Robert John on the Balfour Declaration

Peter Myers, February 4, 2001; update September 12, 2010. My comments are shown {thus}.

Write to me at contact.html.

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(1) World War I as an Opportunity

Frederick Engels wrote in 1887:

"No other war is now possible for Prussia-Germany than a world war, and indeed a world war of hitherto unimagined sweep and violence. Eight to ten million soldiers will mutually kill each other off, and in the process devour Europe barer than any swarm of locusts ever did. The desolation of the Thirty Years War compressed into three or four years and spread over the entire continent: famine, plague, general savagery, taking possession both of the armies and of the masses of the people, as a result of universal want; hopeless demoralization of our complex institutions of trade, industry and credit, ending in universal bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional statecraft, so that crowns will roll over the pavements by the dozens and no one be found to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing where this will end, or who will emerge victor from the general struggle. Only one result is absolutely foreseeing: general exhaustion and the creation of the conditions for the final victory of the working class."


"That {Rabbi} Kook deprecated unnecessary Jewish brutality against non-Jews should not minimize criticism of his expressed delight in the belief that the death of millions of soldiers during World War One constituted a sign of the approaching salvation of Jews and the coming of the Messiah" - Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky, Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel, Pluto Press, London, 1999, p. x.: shahak2.html.


"Herzl describes in his diaries an interview with Chamberlain in April 1903, when the El Arish scheme was again discussed. He told Chamberlain, he says, that 'we shall get [Palestine] not from the goodwill but from the jealousy of the Powers. And if we are in El Arish under the Union Jack, then our Palestine will likewise be in the British sphere of influence.' This suggestion, Herzl writes, was not at all ill-received.89" (p. 25)

(2) T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) on the Sykes-Picot Treaty
Seven Pillars of Wisdom: a Triumph

by T. E. Lawrence (Jonathan Cape, London, 1926, new edition 1940)

{p. 21} INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

The story which follows was first written out in Paris during the Peace Conference, from notes jotted daily on the march, strengthened by some reports sent to my chief in Cairo. Afterwards, in the autumn of 1919, this first draft and some of the notes were lost. It seemed to me historically needful to reproduce the tale, as perhaps no one but myself in Feisal's army had thought of writing down at the time what we felt, what we hoped, what we tried. So it was built again with heavy repugnance in London in the winter of 1919-20 from memory and my surviving notes. The record of events was not dulled in me and perhaps few actual mistakes crept in - except in details of dates or numbers - but the outlines and significance of things had lost edge in the haze of new interests.

... It was an Arab war waged and led by Arab for an Arab aim in Arabia.

{p. 23} All men dream; but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes, to make it possible. This I did. I meant to make a new nation, to restore a lost influence, to give twenty millions of Semites the foundation on which to build an inspired dream-palace of their national thoughts. So high an aim called out the inherent nobility of their minds, and made them play a generous part in events: but when we won, it was charged against me that the British petrol royalties in Mesopotamia were become dubious, and French Colonial policy ruined in the Levant.

I am afraid that I hope so. We pay for these things too much in honour and in innocent lives. ...

For my work on the Arab front I had determined to accept nothing. The Cabinet raised the Arabs to fight for us by definite promises of

{p. 24} self-government afterwards. Arabs believe in persons, not in institutions. They saw in me a free agent of the British Government, and demanded from me an endorsement of its written promises. So I had to join the conspiracy and, for what my word was worth, assured the men of their reward. In our two years' partnership under fire they grew accustomed to believe me and to think my Government, like myself, sincere. In this hope they performed some fine things, but, of course, instead of being proud of what we did together, I was continually and bitterly ashamed.

It was evident from the beginning that if we won the war the promises would be dead paper, and had I been an honest adviser of the Arabs I would have advised them to go home and not risk their lives fighting for such stuff: but I salved myself with the hope that, by leading these Arabs madly in the final victory I would establish them, with arms in their hands, in a position so assured (if not dominant) that expediency would counsel to the Great Powers a fair settlement of their claims. In other words, I presumed (seeing no other leader with the will and power) that I would survive the campaigns, and be able to defeat not merely the Turks on the battlefield, but my own country and its allies in the council-chamber. It was an immodest presumption: it is not yet clear if I succeeded: but it is clear that I had no shadow of leave to engage the Arabs, unknowing, in such hazard. I risked the fraud, on my conviction that Arab help was necessary to our cheap and speedy victory in the East, and that better we win and break our word than lose.

The dismissal of Sir Henry McMahon confirmed my belief in our essential insincerity ...

{p. 25} SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM

{p. 26} INTRODUCTION FOUNDATIONS. OF REVOLT

Chapters I to VII

Some Englishmen, of whom Kitchener was chief, believed that a rebellion of Arabs against Turks would
enable England, while fighting Germany, simultaneously to defeat her ally Turkey. Their knowledge of the nature and power and country of the Arabic-speaking peoples made them think that the issue of such a rebellion would be happy: and indicated its character and method.

So they allowed it to begin, having obtained for it formal assurances of help from the British Government. Yet none the less the rebellion of the Sheriff of Mecca came to most as a surprise, and found the Allies unready. It aroused mixed feelings and made strong friends and strong enemies, amid whose clashing jealousies its affairs began to miscarry.

{p. 27} CHAPTER I

{p. 30} In my case, the effort for these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and to imitate their mental foundation, quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West and its conventions with new eyes: they destroyed it all for me. At the same time I could not sincerely take on the Arab skin: it was an affectation only.

{p. 42} Arab civilizations had been of an abstract nature, moral and intellectual rather than applied ...

With the coming of the Turks this happiness became a dream. By stages the Semites of Asia passed under their yoke, and found it a slow death. ... Turkish rule was gendarme rule, and Turkish political theory as crude as its practice.

{p. 43} Then came the Turkish revolution, the fall of Abdul Hmid, and the supremacy of the Young Turks. The horizon momentarily broadened for the Arabs. The Young Turk movement was a revolt against the hierarchic conception of Islam and the pan-Islamic theories of the old Sultan ...

{p. 44} The Young Turks, in the confidence of their first success, were carried away by the logic of their principles, and as protest against Pan-Islam preached Ottoman brotherhood. The gullible subject races - ar more numerous than the Turks themselves - believed that they were called upon to co-operate in building a new East. Rushing to the task (full of Herbert Spencer and Alexander Hamilton) they laid down platforms of sweeping ideas, and hailed the Turks as partners. The Turks, terrified at the forces they had let loose, drew the fires as suddenly as they had stoked them. Turkey made Turkish for the Turks - Yeni-Turan - became the cry. ... The Arabs, the largest alien component of Turkey, must first be dealt with. Accordingly the Arab deputities were scattered, the Arab societies forbidden, the Arab notables proscribed. Arabic manifestations and the Arabic language were suppressed ...

However, the Arabs had tasted freedom ...

{p. 136} In sum, to my mind, the Arab Movement would not justify its creation if the enthusiasm of it did not carry the Arabs into Damascus.

This was unwelcome to him; for the Sykes-Picot Treaty of 1916 between France and England had been drawn by Sykes for this very eventuality; and, to reward it, stipulated the establishment of independent Arab states in Damascus, Aleppo and Mosul, districts which would otherwise fall to the unrestricted control of France. Neither Sykes not Picot had believed the thing really possible; but I knew that it was, and believed that after it the vigour of the Arab Movement would prevent the creation - by us or others - in Western Asia of unduly 'colonial' schemes of exploitation.

{p. 282} The Arab Revolt had begun on false pretences. To gain the Sherif's help our Cabinet had offered, through Sir Henry McMahon, to support the establishment of native governments in parts of Syria and Mesopotamia, 'saving the interests of our ally, France'. The last modest clause concealed a treaty (kept secret, till too late, from McMahon, and therefore from the Sherif) by which France, England and Russia agreed to annex some of these promised areas, and to establish their respective spheres of influence over all the rest.

Rumours of the fraud reached Arab ears, from Turkey. In the East persons were more trusted than institutions, So
the Arabs, having tested my friendliness and sincerity under fire, asked me, as a free agent, to endorse the promises of the British Government. I had had no

(p. 283) previous or inner knowledge of the McMahon pledges and the Sykes-Picot treaty, which were both framed by wartime branches of the Foreign Office. But, not being a perfect fool, I could see that if we won the war the promises to the Arabs were dead paper. Had I been an honourable adviser I would have sent my men home, and not let them risk their lives for such stuff. Yet the Arab inspiration was our main tool for winning the Eastern war. So I assured them that England kept her word in letter and spirit. In this comfort they performed their fine things: but, of course, instead of being proud of what we did together, I was continually and bitterly ashamed. ...

In revenge I vowed to make the Arab Revolt the engine of its own success, as well as handmaid to our Egyptian campaign: and vowed to lead it so madly in the final victory that expediency should counsel to the Powers a fair settlement of the Arabs' moral claims. This presumed my surviving the war, to win the later battle of the Council Chamber - immodest presumptions, which still balance in fulfilment.* ...

* 1919: but two years later Mr. Winston Churchill was entrusted by our harassed Cabinet with the settlement of the Middle East; and in a few weeks, at his conferences in Cairo, he made straight all the tangle, finding solutions fulfilling (I think) our promises in letter and spirit where humanly possible) without sacrificing any interest of our Empire or any interest of the peoples concerned. ...

(p. 572) Their strongest card was the Sykes-Picot agreement, an old style division of Turkey between England, France, and Russia, made public by the Soviets. ...

Convenently, at this juncture the British Cabinet, in joyous style, gave with the left hand also. They promised to the Arabs, or rather to an unauthorised committee of seven Gothamites in Cairo, that the Arabs should keep, for their own, the territory they conquered from Turkey in the war. The glad news circulated over Syria.

To help the downcast Turks, and to show us that it could give as many promises as there were parties, the British finally countered document A to the Sherif; B to their Allies, C to the Arab Commitee, by document D to Lord Rothschild, a new power, whose race was promised something equivocal in Palestine. {end}


(p. 18) I remember how angry I was while in the library of the Hoover Institution for War, Peace, and Revolution at Stanford, when I first held in my hand and read a copy of secret document prepared for the inner group at the Versailles 1919 Peace Conference, relating to what was then called the Near East. Page nine of part of the document is reproduced in the Appendix. It proved that the tiny group around Lloyd George recognized that Great Britain had promised independence to the Arabs, including the area of Palestine, about two years before the pledge of a national home for the Jews in Palestine was made to Lord Rothschild. When Arab representatives in 1939 asked the British government for an inquiry into the documents they had regarding this promise, the secret document was not made available to the Commission on the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence. Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Arnold Toynbee and others who knew its contents were all still alive, but remained silent. I was angry because I knew that two generations of my family, like so many others, had volunteered and fought for a Britain which they believed stood for Truth and Justice.

(p. 29) Herzl on the Jewish Problem

Support for a "national home" for the Jews in Palestine from the government of the greatest empire in the world was in part a fulfillment of the efforts and scheming of Theodore Herzl (1860-1904), descendant of Sephardim (on his rich father's side) who had published Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State) in Vienna in 1896. It outlined the factors which he believed had created a universal Jewish problem, and offered a program to regulate it

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through the exodus of unhappy and unwanted Jews to an autonomous territory of their own in a national-socialist setting.

Herzl offered a focus for a Zionist movement founded in Odessa in 1881, which spread rapidly through the Jewish communities of Russia, and small branches which had sprung up in Germany, England and elsewhere. Though "Zion" referred to a geographical location, it functioned as a utopian conception in the myths of traditionalists, modernists and Zionists alike. It was the reverse of everything rejected in the actual Jewish situation in the "Dispersion," whether oppression or assimilation.

In his diary Herzl describes submitting his draft proposals to the Rothschild Family Council, noting: "I bring to the Rothschilds and the big Jews their historical mission. I shall welcome all men of goodwill -- we must be united -- and crush all those of bad." 2

He read his manuscript "Addressed to the Rothschilds" to a friend, Meyer-Cohn, who said,

Up till now I have believed that we are not a nation -- but more than a nation. I believed that we have the historic mission of being the exponents of universalism among the nations and therefore were more than a people identified with a specific land.

Herzl replied:

Nothing prevents us from being and remaining the exponents of a united humanity, when we have a country of our own. To fulfill this mission we do not have to remain literally planted among the nations who hate and despite us. If, in our present circumstances, we wanted to bring about the unity of mankind independent of national boundaries, we would have to combat the ideal of patriotism. The latter, however, will prove stronger than we for innumerable years to come." [2a]

In this era, there were a number of Christians and Messianic groups who looked for a Jewish "return." One of these was the Protestant chaplain at the British Embassy in Vienna, who had published a book in 1882: The Restoration of the Jews to Palestine According to the Prophets. Through him, Herzl obtained an audience of the Grand Duke of Baden, and as they waited for their appointment to go to the castle, Herzl said to Chaplain Hechler, "When I go to Jerusalem I shall take you with me."

The Duke gave Herzl's proposal his consideration, and agreed to Herzl's request that he might refer to it in his meetings outside of Baden. He then used this to open his way to higher levels of power.

Through intermediaries, he endeavoured to ingratiate himself with the Sultan of Turkey by activities designed to reduce the agitation by emigre Armenian committees in London and Brussels for Turkish reforms and cessation of oppression [A] and started a press campaign to calm public opinion in London on the Armenian question. But when offered money for Palestine, the Sultan replied that his people had won their Empire with blood, and owned it. "The Jews may spend their millions. When my Empire is divided, perhaps they will get Palestine for nothing. But only our corpse can be divided. I will never consent to vivisection." 2b

Herzl met the Papal Nuncio in Vienna and promised the exclusion of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth from the Jewish state. He started a Zionist newspaper -- Die Welt, and was delighted to hear from the United States that a group of rabbis headed by Dr. Gustave Gottheil favored a Zionist movement. All this, and more, in a few months.

It was Herzl who created the first Zionist Congress at Basel, Switzerland, 29-31 August 1897. [B] There were 197 "delegates"; some were orthodox, some nationalist, liberal, atheist, culturalist, anarchist, socialist and some capitalist.

"We want to lay the foundation stone of the house which is to shelter the Jewish nation," and "Zionism seeks to
obtain for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured homeland in Palestine." declared Herzl. And his anti-assimilationist dictum that "Zionism is a return to the Jewish fold even before it is a return to the Jewish land," was an expression of his own experience which was extended into the official platform of Zionism as the aim of "strengthening the Jewish national sentiment and national consciousness." 3

{p. 30} It was Herzl who created the first Zionist Congress at Basel Switzerland, 29-31 August 1897.

{p. 31} In conversation with a delegate at the First Congress, Litman Rosenthal, Herzl said:

It may be that Turkey will refuse or be unable to understand us. This will not discourage us. We will seek other means to accomplish our end. The Orient question is now the question of the day. Sooner or later it will bring about a conflict among the nations. A European war is imminent. The great European War must come. With my watch in hand do I await this terrible moment. After the great European war is ended the Peace Conference will assemble. We must be ready for that time. We will assuredly be called to this great conference of the nations and we must prove to them the urgent importance of a Zionist solution to the Jewish Question. We must prove to them that the

{p. 42} problem of the Orient and Palestine is one with the problem of the Jews - both must be solved together. We must prove to them that the Jewish problem is a world problem and that a world problem must be solved by the world. And the solution must be the return of Palestine to the Jewish people. (American Jewish News, 7 March 1919)

A few months later, in a message to a Jewish conference in London, Herzl wrote "...the first moment I entered the Movement my eyes were directed towards England, because I saw that by reason of the general situation of things there it was the Archimedean point where the lever could be applied." Herzl showed his desire for some foothold in England, and also perhaps his respect for London as the world's financial center, by causing the Jewish Colonial Trust, which was to be the main financial instrument of his Movement, to be incorporated in 1899 as an English company.

Herzl was indefatigable. He offered the Sultan of Turkey help in re-organizing his financial affairs in return for assistance in Jewish settlement in Palestine.7 To the Kaiser, who visited Palestine in and again in 1898,* he promised support for furthering German interests in the Near East; a similar offer was made to King Edward VII of England; and he personally promised the Pope to respect the holy places of Christendom in return for Vatican support.** But only from the Czar did he receive, through the Minister of the Interior, a pledge of "moral and material assistance with respect to the measures taken by the movement which would lead to a diminution of the Jewish population in Russia."8

He reported his work to the Sixth Zionist Congress at Basle on 23 August 1903, but stated, "Zion is not and can never be. It is merely an expedient for colonization purposes, but, be it well understood, an expedient founded on a national and political basis." :

When pressed for Jewish colonization in Palestine, the Turkish Sublime Porte offered a charter for any other Turkish territory (with acceptance by the settlers of Ottoman citizenship) which Herzl refused.11 The British Establishment, aware of Herzl's activities through his appearance before the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration,*** and powerful press organs such as the Daily Chronicle and Pall Mall Gazette which were demanding a conference of the Powers to consider the Zionist program.12 somewhat

*On the latter trip he was accompanied by his Empress. Their yacht, the Hohenzollern, put in at Haifa, and they were escorted to Jerusalem by 2,000 Turkish soldiers.

**Pope Pius X told him that the Church could not support the return of "infidel Jews" to the Holy Land.10

***In 1880, there were about 60,000 Jews in England. Between 1881 and 1905, there was an immigration of some 100,000 Eastern Jews. Though cut {continued on p. 43}
characteristically, had shown a willingness to negotiate about a Jewish colony in the Egyptian territory of El-'Arish on the Turco-Egyptian frontier in the Sinai Peninsula. But the Egyptian Government objected to making Nile water available for irrigation; the Turkish Government, through its Commissioner in Cairo, objected; and the British Agent in Cairo, Lord Cromer, finally advised the scheme's rejection.13

Meanwhile, returning from a visit to British East Africa in the Spring of 1903, Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain put to Herzl the idea of a Jewish settlement in what was soon to become the Colony of Kenya, but through a misunderstanding Herzl believed that Uganda was intended, and it was referred to as the "Uganda scheme." Of the part of the conversation on the El-'Arish proposal, Herzl wrote in his diary that he had told Chamberlain that eventually we shall gain our aims "not from he goodwill but from the power,"14 With the failure of the El-'Arish proposal, Herzl authorized the preparation of a draft scheme for settlement in East Africa. This was prepared by the legal firm of Lloyd George, Roberts and Company, on the instructions of Herzl's go-between with the British Government, Leopold Greenberg.15

Herzl urged acceptance of the Uganda scheme," favoring it as a temporary refuge, but he was opposed from all sides, and died suddenly of heart failure on 3 July 1904. Herzl's death rid the Zionists of an "alien," and he was replaced by David Wolffsohn (the Litvak* *).16

The "Uganda proposal" split the Zionist movement. Some who favored it formed the Jewish Territorial Organization, under the leadership of Israel Zangwill (1864-1926). For these territorialists, the renunciation of "Zion" was not generally felt as an ideological sacrifice; instead they contended that not mystical claims to "historic attachment" but present conditions should determine the location of a Jewish national homeland.17

In Turkey, the "Young Turk" (Committee of Union and Progress) revolution of 1908 was ostensibly a popular movement opposed to foreign influence. However, Jews and crypto-Jews known as Dumehs played a leading part in the Revolution.19

The Zionists opened a branch of the Anglo-Palestine Bank in the

{footnote continued from p. 42} by the Aliens Bill of the Balfour Government, which became law in the summer of 1905, immigration continued so that by 1914 there was a Jewish population in England of some 300,000. A leader of the fight against the Aliens Bill and against tightening up naturalization regulations in 1903-1904 was Winston S. Churchill.1A

**The Eastern Jews referred to each other as "Litvaks" (Lithuania), "Galizianers (Galicia), Polaks," "Hungarians," and geographical regions of their ancestral origin, e.g., Pinskers"; never by the term Jew.

{p. 46} The Great War

{p. 47} First Pledge

Lord Kitchener, who had left London at 11:30 on the morning of 3 August to return to Egypt after leave, was stopped at Dover and put in charge of the War Office. At the first meeting of the War Council he warned his colleagues of a long struggle which would be won not at sea but on land, for which Britain would have to raise an army of millions of men and maintain them in the field for several years.4D When the defense of Egypt was discussed at the meeting, Winston Churchill suggested that the ideal method of defending Egypt was to attack the Gallipoli Peninsula which, if successful would give Britain control of the Dardanelles. But his operation was very difficult, and required a large force. He preferred the alternative of a feint at Gallipoli, and a landing at Haifa or some other point on the Syrian coast.

In Turkey, the Sultan had taken the title of Khalif-al-Islam, or supreme religious leader of Moslems everywhere, and emissaries were dispatched to Arab chiefs with instructions that in the event of Turkey being involved in the European hostilities, they were to declare a jihad, or Moslem holy war. A psychological and physical force which Kitchener of Khartoum, the avenger of General Gordon's death, understood very well.
Kitchener planned to draw the sting of the jihad, which could affect British-Indian forces and rule in the East, by promoting an Arab revolt to be led by Hussein, who had been allowed by the Turks to assume his hereditary dignity as Sherif of Mecca and titular ruler of the Hejaz. Kitchener cabled on 13 October 1914 to his son, Abdullah, in Mecca, saying that if the Arab nation assisted England in this war, England would guarantee that no internal intervention took place in Arabia and would give the Arabs every assistance against external aggression.

A series of letters passed between Sherif Hussein and the British Government through Sir Henry McMahon, High Commissioner for Egypt, designed to secure Arab support for the British in the Great War. One dated 24 October 1915 committed HMG to the inclusion of Palesine within the boundaries of Arab independence after the war, but excluded the area now known as Lebanon. This is clearly recognized in a secret "Memorandum on British Commitments to King Hussein" prepared for the inner group at the Peace Conference in 1919. (See Appendix) I found a copy in 1964 among the papers of the late Professor Wm. Westermann, who had been adviser on Turkish affairs to the American Delegation to the Peace Conference.

The Second Pledge

As the major ally, France's claim to preference in parts of Syria could not be ignored. The British Foreign Minister, Sir Edward Grey, told the French Ambassador in London, Mr. Paul Cambon, on 21 October 1915, of the exchanges of correspondence with Sherif Hussein, and suggested that the two governments arrive at an understanding with their Russian ally on their future interests in the Ottoman Empire.

M. Picot was appointed French representative with Sir Mark Sykes, now Secretary of the British War Cabinet, to define the interests of their countries and to go to Russia to include that country's views in their agreement.

In the subsequent secret discussions with Foreign Secretary Sazonov, Russia was accorded the occupation of Constantinople both shores of the Bosphorus and some parts of Turkish Armenia.

France claimed Lebanon and Syria eastwards to Mosul. Palestine did in fact have inhabitants and shrines of the Greek and Russian Orthodox and Armenian churches, and Russia at first claimed a right to the area as their protector. This was countered by Sykes-Picot and the claim was withdrawn to the extent that Russia, in consultation with the other Allies, would only participate in deciding a form of international administration for Palestine.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement was compatible with the pledges made to the Arabs. When the Turks gave Hussein details of the Agreement after the Russian Revolution, he confined his action to a formal repudiation.

Like the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence, the Tripartite Agreement made no concessions to Zionism in the future disposition of Palestine, or even mention of the word "Jew." However it is now known that before the departure of Sykes* for Petrograd on 27 February 1916 for discussions with Sazonov, he was approached with a plan by Herbert Samuel, who had a seat in the Cabinet as President of the Local Government Board and was strongly sympathetic to Herzl's Zionism.

The plan put forward by Samuel was in the form of a memorandum which Sykes thought prudent to commit to memory and destroy. Commenting on it, Sykes wrote to Samuel suggesting that if B:um should assume the administration of Palestine it might be more acceptable to France as an alternative to the internationa a m hich shewantednthe7.i-llists did not. Of boundaries marked on a map attached to the memorandum he wrote, By excluding Hebron and the East of the Jordan there is less to discuss with the Moslems, as the Mosque of Omar then becomes the only matter of vital importance to discuss with them and further does away with any contact with the bedouins, who never cross the river except on business. I imagine that the principal object of Zionism is the realization of the ideal of an existing center of nationality rather than boundaries or extent of territory. The moment I return I will let you know how things stand at Pd."

However, in conversations both with Sykes and the French ambassador, Sazonov was careful not to commit
himself as to the extent of the Russian interest in Palestine, but made it clear that Russia would have to insist that not only the holy places, but all

*Sir Mark Sykes, Secretary of the sritishe war Cabinet, sent to Russia to negotiate the Tripartite (Sykes-Picot) Agreement for the Partition of the Ottoman Empire. M. Picot was the French representative in the negotiations. Neither Hussein nor Sir Henry McMahon were made aware of these secret discussions. Among other things, the agreement called for parts of Palestine to be placed under an international administration."

{p. 50} towns and localities in which there were religious establishments belonging to the Orthodox Church, should be placed under international administration, with a guarantee for free access to the Mediterranean. 44

Czarist Russia would not agree to a Zionist formula for Palestine; but its days were numbered.

The Third Pledge

In 1914, the central office of the Zionist Organization and the seat of its directorate, the Zionist Executive, were in Berlin. It already had adherents in most Eastern Jewish communitiesuding all the countries at war, though its main strength was in Russia and Austria-Hungary.45 Some important institutions, namely, the Jewish Colonial Trust, the Anglo-Palestine Company and the Jewish National Fund, were incorporated in England. Of the Executive, two members (Otto Warburg* and Arthur Hantke) were German citizens, three (Yechiel Tschenow, Nahum Sokolow and Victor Jacobson) were Russians and one (Shmarya Levin) had recently exchanged his Russian for Austro-Hungarian nationality. The 25 members of the General Council included 12 from Germany and Austria-Hungary, 7 from Russia, 2 (Chaim Weizmann and Leopold Kessler) from England, and one each from Belgium, France, Holland and Rumania.46

Some promenent German Zionists associated themselves with a newly founded organization known as the Komitee fuer den Osten, whose aims were: "To place at the disposal of the German Government the special knowledge of the founders and their relations with the Jews in Eastern Europe and in America, so as to contribute to the overthrow of Czarist Russia and to secure the national autonomy of the Jews."47

Influential Zionists outside the Central Powers were disturbed by the activities of the K.f.d.O. and anxious for the Zionist movement not to be compromised. Weizmann's advice was that the central office be moved from Berlin and that the conduct of Zionist affairs during the war should be entrusted to a provisional executive committee for general Zionist affairs in the United States.

At a conference in New York on 30 August 1914, this committee was set up under the chairmanship of Louis D. Brandeis, with the British-born Dr. Richard Gottheil and Jacob de Haas, Rabbi Stephen Wise and Felix Frankfurter, among his principal lieutenants. For

*Of the Warburg international banking family. Although ostensibly a second Secretary in the Wilhelmstrasse, Max Warburg has been reported as having the same position in German counterintelligence as Admiral Canaris in World War II.

{p. 51} Shmarya Levin, the representative of the Zionist Executive in the United States, and Dr. Judah Magnes, to whom the alliance of England and France with ussia seemed "unholy," Russian czarism was the enemy against which their force should be pitted.48 But on 1 October 1914 Gottheil, first President of the Zionist Organization of America, wrote from the Department of Semitic Languages, Columbia University, to Brandeis in Boston enclosing a memorandum on what the organization planned to seek from the belligerents, with respect to the Russian Jews:

We have got to be prepared to work under the Government of any one of the Powers ... I shall be glad to have any suggestion from you in regard to this memorandum, and shall be glad to know if it meets with your approval. I recognize that I ought not to have put it out without first consulting you; but the exigencies of the situation demanded immediate action. We ought to be fully prepared to take advantage of any occasion that offers itself.49
In a speech on 9 November, four days after Britain’s declaration of war on Turkey, Prime Minister Asquith said that the traditional eastern policy had been abandoned and the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire had become a war aim. "It is the Ottoman Government," he declared, "and not we who have rung the death-knell of Ottoman dominion not only in Europe but in Asia." The statement followed a discussion of the subject at a Cabinet meeting earlier that day, at which we know, from Herbert Samuel's memoirs, that Lloyd George, who had been retained as legal counsel by the Zionists some years before, referred to the ultimate destiny of Palestine." In a talk with Samuel after the meeting, Lloyd George assured him that "he was very keen to see a Jewish state established in Palestine."

On the same day, Samuel developed the Zionist position more fully in a conversation with the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey. He spoke of Zionist aspirations for the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish state, and of the importance of its geographical position to the British Empire. Such a state, he said, "could not be large enough to defend itself," and it would therefore be essential that it should be, by constitution, neutral. Grey asked whether Syria as a whole must necessarily go with Palestine, and Samuel replied that this was not only unnecessary but inadvisable, since it would bring in a large and unassimilable Arab population. "It would," he said, "be a great advantage if the remainder of Syria were annexed by France, as it would be far better for the state to have a European Power as a neighbor than the Turk."52

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In January 1915 Samuel produced a Zionist memorandum on Palestine after discussions with Weizmann and Lloyd George. It contained arguments in favor of combining British annexation of Palestine with British support for Zionist aspirations, and ended

{p. 52} with objections to any other solution.53 Samuel circulated it to his colleagues in the Cabinet. Lloyd George was already a Zionist "partisan"; Lord Haldane, to whom Weizmann had had access, wrote expressing a friendly interest; though privately expressing Zionist sympathies, the Marquess of Crewe presumably did not express any views in the Cabinet on the memorandum; Zionism had a strong sentimental attraction for Grey; but his other colleagues, including his cousin Edwin Montagu, did not give him much encouragement. Prime Minister Asquith wrote: "I confess that I am not attracted by the proposed addition to our responsibilities, but it is a curious illustration of Dissy's favorite maxim that race is everything to find this almost lyrical outburst proceeding from the well-ordered and methodical brain of H.S."

After further conversations with Lloyd George and Grey, Samuel circulated a revised text to the Cabinet in the middle of March 1915. It is not known if the memorandum was formally considered by the Cabinet, but Asquith wrote in his diary on 13 March 1915 of Samuel's "dithyrambic memorandum" of which Lloyd George was "the only other partisan." Certainly, at this time, Zionist claims and aspirations were secondary to British policy towards Russia and the Arabs.

Britain, France and Germany attached considerable importance to the attitudes of Jewry towards them because money and credit were needed for the war. The international banking houses of Lazard Freres, Eugene Mayer, J. & W. Seligman, Speyer Brothers and M.M. Warburg, were all conducting major operations in the United States as were the Rothschilds through the New York banking house of Kuhn, Loeb & Co. * Apart from their goodwill, the votes of America's Jewish community of 3,000,000 were important to the issue of that country's intervention or non-intervention in the war, and the provision of military supplies. The great majority represented the one-third of the Jews of Eastern Europe, including Russia, who had left their homelands and come to America between 1880 and 1914.

{footnote} *Jacob Schiff, German-born senior partner in Kuhn, Loeb & Co. and "the most influential figure of his day in American Jewish life," wrote in The Menorah Journal of April 1915: "It is well known that I am a German sympathizer ... England has been contaminated by her alliance with Russia ... I am quite convinced that in Germany anti-semitism is a thing of the past." The Jewish Encyclopedia for 1906 states that "Schiff's firm subscribed for and floated the large Japanese war loan in 1904-05" (for the Russo-Japanese war), "in recognition of which the Mikado conferred on Schiff the second order of the Sacred Treasure of Japan." Partners with Schiff were Felix M. Warburg and his brother Paul who had come to New York in 1902 from Hamburg, and organized the Federal Reserve System.
Many detested Czarist Russia and wished to see it destroyed. Of these Jews, not more than 12,000 were enrolled members of the Zionist Organization.

The goodwill of Jewry, and especially America's Jews, was assessed by both sides in the war as being very important. The once-poor Eastern European Jews had achieved a dominant position in New York's garment industry, and had become a significant political force. In 1914 they sent a Russian-born socialist to the Congress of the United States. They produced dozens of Yiddish periodicals they patronized numerous Yiddish theatres and music halls; their sons and daughters were filling the metropolitan colleges and universities.

From the beginning of the war, the German Ambassador in Washington, Count Bernstorff, was provided, by theKomitee fuer den Osten, with an adviser on Jewish Affairs (Isaac Straus); and when the head of the Zion Agency in Constantinople appealed, in the winter of 1914, to the German Embassy to do what it could to relieve the pressure on the Jews in Palestine, it was reinforced by a similar appeal to Berlin from Bernstorff. In November 1914 therefore, the German Embassy in Constantinople received instructions to recommend that the Turks sanction the re-opening of the Anglo-Palestine Company's Bank - a key Zionist institution. In December the Embassy made representations which prevented a projected mass deportation of Jews of Russian nationality. In February 1915 German influence helped to save a number of Jews in Palestine from imprisonment or expulsion, and "a dozen or twenty times" the Germans intervened with the Turks at the request of the Zionist office in Turkey, "thus saving and protecting the Yishuv." The German representations reinforced those of the American Ambassador in Turkey (Henry Morgenthau).* Moreover, both the German consulates in Palestine and the head of the German military mission there frequently exerted their influence on behalf of the Jews.

German respect for Jewish goodwill enabled the Constantinople Zionist Agency from December 1914 to use the German diplomatic courier service and telegraphic code for communicating with Berlin and Palestine. On 5 June 1915 Victor Jacobson was received at the German Foreign Office by the Under-Secretary of State (von Zimmerman) and regular contact commenced between the Berlin Zionist Executive (Warburg, Hantke and Jacobson) and the German Foreign Office.

Zionist propagandists in Germany elaborated and publicized the idea that Turkey could become a German satellite and its Empire in

{footnote} *An award for Morgenthau's heavy financial support for Wilson's presidential campaign.

Asia made wide open to German enterprise; support for "a revival of Jewish life in Palestine" would form a bastion of German influence in that part of the world. This was followed by solicitation of the German Foreign Office to notify the German consuls in Palestine of the German Government's friendly interest in Zionism. Such a course was favored by von Neurath* when asked by Berlin for his views in October, and in November of 1915, the text for such a document was agreed upon and circulated after the approval of the German Chancellor (Bethmann-Hollweg). It was cautiously and vaguely worded so as not to upset Turkish susceptibilities, stating to the Palestine consuls that the German Government looked favorably on "Jewish activities designed to promote the economic and cultural progress of the Jews in Turkey, and also on the immigration and settlement of Jews from other countries."

The Zionists felt that an important advance toward a firm German commitment to their aims had been made, but when the Berlin Zionist Executive pressed for a public assurance of sympathy and support, the Government told them to wait until the end of the war, when a victorious Germany would demonstrate its goodwill.

When Zionist leaders in Germany met Jemal Pasha, by arrangement with the Foreign Office, during his visit to Berlin in the summer of 1917, they were told that the existing Jewish population would be treated fairly but that no further Jewish immigrants would be allowed. Jews could settle anywhere else but not in Palestine. The Turkish Government, Jemal Pasha declared, wanted no new nationality problems, nor was it prepared to antagonize the Palestinian Arabs, "who formed the majority of the population and were to a man opposed to Zionism."
A few weeks after the interview, the Berlin Zionists' pressure was further weakened by the uncovering by Turkish Intelligence of a Zionist spy ring working for General Allenby's Intelligence section under an Aaron Aaronsohn. "It is no wonder that the Germans, tempted as they may have been by its advantages, shrank from committing themselves to a pro-Zionist declaration."

It was fortunate for Zionism that the American Jews as a whole showed no enthusiasm for the Allied cause, wrote Stein, political secretary of the Zionist Organization from 1920 to 1929, "If they had all along been reliable friends, there would have been no need to pay them any special attention."

In 1914 the French Government had sponsored a visit to the United States by Professor Sylvain Levy and the Grand Rabbi of France with the object of influencing Jewish opinion in their favor, but without success. A year later, it tried to reply to disturbing

*Later, Foreign Minister (1932-38) and Protector of Bohemia (1939-43).

{p. 55} reports from its embassy in Washington about the sympathies of American Jews by sending a Jew of Hungarian origin (Professor Victor Basch) to the United States in November 1915. Ostensibly he represented the Ministry of Public Instruction, but his real mission was to influence American Jews through contact with their leaders. Though armed with a message to American Jewry from Prime Minister Briand, he encountered an insuperable obstacle - the Russian alliance. "For Russia there is universal hatred and distrust ... We are reproached with one thing only, the persecution of the Russian Jews, which we tolerate - a toleration which makes us accomplices ... It is certain that any measures in favor of Jewish emancipation would be equivalent to a great battle lost by Germany." Basch had to report to French President Poincare the failure of his mission.

At the same time that Basch had been dispatched to the United States, the French Government approved the setting up of a "Comite de Propagande Francais aupres des Juifs neutres," and Jacques Bigart, the Secretary of the Alliance Israelite, accepted a secretarship of the Comite. Bigart suggested to Lucien Wolf, of the Jewish Conjont Foreign Committee in London, that a similar committee be set up there. Wolf consulted the Foreign Office and was invited by Lord Robert Cecil to provide a full statement of his views.

In December 1915 Wolf submitted a memorandum in which he analyzed the characteristics of the Jewish population of the United States and reached the conclusion that "the situation, though unsatisfactory, is far from unpromising." Though disclaiming Zionism, he wrote that "In America, the Zionist organizations have lately captured Jewish opinion." If a statement of sympathy with their aspirations were made, "I am confident they would sweep the whole of American Jewry into enthusiastic allegiance to their cause.

Early in 1916 a further memorandum was submitted to the British Foreign Office as a formal communication from the Jewish Conjont Foreign Committee. This stated that "the London (Conjoint) and Paris Committees formed to influence Jewish opinion in neutral countries in a sense favorable to the Allies" had agreed to make representations to their respective Governments. First, the Russian Government should be urged to ease the position of their Jews by immediate concessions for national-cultural autonomy, secondly "in view of the great organized strength of the Zionists in the United States," (in fact out of the three million Jews in the U.S. less than 12,000 had enrolled as Zionists in 1913), the Allied Powers should give assurances to the Jews of facilities in Palestine for immigration and colonization, liberal local self-government for Jewish colonists, the establishment of a Jewish university, and for the recognition of

{p. 56} Hebrew as one of the vernaculars of the land - in the event of their Victory.

On 9 March 1916 the Zionists were informed by the Foreign Office that "your suggested formula is receiving (Sir Edward Greyls) careful and sympathetic attention, but it is necessary for H.M.G. to consult their Allies on the subject." A confidential memorandum was accordingly addressed to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs in Petrograd, to ascertain his views, though its paternity, seeing that Asquith was still Prime Minister, 'remains to be discovered." No direct reply was received, but in a note addressed to the British and French ambassadors four days later, Sazonov obliquely assented, subject to guarantees for the Orthodox Church and its establishments, to raise no objection to the settlement of Jewish colonists in Palestine.

http://mailstar.net/balfour.html
Nothing came of these proposals. On 4 July the Foreign Office informed the Conjoint Committee that an official announcement of support was inopportune. They must be considered alongside the Sykes-Picot Agreement being negotiated at this time, and the virtual completion of the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence by 10 March 1916, with the hope that an Arab revolt and other measures would bring victory near. But 1916 was a disastrous year for the Allies. "In the story of the war" wrote Lloyd George:

{quote} The end of 1916 found the fortunes of the Allies at their lowest ebb. In the offensives on the western front we had lost three men for every two of the Germans we had put out of action. Over 300,000 British troops were being immobilized for lack of initiative or equipment or both by the Turks in Egypt and Mesopotamia, and for the same reason nearly 400,000 Allied soldiers were for all purposes interned in the malarial plains around Salonika. {end quote}

The voluntary system of enlistment was abolished, and a mass conscript army of continental pattern was adopted, something which had never before occurred in British history.* German submarine activity in the Atlantic was formidable; nearly 1 1/2 (1.5) million tons of merchant shipping had been sunk in 1916 alone. As for paying for the war, the Allies at first had used the huge American debts in Europe to pay for war supplies, but by 1916 the resources of J.P. Morgan and Company, the Allies' financial and purchasing agents in the United States, were said to be nearly exhausted by increased Allied demands for American credit. There was rebellion in Ireland. Lord Robert Cecil stated to the British Cabinet: "France is within measurable distance of exhaustion. The political outlook of Italy is menacing. Her finance is tottering. In Russia there is great discouragement. She has long been on the verge of revolution. Even her man-power seems coming near its limits."

Secretary of State Kitchener was gone - drowned when the cruiser Hampshire sank on 5 June 1916 off the Orkneys when he was on his way to Archangel and Petrograd to nip the revolution in the bud. He had a better knowledge of the Middle East than anyone else in the Cabinet. The circumstances suggest espionage and treachery. Walter Page, the U.S. Ambassador in London, entered in his diary: "There was a hope and feeling that he (Lord Kitchener) might not come back ... as I make out."

There was a stalemate on all fronts. In Britain, France and Germany, hardly a family numbered all its sons among the living. But the British public - and the French, and the German - were not allowed to know the numbers of the dead and wounded. By restricting war correspondents, the American people were not allowed to know the truth either. The figures that are known are a recital of horrors.*

In these circumstances, a European tradition of negotiated peace in scores of wars might have led to peace at the end of 1916 or early 1917. Into this gloomy winter of 1916 walked a new figure. He was James Malcolm,** an Oxford educated Armenian*** who, at the beginning of 1916, with the sanction of the British and Russian

{footnotes} * Russian nationals resident in the United Kingdom (nearly all of them Jews), not having become British subjects, some 25,000 of military age, still escaped military service. This prompted Jabotinsky and Weizmann to urge the formation of a special brigade for Russian Jews, but the idea was not favorably received by the Government, and the Zionists joined non-Zionists in an effort to persuade Russian Jews of military age to volunteer as individuals for service in thebritish army. The response was negligible, and in July 1917 the Military Service (Conventions with Allies) Act was given Royal assent. Men of military age were invited to serve in the British army or risk deportation to Russia. However, the Russian revolution prevented its unhindered application.

* Half a million Frenchmen were lost in the first four months of war, 1 million lost by the end of 1915, and 5 million by 1918. Who can imagine that the Allies lost 600,000 men in one battle, the Somme, and the British more officers in the first few months than all wars of the previous hundred years put together? At Stalingrad, in the Second World War, the Wehrmacht had 230,000 men in the field. The German losses at Verdun alone were 325,000 killed or wounded. By this time a soldier in one of the better divisions could count on a maximum of three months' service without being killed or wounded, and the life expectancy for an officer at the front was down to five months in an ordinary regiment and six weeks in a crack one.
Sir Mark Sykes, with whom he was on terms of family friendship, told him that the Cabinet was looking anxiously for United States intervention in the war on the side of the Allies, but when asked what progress was being made in that direction, Sykes shook his head glumly. "Precious little," he replied.

James Malcolm now suggested to Mark Sykes that the reason why previous overtures to American Jewry to support the Allies had received no attention was because the approach had been made to the wrong people. It was to the Zionist Jews that the British and French Governments should address their parleys.

"You are going the wrong way about it," said Mr. Malcolm. "You can win the sympathy of certain politically-minded Jews everywhere, and especially in the United States, in one way only, and that is, by offering to try and secure Palestine for them."

What really weighed most heavily now with Sykes were the terms of the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement. He told Malcolm that to offer to secure Palestine for the Jews was impossible. "Malcolm insisted that there was no other way and urged a Cabinet discussion. A day or two later, Sykes told him that the matter had been mentioned to Lord Milner who had asked for further information. Malcolm pointed out the influence of Judge Brandeis of the American Supreme Court and his strong Zionist sympathies."

In the United States, the President's adviser, Louis D. Brandeis, a leading advocate of Zionism, had been inducted as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court on 5 June 1916. That Wilson was vulnerable was evident, in that as early as 1911, he had made known his profound interest in the Zionist idea and in Jewry.

{footnote continued from p. 57} reprinted by the IHR, $2.00 postpaid.

{footnote} *** Born in Persia, where his family had settled before Elizabethan days. He was sent to school in England in 1881, being placed in the care of a friend and agent of his family, Sir Albert (Abdullah) Sassoon. Early in 1915, he founded the Russia Society in London among the British public as a means of improving relations between the two countries. Unlike the Zionists, he had no animus towards Czarist Russia.

{p. 59} Malcolm described Wilson as being "attached to Brandeis by ties of peculiar hardness," a cryptic reference to the story that Wilson had been blackmailed for $40,000 for some hot love letters he had written to his neighbor's wife when he was President of Princeton. He did not have the money, and the go-between, Samuel Untermeyer, of the law firm of Guggenheim, Untermeyer & Marshall, said he would provide it if Wilson would appoint to the next vacancy on the Supreme Court a nominee selected by Mr. Untermeyer. The money was paid, the letters returned, and Brandeis had been the nominee.

Wilson had written to the Senate, where opposition to the nominee was strong: "I have known him. I have tested him by seeking his advice upon some of the most difficult and perplexing public questions about which it was necessary for me to form a judgement ..." When Brandeis had been approved by the Senate, Wilson wrote to Henry Morgenthau: "I never signed any commission with such satisfaction." "Relief" might have been a more appropriate word.

The fact that endorsement of Wilson's nominee by the Senate Judiciary Committee had only been made "after hearings of unprecedented length" was not important. Brandeis had the President's ear; he was "formally concerned with the Department of State." This was the significant development, said Malcolm, which compelled
a new approach to the Zionists by offering them the key to Palestine.

The British Ambassador to the United States (Sir Cecil Spring-Rice) had written from Washington in January 1914 that "a deputation came down from New York and in two days 'fixed' the two Houses so that the President had to renounce the idea of making a new treaty with Russia." In November 1914 he had written to the British Foreign Secretary of the German Jewish bankers who were extending credits to the German Government and "were getting hold of the principal New York papers" thereby "bringing them over as much as they dare to the German side" and "toiling in a solid phalanx to compass our destruction."

This anti-Russian sentiment was part of a deep concern for the well-being of Russian and Polish Jews. Brandeis wrote to his brother from Washington on 8 December 1914: "... You cannot possibly conceive the horrible sufferings of the Jews in Poland and adjacent countries. These changes of control from German to Russian and Polish anti-semitism are bringing miseries as great as the Jews ever suffered in all their exiles."*

{footnote} *A reference to the 1914 invasion of Austria and East Prussia by the Russians with such vigor that many people believed that the "Russian steamroller" would soon reach Berlin and end the war. Only the diversion of {footnote continued on p. 60}

{p. 60} In a speech to the Russian Duma on 9 February (27 January Gregorian) 1915, Foreign Minister Sazonov denied the calumnious stories which, he said, were circulated by Germany, of accounts of alleged pogroms against the Jews and of wholesale murders of Jews by the Russian armies. "If the Jewish population suffered in the war zone, that circumstance unfortunately was inevitably associated with war, and the same conditions applied in equal measure to all people living within the region of military activity." He added to the rebuttal with accounts of hardship in areas of German military action in Poland, Belgium and Serbia.

It is noteworthy that the chairman of the non-Zionist American Jewish Committee responded to an appeal by the Brandeis group that all American Jews should organize to emphasize Zionist aims in Palestine before the Great Powers in any negotiations during or at the end of the war, by dissociating his community from the suggestion that Jews of other nationalities were to be accorded special status. He said that "the very thought of the mass of the Jews of America having a voice in the matter of deciding the welfare of the Jews in the world made him shrink in horror."

The new approach to the Zionist movement by Mark Sykes with James Malcolm as preliminary interlocutor took the form of a series of meetings at Chaim Weizmann's London house, with the knowledge and approval of the Secretary of the War Cabinet, Sir Maurice Hankey. A Programme for a New Administration of Palestine in Accordance with the Aspirations of the Zionist Movement was issued by the English Political Committee of the Zionist Organization in October 1916, and submitted to the British Foreign Office as a basis for discussion in order to give an official character to the informal house-talks. It included the following:

{quote} (1) The Jewish Chartered Company is to have power to exercise the right of pre-emption over Crown and other lands and to acquire for its own use all or any concessions which may at any time be granted by the suzerain government or governments. (2) The present population, being too small, too poor and too little trained to make rapid progress, requires the introduction of a new and progressive element in the population. (But the rights of minority nationalities were to be protected). {end quote}

Other points were, (3) recognition of separate Jewish nationality in Palestine; (4) participation of the Palestine Jewish population in local

{footnote continued from p. 59} whole army divisions from the Western to the Eastern Front under the command of General von Hindenburg saved Berlin, and in turn saved Paris. There was a direct effort by certain groups to support anti-Imperial activities in Russia from the United States, but Brandeis was apparently not implicated.

{p. 61} self-government; (5) Jewish autonomy in purely Jewish affairs; (6) official recognition and legalization of existing Jewish institutions for colonization in Palestine.
This Programme does not appear to have reached Cabinet level at the time it was issued, probably because of Asquith's known lack of sympathy, but as recorded by Samuel Landman, the Zionist Organization was given official British facilities for its international correspondence.

**Lloyd George**, an earnest and powerful demagogue, was now prepared to oust Asquith, his chief, by a coup de main. With the death of Kitchener in the summer of 1916, he had passed from Munitions to the War Office and he saw the top of the parliamentary tree within his grasp. In this maneuver he was powerfully aided by the newspaper proprietor Northcliffe,* who turned all his publications from The Times downwards to depreciate Asquith, and by the newspaper-owing M.P., Max Aitken (later Lord Beaverbrook). With public sympathy well prepared, Lloyd George demanded virtual control of war policy. It was intended that Asquith should refuse. He did. Lloyd George resigned. Asquith also resigned to facilitate the reconstruction of the Government. The King then sent for the Conservative leader, Bonar Law, who, as prearranged, advised him to offer the premiership to Lloyd George.

Asquith and Grey were out; Lloyd George and Balfour were in. With **Lloyd George as Prime Minister from December 1916**, Zionist relations with the British Government developed fast. **Lloyd George had been legal counsel for the Zionists**, and while Minister of Munitions, had had assistance from the Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann; the new Foreign Minister, Arthur Balfour, was already known for his Zionist sympathies.

The Zionists were undermining the wall between them and their Palestine objective which they had found impossible "to surmount by ordinary political means" prior to the war. Herzl's suggestion that they would get Palestine *"not from the goodwill but from the jealousy of the Powers,"* was being made to come true. The Zionists moved resolutely to exploit the new situation now that the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary were their firm supporters. Landman, in his Secret History of the Balfour Declaration, wrote:

{quote} Through General McDonogh, Director of Military Operations, who was won over by Fitzmaurice (formerly Dragoman of the British Embassy in Constantinople and a friend of James Malcolm), Dr. Weizmann was able, about this time, to secure from the Government

{footnote} *Northcliffe was small-minded enough to have Lloyd George called to the telephone, in front of friends, to demonstrate the politician's need of the Press.

{p. 62} {quote continued} the services of half a dozen younger Zionists for active work on behalf of Zionism. At the time, conscription was in force, and only those who were engaged on work of national importance could be released from active service at the Front. I remember Dr. Weizmann writing a letter to General McDonogh and invoking his assistance in obtaining the exemption from active service of Leon Simon, (who later rose to high rank in the Civil Service as Sir Leon Simon, C.B.), Harry Sacher, (on the editorial staff of the Manchester Guardian), Simon Marks,* Yamson Tolkowsky and myself. At Dr. Weizmann's request I was transferred from the War Office (M.I.9), where I was then working, to the Ministry of Propaganda, which was under Lord Northcliffe, and later to the Zionists office, where I commenced work about December 1916.

Simon Marks actually arrived at the Office in khaki, and immediately set about the task of organizing the office which, as will be easily understood, had to maintain constant communications with Zionists in most countries.

{quote continued} From that time onwards for several years, Zionism was considered an ally of the British Government, and every heip and assistance was forthcoming from each government department. Passport or travel difficulties did not exist when a man was recommended by our office. For instance, a certificate signed by me was accepted by the Home Office at that time as evidence that an Ottoman Jew was to be treated as a friendly alien and not as an enemy, which was the case with the Turkish subjects. {end quote}

**The Declaration, 1917**

The informal committee of Zionists and Mark Sykes as representative of the British Government, met on 7 February 1917 at the house of Moses Gaster,** the Chief Rabbi of the Sephardic (Spanish and Portuguese) congregations in England. Gaster opened the meeting with a statement that stressed Zionist support for British
strategic interests in Palestine which were to be an integral part of any agreement between them. As these interests might be considered paramount to British statesmen, support for Zionist aims there, Gaster said, was fully justified. Zionism was irrevocably

{footnotes} *Associated with Israel M. Sieff, another of Weizmann's inner circle, in the business which later became Marks & Spencer, Ltd. Sieff was appointed an economic consultant to the U.S. Administration (OPA) in March 1924. As subsequent supporters, with Lord Melchett, of "Political and Economic Planning" (PEP), they exercised considerable influence on British inter-war policy.

** Born in Rumania in 1856, his imposing presence and scholarship combined with "an oracular manner suggesting that he had access to mysteries hidden from others, had made him an important figure at Zionist Congresses and on Zionist platforms in England and abroad." It was calculated that Sykes would be impressed by his personality and background.

{p. 63} opposed to any internationalization proposals, even an Anglo-French condominium.

Herbert Samuel followed with an expression of the hope that Jews in Palestine would receive full national status, which would be shared by Jews in the Diaspora. The question of conflict of nationality was not mentioned and a succeeding speaker, Harry Sacher, suggested that the sharing should not involve the political implications of citizenship. Weizmann spoke of the necessity for unrestricted immigration. It is clear that the content of each speech was thoroughly prepared before the meeting.

Sykes outlined the obstacles: the inevitable Russian objections, the opposition of the Arabs, and strongly pressed French claims to all Syria, including Palestine. James de Rothschild and Nahum Sokolow, the international Zionist leader, also spoke.

The meeting ended with a summary of Zionist objectives:

{quote} 1. International recognition of Jewish right to Palestine; Juridical nationhood for the Jewish community in Palestine; The creation of a Jewish chartered company in Palestine with rights to acquire land IV. Union and one administration for Palestine; and V. Extra-territorial status for the holy places. {end quote}

The first three points are Zionist, the last two were designed to placate England and Russia, respectively. IIs and probably Italy and the Vatican. Sokolow was chosen to act as Zionist representative, to negotiate with Sir Mark Sykes. The Zionists were, of course, coordinating their activities internationally. On the same day as the meeting in London, Rabbi Stephen Wise in the United States wrote to Brandeis: "I sent the memorandum to Colonel House covering our question, and he writes: 'I hope the dream you have may soon become a reality.' "

The reports reaching England of impending dissolution of the Russian state practically removed the need for Russian endorsement of Zionist aims, but made French and Italian acceptance even more urgent. This at any rate was the belief of Sykes, Balfour, Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, who, as claimed in their subsequent statements, were convinced that proclaimed Allied support for Zionist aims would especially influence the United States. Events in Russia made the cooperation of Jewish groups with the Allies much easier. At a mass meeting in March 1917 to celebrate the revolution which had then taken place, Rabbi Stephen Wise, who had succeeded Brandeis as chairman of the American Provisional Zionist Committee after Brandeis's appointment to the Supreme Court, said: "I believe that of all the achievements of my people, none has been nobler than the part the sons and daughters of Israel have taken in the great movement which has culminated in free Russia."

{p. 64} Negotiations for a series of loans totalling $190,000,000 by the United States to the Provisional Government in Russia of Alexander Kerensky were begun on the advice of the U.S. ambassador to Russia, David R. Francis, who noted in his telegram to Secretary of State Lansing, "financial aid now from America would be a masterstroke. Confidential. Immeasurably important to the Jews that revolution succeed ..."

On 22 March 1917 Jacob H. Schiff of Kuhn, Loeb & Co., wrote to Mortimer Schiff, "We should be somewhat
careful not to appear as overzealous but you might cable Cassel because of recent action of Germany (the declaration of unlimited U-boat warfare) and developments in Russia we shall no longer abstain from Allied Governments financing when opportunity offers."

He also sent a congratulatory cable to the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first Provisional Government, referring to the previous government as "the merciless persecutors of my co-religionists."

In the same month, Lev Davidovich Bronstein, alias Leon Trotsky, a Russian-born U.S. immigrant, had left the Bronx, New York, for Russia, with a contingent of followers, while V.I. Ulyanov ( Lenin) and a party of about thirty were moving across Germany from Switzerland, through Scandinavia to Russia. Some evidence exists that Schiff and other sponsors like Helphand financed these revolutionaries.

In March 1917, President Wilson denounced as "a little group of willful men," the non-interventionists who filibustered an Administration-sponsored bill that would have empowered Wilson to wage an undeclared naval war against Germany. The opposition to Wilson was led by Senators La Follette and Norris.

On 5 April, the day before the United States Congress adopted a resolution of war, Schiff had been informed by Baron Gunzburg of the actual signing of the decrees removing all restrictions on the Jews in Russia.

At a special session of Congress on 2 April 1917, President Wilson referred to American merchant ships taking supplies to the Allies which had been sunk during the previous month by German submarines (operating a counter-blockade; the British and French fleets having blockaded the Central Powers from the beginning of the war); and then told Congress that "wonderful and heartening things have been happening within the last few weeks in Russia." He asked for a declaration of war with a mission:

{quote} for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights, and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free. {quote continued}

That night crowds filled the streets, marching, shouting, singing "Dixie" or "The Star Spangled Banner." Wilson turned to his secretary, Tumulty: "Think what that means, the applause. My message tonight was a message of death. How strange to applaud that!" So, within six months of Malcolm's specific suggestion to Sykes, the United States of America, guided by Woodrow Wilson, was on the side of the Allies in the Great War. Was Wilson guided by Brandeis away from neutrality - to war?

In London, the War Cabinet led by Lloyd George lost no time committing British forces first to the capture of Jerusalem, and then to the total expulsion of the Turks from Palestine. The attack from Egypt, launched on 26 March 1917, attempting to take Gaza, ended in failure. By the end of April a second attack on Gaza had been driven back and it had became clear that there was no prospect of a quick success on this Front. From Cairo, where he had gone hoping to follow the Army into Jerusalem with Weizmann, Sykes telegraphed to the Foreign Office that, if the Egyptian Expeditionary Force was not reinforced, then it would be necessary "to drop all Zionist projects ... Zionists in London and U.S.A. should be warned of this through M. Sokolow. " Three weeks later, Sykes was told that reinforcements were coming from Salonika. The War Cabinet also decided to replace the Force's commander with General Allenby.

Sykes was the official negotiator for the whole project of assisting the Zionists. He acted immediately after the meeting at Gaster's house by asking his friend M. Picot to meet Nahum Sokolow at the French Embassy in London in an attempt to induce the French to give way on the question of British suzerainty in Palestine. James Malcolm was then asked to go alone to Paris to arrange an interview for Sokolow directly with the French
Foreign Minister. Sokolow had been previously unsuccessful in obtaining the support of French Jewry for a meeting with the Minister; since the richest and most influential Jews in the United States and England, with the notable exception of the Rothschilds, who could have arranged such a meeting, were opposed to the political implications of Zionism. In Paris, the powerful Alliance Israelite Universelle had made every effort to dissuade him from his mission. Not that the Zionists had

(p. 66) no supporters in France other than Edmond de Rothschild, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had no reason to entangle itself with them. Now James Malcolm opened the door directly to them as he had done in London.

Sykes joined Malcolm and Sokolow in Paris. Sykes and Malcolm, apart from the consideration of Zionism and future American support for the war, were concerned with the possibility of an Arab-Jewish-Armenian entente which, through amity between Islamic, Jewish and Christian peoples, would bring peace, stability and a bright new future for the inhabitants of this area where Europe, Asia Minor and Africa meet. Sokolow went along for the diplomatic ride, but in a letter to Weizmann (20 April 1917) he wrote: "I regard the idea as quite fantastic. It is difficult to reach an understanding with the Arabs, but we will have to try. There are no conflicts between Jews and Armenians because there are no common interests whatever,"*

Several conversations were held with Picot, including one on 9 April when other officials included Jules Cambon, the Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry, and the Minister's Chef de Cabinet. Exactly what assurances were given to Sokolow is uncertain, but he wrote to Weizmann "that they accept in principle the recognition of Jewish nationality in terms of a national home, local autonomy, etc." And to Brandeis and Tschlenow, he telegraphed through French official channels: "... Have full confidence Allied victory will realise our Palestine Zionist aspirations."

Sokolow set off for Rome and the Vatican. "There, thanks to the introductions of Fitzmaurice on the one hand and the help of Baron Sidney Sonnino*** on the other," a Papal audience and interviews with the leading Foreign Office officials were quickly arranged. When Sokolow returned to Paris, he requested and received a letter from the Foreign Minister dated 4 June 1917, supporting the Zionist cause in general terms. He hastily wrote two telegrams which he gave to M. Picot for dispatch by official diplomatic channels. One was addressed to Louis D. Brandeis in the United States. It read: "Now you can move. We have the formal assurance of the French Government."****

{footnotes} * These included the socialist leader, Jules Guesde, who had joined Viviani's National Government as Minister of State; Gustave Herve; the publicist and future Minister de Monzie; and others.

** Privately, Sokolow resented Malcolm as "a stranger in the center of our work," who was "endowed with an esprit of a goyish kind."

*** Of Jewish extraction.

**** The French note represented a defeat for the "Syrian Party" in the government who believed in French dominion over the entire area. This was not only due to the strong representations of Sykes on behalf of his

{p. 67} "After many years," wrote M. Picot, "I am still moved by the thanks he poured out to me as he gave me the two telegrams ... I do not say that it was the cause of the great upsurge of enthusiasm which occurred in the United States, but I say that Judge Brandeis, to whom this telegram was addressed, was certainly one of the elements determining the decision of President Wilson."

But Wilson had declared war one month before! It is natural that M. Picot should want to believe that he had played a significant part in bringing America into the war and therefore helping his country's victory. The evidence certainly supports his having a part in helping a Zionist victory. Their objective was in sight, but had still to be taken and held. Although the United States was now a belligerent, no declaration of support had been made for the Zionist program for Palestine, either by Britain or the United States, and some of the richest and most powerful Jews in both countries were opposed to it.
The exception among these Jewish merchant princes was, of course, the House of Rothschild. From London on 25 April 1917, James de Rothschild cabled to Brandeis that Balfour was coming to the United States, and urged American Jewry to support "a Jewish Palestine under British protection," as well as to press their government to do so. He advised Brandeis to meet Balfour. The meeting took place at a White House luncheon. "You are one of the Americans I wanted to meet," said the British Foreign Secretary. Brandeis cabled Louis de Rothschild: "Have had a satisfactory talk with Mr. Balfour, also with our President. This is not for publication."

On the other hand, a letter dated 17 May 1917 appeared in The Times (London) signed by the President of the Jewish Board of Deputies and the President of the Anglo-Jewish Association (Alexander and Montefiore, both men of wealth and eminence) stating their approval of Jewish settlement in Palestine as a source of inspiration for all Jews, but adding that they could not favor the Zionists' political scheme. Jews, they believed, were a religious community and they opposed the creation of "a secular Jewish nationality recruited on some loose and obscure principle of race and ethnological peculiarity." They particularly took exception to Zionist pressure for a Jewish chartered company invested with political and economic privileges in which Jews alone would participate, since this was incompatible with the desires of world Jewry for equal rights wherever they lived.

\{footnote\} Government, but was assisted by those of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who prevailed upon the Alliance Israelite to back the Zionist cause. The result of the no less successful conversations in Rome and the Vatican were cabled to the Zionist Organization over British controlled lines.

{p. 68} A controversy then ensued in the British press, in Jewish associations and in the corridors of government, between the Zionist and non-Zionist Jews. In this, Weizmann really had less weight, but he mobilized the more forceful team. The Chief Rabbi dissociated himself from the non-Zionist statement and charged that the Alexander-Montefiore letter did not represent the views of their organizations. Lord Rothschild wrote: "We Zionists cannot see how the establishment of an autonomous Jewish State under the aegis of one of the Allied Powers could be subversive to the loyalty of Jews to countries of which they were citizens. In the letter you have published, the question is also raised of a chartered company." He continued: "We Zionists have always felt that if Palestine is to be colonized by the Jews, some machinery must be set up to receive the immigrants, settle them on the land and develop the land, and to be generally a directing agency. I can only again emphasize that we Zionists have no wish for privileges at the expense of other nationalities, but only desire to be allowed to work out our destinies side by side with other nationalities in an autonomous state under the suzerainty of one of the Allied Powers." This letter stressed the colonialist aspect of Zionism, but detracted from the strong statist declaration of Weizmann. The Zionist body in Palestine was to be of a more organizational character for the Jewish community.

Perhaps feeling that his statement had been a little too strong for liberal acceptance, Weizmann also joined this correspondence in the Times. Writing as President of the English Zionist Federation, he first claimed that, {quote} it is strictly a question of fact that the Jews are a nationality. An overwhelming majority of them had always had the conviction that they were a nationality, which has been shared by non-Jews in all countries. {end quote}

The letter continued:

{quote} The Zionists are not demanding in Palestine monopolies or exclusive privileges, nor are they asking that any part of Palestine should be administered by a chartered company to the detriment of others. It always was and remains a cardinal principle of Zionism as a democratic movement that all races and sects in Palestine should enjoy full justice and liberty, and Zionists are confident that the new suzerain whom they hope Palestine will acquire as a result of the war will, in its administration of the country, be guided by the same principle. (emphasis supplied) {end quote}

The competition for the attention of the British public and British Jewry by the Zionists and their Jewish opponents continued in the press and in their various special meetings. A manifesto of solidarity with the opinions of Alexander and Montefiore was sent to The Times on 1 June 1917; and in the same month at Buffalo, N.Y., the
President of the Annual Convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis added his weight against Jewish nationalism: "I am not here to quarrel with Zionism. Mine is only the intention to declare that we, as rabbis, who are consecrated to the service of the Lord ... have no place in a movement in which Jews band together on racial or national grounds, and for a political State or even for a legally-assured Home."

But while the controversy continued, the Zionists worked hard to produce a draft document which could form a declaration acceptable to the Allies, particularly Britain and the United States, and which would be in the nature of a charter of international status for their aims in Palestine. This was treated as a matter of urgency, as Weizmann believed it would remove the support from non-Zionist Jews and ensure against the uncertainties inseparable from the war.

On 13 June 1917 Weizmann wrote Sir Ronald Graham at the Foreign Office that "it appears desirable from every point of view that the British Government should give expression to its sympathy and support of the Zionist claims on Palestine. In fact, it need only confirm the view which eminent and representative members of the Government have many times expressed to us ..." This was timed to coincide with a minute of the same date of one of Balfour's advisers in which it was suggested that the time had arrived "when we might meet the wishes of the Zionists and give them an assurance that H.M.G. are in general sympathy with their aspirations." To which Balfour remarked, "Personally, I should still prefer to associate the U.S.A. in the protectorate, should we succeed in securing it."

The Zionists also had to counter tentative British and American plans to seek a separate peace with Turkey. When Weizmann, for the Zionists, together with Malcolm, for the Armenians, went on 10 June to the Foreign Office to protest such a plan, Weizmann broadly suggested that the Zionist leaders in Germany were being courted by the German Government, and he mentioned, to improve credibility, that approaches were made to them through the medium of a Dr. Lepsius.

The truth, probably, is that the Berlin Zionist Executive was initiating renewed contact with the German Government so as to give weight to the pleading of their counterparts in London that the risk of German competition could not be left out of account. Lepsius was actually a leading Evangelical divine, well known for his championship of the Armenians, who were then being massacred in Turkey. When Leonard Stein examined the papers of the Berlin Executive after the war, his name was not to be found, and Mr. Lichtheim of the Executive had no recollection of any overtures by Lepsius.

In the U.S., in July 1917, a special mission consisting of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., and Justice Brandeis's nephew, Felix Frankfurter, was charged by President Wilson to proceed to Turkey, against which the United States did not declare war, to sound out the possibility of peace negotiations between Turkey and the Allies. In this, Wilson may have been particularly motivated by his passion to stop the massacres of Armenian and Greek Christians which were then taking place in Turkey and for whom he expressed immense solicitude on many occasions. Weizmann, however, accompanied by the French Zionist M. Weyl, forewarned, proceeded to intercept them at Gibraltar and persuaded them to return home. During 1917 and 1918 more Christians were massacred in Turkey. Had Morgenthau and Frankfurter carried out their mission successfully, maybe this would have been avoided.

This account appears in William Yale's book *The Near East: A Modern History*. He was a Special Agent of the State Department in the Near East during the First World War. When I had dinner with him on 12 May 1970 at the Biltmore Hotel in New York, I asked him if Weizmann had told him how the special mission had been aborted. He replied that Weizmann said that the Governor of Gibraltar had held a special banquet in their honor, but at the end all the British officials withdrew discreetly, leaving the four Jews alone. "Then," said Weizmann, "we fixed it."

The same evening, he told me something which he said he had never told anyone else, and which was in his secret papers which were only to be opened after his death. He later wrote to me, after he had read *The Palestine Diary*, saying that he would like me to deal with those papers.

One of Yale's assignments was to follow Wilson's preference for having private talks with key personalities
capable of influencing the course of events. He did this with Lloyd George, General Allenby and Col. T.E. Lawrence, for example. Yale said he had a talk with Weizmann "somewhere in the Mediterranean in 1919," and asked him what might happen if the British did not support a national home for the Jews in Palestine. Weizmann thumped his fist on the table and the teacups jumped, "If they don't," he said, "we'll smash the British Empire as we smashed the Russian Empire."

Brandeis was in Washington during the summer of 1917 and conferred with Secretary of State Robert S. Lansing from time to time on Turkish-American relations and the treatment of Jews in Palestine. He busied himself in particular with drafts of what later became the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate for Palestine, and in obtaining American approval for them. A considerable number of drafts were made in London and transmitted to the United States, through War Office channels, for the use of the American Zionist Political Committee. Some were

{p. 71} detailed, but the British Government did not want to commit itself to more than a general statement of principles. On 18 July, such a statement, approved in the United States, was forwarded by Lord Rothschild to Lord Balfour. It read as follows:

{quote} His Majesty's Government, after considering the aims of the Zionist Organization, accepts the principle of recognizing Palestine as the National Home* of the Jewish people and the right of the Jewish people to build up its national life in Palestine under a protection to be established at the conclusion of peace, following upon the successful issue of war His Majesty's Government regards as essential for the realization of this principle the grant of internal autonomy to the Jewish nationality in Palestine, freedom of immigration for Jews, and the establishment of a Jewish national colonization corporation for the resettlement and economic development of the country. The conditions and forms of the internal autonomy and a charter for the Jewish national colonization corporation should, in the view of His Majesty's Government, be elaborated in detail, and determined with the representatives of the Zionist Organization. {end quote}

{Lord Rothschild was Lord Walter Rothschild: perry.html}

It seems possible that Balfour would have issued this declaration but strong representatives against it were made directly to the Cabinet by Lucien Wolf, Claude Montefiore, Sir Mathew Nathan, Secretary of State for India Edwin Montagu,** and other non-Zionist Jews. It was significant, they believed, that "anti-semites are always very sympathetic to Zionism," and though they would welcome the establishment in Palestine of a center of Jewish culture, some - like Philip Magnes - feared that a political declaration would antagonize other sections of the population in Palestine, and might result in the Turks dealing with the Jews as they had dealt with the Armenians. The Jewish opposition was too important to ignore, and the preparation of a new draft was commenced. At about this time, Northcliffe and Reading*** visited Washington and had a

{footnotes} * The use of the term "National Home" was a continuation of the euphemism deliberately adopted since the first Zionist Congress, when the term "Heimstaette" was used instead of any of the possible German words signifying "state." At that time, its purpose was to avoid provoking the hostility of non-Zionist Jews. The author or inventor of the term "Heimstaette" was Max Nordau who coined it "to deceive by its mildness until such time as "there was no reason to dissimulate our real aim." The Arabic translation of "National Home" ignores the intended subtlety, and the words employed: watan, qawm, and sha'b, are much stronger in meaning than an abstract notion of government.

** (1879-1924). His father, the first Lord Swaythling, and Herbert Samuel's father were brothers.

*** Rufus Isaacs, a Jewish lawyer, who had quickly risen to fame in his {continued on p. 72}

{p. 72} discussion with Brandeis at which they undoubtedly discussed Zionism.

Multiple pressures at key points led Lord Robert Cecil to telegraph to Col. E.M. House on 3 September 1917: "We are being pressed here for a declaration of sympathy with the Zionist movement and I should be very grateful if you felt able to ascertain unofficially if the President favours such a declaration." House,
who had performed services relating to Federal Reserve and currency legislation for Jacob W. Schiff and Paul Warburg, and was Wilson's closet adviser, relayed the message, but a week later Cecil was still without a reply.

On 11 September the Foreign Office had ready for dispatch the following message for Sir William Wiseman,* head of the British Military Intelligence Service in the United States: "Has Colonel House been able to ascertain whether the President favours sympathy with Zionist aspirations as asked in my telegram of September 3rd? We should be most grateful for an early reply as September 17th is the Jewish New Year and announcement of sympathy by or on that date would have excellent effect." But before it was sent, a telegram from Colonel House dated 11 September reached the Foreign Office.

Wilson had been approached as requested and had expressed the opinion that "the time was not opportune for any definite statement further, perhaps, than one of sympathy, provided it can be made without conveying any real commitment." Presumably, a formal declaration would presuppose the expulsion of the Turks from Palestine, but the United States was not at war with Turkey, and a declaration implying annexation would exclude an early and separate peace with that country.

In a widely publicized speech in Cincinnati on 21 May 1916, after temporarily relinquishing his appointment as Ambassador to Turkey in favor of a Jewish colleague, Henry Morgenthau had announced that he had recently suggested to the Turkish Government that Turkey should sell Palestine to the Zionists after the war. The proposal, he said, had been well received, but its publication caused anger in Turkey.

Weizmann was "greatly astonished" at this news, especially as he had "wired to Brandeis requesting him to use his influence in our favour. But up to now I have heard nothing from Brandeis."

*Joined Kuhn, Loeb & Co. in 1921, and was responsible for their liaison with London banks, and was "in charge of financing several large enterprises."

{footnote continued from p. 71} profession, and then in politics. This was a period when elevations to the peerage for political and financial assistance to the party in power were so numerous that the whole system of British peerage was weakened. In 1916 Isaacs was a viscount; in 1917 an earl.

{p. 73} On 19 September Weizmann cabled to Brandeis:

{quote} Following text declaration has been approved by Foreign Office and Prime Minister and submitted to War Cabinet (1) H.M. Government accepts the principle that Palestine should be reconstituted as the national home of the Jewish people. (2) H.M. Government will use its best endeavours to secure the achievement of the object and will discuss the necessary methods and means with the Zionist Organization. {end quote}

Weizmann suggested that non-Zionist opposition should be forestalled, and in this it would "greatly help if President Wilson and yourself support the text. Matter most urgent." He followed this up with a telegram to two leading New York Zionists, asking them to "see Brandeis and Frankfurter to immediately discuss my last two telegrams with them," adding that it might be necessary for him to come to the United States himself.

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Brandeis saw House on 23 September and drafted a message, sent the following day through the British War Office. It advised that presidential support would be facilitated if the French and Italians made inquiry about the White House attitude, but he followed this the same day with another cable stating that from previous talks with the President and in the opinion of his close advisers, he could safely say that Wilson would be in complete sympathy.

Thus Brandeis had either persuaded Wilson that there was nothing in the draft (Rothschild) declaration of 19 September which could be interpreted as "conveying any real commitment," which is difficult to believe, or he had induced the President to change his mind about the kind of declaration he could approve or was sure he and House could do so.

On 7 February 1917, Stephen Wise had written to Brandeis: "I sent the memorandum to Colonel House covering
Robert John, Behind the Balfour Declaration

our question, and he writes, 'I hope the dream you have may soon become a reality'." In October, after seeing House together with Wise, de Haas reported to Brandeis: "He has told us that he was as much interested in our success as ourselves." To Wilson, House stated that "The Jews from every tribe descended in force, and they seem determined to break in with a jimmy, if they are not let in." A new draft declaration had been prepared; Wilson had to support it.

On 9 October 1917, Weizmann cabled again to Brandeis from London of difficulties from the "assimilants" opposition: "They have found an excellent champion ... in Mr. Edwin Montagu who is a member of the Government and has certainly made use of his position to injure the Zionist cause."

Weizmann also telegraphed to Brandeis a new (Milner-Amery) formula. The same draft was cabled by Balfour to House in Washington on 14 October:

{quote}His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish race and will use its best endeavours to facilitate achievement of this object; it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed in any other country by such Jews who are fully contented with their existing nationality and citizenship. {end quote}

It was reinforced by a telegram from the U.S. Embassy in London direct to President Wilson (by-passing the State Department), stating that the "question of a message of sympathy with the (Zionist) movement" was being reconsidered by the British Cabinet "in view of reports that (the) German Government are making great efforts to capture (the) Zionist movement."

Brandeis and his associates found the draft unsatisfactory in two particulars. They disliked that part of the draft's second safeguard clause which read, "by such Jews who are fully contented with their existing nationality and citizenship," and substituted "the rights and civil political status enjoyed by Jews in any country." In addition, Brandeis apparently proposed the change of "Jewish race" to "Jewish people."

Jacob de Haas, then Executive Secretary of the Provisional Zionist Committee, has written that the pressure to issue the declaration was coming from the English Zionist leaders: "they apparently needed it to stabilize their position against local anti-Zionism. If American Zionists were anxious about it, Washington would act." De Haas continues:

{quote}Then one morning Baron Furness, one of England's unostentatious representatives, brought to 44 East 23rd Street, at that time headquarters of the Zionist Organization, the final draft ready for issue. The language of the declaration accepted by the English Zionists based as it was on the theory of discontent was unacceptable to me. I informed Justice Brandeis of my views, called in Dr. Schmarya Levin and proceeded to change the text. Then with Dr. Wise, I hurried to Colonel House. By this time he had come to speak of Zionism as "our cause." Quietly he perused my proposed change, discussed its wisdom and promised to call President Wilson on his private wire and urge the change. He cabled to the British Cabinet. Next day he informed me that the President had approved. I had business that week-end in Boston and it was over the long distance wire that my secretary in New York read to me the final form as repeated by cable from London. It was the text as I had altered it. {end quote}

"It seems clear," wrote Stein, "that it was not without some prompting by House that Wilson eventually authorized a favourable reply to the British enquiry." Sir William Wiseman, "who was persona grata both with the President and with House, was relied upon by the Foreign Office for dealing with the declaration at the American end.

{p. 75} Sir William's recollection is that Colonel House was influential in bringing the matter to the President's attention and persuading him to approve the formula."

On 16 October 1917, after a conference with House, Wiseman telegraphed to Balfour's private secretary: "Colonel House put the formula before the President, who approves of it but asks that no mention of his
approval shall be made when His Majesty's Government makes formula public, as he had arranged that American Jews shall then ask him for approval, which he will publicly give here."

The Balfour Declaration, as stated, was issued on 2 November 1917. Its text, seemingly so simple, had been prepared by some of the craftiest of the craft of legal drafting. Leaflets containing its message were dropped by air on Germany and Austria and on the Jewish belt from Poland to the Black Sea. Seven months had passed since America entered the war. It was an epochal triumph for Zionism, and some believe, for the Jews. On the other hand, two months before the declaration, Sokolow had written of a marked falling off in "le philo-semitisme d'autrefois," ascribed by some to the impression that the Russian Jews were the mainspring of Bolshevism; and on the day it was issued, The Jewish Chronicle complained of "the antisemitic campaign which a section of the press in this country, indifferent to the national interests, is sedulously conducting."

There only remained certain courtesies to be effected. On 12 November 1917, Weizmann wrote a letter of thanks to Brandeis:

{quote} "... I need hardly say how we all rejoice in this great event and how grateful we all feel to you for the valuable and efficient help which you have lent to the cause in the critical hour ... Once more, dear Mr. Brandeis, I beg to tender to you our heartiest congratulations not only on my own behalf but also on behalf of our friends here and may this epoch-making be a beginning of great work for our sorely tried people and also of mankind." {end quote}

The other principal Allied governments were approached with requests for similar pronouncements. The French simply supported the British Government in a short paragraph on 9 February 1918. Italian support was contained in a note dated 9 May 1918 to Mr. Sokolow by their ambassador in London in which he stressed the religious divisions of communities, grouping "a Jewish national centre" with "existing religious communities."

On 31 August 1918, President Wilson wrote to Rabbi Wise "to express the satisfaction I have felt in the progress of the Zionist movement ... since ... Great Britain's approval of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." Brandeis joined in Zionist delight at the President's endorsement ...

{p. 78} Wilson and the War

If the contract with Jewry was to bring the United States into the Great War in exchange for the promise of Palestine, did they in fact deliver, through Brandeis or anyone else? For the German-Jewish princes of the purse in the United States, the evidence points more to the Russian revolution being the factor of most weight in determining their attitude. Was it the resumption of Germany's submarine blockade, the sinking of the Laconia, the Zimmerman telegram, which really influenced Wilson for war? Was it the Zionist counsel of Brandeis? In a careful study, Prof. Alex M. Arnett showed in 1937 that Wilson had decided to put the United States into the war on the side of the Allies many months before the resumption of U-boat warfare by Germany, which was promoted as a sufficient reason.

In the propaganda battle for American public opinion between Britain and Germany, the former had the advantage of language, and the fact that on 5 August 1914 they had cut the international undersea cables linking Germany and the United States, thus eliminating quick communication between those two countries and giving British "news" the edge in forming public opinion.

{p. 79} The Intimate Papers of Colonel House record that on the morning of 7 May 1915, he and the British Foreign Secretary Grey drove to Kew. "We spoke of the probability of an ocean liner being sunk," recorded House, "and I told him if this were done, a flame of indignation would sweep across America, which would in itself probably carry us into the war." An hour later, House was with King George in Buckingham Palace. "We fell to talking, strangely enough," the Colonel wrote that night, "of the probability of Germany sinking a trans-Atlantic liner. ..." He said, "Suppose they should sink the Lusitania with American passengers on board. ..." That evening House dined at the American Embassy. A dispatch

{p. 80} came in, stating that at two in the afternoon a German submarine had torpedoed and sunk the Lusitania
off the southern coast of Ireland. 1,200 lives were lost, including 128 Americans. It took 60 years for the truth about its cargo to be confirmed; that it had carried munitions which exploded when the torpedo hit. But Secretary of State Bryan remarked to his wife, "I wonder if that ship carried munitions of war? ... If she did carry them, it puts a different face on the whole matter! England has been using our citizens to protect her ammunition."

... immediately after the election of Wilson, House had anonymously published a political romance entitled Philip Dru: Administrator. Dru leads a revolt and becomes a dictator in Washington, where he formulates a new American constitution and brings about an international grouping or league of Powers.

{p. 82} The other members of the Cabinet and the Chief of Staff repudiated peace without victory.

The other course was that adopted: to thrust more men and money into the holocaust (defined as a wholesale sacrifice or destruction). What would now be called political and military summit meetings were held in France to plan for it. They commenced on 15 November 1916. In the political presentations, the only reference to America seems to have been offered by Lloyd George:

{quote} The difficulties we have experienced in making payment for our purchases abroad must be as present to the minds of French statesmen as to ourselves. Our dependence upon America is growing for food raw material and munitions. We are rapidly exhausting the securities negotiable in America. If victory shone on our banners our difficulties would disappear. (Asquith deleted the next sentence, which read) Success means credit financiers never hesitate to lend to a prosperous concern: but business which is lumbering along amidst great difficulties and which is making no headway in spite of enormous expenditure will find the banks gradually closing their books against it. {endquote}

This reference to Allied problems in getting more credit from the bankers in the United States, who were predominantly German-Jewish, elucidates Schiff's agreement to arrange credit for Britain through the Jewish banker Cassel - they were not waiting for a Balfour Declaration, they were waiting for the Russian Revolution!

On the military side, there was general agreement at the summit conference that what was needed was a "knock-out blow," and it was decided that the 1917 plan of campaign would be an offensive on all fronts, including Palestine, with the Western Front as the principal one. On 7 December the Asquith government fell and Lloyd George who was pledged to a more vigorous prosecution of the war, took over the Government. Five days later, Germany and her allies put forward notes in which they stated their willingness to consider peace by compromise and negotiations. The first of the battles opened on 9 April 1917, heralded by a bombardment of 2,700,000 shells. Another attack was launched by the French nine days later, these resulting in about a million dead and wounded on both sides. The French Army mutinied, and General Petain was put in charge. At this time the two events which were to twist the world into a new shape were occurring, the Russian Revolution and American entry into the war. The French Government wanted to defer all offensive operations until American assistance became available, but the generals thought otherwise. Maj.-Gen. J.F.C. Fuller, whom I have met, one of

{p. 83} the few bright military-political minds in this century, tells us that Haig "had set his heart on a decisive battle in Flanders, and so obsessed was he by it that he believed that he could beat the Germans single-handed, and before the Americans came in." I do not think that people who did not live in the great days of the British Empire can have a sense of the hubris of a Haig, unless one gets it from classical literature. Perhaps today it would be found in the head of the World Bank, from whom we taxpayers, like the common soldiers of that time, are so far removed! There was actually resentment in the England of my boyhood about Americans claiming to have played any significant part in fighting the Great War.

The outcome of the grandiosity of the generals and politicians was the costly Flanders campaign of the summer and autumn. On 7th June it was opened by the limited and successful Battle of Messines, which was preceded by a seventeen days' bombardment of 3,500,000 shells, and initiated by the explosion of nineteen mines packed with a million pounds of high explosives.
On 31st July it was followed by the Third Battle of Ypres, for which the largest force of artillery ever seen in British history was assembled. In all, the preliminary bombardment lasted nineteen days, and during it 4,300,000 shells, some 107,000 tons in weight, were hurled onto the prospective low lying battlefield. Its entire surface was upheaved, all drains, dikes, culverts and roads were destroyed, and an almost uncrossable swamp created, in which the infantry wallowed for three and a half months. When, on 10th November, the battle ended, the Germans had been pushed back a maximum depth of five miles on a frontage of ten miles, at a cost of a little under 200,000 men to themselves, and, at the lowest estimate, of 300,000 to their enemy.

Thus ended the last of the great artillery battles of attrition on the Western Front, and when in retrospect they are looked on, it becomes understandable why the politicians were so eager to escape them.

The great war was like a great magnified mutual destruction of noble men in the Nibelungenlied. Set against each other by the vanity and lack of vision of their rulers, the more they fought the more there was to avenge until death delivered them from their need. "At the goingdown of the sun and in the morning," we should learn their lesson.

Britain's Obligation?

In a memorandum marked in his own handwriting "Private & Confidential" to Lord Peel and other members of the Royal Commission on Palestine in 1936, James Malcolm wrote: {quote}I have always been convinced that until the Jewish question was more or less satisfactorily settled there could be no real or permanent

{p. 84} peace in the world, and that the solution lay in Palestine. This was one of the two main considerations which impelled me, in the autumn of 1916, to initiate the negotiations which led eventually to the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate for Palestine. The other, of course, was to bring America into the War.

For generations Jews and Gentiles alike have assumed in error that the cause of Anti-Semitism was in the main religious. Indeed, the Jews in the hope of obtaining relief from intolerance, engaged in the intensive and subversive propagation of materialistic doctrines productive of "Liberalism," Socialism, and Irreligion, resulting in de- Christianisation. On the other hand, the more materialistic the Gentiles became, the more aware they were subconsciously made of the cause of Anti-Semitism, which at bottom was, and remains to this day, primarily an economic one. A French writer - Vicomte de Poncins - has remarked that in some respects Anti-Semitism is largely a form of self-defence against Jewish economic aggression. In my opinion, however, neither the Jews nor the Gentiles bear the sole responsibility for this.

As I have already said, I had a part in initiating the negotiations in the early autumn of 1916 between the British and French Governments and the Zionist leaders, which led to the Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate for Palestine.

The first object, of course, was to enlist the very considerable and necessary influence of the Jews, and especially of the Zionist or Nationalist Jews, to help us bring America into the War at the most critical period of the hostilities. This was publicly acknowledged by Mr. Lloyd George during a recent debate in the House of Commons.

Our second object was to enable and induce Jews all the world over to envisage constructive work as their proper field, and to take their minds off destructive and subversive schemes which, owing to their general sense of insecurity and homelessness, even in the periods preceding the French Revolution, had provoked so much trouble allId unrest in various countries, until their ever-increasing violence culminated in the Third International and the Russian Communist Revolution. But to achieve this end it was necessary to promise them Palestine in consideration of their help, as already explained, and not as a mere humanitarian experiment or enterprise, as represented in certain quarters. {endquote}

It is no wonder that Weizmann did not refer to Malcolm in his autobiography, and Sokolow privately resented Malcolm "as a stranger in the center of our work," who was "endowed with an esprit of a goyish kind."
It is also worth noting that on page seven of his memorandum Malcolm quoted General Ludendorff, former Quartermaster-General of the German Army, and perhaps at least remembered for heading an unsuccessful coup in Munich in 1923, as saying that the Balfour Declaration was "the cleverest thing done by the Allies in the way of propaganda and that he wished Germany had thought of it first."

On the other hand, might it not have provided some cold comfort for Ludendorff to believe that the Zionist Jews were a major factor in

(p. 85) the outcome of the war - if that is what he is implying?

Malcolm's belief in the Balfour Declaration as a means of bringing the United States into the war was confirmed by Samuel Landman, secretary to the Zionist leaders Weizmann and Sokolow, and later secretary of the World Zionist Organization. As

{quote}the only way (which proved so to be) to induce the American President to come into the war was to secure the cooperation of Zionist Jews by promising them Palestine, and thus enlist and mobilize the hitherto unsuspectedly powerful forces of Zionist Jews in America and elsewhere in favour of the Allies on a quid pro quo contract basis. Thus, as will be seen, the Zionists having carried out their part, and greatly helped to bring America in, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was but the public confirmation of the necessarily secret "gentlemen's" agreement of 1916, made with the previous knowledge, acquiescence, and or approval of the Arabs, and of the British, and of the French and other Allied governments, and not merely a voluntary, altruistic and romantic gesture on the part of Great Britain as certain people either through pardonable ignorance assume or unpardonable ill-will would represent or rather misrepresent ... {endquote}

Speaking in the House of Commons on 4 July 1922, Winston Churchill asked rhetorically,

{quote}Are we to keep our pledge to the Zionists made in 1917 . . .? Pledges and promises were made during the war, and they were made, not only on the merits, though I think the merits are considerable, they were made because it was considered they would be of value to us in our struggle to win the war. It was considered that the support which the Jews could give us all over the world, and particularly in the United States, and also in Russia, would be a definite palpable advantage. I was not responsible at that time for the giving of those pledges, nor for the conduct of the war of which they were, when given, an integral part. But like other members I supported the policy of the War Cabinet. Like other members, I accepted and was proud to accept a share in those great transactions, which left us with terrible losses, with formidable obligations, but nevertheless with unchallengable victory. {endquote}

However, Hansard notes, one member, Mr. Gwynne, plaintively complained that "the House has not yet had an opportunity of discussing it."

Writing to The Times on 2 November 1949, Malcolm Thomson, the official biographer of Lloyd George, noted that this was the thirty-second anniversary of the Balfour Declaration and it seemed a

{quote}suitable occasion for stating briefly certain facts about its origin which have recently been incorrectly recorded. When writing the official biography of Lloyd George, I was able to study the original documents bearing on this question. From these it was clear that although certain members of the Cabinets of 1916 and 1917 sympathized with Zionist aspirations, the efforts of Zionist leaders to win any promise of support from the British Government

(p. 86) had proved quite ineffectual, and the secret Sykes-Picot agreement with the French for partition of spheres of interest in the Middle East seemed to doom Zionist aims. A change of attitude was, however brought about through the initiative of Mr. James A. Malcolm, who pressed on Sir Mark Sykes, then Under-Secretary to the War Cabinet, the thesis that an allied offer to restore Palestine to the Jews would swing over from the German to the allied side the very powerful influence of American Jews, including Judge Brandeis, the friend and adviser of President Wilson. Sykes was interested, and at his request Malcolm introduced him to Dr. Weizmann and the other Zionist leaders, and negotiations were opened which culminated in the Balfour
These facts have at one time or another been mentioned in various books and articles, and are set out by Dr. Adolf Boehm in his monumental history of Zionism, "Die Zionistische Bewegung," Vol. I, p. 656. It therefore surprised me to find in Dr. Weizmann's autobiography, "Trial and Error," that he makes no mention of Mr. Malcolm's crucially important intervention, and even attributes his own introduction to Sir Mark Sykes to the late Dr. Gaster. As future historians might not unnaturally suppose Dr. Weizmann's account to be authentic, I have communicated with Mr. Malcolm, who not only confirms the account I have given, but holds a letter written to him by Dr. Weizmann on March 5 1941 saying: "You will be interested to hear that some time ago I had occasion to write to Mr. Lloyd George about your useful and timely initiative in 1916 to bring about the negotiations between myself and my Zionist colleagues and Sir Mark Sykes and others about Palestine and Zionist support of the allied cause in America and elsewhere."

No doubt a complexity of motives lay behind the Balfour Declaration, including strategic and diplomatic considerations and, on the part of Balfour, Lloyd George, and Smuts, a genuine sympathy with Zionist aims. But the determining factor was the intervention of Mr. Malcolm with his scheme for engaging by some such concession the support of American Zionists for the allied cause in the first world war. {endquote}

Yours, & c. MALCOLM THOMSON

According to Lloyd George's Memoirs of the Peace Conference where, as planned many years before, the Zionists were strongly represented,

{quote} There is no better proof of the value of the Balfour Declaration as a military move than the fact that Germany entered into negotiations with Turkey in an endeavor to provide an alternative scheme which would appeal to Zionists. A German-Jewish Society, the V.J.O.D., * was formed, and in January 1918 Talaat, the Turkish Grand Vizier at the instigation of the Germans, gave vague promises of legislation by

*Vereinigung Juedischer Organisationen in Deutschland zur Wahrung der Rechte des Osten. (Alliance of the Jewish Organizations of Germany for the Safeguarding the Rights of the East.)

{p. 87} means of which "all justifiable wishes of the Jews in Palestine would be able to meet their fulfilment."

Another most cogent reason for the adoption by the Allies of the policy of the Declaration lay in the state of Russia herself. Russian Jews had been secretly active on behalf of the Central Powers from the first; they had become the chief agents of German pacifist propaganda in Russia; by 1917 they had done much in preparing for that general disintegration of Russian society, later recognised as the Revolution.

It was believed that if Great Britain declared for the fulfillment of Zionist aspirations in Palestine under her own pledge, one effect would be to bring Russian Jewry to the cause of the Entente.

It was believed, also, that such a declaration would have a potent influence upon world Jewry outside Russia, and secure for the Entente the aid of Jewish financial interests. In America, their aid in this respect would have a special value when the Allies had almost exhausted the gold and marketable securities available for American purchases. Such were the chief considerations which, in 1917 impelled the British Government towards making a contract with Jewry. {endquote}

As for getting the support of Russian Jewry, Trotsky's aims were to overthrow the Provisional Government and turn the imperialist war into a war of international revolution. In November 1917 the first aim was accomplished. Military factors primarily influenced Lenin to sign the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918. The Zionist sympathizers Churchill and George seemed never to lose an opportunity to tell the British people that they had an obligation to support the Zionists.

But what had the Zionists done for Britain?

Where was the documentation? "Measured by British interests alone," wrote the Oxford historian Elizabeth
Monroe in 1963, the Balfour Declaration "was one of the greatest mistakes in our imperial history!" The Zionists had the Herzlian tradition—shall we call it—of "Promises, promises." **Considerable credit for the diplomacy which brought into existence the Jewish national home must go to Weizmann.** A British official who came into contact with him summarized his diplomatic method in the following words:

> When (the First World War) began, his cause was hardly known to the principal statesman of the victors. It had many enemies, and some of the most formidable were amongst the most highly placed of his own people. He once told me that 2,000 interviews had gone into the making of the Balfour Declaration. With unerring skill he adapted his arguments to the special circumstances of each statesman. To the British and Americans he could use biblical language and awake a deep emotional undertone, to other nationalities he more often talked in terms of interest. Mr. Lloyd George was told that Palestine was a little mountainous country not unlike Wales; with Lord Balfour the philosophical background of Zionism could be surveyed; for Lord Weizmann the problem was placed in the setting of a new world organization; while to Lord Milner the extension of imperial power could be vividly portrayed. To me, who dealt with these matters as a junior officer of the General Staff, he brought from many sources all the evidences that could be obtained of the importance of a Jewish national home to the strategical position of the British Empire, but he always indicated by a hundred shades and inflections of the voice that he believed that I could also appreciate better than my superiors other more subtle and recondite arguments.

Triumph and Tragedy

Herzl correctly predicted a great war between the Great Powers. His followers organized to be ready for that time to further their ambitions through exploiting the rivalry of the Great Powers. They had a vested interest in promoting that war and in its continuance until Palestine was wrested from Turkey by British soldiers. They prepared for the Peace Conference at Versailles although they had no belligerent standing, but they had the weight of the Rothschilds, Bernard Baruch, Felix Frankfurter, and others, which made room for them. In the Introduction to *The Palestine Diary* I wrote,

> The establishment in 1948 of a Jewish state in Palestine was a phenomenal achievement. In fifty years from the Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland, in 1897—attended by a small number of Jews who represented little more than themselves—the Zionist idea had captivated the vast majority of world Jewry, and enlisted in particular Britain, America and the United Nations to intervene in Palestine in its support.

In 1983, seventy-five years after the Balfour Declaration and nearly ninety years after the first Zionist Congress in Switzerland, a meeting was held there of the International Conference on the Question of Palestine—but the conferees were not Jews—they were Palestinians—two million are in exile—displaced by Jews! Where is the meaning for us?

On a day-to-day level, we can look in our newspapers for Zionist tactics of influence and leverage which we can document they have used successfully in the past. Then there is a long-term strategy. From the mass of material in a century of history and in our complex society of today I see the underlying effect of two themes. They influence the lives of every one of us, and will continue to do so unless a change is made. We can see them clearly in their early formulation, before they had been fed as valid data into the information processing and software systems of our society, with the result that most of the answers we get are wrong! They are found in the conversation of Herzl and Meyer-Cohn in 1895. The sets of ideas are those associated with Jewish nationalism and racism on the Right—racism being defined by Sir Andrew Huxley P.R.S. as the belief in the subjugation of one race by another, and on the other hand the concept of "universalism." Acceptance of this input from the Right into our computations has resulted in the transfer of some $50 billion from our pockets into theirs. In 1983, budgeted American tax money, labeled "aid," alone amounts to $625 for every man, woman and child in Israel. It results in our acceptance of concentration camps for Palestinians containing thousands of people without a squeak from the so-called "international community"; in acceptance of their assassination, torture, deportation, closing of their schools and colleges, even of their massacre. The lives of American troops, men and women, are committed to supporting these crimes. Criticism is called "antisemitism," a word which...
computes as "unemployable social outcast."

Jewish nationalism and Israeli policy planned the present destabilization of Lebanon in 1955. This is part of larger schemes to fragment and enfeeble possible challenges to their supremacy in the Middle East. On the other hand we have "universalism," This, I believe was the factor motivating Woodrow Wilson through House in his telegram of 30 May 1916 and letter of 16 June 1915 to the President, to which I have referred. "The League of Nations," the United Nations Organization, are its printouts.

(p. 91) Appendix

SECRET - Political Intelligence Department, Foreign Office.

Special 3.

Memorandum on British Commitments to King Husein

(Page 9) With regard to Palestine, His Majesty's Government are committed by Sir H. McMahon's letter to the Sherif on the 24th October, 1915, to its inclusion in the boundaries of Arab independence. But they have stated their policy regarding the Palestinian Holy Places and Zionist colonisation in their message to him of the 4th January, 1918:

That so far as Palestine is concerned, we are determined that no people shall be subjected to another, but that in view of the fact

(a) That there are in Palestine shrines, Wakfs, and Holy Places, sacred in some cases to Moslems alone, to Jews alone, to Christians alone, and in others to two or all three, and inasmuch as these places are of interest to vast masses of people outside Palestine and Arabia, there must be a special regime to deal with these places approved of by the world.

(b) That as regards the Mosque of Omar, it shall be considered as a Moslem concern alone, and shall not be subjected directly or indirectly to any non-Moslem authority.

That since the Jewish opinion of the world is in favour of a return of Jews to Palestine, and inasmuch as this opinion must remain a constant factor, and further, as His Majesty's Government view with favour the realisation of this aspiration, His Majest's Government are determined that in so far as is compatible with the freedom of the existing population, both economic and political, no obstacle should be put in the way of the realisation of this ideal.

This message was delivered personally to King Husein by Commander Hogarth, and the latter reported on his reception of it as follows:

The King would not accept an independent Jewish State in Palestine nor was I instructed to warn him that such a State was contemplated by Great Britain. He probably knows nothing of the actual or possible economy of Palestine, and his ready assent to Jewish settlement there is not worth very much. But I think he appreciates the financial advantage of Arab co-operation with the Jews.

{end of quotes from Robert John's book Behind the Balfour Declaration}

The text of Behind the Balfour Declaration, minus the Introduction, is at http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html.

(4) Moses Hess founds Jewish National Socialism; Theodor Herzl on the need for Jews to separate

Lasse Wilhelmson on Moses Hess as the Founder of Israeli National Socialism ... Hess seems to be the first
person who combined National Socialism, for a particular state (the Jewish), with world-wide Communism: avineri.html.

(3.1)

Benjamin Disraeli, *Lord George Bentinck: A Political Biography*, written in 1852. There are several editions; this is from that published by Archibald, Constable & Co. Ltd., London 1905:

> {p. 324} An insurrection takes place against tradition and aristocracy, against religion and property. Destruction of the Semitic principle, extermination of the Jewish religion, whether in the mosaic or in the christian form, the natural equality of man and the abrogation of property, are proclaimed by the secret societies who form provisional governments, and men of Jewish race are found at the head of every one of them. The people of God co-operate with atheists; the most skilful accumulators of property ally themselves with communists; the peculiar and chosen race touch the hand of all the scum and low castes of Europe! And all this because they wish to destroy that ungrateful Christendom which owes to them even its name, and whose tyranny they can no longer endure.

When the secret societies, in February 1848, surprised Europe, they were themselves surprised by the unexpected opportunity, and so little capable were they of seizing the occasion, that had it not been for the Jews, who of late years unfortunately have been connecting themselves with these unhallowed associations, imbecile as were the governments the uncalled-for outbreak would not have ravaged Europe. But the fiery energy and the teeming resources of the children of Israel maintained for a long time the unnecessary and useless struggle. If the reader throws over the provisional governments of Germany, and Italy, and even of France, formed at that period, he will recognise everywhere the Jewish element. Even the insurrection, and defence, and administration of Venice, which, from the resource of statesmanlike moderation displayed, commanded almost the respect and sympathy of Europe, were accomplished by a Jew - Manini, who by the bye is a Jew who professes the whole of the Jewish religion, and believes in Calvary as well as Sinai, 'a converted Jew', as the Lombards styled him, quite forgetting, in the confusion of their ideas, that it is the Lombards who are the converts - not Manini. {endquote}

Disraeli's message is: if you don't want Communism, support Zionism: disraeli.html.

Herzl also used this argument to persuade Europe to back the creation of a Jewish state, to which this disruptive element would depart - or as a counter-attraction to draw Jews away from Communism. And after the creation of Israel, this did happen: poland.html.

For decades prior to the Balfour Declaration, Zionists had argued that Jews could not fit in to Western democracies, and instead needed their own country.

However, the late amendment to the text of the Balfour Declaration, drafted by Leo Amery, reversed this position, probably to attract the support of those British and American Jews who had no wish to emigrate:

"His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people ... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice ... the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." http://users.cyberone.com.au/myers/c20-doc.html.

(3.2) *Zionism and the Third Reich* by Mark Weber

http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v13/v13n4p29_Weber.html

Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), the founder of modern Zionism, maintained that anti-Semitism is not an aberration, but a natural and completely understandable response by non-Jews to alien Jewish behavior and attitudes. The only solution, he argued, is for Jews to recognize reality and live in a separate state of their own. "The Jewish question exists wherever Jews live in noticeable numbers," he wrote in his most influential work, *The
Jewish State. "Where it does not exist, it is brought in by arriving Jews. ... I believe I understand anti-Semitism, which is a very complex phenomenon. I consider this development as a Jew, without hate or fear." The Jewish question, he maintained, is not social or religious. "It is a national question. To solve it we must, above all, make it an international political issue. ..." Regardless of their citizenship, Herzl insisted, Jews constitute not merely a religious community, but a nationality, a people, a Volk. Zionism, wrote Herzl, offered the world a welcome "final solution of the Jewish question." ...

(3.3) Zionism and Anti-Semitism: A Strange Alliance Through History by Allan C. Brownfeld


... In his study, The Meaning of Jewish History, Rabbi Jacob Agus provides this assessment: "In its extreme formulation, political Zionists agreed with resurgent anti-Semitism in the following propositions: 1. That the emancipation of the Jews in Europe was a mistake. 2. That the Jews can function in the lands of Europe only as a disruptive influence. 3. That all Jews of the world were one 'folk' in spite of their diverse political allegiances. 4. That all Jews, unlike other peoples of Europe, were unique and unintegratable. ...

(5) Leo Amery was the true author of the Balfour Declaration, and a secret Jew

Balfour Declaration's author was a secret Jew

Jerusalem Post, Tuesday, January 12, 1999


By DOUGLAS DAVIS

LONDON (January 12) - Leopold Amery, the author of the Balfour Declaration - the 1917 document from British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour to Lord Rothschild which laid the groundwork for the establishment of the State of Israel - was a secret Jew.

This has been disclosed in just-published research by William Rubinstein, professor of modern history at the University of Wales, who says Amery hid his Jewish background.

Ironically, one of Amery's sons, John, achieved infamy when he defected to Nazi Germany and was hanged for treason in London after World War II. The other son, Julian, succeeded his father as a member of Parliament and was a staunch supporter of Israel. He died two years ago.

In his 1955 autobiography, Amery, who was assistant secretary to the British war cabinet in 1917, said his own father, Charles Frederick Amery, came from an old English family.

His mother, Elisabeth Leitner Amery, he wrote, was part of a stream of Hungarian exiles who fled first to Constantinople and then to England.

According to Rubinstein's research, Amery's mother was born to Jewish parents in 1841 and was named Elisabeth Joanna Saphir. The family lived in Pest, which later became part of Budapest and contained the city's first Jewish quarter.

Both of her parents were Jewish, says Rubinstein, who adds that Amery himself changed his middle name from
Moritz to Maurice in an attempt to disguise its origins.

As assistant secretary to the war cabinet, Amery not only drafted the Balfour Declaration, but also was responsible for establishing the Jewish Legion, the first organized Jewish fighting force since Roman times, which proved to be the forerunner of the modern Israel Defense Forces.

Later, as secretary of state for dominion affairs from 1925 to 1929, he spearheaded what many regard as the most impressive period of peaceful growth in pre-state Palestine.

But his most significant contribution to British politics was a powerful speech in parliament which is thought to have played a key role in precipitating the departure of prime minister Joseph Chamberlain in 1940 and the accession to power of Winston Churchill, who was to lead Britain through World War II.

Rubinstein, whose disclosures are contained in the February edition of History Today, describes Amery's deception as "possibly the most remarkable example of concealment of identity in 20th century British political history."

Rubinstein, who suspects that both of Amery's sons knew of their Jewish origins, believes Leopold Amery decided to conceal his own Jewishness for fear of persecution, because he was confused about his status following his relatives' conversion to Protestantism, and because of the obstacles it might have posed at the time to his political ambitions.

Finally, Rubinstein believes Amery might have hidden his origins to avoid pressure for favors from the Jewish community.

{endquote}


{p. 190} From now on our preoccupation was not with obtaining recognition for the Zionist ideal, but with the fitting of its application into the web of realities, and with preventing its frustration by unwise combinations and concessions. The chief danger came always from the French. I had a long talk with Balfour on March 27, 1917 - he had become Foreign Minister, replacing Sir Edward Grey - and the situation then looked so serious that Balfour made a rather startling suggestion: if no agreement could be reached between England and France, we should try to interest America, and work for an Anglo-American protectorate over Palestine. It was an attractive, if somewhat farfetched idea, but, as I wrote to C. P. Scott, "it is fraught with the danger that there always is with two masters, and we do not know yet how far the Americans would agree with the British on general principles of administration."

It was again the attitude of the French which came to the fore in my talk with Herbert H. Asquith, the Prime Minister, on April 3. In spite of what we have seen, from private notes published years later, of Asquith's personal unfriendliness to the Zionist ideal, his official

{p. 191} attitude was helpful. Neither he nor Mr. Balfour, however, mentioned the Sykes-Picot treaty. I learned of its existence on April 16, 1917 from Mr. Scott who had obtained the information from Paris. The arrangement was: that France was to obtain, after the war, not only northern Syria, but Palestine down to a line from St. Jean d'Acre (Acco) to Lake Tiberias, including the Hauran; the rest of Palestine was to be internationalized.

This was startling information indeed! It seemed to me that the proposal was devoid of rhyme or reason. It was unjust to England, fatal to us, and not helpful to the Arabs. I could easily understand why Sykes had not been averse to the abrogation of the treaty and why Picot had not been able to defend it with any particular energy.

On April 25 I went into the matter thoroughly with Lord Robert Cecil, the Assistant Secretary for Foreign
Affairs, one of the great spirits of modern England, and a prime factor in the creation of the League of Nations. Like Balfour, Milner, Smuts and others, Lord Cecil was deeply interested in the Zionist ideal: I think that he alone saw it in its true perspective as an integral part of world stabilization. To him the re-establishment of a Jewish Homeland in Palestine and the organization of the world in a great federation were complementary features of the next step in the management of human affairs.

We did not talk openly of the Sykes-Picot treaty. I alluded only to "an arrangement which is supposed to exist," and which dated from the early days of the war. According to its terms Palestine would be cut arbitrarily into two halves - a "Solomon's judgment," I called it - and the Jewish colonizing effort of some thirty years was out. To make matters worse, the lower part of Palestine, Judea, would not even pass under a single administration, but would become inter-nationalized: which in effect meant - as I had recently written to Philip Kerr - an Anglo-French condominium. What we wanted, I said to Lord Cecil, was a British protectorate. Jews all over the world trusted England. They knew that law and order would be established by British rule, and that under it Jewish colonizing activities and cultural development would not be interfered with. We could thus look forward to a time when we would be strong enough to claim a measure of self-government. Lord Cecil then asked what were the objections against a purely French control. I answered that of course a purely French control was preferable to dual control, or internationalization, but the French in their colonizing activity had not followed the same lines as the English. They had always interfered with the population and tried to impose on it the esprit francais. ... 

(p. 192) We had long pointed out to the British, and I repeated it again in my interview with Lord Cecil, that a Jewish Palestine would be a safeguard to England, in particular in respect to the Suez Canal. Our foresight had larger bearings than we ourselves understood. It is proper to ask, after this interval of a quarter of a century, with the Second World War fresh in our memories, what the position would have been in the Near East, not for England alone, but for the world democratic cause, if we had not provided in Palestine a foothold for England; if, instead of the bulwark thus constructed, Palestine would have been as open as Syria and Iraq to a Nazi drive after the fall of France. It is, I think, permissible to say that there was something providential in our insistence on the arrangement which we put through, and the exertions by which we gave it effect.

Nor can it be objected that all this is merely the wisdom of hindsight. We were always seeing decades ahead. ... 

(p. 193) In the mobilization of Jewish public opinion, undertaken, as we have just seen, at the instance of the British Government, we had in mind England, South Africa, Russia, France, Italy, Canada and America - but by far the greatest emphasis was placed on America. Of America's role in the movement I shall have much to say. At this point, one aspect of her immense services is relevant. Mr. Louis D. Brandeis was at the head of the movement then, and I was in constant touch with him. On April 8, 1917, I sent him a report on the general position, which I could say was developing very satisfactorily. "The main difficulty," I wrote, "seems to be the claims of the French. ... We look forward here to a strengthening of our position, both by the American Government and American Jews, and on that point I had a conversation with Mr. Norman Hapgood in the presence of Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Neil Primrose, Mr. James de Rothschild and Commander Wedgwood, M.P. An expression of opinion coming from yourself and perhaps from other gentlemen connected with the Government in favor of a Jewish Palestine under a British protectorate would greatly strengthen our hands."

Before long, Mr. Brandeis was able to throw the full weight of his remarkable personality onto the scales. America entered the war in March of that year. On April 20, Mr. Balfour arrived in America on a special mission, and almost immediately met the Justice at a party at the White House. Mrs Dugdale, Balfour's biographer, reports that Balfour's opening remark to Brandeis was: "You are one of the Americans I had wanted to meet," and continues: "Balfour remarked to Lord Eustace Percy, a member of his Mission, that Brandeis was in some ways the most remarkable man he had met in the United States. It seems from such notes of these conversations as survive, that Balfour pledged his own personal support to Zionism. He had done it before to Dr. Weizmann, but now he was British Foreign Secretary. Mr. Justice Brandeis seems to have become increasingly emphatic, during the course of the British Mission's visit, about the desire of American Zionists to see a British Administration in Palestine."

(p. 211) A generation has passed since the Balfour Declaration became history. ... The foremost statesmen of the time had collaborated in the declaration. Balfour was to say later that he looked upon it as the greatest
achievement of his life; Viscount Robert Cecil, one of the founders of the League of Nations considered the Jewish homeland to be of equal importance with the League itself.

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(7) Arnold J. Toynbee's foreword to Robert John's book The Palestine Diary

THE PALESTINE DIARY

by ROBERT JOHN and SAMI HADAWI

With a Foreword by Arnold J. Toynbee

VOLUME ONE 1914-1945

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{p. xiii} Foreword

By Arnold J. Toynbee

'DIARY ' IS A MODEST TITLE for this massive work. It is a detailed narrative, covering the history of Palestine during the period running from the outbreak of the First World War to the declaration of the establishment of the state of Israel and the outbreak of the First Arab-Israeli War in 1948. The narrative is supported by a very full documentation. As far as I know, so full an assemblage of pertinent documents is not to be found between the covers of any previous publication. The sub-titles are also apposite. The story is a tragedy, and the essence of this tragedy is that about 1,500,000 Palestinian Arabs have now become refugees as a result of the intervention of foreign powers in their country's affairs. The might of these foreign powers has been irresistible, and the evicted Palestinian Arabs have been forcibly deprived of their country, their homes, and their property without having been allowed to have a voice in the determination of their own destiny.

Though the facts are public, there is widespread ignorance of them in the Western World and, above all, in the United States, the Western country which has had, and is still having, the greatest say in deciding Palestine's fate. The United States has the greatest say, but the United Kingdom bears the heaviest load of responsibility. The Balfour Declaration of 2nd November 1917 was the winning card in a sordid contest between the two sets of belligerents in the First World War for winning the support of the Jews in Germany, Austria-Hungary, and - most important of all - in the United States.

In promising to give the Jews 'a national home' in Palestine, the British Government was, I believe, using deliberately ambiguous language As a citizen of the United Kingdom, I declare this belief of mine with feelings of shame and contrition, but I do believe that this is the truth. Throughout the First World War and after it, the Government of the United Kingdom was playing a double game. Perhaps a lawyer might be able to plead plausibly that there was no inconsistency between the respective pledges that Britain gave to the Arabs and to the Zionists, or between the inclusion of the Balfour Declaration in the text of the mandate taken by Britain for the administration of Palestine and the classification of this mandate in the 'A' class - a class in which the mandatory power was committed to giving the people of the mandated territory their independence at the earliest date at which they would be capable of standing on their own feet. Whatever the casuists might say, laymen - Arabs or Jews - would, I think, naturally infer, bona fide, from the British Government's various statements and acts that it had made two commitments that were incompatible with each other.

At the same time when the mandate was drafted, offered, and accepted, the Arab Palestinians amounted to more than 90 per cent of the population of the country. The mandate for Palestine was an 'A' mandate, and, as I interpret the Hussein-McMahon correspondence, Palestine had not been excepted by the British Government
from the area in which they had pledged themselves to King Hussein to recognize and support Arab independence. The Palestinian Arabs could therefore reasonably assume that Britain was pledged to prepare Palestine for becoming an independent Arab state. On the other side, the Zionists naturally saw, in the British promise of 'a national home' in Palestine, the entering wedge for the insertion into Palestine of the Jewish state of Israel which was in fact inserted there in 1948.

To my mind, the most damaging point in the charge-sheet against my country is that Britain was in control of Palestine for thirty years - 1918-1948 - and that during those fateful three decades she never made up her mind, or at any rate never declared, what her policy about the future of Palestine was. All through those thirty years, Britain lived from hand to mouth, admitting into Palestine, year by year, a quota of Jewish immigrants that varied according to the strength of the respective pressures of the Arabs and Jews at the time. These immigrants could not have come in if they had not been shielded by a British chevaux-de-frise. If Palestine had remained under Ottoman Turkish rule, or if it had become an independent Arab state in 1918, Jewish immigrants would never have been admitted into Palestine in large enough numbers to enable them to overwhelm the Palestinian Arabs in this Arab people's own country. The reason why the state of Israel exists today and why today 1,500,000 Palestinian Arabs are refugees is that, for thirty years, Jewish immigration was imposed on the Palestinian Arabs by British military power until the immigrants were sufficiently numerous and sufficiently well-armed to be able to fend for themselves with tanks and planes of their own. The tragedy in Palestine is not just a local one; it is a tragedy for the World, because it is an injustice that is a

{p. xv} menace to the World's peace. Britain's guilt is not diminished by the humiliating fact that she is now impotent to redress the wrong that she has done.

As an Englishman I hate to have to indict my country, but I believe that Britain deserves to be indicted, and this is the only personal reparation that I can make. I hope this book will be read widely in the United States, and this by Jewish as well as by non-Jewish Americans. The United States Government's policy on the Palestinian question has been a reflexion of American public feeling and opinion. The opinion that has generated the feeling has been formed to a large extent in ignorance of the facts. If the American people are willing to open their minds to the truth about Palestine, this book will help them to learn it. If they do learn the truth, I hope this will lead them to change their minds, and if the American people do change their minds, I feel sure that their Government will change its policy to match. If the American Government were to be constrained by American public opinion to take a non-partisan line over Palestine, the situation in Palestine might quickly change for the better. Is this too much to hope for? We cannot tell, but at least it is certain that the present book will be enlightening for any reader whose mind is open to conviction.

A. J. Toynbee

1st June 1968

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The Balfour Declaration was **issued on 2 November 1917**. British forces under General Allenby captured Jerusalem on 9 December, 1917: [http://wwnet.fi/users/veijone/allenby1917and2007.htm](http://wwnet.fi/users/veijone/allenby1917and2007.htm)

Robert John's book *Behind the Balfour Declaration* is out of print, but online at [http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html](http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html).

**David Lloyd George on the Balfour Declaration:** [l-george.html](http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html).

For more on the Balfour Declaration, see **Benjamin Freedman's speech The Hidden Tyranny:** [freedman.html](http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html).

Theodor Herzl on Jews in Finance and in Communism: [herzl.html](https://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html).

Write to me at [contact.html](http://www.ihr.org/jhr/v06/v06p389_John.html).