Jewish migration brought a grave risk of civil disturbance. This fear was exploited by anti-Zionists in the Military Government who judged supporting Zionism as contrary to the interests of the British Empire.¹

Sovereignty over Palestine gave 'room for a strategic base and, with Jewish consent, the best harbour in the Eastern Mediterranean (Haifa)', which, when added to their known commitment to develop the country, contributed to Zionism's attraction.² Therefore, when formulating British strategy, a clear understanding of the reality of Jewish-Arab relations was required, and also ways of defusing Arab reaction to large-scale immigration. Grandiloquent phraseology in the proclamation given to Sharif Hussein had allowed him to construe the British favoured an Arab Kingdom in the Middle East, which created the foreseeable result of the land claim in the Damascus Protocols. British failure to immediately quash these aspirations emboldened the Emir to believe Arab yearnings would be unopposed. Similarly, British failure to assert their authority over Sharif Hussein inspired Feisal, his son, especially after the publication of the Balfour Declaration, in 1917, to welcome defeat of the Ottoman Empire, which he believed would result in the creation of an autonomous Arab State. Yet, though Feisal welcomed Jewish finances to develop

¹ Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 22.

² *Ibid*, pp. 17-19.

Palestine's economy, he feared and resisted their land purchase. Constructing Palestine's infrastructure required a vast monetary investment that was anticipated would be raised by world Jewry. Investment on this scale meant Zionists would expect that rewards derived from developing the country's economy would benefit the entire population. Firstly, the country had to be secured, which the Zionist Organisation's August 1920 letter to Lloyd George, stating world Jewry's unprecedented sacrifices for upbuilding Palestine meant they had to be sure 'that the economic status is secured and safeguarded', shows was clearly understood.³ Though expected to provide the funds to rebuild their national home, whilst governed by the British for an indeterminate period, Zionists received no clear indication over their influence in the corridors of power. Obvious British protection of Zionists would have alienated the Arabs whose nationalistic expectations were unmatched by either the education or skills needed to participate in government. Presciently, in 1919, Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, the Chief Political Officer, observed to Lloyd George that in fifty years time both Jews and Arabs would be obsessed with nationalism, which

'prefers self-government, [...], to government by foreigners [...]. A National Home for the Jews must develop sooner or later into sovereignty. [...] Arab nationalism will also develop into sovereignty [...]. Jewish and Arab sovereignty must clash. [...] the Arab will do his utmost to check the growth and power of a Jewish Palestine. That means bloodshed'.⁴

Accordingly, resolving disputes over land ownership was the key issue for the Military Administration if conflict was to be avoided. Major issues surrounding ownership and cultivation of land, believed to be guaranteed by the Balfour Declaration as a right of the non-Jewish community, were

- '(1) the area available for cultivation by residents or immigrants, due allowance being made not only for wasteland, but that required for afforestation or grazing [...].
- (2) The extent to which extensive can be replaced by intensive cultivation, and the water resources in Palestine can be developed'.⁵

Safeguarding these entailed understanding the communities they were intended to protect. Hence, it was vital that Arab claims to have either owned or cultivated the land for many centuries were scrutinised in the light of both Zionist land purchase and Ottoman rule. Such assertions were an important dimension to allegations of Zionist land theft that rested on how Arabs and land ownership are defined.

3 Lloyd George Papers, file F/92/16/4. Zionist Organisation to Foreign Secretary, 11 Aug. 1920.

4 Meinertzhagen, *Diary*, pp. 17-18.

5 Cmnd. 5479 (1937), p. 218. The report refers to 'following a well beaten track' back to 1920'.

Strategy and Military Government

In a desire that reflected the government's need for propaganda at this stage of the First World War, but may also have symbolised the first Crusade, Lloyd George wanted Allenby to capture Jerusalem before Christmas 1917.⁶ Reshaping priorities to devise and implement a strategy using the military to control Palestine was asking a great deal of an Army commander especially when Ottoman armies were undefeated. Yet, to avoid Asquith's 'hornets nest' a political strategy capable of realisation had to be developed that embraced the key issues of understanding the differences between the major communities and the influence of economic conditions. Prerequisite to solutions were sound political intelligence, skilled managers, and political will without which the Military Administration would lack both direction and a framework for control. Evolving a strategy first required the Government to have a clear policy concerning the length of stay and type of tenure. Yet, as Hankey observes, Lloyd George hoped to gain advantage at the Peace Conference from acquiring terrain that had previously belonged to Britain's enemies, which meant 'he wanted assets to bargain with those of the enemy [...]. Among the assets which seemed to the Prime Minister to be obtainable [...] was [...], Palestine'.⁷ Though viewing Palestine as an asset, capturing the Holy Land also appealed to Lloyd George as 'a man of religious upbringing, a romantic, and a citizen of the British Empire'.⁸ Nevertheless, he was pragmatic and knew Jewish finances were crucial to develop Palestine's economy and ports. Accordingly, if the price of accessing these funds meant resettling Jews into their ancient home under a British protectorate, he was prepared to pay provided Britain governed. Yet this implied a long-term approach that was incompatible with using Palestine as a bargaining asset at the Peace Conference. Whilst a temporary Military Administration needed little planning any longer-term role involved a great deal, and had to include Zionists. Initially, Allenby would have needed briefing on his terms of reference, which meant explaining Zionism's benefit to the British Empire, and how to reconcile adverse Arab reaction to extensive Jewish resettlement. Strategic briefing would have covered the length of military tenure, manpower, material resource estimates, and how these were to be identified. Crucial was selecting suitably experienced personnel to run the country, and especially combat tension between Zionists and Arabs. Significantly, since Jewish finance was vital, Zionists needed reassurance that autonomy was only delayed, and not arrested. Subject to clarity over the length and extent of tenure and their role in government, any Zionist objection was likely to be muted. Instead, Lloyd George's

⁶ Segev, *One Palestine*, p. 13.

⁷ Maurice Baron Hankey, *The Supreme Command: 1914-1918*, 2 vols. (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961), 2, p. 599.

⁸ Elizabeth Monroe, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East: 1914 - 1971* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981), p. 38.

equivocation militated against devising a strategy that created a vacuum into which stepped officers who regarded the government's obligation to Zionism as an obstacle to normal colonial development, and endeavoured to sway Whitehall into tolerating their prejudices.⁹ Another difficulty was identifying the revenues required to meet the cost of transforming Palestine into a Protectorate especially when a bankrupt nation needed to restore its own economy to a peacetime basis. World-Jewry was ready to raise funds to develop Palestine's economy, but not to subsidise a British protectorate, in order to create their own Commonwealth.

Executing a successful strategy involved strong political will. Palestine was no sinecure and British officials were assailed by both sides. Zionists were difficult and demanding, and the Moslem upper class feared Jewish brain power and enterprise, which was 'influenced by Arab nationalist effervescence, and imbued with a tincture of race hatred'.¹⁰ Yet, when the Colonial Office absorbed the Palestine Mandate, after February 1921, it could only manage the limp formula that Palestine should be 'a Commonwealth based upon a democratic foundation in which all sections of the community will enjoy equal political rights'.¹¹ Effectively, it called for a biracial state 'that Arabs and Jews must share, though each claimed title to Palestine'.¹² Strangely, Hankey fails to mention whether Lloyd-George recognised Zionist desires to create their own Commonwealth in Palestine, which may indicate that his speech regarding Jewish aspirations to their Manchester Deputation, in September 1918, lacked real political will or vision of Jewish desires although both had been clear since 1916. Hankey also gave no indication whether the British recognised that the corollary to Zionist funding economic development was their expectation of influence in Palestine's administration.

Political resolve was first tested with Meinhertzhagen's 1919 Draft Declaration of Zionism, which was intended as a statement to Palestine's inhabitants of British determination to fulfill the Balfour Declaration, and create a Jewish Homeland.¹³ Covering the main areas of conflict over Zionism its strategic force derived from the ambivalence caused by the government's lack of direction. Key areas addressed were the protection of the Holy Places, Jewish immigration, present Landowners, and Minority Rule. Zionist policy for The Holy Places, it stated, was aimed at encouraging all denominations to enjoy full religious

⁹ Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 82.

¹⁰ F.O. 371/3386/213403. Report by Sir Mark Sykes, 15 Nov. 1918.

¹¹ C.O. 537/854. Draft formula to the ZO, 17 Dec. 1921.

¹² Ann Mosely Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 36.

¹³ F.O. 608/99/20335. 'Draft Declaration of Zionism', Meinhertzhagen to Curzon, 14 Oct. 1919.

liberty 'subject to the maintenance of public order and security'.¹⁴ Concerning land ownership, it showed that fears of wholesale Jewish acquisition through eviction were baseless because 'it is guaranteed that no unfairness will be permitted and present landowners will not be despoiled of their land' even if necessary to 'prevent the establishment of a National Home of the Jews becoming an empty phrase'. Furthermore, any concessions made to Zionism would be 'made to Public Utility Bodies, and not to individuals, and will not fail to benefit the whole community'.¹⁵ The highly contentious issue of minority rule was dealt with by assuring the Arabs of equal opportunity, justice, and freedom 'to participate in the administration of Palestine'.¹⁶ Moreover, greater prosperity from Zionism would induce the end of obsolete Arab agricultural methods and industry without swamping Palestine with Jewish culture, but solely 'uplifting of all classes from poverty and the removal of the preventive force hitherto exercised over Palestinian development'.¹⁷ Concerning 'the present backward state of industry and agriculture, and the comparatively undeveloped state of the land', both, the Declaration stated, were remediable by 'Zionist money and Zionist brains', so 'all classes will benefit by increased prosperity'.¹⁸ Furthermore, opposition to the programme would be to the detriment of all, 'and can only impede the development which Palestine so sorely needs after so many stagnant years'.¹⁹ Arguably, the final clause that specified the Mandatory would restrain any Zionist injustice should have quelled Arab fears, stating that whatever Zionist's ultimate aim, they were always subject to non-Zionist control 'whose main consideration is to ensure that no injustice is done to the people [...], and that the country is not given over to the immoral exploitations of capitalists and speculators'.²⁰ Shrewdly, Meinhertzhagen recognised the importance of discouraging any intention of continued agitation against Zionism, which he described as 'a *chose jugée* and [...] any Societies or Organisations whose professed programme is directed against Zionism can therefore only be looked on with disfavour'.²¹ Though, Lord Curzon, now Foreign Secretary, favoured promulgation, General Bols, the anti-Zionist Chief Administrator, refused.²² Further progress was impeded by the long-drawn out Peace process, which ensured 'every kind of speculation'. Yet a definitive statement of British intent would have established that 'the people were squarely faced with a *chose jugée* that in the East often works miracles

14 F.O. 608/99/20335. 'Draft Declaration of Zionism', Meinhertzhagen to Curzon, 14 Oct. 1919.

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 *Ibid.*

22 Jerusalem: Israel State Archives, ISA 2/130/14A, Bols to Meinhertzhagen, 13 Jan. 1920.

persuading people to accept the inevitable'.²³ Allowing Bols to resist publication was politically weak and provoked anti-Zionists in the administration into believing Arab violence would change British strategy. Colonel Waters-Taylor, Bols' Chief of Staff, advocated opportunistic violence to Feisal, which would show that Arabs would not tolerate Jewish domination and that Zionism was unpopular in Palestine and Whitehall so 'if disturbances of sufficient violence occurred in Jerusalem [...], both General Bols and General Allenby would advocate the abandonment of the Jewish Home'.²⁴ Political will was also necessary to discourage Feisal informing Palestinian recruits to his army that they were fighting in a national cause to liberate their country from the Ottomans, and create an Arab kingdom in the Middle East. Although there was never any suggestion of it being included in the Hedjaz Empire when the Balfour Declaration was published, 'the early impression left [...] was that the British were going to set up an Independent Arab State, to include Palestine'.²⁵ This notion abrogated Feisal's acceptance of the third Article of the Feisal-Weizmann Agreement, which guaranteed the Balfour Declaration would be implemented. Feisal, predictably, subsequently denied accepting the idea of a Jewish Homeland.²⁶ Since Britain provided the arms and money supporting the Arabs, it was appropriate for Whitehall to have insisted that Feisal cease statements hinting at Arab autonomy. But once, in October 1918, he was appointed head of an Arab military administration, Feisal immediately announced the establishment of a 'completely independent constitutional' government, and a fundamental notion to Arab dreams of independence, it was too late. Combined with their hostility to the Balfour Declaration, it made Palestine's Arabs more strongly anti-Zionist and apprehensive of Zionist aims. In earlier day they had been pro-British, but 'are showing a tendency to turn towards the King of the Hedjaz, and the Arab Government in Damascus'.²⁷ British declarations to Sharif Hussein were proving the hostage to fortune feared by Hirtzel. Thus, when Feisal encouraged recruits into his army to believe in Arab independence, Balfour succinctly noted, when referring to the unqualified promises given in 1915, and repeated by implication in 1918,

'for no other interpretation can, [...], be placed by any unbiased reader on the phrases in the declaration about a "National Government", and "an Administration deriving its authority from the initiative and free choice of the native population".²⁸

23 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

24 Meinertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 82.

25 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

26 MECA, Feisal Papers, letter to Allenby, 15 May 1920.

27 F.O. 371/3385/191229. Clayton on Arab political stands in Syria and Palestine, 18 Nov. 1918.

28 F.O. 371/4183/132187. Balfour to Curzon, 11 Aug. 1919.

Allowing 'the genie out of the bottle' with their December 1914 proclamation placed the British in a dilemma of their own creation. Supporting Zionism would earn the enmity of the Arabs, but abandoning it would incur Zionist anger, and serious political repercussions in Britain.²⁹ Indeed, the Colonial Office warned it was necessary 'to resist pressure from both sides'.³⁰ If General Bols' had published, 'despite the extreme delicacy, the Foreign Office pronouncement on Zionism' it would have been easier to resist pressure. As Palin indicated, failure to publish was unwise.³¹

Political Realities

Political intelligence is a vital adjunct to political will. Acquiring and assessing information on civilian affairs would have delivered much needed advance knowledge of difficulties providing time to plan, assess, and implement strategy. Military intelligence is required to understand an enemy's objectives and morale, which are both essential components of ultimate victory though different in quantity and substance from the skills vital to control the regular threat of civil strife between Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities. The first British setback when they entered Jerusalem, in 1917, was that 'everywhere was more or less in chaos' forcing Allenby to declare a state of emergency.³² A further two years would elapse before Meinherzhagen was able to establish an intelligence web, which in the context of Palestine was a serious delay that inhibited estimating 'the reality of the opposition to the proposed immigration of the Jews [...]'.³³ Allenby, writing to General Vaughan, expressed that the general conflict affects 'all nations [...], and all shades of religions and politics are up against each other, and trying to get me to commit myself to their side. [...]; there is a need to walk warily'.³⁴ Allenby's caution was realistic. Time was vital to identify and evaluate the root causes of discord and prevent conflict, but as the central administration remained in Cairo rather than in Palestine itself, where it consisted of 'a few large tents and a telephone', effective early response was constrained.³⁵ Also, the 1907 Hague Conference limited action to where 'the key element was the obligation placed upon occupying authorities to maintain, so far as consistent with military necessity, the *status quo ante bellum*'.³⁶ This only increased control problems and made awareness of internal conditions more important if Palestine was ever to prosper. In October 1918,

29 C.O. 537/852. E. Mills minute, 9 Dec. 1921.

30 C.O. 733/16. Shuckburgh minute, 10 Jun. 1921.

31 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

32 ISA P/653/73. Edwin Samuel to Herbert Samuel, 5 May 1918.

33 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

34 London. Kings College, Basil Liddell Hart Archive, Allenby Papers, file 2/5/9. Extract from letter to General Vaughan, 2 Mar. 1919.

35 Segev, *One Palestine*, p. 58.

36 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 20.

Allenby reminded Chief Administrators that the administration was both military and provisional without prejudice to future settlement. Therefore, they were instructed 'not to undertake, except so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of public order and security, any political propaganda or to take part in any political questions'.³⁷ Though formally establishing limits on the Military Administration, in practice his instructions were so ignored that Major-General Sir Arthur Wigram Money, the first Chief Administrator, remarked 'at present I'm an autocratic ruler, responsible to no one but the Chief (Allenby) who gives me a very free hand'.³⁸ However, in Palestine's febrile atmosphere, where Jews and Arabs expected a 'speedy realisation of their respective goals', political questions dominated relations between the communities. Intrinsically, provided the British were even handed, there was much to gain from military involvement in the political arena especially with concerns over latent violence from Arab qualms that Zionists were intent on

'(a) the immediate imposition of a minority Jewish government; (b) the expulsion of the Arab inhabitants to make room for massive Jewish immigration; or (c) Jewish desecration of Muslim or Christian Holy Places'³⁹

In reality, as Meinhertzhagen found, many obstacles were placed in Zionism's path by 'the Foreign Office and War Offices, Allenby, Bols and a host of minor fry'.⁴⁰ Allenby recognised political sensitivities, but, possibly swayed by Waters-Taylor, did little to ensure an intelligence network was created, although, the 'position of many officials [...] was desperate - conflicting loyalties, rival claimants, the Intelligence of the Jews, the senseless fanaticism of the Arabs and the varying interpretations of 'justice''.⁴¹

Meinhertzhagen believed that Waters-Taylor's toxin had worked on Bols's weak intellect, and had also influenced Allenby and Congreve, GOC Egypt, so all were hopelessly infected with anti-Zionist and pro-Arab ideas. Similarly, they had placed 'Feisal and the Arabs on that pedestal of romance to which they are only entitled by their picturesque dress and some other attractive mannerisms'.⁴²

Controlling Palestine required effective responses to conflicting demands from Zionists and Arabs without showing fear or favour to either. The Nebi Musa disturbances, in April 1920, demonstrated how

37 F.O. 371/3384/358. Allenby to WO, 23 Oct. 1918.

38 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 20, cites letter in Money Papers, 2 Nov. 1918.

39 F.O. 371/3395/86912. Ormsby-Gore 'Zionist Commission Report No. 2' (ZC), pp. 4-5, 21 Apr. 1918.

40 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 66.

41 *Ibid*, pp. 85-6.

42 *Ibid*, pp. 85-6.

little the Military understood or possessed intelligence of both sides, and how partial their response. Indeed, a few days later Storrs summoned Arab leaders and warned against introducing politics into religious ceremonies. This, the Arabs declared was impossible and asked him to address Jerusalem's Moslems. Declining the invitation Storrs said that Moslems believed he was a friend of the Jews, but 'the exact opposite is the case'.⁴³ General Palin's report noted these strategic, operational, and intelligence frailties and commented, on what should have already been clear, that the basis of Arab antipathy was their deep-seated fear of Jews

'both as a possible ruler and [...] economic competitor. Rightly or wrongly they fear the Jew as a ruler, regarding his race as one of the most intolerant known to history'.⁴⁴

Clayton, a year earlier, had made a similar statement to the Foreign Office explaining that Palestinians believed Britain to be more committed to the Zionist programme than the United States or France, and that any general Jewish immigration would be resisted. He recommended that if Britain desired a mandate they should make an authoritative announcement 'that the Zionist programme will not be enforced in opposition to the wishes of the majority'.⁴⁵ Six months earlier, Curzon had warned that identifying Britain with the Jews, when 'the whole Arab force backed by Feisal on the other side was thrown into the scale against us would produce complication'.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it was the government's responsibility to anticipate complications and ensure Arabs recognised that Jewish involvement in Palestine was expected to produce a new nation free from Ottoman corruption and economic stagnation. Hence, it was important to ensure Arabs understood Zionists brought the skills, funds, expertise, and ability sorely needed to develop the economy even though rash undertakings given to Sharif Hussein, in 1915, undermined this argument and encouraged the belief that Britain had promised Palestine as part of an independent Arab nation. Paucity of skill and experience also applied to the administration, and though the importance of sound civil management ability and skills should have been obvious, Palestine only received ineptitude that included

'a cashier from a bank in Rangoon, an actor-manager, two assistants from Thos. Cook, a picture-dealer, an Army coach, a clown, a land valuer, a bosun from the Niger, a Glasgow distiller, an organist, an Alexandria cotton-broker, an architect (not in Public Works [...])'.⁴⁷

43 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 82.

44 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920

45 Butler, R., and Bury, J. P. T. eds. *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* asstd. M. E. Lambert, 1st Series (London: HMSO, 1963), p. 272. Clayton to Curzon, 5 May 1919.

46 London. India Office Library. Curzon Papers. Eastern Committee minutes, 41, 5 Dec. 1918.

47 Storrs, *Orientalism*, p. 360.

Consequently, the most crucial aspect of governing Palestine was left to untrained and callow troops who, lacking certainty over the Arab population, 'was disposed to regard Zionism [...] as complicating a situation already complicated enough'.⁴⁸ British officers relied upon Arab officials, including the gendarmerie and police, who had previously served under the Ottomans, which gave Arabs considerable power largely used to 'shape the views of his British superior [...] and to create the atmosphere in which the British officer passed his life'.⁴⁹ Many officials were drawn from the Arabic speaking Moslem populations who regarded Palestine as an Arab and Moslem land which directly impinged on their quality.

'Two of the most important [...] Administration officials in Palestine have candidly stated [...] not more than half-a-dozen of the one hundred and twenty officers are of satisfactory quality'.⁵⁰

Good leadership and training could have mitigated some weakness, but British leadership was not good quality and also anti-Zionist. Small wonder that Meinhertzhagen, quoting Commander Bianchini a keen Italian Zionist recently returned from an extended visit, wrote to the Director of Military Intelligence, in June 1919, that Arab opposition to Zionism was encouraged by granting privileges denied to Jews.

'Police are corrupt and the Jews regard the Administration as half-hearted regarding The National Home. [...] Colonel Stirling of General Clayton's staff confirmed Bianchini's statement, adding that Ronald Storrs is playing a double game, pretending to favour the Jews whilst intriguing against them'.⁵¹

Anti-Zionism in the administration could only prosper in the light of General Money stating all Jewish schemes were 'open to the suspicion of having some financial end in the background, as the Jew is not in the habit of going to out of the way parts of the world solely for the benefit of his health'.⁵² Possibly, his anti-Zionism arose from a mistaken belief that support was not in British interests. However, another agenda appears to have been anti-Semitism, which is reflected in his description of Jerusalem's Jews whom he compared to the Pharisees of the New Testament, saying they were

'insistent on the letter of their religion, and bringing the rising generation in their schools to dirty little wasters [...]. Their men turn out more idle wasters and their

48 CZA, Z3/113. 'The Military Administration of Palestine and the Jews', undated.

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 22.

52 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 25, cites Money Papers, 23 Apr. 1918.

women more prostitutes than the rest of the population put together'.⁵³

Clayton, now Chief Political Officer to the Egypt Expeditionary Force, and known for his Arab sympathies, was similarly opposed, stating 'I cannot conscientiously carry out any line of policy which will go against our pledges to the Arabs'.⁵⁴ In May 1918, he informed the Arabs 'there would be no immediate immigration of millions of Jews and the Arabs would not be forced to sell land to Jews'.⁵⁵ Particularly, since all military and civil intelligence had been under Clayton's jurisdiction since 1914, and the 'the ideal of Arab independence was always smouldering', this imprudence is startling and its import to the Arabs ought to have been recognised.⁵⁶ Not only did it supply a useful tool to prevent Zionist land purchase by claiming coercion, which pandered to Arabs 'deep seated fear of Jews as both possible rulers and economic competitors,' it also undermined strategy on Jewish immigration.⁵⁷ General Watson, replacing Money as Chief Administrator, in 1919, also opposed Zionism, and proposed only 'a limited programme towards establishing a Jewish National home' seemingly because

'the Mandatory Power will not only have to keep [...] a large force of troops in the country, but will lose many lives [...] in a war [...] fought against the principles of the League of Nations'.⁵⁸

This differed considerably from the government's support for Zionism as expressed by Balfour, stating

'be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land'⁵⁹

Balfour was convinced Zionism was the solution to Palestine's economic development, which he made clear to a London Zionist audience, in 1920, saying that Zionist settlements would help rescue Palestine from Ottoman desolation, and the difficulties of making the country physically adequate would have beset 'another people' with whom the British were aligned. What, he asked, 'are the two necessities? [...]. Skills, knowledge, perseverance, enterprise; capital. I am perfectly convinced [...] you will find no want of any one of these'. Subsequently, Meinertzhagen stated that producing his Draft Declaration was caused by

⁵³ Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 20, cites Money Papers, 9 Sept. 1918.

⁵⁴ Wingate Papers, file 148/8. Clayton to Wingate, 21 Apr. 1918.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 19 May 1918.

⁵⁶ F.O. 371/512. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ F.O. 371/4171/182. Watson to C.P.O. Aug. 1919.

⁵⁹ Macmillan, *Peacemakers*, p. 434.

hostility towards Zionism from 'irresponsible people', which, doubtless, meant British as well as Arab sources deliberately fomenting trouble between Jews and Arabs, also

'an ignorance of the meaning of Zionism, and to an erroneous idea that HMG might [...] abandon [...] establishing a National Home for the Jews in Palestine, if sufficient local agitation was set on foot by anti-Zionist elements [...]'.⁶⁰

Meinhertzhagen, a self-professed Zionist, was impartial and wondered how best to develop the country so all benefited, observing

'if the Arabs refuse or fail to compete with the Jews, is it fair that Palestine, with its undeveloped resources, should be denied progress because some of its inhabitants are incapable or unwilling to assist'?⁶¹

This salient point warranted British explanations to the Arabs. Palin postulated that an inoculation of Jewish vigour would be invaluable to developing the country. This point was recognised by the smarter Arabs and the Grand Mufti, saying 'I too believe the Jews could greatly help our country, but what terrify us are the extremists and the uncontrolled immigration'.⁶² Since the Draft Declaration provided British assurances that they would control Zionist extremists and immigration Bols' refusal to publish, which was exacerbated by his lazy ignorance 'about matters which he should have studied, which compels him to rely on the wits and brains of others [...]', assumes greater importance.⁶³ Lack of fibre made him an easy prey for Waters-Taylor who had succeeded in gaining control of Bols's intellect and who 'works purely for himself, and is as deliberately inaccurate in his statements as he is unscrupulous in his acts'.⁶⁴ Once again, as with the Faruqi episode, Storrs's great experience of the Arabs might have been expected to prevail on Bols to ensure publication, however, long years of exposure to the East had

'orientalised his mind, introducing an exceptionally strong element of intrigue and intellectual dishonesty. [...]. He could be an enthusiast for Zionism and the next days suffer from violent hebraphobia. He was a dangerous man, not knowing the meaning of the words loyalty or sincerity'.⁶⁵

More concerning for the Jews was Arab familiarity with the sentiment of the Military Administration that

60 F.O. 608/99/20335. Draft Declaration of Zionism, 14 Oct. 1919.

61 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 73, 1 Apr. 1920.

62 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

63 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 85.

64 *Ibid.*

65 *Ibid.*

'may have strengthened their opposition to Zionism in the hopes that the Military would be able to persuade Whitehall to abandon or limit its Zionist strategy'.⁶⁶

Palin's report criticised the Jerusalem Administration for entertaining the view 'that the Jews were in some way concerned as the aggressors'. Indeed, the Military Governor had dismissed the Jewish Self-Defence League's frequent warnings of Arab intentions, stating 'every precaution would be taken to ensure public safety during this, as during the last two festivals, of Nebi Moussa'.⁶⁷

The Nebi Musa disturbances produced a strong reaction in London, in favour of the Jews and against the Military Government.⁶⁸ Both *The Times* and the Foreign Office accepted Zionist claims of prejudice, and questioned the Military Administration's continued existence.⁶⁹ Consequently, when Lloyd George and Balfour read Meinhertzhagen's despatch to Lord Curzon,⁷⁰ on arrival at San Remo for the Allied Prime Ministers Conference, they agreed to disband the Military Government, install a British civil administration, and appoint Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner.⁷¹ A letter from the Secretary of the Zionist Organisation may have hastened this decision, saying 'it had no alternative but to accept the view that the local administration is unsympathetic to the Jews and indisposed to carry out the considered policy of the British Government'.⁷² When Samuel reached Jerusalem, on 30 June 1920, Bols's final act was to hand him a note inscribed with the words 'Received, one Palestine complete'. Samuel prophetically added the letters 'E&O.E';⁷³ some 'Errors and Omissions', especially failing to publish the Draft Declaration, might have changed Arab perspectives.

Responsibility for inept administration did not solely emanate from Military bias. Communications between the Military Administration and the Chief Political Officer were parallel rather than seamless, and each had their own staff. Whilst the CPO communicated with the Chief Administrator over intelligence activities it was not 'compulsory upon the latter to inform the former of even important administration measures that he has taken or contemplates taking'.⁷⁴ Lack of communication was compounded by a military hierarchy where the Chief Administrator was always more senior than the CPO, which led to 'different courses being pursued by the watertight compartments of the administration and the political

66 Porath, *Emergence*, p. 38, cites B. Joseph, *Ha-Shilton, Ha-Briti be-Eretz-Israel*, (Jerusalem: 1948), pp. 21-5. 67 CZA, Z4/16078. Storrs to Jewish Self-Defence League, 31 Mar. 1920.

68 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 71.

69 F.O. 371/5117/130. Minute, by Sir John Tilley, 15 Apr. 1920. *The Times*, 27 Apr. 1920.

70 Meinhertzhagen, *Diary*, p. 87.

71 F.O. 371/5139/82. Minute by Curzon, 29 Apr. 1920.

72 F.O. 371/5117/85. Landesmann to F.O., 16 Apr. 1920.

73 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 72 fn.

74 CZA, Z3/113. 'The Attitude of Palestine's Military Administration to the Jews', undated.

side'.⁷⁵ Such an outcome was made more likely when Whitehall's otiose instructions created a muddle. Every impulse was directed through the chain of command before being reshuffled into either the political or military chains, which created inherent delays that, coupled to British decision-making practices, impeded strategic planning.⁷⁶ Tense relations between Palestine's communities meant that a Chief Administrator acting without the CPO's insight created a systemic failure that probably inflamed existing tensions. Lacking a political intelligence network, at least until 1919, made acquiring this insight considerably more demanding, so it is even more surprising that neither the military nor Whitehall appeared especially concerned that these deficiencies were detrimental to the evolution of strategy.

Arab Perspectives

The Feisal-Weizmann agreement of February 1919, which Weizmann believed would establish 'a real political entente', was intended to provide a co-operative basis of tolerance between Arabs and Jews, though it would have struggled against the underlying fear of Jewish economic and commercial instinct. British strategy had to 'find a common denominator to evolve a policy acceptable to Jews and Arabs'.⁷⁷ One difficulty was that implementation relied on Feisal overcoming French opposition to his becoming King of Syria.⁷⁸ Additionally, French desire to control Syria impeded any territorial settlement in Palestine even though the 'majority of the Moslems would probably prefer the Ottoman to the French'.⁷⁹ Though, the British considered both Arabs and Jews as Palestinians great difficulties existed over land ownership, cultivable area, and taxation. Reaching any agreement between Arab and Zionist on these issues was bound to be exceedingly problematic as Palestinians unshakeably considered themselves an integral part of the Arab nation with tenure derived from the Byzantine Empire. Palin observed that both Palestine and Syria occupied a peculiar place in Arab regard,

'being the earliest foreign conquests of the Arab invaders [...]. That his 1300 year old title has suffered interruptions [...] make no impression on his view of his claim.'⁸⁰

At the Paris Peace Conference the Muslim chairman of the Syrian Delegation differed, saying 'the only Arab domination since the Conquest in 635 hardly lasted twenty-two years'.⁸¹ How then did Arab become

⁷⁵ CZA, Z3/113. 'The Attitude of Palestine's Military Administration to the Jews', undated.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 140.

⁷⁸ CZA, Z4/483, 16 Jun. 1918.

⁷⁹ F.O. 371/146/123863. Wingate to Balfour, 28 Jun. 1918.

⁸⁰ F.O. 371/5171. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

⁸¹ David Hunt Miller, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris*, 22 vols (New York: Printed for Author, 1924), 14, p. 405.

identical with Palestinian, and what was meant by Palestine? In 1919, the General Syrian Congress requested 'there should be no separation of the southern part of Syria, known as Palestine'.⁸² Indeed, the consensus during the Peace Conference was that Southern Syria included Palestine.⁸³ However, once Feisal was expelled from Damascus, in July 1920, the debate as to whether it was part of Syria, or separate, ended and allowed Palestinian Arab nationalism to emerge in a clearer form.

Arab Self-Determination and the Military Administration

On 5 May 1917, Sykes met Sharif Hussein, and conveyed a message from King George V welcoming the Emir's efforts in the 'cause of the Arab peoples whose ultimate enfranchisement from persecution will mark an epoch in the development of civilisation and prosperity in Asia'.⁸⁴ Sharif Hussein unenthusiastically responded by stating that unless Arab independence was assured 'posterity would charge him with assisting in the overthrow of the last Islamic power without setting up another in its place'. Particularly if France annexed Syria, he would be accused of breaking faith with its Muslims 'by having led them into a rebellion against the Ottomans in order to hand them over to a Christian power'.⁸⁵ Clearly, he interpreted British support for him as ruler of the Hedjaz to mean he would rule over an Arab Empire though knowing Arabia would be formed from 'a series of more or less independent states or confederations, [...] loosely bound into an Arab federation'.⁸⁶ He also knew the British would not grant Syria to the Arabs because of French interests. French diplomats had long claimed Syria included Palestine, which the British would not concede, so when Colonel Brémond, Chief of the French Military Mission to Arabia, told Feisal that French bonds with Britain were temporary, and would not lead to permanent friendship, it resulted in British disquiet over French activities in the Hedjaz.⁸⁷ Attempting to allay Arab suspicions of post war French intentions, the British and French Governments pledged to the Arabs of Syria and Mesopotamia, on 8 November 1918, that their goal was complete emancipation of peoples oppressed by the Ottomans, and 'the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations'.⁸⁸ Predictably, when distributed in Palestine, it was seen as an official promise of their right to self-determination, which caused Arabs to

82 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, p. 152, n. 49.

83 *Ibid.*

84 MECA. Sykes Papers. Sykes to Wingate, 5 May 1917.

85 Adelson, *Sykes*, p. 230.

86 SAD. Clayton Papers, file 693/12. Clayton to Storrs, 7 May 1917.

87 F.O. 686/6. Lawrence to Wilson, 8 Jan. 1917.

88 Hurewitz, *Diplomacy*, 2, pp. 111-2.

wonder whether Palestine would form part of southern Syria. They also demanded a Sharifial government.⁸⁹

On 2 November, Jews celebrated the first anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Arab leaders, wary that the celebrations presaged early Jewish control of Palestine, delivered a petition to Storrs protesting against Zionism on behalf of the Muslim Christian Association, which, according to one of Wingates's correspondents, had been constituted at the prompting of Captain Brunton, an intelligence officer, and established as a vehicle to express popular opposition to Zionism.⁹⁰ There is a hint in a letter dated 20 November 1918, from Lieutenant-Colonel Hubbard, of official military administration support

'I suggest that a Palestine Arab Commission be formed for the purpose of keeping the balance of power between the races. What the Arabs fear is not the Jews [...] is [...] Jews who are coming to Palestine'.⁹¹

Subsequently, Wyndham Deedes, then Chief Secretary of the Palestine Government, claimed that support was more than just a matter of morale, but in fact the Association also 'enjoyed [...] financial aid from the Military Government from the start'.⁹² Arabs could only organise with British sustenance, so, whilst some kind of generalised support, with some qualms over its objectives, might have helped create greater tolerance towards Zionism, funding the Society was a conflict of interest, given that Zionist financing was essential to develop the economy, and left the British susceptible to exploitation. It would appear Military judgment allowed the Association's existence expecting some benefit would accrue, since when Arabs understood Zionist policy, it would moderate public opinion

'rather than excite it so long as they feel the inhabitants [...] are not to be deprived of their land and put at a disadvantage commercially and economically to the Jews'.⁹³

It should have been obvious that, though it may have suited the Military administration unhappy over Whitehall's pro-Zionist strategy to ignore it, a semi-independent Arab regime for Syria would be more likely to reinforce Palestinian desire for autonomy, which if denied could be blamed on the Balfour Declaration. Once this idea gained tenure, it would strengthen local desire for unity with Syria. Herbert Samuel clearly understood this when he observed, in April 1920, that unity with Syria sprang from 'a natural patriotic sentiment among the small class of politically minded Arabs' who objected to the insertion 'of economic

⁸⁹ F.O. 371/3386/261. Storrs to OETA, 19 Nov. 1918.

⁹⁰ CZA. L4, 276IV. Shneorson's papers, No. 5, undated.

⁹¹ ISA. CS 140. Hubbard to O.E.T.A., 20 Nov. 1918.

⁹² Porath, *Emergence*, p. 32.

⁹³ ISA, CS 140. Watson to Meinhertzhagen, 26 Sept. 1919.

divisions, [...] hitherto under a single government', and from an estimation that 'a united and independent Syria [...] is the only means of combating Zionism'.⁹⁴ Though this reflection on Arab response to the Balfour Declaration was quite subtle, attributing their reaction to patriotic sentiment, Clayton showed better understanding when he wrote to Gertrude Bell that Arabs of Syria and Palestine believe the Jews have a free hand and are backed by the government, which they interpreted as surrendering their heritage. Clayton opined Arabs were

'right and no amount of specious oratory will humbug him in a matter which affects so vitally. [...]. We are like men walking through an unknown country in a fog and it behoves us to feel our way and take care of each step we take'.⁹⁵

A few months earlier he had welcomed the meeting between Feisal and Weizmann, writing to Sykes that

'I feel convinced, that many of the difficulties which we have encountered owing to the mutual distrust and suspicion between Arabs and Jews will now disappear'.⁹⁶

Seventeen days later, Clayton qualified his optimism, saying he 'could not conscientiously carry out any line of policy which will go against our pledges to the Arabs', and thought rapprochement possible

'provided we go very easy and don't scare the Arabs'.⁹⁷ Storrs had advised the Military, in April 1918, that

'no kind of enlightenment or further definition of [...] of His Majesty's Government's declarations have ever reached Arab ears. [...], the Commission [...] made no public pronouncement [...] to dispel the pardonable anxieties of the Arab population'.⁹⁸

In June 1918, Clayton, based on his connections with Palestinian Arab leaders, claimed that Jewish dominance would be a 'nightmare for both Muslims and Christians'.⁹⁹ Subsequently, in November 1918, he modified this opinion in a letter to Sykes, saying Jewish superior intelligence and commercial abilities scared the Arabs who feared the Balfour Declaration would result in a Jewish state.¹⁰⁰ To Arabs this fear was confirmed by rumours that Herbert Samuel had stated Zionist policy would 'enable the establishment of an independent state under the control of a Jewish majority'.¹⁰¹ Since Samuel was normally a sober and experienced statesman, if the attribution is accurate, small wonder Arabs were alarmed believing, largely,

94 Butler and Bury, eds. *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* asstd. M. E. Lambert, 1st Series, vol. 13, (London: HMSO, 1963), p. 241

95 SAD. Clayton papers, file 693/13. Clayton to Bell, 8 Dec. 1918.

96 *Ibid.*, Clayton to Sykes, 4 Apr. 1918.

97 *Ibid.*, file 148/8. Clayton to Wingate, 21 Apr. 1918.

98 F.O. 371/3398/92392. Storrs to O.E.T.A., 22 Apr. 1918

99 F.O. 800/221. Clayton to Sykes, 15 Jun. 1918.

100 MECA. Sykes papers, Clayton to Sykes, 28 Nov. 1918.

101 Porath, *Emergence*, p. 35.

that British imperial power championed the ablest intellectual race in the world past masters at ousting competition, and 'backed by apparently inexhaustible funds, possessed of powerful influence in the Councils of nations, and prepared to enter the lists in every one of its normal occupations'¹⁰² The Catholic Church was also opposed to Zionism. Cardinal Bourne, a future Archbishop of Westminster, and champion of Arab rights, wrote Zionists were claiming they would dominate the Holy Land under a British Protectorate, and would force their rule on unwilling peoples. Although he had no objection to Jews enjoying the same rights as other peoples in the Holy land, he had been approached by Christians and Moslems whom he claimed disliked Zionists even more than the Ottomans. Consequently, he felt Jewish domination 'would be an outrage to Christianity and its Divine Founder, and would mean, moreover, most certainly, the controlling influence of Jewish, which is German, finance'.¹⁰³ This statement insidiously mixed sympathy for the Moslems with the ancient libel of Jewish liability for the Crucifixion and, to ensure no ancient calumnies against the Jews were absent, included their ubiquitous association with finance, and its connotation of usury, with an artful implication that Jews were German agents. Certainly, as a short-term measure, attempts to avoid trouble were sensible, but in the longer-term they could not work unless the British Government was either prepared to use force to suppress anti-Zionism, which was bound to intensify existing tensions, mitigate its pro-Zionist policy, or insert a colonial administration with suitably trained and experienced staff. This latter course, in particular, demanded a strategy that meant the government had to first decide on its future expectations, Palestine's position in the Empire, and the future of the Empire.

Aliyot (The First and Second Aliyah)

Generally opposed to Jewish immigration, the Powers' strong stand persuaded the Sublime Porte to loosen restrictions, in 1888, and allow Jews to settle provided they came singly and not *en masse*.¹⁰⁴ In fact, organised Jewish immigration of the First *aliyah*, led by *Chovevi Zion*, had begun in 1882.¹⁰⁵ These immigrants intended to change the Ottoman *status quo* to acquire land on a scale never previously imagined, which they saw as crucial to building a Jewish state. Their drive to obtain land exposed the labyrinth of Ottoman rules that left Jews vulnerable to subsequent Arab dispossession claims. However, if land could not be obtained

102 F.O. 371/5121. Palin Report, 1 Jul. 1920.

103 Lloyd George Papers, file F/92/16/1. Letter from Cardinal Bourne to Lord Edmund Talbot, 25 Jan. 1919.

104 F.O. 195/1607. White to Moore, 6 Oct. 1888.

105 *Aliyah* - 'Ascent' or 'going up'. Diaspora Jews returning to Israel. Ezekiel 39. 28, 'though I sent them into exile among the nations, I will gather them to their own land'.

'*Eretz Y'Israel* will never become Jewish, [...], and Jews will remain in the very same abnormal situation which characterises them in the diaspora'.¹⁰⁶

One significant point Zionists quickly recognised, was that 'the only method to acquire *Eretz Y'Israel* at any time, and under whatever political conditions, is but purchase with money'.¹⁰⁷ Pragmatically, they also realised that initial territorial aims had to be limited.¹⁰⁸ Hence, early purchases were restricted to land directly owned by the Ottoman State in scantily inhabited areas.¹⁰⁹ Zionists aimed to build *Eretz Y'Israel* by their own efforts through agriculture, but the settlers of the First *aliyah*, unaware of the harsh conditions, were unprepared for farming. Many suffered from malaria, sought work in one of the major towns or returned to Europe. Those who remained mainly hired cheaper, better experienced, and well-informed locals to work the land, which created the unintended consequence of Jews becoming owners and overseers that clashed with the Zionist ideal of creating their Commonwealth by 'the fruits of their own labour'.¹¹⁰ This resulted in good interaction that often accrued because 'most colonies employed from five to ten times as many Arabs as Jews'.¹¹¹ An unforeseen consequence of using Arab labour was that it discouraged diaspora Jews from immigrating, and those in Palestine from remaining.¹¹² Inevitably, the early stages of nation building resulted in errors and poor judgment, which were broadly caused by ignorance of local customs, farming conditions, and the harsh climate that inhibited Zionist ability 'to transform radically the character of the *yishuv*'.¹¹³ Nonetheless, some important achievements of 'obvious practical significance and even greater symbolic value' resulted.¹¹⁴ Chief amongst them was a twenty-five thousand increase in the *yishuv* that enabled new communities to be established and roughly doubled Palestine's Jewish community, which allowed a Jewish presence into areas other than the historic ones of Jerusalem, Safed, Tiberius, and Hebron. Hardships survived by the immigrants of the First *aliyah* would prove a valuable foundation for those following.¹¹⁵

The Second *aliyah*, between 1904 and 1913, brought another thirty-five thousand Jews that increased the Jewish population to eighty-five thousand so that it attained stability from a critical mass.

106 Shafir, *Land, Labor and Origins*, p. 42.

107 *Ibid*, cites Ussishkin's 'Our Programme'.

108 Bein, *Ruppin*, p. 175.

109 Shafir, *Land, Labor and Origins*, p. 44.

110 *Ibid*, p. 62.

111 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, p. 37.

112 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 59.

113 *Ibid*, p. 60.

114 *Ibid*.

115 *Ibid*.

Originating from Europe's Pale of Settlement, they were educated, politically conscious, and possessed a utopian socialist direction that 'gave the new wave of immigration its ideological character'.¹¹⁶ This changed the nature of the *yishuv* and allowed it to evolve 'into a modern and integrated polity' that produced Israel's future leaders.¹¹⁷ Benefitting from institutions founded by the First *aliyah*, they were more cohesive and better able to focus their political ideology, which was 'heavily influenced by the principles of revolutionary and utopian socialism espoused by intellectuals and political activists in Tsarist Russia'.¹¹⁸ Many had been organisers of the fruitless 1905-6 Russian Revolution who had immigrated to construct a more egalitarian society, and were united with other political activists by a single-mindedness that advocated a Jewish Society in Palestine must be 'organised along socialist lines to be based on and sustained by the labour of the Jewish working class'.¹¹⁹ No less important was the reappearance of Russian pogroms, after a relative lull for twenty years, which made it too dangerous to return. Thus, lacking the finances to go elsewhere, immigration had to work. Testimony to their efforts is that in ten years the Second *aliyah* established labour exchanges, workers' kitchens, a medical insurance programme incorporating a network of clinics, and three new types of agricultural settlements; some on land bought from absentee owners abandoned by Arab tenant farmers. Of these, the *kibbutz* was the most important, and most depicted utopian socialism with its obligation to Jewish labour, self-sufficiency, and a collective basis for revenue and expenditure. Self-sufficiency helped Jews confront rigour without assistance and produced a very self-contained society 'capable of surviving on its own and meeting all needs of its members'.¹²⁰ Great importance was attached to a Jewish working class because Labour Zionism 'considered it unacceptable that the productivity of the new *yishuv* should depend on the labour of non-Jews'.¹²¹ To ensure this happened, whenever possible it was presumed that skilled work should be restricted to Jews, which was a monopolisation policy to ensure Jews were better paid.¹²² Though, dependence on unskilled Arab labour continued, Jewish earnings were often supplemented by subsidies from public funds.¹²³ Progress was also made adding an industrial base for the Jewish homeland including iron and oil works and over one hundred thousand acres cultivating citrus fruits, almonds, and grapes by

116 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 63.

117 *Ibid*, p. 61.

118 *Ibid*.

119 *Ibid*.

120 *Ibid*, p. 65.

121 *Ibid*.

122 *Ibid*.

123 Shafir, *Land, Labour and Origins*, pp. 70-1.

the eruption of war. Growth was so substantial and rapid that it attracted 'investment capital from Jews in the Diaspora'.¹²⁴ Zionists, on the eve of war, had made important strides towards economic viability and had created social and political institutions to provide basic services and promote integration 'in the domestic arena of Palestine'.¹²⁵ Hence, by December 1914, 'tangible expression to the ancient national identity of the Jewish people and translated into reality the vision of the Jews future' had developed.¹²⁶ Contrastingly, four hundred years of Ottoman lack of interest, corruption, and shortage of investment had resulted in a moribund economy, intense poverty, and no social cohesion.

Economics of Land Categories

Prior to 1913, Ottoman policy was to keep 'the largest amount of land available for agriculture'.¹²⁷ Tradition had evolved six categories, of which three were attractive to Zionists. Firstly, *miri*, which is land that could be privately occupied or rented

'provided that such right has been granted by the State. The absolute ownership remains vested in the Government, but the grant is in perpetuity, subject to [...] continuous cultivation'.¹²⁸

Tenure automatically reverted to the Ottoman government if *miri* land was unproductive for three years, so Zionist purchasing aspirations were realistic. Another realistic target for Zionists was *mawat*. Title to this land was also vested in the government. This was

'waste land at such a distance from the village site, that the voice of a man shouting there cannot be heard. [...] interpreted by judicial decision as one and a half miles'.¹²⁹

Mesha'a was the third category, which Arab agricultural methods might have made the easiest target because it left

'the whole of the property in the village held in common. Each shareholder owns a fractional share in the village, but has no separate parcel of land allotted to him in proprietary right. The village as a whole belongs to the proprietors as a whole'.¹³⁰

124 Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 67.

125 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

126 *Ibid.*

127 K. W. Stein, *The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1985), p. 11.

128 Cmnd. 3686 (1930), p. 30.

129 *Ibid.*

130 *Ibid.*, pp. 31-2.

Often, these small or awkwardly shaped parcels could be fused together by piecemeal purchase into larger more profitable tracts. Greater profitability would improve cash flow, which could allow investment in more land, or in improving existing land. However, the Zionist's primary concern was

'consolidating existing agricultural settlements, and establishing new ones. Although [...] the development of Palestine had been going on for a quarter of a century, there was [...] not one single village which conditions encouraged the establishment of settlements'.¹³¹

Some land was acquired during the late Ottoman period by bribing local government officials, local Arabs, consular agents, registering land in fictitious names, or in the names of Jews living in Istanbul.¹³² Lack of any meaningful land registry system encouraged such subterfuges, but the usual landmarks of wadi, hillock, tree, or fence only identified general areas whose actual dimensions usually differed from those stated and resulted in friction between the Arabs and settlers of the Second *aliyah* that caused numerous disputes over boundaries, or particular tracts of land. Arthur Ruppin, the Director of the Zionist Organisation's *Eretz Y'Israel* office who was responsible, from 1908, for acquiring land to establish settlements noted that Ottoman real estate laws were extremely complex, which persisted for much of the British Administration, and because the land had never been surveyed there was no information on ownership. Thus,

'the legal title (*kushan*) [...] was no guarantee that the purchaser had legal title. [...]. Consequently, boundary disputes occurred frequently [...]. Even if these hurdles could be overcome the *kaimakam*, [...], could still object and refuse to allow a deal to be entered into the land register without which it would not be legally valid'.¹³³

Such serious disincentives to diligence and investment were worsened by a Land Tenure system that undermined Arab tenant farmers occupancy rights since 'as a rule the peasant holds his land on a yearly tenure, terminable by his landlord at will'.¹³⁴ Overcoming these difficulties, to even live at subsistence level, meant that regular profits had to be generated to provide the cash needed for investment without which the *fellaheen* could be forced to vacate land. Shortage of working capital and usurious rates of loan interest, up to 50%, made disincentives greater than incentives, which meant change was nearly impossible. Even the 1920 Land Transfer Ordinances, designed to retain sufficient land for a tenant

131 Bein, *Ruppin*, p. 141.

132 CZA. L18/245/4. Hankin to Thon, 22 Aug. 1913.

133 Bein, *Ruppin*, p. 141.

134 Cmnd. 3686 (1930), p. 34.

farmer's 'maintenance of himself and his family' when an estate was sold over his head, changed little. By the time the District Officer learnt of the sale, the Jewish purchaser had settled with the farmer who left and forfeited any protection.¹³⁵ Arab apprehension was increased by the Jewish labour only policy of the Second *aliyah* that left 'out of work a large number [...] Great harm has been caused to this country by the sale to Jews of large estates'.¹³⁶ Probably, a greater problem was Arab reluctance to change their farming practices to intensive irrigation from dry farming and animal husbandry that

'entails a complete change of [...] habits, chief of which stands the fact he would have to work all the year round, and that his farm would require daily attention instead of the leisured annual disposal of cereal crops from dry farming'.¹³⁷

Another disincentive to farmers was the local elites controlling the economic and political administration. Who consolidated their hold by serving on municipal and regional bureaucracies and staffing local bodies that 'spawned and maintained the dominance of a few families'?¹³⁸ All used familial and social bonds to advance their mutual self-interests, whilst simultaneously providing the leadership of Palestine's Arabs. Since each level required their sweetener *fellaheen* had to make sustainable and regular profits to meet tax demands. Was this possible?

Effects of the Agricultural Background in Ottoman Palestine

In March 1918, Sharif Hussein complained that Palestine's resources would be developed by Jewish immigrants, and 'one of the most amazing things [...] was that the Palestinian used to leave his country, wandering over the high seas in every direction his native soil could not retain its hold on him'.¹³⁹ Though land was plentiful, much was deemed uncultivable and systemic deficiencies prohibited the modernisation of farming practices to improve yields and allow greater land development. Shortage of working capital, also poor skills and education, combined to reduce fertility, which, when added to war-time Ottoman requisitions of camels and sheep, made profit scarce where it even existed. Moreover, Ottoman forces wholesale destruction of olive groves, and a pre-war epidemic that created livestock shortages, further undermined the *fellaheen*.¹⁴⁰ Despite poor agricultural practice and wartime destruction, if *fellaheen* had any retained earnings, or were able to borrow, abandoning land might not have been

135 London: *Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August 1929*. Command 3530. (March 1930).

136 *Ibid.*, p. 116.

137 Cmnd. 5479, p. 248. (1937).

138 Stein, *Land Question*, p. 11.

139 Peters, *Time Immemorial*, p. 170, cites Sharif Hussein in *Al-Qibla*, 23 Mar. 1918.

140 F.O. 371/3383/9400. Clayton to FO, 16 Jan. 1918.

necessary, which indicates that lack of profit and borrowing costs were more plausible reasons.¹⁴¹ Unable to own land the *fellaheen* had no assets to provide as loan collateral, even assuming they could have managed interest rates of up to fifty percent.¹⁴² In these circumstances, profit became so vital to cash flow that one failed harvest might have forced *fellaheen* to leave. This possibility was increased by the main land tax, which, in 1914, was calculated at 12.5 per cent of the land's gross yield.

'While the incidence varied according to the harvest, the annual assessment in the field or on the threshing floor gave opportunity for great abuse. [...]. The rich man rarely, if ever, paid his fair assessment; and the loss of revenue [...] was made good by overcharging poorer neighbours.'¹⁴³

Oppressive taxation resulted in 'the average fellah's margin of profit being reduced almost to a vanishing point, in some cases where a cultivator is not the land owner this point has been reached'.¹⁴⁴ Also, Jewish demand for land increased property values that made it more profitable for landowners to sell and leave tenant farmers with nothing to cultivate, or be employed by the Jews. A Jewish eyewitness to the Peel Commission recalled the condition of Arab villages in the Maritime Plain, in 1913. Describing the outcome of inefficient farming, massive corruption, and overbearing tax policies on villages from Gaza to the north, he said

'as far as the hills to the east nor orange groves, orchards or vineyards were to be seen [...]. Nor were there any vegetable gardens [...]. In all the villages dotting the plain between Gaza and Jaffa there was only one well in the village and in the smaller villages there were no wells. [...] The lands were all held in *masha'a* ownership. [...] Wheat yield [...] went to the Government in payment of tithe and to the *effendi* in payment of interest on loans. [...]'.¹⁴⁵

In the twenty-five years prior to 1914, Zionists had 'flung themselves upon barren uncultivated land, and converted it into rich intensively cultivated plantations'.¹⁴⁶ Centuries of Arab farming had only resulted in pauperised village economies, subsequently worsened by the destruction wreaked from departing Ottoman forces. Hence, when young Arab men returned from the war it made the 'amount of labour available

141 *Fellaheen* were agricultural labourers.

142 Stein, *Land Question*, p. 19.

143 Cmnd. 5479, p. 150. (1937).

144 ISA, 3852/492. Director of Agriculture to Civil Secretary, 7 Aug. 1922.

145 Cmnd 5479, p. 150. (1937).

146 F.O. 373/5/3. *Handbook No. 93*, p. 63. Vaads were Colonist Committees.

greater than it had been before', and nowhere for it to be employed.¹⁴⁷ Yet, even under the most favourable conditions, and plentiful finances, improving Arab knowledge, skill, and enterprise 'towards the Jewish level, could only be a very slow business; [...] Arabs were still living in the atmosphere of the past, still separated, [...], by centuries, from the educated resourceful, [...] Jews'.¹⁴⁸

Conflict was inevitable if a mutually acceptable resolution was unobtainable.

Strategically, it suited the British to believe that tension between the communities could be alleviated by Arabs adopting Jewish agricultural methods. However, Arabs' main concern was to keep what they saw as their land; how and whether it was developed, or by whom, was of secondary importance. Hence, competent and balanced resolutions over the intertwined problems of land purchase and Arab Nationalism were the most crucial issues facing the Military administration.

Politics of Land Purchase

New settlers 'believed they were coming to a barren, empty land', so their surprise at finding Arab inhabitants would have been as great as Arab offence towards settlers disrespect of local customs and preference for their own institutions and colonies. Moreover, lack of Arabic made relations difficult and probably fostered misunderstandings.¹⁴⁹ Arabs believed the land was theirs irrespective of size, survival difficulties caused by archaic farming methods, or even the brutal taxation and corruption of the Ottoman Empire. Zionists held their Creator had promised the land to them where they could work and create His Commonwealth. This lack of common ground placed the British Administration in the unhappy position of having to decide how to support what they believed was in Britain's best interests, but with no understanding of Jewish or Arab attitudes on the all important land issue, which was the fundamental cause of anti-Zionist violence.

Notwithstanding, attachment to the land was of more importance to the *fellaheen* than the notables who were often the first sellers, whilst strenuously objecting to any Jewish purchase. Sporadic attacks against Jews were recorded in the winter of 1913-14 and, in April 1914, the British Consul in Jerusalem reported that 'the assaults upon Jews in the outlying districts are increasingly frequent'.¹⁵⁰ Originally, these attacks were not part of a definite campaign, but, in June 1914, an *al-Iqdam* article mixed

147 Cmnd 5479, p. 44. (1937).

148 *Ibid*, p. 45. (1937).

149 Porath, *Emergence*, p. 28..

150 F.O. 371/2134/22036. MacGregor to Mallet, 30 Apr. 1914.

Muslim unity and Arab nationalism in a call to Arab patriotism in the name of Arabia, Syria, Palestine, and all they held dear

'will you leave the country, and God has not commanded you to depart? If indeed you do so [...] God, his Messenger and Angels, and all men will be obliged to punish you. [...]. At least let your children inherit the country which your fathers gave you as an inheritance'.¹⁵¹

Raising the spectre of Zionists using Arabs as slaves and then rejecting them, *al-Iqdam* also implied that God was on the side of the Arabs because when He expelled the Jews from the land in ancient times He forbade any return. This cunning mix of religion and nationalism claimed Jewish immigrants would not be satisfied with just taking over trade and industry, but would also seek to control the country's agriculture,

'and thereafter conquer the whole country. It is not merely that they wish to have dominion over us, but they also wish to expel us from the country. Are you Muslims content with this? Are you, Palestinians, Syrians, Arabs, happy at this?'¹⁵²

This portrayal of Zionists as conquerors heightened their perceived menace that was incremented by labeling it a Jewish conspiracy. Nevertheless, some Arabs welcomed the new settlers. Dr Thon, Ruppin's deputy in the Zionist Organisation's office, recalled that Arabs often wanted Jews to buy their land and settle nearby.

'Gaza was a city filled with religious fanaticism and opposition to all non-Moslems, whether [...] Christians or Jews. All the same, [...] many groups of people accompanied us, not in hostility, but [...] to encourage us and to extend a cordial and friendly invitation to come to Gaza and environs and establish settlements there. They promised us all assistance in a spirit of brotherhood and neighbourliness'.¹⁵³

Selling land did not fit in with the general perception that Zionism and Jewish immigration

'are a danger to the national and material interests of Arabs in Palestine is well nigh universal [...] the leaders of Arab opinion [...] carry on a political campaign'.¹⁵⁴

Politically, the extremely high prices paid for land significantly raised Arab fears because it suggested unlimited resources although purchases were often 'substandard, poorly developed or underdeveloped

151 Mandel, *Arabs and Zionism*, pp. 220-1, cites *al-Iqdam*, 5 Jul. 1914.

152 *Ibid.*

153 CZA Z3/1473. Report of Dr. Thon on land Purchase, 4 Mar. 1916.

154 Cmnd 1540, p. 45. (1921).

tracts of marsh, swamp or sand dune that landlords were happy to sell to Jews at elevated prices'.¹⁵⁵

Nevertheless, the fact that Jews met such prices increased Arab fears of dispossession, which were exacerbated by some of the means used by Zionists to overcome obstacles such as disregarding Moslem convention by sending beautiful women as agents to government officials.¹⁵⁶

Whitehall Acts

Zionist representation in Palestine concerned the British Government sufficiently to commence discussion, late in 1917, between the Foreign Office and Zionist Organisation leaders with a view 'to sending out a Zionist Commission to Palestine'.¹⁵⁷ Whitehall perceived

- '(1) The important political results that had accrued from the declaration of His Majesty's Government to the Zionists and the need for putting the assurances given [...] into practice
- (2) The inadequacy of existing Zionist representations in Egypt and Palestine
- (3) The necessity of bringing the British authorities in Egypt and Palestine and the Arabs into contact with the responsible leaders of the organisation in *entente* countries'.¹⁵⁸

Three objectives were important to British strategy,

- '(1) Help to establish friendly relations between the Jews [...], the Arabs and other non-Jewish populations.
- (2) To form a link between the British Authorities and the Jewish population.
- (3) To collect information and report upon the possibilities of future Jewish developments in Palestine in the light of the declaration of His Majesty's Government'.¹⁵⁹

Storrs believed the mission by the Zionist Commission was inopportune, and recorded that both he and Clayton were opposed 'we could hardly believe our eyes, and even wondered whether it might not be possible for the mission to be postponed until the Administration could be more clearly defined'.¹⁶⁰ Sending the Zionist Commission was a strong signal that the Government intended to honour its commitment to create a Jewish Homeland whatever the attempted distractions from assiduously conveyed Arab threats of violence. The military were now presented with an opportunity to express their concern that supporting Zionism was not in British interests. Storrs and Clayton, instead, attempted to delay the Commission's arrival by using the time-honoured ruse of stalling the disliked in the hope that it would never arrive. If the Military administration really believed the mission premature, nothing prevented them presenting a

¹⁵⁵Tessler, *Conflict*, p. 176.

¹⁵⁶Porath, *Emergence*, p. 28.

¹⁵⁷F.O. 371/3394/19932. Middle East Committee Minutes, 19 Jan. 1918.

¹⁵⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰Storrs, *Orientations*, pp. 340-1.

reasoned case in support. Delaying tactics merely created the suspicion that a mixture of anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism, and pro-Arabism might be the real agenda. Meanwhile, hostility between Jews and Arabs continued unabated, which, in December 1918, caused Clayton to issue a strongly critical note to the Foreign Office, saying that ninety per cent of Palestine's inhabitants were not Jews, so imposing an alien and unpopular element would be highly injudicious particularly as Zionists had little executive experience. Zionists, though, had continually stressed that a Jewish administration would take many years.¹⁶¹ Primarily, Clayton's opposition was that Zionists regarded reconciliation with the Arabs as desirable, but not a *sine qua non* of Zionist development, but the British saw reconciliation as a *sine qua non*, which caused fundamental disagreement between British officials and Zionists.¹⁶² Ostensibly, ignorance over Zionist aims and policies caused the disagreement, which affected both Arabs and the majority of Palestinian Jews, but the Military Authority's efforts to dispel ignorance

'had been handicapped by a lack of information concerning Zionist activities [...]. The interpretation [...] of policy has varied according to the fears or hopes of different individuals and a clear definition by the responsible Zionist leaders have been lacking'.¹⁶³

Though ignorance of Zionism apparently handicapped the military's efforts, it caused neither enquiry of Whitehall nor of the Zionist Organisation in Palestine. Similarly, Ormsby-Gore's report made no mention of any attempt at such an enquiry. Claims of ignorance, however, failed to prevent the military assuming Zionism did not serve British interests, which was a view that overlooked the long-term growth of Palestine's economy meant constructing an essential infrastructure with serviceable ports for Britain at Haifa and Jaffa. Britain's economy, weighed down by the costs of war and servicing massive loans from the United States was unable to bear the cost of Palestine's economic development, so small wonder a Jewish subvention was welcomed. From the Jewish perspective, their investment in Palestine was made on the understanding that it would be protected by the British, which Zionists interpreted in a literal sense as well as the figurative sense of preparing for autonomy. Consequently, not unreasonably, they expected to have some influence in governing the country.

Stopping in Cairo en route to Palestine, the Zionist Commission met Wingate who warned that Arabs mistrusted Zionist intentions though he believed that given goodwill, despite the difficulties, an entente between both sides was realisable although various agencies complicated the situation, either

161 F.O. 371/4170/153. Clayton to FO. 31 Dec. 1918.

162 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 26.

163 F.O. 371/3395/86912. ZC Report No. 2, 21 Apr. 1918.

from hostility or jealousy 'of Great Britain, trying to persuade the Arabs that Great Britain had sold them to the Jews, and was not to be trusted to protect Arab interests'.¹⁶⁴ Major William Ormsby-Gore, the Political Officer to the Zionist Commission, endorsed Wingate's view of Arab apprehension, and added that 'the Jews are frightened of Arab fanaticism, intrigue and attempts at domination, it is clear the Arab has lost no time in trying to get in first'.¹⁶⁵ When the Commission arrived in Jerusalem, Storrs laid on an official reception attended by leading Arab and Christian religious and lay dignitaries to whom Weizmann, in an effort to rebut scaremongering, explained Zionist policy. Jews perceived, he said, that they were returning to the land where their forefathers had stood twenty centuries earlier. Though physical hold on the land was lost Jews had never relinquished their claim, but had fought 'the onslaughts of every conceivable destructive foe' and were returning to 'link up our glorious ancient traditions [...] with the future to create [...] a moral and intellectual centre'.¹⁶⁶ Zionists intended to create the conditions from which material and moral development would flow by cultivating the land, which was plentiful enough to sustain a population many times larger. Weizmann made clear that Arab ideas of being ousted were either 'fundamental misconception of our aims and intentions or malicious activities of our common enemies' because

'our pioneers have shown that even under the deadening Ottoman regime they were capable of transforming the desert into flourishing villages'.¹⁶⁷

Though anticipating eventual autonomy, Weizmann was careful to state that a long apprenticeship would be needed 'under well-trained and trustworthy teachers, which Britain was the best Power to undertake'.¹⁶⁸ After the reception, Storrs informed the Foreign Office that the frank and friendly exchanges of programs had done a lot of good and that

1. Syrians present, both Moslem and Christian, who are most nearly affected by Zionist policy, were most emphatic in the approval of the pronouncements, and
2. That all united in agreeing that the Zionist programme and its acceptance were unthinkable save under one just and equitable Government, the identity of which did not seem to occur to them to question.¹⁶⁹

A 1919 Foreign Office publication recorded the actual benefit to Palestine from Jewish immigration, stating Jewish national development was inevitable and that Zionists were no threat to the Moslem community because their demands were not inconsistent with Arab or Moslem interest.

164 F.O. 371/3395/86912. ZC Report No. 2, 21 Apr. 1918.

165 *Ibid.*

166 *Ibid.*

167 *Ibid.*

168 *Ibid.*

169 *Ibid.*

'There is so much uncultivated land [...] there is plenty of room for Zionist development [...]. Sharif Faisal and his principal advisers realise that, [...], [...], an element of strength and stability will be introduced [...] which will [...], enable Arabs to learn [...] how best to develop their country [...].'¹⁷⁰

Since the British regarded Zionist reconciliation with the Arabs as an indispensable requirement to Palestine's growth anything appearing to fulfil that view was regarded favourably, which may explain Storrs' optimism. Notably, Money disagreed, and complained to the Foreign and War Offices that Zionist pretension, described as 'shadowy claims to monopolise Palestine', were being encouraged. Though admitting he was inclined to side with the Arabs, despite the impartiality ordered by Whitehall, he claimed this did not impel him 'very far in that direction' since political Zionism's aims clashed with the 'best interests of the people of Palestine'.¹⁷¹ Naturally, however, his sympathy lay with the ideals of moderate and enlightened Zionists.¹⁷² Lacking any clear definition of Zionist policy or Zionism, Money's judgment of Palestinian interests could only be subjective. Furthermore, his distinction between 'moderate' and 'political' Zionists was disingenuous in the light of his previous statements that made no distinction between Jews and Zionists, but simply referred to 'Jewish schemes' when opposing Zionism. Lack of a properly communicated and clear strategy allowed the Military Administration to determine what they thought best for Britain, but without being sufficiently aware of political considerations.

Weizmann's speech started and ended with the Biblical notion of 'God's Chosen People' being restored to their 'Promised Land', which was a fusion that eluded the British. Although he avoided specifying a protecting Power or how long autonomy would take to gain, Weizmann clearly referred to Britain. Many Zionists might have regarded British restoration as God interceding in a similar way as Cyrus who, two and half millennia earlier, allowed Jews exiled in Babylon to return and rebuild their temple. Weizmann's speech was warmly approved by the Greek Orthodox Archbishop Porphyrios II of Mount Sinai who wrote to Ormsby-Gore, saying no other cause was more just than that of the Jews who would employ all the great 'qualities of their race for the development of this land, [...], and so after a short time we shall have a Palestine flowing once again with milk and honey'.¹⁷³

170 F.O. 373/5/3. *Handbook No. 93*, p. 65.

171 CZA, Z4/16044. Money to C.P.O., 26 Jul. 1919.

172 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 48fn, cites Money's letter to the *Daily Mail*, 12 Jan. 1923.

173 F.O. 371/3395/99983. Letter from Archbishop Porphyrios of Mount Sinai, 4 May 1918.

These plaudits were welcome, but compared to the Arab view, some of which was favourable, unimportant. The Mufti of Jerusalem, Kamal Effendi al-Husseini, thought Weizmann had 'allayed the fears which such lack of explanation had brought about'. Quoting from the prophet, he added that 'our rights and obligations are yours', and expressed his 'complete confidence in the useful cooperation of all parties'.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the military's ultimate concern was to protect their view of what they believed was in Palestine's best interests, which of course meant what they believed in Britain's best interests. Only time could testify to the wisdom of a tactic whose progenitors would have long since departed and left their successors to resolve the aftermath.

Fundamental Antipathy

Though Weizmann's speech was well received by Arab leaders, the real issue was whether these sentiments were genuine or whether they concealed the fundamental 'antipathy towards Zionism felt by most politically conscious Arabs'.¹⁷⁵ After his first meeting with Feisal, Weizmann was very optimistic that the Zionist movement could serve 'as a natural bridge between the West and the Orient',¹⁷⁶ though concerned that any discontent in Palestine might spread to 'those Arabs who are now actively assisting our military operations, and whom it is of the utmost importance to the Ottomans to win over'.¹⁷⁷ *Yishuv* leaders were less impressed, and warned that Feisal's Damascus regime was the organising centre against Zionist plans for Palestine, which the regime described as 'Southern Syria' despite Sykes's rebuke of Syrian leaders that 'Damascus cannot and must not busy itself with Palestinian problems'.¹⁷⁸ Colonel French was also more realistic, saying

'as it is now, the Arab feels Zionist policy is unjust and that any mandatory power that attempts to carry out a Zionist policy are guilty of favouritism and doing him a gross injustice'.¹⁷⁹

French believed Jewish supremacy could only stem from their efforts under a British Mandate, and opposed either a Jewish or Zionist State. From such a senior officer this is startling, reflects underlying Arab antipathy that was bereft of any economic basis since it was accepted Zionism had improved the economy, but arose from the perception that land ownership was a prerequisite to their own state, which was precisely the view espoused by Zionists. Animosity was further fuelled by Christian anti-Zionist activity

174 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 29, cites *Palestine News*, 9 May 1918.

175 *Ibid.*

176 CZA, Z4/483. ZC minutes, 16 Jun. 1918.

177 F.O. 371/3395/125473. ZC letter Weizmann to Balfour, 30 May 1918.

178 CZA, L4/65/III, Lewis-Epstein's report to ZC meeting, 20 Jan. 1919.

179 F.O. 608/99. Report Camp to French, 12 Aug. 1919.

that buoyed Moslems to sign petitions against partitioning Palestine from Syria. Meetings, in the presence of Haifa notables, decided that because of the

'Jewish Zionist menace, all should combine for annexation to Syria. Immediately after this, these petitions made their appearance, [...], to which many names have been affixed, both Moslem and Christian.'¹⁸⁰

Small town Arabs, Haycraft noted, were more politicised than in Britain, and there was a general belief that Zionist aims and Jewish migration were dangers to the 'national and material interests of Arabs in Palestine [...] universal amongst the Arabs [...] the leaders of Arab opinion [...] carry on a political campaign'.¹⁸¹ Fear of Zionism was nurtured using 'books, newspapers, and chosen extracts translated and read to those unable to read or understand English, and who found statements that to them were both alarming and provocative'.¹⁸² Moreover, Feisal's representations to Palestinian recruits to his army incremented Arab discontent because of British wartime pledges made to King Hussein, in 1915, for the Arab Kingdom that had been in bondage to the Ottomans.

'Come and join us who are labouring for the sake of religion and the freedom of the Arabs so that the Arab Kingdom may again become what it was during the time of your fathers'.¹⁸³

Intended to encourage Arabs to desert Ottoman armies and serve Allied ones this propaganda came at a time when self determination of nations was a political goal, which made the wording injudicious and handed the Arabs a useful tool for resenting the British, which

'it is at least probable that this resentment would show itself against the Jews, whose presence in Palestine would be regarded [...] as an obstacle to the fulfilment of their aspirations'.¹⁸⁴

Once again the law of unforeseen consequences followed British failure to be more precise in their intentions with Sharif Hussein.

Conclusion

Endeavouring to make their strategy work presented Britain with great challenges. Not least was to understand that some Zionist roots, as Jews, lay in their Biblical traditions of the 'Chosen People, the 'Promised Land', and the 'Messianic Era', which are vital to an accurate perception of the competing

180 F.O. 608/107/8498. Lieutenant F.W. Powell to Director of Military Intelligence, 18 Mar. 1919.

181 Cmnd. 1540, p. 12. (1921).

182 *Ibid.*

183 *Ibid.*, p. 126.

184 *Ibid.*, p. 125-7, (1921).

interests between Jews, Arabs, and Christians. Though it was the military's job to provide the administration and control the different communities, its staff was largely untrained in either civil administration or running a country. This was particularly disadvantageous in a country where the necessity of declaring a state of emergency indicated that the chaos was severe enough even for a professionally trained and experienced Civil Service to have found immensely demanding. A body of well-trained experienced experts and impartial administrators was needed if a British Protectorate was to take post-war control.¹⁸⁵ Watson, who had replaced Money as Chief Administrator, appreciated the difficulties and wanted Arabs protected against 'the alien coming to their country'.¹⁸⁶ He had identified Moslem concern that Zionist participation in governing would create 'anxiety as to the Security of the Mosque of Omar and other Holy Places of Islam', and was equally concerned that if Jews 'were given economic privileges at the expense of the people of the country' anxiety would greatly increase.¹⁸⁷ Accordingly, it was vital that Whitehall made an early decision on the nature of the administration and corpus of skills. Regardless, as late as August 1918 the Foreign Office was still debating whether the administration should be civil or military, and whether the 'Chief Political Officer, General Clayton, would be responsible for the Civil Administration to the Commander in Chief'.¹⁸⁸ In Sykes's view

'civil administration cannot be divorced from political relations and a purely military civil administration that does not concern itself with political relations is bound to go wrong sooner or later'¹⁸⁹

Sykes was right, but failed to take account of the pro-Arab stance of the most senior military officers, several with deep experience of colonial affairs, Money and Storrs amongst them. Skills, experience, and knowledge required to run Palestine were magnitudinally greater than those acquired in well-established British areas of control like Egypt. Such complications were enhanced by the partiality of British dislike for Jews in the highest reaches of the administration, and compounded by either unwillingness or inability to realise the importance of Biblical tradition that to the Jews meant the land had been given by God to create His Commonwealth. Arab opposition made Clayton, who had earlier favoured a Zionist-Sharifian *rapprochement*, change his mind and advise the Foreign Office that it was 'injudicious to impose an alien

185 F.O. 371/4170/25158. 'Statement on Internal Jewish Situation in Palestine', enclosed with Sykes to Balfour, 11 Feb. 1919.

186 *Ibid.*

187 CZA, Z4/16044. Watson to CPO. 3 Jul. 1919.

188 F.O. 371/3389/115571. Note by Sykes 2 Jul. 1918.

189 *Ibid.*

and unpopular element', and that 'the cause of the Christians and Muslims of Jerusalem should be represented [...] when Zionism is under discussion'.¹⁹⁰ Whitehall was clear that it expected the Military Administration to support the Zionists, but failed to plan for this eventuality, or how to defuse resulting Arab resentment. Neither was there clarity over the means or what was meant by support, or the contradictions of supporting Zionism. Nevertheless, untrained British officers were expected to deal with resulting Arab hostility. Hence, a vacuum resulted that permitted scope for largely anti-Zionist personal agendas and, in some instances, anti-Semitism. Since a prosperous Palestine could only benefit Britain, the Military Administration's hostile stance towards the Jews contradicted long-term British interests. This ought to have been obvious when observing Jewish village life which also 'suffered from the war'. Except, 'due only to their admirable communal organisation they have not been ruined'.¹⁹¹ If Jewish, unlike Arab, villages had not been ruined by war the effect of a Jewish influx on a peacetime economy was imaginable. What then were the sources of this ill disposition? According to Sykes, both Palestinian Jews and Zionists lacked sober, tactful, and authoritative leaders.

'Jews emerging from political Silence and obscurity are now dazzled with the light, and lack balance and political reticence. [...]. There is a considerable one-sidedness in their views and they are apt to take offence on very small provocation [...].'¹⁹²

However, experienced colonial administrators like Storrs, Money, and Clayton could, and should, have expected to allay these characteristics. Of course, since they believed the land was God given, Zionists saw little need for tact particularly as it was their money and toil developing the economy. Notwithstanding, British administrators were 'unanimous in expressing their dislike of any policy favouring the Jews, and seriously fear the consequences of such a policy' for British interests as they saw them.¹⁹³ Fundamentally, discord between the Military and the Zionists derived from the nature and significance of Arab opposition to Zionism. Zionists tended to view Arab opposition as artificial

'created by a self-interested, corrupt and exploitative class of land-owning 'effendis', who forced the ignorant *fellaheen* into an anti-Zionism, which conflicted with the 'real' inclinations and interests of the downtrodden peasantry'.¹⁹⁴

190 F.O. 371/4170/153. Clayton to FO, 31 Dec. 1918.

191 F.O. 371/3383/49752. Jewish Agricultural Colonies, Wingate to FO., 18 Mar. 1918.

192 F.O. 371/3386/213403. Report by Sir Mark Sykes, 15 Nov. 1918.

193 CAB 24/108/18-19. Memorandum, Major-General Thwaites, May 1920.

194 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 26.

British officials did not accept Arab opposition was artificial, or that it would 'fade away before British displays of firmness'.¹⁹⁵ Instead, they regarded the 'pro-Zionist policy of the government as endangering the British position throughout the Muslim world, especially in India'.¹⁹⁶ Yet, Zionist suspicion of the Arabs was not unreasonable. William Yale, an American citizen who had represented the Standard Oil Company in Jerusalem, from 1915 until March 1917, observed 'the Palestinians [...] have looked down upon and despised and considered them as inferiors'.¹⁹⁷

Change is always difficult, which is something these experienced colonial administrators must have known, and should have been able to overcome without direction from Whitehall. Hence, it is surprising that experts like Storrs were seemingly unaware of the Moslem view of Jews as subordinate *dhimmi*, which in addition to the much more significant issue of land sales or the extreme difficulties facing Moslem cultivators, was timeless. Perhaps unwittingly, Watson echoed this view when he wrote of territorial and mineral concessions falling into Jewish hands. Thus, despite the evidence that Jewish enterprise and industriousness could transform Palestine's economy, Britain's highest-ranking officials there were prejudiced against Zionists from fear of Arab disorder and violence.

As already shown, the Military Administration, between 1918 and 1920, frequently adopted the path it deemed in British interests, and made only paltry constructive attempts to ensure that non-Jews understood the position of Zionism insofar as the British Government desired. Minuscule direction from Whitehall, which did little until the Zionist Commission went to Palestine, in 1919, was largely responsible. However, 'the wide discretionary powers' accorded to British officials by Allenby enabled the Military Administration to contain Zionist activity 'within the narrowest possible limits by means of administrative fiat'.¹⁹⁸ British officials, to Zionist fury, invoked the *status quo* principle as if it were sacred, which created an almost universal feeling among the *yishuv* of disillusion and betrayal exacerbated by 'almost apocalyptic expectations [...] aroused throughout the Jewish world by the Balfour Declaration'.¹⁹⁹ This disturbed Sykes who wrote to Balfour protesting that British officials were not acting according to the spirit of the declaration, so

195 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, p. 26.

196 *Ibid.*

197 Elie Kedourie, *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1956), p. 154.

198 Wasserstein, *British in Palestine*, pp. 41-2.

199 *Ibid.*, pp. 42.

'it is only natural therefore that the Arabs should feel that the British authorities have no definite policy vis-à-vis the Jews, and this indefiniteness, which is wrongly interpreted by the Arabs as weakness, stimulates the Arabs both inside and outside Palestine to carry on openly an anti-Jewish propaganda'.²⁰⁰

Foreign Office failure to establish clear strategies and personnel with the skills to at least mitigate the complexities of the situation in Palestine immediately after the war, led to a breakdown in trust between Zionists and the Military Administration. Inevitably, this allowed Arabs to propagate anti-Zionist views and spread the perspective of expulsion from what they saw as their own lands. Politicians saw things differently and believed it impossible for any Government

'to extricate itself without a substantial sacrifice of consistency and self-respect, if not of honour. Those of us who have disliked the policy are not prepared to make that sacrifice'.²⁰¹

Such differences were manifest in the practical daily running of Palestine, which Samuel observed when he visited, in March 1920, and noted that administration officers mainly accept

'Zionist policy because it has been adopted by H.M.G. whose servants they are and not with any conviction of the wisdom of that policy'.²⁰²

Belatedly, the risk to Britain for unequivocal support of Zionism was creating political attention. Curzon had always opposed British involvement in Palestine, but Sykes, since becoming aware of Zionism, was a great enthusiast. This confusion left Palestine's administration out of harmony with the government, which Samuel observed when writing to Sir William Tyrell, in 1919, to express his concern that the Military Administration's dealings with the Arabs did not uphold the declaration that embodied British policy. Consequently, Arabs doubt 'whether the establishment of the Jewish National Home [...] is really a decided issue', and conclude agitation might encourage the British Government 'to abandon the intentions it has at first announced'. Moreover,

'distorted views of the nature of the Zionist programme are disseminated among the population [...] and have undoubtedly become widespread'²⁰³

200 F.O. 371/4170/25158. Statement on Internal Jewish Situation in Palestine, 11 Feb. 1919.

201 CO 733/54/455. Lord Curzon 'The Future of Palestine', Jul. 1923.

202 Samuel Papers. File 6. Samuel to Curzon, 2 Apr. 1920.

203 F.O. 371/4181/86424. Samuel to Sir William Tyrell, 5 June 1919.

Tyrell recommended the government instruct the military that the Mandate would embody the substance of the Declaration, and Arabs will not

'be despoiled of their land or required to leave the country; that there can be no question of the majority being subjected to the rule of the minority and the Zionist programme does not include any such ideas'.²⁰⁴

Ironically, this was exactly the sort of statement that General Palin, a year later, recommended should have been made. In his view such a statement would have averted the *Nebi Musa* disturbances and consequent bloodshed. Samuel was obviously concerned for the difficulties facing the Zionists, but was also clear the local administration at least understood the reasons for the Mandate even if unconvinced they served British interests. Thus, the government's lack of a coherent strategy produced circumstances whereby the local administration reacted solely to the immediate situation. Only time could determine the effect on longer-term British interests.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

CONCLUSION

Uniquely in British history the First World War involved all levels of the country from the highest reaches of government to the ordinary man on the Clapham omnibus. Correspondingly, strategic judgement was complex and would affect the future of the Empire itself. Thus, the processes by which intelligence was gathered, interpreted and advised to the War Cabinet had to be rigorous and accurate for a realistic strategy to evolve that would enable the government to ensure that the country, military and civil service were prepared to the highest state of readiness. This thesis has examined the nature of the information available to the British Government during the First World War appertaining to its involvement in Palestine, how it was used and why decisions reached during wartime did not always give sufficient consideration to how they would translate in peacetime. Hence, this history has examined how information was managed through the use of the differing opinions and advice of those key civil servants, military officers and ministers involved with the decision to acquire Palestine, after dismembering the Ottoman Empire, which resulted in Britain ruling the country as a Protectorate under a League of Nations Mandate.

In evolving their strategy, the government had to be clear whether its ultimate objective was simply to defeat the Ottoman armies, and then add Palestine to the British Empire as part of an Arab dominated region so that a friendly country protected the east bank of Suez, or whether its long-term strategy was to guarantee access to the ports of Haifa and Jaffa by governing Palestine directly. Accordingly, the appointment of Field Marshal Herbert Horatio Kitchener, Earl of Khartoum, as Secretary of State for War, assumed an even greater significance than otherwise might have pertained. Many of the key figures involved with Palestine were acolytes of the Field Marshal whose opinions were important to his strategy of encouraging the Arabs to revolt against their Ottoman suzerains by trailing the possibility of an independent Arab kingdom. Since Britain's ultimate objective was to gain Palestine, in order to protect Suez and extend the Empire, this required long-term planning, careful evaluation of which tactics were best suited, and active input from military planners, politicians and diplomats so that a clear strategy evolved that avoided sacrificing the long-term for the short. Firstly, though, the government had to determine what they anticipated would be Palestine's contribution to the British Empire.

Germany's war strategy was to weaken the Entente powers by attacking them indirectly through their empires. To achieve this, because German armies were fully committed to a war in Europe, an alliance with the Ottoman Empire could provide troops for deployment against the Entente powers, which would open the empire's land mass, the overland route to Central Asia and Africa and threaten British and French interests. Thus, when the Sheikh-ul-Islam declared an Islamic holy war against the Entente Powers, on November 14 1914, it was believed by

the British that the true author of the *jihad* was Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany who had earlier declared that if Germany had to fight Britain 'England must at least lose India'.¹ In fact the Kaiser had written, on 2 August 1914, to his Foreign Ministry 'calling for revolution in India, the heart of the British Empire, and in Egypt', thereby threatening the strategic importance of the Suez Zone to Britain.²

Though Lord Grey, the Foreign Secretary, had successfully raised British expectations of a European war, this was not the same as a high state of readiness. Unbeknown to the government, British industry was 'a working museum of industrial archaeology' that badly needed reforming and modernising so that working practices and skills could meet the manufacturing demands of contemporary warfare. Hence, the government was forced to divert Britain's best managerial talent, which would have been better deployed concentrating on equipping Britain's armed forces with the munitions essential for a mainland European war against a formidable opponent, to improving production in order to create a modern machine tool industry, whilst simultaneously sourcing foreign companies where it could, in the interim, purchase machinery capable of large-scale production to fine tolerances.

Not only industry was unprepared for war; so was the government. There had been no dedicated Minister of War since Lord Haldane relinquished the post, in 1912, when the responsibilities were transferred to the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith. A dedicated Minister of War, in his regular meetings with the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, would have established the weaponry required and the far-reaching industrial inadequacies that left Britain incapable of their production. There must also be some possibility that a dedicated Minister would have had the time and available expertise to consider the potential strategic implications that arose from Lord Kitchener's 1910 letter to Lady Salisbury, the widow of the ex Prime Minister, which conjectured that Britain might have to resort to arms against the Ottoman Empire. In seeking a strategy that would deal with this possibility the cabinet might have reached an earlier political decision on how and whether to dismember the Ottoman Empire's Middle East territories, and which parts were of interest to Britain. Since 1912, the government had been aware of French desires in Syria, which included Palestine, and assured the French of British disinterest in the country, so, at the very least, it is feasible that an earlier decision might have avoided a split cabinet and provided time in which to decide how best to contain French interests. Arguably, a government that was prepared for an Ottoman war, simultaneous to one in Europe, might have avoided appointing Sir Mark Sykes to negotiate with the French over which parts of divided Ottoman territories would best suit British and French interests, in favour of a more balanced veteran with greater knowledge of the Arabs and, for that matter, Zionism. Sykes was an unseasoned and over exuberant dilettante prone

1 Strachan, *First World War*, p. 99.

2 *Ibid.*

to sudden and contradictory changes of opinion, but the cabinet's regard for him as an Ottoman expert made him appear an appropriate choice.

There were other serious disadvantages to a Prime Minister acting as War Minister at a time when the risk of war against Germany was an active consideration. It was the Prime Minister's responsibility to ensure cabinet opinions were synchronised with military and political objectives so that short and longer-term interests were matched. Hence, for Asquith to become involved at a departmental level, with day to day decision taking, meant that focus on the smooth running of a department could easily result in insufficient time to effectively plan long-term strategy. This also created opportunities for conflict when short-term and long term objectives were incompatible. Evidence that Asquith acting as War Minister was disadvantageous is seen by a letter from Kyoch Ltd, in March 1915, saying

'increased output of rifle ammunition is dependent upon obtaining machine tools with not much greater difficulty than is experienced today'.³

Such machinery cannot be bought 'off the shelf'; it first needs a specification based on required output to draw up an agreed design. Metal then has to be purchased, pressed and the machine assembled and tested. So, Kyoch's letter might be viewed as an indirect way of expressing reservations over the expeditious availability of machinery. Delay in delivery meant that Britain's only alternative was to use her gold reserves to buy huge quantities of munitions. Thus, it is even more surprising that Asquith was not better acquainted with industrial shortcomings. One indication that the demands of two major Offices of State were the direct cause of what amounts to neglect might be the appointment of Lord Kitchener as War Minister. There is little evidence to suggest that this resulted from an appraisal process to identify alternative candidates, or whether his personality and skills were best suited to the post. Instead, public opinion, manipulated by a newspaper campaign that made him appear 'magical and larger than life', persuaded Asquith to make the appointment. This means it is legitimate to question whether combining the offices of Prime Minister and Minister of War caused Asquith to lose focus, which resulted in a hasty and poorly considered decision. There is other evidence that his dual ministerial roles left Britain poorly prepared for war. In November 1914, Lloyd George wrote to General van Donop that shortage of rifles meant enquiries were made to American companies, 'even although they would only be received in substantial numbers late next year'.⁴ Thus, when the Earl became Minister of War he inherited a weapons shortage as well as a 'working museum of industrial archeology' only capable of manufacturing small quantities of munitions.

Prophetically, Asquith described the Earl's appointment, in September 1914, as a 'hazardous experiment'. This epigram might have been intended to mean that the Field Marshal's limited knowledge of the Imperial General

³ Lloyd George Papers, file C/5/7/17, letter from Kyoch Limited to Director of Army Contracts, 13 Mar. 1915.

⁴ HMLRO. Lloyd George Papers, file c/5/7/8, Lloyd George to General Von Donop, 23 Nov. 1914.

Staff, subordinate officers of the British General Staff, his discomfort in England and his inexperience of any major Department of State where political skills were important, were all mitigating factors to his attractiveness as Minister of War. Regardless, Lord Kitchener at least recognised the strategic importance of Suez to the British Empire, which was the reason he initiated an approach to the Emir of Mecca. Nevertheless, before dispatching his message from Cairo, on 5 October 1914, it was embellished to imply that an independent Arab kingdom could result if the Arabs allied themselves with the British to expel the Ottoman armies from the Middle East. Moreover, in an attempt to persuade the Emir to accept this notion the Minister of War raised the concept that, in time, 'an Arab of the true faith' might assume the Caliphate. To a government that erroneously perceived the Earl and his acolytes in Cairo and Khartoum as authorities on the Arabs such an approach might have seemed a convincing way to protect Suez, which also brought the dual benefits of circumventing the necessity for French agreement to withdraw troops from the Western Front, and provide a base from which to extend the British Empire after the war. Yet, the cabinet was unaware that the intelligence, which was the genesis for the War Minister's messages to the Emir, had emanated from his acolytes in Cairo whose views he sought in preference to those of the more seasoned Foreign and Colonial Office officials. Moreover, the War Minister, his acolytes in Cairo and Khartoum and the government were unaware that Sharif Hussein had long harboured an ambition to become Caliph, or that his idea of an Arab kingdom was one he ruled. Significantly, the British did not believe that a united Arab nation would ever become a reality, which suggests that British promises were intended as short-term expedients to deny the Ottomans an opportunistic attack on Suez.

Lord Kitchener's replacement, in January 1915, at the British Residency in Cairo was Sir Henry McMahon, a colourless, indecisive, uninspiring and unimaginative minor official from the Government of India on the verge of retirement. Personally selected by the Earl as High Commissioner, he lacked the confidence or ability to act as an interlocutor able to advise the War Minister of drawbacks to his strategy of an independent Arab nation. Instead, he became drawn into protracted communication, the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, concerning where the frontiers of an Arab nation might be settled. Eventually, in May 1915, Storrs received the Damascus Protocols where Sharif Hussein defined the boundaries he wished for an Arab kingdom. No officials in Whitehall or Cairo, despite Storrs imaginative doggerel regarding commerce and the Dutch, responded. None appeared to recognise that the Arabs might interpret silence as meaning the British Government was at worst neutral and at best encouraging. Furthermore, the British should have realised that after surviving many years of byzantine intrigue in Constantinople the Emir was no political novice. Though the war in Europe and re-engineering British industry significantly distracted government attention from the Middle East, it remained important to properly evaluate Lord Kitchener's reasons for

advocating Sharif Hussein as a British ally. Answers to questions appertaining to the Sharif's ability or willingness to contribute towards the expulsion of the Ottoman armies, and his expectations in return, ought to have been sought. Instead, by October 1916, financing the Arab Revolt had cost eleven million pounds, but Britain gained very little in return. McMahon and Storrs were crucial links in the chain to Whitehall so their task was to properly evaluate Arab capability and advise the government. However, McMahon, Storrs' superior in Cairo, claimed that 'it was the most unfortunate date in my life when I was left in charge of the Arab movement', which meant that any expectations of him would have been disappointed.⁵ These factors left Cairo without an effective leader, and the War Minister poorly informed about the potential of his strategy. Notwithstanding, after many years in the East, that made him a supposed Arab expert, it is surprising the War Minister did not reappraise his strategy since he knew Arabs would not unite, and it's most likely that self-government was understood by the British as meaning advised by themselves. However, apart from Asquith himself, only Sir Edward Grey could have successfully challenged Lord Kitchener. Grey, though, was a sick man, felt he had not done enough to avert war and was uneasy confronting military judgement. So, by default the Emir was able to construe the December 1914 Proclamation, which had been issued by Cairo without Whitehall's prior knowledge or consent, as British support for an independent Arab kingdom which he would lead. Whether the government intended to create a genuinely independent Arab kingdom or simply one that involved a change of suzerainty was of great strategic importance. This was not only a question of how to finance the creation of such a kingdom, even assuming that it could be self-financing in the not too distant future, but at least as important were satisfactory answers to questions over whether and how Britain would be allowed to control Suez, what sort of government would ensue and whether British taxpayers would be willing to financially support an Arab kingdom until it became economically viable. There was, though, little consistency within the British Government, and whilst the War Minister was conferring with Sharif Hussein the Foreign Office, simultaneously, was negotiating with the French over which parts of a dismembered Ottoman Empire they would control.

To avoid creating a power vacuum in the Middle East after dismembering Ottoman territories, France, Britain and initially Russia, had to agree on which parts they each desired. The *entente cordiale*, signed in 1904, had not altered the traditional commercial and imperial rivalry between Britain and France, which is reflected in Lord Kitchener's desire to acquire Alexandretta in Northern Syria. Moreover, failure to rebut Arab territorial claims in the Damascus Protocols placed Britain in a difficult position with the French who regarded the whole of Syria and Palestine as their *mission civilisatrice*. Thus, Sir Mark Sykes was appointed to lead the negotiations that resulted in the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Whilst Sykes was in Cairo, returning to England from India with the De Bunsen Committee

⁵ Kedourie, *Chatham House*, p. 14.

recommendations, the 'Egyptian Party' had all too easily persuaded him that Mohammed Al-Faruqi's claims were of sufficient substance for the British to accept that Arabs in the Ottoman armies would revolt if the government agreed to their conditions. Regarded as an expert on the Ottoman Empire, Sykes' opinion that Arab support could make a substantial contribution toward Britain's aim to gain Palestine went largely unchallenged. Only Reginald Hall, the Admiralty Head of Intelligence, dissented and warned the Arabs wanted independence, not unification under a Franco-British aegis and their military value was inflated. Yet, Grey only reluctantly accepted Britain should gain from the partition of the Ottoman Empire; a reservation shared with the military that were equally unhappy with the Sykes-Picot Agreement believing, not unreasonably, it favoured France a lot more than Britain. Moreover, military opinion was unwavering over the strategic imperative for Britain to control a continuous stretch of territory from Mesopotamia to Egypt with Palestine as a link. Grey, however, could not agree to any diminution of his promise to respect French interests in Syria even though given, in 1912, before unrest in Syria, the claims of Sharif Hussein for an independent Arab kingdom and Lord Kitchener's ambitions for a new Viceroyalty. French goals had always been constant, but the 'Egyptian Party, largely comprised of the Earl's acolytes, Sykes among them, caused the British Government to rethink its position regarding Syria, which resulted in little clear or consistent direction. Any chance to resolve the ancient rivalry with the French was not helped when Sykes, in one of his enthusiastic moments, decided the key to resolving Syria was Zionism.

These rivalries could only be settled if both countries were prepared to review their imperialistic traditions and cease extending their empires. Neither, however, anticipated changing the *status quo*, which meant each having to decide which territory to acquire and how it could be controlled. The British desire to acquire Palestine meant conflict with the French, but knowing the Syrian Arabs were opposed to any French involvement placed British diplomats in a difficult position. So, whilst accepting their allies should be informed, they were also concerned that the French might view reports of Syrian unease as a backdoor method for Britain to gain Syria. Conversely, French unpopularity could be used to gain control of Palestine without affecting British relations with France. Underlying this view was that France, despite the *entente cordiale*, was still regarded as a rival empire, even as a future enemy. This notion was assiduously conveyed by the Field Marshal despite being entirely at odds with the carnage on the Western Front and the moral pressure of the *entente cordiale*; it is surprising that this contradiction did not seem entirely obvious. Nevertheless, the British were also wary of raising Palestine with the French fearing it would open up the problem of post-war territorial dispositions in Syria, and Britain's African Colonies. Protecting Suez necessitated British access to the ports of Haifa and Jaffa, which could only be done with certainty by gaining Palestine. This raised the difficult question of how to meet the cost of constructing the infrastructure to support the ports. Since the British

were unable to finance the development of Palestine, Zionist access to world Jewry's funds seemed an attractive recourse for the government. Though the Foreign Office had long favoured Jewish resettlement, they also knew that a large-scale influx risked embroiling Britain in disputes with the Arabs who feared Jewish industriousness and business acumen, and losing their land.

Seventy years before the Great War the Foreign Office envisaged that restoring Jews to Palestine to develop its economy, would help shore up the Ottoman Sultan's authority against Mehmet Ali, the Egyptian ruler. This idea gained ground during the latter half of the nineteenth-century, but it needed Jewish political will and support from one of the Powers. Systemic Russian persecution forged the former and resulted in many Jews, having concluded they best controlled their own destiny, making *aliyah*. Despite British sympathy it is unlikely any practical assistance would have been extended to the Zionists had it not been for the threat to the security of the Canal Zone which altered British relationship with the Ottoman Empire and Britain's stance toward Palestine. Hence, the Zionists and the British had common purposes, but for very different reasons.

Exiled from their land by the Romans, who renamed it Syria-Palestina, in 135, the Jews' attachment to *Eretz Y'Israel* remained undimmed throughout the centuries. As Christianity developed, and particularly when it became the state religion of the Roman Empire, after 395, Jewish persecution grew more frequent and prolonged. Economic exclusion and violence were commonly used in attempts to persuade Jews to convert, which Christian thinkers believed would usher in the *Parousia* and the Kingdom of Heaven. Nevertheless, attachment to their land and faith remained undiminished and Jews continued to believe that when The Lord chose they would be restored to their Promised Land united under their own rulers. Even though such eventuality might only arrive with the Messianic Era, patiently they waited and suffered believing this was in atonement for their failure to create a Commonwealth according to their Creator's wishes. Jewish cultural and religious differences intensified by persecution, isolated them from becoming an integral part of their host nations. This was heightened by weekly readings from Torah that emphasised their chosenness, increased their feelings of uniqueness and determination to return to their own land when deemed appropriate by their Creator.

When Count Pavlovich Ignatiev promulgated the May Laws, in 1882, it intensified oppression of the Jews. Hence, under the auspices of *Chovevi Zion*, many were inspired to seek safety and freedom in Palestine, which meant abrogating the notion that Jews would damage their relationship with their Creator if they did not patiently wait for restoration. This dramatic change resulted from the *haskalah* which introduced Western European ideas into the Ghettoes of Eastern Europe and weakened rabbinic control. These ideas deepened hostility to Russia. augmented

Jewish longing for restoration, and encouraged many to emigrate. Undoubtedly, at least amongst Russian Jewry, *Chovevi Zion* were a driving force that helped Jews realise there was an alternative, no matter how difficult, to living in Russia and enduring denigration, hostility, victimisation and starvation. Essentially, nonetheless, *Chovevi Zion* was a parochial movement that though attracted large support within the Pale of Settlement, but was largely unknown elsewhere. To re-establish themselves in their 'Promised Land' required a larger movement and international recognition.

It was Herzl's genius that he recognised this need for a larger stage on which to project the idea of restoration and subsequent autonomy. He also understood that to create a political movement he had to convert notions more usually associated with Biblical tradition into a recognisable political agenda that would engender international sympathy and create acceptance of the Jews right to return. Herzl's experience of the Dreyfus trial, in 1897, convinced him that Jews best chance of survival lay with independence in Palestine. This he set down in *Der Judenstaat* where he argued that Europe's Jews, whilst expected to conduct themselves as full citizens of their native countries, were often not accorded full citizenship rights so the task of persuading them only independence could arrest persecution was easier. However, acquiring nation states support for the idea of restoration, let alone self-rule, was a different order of achievement. Herzl's opportunity came with the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration, in 1902, specifically tasked to report on the turmoil caused by a large influx of Russian Jews into London. Testifying, he argued that the best solution for the Jews was Zionism, which at least established the idea of restoration in British minds even if the timing was not propitious for the concept of an autonomous Jewish state.

Herbert Samuel's memorandum on the 'Future of Palestine' had already been discussed by the time the de Bunsen Committee reported to the cabinet, in June 1915, and recommended that an international commission rule Palestine. Samuel had opposed this concept in a cogent and well-argued paper laid before the cabinet, three months earlier, which examined the strategic benefit to Britain of supporting Jewish resettlement under a British Protectorate. In particular, he argued that an international commission would result in 'inevitable and continuous disagreements' that would achieve nothing in terms of 'developing the land or progress of its people'. Samuel postulated that, if Jewish financing were used to build a badly needed infrastructure, Britain would gain a friendly nation, security for the Suez Zone, safeguard the route to India and avoid French sensitivities over Alexandretta. Undoubtedly, Jewish commitment to raising the funds to build Palestine's infrastructure, despite Asquith's description of the memorandum as 'dithyrambic', must have seemed very attractive and a major factor in Britain's subsequent support of the Zionists. But, it was not the only factor.

Key to the favourable reception of the Zionist agenda for Palestine was Chaim Weizmann's influence amongst British leaders which persuaded Lloyd George to speak of 'world Jewry', the 'Jewish race' and 'the Zionists' as if they were synonymous.⁶ Hence, although Zionism was only a small movement its appearance was much larger, which ensured Zionist representatives were received as if they 'were the emissaries of a great power'.⁷ Furthermore, Weizmann had spent years canvassing support for Zionism amongst British opinion formers so his request for a letter of formal support from the Foreign Office met with sympathy which had 'already been expressed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour [...] and other statesmen, we are committed to supporting it'.⁸

Timing is everything and though Weizmann assiduously cultivated British leaders, weightier considerations helped convince Lloyd George of Zionism's value to Britain. One of these factors, which convinced the Prime Minister that Jews controlled the White House, was America's reversal of its earlier refusal to support Zionism. Ironically it was Edwin Montagu, the Minister of Munitions, Samuel's anti-Zionist cousin, who was the cause by convincing the cabinet that Woodrow Wilson, the American President, should be consulted before any promulgation to the Zionists. Astute Zionist public relations overcame the White House 'which raised eyebrows in London' and confirmed in Lloyd George's mind the extensiveness of Jewish influence.⁹ Another factor was the perception that Christianity owed a debt to the Jews because of its involvement in centuries of oppression, though not an issue for the Zionists who only wanted restoration and had made clear to the Government they envisaged resettlement to be under the auspices of Great Britain as the Mandatory, incorporation into the British Empire as a Crown Colony and eventual development into a self-governing Colony with their own defence capability, which, in essence, confirmed the Jewish perception of a Commonwealth contained in Sokolow's 1916 memoranda to the Foreign Office. When the Foreign Office received the memoranda it should have spurred officials to ensure their understanding of a Commonwealth was synonymous with the Zionists. Had this been done Whitehall's insight into the magnitude of the 'Promised Land' to the Jews might have improved. Arguably, this failure to appreciate Zionist meaning might have arisen from the British belief that 'her potent influence has many a time been in the past, and may yet be in the future, invaluable in the cause of human liberty', which might appear altruistic when Britain's real intention was to gain control of Palestine, and protect Suez, using Jewish finances to develop its economy.¹⁰ Since Britain, after the Great War, was bankrupt, but still intended to expand her Empire, there was little other option than to adopt a strategy that brought Palestine into the British Empire as a Protectorate, but relied on Jewish finances to develop its economy in exchange for resettlement, the

6 Segev, *One Palestine*, pp. 42-3.

7 *Ibid*, p. 48.

8 *Ibid*, pp. 44-5.

9 *Ibid*, p. 48.

10 David Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, 2 vols, (London: Oldhams Press, 1938), 1, p. 26.

potential for some voice in the country's administration and possible future autonomy. Though this might seem unequal and egregious, from the Jewish perspective, however, nothing could compare to resettlement in their 'Promised Land', and since Jews had waited nearly twenty centuries to return, autonomy could wait a little longer. Moreover, at least under British rule they would no longer be oppressed.

By 1914, Zionists of the first and second *aliyot* had increased Palestine's Jewish community to a critical mass of seventy-five thousand that gradually transformed the *yishuv* into a modern economy. Such success gave greater impetus and weight to the Zionist Organisation's petition to the government for a proclamation in favour of a Jewish state. Though welcomed by the Zionists, because the government was determined to avoid offending either Jewish or Arab sensitivities, the Balfour Declaration was an indeterminate document that only gave Arabs and Jews equivocal support by permitting both too much scope for interpretation. In any event, by the time it was promulgated the government had come to the conclusion that Palestine should become a British Protectorate under a League of Nations Mandate, though it was thought better this remain *sub judice* for fear of attracting French dissent. Neither was any mention made to the Zionists regardless of Lloyd George speech to a delegation of the Manchester Jewish Community and Balfour's belief in the benefit to the Jews of their own Commonwealth. Combined, these might have created an impression that the government would take more active steps than it really intended to resettle the Jews, and also favourably viewed eventual autonomy. Whatever these earlier protestations of support, Zionists realised political expediency overruled their own aspirations. Weizmann, noting the government's *volte face*, expressed Zionist concerns to Lloyd George, in August 1920, when he questioned the reasons for omitting any reference to self-government, and 'the principle that the Jewish Agency shall have priority in developing the public works, utilities and the natural resources of the country' from the Draft Mandate. Weizmann, for all his tireless courting of ministers, opinion formers and leaders had not completely understood that the government favoured a Jewish nation only so long as it was under a British Protectorate and the Jews financed Palestine's economic progress. Though eventual autonomy was not ruled out, the real message was that Zionists should not count on it happening, or at least not in the foreseeable future. Balfour, alone amongst British politicians comprehended that watering down the Mandate commitments was unlikely to impress Jewish sentiment, especially when Jewish financial assistance was essential, so every effort should be made to ease the Zionist leaders' task when appealing to world Jewry for funds. Balfour advised Lloyd George that if Zionism failed the British Government would be associated with the failure, which made

it all the more prudent to lighten the Zionist leadership burden instead of making it greater.¹¹ However, because the British had not formulated how they intended to govern Palestine, or what this entailed, the military was left directionless to form an administration without any clear idea that the government favoured Zionism because it perceived the Jews as the only people able to develop Palestine's economy, thereby providing strategic protection and increased trade to the Empire. In April 1920, the *Nebi Musa* riots finally forced on Lloyd George the importance of a properly devised, realisable and affordable strategy.

Competing interests of Jews, Arabs and Christians presented Palestine's Military Government with great challenges that could only be resolved by sensitive and astute handling. Yet the difficulties that faced the incoming administration, not the least of which was being forced to declare a state of emergency, would have taxed the ingenuity and knowledge of a fully trained and highly experienced civil service, let alone a comprehensively untested and untrained one. Complicating the situation was that many officers had been seconded from Egypt, but their subordinate officials in Palestine had served under the Ottoman administration and feared Zionist industriousness, commercial awareness and land purchase. They also possessed an underlying religious wariness of the Jews whom they regarded as *dhimmi*. Similarly, many senior British officers viewed Zionism as inimical to Britain's best interests, and encouraged Arabs to threaten violence hoping this would pressurise Whitehall into revoking the Balfour Declaration and British support. Zionists often did not help their cause with vociferous expressions of aspiration and defence of their own interests which made them less than popular with British officers. However, expecting anything different would have been unrealistic when Jewish finances were improving Palestine's economy. This confusion arose because, from the Prime Minister down, no decisive influence clarified that the ports of Haifa and Jaffa had to be developed, which needed Jewish finances, to protect Suez. Thus, the military administration was expected to govern without understanding the nature or longevity of their tenure, or any proper political accountability. This meant they governed by interpreting the Hague Convention, at least when it suited them, in a restrictive manner that Zionists believed unfairly prevented them developing Palestine into a Jewish country. More damagingly, political responsibility ran through the Chief Administrator to Allenby whose little inclination to become personally immersed in Palestine allowed the Chief Administrator to pursue his own judgment, unfettered by genuine political or military control. This situation pertained until the Zionist Commission, despatched by the Foreign Office, arrived on a fact finding mission, in late 1918, with a brief to establish friendly relations between the Jews and the non-Jewish populations, form a link between the British Authorities and the Jewish population and report upon the possibilities of future Jewish

¹¹ Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, 1, p. 156.

developments in the light of the Balfour Declaration. Such was the confusion in Whitehall that as late as August 1918 the Foreign Office was still undecided whether the administration should be civil or military. Sykes was clear that a purely military administration was eventually bound to fail, but did not recognise this was because of deep-seated Arab antipathy to Jewish resettlement. Notwithstanding, the military advocated a meeting between Weizmann and Feisal, although knowing any resulting agreement would meet Arab opposition. Subsequently, even Clayton, who had instigated the meeting, decided Arab opposition made *rapprochement* impossible. Friction between the military and the Zionists arose because the military did not believe Arab opposition was artificial and expected the Zionists to be more accommodating. Zionists, however, believed the effendis created discord from fear of Jewish competition. None of which was helped by fears that the government's pro-Zionist policy endangered the British position throughout the Muslim world, especially in India. Yet, either out of ignorance or because it suited them, the military administration, though they recognised Arab concerns over Jewish land purchase, failed to understand the Moslem view of Jews as inferior *dhimmi* that exacerbated the situation, particularly when combined with fears that Zionist land acquisition would lead to Arabs becoming ruled by Jews. Yet, though fear of the effect on Moslem opinion was understandable, it is nevertheless surprising that the economic improvement already made by the Jews was overlooked. Moreover, the conduct of many British officials, which was utterly at variance with the spirit of the Balfour Declaration, encouraged Arabs to believe, and interpret as weakness, the British had no real policy, which resulted in openly anti-Jewish propaganda and spreading the idea that Jews could be expelled. Problematically for the military administration, miniscule direction from Whitehall combined with Zionist's almost messianic regard for the Balfour Declaration led to a breakdown of trust. Zionists found it hard to understand why, since they were creating the wealth that could lead to greater economic prosperity, this should cause Arab agitation. Most Zionists did not understand that Arabs regarded the land as their own even though, because of corruption and crippling taxation, earning a living from it was very difficult. To the Zionists, British failure to prevent Arab agitation, some of which could be attributed to poor intelligence and some to dislike of Jews, left the *yishuv* feeling betrayed. Also, Arabs sent out mixed messages. Often the most vociferously opposed to selling land, was the first to sell. Politicians were no less divided. Even Curzon, a long time opponent of any involvement with Palestine, was disposed to admit that Britain could not withdraw without losing consistency, self-respect and honour. Small wonder Palestine's military government had little conviction of what passed for British strategy and failed to prevent Arabs distorting and disseminating anti-Zionist propaganda. It was left to General Palin, in his report following the *Nebi Musa* disturbances, to echo Colonel Richard Meinhertzhagen's argument that a clear and unequivocal statement of British support for the Zionists should have been made to the Arabs, but with a simultaneous undertaking that forced land dispossession would be acted against.

Undeniably, the military had a difficult balancing act. Not only did the Hague Convention prevent them changing the *status quo*, which they were slavish in following when deemed advantageous, but they also had to keep the communities apart to avoid bloodshed. Government failure to devise a clear and coherent strategy was unhelpful to Palestine and allowed the military too much latitude to act as it felt fit, which was not always helpful to economic progress. Even though most of the British administrators were incompetent at the civil operational level expected, it was not asking too much for experienced leaders, such as Storrs and Money, to have made some attempt at training or ensure that Jews and Arabs were treated equally and each dispute settled on its own merits. Certainly, it would not have hurt the Zionists to have shown a little more sensitivity to Arab sensibilities, though under the circumstances little else should have been expected. Ultimately, it was the military's job to prevent unnecessary discord, which lack of any significant intelligence system until 1919 made more difficult. Nevertheless, it is sometimes overlooked that the military were the enforcing arm of foreign policy and needed political direction that was not forthcoming. Whilst it was not the military's responsibility to have been pitched into the maelstrom that Palestine was rapidly becoming, they had to govern fairly. Yet, seeking easy rather than right solutions to the antagonism between Arabs and Jews they were often partial and made little attempt to understand that because Jewish finances were developing the country rather more tactful handling was merited. Similarly, they also failed to appreciate that the Arab agenda was to expel the Jews. Perhaps the best example of why the Zionists perceived the military as partial was Storrs's withdrawal of troops from Jerusalem just in time for *Nebi Musa*, though warned of Arab plans to attack the Jews in the Old City. Although he escaped direct culpability for this egregious act, and was only criticised by General Palin for holding Zionists responsible, that the General believed any criticism was warranted might be viewed as a suspicion that Storrs was culpable, but the evidence was insufficient to prove him so. Placing a man like Storrs in such a sensitive position was one of the more egregious acts of the military administration especially after a number of reports suggested he was unsuited and biased in his dealings between Arabs and Jews. In fact, Storrs's appointment to the Military Governorship of Jerusalem might be considered as a good metaphor for Palestine's military administration.

Ultimately, neither Asquith's opposition to acquiring new territories, or Lloyd George's emotional attachment to the Holy Land, whilst simultaneously endeavouring to use it as a bargaining chip for other territory at the Peace Conference, avoided creating the 'hornets nest' that Asquith feared. Samuel's appointment as High Commissioner simply delayed the inevitable consequences of an ill considered strategy that owed too much to the reputation and standing in Britain of the Earl of Khartoum and his acolytes in Cairo, too much credence placed on Sykes' views, insufficient attention given to dissenting and better informed opinion, and planning that was too poor to evolve a

strategy that would be sustainable in peacetime. Hence, the adage of fail to plan means plan to fail is an appropriate epitaph for Britain's approach to evolving a strategy for Palestine.

BIBLIOGRAPHY**Primary Sources****National Archives**Britain – The National Archives, Kew

- CAB 21 Cabinet Office and Predecessors (CAB).
- CAB 24 War Cabinet and Cabinet Memoranda.
- CAB 27 War Cabinet and Cabinet: Miscellaneous Committees.
- CAB 37 Cabinet Office: Cabinet Papers.
- CAB 38 Cabinet Office: Committee of Imperial Defence.
- CAB 42 Cabinet Office: War Council and Successors.
- CO 537 Colonial Office (CO) Palestine Political.
- CO 733 Colonial Office Palestine Original Correspondence.
- FO 78 Foreign Office and Predecessor: Political and Other Departments: General Correspondence before 1906, Ottoman Empire (FO).
- FO 141 Foreign and Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Embassy and Consulates, Egypt: General Correspondence.
- FO 195 Foreign Office: Embassy and Consulates, Turkey (formerly Ottoman Empire): General Correspondence.
- FO 371 Foreign Office: Political Departments: General Correspondence.
- FO 372 Foreign Office: Treaty Department and Successors: General Correspondence.
- FO 373 Foreign Office: Peace Conference.
- FO 608 Foreign Office: Peace Conference: British Delegation.
- FO 686 Foreign Office and Predecessors: Jeddah Agency: Papers.
- FO 800 Foreign Office, Private Offices: Various Ministers' and Officials' Papers
- FO 882 Foreign Office: Arab Bureau: Correspondence and Reports.
- Kew. The National Archive (TNA). Haig. Diaries.
- Kew. The National Archive. Kitchener Papers.
- Kew. The National Archive. Arab Bureau Papers.
- Kew. The National Archive. Milner Papers.
- L/P & S Political and Secret.

Israel Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem

Correspondence of the Zionist Central Office (CZA), Berlin, 1911-1920.

Correspondence of the Zionist Central Office, Jaffa, 1918-1920.

Correspondence of the Zionist Central Office, London, 1911-1920.

Correspondence of the Zionist Representative, Constantinople, 1908-1920.

Sokolow Papers.

Weizmann Papers.

Thon Papers.

Israel State Archives (ISA), Jerusalem.

Government of Palestine. Report on the Palestine Administration, July 1920 - December 1921.

Other Archives

Cambridge. Pembroke College. Storrs Papers.

Cambridge. University Library. Hardinge Papers.

Durham. University of Durham Library. Sir Arthur Henry McMahon. Correspondence with Sir Reginald Wingate, 1915-1916.

Durham. University of Durham. Sudan Archive (SAD). Gilbert Clayton Papers.

Durham. University of Durham. Sudan Archive. Reginald Wingate Papers.

Kingston upon Hull. University of Hull, Brynmor Jones Library. Mark Sykes Papers.

London. British Library. Balfour Papers.

London. House of Lords Record Office (HMLRO). Beaverbrook Collection. Lloyd George Papers.

London. House of Lords Record Office. Herbert Samuel Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive (MECA). Allenby Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. Balfour Declaration Files.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. C. D. Brunton Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. Feisal Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. Mervyn Herbert Diaries.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. David Hogarth Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. T. E. Lawrence Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. F. R. Somerset Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. Mark Sykes Papers.

Oxford. St. Antony's College. Middle East Centre Archive. Hubert Young Papers.

Private Papers

London. British Library. Balfour Papers.

London. Imperial War Museum. T. E. Lawrence Papers.

London. India Office Library. Curzon Papers.

London. King's College. Liddell Hart Centre. Allenby Papers.

Oxford. Bodleian Library. Asquith Papers.

Oxford. Bodleian Library. Milner Papers. Palestine.

Published Official Papers

Butler, R., and Bury, J. P. T., eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* asstd. M. E. Lambert, 1st Series (London: HMSO, 1963).

Hurewitz, J. C. *The Struggle for Palestine*, 2 vols (New York: Horton, 1950).

Hurewitz, J. C., *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: a documentary record*, 2 vol. (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1958).

Ingrams, D. ed., *Palestine Papers, 1917-1922, Seeds of Conflict* (London: John Murray, 1972).

Laqueur, Walter, and Rubin, Barry, *The Israel Arab Reader* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984).

London. Foreign Office Historical Section. Handbook No. 60, *Syria and Palestine* (London: HMSO, 1920).

London. History of The Ministry of Munitions (London: HMSO, 1922).

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Interim Report on Palestine*. Command 1499. (October 1921).

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Palestine Disturbances in May, 1921* (Haycraft Commission). Command 1540. (1921).

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Palestine Royal Commission Report* (Peel). Command 5479. (1937).

London. House of Lords Record Office. Report of the High Commissioner on the Administration of Palestine 1920-1925.

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development*. (John Hope Simpson). Command 3686. (October, 1930).

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Report of the Commission on the Palestine Disturbances of August, 1929*. (Passfield) Command 3530. (March, 1930).

London. House of Lords Record Office. *Report on Indian Constitutional Reform*, (Montagu-Chelmsford) Command 9109 (1918).

London. War Office, *Statistics of the Military Effort* (London: HMSO, 1922).

Lowe, C. J. and Dockrill, M. L., *The Mirage of Power, The Documents, British Foreign Policy 1902-1922*, 3 vols (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

Sachar, Howard M., ed., *The Rise of Israel*, 39 vols. (London: Garland Publishing, 2000).

Woodward, E. L., and Butler, R., eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* First Series, 6 vols (London: HMSO, 1952).

United States. Washington. Department of State, *Mandate for Palestine* (Washington: Department of State, 1920).

Published Personal Papers

Asquith, H. H., *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, ed., Michael and Eleanor Brock, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

Barzilay, Dvorah and Litvinoff, Barnet, eds., *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann. November 1917-October 1918*, 22 vols (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1977).

Bein, Alex, ed., *Arthur Ruppin: Memoirs, Diaries, Letters* trans. Karen Gershon (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971).

Bein, Alex, *Theodore Herzl: A Biography* trans. Maurice Samuel (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1941).

Bell, Gertrude Margaret Lowthian, *The Arab War: Confidential Despatches Reprinted from the Secret "Arab Bulletin"* (Great Britain: The Golden Cockerel Press, 1940).

Gwynn, Stephen, ed. *Letters and Friendships of Sir Cecil Spring-Rice*, 2 vols (London: Constable, 1929).

Stein, Leonard, gen. ed. *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, 22 vols (Jerusalem: Israel University, 1975).

Unpublished Papers

Richmond, John, 'The Church's Influence on the Expulsion of the Jews from England, in 1290' (MA dissertation, Royal Holloway University of London, 2003).

Political Publications

Balfour, A. J., 'A Brief Note on Zionism' in *Essays Speculative and Political* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1920).

Wilson, Trevor, ed. *The Political Diaries of C. P. Scott, 1911-1928* (London: Collins, 1970).

Pinsker, Leon, *The Road to Freedom* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1975).

Biographies

Lenox, Algernon Gordon Lady, ed., *The Diary of Lord Bertie of Thame* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1924).

Graves, Philip R., ed., *Memoirs of King Abdullah* (London: Cape, 1950).

Montefiore, Moses Sir, *The Diaries of Sir Moses and Lady Montefiore*, ed., Louis Loewe (London: Jewish Historical Society of England, 1983).

Rose, Norman, *Chaim Weizmann – A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986).

Autobiographies and Political Memoirs

Amery, L. S., *My Political Life, War and Peace: 1914-1929*, 3 vols (London: Hutchinson, 1953).

Amery, L. S., *The Leo Amery Diaries, 1896-1929* (London: Hutchinson, 1980).

Asquith, H. H., *Memories and reflections, 1852-1927*, 2 vols (London: Cassell, 1928).

Bentwich, Norman, *Mandate Memories* (London: Hogarth Press, 1965).

Cecil, Edward, Lord, *The Leisure of an Egyptian Official* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1921).

Churchill, Winston S., *The World Crisis: 1911-1914*, 4 vols (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1923).

Conder, Claude Reignier Colonel, *Heth and Moab* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1883).

Eban, Abba, *Abba Eban: An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1977).

Grey, Viscount Lord of Falloden, *Twenty-Five Years, 1892-1916* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1925).

Hankey, Maurice Baron Lord, *Supreme Command, 1914-1918*, 2 vol (London: Allen & Unwin, 1961).

Lawrence, T. E., *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1935).

Lawrence, T. E., *Secret Despatches from Arabia* (London: Golden Cockerel Press, 1939).

- Liddell Hart, B. H. *A History of the First World War* (Trowbridge, Wilts: Redwood Press, 1973).
- Lloyd George, David, *The Truth About the Peace Treaties*, 2 vols (London: Gollancz, 1938).
- Lloyd George, David, *War Memoirs*, 4 vols (Boston: Little, Brown, 1934).
- Lloyd George, David, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*, 2 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939).
- Meinhertzhagen, R. Col., *Middle East Diary, 1917-1956* (London: Cresset Press, 1959).
- Miller, David Hunt, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris*, 22 vols (New York: Printed for Author, 1924).
- Samuel, Viscount, *Memoirs* (London: Cresset, 1945).
- Samuel, Edwin Herbert, *A lifetime in Jerusalem: The memoirs of the Second Viscount Samuel* (London: Valentine, Mitchell, 1970).
- Storrs, Ronald Sir, *Orientalisms* (London: Nicholson & Watson, 1943).
- Symes, G. S., *Tour of Duty*, (London: Collins, 1946).
- Weizmann, Chaim, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann* (New York: Harper, 1949).
- Weizmann, Chaim, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, 22 vols (Jerusalem: Israel University Press, 1974).

Newspapers

- Jerusalem: Jerusalem Post.
- London: Jewish Chronicle.
- London: New Statesman.
- London: The Times.

Secondary Sources

- Abbot, John, *The History of Napoleon Bonaparte*, 2 vols (New York: Harper, 1883).
- Adelson, Roger, *Sir Mark Sykes: Portrait of an Amateur* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1975).
- Almog, Shmuel, *Zionism and History: The Rise of a New Jewish Consciousness* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1987).
- Aloy, Gill, Carl, *Behind the Middle East Conflict, The Real Impasse Between Arab and Jew* (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1975).
- Andrews, Christopher, M., and Forstner, A. S., *France Overseas: The Climax of French Imperial Expansion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981).
- Andrews, Christopher, M., 'France, Britain, and the Peace Settlement: A Reconsideration' in *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1919 - 1939* ed., Uriel Dann (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988).
- Antonius, George, *The Arab Awakening: The Story of the Arab National Movement* (New York: Capricorn Books, 1965).
- Ashley, Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury, 'State and Prospects of the Jews' in *Quarterly Review*, 63 (1839).
- Ariel, Yaakov. 'An Unexpected Alliance: Christian Zionism and its Historical Significance', *Modern Judaism*, 26 (2005).
- Arthur, George, *Life of Lord Kitchener* (London: MacMillan, 1920).

- Avineri, Shlomo, *The Making of Modern Zionism, The Intellectual Origins of the Jewish State* (New York: Basic Books, c1981).
- Avneri, Aryeh, *The Claim of Dispossession: Jewish Land Settlement and the Arabs, 1878-1948* trans. Kfar Blum Translation Group (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, c1984).
- Baker, Randall, *King Husain and the Kingdom of Hejaz* (Cambridge: Oleander, 1979).
- Barnett, Correlli, *The Collapse of British Power* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1993).
- Barr, James, *Setting the Desert on Fire: T. E. Lawrence and Britain's Secret War in Arabia, 1916-18* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006).
- Baumgartner, Frederick, J., *Longing for the End* (London: Macmillan, 1999).
- Bein, Alex, *Theodore Herzl, A Biography* trans. M. Samuel (London: East and West Library, 1956).
- Biger, Gideon, *An Empire in the Holy Land* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press: 1994).
- Bonham Carter, Violet, *Winston Churchill as I Knew him* (London: Eyre & Spottiswood and Collins, 1965).
- Bowle, John, *Viscount Samuel* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1957)
- Brecher, F., *Reluctant Ally: United States Foreign Policy Towards the Jews from Wilson to Roosevelt* (New York & London: Greenwood Press, 1991).
- Brecher, F., 'French Policy Toward the Levant 1914 - 1918' in *Middle Eastern Studies* (MES), 29 (1993).
- Busch, Briton, Cooper, *Britain, India, and the Arabs, 1914 -1921* (London: University of California Press, 1971).
- Caplan, Neil, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question 1917 -1925* (London: Cass, 1978).
- Caplan, Neil, *Futile Diplomacy: Early Arab-Zionist Negotiation Attempts, 1913-1931*, 3 vols (London: Cass, 1983).
- Cassar, George, H., *Kitchener: Architect of Victory* (London: W. Kimber, 1977).
- Childers, Erskine, 'Palestine: The Broken Triangle', *Journal of International Affairs*, 19, 1 (1965).
- Choueiri, Youssef, *Arab Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).
- Cohen, Israel, Ahron, *Israel and the Arab World*, trans. A Hodes, (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1970).
- Cohen, Michael, J., *Churchill and the Jews* (London: Frank Cass, 1985).
- Cohen, Michael, J., 'Churchill and the Balfour Declaration: The Interpretation, 1920-1922' in *The Great Powers in the Middle East, 1919-1939* ed. Uriel Dann (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1988).
- Cohen, Stuart, A., *English Zionists and the Jews* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982).
- Cohn, Norman, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (London: Mercury Books, 1950).
- Curtis, Michael, *Verdict On Vichy; Power and Prejudice in the Vichy France Regime* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003).
- Darwin, John, *Britain, Egypt and the Middle East: Imperial Policy in the Aftermath of War 1918-1922* (London: MacMillan, 1981).
- Dawn, Ernest, 'The Origins of Arab Nationalism' in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* eds., R. Khalidi, L. Anderson, M. Muslih and R. S. Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
- Dawn, Ernest, *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI, 1996).

- Dockrill, Michael, J., and Goold, Douglas, J., *Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences, 1919 - 1923* (London: Batsford Academic and Educational, 1981).
- Duff, Douglas, V., *Sword for Hire* (London: John Murray, 1934).
- Dugdale, Blanche, E., C., *Arthur Balfour First Earl of Balfour*, 2 vols. (London: Hutchinson, 1936).
- Edelstein, Alan, *An Unacknowledged Harmony: Philosemitism and the Survival of European Jewry* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981).
- Ekstein, Michael, G. 'Russia, Constantinople and the Straits, 1914-1915' in *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey* ed., F. H. Hinsley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
- Egremont, Max, *Balfour: A Life of James Arthur Balfour* (London: Collins, 1980).
- Epstein, Isidore, ed., *The Babylonian Talmud* (London: Jews College, 1961).
- Esposito, John, L., ed., *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World* (Oxford: OUP, 1995).
- Federbush, Simon. 'The Talmud' in *The Great Jewish Books and their Influence on History* eds., Samuel Caplan and Harold U. Ribalow (London: Vision Press, 1952).
- Fisher, John, 'Syria and Mesopotamia in British Middle Eastern Policy in 1919' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34, 2 (April 1998).
- Fitzgerald, E. P., 'France's Middle Eastern Ambitions', the Sykes Picot Negotiations, and the Oil Fields of Mosul' in *Journal of Modern History*, 66 (1994).
- French, David, *British Strategy & War Aims 1914-1916* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986).
- French, David, *The Strategy of the Lloyd George Coalition 1916-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
- Friedman, Isaiah, 'The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence and the Question of Palestine' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 2 (1970).
- Friedman, Isaiah, *The Question of Palestine, 1914-1918, British-Jewish-Arab Relations* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973).
- Friedman, Isaiah, *A Twice Promised Land? The British, The Arabs and Zionism, 1915-1920* (New Brunswick: B.J. Transaction, 2000).
- Frischwasser-Ra'anan, H. F., *The Frontiers of a Nation* (London: Balchworth Press, 1955).
- Fromkin, David, *A Peace to End All Peace: Creating the Modern Middle East 1914-1922* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1989).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Winston S. Churchill*, vol. 3: *1914-1916, The Challenge of War* (London: Heinemann, 1971).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Winston S. Churchill, The Stricken World 1916-1922* (London: Heinemann, 1975).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Winston S. Churchill, Companion Volume*, vol. 3, Part 1: *July 1914 - April 1915* (London: Heinemann, 1975).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Winston S. Churchill, Companion Volume*, vol. 4, Part 2: *July 1919 - March 1921* (London: Heinemann, 1975).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Exile and Return: The Struggle for a Jewish Homeland* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978).
- Gilbert, Martin, *Israel: A History* (London: Doubleday, 1998).
- Gilbert, Martin, *From The Ends of the Earth* (London: Cassell & Co, 2001).

- Gillon, D. Z., 'Antecedents of the Balfour Declaration and its Makers' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 5 (1969).
- Gilmour, David, *The Dispossessed: The Ordeal of the Palestinians, 1917-1980* (London: Sphere Books, 1982).
- Gilmour, David, 'The Unregarded Prophet: Lord Curzon and the Palestine Questions' in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 25 (1996).
- Goldstein, Erik, *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916-1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
- Gorny, Yosef, *Zionism and the Arabs, 1882-1948: A Study of Ideology* (New York: OUP, 1987).
- Graetz, H., *History of the Jews*, ed., trans. Bella Lowy, 5 vols (London: Jewish Chronicle, 1901).
- Grannot, Abraham, *Land Settlement in Palestine* (London: V. Gollancz, 1930).
- Grayzel, Solomon, ed. and trans. *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century* (New York: Hermon Press, 1966).
- Grigg, John, *The Young Lloyd George* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973).
- Guedalla, Philip, *Napoleon and Palestine* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1925).
- Haddad, H., S., 'The Biblical Basis of Zionist Colonialism' in *Journal of Palestine Studies* (JPS), 3 (1974).
- Hadawi, Sami, *Bitter Harvest, Palestine 1914-1967* (New York: New World Press, 1967).
- Haim, Sylvia, G. *Arab Nationalism: an Anthology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976).
- Helmreich, Paul, C., *From Paris to Sevres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919 -1920* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1974).
- Hertzberg, Arthur, ed., *The Zionist Idea* (New York: Atheneum, 1969).
- Hertzberg, Arthur, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews: the Origins of Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
- Hodder, E., *The Life and Works of the Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury*, 3 vols (London: Cassell, 1886).
- Hogarth, D. G., 'Wahabism and British Interests' in *Journal of the British Institute of International Affairs* (JBIIA), 4 (1925).
- Hopwood, Derek, *Tales of Empire: The British in the Middle East 1880-1952* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1989).
- Hopwood, Derek, *Arab Nation, Arab Nationalism* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).
- Hourani, Albert, 'Ottoman Reform and the Politics of Notables' in *Beginnings of Modernisation in the Middle East*, eds., William Polk and Richard Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
- Hourani, Albert, *The Emergence of the Modern Middle East* (London: Macmillan in association with St Antony's College, Oxford, 1981).
- Hourani, Albert, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1738-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- Hurewitz, J. C., *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York: Schocken, 1976).
- Hurewitz, J. C., *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East: a Documentary Record* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Norstrand, 1958).
- Hyamson, A., *Palestine A Policy* (London: Methuen, 1942).
- Jacobs, Louis, *Concise Companion To The Jewish Religion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

- Isserof, Amir, 'Biography of Rabbi Yehudah Alkalai' in *New Encyclopedia of Zionism and Israel* ed. Geoffrey Wigoder (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994).
- Jones, Phillip, *Britain and Palestine 1914-1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).
- Judd, Denis, *Empire: The British Imperial Experience from 1765 to the Present* (London: Harper Collins, 1996).
- Karma, Martin, 'Arab Nationalism: Mistaken Identity' in *Daedalus*, 122 (1993).
- Karpat, Kemal, H., 'The Land Regime, Social Structure, and Modernization in the Ottoman Empire' in *Beginnings of Modernization in the Middle East* eds., W. Polk and R. Chambers (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1968).
- Karsh, Efraim, 'Israel, The Hashemites and the Palestinians: The Fateful Triangle' in *Israel Affairs*, eds., E. Karsh and P.R. Kumaraswam, 9 (2003).
- Karsh, Efraim and Inari, 'Myth in the Desert, or Not the Great Arab Revolt' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 33 (1997).
- Katz, David, S., *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews in England, 1603-1655* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).
- Kayyali, A. W., *Palestine: A Modern History* (London: Croom Helm, 1978).
- Kayali, Hasan, *Arabs and Young Turks: Ottomanism, Arabism, and Islamism in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1918* (Berkeley: University of California Press, c1997).
- Kedourie, Elie, *England and the Middle East: The Destruction of the Ottoman Empire, 1914-1921* (London: Bowes & Bowes, 1956).
- Kedourie, Elie, 'Cairo and Khartoum on the Arab Question 1915-1918' in *Historical Journal*, 7 (1964).
- Kedourie, Elie, 'Britain, France and the Last Phase of the Eastern Question' in *The Academy of Political Science* (New York: Academy of Political Science, 1969).
- Kedourie, Elie, *The Chatham House Version* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1970).
- Kedourie, Elie, 'Sir Mark Sykes and Palestine 1915-1916' in *Arabic Political Memoirs and Other Studies* (London: Frank Cass, 1974).
- Kedourie, Elie, *In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Hussayn Correspondence and its Interpreters 1914-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
- Kent, Marian, 'Asiatic Turkey, 1914-1916' in *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey* ed., F. H. Hinsley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
- Kent, Marian, 'Constantinople and Asiatic Turkey, 1905-1914' in *British Foreign Policy under Sir Edward Grey* ed., F. H. Hinsley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).
- Khadduri, Majid, 'Aziz Ali Al-Misri and the Arab Nationalist Movement' in *Middle Eastern Affairs*, 4, 17 (London: University Press, 1976).
- Khalidi, Rashidi, 'The Origins of Arab Nationalism' in *The Origins of Arab Nationalism* eds., R. Khalidi, L. Anderson, M. Muslih and R. S. Simon (New York, Oxford: Columbia University Press, c1991).
- Khoury, Philip, S., *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus 1860-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
- Kimche, Jon, *The Second Arab Awakening* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1970).
- Kimche, Jon, *Palestine or Israel: The Untold Story of Why We Failed 1917-1923, 1967-1973* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1973).

- Klieman, Aaron, S., 'Britain's War Aims in the Middle East in 1915' in *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (1968).
- Klieman, Aaron, S., *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference of 1921* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1970).
- Klier, John, D., and Lambroza, Shlomo, *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russia* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992).
- Knightley, P., and Simpson, C., *The Secret Lives of Lawrence of Arabia* (London: Nelson, 1969).
- Kobler, Franz, *The Vision Was There: A History of the British Movement for the Restoration of the Jews to Palestine* (London: Lincolns-Praeger, 1956).
- Kobler, Franz, *Napoleon and the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 1976).
- Landes, David, 'Palestine Before the Zionists', *Commentary* (February 1976).
- Laqueur, Walter, *A History of Zionism* (New York: Schocken, 2003).
- Larsen, Timothy, *Friends of Religious Equality: Non Conformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* (Bury St Edmunds: Boydell Press, 1999).
- Lesch, Ann, M., *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939: The Frustration of a National Movement* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 1979).
- Leslie, Shane, *Mark Sykes, His Life and Letters* (London, New York: Cassell, 1923).
- Levene, Mark, 'The Balfour Declaration: a Case of Mistaken Identity' in *English Historical Review*, 107 (1992).
- Lewis, Bernard, *The Middle East and the West* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1966).
- Lewis, Bernard, *Islam in History* (London: Alcove Press, 1973).
- Lewis, Bernard, *The Middle East* (London: Phoenix Press, 2000).
- Luz, Ehud, *Parallels Meet: Religion and Zionism in the Early Zionist Movement, 1882-1904* (Jerusalem: Jewish Publication Society, 1988).
- Macmillan, Margaret, *Peacemakers* (London: John Murray, 2001).
- Magnus, Philip, *Kitchener: Portrait of an Imperialist* (London: John Murray, 1958).
- Main, Ernst, *Palestine at the Crossroads* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1937).
- Malkin, Yaacov, 'The Faith of Secular Jews' in *The Blackwell Reader in Judaism* eds. J. Neusner & A. J. Alan Peck (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
- Mandel, N. J., 'Attempts at an Arab-Zionist Entente, 1913-1914' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 1, 1 (1965).
- Mandel, N. J., *Arabs and Zionism Before World War I* (Berkeley, London: University of California Press, 1976).
- McTague, John, J., 'Anglo-French Negotiations Over the Boundaries of Palestine, 1919-1920' in *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 11 (1982).
- McTague, John, J., *British Policy in Palestine, 1917-1922* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, c1983).
- Maoz, Moshe, *Ottoman Reform in Syria and Palestine 1840-1861* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).
- Marlowe, John, *The Seat of Pilate* (London: Cresset Press, 1959).
- Merkley, Paul, C., *The Politics of Christian Zionism 1891-1948* (London: Cass, 1998).

- Monroe, Elizabeth, *Britain's Moment in the Middle East: 1914 - 1971* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1981).
- Morgan, Kenneth, O., 'Lloyd George's Premiership: A Study in Prime Ministerial Government', *Historical Journal*, 13 (1970).
- Morris, Benny, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict 1881-1999* (London: John Murray, 2000).
- Mossek, M., *Palestine Immigration Policy Under Sir Herbert Samuel* (London: F. Cass, 1978).
- Neusner, Jacob and Avery-Peck, Alan, J., *The Blackwell Reader in Judaism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001).
- Nevakivi, Jukka, 'Lord Kitchener and the Partition of the Ottoman Empire, 1915-1916', in *Studies in International History*, ed., K. Bourne & D. C. Watts (London: Longman, 1967).
- Nevakivi, Jukka, *Britain, France and the Arab Middle East 1914 - 1920* (London: Athlone Press, 1969).
- Nutting, Anthony, *The Arabs* (New York: New American Library, 1965).
- Pappe, Ilan, *A History of Modern Palestine - One Land Two People* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004).
- Parkes, James, *A History of the Jewish People* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964).
- Parkes, James, *Whose Land? History of the Peoples of Palestine* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970).
- Parfitt, Tudor, *The Jews of Palestine, 1800-1882* (London: Boydell, 1987).
- Peretz, Don, *The Government and Politics of Israel* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1979).
- Personal, John, *Deedes Bey. A Study of Sir Wyndham Deedes 1883-1923* (London: Macmillan, 1942).
- Peters, Joan, *From Time Immemorial* (London: Michael Joseph, 1985).
- Picthall, Mohammed, Marmaduke, ed., *the Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (New York: Mentor Books, 1953).
- Porath, Y., *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement 1918-1929* (London: Cass, 1974).
- Reinharz, J., *Chaim Weizmann The Making of a Zionist Leader* (Oxford: OUP, 1985).
- Reinharz, J., 'The Balfour Declaration and its Maker' in *Journal of Modern History*, 64 (1992).
- Renzi, William, A., "Great Britain, Russia and the Straits, 1914-1915" in *Journal of Modern History*, 42 (1970).
- Robbins, Keith, *Sir Edward Grey: a Biography of Lord Grey of Fallodon* (London: Cassel, 1971).
- Ro'i, Yaacov, 'The Zionist Attitude to the Arabs 1908-1914' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 4. 3 (1968).
- Rose, Norman, *Chaim Weizmann - A Biography* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986).
- Roskill, Stephen, *Hankey. Man of Secrets, 1877-1918*, 2 vols (London: Collins, 1970).
- Roth, Cecil, *Anglo-Jewish Letters* (London: Soncino Press, 1938).
- Rothwell, V. H., *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971).
- Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Great Britain and Palestine, 1915-1945* (London: HMSO 1946).
- Sachar, Howard M., *The Emergence of the Middle East, 1914 -1924* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969).
- Sachar, Howard M., *The Course of Modern Jewish History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990).
- Sanders, Ronald, *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1983).

- Scholch, Alexander, *Palestine in Transformation 1856-1922* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for Palestine Studies, c1993).
- Schuman, F. L., and Wright, Q., *War and Diplomacy in the French Republic: An Inquiry into Political Motivations and the Control of Foreign Policy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931).
- Segev, Tom, *One Palestine Complete: Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate*, trans. Haim Watzman (London: Little Brown, 2001).
- Shafir, Gershon, *Land, Labor and the Origins of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 1882-1914* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989).
- Sharif, Regina, *Non-Jewish Zionism: Its Roots in Western History* (London: Zed, 1983).
- Shaw, Stanford J., 'The Nineteenth Century Ottoman Tax Reforms and Revenue Systems' in *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (IJMES), 6, 4 (1975).
- Shaw, Stanford J., 'The Ottoman Census System and Population, 1831-1914' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 9 (1978).
- Sherman, A. J., *Mandate Days: British Lives in Palestine, 1918-1948* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997).
- Shimon, Shamir, 'The Modernisation of Syria: Problems and Solutions in the Early Period of 'Abdulhamid' in *Beginnings of Modernisation in the Middle East*, eds., William Polk and Richard Chambers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968).
- Shindler, Colin, *What do Zionists Believe* (London: Granta, 2007).
- Shindler, Colin, *A History of Modern Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
- Shlaim, Avi, *Collusion Across the Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).
- Shlaim, Avi, *The Politics of Partition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- Shlaim, Avi, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London: Penguin Books, 2001).
- Sicker, Martin, *Between Hashemites and Zionists: The Struggle for Palestine, 1908-1988* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1989).
- Silvera, Alain, 'In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and Its Interpretations' in *New Criterion*, 20 (September 2001).
- Silver, Hillel, Abba, *A History of Messianic Speculation in Israel* (New York: Macmillan, 1927).
- Sizer, Stephen, *Christian Zionism Road-map to Armageddon?* (Leicester: Inter Varsity Press, 2004).
- Smith, Pamela, Ann, *Palestine and the Palestinians, 1876-1983* (London: Croom Helm, 1984).
- Sokolow, Nahum, *History of Zionism*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, 1919).
- Steevens, George, *With Kitchener to Khartum* (New York: Dodd, Meade, 1900).
- Stein, Kenneth, W., *The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).
- Stein, Leonard, *The Balfour Declaration* (London: Jewish Chronicle Publications, 1983).
- Steiner, Zara, 'Grey, Hardinge and the Foreign Office 1906-1910', *Historical Journal*, 10 (1967).
- Steward, Despond, *T. E. Lawrence* (New York and London: Harper & Row, 1977).

- Stoyanovsky, J., *The Mandate for Palestine* (London: Longmans, Green, 1928).
- Strachan, Hew, *The First World War* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2001).
- Sykes, Christopher, *Two Studies in Virtue* (London: Collins, 1953).
- Sykes, Christopher, *Crossroads to Israel: 1917-1948* (London: Collins, 1965).
- Syrkin, Nachman, 'The Jewish Problem and the Socialist-Jewish State', in Marie Syrkin, *Nachman Syrkin, Socialist Zionist* (New York: Herzl, 1961).
- Tauber, Eliezer, *The Arab Movements in World War I* (London: Cass, 1993).
- Taylor, A. R., and Terlie, R. N., eds., *Palestine: A Search for Truth* (Washington DC: Public Affairs Press, 1970).
- Teitelbaum, Joshua, 'Sharif Husayn ibn Ali and the Hahsemitic Vision of the Post-Ottoman Order: From Chieftancy to Suzerainty' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 34 (January 1998).
- Tessler, Mark, A., *A History of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
- Teveth, Shabtai, *Ben Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- Tibawi, A. L., *A Modern History of Syria: Including Lebanon and Palestine* (London: Macmillan, 1969).
- Tibawi, A. L., *Anglo-Arab Relations and the Question of Palestine 1914-1922* (London: Luzac, 1978).
- Tomes, Jason, *Balfour and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1997).
- Toynbee, Arnold, J., *Turkey, A Past and Future* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1917).
- Trevelyan, George, Macaulay, *Grey of Fallodon, being the life of Sir Edward Grey, afterwards Viscount Grey of Fallodon* (London: Longmans, 1937).
- Troeller, Gary, "Ibn Saud and Sharif Husain: A Comparison in Importance in the Early Years of the First World War", in *The Historical Journal*, 14 (1971).
- Tuchman, Barbara, W., *Bible and Sword: England and Palestine from the Bronze Age to Balfour* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1956).
- Vereté, Mayir, 'The Balfour Declaration and its Makers' in *Middle Eastern Studies*, 6, (January 1970).
- Vital, David, *Origins of Zionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).
- Vital, David, *Zionism, the Crucial Phase* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
- Wagner, Donald, E., *Anxious for Armageddon* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1995).
- Warriner, D., *Land and Poverty in the Middle East* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1957).
- Wasserstein, Bernard, *The British in Palestine, the Mandatory Government and the Arab-Jewish Conflict, 1917-1929* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978).
- Westrate, Bruce, *the Arab Bureau British Policy in the Middle East, 1916-1920* (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992).
- Winstone, H. V. F., *Captain Shakespear* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1976).
- Winstone, H. V. F., *The Illicit Adventure* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1982).
- Winstone, H. V. F., ed., *The Diaries of Parker Pasha* (London: Quartet Books, 1983).
- Young, Kenneth, *Arthur James Balfour* (London: The Camelot Press, 1963).

Zebel, Sydney, H., *Balfour: A Political Biography* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1973).

Zeine, Z. N., *The Emergence of Arab Nationalism* (Beirut: Kayats, 1966).

Works in Other Languages

Azouri, N., *Le Réveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1905).

Cloarec, V., *La France et la Question de Syrie: 1914-1918* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 1998).