

ARAB NATIONALISM

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ARAB NATIONALISM

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THESE

PREFACE

My primary purpose in writing about Arab Nationalism has been a personal interest in making a general study of the subject. The duty of writing a thesis presented me with a chance of getting better acquainted with the political awakening of the Arabs and the various national movements that have occurred separately, or simultaneously, in the individual Arab countries. The topic is extremely wide and its treatment in this thesis represents a mere survey. Though I have attempted to include all important events that have happened in the history of Arab nationalism I do not pretend to have done a complete job. Nevertheless, I have tried to provide the interested reader with succinct material from which he may be able to derive a summary view of a broad subject.

In the hope that my work may prove useful to some people who are interested in the theme I have endeavored to reveal the truth and be as objective as possible. A special effort has been made in organizing the material in such a way as to keep clear the connection between the various aspects of the subject.

The first part of the thesis introduces the subject by defining the Arab world geographically, historically, and socially. The relation between Arabism and Islamism is made clear, especially by touching upon the major Moslem movements that have had a bearing on the Arab

revival. In the second part a record is given of the start and development of Arab nationalism and its evolution during the first World War. The last part deals with the progress of the Arab movement as it was expressed separately in the individual Arab states covering the period from the first post-war settlement up to the present day. To round out the subject I inserted a chapter on the Arab League pointing at the concerted efforts of the Arab countries in their endeavor for complete freedom from foreign control and for the establishment of some sort of union between themselves.

I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. H. L. Leonhardt of the Political Science Department who sponsored my work and gave me many fruitful suggestions. I also extend my appreciation to Dr. A. T. Cordray and Dr. E. M. Banzet of the Foreign Students Counseling Department and to many others who were very helpful in correcting the English in this thesis. I reserve for myself, however, the sole responsibility for any and all errors in content and construction.

SANIA HAMADY

CONTENTS

PART I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter		Page
I	DEFINING THE SUBJECT	
	Delineation of the Arab Countries	1
	Defining the Arabs Historically	2
	Who Are the Arabs	4
	Nationalism	6
II	MOSLEM MOVEMENTS THAT HAD A BEARING ON ARAB NATIONALISM	
	Wahhabism	8
	Muhammad 'Ali	9
	Pan-Islamism	12

PART II

START AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARAB NATIONALISM

I	THE ARABIC RENAISSANCE AND ITS EVOLUTION INTO POLITICAL REVIVAL	
	Foreign Missionaries	17
	The Arab Revival Assumes its Political Aspect	21
	Intensification of the Nationalistic Feelings under the Sultan of Turkey, 'Abdel-Hamid	23

Chapter	Page
Organized Efforts for Emancipation	26
II. WORLD WAR I AND ARAB NATIONALISM	
Arab-British Negotiations	31
The Arab Revolt	36
Pledges and Counter-Pledges	
The Sykes-Picot Agreement	39
The Balfour Declaration	41
The Declaration to the Seven	43
The Anglo-French Declaration	44
Post-War Settlements	
The Peace Conference	46
The General Syrian Congress	46
The King-Crane Commission	47
The Arab Declaration of Syrian and	
Iraqian Independence	49
San-Remo Conference	50

PART III

NATIONALISM IN THE INDIVIDUAL ARAB COUNTRIES

I	SYRIA AND LEBANON	52
II	IRAQ	60
III	PALESTINE	
	Churchill-Samuel White Paper	67
	Shaw and Simpson Commissions	68
	Pssfield White Paper	69

Chapter	Page
MacDonald's Letter	69
Royal Commission	71
Partition Plan	71
Woodhead Commission	72
White Paper Repealing Partition	73
Round Table Conference	73
MacDonald White Paper	73
Land Transfers Regulations	74
Anglo-American Committee	76
Morrison Plan	77
Bevin Plan	77
Appeal to the United Nations	78
UNSCOP	78
U.N. Partition Resolution	79
U.S. Proposal of Trusteeship	80
Truce Commission	80
Bernadotte's Recommendations	81
Conciliation Committee and U.N.	
Mediator Ralph Bunche	82
IV ARABIA	84
V EGYPT	91
VI THE ARAB LEAGUE	101
CONCLUSION	108
BIBLIOGRAPHY	111

PART I
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I
DEFINING THE SUBJECT

DELINEATION OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES

There exists around the eastern end of the Mediterranean a group of lands to which both geography and history have given an inevitable unity. Turkey checks them from the north, Persia veils them from the Far East, the Mediterranean surrounds them from the west, and the Arabian Sea limits them from the south. Within those confines lie the two Levantine¹ republics of Syria and Lebanon, the partitioned state of Palestine,² the kingdom of Transjordan,³ the constitutional monarchy of Iraq, and the absolute kingdom of Sau'di Arabia with what is left of the Arabian Peninsula in the form of sultanates, sheikhdoms, city states and principalities. In addition to this entity of

1. The term Levant was coined by the Italian shipmasters of Medieval days when their galleys sailed eastward toward the "Levante" or place of the rising sun.

2. The names of Palestine and Lebanon are very old in history; but these territories never constituted separate political entities since the advent of the Arabs into western Asia. Before World War I they were political districts of Syria, but since the post-war settlement those areas were detached from the latter to form separate states.

3. Previously a southwestern part of Syria, Transjordan was detached from the latter in 1920 to become a separate state under the tutelage of a British mandate.

lands there is Egypt, another Arab country which is outside the above confines. It is limited by the Mediterranean from the north, the Sudan from the south, the Red Sea from the east, and the desert from the west. The total area of the Arab lands is estimated to be around 1,604,521 square miles while the total population amounts to over 40 million persons,⁴ the majority of whom are adherents of the Moslem faith. To that entity of countries, to which Turkey and the rest of North Africa are often added and the Balkan States infrequently, the name "Near East" is applied. The Arab hinterlands (Iraq and Arabia) are usually added to Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to denote the "Middle East", a name which sometimes includes the rest of the Near East as well. Those terms have been coined in terms of the relative propinquity of western Asia to Europe.

DEFINING THE ARABS HISTORICALLY

Around the Nile, the Tigres and the Euphrates rivers,

4. H. E. Vizetelly, ed., The New International Year Book: A Compendium of the World's Progress for the Year 1948 (N.Y., 1949), pp. 32, 162, 278, 312, 414, 537, 551. Hereafter cited as The New International Year Book.

<u>Country</u>	<u>Area in sq. mi.</u>	<u>Population</u>
Arabia	1,000,000	10,000,000
Egypt	386,198	19,000,000
Iraq	116,000	5,000,000
Lebanon	3,881	1,187,000
Palestine	10,640	2,000,000
Syria	54,000	3,000,000
Transjordan	34,700	340,000

and on the shores of the Mediterranean, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, many pre-Christian civilizations arose successively or simultaneously, flourished, decayed and passed away, leaving behind them contributions some of which still lie at the roots of the modern civilization. Mention could be made of some of them such as the Pharoan, the Phoenician, the Babylonian, the Assyrian. At the advent of the Arabs the main stream was Roman. The first Arabic-speaking people appeared in North Arabia around 300 B. C. Among the first were the Nabateans who settled in Jordan and founded the famous city of "Petra".

Judaism and Christianity, born in Palestine, altered the heathenistic mind and paved the way toward monotheism. As the Sixth Century drew to a close Arabia gave birth to a new force which shook the foundations of what was civilized in the world; Muhammad was born and the new light he kindled was Islam. Once released from the boundaries of the Peninsula the zealous adherents swarmed out to sweep across three continents. In their unabated expansion they conquered an empire that stretched as far as Marrakesh in Africa, the Pyrenees in Europe, and Trans-Oxus in Asia. Under their emboldened march the empires that were then in existence crumbled. The glory of the Arab Empire shone radiantly under the "Orthodox Caliphs" (al-Rashidiyyoun), whose capital was Mecca, the "Omayyads" (al-Amawiyyoun), in Damascus and Spain, and the "Abassides" (al-'Abbasiyyoun), who ushered in Baghdad.

The Arabs founded an important civilization that fostered knowledge in most fields and left wonderful contributions to culture. They showed particular interest in the sciences and medicine, in theology and philosophy, architecture and fine arts. Such names as al-Khawarismi, the mathematician, Averroes and Avenenna, the philosophers, al-Ghazali, the theologian, Ibn-Khaldoun, the historian and sociologist, are universally famous among the people of learning. The Arabic culture was due largely to the creation of the desert man's fertile and inquisitive mind and partly to the adoption of the Greek heritage. It was the Arabs who preserved the precious Greek legacy in knowledge and transmitted it to a Europe, then enshrouded in darkness. The dark ages of Europe witnessed the intellectual supremacy of the Arabs. The unbiased verdict of history records that from the seventh to the twelfth century after Christ the torch of progress was carried by the Arabs and their language was the scientific lingua franca of mankind. The Arabic language is extremely rich, having an intricate construction with copious vocabulary, tremendous rhythm and variety of expressions. The classical literature and poetry that the Arabs have left behind them form an appreciable legacy to the realm of writing.

WHO ARE THE ARABS

The Arabs represent an admixture of races,⁵ preponderantly the Mediterranean, the Armenoid, and the Hamitic

strain. Their language, Arabic, is Semitic in origin. What makes of them one people are the factors of religion, history, culture, and aspirations that are common to all of them. Islam is the dominant faith among the Arabs; it is not only a religion but a way of life. The Arab Empire furnish memories of a glorious past which inspire them. Their culture, which is tied with their religion and history, supply them with one morality which makes them generally follow similar ways of living, be it in thought and outlook or behavior and feelings. All the Arabs have suffered equally under foreign domination, as a result of which they developed a common hatred toward the West and rose together in their demand for freedom and independence. Beside the community of factors that tie the Arabs together there is the similarity of certain traits that have been formed among them through unified geographical and historical influences. These distinguishing features are such as austere monotheism, forbearance and self-negation, magnanimity and generosity, hospitality, courage, individualism and love for freedom, hatred for authority and lack of discipline.

It is relevant to mention that the Arabs are not coexistent with Islam; the former existed before the latter.

5. The repeated inundations of tribes and peoples to the Near East in search of the Fertile Crescent, by deliberate conquest and gradual seepage, left independent deposits of racial characteristics that went into the making of the many local types.

Accordingly, a distinction should be made between two processes in the cultural evolution of the Arabs; Islamization and Arabization. Though the latter started before the former it did not reach its zenith until it became identified with Islam. At any rate, Islamization spread beyond Arabization but where the latter was found the former was also present. Another clarification which is worthwhile mentioning is the distinction between the three words; Arab, Arabian, and Arabic. The first refers to any individual who shares in the Arab common interests and qualities and lives in any of the Arab countries. The second denotes any inhabitant of the Arabian Peninsula while the word Arabic is an adjective that describes the quality of anything that belongs to the Arabs.

NATIONALISM

"Nationalism is a modern historical tendency having for its objective the organization in well-knit political states of populations naturally bound together by ties of nationality."⁶ Nationality itself is conceived by the proponents of the tendency as including community of language, traditions, morals, religion, or, in a broader sense, of culture. "In the early period of nationalism much stress was laid also upon community of race, but more

6. The New International Encyclopaedia (2nd ed.), XVI, 612.

recent ethnological studies have rendered the hypothesis of race as a basis of culture untenable."⁷ In its modern form nationalism is an outgrowth of the French Revolution with its emphasis upon the independence and unlimited sovereignty of nations.

"Arab nationalism is the resurgence of the will to live of the Arab people produced by the action of the West upon it, and with the object of combating the dangers and realizing the benefits of that action."⁸ The movement assumes that there is or can be created an Arab nation because all the prerequisites of nationhood, such as geographical unity, historical continuity, similarity of language, religion, and culture are present today among the Arab people. The movement aims at the complete emancipation of Arab states from foreign control, at their full independence and sovereignty, and the establishment of some degree of unity among them. It intends, further, to reorganize the social and economic structure of the Arab communities by means of a process of controlled and discriminate westernization, a process that would not break totally with the Arab past.

7. Ibid.

8. A. H. Hourani, Syria and Lebanon (London, 1946), p. 99.

CHAPTER II
MOSLEM MOVEMENTS THAT HAD A BEARING
ON ARAB NATIONALISM

WAHHABISM

It was a puritanical religious movement that aimed at purging Islam from the impious trend expressed in newly introduced superstitions and accretions. It was founded in 1747 by Muhammad ibn Abdel-Wahhab, a native of Najd, Arabia. The diversified studies that he had made in theology and the wide-spread travels that he had undertaken in the whole Moslem world had intensified his inborn curiosity of mind. Religious corruption began to appall him. As a result he became inspired with a passionate zeal and endeavored, in an intense movement, to purify Islam and revive it to its pristine form. To do away with intruding superstitions and innovations was the central theme of his insistence on simplicity and vigor in religious service.

The secular champion whom the movement chose was a scion of the House of Sau'd. With his enlightened leadership it grew rapidly and spread over a major part of the Peninsula. The sword of Islam once more united the quarreling tribes and the diverse provinces of Arabia. Under his son Abdel-'Aziz, ancestor and namesake of the present Wahhabi king, the rise of forces that denounced and disputed the Ottoman Caliph's authority was spectacular. The gates of Baghdad witnessed their first armed excursions. After

compelling the Turkish Governor of Iraq to conclude a humiliating treaty they sacked the Shi'ite city of Karbala in 1861 and then switched their destination to al-Medina and Mecca, the thrilling occupation of which made them so exulted that later on they ventured an invasion of Syria. The latter was a failure.

Alarmed and perturbed the Sultan-Caliph, keeper of the two Holy Cities and head of Dar al-Islam, called on Muhammad 'Ali, Governor of Egypt, to crush the rebellion. The latter dispatched, in 1811, well equipped forces under the command of his son Ibrahim that engaged in a seven-years campaign till the might of the Wahhabis was shattered and the conquered places delivered.

Thus had ended the conquests of the Wahhabi movement. But in its ashes flickered sparks of a new fire which was lightened by spiritual repercussions that continued to be evoked. All sorts of dormant dissatisfactions soared and hatred for foreign intervention became accentuated. In those effects the movement served as a precursor to the Arab awakening.

MUHAMMAD 'ALI

Founder of the present ruling dynasty in Egypt, Muhammad 'Ali was an outstanding officer of Albanian origin. His efficiency won him the admiration of the Ottoman Sultan, who called on him to put an end to Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1799. His victory brought to the fore military

talent as well as political genius. Six years after his victory over the French he was recognized by the Sultan as titular Governor of Egypt. He endeavored at first to eradicate the power of the Mamlukes. After becoming sole ruler he engaged in overcoming the prevailing anarchical state of Egypt and once he established a firm order internally Muhammad 'Ali began to devote himself to foreign affairs.

The expeditions against Wahhabism exposed the pulse of the Arab world, at the touch of which a spontaneous vision of carving an Arab empire illuminated the minds of Muhammad and his son Ibrahim. The divergence between father and son as to the degree of their identification with the Arabs made it conspicuous from the beginning that Muhammad 'Ali's interest was totally personal. All that he wanted was to establish for himself a vast empire while his son was more sincere in planning to foster a real revival of national consciousness among the Arabs and to restore to them their nationhood.

As a reward for his help in quelling the insurrection in Greece¹ Muhammad 'Ali pressed his claim to the overlordship of Syria. The refusal of the Sultan to confer on him such a right prompted the ruler of Egypt to put his son

1. Commanded by Ibrahim, Egyptian forces dispatched to Greece displayed heroic deeds and won for themselves historic fame. They repressed the revolt and occupied a large part of the country. Nevertheless, their march was stopped by the interference of Great Britain and Russia, who sent a mixed squadron to Greece to check the advance of the Egyptian army. As a result the Turko-Egyptian fleet was defeated at Navarino in 1827.

Ibrahim on the march to conquer Syria. Through his heroic victory the illustrious conqueror won for his father the formal recognition of his governorship of Syria. The Arab-empire project never paraded as close to Muhammad 'Ali's eyes as when, by the time he conquered Syria, he was in possession of the key cities of Cairo, Mecca, Medina, Jerusalem, and Damascus. The unpopularity of the Sultan among the Arab people and their discontent with the Ottoman rule as a whole prepared the ground for the efforts of the new conqueror and rendered the atmosphere propitious for his project.

The plan for an Arab empire was not realized because the instigators were not Arabs, and as such lacked spontaneity in their approach. Muhammad 'Ali, especially, was handicapped by the selfishness of his motive. Furthermore, though Ibrahim proved at the beginning of his rule in Syria to be an admirable administrator his policy of increasing taxes and the forced means to which he resorted in order to strengthen the army caused a revulsion of public opinion against him.² Those causes were secondary in relation to the lack of national consciousness among the Arabs. Centuries of decadence and misrule had debilitated the collective spirit of the Arab population and loosened their former cohesion. Anyway, the hard rock on which the plan for an

2. Owing to European pressure combined with local discontent Muhammad 'Ali's rule of Syria, which had lasted seven long years, met its end in 1840.

Arab empire crushed was the opposition of Great Britain who feared then the emergence of Russian hegemony in Europe in case the Ottoman Empire became dismembered.

Antonius relates these events to world affairs in stating: "This was the first occasion in modern times on which the idea of an Arab empire had presented itself as a problem in world politics, and on that occasion, at any rate, England's hand was against it."³

PAN-ISLAMISM

Pan-Islamism was a movement that aimed at uniting the Moslem countries under one caliph and reviving the original culture of Islam. It arose in the nineteenth century and reached its zenith in the 1890's. It has two aspects, political and spiritual.

Its intellectual exponent was Jamal-Addine al-Afghani who, in the second half of the nineteenth century, proved to be the first Moslem to grasp the impending peril of Western domination. The major part of his life was devoted to warning the Islamic world against the danger of Western hegemony and to the attempt at elaborating measures of defense. His main view was to meet the aggressive West and combat it with its own methods and techniques. Education and Islam, adapted to the conditions of the age, were to serve as channels to salvation. The means to

3. George Antonius, Arab Awakening (N. Y., 1946), p. 32.

achieve those objectives were to be revolutionary. The necessary prelude to the Moslem regeneration was to be emancipation from the foreign yoke. This and the revival of the culture and religion of Islam were the steps toward uniting the Moslem people under one caliph.

Imprisoned for a while in India by the British Jamal-Addine al-Afghani went, upon his release, to Egypt. Here, he lent a hand to the anti-European movement of Arabi Pasha. His participation in the rebellion prompted the British authorities to expel him from the country. From 1882 on he wandered, thinking and observing, till he reached Constantinople where he found a generous patron in the famous Ottoman Sultan 'Abdel-Hamid, who was then evolving a Pan-Islamic policy of his own. The Sultan-Caliph of Turkey saw in the political unity of the Moslem world an effective weapon against further European aggression. He used the religious fervor of his people and their reverence to the sacred attributes of his office to incite loyalty to his throne and win for himself recognition as the leader of Islam among the nations of Europe. Jamal-Addine's arrival in Turkey kindled the Sultan's inspiration into action. He appointed al-Afghani head of the Propaganda Bureau and dispatched emissaries all over the Moslem world to rally believers behind the Caliph. Although his call, heard in the far corners of Islam, created Pan-Islamic feelings that were expressed in sporadic

outbreaks against European penetration like those of 'Abdel-Kader in Algeria and al-Mahdi in Sudan, it failed to inspire a political world movement or to coordinate effectively the efforts of the Moslems in their struggle against the West.

The spiritual champion of Pan-Islamism was Muhammad 'Abdou, an eminent Egyptian scholar and a disciple of al-Afghani. He differed from the latter in seeking to stem Western intrusion into the Moslem world by busying himself with the moral rather than with the political revival of Islam. The program that he bequeathed to the Muhammadan reform movement can be summed up under four headings:

1. Purification of Islam from corrupting influences and practices.
2. Reformation of Moslem higher education.
3. Reformation of Islamic doctrine in the light of modern thought.
4. Defense of Islam against European influences and Christian attacks.⁴

The spiritual aspect of the Pan-Islamic movement is different from its political side in outlook and effects. It is based primarily on the feeling of solidarity that is implanted in the heart of every Moslem. This fact is buttressed by three features that tie the Moslem people together; the institution of al-Hajj (pilgrimage) where men of all races, cultures, and nationalities mingle in

4. H.A.R. Gibb, Modern Trends in Islam (London, 1932), p. 33.

an ecstasy of common devotion, the Arabic language which is used in the reading of the Koran, and the universal Moslem regulations that are set in the Sacred Book to direct the ordinary pursuits of life. With respect to the last factor it should be remembered that Islam is not only a religion but a way of life. As a spiritual and charitable idea Pan-Islamism has achieved some minor results such as the construction of the Hejaz Railway, the foundation of the "Red Crescent" after the pattern of the Red Cross, and the establishment of the "Young Men's Moslem Association" on the model of the Y.M.C.A. Stoddard observes correctly:

Though the Pan-Islamic movement had been tremendously stimulated by Western pressure, especially by the first World War and the peace-settlement, it must not be regarded as a merely defensive political reaction against external aggression.... It springs primarily from sentiments of unity. These bonds are cultural and social as well as religious.⁵

The Pan-Turanian movement, which aimed at a separate revival of the Turkish nation, constituted an interim period in the history of Pan-Islamism. The years between 1908 and 1912 witnessed the ascendancy of confusion and mental uncertainty in the Moslem world. However, renewed pressure from the West served to revive Moslem feeling of solidarity and to give new strength to the expiring

5. Lathrop Stoddard, The New World of Islam (N. Y., 1921), p. 35.

movement of Pan-Islam. The reinvigorated religious zeal was expressed strongly in Tripoli where the Italians were met with a strange fanatical fury that was instigated by the Senussiyyah Fraternity.⁶ Nevertheless, the death knell of the Islamic movement as a political factor was soon tolled in 1916 when Sultan Muhammad V failed in his appeal for jihad (holy war) and the Sharif of Mecca rose in insurrection against his Moslem brethren in Turkey. After the first World War each Moslem country became concerned with its own emancipation and nationalism. Besides, spiritual regeneration and the power wielded by the Moslem countries were not enough for the realization of the original aims of the Islamic movement. All the post-war Moslem congresses that were held at different times and in various capitals of the Arab countries served only to confirm the simple fact that Islam as a political idea could not be resurrected.

6. Muhammad ibn Senussi, a descendant of the Prophet, was born in Algeria in 1800. He was a pious man who traveled through all North Africa preaching for the correction of religious abuses. After his pilgrimage to Mecca he settled in Cyrenaica, Tripoli, in 1843 and launched a puritan reform movement. His son al-Mahdi carried on the movement after the death of his father in 1859. The present ruler of Cyrenaica is Ahmed al-Sharif, nephew of al-Mahdi.

PART II
START AND DEVELOPMENT OF ARAB NATIONALISM

CHAPTER I
THE ARABIC RENAISSANCE AND ITS EVOLUTION
INTO POLITICAL REVIVAL

The first phase that Arab nationalism assumed was the literary revival, a resuscitation of the ancient Arabic culture, having its inspiration and ideals from the past, and a rebirth of a progressive spirit, directed towards the future and the West. A special endeavor was made to preserve the Arabic language and master its classical literature.

FOREIGN MISSIONARIES

The Catholic French Jesuit missionaries inaugurated at the dawn of the seventeenth century a chain of European missionary settlements in the Levant. Though the activities of the early settlers were confined to dissemination of devotional books, they served to move slightly the dormant spirit of the oppressed Arabs under the Ottoman regime.

The year 1820 witnessed the arrival of the Presbyterian American missionaries at Beirut, among whom was Eli Smith who made himself later very famous among the Syrian people as a result of his wonderful contributions to the Arab cultural revival.

The Jesuits, who had returned to Beirut in 1834 after the suppression of their order by the Pope in 1773, ingratiated themselves with the Arabs by endeavoring to revive the Arabic literature. This sharpened the eyes of the American missionaries who cared to gain equally the good will of the Syrians. As a result they, in turn, set in train another revival of the Arabic language. Eli Smith transferred the American printing press at Malta;¹ a new type of Arabic fount was cast at Leipzig, and all necessary equipment was supplied. Textbooks and school manuals were supplied in Arabic. This paved the way for the rehabilitation of the Arabic language as a vehicle of thought. The foreign missionary efforts in fostering education, coupled with Ibrahim's state school system and the endeavors of the local ecclesiasts, stirred the people to open schools. From then on the spread of education progressed by leaps and bounds.

The Catholic missionaries established many schools in the cities and in the mountains, but the most famous of all was the one founded at Ghazir in 1843, the reason being that it was the nucleus of the present famous French University at Beirut. The French drive for research was placed at the disposal of the Syrians and helped greatly

1. Malta was the center of the American Board of Control of Foreign Missions. The first Arabic press appeared in Constantinople in 1816 and the second in Cairo in 1822.

in recovering the lost Arab inheritance. Parallel to that was the establishment in 1866 of the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut by the American missionary, Daniel Bliss. This institution, later evolving into a full-fledged and justly celebrated university, played an immense part through its students and subsequent graduates in raising the level of Arab cultural and national activities. It encouraged the use of the Arabic language in the transmission of knowledge and sponsored the revival of Arabic classical literature and poetry. Much credit is attributed to the American University in fostering research in Moslem studies. The majority of the high ranks in the government and public service were filled by its graduates. The American faculty supported the development of nationalistic feelings among the students, who were in most cases the instigators of manifestations against foreign rule.

The intellectual period of the middle of the nineteenth century was dominated by two Lebanese scholars, Nassif Yaziji and Butrus Bustani. Both were commissioned by the Americans to compose manuals on a variety of subjects for the use of schools. The former thought that the only way to salvation was through the revival of the old Arabic literature. With the collaboration of Eli Smith Butrus Bustani translated the Bible. He compiled two dictionaries and an Arabic encyclopaedia of six volumes. The first political newspaper, "Clarion of Syria" (Nafir Suriya), was founded by him. The main theme of his

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preaching was knowledge for he believed that enlightenment fostered peace in killing fanaticism and in upholding common ideals.

At the instigation of both scholars the first literary society, Jami'yat al-Adab wa-'Uloum, was founded in 1847. Other societies were founded after its pattern. The "Oriental Society" was founded by the Jesuits. After the dissolution of those two societies the "Syrien Scientific Society" (al-Jami'yah al-'Ilmiya al-Suriya) came to the fore. The initiator was Ibrahim Yaziji, son of the late Yaziji. The aim shifted from literature to politics and the main issue became the incitement of Arab feeling against Turkish rule.²

French and American missionaries were followed by other Europeans - British, Italian, and German.³ A spread of a network of schools and colleges took place. Although they were the main factor in raising the cultural standard of Syria, the foreign missionaries added mischief to the country for in their diversity they carried with them the evils of international rivalries. This accumulated sectarianism and kindled further conflicts. Though they were vehicles of knowledge, the European missionaries became instruments for political penetration and tools for intrigues.

2. .Antonius, op. cit., pp. 51-54.

3. The Germans were to have more Arabists than any other nation in Europe. Their first-rate scholars contributed innumerable classical works in Islamic and Arabic studies.

Every one of them strove to introduce its own native culture and thus disseminate its language and ideas and in so doing threatened to wean away young students from their own culture. The sectarian disturbances, fostered by the foreigners, helped to "awaken men's minds to the horrors of their moral stagnation and rekindle the zeal of those who saw that at the root of the country's tribulations was the sectarian hatred that thrives on ignorance."⁴

THE ARAB REVIVAL ASSUMES ITS POLITICAL ASPECT

The first organized effort for a national movement was embodied in the "Beirut Secret Society" that was founded in 1875 by five former Christian students at the American University, whose identity was never divulged either to the government or to the public. Other adherents of different religions joined the society till its membership rose to twenty-two persons. The organization was strengthened by the affiliation of the recently founded Masonic Lodge, chartered on the European pattern. Besides its center in Beirut the society had branches in Damascus, Tripoli, and Sidon. Revolution against the Turkish domination and rule was its objective. Conspiracy spread by whisper from ear to ear. Inciting placards posted on the streets or distributed by leaflets and other press dispatches for exciting national fervor appeared anonymously. The agility

4. Antonius, op. cit., p. 59.

and dexterity with which that was done is well-described by Antonius:

Having drafted the text of an appeal they would spend long nightly vigils making out innumerable copies of it in disguised hand writings. Then at an agreed hour at dead of night, the younger members would go out, with pots of glue in their pockets, and stick as many placards as they found time for on the walls of the city. In the morning, a crowd would collect around each poster while someone read it out loud, until the police would come, tear it down, and make arrests among the innocent bystanders. ⁵

Antonius goes on depicting in a natural way the contents of these placards:

Their contents furnished a topic of hushed conversation at private gatherings; and the members of the society, carefully guarding their secret, would circulate among their friends and acquaintances, take part in the discussions, and inwardly note the comments The placards contained violent denunciations of the evils of Turkish rule, and exhorted the ⁶Arab population to rise in rebellion and overthrow it.

He adds:

They reproached the people of Syria for their lethargy under the tyranny of the Turks and for their habits of dissension which made them a prey to European ambitions. They stressed the importance of unity and incited the people to sink their differences and unite against their tyrants under the inspiration of their 'Arab pride'.⁷

5. Ibid., p. 80

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., p. 83

INTENSIFICATION OF THE NATIONALISTIC FEELINGS UNDER THE SULTAN OF TURKEY, 'ABDEL-HAMID

'Abdel-Hamid II had been proclaimed Sultan (1876-1909) after the compelled abdication of his extravagant uncle 'Abdel-'Aziz, who had reigned about sixteen years. Despotism by nature, he concealed at the beginning his potential tyranny by the granting of the 1876 Constitution.⁸ He was particularly bountiful with the Arabs, who were less amenable due to their inherent love for independence and who, besides, constituted a disturbing element because of their budding national consciousness. He tried to appeal to them by bestowing on them lavish favors, thinking that that was the best way of winning them to his side. But wherever he noticed that his policy of blandishments was not working, he resorted ruthlessly to cruel means of subjection. The story of emissaries sent by him to scourge the Arab world, sowing discord and provoking disturbances, is disagreeable to describe, as is his tyrannical policy in searching for the fomenters of conspiracy. The weight of his wholesale torture of Arab nationalists made the Beirut Secret Society suspend its activities.

His disguise behind liberal ideas did not last long; he revealed his despotic nature by first suspending the constitution. The pretext was the Russo-Turkish War. With the San-Stefano treaty concluded, he was free to rule

8. Midhat Pasha was the father of the Constitution. A liberal idealist, he served as Grand Vizir and later as Governor of Syria.

as he liked. The Russian War multiplied discontent and intensified grievances because Arab recruits were levied to fight aliens for no cause of their own.

On the whole, the period of 'Abdel-Hamid was characterized by slow and invisible manifestations of Arab national consciousness in spite of the fact that the movement of ideas made decisive strides and the seed of Arab revival which started in Syria threw out shoots into other Arab countries. The Sultan's tyranny kept the Arab world prone except for the manifestations of the Beirut Secret Society, the kindling writings of 'Abdel-Rahman al-Kawakibi, and the influence of Najib 'Azuri in introducing the Arab problem to Europe. The former writer was Syrian by birth but had emigrated to Egypt⁹ to escape the heavy weight of the Ottoman oppression that he had tasted while imprisoned. He hated intolerance and injustice and believed passionately in the Arab people and the restoration to them of the leadership of Islam. His contribution to the progress of the Arab nationalistic movement was channeled through his writings in which he analyzed the decrepitude of the Arab world and suggested for remedy the combating of the obscurantism of the theologians and the

9. Since 1870 Egypt marched along with Syria in political revival and evolved, besides, a nationalistic movement of her own. The fact that it was out of 'Abdel-Hamid's reach made Cairo one of the centers of conspiracy and an asylum for political writers who escaped from all parts of the Arab world where the Turkish censorship left them no way to express their nationalistic feelings.

ignorance of the people. In 1904, Najib 'Azuri founded in Paris La Ligue de la Patrie Arabe. The society appealed strongly to the Arabs to join efforts and emancipate themselves from the Turkish yoke. Through his book Le Réveil de la Nation Arabe and the publication of a monthly review L'Indépendance Arabe he attracted the attention of Europe to the existence of an Arab problem and thus revived the interest of the West in the Arab world.

The burden of 'Abdel-Hamid's despotism weighed heavily not only on the Arabs but on his other subjects too, from whom conspirators, identified as Young Turks, arose and sought to put an end to his cruelty. A Committee of Union and Progress¹⁰ was formed in Salonica. It aimed at uniting the different races of the Empire into one nation on the basis of equality for all. Its plotting blossomed in a military revolution that drove 'Abdel-Hamid to grant the people in 1908 a constitution, abolish censorship, release political prisoners and disband his enormous army of spies.¹¹ Some Arabs had a hand in the revolution but they served as members of the Ottoman Empire combating the Sultan's despotism rather than as Arabs fighting for their own freedom. Though the constitution with its various restrictions and stipulations was not the real redeemer for the Arabs, the latter joined in the general celebration

10. Henceforth referred to as the C. U. P.

11. G. P. Gooch, & H. W. V. Temperley, eds., British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914 (London, 1938), V, 251. Hereafter cited as British Documents.

and in their exultation they formed the Ikha al-'Arabi al-Uthmani (Ottoman Arab Fraternity). The fraternity aimed on the one hand at the protection of the constitution while preserving loyalty to the Sultan, and on the other hand at the promotion of the welfare and equality of the Arabs, recognition of their language as an official medium of communication, and observance of their customs and ways of life.¹²

The injustice of the elections to the new parliament revealed the C.U.P.'s power of gerrymandering to favor the Turks at the expense of the Arabs. This fact caused dissension between the outlook of the Turks and the aspirations of the Arabs and brought forth an estrangement in their relations.

ORGANIZED EFFORTS FOR EMANCIPATION

The attempt of 'Abdel-Hamid to overthrow the C.U.P. caused the second Ottoman Revolution. The latter was headed by Mahmoud Shawkat, an Arab officer who had risen to high ranks in the Turkish army. By a joint action of the parliament the Sultan's deposition was pronounced and in his place his gentle and unambitious brother Muhammad V was proclaimed. The C.U.P., which had reassumed authority with more tenacity, ruled with an iron hand. The Arabs

12. Antonius, op. cit., p. 102

suffered tremendously under the new rule and among the non-purely Turkish societies the Ikha al-'Arabi al-Uthmani was the first to be banned. Added to that was the appearance of a new movement, known in history as Turanianism. Its essence was the drive to assert the Turanian origins of the Turkish people in the hope of regenerating the Turkish race. The threat of losing their cultural aspirations alarmed the Arabs. Besides, the C.U.P.'s policy of centralization made it obvious to the Arabs that their aspirations were totally incompatible with the Turkish plans. The impossibility of realizing Arab aims by friendly and peaceful terms asserted itself forcefully.

The suppression of the Ikha al-'Arabi al-Uthmani gave rise to four other societies. The ones publically recognized were al-Muntada al-Adabi (Literary Club) and Hizb al-Lamarkaziya al-Idariya al-Uthmani (Ottoman Decentralization Party). The former society was founded in 1909 and had its headquarters at Constantinople with other branches in some of the Arab countries. Its effect was to strengthen the appeal of the Arab movement. The Decentralization Party was founded in 1912 in Cairo and had an elaborate organization with representatives in several Syrian localities. The aim was to mobilize Arab opinion in support of decentralization and focus the attention of the Turkish rulers on the matter. As a society it was sorted out for its organized effort and concerted pressure for home rule. The two secret societies were the al-Qahtaniya

and al-Fatat. The year 1909 was the date when the former was founded in Constantinople by 'Aziz 'Ali al-Masri, an influential Arab officer in the Turkish army, with the help of Salim al-Jazai'ri. Its object was to turn the Ottoman Empire into a dual monarchy, one of which was to be an Arab kingdom. Its importance was summed up in the fact that it made the first attempt to win over the Arab officers serving in the Turkish army. Eventually the society was to evolve into an alliance of army officers and change its name to al-Ah'ad. The second secret society, al-Fatat (Young Arab), was initiated in Paris in 1911 by seven Moslem students but was shifted to Beirut two years later and then established itself firmly in Damascus. It worked for the liberation and independence of the Arab countries. The determining part it played was unparalleled in the history of Arab national movement.¹³

At the disguised instigation of al-Fatat the first Arab Congress was held in Paris in the summer of 1912. About ninety members of all creeds assembled there. Their deliberations proceeded in French and the sessions were open to the public. Moderation characterized their decisions for they demanded decentralization and not secession from the Ottoman Empire. Emphasis was put on their claim to equal political rights and especially to a share in administering the affairs of the Empire. They

13. Ibid. pp. 108-12

required that Arabic be recognized in the Ottoman Parliament and considered the official medium of expression in the Arab countries. Military service was to be regional in the Arab areas except in cases of extreme emergency. The French version of the above deliberations reads as follows:

1. Il importe d'établir dans chacun des vilayets syriens et arabes un régime décentralisateur approprié à ses besoins et à ses aptitudes.
2. Il importe d'assurer aux arabes ottomans l'exercice de leurs droits politiques en rendant effective leur participation à l'administration centrale de l'Empire.
3. La langue arabe doit être reconnue au Parlement Ottoman et considérée comme officielle dans les pays syriens et arabes.
4. Le service militaire sera régional dans les vilayets syriens et arabes, en dehors des cas d'extrême nécessité.¹⁴

The response of the C.U.P. to the deliberations of the Arab Congress was hostile at first but suddenly changed to a deceptive diplomatic approach. A Turkish emissary was sent to Paris to negotiate with the Arab representatives for a mutual understanding. Loaded with alluring promises, he succeeded in concluding an agreement with them. A small group of the Arab representatives, who travelled to Constantinople to press their gains home, were shocked to find out that the Ottoman Government was not ready to concede to the Arabs all what they were promised by the Turkish emissary at Paris.

14. British Documents, X, part II, 826

Failure was also the fate of the Arab Committee of Reform. This was a group of influential Arab nationalists who were working for the autonomy of the Arab countries within the frame of the Ottoman Empire. In the Winter of 1913 the Committee published its scheme of home rule. The warm acclamation that it received from the people of Beirut prompted the C.U.P., who was hostile to the thought of decentralization, to order the dissolution of the Committee. The failure of the Paris Congress and the Beirut agitation hardened the Arab will to freedom and embittered their feelings which caused them to flare into open protest against the Turkish rule during the first World War.

CHAPTER II

WORLD WAR I AND ARAB NATIONALISM

ARAB BRITISH NEGOTIATIONS

Sharif Hussain ibn'Ali, a descendant of the Prophet, was appointed in 1908 as Grand Sharif of Mecca by the Committee of Union and Progress. However, since the Committee had embarked on the policy of Turanianism, a policy which was opposed to the movement of Ottomanism and consequently to the fostering of Arab national interests, the relationship between the C.U.P. and the Grand Sharif took on an unfriendly aspect. This feeling led to a design on the part of the Committee to dispose of the Sharif, a movement which, later when it became known, spread seeds of revolt in the Hejaz. The Sharif's son, 'Abdallah, who was at that time a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament, approached Lord Kitchner,¹ then British Consul-General in Egypt, in order to test the pulse of Britain's attitude² toward the Arab world. At first Lord Kitchner refused to take a definite stand on the issue. However, he reconsidered later the situation and he began to think

1. British Documents, X, part II, 827-30

2. Britain was interested in the Near East because it formed a part of the continuous life line to India. At the dawn of World War I she had already occupied the islands of Perim, Socotra, Kuria Muria, and made of Aden at Bab al-Mandab a British base. Furthermore, she had acquired influence over the Arabian countries along the Red Sea by concluding with them treaties of friendship.

of extending British influence from the port of Acre in Palestine to the Persian Gulf and making of the rest of the Arab world a confederation, friendly toward England to stem the progressive tide of German penetration³ in the Near East.

At the outbreak of World War I Lord Kitchner was appointed to the position of Foreign Secretary in the British Cabinet and his place of Consul-General in Cairo was taken by Ronald Storrs, former Oriental Secretary in Egypt. The gravity of the situation as a result of the war was such as to compel the new British Foreign Secretary to instruct Storrs to make overtures to Sharif Hussain for the purpose of reaching an understanding on the Arab question. The latter first sought the opinion of his two sons, Feisal and 'Abdallah. Then, after checking on the attitude of the other Arab leaders, he affirmed his willingness to come to such an understanding with Great Britain. Lord Kitchner,

3. "Drang nach Osten" was a new orientation in German foreign policy. Seeing in Asia Minor a potential field for colonization, Germany indulged in fostering the Islamic policy of 'Abdel-Hamid in order to gain his friendship. The first step she took was to send a German military mission in 1883 to modernize the Turkish army. This was followed by the economic invasion that started with the railway concession from Haider Pasha (on the Bosphorus) to Konia (1888-96) and to the Persian Gulf (Baghdad Railway). For the latter enterprise Kaiser Wilhelm II went himself to Turkey in 1898. The construction of the Damascus-Medina railway was also entrusted to German engineers. 'Abdel-Hamid's grant of favors to Germany was prompted by his desire to have a defender in the Council of Europe and his ambition to see the Arab world knit together by a system of communication that would facilitate the dissemination of his Pan-Islamic policy and thus strengthen his hold on his empire.

in his reply, gave assurance that England would support the Arabs in their endeavor to secure freedom and also that she would back Sharif Hussain in the event he should be proclaimed Caliph. British support, however, was based on the condition that the Arabs ally themselves to Britain against Turkey.⁴ In the name of his father, 'Abdallah committed the Arabs to an unavowed alliance with England, with the stipulation that no action could be taken until the time was suitable. Thus, Turkey's entry into World War I introduced the Arab question to the political arena of Europe.

Amir Feisal, the elder of Sharif Hussain's sons, was a member of the secret societies of al-Ah'ad and al-Fatat. These societies, which wielded considerable influence among the Arabs, constituted a school of thought which maintained that secession of the Arab countries from the Ottoman Empire was the only real method of gaining their independence. But the fear that some European nations might have designs to take over the Arab countries if they seceded from Turkey held al-Ah'ad and al-Fatat in check. The main reason that made the Arabs hesitant to take revolutionary action and to oppose the Turks was the fear that they might be simply substituting one oppressive ruler for another.

Amir Feisal's disclosure to both secret societies of Lord Kitchner's overtures was the primary stimulus for

4. British Documents, X, part II, 831-32

the "Damascus Protocol" that was later issued. This protocol defined the conditions for the cooperation of the Arab leaders with Great Britain against Turkey. Britain was promised a defensive alliance and economic preference in the projected Arab state in return for her help to the Arabs in obtaining their freedom and independence and abolishing all concessions that had been granted to foreigners. The confines of the future Arab state were delineated as follows:

North: The line Mersin-Adana to parallel 37°N. and thence along the line Birejik-Urfa-Mardin-Midiat-Jazirat (Ibn 'Umar)-Amadia to the Persian frontier;

East: The Persian frontier down to the Persian Gulf;

South: The Indian Ocean (with the exclusion of Aden, whose status was to be maintained);

West: The Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea back to Mersin.⁵

That is the whole of the Arabian Peninsula and all of what is now Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, and Syria, running up to the borders of Persia on the east and slightly into the present Turkish state on the north.

The outbreak of the war prompted Britain to declare Egypt a British protectorate and to place it under martial law. Sir Henry MacMahon was appointed High Commissioner of Egypt and the Sudan in January, 1915. It was to him that Sharif Hussain sent a copy of the Damascus Protocol.

5. Antonius, op. cit., p. 157

This was the first of the four official letters and their answers that are known in history as the "Hussain-MacMahon Correspondence". This exchange of letters lasted from July 1915 to January 1916. In his second reply to Sharif Hussain's letter in which the latter had refused to make any promises until all of the conditions which he had laid down had been accepted Sir Henry MacMahon agreed to meet all of these conditions without qualification. The pledges entered into by the Sharif and the High Commissioner of Egypt incorporated all of the conditions set forth in the Damascus Protocol and also the promise made in regard to the Caliphate. Furthermore, it is important to note, in the light of later events that were to take place in Palestine, that in the correspondence between the Sharif of Mecca and Sir Henry MacMahon the latter made no attempt to define what was meant by the Arab world which was to constitute the independent Arab state but accepted with some exceptions the definition given by Sharif Hussain:

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

With the above modification and without prejudice to our existing treaties with Arab chiefs, we accept those limits.

As for those regions lying within those frontiers wherein Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interests of her ally, France, I am empowered in the name of the Government of Great Britain to give the following reply to your letter:

Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is

prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs in all the regions within the limits demanded by the Sharif of Mecca.

With regard to the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra, the Arabs will recognize that the established position and interests of Great Britain necessitate special administrative arrangements in order to secure these territories from foreign aggression, to promote the welfare of the local population and to safeguard our mutual economic interests.⁶

Thus, the exceptions concerned the north coastal region and some parts of Iraq. French interests were involved in the former area while those of Britain were at stake in the latter. It was proposed that the area in Iraq be placed under both British and Arab administration.

THE ARAB REVOLT

The Arabs were not fully prepared by June 1916 and Sharif Hussain had not yet given up his cautious policy of trying to find the right time for striking when the blame for starting the revolt could be put on Turkey. All of a sudden a German expedition under Von Stotzingen attempted to start a new theater of operations against the Allies in south Arabia. This prompted the Sharif of Mecca to wage prematurely the revolt in the Hejaz and to follow it one month later by a proclamation to all Arabs and Moslems explaining his action and appealing to them to follow his

6. Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and Palestine, 1915-45: Information Papers No. 20 (London, 1946), App. 1, p. 145. Hereafter cited as R.I.I.A, Great Britain and Palestine.

step.

The news of the Arab revolt caused stupor in Germany and Turkey where the Governments tried very hard to screen the news from the public. At the same time Ah'mad Jamal Pasha,⁷ Ottoman Governor of Syria and Commander in Chief of the Turkish forces in the Arab world, was making wholesale arrests and executions. His rage was intense and the martial law that was at his disposal served him well in punishing all those whom he thought guilty of anti-Ottoman feelings.

British and French missions established themselves in Jedda during the summer of 1916. Sir Reginald Wingate, former Governor of the Sudan, was made Commander-in-Chief of operations in the Hejaz and was entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating the various activities of the Allied missions. Among the numerous contributions of non-Arab individuals to the Allied cause in the Arab revolt were those of Lieutenant-Colonel C.C. Wilson and T.E. Lawrence. The former was British agent who served as an intermediary between Sharif Hussain and the British authorities in the Sudan and Egypt. Lawrence was a British

7. A prominent member of the C.U.P., Jamal Pasha was previously the Minister of Marine in the Ottoman Cabinet, a position which he left for the attempt to liberate Egypt from the British. His offensive was launched in February, 1915. As he was defeated he returned to Syria where he became governor for three years and made Damascus his headquarters. He was endeavoring to bring the Arabs to support Turkey and the Moslems to cooperate in the European War in order to save the Ottoman Empire.

pioneer who went to Arabia for a visit and finished by playing a major part as an ally to the Arabs in their revolt.

The revolt in the Hejaz spread and became a major conflict. Each of the Sharif's sons, Feisal, 'Abdallah, and 'Ali, headed a division. While it was at first that the rising had started in Madina, this city actually remained in the hands of the Turks till the end of the war because, being a holy place, the Moslem Arabs refrained from bombarding it. From the Hejaz the Turks were driven to Wajh in the north of Arabia where their countrymen were being pushed back from the west. Sir Archibald Murray succeeded in driving the Turks back to the confines of Palestine, but his unsuccessful attacks on Ghaza in March and April of 1917 resulted in his recall. Heading a British-Arab combination of troops, the new General, Edmund Allenby, launched a vigorous attack on Palestine and by the end of October 1917 he had liberated all Syria. The joy of freedom experienced in Damascus at the evacuation of the Turkish troops is described dramatically by Antonius:

Damascus was in a frenzy of joy and gave itself wholly to its emotion. A population famed for the vigor of its impulses outdid itself in a riot of delirious thanksgiving. It seemed as though the sufferings of the four hideous years, sharpening the city's capacity to feel, had intensified its passion and that the nightmare of Jemal's tyranny had quickened its instincts.⁸

8. Antonius, op. cit., p. 237

The Arab revolt had helped the Allies in many ways. It served to divert Turkey's attention and to sever her relations with her garrisons in Arabia. It barred access of Germany and Turkey to the surrounding waters of Arabia and thus secured a safe navigation for Allied traffic. Dr. D.G. Hogarth expressed his appreciation of the value of the revolt to the Allied cause by saying: "Had the revolt never done anything else than frustrate that combined march of Turks and Germans to southern Arabia in the spring of 1916 we should owe it more than we have paid to this day."⁹

PLEDGES AND COUNTER-PLEDGES

As the war proceeded the Entente Powers became increasingly interested in the prospect of the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. To define their respective zones of influence and delimit their planned territorial acquisitions in the Near-East they concluded among themselves various treaties which they kept secret.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement: The Sykes-Picot agreement was concluded in May, 1916, between George Picot, former French Consul-General at Beirut, and Sir Mark Sykes, British student of Eastern affairs. Both drew up a scheme in which they allocated to France and to Britain certain coveted parts of the Ottoman Empire and submitted the draft to the Tsarist Government for approval. The latter

9. D. G. Hogarth, "Mecca's Revolt against the Turk," The Century, 100:3 (July, 1920), p. 411

recognized, subject to certain restrictions, the arrangement between Great Britain and France. Accordingly, the Levant was to be divided into two spheres of influence: France was to have the "Blue Zone" - including Syria, the vilayet of Mosul and Cilicia (south Anatolia) - within which the "A-area" - consisting of the territory east to Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus as well as the vilayet of Mosul - was to form an independent Arab state. Britain, on the other hand, was to have the "Red Zone" - comprising Iraq (with the exception of Mosul), Transjordan, and the ports of Haifa and Acre with a strip of hinterland - within which the "B-area" - consisting of Transjordan and the center of Iraq - was to become an independent Arab state. The Holy Places in and around Jerusalem were to be entrusted to an international regime.¹⁰

As the Bolsheviki came into power and published all the secret documents into which the Tsarist Government of Russia had entered, the terms of the Sykes-Picot agreement were revealed to the Arabs through the Turks. This disclosure disturbed the confidence of the Arab world in Britain; however, Sharif Hussain refused the Turkish offer for conciliation and referred the matter to the British Foreign Office for clarification. The latter gave a misleading presentation of the character and scope

10. H. W. V. Temperley, ed., A History of the Peace Conference of Paris (London, 1924), VI, 16. Requoted from the Manchester Guardian, Jan. 19, 1918. Hereafter cited as Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris.

of the agreement and reaffirmed that Great Britain, in accordance with her former pledge, would stand by the Arabs in their struggle for liberation and assist them in obtaining their independence. Thus, the reply evaded the issue but reassured Hussain, who had great faith in the fair dealing of Britain, of the good intentions of England towards the Arab world.

The Balfour Declaration: The Great War presented an occasion for Dr. Chaim Weizmann and a group of Zionist leaders to start a movement in England in an effort to enlist the sympathy of the British Government towards their cause. They issued a program in which they made clear that if Great Britain would help them realize their aspirations for establishing a homeland in Palestine they would give her priority, economic and political, in their projected state. By that time Britain was starting to be disturbed by the repercussions of the Sykes-Picot agreement. The desert in the Sinai Peninsula had proved surmountable in the war, and she thought that a buffer state made of Palestine would protect the Suez Canal and Egypt from any venturous attack from the northwest. Furthermore, she sympathized with the Jewish case from a humanitarian point of view.

Arthur J. Balfour, then Foreign Secretary in the British Government, together with Dr. Weizmann had a determining part in the negotiations between the Zionist Organization and the British Government which were carried

throughout the Summer of 1917. These culminated in the so-called Balfour Declaration, a letter containing the decisions of the British Government and conveyed, in November, 1917, to Lord Edmond de Rothschild:

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

This was another instance that annoyed Sharif Hussain and shook the confidence of the Arabs in Britain. Upon the Sharif's demand of the British authorities for an explanation of the Balfour Declaration, Commander D.G. Hogarth, a British official in the Arab Bureau at Cairo, was dispatched to Arabia in January, 1918. His purpose was to assure Sharif Hussain that Jewish settlement in Palestine would only be allowed as far as it would be consistent with the political and economic freedom of the Arab population. He was, further, to reaffirm the determination of the Entente Powers to give the Arabs full opportunity to once again form a nation:

His Majesty's Government are determined that in so far as is compatible with the freedom of the existing population, both economic and political, no obstacle should be put in the way of the realization of the aspirations of Jews to return to Palestine.

The Entente Powers are determined that the Arab race shall be given full opportunity of once again forming a nation

in the world. This can only be achieved by the Arabs themselves uniting, and Great Britain and her Allies will pursue a policy with this ultimate unity in view.¹¹

Jamal Pasha, taking advantage of the shaken Arab confidence in Britain, tried to reincorporate the Arab countries into the Turkish Empire by appealing to their common religion as a basis for their unity. Great Britain, apprehensive of this gesture, sent a formal note in February, 1918, signed by J.R. Bassett, Acting British Agent at Jedda, in which she reiterated in general terms her pledge in regard to the liberation of the Arab people.¹²

The Declaration to the Seven: In the Spring of the year 1918, when the feelings of the Arabs towards Britain were enraged by the appearance of the Balfour Declaration and the disclosure of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, seven unidentified Arabs, domiciling in Cairo, drew up in concerted action a statement in the form of a memorandum addressed to the British Government. In this memorandum they requested a clear and comprehensive definition of Great Britain's policy with regard to the future of the Arab countries as a whole. The answer from London, in June 1918, confirmed England's previous pledges to the Arabs in plainer language than in any former public utterance and stated, in addition, that the "principle of the consent of the governed"

11. R.I.I.A., Great Britain and Palestine, App. i, p. 147

12. Antonius, op. cit., App. C, pp. 431-32

was to be the basis on which those pledges would rest:

In regard to areas in Arabia which were free and independent before the outbreak of the war and to other Arab areas emancipated from Turkish control by the action of the Arabs themselves during the present war, it is the wish and desire of His Majesty's Government that the future government of these regions should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed. This policy has and will continue to have the support of His Majesty's Government.

In regard to areas formerly under Ottoman dominion and occupied by the Allied forces during the present war, it is the wish and desire of His Majesty's Government that the oppressed people of these areas should obtain their freedom and independence, and towards the achievement of this object His Majesty's Government continue to labour.¹³

The Anglo-French Declaration: At the beginning of October, 1918, the Syrians hoisted the Arab flag in Beirut, displaying Arab sovereignty in the name of Amir Feisal. The French, who regarded Syria as their future zone of influence, reacted bitterly to the Arab action. Under the pressure of a French protest the British Government notified General Allenby to denounce the independent Arab proceeding and to order the removal of the flag. This gesture aroused a feeling of violence on the part of the public, a feeling which was accentuated by mutiny in the ranks of the army. In order to calm the turmoil occasioned by the incident of the hauling down of the Arab flag, the French, together with the British Government, issued a declaration assuring publicly the solidarity of the Allied Powers in their attitude toward

13. R.I.I.A., Great Britain and Palestine, App. 1, p. 149

Arab independence. They reiterated their identical aims of seeing all populations under the Turkish rule liberated and able to set up national governments under the principle of self determination. In addition, they reaffirmed their readiness to assist in establishing such governments and to be the first to recognize them once they were organized:

The object aimed at by France and Great Britain in prosecuting in the East the war let loose by the ambition of Germany is the complete and definite emancipation of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks and the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations.

In order to carry out these intentions France and Great Britain are at one in encouraging and assisting the establishment of indigenous governments and administrations in Syria and Mesopotamia, now liberated by the Allies, and in the territories the liberation of which they are engaged in securing, and recognizing these as soon as they are actually established.¹⁴

POST-WAR SETTLEMENTS

In spite of the fact that the emancipation of the Arabs from the Turkish yoke during the first World War was due to their own efforts, except for the help they received from Britain in Aden and Iraq, their countries continued after the war to be under the occupation of British troops. The provisional arrangements to which the Arab countries had been subjected during the war seemed to have become final settlements. This was true of Iraq which was treated as a single administrative unit with a British civil

14. Ibid., p. 150

commissioner at its head. The same was also true of Syria which was divided into three zones ; the South (Palestine), the East (interior of Syria), and the West (Lebanon and the Syrian seaboard). Each of these areas constituted a separate administrative unit.¹⁵

The Peace Conference: Amir Feisal was the representative of the Arab world at the Paris Conference. There he met considerable resistance from France, who endeavored constantly to hinder him from presenting the full Arab cause to the Conference. In spite of that he succeeded in pleading for Arab rights in the name of the principle of self-determination, the Arab contribution to the war, and the various Anglo-French pledges for the guarantee of Arab independence. "He pleaded for the independence of all the Arab countries, urging that together they formed a racial and economic unit."¹⁶ Nevertheless, France and Britain gave no sign of promise for fulfilling their pledges to the Arabs but, on the contrary, they seemed determined to keep their hand on the Near East.

The General Syrian Congress: Meanwhile, Feisal returned to Damascus apprehensive, yet discreet, and it was exactly his reticence that made some Arab leaders and the members of the Arab Independence Party move for the

15. Under the Ottoman rule as typified by 'Abdel-Hamid's regime the Levant was divided into three vilayets - Aleppo, Beirut, and the East (including what is now Transjordan) - and two sanjaks - Lebanon and Jerusalem.

16. Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris, VI, 145

convening of an All-Arab Congress. The large number of people that participated directly and indirectly in the congress represented practically every political, religious, and social sections of Arab society. As a result of this widespread participation the representatives felt authorized to issue the following resolutions:

1. Recognition of the independence of Syria including Palestine as a sovereign state with the Amir Feisal as King; recognition of the independence of Iraq.
2. Repudiation of the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration and of any plan for the partition of Syria or the creation of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine.
3. Rejection of the political tutelage implied in the proposed mandatory system; but acceptance of foreign assistance for a limited period provided it did not conflict with national independence and unity, preference being given to American or - failing America - to British assistance.¹⁷
4. Rejection of French assistance in any form.

The King-Crane Commission: At the suggestion of Amir Feisal, who rejoined the conference at Paris, and with the assistance of President Wilson of the United States, a commission representing the Allied Powers was to be set up and authorized to visit Syria in order to ascertain the wishes of the people relative to their political fate. This action was sponsored by President Wilson in an attempt to fulfill the stipulation in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations which stated that the wishes of certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish

17. Antonius, op. cit., pp. 293-94

Empire should be a principal consideration in the selection of the mandatory powers. Anticipating the results of such a plebiscite and realizing that their imperialistic aims in the Near East would not be satisfied, France and Britain tried one subterfuge after another in order to prevent the formation of the commission. President Wilson stood firm on his decision and finally insisted on sending two American representatives - Dr. Henry C. King, President of Oberlin College, and Mr. Charles R. Crane - to examine public opinion of the Arabs in the Levant in regard to their future political status. Their inquiry on the spot brought recommendations the gist of which is contained in the following:

1. ... whatever foreign administration ... is brought into Syria, should come in ... as a Mandatory under the League of Nations with the clear consciousness that 'the well-being and development' of the Syrian people form for it a 'sacred trust'.
2. ... the unity of Syria be preserved, in accordance with the earnest petition of the great majority of the people of Syria.
3. ... Syria be placed under one mandatory Power, as the natural way to secure real and efficient unity.
4. ... Amir Feisal be made head of the new united Syrian State.
5. ... serious modification of the extreme Zionist programme for Palestine...¹⁸

They recommended, in addition, that the mandate for Syria

18. R. W. Baker, Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement (N.Y., 1922), II, 205-19. Requoted from Editor and Publisher, Dec. 2, 1922

and Palestine should go to the United States. In case the latter failed to accept such a responsibility the second choice would go to Great Britain. Furthermore, France was to be given no choice for assuming the mandatory responsibility over Syria and Palestine. As to Iraq the two American representatives recommended that the country should be united under one Arab sovereign to be chosen by the people.¹⁹

The King-Crane report was pigeon-holed, kept secret and ignored. As a matter of fact, it was not made public till 1922.

The Arab Declaration of Syrian and Iraqi Independence:

For a while the relations between Britain and France became strained. To save expenses the former did not want to keep her troops in Syria since she was not interested in that region. France, on the other hand, realizing her unpopularity among the Arabs, expected of Britain to continue policing Syria until the right time came for the French to take over. To solve the tension between the British and the French Lloyd George invited Amir Feisal to give his opinion as to the substitution of French for British troops in Syria. At first he protested, but when matters evolved to the point that he had to deal directly with Clemenceau, Amir Feisal proved complaisant for the sake of avoiding hostilities between the French and the Arabs. He

19. Ibid.

agreed that on the second of November, 1919, French troops would occupy Lebanon and the Syrian coast provided this arrangement was regarded as entirely provisional, pending the final settlement of the Peace Conference.

A revulsion of feelings shook the Syrians along with the Iraqians when the rumor of the agreement between Feisal and Clemenceau became known. Their discontent and dismay were expressed in active hostility. When Feisal returned to Syria he found the atmosphere boiling with hatred of the French. Damascus was then harboring a great number of Arab political leaders who had flocked there from all parts of the Levant. On the eighth of March, 1920, the tension was released when the General Syrian Congress proclaimed the independence of Syria (including Palestine and Lebanon) and declared it a sovereign state under a constitutional monarch with Amir Feisal as king. The Iraqi leaders had followed suit and declared the independence of their country with Amir 'Abdallah as king.

San-Remo Conference: Meanwhile, the western powers met at San Remo and decided on the twenty-fourth of April, 1920, that both Syria and Iraq should become independent states, subject to a mandatory Power until they were able to rule themselves. They further decided that the mandates for Iraq and Palestine should be assigned to Great Britain and those for Syria and Lebanon to France. In so doing the western powers applied the section of Article 22 of the

Covenant of the League of Nations which says:

Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone.

But they disregarded completely the last part of the above section that states: "The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory."

When the San Remo resolutions were made public on May 5, 1920, a feeling of contempt for the western powers and of disillusionment swept over all parts of the Arab world. The intensified nationalist sentiment expressed itself in uprisings and revolutions that flared intermittently in the various Arab countries. The following chapters will describe these revolutions along with the development of nationalism in the various Arab states.

PART III

NATIONALISM IN THE INDIVIDUAL ARAB COUNTRIES

CHAPTER I

SYRIA AND LEBANON

As soon as Syria and Lebanon were assigned to France an ultimatum from the mandatory power fell on them like a thunderstorm. The population was feverishly rebellious; anger and hatred were devouring its heart. The people were prepared to fight, yet despair and helplessness moved their leader to think wisely. Feisal, like his father the Sharif Hussain, never lost faith in Great Britain; he went on hoping, no matter how antagonizing her successive deeds proved to be. He thought he could go once more to Europe and secure a fair hearing that might result in the repeal of the mandate that subjected Lebanon and Syria to France. Besides, he wanted to save Damascus from an impending French attack. For those reasons he accepted the French ultimatum of July 14, 1920, that decreed:

1. Unconditional recognition of the French Mandate.
2. Immediate reduction of the Syrian army and the abolition of conscription.
3. Adoption of the French currency system.
4. French military occupation of the Rayak-Aleppo railway.
5. Punishment of those Arabs who proved themselves anti-French.¹

In spite of Feisal's acceptance of the ultimatum the French approached Damascus attacking. The Syrians responded furiously to the French aggression but their counterattack was commensurate with the little power they had. The bombardment of the capital was ruthless and it was really futile to be intransigent when one had to fight airplanes without airplanes. Although they were at a disadvantage in lacking the modern munitions that were at the disposal of the French, the Syrians displayed bold heroism in their defense. Nevertheless, their failure was imminent, for the material odds against them were great. Feisal found it wise to put an end to the unceasing resistance of his people against the French. The reward for such a conciliatory personality was exile. The first thing the French did was to invite Feisal to leave the country, which he did on the twenty-eighth of July. From Italy, his first destination, he went to London upon an invitation from the British Government.

From the already shrunken Syria the French carved out two other small states - Djebel al-Druse and Bilad al-'Alawiyyin. Moreover, their instigation of the sectarian dissension policy made them use any possibility to foster the separatist tendencies among the people of the Levant. Accordingly, they consented that the northeastern part of

1. Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris, VI, 158

Syria, al-Jazira, adhere to Iraq, and the northwestern part, Alexandretta, be annexed to Turkey. The disposal of these two districts were sore spots that created much resentment and chagrin among the Syrians against the mandatory power.² To the original small mountainous sanjaq of Lebanon the rich valley of Buqa', the districts of Sidon and Tyre, Tripoli and the city of Beirut were added. Out of this merger the state of the Grand Liban was created and its independence declared in 1920. Six years later the new state was proclaimed a republic.

Since the French occupation of Syria and Lebanon there were occasional demonstrations and riots against the new rule. Rancor, along with the zeal for freedom exploded in 1925 when the undaunted Druses initiated that famous, bloody revolution that spread all over the French mandated area and lasted two years till it died out in guerrilla warfare. From then on the scene of national resistance was concentrated in Damascus. The Syrian Government continued to oppose the conclusion of any agreement with France on the basis of the mandate. Nevertheless, under Comte D. de Martel, the well-known French High Commissioner, a short

2. The Syrians claimed specially Alexandretta for two reasons: it fell within the natural northern boundary of their country, the Taurus Mountains, and its inhabitants went back to the settlement of the Christian Ghassanites.

The French made of it an autonomous state under the nominal suzerainty of Syria. In 1938, a plebiscite was held in Alexandretta and the result was in favor of rejoining Syria, but the French found it expedient to hand it over to Turkey.

period of calm and prosperity reigned in Syria. He engaged in fostering the economic interests of the country while keeping the political issues in abeyance. Unfortunately, that interval of peace seemed to be a sort of quiet before a storm for at the outset of 1936 an underground campaign swept the country. The sudden explosion surprised De Martel and made him realize that discontent with French control was deeply rooted in the Syrian people. He opened negotiations with the Syrian Government and, at the suggestion of some of the conferees, it was decided that a delegation of Syrian representatives would proceed to Paris in order to negotiate directly with the central government. Though the delegation failed to bring back any satisfactory arrangement, an understanding was reached between the Syrians and the French as soon as the Blum Government came to power. On September 9, 1936, a treaty of alliance and friendship was concluded between France and Syria, and two months later a similar treaty was signed with Lebanon. The contents provided for the abrogation of the mandate three years after the French ratification of the treaties, the reincorporation of Bilad al'Alawiyin and Djebel al-Druse into Syria, and for mutual assistance and consultation in foreign matters:

Une alliance est établie entre la France et les deux Etats indépendants et souverains de la Syrie et du Liban.... En toute matière de politique étrangère de nature à affecter leurs communs intérêts, les gouvernements de la Syrie et du Liban conviennent de consulter le gouvernement de la France pleinement et sans réserve.... Les Hautes Parties

Contractantes prendront toutes mesures utiles pour assurer, au jour de la cessation du Mandat, le transfert aux gouvernements syrien et libanais des droits et obligations résultant de tous traités, conventions et autres actes internationaux, conclus par le gouvernement français en ce qui concerne la Syrie et le Liban...³

France was to keep the right to have air-bases in Syria and to maintain garrisons in Lebanon for the entire period of the treaty, the duration of which was for twenty-five years, renewable by mutual accord.

Due to the failure of the French Government to ratify the treaties and to the international chaos brought about by the advent of the second World War, it was not till the sixteenth of September, 1941, that General Catroux, French High Commissioner in the Levant, recognized the independence of Syria and followed it two months later by the declaration of the Lebanese independence. The proclamation was endorsed by Great Britain, whose forces were in joint occupation of the Levant since June, 1941.

The Free French undertook to guarantee both new republics by treaty; however, the final settlement was delayed due to the political confusion in France. In spite of that events during 1943 moved rapidly to a climax which brought actual independence to Syria and Lebanon.

Refusing to accept the French thesis that determination of the final status of Syria and Lebanon must await the end of the war, the nationalist leaders in both countries

3. Stephen Heald, ed., Documents on International Affairs, 1987 (London, 1939), pp. 445-47, 459-62

pressed for immediate steps toward self government. To appease them slightly, the French High Commissioner restored in March, 1943, the constitutional regime, which had been suspended in Syria and Lebanon since the outbreak of the World War. The parliamentary elections brought to power extreme nationalists, who proceeded directly to conclude a permanent arrangement for future relations with France.

On November 8, 1943, the Lebanese Parliament unanimously adopted a declaration of policy, prepared by Premier Riyad as-Solh, which called for the deletion from the Constitution of provisions incompatible with full sovereignty and independence. Immediately after the Chamber of Deputies' vote, French authorities in Lebanon imposed a strict censorship on outgoing messages, suspended publication of local newspapers and took military measures to maintain order under a modified form of martial law. These measures provoked an outburst of resentment among the Lebanese people. Premier as-Solh demanded the immediate restoration of civil rights. The reply of the French Delegate-General Jean Helleu, who had hurried back to Beirut from Algiers,⁴ was to order the arrest of the Lebanese President, Premier, and other members of the Cabinet and Chamber of Deputies. Rioting and anti-French demonstrations

4. He was absent in Africa discussing with the French Committee on the concessions to be made to Syrian and Lebanese demands for fulfillment of the French pledge of independence.

spread throughout Lebanon and Syria and a general strike paralyzed Beirut and Damascus. Guerrilla bands began to form in the mountains and a country-wide revolt seemed imminent. All the Arab states protested to the French Committee at Algiers for National Liberation against the violent measures taken by Monsieur Helleu. "The British Government, with the support of the United States, protested against the French actions and insisted that immediate steps be taken to restore self-government in Lebanon and to fulfill the French pledges of independence to both Syria and Lebanon. They made it plain that they would intervene with military force, if necessary, to prevent the Lebanese disorders from developing into anti-Allied outbreaks in other parts of the Middle East."⁵

As a result, the French Committee at Algiers rushed General Catroux to Beirut to bring order out of developing chaos. The first step he took was the dismissal of General Helleu and his replacement by Yves Chataigneu as Delegate-General. Then he proceeded to release the Lebanese President and Ministers and to reinstate them in their positions.

Immediately afterwards, General Catroux opened negotiations with the Lebanese and Syrian Governments for the permanent regulation of their relations with France. Both countries insisted on proceeding on the basis of complete sovereignty. As a result of the ensuing negotiations an

5. C. E. Funk, ed., The New International Year Book, 1943 (New York, 1945), p. 608

agreement was signed by which all powers exercised hitherto by France under mandate were to be transferred as from January 1, 1944, to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments.⁶ This arrangement represented the final settlement that granted Syria and Lebanon complete independence and sovereignty, but it was not till the end of 1946, after all powers had been gradually transferred to them, that the two republics attained really their full independence.

6. Ibid.

CHAPTER II

IRAQ

At the same time when Syria proclaimed Feisal as king Iraq resolved to become an independent kingdom with 'Abdallah as head of state. This resolution was taken up at a conference of Iraqi political leaders held in Damascus. Unfortunately, it did not have time to be implemented for the news soon spread that Iraq had been assigned for Britain as a mandate. No moment did the inflamed Iraqians spare to show their dissatisfaction and readiness to fight any foreign power that attempted to rule them. The whole country began to seethe with unrest. A movement of spontaneous agitation caused an effective insurgence against the denial of independence and the arbitrary imposition of the mandatory system. The insurrection developed into a murderous upswing that spread over the whole country and lasted about six months.

The revolution brought immense losses to the British, for there was a constant and considerable call on reinforcements to fight the rebels. The enormous toll of casualties made the British Government act fast. Sir Percy Cox was sent to Iraq to attempt conciliation. The most important thing he did was to assemble a native provisional government. This helped to calm, though temporarily, the rebellious spirit of the people. Meanwhile, the British Government had decided to support Amir Feisal in his

candidacy for the Iraqi throne, subject to election by the people. By the midsummer of 1921, Amir Feisal had been elected and confirmed as a constitutional monarch of Iraq.¹

Among the early things that the king witnessed was the birth of national parties. Al-Hizb al-Watani (Fatherland Party) consolidated its efforts with Hizb al-Nahdah (Revival Party) to oppose any agreement with Britain on the basis of the mandate. Troubles broke out again in 1922. Incriminated for fomenting the revolt, the two national parties were suppressed for a while, due to the pressure exerted by the British on the Iraqi Government. In spite of the tempestuous spirit of the Iraqi nationalists the British found it relatively smooth to deal with them due to King Feisal who proved himself clever and flexible.

From 1922 to 1930 Britain concluded with Iraq four treaties which gradually led to the abolition of the mandate. Those eight years marked a period of constant struggle between the ever-growing nationalist parties and the British who, though reluctantly, had to give up step by step their administrative control over the country.

The treaty of 1930 "was concluded on terms of complete freedom, equality and independence".² It terminated the mandate and granted independence to Iraq. Provision was

1. Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris, VI, 184-86, 163

2. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, ed., Documents on International Affairs, 1930 (London, 1931), p. 134

made for "full, frank consultation between the two countries on all matters of foreign policy which may affect their common interests",³ and for mutual assistance in time of war. Great Britain was to reserve the rights to certain air-bases and communication facilities. In addition, a British military mission was to be entrusted with the building up of the Iraqi army.⁴ The treaty entered into force two years later upon its ratification by the British Government. Iraq acquired more autonomy and assumed the appearance of an independent state.

Under King Ghazi, who had ascended the throne in 1933 after his father's mysterious death in Switzerland, the political scene was dominated by the newly formed and strong army. Baqir Sidqi, Chief of Staff, staged in 1936, a bloody coup d'état that ousted a moderate prime minister and secured the premiership for the extremist Hikmat Suleiman. The new cabinet followed progressive ideas and really embarked upon a daring plan of far-reaching social reforms. Their regime did not last long for Baqir Sidqi was soon assassinated and the new premier saw it wise to resign. The new moderate cabinet under Jamil Madfa'i expired very soon when another military coup d'état was displayed to elevate Nur as-Sai'd to the premiership. The country became an abode of dangerous intrigue, for this

3. Ibid., p. 135

4. Ibid., p. 136

new venture of the military men was far from bringing peace and stabilization to the political life of Iraq.

The situation became worse at the outset of the second World War as Iraq lived under a growing danger of direct involvement in the European conflict. Inspired by the wish of eliminating British influence and treaty rights, the nationalist elements in the army made further troubles for Premier Nuri as-Sai'd and other pro-British leaders. To relieve the public from imminent disturbances Nuri Pasha surrendered his position to a former ultra-nationalist prime minister, Rashid 'Ali al-Gailani.

As the war developed Iraq was drawn into the vortex of the expanding European conflict. The German campaign for the conquest of the Near East and the Suez Canal spurred the anti-British elements at Baghdad into an effort to repudiate the Anglo-Iraqi alliance and throw off the last vestiges of British control.⁵

The relations between members of the government became tense and, as a result, the extremist Premier Gailani lost the confidence of the House of Representatives. At this time the British were trying to obtain from the Iraqi Government consent to the application of Clause IV of the 1930 treaty. This bound Iraq "to place its territory and means of transportation and communication at Britain's disposal in the event of war or threat of war".⁶

5. C. E. Funk, ed., The New International Year Book, 1941 (New York, 1942), p. 291

Opposition of the Iraqi army leaders to this request precipitated the anti-British coup d'état of April, 1941, in Baghdad. Followers of Rashid 'Ali al-Gailani surrounded the regent's palace, causing him to flee. At the same time officers of the Baghdad garrison forced the incumbent premier to resign. Parliament was then convened and induced to elect a new regent, Sharif Sharaf Eddine, who had to ask Rashid 'Ali to form a new government. One month after the coup d'état the British intervened and hostilities broke out between them and the new government. The head of the government appealed to Germany for help.⁷ The British met this action with intense increase of their military power in Iraq. This, along with the insufficient aid received from the Axis and the weakness of the extremist policy of the ultra-nationalists, caused the collapse of the new regime.⁸

The regent was restored to power, and a pro-British ministry was formed. The British authorities in Iraq obtained control of all vital communication and transportation facilities, as provided in the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Alliance. This action was followed by an outbreak of

6. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, ed., Documents on International Affairs, 1930 (London, 1931), p. 136

7. J. A. H. Hopkins, comp., Diary of World Events: Record of World War II as Reproduced in Newspapers (Baltimore, 1942), X, 2208. Hereafter cited as Hopkins' Diary.

8. Al-Gailani fled to Iran, and from Turkey went to Berlin where he joined hands with the Mufti of Palestine in championing the anti-British propaganda to the Arabs.

rioting, fostered by the followers of 'Ali al-Gailani. Henceforth, the Iraqi Government engaged in rooting out the strong pro-Axis political machine that was well entrenched in the country. In spite of their vigorous campaign sporadic anti-government disturbances kept on during the whole period of the war.

From the last year of the war on Pan-Arab affairs dominated the political scene in Iraq. The government pursued a policy of solidarity with the other Arab countries in regard to such issues as Palestine and Syria and they were instrumental in the formation of the Arab League.

The main issue in recent times has been the treaty of 1930. The Iraqians want its repeal in order to obtain complete independence and emancipation from any British control while Great Britain desires only a revision so that she can keep some hold on the strategic position of Iraq. Negotiations had been opened in the late forties, and they culminated in the abortive Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of Portsmouth. According to this treaty Britain was to maintain the right to send troops into Iraq in case of war or its imminence, and to continue the training and equipping of the Iraqi army.⁹ The Iraqi Government did not ratify it because it did not fulfill their national aspirations.

9. H. E. Vizetelly, ed., The New International Year Book, 1948 (New York, 1949), p. 279

CHAPTER III

PALESTINE

As previously mentioned,¹ the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers agreed in April, 1920, to allocate the mandate for Palestine to Great Britain:

The Principal Allied Powers have agreed, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, to select His Britannic Majesty as the Mandatory for Palestine, which formerly belonged to the Turkish Empire, within such boundaries as may be fixed by them....²

The Preamble and Article 2 of the mandate for Palestine bound Great Britain to put the Balfour Declaration into effect:

The Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the Declaration originally made on November 2, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for Jewish people....

The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home, as laid down in the Preamble....³

The news of the mandate caused an insurgence of feelings among the Arabs in Palestine. An Arab Executive Office was established with Kasim al-Hussayni as president. It adopted the policy of non-cooperation with the British as long as

1. See page 50 above

2. R. I. I. A., Great Britain and Palestine, App. ii, p. 151

3. Ibid.

the mandate was in operation. Besides, it assumed the control and direction of the Arab nationalist movements in Palestine.

The dissatisfaction of the Palestinian Arabs was first expressed in the riots of 1920. These were championed by al-Hajj Amin al-Hussayni, a religious leader who was to become in later years a prominent figure in the political arena.⁴ The effects of the rebellion coupled with the policy of appeasement exercised by the British High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel led to the issuance in June, 1922, of the Churchill-Samuel White Paper. It stated that the British intention in the Balfour Declaration was to help make of Palestine not a National Home for the Jews but a cultural center of Judaism. It restricted Jewish immigration to the economic capacity of the country to absorb new arrivals: "Jewish immigration cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals. It is essential to ensure that the immigrants should not be a burden upon the people of Palestine as a whole, and that they should not deprive any section of the present population of their employment."⁵

This interpretation of the Balfour Declaration appealed

4. The British High Commissioner appointed him in 1921 as Mufti of the Moslems in Palestine and later as the head of the Supreme Moslem Council. He played a famous role in World War II as a propagator of the Axis policy in the Arab world.

neither to the Jews who wanted a Jewish state in Palestine nor to the Arabs who could not be satisfied with less than the revocation of the British mandate and the Balfour Declaration.

Since the mandate entered into force formally in September, 1923, troubles were fomenting in Palestine and occasional disturbances arose. An outbreak exploded in 1929 and developed into a revolution that lasted two years. A Commission, headed by Sir Walter Shaw, was dispatched to Palestine to inquire into the immediate causes of the rebellion and to make recommendations as to the steps necessary to avoid recurrence.⁶ Upon the recommendation of the Shaw Commission "that the British Government should lay more explicit directions as to land-tenure and immigration to safeguard the rights of the non-Jewish communities, and that a scientific inquiry should be held into land cultivation and settlement possibilities"⁷ the Colonial Office appointed Sir John Hope Simpson to inquire into the problems of land-settlement, development and immigration in Palestine.⁸ In regard to land-settlement Simpson's Report stated that there were neither enough places for further settlements nor any margin available for agricultural

5. R.I.I.A., Great Britain and Palestine, App. iii, p. 156

6. Ibid., p. 45

7. Ibid., pp. 45-6

8. Ibid., p. 50

settlements by new immigrants. It emphasized that the progress of the country was in its agricultural development. As to immigration it recommended restriction of the Jewish inflow into Palestine.⁹

The Government Statement of Policy accompanying the Report was published as a White Paper in October, 1930. It was issued by Lord Passfield, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and is known by his name. Largely a verbatim recapitulation of Sir John Hope Simpson's conclusions, it curtailed further Jewish immigration and restricted land purchase.¹⁰

The Passfield White Paper provoked a storm of criticism from the Jews, directed fundamentally against the tone of the document that suggested an inclination towards the Arab side of the controversy. They protested so vehemently that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the British Prime Minister, was led to issue a new statement in the form of a public letter to Dr. Chaim Weizmann, which sought to mitigate the Passfield White Paper.¹¹

The period between 1931 and 1936 marked an interval of unprecedented economic development. This was due fundamentally to the capital and activity of the Jews. Unfortunately, the Arabs did not share fully in that prosperity because it involved some curtailments on their interests. This

9. Ibid., p. 54

10. Ibid., p. 81

fact is upheld by Article 3 of the Constitution of the enlarged Jewish Agency signed at Zurich on August 14, 1929, which stated that "the land acquired shall be held as the inalienable property of the Jewish people.... In all the works or undertakings carried out or furthered by this Agency it shall be deemed to be a matter of principle that Jewish labor shall be employed."¹² Though there were sporadic manifestations of Arab opposition to the British mandate and the Balfour Declaration in general, and to the Jewish economic policy in particular, the British Government in Palestine had the situation under control and did a lot to promote cooperation between Arabs and Jews.

The relatively calm situation in Palestine was disturbed strongly by the stream of Nazi-persecuted Jewish immigrants. By that time the Mufti al-Hajj Amin al-Hussayni had united the leaders of the several parties in Palestine into an Arab Higher Committee; their differences were sunk into a common cause. The Committee met the new inflow of Jews into Palestine with the proclamation of a general strike. Civil disobedience followed, guerrilla bands went into action, and the famous Iraqi fighter, Fowzi al-Kawak'ji, was appointed leader of the rebel forces. On their part, the Jews responded vehemently with counter-

11. Ibid., p. 83

12. W. E. Hocking, "Arab Nationalism and Political Zionism," Institute of Arab American Affairs, Papers on Palestine (Washington, D.C., 1945), p. 25

attacks. The 1936 Arab-Jewish disorders culminated in a big revolution that lasted three years till it was interrupted in 1939 by the outbreak of the second World War. One year after the revolution had started Great Britain tried in her dominated territories to obtain the assistance of Arab rulers to calm the situation in Palestine. The latter were very cooperative, and at their appeal the Arabs in Palestine suspended the revolution. This interval made possible the entrance of the Royal Commission headed by Lord Peel. After its investigation of the causes of unrest the commission came out with a Partition Plan. It recommended that "the whole of Galilee, the Plain of Esdraelon and Jezreel and the Maritime Plain as far south as Isdud would form the Jewish State. The greater part of Palestine to the south and east of this line would constitute the Arab area, to be united with Transjordan. Jerusalem and Bethlehem, with a corridor reaching the sea at Jaffa, and also Nazareth, would remain under British Mandate."¹³ It suggested the termination of the mandate in the Arab and Jewish states and its replacement by a treaty.

In a White Paper accompanying the publication of the Report the British Government declared themselves satisfied that a scheme of partition on the general lines recommended by the Royal Commission represented the best and most hopeful

13. United Nations, Report on Palestine: Report to the General Assembly by the UNSCOP (New York, 1947), p. 128. Hereafter cited as UNSCOP Report.

solution to the Palestine Problem.¹⁴

The immediate reaction on the part of both Jewish and Arab communities in Palestine was one of disapproval. The rebellion was resumed and the country thrown again into chaos. As a result a technical commission, headed by Sir John Woodhead, was sent to Palestine to work out a detailed scheme of partition, bearing in mind that it would:

- a) afford a reasonable prospect of the eventual establishment, with adequate security, of self-supporting Arab and Jewish states;
- b) necessitate the inclusion of the fewest possible Arabs and Arab enterprises in the Jewish area and vice versa;
- c) enable His Majesty's Government to carry out the mandatory responsibility....¹⁵

The Report of the Woodhead Commission, published in October, 1938, found wanting and examined three plans of partition: Plan A was the Royal Commission Plan, with the boundaries adjusted for purposes of defense; Plan B was a variant of Plan A, in which Galilee and the area at its southern extremity would be excluded from the Jewish state - the former becoming mandated territory and the latter a part of the Jerusalem enclave; Plan C proposed the division of Palestine into three parts - Northern Mandated Territory, Southern Mandated Territory, and a central part to be divided into an Arab state, a Jewish state, and the

14. R.I.I.A., Great Britain and Palestine, p. 100

15. Ibid., App. v, p. 165

Jerusalem enclave. The Mandated Territories would be administered by the Mandatory until their Arab and Jewish populations could agree on their final destination. An essential feature of the third plan was a customs union between the different divisions of Palestine.¹⁶

To every one of the above plans the Commission had its objections. It found impossible to divide Palestine as to satisfy the premises of a successful partition set on it by the British Government before it started its investigation.

At the same time of the Woodhead Report's publication a White Paper was issued by His Majesty's Government in which they rejected the partition scheme on the ground that the political and financial difficulties involved in the proposal to create independent Arab and Jewish states inside Palestine were so great as to make such a solution of the problem impracticable.

As a last resort for compromise Great Britain invited Arab and Jewish representatives to a Round Table Conference in London. No agreement was reached between the two communities, and Great Britain stepped forward to make finally her own decision. This was embodied in the MacDonald White Paper, issued in May, 1939. It provided within a period of ten years for an independent state in Palestine in which both interests, Jewish and Arab, were represented. It limited Jewish immigration to a maximum of 10,000 per year for the

16. UNSCOP Report, p. 129

ensuing five years, following which Arab consent would be necessary for further immigration. It prohibited Jewish purchase of land in certain districts and restricted it in others.¹⁷

The second World War brought to the fore the importance of the Near East and thus accentuated the sensitive question of the Arabs, whose neutrality was essential to maintain. Therefore, Great Britain went on implementing quite strictly the terms of the 1939 White Paper. She restricted the Jewish immigration very severely, and by the Land Transfers Regulations - which divided Palestine in February, 1940, into three zones, in one of which purchase of land by the Jews was prohibited, in another restricted and in a third kept free - she put into effect the third part of the MacDonald White Paper that dealt with land-settlement.¹⁸

While the Zionists cooperated whole-heartedly in the struggle against the Nazis during the war they continued to oppose vehemently the hated White Paper of 1939. Their terrorist campaigns created plenty of troubles for the British in Palestine. As the war approached the end their opposition abated, for they were expecting of Britain a quick action for their cause. Unfortunately, the British Labor Government that came to power in August, 1945, and was known for its pro-zionist tendencies,¹⁹ did not stampede

17. R.I.I.A., Great Britain and Palestine, App. vi, pp. 167-74

18. Ibid., App. vii, pp. 174-75

into a precipitate change of official policy. This disappointed greatly the Zionists, who promptly resumed their terrorist activities, harassing the British in Palestine.

The British Government had meanwhile come to the conclusion that in determining a post-war policy for Palestine the collaboration of the United-States must be sought, "since both political parties in that country had courted the Jewish vote in the presidential election of 1944 by pledges of support for the full Biltmore Program²⁰ and President Truman had in October 1945 called upon the British Government to open the gates of Palestine immediately to 100,000 displaced Jews in Palestine."²¹ Accordingly, Mr. Ernest Bevin, the British Foreign Secretary, made his long-awaited statement in the House of Commons on November 13. He began by announcing that the United States Government had accepted the invitation of the British Government to set up a joint Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry "to review, in the light of the examined situation of the European Jewry, the political, economic and social problems of Palestine as they bear on the question of Jewish

19. Jacob Robinson, Palestine and the United Nations (Washington, D.C., 1947), p. 26

20. New York Times, May 11, 1942, p. 6, col. 4. Adopted by the Zionist Conference held in New York, it urged the establishment of Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth, the creation of a Jewish army, and the opening of the gates of Palestine to unlimited immigration, under the control of the Jewish Agency.

21. G. E. Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East (London, 1948), p. 211

immigration and settlement."²² He made a pledge to consider the interim recommendations of the Committee to the two Governments and to try to prepare a solution for submitting to the United Nations. Furthermore, Mr. Bevin asserted that "the policy of the British Government would be such as not to prejudice the terms of 'Trusteeship Agreement' which will supersede the existing Mandate in Palestine."²³

In its report the Anglo-American Committee turned down proposals for partition in favour of a continuation of the mandate pending the execution of a Trusteeship Agreement. It recommended that the constitutional future of Palestine should not be controlled by either the Jewish or the Arab domination, but "the ultimate form of government to be established under international guarantees, should protect and preserve the interests of the Holy Land of Christendom and of the Moslem and Jewish Faiths."²⁴ The concrete recommendations concerned the immediate future - revocation of the Land Transfers Regulations of 1940, banishment of restricted Jewish Labor Law, admission of 100,000 Jewish immigrants in 1946, and cessation of violent activities in Palestine.²⁵

Following the examination of the Anglo-American Committee's

22. House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, Hansard Weekly (London, 1947), vol. 415, cols. 1927-35

23. Ibid.

24. UNSCOP Report on Palestine, p. 129-30. Requoted from the Anglo-American Committee's Report.

Report by a group of British and American experts two other plans for Palestine were proposed. The first, known as the Morrison Plan contemplated provincial autonomy. It aimed at putting into effect the Anglo-American Committee's recommendation 'that Palestine shall be neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state.' "The greater part of Palestine was to be divided into an Arab and a Jewish province, with separate governments. Jerusalem and Bethlehem, together with the Negeb, would remain under the direct control of the representative of the British Government, acting as trustee for Palestine in virtue of a United Nations Trusteeship Agreement.... The way was left open for future development either towards an independent state or towards partition...."²⁶

The second plan, issued several months later and known as the Bevin Plan, envisaged cantonisation. "It provided for a five-year period of British trusteeship, with the object of preparing the country for independence.... At the end of the fourth year if Jews still disagreed on the final settlement the Trusteeship Council would be asked upon future procedure."²⁷

As none of the above plans was satisfactory to either the Jews or the Arabs in Palestine, and as the British

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid., p. 130

27. Ibid., p. 131

losses in men and expenses accrued considerably due to the continued Zionist terrorist campaigns, the British Government's decision to submit the Palestine question to the United Nations was precipitated. On February 18, 1947, Mr. Bevin finally announced that the matter would be submitted to the United Nations.²⁸

At the end of April a special session of the United Nations General Assembly met to consider the Palestine question.²⁹ After a fortnight's debate which reflected the many international cross-currents affecting the issue, the Assembly set up a Special Committee to investigate all questions and issues relative to the Palestine problem and to make proposals for a solution.

In its report on August 28, 1947, the UNSCOP offered two plans. While a minority of three made proposals approximate to the Anglo-American Committee's Plan,³⁰ a majority of seven of the eleven members recommended to the General Assembly a sharper partition on the lines of the Royal Commission's Proposal of 1937,³¹ though the two states so formed would remain in economic union. They proposed:

... to award to the Jewish state, in addition to rounding

28. House of Commons, Parliamentary Debates, Hansard Weekly (London, 1948), vol. 433, col. 988.

29. Jacob Robinson, Palestine and the United Nations, p. v

30. See page 76 above

31. See page 71 above

off its present holdings, the whole of the Beersheba sub-district of southern Palestine and Eastern Galilee, though the Arabs were to keep Western Galilee.... In the transitional period of two years 150,000 Jews were to be admitted, and the 'Land Transfers Regulations' were to cease in the area of the Jewish state. The Scheme contemplated that Great Britain would continue to administer the country during the transitional period under the auspices of the United Nations, and if so desired with the assistance of members of the United Nations.³²

Soon afterwards the British Government made it known that they would not feel able to implement a policy not acceptable to Jews and Arabs, and in the absence of a settlement British forces and administration were to withdraw from Palestine in the Spring of 1948.

On November 29, 1947, the Assembly approved the Partition Plan with minor amendments, though the necessary two-thirds majority was not obtained in spite of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. full support, but after some remarkable lobbying.³³

Immediately, guerrilla warfare broke out in Palestine. The Arabs were determined not to submit to any partition plan while the Jews knew that the moment has come for them to display all their power to realize their long-sought objective of conquering Palestine and establishing a Jewish state therein. In March, 1948, the Arab League proclaimed a state of war between the Arab States and Palestine Jewry

32. UNSCOP Report on Palestine, pp. 161-73; 196-208

33. New York Times, Nov. 30, 1947, p. 1, col. 7

and announced that coordinate Arab troops will invade the Holy Land as soon as the United Kingdom gives up the mandate.

After the problem of executing the partition scheme had been referred to the Security Council, the United States admitted on March 19, 1948, that partition of Palestine could not be carried out peacefully and proposed instead that the country be placed under temporary United Nations trusteeship. "The consideration which has prompted Mr. Truman to abandon, though momentarily, the Partition Plan was chiefly the fear of alienating the entire Arab World and jeopardizing the American position in the Middle East."³⁴

As a result of Truman's declaration the Security Council ordered, one month later, a general truce in Palestine and set up a Truce Commission to observe it. The latter was disregarded completely by both Arabs and Jews in Palestine and fighting went on. As the end of the mandate and the withdrawal of British troops approached confusion increased in Palestine. The problem was put again to the General Assembly to affirm the decision of November, 1947, or to find a new solution. No agreement on a settlement was reached among the members of the Assembly and while the discussions dragged on the British

34. Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1948-49 (New York, 1949), p. 396

evacuated Palestine and their mandate ended on the fourteenth of May.

In the early afternoon of the same day President Truman had accorded the Jewish state a sudden de facto recognition five hours before it was established. This was done immediately after Eliahu Epstein, the Representative of the Jewish Agency in Washington, D.C., communicated to Mr. Truman the news that at 6:00 p.m. of that day a Jewish state named Israel was to be proclaimed in Palestine.³⁵

Fighting was resumed with new vigor and the armies of the neighbouring Arab states crossed the frontier into Palestine. A truce ordered by the Security Council went into effect on June 11, 1948. It was carried out, punctuated by sporadic local fighting, till July 9 when general hostilities were resumed. These were followed by another truce that was ordered on July 18.

Before the end of its last session the General Assembly had appointed Count Folk Bernadotte as U.N. Mediator for Palestine. His report reached the Assembly, conferring at Paris, with the news of his assassination on September 17. The major recommendations were the following:

1. Replacement of the truce by a formal peace or at least an armistice involving withdrawal and demobilization of the armed forces or the creation of demilitarized zones between them.
2. Revision of the frontiers laid down by the original

35. New York Times, May 15, 1948, p. 14, col. 1

Assembly resolution, so as to give western Galilee to the Jews and the Negeb to the Arabs.

3. Merger of Arab Palestine with Transjordan, with possible frontier rectifications in favor of other Arab states.

4. Haifa to be a free port and Lydda a free airport.

5. An international regime for Jerusalem, with the right of unimpeded access to it.

6. Assistance to Arab refugees and recognition of their right to return to their homes and to be compensated for their loss of property.

7. Creation of a U.N. conciliation commission to supervise the working out of any arrangements decided by the U.N. and to aid in the search for peaceful adjustment of the situation.³⁶

The United States presidential elections deviated the attention from the Palestine problem for a while in such a way that the Bernadotte's recommendations received no immediate attention. Fighting in the Negeb and western Galilee broke out once again, and the fate of the Jews and the Arabs was left to the interplay of forces within Palestine. The outcome was victory for the Jews. The weakness of the Arab states and their rivalry between themselves contributed to make the Jewish victory decisive.

Through the help of the Conciliation Committee, set up on December 11 by the General Assembly at Paris, and the mediation of Mr. Ralph Bunche, the successor of Bernadotte as U.N. Mediator, hostilities between the Arab

36. Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1948-49 (New York, 1949), p. 392. Requested from U.N. General Assembly Official Records.

states and Israel were terminated by means of formal armistice agreements concluded between February and April 1949. With the Negeb and western Galilee added by fait accompli, the state of Israel stretched its boundaries beyond the original territorial limits contemplated by the United Nations in November, 1947. While the negotiations between Arabs and Jews went on the new Israel state emerged and Chaim Weizmann was selected president. The Arabs of Palestine joined the Kingdom of Transjordan,³⁷ according to their decision at the Jericho Conference in December, 1948.

37. Formerly a part of south Syria, Transjordan was carved out along with Palestine in April, 1920, to be allocated to Great Britain as mandate. In 1922 it was given a separate administration with Amir 'Abdallah as ruler. In 1946 Great Britain concluded a treaty with Transjordan by which the latter was declared an independent kingdom with 'Abdallah as sovereign. In return, Great Britain secured her hold on the air-bases in the country and was allowed to keep sending military missions to train the native army.

Nationalism had no ground in Transjordan because the people were too illiterate to be politically conscious and, moreover, the foreign policy of the country revolved around the ambitions of Amir 'Abdallah who entertained the dream of annexing the neighboring Arab states and becoming sole ruler in the Levant.

CHAPTER IV

ARABIA

Arabia presented an unsurmountable obstacle to the Turks who, pressing from south Iraq, tried during the nineteenth century to wield control over as many parts of the Peninsula as they could. It was hard for them to overcome the Arab of the desert to whom freedom and independence were as indispensable as life itself. The fierceness of the interior was another stumbling block to their advance.¹ Besides, the long distance as well as the lack of means of communication constituted other hindrances to the Turkish penetration in Arabia.

With great efforts the Turks finally succeeded in conquering Hejaz². They added it in 1841 to their Arab vilayets. An expeditionary force dispatched in 1872 occupied San'a, the capital of Yaman,³ but retreated before the rest of the country which remained rebellious. A revolt flared in 1903 under the leadership of the Imam Yahya but the matter was settled by a sort of compromise; the Imam was recognized as the ruler of Yaman under the suzerainty of the Turkish Government. 'Azir, a province

1. M. J. Steiner, Inside Pan-Arabia (Chicago, 1947), p. 53

2. A territory that extends along the westcoast of Arabia from Transjordan to 'Azir. It is the country of the two holy cities of Mecca and Madina.

3. A territory between Hejaz and 'Aden.

to the north of Yaman, was governed by Sayyed Ahmed ibn 'Ali al-Idrisi. He had helped Imam Yahya in his revolt against the Turks and in 1909 had stirred a rebellion in 'Azir against the Ottoman rule. By 1914 he was still a vassal to the Sultan but at the same time remained an unappeased rebel. In Najd⁴ and Shammar⁵ the Houses of the Sau'ds and the Rashid's disregarded the Turkish claims on their countries and conducted their own affairs with the freedom of independent dynasties.

The coastal regions offered less challenge to Turkey but she met a competitor in Great Britain who was seeking allies and stations on the way to India. Napoleon's conquest of Egypt had prompted her to occupy the island of Perim at the mouth of the Red Sea. To it she had added 'Aden and Hadramaut and, step by step, throughout the nineteenth century she succeeded in wielding control over the Arabian fringes reaching to the top of the Persian Gulf by concluding treaties of friendship with the sultanate of Oman and the sheikhdoms of Trucial Oman, Qatar, Bahrein and Kuwait.

During the first World War Hejaz sided with the Allies while ibn-Sau'd kept a benevolent neutrality for he was not strong enough to throw his weight on any side. His rule was not firm, the allegiance of certain tribes to him was dubious, and he had no fighting strength at his disposal.

4. A territory that extends into a large part of center Arabia.

5. A province west of Najd.

The Imam Yahya of Yaman remained faithful to the Turks. The two Turkish garrisons stationed in his country held out to the end of the war. Shammar declared herself also for the Turks.

The end of the World War brought complete emancipation for the west and interior of Arabia from foreign control. The mandate system did not apply to the newly freed territories in the Peninsula for their impenetrability secured their isolation. After the war the scene of politics in Arabia was filled by the efforts of 'Abdel-'Aziz ibn-Sau'd who endeavored to build a kingdom by expanding over the interior of Arabia. In 1913 he had already annexed the maritime province of al-Hasa on the Persian Gulf. His second move for hegemony was the conquest of Shammar⁶ in the Autumn of 1919.

Sharif Hussain of Hejaz was not on good terms with ibn-Sau'd. The reason was obvious. They clashed over leadership for Arabia. By the end of the war the Sharif was beaten and his position was really precarious in contrast with the strength of the new bold general of Najd. In 1921 the British had approached Hussain with a suggestion that they would defend his country from any aggression

6. Originally enmity existed between the House of the Sau'ds and that of the Rashid's. The latter had captured Riyadh and forced the former into exile. When the Sau'ds won back Najd they waited for an opportunity of revenge. 'Abdel-'Aziz invaded Shammar in 1913 but had to retreat due to the interference of the Turks.

if he recognized their mandate in Iraq and Palestine. His refusal of their demand was natural for his faith in them had long crumbled to pieces. They had thrown him in a dilemma from which there was no escape; on one side there were his people who blamed him for having driven them into the revolt and on the other were the British who had failed to fulfill all their promises. In spite of the animosities between the Sharif and the British, negotiations were opened between them two years later with the aim of attaining a friendly understanding. But the attempt at conciliation dragged on without reaching any final results.

The determination of Sharif Hussain not to recognize ibn-Sau'd's conquest of Shammar provided the latter with a pretext to invade Hejaz in 1924. Once defeated, the Sharif found no friend beside him.⁷ He abdicated in favor of his son 'Ali. For a year the latter kept a precarious defense in Jedda. In spite of that ibn-Sau'd pressed his advance from Tai'f and occupied Mecca. When 'Ali capitulated the leader of Najd was formally proclaimed king by a general consensus held in 1926. The Treaty of Jedda, concluded with the British in 1927, recognized Sau'di Arabia's full independence and pledged both parties to prevent their territories from being used as bases for hostile activities.

7. Few days after his abdication Sharif Hussain sailed away and took refuge in 'Aqaba until the following June when he had to leave to Cyprus to be far from ibn-Sau'd. Afflicted in 1930 by a stroke, he was allowed to go to 'Amman where he ended his days near his sons.

against each other. In addition, it bound King ibn-Sau'd to maintain peaceful relations with the small states on the Persian Gulf which were under British protection.⁸

In 1923 the province of 'Azir became a dependency of the Sau'dian kingdom. Ten years later when the ruling family of al-Idrisi rose in an insurrection against the suzerainty of 'Abdel-'Aziz, the latter ordered the incorporation of the province into his kingdom. The animosity between him and Imam Yahya of Yaman flared into an open conflict in 1934. Alarmed at the gradual extension of the Sau'dian power over most of the Arabian Peninsula, the aggressive Imam had sought to check this advance by lending support to rebellious elements in 'Azir. As a result, King ibn-Sau'd ordered the invasion of Yaman. The defeat of the latter was devastating. Imam Yahya capitulated unconditionally. A Treaty of Peace signed at Tai'f in June, 1934, confirmed the authority of ibn-Sau'd in 'Azir and left the Imam in possession of his original territories. Furthermore, both countries agreed to settle their future disputes by peaceful means and to do nothing detrimental to one another.⁹

The confirmation of ibn-Sau'd's authority in 'Azir marks the end of his conquests in Arabia. Ever since that

8. C. E. Funk, ed., The New International Year Book, 1943 (New York, 1945), p. 36

9. J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, ed., Documents on International Affairs, 1934 (London, 1935), p. 455

time he endeavored to subdue the turbulent subjects of whom there are many in Arabia. Moreover, he engaged in ameliorating the conditions of his kingdom and he introduced westernization as much as it was compatible with the spirit of his people. Meanwhile, he was steadily strengthening the foundations of his rule. He gradually established friendly relations with tribes in Arabia and negotiated with the surrounding Arab states for treaties of mutual support. A Treaty of Friendship was signed in 1933 between him and Amir 'Abdallah of Transjordan. Three years later he concluded a Military Alliance with Iraq and a Treaty of Amity and Friendship with Egypt.¹⁰

During the second World War King ibn-Sau'd of Arabia and the Imam Yahya of Yaman maintained a benevolent neutrality in favor of the western powers in spite of the efforts of German and Italian agents on one hand and British agents on the other to obtain their full support and collaboration. Italy's entrance into the war drew the Arabian Peninsula toward the vortex of the conflagration. The Italians made repeated air-raids upon the British base at 'Aden and the American oil refineries in the Bahrein islands. Nevertheless, the British conquest of Italian East-Africa early in 1941 and the subsequent Allied military occupations of Iraq, Syria, Iran isolated

10. C. E. Funk, ed., The New International Year Book, 1936 (New York, 1937), p. 43

the Arabian Peninsula from the spreading European conflict.

Although ibn-Sau'd adopted a policy of neutrality during the war period he maintained a friendly attitude towards Great Britain. He believed that Arab interests would be best served by cooperating with the British and siding with the United Nations. During 1942 he granted a concession for the exploitation of petroleum deposits near the Persian Gulf to American companies in preference to other competitors. The rapid developments of the fields enriched his treasury and enabled him to press forward more rapidly his program for the westernization of his kingdom.

In his relations with the other Arab states the King of Arabia proved cooperative in fostering the cause of Pan-Arabism. He assumed an important role in the movement of Arab federation and came out strongly for the Arab side on the issue of Palestine.

CHAPTER V

EGYPT

The concession in the Suez made by Viceroy Muhammad Sai'd to France in 1856 inaugurated the period of real European penetration into Egypt. Khedive Isma'il witnessed the opening of the Suez Canal. In addition, he heightened the vulnerability of Egypt to European imperialism by selling his shares in the Canal to England. The financial bondage invited foreign intervention, as a result of which a new social force arose rebelling against the ruling dynasty and the foreign control. This tension manifested itself in the revolt of Arabi Pasha, a colonel of fellah origin who succeeded in effecting a change in the cabinet by replacing Othman Rifki as minister of war. He launched a great program that aimed at fulfilling the wishes of the people. Seeing in this a direct challenge to their interests, the French and the British sent an ultimatum to the Khedive requiring the removal of the cabinet. The appearance of their fleet in Alexandria forced the Khedive to yield, but the latter did not dare oust Arabi Pasha from his post. Riots broke out, demonstrators filled the streets, and scores of innocent individuals were slaughtered as a result of imperialism. Arabi's spectacular defense was a challenge to the British, who broke into a wild action of bombarding Alexandria. The battle of Tel al-Kabir in 1882 between

the British and the Egyptians was decisive. The latter were defeated and Arabi Pasha was exiled to Ceylon.

Arabi Pasha's revolution precipitated the British occupation of Egypt.¹ Sir Evelyn Baring, better known as Lord Cromer, was sent to Egypt as the first British Consul-General. He conducted the affairs of the country quite smoothly till the advent of Khedive 'Abbas Hilmi. The latter nurtured a strong anti-British feeling and followed a policy that created plenty of difficulties for the British in Egypt. Under his rule many important things happened. The urban intelligentsia flourished, championed by Mustapha Kamil, who was well-known for his nationalistic ideology. He kindled the political thought of his time and had a tremendous effect on the national awakening of the people. Another important thing that occurred during the "Hilmi period" was the British conquest of the Sudan² in 1898 under the leadership of Sir Eldon Gorst, better known as Lord Kitchener. An agreement was signed the next year between Egypt and Britain by which the status of the Sudan was defined and its administration regulated.³ An Anglo-Egyptian condominium was established in the Sudan but

1. The Khedive remained nominal ruler of Egypt and his allegiance to the Ottoman Sultan was not abrogated.

2. The Sudan had been first conquered under Muhammad 'Ali in 1820, but the revolt of its leader the Mahdi secured its freedom in the eighties. Thus, the British occupation was a reconquest of the "lower Nile area", undertaken as a joint Anglo-Egyptian operation.

virtually, the control of the country was in the hands of Great Britain. The last but not least happening that took place in the era of Khedive Abbas II was the British sudden declaration of Egypt as a protectorate of the United Kingdom in December, 1914. The first thing the British did was to depose the hated Khedive and put his uncle, Hussain Kamil, in his place. They elevated the latter to the rank of sultan after they abolished the sovereignty of the Turkish Sultan. The reign of the new sultan lasted only three years, after which his brother Fua'd took the reins of the state in his hands. It may seem that the British assumption of complete power in Egypt was effected with relative smoothness, but as Valyi puts it:

If Egypt submitted apparently without a murmur to the proclamation of the protectorate, if she seemed to resign herself to a war time measure hastily decided upon in order to meet the exigencies of the moment, it was because she trusted the solemn promise that her rights would be safeguarded on the conclusion of the peace and her independence would not be overlooked.⁴

The peace settlement, however, effected no change in the status of Egypt, which remained a British protectorate. As a result, national awakening resumed with increased power. Its champion was Sa'ad Zaghloul, a prominent nationalist of fellah origin. He was not a new figure in the political arena; he had served as minister of education

3. Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris, VI, 204, 205

4. Felix Valyi, Revolutions in Islam (London, 1925), p. 94

in the "Cromer era", and at the beginning of World War I he had already revealed himself as an uncompromising leader of Egyptian emancipation.

/ Zaghloul organized a strong party called al-Wafd. Its first action was the presentation in November, 1918, of a delegation to the British High Commissioner, Sir Reginald Wingate, to demand full independence for Egypt on the ground of President Wilson's declaration of 'self-determination'. The British High Commissioner was very considerate and he went especially to London to confer on the matter. In his absence Zaghloul agitated so much that he was deported to Malta by the British authorities in Egypt. This action accelerated the outbreak. Violent riots surged in the country, protests poured from every side, and the whole situation became so acute that the British Government found it expedient to dispatch General Allenby as a special High Commissioner to put an end to the rebellion by military measures. He acted with an iron hand but the revolt did not abate till Zaghloul was set free.

Once released of his exile, Zaghloul sought the public support to declare the British protectorate illegal. The British were struck by his attitude but they exhibited wisdom this time for they realized the power behind the popular leader. They called Zaghloul to London in order to negotiate with him. Meanwhile, 'Adli Pasha, the new prime minister, suspicious and jealous, summoned the Egyptian

delegate in England to Cairo. At the refusal of Zaghloul to comply with 'Adli's request the latter put himself in an airplane aiming at the British capital in order not to let the leader of the Wafdists act by himself. The national champion returned to Egypt and agitated so violently against the treacherous Prime Minister that the latter resigned in disgrace. At this occasion Zaghloul called a new congress of the Wafd. Allenby met this gesture with immediate protest and found it necessary to exile the defying leader once more.

During this interval General Allenby presented Egypt with a unilateral declaration in February, 1922, which allegedly made Egypt an independent, sovereign state. Important matters such as the security of communication of the British Empire in Egypt, the defense of Egypt against foreign aggression or interference, and the administration of the Sudan were reserved for later agreements.⁵ This made it obvious that the declaration amounted to the abrogation of the protectorate and the widening of opportunity for the natives to govern themselves.

Presuming that the declaration would appease the people, General Allenby set Zaghloul free. As soon as the latter reached Cairo new elections were on the way. Zaghloul launched a vigorous campaign that won for the Wafdists an overwhelming majority in the parliament. Then he opened

5. Harold Temperley, Peace Conference of Paris, VI, 203

again negotiations with Great Britain for the complete independence of Egypt. As no understanding was reached between the two countries their relationship became tense and the situation in Egypt hardened till it culminated in the assassination of Lee Stack, Governor of the Sudan, by an Egyptian student in 1924. The British met the incident with a harsh ultimatum forwarded to Egypt that prompted the latter "to take her hands off the Sudan".⁶ Zaghloul had to resign and a coalition government was formed. An interval of calm prevailed for a short period during which Zaghloul died.

Negotiations for regularizing relations between Britain and Egypt were resumed in 1927. On more than one occasion the attempts at reaching mutual understanding proved futile. In 1930 the failure of reaching a peaceful settlement appeared final. There the matter rested until the Autumn of 1935 when the situation resulting from the Italo-Abyssinian dispute focussed attention upon Anglo-Egyptian relations. Mutual conversations proceeded regarding cooperation and defense and culminated in a Treaty of Alliance between the United Kingdom and Egypt in August, 1936. Great Britain undertook to withdraw troops from the interior of the country, maintaining them only in the Suez Canal. The restrictions on the size of the Egyptian

6. George Glasco, "Foreign Affairs," Contemporary Review, vol. 127 (January, 1925), p. 108

army were removed and limits were put on the British forces during peace time. Egypt was given back her share in the administration of the Sudan and was promised to receive help from Great Britain for abolishing the capitulations.⁷ The question of the Suez Canal was to be reviewed twenty years after the ratification of the treaty; as to the rest of the provisions they could be reviewed in a period of ten years.⁸

In accordance with her promise, Great Britain then helped arrange for a meeting of the powers that had capitulatory rights in Egypt at Montreux, Switzerland, in May, 1937. An agreement was signed and it provided for the gradual abolition of the capitulations within a transitional period of twelve years.⁹

The 1936 treaty and the subsequent abolition of the capitulation privileges apparently consolidated Egypt's independence. But in fact, by that pact Egypt's occupation by British troops was prolonged for twenty more years and the Sudan question was left in abeyance.

From the outset of the second World War Egypt was

7. The capitulations were privileges granted to foreign powers' citizens living in Egypt. Among other concessions they comprised immunity from personal taxation without assent of their governments, inviolability of domicile, protection from arbitrary arrest, and exemption from the jurisdiction of the local courts.

8. Stephen Heald and J. W. Wheeler-Bennett, eds., Documents on International Affairs, 1936 (London, 1937), pp. 478-89

9. W. C. Langsam, ed., Documents and Readings in the History of Europe (New York, 1939), p. 364

constantly threatened with the danger of Axis invasion. The Italian bombardment of Cairo and Alexandria during September, 1940, intensified the menace for Egypt. Eight months later German and Italian planes repeatedly raided Alexandria, the Suez Canal area, and other Egyptian centers. In spite of these events, of the influence of a pro-war minority of Egyptians, and of pressure from Britain, the Egyptian Government adopted a policy of non-belligerence. The main cause was the desire to see the complete elimination of British influence from Egypt. Another factor was the anti-British and pro-Arab propaganda of the Axis that exerted a tremendous influence on the strongly Moslem Egyptians.

The threat of invasion from Libya was intensified in the Summer of 1942 when Marshal Erwin Rommel's counter-offensive captured Tobruk and drove the British Eighth Army back to al-'Alamein, within ten miles of Alexandria and the Nile Valley. The fate of Egypt, the Suez Canal, and Allied positions throughout the Middle East hung in the balance until Rommel's forces were routed and driven out of Egypt and Libya through the joint action of British and American forces, led by General B.L. Montgomery.¹⁰

A frequent target for political agitation was the 1936 treaty, the expiration of which was due in 1946. The

10. J. A. H. Hopkins, comp., Diary of World Events: Record of World War II as Reported in Newspapers (Baltimore, 1942, XXIV, 4727

Egyptians were always pressing Great Britain to give definite commitments for the status of their country after the war. In anticipation of the treaty's revision Egyptian public opinion became thoroughly exercised over such issues as the evacuation of the British troops from the Nile Valley and the continuation of the condominium in the Sudan.¹¹

Another great issue in the political life of Egypt was the fate of the Pan-Arab affairs. She stood firmly beside Lebanon and Syria in their conflict with France, and she played a leading role in the foundation of the Arab League. When the Palestine question came to the fore she showed no hesitation to contribute her share in helping the Arabs.

The Egyptian Government, anxious to review the 1936 treaty directly after the war, opened negotiations with Great Britain in May, 1946. They made it plain from the beginning that they could accept nothing less than the complete cessation of British control and political influence in Egypt. With this premise in mind the Egyptian Government was not surprised when no understanding was reached between them and the British Government. As a result they appealed to the United Nations in July, 1947, to help in directing the total and immediate evacuation of British

11. C. E. Funk, ed., The New International Year Book, 1945 (New York, 1946), p. 174

troops from Egypt and the Sudan. Under British influence the Security Council delayed consideration of the Egyptian case¹² and when it did discuss it the recommendation was for the resumption of direct negotiations between Egypt and Great Britain. Riots and demonstrations took place in Egypt protesting against the United Nations for failing to adjust the Anglo- Egyptian relations. The final situation was that Britain declined to withdraw her troops from the Suez Canal area, maintaining that the international situation made it inexpedient for her to evacuate Egypt completely. As for the Sudan, a British ordinance put a self-government project in motion.

12. New York Times, July 13, 1947, p. 14, col. 1

CHAPTER VI

THE ARAB LEAGUE

The various nationalistic movements that took place simultaneously or successively in the individual Arab countries were interrelated. They interacted as stimulus and response to each other and had the same or similar objectives. Emancipation from foreign control, acquisition of complete independence, and revival of Arab culture were cardinal aims in the nationalistic strife of the Arab people. The ultimate aim of the individual movements was the unification of the Arab states. The formation of a union among the Arab countries was a logical goal since all of them possessed the prerequisites for nationhood based upon cultured factors related to each other. Nevertheless, the ideal of Pan-Arabism encountered opposition from Arab separatism. In Lebanon, for instance, where half of the population is Christian the general opinion is not in favor of total absorption in a Moslem Arab world. Old rivalries between the reigning families of Sau'di Arabia, Egypt, and Iraq are serious barriers for the achievement of complete unity. Moreover, the difference between the forms of government in the various Arab states constitutes another hindrance for the realization of the Arab aspiration for union.

In spite of those difficulties, however, the movement towards the goal of a Pan-Arab union made steady progress.

In 1931 at a Pan-Arab conference in Jerusalem, an Arab covenant was drawn up by Arab nationalist leaders as a guidepost to future unity. Article I of the covenant declares that "the Arab lands are a complete and indivisible whole, and the divisions of whatever nature to which they have been subjected are not approved or recognized by the Arab nation."¹ Furthermore, closer political ties were being formed among the Arab states when the outbreak of World War II provided new impetus to Pan-Arabism. Military considerations induced Britain to sponsor more energetically the cause of Arab unity. In a speech on May 29, 1941, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden declared that "His Majesty's Government will give full support to any scheme" that the Arabs may desire for "a greater degree of unity than they now enjoy..."² On February 24, 1943, Mr. Eden reiterated the assurance to the Arabs that Great Britain would support them in their efforts for union: "As I have already made plain the British Government would view with sympathy any movement among the Arabs to promote economic, cultural, or political unity, but clearly the initiative in any scheme would have to come from the Arabs themselves."³

1. Cited in Paul Seabury, "The League of Arab States: Debacle of a Regional Arrangement," International Organization, 3:4 (November, 1949), p. 635

2. Cited in Britannica Book of the Year: Events of 1946 (London, 1947), p. 62

3. Ibid.

The renewed assertions of British support for Pan-Arabism encouraged the Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri as-Sai'd to lay down his project of Arab unity. The important points in his plan may be summarized in the following terms: (1) Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Transjordan to be reunited into one state; (2) the people of that state to decide its form of government; (3) an Arab League to be formed, Iraq and Syria (i.e., Greater Syria) to join at once, while other Arab states can join if and when they desire; (4) the Arab League to have a permanent Council which will be responsible for defense, foreign affairs, currency, communications, customs, and protection of minority rights.⁴

Unfortunately, Nuri Pasha's plan met with serious objections from the Sau'di Arabian and Egyptian Governments which feared the effect of such a union upon the balance of Near-Eastern Arab power.

As World War II drew to a close, plans for Arab unity received new impetus:

Chief among the impelling factors were the desire of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments for greater Arab support for their independence; the Egyptian Government's desire to "capture" the League idea for her own North African policies and to prevent her isolation from an Arab bloc; and a widespread belief that greater Arab cooperation was necessary to cope with post-war political problems, notably the Palestine question.⁵

4. Cited in Majid Qadduri, "Towards an Arab Union: The League of Arab States," The American Political Science Review, 40:1 (February, 1946). p. 94

Egypt took the lead this time. Prime Minister Mustapha Nahhas opened initial conversations with the various foreign ministers of the Arab States in order to canvass their opinions on the scheme of Arab unity. This series of preliminary conversations was followed by a preparatory conference which convened in Alexandria during the early Fall of 1944. The delegates outlined their views on the Arab unity scheme and proceeded to work out a general plan which would be acceptable to all. From the outset it was realized that full union could not be adopted under existing circumstances, not even in the form of a federation. Accordingly, they decided that a League of Arab States should be established. A draft of the League was formulated and embodied in a protocol which was signed by the Arab representatives on October 7, 1944. Five months later a Pan-Arab Congress assembled in Cairo and signed officially the pact of the Arab League.

The purpose of the Arab League was to strengthen the relations between the member states, to coordinate their policies in order to achieve cooperation between them, and to safeguard their independence and sovereignty. Cooperation was to be promoted in economic and financial affairs, communications, cultural matters, nationality, social affairs, and health problems.⁶

5. Seabury, op. cit., p. 636

6. Pact of the Arab League, cited in Cecil Hourani, The Arab League in Perspective (Washington, D.C., 1947), App. II, p. 16

The League was made up of a council, a general secretariat, and a number of committees. The latter were to study and report on matters of common interest. The council was entrusted with the task of carrying out the purposes of the League and collaborating with any international organizations to guarantee peace and security:

It shall be the task of the Council to achieve the realization of the objectives of the League...

It likewise shall be the Council's task to decide upon the means by which the League is to cooperate with the international bodies to be created in the future in order to guarantee security and peace and regulate economic and social relations.⁷

The use of force for the settlement of disputes between members of the League was prohibited:

Any resort to force in order to resolve disputes arising between two or more member states of the League is prohibited.

... if the parties of the dispute have recourse to the Council for the settlement of this difference ... they shall not participate in the deliberations and decisions of the Council.

The Council shall mediate in all differences which threaten to lead to war between two member states, or a member state and a third state Decisions of arbitration and mediation shall be taken by majority vote.

In case of aggression ... the Council shall by unanimous decision determine the measures necessary to repulse the aggression.⁸

7. Ibid., p. 17

8. Ibid.

The independence and sovereignty of each member state was safeguarded: "Each member state shall respect the systems of government established in the other member states. Each shall pledge to abstain from any action calculated to change established systems of government."⁹

In retrospect, it is evident that the League activities since 1945 have been concentrated in the realm of politics. While the first session of the League Council concerned itself with the Syrian and Lebanese efforts to obtain the withdrawal of French troops as well as complete independence, the attention of the Council after the Spring of 1946 came to bear more relentlessly upon the Palestine question. The failure of the subsequent League efforts in Palestine was due mainly to the selfish policy of King 'Abdallah of Transjordan. His "Greater Syria Plan", which aimed at uniting Iraq, Syria, and part of Palestine under his leadership, constituted the main cleavage within the League. The hostility of the rest of the Arab governments to such a scheme has brought a real failure to their concerted action. An apparent cleavage between Transjordan and the rest of the Arab states occurred when the League set up an independent Arab Palestinian Government at Ghaza and the Arab Palestinian leaders, influenced by King 'Abdallah, created an impasse by declaring a union of their country with Transjordan.

9. Ibid., p. 18

However, the League has undertaken numerous and ambitious projects. Under its auspices various committees have drafted far-reaching plans for closer Arab integration in the economic, cultural, and social fields. As a result of some internal dissensions and especially of the Palestine venture none of those decisions has so far been implemented. This reveals a disparity between the intentions and the accomplishments of the League. Nevertheless, "the League is one of the most interesting regional groups operating within the United Nations today. It played an active role in the San-Francisco Conference and has made its weight felt in meetings of the General Assembly and other organs."¹⁰

10. M. I. T. Publications in International Affairs, "Introduction to a selected Reading," International Relations: A Selection of Current Readings, No. 1 (Cambridge, Mass., February, 1947), p. 237

CONCLUSION

In terms of world politics the major importance of the Arab world lies in its geographical position. It is the bridge that connects the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, thus constituting a crossroad of the world. In it converge the main intercontinental land roads, the shortest water ways and even a convenient network of air-routes. Thus, the Arab world lies across the most convenient routes of land, air, and water communications. Besides its strategic position, which makes it an attractive spot to all great powers and a center of gravity in world affairs, the importance of the Arab East is multiplied by the large number of oil fields that are being discovered.

Another preeminence of the Arab world derives from its central position within the broad reaches of the Islamic countries. Arabia is the heart of the world Moslem community because it is the homeland of the Prophet and the seat of the Holy Places. Moslems from all points on the continents turn their faces toward Mecca everyday before they kneel to pray. Once a year great numbers of Moslems swarm from all over the world into the Hejaz in order to fulfill their duty of pilgrimage. No matter what the language of a Moslem is he should know enough Arabic to be able to read the Koran.

The Arab world is a real thoroughfare of older civilizations and a vital fusion point of modern cultures. The

Arabs have assimilated keenly most of what they have found worthwhile in the early civilizations that existed before their own. The same power of adaptation is being proved by their critical absorption of Western civilization. Their talent for sifting values in order to extract the best is really tremendous. The position that the Arabs hold between the Eastern and Western mind gives an example of how both philosophies could be fused. Thus, the Arabic culture combines the past and the present, the East and the West, in such an objective way that our present-day hunger for finding a universally compatible philosophy of life may find in it a good pattern to follow.

The Arab people have been accused since World War II of hatred for democracy and love for dictatorship. The accusation has some justification in the fact that the failure of Great Britain and France to fulfill their pledges to the Arabs after the first World War created in the latter a revulsion of feelings against democracy as symbolized in those two great European powers. The favorable response of the Arabs to the Italian and German concern for Islam and Pan-Arabism did not evolve out of love for these two dictatorships but as a result of a coincidence: their aspirations concurred with the promises of Mussolini and Hitler. In reality, the Arabs are far from favoring dictatorship for democracy runs in their veins. The first rulers of the Arab Empire, "al-Khulafae al-Rashidiyyoun", were chosen by election, and all political disputes were

submitted to arbitration. The whole setting of geography and history has made of the Arab man an individualist who cares primarily for his freedom and independence even at the expense of discipline and cooperation.

The Arabs and their culture deserve serious attention. Their lands are of the utmost strategic significance. Their advance is vital to the full development of human society. They have much to contribute to universal cooperation and the betterment of the world. But the premise for the realization of all their potentialities lies in their complete emancipation from foreign control. Without full freedom it will be impossible for the Arabs to reach the status of an important nation. Only thus will they be able to contribute their share to the progress of mankind.

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