The puzzle of Palestine, by David H. Popper; maps and charts by Delos Blackmar.

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THE PUZZLE OF PALESTINE

by

DAVID H. POPPER

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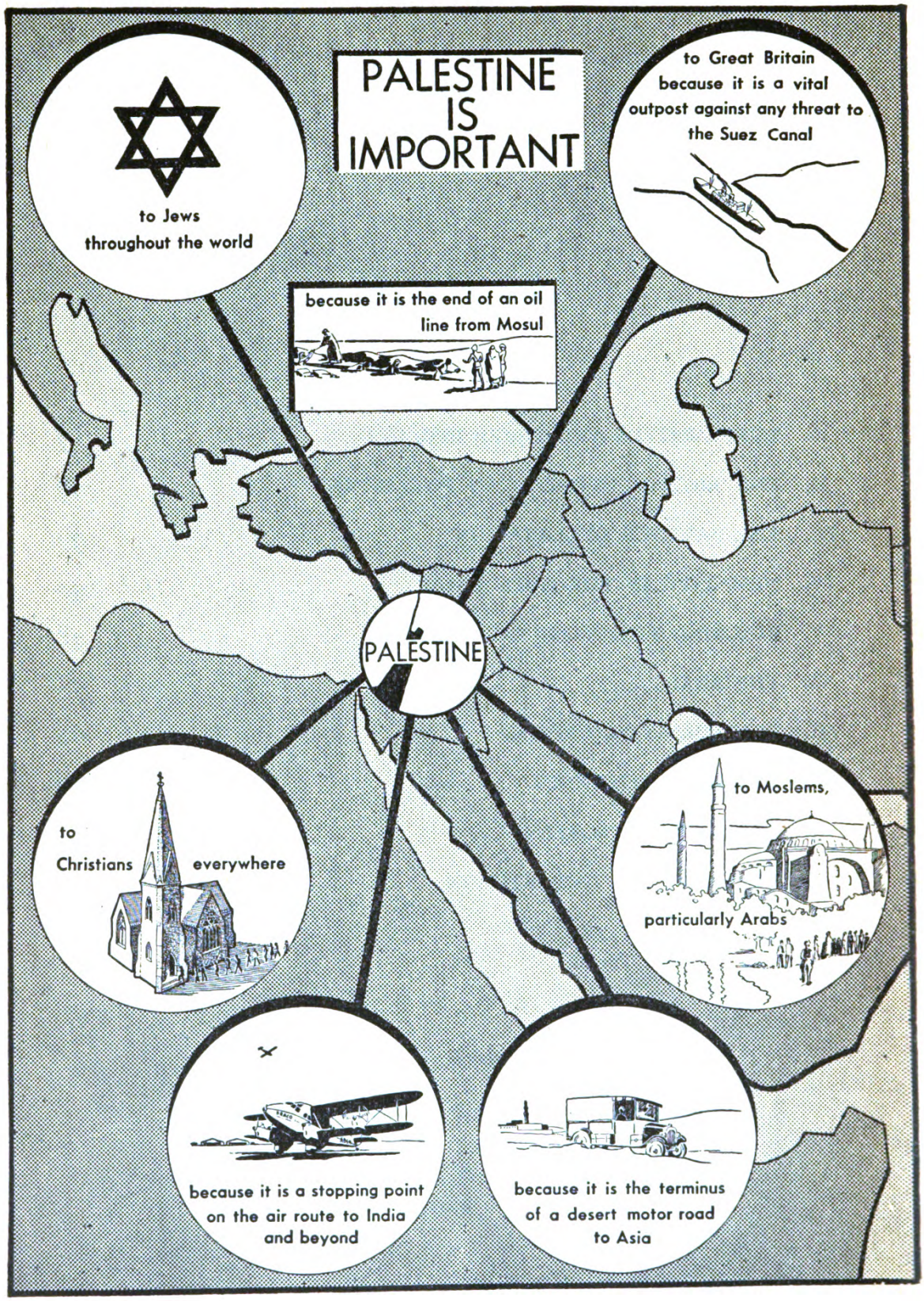

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I. Three Faiths and Three Peoples

Breasting the eastern edge of the Mediterranean, at the crossroads between Europe, Africa and Asia, lies a little territory about the size of New Hampshire. Physically it is not a very imposing place. The rainfall is rather scanty; the sun, blazing. Until recently much of it was barren sand, or swamp, or incredibly rocky hills, now and then whitened by a light touch of snow. Perhaps its only claim to geographical notice is possession of the lowest land on earth—the shores of the salt-saturated Dead Sea, 1300 feet below sea level.

Not a very imposing place; not much to fight for.

Yet it has a long record of warfare, running back to the very dawn of history. Semitic tribesmen, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Romans, Seljuk and Ottoman Turks, Crusaders and Tartars—these are some of the historic groups which have battled valiantly and poured out their blood on its soil. In 1917 the British added theirs. And today, while *war* does not exist in Palestine, Arabs, Jews and Britons are engaged in a grim struggle there, each for purposes of his own.

Why? Why is it that in Palestine, the Holy Land—holy for the Jews, the Christians and the Moslems—there should be night attacks, murders from ambush, guerrilla warfare? Surely here if anywhere you might expect to find godliness, understanding and peace. And yet the very opposite is the case. Why?

It is the purpose of this book not only to find the answer to that question but also to discuss the various suggestions that have been made to restore peace and tranquillity to the Holy Land. In the course of it we shall discover that Palestine is important to three great religious groups: the Jews, the Christians and the Moslems. We shall learn that it is also of vital concern to Great Britain: as an eastern outpost guarding the Suez

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Canal; as a potential naval base; as the starting-point of several land routes to India and the East; as the location of a stopping-point on the international air routes to India and the Far East; and as the terminus of an underground pipe line which brings petroleum from the oil wells of Iraq to the tankers which are to carry it abroad.

We shall find out how England happened to gain control of Palestine; and we shall consider the various, and some say conflicting, promises she made—to the Jews, to the Arabs, and to the French—in the course of doing so. Then we shall see how the Jews have been striving to build a new "national home" in Palestine; how the Arabs have reacted to this great effort; and how those old promises she made have risen up to plague Great Britain every time she tries to find a way out of the Palestine dilemma. Finally, we shall consider the scheme the British have thought up (it is called the "plan of partition") for solving the puzzle of Palestine; learn what its progress has been; and see what alternatives have been proposed.

This is our story. It is admittedly a complicated one; but it is also a vitally important one. Important to the Jews, to the Arabs, to the Christians; important to the British; and, because of its broader implications, important to every one everywhere who wants to see the world live at peace instead of in constant strife.

This brings us back to our original question. Why is it that in Palestine, the Holy Land, of all places, there should be such seemingly endless conflict?

A LAND OF THREE FAITHS

To the Jews Palestine is the land of Israel. In a religious sense it has been theirs ever since Jehovah appeared to Abram and said: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." So, likewise, did the Lord promise it to Isaac and Jacob; so did He lead His people back from Egypt to the Promised Land. In Jerusalem

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arose the Temple of Solomon; here was the native soil of the prophets. Indeed, without Palestine as a place to long for and to remember, the Jewish religion itself is scarcely conceivable.

For Christians, too, Palestine is the fountainhead of religious doctrine. Here the Savior, a Jew, was born; taught His disciples; preached; and was crucified, died and was buried. Here are the sanctified places associated with His life.

And for Moslems also the country is sacred. For they believe that their great prophet, Mohammed, once made a miraculous night ride on an enchanted steed, from Mecca to the *Haram-esh-Sharif*—a holy place in Jerusalem—and thence through the heavens with the angel Gabriel, back to the tethered mount waiting at the *Haram*, and once more through the skies to Mecca—"thus performing in the tenth part of a night the journey of many thousands of years." Because of this legend, Jerusalem ranks close to Mecca and Medina as a holy city of the Mohammedan world.

THE JEWS AND PALESTINE

Historians tell us that almost four thousand years ago bands of Semitic tribesmen began to wander across the Arabian desert toward the Mediterranean. By 1100 B.C. one of these tribes, the Hebrews or Israelites, had already occupied most of the hill country of Palestine. Unlike the other peoples of that distant age, the Hebrews had placed their faith in one invisible God. That faith was to carry them onward through the centuries. In it they built up the monarchy of David and Solomon, and nurtured the prophets in the divided kingdom of Israel and Judah. That faith sustained them through the Babylonian captivity, when they were transported as a vanquished people to a foreign land.

This exile marked the beginning of an age-long yearning to return to Palestine. For it was while the Hebrews were living in Babylon that their psalmist wrote:

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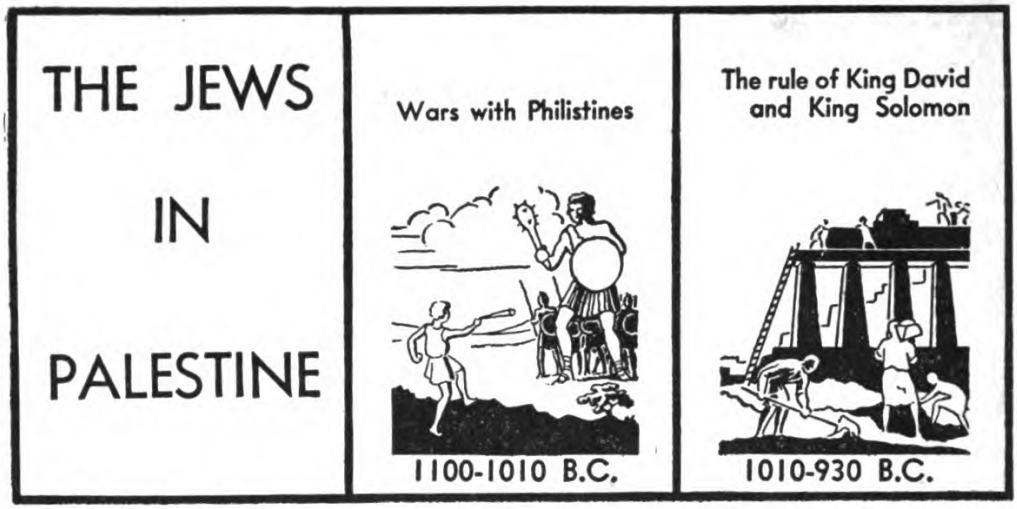

By the rivers of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion. . . .
How shall we sing Jehovah's song
In a foreign land?
If I forget thee, O Jerusalem,
Let my right hand forget her cunning.
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
If I remember thee not;
If I prefer not Jerusalem
Above my chief joy.

After this first brief captivity in Babylon, the Hebrews returned to their homeland, where they raised their cultural level to new heights. But their history was stormy—again and again they were conquered, and again and again they revolted against their conquerors.

This phase of the Hebrews' national life ended only in 135 A.D., when the exasperated Romans drove them out of Jerusalem, destroyed the city and even ploughed up the ground on which it had stood. After that catastrophe, only a few

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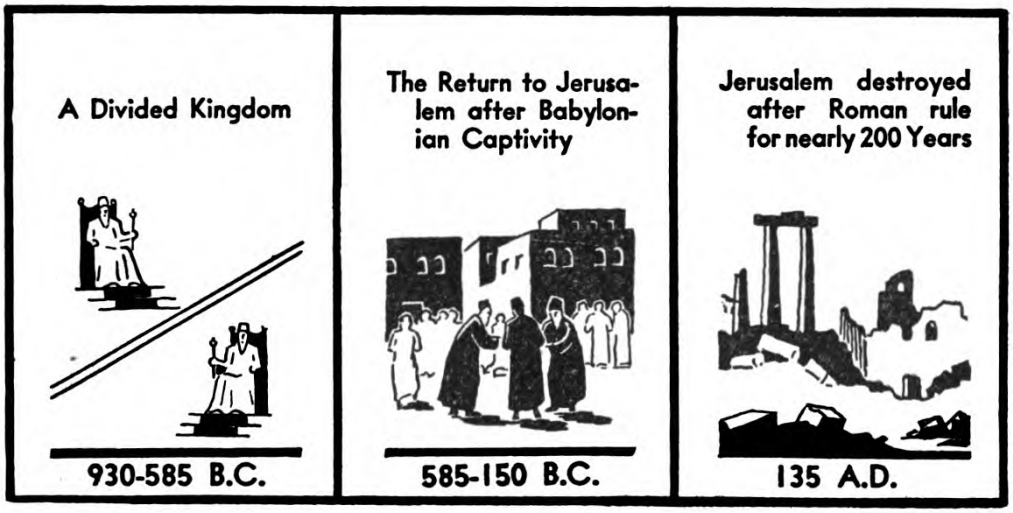

thousand Jews remained in the homeland; the rest began an endless trek from country to country which has not ended yet.

But always, wherever they were, whatever their condition, the Jews never stopped praying for the day when they could return to Palestine. They thought of it as a home promised them by God. And they believed that a Messiah would one day appear and lead them all back.

THE ARABS IN PALESTINE

As the centuries rolled by another group overran Palestine. This time it was the Arabs. Thirteen hundred years ago these wanderers of the desert became fired with enthusiasm for the new religion of their prophet Mohammed. Spurred on by this faith, they spread a civilization of their own from the Indian Ocean all the way across North Africa to Spain. In this wonderful Arab empire Palestine played no more than a minor part. But the Arabs have been the most numerous inhabitants of Palestine ever since their ancestors first conquered it.

They have not, however, always been its masters. In the

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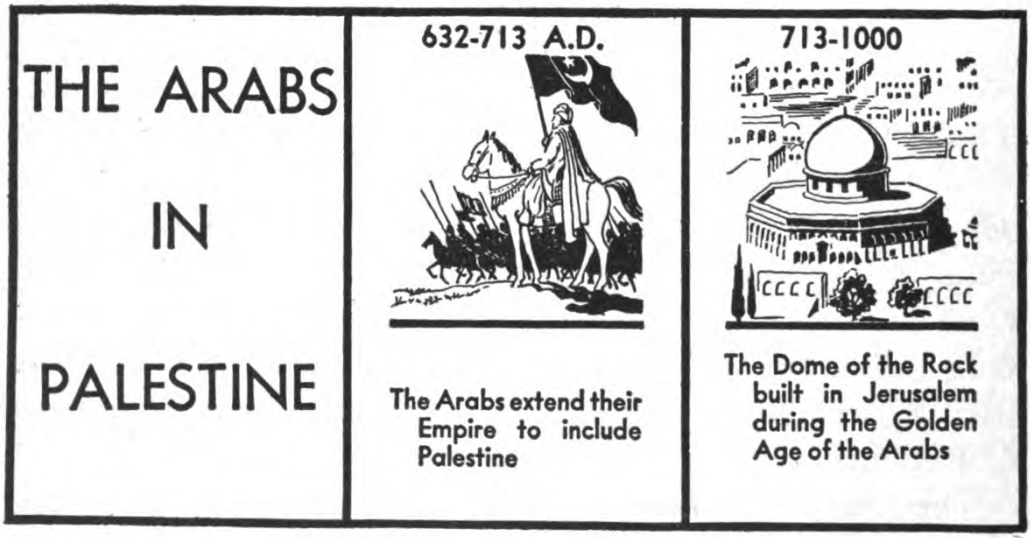
eleventh century Palestine fell under control of the Seljuk Turks. Later, Christian Crusaders from Europe ruled a kingdom of their own in the Holy Land. Later still, Egyptians and Mongols extended their sway over it. And, finally, for four hundred years before the World War the Ottoman Turks of the Turkey we know governed it from Constantinople.

Through all of this, Arabs continued to live in Palestine and regard it as their home.

JEWISH PERSECUTION—OLD AND NEW

There were always, or almost always, a few Jews in Palestine, too. But the great majority of them were spread out over most of the civilized world. There their lot was hard. For somehow they were different from others. Though they lived in Christian lands, they were not Christians: they denied that Christ was the son of God. Instead of going to church on Sunday, they went to synagogue on Saturday. Instead of observing Christmas and Easter, they observed their own holy days, Yom Kippur, Rosh Hashanah and the Passover. And in an age when religion bulked large in people's lives, and when



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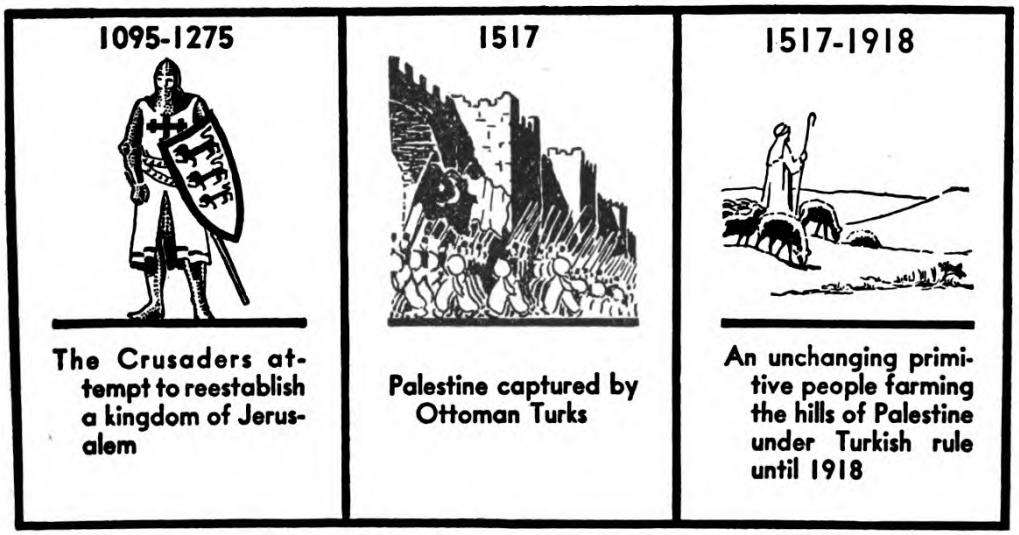
people knew much less about the different customs which had grown up in other parts of the world, these facts alone sufficed to make the Jews conspicuous.

It was this sense of difference and strangeness which was at the bottom of their long and unhappy experience in Europe. Fantastic tales were spread concerning their religion and ways of living. When mysterious natural catastrophes occurred, the Jews were always likely to be held responsible for them. Thus they were even blamed for the devastating bubonic plague which swept over Europe in the middle of the fourteenth century.

Under these circumstances the Jews suffered centuries of persecution. They were often deprived of the right to own land or to engage in many of the common occupations; and, in the fields into which they were forced, like trading and money-lending, any success they enjoyed excited the envy of those among whom they lived. So they were herded off into crowded ghettos—districts in which they alone were allowed to dwell—and were forced to wear distinctive badges on their clothes to label them as Jews wherever they went.

Yet, rather than accept baptism into Christianity, which



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might have saved them, countless Jews chose to suffer death and torture.

And their suffering continued until near the end of the eighteenth century. Then came the French Revolution. The Jews emerged from their seclusion into a new Europe, a Europe which was preaching tolerance, liberalism, freedom. The ghettos slowly disappeared. As a man, the Jew began to be regarded as the equal of every other man. Jews entered public life and played their part in the rapid progress of Western Europe. Many of them began to hope that they might at last be accepted as full-fledged members of the nations in which they lived. The age-old Jewish problem, some felt, was finally nearing solution.

Unfortunately this vision was not destined to be completely fulfilled. If any reminder were needed that anti-Semitism—or opposition to the Jews—was far from dead, it was provided by a series of horrible pogroms in Russia between 1880 and 1910. In those years the decaying Russian Empire sought to stave off approaching revolution by diverting the attention of the people from their own misery to the Jews, who were made scapegoats for all sorts of unpleasant occurrences. While civilized Europe looked on aghast, anti-Jewish fanatics, unrestrained by the government of the Czar, murdered thousands of innocent people.

About the same time, in Germany and other countries, anti-Semitism began to reappear in a new form. In past centuries Jews had been attacked because of their distinctive religion and conduct. But now that the Jews of modern Europe were at last becoming less and less different from non-Jews, the anti-Semites shifted their line of attack: they tried to picture the Jew as a member of an inferior *race*. No matter how honest or able he might be, he was, they said, an undesirable character.

Scientists know that this doctrine of race is nonsense. Yet

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in the hands of a demagogue like Adolf Hitler it has been skillfully used to convince Germans that the Jews are responsible for all Germany's misfortunes. So far has this false and naïve theory been pushed in Nazi Germany that life for the Jews there has become almost intolerable.

Nor is Germany the only country in which the lives of Jews are being made unbearable. In Poland, Rumania, and other lands in Eastern Europe, Jewish citizens are being slowly forced out of the political and economic life of their countries —not because they have committed any crimes but simply because they are Jews.

Thus the hope, born with the French Revolution, that Jews might in due course of time be accepted as full-fledged members of their adopted countries seems to be vanishing. Instead they seem to be facing another era of hardship and persecution —not in Britain, France and the United States, to be sure, but in much of the rest of the world.

ZIONISM

Some of these hard facts were already beginning to become apparent to Jews two generations ago. Consequently many Jews began to turn their thoughts once more to the ancient land that was rooted so deeply in their prayer, their song and their story. Even in the great democratic countries, Jews who had won equality and security began to hope that an opportunity would come for building a Jewish national home in Palestine. For many of them despaired of being completely absorbed in the lands in which they lived. A home in Palestine for some of their number, they felt, would end their feeling of rootlessness, of being a minority everywhere.

So, while millions emigrated from Eastern Europe to the United States and other parts of the world to escape persecution, a few thousands managed, with the assistance of Western Jews, to make their way to Palestine. The first group of

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European Jews arrived there in 1881. Another left Russia during and after the revolution of 1904–05. By 1914 there were 80,000 Jews in Palestine, and of these nearly 12,000 were living in farm colonies. But it was difficult to make very much headway in building up the country so long as the Turks ruled it.

This idea of restoring the Jewish National Home in Palestine is known as Zionism. It first became a matter of practical politics in 1897, when a Viennese Jew, Theodor Herzl, convened a congress of Jews at Basle, Switzerland, and founded the Zionist Organization. The program adopted by that congress states that: "The object of Zionism is to establish for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law." And to this program Zionists have adhered ever since.

Note that only Palestine would do; a home anywhere else would *not* be satisfactory. For Zionists consider Palestine their historic homeland. Even if it were the most barren desert, they would work there as nowhere else to build a new country for their people.

As we have seen, this desire to go back to Palestine is based on religious teaching. But, as we shall discover shortly, it is more than religious now. For many—perhaps most—Zionists today, religion is just about as important as it is to the ordinary man or woman—no more, no less. Zionism is largely a political movement, a national sentiment like that of other nationalities.

Like that of many Arabs, for instance. And especially of those Arabs whose ancestors have lived in Palestine for thirteen hundred years.

A THREE-CORNERED CONTEST

That is why, today, there is violence in the Holy Land. For two different peoples are focusing their national loyalties about the same piece of territory, and when that happens, clashes are almost inevitable.

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In the case of Palestine, however, there is still another factor at work. For, as we noticed, Palestine is situated on communication lines which connect three continents—Asia, Africa and Europe. For that reason it is of interest both to Great Britain and to her enemies.

But that is another story.

II. The British Interest in Palestine

Keep your eye on the maps as you read the next two chapters. For we are going to see why, for a good many years, the British have been thinking about Palestine, the country around it, and the Jews. And we are also going to trace the progress Britain has made in establishing her control in the Holy Land. As this is a complicated story, having to do not only with unfamiliar districts like the Hejaz, but also with a number of promises involving overlapping areas, it would be hard sledding without maps.

BRITAIN'S SYMPATHY FOR THE JEWS

Dusty English pamphlets and records dating back almost to the year 1600 tell us that for centuries Englishmen have been toying with the idea of resettling the Jews in their ancient home. The project was first talked about when Oliver Cromwell was Britain's dictator. And in the Bible-loving, strait-laced England of Queen Victoria's day no godly family could forget the Jews' historic connection with the Holy Land. Almost exactly one hundred years ago Lord Shaftesbury tried to persuade the British government to work for a plan for resettling the Jews in Palestine, under international guarantee. And the

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idea kept cropping up every now and then for the next eighty years.

A good deal of the support it received was due to the shocking persecution the Jews were undergoing in certain European countries. More than most other peoples, the British have been moved by a desire to help the underdog and the victim of injustice. They were leaders in stamping out the slave trade. They aided the revolutions of oppressed nationalities like the Greeks. And they were deeply disturbed by the harsh treatment which the Turkish Empire meted out to other minority races under its control.

Thus, in the name of common decency, Britain had a long tradition of sympathy for the Jews.

A PRACTICAL MATTER

But the British interest in the Eastern Mediterranean area around Palestine was more than a mere matter of religion and humanity. It had its practical side as well.

In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened to steamer traffic. This Canal speedily became a vital bottleneck on the long route between Britain and the Far East—the richest trade route in the world. Commerce via this path was and still is a foundation stone of British wealth and glory; and the defense of this route has been and still is a primary concern of Britain's great navy.

As long as the territory around the Canal remained subject to the Turks, and no other great power attained undue importance at Constantinople, the British could feel that their "life line" was reasonably safe. But to make assurance doubly sure, British statesmen have since seized many opportunities to strengthen their position at the Canal. In 1875 England's great Prime Minister of Jewish descent, Disraeli, secured control of the Canal company for his country by buying up the Egyptian ruler's stock in it. And in 1882 the British began a "temporary"

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occupation of Egypt which continued in one form or another until 1936. In the latter year Egypt became independent, but by mutual consent British armed forces are still maintained in the Canal Zone for its defense.

THE GERMAN MENACE

In the years before the World War this great commercial highroad was threatened by an influential power—Germany. One German project—a plan to establish through railroad traffic all the way from Berlin to Bagdad—seriously alarmed the British. If it had ever been completed, this railroad would have short-circuited the maritime route to India and challenged Britain's prestige all along its length. Needless to say, the British were ready to fight such German penetration into the Middle East tooth and nail.

THE ARABS WAVER

When the World War began, the British government immediately realized that the Turks and their German allies could attack its life line with a double-barreled weapon. They could make Syria and Palestine the base for a military campaign against the Suez Canal. And they could get the Turkish Sultan —who was also Caliph, or religious leader, of all Mohammedans—to proclaim a holy war against the Allies. Thus all Moslems from Morocco to India might be induced to take up arms against Great Britain in the hope that, dying, they would win eternal salvation. For was it not written that "whosoever falls in battle, his sins are forgiven: at the day of judgment his wounds shall be resplendent as vermilion and odoriferous as musk and the loss of his limbs shall be supplied by the wings of angels and cherubims"?

Well, the Turks fired both barrels. But the attack on the Canal fell flat. And the holy war, when it was proclaimed, proved to be a dud.

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One reason for this failure was that the Arabic-speaking inhabitants of Syria and Arabia were discontented under the Turkish yoke and were therefore not at all eager to fight for their masters. Knowing this, the British hoped they might persuade the Arabs of the desert region called the Hejaz to start an Arab rebellion against the Turkish government. For that reason they opened negotiations with the ruler of the Hejaz, Hussein, in the autumn of 1914.

At first Hussein would not do more than forbid the holy men of Mecca and Medina to preach the "holy war" against Britain and her Allies. Then, in June 1915, the British promised that the independence of the Arabian peninsula would be assured when peace was made.

But Hussein was a careful individual who always looked long before he leaped. Consequently the conversations with the British authorities in Egypt spun themselves out for months while he waited to see which way the fortunes of war were going, how much support and money could be extracted from the British, and what territorial guarantees of independence might be promised for the future.

His price was high, but in the end a bargain was struck. Here is how it happened.

THE McMAHON PLEDGE

Not content with freedom for the Arabian peninsula alone, Hussein demanded far more. On July 14, 1915 he requested that England acknowledge Arab independence in the whole vast area bounded on the east by Persia and the Persian Gulf, on the west by the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, on the south by the Indian Ocean, and on the north by what is now about the southern border of Turkey.

Look at the map opposite and you will see that, in making this request, Hussein was asking for the whole land bridge which links the Mediterranean with the Persian Gulf. Who-

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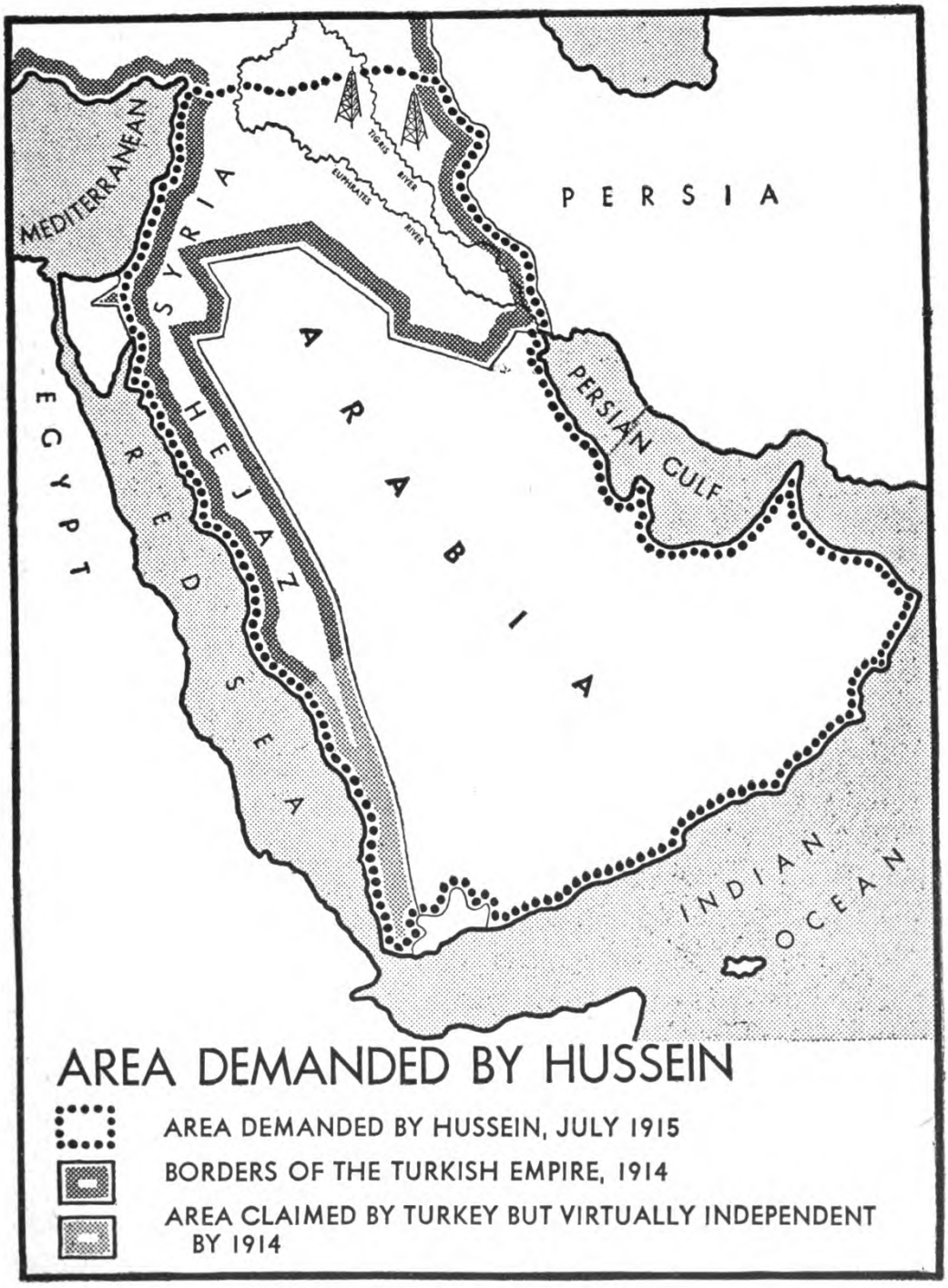

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ever controlled this territory would not only be in a strong strategic position but would also possess the great oil resources which this region contains. And oil is an essential ingredient of modern war.

Dickering with Hussein for the British was Sir Henry McMahon, then High Commissioner in Egypt. Not all the correspondence between the two men has been published. But Hussein's price may very well have appalled Sir Henry. At any rate, he replied that the discussion of boundaries was premature.

Meanwhile the Allied armies in the Near East, which had been doing fairly well up to that time, suffered a sharp setback. Now Hussein could jack up his terms. In September he hinted pretty broadly that he considered his support valuable enough to command a more definite response than he had yet received. "Your Excellency," he wrote, "will pardon me and permit me to say clearly that the coolness and hesitation displayed in the question of the limits and boundaries . . . might be taken to infer an estrangement or something of that sort."

Sir Henry took the hint. He made the cable between Egypt and London hum. Eventually, on October 24, 1915, he wrote a courteous letter to Hussein in which he denied that there was any "coldness and hesitation" about the question of boundaries. Then he made a statement which has been a source of controversy ever since. He wrote:

"The districts of Mersina and Alexandretta and the portions of Syria lying *to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo* cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits and boundaries. With the above modification, and without prejudice to our existing treaties with Arab chiefs we accept these limits and boundaries, and *in regard to those portions of the territories therein in which Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interests of her ally, France,* I am empowered in the

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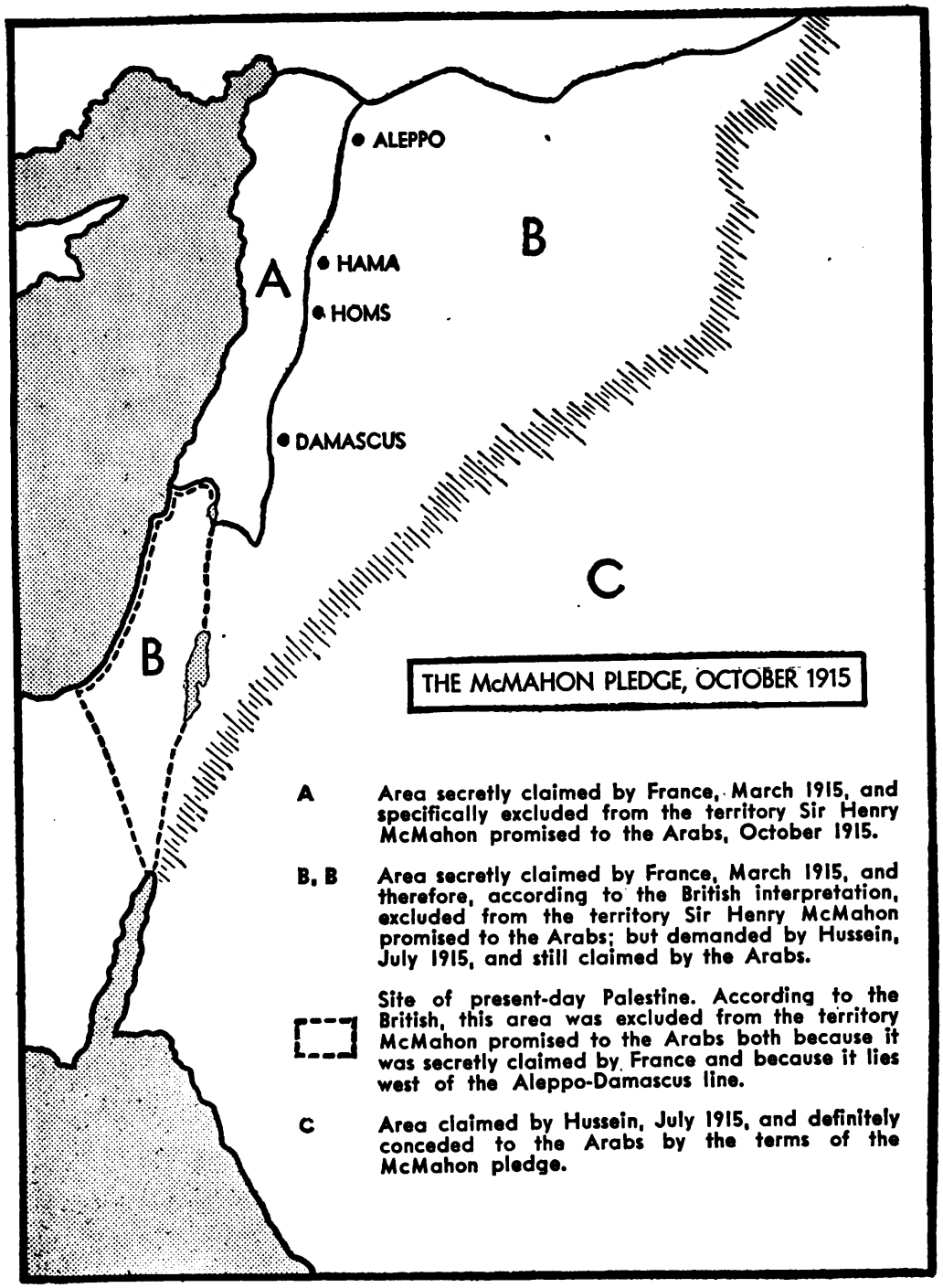

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name of the Government of Great Britain to give the following assurances and make the following reply to your letter:—

"Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories included in the limits and boundaries proposed by the Sherif of Mecca [Hussein] . . ."

The passages we have italicized show that there were two conditions attached to this pledge of independence. The first set forth a geographical limit. The second indicated that there were some French interests which the British would have to respect. Each qualification excluded certain territories which the Arabs claimed; but the exact extent of the excluded areas was never threshed out. After all, the world was at war, and there were more urgent things to think about. Yet by leaving matters in such an unsettled state the British were storing up trouble for themselves later on.

ANOTHER BRITISH PROMISE

Other powers had fish to fry in this region, too. Back in March 1915, before the McMahon pledge had been made, France had told the British that she wanted a controlling influence in Syria, which meant the Holy Land as well. But, in giving the McMahon pledge, in October of the same year, the British had led the Arabs to believe that part of this same area had been promised to them.

Here, then, were real seeds of discord. France and Britain had to reach an agreement over the division of the spoils. And they had to do it in secret. For it would never have done for the world to know that the war was being fought for something much more substantial than the lofty objectives proclaimed by the Allied statesmen. And it might have proved awkward, too, to have the Arabs know that part of what had been promised to them was now being promised to France.

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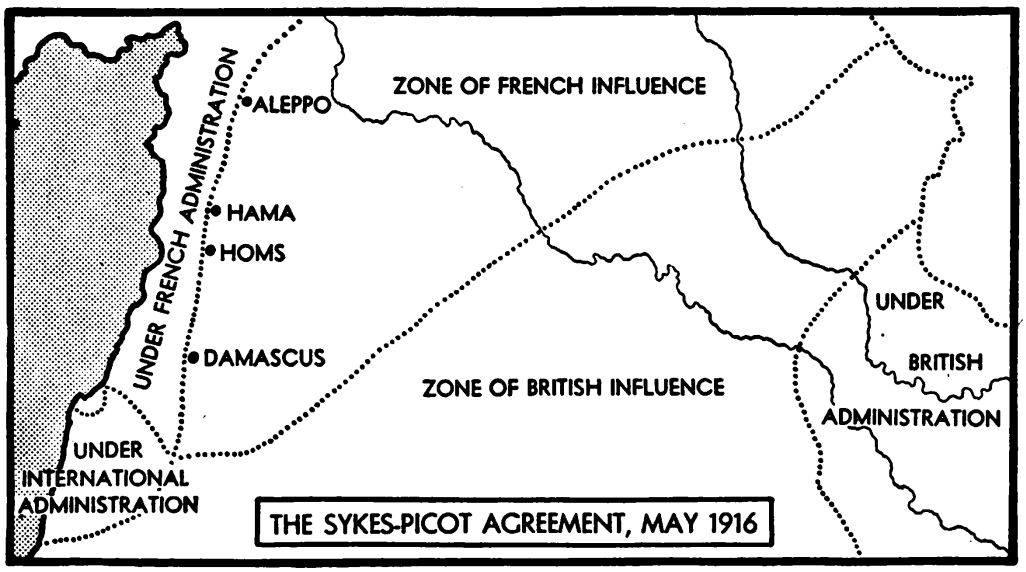
So, after long negotiations, a secret treaty was signed (May 1916). In it Britain and France blocked out the areas over which, after victory, they were to have control. Under the terms of this treaty—which is known as the Sykes-Picot agreement—the whole of the land bridge between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf was divided into five regions. One of these regions was placed under French administration, and another under British; while the inland portion of the territory, which was undeniably covered by the McMahon pledge and was therefore promised to the Arabs, was split up into British and French "spheres of influence."



As for Palestine, most of it was "to be separated from Turkish territory and subjected to a special régime to be determined by agreement between Russia, France and Great Britain." This was to be done, it was said, to protect the Allies' religious interests in the Holy Land.

Thus a "deal" was concluded. The budding dispute between the French and the British was patched up—for a time. But wasn't the patching done at the expense of the Arabs? At least we may well raise the question whether the British could in

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good conscience promise France a sphere of influence in territory they had already pledged to Hussein.

For, remember, the Arabs as a whole had no inkling of the way in which a part of their promised land had been deeded away. They were relying on the terms of the McMahon pledge, never guessing that other and different promises had been made later.

REVOLT IN THE DESERT

Just about a month after the conclusion of the Sykes-Picot agreement—that is, in June 1916—the Arabs of the Hejaz carried out their part of their bargain with the British by rising against their Turkish rulers. Under the guidance of the famous British colonel, T. E. Lawrence, the rebels carried on guerrilla warfare with remarkable success. Charging across the desert on their sturdy camels, they delivered lightning attacks on the Turkish garrisons and often cut the Hejaz railway—a road built to carry Moslem pilgrims to the holy cities, but now serving as the Turks' principal artery of communication. The Arabs were everywhere and nowhere; in the end they succeeded in wearing the Turks down by forcing them to defend now one and now another distant outpost.

By the time that large British forces under General Allenby invaded Palestine in the fall of 1917, Lawrence's men had worked their way so far north that they were in a position to cooperate in Allenby's campaign. It was a striking success. On December 11, 1917 Allenby made a triumphal entry into the captured city of Jerusalem, and the British were ecstatically welcomed as deliverers. And by the end of the war the Turks had been driven from all of Syria.

In Allenby's campaign, Jewish volunteers served with the victorious British army. As for the fighting Arabs, they hailed from the Hejaz, and not from Palestine. There was no rebellion in the Holy Land. But this does not reflect any discredit on

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the Palestine Arabs. For the Turks had many more troops in Palestine than in the desert; and nationalist agitation in Palestine was severely repressed. Even as it was, the Arabs behind the lines managed to keep the Turks worried.

WHAT ABOUT PALESTINE?

So, at the end of the war, Palestine was in British hands. Was it to be given its freedom in fulfillment of the McMahon pledge? We can easily understand why the Arabs might have thought so. For without Palestine they would have no outlet on the Mediterranean. And Hussein had specifically mentioned the Mediterranean as one boundary of the independent Arab area he demanded. If the British had meant to block the Arabs completely off from the sea, they ought to have said so.

To be sure, the British had ruled out of the pledge the districts lying west of Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Damascus. But look at the map on page 23. Damascus is the southernmost point named in designating the territory which was *not* to be handed over to the Arabs. Strictly speaking, Palestine *is* west of it. But it is also a good deal farther south. And the Arabs simply assumed that one would no more think of Palestine as lying *west* of Damascus than you would regard Florida as being *west* of New York.

But the British officials concerned have stated several times that, in making the McMahon pledge, they never intended to give up Palestine. And Sir Henry McMahon himself says that he has "every reason to believe" that Hussein understood this at the time.

Besides, as a matter of geography, Palestine *is* west of Damascus, and the British *had* reserved the districts west of Damascus. They had also reserved all territories to which their ally, France, had asserted a claim. And, though the Arabs knew nothing about it at the time, the French *had* asserted a claim to Syria, of which Palestine was then a part.

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On the strength of these facts, the British government has consistently refused to accept the Arab case.

Nor have the Arabs abandoned it. If the British are right, they ask, then why don't they publish the entire correspondence, and clear the matter up once and for all?

HAS BRITAIN "BETRAYED" THE ARABS?

So much for the complex diplomatic maneuvers of the British up to 1917. Something—we are not sure just what—had been promised to the Arabs. And some of that something had also been promised to the French. After all these years, it is perhaps beside the point to argue over the question whether Britain has betrayed the Arabs or not. Probably the two parties never came to a clear understanding of just what the McMahon pledge did cover. Certainly the Arabs outside Palestine have little cause for complaint. Look at the map opposite. Well over 95 per cent of the territory whose independence Hussein demanded in 1915 is now either self-governing or definitely on the road to freedom. It would be hard to find another group which has won as much from the war.

But in one little notch of this territory—Palestine—there is still no Arab government. There is none because of another promise made by the British—a promise to the Jews. And to every Arab who believes the McMahon pledge included Palestine, this third promise stands as a supreme example of British bad faith. To the people of many other nations, however, it seems like a shining act of idealism.

Let's look at it a little more closely.

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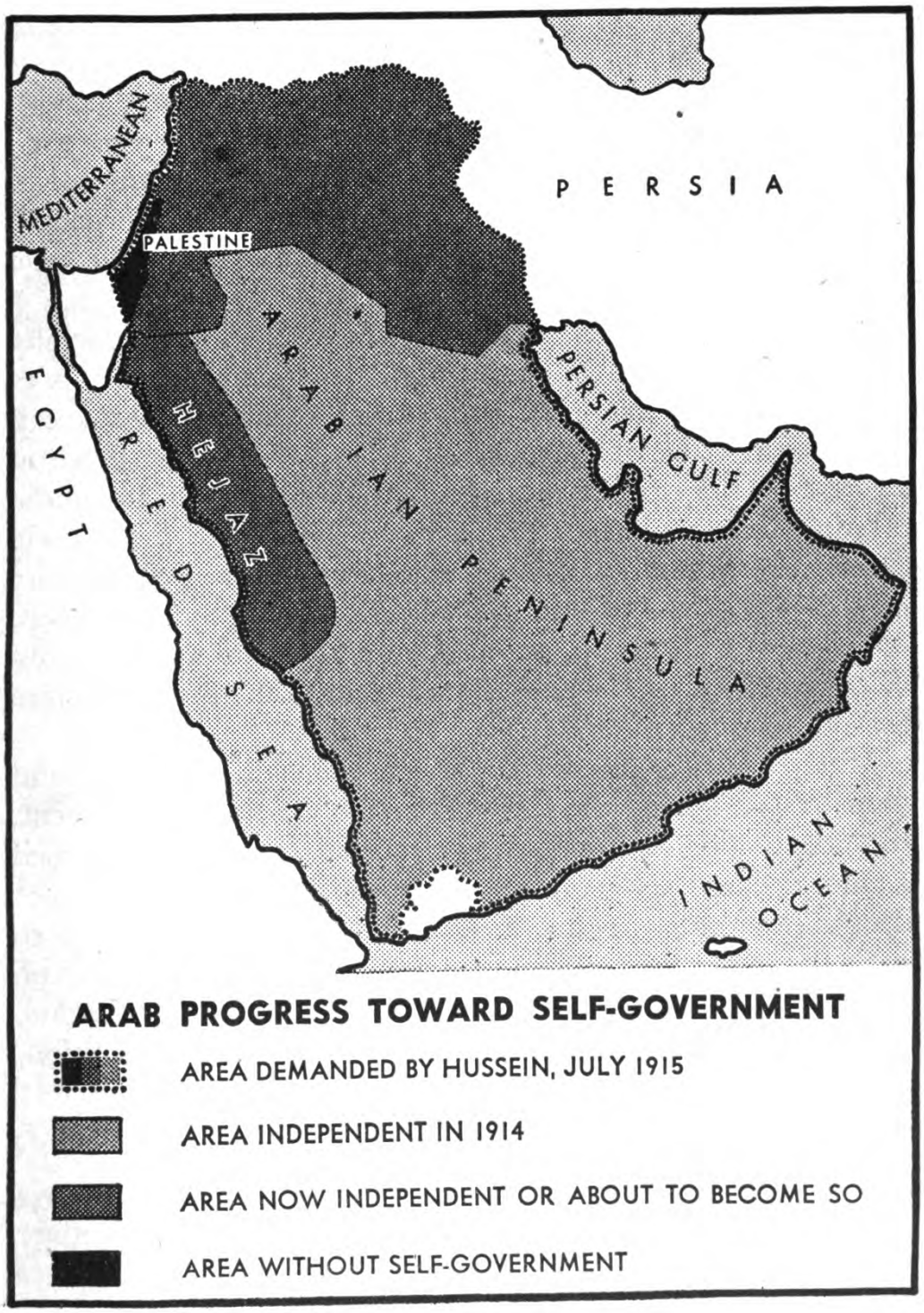

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III. The Balfour Declaration

The outbreak of the war brought new hope to the Zionists as well as to the Arabs. If the Allies won, the tottering Turkish Empire which had blocked the paths of both might very well crash in the ruins. So, as the Turks were gradually worn down, both groups kept their fingers crossed. And Zionists began to plan for Jewish settlement in Palestine on a much larger scale than had ever been possible before.

In 1917 their chance came. The Allied cause was desperate. Russia, savagely intolerant of both Jews and Zionism, was dropping out of the war. Britain and France needed every ounce of available aid. As a result, what had been an altruistic interest on the part of prominent Englishmen now became a pressing matter of state. By assisting Zionists to make their dream a reality, Britain could win the wholehearted support of many Jews and liberals everywhere. And if the Jews were established in Palestine, an outpost of the Suez Canal would be occupied by a loyal population bound to the British Empire by indissoluble chains.

More than this, Britain was trying to get in on the ground floor by forestalling the enemy. For the German government, too, was holding out tempting bait to the Zionists. It proposed a kind of chartered company under which the Jews might set up an autonomous régime in Palestine and enjoy the right to settle there. But the German plan was not worked out until too late in the game. The British had already captured Palestine. They had also published the text of the Balfour Declaration.

ARCHITECTS OF THE NATIONAL HOME

Formal negotiations between the Zionists and the British government were begun during 1917. On the British side they were conducted by the Foreign Secretary, Arthur James

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Balfour, with other prominent British statesmen, including Lord Milner and David Lloyd George, lending a hand. The Zionist spokesmen were Dr. Chaim Weizmann and Mr. Nahum Sokolow.

These were all extraordinary men. In some ways, however, Dr. Weizmann, the only one who retains his pre-eminence today, was the most unusual of them all. Zionism's outstanding leader since the war, he was born in Russia. By 1917 he had already long filled a post as lecturer in chemistry at the University of Manchester. This was in Balfour's election district. In fact, the two men had talked over the Zionist plan as far back as 1906.

When the war broke out the British authorities discovered to their dismay that acetone, an essential ingredient of TNT, was practically unobtainable outside of Germany. Here was a crisis indeed; something had to be done. Working in his laboratory, Weizmann saved the day. He discovered a cheap process for extracting the substance from horse chestnuts, and soon English school children could be seen picking them up all over the country, to help Britain win the war.

Turning his energies to other fields, the chemist then took on the job of statesman. With Balfour he worked out the following formula, first stated in an official letter to Lord Rothschild on November 2, 1917:

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

This declaration was subsequently approved by the governments of France, Italy, Japan and the United States.

Just sixty-seven words, apparently very simple. A single

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sentence. Yet hundreds of thousands of lives, hundreds of millions in money, and possibly even the fate of an Empire have depended and still depend on the way in which that sentence is carried out! We know from the record that every word and every shade of meaning in it were thoroughly debated before it reached its final form. Notice, for example, that Palestine is not declared to be the national home of the Jewish people. The government is said to favor a national home *in* Palestine—a very different thing. Note that the "civil and religious rights" of "non-Jewish communities" are to be preserved, while at the same time the Jews are to establish a "national home."

What are these rights? What is a "national home"? Can the two provisions be reconciled?

ZIONISTS AND ANTI-ZIONISTS

For these vague words the Jews must share responsibility with the British. Zionist efforts to win over the British government were hampered by opposition within the Jewish ranks. Many English Jews were far more interested in preserving their status as a patriotic community within Great Britain than in furthering a risky experiment for which they had no particular need. Hence the Declaration's clear statement that nothing should be done which would prejudice "the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country."

Down through the years this split has continued. Among Jews the Zionist movement has been gaining ground, especially as new ghetto walls go up all over Europe. Non-Zionists now cooperate with Zionists to help persecuted Jews find refuge in Palestine. Yet in the United States, Britain and France, where they are accepted as full-fledged citizens, many Jews still show little interest in the Holy Land. They know that today only a small proportion of the world's sixteen million Jews could

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be accommodated in Palestine. They know that, as the chart on page 35 shows, only one Jew in forty lives there now. Looking back over history they have concluded that the only solution for the Jewish problem is a more perfect assimilation into the nations in which they live. After all, they say, an American Jew has far more in common with his fellow Americans than he has with the Jews of Poland, or Germany, or Rumania. But the tragedy of the German Jews has convinced many "assimilationists" that their goal is either impossible or unrealizable until their fellow-men become more tolerant.

PALESTINE AS A JEWISH RELIGIOUS CENTER

Then, too, there are other Jews who are convinced that the religious values of the Jewish faith are a vital contribution to world civilization and should by all means be preserved. Looking with distaste at "assimilation" as it is practiced in the Soviet Union—where Judaism, like other religions, has been thrown into the discard—they are eager to build up a spiritual and cultural center in the Holy Land. For they feel that their creed cannot thrive in its purest form anywhere else.

But they have no great urge for power and dominion, no desire to step on the political toes of Arab leaders. If they were the only Jews represented in Palestine, they would probably get along fairly well with the Arabs.

Thus Zionism has not by any means received the unanimous support of the Jewish people, and its progress has been studded with obstacles. But its story has been one of steadily growing strength in the face of them all.

THE DECLARATION AND THE ARABS

Like every one else who followed the subject, the Arab leaders must have known that the British government was considering the project for settling Jews in Palestine. When the text of the

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Balfour Declaration was published there was of course some disappointment; but Hussein, we are told, accepted the news philosophically. All he did at the time was to express his good will toward a kindred Semitic race who were to "lodge in a house owned by Arabs."

Obviously he did not consider Zionism a political movement or, necessarily, a setback to his hopes. And his ideas seemed to be confirmed by President Wilson's fourteen points, which guaranteed free political development for the Turkish minorities, including the Arabs. They seemed doubly confirmed by a joint British and French declaration of November 7, 1918, in which the two nations promised to aid in establishing a native government in Syria. (Syria, we must remember, was understood by the Arabs to include Palestine.)

THE PEACE CONFERENCE: A FLEETING HONEYMOON

In the peace negotiations after the Armistice, Palestine seemed a relatively small matter. For the Arabs were on the threshold of a great new development in a large area. When, therefore, the Emir Feisal, son of Hussein, came to Paris with Lawrence of Arabia to speak for his people, he welcomed the policy of the Balfour Declaration and even suggested that an outside power might maintain justice for all races and religions alike in Palestine.

This was a promising beginning. On January 3, 1919 Feisal followed it up by signing an agreement with Dr. Weizmann whereby "the Arab State and Palestine" were to cooperate under the Balfour Declaration.

Unfortunately, this pact was stillborn. It was not to go into effect unless the Arabs' other demands for independence were carried out. And when Feisal returned to the East and was proclaimed king of Syria, a French army invaded the country and expelled him. This had the effect of ending the understanding

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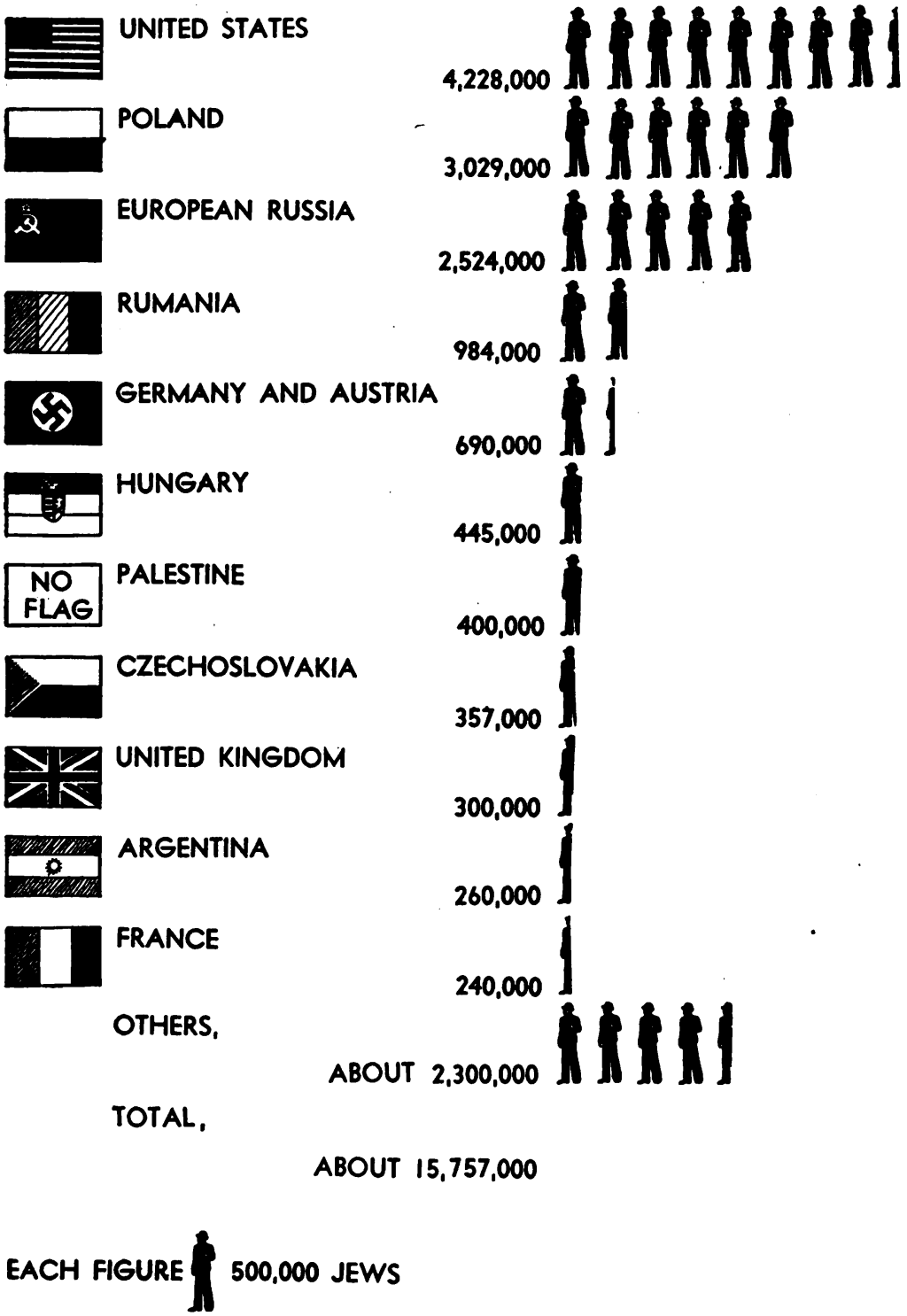
WHERE THE JEWS LIVE TODAY



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with Dr. Weizmann. When this understanding lapsed, the one brief moment of harmony between Arab and Jewish statesmen came to an end. The Arabs (and Hussein's family) achieved much from the war: the Hejaz became independent, the British made Feisal king of Iraq, and Abdullah—another son of Hussein—became Emir of Trans-Jordan. But they did not get Palestine. And the Arab inhabitants of Palestine remained convinced that in failing to give it to them the British had broken their promise and that the Arabs were entitled to rule the country.

After the war almost five years went by before the last details regarding Palestine's form of government were finally determined. During that time all the parts of the picture-puzzle settlement in the Near and Middle East were being gradually fitted together. We have seen that the McMahon pledge, the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration contained promises which many people believed inconsistent, at least in spirit. Now all these chickens came home to roost, and diplomats racked their brains to find some arrangement which would be satisfactory to every one.

The solution was found in President Wilson's proposal for a League of Nations and a system of mandates. The British and French were to get their spheres of influence, but in a new form which was to prevent them from being just old-style protectorates. Palestine, Syria and Iraq were to be guided toward self-government, and their guardians were to be responsible to the League of Nations for the performance of this duty.

Under this scheme the mandate for Palestine was allotted to Great Britain in 1920, and became fully effective in September 1923. At the same time France formally became the mandatory power in Syria.

THE MANDATE AND THE BALFOUR DECLARATION

Examining the Palestine mandate itself, we can see that Britain has been commissioned by the League to rule in the spirit of

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the Balfour Declaration. The keynote provision reads: "The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home, . . . and the development of self-governing institutions, and also for safeguarding the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race and religion."

The British, then, were taking on two jobs—one to permit the Jews to build the national home in Palestine; the other to protect the rights of the Arabs. Under any conditions this would have been a difficult task.

It was not made any easier by the text of the mandate. There it was stated that, so far as circumstances permitted, the mandatory power was to encourage local self-government. It was to recognize an appropriate Jewish agency as a public body to advise and cooperate with the governing authorities of Palestine and to assist the development of the national home. Jewish immigration was to be facilitated, but the rights and position of other sections of the population were not to be injured thereby. The Jews were to be encouraged to settle closely on the land—that is, to develop and improve the soil so that many more people could earn their livings on a given plot. The sanctity of all holy places was guaranteed, as was freedom of worship. Each community was to be entitled to maintain its own schools in its own tongue. And English, Arabic and Hebrew were all declared to be official languages.

Three languages and three sabbaths—Friday for the Moslems, Saturday for the Jews, Sunday for the Christians—in a district the size of New Hampshire!

TRANS-JORDAN

To be sure, the area originally covered by the Palestine mandate was much larger. But because of the McMahon pledge all

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the territory east of the Jordan—almost two and a half times as large as the rest of Palestine—was immediately split off and placed under an Arab government with British advisers. It is called Trans-Jordan (see the map on page 87). Closed to Jewish immigration, it offers a striking contrast to the Holy Land. Perhaps half of its backward population of 320,000 are wandering Bedouin, who are slowly turning toward settled agriculture as a means of subsistence.

Trans-Jordan is now largely desert, and no one knows what could be done to develop it. Zionists bitterly resent the fact that they are not allowed to try their hand at the job. This, they believe, constituted the first unjust partition of the country—and not, perhaps, the last one. But the Arabs of Trans-Jordan seem to be dead set against any Jewish immigration to their barren state. According to the Zionists, however, it is the British who are responsible for keeping the Jews out.

THE ROOT OF THE TROUBLE

But perhaps the root of all the difficulties which have arisen in Palestine lies in the fact that Britain appears to be obligated to prepare the territory for self-government without having full power to weld the Jewish and Arab communities together. How much easier it would be for the British to govern the country if it could be run like any British Crown Colony! Then the Palestine administration could do whatever seemed necessary to preserve order and train all the inhabitants for responsible government as a single community, without outside interference.

But because of the mandate Jewish and Arab children cannot be educated side by side and grow up together in the same English schools. Because of the mandate Arab and Jewish officials staff many posts in which they cooperate only with

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difficulty during periods of disturbance. Because of the mandate Jews and Arabs give their allegiance to their own political and religious organizations rather than to the Palestine government. There is no Palestinian flag. There is no Palestinian national anthem. There is no Palestinian loyalty: there are only Arab, Jewish and British loyalties. In short, we might almost say that there are three governments in Palestine, and not just one.

Of course, it seemed possible in 1919 that Arabs and Jews would be able to cooperate so that a national home could be built up within an independent Palestine government. But anyone could see with half an eye that if friendly relations could not be preserved, Britain would have a Titan's job on her hands.

And ominous storm clouds gathered on the horizon as soon as the Zionist aims became clearer. The official Zionist program said nothing directly about the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. But Dr. Weizmann himself told the Peace Conference that the Zionists wanted to settle 50,000 to 60,000 Jews on the land in Palestine each year; and not only settle them but see that they lived under Jewish institutions. Ultimately, he said, he wanted Palestine to be "just as Jewish as America is American and England is English." And there was nothing in the mandate to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine—Jewish in character, and with a Jewish majority—at some time in the future.

You can't blame the Arab leaders for balking when this dream began to be realized. The very conditions under which the mandate was drafted were a direct affront to their pride. For the 600,000 Arabs who made up the great mass of the population, it was galling to be referred to as the "non-Jewish" community, while the preservation of "non-Jewish" rights was only guaranteed in a "by the way" manner after the Jewish aims had been approved.

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Alarmed by the rash statements of Zionist extremists, the Arab leaders tended to stir up the rank and file of the people against the 80,000 Jews in the country. Dissatisfaction increased. As early as 1922 an Arab delegation told the British Colonial Office that their people were opposed to the Balfour Declaration and the mandate and wanted an independent government. And the Arabs have never wavered in support of this position. Since they have never accepted the mandate or the British administration, they see no reason why they should recognize the validity of either.

But this was just distant thunder, attracting little attention at the time. The real storm was not to come until much later. Before we turn to it, however, suppose we see what has happened to Palestine economically since the mandate was first awarded; what the Jews have done and hope to do there; what the Arab community in Palestine is like; and, finally, why the Jews and the Arabs get on so badly together.

IV. New Life in the Holy Land

Before the war Palestine was merely a backwater district in a tottering Turkish Empire. Conditions were primitive. The Arab population did not grow because it was held down by malaria and other diseases, as well as by the harsh Turkish system of conscription, which took the pick of the country's man power for the Sultan's armies. Originally Palestine may have been a land of milk and honey, but migrating tribes who invaded it exhausted the soil and cut the trees from its hilly slopes. Severe erosion followed. By 1918 most of Palestine was very poor farming country indeed.

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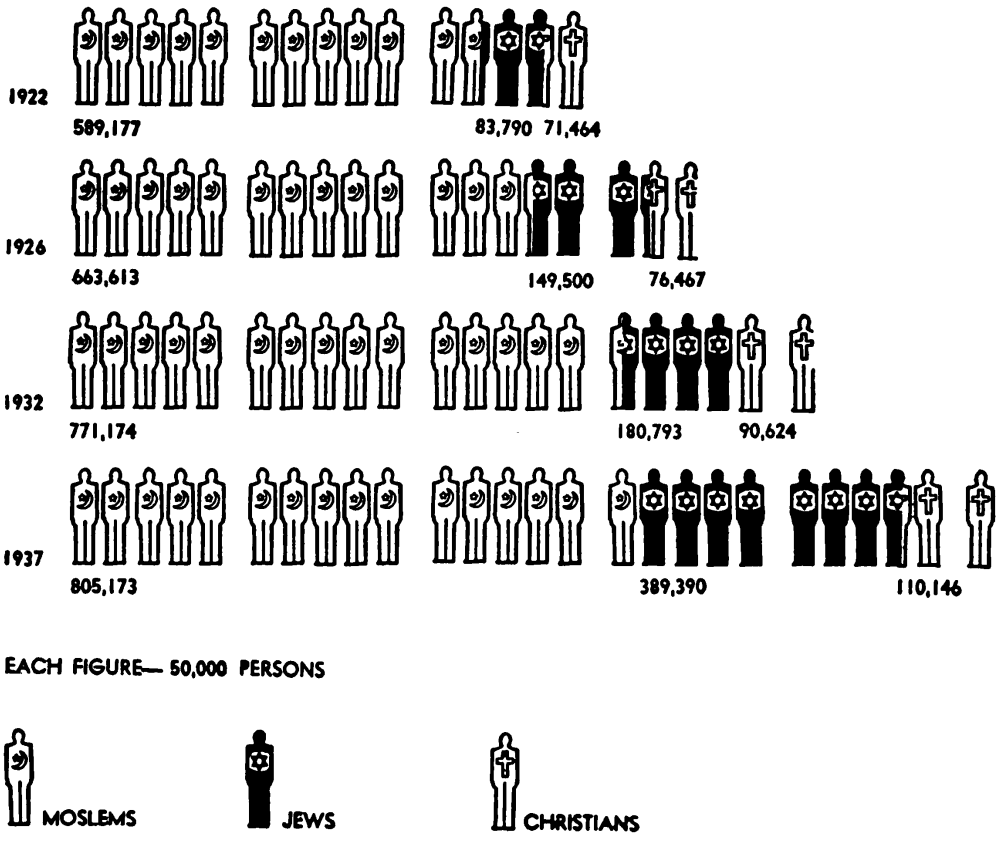
What has happened since that time is remarkable. The country has been revivified, and reconstruction is still going on. Far from standing still, the population has almost doubled: from 752,000 in 1922 it has risen to about 1,350,000 today. Of these, the Arabs—Christian as well as Moslem—who numbered 650,000 in 1922, now total over 900,000, while the Jewish population has grown from 84,000 to over 400,000—30 per cent of the country's inhabitants.

Basically, most of the growth in population and resources is due to two factors: Jewish immigration, and an inflow of large amounts of money. Those immigrants who were well off in their old homes have brought their funds with them; and mil-

THE POPULATION OF PALESTINE BY RELIGION



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lions of Jews the world over have contributed their pennies and their dollars to help those who were destitute. As we shall see, this stream of capital into the country has financed an amazing economic development. And, profiting from the better conditions of life which the Jews have made possible, the Arab population has forged ahead rapidly in numbers and resources.

A LITTLE ECONOMICS

After a period of rather slow progress, the country ran into a depression lasting from 1925 until 1929. While the rest of the world was at the crest of the wave, Palestine was in the trough. But then, as Europe and America plunged downward, the Holy Land began to bob up again. Each year more Jewish immigrants brought more money with them. At the same time, shots in the arm, in the form of charitable contributions from abroad, began to play a smaller part in the economic picture, and private investment, on a strictly business basis, began to play a larger part.

By the beginning of 1936 government revenue was not far from twice as great as it had been three years before. Imports zoomed from £P.7,768,920 in 1932 to £P.17,853,493 in 1935. (£P. is the symbol for the Palestinian pound, which has the same value as the British pound sterling—namely, about $5.00.) Exports rose, too: from £P.2,381,491 to £P.4,215,486. All the economic indices prepared by the statisticians seemed bound for the dizzy heights. Look at the chart opposite—each year more railway freight, more electric power consumed, more new buildings. And, as business activity spurted, wages and prices spiraled upward, too.

Of course this boom could not last indefinitely. In the autumn of 1935, when a British-Italian conflict over Ethiopia seemed possible, the whole eastern end of the Mediterranean

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HOW PALESTINE'S BUSINESS HAS INCREASED

RAILWAY FREIGHT

EACH SYMBOL—20,000,000 TON MILES

1933 
58,900,000

1935 
91,100,000

1937 
95,200,000

CONSUMPTION OF ELECTRIC POWER

EACH SYMBOL—10,000,000 KILOWATT HOURS

1933 
22,200,000

1935 
56,800,000

1937 
77,000,000

NEW BUILDINGS (Monthly Average in Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, and Tel Aviv)

EACH SYMBOL—20,000 SQUARE YARDS OF NEW FLOOR AREA

1933 
78,000

1935 
121,000

1937 
57,500

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became jittery. Afterward, grave Arab disturbances and strikes paralyzed much of the business activity of the country, and uncertainty about the future has prevented any real revival ever since. In the spring of 1938 there was no doubt that times were hard in Palestine.

Then it became the turn of the pessimists, and they gloomily pointed out the dangerous aspects of Palestine's economic situation.

First, they shook their heads over what you may have noticed two paragraphs back—the tremendous excess of imports over exports. Ordinarily no nation could long be prosperous with such an enormous "unfavorable" balance of trade. In the case of Palestine, however, these extra imports really represent in large part goods brought in or paid for by the more wealthy Jewish immigrants. Jews coming from Germany, for example, could not take money out of that country but were able to ship goods to Palestine instead. Other immigrants set up new businesses and imported machinery and materials with their funds.

You will note from the chart opposite that excess imports were nearly balanced by imports of capital. And money spent by foreign tourists in the Holy Land has also helped to make up the deficit.

But what will happen, economists ask, if the growing population, which will need larger and larger imports, suddenly finds that it can no longer get help in the form of imported funds? What if money starts flowing *out* of the country instead of flowing in? How will imports be paid for then?

The normal method would be by increasing exports; but here Palestine's prospects are none too bright. Her wages and costs are high, and all her neighbors have protective tariffs just as she has. In general, Palestine's manufactured goods have not competed very successfully with foreign products in other

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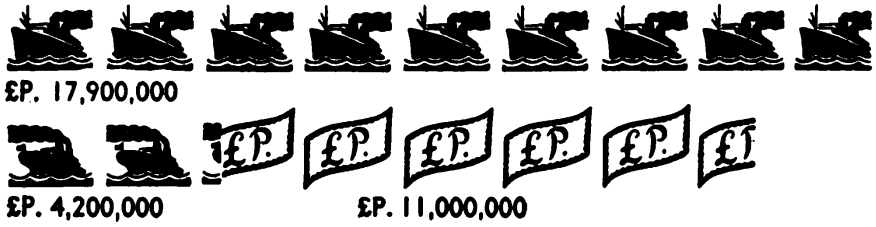
HOW NEW CAPITAL OFFSETS PALESTINE'S IMPORT SURPLUS

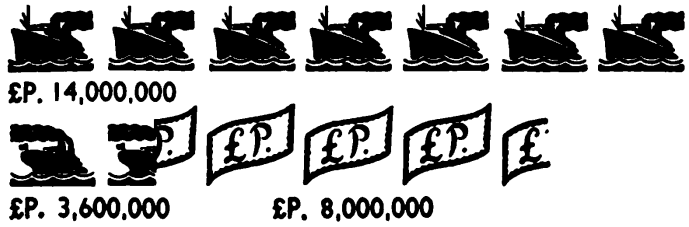
1933



1935



1936



1937



EACH  £P. 2,000,000 OF IMPORTS

EACH  £P. 2,000,000 OF EXPORTS

EACH  £P. 2,000,000 OF CAPITAL BROUGHT BY IMMIGRANTS OR INVESTED IN PALESTINE BY JEWS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

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countries. Exports of manufactured goods have remained relatively low: during the last few years they have lagged at about £P.500,000 annually. Because of Article 18 of the mandate, Palestine is not able to force open foreign markets for her exports as other countries do. For, by guaranteeing equal customs treatment to all League members, that article prevents Palestine from employing the threat of tariff retaliation to obtain favorable terms for her products.

What is worse, the meager exports are dangerously concentrated on one item: as a rule about 80 per cent of all Palestine's shipments abroad are made up of citrus fruits. Sales of oranges and grapefruit rose from 4,500,000 boxes in the 1932–33 season to about 10,200,000 boxes in 1936–37. And when trees already planted reach their full productivity, 25,000,000 boxes may be produced each year. Already Palestine fruit growers are finding it difficult to sell their fruit at profitable prices. Will the markets of Europe be able to absorb the still bigger crop that is to come?

A BASICALLY SOUND FUTURE

Yet, despite all these headaches—and they grow really painful as immigration and capital imports decline—people have only tightened their belts and carried on as before. There has been no collapse and no panic. If a descent to a lower standard of living proves necessary, it will probably be accepted without too much grumbling.

And in the long run, if the Arab-Jewish conflict could be settled, the future of the territory would be quite bright. Its labor costs are high; but within its borders there are now large supplies of labor and management of unusual skill and quality. It is situated squarely astride the trade routes linking Europe and the Middle East. Given years of peace, it might become a

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HOW PALESTINE'S CITRUS EXPORTS HAVE GROWN



EACH SYMBOL—ONE MILLION CASES

1932-1933



4,500,000 CASES

1933-1934



5,500,000 CASES

1934-1935



7,330,000 CASES

1935-1936



5,900,000 CASES

1936-1937



10,200,000 CASES

great business and financial center and play a leading rôle in the development of the whole Asiatic Arab world. But if the present strife continues, these prospects for prosperity will never materialize.

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V. Building the National Home

The great vision of Simon-pure Zionists has always been, and still is, the settlement of large numbers of Jews as farmers on the land of Palestine. And there is an excellent reason for this. Jews have been hounded so long, and driven from country to country so often, that they have seldom succeeded in striking deep roots among the populations of their adopted countries. Instead, in many nations they have tended to concentrate in a relatively small number of occupations and professions, where they were sometimes enviously regarded by their non-Jewish competitors. It was said that they engaged in "parasitic" occupations; that they were middlemen who created nothing, but made profits from buying and selling, speculating, or lending money; that far too many of them, proportionately, were doctors, lawyers, teachers, journalists.

THE RETURN TO THE LAND

These statements were often false. Even when they were true, they usually described a condition which was not the fault of the Jews, but which was due to the fact that they had in the past been prevented from engaging in other occupations or from owning land.

But whether true or false, the statements rankled. To Zionists they seemed to prove that the only way to become solidly settled in the new homeland was to build it from the ground up with their own hands. Jews in Palestine must not be mere overseers for cheap Arab labor; they must do the work themselves and learn to regard manual labor as an honorable and ennobling task. And it was particularly important that Jewish *farmers* should become so firmly rooted in the soil that they could not easily be dislodged.

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To a considerable extent this objective has been realized. In the forty years before the British occupied Palestine, the Jews had acquired about 162,000 acres of land. Today they own about twice as much. Today there are in Palestine over two hundred Jewish agricultural settlements containing some 97,000 people—about one-quarter of the Jewish population. Of this group, 55,000 work directly on the soil.

RECONSTRUCTION

And Jews have not only succeeded in getting a firm foothold on the land of Palestine, but they are developing it as it has never been developed before. With the support of contributions from abroad, without which the work could not go on, Jewish agricultural improvement has been carried out along the most modern lines. The new settlers have reclaimed land and built irrigation systems. They have drained swamps and conquered malaria. They have planted orange and grapefruit trees in what was once a sandy waste. And the task, they feel, is only begun.

THE HALUTZIM

It could not be accomplished without the heroic idealism of the young Jewish pioneers, known, in Hebrew, as the *Halutzim*. Working in an area far less hospitable than the American West of one hundred years ago, these pioneers feel as our own frontiersmen did that they are creating a new land for their people. Only their deep enthusiasm for the Zionist cause has made them persevere through all kinds of poverty and discouragement.

Before they came to Palestine most of these youthful immigrants attended training camps in their own countries, where they learned modern methods of tilling the soil. Once in Palestine, they are expected to cultivate the land as intensively

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as possible, so that the greatest possible number of people may earn their livings from a given area. This means that the Jewish farmers must not only work harder to squeeze the utmost production from their small plots, but must continually improve their farming technique. As a result, crop yields on the average Jewish farm are already far higher than those obtained by the average Arab.

COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES PROMINENT

Furthermore, Jewish agricultural colonization has taken several different forms, and some of them have attracted wide attention as interesting social experiments. Many colonists are striving to eliminate the abuses which have grown up elsewhere under the capitalist system. Hence they have banded together in democratically organized cooperative settlements, as well as on small, privately owned farms.

THE KVUTZA

In one type of cooperative colony, called a *Kvutza*, practically everything is organized on a collective basis. Every one works in fields and orchards which are the common property of the settlement. The colony's members live in houses owned by the group and eat in a common dining hall. No money is used within the settlement; each worker receives his support from the colony's general income. Over 6,000 settlers now live as members of such organizations of their own free will—a remarkable example of idealism in practice.

THE MOSHAV

In the *Moshav*, another type of colony, there is much more scope for individual enterprise. Here each farmer is allotted his own house and fields, so that the settlement resembles a European village. But the cooperative spirit has penetrated

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deeply. In some of these colonies, the grain crops are cultivated collectively, while mixed subsistence farming—principally dairying, poultry raising, vegetable and fruit culture—is done by individuals. Most of the buying and selling with the outside world is done through cooperatives. About 8,000 Jews are organized in this manner.

WHO OWNS THE JEWISH LAND?

Zionist agricultural colonies like those we have just described are established on land belonging not to any individual but to the Zionists *as a group*. In fact, contributions from ardent Zionists all over the world have financed the purchase of about 30 per cent of all the Jewish-owned land of Palestine. The Jewish National Fund, the Zionist agency which purchases this land, leases the property to individuals and groups. Thus speculation is prevented.

Once land has been purchased by the National Fund, it can never be sold to non-Jews, nor may non-Jews be employed on it. As a general rule the Zionist colonies employ no hired labor at all. Instead, for reasons which we have discussed, they insist that farmers should do all their own work. But the Arabs have become alarmed because they see land slipping permanently out of their hands and because they cannot find employment on National Fund holdings. What will they do eventually, they ask, to earn their living?

Another 30 per cent of the Jewish land is owned by the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association. The P.I.C.A., as it is called, buys land and installs settlers, either giving them a long lease or allowing them to purchase the land on easy terms. It is not a political organization; employs Arab as well as Jewish labor; and helps to develop Arab land. Consequently its relations with the Arabs have always been relatively friendly.

Other development companies and individual Jewish agriculturists own their own citrus fruit groves and small farms.

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Indeed, Jews have done some of their best work in turning waste land into plantations where oranges and grapefruit are grown. In 1936 they owned 41,000 acres of this type of land, a considerable portion of which was in the hands of well-to-do private farmers. Following the Jewish example, and using money acquired by sale of part of their property, Arabs have increased the area of citrus land under their cultivation at least six times between 1920 and 1936. In the latter year they had 34,000 acres under cultivation.

CROWDED CITIES

Good Zionists hope that some day at least 10 per cent more of the Jewish population of Palestine can be added to the 25 per cent already settled on the land. But between 1933 and 1936 immigrants entered the country in such large numbers that progress toward this goal was impossible. For most of the new arrivals had to crowd into the cities and find work as best they might.

Some Zionists regard the growth of large cities in Palestine as a corruption of the old principle of a return to work on the soil. But to most observers the urban and industrial development of the country has been one of its most remarkable features. Certainly it enables a much larger population to live in the Holy Land. And if we devote less space to it than to other aspects of the National Home, it is only because so much of this development closely resembles our own familiar city and factory civilization.

Of all the new cities of Palestine, the one which has had the most remarkable development is Tel Aviv. In 1917 Tel Aviv was a hamlet of 1,000; today it is a metropolis of 150,000. With its busy streets, its shops, cafés and movies, it is hardly distinguishable from a European city.

Again, in Jerusalem, new suburbs, containing over 75,000 Jews, form a sharp contrast to the narrow, winding alleys of

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the old city within its ancient walls. And at the busy seaport of Haifa more than 50,000 Jews are building an important new industrial and transport center. In each of these latter two cities, over 50,000 Arabs also make their homes.

Within these cities, and sheltered by a protective tariff, new Jewish industries have rapidly increased in number, until there are now over 4,000 such enterprises, large and small, in Palestine. They manufacture food products, cigarettes, building materials, metal work, furniture, leather goods, artificial teeth, matches, clothing, chemicals, and many other articles. To provide them with power, the Jordan has been harnessed to electric generators and now supplies most of Palestine with cheap current. And Jewish enterprise is prominent in the Dead Sea potash concession, which extracts potash, bromine and other products from the water on a large scale for use in both industry and agriculture.

COOPERATIVES AND LABOR

In industry, as in agriculture, the cooperative movement has made great strides. In fact, probably nowhere else in the world could you point to 900 cooperatives in a population of about 400,000—the actual figures for Jewish Palestine. The visitor finds them in almost every important branch of economic activity. They engage in banking, credit, insurance and the sale of farm products. There are consumers' cooperatives, organizations for various types of production, and others for building, motor transport, marketing, irrigation and land purchase.

THE HISTADRUT

Most of the industrial cooperatives are closely connected with the *Histadrut*, the General Federation of Jewish Labor in Palestine. With more than 105,000 members, the *Histadrut* is

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far more than just a powerful labor organization which can meet any private employer of Jews in Palestine on equal terms. It also undertakes a wide variety of general social functions. Besides establishing numerous cooperatives, it trains labor immigrants and brings them to Palestine, finds jobs for some and settles some on the land. It acts as a contractor, carrying out home and industrial building and public works projects, particularly to keep down unemployment. It is interested in a labor bank and in workers' loan associations. It supervises a country-wide health insurance organization, with its own hospitals and clinics. And, last but not least, the *Histadrut* runs schools from kindergarten grade up; carries on a cultural program which includes theatrical and musical performances; sponsors sports groups and preparation for defense; and, publishing the most widely read Hebrew newspaper in Palestine, exercises a formidable political influence.

Truly in many ways the *Histadrut* makes our own labor organizations look like mere beginners, for it guides the Jewish workers of Palestine almost from the cradle to the grave. Yet it was founded only in 1920. Such is the tremendous pace at which the National Home has developed!

This powerful labor body is Zionist to the core. To protect its members, whose wages are far above those of the Arabs, it turns its full strength against any Jewish employer who is rash enough to hire Arab workers. For if Arabs were employed in place of Jews, Zionists feel, immigration would immediately cease and the National Home could never be built up by Jewish effort. In most industries the problems this policy creates are not very difficult ones, because the only workers sufficiently skilled to perform the work are Jewish anyway. But in agriculture the situation is different. Jewish citrus groves are often picketed because their owners employ Arabs.

Thus it seems that the Arabs may eventually be cut off, economically, from the Jewish community. And, by striking and

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engaging in violence, the Arabs are forcing the Jews to provide for their own needs even more quickly and completely than they otherwise would.

POLITICS IN THE NATIONAL HOME

There are two political organizations which work to advance the interests of the Jews in Palestine. One, the Jewish Agency, is the organization set up under the mandate to cooperate with the government. Since 1929 it has included both Zionist and non-Zionist representatives of the Jews of the world, united in their concern for the National Home.

The other organization is the governing body of the Palestine Jewish community itself. This body, called the *Va'ad Leumi*, or People's Council, is dominated by a labor bloc. Thus within the National Home the ruling political tendency is social-democratic—that is, somewhat to the Left of our New Deal and quite comparable to some of our farmer-labor movements.

There are conservative Zionists, too, and several small minority opposition groups in Palestine. One of these—the Revisionist movement or New Zionist Organization—demands revision of the mandate and a policy of force if necessary to settle very large numbers of Jews on both sides of the Jordan. Another—the orthodox religious *Agudath Israel*—wants a religious community rather than a political, nationalist home in Palestine. While both these groups have quarreled bitterly with the Zionists in the past, they now cooperate closely with them as a matter of self-preservation.

CULTURE

An extraordinary social and religious cultural life has grown up in Palestine, too. The Jews themselves supply much the

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greater part of the money needed to educate their children, and support the fine new Hebrew University in Jerusalem. They also maintain their own hospitals and clinics—with considerable aid from the American *Hadassah* and other Zionist groups abroad.

Still another Jewish achievement has been the successful resurrection of Hebrew from the limbo of dead languages. In its modernized form Hebrew is now the only means of communication between Jews who have come to Palestine from many different countries. As a result of this revival, a new Hebrew literature has arisen. Hebrew newspapers and periodicals flourish, and many works are translated from foreign languages.

And one of the National Home's proudest accomplishments has been its progress in the field of music. Musicians exiled from their native lands have banded together in a Palestine Symphony Orchestra. As great an artist as Arturo Toscanini has conducted this orchestra in concerts thronged with admiring audiences.

THE RESTRAINTS OF BUREAUCRACY

Naturally, this high-spirited community chafes under the restraints put on its growth and development by the more cautious British administration. Many of the British officials in Palestine were trained for Crown Colony rule over backward tropical races; and many of their most important decisions have to be referred to officials in London who are wholly out of touch with the country they are governing. Small wonder that there is friction between the British administration and an educated, essentially European people like the Jews of Palestine.

Ordinarily a group governed in this way would loudly demand more self-government; but since the Jews are in the minority in Palestine, they cannot urge this change. It would be like

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jumping from the frying pan into the fire. So, too often, they denounce the government as pro-Arab and criticize it for not making more strenuous efforts to help build up the National Home.

We can easily understand why the Jews want to force the pace of development as much as possible. Abroad their relatives and friends, their brethren in many lands, cry out for salvation. In the Holy Land more immigrants, and still more, are needed if the National Home is to be secure against attack by embittered Arabs in a future crisis.

But this breathless growth at high pressure has its dangers and drawbacks, and when they appear it is the government which is held responsible. Hence it must check excesses where it can. And there are many. Not all the Jewish immigrants have shared the idealism of the Zionist agricultural colonists. Speculation has been rife in land, building and business activities. Much of the new capital imported since 1933 has been invested in industries which have no assured market, so that there is always the danger of over-industrialization. And as waves of immigration rise and fall, the Jewish community experiences booms and slumps.

Moreover, many of the agricultural settlements, considered as business enterprises, are in very bad shape. Only grants and loans from Zionist funds made it possible to establish them in the first place, and many have had to be propped up by subsequent financial assistance. Thus, without the aid of funds collected abroad, much of Palestine's development would have been impossible. What would happen to the new peasantry and to the country as a whole if these funds should suddenly be cut off now?

THE REAL FAILURE

Serious as they are, drawbacks of this sort fade into insignificance when compared with the real, underlying failure of the

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Jews. That is the failure to come to any understanding with the Arabs, or even to prevent Arab opposition from growing steadily more bitter. Of course Zionists say that this is not their fault; and to some extent they are doubtless correct. Yet it seems plain that in their zeal to build up the National Home they have sown the seed of endless strife by paying too little attention to the Arab community.

Now, twenty years after the war, two separate peoples with little love for each other are intermingled on the same territory. The National Home rests on a seething volcano. And it is an open question whether, as long as Zionists do not modify their aims, the gulf between Jew and Arab can be bridged. If it cannot, the whole Arab world may some day rally under the banner of "Death to the Jewish National Home!"

VI. The Arabs

When the war ended most of the Arabs were still living very much as they had for centuries past. In some respects their life resembled that of medieval Europe. At the top stood a small group of aristocrats, who before 1914 had belonged to the *effendi*, or governing, class of the Turkish Empire. Many of them were cultured and dignified, and had a good acquaintance with European thought, either through travel or through education outside the country. Among them were the large landowners, thoroughly dominating the great bulk of the population.

Aside from a tiny middle class of professional and business men, the rest of the inhabitants belonged to a backward peas-

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antry whose picturesque flowing robes and ways of life could not conceal its poverty and distress. Most of this group were *fellaheen*, small farmers who sometimes owned their little plots of land but more often paid the *effendi* for the privilege of raising crops on his estates. In some parts of the country there were many Bedouin, wandering sons of the desert who made their living either by tending flocks or by primitive agriculture.

Slowly, as these underprivileged groups have made contact with the modern world, conditions in the Arab community have begun to change. Politically, the setting is rapidly being altered; some progress is being made in the field of economics; but social changes have been slow. In the last census, that of 1931, it was found that 64 per cent of all the Moslems in Palestine were still engaged in agriculture, and that the number of Bedouin, though dwindling, was still over 65,000.

A TYPICAL ARAB VILLAGE

A British Royal Commission, investigating conditions among the Arabs, gives a picture of their life in one village which stands in sharp contrast to the progressive ways of living followed by the Jews. Of the village of Barriye, they say:

"There were 80 families in this village, the population being some 400 who lived entirely on agriculture. The land cultivated by the village was 740 acres. Usually, the villagers needed all the crops they grew, cereals, for their own sustenance, and little was left for sale. In one respect this village had a unique advantage. It was one of the first villages to start bee-keeping, and is now able to spare hives to other villages. . . . There was no school, though the villagers had subscribed £75 towards getting one; there was no room for the children in the neighbouring village school. Their methods of cultivation were primitive, the camel and the donkey being yoked together for purposes of ploughing. Farmyard manure was being collected

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in order that it might be stored for fuel. Irrigation was impossible, and the village was dependent on a capricious rainfall. Water was obtained during the summer from a neighbouring village half-a-mile away. We were told that the villagers were short of land and that the surplus population had to go to the towns for work. . . . The general impression we gained was that of congested poverty and ignorance, combined with an almost subconscious desire for village uplift."

THE BURDEN OF THE PEASANTS

You'd be wrong if you assumed that the backwardness of the Arab farmer was due to some inferiority in his basic make-up. The truth is, he has been a victim of circumstances quite beyond his control. For one thing, he has inherited a system known as *masha'a*, under which—as in the case of the old Open Field system in feudal England—all the property in a village is held in common. Under this system every cultivator has a right to work on a given share of the village land, but the shares are re-allotted every other year. Now, few men would put all their energy into the task of improving land which was going to be given to some one else in the near future. So there is no incentive to work unduly hard. Ambition and enterprise are stifled almost before they are born.

This situation is improving, however. Whereas 56 per cent of the villages were *masha'a* in 1923, only 46 per cent were *masha'a* in 1930. And, with the assistance of the government, the number is being steadily reduced.

Another barrier to the progress of the *fellaheen* is the fact that many of them live on large estates owned by landlords, some of whom seldom visit their own property. These tenant farmers hold their land only from year to year and never know when they are likely to be turned out. Here, too, the

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government has taken steps to increase the security of the tenant.

Nor is this all. The experience of the Jews has shown that if money is spent for improving the land, by irrigation or the use of modern tools, much better results can be obtained. But where is the Arab to obtain capital? He has none of his own, and no one outside the country will supply him with it. If he ekes out a bare living by raising a grain crop on his hilly patch, he cannot afford to plant fruit trees or vineyards. For while these would be more profitable when they started to bear, years afterward, how would he live while he waited? More often than not he has already had to go into debt body and soul to some Arab money lender who charges such high interest that the account can never be paid off. This is one of the *fellah's* greatest difficulties. And the credit societies and small cooperatives encouraged by the government have only scratched the surface so far as improving matters is concerned.

Still more important in the long run is the fact that the Arab peasant is often completely uneducated, not only in the three R's but in scientific farming. This state of affairs is, of course, a hangover from the old Turkish régime. The Palestine government has taken steps to improve the Arabs' educational facilities but, as recently as 1935, 40 per cent of the Arab applicants for admission to schools were turned away for lack of space. Even in January 1937 there were only 75,000 non-Jewish children in school out of an estimated Arab school-age population of 260,000. Critics have taken the government to task because it has not spent more money on Arab education.

By themselves these troubles would be bad enough. But we must also remember that Palestine is a small, rather barren country. Thousands of Arabs live under congested conditions in the rocky hills. Since the population is rapidly increasing, there will soon be many more mouths which must somehow be fed.

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Yet, though his representatives do not like to admit it, the average Arab is better off today than he was before the Jews began to arrive.

It is true that fewer official posts are open to the *effendis;* but in spite of this they are on the whole much more prosperous. Many have been enriched by the sale of their land at top prices. Following the Jewish example, some have been wise enough to use their profits to improve the land remaining under their ownership. Others have invested their funds in housing and industry: before the war there were about 1,200 Arab industrial undertakings; in 1933 there were at least 2,200 of them.

What of the poor *fellah?* If he has remained on the land, he may have suffered from low prices or drought. In that case the government has given him a helping hand. It has reduced his taxes, lent him money when he needed it, organized his first cooperatives and guided him at least a little way along the path to modern farming.

If he has gone to the city—and, in 1931, 60,000 of his fellows had already secured jobs in industry—he probably earns what he considers a very satisfactory wage. Even in rural districts he may find work on a government public works project or in a citrus grove. And in addition he enjoys government services in health, sanitation and education far more advanced than those in any of the neighboring Arab states.

So, though the land is more crowded than it was, the *fellah* is on the whole better off. And for much of his improvement he must thank the Jews—who have brought prosperity, employed labor, advanced public health work, and paid most of the taxes supporting the government. Significantly enough, the Arab population has grown most quickly in the towns where the Jews have spent their money.

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WHAT OF TOMORROW?

Yet the outlook is not all roses for the Arab community, even if it does have more money in its pockets because of the National Home. Eager to broaden their base and lessen their dependence on Arab labor, Zionists are gradually closing the door against the employment of non-Jews. With each disturbance in Palestine the wall separating the two peoples grows higher. Whenever there is a slump—and boycotts and bloodshed breed slumps—Arab laborers are likely to be the first to be thrown out of work. Furthermore, tariffs applied to protect infant Jewish industries raise the prices of many articles the Arabs must buy.

Hence the Arabs fear they will suffer the fate of the proverbial Palestinian chicken: "Feed me up today; wring my neck tomorrow." And when you tell them that no one wants to deprive them of the gains they have made in the last twenty years, they respond, in the expressive phrases of their language: "You say we are better off: you say my house has been enriched by the strangers who have entered it. But it is *my* house, and I did not invite the strangers in, or ask them to enrich it, and I do not care how poor or bare it is if only I am master in it."

ARAB NATIONALISM

Thus, to the Arabs, their struggle is a battle for freedom. They picture it as part of a great revolution for the right of self-government in what they believe is their own country. They disregard the economic consequences. And since the presence of the Jews seems to be the one great obstacle to Arab independence in the Holy Land, all the hatred and fear of Arab nationalists is vented on them. Should the Jews become a numerical majority, as they clearly intend to, the Arabs fear their cause would be lost.

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Then, they believe, they will be submerged. Their way of life will give way to that of the newcomers. Their own literature, their own music, their own culture, will be blotted out. The Arab youth will abandon the old customs and way of life; he will be largely indifferent to religion; he will adopt the Western code of morals, with its materialistic basis. Arab women will cast off the veil for the scanty shorts of the Zionist girl pioneers. European customs and political ideas will supersede the old Arab ways.

Zionists, of course, deny that they have any intention of interfering with Arab customs and manners, and maintain that the Palestine Arabs would, like their Arab neighbors, be influenced by Western culture whether or not Jews came to the country. However this may be, all the conservative forces among the Arabs certainly fear that they will be overwhelmed. Thus the more quickly the National Home grows, the more determined the Arabs become in their opposition to it. Independence, they feel, must be won before it is too late.

THE "EFFENDIS" AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

Some Jews will tell you that the Arab nationalist movement in Palestine has no real roots among the mass of the people. The anti-Jewish agitation is fomented, they say, by a few *effendis* who are alarmed because they believe that the Arab peasant is being stimulated by his contact with the Jews to demand his just rights from his Arab oppressors. According to this thesis the *effendi*—who, as likely as not, has himself sold some of his land without regard for the fate of the *fellaheen* on it—is simply using the forces of religious fanaticism and of terrorism to divert the wrath of the peasantry from his own misdeeds to the great Jewish bogey. All that has to be done, these Jews say, is to prick the nationalist bubble by crushing the agitators and carrying out the terms of the mandate to the last T. Then

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the Arab in the street would soon see where his real interests lie.

No doubt there is some truth in this argument. But it is scarcely the whole truth. While we cannot tell exactly how many Arabs are convinced nationalists, there is no doubt that the movement is now widespread and growing. Practically every Arab youth who has had any education has left school an ardent patriot, ever ready to preach the new gospel among his townspeople.

Indeed, the evidence indicates that no small group of terrorists alone, even if supported by foreign funds from the fascist powers, could be responsible for such disturbances as Palestine has undergone.

POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL METHODS

Arab political parties, when they first appeared after the war, were little more than factions grouped around leading families. These had long been engaged in sharp rivalry for political and religious offices. But today, despite family feuds and the individualism of the ordinary Arab man of affairs, all the Arab political groups are united in the struggle for freedom. The voices of moderates who might favor compromise and cooperation with Britain or the Jews are hushed.

Sympathize as we may with the desire of a people to be free, we cannot admire the methods by which the Arabs have tried to advance their cause. No one questions their right to present their case peaceably, wherever and whenever they please. But when their press incites the people to violence by false and inflammatory statements; when the *Imam* in the Mosque arouses the simple peasants to a fever heat of hatred; and when all this results in terrorism, not only against Jews but against any Arab moderate who dares to differ with the nationalists, and

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against British officials as well—then the government must step in.

We shall see why the Arabs believe themselves forced to resort to such measures, and what has been done to curb them. Here we shall only note that the whole unsavory business has been carried out under the direction of a single political machine, under a single autocratic chief. He is Haj Amin el Husseini, Mufti (religious leader) of Jerusalem. Like a combination of a Cardinal and a political boss who cannot be unseated from power except by outside force, he controls both the religious funds and the political organization of the Arab community. On him rests a large share of the responsibility for the serious turn which affairs have taken in the last ten years.

VII. Platforms and Issues

Boiled down to its essence, the struggle between the Jews and the Arabs clearly turns on this one issue: who is to determine the future of the National Home? There is not much chance of expelling the Arabs, whose right to live in Palestine is not denied by any one. But it is still possible to prevent the Zionists from becoming the majority group in all or part of the country. And on this issue the two parties have locked horns.

Ask an Arab nationalist what he wants, and this is what he will tell you: (1) End the mandate. We don't recognize its validity. We will not cooperate in carrying out its terms. (2) Stop Jewish immigration. (3) Prevent land sales by Arabs to Jews. (4) Give us our independence. Or at least set up self-governing institutions in Palestine. (5) Abandon the experiment of the Jewish National Home.

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If these things were done, the Arabs say, they would become faithful allies of the British, like their brethren in Egypt and Iraq. And through thick and thin, for years, Arab nationalist leaders have stubbornly insisted on these same demands.

The Zionists are just as resolute. This is the program they present to the British: (1) Stop shilly-shallying. Carry out the mandate in full. Aid in the development of the National Home which it sanctions. If there is violent opposition, meet force with overwhelming force. (2) Admit as many Jewish immigrants as the country can absorb without economic danger to the population. (3) Let Jews buy land without restriction, as long as the economic condition of Arab cultivators is not injured. (4) Protect each group against domination by the other, by providing for equal representation of both in an elected legislative council, whatever their relative numbers are or may become.

THE DISPUTE ON IMMIGRATION

From these demands it is quite obvious that the key to the future of the National Home rests in the volume of Jewish immigration. When we were talking about the mandate, we noted that the government was directed to "facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions," but that the growth of the Home must not jeopardize the rights and position of the other inhabitants.

Now, as the chart on the next page shows, under the government's policy the Jewish proportion of the total population increased from 11 per cent in 1922 to around 30 per cent in 1937. Since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, no fewer than 290,000 Jews have entered Palestine. Today, as the chart on page 69 indicates, Palestine is the goal of about 70 per cent of the Jews who emigrate.

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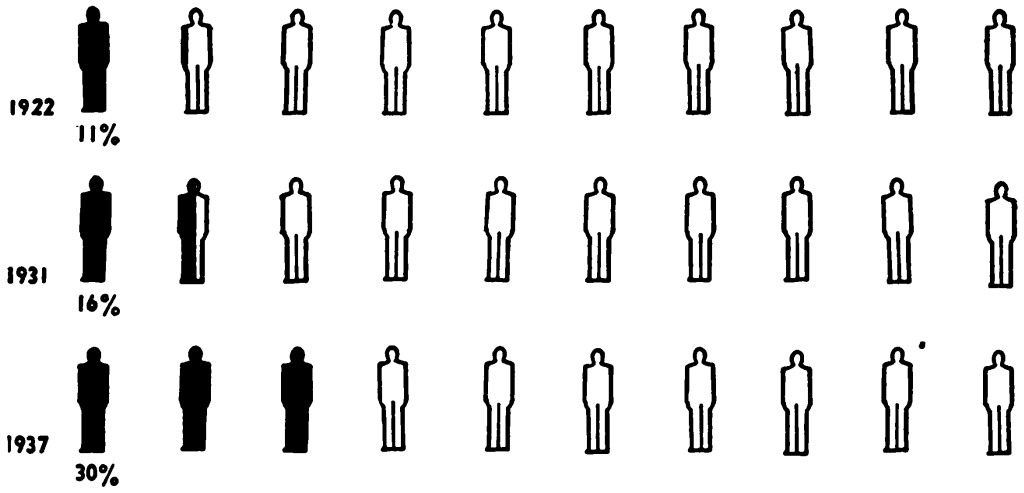
Most of this immigration has been concentrated in two great waves. The first, lasting from 1924 to 1926, reached a peak of 33,801 in 1925 and was followed by a bad recession. But this was only the prelude to another inward rush. After the Nazis established themselves in Germany, in 1933, the total

THE PERCENTAGE OF JEWS IN PALESTINE'S POPULATION



EACH FIGURE—10% OF TOTAL POPULATION OF PALESTINE
BLACK FIGURES—JEWISH POPULATION

soared until, in 1935, it passed the 60,000 mark. So large was this second wave of settlers that the number of Jews in Palestine has very nearly doubled since 1932. It is only fair, however, to point out that, under the present disturbed circumstances, these figures are not likely to be duplicated.

Any one who walks the colorful streets of old Jerusalem and sees Jewish pioneers in shirts and shorts, business men in European suits, bearded orthodox Jews in long black coats and broad-brimmed hats, pantalooned Bagdad Jews, and Yemenites in white cotton coats and red fezzes will soon realize that the inhabitants of the Jewish community come from numerous,

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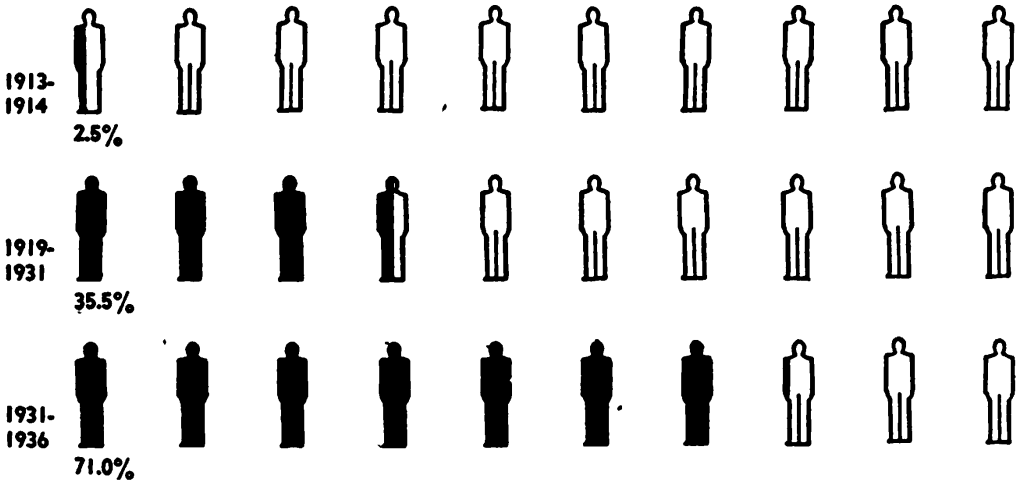
widely separated countries. The largest number—some 40 per cent—nowadays comes from Poland, where about 3,000,000 Jews drag out a miserable existence. Russia was formerly second on the list, but has been replaced in recent years by Germany: since 1933, 42,500 Jews have abandoned the land of the swastika for the National Home. (See the chart on page 71.)

PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS WHO GO TO PALESTINE



EACH FIGURE—10% OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS FROM ALL COUNTRIES
BLACK FIGURES—THOSE WHO GO TO PALESTINE

At the very beginning it was seen that this inflow would have to be regulated in some way if the position of the Arabs was to be safeguarded. So in 1922 the British government, with League approval, stated that the Jews were in Palestine "as of right and not on sufferance"—that is, that they had a definite right to be there. But it went on to say that Jewish immigration could not be "so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals," and that Jews could not come into the country unless they were sure of support or of *new* jobs.

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TYPES OF IMMIGRANTS

Under this rule, most immigrants to Palestine during the last few years have belonged to one of three classes. First, there were the "capitalists"—those who brought with them the equivalent of not less than £P.1,000. Though the number of immigrants of this class was unrestricted, there were relatively few of them before 1933: most of the arrivals came from the penniless Jewish communities of Poland and Russia. Since that date, however, many Germans and a few Americans have entered with £P.1,000 or more—sometimes much more. Between 1933 and 1936 about 11 per cent of all the immigrants were of this type.

The second type of immigrant consists of relatives and dependents of those already in the country. Since workers in Palestine naturally want to rescue as many relatives as possible from the conditions from which they themselves have escaped, there are frequent disputes with the authorities as to who should be classed under this heading. Yet, despite all restrictions put on immigrants in this category, 61 per cent of the arrivals in the peak year 1935 were dependents.

THE LABOR SCHEDULE

There is relatively little dispute between the Jews and the government over these two types of immigrants. The real rub centers about the entry of working men and women with assured jobs, for they are the backbone of the National Home. To be admitted in this class, a worker must have a guarantee of employment for at least a year. Every six months both the government and the Jewish Agency make surveys of the economic situation of the country and try to predict its labor needs. Then the government decides how many laborers shall be admitted, leaving it to the Jewish Agency to select the individuals who are to enter under the quota.

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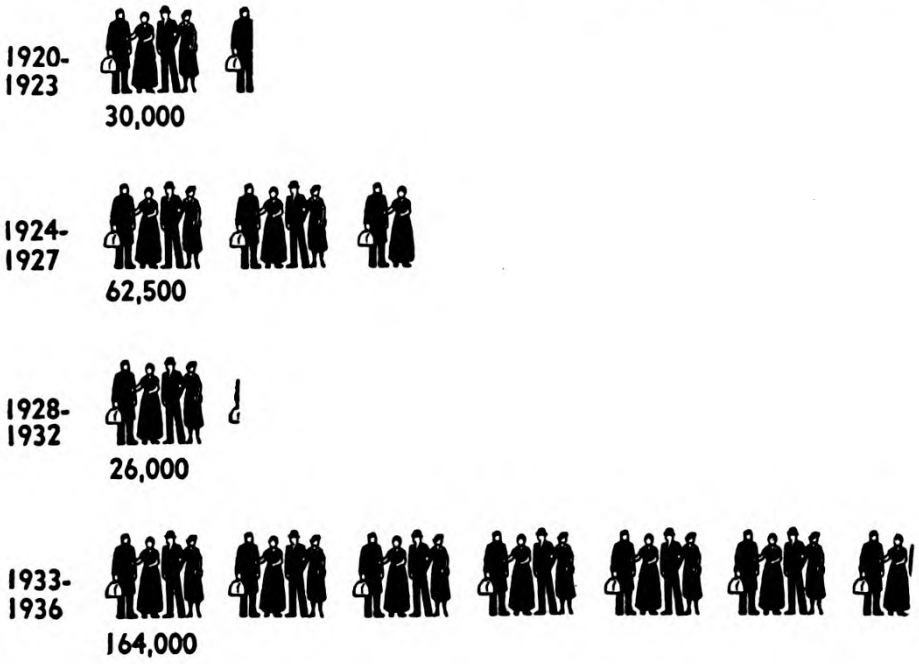
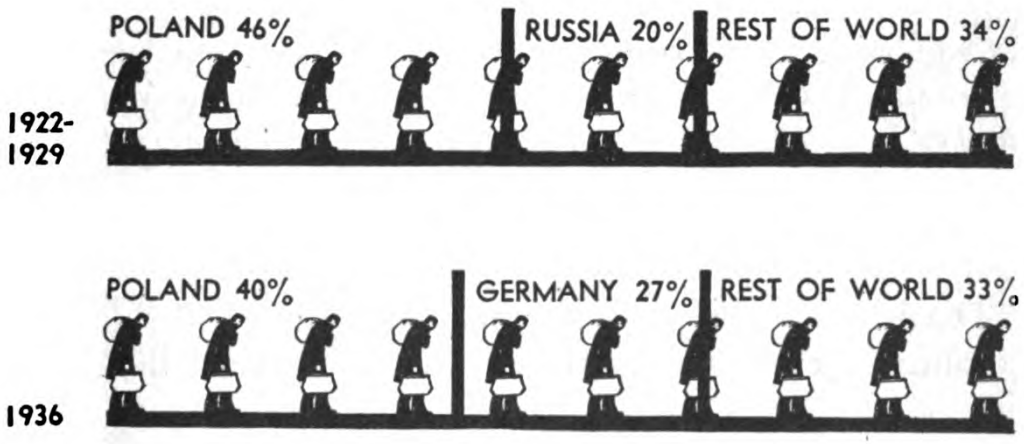
JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO PALESTINE

EACH GROUP—25,000 IMMIGRANTS



THEY CAME FROM THESE COUNTRIES

EACH FIGURE—10% OF JEWISH IMMIGRANTS TO PALESTINE



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Obviously there is room for a good deal of guesswork about the economic future of the country at any particular moment. Small wonder, then, that the Jewish estimates of Palestine's "absorptive capacity" are much higher than those of the government. And small wonder, too, that the Zionists complain bitterly when their estimates are cut.

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

In addition to the immigration authorized by the government, there is also a certain amount of illegal immigration. Some Jews have smuggled themselves into the country by land or sea, even though they knew that they risked imprisonment within the solid walls of Acre jail and swift deportation to their native lands, if caught. Others have secured permits as temporary travelers and have stayed on indefinitely. So eager are some Jews to enter the country that they will even marry Palestinians just to be able to come in as dependents and then, afterwards, get divorces!

But Jews are not the only ones who slip by the frontier posts to find work in Palestine. An unknown number of Arabs also trickles in over the Syrian and Trans-Jordan borders, especially when crops are bad at home.

JEWISH COMPLAINTS

In regulating immigration the government is caught between two fires. The Arabs are, of course, unsatisfied as long as any noticeable number of Jews is admitted. On the other hand, Jewish protests are just what you would expect from an energetic people impatient to enter what it considers its new homeland.

The Jewish Agency will tell you that the authorities do not "facilitate" Jewish immigration, as they must under the man-

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date. Zionists claim that immigrants who must be fed and sheltered create employment by their very presence. They say that new settlers, when they spend money, help to maintain prosperity and that the economic life of Palestine depends on this type of stimulus. And, they add, if the government had spent more money on roads, public health, education and housing instead of leaving so many of these matters to the Jews, more funds would have been available to provide employment for new immigrants.

Persuasive as it sounds, this line of argument is not necessarily conclusive. We know, and the government knew, that much of the boom development before 1936 was highly speculative, and that the country was headed for the doldrums when the troubles facing it became acute. With 6,000 Jewish unemployed at the end of 1936, and with at least 12,000 Jews and 21,000 Arabs out of work a year later, the cautious policy of the authorities in earlier years seems to have been fairly well justified.

There was a further consideration, too, which may have influenced the authorities. Many observers believe that a slower influx of immigrants, which might not have provoked the Arabs to such desperate measures, might in the long run have been more desirable from the standpoint of the Jews themselves. For a National Home surrounded by hostile Arabs cannot be secure or happy—nor perhaps even prosperous.

This seems to have been the view of a British Royal Commission which investigated the Palestine problem in 1936 and 1937. Hence the Commission recommended that the "economic absorptive capacity" principle be supplanted by a "political high level" of immigration, which would lend weight to political and psychological factors, such as the state of Arab opinion. But we shall consider this proposal at another point. Meanwhile, let us have a look at Palestine's land problem.

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THE TANGLED LAND QUESTION

Historians believe that the Holy Land once supported many more inhabitants than it now possesses. Yet today it is more densely populated than any of the neighboring countries. Can the land be developed and reconstructed, can the soil's fertility be restored, so that more farmers can be settled on it? The answer, many Jewish authorities assert, is a decided "Yes." And they are eager to continue the attempt under the mandate, for they realize, like the Arabs, that the ultimate answer to this question may be vital for the future of the National Home.

You will recall that it is the government's duty to encourage close settlement of the Jews on the land, as far as this can be accomplished without injuring the rights and position of the rest of the population. Thus obligations to both parties must be met. And they are exceedingly difficult ones to meet. There is room for oceans of disagreement in determining the number of Jews who can be settled on the land without injuring the Arabs. There are the questions of how much land it is possible to cultivate, how much is needed for reforestation, and how much will be forever waste. And then there is the problem of how to introduce intensive cultivation and to find the water resources needed to sustain it.

No less than thirteen official investigations dealing with this highly technical matter have been made since 1920. As a result certain general conclusions have been rather widely accepted: (1) Without a marked change in methods of cultivation—such as the Jews are introducing—the land is too crowded to support many more people. (2) Any change must be a slow one, at least as far as the Arabs are concerned, because it depends on the extension of education to the Arab villages, so that the Arabs can be trained to use modern implements and methods of cultivation. (3) Increased productivity of the land depends

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very largely on the extension of irrigation, and regulation of the country's scanty water resources. (4) Title to every piece of land must be determined and accurately recorded, to end disputes in which Arabs take advantage of legal technicalities to obstruct land sales to Jews. (5) The rocky hill country is already crowded.

We have touched on some of these points before; now let us turn to the others.

HOW MUCH LAND IS AVAILABLE

How much agricultural land is there, anyway? You might imagine this would be a simple question to answer; but few issues in Palestine have been more hotly debated. The total area of the country is approximately 10,400 square miles, or 6,752,000 acres. But the large, dry, thinly inhabited southern district of the country—known as Beersheba, or the Negeb (which means "south")—has never been surveyed, so we may disregard it for the moment. The land area of the remainder of Palestine is 3,400,000 acres.

"Simple enough," you will say. But we have only begun. The Palestine government considers as "cultivable land" only the area which is "actually under cultivation, or which can be brought under cultivation by the application of the labour and resources of the average Palestinian cultivator." Now we know from our brief glance at the Arab community that the average Arab cultivator has mighty little in the way of resources with which to improve the soil—not very much more than his strong right arm. Yet it is on the basis of *his* limited ability that the government calculates the area of "cultivable" land. Employing this standard, it figures that only 1,780,000 acres are "cultivable."

According to the Jewish Agency this procedure results in an estimate of "cultivable" land which is pretty nearly identical

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with the land now being used. Under the government's definition, the Agency points out, a good deal of the land now worked by Zionists would formerly have been dubbed "uncultivable." Yet outside capital and pioneer labor have succeeded in developing it. And the Jews are willing to continue to spend money for land improvement and irrigation even when by ordinary economic standards such an undertaking would not be profitable.

Indeed, they are doing so now. Travelers in Palestine are likely to catch sight of well-boring apparatus now and then—a sign that an attempt is being made by irrigation to increase the productivity of the land. In some localities irrigation has made the desert bloom; in others it has made it possible to increase crop yields as much as five times by intensive cultivation.

Taking this factor into account, Jewish Agency experts have estimated the cultivable area of Palestine at 2,300,000 acres—or, if Beersheba is included, at 3,175,000. "If you think a district is uncultivable and must remain waste," they say to the government, "why not turn it over to us and let us try to make something useful out of it?"

ARAB GRIEVANCES

And, if it were not for the opposition of the Arabs, the government probably would. But one of the most serious Arab charges is that the Jews have already received too much land. So much land has been sold, they say, that a class of landless Arabs has been created.

On the basic figures every one agrees. The Arabs hold 3,040,000 acres of land, of which about half is regarded as cultivable under the government's restrictive definition; while the Jews own a little more than 300,000 acres, almost 250,000 of which can be used for farming.

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Have the newcomers really bought too much, then? According to the government's figures the Jews, 30 per cent of the population, hold only 13 per cent of the cultivable land. Nor are they buying at such a rapid rate that the Arab community is being seriously inconvenienced thereby. It is true that the Jews own a high proportion of the best land—the coastal plains area devoted to citrus cultivation. But it is also true that much of this land was not being used before the Jews acquired it. And, as we have noticed, it was the example set by the Jews and the money paid for Arab property which were largely instrumental in stimulating Arabs to improve what they retained. Furthermore, the British Royal Commission believes that land may still be sold to the Jews in the plains area without injustice to the Palestinian Arabs.

But what about the "landless Arabs"? Again and again the Jewish leaders have denied that they ever intended to leave native cultivators without enough land for subsistence. In some cases, part of the improved land is simply turned over to the *fellaheen* for their use. In fact, much the greater portion of Palestine's land shortage is due to the rapid natural increase of the Arab population rather than to the sale of land to the Jews. Indeed, a government investigation has shown that up to the present only a rather negligible number of Arabs has been deprived of their subsistence by Jews in this way. To be sure, Arabs have left the countryside, but they have ordinarily found work in the towns, where their living standard is no lower than it was before.

THE FUTURE

What of the future? The Arab leaders say they are alarmed because they cannot repurchase land sold to the Jewish National Fund. Accordingly they have decided to fight fire with fire. They have encouraged the conversion of Arab property

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into *waqf*—a religious endowment under the terms of which Moslems use the land but can never sell it to non-Moslems. But despite all the pressure against land sales to Jews (and it sometimes takes the form of terrorism), Arabs continue to sell their land.

Yet, because of the growing population, the government must be careful to see that overcrowding does not occur in the years to come. It must remember what the Jews sometimes seem to forget: that there will be a long, hard pull before the *fellah* is induced to abandon his more leisurely ways in favor of the concentrated, intelligent effort demanded of the modern farmer.

At bottom, then, the land dispute, like the whole issue of the National Home, can only be settled after a decision has been reached on this basic question: does a people living on land it has not developed have the right to shut out a persecuted but energetic group which not only has a historic claim to that land but will make fuller use of its resources, to the benefit of *all* the inhabitants? In view of their need for a place to live in security, and their historic connection with Palestine, the Jews answer "No." In view of their desire to determine their own national destiny without any outside interference, the Arabs say "Yes."

Your answer to this question is likely to determine your attitude on almost everything we have to say in this book.

THE PROBLEM OF SELF-GOVERNMENT

Still another Palestinian puzzle is the problem of self-government. Committed under the mandate to prepare Palestine for self-government, the British have twice proposed plans for an elected legislative council. And they have also proposed an Arab Agency, which might counter-balance the Jewish Agency

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in cooperating with the government. But each time the projects have been dashed against the stone-wall resistance of the nationalists on one side or the other.

The first British proposal for a legislative council, in 1922–23, was wrecked by the Arabs because it did not give them the absolute majority in the council to which they were entitled on a numerical basis. In 1935 a new plan was presented. This provided for a council with only restricted powers but with a large majority of members who were not government officials, elected roughly in proportion to the relative numbers of the three religious communities. Under this plan Arab influence would have been preponderant; so, while the Arabs agreed to consider the new proposals, the Zionists violently opposed them.

When the plan came up for debate in the British Parliament, in February and March 1936, it went down under a barrage of criticism. Most of the opposition was based on the ground that more time was needed to train both communities in local government, and that conditions were still too disturbed for responsible self-rule. This was a fair enough argument. But the Jewish case received so much publicity, and the Arab side so little, that the Arabs believed the scheme was abandoned because Jewish influence in London was all-powerful. They felt convinced that only violent and desperate methods could be effective in getting their case before the public and halting the progress of the National Home.

Thus, faced with a flood of new immigrants, and unable to put an end to the sale of their land, the Arabs fell back on a desperate policy. Strange, was it not, that the British government, with all its power, could not prevent this development? But perhaps, by reviewing the history of the Arab disturbances, we can find out why, for over two years, a small Arab community of 950,000 souls has dared to defy the mighty British Empire.

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VIII. Blood and Thunder

Disappointed and resentful because they saw not independence but the Jewish National Home on the horizon, Arabs rioted in Jerusalem as far back as 1920. And in 1921 there was a clash in which nearly one hundred Jews and Arabs lost their lives.

These incidents seemed to indicate that there would be more trouble in the future. But instead of dealing harshly with the few leaders who were at the bottom of the outbreaks, the government decided to treat them leniently, on the theory that they might in time become reconciled to the presence of the Jews. The man who tried to calm them down was the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert (now Viscount) Samuel, a patriotic and moderate British Jew whose efforts won him the enmity of most Zionists.

A POLICY OF CONCILIATION

Under Sir Herbert, the policy of concession went forward. Moslem religious affairs, including the important system of religious courts, were handed over to the control of a Supreme Moslem Council free of British supervision. Despite the fact that he had incited the 1920 riot and had then cravenly fled from the country, Haj Amin el Husseini, the nationalist whom we met in Chapter VI as political leader of the Arabs, was appointed Mufti of Jerusalem and was later elected president of the Council in a highly irregular manner. Agricultural taxes were reduced. Disputes over land ownership were settled on terms favorable to the Arabs. Improved social services and economic conditions were encouraged in the hope that they would exercise a pacifying influence on the populace.

As evidence of the success of this policy of conciliation, the government could point to the organization of a more moder-

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ate Arab party—the National Party—formed by the Nashashibi family, chief rivals of the Husseinis. In fact, opposition to the National Home seemed to be dying. So much so that the government felt able to reduce the strength of the armed forces in Palestine and give both Arabs and Jews more official positions.

In 1928, however, the tide turned. On the Jewish side the National Home began to grow; on the Arab side the news that Arabs in Trans-Jordan, Egypt and Iraq were making progress in their struggle for independence had a contagious effect. All over the Middle East the ferment of nationalist sentiment was rising. Only a spark was needed to ignite the Palestine tinderbox.

It came in 1929. And although religion has been a relatively unimportant factor in the Palestine problem, it was a religious issue which touched off the disturbance.

THE WAILING WALL

To orthodox Jews the holiest spot on earth is probably at one side of a narrow causeway in Jerusalem. There a lofty wall of magnificent stone blocks larger than those of the pyramids rises one hundred feet from its base. These stones, the Jews believe, once formed part of the exterior of Solomon's temple. But the wall is sacred to Moslems, too. It is the western edge of the *Haram-esh-Sharif*, the Moslem holy area in Jerusalem; and at one end of it *El Burak*, the winged steed of the prophet Mohammed, was tethered during that miraculous night of the ascension to heaven.

This wall and the pavement at its base are Moslem property; but over the centuries Jews have established a "right of access" to it, there to lament the destruction of Solomon's temple. But Mohammedan authorities feared that if Jews were allowed to bring chairs, benches or screens to the wall they would gradu-

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ally extend their prerogatives, bit by bit. So the Turkish government and its British successor had ruled that no such objects were to be allowed.

On September 23, 1928 an "incident" occurred at the Wall. It was the eve of the Day of Atonement, that most sacred of Jewish holidays. When the authorities learned that a screen had been set up on the pavement, to separate the men from the women in accordance with orthodox Jewish ritual, the police removed it. Feeling ran high in all quarters. The Mufti, Haj Amin el Husseini, did his best to play on the religious fanaticism of his followers by claiming that the Jews wished to take over the Moslem holy places. The Moslems began building operations in the neighborhood of the Wall—which to the Jews seemed like a deliberate attempt to interfere with their right of worship. And political agitation by Arab nationalists increased notably all over the country.

Fierce passions had been aroused; they were unleashed on August 15, 1929, when a provocative Jewish procession marched through the streets to the Wall. On the following day the Arabs responded with a similar demonstration.

And a week later the simmering pot boiled over. From August 23 to 29, 1929, Jews were massacred in many sections of the country. They retaliated only very slightly. But troops hastily summoned from Egypt joined with police in battling the Arabs. When the smoke cleared away, 133 Jews and 116 Arabs were found to have been killed.

THE SHAW COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The usual investigations and recommendations followed. In March 1930 a British body, known from the name of its chairman as the Shaw Commission, recommended: (1) That the British government should quickly issue a clear statement of policy defining the vague passages in the mandate regarding

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the protection of the interests of the "non-Jewish" communities. (2) That methods of regulating immigration be revised to prevent repetition of "the excessive immigration of 1925 and 1926," the new regulations giving non-Jewish representatives a voice in discussing quotas. (3) That an expert inquiry be made on the land question and that the government use the results of this inquiry as the basis of its land policy. (4) That the government reaffirm the statement it made in 1922 to the effect that the Zionist Organization's special position did not entitle it to share in the government of the country.

THE HOPE SIMPSON REPORT

To the Arabs these recommendations seemed quite acceptable. Their leaders were still more pleased when London stopped granting immigration certificates until a land expert, Sir John Hope Simpson, had had an opportunity to make an investigation. When his report was issued it seemed to favor the Arab rather than the Jewish point of view. For Sir John estimated the amount of cultivable land in Palestine at only 1,638,000 acres; said there was not enough cultivable land to give every Arab agricultural family a decent livelihood; and thought there was no room for a single additional settler if the standard of life of the *fellaheen* was not to be lowered. This did not mean that there was no possibility of land development but rather that additional settlers should be kept off the land until that development had actually taken place. Moreover—and this, for the Jews, was the last straw—Sir John was not very enthusiastic about the probable result of permitting more industrial workers to enter the country.

Zionist stock sank to a new low when this report and the government's accompanying statement of policy were issued. Known as the "Passfield White Paper," the latter reaffirmed the government's double obligation to the two groups under

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the mandate but then went on to take an even more pessimistic view than had Sir John of the possibilities for Jewish immigration and land settlement. In short, the government gave the impression that no Jewish workmen would be admitted to Palestine as long as a single Arab was unemployed, even though this would mean that Jewish capital would stop flowing in and, as a result, the economic condition of Palestine would go into a tailspin.

POLITICAL MANEUVERS

To the Zionists, then, the outlook appeared dark. For it seemed clear to them that Britain was backing down on her obligations under the mandate. Through the press and public forums they challenged Sir John's conclusion on the amount of cultivable land and condemned the Passfield White Paper's anti-Jewish tenor. Evidently their arguments carried enough conviction to sway opinion. For in February 1931, in a letter to Dr. Weizmann, the Prime Minister "interpreted" the White Paper in such a way as to swing the balance back somewhat toward the Zionists. But the change was actually greater in tone than in substance.

If, however, the Zionist fears were partly set at rest, those of the Arabs were intensified. For they became convinced that the advantages in the game were constantly snatched from their grasp because they had neither representatives of their own in Europe nor the same access to the press and other organs of public opinion as had the Jews. They began to say that a number of commissions had come to Palestine, made reports favoring the Arab cause, and then returned to London only to see their efforts set at naught by the British government.

Of course, this was far from true. As a matter of fact, many of the Shaw Commission and Hope Simpson recommendations

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favoring the Arabs were put into effect. And in at least one case where they were not—the matter of Jewish settlement on the land—the government's stand has been proved justified. For the Jewish contention that further colonization was possible without injury to the Arabs has certainly been borne out by the facts since 1930.

INCREASING TENSION

A lull followed the disturbances and inquiries of 1929–31. But in 1933 another cycle of tension and violence—one which is not yet ended—began to make its appearance. German Jews joined their unfortunate Polish and Rumanian fellows in battering at Palestine's gates. And, as we know, the National Home grew like the beanstalk in the fairy tale. Highly gifted individuals—scientists, doctors, lawyers, financiers, business men, artists—streamed into the country. They invested funds in Palestine not for philanthropic purposes but in expectation of a real business return. The stamp of permanence was being placed on the National Home.

Again there arose the Arab fear of submergence. Manifestoes were issued. The Arab press became excited and inflammatory. Crude propaganda containing much exaggeration and falsehood was spread among the people. It was not without effect. In October 1933 there were demonstrations. This time, for the first time, the Arabs attacked not the Jews but the government. The British, it was said, represented the real threat to the Arabs, for Britain was only an imperialist power using the Jews to perpetuate her own mastery in Palestine.

Riots, strikes and shootings spread rapidly over the country. But the police were firm: they took emergency measures and fired when necessary; and the troubles were quelled before they were fairly started. The lid was kept down. But stark tragedy was brewing beneath it.

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THE CRISIS APPROACHES

By 1935 a crisis was definitely approaching. In October of that year arms and ammunition were found hidden in a shipment of cement imported from Belgium. A hue-and-cry was immediately raised by the Arabs, who regarded this as proof that the Jews were secretly arming. Indeed, there seems good reason to believe that they had done so, though by no means to the same extent as the Arabs.

As usual there were demonstrations. By November 25 the five chief Arab parties had sunk their differences and had presented formal demands to the High Commissioner: for the establishment of democratic government; for prohibition of land sales; and for stoppage of Jewish immigration until a competent committee could determine the country's absorptive capacity.

But of course all the evidence at that moment showed that the Arabs were being benefited, not harmed, by land sales and immigration. Hence, under the mandate, the government could not check either. And Zionists were stimulated by the frantic pleas of Jews in Europe to plan for even larger immigration. They appealed to the government for help.

Thus the atmosphere was tense when Parliament debated and killed the legislative council plan which we discussed on page 79. Again the Arabs were convinced that Jewish influence in London could not be overcome save by a desperate show of force. At the same time a new wave of nationalism swept the Middle East. Britain's prestige was shaken by Mussolini's victories in Ethiopia; and the Egyptians, approaching Britain in her hour of weakness, wrung their independence from her in exchange for their continued friendship. Not long afterward Syria and the Lebanese Republic signed treaties with France under which, in three years or so, they too were to become independent states. Thus the Palestinians were left as the only Arab people in the Middle East who did not have at least a

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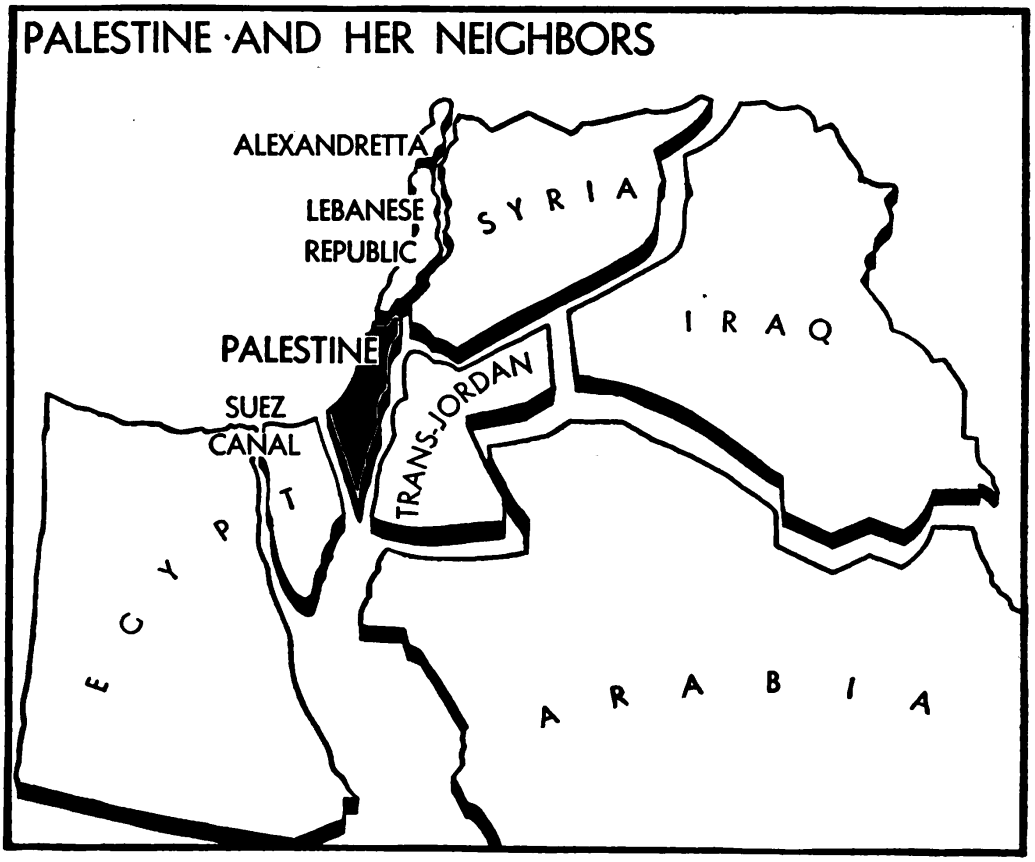
technically independent government, or who were not on the road to independence. Why? Not because they were less advanced than the others. Only, they thought, because of the Jews.

ZERO HOUR

The stage was now set for an outbreak which was to dwarf everything that had gone before. On April 15, 1936, two Jews were murdered by Arab bandits. The following night, two Arabs were slain. The Arabs took this to be a Jewish reprisal. A directing body, the Arab Higher Committee, was quickly set up, with the Mufti as its president.



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This Committee proclaimed and enforced a general strike of all Arabs engaged in labor, transport and shopkeeping, and resolved to continue it until the government stopped Jewish immigration. At first the government tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade the Arabs to call off the strike: but the Arab Higher Committee insisted it could do nothing until immigration was halted. Meanwhile, terrorists forced reluctant Arabs to join the strike. Jewish property was wantonly destroyed; snipers attacked Jewish colonies. Other Arabs dug up their rifles for nightly forays, then buried them again and acted as innocent *fellaheen* during the day.

Hoping to restore order by the move, the British Cabinet appointed a Royal Commission to conduct another investigation. But this step had no noticeable effect on the Arabs. If anything, matters became even more serious. Bands of armed men, including volunteers from Syria and Iraq, swooped down from the hills to attack police and soldiers. They clashed sharply with the British forces.

To all this the government responded with extraordinary mildness. The normal curfews, imprisonments and collective fines were ineffective. Some military reinforcements arrived in the country but did not engage in large-scale operations against the Arabs.

And it was the British who bore the brunt of the battle. As for the Jews, they usually stood aside except when directly attacked. Indeed their remarkable calmness under provocation won the admiration of many observers. But they clamored for the government to use more of them as police, and scored its failure to maintain law and order, or to restrain inflammatory articles in the Arab press.

Not until September 7, when the British Cabinet announced that it would send strong reinforcements to the country to crush resistance, did the strike and disturbances begin to weaken. By the end of the month 20,000 British troops were in

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the country, and Arabs were wearying of the constant danger and financial loss which they were suffering. Real economic hardship threatened if they did not work during the orange-picking season, which begins in November. But the Higher Committee had taken a firm stand: no peace without a stoppage of immigration. And immigration continued. How could the Arabs end the disturbances without losing "face"?

THE WAY OUT

A way out of the quandary was eventually found. During the disturbances the Committee had been keeping in touch with the Arab sovereigns of the surrounding states. Indeed, their anti-Zionist cause had received widespread support in the course of the strike. Thus when identical appeals for peace arrived from King Ibn Saud of Arabia, King Ghazi of Iraq and the Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan, the strike was called off and work was resumed on October 12.

So the struggle was ended—for the time being. It was believed 1,000 Arabs had been killed. Eighty-two Jews were known to have died. Two hundred thousand fruit and forest trees were destroyed—this in a country to which trees are indispensable—and other property losses were also high.

A PAN-ARAB MOVEMENT

Soon afterward the Royal Commission created to investigate conditions under the mandate arrived in the Holy Land. Because immigration was not suspended while the Commission went about its work, the Arab Higher Committee decided to boycott its sessions. But the Commissioners proceeded with their hearings, until at last the Arabs realized that they were only weakening their own position by refusing to cooperate with a body which held their future in its hands.

This was an embarrassing situation for the Arabs. But again they turned to the Arab sovereigns, who skillfully erected a

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bridge over which they might retreat. Ghazi and Ibn Saud sent appeals to the Higher Committee in identical terms, urging it to reconsider its decision. As a result, Arab witnesses came forward to testify before the Commission.

These tactics are more than just a matter of convenience or face-saving. They have an underlying purpose: to symbolize the growing coherence of a Pan-Arab movement looking toward a great confederation of Arab states. And in the interval before this dream can be realized—for it is very far from reality today—these steps have a more immediate significance: the appeals of the kings may mark the beginning of an increasing degree of interference by the other Arab states in the affairs of Palestine.

Now there is nothing in the mandate which permits such a development. Would the British approve of it? We do not know. By those who think a counteracting force is necessary to put the Arabs on a more nearly equal footing with the Jews it will probably be welcomed. But it has deeper implications. Thus far, Britain has retained her strong influence among the free Arab states. Indeed, the British have apparently fostered Arab independence in order to keep Italy from playing the rôle of Arab liberator. Yet a strong, united Arab Confederation might some day oust Britain from her position of leadership in the Middle East.

WHAT IS BRITAIN'S RESPONSIBILITY?

As the power which sought and accepted the mandate for Palestine, Britain is of course responsible for carrying out its terms. Her statesmen hoped that the aims of the mandate could be accomplished by peaceful cooperation among Jews, Arabs and British. Instead, there is almost universal discontent and sporadic rebellion. Does the fault lie with Britain?

We already know the answer; at least we know the answers the Zionists and the Arab nationalists give. The former say that

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Britain has not wholeheartedly helped to establish the National Home or to end Arab opposition to it. The latter say that Britain is using the presence of the Jews to keep her hold over a people who should be given their independence. Members of each faction accuse British officials of being in sympathy with the other.

Thus the British have been subjected to a torrent of criticism. But not all of it can be taken too seriously, for people are always tempted to blame some one else for their own failures.

Stymied in attempts to secure Arab-Jewish cooperation, the Palestine administration has had to fulfill its obligations to each side by resorting to a principle known as "mechanical impartiality." All jobs and other public awards are apportioned in accordance with the numerical ratio of the two populations. Officers in Arab areas are Arabs; in Jewish areas, Jews. Labor for public works and appropriations for education and health are divided among the two peoples proportionately. It is "government by arithmetic."

But still, few people in Palestine are convinced of the government's impartiality. Carping critics protest from both sides. Jews protested when Jewish scavengers in Jerusalem were not supplied with winter clothes as Arab scavengers had been, and because telephone calls to and from Tel Aviv had to be routed through the Arab city of Jaffa. Arabs protested because a Jewish doctor was appointed to a hospital staff in Jaffa despite the fact that there are no Arab doctors in Tel Aviv; and because the Jerusalem Museum bears its title in English and Hebrew, but not in Arabic. "Impartiality" only seems to anger every one.

THE BRITISH DILEMMA

Could the British have adopted any other course? To meet the Arab demands would have meant clear violation of the mandate. To satisfy the Jews, said the government—to push the

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growth of the National Home at top speed—would have meant exasperating the Arabs beyond all restraint. Then it would have been necessary to repress them firmly and continuously, and such a course could only have led to smoldering resentment and an ultimate explosion. Hence the British adopted a policy of "conciliating" the Arabs, never punishing them very severely for their misdeeds in the hope that they might eventually see the light of reason.

But meanwhile, over the years, Arab nationalist agitators took full advantage of the leeway left them by this mild government policy; and the Jews complained bitterly. Here impartial sources agree with Zionists that the administration's conduct was disastrous. Instead of calming down, Arab nationalists only indulged in greater crimes because they suspected that the government might be looking for an excuse to avoid execution of the mandate. Leniently treated after violence and rebellion, they went further and further in each crisis, even to the point where they attacked the British with impunity.

At the same time, Jews were not given sufficient means of self-defense; nor did they get the security to which they were entitled. In 1930 and again in 1937 the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, which supervises Britain's fulfillment of its obligations under the mandate, criticized the British government rather severely for failing to prepare for trouble in advance, for its inactivity, for the vagueness of its policy and for its apparent tendency to wobble when the Arabs applied pressure.

To some observers the explanation given by the British for their conduct—the need for "conciliation"—did not ring true. Those who regarded Britain primarily as an imperialist state trying to maintain her strength in the Eastern Mediterranean suspected that she was playing the imperialist game. One group believes that she pulls her punches when dealing with the Arabs so as not to fan anti-British sentiment among the other

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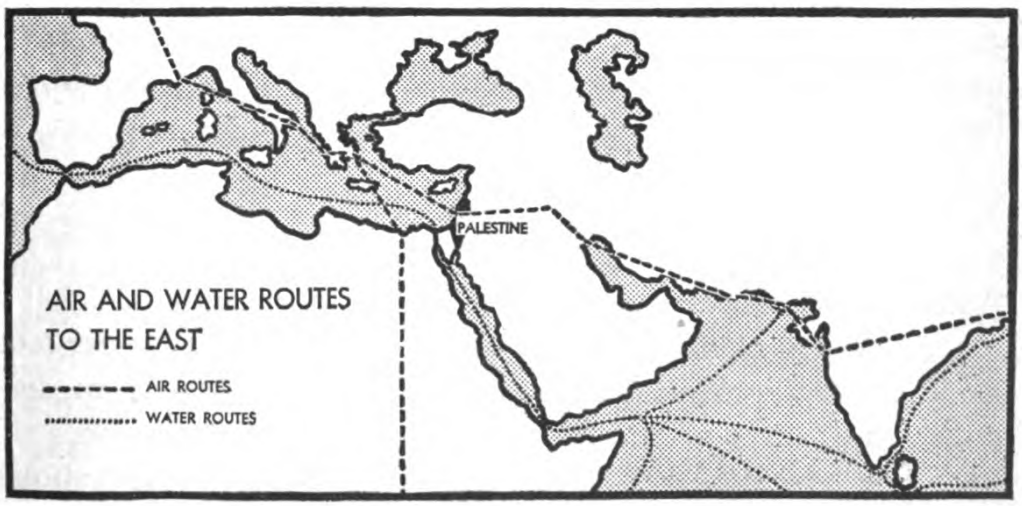
Arab states and among the many million Moslems over whom she rules. Another group suspects that she means to hold her position in Palestine by following the maxim "divide and conquer"—that is, by playing off one people against the other and thus making herself indispensable to both.

There is no direct evidence to support these theories. Nevertheless, they have been used to undermine confidence in Britain's good faith. Both Jews and Arabs often condemn Britain's "imperialist" policy. Yet they are willing to pledge themselves to aid it if their aspirations succeed. Many Zionists would like to convince the government that a Jewish state, possibly a British dominion, would be a firm pro-British bulwark against undependable Arabs in case of war. And, on their side, the Arabs offer to conclude an ironclad treaty of alliance with Britain if only they are given their independence.

Clearly Britain has a cantankerous bear by the tail in Palestine. But she can scarcely let it go. Palestine is more important to her than ever before. It remains an outpost guarding the Suez Canal. Haifa harbor may become a naval base commanding the Eastern Mediterranean; an oil pipe line from the rich fields of Iraq terminates there now. The country is on the air route to British India and the Orient. New roads, new railways will connect it with the Persian Gulf and India.



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No, Britain cannot let Palestine go. But after the outbreaks of 1936 every one agreed that something effective had to be done to restore order there. The question was—"What?" And the answer—one answer—was given by the British Royal Commission.

IX. Solomon's Judgment

And the king said, Fetch me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.
And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

This was the judgment of King Solomon the wise in a dispute between two women each of whom claimed the same child as her own. And so drastic was his proposal that the true mother shrank from it, preferring to lose the child rather than to see it slain. Once the real mother's identity had thus been revealed, the infant was awarded to her unharmed.

There are those who believe that the British government, like Solomon, has resolved to scare the two claimants to Palestine into an agreement which would prevent its dismemberment. Others feel that the sword will really be used. Anyhow, here's the story.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION

After the disturbances of 1936, described in the previous chapter, the Royal Commission appointed in May of that year left London for the Holy Land, where it took testimony to discover the causes of the trouble, the legitimate grievances of each side, and the steps which might be taken to bring about

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peace. On July 7, 1937 it issued its report. This document is one of the most valuable sources of information we have on present-day Palestine. It treats in greater detail many of the points we have mentioned in this book.

The first task of the Commission was to see what could be done to make the mandate work smoothly. And as it was the Arabs who were most directly responsible for the friction in Palestine, the Commission carefully investigated their grievances. Although they realized that these grievances were sincerely felt, the Commissioners nevertheless found most of them unjustified under the terms of the mandate. Hence, as far as the Arabs were concerned, they contented themselves with the statement that the government ought to have spent more money on Arab education, and especially on village agricultural schools. With reference to the Arab demand for representative institutions, moreover, the Commission declared that there could be no thought of self-government in Palestine under present conditions.

Since the Arabs repudiate the mandate, none of this satisfies them.

PALLIATIVES

Having dealt with the Arabs' grievances, the Commission next turned to the complaints of the Jews. Many of these—particularly those relating to the preservation of peace and security—it recognized as sound. To meet them, the Commission recommended in detail a number of measures which it thought would help to maintain peace under the existing system of administration. The most important of these measures provided: (1) The whole machinery of government was to be overhauled to make it more effective in carrying out the mandate and quelling dissent. (2) Toleration of subversive activities, especially those of the Mufti and his political machine, was to be ended; the

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Moslem religious organization was to be made more democratic; and an enlarged Arab Agency, including representatives of the neighboring countries, was to be considered. (3) A careful land development and settlement scheme was to be undertaken; Jews were to be permitted to farm intensively on land bought in the plains districts; while the hills were to be retained by the Arabs. (4) Since too much immigration might goad the Arabs to renewed violence, it was to be limited by political, social and psychological, as well as merely economic, factors. For the next five years the top figure was to be 12,000 annually. (5) The mandate was to be amended to abolish the "open door" article and permit Palestine to bargain abroad for its citrus fruit products. (6) If, in spite of all this, new disorders should occur, martial law was to be applied at once; Arabs and then Jews disarmed; the press rigorously controlled; and much more severe penalties for subversive activities imposed than in the past.

The purpose behind these proposals was plain: they were designed to satisfy both Jews and Arabs under the mandate by partially meeting the demands of each. Immigration and the sale of land to the Jews were so restricted that the National Home would retain, in the decades to come, just about the same importance relative to the Arab community that it has today. This was the gesture to the Arabs: no more fear of absorption or submergence. On the other hand, the Zionists were to be guaranteed what they had long demanded: a fair test of the mandate, energetically and sympathetically administered. The Mufti and his terrorist cohorts were to be crushed, and Arab moderates were to be given the opportunity to come forward and cooperate in making the mandate a success.

But, despite the care with which it had worked them out, the Royal Commission had little faith in these proposals. To it they seemed quite inadequate to break the existing deadlock. "They are the best palliatives we can devise for the disease

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from which Palestine is suffering, but they are only palliatives," the Commission said. "They might reduce the inflammation and bring down the temperature, but they cannot cure the trouble. The disease is so deep-rooted that, in our firm conviction, the only hope of a cure lies in a surgical operation."

In other words, there was an "irrepressible conflict," and peace under the existing system was possible only if the government were prepared to impose it indefinitely by armed force. The mandate was unworkable.

PARTITION

But how, then, could the deadlock be broken? To the Commissioners there seemed to be just one answer to this question —Solomon's judgment. They thought that the only way to re-establish peace between Jew and Arab was to cut down the contact between them as much as possible. Hence they suggested a plan of partition, or division, under which the territory would be split up into three political units.

The map on page 99 shows what they proposed. If you will glance at it, you will notice in the northwest part of Palestine a proposed Jewish state including the coastal plain and Galilee. Near its southern end this strangely shaped territory is split by a British mandated area stretching from beyond Jerusalem to the sea. And the rest of Palestine is united with Trans-Jordan in a large new Arab state.

If this plan of partition were carried out, the new Arab state would occupy not only by far the largest portion of what is now Palestine, but also all of Trans-Jordan, and would be inhabited by about 950,000 Arabs. The Jews, on the other hand, would receive about one-fifth of Palestine alone; but within that fifth now lies much the greater part of all the Jewish-owned rural land. Moreover, slightly over half the population of this proposed Jewish area would be Jewish.

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Of course, if such a plan as this were to be put into effect, an almost limitless number of intricate details would be encountered. Some of these details the Commission worked out in its report. Thus, like Egypt and Iraq, the two new states which would be created would each have a treaty of alliance with Great Britain. In this way, the mandatory power would be enabled to exercise a predominant influence over their foreign and defense policies. Further, these same treaties would guarantee the rights of minorities in the new states. And Britain's imperial interests would be safeguarded by military agreements permitting her to station armed forces in their territory, to use their ports and communications facilities, and to safeguard the oil pipe line to Haifa. To preserve the sanctity of the holy places she would assume a permanent mandate over Jerusalem and Bethlehem, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee. And, in addition she would retain "temporarily" under her own administration Haifa, Acre and other centers in the Jewish state which have an important Arab population. On the other hand, the Arab port of Jaffa would form part of the Arab state even though it would be surrounded on land by the territory of the British Corridor to the sea. Both the Jewish state and the British government would pay large sums to the Arab state to set it up as a going concern. And in the period of transition before the new régime went into effect the Jews would not be permitted to buy land or settle in what would become Arab territory.

THE ADVANTAGES OF PARTITION

A glittering prize, this, for the Jews . . . the independent Jewish state so many of them have dreamed of and fought for . . . no outside power to regulate Jewish immigration . . . a small area, to be sure, but a first-class challenge to every bit of skill and enterprise which the Jews of Palestine possess.

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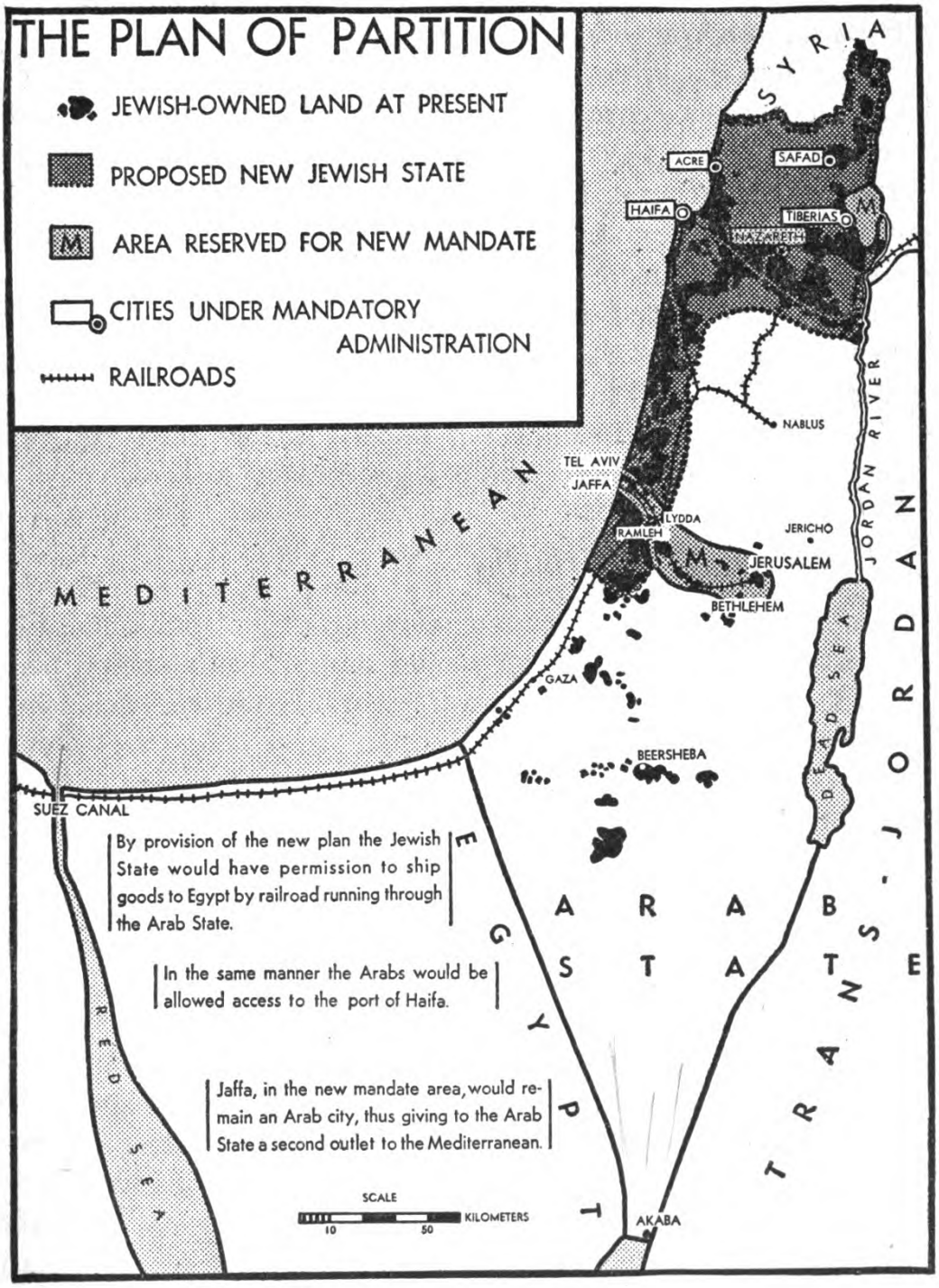

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And, for the Arabs—most of them—independence . . . no fear of eventual submergence . . . their holy places secure . . . financial aid from others for development purposes . . .

For both . . . freedom from the fear of domination by an alien majority. Secure in their own territories, would not both realize that they have everything to gain by peace? Possibly, with tension relaxed, closer economic relations would arise; it would be feasible to increase immigration, first into the Jewish state, perhaps ultimately into all the Arab countries, where they would be welcomed. For British and for Jews, then, partition might be the first step toward better relations with the whole Arab world and with Moslems everywhere.

At least, so the Commission hoped. But its plan was not destined to be adopted without a good many hitches.

PROGRESS OF THE PLAN

As soon as the Royal Commission report was published, the British Cabinet stated that it would support the partition plan to the hilt. Until the details were worked out, it proclaimed, it would firmly repress any disorder, stop land sales which might lessen the chances for successful partition, and restrict Jewish immigration to 8,000 persons for the eight months August 1937–March 1938.

But these brave words had no sooner been spoken than a storm of criticism descended on the Cabinet's head. After a bitter debate the ministers secured from Parliament only a grudging assent to further investigation of the partition plan. All that the House of Commons did was to empower the government to submit the idea to the League of Nations and then, after adequate inquiry, to present Parliament with a more detailed plan for discussion. Buffeted by adverse comment from this and other sources, the government beat a hasty retreat from its wholehearted support of the partition scheme. Instead of urging adoption of the Royal Commission's program, it

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asked the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League to recommend to the League Council that a settlement "on the lines of partition should be explored as the best and most hopeful solution" of the deadlock. To this the Mandates Commission agreed. But it is worth noting that neither Parliament nor the League is yet formally committed to partition.

THE JEWS NEGOTIATE

Nor is either group in Palestine enthusiastic about the plan. Many Jews deny that the mandate has been proved unworkable; indeed, they say that because of British vacillation it has never really been applied. Partition they consider a betrayal. But, dependent on British support as in the last analysis they are, they have thought it imperative not to refuse the half loaf offered to them. Both the Zionist Congress and the Council of the Jewish Agency have gone on record in opposition to the partition plan in its present form. But they have also authorized their leaders—especially Dr. Weizmann—to negotiate with the British government, with the idea that the plan might be altered in such a way as to be more acceptable to them. When these alterations have been made, the revised version of the plan is to be sent back to these bodies for their final approval. Thus, like Parliament and the League, they have not yet formally committed themselves to any new status in Palestine.

What changes would they want? For one thing, they would be much more enthusiastic about partition if it gave them control of the new, all-Jewish section of Jerusalem; for without it the Jewish state would be a home for "Zionism without Zion." They would like more land in the undeveloped Beersheba (Negeb) district in the south. They would like to know in advance exactly when Britain's control of Haifa and the other towns inhabited by both Jews and Arabs would end. They would like to retain their own port at Tel Aviv. Last but not

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least, they would like a guarantee that they might safely continue to operate the hydro-electric plant and the Dead Sea potash concession, both of which would be in the Arab state. Given these changes, some Zionists estimate that 2,000,000 Jews might be settled in the proposed Jewish state in the next twenty years. To more detached observers, however, this figure seems far too high.

THE ARABS STAND FIRM

But if the Zionists are willing to negotiate, the Arabs are firm as flint. This is somewhat surprising, for the partition plan—as some of their British friends believe—gives them practically everything they could expect. After all, since the Jews cannot be thrown bodily into the sea, the wisest policy from the Arab point of view would seem to be to confine them to the smallest possible district, where they would have relatively little space for further expansion.

Yet the Arab nationalists demand all or nothing. Even the Nashashibi group—the Mufti's rivals, who would presumably control the new Arab state—have asserted that they oppose partition. For to the Arabs it appears that the plan gives the Jews the most fertile portion of Palestine, the British the most holy, and the Arabs themselves the most barren—when they desire it all.

FLAWS OF PARTITION

But these are by no means the only objections to the partition plan. Many neutral observers oppose it because it simply bristles with difficulties. Under it, the refuge for persecuted Jews would become cruelly small, with Tel Aviv the only important town under Jewish control. How independent, these observers ask, can a state the size of Delaware really be?

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And then the greatest obstacle to the success of the partition idea is the impossibility of doing away with large minority groups within each state, however the boundaries are drawn. The proposed Arab state would indeed be virtually free of Jews. But in the Jewish state there would be 225,000 Arabs and only 258,000 Jews. The rest of Palestine's 400,000 Jews would be living in Jerusalem, Haifa and other towns under British control.

What would be done with this Arab minority? The Commission recommends that they be transferred from their ancestral homes to the Arab area. But it admits that no one knows whether that area contains enough cultivable land to support them!

Meanwhile, a Jewish state with an Arab minority of 47 per cent owning three-quarters of the land could scarcely have the strictly Jewish character, in officials, language and civilization, which the Zionists desire. And Arabs elsewhere would almost certainly sharpen their weapons in preparation for the day when they could forcibly reunite that minority with themselves.

If war should come, the Jewish state—"a small island in a great Arab sea"—would be almost completely indefensible. It would have a sea frontage of 80 miles and a land frontier of 200; it would be crossed by hundreds of roads and paths, with railroads winding back and forth across the border. At one point it would be less than nine miles wide. Especially if Britain's energies were absorbed on another front, Arab bands would be likely to charge down from the hills in fierce raids. And these raids would be pretty sure to be met by retaliation. No wonder that one authority states that the Commission seems "to have picked out all the most awkward provisions of the Peace Treaties of Versailles, and to have put a Saar, a Polish Corridor and half a dozen Danzigs and Memels into a country the size of Wales."

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Then, too, the plan contains plenty of ammunition for those who insist that Britain is acting primarily to safeguard her own imperialist interests. Certainly, as we noticed when we examined the details of the partition plan, Great Britain would retain extensive powers over the proposed states. As long as Britain controls the cities, the pipe line, the communications, the harbors, the tariffs and Arab finances, neither state would be independent in the full sense of the word. Whether by accident or design, the plan would create two states which could not dispense with British aid if they would: the Jewish state because it could never, unassisted, check the Arab thrust to the sea; the Arab state because it would be relying heavily on British financial support.

As for the proposed British mandate over the holy places, although it would ostensibly be created only to protect the rights of various religious groups, actually Palestine's chief railway junction, barracks and airdrome would all lie within it. Nor is that all. The British would also retain indefinitely the potential naval base at Haifa. And down south, at the tip of that long finger of the Red Sea which protrudes into Palestine, they would keep their control over Akaba—a city which may one day be a strong naval station or possibly even the terminus of a canal parallel to the Suez.

ITALY'S CHALLENGE

Thus Britain, under the partition plan, would remain as powerful as ever in the Eastern Mediterranean. And from her standpoint it is particularly important that she should do so. For today she must meet the challenge of Fascist Italy, whose dictator is seeking to build up a great empire of his own in the Mediterranean area. As one means toward this end, Mussolini has in the past moved in many ways to undermine British in-

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fluence among the Arab peoples. He has proclaimed himself "protector of Islam" and has made generous gestures toward his Mohammedan subjects. His radio station at Bari has broadcast anti-British propaganda in Arabic—with so much success that, in self-defense, the British have begun Arabic broadcasts of their own.

To be sure, Anglo-Italian rivalry in the Mediterranean seems to have been eased as a result of the comprehensive agreement the two powers concluded in April 1938. But as long as Mussolini strives for an empire, and Britain is prepared to hold what it has, there will always be an undercurrent of tension between them, no matter how cordial their relations may seem. No doubt, in this situation, the Arabs of Palestine will often be tempted to flirt with Italy in the hope of winning concessions from Great Britain. But in view of the sad fate of their dreams for independence if they ever came under Italian control, the Arabs are likely to prefer British guidance in the long run.

X. Alternatives to Partition

Perhaps, as the Royal Commission believed, the only way to teach mutual tolerance to the highly nationalistic groups we have been studying would be to subject them to a partition plan which would end the fear of domination of one by the other. But we have now seen that this plan involves many dangers and difficulties. Instead of curing the disease from which Palestine is suffering, it might kill the patient. And, once two separate states had been set up, it would be almost impossible to unite them again, except by force. That is why so many people feel that partition is a drastic remedy which should not be tried until everything else has failed.

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It also explains the desire of moderates on both sides for a round table conference—possibly arranged by the British—at which they might discuss the whole issue calmly and thoroughly. Confronted by the Solomon's judgment of partition, both might find it possible to compromise. And unless the British show some willingness to strive for a reconciliation they will always be open to the charge that they have acted in bad faith and for their own selfish interests.

A BI-NATIONAL STATE

Another reason for seeking a settlement without partition is that the ground for one has already been cleared. A few Jews agree that Britain cannot continue indefinitely to impose the mandate on the Arabs, and that the Jews in Palestine can never be secure without Arab consent. So they would sacrifice Zionist national ambitions if this would lead to agreement between the two peoples.

Possibly an arrangement might even be made for a federal, bi-national state in Palestine. In such a state both the Arabs and the Jews might have their own communal governing bodies, each supervising the people of its own nationality, and each endowed with large powers in such fields as education, public health, agricultural development and local government. Representatives of both peoples would sit on a central governing body. If such an arrangement were made, the Jews might agree that over a given period their numbers should not exceed a specific percentage of the entire population of Palestine—perhaps 40 per cent. In return they might be permitted to emigrate to Trans-Jordan, Syria and Iraq. And on the Arab side, several leaders say they would be willing to negotiate on this proposition provided the Arabs were given political control.

If it could be worked out, some such solution for an undivided Palestine would seem to be more practical than the

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cramped and artificial national systems proposed by the British. But, unfortunately, agreement may be impossible. For, now that matters have gone so far, the wall of mutual distrust may be too high to surmount. The more extreme Zionists refuse to renounce their hopes for a Jewish state in all of Palestine—including Trans-Jordan. And the supporters of partition say the plan for a federal state would simply mean the creation of a new ghetto for the Palestinian Jews. Whatever we think of this, we must admit that the Jews have good reason to distrust their fate as a minority in an Arab state.

THE MANDATES COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

Thus this proposal for a federated Palestine may not be feasible today. But, even if it is not, the experienced critics of the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League believe that no advantage would be gained by the immediate creation of two new independent states, both of which would find it difficult if not impossible to stand alone. They favor a more gradual movement which would give passions on both sides time to cool.

In 1937 they therefore recommended a system of "provisional cantonization." Their suggestion provides for a transition period during which Palestine would be divided into two or three territorial units with broad powers of local self-government. Both the Jewish and Arab cantons would control their own immigration. But such matters as defense, foreign affairs and customs policy would be regulated by a central body on which both nations would be equally represented and over which Great Britain would preside. Or possibly Britain might assume two separate mandates, one for each canton, and retain each until it had demonstrated its ability to stand alone.

Such a solution, you see, would give every one a breathing spell. Thinking things over calmly, the Jews might abandon

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their more extreme nationalism and the Arabs might moderate theirs. Then both peoples could cooperate for the full development they can scarcely attain if they remain in conflict.

Cantonization, to be sure, has its own difficulties. It would not satisfy hotheads, for they would regard the central government, which would be responsible for the maintenance of law and order, as a meddling body of outsiders. And the minorities problem would remain. In short, some critics say, cantonization would have the disadvantages of partition without its advantages.

But those who agree that everything possible must be done to reconcile the Jews and the Arabs would like to give cantonization a try before cutting up the baby. Setting up tiny puppet states, they feel, can only retard the economic development of the region while at the same time it opens up a fertile field for the intrigues of imperialist nations.

DELAY AND UNCERTAINTY

Here we are, then, at the end of our story. We have seen how the Jews, under British supervision, have begun to return to a land which the Arabs consider their own and which Jews, Christians and Moslems everywhere regard as sacred territory. We have seen how the determination of the Jews to build a Jewish National Home in Palestine clashes with the determination of the Arabs to set up an independent Arab state. We have observed that the country's economic development, although it has benefited the Arabs in the past, is not entirely stable; and that the Arabs, who are gradually being pushed out of the Jewish economic picture, seem more eager to destroy the Palestine mandate and the National Home than to advance their own prosperity. Finally, we see the British, who have failed in the difficult task of reconciling the two peoples, troubled by the mess in Palestine but unable to withdraw from

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the country as long as they must safeguard the life line of their Empire. And the partition plan, as we have described it, seems a despairing attempt to get the Jews and the Arabs off to a new start under conditions in which they might possibly be able to live in peace.

Thus Palestine is at the crossroads. The next few months may tell whether there will be peace or war. At the moment it certainly looks like war. Arab dissatisfaction with the partition plan has already led to a new rebellion against the British in Palestine. On September 26, 1937 Lewis Y. Andrews, an important and respected British official, was murdered in broad daylight. After this outrage, the government took firmer steps to end lawlessness than ever before. Prominent Arab leaders were deported or exiled. Others were rounded up and put in prison. The Arab Higher Committee was at last declared illegal. The Mufti was ousted from the presidency of the Supreme Moslem Council and fled from the country. He is now at Beirut, in the Lebanese Republic, from which point he may be directing the activities of Arab bands in Palestine today.

Meanwhile a little war rages. Military law is in effect. British troops track down Arab marauders with police dogs and blow up the houses of suspected terrorists. Heavy fines are levied on villages near which crimes are committed. Persons who carry firearms without authorization are liable to the death penalty. In short, Britain seems grimly in earnest in trying to wipe out disorder. Yet a guerrilla "army" fights the British troops much as it did in 1936. More than ever it seems true that Arab nationalism is too deep-rooted to be wiped out easily.

And London is going ahead with plans for partition—but at a snail's pace. It has appointed a technical commission which has gone to Palestine to work out the incredibly complicated details. Yet it seems that the government has become more and more hesitant about partition as such. In January 1938 it issued

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a White Paper in which there were signs that a transitional plan of cantonization might be considered—and, in Britain as in other countries, "transitional" developments have a way of becoming semi-permanent.

Thus, if we are to believe its critics on all sides, the British government is returning to the policy of delay and uncertainty which has been so disastrous in the past. Meanwhile the political and economic situation in Palestine deteriorates every day.

But at the same time it appears that negotiations may be going on behind the scenes. Certainly secrecy is necessary if any kind of a bargain is to be struck without being wrecked by inflamed national passions. Hence we must wait and see if some amicable arrangement cannot be reached before Britain feels obliged to force partition through.

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