

FUTILE DIPLOMACY

Arab–Zionist Negotiations and the End of
the Mandate

Neil Caplan

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Volume 2

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THE END OF THE MANDATE

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NEIL CAPLAN

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published in 1986 by FRANK CASS AND COMPANY LIMITED

This edition first published in 2015

by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

and by Routledge

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-138-90521-4 (Set)

eISBN: 978-1-315-69594-5 (Set)

ISBN: 978-1-138-90523-8 (Volume 2)

eISBN: 978-1-315-69510-5 (Volume 2)

Publisher's Note

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Futile Diplomacy

VOLUME TWO

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Neil Caplan



FRANK CASS

First published 1986 in Great Britain by
FRANK CASS AND COMPANY LIMITED
2 Park Square, Milton Park,
Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

and in the United States of America by
FRANK CASS AND COMPANY LIMITED
270 Madison Ave,
New York, NY 10016

Transferred to Digital Printing 2006

Copyright © 1986 Neil Caplan

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Caplan, Neil 1945–

Futile diplomacy.

1. Jewish – Arab relations — 1973 –

I. Title

327'.0917'4927 DS119.7

ISBN 0-7146-3215-5

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List of Abbreviations

Ac.	Arabic
A.E.	Arab Executive
A.H.C.	Arab High Committee
CAHJP	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People*
CO	Colonial Office
Ctee.	Committee
DFPI	<i>Documents on the Foreign Policy of Israel*</i>
DPNM	<i>Documents of the Palestinian National Movement*</i>
encl.	enclosed
FD	<i>Futile Diplomacy</i> (vol. I)*
FO	Foreign Office
FRUS	<i>Foreign Relations of the United States</i>
H.C.	High Commissioner
Heb.	Hebrew
ID	<i>Israel Documents*</i>
J.A.(E.)	Jewish Agency (Executive), Jerusalem (unless otherwise indicated)
JEM	Jerusalem & East Mission (MEC)*
J.N.H.	Jewish National Home
Jnl.	Journal
J.Q.	<i>Jerusalem Quarterly</i>
LCW	<i>Letters of Chaim Weizmann*</i>
LJAR	League for Jewish–Arab Rapprochement
MEC	Middle East Centre, St Antony’s College*
NA	National Archives, Washington*
PCW	<i>Papers of Chaim Weizmann*</i>
PRO	Public Record Office, London*
RH	Rhodes House Library, Oxford*
SJC	St James’s Conferences, London
SJC/A	St James’s Conferences: British Meeting with Arab Delegates
SJC/J	St James’s Conferences: British Meeting with Jewish Delegates
transl.	translation
WA	Weizmann Archives, Rehovot*
Z.E.	Zionist Executive, London (unless otherwise indicated)
Z.O.	Zionist Organisation

*For details, see Bibliography.

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Preface to Volume Two

Some of the comments in the Preface to Volume One dealt with the problems of writing a balanced account from a full range of source materials. Some reviewers have underlined this problem, and my own continued preparation for the present volume has made me even more sensitive to the dangers of distortion. Still, documentary source material from the Arab side unfortunately represents only a small fraction of the evidence examined here. I can only hope that those researchers who do have access to the private papers, diaries etc. of leading Palestinian and other Arab figures may be tempted to produce scholarly works which may serve to fill in any gaps (and rectify any imbalances) in the present account.

* * *

The documents reproduced in the second half of this volume are meant to provide researchers with raw materials upon which their own judgments and assessments might be made. Given the pitfalls of selection and omission, it was my original intention to reproduce documents in full, as often as possible. Unfortunately, limitations of space made it necessary to do more extracting than I would have liked. Omitted paragraphs and sentences are indicated by [...].

* * *

In the preface to Volume One I thanked a number of people whose help and encouragement I greatly appreciated. Without repeating their names here, I would just like to say that my debt to them is not lessened with the appearance of this second volume. At the same time, I would like to record my appreciation to Suleiman Mousa, Arab Abd al-Hadi, Barry Rubin and Avraham Sela, who, in the later stages of my research, generously shared with me the benefits of their own work and personal insights. I am also grateful to Elias

Farah, Khalil Shikaki, Rod Noble and Arlene L. Steiger for their kind assistance.

N.C.
Montréal
January 1985

CHAPTER 1

New Formulae and Trial Balloons: Negotiating Opportunities in the Early Thirties

THE DECEPTIVE LULL

The period between the 1929 riots and the 1936 general strike and rebellion was not marked by any major political events or serious Arab–Zionist negotiations. Yet, below the surface, significant changes were taking place. If we probe beneath the superficial tranquillity and relative prosperity of this period, we can detect important developments which were simultaneously a postscript to the 1929 crisis and a prelude to the more serious outbreaks of 1936.

As we have seen, the riots of 1929 and the ensuing political crisis had not produced a favourable context for a negotiated Arab–Zionist accord. What they did succeed in doing, however, was to raise the level of concern for the problems of Arab–Jewish relations. As a result, various individuals felt forced to explore the possibilities of compromise, and to try out new formulae for better relations during the early 1930s.

This heightened concern and search for a compromise were often accompanied by an increased pessimism about the gap which separated the two sides. As Dr Weizmann wrote in early 1930:

all the Arab objections to what we have done in Palestine during the last ten years boil down to one single thing: that we have come, are coming, and mean to come in increasing numbers. ... The Arabs, when they speak the truth, say to us: 'We do not ask you to deal fairly with us, but not to come'; and so long as they do not bolster up that demand by mendacious allegations of wrongs suffered at our hands, I can both understand and honour their point of view.¹

Arthur Ruppin, a one-time supporter of the bi-national idea, wrote two years later that the Arabs had “greatly strengthened their political position” and were “much less ready to make concessions to the Jews than they were ten years ago.” The situation, Ruppin found, was “paradoxical: what we can get (from the Arabs) is of no use to us, and what we need we cannot get from them.”² It was also during this period that Awni Abd al-Hadi reached “the definite conclusion that there was no point in negotiations or in attempts at mutual understanding,” in view of the utter irreconcilability of Jewish and Arab aims in Palestine.³

In spite of the widespread pessimism among leaders, there were still sufficient pressures and incentives on both sides to engage in explorations of the possibility of an agreement. Perhaps the most decisive factor affecting the context for possible Arab–Zionist negotiations was the unprecedented increase in the numbers of Jewish immigrants during the early 1930s. Annual immigration rose from under 5,000 during the years 1929–31 to 9,500 in 1932 and 30,000 in 1933, reaching an all-time peak of 62,000 in 1935.⁴

The economic “uplift” which Palestine underwent during this period and the lowering of the political temperature should have meant – according to the theories entertained by all Zionists – promising prospects for improved Arab–Jewish relations through economic co-operation.⁵ But, for several reasons, this uplift also held within it some strong *disincentives* as far as bargaining and mutual accommodation were concerned. On the Zionist side, as one Israeli historian has speculated, the dramatic increase in the Jewish population of Palestine between 1931 and 1936 (from 175,000 to 400,000) may have “led many Zionists to believe that they could achieve a majority *without* an agreement with the Arabs.”⁶ For many Arabs, Zionist economic development in Palestine was not merely an invitation to them to co-operate with Jews so as to share in the economic “blessings”; it was, in itself, a part of the Zionist strategy of imposing the *fait accompli* of a strong and irremovable Jewish community (*yishuv*) in the country.⁷ Increasing Arab awareness of this danger led to two sorts of defensive reaction: (a) greater militancy and determination to resist the further growth of the Jewish community by any and all means; and (b) the search for an agreement with the Jews – an agreement whose aim was to prevent the creation of a Jewish majority and the loss of the Arab character of the country.

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

Against the backdrop of superficial calm and prosperity, a variety of “trial balloons” and feelers originated from both camps in the early thirties. Some of the departures from the static positions of the previous decades were attributable to changes in the personnel of the Arab and the Zionist leaderships. On the Arab side, leadership in the early 1930s passed from the older generation of urban “notables” into younger, better-educated and more militant hands. If the nationalist movement had been “mobilized from above” during the twenties, after the 1929 riots it was increasingly “mobilized from below”.⁸ While the Jerusalem Mufti, al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini, consolidated his power within the Arab community during the crisis of 1929, other figures who had been active passed from prominence and the Arab Executive Committee (A.E.) met its formal demise in 1934.⁹ Jamal al-Husaini and Awni Abd al-Hadi remained central and respected figures, but younger nationalists – such as Izzat Darwaza, Akram Zuaytir, Ajaj Nuwaihid and Subhi-al-Khadra – became more active in leadership circles.¹⁰

The new Arab leadership remained pessimistic about the chances of a satisfactory accommodation with Zionism in Palestine, and the drive for independence led to a more explicit pan-Arab and anti-British orientation. The feeling of disappointment and despair following the publication of the pro-Zionist MacDonald Letter of February 1931 led the Arab leadership to approach the British with a new determination and militant words:

Before everything else [the A.E. proclaimed] we must give up the idea of relying on the British Government to safeguard our national and economic existence, because the Government is weak in the face of the forces of World Jewry. Let us leave this Government to flatter the Jews as much as they desire and let us seek help from ourselves and the Arab and Islamic world. . . . Mr MacDonald's new document has destroyed the last vestige of respect every Arab had cherished towards the British Government.¹¹

Anti-British demonstrations in October 1933 made a point of not harming any Jewish targets, evidence of a new effort to portray the nationalist movement as disciplined and more mature.¹² At the same

time, some leaders were losing hope in the traditional avenues of protest (demonstrations, petitions, etc.) and began hinting that armed struggle might be the only effective means of ridding Palestine of the British and the Zionists.¹³ Calls for the purging of "traitors" and land-brokers from positions of authority within the Arab community were another sign of the increasing militancy.¹⁴ For some spokesmen, bad feelings left by earlier experiences of talking with the Jews carried over into the thirties (and even beyond) to hamper the growth of mutual trust and good faith.¹⁵

A further aspect of the changes in Palestinian Arab leadership in the early thirties was the emergence of political parties organised more along western lines. Some (notably, the Istiqlal, or Independence Party) went further than others in replacing family loyalty with political programme as their principal *raison d'être*.¹⁶ This overall change was at first welcomed in progressive Zionist circles which had despaired of the chances of reaching an enduring agreement with the factionalised and "feudal" older generation.¹⁷ But it would soon become clear that the younger Arab leaders had their own, more modern, ideological commitment to opposing the Zionist vision for the future of Palestine.

Leadership changes on the Zionist side were no less significant, but – in the end – not a reason to increase the chances of a negotiated compromise between the two communities. In August 1931, Dr Hayim Arlosoroff replaced Col. Kisch as Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency Executive (J.A.E.). Despite the expectations attached to Arlosoroff's appointment (especially in the area of Arab affairs), the new Political Secretary underwent a rapid disillusionment, with the result that the term "preventive diplomacy" continued to be the most apt description of his "Arab policy". The same problems and limitations of this kind of political work affected his Department, as they had done with Kisch during the twenties. Contacts were aimed at strengthening so-called "moderate" Arabs and at weakening so-called "extremists". Individual Arabs continued to approach the Jews with requests for support in creating new parties and organisations. Most of these had to be rejected by the Zionists "as either calculated to burden the Jewish Agency with heavy liability or involving in advance commitments too far-reaching."¹⁸

In a penetrating mid-1932 analysis, Arlosoroff defined the situation as a deadlocked balance of forces in which the Arabs were no longer sufficiently strong to destroy our position, yet at

which they believe [themselves] to be still powerful enough to enforce the establishment of an Arab state in Palestine without having regard to our political claims.

The Zionists, on their side, were

sufficiently strong to hold their ground, but not powerful enough to enforce the continuous growth of the Yishuv by immigration and settlement and to safeguard peace and order in the country during the process.

The only way to break this deadlock, Arlosoroff concluded, was to create a new situation in which the Arabs, as the result of an “unceasing increase in Jewish strength, would be *driven* into a negotiated settlement.”¹⁹

This somewhat paradoxical notion – that the Arabs could be coerced into negotiating with the Jews if the latter increased what the Arabs feared most – became part of the orientation of both David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Shertok (later Sharett), who succeeded Arlosoroff in the fall of 1933. Shertok, unlike any of his predecessors, had spent his childhood years living near an Arab village and spoke the language fluently. After assisting Arlosoroff, he was in a position to relieve the J.A.E. of its dependence on discredited Arab-affairs “experts” like H.M. Kalvaryski.

But, even more than Shertok, it would be David Ben-Gurion whose personal style and dynamism were to leave their distinctive mark on the “Arab policy” of the J.A.E. in the coming decades. Within his own Mapai party, Ben-Gurion argued for a greater appreciation of the Arab factor and rejected as futile all previous political activity which had been based on the payment of *baksheesh*, on the sentimentality of racial-kinship theories, or on keeping Zionism in “low profile”. In fact, he coupled his early activism on the Arab front with a renewed drive to create conditions for a Jewish state on *both* sides of the Jordan River.²⁰

BEN-GURION'S TALKS WITH ARAB LEADERS

In listing the working assumptions behind his approach to the question of Arab-Jewish relations, Ben-Gurion included the following principles:

[...]

2. We must speak the truth to the Arabs. We must not hide our real aims nor blur our historic aspirations.
3. The agreement must be built upon a full recognition of the aspirations of the two peoples: the Arabs need to recognise our full aspirations, and we theirs.
4. We must find a solution to the political–constitutional question in Palestine, in the interim and for generations to come.

As energetic as Ben-Gurion was in trying “to find a way to an understanding with the Arab national movement, if at all possible, on the basis of what we and they want,” his fresh approach was not going to be enough to lead to an acceptable breakthrough or compromise between the two sides. Understandably, the Zionist leader was better able to define what the Jews were claiming than to assess what the Arabs wanted and required. As to the former, he held that various arrangements were possible in the short term (“until the National Home is established”) – as long as they led to the final result of a Jewish majority in Palestine, on both sides of the Jordan; the Jewish sovereign state thus created would then be willing to join in a Middle Eastern federation, without cutting its ties with the British Empire.

With this goal in mind, Ben-Gurion pledged himself in mid-1934 to a new “political activism, ... directed this time on two fronts: the British and the Arab.” Between March 1934 and April 1936, both he and Moshe Shertok tried to meet with people whom they considered to be the “true representatives of the Arab movement” in Palestine and the neighbouring countries.²¹ Ben-Gurion, in particular, spoke openly, even bluntly, with them of a Jewish majority, of Transjordan and of his “parity” proposals on the constitutional question. He also stressed the pan-Arab framework as the only one in which “a final answer would be possible” to the local Palestine dispute. He saw “no essential or inevitable contradiction” between Jewish and Arab aspirations so long as the question was *not* defined as being one that “involved only the Jews of Palestine and the Arabs of Palestine.” In that “limited area”, Ben-Gurion was forced to admit, “there really was a conflict that was difficult to reconcile.”²²

Thus, at his first meeting with Lebanese Muslim politician, Riad as-Sulh, in mid-1934, the Zionist leader proposed an agreement built on five points:

1. Freedom of Jewish immigration with no political limitation, including Transjordan.
2. All the Palestinian Arabs to remain in the country, and systematic aid to be extended in order to improve their economic and cultural position.
3. Participation of Jews and Arabs in the government, so long as the Mandate existed on a parity basis.
4. Jewish independence in Palestine.
5. A link between the Jewish State in Palestine and the independent Arab Union in the neighbouring countries.

Riad reportedly agreed to study Ben-Gurion's proposals, but the Lebanese leader evidently did not find them attractive enough to warrant any follow-up talks with the Zionist leader.²³

Ben-Gurion presented similar outlines for an agreement to Palestinian spokesmen Musa al-Alami, Awni Abd al-Hadi and George Antonius, as well as to Ihsan al-Jabiri and the Amir Shakib Arslan, who headed the Syro-Palestinian Committee in Geneva. Ben-Gurion's own detailed records of these talks convey *his* distinct impression that Arab reactions were largely encouraging. The high-point of these contacts seems to have been a 31 August 1934 meeting with Musa al-Alami. Following the latter's reported consultations with the Mufti about Ben-Gurion's overture, the two men worked out the following draft declaration which was to be published once serious negotiations got underway:

the Palestine question is a matter of concern not only to the Arabs and Jews living in the country but, on the one hand, it is the affair of the entire Jewish people and, on the other hand, it is a general Arab question. The complete realisation of the aspirations of the Jewish people in Palestine does not conflict with those of the Arab people. On the contrary, the two complement one another; co-operation between the two peoples would be of benefit both to Palestine and to the other Arab states.

Measures were supposed to be taken to "insure that Jewish and Arab press reactions" would be "friendly", and negotiations would have gone on from there.²⁴

But there was no fruitful follow-up to the Ben-Gurion/Alami talks. In fact, the available Arab documentary evidence suggests

frequent differences in interpretation of the tone (and sometimes of the contents) of the meetings involving David Ben-Gurion. (See Documents 5, 6, 8.) Rather than endearing him to the Arabs, Ben-Gurion's openness and frankness had the effect of drastically increasing their alarm at the extent of Zionist determination and the true scope of Zionist aims. Arabs also found it insulting and impertinent that the Zionist leader actually expected them to *agree* to the creation of a Jewish majority and a Jewish state in Palestine. It was likely that it was this sort of reaction which led Jabiri and Arslan to seek to alert their followers, and to embarrass Ben-Gurion, by leaking to the press accounts of their talk which was supposed to have remained confidential.²⁵

Although they proved, in the end, to be little more than frustrating exchanges of mutually incompatible positions, Ben-Gurion's talks with Arab leaders did provide leaders with some valuable lessons about each other. The Arabs came to appreciate that official Zionism did intend to convert Palestine from an Arab to a Jewish country. Ben-Gurion, for his part, learned to regard as real and sincere the Arab fear of "Jewish power" in the world – and he would try to manipulate that fear to Zionist advantage.²⁶ Ben-Gurion never found the Palestinian Arabs' case convincing enough to modify his own "maximalist Zionism", but he did learn to take more seriously the Arab rejection of further Zionist advances in Palestine, especially with regard to immigration.²⁷ Ben-Gurion was also trying to teach himself to see things "through Arab eyes", and by mid-1936, he was capable of sufficient insight to conclude that, even if the Arab leaders admitted ("and not all of them" did) that Jewish immigration brought material benefit to the country, they said – "*and from an Arab viewpoint I think rightly so* – 'None of your honey and none of your sting.'²⁸

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL PROPOSALS

Some of the patterns of Arab–Jewish relations during this period were carry-overs from, or "replays" of, the not very productive patterns set during the previous decade. The personalised, high-level style of diplomacy once engaged in by Dr Weizmann re-emerged occasionally, even though Weizmann was out of office between July 1931 and July 1935.²⁹ The familiar pattern of so-called "moderate" Arabs seeking Jewish support, and later turning into

vocal opponents of Zionism, was illustrated during the thirties by men like Hasan Sidqi ad-Dajani and Dr Husain Fakhri al-Khalidi.³⁰

One of the main bones of contention in British–Arab–Zionist relations prior to 1936 was the British repetition of their unsuccessful 1922–23 attempt to set up a legislative council in Palestine.³¹ As we have already seen, Arab interest in diminishing Zionist opposition to the introduction of elective institutions had served as a motive for several unsuccessful Arab overtures to the Jews in the late twenties.³² In the circumstances of the early thirties, there was even less room for agreement or tactical alliances on the constitutional issue, and the political dynamics around it resembled a three-sided deadlock: the Arabs pressed their demands for self-government; the Zionists did everything possible to delay or obstruct that prospect; and the British pushed ahead towards implementing their Mandatory obligations to foster self-governing institutions in a way which would not have resulted in the sabotaging of the Jewish national home.³³ On at least five occasions during Sir Arthur Wauchope's tenure as High Commissioner, parallel Anglo-Arab and Anglo-Zionist consultations were held. On each of these occasions, Arabs hoped, and Zionists feared, that concrete proposals would be made for the establishment of the controversial council.³⁴ Finally, in early 1936, the legislative council offer was dropped owing to criticism in Parliament and in the British press. Although official Zionist circles disclaimed the credit for defeating the plan in London, Arabs saw the result as evidence of ominous "Jewish power" over the British.³⁵

The legislative council issue was, nevertheless, among the subjects discussed in Arab–Zionist conversations of the period. With the exception of Hebrew University Chancellor, Judah L. Magnes,³⁶ very few Arabs or Jews saw in the constitutional issue a positive bridge towards greater Arab–Jewish understanding. A number of Arabs – including the Amir Abdallah, Musa al-Alami and Dr H.F. al-Khalidi – did make use of friendly conversations with Jews to try to soften Zionist hostility to the legislative council idea, arguing that this hostility constituted an obstacle to the development of healthy relations and the chances of an entente.³⁷ Sometimes an Arab would offer to compromise on some aspects of the council's format. For example, Abdallah's plan for the reunification of western Palestine and eastern Transjordan contained a provision for two legislative councils, one Arab and the other Jewish.³⁸ An unnamed "Egyptian gentleman" (probably Mahmud Azmi) rejected full parity

but was favourable to the idea of a guaranteed permanent ratio of three Arabs to two Jews.³⁹ Fakhri an-Nashashibi, who was later to become a prominent member of the National Defence Party headed by his uncle, Raghīb, devised a seven-point plan in which both Arab and Jewish interests would have been secured through the sharing of government offices and the fixing of a 3:2 ratio in the executive branch.⁴⁰

But these compromise offers from the Arab side were less credible and less visible than the demands for full national self-government made by the Husaini and Istiqlal Parties, and were not taken seriously by either British or Zionists. The latter felt that those Arabs who were attempting to persuade them to modify their attitude to the legislative council were primarily interested in removing obstacles to the establishment of a council, and not in the formulation of a lasting accord.

On the other side of the coin, Zionist diplomatic manoeuvring around the legislative council issue, whether on the British or on the Arab front, was chiefly defensive. With the former, official spokesmen developed two novel counter-proposals – the convening of a “round-table conference” and the inclusion of the “parity” formula – whose purpose was to delay or to change government plans for the creation of a council. On some occasions, Zionist representatives tried – in vain – to deflect their Arab counterparts from demanding a council by putting forth the argument that the Arabs, as well as the Jews, stood to gain more from the “parity” formula within the Executive Council.⁴¹ Many Zionist contacts were only concerned with keeping abreast of the latest trends in Arab thinking on the council question, and sometimes for purposes of influencing British appraisals.⁴² Sometimes Zionists attempted to foster existing divisions and rejectionist tendencies in the Arab camp.⁴³

Thus, until the issue was dropped and the Arab general strike was underway in the spring of 1936, the constitutional question was often at the core of Arab–Zionist–British relations. But, because positions were so fundamentally irreconcilable, no common ground existed for Arab–Zionist agreement, whether tactical or long-term. As David Ben-Gurion summed it up: “Both groups objected – though for opposite reasons – to the proposed Legislative Council. This ‘joint’ opposition did not bring the Jews and Arabs any closer.”⁴⁴ As we shall see, this pattern of simultaneous Arab and Zionist opposition to a British policy proposal would later provide other oppor-

tunities for possible Arab–Zionist co-operation – notably partition in 1937 and the White Paper in 1939. But because those Arab and Zionist objections stemmed from often contradictory reasons, the potential for agreement would, as in the case of the legislative council proposals, not be realised.

RELATIONS ACROSS THE JORDAN

Perhaps the most significant relationship between Zionists and an Arab personality during this period was the one involving the Amir Abdallah of Transjordan. The pattern of Zionist–Abdallah relations in the thirties was largely a continuation and an expansion of the ties that had developed a decade earlier. Like his brother, Faisal, Abdallah appreciated the potential value of an “exchange of services” with the Zionists, and he seemed capable of posing simultaneously as a loyal defender of Palestinian Arab rights, as a faithful ally of Great Britain, and as the understanding friend of the Jews.⁴⁵

Zionist interest in the sparsely-populated lands of Transjordan had been rekindled by the Shaw Report, the Hope–Simpson findings and the Passfield White Paper of 1930 – all of which suggested a shortage in western Palestine of land available for new Jewish immigration and settlement. Security considerations after 1929 also led to a special Zionist interest in having a quiet eastern frontier. After remaining quiescent about the 1922 exclusion of Transjordan from the provisions of the Jewish national home policy, some Zionist leaders began to dedicate themselves to the acquisition of Transjordanian lands in the early thirties, if not for direct Jewish settlement, then at least for the relocation of Arabs displaced by Jewish land-purchases in western Palestine.⁴⁶

A new dimension was added in this period when contacts began to multiply between Jews and Transjordanian shaikhs, with the latter in the dynamic role of initiating the contacts and the Jews usually in the position of the reacting parties.⁴⁷ Several important shaikhs, like Mithqal al-Fa’iz and Rufayfan al-Majali, tried to interest the Jews in their lands, whether for the purpose of sales or for economic development.⁴⁸ The relative prosperity in western Palestine contrasted sharply with stark conditions in Transjordan, and Arab overtures for Jewish investments, loans or land-purchases multiplied dramatically during the early thirties. Jewish Agency officials responded cautiously to these overtures, sometimes because of lack

of funds and at other times out of fear of political repercussions. The net result was that the Zionists stalled the Transjordanian shaikhs regarding land-sales, while encouraging them to prepare the ground for future dealings by improving the atmosphere in the country concerning politics and security.⁴⁹

Highlighting Zionist-Transjordan relations during this period were two episodes, one practical and the other ceremonial. The ceremonial event was a banquet given by the J.A.E. in honour of visiting Transjordanian shaikhs at Jerusalem's King David Hotel in April 1933. Dr Weizmann, although out of office at the time, participated in the speech-making which dwelt on themes of mutual esteem and friendship. Despite the outcry which this luncheon aroused from the Palestine Arab Executive, contacts between Zionist and Transjordanian leaders "continued apace" thereafter, although without any lasting or heavy commitments being made.⁵⁰

An important practical-political episode was one which involved the Amir Abdallah directly. In early 1932, Zionists in Jerusalem began hearing stories about the Amir's search for foreign capital to invest in the development of lands at Ghaur al-Kibd, which had recently been transferred to his private domain.⁵¹ While Hayim Arlosoroff deliberately evaded these indirect overtures because of their sensitive political complications, two members of the Agency Executive moved quickly and secretly to try to cement new economic and political ties with Transjordan. Emmanuel Neumann and Herschel Farbstein provoked a bitter wrangle inside the Executive by their independent negotiations with Abdallah and his trusted representative, Muhammad al-Unsi. (Document 4) News of their talks was not divulged to the J.A.E. until the outline of an agreement had been nearly finalised, and on January 7th 1933 the first of several options-to-lease the Amir's lands was signed.⁵²

Despite the agreed need for absolute secrecy, word of the deal soon leaked out and Abdallah became the object of vigorous press attacks in Palestine. In an effort to dampen the criticism, Abdallah denied the existence of any contract with the Jews.⁵³ Only when the focus of nationalist concern shifted to another land dispute, the Wadi Hawareth affair,⁵⁴ did public pressure on the Amir subside. Although the Zionists never proceeded to exploit or develop the lands which they had leased,⁵⁵ the option was renewed openly (despite British misgivings) until 1935 and secretly (to bypass British disapproval) until 1939.⁵⁶

The Amir's and the Zionists' interest in this land deal was not purely financial. In one of his subsequent talks with Jewish Agency representatives, Abdallah described the lease option not as a goal in itself, "but rather [as] a means towards mutual rapprochement."⁵⁷ The land-option deal seemed to blend in well with Abdallah's regional political aims, for which the Zionists were seen as a potentially useful ally. Rumours about the possible union of Palestine and Transjordan – the first step towards the Amir's dream of "Greater Syria" under his throne⁵⁸ – cropped up periodically during the early thirties, and Abdallah's interest in Zionist support was sometimes expressed quite openly.⁵⁹ As a *quid pro quo*, the Amir frequently offered his good offices as mediator, and even held secret (but inconclusive) talks with Dr Weizmann in early 1934, presumably dealing with broader questions of a long-term entente.⁶⁰

Most Zionists valued their good relations with the Amir, and some even entertained far-reaching hopes for expansion of the Jewish national home across the Jordan.⁶¹ But those in charge of political decision-making appreciated the limitations under which they were forced to operate. When faced with talk of the reunification of western Palestine and eastern Transjordan or with the Amir's mediation offers, their reactions were polite but noncommittal. This caution was usually dictated by two factors: (a) the unattractiveness of some of the terms of agreement being offered by Abdallah; and/or (b) his political weakness and uncertain ability to "deliver the goods". On the first point, we have only to recall the *yishuv* fears of being ruled by Abdallah expressed in the early twenties.⁶² In the thirties, Abdallah – despite his generally favourable image among the Jewish public – was prepared to consider a Jewish *province* within his future realm, but excluded any possibility of a sovereign Jewish *state*.⁶³

Both Abdallah and the Zionists realised that, before either could be a fully useful ally to the other, the dispute between Arabs and Jews *inside* Palestine would have to be resolved. On this score, the Zionists had their reasons to doubt Abdallah's likely effectiveness as a mediator between themselves and the Palestinian Arabs. His only real allies inside the Palestinian Arab community were found among the relatively weaker Nashashibi and *muaridun* (opposition) groups. Following the publicity given to his land dealings with the Jews, his credibility as a loyal patriot steadily declined – to the point where even his Nashashibi allies were afraid to be associated with his political plans. At one point, Abdallah was reportedly asking for the

Jewish press to attack him occasionally, so as to counteract his image as the "Jews' friend".⁶⁴

Even within Transjordan the Amir's power-base seemed somewhat shaky. Arlosoroff had described him as a "foreigner in his own country who must doubly beware of not offending the existing or alleged susceptibilities of his subjects."⁶⁵ In all their dealings with Abdallah, Zionists had to calculate their moves so as not to weaken the Amir's sometimes fragile position. In a talk with Moshe Shertok, the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, described Abdallah as "one of the very few Arabs whom he knew to be pro-British. At bottom," he confided, Abdallah was "not our [i.e. the Zionists'] enemy" and it was in the Zionists' "own interest to keep him strong and not undermine his position by rash acts."⁶⁶

"Rash acts" evidently included embarking prematurely upon common political or colonisation programmes with the Amir, and thus the Zionists took the cautious route of continuing to pay for a land-lease option which proved useless from the point of view of Jewish settlement in Transjordan. By mid-1934, the Jewish Agency was already considering these payments to be – "for all practical purposes" – "a political subsidy to the Emir."⁶⁷ In later years – especially during the crisis of 1936–39 – this subsidy (combined with the parallel financial dealings involving Jewish industrialist, Pinhas Rutenberg) would serve to reinforce co-operation between Abdallah and the Zionists on limited political and security matters.⁶⁸

THE PAN-ARAB DIMENSION

In his dealings with the Zionists, the Amir Abdallah was not acting merely as a local or a neighbouring element. As he explained to Col. Kisch in early 1931, he saw himself as "an Arab for whom Transjordan" was

only a small part of Arabia: [...] The Arabs [could] not look on indifferently while an endeavour was being made permanently to detach Palestine, which was a part of Arab lands.⁶⁹

Likewise, other Arab leaders from the neighbouring lands took an increasingly active interest in Palestinian affairs during the thirties. This external, or regional, dimension of the Palestine question assumed a new importance, in part because of the religious solidarity

which had been mobilised in response to the perceived threat to the holy places of Jerusalem during 1928–31. This solidarity had been manifested in the form of financial support for Arabs injured in the 1929 riots, and the pan-Islamic importance of Jerusalem was enhanced by virtue of three events in 1931: (a) the burial of the Indian Muslim leader, Muhammad Ali, in the Haram ash-Sharif (and the visit of his brother, Shawkat Ali, to Palestine); (b) the burial of ex-King Husain in Jerusalem; and (c) the convening of a World Islamic Congress there in December.⁷⁰

Palestinian Arab leaders seized these and other opportunities in an effort to maximise the support to be had for their cause from Muslims and Arabs of the region. In addition to al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini's appeal to Islamic solidarity, a group of younger nationalists emphasised the secular, pan-Arab dimension of their cause and formulated a "National Covenant" at a meeting hosted by Awni Abd al-Hadi in late 1931.⁷¹ The local Palestinian struggle against Zionism and the British Mandate was rendered more intense by the unfavourable contrast drawn between Palestine and other neighbouring lands, where progress towards independence seemed to be advancing more rapidly.⁷²

Increasingly into the 1930s, Palestinian Arabs multiplied their appeals for support to fellow Arabs and Muslims.⁷³ In response, Zionists developed their own regional, or "foreign," policy, aimed at counteracting or neutralising most pan-Arab involvement in the local dispute. They continued to cultivate friendly relations with Egyptian, Syrian and Lebanese personalities.⁷⁴ During the World Islamic Congress in late 1931, Zionists tried to win sympathy and understanding for their position by meeting with as many visiting Muslims and Arabs from abroad as possible.⁷⁵ Although it seemed unlikely that they would find a prestigious non-Palestinian ally ready and willing to conclude a far-reaching "exchange of services" along the lines of the Weizmann–Faisal agreement, Zionists still pursued a pan-Arab orientation, stressing the contrast between the apparent "stubbornness" of the Palestinian leaders and the seeming "flexibility" of their non-Palestinian counterparts.⁷⁶

In mid-1933 an overture for Arab–Zionist talks came from Nuri as-Sa'id, then Foreign Minister (and later several times Prime Minister) of Iraq. During a June 1933 visit to London accompanying King Faisal, Nuri initiated what appears to be the first effort of an independent Arab state to intervene in the Palestine–Zionist

conflict. In an informal talk with an official at the Colonial Office, Nuri suggested that "the present would be an extremely favourable opportunity for a meeting between Dr Weizmann and King Feisal, who thought that he might be able to smooth over some of the present difficulties between Arabs and Jews in Palestine."⁷⁷

Since they were being asked to arrange for Dr Weizmann to make the first move, officials at both the Colonial and Foreign Offices investigated the matter carefully. When they turned to Faisal, the Iraqi king disclaimed any knowledge or responsibility for the suggestion. Although the king stated that he "would be very happy to see Dr Weizmann *if H.M.G. thought this desirable*, he had not contemplated doing so and was not, at the moment, aware of any points which could be usefully discussed."⁷⁸ Taken aback by this evasive reply, the British concluded that the whole affair was probably designed "to manoeuvre His Majesty's Government into the position of taking the initiative in suggesting that king Faisal should give an interview to Dr Weizmann"; Faisal would then be able to claim that he had done so "as a special favour" to the British, and would then be in a position to demand some *quid pro quo*, whether in the form of the "release of Palestine from mandatory control," or of support for the idea of a Palestine-Transjordan-Iraq federation which would give Baghdad a Mediterranean seaport.⁷⁹

In any event, King Faisal left London before Dr Weizmann returned from the United States, and it is not known whether the Zionist leader was ever informed of Nuri's suggestion that the two leaders try to renew their historic relationship. This Iraqi manoeuvre, although not followed through, set what was to become a familiar pattern in future Anglo-Arab relations: the offer by an Arab state to mediate in the Palestine dispute as a bargaining card in the context of its bilateral dealings with Great Britain on other issues. In 1936 and after Nuri would play a more active role in Palestinian affairs.

In the absence of any far-reaching pan-Arab-Zionist agreement, most Zionist activity in the Arab countries surrounding Palestine took the form of what we have called "preventive diplomacy". In addition to their public-relations and press efforts in Egypt and elsewhere,⁸⁰ Zionist leaders asked for British backing for an "educative" tour of Arab capitals in late 1932 and early 1933. The tour was intended as a counter-thrust to the growing pull of pan-Arab sentiment on the Arabs of Palestine, and British support was viewed as crucial to its success. Zionists were interested in such a trip because

they believed there were important Muslim and Arab personalities who were

willing to use their influence to bring about better relations between Jews and Arabs in Palestine if they could be assured that this was in harmony with the policy of the British Government[, but that] while doubts remained ... they would be unwilling to move in the matter.⁸¹

Dr Victor Jacobson (1869–1934) – whom Walter Laqueur has described as “the first Jewish diplomat of modern times” – was selected to visit Cairo and Beirut. His assignment was “to get into contact with Arab and Moslem circles ... to remove misunderstanding and misconceptions concerning [Zionist] work in Palestine, and ... to find out whether some leading Arabs and Moslems would use their good offices in order to bring about an understanding between [Jews] and the Arabs in Palestine.” Formal requests were made to the Foreign Office to lend its endorsement to the trip, but officials were reluctant to take up the “somewhat delicate task” of being “actively or officially associated with” the mission.⁸²

Despite its lukewarm British backing, the Jacobson mission proved to be useful in providing firmer grounding for Zionist “foreign policy” in the Arab world. Jacobson’s preliminary feelers and contacts in Syria and Lebanon did not lead to any immediate results, but they did open the way to future Zionist–Arab contacts, especially between Lebanese Maronite leaders and the Jewish Agency Executive. The Istiqlalist Muslim politician, Riad as-Sulh, also met with Jacobson and outlined his conditions for possible accord based on Jewish support for an Arab federation. The contacts established by Jacobson in 1933, and again in 1934, were subsequently followed up and expanded by Eliahu Epstein (later Elath), who became the Jewish Agency Political Department’s specialist on relations with Syria and Lebanon.⁸³

THE STRANGE CASE OF THE “ABBAS DOCUMENTS”

In the first months of 1932 there surfaced an elaborate document (Document I), purporting to be the basis for an Arab–Zionist agreement mediated by Abbas Hilmi II (1874–1944), ex-Khedive of Egypt. Despite its lack of seriousness in several respects, this curious episode serves to illustrate a number of the developments under

discussion here: (a) the increasing involvement of non-Palestinian actors and the presumption that Palestine would one day be a member state of a larger pan-Arab federation, (b) the growing popularity of the round-table conference as a format for resolving disputes, (c) the emergence of the idea of cantonisation as a possible solution for Palestine, and (d) the reluctance of the official leadership on either side to consider any radical departures from their full formal demands at this time.

Contacts between Abbas Hilmi II and the Zionists began in late 1930, when the ex-Khedive had met with Dr Weizmann to discuss a possible round-table conference and “intellectual co-operation” between Arabs and Jews.⁸⁴ Towards the end of 1931, when he was touring the Fertile Crescent, Abbas resumed contact with Jewish Agency representatives in Jerusalem. In talks with Hayim Arlosoroff, he spoke of his availability for fostering better Muslim–Jewish relations in the area, and expressed his disappointment at the lack of follow-up to his earlier talks with Dr Weizmann.⁸⁵

Following a meeting between the ex-Khedive and Lord Reading, a leading British Jew then also touring Palestine, rumours began to circulate about an Arab–Jewish peace plan that the two men had discussed.⁸⁶ Despite denials from both parties, a document soon appeared in London which purported to be a proposal which Abbas had mediated between the Arab Executive, on the one hand, and unnamed Jewish leaders, on the other. The proposals were accompanied by an unsigned cover-letter, allegedly written on behalf of the Mufti of Jerusalem, asking the advice of Indian Muslims in London.

The cover-letter established that Palestine had to be maintained as “a single united state” with a future evolution towards joining an “Arab Confederacy”, but there was an unusually defeatist flavour to some of its lines:

the feeling still remains that ... we have lost our Motherland to a people who ... are taking advantage of their wealth and political influence to deprive us of our lands. ... But at the same time, it is being recognized that they will have to come into the country and it will not be possible to get rid of them. The reason why Syria is getting a constitution while we are not is our quarrel with the new conditions. Can we come to an

understanding with the Jews and remove the great obstacle in our way.⁸⁷

After declaring that both Jews and Arabs “desire[d] to live in harmony and work for the good of the country as a whole”, the proposals (Document 1) suggested the convening of a round-table conference to consider all “points of difference between the two communities.” Under a new constitution, “sufficient safeguards” would be “settled by mutual consent or Jewish interest,” and the country would contain two “administrative areas on a new basis, so that the interests of the Jews [could] be concentrated in one unit of administration which would be called the National Home of the Jews.”

Perhaps more important than the existence of such a document was the hostile reception which it received from leaders on both sides. Despite early rumours that the plan had been endorsed by most of the Palestinian Arab leadership, denials of involvement in the affair soon came from all quarters, including Abbas himself.⁸⁸ In an interview with *al-Ahram*'s Palestine correspondent, Awni Abd al-Hadi categorically denied that the Arab Executive, the Supreme Muslim Council or the Mufti could have had anything to do with such proposals. To hold a round-table conference with the Jews, Awni affirmed, was nonsense and a complete waste of time; in any event, Palestinian Jews were acceptable only on the basis of their having the same rights as Arab Palestinians, which meant the Balfour Declaration had to be annulled.⁸⁹ Other Arab reactions included denunciations of the ex-Khedive's meddling, and accusations that he was in the pay of the Jews. When Abbas stopped briefly in Haifa port a year later, he was still having to defend himself by denying that he was aspiring to a throne in Syria and that he was involved in trying to mediate between Arab and Jewish leaders in Palestine.⁹⁰

The “Abbas documents” were equally effective in evoking official Zionist rejection of this type of solution to the Palestine problem. Following some initial bewilderment, research in Jerusalem and London led Zionists to conclude that the documents were a forgery perpetrated by an Indian journalist.⁹¹ This did not lessen the need which the Zionist Executive felt to dissociate itself from a plan which advocated what it considered to be “the partitioning of Palestine”, and which was being denounced by the right-wing Jewish press as an

“Arab–British Connection to Kill Off Zionism.” In labelling the documents as “a fake, contrived by some unknown adventurers,” Jewish Agency President, Nahum Sokolow, made it clear that the Zionists would never consider the “absurd” idea of “divid[ing] small Palestine into even smaller units.”⁹²

PROPOSALS FOR A ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

While not indicating any departure from existing “terms of agreement”, Zionist suggestions for convening a round-table conference in the early 1930s did represent a novelty in terms of the *format* through which an accord was to be reached. As mentioned earlier, the idea was essentially a Zionist delaying tactic *vis-à-vis* the imminent establishment of a legislative council for Palestine.⁹³ But the suggestion to call a round-table conference was more than a mere defensive manoeuvre; it was also an ambitious Zionist attempt to force the British – the decisive third-party – into a pro-Zionist role in the negotiating process.

While Dr Weizmann’s appeals to convene a conference in late 1930 seemed reasonable enough to some British officials in London,⁹⁴ the High Commissioner in Jerusalem was deeply sceptical and so informed the Colonial Office. Citing his own unsuccessful experiences of trying to get the two parties to meet, Sir John Chancellor felt that there was “obviously no basis on which a Round Table Conference [could] be summoned until the Arabs change[d] their attitude as regards the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate.”⁹⁵ Dr Weizmann’s failure to meet with any important Arabs during his spring 1931 visit to Palestine, and the inability of the Colonial Office to convene tripartite talks in London on ostensibly non-political issues were enough to put a halt to further British thoughts of convening a round-table conference.⁹⁶

But the idea was not quickly abandoned by Zionist spokesmen, and they especially pushed the proposal as a prerequisite for the creation of any legislative council.⁹⁷ While these repeated requests for convening such a conference might suggest Zionist underestimation of the seriousness of Arab rejection of the Jewish national home policy, at a deeper level they amounted to a direct appeal for British pressure to be applied to the Arab leadership. For, the appearance of Arab representatives at a round-table conference would have presumed their tacit approval of the legality of the Mandate and

its Zionist policies, along with their recognition of the Zionist Organisation as a legitimate partner for discussing the fate of their country. Such recognition leading nationalists, like Jamal al-Husaini and Awni Abd al-Hadi, were determined not to accord, and in the ensuing Arab–British deadlock British officials were clearly reluctant to apply any sustained pressure on Arab leaders to participate.⁹⁸

For their part, many Zionists took this British reluctance as further evidence of the Mandatory Power's failure to exercise its moral responsibility for the promotion of Arab–Jewish understanding.⁹⁹ Zionist requests in the early thirties for a “coercive” British mediating role were not acted upon, but, ironically, when the British *did* decide to convene a conference in February 1939, it would be the Zionists who would find themselves in the unhappy position of feeling coerced to participate.

PARITY PROPOSALS

At the XVIIth Zionist Congress (1931), Dr Weizmann gave official expression to the principle that neither Jews nor Arabs should dominate the other in Palestine. At the close of the Congress his successor as President of the Zionist Organisation, Nahum Sokolow, also endorsed the “basic principle that, without reference to numerical strength, neither of the two peoples shall dominate or be dominated by the other.”¹⁰⁰ This “non-domination” formula had emerged in Zionist thinking in late 1929, and had been repeated frequently in public statements and in private conversations with both British officials and Arab leaders.¹⁰¹

One concrete manifestation of the non-domination principle was “parity”: a guarantee of equal representation as between Arabs and Jews, regardless of their numerical proportion in the population, in the administration and government of the country. Like the round-table conference proposals, those for parity also emerged mainly as a Zionist delaying tactic against British plans for the setting up of a legislative council.

Yet, in some ways the parity principle could be seen as a daring innovation in the Zionists' proposed terms of agreement. For, in the context of the internal debate in the early thirties over whether to declare openly that the final goal of the Zionist movement was a Jewish majority and a Jewish state in Palestine, the parity idea rejected this maximalist Zionism and seemed to imply (in at least

some people's minds) that Palestine was legitimately the home of *two* nations.¹⁰²

But, from the start, the concept of parity did little to bridge the gap between the Arab and Zionist positions. This was so for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the inherent unattractiveness of the idea to the Arabs – who, it must be remembered, constituted 80 per cent of Palestine's population in the 1931 census. Once this "trial balloon" was launched, Zionists were made aware of the overwhelmingly negative Arab reaction to parity.¹⁰³ Why, asked Arab leaders, should they agree to abdicate the normal rights and privileges of their overwhelming majority status in exchange for a Zionist pledge (a virtually unenforceable one, some added) not to dominate them when – and if – the Jews should become the majority? Why indeed, given that the whole *raison d'être* of their nationalist struggle was directed at preventing the creation of a stronger Jewish community in Palestine? Not only "extremist" leaders, but even friendly and "moderate" Arabs, declared that they would never accept the principle of equal representation between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. The latter sometimes responded to the parity proposal with counter-offers, such as the fixing of the maximum Jewish population at 33 per cent or 40 per cent.¹⁰⁴

But the Zionist parity proposal was directed perhaps more at the British than at the Arabs, with the aim of convincing the British to incorporate parity into their official legislative council proposal. This would have led to one of two possibilities: either the formation of a council which would not have subjected the Jews to control by the Arab majority; or else abandonment of the whole council scheme as being "unacceptable to the other side."¹⁰⁵ But, even as a British-oriented tactic, the parity proposal floundered. At first Zionists thought that they had succeeded in convincing the then Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, and his son (later Colonial Secretary) Malcolm at a secret meeting at Chequers in July 1931 that any representative institutions in Palestine should be based on parity representation. But, to Weizmann's and Ben-Gurion's disappointment, even these friendly British leaders had to back away from promoting such a radical denial of Arab majority rights.¹⁰⁶

Yet another reason for the failure of parity to provide a breakthrough in Arab–Jewish relations at this time was the uncertainty and ambiguity in the minds of the Zionists themselves. While the *abstract* notion of non-domination was more easily accepted and understood

in the mainstream of the movement, the *practical* implications of parity led to confusion and internal divisions. The parity advocated by Ben-Gurion, for example, was a formula which sought to bypass the legislative council proposals altogether; what Ben-Gurion had in mind was not an elective body, but the gradual co-opting of Jews and Arabs, in equal numbers, into the government's Executive Council and selected administrative departments. Furthermore, many Jews thought of parity as a transitional, and not a final, arrangement; for them, parity was designed to help stabilise Arab-Jewish relations until the end of the Mandatory regime, at which time a Jewish state (not a bi-national one) would still be the Zionist goal.¹⁰⁷

Such equivocation contributed, not surprisingly, to British hesitations and to Arab suspicions regarding the sincerity of the Zionist leadership. Members of the Zionist "inner circle" did regard parity as a serious political formula for future Arab-Jewish relations, but these men were running ahead of the movement when they raised this "trial balloon" in their talks with British officials. The formula had never been endorsed by any authoritative Zionist body, and only in late 1936 would Dr Weizmann attempt – without success – to resolve this ambiguity by having the Actions Committee adopt a clear stand in favour of parity.¹⁰⁸

CANTONISATION: SEEDS OF THE PARTITION SOLUTION

The early thirties also witnessed the emergence of an even more significant innovation in the possible terms of an Arab-Zionist accord. This was the suggestion for a "territorial solution" – i.e., subdividing Palestine into autonomous or semi-autonomous Arab and Jewish regions. Following the 1929 riots, implied or explicit suggestions for such a solution became more frequent, and emanated simultaneously from personalities on both sides. Several years later these ideas would be taken one step further to become the more far-reaching proposal for the partition of Mandatory Palestine into two sovereign states.

In the mid-1920s, the politically-active Hebrew journalist, Ittamar Ben-Avi, had become a champion of the canton idea, while an Arab journalist, Yusuf al-Isa, had made a similar proposal.¹⁰⁹ In late 1929, David Ben-Gurion had written up his own "Draft Constitution for Palestine", a proposal which, like the *yishuv's* "National Demands" to the Peace Conference a decade earlier, held the seeds

of a territorial solution in the concept of evolving municipal, district and national–communal autonomy.¹¹⁰ We have also seen cantonisation incorporated into the clauses of the notorious Abbas documents (above, pages 18f.). The latter proposals may well have had their origins in a plan formulated by Dr Victor Jacobson for consideration among his Jewish and Zionist friends.¹¹¹

Jacobson's territorial solution (Document 2) was accompanied by a penetrating assessment of the state of the Arab–Zionist impasse of the early thirties. When it was circulated among his friends, it provided an interesting barometer for testing Zionist attitudes towards the idea of making some sacrifices for the sake of an agreement with the Arabs. In Jacobson's analysis, "just Jewish demands" had to be harmonised with the accelerating "tempo of political evolution in Palestine and the neighbouring countries." It was only a matter of time, Jacobson felt, before Palestine would join with Iraq and Syria in freeing itself from the Mandatory regime. What was needed, he argued, was the creation of a completely new situation in which each community would feel free to pursue its legitimate aims without fear of interference from the other. Hence, he was recommending the establishment of two separate, "sovereign, autonomous" entities in Palestine. He also foresaw the eventual union of the Jewish ("Eretz-Israel") and Arab ("Palestine") entities within a larger Middle Eastern confederation.

Jacobson dwelt at length on the advantages which, he believed, his plan held out for the Jewish people, and predicted that immediate sovereignty over a limited area of Palestine would unleash "great enthusiasm" and a new outpouring of effort by world Jewry on behalf of the national home. As for possible Arab objections to his territorial solution, Jacobson did not seem particularly concerned. He expected that Arab leaders would initially reject the proposals, but felt that they could be made to change their minds if the proper pressure were applied by "our allies and our friends."

Since the scheme was never actually "on the table" during Arab–Zionist talks, we can only speculate, on the basis of the clear hostility towards the "Abbas proposals", that Palestinian reaction would have been negative. From the available Zionist evidence it seems clear that Jacobson's ideas were considered to be well ahead of the movement.¹¹² He admitted to his friend, Chaim Weizmann, how disheartened he was by the "almost unanimously negative" response his plan was receiving among Zionists.¹¹³ Weizmann, then out of office,

appeared sympathetic to the notion of cantonisation (see below), but was only a hesitant, rather than an active, advocate on its behalf. Hayim Arlosoroff was impressed by the plan's realism and its focus on medium-range, rather than long-term, goals; but the J.A.E.'s Political Secretary felt there were practical difficulties in the proposals which it might prove impossible to overcome.¹¹⁴

Preoccupied as they were with day-to-day matters which seemed more urgent, members of the Jewish Agency Executive usually listened with polite attention on the few occasions when Jacobson's "mini-state" (as it came to be known in Zionist circles) was brought up, and ended by brushing the matter aside.¹¹⁵ Some Zionists rejected what they felt was the plan's defeatist mentality, in that it overemphasised obstacles and too easily abandoned the goal of a Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan – a goal which some still thought ultimately, if not immediately, feasible.¹¹⁶ Others feared submersion in an Arab-dominated structure, and rejected the plan's presumption that the building of the national home was now largely completed and could be "crystallised" (i.e., frozen) in its current shape and size.¹¹⁷

It was precisely *because* the idea presumed the crystallisation – as opposed to the continued expansion – of the Jewish national home that we find territorial solutions being discussed in some Palestinian Arab circles during the early thirties. Like the Jacobson plan, these proposals never reached the stage of being discussed in direct Arab-Zionist negotiations; they were, rather, in the form of unofficial "trial balloons" sent up for the reactions of other Arabs, of British officials, and even (indirectly) of the Jews. In late 1933, for example, the newspaper *Mirat ash-Sharq* openly discussed the pros and cons of a canton solution, but concluded that such a scheme was not feasible for Palestine of the thirties. Cantonisation, the unsigned lead article suggested, was a solution that should have been considered when it had been first proposed, a decade earlier, at a time when Jewish population, economic influence and land-holdings had all been significantly less.¹¹⁸

In September 1933, Musa al-Alami, then serving as the High Commissioner's special adviser on Arab affairs, recommended that the British were "now justified in declaring the National Home to be *actually established* and their obligations fulfilled." Hence, Alami argued, the areas already populated by Jews should be turned into "an independent Jewish canton" within which the Jews could do as

they pleased with regard to immigration and settlement. But an Arab "National Government" should, he insisted, be created to govern over Palestine as a whole.¹¹⁹

Several months later there appeared in *Falastin* an unsigned ten-point plan for the cantonisation of Palestine. The plan was actually an outline of what Ahmad Samih al-Khalidi, Principal of the government Arab College, had discussed privately with Sir Cosmo Parkinson, a senior Colonial Office official who was then visiting Palestine.¹²⁰ Khalidi's proposals, which he claimed were "by no means definitive or final", included provisions for: (a) the territorial division of Palestine into "Southern Syria" for the Arabs and "Eretz Israel" for the Jews; (b) a division of powers as between central and regional governments; (c) restrictions on land purchases; (d) definition of official languages; (e) definition of the future role of Great Britain; (f) formation of separate Arab and Jewish legislative assemblies and a single "Supreme Executive Council"; and (g) the future unification of the Arab canton with Transjordan.

The British reacted to this trial balloon with polite interest, but no great enthusiasm.¹²¹ Arab press reaction was openly hostile, denouncing the unnamed "traitor" who was helping to pave the way for the creation of a "Jewish Kingdom" in Palestine.¹²² In the Jewish Agency's Political Department, the plan was received scornfully as "a new and revised edition of the Magnes-Philby stunt." Nevertheless, Moshe Shertok had to admit that it was an interesting indication of "the lengths to which certain Arabs [were] prepared to go."¹²³

In mid-1934, Khalidi sent a revised version of his plan (Document 7) to Dr Judah Magnes, and was also hoping through him to elicit some official Zionist reactions. The second draft was more elaborate than the first in stressing the advantages to be gained by the Jews. In his cover-letter to Magnes, Khalidi claimed that he did not view cantonisation as "an ideal solution", but felt it was "as practicable as any other solution which has ever been proposed." He went on to list four "cardinal" points which lay at the heart of his proposed scheme:

- (a) that "no proposal" could be accepted as an "*immediate solution*" (his underlining) to the already noticeable "difficulties and complications" of the Jews in Europe;
- (b) that any rapprochement with the Arabs would require "some sort of reasonable limit" to be placed on the growth of the national home, "both in land and population";

- (c) that Arab friendship should “in the long run be more precious to the Jews than obtaining millions of dunums [of land] or introducing thousands of immigrants”; and
- (d) that “a drastic change in the Jewish policy towards the Arabs” was needed.¹²⁴

When Magnes showed the plan to David Ben-Gurion, the Zionist leader’s reaction was similar to what Shertok’s response had been to the earlier draft. He found the plan “interesting because of its Arab origins,” but went on to note that even “from an Arab point of view it seems undesirable because it leaves them in a bad situation in the poor hilly region and shuts them off from the sea.” Nevertheless, Ben-Gurion was impressed with the historical significance of Khalidi’s suggestion as a forerunner of partition, and as an indication that there were “among the Arabs men who [were] searching for a way out through an agreement [which allowed for] some kind of satisfaction of Jewish aspirations.”¹²⁵

While the waters were being tested in Palestine, politicians in Europe were also flirting with the idea of cantonisation. During 1933 and 1934 Dr Weizmann, Dr Jacobson, the Marquis de Theodoli (Chairman of the League of Nations’ Permanent Mandates Commission), Benito Mussolini and others discussed a canton solution for Palestine. British officials in Rome, where the most serious talks took place, were curious onlookers.¹²⁶ Although the British were under the impression that Dr Weizmann was actively promoting the idea, the Zionist leader was playfully evasive when the High Commissioner later “asked him bluntly what his real views were as to dividing Palestine into two zones.”¹²⁷

The British position during 1934 was to stay clear of any cantonisation discussions, so as to avoid any impression that they were “even contemplating the possibility of a change of policy in Palestine.”¹²⁸ Yet, by early 1935 they had begun to take the idea more seriously, largely in response to an internal memorandum prepared by a Palestine government official, Archer Cust.¹²⁹ When the High Commissioner raised the subject a second time with Dr Weizmann in March 1935, the latter again was studiously aloof and evasive.¹³⁰

Like the round-table conference and parity proposals, so too did the cantonisation idea remain confined to the realm of tentative feelers and trial balloons. Leaders on both sides, in their steadfast

belief that their respective national claims could be satisfied sooner or later without any need for radical compromise, acted in ways which kept the novel suggestions out of the realm of practical politics. As we shall see in the following chapters, all three ideas would re-emerge in the late thirties and forties. But, unlike the relatively calm climate of the early thirties, the atmosphere under which the new negotiation attempts would be made would be considerably more stressful for all parties concerned, owing to dramatically increased Jewish immigration, an Arab general strike and widespread violence in Palestine.

CHAPTER TWO

Rebellion in Palestine

ERUPTION OF RIOTING: APRIL 1936

Arab and Jewish aspirations are still too wide apart to allow of substantial reconciliation across the table, and neither Arab nor Jewish leaders have yet the moral courage to make the concessions necessary to secure a common measure of agreement and to face the political criticism which such concessions would inevitably evoke. [...]¹

This was how the High Commissioner in Jerusalem, Sir Arthur Wauchope, defined Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine in mid-April 1936. But the High Commissioner was tragically mistaken when, in the same despatch, he assured the Colonial Secretary that he “feared no immediate disturbances.” For, on the following day, April 19th, localised rioting erupted and subsequently degenerated into a general strike and country-wide disturbances known as the Arab rebellion of 1936–39.

The outbreak can be seen as the culmination of a number of contributing causes which had been building up over the preceding year.² Some of these factors have been touched on in Chapter One. In late 1935, Shaikh Izz ad-Din al-Qassam, who had earlier taken to the hills in preparation for armed revolt, was killed in a gun battle with British forces; his funeral served to inspire nationalists and escalate the tension. Arab fears of Jewish intentions were also reaching a new peak. Those who feared the creation of a Jewish majority through increased immigration had real cause for alarm when at least 62,000 (perhaps as many as 66,000) Jews entered the country in 1935 alone. The discovery of a smuggled arms shipment in Tel Aviv port in October had seemed to confirm Arab suspicions that the Zionists were preparing an armed take-over of the country. Anti-British feelings among the Arabs were given encouragement by the

rise of England's European rivals, Italy and Germany, who offered examples of successful defiance of the previously unchallenged "Power" that ruled Palestine. Finally, Arab frustration over the British legislative council proposals grew, and even the High Commissioner had warned (on March 9th) that if the council were not formed, "civil disobedience and disturbances" were "almost certain to result".³ Growing pan-Arab solidarity for the Palestinian cause was also expressed by Syrian and Egyptian politicians, including Fakhri al-Barudi and Abd ar-Rahman Azzam, who attended a 1935 Balfour Day (November 2nd) protest rally organised at Nablus.⁴

During the build-up of tension, there is little evidence of any overtures from Arabs or from Jews to meet in order to work towards better relations. David Ben-Gurion's energetic initiatives of 1934 had terminated without tangible results, and the only regular contacts of the Jewish Agency's Political Department were with Amir Abdallah and his representatives.⁵ The real targets of both Arab and Zionist attention during the first half of 1936 were, in any case, British public opinion and policy-makers. Five of the six Arab political groupings had formed a coalition to negotiate with the government on the proposed legislative council and to present their additional demands.⁶ Sinister "Jewish power" in London was seen by many Arabs as the reason for the British withdrawal of the legislative council scheme following hostile criticism in Parliament,⁷ and Arab complaints on the immigration and land-sales issues were having their effect on British officials.

This was enough to cause the Zionists some serious concern. Ben-Gurion urged his colleagues on the Executive to abandon their defensive reactions to these Arab grievances and to pass to the offensive by arguing that "an objective basis for a Jewish-Arab agreement" would be created by a British decision to *increase*, rather than restrict, Jewish immigration into Palestine. If half a million new immigrants were to enter the country over the coming five years, he reasoned, the Arabs would be forced to recognise the "*fait accompli* ... of a strong Jewish force which they could neither ignore nor stand up to." Only then, he predicted, would the Arabs make peace with the Jews, and "England would be rid of the Arab difficulty."⁸ Needless to say, the British were a long way from accepting Ben-Gurion's logic about how to be rid of their "Arab difficulty".

When Zionist leaders did consider the advisability of approaching Arab leaders, it was most often connected with these fears of

negative turns in British policy regarding immigration and land-purchase.⁹ In Palestine, Ben-Gurion attempted, through Judah Magnes, to start talks with Jamal al-Husaini, but the latter rebuffed the overtures.¹⁰ Several meetings did, however, take place between Ben-Gurion, Magnes and George Antonius, a British-educated, Christian Arab government official who was reputed to have close ties with the Mufti. During three long and inconclusive talks, Ben-Gurion and Antonius elaborated their peoples' respective historical claims and current aspirations. Ben-Gurion repeated his proposal for parity within Palestine, which would one day become a Jewish state in a Middle Eastern confederation. Antonius argued that some form of cantonisation – a “Jewish entity” within Palestine – might prove to be the only feasible arrangement.¹¹

The Ben-Gurion–Antonius talks, which had begun two days before the April 19th rioting in Jaffa, ended inconclusively ten days later. Meanwhile, an Arab Higher Committee (A.H.C.) had been formed to serve as the authoritative leadership body of the Palestinian Arabs, and a general strike had been declared in support of the three principal demands for self-government, an end to Jewish immigration and the stopping of land-sales to Jews. These developments left few incentives or opportunities for any Arab–Zionist negotiations. Just as the national demands and the general strike were aimed at the British, so too was Zionist reaction directed at the Mandatory Power. Zionist spokesmen argued repeatedly and forcefully that the British “firm hand” had to be applied to suppress disorders, so that no political concessions would be made to law-breakers.¹²

But, as the strike and violence dragged on from one week to the next, Zionists feared (and Arabs hoped) that the British might be on the point of deciding to suspend Jewish immigration while a Royal Commission investigated the problem. The rumoured possibility of a temporary stoppage of Jewish immigration then became the focus of a flurry of Arab–Jewish contacts during the peak of the crisis period. Most overtures came from Arabs who attempted to convince the Jews to propose this concession voluntarily – given that the British appeared to be having difficulty making up their minds to impose a suspension in the face of determined Zionist opposition. Thus, for example, emissaries or Palestinian supporters of the Amir Abdallah made various approaches to Jewish Agency officials (see below), just as Jerusalem Mayor Khalidi (a member of the A.H.C.)

used his contacts with Jewish members of the Municipal Council to direct feelers at the Zionist leadership.¹³ Perhaps the best-known episode of the period, the negotiations of “the Five” (discussed below), resulted from an overture made by Judge Mustafa al-Khalidi to his Jewish colleague, Judge Gad Frumkin. Generally speaking, the incentives which the Arabs used to try to convince the Zionists to make such a gesture were a combination of the “stick” – the latent threat of continuing and escalating violence and disorder in the country – and the “carrot” – the prospect of Arab–Zionist negotiations aimed at resolving their long-term dispute.

The real purpose of these Arab overtures was to secure an honourable way out of their deadlock with the British. Winning Zionist assent to a temporary stoppage of immigration would have done this, and would even have allowed the Arabs to end the strike with some tangible victory. No less than the Jews, the Arabs oriented their diplomacy towards the British masters of the country. The ebb and flow of their overtures to the Jews followed a pattern of approaching whenever British policy seemed to be turning against them, but withdrawing whenever it seemed to take a more favourable course.¹⁴

In considering these Arab overtures, Zionist leaders took the consistent stand of playing “hard-to-get”. While the fact that Arabs were approaching them was no doubt gratifying, they found both the short- and long-term requirements of the Arabs far from attractive. The Zionist leadership categorically rejected the possibility of their agreeing to a temporary stoppage of immigration, and repeatedly stressed that it was up to the British and the Arabs to extricate themselves from their impasse, without bringing in the Jews. Deliberately, they used any conversations they held with Arabs to try to convince them that the strike would be crushed by the British without any political concessions being made.¹⁵ As for the Arab terms of agreement (if serious negotiations got underway), invariably these would have included restrictions on immigration so as to guarantee that the number (or the proportion) of the Jews in Palestine should not exceed a given figure.¹⁶

While such an accord might have been useful in strengthening Zionist–British relations, most Zionist leaders did not feel it was a priority in itself.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the impact and pressures of the continuing crisis led to many soul-searching debates and discussions in Jewish circles. Among key Zionist decision-makers there was a

deep pessimism about the usefulness of negotiations or the quest for an agreement with the Arabs.¹⁸ Moshe Shertok, who headed the Political Department, exposed the core of the dilemma in the course of recounting a conversation he had had with “an important Palestinian Jew” (probably Pinhas Rutenberg or Judah Magnes):

I [Shertok] said that I did not believe that we could reach any agreement in the near future. He said that we had to reach an agreement in the near future, otherwise the danger would grow and grow. I said that I knew the danger was great, but that the danger was not enough to produce an agreement, since there were questions for which there were no solutions. ... [O]nly time will solve the question of ... an agreement between ourselves and the Arabs. ... [One day] we shall reach a solid entente with the Arabs as one power to another. A precondition for this is that we become, in the eyes of our adversaries, not only a potential power, but a real force.¹⁹

During the first month of the Arab general strike, David Ben-Gurion also elaborated his analysis of the “great contradiction” which it was “impossible to overcome by beginning negotiations with the Arabs”:

I don't believe in a Jewish–Arab political accord. A Jewish–Arab agreement can come about solely after they [the Arabs] have despaired of the possibility of preventing Palestine from becoming Jewish ... At that point they will make an agreement, if we can convince them that they stand to benefit from an agreement with us.²⁰

At the same time, the Agency Chairman admitted that the Zionists *needed* an agreement with the Arabs (for a variety of reasons),²¹ and three weeks later, in London, he emerged with a more optimistic, revised assessment of the questions of tactics and timing.

Perhaps the key to Ben-Gurion's change of heart came from his reading of the record of a late-May meeting between Dr Bernard (Dov) Joseph and Musa al-Alami (Document 12). Ben-Gurion now began to feel that the strike deadlock *did* offer the Zionists an opportunity which might lead to satisfactory and successful negotiations with the Arabs. “We would be making a grave mistake,” he wrote in his diary, “if we did not attempt now, in the most serious

way, to reach an agreement" – even if the chances were "one in a hundred or one in a thousand."²²

For Ben-Gurion, it was the Arab fears of "Jewish power" in London, rather than the pressure of the general strike, which would be the decisive key to an Arab–Zionist agreement.²³ In order to capitalise on these fears, Ben-Gurion elaborated his tactical approach to negotiations by posing the following questions: "How far will the Arab fear [of Jewish power] go, and will it drive them into an agreement with us, as the choice of the lesser evil?" And, once the Arabs were forced to consider such an agreement, "What can we offer the Arabs, and what can we get from them?" In sketching out answers to these questions, Ben-Gurion reformulated his own proposed terms for an agreement with the Arabs. He was now suggesting that the Jews make a major concession in the form of voluntary limitations over the coming five years on immigration (although he set the rather high figures of 60,000 to 80,000 per annum) and on land-purchase (on condition that the impending British land legislation be dropped). Under the impact of the Arab rebellion, other members of the J.A.E. were also moved to consider such concessions seriously. While these Zionist leaders may not have been persuaded that Arab demands were any more legitimate, they were now forced to the conclusion that without their agreement to fix immigration quotas for a period of years there would be no negotiations with Arabs whatsoever.²⁴

Other features of Ben-Gurion's revised negotiating stance included (*a*) parity participation in the executive branches of government (no mention of a legislative council); (*b*) the opening up of Transjordan to Jewish and Arab settlement on parallel tracts of land (the "Rutenberg plan"; see below, pages 41f.); and (*c*) the granting to Abdallah the title, "Leader of the Muslim Arabs" in the entire territory of Palestine and Transjordan. This kind of agreement, Ben-Gurion felt, would have guaranteed the Jews the "essential minimum" required to strengthen their "concrete power in the country", and at the same time would have improved their political position "vis-à-vis the British and world public opinion."²⁵

But Ben-Gurion's negotiating proposals never reached any Arab–Zionist conference table. The Arabs were not, as he had been hoping, "driven" into considering this kind of agreement with the Zionists as the lesser of two evils, largely because of the complicated manoeuvring around the questions of how to end the strike and

how/when to begin talks. Contacts between Jewish Agency representatives and several Palestinian Arab personalities did continue through the summer of 1936, but they remained stymied on the preconditions for beginning official talks, and were further embroiled with the involvement of five prominent Palestinian Jews who had embarked on their own initiative for an agreement with the Arabs.

NEGOTIATIONS OF "THE FIVE"

In sharp contrast to the guarded behaviour of J.A.E. officials, an informal group of Palestinian Jews attempted to jump all procedural hurdles by devising and discussing their own draft agreement with two Jerusalem Arabs.²⁶ Apart from the shady episode of Moshe Smilansky's negotiations with Tawfiq al-Ghusain for the bribing of most of the Arab Higher Committee,²⁷ the first step in this complex affair seems to have been taken by Judge Mustafa al-Khalidi, who approached his colleague Gad Frumkin to discuss ways of ending the strike and formulating an Arab-Zionist accord. Frumkin then talked with Musa al-Alami, and reported his conversations to Moshe Shertok of the Jewish Agency Executive.

Frumkin also shared the results of his conversations with these Arabs with Smilansky and three other leading Jewish personalities: Pinhas Rutenberg, Judah Magnes and Palestine Potash Company founder, Moshe Novomeyski. "The Five", as they came to be known, "were more or less agreed that a supreme effort [had to] be made to bring Jews and Arabs together",²⁸ and began discussing a draft agreement prepared by Frumkin (Document 11). Magnes also met with Alami, and prepared his own draft agreement, which was subsequently integrated with Frumkin's and submitted to the Agency Executive for consideration on June 1st 1936.²⁹

Executive reactions were cautious and suspicious. Some members felt that "the Five" had already gone too far, and wanted the Political Department to take over responsibility for (and re-orient) the talks with the Arabs.³⁰ Once the matter was turned over to Moshe Shertok and Dr Bernard (Dov) Joseph, the talks seemed to flounder on pre-negotiation and procedural obstacles. The initiative was allowed to lapse in late July, to the bitter disappointment of the Five and of Musa al-Alami as well.

The unsuccessful episode of the Five offers some instructive lessons which we may examine under the following headings.

Terms of Agreement

The terms of agreement under discussion during the negotiations of the Five seemed, to some, to offer some hopes of a real compromise. If men like Khalidi and Alami were prepared to accept the terms embodied in the memoranda drafted by Frumkin and the Five (Documents 11 and 13), then this represented a significant departure from the official demands then being put forth by the Arab Higher Committee. In contrast to the latter's insistence on the immediate cessation of all Jewish immigration, the proposals under discussion were suggesting a ceiling of 40 per cent on the Jewish proportion of the population at the end of a ten-year period. This proposal, which was to be known as the "40:10" formula, held out the practical prospect of the Jews *doubling* their numbers over the coming decade, and its generosity was not lost on the Zionist leadership.³¹

Those Zionists (like Ben-Gurion) who might have been prepared to agree on fixing a ceiling on Jewish immigration for a limited period of time cited figures (of between 40,000 and 80,000 per annum) which were more than double those which Khalidi, Alami and the Five were looking at.³² Had these numbers been the only bone of contention, the Jewish Agency Executive might have been expected to regard the draft of the Five as an acceptable basis for beginning discussions with the Arabs. In the ensuing bargaining, one might have expected the gap between the Arabs' 30,000 and the Zionists' 60,000 to have been narrowed.

But there were some preliminary obstacles which had to be cleared away before any authorised representatives of either side would agree to sit down to discuss any numbers. The most serious difficulty was the Arab demand, which amounted to a precondition, that the Zionists voluntarily agree to a temporary stoppage of immigration, as a gesture of goodwill so as to create a positive climate for negotiations. While some of the Five felt that such a gesture was a small price to pay for great long-term benefits, Moshe Shertok's refusal to consider such a move was categorical and often vehement.³³ While urging his colleagues that it was "desirable to continue negotiations with Arab leaders" in early June, David Ben-Gurion insisted that there should be no question of entrusting these

talks to any Jew who might agree to a temporary stoppage of immigration.³⁴

Timing and Tactics

A related, but less crucial, pre-negotiation stumbling block was the question of *when* to start the talks. Should the Arab Higher Committee call off the general strike before sitting down to negotiations, or in response to the actual start of such talks? Or, should the two activities not be linked in any way? (See Document 12)

Differences of opinion on these questions were left in abeyance while other issues contributed to the breakdown of efforts to get talks started. The informal talks of the Five, no less than those involving official Zionist representatives, demonstrated how discussions on an Arab–Zionist agreement were really secondary to another issue: whether the Arab general strike would lead to changes in British policy. The May 18th announcement of new immigration quotas – in which the British seemed to be sending a message to Arab leaders that they were not about to give in to one of the main demands behind the strike – seems to have been the major consideration in the timing of Judge Mustafa al-Khalidi's decision to approach Gad Frumkin.³⁵ It is also clear that, for Moshe Shertok and others, tactical considerations were of greater importance than the actual terms being proposed as a basis for discussion with the Arabs. Upon taking over responsibility for negotiations from the Five and re-establishing contact with Musa al-Alami, Shertok confided to his Mapai Party colleagues that he wanted to *use* these negotiations to create the proper appearances. He wanted the Arabs not, at some later date, to “be able to say that we had relied only on the English,” and he had, he confessed, “no intention” of using the negotiations “to find a way out of the present situation.”³⁶

This was part and parcel of the Zionists' tactical refusal to make the *beau geste* so often asked of them – by both Arabs and by British friends – to agree to a temporary stoppage of immigration. Although their spokesmen invoked principles and precedents, the Zionists' stubbornness on this point also served the useful purpose of prolonging the Arab–British deadlock – to the point where, some hoped, the Arab community would despair of its leadership for having led it into a no-win situation. The advantages to be gained, so some Zionists reasoned, would have been a humbled, more

amenable group of leaders with whom to negotiate at some future date.³⁷

Status of Negotiators

Another reason for the failure of this negotiation attempt arose out of the non-official origins of these peace proposals. It was clear to all concerned that, once the initiative had been made, a way would have to be found for the responsible leadership on both sides to take up formal negotiations and bring them to a successful conclusion.

From the evidence available on the Zionist side, this process was a difficult, and sometimes painful, one. In informing the J.A.E., the Five had hoped to be entrusted, in the name of the Executive, to continue talking to their Arab contacts. Instead, some Executive members, led by Shertok himself, were adamant that responsibility had to be taken out of the hands of the Five. Many had doubts about the political judgment of these prominent peace-seekers, while others were more concerned about weakening the authority of the Executive.³⁸ The unanimous decision of the Jewish Agency Executive on June 2nd was to “adopt a positive attitude towards the attempts at negotiation with Arabs aiming at reaching an agreement,” but to grant no authority to any individuals or groups outside the Jewish Agency’s Political Department, which would, however, be free to consult and make use of members of the Group of Five.³⁹

This decision was, of course, a slight to the ego of several of the Five. But Judah Magnes argued that it was also an unwise tactical move, in that the Executive was throwing away a procedural advantage which the Five wished it to have – viz. the opportunity to use “informal” Jewish and Arab sub-committees as a “cover” against possible failure of the attempts.⁴⁰ But Shertok would not trust Magnes even to prepare the ground for negotiations.⁴¹ While Ben-Gurion held a higher opinion of Magnes’s integrity and usefulness, he too disqualified Magnes and his associates when arguing that anyone who entered into negotiations “out of panic [was] bound to err and mislead.”⁴²

By contrast, the status of the Arab participants in this episode seemed, from the Jewish Agency’s vantage point, to bode well at first. In Shertok’s evaluation, Khalidi and Alami were both “respected, not insignificant . . . nationalist figures,” even though they were not directly “engaged in the political game.”⁴³ Gad Frumkin saw them

as men who were "in a position to move the majority of the leaders of the [Arab Higher] Committee."⁴⁴

But Alami and Khalidi seemed to have had their own difficulties in winning over influential members of the Palestinian leadership. When Shertok and Joseph took over from the Five, their first priority (apart from rejecting, out of hand, any idea of a temporary stoppage of immigration) was to put to the test Musa al-Alami's ability to "deliver the goods"⁴⁵ – even though the goods themselves were not yet clearly defined. Alami responded by arguing that this was putting the cart before the horse; an informal agreement with "moderates" like himself on a draft basis had to precede any steps toward involving members of the A.H.C. He was, he said, offering himself as "the first hurdle to be jumped over."⁴⁶

But Moshe Shertok was adamant in his insistence on learning first whether any recognised Arab leaders could be brought into the talks. Recalling the episode during an interview with the High Commissioner several months later, Shertok argued that it would have been "a sheer waste of time" for him to discuss terms of agreement so long as there was no assurance of "such discussion leading to the further stage of negotiations with the Arab leaders who were in a position to deliver the goods." When he received no reply from Alami, Shertok concluded by mid-July that Alami had either "taken his soundings and got a negative reaction or [had] simply arrived at a conclusion from his knowledge of the mood of his friends that there was 'nothing doing'. "⁴⁷

It appears that Musa al-Alami never did take any soundings among members of the A.H.C. Ten years later, Awni Abd al-Hadi claimed that he had been unaware of the existence of these negotiations.⁴⁸ Alami's state of mind in late June was recorded in a private letter to his Jewish friend, Norman Bentwich. In it Alami confessed to being "more distressed at the state of mind of both Arab and Jew" than at the actual loss of life. He blamed "the leaders on both sides" for "making the possibility of an understanding daily more difficult if not impossible." Especially, he wrote, he was "losing hope . . . in [the] wisdom and sincerity" of the Zionist leaders – "except for Magnes, who unfortunately is not powerful in the Jewish world." Alami told Bentwich that he had ceased believing in the "genuineness" of the Jewish leaders' desire

to come to an agreement. By "agreement" I mean some

arrangement whereby both sides will make concessions to each other. What I understand the Jews *mean* and *want* by the term “agreement” is the acceptance of the Arabs of the full Zionist programme ...⁴⁹

Although he was secretly made aware of Alami’s letter to Bentwich, Shertok continued to insist that other reasons had led to the breakdown, and maintained his own doubts about the sincerity of Alami’s version.⁵⁰

This breakdown of communication between Shertok and Alami was compounded by various other misunderstandings and some pent-up resentment on the part of some of the Five.⁵¹ The latter, often echoing the spirit of Alami’s letter to Bentwich, complained for years afterwards that “another eleventh-hour opportunity” had been lost owing to the intransigence, indifference and/or lack of sincerity on the part of certain members of the Jewish Agency Executive.⁵² In attempting to sort out the conflicting versions which he had heard, the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, could only conclude that the net result of the whole affair was “increased mistrust of each other.”⁵³

ZIONIST-ABDALLAH RELATIONS

Apart from this well-documented negotiation attempt, the Arab Rebellion and general strike stimulated a number of lesser-known, but perhaps more important, talks and mediation efforts, both inside and outside Palestine. In response to criticism that the Executive had abandoned the Five, Dr Weizmann described that episode as “desultory talks between some well-meaning people on our side and their Arab friends,” rather than “negotiations”. The Zionist leader contrasted these activities of “good people” who could not “deliver the goods” with the “very serious efforts” undertaken behind the scenes by representatives of the Political Department, involving politicians in the neighbouring countries

with a view first to neutralising them, and secondly to obtaining their good offices in order to influence the Palestinian Arabs, who largely depend upon their neighbours for their political inspiration.

It was by following this “slow road”, Weizmann believed, that the Zionists would achieve real results.⁵⁴

One of the main stops on this "slow road" was the Amir of Transjordan, and during the general strike contacts between Abdallah and the Political Department were intensified, usually through Muhammad al-Unsi. The relationship built upon a "political subsidy" (above, page 14) was strengthened, largely in response to the British and Zionist fear that Transjordanian tribes might be drawn into western Palestine by the disorders. During the first months of the strike, special payments from both sources to the Amir were earmarked for the "pacification of spirits", and the results were considered to be quite satisfactory.⁵⁵

But the Zionists were less successful in turning their relations with Abdallah to any great political advantage. Here, as before, the Amir steered a cautious course which attempted to maintain his credibility simultaneously as a loyal ally of Great Britain, a sincere friend of the Jews and an Arab patriot defending the rights of his Palestinian brothers. In his periodic meetings with Palestinian Arab leaders, Abdallah discussed ways of ending the strike honourably, and offered his services as mediator between them and the British.⁵⁶ Aligning himself with the Arab Higher Committee's demand of some tangible proof of British good faith, the Amir argued orally and in writing that a temporary stoppage of immigration was the only way that the Palestinian leaders could effectively call off their strike and attempt to quell the violence which was growing out of their control.⁵⁷ Both publicly and privately he deplored the violence, and sent messages to the Jews to the effect that he was available to serve as a mediator between them and the Palestinian Arabs.⁵⁸

Through his emissaries, the Amir tried to convince the Jews to come forth with a "political offer" upon which an end to the strike could be negotiated. What Abdallah had in mind was, in the short term, a voluntary suspension of immigration, and, in the long term, a solution based on the reunification of eastern Transjordan and western Palestine. The Zionists chose to side-step the latter suggestion, and (consistent with their position throughout the rebellion) to reject the former categorically.⁵⁹ There was, however, a constant exchange of information and advice between the two parties throughout the course of the Rebellion.⁶⁰

Parallel to, but largely distinct from, the Jewish Agency's links with Abdallah were those of an economic/political nature between Pinhas Rutenberg and the Amir. The Palestinian Jewish industrialist had been moved by the Arab general strike not only to join with the

Five, but also to revive and put into writing a plan for Jewish and Arab settlement in Transjordan which he had discussed previously with Abdallah. On July 12th, Rutenberg wrote to the Amir, appealing to his interest "in the improvement of Arab Jewish relations and the possibilities for Jewish Arab collaboration in the development of Transjordan."⁶¹ He enclosed a 14-point plan for parallel and semi-autonomous Jewish and Arab settlement regions to be developed along the Zerka River, through a Jewish-financed company to be registered in England.⁶²

On first reading, Abdallah's reply seemed positive enough. He claimed to see "no difficulty to find a way for straight and dignified mutual collaboration between Arabs and Jews." What was needed, however, was prior approval of "Transjordan public opinion" and the British Mandatory Government. Once "the difficulties in Palestine will be settled," Abdallah added, there would be "nothing against our agreeing to find a way for dignified mutual collaboration in the spirit of the clauses given in your proposal."⁶³

On careful scrutiny, the conditions attached to Abdallah's apparently encouraging response were weighty indeed. Rutenberg had conceived of his settlement plan as a helpful step in cooling down tempers in Palestine, but what Abdallah was suggesting was the opposite sequence of events. And, given the continuation of unrest in Palestine, the Amir's last proviso meant that any further steps towards finalising the deal had to be postponed for at least a year.⁶⁴ When Shertok learned that Rutenberg was entertaining even more far-reaching hopes of inducing the Amir to adopt a public pro-Zionist stand on Jewish immigration, he felt he had to warn him not to overestimate Abdallah's influence over the Arabs of Palestine:

If the agreement suits them, they will accept it and also praise Abdallah for it. But if it doesn't suit them, they will reject it, and Abdallah's title as current head of the Hashimite family will not be enough to save him from all the insults and the accusations of treason they will shower upon him.⁶⁵

PAN-ARAB MEDIATION

As the feeling spread among Palestinian Arabs that their strike might prove to be a dead-end offering no political gains, they turned increasingly to politicians in the neighbouring lands to use their

influence with the British. These appeals, which were the culmination of a process which had been growing since 1929, dovetailed well with the respective interests of the leaders surrounding Palestine, each of whom developed his own "Palestine policy".⁶⁶

It was in response to the energetic manoeuvring and lobbying by non-Palestinians that the British negotiated and finally emerged with a formula which served as the face-saving device by which the general strike was finally called off in October 1936. The A.H.C. issued a proclamation, accepting the parallel appeals by Kings Ghazi and Ibn Sa'ud and by the Amir Abdallah that the Palestinian Arabs should end the disturbances and trust in the "good will of [their] friend the British Government and her declared intention to fulfil justice."⁶⁷

Although this Anglo-Arab diplomacy proved to be the decisive avenue that brought about an end to the strike, there was also a parallel, if lesser-known, upsurge in contacts and negotiations involving Zionists and non-Palestinians during the Arab Rebellion. The Amir Abdallah was not the only outsider with an interest in maintaining close links with this third, Zionist, element in the Palestine "triangle". On June 18th, Dr Weizmann wrote to Sir Arthur Wauchope about the promising talks which Jewish Agency representatives were holding with Syrians and Iraqis; the Zionist leader might well have added Lebanese and Egyptians, for, in fact, Arab-Zionist contacts were being intensified on all four fronts at that time.⁶⁸

Running parallel to the Anglo-Arab diplomatic activity, there were at least four sets of Zionist-Arab talks, coming mainly on the initiative of the Arabs. These were talks involving (a) Nuri as-Sa'id of Iraq, (b) Egyptian and Syrian personalities in Cairo, (c) Syrian leaders in Damascus and in Paris, and (d) Lebanese Maronites in Beirut and Paris.

Nuri as-Sa'id

Aside from the Amir Abdallah, perhaps the most intricately-involved non-Palestinian politician at this time was Iraqi Foreign Minister (and later Prime Minister), Nuri as-Sa'id. In early June 1936, Nuri and Ali Jawdat, the Iraqi minister in London, invited Dr Weizmann for an unofficial exchange of views "on the deplorable Palestine crisis [to] see if they could in any way be of any service in bringing to an end this fratricidal conflict."⁶⁹ What was said during their

meeting of June 9th must be deduced from the conflicting reports which Nuri later gave to George Rendel at the Foreign Office and which Weizmann gave to his intimate circle of advisers. Nuri reported that, "speaking as an old friend", he had made two suggestions to the Zionist leader: "that the Zionist organisation should spontaneously propose the suspension of Jewish immigration" during the period of the proposed Royal Commission inquiry; and "that the Jews make it clear that they were prepared to accept the position of being a minority in an Arab country," the latter vague term ostensibly opening the door to a wider territory comprising a federation of Arab states with Palestine. Nuri said he had "the impression" that Weizmann was "not opposed" to the former suggestion, and that he "seemed prepared to consider" the latter.⁷⁰

In his reports to his close advisers, Dr Weizmann dwelt on both the long- and short-term possibilities that he had discussed with the Iraqi leader. In the long term, Nuri seemed to suggest that a Jewish entity in Palestine might be more acceptable to the Arabs if it were integrated into the fabric of a wider federation of Arab states. But, in the short term, the Jews would have to agree, in order to pave the way for further talks, to calling a temporary halt to any further Jewish immigration.⁷¹ Members of the Z.O. Political Advisory Committee severely took the chief to task when he recommended that they consider making this *beau geste* in order to break the deadlock.⁷²

It is not clear whether or when Dr Weizmann reported back to Nuri as-Sa'id that he had been overruled by his colleagues. But when Nuri returned to Baghdad he gave the misleading report to the British ambassador there that Weizmann "had agreed to ask His Majesty's Government, on behalf of the Zionist organisation, to stop Jewish immigration into Palestine for a year in order that the proposed Royal Commission might have an opportunity to get on with its work."⁷³ Now, with the British inquiring into the accuracy of Nuri's report of Weizmann's remarks, the Zionist leader was forced to recant and to issue a not altogether convincing clarification to the effect that he had been "unable to agree to [Nuri's] suggestion", though he possibly had not "contradict[ed] it as vehemently as [he] should have done."⁷⁴

Still anxious to use his influence towards breaking the deadlock in Palestine, Nuri as-Sa'id arrived in Jerusalem in late August and began to mediate between the A.H.C. and the High Commissioner. Simultaneously, Nuri also contacted the Zionists there and resumed

his attempts to convince them of the advantages of their volunteering to suspend their immigration temporarily. During his meeting with Moshe Shertok, Nuri recalled his earlier talk with Weizmann and again urged the Zionists to create the "psychological bridge" which was needed

not only to find a way out of the present situation, but also to create the impression in the Arab public, not only in the country but mainly outside the country, that the Jews truly sought peace, and for its sake they were willing to make that sacrifice.⁷⁵

Shertok enumerated the reasons why the Zionists were united in rejecting the "sacrifice" which was being asked of them, and their talk ended without Nuri accomplishing the main objective of his approach to the Jews.

Nuri's main purpose – i.e., his Anglo-Arab diplomacy – seemed, for a brief moment, to meet with rather more success. During his two weeks in Palestine, speculation grew that he was on the verge of producing a formula which would satisfy both the High Commissioner and A.H.C., based on the British agreeing (among other things) to a temporary stoppage of immigration in exchange for an end to the general strike.⁷⁶ In response, Zionists in Jerusalem and in London mounted a vigorous attack aimed at the immediate termination of Nuri as-Sa'id's mediation.⁷⁷ In an apparently spontaneous gesture, Dr Weizmann even came up with a constructive counter-proposal: he offered to go immediately to Palestine or to Cairo to meet with Nuri, "and any Palestinian Arabs whom [Nuri] might wish to be present," for the purpose of "arriving at a *modus vivendi*."⁷⁸

The Colonial Secretary jumped at Weizmann's offer, which would have amounted to replacing the faltering Iraqi-British mediation by a form of Arab-Zionist diplomacy under British aegis. But, in reply Sir Arthur Wauchope in Jerusalem cabled his clearly negative reaction to the idea:

Arab leaders of Palestine [the High Commissioner argued] would almost certainly refuse to attend. The suggestion would lead to false hopes. It would be abortive because Arabs will insist on suspension of immigration and Jews will not yield on suspension.⁷⁹

But while this exchange of telegrams was taking place J.A.E.

officials in Jerusalem dealt what appears to have been the *coup de grace* to Nuri as-Sa'id's mediation by causing to be published in the *Palestine Post* a text alleged to be the terms agreed upon for the termination of the strike. The Colonial Secretary had no choice but to issue a formal denial, which took the form of a letter to Weizmann ("a second MacDonald letter") which was given wide publicity. This, along with the Cabinet's September 2nd "get tough" decisions on Palestine, effectively liquidated Nuri's intervention, although rumours of his re-emergence continued to crop up for weeks afterwards.⁸⁰ Later that month, Sir Herbert Samuel and Lord Winterton would make their own independent approaches to the Iraqi leader in a further abortive mediation effort (below, pages 55f.).

Talks in Egypt

Political figures in Egypt also watched the developing crisis in Palestine with interest, and a number of them declared support for the Palestinian Arabs, offered to mediate between the latter and the British, or offered to try to mediate between Jews and Arabs. Leaving aside the former two types of activity⁸¹ and focusing here only on the latter, we find Muhammad Ali Aluba Pasha involved, during May 1936, in a brief attempt to convene an Arab-Jewish conference in Cairo. Aluba was in contact with Nahum Vilenski, manager of the Zionist-owned Agence d'Orient (*wikalat ash-sharq*), and wrote to the Mufti and to Raghīb an-Nashashibi in Jerusalem. The Mufti's response to the idea was that he would be willing to go to Cairo if the Jews agreed, in advance, to a temporary stoppage of immigration and an end to land-purchases. Since such a precondition was unacceptable to the Zionists, the attempted mediation ended quickly in failure, and Aluba declared that he was washing his hands of any further involvement.⁸²

A second and more elaborate attempt involved Vilenski and two Syrian exiles: journalist Amin Sa'id (with *al-Muqattam*), and the veteran pro-Hashimite pan-Arabist, Dr Abd ar-Rahman ash-Shahbandar.⁸³ The two Syrians were in contact with the A.H.C. through Yaqub al-Ghusain and Amin Abd al-Hadi, and in their talks with Vilenski they sought to obtain a definition of the Zionists' "final goal" in terms of numbers. Although the Syrians began by insisting that no Arabs would be prepared to discuss any figure higher than 40 per cent, Vilenski claimed in early July that he had convinced them to

try to arrange a meeting at which the Jews would be demanding the right to equality of numbers with the Arabs in Palestine.⁸⁴

When David Ben-Gurion learned about these talks, he pressed Vilenski to take steps to verify whether the A.H.C. in Jerusalem would really agree to negotiate on this basis. For, Ben-Gurion reasoned, if the Mufti was, in fact, willing to meet on the basis of a 50:50 formula, then this constituted “almost – from the Arab point of view – the acceptance of Zionism in full” and the Jews had better be prepared to sit down to some “very serious negotiations”.⁸⁵ But the clarifications which the Syrians obtained from Jerusalem indicated that the Mufti would insist on the Jews not surpassing 80 per cent of the Arab population, although the possibility of parity in government bodies was not ruled out.⁸⁶

Dwelling on what he considered to be the positive aspects of Shahbandar’s and Sa’id’s revised proposal for negotiations (Document 16) and rejecting its negative aspects, Moshe Shertok instructed Vilenski to inform the Syrians that the Jews were willing to pursue such talks, especially with a view to clarifying adequate guarantees for non-domination and non-eviction. The more difficult question of the form of a final arrangement, Shertok suggested, would best be left to one side. Shahbandar and Sa’id responded by offering to invite the A.H.C. to send a Palestinian representative to Cairo for a “free conversation, without preconditions,” if the Jewish Agency would also agree to send someone.⁸⁷ After Shertok visited Cairo (and following a delay caused by Nuri as-Sa’id’s mediation attempts in Jerusalem), Dr Bernard Joseph was despatched to Cairo in late September to meet with Dr Shahbandar, Amin Sa’id and – it was hoped – a Palestinian, Yaqub al-Ghusain.⁸⁸

As Yaqub al-Ghusain was unexpectedly called away from Cairo, Dr Joseph and Nahum Vilenski had to content themselves with talks involving only the Syrians.⁸⁹ Joseph elaborated the Zionist position on the legislative council and land questions, and expressed a positive attitude to the idea of Palestine one day entering a confederation of Middle Eastern states. While insisting that the Zionists’ right to immigrate into Palestine was not dependent on Arab consent, but only on the economic capacity of the country, Joseph nevertheless departed from the existing consensus in the Zionist camp by offering to fix a ceiling on Jewish immigration for a limited period of five years. Regardless of whether or not they succeeded in becoming a majority in Palestine, he said, the Zionists were prepared

to pledge themselves to a non-domination formula, and to respect guarantees for the non-eviction of Arabs in the wake of Jewish land-purchases.

The Syrians voiced their doubts that any Arabs would feel secure with Jewish promises and guarantees, but Dr Shahbandar seemed to think that there was room for agreement on the land and legislative council issues. According to Joseph's record of the conversations, the Syrians agreed to contact Palestinian spokesmen with a recommendation to hold talks with the Zionists. But, although Shahbandar was still offering his services as mediator in early October, he seems to have been unable to bring any Palestinian Arabs into the talks.

One possible explanation for the failure of this attempted mediation was the intervention of the "Arab kings" which at that very moment was bringing about an end to the strike. Now preparations to send out a Royal Commission to Palestine shifted the political interest of both the Zionists and the Syrian emigrés to other arenas. Secondly, if we are to believe Nahum Vilenski's undated retrospective account of these talks,⁹⁰ it was the inadequacy, in Arab eyes, of the guarantees being offered by the Zionists which led to Shahbandar's discouragement – contrary to Joseph's record (Document 20), which implied that the Syrians had been positively impressed by his arguments.

Syrian National Bloc Leaders

The negotiations in Paris for the Franco-Syrian and Franco-Lebanese treaties during 1936 provided some incentives for Syrian and Lebanese politicians to offer to meet with Zionists on the question of Palestine. Stereotypic assumptions about "Jewish power" in European public affairs seemed confirmed in the minds of many Arabs when Léon Blum, a Jewish socialist, was elected French Prime Minister in spring of 1936. Indeed, the view that Jews could influence the French Government's negotiating position on Syria led a number of Syrian leaders to offer their services as mediators between Arabs and Jews in Palestine. Those Zionists who recognised the force of pan-Arabism welcomed this opportunity of broadening the frame of reference of the local Palestine tangle, and of considering the problem as one which might be solved in a wider Middle Eastern context.⁹¹

Such were the lines of approach in the summer of 1936 as representatives of the Syrian "National Bloc" Party (rival of the

Shahbandar group) and those of the Jewish Agency held meetings in Paris and in Syria.⁹² In June, Dr Weizmann met twice with members of the Syrian delegation there. After the first meeting, he reported to his colleagues that Jamil Mardam had offered “to tell the Arabs of Palestine to lay off, if we would help them in Syria; the assumption being, apparently, that we had Blum in our pockets.”⁹³ After a second meeting, the Zionist leader reported that Riad as-Sulh was prepared, “if Syria achieved independence”, to “do all that was possible to try and ease the situation in Palestine,” in exchange for Jewish economic and organisational assistance in the formation of a future Arab federation. But when Riad was visited by David Ben-Gurion six weeks later, the Lebanese pan-Arabist complained that Dr Weizmann had failed to produce a set of written proposals he had promised. In contrast with what Ben-Gurion seemed to be saying, Riad claimed that Weizmann had shown “moderation” in agreeing to limitations on immigration and land-purchase, and to a pledge that the Jews would not become a majority.⁹⁴

Zionists found it difficult to hide their ambivalent feelings towards Syrian independence. One line of thinking was that, as the Syrians approached their independence, they would be adopting an increasingly “realistic” approach to Palestine, especially as they would have pressing internal matters to deal with.⁹⁵ But another viewpoint, often masked behind hollow professions of sympathy for Arab independence, was that nationalist advances in Syria could only have the effect of encouraging further Palestinian resistance to Zionism.⁹⁶ As a result of the dominance of the latter attitude, Zionist discussions with the French were, on the whole, aimed at limiting, rather than advancing, the cause of Syrian independence, leaving some Syrians with justified cause for suspicion or complaint.⁹⁷

In July and August Zionists continued to try to build up “good-neighbourly” relations with members of the National Bloc. Partly to counteract the appeals made by the Mufti of Jerusalem to involve Syrian leaders more actively in support of the general strike in Palestine, Eliahu Epstein (Elath) was sent to Syria to meet with Fakhri al-Barudi, founder-organiser of the “Iron Shirts” youth movement.⁹⁸

At their secret meeting of July 17th, near Damascus, the two men exchanged views both on how to end the general strike and how Jews and Arabs could combine efforts for the future progress of the Middle East. “You’ve got the talent and the money,” Barudi was

reported to have stated during their five hours of talks, “and we’ve got the land and the manpower.” The conversation covered familiar ground, culminating in Barudi’s eloquent insistence that not even the Prophet Muhammad, were he to rise from his grave, could convince the Arabs of Palestine to end their strike without the Jews agreeing to suspend immigration. Epstein responded with equally firm insistence that the Jews would never abandon what they viewed as their fundamental right to immigrate to Palestine, restricted only by the economic absorptive capacity of the country. When Epstein mentioned his planned trip to Paris, the talk ended on a positive note: Syrian nationalists would regard any help to their Paris delegation as a proof of “the friendly feelings of the Jewish people for the Arab people.” A further meeting was scheduled for two weeks later.⁹⁹

In preparation for the meeting with members of the National Bloc, the Zionists formulated their position in fine detail.¹⁰⁰ The central issue upon which the success of the forthcoming talks would be measured, for the Zionists, would be the quality of the link between the issues of Syrian independence and Syrian helpfulness with regard to the Palestine dispute:

As long as the disturbances and rioting in Palestine continued, not only would we not be able to put this [co-operative] attitude into actual practice in Paris, but, on the contrary, our propaganda and protest activities would have to hurt the Syrian nationalist movement because the actions of their comrades in Palestine were making the Arabs unworthy of independence.¹⁰¹

The meeting of August 1st 1936 (Document 17) – hailed as the first “official” negotiations between authorised representatives of the National Bloc and the Jewish Agency – was followed by a second session on August 9th.¹⁰² At both sessions, Shukri al-Quwatli led the discussion for the Arab side, assisted by Faris al-Khoury; the latter was the only one who, in the opinion of the Jewish participants, showed them any “hostility and suspicion”.¹⁰³ In the absence of a clear-cut harmony of interests on immediate, practical issues, the discussion consisted of eloquent analyses of the roots of Arab-Zionist differences. Quwatli, in cordial but firm terms, restated the Arabs’ demands and their fears of Jewish domination: “What good are economic blessings if we are not masters in our home?” The Jews offered words of reassurance about Arab rights and interests, and tried to convince their negotiating partners of their need “to under-

stand our aspirations and to recognise our right to return to our homeland." Despite the standard words of farewell and hopes for continuing their discussions, the second meeting ended inconclusively, without even a repetition of the Syrian request for Zionist help in Paris.¹⁰⁴

As with the 1936 Cairo talks, the factors of "timing" and "terms of agreement" may be cited as reasons for the failure of the Syrians to serve as successful intermediaries between Zionists and Palestinian Arabs. Nuri as-Sa'id's intervention helped to put the Syrians on the sidelines, and the Syrian negotiators seem to have been disappointed with the lack of precision offered by Zionists in terms of the "guarantees" being sought to offset their complaints.¹⁰⁵ The decline and fall of Léon Blum in Paris also contributed to Syrian second thoughts about the usefulness of having Zionist allies in Paris. As Eliahu Epstein recalled many years later, the talks had demonstrated that "the gulf between the positions of the two sides . . . was, evidently, too wide for Shukri al-Quwatli . . . and his comrades, and thus they saw no point in continuing the discussions with us."¹⁰⁶

While no breakthrough on the Palestine impasse resulted from these efforts, Zionists nevertheless had reason to be pleased with at least two limited achievements: (a) the neutralisation of the National Bloc's potential for active intervention on behalf of the Palestinian Arab cause in response to the Mufti's pressures, and (b) the intensification of contacts with Jamil Mardam and several other politicians whose friendship and assistance were to prove useful during the coming years.¹⁰⁷

Zionist-Lebanese Relations

One of the reasons why the Syrian independence issue could not serve as a common basis for an agreement between the Zionists and the National Bloc was the deeper commitment which the former felt for competing Maronite-Lebanese interests. The sense of insecurity and isolation which the Christian and Jewish minorities shared vis-à-vis the larger Arab-Muslim world only grew more intense as a result of the disturbances and the general strike in Palestine. Zionists felt that the unrest was providing the Maronite and other Christian sects with "proof of what the rule of a Muslim majority would mean," while the economic losses incurred by the Lebanese tourist and agricultural sectors were making it "abundantly

clear ... how vitally interested they were in the safety and prosperity of the Jews in Palestine.”¹⁰⁸

A specific treaty-related issue over which Muslim Syrians and Maronite Lebanese were at odds was the proposed boundaries of the two future states. Both sides laid claim to the Sidon and Tyre areas, and Dr Weizmann gladly made representations in Paris to the effect that

there should be no kind of corridor for the Syrian State between the [Lebanese] Republic and Palestine because, looking to the future, the Lebanese Republic and the Jewish National Home will have to ‘hold hands’ ... [If] Damascus would like to push the Lebanese into the Mediterranean, [so too did] Nablus [wish] to do the same to us in Palestine.¹⁰⁹

On the wider issue of the degree of Lebanese autonomy vis-à-vis Muslim Syria, Zionists felt that a generous approach by the French Government to the Maronites might serve as a precedent for future British attitudes towards an independent Jewish Palestine in the region.¹¹⁰

The most ambitious expression of this trend towards closer Maronite-Zionist relations came in the form of Jewish attempts to formulate a written entente to be incorporated into the projected Franco-Lebanese Treaty. On September 22nd 1936, E. Epstein visited President Emile Eddé with a view to drafting such a document. After listening to Epstein’s summation of the harmony of interests that existed between the two parties, Eddé repeated his own views on the “natural partnership” between his people and the Jews, and declared himself ready to begin negotiations immediately for a cultural and commercial entente.¹¹¹ Such a draft treaty was discussed between Eddé and Zionist emissary Isaac Kadmi-Cohen in late December and early January, but the repeated expressions of sincere friendship remained in the realm of private conversations and did not lead to the actual signing of this, or any other, formal document.¹¹² Zionists usually accepted Eddé’s reasons for his inability to act publicly – viz. interference and non-co-operation by the French High Commissioner in Beirut – and did their best to lobby Paris in the direction of correcting the supposed hostility.¹¹³ But a more credible explanation may have been Eddé’s sensitivity to the danger of alienating Muslim and even Christian political circles in

Lebanon and Syria: "Si j'autorise le sionisme au Liban, demain j'aurai la révolution."¹¹⁴

INTERMEDIARIES AND MEDDLERS

The extended crisis caused by the Arab general strike and Rebellion in Palestine led not only to official British, Arab or Zionist attempts at restoring order and laying the foundations of improved Arab–Jewish relations. The crisis also attracted the interest and active involvement of a number of private individuals who felt they could be of service in formulating an Arab–Zionist accord. Thus, for example, as the strike was entering its second month, two Jerusalem Englishmen (Shelley of the Chamber of Commerce and Clark of Barclays Bank) approached Moshe Shertok and Awni Abd al-Hadi with an offer to mediate, but the attempt broke down when the Jews refused to consider the prerequisite of a voluntary suspension of immigration.¹¹⁵

More sustained were the mediation efforts of former Palestine government official Archer Cust, Quaker missionary Daniel Oliver and journalist Nevill Barbour. As we noted in the previous chapter, Archer Cust had been circulating his ideas for a cantonisation solution to the Palestine problem more than a year before the outbreaks of April 1936 (see page 27). In the increasingly pessimistic political atmosphere which preceded the rioting Cust had again presented his scheme in a public lecture at the Royal Central Asian Society in London.¹¹⁶ While Colonial Office officials still found the scheme too much of a deviation from current policy to be given serious consideration, Cust nevertheless kept them informed of Arab and Zionist reactions to his plan, especially the positive responses he had from Arab lobbyist, Col. S.F. Newcombe, "non-Zionist" Jew, Norman Bentwich, and even from the Zionist leader himself, Dr Weizmann.¹¹⁷

Although cantonisation was unacceptable to Zionists because it "crystallised" the Jewish national home in its current dimensions, some leading Zionists were privately open to the idea – if it were to be a *transitional* measure.¹¹⁸ In this light it is not surprising that Dr Weizmann invited Cust to discuss his own plan for "reserved" areas in Palestine, a plan which the Zionist leader felt "crossed" Cust's cantonisation scheme. Weizmann's idea was to reserve the hill country during the coming 15 to 20 years for the Arabs, while

concentrating Jewish settlement and immigration in the urban areas and the plains. Under this plan, the Zionists hoped to acquire an additional one million dunums of land, and to introduce 700,000 European Jewish refugees.¹¹⁹

During their discussion, Cust pressed Dr Weizmann to agree to discuss the question of eventual self-government for the two "administered areas" thus created, on condition that the Arabs would agree to "a solution to the fundamental problem of land" along the lines of these "reservations".¹²⁰ Armed with these guidelines and with Dr Weizmann's blessing, Cust then undertook to meet with members of the Arab Higher Committee who were then in London. Jamal al-Husaini, Shibli Jamal, Dr Izzat Tannous and Emile Ghory received Cust's summary of Weizmann's proposal "with sympathetic interest", but not without suspicion. In particular, the Arabs found the implication of 30,000 Jewish immigrants per year "unacceptable", and were not relieved of their fears that the Jews would still succeed in creating a majority and/or in dominating the urban and industrial economy of Palestine. Nevertheless, Cust felt they were attracted by the possibility of finding an "honourable agreement" by which to end their general strike.¹²¹

While Cust felt that he had already received encouraging signs in this sense from Dr Weizmann, the latter's subsequent clarifications underlined the gaps that existed between Cust's cantonisation scheme and the Zionist plan for "Arab reservations". These differences were soon made clear to the Colonial Office and to the High Commissioner in Jerusalem.¹²² Despite the absence of positive response from all three parties,¹²³ Cust persisted in his belief that in cantonisation lay "the only hope for a solution."¹²⁴

Daniel Oliver, an American Quaker living near Beirut, was another individual who thought he might try to bridge the gap between Arabs and Zionists in the midst of the 1936 crisis. In July he co-ordinated his efforts in the Middle East with those of fellow-Quakers Arnold Rowntree and William Ayles in London. Their proposal was for the Arabs to agree to call off the strike, in exchange for the Zionists agreeing to forego the schedule of immigration certificates due in October. Rowntree and Ayles met with Dr Weizmann, and the Zionist leader – notwithstanding the Jewish Agency's hostility to the idea – apparently agreed to go along with the formula if it would really result in ending the strike.¹²⁵

But when the Quakers cabled the results of their London meet-

ings to the Middle East, the mediation attempt quickly fell apart. According to a Jewish Agency "Arab source", the offer was spurned by the Mufti on several grounds, including (a) the Arabs' interest in receiving concessions from the British, rather than from the Zionists, and (b) the feeling that "foregoing certificates" was not as definitive as "stopping immigration".¹²⁶ Neither was Oliver very successful in his meeting with Moshe Shertok, the Agency's chief proponent of the case against the Zionists' making the *beau geste* of voluntarily suspending immigration. Oliver's arguments in favour of endorsing Dr Weizmann's "statesmanlike" approach fell on very unsympathetic ears. The rumours surrounding this episode evoked strong denials from the Agency's Political Department in Jerusalem, but not before some Arab leaders had been led to expect an imminent "victory" to their strike.¹²⁷

Another would-be mediator at this time was Nevill Barbour, a British journalist and author who spent the summer of 1936 in Palestine. In late August he published a pamphlet entitled, "A Plan for Lasting Peace in Palestine," which he distributed to various Arab and Jewish leaders for their reactions. While the almost-standard call for a stoppage of Jewish immigration was absent from this plan, its clauses were designed to provide mechanisms to allow greater satisfaction to most Arab grievances – for example, an international declaration recognising the "historical connection of Palestine with the Arab world," and the creation of an "Arab Agency on a parity with the Jewish Agency."¹²⁸

Dr Judah Magnes was one of the few Jews who reacted with positive interest to what he called Barbour's "most valuable pamphlet".¹²⁹ While Raghīb an-Nashashibi complimented the author's understanding of the Arab struggle and the Arab mentality, Jamal al-Husaini challenged both the plan's "practicability" and its "justice", stating that "no respectable Arab [would] consider the plan as in any way feasible." In fact, Jamal went on to add that the only "solution" on which Zionists and Arabs might agree was the one proposed by V. Jabotinsky, "who said [according to Jamal] 'Why deceive the Arabs? We all know that the land [has] no space for both of us. We must drive them out or be driven [by] them.'"¹³⁰

THE SAMUEL-WINTERTON MEDIATION

A final mediation attempt which we shall examine here emanated

from more distinguished quarters: Sir Herbert (later Lord) Samuel, former High Commissioner for Palestine (1920-25). In early September 1936 Samuel formulated a four-point plan for an Arab-Zionist entente (covering the issues of legislature, immigration, land and Transjordan) and showed the plan, in strictest confidence, to Dr Weizmann.¹³¹ After receiving Weizmann's criticisms, Samuel showed a revised draft to Lord Winterton, a parliamentary lobbyist for the Arab cause, and to the Colonial Secretary, Wm. Ormsby-Gore.¹³²

The main points of Samuel's "Draft Proposals on Palestine" (Document 19(a)) were that there would be an agreement to last until the end of 1950, by which time the Jews should not have exceeded 40 per cent of the population; land-sales would be restricted, but Transjordan would be opened to Jewish and Arab settlement (cf. the Rutenberg proposals, Document 15); the government would undertake "substantial expenditure" to raise the level of Arab agriculture and education; a "Customs Union" would be promoted between Palestine and the neighbouring countries; and a legislative council would be established in Palestine consisting of an equal number of Arabs, Jews and "official and unofficial members nominated by the Government."

Taking into account the cautions and advice of Ormsby-Gore and Weizmann, but armed with the "enthusiastic support" of Winterton and the backing of Pinhas Rutenberg, Samuel was hoping to win endorsement for his plan from Iraqi Foreign Minister Nuri as-Sa'id, who was also a personal friend of Lord Winterton. After Nuri, Samuel envisioned the next stage as bringing about the involvement of Arab leaders from Palestine and gaining the approval of the Jewish Agency for the mediation.¹³³

But Samuel's initiative was quickly undone. On September 19th, Samuel and Winterton met Nuri in Paris and their hopes were immediately dashed by Nuri's categorical rejection of each of the proposals (Document 19(b,c)). The Samuel-Winterton proposals died then and there, but the episode carried with it some important lessons for the various parties involved. For the Zionist leadership, this episode was the first of several unwelcome and "irresponsible" initiatives by Samuel which went against the wishes and the political line of the J.A.E. – highlighting the perennial problem of relations between leaders and dissenters.¹³⁴ Nuri's firm tone – particularly in the face of such "exaggeratedly moderate proposals" – sent a clear

message to the Zionists that the Arabs were in no mood to compromise with them, as they were expecting instead to win concessions from the British Royal Commission. Those Zionist leaders who were hoping to win the movement's support for the parity formula were especially disappointed by Nuri's rejection of the principle of equal representation in the legislative council, while Samuel himself was struck by the Iraqi leader's narrow focus on his own country's policies ahead of the general Arab interest.¹³⁵

Thus, Nuri as-Sa'id's outright rejection of the Samuel proposals left the field clear for the British firm hand approach, in tandem with the mediation of the Arab kings, to bring about an end to the general strike and the disturbances in early October. The immediate crisis had abated somewhat, and the attention of Arab and Zionist leaders shifted to Lord Peel and the Royal Commission of Inquiry.

CHAPTER 3

Partition

THE PEEL COMMISSION

The dispatch of a Royal Commission, mandated to “ascertain the underlying causes of the disturbances which broke out in Palestine” and to determine whether “either the Arabs or the Jews [had] any legitimate grievances upon account of the way in which the Mandate has been ... implemented”,¹ set into motion a stylised arbitration procedure, whereby Arabs and Zionists were encouraged, even more than they had been before, to direct their attentions and their efforts not towards each other, but towards the British. Lord Peel and the other commissioners held hearings in Palestine and in London, and heard Arab and Zionist spokesmen clarifying and restating their respective positions, grievances and demands – invariably in less generous terms than had been hinted at through intermediaries or in secret talks with each other during the preceding months.

Some Zionists felt that they were under a certain pressure to come up with a formula or proposal to impress the Royal Commission and public opinion generally with their sincerity and concern for an agreement with the Arabs. Consequently they debated – but rejected – Dr Weizmann’s idea that the movement declare itself publicly and officially in favour of parity.² Much energy went into how best to present the Zionist case before the Commission, and behind-the-scenes efforts were made to discourage dissenters like Judah Magnes and Norman Bentwich from appearing and thereby weakening the official line.³ Surprisingly, perhaps, there was very little Zionist activity designed to encourage or to orchestrate the appearance of friendly or moderate Arab spokesmen before the Royal Commission.⁴

On the other side, internal debate was over whether the Arab Higher Committee should agree to appear at all, in part a reflection

of Arab fears that "Jewish power" over London would likely overturn any possible pro-Arab recommendations by this latest Commission of Inquiry.⁵ In the end, non-Palestinian leaders helped to persuade the A.H.C. to appear. If, during the strike, various signals from the Mufti's camp had indicated the possibility of an agreement based on the Jews reaching a maximum of 40 per cent of the population,⁶ al-Hajj Amin's testimony before the Royal Commission now spoke of "the immediate and complete stoppage of Jewish immigration."⁷

There were, nevertheless, a few spontaneous initiatives for an Arab-Zionist agreement which were intended to supplement, or to influence, the proceedings of the Peel Commission. In London, Pinhas Rutenberg began a *démarche* remarkably similar to his May 1930 efforts. In October 1936, Rutenberg drafted a set of proposals for the Colonial Office and enlisted the personal backing of Dr Weizmann and a Transjordanian, Hasan Khalid Pasha. His 1936 proposals for a new Zionist initiative reflected the parity principle, and showed some willingness to accept a temporary reduction of Jewish immigration.⁸ But, apart from Zionist hesitations, Rutenberg encountered an unenthusiastic response from British officials, especially with regard to the parity and (unwritten) bribery aspects of the plan. Once the C.O. made it clear that there could be no question of the British Government actively helping to start up Arab-Zionist talks on the basis of such proposals, Rutenberg allowed the matter to drop.⁹

Parallel to this initiative, Rutenberg also tried to obtain from the Amir Abdallah some written expressions of "his friendly views about Jewish Arab collaboration in Palestine and in Transjordan." The format was to have been personal letters addressed by Abdallah to former High Commissioners Sir Herbert Samuel and Sir John Chancellor - letters which the latter would then forward to the Royal Commission. But the Amir steered a cautious course, and did not fall in with Rutenberg's plans. The Amir did demonstrate some "moderation" in a private audience with members of the Commission at Amman, but his formal memorandum addressed to the Peel Commission contained material which Rutenberg found so "disgusting" that he temporarily held back a £2000 subsidy which the Amir had requested for the purpose of keeping "his sheikhs in order" during his absence for the coronation of King George VI in London.¹⁰

In Jerusalem, too, there were a few unsuccessful efforts to capitalise

on the lull in the tension brought about by the coming of the Royal Commission. Dr Magnes, for example, asked Shibli Jamal whether he could organise a meeting of some friends who might be willing to search, unofficially, for a basis of agreement. The latter replied that he was unable to find anyone willing to engage in political discussions at that time.¹¹

THE REGIONAL DIMENSION

The shifting of the Palestine problem to arbitration by the Royal Commission was also marked by an intensification of the pan-Arabisation of the local conflict. Parallel to the testimony being gathered by the Royal Commission, private talks with British officials served as an avenue for non-Palestinian spokesmen to propose various suggestions for the proper resolution of the Palestine dispute. Almost invariably, these proposals began with the demand to stop Jewish immigration,¹² but there seemed to be room for an accommodation with the Jews in at least some of the suggestions which were linked to wider schemes for an Arab federation. Thus, Nuri as-Sa'id was prepared to resume Jewish immigration after a temporary halt, but his plan called for the *proportion* of Jews to Arabs to remain permanently fixed at the current ratio.¹³ The Iraqi Prime Minister, Hikmat Sulaiman, privately expressed himself in more generous terms, accepting the inevitability of further Jewish immigration – but only so long as it did not result in making the Arabs “a minority in what was after all their own country.” The official Iraqi stand, however, formulated by Foreign Minister, Dr Naji al-Asil, was more in line with Nuri's position, and called for a temporary suspension of immigration, followed by a policy of not allowing the Jews to exceed their current proportion (then reckoned at 28 per cent) of the population.¹⁴

Having already been left aside unceremoniously by the Anglo-Arab diplomacy which had been used to end the general strike in October 1936, Zionists now directed new energy into fostering better relations with Arabs outside Palestine. David Ben-Gurion told the Royal Commission in early January 1937 that he believed that the Jews would “come to terms” with the Arabs outside Palestine: “after we come to terms with the Arabs in Iraq and with the Arabs in Syria, it will also influence the Arabs in Palestine.”¹⁵ Indeed, in February Dr Weizmann felt that the Zionist position in

the Arab world outside Palestine was “much more favourable than it ha[d] ever been before,” and saw this as “the key to all our troubles in Palestine.”¹⁶ Zionists went on to increase their activities aimed at solidifying their contacts with leaders in the surrounding Arab capitals and counteracting hostile propaganda through the publication of several brochures in Arabic.¹⁷ The Political Department sought to remain on good terms with Nuri as-Sa’id, and went on to forge links with members of the new Iraqi regime following the coup d’état in late 1936.¹⁸ During a visit to Cairo in January 1937, Dr Weizmann tried to meet Mustafa Nahhas in order to let the Egyptian Prime Minister see “that the Zionist leaders were not savages,” but he was discouraged from doing so by British Embassy staff, who felt that such a meeting would not be opportune.¹⁹ Moshe Shertok also followed what proved to be a futile lead by meeting in Paris with Syrian and Lebanese activists who claimed (falsely, it transpired) to be in a position to arrange a high-level meeting between him and the Amir Shakib Arslan in Geneva.²⁰

At the same time, Zionists resumed contact with National Bloc leaders in Syria following the party’s election to office in late 1936, and proudly invoked these resumed contacts during *in camera* sessions of the Royal Commission hearings.²¹ Zionist–Maronite relations also continued to develop in friendly directions. Even though the proposed written entente with Emile Eddé remained unsigned, by late summer of 1937 Eddé and the Zionists considered that an agreement existed between them not on paper “but in our hearts”.²² Zionists also sought to cultivate friendly ties with the major non-Arab Muslim states in the region, Iran and Turkey.²³

A new factor was added to the ensemble of Zionist non-Palestinian contacts when some people began toying with the idea of King Abd al-Aziz al-Sa’ud (Ibn Sa’ud) serving as a mediator between Jews and Palestinian Arabs.²⁴ Partly in response to the Mufti’s visit to Mecca in February 1937, Saudis were now joining with other non-Palestinian spokesmen in declaring their solidarity with the Arabs of Palestine.²⁵ Zionists now sought to make approaches to the Saudi king in an attempt to neutralise this support.

Fuad Hamza, a Syrian Druse who had lived in Palestine for several years and who was then serving as Director-General of the Saudi Foreign Ministry, agreed to a private meeting with David Ben-Gurion in Beirut in early April. During their three-hour talk, the two men discussed the Arab–Zionist conflict in all its aspects.

Consistent with his line of argument since 1934, Ben-Gurion outlined the Zionist case and stated "that he saw no way out of the situation as long as the discussion of the relations of Jews and Arabs in [Palestine] did not break out of the narrow framework in which it was now confined and if a broader view were not taken of the interests of the two parties in their full scope."²⁶ The Zionist leader asked Hamza to convey the gist of his arguments to the king, since the Jews wished to hear "what a great personality like Ibn Sa'ud could propose after he fully understood the problem, having become acquainted with it also from a Jewish source." Hamza agreed to discuss the matter with Ibn Sa'ud, but suggested that no serious negotiations could take place before publication of the report of the Royal Commission. Although Hamza offered to co-operate in arranging further low-level meetings between Jewish Agency and Saudi Arabian representatives, he seems to have been vetoed by a rival Saudi diplomat, Yusuf Yasin, who reported to the British Foreign Office that the king himself had instructed Fuad "to have nothing to do with these advances."²⁷

PARTITION RUMOURED

In large measure, the motives and timing considerations behind the renewed flurry of Arab and Zionist diplomatic manoeuvres during 1937 and 1938 were first determined by the rumoured, and then by the actual, findings of the Peel Commission. At a January 8th session in camera, Dr Weizmann first learned that the commissioners might seriously consider partitioning Palestine into two states.²⁸ For the next six months, rumours about the possible partition of Palestine served as the backdrop for both Arab and Zionist negotiating manoeuvres.

First reactions inside the Jewish Agency leadership were that partition, like cantonisation,²⁹ was an undesirable outcome from the Zionist point of view. This assumption gradually changed over the coming weeks and months, to the point where the Head of the Political Department, Moshe Shertok, felt that the Zionist movement should be prepared to accept a Jewish state in part of Palestine, but (for tactical reasons) should not declare this readiness too early in the game. David Ben-Gurion also underwent his own personal conversion during this period from being anti- to becoming pro-partition.³⁰

As early as March 1937, some partition rumours had taken the specific form of the Jews being given most of western Palestine, with the Amir Abdallah annexing specified regions to his future kingdom. Some Zionists joined the Amir in quietly looking forward to such an outcome, although no one dared say so openly.³¹ But, for some Palestinian Arab leaders, Abdallah's possible take-over of parts of Palestine was almost more objectionable than the Jews being given their own state in other parts of the country. Thus, the Turkish consul in Jerusalem, reporting rumours that al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini was so hostile to this idea that he might consider making a deal with the Jews, offered his services as mediator. While nothing came of this episode, it illustrated how the antipathy of some Palestinians to seeing Abdallah ruling over them was almost strong enough to serve as the basis for making a deal with the Jews.³²

The uncertainty and delays awaiting the Royal Commission's report were seen by some Zionists as offering opportunities for trying to reach an accord with the Arabs. It only remained to be seen whether better terms would be had from a voluntary Arab-Jewish accord or from the expected edict at the hands of the British. Arabs, too, began weighing terms of a voluntary agreement by comparing them with what might be decreed in the forthcoming Royal Commission Report.³³

In late April 1937, Moshe Shertok requested a meeting with Awni Abd al-Hadi, with the intention of "offering peace negotiations as the only way of escaping Solomon's judgment." Even if nothing were to come out of such a meeting, Shertok felt that it would be "interesting to learn at first hand about the Arab frame of mind" and he considered it "important also to go on record that at this eleventh hour before the cutting of the baby we have again offered peace."³⁴ During their talk, Awni told Shertok firmly, but cordially, that the Arabs would fight partition, the British, and Jewish immigration as part of the same battle. There was nothing on which an Arab-Zionist compromise could be built; the proposed common front against partition could not come to pass, Awni felt, "because the Jews were being protected by Britain while the Arabs were fighting her."³⁵

In a parallel démarche aimed at "forming an Arab-Jewish front against partition," Shertok also sent Dov Hos and Eliahu Epstein to see Jamil Mardam in Damascus, on the assumption that, if the Arabs preferred "to reach an arrangement with the Jews while keeping Palestine whole," the Syrians might "prevail upon their friends here

to see reason before it [was] too late".³⁶ Mardam seemed receptive to Hos' and Epstein's arguments that partition would be "damaging to the interests of both Jews and Arabs in Palestine ... and even of Syria" and that "there was no possibility of preventing the partition of the country except by a Jewish-Arab agreement." According to Epstein's report, the Syrian leader recognised three elements – Arab, Jewish and British – that had to be satisfied in resolving the Palestine dispute, and promised to "report the contents of the talk to his government and to communicate with Hajj Amin al-Husaini with the aim of influencing him and the other Palestinian leaders not to hold back from entering into negotiations with us."³⁷

But, whatever Jamil Mardam might have done or said in his contacts with Palestinians in the direction of fulfilling his promise to the Zionist representatives, the A.H.C. leadership firmly rejected these Zionist attempts to set up a common front against partition. The Mufti also took steps to neutralise this attempted Zionist-Syrian collaboration by writing to Shukri al-Quwatli, warning him of Zionist duplicity.³⁸ The Palestinian Arab leadership was evidently planning to resist partition not through negotiations with the Jews, but through a renewal of the rebellion against British rule and Zionism.³⁹

LONDON CORONATION INTERLUDE

The results of Shertok's eleventh-hour overture to Awni Abd al-Hadi were taken by the Zionists as an indication that "the chances of having fruitful contact with Arab circles in Palestine were evidently, for the time being, nonexistent."⁴⁰ That left the Zionists to concentrate their efforts almost exclusively in the non-Palestinian arena, where contacts and feelers continued unabated during the coming months. During May and June 1937, speculation that the Peel Commission might recommend partition seemed to elicit an increase of Arab overtures to the Jews.⁴¹ On the question of the boundaries of the future Jewish area, Zionists now exploited their friendly relations with Lebanese Maronites to have both parties lobby the British and French governments for the idea of Christian Lebanon and Jewish Palestine sharing a common frontier.⁴²

The Coronation festivities for George VI brought to London many representatives and dignitaries from the Muslim and Arab world, and Eliahu Epstein was assigned to meet with many of them

on behalf of the Jewish Agency.⁴³ Although these often stylised encounters brought no “immediate results”, they were considered necessary and useful by the Zionists for counteracting the “wide and active propaganda” which they noticed the Palestinian Arabs engaging in among the Muslims and Arabs in London. Epstein argued that merely giving the latter “the feeling that the Jews were not ignoring the Arabs and were coming to talk to them was, in itself, valuable in paving the way” to better Zionist relations with the Arab world.⁴⁴

Another set of Arab–Jewish political discussions during the Coronation centred on the Amir Abdallah, with the Jews attempting to straighten out the ambiguities in the Amir’s attitude to Jewish settlement in Transjordan. The chief instigator of these contacts was Pinhas Rutenberg, who was impatient to follow up on the Amir’s conditional response to his July 1936 scheme, and to escape from the “vicious circle” of relations between Abdallah, the Jews and the British.⁴⁵

Rutenberg began by approaching the Colonial Office, with two purposes in mind: (a) to make sure that the Royal Commission, during its final internal deliberations, would not take at face value Arab opposition to Jewish settlement in Transjordan, or make any recommendations which might hinder such settlement; and (b) to persuade the Colonial Secretary to set up a joint meeting with himself and Abdallah – a meeting at which he hoped to “tie down” the Amir to go ahead with his settlement scheme.⁴⁶

Jewish Agency leaders, who were kept informed of Rutenberg’s movements, were more optimistic about the former goal than about the latter.⁴⁷ Like them, C.O. officials were also sceptical about being able to tie the Amir down, and were extremely cautious about involving the government in anything that could have been interpreted as indicating a change of policy on the eve of the expected publication of the Royal Commission Report.⁴⁸ At a meeting with Abdallah, Sir Cosmo Parkinson delicately raised the question of Rutenberg’s scheme and was told that the Amir was “in no hurry” to proceed, and that he fully shared the long-standing British position, which was to leave it to the High Commissioner in Jerusalem to decide the appropriate moment for the entry of Jews into Transjordan.⁴⁹

Rutenberg also enlisted David Ben-Gurion’s support in trying to extract a commitment from Abdallah regarding his settlement scheme. Despite his scepticism, Ben-Gurion shared Rutenberg’s

concern that the C.O. should not use the pretext of Abdallah's objections to deny the Jews access to lands in Transjordan, and so he asked Dov Hos and David Hacoheh to arrange a meeting with the Amir. The Agency Chairman also wanted to use the opportunity to learn Abdallah's views on the burning question of the day – the rumoured partition of Palestine.⁵⁰

During a preliminary meeting, Samir ar-Rifai, Chief Secretary of the Transjordanian delegation to London, asked the Jewish Agency representatives for their reactions to a Palestine solution based on its reunification with Transjordan under the Amir. Hos evaded the question by posing another one: How would Transjordan react if England were to decree the creation, in western Palestine, of a Jewish state – a state which, he said, could bring enormous benefits to a friendly neighbouring Transjordan? Rifai gave the clearest possible answer: "A Jewish state, however small, is a danger to Transjordan, and there would be no other way except [launching armed] gangs" from across the Jordan to fight it.⁵¹

The next day, Hos and Hacoheh met with Abdallah himself.⁵² Hos inquired whether the same

good intentions which the Amir had shown on previous occasions still existed, and whether it would be possible at this time to think about realising a certain concrete plan built on the basis of mutual help between the Jews and the state of Transjordan.

Recognising the approaching "important turning-point" and without mentioning Pinhas Rutenberg by name, Hos outlined a possible deal involving

a plan for the settlement of Jews in ... certain parts of Transjordan, in exchange for concrete assistance from the Jews to the Amir in the form of financial and economic assistance, Jewish influence in favour of Transjordan in England and in other countries, etc. etc.

The Amir's evasive reply appeared, to the Jews, "as though it was prepared by him ... as an official government communiqué." As ruler of Transjordan, Abdallah claimed, he had no particular interest in the affairs of western Palestine, except to hope that the Royal Commission would find a solution which would satisfy the Jews without harming the interests of the Arabs of Palestine. Hos's persis-

tence in trying to conclude a bi-lateral arrangement which would be valid “whatever the [Commission’s] conclusions might be” had no effect on Abdallah. It was not the right time, the Amir reportedly answered, “to draw conclusions about such decisive matters ... and he saw no other way than to await the ruling of England; the next steps should be directed in accordance with that ruling.”⁵³

Meanwhile, Pinhas Rutenberg, continuing with his own private efforts at tying down Abdallah, had arranged a direct meeting between himself, the Amir and three prominent British Jews associated with his Palestine Electric Corporation. Jerusalem Sephardi activist, Elie Eliachar, who served as Rutenberg’s aid and translator, recalled that the meeting afforded his boss an opportunity to clarify the implications of some of his July 1936 proposals. Abdallah replied by claiming that he was unable to do anything towards finalising their “tentative agreement” owing to British objections. In giving Rutenberg and the Zionists the “run-around”, Abdallah apparently had no difficulty in convincing Eliachar that it was the British who stood in the way of Arab–Jewish co-operation in this affair.⁵⁴

One further series of talks during the Coronation were David Ben-Gurion’s meetings with H. St-J. Philby and Captain H.C. Armstrong, both regarding King Ibn Sa’ud. Since previous Zionist attempts to develop friendly contacts with the Saudis seemed to be leading nowhere, the Jewish Agency Chairman decided to use the good offices of Philby and Armstrong, two very different Englishmen with experience of Saudi Arabia. In his talks with them, Ben-Gurion restated his view of the Saudi king as “a man of influence who would delve deeply into the matter” of Arab–Jewish relations in Palestine – and one who was powerful enough to consider a treaty with the Jews without fear of being denounced as a “traitor”.⁵⁵ Both Philby and Armstrong offered to arrange meetings with Saudi representatives in London (Amir Sa’ud and Yusuf Yasin), but neither succeeded in convincing the Arabs to meet with the Jews.⁵⁶

During his first meeting with Ben-Gurion, Philby also spoke gloomily of growing anti-Jewish sentiment in the Arab world, and described Ibn Sa’ud as the only Arab leader capable of heading a future Middle Eastern federation and of assuring the Jews a secure place in the region.⁵⁷ The two men went on to hold at least one further meeting, at which the British Arabist produced an 11-point draft for an Arab–Zionist accord.⁵⁸ The explicit intent of the Philby plan was to provide an agreement which would have both replaced

the existing British Mandate and circumvented the anticipated partition of Palestine.

Despite the fact that there were a few areas of broad agreement between the two men (e.g., opposition to partition, reunification of Transjordan with western Palestine, future independence of Palestine, need for a voluntary Arab–Jewish agreement), Ben-Gurion found the scheme wanting in several important respects, principally in that it did not lay enough stress on recognising the right of the Jewish people to establish themselves in Palestine.⁵⁹ The Zionist leader also wondered whether excluding Great Britain from the agreement, as Philby had suggested, was either “desirable or feasible”.⁶⁰ There is no record of Philby replying to Ben-Gurion’s critique, but several years later he would again be proposing a plan for an Arab–Zionist agreement centred on King Ibn Sa’ud. (see below, pages 133 et seq.)

PARTITION RECOMMENDED

On July 7th 1937, the report of the Peel Commission was published. The penetrating historical study of the problems of Arab–Jewish relations was pessimistic about a workable solution, but concluded with a recommendation that the best chances might lie in the partition of Palestine into a small Jewish state and an Arab area to be joined with Transjordan to form an Arab state. A transfer of Arab population from the proposed Jewish area (especially the Galilee) was an integral part of the radical “surgery” being proposed, which went beyond the cantonisation proposals which had been tentatively discussed during the previous few years.⁶¹

The Peel recommendations now became the guiding force behind Arab and Zionist negotiating manoeuvres – manoeuvres which were further complicated by the internal splits which partition created in each camp. In the Zionist movement, divisions over partition occurred even within parties and factions; “political allies who had been in the same camp for years suddenly found themselves on opposite sides of the barricades.”⁶² The official Zionist attitude was reserved, and in many ways negative, but privately many key decision-makers welcomed partition. The Twentieth Zionist Congress, which met in Zurich in August, went on to mandate the Executive, by a two-to-one vote, to continue to negotiate with the British “with a view to ascertaining the precise terms ... for the

proposed establishment of a Jewish state." The Congress further reaffirmed previous declarations "expressing the readiness of the Jewish people to reach a peaceful settlement with the Arabs of Palestine, based on the free development of both peoples and the mutual recognition of their respective rights."⁶³

Despite a few feeble flickers of possible acceptance, Palestinian Arab rejection of the Royal Commission report was widespread and vehement. In a letter to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, the Arab Higher Committee on July 23rd declared that "peace in the land" could only be achieved based on the following principles:

- (a) the recognition of the right of the Arabs to complete independence in their own land;
- (b) the cessation of the experiment of the Jewish National Home;
- (c) the cessation of the British Mandate and its replacement by a treaty similar to treaties existing between Britain and Iraq, Britain and Egypt and between France and Syria, creating in Palestine a sovereign state;
- (d) the immediate cessation of all Jewish immigration and of land-sales to Jews pending the negotiation and conclusion of the treaty.

Like the Zionist Organisation, the A.H.C. declared itself prepared to engage in further discussions with the British; the Arabs proposed to negotiate, "in a reasonable spirit", for provisions to protect British interests, for safeguards to the holy places, and "for the protection of all legitimate rights of the Jewish population or other minorities in Palestine."⁶⁴

During the following months, A.H.C. leaders succeeded in neutralising those few Palestinians who might have been inclined to accept partition as (in Ben-Gurion's words) "the lesser evil" – i.e., preferable to continued Jewish claims upon, and possible expansion into, *all* of Palestine.⁶⁵ Nationalist leaders were also successful in rallying renewed support from the neighbouring Arab governments. Given the recent rise of pan-Arab sentiment and growing anti-British and anti-French frustration (fuelled partly by Italian and German propaganda), the defence of Palestine became an issue around which all Arabs could rally with greater determination than before. The precedent established by the intervention of the Arab kings in October 1936 paved the way for new pressures for increased

pro-Palestinian activity by the relatively uninvolved regimes in Egypt and Lebanon, while the Colonial Secretary in London was literally outraged by the provocative and vehement Iraqi tirades against partition.⁶⁶ Terror and lawlessness inside Palestine escalated, and the Palestinian Arabs co-ordinated their official stand with the backing of the neighbouring states at the Bludan Conference of September 1937, where a Palestinian “National Covenant” was promulgated.⁶⁷

ARAB NEGOTIATING MANOEUVRES: JERUSALEM

In addition to waging a battle against the partition proposal by resuming the Rebellion inside Palestine and by applying diplomatic pressure abroad, some Palestinian Arab leaders also chose to exploit their contacts with Jews in an attempt to negate one of the Peel Commission’s basic assumptions – viz. that a voluntary agreement between Arabs and Jews was not possible.⁶⁸

Although, from the point of view of *timing*, the wake of the Peel Report seemed more auspicious than before for a breakthrough, a look at the *terms* to which both sides clung confirms that a wide gap continued to separate the parties. As David Ben-Gurion saw it, the Royal Commission’s recommendations had created a completely new context for future Arab–Zionist diplomacy:

For the first time we are partners for discussion; we have become a party which it will no longer be possible to ignore. We are a state factor, not just a political element. Not a growing minority – but a force standing on the threshold of sovereign authority.

But the Agency Chairman was quick to add – and events would prove his reservation amply justified – that the Jews still had little concrete to offer the Arabs, if and when any new negotiations took place.⁶⁹

The Jewish Agency now saw itself in the confident position of the party being courted and, with the expected implementation of some form of partition as a comfortable “fall-back” position, Zionists now felt that the Arabs would have to come a considerable way towards meeting their terms for an agreement. At every turn, Zionists were now asking themselves: were the Arabs offering a “better deal” than what was being offered by the British? Ben-Gurion was prepared to favour an agreement with the Arabs ahead of partition, but only if

such an agreement were to include the following essentials: (a) recognition of the Balfour Declaration and the National Home by authorised Arab leaders; (b) Jewish immigration according to the economic absorptive capacity; (c) unification of Transjordan with western Palestine; and (d) parity in government bodies.⁷⁰

About two weeks following publication of the Royal Commission report, two Arabs close to A.H.C. circles, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and Dr Husain Fakhri al-Khalidi, in parallel moves approached the Zionist leadership – not directly but through the well-known Jewish critic of Zionist “Arab policy”, Hayim Margaliut Kalvaryski.⁷¹ The latter duly informed Moshe Shertok of the Political Department, and conveyed a message that the Arab Higher Committee wished to sit down to a round-table discussion with the Jews, each side to be represented by seven delegates, two of whom would be men proposed by the other side.⁷² Shertok replied by tentatively accepting the invitation, but rejecting the precondition about the selection of delegates and asking for clear evidence that the Arabs would indeed be there by the authority of the A.H.C.⁷³

When Dr Joseph, the Canadian-born lawyer who had been co-opted by the Political Department during the 1936 riots, assumed responsibility for dealing with the July 1937 Arab overtures in Shertok’s absence, he approached the affair with the same hard-nosed scrutiny which he had shown during the negotiations of the Five.⁷⁴ Even before ascertaining the likely terms which the Arabs were proposing, Joseph hit upon what he considered serious obstacles in the areas of the status of the negotiators, and of the timing and motives of the Arabs who were suggesting negotiations. Joseph took the view that the Jews should no longer have to put up with what he called the “hole-in-the-corner method of negotiations which the Arabs had heretofore compelled us to acquiesce in by only agreeing to meet our representatives clandestinely and in out-of-the-way places.”⁷⁵ If the Arabs wanted to make a lasting deal with the Zionists, they should, Joseph felt, show “enough seriousness and respect for the Jewish elected representatives to be willing to meet with members of the Jewish Agency” openly and directly. The Arabs’ use of Kalvaryski as their contact-man, their proposal to nominate two of the members of the Jewish delegation, and their request that Kalvaryski present them with an outline of his (1930) plan⁷⁶ for an agreement before sitting down to talks – all this aroused in Joseph doubts about the sincerity of the overture.

Zionist suspicion hinged mostly on the feeling that the Arabs merely wished to create the appearance of a possible Arab-Zionist agreement so as to side-track the scheduled discussion of the Peel recommendations by the Permanent Mandates Commission at Geneva.⁷⁷ One way of testing Arab sincerity, Joseph felt, would be for Kalvaryski to cut off contacts for a few weeks, and to see whether the same interest in talks existed after the Geneva meeting. Several weeks later, Joseph felt his suspicions were confirmed when "confidential information" reached him about a conversation between "two prominent Arab politicians"; according to these sources, the Arabs were trying "to arrange matters in such a way that it would appear the Arabs were willing to meet whilst the Jews were not," and at the same time to "sow dissension in Jewish ranks."⁷⁸ After waiting for several weeks for a written reply from Ibrahim, the J.A.E. presumed that the overture was not a serious one and allowed the matter to drop.

One further factor which made these Arab overtures less attractive than they might have seemed at first glance was the repeated declarations of leading Palestinian spokesmen "to the effect that the Arabs insisted on this country being a purely Arab State."⁷⁹ While Dr Khalidi advised the Jews not to take such statements at face value, Awni Abd al-Hadi in Geneva was as categorical in private conversations as he was in his public utterances. In one of several talks with Jewish newspaper editor, Gershon Agronsky (Agron), Awni was recorded as stating that the Arabs "would do anything . . . if only we [Zionists] undertook not to become a majority." "*They*" (the Arabs), underlined Agronsky in reporting Awni's words,

must rule, *they* must dominate. There was no Arab who thought otherwise. No Arab will acquiesce in any arrangement which deprives them of the right to rule in their own country. They can be forced, but never made to consent; they had no right to consent. . . . If we [Jews] truly desired Arab friendship, we should tell the British Government that we rejected partition and at the same time tell the Arabs that we will not have anything ("any part of the Arab home") without their consent. We should then leave it to the Arabs, as a return expression of goodwill and good faith, to settle as many Jews as possible on land that they will find for us, outside Palestine and also inside Palestine.

In reply to Agronsky's question as to whether Jews would later be able to continue immigration in accordance with the economic capacity of the country, Awni replied: "up to the time they threatened the Arab position as a majority."⁸⁰

THE ANTI-PARTITION COMMON FRONT:
NEW YORK AND LONDON

Given these repeated and clear signals from an authoritative and respected Palestinian leader that the only possible basis for an agreement would be for the Jews to agree to remain a minority in Palestine, the Jewish Agency leadership evolved a strategy of avoiding the pressures of being drawn into talks with the Arabs.⁸¹ The Executive followed Ben-Gurion's lead in reverting to the British, and not the Arabs, as being the decisive front in the post-Peel period. Still, there was considerable activity by the Arab Section of the Jewish Agency's Political Department in three areas: co-operation with moderate Arabs in Palestine – i.e., opponents of the Mufti who might be expected to go along with some form of partition;⁸² the neutralisation of unwanted interference by non-Palestinian politicians; and the cautious evaluation of overtures for negotiation which continued to emanate from the other side.

To the chagrin of the Zionists, even the neighbouring regimes which had earlier shown some sympathy for the needs and interests (although not the "rights") of the Jews in Palestine were now showing more vocal support for the Palestinian-Arab cause, both in the Middle East and at the League of Nations headquarters in Geneva. Organisational and financial support was also mobilised for the renewed rebellion, with terrorist activities being directed from Syrian soil.⁸³ Zionist officials reverted to the "preventive diplomacy" approach of merely trying to neutralise unwanted outside interference, as it seemed that their stepped-up cultivation of friendly ties with non-Palestinian leaders over the preceding year had been for naught. All previous Zionist speculation that Iraq and Syria would be too preoccupied with their internal affairs to take an active interest in Palestine proved ill-founded.⁸⁴ Even Emile Eddé, with whom a deeper and more solid harmony of interests was thought to exist, had to be visited by Dr Joseph, who sought reassurances that the Lebanese would not be issuing anti-partition statements or taking part in the pan-Arab conference on Palestine at Bludan.⁸⁵ Likewise, the Amir Abdallah tactically retreated from his initial pro-partition

stand under the pressure of attacks on his patriotism and the loss of expected support from his traditional allies in Palestinian opposition (Nashashibi) circles.⁸⁶ With the dismissal and flight of al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini in early October 1937, Abdallah was emboldened to try more actively to fill the power-vacuum which was created; but Political Department evaluations pointed to the conclusion that both Abdallah and the Nashashibis were in such a weak position that it would be a waste of time and money for the Zionists to support them.⁸⁷

In contrast to the defensive attitude dominating J.A.E. circles, an activism and sense of urgency motivated a minority of anti-partition Jews to try unofficially to negotiate an agreement with willing Arabs. This negotiating activity deepened a split within Zionist ranks – a split not only based on conflicting attitudes about the fundamental questions of a Jewish state and a Jewish majority, but also one overlaid with personality clashes and unhealed wounds dating back to the affair of the Five.⁸⁸

Six weeks before the official publication of the Peel Report, Felix Warburg, the acknowledged leader of the American non-Zionist section of the Jewish Agency and a friend and supporter of Judah Magnes, had written to Dr Weizmann, hoping that publication might be delayed so as to allow time for “all efforts to be made to reach an agreement with the Arabs by ‘give and take’.”⁸⁹ In the days immediately preceding the Report’s publication, Warburg had also been involved in arranging meetings between American Jewish leaders and three Arab spokesmen in New York. Warburg seemed genuinely hopeful about these talks, since he felt that the Arabs did “not seem to be in an impossible frame of mind.” Unlike the Agency leaders in Jerusalem, American Zionists were not deterred from opening negotiations by the knowledge that the Arabs wished to

base the conversations on an agreement that the Arabs should always have a majority in Palestine. . . . [T]hey would be willing to see the Jewish population in Palestine increase by considerable numbers provided that it never equals or exceeds the Arab population.⁹⁰

On the basis of a simple desire to hold discussions towards an agreement, American Zionist leaders became willing partners for talks in July 1937. As anti-partitionists, these Jews were motivated by two assumptions: (a) that partition could not be implemented except

by force, and (b) that an agreed solution was preferable to an imposed one⁹¹ – assumptions which were hardly shared by men like Ben-Gurion, Shertok and Joseph, in whose hands the Jewish Agency's political affairs were entrusted. When Warburg cabled Dr Weizmann to inform him of plans for a joint Arab-Jewish "peace statement" to be addressed to the Permanent Mandates Commission at Geneva, Weizmann warned that such a "separate step" would be "fatal in this most delicate situation." The Zionist chief argued, in his reply, that discussion of partition at Geneva should be allowed to proceed without complication, so as to put the Jews in a better bargaining position vis-à-vis the Arabs afterwards.⁹²

But Warburg and his colleagues persisted, and next day provided the London Zionist office with details of the negotiations which had taken place. In sharp contrast to the aborted anti-partition common front which Shertok had tried to arrange with Arabs in April (above, pages 63f.), the new Arab manoeuvres in the U.S.A. for joint action had quickly reached the advanced stage of discussing terms for a ten-year agreement, under which Jewish immigration would be continued in accordance with the economic absorptive capacity, so long as the Jewish population did not exceed 40 per cent of the total during this period.⁹³ Weizmann replied testily to New York about the unacceptability of having a matter of "such importance thrown" at him at the "last minute" and at a time when he was "battling with [the] gravest difficulties"; he again suggested that the whole affair could and should wait until after the Mandates Commission meeting, and repeated his assessment that the more the Arabs were convinced about the government's determination to implement partition, the more likely would the Zionists be to "arrive at a satisfactory arrangement" with them. Weizmann also took the opportunity to cast doubt on the representativeness and authority of Warburg's negotiating partners, and warned the Americans that "any proposals specifically restricting Jews to a minority in Palestine [would] certainly be unacceptable to [the] whole Zionist movement and to [the] Jewish people in Eastern Europe." Notwithstanding these reservations, the Zionist leader pledged that the J.A.E. was "always prepared to meet" leaders of the Palestinian Arabs for discussions.⁹⁴

Weizmann's forceful insistence succeeded in having the Americans call a temporary halt to their talks, on the assurance that contacts would be resumed after the Permanent Mandates Commission

meeting.⁹⁵ Simultaneous with these talks, but independent of them, at least one discussion took place in London between Norman Bentwich, former Attorney-General for Palestine, and Jamal al-Husaini, a leading member of the Arab Higher Committee. It is not clear who initiated the contact; it is possible that it developed spontaneously when the two men were invited by the B.B.C. to do parallel radio commentaries on the Peel Report.⁹⁶ Like the Arab overtures in the U.S.A., the common ground for the Bentwich-Husaini meeting was both parties' opposition to the proposed partition of Palestine. If Bentwich could succeed in interesting the Zionist leadership in a six-point "basis for discussion" (Document 22), Jamal was prepared to continue talks at a more "official" level (through an Iraqi intermediary) in Switzerland. The main features of the Bentwich-Husaini draft were cantonal autonomy, restriction of Jewish immigration, and the unification of western Palestine with Transjordan. Bentwich began consulting friends in London and passed along a copy of the proposal to Zionist headquarters, but from the latter came no desire to pursue the matter.⁹⁷

Although during August and September 1937 anti-partitionist American Jews apparently kept up their contacts with Arab spokesmen,⁹⁸ neither through this channel, nor through the Bentwich-Husaini connection, were representatives of the J.A.E. and the A.H.C. drawn into any semi-official political negotiations.⁹⁹ The Arabs were *not*, as the Jewish Agency was hoping, forced by the threat of partition into revising their minimum terms in the direction of meeting the Zionists' own minimum conditions. As Shertok defined them in late October, the only acceptable terms for an Arab-Zionist agreement in an undivided Palestine were that (1) the Arabs should "stop talking as if they were the only masters . . . and the Jews at best their guests and at worst unwanted intruders," and that (2) Jewish immigration should be allowed without any limitation other than a Zionist commitment that such immigration would not result in the dispossession of any Arabs.¹⁰⁰ Whenever it became clear that Arab overtures for negotiation were based on the presumption that the Jews must never become a majority, official Zionist spokesmen reverted to their British front and pressed for a determined implementation of partition. Zionist reasoning was that, if the Arabs were not ready for a voluntary agreement for an undivided Palestine on *their* terms, then perhaps the *fait accompli* of a Jewish state, imposed with the help of British firmness, would create

better conditions for an Arab-Zionist accord sometime in the distant future.¹⁰¹

PAN-ARAB SOLUTIONS: NURI AND SHAHBANDAR

All through the autumn of 1937 Zionists were still being put under pressure to consider various suggestions for agreement with the Arabs that might have taken the place of the proposed partition of Palestine. Overtures for talks and discussions of peace plans came from many quarters, including Fakhri and Raghīb an-Nashashibi, Omar Salih Barghuthi and Khalusi al-Khairi in Palestine, while from Damascus Syrian leaders Shukri al-Quwatli and Jamil Mardam both urged the J.A.E. to enter into direct talks with Palestinian Arabs.¹⁰²

At this time parallel initiatives came from Nuri as-Sa'id and Dr Abd ar-Rahman Shahbandar, suggesting that a breakthrough on the Palestine deadlock might be possible within the framework of an Arab confederation. Both men, at that time leading opposition figures in their home states of Iraq and Syria, were proposing that the Jews be given guarantees for a minority status in Palestine, while offering to absorb up to three million European refugees in the neighbouring member states of the future federation. Nuri's plan called for keeping the current proportion of Arabs to Jews in Palestine constant, while Shahbandar's scheme was based on allowing the Jews to reach a maximum of 36 per cent of the total.¹⁰³

During his talks with two Paris-based Zionists, Shahbandar felt (or was led to believe) that his ideas might be well received by Dr Weizmann, but public and private statements from Weizmann and other leading Zionists soon made it clear to the Syrian politician that no agreement would be forthcoming on the basis of keeping the Jews a minority in Palestine.¹⁰⁴ Shahbandar's plan was also torpedoed from the other side, once press leaks exposed it to Palestinian activists, who took the opportunity of reminding him that his 36 per cent went well beyond the Bludan resolutions which had offered the Jews guaranteed minority rights only in their current (i.e., 28.5 per cent) numbers.¹⁰⁵

Meanwhile, without the handicap of indiscreet publicity, Nuri as-Sa'id was active with British, French and leading Palestinians in Beirut. He tried to convince the latter to end the terror, to agree to give evidence to the forthcoming Woodhead Commission of Inquiry

into the feasibility of partition, and to agree to meet the Jews in conference to discuss an agreement along the lines of his own federation scheme. According to Zionist intelligence sources, Nuri was stressing to the Palestinians that this was their last chance to avoid the "extreme solution of partition" by proving that they were acting responsibly and reasonably, while placing the onus on the Jews to make concessions, thus paving the way to a successful Arab–British–Jewish accord.¹⁰⁶

According to the same sources, the exiled Mufti was only reluctantly persuaded to go along with some of Nuri's suggestions. In his native Iraq there were mixed feelings about Nuri's rumoured Palestine schemes, notably about the idea of absorbing millions of Jews into the future confederation.¹⁰⁷ Although Nuri found a sympathetic ear among British and American envoys in Cairo and in Baghdad, he failed to impress British officials in London, while Dr Weizmann spoke disparagingly of the Iraqi leader's "dabbling in 'peace-proposals'."¹⁰⁸ After his February 1938 meeting with Dr Magnes (see below), Nuri as-Sa'id abandoned these latest attempts to mediate in the Palestine dispute. Like Dr Shahbandar, he had run up against a resounding lack of enthusiasm on the part of both main protagonists and their British masters.

THE HYAMSON–NEWCORBE PROPOSALS (I)

Amid the many rumours and press commentaries of late 1937 pointing to possibilities (never actually realised) of an imminent Arab–Zionist accord, favourable comments were sometimes made by supporters of the Arab cause about Lord Samuel's recent proposals – i.e., that the Jews might be allowed to reach 40 per cent of the population after ten years.¹⁰⁹ One young Palestinian Arab who had never before been involved in negotiation manoeuvres, Musa al-Husaini, became highly visible in London, advocating the Samuel formula in front of British and Anglo-Jewish audiences.¹¹⁰

Zionist leaders responded to these public suggestions for Arab–Zionist agreements defensively and with some annoyance, since they considered most of them "propaganda in the guise of 'solutions'", aimed only at sabotaging the chances of partition and "increasing the hesitations in government circles about implementing the plan for a [Jewish] state."¹¹¹ Zionists considered these overtures for agreement unacceptable by their very terms, but their cumulative effect on

British and even Jewish public opinion caused Weizmann and others to wage a counter-offensive designed to firm up the sagging momentum towards the implementation of partition. It was “a veritable Witches Sabbath”, Dr Weizmann complained to his colleagues in America, as he listed the various British, Arab and Jewish personalities rumoured to be engaged in discussion of proposals designed to avert partition:

The clear object of all these efforts [he warned] is to utilise the present condition of unsettlement for strangulating the National Home. Unfortunately, ... the notion is gaining ground that, in view of the solid opposition of the Arabs and of influential sections among the Jews, Partition must be regarded as impracticable, and that since the Mandate has in effect been given up by the Royal Commission, the only solution is to be found in conceding Arab demands, winding up the National Home and granting the Jews ‘minority rights’ in what to all intents and purposes will be an Arab state.¹¹²

Weizmann’s arguments reflected the negative and almost paranoid mood which dominated Zionist leadership circles when, between November 1937 and February 1938, they were called upon to deal with an intricate and ambitious series of proposals for a solution generally known as the Hyamson–Newcombe proposals. The proposals which came to bear the names of Albert M. Hyamson and Col. Stewart F. Newcombe can be understood, in some senses, as an offshoot of and a follow-up to the mid-1937 talks in London and New York.¹¹³ In May 1937, Hyamson, a British Jew and former Head of the Palestine Immigration Department (1926–34), had begun sharing his ideas on a solution to the Arab–Zionist dispute with Col. Newcombe, then serving as lobbyist for the Palestine Information Centre in London. The immediate impetus for the first draft proposals which Hyamson submitted to the Colonial Office and the Zionist Organisation in October and November 1937 was an urgent suggestion from Newcombe (apparently initiated by members of the A.H.C. through George Antonius).¹¹⁴ The nine-point plan (Document 23(a)) called for the ultimate independence of Palestine, based on a transition period of national–communal autonomy (“A Jewish National Home but not a Jewish State ...”) and an upper limit of the proportion of Jews in the population of Palestine

(to be combined with Transjordan) to be set at "less than 50 per cent of the total".

There followed several months of intensive negotiating manoeuvres and redraftings of the scheme, in what turned out to be an episode more intricate and more frustrating than the affair of the Five of the previous year.¹¹⁵ This first (Hyamson) draft turned out to be not close enough to minimum Palestinian-Arab demands to enjoy official Arab backing, although British and Zionist officials had been called upon to evaluate its clauses as though these were genuine Arab proposals for a settlement.¹¹⁶ Jewish Agency representatives in London and in Jerusalem conducted parallel cross-examinations of Hyamson and Dr Judah Magnes (who had offered his active assistance), in an effort to establish which Arab leaders backed the scheme, to clarify the meaning of certain phrases and to distinguish between the views of the British intermediaries, on the one hand, and the real positions of Arab leaders, on the other.

Privately, most Zionist officials were, at best, leery about (and, at worst, hostile towards) the scheme and its originators.¹¹⁷ But the J.A.E. was morally bound to investigate carefully all reasonable proposals for a resolution of the conflict with the Arabs. Memories of the affair of the Five were still fresh, as Shertok argued that the Executive

should not give an unwarranted or premature negative reply which would be interpreted as mere intransigence on our part and give rise to a new legend about there having again been a golden opportunity of coming to an honourable peace with the Arabs which had been killed by the folly of the Jewish Agency.

Shertok continued with remarks which typified the subtle tactical approach of the Political Department throughout this episode:

On the other hand, we must endeavour to manoeuvre the other side, or the intermediaries, into a position where they must lay all their cards on the table. If the cards which they now keep hidden are such as to make it necessary for us to say No, that No would then be justified. If they are such as to make the proposal appear to us worthy of consideration, then there would be no harm in taking a further step.¹¹⁸

Both before the emergence of the proposals and during their investigation of them, Jewish Agency representatives could find no

evidence of any Arab spokesman who was willing to see the Jews reach 49 per cent of the population (30, 35 or 40 per cent had sometimes been mentioned in compromise formulae).¹¹⁹ They also found the terms of the Hyamson scheme, upon closer scrutiny, to be less attractive than had appeared at first glance. The official leadership could have been persuaded to agree to the idea of having an “armistice” or breathing space for a fixed number of years, during which the Jewish population might not exceed a certain percentage or absolute figure; but this limitation could be considered only if it were seen as a *transitional* measure, without prejudice to the shape of a final settlement (in which the Jews might still become a majority), and only if the numbers were generous enough.¹²⁰ But, in the minds of both Hyamson and Newcombe, the draft scheme represented their idea of the most desirable *final* arrangement. Both men shared with A.H.C. members the starting points that (a) Palestine alone could not resolve the worsening Jewish problem in central Europe, and (b) no Arabs could be expected to enter into talks except on the basis of an assured Arab majority in Palestine.¹²¹

Existing doubts in the minds of J.A.E. leaders were aggravated in early December when rumours about secret Arab–Zionist contacts began to circulate. Although the content of these rumours was largely inaccurate, Ben-Gurion vigorously denied the existence of any ongoing negotiations during a specially-convened press conference. The Chairman of the Jewish Agency took the opportunity to emphasise that the Jews were willing to negotiate on any serious proposals which might emanate from responsible Arab quarters, but he emphatically ruled out any talks which were based on the Jews remaining a minority – whether 35 per cent or 49 per cent – in Palestine:

Only someone who doesn't know the Jews would be able to imagine the absurdity of the Jews agreeing to the creation of a ghetto in Palestine placed under the protection of Messrs Hajj Amin al-Husaini, [rebel band commander] Fawzi al-Qawukji and their friends.

Ben-Gurion warned that before a real agreement were possible, it was essential for the Arabs to rid themselves of “the mistaken impression that there was the slightest chance for an agreement on the basis of fixing the Jews as a minority in Palestine.”¹²²

For the exiled Mufti in Beirut, Ben-Gurion's outspoken remarks

mirrored and confirmed his own view of the futility of negotiating with the Jews. Since the Zionist leadership would never voluntarily agree to remain a minority in Arab Palestine, he would pin his hopes on Great Britain to break the impasse by imposing a “just” solution – which, in his view, meant that partition was excluded.¹²³ In its official response to the negotiation rumours, the Arab Higher Committee denied categorically that it had been involved in any talks with Jews or was contemplating any arrangement which did not “correspond to the nation’s demands” as formulated in its July 23rd 1937 memorandum to the League of Nations and in the National Covenant adopted at the Bludan Conference.¹²⁴

The Hyamson–Newcombe proposals might have died then and there from the unanimously cold reception accorded them by the Colonial and Foreign Offices,¹²⁵ the J.A.E. and the A.H.C. But a combination of factors led to their resuscitation, in the form of a second revised draft, dated Beirut, January 12th 1938.¹²⁶ If the original Hyamson draft had been faulted for not being faithful enough to the true demands of leading Palestinian circles, then the revised document which emerged in January 1938 could not have been so faulted; it was said to have been approved by the Mufti and his confidants in Beirut, with input from Dr Izzat Tannous, Judah Magnes and Bishop Graham–Brown in Jerusalem.¹²⁷ But, while the “Beirut” draft (Document 23(b)) was an “improvement” in the sense of having more solid Arab backing, it offered little hope for successful negotiations in that it revealed an even wider gulf between the positions of the two sides – most prominently in declaring that the “maximum Jewish population of Palestine should be the present population.” When Magnes transmitted the Beirut draft to Shertok for his private opinion, the Head of the Political Department rejected it emphatically, not only for its terms, but also because he felt that the mere willingness of the Jews to discuss such terms would seriously damage their political position vis-à-vis England. Shertok asked Magnes to inform the Arabs that the Jewish Agency was still prepared to meet, but only on the basis of the Arabs knowing that the latest draft was completely unacceptable.¹²⁸ Thus, the second draft, like the first, was not going to serve as a basis on which the J.A.E. and A.H.C. would agree to begin discussions.

But, despite the clear and authoritative rejections of each other’s conditions given to him by both Moshe Shertok and Dr Izzat Tannous, Dr Magnes persisted in trying to arrange a meeting – on

any basis – because, he claimed, of his belief that the fact of having the two sides come together was so all-important.¹²⁹ It was just at the time when Shertok was presuming (not for the first, or the last time) that the whole episode was “liquidated”, that he was “astonished” to learn that Judah Magnes was still attempting, in late January, to organise a meeting.¹³⁰ The persistent Hebrew University Chancellor was soon in Beirut, for face-to-face discussions with Nuri as-Sa’id.¹³¹ Their four-hour meeting produced a third revision of the Hyamson proposals, closer to the original, establishing the indefinite “x per cent” in place of the second draft’s “present population” (Document 23(c)).

But serious complications soon arose which prevented the J.A.E. from evaluating the latest draft proposals on their merits. In communicating his version of the Beirut meeting to the British, Nuri claimed that Dr Magnes had not only promised to work for an agreement “based on [the] principle of a *permanent* minority status for the Jews,” but had also predicted that if the Agency did not accept this basis for negotiations, “the English, American and German Jews would break away from the Executive and work for a settlement separately.”¹³² Through its informers, the Political Department received a fairly accurate account of what Nuri was saying about his meeting with Magnes, and the perennial Jewish dissenter now saw his credibility in Zionist decision-making circles drop to rock-bottom. Judah Magnes forcefully denied having made those remarks, and wrote to Nuri with a request (which went unanswered) for a letter of clarification.¹³³

From the Jewish Agency’s point of view, the damage had already been done once rumours reached British ears that some members of the Executive were prepared to join Magnes in agreeing that the Jews should remain a minority in Palestine for the sake of an agreement with the Arabs.¹³⁴ In the eyes of David Ben-Gurion, Dr Magnes’ actions had now gone beyond the point of being a mere nuisance of dubious value; they now constituted “a serious and dangerous assault on [the J.A.E.’s] political position.”¹³⁵ Moshe Shertok, the man who had been dealing with Magnes on a day-to-day basis, had also concluded by now that the activities of this “well-meaning but self-appointed and much too credulous” negotiator were causing “an enormous amount of mischief.”¹³⁶ The Executive thus put aside any consideration of the third (Nuri) draft and turned instead to the question of repairing the perceived damage and issuing an

ultimatum to Magnes: either “drop these negotiations altogether”, or risk having the Executive come out in “open war” against him.¹³⁷

By the end of February, Zionist officials were beginning to express some relief that the Executive’s “caution” since November had saved them “from the trap which someone had laid” for them through the Hyamson–Newcombe schemes – “a trap of Jewish–Arab negotiations” which Ben-Gurion and Shertok continued to believe were designed only “to create the false impression that peace between the two parties was possible and that partition was therefore unnecessary.”¹³⁸ Internal memoranda, speeches and correspondence emanating from Zionist headquarters made no further mention either of the Magnes–Nuri meeting or of the latest draft scheme,¹³⁹ in the hope that the Hyamson–Newcombe affair could at last be laid to rest. For a short while in early 1938, Hyamson continued to hope that sufficient pressure might be brought to bear on the reluctant leaderships of both camps by influential third-parties.¹⁴⁰ Col. Newcombe was reportedly urging the Mufti to abandon the impossible goal of persuading the Jews to accept permanent minority status in advance of negotiations, while Bishop Graham-Brown tried, in vain, to obtain from al-Hajj Amin a written endorsement of the third draft scheme and his condemnation of the mounting terrorism in Palestine.¹⁴¹ But by this time the Hyamson–Newcombe proposals had passed from the status of a possible basis for a *voluntary* coming-together of Arab and Zionist leaders. During the coming months, the scheme’s sponsors would be trying to sell it to the British, as the suggested basis for an imposed solution (see pages 96f., below).

CHAPTER FOUR

The Conferences at St James's Palace

RETREAT FROM PARTITION

By early 1938 it was already becoming clear to Arabs, Zionists and British alike that the radical conclusions of the Peel Report – even if they might not provide a practical, definitive solution to the dispute – now constituted an important turning point. A Jewish state in part of Palestine, even if it were not implemented as recommended by the British White Paper of July 7th 1937, had now become the acknowledged goal of the Zionist movement, and this fact would alter the context of any future direct Arab–Zionist bargaining. The Royal Commission's pessimistic conclusion that the Mandate was no longer workable was largely accepted by British and Arab leaders; this meant that, for all practical purposes, there could be no turning back to the *status quo ante*.

On January 5th 1938, the British Government published a White Paper announcing the appointment and terms of reference of a commission which was to visit Palestine to gather evidence regarding the technical feasibility of partitioning the country.¹ On the surface this move was consistent with the declared British policy of implementing the Peel Commission's recommendations, but the text of the White Paper was interpreted by many as an indication that partition was neither as imminent nor as certain as had once been supposed.² Indeed, the growing evidence of a likely British retreat, under mounting Arab pressure, from their commitment to proceed with the partition of Palestine produced a lack of direction throughout 1938 which was to lead to a fundamental re-thinking of the whole question. As was observed in the wake of the 1929 riots, now, too, a lack of certainty about British intentions was producing a negotiating context for Arabs and Jews which was geared more towards the creation of "appearances" for British consumption than towards genuine reconciliation.

As we have already seen, the attitude of self-confidence which the Jewish Agency Executive adopted in its dealings with Arabs after publication of the Peel Report deteriorated during the second half of 1937, as a direct reflection of Zionist perceptions of British wavering on partition.³ In December 1937, Dr Weizmann had sent a letter to Sir John Shuckburgh at the Colonial Office, arguing that “the motive behind whatever readiness there [was] ... among the Arabs for an understanding with the Jews [was] exclusively the belief that partition [was] imminent,” and that any step that could be interpreted as “wavering on the part of the Government in regard to the execution of partition” would lead to the disappearance, “within the twinkling of an eye”, of “every trace of Arab readiness for peace.”⁴

With the publication of the January 1938 Statement of Policy, some Zionists felt that these fears were being confirmed and that the rug was being pulled out from under them. The Mandate had been declared unworkable by Peel; the partition plan was in danger of being “wrecked”, and a completely “new order” might be created, based on the satisfaction of only Arab demands and claims.⁵ David Ben-Gurion now abandoned any hope of reaching an agreement with the Arabs, and urged instead that Zionists devote all their energies to preventing the British retreat from partition.⁶ The heightened pessimism and despair also led to a sharp drop in the tolerance level of Zionist officials for the activities of Jewish dissenters, like Judah Magnes, Lord Samuel, Norman Bentwich and A.M.Hyamson, who were still trying to reach an agreement with the Arabs on the basis of a formula other than partition. “Our super-clever Jews”, wrote a contemptuous Jewish Agency official, “have provided most welcome ammunition to our enemies,” who were “building great hopes on the dissensions in the Jewish camp.”⁷

The Arabs, by contrast, had good reason to believe that their battle against partition – which some declared they were prepared to wage for twenty years, if necessary – would soon lead to a reversal of British policy.⁸ Consequently they were not willing to consider an agreement with the Jews on the basis of anything less than keeping them a permanent minority in Palestine. Following the January 1938 White Paper, Moshe Shertok felt that the Arabs were reverting to their earlier stance of expecting their demands to be met in full, without having to take the Jewish factor into consideration at all.⁹

DR WEIZMANN'S MEETINGS IN EGYPT

Given their fears of a British retreat from partition, Zionists were now directing their efforts primarily at the Colonial and Foreign Offices in London, and at the Woodhead Commission which visited Palestine between May and August 1938. For the latter body extensive documentation was assembled, including material designed to show that the Arab minority in the future Jewish state would suffer no discrimination or ill-treatment.¹⁰

The desire to side-track the proceedings of the Commission by creating the appearance of movement towards a Jewish-Arab accord seems to have been the principal motive behind several spring 1938 overtures to the Jewish Agency by Beirut-based intermediaries who claimed to be acting on behalf of members of the disbanded Arab Higher Committee. The terms being hinted at were close to those which had been suggested during 1937 – viz. a joint Arab-Zionist rejection of partition, and a regime offering the Jews a fixed minority status. These overtures evoked no serious response from the Agency Executive.¹¹

The Zionists' "Arab front" was once again secondary to their British one, and the Political Department's activities were oriented primarily towards creating certain impressions – and avoiding others – in British minds. The dissolution of the A.H.C., the increase in terrorism and the expulsion of many leading Arab political figures was producing an unstable power-vacuum in the Palestinian-Arab community, leading some Zionists to contemplate the creation of a new, pro-partition "groupement".¹² Some efforts were made to encourage the appearance of certain Arabs before the Woodhead Commission, and later to support "counter-terror" bands (sometimes called "peace gangs") among the ex-Mufti's rivals.¹³ These activities met with the same degree of success as their more ambitious forerunners (creation of "moderate" Arab parties, etc.) of the early 1920s.¹⁴

Outside Palestine, other forms of Zionist "preventive diplomacy" were aimed at neutralising the growing moral, political and practical support shown towards the Palestinian-Arab cause. For their own reassurance, perhaps, but also for British eyes, Zionist reports from the region downplayed the sincerity and the depth of pan-Arab solidarity around the Palestine issue.¹⁵ For most of 1938, the J.A.E.

felt satisfied with the “reasonable” and straightforward attitude of Syrian National Bloc leaders, but at one point a Zionist agent had to appeal to Jamil Mardam’s fears of “Jewish power” in Paris (where ratification of the Franco-Syrian Treaty was still pending) when seeking the Syrian Prime Minister’s help in curbing the pro-Palestinian activities of certain Syrian public figures.¹⁶ Some Lebanese politicians actively co-operated with Zionists in efforts to curtail the activities of the ex-Mufti and his followers, but these efforts were never very effective in neutralising the Palestinians based in Beirut and other centres.¹⁷

Wafdist and other opposition circles in Egypt, however, took up the Palestinian cause in greater earnest during 1938.¹⁸ Partly in response to this trend, Dr Weizmann reverted to his personalised style of high-level diplomacy and arranged for two meetings with non-Palestinian leaders in Cairo in early February. One of his main purposes was to appeal to prominent Arab personalities who might be prepared to consider an Arab–Zionist agreement based on partition, and these cordial but inconclusive talks provided the Zionist leader with some temporary optimism.¹⁹

In his meeting with the Syrian opposition leader, Dr Abd ar-Rahman Shahbandar, Weizmann took the opportunity to reiterate his rejection of Shahbandar’s much publicised scheme for a permanent Jewish minority status in Palestine. Shahbandar reacted in a way which seemed, to Weizmann, to leave the matter open to further discussion, and the conversation also dwelt on the two men’s common antagonism to the ex-Mufti and his party.²⁰

On the following day, Dr Weizmann met with Prince Muhammad Ali of the Egyptian royal house, a man who had on several previous occasions shown his willingness to serve as a mediator in the quest for a resolution to the Palestine dispute.²¹ During their February 7th meeting, Dr Weizmann recalled his friendship with the late King Faisal, and both men spoke of the need for realism and moderation. Dr Weizmann explained Zionist aims and tried to offset Arab fears and complaints by offering the standard reassurances about Zionist good intentions. Weizmann’s record of the talk contained repeated references to the harmony of interests among Arabs, Jews and British in the region, and the Zionist leader also responded sympathetically to the prince’s two major concerns: the establishment of an Arab federation, and the safeguarding of the Muslim holy places.²²

Although the two men spoke of holding a further meeting, none in fact took place. Given Muhammad Ali's distance from real political power in Egypt or elsewhere in the Arab world, Dr Weizmann's declaration that he hoped the prince "would take upon himself the mantle of King Feisal" so as to provide the "statesmanlike leadership" which the Arabs "lacked" must be regarded either as hollow flattery or as wishful thinking on his part. While Dr Weizmann felt that Muhammad Ali had shown himself "not unfavourable to partition", this must have been either a misunderstanding or a misinterpretation of the prince's attitude; in later clarifications the prince spoke of a federation consisting not of a Jewish "state", but of "a number of Cantons – Arab, Jewish, Alouite, Lebanese, etc. – under the sovereignty of an Arab prince at Damascus."²³ Muhammad Ali must also have been holding back some mental reservations while listening to Dr Weizmann speaking of a Jewish majority, for he was later reported to be hovering between Lord Samuel's 40 per cent and a figure of 33 per cent as the projected ceiling for the Jewish population of Palestine.²⁴

The Weizmann–Muhammad Ali meeting thus did little to bring an Arab–Zionist agreement any closer, but the record of the interview did serve as ammunition for the Zionist leader in his attempts to have the British stick, for a while longer, to the partition policy. Weizmann also used it to try to offset what he thought were deliberately exaggerated worries which Lampson and Smart were transmitting to the Foreign Office about the spill-over of the Palestine conflict into Egypt. In both cases, the Zionist leader could not win the credibility battle against the Cairo-based British officials.²⁵ More impressive to the Arabs and to the British was the anti-partitionist Lord Samuel, who followed Weizmann with his own private visit to Muhammad Ali five weeks later.

LORD SAMUEL AND THE "40:10" FORMULA

On July 20th 1937, in the heat of the House of Lords debates over the Report of the Peel Commission, Herbert Samuel had delivered a speech in which he proposed a solution containing elements of the scheme which he had conveyed to the Colonial Office and to Nuri as-Sa'id in September 1936. The speech had given encouragement to anti-partition Englishmen, Jews and Arabs, while evoking angry condemnation from most Zionist circles.²⁶

Although, following the speech, the "Samuel proposals" had immediately become part of the political debate over Palestine, eight months passed before Lord Samuel himself became active in promoting the scheme. The principal feature of his plan was that Arabs and Jews should agree that the Jewish population of Palestine should not exceed 40 per cent of the total at the end of a fixed ten-year period; hence, the name "40:10 formula", one which was first proposed in May 1936 by Frumkin and Alami during the episode of the Five.²⁷

In March 1938 Lord Samuel spent a fortnight in Palestine and in Egypt, discussing with Jews and Arabs the likelihood of the 40:10 formula serving as a credible alternative to partition. In Palestine, Samuel met with Dr Magnes, Raghib an-Nashashibi, Moghannam al-Moghannam, A.S.Khalidi and others. He was surprised and encouraged to learn that "one of the principal representatives of official Zionism" (Menahem Ussishkin?) had admitted that he would "greatly prefer" the 40:10 formula to partition, but that he did not believe that any Arabs would accept it.²⁸

In Egypt, Samuel held what he considered to be a useful meeting with Prince Muhammad Ali, in the company of Awni Abd al-Hadi. The prince seemed favourably impressed with Samuel's personality and proposals, but stressed Arab and Muslim concern for the inclusion of Palestine within a future Arab federation and for adequate protection of the holy places. Awni, when pressed, said the Palestinians might accept the 40 per cent figure – but only if this were considered a *final* settlement. A ten-year agreement, he argued with some foresight, would only mean another 400,000 Jews, whose presence would surely "strengthen the demand for an ultimate majority, with the consequent domination of Jews over Arabs." Samuel stuck to his argument that the Jews would never agree to remaining a permanent minority, and suggested that they leave the "situation to be cleared up after ten years, in accordance with conditions then."²⁹

Samuel returned to England encouraged by his talks in Egypt and Palestine, and hoped to rally more British and Jewish support for the 40:10 formula as a way of averting partition.³⁰ Samuel had to admit that it would be more difficult to convince the Zionists than to rally Arab support for the "40:10" formula. Still, he hoped that Jews would see the contrasting results of the two alternatives, and would draw the necessary conclusions. Under his plan, the Jewish popula-

tion of 400,000 would double, while further settlement and immigration opportunities might become available in Transjordan, Syria and/or Iraq; whereas, under the (Peel) partition plan, the Jewish state would start out with 260,000 Jews (54 per cent) and 225,000 Arabs, and would have to grow while being "faced by continuous hostility from without and obstruction from within." (cf. Table, page 113)

Jewish Agency leaders, whenever they were forced to comment on the 40:10 scheme, did their best to leave no doubts in both British and Arab minds about their categorical rejection of the plan.³¹ As for the Arab reception of his scheme, the fact that Prince Muhammad Ali seemed to side with him against Awni Abd al-Hadi on several issues led Samuel to hope that non-Palestinians, in general, could be enlisted in the task of "moderating" the demands of the Palestinian Arabs. Reaction in some British official quarters was most encouraging (in sharp contrast to the schemes recently advanced by Hyamson and Newcombe); yet, after serious inter-departmental debates, the Foreign Office's enthusiasm had to give way to the Colonial Office's reluctance to endorse any venture which might have "prejudice[d] the chances of partition" – which was still, in the official view, "the best and most hopeful solution."³²

In lieu of promoting further direct mediation efforts by Lord Samuel, the Foreign Office did try to follow up his visit to Egypt by encouraging leading Egyptian Muslims and Jews to "reach an understanding on some solution to the Palestine problem which they would be prepared jointly to recommend to the Jews and Moslems in Palestine."³³ A more ambitious *démarche* was undertaken by the Egyptian Prime Minister, Muhammad Mahmud, in early September 1938. With an Arab Interparliamentary Conference on the Palestine question scheduled to open in Cairo in October, Mahmud approached the British with the suggestion that he – "in collaboration with" the British Legation – should invite both the ex-Mufti and Dr Weizmann to sit down to talks.³⁴

Consultations between the Foreign and Colonial Offices then ensued as to the wisdom of the British becoming associated with this rather daring mediation attempt. Although aware of the various unfavourable ways British involvement might be interpreted, F.O. advisers stressed what they considered the overall advantages, especially given the deteriorating situation in Europe and its overflow into a tense Middle East.³⁵ The Colonial Office, however,

refused to fall in with the F.O.'s recommendation, on the grounds that: (a) there was "no hope whatever" (in MacDonald's opinion) of Dr Weizmann agreeing to meet the ex-Mufti in those circumstances; (b) the meeting, if held, would turn out to be a certain fiasco, given the gulf between the two sides "even on the limited question of a temporary truce"; and (c) permission for the exiled Hajj Amin al-Husaini to leave Lebanon for such negotiations "would tend to increase his prestige and that of his terrorist organisation."³⁶ Accordingly, the F.O. instructed its representative in Alexandria to inform Muhammad Mahmud that, after "earnest consideration", H.M.G. did not consider the proposed meeting "likely to achieve the happy results" for which the Egyptian Prime Minister might have been hoping. Muhammad Mahmud thereupon dropped the mediation effort.³⁷

THE ABDALLAH PLAN

During the summer of 1938, a further non-Palestinian opportunity for a peace settlement arose when the Amir Abdallah published a plan for solving the Palestine dispute. Since early 1937, it had been presumed in most quarters that the Amir would have stood the most to gain from the implementation of partition, and, indeed, when Abdallah saw the British retreating from partition in the January 1938 White Paper, he professed his disappointment to the Zionists at the loss of an opportunity to expand his kingdom west of the Jordan.³⁸

Abdallah's relations with the Zionists after July 1937 had been friendly, but low-key, based on the tactical calculation of "my enemy's enemy is my friend" and lubricated by occasional Zionist payments to bolster his struggle against the ex-Mufti.³⁹ On the eve of the arrival of the Woodhead Commission, Abdallah indicated that he wished to co-operate more closely with the Jewish Agency. He had rejected Nuri as-Sa'id's invitation to endorse his own scheme, and now turned to the Zionists for specific political and financial aid in pursuit of a pro-partition stand before the Commission.⁴⁰

But, to almost everyone's great surprise, the Amir submitted a memorandum to the Commission which was *not* based on the partition idea at all (and which consequently had to be formally rejected as falling outside the Commission's terms of reference). The memorandum soon found its way into the Arabic press, was

communicated semi-officially to the C.O. and to the J.A.E., and became the centre of some lively public debate.

Abdallah's plan (Document 24) openly tried to satisfy all three interested parties – Arabs, Jews and British – in addition to providing some special advantages, of course, for himself. Palestine and Transjordan were to be joined to form a “United Arab Kingdom”, under which the Jews would be granted self-government in (and would be permitted a “reasonable” level of immigration into) designated Jewish “areas”. Jewish immigration into Arab areas might occur at the discretion of the Arabs. The plan would be in force for ten years, during which the Mandate would continue only as a “moral” force and British strategic interests would be safeguarded. After ten years, the Mandate would be terminated and a decision taken on the final form of the independent state.

The British viewed the plan as an enlarged version of cantonisation, and expressed surprise that Abdallah had come out publicly against the partition plan which had been so favourable to his interest. At the C.O., the plan was not taken very seriously, one senior official commenting wryly: “When it is decided to betray the Jews we can begin to consider schemes of this kind.”⁴¹

Although Abdallah boasted to the High Commissioner that his scheme was being well received by thinking Arabs, press reaction in Palestine was universally hostile. Some criticised the plan for its departure from the National Covenant formulated at Bludan in 1937, and for allowing ten more years of continued Jewish growth, to the point where the Jews would eventually have their state within a *de facto* partitioned Palestine.⁴² Even Abdallah's sometime allies in Palestine, the National Defence Party, publicly disclaimed any connection with, or support for, the proposals. Raghib an-Nashashibi took the occasion to reiterate his party's platform, which called for a national government in Palestine, with the Jews, in their current proportion of the population, enjoying minority rights.⁴³

Abdallah was not deterred by this Arab criticism, and vigorously defended the plan's practicability as a way of preventing a complete Jewish takeover of both Palestine and Transjordan. Such an outcome, he argued, was sure to result from a continuation of the status quo. He denounced “those partisans of the Arabs who will accept no solution but are content with weeping and wailing and calling for help to those who cannot aid them.” His own plan, he argued, would at least offer “a speedy halting of the danger”; the United Arab

Kingdom, once formed, "could then deal with the problem on a long-term basis, with a strengthened hand and a single voice." Abdallah challenged his detractors to suggest a better plan.⁴⁴

In presenting the plan to the British, Abdallah also invoked his upstanding image among the Jewish public, expressing his optimism that the Jews would see the merits of his plan from their own viewpoint. The Amir even predicted that the Jews would gladly contribute their financial resources and technical know-how to the benefit of the future kingdom.⁴⁵ But the Political Department in Jerusalem was hardly enthusiastic, and advised Zionist bodies not to react at all to the Abdallah plan:

The whole affair should be regarded as a tactical move designed, on the one hand, to screen – vis-à-vis the Arab world – the Amir's undoubted acquiescence in partition in the event of its coming off, and, on the other hand, to serve as a feeler for exploring an alternative.⁴⁶

Jewish press reaction was nonetheless positive, although with reservations. Editorials wistfully recalled the Weizmann/Faisal episode, welcomed the "courage and initiative" of the Amir, and spoke of "the first glimmerings of sanity and statesmanship" among the Arabs. They also praised Abdallah for admitting that the Jews had "rights and interests in Palestine" and for his desire "to come to some sort of agreement with them."⁴⁷ But, at the same time, the Jewish press found the specific terms of the Abdallah plan decidedly unacceptable, especially since they appeared to be based on the presumption "that Palestine must always be an Arab country with an Arab majority."⁴⁸

One of the few positive echoes to the Abdallah scheme came from Jewish dissenters like Judah L. Magnes and H. M. Kalvaryski. In late May the latter was holding talks with Mustafa Wahba at-Tal, Abdallah's Minister of Justice, about Transjordanian backing for his own proposal for a parity regime in Palestine and the eventual creation of a large "Semitic Empire".⁴⁹ Kalvaryski soon met with the Amir himself, but Abdallah would not commit himself beyond expressing a general desire for Arab-Jewish peace.⁵⁰ Kalvaryski and at-Tal maintained contact during the summer and autumn of 1938, discussing the less grandiose practicalities of preparing Arab and Jewish public opinion to favour the Semitic Empire idea.⁵¹ When Kalvaryski turned to the Jewish Agency for advice and funding, he

found Moshe Shertok casting doubts on at-Tal's standing as "a decisive factor in Arab politics," and anxious to avoid the impression that certain Jewish groups were prepared to come to an agreement with Arabs on (non-partition) terms which could "in no circumstances be accepted by the representatives of official Zionism and by the Jewish public at large."⁵²

By late summer 1938 it was clear that Abdallah's position was progressively deteriorating, largely as a result of the controversy surrounding his Palestine plan. Jewish public opinion turned sour following his public condemnations of the Jewish terrorist bombing of the Haifa Arab market, while his erstwhile British patrons seemed to be ignoring him in favour of his rival, Saudi King Abd al-Aziz al-Sa'ud (Ibn Sa'ud).⁵³ If the Jewish Agency-Abdallah connection was to serve as a cornerstone for a definitive solution to the Palestine question, it would have to be done on the basis of different terms, and to wait for a time when the Amir would be in a better position to deliver the goods.

THE HYAMSON-NEWCOMBE PROPOSALS (II)

Once it had become clear to them that neither the ex-Mufti's circle nor the J.A.E. was going to be taking up the schemes which bore their names, Col.S.F.Newcombe and Albert M.Hyamson turned their attention to Members of Parliament and government officials in London.⁵⁴ Such a shift reflected a frustration shared by other personalities who were now displaying a growing inclination to look to the British to impose a solution to break the persistent deadlock.⁵⁵

In mid-1938, Newcombe was hoping that the British would take the lead in convening Arabs and Jews to a "trial" conference to discuss a settlement. Significantly, he had now reverted to the *second* draft of the scheme (the "Beirut" draft; see Document 23(b)), recommending it as the version which had been "accepted by the Mufti and all Arabs who [had] seen it." All that remained was for the British "to bring pressure to bear on Dr Weizmann" to accept it.⁵⁶ During a summer visit to the Middle East, Newcombe reinforced his arguments with reports to London, quoting anti-Zionist Jews from Ankara, Istanbul and Baghdad. In discussions with Palestinian Arab exiles, slight revisions were inserted into the "Beirut" draft to make its terms more consistent with the National Covenant adopted at

Bludan (see Document 23(d)) The Arabs also discouraged Col. Newcombe from pressing too hard for the convening of an Arab-Jewish conference or for the admission of more European Jewish refugees into the Arab countries around Palestine.⁵⁷

When he returned to London, Newcombe's continued appeals to the F.O. and C.O. were underlined by urgent warnings about the deteriorating international situation and the dangers of a *jihad* being declared against the British and Zionists in Palestine.⁵⁸ Albert Hyamson added his own voice to these requests for an active British role in forcing Arab and Zionist leaders to meet in conference. He attempted to convince government officials that considerable Arab and (non-Zionist) Jewish support could be had for his proposals. At the same time, he tried to persuade the Jews that prominent Arabs – even the ex-Mufti himself – were willing to come to terms on the basis of the third (i.e., “Nuri”) draft version of his scheme. In both British and Zionist circles, Hyamson's latest lobbying efforts were dismissed with great scepticism.⁵⁹

INFORMAL ARAB-ZIONIST TALKS IN LONDON

As 1938 wore on and the Woodhead Commission slowly deliberated over its findings, the feeling grew in British, Arab and Zionist circles that the long-awaited report might not, after all, lead to a definitive resolution of the Palestine dispute. Rather than settling the matter, it now seemed more than likely that publication of the Woodhead Report – and *any* plan for the partition of Palestine – was going to result in a new and perhaps more dangerous impasse than the existing one.⁶⁰

By Autumn 1938, the Colonial Office had shifted its Palestine thinking more towards that of the Foreign Office on the question of the dangers of proceeding with partition. Lord Samuel's 40:10 formula, which had not achieved the bridging of the gulf between the official Arab and Zionist positions, was now having an important impact on Malcolm MacDonald. Despite his initial rejection of the Samuel approach, the Colonial Secretary began building his own 1938-39 Palestine policy around some of its essential features, especially the idea of fixing a period of restricted Zionist development in Palestine which would be based on Arab consent.⁶¹

Between October 1938 and early February 1939, MacDonald and his colleagues were heavily involved in preparations for a conference

of Arabs and Jews. The major questions which had to be resolved were: (a) to secure the co-operation and consent of the Zionist Organisation for its official participation; (b) to determine which Palestinian Arabs could be invited (without appearing to be capitulating to rebels and "terrorists"), and to persuade these people to attend; and (c) to determine the proper role and status of the Arab states, whose participation – although contrary to the government's formal stand against their involvement in Palestine affairs – was considered desirable.⁶²

Following publication of the Woodhead Report and the Colonial Secretary's invitations to Arabs and Jews in early November, the would-be participants became preoccupied with internal questions of selecting delegates and formulating positions to be taken during the talks. At the same time, the invited guests also engaged in pre-conference negotiations with their British hosts about ground-rules, format and procedures – each party naturally wishing to obtain, in advance of the conference, maximum tactical advantage.⁶³

The invitations to attend a conference came at a time when Arab and Zionist leaders were already despairing of any satisfactory results coming from direct negotiation with each other. Both parties were now fixing their sights firmly on the British – the Arabs in the hope of extracting some concessions, and the Zionists in fear of a betrayal of their position.⁶⁴ Sensing their backs against the wall and their leverage over British policy-making slipping, Zionist leaders also increased their efforts at enlisting American government support for their position.⁶⁵ Given the decline and collapse of the Jewish position in central Europe, the open threat of the Arabs to side with Britain's enemies, and the demise of the partition plan, it was clear to everyone that any possible breakthrough at the forthcoming talks would have to be achieved largely at the expense of the Jews. There seemed little doubt that, during the forthcoming conference, the Arabs would enjoy a decided tactical advantage.⁶⁶

In anticipating the proposed London talks, Zionist and Arab leaders did nonetheless feel some pressures and incentives to make approaches to each other. For some Jews, the fear of leaving the final decision in British hands was an incentive to consider renewed attempts to reach a voluntary accord with the Arabs.⁶⁷ For his part, the Colonial Secretary began urging Dr Weizmann to increase his efforts at negotiations with non-Palestinian leaders, realising no doubt that any success in this regard might make matters easier for

British policy-makers. In particular, MacDonald hoped that the Zionist leader could perhaps "repeat the chapter of the Faisal Agreement" by making contact with King Ibn Sa'ud.⁶⁸ In his non-committal replies to the latter suggestions, Weizmann repeated his views on the need for a clear and firm British stand on Zionism, without which Jewish approaches to Ibn Sa'ud would be ineffective.⁶⁹

But the scheduled presence in London of a number of other Arab leaders in late 1938 did provide several opportunities for exploratory talks. In early September, Dr Weizmann had hoped to hold an informal meeting with the Syrian Prime Minister, Jamil Mardam (who was then in Paris), Iraqi Foreign Minister, Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, and Malcolm MacDonald; but Mardam did not come to London, and no such joint meeting materialised.⁷⁰ A private meeting between Weizmann and Tawfiq as-Suwaidi did, however, take place on October 6th. Suwaidi, who was unexpectedly accompanied by Nuri as-Sa'id, took a tough line with the Zionist leader, and the discussion broke down over two central issues: (a) whether it was necessary to stop, and later restrict, Jewish immigration, and (b) whether the Jews had a right to expect more than communal autonomy and minority rights in Palestine. A second meeting was planned but fell through.⁷¹ Although Malcolm MacDonald claimed, in his talks with Zionists, that he had made it clear to the Iraqi Foreign Minister that the British could not contemplate either stopping Jewish immigration or "crystallising" the Jewish national home in its current size,⁷² Suwaidi left London optimistic that a British-imposed solution to the Palestine dispute was imminent, one which he hoped would win Arab acquiescence by being based on the second or third draft of the Hyamson-Newcombe scheme.⁷³

Several other attempts were made to bring Arabs and Jews together informally. In late October, Albert Hyamson tried to arrange a meeting between Dr Weizmann, other Zionists, Nuri as-Sa'id and Jamal al-Husaini, under the neutral chairmanship of Lord Lloyd, former High Commissioner to Egypt and later Colonial Secretary. Although, in the end, no meeting took place, Zionists looked favourably on the idea in the hope that it might turn out to be "a better way than the official conference."⁷⁴ In November, a delegation sent by the Cairo Interparliamentary Conference on Palestine arrived in London, accompanied by the prospect – also unrealised – that some members might be persuaded to meet with

Jewish representatives.⁷⁵ Dr Weizmann did meet with the Egyptian ambassador to London, but their meeting turned out to be nothing more than a friendly exchange of views.⁷⁶

PREPARING THE CONFERENCE: POSITIONS AND PERSONALITIES

Despite these opportunities for secret meetings in late 1938, the gap separating Palestinian Arabs and Zionists remained as wide as ever, and was perceived as such by leaders on both sides. As David Ben-Gurion reasoned:

A Jewish–Arab agreement is actually an ideal solution, and very desirable.... But at this time, after thirty months of rioting and murders, when we have lost hundreds of dead and wounded, and the Arabs have lost thousands, when Arab hatred of us has grown sharper and extremist Arabs, our mortal enemies, have the upper hand over the terrified Arabs of Palestine, it's hard to see the Arabs agreeing to any conditions which we could accept.

The Jewish people, he declared in a public statement, were

ready to co-operate with the Arabs for the general welfare of the country. But they can consider neither the imposition of minority status nor any arbitrary limitation of their inalienable right to return to their homeland.⁷⁷

From the vantage-point of the ex-Mufti, al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini, the situation was no different. It was “highly unlikely”, he wrote to King Ibn Sa’ud,

that the Jews will agree to the cessation of immigration or the formation of an independent government, and the Arabs will accept nothing less, and in that case the efforts and hopes [for an agreement during the proposed conference] will have been in vain, and the prestige of the Arabs and of their governments will be exposed to contempt. ...⁷⁸

Both sides were now clearly looking to the British for an imposed solution favourable to their interests, and in convening the conference the British were under no illusions about the chances of arriving at a voluntary Arab–Zionist agreement. A senior official at

the Colonial Office remarked privately that "the word 'conference' was hardly appropriate," since "what was intended was separate parallel discussions between His Majesty's Government and the Arabs, and His Majesty's Government and the Jews"; although such discussions might "eventuate in a general conference," most people realised from the start that there was a good chance that the British would be called upon to impose a settlement in the end.⁷⁹

The stance of the exiled Palestinian leadership on the eve of the London Conference remained consistent with previous declarations. Given the widespread perceptions of the decline of Zionist influence over Great Britain and of a greater British willingness to satisfy Arab demands (with a looming European war weighing on policy-makers' minds), the Arab stance was, not surprisingly, a tough one. The platform announced by members of the disbanded Arab Higher Committee in mid-November consisted of the following points: (a) the establishment of an Arab national government; (b) the cessation of all Jewish immigration; (c) the prohibition of further land-sales to Jews; (d) the granting of minority rights to Jews; and (e) the protection of British interests by means of an Anglo-Palestine treaty.⁸⁰

The confident spirit with which many Palestinians were approaching the talks was given expression during a private and unofficial pre-conference meeting between Musa al-Alami and Malcolm MacDonald. In contradicting the Colonial Secretary's innocent and optimistic remark that "even if ... an agreement was not achieved, ... the discussions would be very helpful," the "moderate" Alami was frank and blunt, pointing out that there was

nothing new to be learnt from talks in London. So far as the Palestinian Arabs were concerned, they had made their point of view known over and over again. They had been perfectly consistent. He thought there was some misunderstanding of their point of view in London; people were apt to think that their firm demands were simply made from the point of view of bargaining, and that in the course of negotiations they would make concessions from these demands. That [Alami emphasised] was not the position. They believed firmly and sincerely in the rightness of their demands, and they would stick to them. [...]

In 1922, Alami added,

it might have been possible to get a compromise on the various demands the Arabs were putting forward. But now it was too late. The proportion of the population in Palestine had altered so greatly since 1922 that they could not compromise.⁸¹

The toughness of the Palestinians' position, based on their optimism and confidence in the balance of forces on the eve of the conference, was matched by a pre-conference toughness on the part of Jewish leaders – but theirs was based on dejection and despair. Given the increasingly gloomy situation of European Jews under Hitler, David Ben-Gurion and others felt that the Jews had nothing to concede on the immigration issue, but rather were obliged to press for a more generous interpretation of the existing economic absorptive capacity criterion. The J.A.E. Chairman urged his colleagues to be prepared to take an uncompromising line vis-à-vis the *British*, but at the same time he argued forcefully that “it would be a grave mistake not to make every possible effort to reach an understanding with the *Arabs*.” The Jews, he urged,

must try to get into touch with the Arabs ... If they succeeded in reaching [an understanding], and thereby getting less [with the Arabs] than through an understanding with the Government, ... he would be prepared to take less from the Arabs than he would agree to take from the British.⁸²

Even though he admitted that only a miracle could produce a voluntary Arab–Zionist agreement at the conference, Ben-Gurion warned that it would be a great error for Zionists to approach the conference with the *a priori* position that an agreement with the Arabs was impossible. It would be tactically fatal, he felt, if the Jewish delegation could be faulted by the British, the Arabs, or by other Jews for “not trying hard enough” to reach an Arab–Zionist agreement.⁸³ During the days leading up to the February 7th 1939 opening session, Ben-Gurion advocated the following four guidelines for Zionists to stick to during the talks:

- (a) no concessions on immigration;
- (b) no Arab state, but a regime based on parity in Palestine;
- (c) cantonization might be acceptable, if the Jewish area was not less than that recommended by the Peel Report and if control over immigration were in Jewish hands; and

(d) a Jewish state would be willing to belong to a future Middle Eastern confederation.⁸⁴

The Jewish Agency Chairman also cited the Weizmann–Faisal model as the one to guide the Zionist position vis-à-vis the delegates from the neighbouring Arab states, and recalled that non-Palestinians could be expected to take “a larger view of the problems” than the Palestinians.⁸⁵

THE ARAB STATES ON THE EVE OF THE CONFERENCES

This resumption of a positive Zionist attitude to non-Palestinian factors was due more to force of circumstances than to any new signs of an attractive offer coming from leaders of the Arab world beyond Palestine. Zionist protests since 1936 about British laxity in face of the increasing role of non-Palestinian Arabs in the Palestine dispute had been to no avail, and with the announced attendance of representatives of the neighbouring states at the conference, the Zionists had little choice but to try to make the best of the formal pan-Arabisation of their conflict with the Palestinian Arabs.⁸⁶ Reflecting this reality, almost all Zionist scenarios for solutions included support for the formation of a regional federation – support which would be offered in exchange for Arab recognition of Jewish immigration and some form of autonomy (if the term “sovereignty” had to be avoided) in at least part of Palestine.⁸⁷ In internal deliberations, Ben-Gurion also began advocating a proposal for the transfer of 100,000 Palestinian Arab families to Iraq, to be subsidised by a fund of £10 million. Many of his colleagues, however, raised doubts as to whether the time was right for such a suggestion, or whether the idea should be seen to originate from Jewish quarters.⁸⁸

If there was to be any room for manoeuvre, or give and take, at the conference, it was going to have to come from the representatives of the Arab states outside Palestine. Directly or indirectly, J.A.E. officials became aware of a variety of schemes and terms of agreement which were being considered by non-Palestinian spokesmen on the eve of the conference. Although, in the end, no Syrian delegates were invited to the conference, Finance Minister Lutfi al-Haffar suggested from Damascus that the Jews should think of a future Syro-Palestinian union, under which larger Jewish immigration would be possible, following a cooling-off period of four or five

years.⁸⁹ Even opposition leaders in Syria offered to help mediate between the Zionists and Palestinian Arabs, along the lines of the "Shahbandar plan" for a wider, Syrian-centred federation with a fixed minority status for the Jews in Palestine.⁹⁰ From Egypt came reports that Prime Minister Muhammad Mahmud was in favour of allowing continued Jewish immigration until the Jews reached 35 per cent of the population, and thereafter permitting immigrants to equal the difference between Arab and Jewish natural increase.⁹¹ Although no specific schemes were attached to them, Egyptian Prince Abd al-Mun'im (son of ex-Khedive, Abbas Hilmi II) and Saudi Prince Faisal as-Sa'ud were rumoured to be coming to the conference with thoughts of promoting a Palestine solution based on creation of an Arab federation.⁹²

Not wishing to be excluded, the Amir Abdallah sought to portray himself to the British, the Jews and the Arabs as a "reasonable" element and broadcast his motto as being: "To surrender too much is bad; to insist on too much is worse."⁹³ Arrangements were made for the Transjordanian delegates to maintain contact with Jewish Agency representatives in London, raising Zionist hopes that the former would hold to a "constructive" line during the conference.⁹⁴ Nuri as-Sa'id, now Prime Minister of Iraq, was reported to have reformulated his ideas, and was now calling for a three to four year halt to Jewish immigration, followed by the creation of a federation and a level of Jewish immigration equal to the difference between Arab and Jewish natural increase.⁹⁵ Tawfiq as-Suwaidi on most occasions propounded the same formula, but was also reported privately to be in favour of a version of partition which would have granted the north of Palestine to the Arabs – ostensibly paving the way for an Iraqi-Palestinian union which would give Baghdad access to the sea through Haifa.⁹⁶

From the Zionist point of view, all the formulae discussed in anticipation of the conference shared in common the drawback of presuming that the Jews would remain a minority in Palestine in any future arrangement. (See Table, page 113.) Quite apart from the negation which this represented to the Zionist goal of making Palestine the one country in the world where Jews would *not* be a minority, many Zionist spokesmen began citing the recent massacre of Assyrians in Iraq to underscore their lack of confidence in any minority guarantees which the Arabs might offer to the Jews.⁹⁷

This multiplicity of Arab actors and proposals also evoked strong

suspicions among Palestinians, some of whom feared a conspiracy between British officials and the Arab states aimed at manipulating the alleged Palestinian “stubbornness” as a pretext for an imposed solution which would fall short of their basic demands. To prevent this possibility, Palestinian leaders did their best to lobby non-Palestinian spokesmen with the aim of “toughening up” their proposed stands at the conference.⁹⁸

“MODERATES” AND MAVERICKS

Another area of pre-conference activity involved “moderates” and mavericks in both camps. In an obvious bid to establish himself as a *locutor viable*, to be invited to London in place of his Husaini rivals, Fakhri an-Nashashibi took the bold step of publishing a conciliatory open letter to the High Commissioner.⁹⁹ As a result, threats to his life increased, as did his isolation even from other opposition figures. But his demonstrative gesture was not enough to enhance his credibility in British eyes, especially since most observers believed (incorrectly, as it happened) that Fakhri’s *démarche* had been orchestrated and paid for by the Zionists.¹⁰⁰

The impending conference also brought to life dissenters and critics within the Jewish camp, as well as would-be mediators and intermediaries from the outside.¹⁰¹ In early December, Lord Samuel delivered another speech which reiterated his views on a Palestine settlement and caused some consternation to Agency leaders and supporters.¹⁰² From Jerusalem, Judge Gad Frumkin thought it was an opportune moment to forward to the High Commissioner a copy of his May 1936 memorandum dealing with the attempts to reach an agreement based on the original 40:10 formula.¹⁰³ In talks at the C.O. on the eve of the conferences, Pinhas Rutenberg began promoting yet another of his schemes for Arab-Jewish agreement, this time based on a joint Arab-Jewish demand for “the creation of a Federation composed of Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan and Iraq with Palestine, to which free Jewish immigration [will] be allowed,” and the creation of a huge Economic Development Corporation for the region. But, as with his previous plans, Rutenberg was told emphatically that there was no question of receiving any official, or even unofficial, blessing from the C.O., especially with regard to his suggestion about a policy of free Jewish immigration.¹⁰⁴

Suggestions also came from miscellaneous quarters that "moderate" Jews like Samuel, Magnes or Kalvaryski should be included in the Jewish delegation which was being assembled for the conference, or, alternatively, for their unofficial presence in London to serve as liaisons with Arab delegates.¹⁰⁵ From Egypt, in particular, came suggestions for the inclusion of Sephardi Jews who, it was argued, would not only serve the latter function, but would also prove more moderate than J.A.E. leaders. The Agency Executive either ignored or explicitly rejected these pressures to co-opt people whose ideas were known to be at variance with the official line, with two exceptions. The Executive did make sure to include a Sephardi representative, and H.M. Kalvaryski was added to the Jewish delegation at the last minute, in deference to "certain segments" of *yishuv* opinion.¹⁰⁶

For their part, some Zionist leaders hoped for, but had little influence over, the selection of certain non-Palestinian politicians with whom they had had some friendly contacts in the past – men such as Prince Muhammad Ali and Muhammad Mahmud of Egypt.¹⁰⁷ Since they were convinced, from previous experience, that the Nashashibis could not be relied upon to adopt an acceptable programme – and to stick by it during a conference which might well be dominated by the Husainis – most Zionists (with the notable exception of Pinhas Rutenberg) concluded that there was no point in providing any open encouragement or secret funding for so-called moderate Palestinian politicians coming to London.¹⁰⁸ Some Zionists actually felt that it would be tactically *better* for their side if the Palestinian Arab Delegation were to turn out to be composed uniformly of so-called "extremists".¹⁰⁹

THE CONFERENCES BEGIN

The opening of the London conferences approached in an atmosphere of increasing tension, suspicion and antagonism which affected all three parties. In an attempt to improve the pre-conference atmosphere, Dr Judah Magnes (who did not come to London) launched a passionate appeal – not, this time, to the Zionist leadership, but to his former negotiating partner, Dr Izzat Tannous. In early December, Magnes pleaded with Tannous, who served as the principal link between Palestinians in London and Beirut, to

“put the whole Arab–Jew problem on a different and higher plane” by getting the ex-Mufti’s circle to advocate the admission into Palestine of several thousand refugee children and elderly Jews from Germany. Zionist demands for their admission and British refusal to accede had almost led to a Jewish boycott of the conference,¹¹⁰ and Magnes felt that such a humanitarian gesture would be “of incalculable moral and political value to the Arab cause”:

If you can get the courage and the wisdom to do this, history will not forget you. [...] In these days of barbarism, such an act [...] would electrify the world. [...] It would glorify the Arab name. It would stamp the Arabs as in very truth a noble and generous nation. It would wipe out all the bitterness and pain of the past several years. It would give the Arab cause a power which could be achieved in no other way.¹¹¹

Magnes’s eloquence was to no avail, and an atmosphere of gloom and pessimism continued to mark the approach of the conference, particularly for the Jews. On February 7th, Arab and Jewish spokesmen replied to Prime Minister Chamberlain’s welcoming remarks by making forceful formal presentations of their respective cases at separate and parallel meetings, setting the pattern for the ensuing weeks.¹¹² The first days of speeches and discussions revealed the deadlock in all its aspects, and Arabs and Jews followed the lines which had already been set out in pre-conference preparations and posturing. There were no important signals sent out by any of the delegates to indicate the possibility that a compromise might be found to bridge the gulf between the parties on immigration, land-sales or the future constitutional status of Palestine.

From the point of view of Arab–Zionist diplomacy, these “Conferences on Palestine” resulted in only a few direct encounters. Two informal meetings, involving Jewish representatives and some delegates from the Arab states, were convened under British auspices. The first British-sponsored joint meeting came in response to a request from the Jews, after the issue had been exhaustively debated in Zionist councils. On February 16th, Dr Weizmann informed the Prime Minister that the Jews were “prepared to negotiate with the Arabs” in their anxiety “to assist the Government in securing peace in Palestine”, either “directly or through the good offices of His Majesty’s Government, though

without, of course, surrendering our essential rights, or accepting minority status."¹¹³

In attempting to arrange the meeting, Malcolm MacDonald at first encountered among the Palestinians a "steadfast ... refusal to meet the Jews" and among the non-Palestinians little interest in such a meeting. But ultimately the Colonial Secretary succeeded in arranging an informal meeting between delegates from Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia and members of the Jewish delegation – on condition that the latter be regarded as private individuals, not as delegates of the Jewish Agency.¹¹⁴

This first "tripartite meeting", as it was called, was marked by a tense exchange of general statements, with the representatives of the Arab states insisting on Palestinian independence with minority guarantees for the Jews. In the opinion of one British official, the meeting had gone well except for what he termed the "unfortunate" speeches of David Ben-Gurion and Rabbi Stephen Wise, which had caused some "strain".¹¹⁵ Ben-Gurion, for his part, was well aware of the effect of his remarks, but claimed he had made them deliberately with the intention of preventing either the British or the Arabs from believing that they would ever win Jewish agreement to a regime based on the Jews remaining a minority in Palestine. In retrospect, although regretting the annoyance he caused to the Arab representatives, he was glad that he had "taught" them to "understand Zionism better than they did before and ... also [to] respect it more."¹¹⁶

Having requested the meeting in the first place, the Jews were somewhat shocked by the result – particularly the active involvement of Malcolm MacDonald who, rather than using his influence to "force" the Arabs to agree with the Jews,¹¹⁷ seemed to share some of the Arabs' starting assumptions. During two consultations following the tripartite meeting, several members of the J.A.E. called for the cancellation or postponement of the scheduled future meetings. But Ben-Gurion again argued for the continuation of the tripartite talks, underlining his willingness to talk to any Arab leader (including the ex-Mufti himself, if necessary) if there were even the slightest chance of coming to an agreement.¹¹⁸ In any case, the meeting scheduled for the next day was transformed by the British, at the last minute, into short, parallel British–Arab and British–Jewish meetings, punctuated by a brief informal chat between Jewish and Arab delegates over tea.¹¹⁹ The tentative British suggestions for future policy which were to have been the subject of discussion at this joint

meeting turned out to be so important that the next ten days were consumed with parallel conferences at which each side argued and bargained with the British.

As matters were heading towards an impasse during these parallel discussions, it was the Colonial Secretary who took the initiative to suggest another joint meeting with Arab and Jewish delegates in early March. This time, the Zionist Executive was anxious that the British should "leave the Jews and Arabs to talk" without taking an active part.¹²⁰ At the tripartite meeting of March 7th (Document 27), Ali Mahir made a speech which impressed not only the British delegation but also, in different ways, the Zionist delegates.¹²¹ The Egyptian Prime Minister suggested that the Zionists should "slow down" the pace of their development and "consolidate their position" for the sake of breaking the present impasse:

... later, in a better atmosphere, they might (he thought they certainly would) make a further advance, not as hitherto, with the aid of force, but with the goodwill of the Arabs.

Dr Weizmann enthusiastically responded to the conciliatory spirit of Ali Mahir's remarks, and declared that "speaking for himself, he would be prepared, for the sake of peace, to go a long way in the direction of slowing down."

But, as the British quickly realised, agreement at this level of general statements was not sufficient – particularly since Ben-Gurion openly dissented from Weizmann's remarks during the meeting with the provocative retort that immigration, "so far from being slowed down, should be doubled."¹²² In practical terms, too, MacDonald was aware of the "marked divergence" which separated the moderate Dr Weizmann from the moderate spokesmen of the Arab states on the question of numbers of immigrants.¹²³

While the formal conferences were taking place, there were also several behind-the-scenes conversations between Jews and Arabs in London, although far fewer than some Jews had been hoping for. The Jews were somewhat disappointed when their overtures to Arabs (including men like Musa al-Alami, with whom they had held previous conversations) were met, at first, by a consistent refusal to meet, "either publicly or privately."¹²⁴ The Arab delegates even absented themselves from the opening press conference so as to demonstrate their avoidance of the Jewish delegates, and their initial rebuffs extended not only to official Zionist personalities, but also to

H.M. Kalvaryski, whose presence in London was supposed to have facilitated such contacts.¹²⁵ The Nashashibi delegates and the representatives of Transjordan illustrated their weakness at the conferences by echoing the maximalist positions adopted by the dominant Husaini-led faction, and by doing nothing in private (as some Jews had hoped they would) to advance the prospect of a breakthrough.¹²⁶

Only after the first tripartite meeting did some non-Palestinian delegates agree to meet privately with some members of the Jewish delegation.¹²⁷ Although they never materialised, hints of possible compromises on Jewish immigration were dropped by Nuri as-Sa'id in private talks with British acquaintances.¹²⁸ Two prominent British members of the Jewish delegation, Lords Bearsted and Reading, held a number of private talks with some representatives of the Arab states, sometimes inviting Dr Weizmann and sometimes dealing with sensitive subjects, such as the possibility of European Jewish refugees finding shelter in Iraq, or the transfer of Palestinian Arabs to that country.¹²⁹ Tawfiq as-Suwaidi emerged from another private encounter shocked by Pinhas Rutenberg's blunt exposition of Jewish aspirations for majority status in Palestine. For his part, Rutenberg left their meeting with confirmation of his own worst fears of Arab hostile intentions and collaboration with the Nazis.¹³⁰ H. St. John Philby invited Weizmann, Ben-Gurion and Fuad Hamza to lunch, but this meeting – like all the others – produced “no chance of bridging the gulf” which separated the parties throughout the conference.¹³¹ Despite this futility, Jewish suggestions were made during the dying days of the conference for further eleventh-hour meetings with Arabs.¹³² But by now it was clear that the Jews had nothing new or attractive to offer the Arabs. They would be marking time until the formal closing of the conference, hoping only to “get out ... as cheaply as possible.”¹³³

THE “DOUBLE VETO”

On March 8th, the Colonial Secretary reported to the Cabinet that “the Palestine Conferences were now coming to the end of their tether.”¹³⁴ One week later MacDonald assembled the Jewish and Arab delegations in succession to read to them the government's final proposals for a Palestine policy. Those proposals were a far cry from what MacDonald had originally asked the Cabinet to endorse

as his mandate for the conferences. He had started out proposing a policy resembling Lord Samuel's 40:10 formula, and with the prospect of 150,000 to 300,000 additional Jewish immigrants by the end of the coming decade. This had now been revised, in face of stiff Arab opposition, to a scheme whereby only 75,000 immigrants might enter Palestine over a *five*-year period, during which time calculations of the economic absorptive capacity might reduce (but not increase) the annual figure. After five years the Arabs would have to give their consent to any further immigration.¹³⁵

From the early sessions, it had been clear that MacDonald was heading for an impasse with the Jewish delegation. The Jews had rejected the British proposals as unacceptable, and had declined (until the closing days of the conference) to put forth any counter-proposals. Their position remained that of being willing to discuss either (a) a continuation of the Mandate, with adequate facilities for immigration, or (b) the implementation of the Peel Report, but only if the Jewish state were to be given a larger area.¹³⁶

In the absence of Anglo-Jewish agreement, the only remaining possibilities were an Arab-Jewish or an Anglo-Arab agreement. As we have seen, the former prospect had been well tried and appeared most unlikely. So, after some 35-odd meetings with the various delegations, there remained only the slim hope for an Anglo-Arab agreement on future Palestine policy.

But that too proved illusory. Although he felt he was going quite a distance towards satisfying some of their main demands, MacDonald found the Palestinians unimpressed with either the promise of a veto over Jewish immigration after five years, or the commitment to independence in the near future. MacDonald's insistence on defining the Jews as an "extraordinary", rather than an "ordinary", minority lost him any chance of winning Arab assent to his constitutional proposals.¹³⁷

In presenting his final proposals before the Cabinet, the Colonial Secretary also gave some indication of how the Jewish and Arab arguments during the conferences had been affecting him. "The plain fact", he declared, "was that the Jews had made no attempt to co-operate with the Arabs in the last twenty years; but they would have to do so now."¹³⁸ At the close of the conferences the Colonial Secretary admitted publicly to the Arab delegation that it had been Jamal al-Husaini's argument "that the Jews of Palestine would never co-operate with the Arabs so long as they felt they could rely on

British support" which had impressed his delegation "very deeply and had led them to make great concessions to the Palestine Delegation."¹³⁹

In accepting this basic Arab contention about the British role in the Arab-Zionist struggle, the Colonial Secretary simultaneously rejected the contrary Zionist premise which David Ben-Gurion and others had been advancing – viz., that a *stronger*, British-backed Jewish Palestine would lead to better chances for an Arab-Zionist accord, by forcing the Arabs to recognise the Zionist position and to negotiate with the Jews.¹⁴⁰ During one exasperating moment with the Jewish delegation, Malcolm MacDonald specifically named Ben-Gurion and Shertok as having conveyed to him "the impression that, so long as the Jews had the British Government behind them, they would never meet the Arabs half-way." "These discussions," he added the next day:

had convinced him personally that there would never be co-operation on the part of the Palestine Jews unless, in order to win something which they greatly desired [viz., continued immigration], they were placed in a position of being obliged to co-operate [with the Arabs].¹⁴¹

With a semblance of even-handedness, the Colonial Secretary was also planning to withhold from the Arabs something which *they* "greatly desired" – viz., independence, to which the British had become committed in principle during the conferences. According to the British proposals, the final independence of Palestine was to be granted only after a transitional period which "could not end unless Arabs and Jews were in practice co-operating and unless there was an assurance that such co-operation would continue."¹⁴²

Thus, after going through the process of advancing, and eliminating, various formulae and suggestions for an agreed policy (parity, non-domination, cantonisation, a federal state, a further round-table conference in the fall, etc.), the Colonial Secretary tried to break the impasse which had emerged by the ingenious device of a "double veto". Each side would be deprived of what it wanted most; each would have the power to grant, or to withhold, what the other desired; and this "negative equality" (as Moshe Shertok termed it) was meant to have the positive potential of "generat[ing] the conditions" for a "compromise settlement" which would be to the advantage of both sides.¹⁴³

As clever as this logic may have appeared to the outside observer or to its British proponents, it seemed to offer “the worst of both worlds” to the Palestinian Arab and Jewish delegates.¹⁴⁴ “In the last resort,” complained Awni Abd al-Hadi, the Arabs were being placed “at the mercy of Jewish co-operation” and they “knew that the Jews would never allow an independent state”, while other Arab delegates protested that this amounted to placing humiliating (and insuperable) obstacles in the path of the Palestinians’ right to self-determination.¹⁴⁵ For Ben-Gurion, the proposals amounted to the “handing over [of] the Jews to the mercy of the Arabs”; “a more evil, stupid and shortsighted plan”, he wrote to his wife, “cannot be imagined.”¹⁴⁶ Indeed, given each party’s lack of confidence in Britain’s ability to execute the profuse and repeated assurances which MacDonald had been offering, and given each party’s lack of trust in the good faith of the other, neither side was convinced that the bargaining leverage built into the double veto was equitable or constructive.¹⁴⁷

Yet, although both sides protested the unfairness of the new British policy, there were some distinct political gains which would place the Arabs in a very advantageous situation for any future bargaining:

- (1) Palestine’s right to independence (even though conditional and deferred) had been recognised by the Mandatory Power;
- (2) the right of the Arabs to safeguard their status as the majority by preventing the Jews from surpassing a certain proportion of the population had also been acknowledged by the British; furthermore, the Arabs would be given an instrument (a veto over immigration after five years) with which to exercise this right;
- (3) the British had clearly rejected two of the three possibilities (i.e., continuation of the Mandate or acceptance of the Peel partition with modifications) which might have been acceptable to the Zionists, with the third (federalism) being left vaguely as a possible scenario for the period *after* the five years of restricted Jewish development.¹⁴⁸

It was now clear that, if there was to be a voluntary Arab–Zionist agreement, it would have to be based on the Zionists’ offering terms more attractive to the Arabs than what was being promised to them by the British – an utterly impossible prospect, given the Zionists’

determination to overturn the new British policy by every possible means.

PROJECTED POPULATION OF, AND JEWISH IMMIGRATION INTO,
PALESTINE AT END OF TEN YEARS (1938/1948)

Formula	Population			Jewish Immigration per annum
	Arabs	Jews	Total	
Jews to remain at present proportion (28.57%) of total	1,250,000 (71.43%)	499,000 (28.57%)	1,749,000	2,300 ¹
Jews not to surpass 33% of total	1,250,000 (67%)	625,000 (33%)	1,875,000	14,900
Jewish immigration only to match excess of Arab over Jewish natural increase	1,250,000 (66%)	650,000 (34%)	1,900,000	17,400
Jews not to surpass 35% of total	1,250,000 (65%)	673,000 (35%)	1,923,000	19,700 ²
Jews not to surpass 40% of total	1,250,000 (60%)	833,000 (40%)	2,083,000	35,700 ³

Source: Based on L.J. Stein, "Notes on the Forthcoming Palestine Conference", 18 December 1938, CZA, S25/10350. In Stein's view these calculations were "not quite exact ... but sufficiently reliable to give a rough indication of the results to be anticipated."

Notes:

1. E. Sasson estimated this figure at 5,600. See: Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 281.
2. The British gave an estimate of 15,000 during the St James's Conference. See: Meeting with Jewish Delegation, 20 February 1939, CZA, S25/7633.
3. The British estimated this figure at 30,000. See: Extract from Conclusions of Cabinet Meeting, 8 March 1939, PRO, C0 733/406, file 75782/11.

CHAPTER FIVE

The White Paper and the War, 1939–1945

The combined impact of the MacDonald White Paper and the outbreak of World War II on relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine led to a sharp decline in contacts and attempts to reach an understanding. In some cases this decline was because of a feeling that the outcome of war and the policies which would emerge from a future peace conference would be decisive in determining the form of a settlement to the Palestine dispute. Hence, despite the “double veto”, the tendency was stronger than usual for Arab and Zionist leaders to look more to the powers than to each other for the terms of an acceptable resolution of the problem. Even when tentative feelers were extended between the main protagonists, the discussants invariably stopped short of making any binding commitments, given the fluidity of the wartime political situation.

ANTICIPATING THE WHITE PAPER

As it had been made clear from the start, the absence of agreement at the St James’s Conference meant that the British were left, after March 17th 1939, to finalise and to enforce their new Palestine policy unilaterally. A White Paper, first drafted in late March, was not published until early May, thus affording Arabs and Jews further opportunities to continue their efforts at influencing the final terms of the proposed British policy.¹

The representatives of the Arab states were again in a pivotal position as intermediaries between the Palestinian Arabs, on the one hand, and the British and Zionists, on the other. During and after the final days of the conference, Fuad Hamza and Tawfiq as-Suwaidi made an eleventh-hour attempt to reconcile the outstanding differences between the British and the Palestinian Arab delegations.

The men formulated two post-conference memoranda which summarised the Arab position. The first of these documents stressed that one of the aims of the Arab states was “to ensure that the Jews of Palestine should be treated so fairly that they would willingly co-operate in the future with the Arabs of Palestine in the development of the Palestine state”; at the same time, they insisted that no solution was possible unless the Jews accepted minority status in that state.² When nothing came of this, Anglo-Arab discussions continued in Cairo and Baghdad in the hope of reformulating the British proposals in a way that might have been acceptable to the Palestinian leadership.³

For their part, Zionists had all but given up hope of influencing policy through direct contact with Malcolm MacDonald and the Colonial Office. Nevertheless, their spokesmen in London persisted in their lobbying and public relations activities, while others argued the Zionist case against the proposed White Paper policy in talks with members of the Palestine Administration.⁴

Some Zionists now felt that one way of regaining their diminished standing and credibility with the British, while at the same time averting the forthcoming declaration of policy, would be to reach a quick settlement with the Arabs. The most promising avenue appeared to be the non-Palestinian Arabs who had shown them some understanding or courtesy during the London talks.⁵ Partly in response to being chastised by the British for not having done enough to win Arab goodwill and sympathy, the Zionist Executive on March 16th discussed the idea of requesting – jointly with Ali Mahir if possible – a delay in the promulgation of the new British policy.

Moshe Shertok and others raised doubts as to whether Ali Mahir was, despite his demonstrations of good will, capable of “delivering the goods” – i.e., winning Palestinian Arab support for a compromise plan. Shertok also feared that unacceptable compromises would be required of the Jews if such talks got underway.⁶ Despite such reservations, the consensus in the Executive was in favour of requesting and trying to utilise a “stay-of-execution” in the publication of the new White Paper. On March 24th Dr Weizmann wrote to the Prime Minister, begging him to “prevent this additional sorrow from being added” to the “tragic lot” of the Jews and promising – if the announcement of the government’s decision were postponed – to use “every effort ... to explore the possibility of Jewish–Arab agreement or rapprochement.”⁷

Accordingly, on April 10th and 11th, Dr Weizmann visited Alexandria and Cairo and met with Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, Egyptian Prime Minister Muhammad Mahmud and Ali Mahir.⁸ During these meetings, the Zionist leader begged the Arabs to join him in a joint appeal for the postponement of the proposed White Paper, and invoked the following arguments: (a) the Jews were prepared for practical and military co-operation with the Arabs in the event of a world war; (b) American Jews would be reluctant to urge their government to show uncritical support for Britain in the looming world crisis if the British Palestine policy went ahead as scheduled; (c) the Axis powers were showing contempt for the sovereignty of Muslim states (citing the recent Italian take-over of Albania); and (d) a frustrated and demoralised *yishuv* might not be restrained from behaving in a disruptive or menacing manner. Although the talks were conducted in a cordial atmosphere, none of Weizmann's arguments were specific or attractive enough to win any enthusiasm from his listeners. Ali Mahir revived his suggestion, made so eloquently in London (see Document 27), that an agreement might be possible if the Zionists made the gesture of suspending immigration for six months. This time the idea was categorically rejected by the Zionist leader.

THE MACDONALD WHITE PAPER, MAY 1939

Contrary to press exaggerations of the importance of Dr Weizmann's visit to Egypt, there was no follow-up to these Arab-Zionist talks.⁹ The White Paper was finally published five weeks later without having been influenced in the slightest by this feeble diplomatic initiative. The British had now come out with a policy which they expected would "unfortunately be disappointing to both Jews and Arabs." Its terms were essentially the same as the proposals outlined at the close of the St James's Conference, with slight amendments based on Anglo-Arab consultations in Cairo.¹⁰

As Dr Weizmann had already discovered during his stop-over in Egypt, the new directions in British policy had placed the Zionists in a distinctly unfavourable bargaining position.¹¹ Most Arab statements seemed to indicate that one important result of the White Paper was that it gave them less incentive than ever to deal with the Zionists, "since the latter would surely not want to give away more than the British had [already] given at their expense."¹² During this period the Palestinian Arabs had come closer than ever before to

winning full and immediate independence, and after the White Paper was published few Palestinian leaders saw any need for an agreement with the Zionists. The only cards which the Zionists could play now were the negative ones of threatening to obstruct or undermine the implementation of the White Paper, whether through resistance in Palestine or through lobbying in Washington and London.¹³

Given Arab and Zionist opposition to the White Paper, one might have expected some people to co-operate in a joint effort to have that policy replaced. But, as in the case of the Legislative Council proposals of the 1930s (see Chapter One), rejection stemmed from different, and not compatible, reasons. For the Jews, including most moderates and dissenters, the White Paper went too far.¹⁴ For one group of Arabs it was unacceptable because it did not go far enough; for another group, the White Paper represented the most generous programme on which an agreement with the Jews could be considered.¹⁵

When the Zionists' obstruction of the White Paper policy appeared to be threatening or embarrassing to British or Arab interests,¹⁶ some futile attempts were made to persuade Dr Weizmann of the long-term advantages of co-operating with the Arabs *on the basis of* the White Paper. One person active in this regard was Col. S.F. Newcombe, who visited the Middle East in the summer of 1940 in search of a deal for more intimate Anglo-Arab wartime co-operation.¹⁷ After his return to London, Newcombe met with Dr Weizmann and his close associate, Prof. Lewis B. Namier in late October, and made a direct appeal to the Zionist leader for his "help in getting the White Paper put into force."¹⁸ In a memorandum addressed to the Colonial Office and shown to Dr Weizmann, the veteran lobbyist argued that Arab enthusiasm for the war effort was lacking because of the government's "inaction" in fulfilling of the White Paper – due, in Newcombe's analysis, to "the influence of Dr Weizmann and the Zionists."¹⁹

In a letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary, Weizmann challenged the assumptions on which Newcombe's arguments were based, and proceeded to inform Newcombe directly that the Zionists had no intention of "committing suicide" by following his advice. "Fortunately", the Zionist leader concluded, there were:

more constructive ways in which both we and the Arabs can

play a part in this war. We are doing, and shall continue to do, all in our power to assist Britain. Encourage your Arab friends, for whom Great Britain has done so much, to do likewise. As for the ultimate settlement, the scheme of a Jewish State (not of some ridiculous "autonomous area" [which Newcombe had suggested]) federated with Arab States seems to us the most sensible solution.²⁰

This Zionist proposal – rather than "the niggling, restrictive provisions of the White Paper" – Weizmann suggested to Lord Lloyd, might serve as the basis for Arab–Zionist talks under British aegis.²¹

GRASS-ROOTS CONTACTS INSIDE PALESTINE

The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 magnified some of the effects of the White Paper on the Arab–Zionist bargaining context. For a brief moment Zionists were hoping – and Arabs were fearing – that the war would be seen as a reason to suspend the implementation of the new British policy.²² But the British remained persuaded that the war effort required them to proceed with the White Paper as planned; only the constitutional provisions were to be delayed.²³ Meanwhile, Hitler's successes in Europe had their echoes in Palestine, especially on Arab and Jewish perceptions of their own relative strength. The stock of the Jews was clearly on the downslide by mid-1941, as reflected in an American official's comment that the Arabs "now believe[d] that they ha[d] a whole loaf within their grasp in the shape of the expulsion of the Jews from Palestine or their extermination."²⁴ One member of the Jewish Agency Executive in Jerusalem doubted the value of pursuing "talks" and "agreements" with the Arabs "when the people who ha[d] power and influence in Arab public life [were] waiting for the victory of Hitler."²⁵

The only exceptions to the general decline in the Zionists' prestige and the deterioration of their bargaining position after 1939 came from outside Palestine. Some non-Palestinian Arabs continued to show some respect for them as a political factor in the region, and friendly contacts were maintained with political figures from all the neighbouring Arab lands. But all parties seemed to prefer to wait for better times and better terms before committing themselves to any definite schemes.²⁶

While some of these conversations included speculation on scenarios for a post-war Arab-Jewish accord, the Amir Abdallah of Transjordan seems to have been the only one who took the bold step of offering to draw up a specific agreement. In July 1939 he wrote to Moshe Shertok, reminding him of his long-standing desire for Arab-Jewish reconciliation, and referring to the plan which he had submitted to the Woodhead Commission thirteen months earlier (Document 24) as one which he hoped the Zionists might reconsider more seriously, now that they were stuck with the White Paper.²⁷ Even though Shertok did not jump at this particular overture, during the coming years the Amir periodically reassured the Jewish Agency of his dedication towards reaching a Palestine solution that would satisfy both Arabs and Jews. Such declarations of goodwill were often accompanied by expressions of Abdallah's interest in having Zionist collaboration for the fulfilment of his own goal of emerging from the war not only as ruler of a fully independent Transjordan, but as the predominant leader in the region, at the head of an expanded kingdom.²⁸

Following inconclusive discussions between Moshe Shertok and Abdallah at Amman in the fall of 1942 (during which Shertok's references to the need for large European-Jewish immigration caused the Amir some tense and reticent moments) Abdallah's trusted agent approached the Jewish Agency with a proposal to open negotiations for a secret accord on immigration and other questions along the lines of the historic Weizmann-Faisal pact. In exchange for Abdallah's proposed generous stand on immigration, the Jews would be expected to contribute financial assistance and propaganda support for the Amir's pan-Arab leadership efforts in England, America and Syria. In reporting the Transjordanian overture to his Executive, Shertok recommended caution and repeated his low estimation of the Amir's strength as a political factor capable of creating new situations. The Jewish Agency chose to respond to this specific overture in a noncommittal way. While reiterating its appreciation of Abdallah as a statesman who worked for realistic solutions and who recognised Jewish needs, the Executive felt it was premature to negotiate over immigration figures.²⁹ Similar opportunities would come again, as this 1942 episode was a preview of scenarios to be repeated after 1945.³⁰

On the question of fostering fruitful contacts with Arabs at the grass-roots level in Palestine, there was a sharp division of opinion

within the Jewish community. In contrast to the largely negative assessments about the chances of an Arab-Zionist agreement in Zionist leadership circles, there was in certain quarters another school of thought which found expression in late 1939. During the first months of the war, Palestine experienced severe unemployment and food shortages, leading various observers to comment on an apparent relaxation of Arab-Jewish tension in the country. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, saw this as a result of the White Paper having its desired pacifying effect on the "reasonable" elements within the Arab community.³¹ Some Jewish optimists argued that fear of the common Nazi enemy would be operating as a factor bringing Arabs and Jews closer together, while others went further and predicted improved chances for a negotiated agreement.³²

A leading exponent of the latter view was Hayim Margaliut Kalvaryski, who used the recently-founded League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement (L.J.A.R.) as his platform. Kalvaryski openly advocated a return to the "old ways", which had never, in his view, been fully implemented: publication of an Arabic newspaper, promotion of Arab farmers' parties, an agricultural loans bank, joint Jewish-Arab labour groups, Jewish-Arab clubs in towns, involvement of more Arabs in Jewish commercial ventures, etc.³³ Kalvaryski also believed that the time was ripe to open discussions with Arabs about an agreement for a bi-national, parity regime in Palestine, along the lines of the memorandum which he had submitted to the Jewish delegation at the St James's Conference.³⁴

Such sanguine expectations were contradicted not only by the assessments of Jewish Agency "experts", but also by the High Commissioner's analysis. Sir Harold MacMichael welcomed what he initially described as the "encouraging signs of a renewal of contacts between Arabs and Jews" (shopkeepers, citrus-growers, journalists, charity and relief workers, etc.) and "the marked tendency on the part of the bulk of the population to abandon Palestine politics and to concentrate more on their normal avocations."³⁵ But the High Commissioner was quick to add that "political antagonism between the two communities" still existed "in regard to the major issues affecting the future of Palestine": "So far from either side having receded from its position, each has been driven to crystallise claims which are impossible of acceptance by the other."³⁶ MacMichael's reports

underscored the White Paper's failure to create incentives for Arab and Jewish efforts to reach an accord:

...the Arab politicians have no reason to seek an understanding with the Jews whilst the gradual implementation of the White Paper is continuing, and both the Jewish Agency and the Revisionist party appear to hold the view that the intensification of the strain of war may eventually provide an opportunity to place Great Britain under an obligation to the Jews and that more may then be gained by bargaining with H.M.G. than by attempting to come to terms with the Arabs.³⁷

Notwithstanding such on-the-spot reports, policy-makers in London stuck to their benevolent expectations of the "double-veto" situation which they had created, and continued to believe that "the best chance for encouraging the Jews to come to terms with the Arabs [lay] in the fact that the carrying out of the detested White Paper [was] the alternative."³⁸

The inability of Jews and Arabs to build an alliance based on co-operation against the White Paper was also illustrated by the widening gulf between the J.A.E. and its erstwhile Nashashibi allies. The politics of the traditional *muaridun* (opposition) elements in the Palestinian community were now based on defiance of the exiled Mufti and on a declared willingness to co-operate with the government in the implementation of the White Paper. This latter stance caused the Agency Executive to keep its distance. Figures such as Sulaiman Tuqan – who might have been talking to Jewish Agency representatives about creating a new moderate Arab party – were now holding talks with *government* officials for that purpose.³⁹

Growing doubts in Jewish Agency quarters about the Nashashibis' ability to offer, and stick with, a political programme acceptable to the Zionists had been confirmed by their performance at the St James's Conference. In April 1939, Elias Sasson pointed again to the "consistency, courage and many other qualities" which he found lacking in members of the Arab opposition camp. In his view, the only possible rapprochement with such men would be based on "their limited aspirations for their own personal well-being."⁴⁰ Thus, the Jewish Agency responded with some coldness to overtures from Fakhri an-Nashashibi when he requested its active support for his 1939 war against their common foe, al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini.

Officials in the Political Department were not even tempted by Fakhri's offer to sign a secret pact, pledging to work for a parity regime and for pro-Zionist amendments to the White Paper. Their reluctance was based on several factors, notably Fakhri's unreliability and unsavoury political reputation, and his record of vocal support of the White Paper policy.⁴¹

Indeed, the Jewish Agency now had a vested interest in *avoiding* contacts with Arabs so as to prove to the British that co-operation could *not* be had so long as the White Paper remained in force.⁴² In response to the recurring British criticism that the Jews were not talking to the Arabs, Moshe Shertok would reply: "How can you say that we are not talking [to them]? ... So long as the White Paper exists, there isn't much to talk about. The matter depends," he lectured a British official in Cairo, "on you, and not on the Arabs."⁴³

But during the war years the J.A.E. was faced with an increasingly vocal minority of dissenting moderates in the *yishuv* – veterans like Kalvaryski and Magnes, and newcomers like Aharon Cohen, an Arab-affairs specialist of the left-wing *ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir* party. These dissenters not only advocated formulae (e.g., bi-nationalism, parity, 40:10) which were unacceptable to the elected leadership, but also caused so much political embarrassment that more than one internal Jewish Agency memorandum was produced on the subject of how to deal with the "danger" of the Jewish "moderates". By the summer of 1941 the rift between the Executive and the dissenters had grown more acute than ever, with the latter being accused by the leadership of causing a serious deterioration in the Zionists' bargaining position. E. Sasson, who headed the Arab Section of the Agency's Political Department, urged all Jews to avoid political talks with Arabs; if such conversations proved unavoidable, he wanted Jews to stick as closely as possible to the demand for some form of Jewish statehood after the war.⁴⁴

But, if the Jewish Agency and its critics in the L.J.A.R. disagreed over the questions of timing and the possible terms of agreement, there was a consensus in all Jewish circles on the need for increased "activity" on the Arab front. While the main motive of dissenters was to work towards an agreement with the Arabs, the Political Department defined the purpose of activity among the Arabs in very different terms. Moshe Shertok, who considered it a waste of time to search for a formula for agreement at this time, wanted to use every opportunity of contacts to "emphasise the strength" of the Jews, so

that both the Arabs and the British would not ignore them in the course of preparing their post-war scenarios.⁴⁵

The patterns of Arab–Jewish interaction after 1939 began to resemble in many ways the situation which we described in the 1920s.⁴⁶ Much Zionist discussion was taken up with the need for improved public-relations, press and propaganda work – all designed to fight the growing pro-Hitler sentiment among the Arabs; to rebuild the credibility of the Jews as an economic and political factor not to be ignored; and to denounce and delegitimise the White Paper as a model for any future settlement of the Palestine question. In summary, the signs of co-operation and contact during World War II, which some misinterpreted as evidence of growing rapprochement, were really based on short-term advantages and mixed motives.⁴⁷

BI-NATIONAL/FEDERATION PROPOSALS

A survey of Jewish–Arab conversations of the period testifies to the accuracy of Sasson’s pessimism regarding the Arabs’ agreeing to any political solution which would be acceptable to the Jewish Agency. Almost no Arab seemed willing to consider terms more generous to the Jews than those of the MacDonald White Paper. Even the Arabs with whom men like Kalvaryski were in contact – men who claimed to favour parity and bi-nationalism as *future* scenarios – insisted, during the first stages of the war, that they could not go beyond the terms of the White Paper.⁴⁸

One exception was Adil Jabr, a young municipal councillor of Jerusalem, who transmitted a set of written proposals to the Jewish Agency through H.M. Kalvaryski in mid-1941. Jabr’s proposed basis for agreement rested on five points, which he initially submitted as follows:

- (1) An Arab–Semitic federation or confederation [to be created].
- (2) Autonomy for all constituent states and provinces.
- (3) Palestine to enter the federation as a [separate] state.
- (4) A bi-national Palestine, based on the principle of equality in everything (the number of inhabitants, the area of land-holdings and the government).
- (5) The possibility of [Jewish] immigration to all the constituent states [within reasonable limits].⁴⁹

In response to comments and criticisms from David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Shertok, Jabr produced a revised draft, to which was added the following point:

- (6) When the number of Jews, after a period of years (5, 10 or 15), reaches the number of the Arabs and is equal to it, a law will be passed by the legislative body of the autonomous state of Palestine to regulate Jewish immigration on the basis of the economic capacity [of the country].⁵⁰

Caught between its own sceptical and aloof approach to Arab overtures, on the one hand, and Kalvaryski's promotion of this plan, on the other, the J.A.E. discussed the proposals in August 1941. Shertok had already given Kalvaryski a preliminary reply, to the effect that the Agency was not opposed to – was even positively interested in – the idea of Palestine joining an Arab federation. But, at the same time, the Head of the Political Department recorded his regret that no authoritative Arab group had yet taken up the federation idea in conjunction with “the recognition of the vital interests of the Jewish people in Palestine.” Shertok had rejected the (first draft's) requirement that the Jews could not surpass 50 per cent of the population, and stated that Zionist support for Palestine's participation in any federation would be conditional on Arab acceptance of only one kind of limitation on Jewish immigration: the non-eviction of Arab inhabitants. In response to point (5), Shertok had further declared that the Jewish Agency would not be interested in any territorial concentrations of Jews in the lands beyond Palestine.⁵¹

Most of the August 17th discussion in the Executive cast doubts on the representativeness of Adil Jabr, and stressed the dangers inherent in the Zionists putting down in writing “terms of agreement” which might later be used against them. A tougher version of Shertok's first reply – this time mentioning the need for a “Jewish state” to be part of any future federation – was conveyed to Kalvaryski two days later for transmission to Jabr. With a number of such unreconciled gaps between the positions of the Executive and Adil Jabr, this set of “bi-national/federation” proposals met its quick demise.⁵²

AFTER BILTMORE

In May 1942, an emergency Zionist conference held at the Biltmore

Hotel in New York passed resolutions calling for immediate mass immigration to rescue European Jews and the post-war creation of a Jewish "commonwealth" in an undivided Palestine.⁵³ These resolutions formed part of the diplomatic campaign which was aimed resolutely at obtaining from the allied powers a strong pro-Zionist declaration about the future of Palestine.⁵⁴ Even while lobbying on behalf of the "Philby scheme" for an Arab-Zionist agreement under the auspices of King Abd al-Aziz as-Sa'ud (see below), Zionists also pressed American officials to help "bring in as many Jews as possible in as short a space of time as possible", and appealed to the "moral responsibility" of the United States to help the Jews in their efforts to make Palestine a Jewish, and no longer an Arab, country.⁵⁵ By mid-1943, Jewish Agency leaders were admitting that their most crucial fronts for political action were British and American, and were explicitly defining the Arabs as being of secondary importance.⁵⁶

Zionists were not alone in putting such low priority on direct Arab-Zionist diplomacy during the period of the White Paper and the war. Arabs, too, recognised that their relations with the British and Americans were more decisive than direct Arab-Zionist dealings – the ingenious "double veto" notwithstanding. Leading spokesmen for both sides attempted to convince the British that future policy had to be based on a fuller satisfaction of their respective needs and claims. Anglo-Arab relations during the war were marked by lobbying, especially by non-Palestinian Arabs, for the implementation of the White Paper's constitutional clauses (suspended by the outbreak of the war) and for adequate enforcement of its restrictions on Zionist development.⁵⁷ Periodic fears that the British were contemplating a pro-Zionist reversal of their Palestine policy (fanned by German and Italian propaganda) led Arab leaders to seek, and sometimes obtain, reassurances from London.⁵⁸ Likewise, Iraqi, Egyptian and Saudi representatives intensified their lobbying in Washington against the prospect that the Americans, under Zionist influence, would persuade the British to abandon the White Paper and "give" Palestine to the Jews.⁵⁹

Thus, London and Washington, ahead of Jerusalem, Beirut or Cairo, became the principal arenas for the political struggles of both sides. It is in the light of this orientation that we can best appreciate another exceptional case of a local negotiation episode, the one involving Omar Salih al-Barghuthi, H.M. Kalvaryski, and A. Cohen during 1943-44. Barghuthi, a Jerusalem lawyer and scholar, had

had intermittent contacts with Kalvaryski, Magnes and with Jewish Agency representatives dating at least as far back as 1930. The terms of agreement under consideration in 1943 (very close to those offered by Adil Jabr and rejected by the Agency two years earlier) were the following:

- (1) Full equality between the two peoples: in government (legislative and executive bodies), in numbers of population, in rights to land ownership, etc.
- (2) Palestine, as a bi-national autonomous state, to take part in a federation with the neighbouring Arab countries.
- (3) Joint efforts to obtain opportunities for Jewish immigration into neighbouring countries in accordance with limitations agreed to with the countries concerned.
- (4) Loyal co-operation between the two peoples in all fields: economic, political, social, cultural.⁶⁰

But the similarity between Barghuthi's terms, on the one hand, and the platforms of the L.J.A.R. and *ha-Shomer ha-Tza'r*, on the other, led some members of the Jewish Agency Executive to suspect that this was not so much an Arab-inspired programme as a scheme initiated and orchestrated by Kalvaryski and Cohen. The organisations which these two men represented were, in fact, waging open campaigns against the official Zionist programme as defined in the Biltmore resolutions, and the Executive feared that its acceptance of this proposal as a basis for discussions with Arabs would amount to a departure from the declared goals of immediate mass immigration and the establishment of a Jewish commonwealth.

While not wishing the Executive to pronounce itself officially on the scheme (which he, personally, found completely unacceptable), Ben-Gurion did not hide his satisfaction that talks were taking place. For him, it was the Biltmore Programme – like the threat of partition in 1937 – which was responsible for eliciting this overture from the Arab side, since, he felt, the Arabs now knew “that the Jews [were] working for a state and [were] afraid that they [would] succeed.”⁶¹ Ben-Gurion hoped that talks would continue – although *not* on the basis of the Barghuthi(–Kalvaryski–Cohen) proposals, and *not* with the participation of Jews whose Zionism was, in his opinion, not “solid”. What the J.A.E. Chairman wanted was a continuation of talks during which accredited Agency representatives would force

more important Arabs to conclude that the bi-national/federation idea had no hope of winning Zionist assent.⁶²

Despite Kalvaryski's and Cohen's repeated claims that they were merely serving as a "pipeline" for the transmission of a genuine Arab proposal, Jewish Agency officials remained suspicious of the scheme's true origins.⁶³ Recalling the Hyamson-Newcombe episode (above, Chapter Three), several members of the Executive declared that they wanted to have nothing to do with proposals which might turn out to be only "Jewish" ones; for them, the main priority was to ascertain the extent, if any, of Arab support for the plan.

Accordingly, Elias Sasson proceeded to obtain first-hand precisions by meeting with Omar Salih al-Barghuthi on July 23rd 1943. According to Sasson's report, Barghuthi insisted that a federation would have to be created *before* the Arabs would agree to allow the Jews to increase their numbers in Palestine; a Jewish pledge to assist in the creation of the federation would not suffice. Barghuthi also indicated that the Arabs would view a 50:50 population split as the absolute, final upper limit on the future size of the Jewish National Home; no Jewish immigration, after numerical parity was reached, would be permitted, not even if based on the economic absorptive capacity principle. *Perhaps* the Arabs might be willing to consider further Jewish immigration to match the excess of Arab over Jewish natural increase; but this would be an open question for future negotiations. As for the proposal intended to do away with the White Paper's land-sales restrictions, Omar Salih's idea of equal opportunity to Jewish and Arab buyers and sellers applied to Jews and Arabs *as individuals*; he seemed no less adamant than Awni Abd al-Hadi had been ten years earlier (see Document 6) that the Zionists' land-purchase companies should not continue their operations. Finally, on the crucial issue of the extent of Arab backing for the bi-national/federation scheme, Sasson concluded from his talk with Omar Salih that the Jerusalem lawyer had been heavily influenced by Kalvaryski and Cohen, and that he had not yet consulted any other Arabs. Only after receiving an informal "green light" from Sasson was he planning to approach Awni Abd al-Hadi, Ahmad Hilmi al-Baqi, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and others for their views.⁶⁴

Following these clarifications, the Jewish Agency Political Department felt that its scepticism and aloofness regarding the "Barghuthi" plan had been entirely justified, and now took the view that no further action on their part was needed.⁶⁵ But both

Kalvaryski and Cohen had far less negative interpretations of Barghuthi's clarifications. They expressed their surprise and disappointment that the Agency seemed to be letting go by what they considered an important opportunity for agreement. Were not these Arab terms a giant step forward, they asked, and a vast improvement over the terms laid down in the White Paper? Didn't the Arabs agree to what amounted to an immigration of between 600 and 700,000 Jews during a fixed period (in order to create parity of numbers)? Did not the proposal advocate the abolition of restrictions on land-sales?⁶⁶

During the fall of 1943 Kalvaryski and Cohen continued, without result, to press the J.A.E. with arguments in favour of meeting with Arabs to discuss the bi-national/federation scheme.⁶⁷ In January 1944, not wishing to see their effort completely wasted, Cohen revived his contacts with Omar Salih al-Barghuthi.⁶⁸ Despite the absence of Jewish Agency backing (which he continued to regard as a serious drawback), Barghuthi did agree to advance the discussions one step further by consulting Nuri as-Sa'id, who was then visiting Palestine,⁶⁹ and at least a dozen local leaders, including Awni Abd al-Hadi, Ahmad Hilmi, Ibrahim ash-Shanti, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, and Dr Husain Fakhri al-Khalidi.

Barghuthi reported three kinds of reaction to the bi-national/federation scheme. Some Arabs preferred "Dr Magnes's old program of 40 per cent" (i.e., the 40:10 formula).⁷⁰ Another group wanted no further immigration under any circumstances. But a majority of those consulted, Barghuthi claimed, would back the bi-national/federation solution if the following conditions were met:

- (a) the British would express approval of the proposed solution;
- (b) the British would lift wartime censorship so as to allow open press debate about the plan;
- (c) the British would allow freedom of movement around the Middle East to the promoters of the plan; and
- (d) the Jews would cover all the propagandist expenses incurred for the promotion of the scheme.⁷¹

In late February 1944, as the White Paper was nearing its critical fifth anniversary, Sasson met again with Omar Salih al-Barghuthi in order to learn whether any breakthrough, closer to the Jewish Agency's terms, was imminent. Once again he emerged with clearly negative conclusions.⁷² Nevertheless, two days later Kalvaryski and

Cohen were appealing directly to Dr Weizmann, “through secret channels” over the heads of the Political Department in Jerusalem, with the complaint that Sasson, Shertok and Ben-Gurion had not lived up to an alleged commitment, made the previous July, to reply officially to Barghuthi’s proposals. After providing a survey of the various conversations of the preceding year, Kalvaryski and Cohen repeated their view that “in this crucial moment” there were

important Arabs ready to lend a hand in removing the moral and political support for the White Paper, provided that there will be on our side indications of readiness to agree on a political programme which would take into consideration the interests and desires of both sides. ... Aside from partition, [they concluded] there exists, even now, another alternative which promises immigration and settlement on a large scale in all of Palestine in peace and agreement with the Arab world.⁷³

Dr Weizmann, believing the assessments of his Political Department experts to be more reliable,⁷⁴ apparently chose not to reply to the appeal from this group of dissenters. While Kalvaryski and Cohen regarded Omar Salih al-Barghuthi as “an important Arab personage of the influential group in Istiklal”, Jewish Agency policy-makers were not impressed with Barghuthi’s credentials or his ability to rally support from more influential Palestinian personalities.⁷⁵ Neither did the elected leaders of the Zionist movement share Kalvaryski’s and Cohen’s rosy assessment of the chances of the Arabs ever being won over to support the bi-nationalism/federation solution. In any case, the Zionist leadership was expecting to “tough it out” until the war’s end, at which time – many leaders firmly believed and hoped – far better terms would be available in the form of a settlement dictated by the Powers. While Kalvaryski and Cohen had been favourably contrasting the bi-nationalism/federation scheme with the terms of the White Paper, the Jewish Agency had been measuring the proposals against their own official demands as defined in the Biltmore resolutions. Years later Aharon Cohen continued to claim that the Jewish Agency bore a heavy responsibility for having deliberately “foiled” this opportunity for an agreement with the Arabs.⁷⁶

A PALESTINE SOLUTION THROUGH AN ARAB FEDERATION?

The only aspect of the Barghuthi proposals which had been remotely acceptable to members of the J.A.E. was the abstract principle that Palestine – but only if adequately Jewish – should enter into some future Middle Eastern (but not Arab) federation.⁷⁷

This idea was by no means a novel one. As we have seen, it was an integral part of the Weizmann–Faisal model for a solution to which many Zionists still adhered; it had been Herbert Samuel’s key to a global solution, both during his tenure as High Commissioner (1920–25) and in his 1936 talks with Nuri as-Sa’id; it had been a principal element in Ben-Gurion’s approaches to Arab spokesmen in the mid-1930s, and the cornerstone of schemes promoted by Nuri and Dr Shahbandar in the late 1930s.⁷⁸ Since the breakdown of the St James’s Conference, there had been an emerging consensus in Zionist circles that an acceptable final solution to the Palestine dispute might take the form of Jewish statehood in at least part of Palestine, to be joined to neighbouring states in a federal arrangement.⁷⁹

Two novel features were added in the early forties. The first was the fact that British policy-makers began to take more seriously the question of Arab unity, and, with it, the prospect of an alternative solution to the Palestine dispute. Despite the deliberate British tactic of not allowing either Arabs or Zionists “to think that [they were] going to depart from the White Paper policy”,⁸⁰ policy-makers in London were, in fact, cautiously exploring new approaches. In mid-1940, the idea was emerging in the minds of some Foreign and Colonial Office advisers that, at the war’s end, the Allies might be in a position to encourage Arab moves towards federation and, at the same time,

as victors to dictate a peace settlement for the Middle East [in which] the Jews should have a small autonomous area somewhere in Palestine. ... Our line should be that Arabs and Jews alike owed liberty and everything else to our protection and that the acceptance by them of our solution to the Arab–Jewish problem was a small price to pay in return.⁸¹

In September 1941, several Cabinet Ministers, recognising that “a scheme for Arab federation [had] considerable attractions and, if

feasible, ... seem[ed] to offer great advantages from the point of view of a solution to the Palestine problem”, referred the question to the Middle East Official Committee for careful examination.⁸²

The second novel factor was the increased Arab activity in search of an appropriate framework for implementing some form of Arab unity. This activity resulted in the Alexandria Conference of September–October 1944, to which the Egyptian Prime Minister invited representatives from Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. After some difficulties, Musa al-Alami was chosen to represent the Palestinian Arabs. The foundations for a League of Arab States were laid down in the “Alexandria Protocol”, which also included a special resolution on Palestine. The resolution insisted on the “prompt implementation” of the “permanent Arab rights” acquired through the “pledges binding the British Government” (i.e., the White Paper of 1939); these were defined to provide for “the cessation of Jewish immigration, the preservation of Arab lands, and the achievement of independence for Palestine.” The conference proclaimed Arab solidarity with the cause of the Arabs of Palestine, and further declared its regret over “the woes which [had] been inflicted upon the Jews of Europe by European dictatorial states”, but added that:

the question of these Jews should not be confused with Zionism, for there can be no greater injustice and aggression than solving the problem of the Jews of Europe by another injustice, i.e., by inflicting injustice on the Arabs of Palestine. ...⁸³

Arab and Zionist efforts to formulate and/or negotiate solutions to the Palestine impasse during this period were almost always discussed within the “Arab federation” framework.⁸⁴ Despite their recognition that the federation issue was “a matter primarily for the Arabs themselves”,⁸⁵ many Zionists became preoccupied with the idea, more often than not as a function of their orientation towards the British and the Americans.⁸⁶ Many Zionists shared the general lines of British thinking – namely, that a post-war settlement might include a Jewish presence in Palestine which would be a part of a wider federation. But, while British officials tended to think of a Jewish “autonomous area” or “enclave” which would have to be smaller than the area proposed by the Peel Commission, the Jews were envisaging a *state*, in a large part, or in all, of Palestine as part of an overall “federation” solution.⁸⁷ And, while Zionist leaders argued

that British support for an Arab federation should be “made conditional on the creation of a Jewish State” (which might later decide to become a member of a regional federation), British officials were not willing to impose such a condition on the Arabs.⁸⁸

Aside from the “Philby scheme” (discussed below), the only Arab-oriented aspects of Zionist policy on the federation question were either negative or too distant to offer immediate incentives. As Moshe Shertok argued, the most the Jews could do to influence Arab thinking would be to place themselves in a position of greater strength, so as to convince the Arabs that Palestine’s eventual inclusion in a future federation might be *blocked* (most likely through Zionist influence in London or in Washington) unless certain Zionist conditions were met.⁸⁹ The positive notions of international economic, technical and political support which the Jews might rally for the federation were matters to be left for discussion at a much later stage.

Thus, the idea of resolving the Palestine dispute within the federation framework – so alluring in theory – did little but paper over some of the essential contradictions between the Zionist and Arab positions. For most Zionists who found the idea attractive at all, it was because they saw it as one of the possible ways of superseding and replacing the White Paper;⁹⁰ but, for most Arabs, it was presumed that it would be a “White Paper Palestine” that would be participating in the future federation.⁹¹ And, as we have seen, the Adil Jabr and Omar Salih al-Barghuthi proposals (which were not based on the disputed White Paper) left unresolved differences on the issues of Jewish immigration and an ultimate Jewish majority, which boiled down to the basic question: what *kind* of Palestine (Arab, Jewish or bi-national) would be participating in the proposed federation?

Even Shertok knew very well, on the basis of his talks with several leading Palestinians over the previous decade, that the federation issue was not for the Arabs (as it was for the Jews) a means for resolving the Arab–Zionist impasse in Palestine. Just as Awni Abd al-Hadi had explained to him in 1937 (Document 21), so too did the government official and scholar, Arif al-Arif, make it clear in 1942: the question of Palestine’s participation in a wider federation could in no way be viewed as a “compensation” for agreeing to a Jewish state in any part of their homeland. The federation was, for the Palestinian Arabs, a future stage to which they aspired after realising

their natural right to independence.⁹² In fact, both Awni and fellow-Istiqlalist, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, sent clear messages to Kalvaryski and to Judah Magnes that the internal *Jewish* debate over a resolution of the Palestine dispute through the federation framework was irrelevant, and even presumptuous. The matter was, they stressed to these Jewish dissidents, a purely internal affair for Arabs alone to determine.⁹³

GRAND DESIGNS: THE PHILBY SCHEME

Although the federation idea did not provide the key to the persisting Zionist–Palestinian impasse during World War II, it was virtually the only plan on which Arab–Zionist talks – however exploratory and inconclusive – could be based. Thus, for instance, Nuri as-Sa’id, author of a “Green Book” plan for the region in 1942, continued his private contacts with Moshe Shertok and others. The Amir Abdallah, as well, confided in Jewish Agency representatives about his own scheme for a Fertile Crescent union. In both cases, discussion between Arabs and Jews touched on the possible autonomy or “special status” to be accorded to the Jews under the projected regime; however, neither Nuri nor Abdallah ever went so far as to agree to the Zionist demands for a Jewish majority or Jewish sovereignty in Palestine.⁹⁴

One of the period’s most colourful episodes along these lines was initiated by H. St-John Philby in late 1939. Immediately after the outbreak of the war, Philby suggested to several Zionists in London that the following deal might be possible: King Ibn Sa’ud might be persuaded to support the creation of a completely Jewish state in all of western Palestine, with the accompanying transfer of Arab population to the neighbouring countries, *if* the Jews would, in exchange, provide their political influence in London and in Washington on behalf of the complete “unity and independence” of the remaining Arab lands, and “extensive financial help” to the Arabs in the form of a £20 million subsidy to Ibn Sa’ud.⁹⁵

Zionist reactions to the idea were mixed. Putting aside some of the reservations which he and his colleagues had about Philby (based on his record since the early 1920s), Dr Weizmann responded enthusiastically.⁹⁶ Such a positive response may be understood in terms of several factors: (1) the temptation of finding a formula for an Arab–Zionist accord which could be used to bypass the White Paper; (2)

his anticipation of “a very serious Jewish problem” arising from displaced European Jews at the end of the war; (3) his penchant for personalised, high-level diplomacy – one “great leader” dealing directly with another and making an “heroic” breakthrough together;⁹⁷ (4) his wish to satisfy repeated British counsels of the previous few years that he ought to try to “repeat the Faisal chapter” with King Ibn Sa’ud, whom some considered “the only big statesman in the Near and Middle East”;⁹⁸ and, finally, (5) the welcome opportunity of bringing in the U.S. government and American Jewry as underwriters of a “big scheme of such a character.”

Jewish Agency Chairman, David Ben-Gurion, who had held his own inconclusive talks with Philby two years earlier (above, pages 67f.), reported – without critical comment – to the Jerusalem Executive that their colleagues in London were proceeding to prepare material on the proposed transfer of population.⁹⁹ But other Zionists were less enthusiastic. Moshe Shertok, who participated in the October 6th meeting with Philby, Namier and Weizmann, raised objections which were answered by Philby in a way which left the Head of the Political Department “shocked”. “Either he’s a charlatan, or he is a child in politics,” Shertok commented in his diary account of the meeting; “in either case, he’s not serious.” The whole scheme, he found, was “chimerical from the start.” But the plan nevertheless had one political advantage: “the phenomenon of St-John Abdallah Philby [appearing] before Ibn Sa’ud with a proposal to give all of Western Palestine to the Zionists and to remove the Arabs from there.” And for this reason alone Shertok was prepared to go along with his colleagues in telling Philby to proceed to approach the Saudi king.¹⁰⁰

Thus, on October 6th 1939, Dr Weizmann and H. St-John Philby agreed to begin testing the waters for a Zionist deal with Ibn Sa’ud – Weizmann at first in the U.S. and Philby in Arabia. The two men would be reporting to each other on their progress towards “creating circumstances which would favour such a scheme.”¹⁰¹ During a meeting at the State Department in early February 1940, Weizmann responded to questions by American officials about Zionist efforts at an agreement with the Arabs by recalling the unfulfilled hopes of his negotiations with the Amir Faisal in 1918–19. He went on to give some details of his recent talks with Philby regarding an entente with Ibn Sa’ud, whom the Zionist leader described as “an excellent spokesman for the Arabs and one with whom he could deal.”¹⁰²

According to Philby's own accounts, he first approached the Saudi king with the idea on January 8th 1940. Six weeks later he sent a message to Dr Weizmann to the effect that "the scheme [had] been accepted in principle", but that if anything about it leaked out Ibn Sa'ud would "have no hesitation in denying the whole thing."¹⁰³ In April, Philby reported to his wife that, although the king had still not committed himself, the "truth" was that Ibn Sa'ud was "quite favourably inclined towards the proposal and [was] just thinking out how it [could] be worked without producing a howl of anger among certain Arab elements." Philby asked his wife to tell Dr Weizmann to do his best to assure that the Jews would be able to "perform their part of the contract."¹⁰⁴ On his next trip to the U.S., the Zionist leader alerted Jewish fundraisers about the possibility of their being called upon to contribute large sums as part of an overall solution to the Arab question, and gave some details of his dealings with Philby.¹⁰⁵

Weizmann was also active among government officials in the quest of political backing for the scheme. After planting the seeds of the idea with Winston Churchill in December 1939 and with U.S. State Department officials in early 1940, he returned to London, and by autumn the British Colonial Secretary and Foreign Secretary were both aware of Weizmann's hopes for an agreement with Ibn Sa'ud through Philby's scheme. Partly because they wanted to avoid giving encouragement to any Zionist hopes of linking their moves for a Jewish state to the Arab federation issue, British officials were reserved in their reactions.¹⁰⁶

Undeterred, Dr Weizmann went on during 1941 and 1942 to lobby Churchill (now Prime Minister), Lord Lloyd (Colonial Secretary) and Anthony Eden (Foreign Secretary) during 1941 and 1942. The Zionist leader even discussed a Palestine solution through a Saudi-dominated federation with the Indian statesman, Firoz Khan Noon, who proceeded to recommend the idea, from the Muslim point of view, to the Secretary of State for India and to the Prime Minister.¹⁰⁷ Weizmann's notes of these conversations almost invariably indicated positive reactions, with Churchill recorded as having spontaneously volunteered to make the Saudi king "the Boss of the Bosses" in the Middle East as part of a deal which would satisfy Zionist demands.¹⁰⁸ But, apart from the Churchill meeting, British records of some of the conversations attest to far less encouraging reactions.¹⁰⁹

In the months following the Biltmore resolutions, internal Zionist discussions focused more than ever on steps to assure the post-war creation of a Jewish Palestine – to be made more homogeneously Jewish, if possible, through a transfer of Arab population to the neighbouring countries.¹¹⁰ The Philby scheme continued to attract attention, especially from Prof. L.B.Namier, who in January 1943 urged the London Zionist Executive to put forward the plan to Churchill and to Roosevelt as a practical step towards an Arab-Zionist agreement for a post-war Jewish state.¹¹¹

Dr Weizmann, then in Washington, was already embarking upon a concerted campaign aimed at winning American support for a fully Jewish Palestine, and his arguments during the coming months would be clearly based on the Philby–Ibn Sa’ud scenario. At a meeting with American State Department officials on January 19th 1943, the Zionist leader again recalled his historic accord with Faisal, and attributed its success chiefly to the fact that the Arab leader had “felt that the great powers were behind the agreement.” He was prepared, he declared, to deal similarly with the Saudi monarch, but only if “the U.S. and Britain would act as intermediaries and support the Zionist policy before the Arab world.” If he was to undertake any initiative, Weizmann stressed, it would “have to be done after the U.S. and Great Britain paved the way for such conversations.”¹¹²

First reactions from State Department officials were described in Dr Weizmann’s reports as enthusiastic, even though Wallace Murray, who was in charge of the Palestine desk, was already on record as deeply sceptical of the Zionist leader’s ability to repeat his historic success with Faisal in talks with Ibn Sa’ud.¹¹³ In any case, with the sympathetic backing of Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles, American officials began investigating the prospects of a Weizmann–Ibn Sa’ud meeting.¹¹⁴ When British and American representatives in Saudi Arabia were asked for their views on the prospects of a meeting between Weizmann and Ibn Sa’ud, they responded to their respective governments with strikingly similar (and evidently co-ordinated) negative reports. The proposal filled the British representative “with alarm”, and he predicted that the situation, following the king’s certain refusal, “might well be even worse than it is now.” He was “convinced” that Ibn Sa’ud “would not tolerate, let alone assist, a solution to the Palestine problem along Zionist lines.” The U.S. Chargé d’affaires concluded his own

categorical report by affirming that there was “no question now, nor was there previously, of Ibn Sa’ud’s sincere interest in the Arab position in Palestine.”¹¹⁵

Clearly, the ideas discussed during Weizmann’s January 1943 State Department meetings had gone far beyond existing U.S. policy orientations. Six weeks later, the Zionists themselves retreated from the idea of meeting Ibn Sa’ud. The leading figure in this reversal was Moshe Shertok, who “could not conceive of Ibn Sa’ud’s even receiving a Jewish delegation.” Shertok suggested, instead, that British or American intermediaries be used to test the waters. Dr Weizmann was forced to agree with the Head of the Political Department, and now confessed to State Department officials that “it would be premature for him to go see Ibn Sa’ud.”¹¹⁶ When the Zionist leader was given an audience with the President in mid-June, he made no mention of meeting the Saudi king, but stressed instead the need for the U.S. and British governments to give clear indications to the Arabs that they “meant business” regarding a post-war Zionist solution for Palestine. With the proviso that the “mistakes” of the St James’s Conference be avoided, Weizmann cautiously welcomed Roosevelt’s suggestion that the Powers convene an Arab–Jewish conference under their joint auspices. The President indicated that he would be sending a special envoy to Saudi Arabia to prepare the ground for such a conference.¹¹⁷

Following consultations with London, President Roosevelt despatched Lt-Col. Harold B. Hoskins on a mission to Saudi Arabia. But, rather than announcing any Anglo-American plans to sponsor an Arab–Jewish conference, Hoskins was given the task of obtaining Ibn Sa’ud’s reply to a narrower question, viz.:

“Will King Ibn Sa’ud enter into discussions with Dr Chaim Weizmann or other representatives selected by the Jewish Agency for the purpose of seeking a solution of basic problems affecting Palestine acceptable to both Arabs and Jews?”¹¹⁸

The Hoskins mission to Ibn Sa’ud seemed almost deliberately designed to provide confirmation, to those in Washington or in London who sought it, of the futility of the Philby scheme.¹¹⁹ After spending a week with the king and his advisers during August 1943, Hoskins reported – not surprisingly – that not only was the Philby scheme a “non-starter”, but also that the king had vigorously denounced Dr Weizmann and Philby for their insult to his

“character and motives” in their “attempted bribe of £20 million.”¹²⁰

Yet, even as Col. Hoskins was secretly sharing his clear-cut conclusions with American and British officials, Dr Weizmann was continuing his lobbying in London.¹²¹ Eventually, in early November, Hoskins met also with the Zionist leader and Prof. Namier, so that they too could learn about his findings. The disappointed Zionists then turned to St-John Philby, who responded with disbelief to Hoskins’s reports, especially those regarding the king’s personal hostility towards him. Philby himself then met with the American envoy, and provided his own version of the events since 1940.

In Philby’s view, had Hoskins gone to Riyadh not with a question, but with “President Roosevelt’s firm offer, made on behalf of the American and British Government, on the lines of ‘the plan’, that offer would have been accepted” by Ibn Sa’ud. Philby challenged the Americans to “put the matter to the test”, “without prejudice to anybody”, to see whether his “own conviction” or Col. Hoskins’s version was correct – a challenge which remained unanswered. He further wired to Saudi Arabia and received a friendly personal reply from the king, which he proceeded to invoke as proof that he was not *persona non grata* in Ibn Sa’ud’s eyes.¹²²

Outwardly, Zionists proceeded to the counter-attack, and used Philby’s account of his meeting with Hoskins and the telegram from Ibn Sa’ud in their attempts to reestablish the credibility of the Philby scheme as “an approach which should not be abandoned without further exploration.”¹²³ But privately their optimism had given way to Shertok’s longstanding view that, in contrast with Philby’s portrayal, Ibn Sa’ud’s true attitude to the Jewish National Home was one of genuine and uncompromising hostility.¹²⁴

As for the British, they had grown tired of Dr Weizmann’s efforts on behalf of Philby’s “fantastic plan for Palestine” – not only because of Hoskins’ Report, but also because the plan made the unwarranted presumption that Great Britain would be willing to help the Jews get all of western Palestine by paying the price of “surrendering ... all our claims and interests in Arab territory.”¹²⁵ One of the last words on the Philby scheme recorded in Foreign Office files came from Sir M. Hankey, who commented:

Anyone who thinks Ibn Sa’ud will look at this scheme after what he has said about it must be quite cracked. This correspondence does Mr Weizmann no credit. ... [A]nyone who backs it ... will lose all further influence with Ibn Sa’ud for some time to follow.¹²⁶

CHAPTER SIX

Negotiations at the Eleventh Hour

As we saw in Chapter Five, Arabs and Zionists had become more entrenched in their positions under the combined impact of the White Paper and the World War. The failure of the Zionists and Philby to produce a comprehensive Middle East settlement through Ibn Sa'ud during World War II merely confirmed the growing tendency among both Arabs and Zionists to look upon the Powers, and not upon direct dealings with each other, as the key to the future of Palestine.¹ The Arabs maintained their claim that the Palestinians should exercise their natural right to independence, which included the right of the Arab majority there to prevent the Jews from becoming more numerous through further immigration. There were, they argued, already enough Jews in Palestine, whom they were prepared to recognise and treat as an ordinary – but not as an “extraordinary” – minority. As Nuri as-Sa'id described it, there were only two possible formulae for a post-war Palestine settlement: either (a) the Jews agree to live in Palestine as a minority, or (b) the Powers would impose a solution favourable to the Arabs.²

Although a Jewish commonwealth remained the declared aim of the Zionist movement, Jewish Agency representatives began privately to prepare themselves and their colleagues to accept partition as an alternative, or “fall-back” position, given the signs which they saw that this solution (in combination with regional federation) might prove acceptable to British, American and some Arab leaders.³ Zionist leaders also looked for indications that the *fear* of partition might prove tactically beneficial in forcing some Arab leaders to consider new efforts to reach a compromise with them.⁴

Any apparent shifts in the Zionist and Arab positions after the war were overshadowed by an intensification of bitterness and mistrust between the two sides, accompanied by a sense of desperation and determination. Even though discussions of alternatives and compromises went on sporadically during this period, these talks became

farther and farther removed from the reality of an imminent "solution through force". Despairing of the possibility of having the other side agree to acceptable terms, each party prepared for the likelihood of having to defend its position militarily. Once the British announced they would be leaving Palestine, the alternative to finding a compromise was a "resolution" of the conflict through an all-out war. It seemed, to some, to be "in the nature of things that such matters would not be settled by reason but by arms."⁵

ANGLO-AMERICAN CO-OPERATION AND THE SEARCH FOR A PALESTINE SOLUTION

The unresolved and worsening problem of satisfying Arabs and Jews in Palestine was one of the thorny post-war issues which complicated Anglo-American relations. Since the late thirties, Zionists had been working on building up favourable public opinion and support for their cause among elected officials in the United States. Zionist lobbying took the form of an ever-growing list of grievances against the British Mandatory policy. By the war's end the American Congress and President Harry S. Truman were committed fairly solidly to supporting the "Biltmore" version of Zionist aims.⁶ On their side, the Arabs intensified their efforts in Washington and in London to defend their interests and claims against the Zionist campaign for American sympathy and political support for a solution which, they feared, could lead to the creation of a Jewish "commonwealth", or state, in post-war Palestine. The call for the immediate admission of 100,000 European Jewish refugees to Palestine became one of Truman's personal commitments, and the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was set up in November 1945 partly in response to pressures on the British owing to Zionist lobbying in America.

The launching, hearings, deliberations and report of this latest Committee of Inquiry followed the familiar patterns set by similar bodies in the previous decades. Arabs and Zionists were diverted from dealing with each other; each focused its energies on presenting its case before the outside tribunal; each party began entertaining new hopes that the Committee's arbitration of the problem would lead to a solution which would satisfy its demands. There was at least one Zionist effort to sponsor a "friendly" Arab witness before the commissioners, in a feeble effort to offset the almost unanimously hostile testimony of the Palestinian and Arab League spokesmen.⁷

The only real difference this time around was the involvement of the Americans in the Palestine problem more formally than before – a development seen by most as favouring the Zionist cause.

The Report of the Anglo-American Committee suffered the same fate as that of the Woodhead Commission which had examined the technical feasibility of partition in 1938: its recommendations were unusable. The Zionists and President Truman welcomed its proposals to annul the White Paper's regulations on immigration and land-purchase and to admit 100,000 European refugees immediately, but rejected the call for making Palestine "neither a Jewish nor an Arab state" and the requirement that the Jewish militias be disarmed and disbanded. The British could not accept the proposal for the admission of the 100,000 without American troops and the disarming of the militias. The Arabs considered the recommendations as a whole completely unacceptable.⁸

Consequently, British and American experts met to reconsider the Anglo-American Committee's report with a view to producing revised proposals which would have a more realistic chance of being implemented. The result was a set of proposals known as the "Morrison-Grady" plan, which included a new version of the cantonisation idea, sometimes also referred to as the "provincial autonomy" or the federal scheme.⁹

The available options before those seeking a final resolution of the Palestine conflict were now three in number:

- (a) continuation of a form of "White Paper" regime;¹⁰
- (b) a federal or cantonal arrangement, along the lines of the Morrison-Grady proposals; and
- (c) a form of partition, allowing the establishment of a Jewish and an Arab state in Palestine.

In late summer of 1946, the British invited Arab and Zionist representatives to a conference in London to consider the latest proposals for a Palestine solution. The British let it be known that the delegates to the conference would be asked to consider option (b), but the Arabs and the Zionists went on record as preferring to discuss solutions (a) and (c) respectively. The Arab League made it clear, in anticipating the conference, that the Arabs would "oppose ... by any means possible" both partition *and* the federal scheme worked out in the wake of the unacceptable Anglo-American Report.¹¹ The Arab states nonetheless accepted invitations to the

conference, but reiterated their insistence on the MacDonald White Paper and announced that they would not sit down to discussions in the presence of the Jews.¹²

At the very moment that plans for a conference were being made, the Zionist Executive meeting in Paris reached the conclusion that, for tactical reasons, the movement's willingness to accept partition had to be brought to the fore.¹³ Zionists were reluctant, however, to participate in the proposed conference for several reasons:

- (a) the "bitter experience" of the 1939 conference at St James's Palace, at which they felt they had been placed before an Anglo-Arab fait accompli;¹⁴
- (b) the continued detention of many Zionist and *yishuv* leaders, following the British counter-terrorist swoop known as "Operation Agatha" (known to the Jews as "Black Sabbath");¹⁵
- (c) the unacceptability of the Morrison-Grady plan as the basis for discussion, and the unlikelihood that the British would agree to put partition on the agenda (for fear of alienating Arab participation).¹⁶

Thus, the "London Conference" which opened on September 9th 1946 was attended only by British and Arab delegates.

JEWISH AGENCY CONTACTS IN EGYPT

While Arabs worked almost exclusively for mobilising American and British opinion, Zionists did this and more. On the eve of the London Conference, and during the Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference in Alexandria, the Zionists launched an ambitious diplomatic offensive on their Arab front, with the aim of having some Arab personalities come out publicly with an endorsement of partition as the only fair and workable solution of the Palestine dispute.¹⁷

In early August 1946, a Zionist agent in Egypt (who was also an Egyptian police informer) made approaches to leading Egyptian politicians with the suggestion that a harmony of interests existed between (a) Egypt's desire to conclude its negotiations for the evacuation of the British from Egypt, and (b) the resolution of the Palestine dispute, especially along the lines of partition.¹⁸ Elias Sasson, Head of the Arab Section of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, reported encouraging results from the agent's talks with a list of prominent figures: former Prime Minister, Ali Mahir; Arab League

Secretary-General, Abd ar-Rahman Azzam; Prime Minister, Isma'il Sidqi; Deputy Minister of the Interior, Hasan Rifaat; and Foreign Minister, Lutfi as-Sayyid.

On the basis of these reactions, Sasson and his superiors became optimistic that some pro-partition momentum might be generated among these Egyptians. Of all the politicians interviewed, Isma'il Sidqi appeared to be the most receptive, and the Egyptian Prime Minister soon began sending hints and oblique messages to the British that he might be willing "to pull [their] chestnuts out of the fire in Palestine" if he could "get a quid pro quo over the Treaty negotiations."¹⁹

In response to Sidqi's request for a written outline of their proposals for co-operation with Egypt, the Zionists quickly prepared a memorandum (Document 31(b)) in which they invoked the power of Jewish public opinion, especially in America (which might "become friendly instead of hostile" to Egyptian aspirations), and offered to allow the British to move their military bases from Egypt to the future Jewish state. Shortly after transmitting the memorandum to Isma'il Sidqi, Sasson came to Alexandria and worked out the lines of an Egyptian-Zionist entente in greater detail.²⁰ Sasson also met with Brig. I. Clayton in Cairo, and confirmed that the Agency was indeed contemplating offering the British "anything" they wanted, if the Jews "could get a state of some sort in Palestine" (under a partition plan) and the British were to evacuate their bases in Egypt.²¹

Meanwhile, Zionist representatives in London and Paris had been circulating Sasson's report of the first series of Cairo talks to British and American policy-makers.²² This formed part of a concerted campaign aimed at urging the British to "declare openly and unequivocally" that the powers "had certainly not decided to liquidate Zionism" and that the Arabs had to "find a way to come to terms with the Jews."²³ Some Zionists now requested a postponement of the proposed London talks – in order to allow both British officials and Egyptian politicians more time to prepare it in a way which would prove favourable to Zionist interests (e.g., by meeting individually with Arab delegates prior to the conference in the hope of setting them up for compromise during the conference). They also tried (in vain) to have partition included in the agenda of the forthcoming conference, and began spreading reports – based largely on these talks and on Sasson's contacts with Abdallah (see below) – which indicated a shift in Arab feeling in favour of a partition solution.²⁴

This heightened visibility and apparent credibility of the partition option caught the British somewhat by surprise. It was not even part of the demands of the Jewish Agency Executive (which still stood, at least officially, behind the Biltmore Programme), and seemed certain to rouse instant and vehement rejection from Arab leaders (who would go no further than the terms of the 1939 White Paper).²⁵ British officials in Cairo at first doubted whether Sidqi, Azzam and others would, as was being alleged, really be willing to endorse a partition solution to the Palestine problem.²⁶ In any case, it soon became clear that the essential ingredient for the success of the Sidqi–Jewish Agency scenario was a *British* overture to Sidqi, and Zionist representatives made the necessary approaches to Bevin and others, indicating that the Egyptian Government was “hesitant about taking any steps” in favour of partition “unless encouraged to do so by His Majesty’s Government.”²⁷

But the British approach to Sidqi was never to come. Foreign Office officials were guarded and apparently not impressed with the reports of the Egyptian conversations transmitted to them by Dr Goldmann in Paris. After some consultations, they claimed they had “no evidence as yet to support the view that partition would be acceptable to the Arabs.”²⁸ Such Foreign Office conclusions were based largely on the opinions of Sir Ronald Campbell, the British ambassador to Egypt, who doubted that Isma’il Sidqi could exercise sufficient influence over the Palestinians and the Arab states, and who found it difficult to see what treaty concessions the British could offer him to “make it worth his while to throw his weight about for us regarding Palestine.”²⁹ In fact, Campbell described Sidqi as “very ignorant of the Arab world” and was reluctant to approach him directly, even for confirmation of the views attributed to him: “He is a tricky customer and may seek to involve us in undesirable ways.” Campbell further recommended to London that the existence of these Zionist–Egyptian contacts was no reason to postpone the opening of the scheduled conference on Palestine.³⁰

In mid-September, the British finally decided to kill the whole affair by informing the Zionists that British interests in Egypt and in Palestine could not serve as “bargaining counters” between them and the Egyptians.³¹ For their part, leading Zionists regretted that His Majesty’s Government had “unfortunately” been unable to lend its weight to this potential Egyptian–Zionist rapprochement, “though it [had] offered one of the first opportunities for many years

of serious talks between Jews and Arabs.”³² Perhaps in an effort to embarrass the British Government for such neglect, Richard Crossman published a report of the proposed deal between the British, Sidqi and the Zionists, a report summarily denied (as promised) by the Egyptian Prime Minister.³³ With Sidqi’s resignation in late September, Elias Sasson was forced to consider his relations with the Egyptian politician as relegated “to the legacy of history ... without any practical value.”³⁴ The episode was indeed dead; yet, behind the scenes, Isma’il Sidqi put on a good show for Sasson, thanking the Zionists for their help on behalf of the Egyptian cause (in the British press) and keeping the door open to continued, but secret, contacts and co-operation.³⁵

ZIONIST-ABDALLAH NEGOTIATIONS, 1946

At the same time as the Jewish Agency was cultivating its new contacts with leading Egyptian personalities, Elias Sasson was also engaged in serious talks with an “old friend”, the recently-crowned King Abdallah of Transjordan. From the Zionist side, the main motive was, as with the Egyptians, to create a momentum for partition in certain Arab quarters, and to influence the proceedings at the proposed conference on Palestine scheduled to begin in London in September. Abdallah’s motives are probably best understood in terms of the growing rivalry among Transjordan, Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia, and in terms of his long-standing dream of heading a “Greater Syrian” federated kingdom, the first stage of which was the annexation of at least the Arab parts of Palestine.³⁶

According to Sasson’s records of their meeting of August 12th (Document 32(a)), Abdallah had been planning to line up loyally behind the British and support the Morrison–Grady proposals. The king tried to convince the Zionists to join him in backing this scheme, while Sasson tried to persuade Abdallah that partition would better serve their joint interests. In the end, Sasson reported, the king would “be prepared to support” the Zionists “and to fulfil any [obligation] falling to him” if there was any real chance of pushing partition through in the United States, Great Britain and at the United Nations. As part of the proposed understanding, the Zionists for their part would be expected to help Abdallah financially and politically in preparing for the second stage of his long-term plan: the take-over of Syria.³⁷ Abdallah was also asking the Jewish Agency to

help curb Jewish terrorism as a sign of good faith towards both the Arabs and the British.

As arranged, one week later Sasson again visited the king at his summer palace at Shuneh in order to elaborate details of their tentative understanding. But this time the J.A. official found himself, his driver and his taxi the objects of meticulous police searches, both on his entry into and on his departure from Transjordan. This was a most unsettling omen for the royal guest, to which was added the further embarrassment (aimed perhaps more at Abdallah than at Sasson) of subsequent press reports which pointed to a drop of £P4000 in the money in Sasson's possession upon arriving in and upon leaving the country.³⁸

From Sasson's account (Document 32(b)), the August 19th meeting seems to have been somewhat of an anticlimax. His report mentioned no concrete terms of agreement, nor any of the specific suggestions which the king had promised he would reveal for winning the assent of the Palestinian Arabs to the annexation plan. But, according to Sasson, the king was no longer urging the Zionists to back the British-sponsored federal solution; rather, he now clearly agreed that both parties should "oppose all plans except the 'separation [i.e., partition] and annexation' plan." The two men also made practical arrangements for continuing contacts between J.A. and Transjordanian representatives in London and in Jerusalem.³⁹

In the months to come, these August 1946 talks would be seen by the Zionists as constituting an important unwritten mutual understanding. While, as we have seen, this was by no means the first time that the two parties had made overtures to one another based on perceived common interests, the king's August 12th proposals to Sasson for Zionist assistance were remarkably explicit. Moreover, they came at a time when the Zionists felt the timing was right to go beyond their usual noncommittal replies to Abdallah. In the light of the Zionist Executive's recent decision to work discreetly (yet unofficially) for partition, the idea of splitting Palestine with Abdallah now seemed to some Jewish leaders an ideal way to proceed.⁴⁰ Thus, following the August 1946 meetings, Zionists would refer periodically in talks with the king or his emissaries to "the existing agreement between us"; payments from the Jewish Agency to the Transjordanian monarch during 1946-47 further consolidated their mutual understanding.⁴¹

From Abdallah's point of view, however, these contacts appear to

have constituted less than a full-fledged accord. Like Isma'il Sidqi of Egypt, the king regarded the British third-party role as his prime consideration, and his support for partition was only a minor and uncertain part of his Palestine policy. Following his first conversation with Sasson, Abdallah duly reported to Sir Alec Kirkbride, the British Representative at Amman. The king used this opportunity to convey his willingness to support partition – but added that “his action would be useless unless acceptance of this solution by His Majesty’s Government and other Arab States was secured.”⁴² A few days after his second meeting with Sasson, Abdallah, along with his Prime Minister, went further and informed the British that, in their view, “partition followed by an exchange of populations” was “the only practical solution to the Palestine problem.” But, as the High Commissioner reported to London, the Transjordanians did “not feel able to express” their pro-partition opinions “very publicly” for fear of being denounced as self-interested. They further indicated that, if partition were discussed at the London Conference, they wanted to have the possible Transjordanian annexation of Arab Palestine “avoided” so as to avert the anticipated attacks of Saudi Arabia and Syria.⁴³

When the London Conference was finally convened in September, the Transjordanian delegates left the British perplexed and the Zionists clearly disappointed when they did not take up a public stance in favour of partition. Even Abdallah’s “secret proposals” which Samir ar-Rifai presented to Ernest Bevin on September 30th (like the mysterious private message from Abdallah to the Colonial Secretary on the eve of the conference)⁴⁴ were nothing like what Sasson had been expecting. These proposals in fact ruled out any partition and advocated the reunification of Palestine with Transjordan, with the granting of “provincial autonomy” to the Jews. When the Foreign Secretary pointed out that this was substantially the same as the British plan which had already been rejected by the Arab delegations at the Conference, Rifai had to admit that Abdallah’s version would have no better chance of being welcomed by his Arab neighbours.⁴⁵

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the British stood by their own federal proposals and ignored the Transjordanian suggestion. As they had done with Sidqi and the Egyptians, the British decided to leave it to the Transjordanians to take their own political risks if, indeed, they wished to come out in favour of a partition

solution to the Palestine question. Sasson's hopes to influence the British in favour of partition via Abdallah's representative to the London Conference were – as with Isma'il Sidqi – completely in vain.

FROM THE LONDON CONFERENCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
1946–47

Despite the energetic activities and plans of E. Sasson, the London Conference of September–October 1946 did not yield any fruitful private encounters involving Egyptians or Jordanians working on behalf of partition.⁴⁶ The result of the Anglo-Arab discussions,⁴⁷ from which both the Zionists and the Palestinian Arabs had deliberately excluded themselves, was a clarification of the Arab states' joint stand on the Palestine question. This latest definition of the Arab position clearly ruled out both the Morrison–Grady plan and partition as acceptable solutions. The Arab counter-proposals to the conference (Document 33) stuck closely to the MacDonalld White Paper of 1939, and called for an independent, unitary state in Palestine on or before December 31, 1948. Jews would be granted the right to “employ the Hebrew language in districts where they form an absolute majority”, and proportional representation in government bodies – “provided that in no case shall the number of Jewish representatives exceed one-third of the total.”

The appearance of this unified, formal set of constitutional proposals represented, in Sasson's view, a setback to his recent optimism regarding the chances of a regional arrangement between the Zionists and the Arab world over Palestine.⁴⁸ The reservations about these proposals expressed by Palestinian Arab leaders following the conference pushed further into the background any chances of a pan-Arab solution being worked out to the satisfaction of all parties.⁴⁹

The London Conference, adjourned in October 1946, was resumed in the form of parallel Anglo-Arab and Anglo-Zionist conferences in January 1947. There was only one slim prospect for behind-the-scenes Arab–Zionist diplomacy, and it evaporated when Abdallah evaded renewed attempts by the Zionists to have him instruct Transjordan's delegates to co-ordinate a pro-partition stand with Jewish Agency officials in London.⁵⁰ The second stage of the London Conference ended in deadlock, with each side formally

rejecting the British proposals and neither able to generate a formula acceptable to the other.⁵¹

At this point the British laid the Palestine question before the United Nations Organisation, which proceeded to establish a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) – yet another tribunal (and the final one during the Mandate period) before which Arabs and Zionists would plead their irreconcilable cases.

Leaders of the Arab states, under the umbrella of the Arab League, gave evidence on behalf of the Palestinian Arabs (the A.H.C. formally boycotted UNSCOP) and were categorical and unanimous in rejecting any form of Jewish statehood in Palestine. The Zionists now made a tactical retreat and argued formally on behalf of a Jewish state in part of Palestine. The unanimity of the Arab stand was broken only by a handful of Lebanese Maronite spokesmen, who gave private testimony in favour of the creation of a Jewish state.⁵² After visiting Amman, members of the Special Committee left perplexed about Abdallah's true feelings. For their part, Zionists felt greatly let down by the king's failure to express his pro-partition (and anti-Mufti) sentiments clearly; in their view, Abdallah was renegeing on the mutual understanding they had worked out for promoting a partition solution.⁵³

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

In September 1947, the Report of the Committee brought the protagonists back to the situation they had been in in 1937: faced with an authoritative proposal to partition the country into separate Jewish and Arab states.⁵⁴ The UNSCOP majority report, with its recommendation so close to the official Zionist position, set the battle-lines for the diplomatic and military manoeuvring which marked the final months of the Mandate period. For a brief moment in September, several unofficial feelers were sent out to see whether an Arab-Zionist agreement might not be had on the basis of the *minority* report of the Committee, which recommended autonomous provinces rather than sovereign states. But the recognised leaders on both sides quickly committed themselves to have nothing to do with the minority report.⁵⁵ Other compromise proposals, such as those coming from dissenting Jews like Lord Samuel and Judah Magnes, began to surface, but these had little impact.⁵⁶

During the three months leading up to the General Assembly vote

on partition of 29 November 1947, lobbying in New York, Washington and other world capitals demanded the fervent attention of partisans of the two conflicting causes.⁵⁷ Official Zionist efforts were mobilised towards ensuring the endorsement of the majority plan by a United Nations Subcommittee and its acceptance by the General Assembly. The Arabs worked in the opposite sense, denouncing the injustice and the unacceptability of partition as a solution and predicting that, if partition were sanctioned by the world body, it would lead to war.⁵⁸

While denouncing the UNSCOP proposals, Arab spokesmen also clarified their own terms for an acceptable Palestine settlement, following largely the lines of their September 1946 proposals to the London Conference: (a) Palestine should be unitary and undivided; (b) its government should be republican, democratic and representative; (c) cultural freedom should be guaranteed for ethnic minorities; and (d) religious freedom should be safeguarded for the three major faiths.⁵⁹ At the same time, some Arab spokesmen in New York, Washington and (to a lesser extent) London revived various alternatives to the dreaded partition – the UNSCOP minority plan, cantonisation or the Morrison–Grady proposals – and suggested them as worthy of imposition by the Great Powers.⁶⁰ These Arab terms of agreement did not go far enough to win any Jewish or Zionist support. When pressed by British or American officials, Arab representatives referred to previous “unsatisfactory experiences in attempts to come to terms with the Zionists” as the reason for considering it “useless to discuss” such matters directly with the Jews.⁶¹

Unlike the Arabs, who were active only on their British and American fronts, Zionists went beyond these two arenas and also lobbied on their Arab front with two interrelated purposes in view: (1) to use direct contacts with Arabs in attempts to reduce the chances of various Arab regimes becoming actively involved in a military campaign against the future Jewish state; and (2) to reduce the credibility, in American and British eyes, of the Arab threat to resort to force. This they tried to do by creating the appearance that some Arab leaders would go along with partition – if it were resolutely supported by the powers.⁶²

Focusing on the two strongest, and also potentially most moderate, regional actors, the Zionists reactivated their Arab front for what was to be the supreme test of their “preventive diplomacy” tactics. The

final countdown to the partition of Palestine was also going to be a trial-run for the logic which Ben-Gurion and his colleagues had been pronouncing for more than a decade: viz., that faced with the fait accompli of a Jewish state, the Arabs would not like it, but they would display “realism” and learn to appreciate the advantages it could bring to the region and to themselves.⁶³

At this point, two leading political figures became the centre of Zionist attention. The first was Abd ar-Rahman Azzam, the Egyptian Secretary-General of the Arab League. The testing of the fait accompli logic formed an interesting part of the conversation which took place between Aubrey (later Abba) Eban, David Horowitz and Azzam in mid-September 1947 (Document 34). The meeting – later described by Horowitz as a “coveted opportunity”, “a final effort to reach an agreement with the Arabs in the light of the [UNSCOP] report” – was arranged by journalist Jon Kimche and took place in the Savoy Hotel in London.⁶⁴

During their conversation, Azzam pointedly contradicted the Zionists’ assumption that partition provided suitable conditions (“equality” and “finality”) upon which future Arab-Jewish co-operation might be built. The League’s Secretary-General resisted, and resented, their attempt to convince him that rational calculations of their own best political and economic interests should have led the Arabs to a “realistic” acceptance of the future Jewish state. For the broad Arab public, Azzam is recorded as stating, the Zionists were:

not a fact at all – you are a temporary phenomenon. Centuries ago, the Crusaders established themselves in our midst against our will, and in 200 years we ejected them. This was because we never made the mistake of accepting them as a fact.⁶⁵

Abd ar-Rahman Azzam made it abundantly clear to Eban and Horowitz that there were no grounds upon which they could win Arab assent for the partition plan. “Up to the very last moment, and beyond,” he warned, the Arabs would “fight to prevent you from establishing your State. In no circumstances will they agree to it.” In the course of their candid, but futile, exchange of views, Azzam also lectured the Zionists on the inherent unattractiveness of their offers to join in a regional federation⁶⁶ and the irrelevance of their proposed guarantees against any “encroachment by the Jews upon the boundaries of other states.” The Jews, he said, would “only obtain Arab agreement by abandoning Zionism” and by “going in with the

Arabs and creating Jewish autonomous units within the framework of Arab society.”

Both Horowitz and Eban later recorded how “far-reaching” were the effects of this conversation on them. It convinced Eban that Jewish statehood would have to be won not mainly through diplomacy but in “the hot crucible of war.” Horowitz, deeply impressed with Azzam’s “forcefulness and fanaticism”, left feeling “the full historic impact of this dramatic encounter.”⁶⁷ Although they had agreed not to *publish* any account of their talk, Zionists now felt free to report orally the results of that meeting in their efforts to convince U.N. delegates and American officials of their own “reasonableness” and the “stubbornness” of the Arabs.⁶⁸

On his side, the Arab League Secretary-General referred to this meeting on several occasions. Two weeks after their talk, Azzam reported to Brig. Clayton in Cairo that he felt “depressed about the future in Palestine”, since he “saw no chance of avoiding armed conflict between Arabs and Jews.” When Clayton asked whether the Arabs could “make some contact with the Jews, even unofficially”, Azzam referred briefly to his talk with Eban and Horowitz and stated that negotiation was “quite useless so long as the Jews stuck to their claim for a Jewish State.” Azzam had

told them that if they would only come into a Palestinian State in [the] course of time, as bitterness died down, they might achieve some form of autonomy – even possibly a state in a federation. The gap between the two sides at present was [Azzam concluded] too great and he thought nothing would be gained by talks.⁶⁹

NOVEMBER 29TH AND AFTER

During the coming months, Azzam and other Arab spokesmen revealed the clear presumption that war was inevitable, both in their private conversations or in their public pronouncements. The only imponderables, from the Arab side, concerned how long the Jews could hold out and how much territory they had a chance of successfully defending.⁷⁰ In predicting an “impossible war” for the Jews in the event of U.N. endorsement of partition, Azzam was, in effect, using intimidation to lobby against the UNSCOP Report, while at the same time hoping to elicit (with British or American help) a

reconsideration of “a modified version of the Morrison plan” as a basis for an agreed solution:

he thought an “agreed solution” as to Palestine’s future would be possible between Jews and Arabs if partition fails and the Jews see that the highest international authority cannot form a Jewish state.⁷¹

But when, on November 29th, the United Nations General Assembly nevertheless passed its historic resolution in favour of the partition solution, the Arab position became even more difficult. Azzam pointed out that “leading Arabs” had all done “their best to guarantee the future and freedom of the Palestine Jews”:

On every occasion they [had] referred to the equality of right between the Jews and Arabs and to the Jews’ right of participation in the administration of Palestine according to the proportion of their population. They were given [i.e. offered] the right of running some municipalities where they are the majority, and also they were [as]sured of the freedom of their belief and education. But the Jews [had] refused to accept the foregoing guarantees and they insisted on setting up a Jewish state.

Azzam gave a rosy report of the readiness of all Arabs to “back up the cause of right”, and urged the participants at the Arab National Conference in Cairo to prepare for a supreme struggle in the name of the highest principles of justice and in opposition to “those gangsters in Palestine.”⁷²

In response to reports of Azzam’s speeches, E. Sasson wrote to the Arab League Secretary-General in early December, stretching out “the hand of peace and cooperation to our Arab neighbours”, while at the same time warning against any underestimation of the spiritual and material strength of the Jews in Palestine. Denouncing the irresponsibility of the Arab leaders’ incitement against “the bogey of a Jewish conquest of the Middle East”, Sasson hinted once again at the benefits to the entire region which the “returning” Jews would bring. He also warned that both peoples stood “at the crossroads of history”:

It depends on you whether you are going to hamper our path or to accept us as we ask to be accepted, as sons of the East returning after centuries of enforced exile to the Land of our Fathers.⁷³

Not surprisingly, Azzam chose not to respond, whether publicly or privately, and it is difficult to imagine that the Jewish Agency expected anything concrete or positive to result from sending this letter.⁷⁴ Dr Weizmann's prediction that the chances for an agreement with the Arabs would be better *after* the United Nations decision than before it was proved false, and anyone else hoping to find the proper "psychological moment" for rapprochement after November 29th was to be disappointed.⁷⁵

Both sides now prepared themselves for a military confrontation which seemed to become more unavoidable with each passing day. In the absence of any direct Arab-Zionist talks, a credibility battle developed among United Nations members over whether the partition decision could be implemented "by peaceful means", if not by mutual agreement of Arabs and Jews. Zionist efforts were geared to the public-relations tasks of ensuring the implementation of partition by occasional rhetorical appeals to the Arabs (with few serious direct contacts), and by optimistic propaganda among United Nations members to the effect that "the Assembly's decision correctly define[d] the objective conditions of Arab-Jewish harmony."⁷⁶

While bellicose rhetoric escalated and military preparations proceeded in the Middle East, Arab spokesmen in New York, London and the Middle East manoeuvred for a delay in the implementation of the partition decision. These efforts were accompanied by repeated indications that the Arabs were prepared to consider a "moderate solution of the Palestine question", based on what were, for them, "compromise" counter-proposals (usually communal autonomy or federal arrangements).⁷⁷ Arab League Secretary-General Azzam even hinted that the Arabs might be willing to accept an extension of the British Mandate.⁷⁸

This Arab diplomacy, although unsuccessful in the end, did appear to be having some impact, as a growing number of United Nations delegates began to wonder whether the November 29th decision could ever be implemented without violence. In response to reports from Palestine which underscored a deterioration of law and order in the final months of the Mandate, a flurry of mediation, conciliation, cease-fire and truce proposals were considered in New York, London and Washington. The most serious of these was the United States' trusteeship plan, which the Zionists regarded as a betrayal of American support for partition and which almost went

far enough to win Arab backing.⁷⁹ Amid a dozen less prominent attempts was the somewhat spectacular offer by President Truman, in early May, to put his private aircraft at the disposal of Arab, Zionist and third-party representatives so that they might fly to Palestine to work out a compromise.⁸⁰

In the face of these various proposals, Zionist spokesmen took to the diplomatic counter-offensive. They argued that “nothing will ever satisfy” the Arab Higher Committee

short of the complete acceptance of its programme, namely, the conversion of the whole of Palestine into an independent Arab state, with the Jews as a crystallized minority at its mercy; ... any impression of [Jewish] readiness to offer concessions to the Committee is bound to strengthen its belief that it can achieve this object.

At one point, Shertok reminded Robert Lovett of the State Department that the American delegation to the U.N. General Assembly had itself argued that “the compromise based on Partition was the only way out, after all past efforts at conciliation had failed.” The Zionist emissary stated that he viewed “with the greatest alarm” the rumours circulating about new efforts at conciliation, moves which seemed to indicate that the U.N.’s partition resolution did “not necessarily stand.” Shertok stressed the Zionist argument that “Jewish–Arab understanding and collaboration” could not be built except “on the basis of full implementation of the United Nations plan.”⁸¹

By late 1947 and early 1948, a number of British and American officials were coming to the conclusion that conciliation between the Zionist and Arab positions was impossible – except, perhaps, if it took the form of American pressure on the Zionists to abandon the tremendous victory they had achieved in the November 29th vote.⁸² Even as the United States was starting to push its proposals for a temporary trusteeship arrangement, an internal British memorandum entitled “The Possibility of Mediation” warned against any false hopes:

Even if the leaders on both sides could be brought to accept an interim arrangement, they would do so not with the aim of laying the foundations for a permanent settlement by agreement but in order to strengthen their respective positions in

readiness for the postponed conflict. Each would build up its armed strength, and would bid against the other for the support of foreign Powers. [...] It might be preferable to permit civil war to break out on the 15th May [date of the scheduled British withdrawal] than to inaugurate a period of so-called truce in which Palestine would be a centre of international intrigue and which would only postpone a probably inevitable crisis.⁸³

After November 29th, each party's inclination for talks or compromise was often a reflection of its assessment of the military balance between the two sides and the likely outcome of hostilities. Several variations of this process were at work. In March 1948, for example, several British representatives sensed a certain dejection in the mind of Arab League Secretary-General Abd ar-Rahman Azzam; their reports suggested that this was a good moment for the Jews to offer to open discussions towards a compromise.⁸⁴ Yet, during that same period, Azzam told one British official that "the psychological moment had not yet come for the Arabs to put forward any definite proposals" for compromise:

This would only be possible when the Jews had given up all hope of establishing a Jewish state. Any proposals by the Arabs now would be useless [...]. At the appropriate time (when Jews might even be offered a Jewish State without danger to the Arabs) the Arabs would be prepared to accept a compromise i.e. when and if the Zionist spirit had been well and thoroughly broken.⁸⁵

Azzam reverted to this logic again in early May, following Zionist military successes in the previous month, when he informed the British minister in Amman that

it would be necessary to do something to re-establish the prestige of the Arab world and to bring the Jews to a reasonable state of mind after which negotiation of a settlement might be possible. He even hinted that a reduced Jewish state might be accepted but this he said would have to take the form of an act of generosity by the Arabs after they had re-established their position.⁸⁶

Another Arab exponent of the search for the (militarily) appropriate

“psychological moment” for negotiations was King Abdallah, who – notwithstanding his friendliness to the Jews and apparent support of partition (see below) – seemed to favour a scenario in which a peace settlement based on cantonal autonomy would be imposed following the containment of the Jews by his Arab Legion.⁸⁷

On the Zionist side, perceptions of imminent success or failure, victory or defeat, also played their part in determining an inclination or a disinclination towards eleventh-hour negotiations and compromise. At moments when the Jews felt confident about their military performance or prospects, their spokesmen tended to take a tough stand against truce or compromise proposals which they considered unfavourable.⁸⁸ Yet, perceptions of having the upper hand did not uniformly lead to intransigence. An interesting behind-the-scenes debate occurred among Jewish Agency officials, some of whom pointed, in March 1948, to what they considered to be the right “psychological moment” to come forward with a generous gesture so as to allow the Arabs a dignified “way out” of the impasse which was otherwise certain to lead to war.⁸⁹ A similar Zionist suggestion came ten days before the scheduled end of the Mandate, when the Agency’s chief delegate to the United Nations, Moshe Shertok, sent an urgent cable to his chief, David Ben-Gurion:

After signal [Hagana military] success [in] Palestine, virtual defeat [of the U.S.] trusteeship [plan] here, and in view of excessive Arab suffering, bitterness against [their] leaders and ourselves, it is our vital interest to make [a] serious peace gesture before invasion [by Arab armies].⁹⁰

But this school of thought, which advocated making gestures from a position of strength, was not to be the decisive one in determining the actual military and political decisions which governed Israeli actions in the first Arab–Israeli war of 1948–49.

GOLDA MEYERSON’S MEETINGS WITH ABDALLAH

In his memoirs, David Horowitz wrote that with the September 1947 meeting with Abd ar-Rahman Azzam had “vanished the last effort to bridge the gulf. The final illusion of reaching an agreed and peaceful solution had been exploded.”⁹¹ Discounting the rhetoric in Horowitz’s account, it must be said that there was another diplomatic avenue which was more deserving of being considered the Zionists’

final effort at reducing the threat of outside Arab military intervention in Palestine. This was the series of eleventh-hour contacts with King Abdallah, their old-time ally. These contacts would put to the test, in the moment of crisis, what Zionist officials regarded as their unwritten mutual understanding for the sharing of Palestine.

While Zionist spokesmen were no doubt anxious to make it appear that there *were* chances of compromise with several Arab leaders on the basis of partition,⁹² Abdallah was really the only one whose interests and orientations coincided closely enough with the U.N. resolution of November 29th. Principally through Ezra Danin, contact between the Jewish Agency and the king had been maintained during 1946–47. Despite occasional vacillations and public anti-partition stances (e.g., during the visit of UNSCOP), Abdallah privately reassured the Jews that, as far as he was concerned, their mutual understanding about an amicable solution to the Palestine question remained in force.⁹³ Several times between August and November 1947, the desirability of formulating and signing a written entente was mentioned between the two parties, but no draft text seems to have been actually discussed.⁹⁴

Despite his attempts to camouflage them, Abdallah's hopes of annexing Arab Palestine as part of a settlement were the subject of much rumour and speculation throughout 1947. One Zionist official in New York felt it was "no secret" that Abdallah was looking for "an opening to grab off the Arab part of Palestine", and most speculation went further, to presume that both the British and the Jews would welcome the prospect.⁹⁵ Throughout 1947 and 1948, Abdallah's first priority seems to have been to lean towards any party who offered some prospect of his being able to annex the Arab parts of Palestine.⁹⁶ This included an important private talk in early February 1948 between the Transjordanian Prime Minister visiting London and Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary.⁹⁷ Consistent with this short-term goal, Abdallah occasionally presented his Greater Syria project as a promising broader framework for resolving the Palestine problem – an idea which impressed some American policy-makers, as well as a number of Jewish leaders.⁹⁸

But, despite much speculation to the contrary, the king was not able to count on a complete blessing or "green light" for his Palestine plans from London.⁹⁹ One reason for British hesitations was Abdallah's Greater Syria ambitions, which met with the determined opposition of several neighbouring states and clashed with the

general approach of the Arab League on the Palestine question.¹⁰⁰ But it was the anticipated participation of the British-led and financed Arab Legion in the Palestine campaign which posed the most dangerous dilemma for the British. If Abdallah were to “fall for” (as Harold Beeley of the Foreign Office phrased it) the Jewish Agency’s attempts to have him agree that his soldiers should respect the frontiers proposed by the U.N. plan, it would

amount to using the Arab Legion as an instrument for the enforcement of the partition plan to which the whole Arab world is violently opposed. Abdulla [Beeley predicted] would at once be branded as a quisling, he would find himself isolated even from Iraq, and his throne and even his life would be in danger.¹⁰¹

On the other hand, if the Legion were to “operate equally on both sides” of the U.N.-proposed frontier, Transjordan might have to face Security Council sanctions as an aggressor, and this would place the British in an embarrassing position. Thus, despite the consensus in British circles that, on the whole, the annexation of parts of Palestine to Transjordan would be a good thing, Beeley did not wish to provide the king with too much clarity. This British ambiguity left the king stuck on the horns of his dilemma. It also lessened the chances of his being able to strike a firm deal with the Zionists.¹⁰²

Two weeks before the General Assembly vote on partition Golda Meyerson (later Meir), the new Head of the J.A.’s Political Department, had met with Abdallah at the Rutenberg home in Naharayim, on the border with Transjordan. Meyerson, Sasson and Danin had come away from that meeting with the feeling that the king was, at that stage, confident and optimistic about avoiding all-out war.¹⁰³ Abdallah was reported to be still favouring partition – but (he had insisted at this meeting and was to repeat afterwards) “a partition which would not humiliate [him] before the Arab world at a time when [he was] appearing as its defender.”¹⁰⁴ Abdallah had pledged that he would not permit the Arab states to station their armies in Transjordan, unless they were totally under his own command; if that were done, he said, he would set “everything . . . into motion for the sake of keeping order and for creating a common language with the Jews.” Both sides reaffirmed their common interest in checking the activities of Palestinians who supported al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini,

and Danin tried to press Abdallah to lend more overt support to personalities in the Palestinian "opposition" camp.¹⁰⁵

During their meeting of November 17th, Abdallah had given the Zionists only one indication that he might have been contemplating something other than an outright splitting of the country with them. This was his invitation, in the course of some noncommittal "thinking out loud", for them to consider a non-partition solution in the form of Jewish "independence in part of Palestine within a Trans-jordanian state which will include both sides of the Jordan under [his] leadership." Although Danin recorded that the king did not press this suggestion too firmly, it was to be precisely this approach which Abdallah would embrace more and more firmly during the months to come.¹⁰⁶

Despite the fact that no meeting between Meyerson and Abdallah was held immediately after the November 29th partition vote, as planned, regular contact between the two was maintained from December 1947 to May 1948 through trusted messengers and go-betweens. Abdallah paid proper (but minimum) lip-service to the Arab League's preparations for a Palestine campaign. Yet at one point the king and his then-Prime Minister, Samir ar-Rifai, reportedly made it clear to three leading Palestinians that, following the evacuation of the British, the Arab Legion would be used "to restore order", a task which would have "to take precedence" over "any steps against the Jews."¹⁰⁷ Amid his ambiguous public pronouncements, Abdallah periodically reassured the Jews that he was not abandoning their mutual understanding for the avoidance of military encounters between them.¹⁰⁸ Notwithstanding such private reassurances, the Zionists were feeling increasingly uncertain about the king's ability and/or willingness to execute plans for the future sharing of Palestine between them.¹⁰⁹ Mounting Arab feeling against the Jews and the British inside Palestine – especially after the Deir Yassin outrage – began to push Abdallah into taking a more bellicose public posture.¹¹⁰ Members of the Arab League, as well as various Palestinian spokesmen, indicated that they supported the idea of Abdallah's Arab Legion taking as much of Palestine as possible; but they expressed either shock, fear or disbelief at the thought of Abdallah stopping short and respecting the Jewish areas allotted by the U.N. partition plan.¹¹¹ It was not long before the "Liberation Army" and Iraqi units began manoeuvres on Trans-

jordanian soil, and the Arab Legion became involved with the coordinated war preparations of the Arab League.¹¹²

These trends caused Jewish Agency leaders some anxiety. As early as mid-January 1948, E. Sasson addressed a long letter to the king, written "openly, clearly", "not using diplomatic language and not hiding anything."¹¹³ In this "carrot-and-stick" letter, the Head of the Arab Section of the Political Department did not hide the Agency's disappointment in Abdallah's conduct. Sasson warned the king not to be taken in by the various plots which were being hatched against their joint interests by Amin al-Husaini ("Hitler's collaborator"), by various Arab politicians, and by British officials in London and in Cairo. He reminded Abdallah that

we had already discussed the matter together [...] and had reached an honourable and open agreement regarding a peaceful solution to the Palestine problem; we had even promised to declare it [publicly] in the East and in the West insofar as it was in our power.

Sasson tried to encourage Abdallah to stand by their "honourary agreement" by telling him that many Palestinian Arabs were looking upon him as their deliverer and were putting great hopes in him. At the same time, Sasson warned him not to underestimate the Jews' determination to hold their ground, both politically and militarily.

In his letter to Abdallah, Sasson also informed the king that the Jews were "on the verge of success" in their pro-Jordanian public-relations efforts in the United States. Moshe Shertok, Sasson promised, had left for America and would be personally lobbying for Abdallah's "intervention in and conquest of the Arab part of Palestine without a protest from the Security Council." Indeed, as their part of a mutual understanding, Zionists were offering to Abdallah their assistance in his efforts in the United States at winning three things: American diplomatic recognition for Transjordan's independence, his country's entry into the U.N., and a loan to lessen his dependence on the British and on the Arab League. Some Zionists joined the king's emissary in New York in portraying Abdallah to the Americans and to U.N. officials as an ideal "instrument of implementation" of the partition scheme, and worked for an outright U.N. or U.S. request that he take over the Arab sector of Palestine.¹¹⁴ Such lobbying also fell in well with the Zionists'

own political interests at that time, which were to counteract the Americans' retreat from partition through proposals for a temporary trusteeship over Palestine.

But, despite Zionist efforts to portray him as an instrument for the successful implementation of partition, Abdallah was giving increasing evidence of moving farther and farther away from what the Zionists had considered to be their mutual understanding and their common interest. In January Abdallah urgently requested that the Jews offer him some minor territorial concession, "so that he might be able to appear stronger in the eyes of the Arab world". Meyerson's reply was an emphatic negative, and she added that the proposed U.N. boundary would be respected by the Jews only in peaceful conditions: "If there was a war, then whoever was stronger would take what he could."¹¹⁵ By early March, contacts between the Jewish Agency and the king had lapsed, leaving the former in greater doubt as to Abdallah's current intentions.¹¹⁶ After mid-April, skirmishes between the Arab Legion and the Jews threatened to unravel completely any mutual understanding that existed between the two. Some rumours even indicated that Abdallah might indeed be planning to send the Arab Legion against the Jews.¹¹⁷

The massacre of Arab men, women and children at Deir Yassin may have been the last straw in Abdallah's final clarification of his Palestine plans. In parallel messages dated April 23rd and May 4th, the king warned the High Commissioner in Jerusalem and the U.N. Secretary-General in New York about Arab feeling in both Palestine and Transjordan, and denounced the outrages. While accepting the Jewish Agency's disclaimer of responsibility, he warned that peace depended on the Jews stopping their "aggression". If the Jews did not "abstain from committing in the Holy City [of Jerusalem] and Jaffa what they have done elsewhere", Abdallah declared, they would find their "extravagance" leading to "great disadvantage to their desire to settle in Palestine under the name of a national home."¹¹⁸

However sincerely interested in partition he had once appeared to the Zionists and to the British, Abdallah now argued publicly against any Jewish state in Palestine, and declared that the only way to peace was for the Jews to accept "negotiations with a view to obtaining the right of being citizens in the Palestinian State" and to admit "that Arab sovereignty in their homeland shall not be disputed or contended by any authorities."¹¹⁹ In clarifying his political stand in his private contacts with the Jews, he emphasised (albeit in friendlier

tones) that he wanted the country to remain an undivided Arab state in which the Jews would be granted autonomy in those areas heavily populated by them.¹²⁰

Such terms of agreement, although disappointing to the Zionists, were not really new. In fact, they were similar to several schemes advocated by Abdallah in the past, and also corresponded closely with proposals being made in those days by Transjordanian politicians who were considered to be close to the king.¹²¹ Yet, if a common approach to partition was no longer possible, then Abdallah and the Zionists still seemed to share a mutual hope for minimising hostilities between Jewish and Transjordanian forces. If, by April 1948, a political settlement seemed unlikely in the face of almost certain war, then, many felt, perhaps conditions for an agreement might be better *after* the final British withdrawal, and after some (hopefully only small-scale) fighting had occurred.¹²² Secret contacts initiated by Col. Desmond Goldie, a high-ranking officer of the Arab Legion, contributed to the speculation that actual fighting between the Legion and the Hagana would be minimal.¹²³

As the Mandate entered its final days, Moshe Shertok replied to an American official's question by denying the existence of any agreement between the Jewish Agency and Abdallah.¹²⁴ Nevertheless, one day later (May 9th), Shertok gave American officials the clear impression that the Jewish Agency was preparing "to gamble on [a] 'now or never' basis" on the possibility of an "arrangement with Abdallah [for] partitioning Palestine between [the] Jews and Abdallah."¹²⁵ In Jerusalem, Zionist officials requested a face-to-face meeting with the king. Even though they had considered Abdallah's recent political declarations completely unacceptable, they decided to make one last attempt at negotiating with Abdallah, with the aim of neutralising Transjordan (and, with it, possibly Iraq) in the almost inevitable military confrontation.¹²⁶

The historic final meeting between Meyerson, Danin and Abdallah took place in Amman on May 10th, and Meyerson's colourful account has been published in various places.¹²⁷ The Zionists described Abdallah as being under considerable strain, insisting that he had no choice but to fall in with Egypt, Syria and Iraq in their intended war against partition. The only way, in his view, for war to be avoided would be for the Jews to postpone the declaration of their state, to accept his proposal for autonomy status, and to put their trust in him. Meyerson tried to rebuild his confidence in a partition-

based alliance with the Zionists by optimistically predicting the downfall of their mutual (Husaini-led) enemies in Palestine and by playing up Zionist military strength. But Abdallah remained firm, and repeated his proposal as the only way out of the imminent war:

He was very sorry, he said, but he had no choice. He asked us to think it over, and if the reply was positive it should be given before the 15th of May. [If it was positive, he] would invite ... moderate [Palestinian] Arabs and would ask us also to send moderates. In this way the matter could be settled.¹²⁸

Meyerson and Danin left convinced that Abdallah was sincerely interested in avoiding war, but they were forced to conclude that – given the political alternative which they found utterly unacceptable – war was inevitable.¹²⁹ Eight months later, on the eve of concluding the Israel–Jordan armistice, Abdallah recalled with some bitterness his fateful final meeting with Meyerson, and reproached her for having haughtily declined to consider his proposals which, in his view, might have spared unwanted death and destruction.¹³⁰ Meyerson, for her part, would later point to the assassination of Abdallah by a Palestinian in 1951, expressing her relief that the Zionists had not linked their fate to his 1948 political proposals.¹³¹

Conclusion

The failure of the Meyerson–Abdallah talks to prevent Trans-jordan’s involvement in the first Arab–Israeli war was the final episode in a long series of futile attempts made during the Mandate period by Arab and Zionist leaders who wished to resolve their differences through diplomacy. The persistence and further deterioration of the Arab–Israeli conflict since the days of the British Mandate have given birth to a number of explanations, and it is hoped that this study will shed some light on several of these theories.

FIVE EXPLANATIONS

Without pretending to provide a thorough re-examination of these explanations here, we shall make brief comments on five theories which have been offered as explanations for the persistence of the Arab–Israeli conflict.

- (1) “The conflict persists because of an absence of communication, and/or each party’s misunderstanding about the real aims of the other.”

This theory, with its appeal to people of goodwill on all sides, seems to reflect the actual situation of the post-1948 relations between Israel, the Palestinians and the rest of the Arab world. But it does not accurately represent the pre-1948 situation, a period when there *were* many opportunities for each party to learn the position of the other. While such contact may have led, on occasion, to better “understanding” of the other party, it never seemed to have led to an acceptance of the other party’s claims sufficient to produce a breakthrough and a negotiated settlement on major issues. This should serve to caution present-day observers from expecting too much from efforts at building bridges and at breaking down the mutual boycott and mutual misunderstanding which have taken root. While these are essential to a breakthrough, they are not sufficient in themselves.

- (2) “The leaders on one side or the other did not try hard enough to reach an agreement.”

While the term “enough” is impossible to quantify, the evidence assembled here suggests that a comprehensive and convincing explanation would need to go beyond the simple presumption that leaders are guilty of neglecting or underestimating the problem of relations between the two peoples. A stronger case against the leaders could be made, however, by focusing not so much on their *neglect* as on their *manipulation* of the conflict for the purposes of mobilising their followers (see “Dynamics of Deadlock”, below).

- (3) “Zionist (and Israeli) leaders are to blame for ignoring the existence or the rights of the Palestinian Arabs.”

Much has been written on this popular theory, and the present writer has elsewhere tried to show that this apparent “ignorance” was really a tactical response to recognised problems and contradictions which, they felt, could not be resolved by confronting them openly.¹ This interpretation seems to be borne out in the present study of Arab–Zionist negotiations, where Zionist “preventive diplomacy” and the search for a *pan*-Arab solution on the Weizmann–Faisal model are but two reflections of this approach. It would seem more accurate to describe this Zionist attitude as a strategy of avoidance and side-stepping difficult realities, rather than a sin of being “ignorant” of these realities.

- (4) “Arab leaders, by their stubborn refusal to recognise Jewish national rights in Palestine/Israel, are the ones blocking the way to any hope of reconciliation.”

This explanation, with its built-in pro-Zionist assumptions and its racist undertones, should be revised and set in the context of the diplomatic options which face *any* leadership body involved in a difficult national struggle. Rather than explaining actions through the inherent “stubbornness” of a particular ethnic or national group, we would be on more solid ground if we were to analyse the so-called rejectionism of one party or the other² in the context of its political decision-making.

This is not to suggest that the emotional factor is irrelevant to our understanding of this conflict, but that we ought to look beyond the purely emotional component of one party’s rejection of the other’s

rights. We should attempt to evaluate each party's decisions to reject proposals or to abstain from talks as being based also on rational calculations of its own relative strength or weakness at any given moment – even when such rejection is expressed in moral absolutes and echoes with cries of “never!” Political analysts have a duty to probe behind the emotions and the rhetoric, and should try to correlate rejection of particular proposals or overtures with such factors as (a) the timing and particular circumstances in which the rejected initiative is being made; (b) the rejecting party's confidence in its ability to win better terms or ultimate victory at a later date; or (c) the rejecting-party's desperation and pessimism with regard to the chances of achieving anything from going along with the negotiations or the terms being proposed.

- (5) “Important third-parties, pursuing their own selfish interests, are to blame for sabotaging good relations and peace-efforts by Arabs and Jews.”

This explanation appears, on the evidence, to be a simplistic one in need of revision. As we suggested in the conclusion to Volume One, the role of outside powers does seem to have been a negative one, but not in the form usually supposed. (See also below.)

STATUS OF NEGOTIATORS

Many of the conclusions which were drawn following our survey of the years 1913–31 apply equally, some of them *a fortiori*, to the episodes covered in the present volume. Some of them may be recalled briefly here. In order to understand any party's decision to initiate, to respond to, or to abstain from contacts with the other, we must look at the subtle tactical considerations which were involved – not merely at whether that party did, or did not, display sufficient sincerity or determination to put an end to the conflict. Responsible leaders have had to consider whether the timing was right for maximising advantages to be gained through negotiation. Showing an interest in, or standing aside from, negotiations with the other side was often related to the leaders' need to maintain the appropriate appearances, whether vis-à-vis the British or vis-à-vis public opinion in their respective communities.

Another of the patterns which was evident both before and after 1931 was the frustration which developed as a result of splits

between unofficial and official spokesmen over how to approach a solution to the conflict. In Volume One we saw the activities of H.M. Kalvaryski and Dr Judah L. Magnes as the focus of controversy inside the Zionist camp; in the present volume, moderate or dissenting Jews became prominent during the negotiations of the Five, the Hyamson–Newcombe affair, Lord Samuel’s advocacy of the 40:10 formula, and the Kalvaryski–Cohen contacts of the early 1940s.

In their recurring attempts to maintain or regain the initiative in Arab–Jewish contacts, official Jewish Agency spokesmen frequently found themselves locked in internal battles with their dissenters. Periodically they reminded dissenters and Arab leaders alike that only *they*, the elected leaders, had the power to “deliver the goods” in any arrangement. Ben-Gurion’s and Shertok’s activism of the thirties was predicated on this assumption, coupled with their insistence on talking only with Arab counterparts who were, like themselves, capable of putting into effect any deal that might be struck. As promising as the terms worked out among moderate Arabs and moderate Jews might have appeared, these dealings usually proved irrelevant whenever the authoritative spokesmen for the national movements chose to reject compromise and hold out for more.

The years 1936–38 were replete with evidence of the confusions and complications which can arise when the status of the negotiators is not clear. In the cases of the negotiations of the Five and the Hymason–Newcombe affair, this was particularly true when the semi-official Arab, British and Jewish go-betweens did not fully share the views of the official leadership regarding the minimum acceptable terms of agreement. Those holding public office invariably acted under constraints which led to less flexibility, generosity and willingness to take risks than the intermediaries were recommending as necessary. While the first priority of the go-betweens may have been to find a compromise which could bring about the start of negotiations, those in leadership positions measured every step against its likelihood of attaining their final goals and in terms of its likely effect on the British. Leaders on both sides developed a keen political sensitivity not always shared by intermediaries who were urging them to accept various draft “bases for discussion”. The former insisted on more favourable drafts before even agreeing to sit down to informal talks, and regarded their consent to sit down with the other side as an important political act in itself.

In contrast to these situations, one episode where the status of negotiators was *not* a factor of confusion was the St James's Conferences of 1939, where – despite efforts to activate various moderates and dissenters – the negotiations were dominated by the recognised leaders of the Palestinians and of the Zionists. In the event of any compromise being worked out at these conferences, the chances were excellent that the agreement would have been binding. But, as we saw, the dynamics of the conferences produced only frustration and utter deadlock.

THIRD-PARTY CONSIDERATIONS: THE BRITISH ROLE

Given the persisting gap between the positions of the Palestinian Arabs and the Zionists, and given their determination to stick to irreconcilable aims, the only real hope for a breakthrough prior to 1948 seemed (as it does now) to lie with third-parties. The British were for many years arbitrators between the rival national groups, with overwhelming power at their disposal to dictate policy with or without consulting the main protagonists.

As we have seen throughout the period since 1917, one of the main reasons for the low priority of an Arab–Zionist accord in the minds of Arab and Zionist leaders had been the fact that each party's most desired goals could be best achieved through dealing with the British and not with each other. Despite frequent complaints of unfairness emanating from both sides and hollow lip-service to the contrary, neither party honestly wished for a situation in which they could bargain directly with each other, to the exclusion of the British. In fact, complaints of British unfairness were usually a disguised request for the British to impose one party's version of a "just" solution. During the Mandate period the British made several attempts, but never succeeded in imposing such a solution.

This is precisely what the Zionists had had in mind when they pressed the British in the early 1930s (and again, less insistently, in 1937–38) to convene a round-table conference of Arabs and Jews. In distancing himself from his colleagues' enthusiasm for such a conference, Moshe Shertok was prophetic in warning them of the pitfalls. It was, he argued,

bound not to succeed, [...] and the responsibility will be on us.
The government will not be unhappy with such a situation and

will say: "Here, you see how serious the situation is. You yourselves have said how necessary an agreement was; you have demanded the convening of a round-table; [...] you can see for yourselves that it is impossible to proceed like this; you have asked for [our] intervention and that intervention has not succeeded; we shall have no choice but to find other solutions."³

This is precisely what did happen during the conferences at St James's Palace in February–March 1939, and by focusing on them here we may once again see the decisive role played by the British in determining the course of Arab–Zionist negotiations.

The London Round-Table Conferences – one of the crucial turning-points of the period under discussion – were born out of deadlock and ended in deadlock. They were deliberately set up by the British hosts as a "last chance" for an Arab–Zionist compromise. Since "both the Jews and the Arabs had to be relieved of the responsibility for abandoning positions which each had taken up", the conferences were also seen as "a good publicity exercise, demonstrating London's concern to reconcile the opposing parties, before having to impose its own policy."⁴

During the first British–Arab and British–Zionist meetings, the hosts took on the role of listener, and occasionally of devil's advocate, holding back as long as possible from declaring any firm views or intentions. Finally, when he concluded that no three-sided (or Arab–Zionist) agreement was likely, the Colonial Secretary tried to break the deadlock by creating a "double-veto" situation between the main protagonists. In his final talks with the Jewish and Arab delegations, MacDonald repeatedly elaborated variations of the following line of argument:

It might be the best thing, from the point of view of securing a constructive policy, to say that if Arab independence was to depend on Jewish consent, Jewish immigration should depend on Arab consent. In this way the elements of a compromise would come into being and that might well be the solution to the problem.⁵

The St James's Conferences constituted a crucial turning-point not only for the formulation of British policy, but also in this drastic change which was supposed to be introduced into the bargaining

situation between Arabs and Zionists. For the first time, there was a real prospect that the British would divest themselves of their decisive role as final arbiter between the contesting parties. In setting up the “double veto”, the British were preparing to hand over the two most precious bargaining cards – control over immigration and conditions for future independence – to the main protagonists, cards to deal among themselves.

But, as we have seen, the double veto did not produce the intended conditions for more frequent and more promising direct Arab–Zionist negotiations in Palestine. The conferences broke down with the Zionists feeling humiliated and betrayed by MacDonald’s championing of some key elements of the Arab claim, and with the Palestinians disappointed that the Colonial Secretary had not gone far enough to meet their minimum demands. Neither side saw any reason for being optimistic about its half of the proposed double-veto arrangement. During the war years both Arabs and Jews in Palestine ignored or undermined various provisions of the White Paper, and showed a marked disinclination to deal directly with each other.

Despite the British attempt at even-handedness in setting up this new bargaining context, there was also a built-in bias in favour of the Arab position. This was reflected not only in the political aspects described in Chapter Four, but also in Malcolm MacDonald’s moralistic inveighing against the Jews. “It was time”, he lectured the Jewish delegates at St James’s:

that the people concerned in this unprecedented expansion got for themselves the consent of the other community in Palestine, whose interests they were obliged to respect and with whom, in any case, they had to live.... [T]here must come a time [he went on] where the Mandatory should say, ‘For 20 or 25 years we have borne the responsibility of forcing Jews into Palestine against the will of the Arabs; if this experiment is to have any moral justification vis-à-vis the Arabs, the time has come for the immigrating people to justify themselves to the Arabs.’⁶

Thus, after two decades of British Palestine policy being oriented along Zionist lines, MacDonald’s words reflected new trends in British thinking during the final decade of the Mandate. This shift towards a more sympathetic reading of Arab national feeling on the

Palestine question was reflected partly in British support for the Arab League. It specifically affected Arab–Zionist negotiations on at least two occasions: when the British displayed scepticism towards Zionist attempts in 1946 to develop a pro-partition momentum among certain Arab spokesmen, and again, in 1947–48, when they refused to provide unequivocal backing for King Abdallah’s proposed take-over of Arab Palestine. This new slant in British thinking, up until their very last attempts to find a compromise formula during the February 1947 London Conference, did not, however, help to make them any more effective as arbitrators of the worsening conflict.

MEDIATORS

Another possibility for constructive third-party involvement in this dispute was the hope for a voluntary agreement being reached through the good offices of an unofficial outside mediator. During the Mandate period we have seen a number of individuals – usually Englishmen and non-Palestinian Arabs – who attempted to play the role of mediator between the Palestinian Arabs and the Zionists. In our survey of the period, we found in this category: the Arab Decentralist Party in 1913; Hashimite princes, Faisal and Abdallah; Iraq’s Nuri as-Sa’id; Syria’s Jamil Mardam, Abd ar-Rahman ash-Shahbandar and others; Riad as-Sulh, Emile Eddé and other Lebanese politicians; Isma’il Sidqi and other Egyptians; American Quaker Daniel Oliver; Englishmen T.E. Lawrence, S.F. Newcombe, Archer Cust and H. St. John Philby; and British Jews Herbert Samuel, Albert Hyamson and Norman Bentwich. At various times, each felt motivated to try to mediate between the two sides, armed only with the power of moral persuasion, a peace formula, and privileged access to leaders in both camps, but without any power to impose a settlement.

It will be left to political science specialists⁷ to provide us with deeper insights into the role of intermediaries in this and other conflicts. The numerous cases covered in the preceding pages seem to follow familiar patterns and offer lessons similar to those we have drawn with regard to negotiations between the main protagonists. For example, the compromise “terms of agreement” which intermediaries proposed to Palestinian Arabs and Zionists had to appear more attractive than what each was expecting to win via other

avenues; the timing of an attempted mediation, too, had to be right. The would-be mediator also needed to enjoy the confidence and respect of both sides – qualities not often found in any single individual.

The broadening of negotiations beyond the local Zionist–Palestinian confrontation to include one or more of the neighbouring Arab states was a recurring pattern, based on the classic example of Weizmann and Faisal in 1919. But as promising as such an arrangement may have appeared in theory, we have seen numerous instances where the non-Palestinian Arab lacked the moral or political strength to “deliver the goods” to the Zionists, just as the latter were less influential in the worlds of finance, government and journalism than the myth of “Jewish power” had led many Arabs to expect. Despite several attempts, there was no repetition of the Weizmann–Faisal chapter. Dr Weizmann’s frequent recollection of this “lost opportunity”⁸ remained in the realm of rhetoric and wishful thinking. Ben-Gurion and Shertok – the real makers of Zionist policy during the last 15 years of the Mandate – readily shared Malcolm MacDonald’s conclusions that, during the years since 1919, “much had happened” and that Arab opinion had “hardened”.⁹

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

Despite many similarities, there is one significant difference which distinguishes the periods covered in Volume One and Volume Two of this study. This concerns the terms of agreement under consideration by the parties in conflict. The period before 1931 had been a static one, with each party maintaining its original demands without feeling the need for revisions or compromise. The years 1931–48 witnessed serious deliberations over alternative terms of agreement, each party coming up with what it considered to be significant compromises in search of some kind of accommodation.

In the early 1930s Arab–Zionist negotiations began dealing with a variety of formulae which the proposers felt had some hope of leading to a mutual accord: the non-domination principle, parity, cantonisation, Zionist offers of support for pan-Arab unity or federation, Zionist guarantees against non-eviction of Palestinian Arabs, restrictions on Jewish immigration, a ceiling on the Jewish

proportion of the population, and the partition of Palestine. Until 1936, however, the recognised leaders on both sides stuck to the conditions and terms on which they had been insisting, virtually without modification, in earlier decades. Ben-Gurion's inconclusive talks with Arab leaders and the "Abbas affair" (Document 1) were just two of the trial balloons of the period which tested – and found wanting – the readiness of leaders to deviate from their respective national demands for the sake of a compromise. Largely because one party or the other felt it had the strength to hold out for a fuller satisfaction of its claims, no agreements were reached on the basis of any of the formulae which began to be discussed in the early 1930s.

The situation changed during April–September 1936, when we saw a flurry of Arab–Zionist negotiations. These talks were at first concerned with finding a face-saving formula for the Arabs and/or the British to end the Arab general strike and rebellion. But fundamental Arab–Jewish differences also came to be discussed. In 1937, the British began to prepare for the imposition of one particular solution – partition – on both parties. Although the British ultimately backed away from their announced intention to implement the Peel Commission's radical recommendations, the prospect of an imposed partition led to a year of perhaps the most intensive Arab–Zionist negotiations of the Mandate period. There was now a conscious attempt, in at least some quarters, to redefine national objectives in a way which might have given satisfaction to *vsomew* of the claims of the other side in order to keep the country whole. But the Hyamson–Newcombe affair (the haggling over proposed "bases for discussion") and other lesser-known negotiation episodes of 1937–38 showed that even a common dissatisfaction with the Peel Report and the prospect of an imposed partition could not force the two sides to make sufficient concessions to bridge the gap between them.

By the end of the thirties, there emerged some clear – if not altogether satisfying – choices for Arab and Zionist leaders to make. Calculations of their own strength *vis-à-vis* that of their opponents, combined with an emotional commitment to their national struggle, led Palestinian Arab leaders to reject both partition and an agreement with the Zionists on the terms which were available from the J.A.E. They chose instead to continue their fight for an independent Arab state in all of Palestine. Similarly, Zionist leaders made their own appraisals of the prevailing balance of forces between themselves, the British and the Arabs, and, given their own emotional

commitment to the goal of independent Jewish nationhood, they chose to push ahead for a Jewish state, even in the face of Arab objections. In the short term, the Arab calculation and choice seemed the more solid and well-founded of the two, since the British did indeed abandon partition and, under the impact of a looming world war, radically reoriented their Palestine policy in deference to Palestinian-Arab demands and claims. This British retreat from partition, the convening of the St James's Conferences and the imposition of the MacDonald White Paper set the context for further redefinitions of the terms which each side insisted had to be part of any voluntary agreement.

The gap which separated the Arab and Zionist positions at the close of the 1939 St James's Conferences was clearly defined for all to see. The Zionists clung to the status quo, i.e., the Mandate, and even asked for more generous opportunities for immigration and land-purchase. They did not abandon their hopes of one day becoming a majority in Palestine, and responded to Arab objections to such a scenario with the economic blessings argument, by offering a commitment not to dominate Arabs in Palestine, and by declaring their willingness to join in and contribute towards a wider political arrangement with the neighbouring Arab countries. The Arabs in 1939 maintained their claim that the Palestinians should be permitted to exercise their natural right to independence, which included the right of the majority to prevent the Jews from becoming more numerous through further immigration. There were, they argued, already enough Jews in Palestine, who should enjoy normal minority rights.

During the final days of the conferences, the British thought they had detected a glimmer of hope for a voluntary agreement when some Zionist delegates had made positive remarks about a possible federal subdivision of Palestine. But in the ensuing months and years, the federal option – a variation of the cantonisation schemes discussed in the early thirties – proved to be a weak prospect for a breakthrough, given the absence of any Arab backing and the increasingly lukewarm support coming from Zionist quarters.¹⁰

The impact of the war did result in some changes in the parties' proposed terms for agreement, but these shifts were almost all in the direction of intensifying rather than reducing the bitterness and mistrust between the two sides. The Zionist position during the war years hardened noticeably, reflecting the deteriorating plight of the

Jews in Europe. From 1939 onwards, Zionist leaders looked to an imposed post-war settlement to bring them better terms than the White Paper, which they totally rejected, and well before the war's end they were pressing for mass immigration to help rescue the victims of Nazism. In the ensuing public debates, the Arab argument that the Jewish problem could not be solved by Palestine alone, and that *other* countries should share in a humanitarian solution,¹¹ had little impact in western countries, where selfish interests combined with feelings of guilt about the Holocaust to result in greater sympathy for the Zionist claim to Palestine.

By 1942–43, the official Zionist political goal was defined as making Palestine into a sovereign Jewish “commonwealth”, with no mention of either partition or a federal subdivision – i.e., a Jewish state in all of Palestine. A minority within the Zionist camp favoured a bi-national Palestine, based on numerical parity, a formula which would have allowed some large-scale Jewish immigration to equalise the population of the two communities. Most Jewish supporters of bi-nationalism argued that, while the goal of rescuing European Jewish survivors through an entente with the Arabs was attainable, that of a Jewish state was not – as it could be achieved only at the unacceptable cost of all-out war with the Arabs. Some, as we have seen, pointed to the apparent willingness of some Arab leaders to accept a bi-national Palestine within an Arab federation. But Jewish Agency leaders rejected this option, which seemed to them to have only marginal support in Arab circles. In any event, the bi-national formula deviated from the Biltmore Programme which still seemed, to many leaders, feasible, if accompanied by the strong backing of the Powers.

Neither were the “statists” convinced that evidence of Arab hostility to Jewish sovereignty in Palestine needed to be taken at its face value. Inspired by the model of the 1919 Weizmann–Faisal agreement, a number of Jewish leaders mistakenly persisted in believing that an offer by the future Jewish state to enter into, and contribute its resources to, a regional federation would help to bring about Arab acceptance of a Jewish state in Palestine.

However appealing this *quid pro quo* might have been to certain Arab leaders in the past, it had notably less appeal in the changed conditions of the 1940s (e.g., Azzam, quoted in Document 34). Pan-Arabists made it clear that they were interested in the inclusion of Palestine *as it was* (i.e., a predominantly Arab country), and not of



1. Zionist Reception for Transjordanian Shaikhs, Jerusalem, April 1933



2. Mithqal
al-Fa'iz with
Eliahu Epstein
(Elath)



3. Dr Husain
Fakhri
al-Khalidi

4. Amir
Abdallah



5. al-Hajj Amin
al-Husaini

6. Musa al-Alami

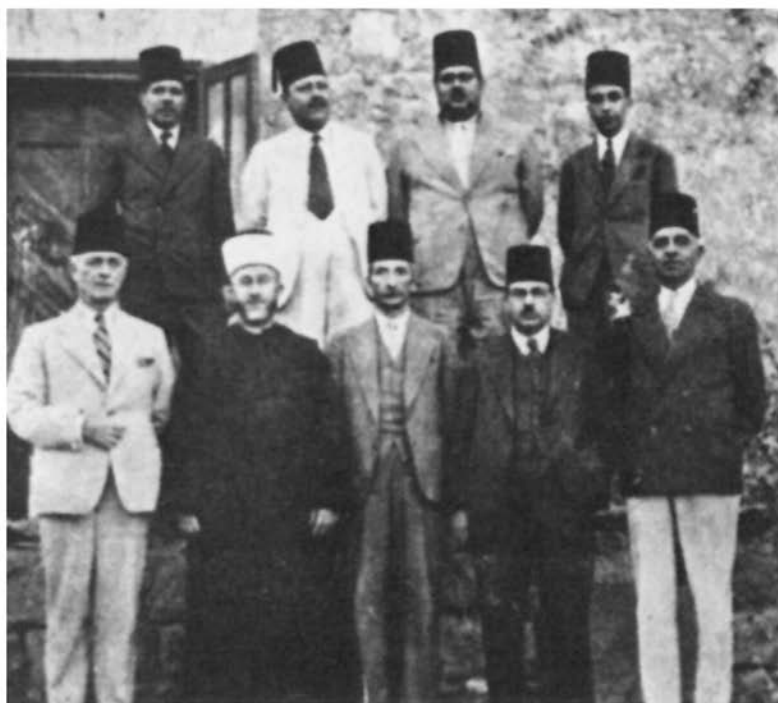


7. Judge Gad Frumkin

8. Pinhas Rutenberg

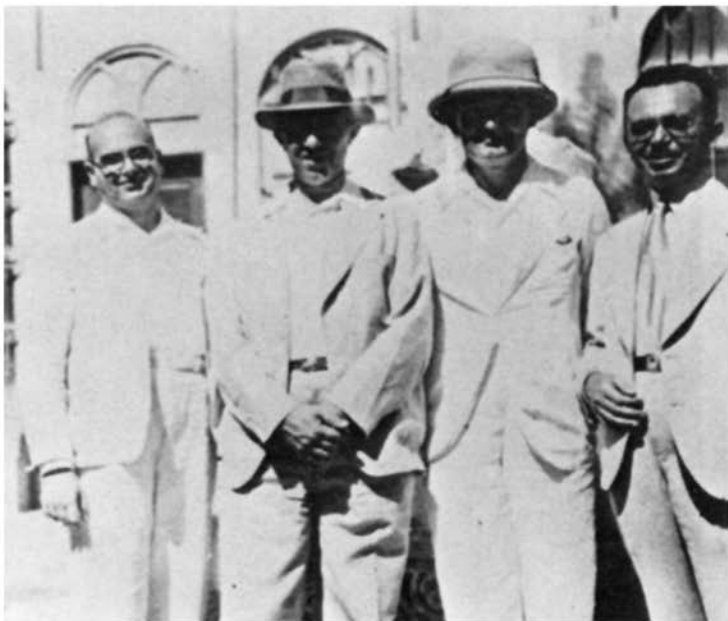


9. Members of the Arab Higher Committee, Jerusalem, 1936





10. Nuri as-Sa'id, with
Awni Abd al-Hadi and
Nabih al-Azma, 1936



11. Jewish Agency
delegation to the National
Bloc, Damascus 1936

12. Dr Bernard
Joseph



13. Dr Izzat
Tannous and Jamal
al-Husaini





14. Dr Judah L. Magnes

توحيد فلسطين وشرق الاردن ومنح اليهود حكما ذاتيا

واباحة الهجرة الى المناطق اليهودية

يانا في ٢٣ مايو - لمراسل الاهرام الخاص - اتصلت بي صورة حقيقية للشروط التي تضمنتها مذكرة الامير عبد الله المقدمة الى المراجع البريطانية لحل القضية الفلسطينية وهذه هي الشروط بنصها الاصلى :

نص الاقتراح

- ١ - تؤلف مملكة موحدة عربية من فلسطين وشرق الاردن تحت يد ملوكية عربية قادرة على القيام بمهمتها وتنفيذ تعهداتها .
- ٢ - تعطى هذه المملكة ادارة مختارة لليهود في المناطق اليهودية التي تتعين خريبتها بواسطة لجنة تؤلف من رجال بريطانيين وعرب ويهود .
- ٣ - يكون لليهود التمتع بكامل ماتمتمع به اى ادارة مختارة (حكم ذاتي)
- ٤ - يمثل اليهود في برلمان الدولة العربية بنسبة عددهم . ويؤخذ في وزارة الدولة المتحدة وزراء منهم
- ٥ - تنحصر الهجرة اليهودية بنسبة معقولة الى تلك الاراضى التي ستكون فيها الادارة المختارة
- ٦ - لاحق لليهود ان يطلبوا شراء ارض او ادخال اى مهاجر خارج المناطق اليهودية .
- ٧ - يكون هذا التكيف الى مدة عشرينسنوات منها ٨ سنوات للتجربة والسنتان الباقتان لاعطاء القرار النهائى بمصير البلاد
- ٨ - اذا انس العرب من اليهود حسن النية والامتزاج وراوا انه لا بأس من هجرة عدد مناسب الى اراضى الدولة المتحدة فذلك من حق العرب
- ٩ - يبقى الانتداب في هذه المدة بشكل ادبى صرف لايتجاوز حدود الملاحظة والمراقبة لدولة المتحدة .
- ١٠ - لا اعتراض على بقاء الجيش البريطانى مدة السنوات العشر هذه
- ١١ - عند مضى السنة الثامنة ودخول السنة التاسعة يجب على حكومة الدولة المتحدة وبرلمانها اعلان القرار النهائى وتنفيذ مايقع عليه الاختيار
- ١٢ - ان ما لبريطانيا العظمى من مصالح تحرى المذاكرة فيها من الان وتنبىء للتصديق، بعد اعلان القرار ادهائى للدولة
- ١٣ - ان .شاريح الامم للاحات، العامة فى الري والجيش والرقق والبريد والجمارك وغيرها من اسباب الرقى والعمران تجرى على وتيرة واحدة ويبد واحدة وند بانفى ان هذه ابنىود كانت مؤلفة من ١٤ مادة وفى السمة الاخيرة حذف منها البند الرابع عشر .



16. Jewish Delegation to St James's Conference, London, February 1939



17. Arab Delegation to St James's Conference, London, February 1939

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CONFERENCES ON PALESTINE.

Note of Informal Conversation with Arab and
Jewish Delegates.

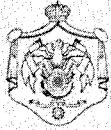
Certain members of the Jewish Delegation and
of the Delegations of Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia
participated in an informal discussion at St.James's Palace
on Tuesday, 7th March, at 9.30 p.m. The following were
present:-

Dr.Weizmann	Lord Halifax	Aly Maher Pasha
Lord Bearsted	Mr.MacDonald	Fuad Bey Hamza
Mr. Ben-Gurion	Lord Dufferin	Taufiq Bey es-Suwaiddi
Mr.Shertok	Mr. Butler	
	Sir E.Brocklebank	
	Mr. Baxter	
	Mr. Downie	

MR.MacDONALD invited Dr.Weizmann to open the
discussion.

DR.WEIZMANN referred to the suggestion of the
British Delegation that the establishment of an independent
Palestine State should be the objective, and that the first
step towards this objective should be taken in the near
future. This suggestion had not been accepted by the Jewish
Delegation as a basis for discussion, but he was ready in
the present informal conversation to offer his personal
views on the subject. He said that he agreed that
independence must come at some future date and that there

must



1009/1000 1

حفظه

سعادة حديق الجيم السيد موسى شرتوك

تقبت كتابكم المبعث على الشعور الطيب والفرح الصميم بالخطوات التي تقدمت بها شرق الأناضول
 في مجال التعليم رآني أؤسفكم هذا الشعور وتحت الترحيب . لقد اظهروكم في كتابكم الأمل
 بالخطوة التي اتجاها لها وبالشجاعة التي وصفتموا بها وعنه تقديمه بؤنفاً التي تحورت
 بالاشارة مناداتكم بطلبها ، كقولها لا على تنظيم العميد وروحوتكم اتمام . واني ابر تقديري
 لشجرتكم هذا الصادر عنه الرغبة في تأييد الصلابة والولاء لنا . انما سوف لا ارفى
 كتابي هذا وانه انما على المسئلة العظيمة الهمة لا شك في انكم تنظرون على لقد
 اتمت المؤثر الرسمي حينه ودرس البنفسج من العرقا . انتم انما تقدمت من الدرس وقال العرب
 ما ايا دور ونظرة البرود بما . او انما من هضم انه يقولون ثم جاء الكتاب الذي به على اثر
 وقائمه بريليايا العظمي الحضر ولم يوجد به هذا الا العبد الصريح لأخيه . لكن فريد احسن السب
 فيما فيه منقحة . وقد قلت لكم عام 1929 في حينها فبعد زعماء الحركة الصهيونية بأنه لا يجب
 على ساسة البرود ان يطرقوا الباب ولا يدخلوا البيت دون ذلك اهدر وآلوق
 ارى اني كتبت في احادية من خوفي زني برحمته اتفاهم جميعه في قطعته وبرودها و
 انقلا انما الصاوة في العلم الماتح والمسهل الى العبه الاخذة تجدونه قريباً خدأ
 من مرامي الكتاب الذي انقصره وفي الاقتراح من ان لغزوه من الما رسة
 فاقولكم و ايني اعني ما اقول بماذا واحد شئ من الاستدراك والبرود كاح العرب
 اعني ابي العاشية بالأمس والسامع من انتقام من حاتم فمحتاج اتفاهم بصبح
 والسلام في هذه الاخيرة وانتموا بجانك

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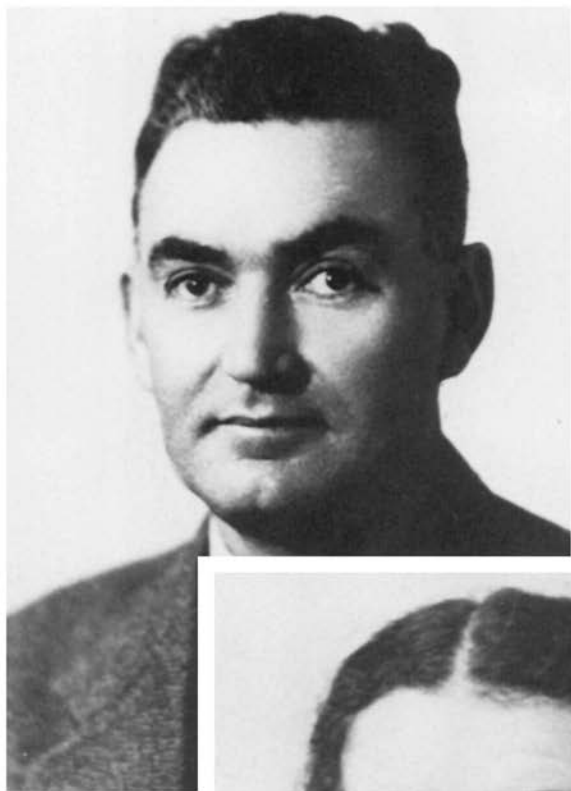


20. David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Shertok

21. Eliahu
Sasson



22. Isma'il Sidqi



23. Eliahu
Epstein (Elath)



24. Golda Meir

a “Jewish Palestine”, in any proposed federation of Middle Eastern states. Some politicians in the neighbouring countries were prepared to see a ratio of two Arabs to one Jew maintained under new arrangements, while the Green and White Books of Nuri as-Sa’id and the Amir Abdallah, respectively, offered the Jews a vaguely defined autonomous or semi-autonomous status within a future Arab federation.

All these formulations fell far short of allowing the Jews a majority or sovereignty in any part of Palestine. Notwithstanding some periodic consideration of pan-Arab solutions to the dispute, during the war the Palestinian Arabs held to positions taken up in 1939: independence for Arab Palestine, with a Jewish minority whose rights and status would be constitutionally defined and guaranteed. For many Arab leaders, the terms of the 1939 MacDonald White Paper, which froze the existing population ratio, were the farthest they would go during the forties towards answering Jewish claims.¹²

In the aftermath of World War II, the options for a Palestine solution boiled down to the following four:

- (a) an Arab state in an undivided Palestine, with minority guarantees and local autonomy for Jews (see, e.g., Document 33) – a slight revision of the original Palestinian-Arab stand of earlier decades;
- (b) a Jewish commonwealth in all of Palestine, with constitutional guarantees for the (future) Arab minority – the original Zionist stand, pleaded with greater urgency in the shadow of the Holocaust;
- (c) a federal Palestinian state with Arab and Jewish cantons or provinces – the British idea of the only solution which had a chance of being implemented without violence; and
- (d) the partition of the country into sovereign Arab and Jewish states.

The chances of a *voluntary* agreement being built on any of these formulae was remote indeed. In fact, the most urgent diplomacy of each party during 1947 and 1948 was directed towards the *imposition*, by the Powers, of a Palestine settlement favourable to its interests.

During the final years of the Mandate, the Zionists showed some tactical flexibility by abandoning their insistence on the Jewish commonwealth in all of Palestine. In trying to mobilise international backing for a partition solution in the face of strenuous Arab objections, Zionist spokesmen once more invoked the *fait accompli* argument which they had been repeating to themselves and to the British

since the late 1930s. "Once a Jewish State is established in an adequate area of Palestine," wrote Dr Weizmann in September 1946, he was

deeply convinced that [...] a new relationship will be created between us and our neighbours. We shall in all likelihood become an integral part of a Middle Eastern Federation – both they and we will realise this. There will be treaty relations, commercial relations, cultural relations, and beyond and above all this, there will be the guarantee of Great Britain and the United States (or, if you will, the United Nations), all of which will work towards collaboration and concord, perhaps more strongly than other influences have in the past worked for the contrary. I am convinced, too, that once we have a State in an adequate area of the country, and with it a real opportunity of constructive work, we shall find ourselves drawn more and more closely together with our Arab neighbours: our very separation, and our equal status with members of the Arab League, will greatly influence us all in that direction. That has been my own belief for many years past, and it remains my belief, despite all the rancour and bitterness lately engendered.¹³

Viewed with hindsight, such arguments might appear naive wishful-thinking, tragic self-deception, deliberately misleading propaganda, or a combination of all three. The fact is that it was *not* an accurate prediction of the way Arabs would react to the imposition of the U.N. partition plan a year later. Faced with such a prospect, Palestinian Arabs prepared to express their rejection primarily through a military show-down. Non-Palestinian spokesmen did not abandon completely the diplomatic option, but, except for King Abdallah, they had given up all hope of satisfactory direct dealings with the Zionist leadership. Their eleventh-hour diplomacy took the form of lobbying – in vain – for the Powers to abandon partition and impose a settlement which would prove more acceptable to the Arabs.

THE DYNAMICS OF DEADLOCK

Among the foregoing concluding comments, we have reviewed some of the reasons for the futility of the diplomacy which was aimed at resolving the Arab–Zionist conflict during the Mandate period. The

gap between the demands of the parties; the circumstances which allowed each side to cling to its full claims without feeling forced to make any significant concessions; the confusions introduced by the activities of unofficial Jewish and Arab go-betweens; the diversions caused by British actions or inaction – all these have contributed their share to the missed opportunities for a peaceful resolution to this dispute.

It is difficult to imagine any successful diplomatic solution to this conflict which does not come from the outside. But there is also an *internal* factor which deserves some comment here. Although this factor was not heavily emphasised in the foregoing pages, the dynamics of political mobilisation, and the accompanying neutralisation of internal dissent, have played a crucial and negative role in the escalation of mutual distrust and animosity.

This contribution to the progressive worsening of the conflict may be called the dynamics of deadlock. In mobilising their respective communities to make sacrifices for the sake of the national struggle, there was no place for doubts, hesitations or internal divisions. These had to be eliminated or minimised – the leaders reasoned – in order not to undermine the official stance (e.g., vis-à-vis the British) and in order not to give comfort to the “enemy”. The operative theory was that any display of weakness would only stiffen the opponent’s stance. Thus, the heroism and effectiveness of leaders came to be measured by their ability to eliminate doubts and defeatism, and to foster optimism in the midst of increasingly gloomy scenarios. In their despair, people looked for – and found – dynamic, forceful leaders, who encouraged them not to give up their respective “noble struggles”. In pursuit of nationalist goals which they defined as vital and unalterable, those leaders found it necessary to combat and discredit the activities of dissenters.

It is difficult to deny the historic importance of strong leadership to the two embattled communities, and leaders on both sides may be credited with having assured physical survival and a strong national identity for their respective peoples (the Israelis more successfully, of course, when their dispersion ended and they gained a sovereign state). But there is also a negative legacy which may be gauged in terms of the psychological damage caused to millions of people on both sides. Apart from the trauma of recurring insecurity, destruction and loss of life, generations have been brainwashed into viewing the other side through the prism of unending mutual distrust and

hatred. Even among the better-informed strata on both sides, there has been a fostering of illusions and self-delusion about one's own virtue and the other party's evil intentions (the self-righteous "double-standard" approach to arguing one's claims). And politicians on both sides have won and maintained their leadership roles almost exclusively by the dogmatic reaffirmation of demands which have been utterly irreconcilable with those of the other side and incapable of full satisfaction.

Unless this psychology is somehow broken, the cumulative effect of these leader-follower dynamics will doom both sides to an ever-worsening cycle of disenchantment and despair. What seems to be needed, in addition to the right political conditions among the main rivals for Palestine/Israel and interested third-parties, is a new psychology and a new leadership factor which can alter the protagonists' ways of thinking about this conflict. Although many leaders are slow to admit it, they have both been victims of what has been, in many ways, a "no-win" conflict for either party.

Documents

DOCUMENT 1

Proposals for a Round Table Conference, attributed to Abbas Hilmi II, January 1932

It is understood that the Arab as well as the Jew [sic] community desire to live in harmony and work for the good of the country as a whole. They desire that Palestine as a state should hold the same position in the world as is now held by independent self-governing countries.

The Arabs and Jews must arrive at a complete understanding on matters of mutual interest before they can co-operate in bringing about the revival of Palestine as an independent state. A Round Table Conference between the Arab and Jewish representative leaders should be held at Jerusalem or any other place mutually agreeable for considering all the points of difference between the two communities, under the chairmanship of a neutral person acceptable to both and agreed to by the British Government.

1. This Round Table Conference should discuss the future constitution of Palestine.
2. [It should] settle the terms on which Arab and Jewish representatives will be prepared to cooperate.
3. [It should] discuss the possibility of ensuring (a) the unity of Palestine, (b) the ideal of the National Home for the Jews, and (c) preservation of the rights and privileges of Arabs who have been in possession of the country for several centuries.
4. Among the proposals for such consideration will be included one for the division of Palestine into administrative areas on a new basis, so that the interests of the Jews can be concentrated in one unit of administration which will be called the National Home of the Jews.
5. This district will be part of the State of Palestine as a whole but will be under a constitution securing for the Jewish community full autonomy for internal affairs, while at the same time, it will guarantee them their due and proper share in the governance of the whole country.
6. [...]
7. At the present moment there is a sharp division among the Arab Executives [sic] as to whether the area to be set apart is to be strictly according to the ratio of the Jewish to the Arab population of Palestine as it is shown by the latest census. [...]
8. If the representatives agree the provincial administration of the Jewish District should be constituted on the lines of the Provincial Constitution framed for India, as explained to the Arab Executive by Moulana Shaukat Ali.

9. The main principles accepted by the League of Nations for the treatment of minorities should be applied to the minority communities in both Jewish and Arab districts.
10. The inhabitants should have the option of exchanging into another area within a limited period to be settled by the Round Table Conference.
11. After this period they will automatically be considered to have accepted the constitution with the safeguards for minorities.
12. Under no circumstances will any differentiation be made against any person because of his race or religion.
13. No law affecting the interests of either the Arabs or the Jews will be passed unless agreed to by more than half of the number of representatives of that community.
14. All matters arising out of any conflict of interest or views will be submitted to a special Judicial tribunal appointed by the Government of Palestine and an appeal may lie to the League of Nations on judicial points alone.
15. Palestine should become a member of the League of Nations on the same terms as Iraq.
16. The constitution of the Jewish district should have the same binding effect as the constitution of Palestine itself and cannot be changed.
17. The Palestine constitution shall be framed on self-governing lines, the power to rest in the hands of the elected representatives of the people.
18. The Arabs and Jews will have representation according to the population with sufficient safeguards to be settled by mutual consent for Jewish interests.
19. It will be the business of the Round Table Conference to divide provincial and central subjects for purposes of administration.
20. The question of Jerusalem raises a most difficult problem. It is clear that Jerusalem must be the capital of Palestine. Special consideration is required for the solution of this problem.

Source

Enclosure to Brodetsky to Sacher, 26 January 1932, CZA, S25/2. Cf. *Palestine Bulletin*, 19 February 1932.

DOCUMENT 2

V. Jacobson, Memorandum on the "Territorial Solution", January 1932

I

These propositions are based on several general considerations:

1. the tempo of political evolution in Palestine and the neighbouring countries.
2. the need for an agreement with the Arabs.

3. the need to gain effective support and intervention from [international] political factors.
4. the need to satisfy just Jewish demands.



1. The tempo with which very important events have succeeded one another around the Palestine question and in Palestine itself are going beyond, it seems, all the ideas which we had formed about the development of the Near East.

The affairs of Palestine, ending with the Pan-Islamic Congress [...], prove that the Arabs of Palestine have succeeded in creating a fairly strong political organisation, and there exists a real danger of considerable success for their anti-Zionist propaganda in the future.

Around Palestine, we see a big strengthening and stabilisation of the Wahhabi state, the independence of Iraq already achieved, and the imminent independence of Syria. Iraq will be entering the League of Nations this year. [...] In three years Palestine will find itself the only Category "A" Mandate, and [...] the Mandate will cease to offer sufficient guarantees for the Jewish National Home. [...]

Conclusion: Any proposal for a Zionist policy must take account of this tempo: Given the essential and decisive changes in the whole political situation, it is necessary to adapt our action and our tactics to the new conditions. The very fact that in these completely changed conditions we are putting forth propositions dated several years ago and, above all, calculated on [the basis of] a long evolution is evidence of a certain defect in this programme and already announces its inevitable failure. The continuation of methods which find themselves in opposition to the march of events will necessarily lead to a catastrophic defeat. [...]

A new plan, which does not require too long a period for its realisation, must therefore be elaborated.

2. Agreement with the Arabs is, in the opinion of us all, an indispensable condition for the success of our action. This agreement is impossible so long as there persists in the minds of the Arabs the fear not so much of a Jewish majority as of the domination of the Arabs by the Jews. [...]

When we try to find a way to give the Arabs sufficient appeasements, we find ourselves absolutely powerless, since we cannot obviously offer them proposals of a "numerical" nature, putting a limit on our immigration, etc. ... and particularly because they won't believe a word of it. If they believe in Jewish desires of conquest, they will surely say to themselves that even a Jewish minority, better equipped, richer and more intelligent, will end up dominating them over time.

Conclusion: A political plan which hopes to come to be accepted by the Arabs must reckon with the psychosis (if it is one) of Arab fear: it must therefore find other means of conciliation. [...] Their grievances against us are: the loss of their strength and political influence, which was 100% in their hands until the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, which is why they demand the annulment

of these two documents. Next, they object to the dismemberment of Palestine and its separation from Transjordan, which offers a natural reserve for the development of Palestine. Lastly, they want to rebuild a Union with Syria to form a Syro-Palestinian political entity: Palestine remains and will remain an irredenta for Syria. Our plans must take account of this fact. [...]

3. [...]

4. To satisfy just Jewish demands the plan must provide possibilities of a numerically significant installation of Jews, forming a unit with sovereign autonomy which would constitute for them the normal guarantees for their normal development.

II

Here are the main lines of the "territorial solution" to our problem.

This is a repetition, on a larger scale, of the proposals made in 1902 by Dr Herzl to the Sultan. [...]

I would like to propose, as a territorial base, the parts of Palestine starting with the Negev, all of the Mediterranean coast to the northern border, the Emek, the part north of Beisan (approximately one-third), the Jordan Valley north of Lake Tiberias with the Huleh, and the acquisition of one and a half million dunams in the areas adjacent to Transjordan, as well as those bordering on Syria.

This would mean the loss of Jerusalem, the Dead Sea and the whole hill region.

The region indicated above would be, it would seem, sufficient for the installation, over the next ten to twelve years, of five to six hundred thousand Jews, and, during a generation of 25–30 years, between one and one and a half million Jews.

The Jewish population installed in that region would obtain, from the start, all the rights and prerogatives of a politically autonomous and independent people. The Jewish National Home would be constituted on a unified territory, presenting a single bloc with defined boundaries guaranteed by international law. This fact could be seriously presented as a political "saturation", as the realisation of [our] hopes for the creation of an independent Jewish entity, a Jewish National Home, equivalent in effect to the Jewish State sanctioned by Zionist expectations and tradition.

Consequently, the supposed danger of Jewish "domination" over the Palestinian Arabs would lose importance and would be classified among the psychoses which have no right to the help and support of responsible political factors. One can hope that, with time, Arab fears will disappear and, with that, they would appreciate the value and the importance of collaboration with the Jews in the work of Renaissance of the Near East. There is no doubt, and we have had some prior experience in conversations with certain representatives of Near Eastern countries which confirms it, that in the Near East in general the people would greatly value such collaboration, and that our solution would find serious supporters in these circles. If we accept, for the following pages of this

exposé, the name of Erez-Israel for the Jewish part while leaving the name of Palestine for the Arab part, we could say that any combination which assures to Transjordan, Syria and Palestine the collaboration of Erez-Israel will become desirable to Syria and the other Arab countries as much, or perhaps even more, than it is to the Jews themselves. [...]

One can imagine that Erez-Israel might arrive at very interesting arrangements with the other states of the Confederation concerning Jewish immigration. [...] One can hope that, on the basis of these arrangements, several hundred thousand, maybe even several million, Jews would be able to enter different parts of the Near East which are in great need of an influx of human resources, but which will always be afraid of the spectre of Jewish political desires so long as these desires are not satisfied in a clear and precise manner, with bi-lateral and multi-lateral guarantees sanctioned by international law and by the supervision of the League of Nations. [...] One can easily imagine conditions in which a considerable portion of [...] Arab farmers would decide to move their homes and go to set themselves up, with the economic and financial assistance of the Jews, in other parts of the Confederation: in Syria, Transjordan, or even in Iraq or [Arab] Palestine. To put into effect, in these modest proportions of several thousand men, this exchange of populations would not provoke any serious agitation and would be considered quite natural, as a case where a Jewish collectivity, legally recognised as an autonomous and independent political entity, is moving naturally towards a rapid and considerable increase in its Jewish population. This would not be, then, the manifestation of a secret design, of a desire to supplant the Arab in an Arab country. In these conditions one can really imagine that Erez-Israel would be able – with the help of world Jewry and on the basis of a system of loans and financial measures which are closed to the Jewish Agency but which would be open to a recognised government of the sovereign and independent Jewish National Home – to reach soon, perhaps in five or six years and surely in the space of ten to twelve years, a very large Jewish majority. [...]

It also appears that the realisation of this dream of autonomy and absolute independence will enormously influence the feelings and attitudes of world Jewry and the non-Jewish world towards the Zionist ideal. If we have confidence in the Jewish constructive effort we must realise that the achievement of this project – independence, rapid blossoming of a flourishing economic organism, appeasement of the Arabs, constitutional and international guarantees, clarity and precision [...] – will provoke a great enthusiasm around the J.N.H. and will push Jews into sustaining and supporting it with an impetus and with efforts much different than in the past.

One must still mention some objections which can be made to this project. Some would say that [...] the Arabs won't agree to it. We can reply: the Arabs will reject any proposal, and they will only give in to a certain pressure coming from our allies and our friends. They will give in only on condition of receiving certain profit or certain advantages in exchange: it is obvious that, on the condition of their consent to these proposals, the Jews will drop all their opposition to the annulment of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, at least for the part destined to remain Arab, and, as indicated above, the Jews will

promote a certain unity in this part of the Near East. [...] But, above all, [these proposals] would cancel out all the serious and justified reasons for the fear of Jewish domination in an Arab country.

Some might say: the Arabs, according to this project, must give up the best parts of Palestine. This is not quite true. [...] The organisation of all the countries into one Confederation would remove a large part of the sharpness of the Arab objections. It seems to us that it is much easier to obtain support from political elements who can exert political, intellectual and moral pressure on the Arabs in defence of our project than in defence of all the others which the Arabs always criticise, and with a certain justice, for the tendency towards Jewish domination! [...]

Source

Enclosure to Jacobson to Weizmann, 20 January 1932, WA. My translation from the French.

DOCUMENT 3

M. Shertok, Note of Conversation between Dr H. Arlosoroff and Awni Abd al-Hadi, at the home of G. Agronsky, 12 February 1932

The conversation began with matters of the distant past [...] when the Abd al-Hadi family was prominent and respected in the country. [...] From there he went on to his own history – his participation in the Arab Nationalist Congress in Paris before the War and his life in Paris during the War. [...]

From there the talk moved on to the role that the European states were playing in the East. Awni Bey did not deny the many economic benefits which European administration had brought to backward lands, but he refused to recognise this as sufficient compensation for their political subjugation.

When, in this connection, the question of relations between the communities in Palestine was raised, Awni answered that he had already come to the definite conclusion that there was no point in negotiations or in attempts at mutual understanding. The goal of the Jews was to take over the country and the goal of the Arabs was to fight against this take-over. He understood the Jews very well and respected them, but their interests were in absolute contradiction to the interests of the Arabs, and he did not see here any possibility of agreement. For this reason he had avoided meeting with Dr Weizmann during his last visit to London.

Dr Arlosoroff commented that this stance was very easy and convenient and did not require any civil courage. Even among the Jews there were many who held [such a view]. It meant that one allowed events to take over, without making any effort to direct their development. However, if Awni were to consider not only the interests of the Arabs but also the good of the country in which they

lived, he would have to ask himself where these developments were leading and whether they held out a blessing for this country. If he would face reality with open eyes he would see that the Jews were already, today, a large force in the country which it was impossible to ignore or belittle. All the foolish rejoicing at [Jewish] misfortunes in the Arabic press over their economic distress and the daily [...] declarations of the bankruptcy of Zionism were not changing the situation. Even in these times of distress the Zionist endeavour was continuing to strengthen itself economically, continuing to plant roots. The country would never revert to being a purely Arab land as it once was and realistic Arab political leaders had to draw the conclusions from this.

Mr Agronsky reminded Awni Bey of their conversation of a few days ago on constitutional questions and the principles of equality and parity.

Awni Bey affirmed that he recognised complete equal rights for all Jews living in the country.

Dr Arlosoroff explained that, in practice, equal personal rights meant majority rule and subjugation of the minority.

Mr Shertok stated that if Awni Bey was afraid of Jewish domination of the country, that is, their increasing to become a majority, then he should understand that this equality of rights that he now set out, while it supported the [current] rule of the Arab majority, was liable to backfire on the Arabs in the future, when the Jews became the majority. Instead of this, we should lay down equality for the national units, without consideration of the numerical strength of each, now or in the future.

Dr Arlosoroff stressed that even today, if there really was personal equality in the country as a whole, meaning Arab rule, this was not the case in the major cities. In Jerusalem the majority was Jewish, as was the case in Jaffa and Tel Aviv taken together; in Haifa the Jews were [proportionally] stronger than in the country as a whole. Would Awni Bey agree to granting the Jews in those three centres the authority due to them in accordance with their numbers? In place of this, the Jews were suggesting a formula which gave a guarantee against one nation ruling over the other at all times.

Awni Bey ended the conversation because of a toothache which had been bothering him all this time, and asked Mr Agronsky to invite those present to return to continue the talk. [...]

Source

CZA, S25/3051. My translation from the Hebrew.

DOCUMENT 4

Minute of Conference between Messrs Neumann and Farbstein and the Amir of Transjordan, 27 November 1932

The meeting which had been arranged through Mohammed Bey Ansin [i.e., al-Unsi] took place in the garden of the latter's home in Transjordan, a short distance from Allenby Bridge.

Before the arrival of the Emir, we spent more than an hour with Mohammed Bey discussing the various questions involved in the project under consideration. Our discussion was quite animated.

We made it clear that neither we nor our friends could be interested in a lease of the Emir's lands unless it gave us the right and full opportunity to bring in and colonize as many Jews as we desired and were able to settle. Further, that it was necessary that adequate protection be provided and that various contingencies should be foreseen against any difficulties in view of the nature of the lease and its term of 99 years.

One of the points we discussed was the necessity of obtaining the consent of the High Commissioner. Mohammed Bey strenuously opposed our raising the matter with the Emir, who could never agree to the implication that he was not free to dispose of his private lands as he saw fit. We agreed not to raise the point during the interview.

Another point which we discussed at some length was that of getting the official sanction of the Transjordan Government. Mohammed Bey would not concede that such a sanction was required. He said that he had no objection, however, to our raising the matter with the Emir if we saw fit.

One of the demands which he put up was that the lease should provide for our employing Arabs to the extent of 50% of all the workers which the Company would employ in unskilled labour. We stated that such a condition could not be acceptable.

Many other questions of lesser importance were thrashed out.

When the Emir arrived, he conferred with Mohammed Bey privately before coming out to meet us. In this private conversation, he presumably learned about the various questions which we had been discussing.

When we met together, we stated to him that we had heard of his intention to lease his lands; that we ourselves were not the capitalists who were prepared to take over the land and develop it, but might be willing and able to interest our friends. It was, therefore, necessary for us to understand and to hear directly from him what he had in mind. It had been told to him beforehand, and we also informed him[,] that we were members of the Zionist Executive in charge of Economic Departments of work.

The Emir confirmed the fact that he was desirous of leasing his lands for a long period of years, which he felt was not only in his own interest, but in the interest of his country as well. [...] He could see that we were concerned over the question of security, etc. He understood our misgivings. He did not regard them as evidence of lack of confidence in himself personally, but realized fully that the

circumstances were to blame. In view of the events of the past few years, particularly in Palestine, we were warranted in entertaining such doubts and misgivings. He wished us, however, to have confidence in him. We replied that we have confidence in him and hoped he would have the same confidence in us. [...]

[The Amir would have to consult his immediate advisers on the business questions.] We would then meet again or he would communicate with us through Mohammed Bey.

The Emir said that since Zionism had been mentioned, he wished to say that it was his desire to bridge the gulf which now separated the two races. It would be his endeavour to do so and he hoped that we would use our influence in the same direction.

If this particular transaction is consummated, it will be the first of a series of other and perhaps more important transactions and concessions. In this way, we would demonstrate how Jews and Arabs could cooperate in furtherance of their common interests. [...] He also stated that it would be necessary for him to make known through the press that he was desirous of leasing his lands in order to give an opportunity to whoever was interested to come forward. He knew, however, that those who might be inclined to criticize such a transaction as we were discussing, would be least prepared to come forward and develop the land. It was necessary to be discreet and avoid harmful publicity until the matter was concluded.

The Emir's attitude throughout was courteous and cordial. The conversation was replete on both sides with expressions of confidence and good will.

The meeting lasted about an hour.
Jerusalem, 2.12.32.

Source

CZA, S25/3487.

DOCUMENT 5

Two Accounts of Meeting between D. Ben-Gurion and Musa al-Alami, March 1934

(a) Ben-Gurion's Version

[In the winter of 1933–34,] I had decided to enter into talks with representatives of the Arabs in order to clarify the question of participation in government. It was clear that a Legislative Council would soon exist if another initiative on a constitutional arrangement, agreed upon between the Jews and the Arabs, were not successfully taken.¹

I knew that the Arabs in Palestine had no authorized spokesmen and that the leaders were divided in their views and attitudes. After consulting with Moshe

Sharett [then Shertok ...] I decided to meet a certain Arab, who had a reputation as a nationalist and a man not to be bought by money or by office, but who was not a Jew-hater either. The man was Musa Alami [...]

The prevailing assumption in the Zionist movement then was that we were bringing a blessing to the Arabs of the country and that they therefore had no reason to oppose us. In the first talk I had with Musa Alami [...] that assumption was shattered. Musa Alami told me that he would prefer the land to remain poor and desolate even for another hundred years, until the Arabs themselves were capable of developing it and making it flower, and I felt that as a patriotic Arab he had every right to this view.

Our conversation was frank, and Musa Alami gave me the impression of a sincere, straightforward and sensible man. He complained that the Jews showed contempt for the opinion of the Arabs, and that the previous members of the Executive, Kisch and Sacher on different occasions (before the outbreak of the riots, during the Shaw Commission hearings, etc.),² had acted unfairly.

He particularly emphasized the pessimistic feeling that prevailed among the Arabs: they were gradually being ousted from all the important positions, the best parts of the country were passing into Jewish hands (while Arabs were also benefitting from this, the situation of the masses was desperate), the Jews had acquired the large concessions, the national budget was expended on defense, for which the Arabs had no need, there was an abundance of high-salaried British officials – all for the sake of a Jewish national home; an Arab Palestine had no need for this officialdom. [...] Perhaps the Jews were compelled to come here, but for the Arabs all was bleak and bitter. They were also apprehensive about their political future, but Musa Alami was concerned above all about the economic positions, and these were collapsing one by one.

I asked whether there was no possibility of agreement and mutual help instead of hatred and sterile opposition. The fact was that the Arab fellah and the Arab laborer were better off here than in Transjordan, where there wasn't a single Jew, or in the neighboring Arab countries. [...]

Musa Alami was sorry about the chances [of an agreement], but he could see no way out. Would the Jews stop buying lands?¹

I said that, first of all, we must seek a solution to the political questions, because in my opinion the Arabs had no reason for fears with regard to the economic question. In this area it would not be difficult to reach an agreement that would satisfy both sides. The main difficulty was in the political field. We wanted immigration unrestricted by political considerations; we did not wish to remain a minority, and there was the question of régime and the final arrangements for the country.¹

Musa Alami spoke with bitter mockery about the Legislative Council proposal.³ It was a mere deception. All the power would remain in the hands of the English, while the elected representatives – Arabs and Jews alike – would be able to do nothing but talk; the Government would do as it pleased. Nevertheless, the Arabs would apparently participate in the Legislative Council, because they had gained nothing from their refusal to join the council established twelve years before.

I asked him whether the Arabs would agree to parity.

His answer, as I had expected, was absolutely negative. Why should they? he asked. Did the Arabs not constitute four-fifths of the country's population? Why should they make such a concession?

I said that I could well understand that stand, but possibly another proposal was feasible. Instead of a council without any real power, perhaps we should together demand a share in executive authority. The English were surely not keen on having us participate in the government, but if the Jews and Arabs agreed among themselves and presented a joint demand, the English might be forced to consider it – and the Jews would agree to such a demand if they were assured of parity in the government. Would the Arabs agree?

Such a plan might serve as a basis for discussion between the Jews and the Arabs, Musa Alami replied.

I said that we would seek a common political platform, and then I put to him the crucial question: "Is there any possibility at all of reaching an understanding with regard to the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, including Transjordan?"

He replied with a question. Why should the Arabs agree? he asked. Perhaps the Jews would manage to achieve this even without Arab consent, but why should they give their consent to this?

I answered that in return we would agree to support the establishment of an Arab Federation in the neighboring countries and an alliance of the Jewish State with that federation, so that the Arabs in Palestine, even if they constituted a minority in that country, would not hold a minority position, since they would be linked with millions of Arabs in the neighboring countries.

After brief reflection, Musa Alami said that the proposal could be discussed, but what would happen in the meantime? [Return to discussion of the Legislative Council proposal.]

The hour was already late, and we parted. [Ben-Gurion refers to difficulties of arranging a further meeting during the coming months.]

(b) Musa al-Alami's Version

[Musa] was visited at his home by two of the most important Jews, Ben Gurion and Shertok. [...] Their avowed abject was to have a general talk on the future, and Shertok opened the ball [sic] with a long discourse in familiarly soothing terms, in which he likened Palestine to "a crowded hall in which there is always room for more people", and asserted that it could always contain the Jews who wanted to come in without any vital harm being done to the Arabs, who on the contrary would benefit from the development which Jewish capital would make possible.

He was, however, brushed aside by the blunter Ben Gurion, who snapped out that it was useless to talk like that to a realist like Musa Alami. The Jews had nowhere to go but Palestine, whereas the Arabs had at their disposal the broad and undeveloped lands of the Arab world. What he and Shertok wanted to know was whether there was any possibility of the Arabs being brought to agree to the creation of a Jewish State which would include both Palestine and Transjordan (the latter was a new suggestion to which he returned several times), in return for

Jewish support for the creation of a Federation of independent Arab States. The existence of this latter, on good terms with the new Jewish State, would prevent the Palestine Arabs from feeling “crushed” even if they became a minority in the latter.

Musa listened in silence, and when they had done contented himself with a reminder that he was a Government servant and not a politician, and a reference to the numerous Zionist publications which betrayed both expansionist designs and hatred of the Arabs.

They parted on friendly terms, and Musa had been favourably impressed by Ben Gurion’s forthrightness. Nevertheless the conversation marked the final stage in his education on the nature and aims of Zionism. Despite all that he had seen and read during the previous ten years, he had remained, as he says, “incredibly naive” about the ultimate intentions of the Zionists, who had always been careful in their official pronouncements to keep their desiderata within the limits of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate, i.e., a National Home *in* Palestine. But now he had heard these leaders, who were not reckoned extremists, making crystal clear that they were aiming at nothing less than the complete control of the country.

Sources

- (a) D. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 15–17 and *Memoirs* II, 163f. (my translation of the Hebrew). Breakdown and order of paragraphs differs slightly from the originals.
 (b) G. Furlonge, *Palestine Is My Country*, 102f.

Notes

1. Preceding paragraph appears in *Memoirs*, but not in *My Talks*.
2. “Kisch ... etc.” appears in *Memoirs*, but not in *My Talks*.
3. Preceding sentence appears in *Memoirs*, but not in *My Talks*.

DOCUMENT 6

Two Accounts of Meeting between David Ben-Gurion and Awni Abd al-Hadi, 18 July 1934

(a) Ben-Gurion’s Version:

[...] After Magnes introduced us, he started the conversation. Speaking in broken English, he opened with the land question. The Jews were buying up the best lands and dispossessing the Arabs. All the valleys were in their hands: the coastal valley, the Jezreel valley, the Huleh. Weizmann and others were always proclaiming goodwill towards the Arabs – where was this goodwill? In what form had it actually been manifested? Do you think you can fool us with sweet-sounding proclamations? What have you done to prove your goodwill? The settlement of the Jews undermines the existence of the Arabs. It is of no benefit

to us. Individuals among us have become rich, but the people are losing their positions. The Jews have introduced speculation into the country. They pay exaggerated prices for land, and even if a few Arabs do plant orange groves with the Jewish money they have obtained, who can guarantee that in the end those groves will not be sold too? Who can resist the insane prices paid by the Jews? The English are helping to dispossess the Arabs [of] the land, contrary to the Mandate. He was planning to go to court to protest the illegality of the Jewish purchases. He knew that he would lose, for there was no justice in the land, but he wished to try. The terms of the Mandate provided that the Jews be helped without causing any harm to the Arabs. But the sale of land did cause harm and it was thus a violation of the Mandate. The behavior of the Jewish National Fund [Keren Kayemet] was particularly reprehensible. It did not leave the Arabs any trace of land, he said [...].

Both Dr Magnes and I tried to prove to him that the settlement of the Jews was a blessing to the Arab fellahin [...]. Auni disputed this. He maintained that in any case the land was being transferred to the Jews, and even though the Arabs might not need it at the moment they would require it in a generation or two, when their numbers would be greater.

I said that if he was opposed to all land purchases under any conditions there was of course no possibility of a mutual understanding. We had been compelled to come and settle without the consent of the Arabs, and we would continue to do so in the future if necessary, but we would prefer to act on the basis of an understanding and mutual agreement. This was conceivable if the Arabs recognized our right to return to our land, while we would recognize the right of the Arabs to remain on their land. By developing the country we would make possible a larger and more firmly established population. [...] On the basis of our settlement experience and of detailed scientific research, we were convinced that there was room in the country both for Arabs who would gain their livelihood from their land and for large-scale Jewish settlement. We wanted all the Arabs that were working the land to remain where they were.

But under Jewish ownership? Auni asked.

No, I replied, we wanted to acquire the surplus. There was plenty of land in the country that was entirely uncultivated and unpopulated, and it should be put under intensive cultivation to permit a greater population density.

Auni had his doubts, and he returned to the arguments the Arabs had put forward before the Shaw Commission [...].

I told him that, while the land question was of great importance, to us as well as to the Arabs, it would be impossible to arrive at an understanding on that matter unless there were grounds for agreement between us on the central issue. And the central issue was: Is it possible to reconcile the ultimate goals of the Jewish people and the Arab people? Our ultimate goal was the independence of the Jewish people in Palestine, on both sides of the Jordan, not as a minority but as a community of several millions. In my opinion it was possible to create over a period of forty years, if Transjordan was included, a community of four million Jews in addition to an Arab community of two million. The goal of the Arab people was independence, and the unity of all Arab countries. If the Arabs agreed to our return to our land, we would help them with our political, financial and moral support to bring about the rebirth and unity of the Arab people.

Auni became enthusiastic when he heard this¹ and said that if with our help the Arabs could achieve unity he would agree not to four million, but to five or six million, Jews in Palestine. He would go and shout in the streets, he would tell everyone he knew, in Palestine, in Syria, in Iraq, in Damascus and Baghdad: Let's give the Jews as many [immigrants] as they want, as long as we achieve our unity.

When his enthusiasm abated he reverted to his mocking and sceptical tone and asked what guarantees the Arabs would obtain. The Jews in Palestine would increase in number to four million, while the Arabs in the other countries would be left with the English, the French, and the promise given by the Jews. Did we think Arabs could rely on our promises and declarations?

I told him that if we should reach agreement on the main point we would seek together practical means whereby each side could insure the interests of the other. Even [though] we had not yet attained four million in the country, the realization of Zionism was a long process, and the rebirth of the Arab people would also not come about overnight.

Auni asked whether we would help the Arabs get rid of France and England.

I answered that I had to speak frankly on this matter too. We would not fight against the English. We, too, had grievances against the Mandatory Government, perhaps no less than those held by the Arabs. But the English had helped us, and we wanted them to continue to do so. And we were faithful to our friends. The building up of the Arab economy, the raising of the level of culture, public education, the development of the various Arab countries – all these preceded and conditioned political liberation. In that positive task we were prepared to render all possible assistance to the Arab people. The only question was whether the Arabs were prepared to let us to work peacefully and undisturbed in Palestine.

Dr Magnes framed the question as follows: Were the Arabs willing to sacrifice Palestine in order to attain the broader goals in the other Arab countries?

I commented that we did not wish the Arabs to "sacrifice" Palestine. The Palestinian Arabs would not be sacrificed so that Zionism might be realized. [...] The Arabs of Palestine would remain where they were, their lot would improve, and even politically they would not be dependent on us, even after we came to constitute the vast majority of the population, for there was a basic difference between our relation to Palestine and that of the Arabs. For us, the Land was everything, *and there was nothing else*. For the Arabs, Palestine was only a small portion of the large and numerous Arab countries. Even when the Arabs became a minority in Palestine they would not be a minority in their territory, which extended from the Mediterranean coast to the Persian Gulf, and from the Taurus Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean. [...] For the Jewish people, it was essential that they be the majority here, as otherwise they would not be independent. But the Arabs could not turn into a minority.

Dr Magnes asked whether the Arabs in their various countries really felt their unity.

Auni answered that, while this might not yet be true of the masses, the Arab intelligentsia in all countries – Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Tunis, Morocco – did feel they belonged to one culture, one past, one nation.

The talk lasted three hours, and we parted on very friendly terms.

(b) Awni Abd al-Hadi's Version²

[...] A long discussion took place between us, lasting three hours. I made notes of the talk which took place between us immediately after they left.

Ben-Gurion began the discussion after Dr Magnes had introduced me to him. Dr Magnes, who was often making approaches to the Arabs on the pretext that he did not believe in the Zionist policy, told me that Ben-Gurion had asked him to bring him into contact with Arab nationalists who were not corrupted by money [...]. I felt that it would be in my interest to become informed about the intentions of this well-known Zionist leader in Palestine. [...]

Ben-Gurion said: I came to speak with you about our case, the case of the Jews. The Jews desired to reach an agreement and come to an understanding with the Arabs, instead of feuding with each other. He said: We recognise the right of the Arabs to remain on their lands, if they recognise our right to settle in Palestine.

Here I was unable to listen to the lies he was telling. I interrupted him, saying: Palestine, Mr Ben-Gurion, is an Arab country and not a Jewish country. The right of the Arabs to remain on their lands and in their country does not require your recognition. You are foreigners in this country. As for the Palestinian Jews who have lived with the Arabs in peace, they enjoy the same rights as the Arabs enjoy, without discrimination. As for the Balfour Declaration, a foreigner who did not rule [Palestine] issued it to a foreigner who was not entitled [to it].

As soon as that Declaration was issued, we saw the British Government give all the lands [...] to Jewish companies. We saw her exert great efforts to facilitate the transfer of Arab lands to Jews by decreeing oppressive taxes and enacting unfair laws. We also saw the Jews buying some lands from people of weak character. In this way, the Jews owned most of the good Arab lands, the lands of non-Palestinian Arabs living outside Palestine [...]. You are active in tempting the fellahin, taking over their lands by means of the greatest calamity and horrible evil with which we are afflicted: your great company called the Keren Kayemet. [...] It was not enough that this company bought extensive lands from the rich people living outside Palestine; rather, this company has started enticing the poor among the fellahin with large sums to rob them of the lands of their fathers and grandfathers. The result of this unjust policy is that the Jews' land area has begun to grow, while the Arabs' land area is starting to diminish. The Arabs need every inch of their lands.

I told Ben-Gurion that the damage afflicting the Arabs because of the Jews' taking over the lands in the country has already reached great proportions. I had decided to file a suit against the English Government [...] in the highest court [...]. The laws of the country [i.e., the terms of the Mandate?], as you know, do not permit any act or measures which cause harm to the Arabs.

Here Ben-Gurion said: But, in this situation, if you decide to pursue something like that policy, then that doesn't leave room for an understanding between us, and this is regrettable. The Jews will take all pains to settle themselves on the lands of Palestine. If the Arabs try to prevent them, the Arabs will be testing their muscle and the Jews will be testing their abilities. The only result of that would be tragedy and the shedding of innocent blood by both parties. He began to explain the great advantages which the Arabs would gain from the settlement of

Jews in Palestine, from the improvement of methods of work, the increase in their income, and the help of the Jews to the Arabs [in the quest] for independence and unity.

Here I told him fervently and in a severe tone: You speak, Mr Ben-Gurion, about money, and about helping us with our independence and unity, in exchange for the Arabs conceding Palestine to the Jews on both West and East Banks [of the Jordan]. I am talking about the homeland and its sanctity. The homeland is not sold for a price, and therefore it is not possible, Mr Ben-Gurion, for us to come together.

Sources:

- (a) D. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 18–21. Cf. Heb. version, with very slight additions, in *Memoirs* II, 165–7.
 (b) *An-Nahar*, 31 January 1968, and A. Abd al-Hadi, *Private Papers*, 68–70. My translation from the Arabic. Sequence rearranged slightly.

Notes

1. This is perhaps the most sharply disputed aspect of Ben-Gurion's account. Is it possible that Ben-Gurion mistook what might have been Awni's loud sarcasm for enthusiasm? On the other hand, Awni's daughter told me that her father, recalling the event to her, said he had been so furious that he had almost thrown Ben-Gurion out of the house. (Interview, Arab Abd al-Hadi, Cairo, February 1983.)
2. Awni was responding to *An-Nahar's* publication (10 January 1968) of a letter from Ben-Gurion to French President Charles de Gaulle, in which the Israeli leader gave his account of the meeting. In presenting his own account, Awni commented: "I saw it my duty to make known the truth which Ben-Gurion wished to falsify in his letter to President de Gaulle. [...] The aim of Ben-Gurion was to twist what was said in order to portray the Arabs to the world as a people who sold their homeland for material [...] benefit. [...] I want to declare the whole truth so that these lies would not be used against the Arab nation."

DOCUMENT 7

A.S. al-Khalidi, Proposals for the Solution of the Arab-Jewish Question of Palestine on the Basis of the Cantonization of the Country and the Formation of an Arab and Jewish State, July 1934

The proposals outlined in this memorandum are by no means new. Various attempts have been made in the past to solve the Palestine question on the basis of cantonization and have for some reason or another failed. The proposals however came from the Jewish camps. The present scheme is based on a broad and just consideration of the present situation, and on a clear understanding and sympathy with just and moderate claims of the two conflicting camps. It is believed that after serious deliberation, the present proposals should prove beneficial and satisfactory to both sides, Arab and Jewish. [...]

The present situation in Palestine could by no means be taken as normal. The position is potentially dangerous. The reason for this we need not enter into. Whether we like it or not we have to admit that disturbances are bound to occur now and then of a much [more?] serious nature [than October 1933?]. Peace is a thing which Palestine cannot claim to enjoy. The proposals here submitted will put an end to this hesitant and unsettled state, and Jews and Arabs will enjoy for ever the element of security which we cannot admit they now enjoy. Once the political questions are solved the country though divided will reap the seeds of peace and security. The present proposals should not be taken as a temporary settlement, but as a final solution. The Balfour Declaration will have to be cancelled when the present arrangement comes into force. International ratification of the powers will have to be obtained together with the consent of world Jewry.

[Proposed boundaries of the cantons described.] The Jews now possess about 1,500,000 dunums. The [Jewish] canton will include more land to the extent of 1,000,000 dunums, thus making it 2,500,000.

The following towns will be declared neutral and Holy[:] they are Jerusalem, Hebron, Bethlehem, Nazareth and Safad. Bethlehem and Nazareth being totally Arab will be attached to the Arab canton and the status quo [sic] will be preserved.

It is noteworthy that the Jewish canton will comprise the best lands of Palestine and as such the Jews will be able to take into their canton as many immigrants as their capacity can take.

The Jewish existence in Palestine will depend on the economic success and this in turn depends on

- (1) Industry
- (2) Intensive cultivation.

The Jewish canton therefore should satisfy Jewish ideals in having established in Palestine a Jewish national Home.

The Jews will further be able to settle in Jerusalem, Safad and Hebron towns.

It is understood that some transfer of property and population is bound to take place, but meanwhile Arabs residing in the Jewish canton will have to abide by the laws and regulations of the Jewish canton and vice versa, it being understood that their civil and religious rights will be protected. They can appeal at any time to the Supreme Court which shall be preserved in Jerusalem.

Subsequent to that, two independent and widely autonomous local governments will be set [up,] one Arab and the other Jewish. These two governments will be entirely run by Jews and Arabs with limited British advice.

The cantons will then enter into agreement with the Mandatory Power for a period of some years, preparatory to their becoming members of the League of Nations.

Steps will be taken to join Trans-Jordan to the Arab canton under Emir 'Abdullah and this should satisfy the Arabs and compensate their loss of what was lately in their hands.

A central Council will then be formed in Jerusalem with Arabs, Jews and British on it which will be responsible for Religious sites, the Supreme and

Mixed Courts, Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, Railways, Currency and Defence in both cantons.

All other government activities will be deputed to the local government:

- (1) Law Courts up [?] District Court
- (2) Education
- (3) Agriculture
- (4) Local Police
- (5) Public Works etc.

The Arabic language and the Hebrew language will be declared official in the Arab and Hebrew cantons respectively. The Emir 'Abdullah will act as head of the Executive Council of the two cantons.

Independent and separate Legislative Councils in both cantons will be formed which will have jurisdiction to enact [laws] within the terms of agreement. Jews and Arabs willing to migrate to the other canton will have to abide by the rules and regulations of the canton, and the same thing applies to ownership of land. Immigration and ownership of land in both cantons will be completely in the hands of the Legislative Council subject to agreement.

It is the candid and firm opinion of the proposer that these proposals are feasible and practicable. They should ultimately lead to the co-operation and better understanding between the two kindred races. Add to this that the expenses of Police, transportation and duplication of work etc. will be diminished and directed towards productive concerns.

As to Great Britain she will have attained the following aims:

- (1) Fulfilment of promises both to Jews and Arabs.
- (2) Ensuring British interests in Palestine by creating a free port of Haifa.
- (3) The Palestine troubles and disturbances etc. will cease.
- (4) The prestige of Great Britain will be immensely enhanced.

P.S. The extreme Arab and Jewish camps will probably refuse these proposals[,] so might some of those who are now influencing more or less the trend of politics in the land[. B]ut this should not matter[,] for if the Jews will re-consider the situation and take into consideration that the friendship of the Arabs[,] who should ultimately see the advantages of the proposal, is far better than relying on force.

Once separated the two races will come to realize how much they have in common. Many will discover that they must have been working under an illusion.

Source

Enclosure in Khalidi to Magnes, 23 July 1934, CAHJP, P3/2436.

DOCUMENT 8

Three Accounts of Meeting between D. Ben-Gurion and Ihsan al-Jabiri and the Amir Shakib Arslan, Geneva, 23 September 1934

(a) Ihsan al-Jabiri's Version

Following the pressing appeals of a number of friends, we agreed to receive Ben-Gurion in Geneva. He wished to talk to us about the Jewish problem in Palestine and to propose a number of practical solutions which had been put before his committee [i.e., the J.A.E.].

To tell the truth, we hesitated a long time before agreeing to the visit, because we suspected that it might have been planned as propaganda for the Zionist movement. But after receiving information as to Ben-Gurion's serious nature, we decided that it would be worthwhile to hear his proposals while at the same time learning of the real aim of Zionism from an authorised source. Naturally the talks had no official character. This was an informal exchange of views without any commitments on either side. [...] We told Ben-Gurion that we would listen to his proposals with the greatest attention.

He opened with an introduction which included the causes of immigration to Palestine, the aims of the Zionist movement and the urgent motives for Jewish settlement in that country. He detailed the various stages the Jews have gone through in different countries, and he concluded with the absolute necessity of making Palestine *a Jewish homeland and a Jewish State*. That could not be prevented, he declared, but he believed that it was necessary to reach an agreement with the Arabs.

We asked him how many immigrants the Zionist Agency intended to bring into the country and what he thought was the maximum absorptive capacity of the country. He stated frankly that their claim applied not only to Palestine but to Transjordan as well. According to their experts, the two countries could absorb between six to eight million Jews. He explained in greater detail the material and spiritual factors that draw the Jews to Palestine. He had come to ask quite simply what compensation the Arabs might demand for agreeing to the establishment of a Jewish State in both of these countries, immediately adding that the Arabs who did not wish to emigrate from their country would be free to remain and their land would not be stolen from them.

We felt it our duty to ask him whether he was talking seriously, for we could not keep from smiling when we heard such nonsense. Nevertheless, we wanted to get to the bottom of the matter and we asked Mr Ben-Gurion what compensation the Jews would make to the Arabs in return for their sacrifices.

He answered: "We will extend political and economic aid to the Arabs. The political aid will come from the mobilisation of Jewish forces on behalf of the Arabs in Syria. The economic aid will be in the form of capital investment in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen, looking to their economic development."

We replied: "In short, you are proposing to us the evacuation of a country [for the sake of] seven or eight million inhabitants, in return for some vague political

assistance and economic aid of which these Arab countries have no urgent need. [...A]s you see, events in Syria are developing normally [towards independence], without the need of any Jewish help. Iraq, for its part, has already achieved independence and, thanks to its oil and other natural resources, is in the full swing of economic development. There is no capital shortage; the Government has only to ask, and money is forthcoming. As for Hejaz and Yemen – at this time, at any rate, they have no intention of seeking foreign capital, least of all Jewish capital. You can well see that Arab dependence on the political and economic aid of the Jews is not a necessity.

“Indeed, very little is being offered in return for driving a million and a half Arabs to abandon their birthplace, the holy land of their fathers, and wander into the desert, in return for the Arab nation of twenty million souls accepting this humiliation of countersigning the evacuation of the land, every grain of which is saturated with the blood of their fathers, and which is so holy from the religious aspect. Such a proposal should not be presented before it is weighed and examined with great care.”

If anyone has such grandiose and impudent ideas, he should not assume that he will obtain the consent of his adversary. It would be better for him to continue with reliance on British bayonets, and to create the Jewish Kingdom, but at least he should not contemplate an agreement with the Arabs, an agreement that the English and the Jews do not cease talking about in order to deceive world public opinion. With that, we informed Mr Ben-Gurion that there was no point in continuing this fantastic conversation. These are the facts as they were presented.

Mr Ben-Gurion had good reason for his boldness in making such childish and illogical proposals, for the tremendous backing of the British Government, the inaction of the Arab forces in the face of the growing dangers and the assaults of the Jewish enterprise have made it possible for the Zionist representatives to take up the most daring notions. Mr Ben-Gurion’s step is really a most important act, revealing the true aim of the Zionists, which can be explained by their faith that their dream will soon be realised. It is a warning not only to the Arabs, but also to the British, who ought to ponder the consequences of Jewish expansion of this scope.

(b) Ben-Gurion’s Version

When we arrived at Arslan’s, Jabri was already there. [...] After a brief conversation about common acquaintances – in the French Socialist Party – we came to the point. Jabri said that he had received a letter from Palestine about the talks held with me, but he wanted to hear details. There was a language difficulty. We started in Turkish, but since [Marc] Jarblum did not know the language we switched to French. That was the first time in my life that I took part in a lengthy, serious conversation in that language. [...]

The talk in Arslan’s home lasted until one in the morning. I went over the main points I had discussed with Musa Alami.

Arslan immediately adopted an extreme position. Without a promise from us that the Arabs in Palestine would remain a majority he was not prepared for any negotiations. As to our assistance in achieving the unity of the Arab countries

outside Palestine – unity of that kind was nothing but a dream. Before that came about, a hundred or who knew how many years would pass. Meanwhile, the Jews would be the majority in Palestine while the Arabs would become an insignificant factor.

I said that I was not so pessimistic about the unity of the Arab countries. As for the Palestinian Arabs, they were after all only a small percentage of the total Arab population, and even if we became the overwhelming majority in Palestine, more than two-thirds, the Arabs of Palestine would be surrounded by Arab states that were linked with the Jewish State.

Arslan changed his line of reasoning and said that the unity of the Arab peoples was assured in any case. [...] why did the Arabs need Jewish help, and what would it actually give them? If the Jews needed a Jewish State, why did they not go to one of the larger, unpopulated countries?

I told him that similar advice had been offered us at the beginning of the century [...] by Joseph Chamberlain, who was then Colonial Secretary and had offered us Uganda – and we had rejected it. I explained what Erez Israel had meant to the Jewish people for some four thousand years.

Arslan insisted emphatically that he could not approach the Arabs of Palestine with a proposal that they should become a minority. He did not see any value whatsoever in Jewish assistance, and he was also certain that the English would never permit us to become a majority or a great force in Palestine. England wanted a Jewish community in Palestine in order to make it easier for her to dominate the Arabs, but she had no interest in creating a Jewish Palestine. Even if such a Palestine should be created, the Arabs would never acquiesce. After all, surrounding Palestine there were tens of millions of Arabs. He was prepared to enter an agreement only if we would undertake to remain a minority.

He also denied our right to settle in Transjordan. That area had not been promised to us in the Mandate, and we had no claim on Transjordan even from the English standpoint. He asked me, by the way, whether the English agreed to our settling in Transjordan. I said that the exclusion of Transjordan from the Jewish national home was temporary and had been introduced a few years after the Balfour Declaration, which applied to all of Erez Israel, eastern as well as western.

When Jabri spoke, he made no attempt to contradict Arslan, but it was obvious from his questions that he was more willing to compromise: he valued the Jewish factor more and understood the historic tie of the Jewish people to Palestine. He asked me whether we were empowered by the Jewish people or the Zionist Organization to make an agreement. I said that for the time being the conversation was private and, as he already knew from the letter he had received, also confidential.

After our talk was over, Jabri escorted me to the railway station. On the way he said that the last word had not been spoken and that the discussion would continue.

(c) Amir Shakib Arslan's Version

The danger to Palestine has become a settled issue. The Jews, in the past, had concealed a little bit, but now they have made it clear and disclosed that they are

coming to Palestine, five or six million souls, whether we agree or refuse. England herself, if she wanted to stop this thing, doesn't have the power to do so.

A month and a half ago, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Zionist Organisation (I forget his name) came to us in Geneva from Paris. Musa Bey al-Alami knows him, and wrote to me about the man's desire to meet with us, saying to me that he controlled Zionist affairs. In short, he came [...] and sat with us for three hours. He did not stammer in telling us [...] that the Jews will definitely come to Palestine and Transjordan and that their numbers will reach at least seven million.

We told him that, if the matter did turn out that way and if we had no way of repelling this immigration, what then was his reason for coming to inform us of that intention?

He said: Because they preferred that this matter be [settled] without quarrel or disagreement, and because they wanted to assure us that they did not intend to encroach on the Arabs of Palestine or to evict them from their homes. Indeed, the question of the existence of the majority of the country did arise: the Jews [Ben-Gurion explained] would indisputably become [the majority].

We answered him, in all calmness, saying: We ourselves will prevent them from coming and from taking over the country; not only Transjordan but also Palestine itself shall remain Arab. He said: How would you stop us? We restrained ourselves by saying that we would stop them, without knowing how. Whatever happened, we would repeatedly convince you that the country shall remain Arab.

Then he began to concoct ridiculous proposals, such as that the Jews, having great worldly power, would support the Arabs in their independence. We told him: If the Jews promised us that they would expel France from Syria, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria, then could we reach this [stage of] idiocy to believe him?

Then he said that they would offer a loan to Iraq to settle its affairs. We told him that Iraq did not need a loan and did not want to borrow; every day people were coming to offer the Government of Iraq funds to borrow from them, and she was refusing.

In short, I'm telling you this not out of consideration for the importance of the proposals which the Zionist leader put forth, but because they are a reflection of the degree of impertinence which these groups have reached this year, especially while the Arabs of Palestine are concerned only with municipal elections and nonsense which you are familiar with. Our misfortune with the Jews is not as [bad as] our misfortune with ourselves. [...]

Sources

- (a) *La Nation Arabe*, no.2, novembre-décembre 1934, 144-6. My translation from the French, with reference to the (reasonably accurate) translation given in Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 37-9.
- (b) Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 35-37. This account may have been reconstructed in response to the publication of (a). Cf. *My Talks*, 39.
- (c) Extract of letter from Arslan to Akram Zuaytir, 4 December 1934, in DPNM, 387f. My translation from the Arabic.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the originals.

DOCUMENT 9

A.H. Cohen, Note of Talks between M. Shertok and the Amir Abdallah (28 December 1934) and between himself and Muhammad al-Unsi (1 January 1935)

On Friday, 28.12.34, Mr Shertok and the undersigned met with the Amir Abdallah at the King David Hotel. Hasan Khalid Pasha came to greet us and took us in to the Amir, who introduced Hasan to us as his trusted friend. He stated that the option [renewal] affair was not[?] troubling him since there had not been any communication link between us and him. Before us lay important political tasks which would bring [our] two peoples closer together. Hasan Khalid remarked that today the Amir was the only man whom the Arabs in Palestine and Transjordan trusted, and it would be good if we too would put our trust in him. The Amir invited us to come to him in Amman during the Ramadan fast and promised to introduce us there to an important personality. The meeting lasted 10 minutes.

[On 1.1.35,] M.U. [i.e., Muhammad al-Unsi] asked whether we had been satisfied with our meeting with the Amir. I expressed our thanks for the fine welcome with which we had been received, and remarked that Mr Shertok had thought he would have concluded the option matter during that meeting, but it had not been possible. [...]

M.U. raised the proposal to unite Palestine with Transjordan under the crown of the Amir Abdallah. He said that during the Amir's talks this week in Jerusalem discussions on this subject had begun between him and different Arab groups; the latter had practically given their assent to the matter. The Amir would be authorising M.U. to probe our [reactions] and to ascertain whether we would be prepared to offer him a helping hand.

The proposal, in rough, is based for the moment on four clauses:

- (a) unity of Palestine with Transjordan under the throne of the Amir;
- (b) official recognition by the Arabs of the Mandate and the Jewish rights contained therein;
- (c) each of the two countries would keep its political status and establish within it a legislative council by proportional representation, headed by an elected Prime Minister. Both Prime Ministers would be under the authority of the Amir and conduct their affairs in day-to-day consultation with him;
- (d) the settling of a Jewish-Arab agreement on the questions of immigration and land-sales, which will be excluded in advance from the competence of the Legislative Councils.

M.U. added that if this union were formed it would benefit us, first of all, since through [the Amir's] auspices the Arabs would officially recognise the Mandate and the Balfour Declaration and would not go on complaining of injury about robbing and dispossessing the Arabs of their lands. At the same time [we] would be rid of the false lie about the Jews wanting to expel the Arabs from Palestine and to establish an independent Jewish kingdom on their ruins. Also the land of Transjordan would be open before us for trade and settlement,

and new horizons for settlement and Hebrew industry would appear. If this plan works, then it would be possible after some years to add Syria, which would expand the frontiers of Zionism northward and eastward.[...]

Source

A.H. Cohen report, dated 3 January 1934 [sic, for 1935]. CZA, S25/3485. My translation from the Hebrew.

DOCUMENT 10

A.H. Cohen, Note of Talk between M. Shertok and the Amir Abdallah, Amman, 11 July 1935

[...] “What is happening with you,” [the Amir] asked, “in relation to the legislative council? Some say that it will really be established this year. What is the position of the Jews about it: will you take part in it?”

“No”, replied Mr Shertok.

“Why?”

“Because the creation of a legislative council without mutual understanding between the Jews and the Arabs will bring no good to either of the communities who inhabit the country.”

The Amir said that the Jews were making a big mistake in negating the value of a legislative council and explained his delicate position vis-à-vis the elements in Palestine: the Arabs were difficult, the Jews were stubborn, and the British were more stubborn than both of them. [...] He considered himself our friend and this actually obliged him to be true to his people. It had happened more than once that his words and preaching in favour of mutual understanding with the Jews had not pleased them [the Arabs], but this had never stopped him from continuing to preach in favour of peace. He did so, he said, out of a sincere belief that the thing would bring benefit to both parties. The Jews had come here with little and even they themselves had not imagined that they would reach this level [of development] of today. They had succeeded in coming thanks to their stubborn stand and great perseverance, and because of this no one had the power to erase the value of their existence in Palestine. On the other hand, the Arabs were the natives of this country and they had natural rights over it. They had demands which it was not always possible to accept. A man had to be found who knew how to bring the parties together and bring about a blending of the interests of both sides. He himself was prepared to be that man. If he heard from us a proposal which he found more or less reasonable he would then be able to convince the Arabs. In any case, he regarded participation of the Jews in the legislative council – if they would not maintain their rejection – as a first step towards mutual understanding with the Arabs. The very [fact of] sitting down together must necessarily lead to good relations.

Mr Shertok acknowledged the lofty sentiments of the Amir and explained Jewish fears regarding the Council. [...] Everywhere [the Jewish people] found itself a minority, where the majority did whatever it wanted. [...] The Jews had no place except Palestine which could serve as a tiny foothold. They looked upon it as their haven of refuge and did not want to feel themselves a minority within it. Sitting with the Arabs in a council was liable to [?]limit] the steps of the Jewish enterprise because the Arabs did not want, on any account, to recognise the right of existence which the Jews had in this country. So long as we were a minority [...] the Arabs] would not have to respect our feelings. [...]

[Abdallah:] The information which he had indicated that the decision on [?]important] questions in the legislative council would be referred to the Government, and he didn't understand what the Jews were afraid of. He had strong faith that England would not wish to renege on a promise to them.

Mr Shertok said that the [...] Arabs had to remember that the Jews were hoping to reach a majority at some point. What would the situation be then? They would cry out against the injustice perpetrated against them by the Jewish majority. But if they wanted to look at this future development with open eyes, they should agree with us that the surest way would be the granting of equal representation to each of the two peoples in the country's legislative institution. This form of representation will guarantee for all time the non-domination of either party by the other. Even in the event of the creation of a Jewish majority, the Arabs' rights would be protected by this representation.

"And why should you worry about the future of the Arabs? [asked the Amir.] Let them rule today, and if tomorrow fate grants you a majority, then you should rule."

"There is in that suggestion no solution to the question. We must remember that we did not come here as conquerors, but as a nation which regards this country as its only homeland, and which recognises that there is enough room in it for the Arabs. Even in the case of us becoming the majority, we would want to live in peace with them, since Arab lands surround us on all sides and we wish to develop good relations with them. If understanding does not reign inside [Palestine], then the anger of the neighbours outside will be aroused, and thus we would be undermining the path to assuring good relationships in the future."

"As the Amir of a neighbouring country I am happy to hear this position. Could you, Mr Shertok, declare it publicly? I believe that there are many Arabs who would be happy [to hear] this declaration. [...] Nevertheless, I would suggest that you go to the Zionist Congress and say that an important friend who is concerned with the future of Palestine recommends that they enter into a [legislative] council. Perhaps this council will lead to the uniting of Palestine with Transjordan in the future, and would open before you new horizons for settlement." [...]

Mr Shertok explained that this idea of parity was not yet the [policy] of the Zionist movement as a whole. There were many who would oppose it and regard it as an act of betrayal. But if he found an attentive ear among the Arabs there would be many who would fight for its realisation inside the Zionist movement.

The Amir thanked Mr Shertok for the opportunity given him to learn about this question from his lips [...]. He promised to talk about this with several Arab politicians and to hear their views on equality of representation. [...]

Source

CZA, S25/10122. My translation from the Hebrew.

DOCUMENT 11

G. Frumkin, Proposal for a Preliminary Agreement, [18] May 1936

WHEREAS it is recognised that it is of vital importance to the Jewish People to maintain peaceful and friendly relations with the Arab People, and
 WHEREAS at the outset it is desirable to enter into an Agreement with the Arab Population in Palestine which should ultimately lead to a Treaty between the two ancient Peoples, the Jews and Arabs, and

WHEREAS the development of the Jewish Settlement in Palestine in all its aspects should be directed in such a way that not only will it exclude any possibility of prejudicing the rights of the Arabs living in the country, or putting any restraint on them, but on the contrary will secure them direct benefit and participation in the economic upbuilding of the country, and

WHEREAS the Agreement must in the first instance solve the three main problems in dispute between Jews and Arabs, namely (a) Immigration and Labour, (b) Land, and (c) the Constitutional Structure of the Country,

the following proposal is hereby suggested by a Jewish group to serve as a basis for an Agreement and for the solution of the three main problems.

(a) IMMIGRATION & LABOUR

1. The immigration of Jewish labour into Palestine will be regulated by the absorptive capacity of the country on condition that in new openings for labour created by Jews, a proportionate place will also be allotted to Arabs. [...]

Note: Upon Arab request it might be possible to fix at once the limit of the Jewish percentage in the total population of the country by the end of the first period of agreement [i.e., from five to ten years]. (From Arab sources it has been suggested that after ten years the Jews should reach 40% of the total population, which means a yearly immigration of 30,000 Jews.¹)

2. There will be no restrictions on the immigration of capitalists, but an opportunity will be given to Arabs to participate in the capital, and proportionally to the capital invested by them, in the Directorship of Companies established by Jews for all sorts of economic undertakings.
3. The Jews will also open their doors to the Arab Employees in trade, commerce and industry and other economical [sic] and financial institutions [...]
4. The municipality of Tel Aviv will employ a certain proportion of Arab labour and staff. [...] In consideration thereof, facilities will be given by Arabs for the settlement of Jewish capitalists, members of liberal professions, artisans and skilled labourers in towns hitherto consisting of mainly Arab population.
5. In public works undertaken by Government, labour will be distributed

between the two peoples in proportion to their numerical strength in the country [...].

6. No free entrance into the country will be granted to Arab workmen from neighbouring countries. In case of an agreement being reached with the competent authorities as regards Jewish immigration into Trans-Jordan, such an agreement will deal with the conditions of immigration of workmen from Trans-Jordan into Palestine.
7. After having agreed to the above principles, Jewish and Arab representatives will consider the criterion for fixing the absorptive capacity of the country and the creation and composition of a body to control the observance of the above principles, in which body Jews, Arabs and Government Representatives will participate.

(b) LAND

1. No acquisition of new land by Jews during the first period of agreement will be made except on the principle that no Arab cultivating land either as owner or as tenant should be dispossessed from the land [...].
2. There will be no restriction as regards the purchases of land by Jews for urban or industrial purposes.
3. As regards land for agricultural purposes, if owned by felaheen and cultivated by them, the Jews will purchase a certain portion of it only, (from two-thirds to three-quarters) and Jewish institutions will assist the felah to exploit the portion of land remaining in his possession intensively. [...]
4. If the land sold is cultivated by tenants, a portion of it (as quoted above) or other land in the neighbourhood, will be allotted to the tenants who will be granted facilities by Jewish Institutions for according such land on easy terms. [...]
5. After the above principles have been agreed upon, the parties will [...] consider the creation and composition of a body to control the observance of the said principles, in which Jews, Arabs and Government Representatives will participate.

(c) CONSTITUTION AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The constitutional structure of the country is to be built up on the principle of complete political, cultural and economic equality between the two Peoples, so that independent of the numerical strength of any People now or at any time in the future, no People will dominate the other.
2. Upon this principle, and provided that the full observance of the principles laid down in the sections dealing with Immigration and Labour, and Land are fully guaranteed, the Jews will agree to the establishment of a Legislative Council and to the development of the administrative system of the country in such a way that gradually more and more responsible functions in the administration will be entrusted to Jews and Arabs in equal measure, and also will not insist that already at its first session the Legislative Council should be equally represented.²
3. The constitution of the Legislative Council, its duties and functions will be the subject matter of a separate agreement.

(d) TRANS-JORDAN & ARAB FEDERATION

1. Both Jews and Arabs will aim to combine the two sides of the Jordan into one Political Unit.
2. Until that unit has been established the Arabs of Palestine will look favourably upon the opening of Trans-Jordan for Jewish immigration and as far as it lies within their power will help Jews to come to an agreement with the competent authorities as regards conditions of immigration into Trans-Jordan and acquisition of land by Jews there.
3. If, after Palestine and Trans-Jordan have become one political unit, it will be invited to join an Arab Federation, Jews will promise not to adopt an attitude in opposition to such an invitation but will give it its [sic] most considerate attention, provided that the rights and privileges of Jews in Palestine and in Trans-Jordan, as described above, will be fully guaranteed and internationally sanctioned.

(e) EDUCATION AND CULTURE

1. Each of the two Peoples of Palestine will enjoy complete full independence in the administration of its cultural affairs without interfering in the cultural affairs of the other. Each party, however, will do its best to foster cultural and social relations between the two Peoples.
2. Both Jewish and Arab schools will educate the Youth in a spirit of respect and understanding for the other people's traditions and aspirations. In Arab schools, both Governmental and private, Hebrew will be taught as a language in the higher classes of the elementary and in all classes of the secondary schools; similarly the Arab language will be introduced as an obligatory subject in the parallel classes of Jewish schools.
3. The two parties will see to the establishment of Hebrew evening classes for Arabs and Arab[ic] evening classes for Jews.³

Sources

Text as enclosed in Frumkin to Trusted, 2 December 1938, CZA, A199/51, in comparison with the original draft (n.d.) in S25/3434.

Notes

1. "which ... Jews" does not appear in the original draft.
2. "and ... represented" appears in the original draft, but not in the copy sent to Trusted in 1938.
3. Item 3 does not appear in the original draft.

DOCUMENT 12

B. Joseph, Note of Talk with M.A. [=Musa al-Alami], 28 May 1936

I called at the office of M.A. this morning. I inquired as to what had happened

about our previous conversation. He said that he had since then had a number of conversations with Jewish friends, and he had made efforts with the Arabs but without any great success. The difficulty was that the Jews wished to connect discussions for a settlement of ultimate problems with the cessation of the Strike, whilst the Arab leaders were unwilling to enter into discussions of these problems until the Strike was called off. They remembered that in 1930 Dr Weizmann conducted certain negotiations with them and at the same time he was negotiating with the Government, and when he obtained the Prime Minister's letter [J. Ramsay MacDonald, February 1931] he dropped the Arabs. They would consequently be unwilling now to agree to the cessation on the strength of proposals to negotiate. It seemed to him, therefore, that the only hope was that the Jews of their own volition [should] agree to a cessation of immigration during the couple of months that negotiations were pending, then the strike would be called off and negotiations would commence. If, as he understood, the Jews would be unwilling to agree to this course[,] then he was afraid that there was nothing left but to await the end of the Strike. If the Strike would break of its own weight he was confident that it would be possible to enter into negotiations subsequently. If, however, the Strike were suppressed by force, and he had no doubt Government could suppress it in this way[,] then the bitterness which would result would make it impossible for Arabs to negotiate with the Jews for some time to come.

I replied that [...]two alternative courses appeared to me to be open. I said that I spoke entirely as a private person, and did not know whether I was not suggesting something that would be unacceptable to those responsible for the conduct of Jewish affairs, but I would like to get his reaction to these proposals and I would then be prepared to put them forward as suggestions.

One course would be for the Jews and Arabs to agree to meet to discuss their differences and that Government should make a public declaration that it would do nothing one way or the other, either at the request of the Arabs or at the request of the Jews[,] until the Arab-Jewish conference either arrived at an agreement or failed. [...]

The alternative course was for negotiations to be entered into at once by Arabs and Jews regardless of the strike with a view to settling the major differences. If this effort was successful the strike would automatically be called off when an Agreement was reached.

I said that I would suggest that the negotiations should be as to purely practical questions without raising ultimate aims. I thought the question should be approached from a practical point of view. The Jews would never agree to a restriction of their absolute right to bring into the country as many Jews as it could absorb or to buy as much land as was offered for sale. But I thought it might be possible to put forward a proposal whereby Jews would, in the light of Jewish immigration in the past and of Jewish land purchases in the past, agree that during a fixed number of years, say five years, they would, as a matter of economic expediency and in order to give the country time in which there should be established permanent relations of friendliness between Jews and Arabs, bring into the country a certain number of immigrants per annum, and not purchase in all more than a certain number of dunams per annum, on condition that this arrangement should not prejudice, in any way, their rights under the

Mandate and the Balfour Declaration. The Arabs could agree to such an arrangement without formally recognizing Jewish rights, but would express their satisfaction with the arrangement, then the country would have no Arab-Jewish conflict and the Government would not be called upon to take decisions with regard to immigration and land as this would have been settled by the arrangement.

I made it clear that no responsible Jewish leader had gone so far as to agree to any absolute limitation by numbers of immigration or land purchases, but I would be prepared to approach them on this basis if he thought Arab leaders would be disposed to agree to reasonable figures. I said that, of course, if they spoke of twenty or thirty thousand immigrants a year one might as well not waste time discussing the suggestion.

He replied that he did not believe the Arab leaders could terminate the strike merely by entering into negotiations with the Jews. They would be discredited by such an act. [...] He was not sure that any of the Big Ten [i.e., the A.H.C.] would be willing to meet Jewish leaders as long as the Strike was on. He had looked about for other suitable Arab notables but could not find them. No one of the Big Ten, even the Mufti, had sufficient influence with the Arab rank and file to be able to impose his will. [...] I then suggested [...] that one should arrange a meeting with people like Aouni [Abd al-Hadi], Jamal [al-Husaini] and Ahmed Hilmi Pasha. He was more inclined to think that a possibility.

I asked whether, if I could persuade Jewish leaders to agree to negotiate on the basis of absolute limitation by numbers, this would not be sufficient justification for the Arab leaders to call off the Strike and to enter into negotiations.

M.A. was not sure but he went on to say that in any event he was doubtful whether Jewish leaders would be prepared to negotiate on such a basis[,] as they had always in their discussions with him been anxious to get the Arabs to agree to the conception of a Jewish State. He had, for his part, proposed a ten-year arrangement, but they always seemed to wish to tie the Arabs down to what would happen after fifteen years[,] by which time they had said they expected there might be a couple of million Jews in Palestine.

I said that it had occurred to me to mention a five-year period. During that time there would be no question of the Jews being a majority[,] so that the Arabs would still be in the same position at the end of the period as they were today with regard to who should be a majority, and the whole question as to whether or not there should be a Jewish State need not arise[,] as no one expected any such change to come about within so short a period of time. [...]

M. then raised the question of the Legislative Council. I said that he was touching on politics and I was concerned with the matter from a practical point of view. He retorted that if Jews and Arabs agreed as to immigration and land then there would be no danger in the setting up of that body such as the Jews had pointed to heretofore. I replied that I had little interest in this third question because the L.C. would have no power in any case. My objection to it would remain because I regarded it as a danger to the peaceful and friendly relations between Jews and Arabs, which I was anxious to help establish. It would be a platform from which politicians like Hassan Sidky Dajjani would vie with each other in being extreme in order to curry favour with certain elements of the

population. This would constantly cause friction between Arabs and Jews and would thus defeat the whole purpose of our conversations.

I asked him whether Mr Ben Gurion had ever mentioned to him the suggestion of there being [parity] Jewish and Arab representation in the Executive Council instead of a Legislative Council. [...] He thought that the Arabs might now agree to one Arab and one Jew or two Arabs and two Jews. To this I replied that I knew of no principle which would restrain the Jews from agreeing to Arab and Jewish representation on the Executive Committee if the representation were equal.

With regard to my suggestion M. thought that the Arab leaders would be reasonable as to numbers[,] and[,] if only the Jews would agree to negotiate on this basis[,] one could hope that an arrangement would be reached[;] but the principal stumbling block remained as to how to bring them together. He would try to raise the question again with the Arabs. Would I ascertain if the Jews would be willing to meet to negotiate on this basis? If I informed him that they would he, for his part, would explore every possibility of bringing the parties together. He stressed, however, that the Agreement should be a two-party and not a three-party one [i.e., involving the British. ...] M.A. again expressed the fear that the Jews might begin to negotiate with the Arabs and then drop them because of some promise from the British.

I pointed out that this fear was not well founded. It was true that the Jews relied upon the British[,] but they were nevertheless anxious to find a *modus vivendi* with the large Arab population who were clearly entitled to be in the country, and [with] whom the Jews would like to live on terms of friendship. It was not pleasant, to say the least, to maintain one's right to live in a country [by] reliance on bayonets. He interjected here that in addition to the argument I had made in support of Arab-Jewish friendly relations the Jews would benefit[;] once there was mutual confidence the Arabs themselves might help open Trans-Jordan to the Jews. [...]

Source

CZA, S25/10093. Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the original.

DOCUMENT 13

Proposal for an Arab-Zionist Agreement, submitted by "the Five" to the Jewish Agency Executive, 1 June 1936

I. THE AGREEMENT

1. A period from five to ten years.
2. The Agreement is to be made at once and without the intervention of Government, but with its ultimate approval.
3. The Agreement is to cover both the economic and the political aspects of the questions at issue.

II. IMMIGRATION

4. No free entrance into the country of Arab workmen from other countries.
5. Jewish Labour immigration in accordance with the absorptive capacity of the country, but on condition that in new openings for labour created by Jews a proportion to be allotted to Arabs.
6. No changes in reference to Capitalist immigration or relatives.
7. Jews to be employed on Government undertakings in a proportion not less than their numerical strength.
8. [...]
9. In case the above is insufficient to secure agreement, a temporary fixation of immigration over 5 to 10 years to be conceded, provided that at the end of the period the Jewish population may reach approximately 40% of the total population.

III. LAND

10. No acquisition, except on the principle that an Arab cultivating the land as owner or tenant should not be displaced without his consent, or that land of equivalent value in the same neighbourhood or any other place with his consent be placed at his disposal for development.
11. Only a given proportion (75%) of land, owned and cultivated by a fellah is to be sold by him [...].
12. [...]

IV. POLITICAL

13. A Legislative Council upon the basis of parity, thus showing that neither people is to dominate the other.
14. The principle is adopted of increased Jewish and Arab participation in Government administration as Heads of Departments and as members of the Government Executive. [...]

V. STAGES OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

1. The Executive of the Jewish Agency is to authorise the unofficial Committee consisting of five persons which may co-opt at any time any other person by mutual agreement with the Executive of the Jewish Agency to canvass with unofficial Arabs the possibility of coming to an understanding on the main points of Immigration, Land and Legislative Council.
2. Should these private talks indicate that there is the possibility of agreement on the main points, the above mentioned unofficial Committee shall, with the consent of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, come together with a similar unofficial Committee of Arabs for the purpose of preparing a text for submission to both Jewish and Arab official bodies respectively.
3. The Executive of the Jewish Agency and the Arab Supreme Committee are to consider this text and to inform the unofficial Committees of their attitude.
4. Should an agreement be reached on the main points [...] the Executive of the Jewish Agency and the Arab Supreme Committee are then to meet and to issue an announcement something like the following:—

“The Executive of the Jewish Agency and the Arab Supreme Committee have decided to enter into formal negotiations and during the progress of these negotiations the strike is to be called off by the Arab Supreme Committee as from June and the Jewish Agency is to postpone the carrying out of the new labour schedule.

“The formal and official negotiations between these two bodies will begin on June”

Sources: CZA, A199/51, as enclosed in Frumkin to Trusted, 2 December 1938. Original in S25/9795.

DOCUMENT 14

M. Shertok, Reports of Conversation with M.A. [=Musa al-Alami], 21 June 1936

(a)

The contact with M.A. was interrupted for a fortnight or so owing to the complication which arose as a result of the intervention of the “Committee of Five”. There was also the question of whether it was admissible for us to discuss dimensions of immigration in view of the fact that the [Jewish Agency] Executive seemed divided on the issue, while in the last conversation which B.J. [=Bernard Joseph] had had with M.A. the latter made it clear that unless this question could be discussed he saw no hope of any negotiations at all. [...]

[... O]n Sunday the 21st in the morning [I] rang up M.A. at his house asking whether we might not meet. He at once responded and, although he had not intended to come to the office that day he said he would gladly do so in order to meet me. [...]

I was received very cordially. [...] I then asked M.A. point blank whether he thought that there was any prospect of getting his friends to sit down with us to discuss the future.

M.A. replied that he had to admit he himself had rather given up hope lately. The suspicion which his friends had entertained all along had recently become strengthened in his mind also. This was that we, the Jews, were not really interested in coming to an understanding with the Arabs but that we were relying on the British and as soon as our position became a little stronger we were forgetting all about the Arabs. [...]

I expressed my surprise at hearing this impression of his. I said that he could not certainly accuse B.G. [=Ben-Gurion] or myself of forgetting the existence of the Arabs whenever we felt strong. He knew very well that we were the first to approach him and that we did so at a time when our work was on the crest of a wave of prosperity, when immigration was proceeding apace and reaching record figures. Even today I had rung him up just after we had received the account of the debate in Parliament. He might have said that the debate had

been such a victory for us that we need not have bothered about the Arabs at all. Far from it. No success in England could make me forget that it is with the Arabs that we have to live here and that we had therefore to come to terms with them direct no matter how the relations between us and the English might shape [sic].

M.A. readily admitted that he had never had any suspicions with regard to the sincerity of the intentions of myself and B.G. In fact he had felt great relief when he heard my voice on the telephone in the morning. He had to be frank, however, and say that with all the respect and admiration he felt for B.G. he could not help concluding that he was intransigent. He always had the impression that B.G., while most sincerely anxious to come to an agreement with the Arabs, wanted them in actual fact to accept the 100% of his full Zionist programme. An agreement, however, had [of] necessity to be a matter of give and take and could not be based on the acceptance by one part[y] of the full demands and aspirations of the other.

I reminded M.A. that on the last occasion when B.G. and myself had had a talk with him in my house it had been agreed that he should sound some of his friends with regard to the possibility of widening the circle of those taking part in the conversations on the Arab side and that we had received no reply.

[M.A.'s account of approaches to him by Frumkin and Magnes; sorting out of confusions caused by approaches go-betweens; rumours of Dr Weizmann's "intransigence".]

Whether representatives of the J[ewish] A[gency] were intransigent or not was a matter of opinion. Whatever they were it was only they who were able to "deliver the goods". To say that it was no use discussing an agreement with them was tantamount to saying that it was no use discussing an agreement at all because discussions outside the J.A. would clearly lead to nothing. In the discussions with them there was at any rate no possibility of anyone being misled or deluded. If they would accept a settlement they would be able to get it ratified and implemented. If they would consider certain terms unacceptable they would frankly say so and then the two parties would part without their mutual respect having been infringed. If on the other hand unauthorised people were to conduct the negotiations there was always a danger of false hopes being roused which would afterwards come to nothing and cause disappointment and bitterness. If the participation of any particular Jew in the negotiations was found desirable it might of course be arranged but only with the full knowledge and agreement of the J.A.

M.A. fully agreed.

(b)

M.S.: In brief, do we have something to talk about or not?

M.A.: Your side does things that obstruct the possibility of an agreement, and I don't understand why you have to act in this way. I don't know what point there is in your constantly emphasizing that the Arab movement is supported by Italian money. [...] this is a lie. [...] Why do you attack the Mufti personally? [...] Don't you realize that in this whole affair the Mufti is not the worst person with whom you will have to deal? [...] Don't you understand that there is no hope for an agreement to which the

Mufti does not consent? And you make his position more difficult by your personal attacks. [...] You don't have to believe me, but what I am about to tell you is as true as the fact that I see you before me: *the Mufti is opposed to violence*. [...]

M.S.: And so, in short: is there anything for us to talk about or not?

M.A.: But what will happen? Is there any way out of the situation? Perhaps you have some ideas?

M.S.: When you say "way out" you mean the suspension of immigration. On this issue there is nothing to discuss. [...] You say: "Immigration causes disturbances; stop the immigration. What does it matter to you? After all, the keys to the immigration remain in your hands, [...] but for the sake of peace halt the immigration temporarily."

To that we say: "Immigration is our fundamental right; you are attacking that right. The suspension of immigration is an act that symbolizes our capitulation, and no Jew can agree to that." [...] We cannot now discuss an agreement in general, it is not the proper time for that. We can discuss a way out of the situation – do we have anything to talk about or not? If it is impossible here let's go to Egypt, we will meet there, but we must know if there is something to talk about or not.

M.A.: We must discuss some general principles before I make an attempt to influence people.¹

We fixed a meeting on general principles for Wednesday of this week at a neutral place. I informed him that Joseph would also participate.²

Sources

- (a) Undated memorandum in CZA, S25/3435.
- (b) From Shertok's speech to the Mapai Political Committee, 21 June 1936, as translated in Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 89–92.

For other versions of various parts of the above reports see CZA, S25/3434 (Heb.); Sharett, *Political Diary I*, 176–9; and Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 84–87.

Notes

1. Alami's recollection of this part of the conversation, as retold to Magnes in August 1936, went as follows: "A. said he was ready [to] continue the conversations, but that in order that they bear fruit it was necessary that the basic points be agreed upon first. He could approach his friends only if this preliminary agreement could be reached in the first place." Magnes to Shertok, 20 August 1936, S25/2960/B.
2. For Alami's account of the meeting of 24 June, see Magnes to Shertok, *loc. cit.* For Joseph's account, see: S25/10093; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 93–97.

DOCUMENT 15

P. Rutenberg, Points of Proposal for the Development of Transjordan through Jewish Arab Collaboration, July 1936

1. Jews to form a Company registered in England with an authorized capital of at least £2,000,000.
The company's finances to be controlled by the British Government.
2. Object of Company: Financing and or direct management of the settlement of Jews and Transjordan Arabs and for the general economic development of Transjordan.
3. A west to east line – preferably the river Zerka – to be determined by agreement between Government and Company, on both sides of which Arab and Jewish settlements to be made. The Arab settlements south of the line and the Jewish settlements north of it.
4. The Company to pay to the Transjordan Government sums up to £1,000,000 to be appropriated for the purposes of agricultural settlement under this scheme of Arab citizens of Transjordan selected by Transjordan Government. In consideration thereof the Transjordan Government to allot to the Company an area of about 1,000,000 dunams of cultivable land in one block to be used for Jewish colonization. This area to be developed by the Company gradually.
5. The rest of the Company's capital or any further increase of it to be used by the Company for the agricultural and other settlement of Jews in Transjordan on the above territory and for other developments as may be agreed with Transjordan Government throughout the country such as irrigation, water supply, roads, railways, buildings, transport, industries, banks, etc.
6. The existing Arab cultivators, if any, in the Northern area to be, as and when required by the Company, transferred by Government to the Arab development region. But so that the conditions of life for those transferred shall be improved.
7. [Taxation exemptions.]
8. The Transjordan Government will share equally with the Company the profits arising from its activities [...].
9. Jews colonized in Transjordan to be Transjordan citizens, with rights and duties equal to all other citizens.
10. Government and Company to take measures to prevent land speculation.
11. The above Arab and Jewish settlement areas will have, under the supreme authority of the Transjordan Government, autonomous religious cultural educational local organizations in their respective languages.
12. The Government and the Company will take effective measures to promote understanding and collaboration between the neighbouring Arabs and Jews.
13. Government to set up special administration for Arab settlement and Company to assist such administration in every way necessary.
14. Transjordan Government will provide for safety.

Source

Copy, submitted with cover-letter dated Haifa, 12 July 1936, by Rutenberg to Parkinson, 13 May 1937. PRO, CO 831/41, file 77033.

DOCUMENT 16*N. Vilenski, Report of Talk with Amin Sa'id, Cairo, 13 July 1936*

Today I met with Amin Sa'id. He informed me that he had had news by telephone from Amin Abd al-Hadi in Jerusalem. The latter had spoken to the Mufti and had informed him about the negotiations that were taking place between myself and Amin Sa'id on an agreement between the Jews and the Arabs. He stressed that the Mufti refused, for the time being, to take part officially in the talks, but he had agreed that emissaries of the Arab Higher Committee, Yaqub al-Ghusain and Amin Abd al-Hadi, should take part in the committee which was proposed by Amin Sa'id and Dr Shahbandar. The Mufti also objected to negotiations on the basis of equality [between Jews and Arabs]. His suggestion is that the basis be that Jews constitute 80% of the total number of Arabs.

To my question whether he had spoken to A.A.H. about the possibility of equality in the government and parliament of Palestine, Amin Sa'id replied that A.A.H. had mentioned the question and had stated that the matter was not impossible, since the Arab leaders would regard the 20% surplus of Arabs in the country as a symbolic right.

A.S. suggested that we send a special man here immediately to begin negotiations [cf. Document 20] with him and the Arab committee whose composition should be: A.S., Dr Shahbandar, Muhammad Pasha Aluba, Salibi from Tunis, Yaqub Ghusain and A.A.H.

A.S. pointed out that in his opinion the agreement could include the following points:

- (a) Jews and Arabs declare peace and friendship forever between them.
- (b) The Jews undertake to support the idea of an Arab federation including Palestine and to assist the Arab countries in their economic and financial development.
- (c) The number of Jews in Palestine shall be fixed at 80% of the number of Arabs.
- (d) The constitution of Palestine shall lay down the equality between Jews and Arabs in parliament and in government.
- (e) Jewish immigration to Palestine will be unrestricted so long as the number of Jews does not reach the proportion fixed in the constitution.

This, in general outline, is the plan for an agreement proposed by A.S.

Source

Extract from letter to M. Shertok, 13 July 1936, CZA, S25/3135. My translation from the Hebrew.

DOCUMENT 17

Minutes of Meeting between Representatives of the Jewish Agency and the Arab National Bloc of Syria, Bludan, 1 August 1936

Present

On behalf of the Bloc: Shukri Bey Kuwatly, acting President of the Bloc; Fakhry Bey el-Barudy, Member of the Central Committee and leader of the Arab National Youth Organization of Syria ("Iron Shirts"); and Lutfi Bey Haffar, Member of the Central Committee.

On behalf of the Jewish Agency: Mr Eliahu Epstein, accompanied by Mr A. Landman and Dr D. Pinto, President of the Jewish Community of Damascus.

The meeting was opened by Fakhry Bey el-Barudy who presented Mr Epstein [...].

MR EPSTEIN: It is not the first time that a representative of the Jewish Agency has met Arab leaders, but it is the first time that such a meeting is held officially with representatives of the Syrian National Bloc. I consider this a great honour to the Jewish Agency and a privilege to myself. [...]

It is not possible to understand or appreciate the Zionist movement without taking into due consideration all the historical, psychological and other factors involved. [Gives some details.] Notwithstanding our long exile in the West we have remained a Semitic people and Zionism is nothing but a restoration of our oriental origin. This is why we are so earnestly interested in the destiny of the awakening orient in which we share. [...]

[... Y]ou are on the point of concluding your struggle for independence and of beginning to devote your energies to constructive projects. It is my sincere conviction that were it not for your political difficulties you would have long ago devoted your attention to the problem of Arab-Jewish relations and to its solution, which had been attempted at one time by the late King Faisal.

When looked at superficially, it may appear as if the interests of the Jewish and Arab national movements conflicted, and it requires both vision and penetrating knowledge to understand that in reality these interests are complementary. Such a harmony of interests can be achieved by an Arab-Jewish agreement.

Why are the Jews interested in such an agreement and what can they contribute to its fulfilment in the interests of the Arabs?

Please rest assured that we have never considered it possible or desirable to come to an agreement with the Arab National movement in general at the expense – so to speak – of the Palestine Arabs. [...]

We do not fear and we are not discouraged by acts of violence to which we have become used throughout our long and arduous history. This is why such acts in Palestine cannot discourage us and stop us from pursuing our constructive work, which we are determined to continue under any circumstances. [...] You are well aware, gentlemen, I have no doubt, that we have brought no harm to the interests of the Arabs of Palestine. On the contrary our work has benefitted them. [...] We realize very well that we cannot hope to develop our cultural, social and economic life on a solid and lasting basis unless our neighbours also develop, thus diminishing and in time doing away with existing differences in these fields. The causes of the present disturbances, therefore, cannot be explained by the allegation that any material or moral harm was done to the Arabs.

But if we assume that the Arabs of Palestine fear that such harm would come to them with the continued development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine, we are ready to offer necessary guarantees that none of their interests should be prejudiced in any way. [...]

The reasons which prompt us in desiring to raise the general level of the Arabs in Palestine also apply to the neighbouring countries, especially to Syria, for it may endanger our position to remain a solitary island amidst an Arab sea separated from it by cultural, economic and social barriers. We hope very much to see the national aspirations of the Syrians fulfilled as soon as possible as this will bring us peace in its wake. [...]

We are ready, in case we come to an agreement, to be not only passively interested but to cooperate actively with you in helping you, *within legal bounds*, to realize your national aims. Though it is unfortunately true that we are still persecuted and oppressed in many countries, yet it is also true that we form a cultural and material force which is felt throughout the world. This influence and power can be very valuable to the Arabs, and Syrians in particular, at this stage of their development. Independence on paper is far from real independence which requires large intellectual, technical and financial forces to realize it. The Arab world is at present unable to provide these forces fully and we can contribute without any risk to the Arabs, since our national aspirations are *limited definitely to Palestine* [...].

If the political and national aspirations of the Arabs lead ultimately to an Arab Federation we do not object to it in principle, provided it is based on harmony and understanding among the parties concerned. [...]

In order to realize this agreement, it is necessary that the Syrian National Bloc express an appreciation and understanding of the national aspirations of the Jewish people and agree to its historic right of establishing a Jewish National Home in Palestine. It is understood that this is conditional upon our offering satisfactory guarantees safeguarding the interests of the Palestine Arabs [...].

SHUKRI BEY KUWATLY: We also consider it a great honour to have met with an official representative of the Jewish Agency and we sincerely hope that we may come to an understanding. I wish to thank you for your comprehensive and frank exposition of the Zionist cause and of its attitude to Arab Nationalism and to us Syrians in particular. I agree with you that only a frank and realistic approach to the question before us may lead to satisfactory results. There are a

number of ties that bring us together; I realize that in spite of your long exile you have remained an oriental people and that Arabs and Jews are, therefore, close to each other owing to their common origin and similar culture. We are also brought together by the long suffering and oppression that we have both experienced throughout the ages, and by our common destiny. We are consequently interested, at least to the same extent as you, in reaching an agreement with the Jews.

The idea of an understanding with the Jews is not new to us for we collaborated with the late King Faisal right from the beginning, even before his accession to the Throne of Syria and also after. From time to time we have met individual Jews of good standing and discussed the Arab-Jewish problem with them (Kalvarisky, Ben Yehuda, etc.), though this is the first time that we have the honour to meet officially with the Jews. [...]

[In response to the main points of your discussion,] I intend to take up some points and bring out the objections from the point of view of the Palestinian Arabs. (Here Shukri Bey emphasized the fact that he now wished to present not his own view on the matter, but those of a typical Palestinian Arab.)

You base your claim to Palestine on the ground of your historical connections with this country 2,000 years ago. Now tell me what would happen, if we claimed Andalusia on similar grounds. (Here Mr Epstein replied that [...] Palestine has always been the center and object of Jewish Nationalism, which was not the case with regard to Andalusia in its relation to the Arab national movement. [...])

We have always lived at peace with the Jews and I am sure that, were it not for the idea of a Jewish National Home many more Jews could come to Palestine and much more land acquired without opposition on the part of the Arabs.

You have made the point that the Jews brought prosperity to Palestine and that the Arabs have greatly profited from it. In admitting this we should remember, however, that the Arabs of Palestine consider this prosperity as coming from you and returning to its source sooner or later, since you are, or will soon be, the masters of the situation.

Though it is true that you have acquired large tracts of waste land, marshes, sand dunes, it cannot be denied that you have also bought land, which was settled by the Arabs. What would be their fate if you continue to buy such lands and thus displace the fellahin? You have frankly admitted that the Arabs of Palestine are afraid of the future and what would happen to them if the Jews continued to come to Palestine armed as they are with wealth, ability and training. You have also stated that you are ready to offer satisfactory guarantees in order to allay this fear and we should naturally want to have them defined to us.

[... I]t is the idea of a National Home to which the Palestinian Arabs are opposed. What makes the problem still more complicated and acute is the ignorance in which you leave us as to the exact interpretation and meaning of this term. Which is the predominant view, that of Jabotinsky, which contemplates the occupation of all of Palestine and the consequent exodus of her Arabs, or is there a more moderate view? What is its official interpretation by the Jewish Agency? In other words[,] are you intending to make of Palestine a Jewish National Home or to make a Jewish National Home in Palestine? If the former, then we are categorically opposed to it and there is no way to come to an

understanding. But if it means the latter then we are ready to discuss the guarantee that you suggested and to find a solution to the mutual advantage of both parties concerned.

[...] We do not deny and we do not underestimate the power and influence of the Jews all over the world. We appreciate them at their true and full worth and we realize of what great help and assistance the Jews could be to us. We are convinced that the Jews depend on themselves in their efforts to rebuild their National Home and we fully appreciate it. Though the present disturbances cannot last indefinitely and must stop sometime, yet they are likely to recur in the future and more violently unless a permanent solution is found for the problem of Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine. The Syrians, for reasons that you know, are the best suited and what is more, *they are willing and ready to undertake the solution of this problem* and to reach an agreement between Jews and Arabs in general. (Here Lutfi Bey Haffar interrupted the speaker and further emphasized the point.)

[...] Syrian independence would conduce towards it an Arab-Jewish entente. You should, therefore, help us in every way to gain this independence, which would also be of real advantage to you.

In closing I wish to express the hope that we may reach an entente after these questions are explained, and defined, and we shall consider it a great historical achievement if we can come to an agreement of our own accord. We are, therefore, ready to continue the negotiations.

MR E. EPSTEIN: I appreciate very much your frank and straightforward presentation of the case which leads me to hope for the successful conclusion of our negotiations. In the minds of the westerners, the East is a place whose inhabitants are incapable of living at peace with one another. This idea is one of the big handicaps in the way of the Arabs in their struggle for self-government. This is why a peaceful settlement of the Arab-Jewish question will raise the prestige of the East in the eyes of the West and will be one of the greatest moral and political victories of the two Semitic peoples. [Suggests agenda for subsequent meeting.]

The meeting lasted for 2½ hours.

Source

CZA, S25/10093. Cf. Heb. version in Elath, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 422-8.

DOCUMENT 18

M. Shertok, Report of Talk with Nuri as-Sa'id, 21 August 1936

[...] I was invited to meet with Nuri Pasha. The talk lasted more than an hour. Nuri wanted to clarify two things: (a) what happened to Weizmann; and (b) to get to the bottom of the matter of the stoppage of immigration.

Nuri recounted that he knew Weizmann since 1918, from the days of Faisal's great idea of a comprehensive Arab state with a large national home within it. He pointed out with satisfaction that when he recently met Weizmann he was able to confirm that Weizmann had remained true to his outlook. Weizmann had outlined a Jewish-Arab political programme which he considered a good one, but in the given situation nothing would move – in his opinion – without the creation of a psychological bridge between the Jews and the Arabs. It was impossible to arouse faith among the Arabs that the Jews really wanted peace unless the Jews took some step, one which was politically worthwhile, even if it entailed a sacrifice and a concession on their part. And this sacrifice was the stoppage of immigration. According to Nuri, Weizmann had agreed to this idea and had undertaken to clarify it with his colleagues [...]. Nuri had told the English about Weizmann's agreement to the stoppage of immigration, and they were very glad to hear of it. [... But, subsequently] Weizmann regretted to inform him that he was in a minority on the question of the stoppage of immigration, and that the majority of his colleagues were against it. [...] He – Nuri – understood that the source of the opposition to the stoppage of immigration was to be found here, in Jerusalem. [...]

Nuri said [...] it was necessary to confer about how to arrange matters in the given conditions. It seemed to him that the Jews were smarter than the Arabs in Palestine (I interrupted him here to say that we Jews and the Arabs were one race and that the Arabs were no less clever than ourselves. He said: But you are more developed than they are; you are more civilised.) From them [i.e., the Jews] it was possible to ask more, and they had to understand that a situation of strangulation had now been created. The Arabs found themselves in a situation of jailed prisoners who could not free themselves; the Government was not budging from its stand; and it was up to the Jews to make this gesture (stoppage of immigration) not only to find a way out of the present situation, but to create an impression in the Arab public, not only in the country but mainly outside of it, that the Jews truly sought peace, and that for its sake they were prepared to make a sacrifice. He understood that the stoppage of immigration was a sacrifice for us, but we had to have the strength to make that sacrifice. [...]

I said to him: What has happened in the country? Arabs started killing Jews, and they are still doing it until this very day. [...] Was this a reason to stop immigration? If the situation had been that Arabs and Jews were killing [each other], and you had come to me saying, Stop immigration for a while and let us talk peace – then your suggestion would be understandable. But since Jews were not killing [Arabs], then what your proposal means is that we have lost out on the matter of immigration because we have not killed. [...] The main point, I said, is that we were now a minority here, and it was not known for how long we would remain a minority. The Arabs were stronger than ourselves in physical strength, and for our security it was vital that the Arab people here learned the lesson that violence doesn't succeed. If we were to agree to suspend immigration now, how would the Arabs interpret it? They would say that we were

terrified by the violence and were begging for mercy. This we would not do.

He asked: Why take into consideration the reactions of the coffee-house rabble? Why not consider political public opinion in the Arab lands? They would evaluate this step appropriately.

I said: You are presuming that if we agree to this step an agreement would then follow between ourselves and the Arabs. But what would happen if immigration were halted, and no agreement were reached – how would we resume [immigration]?

He said: If you do this, then negotiations would take place and we would assist you. This step would prove that you countenance peace. And it would not mean that you were taking this step [on your own]; we would announce that, in response to the request of the Government of Iraq, you had agreed to do this. Why don't you think of the long term?

I said: It is precisely because we are looking ahead that we cannot agree to this step. We must consider the reaction which this step would evoke among the Arabs.

He asked: But how will the matter end? [...] You ought to know that in the Arab countries a great deal of hatred is awakening against you, and if you don't take this step which will show your interest in peace and your readiness to make a sacrifice for the sake of peace, then I greatly fear for the future. [...] How will you show goodwill about ending the matter peacefully?

I said: Our goodwill is shown by our willingness to sit and talk with Arabs even in the present situation – in that we are not saying that we won't sit down with murderers.

He asked: On what basis will the discussions [take place]?

I said: We shall sit down for clarifications. The Arabs say that our immigration is encroaching on them – let us sit down together and see whether the claims are correct or not. Also on the matter of land. We claim that our colonisation work is making Arabs rich; they claim that we are evicting them. Let us sit down and examine the claims.

He said: What you say is certainly reasonable, and I think that in this manner it will really be possible to reach a compromise. [...] I have always thought that there was no contradiction between your interests and those of the Arabs. On the contrary, I have always seen a possibility of mutual benefit, not only with respect to the Arabs of Palestine, but also with respect to Iraq. But how will that get things moving? There is suspicion against you, and you need to show goodwill.

I said: What you are asking for is not a sign of goodwill to reach an agreement, but an admission on our part that our immigration into the country can take place only by Arab consent, and you will not get such an admission. For if we stop immigration under the pressure of murder, then this means that we acknowledge that the Arabs are masters of the country – that, since they had objected and had accompanied [that objection] with acts of violence, we had temporarily stopped immigration. This you will not achieve. We are prepared to [make] efforts for peace with the Arabs, ready to exhaust all the possibilities for it; but if we don't achieve a peace,

we won't renounce our right to immigrate into the country, which does not depend on the consent of the Arabs. [...]

At the end I said that [...] I hoped that we might discuss the future in a calmer atmosphere. He agreed, but said that he saw no way out of the present situation [...]. I said to him: There must be an effort on your part to extricate the Arabs from this situation; people like you must help them out. The disorders had hurt us too, but from an economic point of view we were nevertheless making advances, even during the disturbances. He said: I had heard this, and had even told the Arabs, but there was no question of convincing [them]. Without a great deed nothing will budge.

Source

My translation of the Hebrew report given by Shertok to the Mapai Centre, 22 August 1936, in *Political Diary* 1, 271–5. Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the original.

Parts of this talk were also reported by Shertok in interviews with the High Commissioner (24 August; CZA, S25/19) and with two R.A.F. Officers (27 August; PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/pt.IV and *Political Diary* 1, 279–84.)

DOCUMENT 19

The Samuel–Winterton Mediation: Meetings with Nuri as-Sa'id, Paris, September 1936

(a) H. Samuel, "Draft Proposals on Palestine", 8 September 1936

1. An agreement to be made covering the period to the end of 1950.
2. In order to promote the peaceful development of Palestine, it is voluntarily agreed that the Jewish population shall not exceed forty per cent. of the whole at that date.
3. Specified areas shall not be open to land purchase or colonisation by the Jews.
4. Substantial expenditure should be undertaken by the Government of Palestine, with a view to raising the standard of agriculture and the provision for education of the Arabs to a level approximating to that of the Jews within a specified period. A reasonable expenditure upon Jewish agriculture and education to be undertaken also.
5. Trans-Jordan to be opened to colonisation by both Jews and Palestinian Arabs, on conditions acceptable to the Trans-Jordan Government. A loan of substantial amount to be made for this purpose. The Balfour Declaration not to be applied to Trans-Jordan.
6. A Legislative Council to be established in Palestine, consisting of one-third of Arab representatives, one-third of Jewish representatives, and one-third of official and unofficial members nominated by the Government. The Arab and Jewish representatives to be chosen, in the first instance, by Communal

- Bodies already existing or to be established for the purpose.
7. The rights of the Moslems in respect of their Holy Places, already guaranteed under Article 13 of the Mandate, to be reaffirmed.
 8. A Customs Union to be promoted between Iraq, Hejaz, Yemen, Palestine, Trans-Jordan and Syria, with freedom of trade within its area. A Supervisory Council representing those states to be established, with Arabic as its official language.
 9. In the event of these proposals being accepted, the High Commissioner to confer with the Arab and Jewish leaders as to their application and as to any supplementary matters. In case of disagreement, the issue to be referred to the Royal Commission on Palestine.

(b) and (c) – Reports of Meetings between Samuel, Winterton and Nuri as-Sa'id, Paris, 19 September 1936

(b) Report by Herbert Samuel

Lord Winterton and I had two long conversations on the Palestine situation with Nuri Pasha in Paris yesterday. The result was negative.

We communicated to him in outline the proposals which we had in mind, but Nuri did not consider that they would be acceptable to the Arabs of Palestine.

(c) Report by Nuri as-Sa'id

[...] Sir H.S. handed me a paper containing the headings of the subject matter to be discussed concerning the Palestinian Question. These headings appeared to relate to general policy and not to the liquidation of the present situation. [...]

When Sir H.S. completed his explanation of these items I replied that I was not an envoy of the Arabs of Palestine or of the Government of Iraq, but as an Arab I could not agree to such proposals. Having regard, however, to the knowledge I had gained of Arab public opinion in Palestine in the course of my recent attempts to settle the differences between the British Government and the Arabs, I could state my views on these proposals if Sir H.S. cared to hear them, and I could tell him the facts of the situation in Palestine and the real wishes of the Arabs there. [...] The fundamental cause of the struggle now proceeding in Palestine between the Arabs and the Jews was to be found in the hope entertained by

An agreement including a restriction upon Jewish immigration he did not think would be regarded as any real concession on the part of the Jews, since the Arabs were convinced that the Royal Commission must in any case recommend such a restriction. If they did not do so, then a voluntary restriction would be a concession, but not now.

the Jews of becoming owners of Palestine, and the resultant defensive attitude adopted by the Arabs. This was a fact which could not be denied and until each side had recognised in some way or other the rights of the other, there could be no real peace between them.

After making the above preliminary observations, I pointed out to Sir Herbert that most of his proposals implied continued Jewish immigration, though on a limited scale, while the remainder facilitated immigration in the interests of the Jews. Not a single point was for the advantage of the Arabs. [...] During the last three years Jewish immigration had assumed serious proportions, [...] with the result that the ratio between the Jewish and the Arab population had become greater than one to two. If that state of affairs continued for a few years more, the Jews would equal the Arabs in number or even exceed them. It had been the threat of such a situation which had led to the last disturbances. Unless immigration was suspended, at least for a period long enough to enable the natural increase of the Arab population to restore the ratio between them to where it [had been] three years ago, I do not believe that any solution would prove fair for the Arabs, or ultimately acceptable to them. [...]

Moreover, another principle governing Jewish immigration [viz., the economic absorptive capacity of the country] had been plainly misconstrued in practice. [...] This point had been plainly made out in the report of Mr Hope Simpson. His report had, however, been neglected under pressure brought to bear upon the British Government by the Jews in London. Neglect of his report had led

A provision for Arab and Jewish colonisation of Trans-Jordan would be considered likely to work out very much in favour of the Jews, who would prove to be the real beneficiaries.

A Legislative Council which should include Arab and Jewish delegations of equal numbers would be quite unacceptable.

As to the proposed Customs Union of the Arabian countries, that was already under negotiation between them; but the inclusion of Palestine was not at present contemplated, because here again the chief beneficiaries would be the Jewish industrialists there, who would be given a large and valuable protected market. This should only be agreed to as part of a satisfactory general settlement. The inclusion of this proposal, put forward as a means of conciliating Arab sentiment, was really a point on the side of the Jews.

to the overflow of the tide of immigration and the recent regrettable events.

In regard to item 4 concerning the development of agriculture and education, that constituted no concession in favour of the Arabs. Such development was an obligation of the Mandatory Power.

Item 5 gave the Jews a right to exten[d] immigration beyond Palestine and offered them facilities for that purpose. On the other hand, the Arabs were not at present prohibited from settling in any Arab country.

Item 6 granted the Arabs and Jews equal rights of representation; whereas the British Government had already granted the Arabs rights based on a majority in the Assembly.

As regards item 7, I could not agree that a guarantee of the integrity of their places of worship constituted a concession to the Arabs.

As regards item 8, since her admission into the League of Nations, Iraq had announced that policy and it had been noted, accepted and recognised by all States members of the League. Later on Iraq ha[d] proceeded to give effect to that policy progressively. She had, however, in recent years thought it better not to enter with Palestine into an arrangement for the removal of Customs barriers for fear lest Jewish factories, which had no sure market for their products even in Palestine, should profit by such an arrangement. [...] If the Jews could realise where their interests lay and secure the satisfaction of the Arabs by adopting a wise policy, it might perhaps be possible to study such a grave proposition, but at a time when Jewish policy was pressing hard on the Arabs and involving them in a struggle which had led to the present disturbances, no Iraqi or

In any case he thought that the disturbances would be brought to an end almost at once, and that nothing need be done, or could be done, until after the Commission had reported.

Nuri Pasha was very friendly, and said that he was most anxious to see a solution reached in Palestine, in the interest of the Arab world generally, as well as in that of Great Britain; and also in the interest of the Jews, with whom he was very desirous of living on the best of terms. It appeared, however, that he also strongly desired to promote some form of political union between Iraq, Palestine and Trans-Jordan. When that had been brought about, he said, the Palestine Arabs would be able to look upon a large Jewish immigration with equanimity, because they would have the support of some millions of Arabs to the East of them. [...]

He also referred to his proposal to H.M.G. that his own mediation, acting officially on behalf of the Iraqi Government, might be the best course, both now, and at the inquiry by the Royal Commission.

Lord Winterton and I had said at the outset of the conversations that [we] were approaching him in his

other Arab could reasonably come forward to examine such a scheme. [...]

At the final meeting I pointed out to him that there only existed two alternative policies to choose between and no third, and that the Jews had to choose one of the two. These were: (1) to suspend immigration in the existing circumstances and not to think of continuing even limited immigration, and (2) to unite Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq in one state in a suitable political form to be agreed to by the British Government. The Arabs would then be able to agree to immigration, subject to limitation as to number and zone. Only in such union can the Arabs find assurance that Palestine will preserve its Arab character and be satisfied that there is no fear of a Jewish State being set up in it. Such a solution might ensure a limited immigration in view of the transfer, to the Government of such an Arab Union, of British responsibilities towards the League. Customs barriers within it would necessarily have to be abolished, and their abolition would ensure a wide market and trade protection for Jewish industrial undertakings established in Palestine. [...]

Sir Herbert explained to me that he had put forward these proposals to the British Government and to the Zionist

personal capacity, and not as the Foreign Minister of Iraq. We also made it quite clear that we were not acting at the suggestion, or on behalf of H.M.G., or of the Zionists, neither of whom were in any way committed to any of our proposals. Further we expressed the view that, in any event, nothing could be done along the lines that we had in mind until after the Arab strike in Palestine had been terminated, acts of violence had been stopped and the inquiry by the Royal Commission accepted.

It was plain that no action would be taken by Nuri Pasha in present circumstances [...].

Lord Winterton has seen this note, and concurs.

[Organisation] and was showing them to me not in my capacity as Foreign Minister of Iraq, but as a friend of the leading Arabs, including the Palestinian leaders, in order that I might act as intermediary for the settlement of the question.

Sources

- (a) PRO, CO 733/315 file 75528/58 (copy handed to Wm. Ormsby-Gore).
- (b) Samuel note, dated 20 September 1936. ISA 100/18.
- (c) Nuri as-Sa'id to "His Excellency, the Prime Minister" of Iraq, 26 September 1936, copy forwarded by A. Clark-Kerr (Baghdad) to Sir A. Wauchope (Jerusalem), 21 October 1936. PRO, *loc. cit.*

Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the originals. Slight changes in the sequence have been made so as to align the two versions more closely.

DOCUMENT 20

B. Joseph, Notes of Conversations with Dr Abd ar-Rahman Shahbandar and Amin Sa'id, Cairo, 21 and 23 September 1936

(a)

I met Dr Abdulrahman Shahbender, the Syrian Arab nationalist leader, and Amin Eff. Said, another Pan-Arab leader at Cairo on Monday evening, September 21st. The meeting was arranged by Mr Vilenski who accompanied me to the home of Dr Shahbender where the meeting took place. It lasted about two and a half hours.

He expressed deep regret [at recent murders in Palestine] saying that once violence was resorted to it was difficult to control. [...] He then said that as we were agreed the present situation in Palestine was a regrettable one, what did I think could be done to end it[?]

I replied that what we were concerned about was to arrive at a permanent

understanding for friendly co-operation with the Arabs. That was even more important than ending the present situation. This would be done by Government. [...]

I proceeded to say that we regarded the problem in its broader aspect and wished to come to an understanding with the Arab people as a whole. We were willing, on certain terms, to have Palestine form part of an Arab confederation. I made it clear we would make no agreement behind the backs of the English, but with their knowledge we would be prepared to come to an agreement with the Arabs. We were not afraid of being a minority within an Arab majority and to be content with our proportionate representation in any central governmental body which might be set up for the confederation. [...] We were willing to co-operate with the Arabs and believed we could be of great assistance to them.

Dr Shahbender was pleased to hear this. He was most anxious, he said, that Jews and Arabs should work together. He hoped it would be possible to come to an understanding but, in the meantime, until we could speak of confederation[,] how did I think that the smaller problem of the Arabs of Palestine could be settled?

I stated that one of the difficulties was that the Arabs of Palestine forgot that the Jews of Palestine were part of a larger body, the Jews of the world, all of whom had the same right to come to Palestine as those of us Jews who happened to have come to Palestine within the last eighteen years. The Arabs, too, were only part of a larger Arab group together with which they would always be a majority over the Jews regardless of how many Jews came into Palestine.

Dr Shahbender said that he saw my point and for that reason King Feisal had looked very favourably on the Jews returning to Palestine but the Arabs of Palestine insisted that they feared for their future in Palestine because of large Jewish immigration and it was therefore necessary to deal with this problem in the light of the existing situation on the basis of the limited area of Palestine. [...]

I then passed to the question of a Legislative Council. I explained that whilst we saw little advantage in a Legislative Council we could be prepared to agree to its being established on a certain basis, primarily to reassure the Arabs with regard to their principal fear, that the Jews would dominate them. We did not think the present position of the population in Palestine could serve as a basis for fixing representation in a Legislative Council. [...But] we would be willing, because of our desire to live on terms of friendship with the Arabs, to agree to parity of representation regardless of the increase in Jewish population. In this way the Arabs could be certain that the would never be dominated by the Jews. [...] This I said would also solve the immigration problem, as the Arabs would on such a basis not need to be concerned with the number of Jews entering the country so far as political domination was concerned.

Dr Shahbender at once raised the question of what guarantee the Arabs could have that such an arrangement if accepted by them would be respected in the future. [...] He then asked whether we wouldn't try to find a way of allaying Arab fears by agreeing to a limitation of the Jewish population so that they should not exceed the Arabs in numbers.

I replied that such a request we regarded as unreasonable. We could only give the Arabs one guarantee in the field of immigration and that we considered was

really ample to remove any genuine fear. We would agree [...] that the immigration of Jews should be limited to the economic absorptive capacity of the country without displacing the existing Arab population. As soon as we reached the stage where one Jew more entering the country could not be absorbed without displacing an Arab, we would stop our immigration. That gave them security against being driven from the country. But so long as there was room for Jews we held the view they were entitled to come. [...] We were [also] willing to agree to any possible form of guarantee of the fulfilment of our undertaking to maintain the principle of non-domination. [...]

[T]hey must realize that with the 25,000,000 Arabs surrounding Palestine it did not matter much if the Jews were 1 million or 2 million in number. Dr Shahbender said he quite agreed that when there was an Arab confederation there would be no valid objection to the number of Jews settling in Palestine, but he was anxious that we should help settle Palestine's problem as the country was constituted today.

I answered that we were anxious to come to Palestine with the acquiescence of the Arabs but we would never abandon the position that Jews are entitled to come to Palestine so long as there was room for them. If the Arabs of Palestine would not agree on this basis, we regretted it, but we would have to come despite them. But, we did not seek to use our numbers to dominate them and as to this we were, as I had stated, prepared to give every possible guarantee.

Dr Shahbender said that the Palestine Arabs['] desire somehow to limit Jewish numbers had obsessed them like a madness and he was sure that if we agreed to the equality of numbers proposed now by him we would be free to make all the progress we wanted and would not regret it in the future.

I replied that we were not willing to bluff [...] by pretending to give up a right we could never surrender, with the intention of later trying to upset any present arrangement we might agree to.

Dr Shahbender intimated he thought we could come to terms as to land & the Legislative Council. The difficulty might be over limitation of immigration.

I then said that, [...] if the Arabs preferred the method of fixing in advance the extent of Jewish immigration for a period of five years, we would be prepared to consider such a proposal provided the Arabs were reasonable in the figures they suggested. [...] I said I was glad to see that he and Amin Eff. Said had shown their genuine concern to try to reach an understanding of the actual problems themselves and had not put forward the usual demand that the Jews agree to a temporary cessation of immigration. That would have made it impossible for me to negotiate. He would understand, I went on to say, how unreasonable it was for the Arabs to expect us to pull them out of the mess they had got themselves into. [...]

[I proposed that] Dr Shahbender and other neutral Arab leaders come to Palestine and arrange for the Jewish and Arab leaders to meet in their presence, or for such a meeting to be arranged in Egypt. If he did I felt confident he would either get us to agree or he would come to the conclusion that the Jews were reasonable and the Arabs of Palestine were not. [...] We would not surrender any of our fundamental rights, but we would not oppose any reasonable proposal on grounds of stubbornness or caprice.

Dr Shahbender said he might come to Palestine if that were necessary. He asked me whether I had put the proposals to Aouni Abdul Hadi or the other Arab leaders I knew. I replied in the negative and explained that we had been unable to do so for two reasons. Firstly, the Arabs had consistently refused to meet us and we could not adopt the humiliating position of having to run after them and to beg them to receive us to put forward proposals which were really in their interest. Secondly, if we made any proposal of this kind directly to them it might be suspect. [...] If the proposals would be put forward by him as proposals which he considered reasonable and acceptable they would have a different reception at the hands of the Arabs and might be agreed to. [...]

My general impression of Dr Shahbender was that he was a shrewd but fair-minded type of person, a man with a deep love of the Arab people who was genuinely desirous of Jews and Arabs co-operating on terms of friendship. His approach to the problem was not petty. He did not seem to be possessed of detailed knowledge of the Palestine situation but was apparently anxious that a settlement be arranged. I gathered the impression that he regarded our proposals as reasonable and that he would endeavour to prevail upon the Arab leaders to meet us to try to come to terms as to the future basis of Jewish development and Arab-Jewish co-operation in Palestine. [...]

(b)

After a short discussion of the European political situation, Dr Shahbender informed me that Yacoub Ghussein had left for Palestine on Monday so that they had been unable to meet him. He enquired whether I had given further thought to finding a solution to the immigration problem.

I replied that I had already stated our position on the subject at our previous meeting and further than that we could not go. As I had stated we might be prepared to agree in advance on the annual immigration for a fixed period, say five years. He asked whether I thought it likely we would agree on a figure. I said that depended on whether or not the Arabs would make a reasonable suggestion. [...] I pointed out that Jewish leaders were accepting a heavy responsibility in agreeing to discuss a settlement on such a basis as they would be criticized in various Jewish circles which maintained the view that the gates of Palestine should be open to as many Jews as the country would absorb. We were prepared to consider such a course only because of our desire for Arab-Jewish peace and understanding. [...] The British Government could well see to the re-establishment of peace, but we wanted to effect a general understanding with the Arabs. [...]

We spoke of Nuri Pasha's effort. I told them that Mr Shertok had, on Nuri Pasha's invitation, met him and discussed matters [see Document 18]. [...] I went on to explain that Nuri Pasha's efforts had failed because he ignored the Jews. He thought he could manage a settlement between Government and the Arabs whilst leaving out the Jews. Did he think the Jews were going to take that lying down? They had immediately taken action abroad where they had many friends and the whole scheme was scotched by Government's firm letter of denial. [...] The Arabs had better make up their minds that there were three factors in the Palestine situation: the British Government, the Arabs and the

Jews. No settlement would stand which was not agreed to by us. As he knew the Jews had many friends in the political and newspaper world. There were nearly five million Jews in the United States who were an influential factor and the Jews had many means of protesting and making it difficult for injustice to be done to them in such an important matter. We did not put forward friendly overtures only when we were in a weak position. On the contrary we did so equally when we were at an advantage. At present there was no question that the Arabs of Palestine were in a weak position. We don't stand aside for Government to crush them although that would be to our advantage[,] but we go on trying to negotiate with them to settle matters. Similarly we express our readiness to consider forming part of an Arab Confederation, not when such a confederation exists and is powerful and we have no choice, but when it is still non-existent. That is the best proof of our good faith in our dealings with the Arabs. [...]

Dr Shabbender said he proposed discussing the whole situation with Salibeh (?) and Aloubi [i.e., Aluba] Pasha [...]. He would then have Amin Eff. write to their friends in Palestine to see what could be done to effect an Arab-Jewish agreement. I observed that little would in my view result from letter writing. If they really wished to assist they should arrange for a meeting of the Arab leaders and representatives of the Jewish Agency. We would be glad to have him present at any such meeting. I hoped he would be able to come to Palestine to try to arrange such a meeting. If the Arab political leaders would be uneasy about meeting us in Palestine it would be possible, so far as we would be concerned, for the meeting to take place in Egypt.

Dr Shabbender expressed his readiness to act on my view of the best course of procedure to be followed. He would communicate to the Arabs the tenor of our conversations and would do his best to arrange for a meeting between them and us to take place in Palestine or in Egypt. He said he would not promise that he would succeed but he would certainly do what he could.

Both he and Amin Eff. were most cordial and friendly and appeared to be anxious to see Arab-Jewish friendship established.

Source

CZA, S25/10093. Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the original.

DOCUMENT 21

M. Shertok, Report of Meeting with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 23 April 1937

Mr Shertok had a talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi. The conversation took place at Mr Shertok's request. In accordance with Awni Bey's wishes, the talk was held at his home.

Mr Shertok informed him that the proposal to partition the country was a serious matter. The Jews were against partition, not only as Jews but also as

Palestinians. Partition was also bad for the Arabs, and the only way to prevent it was through an agreement between the Jews and the Arabs.

Awni Bey answered that he was also against the partition of the country, and the Arabs would fight against it to the bitter end. [But, i]f an agreement with the Jews meant Jewish immigration, then they would never agree to it. It was enough that the Jews were a third of the inhabitants of this country; the Arabs would not agree that the Jews should exceed this proportion. {The demand that the Jews give up immigration was a natural one in their eyes: the Arab nation had to remain for ever the majority in the country and to determine its fate.} If the Jews wanted to become a majority in the country and the Arabs did not agree to become a minority, then there was no place for an agreement.

Mr Shertok spoke of the economic aspect of partition. Awni Bey commented that the Arabs were poor in any case, and the question was not for them an economic one. Here was a question of national honour. It was very possible that the Arabs would lose this war, but that did not excuse them from fighting. {Everyone had the right to be optimistic and to think that his side would win. In any case, even if there were pessimists [among the Arabs], there was no way before them other than to continue the war, for this was a question of honour for the Arab nation. [...]}

“And so”, [Shertok] asked, “what will be?”

He said: “We shall fight! We shall fight the partition of the country, we shall fight Jewish immigration; a way to compromise does not exist.” He did not accept “parity” as a guarantee, because [...] Jabotinsky was correct in saying that Zionism aspired to make the Jewish point of view predominant in Palestine. [...] If we reached a majority this would necessarily determine the fate and character of the country.

Neither did he accept as a guarantee the large support which the Palestinian Arabs enjoyed in the neighbouring countries. [...] He said: “It is not in your power to give me an Arab federation, nor is it in my power to realise such a federation at this time. It lies hidden in the future. In the meantime, my job is to worry about this country. Even if an Arab federation is created one day, we are interested in Palestine joining that federation as an Arab country. What interest do we have in a Jewish Palestine joined to an Arab federation?”

All this did not [amount to] a basis for agreement. He was very sorry that such was the situation. Personal relations between us were the very best.} Awni had no hatred for the Jews. They were engaged in their national enterprise, and he understood them. But he saw the English as the main ones responsible for the situation which had been created in the country. {The English were ruling the country by means of the [Jews]. The Arabs were fighting the English and would continue to fight them.}

In the end Mr Shertok commented that in his opinion Awni was leading his people to destruction.

Awni Bey was very gracious and expressed his readiness to meet with us if we saw any need to.

Sources

Reconstructed from J.A.E. Minutes, 2 May 1937, CZA (reprinted in Ben-Gurion,

Memoirs IV, 171f.) and from Shertok's report to the Mapai Centre Meeting, 27 April 1937, in *Political Diary* II, 112f. Segments from the latter source appear in between { ... }. My translations from the Hebrew.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs slightly from the originals.

DOCUMENT 22

N. Bentwich, Notes of Talk with Jamal al-Husaini, London, 14 July 1937

SUGGESTED BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN JEWISH AND ARAB REPRESENTATIVES WITH A VIEW TO FINDING AN ALTERNATIVE SETTLEMENT TO PARTITION IN PALESTINE

- (1) Both the Arab and Jewish communities are in Palestine as of right.
- (2) Both communities are opposed to any partition of their common home.
- (3) Great Britain should conclude a treaty with the united people of Palestine providing for the establishment of an autonomous Government in which Jews and Arabs should be equally represented on a cantonal basis and providing for the termination of the Mandate after five years, if the peoples of Palestine have, in the opinion of the Council of the League [of Nations], at that time shown their fitness to govern themselves and live in peace with each other.

The powers of the British advisers in Palestine during the period of five years would be similar to those now exercised by the British Advisers in Trans-Jordan.

- (4) The Arabs recognise the historical and moral right of the Jews to a home in Palestine, and consequently the rights of Jews from other countries to immigrate into Palestine, it being understood that:
 - (a) Jewish immigration would for a period of years, until the relations of the two communities have been adjusted, be limited by some relation to the existing population and the difference between the natural increase of the Arabs over the natural increase of the Jews.
 - (b) The Jews in Palestine do not claim special political privileges, but full civil and political rights of citizens.
- (5) Palestine should be combined with Trans-Jordan in a single autonomous state, and Jews should have the same rights of immigration and settlement in Trans-Jordan as they have in Palestine west of the Jordan.
- (6) British authority in Palestine after the period of five years should be restricted to special rights of Defence in accordance with a Treaty of Alliance; and the government of the Holy Cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth and the supervision of the Holy places, until such time as the Council of the League of Nations agreed that special control was unnecessary.

Source

CAHJP, P3/2423.

DOCUMENT 23

Draft Bases for Discussion: The "Hyamson-Newcombe" Schemes, 1937-38

(a) London, 9 October 1937

1. A sovereign independent Palestinian state to be created on 1st January ... provided that the League of Nations certifies that the population of Palestine is then fit for self-government.
2. Every Palestinian independent of race, religion and nationality shall have equal and complete political and civil rights.
3. In the meanwhile Gt. Britain shall continue to be responsible for the Government of the country, the Palestine Government giving members of the population, Arabs and Jews, an ever-increasing share in the administration.
4. Complete autonomy shall be granted to all communities in communal matters in the widest sense as soon as possible, provided that no community has jurisdiction over members of another community in those matters. A Jewish National Home but not a Jewish state would thereby be provided.
5. Complete municipal autonomy should be granted as soon as possible to all-Jewish and all-Arab towns, villages and districts.
6. The maximum Jewish population of Palestine and later of Transjordan shall not exceed an agreed figure which shall be less than 50% of the total population.
7. The interests of the different communities of Palestine after the creation of the independent state shall be watched over by the British Government.
8. Great Britain shall retain special rights at Haifa.
9. This agreement shall hold for a term of ... years from ... and shall be renewable.

(b) Beirut, 12 January 1938

1. A sovereign independent Palestinian state to be created on 1st January
2. Every Palestinian independent of race and religion shall have equal and complete political and civil rights.
3. In the meanwhile Gt. Britain shall continue to be responsible for the Government of the country, the Palestine Government giving members of the population, Arabs and Jews, an ever-increasing share in the administration.
4. Complete autonomy shall be granted to all communities in communal matters in the widest sense as soon as possible, provided that no community has jurisdiction over members of another community in those matters.
5. Complete municipal autonomy should be granted as soon as possible to all-Jewish and all-Arab towns, villages and districts.
6. The maximum Jewish population of Palestine should be the present population. All Jews in Palestine on 1st ... shall be entitled to apply for and receive Palestinian citizenship. During the interim period envisaged, the Arab

leaders have not been authorised by [the Bludan] Congress or by the Arab Kings to agree either to further Jewish immigration or to further land sales.

7. The interests of the different communities of Palestine after the creation of the independent state shall be guaranteed by the British Government.
8. The legitimate interests of Gt. Britain shall be safeguarded.

(c) Beirut, 6 February 1938
("Nuri Draft")

1. A sovereign independent Palestinian state to be created on 1st January ... in accordance with the procedure adopted by the League for other Mandated Territories such as Iraq and Syria.
2. Every Palestinian independent of race, religion and nationality shall have equal and complete political and civil rights.
3. In the meanwhile Gt. Britain shall continue to be responsible for the Government of the country, the Palestine Government giving members of the population, Arabs and Jews, an ever-increasing share in the administration.
4. Complete autonomy shall be granted to all communities in communal matters in the widest sense as soon as possible, provided that no community has jurisdiction over members of another community in those matters.
5. Complete municipal autonomy should be granted as soon as possible to all Jewish and all-Arab towns, villages and districts.
6. The maximum Jewish population of Palestine shall be X% until there be a further agreement between the two peoples.
7. The interests of the different communities of Palestine after the creation of the independent state shall be watched over and guaranteed by the British Government.
8. The legitimate interests of Gt. Britain shall be safeguarded.

(d) Baghdad, July 1938

1. A sovereign independent Palestinian state to be created.
2. Every Palestinian without distinction of race and religion shall have political and civil rights in the state.
3. Britain shall continue to be responsible for the Government of the country for a period to be defined between the parties (the predominant view is that it should be for 10 years). During this period Arabs and Jews would be permitted to apply for jobs and have an ever-increasing participation in the administration until [British] responsibility comes to an end.
4. The communities will have broad authority over matters relating to their communal affairs, but not including any jurisdiction over members of other communities.
5. Municipalities and village councils in the Arab and Jewish towns and villages shall be extensively decentralised, giving them control over education, personal and civil matters, and local administration.
6. The maximum number of Jews shall be their present [number].
7. The interests of the different communities of Palestine after the creation of the state shall be guaranteed by the British Government. This guarantee will

be limited, according to custom, to a fixed period and will be included in the text of the state's constitution.

8. The legitimate interests of Gt. Britain shall be safeguarded.

Sources

(a, b and c): Texts as enclosed in Hyamson to Hyamson to Parkinson, 8 August 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33. (d) Translated from Darwaza, *On the Modern Arab Movement* (Ac.), III, 226f.

DOCUMENT 24

Proposal for the Solution of the Palestine Problem, submitted by the Amir Abdallah to the Woodhead Commission, May 1938

1. A United Arab Kingdom shall be established from Palestine and Trans-jordan under an Arab monarchy capable of carrying out its duties and executing its obligations.
2. This Kingdom will allow the Jews to choose their own administration in the Jewish areas, which shall be designated by a map drawn up by a committee composed of British, Arab and Jewish members.
3. The Jews will enjoy whatever any other self-governing administration would enjoy.
4. The Jews will be represented in the Parliament of the Arab State in proportion to their numbers, and the Cabinet of the United State will include Jewish Ministers.
5. Jewish immigration, on a reasonable scale, shall be limited to the areas under [Jewish] administration.
6. The Jews will not have the right to offer to purchase land or to admit any immigrants outside of the Jewish areas.
7. This scheme shall be [in force] for a period of ten years, of which eight years shall be probationary and the remaining two years given to consideration of the final decision on the destiny of the country.¹
8. Should the Arabs experience good faith and willingness on the part of the Jews to mix with them, and should they see no harm in the immigration of a suitable number [of Jews] into the [Arab] lands of the United State, the Arabs will have the right [to permit such mixing and immigration].
9. During this period, the Mandate shall remain solely in a moral form, and shall not go beyond observation and supervision in the United State.
10. There is no objection to the British Army remaining during this ten-year period.
11. At the end of the eighth year and the beginning of the ninth, it will be the duty of the Government and Parliament of the United State to declare their final decision and to execute whatever has been decided upon.
12. Discussion about Great Britain's interests shall begin immediately, and

[Great Britain] shall prepare for the ratification of the final decision once it is reached by the State.²

13. Projects for general reforms in irrigation, the army, posts and telecommunications, customs³ and other means for modernisation and prosperity shall all be carried out at an even pace and under one authority.⁴

Sources

My translation of the Arabic text transmitted by *al-Ahram's* Special Correspondent in Jaffa, dateline 23 May 1938, clipping in ISA, 66/150. (See photo following page 176.)

Other versions and translations of these proposals may be found in:

- (a) PRO, CO 733/381, file 75730/17;
- (b) CZA, S25/10347;
- (c) CZA, S25/5171;
- (d) Abdallah, *al-Takmilah*, 99f.;
- (e) Faddah, *Middle East in Transition*, 11f.

Notes

1. Other versions include the words: "... the declaration of its independence, and the termination of the Mandate."
2. Other versions refer to a "treaty" and to "the end of the ten-year period, at the time of granting the country's independence." In some versions clauses 12 and 13 are combined into a single clause 12.
3. Some versions include "finances" and "roads" in this listing.
4. The *al-Ahram* story mentioned the existence of a 14th clause which had been dropped at the last moment.

DOCUMENT 25

C. Weizmann, Summary Note of Interview with Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, London, 6 October 1938

Present: T.S. [= Tawfiq as-Suwaidi]
 N. [= Nuri as-Sa'id]
 C.W. [= Chaim Weizmann]

T.S. was at first inclined to take a somewhat rigid line, and said that no settlement was possible without a stoppage of immigration.

W. said that from his point of view, no settlement was possible which *did* involve a stoppage of immigration; that solution might be ruled out from the start.

T.S. went on to say that in that case there was no possibility of an agreement, and proceeded to indulge in a tirade in which he talked of the Jews coming in like invaders, etc., etc.

W. remarked that he was talking like an Arab pamphlet, and that they were not likely to get anywhere on that basis.

T.S. then calmed down a little, and said that if there were a Jewish State, the Jews would find it difficult to defend in case of war.

W. said that the question of defence in those circumstances would be our business. In the event of war (to which the Arabs were apparently looking forward) they might even get what they had failed to get in the last war; on the other hand, they might lose what they had already gained.

T.S. then reverted to the immigration question, and asked what W. thought about a proportion of 35 per cent.

W. said there was no use talking about it.

N. (who had up to then been silent) said: What about 50 per cent.

To this W. replied that now they were getting a little nearer. The Jews did not want to dominate anybody, but on the other hand, they would not agree to be dominated themselves.

T.S. said: But we should give you autonomy.

W. retorted: You will give us nothing.

In spite of this the interview ended on a cordial note, and it was agreed that a further meeting should be arranged shortly.

Source

CZA, S25/5476. Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the original.

DOCUMENT 26

Informal Discussions between Arab and Jewish Delegates, St James's Conference, London, 23 February 1939

- Present: – Malcolm MacDonald, Lord Halifax, Lord Dufferin,
 Sir J. Shuckburgh, Sir G. Bushe, Messrs Butler, Baxter, Downie,
 Archer and Bennett.
 – Ali Mahir, Nuri as-Sa'id, Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, Fuad Hamza,
 Mr H.I. Lloyd.
 – Dr Chaim Weizmann, D. Ben-Gurion, M. Shertok, Dr S. Wise,
 Lord Bearsted, Lord Reading, Prof. S. Brodetsky, S. Marks,
 A. Lourie.

(a) From the Official Minutes

(b) From Shertok's and Ben-Gurion's Diaries:

[M.S. Diary: Colourful description of arrival of delegates.] In the waiting hall an atmosphere of "fraternity" was created and one felt that the British were surprised and slightly

Opening the discussion, Mr MACDONALD said that the members of the British Delegation would like to say how glad they were that it was possible for the present gathering to take place. The meeting would be an informal one and would not be regarded as an official meeting of the Conference but rather as a meeting of individual delegates. [...] If all parties were prepared to make reasonable concessions, it should be possible to obtain agreement.

[...T]he purpose of this morning's informal discussion was to consider in particular the constitutional aspect of the problem. [...] It was obvious that the Mandate could not continue for ever and that one day the people of Palestine must have their independence. If we were to follow the model of Iraq, the Mandate would be replaced in due course by an independent Palestinian State in treaty relations with Great Britain. There was much criticism in Palestine today because the British Government had taken no steps during the past twenty years towards conceding the people of Palestine the political freedom which their neighbours had gradually gained. [...]

It appeared to be very desirable that the British Government should take two steps:

(1) A declaration should be issued dealing with the termination of the Mandate and the establishment of an independent Palestinian State in treaty relations with Great Britain.

embarrassed [...] as it seemed for a moment as though the barriers between the Arabs and the Jews had apparently fallen and they were drawing closer to one another much more than it had been possible to imagine. [...]

MacDonald opened [the discussion] and immediately went into the question of the régime; the Mandate would not last for ever. We had to aspire to treaty relations on the Iraq model. [...]

(2) As soon as peace was established in Palestine, but not before, some practical step should be taken which would give proof of the good faith of the declaration.

[... T]wo questions called for consideration:

(1) What form of institution or institutions could be set up as soon as peace had been restored to give practical expression to the proposed declaration? [...]

(2) What safeguards would have to be embodied in the constitution (a) in order to ensure that the British Government had authority in things that mattered; (b) in order to secure British interests; (c) in order to secure the interests of various religious communities, Moslem, Jewish and Christian; (d) in order to secure the special rights of the Jewish community in Palestine?

The Jewish community in Palestine was in fact at present a minority, but it was not an ordinary minority like the minorities of other countries. It was an extraordinary minority. Other minorities had some countries in the world which they could call their own. The Jews had not. In any case, under the Mandate the Jews had been promised a national home. The crucial question was that of the safeguards to be provided in respect of the interests of the Jewish community. [...]

ALY MAHER PASHA said that in the view of the Egyptian, Iraqi and Saudi Arabian delegates there ought to be an independent State in Palestine ready to give all necessary guarantees. He and the Arab representatives present were ready to hear what kind of guarantees were proposed and they would then be able to form an opinion

[...] Ali Mahir began and spoke briefly: [.2.] They believed that Palestine had to be independent. As for guarantees, quite so – let them be told what guarantees were being requested of the Arabs, and they were ready to give guarantees, on condition that those guarantees did not nullify the very essence of an independent state and

as to whether such guarantees allowed of an independent Arab State.

DR WEIZMANN congratulated Mr MacDonal on the fact that through his exertions an opportunity had been given to him and his colleagues to meet the representatives of the neighbouring Arab States. [...] He would like to begin by reminding the distinguished representatives of Egypt and the Arab States that the Jews had had many contacts with them in the past. Aly Maher Pasha would remember the times of Moses and Joseph, and General Nuri al-Said would remember Babylon. There was between the Jews and the Arabs a community of history and language.

Nothing would make the Jews happier than to see an independent and peaceful Palestine, and Dr Weizmann thought that such an ideal was not beyond the capacity of the Jews and the Arabs in co-operation. He understood that the Arabs of Palestine were afraid of being dominated by the Jews. Domination was, however, very remote from the minds of the Jews, and any constitution which embodied the principle of non-domination by either side would please the Jews and would be supported by all their energies.

Dr Weizmann went on to say that he would be doing an injustice to the British Delegation and to the Arab representatives if he failed to admit that the Jews desired further Jewish immigration and development, in the interests of Arabs as well as of Jews. He believed that such immigration and development was possible with the support and co-operation of the neighbouring States. As for self-governing institutions, he agreed that the first steps should be taken at once, but he thought that their development

did not negate the vital Arab interests which were for them fundamental.

Then Weizmann spoke. He expressed his satisfaction about the meeting and congratulated MacDonal for his success in convening it. In reality this was not our first meeting. [...] The quarrel was a quarrel between kinsmen, and for that reason it was so bitter.

We would be happy to see Palestine independent and flourishing, [a land] in which all interests were settled [by] mutual [consent]. Our principle – Weizmann continued – was mutual non-domination, and it was not beyond human capacities to devise a régime on the basis of this principle. [...]

For us, large-scale immigration was indispensable and we were interested in a large-scale development project which might serve as a basis for co-operation with the neighbouring countries. We could also begin with institutions for self-government, but that was a matter of organic growth – one should not run before learning to walk, and the paths of Palestine were very rocky. Weizmann ended with wishes for a return to ancient Semitic unity in all its splendour.

should be a matter of organic growth. In contradistinction to other Arab countries, Palestine was the confluence of three great religions. Nothing would be more welcome to Jews inside and outside Palestine or to representatives of the Jewish Agency than the early establishment of representative institutions. [...] Speaking on behalf of his colleagues and of other Jews not represented at the meeting, he would welcome the principle of the independence of Palestine, provided that the principle of non-dominance were observed. [...]

ALY MAHER PASHA expressed appreciation of the patience of Mr MacDonald and thanked Dr Weizmann for his kind words on the subject of co-operation between Jews and Arabs. Everyone knew how the Jews were co-operating in Egypt. He himself as a boy at school had a Jew sitting beside him. In the Royal Court the Lords-in-Waiting were all Jews, in economic matters throughout Egypt Jewish co-operation was general.

But when he and his friends referred to an independent Palestinian State they meant an independent Palestinian State as it stood at present. At the end of the War Palestine's population was about 92 per cent Arab and 8 per cent Jew. All these people lived together happily, sharing a common culture and a common language. The main point for discussion now was not the safeguards required for British interests or the general safeguards required for the different communities in Palestine, but the situation created by the exceptional position of the Jews in Palestine. [...] When the Balfour Declaration was issued, the Jews were given an exceptional position in Pales-

Ali Mahir replied with eloquence. An alliance with the Jews – [...] who know better than Egypt how to respect it. The Jews of Egypt were [their] brothers. He himself had sat on the same bench with a Jewish boy at school, and today his neighbour at Giza was a Jew.

But when one was talking about a Palestinian State, one meant Palestine as it was.

tine, and this was the whole point at issue. He had three observations to make:

(1) [...] the Jewish problem could not be solved by Palestine alone. Arab hospitality would enable a certain number of Jews to find homes anywhere in the Arab States and the Arab States were ready to help the Jews to the best of their ability.

(2) The Balfour Declaration did not give the Jews any right of sovereignty or control. It held no promise of a Jewish State. [...]

(3) Great Britain never had the right to dispose of Palestine. There was no right of conquest [...].

We must, however, take the situation as it stands. During the past twenty years nearly 400,000 Jews had entered Palestine. He would not discuss the question whether this was for the good of the country or not, but in any case it made government difficult. There were differences of language, culture and political and social ideals, but a practical solution must be envisaged. The present Jewish inhabitants of the country were welcome. The Arabs wished to establish peace. They wished to help the Jews who were in Palestine at present. They were prepared to accord them not only equal rights, not only guarantees, but also to co-operate with them in Palestine as in other Arab countries. [...] He suggested that the most statesmanlike solution would be to face the situation as it stands and to adopt a policy that would establish peace between Arabs and Jews. [...] The only way to peace was for the Jews to acquire Arab friendship by pacific penetration. [...] If there were need

The Jewish problem would not be solved by Palestine. The Jews could be at home in all the Arab lands.

Britain had not conquered Palestine by herself; the Arabs fought alongside her. Since she had no right of conquest, she could not hand [Palestine] over to the Jews.

But they were willing to accept the fact that there were 400,000 Jews in the country. The question was how to create peaceful relations between the Arabs and the Jews living in the country.

for further Jewish immigration, such immigration should not be permitted on the basis of some principle or treaty. It should be permitted on its merits as, for example, immigration into Egypt or Iraq. This was another principle altogether. We might decide now that such and such a number of additional immigrants could be admitted, but, given peace and co-operation between Jews and Arabs, the number of immigrants might be increased.

TAUFIQ BEY ÉS-SUWAIDI agreed with what Aly Maher Pasha had said. He thought that the important thing was to find out whether all those present agreed that it was impossible to deny the right of Palestine to independence. If this was once admitted, there would be no difficulty in dealing with the secondary problem.

In his view the admission of the right of Palestine to independence was incompatible with the conception of further immigration. The immigration which had taken place during the last twenty years meant, to the Jews, independence for a people coming from abroad. The Jews said that they were coming home; but he knew from personal acquaintance that this meant to them constituting a majority and a government in Palestine. So far they had not succeeded, but we were now faced with the fact of a substantial Jewish population in Palestine. The Arabs were willing to adopt every possible means to protect the latter. But if the Jews were anxious to continue to bring in more and more immigrants, he was convinced that the result would be further disturbances in Palestine, the perpetuation of the estrangement between Jews and Arabs, and the continuation of the anxieties of Great Britain. In Taufiq

If there was room for additional immigration it should be considered just as they consider it in every country in the world, and not on the basis of any political demands.

After him Tawfiq Suwaidi took over [...]. He exposed a contradiction in our position: admitting independence and demanding immigration were two diametrically opposed matters.

Immigrants from abroad who were hoping for a Jewish majority and a Jewish State stood in the way of the independence of the country. It was possible to legislate for the protection of the rights of the Jews who were already there, but if immigration continued the grievance and the suspicion would persist and the country would not quiet down.

Bey es-Suwaidi's view continued immigration would not be logical because it would not lead to conditions in which independence could grow.

The task before them was to agree in principle to the independent status of Palestine and to ensure that all sections of the population there were suitably safeguarded. But they could not lay down conditions for the future conduct of the government of Palestine. The main difficulty, as Aly Maher Pasha had said, was political, and due to the importation of a people of alien culture.

He suggested that the precedent of Iraq should be followed in the development of self-government by stages. In this way the friendship and co-operation between Jews and Arabs which, as Dr Weizmann had said, dated from the days of Abraham, could be reconstituted in Palestine.

[... Exchange of information and views on the constitutional development of Iraq.]

DR WEIZMANN said that he was sorry to interrupt the discussion, but it seemed to him somewhat premature to go into these details. The thesis that Palestine was analogous to Iraq could not be accepted without qualification, and the Jewish representatives could not agree to the statements of Aly Maher Pasha and Taufiq Bey es-Suwaidi, without comment, as a basis for discussion.

He asked for the opportunity for two of his colleagues to speak at this juncture.

MR BEN-GURION said that he

He had first of all to clarify whether we agreed on the principle of the independence of Palestine. [After that] there would remain the question of safeguarding the existing Jewish community. Even that was not a simple question, but it would be possible to overcome that difficulty. For that there were precedents – the example of Iraq. [...]

Weizmann tried to interrupt: "Mr Chairman ... Mr Chairman ...", but Malcolm did not pay any attention to him [...], so engrossed was he in listening to the lecture on Iraq. Weizmann raised his voice: "Mr Chairman!" Finally MacDonald turned to him, and then Weizmann said: "I am very sorry to interrupt this interesting lecture, but it seems to me that it is a bit before its time. We cannot accept the assumption that Iraq serves as a precedent for Palestine."

Lloyd stopped talking, the Englishmen turned their heads 90 degrees, and the discussion got back on track. Weizmann requested the floor for Ben-Gurion [...].

[From Ben-Gurion's Diary:] There

thought there were a number of common factors on which all present were agreed. First, there was the pressing need for peace in Palestine. Secondly, the prosperity of Palestine: the country had made great material progress in the last twenty years, and he thought it was to the common interest of Jews and Arabs that this progress should continue. Thirdly, the desirability of friendly and healthy relations between Palestine and the neighbouring countries. Fourthly, the safeguarding and preservation of British interests, since he thought that the interests of the Jewish and Arab peoples were identical with those of the British Empire.

The fifth point, which was that of the independence of Palestine, was not so simple a matter, and it would depend on circumstances whether it could be counted as an agreed common factor. Mr Ben-Gurion wished to make it clear that, in his view, the independence of Palestine could sooner or later be achieved, and that if agreement on the precise mode could not be reached now, it would come in time. He added that unless he was certain of this he would not be able to live in Palestine.

But there were certain points which had to be made clear. The first was that the Jews were in Palestine of right, not as guests or aliens. Palestine was and would continue to be their home, though not to the exclusion of the other peoples whose home it also was.

He appreciated Aly Maher Pasha's cordial reference to the standing and importance of the Jewish community in Egypt, and the Jews had never had any complaint in that regard. But the

were several principles on which all of those present could agree: (1) the urgent need to establish peace in the country; (2) the return of the economic prosperity of the country [...];

(3) it was desirable to establish effective peaceful relations between Palestine and the neighbouring countries; (4) the safeguarding of British interests in the country. [...]

A fifth point – the question of the independence of Palestine – was not quite so simple, and the matter would depend on several circumstances; [it was not clear] whether it could be counted among the agreed upon principles or not. In his opinion, the independence of Palestine would be realised sooner or later through a Jewish–Arab agreement, and if the agreement were not reached now it would be reached in due course.

But there were several points which had to be clarified and to which our Arab friends would have to agree. The first point was that the Jews were in the country by right, and not as guests or aliens. Palestine was and would continue to be our homeland, although this did not negate the birth-right of the other inhabitants who also regarded it as their homeland.

He appreciated – and all his colleagues no doubt shared his appreciation – the words of Ali Mahir Pasha about the standing and importance of the Jewish community in Egypt, and

Jews were not in Palestine in the same way they were in Egypt; they were in their own country. The only limit to their rights in Palestine which they recognized was that there should be no addition to their numbers by immigration which involved the displacement of any of the existing inhabitants. It was legitimate for the Government and people of Egypt to say whether or not they would accept further "guests" within their frontiers. But this was not the case in Palestine. ALY MAHER PASHA intervened to ask what Mr Ben-Gurion meant in calling Palestine the Jews' "own country".

MR BEN-GURION said that the world admitted the historical connection of the Jews with Palestine dating back over 3,000 years. [... Further interruptions.]

MR MACDONALD intervened to suggest that Mr Ben-Gurion be allowed to continue his statement.

MR BEN-GURION, continuing, said that the Jews did not regard themselves as a minority in Palestine in the same sense in which they were a minority in Egypt or in Iraq. On the basis of this distinction, he believed that it would be possible to remove any misunderstandings, such as the belief that the Jews wished to dominate in Palestine.

he was happy to point out that the Jews had never had any basis for complaint against the New Egypt. But the status of the Jews in Palestine was not like the status of the Jews in Egypt. Jews were in Palestine because it was their [own] country. They immigrated to the country as a nation returning to its national home. The only limitation on their immigration to which they agreed was that the existing inhabitants should not be displaced by the Jewish immigrants. [...]

Ali Mahir interrupted and asked: What did Mr Ben-Gurion mean when he said that Palestine was the country of the Jews? The Arabs were once in Spain and had created their own culture there – can they now claim that Spain was their home?¹

[Ben-Gurion replied that he] meant the ancient historic connection between the Jews Palestine, which was recognised by the whole world, including Iraq,² and which has continued now for more than 3,000 years. [... Further interruptions.] Ali Mahir got tough and they exchanged questions and answers; there was a danger of chaos.

Malcolm intervened, quieted down Ali Mahir and allowed Ben-Gurion to finish.³

The Jews did not see themselves as a minority in Palestine like the minority they constituted in Egypt or in Iraq. Even though at this time they were a numerical minority, yet their status was not the status of a minority. This was because they were in their own land and had the right to increase their numbers by immigration, subject only to economic considerations. But, just as the Jews were not to be regarded as a minority subject to the rule of others, neither did they wish to rule over others.

Only if these misunderstandings could be removed would it be possible to discuss constructively the question of the independence of Palestine. He would only add that this problem could not be solved against the will of either of the communities in Palestine. [Rabbi S. Wise remarks....]

FUAD BEY HAMZA said that [... h]e saw no point in continuing these meetings if the proceedings were to consist simply of general speeches. So far he did not think that the Jewish representatives had recognized the gravity of the situation. He did not wish to discuss hypothetical questions [...].

DR WEIZMANN said that he fully shared Fuad Bey Hamza's view as to the importance of concentrating on practical proposals. But he thought that it was impossible to consider the constitutional issue alone when there were other equally vital matters such as immigration. The Jewish representatives would not have spoken as they had done if Taufiq Bey es-Suwaidi had not expressed himself so definitely on the broader question of immigration. [...]

FUAD BEY HAMZA said that, if the subject for discussion was an independent Arab State, these other matters, such as immigration, would solve themselves, since they would come within the competence of the future Palestinian Government.

DR WEIZMANN said that he under-

Only if these principles were accepted by both sides and the existing misunderstanding in the relations between the two peoples were removed would it be possible to speak constructively of the independence of Palestine. He wished only to add that this independence would not be achieved, and it would be impossible to implement it, against the will of one of the two peoples. [Shertok's account continues: Rabbi Wise remarks....]

Fuad Hamza raised difficulties: How could the Jews promise the Arabs that they would not dominate them when they became the majority if they themselves were afraid of domination by the Arab majority? Since they understood very well that the majority dominates, how, therefore, did they expect the Arabs to agree to a Jewish majority and to rely on [the Jews'] unwillingness to dominate? He proposed that we stop talking generalities and get down to a discussion of details. [...]

Weizmann remarked that we should not separate the constitutional question from the immigration question. He pointed out that Tawfiq Suwaidi himself had insisted on the connection.

Fuad Hamza: If an independent state were created, it would decide on immigration.

Weizmann: One had to consider

stood this attitude, but that he could not be expected to agree to it. They were all concerned to face realities, and that it must be realized that for the Jews immigration was one of the fundamental realities which could not be left to chance and which must form an integral part of any general agreement.[...]

the reality – immigration was for us the essential point, and without it there would be no agreement. [...]

With that the meeting ended. We didn't split up right away. I approached the Iraqis and called Ben-Gurion over. We spoke Turkish. Tawfiq Suwaidi got excited: "You are already 400,000 – what more do you need?" Nuri claimed that they had important proposals for us if we came to an agreement, but apparently we did not know what was good for us (read: settlement in Iraq if we agreed to stop immigration to Palestine). He turned to Weizmann and said: "In 1936 you wasted an important opportunity." We parted on friendly terms – with nothing. [...]

Sources

- (a) PRO, FO 371/23225, file E1448/6/31.
- (b) Reconstructed from Shertok's account, CZA, S25/198/1 (reproduced in Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 78–83) and Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* II, 101f. My translation from the Hebrew.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the originals.

Notes

- 1. Preceding sentence from Shertok diary.
- 2. Preceding two words from Shertok diary.
- 3. Preceding two sentences from Shertok diary.

DOCUMENT 27

Informal Discussions between Arab and Jewish Delegates, St James's Conference, London, 7 March 1939

Present: – Malcolm MacDonald, Lord Halifax, Lord Dufferin,
Sir E. Brocklebank, Messrs Butler, Baxter, Downie.
– Ali Mahir, Tawfiq as-Suwaidi, Fuad Hamza.
– Dr Chaim Weizmann, D. Ben-Gurion, M. Shertok,
Lord Bearsted.

(a) From the Official Minutes:

MR MACDONALD invited Dr Weizmann to open the discussion.

DR WEIZMANN referred to the suggestion of the British Delegation that the establishment of an independent Palestine should be the objective, and that the first step towards this objective should be taken in the near future. This suggestion has not been accepted by the Jewish Delegation as a basis for discussion, but he was ready in the present informal conversation to offer his personal views on the subject. He said that he agreed that independence must come at some future date and that there must be a transition period. He understood that the question of safeguards for the Jewish National Home had been under discussion with the Arabs, but the point which he wished to emphasize was that an essential condition of an independent State must be Jewish consent. The Peel Commission had endorsed the view that it would not be right to force the Jews to enter a Palestine State against their will. The second point which Dr Weizmann wished to emphasize was that any constitutional arrangements directed

(b) From M. Shertok's Diary:

Who would open? Weizmann and Ali Mahir, with considerable politeness, tried to honour each other with the opening. Ali Mahir's politeness won out, and Weizmann opened.

His remarks were designed to create a spirit of peace and cordiality rather than to outline a political programme. But he stressed two main principles: agreement on the régime, and possibilities for the expansion of the Jewish National Home. The first implied mutual non-domination, while the second meant immigration.

towards the goal of independence must be of such a nature as to leave unimpaired the right of the Jewish National Home to grow by immigration.

MR BEN-GURION expressed the view that discussion of the question of safeguards for the Jewish National Home in an independent Palestine was irrelevant. In his opinion, the Jews of Palestine needed no safeguards. They could look after themselves.

From this point of view, the question was as much one of securing independence for the Jews as of securing independence for the Arabs, and, though a Palestinian Jew himself, he was not so much interested in Palestine, as in the sixteen million Jews outside Palestine, all of whom had a right to go there [...].

To him the problem posed itself on a wider canvas than that of Palestine. It was a question of securing a rapprochement between the Jews of the world and the Arab peoples as a whole. On this basis he did not despair of the possibility of agreement.

ALI MAHER PASHA said that, though he was a lawyer, he proposed to leave

He was followed by Ben-Gurion who made some supplementary remarks. The Government had discussed with us questions regarding the political system and was undoubtedly conducting the same negotiations with the Arabs. At the meetings with us the Government spoke as though it were a faithful representative of the Arabs. He assumed that in the talks with the Arabs the Government was defending the stand of the Jews.

What was being discussed was an independent State with safeguards for the Jews therein. Our reply was: For such safeguards we have no need; the *Yishuv* will hold its own by virtue of its own strength even without constitutional safeguards.

The main point was not the fate of the Jews in Palestine, but the fate of those who were not yet in the country and who had to settle there. Such Jews were entitled to enter Palestine because it was their home, and if the Arabs recognised that right, then there was a basis for peace.

It was possible that the expansion of the basis for negotiation and the inclusion of the neighbouring countries would help. The intention was not the settlement of Jews in Iraq or in some other neighbouring country – this was not what we aspired to. But in a broader scope, it was possible that a way would be found to meet the national aspirations of both the Arabs and the Jews.

Ali Mahir replied. He spoke softly, either from cunning or from a humane

aside all questions of legality and to come down to realities. He said that he appreciated and respected the Zionist ideal for the reconstruction of their National Home in Palestine, but he begged them to recognize realities, and in particular the fact of the existing inhabitants of Palestine. If Palestine had been an empty country, Egypt and, no doubt, the surrounding Arab countries, would have welcomed the establishment of a Jewish State there, and would have been glad to cooperate with it in the economic sphere. At this point he paid tribute to the perseverance and ability of the Jews who had organized in Palestine in twenty years a community which now numbered something like 450,000, but he would ask the Zionists to recognize the existence of the Arab inhabitants in Palestine, whose ancestors had lived there for 1,300 years, who were attached to their native soil, and regarded the incoming Jews, rightly or wrongly, as intruders. Unless the Jews were prepared to respect the genuine feelings of the Arabs there could never be peace. [...] Reference to the 1903 British offer of a haven for the Jews in East Africa.]

MR SHERTOK recalled the history of Zionism [...] The urge of the Zionist ideal, though a psychological reality, was as much a fact as the physical reality of the existence of the Arabs in Palestine. The Jews had always been ready to cooperate with the Arabs in Palestine, but had met with no response. [...]

feeling. He appreciated the Zionist ideal – it was a very exalted ideal. The Jews deserved a state of their own. If Palestine had been unpopulated, Egypt would have welcomed Jewish immigration into that country, and even the creation of a Jewish State therein. But the trouble was that the country was not empty but was populated. This was the land of the Arabs from time immemorial.

[...] It was not feasible to continue immigration in spite of Arab opposition. They would fight, and were prepared for sacrifices. One had to face realities and not persevere in the realisation of a dream that some visionary had had.

I asked to be permitted to reply to Ali Mahir. [...] For us our history was a powerful reality, it was the basis of our being. Zionism was the outcome of that history, not the dream of an individual. [...] Present-day Zionism was only a new expression of an old movement. The fact that Palestine was today settled by Arabs was a physical reality, which would not be overlooked; but our bond with the land and our striving to return were also a reality, psychological perhaps, but a reality no less decisive with

MR BEN-GURION said that his proposal [to widen the frame of reference] would be that the whole of Western Palestine should be made a Jewish State and that this State should be federated with the surrounding Arab States. In this way the Arabs of Palestine would not feel that they were under Jewish domination, as they would be members of a wider and predominantly Arab Federation.

respect to the fate of the country than [the reality] of the Arab community. The Jews would not be deterred; we would strive not for domination by one element over the other, but for their mutual adjustment. Perhaps such a possibility of adjustment might be found if the framework of the negotiations could be extended beyond the confines of Palestine. [...]

Ben-Gurion [continued:] supposing that Western Palestine was recognised as a Jewish State, that State could nevertheless become part of a greater body embracing the neighbouring countries. The Arabs in Palestine would then not feel themselves a helpless minority, for they would be a part of the great Arab people with an overwhelming majority within this wide framework. On the other hand, the Jewish State could pour benefits not only on the Arab inhabitants but also on the neighbouring Arab countries, which would be its allies within the confederation.

[...] Among the three Arabs there was some stirring upon hearing these words. Tawfiq Suwaidi was particularly affected. He exchanged glances with and also whispered to Ali Mahir to his left and Fuad Hamza to his right. [...]

Ali Mahir again questioned our right to Palestine and repeated the argument that if the historical past were considered then the Arabs had a right to Spain.

"Yes, really," Weizmann replied, "why don't you claim Spain?"

"Perhaps," interjected Tawfiq Suwaidi, "you will help us in this matter with the British Government?"

Weizmann countered that it was nevertheless a fact that they were not going to Spain and were not claiming it, whereas we were returning to

[ALY MAHER PASHA:] Had not the time come for the Jews to call a halt in the realization of their ideal and to consolidate the successes which they had already won? [...] If the Jews would now slow down their advance in Palestine peace might be secured, and later, in a better atmosphere, they might (he thought they certainly would) be able to make a further advance, not, as hitherto, with the aid of force, but with the goodwill of the Arabs. [...]

DR WEIZMANN expressed his appreciation of Aly Maher Pasha's remarks. There had, he thought, been no such conversations as this between Jews and representatives of the Arab side since his talk with the Amir Faisal in 1918. He appreciated the force of Aly Maher Pasha's suggestion that, for the sake of securing peace in Palestine, the Jews should now be ready to slacken the pace of the development of the Jewish National

Palestine. That was the answer. After all, we were once offered Uganda and we did not accept it.

Ali Mahir: "It was a great sin to have rejected Uganda." [... Exchange of views on whether Zionist work in Palestine had benefitted the Arabs.]

Finally, Ali Mahir turned to us, as though speaking from his heart. For three years now the bloodshed had continued in the country, and, if we insisted on our rights to the full, the bloodshed would continue in future as well. We must take a step forward towards peace, and concede something in order to buy Arab friendship. We ourselves should announce that, for the sake of peace, we were prepared to suspend immigration or at least to limit it. That would create a different spirit in the country. Afterwards we could even renew our immigration. (It seemed to me that he said that in the course of time we could even become a majority – if only we would establish peace and friendship.)

Suddenly the atmosphere around us thickened[; ...] it almost became difficult to breathe. [...] The Englishmen and the Arabs had united into a single front. Ben-Gurion whispered to me: "This is why the meeting was arranged – to appeal to us for this concession."

Weizmann was apparently impressed otherwise. He thanked Ali Mahir for his cordiality. For twenty years, he said, no Arab had spoken to us in that language. Let us begin negotiations in this spirit of friendship and understanding.

Home, and, speaking for himself, he would be prepared, for the sake of peace, to go a long way in the direction of slowing down. [...]

Dr Weizmann suggested to Aly Maher Pasha that he and his friends from Iraq and Saudi Arabia should take an early opportunity of visiting Palestine and seeing the Jews at work. He would find that their activities were peaceful and not warlike, though they were prepared to defend themselves against aggression. He would like to see the present Conference adjourned and an early Conference in Palestine itself between Arabs (including representatives of the neighbouring countries) and Jews, with a view to reaching a compromise. He repeated that he would be prepared, for his part, to go a long way in the direction of slowing down, provided that future development was not prejudiced.

ALY MAHER PASHA expressed his appreciation of Dr Weizmann's invitation to him to visit Palestine, but thought that a Conference in Palestine was out of the question until peace was restored. He desired again to urge upon the Jews that they should now call a halt and consolidate their position with a view to securing peace and obtaining the goodwill of the Arabs for a further advance. [...]

FUAD BEY HAMZA [...] strongly supported Aly Maher Pasha's plea that the Jews should slow down the development of the Jewish National Home in the interests of peace. He thought that hitherto the Jews had made no genuine effort to co-operate with the Arabs.

DR WEIZMANN demurred. He reminded Fuad Bey Hamza of his own agreement with the Amir Faisal and pointed out that in 1934 there were as

Let the decision be postponed; Ali Mahir should come to Palestine to see with his own eyes what we have done, and let him judge. He would mediate between the two sides. His hope was strong that we would reach an agreement. Possibly we had been too much in a hurry in the past. For the sake of an agreement we would be prepared to slow down our immigration. [...]¹

many as 10,000 Arabs employed on Jewish plantations [etc...]

MR MACDONALD said that he had listened with interest to the discussion and, as he understood it, one point of agreement between the two sides had emerged, namely the expediency and necessity for slowing down of the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine. If agreement could be reached on this point in principle, the only question remaining for discussion would be the degree of slowing down.

MR BEN-GURION said that his own suggestion would be that immigration, so far from being slowed down, should be doubled.

FUAD BEY HAMZA asked how this could be expected to secure peace. He could not regard Mr Ben-Gurion's suggestion as a serious contribution to a discussion the object of which was to face realities and to find a solution of the present problem. [... He] referred to Mr Ben-Gurion's uncompromising statement of the Zionist case, and reminded him that the Arabs did not recognize that the Jews had any right to Palestine. So far as the Arabs of Palestine were concerned, it was not to be expected that they would discuss a mere slowing down of the rate of immigration. Their demand was that immigration should be completely stopped.

Malcolm opened his mouth for the first time all evening – at last he was given the necessary handle. Here we had reached something in common, he said. Ali Mahir Pasha had proposed the reduction of immigration, and the other side had also expressed a readiness to slow down. This point should now be clarified.

Ben Gurion came to the rescue and interpreted what Weizmann had said. "We are prepared for an agreement with the Palestine Arabs even if this agreement entails certain concessions on our part. But this applies only if the Arabs recognise our rights. Is there a recognition on the part of the Arabs of the principle of Jewish immigration – of the immigration of Jews into the country by right and not on sufferance?"

Fuad Hamza mumbled: "The Palestinian Arabs are totally opposed to immigration. They won't be satisfied with a slowdown. They are demanding a complete stop."

Ali Mahir repeated his proposal. Ben-Gurion said he would try to explain to him the impression which his appeal would make on a Zionist.

“This can be compared to a woman who was barren for many years and finally succeeded in getting pregnant. When she rolls around in her birth-pangs and cries out from the intensity of her pains in delivery, the neighbours, who are all mothers, are angry at the noise she is making and ask her to stop: Don’t give birth! This call to us to stop immigrating for the sake of peace and quiet in the country is just like that. It is impossible to stop giving birth; it is a decree of nature. It is possible to kill the woman giving birth or [kill] the child, but it is impossible to stop the natural process.”

One of the Englishmen – I don’t remember who – said it was necessary to make sacrifices for the sake of peace.

Ben-Gurion protested bitterly: “What’s all this turning to us and demanding peace from us[?] We are not the ones who broke it. Others have done that. Let them stop the bloodshed.” [...]

MR BEN-GURION said that there could be no one-sided surrender on the part of the Jews. It was not the Jews who had broken the peace, and those who had broken the peace should make peace. So far as the Jews were concerned, there had been and would be peace. The Jews could never give up their right to Palestine, although Great Britain had the power to impose any decision that it might see fit. [...]

I said that the intention was apparently [for the Jews to make] a one-sided concession, and there was no point discussing it. Such a concession would not even bring about peace.

MR MACDONALD thought that the discussion had shown that there was perhaps a two or three per cent prospect of securing an agreement, and that it would be worthwhile to continue discussion at a later date.

Malcolm shook his head in a sign of disgrace, as if to say: What obstinate stubbornness! He tried to return to the “common point”, but seeing that we were not budging he announced that the hour was late and adjourned the meeting. [...]

DR WEIZMANN said that he would let Mr MacDonald have his views on the question of a further discussion tomorrow. [...]

Afterwards he asked us if we were prepared to continue the next day. We did not commit ourselves.

Sources

- (a) PRO, FO 371/23228, file E1875/6/31.
 (b) CZA, S25/198/1 (reproduced in Sharett, *Political Diary IV*, 119–24). My translation from the Hebrew. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 258–61.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the originals, and the order of some segments has been slightly rearranged for the sake of greater coherence and a better comparison of the two texts.

Note

1. At this point, Shertok commented in his diary: "When I heard this I thought my hair would turn white. I felt as though an abyss had opened at our feet. ..." Ben-Gurion recorded Weizmann's last remark slightly differently: "We were prepared for negotiation with the Palestinian Arabs in order to give and take. Fifty to sixty thousand persons could enter Palestine each year. If it is suggested that we make an agreement and slow down a bit, we can find a common basis." *My Talks*, 262.

DOCUMENT 28

B. Joseph, Diary Account of Dr Weizmann's Meetings in Egypt, 10–11 April 1939

[10 April. Weizmann had met Tawfiq Suwaidi at the Windsor Hotel.] Apart from the question of the settlement of Palestinian Arabs in Iraq which had been discussed by them, Dr Weizmann told me that they had also had a brief conversation about the present Palestine situation.

Dr Weizmann had impressed upon Tewfiq Suweidi that in view of the grave international situation the Jews and Arabs of Palestine and the neighbouring countries would do better to hold hands and help each other as otherwise we would all be wiped out. He pointed to the moral of the conquest of Albania, a Moslem State, by Italy. He tried to impress upon Tewfiq Suweidi that this was not the time for declarations of policy by the British Government. [...] Dr Weizmann also reminded him that the Jews counted in the United States and it would be a much more serious matter if Great Britain had a quarrel with the United States than if they merely had a quarrel with the Jews. Suweidi said that this was quite a logical proposition. During their conversation Suweidi said that it did not matter much what the Mufti thought; if an arrangement were considered by the Arab States to be reasonable the Arabs of Palestine would accept it. [...]

[11 April. 11:30 a.m.] The Prime Minister was very cordial and friendly. The main points made by Dr Weizmann in the conversation were that this was no time for Government to announce fundamental changes of policy. The international situation made this undesirable and it would be in the general interest that the announcement of policy should be postponed. Mohammad Mahmoud reacted to this in no [?] very definite manner. Another point made by Dr Weizmann was that Great Britain would need the help of the United States if

war came. Mohammad Mahmoud immediately reacted to this saying that, of course, the United States must come in at once.

Dr Weizmann countered that in that event the Jews could be helpful because they had some influence in the United States and it would not be so easy to find support for a policy of intervention in Europe if the Jews were treated unfairly as had been suggested. He also said that Jews would be able to help in a positive way. If war came we would be able to put a large number of men into the field as soldiers. He invited the Prime Minister to send an Egyptian Military expert to Palestine to visit the Jewish settlements and to see what we had achieved in the matter of training our young men for defence purposes. The Prime Minister said that he would consider the suggestion, but at the present moment [...] he could not spare a single officer.

Dr Weizmann asked Mohammad Mahmoud to tell the British that if they tried to restrict our right to acquire land as they were thinking of doing they would upset everything because our work would be completely stopped if they did that. We would never be able to agree to this.

Mohammad Mahmoud said that [...] it was essential that order should be restored as soon as possible as the British troops were immobilised in Palestine because of the disorders.

Dr Weizmann said that the troops were not needed in Palestine to protect us. They were there because they were there but we could look after ourselves.

[... The Prime Minister's] general attitude was quite friendly and very different from [...] the behaviour of the representatives of Arab States at meetings with the Jews [in London....] The talk with the Prime Minister lasted about 20 minutes.

Leaving the Prime Minister's offices we were besieged by newspaper men. [...] The afternoon editions of the Egyptian press featured Dr Weizmann's visit to the Prime Minister but attached more importance to it than it really merited. [...]

[6:30 p.m. Abdin Palace.] It transpired that Ali Maher was not alone, whether accidentally or by design. There were with him Abdul Rahman Bey Azzam, Tewfiq Suweidi and Kilani Bey, the Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires in Cairo. Here again Dr Weizmann urged the advisability of a postponement of any change of policy. Ali Maher rejoined that it might be a good thing to postpone the whole question for a considerable period of time[,] but in order to achieve that he thought the Jews ought to make a gesture. Dr Weizmann asked what he meant and he replied that he thought it would be a good thing if we agreed to suspend immigration for six months. We would not lose much thereby. This would create a suitable frame of mind and give time for discussions between Arabs and Jews.

Dr Weizmann said that was entirely out of the question and suggested that Ali Maher think of something better. He might be willing to return to Egypt in three weeks' time and have a further talk. [...] Dr Weizmann also spoke of the importance of the United States to Great Britain in the present international situation and said he did not want to have to go to the United States, for if he did go he would have to say many harsh things.

Dr Weizmann also touched upon the help which the Jews could give in the

event of an international conflict. He said we had to help each other, and used the expression that our frontier was Alexandria. Dr Weizmann suggested to Ali Maher that perhaps the best course the Egyptians could pursue would be to try to help the Arabs of Palestine constructively instead of by political changes to which the Jews would never agree. If the Egyptians started this the Jews might be able to join in.

The other Arab gentlemen present took practically no part in the discussion. [...] Ali Maher was very cordial. [...] Dr Weizmann commented upon the much more friendly tone of Ali Maher than he had used in the conversations in London [cf. Documents 26, 27].

Source

CZA, S25/43.

DOCUMENT 29

L.B. Namier, Note of Talk with H. St-J. Philby, London, 23 September 1939

I met Philby by chance at the [Athenaeum] Club yesterday, and we had a talk from which I learnt the following points:

[...]

3. I asked him concerning Ibn Saud's attitude [towards the war]. He said that Ibn Saud had so far made no declaration [of war against Germany] and had no reason to make one. He would come out on the British side if he was given what he wanted. I asked Philby what that was? He replied: "Money and armaments".
4. He explained to me that Ibn Saud had counted on using his new income from oil for armaments; but that the war will interfere with the Moslem pilgrimages to Mecca & reduce Ibn Saud's income from that source; and that he will have to use his new income for the ordinary expenses of his State; and that he will therefore need more money from the outside for armaments.
5. He next asked me what there was in the scheme he had once seen in the papers of 500 million pounds to be used for Jewish settlement, and he added that if such sums were raised, we surely could use £20,000,000 out of it to buy Palestine. He said: "What you have not got, you can either buy or steal! Why not buy it?" I replied that we always are prepared to plonk down money for Palestine provided we are certain that the buyer will deliver the goods. As to the £500,000,000 scheme, I told him that if someone approaches me with a proposal to save 100 Jews, I shall spend the whole day talking to him, but if he has a scheme to save the whole of Israel, I cannot spare more than 20 minutes; for obviously it is a crank who talks through his hat. In the same way, if someone talks of £500,000,000, he is not worth listening to. But that for Palestine any reasonable sum can be raised in the Jewish world if there is a

sufficient basis for doing so. Obviously he would like to talk to Ibn Saud about some kind of Jewish loan to Saudi Arabia.

[...]

8. Sometime during the conversation Philby said Ibn Saud was a man and that we ought to deal with him. I replied that he, Philby, was the best witness of our having wished to do so, and that it was in no way our fault if direct contacts had not been established. I added that I hoped he would tell Ibn Saud about his attempt to arrange a meeting [in February 1939] between Dr Weizmann and [Fuad] Hamza, and how Hamza gave Philby the slip. Philby replied that Ibn Saud knew about it. In the course of a talk about these matters he said, in explanation of Hamza's behaviour, that the Saudi Arabians have to pay attention to Palestinian and Syrian public opinion.

[...]

I suggested to Philby that before he goes out to Ibn Saud he should meet Dr Weizmann. He was most keen to do so and asked that I should come too, and suggested that we three should lunch together at the Athenaeum. [...] ¹

Source

WA.

Note

1. For the record or their subsequent talk, see PCW II, 371–3.

DOCUMENT 30

Extract from a note given by King Ibn Sa'ud to Col. H.B. Hoskins, Riyadh, 20 August 1943

As regards his Excellency's [i.e., President Roosevelt's] reference to me meeting Dr Chaim Weizmann, I should like his Excellency the President to know that we sincerely welcome all who visit us, no matter what their religion, and do our duty by honouring them as befits their rank. But the Jews are on a special footing. The noble President is well aware of the enmity that exists and has existed between us and them from of old. It is an enmity well known and treated of in the books that we possess, and from first to last has always been deep-rooted in us. Hence it will appear that we do not feel ourselves safe from Jewish treachery and can neither hold discussions with them nor trust their promises, and that for two reasons: first, because we know their intentions towards the Arabs and the Muslims; second, because we have not consulted the Arabs and ascertained their intentions. [...]

As for the person mentioned, Dr Chaim Weizmann, he in particular is my enemy, for it was he who had the outrageous impudence¹ to single me out among all the Arabs and Muslims to address to me the base demand that I should turn traitor to my religion and my country. By that act he has increased

my hatred for him and all who follow him. This demand was made in the first year of this war, when he sent to me a certain European to request me to abandon the Palestine question and my support for the rights of the Arabs and Muslims there and to offer me in consideration of that £20 million, this sum being guaranteed by his Excellency President Roosevelt himself. Could there be impudence or baseness greater than this? Could there be a crime greater than the crime that this man has dared to commit in making this request of me and in making the noble President the guarantor of so dishonourable an act?² I do not doubt that his Excellency the President would refuse to countenance this both for my sake and his own. This is one of the reasons for my attitude which I should like you to lay before his Excellency so that he may see to what lengths the Jews go in seeking to attain their wicked ends and so that he may look with that sound judgment of his into these acts, the mere mention of which is sufficient description of them.

Source

Translation of document obtained by T. Wikeley and forwarded to Eden, 31 August 1943, PRO WO 32/10260. The translation which Hoskins provided to the British Foreign Office in November 1943 differs slightly (see notes). FO 371/34963/A, file E6823/506/65.

Notes

1. For "outrageous impudence", Hoskins' translation reads: "criminal affront".
2. For "so dishonourable an act", Hoskins' translation reads: "such a vile proposal".

DOCUMENT 31

Reports of Jewish Agency Contacts with Egyptian Leaders, August 1946

(a) E. Sasson Report, Cairo, 9 August 1946

[Summary of discussion with Ali Mahir.]

Abd ar-Rahman Azzam had approached the English with a proposal to help them with a solution to the Palestinian and Libyan questions, if only they would agree to Egypt's demands. He hadn't received any reply. He understood that any solution to the Palestine question without the assent of the Jews and the Arabs was doomed to failure from the start. He also understood that any agreement of this sort means compromise and concessions by both sides, by the Arabs and the Jews. There was only one solution, in his view, and that was: partition. But, in order to arrive at this solution, joint discussions and talks were needed. As Secretary of the Arab League he could not appear before the Arabs as the initiator of such a proposal; his position was very delicate. [...] He would be prepared to support partition on [one of] two conditions: if one of the Arab states took into its hands the initiative and found the strength and courage to propose the thing in the League Council, or if the British requested him to work along these lines. He respected very much the Jewish achievements and strength in

Palestine, and believed that if the Arab East came to an understanding with them it would be able to reap great benefits. He suggested that we declare our willingness to join the Arab League.

Isma'il Sidqi, the Prime Minister, understood that the English would not leave Egypt so long as the Palestine question remained unresolved and served as a source of unrest which threatened the entire Arab East. The English were hoping that Palestine would be a "secure haven" for the British Army in the East.

From this perspective he was prepared to listen to our claims and demands and to try to help as best he can. But in order for him to harness himself to the affair he would need to know how much we were prepared to concede. There could be no question of a Jewish state in all of Palestine, but [he] might definitely [consider] partition, a bi-national state or a federal state. In addition, he would need to know the extent of the help we could give him in England and America towards the success of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations and the extent of the economic aid we could give to the Arab world. For this reason he asked us to submit to him immediately (in writing, but without signature) a short memorandum which would include all the details he needed. It would be very desirable if he received the memorandum this very week, so that he could study it and orient the discussions at the Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference, meeting on the 12th of this month in Alexandria, in accordance with it. [See (b), below.]

He repeatedly stressed that he was a "businessman", neither pro-Jewish nor pro-Arab. He was after what was best for Egypt. If that required Jewish-Arab understanding, so be it. But he could not understand the English. Why were they not requesting him to intervene? Couldn't we, Jews, do something in this direction?

[Brief summary of talks with Hasan Rifaat, Deputy Minister of the Interior, and Lutfi as-Sayyid, Egyptian Foreign Minister.]

(b) I.N. Clayton, Substance of Note Alleged to have been Delivered from Jewish Agency Sources in Jerusalem to Isma'il Sidqi on 13 August 1946

1. Points out that continued immigration and development of National Home is Jewish main interest. The Jews seem to realise that their ideal of a Jewish state in the whole of Palestine cannot be achieved so are looking for a compromise which will secure their essential requirements.
2. The Arabs['] essential requirements are (a) to ensure for the majority of the Arabs in Palestine the right to shape their own destiny and give full scope to their natural talent and aspirations; and (b) to confine Zionist designs to a definite area, so preventing further expansion and the Jews from becoming a disturbing factor in the Arab world.
3. The Jews will never abandon immigration. They are now an expansionist element and so disturbing, but if integrated into the Arab World they may become a useful and valuable part of it. They will have much to do in absorbing their own immigration and developing their existing communities. They are interested in a peaceful solution as otherwise they will have to direct to armed forces money which they would otherwise have available for development.

4. The Jews are largely agricultural. In this they will not compete with the Arab countries. In fact they will have to buy largely from them. The balance of trade with Arab countries has always been largely against the Jews and can be expected to continue to be so.
5. The Egyptian demand for the total evacuation of Egypt and the Canal Zone can only be satisfied if an alternative base for British forces can be found. This can only be in Palestine and is only possible in a peaceful Palestine. Egypt's interest is therefore to promote a peaceful compromise in Palestine. This can only be possible on the basis of some form of segregation. Jewish public opinion in the world, especially in America, would be of great value in the solution of the Egyptian question and, if the Palestine question were solved, would become friendly instead of hostile. It could act the part of mediator and honest broker between British and Egyptian interests, the clash of which could be avoided by the availability of a base in Palestine for British forces.
6. The international situation is dangerous. The Jews form an important force both in Palestine and in the world. It is very important to have a peaceful condition in Palestine, within the framework of the Middle East, and with the backing of Jewish public opinion and interests throughout the world.

(c) Summary of Talks in Egypt, prepared by the Jewish Agency Political Department, 29 August 1946

1. The Egyptians agree that there is no other acceptable solution to the Palestine question except partition.
2. The Egyptians understand and agree that speeding-up the [Palestine] solution will ease their own negotiations [with the British].
3. The Egyptians are prepared to get involved and begin to concern themselves with the matter immediately on three conditions:
 - (a) that there be an official overture to them from the British;
 - (b) that the round-table conference be postponed several days in order for them to have time to prepare things in the desired direction;
 - (c) that [our] contacts remain completely secret. They emphasise that if the affair becomes known to the Arabs they will categorically deny that they had any contact whatsoever with the Jews.
4. Current negotiations on partition will be on the level of principle; areas and boundaries will be discussed only after obtaining the agreement in principle of the Palestinian Arabs and the Arab states.
5. We spoke of partition and the establishment of a Jewish state. As for the Arab part, the choice will be left to the Palestinian Arabs to determine whether to be joined to Transjordan or to establish an independent state in their sector. In such an event, the Jews must commit themselves to support the Palestinian Arabs.
6. The Jewish state would be prepared to:
 - (a) sign an agreement with the British for setting up military bases in the Jewish state for as long as the British deemed it necessary.
 - (b) join the [Arab] League as a member, and take upon itself all the consequent obligations from the political, military and economic point of

view. In case the Jewish state's joining the League as a member were not possible, it would sign treaties with the League, with the Arab Palestinian state and with the rest of the Arab states, which would be equivalent to membership in the League itself.

- (c) If the partition solution were not achieved, the Jews would be prepared to an exchange of views on other solutions. In the case of the federal solution on the basis of the Morrison proposal, they would discuss an extension of the powers, an improvement in the frontiers, and the control over Jewish immigration by the Jews themselves. In the case of discussion of a bi-national state, they would deal with the immediate immigration of Jews into Palestine until numerical parity is reached; in addition, there would be discussion of the continuation of immigration.
- [7.] The Egyptians are herewith putting forth two demands:
- (a) Immediate assistance on our part which would include activating our channels in England and in America for the creation of public opinion favouring Egypt's position in her negotiations with England, and activating the same channels for the creation of public opinion justifying the existence of the current government.
- (b) Future assistance to include co-operation with Egypt in the economic, industrial, agricultural, etc. fields. [...]

Sasson's opinion is that we must communicate the above urgently to Paris and London in order to get an approach of some sort from England to the Egyptians. He also sees it as very important that articles should soon appear in the English and American press in the sense asked for by the Egyptians.

On Sunday [1 September] Sasson will have a talk with an important person from the King's Court. We know that the results of the above talks have been communicated to the King.

Sources

- (a) CZA, A291/11, translated from the Hebrew (reproduced in Sasson, *On the Road*, 364f.). The contacts were carried out by an unnamed agent (code-name: "ha-Ozer", i.e., "the Helper"), who was also an informer for the Egyptian Police and maintained contact with Brig. Clayton's office.

For two other summaries of these talks, see: Brig. I.N. Clayton's note of report by his Egyptian police contact, 13 August 1946, PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/8/46G; and note transmitted by Zionist representative in Paris, Nahum Goldmann, to British and American officials, 19 August 1946, NA, 867N.01/11-1847.

- (b) PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/8/46G.
 (c) Translated from unsigned Hebrew report, 29 August 1946, S25/3960.

DOCUMENT 32

E. Sasson, Reports of Meetings with King Abdallah at Shuneh, 12 and 19 August 1946

(a)

The conversation took place at his invitation and lasted an hour and a half. The Amir [sic] began by asking after Moshe Shertok and by expressing the hope that he would be freed [from internment at Latrun] soon. [...]

He had told his [British] "allies" about my visit and was asked by them to try to convince us to agree to several points: [...] (b) to co-operate with the authorities in their war against [Jewish] terrorism; (c) to agree to go to the London talks without any preconditions; (d) to stop the anti-British "intriguing" in the United States; (e) to understand the delicate and difficult situation of the British in the Arab East as a result of Russian propaganda and Russian aspirations; (f) to put our trust in them, because in the end we'll be satisfied [...].

To my comment that we could not go to the London talks on the basis of the proposed [Morrison-Grady] "federal" plan, the Amir tried to explain that it was a much better plan for the Jews than the Peel partition. True, it did not give us a state, but it assured us the immigration of 100,000 over a short time and the continuation of immigration afterwards. [...] True, it denied us access to the Arab sector; but even here it was possible to find ways to penetrate and opportunities for settlement in due course. That would depend on who stood at the head of the Arab sector and on international conditions.

In the course of his remarks, the Amir revealed that [...]e himself preferred partition and the annexation of the Arab sector to Transjordan. To my question, whether he would be prepared to stick to this position under all conditions, he replied that this depended largely on an understanding and an agreement between ourselves and him. When I requested him to be more explicit, he asked me to swear a solemn oath to keep what he would tell me secret and not reveal it to anyone except our current policy-makers. I promised.

He began by saying: he aspired to expand the borders of Transjordan and to create a large and strong Hashimite kingdom that would enter into a treaty with Britain and Turkey and would keep the English line of defence in the East. His plan of execution had several stages:

- (a) partition of Palestine and annexation of the Arab sector to Transjordan;
- (b) annexation of Syria to the [enlarged] Transjordan;
- (c) entry of the [enlarged] Transjordan into a federation with Iraq;
- (d) entry of the Jewish part of Palestine into a federation, or alliance, with the Jordanian-Syrian-Iraqi federation;
- (e) Lebanon would have the choice of joining this federative bloc or remaining isolated. [...]

When I asked whether the Arabs of Palestine would agree to the federal plan, the Amir answered in the negative, adding that the British, the Arab states and the Zionists had to do everything in order to get them to agree. To my remark,

why should the Zionists be interested in doing this, he answered: First, in order not to shut the gates of the Arab sector completely before them and not to lose every possibility of expansion; second, in order not to lend their hand to the creation of an eighth Arab state, extremist and hostile, headed by their arch-enemies, the Husainis; thirdly, it was better for the Jews to speak of the creation of their own state two or three years from now, when their numbers would be larger by another 100–200,000. Fourth, in order not to block the way to the expansion of Transjordan and the strengthening of the Hashimite family; fifth, to make things easier for Britain in these days of crisis, and thereby repair their relations with her and win back her sympathy for Zionism.

When I remarked that I didn't manage to understand his position exactly, whether he was in favour of the federal plan or partition, the Amir answered that he was [...] temporarily setting aside his wishes for those of the English. But, if we believed that we had the power to move the partition plan (i.e., creation of a Jewish state and the annexation of the Arab sector to Transjordan) through England, the United States and the United Nations, he would be prepared to support us and to fulfil any [obligation] falling to him. He was sure that Iraq would also support us, even if the matter caused a split in the "Arab League".

When I asked whether it was not desirable to hold a secret, limited, Iraqi-Jordano-Zionist conference or consultations to discuss and evaluate matters together and to define a unified stance for the London talks, the Amir answered there was no need for this at the moment. It was premature. He was empowered to speak for the Iraqis. If we came to an agreement with him, he added, he was prepared to put us in touch with Samir Rifai, the head of the Transjordanian delegation travelling to London.

When I asked if he had thought of how to impose on the Palestinian Arabs the federal plan [...] or the partition plan and the annexation of the Arab sector to Transjordan, the Amir answered that in recent weeks he had been pondering over this, and only this, question. He said that he was finalising a certain plan which seemed a good one, and he was prepared to present it to me if I would visit him again next Monday, August 19th. But, he added, I was to bring him our final answer on these three matters:

- (a) To which plan [federal or partition] do we agree?
- (b) Our readiness to work to halt the acts of violence against the British and to repair our relations with them.
- (c) Our readiness to support him "frankly and with all our power" in the realisation of his far-reaching plan.

I was also to bring to him, as a first payment, £P10,000. [Discussion of Abdallah's forthcoming financial requirements.] When I pretended that the sums he required from us – almost £P40,000 – were quite large and I could not bring them to him, he answered: "He who wishes to earn a living does not need to count out the portions", i.e., whoever wants a state must invest what is required. This, in his opinion, was the right time to act – for him and for us. And here he began a comprehensive explanation of the economic possibilities which would develop before us under the future expanded Hashimite kingdom. [...]

In speaking of the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations, the Amir [...] rejected my

suggestion that his and the Egyptian Foreign Ministers might co-operate in promoting the partition plan at the Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference then taking place in Alexandria. [...]

When I rose to leave, the Amir took my hand and said: He was now 66 years old; the remaining years of his life were numbered. We didn't have a faithful friend like him in the entire Arab world. There were two ways before us: to join together and work with him, or to abandon him. If we took the first route, we had to fulfil his requests without hesitations, without further calculations and quickly. Every moment was precious. If we took the second route, God be with us; but he would ask us not to go on talking with him about co-operation or common interests. [...]

(b)

(A) [Reports unexpected and unpleasant incidents of thorough searches and interrogations by Transjordanian police on entering and leaving Transjordan.]

(B) [Discussion of extent of Syrian, British and Iraqi support for Abdallah's plans.]

(C) I told him what had happened to me on my journey to him, and stressed that it was not a good idea, for him or for us, for me to visit him often. He understood and agreed. He pointed to one of his envoys presently in Jerusalem conducting talks and gathering signatures in favour of the "separation and annexation" plan, and said that I should look upon him as our liaison and give him my complete confidence. He gave me his name and address [...].

(D) During the course of the conversation the Amir asked for details about the talks between our people in Paris and London and British ministers, and [...] showed me two documents [...] from the British representative in his country regarding our previous conversation. [...]

(E) When I tried to talk to him about the "separation and annexation" plan and the adjustment of boundaries [...], he interrupted me, saying that the time had not yet come for that. First of all we had to reach an agreement on the principle, and after that we could talk about details. If the rearrangement [of borders] were dependent on his agreement alone, he promised that he would not be stubborn and would get right to the heart of the matter, on the condition that it ended up that neither side benefitted at the other's expense. [...] When I repeated myself and pressed him on this matter, he said: "Don't be egoists, making demands only for your own good. Look at things within the framework of the Arab East as a whole, with its complexities, and not solely in a Palestinian framework."

Here I proposed a compromise to him: to leave the discussion on this to emissaries in London – to his envoys and to ours. If the talks developed in the direction of "separation and annexation" and the question of modification of boundaries were raised, the envoys would meet and discuss amongst themselves how best to present the question. In general, I added, it was desirable that there should be contact between his envoys and ours. He agreed and promised to give instructions on this matter to the head of his delegation [Samir ar-Rifai], but on condition that the contacts be limited to only two people: Mr Shertok and the head of his delegation. He also requested that the discussions between them comprise all questions, that is, that the two men would serve as advisers to each

other. I thanked him for this and we made arrangements for the contacts. (F) To my question about the resolutions of the Arab Foreign Ministers' Conference at Alexandria, he said that they all came, involuntarily and under pressure of the Mufti and his men, to an agreement to demand the implementation of the White Paper of 1939. Despite this, they were prepared for some concessions: the Palestine government, which would be established according to the White Paper, would: (a) recognise the Jews as a politically and economically influential minority; (b) grant the Jews internal autonomy; and (c) authorise limited immigration. In addition, the Arab states would declare that they were prepared, like all the other democratic states [...], to contribute their share to resolving the question of the displaced Jews of Europe. In taking this stand, the Amir continued, the Arab states wished to kill two birds with one stone: to enable England, until realisation of the White Paper, to continue to strengthen her rule in the country and to set up all the military bases she needs there; and also to appear before the whole world, and especially before the U.N., as moderate, generous and gentlemen. By the way, these two points would make negotiations with England easier for Egypt.

(G) [Discussion of ex-Mufti, and Abdallah's desire to "remove" him "at any cost, and quickly". Discussion of Palestinians' decision on whether to participate in the London Conference.]

(H) In his opinion we had to oppose all plans except the "separation and annexation" plan, and to do everything in order to achieve it. In so doing we would pave the way for [...] the possibility of the English, in the end, imposing the federative solution on us and on the Palestinian Arabs. Such an imposition, said Abdallah, would be a net gain. True, it would not give the Jews full satisfaction, but it held out [the prospect...], in his opinion, of making easier our efforts at improving and expanding our powers in the future. In the meantime, it would make possible the immigration of 100,000 Jews into the country, and it would draw us closer to the Arab world.

[Brief resumé of discussion of latest regional political developments.] When we talked about the Anglo-Egyptian negotiations I stressed that we would continue our efforts to win the backing of Isma'il Sidqi and his people.

Sources

Translated from the original reports in CZA, S25/9036, with reference to the published versions in *Ma'ariv*, Friday supplement, 13 August 1971, pp.6, 7 and 59, and in Sasson, *On the Road*, 367-72.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs slightly from the originals.

DOCUMENT 33

Constitutional Proposals put forward by the Arab States Delegations to the Palestine Conference, London, 30 September 1946

1. The first step would be for the High Commissioner to establish, by nomination and after consultation with the leading Palestinian elements, a Provisional Government consisting of seven Arab and three Jewish Ministers of Palestinian nationality. The legislative and executive powers of the present administration in Palestine would be transferred to the Provisional Government as soon as it has been appointed. The High Commissioner would retain a power of veto throughout the transition period.

2. [...]he Provisional Government would hold elections for a Constituent Assembly in accordance with an electoral law to be enacted by them. This Constituent Assembly would consist of 60 members. The electoral law should provide for the adequate representation in the Constituent Assembly of all the important sections of citizenry, as defined in paragraph 4(vi)(a) below, in accordance with their respective numbers.

The representation of Arabs and Jews in the Provisional Government would be without prejudice to the proportions to be determined in the constitution for the representation of Arabs and Jews in the Legislative Assembly. [...]

3. The Provisional Government would prepare and submit to the Constituent Assembly a draft constitution for Palestine. [...]

4. The Provisional Government in drafting or enacting the constitution, and the Constituent Assembly in debating and voting on it, would be bound by directives issued by the High Commissioner. With the exception of these binding directives, the constitution, as decided by the Constituent Assembly[,] would not be subject to the power of veto by the High Commissioner. These directives would provide for the embodiment in the constitution of the following principles:

- (i) Palestine would be a unitary State.
- (ii) It should have a democratic constitution, with an elected legislature.
- (iii) The constitution should provide guarantees for the sanctity of the Holy Places, covering inviolability, maintenance, freedom of access and freedom of worship in accordance with the *status quo*.
- (iv) The constitution should guarantee, subject to suitable safeguards, freedom of religious practice in accordance with the *status quo* throughout Palestine (including the maintenance of separate religious courts for matters of personal status).
- (v) The law of naturalisation should provide amongst other conditions that the applicant should be a legal resident of Palestine for a continuous period of ten years before his application.
- (vi) The constitution should provide guarantees for:
 - (a) Full rights of citizenship for:

[Definitions of eligibility, including:] (2) Any person who acquired

Palestinian citizenship by naturalisation before May 1939.

- (3) Any person who acquired Palestinian citizenship after May 1939, under the Palestinian Citizenship Order, 1925–41, and has been permanently resident in Palestine for a period of ten years.[...]
- (b) The right of any resident in Palestine to apply for and acquire Palestinian citizenship on the same terms and conditions without discrimination on grounds of race, religion or language.
- (c) The right of religious bodies or other societies and individuals to maintain, in addition to educational establishments administered by public authority, private schools and universities, subject to the compulsory teaching of Arabic in the schools and to Government control for the purpose of maintaining educational standards and preventing subversive teaching with the object of creating common allegiance.
- (d) The right of Jews to employ the Hebrew language as a second official language in districts where they form an absolute majority.
- (e) 1. Securing that the electoral law for the Legislature shall provide for the adequate representation of all the important sections of the citizenry, as defined in sub-paragraph (a) above, provided that in no case shall the number of Jewish representatives exceed one-third of the total number of the members.
2. Securing that the constitution shall provide for the adequate reflection in the Executive and the Administration of the distribution of the representation in the legislature.
- (vii) Unless and until legislation provides otherwise, Jewish immigration into Palestine should be entirely prohibited, and the existing land transfer restrictions should remain unchanged. The constitution should provide that any change in the above two matters can only be effected by law requiring the consent of the Arabs in Palestine as expressed by a majority of the Arab members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (viii) [Guarantees concerning the Holy Places.]
- (ix) The guarantees concerning the rights of the Jewish citizens which are prescribed in the preceding provisions should not be subject to amendment without the consent of the Jewish citizens of Palestine as expressed by a majority of the Jewish members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (x) [Machinery, through the establishment of a Supreme Court, for review of legislation and upholding of the constitution.]
5. When the constitution had been adopted, the Provisional Government would proceed forthwith to hold the first parliamentary elections. The first Head of the Independent Palestine State would then be appointed, by whatever procedure was laid down for the purpose in the constitution. The Head of the State would forthwith assume full powers under the constitution. The Mandatory Power should effect the termination of the Mandate and recognise the independence of Palestine. A Treaty of Alliance should be concluded to define the future relations between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Independent State of Palestine.
6. During the transition period, substantial numbers of Palestinians should be progressively brought into the administration.

7. Every effort should be made to complete with the least possible delay the stages described in the preceding paragraphs, notwithstanding the non-co-operation of any section of the Palestine citizenry. The assumption of powers by the Head of the Palestine State should take place not later than 31st December 1948.

Source

Proposals for the Future of Palestine: July 1946 – February 1947, Cmd.7044, 9–11.

DOCUMENT 34

A.S. Eban, Note of Conversation with Abd ar-Rahman Azzam Pasha, London, 15 September 1947

After complimentary exchanges we began a discussion on the effect of the UNSCOP Report on Arab–Jewish relations. Mr Eban said that the majority report defined the correct conditions in which Arab–Jewish co-operation could be built up. These conditions were finality and equality. Once agreement had been reached on a practical compromise such as that suggested by UNSCOP, it should not be difficult to convince the Arab world that it had nothing to fear from Jewish development, and that no threat of Jewish expansion would exist.

Mr Horowitz said that we would be prepared to offer a Jewish guarantee, and to accept the guarantees of the Arab League and the United Nations, against any encroachment by the Jews upon the boundaries of other States.

Mr Eban suggested ways of integrating the Jewish State into processes of regional development, and Mr Horowitz added that in certain conditions we would not be averse to joining with the Arab States in a single League.

At this point Azzam Pasha reacted very strongly, saying that no Middle Eastern League based on diversity could in any way be considered. There were only two historic or cultural ideas which could unify the Arab peoples. The one was the idea of the Arab nation; the other was the idea of Islam. [...] He said that the Arabs were not afraid of our expansion. They resented our very presence as an alien organism, which had come without their consent, and which refused to be assimilated to their way of life.

Mr Horowitz suggested that the existence of Palestine Jewry was not a fruitful subject for discussion since it was an established fact. Mr Eban added that the refusal of Palestine Jewry to become arabised could equally be taken as an established fact. Whether the Arabs liked these facts or not, they must surely be realistic enough to face them and to make them the starting point of their political thinking.

Azzam Pasha replied that he was surprised to hear us ascribing realism to the Arab peoples which, like all others peoples, were animated by strong historic emotions. "For me you may be a fact, but for them you are not a fact at all – you are a temporary phenomenon. Centuries ago, the Crusaders established them-

selves in our midst against our will, and in 200 years we ejected them. This was because we never made the mistake of accepting them as a fact."

Mr Horowitz said that without disputing the [point?] of historic memory, a modern people must apply realistic criteria as well. In concrete terms, the existence of Palestine Jewry, and its refusal to assimilate, must be accepted as facts. Mr Eban said that though these were recent facts it did not make them less historic. Arab statesmanship had to consider, from the viewpoint of its own interests, whether more was to be gained by envisaging its relationship with the Jews in terms of harmony or in terms of conflict.

Mr Horowitz dealt in some detail with the mutual advantage that would redound to both parties from active policies of co-operation and development. Mr Eban added that the very existence of conflict seemed to be against the Arab interest. The Palestine conflict was uselessly absorbing the best energies of the Arab League, diverting it from the constructive purposes to which it might otherwise address itself.

At this point Assam Pasha nodded vigorous assent, and went over to a long digression on the Egyptian question which, he said, illustrated the predominance of historic and emotional factors in politics. [... H]e apologised for the vigour of his tones, but added that out of sheer respect for us he wished to be candid, and to put out of our minds any idea that the United Nations Report had created a basis for an Arab-Jewish agreement.

"You may easily convince me that the Arabs now have an interest in allowing you to develop your State, and to live at peace with them [sic], but having convinced me of this, you will have achieved nothing, for you have nothing at all to offer which I can take back to my people tomorrow. Up to the very last moment, and beyond, they will fight to prevent you from establishing your State. In no circumstances will they agree to it."

We asked what would happen if, nevertheless, despite Arab opposition, the State was created. Azzam Pasha said that if we took this view-point, without assuming Arab agreement, we were on a more realistic plane. "Politics were not a matter for sentimental agreements; they were results of contending forces. The question is whether you can bring more force for the creation of a Jewish State than we can muster to prevent it. If you want your State, however, you must come and get it. It is useless asking me for the Negev on the grounds that it is empty. You can only get your Negev by taking it. If you are yourselves strong enough to do this, or if you enlist strong partners – Britain, America, Russia, the United Nations – you may well succeed. If you cannot, then you will fail. But, in no circumstances, will you obtain Arab consent in the process."

Mr Horowitz asked what the situation would be if the "fait accompli" was created. So much of impartial world opinion had now rejected the case for a completely Arab Palestine that this contingency could not be ruled out.

Azzam Pasha said that he could not predict future history. He had already mentioned the Crusades as an example of Arab irredentism. "On the other hand, we once had Spain, and then we lost Spain, and we have become accustomed to not having Spain. We once had Persia, and then lost Persia, and now we have become accustomed to not having Persia. Whether at any point we shall become accustomed to not having a part of Palestine, I cannot say. The

chances are against it, since 400,000 of our brethren will be unwilling citizens of your State. They will never recognise it, and they will never make peace." [...]

Mr Horowitz remarked that it was pessimistic to think of history in terms of biological predestination. Surely there was an element of choice in politics which allowed people to operate along the line of their greatest interests?

Azzam Pasha insisted that no such considerations were valid here. He could imagine the emotional forces which had driven the Zionists into their position, and he knew of the forces which lay at the root of Arab feeling. There was nothing for it but to see which of these forces would prevail and conquer. He repeated that we had no common interest which he could take back to his people. "I can no longer say that we should give the Jews their State, and then enlist them as a world force to banish imperialism from the East. Imperialism is in any case banished, and we stand in no need of Jewish aid. At one time we might have said that the Jews should be allowed to develop their State in order to contribute to movements of development and unity in a unified Arab world."

Mr Eban said that that was how we had started, and it was on this basis that we saw a mutual interest now. Azzam Pasha said that it was very probable that if Arab unity had been realised in the '20s this conception might have been accepted, but the opportunity had been missed and would not recur. Today the Jews might secure an Arab agreement by abandoning their present conceptions, and going in with the Arabs and creating Jewish autonomous units within the framework of Arab society. Eventually these units might grow and develop until something like a Zionist conception emerged. But this would mean for the present a relationship of trust, in which the present Zionist programmes, and such conceptions as the UNSCOP Majority Report, would have no place. We could either take this way, or the other way of endeavouring to enlist as much force as possible and suppress Arab resistance. We could only obtain Arab agreement by abandoning Zionism. If we did not abandon it, our only hope lay in the enlistment of predominant political power. We could not tread the second road and have Arab agreement as well.

Despite this candour and vigour of expression, the conversation was cordial in tone, and Azzam Pasha expressed his readiness, at all suitable occasions, to have private discussions of this kind.

Source

Eban memorandum, 19 September 1947, CZA, S25/9020.

Breakdown into paragraphs differs from the original.

DOCUMENT 35

E. Danin, Report of Meeting between G. Meyerson and King Abdallah, Naharayim, 17 November 1947.

[...] The conversation lasted about fifty minutes. The Mayor [code-name for Abdallah] was anxious to return and did not sit calmly. He was glad to meet Golda, even though he was surprised [to be meeting a woman?]. It was explained to him that, owing to the importance which we attached to this meeting, we asked the person in charge to come with us. He greatly appreciated that Shertok's replacement had come to visit him, and invited her for an official visit to his capital.

He got right to the point. He stressed that our conversation would be like thinking aloud. "At one time we talked about partition, and now I would like to know your opinion. [...] For the past thirty years you have grown in numbers and strength, and your achievements are many. It is impossible to ignore you and it is a duty to come to terms with you.[...] Now I am convinced that the British are leaving, and we shall remain, you and we, face to face. Any clash between us will be harmful to both of us.

"At one point we talked about partition. I would agree to a partition which would not humiliate me before the Arab world at a time when I am appearing as its defender. Let me take this opportunity to throw out an idea for the future consideration of a Jewish Republic: independence in part of Palestine, within a Transjordanian state which will include both sides of the Jordan under my leadership, in which the economy, the army and the legislative houses would be shared."

The emphasis was on the assumption that it would not be *under* the Transjordanian regime, but within a Transjordanian monarchy. He didn't press for an answer, but only explained that, in the event of the creation of such a state, he would be able to expand the territory of his state and annex it to G[reater] S[yria] and even to Saudia.

We explained to him that our case was now being discussed at the United Nations, and that we were hoping that they would decide there on the creation of two states, one Jewish and the other Arab. We wanted to talk to him now about an agreement based on those decisions.

He said that he understood this, and it would be desirable for us to meet again immediately after the adoption of the U.N. resolution, to discuss ways of co-operating in the light of the decision.

Here he went on to ask what our attitude would be to his attempt to seize the Arab part of the country. We replied that we would look favourably on it, especially if it did not hinder us in the establishment of our state, if it did not lead to clashes between us and his forces, and particularly if this action were taken under a declaration that the seizure was only to ensure order and keep the peace until the U.N. could establish a government in that part.

To this he answered: "But I want that part for me, in order to annex it to my

state, and I do not wish to create a new Arab state which will interfere with my plans and allow the Arabs to 'ride on my back'. I want to be the rider, not the horse." He did not accept our suggestion that he arrange for this in a different manner, namely, by a plebiscite over which he would have decisive control.

[...] As for the Arab-Jewish border in Palestine, he was prepared to take the matter into his hands and guard against any clash between Jews and Arabs. He advised us to respond with hard blows should the Mufti dare to try to harm us [...].

From here, the conversation turned to the Arab world's preparations for intervention in the Palestine affair. He said that he had informed all the states, even Iraq, that he would not permit their armies to cross his country [...] and would not support any plan unless it concentrated the arms, ammunition, vehicles, repair workshops, etc. in his country, under his command! They would be in his hands on condition that everything would be put into motion for the sake of keeping order and for creating a common language with the Jews. The situation and the conditions did not justify and did not call for war, but for compromise.

[Some remarks about the Mufti and his rumoured activities designed to provoke clashes between Jews and Abdallah's army.]

We explained to him that there were many anti-Mufti Arabs in Palestine who wanted to be organised by him and to take to the public stage as his supporters and as supporters of his views. But they were waiting for his invitation to do so, and were surprised that this had not yet come. He answered that he knew about this; he had even received letters on this subject from several of them. If he was hesitating to invite them, it was only out of fear that they would not stand the test in the moment of crisis, and hence he preferred them to come to him without any invitation on his part. He allowed us to direct them to him *en masse*.

He appreciated our help to his personal emissary in the United States, and said that the emissary would soon be coming for advice and a mandate.

When we tried to find out the attitude of the British to his various plans, mainly his stand on the Palestine question, he replied that the British did not ask him about anything. Even for him the situation was unclear. There had been no discussions on the subject, and he was having a hard time interpreting the reason for their silence.

Unlike our previous conversations, he seemed optimistic and unwavering. He has become stronger and seems to be on top of the situation. He dismissed out of hand the talk of the Arab states [mounting] an armed invasion and also of the plotting by the Mufti which we had mentioned. We asked him at the end of the conversation: should there be a common basis – whether political, economic, or security – would he be prepared to sign a written agreement? He answered yes, and asked us to furnish him with a draft.

Finally, he repeated and stressed that it would be possible to discuss practical matters only after the U.N. decision, and agreed that we should meet immediately [afterwards]. He requested us to lessen, if we could, the pressure of the newspapers on him. [...] In particular, he asked whether it was possible for the *Palestine Post*, which was read by Arabs, to somewhat reduce its interest in him. [...] He commented, in this regard, that we should not pay too much heed

to his stinging declarations, since they were being made under duress and not willingly.

Source

Translated from Hebrew report, CZA, S25/4004. Although not mentioned in Danin's report, he and Mrs Meyerson were accompanied by Eliahu Sasson. Breakdown into paragraphs differs slightly from the original.

Notes

CHAPTER 1

Deceptive Lull

1. *Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*: Series A: Letters (hereafter LCW), vol. XIV (New Brunswick, N.J./Jerusalem 1978), 208.
2. A. Ruppin, *Memoirs, Diaries, Letters* (London 1970), 258. Cf. *ibid.*, 275.
3. Below, Document 3. Cf. *Futile Diplomacy* (hereafter FD) vol. I, 7f.; Interview with *al-Ahram* Jaffa correspondent, 23 February 1932, ISA 66/159.
4. Esco Foundation, *Palestine: A Study ...*, (New Haven 1947), vol. II, ch. 10; C. Sykes, *Cross Roads to Israel* (Bloomington/London 1973), 119f.; C. Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (London, 1949), 415.
5. E.g., Sykes, *op. cit.*, 120; F.H. Kisch, *Palestine Diary* (London, 1938), 410; M. Beilinson, in E. Sereni and R.E. Ashery (eds.), *Jews and Arabs in Palestine* (New York 1936), 172; D. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* (Heb.) vol. II (Tel Aviv 1972), 74f.
6. S. Dothan, "Attempts at An Arab-Jewish Agreement", *Studies in Zionism*, no. 2 (Autumn 1980), 213 (my emphasis). Cf. Jacobson's impressions of Palestinian Jewish attitudes. Report of Visit to Syria and Palestine, March-May 1933 (12 May 1933), WA.
7. I. Kollat, "The Zionist Movement and the Arabs", *Studies in Zionism*, no. 5 (Spring 1982), 144; Dothan, *op. cit.*, 214; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula* (Valentine, Mitchell: London 1971), 126.

Changes in Leadership

8. A. Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Ithaca/London 1979), chs. 4 & 5; Y. Porath, *The Palestinian Arab National Movement, 1929-1939* (Cass: London 1977), 118-27.
9. Porath, *op. cit.*, 22-48, 110-118.
10. *Ibid.*, 118f., 332f.; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 102-15.
11. Proclamation of 18 February 1931, quoted in Porath, *op. cit.*, 34. Cf. *ibid.*, 38, 41, 119, 128; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 170, 192; Awni Abd al-Hadi, Interview with *al-Ahram* Jaffa correspondent, 23 February 1932 (n. 3) and Draft Memo to H.C., 22(?) October 1933, ISA 66/162; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 October 1933, CO 733/239, file 17356/1.
12. A. Almaliah, Note (14 Nov.) of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 13 November 1933, CZA, S25/3051; D. Hoz, Note of Talk with Hasan Sidqi ad-Dajani, 1 November 1933, *loc. cit.*; A. Felman to Ben-Gurion (Note of Talk with Musa al-Alami), 28 October 1934, *loc. cit.*; *Documents of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918-1939* (Ac.; hereafter DPNM) (Beirut 1979), 394-7; B. Joseph, Note (1 June) of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 31 May 1937, S25/188; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 683; *ibid.* II, 14f.; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 October 1933 (n. 11); same to same, 23 December 1933, PRO, CO 733/257, file 37356/I; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 104f., 214f.; A.W. Kayyali, *Palestine: A Modern History* (London 1976?), 174; Porath, *op. cit.*, 44f., 127.
13. DPNM, 395-7; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 107f., 212-7; Porath, *op. cit.*, 43, 130f.; Sh. Lachman, "Arab Rebellion and Terrorism", in *Zionism and Arabism in Palestine and Israel*,

- eds. E. Kedourie and S.G. Haim (Cass: London 1982), 52–9.
14. *Ibid.*, 38, 40f., 91–3, 96f., 111f.; DPNM, 388–91; B.N. al-Hout, *Political Leadership and Institutions in Palestine, 1917–1948* (Ac.) (Beirut 1981), 294–6, 739–42.
 15. Musa al-Alami, quoted in Ben-Gurion, *My Talks with Arab Leaders* (Jerusalem/New York 1972), 28; Documents 5, 12; cf. FD I, 76, 84f., 248; J. Magnes, Note of Talk with Musa al-Alami, 6 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/318; Magnes, Testimony before Committee on Jewish–Arab Relations, 11 March 1940, CZA, S25/2992; R.B. Memminger, Note of Talk with M. al-Alami, 6 October 1945, National Archives, Washington (hereafter: NA), 867N.01/10–945.
 16. On the formation of the new parties, see: al-Hout, *op. cit.*, part V; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 105f., 110–5, 124f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, ch. 3.
 17. E.g., Dothan, *op. cit.*, 214; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 29.
 18. *Political Report of the Executive of the Zionist Organisation to the XVIIIth Zionist Congress*, Prague, August 1933 (London 1933), 249. Cf. H. Arlosoroff, *Jerusalem Diary* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1949), 33, 80, 87, 93, 127, 130, 144, 146, 182, 219, 231; material in CZA files S25/3051 3052 3066; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 529–32, 560–3; LCW XV, 222, 322; *ibid.* XVI, 164f.; *ibid.* XVII, 13f.; I. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs, 1936–1939* (Ph.D. diss., University of London 1978), 12f.; E. Rubinstein, “Zionist Attitudes on the Jewish–Arab Conflict Until 1936”, in *Zionism and the Arabs*, ed. S. Almog (Jerusalem 1983), 45f., 53f., 56–60. For an Arab view of these activities, see al-Hout, *op. cit.*, 179–84, 720–22.
 19. Arlosoroff to Weizmann, 30 June 1932, CZA, S25/1508 (my emphasis). Cf. Heb. transl. in *Jerusalem Diary*, 333–42; Rubinstein, “Zionist Attitudes in the Arab–Jewish Dispute to 1936”, *Jerusalem Quarterly* (hereafter JQ) no. 22 (Winter 1982), 137–9.
 20. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 149–51. The remainder of the present discussion of Ben-Gurion’s views is based on this source, which includes his August 1934 letter to Dr Weizmann and speech to the Mapai Party Political Committee. Quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from this source. For other discussions of Ben-Gurion’s views on this question, see: A. Sela, “Talks and Contacts between Zionist Leaders and Palestinian–Arab Leaders, 1933–1939” (part I), (Heb.), *ha-Mizrah he-Hadash* XXII (1972), 407f.; Black, *op. cit.*, 57f.; Rubinstein, *op. cit.*, 139–41.

Ben-Gurion’s Talks with Arab Leaders

21. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 15–62; M. Shertok, Speech to Jewish Agency Executive (hereafter JAE Minutes), 22 May 1936.
22. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 32, 43. Cf. *Memoirs* I, 711; *ibid.* II, 41, 43f., 149–51 405f; *ibid.* III, 280, 443.
23. *My Talks*, 17f. The two men did meet at least once more, in August 1936. See below, page 49 (n. 114).
24. *Ibid.*, 33. For other indications of Ben-Gurion’s optimism, see: *ibid.*, 20, 27, 30, 32–4, 49f., 55, 83; below, Documents 5, 6, 8; *Memoirs* II, 145f.; *ibid.* III, 307; talk with High Commissioner (hereafter HC), 30 July 1934, CZA, S25/4162; JAE Minutes, 22 May 1936.
25. *My Talks*, 36, 38–40; Documents 5(b), 8(a,c), below; Felman to Ben-Gurion, 28 October 1934, CZA, S25/3051; M. Sharett (Shertok), *Political Diary* (Heb.), vol. II (Tel Aviv 1971), 72f., 76.
26. Below, page 34; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 205f.
27. *My Talks*, 31, 44, 50f., 60f., 83; Speech, JAE Minutes, 25 October 1937. Cf. Kayyali, *op. cit.*, 171f., 176, 181, 189; DPNM, 372. Still, Ben-Gurion could not abandon completely his expectation that increased Jewish immigration would prepare better “opportunities for negotiations” with the Arabs. See: *Memoirs* II, 149; *ibid.* III, 118.

28. *My Talks*, 80, 83 (my emphasis). Cf. *ibid.*, 11, 15, 124; *Memoirs* III, 436; Document 5; Speech at Joint Meeting between JAE and members of the League for Jewish-Arab Rapprochement (hereafter LJAR), 25 October 1939, CZA, S25/10095; E. Sasson, *On the Road to Peace* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1978), 342.

Legislative Council Proposals

29. F. Warburg to N. Sokolow, 5 August 1931, WA; M. Hexter to Warburg, 9 August 1931, WA; Sokolow to Warburg, 25 August 1931, WA; LCW XV, 188.
30. Summary of Talks with Hasan Sidqi ad-Dajani, 11 January 1932, 1 November 1933, CZA, S25/3051; D. Auster, Notes of Conversations with Dr H.F. al-Khalidi, June 1935, *loc. cit.*; E. Sasson Note, 15 December 1935, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 183; LCW xvii 247; P. Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians: Co-Existence or ...* (London 1978), 43; Porath, *op. cit.*, 77f.; Report of Dajani speech, 7 May 1936, CZA, S25/9783.
- Zionist relations with Dr al-Khalidi were related to manoeuvring around the 1934 Jerusalem municipal elections, a decision which cost the Executive the goodwill of his defeated rival, Raghib an-Nashashibi. See: material in CZA file S25/9979; A. Franco to Shertok, 18 March 1938, S25/3051; Shertok, *Political Dairy* I, 52, 264f.; Gillon, *op. cit.*, 68f.; Jewish Agency, *The Jewish Case Before the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine* (Jerusalem 1947), 105 (evidence of M. Shertok); Porath, *op. cit.*, 62-4; Rubinstein, *op. cit.* (JQ), 131.
31. On the 1922-23 attempt, see: N. Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question, 1917-1927* (Cass: London 1978), ch. 8; Lesch, *op. cit.*, ch. 8.
32. See FD I, 72-7.
33. For Zionist and Arab reactions to the legislative council proposals of the 1930s, see: Y. Haim, *Abandonment of Illusions: Zionist Political Attitudes Toward Palestinian Arab Nationalism, 1936-1939* (Boulder 1983), 14-17; N. Rose, *The Gentile Zionists: A Study in Anglo-Zionist Diplomacy, 1929-1939* (Cass: London 1973), ch. 3; LCW XVII, Introduction; *Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann: Series B: Papers* (hereafter PCW), vol. II (New Brunswick, N.J./Jerusalem 1984), 62-5, 86f., 152f.; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 192-6; Porath, *op. cit.*, 143-54.
34. See: Arlosoroff, *Jerusalem Diary*, 295-302, 342-51; Cunliffe-Lister to Wauchope, 2 December 1932, PRO, CO 733/215, file 97054/II; Shertok, Note of Interview with HC, 23 August 1934, CZA, S25/4162; LCW XV, 358; *ibid.* XVI, 456f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 140-8, 455f., 490, 495, 550-60, 563; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 71f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 18-20.
35. DPNM, 406; Porath, *op. cit.*, 155; Sykes, *Cross Roads*, 146f.; Esco, *Palestine* II, 786-9; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 100-2; Rose, *op. cit.*, 60-4; PCW II, 278f.; LCW XVII, xiv, 234; *Baffy: The Dairies of Blanche Dugdale, 1936-1947*, ed. N. Rose (Valentine Mitchell: London 1973), 6, 10f.; below, page 30.
36. For details of Magnes' attempt to have an Arab-Jewish agreement based on the constitutional issue in 1932, see: Memorandum, 4 February 1932, CZA, S25/6297; Notes for Conversation with HC, 3 March 1932, ISA 103/658/10; A. Ruppin, *Chapters of My Life* (Heb.) vol. III (Tel Aviv 1968), 205; S.L. Hattis, *The Bi-National Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times* (Haifa 1970), 70f.
37. Below, Documents 10, 12; Felman to Ben-Gurion, 28 October 1934 (n. 12); Auster-Khalidi talks, June 1935 (n. 30); B. Joseph, Note of Talk with M. [Musa al-Alami], 11 May 1936, CZA, S25/10093; Sela, *op. cit.*, 413; Kayyali, *op. cit.*, 188f.
38. Below, Document 9. Cf. Rutenberg plan, FD I, 225f.
39. Shertok, JAE Minutes, 20 August 1934; Shertok, Note of Interview with HC, 23 August 1934 (n. 34). Cf. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 713, 716; "Attempts at an Agreement with Arabs, I" (1931-41), 28 February 1946, CZA, S25/3098. On

- Azmi, see: Shertok, *Political Diary* II, 12f.; FD I, 104, 106, 256; Black, *op. cit.*, 80f.
40. Unpublished interview with G. Hoffman, 8 August 1935, in CZA, S25/3051. Cf. Lesch, *op. cit.*, 195n. For negative and positive evaluations of Fakhri an-Nashashibi's character and motives, see: sources cited in n. 100 to Chapter 4, below; L. Farago, *Palestine at the Crossroads* (New York 1937), 39–48; Gillon, *op. cit.*, 42–9.
41. Below, Documents 3, 5, 6, 10, 12; Joseph–Alami talk, 11 May 1936 (n. 37); Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 17, 27, 33f., 69, 82; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 136f., 149; *ibid.* III, 119, 204f., 257.
42. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 22–27; Ben-Gurion, Note of Talks with HC, 29–30 July 1934, CZA, S25/4162; Shertok, Note of Talk with HC, 23 August 1934, *loc. cit.*; Sasson, Notes of talks with Arab journalist Joseph Francis and others, 15 July, 3 September, 12 December and 23 December 1935, S25/3051; LCW XVI, 375; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 334.
43. E.g. Shertok's marginal note to a letter from L. Kohn(?) to A. Lourie, 5 December 1935, S25/6298. Cf. Shertok to "Dear Friends", and L. Kohn to A. Lourie, both 20 June 1935, *loc. cit.*
44. *My Talks*, 42.

Relations across the Jordan

45. For evidence of Abdallah's friendly attitude to the Jews during this period, see: Kisch, *op. cit.*, 338, 363, 386f., 390, 404, 431; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 48, 248–50; A. Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World* (New York/London 1970), 195; below, Documents 4, 9, 10; Kisch, unpublished diary, 19–20 February 1931, CZA, S25/5024/I. For evidence of his patriotic anti-Zionist stand, see: FD I, 54, 241f.; DPNM, 430f.; Abdallah, King of Jordan, *My Memoirs Completed (al-Takmila)* (Washington 1954), 86–88; Y. Nevo, *Abdallah and the Palestinian Arabs* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1975), 14; Porath, *op. cit.*, 322; B. Rubin, *The Arab States and the Palestine Conflict* (Syracuse 1981), 47.
46. PCW II, 13f., 17f., 27f., 54f., 126–30; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 324, 332; *Baffy*, 26; Secret Resolutions of XIXth Zionist Congress, transmitted to H.M.G., September 1935, CO 733/281, file 75206; K.W. Stein, *The Land Question in Mandatory Palestine, 1929–1936* (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan 1976), 422, 424; Haim, *op. cit.*, 72; Document 8(b).
47. A. Shapira, "The Option on Ghaur al-Kibd", (*Studies in Zionism* no. 2 (Autumn 1980), *passim*, esp. 266f., 281.
48. *Op. cit.*; Porath, *op. cit.*, 72; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 46f.; CZA, file S25/3515. On Mithqal's later anti-Zionist activities, see Farago, *op. cit.*, 253; Sasson, note of talk between A.H. Cohen and Mithqal al-Fa'iz, 27 October 1936, S25/9783.
49. Shapira, *op. cit.*; CZA, file S25/3509; Arlosoroff, *Jerusalem Diary*, 65, 203, 217f., 241, 266, 302, 355; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 521, 711; Stein, *op. cit.*, 427f.
50. Record of speeches of 8 April 1933 in S25/3510; cf. A.A. Mahmoud, *King Abdallah and Palestine, 1921–1950* (Ph.D. diss., Georgetown University 1972), 48–51; A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 252–4; photo between pages 176–7; Stein, *op. cit.*, 436; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 247; A. Sa'igh, *The Hashimites and the Palestine Question* (Ac.) (Beirut 1966), 130f.
51. Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 218; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 244f.; PCW II, 127f.; E. Neumann, *In the Arena* (New York 1976), 123f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 72f.; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 144n.
52. Document 4; Neumann, *op. cit.*, ch. 11 & 325–9; LCW XV, 386; Shertok, Interview with HC, 19 December 1933, CZA, S25/3493; Lease Agreement between Abdallah and the Palestine Land Development Company, 3 January 1934, S25/10122; Shertok Memo to Members of the J.A.E., 6 February 1935, *loc. cit.*;

- Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 565–7, 595–9; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 245–8, 265–8, 275–7; Stein, *op. cit.*, 429–32; Sa'igh, *op. cit.*, 130 (date incorrectly given as 1931).
53. Stein, *op. cit.*, 433–6; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 246f., 253; Neumann, *op. cit.*, 128f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 74, 126; Mahmoud, *op. cit.*, 46.
 54. Stein, *op. cit.*, 436, and “The Wadi Hawarath Affair: The Making of the Land Question in Mandatory Palestine”, unpubl. ms. (December 1975).
 55. Contrary to Neumann’s claim (*op. cit.*, 126), these lands were discovered at an early stage to be of no economic value. See: Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 688; Shertok to Brodetsky, 7 June 1934, CZA, S25/3515; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 248, 269.
 56. For Abdallah, these deals provided an income of at least £P3500 and other benefits. See: Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 303–6, 308–10; Shertok–HC interviews, 19 December 1933 (n. 52) and 10 December 1934, S25/17; J.A.E. Finance Dept. to S. Hoofien (Anglo-Palestine Bank), 18 March 1934, S25/3486; Shertok to Brodetsky, 7 June 1934 (n. 55); J.A.E. Minutes, 3 February 1935; Political Dept. Diary, 11 February 1936, S25/443; Joseph, Note of meeting with A.H. Cohen and M. al-Unsi, 11 May 1939, S25/3052; Sasson, Note (28 November) of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 27 November 1939, S25/3115; Sasson to Joseph, 4 January 1940, S25/3487; Sharett, *Political Diary* V, 259; Porath, *op. cit.*, 72f., “Attempts at an Agreement”, 28 February 1946 (n.39).
 57. A.H. Cohen, Report of Visit to Abdallah on 12 December 1934, S25/10122. Cf. Neumann, *op. cit.*, 129.
 58. See: Porath, *op. cit.*, 73f.; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 249–51, 277.; Farago, *op. cit.*, 55f.; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 14; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 51f.; Sa'igh, *op. cit.*, 133; B. Shwadran, *Jordan: A State of Tension* (New York 1959), 223f.; below, pages 119f., 145f., 158f.
 59. See: Documents 9, 10; Kisch unpublished Diary, 27 March 1931, CZA, S25/5042/1; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 48; Hoz–Dajani Talk, 1 November 1933 (n. 12); Shertok, Report of Visit to Amman, 24 April 1934, S25/3515; Shertok to Brodetsky, 7 June 1934 (n. 55); Shertok, Note of Talk with H.S. ad-Dajani, 22 June 1934, S25/3052; A.H. Cohen to M. al-Unsi, 7 May 1935, S25/3486; Shertok, *Political Diary* I, 134; Porath, *op. cit.*, 73.
 60. Document 10; A.H. Cohen report of meetings with Abdallah and M. al-Unsi, 12 January 1934, S25/3487; A.H. Cohen, Notes of Talks with al-Unsi, 5 March and 22 July 1934, S25/3051; same/same, 5 August 1934, S25/3485; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 259; Porath, *op. cit.*, 73f.; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 46f. A Weizmann–Abdallah meeting was referred to by several parties, but no detailed account has been found by this researcher. See: Wauchope to Cunliffe–Lister, 12 March 1934, PRO, CO 733/257, file 37356; same to same, 15 March 1934, CO 733/263, file 37456/1; Cohen–Unsi Talk, 22 July 1934 (*loc. cit.*); Cohen–Abdallah Talk, 12 December 1934 (n. 57).
 61. Shapira, *op. cit.*, 282; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 52.
 62. FD I, 53f.
 63. Below, pages 66f., 93f. and Documents 10, 24; Abdallah, *My Memoirs Completed*, 88–92; Porath, *op. cit.*, 74; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 251.
 64. Joseph Diary, 2 August 1937, CZA, S25/50; Sa'igh, *op. cit.*, 131; Porath, *op. cit.*, 74, 78; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 43; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 51; Document 35.
 65. Arlosoroff to Brandeis, 8 May 1932, S25/3489.
 66. Interview, 10 December 1934 (n. 56). Cf. Shapira, *op. cit.*, 259, 278; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 50–52. On British hesitations, see: Stein, *op. cit.*, 426f., 432, 437f.; Shapira, *op. cit.*, 252–6, 268, 270f., 273f., 278f.
 67. Shertok to Brodetsky, 7 June 1934 (n. 55); Shertok–HC Interview, 10 December 1934 (n. 56). Cf. Shapira, *op. cit.*, 268f., 283.
 68. “Attempts at an Agreement”, 28 February 1946 (n. 39); Shapira, *op. cit.*, 269f., 278; below, pages 41f.

Pan-Arab Dimension

69. Kisch, *Letter to the Chairman, Political Commission* (June 1931), 43. Cf. unpublished Diary, 19–20 February 1931, CZA, S25/5024/I; Shertok, Report of Visit to Amman, 24 April 1934 (n. 59).
70. Sykes, *Cross Roads*, 123f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 8–13, 109; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 139f.; al-Hout, *op. cit.*, 243–9, 726f.; P. Mattar, “The Role of the Mufti”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 9.IX (1983), 106–15; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 89f., 92, 94, 140f., 147, 156; Kisch, *Palestine Diary*, 373; LCW XV, 214; FD I, 104; Esco, *Palestine* II, 761–4.
71. al-Hout, *op. cit.*, 732f., 877; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 142; Porath, *op. cit.*, 123f.; Esco, *op. cit.*, 764.
72. DPNM, 364f.; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 191; Awni Abd al-Hadi, Interview for *al-Ahram*, 23 February 1932 (n. 3); LCW XV, 214, 312; below, Document 2; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 67.
73. DPNM, 365–7, 376f., 379, 386f., 391–5; al-Hout, *op. cit.*, 732f., 746f.; Lesch, *op. cit.*, ch. 6; Porath, *op. cit.*, 34, 45, 127f., 160f.
74. E.g., Kisch, *Palestine Diary*, 317f., 376, 386, 391f., 409; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 107, 112f., 135f.; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 17f., 27; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* II, 148; LCW XV, 222; *ibid.* XVI, 290–3, 305f.; *ibid.* XVII, 56, 83, 110f., 113, 172; J.A.E. Meetings, 20 August 1934 and 22 May 1936; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 33, 39, 44f., 60f.
75. Kisch, *op. cit.*, 317f., 381, 431; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 90, 123–75 *passim*.
76. E.g., Kisch, *Palestine Diary*, 361, 374; Cunliffe-Lister, Note of Interview with Shertok, 19 July 1934, PRO, CO 733/257, file 37356; Sereni and Ashery, *Jews and Arabs*, 225–7, 253–5.
77. H. Hall, “King Faisal and Dr Weizmann”, 26 June 1933, PRO, FO 371/16931, file E3452/3289/31.
78. *Loc. cit.*
79. Williams to Shuckburgh, 23 June 1933, CO 733/246, file 17547; Rendel to Williams, 21 July 1933, *loc. cit.* Cf. Rubin, *op. cit.*, 44f., 57; Porath, *op. cit.*, 208.
80. Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 65; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 713; *ibid.* III, 207f.; Sharett, *Political Dairy* I, 203, 214; *ibid.* II, 146f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 57, 62f., 65; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 65, 175–85; Haim, *Abandonment*, 42.
81. Williams, Note of Interview with Brodetsky, 9 September 1932, PRO, CO 733/215, file 97054/I.
82. Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 359; W. Laqueur, *A History of Zionism* (London/New York 1972), 142; N. Caplan and I. Black, “Israel and Lebanon”, JQ no. 27 (Spring 1983), 49, 52; Brodetsky, Note of Interview with Cunliffe-Lister, Sokolow, 2 November 1932, CZA, S25/6297; Parkinson, Note of Interview with Brodetsky, 8 November 1932, PRO, *loc. cit.* (n. 81); Brodetsky to Arlosoroff, 17 January 1933, CZA, Z4/20177; same to Jacobson, 17 January 1933, *loc. cit.*; same to Parkinson, 14 February 1933, PRO, FO 371/16927, file E963/257/31; Williams to Warner, 17 February 1933, *loc. cit.* The F.O. instructed its envoys in Cairo and Beirut to show some “friendly interest” towards Dr Jacobson. See: Rendel notes to Loraine, Satow, and Williams, 25 February 1933, *loc. cit.*; G. Sheffer, “The Images of Arabs and Jews”, (*Studies in Zionism* no. 1 (Spring 1980), 117.
83. V. Jacobson, Report of Visit to Syria and Palestine, March–May 1933, 12 May 1933, WA; Caplan and Black, *op. cit.*, 49–58; M. Getter, *Hayim Arlosoroff: A Political Biography* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1977), 107–9; J.A.E. Minutes, 22 April 1934, CZA; Black, *op. cit.*, 279f.; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 45; E. Epstein (Elath), Report of Visit to Syria and Lebanon, October 1934, S25/10225; E. Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.* (Philadelphia 1976), 255f.

“Abbas Documents”

84. FD I, 104; A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 192–4; Camhy to Weizmann, 22 July 1931, WA;

- Puniansky to Weizmann, 26 October 1932, WA.
85. Shertok, Note of Talk between Arlosoroff and Abbas Hilmi, 25 December 1932, CZA, S25/3052; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 161.
 86. For details of the episode, see: *ibid.*, 166, 190, 204; Brodetsky to Sacher, 26 January 1932, S25/2; Brodetsky, "Rumours in Connection with Arab Proposals for Conference with Jews", 4 February 1932, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 492; S. Brodetsky, *Memoirs: From Ghetto to Israel* (London 1960), 154f.; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 45.
 87. S25/2.
 88. May to Weizmann, 29 February 1932, WA; *Palestine Bulletin*, 6 March and 3 April 1932 (clippings in ISA 65/329); Brodetsky, *loc. cit.* Cf. Brodetsky to Sacher, 26 January 1932 (n. 86); Sokolow to Brodetsky, 28 January and 7 February 1932, CZA, S25/2.
 89. Handwritten draft, 23 February 1932, ISA 66/159. Cf. Sasson Report on Abbas Visit, 6 February 1935, CZA, S25/3044.
 90. Clippings from Egyptian and Palestinian press (December 1932, January 1933) in ISA 65/862; Shertok(?) to Smolar, 5 January 1933, CZA, S25/3487; Abbas Hilmi lawsuit against Ajaj Nuwaihid, 6 January 1933, ISA 66/167; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 139, 156, 165f., 210.
 91. Sokolow to Brodetsky, 28 January 1932 (n. 88); Arlosoroff to Brodetsky, 8 February 1932, CZA, S25/2; May to Weizmann, 9 and 23 February 1932, WA; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 492f.; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 220; LCW XV, 288.
 92. *Palestine Bulletin*, 3 April 1932. Cf. *Doar ha-Yom*, 16 February 1932, copy in CZA, S25/2; May to Weizmann, 29 February 1932, WA.

Proposals for Round-Table Conference

93. The suggestion seems to have been first made by Dr Weizmann in September 1929; one year later, with the likelihood that the British were going to issue a White Paper hostile to Zionist interests, Weizmann returned to the idea in earnest. See: J.R. MacDonald, Note of Interview with Weizmann, 23 September 1929, PRO, CO 733/175, file 67411/I; LCW XIV, 45, 51, 109, 119f., 199, 361, 371-3; *ibid.* XV, 54n., 70, 97, 103, 125.
94. E.g., Henderson, in private conversation, 4 December 1930, WA; LCW XIV, 45n.; *ibid.* XV, 70; *ibid.* XVI, 386; Namier to Weizmann, 12 July 1931, WA; MacDonald to Passfield, 16 July 1931, PRO, CO 733/197, file 87050/II.
95. Chancellor to Williams, 22 October 1930, CO 733/183, file 77050/D/A. Cf. same to Shuckburgh, 16 January 1931, CO 733/197, file 87050/I.
96. FD I, 105-8.
97. E.g., Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 482; *ibid.* II, 42, 44; *ibid.* III, 114, 117; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 230; Arlosoroff to Weizmann, 21 November 1932, CZA, S25/795; Brodetsky to Arlosoroff, 23 February 1932, S25/2; same to same, 14 December 1932, S25/6297; J.A.E. Memo on Proposed Legislative Council, 4 October 1934, S25/4162; MacDonald to Wauchope, 17 July 1935, PRO, CO 733/275, file 75102; Wauchope, Note of Interview with Shertok and Ben-Gurion, 19 July 1935, *loc. cit.*; Shertok, *Political Diary* I, 70, 72; Lourie to Shertok, 23 April 1936, CZA, S25/6325; Porath, *op. cit.*, 156f.
98. Chancellor to Williams, 22 October 1930 (n. 95); Minutes of Meeting of Cabinet Committee, 19 December 1930, WA; Shuckburgh to Chancellor, 8 January 1931, RH/C 16/4; Awni Abd al-Hadi, Interview for *al-Ahram*, 23 February 1932 (n. 3); MacDonald to Wauchope, 17 July 1935 (n. 97); Porath, *op. cit.*, 156.
99. E.g., *ha-Aretz* editorial, Heb. press summary no. 49, CO 733/182, file 77050; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 482; LCW XVI, 386.

Parity Proposals

100. Esco, *Palestine* II, 749. Cf. *ibid.*, 748; PCW I, 635.
101. LCW XIV, 140, 207; *ibid.* XVI, 468; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 473, 481, 491; *ibid.* II, 43, 149; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 45, 58; S. Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians* (New York/London 1979), 145, 147; H. Sacher, quoted in the Shaw Commission Report, cmd. 3530 (London 1930), 108; A.A. Goren, ed., *Dissenter in Zion* (Cambridge, Mass./London 1982), 284f.; below, Document 3.
102. M. Marrus, "Zionism and the Idea of a Jewish State", *Social Praxis* IV (1976-77), 204-8; D. Vital, "The Definition of Goals in Foreign Policy", in *Israel: A Developing Society*, ed. Asher Arian (Assen, Netherlands 1980), 17-20; Laqueur, *op. cit.*, 494f.; H.M. Sachar, *A History of Israel* (New York 1976), 181-3.
103. Awni Abd al-Hadi, in Documents 3, 21; Musa al-Alami, in Document 5; G. Antonius, below, page 31; Nuri as-Sa'id, in Document 19; Naiditch to Weizmann, 22 March 1937, WA; Fuad Hamza, in Document 26(b).
104. Sources cited in nn. 39, 40, above; Joseph, Note of Talk with "S.A." (?Salim Ayoub), M. al-Unsi, and "Dr N", 5 June 1936, CZA, S25/10093; below, page 57.
105. LCW XVII, 132f., 139; Arlosoroff, *op. cit.*, 296, 349; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 117, 119; Shertok, *Political Diary* I, 74; *Baffy*, 11; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 106f., 109f.; Rose, *Gentile Zionists*, 52f.; Haim, *Abandonment*, 14, 17f.
106. Sources cited in n. 94, above; Namier to Weizmann, 3 November 1932, CZA, A312/55; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 480-3; *ibid.* II, 144, 330, 341; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 207f.; LCW XV, 362; *ibid.* XVI, 386; *ibid.* XVII, 74, 134f., 149f., 163f., 177, 192, 330; Rose, *op. cit.*, 51f., 54, 56f., 59; Porath, *op. cit.*, 150; Haim, *op. cit.*, 14f.; Hattis, *op. cit.*, 106-9, 112f.
107. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 100-2, 119, 350, 367; Black, *op. cit.*, 14; Rubinstein, "Zionist Attitudes" (JQ), 140; LCW XVII, xiii; Haim, *op. cit.*, 17f., 52; 4th Meeting of "Panel" for St. James's Conference, 16 February 1939, CZA, S25/7643.
108. Brodetsky to Shertok, 29 October 1934, S25/4162; Parkinson, Note of Interview between Secretary of State, Sokolow and Brodetsky, 30 July 1935, PRO, CO 733/275, file 75102/I; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 491; *ibid.* II, 43, 135f.; *ibid.* III, 119; LCW XVII, xxii-xxiii; Shertok remarks, below, Document 10; Hattis, *op. cit.*, 110, 112f.; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 145f.

Cantonisation

109. On Ben-Avi, see Hattis, *op. cit.*, 116-8; FD I, 54f., 103, 115. On Yusuf al-Isa, see *Miral ash-Sharq*, 27 September 1933; Porath, *op. cit.*, 70.
110. Draft Constitution, 20 November 1929, CZA, S25/6297; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 406-11; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 23; Caplan, *Palestine Jewry*, 210f.; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 145.
111. Dothan ("Attempts", 218) points out that both Abbas and Jacobson were in Paris during the same period. Cf. Hattis, *op. cit.*, 120f. and Dothan, *op. cit.*, 216f. for their discussions of Jacobson's plan (Document 2).
112. E.g., Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 252. The London Z.E. asked Jacobson at the time to refrain from any private or public discussion of his cantonisation ideas because they were "far too important ... to be allowed to develop into a cause of confusion". Brodetsky to Jacobson, 24 February 1932, CZA, S25/3066. There is no mention in Jacobson's accounts of his talks in Beirut and elsewhere during 1933 and 1934 of the idea being discussed.
113. Letter to Weizmann, 20 January 1932, WA. Cf. Brodetsky, *op. cit.*, 154.
114. Arlosoroff, *Jerusalem Diary*, 122, 341; Arlosoroff to Weizmann, 30 June 1932 (n. 19); Getter, *op. cit.*, 108; G. Cohen, quoted in Arian, *op. cit.*, 98.
115. Minutes, JAE meeting, 26 April 1933, CZA; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 716; Getter,

- op. cit.*, 109; Dothan, *op. cit.*, 217; G. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 97f.
116. E.g., Farbstein, JAE meeting, 26 April 1933; undated, unsigned memorandum against cantonisation, CZA, Z4/17141.
 117. L.B. Namier, "Memorandum on Cantonalisation", 15 February 1932, S25/2; Sokolow to Brodetsky, 28 January 1932 (n. 88); *Palestine Bulletin*, 3 April 1932; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 493.
 118. *Mirat ash-Sharq*, 27 September 1933; Porath, *op. cit.*, 70.
 119. M. al-Alami, "Present state of mind and feelings of the Arabs of Palestine", September 1933, (forwarded to London by Wauchope, 23 December 1933), PRO, CO 733/257, file 37356/1. Cf. J.T.A. Press Bulletin no. 3, 3 January 1934 (quoting *Falastin*) in CO 733/248, file 17688; Sela, "Talks", 405f.; Dothan, *op. cit.*, 216.
 120. Proposals enclosed in Y. Hanna to G. Agronsky, [?14] December 1933, CZA S25/2.
 121. Parkinson minute, 5 December 1933, PRO, *loc. cit.*; same to Wauchope, 14 December 1933, *loc. cit.*; Williams, Note of Interview between Parkinson, Brodetsky and Lourie, 6 February 1934, CO 733/257, file 37356/1.
 122. *al-Jamia al-Arabiyya*, 27 December 1933.
 123. Shertok to Lourie, 14 December 1933, CZA, S25/2. Cf. J.T.A. report (n. 119) that Jewish leaders had rejected the plan. On the Magnes-Philby negotiations of 1929, see FD I, 87-93.
 124. Khalidi to Magnes, 23 July 1934, CAHJP, P3/2436.
 125. n.d. P3/2463.
 126. Material in PRO, CO 733/248, file 17688 (November-December 1933) and CO 733/268, file 37688 (February 1934); LCW XVI, 228n., 266n.; PCW II, 39f.
 127. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 12 March 1934 (n. 60).
 128. Warner to Drummond, 13 February 1934, CO 733/268, file 37688.
 129. Cust Memorandum, 18 January 1935, CO 733/283, file 75288. Cf. below, pages 53f.
 130. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 13 March 1935, PRO, *loc. cit.*

CHAPTER 2

Eruption of Rioting: April 1936

1. Wauchope to Thomas, 18 April 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/II.
2. The following account is based on Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 113-5; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 127-61; al-Hout, *Political Leadership*, 317-28; DPNM, 356f., 358-60, 395-401, 404f., 466; Lachman, "Arab Rebellion and Terrorism", 67-78; Haim, *Abandonment of Illusions*, ch. 1.
3. "Particularly so in view of the apparent success achieved by disorder in Syria and student rioting in Egypt." Quoted by Porath, *op. cit.*, 156. Cf. *ibid.*, 127, 159-61; Wauchope to Thomas 18 and 29 April 1936, *loc. cit.* (n. 1); Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 198; Sharett, *Political Diary* I, 70, 73, 75.
4. DPNM, 391-5; E. Elath, *Zionism and the Arabs* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1974), 286.
5. Below, Documents 9, 10; E. Sasson, Note of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 3 March 1936, CZA, S25/3485; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 22 May 1936, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 133.
6. Memorandum of 25 November 1935, quoted in Porath, *op. cit.*, 142f.
7. DPNM, 431; Nafez al-Taji to M. MacDonald, 26 September 1936, PRO, CO 733/289, file 75054; Porath, *op. cit.*, 157-9; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 171f.; PCW II, 180.
8. *Memoirs* III, 118 (9 April). Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 22f.
9. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 16-36, 39f., 56-63; LCW XVII, 138-44, 151f., 167f., 171, 174f.,

- 178f., 193f.; *Book of Documents of the Va'ad Leumi* (Heb.), 2nd enlarged ed., M. Attias, ed. (Jerusalem 1963), 223–5; *Baffy*, 2–5; Haim, *op. cit.*, 18–22.
10. *My Talks*, 83; *Memoirs* III, 130.
 11. *My Talks*, 42–62 (cantonisation discussed on pages 50–5, 57–9); cf. M.J. Cohen, “Secret Diplomacy and Rebellion”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* VIII (1977), 380–4; Haim, *op. cit.*, 26f. I have not found any records of these talks in Antonius’ papers in the ISA or the Private Papers Collection, Middle East Centre, St Antony’s College.
Two and a half years earlier, Antonius was quoted as believing that cantonisation was impracticable. See: Parkinson to Wauchope, 14 December 1933, PRO, CO 733/248, file 17688; Dothan, “Attempts”, 219.
 12. Ruppin, *Memoirs*, 278; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 215; LCW XVII, 238–44, 246–9, 297, 334. Wauchope was not impressed by such arguments. See: Wauchope to Ormsby-Gore, 18 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75157/II.
 13. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 216f., 232; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 259, 431; Haim, *op. cit.*, 57.
 14. E.g., Political Dept. Diary, 8 July 1936, CZA, S25/443.
 15. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 91, 99; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 176, 196–208, 240–8; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 66–9, 79; Haim, *op. cit.*, 37f.
 16. B. Joseph, Note of Talk with Salim Ayoub, 20 May 1936, CZA, S25/10093; Joseph, Note of Talk with “S.A.” (Ayoub?), M. al-Unsi and “Dr N.”, 5 June 1936, *loc. cit.*; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 216f., 232; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 322, 333, 359; Documents 11, 13; Haim, *op. cit.*, 50–57.
 17. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 203 and *My Talks*, 69.
 18. E.g., the eloquent letters and speeches of Arthur Ruppin at this time: *Memoirs*, 275–7; JAE Meeting, 20 May 1936, CZA. See also: Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Pauls*, 127f.
 19. *Political Diary* I, 126f.
 20. *Memoirs* III, 199.
 21. *Ibid.*, 200, 203; cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 40, 53.
 22. *Memoirs* III, 240, 283, 443. Cf. *ibid.* IV, 56 and *My Talks*, 84; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 133f.
 23. *Memoirs* III, 238. Indeed, this fits in well with the Zionist leader’s broader analysis of the fears which motivated all three parties to the conflict. Cf. *ibid.*, 197f., 205f.; *My Talks*, 66f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 129, 134; Report to JAE Meeting, 19 April 1937, CZA; PCW II, 135f., 168f.
 24. Joseph, Note of Talk with “M.” (Musa al-Alami), 11 May 1936, S25/10093; Below, Documents 12, 14; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 142–7, 165f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 226–35, 262–70, 362; Shertok to Lourie, 3 June 1936, S25/6326; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 98–103.
 25. *Memoirs* III, 239f., 257, 259, 280, 293. See also: Lourie to Shertok, 25 May 1936, S25/6325; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 128f. On the Rutenberg plan, see below, pages 41f., 65f. and Document 15.

Negotiations of “The Five”

26. Details of this episode may be found in the following primary sources: M. Smilansky, *Rise and Holocaust* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1953), 194–6; G. Frumkin, *The Way of a Jerusalem Judge* (Heb.) (Tel Aviv 1954), 326–35; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 70–103; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 136 et seq.; J.L. Magnes, Summary of Events, 20.5.1936–15.1.1937, CAHJP, P3/2448.
Other accounts of this episode may be found in: A. Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, 269f.; Sela, “Talks”, 414–20; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 144–54; M.J. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 385–9; Black, *op. cit.*, 74–9; Dothan, *op. cit.*, 220–4; Haim, *op. cit.*, 56f.
27. Smilansky, leader of the Jewish Farmers’ Federation, had long-time contacts with a

- prominent Arab of the Nes Ziona region, Tawfiq al-Ghusain, whose son, Yaqub, was a leader of the Arab youth movement and a member of the A.H.C. In his quasi-fictionalised autobiography, Smilansky admits that his efforts were designed to work behind the backs of Magnes and Alami, who were both considered to be idealists. Despite his own professed dislike of bribery, Smilansky confessed that he felt that a "bridge of silver" was indispensable to the success of political negotiations. For details, see Smilansky, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 77–9; A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 274f.; *Baffy*, 16; Shertok, Note of Interview with HC, 25 May 1936, CZA, S25/19; Shertok, Report of Talk with Musa al-Alami, Mapai Political Committee, 21 June 1936, CZA, S25/3434; Sokolovitch report, Magnes Diary, 4 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/317–8; Haim, *op. cit.*, 43.
28. Magnes Summary (n. 26), 24 May. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 98.
 29. Document 13. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 76f.
 30. Shertok to Ben-Gurion, 31 May 1936, CZA, S25/6325; same to Lourie, 3 June 1936, S25/6326.
 31. JAE Meeting, 22 May 1936, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 135; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 337; LCW XVII, 320.
 32. Documents 11, 12, 20; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 98f., 102 and *Memoirs* III, 235, 268f., 279, 322; S. Kaplansky, Outline for Jewish–Arab Agreement, 15 June 1936, S25/3434; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 166; LCW XVII, 329.
 33. The Zionist case against accepting this precondition was based on four arguments: (a) it would be interpreted as an act of "self-effacement" and "weakness" in the face of violence, and would increase the self-confidence of the Arab leadership; (b) it would weaken the government's determination to suppress the disturbances by force; (c) it would constitute a dangerous precedent in abandoning "economic absorptive capacity" as the sole criterion for fixing immigration quotas, and would amount to a retreat from the Jewish Agency's stand in its dealings with the British; and (d) it would set a precedent for all future negotiations with Arabs. See: Below, Documents 14, 18; Shertok to Ben-Gurion, 31 May 1936 (n. 30); Shertok, Note of Interview with HC, 2 June 1936, S25/19; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 144, 198f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 227, 342, *My Talks*, 72, and *Letters to Paula*, 127; Sela, *op. cit.*, 416; Farago, *Palestine at the Crossroads*, 144.
 34. *Memoirs* III, 236; also Shertok, quoted in *ibid.*, 305.
 35. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 139; Sela, *op. cit.*, 414f.; Ruppin, Note of Interview with HC, 31 May 1936, WA. More frequent was the *Arab* accusation, voiced by Musa al-Alami, that the Jews were happy to win everything possible from the British – "behind the backs" of the Arabs. Joseph-Alami talk, 11 May (n. 24); Documents 12, 14; Magnes Summary (n. 26), 20 June; Political Dept. Diary, 7 July 1936, CZA, S25/443.
 36. *Op. cit.*, 169. Cf. Joseph remarks, Document 20.
 37. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 135f.; *Political Report of the Executive ... to the XXth Congress*, Zurich, August 1937, (Jerusalem 1937), 28.
 38. JAE Meetings, 22 May and 14 June 1936, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 126–36, 146f., 165; Shertok to Ben-Gurion, 31 May 1936 (n.30); same to Lourie, 3 June 1936, S25/6326; same to Ben-Gurion, 14 June 1936, S25/1499; Ben-Gurion to JAE, 9 June 1936, S25/6326; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 82f., and *Memoirs* III, 232–5, 253, 257, 262–70; Black, *op. cit.*, 77.
 39. JAE Meeting, 2 June 1936, CZA; cf. Shertok to Lourie, 3 June 1936 (n. 38).
 40. "If ... an informal basis for an understanding with moderates was found to be impossible," then, argued Magnes, "the Agency would in no way have been compromised." Summary (n. 26), 15 January 1937. Cf. Document 13, below.
 41. See, e.g., Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 232, 267, 304f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 146.
 42. *My Talks*, 82f.
 43. *Political Diary* I, 135; JAE Meeting, 22 May 1936, CZA.

44. Magnes Summary (n. 26), 24 May; Frumkin to Trusted, 2 December 1938, CZA, A199/51.
45. Below, Document 14; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 82f., 93–7.
46. Magnes, Note of Talk with Alami, 19 August 1936 (forwarded to Shertok, 20 August), S25/2960/A; Summary (n. 26), 27 June 1936 and 15 January 1937.
47. Shertok, Note of Interview with HC, 2 September 1936, S25/19. Cf. Political Dept. Diary 7 July 1936 (n. 35); Shertok to Alami, 8 July 1936, S25/5808; JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936, CZA; Magnes to Shertok, 20 August 1936 (n. 46); Wauchope to Ormsby-Gore, 4 September 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/V; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 230f., 234, 295f.; LCW XVII, 320, 328f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 337f.; Goren, *Dissenter*, 388.
48. Sasson, *On the Road*, 356.
49. 26(?) June 1936, CZA, A255/294.
50. Lourie to Shertok, 7 July 1936, S25/3434.
51. Magnes Survey (n.26), *passim*.; Smilansky, *op. cit.*, 194; Wauchope to Parkinson, 10 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/III; Political Dept. Diary, 23 July 1936, CZA, S25/443; Shertok to Magnes, 30 July and 13 August 1936, S25/5808; Magnes to Shertok, 20 August 1936 (n. 46); Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 84, 97; Goren, *loc. cit.*
52. E.g., Magnes, Survey (n. 26), *passim*; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 101, and *Memoirs* III, 304; Smilansky, *op. cit.*, 194, 196; Frumkin, *op. cit.*, 335–7, 339; Frumkin to Shertok, 4 November 1936, A199/49; LCW XVII, 320; Magnes, Note of Talk with Musa al-Alami, 6 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/318; Magnes testimony, Committee on Jewish–Arab Relations, 11 March and 10 April 1940, S25/2992 and 2993; Magnes to Shertok, 24 March 1946, S25/2966; Magnes to A. Eban, 25 August 1948, ISA 93.03/129/8; Goren, *op. cit.*, 503.
53. Wauchope to Ormsby-Gore, 4 September 1936 (n. 47).

Zionist–Abdallah Relations

54. LCW XVIII, 33f.
55. Zionists paid Abdallah at least £1000, and the British paid him £5000, during the first months of the rebellion. See: Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 117, 121–5; Farago, *op. cit.*, 253, 267–9; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 216; *Foreign Relations of the United States* (hereafter FRUS) 1936, vol.III (Washington 1955?), 444; “La-Binyan” Ltd. to Shertok, 30 June 1936, S25/10122; Political Dept. Diary, 5 and 21 July 1936, CZA, S25/443; Shertok to Lourie, 30 July 1936, S25/5808; Joseph, Note of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 5 August 1937, S25/3052; M.I. Faddah, *The Middle East in Transition* (New York 1974), 9; Haim, *op. cit.*, 43.
56. E.g., Sharett, *op. cit.*, 243, 314f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 202–4, 206f. Abdallah seems to have retained the confidence of Palestinian nationalists, who regarded him as loyally supporting their cause. See, e.g., A. Zuaytir, *The Palestinian National Movement, 1935–1939: The Diaries of Akram Zuaytir* (Ac. – hereafter cited as *Diaries*) (Beirut 1980), 165.
57. DPNM, 430f., 447; Wauchope, Note of Talk with Abdallah, 3 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/II; Abdallah, *My Memoirs Completed*, 93–6; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 155f., 257f., 263; Porath, *op. cit.*, 202f.
58. M. al-Unsi, in a talk with Joseph, 5 June 1936 (n. 16); “Note on the strength of Arab National spirit in Palestine”, 22 August 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/IV; Farago, *op. cit.*, 271f.
59. See: Joseph–Ayoub talk, 20 May 1936 (n. 16); Lourie to Shertok, 25 May 1936, CZA, S25/6325; Joseph–S.A.–M.U.–Dr. N. Talk, 5 June 1936 (n. 16); Political Dept. Diary, 9 August 1936, S25/443; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 244f., 264; Black, *op. cit.*,

- 118–23, 130; Porath, *op. cit.*, 206.
60. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 91, 155f., 245f., 250, 312; Shertok to JAE (London), 28 July 1936, Z4/17032; Black, *op. cit.*, 120; Haim, *op. cit.*, 43.
61. Rutenberg to Abdallah, 12 July 1936, encl. in Rutenberg to Parkinson, 13 May 1937, PRO, CO 831/41, file 77033. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 202, 215f.; Black, *op. cit.*, 145–51.
62. Document 15. Cf. E. Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians* (Heb.) (Jerusalem 1975), 76f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 210f.
63. Abdallah to Rutenberg, 17 July 1936, translation enclosed in Rutenberg to Parkinson, 13 May 1937 (n. 61). Cf. M. al-Unsi remarks to Joseph, 5 June 1936 (n. 16).
64. Discussions were resumed in London in May 1937. See below, pages 65f.
65. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 211.

Pan-Arab Mediation

66. See Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 199–207.
67. DPNM, 458f.; al-Hout, *Political Leadership*, 752f.; E. Kedourie, “Great Britain and Palestine: The Turning Point”, in *Islam in the Modern World* (London 1980), 105–9; Rubin, *Arab States*, 74. On the intricate Anglo-Arab negotiations which ended the strike, see, inter alia: *ibid.*, 67–79; Porath, *op. cit.*, 204–16; Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 144f.; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 104–20; M.J. Cohen, *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate, 1936–1945* (London/New York 1978), 18–31; G. Sheffer, “The Involvement of Arab States”, *Asian and African Studies* X (1974–75), 59–78; A.S. Klieman, “The Arab States and Palestine”, in Kedourie and Haim (eds.), *op. cit.*, 118–136; Kedourie, *op. cit.*, 96–115.
68. LCW XVII, 280. Cf. Parkinson, Note of Interview given by Ormsby-Gore to Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, 30 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/III.
69. H. Rose to May, 6 June 1936; cf. May to Weizmann, 5 June 1936, WA. Rose was a British Jew with Iraqi business interests. See also: LCW XVII, 310, 350f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 204. For a detailed overview of Nuri’s Palestine activities during 1936–38, see Y. Nimrod, “The Involvement of Nuri as-Sa’id” (Heb.), *Cathedra* no. 14 (January 1980), 153–79.
70. G. Rendel, Note of Talk with Nuri as-Sa’id, 9 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/294, file 75113/I.
71. Lourie to Shertok 12 June 1936, CZA, S25/6326; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 251, 326; BAFFY, 21.
72. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 326; LCW XVII, 291n.; Note of Conversation between Ormsby-Gore, Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, 31 August 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/IV; Haim, *op. cit.*, 45.
73. A.C. Kerr to Rendel, 16 June 1936, CO 733/294, file 75113/I. Cf. Ormsby-Gore to Weizmann, 25 June 1936, CZA, Z4/17068.
74. LCW XVII, 292. Cf. *ibid.* 290f.; *ibid.* XVIII, 307; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 288, 293f., 310, 327, 342; *Baffy*, 23; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 195f., 271; below, Document 18.
75. Document 18. In later years, Nuri referred several times to his frustration at the Zionists’ rejection of his suggestions of 1936, which, he claimed, were in their own best interests. See: Goren, *Dissenter*, 344f.; below, Document 26(b); Shertok Reports of Talks with Nuri, JAE Meetings, 27 July 1941 and 22 August 1943, CZA.
76. Shertok, Notes of Interviews with HC, 24 August and 2 September 1936, S25/19; same to Wauchope, 30 August 1936, S25/5808; Ormsby-Gore Interview with Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, 31 August 1936 (n. 72); Zuaytir, *Diaires*, 156–65; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 287; Porath, *op. cit.*, 207–11; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 22–5.
77. Shertok set out in a formal letter to the British all the dangers which, he felt, lurked behind Nuri’s mediation efforts, arguing that by their acceptance of the Iraqi leader

- as mediator they had "allowed ambitions to develop and expectations to arise" among the Arabs which they would find "impossible to satisfy while remaining faithful to [their] obligations as Mandatory for Palestine." To help press their point, Zionists passed along reports alleging that Nuri was actually encouraging the A.H.C. to hold out for greater concessions. Shertok to Wauchope, 30 August 1936 (n. 76); interview with Wauchope 2 September 1936 (n. 76); *Political Diary I*, 287f.; Note of Conversation between an Arab (X) and Dr Khalidi (25 August), forwarded by Weizmann to Ormsby-Gore, 31 August 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/IV; LCW XVII, 326; Porath, *op. cit.*, 210.
78. Record of Conversation between Ormsby-Gore, Weizmann, Ben-Gurion, 31 August 1936 (n. 72). For a few days following his apparently spontaneous suggestion, Dr Weizmann grew not only optimistic about the tactical possibility of scuttling Nuri's unwanted intervention, but even became positively enthusiastic about the wider prospect of concluding a successful tripartite agreement. But David Ben-Gurion, Blanche Dugdale and Lewis Namier combined their efforts in trying "to erase from his mind this delusion and to bring him back to the harsh reality." Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs III*, 407. Cf. *ibid.*, 399–407; *Baffy*, 26–9; LCW XVII, 326f., 336f., 355.
 79. The High Commissioner preferred the Cabinet to allow Nuri's mediation to continue (revising his mandate if necessary), and acknowledged that this would have to be at the cost of the British placing themselves "under a moral obligation to suspend immigration now or a little later." Any other course, Wauchope felt, would require the imposition of a drastic military solution. Ormsby-Gore to Wauchope, 31 August and 1 September 1936, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Wauchope to Ormsby-Gore, 1 September 1936, *loc. cit.* Cf. Bennett, Note of Conversation with Williams, 31 August 1936, PRO, FO 371/20024, file E5503/94/31; Bennett, Rendel minutes, 1 September 1936, *op. cit.*, file E5504/94/31.
 80. Ormsby-Gore to Weizmann, 2 September 1936, WA; LCW XVII, 327, 330, 334; Shertok to Weizmann, 5 September 1936, CZA, S25/6327; same to Lourie, 20 September 1936, S25/5808; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs III*, 406, 408, 431, 449; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 298, 303, 305, 314; Document 20; Zuaytir, *op. cit.*, 158f., 163f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 198f., 211f.; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 25–7.; Kedourie, *op. cit.*, 104.
 81. For evidence of these, see: Zuaytir, *op. cit.*, 161; DPNM, 457f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs III*, 401, and *My Talks*, 105f.; LCW XVII, 336; J. Jankowski, "The Government of Egypt and the Palestine Question, 1936–1939", *Middle Eastern Studies XVII* (1981), 429–31; Porath, *op. cit.*, 199–201; Kedourie, *op. cit.*, 156f.
 82. N. Vilenski, Report of Talks with Aluba, Shahbandar et al, May–August (sic, for September), n.d. (perhaps July 1937), CZA, S25/9166; same to Shertok, 9 June 1936, *loc. cit.*; Shertok, Note of Phone Conversation with Ben-Gurion, 12 June 1936, S25/6326; same to Weizmann, 2 October 1936, S25/5808; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 93; Sela, "Talks", 421f.; Jankowski, *op. cit.*, 429; Haim, *op. cit.*, 57. Aluba was to be a prominent organiser of both the Bludan (September 1937) and Cairo (October 1938) Conferences on Palestine. See: below, pages 91f., 98f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 231f., 276f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 318.
 83. On Shahbandar, see: FD I, 20, 23, 32; Sharett, *Political Diary III*, 10; below, pages 77f.; P.S. Khoury, "Factionalism among Syrian Nationalists during the French Mandate", *Intl. Jnl. of Middle East Studies XIII* (1981), 445–7; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 154f. Later Zionists noted that Amin Sa'ïd came out vocally against Zionism. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 81.
 84. Vilenski Report, n.d. (n. 82); JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936, CZA; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs III*, 333; Sharett, *Political Diary I*, 231.
 85. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 333f., 336; Document 16; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 208f., 231; Haim, *op. cit.*, 57f. Ben-Gurion, it should be added, had his own hidden reservations about the

- Jews agreeing to 50:50 as a *final* arrangement.
86. Document 16; JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 231.
 87. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 215; cf. *ibid.*, 210f., 231; JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936.
 88. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 266, 310; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 362, 409; Shertok to Weizmann, 2 October 1936 (n. 82).
 89. Document 20. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 316; Haim, *op. cit.*, 58.
 90. Above, n. 82.
 91. E.g., Elath, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 283, 433.
 92. On the Bloc, see: P. Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (London/New York/Toronto 1965), 24; G. Haddad, *Fifty Years of Modern Syria and Lebanon* (Beirut 1950), 79f.
 93. Note of Meeting of Z.O. Political Advisory Committee (London), 8 June 1936, CZA, S25/6326. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 248f.; LCW XVII, 264n., 280n.; PCW II, 168f.; Elath, *op. cit.*, 288; Black, *op. cit.*, 213f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 59.
 94. Note of Meeting of Z.O. Political Advisory Committee (London), 25 June 1936, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 288, 358; LCW XVII, 283n.
 95. E.g., Shertok, JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936.
 96. Political Advisory Committee meetings, 8 and 25 June 1936 (nn. 93–4); Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 276.
 97. Black, *op. cit.*, 214f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 218f. and *My Talks*, 70.
 98. Nahmani to Ben-Zvi, 26 June 1936, CZA, S25/9783; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 213, 232; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 362; Elath, *op. cit.*, 281; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 46.
 99. Elath, *op. cit.*, 419–21. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 218f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 58f. On Barudi, see also Elath, *op. cit.*, 286f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 101.
 100. The points were: (a) Jewish immigration should be restricted only by the economic capacity, and its benefits to the Arabs should be stressed; (b) land acquisition would be undertaken in a way so as not to affect the minimum required by Arab farmers, and an inquiry could be set up to investigate any complaints; (c) all governmental arrangements to be based on the non-domination principle; (d) a positive attitude to Arab federation plans, on condition that Zionist interests would be respected in Palestine; (e) a positive attitude to Syrian independence, “provided that it does not infringe on the independence of Lebanon and does not oppress minorities”; and (f) all negotiations to be conducted in a spirit of loyalty to Great Britain and France. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 239. Cf. *ibid.*, 234f., 241f.; JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936.
 101. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 239. Cf. *ibid.*, 218; Porath, *op. cit.*, 199; Elath, *op. cit.*, 288, 418.
 102. Elath, *op. cit.*, 428–34. Cf. *ibid.*, 289f., and Illustration No. 11.
 103. Political Dept. Diary, 10–11 August 1936, CZA, S25/443; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 147. Cf. Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.*, 142. On Quwatli see: *ibid.*, 254; Khoury, *op. cit.*, 459f.
 104. Political Dept. Diary, 10–11 August 1936 (n. 103); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 316. There was no contact between Syrians and Zionists for the next four months, except for the Jewish Agency’s formal congratulations on the conclusion of the Franco-Syrian Treaty and Quwatli’s friendly acknowledgement. A visit by Agency representatives to Damascus following the election to office of the National Bloc in late December revealed a marked reluctance by Quwatli and several of his colleagues to commit themselves to any further talks. Only Jamil Mardam seemed friendly and encouraging. See: Shertok–Quwatli exchange (27 September and 26 October 1936), S25/5576; Elath, *op. cit.*, 290f., 435–7; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 44f., 47.
 105. Political Dept. Diary, 11 August 1936 (n. 103).
 106. Elath, *op. cit.*, 291. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 122. On Barudi’s energetic activities on behalf of the Palestine cause in 1937 and afterwards, see: Porath, *op. cit.*, 274.
 107. Elath, *op. cit.*, 292, 436f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 45, 254; below, pages 61, 63f., 88. By late 1946, Mardam, too, was listed as another of the Zionists’ former “friends” who had

- turned into an extreme opponent. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 383.
108. Elath, quoted in Sharett, *op. cit.*, 216; Shertok, JAE Meeting, 26 July 1936, CZA; Shertok to Weizmann, 2 October 1936 (n. 82); Caplan and Black, *op. cit.*, 49f.
 109. Political Advisory Ctee., 25 June 1936 (n. 94); Ormsby-Gore, Interview with Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, 30 June 1936 (n. 68).
 110. JAE Meeting, 20 May 1936, CZA; *Palestine Review*, 20 November 1936, 622; Weizmann, Summary note (3 February) of conversations with Léon Blum, 27 and 30 January 1937, WA.
 There were also grounds for very practical sorts of co-operation between Maronites and Zionists during 1936. Although Zionists were not quick to take up the suggestions, Maronites continued to offer to sell land for Jewish settlement, with the not-so-hidden motive of introducing additional non-Muslim populations into certain regions, and thereby weakening the Syrian claim to these areas. In Paris, visiting Maronite dignitaries benefited from friendly contacts with Zionist representatives, and anticipated a positive impact on their dealings with Léon Blum. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 64f., 216, 317; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 260; LCW XVII, 83, 113, 172, 265, 336f., 368; Hos to Shertok, 14 June 1936, S25/6326; Shertok to Weizmann, 2 October 1936 (n. 82); Wauchope, Note of Interview with Weizmann, 13–14 December 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/V; I. Kadmi-Cohen, Note of Interview with E. Eddé, 7 January 1937, CZA, Z4/17024/B; Sasson to Ben-Gurion, 16 April 1937, S25/5568.
 111. Epstein, Note of Talk with E. Eddé, 22 September 1936, S25/5581; Shertok to Lourie, 22 September 1936, S25/6327.
 112. Caplan and Black, *op. cit.*, 49, 54f. Kadmi-Cohen, it should be noted, did not enjoy the full confidence of Dr Weizmann, Shertok or Weizmann's Paris confidant, Marc Jarblum. Shertok to Weizmann, 2 October 1936 (n. 82); Joseph to Shertok, 11–12 January 1938, S25/5476; below, page 61.
 113. LCW XVII, 336, 363f., 367f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 216, 316f.; Weizmann–Blum Talks, 27–30 January 1937 (n. 110); Kadmi-Cohen Talks with Eddé, de Martel, December 1936–January 1937, CZA, Z4/17024/B.
 114. Interview with Kadmi-Cohen, 7 January 1937 (n. 110).

Intermediaries and Meddlers

115. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 184f.; Shertok to Z.E., London, 5 June 1936, S25/6326; Ben-Gurion to Shertok, 7 June 1936, S25/3434. Later that year, Rudolphe Said-Ruete (cf. FD 1, 103) again offered his services as intermediary. Dugdale Diary, 22 September 1936, WA.
116. A. Cust, "Cantonisation: A Plan for Palestine", Lecture to Royal Central Asian Society, 4 March 1936, published in *Jnl. of the Royal Central Asian Society* XXIII (April 1936), 194–211. Cf. LCW XVII, 262n.
117. Parkinson, Note (17 April) of talk with Cust, 16 April 1936, PRO, CO 733/302, file 75288; LCW XVII, 261f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 55.
118. Above, pages 25f. and 27f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 341, 344; Haim, *loc. cit.* Cust was well aware of this Zionist attitude.
119. Cust, Record (28 June) of Discussion with Dr Weizmann, 26 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/297, file 75156/III (also CZA, Z4/17141). Cf. LCW XVII, 261f., 282n.; PCW II, 244; Z.O. Political Advisory Ctee. Meeting, 1 July 1936, CZA, S25/6326; Ruppin, *Memoirs*, 277f.; N. Katzburg, *From Partition to White Paper* (Heb.) (Jerusalem 1974), 106, 108.
120. Lourie to Shertok, 26 June 1936, S25/6326.
121. Cust, Record (28 June) of Discussion with Jamal al-Husaini, Shibli Jamal, Izzat Tannous and Emile Ghori at Milestone, 26 June 1936, PRO, CO 733/302, file

75288. Even opposition (so-called “moderate”) figures, like Bulos Shihade, expressed themselves against cantonisation. The only really positive sign of Arab interest in Cust’s plan came from the Amir Abdallah, probably since (like Khalidi’s scheme of 1933–34 – above, page 26 and below, Document 7) it called for the re-amalgamation of Western Palestine’s Arab canton with Transjordan. See: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 241; Sa’igh, *Hashimites*, 133; Cust, *op. cit.*, 207f.
122. Williams, Note of Conversation between Maffey, Parkinson and Cust, 27 June 1936, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Parkinson Minutes, 29 June, *loc. cit.*; Ormsby-Gore Interview with Weizmann and Ben-Gurion, 30 June 1936 (n. 68); Parkinson to Wauchope, 3 July 1936, *loc. cit.*; Wauchope, Note of Interview with Shertok and Ben-Gurion, 9 July 1936, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 324; LCW XVII, 293–5; PCW II, 218f.; Arguments against Cantonisation Scheme, n.d., CZA, Z4/17141; Haim, *op. cit.*, 87.
 123. The British insisted that for the plan to have any chance at all the Zionists would have to really want, and to push for, the plan. After several months of study in Palestine, the HC reported that the considered opinion of his Executive Council was that cantonisation would not work. See: Maffey–Parkinson–Cust Conversation, 27 June 1936 (n. 122); Parkinson Minute, 29 June 1936 (n. 122); D.F. Harris, “Cantonisation in Palestine”, 4 October 1936, encl. Wauchope to Ormsby-Gore, 28 October 1936, PRO, *loc. cit.*
 124. Cust to Martin, 15 February 1937, CO 733/343, file 75550/9/A39. Cf. E. Main, *Palestine at the Crossroads* (London 1937), 65f.; Cust to E. Samuel, 3 January 1939, ISA 103/655/23. The cantonisation solution was to be revived after World War II in further unsuccessful schemes for “provincial autonomy” or “federalism” within Palestine (see Chapter Six).
 125. H.L. Nathan to Weizmann, 2 and 8 July 1936, CZA, Z4/17051/1; Williams, Note of Conversation with Ayles, 16 July 1936, PRO, CO 733/289, file 75054; LCW XVII, 298.
 126. Report “from Arab sources” on activities of D. Oliver, 20 July 1936, CZA, S25/3234; Shertok to Lourie, [22] July 1936, S25/6326; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 215, 217, 224. Cf. Williams, Note of Conversation with Ayles, 24 July 1936, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Nuri as-Sa’id, quoted in Document 19, below.
 127. Sharett, *loc. cit.* On Oliver, and the activities of the London-based Society of Friends, see: FD I, 93–6, 103f.; Society of Friends, *Proceedings: Yearly Meetings*, 1941 (London 1942), Meeting of 23 May; I. Cohen, Memorandum on Arab Mission to England, 5 June 1934, CZA, S25/3053; LCW XVII, 377f. In 1937 and in 1938, Oliver again tried his hand at bridging the gap between the Mufti and the Zionist leadership. See: Clark-Kerr to Bennett, 11 February 1937, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44; Oliver, “An Appeal to the Arabs”, 3 March 1937, CO 733/344, file 75550/9/A59; same to Ayles, 10 March 1937, *loc. cit.*; Williams note, 22 March 1937, *loc. cit.*; Sasson, *On the Road*, 67; below, n. 27 to Ch. 4.
 128. “A Plan for Lasting Peace”, (Jerusalem 1936), 16f. The six main headings of the plan were: (a) measures to put the Arabs on an equality with the Jews; (b) guarantees for the protection of Arab nationality, culture, and economy; (c) provisions for the protection of Arab and Jewish agriculture; (d) provisions concerning Jewish immigration into adjacent Arab areas; (e) provisions concerning the eventual termination of the Mandate; and (f) provision for the revision of the existing Mandate.
 129. Magnes to Barbour, 1 September 1936, MEC, Barbour Papers, II/3. Cf. LCW XVIII, 60.
 130. Jamal al-Husaini to Barbour, 7 September 1936, MEC, *loc. cit.*; Raghib an-Nashashibi to Barbour, 8 September 1936, *loc. cit.*

Samuel–Winterton Mediation

131. Samuel Proposals, 4 (or earlier) September 1936, ISA 100/18. Cf. Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 157–60.
132. Ormsby-Gore to Wauchope, 8 September 1936, PRO, CO 733/315, file 75528/58; Winterton to Samuel, 9 September 1936, ISA, *loc. cit.* For Weizmann's reactions, see LCW XVII, 328–30.
133. Ormsby-Gore to Wauchope, 8 September 1936 (n. 132); Samuel to Winterton, 11 September 1936, ISA, *loc. cit.*; Winterton to Samuel, 9 and 14 September 1936, *loc. cit.*; Ormsby-Gore to Samuel, 15 September 1936, *loc. cit.*; LCW XVII, 339f.
134. Shertok to Brodetsky, 25 September 1936, CZA, S25/5808. Cf. Ben-Gurion and Shertok to Weizmann, 14 September 1936, S25/6327; Dugdale Diary, 17 September 1936, WA; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 433.
135. Brodetsky, Note of Phone Conversation with Samuel, 21 September 1936, S25/6327; Namier to Ben-Gurion, 23 September 1936, *loc. cit.*; Maffey, Note of Ormsby-Gore Interview with Weizmann and Namier, 30 September 1936, PRO, CO 733/289, file 75054; M. Kahany, Report (29 October 1936) of Two Talks (23 September, 26 October) with Sabih Najib, Geneva, WA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 305; PCW II, 192; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 24.

CHAPTER 3

The Peel Commission

1. Terms of Reference (7 August 1936), quoted in Katzburg, *From Partition to White Paper*, 107.
2. LCW XVII, xxii–xxiv, 351f., 360f., 381; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* III, 442, 448, 458, 463–73; Sharett, *Political Diary* I, 254, 324f., 327f., 344–6, 360f.; Haim, *Abandonment of Illusions*, 74–6.
3. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 481–535 passim; Goren, *Dissenter*, 315f.; JAE Meeting, 29 October 1936, CZA. On Weizmann's coaching of H. Samuel, see Sharett, *ibid.* II, 40, 48.
4. Two exceptions were Rufaifan al-Majali and the Amir Abdallah. On Abdallah, see below. On Majali, see B. Joseph, Diary, 15 February, 4 and 15 April 1937, CZA, S25/50; Haim, *op. cit.*, 80. Cf. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 134.
5. Porath, *Palestinian Arab National Movement*, 222f.; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 38; Amin al-Husaini, Testimony before Peel Commission, reprinted in Main, *Palestine at the Crossroads*, 297–301; LCW XVIII, 151–4; above, page 3.
6. See above, pages 46f.
7. Main, *op. cit.*, 302. Cf. Zuaytir, DPNM, 466.
8. Draft Proposals, 16 and 22 October 1936, CZA, Z4/17136; M. Arram to Brodetsky, 19 October 1936, S25/10122; Parkinson to Maffey, 20 October 1936, PRO, CO 733/289, file 75054; Parkinson Minutes, 22 October 1936, *loc. cit.* On the 1930 proposals, see FD I, 101–3, 225–7; Rose, *Gentile Zionists*, 46–8.
9. Parkinson to Maffey, 20 October 1936 (n. 8); Parkinson Minutes, 22 October 1936 (n. 8); Parkinson, Note of Interview between Maffey, Weizmann and Rutenberg, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Maffey, Note of Interview with Rutenberg, 3 November 1936, *loc. cit.*; Wauchope to Parkinson, 7 November 1936, *loc. cit.* Rutenberg would return to the British with another scheme for a solution on the eve of the 1939 St James's Conferences. See below, page 104.

10. At a January 9th banquet in Amman Abdallah made the following points to Peel, Rumboldt and Coupland: (1) the Jews would be accepted in Eastern Jordan only by popular consensus and with British approval, but without any special political rights of privileges; (2) the Jews should never exceed 35% of the population of Palestine; (3) the present Mandate was unworkable and needed to be amended. Record of Conversation (Ac.), 9 January 1937, CZA, S25/9783. On the following day, the Amir submitted his written memorandum which – although considered “a very moderate statement” by one C.O. official – contained several unflattering racial slurs on the Jews and called for a halt to the Jewish national home. See: PRO, CO 733/344, file 75550/56; Faddah, *Middle East in Transition*, 10.
On Rutenberg’s activities and attitudes with regard to Abdallah, see: A.H. Cohen(?), Note on Abdallah’s Testimony, 18 March 1937, CZA, *loc. cit.*; Rutenberg to Samuel, 26 March 1937, Z4/17136; LCW XVIII, 72f.; Downie, Note of Parkinson Interview with Rutenberg, 13 May 1937, PRO, CO 831/41, file 77033; *Baffy*, 42; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 174, 201f. No “friendly” letters from Abdallah to Samuel or Chancellor were found by this researcher.
11. Letters of 2 and 11 November 1936, CAHJP, P3/2444.

The Regional Dimension

12. E.g., Kelley to Rendel, 28 October 1936, PRO, FO 371/20028, file E6782/94/31; Abdallah Memorandum, 10 January 1937 (n. 10); Saudi Memorandum, 6 February 1937, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44; Statement of Ibn Sa’ud’s Views on the Palestine Question: Y. Yasin to Bullard, 27 March 1937, *loc. cit.*; Bullard to F.O., 31 March and 3 April 1937, *loc. cit.*
13. Amery to Weizmann, 14 October 1936, WA; Clark-Kerr, Minute (27 October) of Interview with Nuri as-Sa’id, 26 October 1936, PRO, FO 371/20029, file E7217/94/31; Kahany, Report of Two Talks (23 September, 26 October) with Sabih Najib, 29 October 1936, WA; Y. Taggar, “The Iraqi Reaction to the Partition Plan for Palestine”, in *The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict*, ed. G. Ben-Dor (Ramat Gan/London/Montreal 1979), 210f.
14. F.O. despatches from Iraq (February 1937), forwarded by Baggalay to Under-Secretary, C.O., 5 March 1937, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44; Iraqi Government Memorandum, 15 April 1937, *loc. cit.* and DPNM, 467f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 226f.
15. In Camera testimony, 7 January 1937, CZA, S25/4642. Cf. Sasson, *On the Road*, 63; Sharett, *Political Diary* II, 21; Porath, *op. cit.*, 224f.
16. LCW XVIII, 35. Cf. PCW II, 250; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 113; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 124, 181; Haim, *op. cit.*, 76f., 79f.
17. Esp. stressing the economic aspect. See, e.g., Sasson to Shertok (2 notes in Ac.), 25 May 1937, S25/3139. For a later report of Arab reactions to these publications, see M.W. at-Tal to Kalvaryski, 22 September 1938, S25/3111; Haim, *op. cit.*, 108.
18. Kahany-Najib meetings, September–October 1936 (n. 13); Shertok to Nuri as-Sa’id, 9 November 1936, S25/5809; Goldmann Report, JAE Meeting, 19 April 1937, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 10, 20f., 224; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 55–71; Elath, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 321f.
19. Lampson to Eden, 21 January 1937, PRO, FO 371/20804, file E753/22/31. Cf. later Zionist attempts to maintain contacts with Egyptians: Joseph Diary, 7 March 1937, CZA, S25/50; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 321–3.
20. *Ibid.*, 44f., 55–7, 72–8, 82; Naiditch to Weizmann, 22 March 1937, WA; Shertok Report, Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942, CZA, S25/8987.
21. PCW II, 226, 232, 250f.; Ben-Gurion, In Camera testimony, 7 January 1937 (n. 15); Elath, *op. cit.*, 435–9; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 43–8; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 19f., 59f. Later in 1937, the J.A. contributed funds for the relief of Syrian flood victims. Shertok Diary, 13 November 1937, A245/4; material in CZA file S25/5576; LCW XVIII, 259.

22. Joseph, Note of Interview with E. Eddé, 6 August 1937, S25/5581, and Report to Mapai Centre, 18 September 1937, S25/10475. Cf. Joseph Diary, 19 February 1937, S25/50; Sasson to Ben-Gurion, 16 April 1937, S25/5568; *l'Orient*, 18 April, and *Palestine Post*, 26 April 1937 (clippings in PRO, CO 733/344, file 75550/64); Note of Interview with D. Hos, 6 May 1937, *loc. cit.*; Shertok to Epstein, 25 May 1937, CZA, S25/5810; Elath, *op. cit.*, 294–301, 309–12, and *Zionism at the U.N.*, 239–41; PCW II, 226, 251; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 74, 82, 141f., 174f.; PCW II, 226, 251; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, Ch. 6.
23. E.g., Sharett, *op. cit.*, 21, 192; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 106f.; Joseph Diary, 5 and 8 March 1937, S25/50; Epstein, Note of Meetings with M. Nabil and Z. Zaki, 7 and 8 May 1937, S25/5576; Black, *op. cit.*, Ch.7.
24. Melchett, Note to Royal Commission, 20 January 1937, Z4/17121; Dugdale Diary, 3 February 1937, WA; Joseph Diary, 14 February 1937, S25/50; Epstein to Shertok, 28 May 1937, S25/3163; LCW XVIII, 342; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 60, 79, 131f., 163, 167, 175. On contacts with Fuad Hamza, see below.
25. Saudi Memorandum, 6 February 1937 and other sources cited in n. 12; “Between the Political Dept. and the Amir’s Palace”, 14 April 1937, S25/10122; Kedourie, “Great Britain and Palestine”, 121; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 106f., 109, and *My Talks*, 127f. For earlier Saudi involvement, see Porath, *op. cit.*, 201f., 204; Kedourie, *op. cit.*, 96–102.
26. Quotations taken from Ben-Gurion’s account in *My Talks*, 123–7. Cf. *ibid.*, 121–3, 135; Elath, *op. cit.*, 322–4; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 113, 122, 166; JAE Meeting, 19 April 1937, CZA.
27. Rendel, Note of Interview with Yasin, 31 May 1937, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44. Cf. Elath, *op. cit.*, 324f.; Epstein, Note of Visit to Saudi Mission (London), 11 May 1937, CZA, S25/3144. On the continuing Zionist interest in Ibn Sa’ud during 1937 and 1938, see: LCW XVIII, 83, 266, 295, 338, 392–4; PCW II, 299; Weizmann, Note of Interview with Ormsby-Gore, 25 February 1938, S25/7563; Weizmann, Note of Conversation with M. MacDonald, 22 June 1938, *loc. cit.*

Partition Rumoured

28. PCW II, 250–64. Cf. *Baffy*, 37–41; LCW XVIII, 135; Haim, *op. cit.*, 87.
29. E.g. Shertok, Note on Cantonization Proposals, 7 January 1937, S25/2; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 58, 91.
30. Shertok to Weizmann, 22 April 1937, Z4/17032; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 128–30; Haim, *loc. cit.*; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 35–8.
31. Melchett to Weizmann, 5 March 1937, Z4/17121; Rutenberg to Samuel, 26 March 1937 (n. 10); *Baffy*, 42; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 113; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 69.
32. Shertok to Weizmann, 22 April 1937 (n. 30); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 194; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 224; Elath, *op. cit.*, 440; Sasson to Ben-Gurion, 16 April 1937 (n. 22).
33. LCW XVIII, 78; *Baffy*, 41; Shertok, *op. cit.*, 73, 75.
34. Letter to Weizmann, 22 April 1937 (n. 30).
35. Document 21; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 324. Cf. Shertok Report, Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942 (n. 20); Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* (Heb.) vol. I (Tel Aviv 1957), 212; Haim, *op. cit.*, 78f.; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 268f.
36. Elath, *op. cit.*, 292; Shertok to Weizmann, 22 April 1937 (n. 30). Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 112f., 118, 139; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 172; *Baffy*, 41.
37. Elath, *op. cit.*, 438f. (where date is erroneously given as February).
38. Elath, *op. cit.*, 292, 440f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 224; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 189.
39. E.g., Oliver to Ayles, 10 March 1937, PRO, CO 733/344, file 75550/9/A59; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks* 127f. On the deterioration of public security in Palestine during

and after March 1937, see: Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 86–92, 98f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 62; LCW XVIII, 60f.

London Coronation Interlude

40. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 133; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 212, and *Memoirs* V, 125.
41. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 165, 172, 187, 208.
42. Shertok to Weizmann, 22 April 1937 (n. 30); Note of Interview with Hos, 6 May 1937 (n. 22); Rutenberg to Maffey, 5 June 1937, PRO, CO 733/348, file 75550/69; Elath, *op. cit.*, 294–9 and *Zionism at the U.N.*, 137; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 118, 149, 221; LCW XVIII, 130; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 172, 185, 188, 190f., 196, 206f.; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 118, 132; Caplan and Black, “Israel and Lebanon”, 50.
43. Epstein’s London meetings, May 1937, with M. Nabil, Z. Zaki, A. Zarah, R. Chadirji, S. al-Islam in CZA, files S25/5576, S25/3144; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 116.
44. Epstein, Note of Talk with S. al-Islam, 23 May 1937, S25/3144. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 192; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 148. On Arab apprehensions of this Zionist lobbying, see: Rendel, Note of Meeting with Hafiz Wahba, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44; Rendel, Note of Interview with Yasin, 31 May 1937 (n. 27).
45. The “vicious circle” had been defined by Arlosoroff, 5 years earlier, as follows: “If you spoke to the High Commissioner [...], he referred you to London. If you spoke to the Colonial Office, they referred you to the British Resident at Amman. If you spoke to the British Resident at Amman, he referred you to the Emir Abdallah. If you spoke to the Emir, he referred you to the leaders of public opinion in the country, the influential sheikhs and pashas. If you spoke to them, they referred you back to the British.” Letter to Brandeis, 8 May 1932, S25/3489. Cf. Arlosoroff, *Jerusalem Diary*, 218, 266; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* I, 521; Shapira, “The Option”, 251–9, 262f., 270f.
46. Parkinson–Rutenberg Interview, 13 May 1937 (n. 10); Parkinson note, 14 May 1937, PRO, CO 831/41, file 77033; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 202.
47. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 176f., 192, 195, 202.
48. Sources in n. 46.
49. Parkinson note (17 May) of Talk with Abdallah, 15 May 1937, PRO, *loc. cit.* Cf. same to Wauchope, 18 May 1937, *loc. cit.*; Wauchope to Parkinson, 28 May 1937, *loc. cit.*
50. *Memoirs* IV, 175, 177f., 195, 202, 206f.
51. Hos, Note of Talk between D. Hacothen, Samir ar-Rifai and Dr Jamil Fa’iq Mutunj, [14 May] 1937, CZA, S25/3485. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 175, 177.
52. Hos, Note of Talk between Hacothen, Abdallah and Rifai, 15 May 1937, CZA, *loc. cit.* Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 177f.; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 141f.
53. For Shertok’s incredulous and worried reactions to these approaches to Abdallah, see: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 150f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 195; Black, *op. cit.*, 142–4.
54. Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 73–9. Cf. Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 82f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 200, 202 and *ibid.* V, 381. In 1939, Abdallah would be claiming to Rutenberg that it was the destruction of the ex-Mufti which stood in the way of implementing their 1936 tentative agreement. MacMichael, Note of Interview with Rutenberg, 4 January 1939, PRO, CO 733/409, file 75872/51.
55. *My Talks*, 134.
56. *Ibid.*, 135, 140f.; *Letters to Paula*, 116f.; Epstein, Note of Visit to Saudi Mission, London, 11 May 1937, CZA, S25/3144; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 79.
57. *My Talks*, 130f.
58. *Ibid.*, 136f. Cf. S. Hattis-Rolef, “The Zionists and St. John Philby”, *Jewish Social Studies* XXXIV (1972), 112f., 120f.
59. In his autobiographical *Arabian Jubilee* (London 1952), Philby claimed: “I have always held and still hold that the Jews have not got a shadow of legal or historical

right to go to Palestine..." (p.219).

60. *My Talks*, 137–40. Adding further confusion, Philby appears to have transmitted his scheme to Y. Yasin as though it was Ben-Gurion's proposal. Rendel, Interview with Yasin, 31 May 1937 (n.27).

Partition Recommended

61. *Palestine Royal Commission Report*, Cmd. 5479 (London 1937).
 62. E. Sha'altiel, "David Ben-Gurion on Partition", JQ no. 10 (Winter 1979), 39. Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 88–95; E. Samuel to H. Samuel, 12 July 1937, ISA 100/94.
 63. Resolution quoted in Esco, *Palestine II*, 854f. and LCW XVIII, 375f. Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 93.

While this was taken to mean conditional acceptance of the principle of partition, the seven additional clauses of the Congress' final resolution added to the ambiguity of the Zionist stance by protesting and condemning certain proposals, and by insisting that, in the meantime, the Mandate had to be fulfilled and not declared "unworkable". Cf. M. Cohen's critique of this "equivocation" on the part of the Zionists. *Retreat*, 35–38.

64. Translation as given in G.F. Graham-Brown, Report on Negotiations [10 February, or earlier] 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458 (pp.1–9) and MEC, JEM LXV/2 (pp.10–14). Cf. DPNM, 470; A.W. Kayyali, *Documents of the Palestinian Resistance ...* (Ac.) (Beirut 1968), 600; Porath, *op. cit.*, 228.
 65. For would-be pro-partition Palestinian Arabs, see: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 188; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 172; Joseph Diary, 7 March 1937 (conversation with H.F. al-Khalidi), CZA, S25/50; Shertok to Weizmann, 22 April 1937 (n. 30); E. Samuel to H. Samuel, 12 July 1937 (n. 62); A.H. Cohen, Note on Raghīb's Reaction to Partition, 18 July 1937, S25/5171; Joseph, Note of Meeting with M.I. Moghannam, 25 July 1937, S25/3052; L. Kohn to Weizmann, 18 August 1937, S25/1716; D. Hacohen(?), letter from Haifa, 16 September 1937, extract in S25/1513; Sela, "Talks" pt. II, 2, 7; Porath, *op. cit.*, 229.

For Ben-Gurion's analysis of the "lesser evil" logic, see his *Memoirs* IV, 240f.; G.Cohen, "Harold MacMichael and Palestine's Future", (*Studies in*) *Zionism* no. 3 (Spring 1981), 149.

66. Sasson, *On the Road*, 72–103 passim; LCW, XVIII, 138, 157, 210f., 216; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 434, and *Letters to Paula*, 149; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 320; N. Vilenski to Weizmann, 10 May 1937, S25/3135; Joseph Diary, 22 August 1937, S25/1511; Porath, *op. cit.*, 230–2; Kedourie, "Ibn Sa'ud on the Jews", in *Islam in the Modern World*, 68–74; Kedourie, "Great Britain", 149; Katzburg, *op. cit.*, 117; J. Jankowski, "Egyptian Responses to the Palestine Problem", *Intl. Jnl. of Middle East Studies* XII (1980), 17f.
 67. Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 147–9; Porath, *op. cit.*, 231f.; Kohn to Weizmann, 18 August 1937 (n. 65); Letter from Haifa, 16 September 1937 (n. 65); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 342f., 392.

Arab Negotiating Manoeuvres: Jerusalem

68. Several Jewish Agency leaders were indeed predicting that such overtures would materialise, some (of the "lesser evil" school of thought) even feeling that the Peel Report might cause Arab leaders to "come to terms with the Jews rather than face partition" of the country by offering "a genuine invitation for negotiations" to "the official Jewish bodies". Kohn to Weizmann, 18 August 1937 (n. 65). Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 265; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 307.
 69. *Ibid.*, 295f. Cf. *In Struggle* I, 206, 212.
 70. Yet, even as he outlined these conditions, Ben-Gurion admitted that there was "no

real possibility that the spokesmen of the Arabs would agree to this” and abandon their insistence on forming a “national government” under which the Jews would be considered no more than “guests” in Palestine. *Memoirs* IV, 307.

71. Zionist sources used for this episode all presume some degree of coordination between Palestinians in Jerusalem and abroad. In the absence of authoritative Palestinian material, it is impossible to confirm the extent of coordination. See: Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 302; *In Struggle* I, 212; “Notes from Damascus”, 3 October 1938 (re Meeting of 30 September), CZA, Z4/17024/B; Ben-Gurion remarks, JAE Meeting (Paris), 19 August 1946, CZA.
 72. Arabs had in mind to invite anti-partition Jews like H. Samuel, Magnes, or Kalvaryski. Cf. *Baffy*, 54f.
 73. This episode is reconstructed from: Kalvaryski Diary, 23 July (et seq.) 1937, CZA, A113/14; Shertok to Ben-Gurion, 24 July 1937, S25/2960/A; Shertok, Conditions for J.A. Negotiations with Arabs, 26 July 1937, A113/23/2; same to Kalvaryski, 29 July 1937, S25/2960/A; Joseph, Note of Talk with Kalvaryski, 3 August 1937, S25/50. Cf. Joseph Diary, 2 August (S25/50) and 17 August (S25/1511) 1937; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 141f.; Sasson to Shertok, 21 April 1938, S25/3246; M. Cohen, “Secret Diplomacy”, 391; Haim, *op. cit.*, 106f.
- Kalvaryski elsewhere reported that, prior to this overture from Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, he had had an encouraging meeting with Shakib (sic. for Adil?) Arslan in Lebanon. Report on Activities of Kedma Mizraha, 6 February 1938, A113/14. At the same time, a report reached Kalvaryski that Jamal al-Husaini was also proposing a round-table meeting. The report, which came from a dubious Jewish informant, does not seem to have been followed up by the Agency’s Political Department. Sokolovitch to Kalvaryski, 21 August 1937, A113/25/3.
74. Above, pages 35f. Kalvaryski’s account of his talk with Joseph on August 3rd quotes the latter as saying: “In this house (the J.A.) we are used to appraising each of the people who comes to us with proposals from one Arab or another.... I believe that all of them (*the Arabs*) are tricksters and liars. They just want to gain time.” A113/14.
 75. Joseph, Note of Talk with Moghannam I. Moghannam, 25 July 1937 (n. 65). Cf. Document 20; Joseph Report to Mapai Centre, 18 September 1937, S25/10475; M. Cohen, *loc. cit.*
 76. FD I, Document 36.
 77. Joseph, Note of Interview with HC, 3 August 1937, S25/50; same, Interview with Kalvaryski, 3 August 1937 (n. 73); same, Diary 4 August (S25/50) and 11 August (S25/1511).
 78. Joseph Diary, 22 August 1937, S25/1511. Cf. Joseph to Shertok, 22 August 1937, S25/2960/A; Report to Mapai Centre, 18 September 1937 (n. 75); Diary, 24 September 1937, S25/1511.
 79. Joseph–Kalvaryski Interview, 3 August 1937 (n. 73). Cf. Kayyali, *Documents*, 603; Joseph Diary, 24 September 1937 (n. 78); LCW XVIII, 200, 210.
 80. G. Agronsky, Note (27 August) of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 26 August 1937, S25/3051. Cf. Joseph Diary, 8 and 16 August 1937, S25/1511; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 324f. Y. Thon received the impression from Awni that the Arabs might be prepared to accept a partition plan which left the Jews a small area around Tel Aviv. See Thon to Shertok, 30 August 1937, S25/3051.

Anti-Partition Common Front

81. E.g., Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 10 October 1937, CZA; Ben-Gurion speech, JAE Meeting, 25 October 1937; LCW XVIII, 210.
82. Joseph Diary, 5 April 1937, S25/50; Shertok Diary, 16–27 October and 4

- November 1937, A245/4; Shertok to Weizmann, 19 October 1937, S25/1716; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 138, 373, 386, 396, 428; Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 64, 67, 70. Raghīb an-Nashashibi, who had been expected to support partition, did an about-face. See Porath, *op. cit.*, 229.
83. *Ibid.*, 232–43; Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 146f.; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 50–4; Joseph Diary, August–October 1937 (passim), S25/1511; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 176, 183, 320f., 392; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 434 and *Letters to Paula*, 147f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 80–4; LCW XVIII, 210–22, 230; Shertok to Joseph, 22 September 1937, Z4/17032.
 84. Reflecting his frustration at this turn of events, Dr Weizmann wrote intemperately of the non-Palestinian leadership: “all their adventurer-leaders and gangster-politicians are doing their best to create a diversion by rounding on Palestine, hoping thereby to give evidence of super-patriotism.” LCW XVIII, 211. Cf. *ibid.*, 293, 370; L.J. Stein, “Arab Reactions to Government Policy in Palestine”, March 1938, A185/11; Haim, *op. cit.*, 109f.
 85. Diary, 6 August 1937, S25/50; Note of Interview, 6 August 1937, S25/5581; Report to Mapai Centre, 18 September 1937 (n. 75).
 86. A.H. Cohen, Note on Raghīb, 18 July 1937 (n. 65); Joseph–Moghannam Talk, 25 July 1937 (n. 65); Joseph Diary, 18 August 1937, S25/1511; A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 9 January 1938, S25/5171; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 474; *ibid.* V, 320; Porath, *op. cit.*, 230.
 87. A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 1 November 1937, S25/3486; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 473; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 370, 373, 377, 386–8; Haim, *op. cit.*, 79f., 108f.
 88. LCW XVIII, 33f., 109f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 81, 93f.; J. Simon, *Certain Days* (Jerusalem 1971), 309f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs III*, 337–9; Goren, *Dissenter*, 329–34. The split may even be considered to date back to the controversy over Magnes’s 1929 negotiation activities. Cf. FD I, 90–93.
 89. Warburg to Weizmann, 24 May 1937, Z4/17026/B.
 90. Warburg to Magnes, 30 June 1937, CAHJP, P3/2461. The Jews involved were: Karpf, Backer, Waldman and Strook. The Arabs involved were: Amateau, Tannous, Shatara and Rihani. The quotation is from Karpf’s summary of a letter he received from Dr Amateau.
 91. See, e.g., Goren, *op. cit.*, 325, 327; A.M. Hyamson to S.F. Newcombe, 2 February 1938, P3/2458.
 92. LCW XVIII, 163.
 93. Warburg et al. to Weizmann (2 cables), 17 July 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A.
 94. LCW XVIII, 163f., 181. Cf. Weizmann to Shertok, 18 and 19 July 1937, CZA, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 302, 316, and *My Talks*, 141.
 95. Wise to Z.E. (London), 19 July 1937, WA; Warburg to Weizmann, 22 July 1937, CZA, Z4/17021; LCW XVIII, 183; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 308f.; *Baffy*, 57.
 96. See PRO, CO 733/351, file 75718/3; LCW XVIII, 144f.
 97. T. Hodgkin to Bentwich, 18 July 1937, CZA, A255/594; Bentwich to Lourie, 22 July 1937, S25/2960/A; Bentwich to Magnes, 23 July 1937, CAHJP, P3/2459. Cf. Sela, “Talks” pt. II, 6; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 196f.; M. Cohen, “Secret Diplomacy”, 390.
 98. See, e.g., passing references in: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 364; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 195; Hyamson to Parkinson, 21 November 1937, PRO, CO 733/333, file 75156/33; JAE Meeting, 24 April 1938, CZA.
 99. E.g., Sharett, *op. cit.*, 325.
 100. *Ibid.*, 396. Cf. *ibid.*, 74; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle I*, 207, 209, and his conditions outlined above, page 71.
 101. Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 145, 152; *Baffy*, 61, 64, 70f.; LCW XVIII, 221, 224, 235, 250, 265f.; PCW II, 303, 316; Kohn to Weizmann, 18 August 1937 (n. 65); Joseph to Weizmann, 22 September 1937, CZA, S25/1716; JAE Meeting, 25

October 1937, CZA; Haim, *op. cit.*, 92, 97f.

Pan-Arab Solutions: Nuri and Shahbandar

102. For details, see: Shertok Diary, 19 October and 12 November 1937, A245/4; *Sami Ash-Shab*, transl. extract in ISA 100/94; G.F. Graham-Brown to Magnes, 3 and 14 November 1937, CAHJP, P3/2459; Hyamson to Lourie, 7 November 1937, quoted in same to Parkinson, 21 November 1937 (n. 98); Brodetsky, Note of Talk with Carmi, 9 November 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; Epstein and Sasson, Note of Meetings with Shukri Quwatli, Fakhri al-Barudi and Fu'az Shaalan, 10–17 December 1937, S25/5570; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 476f., and *My Talks*, 151; LCW XVIII, 265; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 386, 401f., 413f., 446; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 90–3, 98, 99, 101f.

The Barghuthi-Khairi proposals may be noted here, not because they were any more attractive to the Zionists than the others, but because they were to figure in Kalvaryski's submission of an alternative plan to the Jewish Delegation during the St James's Conference (below, pages 108f.) and because Barghuthi was to resurrect the parity-confederation proposals during the 1940s (below, pages 126f.). They were: (1) Palestine as an integral part of an Arab confederation; (2) political parity for Jews and Arabs within the Palestine state for an agreed period, during which Jews and Arabs agree on regulations for immigration and land-sales; (3) Jewish immigration quotas to be set at between 30,000 and 40,000 per annum. See: Unidentified 5-point plan transmitted by Magnes to JAE, [19] November 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; Kalvaryski to Shertok, 3 December 1937, *loc. cit.*; Shertok to Kalvaryski, 14 December 1937, *loc. cit.*; Joseph, Note of Talk with Kalvaryski, Barghuthi, al-Khairi and Dr Bishara(?), 22 December [1937], S25/3052; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 152; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 432f., 434, 444, 446; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 476f. and *My Talks*, 146, 151; Haim, *op. cit.*, 107.
103. Nuri as-Sa'id, Proposal for Solution of the Palestine Problem, 6 September 1937, PRO, CO 733/353, file 75718/36; Document 19(b,c); Sattel to Agronsky, 15 December 1937 (talk with Shahbandar), CZA, S25/2965; Sasson to Shertok, 19 December 1937, S25/2966; Amery to Weizmann, 27 January 1938, WA; Sasson, *On the Road*, 103f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 426, 446f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs IV*, 461f.; FRUS 1938 II, 904–9; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 156; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 45, 201; M. Cohen, "Secret Diplomacy", 397–9; Haim, *op. cit.*, 110f. On Shahbandar's mediation offers of 1936, based on 50%, see above, pages 46f., and Document 16.
104. LCW XVIII, 261f., 422; Vilenski report (n.d.), S25/9166; Sharett, *Political Diary II*, 447; *ibid.* III, 10f., 36f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 106–8, 110–2; I. Kadmi-Cohen to Shertok(?), 30 November 1937, S25/2960/A; Sattel to Agronsky, 15 December 1937 (n. 103); Vilenski to Shertok, 17 December 1937, S25/10095; Kadmi-Cohen to Shertok, 29 December 1937, S25/2966; same to same, 11 January 1938, *loc. cit.*; Joseph to Shertok, 11–12 January 1938, S25/5476; Vilenski to Shertok, 16 January 1938, S25/2960/B; Note of Weizmann meeting with Shahbandar, Qatawi and Mosseri, 6 February 1938, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 164. On Ben-Gurion's press conference, see below, pages 81f.
105. Zuaytir, *Diaries*, 342f.; DPNM, 471. Cf. Sharett, *Political Diary III*, 10; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 104, 106–8, 111 (incl. Syrian criticism); Epstein, Letter from Beirut, 8 January 1938, S25/3156; Porath, *op. cit.*, 242; Haim, *op. cit.*, 111.
106. Sasson to Shertok, 19 December 1937 (n. 103); *an-Nahda*, 22 January 1938, Heb. summary in S25/2960/B; Shertok to Lourie, 23 January 1938, S25/3156; Report of New Diplomatic Efforts of the Mufti, 23 January 1938, S25/5476; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 104, 108f.; *Baffy*, 80.
107. FRUS 1938 II, 894f.; "Nuri Pasha's Activities", (*Palestine Post?*), 29 January 1938,

clipping in CAHJP, P3/318.

108. LCW XVIII, 299. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 208; Shertok to Lourie, 23 January 1938 (n. 106); Lampson to F.O., 11 January 1938, PRO, FO 371/21872, file E257/10/31; Cranborne Minute, 17 January 1938, *loc. cit.*; Brodetsky, Summary Report on Recent Political Developments, 2 March 1938, CZA, A209/158/1. For Abdallah's critical reactions to Nuri's proposals, see: A.H. Cohen(?), Note of Talk with al-Unsi, 16 March 1938, WA; *ha-Aretz*, 28 March 1938, clipping in CAHJP, P3/2458.

Hyamson–Newcombe Proposals (I)

109. Agronsky, Note of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 26 August 1937 (n. 80); *Sawt Ash-Shab*, 3 November 1937 (n. 102); E. Samuel to H. Samuel, 9 November 1938, ISA 100/94; Hyamson to Parkinson, 21 November 1937 (n. 98); Awni Abd al-Hadi, Interview in *Egyptian Gazette*, 22 November 1937, clipping in CZA, S25/3156; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 37; *Falastin* Editorial, 11 December 1937, transl. summary in CAHJP, P3/2458; Magnes Diary, 11–12 January 1938, P3/317. Cf. below, pages 89f.
110. Husaini maintained contact with Col. Newcombe and also had several talks with Ben-Gurion. See: Hyamson to Magnes, 25 November 1937, P3/2458; Magnes to Hyamson, 6 December 1937, *loc. cit.*; Lourie to Shertok, 13 December 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; L. Bakstansky, Memo (15 December) of Talk with Musa Husaini, 14 December 1937, *loc. cit.*; Magnes, Note of Meeting with Musa al-Alami, 6 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/318; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 182–5, and *Memoirs* V, 116–8, 125f.; Goren, *op. cit.*, 353, 532.
111. Weizmann to Wise and Lipsky, 21 December 1937, CZA, S25/1649. Cf. LCW XVIII, 268f.; Sharett, *Political Diary* II, 451; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* IV, 467; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 93f.
112. Weizmann to Wise and Lipsky, 21 December 1937 (n. 111). Cf. LCW XVIII, 265, 269f., 278, 280, 370; *Baffy*, 73; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 206, 208, 210.
113. Above, pages 74f. On Hyamson's and Newcombe's ideas, and their early contacts with each other and with Arabs and Jews during 1937, see: Newcombe, Evidence for the Royal Commission, 22 February 1937, and other correspondence (April–June 1937) in PRO, CO 733/342, file 75550/9/A9; Hyamson to H. Samuel, 22 July 1937, ISA 100/19; Hyamson to Magnes, 14 September, 6 October and 1 November 1937, CAHJP, P3/2458; Magnes to Hyamson, 20 and 25 October 1937, *loc. cit.*; Hyamson to Parkinson, 21 November 1937 (n. 98).
114. Newcombe to Hyamson, 7 October 1937, in Hyamson, Confidential Memorandum: The Palestine Problem, 11 October 1937, PRO, CO 733/333, file 75156/33; Hyamson to Parkinson, 21 November 1937 (n. 98). Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 142f.; Y. Nimrod, "The Husaini Party and the Non-Zionists" (Heb.), *ha-Tziyyonut* VI (1981), 234–9.
115. Also like the affair of "the Five", those who were involved in it have left behind an extensive documentary record. Their respective accounts of events and people's motives are often conflicting. The principal published versions are to be found in: Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 142–62, 164–7, 186–95 (Ben-Gurion's version) and *ibid.* 167–82 (Magnes' version); Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 29–88; Goren, *Dissenter*, 344–52.

In addition to the voluminous day-to-day correspondence surrounding the affair in the files of various archives, there are also a number of unpublished memoranda and reports, including: Hyamson to Parkinson, 21 November 1937 (n. 98); same to same, 8 August 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Shertok to Brodetsky, 28 January 1938, CZA, S25/10095; Ben-Gurion, Secret and Private Internal

Memorandum for Z.O. Central Office, 3 February 1938, S25/10094; Graham-Brown Report, [10] February 1938 (n. 64); Magnes Testimony, Ctee. on Arab-Jewish Relations, 10 April 1940, CZA, S25/2993 (pp.39–51).

There are also many researchers who have given accounts of this negotiating episode: Esco, *Palestine*, 881–6; H. Parzen, “A Chapter in Arab–Jewish Relations During the Mandate Era”, *Jewish Social Studies* XXIX (1967), 203–33; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 176–93; Sela, “Talks” (pt. II), 11–19; M. Cohen, “Secret Diplomacy”, 392–7, 400–3; Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 87–93; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 269–72; Dothan, “Attempts”, 230–6; Nimrod, “Husaini Party”, 161–240; Haim, *op. cit.*, 101–6.

116. Some Jewish leaders had, in fact, suspected this from the start. Shertok to Brodetsky, 25 November 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 206f. In particular, it was a private talk with Musa al-Husaini in London in mid-December 1937 which exposed serious discrepancies between what Hyamson had claimed had the support of leading Arab figures, on the one hand, and what Husaini himself, other Arabs and even Col. Newcombe regarded as acceptable terms, on the other. Even Dr Magnes seems to have been misled by Hyamson into thinking that the October proposals already had the blessing of leading members of the A.H.C. See, e.g.: Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 156–60, 161, 170, 183, 195; Shertok to Magnes, 13 January 1938, S25/2960/B; Hyamson–Magnes correspondence, November–December 1937, CAHJP, P3/2458; Magnes Diary, 13 and 20 January 1938, P3/317.
117. “The whole affair”, wrote Shertok to his London colleagues, “may be nothing but a pitfall – a manoeuvre to defeat the scheme of partition and Jewish State, to which certain Jews, Englishmen and Arabs, or only the former two, are parties.” Letter to Brodetsky, 25 November 1937 (n. 116). Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 144f., 147f.; Kohn to Lourie, 26 November 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; LCW XVIII, 247, 249–51, 274f.; Black, *op. cit.*, 90, 248.
118. *Loc. cit.* (n. 117). Cf. Sharett, *Political Diary* II, 413f.
119. E.g., Sharett, *op. cit.*, 451; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 125f. Newcombe himself had been variously citing figures of “up to 30%” or 35% as the maximum percentage of Jews the Arabs would allow. See: Epstein, Note of Talk with Newcombe, 20 May 1937, S25/3144; Newcombe, Note for P.M., 5 May 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Newcombe, Memo to Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, 23 January 1946, MEC, Spears Papers V/3.
120. See, e.g., sources in note 2 to Chapter 2; Joseph, in Document 20; Haim, *op. cit.*, 45, 52f.
121. Newcombe to Epstein, 17 September 1937, CZA, Z4/17423; Newcombe, Outline left at C.O., 11 November 1937, PRO, CO 733/333, file 75156/33; Hyamson to Newcombe, 2 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458; same to Magnes, 3 March 1938, *loc. cit.* Cf. A.S. al-Khalidi, Document 7; D. Auster, Note of Talks with Dr H.F. al-Khalidi, June 1935, CZA, S25/3051; Rendel, Note (19 February) of talk with Dr N. al-Asil, 18 February 1937, PRO, CO 733/341, file 75528/44; sources cited in n. 83 to Chapter 5 and n. 44 to Chapter 6.
122. Text of Press Conference, 21 December 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A (subsequently distributed as an Arabic pamphlet). Cf. *Palestine Post*, 22 December 1937; *Zionist Review*, December 1937, 173; LCW XVIII, 304f., 370; Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 11; Sasson, *On the Road*, 99.
123. Such, at least, was what Nuri as-Sa’id reported to British officials in Cairo, while en route to London. Lampson to F.O., 11 January 1938 (n. 108); FRUS 1938 II, 922. Cf. Magnes Notes, 4 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/318; Graham-Brown Report, February 1938 (n. 64); Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 174, 195f., and *Memoirs* V, 130. Likewise, Dr Shahbandar in Cairo expressed his regret that “extremists” seemed to

- have taken over the JAE. Vilenski to Shertok, 16 January 1938 (n. 104); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 25; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 106f.
124. A.H.C., Proclamation to the Noble Arab Nation in Palestine, 29 December 1937, Heb. transl. in CAHJP, P3/2461. Cf. Kayyali, *Documents*, 600, 603; DPNM, 470; *an-Nahda*, 22 January 1938 (n. 106); above, page 69.
 125. Partly because of the declared British commitment to prepare for an eventual partition of Palestine, Hyamson and Newcombe received no official encouragement from the C.O. or the F.O. See: Hyamson to Magnes, 1 and 25 November 1937, CAHJP, P3/2458; Parkinson note, 12 November 1937, PRO, CO 733/333, file 75156/33; same to Wauchope, 24 December 1937, *loc. cit.*; Rendel, "Col. Newcombe and Palestine", 31 December 1937, FO 371/21885, file E38/38/31; C.O. officials' minutes, 4 March – 6 May 1938, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Baikie to Creasey, 8 March 1938, *loc. cit.*
 126. For their part, Hyamson, Newcombe and Magnes each did their best to gloss over the unhelpful public reactions of the Zionist and Palestinian-Arab leadership, and proceeded to involve Dr Izzat Tannous and the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem in further "clarifications" of the original draft basis for discussion. On his side, Nuri as-Sa'id also resumed his efforts at persuading al-Hajj Amin al-Husaini to consider resolving the Palestine impasse along the lines of his own confederation plan. According to one Beirut journalist, the Mufti and Nuri came to agree that negotiations towards an Arab-Zionist accord might be attempted, first by informal talks involving non-Palestinian intermediaries, and later (if a tentative basis for agreement were reached in this way) the Palestinian leadership would "come out into the open and give their final decision". See: Lourie to Hyamson, 21 December 1937, CZA, S25/2960/A; Graham-Brown to Magnes, 21 December 1937, CAHJP, P3/2458; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 150f., 159f., 170; Graham-Brown to ?, 28 December 1937, MEC, JEM LXV/2; Rendel note, 31 December 1937 (n. 125); Magnes Diary (CAHJP, P3/317) and letter to Graham Brown (MEC, *loc. cit.*), 6 January 1938; Magnes Diary, 11–13 January 1938, P3/317; Lampson to F.O., 11 January 1938 (n. 108); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 19–22; Graham-Brown Report, February 1938 (n. 64); FRUS 1938 II, 904f.; Report of New Diplomatic Efforts of Mufti, 23 January 1938 (n. 106); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 109; Sasson(?), Report of Mufti meeting with Nuri, 7 February 1938, WA.
 127. Magnes Diary, 11–12 January 1938, P3/317; Graham-Brown Report, February 1938 (n. 64).
 128. Shertok to Magnes, 13 January 1938 (n. 116); same to Brodetsky, 28 January 1938 (n. 115); Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 160f.
 129. Magnes Diary, 11–14, 20 January 1938 (n. 127); Hyamson to Magnes, 2 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458; Graham-Brown Report, February 1938 (n. 64); FRUS 1938 II, 923; Magnes, Testimony before Ctee. on Arab-Jewish Relations, 10 April 1940 (n. 115); Goren, *op. cit.*, 42; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 55.
 130. Even after it had become clear to him that the Arabs had "taken up without budging a position which we absolutely reject and refuse to consider." Shertok to Magnes, 25 January 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458 (Heb. in Sharett, *op. cit.*, 19–22). Cf. Ben-Gurion remarks, JAE Meeting, 16 January 1938, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 25; Ben-Gurion, Internal Memorandum, 3 February 1938 (n. 115).
 131. Nuri's participation was welcomed by Magnes (and was even seen by his detractors) as a way of using the "moderating" influence of non-Palestinian leaders to help narrow the gap between the Palestinians and the Zionists. Goren, *Dissenter*, 344f., 349; Magnes, Calendar Diary, 2–6 February 1938, CAHJP, P3/317–8; Magnes notes, 4 February 1938, P3/318; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 55f.; FRUS 1938 II, 924; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 182.
 132. Morgan to F.O., 17 February 1938, PRO, FO 371/21874, file E958/10/31 (my

- emphasis). Cf. Sasson to Shertok, 4 January 1938, CZA, S25/2966; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 51f., 55f.; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 165, 183, 194f., and *Memoirs* V, 130f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 104.
133. Goren, *op. cit.*, 346–52. British F.O. files contain a letter addressed from Nuri to Magnes, dated March 4th, in which the Iraqi leader made light of the “distorted accounts” which were “only to be expected”, and admitted that the Hebrew University Chancellor had not committed himself “or any Jewish organisation to accepting the formula” which he, Nuri, had proposed. The letter concluded by stating that Nuri was “sure” that Dr Magnes “appreciate[d] that no solution would be acceptable to the Arabs which made it possible for the Jews ever to become a majority in Palestine.” PRO, *loc. cit.*, file E1332/10/31; Morgan to Halifax, 4 March 1938, *loc. cit.*
- Yet, evidence from the Jewish Agency, Magnes and Graham-Brown archival papers all indicates that no letter was ever received by Magnes. Cf. Magnes to Graham-Brown, 24 April 1938, MEC, JEM LXV/2; FRUS 1938 II, 916, 924f.
134. LCW XVIII, 323, 367; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 185f., 194f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 63; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 51f., 55, 57.
135. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 186.
136. Shertok to Brodetsky, 28 January 1938 (n. 11).
137. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 56, 66; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 165, 184–6; LCW XVIII, 109f.; Ben-Gurion to JAE, 24 February 1938, CZA, S25/2960/B (encl. copy of letter to Magnes).
138. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 185, and *Memoirs* V, 130f. Cf. Shertok to Brodetsky, 28 January 1938 (n. 115).
139. Brodetsky, Summary Report on Recent Political Developments, 2 March 1938 (n. 108); Shertok to R. Jacobs, 4 March 1938, CZA, S25/2960/B; Lourie to Martin, 4 March 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 210–6.
140. Hyamson to Magnes, 3 March 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458; same to Karpf, 8 April 1938, *loc. cit.*
141. Hyamson to Newcombe, 2 February 1938, *loc. cit.*; Graham-Brown to Tannous, 20 April 1938, MEC, JEM LXV/2; sources cited in n. 140, above.

CHAPTER 4

Retreat from Partition

1. Cmd. 5634, in Katzburg, *From Partition to White Paper*, 124–8.
2. PCW II, 295, 298f., 302f., 315; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 89; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 38–45; Kedourie, “Great Britain”, 158.
3. LCW XVIII, 199–279 passim; *Baffy*, 64, 70; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 206.
4. LCW XVIII, 285. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 215; Shertok to Brodetsky, 28 January 1938, CZA, S25/10095. Cf. H.M. Kalvaryski’s rebuttal of this argument, Report on Activities of Kedma Mizraha, 6 February 1938, A113/14.
5. LCW XVIII, 305. Cf. Weizmann, Note of Interview with Ormsby-Gore, 25 February 1938, Z4/17020/A.
6. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 209 and *Memoirs* V, 10–19 and Ch. 3. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 196; LCW, XVIII, 369, 394, 418f., 423; Cohen, *op. cit.*, 45–9.
7. Kohn to Rabbi Hertz, 10 February 1938, ISA 68/21. Cf. LCW XVIII, 366f., 473; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 210, 212 and *Memoirs* V, 111, 124f.; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 185; Sasson, *On the Road*, 115, 141; FRUS 1938 II, 899–901.

8. Graham-Brown Report, [10 February] 1938, CAHJP, P3/2458 (pp.1–9) and MEC, JEM LXV/2 (pp.10–14); Vilenski to Shertok, 21 November 1937, CZA, S25/10097; Settel to Agronsky, 15 December 1937, S25/2965; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 105. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 162 and *Memoirs* IV, 461.
9. *Egyptian Gazette*, 6 January 1938 (clipping in S25/5171); A.H.C. Proclamation, n.d., Heb. transl. *loc. cit.*; A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 9 January 1938, *loc. cit.*; FRUS 1938 II, 892f., 899–901, 917; Shertok speech, Inner Actions Ctee., 11 January 1938, S25/1790. Cf. Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 301; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 162; LCW XVIII, 358; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 46. Shertok saw a direct connection between the White Paper and the hardening of the Arab attitude to the Hyamson–Newcombe proposals, as evidenced in the Beirut (2nd) draft. See: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 19–22; Document 23(b); above pages 82f.

Dr Weizmann's Meetings in Egypt

10. LCW XVIII, 384 et seq; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 111f., 120f., 130f., 186f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 19–29, 192–201, 203f., 206–10, 212–9; JAE Meetings, 7, 9 and 12 June, CZA; Haim, *Abandonment*, 95–8.
11. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 114f., 117f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 64f., 72; LCW XVIII, 440; E. Rabino-vitch to Y. Sofraski, 11 April 1938, S25/2960/B; A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 25 April 1938, *loc. cit.* Cf. “Notes from Damascus”, 3 October 1938 (I. Darwaza speech to meeting of Syrians, 30 September), S25/9900.
12. Kohn Memo for Shertok, 21 April 1938, S25/2960/B. Cf. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 387; Haim, *op. cit.*, 79.
13. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 25f., 60, 65, 101f., 137, 194, 303; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 162f. and *Memoirs* IV, 473; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 42–9; Porath, *Palestinian Arab National Movement*, 254–6; Haim, *op. cit.*, 128.
14. See FD I, Ch. 4; Caplan, *Palestine Jewry*, Ch. 7.
15. LCW XVIII, 293, 301n., 338, 396f., 405, 420, 465; PCW II, 299; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 26, 179, 247; Weizmann–Ormsby-Gore Interview, 25 February 1938 (n.5); “Arab Reactions to Government Policy in Palestine”, 4 March 1938, PRO, CO 733/368, file 75156/23/pt.1; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 108; Haim, *op. cit.*, 132–4.
16. Sasson, Note of Talk with Jamil Mardam, 25 July 1938, S25/5576 (Heb.) and Z4/17024/B (Eng.); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 109f., 116f., 120f., 129–33, 139, 151; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 26, 72, 247; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 163f.; LCW XVIII, 422. Cf. Porath, *op. cit.*, 274f.
17. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 115f., 122–7, 135f.; LCW XVIII, 350, 355–7; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 37f., 78, 85, 88, 90; Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 63; Joseph to Shertok, 11–12 January 1938, S25/5476; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 13 February 1938, CZA; Reports from Beirut and Damascus, 6, 9 and 14 March 1938, ISA 68/21; Epstein to Shertok, 15 March 1938, CZA, S25/5580; same to Jarblum, 17 May 1938, S25/5814; Sasson to Shertok, 21 July 1938, Z4/17024/B; Caplan and Black, “Israel and Lebanon”, 51, 56f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 110.
18. Jankowski, “Egyptian Responses”, 11–28; Kedourie, “Great Britain”, 156–8; FRUS 1938 II, 917; LCW XVIII, 396f., 405, 420, 435; Goren, *op. cit.*, 355; Sharett, *Political Diary* II, 320–3; Haim, *op. cit.*, 133.
19. See, e.g., Weizmann, Resumé of Situation, 14 February 1938, Z4/17431.
20. Notes on Meeting, 6 February 1938, S25/2960/B; PCW II, 300; LCW XVIII, 422; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 164; Sharett, *ibid.* III, 36f.
21. See FD I, 247; A. Alexander to Weizmann, 10 March 1937, Z4/17048; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 36; Jankowski, “Government of Egypt”, 430.
22. Note of a Meeting at the Palace in Cairo between Dr Weizmann and Muhammad Ali, 7 February 1938, PRO, FO 371/21874, file E1438/10/31. Cf. Jankowski, *op.*

- cit.*, 435.
23. Lampson to Cadogan, 17 February 1938, *loc. cit.*, file E1125/10/31; Baggalay Note, 21 March 1938, *loc. cit.*, file E1438/10/31; Weizmann Remarks, British Meeting with Jewish Delegation, St. James's Conferences (hereafter SJC/J), 8 February 1939, CZA, S25/7632.
 24. Lampson to F.O., 7 April 1938, PRO, FO 371/21875, file E2124/10/31. Some reports indicated that Muhammad Ali was alarmed at some of Weizmann's remarks. See: Lampson to Cadogan, 17 February 1938 (n.23); H. Samuel, Note of Talks with Muhammad Ali, Awni Abd al-Hadi and A. Alexander, 19 March 1938, ISA 100/20; Lampson to Cadogan, 31 March 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*, file E2098/10/31.
 Ten years later, the Prince declared himself favourable to King Abdallah's take-over of Arab Palestine – a solution which also enjoyed considerable Zionist support. See: Hamilton, Note of Interview with Prince Muhammad Ali, 7 October 1948, FO 141/1320; below, pages 158f.
 25. E. Mosseri(?), Notes of Conversation between Weizmann and Lamson, [7 February 1938], CZA, S25/2960/B; Lampson to Cadogan, 24 February 1938, PRO, FO 371/21874, file E1438/10/31; Weizmann–Ormsby-Gore Interview, 25 February 1938 (n.5); Rendel Minute, 28 February 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*, file E1125/10/31; Joseph, Note of Interview with A.S. Kirkbride, 23 December 1938, CZA, S25/43; LCW XVIII, 301n., 337f. 392 420f.; PCW II, 300; Jankowski, *op. cit.*, 444, 446f.

Lord Samuel and the “40:10” Formula

26. Document 19, and above, pages 56f.; Samuel to Ormsby-Gore, 15 June 1937, ISA 100/19; letters from Newcombe (21 July), Hyamson (22 July) and Warburg (30 July) to Samuel, *loc. cit.*; Agronsky, Note of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 26 August 1937, CZA, S25/3051; Attias, *Book of Documents*, 249f.; Stein, Observations on the Partition Proposals, 4 August 1937, A209/98; *Baffy*, 53f.; LCW XVIII, 239; PCW II, 283f.; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 135f., and *Memoirs* IV, 313f., 354; *ibid.* V, 23, 37, 89. Cf. Esco, *Palestine* II, 880f.; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 194f.
27. See Document 11. It was also the only formula which Judah Magnes could imagine, on the basis of his experience with the Hyamson–Newcombe proposals, having the slightest chance of bridging the gap between the declared official positions of the Zionist and Arab leadership. Another persistent peace-seeker, Daniel Oliver, also suggested a “40:10” solution when trying to influence the ex-Mufti in April 1938. See: Magnes, Note of Talk with Samuel, 14 March 1938, CAHJP, P3/2461; Magnes Diary, 20 January 1938, P3/317; Magnes to Philby, 23 March 1938, P3/2458; Magnes, Memorandum to Woodhead Commission, 27 July 1938, CZA, Z4/17141; Goren, *Dissenter*, 356; FRUS 1939 IV, 698; A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 25 April 1938 (n.11); Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 97.
28. Magnes–Samuel Talk, 14 March 1938 (n.27); A.H. Cohen, Note of Talk with “Oved”, 17 March 1938, CZA, S25/10098.
29. Samuel note, 19 March 1938 (n.24); Samuel to Magnes, 20 March 1938, CAHJP, P3/2461; Lampson to Cadogan, 31 March 1938 (n.24); Samuel to Ormsby-Gore, 7 April 1938, PRO, FO 371/21876, file E2668/10/31.
30. Lourie to Weizmann, 3 April 1938, WA; Samuel to Ormsby-Gore, 7 April 1938 (n.29); Ormsby-Gore to Weizmann, 26 April 1938, WA; Samuel to Churchill, 6 October 1938, ISA 100/19.
31. LCW XVIII, 424f.; PCW II, 316f.; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 197. In the latter source Ben-Gurion had to correct Hafez Wahba's impression that Dr Weizmann favoured the Samuel formula, an impression also shared by George Antonius. See FRUS 1939 IV, 698.

32. Shuckburgh to Oliphant, 18 July 1938, PRO, FO 371/21878, file E4324/10/31. Sir Miles Lampson in Cairo, as well as George Rendel and Lord Halifax in London, were very attracted to the formula, especially as they believed that the idea of a 10-year "truce" reflected the position held by Ibn Sa'ud. In the F.O. view, the "40:10" plan might have helped to side-track what was called "Dr Weizmann's ambitious but highly dangerous schemes" for introducing a million or more European Jewish refugees into Palestine. But at this stage, the new Colonial Secretary, Malcolm MacDonald, stood firmly behind British commitments to Dr Weizmann and official Zionism, and faulted the Samuel plan for postponing – rather than resolving (as partition was meant to do) – the real Arab–Zionist deadlock. Additional material in FO 371/21875, files E2098 and E2124; FO 371/21876, file E2668; FO 371/21877, files E3677 and E3678; FO 371/21878, file E4266 and E4324; FO 371/21879, files E4935–6. (All files /10/31.) Cf. LCW XVIII, 392f., 417–26; PCW II, 315–8. On the F.O./C.O. dispute over partition, see M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 38–49; Kedourie, "Great Britain", 116f., 120f., 158f.
33. Oliphant to Shuckburgh, 2 August 1938, PRO, FO 371/21878, file E4324/10/31. Cf. Lampson to Halifax, 8 July 1938, *loc. cit.*, file E4266/10/31; Eyres, Note of Conversation between Kelly and Alexander, 27 September 1938, FO 371/21885, file E5773/38/31; LCW XVIII, 383; *Bourse Égyptienne*, 17 May 1938 (clipping in ISA 66/150); Joseph Cattau to M. Aluba, 19 May 1938, reproduced in *al-Ahram*(?), undated clipping *loc. cit.*; Porath, *op. cit.*, 277–80.
34. Bateman to F.O., 7 September 1938, FO 371/21880, file E5238/10/31. Cf. G. Antonius' version, which claims that Mahmud had been approached by the British during a summer 1938 visit to London. FRUS 1939 IV, 696f.
 Although there may be no obvious connection with this episode, Mahmud did meet, during his visit, with two representatives of the London Zionist office. In response to their remarks about the moderating influence which Egyptians and others could be exercising on the Palestinians, Mahmud reportedly urged the Zionists to be more active and forthcoming in dealing directly with the "real" leadership of the Palestinian Arabs – i.e., the ex-Mufti and his followers. See: Note (2 August) of Meeting between Brodetsky, Locker and Mahmud, 30 July 1938, CZA, S25/3052. Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 110.
35. Cadogan to Shuckburgh, 16 September 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*
36. Shuckburgh to Cadogan, 22 September 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*, file E5556/10/31. Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 132.
37. F.O. to Bateman, 29 September 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.* Cf. Antonius, in FRUS 1939 IV, 687.

The Abdallah Plan

38. A.H. Cohen to Shertok, 9 January 1938 (n.9).
39. *Ibid.*; Kisch to Weizmann, 17 January 1938, WA; Kohn to Shertok, 9 February 1938, CZA, S25/442; Shertok Diary, 1 March 1938, A245/6; A.H. Cohen Memorandum on Payments to "M.U." [Muhammad al-Unsi] and "E.A." [Emir Abdallah], 8 May 1938, S25/3513. Cf. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 154–60.
40. A.H. Cohen, Note of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 16 March 1938, WA; same, Note (22 March) of Talk with Tawfiq al-Ghusain, 21 March 1938, WA; *ha-Aretz*, 28 March 1938, clipping in CAHJP, P3/2458; "Between the Amir's Palace and the Political Dept.", May 1938, CZA, S25/5171; Black, *op. cit.*, 159f. The Amir had even raised the question of future boundaries at this time, but the issue was deliberately evaded by Zionist officials.
41. Martin Minute, 22 June 1938, PRO, CO 733/381 file 75730/17. Cf. Bennett Minutes, 18 June and 5 July 1938, *loc. cit.*

42. *al-Ahram*, 1 June 1938, clipping in ISA 66/150; *Palestine Post*, 7 June 1938, clipping in PRO, *loc. cit.*; Abdallah to MacMichael, 21 May 1938, Heb. transl. in CZA, S25/5171.
43. Statement of Raghib an-Nashashibi, reproduced in *al-Ahram*, [24 or later] May 1938, clipping in ISA 66/150. Cf. Nuri as-Sa'id's negative reactions, mentioned in I. Darwaza, *On the Modern Arab Movement* (Ac.) vol.III (Sidon 1950), 227f.
44. Abdallah to Awni Abd al-Hadi, 24 May 1938, Heb. transl. in CZA, S25/5171; *al-Ahram*, 1 June 1938, clipping in ISA 66/150; *al-Balagh*(?), 16 June 1938, *loc. cit.*; Abdallah, *My Memoirs Completed*, 96–9. Cf. Husain Ibn Talal, "Reflections on an Epilogue", *Middle East Journal* XXXII (1978), 84f.
45. Abdallah to MacMichael, 21 May 1938 (n.42).
46. Exchange of Notes and Cables between Shertok and Lourie, 27, 30 and 31 May 1938, CZA, S25/5171. Cf. Black, *op. cit.*, 161f.
47. *Palestine Post*, 3 June 1938, clipping in PRO, *loc. cit.*; *Palestine Review*, 10 June 1938, 117. Cf. Black, *op. cit.*, 160f.
48. *Palestine Post*, 7 June 1938, clipping in PRO, *loc. cit.* Cf. sources cited in n.47.
49. Shertok to Kalvaryski, 1 June 1938, CZA, S25/2960/B; Kalvaryski to M.W. at-Tal, 10 August 1938, A113/25/3; Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 137; Haim, *op. cit.*, 107f.; A.S. Kirkbride, *From the Wings* (London: Cass 1976), 3. Cf. Meltzer to Magnes, 23 May 1938, CAHJP, P3/2460.
50. Shertok Diary, 25 June 1938, CZA, A245/6; Sharett, *loc. cit.*
51. The two discussed the need for an important Arabic newspaper; activities to try to influence the forthcoming Cairo Inter-Parliamentary Conference on Palestine, etc. See their correspondence, August–September 1938, in S25/3111 and A113/25/3. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 179, 218f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 140, 142.
52. Shertok to Kalvaryski, 1 June 1938 (n.49). Cf. same to same, 16 August 1938, S25/3111; Shertok Diary, 27 June, 1 and 6 July 1938, S25/269 and A245/6; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 155f., 159, 219f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 108.
53. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 218–20; FRUS 1938 II, 938; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 137f.; Black, *op. cit.*, 125n., 157f., 162; Kedourie, "Great Britain", 121, 129, 134f., 146, 149.

The Hyamson–Newcombe Proposals (II)

54. E.g. sources cited in n.140 to Chapter 3.
55. Even a one-time "anti-imperialist" like Dr Judah Magnes despaired of the chances of a voluntary agreement being reached, and began promoting the idea of a British-imposed solution, although his terms were no longer those being advocated by Newcombe or Hyamson. Goren, *Dissenter*, 354f.; Memorandum to Woodhead Commission, 27 July 1938 (n.28); H. MacMichael, Note of Interview with Magnes, 5 September 1938, PRO, CO 733/371, file 75156/86; Magnes to M. MacDonald, 22 September 1938, *loc. cit.*, Magnes, Draft letter to Editor of *Palestine Post*, 11 November 1938, ISA 68/25; FRUS 1938 II, 989f.
56. Newcombe, Note to Prime Minister, 5 May 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Cleverly to Parkinson, 6 May 1938, *loc. cit.*; Newcombe to MacDonald, 29 June and 21 September 1938, *loc. cit.*; L. Baggalay, Note of Interview with Newcombe, 4 September 1938, PRO, FO 371/21885, file E5184/38/31; Newcombe to Baggalay, 4 September 1938, *loc. cit.*; Cf. J.A. Malcolm to Weizmann, 10 May 1938, WA; Nathan to Weizmann, 11 October 1938, CZA, S25/5476.
57. Darwaza, *op. cit.*, 226–8; Peterson to F.O., 25 June 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Newcombe to MacDonald, 29 June 1938, *loc. cit.*; Mackereth to F.O., 4 July 1938, *loc. cit.*; Peterson to Halifax, 20 July 1938 (also encl. draft plan), FO 371/21885, file E4445/38/31; Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 194. Cf. Hattis, *op. cit.*, 192f. By late September 1938, one Arab account had fused together the solution

- proposed by Nuri as-Sa'id with the "Beirut" draft (Document 23(b)) in such a way as to completely dispense with those aspects of the "Nuri" draft (Document 23(c)) which had had any chance of winning Zionist assent. See: "Notes from Damascus", 3 October 1938 (n.11).
58. Baggalay-Newcombe Interview, and Newcombe to Baggalay, 4 September 1938 (n.56); Newcombe to MacDonald, 21 September 1938 (n.56).
 59. Hyamson to Parkinson, 8 August 1938, PRO, CO 733/369, file 75156/33; Lourie(?), Note (15 August) of Talk with Hyamson, 14 August 1938, CZA, S25/2960/B; Downie Minute, 15 August 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Parkinson Minute, 19 August 1938, *loc. cit.*; MacDonald to Halifax, 1 November 1938, *loc. cit.* Cf. the comments on Hyamson's activities in FO 371/21885, file E5008/38/31, which were generally less critical than those of C.O. aides.

Informal Arab-Zionist Talks in London

60. Dugdale Diary, 26 August 1938, WA; Newcombe to MacDonald, 21 September 1938 (n.56); Darwaza, *op. cit.*, 227f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 137; PCW II, 319f.; Goren, *op. cit.*, 354; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 169, 173, 183, 190f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 279f.; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 69, 72; Haim, *op. cit.*, 134f.
61. Such a shift represented, for MacDonald, a radical transformation from his previous history of solid support for Dr Weizmann and the Zionist cause. See: PCW II, Paper 37; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 174 and *Memoirs V*, 346; Y. Bauer, *From Diplomacy to Resistance* (Philadelphia 1970), 28f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 38-45, 66-72. For MacDonald's earlier views, see Parkinson to Oliphant, 17 August 1938 and other sources in n.32, above.
62. MacMichael to MacDonald, 24 September 1938, PRO, CO 733/386, file 75872/1; Samuel, Note of Talk with MacDonald, 17 October 1938, ISA 100/20; Note of Conversation between "B." (MacDonald), "X." (Weizmann) and "M.S." (Shertok), 8 November 1938, CZA, Z4/17020/A; MacDonald, Notes of Talks with Musa al-Alami, 25 and 28 November 1938, ISA 65/570; *Baffy*, 115; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 331f., 334f.; PCW II, 326, 329, 331; LCW XVIII, 472f., 477; Bauer, *op. cit.*, 17f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 279-83; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 62f.; Kedourie, "Great Britain", 169f.
63. Saudi Arabia, Memo re: Endeavours exerted to ensure holding of London Conference, encl. Bullard to Halifax, 12 December 1938, PRO, FO 371/23219, file E164/6/31; ZE Meetings, 16 December 1938 (CZA, S25/7627), 1 and 6 February 1939 (S25/7643); Jewish Delegation "Panel" Meeting, 5 February 1939, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion to Inner Actions Ctee., 17 December 1938, *loc. cit.* and *Memoirs V*, 405-8; Stein Memorandum, 18 December 1938, S25/10350; Stein Memorandum on Arab Federation, 22 December 1938, S25/7656; Kohn to Weizmann, 23 December 1938, S25/7627; *Umm al-Qura*, transl. summary in PRO, FO 371/23220, file E586/6/31; JAE Meeting, 25 December 1938, CZA; Joseph Diary, 25 December 1938 and 15 January 1939, S25/43; Rutenberg to Weizmann, 6 January 1939, Z4/17136; Lourie, Note of Talk with Downie, 19 January 1939, S25/7642; *Baffy*, 115; Simon, *Certain Days*, 313-6; Sharett, *Political Diary IV*, 10f.; LCW XIX, 81; Porath, *op. cit.*, 283; Jankowski, "Government of Egypt", 437f.
64. E.g. Sharett, *ibid.* III, 301; Sasson, *On the Road*, 137, 139; LCW XVIII, 440, 464. Zionists felt not only a sense of "personal" betrayal by their former supporter, but also decried the larger "appeasement" mentality which seemed to characterise British political leaders at the time. See: JAE Meeting (London), 21 September 1938, WA; Joseph to Weizmann, 10 October 1938, WA; LCW XVIII, 465f.; PCW II, Paper 37; *Baffy*, 93; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 169f., 175f., 180f., 184, 186, 207-9; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, Ch. 9; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 85.
65. E.g., LCW XVIII, 470; *ibid.* XIX, 8f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 250; *ibid.* IV, 93f.; Ben-

- Gurion, *op. cit.*, 186f., 189; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 408f., *In Struggle* II, 105, and *My Talks*, 235f., 249; S. Wise, *Servant of the People* (Philadelphia 1970), 230, 232f.; FRUS 1939 IV, 699f.
66. "At no time had we to enter a Conference under worse conditions." Weizmann remarks, ZE Meeting, 16 December 1938 (n.63); Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 398f., and *Letters to Paula*, 175, 183f., 190, 210f., 217, 224f.; Ben-Gurion to Inner Actions Ctee., 17 December 1938 (n.63); Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 293f., 301f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 139; *Baffy*, 115; Joseph Diary, 29 December 1938, CZA, S25/43; Fuad al-Khatib to Parkinson, 12 September 1938, PRO, CO 733/371, file 75156/76; Lampson to Oliphant, 6 December 1938, PRO, FO 371/21868, file E7543/1/31; Bullard to Halifax, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23220, file E586/6/31; FRUS 1938 II, 984f.
 67. E.g., Sasson to Shertok, 12 November 1938, CZA, S25/5476; Haim, *op. cit.*, 137.
 68. JAE Meeting, 21 September 1938 (n.64); PCW II, 323; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 170, 172f., and *My Talks*, 249; *Baffy*, 95.
 69. PCW II, 323f.; LCW XVIII, 393f., 419, 434; Lourie to Weizmann, 22 July 1938, ISA 68/21; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 301f.; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula* 178f.; *Baffy*, 95f. In fact, Ben-Gurion had met with the Saudi representative in London, Hafiz Wahba, only a few weeks earlier. Note (26 August) of Talk, 25 August 1938, CZA, S25/3052. Cf. *My Talks*, 196–8 and *Memoirs* V, 235, 251; Haim, *op. cit.*, 110, 12In.
 70. PCW II, 320. The idea was apparently Mardam's. See: Sasson, *On the Road*, 133; Joseph Diary, 7 November 1938, S25/1511. Weizmann was probably interested in meeting the Iraqi Foreign Minister because of his reported pro-partition views. See: Peterson to Halifax, 20 July 1938 (n.57); Amery to Weizmann, 11 October 1938, S25/5476; Joseph to Lourie, 20 October 1938, *loc. cit.*
 71. Document 25. The talk did not remain secret, and most Arab reports portrayed the meeting as having had a semi-official character, involving the C.O. See: Shertok to Lourie, 7 October 1938, *loc. cit.*; Joseph, Minute of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 11 October 1938, S25/188; LCW XVIII, 474, 475f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 302, 309, 331; FRUS 1939 IV, 698f (Antonius version).
 72. PCW II, 325f., 329.
 73. FRUS 1938 II, 968f., 988; *ibid.* 1939 IV, 699.
 74. Dugdale Diary, 23(?) October 1938, WA; Hyamson to Kisch, 22 October 1938, CZA, Z4/17218; Kisch to Weizmann, 23 October 1938, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 199, 205, 209f. On Ben-Gurion's own talks with Lloyd at this time, see *ibid.*, 198–201.
 75. Joseph Diary, 7 November 1938 (n.70); Sasson, *On the Road*, 144, 147. On the Cairo Conference, see: Porath, *op. cit.*, 276f.; Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 149–51; Jankowski, "Government of Egypt", 435–7.
 76. Weizmann, Note of Talk with Egyptian Ambassador, 16 November 1938, WA; JAE Meeting (London), 17 November 1938, CZA. Cf. Sasson, Note of Talk with Lutfi al-Hafar, 3 November 1938, Z4/17024/B.

Preparing the Conference: Positions and Personalities

77. *Letters to Paula*, 193f. Cf. *ibid.*, 196 and *In Struggle* II, 93; *Baffy*, 111f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 137.
78. Letter of 30 November 1938, quoted in Saudi Memorandum, December 1938 (n.63).
79. Shuckburgh, quoted in MacDonald–Weizmann–Shertok Conversation, 8 November 1938 (n.62). Cf. MacDonald–Alami Talk, 28 November 1938 (n.62); Sharett, *Political Dairy* III, 334; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 218, 214f.; FRUS 1938 II, 988; *ibid.* 1939 IV, 700.

80. *Falastin*, cited in Joseph Diary, 18 November 1938, CZA, S25/1511. Cf. Porath, *op. cit.*, 283f. During the actual Conference, Jamal Husaini reiterated these demands with more stress on the granting of *immediate* independence. British Meeting with Arab Delegation (hereafter SJC/A), 9 February 1939, ISA 65/299. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 216f.
81. Talk of 28 November 1938 (n.62).
82. Discussion on policy and tactics, (n.d. – early February 1939), CZA, S25/7643. Cf. “Premises for a Jewish–Arab Agreement”, 14 November 1938, A113/14; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 217f.; Bauer, *op. cit.*, 26; Haim, *op. cit.*, 139.
83. Letter to Inner Actions Ctee., 17 December 1938 (n.63); ZE Meeting, 1 February 1939, S25/7643; *Letters to Paula*, 218, 226; *Memoirs V*, 413f.
84. Discussion on policy and tactics (n.82). Cf. Haim, *op. cit.*, 138.
85. ZE Meeting, 1 February 1939 (n.83). Cf. *Memoirs*, 404, 413f., and *In Struggle I*, 207; Bauer, *op. cit.*, 26.

The Arab States on the Eve of the Conferences

86. See Kedourie, “Great Britain”, *passim*; Haim, *op. cit.*, 136f.; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs V*, 380f.; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 88f.; above, pages 45f. (n.77).
87. E.g., “Premises”, 14 November 1938 (n.82); Stein Memoranda, 18 and 22 December 1938 (n.63); Shertok remarks, Discussion on policy and tactics (n.82). Cf. below, pages 133 et seq.
88. Letter to Inner Actions Ctee., 17 December 1938 (n.63); Discussion on policy and tactics (n.82); *Memoirs V*, 404, 422. On some of the antecedents of the transfer of population proposal, see: *ibid.*, 212–7; 256, 303f.; Document 2; E.A. Norman, “An Approach to the Arab Question in Palestine”, January 1938, and other materials relating to Norman and Montague Bell in PRO, CO 733/333, file 75156/35 and FO 371/21885, files E775 and E1021/38/31; Kisch to Weizmann, 12 October 1938, CZA, Z4/17218; H. Rose to Weizmann, 12 November 1938, WA; May to Weizmann, 28 December 1938, WA; Sharett, *Political Diary III*, 128f.; Haim, *op. cit.*, 95–7, 143f. See also below, pages 136 and 328. (n.110)
89. Sasson, *On the Road*, 142–6; Joseph Diary, 7 November 1938 (n.70) and 1 March 1939 (S25/43); Sharett, *op. cit.* IV, 101.
90. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 139f. Cf. above, pages 77f.
91. Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 22 January 1939, CZA; Jankowski, “Government of Egypt”, 438.
92. Joseph Report, 22 January 1939 (n.91); Kohn to Graves, 1 February 1939, ISA 68/10; N. Wingate to Weizmann, 14 February 1939, WA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 76f.; Monroe, *Philby of Arabia*, 219f.; Jankowski, “Egyptian Responses”, 27f.
93. *Manchester Guardian*, 5 December 1938, clipping in PRO, CO 733/386, file 75872/4. Abdallah’s behaviour was also seen as reflecting his insecurity about being abandoned by the British in favour of Ibn Sa’ud. See: Joseph–Unsi Talk, 11 October 1938 (n.71); message from Abdallah to MacMichael, transm. 11 October 1938, PRO, *loc. cit.*; MacMichael, Note of Interview with Rutenberg, 4 January 1939, CO 733/409, file 75872/51.
94. Transjordan was to press for “a constructive policy to be put forward by the Arab states” and an agreement based on opportunities for investment of foreign capital in Transjordan, “the intention being that in this way Transjordan should be opened in some measure to Jewish immigration.” Joseph, Note of Talk with al-Unsi, 11 December 1938, CZA, S25/3485. I have found no evidence of any close co-operation between Transjordanian representatives and J.A. personnel in London. Cf. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 164–6.
95. Joseph Report, 22 January 1939 (n.91); Porath, *op. cit.*, 284.

96. Sources cited in n.70.
97. Document 25; PCW II, 316; SJC Meeting, 24 February 1939, PRO, FO 371/23227, file E1668/6/31; Sasson, Memorandum on Problems of Jews in Arab Lands, 28 February 1939, CZA, S25/3139; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 211, 255, and *Letters to Paula*, 201; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 50.
98. Joseph Diary, 16 December 1938, 8, 22 and 31 January 1939, S25/43; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 150; Gillon, *op. cit.*, 87f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 283f.; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 151f.

“Moderates” and Mavericks

99. Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 71f.; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 47–9; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 62f.; Sasson, *On the Road*, 149f. Cf. Porath, *op. cit.*, 282; Lesch, *op. cit.*, 174.
100. Internal Zionist evidence suggests that Fakhri did, in fact, act on his own initiative on this particular venture. But the British remained unconvinced, and Fakhri’s character continued to be the subject of disagreement between certain Zionist leaders and British officials (and even among Jews themselves). See: Joseph Diary, 18 and 21 November 1938, S25/1511; *ibid.*, 28 November, 18, 20, 29 December 1938, and 31 January 1939, S25/43; Joseph, Note of Interview with Kirkbride, 23 December 1938, *loc. cit.*; D. Hacohen, Note (4 December) of Interview with “B.” (MacDonald), 2 December 1938, Z4/17020/A; MacDonald, Note of Interview with Rutenberg, 29 November 1938, PRO, FO 371/21867, file E7240/1/31; MacMichael, Note of Interview with Rutenberg, 13 December 1938, CO 733/409, file 75872/51; Rutenberg to MacDonald, 5 January 1939, *loc. cit.*; MacMichael to MacDonald, 31 December 1939, FO 371/24563, file E2480/20/31; same to Lloyd, 27 June 1940, *loc. cit.*, file E612/20/31. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 409; n.40 to Chapter 1; n.41 to Chapter 5.
101. The “outsiders” included Bishop Graham-Brown, Daniel Oliver and Archer Cust. See: Graham-Brown to Samuel, 29 December 1938, ISA 100/20; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 22; Palestine Watching Ctee., “Settlement in Palestine: A Suggested Basis”, *The Friend*, 20 January 1939, 49f.; Epstein to Joseph, 25 January 1939, CZA, S25/3054/A; Cust to E. Samuel, 3 January 1939, ISA 103/655/23.
102. 8.12.38 P.D. (Lords) 5th Ser. vol.111, 425. However, once the conferences began he acted with extreme discretion, taking no official part and remaining aloof from unofficial contacts. Cf. FRUS 1940 III, 838; Locker Remarks, ZE Meeting, 16 December 1938, CZA, S25/7627; *Palestine Review*, 16 December 1938, 553; Samuel, Phone Message to J.T.A., 16 February 1939, ISA, 100/21; Samuel, Note of Talk with MacDonald, 15 May 1939, *loc. cit.*
103. Frumkin to Trusted, 2 December 1938, CZA, A199/51; cf. Document 11. Other Jewish suggestions: Bentov to JAE, 13 October 1938, S25/5476; Simon, *Certain Days*, 313–6; “Ahdut ha-Am” to JAE, 9 January 1939, ISA 103/658/10.
104. Rutenberg to MacDonald, 28 November 1938, PRO, FO 371/21867, file E7240/1/31; MacDonald–Rutenberg Interview, 29 November 1938, *loc. cit.*; MacMichael–Rutenberg Interview, 13 December 1938 (n.100); Rutenberg to MacDonald, 5 January 1939 (n.100); Joseph Reports, JAE Meetings, 29 January and 5 February 1939, CZA; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 43f., 109; *Baffy*, 119.
105. Graham-Brown to Samuel, 19 and 29 December 1938, ISA 100/20; Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 25 December 1938, CZA; Joseph to Shertok, 5 February 1939, S25/45; Lourie to Joseph, 9 February 1939, *loc. cit.*; ZE Meeting, 9 February 1939, S25/7643.
106. J. Cattai to Weizmann, 20 November 1938 and 27 January 1939, Z4/17425; Weizmann draft reply (not sent), *loc. cit.*; Joseph Diary, 9 and 20 January 1939, S25/43; Lampson to F.O., 7 and 11 January 1939, PRO, FO 371/23220, files

- E416-E417/6/31; ZE Meeting, 16 December 1938 (n.63); Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 22 January 1939, CZA; Joseph to Shertok, 22 January 1939, S25/45; Lourie, Note of Interview between MacDonald, Weizmann et al., 1 February 1939, S25/7642; Eliachar, *op. cit.*, 86f.; LCW XIX, 14; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 335.
107. MacDonald–Weizmann–Shertok Talk, 8 November 1938 (n.62); Weizmann Talk with Egyptian Ambassador, 16 November 1938, WA; Lampson to F.O., 11 January 1939 (n.106); Eliachar, *op. cit.*, 84. Cf. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 147, on the hopes (unrealised) for Syrians Jamil Mardam and Nassib al-Bakri to play intermediary roles between Zionists and Palestinians at the Conferences.
108. Joseph Diary, 12, 20 and 31 January 1939, S25/43; Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 5 February 1939, CZA; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 365, 409; Eliachar, *op. cit.*, 83–5; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 43f., 64. The National Defence (Nashashibi) Party platform differed from that of the Husaini stance in that it was based on the amendment of the existing British Mandate's land-sales and immigration clauses, without demanding immediate independence. See: Porath, *op. cit.*, 284; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 63.
109. Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 194f., and *Memoirs* V, 413f.; Stein Memorandum, 18 December 1938 (n.63); Joseph Diary, 12, 20 and 25 January 1939, S25/43; Rutenberg to Weizmann, 6 January 1939, Z4/17136. Cf. the F.O. view that there was no difference between extremist and moderate Arabs on the question of Zionism. F.O. to Lampson, 24 January 1939, PRO, CO 733/406, file 75872/11.

The Conferences Begin

110. Panel Meeting 9 February 1939, S25/7643; Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* V, 405f., and *Letters to Paula*, 223; Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 10f.; Bauer, *From Diplomacy*, 18f.; Haim, *Abandonment*, 136.
111. Letter to Tannous, 12 December 1938, ISA 100/20. Cf. Kohn to Weizmann, 23 December 1938, CZA, S25/7627.
112. Large verbatim extracts of selected meetings may be found in Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 199–266. For other summary accounts, see: Bauer, *op. cit.*, 27–41; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 74–82; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 284–6; Lesch, *Arab Politics*, 151–4, 175–7; Haim, *op. cit.*, 138–43.
113. PCW II, 361. Cf. Panel Meeting, 12 February 1939, S25/7643; *Baffy*, 123; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 247f. In repeating this request during a subsequent meeting, the Zionist leader admitted that he saw “little hope” of an agreement with the *Palestinian* Arabs, but “some hope that certain of the neighbouring Arab states who were friends of His Majesty’s Government might prove helpful.” SJC/J Meeting, 17 February 1939, S25/7633. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 61, 65; FRUS 1939 IV, 715f.
114. SJC/J Meeting, 20 February 1939, S25/7633; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 72f.; Document 26, below. For a press indiscretion which almost scuttled the meeting, see LCW XIX, 17; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 77f.; Extract from Conclusions of Cabinet Meeting, 22 February 1939, PRO, CO 733/406, file 75872/11.
115. Minute in PRO, FO 371/23225, file E1448/6/31.
116. *Letters to Paula*, 239. Cf. *In Struggle* II, 110; ZE Meeting, 23 February 1939, CZA, S25/7643; Panel Meeting, 24 February 1939, *loc. cit.*
117. David Ben-Gurion had actually been hoping to convince the British to use the opportunity of a joint meeting to bring real pressure to bear on the Arabs to reach an agreement acceptable to the Jews: “The Government should tell the Arabs that if no agreement was possible, they were not prepared to allow disturbances to go on, and they would bring in as many Jews as possible in the shortest space of time.” ZE Meeting, 16 February 1939, *loc. cit.* Cf. *My Talks*, 247; *Baffy*, 123; Panel Meeting, 12 February 1939 (n.113); ZE Meeting, 19 February 1939, S25/7643.
118. ZE Meeting, 23 February 1939 (n.116); Panel Meeting, 24 February 1939 (n.116);

- Sharett, *op. cit.*, 84.
119. SJC Meeting, 24 February 1939 (n.97); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 87.
120. ZE Meeting, 7 March 1939, CZA, Z4/302/23; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 258; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 118f.
121. Ben-Gurion and Shertok were visibly shaken by what they viewed as an Anglo-Arab conspiracy to bring "moral pressure" to bear on the Zionists aimed at "cutting the ground from under us, and in any case proving to us that the British could not support us against the Arabs." *Ibid.*, 124. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 262; Haim, *op. cit.*, 143.
122. In a later clarification of these remarks, Ben-Gurion told MacDonald: "They [the Zionists] might have been willing to consider this had Aly Maher Pasha been willing to accept certain principles – for example the status of the Jews in Palestine as of right and not on suffrage, and the continuance of Jewish immigration. On these terms, Mr Ben-Gurion, speaking for himself might have been willing, for the sake of agreement, to accept a rather smaller figure for immigration tha[n] they would be entitled to obtain under the economic absorptive capacity principle. But so far no concessions had been forthcoming from the Arab side...." SJC/J Meeting, 11 March 1939, S25/7635.
123. While the former seemed willing to go down as low as 20,000–30,000 per year for five years, if there were no Arab veto after the fifth year, the non-Palestinian Arabs seemed prepared to accept a maximum of 10,000 per year, but only if the Arabs were assured a veto over further immigration after that date. See: MacDonald Report to Cabinet, 8 March 1939, PRO, CO 733/406, file 75872/11; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 216, 218.
124. Ben-Gurion Remarks, Panel Meeting, 16 February 1939, CZA, S25/7643. Cf. ZE Meeting, 22 February 1939, *loc. cit.*; *Letters to Paula*, 222, 226; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 18, 21, 23, 46, 125.
125. *Ibid.*, 36, 125; Kalvaryski, Plan submitted to Jewish Delegation, 5 March 1939, enclosed in League for Jewish–Arab Rapprochement (hereafter: LJAR) to R. Jacobs, 20 December 1940, S25/3093. After his late arrival in London, Kalvaryski's activities were limited to an unsuccessful attempt to see Musa al-Alami and the submission of this alternative scheme for a bi-national, parity solution. Cf. Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 227f.
126. There was no follow-up to contacts which were supposed to have taken place between Transjordan representatives and Shertok, while Fakhri an-Nashashibi provided Rutenberg's agents with information about the meetings between the British and the Arabs. See: above, n.94; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 91; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 64, 77.
127. *Ibid.*, 78, 87.
128. Wingate to Weizmann, 14 February 1939, WA; R. Zaslani to Joseph, 15 February 1939, CZA, S25/47; Extract from Conclusions of Cabinet Meeting, 22 February 1939 (n.114); Ben-Gurion Remarks, Meeting with LJAR, 25 October 1939, S25/10095; below, Document 26(b); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 46, 83; *Baffy*, 120.
129. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 78, 83, 132, 167, 186; H. Rose to Weizmann, 10 March 1939, WA; Rutenberg and Weizmann Remarks, ZE Meeting, 22 March 1939, CZA, Z4/302/23; below, Document 28; LCW XIX, 55, 113.
130. Suwaidi Remarks, SJC/A Meeting, 7 March 1939, ISA 65/388, and Document 27; Rutenberg Remarks, ZE Meeting, 22 March 1939 (n.129); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 186.
131. *Ibid.*, 97; Downie, Note (4 March) of Talk between MacDonald and F. Hamza, 3 March 1939, PRO, FO 371/23228, file E1759/6/31; Monroe, *Philby of Arabia*, 219; Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, 208.
132. SJC/J Meetings, 11–12 March 1939, CZA, S25/7635; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 160, 167f.
133. Stein Memorandum, 20 February 1939, Bodleian Library, Stein Papers, Box 117.

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134. See n.123.
135. Final British Proposals, 15 March 1939 (CZA, S25/7642), discussed at final SJC meetings with Arabs and with Jews, ISA 65/374 and CZA, S25/7633. Cf. SJC/J Meeting, 20 February 1939, *loc. cit.*; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 240–7; Samuel–MacDonald Talk, 15 May 1939 (n.102); M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 73f., 81f.
136. LCW XIX, 26f. Cf. *ibid.*, 101; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 203; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 104f., 112. These were the very options which the British had abandoned in the act of convening the conference in the first place. Only at the last moment did the Jewish delegation elaborate a revised set of principles on which an acceptable agreement could be built, the only novelty being the possibility of a "federal" arrangement for Palestine, "providing for full Jewish control over immigration in an area adequate to allow for a further growth of the Jewish National Home, and with federal institutions based on parity." LCW XIX, 27. Cf. *ibid.*, 24–27, 31f.; PCW II, 394; Bauer, *From Diplomacy*, 37; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 257, 265f.; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 110, 112.
137. In vain had George Antonius and Jamal al-Husaini argued that "Arabs and Jews would get on well together" and that "the difficulties would disappear" only when the Jews were made to realise that "the period during which they possessed exceptional privileges was passing away" and that they would have to "adjust themselves to a State in which they would have the rights of ordinary citizens." SJC/A Meetings, 4 and 6 March 1939, ISA 65/388. Cf. Suwaidi Remarks, SJC/A Meeting, 7 March 1939, *loc. cit.*; MacDonald–Hamza Talk, 3 March 1939 (n.131). At the same time, MacDonald completely lost the confidence of the Jews, who were bent on avoiding *any* form of minority status.
138. See n.123. He repeated the same argument to Weizmann privately several months after the end of the Conferences. See: Shertok(?), Note of Talk between Weizmann and MacDonald, 13 May 1939, CZA, S25/7642; LCW XIX, 69n.
139. SJC/A Meeting, 15 March 1939, ISA 65/374. MacDonald was echoing earlier remarks by members of the Palestine Arab delegation, who had argued that "co-operation between the two peoples of Palestine ... would never come" so long as the Jews had "the moral and physical force of the British Government behind them." SJC/A Meeting, 6 March 1939, ISA 65/388.
140. Panel Meeting, 12 February 1939 (n.113); SJC/J Meeting, 13 February 1939, CZA, S25/7632; PCW II, 363; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 250.
141. SJC/J Meetings, 11–12 March 1939 (n.132).
142. SJC/J Meeting, 6 March 1939, *loc. cit.* Cf. SJC/A Meeting, 6 March 1939 (n.139).
143. SJC/A Meeting, 4 March 1939, ISA 65/388. Cf. Panel Meeting, 16 March 1939, CZA, S25/7643.
144. Ben-Gurion Remarks, SJC/J Meeting, 11 March 1939, S25/7635.
145. SJC/A Meetings, 1 and 17 March 1939, ISA 65/374.
146. SJC/J Meeting, 11 March 1939 (n.132); *Letters to Paula*, 238. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 155.
147. Arab fears of the sinister influence of "Jewish power" over London were commonly expressed during the Conferences by Palestinians Jamal al-Husaini, G. Antonius, Egypt's Abd ar-Rahman Azzam and even Transjordan's Tawfiq Abul Huda. See: SJC/A Meetings of 1 and 17 March (ISA 65/374), 4, 6, 7 March (65/388). For Jewish fears of a British pro-Arab tilt, see: Ben-Gurion Remarks, ZE Meeting, 28 February 1939, CZA, S25/7643; SJC/J Meeting, 12 March 1939 (n.132); Bearsted Remarks, ZE Meeting, 16 March 1939, Z4/302/23; Samuel–MacDonald Talk, 15 May 1939 (n.102).
148. FRUS 1939 IV, 751; LCW XIX, 34, 72n., 124, 132f., 264; *Baffy*, 141.

CHAPTER 5

Anticipating the White Paper

1. Cmd. 6019; see Katzburg, *From Partition to White Paper*, 137–54.
2. Memoranda to United Kingdom Delegation, 18 and 22 March 1939, ISA 65/570. Cf. PRO, CO 733/409, file 75872/60; Joseph Diary, 28 April 1939, CZA, S25/43; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 82f.
3. *Ibid.*, 83–5; Porath, *Palestinian Arab*, 287f.; Jankowski, “Government of Egypt”, 440f. Zionists were angered at this attempt to reformulate British policy behind their backs and at their further expense. See: ZE to Joseph, 13 April 1939, S25/45; LCW XIX, 42, 47; FRUS 1939 IV, 740f.; Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 221f., 227f., 248f., 256f., 260, 264f.
4. Lourie, Note (28 April) of Interview between MacDonald and Shertok, 27 April 1939, CZA, S25/7642; Shertok(?), Note of Interview between MacDonald and Weizmann, 13 May 1939, *loc. cit.*; Dugdale, Note of Interview with MacDonald, 4 July 1939, *loc. cit.*; *Baffy*, 142; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 166–229 and 247–85, *passim*.
5. ZE Meeting, 16 March 1939, Z4/302/23; Panel Meeting, 16 March 1939, S25/7643; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 167, 171; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* II, 109, and *Letters to Paula*, 239.
6. ZE Meeting, 16 March 1939 (n.5); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 166–8. On Ali Mahir, see Documents 26, 27; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 78f.; Ben-Gurion, *My Talks*, 262f.; Jankowski, *op. cit.*, 439.
7. LCW XIX, 33f. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 192f.; Rose, *Gentile Zionists*, 195; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* II, 114. Zionists also used the delay to try to mobilise U.S. pressure on the British. See: LCW XIX, 39f., 41–3, 50–3, 68; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 189, 250f., 253, 258, 260f., 264, 272f., 278, 284, 287f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 160
8. Document 28. Cf. C. Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (London 1949), 502; LCW XIX, 55, 60. On Mahmud’s views on an Arab–Jewish compromise for Palestine, see Porath, *op. cit.*, 284; Jankowski, *op. cit.*, 440f., and “Egyptian Responses”, 17f. In the post-war period, Ali Mahir would be seen by the Zionists as a potential supporter of their preferred solution, partition. See LCW XXII, 128; Sasson, *On the Road*, 364; below, page 142.

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9. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 224–6, 237; FRUS 1939 IV, 740f.
10. FRUS 1939 IV, 750; Porath, *op. cit.*, 288f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 85f.; Haim, *Abandonment*, 143.
11. Even Lord Samuel, whose own scheme had contributed some important elements to the Colonial Secretary’s thinking, failed to see “any prospect of a settlement” in the plan to give the Arabs a veto over Jewish immigration. There was “no adequate reason”, he argued, for the Arabs “to agree to any immigration after five years; and they could expect that the methods which had been successful in 1939 could at any time be repeated, and would be equally successful in 1944 or 1949. In placing the Jews in a position in which they would be compelled to accept a compromise with the Arabs [the British] had placed the Arabs in a position in which they on their side need not accept one.” Samuel, Note of Interview with MacDonald, 15 May 1939, ISA 100/21. Cf. Sharett, *op. cit.*, 272; LCW XIX, 103f.
12. Epstein, Note of Talk with “A.D.”, 26 May 1939, CZA, S25/3141. Cf. LCW XIX, 53; Joseph, Note on Aguda Contacts with Arabs, 24 February 1943, S25/3049.
13. Epstein–A.D. Talk, 26 May 1939 (n.12); Zaslani and Sasson, “Proposals to Arrange a Secret Accord with the Opposition”, 26 May 1939, S25/3246; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 325. Cf. Sasson, *On the Road*, 343.

14. E.g., Goren, *Dissenter*, 394f.; Sasson, Note of Talk with Kalvaryski, 19 August 1942, S25/3093.
15. Porath, *op. cit.*, 291–3; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 240; Shertok Report (Talk with J. Mardam), JAE Meeting, 7 November 1943, CZA; N. Vilenski, Note of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 20 December 1943, S25/3115; Cornwallis to F.O., 4 December 1944, PRO, FO 371/40138, file E7436/95/31.
16. The peak of British annoyance at Zionist obstructionism came in September 1941, not from London but from Jerusalem. For the HC's recommendations to "dis-establish" the J.A. unless it loyally accepted the White Paper, see MacMichael to Moyne, 1 September 1941, CO 733/444, file 75872/115.
17. Lloyd to MacMichael, 4 July 1940, PRO, FO 371/24549, file E2152/2029/65; Newcombe (via Newton) to Lloyd, 3 and 6 August 1940, *loc. cit.*; Newcombe to Colonial Secretary, 7 February 1946, MEC, Spears Papers V/3. Cf. al-Hout, *Political Leadership*, 433f.; Bauer, *From Diplomacy*, 127; G. Furlonge, *Palestine is My Country* (New York 1969), 127f.; J.C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine* (New York 1950), 148–50; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 64
18. Weizmann Report, ZE Meeting, 29 October 1940, CZA, ZA/302/24; LCW XX, 62.
19. Newcombe to Weizmann (encl. Memorandum), 3 November 1940, A312/55; LCW, *loc. cit.*
20. LCW XX, 68f.
21. LCW XX, 62–4. In the spring of 1941, American officials also began to consider similar suggestions by a prominent New York Arab to bring pressure to bear on Dr Weizmann, but soon realised the futility of such an approach. FRUS 1941 III, 599; N. Butler to C.W. Baxter, 9 May 1941, PRO, FO 371/27043, file E2702/53/65.

Grass-Roots Contacts Inside Palestine

22. E.g. Weizmann, Note (2 October) of Meeting with Egyptian Ambassador, London, 28 September 1939, WA; LCW XIX, 145, 192f.; FRUS 1943 IV, 759; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 90.
23. Katzburg, *op. cit.*, 155–9; Halifax, Draft Memorandum, January 1940, PRO, FO 371/23242, file E8134/6/31; G. Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine, 1939–1942* (Heb.) (Jerusalem 1976), docs. 8–11; Porath, *op. cit.*, 290f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 88–98.
24. FRUS 1941 III, 599. Cf. *ibid.*, 603f.; MacMichael to Moyne, 24 April 1941, PRO, CO 733/446, file 76032; Butler to Baxter, 9 May 1941 (n.21).
25. Gruenbaum Remarks, JAE Meeting, 17 August 1941, CZA. Cf. Moyne, Note of Interview with Ben-Gurion, 21 August 1941, PRO, CO 733/446, file 76033/3; Sasson, *On the Road*, 196.
26. For a comprehensive mid-war survey, see, e.g., Shertok Report, Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942, CZA, S25/8987. For selected references to specific countries, see:

Egypt: Sasson Note, 16 July 1941, S25/3140/I; Vilenski to Shertok, 10 August 1941, S25/3568; Shertok Reports (re: M. Azmi), JAE Meetings, 17 August 1941, 12 September and 27 December 1943; Vilenski to Joseph, 14 January 1943, S25/3186; Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 13 February 1944; Joseph, Note of Meeting between Ben-Gurion, Kaplan and Sir Amin Osman, 22 February 1944, S25/44; Joseph Diary, 30 March and 19 April 1944, *loc. cit.*; Sharett, *Political Diary* V, 246f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 281–3, 286f., 333–5, 345–7; Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.*, 141.

Syria: Sasson, Note (9 July) of Talk with L. al-Haffar, 3 July 1939, S25/3139; Sasson Memoranda, 6 May (S25/3051) and 9 June (S25/3115) 1940; Joseph Report (Talk with Mardam), JAE Meeting, 2 November 1941; Shertok Reports,

- JAE Meetings, 31 October and 7 November 1943; Sasson, Note of Talk with L. al-Haffar, 7 March 1944, S25/7488; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 154, 164f., 168f., 185–9, 261–4, 292, 314–6, 344.
- Iraq:** Epstein to Shertok, 28 August 1941, A209/98; Shertok Reports (Talks with Nuri), JAE Meetings, 27 July 1941 and 30 January 1944; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 212–5, 293, 326f..
- Lebanese Maronites:** Shertok Reports, JAE Meetings, 27 July and 26 October 1941; Epstein Reports, 9 and 25 June 1942, S25/3580; Joseph Report, JAE Meeting, 4 January 1943; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 186f., 219–22, 224–6, 265.
27. 1 July 1939, S25/3504 (see photocopy, following page XX). Cf. A.H. Cohen, Note of Talk between Joseph and al-Unsi, 11 May 1939, S25/3052; Kalvaryski, Report of Talks in Transjordan, 2–7 June 1941, S25/3504.
 28. See, e.g., MacMichael to Moyné, 1 September 1941, PRO, CO 733/444, file 75872/115; al-Hout, *op. cit.*, 435–8; A.H. Cohen, Note of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 15 August 1939, CZA, S25/3115; Sasson, Note (28 November) of Talk with al-Unsi, 27 November 1939, *loc. cit.*; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 115f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 183f., 198, 200, 205, 215f., 227f., 235, 251–7, 291, 293f., 317f., 345; J. Kimche, *The Second Arab Awakening* (London 1970), 162–5; Abidi, *Jordan*, 19–22; Shwadran, *Jordan*, 232f.; Y. Nevo, “Abdallah and the Arabs of Palestine”, *Wiener Library Bulletin XXXI* (1978), 51. Cf. above, n.58 to Chapter 1.
 29. Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 22 November 1942, CZA. Cf. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 228 on Zionist reactions to earlier overtures.
 30. In late 1943, Shertok and al-Unsi were still discussing the prospects, although in noncommittal terms. Shertok, Note of Talk (n.d. – perhaps 2 November 1943), S25/3504. Cf. Bauer, *From Diplomacy*, 262f.; below, pages 145f. and 158f.
 31. Halifax Memorandum, January 1940 (n.23); M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 65.
 32. Kalvaryski Speech, LJAR Jerusalem Meeting, [8 October] 1939, A113/14, and Report of Meeting, S25/3093; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 7 July 1940, CZA; Kalvaryski, Report of Talk with Abdallah, June 1941 (n.27). Cf. Amery to MacMichael, 27 September 1939, MEC, MacMichael Papers; Society of Friends, *Yearly Proceedings* 1940, 181f.; *Zionist Review*, 26 October 1939, 3f.; Hattis, *Bi-National Idea*, 211f.
 33. Kalvaryski Memorandum, 7 August 1939, A113/14; Joint Meeting between Representatives of LJAR and JAE, 25 October 1939, S25/10095; Hattis, *op. cit.*, 222–4.
 34. See n.125 to Chapter 4; Joint Meeting, 25 October 1939 (n.33).
 35. MacMichael to MacDonald, 29 December 1939, PRO, FO 371/24563, file E1066/20/31. Cf. Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 356.
 36. Same to same, 31 December 1939, *loc. cit.*, file E612/20/31. Later reports used the expressions “superficial tolerance and even goodwill” and “welcome détente”. Same to same, 6 April 1940, *loc. cit.*, file E1066/20/31; same to Moyné, 25 March 1941, CO 733/439, file 75156/143/Pt.1; same to same, 9 April 1941, CO 733/446, file 76032. Cf. FRUS 1940 III, 830f., 839; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 202.
 37. MacMichael to MacDonald, 6 April 1940 (n.36). For MacMichael’s appraisal of Jewish and Arab determination four years later, see G. Cohen, “Harold MacMichael”, 155.
 38. Moyné to MacMichael, 6 August 1941, CO 733/444, file 75872/115. Cf. Mallet to Eastwood, 16 September 1940, FO 371/24569, file E2635/2635/31; Shertok Report (Talk with Moyné), JAE Meeting, 22 August 1943, CZA.
 39. Kirkbride, Note (19 June) of Meeting with S. Tuqan, S. at-Taji and Abd al-Qadir Muzaffar, 14 June 1940, PRO, FO 371/24563, file E2480/20/31; MacMichael, Notes of Interviews with Tuqan, 28 September 1940 and 14 January 1941, FO

- 371/27137, files E374 and E1125/374/31; MacMichael to Moyne, 16 January 1941, *loc. cit.*; Bennett Minute, 3 July 1941, CO 733/444, file 75872/115; Porath, *op. cit.*, 293.
- For descriptions of the confusion and leadership vacuum in the Palestinian Arab community at this time, see: Sharett, *op. cit.*, 325; Meeting on Activity among the Arabs, 17 October 1939, S25/3097; Shertok Report, Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942 (n.26); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 174–7, 202f., 302f., 310–12, 323f.; MacMichael to MacDonald, 31 December 1939 (n.36); same to Moyne, 27 June 1940, PRO, FO 371/24563, file E2480/20/31; FRUS 1940 III, 830f.
40. Sasson, Plan for Work Among the Arabs, 21 April 1939, CZA, S25/3100 and *On the Road*, 157–9. Cf. Black, *Zionism and the Arabs*, 406f.
 41. Zaslani and Sasson, “Proposals to Arrange a Secret Accord with the Opposition”, 26 May 1939 (n.13). Cf. Joseph Diary, 19 and 29 May 1939, S25/43. For the HC’s assessment of Fakhri, see MacMichael to Moyne, 9 April 1941 (n.36), and sources cited in n.100 to Chapter 4. The Nashashibi faction maintained its pro-White Paper line even after Fakhri’s assassination in Baghdad in November 1941. See, e.g., Shertok Speeches, Inner Actions Ctee., 6 January 1942 (S25/3100) and Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942 (n.26); M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 64.
 42. Shertok speeches cited in n.41; Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 326; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 26 October 1941, CZA; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 174–7; Bauer, *op. cit.*, 74f., 394.
 43. Report to JAE Meeting, 22 August 1943, CZA.
 44. Sasson Memoranda, 18 June and 27 August 1941, S25/3140/I. Cf. Sasson to Ben-Gurion, 17 November 1939, S25/3100; *On the Road*, 231–3, 263; Elath, *op. cit.*, 248, 266. For a British reaction to the split between the J.A. leadership and the Jewish dissenters, see MacMichael to Moyne, 13 July 1941, PRO, CO 733/444, file 75872/115.
 45. Speech to Inner Actions Ctee., 6 January 1942 (n.41). Cf. Sasson Memorandum, 9 September 1941, S25/3140/I; *On the Road*, 321f.; Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 100–4.
 46. See FD I, Chapter 4.
 47. For details on local contacts and relations, see: Meeting of 17 October 1939 (n.39); Meeting re: Activity among the Arabs, 19 February 1940, S25/3097; Sasson Notes, 21 April and 28 May 1940, S25/3051; Sasson, Note (6 October) of Talk with O.S. al-Barghuthi, 4 October 1940, S25/3115; Shertok Reports, JAE Meetings, 7 July 1940 and 17 August 1941, CZA; Sasson, Note (5 June) on Three Talks between Shertok and Arif al-Arif, ? April – 2 June 1941, S25/3115; Memorandum on Improvement of Local Relations, 13 November 1942, S25/1571; Sasson, Budget Proposal for Arab Section (1943–44), 26 September 1943, S25/3016; Y. Landau Memorandum, 13 December 1944, S25/3049; Memorandum of Meeting with Dr. Weizmann at Rehovot, 2 February 1945, WA; *Baffy*, 135f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 192–4, 198–200, 202f., 228f., 238f., 323f.; Porath, *op. cit.*, 249f., 254–6.

Bi-National/Federation Proposals

48. Kalvaryski Memorandum, 27 July 1939, CZA, A113/32/2; Ruppin, quoted in Minority Opinions (Ctee. on Arab Question), 10 November 1942, S25/204; Sasson Memorandum, 7 August 1942, S25/3093; PCW II, 480.
49. Sharett, *Political Diary* V, 248; A. Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, 285. Jabr had held several talks with Shertok in late 1940 on the general topic of a Palestine solution via federation, and was subsidised by the J.A. for a trip to Baghdad. See: Sasson, Note (8 December) of Talk with Jabr, 29 November 1940, S25/2965; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 115.
50. For Ben-Gurion’s objections and Shertok’s reply to Jabr, see: JAE Meeting, 17

- August 1941, CZA, and Sharett, *op. cit.*, 248f. Cf. Kalvaryski, Note of Talk with Ben-Gurion, 21 July 1941, A113/23/2; Cohen, *op. cit.*, 286.
51. Sharett, *loc. cit.*; Kalvaryski–Ben-Gurion Talk, 21 July 1941 (n.50).
 52. Nevertheless, Jabr was not averse to maintaining continued relations with Agency representatives. See: Sasson, Note of Talk with Kalvaryski, 19 August 1941, S25/3093; Sasson Memorandum, 7 August 1942, *loc. cit.*; Sasson, Note (7 April) of Talk between Joseph, Jabr and Kalvaryski, 5 April 1943, S25/3115.

After Biltmore

53. Laqueur, *Israel–Arab Reader*, doc. 19; Bauer, *From Diplomacy*, Chap. 6; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 130f.; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 282–8.
54. See: FRUS 1943 IV, 755, 778; PCW II, 507, 516; I. Berlin, Note (18 May) of Talk with Weizmann, 17 May 1943, PRO, FO 371/35034, file E3112/87/31; Sasson, *On the Road*, 260.
55. FRUS 1943 IV, 760, 762.
56. Ben-Gurion Speech, Inner Actions Ctee., 5 July 1943, CZA, A113/22/2; Bauer, *op. cit.*, 246f., 257f.; LCW XX, 317; Shertok Report, Ctee. on Arab Question, 12 March 1942 (n.26).
57. Nuri as-Sa'id took the lead in this campaign. See: Sharett, *Political Diary* IV, 483, 513; Sasson, Note of Talk with M. al-Unsi, 5 February 1943, S25/3504; FRUS 1940 III, 842; Hamza to MacDonald, 9 March 1940, PRO, CO 733/409, file 75872/60; G. Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine*, docs. 8–11; Cornwallis to F.O., 4 December 1944 (n.15); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 191, 216–8; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 88–98.
58. G. Cohen, *loc. cit.*; FRUS 1942 IV, 552f.; *ibid.* 1943 IV, 748f.; Peterson Minute, 17 March 1943, PRO, FO 371/35033, file E2342/87/31; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 90–92.
59. Draft Memorandum to Cabinet, 13(?) April 1943, PRO, FO 371/35033, file E2341/87/31; FRUS 1943 IV, 747, 748f., 751–5, 769f., 773f., 779f., 782, 785f., 789; *ibid.* 1944 V, 571–3, 577–9, 582, 590f., 597, 608, 614f., 638–40, 652–4; Ibn Sa'ud Message to H.M.G., 12 December 1944, FO 371/45391, file E161/119/31. Cf. Shertok, Diary Notes of Talk with Nuri as-Sa'id, 29 July 1943, S25/3294; LCW XXI, 20; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 240, 246f., 260, 283f., 293f., 315f., 318f., 338; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 161.
60. Shertok, Note of Talk with Sasson, Kalvaryski and A. Cohen, 21 June 1943, S25/3094; Kalvaryski, Hirsch and A. Cohen to Weizmann, 26 February 1944, S25/3093; Hattis, *op. cit.*, 273–7; A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 310–12. For previous contacts, see: FD I, 99f., 224.; n.102 to Chapter 3; Sasson–Barghuthi Talk, 4 October 1940 (n.47); Sasson Memorandum, 7 August 1942 (n.52); Sasson to Ben-Gurion, 27 July 1943, S25/3140/II; Ben-Gurion Memorandum, 27 July 1943, S25/3094.
61. Ben-Gurion Memorandum, *loc. cit.*
62. JAE Meeting, 25 July 1943, CZA. Cf. Sasson Memorandum, 20 June 1943, S25/3093; JAE Meeting, 18 July 1943.
63. The fact that the discussions did not remain secret added to the Agency's suspicions that an internal, anti-Biltmore conspiracy was at work.
64. Sasson Memorandum (25 July) on Talk with Barghuthi, 23 July 1943, S25/3094; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 25 July 1943.
65. Sasson Memorandum, 12 August 1943, S25/3094.
66. Kalvaryski Memorandum (24 July) on Meeting with Sasson and Barghuthi, 23 July 1943; Kalvaryski to Shertok, 10 August 1943; Cohen (?), Memorandum on Rumoured Negotiations, 13 September 1943 – all in S25/3094.
67. Kalvaryski to Shertok, 10 August 1943; Cohen to Shertok, 1 September 1943; M. Oren to Shertok, 28 September 1943 – all in S25/3094. Also: Senator Remarks, JAE Meeting, 12 September 1943; Kalvaryski et al. to Weizmann, 26 February 1944 (n.60).

68. In an apparent effort to avert Ben-Gurion's accusations that he was not sufficiently fluent in Arabic to conduct such talks, Cohen engaged the services of a Hebrew University Professor of Arabic, Yitzhak Shamosh. The latter proceeded to provide the J.A.'s Political Department with secret reports of Cohen's activities. See: Shamosh reports, 16, 23, 26, 31 January and 13 February 1944, S25/3094.
- At the same time, Kalvaryski and Cohen approached Dr Magnes for his support. Magnes proceeded to meet with Barghuthi, to learn at first hand about Arab attitudes towards the bi-national/federation solution. See Goren, *op. cit.*, 398-402.
69. Apparently in recognition of the reluctance of many fellow Palestinians, Omar Salih claimed he wanted to involve Nuri as-Sa'id in a role akin to that played by Faisal twenty-five years earlier. But there is no evidence indicating that the Iraqi leader was interested in providing the external persuasion needed to overcome the widespread local rejection of Zionism, even if diluted in the form of a bi-national state. See: Goren, *op. cit.*, 399; Shertok Report (Talk with Nuri), JAE Meeting, 30 January 1944 (no mention of Barghuthi); Joseph Diary, 13 February 1944, S25/44; Shamosh Report, 13 February 1944, (n.68); Sasson, Note (28 February) of Talk with Barghuthi, 24 February 1944, S25/3115; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 312. On Nuri as-Sa'id's own "Fertile Crescent Unity" scheme, see below, page 133 (n.94).
70. Cf. above, pages 90f.; Sasson, Note of Talk with Kalvaryski, 19 August 1942 (n.14).
71. Goren, *op. cit.*, 400f.; Shamosh Reports, 26, 31 January and 13 February 1944 (n.68); Joseph Diary, 13 February 1944 (n.69).
72. 24 February 1944 (n.69). Cf. Joseph Diary, 1 March 1944, S25/44; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 340.
73. 26 February 1944 (n.60); A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 328.
74. E.g., PCW II, 480; Sasson, *loc. cit.*
75. Esp. Joseph and Ben-Gurion, at JAE Meetings, 18 and 25 July 1943. Cf. Kalvaryski et al. to Weizmann, 26 February 1944 (n.60); A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 310.
76. *Ibid.*, 311f. The Executive's role in this affair was also criticised by Cohen during a meeting with Weizmann and others, Rehovot, 2 February 1945, WA.

A Palestine Solution through Arab Federation?

77. E.g., Shertok Report, JAE Meeting 25 July 1943, CZA.
78. Above, pages 6f., 15f., 48f., 56, 77, 103. Documents 2, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20, 26, 27. Cf. Caplan, "Faisal Ibn Husain and the Zionists", *International History Review*, V (1983), 567f.; Y. Thon, Personal Memorandum on his Particular Views not Included in the Majority Report of the Ctee. on Arab-Jewish Relations, 3 November 1942, S25/204.
79. E.g., October 1939 meetings cited in n.18, above; Vilenski to Shertok, 10 August 1941, S25/3568; Sasson, Proposal for Activities of Arab Section (1942-43), 23 August 1942, S25/3016; Sasson, *On the Road*, 157; Sharett, *Political Diary IV*, 346.
80. Moyne to MacMichael, 6 August 1941 (n.38). Cf. M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 90, 146.
81. Mallet to Eastwood, 16 September 1940, PRO, FO 371/24569, file E2635/2635/31. Cf. Lloyd to MacMichael, 24 September 1940, CO 733/444, file 75872/115. By autumn of the following year, the pro-Zionist Secretary of State for India, Leopold Amery, wrote that "one way or another some sort of Arab federation with a Jewish sub-division of Palestine as a unit in it now seems the only possible solution.... The thing [would be] no longer seen in the narrow perspective of Palestine Arabs afraid of being swamped but of the much larger Arab world, in which the Jewish unit could be a stimulating and fertilising element but not likely ever to be strong enough numerically to dominate the rest." Amery to Churchill, 10 September 1941, PREM 4/52/5.
82. Eden to Churchill, 29 September 1941, *loc. cit.* Cf. LCW XX, 42.

83. R.W. MacDonald, *The League of Arab States* (Princeton 1965), 317f. Cf. Furlonge, *Palestine is my Country*, 130–7.
- On the frequently expressed Arab wish to keep the European Jewish question distinct from the Palestine issue, see also: sources cited in n.121 to Chapter 3; Documents 26, 32(b); Ben-Gurion Report (Talk with F. Kattani), JAE Meeting, 6 October 1942; Vilenski, Note of Talk with Awni Abd al-Hadi, 20 December 1943, CZA, S25/3115; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 202; FRUS 1946 VII, 636; Childs to Secretary of State, 6 July 1946, NA, 867N.01/7-646; Ireland, Note of Talk with Dr F. al-Mulki, 31 October 1946, *loc. cit.*/10-3146; Ireland, Note of Talk with Abd ar-Rahman Azzam, 2 November 1946, *loc. cit.*/11-546; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 148.
84. G. Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine*, Ch.4; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, Ch.8; Sasson–Barghuthi Talk, 4 October 1940 (n.47); JAE Meeting, 27 July 1941, CZA; Report of the Ctee. on Arab–Jewish Relations, 19 August 1942, S25/204 (Ch.1) and A113/21 (Ch.3); LCW XX, 191; Magnes pamphlets, “Palestine and Arab Union”, dated 22 June and 28 July 1941 (CZA, S25/1090), 19 May 1942, (PRO, PREM 4/52/5) and “Compromise for Palestine”, 8 October 1944 (CZA, S25/2962); Sharett, *Political Diary* V, 115; Epstein, Report of Talks with E. Eddé and R. as-Sulh, 9 June 1942, CZA, S25/3580; Sasson, Note of Talk between Joseph, A. Jabr and Kalvaryski, 5 April 1943 (n.52); Shertok Report (talks with M. Azmi, Nuri as-Sa’id), JAE Meetings, 12 September 1943 and 30 January 1944, CZA; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 187f., 253, 258f., 340f.
85. Moyne–Ben-Gurion Interview, 21 August 1941 (n.25); Shertok Speech, 6 January 1942 (n.41) and Report, 12 March 1942 (n.26); LCW XX, 202f., 259f.
86. The Palestine “solution” through an Arab federation scheme should be seen in the light of the hopes expressed by some Jews that, once the war was over, “Mr Churchill and Mr Roosevelt would have so much prestige that they would be able to put across any policy they desired.” Melchett Remarks, ZE Meeting, 23 November 1942, CZA, Z4/302/26. Cf. Shertok Report (Talk with Kirkbride), JAE Meeting, 22 November 1942, CZA; LCW XX, 186f.; PCW II, 461; FRUS 1943 IV, 792f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 162; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 287.
87. See: MacMichael to Moyne, 13 July 1941, PRO, CO 733/444, file 75872/115; Moyne–Ben-Gurion Interview, 21 August 1941 (n.25); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 267–73; G. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 42f.; Katzburg, *The Palestine Problem in British Policy, 1940–1945* (Heb.) (Jerusalem 1977), 21; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 162f.
88. PCW II, 441f.; Moyne–Ben-Gurion Interview, 21 August 1941 (n.25). For a brief moment Dr Weizmann thought that he had convinced the Colonial Secretary to agree to this approach, both Lord Moyne and his aides remained convinced that Jews and Arabs would “have to come to an agreement *by themselves*” over this issue. They saw little prospect of the British government using “federation as a sort of lever for securing” Arab agreement to a future Jewish state. See: LCW XX, 186 (quoted, my emphasis) and XXI, 20; Mallet to Eastwood, 16 September 1940 (n.81); Eastwood to Mallet, 14 October 1940, PRO, FO 371/24569, file E2635/2635/31; Moyne to MacMichael, 11 July 1941, and MacMichael to Moyne, 1 September 1941, CO 733/444, file 75872/115; S. Luke Minute, 26 August 1941, CO 733/446, file 76033/3.
89. Shertok Speech, 6 January 1942 (n.41) and Report, 12 March 1942 (n.26); Joseph–Jabr Talk, 5 April 1943 (n.52); Sasson Memorandum, 12 August 1943 (n.65); Shertok Reports (Talks with Nuri as-Sa’id and Jamil Mardam), JAE Meetings, 22 August and 7 November 1943, CZA; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 253, 256, 263.
90. E.g., PCW II, 441f.; Shertok–Kirkbride Talk, November 1942 (n.86); Sharett, *op. cit.*, 246f.
91. MacMichael to Moyne, 13 July 1941 (n.87); Epstein–Sulh Talk, 9 June 1942 (n.84); Sasson–Unsi Talk, 5 February 1943 (n.57); Joseph–Jabr Talk, 5 April 1943 (n.52); Shertok–Kirkbride Talk, November 1942 (n.86); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 216f., 227, 340,

343.

92. Speech, 6 January 1942 (n.41) and Report, 12 March 1942 (n.26); *Political Diary V*, 91, 204f. Even non-Palestinian Arabs often told Zionists and Englishmen that they wished to concentrate on solving problems between Arabs and Jews in the local Palestinian context first and foremost. See, e.g., Shahbandar, quoted in Document 20; Downie, Note (4 March) of Talk between MacDonald and F. Hamza, 3 March 1939, PRO, FO 371/23228, file E1759/6/31; Goren, *Dissenter*, 393, 395f.
93. Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, Open Letter to Magnes, 14 December 1941, CZA, S25/3093; Sasson-Kalvaryski Talk, 19 August 1942 (n.14).

Grand Designs: The Philby Scheme

94. On Nuri as-Sa'id, see: Sharett, *Political Diary V*, 235–7; FRUS 1943 IV, 753–5, 778; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 30 January 1944; Sasson, *On the Road*, 317f., 326f., 348f.; *Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East*, vol.II, ed. J.C. Hurewitz (Princeton 1956), 236f. Cf. Document 19(b,c). In her treatment of Nuri's wartime diplomacy, Bayan al-Hout notes that Palestinian Arab leaders voiced objections to his proposals to grant special status for the Jews in Palestine. *Political Leadership*, 438–40.
On Abdallah's proposals, see: Abdallah, *Memoirs*, ed. P. Graves (London 1950), 262f.; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 293, 300f., 317f., 345; extracts from the Jordanian White Book (1947) in *Political and Social Thought in the Contemporary Middle East*, ed. K. Karpat (New York 1968), 245–50; M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 145; sources cited in n.28, above.
95. See Document 29 and PCW II, 371–3 for the principal discussions between Philby and Zionist leaders. Other available published accounts of this episode may be found in: FRUS 1943 IV, *passim*; Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 525f, 531–5; H. St-John Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, Ch.xvii, esp. 212f.; Monroe, *Philby of Arabia*, 221–5; Hattis-Rolef, "The Zionists and St John Philby", *Jewish Social Studies XXXIV* (1972), 114–7; A. Ilan, *America, Britain and Palestine* (Heb.) (Jerusalem 1979), 125–34; G. Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine*, Ch.4; M. Kedem, "Weizmann, the Philby Plan, and the Hoskins Mission" (Heb.), *Kivunim* no.9 (November 1980), 61–75; and, most recently, Y. Porath, "Weizmann, Churchill and the 'Philby Plan', 1937–1943", *Studies in Zionism* no.10 (Autumn 1984), 239–72.
96. Bracken to Churchill, 31 October 1939, PRO, PREM 4/51/9; LCW XIX, 181; Philby, *op. cit.*, 213. Cf. FD I, 90, 251.
97. See, e.g., Sharett, *Political Diary III*, 332. As noted earlier (above, pages 61f. and 67f.), Zionists had attempted without success to establish contacts with Saudi representatives, especially during 1937–38. Sharett, *ibid.* II, 132, 163, 167, 175; *ibid.* III, 310.
98. Lloyd to MacMichael, 24 September 1940, PRO, CO 733/444, file 75872/115. Cf. ZE Meeting, 9 May 1939, CZA, Z4/302/23; Sharett, *ibid.* IV, 76–8, 193f., 326; LCW XIX, 130; PCW II, 361; Ben-Gurion, *Letters to Paula*, 178f., 183; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 235; above, page 98.
99. JAE Meeting, 26 November 1939, CZA. Cf. *Baffy*, 161; Sharett, *op. cit.*, 376.
100. *Ibid.*, 375f. Namier's account (PCW II, 371–3) makes no reference to Shertok's tough cross-examination of Philby.
101. PCW, *loc. cit.* Cf. LCW XXI, 108f.; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 27 April 1943, CZA.
102. FRUS 1940 III, 839f. Two days later Weizmann met with President Roosevelt, in the company of Lord Lothian, the British Ambassador to Washington. Perhaps because of the presence of the latter, Weizmann made no specific mention of Ibn Sa'ud or of Philby. PCW II, 392–5.

103. Dora Philby to Namier, 21 February 1940, WA. Cf. LCW XIX, 224; Philby, Note (17 November) of Talk with Col. Hoskins, 15 November 1943, CZA, Z4/14615; Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, 213. Philby admitted to committing this forbidden indiscretion by mentioning the matter to Yusuf Yasin and to Bashir Sa'dawi, thus incurring a rebuke from the King. See: *ibid.*, 214; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 27 April 1943. Cf. Document 30.
104. D. Philby to Weizmann, 16 April 1940, WA. Cf. Weizmann to D. Philby, 24 April 1940, WA; LCW XIX, 266n.
 Even though Philby left Arabia in July 1940, he continued to insist (as late as June 1944) that Ibn Sa'ud remained interested in his scheme. See: J.M. Martin to Churchill, 3 November 1941, PRO, PREM 4/52/5; Jebb, Note of Meeting with Philby, 8 June 1943, FO 371/34959, file E3327/506/65; Philby-Hoskins Talk, 15 November 1943 (n.103); LCW XXI, 191.
105. PCW II, 428f.
106. E.g., Mallet to Eastwood, 16 September 1940 (n.81).
107. Amery to Churchill, 10 September 1941, PRO, PREM 4/52/5.
108. LCW XX, 125f.; Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 525f.; FRUS 1942 IV, 550; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 143.
109. On British doubts, see: MacMichael to Moyne, 1 September 1941 (n.88); Martin to Churchill, 3 November 1941 (n.104); Moyne to Churchill, 6 November 1941, PREM 4/52/5; Eden, Note (9 February) of Talk with Weizmann, 6 February 1942, FO 371/31378, file E1021/6/31 (cf. Weizmann's account in CZA, Z4/15199); Eden to Churchill, 3 March 1943, FO 371/35031, file E826/87/31; Hankey and Peterson Minutes, 9 June 1943, FO 371/35034, file E3183/87/31; Note (5 November) of Talk between Peterson and Hoskins, 4 November 1943, FO 371/35041, file E6788/87/31; PCW II, 441; G. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 40, 82-4.
 On Dr Weizmann's "wishful thinking" and possible misreading of British attitudes at this time, see, e.g., Ben-Gurion's view: PCW II, 486.
110. E.g., ZE Meetings, 27 October, 17, 19, 23 November 1942, and 16, 18 January 1943, CZA, Z4/302/26; Thon, Personal Memorandum, 3 November 1942 (n.78); FRUS 1942 IV, 548-51; *ibid.* 1943 IV, 792f.; LCW XIX, 53n.; Document 28; Goren, *Discenter*, 390f. Feelers sent out since 1939 seemed to show that Iraqi collaboration in such a transfer scheme might not, as was first hoped, be forthcoming. The principal go-betweens were E.A. Norman and Montague Bell. See: material in PRO, CO 733/444, file 75906 (February 1941); JAE Meeting, 17 August 1941, CZA; LCW XIX, 55, 113, 242; *ibid.* XX, 301, 379n.; *ibid.* XXI, 117; Sharett, *Political Diary* V, 246f.; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 70f.; above page 102 and sources cited in n.88 to Chapter 4. The suggestion was to be repeated in late 1945. See: R.B. Memminger, Note of Talk with Musa al-Alami, 6 October 1945, NA, 867N.01/10-945; Norman, Memo on the Practical Possibilities of Settling a Large Number of Palestinian Arab Peasants in Iraq, 1 November 1945, *loc. cit.*/11-145; Moose to Secretary of State, 25 November 1945, *loc. cit.*/11-2545, reporting Baghdad press of 22 November.
111. ZE Meetings, 16 and 18 January 1943 (n.110). Although deeply skeptical of putting his trust in Ibn Sa'ud and thereby "putting his head into a noose", Shertok remained attracted to the "core of the Philby Scheme", i.e., that the Jews "should ask for Palestine in exchange for Arab independence elsewhere."
112. Quotations taken from N. Goldmann's Record of the Conversation with State Department Officials, 19 January 1943, WA. Cf. Weizmann Note of Talks, forwarded to Halifax, 30 January 1943, PRO, FO 371/35031, file E826/87/31; LCW XXI, 2n, 3, 19f.; PCW II, 505-8; Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.*, 314. In an apparent attempt to create the appearance that the plan was originating more with "the blessing of Mr Churchill and Mr Roosevelt" than from the Zionists themselves,

- Weizmann on this occasion and afterwards referred to “the Prime Minister’s plan”, which caused ripples of annoyance in British official quarters. See: Weizmann Notes of Meetings of 19 and 26 January 1943, PRO, *loc. cit.*; Eden to Churchill, 3 March 1943, and Peterson to Hopkins, 31 March 1943, *loc. cit.*; Churchill to Eden, 9 March 1943, *loc. cit.*, file E2342/87/31; O. Stanley, Note of Talk with Weizmann, 31 August 1943, FO 371/35038, file E5389/87/31; LCW XX, 125f.; *ibid.* XXI, 118, 191; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 161f.
113. “A fresh start” might be possible, Murray had written in late 1942, only if it were accompanied by increased American economic involvement in Saudi Arabia, and only if “important assurances of a political nature” – “almost certainly an undertaking to renounce political Zionism in the future” – were given “in advance to the King.” FRUS 1942 IV, 553–6. Moshe Shertok, too, had been arguing that the Weizmann–Faisal analogy did not apply to Ibn Sa’ud and the circumstances of the late 1930s and early 1940s. *Political Diary* III, 332; Draft Note of Second Meeting between J.A. and State Department Officials, 3 March 1943, WA.
 114. Weizmann Reports cited in n.112; PCW II, 514f.; Elath, *op. cit.*, 315n. Until then, American interest in the Palestine–Ibn Sa’ud “connection” had taken the form of cautious consideration of appealing to the Saudi king – while proceeding with negotiations for more oil purchases – to “use his great influence in preventing a catastrophe in Palestine” during periods when rioting and attacks on Jews were rumoured possibilities. Once anxious messages about the Palestine situation began reaching Washington from Ibn Sa’ud, President Roosevelt replied to the King that he felt it would be “highly desirable” if the Arabs and Jews “through their own efforts prior to the termination of the war” could reach a “friendly understanding”. Roosevelt had further pledged that “no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews.” See: FRUS 1941 III, 603f.; *ibid.* 1942 IV, 551f.; *ibid.* 1943 IV, 748, 782, 787, 790.
 115. Wikeley to Baxter, 3 May 1943, PRO, FO 371/35034, file E3183/87/31; FRUS 1943 IV, 780f.
 116. FRUS 1943 IV, 761; Second Meeting, 3 March 1943 (n.113); Berlin to Hayter, 5 April 1943, FO 371/35033, file E2399/87/31; Shertok Report, JAE Meeting, 27 April 1943, CZA.
 117. FRUS 1943 IV, 792–4; Weizmann, Note of “Off the Record” Meeting with Roosevelt, Sumner–Welles, 11 June 1943, WA; PCW II, 515–7; LCW XXI, 39n.
 118. FRUS 1943 IV, 795–7. Cf. Winant to Churchill, 14 June 1943, PRO, PREM 4/52/5. The British, although fearful of arousing “wide public controversy” and new uncertainties, nevertheless endorsed the Hoskins mission in the hope that it might result “in educating the President and Mr Welles”, whose views on Palestine appeared, in Foreign Office circles, to be “naive in the extreme”. See: Baxter Minute, 25 June 1943, FO 371/35035, file E3648/87/31; Caccia to Boyd, 20 October 1942, FO 371/31379, file E6079/6/31.
 119. See, e.g., Halifax to Eden, 26 July 1943, FO 371/35036, file E4379/87/31; Casey to F.O., 28 July 1943, *loc. cit.*, file E4437/87/31; Peterson–Hoskins Meeting, 4 November 1943 (n.109). For a sampling of five years of consistent British and American reports of Ibn Sa’ud’s support for the Palestinian–Arab cause and his hostility to Zionism, see: Porath, *Palestinian Arab National Movement*, 200, 204f., 231, 276; sources cited in n.12 to Chapter 3; Lampson to Halifax, 8 July 1938, FO 371/21878, file E4266/10/31; Bullard to Halifax, 16 November 1938, FO 371/21866, file E6860/1/31; same to same, 2 January 1939, FO 371/23220, file E586/6/31; FRUS 1938 II, 994; *ibid.* 1942 IV, 555; *ibid.* 1943 IV, 761, 769f., 773–5, 780f., 796. Only Gen. Patrick Hurley seemed to attribute a less categorically anti-Zionist attitude to the Saudi King, while Sumner Welles minimised the importance of his hostility. See: Magnes, Note of Talk with Hurley, 26 January

- 1944, CAHJP, P3/2497; Joseph, Note of Meeting between Shertok, Ben-Zvi and Hurley, 28 January 1944, CZA, S25/44; PCW II, 515.
120. FRUS 1943 IV, 807–10, and Report (3 November) transmitted to Peterson, 9 November 1943, FO 371/35041, file E6945/87/31; Document 30; Casey to F.O., 8 September 1943, FO 371/35038, file E5469/87/31; LCW XXI, 109. Later the gossip about the alleged bribe-offer was repeated in the context of rumours of Jewish territorial designs in Arabia. Campbell to F.O., 24 December 1947, FO 371/61893, file E12260/951/31.
 121. Stanley–Weizmann Talk, 31 August 1943 (n.112); PCW II, 522f.
 122. Philby–Hoskins Talk, 15 November 1943 (n.103); Ibn Sa'ud to Philby (via F.O.), 31 December 1943, MEC, Philby Papers X/3; LCW XXI, 118; Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 531f.; Philby, *Arabian Jubilee*, 216.
 123. LCW XXI, 109f., 112, 124.
 124. E.g., Namier to Philby, 14 November 1943, MEC, Philby Papers X/3; LCW XXI, 296f.; PCW II, 546f.
 125. Peterson Minute, 6 January 1944, PRO, FO 371/40139, file E206/206/31. Cf. Peterson to Campbell, 25 January 1944, *loc. cit.*
 126. Hankey Minute, 13 January 1944, *loc. cit.*

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. LCW XXI, 147, 296f., 299, 304f.; *ibid.* XXII, 76–84, 124f., 144; PCW II, 540–3, 545–7, 555–61, 568–70, 635; Sasson, *On the Road*, 326, 336f., 384–7; FRUS 1945 VIII, 2f., 7–9, 689f., 713–5, 755f.; *ibid.* 1947 V, 1007f.; Jordan to F.O., 3 February 1945, PRO, FO 371/45236, file E809/3/65; Joseph(?) Diary, 19 August 1945, CZA, S25/1510; Sands to Secretary of State, 7 December 1945, NA, 867N.01/12-745; Johnson to Secretary of State, 19 July 1946, *loc. cit.*/7-1946; al-Hout, *Political Leadership*, 545f. 549f.; Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.*, 59f., 74, 143.
2. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 326. Cf. *ibid.*, 239, 325, 343; Cornwallis to F.O., 4 December 1944, PRO, FO 371/40138, file E7436/95/31; Elath, *op. cit.*, 143, 196.
3. Vilenski to Joseph, 14 January 1943, CZA, S25/3186; JAE Meetings, 22 August and 7 November 1943; Epstein to Shertok, 25 January 1946, S25/451; R. Crossman, Notes on Talks with Weizmann and Shertok, 9 March 1946, MEC, Crossman Papers; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 277; E. Elath (Epstein), *The Struggle for Statehood* (Heb.), vol.I (Tel Aviv 1979), 309–11. Cf. below, pages 142 and 145.
4. Joseph Diary, 30 January 1944, CZA, S25/44; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 308–10, 331, 337.
5. Kimche's paraphrase of Abd ar-Rahman Azzam, *Second Arab Awakening*, 243. Cf. similar sentiments echoed by Awni Abd al-Hadi, Jamal al-Husaini, Musa al-Alami, and Dr H.F. al-Khalidi as recorded in: Sasson, *op. cit.*, 357, 362f., 383, 385; Sasson to Joseph, 12 April 1946, WA; Pinkerton to Secretary of State, 6 May 1946, NA, 867N.01/5-646.

Anglo-American Co-operation

6. See, e.g.: FRUS 1942 IV, 548–50; *ibid.* 1944 V, 624–7; Jewish Agency for Palestine, *Book of Documents Submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations* (New York 1947), 218–25, 233, 236f., 246f.; W. Khalidi, ed., *From Haven to Conquest* (Beirut 1971), 549–56; M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers, 1945–1948* (Princeton 1982), Ch.3.
7. Joseph, Note of Talk with Husni Barazi, 13 February 1946, CZA, S25/2965; Interview, Y. Shimoni, August 1975; B. Crum, *Behind the Silken Curtain* (New York 1947), Ch.12. On Barazi's unexpected endorsement of Abdallah's plans to annex

- Arab Palestine in 1948, see: Memminger to Secretary of State, 29 May 1948, NA, 867N.01/5-2948.
8. For some of the submissions to the Anglo-American Ctee., its recommendations, and reactions to them, see: Laqueur, *Israel-Arab Reader*, docs. 21-3; PCW II, 576-621, 624, 638f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, Ch. 5 and pp.119, 192f.; R. Crossman, *Palestine Mission* (London 1947); Crum, *op. cit.*; FRUS 1945 VIII, 775f.; *ibid.* 1946 VII, 600-34 passim; LCW XXII, 123-6; Khalidi, *op. cit.*, 567-70; Jewish Agency, *Book of Documents*, 267f., 296-8; J.N. Moore, ed., *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, vol.III (Princeton 1974), 255f.; K.R. Bain, *The March to Zion* (College Station, Texas 1979), 105-36; J. Snetsinger, *Truman, the Jewish Vote and the Creation of Israel* (Stanford, Ca. 1974), 26-9; Pinkerton to Secretary of State, 6 May 1946 (n.5); R.B. Memminger, Note (11 May) of Talk with Musa al-Alami, 10 May 1946, NA, 867N.01/5-2146; Wadsworth to Secretary of State, 17 May 1946, *loc. cit.* /5-1746; Jamal al-Husaini to U.S. Consul-General, Jerusalem, 24 May 1946, *loc. cit.* /5-2946; Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 10 May 1946, PRO, FO 371/52524, files E4438 and E4458/4/31; same to same, 21 June 1946, FO 371/52537, file E6380/4/31; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 353f.
 9. On this plan, see: FRUS 1946 VII, 606, 610f., 652-67; *Proposals for the Future of Palestine*, Cmd. 7044 (1947), 3-8; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, Ch. 6; Khalidi, *op. cit.*, 570-2. For earlier Colonial and Foreign Office consideration of provincial autonomy, see PRO, FO 371/45382, file E8047/15/31 (September 1945).
 10. E.g., Cornwallis to F.O., 4 December 1944 (n.2).
 11. FRUS 1946 VII, 676, 683; Johnson to Secretary of State, 19 July 1946, NA, 867N.01/7-1946; Wadsworth to Secretary of State, 8 August 1946, *loc. cit.* /8-846; Goren, *Dissenter*, 433.
 12. FRUS 1946 VII, 676; Ireland, Note of Talk with Azzam, 30 July 1946, 890B.00/8-346; Wadsworth to Secretary of State, 5 August 1946, 867N.01/8-546; same to same, 8 August 1946 (n.11). As late as April 1948, Jamal al-Husaini was maintaining that the White Paper represented the legal status quo as regards Jewish immigration. See: Minutes of Meeting between Alfonso Lopez and Jamal al-Husaini, 8 April 1948, ISA 93.03/94/8.
 13. M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, Ch. 7, esp. pp.141-7; PCW II, 643, 645; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 290-2.
 14. Weizmann Remarks, JAE Meeting (Paris), 15 August 1946, CZA; G. Meyerson Remarks, JAE Meeting, 17 August 1946; LCW XXII, 189.
 15. M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 81-93; Khalidi, *op. cit.*, 570f., 601-12; LCW XXII, 194; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 376f.
 16. LCW XXII, 185-91; FRUS 1946 VII, 692f. Cf. *ibid.*, 727.

Jewish Agency Contacts in Egypt

17. The process of trying to convince British and American policy-makers of this had begun during the work of the Anglo-American Ctee. See: Crossman-Weizmann-Shertok Talks, 9 March 1946 (n.3); LCW XXII, 127f., 140, 172f.
18. On this episode, I am grateful to Avraham Sela for directing me to important archival sources, including Sasson Memorandum, ca. 20 May 1947, prepared for a contact inside the Egyptian Royal Court, CZA, S25/4038. See also: Rubin, *Arab States*, 155f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 195-7; A. Sela, "Political Contacts between Jewish Representatives and the Government of Transjordan and Egypt ..." (Heb.), *ha-Tziyyonut* X (1985).
19. Report of Egyptian Police Informer, 13 August 1946, PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/8/46G. Cf. I.N. Clayton to W. Smart, 19 August 1946, *loc. cit.*, file 101/9/46G; Campbell to Bevin, 29 and 30 August 1946, *loc. cit.*, file 101/10/46G; same to same,

- 1 September 1946, *loc. cit.*, file 101/11/46G.
20. See Police Informer's report of meetings of 26–27 August, in Clayton to Smart, 30 August 1946, *loc. cit.* The Hebrew version of the same informer's report contains a paragraph summarising a further meeting, on 28 August, between Sasson, Sidqi, Lutfi as-Sayyid and the Egyptian Government's Legal Adviser. See CZA, S25/3960. Cf. Document 31(c).
 21. Campbell to Bevin, 2 September 1946, PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/12/46G.
 22. Report dated Paris, 19 August, forwarded by Goldmann to Acheson, 18 November 1946, NA, 867N.01/11-1847; Locker to Bevin, 26 August 1946, PRO, FO 371/52555, file E8701/4/31; FRUS 1946 VII, 688.
 23. Ben-Gurion Remarks, JAE Meeting (Paris), 18 August 1946, CZA.
 24. Goldmann Report (Talk with Bevin), JAE Meeting, 18 August 1946; sources cited in nn.21–2; FRUS 1946 VII, 680–2, 692f.; Clayton to Smart, 22 August 1946, PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/10/46G; Sasson, Note of Talk with Clayton, 8 September 1946, CZA, S25/3960; Sasson, ON THE ROAD, 373f.; LCW XXII, 127f., 187f., 190; Elath, *Struggle* I, 440f.
 25. E.g., Campbell to Bevin, 3 September 1946, PRO, FO 371/52642, file E8791/8035/31; same to same, 4 September 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/13/46G; Abdallah to Creech-Jones, 4 September 1946, CO 537/1776.
 26. Smart Minute, 14 August 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/8/46G; Clayton to Smart, 22 August 1946 (n.24); Campbell to Bevin, 29 and 30 August 1946 (n.19).
 27. Locker to Bevin, 26 August 1946 (n.22). Cf. Document 31(c); Clayton to Smart, 30 August 1946, encl. "Note on Jewish–Arab Relations, August 1946", FO 141/1090, file 101/13/46G; Campbell to Bevin, 2 September 1946 (n.21); LCW XXII, 188, 190; Elath, *Struggle* I, 441.
 28. H. Beeley Minute, 10 September 1946, FO 371/52556, file E8990/4/31. Cf. Campbell to Bevin, 8 September 1946, *loc. cit.*; Beeley to Dixon, 26 August 1946, FO 371/52555, file E8701/4/31.
 29. Campbell to Bevin, 4 September 1946 (n.25).
 30. Same to same, 2 September (n.21) and 7 September 1946, FO 371/52556, file E8989/4/31. Cf. same to same, 8 September 1946 (n.28), and earlier doubts about Sidqi's not having his "finger on the pulse" of Arab feeling (and his business interests with the Jews), in Campbell, Note of Talk with Isma'il Sidqi, 25 April 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/147/46; Elath, *Struggle* I, 441.
 31. Smart Minute, 14 September 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/17/46G; Clayton, Note (16 September) of Talk with Eisenstadt and Sasson, 15 September 1946, *loc. cit.*; Campbell to Bevin, 17 September 1946, *loc. cit.*
 32. LCW XXII, 188. Even Clayton had cautiously described the contacts as "the nearest we have ever got to the possibility of some sort of genuine negotiation" between Arabs and Jews, though he hastened to add that he saw difficulties on the Arab side, especially the unlikelihood of "any of the Arab leaders having the guts to do anything but shout with the crowd." Throughout this episode, Clayton seemed genuinely torn between scepticism and hope. See: Clayton, Note of Talk with Sasson, 31 August 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/12/46G; "Note on Jewish–Arab Relations, August 1946" (n.27).
 33. *Journal d'Egypte*, 16 September 1946, clipping in FO 141/1090, file 101/17/46G; Campbell to Bevin, 16 September 1946, FO 371/53311, file J3901/39/16; same to same, 17 September 1946 (n.31); Document 31(c).
 34. Sasson, *On the Road*, 375. With the end of Sidqi's usefulness as an advocate of partition, Sasson continued his efforts at cultivating other prominent personalities in Egypt. On his attempts to set up a sympathetic "contact" inside the Royal Court, see: Document 31(c); Memorandum, ca. 20 May 1947 (n.18); *On the Road*, 385, 388;

Ben-Gurion, *War Diary* (Heb.), vol. I (Tel Aviv 1982), 224, 353; Israel State Archives, *Documents of the Foreign Policy of Israel* [hereafter DFPI], vol. 1 (14 May–30 September 1948), ed. Y. Freundlich (Jerusalem 1981), 632–4.

35. *Ibid.*, 386; R.L. Speaight to Jerusalem Secretariat, 20 October 1946, FO 141/1090, file 101/20/46G; Sholes to Secretary of State, 14 December 1946, NA, 867N.01/12-1446. In May 1948, Sidqi (in opposition) was a lone voice criticising Egyptian involvement in the Palestine War and publicly advocating an acceptance of partition. See: Tuck to Secretary of State, 18 May 1948, NA, 867N.01/5-1848.

Zionist–Abdallah Negotiations, 1946

36. On Abdallah's political manoeuvring for Greater Syria during and after World War II, see: Kirkbride, Note (14 March) of Views Expressed by Abdallah to Attlee, 13 March 1946, PRO, CO 537/1847; al-Hout, *Political Leadership*, 435–8; Sasson, *On the Road*, 345; Abidi, *Jordan*, 19–23; Shwadran, *Jordan*, 231–40.
37. The sum of £P10,000 was mentioned in the Sasson–Abdallah meeting of 12 August (Document 32(a)) as being for Syrian work, but a special coded telegram from the J.A.E. in Jerusalem to its London counterpart claimed that the money was being requested for the purpose of “establish[ing] new [Palestine Arab] Higher Committee ... in concurrence with British”. Z. Sharef to Linton 13 August 1946, CZA, S25/9036. Ben-Gurion, at the J.A.E. Paris meeting of 19 August, reported that “one of our Arab friends” had asked for £P50,000. Cf. sources cited in nn.41 and 53, below.
38. *Al-Wahda*, 20 August 1946, clipping in S25/9036; *L'Orient*, 21 August 1946, clipping in S25/3504; Clayton to Smart, 30 August 1946, PRO, FO 141/1090, file 101/11/46G.
39. Document 32(b). Cf. Kirkbride to Bevin, 23 August 1946, FO 371/52554, file E8409/4/31. On Sasson's contacts in London with the Transjordanian representative, see: Sasson, *op. cit.*, 376.
40. FRUS 1946 VII, 680f.; Elath, *Struggle I*, 383; LCW XXII, 190. Cf. Kimche, *Second Arab Awakening*, 165–7; Rubin, *Arab States*, 155f.; M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 147–62.
41. The sum of £P50,000 was requested for Transjordan, “including the Mayir” (code-name for Abdallah), in the proposed budget for political work in 1947. See: Sasson to Shertok, 20 November 1946, CZA, S25/3016. Cf. Projected expenses (30 March) for April 1947, *loc. cit.*; Sasson to Sharef, 9 October 1946, S25/6644; Y. Shimoni, Note of Meeting with “Dr”, 4 December 1946, S25/3960; “Sh.”, Note (22 January) of Meeting with “Dr Yardeni”, 21 January 1947, *loc. cit.*; E. Danin, Note (22 August) of Meeting with Abdallah, 21 August 1947, *loc. cit.*; Sasson to Sharef, 23 August 1947, S25/6644.
42. Kirkbride to Bevin, 15 August 1946, PRO, FO 371/52553, file E8106/4/31.
43. Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 27 August 1946, FO 371/52555, file E8615/4/31. Cf. Sasson's assurances to Brig. Clayton, while trying to build up some pro-partition momentum during his meetings in Egypt, that Abdallah “would be guided by [the] wishes of His Majesty's Government” on the matter. Campbell to Bevin, 2 September 1946 (n.21).
44. Abdallah to Hall, 4 September 1946 (n.25). After appealing to Anglo-Arab friendship and co-operation, Abdallah had written: “We do not hate the Jews nor do we like persecution. It was a great generosity on the part of the Arab people that it bore that quantity of people in this small Holy Land and that is enough. I refer to the White Paper and the appreciation of the Arabs thereof.”
45. Bevin to Kirkbride, 30 September 1946, FO 371/52560, file E9844/4/31. Cf. Sasson, Note of Talk with Abdallah's Representative, London, 6 October 1946, CZA, S25/6644.

From the London Conference to the United Nations

46. For informal contacts in London and Paris, see: Sasson, *On the Road*, 376–8; Sasson, Note of Talk with Abdallah's Representative, London, 6 October 1946 (n.45); Sasson to Sharef, 9 October 1946 (n.41); Sasson, Report of Meeting with Tawfiq, 17 October 1946, CZA, S25/6644.
47. For an account of the September Conference, see: M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 197–202.
48. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 378f. Cf. *ibid.*, 376.
49. *Ibid.*, 383, 386f.; Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 16 December 1946, PRO, FO 371/52567, file E12313/4/31; Shimoni, "Notes on Current Arab Affairs", 8, 13 and 23 December 1946, CZA, S25/3570.
50. Shimoni—"Dr" Talk, 4 December 1946 (n.41); "Sh"—"Dr Yardeni" Talk, 21 January 1947 (n.41).
51. Jewish Agency, *Book of Documents*, 309–18; Cmd. 7044, 11–14; FRUS 1947 V, 1007f., 1017–48; T.G. Fraser, ed., *The Middle East, 1914–1979* (London 1980), doc. 17; Bowker to F.O., 11 December 1946, PRO, FO 371/52646, file E12087/8035/31; Sasson, *op. cit.*, 383; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 209–21.
52. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 393; E.L., Report on Visit to Lebanon, 4 August 1947, CZA, S25/3960; J. Garcia-Granados, *The Birth of Israel* (New York 1948), 195, 199–201. Cf. Elath, *Zionism at the U.N.*, 198–200, 246f., 303; Epstein, Note of Talk with Charles Malik, 14 February 1946, S25/7488; Sasson to Joseph, 12 April 1946 (n.5); May 1946 treaty signed between B. Joseph and T. Awwad, on behalf of the Maronite Patriarch, Antoine Arida, referred to in Joseph, *The Faithful City* (New York 1960), 210.
53. Sasson, *loc. cit.*; Sasson to Sharef, 23 August 1947 (n.41); Shimoni, Note of Talk with Omar ad-Dajani, 25 August 1947, S25/3960; C.M. Pirie-Gordon to Bevin, 28 July 1946, PRO, FO 371/61876, file E6835/951/31; Garcia-Granados, *op. cit.*, 208–10. Abdallah hastened to inform the British Representative in Amman that his stand before UNSCOP was dictated by political necessity, and stated explicitly that he wished for a partitioned Palestine and the annexation of the Arab part to his kingdom. Pirie Gordon to Bevin, 30 July 1947, *loc. cit.*, file E7242/951/31. Cf. M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 266f.

The Final Countdown

54. For a sampling of some of the material regarding the UNSCOP hearings and report, see: Laqueur, *Israel–Arab Reader*, docs. 24–25; Fraser, *The Middle East*, 42–61; FRUS 1947 V, 1107–12, 1123–8; PCW II, 672–80; Jewish Agency, *The Jewish Plan for Palestine* (Jerusalem 1947), 322–59, 504–14; Sasson, *On the Road*, 391–3; LCW XXII, 367–71; A. Cohen, *Israel and the Arab World*, 369–86; M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 260–8.
55. Beeley Minute, 5 September 1947, PRO, FO 371/61952, file E8529/8286/31; Boswall to Bevin, 19 December 1947, FO 371/61584, file E12322/11734/65; Campbell to Bevin, 24 December 1947, FO 371/61893, file E12260/951/31; Goren, *Dissenter*, 454f.; Fraser, *op. cit.*, 51. Cf. FRUS 1947 V, 1294; Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, 645–701.
56. Goren, *op. cit.*, 451–6, 490–3, 495f., 498–502, 507f.; Campbell to Bevin, 24 December 1947 (n.55); FRUS 1948 V/2, 811, 901–4, 1137; Samuel, Proposals left for Bevin, 15 October 1947, CO 733/484, file 75872/154/21. Commenting on the latter 8-point plan, Mathieson of the C.O. found it "eminently reasonable", but added that "neither Arabs nor Jews are".
57. For accounts of Zionist and Arab lobbying during September–November, see: Fraser, *op. cit.*, docs. 22–30; FRUS 1947 V, passim, esp. 1159–62, 1192–4; Israel

- State Archives and Central Zionist Archives, *Political and Diplomatic Documents, December 1947 – May 1948* (hereafter ID 1947–1948) (Jerusalem 1979), 3–13; Khalidi, *op. cit.*, 703–29; D. Horowitz, *State in the Making* (New York 1953), 236–312; A. Eban, *An Autobiography* (New York 1977), 88–100; Elath, *Struggle II*, Ch.7; L. Collins and D. Lapierre, *O Jerusalem* (New York 1972), 17–20; D. Kurzman, *Genesis 1948* (New York 1970), 28–40; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 276–300.
58. E.g., Resolutions of Arab League Council Meeting (Sofar, 16–19 September 1947), PRO, FO 816/89; Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Note to British Legation, 27 September 1947, *loc. cit.*; FRUS 1947 V, 1159–62, 1212f.; Fraser, *op. cit.*, 51.
 59. FRUS 1947 V, 1176; Fraser, *loc. cit.*; Beirut to F.O., 20 October 1947, FO 816/89; A. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 382f.
 60. E.g., Nuri as-Sa'id's proposal for Saudi-American intervention: FRUS 1947 V, 1193; F.O. to Kirkbride, 25 October 1947, FO 816/89. Cf. Beeley Minute (re: M. Alami), 5 September 1947 (n.54); Beirut to F.O., 16 October 1947, FO 816/89; Garran, Note of Interview with C. Hourani, 30 October 1947, FO 371/61952, file E10717/8286/31; Kopper, Talk with Jamali, reported in "Arab Plans for Settlement of the Palestine Question, No. 2", 29 November 1947, NA, 501.BB Pal/11-2947; FRUS 1947 V, 1293f.; Azzam's views, discussed below, page 153.
 61. Malik, quoted in FRUS 1947 V, 1177. Cf. *ibid.*, 1193; *ibid.* 1948 V/2, 859; Beirut to F.O., 8 October 1947 (quoting Riad as-Sulh), PRO, FO 816/89.
 62. E.g., ID 1947–1948, 121. This formed part of a long-standing line of Zionist argument to the effect that a forceful stand by the Powers would succeed in neutralising the objections of the Arab states surrounding Palestine, which in turn would make it difficult for the Palestinians to maintain their rejection of partition. See: Campbell to Bevin, 2 September 1946 (n.21); Sasson, *On the Road*, 262, 322, 382; LCW XXII, 127f.; *ibid.* XXIII, 104.
 63. Ben-Gurion Remarks, JAE Meeting (Paris), 19 August 1946, CZA; Sasson-Clayton Talk, 8 September 1946 (n.24); Sasson, *op. cit.*, 389f.; LCW XXII, 193 (quoted below, page 178); *ibid.* XXIII, 42. Cf. sources cited in n.101 to Chapter 3.
 64. Kimche, *Second Arab Awakening*, 224f.; Horowitz, *State in the Making*, 232–5; Eban, *Autobiography*, 85–7; Kurzman, *Genesis 1948*, 26f.; Rubin, *Arab States*, 160f.
 65. For other Arab references to the Crusader parallel at this time, see: Memminger to Secretary of State, 5 December 1947, NA, 501.BB Pal/12-547; FRUS 1947 V, 1161; K. Bilby, *New Star in the Near East* (New York 1950), 79f.
 66. On the basis of his own contacts, Sasson had, a year earlier, believed that an understanding with Azzam along these lines was indeed possible. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 376f.
 67. Eban, *op. cit.*, 87; Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 234f. Cf. an earlier meeting between Sasson and Syrian leader, Lutfi al-Haffar, which followed very similar lines of argument. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 385.
 68. Horowitz, *op. cit.*, 276; ID 1947–1948, 369; FRUS 1948 V/2, 715.
 69. Clayton, Note of Interview with Abd ar-Rahman Azzam, 6 October 1947, FO 371/61836, file E9696/49/31. Azzam apparently also reported on his meeting with the Zionists to a meeting of the Arab League in Bludan. Horowitz, *loc. cit.*

November 29th and After

70. Report on Arab League Council Meeting, October 1947, CZA, S25/9020; Kirkbride to Bevin, 16 October 1947, PRO, FO 816/89; Trott to F.O., 23 November 1947, FO 371/61889, file E11025/951/31; Azzam Speech, transl. extract from *al-Muqattam*, 5 December 1947, in FO 371/68364, file E248/11/65; Clayton, Note on Proceedings of Meeting of Arab Premiers, 17 December 1947, *loc. cit.*, file

- E31/11/65; A.H. Meyer, Note (5 November) of Talk with Azzam, 4 November 1947, NA, 867N.01/11-647; Ireland, Note of Talk with Azzam, 2 December 1947, *loc. cit.*/12-347; Tuck to Secretary of State, 20 December 1947, 890B.00/12-2047; FRUS 1947 V, 1296; Bilby, *op. cit.*, 8.
71. Meyer–Azzam Talk, 4 November 1947 (n.70); Dundas to F.O., 14(213) November 1947, PRO, FO 371/61888, file E10731/951/31.
 72. Speech, 5 December 1947 (n.70).
 73. Cf. Azzam’s frequently quoted rejection of the “returning Semite” concept during his testimony before the Anglo-American Ctee. in 1946. Crossman, *Palestine Mission*, 109f.
 74. The letter seems to have been part of a public-relations campaign aimed at justifying the Zionist position on partition before international opinion. See: ID 1947–1948, 34, 369f.; DFPI 1, 64; FRUS 1948 V/2, 715; Kohn, Note of Interview with Grimwood, 22 March 1948, CZA, S25/7725; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 178.
 75. LCW XXIII, 42–4.
 76. LCW XXIII, 60. Cf. *ibid.*, 42, 44; *ibid.* XXII, 328; PCW II, 677; ID 1947–1948, 38f. The Mexican Chairman of the Security Council, Dr A. Lopez, at one stage believed (somewhat along the lines of Ben-Gurion’s reasoning in 1937) that the Arab abhorrence of the partition solution would drive them to considering generous compromises which might lead to a successful (non-partition) agreement with the Zionists. *Ibid.*, 465.
 77. E.g., Boswall to Bevin, 19 December 1947 (n.55); Campbell to Bevin, 24 December 1947 (n.55); Speaight to F.O., 17 April 1948, PRO, FO 371/68641, file E4918/375/31; FRUS 1948 V/2, 723–5; ID 1947–1948, 126, 225f., 278, 310, 359.
Even *after* the proclamation of Israeli statehood on 14 May 1948, there were hints that Arab leaders might be willing to negotiate for a settlement based on a federal Palestine, comprising Jewish and Arab provinces; but there were few signs that Jewish leaders would negotiate on the basis of anything less than the U.N. Partition Resolution of 29 November 1947. See: Ashley Clarke to Bevin, 26 May 1948, FO 371/68557, file E7026/4/31; Bevin to Cairo, 27 May 1948, *loc. cit.*; Bevin to Kirkbride, 5 June 1948, FO 816/122; FRUS 1948 V/2, 1136f.; Goren, *Dissenter*, 498.
 78. Clayton to Burrows, 17 February 1948, FO 371/68381, file E2518/68/65; Boswall to Bevin, 19 March 1948, FO 371/68539, file E3736/4/31; Campbell to Bevin, 17 April 1948, FO 819/117; FRUS 1948 V/2, 891, 896f.
 79. On the U.S. trusteeship proposal, see: FRUS 1948 V/2, 742–898 *passim*; ID 1947–1948, 474 et seq.; Elath, *Struggle II*, Pt.3; LCW XXIII, 91, 99–101; P. de Azcarate, *Mission in Palestine*, 1948–1952 (Washington 1966), 27–30; PCW II, 694–7; Goren, *op. cit.*, 475–7; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 303–17; M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 354–66; Kurzman, *op. cit.*, Ch. 3.
 80. For details of the President’s offer, see: FRUS 1948 V/2, 891; ID 1947–1948, 720, 728f.; Goren, *Dissenter*, 495; Elath, *op. cit.*, 721; N. Goldmann, *The Autobiography of Nahum Goldmann* (New York 1969), 288; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 295f. For details of the various other attempts to arrange truces, see: Samuel Proposals (addressed to various leaders), 15 March 1948, ISA 100/26 and PRO, CO 733/484, file 75872/154/21; Truce meetings convened by Lopez, 7–8 April 1948, ISA 93.03/94/8; ID 1947–1948, 421–3, 432f., 463–5, 492, 512, 526f., 576, 581, 585, 655, 722f.; FRUS 1948 V/2, 712–19; de Azcarate, *op. cit.*, 26, 34f., 80–8; Kimche, *op. cit.*, 244–6.
 81. ID 1947–1948, 369f. Cf. *ibid.*, 310, 425, 466; FRUS 1948 V/2, 713, 715f.
 82. E.g. Clayton Note, 17 December 1947 (n.70); Boswall to Bevin, 19 December 1947 (n.55); F.O. to British Embassy, Washington, 1 January 1948, PRO, FO 371/61584, file E12400/11734/65; ID 1947–1948, 308; FRUS 1948 V/2, 898; Flapan,

- op. cit.*, 313.
83. Memorandum, 16 March 1948, FO 371/68538, file E3549/4/31. Cf. ID 1947–1948, 492f.
 84. Trott, Note of Talk with Childs, 4 March 1948, FO 371/68641, file E4142/37/31; Kohn–Grimwood Talk, 22 March 1948 (n.74); ID 1947–1948, 505f., 542f.
 85. Boswall to Bevin, 19 March 1948 (n.78).
 86. Kirkbride to Bevin, 8 May 1948, FO 819/119. Azzam again reverted to this analysis when discussing his objections to direct Arab–Israeli talks in late December 1948. See: B.M.E.O. to F.O., 1 January 1949, FO 141/1329.
 87. FRUS 1947 V, 1319; ID 1947–1948, 156; T.R. Little, Summary of Talk with Omar ad-Dajani, [6] January 1948, FO 371/68364, file E306/11/65; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 191. Cf. views of Mulki and Rifai, cited below, n.121.
 88. E.g., Goldmann was quoted by a U.S. official as asking: “Why should we compromise or accept [a] truce adverse to us when we are winning?” Douglas to Secretary of State, 20 April 1948, NA, 867N.01/4-2048. Cf. ID 1947–1948, 752; FRUS 1948 V/2, 894, 902; Goren, *op. cit.*, 489.
 89. ID 1947–1948, 456–9, 522–4, 536. Sasson and H. Berman even prepared a 17-point draft treaty for co-operation and friendship between the future Jewish and Palestinian-Arab states in a partition scenario which, significantly, excluded Abdallah’s annexation plan. *ibid.*, 457f.; cf. DFPI I, 416, 490; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 200.
 90. ID 1947–1948, 726f. Cf. *ibid.*, 790.

Meyerson’s Meetings with Abdallah

91. Horowitz, *State in the Making*, 234f.
92. On the prospects of encouraging pro-partition sentiments among Arab or Muslim leaders, see: Moreland to Secretary of State, 26 September 1945, NA, 867N.01/9-2645; Shimoni, Note of Talk with Shaikh Fawaz ash-Sharif, 16 July 1947, CZA, S25/3909; Shimoni, Note of Talk with Omar ad-Dajani, 25 August 1947 (n.53); I. Thomas to Bevin, 16 October 1947, PRO, FO 371/61836, file E9696/49/31; Burrows to Beeley, 18 October 1947, *loc. cit.*; Bevin to Cairo, 16 October 1947, FO 816/89; T.E. Bromley to Beeley, 6 January 1948, FO 371/68403, file E1877/300/65; Little–Dajani Talk, [6] January 1948 (n.87); J. Fletcher–Cooke to Martin, 12 February 1948, FO 371/68368, file E2878/11/65; “Prospect of Mediation”, 16 March 1948 (n.83); U. Heydt to Brodetsky, 1 January 1948, WA; LCW XXII, 47, 328; *ibid.* XXIII, 75; Sasson, *On the Road*, 389, 393; ID 1947–1948, 121f.; FRUS 1948 V/2, 895; M. Cohen, *Palestine and the Great Powers*, 266f.
93. Sources cited above, n.41; Z. Maimon to Shimoni and R. Zaslani, 14 September 1947, CZA, S25/9013.
94. Danin–Abdallah Talk, 21 August 1947 (n.41); Maimon to Shimoni and Zaslani, 14 September 1947 (n.93); Document 35.
95. ID 1947–1948, 13, 253, 303, 781; FRUS 1947 V, 1254, 1269; *ibid.* 1948 V/2, 899, 925, 1038; Rubin, *Arab States*, 159, 166, 181f., 190; Y. Nevo, *Abdallah and the Palestinian Arabs*, 63f.
96. E.g., Chargé d’Affaires, Beirut, to F.O., 11 October 1947, PRO, FO 816/89; Kirkbride to F.O., 16 October 1947, *loc. cit.*; same to Burrows, 29 October 1947, FO 816/112; Memminger to Secretary of State, 21 November 1947, NA, 867N.01/11-2147; U.K. Delegation, N.Y., to F.O., 27 February 1948, FO 371/68385, file E2821/103/65; FRUS 1947 V, 1269n.
97. Bevin, Note of Talk with Tawfiq Abul Huda, 7 February 1948, FO 371/68366, file E1916/11/65; J.B. Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs* (London 1957), 63, 66; Kirkbride, *From the Wings*, 11f.; S. Musa, *Unforgettable Days* (Ac.) (Amman 1982), 74; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 330f.

98. E.g., E.L., Note of Talks with Fawaz ash-Sharif, 5–6 February 1947, CZA, S25/3504; Campbell, Note of Talk with Fawzi al-Mulki, 14 May 1947, PRO, FO 371/61493, file E4482/42/65; Jordanian White Book, [May] 1947, copy in FO 371/62226, file E4769/3765/80. For the Jews, this was not only an apparently ideal application of a “pan-Arab” solution which would allow them their state, but it also offered them the potential neutralisation of the Druze of Syria, Lebanon and Northern Palestine, whose leaders were toying with the idea of an alliance with Abdallah. See: Sasson, *op. cit.*, 379–82; ID 1947–1948, 45f; Pinkerton to Secretary of State, 9 December 1947, NA, 867N.01/12-947; Statement of Sultan Atrash’s Popular Party, 12 December 1947, in NA, 890D.00/12-1647; Broadmead to Bevin, 22 December 1947, PRO, FO 371/68403, file E300/300/65; Amman Chancery to F.O., 5 January 1948, *loc. cit.*, file E2001/300/65; FRUS 1947 V, 1190; Kimche, *Second Arab Awakening*, 163f.; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 175, 189.
99. E.g., Bevin to Cairo, 16 October 1947 (n.92); Kirkbride to Bevin, 29 October 1947, FO 371/62226, file E10711/3765/80; J.E. Cable Minute, 4 November 1947, *loc. cit.*; Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 20 December 1947, *loc. cit.*, file E12317/3765/80; Beeley Minute, 30 December 1947, *loc. cit.*; Summary of Off-the-Record Talk between British Journalist and Chief Secretary, 5 November 1947, CZA, S25/7725; Fletcher-Cooke to Martin, 12 February 1948 (n.92); Document 35; ID 1947–1948, 48, 125, 238, 303, 431; Ben-Gurion, *War Diary*, 163, 298, 357; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 61–64; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 167, 181, 189.
100. Sasson, *op. cit.*, 384–7, 390; ID 1947–1948, 126, 298n., 668n.; Cable Minute, 4 November 1947 (n.99); Beeley Minute, 6 January 1948, PRO, FO 371/68364, file E101/11/65; Burrows Minute, 9 February 1948, FO 371/68368, file E2696/11/65. Azzam felt that the Zionists, who had “many contacts within Abdallah’s Palace”, were deliberately encouraging Abdallah’s Greater Syria ambitions in order to sow discord in the Arab League. Ireland, Note (23 December) of Talk with Azzam, 22 December 1946, NA, 880B.00/12-2646.
101. Beeley to Bromley, 20 January 1948, PRO, FO 371/68403, file E1877/300/65.
102. His (unhelpful) recommendation was that the British should refuse to encourage Abdallah “either to act in a way which would antagonise his Arab neighbours or in a way which might provoke the security council to take measures against him”. *loc. cit.* Cf. Wright, Brief for Talk with Transjordanian Prime Minister, 6 February 1948, FO 371/68367, file E1980/11/65; ID 1947–1948, 238, 278; FRUS 1948 V/2, 955f; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 181, 191; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 327–30.
- At a later stage, Kirkbride admitted that attempts at negotiation between Abdallah and the Israelis were “only likely to produce satisfactory results if it [were] known generally that Transjordan [was] supported by His Majesty’s Government.” Kirkbride to Bevin, 6 December 1948, FO 816/134. Cf. Stabler to Secretary of State, 28 December 1948, NA, 867N.01/12-2848.
103. Document 35. For other accounts, see: ID 1947–1948, 44; Z. Sharef, *Three Days* (London 1962), 72, reprinted in *Israel in the Middle East: Documents and Readings*, eds. I. Rabinovitch and J. Reinharz (New York/Oxford 1984), 34; “Notes on Two Meetings with Abdallah” (n.d.), in CZA, A289/129; Kirkbride, *op. cit.*, 4f.; M. Syrkin, *Golda Meir: Woman with a Cause* (London 1964), 195f.; Kurzman, *Genesis 1948*, 42–44; G. Meir, *My Life* (London 1975), 176; M. Meir, *My Mother, Golda Meir* (New York 1983), 104f.; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 52; Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 334f.; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 331.
104. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 100, 163; ID 1947–1948, 186; Syrkin, *op. cit.*, 196.
105. On the Palestinian Arab “opposition” and its relations with Abdallah at this time, see: Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 38, 65, 97f.; ID 1947–1948, 42f., 48, 246f.; Cunningham to Creech-Jones, 20 December 1947 (n.99); FRUS 1947 V, 1318f.; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 47–51, 75f.; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 151, 156, 190; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 326f.

106. Document 35. Cf. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 100f.; FRUS 1947 V, 1319; Kurzman, *op. cit.*, 43; Musa, *op. cit.*, 77; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 180.
107. Note of Visit by Ahmad Hilmi, Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar and Awni Abd al-Hadi to Abdallah and Samir ar-Rifai, 21 November 1947, PRO, FO 816/89. Cf. Kirkbride to Bevin, 11 October 1947, *loc. cit.* (report of meeting between Abdallah, Samir, Azzam and Salah Jabr, 10 October); FRUS 1947 V, 1319; *ibid.* 1948 V/2, 971; Ireland, Note (12 January) of Talk with al-Mulki, 11 January 1948, NA, 890i.01/1-1648; Glubb, *op. cit.*, 63, 66; Kirkbride. *op. cit.*, 5.
108. ID 1947-1948, 44-6, 48, 186; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 28, 65f., 100f., 163f. Cf. Douglas to Secretary of State, 17 December 1947, NA, 867N.01/12-1747; Little-Dajani Talk, [6] January 1948 (n.87). Even Jews outside of official circles began to assume that a *de facto* agreement existed with Abdallah. See: Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 129; ID 1947-1948, 247.
109. See: Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 373; ID 1947-1948, 43, 48, 60, 125, 143f., 401, 766. Cf. Ireland-Mulki Talk, 11 January 1948 (n.107); FRUS 1948 V/2, 725; M. Meir, *op. cit.*, 105. For a comprehensive account of Abdallah's relations with the Arab states and the Palestinians during this period, see: Nevo, *op. cit.*, 64-78.
110. Kirkbride to Bevin, 15 January 1948, PRO, FO 816/112; *al-Fihad*, 17 April 1948, transl. extract in FO 816/117; Statement by Royal Hashimite Diwan Regarding the Position in Palestine, 17 April 1948, *loc. cit.*; Kirkbride to Bevin, 25 April 1948, FO 816/118 (reporting "tremendous public pressure" and "hysterical demands for armed intervention"); ID 1947-1948, 625f. 667f. 766; Glubb, *op. cit.*, 97.
111. Childs to Secretary of State, 5 December 1947, NA, 890F.00/12-547; Macatee to Secretary of State, 30 December 1947, 867N.01/12-3047; Beeley Minute, 6 January 1948 (n.100); same to Bromley, 20 January 1948 (n.101); U.K. Delegation, N.Y., to F.O., 27 February 1948, PRO, FO 371/68385, file E2822/103/65; "A Suffering Palestinian" to Chief of Royal Diwan, 11 April 1948, FO 816/117; FRUS 1948 V/2, 544; ID 1947-1948, 145, 156.
112. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 107, 147, 188, 224f., 245, 357f., 375; ID 1947-1948, 126, 145, 156; Glubb, *op. cit.*, 79f.; Kirkbride, *op. cit.*, 20f.
113. Reproduced in *On the Road*, 394-7, and ID 1947-1948, 143-7. See also *ibid.*, 157, 667f., 789; Kirkbride to Bevin, 23 April 1948, FO 816/117.
114. ID 1947-1948, 126f., 156, 247, 274, 758f.; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 103, 163; FRUS 1947 V, 1319; *ibid.* 1948 V/2, 940f., 948. Cf. Ireland-Mulki Talk, 11 January 1948 (n.107); Burrows Minute, 9 February 1948 (n.100); U.K. Delegation to F.O., 2 telegrams, 27 February 1948 (nn.96 and 111); Abidi, *Jordan*, 18, 25n.; Shwadran, *Jordan*, 249n.
- Ten days before the British withdrawal, two senior American officials (D. Rusk and J.E. Horner), despairing of all the other options, recommended that their government openly sanction the "Abdallah plan" for implementing partition; but their advice was not acted upon. See: FRUS 1948 V/2, 895, 899f. On other American attitudes to the "Abdallah plan", see *op. cit.*, 1136f.; *ibid.* 1947 V, 1190; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 190f., 195f.
115. Meyerson Report, *Mo'etzet ha-Am* Meeting, 12 May 1948, Israel State Archives, *Protocols of the Mo'etzet ha-Am* (Jerusalem 1979), 41; ID 1947-1948, 156f., 186, 247, 281; Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 163, 169; Sharef, *op. cit.*, 73. An earlier case of Meyerson's tough talk had produced a vigorous reaction during an Arab League meeting in December 1947. See: Tuck to Secretary of State, 20 December 1947, NA, 890B.00/12-2047.
116. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 283f.; ID 1947-1948, 456, 458f.
117. ID 1947-1948, 656, 674, 721f., 740, 759, 781; FRUS 1948 V/2, 863n., 865, 869, 876.
118. Abdallah to HC, in Kirkbride to Bevin, 23 April 1948, PRO, FO 816/117; Abdallah

- to T. Lie, in Austin to Secretary of State, 4 May 1948, NA, 501.BB Pal/5-448.
119. Abdallah to HC, 23 April 1948 (n.118). Cf. ID 1947-1948, 686n., 687, 756; FRUS 1948 V/2, 896n., 1501; Abdallah Statement ("You, Gracious People of Palestine"), in Wasson to Secretary of State, 6 May 1948, 867N.01/5-648; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 79; Musa, *op. cit.*, 111f.; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 332.
 120. In an attempt to make his offer appear more attractive to the Jews, Abdallah later proposed that, after one year, Palestine should be joined to Transjordan, which would then grant the Jews parity representation in a new parliament. See: Meyerson Report, *Mo'etzet ha-Am*, 12 May 1948 (n.115); ID 1947-1948, 281, 298n., 667n., 668n.; Kirkbride to Bevin, 24 April 1948, PRO, FO 816/117; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 80.
 121. Both F. al-Mulki and S. ar-Rifai had indicated that they favoured the annexation of all of Palestine by Transjordan, followed by the granting of autonomy to the Jews. Mulki was willing to see the Arab-Jewish population ratio in the combined state reaching 2:1. See: Campbell-Mulki Talk, 14 May 1947 (n.98); Charge d'Affaires, Beirut, to F.O., 11 October 1947 (n.96); Clayton to F.O., 22 November 1947, FO 816/89.
- In mid-1949, Rifai advocated acceptance of the U.N. partition plan, with Transjordanian annexation of the Arab sectors, as the only way to halt further Israeli military successes in Arab territory. See his "Plan for the Final Settlement of the Palestine Case", 18 July 1949, FO 816/159.
122. FRUS 1948 V/2, 894, 947; ID 1947-1948, 662, 674, 752, 756, 766, 793; Elath, *Struggle II*, 728f.; U.K. Delegation, N.Y., to F.O., 9 May 1948, FO 816/119; Kirkbride to Bevin, 15 May 1948, FO 816/120; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 199-201.
 123. ID 1947-1948, 721f., 759, 790; FRUS 1948 V/2, 940, 973, 1038; F.O. to Kirkbride, 14 May 1948, FO 371/68852, file E6327/4265/80; Glubb, *op. cit.*, 96, 257; Elath, *op. cit.*, 733; Kurzman, *op. cit.*, 244-6, 251f.; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 320, 335; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 332f.
 124. ID 1947-1948, 766; Elath, *op. cit.*, 728; Rubin, *op. cit.*, 189.
 125. FRUS 1948 V/2, 945. Cf. *ibid.*, 940f., 948, 971f., 973; ID 1947-1948, 759f.; Kurzman, *op. cit.*, 252.
 126. On the prelude to, and arrangements for, this meeting, see: Meyerson Report, *Mo'etzet ha-Am*, 12 May 1948 (n.115); Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 382, 397, 400f.; ID 1947-1948, 756, 789f.; DFPI 1, 64; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 79; Eliachar, *To Live with Palestinians*, 81; Gillon, *Israelis & Palestinians*, 83; G. Meir, *op. cit.*, 176f.; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 323.
 127. *Protocols of the Mo'etzet ha-Am*, 41-44; Sharef, *op. cit.*, 73-6; *Israel in the Middle East*, n.103, 34-6; Syrkin, *op. cit.*, 197-202; G. Meir, *op. cit.*, 177-80; M. Meir, *op. cit.*, 105-7. For other accounts, see: "Notes on Two Meetings" (n.103); A. at-Tal, *The Disaster of Palestine* (Ac.) (Cairo 1959), 66-8; Bilby, *New Star*, 15f.; Kurzman, *op. cit.*, 246f.; Kirkbride, *op. cit.*, 21f.; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 79f.; Flapan, *op. cit.*, 335; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 333f.
 128. Quotation from first source in n.127. At-Tal's account (*loc. cit.*) of the meeting stresses the hard-line position adopted by Meyerson and Abdallah's difficulties. A press conference indiscretion by Dr Weizmann in June led Abdallah to deny that any meeting had taken place. See: DFPI 1, 154; Kirkbride to Bevin, 14 June 1948, PRO, FO 816/123.
 129. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 409; ID 1947-1948, 778, 789, 791. Having failed to neutralise the Arab Legion through this direct diplomacy, Shertok immediately cabled to New York that the "strongest effort" be made to secure an "immediate, direct, sternest warning by the President personally" to Abdallah to desist from the "impending invasion and onslaught [...] by Arab Legion and Iraqi troops, now jointly under his command." *ibid.*, 791. Cf. *ibid.*, 793; Elath, *op. cit.*, 765-7.
 130. Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, 956; Israel State Archives, DFPI, vol.3 (December 1948-July

- 1949), ed. Y. Rosenthal (Jerusalem 1983), 347; M. Dayan, *Story of My Life* (New York 1976), 168f.; Nevo, *op. cit.*, 80. Cf. DFPI 1, 34.
131. *My Life*, 180f.

CONCLUSION

1. *Palestine Jewry*, 2–7; “Negotiation and the Arab Israeli Conflict”, JQ no.6 (Winter 1978), 3f., 6f., 18f. See also: E. Rubinstein, “Zionist Attitudes”, JQ, 121–4.
2. Indeed, depending on the preconceptions or sympathies of the observer, one can conceive of equally vehement charges of “stubbornness” directed against Zionist/Israeli leaders, with the same racist undertones in effect.
3. JAE Meeting, 22 May 1936, CZA. Cf. Sharett, *Political Diary* I, 133; Shertok to Brodetsky, 11 October 1934, S25/4162.
4. M. Cohen, *Retreat*, 72. Cf. *ibid.*, 73.
5. SJC/J Meeting, 11 March 1939, S25/7635. Cf. MacDonald Remarks at: SJC/J Meetings, 6 and 12 March 1939, *loc. cit.*; SJC/A Meeting, 6 March 1939, ISA 65/38; SJC/A Meeting, 10 and 13 March 1939, ISA 65/570; SJC/A Meeting, 15 March 1939, ISA 65/374; Lord Halifax Remarks, Cabinet Meeting, 8 March 1939, PRO, CO 733/406, file 75782/11; F.O. to R. Lindsay, 15 March 1939, *loc. cit.*; FRUS 1939 IV, 733f.
6. SJC/J Meeting, 12 March 1939, CZA, *loc. cit.*
7. O.R. Young, *The Intermediaries* (Princeton 1967); S. Touval, *The Peace Brokers* (Princeton 1982).
8. E.g., above, pages 88 and 136; LCW XXIII, 119; PCW II, 118, 353, 459, 597, 676. Favourable *Arab* references to Faisal’s historic role as would-be intermediary were, by contrast, less common. See, e.g.: Shukri al-Quwath, quoted in Document 17; Nuri as-Sa’id, in Document 18; Abd ar-Rahman Shahbandar, in Document 20; Joseph Diary (Talk with Mahmud Fawzi), 8 February 1944, S25/44; Moreland to Secretary of State (reporting views of Amir Za’id, Acting Regent of Iraq), 26 September 1945, NA, 867N.01/9-2645; FRUS 1948 V/2, 1273 (Talk with Dr Naji al-Asil). Cf. Caplan, “Faisal Ibn Husain”, 566–8.
9. SJC/J Meeting, 20 February 1939, CZA, S25/7633. Cf. Ben-Gurion to MacDonald, 14 February 1939, PRO, CO 733/414, file 75928; Sharett, *Political Diary* III, 322; *ibid.* IV, 72f.; Ben-Gurion, *In Struggle* I, 207, and II, 94f.; sources cited in n.113 to Chapter 5.
10. Amery to MacMichael, 27 September 1939, MEC, MacMichael Papers; MacDonald, Note of Talk with Weizmann, 27 November 1939, PRO, FO 371/23242, file E8142/6/31; LCW XIX, 264; M. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 83; Haim, *Abandonment of Illusions*, 142f.
11. Above, sources cited in n.83 to Chapter 5 and n.44 to Chapter 6.
12. See, e.g., Sasson, *On the Road*, 325, 343.
13. LCW XIX, 193. Cf. above, pages 76f. and sources cited in n.101 to Chapter 3; Ben-Gurion Remarks, Joint Meeting of JAE and LJAR, 25 October 1939, S25/10095; Sasson, Note of Talk with Clayton, 8 September 1946, S25/3960.

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100 Herbert Samuel Papers
103 Edwin Samuel Papers.
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Nevill Barbour Papers
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 501.BB Pal. – 867N.00 – 867N.01 – 880B.00 – 890B.00 – 890D.00 –
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 CO 733 Colonial Office, Palestine
 CO 537 Colonial Office, Palestine (Supplementary)
 CO 831 Colonial Office, Transjordan
 FO 141 Egyptian Legation
 FO 371 Foreign Office: Political
 FO 816 Amman Legation
 PREM Prime Minister's Office
 WO 32 War Office.
- RH Rhodes House Library, Oxford
 Sir John Chancellor Papers (mss. Brit. Emp.s.284)
- WA Weizmann Archives, Rehovot, Israel
 Arranged chronologically.

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