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PALESTINE UNDER THE MANDATE
1920—1948

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ETC.

PALESTINE UNDER THE MANDATE

1920—1948

BY

ALBERT M. HYAMSON



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PREFACE

THE time for a full and, in a sense, final account of the British thirty years' stewardship in Palestine has not yet arrived. Until the opening of the archives of the Foreign Office and also of those of the United States State Department and possibly those of some of the Continental governments, this is not possible. And this opportunity cannot be available for half a century—too late for our generation. Yet it is felt that some account, based on reality, of the record of Britain in the Holy Land is not only desirable but will become urgent, long before another half-century has passed—necessary for the guidance, instruction and also warning of those to whom the welfare of Palestine present and future is of account, necessary as an assistance in dissipating the fog of propaganda in which the whole subject is shrouded and has been for the greater part of the past generation. It is for this reason that this little book, based to a large extent on personal experience, is offered.

Politicians and students of politics may be somewhat impatient of history. Yet political history is after all the summary of the politics of the past. The problems of to-day cannot properly be dealt with in ignorance of the events and conditions that have led up to them. The ideal may perhaps be that no one should be permitted to legislate for the present who is ignorant of the past, that not only should a knowledge of history be a qualification for membership of a legislature but even for the exercise of the franchise. If knowledge of Jewish history, of Arab history and of the history of Palestine had been wider spread, at least some of the misfortunes that have overtaken Palestine and its people could have been avoided.

The reader will perhaps notice that in the following pages at times the terms Jew and Jewish, at times Zionist have been employed. This has been deliberate in order that there shall be a distinction in the reader's mind between members of the Jewish religious community—taken in a wide sense—and those who consider themselves members of a political or national organization. The term Jewish has hitherto and still is used loosely to express both ideas. The need for this distinction,

often resented, has yet been realized, for instance by a group of extreme political Zionists who adopted the term Hebrew not Jewish, for their organization, and above all by the founders of the new state in Palestine who by taking the name * Israel' for their state, Israeli (Israelite) for its citizens, have accepted the view that Israelite and Jew are not synonymous. Among the citizens of Israel, Jews (by religion) at the time of writing, as a consequence of the expulsion of most of the Arab population, predominate. But they do not comprise the whole of the population, for there are also Christian Israelites, Moslem Israelites and even Atheist Israelites. The distinction is clear, for a Christian or Atheist Jew is inconceivable. There remains the term Zionist. Before the proclamation of the State of Israel the meaning was clear—a sympathizer with or worker for the resettlement of Jews in Palestine, either as members of a self-contained state or as a partner with others in a larger state. A Zionist could be a Jew or a Christian or neither, but in most instances he was a Jew, a member of his local Jewish community. In theory, at any rate, a Zionist, especially if he were also a Jew, had an intention or hope some day or other to settle in Palestine. To-day a Zionist is something different. He can more properly be described as a Friend of Israel, just as a man can be a Phil-Hellene and at the same time a British subject, in spirit as well as in fact. With the establishment of the State of Israel the term 'Zionist' has in fact become obsolete. One can be either a Friend of Israel or an Israelite and in neither instance need one be a Jew. A * Friend of Israel' can be a British subject, an Israelite cannot. The story recounted in the following pages ends on May 14, 1948, when the term Israelite, in its new sense, was coined. In consequence it is not used in the following pages, but Zionist is. If the story were continued in another volume, the term Zionist would probably never be employed.

The writing has, and perhaps the reading of the present volume will, inspire one speculation which, it is felt, is worthy of record. The writer has asked himself, and some of his readers may follow him in this, what would have been the position of the Jewish National Home to-day if its germ had not been carefully nursed and protected for a quarter of a century after the acceptance of the Mandate? How large would have been the Jewish population of Palestine to-day and out of what would have developed the Jewish National Home if the instructions to successive British Consuls in Jerusalem from the appointment of the first of the line in 1839 'to afford Protection to the Jews generally' had not been given and observed. Those bitter critics of Britain in Palestine may stop for a moment and think and answer these questions.

Finally it remains for me to acknowledge my debt to friends whom I have consulted as my story was being written and who have generously given whatever advice and assistance for which I asked. I do not, however, want to impose responsibility for any of the views expressed in the following pages. That responsibility rests entirely on me.

A.M.H.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE ENGLISHMAN AND PALESTINE

THERE is probably still a widespread belief among those to whom Palestine, present and future, is of interest, or who are concerned with the relations between the British people as a whole and the Jewish section of it or Jews in general, that British interest in Palestine and the position of the Jews there is of only recent growth. In fact many believe that Palestine came into the orbit of British foreign affairs only when in the course of the First World War that country was invaded by British forces under Lord Allenby and remained under British administration for another thirty years. The conquest of Palestine in the military field, the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate for Palestine in the political one, mark for them the first appearance since the Middle Ages of Palestine in British history. Before that period Britain had had no concern with Palestine and its problems since the abortive third and eighth crusades and the chivalry displayed on Palestinian fields by King Richard and Prince Edward and their knights. But such a conclusion is quite wrong. British interest in Palestine in its relation to the Jews goes back long before the issue of the Balfour Declaration and the First World War. At first and throughout the subsequent period British writers, British thinkers and British philanthropists felt it and expressed an interest in the future of Palestine and of the Jews in relation to one another. This pioneer and educative work had in course of time their effect. The welfare of the Jews of, or in, Palestine ceased to be mainly the hobby of an English pamphleteer, of a country clergyman or of a retired civil servant; it became an object of interest to British governments, at times even a part of British foreign policy.

The resettlement of the Jews in Palestine first aroused a certain amount of popular interest so long ago as the earlier years of the seventeenth century, when Puritanism was growing in strength, to become for a short period the paramount power in English affairs. There was a certain amount of what may be termed Judaizing in the Puritan Movement itself. There were Puritan extremists who advocated the substitution of Saturday (the Sabbath) for Sunday (the Lord's Day) as

the weekly day of rest. Hebrew names were substituted for those which had been given at christening. Barebones' Parliament suggested seventy as the number of members of the Council of State, admittedly following the precedent set by the Sanhedrin. The Levellers even sometimes termed themselves Jews and their opponents Amalekites. Jewish practices were to some extent adopted in certain circles and in 1612 the last martyrs for their religious beliefs to be burnt at the stake in England were punished for what were in effect Jewish or pseudo-Jewish observances. Accompanying this emotional effervescence was the more serious movement for the formal readmittance of the Jews to England. This again led to a still greater activity among pamphleteers and other politicians and in the not inconsiderable literature that the movement brought into existence attention was occasionally directed to Palestine and its past and to the Jewish connexion with it.

The earliest known formal advocacy by an Englishman of the resettlement of the Jews in Palestine was made by the distinguished lawyer, Sir Henry Finch, whose *The World's Great Restauration or Calling of the Jews* was published in 1621. It recommended the putting forward by the Jews of a claim to the Holy Land, and urged that the Christian monarchs should recognize the right of the Jews to it and pay them homage. Finch was, however, somewhat in advance of his time. His work was considered, if not blasphemous, almost treasonable and he was imprisoned. A generation later, in 1657, Henry Jessey, Baptist divine and founder of the earliest independent Welsh church, inaugurated probably the first of the funds raised in England for the benefit of the Jews of Jerusalem and he seems to have had some assistance from John Durie, another divine and the advocate of Protestant union, who spent much of his time ministering to English congregations on the Continent, where he presumably became familiar with Jews. In this connexion a Jerusalem rabbi, Nathan Spira or Saphira, came to England, thereby also probably creating a precedent. Cecil Roth in his *Magna Bibliotheca Anglo-Judaica* records twelve English publications before the end of the seventeenth century in which the return of the Jews to Palestine was advocated and this list is probably not exhaustive. Throughout the eighteenth century the movement—always only theoretical and literary—for the return of the Jews to Palestine continued, although spasmodically. In the middle of that century when, for a short period, the Jewish question became a subject of active interest, with its centre in an abortive attempt to enable Jews of foreign birth, settled in England, to apply for naturalization, the subject of the return of the Jews to Palestine became involved in the controversies. The general tendency of these writings may be deduced

from the full title of one pamphlet taken by chance. It was published in 1753 in the midst of the naturalization controversy, and anonymously. **The** tide runs: 'Full and Final Restoration of the Jews and Israelites, evidently set forth to be nigh at hand: with their happy setdement in their own land, when the Messiah will establish his glorious kingdom upon earth and begin the Millenium: with some hints that the late Act for the Naturalization of the Jews, may contribute towards their more easy and speedy departure. Addressed to all Christians as well as Jews.' A curious combination of religious mysticism and practical politics.

It was, however, in the nineteenth century that the movement in English public opinion for the settlement of Jews in Palestine developed its full force. Napoleon and his manifesto to the Jews of Asia and Africa on the occasion of his invasion of Palestine in 1799, offering to restore the Jewish State, may have given an impetus to it, and as early as in 1800, the campaign was opened by a nonconformist divine and politico-theological writer, James Bicheno, in *The Restoration of the Jews—the Crisis of all Nations*. Still earlier he had dealt with the Jewish question in his *Friendly Address to the Jews* (1787) and his *Signs of the Times* (1792-4). Bicheno pointed to the war in which a large part of the world was then involved as a portent of the approaching early return of the Jews to Palestine, and the purpose of his book he described as * to prepare the minds of my countrymen for the appearance of that event \ Bicheno was the first of this group to devote consistent consideration to this subject, but he was preceded by others who gave it passing attention, above all by Joseph Priestley, the scientist, theologian and political thinker, and Bishop Richard Hurd, one of the few churchmen to refuse the primacy of the English Church. Bicheno's pamphlet led to another by Thomas Witherby who considered Bicheno's doctrine revolutionary and, while not rejecting the ultimate return of the Jews to Palestine, considered a movement in that direction at that time premature. One opinion the two writers had in common and that was a hatred and fear of France and the French. Bicheno in fact considered a move along the road to which he pointed urgent. Otherwise the French might anticipate them. In 1804 Witherby published another book, *An Attempt to remove Prejudices concerning the Jewish Nation*, a volume of dialogues, number eight of which, in Witherby's own words, gave reasons for * the opinion, that previous to the great and most conspicuous return of the Jews to their own land (which will be effected by the zeal of all nations, to do that which is most pleasing to the Lord God of Israel), there will be a partial restoration of many of them to their own land, which will probably be effected

by the piety of Protestant powers, who may renounce their prejudices against them \ Witherby was bitterly anti-Catholic. The fear that Napoleon would use the Jews as an instrument in his campaign against Britain was ever present. His convening of a conference of the Jews in the lands under French rule or influence in 1806 was undoubtedly an attempt to secure the support of Jews in other countries in the war in which he was then engaged, and one of its consequences was an increase in the feeling of alarm that was then prevalent in England.

The discussions revived by Bicheno and Witherby did not die down. They rose and fell, but the subject never ceased to be a living one and in course of time interested men more important in the affairs of the nation than these two protagonists. The interest in the subject came to life also in Jewish circles where the question of the Return of the Jews to Palestine, although always living, had hitherto been merely academic, but the reaction in these circles will be dealt with in a later chapter.

By the 1840s the subject of Palestine and its relationship to the Jews became one of great activity among the interested circles in Britain. In 1839 Andrew Bonar and Robert Murray McCheyne, two young Scottish divines who were later to make their mark in the story of the Scottish Church—McCheyne, however, died four years later at the early age of thirty—were sent to Palestine by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland to report on the condition of the Jews there. This report aroused so much interest that the year of publication saw three editions or reprints exhausted and, as stated in the preface, * During at least twelve months after returning home, scarcely a week passed wherein we did not receive some call to visit this or that other parish in order to tell orally the things we had seen and heard \ Somewhat earlier were the first activities in Palestine of the Church of England. These developed out of the establishment in 1809 of the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews. At first its interest in Palestine was only slight and incidental, but this soon began to grow and, after a few years work in Palestine, had become an important portion of the general undertakings of the Society. The first intended permanent representative of the Society was sent to Palestine in 1820, but his mission was a failure. His failure was, however, but a step on the road that led to a permanent establishment in Palestine that has continued until the present day. The Egyptian occupation of the country from 1832 to 1840 gave the London Jews' Society, its agents and its supporters, some encouragement and when, in 1841, an Anglo-Prussian Bishopric in Jerusalem under the joint patronage of the Queen of England and the King of Prussia was

established, British interest in the Jews of Palestine received even greater encouragement. The first Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem was a baptized Jew, Michael Solomon Alexander. It is said that the King of Prussia had suggested Alexander McCaul, a Christian Hebraist and divine and a very active missionary among the Jews in Poland—later Prebendary of St. Paul's—for the office, but McCaul himself urged that preference should be given to one of Jewish birth. Alexander did not live for long. In the few years of his service he devoted most of his efforts to the securing of recruits for the Church from among the Jewish population of Jerusalem. His successors gradually concentrated more on other activities, and the conversion of Jews to Christianity became merely a matter of nominal concern. But the interest of the successive occupants of the See never lapsed completely and when a Jewish resettlement in Palestine became a subject of living interest the Bishop, while safeguarding those interests that were specifically in his charge, invariably displayed his sympathy with the efforts for the Jewish revival in Palestine that were being made, in his very presence as it were. The primary purpose of the Bishopric, certainly in its first stages, was the conversion of Jews to Christianity. But there was certainly a secondary purpose among some at any rate of its most energetic workers. In the words of an historian of the movement, 'Study of the Prophets had convinced the leaders of the Jewish Mission that the return of the Jews to Palestine was imminent. They planned therefore to found a Church in Palestine in connexion with the Jewish Christian congregation, which had, with much labour, been gathered in Jerusalem. This Church was to be, indeed, Anglican in its organization, yet at the same time it was to be an independent Jewish Church. When, therefore, the European Powers had driven the Egyptian Viceroy, Muhammad Ali, out of Syria, it was hoped in England that, with the support of the Government, which friends of the movement sought to gain, Palestine could now be thrown open to a general immigration of the Jews.' It was a similar desire, there is no doubt, that was to a large extent a contribution to the interest in Zionism shown during the succeeding century by many English Christian Zionists.

A few months before the mission of Bonar and McCheyne, Palestine had been visited by Lord Lindsay, afterwards Earl of Crawford and Balcarres. On his return to England he published a record of his travels which aroused so much interest that several editions were called for.¹ As the title indicates the author did not limit himself to Palestine. Nor in the section that deals with that country was he concerned only with sites and views and historic or traditional associations. He found a

¹ *Letters from Egypt, Edom and the Holy Land* by Lord Lindsay (1838).

Jewish population there, but he was concerned perhaps more with their future than with their present. As he said in his preface to the fifth edition: * It is possible that, in the changes of the Turkish Empire, Palestine may again become a civilized country, under Greek or Latin influences; that the Jewish race, so wonderfully preserved, may yet have another stage of national existence opened to them; that they may once more obtain possession of their native land, and invest it with an interest greater than it could have under any other circumstances.' More important, however, than Lord Lindsay's books and the views expressed in it was the notice it received in the periodical Press. *The Times* and the *Quarterly Review* in particular seconded the sympathetic allusions to a Jewish resettlement in Palestine wholeheartedly, *The Times* devoting two columns of its space to the subject. * The subject may be new to many of our readers, but it is one deserving the solemn consideration of a people possessing an oriental empire of such vast extent . . . no people on the face of the earth has been so little understood and so grossly misrepresented as the Jewish. . . . A new era is however commencing.' Where *The Times* and the *Quarterly Review* led, other periodicals followed, and for a time the Jews and their connexion with Palestine were among the most frequently discussed subjects in the English periodical Press. At the same time the same topic was taken as a text on which a number of books were written. For instance in 1830 appeared *Palestine or The Holy Land* by Michael Russell, afterwards Bishop of Glasgow and Galloway. In 1844 an English clergyman, Thomas Tully¹ Crybbace, after calling a meeting in London for the formation of a society for the promotion of the ' restoration of the Jewish Nation to Palestine \ published his speech on the occasion as *A Statement to the Queen, the Parliament and the People of England, in favour of the Restoration of the Jews*. The same year another clergyman, Samuel Alexander Bradshaw, advocated a similar cause in his *A Tract for the Times, being a Plea for the Jews*,¹ and in 1845 another writer, Edward Ledwich Mitford, this time a colonial civil servant, in his *An appeal in behalf of the Jewish Nation, in connection with British Policy in the Levant*, pleaded for the * re-establishment of the Jewish Nation ' in Palestine under British protection. The Rev. A. G. H. Hollingsworth's *The Holy Land restored, or an examination of the prophetic evidence for the restitution of Palestine to the Jews* appeared in 1849—a religio-mystical production.

The review of Lord Lindsay's book in the *Quarterly Review* which attracted so much attention at the time, was written by Lord Ashley, later the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, famous as philanthropist and

¹ Bradshaw was still agitating for the same cause forty years later.

social reformer, who included among his many interests the spiritual as well as the material welfare of the Jews.¹ As a family connexion of Lord Palmerston, the powerful Liberal statesman, he had direct access to him. He was early interested in the welfare of the Jews of Palestine and was instrumental in securing the sympathy of Palmerston and through him of successive British Governments in some of his projects. It was at his instance that in 1838 a British Vice-Consul was appointed to Jerusalem, the first Consul of any power to be appointed there, although a suggestion to this end had been made previously. The Consulate was, of course, not opened for the sole purpose of serving Jewish interests, but throughout its existence, until the outbreak of war in 1914, it served as a centre at which the Jews of Palestine, of every political allegiance, could always obtain advice and, where needed, representation before the local authorities, in effect, protection. The first despatch sent to the newly appointed Vice-Consul read: * I am directed by Viscount Palmerston, to state to you that it will be a part of your duty as British Vice-Consul at Jerusalem to afford protection to the Jews generally: and you will take an early opportunity of reporting to His Lordship upon the present state of the Jewish Population in Palestine.' The policy here laid down was consistently followed throughout the seventy-six years of the existence of the Consulate. The instruction did not refer to the protection of British Jews. In their case no special instruction was necessary. British Jews were then as always full British subjects. Moreover there was never more than a handful of Jews of British citizenship in Palestine. It was intended as it said, * to afford protection to the Jews generally \ These Jews were to a large extent either Ottoman subjects, ex-Russian subjects who had been discarded by their Government and had no protecting power, or Austrian citizens from Galicia. There was also a small number, originating in North Africa, entitled to French protection, in whom, however, the French Government showed no interest. At first the local British Consul took all of these communities under his protection, but the Ottoman Government soon developed a feeling of jealousy and so far as its Jewish subjects were concerned British protection had to be withdrawn. Trouble also arose over the Russian section which composed the majority of the Jews of Palestine. As stateless persons—such they were in practice since their Government had disclaimed responsibility for and interest in them—the Ottoman Government claimed complete jurisdiction over them. The Russian authorities moreover also developed fitfully an interest in them. They afforded a convenient opportunity for interfering in local affairs when one was desired. Many

¹ He actually began to study Hebrew as a gesture of friendship towards the Jews.

were the difficulties that these alternative claims created for the British Consul in his endeavours to carry out the instructions given to him, and lengthy was the correspondence between not only London and Jerusalem but also between London and Constantinople on the subject of the protection of non-British Jews. In the end the protection granted by Britain had to be severely restricted, but until the doors of the Consulate were finally closed there was never a time when a Jew who found himself in trouble could not find a friend and good advice within them, and there were few, if any, Jews resident in Palestine who did not with justification consider the British Consul his most reliable friend. The protection of the Jews already in Palestine was not, however, the only concern of Palmerston and his Government. On the nth of August, 1840, in a despatch to Lord Ponsonby, then British Ambassador to the Porte, Palmerston wrote: * There exists at present among the Jews dispersed over Europe a strong notion that the time is approaching when their nation is to return to Palestine, and consequently their wish to go thither has become more keen, and their thoughts have been bent more intently than before upon the means of realizing that wish . . . it would be of manifest importance to the Sultan to encourage the Jews to return to, and to settle in, Palestine. . . . I have to instruct your Excellency to bring these considerations confidentially under the notice of the Turkish Government, and strongly to recommend them to hold out every just encouragement to the Jews of Europe to return to Palestine.* Ten days earlier Lord Ashley had put formally before Palmerston his proposals for the settlement of Jews in Palestine and on August 17th *The Times* opened a campaign directed towards the same end. The efforts of the advocates of the Jewish cause did not slacken. Ashley presented to Palmerston yet another reasoned memorandum urging the adoption of his proposals, and on November 24th Palmerston wrote again to Ponsonby forwarding a Memorial of the Commission of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, a consequence of the mission of Bonar and McCheyne in 1838.¹

Lord Shaftesbury was a sincere advocate of the resettlement of the Jews in Palestine almost from the beginning of his public career. There are many references in his Diary to the subject and he seized every opportunity of influencing the British Government, which was as a rule sympathetic, to further his idea. He drew up a scheme for such a settlement as early as the middle of 1838 and put it, unofficially, before Palmerston, then Foreign Secretary, who showed himself interested.

¹ The despatches of the Foreign Office on the subject of the Jews and Palestine have been reprinted by the Jewish Historical Society of England under the title *The British Consulate in Jerusalem, etc.* (1939; 1941)

Two years later Shaftesbury put forward his scheme formally in an official communication to the Foreign Secretary. This communication was made shortly after Palmerston's despatch to Lord Ponsonby at Constantinople. It was written in the midst of a voluminous discussion in the English Press led by *The Times*, in which the idea of a Jewish settlement was canvassed from all points of view, but with few exceptions favourably. This discussion was summed up by Shaftesbury himself in a short passage in his diary. * *The Times* of 17th August filled me with astonishment. I wish I had put down at the moment what I felt at reading it; half satisfaction, half dismay; pleased to see my opinions and projects so far taken up and approved—alarmed lest this premature disclosure of them should bring upon us all the charge of fanaticism.' And five days later, on August 29th, he wrote: 'The newspapers teem with documents about the Jews. Many assail, and many defend them. I have as yet read nothing (except McCaul's treatise) which exhibits any statement new or clever. The motion of *The Times* in this matter has stirred up an immense variety of projects and opinions; everyone has a thought, and everyone has an interpretation.' Of course there was another basis for these discussions apart from Shaftesbury's ideas and proposals and their parallel support by Lord Lindsay. That was the Damascus Blood Accusation, one of the *causes célèbres* of the moment.

By now the British Government had been fully committed to the cause of the Jews in Palestine and henceforth, as the records of the Foreign Office show, its doors were always open to representations from Jewish sources on behalf of the Jewish population there. At times these representations were even invited. Abraham Benisch who had come to England from Vienna primarily to interest his co-religionists in a scheme of settlement, and who made England his home, was asked early in 1842 by a representative of the Foreign Office for a 'Scheme for the improvement of the civil and moral conditions of the Jews in the East'. In the document he drew up in response to this invitation Benisch urged that Britain should use her influence with the Porte to support the applications that were about to be made for the foundation of Jewish agricultural and commercial settlements in Palestine, formed of Ottoman subjects. 'The colony to be under Turkish government and protection, and England to guarantee the maintenance of the conditions under which the colony shall be formed.' It is not improbable that Britain—Lord Palmerston was then Foreign Minister—would have supported the application, without perhaps committing herself to the responsibility of giving the guarantee proposed, but the application to the Porte which was foreshadowed was not made.

Nothing came of Shaftesbury's efforts at this period, but he was not discouraged. Every opportunity for furthering his project was seized by him. The year 1854, when the Eastern Question began again to boil, was one of these. He came forward again and approached the Foreign Office where Lord Clarendon was then reigning. * There is a country without a nation,' he recorded in his diary, * and God now in His wisdom and mercy, directs us to a nation without a country.' Clarendon was to some extent impressed and wrote to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the great British Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject, but war with Russia broke out and the new interest pushed everything into the background. Still Shaftesbury's interest in the Jews and Palestine did not lapse and as late as 1882, when he had passed his eightieth year, he took up new work in connexion with the Society for the Relief of Distressed Jews, otherwise the Syrian Colonization Fund, which James Finn, the British Consul in Jerusalem, always zealous for the welfare of the Jews of Palestine, and his wife had founded. Finn and his wife were the most practical of these well-wishers of Zion. Living in the country, with the authority and reputation of the British Government behind them, they had opportunities that less practical well-wishers lacked. The Finns themselves established 'Abraham's Vineyard', then on the edge of Jerusalem, for the useful employment in horticulture and other occupations, of the otherwise inevitably idle Jews of Jerusalem. After Finn had been established in Jerusalem some years he put forward, in 1857, in a despatch to the Foreign Office, a detailed plan 'to persuade Jews in a large body to settle here as agriculturists on the soil \ He looked forward to a large immigration from Eastern Europe and to a less extent from Asia and Africa. He had, however, no sympathy with the thoughtless enthusiasts who were even then becoming vocal. * In forming rural colonies the immigrants, with regard to their own advantage and the peace of the country, should be recommended and persuaded to do so in partnership with the Arab peasantry.' Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, referred the proposal to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the British Ambassador in Constantinople, but if he incorporated his views in a despatch no record of it can be found.

Shaftesbury was the most distinguished and best known of the advocates of the settlement of Palestine by Jews, but by no means the only one. There were many others of less prominence, but of no less sincerity. In all of the projects that were put forward in the succeeding three-quarters of a century Britain had always a place as a protector or guarantor of the proposed Jewish settlement or state. Some of the advocates went further than others, seeking a reality in what was only

a mirage. The arguments in support of the schemes were many. Often it was suggested that Britain, in giving its support, would reap the reward of political or commercial advantage. But the central incentive was always the same—the benefit of the Jews of Palestine and often of those elsewhere also. Charles Henry Churchill (1814-77), a British officer who knew the Near East well and lived in Syria during the fifth decade of the nineteenth century, a collateral ancestor of Mr. Winston Churchill, at first wanted to establish a Jewish Kingdom, until his ardour was cooled by his more practical Jewish friends. However, his anxiety to do something for the Jews in connexion with Palestine persisted and he showed himself always available whenever his services were needed. George Gawler, the first Governor of South Australia, after his retirement devoted himself to the same cause and made several visits to Palestine in furtherance of it. In his time there were at least two English societies working for the settlement of Jews in Palestine. There was the Association for Promoting Jewish Settlement in Palestine in which English Jews and Christians co-operated, and also the Society for the Promotion of Jewish Agricultural Labour in the Holy Land, strongly supported by the British Consul, James Finn, which was entirely a Christian organization. About the same time, in North America, the eccentric United States Consul in Jerusalem, Warder Cresson, who had adopted Judaism and been relieved in consequence of his office, had formed a similar society for which, however, he had secured only Jewish support. Above all there was Laurence Oliphant, mystic, wanderer, dreamer, journalist, diplomatist and even Member of Parliament. He lived in Palestine for about a decade, and while there he secured for himself by the devotion of time, energy and money to the welfare of the pioneers of the new Jewish immigration that commenced in 1882, the title to be considered, jointly with Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris, the founder of modern Jewish Palestine. The story of his devoted efforts is told in his biography by his kinswoman, Mrs. Margaret Oliphant, and to some extent in his own writings. These efforts were long remembered with gratitude by the first Jewish settlers in the hills of Samaria. Oliphant, while living in Palestine, drew up a detailed scheme for a large-scale Jewish settlement in the land of Gilead on the other side of the Jordan, then an almost empty region. His scheme was to have been based on an Ottoman Government concession of the district to which he proposed to bring his settlers. Oliphant secured the support of the British Government with Lord Beaconsfield at its head and Lord Salisbury as Foreign Minister, and the sympathetic consideration of the Ottoman Government, but a change of government in England brought the project to an end. The

Sultan would not grant to Gladstone, who was strongly anti-Turkish in his policy, even if he wanted it, the concession that would have been at the disposal of Beaconsfield and Salisbury.

Hitherto, except for Palmerston's intervention, the attitude of the British Government in relation to the subject of Palestine and the Jews had been passive although not unsympathetic. Under the rule of Beaconsfield and Salisbury there was a reversion to the earlier policy of Palmerston. Henceforth the interest of the British Government in the subject was quickened and the initiative came often not from private individuals but from official circles. The story of these efforts and their development into the Balfour Declaration will be told briefly later. Before, however, that chapter is opened one must for a moment turn back to the series of individual private actions and tarry for a moment with the group of archaeologists who centred in the Palestine Exploration Fund which was founded in 1865. Lord Shaftesbury was a founder and prominent supporter of this society and other officers shared his interest in the present and the future as well as in the past of the Holy Land. Sir Charles Warren, Sir Charles Wilson and the future Lord Kitchener, who worked for it in Palestine, were attracted by the subject of the Jewish connexion with the country and the hope for Jewish development there. Above all, Claude Reinier Conder, much of whose life after his retirement from the army was spent in work in Palestine, developed an enthusiasm that put him in the forefront of the Zionists of his time, Jewish as well as Christian. He came forward at once as a supporter of Oliphant in his project and remained until his death in 1910 a consistent supporter of Jewish settlement in the country. He pleaded the cause in Jewish and non-Jewish periodicals and on the platform. He supported this cause in the interests not only of the Jews of Palestine and of Eastern Europe but also in those of Britain and of Turkey.

Before we leave the subject of British interest in Jewish welfare and hopes in Palestine a mention, even though a brief one, must be made to the sympathetic references in English literature. There are many of these, especially in the nineteenth century, but to indicate the attitude of some of the outstanding writers of the Victorian age and its immediate predecessor it is necessary to mention but a few and these very briefly. Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* sang of Israel's longing. Sir Walter Scott idealized the Hebrew maiden in his Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*. George Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* is a novel written round a Jewish hero, with as its central theme the ideal of a return of the Jews to Palestine. Lord Beaconsfield chose the Jews and Palestine for the leading theme of two of his foremost works, *Alroy* and *Tancred*.

CHAPTER TWO

THE JEWISH INTEREST IN THE RETURN

PARALLEL with this developing interest in many sections of the British people in Palestine as a centre of Jewry was a similar growth of interest among Jews in England and in other countries. Although the Jewish state came to an end as an independent political organization during the Hasmonaean period—almost two centuries before the opening of the present era—at the latest, there remained a relatively considerable number of Jews in all parts of the country until the unsuccessful revolt against the Romans in the year 70. One consequence of this revolt was the exclusion of Jews from the Holy City of Jerusalem and its environment, but Jewish activity continued elsewhere in Palestine until the conquest of the country by the Crusaders which was accompanied by a general massacre of the Jewish inhabitants. Then for four centuries it may be said that there were no Jews in Palestine. Gradually a new Jewish population began to grow, a population that received a considerable increment at the end of the fifteenth century when the gates of the Turkish Empire were thrown wide open to receive the survivors of the great, centuries-old Jewries of Spain and Portugal who were fleeing in terror before the sword, the tortures and the stake of the Iberian Peninsula. Under the by no means unfriendly rule of the Moslem the Jewish community of Palestine, in common with the other dominions of the Turk, began to flourish and increase. But the numbers were never considerable as numbers go to-day. An estimate of the Jewish population of Palestine in 1523 was less than four thousand and this figure had little more than trebled by 1839. Palestine had no attraction in those days for the ambitious or the worldly. To the student and the religious pilgrim or devotee it offered almost everything he needed. To the man of affairs, to him who desired to share, and perhaps lead, in the common life, commercially and administratively, opportunity had to be sought elsewhere. Thus, until the opening of the nineteenth century and later, there was always a Jewish population in Palestine, but its numbers were insignificant.

The first English Jew to take an interest in Jewish agricultural

settlement in Palestine was Sir Moses Montefiore, for half of the nineteenth century the most prominent and most influential Jew in England, respected and, towards the end of his life, revered—he survived his hundredth birthday—by Gentile and Jew alike. Montefiore paid his second visit to Palestine in 1839 and while there met Bonar and McCheyne, the emissaries of the Church of Scotland, who had been sent to study Jewish conditions. He was so attracted by the possibilities of the country and by the need for employment of the local Jews that he put before Mehemet Ali, the Viceroy of Egypt, then in control also of Palestine, a plan for the settlement of Jews in agriculture. Mehemet Ali, a progressive ruler, showed himself sympathetic, but shortly afterwards he was forced by the Great Powers to evacuate Palestine and his power to assist the project consequently ended. Montefiore, however, unaided, founded some years later a small Jewish settlement near Safad, as he did still later one near Jaffa, but neither prospered. Not long after his return to England he met there Abraham Benisch, the young Austrian university graduate who had come to England to interest the English Jews in the project for the Jewish colonization of Palestine. It was in Montefiore's house that Benisch met Young, the recently appointed British Consul in Jerusalem, and it was at the instance of Young that Benisch drew up his memorandum on the subject that was presented to the Foreign Secretary. Later, Montefiore gave a certain amount of encouragement to Churchill and Gawler in their plans, but not to Churchill's political dreams, and took Gawler with him on one of his several visits to Palestine.

The Association for Promoting Jewish Settlements in Palestine, a joint Christian and Jewish English organization, has already been mentioned. Benisch, who by the date of its establishment had settled permanently in England, was one of its most zealous supporters. This Society approached the Ottoman Government and received assurances that Jewish settlers would be welcomed and granted land and temporary relief from taxation. The Jewish population if it increased and prospered sufficiently was also promised a measure of local self-government. However, nothing came of this project in which Gawler was specially interested. In 1874 when English Jewry decided to commemorate Montefiore's services to the Jewish people, not only in England and Palestine, by the raising of a Testimonial Fund, at his request the sum raised was devoted to the welfare of the Jews of Palestine. He would have liked it to have been spent on agricultural settlement, but this was not found possible and the money was devoted instead to the erection in Jerusalem of houses, to be bought on the instalment system by their Jewish occupiers.

Stimulated in particular by the outbreak of widespread anti-Jewish riots in Russia at the beginning of the 1880s, but with its roots going further back into the nineteenth century, when there was in Eastern Europe a movement, weak but always gathering strength, for the resettlement of Jews in Palestine, was the *Chovevé Zion*, or Lovers of Zion. This was an organization with many branches in Jewry for the establishment of agricultural settlements in Palestine. The movement, in 1887, also spread to England and at once secured support from among the most prominent members of the Jewish community there. The *Chovevé Zion* was solely a colonization society with no political sympathies or interests. It continued its work for another ten years until, with the appearance on the scene of Herzl's movement for the creation of a Jewish state, it was swamped and ultimately absorbed. The *Chovevé Zion*, however, remained nominally in existence until 1920. Its means were never considerable and its activities in consequence limited. Nevertheless it succeeded in the decade and a half of its existence in founding several settlements which became the basis of the Jewish colonization of Palestine.

Theodor Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionist Movement, was a Viennese journalist and writer, resident in Paris. His Jewish consciousness was dormant until it was aroused by the flood of anti-Semitism which, at the time of Alfred Dreyfus, overflowed France. Suddenly he doubted the physical safety of the Jews in a European environment. In Judaism as a religion he was little interested. Of Jewish culture he knew nothing. But he quickly became keenly conscious of Judaism as a nationality. For this nationality he required a home. At first he was indifferent to the locale of this prospective home. But when the movement which he initiated brought him into contact with the Jewish masses of Eastern Europe and the Jewish students of the Central European states he realized that if his movement was to make any progress it could do so only by means of the inspiration of the tradition of Palestine. Thus he found that the Jewish state which he originally thought might be established anywhere would have to be rooted in Palestine or otherwise nowhere. The progress and development of Herzlian Zionism is not the subject of the present consideration. Its story has been told elsewhere. For the present purpose, however, it is necessary to emphasize that from the first Herzl realized that it was only with the support of the British Government that his dream could be realized. Herzl knew enough of Jewish history to know that for a century and longer Britain, no matter what Government was in power, had been consistently sympathetic to Jewish interests and aspirations, and that of all the Powers it was only Britain that had intervened time

after time on behalf of Jews abroad, that if any Power deserved the honoured title of Protector of the Jews that Power was Britain. It was to British Jewry and behind them or through them to the British Government that he turned his eyes and his thoughts. So far as the British Government was concerned he was not mistaken.

The practical interest shown by British Governments in the welfare of foreign Jewries will be narrated later. For the time being it is sufficient to mention only the steps taken by Herzl, with British encouragement or under British protection, for the attainment of his goal. His project was the establishment of a Jewish state and in furtherance of that aim world-Jewry was to be organized in a 'Society of Jews', a chartered company with its seat in London and formed in accordance with British law. This proposal at once secured support in Jewish circles on the Continent. Simultaneously Herzl secured an audience of the Sultan to whom he explained his proposals. The Sultan appeared to be not unsympathetic. He was in difficulties at the time as a consequence of the then recent massacres of Armenians and was anxious to recover some of his former position in European eyes, and as a means to this end he sent an emissary to London to secure the good offices of prominent Jews there with their Government. This mission, however, led to nothing. The English Jews felt little interest in the proposed creation of a Jewish state. Moreover they had no desire to intervene with their own Government on behalf of Turkey.

Independently, however, Herzl was invited to London to explain his proposals to the Maccabaeans, a club of Jewish professional men. As a man he was heartily welcomed, but his proposals encountered severe criticism, mainly on the grounds of their practicability. By the foreign Jewish population of eastern London he received a less discriminating welcome. He was disappointed. He had come to London to secure the support of the leading English Jews. He had failed to do so. Herzl had hoped to make London his temporary capital. In a message to a Zionist Conference in London in 1898, at which the movement in England was first organized among, with very few exceptions, the foreign Jewish population in the formation of the English Zionist Federation, he wrote: 'From the first moment I entered the Movement my eyes were directed towards England, because I saw that, by reason of the general situation of things there, it was the Archimedean point where the lever could be applied.' And two and a half years later when the Fourth International Zionist Congress was held in London, in his opening address he said: * England, with her eyes roaming all over the seas, will understand us and our aims. From this place the Zionist idea will take a still further and higher flight; of this we may

be sure.' Herzl, however, had to satisfy himself by raising his flag in Vienna. The further history of Zionism until the transfer of its headquarters to Palestine under British protection is outside the present scope. It is sufficient to mention that when in 1899 the Jewish Colonial Trust, the financial organ of the Zionist Movement, and its subsidiary, the Anglo-Palestine Bank, were established, they were both domiciled in England, and that after the First World War, the principal organs of the Zionist Organization, the Jewish National Fund and the *Keren Hayesod* or Palestine Foundation Fund, as well as the headquarters of the Zionist Organization, later termed the Jewish Agency for Palestine, were transferred to London. One of the biennial Zionist Congresses, that of 1900, was, as has been mentioned, held in London, but the Anglo-Jewish leaders kept studiously away from it. It was at this Congress that Herzl made the eloquent address to which attention has been called above, but the Congress had very few English participants.

Moreover the keynote of the policy of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who after an interval took up the mantle of Herzl, was co-operation with Britain and dependence on that Power for the attainment of what was then the official and accepted policy of Zionists, the creation in Palestine of a Jewish National Home, of a centre for Jewry and for Judaism. In course of time, after the outbreak of war with Turkey in 1914, the future of Palestine became a matter of practical politics and at the same time Zionism began to pass outside the field of theory. The fortune of war had put Dr. Weizmann in control of that part of the Zionist Organization that survived outside the territories of the enemy powers. Thus much of the direction of Zionist policy was in his hands and the lines on which the future settlement of Palestine were based were laid down, in close and frequent consultation with him. Dr. Weizmann, aware of the consistent pro-Jewish attitude of British Governments over a period of centuries, felt that only with British support and sympathy would the future of the Jews in Palestine have any chances of success. The keynote of any settlement was, in his opinion, British friendly influence and support. Thus the whole of his support and whatever influence his followers could command in North America and elsewhere called for a new Palestine under British protection or trusteeship or Mandate. And there was little difference with this opinion among Zionists, or even the larger body of Jews, who were inevitably interested not only in Britain but also in other countries.

CHAPTER THREE

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE JEWS

HITHERTO, with few and passing exceptions, attention has been given only to some of the many occasions on which an active interest in the welfare of Jews and Jewry has been shown by Englishmen as individuals or in private, unofficial groups. This record, even if it had been complete, would, however, have by no means covered the story nor would it have touched the more important part of it. Private interest had its influence on public policy. Individuals in many cases had access to others in public life and the rulers of Britain, governed by a system in which opinion, or at any rate sections of it, had always influence on those with whom the direction of government and policy lay, were always open to outside influence. From early in the seventeenth century, as has already been pointed out, there have always been sections of English opinion sympathetic to the Jewish cause and these sections, even if not directly represented in the government of the day, could as a rule find an open ear in it. This was the case even so long ago as the time of the Tudors when the King was still the most powerful element in the constitution. There were, practically speaking, no Jews in England in those days. Only an occasional individual was then known, and these were for the most part birds of passage, wayfarers tarrying on English soil for a time while on their travels from their original homes in Southern Europe whence they were being driven, to new ones of permanent residence in the Low Countries or in the dominions of the Sultan. Many of these visitors were men whose character and gifts could have attracted attention in any circumstances, and even during their brief residence in England they proved themselves of value to the country of their sojourn. Two instances of the recognition of this by English monarchs even before the dawn of the seventeenth century can be given, and the English records give evidence of other instances of appreciation by English statesmen.

As early as the reign of Henry VIII, Diogo Mendes, a Portuguese **Marrano**, or forced convert to Christianity, who had settled in Antwerp

where he built up a great international business, and more or less openly practised Judaism, got into trouble on that account and found himself in some peril. Among his many activities was that of a financial agent to the English King. For this and other reasons Mendes had influential friends and when they learnt of his peril they came to his assistance. Among these was King Henry. The intervention of these friends was successful and as far as Mendes was concerned, the danger passed away. Sixty years later, in 1592, when Henry's daughter, Elizabeth, was Queen, Alvaro Mendes, another Portuguese Marrano, lived for a time, at the end of the sixteenth century, in England. There he was one of a small group of Marranos or ex-Marranos who gave signal service to Queen Elizabeth and her advisers in the struggle with Spain. He afterwards settled in Constantinople, openly professed Judaism there, discarded his Portuguese name and took that of Solomon Abenjaish. At the court of the Sultan, Abenjaish acquired considerable influence and was in effect the Foreign Minister. It seems that his success created enemies for him in Constantinople and it came to the ears of Queen Elizabeth that his position was in jeopardy. Her action was prompt. She herself wrote to the Sultan on his behalf: * Now we can truly testify that not only We ourselves but many other Christian princes have wished him to tarry and dwell in our Kingdoms because of his virtues, honesty and industry, where without doubt he could have lived quietly in all plenty and abundance.' Mendes learnt of this royal intervention on his behalf and his letter of gratitude to Queen Elizabeth is in the Public Record Office in London. .

Cromwell, in his efforts to secure the legal settlement of the Jews in England, was probably to some extent influenced by the sufferings of the Jewish victims of Chmielnicki's revolt in the Ukraine and invasion of Poland. His successor, Charles II, made an unquestioned move on behalf of the Marranos of Spain and Portugal. The opening of his reign coincided with a stirring of the Inquisition fires in the Peninsula. Another Marrano or ex-Marrano, Fernando Mendes da Costa, who had come to England in the train of Catherine of Braganza, approached her and her royal husband with a scheme for the emigration of the Marranos who had remained and were in great peril. Charles was sufficiently interested and sympathetic to approach the Pope in the matter, although the project was not pursued further.

Next came a new dynasty, that of the Hanoverians. The behaviour of her Jewish subjects in Alsace had aroused the strong hostility of the Empress Maria Theresa and as a part punishment she decided to expel from Bohemia her Jewish subjects who had been living there for centuries. The Jews of Bohemia, in their terror at the threat, appealed

for assistance to their co-religionists in all parts of the world. A copy of their appeal came to the heads of the Great Synagogue in London and the latter at once petitioned the King, George II, on behalf of their suffering co-religionists. The King, on receiving the petition sent for its authors, to obtain from them personally further information. He was much touched by the story they told and is said, with tears in his eyes, to have repeated, 'It is not right that the innocent should suffer with the guilty.' But he gave more than words. His position was a strong one. He and the Empress were allies in the then raging War of the Austrian Succession. On the King's instructions his Foreign Minister wrote to the English Ambassador in Vienna to make strong representations to the Empress in the matter. These representations were supported by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, also an ally. The efforts of the allies were successful and the edict of expulsion was withdrawn. This is the first recorded instance of representations by one Government to another on behalf of the Jewish subjects of the latter.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the Jewish question in some aspect or other had become a standing item on the agenda of the British representatives at international conferences. At the Congress of Paris, which settled for the time being the affairs of the Near East after the Crimean War, the Foreign Minister, Lord Clarendon, gave an assurance that the situation of the Jews of Turkey would receive favourable consideration from the British representatives, and all that was at the time practicable was attained. In subsequent years the British Foreign Office always kept a watchful eye on the Jews of South-Eastern Europe. In 1867 the Foreign Secretary, writing to the British Minister at Bucharest, pointed out that 'The peculiar position of the Jews places them under the protection of the civilized world', and this continued to be the guiding principle in British Foreign policy. It was followed at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when the treaty that resulted from it was described by the Conjoint Foreign Committee of the Board of Deputies and Anglo-Jewish Association as 'above all a great charter of emancipation, especially of civil and religious equality'. For this 'Charter' the British Prime Minister (Lord Beaconsfield) and the British Foreign Secretary (Lord Salisbury) were largely responsible. When it was found that Rumania was evading the terms of the Treaty to which she owed her existence, there were repeated remonstrances by the Foreign Office. On one occasion, in 1902, when the British Government proposed a joint representation by the Great Powers against certain anti-Jewish legislation contemplated by the Rumanian Government, that Government promptly abandoned its intention, although,

as later transpired, Russia and Germany declined to support Britain in the matter. When the opportunity came again in 1919, under British lead, all practicable steps were taken to safeguard Jewish rights in the new states, and also some of the old ones, then created.

Elsewhere in Europe Britain has for the past century and longer followed a similar policy. In Switzerland the subject had a different aspect. There, until 1864, Jews were as Jews under disabilities and the attempt to get British Jews exempted from the discriminating laws was unsuccessful. A similar situation arose in Russia where the British position in this matter was even weaker, and nothing could be done to secure preference for British Jews over those of other citizenship, Russian or foreign. On Russia's persecution of its own Jews, Britain had no pretence of a *locus standi*. Nevertheless there were occasions on which the British Government could not refrain from expressing its opinion. Such an expression of opinion seems to have prevented a renewal of pogroms in Bessarabia in 1904.

In the Moslem lands Britain was *de facto* in a stronger position. It was the practice there, throughout the nineteenth century, for the Jewish inhabitants, independent of their political allegiance, to be given some sort of British protection. This was especially the case in Persia, Turkey and Morocco, where, further, it was for long the practice on the slightest excuse to make local Jews British protected persons. For half of the nineteenth century, Sir Moses Montefiore, as Ambassador of Jewry, went on successive missions—to Russia, to Rumania, to Turkey, to Egypt, to Morocco, to Italy. In every instance he went strengthened with British support with special recommendations to the British representatives everywhere. And on his successful return from Egypt and Turkey in 1841, whither he had gone on behalf of the persecuted Jews of Damascus and Rhodes, the occasion was marked by the grant to him by the Queen * being desirous of an additional crest to commemorate the event' of supporters for his arms, particulars of his services to the Jews, together with the text of the firman he had obtained from the Sultan being included in the award.

There remains the action taken over a period of a century by successive British Governments on behalf of the Jews settled in Palestine.

Mention has already been made of the establishment of a British Consulate in Jerusalem in 1838, with the specific instructions to the newly appointed Vice-Consul * to afford protection to the Jews generally', and to show that this was not a mere formal instruction he was instructed in the same despatch to take an early opportunity of reporting on the state of the Jewish population of Palestine. For the succeeding

three-quarters of a century the protection of the Jews of Palestine of all origins and the care of their interests were among the principal duties of successive British Consuls. These instructions given by Palmerston with perhaps inadequate consideration led to unexpected difficulties with other Powers, whose relations with their own Jewish subjects had been somewhat impetuously brushed aside, and the British Government was in course of time compelled to retreat with regard to the Jewish subjects of the Czar and still more of the Sultan and even the few Spanish-protected Jews who had been collected by the Spanish authorities. Once Russia or Spain claimed the right to watch over the interests of its own subjects Britain could do nothing in the matter. With regard to the Jews of the Turkish Empire the situation was different. In practice there was in these matters one law for the Moslems and another for the Christian Power, and Britain, while admitting that Ottoman Jews were under Ottoman jurisdiction, claimed and secured the right to make representations on their behalf to their own Government when it thought fit to do so. Britain even went further. It felt itself justified on occasions to make representations on behalf of foreign Jews who desired to settle on Ottoman territory, thus in effect following the precedents set centuries before by Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth. The instructions given to British representatives in all parts of the Sultan's dominions were * whenever any case is brought to your knowledge in which Jews resident within your District, shall have been subjected to oppression or injustice, you will make a diligent enquiry into the circumstances of the case and will report fully thereupon to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople . . . you will, upon any suitable occasion, make known to the Local Authorities that the British Government feels an interest in the welfare of the Jews in general, and is anxious that they should be protected from oppression \ This circular despatch was issued in April 1841. It was to some extent a consequence of the notorious 'Damascus Affair' of the previous year. The Jewish community of Damascus had been accused of a ritual murder. Its leading members were charged with the crime and in order to secure confessions put to the torture. In other respects also the trial was a travesty of justice. The Jews of Damascus appealed for help to their co-religionists in other countries. The British Consul in Damascus reported events to his Government, as did also his Austrian colleague. Sir Moses Montefiore, as the head of Anglo-Jewry, went to Alexandria to intercede with Mehemet Ali, the Viceroy of Egypt, who was temporarily in control of Syria, and to ask for justice. And on the instructions of the Foreign Office he was very actively supported by the local British Consul-General. Montefiore, in fact,

went out almost on a semi-official mission. He was received by Palmerston who immediately instructed the British Ambassador at Constantinople and the British Consul-General at Alexandria to bring as strong pressure as they could to bear on the Governments to which they were accredited in support of the mission. Parliament discussed the matter and the Government was pressed—no pressure was, however, necessary to get it to take the course proposed—to secure justice for the threatened Jews. Still further to strengthen the hands of Montefiore and of Palmerston the Lord Mayor called a meeting at the Mansion House, at which the most prominent circles in the City of London were fully represented, and on the eve of his departure Montefiore was received by the Queen.

The Damascus Blood Accusation was a very serious threat to the peace and happiness of Jews in Eastern lands. Rumours and slanders quickly spread in that part of the world and the charge at Damascus was still in its early stages when a similar one, with which Britain also dealt promptly and decisively, was made in Rhodes. In the spring of 1847 a similar charge was made in Jerusalem itself and here again the British representative, with the full approval of his Government, at once came to the assistance of the accused Jews, and a charge that might have led to an extremely serious situation was kept down to its proper insignificant proportions. This was probably the most serious threat to the position of the Jews in Palestine with which any British Consul had to deal. That there was none other to compare with it throughout the period of the British Consulate was probably due to the vigilance of the successive British Consuls who, whatever their formal instructions, remembered, if only instinctively, those which Palmerston gave to the first of their line and acted as if all the Jews of Palestine were British Protected Persons. Laurence Oliphant, as has already been mentioned, in his projects for Jewish settlement in Palestine had the support in Constantinople of the British Ambassador and the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury.

But when we come to very recent times, when the subject of Jewish settlement in Palestine and the creation of some sort of healthy, prosperous, self-governing community there was passing from the realm of theory to that of practical politics, the interest of British public men in general began to awaken. The Zionist ideals had begun to be brought to the notice of men active in public life. Their views began to be asked, especially at times of parliamentary elections, and the response was probably without exception sympathetic; even though no one ever committed himself to say anything definite. The interest of Arthur James Balfour—whose active mind was attracted by new ideas

—was aroused by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the future President of the Zionist Organization, as early as the General Election of 1906—Weizmann was one of Balfour's constituents. Earlier, in 1903, the British Government, disturbed by the anti-Jewish excesses in Russia and anxious to relieve the situation of those Jews who were anxious to escape from the dominions of the Czar and seek new homes in freer and happier surroundings elsewhere, had made a magnanimous offer to the Zionist Organization of a large area of land in British East Africa—now known as Kenya—a new British dependency at the opening of its development, for Jewish settlement. The terms of the offer were unprecedented for their generosity, certainly in European or American history. In the letter from Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, making the offer, reference was made to 'the interest which His Majesty's Government must always take in any well-considered scheme for the amelioration of the position of the Jewish race \ The British Government was prepared 'to entertain favourably proposals for the establishment of a Jewish colony or settlement on conditions which will enable the members to observe their national customs . . . the scheme comprising as its main features the grant of a considerable area of land, the appointment of a Jewish official as the chief of the local administration, and permission to the colony to have a free hand in regard to municipal legislation and as to the management of religious and purely domestic matters, such local autonomy being conditional upon the right of His Majesty's Government to exercise a general control'.

Unfortunately the only result of this very generous offer was to split and weaken the Zionist movement. A large minority including almost all of the Western Zionists welcomed the offer, accepting it in the spirit in which it was meant as an open-handed contribution to relieve the miseries of the Jews of Eastern Europe, while at the same time securing for the new population of colonists, that was envisaged, a wide measure of self-government under the security of the British flag. The majority, however, saw in the offer a betrayal of the Zionist ideal. *Aut Zion aut nihil* was their maxim. In numbers they weighed down the other party. Herzl secured the postponement of a decision, but in the meanwhile he died and the offer was rejected. This offer of a large Jewish autonomous settlement under the British Crown was a development from another proposal made in the previous year. This came at the instance of Herzl, but was accepted in principle at once by the British Government. The Sinai Peninsula, although Egyptian territory, is on the border of Palestine and might be termed Egyptian Palestine. The Government of Egypt was at that time under British control. The peninsula, although for the most part a desert, included several oases,

in particular that of El Arish, whose extent could be increased by irrigation. The settled population of the Sinai Peninsula was small and could be increased. These were the conditions on which a not very large Jewish settlement could have been established. The proposal was abandoned nominally on account of difficulties regarding irrigation; in reality on account of the objections of the Egyptian Government which, despite British control, had to be given consideration. The Egyptians objected to a self-contained, to some extent self-governing, colony of Jews on its territory and the project had to be abandoned.

The next occasion on which Britain came forward and championed the Jewish cause was that of the Balfour Declaration and its consequences. This will be dealt with in the following chapter. One may anticipate a little, however, and mention that when after some experience of the work of the Mandate for Palestine and with the uninterrupted inflammation of the position of the Jews in a large part of Europe, a consequence of the rise and spread of the doctrine and practice of National Socialism, the British Government, anxious to relieve the situation of the Jewish sufferers and the consequent pressure on the inadequate resources and opportunities of Palestine, came forward with an offer for an autonomous Jewish settlement in the colony of British Guiana. A few prominent English and American Jews, concerned solely for the welfare of their co-religionists in Central Europe, were interested, but in the meanwhile Zionism had very greatly increased the numbers of its adherents and to them as had been the case a generation before the watchword was *Aut Zion aut nihil*, and any Jew who thought of Jewish mass settlement elsewhere was looked on askance as had been Herzl and the supporters of the Kenya project forty years earlier.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BALFOUR DECLARATION AND THE MANDATE

IN view of the centuries-long record of English practical sympathy with Jewish rights and aspirations and the many interventions by British Governments on behalf of Jews and Jewish communities, of which only a few have been mentioned in the foregoing pages, it was not surprising that when the possibility of the realization of Jewish hopes and desires with regard to Palestine appeared above the horizon the eyes of Jews everywhere turned in hope towards London. Britain was the one state in which friendliness towards Jewry had been consistent for centuries. It may be said also to have been the only one whose Governments had given any help to Jewry or Jewish communities in distress beyond kind words and occasional tepid suggestions. The great opportunity came at the end of 1914 when the outbreak of war with Turkey and the consequent liquidation of the Ottoman Empire made in a moment the future of Palestine a matter of living political interest. Among the Allies the principal claimant to the inheritance of Palestine was France who, reaching back to the Middle Ages, argued that as the heir of the Crusaders, whose forces and leaders were largely French, she was morally, almost legally, entitled to recover her lost territory. These claims she reinforced by the contention that Palestine had no longer any separate entity and that as a part of Syria, to the claim to which she tolerated no question in view of her sentimental and cultural interests there, Palestine should also come under her control. Thirdly France also had for centuries, back to the days of Charlemagne and Harun ar Rashid, claimed to be the Protector of the Christians in the Turkish dominions—her right to protect the Latin Church had of late been contested by Italy, but France was resolute in her contention that in the event of a change of status the Holy Places of Western Christendom at least should be placed unrestrictedly under her protection.

France was, however, unquestionably no longer the protector of all Christians as she had once been.¹ At the most she was **the** protector of

¹ The Sultan had accepted this claim in 1535.

the Christians of the Latin Rite, that is to say those more generally known as the members of the Catholic Church and its affiliates, the Uniate Churches. A new power had arisen as the Champion of the Eastern Churches and, although defeated in a war that had itself originated in a quarrel between her Christian protégés and those of France in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, Russia's claims had by now been accepted by both Turkey and Europe and, fortified by material as well as spiritual investments in all parts of the Holy Land, she was also a serious competitor for the office of Guardian of the Holy Land when the time for the distribution of the assets of Turkey arrived. Britain, the third principal partner in the War—the United States, although its Government claimed in effect the deciding word on the political fate of Palestine, was never at war with Turkey and therefore had, properly speaking, no *locus standi*—had no territorial ambitions. During the half-century or more before the outbreak of war the other European Powers—France, Russia, Austro-Hungary, Germany, Italy—had persistently created vested interests in the form of buildings and institutions, secular as well as religious, and even had established their own postal services with their own postage stamps. Britain, however, although a similar course had often been suggested, had resolutely refused to follow their example. With the other European Powers she shared in the privileges of the Capitulations, but of institutions she had only one school in Jerusalem for Jewish girls, another small one of a non-sectarian character in Safad, "and two or three modest missionary hospitals and schools. Jerusalem was also the seat of a Protestant bishopric, but this was Anglo-Prussian, not British, the establishment and maintenance being a joint Anglo-Prussian undertaking of the 1840s. Britain had no designs on Palestinian territory. In her interest it would have been best if the *status quo* could have continued, but as this was apparently out of the question, her interests dictated that the country should be ruled by a similarly unaggressive, not too strong power, but one strong enough to act as a cover for the Asiatic shore of the Suez Canal. If there had to be a change an Arab state, if accepted wholeheartedly by France and Russia, would have met the needs perfectly. But such a state if it were to be self-supporting could not be limited to the geographical limits of Palestine, even if Transjordan or Eastern Palestine were included within them. France was very loth to abandon her claim to Palestine: to lose Syria and the Lebanon as well was unthinkable. Were not the French claims to control them a part of French policy stretching back for centuries? Were not these provinces already a part of France's, cultural and spiritual domain? Was not *Partant pour la Syrie* one of France's most

popular war songs? Furthermore in the claims to Palestine it was admitted that France had competitors. Farther north, however, there **were** none. **In** these circumstances in the secret treaties between the Allies for the division of the Ottoman spoil, negotiated in the earlier months of the War, the claims of France to Syria and the Lebanon were accepted. These treaties even went further. They gave to France Northern Palestine in which neither Britain nor Russia was specially interested, and also, to some extent, Transjordan which it was agreed was to be a part of the Arab Prince Faisal's short-lived Kingdom, a French protectorate.

There remained Central and Southern Palestine and here at first a compromise was reached. Neither France nor Russia was prepared to see the country, and in particular the Holy Places, in the hands of the other and Britain had no desire for either Government to be there untrammelled, nor had she any desire to take control herself. In the end an agreement was reached by the three Allies. By this Britain was to have control of the Haifa-Acre region, in which there were no Holy Places and which was well fitted for the construction of a first-class harbour. The remainder of Central and Southern Palestine was to have been transformed into a neutral state under the joint guarantee and protection of the three principal Allied Powers. This was the essence of the secret agreement. The details of the form of government were to be worked out later. In the meanwhile, however, two events arose which brought this intention to nought. One of the immediate results of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia was the destruction of her influence in the counsels of the Allies. Bolshevik Russia, in fact, at once withdrew from the War and henceforth her wishes and views with regard to a post-war settlement received no consideration from her former allies. Still earlier—from the days of the outbreak of war with Turkey—the eyes of Jews and in particular of the Zionist Party among them had turned to Britain as the Great Power that could take the opportunity and by holding the Gates of Palestine, by means of her forces and protection would lead the Jews after their nineteen centuries of exile back to the Promised Land. The Zionists were then very modest in their requests. There was no talk of a Jewish state. Those among them who had once advocated one were very much in the shadow and had long been there. Political experiences and other difficulties had taught the more intelligent of the Zionist leaders that a Jewish state, if it ever became obtainable, was far away in the distance. 'Zionism strives to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law* was the object laid down in the Basle programme adopted in 1897 by the first International Zionist Congress at

which the Zionist Organization was constituted, and in the elucidation of this statement it continued: 'The Congress contemplates the following means to the attainment of this end (i) The promotion, on suitable lines, of the colonization of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers, . . . (3) The strengthening and fostering of Jewish national sentiment and consciousness.' This was the avowed policy of the Zionist Organization at the time at which the question of the future of Palestine came up for consideration. There was little if any political objection that could be taken to it. Its meaning seemed to be that in Palestine opportunity should be given for the growth of a free Jewish people, free not only to live its own life, but free also to increase and develop as an integral part of the new state which, in view of the variety of peoples already settled within its prospective boundaries, would necessarily have to be in the form of a state built up of a number of nationalities all enjoying a considerable measure of self-government in their own affairs. In this sense was the Jewish National Home policy understood and accepted by Arab spokesmen. The Amir Faisal promised in an agreement with Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the Zionist representative, to agree to a very wide measure of autonomy for the Jews of Palestine, present and prospective, perhaps wider even than the British intended in the Balfour Declaration, but provided that * the Arabs are established as I have asked in my manifesto of January 4th addressed to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. . . . If changes are made, I cannot be answerable for failure to carry out this agreement.¹ Almost as full support was given by the Syrian Committee formed in Paris at the time of the Peace Conference as an alternative to Faisal and his principals. * Palestine is uncontestedly the southern portion of our country. . . . All those among them (the Jews) who are oppressed in certain retrograde countries are welcome. Let them settle in Palestine, but in an autonomous Palestine, connected with Syria by the sole bond of federation. Will not a Palestine enjoying wide internal autonomy be for them a sufficient guarantee?²

The British position with regard to Palestine was clear. The *status quo* had been for a century quite satisfactory from the point of view of British interests and the lines on which that had been built should, as far as was practicable, continue to be followed. Above all no Great Power was desired in Palestine. Germany and Russia had been eliminated. The United States of America was so little interested that it had not troubled to declare war on Turkey, although it had been forced

¹ Translation from the Arabic by T. E. Lawrence. The undertaking to which Faisal referred was not carried out.

² David Hunter Miller, *My Diary at the Conference of Paris*, IV, pp. 399 et seq.

to go to war with Turkey's allies. The only Great Power that remained was France and by the secret Sykes-Picot agreement France had agreed not to allow her forces or influence to come south of Acre and Safad. To retain Turkey in Palestine was impracticable. On the basis of President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points', and in particular No. 12 of them, the non-Turkish * nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development'. This pointed clearly to the placing of the country under Arab control. The Arabs at that time formed 89 per cent of the population. Moreover the Arabs who had revolted and fought against the Turks and the Germans by the side of the British in the conquest of Palestine deserved consideration on that account. On the other hand there was the centuries-old sympathy of the British people and successive Governments with the Jews of Palestine and of Europe and their desire on philanthropic, on sentimental, even on religious grounds to help them rebuild their homes there. The attitude of responsible Arab leaders as expressed in the foregoing quotations and elsewhere justified the belief that in the prospective Palestine state, whether it were given complete independence or became part of a greater entity, co-operation between Arab and Jew was quite possible, and a peaceful and prosperous state might well grow up out of the ruins that the War and inefficient Ottoman administration would leave behind. With further immigration, and the inflow of invigorating and enriching elements the Jewish proportion in the population would grow. So long as this immigration did not exceed the absorptive capacity of the country and was directed only to the development of its prosperity there was not likely to be any opposition from the indigenous population. The country would no longer, however, be in effect an Arab one. It would be bi-national—a Palestinian state, neither Arab nor Jewish, but one in which both Jewish and Arab national homes, that is to say autonomous communities, could flourish. Autonomous communities within a larger political organization were by no means without precedent in the East, even in Eastern Europe, and such a system would have been strange to neither Arab nor Jew.

It was as a consequence of these influences that the Balfour Declaration was made by the British Government in November 1917, 'His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.

The wording was not as clear or closely defined as a document of this nature should have been, but it was accepted by Jews, Zionist and non-Zionist, and also by Arabs such as it had been by the Amir Faisal as favouring the development of Palestine into a bi-national state. That this was clear to Zionist circles is evident from the long-sustained but fruitless efforts made by them to persuade the British Government to adopt as an alternative wording 'the reconstitution of Palestine as the National Home of the Jewish people'. Moreover, when reports of the issue of the Declaration reached, possibly in a garbled form, the Amir Husain, Sherif of Mecca, the head of the Arab people so far as there was one at that time, and his army, already on the frontier of Palestine at Aqaba, it aroused such doubts and suspicions that the British Government had to send hurriedly to the Sherif an emissary, Commander David Hogarth, to assure him that the British Government was in favour of the return of the Jews to Palestine, but * so far as Palestine is concerned, we are determined that no people shall be subject to another \ It was further '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 this ideal'. This assurance of the economic and political freedom of the Arabs of Palestine was accepted and the threat of the withdrawal of the Arab armies from the conflict passed.

Participants in the discussions around the issue of the Balfour Declaration have put forward many views and many have suggested that the principal motive for the Balfour Declaration was anything but altruistic. Both positively and negatively, however, it is clear that, although all human motives are inevitably mixed, and the one in this instance was no exception, the overwhelming incentive was a genuine and generous sympathy with the Jewish people, fortified to some extent by the religious beliefs and hopes that are so strongly entrenched in the British character and civilization. Apart from temporary political reasons—sometimes internal, sometimes external—the policy of a Jewish settlement in Palestine has never had any support from any other Government. Britain had practically nothing to gain from a Jewish Palestine or from a happy Jewish community in Palestine, except perhaps gratitude, and British statesmen should have known even then that there was no room for gratitude in these matters. It was, and still is, said that the Balfour Declaration was issued at a period of crisis in the War and was intended as payment for the support of Jewish subjects of enemy and neutral states—an unworthy slur on the patriotism and sense of duty of foreign Jews. November 1917 was, however, no

particular period of crisis. The situation of British armies had been worse on earlier occasions. Moreover the Zionist movement was still weak and with little influence in this country or elsewhere. So far as it had a following—and before the Balfour Declaration gave the cause its great momentum—the number of its adherents, even in Russia and Poland, was small. In Central and Western Europe and in America their numbers were insignificant, and of the few Jews in Germany, France, England and North America who were active in the cause there was hardly one whose name was known outside his own narrow circle. With very few exceptions Jews of the wealthier, down to the lower middle classes were indifferent if not hostile. Even the issue of the Declaration, harmless as it seemed, was looked on askance by the wealthier and more influential Jews of Europe and America and most of the poorer classes, certainly those living west of Lodz and Bucharest, were satisfied to be German or British or United States citizens of the Jewish faith, and were at the best but vicarious Zionists. The Zionists at that time were certainly not in a position to give Britain any support of any value.

The issue of the Balfour Declaration coincided with the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution and it has been suggested that, as this revolution was foreseen and that Jews were powerful among the revolutionaries, the Declaration should be effective in keeping the new Russian Government in the War on the side of Britain. But in Russia as elsewhere the influential classes among the Jews were anti-Zionist almost without exception and again came the unworthy and baseless suggestion that those who gained power in Russia would sacrifice the interests or supposed interests of their country to Jewish interests elsewhere. The issue of the Declaration did not delay the withdrawal of Russia from the War by a day—although among the plenipotentiaries who accepted the treaty for Russia were more than one diplomatist of Jewish birth. The new Russian Government and the party in power, especially the Jewish section of it, were not only not sympathetic to the Zionist cause, they were bitterly hostile to it. Zionists in Russia were placed under serious restrictions and active Zionist workers were deported, and this policy continued without modification until in the last year of the mandatory period the Russian Government suddenly developed a remarkable friendliness towards the most extreme of the Zionist demands. For almost the whole of the generation during which the burden of the administration of Palestine fell on British shoulders the Zionists were most vociferous in their complaints of the persecution that Zionism and Zionists suffered at the hands of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and repeatedly appealed to the

British and Palestine Governments to rescue Russian Zionists from persecution and death.

Finally it has been contended that the British acceptance of the Mandate was part of her aggressive imperialist policy, a step in the extension of the British Empire and of the building up of the military force on which it rested. Palestine was to be a place of arms, a fortress threatening possible rivals, both in the north and the west. Events proved this to be as little founded as the alleged purchase of foreign Jewish support. Under the terms of the Mandate, Palestine could not be fortified except for purely defensive purposes. One consequence is that the great harbour at Haifa, the second most important in the Eastern Mediterranean, is a purely commercial one with no military or naval facilities. Except in war time, when its frontiers were threatened by powerful enemies, there have never been forces larger than were necessary to preserve the internal peace, as a rule inadequate for that purpose. If more than a few hundred men had been stationed in Palestine in 1929 the Arab outbreak of that year would have been more quickly suppressed and fewer Jewish lives would have been lost.

The purpose of this book, as its title implies, is to give a brief account of the stewardship of Britain in Palestine. All that has hitherto been said is preliminary to this aim. The British civil administration of the country began on the 1st of July, 1920, although there was still no legal basis for it until the conclusion of peace with Turkey and the acceptance by the Assembly of the League of Nations of the terms of the Mandate under which Britain was to administer the country. The Zionists, and behind them one may say Jews of all countries, remembering British friendship in the past, were unanimous in the desire that Britain should be the Mandatory Power. The Arabs, who would have probably preferred independence, with Palestine as a part of a greater Syria, preferred Britain, with perhaps the exception of the U.S.A., above all other states as the Mandatory. Outside the Lebanon, where the French had for many years concentrated their influence, there was hardly a pro-French voice. Britain, not especially anxious to accept the responsibility, had mildly suggested the United States as an alternative, but the United States was resolute in its determination not to accept any responsibility. Thus when the time came for the victorious Powers to distribute the Mandates among themselves, that for Palestine was pressed on Britain with the agreement of both Jews and, if there had to be a Mandate, of Arabs. The British Government at once made a marked gesture to show its sympathy with the Zionist cause. It appointed as its first administrator of the Mandate, a British Jew, Sir Herbert (afterwards Viscount) Samuel, a man who had spent

the whole of his life in the service of his country, at intervals in the highest of offices, who had shown his sympathy with Zionist ideals as expressed in the Balfour Declaration and its official interpretation. This appointment was perhaps the cause of the first trouble in the somewhat checkered history of the new Palestine. The Arabs, somewhat suspicious, despite all assurances they had received, looked askance at the appointment of a Jew, especially one who was known to have shared in the Zionist counsels, although, aware of Lord Samuel's reputation, they welcomed him as a man and an administrator.

The British administration of Palestine, under a prospective mandate, began on the 1st of July, 1920. The Mandate itself, in consequence of circumstances over which neither Britain nor the Zionists nor the Arabs had any control, did not come into force until the 29th of September, 1923, when it was finally enacted by the League of Nations. This document, after reciting the Balfour Declaration and adding that thereby recognition had been given to 'the historical connexion of the Jewish people with Palestine and to the grounds for reconstituting their National Home in that country', entrusted the responsibility to Britain 'for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home ... the development of self-governing institutions and the safeguarding of the civil and religious rights of all the inhabitants'. The Mandate further laid down that 'an appropriate Jewish Agency shall be recognized as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish National Home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine'. The Mandate then proceeded to deal with other matters, such as immigration, land purchase, state concessions, which will be referred to later. English, Arabic and Hebrew were declared to be the official languages of the new state, and the holy days of the respective communities to be legal days of rest for the members of such communities. Article 15 of the Mandate laid down that 'No discrimination of any kind shall be made between the inhabitants of Palestine on the ground of race, religion or language. No person shall be excluded from Palestine on the sole ground of his religious belief. The right of each community to maintain its own schools for the education of its own members in its own language, while conforming to such educational requirements of a general nature as the Administration may impose, shall not be denied or impaired.' Finally power was given to exclude Transjordan, temporarily or permanently, from any of the Articles of the Mandate and this power was at once taken so far as

those that conferred privileges on the Jewish section of the community was concerned. There has never been in modern times any Jewish settlement in Transjordan.

The Arab population had, however, in the meantime become restive and, while the country was still under British Military administration, there had been anti-Jewish riots in Jerusalem in which a few Jews were killed. These riots were quickly suppressed, but nevertheless rumours began to spread among the Jewish population that they had been encouraged by the Army, or an influential section of it, and it was in consequence of this agitation that the unprecedented step was taken of installing a civil administration, independent of the occupying military authorities, in a country whose status was that of Occupied Enemy Territory. The military administration ended on the 1st of July, 1920, when the first High Commissioner took office. The instructions of His Majesty's Government to the High Commissioner were to govern in the spirit of the Mandate which had not yet been adopted and in fact was not yet in its final form. The change was hailed by the Jews, of whom those who lived outside Palestine counted for more than the fifty or sixty thousand who remained in the country at the end of the War. The Arabs, however, gave it no welcome. The movement against separation from Syria, of which Palestine had formed a part for many centuries, was strong. The threat of Zionist immigration, possibly until the native-born Arabs were outnumbered by the newcomers, was actual, and the appointment of a Jewish High Commissioner or Governor seemed to increase it. The new Administration, however, proceeded on its course, but within a few months of its inauguration there was another anti-Jewish outbreak, more serious and more widespread than its predecessor, one of the consequences of which was a commentary on the terms of the Mandate which was issued simultaneously with the text of that document in July 1922. This commentary or interpretation which took the form of a memorandum, known as the Churchill White Paper—Mr. Winston Churchill was the Secretary of State who issued the document—was accepted by the Zionist Organization, though not very enthusiastically. Representatives of the Arabs of Palestine were invited to accept it also but declined to do so. The White Paper reaffirmed the Balfour Declaration. It said in part: 'Phrases have been used such as that Palestine is to become "as Jewish as England is English". His Majesty's Government regard any such expectation as impracticable and have no such aim in view. Nor have they at any time contemplated . . . the disappearance or the subordination of the Arabic population, language or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the

(Balfour) Declaration . . . **do** not contemplate that Palestine as a whole **should be** converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a home should be founded in Palestine. . . . When it is asked what is meant by the development of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, it may be answered that it is not the imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants of Palestine as a whole but the further development of the existing Jewish community, with the assistance of Jews in other parts of the world, in order that it may become a centre in which the Jewish people as a whole may take, on grounds of religion and race, an interest and a pride. But in order that this community should have the best prospect of free development and provide a full opportunity for the Jewish people to display its capacities, it is essential that it should know that it is in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance. That is the reason that the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and that it should be formally recognized to rest upon ancient historic connexion/ At the same time it was laid down that the clauses relating to the Jewish National Home were not to apply to Transjordan although that state was to be administered under the Mandate by the same High Commissioner as Palestine.

The new Administration set to work at once guided by the spirit of this statement.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BEGINNINGS OF AN ADMINISTRATION

WHEN Britain took over the administration of Palestine the country was one of the most backward regions of the Ottoman Empire. Distant from the centre of Government and arousing no interest there, it was allowed to stagnate. Its population was stationary, for the birth-rate, probably high when the statistics of later years are considered, was neutralized by a high death-rate due to disease, the removal by military conscription of the greater part of the young adult male population, many of whom never returned, and the continuous emigration, especially to South America, of others, Jews as well as Arabs. The population was estimated to number 689,300 in 1914, 605,000 Arabs, under 85,000 Jews, and few others, and was consequently 89 per cent Arab.¹ The Turks comprised a handful—officials and their families. The number of Europeans living in Palestine was similarly small—with very few exceptions South Germans who had come in to be free to follow their form of Protestant Christianity without interference, and the American Colony, consisting more of Swedes than of North Americans who had also settled in Palestine for religious reasons. There were one or two Circassian settlements, peopled by refugees from the Caucasus, and an equal number of Druse villages founded by refugees from the Lebanon. The Jewish population fell into two parts. The larger, as a rule of extremely rigid orthodoxy, for the most part immigrants directly or indirectly from Eastern Europe except for those who were Palestine-born but of the same origin, consisted of either elderly people sent to Palestine by their relatives in Europe and America as a place of retirement where they could devote the remainder of their lives to study and prayer, or of oriental Jews long resident in Palestine or the neighbouring countries. A small number, forming an immigration that commenced in 1880 or 1881, consisted of Russian or Rumanian refugees from persecution, young people who preferred the ideal of Palestine to the anticipated fleshpots of Britain or North

¹ By 1920 **it had risen** to about 750,000, of whom less than 67,000 were Jews. Of these latter, 15,000 lived on farms and in agricultural settlements.

America. These latter settlers came to work, not to pray; to live, not to die. For the most part they settled on the land where by the year of the outbreak of war they had formed 31 settlements, generally known as colonies, but none of them very large, with a total population of a few thousands.

Palestine was in every respect poor—a small population, little industry or commerce, no natural resources, fortunate only in the prospects of peace and quiet, for no outside Power coveted it. Under the Ottoman regime the country had lived under a lax form of government. The rulers did little for it, but on the other hand required little of it. The principal requirement was recruits for the army. Taxation was light, even when the addition of *backshish*, a necessary one in all oriental lands, and not only oriental ones, is taken into account. The different communities, apart from the Moslems, were under the *millet* system, one in which the different religious communities or nationalities—the terms are practically synonymous in the East—were left very much to themselves, except in the event of serious crime. Thus the Jewish community could go its own way after it had paid its annual tribute or taxation to the central authorities. It suffered in common with the remainder of the population from the state of (at times) inadequate public security and had village guards of its own, but otherwise there was very little interference with it. If the Jews of Palestine had at that time formed a nationality or national group of any size or importance it might be said that it then enjoyed to some extent the advantages of a Jewish National Home. The position of the several Christian communities was much the same. The Moslems, however, were in a superior position. The non-Moslem communities were the *millets* or minorities. The Moslems were the nation. Arabs of Palestine also had opportunities of filling positions of consequence outside of their own country. They had their representatives in the Parliament at Constantinople. A few exceptional men were appointed Governors of Turkish provinces elsewhere.

The Government of Palestine had never been highly organized, but when the British took it over they found something of the nature of chaos. For instance under the Ottoman Administration there had been some sort of system of recorded land tenure, although much of the land ownership depended on tradition—among a people such as that of Palestine by no means worthless—but there were also Government records in other cases. With the withdrawal of the Turks many of these records disappeared and those that remained were quite inadequate, and the work of replacing them, by means of a cadastral survey, was a very lengthy and expensive one.

In the task of rehabilitation the new Administration decided to move cautiously. Always a poor country, with a very conservative population, the recent War had increased the poverty. Villages had been destroyed; cattle and horses killed or removed; olive trees, one of the main means of support of the villages, cut down for fuel; orange groves left to die for lack of irrigation or cultivation. The War had also left behind a residue of brigands and robbers. Public security was the most urgent matter. The Turkish police force, which had never been large or very effective, had almost completely disappeared. The British military authorities had recruited a temporary force to take its place, but this was not adequate. The new High Commissioner took the matter in hand at once. A new police force, with British officers in the higher positions, was recruited. The training of this force was a matter of years; at first it fell far below the lowest Western European standard, but its efficiency grew from year to year, even if slowly. Both the Arab and the Jewish sections of the population were called on for recruits and both responded. When they had to deal only with ordinary crime there was no lack of co-operation between Jews and Arabs. But political disturbances into which the police were required to intervene also broke out and on these occasions the members of the police force ceased to be impartial. Nevertheless the creation of a police force that was neither Arab nor Jewish, but Palestinian, went on. There was the great advantage of neither Arabs nor Jews being in control. The process was a long one and there were some set-backs. In the end a police force was formed which was on the whole reasonably efficient, one that could compare favourably with similar forces in many European and American states.

Next in importance to public security came the administration of justice. Here the difficulties were greater. With the collapse of the Turks their judicial system also came to an end. The foundations, even if there were no superstructure, however, survived, and on these the new buildings were erected. Under the Ottoman system of government, jurisdiction in religious matters and those of personal status had rested with the religious communities and this arrangement was not disturbed. The Jews also were encouraged to form a representative body, in the hands of whose leading members the general direction of the community and its liaison with the Administration were to rest. The Ottoman legal code remained the basis of justice, with only a few immediate amendments. But this was, and was from the first, only intended to be a temporary measure. The introduction of a system more in accordance with British views was a long process and covered a number of years. It was not until 1936 that the Ottoman Criminal

Code was entirely replaced. The greater difficulty at the beginning was that of personnel. The number of Turkish judges was not large and most, if not all, of them had withdrawn with the retreating armies. There were a few Palestinians who had qualified in, and practised, law in Jerusalem or Constantinople. Unfortunately, however, the apprenticeship they had served had not conduced to the administration of justice on British lines. There were also in Palestine a few foreign Jews who had studied and even practised law in their own countries. From these a judicature was built up, with qualified British lawyers in the Court of Appeal and British presidents in the lower courts when cases of importance were heard. There was not, and could not be, in the circumstances prevalent in Palestine, anything of the nature of a jury. If the field from which Palestinian judges could be drawn was limited, that of the advocates and lawyers was even more so. Almost all of the few qualified lawyers were put on the Bench and none was left to plead before them. However, a Bar was as necessary as a Bench. A qualification for membership of the Bar of an elementary character was introduced and a body was got together consisting at first largely of ex-interpreters and petition-writers, with a sprinkling of clerks in the offices of the handful of foreign Jewish lawyers who began to practise in the country. There also began to grow up a body of young Arab lawyers, especially from Syria and the Lebanon, with some real qualifications. This was the beginning of the Bar in Palestine which also, under the tutelage and with the encouragement of the Administration, developed into a body that was adequate for its purpose. Law classes were soon established at which British and other judges and members of the Administration lectured. This was the only school of law in the country and, with a curriculum extending beyond the narrow limits of legal studies, was intended as much as classes for higher education as for the study of law.

Another important matter was that of Public Finance. Palestine as part of the Ottoman Empire was not entirely dependent on its resources to cover its expenditure. The main sources of public revenue in Palestine had been the tithe on agricultural produce, and customs duties. Another was a tax on immovable property. There were also taxes on shopkeepers. For a time this system was allowed to continue, with minor alterations. One great and immediate improvement for which the new High Commissioner strove from the beginning was the reduction of the 'tithe' of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the gross production, which was very heavy on the agriculturist, and he had the satisfaction of seeing it reduced to 10 per cent before his term of office expired. In the end, as a part of a general fiscal reform, the tithe disappeared

altogether. The system of farming out these taxes was, however, at once abolished. From these two reforms the agriculturalists, especially the smaller ones, benefited greatly. When the British took charge there was a general *ad valorem* import duty of 15 per cent and this, so long as Sir Herbert Samuel was in office, underwent only minor changes. But gradually the duties on raw materials required for building up the industries that began to develop or for the assistance of agriculture were remitted. In these first years of the British Administration the public revenue was small, but so was the expenditure. There was occasionally a deficit, but over a period of years the result was a small surplus. The cost of the maintenance of British troops in Palestine, however, did not fall on the Palestine taxpayer but on those of Britain. One brilliant financial stroke effected during Sir Herbert Samuel's Administration was the liquidation of Palestine's share of the Ottoman Public Debt provided for under the Treaty of Lausanne by which the Palestine state was brought into existence. The Ottoman debt was at a very large discount. Quietly and unobtrusively the agents of the Palestine Government gradually purchased in the market sufficient stock to represent its share of the Debt, and when the purchases were completed presented the stock for cancellation. By this means a nominal amount of debt of £4,577,667 was liquidated at an expenditure of £813,248.

In the Turkish period the system of communications had not yet passed far beyond the primitive. There were no telephones at all in Palestine. The postal service was so unsatisfactory that many of the European Powers had their own services and post offices, which the local population preferred to use for foreign correspondence rather than have recourse to the Turkish one. The Jewish settlements had an internal private system of their own. Practically the only road suitable for normal traffic in the country was that between the port of Jaffa and the capital and this road was never in a satisfactory state of repair. With one exception no motor-car had ever been seen in the country and it was said that this one, once there, had found it impossible to leave. Of railways the principal was one, owned by a French company, running also from Jaffa to Jerusalem. There were short, narrow-gauge railways from the port of Haifa to the main Hedjaz Railway which ran outside the territory of Palestine, a few miles of rail from Haifa to Acre and, constructed after the War had commenced, a short railway connexion between the Haifa-Hedjaz Railway and Nablus in Central Palestine, which it was intended to extend to Jerusalem. The new Administration took over all these railways, purchasing the Jaffa-Jerusalem one for £175,000. It also inherited the far more important

railway that ran along the coast from the Suez Canal to Haifa, which the army had built. At first it had the free use of it, but later purchased it—apart from the section between the Suez Canal and the Palestine frontier—from the British Government for a fraction of its cost. All the Turkish postal and telegraph officials had departed with the Turkish Army and had left none competent to take their places. A new staff had to be built up from the bottom, the nucleus being found from the Royal Engineers and in particular from the Army Postal Corps. With their help not only was a new postal service soon established and the telegraph service restored to use; a telephone service was also introduced. The pioneers in these works met with great difficulties, not the least of which was a completely untrained junior service, but they persisted against all of them. The telephone service in addition to other difficulties had to cope with worn and half-obsolete instruments, since no others were obtainable. But the directors of the new services persisted in their work. These services gradually improved and in the end they had no need to fear comparison with those of most other states. Money Order and Postal Order services were also introduced during the first year of the British Administration and a Post Office Savings Bank twenty years later.

More important even than a satisfactory system of communications was the public health of the country. Under Ottoman rule this was also anything but satisfactory. Reliable statistics were in those days unobtainable, but it is known that despite an abnormally high birth-rate—common to all Moslem populations—the number of the inhabitants remained stationary. An unduly high death-rate was not the only cause of this. Other causes have been previously mentioned. But it was a considerable contribution. In particular there were two scourges rife in the country, malaria and trachoma, the latter of which did not lead to death but to blindness. It was estimated that when the British entered Palestine about 97 per cent of the inhabitants of its southern region suffered from trachoma of varying degrees. In Central Palestine the proportion was about 69 per cent, and in Northern Palestine 15 per cent. Trachoma is largely a consequence of dirt and in Southern Palestine water was, and still is, scarce in wide tracts of country. Of public hospitals there were two or three controlled by municipalities. There were a number of voluntary hospitals, financed and directed from outside by missionary societies, by European Jewish philanthropic societies and, in a few cases, directly or indirectly by foreign governments. Outstanding among these was the British Ophthalmic Hospital of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which was neither political nor missionary, but single-mindedly philanthropic, whose reputation

was not limited to Palestine, but had spread over all the Arab lands of Asia. To this hospital and its devoted staff the successful fight against trachoma, which later the Government Health Department took over, was to a large extent due. But all these institutions, acting in co-operation, were quite inadequate to deal with the patients who were on their doorsteps. So far as sanitation and preventive medicine were concerned there was no provision whatever.

In the wake of the British Army came the Hadassah Medical Unit, financed, equipped and staffed by a Jewish organization in the United States of America, sent in the first instance as a temporary measure to bring help to the Jewish population of Palestine. Its doors were open to members of all creeds and its funds were plentiful. The Hadassah organization did all that a non-governmental agency could do. It was especially active in the provision of hospitals in the principal Jewish centres. In course of time most of its hospitals were transferred to the local Jewish authorities which, under the system of local government that was evolved by the Mandatory Administration, came into existence. Apart from the provision furnished by the Hadassah organization, and a smaller service given by the other outside organizations—with the grant of the Mandate for Palestine to Great Britain the interest of foreign governments, at any rate so far as health and medicine were concerned, very noticeably diminished—the whole of the responsibility for the health of the people of Palestine fell on the Government Department of Health. Of the results of this work it is not necessary to go into details. It is sufficient to say that the average death-rate of 23*82 per thousand for the period 1922 to 1925 fell to 12.3 in 1946. In the eighteen years, 1927 to 1944, the child mortality rate fell among Moslems by 39 per cent, among Jews by 60 per cent and among Christians by 51 per cent. A consequence of this improvement in the health of the country was that the expectation of life rose during the same period among both Moslems and Jews by 16*4 years. From malaria, once the scourge of Palestine, there were only 17 deaths in all the towns of Palestine in 1945, and that was, with one exception, the highest figure for a number of years. Outstanding among the exploits of the Government Department of Health during the whole period of its existence was the fight against smallpox and plague. During these years smallpox often raged in the neighbouring countries, but, thanks to the precautions taken, it very seldom crossed the frontier and on these few exceptional occasions its incidence was limited to but a few cases. There were a number of outbreaks of bubonic plague in the ports during the twenty-eight years of the British Administration, but every one was quickly stamped out. The Department of Health was

ruthless in its action so soon as plague was detected and was invariably successful. In the earlier years the Rockefeller Foundation actively co-operated with the Department in the eradication of malaria. The Hadassah and other Jewish groups, especially those engaged in agriculture, also took their share in the cleansing of Palestine of this scourge. The scope of the Government Department of Health from the beginning covered a wide field. One of its functions was the licensing of those trades and industries which affect public health and the drawing up of regulations that governed their management. The Department also granted licences to practise medicine, dentistry, midwifery and pharmacy, and since there was no training for these professions available in Palestine, had to decide which foreign qualifications could be accepted and which must be rejected. A school medical service was also instituted in the first months of the Mandatory regime.

Related to these health services is that of the provision of an adequate water supply and of drainage systems. When the British entered the country there was neither anywhere. For water the people of the towns depended for the most part on cisterns which were as a rule adequate when the winter rainfall reached the average but whose inadequacy caused much suffering when it failed to do so. In the villages water was obtained from the wells, in fewer cases from springs, also dependent on the rainfall. As for a drainage system there was none in Palestine apart from one in the Old City of Jerusalem which depended on works initiated by the Romans and, since the sewage from this system when it left the city was utilized for the manuring and watering of market gardens outside, its total effect on the public health was not always beneficial. The British Army on its arrival immediately laid pipes to bring water from springs outside. This water was intended only for the needs of the troops, and although others were, as soon as the army requirements diminished, given a share in it, it was quite insufficient to supply the whole of Jerusalem. The older houses all had their cisterns and were therefore in normal circumstances self-supporting in the matter of water. But with the increased immigration of Jews that commenced as soon as the British Administration took charge, considerable building activity began and in the new houses that followed, East European rather than Palestinian models, a cistern had no place. In the meanwhile the new administration, so soon as it got complete control of Jerusalem, set about seeking new sources of supply of water. Among these were the historic Pools of Solomon, which date, not as is often popularly supposed from the King of Israel, but from Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan in the sixteenth century, although there may be a Roman basis for them. But Jerusalem soon

outgrew these additional supplies, which were never fully adequate and a scheme for bringing water from the springs at Ras el Ain, forty miles away in the Plain, was put in hand. The new water supply was inaugurated early in 1936. This was estimated to be sufficient for many years ahead, but there was one drawback which was not realized until the last days of the Mandate. In the event of Jerusalem being besieged or even if hostile forces appeared in small strength between the City and Ras el Ain, the water supply of Jerusalem was imperilled, if not cut. In the towns outside of Jerusalem there was still, at the end of the Mandatory period, no adequate water supply. Even Tel Aviv, the most modern city of Palestine, which was but a small suburb of Jaffa when the British entered the country and had a population of over 150,000 when they left, was and is dependent for its water on a number of wells, in continuous risk of contamination by the innumerable cesspits by which the city is served. This state of affairs cannot altogether be attributed to the Government who brought experts from England to advise on the water supplies and drainage of the four principal cities. These authorities put forward adequate schemes in 1935 and steps, reinforced by loans, were taken to realize them. The provision of a water supply for Jerusalem, as has just been mentioned, was put in hand and completed. In Tel Aviv and Jaffa, however, for which a joint scheme was recommended, unceasing objections led to inordinate delay. The Arab rebellion of 1936 in effect brought all work in fulfilment of the schemes outside of Jerusalem to an end.

The drainage system in the towns of Palestine was even more unsatisfactory. For the most part it consisted of cesspits, some of which were always overflowing. The Palestinian Government took this matter, which was properly the concern of the Municipalities, in hand. It gave its first consideration to Jerusalem and modern drainage had been installed in a large part of the city before the British left. More would probably have been done if the last twelve years of the Mandate had not been a period of continual disturbance or warfare, which necessitated the expenditure of thought and treasure on even more urgent needs. In the twin towns of Jaffa and Tel Aviv the beginning of a drainage system was also undertaken, but this did not cover much of the area. In Haifa, as a part of the development which accompanied and followed the building of the harbour and land reclamation, a system of drainage was installed in the new districts, but the remainder of the town had still to wait.

When the British entered Palestine, education was at a low ebb. The Jewish population was fully provided for, mostly by outside organizations, and the case of the Christian element in the population

may be said to have been in a similar fortunate position. But for the Moslem children there was very little provision; for girls almost none. One of the earliest tasks of the new Government was the setting up of a Department of Education and the organization of education for the country as a whole. One difficulty was that of the existence of two communities each with its own language of which it was intensely jealous, despite the fact that the two languages were closely akin. The schools for the Jewish children had to be on a Hebrew basis: those for Arab children on an Arabic one. Both Jewish and Arab parents are eager, almost greedy, for schooling and both communities were anxious to keep their own education under their own control. The Jewish community was able to do so from the beginning. They had not only experience of, and a tradition in, education. They had, with the assistance of their fellow Jews in Europe and America, sufficient means for the purpose. The Arabs on the other hand were inexperienced and without financial means to support an educational system. The Administration, with its British practical common sense, was able to construct a system that gave both communities much of what they desired. At the centre as a Department of Government was the central educational organization which approved the general lines on which the schools were conducted and, to secure that those lines were generally followed, included an inspectorate which had the right to enter any school in receipt of Government grants. In theory every non-Government school had the right to receive its grant, so long as the conditions on which the grant was made were fulfilled, direct, but the Jewish schools were for the most part run by a Jewish Board of Education and the grant on account of them was paid direct to this Board which, so far as the Government was concerned, might spend the money as it wished, so long as it was devoted to education. The Government grants provided for only the smaller part of the expenditure on Jewish education. There were, in addition, school fees and, more important, contributions from at first the Zionist Organization, later the General Council of the Jews of Palestine (*Vaad Leumi*), and other bodies. The Arabs on the other hand, apart from the privately supported schools, had no educational organization of their own, even in embryo. Nor had they the experience on which they could build one. Anxious to have as much control as was possible over their education they realized that they were completely dependent on the British Administration. As a consequence this Administration had themselves to establish and run almost all the schools for Arab children. For the current expenses of these schools there were no funds, apart from the Government contribution. There were, of course, a few private schools and there were

still a few schools maintained by foreign governments. But for most of the Arab children of Palestine there were only the Government schools, and the funds available were inadequate to provide school accommodation for more than about half of the Arab children who used to besiege their doors at the beginning of term. Under the Turks one might say there was no provision for Arab girls. The new Administration allowed no such disability, although there was a great difference between the numbers of Arab boys and girls at school. Thus in the words of a writer who, for the greater part of the period of the Mandate was Government Director of Education: * The foundations were laid for saving the Moslem woman of the future from the fate of her predecessors. She would be no longer a chattel and a drudge, but a wife capable of bringing up her children in clean and healthy surroundings/¹ The allocation of funds set aside for education followed more or less the system of capitation grants. After provision for the headquarters expenditure and inspectorate, in which there were separate Jewish and Arab sections, the remainder of the allocation for education was divided between the Government and the Jewish schools on the basis of a small sum per head per child of school age, irrespective of whether the child was at school or not. The school buildings, furniture and equipment and sometimes an assistant teacher were provided by the local communities, but their upkeep was a charge on the Government. The Government announced in December 1920 that it was prepared to undertake the cost of maintenance of a certain number of village schools, if the villagers themselves would provide the buildings. There was at once a keen competition to obtain these new schools and in less than three years 190 were established. Most of these village schools were of an elementary character, providing a simple training in agriculture, but there were a very few that gave some measure of secondary education. Government training colleges for men and women teachers were also established—there were independent ones provided by the Jewish community—and special teachers appointed to go among the bedouin tribes and give their children a minimum of instruction. Later there was even a boarding school at Beersheba for the sons of bedouin sheikhs. Education among the Jews was much further advanced. Not only was there a school place available for practically every Jewish child. There were several secondary schools and in course of time technical schools, schools of agriculture, commerce and art, with the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus as the culmination of the educational edifice.

The best and most experienced opinion in Palestine was always in

¹ Humphrey Bowman, *Middle East Window*, p. 260.

favour of a so-called bi-national state—a Palestinian state, as distinct from an Arab or Jewish one—and this was the policy laid down in the Mandate. To build up a Palestinian people was therefore one of the functions entrusted to the Mandatory Power and the education of both sections of the people was obviously one of the most effective instruments for that purpose. The institution of two separate educational systems was certainly not a step in the direction of that goal, but at the time this was with equal certainty inevitable. An opportunity for a more forward move came in 1930, when Sir Ellis Kadoorie, a Jew of Baghdadi origin, left a considerable legacy for the education of the boys of Palestine. The Administration warmly welcomed the opportunity of carrying out what appeared to be the intention of the donor and of establishing a secondary school in which Arab and Jewish boys could sit side by side and learn to build up a state in which they would be equal citizens. Since it was not proposed to impose Arabic on the Jews or Hebrew on the Arabs, it was intended to introduce the neutral English language as that of instruction in the higher classes. This would have been quite practicable for English would have been taught in the lower classes to Arabs and Jews separately and the desire to learn English was one of the very few matters in which Arabs and Jews were in agreement at that time. Later, when the difficulties innate in the proposal began to be realized, the idea of an agricultural school was substituted for the secondary one.

But the Zionist Organization which was in control of the Jews of Palestine, despite the opposition of the British member of its executive, would have nothing to do with any educational system in which Hebrew was not the sole language of instruction. In this they were as adamant. Unfortunately the Administration gave way, although under the terms of the bequest the administration of the trust was left to it, and instead of one educational institution in which Arab and Jewish boys would have learnt to know one another, two separate agricultural schools, both insufficiently endowed, one on an Arabic, the other on a Hebrew basis, were established, even physically far removed from one another.

There were already two or three Jewish agricultural schools in Palestine. There was none for the Arabs, but the Kadoorie bequest enabled such a school to be established. By means of the opportunities furnished by it, teachers in the Government village schools were given some knowledge of agriculture, theoretical and practical, which proved of value when they returned to their posts, where practical agriculture has always occupied a high place in the curriculum.

When the British took over the administration of Palestine the basis

of the country's economy was almost entirely agricultural. Two thirds of the population were engaged in agriculture or its subsidiary occupations. Among the Jews the proportion was very much smaller. In 1914 it was estimated that of a total Jewish population of 84,660, 14 per cent was engaged in agriculture and lived in the villages. Agriculture was the main industry of the country, but agriculture of a relatively primitive character. The Arab fellahin who formed the agricultural class were in no sense a progressive community. For centuries they had been given no opportunity, had had no incentive, to progress. The methods of cultivation had stood still: the results of their efforts had not increased. Progress had shown itself only among the two European groups of settlers—the German Templars who had come from Württemberg in 1869 and the new wave of Jewish immigrants who began to arrive in 1881. But both of these groups were very small. The improvement of agriculture was accepted at once as one of the foremost tasks of the new Administration. A Department of Agriculture was created. Loans to cultivators, introduced already by the Military Administration, were distributed to enable them to make good at least some of the destruction wrought by the war. The advice of the agricultural inspectors was placed at their disposal and the lessons taught by the example of the Governmental experimental stations and also by the practical work of new Jewish settlers was learnt. For the first time for centuries agriculture in Palestine began to move forward. Jewish agricultural activity inevitably advanced at a still greater rate. It had behind it, for the assistance of the small Jewish population, the resources of foreign organizations that exceeded considerably those available to the Palestine Government for the whole of the country. However, both communities learnt from each other. The Arabs profited from the superior scientific knowledge of the Jews: the Jews from the centuries of experience of the Arabs. All of the experiments were, however, not successes. For instance under the Ottoman regime tobacco cultivation and manufacture were a monopoly throughout the Empire and the cultivation of tobacco in Palestine, except in a few villages in the North, was forbidden. With the cancellation of the monopoly by the British, agriculturists were free to cultivate tobacco anywhere. The cultivation of tobacco on a small scale in Galilee had in the past proved profitable, and at once Jews and Arabs throughout Palestine decided that they would share in the prosperity. But the cultivation of tobacco requires certain conditions of soil and climate that are to be found in Rosh Pinah and its neighbourhood but not elsewhere. The result was that the cultivation of tobacco continued satisfactorily in North Galilee but elsewhere it led only to loss and disappointment. The manufacture of

tobacco and cigarettes is, however, not dependent on either soil or climate. There had been one factory in Palestine for this purpose before the period of the Mandate. This was speedily increased to twelve, making, for the most part from imported tobacco, cigarettes to be consumed in the country. As Lord Samuel said in 1925, on the conclusion of his term of office as High Commissioner: 'Large numbers of the Arab peasantry are still exceedingly poor. Their poverty is due sometimes to an infertile soil, sometimes to a deficiency of water, sometimes to lack of industry, and sometimes to the exactions of landlords, or to improvident borrowing at exorbitant rates of interest; these causes are usually combined with primitive methods of cultivation. But there is good ground for believing that the poverty-stricken are becoming fewer, and the comparatively prosperous more numerous, than they were. There is no doubt that the area of cultivation, in the country as a whole, has extended, and many new houses are being built in the villages in every part of the country.'

Industry in Palestine, when the British accepted responsibility for the administration of the country in 1920, was hardly worthy of mention. There was a certain amount of village crafts among the Arabs and also the Yemenite Jews, Arabized Jewish immigrants from Southern Arabia of whom a small number had settled in the country. There were a few small Arab soap factories and tanneries in Nablus and Jaffa and large wine vaults in two Jewish settlements. There was also the Arab tobacco factory that has already been mentioned, but that was all. The great industrial development began after the establishment of the British Administration and the increased Jewish immigration that followed in its wake.

CHAPTER SIX

IMMIGRATION

C *K J F* the supports on which the Jewish National Home must rest it was recognized from the beginning that immigration was one of the principal. Whatever the term might mean and the ideal that it represents might be there could be no question but that there can be no National Home without a population, a population moreover not consisting for the most part, or even to a large extent, of pensioners or dependants on charity, but one composed of vigorous, enthusiastic workers, capable of maintaining themselves if given the opportunity, men and women who would be an asset to Palestine, whatever form its constitution might take. In the past, in the more recent years, there had been an immigration of young Jews and Jewesses coming to work and to build, but they were still outnumbered by the older people who came to pray and to die, and the younger ones whom these older people brought with them, belonged, despite their youth, largely to the same class. Palestine, the centre of Judaism, will always, so long as the Jewish religion persists, be a centre of Jewish pilgrimage, and of the pilgrims who come many will, as in the past, settle there. The number of these pilgrims will, however, at the best remain constant. It was anticipated that immigrants of another character, pioneers or *chalutzim*, would on the other hand increase manifold. Thus instead of merely influencing the character of the Jewish immigration into Palestine the new element would and did transform its character completely. The task of controlling this immigration has been defined by the first High Commissioner in his Report on his five years of administration.¹ 'At the time of the Armistice, the Jewish population, which had probably diminished considerably during the war, was estimated to number about 55,000 persons. The pressure to enter the country was then, and has since remained, very great. The intense feeling for Palestine, traditional among the Jews for ages; the example of the Jewish agricultural colonies founded in the previous thirty or forty years in Palestine, largely through the energy and munificence of Baron Edmond de

¹ p- 29.

Rothschild of Paris; the facilities for immigration now offered through the funds subscribed by Zionists all over the world; on the other hand the disabilities, the antagonisms, sometimes the persecutions, to which the Jews were subjected in many countries of Eastern Europe—all these combined to set flowing towards Palestine a tide of immigration, fed by a thousand streams, which if it had not been regulated, would have overwhelmed, economically, the small and undeveloped country towards which it was directed. Upon the Palestine Administration fell the invidious task of confining this tide within the limits that the situation imposed.'

One of the tasks entrusted to the Mandatory Power when it accepted the responsibility for administering Palestine was 'while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced' to 'facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions'.¹ And although the Mandate was not yet in force in 1920 the Mandatory Power decided not to delay, and as far as possible to put into effect this instruction in anticipation. Among other early legislation therefore was the enactment of an Immigration Ordinance (August 26). To the return to Palestine of residents who had left the country during the War no one had or could offer any objection except with regard to those who were German or Austrian subjects. It was further generally agreed that Palestine was underpopulated and that some increase would bring only benefit and no harm to the country. In organizing immigration no one concerned had at that time any experience and the first measure taken was to divide prospective immigrants into two main classes. The one consisted of those with their dependants who might be expected to be able to look after themselves as soon as they had arrived in the country. They were expected either to have sufficient capital to enter commerce or industry and thrive there or to be expert in trades and professions in the exercise of which they would meet a need that was supposed to be obvious. In addition, persons of religious occupation, the old pilgrim class, were to be admitted without limit so long as they had some means of subsistence. 'Members of families' of residents of Palestine were also to be admitted without limit. The second class consisted of those who could not be expected to be self-supporting immediately on their arrival in the country, but who were expected to find employment and maintain themselves after a short interval. For these, some organization would have to accept responsibility. The Zionist Organization at once stepped forward and offered to do so, and their offer was accepted by the Administration. Under the new regulations the number of immigrants in the first class was

¹ Article 6.

unlimited: those in the second were fixed at 16,500 families in the first year, whose support for a limited period was to be guaranteed by the Zionist Organization, which was to have the right to select them. Looking back on this scheme it is obvious that it was somewhat amateur and, apart from the effect on the predominant Arab population of a continuous flow of young foreign immigrants into what they considered their own country, a flow whose numbers and power were immediately exaggerated by rumour, more potent in the East than perhaps anywhere else, its economic invulnerability was by no means to be assumed. Anyhow the scheme speedily broke down. It was found that while the second category for which the Zionist Organization was responsible was not being filled—only hundreds instead of thousands were being brought in under it—a heterogeneous collection of immigrants of all ages and capacities whose means of subsistence were very often more speculative than actual, was coming in under the first. The country was quite incapable of absorbing this new population. The Zionists themselves began to realize this. The disquiet of the Arab population mounted rapidly and culminated in an anti-Jewish outbreak and the experiment was at an end.

After a few weeks during which all immigration was suspended it was resumed under new temporary regulations, this time with the control withdrawn from the Zionist Organization and placed in the hands of the Government Director of Immigration. These regulations were redrafted, without any change of principle, in 1922 and again after further experience, in 1925. Instead of two main and two minor categories, there were several. If an immigrant intended to enter commerce or industry or practise a profession, he had to show as well as state that he could freely dispose of a minimum capital of £500, and if he intended to practise a profession that he was qualified in it. If he proposed to open a workshop, independently, not as an employee, in which case £250 was accepted as sufficient capital, he had to show that he was skilled in the trade he proposed to follow. A person with an assured income of £60 per annum was also admissible. The natural dependants of residents in Palestine or immigrants were still admitted without question, but the term dependant was defined, no longer left indefinite. There were also other categories of acceptable immigrants—orphans coming to institutions, children to school, men and women of religion to pray for the remainder of their lives. Of course there had to be some provision for the maintenance of members of these dependant categories, but they were dealt with very generously. A guarantee by some individual or institution of the minimum of requirements was all that was asked for. There remained one other category

—an important one. That was that of the genuine worker or prospective employee. The immigrants with capital of £250 were expected to be skilled citizens who would set up small workshops and would not take employment. Prospective immigrants who were nominated by name by reputable employers in Palestine who gave an undertaking to employ them at a reasonable wage, were admitted without difficulty. But they by themselves were not sufficient to supply the labour market in conditions of an expanding economy. To meet this difficulty the second principal category of the original regulations was retained. Working men and women for whom there was apparently room in Palestine but who had no definite employers to whom to come were to be admitted, but on conditions. The Zionist Organization was to accept responsibility for their maintenance during their first year in the country. They were to consist of able-bodied men and women, under thirty-five, unless they were specially qualified, capable of physical work. In the case of the men and women who claimed to be skilled in certain trades—such as carpentry, iron working, etc.—some evidence that they had some training or experience in the trade to which they laid claim was required, but since it was recognized that in the case of most Jewish immigrants practical experience must be the only qualification, mere unsupported statements were as a rule accepted. The number of immigration certificates to be allotted from time to time in this Labour Category was to be prescribed by the High Commissioner after consideration of all relative information regarding the prospects of employment put forward by the Zionist Organization, and of course by the High Commissioner's official advisers. The distribution of the labour certificates, allotted in bulk, was placed at the disposal of the Zionist Organization, except for a small number reserved for non-Jewish employers and Jewish ones who preferred not to make application through the Organization, in almost every case for named immigrants. The Zionist Organization accepted responsibility for the good character and bona fides of the immigrants whom they sponsored and to some extent for their health. These regulations were the most generous of any adopted by any Government anywhere resolved to exercise some control over immigration.

As experience was obtained the procedure followed in arriving at the quarterly quota of immigrants to be admitted under the Labour Schedule—as this section of the immigration, the only one for which definite figures were laid down, came to be known—developed. At first four schedules a year were approved, but it was found that three months was too short a period for which to budget, especially as conclusions had to be reached some weeks before the immigration periods

commenced. These periods were consequently lengthened and reduced to two a year. The procedure was to ask the Zionist Organization to submit a few weeks before the opening of the new immigration period their figures of prospective increases and decreases of Jewish employment during the coming quarter. Arab employment or unemployment was not taken into consideration since the Zionist contention, which was accepted, was that Jewish workers only could be expected to be employed on Jewish undertakings. The only exceptions to this rule were the few large undertakings—Palestine Potash, the Palestine Electric Corporation, etc.—managed by men of vision, who realized that no country could be built up on the refusal of a free market for labour, and who were strong enough to be able to reject the claims to differentiate against any community or religion. It should be said also that there were many smaller Jewish employers—especially among the earlier settlers and the Palestine born—who also rejected discrimination in employment, but their power to put their views into effect was unfortunately not very strong. On Government and Municipal works both Arabs and Jews were also employed, but there were long-drawn-out differences between the Administration and the Organization regarding the proportion of the men to be drawn from the Jewish community, the Administration as a rule arguing that the proportion should follow the relation of the total sum paid in wages to Jewish employees to the total expenditure on wages, whereas the Zionist contention was that not pay but the number of men should be the guiding consideration. Arabs on the whole received lower pay than Jews. Under the Municipalities the proportion naturally varied from town to town. In Jerusalem, where the proportion of Jewish workers was relatively small, despite the large proportion of Jews in the population, a third of the Municipal employees, regular and intermittent, was Jewish, but half of the payment for services went to Jews. In Tiberias three-quarters of the labour was Jewish. In Tel Aviv, only Jews were employed and in Nablus, only Arabs.

However, in the preparation of a new immigration schedule the Zionist Executive was expected to submit a sum in the following form: Prospective new employment in detail, less existing unemployment and prospective reduction of labour (in detail) in consequence of approaching completion of contracts. The balance was the number of new working immigrants for whom employment was foreseen in the coming schedule period. While the Zionist Executive was preparing this statement the Government Immigration Department prepared a similar one. This latter was based to some extent on information as that of the Zionist Executive.

had also others at its disposal. To the total of the anticipated calls for new and increased employment, after the deduction of unemployed and prospective loss of employment of which the Department of Immigration was aware, there were two arbitrary additions (*a*) a reserve of say 10 per cent for new demands which could not be foreseen and (*b*) a similar reserve for unemployed, since under no system could it be anticipated that every man and woman would at all times be employed. There was still a further reserve which was not taken into consideration—the boys and girls continually entering the labour market as they left school. In the first year or two of the working of this system the immigrants authorized under the schedule were classified under (*a*) different trades—in which case a higher maximum age was authorized—in which labour was from time to time specially needed and (*b*) a general body of unskilled labour and men and women of other trades in which there was at the time no scarcity. In many cases, however, the claims to special training on which certificates had been obtained could not be substantiated and the practice of sub-classification had to be abandoned and an alternative adopted of authorizing of so many men between eighteen and thirty-five and a smaller number up to a maximum of forty-five years irrespective of whether or not they claimed to be skilled workers. Women labour immigrants were similarly divided into two classes.

After both the Zionist Executive and the Department of Immigration had prepared their figures their representatives met and discussed the two estimates, and finally the Director of Immigration submitted them to the High Commissioner together with his own recommendation, and a final decision was then given after consideration in Executive Council.

At first the differences between the Zionist Executive and the Department of Immigration were not serious. On one occasion at least the Department's estimate of the amount of labour the country could absorb actually exceeded that of the Zionist Executive. It was a period of depression. A conservative policy on both sides kept the immigration moderate and the economic position sound. This satisfactory state of affairs did not, however, last. The Zionist Executive, with no real responsibility for the consequences and under continuous pressure from its supporters to show results in the form of immigrants, began to view every prospect through rose-coloured spectacles. A natural exuberance on the part of an Organization whose function had been once entirely, and was still mainly, one of propaganda inevitably exaggerated every favourable element just as it brushed aside those that were not so favourable. The Government on the other hand had necessarily a sense of

great responsibility and found a continuous need to put on the brake. The Zionist Executive found that on the application of cold facts its estimates were frequently diminished. Imagining that it had discovered a procedure by which its figures were automatically halved it seems to have decided consistently to overstate them so that in the end it would get more or less what it really wanted. But the Government was not as simple as it was thought to be. The Zionist Executive's figures were still further reduced and the complaints against the Government and its officers immediately concerned proportionately increased.

The policy of the Government was to secure a certain relationship between the importation of labour and of capital. For long this was roughly observed, but after a time it was rendered nugatory by the entry into Palestine in other categories of working men and women for whom the schedule did not provide. One serious means of evasion was the borrowing of money, or even by the securing of certificates from a group of mushroom 'banks' that came into existence in Palestine and on the Continent, to the existence of imaginary bank deposits. Even among the genuine 'capitalist' immigrants who entered business in Palestine there were always failures and the victims of the failures sank into the mass of the labour population. These failures to succeed in commerce or industry were one of the causes of the increase of this amount of capital from £500 to £1,000 required later to qualify for an immigration certificate as a 'capitalist'. The rule that every legal resident in Palestine might not only bring his wife and young children but also his unmarried daughters of any age, and sometimes nieces, granddaughters and other relatives, also tended to swell the labour pool. Furthermore the low level of wages and also partial employment on the part of husbands tended to force young wives into the labour market. The admission of fiancées as dependants of immigrants had very quickly to be stopped. In case after case it was found that these ⁴ fiancées were merely temporary even if bona fide. There were cases in which prospective husbands when suddenly challenged did not know the names of their brides whom they proposed to bring to Palestine and of brides who, on arrival, failed to recognize their future husbands, or parted from them on the quayside immediately after landing, with thanks openly expressed for their services in getting them into Palestine and the hope that one day they would meet again. As time passed even wives were frequently found to be fictitious and the evidence of marriage manufactured for the occasion. Palestine citizens were in these circumstances at a premium as husbands, for marriage to a Palestinian gave the wife her husband's citizenship and as a Palestine citizen the Immigration Laws had no jurisdiction over her. Marriage in these

circumstances carried with it little risk, for under the law, as it applied in Palestine, divorce was as easy as in Soviet Russia or in some of the states of the North American Union, so long as the husband raised no objection. And as time passed the feeling spread that the immigration of Jews into Palestine justified almost every proceeding, and any attempt to exclude any Jew no matter how flimsy his claim to qualify for entry was fought as intensively as if the fulfilment of the whole of the Zionist programme depended on success. Although in theory dependent relatives should not have been admitted as immigrants unless the resident relative who applied for them was in a position to maintain them, this rule was invariably relaxed in the case of wives and young families. When this became known there was a demand, long continued, that there should be equality of treatment in this respect between the two sexes, a wife legally resident in Palestine should be entitled to bring in her husband as a dependant whether or not she was in a position to maintain him or he could maintain himself. This demand was, however, resisted. On one occasion a legal resident in Palestine applied for permission for his wife and young family, still resident abroad, to join him. As a matter of form a few questions regarding the applicant's financial position were put. It was then disclosed that the applicant's profession and sole means of support in Palestine was that of mendicant. For a moment there was hesitation, but the rule not to separate husband and wife was not broken. On another occasion the claim was made that a Yemenite Jew nominated by the Zionist Organization for an immigration certificate under the Labour Schedule should be permitted to be accompanied by both his wives and their families. The claim was admitted, with the advice that since immigrants under the schedule were not after all limited to persons coming to definite and assured employment it would be preferable in future to nominate only monogamists. In both of these cases the Director of Immigration exercised a discretion which was entrusted to him. In another he probably broke the law. Shortly after the beginning of the Nazi persecution in Germany a recently arrived Jewish immigrant who had come with his wife explained the difficulty in which he found himself. The wife who had accompanied him was the centre of his second matrimonial adventure. He had been divorced from his previous wife. She had now written to him in a state of great anxiety and he was anxious to rescue her and was quite prepared to undertake to maintain her. The definition in the Regulations of a dependent relative was very wide—parents, step-parents, grandparents, step-grandparents, parents-in-law, grandparents-in-law, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, unmarried daughters and sons under eighteen or other-

wise incapable of self support. But there was no mention of ex-wives. However, a point was stretched and at least one gentleman was satisfied by being permitted to have both his wife and his ex-wife with him. One was tempted to strain the law in favour of prospective immigrants from the German lands, not only on account of the danger in which they stood, but also because, if one is permitted to generalize, they constituted the best elements among the immigrants. The history of Palestine under the Mandate would have been different and probably far happier if Western Jews—especially those of a German, Dutch and British upbringing—had from the beginning had an adequate share in it.

The Immigration Regulations of the year 1921 were of a provisional character issued to avoid the hiatus that would otherwise have followed the withdrawal of the original ones of the previous year. A more considered set of regulations was promulgated in 1922 after the confirmation by the League of Nations of the terms of the Mandate and its interpretation in the Churchill White Paper of the same year. These Regulations were drafted to conform with the policy laid down in that considered Government statement, which had been accepted by the Zionist Organization and the Council of the League of Nations. * This 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.¹ Those regulations in principle held for a number of years apart from redrafting in 1925. After some experience it was found that, although there were exceptions, £500 was as a rule quite an inadequate sum to set up a man in business with any prospect of reasonable success—the small shopkeepers were already far in excess of the needs—and it was raised to £ 1,000 with power given to the Director of Immigration to make exceptions. The regulation was so interpreted as to qualify the prospective immigrant even though the capital was not his own but held on a long-term loan. If the capital was his own he was not necessarily required to bring it to Palestine and in estimating the qualifying capital, the value of household effects, stock-in-trade, machinery, etc., was taken into account. The administration of this regulation was always a matter of difficulty. It was, however, always recognized that success in business or industry in Palestine was dependent on many factors other than that of the capital available, that in certain circumstances a man might succeed with a capital of £100

¹ Cmd, 1,700 of 1922.

whereas another would fail although he possessed £10,000. And there were instances of both happening. However, a rigid figure had in the end to be adopted. Otherwise in every case, no matter the circumstances, unlimited pressure would have been brought to make it an exception. Even then the efficiency of the Regulation was for a time seriously undermined by the number of mushroom * banks' that suddenly sprang into existence, whose main business, it transpired, was in no sense banking but mainly to issue on payment of a fee certified extracts from non-existent books to the effect that Mr. X had on deposit with them sufficient to qualify for a visa as a 'capitalist' immigrant.

There were two other classes of persons, who were not immigrants, but who were provided for under the Immigration Regulations. The one was that of former bona fide residents, in most cases born in the country, who were entitled to return to Palestine without hindrance. Those who were Palestinian citizens were outside of the Ordinance entirely. But there were a number of others, some of them aliens born in the country, who had left before the introduction of the Nationality Law and who had been absent from the country for varying periods. Those who were born in Palestine and were technically Ottoman subjects or had been absent only since 1914 or for a shorter period, who had their families in Palestine or who had kept up a connexion with it, were permitted to return with the minimum of formality. Among these were to be found almost all of the non-Jewish permanent additions to the population from outside during the period of the Mandate, of whom so much was said and so loudly in the course of a long-drawn-out propaganda campaign.

Finally there were the so-called travellers—nominally tourists, pilgrims, travellers on business or visitors to their friends and relatives settled in Palestine. The Palestine Administration set out with the desire to encourage this traffic, realizing the value it might be to the economy of the country if only as a source of invisible exports. Furthermore, Palestine had always been a land of religious pilgrimage for Christian, Jew and Moslem and there was no desire to interfere with this movement so far as it was legitimately pursued. It was always realized that it was desirable for a man and also his wife, before they uprooted their home, to come to Palestine and ascertain whether the conditions of life there would suit them. For all these reasons visas for visits to Palestine were granted generously, but in the first years by no means lavishly. It is fortunate that in these years—those in which the economic balance was somewhat frail—moderation and realization of the true situation and difficulties were displayed. The end of the

First World War was, after the passage of two or three years, followed by a widespread depression. Palestine's economic backwardness protected it against the worst effects this depression would otherwise have had. Its only exports were oranges and these were not on a large scale. It was dependent to some extent on outside eleemosynary assistance as it apparently had been dependent throughout history—but in this respect also the need was even if relatively, absolutely not great. The total population of the country fell short of a million and of these, nine-tenths were living on a low standard with few needs, almost all of which were—even though inadequately—supplied from within. The Arab fellah and also to some extent the Jewish *chalutz* population had for generations been accustomed to poverty and hunger and did not miss what it had never known. When the world-wide economic crisis touched Palestine in 1923 the results were not serious. Unemployment rose—but by hundreds not thousands—and immigration contracted. The depression was shortlived. Immigration soon rose again to its old figure and surpassed it. Jewish settlement in the countryside expanded and there was some resentment on the part of small Arab cultivators who, as a consequence, lost their employment, which led to sporadic disorder. There were also disputes over the ownership of the land sold, disputes that were inevitable in view of the chaotic state in which the records of land ownership had been left. But the total did not amount to much and the disorder so far as it went was easily controlled.

Returning to the generous facilities extended to whomever expressed a desire to visit Palestine, at first advantage was not taken to any appreciable extent of the opportunities thereby offered of evading the Immigration Regulations. But after a few years these opportunities were realized. A boom, small measured in terms of other countries, but large for Palestine, set in. A campaign of propaganda for immigration to Palestine commenced in the Jewish centres of Eastern Europe. Anyone with X500 could then secure an immigration certificate for himself and his family for the asking, but there were a large number who had neither this amount and could not obtain immigration certificates under the Labour Schedule from the Zionist Organization—perhaps did not qualify for them—who had been told that Palestine was an *El Dorado* in which their poverty could be changed overnight into riches. These, often urged by economic incentives, began to pour into the country, in the guise of tourists or visitors, first as individuals, soon in organized parties. So long as the boom continued the promises which had lured them to Palestine looked like fulfilment. The immigration itself, legal and illegal, for the time being filled the country with money. There

was also the growing investment in Palestine by vicarious Zionists. Employment was plentiful and many of the refugees from the unspeakable poverty of the Polish ghettos no doubt believed that they had indeed found *El Dorado*. But the period of prosperity was short. It began in 1924 with the immigration from Poland of people with some means and was at an end by the middle of 1926. In 1925, 33,801 authorized Jewish immigrants—over 30 per cent of the total Jewish population—entered Palestine to settle there and an unknown but relatively large number of unauthorized ones. Of the authorized immigrants half came from Poland and another 10,600 from the other countries of Eastern Europe. In 1923 there had been 7,421 and in 1924, the year in which the boom began, 12,856. Apart from its size this immigration was top heavy. There was an undue proportion of the smaller middle class—small shopkeepers and even pedlars with an average capital of less instead of more than £500. All of these made their homes in the three towns, Tel Aviv, Haifa and Jerusalem. Of the poorer class, the genuine working men, the greater number also remained in the towns, partly attracted by the temporary plentitude of money there, partly on account of the lack of agricultural land and of the means of developing it, or even of employment in agriculture. An economic depression in Poland hastened the end of the bubble. Those who had left money there found it melting away and hastened back to save what they could of it. Palestine immigration was reversed and twice as many Jews left Palestine in the year 1927 as entered it, and there was an even larger proportion of emigrants in the second half of 1926. Not only did those of the newcomers who could, return to their former homes or go farther afield, many residents of longer standing also departed. It is certain that if other Governments had been willing to admit immigrants the emigration would have been much larger. A period of depression set in.

The great majority of the immigrants who could not leave found themselves in serious difficulties. Unemployment rose steeply, the sufferers from which the Zionist Organization found itself unable to relieve. Special funds for relief were raised among Jews abroad and in the end the Government, which as a consequence of the depression found itself in deficit, had to come forward with the provision of relief works. Even the Municipal Council of Tel Aviv appealed to the Government for financial assistance and received it. At the end of 1929, it was compelled to make an arrangement under which on the Government intervention a loan was obtained from an English bank on favourable terms out of which all the small creditors were paid in full. The larger creditors, different Zionist institutions, reduced the

sums due to them appreciably and the debt to the Government was forgone in full. Under the arrangement payment of the debts that remained were spread over ten years. But the Government made a condition of the remission of the debt due to it and of its good offices with the bank, the exercise of adequate control over the future financial transactions of the local Council.

The echoes of the crisis of 1926 continued to be heard for some time. Unemployment,¹ Jewish and Arab, remained at a high level throughout the year 1928 and both the Zionist Organization and the Government had to continue their relief works. These undertakings kept it within manageable proportions, but only by a strict curtailment of immigration which excluded practically all newcomers likely to enter the labour market. The flow of members of the shopkeeper class had stopped of its own accord in consequence of the disillusionment that spread far and wide through Jewry. Many of the precarious undertakings that had been established in previous years disappeared. The residue proved by their survival that they had taken root. In particular the citrus trade continued to make strides. The limit of the absorptive capacity of Europe for Jaffa oranges had still to be reached. The citrus industry of Palestine—a joint Jewish-Arab undertaking in which the older Jewish planters, despite all the pressure that was brought on them, steadfastly refused to draw their labour solely from Jewish sources—proved to be the backbone of the Palestinian

¹ It was always difficult to estimate unemployment in Palestine. Apart from the absence of practically all machinery for the purpose, there was always, even in the periods of the greatest depression, a tendency to minimize and even conceal the Jewish share in it, mainly for political reasons. With a large shifting population, with no homes anywhere, sometimes in Tel Aviv, at others in a communal settlement, partly seeking employment, partly in hiding from the few Immigration or Labour Department inspectors, this was not difficult. Among the Arabs there was also a political incentive, but to increase not diminish the numbers of the unemployed. One of their arguments against Zionist immigration was that it took employment from the Arabs and threw them out of work. The powerful Zionist Labour Organization was also always claiming the right to dictate to employers whom they might employ and to send to them not the same man every day but him whose turn they considered it was for employment. When employment was scarce the *Histadruth Ha Ovdim* rationed it among their members giving them four, three, two and even one day's work a week and claiming that in calculating the next half-yearly Immigration Schedule they were all equally employed. The Government in this difficulty had to adopt a rough and ready rule. A man known to be employed less than three days a week was counted as unemployed, one employed for three days or more was considered fully employed. Among the Arabs also there was a similar difficulty. The Arab population consisted to a large extent of smallholders, whose holdings alone were not sufficient to maintain them and their families. For a part of the year they were fully employed on these holdings, but for the remainder they had to seek casual employment to provide themselves with necessities. Around this condition of under-employment arose another controversy. Could a man who owned or rented land which he cultivated be in any circumstances an unemployed labourer? The Zionist Organization said No: **the Arabs Yes. The Government hesitated and could not make up its mind.**

economy. The development of this industry, emigration from Palestine and the natural progress of a growing country combined in due course to restore the equilibrium and the Government felt itself justified by the end of 1928 in reopening the Labour Immigration Schedule.

There was another period of depression in Palestine in 1930, a reflection of the world-wide economic depression, one of the consequences of which was a fall in the volume of Jewish money that was always flowing in from America and Europe and on which the Palestine economy to some extent depended. Immigration, which had begun to recover, fell again to 4,075 Jews in 1931, and one consequence of this was, as a precaution, as has already been mentioned, to raise the minimum property qualification of a so-called *capitalist' immigrant family to £1,000. It was, however, soon realized that this measure would rule out a number of desirable and promising immigrants and a new category, of those with capital of from £500 to £1,000, qualified and intending to engage in farming, or as small manufacturers, was created, the discretion for admitting candidates to it being left to the already unduly badgered Director of Immigration. The year 1931 also saw an attempt to regularize the position of the large body of unauthorized immigrants who had settled in the country. Such an attempt had been made previously, in 1927, in the hope and expectation and on the, at least implied, promise that the regularization of the position of the thousands of self-styled tourists who had come in the wake of the legal immigrants of the previous two years would be compensated by the cessation of the illegal practices that had brought this accumulation of unauthorized immigrants into existence. However, the expectation was not realized and by the year 1931 there were again several thousands of Jewish men and women in the country whose selection had been entirely outside the control of the Government, of whose character, health and other conditions nothing was known, a source of trouble and annoyance to themselves as well as to the Administration. A census of the population was to be made in November of that year and there were half-threats that if the position of these unauthorized residents was not regularized before the census, an appreciable section of the population, if only through fear, would refuse to co-operate and the purpose of the census would consequently be frustrated. The regularization of the position of these men and women, it was again suggested, would bring the illegal immigration, which was still continuing, to an end. The Government acquiesced and another indemnity was put into effect. By this measure several thousand Jewish immigrants were once again made normal residents in Palestine. However,

the expectations, at any rate of the Government, were not realized and the stream of immigrants, posing as temporary visitors to Palestine, continued. The Administration could obviously not permit this flagrant contempt for the law to continue and took steps to counteract it. An obvious one was to require a deposit from all applicants for travellers' visas of whose bona fides there was reasonable doubt and who could not qualify for an immigration certificate if the applicant wished to settle in the country. The deposit required was in the first instance £25, but this was found to be ineffective. There were so many people who were quite prepared to pay £25 for a visa and seemed to have no difficulty in getting one at the price. Gradually, therefore, the deposit required was raised to £60, at which figure many of the prospective immigrants hesitated. A few months later, early in 1934, the practice was introduced of counting against the authorized labour schedule the number of Jewish *travellers' who had, despite the deposit, come to the country during the previous half-year and remained without permission. This latter step had its effect on the organization that had come into existence for the encouragement and assistance of unauthorized settlers and the consequent increase of the Jewish population, irrespective of laws, regulations and the capacity of the country to support an unrestricted immigration. By this means the entry of immigrants disguised as temporary visitors to the country was appreciably reduced and the total number of immigrants kept under some control. In 1933 also a new Immigration Ordinance was enacted, but this was for the most part a consolidation of previous amendments or changes in practice, some of which had been enacted in previous ordinances, others of which had developed in the course of the administration of the Immigration laws. There were no changes of consequence. Immigration remained open to all, subject to satisfactory character and health, who could freely dispose of a minimum capital not limited to cash of £1,000 (long-term loans being accepted), of members of those professions which were not already notoriously overcrowded who had similarly a minimum of £500 at their disposal and of skilled craftsmen in similar circumstances with a capital of £250. Furthermore the minimum capital in the first category could be reduced to £500 if the Director of the Department of Immigration was satisfied that the conditions in the business into which the prospective immigrant proposed to enter and his qualifications gave him a fair chance of becoming self-supporting. In all the foregoing cases the immigrant could be accompanied by his wife, children under eighteen and unmarried daughters over that age, and also a long list of other dependants—grandparents, grandchildren, step-children, sisters, nieces,

nephews or fiancées—within the discretion of the Director of Immigration.

Unrestricted immigration was also authorized for anyone with a secure minimum income of £4 per month, apart from earnings, for orphans under sixteen, scholars, students and persons of religious occupation, provided that their maintenance was assured by an individual with adequate means or by a responsible institution in Palestine. The entry of dependants of legal residents in Palestine was authorized without limitation so far as wives and children were concerned, with regard to other relatives provided that the resident was in a position to maintain them. The other main category, that of the working man and woman, remained as before. In this category also the immigrant could bring his wife and children with him. Some of these conditions were systematically abused, especially those that provided for the immigration of adult young women as dependants. Whereas the proportion of young men, as a rule skilled in no trade, who came to Palestine to seek employment and brought wives was originally less than 10 per cent, it in due course rose to over 90 and in the end approximated 100. These *wives' in the end as a rule brazenly parted from 'husbands' on the quayside with a remark to the effect of 'Many thanks for helping me get to Palestine and hope we will meet again some day'. One advertisement was seen in a Rumanian periodical to the effect that Mr. A having been so fortunate as to secure an immigration certificate for Palestine will be pleased to take a young lady with him as his wife, provided that she pays the expenses of both. Many of these marriages were fictitious. In others, divorces of some sort or other could readily be obtained. The scandal which originally touched 'fiancees' only, became so notorious that that sub-category had to be cut out altogether, and later after the pseudo-relationship had been transferred to wives, the basis of the admission of immigrants was radically changed, every individual being required to obtain a separate immigration certificate. But an increased allowance for women outside of the obvious economic needs of the country was provided for and a large proportion of this allowance was reserved for wives and alleged wives. At the same time the law was so amended that the marriage of a foreign woman to a Palestinian did not necessarily bring with it Palestinian citizenship. There were arising too many cases of *professional husbands'—Palestinian citizens who made it a practice of proceeding to Eastern Europe, of marrying Polish or Rumanian girls there and thus giving them Palestinian citizenship and exemption from the Immigration restrictions, of divorcing them on arrival and returning to Poland to repeat the process, perhaps a dozen times.

Despite the limitations on free immigration to which attention has just been called, the proportion of immigrants to population, whether, in view of the closed economy within the two major communities of Palestine lived or the size of the population as a whole is taken into consideration, is without precedent probably anywhere. To a total population of 752,048 (83,790 Jews) in 1922, 377,966 authorized immigrants (345*338 Jewish) were added in the course of the following twenty-three years. The Jewish population was thus increased by immigration (gross) by more than 412 per cent. In considering these figures the facts that Palestine was throughout the period without, except for potash and bromine, any natural resources, dependent on outside sources for all raw materials and for a large part of its food and also in the first stage of industrial development, must not be overlooked. In view of the ceaseless criticism that has been poured of recent years from outside on the British and Palestine Governments on account of the Palestine immigration laws and their administration, similar figures for other countries should not be out of place. Of the unlimited natural resources of the United States of America and of its wide territories open for development it is not necessary to speak. They are widely known. During the years 1925 to 1943 (after that year a separate classification of 'Hebrew' immigrants was abandoned) 244,246 Jews were permitted to settle in the United States, an average of 12,855 per annum. The total population of the Union was estimated to be 139,682,000 in August 1945. During the seven years of the Hitler regime previous to the outbreak of war, when the need of a land of refuge for European Jewry was at its greatest, 92,133 Jews from all countries were allowed to settle in the United States, an average of 13,162 per annum.¹ Quoting an American Zionist or Near-Zionist authority: 'During the years 1933-37, Palestine absorbed more persons coming from the Axis-dominated areas than any other country in the world, including the United States. The figures of German immigration, for instance, show that during this period 25,400 refugees came to the United States, as against 34,000 to Palestine.'² Jewish immigrants permitted to settle in Canada in the fourteen years 1933-46 numbered 9,895, an average of 707 per annum. The population of Canada at the census of 1941 was 11,506,655, of whom 168,367 were Jews. Finally some figures regarding Jewish immigration into Great Britain during the past fifteen years should be of interest. According

¹ During the same period more than 200,000 Jewish immigrants were permitted to settle in Palestine.

² *Palestine. A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Policies.* Published for the Esco Foundation for Palestine, Inc., New Haven, Yale University Press (1947). Page 679.

to a statement made by the Foreign Office there were some 80,000 German, Austrian and Czecho-Slovak refugees in the country, most of whom had settled permanently, at the outbreak of war. During the war years about 70,000 civilian refugees had been allowed to enter. Between the end of the War and the end of 1947 another 80,000 had been admitted. Separate figures are not taken for Jews, but an estimate of 80 per cent of Jews among these 230,000 refugees is probably not far from the mark. Of these, however, a number proceeded later to other destinations. In addition to these figures foreign nationals who had fought in His Majesty's Forces were permitted to settle with their dependants. These numbered something like 200,000, of whom most were Poles. Some of these 200,000 should be added to the Jewish total. The International Refugee Organization stated at the end of its first year of activity that Great Britain had absorbed nearly three times as many displaced persons as any other country. During the first nine months of that period Britain had received 69,788, Canada 25,244, Belgium 19,147, the United States 16,836, France 16,216. Commenting on its figures the I.R.O. said: * It would not be inappropriate if organizations would make a special effort to try to bring home to the large majority of nations which in the General Assembly of the United Nations, professed their sympathy for Jews, the desirability of expressing their sympathy in action, not only in words, that, so far, had little appreciable results.'

Turning again to Palestine, according to another North American Near-Zionist publication: * 'By July 1935 Mr. McDonald (the American Chairman of the International Refugees Commission) was able to report that of 80,000 refugees from Germany the Commission had settled 27,500 in Palestine, 6,000 in the United States.' The Palestine Government was in particular sympathetically disposed to the transfer of Jewish children from Europe to Palestine, partly because Arab objections to this class of immigration were not pressed. The conditions under which elderly relatives were admissible were also eased. For the maintenance of these a relative was hitherto expected to accept responsibility, but shortly after the opening of the Hitler regime, by an amendment of the Regulations the guarantee of a communal settlement was accepted for the maintenance of the elderly relatives of any of its members. In these matters the Palestine Government was able to come at once to the assistance of victims of Nazi persecution. In another it did not enjoy a similar freedom. Under the system of the Labour Schedule the Zionist Organization had the selection of immigrants, subject to conditions of health, character and age, entirely at

¹ *The Price of Liberty* by Nathan Schachnir (New York, 1948).

its disposal and the High Commissioner held that he was not free to interfere. In 1933 and 1934 the position of the Jews of Germany was the most urgent and Sir Arthur Wauchope, when approving a Labour Immigration Schedule, expressed the hope that a large proportion of the Immigration Certificates thereby made available would be allotted to German Jews and Jewesses. Of the 14,300 certificates available in 1934 only a quarter were distributed in Germany and not all of these to Germans. Almost all of the remainder went to Eastern Europe, to Poland in particular.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CITIZENSHIP AND EMPLOYMENT

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VERY close to the subject of immigration is that of citizenship. An immigrant although legally resident in the country is still an alien and therefore living under certain disabilities and liable to expulsion if for any reason such treatment is considered by the governing authorities to be desirable. An alien resident, no matter how long he has lived in the country of his choice, is still not in the full sense a member of the community into which he has entered. His interests, his welfare, his social, even his domestic connexions may all be close to his new home. But there still remain some with his old one. Above all his political allegiance remains unchanged, and so long as that is the case, with the possible changes of political fortune and international relations his position may become precarious. To those who have the misfortune of losing their old citizenship without securing a new one the dangers, even the difficulties in normal times, are still greater. And among the new settlers in Palestine, as well as some of the older ones, there were many who, victims of the upheavals and changes of frontiers and status that followed the recently ended War, had the misfortune to have no country and no citizenship. Apart from the minor advantage of not being liable to expulsion from Palestine, for no other country would admit a stateless person, they had no other.

The Palestinian state came into existence in July 1920, but for some years it had no citizens. Most of the population consisted of Ottoman subjects, who retained that status until a new one was provided for them. But they were in effect stateless, for their Government had neither the power nor the desire to protect or assist them in any way. So long as they remained in Palestine, this was not a matter of practical consequence. The new Mandatory Government at once treated all the inhabitants, without distinction, equally. It accepted them at once as its charges. If, however, they went abroad the Government of Palestine could do nothing for them. All that was within their power was to issue temporary documents of identity on which to travel, valid as a rule for readmission to Palestine. Without this latter undertaking very

few Palestinian residents would have been able to leave the country. The resulting hardship would have been very great. For, apart from business reasons for travel, there were in many cases domestic and health ones. Of the newcomers there was always a large proportion anxious to revisit Europe. The indigenous population in the north of Palestine suddenly found themselves cut off from their friends and relatives by an artificial frontier that had been drawn between them, often cutting families in half, sometimes separating their homes from their fields.

Article 7 of the Mandate prescribed that 'The Administration of Palestine shall be responsible for enacting a Nationality law. There shall be included in this law provisions framed so as to facilitate the acquisition of Palestinian citizenship by Jews who take up their permanent residence in Palestine.' One of the first undertakings of the new Administration was to draw up an Order in Council that would fulfil the conditions laid down in this Article and at the same time secure to the other inhabitants of the country the status of citizens. Difficulties, however, soon arose and led to delay. There was one party that claimed that all Jews resident in Palestine should automatically become Palestinian citizens. Immigrants from Eastern Europe were perhaps to a man in favour of this course. Naturalized United States citizens who considered that they had settled in the country and knew that their adopted Government would in consequence discard them were of a like opinion. Western Jews, however, who possessed a citizenship worth having preferred to be left the choice of a change of citizenship. In the end the latter gained their way. Ottoman subjects of whatever nationality, resident in Palestine on the 6th of August, 1924, the date on which the Order in Council in the end came into force, became automatically Palestinian citizens. Those born in Palestine who happened to be abroad on that day but had retained their connexion with the country and might be expected to return were treated similarly provided that they applied for Palestinian citizenship within two years. (This period was later extended.) For the future the children of Palestinian citizens wherever born became Palestinian citizens at birth. The children born in Palestine of stateless persons also became Palestinian at birth. For those residents of Palestine who were not of former Ottoman citizenship, a naturalization law was enacted. By this law Palestinian citizenship, carrying with it the boon of British protection in all parts of the world, was granted on very easy terms. This legislation, among the most generous of its kind enacted by any Government apart from those that base qualification for citizenship mainly, if not solely, on the ideology favoured, laid down as qualifications (a) resi-

dence in Palestine for two years of the preceding three, (b) good character or more properly absence of any knowledge on the part of the Administration that the applicant was not of good character, (c) a very elementary knowledge of Hebrew, Arabic or English, (d) a statement of intention to reside permanently in Palestine. The fee charged for naturalization was one pound, after a short interval reduced to ten shillings, payable in two instalments. The grant of citizenship was completed by the taking by the recipient of the oath of allegiance to the Government of Palestine or of the making of an equivalent affirmation. Ex-soldiers who had fought in the British armed forces were exempted from the payment of any fee and special facilities were given to students, at the time resident abroad, who would otherwise have qualified for naturalization, to obtain Palestinian citizenship without interrupting their studies and returning to the country. A wife and minor children acquired Palestinian citizenship with the husband and father without any formality or fee. When, however, the practice grew up and spread widely of the contraction of temporary marriages with Palestinian citizens in order to evade the Immigration Regulations, the law was amended so that marriage to a Palestinian husband did not automatically secure Palestinian citizenship. In the case of a genuine marriage naturalization was granted without hesitation: only those in which the marriage was only for the purpose of evading the law was the application rejected. Under another later amendment a Palestinian woman who married an alien but did not acquire his citizenship was permitted to retain her Palestinian citizenship. The administration of the law was decentralized so that applicants could transact all formalities within an hour or two of their place of residence. At times when the Zionist Executive was anxious to increase the number of Jewish Palestinian citizens, but was not fully supported by the people directly concerned, the Administration actually sent its officers into the Jewish villages so as to reduce to the slightest the inconvenience to the prospective beneficiaries from British protection.

Even before the citizenship law was enacted steps were taken in 1922, on the initiative of the Zionist Executive, for the grant of provisional certificates of citizenship to non-Ottoman Jews resident in the country. Elections to a legislative council were then in contemplation and an electorate had to be composed. All Ottoman or ex-Ottoman subjects resident in Palestine at the time were taken as the basis of this electorate. Some 90 per cent or more of these were of Arab nationality. None of the recent Jewish arrivals and but a minority of the earlier ones had held Ottoman citizenship and to provide for them they were

given privileges similar to those of their fellow residents. 37,997 foreign Jews were by this measure given provisional Palestinian citizenship. The distribution was made in a hurry, in anticipation of the elections and much in the organization of it was left to non-Governmental agencies. As a consequence Provisional Certificates of Citizenship were issued not only to genuine residents of Palestine but to many Jewish visitors who happened to be in the country at the time. For long afterwards British Consuls in all parts of Europe were troubled by holders of these long-expired certificates who claimed British protection on the strength of them. Incidentally the issue of these certificates had one untoward consequence. About half of the Jewish immigrants and visitors to Palestine were for the greater part of the 1920s of Polish origin. The Polish Government promptly deprived of their Polish citizenship any who they learnt had applied for these certificates, and these were left, in law, stateless.

During the twenty years ending September 1945, 132,616 individuals acquired Palestinian citizenship by naturalization, and of these more than 131,000 were Jews.

Another subject that is closely related to that of immigration is that of employment. In fact, in an ideal administration the former should be directly dependent on the latter. The Administration, although during the greater part of its existence it endeavoured to preserve this relationship, was only on occasions able to do so. It had little outside assistance in estimating employment and unemployment and their prospects, and its own resources were quite inadequate. It was always realized that for a developing country such as Palestine with very few local resources and a small population, an influx of both capital and labour was necessary, and there was for long an endeavour to secure some sort of balance between them. It was realized that it was necessary to import employers as well as employees and to keep a close watch on the flow of both, so that the labour could meet the requirements of the expansion of industry with a reserve pool, but always careful not to let the exuberance of the enthusiasts sweep away the protective barriers without which the stability of the state would be threatened. The Administration succeeded at times in this. There was, however, never throughout the period of the Mandate, except for brief periods, a real scarcity of labour. The only exception was during the Second World War when Palestine was necessarily almost entirely closed to immigration¹ and the War requirements created an almost insatiable demand for labour in war factories and for the armed forces. Earlier experience showed that the immigration of workers often exceeded the needs, but

¹ Nevertheless in the five years 1940 to 1944, 33,359 Jews were registered as immigrants.

the excess was never great and was always absorbed after a not excessive delay.

In the earlier years the numbers affected were small. As a rule economic forces outside had a retarded effect in Palestine. Thus the post-war economic depression of 1922 and 1923 showed itself in Palestine only in the latter year.

1926 was another year of crisis in Europe with its reactions in Palestine and, as has already been pointed out, with the consequence of widespread unemployment and distress followed by a lean period so far as immigration was concerned, during which the excessive immigration¹ of the previous years was digested. The lesson taught on this occasion was that additional population could be supported only so long as capital on which it was to live entered the country. As soon as the flow of capital ceased signs of an economic and financial crisis became manifest. Despite a marked rise in the volume of emigration the depression persisted longer than on the previous occasion. It was obvious that the situation was more serious this time. A great part

¹ The term immigrant was defined to mean any person who proposed to remain in Palestine for more than a year. British officials and their families, consular officers, members of convents and monasteries, British employees in undertakings such as the Iraq Petroleum Company, and others, none of whom had any intention of settling in Palestine are therefore counted as immigrants. Apart from a few hundred Egyptians no non-Jews settled in the country or could be considered immigrants in the popular as distinct from the legal sense.

From time to time much was said about alleged floods of unauthorized Arab immigrants from Egypt, the Hauran or Trans-Jordan, but whenever these allegations were investigated it was found that these floods were figments of the imagination. From time immemorial bedouin have wandered into Palestine from the Sinai Peninsula as pasture became scarce and wandered back as soon as the rains began. Some of these bedouin obtained employment in Palestine in agriculture or the plantations during the few months when additional temporary labour was required, to the advantage of all concerned, not omitting the longer-established Jewish planters. Furthermore, many if not all of these bedouin were Palestinian citizens, having, as former Ottoman subjects habitually resident in Palestine, acquired that status automatically when the Citizenship Ordinance came into force. The number of Transjordan's settlers in Palestine, authorized and unauthorized, throughout the period of the Mandate was insignificant. Until some ten years ago Transjordanians and Palestinians were free to cross the frontier between the two states without hindrance and large numbers did so, but very few settled in either country.

At times Hauranis were attracted into Palestine by the bait of remunerative employment, but of these also the numbers who settled there was inappreciable. Advantage may be taken of this occasion to deal with the legend that the Arab population of Palestine at the time of the Mandate consisted to a large extent of relative newcomers, which has begun to spread. In the words of one writer 'a very large proportion (of the Arab population) consists of a very recent wave of immigrants, going back for no more than two or three generations and lacking traditional association with the land'. For this statement not only is there no evidence: there is not even a tradition. There have of course been waves of non-Jewish immigration in the past, but none since the Middle Ages. The fellahin as a whole, the backbone of the Arab population, in their origins certainly go back to the beginning of history, adopting in turn Christianity and Islam when new conquerors came.

of the task of coping with the spread of unemployment fell on the *Histadruth Ha Ovdim*, the growingly powerful socialist political organization, in part a federation of Jewish trade unions, whose influence in the Zionist Organization, already great, was extending. The distribution of much of the available employment for Jews in Palestine was in its hands and since there was insufficient employment for all, what there was had to be rationed. Incidentally, the real volume of unemployment could by this means be concealed. In 1927 and 1928, however, not more immigration so much as Government works or relief for the unemployed was the demand. But the control of employment so that employers could not choose their own workers, but had to take those allotted to them by the *Histadruth*, even if that meant a different employee every day in the week, was also useful to those who looked forward and had ambitions for the future. Out of this desire by the *Histadruth* to find some employment for all its members and the preference of the employers to choose their own workers and to employ them continuously so long as they wished, arose disputes and ill-feeling between the two bodies. There was also the endeavour of the *Histadruth* to include all Jewish workers within its organization and the refusal of the workers of the anti-socialist parties to enter it, a consequence of which was other labour disputes in which the parties were trade unionists against so-called blacklegs, with employers in sympathy with the latter. Akin to the latter class of dispute was the campaign waged against the employment of Arabs or other non-Jews, against which the longer-settled Jewish employers—especially in the plantations—struggled long and determinedly and until the end of the Mandate with some success. These, the most prosperous element in Jewish industry, had built up their prosperity on the selection of employees not on account of race or religion or party, but for their comparative usefulness. They were, in fact, little interested whether a man was a Jew or an Arab. Their concern was whether or not he could carry out the task entrusted to him satisfactorily. Further they had always lived on friendly terms with their Arab neighbours and were anxious to continue to do so. A boycott of Arab workers did not seem to them conducive to that end. There were also the three or four large Jewish industrial undertakings which were too powerful to be controlled by the *Histadruth*. These, so long as they remained independent, consistently employed both Jews and Arabs, allotting to each man the work for which he was best fitted.

Palestine had not fully recovered from the depression of 1927 and 1928 before the far more serious one of 1931 appeared above the horizon. The reaction occasioned by this was, however, short lived.

Before it had run its course in Palestine it was overtaken by the uprising of the storm of anti-Jewish persecution in Germany which at once led to an emigration from that country. Since the immigration laws of Palestine were in comparison with those of other states exceptionally liberal, a large part of the emigration turned towards the eastern Mediterranean. The earliest of these refugees were able to bring some of their property with them. There was an agreement between the Jewish Agency, which by this time was merely the Zionist Organization under another name, and the Nazi authorities in Germany for the transfer to Palestine of the equivalent of some of the property of German Jewish exiles and this caused an influx of capital into Palestine with increased needs to be satisfied. The immigration system met this sudden change without difficulty. It had been constructed to do so. The introduction of capital justified the introduction of labour, and so long as the flow of capital continued that of labour was also justified. There was also the strong sympathy felt in the Administration with the victims of Nazism, a sympathy which showed itself in the straining of the regulations in their favour whenever this was considered possible, without damage to the economic stability of the country. Soon economic wisdom was overwhelmed by sympathy, sentiment and also political pressure. Immigration rose to unexampled heights. In the year 1934, 42,359 Jewish immigrants were registered and in the following year 61,854. These compared with a total Jewish population in 1921, when Britain took over the administration of the country of 70,000 and one of 180,793 in 1932 when the new flow of immigration commenced. Simultaneously the principal Palestinian export industry, that of citrus fruits, was getting into difficulties on account of over-production and the loss of the German market, after Britain, the principal one so far as Palestine was concerned. The situation is well illustrated by the figures of visible imports and exports.

	<i>Imports</i>	<i>Exports</i>
1933	£11,123,489	£2,591,617
1934	£15,152,781	£3,217,562
1935	£17,853,493	£4,215,486

The invisible exports were at that time insignificant in value, apart from the introduction of capital by immigrants and contributions by charitable, educational and similar organizations. It was obvious that Palestine was living on the capital of the newcomers supplemented by charity, and it seemed that it would continue to do so as long as the capital lasted. By 1937 it was becoming clear that the volume of

immigration, despite the privations which the Jewish population was prepared to suffer in order to support it, was beyond the capacity of the country. Considerable unemployment began to show itself among both Jews and Arabs. As early as 1935 wages began to fall. By 1938 unemployment and under-employment among both Jews and Arabs had become a matter of concern, even though among the Jews the situation was to some extent mitigated by the large number of temporary police that were recruited, the Government and military works that were instituted and the replacement of Arabs by Jews in the Jewish-owned orange groves.

It was not disguised that many of the refugees from Central Europe came to Palestine not for any desire to settle there but to a land of refuge of which they were in urgent need. Until the uprising of Nazism, Jewish immigration from Central Europe was negligible. The Jews of Germany and Austria, with few exceptions, had no sympathy with Political Zionism, which from the Zionist ideal was by then rapidly taking in all countries. In earlier years there had always been the safety valve of emigration from Palestine and as will be remembered the crisis of 1927 was partly overcome by that. But in the meanwhile the gates of all countries except Palestine, and to a less extent Britain and certain other highly developed European states, had been closed to immigrants and in particular to those from Asia. Those refugees from Europe who had fled to Palestine, as they intended on the first stage of their travels, found they could go no farther. Even the normal emigration of Jew and Arab from Palestine had been ended by the resolute closing of all gates in North and South America. But immigration into the country, authorized and unauthorized, continued, until the Arab population, believing their existence threatened by the newcomers, lost control of themselves and broke out in revolt. Then circumstances were too strong and the figures of immigration fell steeply. These were the conditions that ruled when a new World War broke out in September 1939.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LAND PROBLEMS

THE state of land registration and ownership was one of chaos when the Mandatory Government came into being. Many of the official records had been destroyed or taken away and those that remained were for the time being equally useless in the absence even of a skeleton of an Administration. Quoting from *A Survey of Palestine* prepared by the Government for the information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry:¹ 'Areas were sometimes expressed in the quantity of seed required to sow them, or in dunams the number of which was arrived at by the merest guess. In other instances areas were entirely omitted. There was a loose verbal description of the boundaries by reference to the name of adjoining owners or physical features such as roads, streams or hills. The law provided that all land within given boundaries was the property of the recorded owner and that no regard was to be had to expressed areas. The result was that in order to avoid taxation, a person owning some hundreds of dunums had them recorded as an area of, say, ten or twenty dunums. In effect the register, in so far as it functioned at all, was a record of transactions between persons and not one of transactions with reference to adequately defined plots of land.' Moreover under the Ottoman law only Ottoman subjects could own land. In the course of time many tracts of land in Palestine had been acquired by foreign individuals and organizations acting through nominees. Of these nominees some had in the meanwhile died or could not be traced and the confusion was thereby still further increased. There were also cases of indebtedness, the payment of which the War and its aftermath had rendered impossible, at any rate for some years, and to liquidate which the creditors were endeavouring to get possession of the debtor's land. To meet all these difficulties, in the first place execution on immovable property was prohibited pending the expected but unrealized establishment of a state mortgage bank, and secondly Land Courts under British presidents were set up to disentangle the claims to ownership and to give unquestionable titles,

¹ Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office, p. 112.

often, as experience showed, necessarily in the absence of official documents. The prohibition on the registration of the ownership of land by foreign subjects or institutions was at once swept away. By this measure the acquisition of land in Palestine by foreign Jews, either resident in or outside the country, was facilitated. To some extent Arab landowners were also benefited, for the separation of Palestine from Syria and especially the Lebanon had made aliens many Ottoman owners of landed property in Palestine. Turning to the cases in which the claimants were in possession of the land, to illustrate the condition of chaos that ruled, a quotation may be made from the Government Report on Palestine Administration for the eighteen months 1920 to 1921. * Under the Ottoman regime registration of property was nominally compulsory, but was rarely enforced. Hence much of the land is unregistered and is held in virtue of privately drawn contracts of a primitive nature. In yet more cases the Turkish registers do not show the actual state of the property, which in many instances has passed through numerous hands by private sale; and the heirs of vendors now dispute the sales made by their deceased ancestors. Added to this are the complications arising from unregistered successions and illegal transactions, so that practically all applications for registration in the name of the present holders are contested.' And to show how the litigiousness of the claimants increased the complications and the difficulties a quotation may be made from one of the Reports of the British Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Palestine.¹ ' Large areas are entirely disputed, in some cases as many as thirty claims being submitted to one parcel. . . . Among the disputes most susceptible to mediation and compromise by agreement and persuasion are those arising out of an unofficial contract of sale—where the owner, seeing the prospect of profit from the fantastic rise in the price of land, is ready to go back on his contract and pay the damages; and those arising out of attempts to upset old unofficial partitions or out of mortgages of land proved ultimately to belong to someone other than the mortgagor.'

Even when all the claims to land ownership would have been sorted out and settled, the system remained very complicated. Immovable property fell into five main categories. *Mulk* land was the equivalent of the English freehold. The land became *mulk* if a man built a house or planted vines or olive trees on it. *Miri* land belongs to the state, but with limitations. The occupier may sell, mortgage or lease the land but not bequeath it. On his death it passes to his natural heirs and in default of them back to the state. This land also returns to the

¹ Report for the year 1934, p. 49.

state if the occupier neglects for three years to cultivate it, or build on it. *Waqf* lands are those held in mortmain dedicated to some religious or charitable purpose or on a family trust. In the case of family trusts as a rule the donor or dedicator and his heirs enjoyed all the benefits of the land with the added benefit of the *Waqf* protection. Only in the case of the failure of natural heirs does the property pass to the nominal owner—Allah. By legislation introduced early in the period of the Mandate the High Commissioner's approval of these trusts had to be obtained. It was given very exceptionally. *Metrufy* land is land devoted to public purposes. *Mewat* land is land without owner. It must be at a distance of at least a mile and a half from the nearest town or village or alternatively sufficiently distant for the voice of a man to be out of hearing. *Mewat* land was under the control of the Government—in effect its property. It was possible to own land but not the houses or the trees on it, or to own a tree but not its fruit. These anomalies were not swept away until as late as 1937.

Under the terms of the Mandate (Article 6) it was laid down that

* The Administration of Palestine, while ensuring that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced . . . shall encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish Agency . . . close settlement by Jews on the land, including State lands and waste lands not required for public purposes \ Steps were early taken to survey the country and to ascertain what lands were available for this purpose. It was found that very little state land, apart from uncultivable desert or mountain-tops, was at the disposal of the Administration so long as existing cultivators, many of whose families had been established for centuries, were not to be dispossessed. However, the Administration did what was possible, always keeping 'the rights and position of other sections of the population' in mind. A statement of the situation at the end of 1945 was given in 'A Survey of Palestine . . . for the information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry' ¹ The survey of the obvious desert, in the Negev and in the Wilderness of Judaea, had not yet been completed. The survey of the remainder of the country showed 660 square kilometres unquestionably state domain. Of these, 165 consisted of rocks, marshy and sandy land of no use to anyone except in some instances after very heavy expenditure. 259 were occupied by roads, railways, rivers, antiquity sites, Government forests or forest reservations, or otherwise devoted to public use including that of the Army. On 89 square kilometres Arab families had been settled for generations. Of the remainder, the only portion suitable and available for settlement, 95 square kilometres had been leased to

¹ pp. 257 *et seq.*

Jews, 25 to Arabs and 3 to others. 24 square kilometres of unoccupied arable land remained and these were in process of allocation. Apart from these 660 kilometres there were further areas amounting to 900 square kilometres which had not yet been surveyed but which it was expected would be found to be state domain. Of these, 220 were held on lease, written or implied, 100 by Jewish occupiers, 120 by Arab, the latter for the most part land that their families had occupied for very many generations. A further 600 square kilometres were devoted to afforestation or were in the occupation of the Army. Of the 900 there remained 80 square kilometres, mostly in the arid district in the neighbourhood of Jericho and the Dead Sea. Included in the foregoing the Administration had in fact granted a number of long leases at nominal rents, for instance to the Jewish townships—later municipalities—of Petah Tikva and Tel Aviv for urban settlement and to the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (Pica) for rural settlement. There had also been offers of other land to the Zionist Organization for settlement of ex-soldiers, but these had not been accepted since they were found unsuitable. However, there were always persistent claims by the Zionist Organization or Jewish Agency for the grant of further tracts of land, irrespective of whether or not there was any available, and in October 1944 the Zionist Organization was provided with a complete statement of all land to which the Government had a registered title in the zone to which the acquisition of land by Jews had by then been restricted. A joint Government and Zionist committee investigated these lands in detail and it was found that, apart from a few small plots near the Arab town of Tulkarm, all that was available and suitable for settlement or housing was about 1,500 acres of sand dunes in the Jaffa sub-district. The largest and most important of all the land concessions granted to Jews in Palestine is that of the Lake Huleh region, which covers an area of some 44 square miles. This concession provides for drainage and irrigation as well as settlement. A concession in this region was before the outbreak of the First World War granted by the Ottoman Government to two merchants of Beirut who, however, made no use of it. After the expiration of more than ample time for a serious beginning of the development of the area the new Palestine Administration intervened. A new agreement was made with a subsidiary of the Zionist Organization which purchased for £192,000 whatever property in the concession remained to the original concessionaires and a new concession was granted. The cost of the development was expected to approximate to £710,000 and other Jewish non-Zionist and non-profit-earning organizations agreed to share with the Zionist Organization the expenditure. It was found also that if

the sanitary state of the entire area was to be improved a further area, bringing the total to about 25,000 acres, outside the scope of the original concession would have to be drained, and for that additional undertaking the Palestine Government was willing to accept responsibility at a cost of about £223,000. The original scheme provided for the reservation of some 4,000 acres out of the 14,250 of the first concession area for the resettlement of Arabs already living in the district. There was a similar reservation from the second area for the development of which the Government of Palestine took responsibility. When the enlarged scheme had been completed two-thirds of all the land made available should have been in Arab occupation and one-third in Jewish. The new concession was granted and plans for the co-operation of the several bodies concerned were well near completion when war broke out and no further steps were taken.

The disposal of the Beisan or Ghor Mudawwara lands was a subject that led to persistent and long-drawn-out criticism on the part of the Zionists of the action of the Administration. This area was among the relatively few in Palestine that are capable of extensive irrigation at a reasonable cost and were in consequence from the beginning the object of covetous eyes. The lands covered an area of 381,771 metric dunams (nearly 100,000 acres) and had been in the occupation of the families still settled there for many generations. Like so many districts in Palestine there had never been any title deeds, and taking advantage of this defect it seems that the Sultan Abdul Hamid, many years ago, had the land registered in his name. The cultivators, however, remained undisturbed, but it seems realized their grievance which they nursed from generation to generation. When Abdul Hamid was de-throned much of his property was confiscated and among others the Beisan lands passed into the possession of the state. After the Treaty of Lausanne they became the property of the Government of Palestine. Sir Herbert Samuel on his earliest tour of the country found himself confronted with a demand from the local cultivators for the return to them of 'their lands'. On investigation it was found that legally the rights of the Administration were incontestable, but that morally the occupiers had a very strong case. Sir Herbert Samuel decided that the lands should be transferred to the occupiers on the payment of modest sums spread over a period of years. After a deduction for roads, water-courses, etc., 235,054 dunams were distributed among 2,538 individuals, an average of 92 to each. It was against this decision that the Zionist Organization never tired of protesting and appealing. They were anxious that the whole district should be kept together and developed as one entity. The Zionists in course of time managed to purchase

scattered areas from the new owners, but this did not satisfy their wishes.

Another case of land settlement that led to much and also long-drawn-out controversy, which illustrates the opposite point of view to that of the Beisan lands was that of the Kabbara swamps. A concession of them had been granted to the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA), acting on behalf of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who had long before the Zionists came on the scene undertaken the settlement of Jews in Palestine and continued his undertaking side by side with the Zionists for years after the arrival of the Mandatory Power. The Rothschild Administration in its settlement schemes invariably provided for any Arab occupiers on the land they acquired. As a rule they bought land for development, so that that which had previously supported a hundred families could in future support a thousand. The thousand families after the development were, however, not all Jewish. Provision on the developed land—not by payment of compensation or the endeavour to find land elsewhere—was always made for the original Arab residents, who were as a rule better off after the development work had been completed than before. As a consequence it was only in times of extreme tension that the Arab-Jewish enmity, latent at times, but in fact continuous throughout the British period, spread to the I.C.A. lands. The Kabbara lands consisted of swamps, which, to make them habitable, had to be drained. Their inhabitants were not fellahin, settled cultivators, but nomads or semi-nomads dependent largely on their buffaloes. A concession of the swamps had been made by the Ottoman Government to the I.C.A., but the outbreak of the First World War had stopped the preliminary work under the concession. The concession was confirmed by the Palestine Government in 1921. Until the work under it was completed the existing population had to be removed. The bedouin and their buffaloes were therefore transferred to other land which the I.C.A. provided and the cost of their transfer was also defrayed. Unfortunately by then the Land War in Palestine was in full course and no sooner had the original residents been provided for than new claimants appeared.* In the end the Government, to settle the matter, claimed the land as waste and therefore state domain, with a view to forcing a settlement. Litigation followed and the courts were divided. In the end the Government provided land elsewhere for the new claimants and the I.C.A., by now the* Palestine Jewish Colonization Association, or Pica, was free to continue its work of reclamation. The region now supports a number of prosperous Jewish villages.

It will be seen from the foregoing that although an appreciable share

of the scanty unoccupied and cultivable land at the disposal of the Administration was leased (at nominal rents)¹ to the Zionist and other Jewish organizations, the claims and needs of the Arab section of the population were not overlooked. 63-7 per cent of the Arab population of Palestine are engaged in agriculture. These fall into two classes—farmers and labourers, and of the farmers, all were small according to English standards. Of these farmers some owned the land themselves. Most held what were in effect perpetual leases passing from generation to generation. The Mandate, as has been mentioned, laid down that the Administration, while encouraging close settlement by Jews on the land, shall ensure 'that the rights and position of other sections of the population are not prejudiced'. From this the duty was clear to see that the facilities given to the Jews for close settlement should not be at the expense of the Arab element. The terrible poverty of the rural section of the Arab population early forced itself on the notice of the Administration. With very limited resources, as a rule in debt, heavily taxed, overcrowded, uneducated and in consequence suspicious of every suggested improvement, the only means of escape from their crushing burdens was in many cases desertion of the villages either to seek casual employment in the few towns where labour for which Arabs would be accepted was always scarce, or emigration to North or South America. The latter resource held for a time after the initiation of the Mandatory Administration, but in less than ten years the South American States followed the example of their northern neighbour and closed their gates. All the time the natural increase of the Arab population continued, in the neighbourhood of the remarkably high figure of 3 per cent per annum. The introduction of a new European population with a keen desire for agricultural and industrial development and with some means of attaining that end should have helped to provide for the growing Arab population. But the intensified discouragement of the employment of any but Jews in Jewish undertakings and also of the absence of need for employees in most of them reduced to small figures the possibility of providing for the surplus Arab population there. Moreover the creation of an Arab proletariat—an army of casual labourers—with neither homes nor roots anywhere was not desirable.

In the villages the system of land holding was so complicated and to the western mind extraordinary as to seem to have been invented with

¹ One of the conditions under which concessions were granted, so as to secure the economic equality which was enjoined by the Mandate, was that the Administration had the right to resume possession of leased lands, in whole or in part, for public utility purposes.

the purpose of putting the greatest difficulties possible in the way of production. The villagers had either individual holdings or the village held its lands in common. In the former case the holding was the property either of one individual or a family. In either case it was the rule for the land owned or leased not to be in one continuous area, but to be split up into a number of scattered fragments, sometimes as many as a dozen and even more. When the land was held by the village in common, there was neither division into more or less permanent lots, one for each householder, nor communal working as in the case of many of the newly formed Zionist settlements. Each member of the village community was given a strip, often more than one strip detached from one another, to cultivate, but every two or three years there was a redistribution. In these circumstances no one cultivated the same plot or plots for more than three years and it was against his interest to devote to his land more than what was necessary to produce a harvest during the years immediately in front of him. Above all, there was, in no case, sufficient land to maintain the occupiers on a decent standard even in a backward European sense, and moreover for a bare subsistence the occupier had to find outside employment for a part of the year or to go hungry with his family. Against this last eventuality there was, however, one safeguard. The fellahin or Arabs of the villages form in a real sense a community, as do also the Jews of Palestine as a whole. For one to starve while others have food is very exceptional if it ever occurs. If there is food in a village all can share in it and if it is insufficient to satisfy all in full, everyone is expected to, and will, draw in his belt.

Within a very short time the Administration realized the situation in which most of the Arab villagers of Palestine found themselves and recognized at least some of the steps that had to be taken in order to improve it. An early decision was to make every endeavour to reform the system of landholding so that the occupier, knowing that so long as he devoted himself to the cultivation of his plot, would be in secure occupation and could look a little farther ahead and think of the future. Against this, however, stood at first the conservatism in which the fellah's life and thought had been enclosed for centuries. The task of persuasion and education must obviously continue for years and decades not months. But the Administration and those of its officers who were concerned devoted themselves to it. Progress, after a time, became evident and before the Mandatory period ended much of the village lands of Palestine had been reallocated and consolidated. These reforms applied both to the lands that were held in common and also

to those that were divided into 'fractions'. In some districts the cultivators were even in advance of the Administration. After a time realization of the experience of fellow cultivators in other districts convinced them of the advantage of permanence of holdings. Without awaiting the arrival in their village of the Land Settlement Officer, the villagers would themselves distribute the land owned in common, among themselves, to have the arrangement confirmed later, practically without alteration, when their turn came for official attention.

However, after all the village lands of Palestine had been redistributed and their occupiers finally settled on them, all the agrarian troubles would by no means have ceased. The major one that stood out was that in a large part of the country there was not sufficient land for the people. In the coastal plains this was not acute. There irrigation was possible and had been introduced, and citrus production, thereby made possible, required far less land for the support of a family than in the hills where vegetables and fruit, and to a less extent cereals, were cultivated. In the hills it was estimated that a minimum farm of 95 dunams (23 ½ acres) was necessary to support a family with a minimum of comfort. In the plains, where the principal products are cereals and irrigation is not practicable, the minimum required is 135 dunams.¹ In those plains in which a certain amount of irrigation is possible and vegetables can be grown in addition to cereals, it is estimated that 87 dunams of which 12 are irrigated are required. These are estimates made by experienced Government officials. Those of the Zionist Organization are higher. There are several of them which range from 160 to 320 dunams of unirrigated land.² The result was that the natural growth of the Arab population, quite independent of the continuous alienation of agricultural land long in the occupation of Arab cultivators, was bringing about a situation in which the agricultural opportunities were* becoming quite inadequate for the maintenance of the Arab population, no longer able to maintain themselves in their hereditary calling, prevented from emigrating, refused employment in the greater number of the new undertakings that had been and were being established in the country. This situation was not only fraught with misery to the individuals immediately concerned but also indirectly with danger to the entire population.

¹ The explanation of the smaller area of unirrigated land in the hills than in the plains is that in the former case olives and other fruit can be grown, whereas in the plains the cultivation is limited to cereals.

² See the Report of the Joint Palestine Survey Commission appointed by the Zionist Organization and a group of Jewish non-Zionists jointly in 1928.

This state of affairs was evident to Sir Herbert Samuel almost from the day on which he took up the office of High Commissioner. Within a couple of months of his arrival in the country he enacted a Land Transfer Ordinance intended for the protection of agricultural tenants against eviction. The urgency was due to the relatively large purchases of land that were being made by Jewish agencies from large landowners resident in Paris, Beirut and Cairo, without any regard for the moral if not legal rights of their tenants who had been long established on their land. Under this legislation land could not be transferred unless the interests of the tenant were safeguarded by the retention of sufficient land for the maintenance of himself and his family. The interests of both the vendor and the purchaser were, however, opposed to this. The purchasers were ready to pay high prices, above the hitherto current value, but required vacant land for settlement. The vendors, having no local interests, were, of course, anxious to sell at the highest possible prices. They quickly found at small cost a means of circumventing the legislation. In this they had as allies the moneylenders to whom most of the peasants were heavily indebted. The course taken was to persuade and pay the tenants, before steps were taken for a transfer of the land, to vacate their holdings. When the transfer took place the land was consequently empty, without tenants for whom to provide. And all parties were satisfied—the vendors, the purchasers and presumably the moneylenders, permanently, the tenants for only a short period. The only exceptions to this general satisfaction were the High Commissioner and his officers. They had never intended that their legislation should have such a consequence. These proceedings continued for eight years, during which many of the larger estates passed out of the hands of the larger owners, for the most part resident abroad, into those of one or other of the subsidiaries of the Zionist Organization. Under the new owners, with the expenditure of money for development, a far larger population than previously was supported. In 1929 a new Ordinance was enacted, but this provided even less protection for the tenant. This mainly provided for the compensation for disturbance to tenants who lost their holdings and also for any improvements they had made. It, in fact, merely legalized the practice that had grown up. The large-scale purchases of land had ceased, and it was presumably considered that the need for protection was no longer urgent. In 1931, however, these large-scale purchases began to be resumed and at the same time the anticipated problem of the landless Arab came to the fore. The occurrence of a number of organized disturbances forced this latter on the attention of the authorities. The situation was summarized in the * Report of His Majesty's Government

to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Palestine and Transjordan for the year 1932'.

* Absentee landlords sell large estates with little consideration for their tenant-cultivators or for occupiers with customary rights from time immemorial. Occupancy without formal title is a most common form of landholding in Palestine, and frequently rests on nothing more tangible than a verbal understanding between occupant and owner, or upon recognized and undisturbed practice. If, therefore, cases occur in which land is not vacant for occupation by the person who obtains the title-deeds by purchase, it is the duty of Government to prevent occupancy from passing unless it is satisfied that existing rights have been fully taken into account and that, if dispossession is unavoidable, due provision is made for the future livelihood of the persons dispossessed.' By the legislation of 1931 it was again laid down that despite a change of ownership of land, tenants must not be disturbed unless adequate land for cultivation is left to them or provided elsewhere, preferably in their neighbourhood, which an Arab cultivator is very seldom, if ever, willing to leave. At the same time, as had already been mentioned, energetic steps were taken by the Government to provide suitable land for families that had already lost their holdings. An amendment of the law went even further than was intended and not only secured the bona fide tenant but opened the door wide even to the squatter, the man who settles on another's land without permission or the payment of any rent, and having managed to remain in occupation for a year found himself possessed of all the advantages of a statutory tenant and immovable against his will. The practice was in these cases for agreement to move to be granted in return for payment, but there was no guarantee, if the owner did not act very promptly, that his undesired tenant would not return. However, so far as the bona fide tenant was concerned, those landlords who wished to retain the power to sell their land at advantageous prices were still able to evade the intentions of the legislation, as a rule by granting short tenancies of less than a year but sufficient for the harvesting of two crops, and in 1936 legislation was drafted to deal with this abuse. But by then the land legislation of Palestine as well as many other subjects were in the melting-pot and the intention was not pursued. During the recent War, however, power was available under the Defence Regulations to deal with some of the most glaring attempts to deprive cultivators of their moral rights. But the system of land tenure was still in a very unsatisfactory state when the Mandate terminated. In 1943 a Government Committee reported that at that time the active legislation was 'widely regarded rather as an instrument to facilitate

the exploitation of landlords by tenants than as an instrument for the protection of tenants from the exploitation of landlords\

However, the abuse of the safeguarding legislation on the part of squatters and other persons who seized land with less desire to cultivate than to be bought out of their holdings did not relieve the needs of the constantly growing body of Arabs who had been agriculturalists for generations but could no longer find land adequate for their support. To deal with them an experienced Indian Civil Servant was appointed Director of Development, with instructions, in the first place, to draw up a scheme for the resettlement of those landless Arabs of whose existence he could satisfy himself, to ascertain the extent of state and other lands that were available for Jewish settlement, to investigate the possibility of developing the land in the hills on which Arabs alone were settled, with a view to increasing the size of the population they could support, to consider the practicability and desirability of providing loans for development to Arab and Jewish cultivators and to make recommendations for the drainage, irrigation and reclaiming of other lands that might be put to agricultural use. The British Government undertook to place a sum of two and a half million pounds at the disposal of the Government of Palestine for these purposes. The definition of 'landless Arab' for whose resettlement it was the first duty of the newly appointed Director of Development to provide was, however, very narrowly drawn. It was limited to only those (a) who had lost their land in consequence of its purchase over their heads by Jewish organizations or individuals, (b) who were themselves cultivating the land at the time of the sale, (c) who had not at any time subsequently cultivated other land and (d) who had not since obtained other employment of a fairly permanent nature. Arabs who could fulfil all those conditions were invited to communicate with the Director. Neither the Arab Executive nor the Jewish Agency, both of which were invited to co-operate with him, however, accepted the invitation, and in face of this latent hostility, nothing could be done apart from the registering of a few hundred 'displaced Arabs' who were able to comply with the conditions laid down. The Director of Development, finding his mission hopeless, resigned and his office was abolished. The most urgent of the cases of the displaced Arabs had, however, to be met and land was purchased for the settlement of some four hundred families. No large-scale development, as had been recommended by Sir John Hope Simpson in 1930 and by Mr. Lewis French in 1932, was put in hand. Other subjects far less concerned with the welfare of the country and of its inhabitants pushed such projects aside.

In one other respect an improvement was effected in the position of the agriculturalist as compared with that in which he stood in "Ottoman times. In those days the main revenue of the country was derived from the group of taxes that fell on the landowner or occupier. Of these, that which touched the small agriculturalist was the tithe, which at the time of the British occupation of the country was nominally 12 ½ per cent of the gross revenue of the land. This tax was payable in kind and was not collected directly by officers of the Administration. The collection was farmed out. By this means the Government was certain of receiving a definite sum every year and showed no interest in how it was obtained or in what proportion of the gross collection was retained by the collectors. In fact the wretched taxpayer was completely at the mercy of the tax-farmer who took from him, without appeal, as large a sum as he could exact. This was an oriental method of taxation and could not be tolerated by a British Administration, and its abolition was one of the first steps taken under the new regime. At any rate there was to be no intermediary between the Government and the taxpayer and the tax-collector henceforth had no interest in squeezing the last penny out of the wretched and defenceless agriculturalist. A few years later reform of the land and property taxation was taken seriously in hand. The earliest step after the reduction of the 'Tithe' to 10 per cent as a parting gift from Sir Herbert Samuel on his retirement in 1925, was the commutation of the tithe in 1928. Henceforth a man or community knew exactly the maximum he had to pay. Maximum, for in bad seasons or at periods of other misfortune these payments were reduced and sometimes excused altogether. In times of harvest failures the Government, instead of collecting taxes, actually made grants to the impoverished agriculturalists, always too poor to have reserves. For instance, during the Second World War, when the orange industry came to a standstill and those growers who had been operating on small or no margins, optimistically expecting that their good times would continue without cessation, found themselves in difficulties, the Administration not only remitted all taxation on orange growers but actually made large grants, in the guise of loans, to growers to enable them to keep those groves which were worth preserving alive until the hoped-for better times arrived. The benefit received by the agriculturalist from this reform and from the sympathetic administration of the new system is illustrated by comparative figures for 1925-6 when the old system still held and 1934-5, the last year of the general application of the new one to the whole country. The taxation on citrus plantations which was on a different basis, is not included in these figures.

1925-6	Total Tithe payable	£326,410
1934-5	Total Tithe	
	(including Waqf share)	£263,838
	Remissions granted	£130,731
	Net amount payable	£133,107

This system of taxation was completely swept away in 1935 and a Rural Property Tax substituted for it. Under this legislation the agricultural land of Palestine was divided into seventeen classes and the taxation so arranged as to approximate to 10 per cent of the annual nett revenue from working it. The highest class consisted of the citrus groves south of Haifa. There the nominal tax was approximately £3.6 per acre. In the four lowest classes, which comprised low grade land, forests and fishponds, no tax was levied.

A preliminary to this overhauling of rural taxation was an equally radical reorganization of the system of urban taxation. In place of the several state taxes that had hitherto fallen on the urban landowner or occupier one urban property tax was instituted. A change of the law in 1938 reduced the tax on citrus land by more than half and in 1944 one of £2 -4 per acre was imposed on fishponds which were by then becoming a source of appreciable income in some of the Jewish settlements. Newly planted land was exempt from taxation for the earlier years—for as long as ten in the case of orange and banana plantations. In the last two years of the War when agricultural prices were soaring, these rates of agricultural taxation were considerably increased, except in the case of citrus fruit, which was dependent on export and not on home consumption.

Related to the Land Question is that of water, a very active one in a country where the water supply on which the whole of its prosperity and more depends has never been adequate except for a small population and had, according to the biblical narrative, been the cause of incessant quarrels and threats to the public peace even two and a half millennia ago. The need for the conservation and economic distribution of the water available is not a problem peculiar to Palestine. It has arisen and been dealt with in many other countries. And in India, Egypt, Australia and Canada, British specialists have had much experience. The Palestine Administration, with this experience at its disposal, was therefore well fitted to make the most of whatever water resources there were. In the United States of America the subject of water conservation and distribution had also been studied and it was to one of the states of the Union, Wyoming, that the Palestine authorities went

for a pattern of legislation to be followed. That the Palestine Administration was empowered to take possession of all the water resources of the state was made clear by Article n of the Mandate. That the Administration should take control of them was urged by commission after commission that went to Palestine to advise on the development of the country. Professor Elwood Mead, a United States authority on irrigation of repute, who had been sent to Palestine by the Zionists and * non-Zionists ' jointly to investigate the water problem had recommended very strongly more than twenty years ago that the Government should take steps to investigate and protect the underground water table. The legal position with regard to the property in water in Palestine was, however, as chaotic as that with regard to land. Much of the water was privately owned. On that of the two principal rivers, the only ones large enough to make any contribution of consequence to the general welfare of the country, one of the few large business undertakings—the Palestine Electric Corporation—had rights which they were not prepared to abandon, and even if they had ceded those rights to the state the amount of water thereby made available for public purposes would not have been considerable as compared with the needs. The Palestine Government, however, did not propose to expropriate any private property, only to see that the water available was fully utilized. In some cases the fortunate ones to whom water was available were treating it as a commodity, like other commodities, to be sold to anyone for the highest price obtainable. And as a number of the smaller Jewish settlements had been planted in places where water was not available and had to be brought from considerable distances, there was often a ready market for water. Water rights which were sometimes imaginary had often been divorced from the land to which they belonged and sold, and as usual the man with money always had the advantage over the one without. Not only might an agricultural tenant find that water on which he was dependent had been sold over his head, but the possession of money also enabled a neighbour to sink a deeper well with a more powerful pump and thus drain away silently, almost in secret, the life-giving water of his far longer established fellow cultivator. In this scramble for water, the intensity of which increased as the development of the country proceeded, little if any consideration was ever given to the public welfare. As the population in the coastal plain increased, and with it the citrus cultivation which is dependent on irrigation, more and more and deeper and deeper wells were sunk. Soon the water level was affected. In some places on the coast it fell below that of the sea and as a consequence the sea water penetrated to fill the vacuum

and wells became useless for human consumption or agricultural purposes.

After due consideration the Government decided to enact legislation to cover the entire field. Three ordinances were drafted to control drainage, to decide water rights and control surface water, and the third to enable the Government to study the underground water table and to control the exploitation. Only the first of these three ordinances was enacted. Under this the Government was authorized to declare a 'drainage area *, to prohibit any interruption of the flow or collection of water in it and to carry out schemes of drainage in the cost of which those who would benefit would have to participate. To the other two proposals the objections were so persistent and the difficulties raised so numerous that when the Mandate terminated they were still only drafts. The old game of seizing as much water as one could and of disposing of it to the best personal advantage continued and in the meanwhile if only the weaker individuals suffered in the present, the future of the entire community was being jeopardized.

There are four sources of water in Palestine. That of the rivers is very limited and apart from the fact that the Palestine Electric Corporation has rights over the greater part of it, the water of the rivers cannot be put to practical use in quantities of any consequence except at probably prohibitive expense. The springs, which are copious in some districts, are, so far as they go, the most valuable source of water, but their number is small and the areas they fertilize limited. There is underground water throughout the coastal plain, but the supply of this, as has already been mentioned, is being rapidly and dangerously diminished. There remain the possibility of reservoirs in which to store the flood waters which pour down the hills in the rainy season. On such reservoirs much of the hill country was, with a small population, once dependent, but most of these reservoirs have long since been destroyed and until there is some security, by legislation, that water would be available to fill them, not diverted before it reached them, no one is likely to undertake their building. The Zionist Organization has for long been clamouring for opportunities to colonize the desert of the Negev which comprises almost half the area of Palestine. This region is to a very large extent uninhabited except for nomad Bedu and if it could be settled the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine would be appreciably increased. Here without question the provision of water is the main factor and the Government for many years—especially during the High Commissionership of Sir Aithur Wauchope, who was always deeply interested in agriculture and very anxious to further the welfare of the country—was engaged in investigating the

possibility of irrigation. At first attention was devoted to the sinking of wells. A number of these were sunk and water found—but always saline and unsuitable for cultivation. Attention was then turned to an alternative—the conservation of the winter rains that run down from the Hebron hills and are lost. Two or three dams at the foot of valleys below the hills were built, but were found to serve no purpose. The rock in which the resultant lakes should have formed proved to be porous, and practically the whole supply of water thus stored had after a short period sunk into the earth. In that part of the world there is no bottom to a lake and the water that sinks into the earth mixes with salt water below, and is lost.

CHAPTER NINE

SELF-GOVERNMENT

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UNDER Article 2 of the Mandate for Palestine the responsibility was entrusted to the Mandatory for * placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure . . . the development of self-governing institutions \ So important was this object considered that it was bracketed with * the establishment of the Jewish National Home ' as the two principal purposes of the Mandate. Article 3 laid down that ' The Mandatory shall, so far as circumstances permit, encourage local autonomy \ It cannot be said that the Mandatory, during its twenty-seven years of rule, progressed very far on the road of self-government. Without the co-operation of the people who were to be entrusted with self-government it was impossible to do so. Even the first principal steps in that direction were never taken. First one party, then the other, refused to co-operate. Never did the two simultaneously show, in any direction, any willingness to help in furthering the welfare of the country and of its inhabitants generally. It was very soon clear that the establishment of a Jewish National Home and the development of self-governing institutions, in which all the inhabitants could share equally, were incompatible, if by the former term anything of the nature of a Jewish state or a Jewish majority in the population was envisaged. The Zionists quickly realized this, and although in the first year of the Mandate, when the Jews formed a small minority, they gave their support to the first steps that should ultimately have led to self-government, they quickly changed their minds and devoted the whole of their energies to pressing the Administration to concentrate on the other half of its mission.

During the last years of the Ottoman Administration Palestine had been represented, in common with the other parts of the Empire, in the Central Parliament in Constantinople. The numerical influence of Palestine's representatives there was insignificant and other influence small, for the control of the Empire was then in the hands of a small clique of Turks. In Palestine also there was very little of the nature of local self-government. But Palestine was represented by men of its

own choice in the Central Parliament and a few outstanding Arabs of Palestine did receive high office in the service of the Empire elsewhere, even if not in their own province. There was a small measure of local self-government in the towns by nominated municipal councils, but the power rested almost entirely in the hands of officials sent from Constantinople. In the Arab villages whatever administration there was was entirely from outside except that a local *Muhtar* or headman was appointed to represent the villagers *vis-à-vis* the central authority. The administration of the Jewish villages, although in theory the same, was in effect different. These were left to manage their own affairs, subject only to the payment in one sum of the annual taxation due to the Central Administration. In the event of serious crime this Administration would certainly have interfered, but there was never any in the Jewish villages, nor was there ever any serious dispute between the Jews and their neighbours. Thus the Jews of Palestine had by this system, in combination with that of the *Millet* under which they in common with the other non-Moslem nationalities lived, a large measure of self-government in matters that touched their welfare most closely.

With the withdrawal of the Ottoman officials before the British armies the machinery of government fell to pieces. The army authorities, as a matter of course, set up a temporary military administration which bridged the gap until the installation of a British civil one in July 1920. Under the system of administration then introduced the responsibility for all that was done rested at first solely with the High Commissioner, but he took immediate steps to bring representatives of the population into consultation. This was done by the appointment of a nominated Advisory Council under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner himself. Of this Council ten were high British officials, four prominent Moslem Arabs, three Christian Arabs and three Jews. The function of this Council was to scrutinize all proposed legislation and to advise the High Commissioner on all matters of public policy. The decision in every case rested with the High Commissioner. The Council was in the literal sense only advisory and its advice need not be taken. Simultaneously the Zionist Organization, under the designation of the Jewish Agency for Palestine—a body drawn from the Zionists of the whole world outside of Palestine—was given in effect a similar status with regard to all questions of legislation or administration by which the interests of Palestinian Jews were affected. The internal administration of Palestine Jewry was left to a body chosen by the Jews of the country, which was at first unofficial but was later formally recognized. The personnel of the Administra-

tion so far as its highest officers were concerned was entirely British, but three of the heads of departments, including the second most important in the country, were English Jews. There were a few Palestinians—Arab and Jewish—among the deputy heads of departments and all the judges, apart from the Presidents of the District Courts and the two or three still higher judicial officers, were Palestinian. The other officers of the Administration were almost entirely recruited from Palestinians, by birth or adoption.

Unfortunately from the beginning the community to which a civil servant belonged was to many of more consequence than his fitness for his work. The great majority of the population was Moslem, but few Moslems were fitted by education or training for employment in administration even in a minor capacity. The contrary was the case among the indigenous Christian communities from which to an appreciable extent the junior civil service of the Sudan had for a generation or more been drawn. The Jewish population was small, about 10 per cent, practically none of whom had had any experience even in office routine, but the Eastern Jew is as a rule quick-witted and able to learn. His fitness for employment in administration may be considered as a whole equal to that of the Christian material available. Out of these, with a small sprinkling of British clerks, a junior service was recruited. Almost half of it was drawn from the Christian communities, about a quarter from the Moslems, the remainder from the Jews. This proportion varied, however, in the different departments. In Public Works—Headquarters and supervising staff—and the Telephone service there was a Jewish majority. About half of the staff of the Immigration Department was Jewish. On the other hand in the Railways and Post Office services there were very few Jews. The disinclination of Jews to work on their Sabbath rendered the employment of Jewish railway personnel almost impossible. Similar difficulties arose in the Telephone service, but there they could be overcome. In the Government schools there were practically no Jewish pupils and in consequence no Jewish teachers. The number of Jews in the Police varied violently from time to time. This was due not so much to lack of Jewish recruits. The training obtained in the Police Force was in certain circumstances very welcome. But resignations after about a year of service were numerous. The Police pay was low. At first the Zionist Organization proposed to supplement the pay of the Jewish policeman, but this offer was not encouraged. Apart from a group of police officers, many of whom gave their lives in loyalty to their Government, Jews as a body were averse from making service in the Police their life's work.

The Advisory Council worked on the whole satisfactorily, although

the Arab element at times used it more as a platform for the voicing of their political grievances than for the examination of proposed legislation or criticism of genuine administrative defects. The Council was, however, admittedly but a temporary expedient, and advantage was taken of the necessity for changes that were forced to recognition by the Arab disturbances of the following year for the constitution of a new council with greater powers. This attempt at the strengthening of the Council, however, failed. The first offer was of a Legislative Council elected on a wide franchise, but on a communal basis. This Council was to have consisted of ten nominated officials and twelve representatives of the population to be elected proportionately to the size of the three principal secular communities, provided that neither the Jews nor the Christians were to have less than two representatives. This Council was to have had full powers of legislation except in matters of finance and in those specially dealt with in the Mandate. This latter class included immigration, but a Committee of the elected members of the Council was to have been set up to deal with that matter, and in the event of a deadlock the decision was to have rested with the Secretary of State. Elections were set in course in which the Jews took their share. But the Arabs, rejecting the limitations to the powers of the proposed Council, for the most part refused to do so. A Legislative Council with any claim to a representative capacity, being obviously impossible in the face of the abstention of a majority of the proposed electors, the project had to be abandoned. The High Commissioner then returned to the earlier system of a nominated Advisory Council, but with the seats allocated to the communities in accordance with the provisional numbers appointed for the Legislative Council. The Jews nominated their two members and the High Commissioner, faced by the opposition of most of the influential Arabs, selected a number of prominent Arabs for the Arab side. Considerable pressure was at once brought to bear on these latter and within a short period almost all of them had withdrawn their acceptances. The next step was to offer to set up an Arab Agency with powers and functions similar to those of the Jewish Agency—in fact to have separate Jewish and Arab Advisory Councils sitting apart—but this proposal was also rejected by the Arabs. An Advisory Council, consisting solely of officials, was then set up and, despite other proposals for constitutional reform made from time to time, remained in existence until the termination of the Mandate. At the same time an Executive Council consisting of three or four of the principal officials under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner was constituted. The powers of this Council were somewhat greater than those of the Advisory Council.

It could hold up a decision and in the event of a difference of opinion between it and the High Commissioner, the decision rested with the Secretary of State in London. Proposed legislation had to be examined by both Councils, but, before it could be enacted, unless the occasion was one of great urgency, it had to be published as a bill to give all Palestinians who might be interested adequate opportunity for formulating their criticisms and suggestions. Legislation that would affect the interests of the Jews of Palestine—which soon came to be interpreted as all proposed legislation—was also referred to the Jewish Agency for their observations.

The offer of a Legislative Council which might well have in course of time developed into an organ of complete self-government for Palestine had been rejected by the spokesmen of the Arab population. This did not mean, however, the silencing of the demand by them for a 'parliament'. After a short interval this became an integral part of the persistently pressed, in season and out of season, programme of the Central Arab Committee. The Mandatory Government was, however, in no hurry for the reopening of the subject, for the newly constituted Advisory and Executive Councils were working on the whole quite satisfactorily. But as the years passed and as new High Commissioners arose, consideration began again to be directed to the subject. By the year 1929, when Sir John Chancellor was High Commissioner, the time seemed ripe for a move forward in the direction of self-government. The Arabs had abandoned their attitude of implacable hostility. For eight years there had been no serious unrest in the country. Immigration, as a rule on a moderate scale, had been continuous, so had been the rise in the modest prosperity of all sections of the people. Although still separated by opposing political ideals, the beginning of a *rapprochement* between the Arab and the Jewish sections of the population seemed visible. It was in these circumstances that the High Commissioner went on leave to London in the summer of that year, with new proposals in his pocket for the setting up of a Legislative Council. He had been away, however, only a few weeks when by a sudden outbreak the whole system of administration and co-operation in Palestine began to totter. The causes that led up to this outbreak will be considered later. For the moment it is sufficient to say that the culmination of the crisis was a sudden attack on the Jewish population by their Arab neighbours. One consequence of this outbreak, in a sense a punishment of the Arab community, was the indefinite postponement of all considerations of any introduction of self-government. But the postponement was not for long. The parliamentary commission that was appointed to inquire into the causes of the outbreak

and to make recommendations urged, in its report, the introduction of some measure of self-government. The Colonial Office and the High Commissioner were anxious to pursue such a course as soon as it was possible to do so. The British Government had been instructed to do so in the Mandate whose fulfilment it had undertaken. Everything seemed to point in the same direction. In its statement of policy that followed the Report of the Shaw Commission in 1930 the British Government repeated the undertaking given eight years earlier, which had proved abortive, to bring into existence a Legislative Council which would necessarily have limited powers and would have no authority to legislate contrary to the basic principles of the Mandate. This time, it was stated, no party or community in Palestine would be permitted to prevent the consummation of this aim by boycott or other refusal to co-operate. If a community refused to elect representatives the Government would itself nominate them. The Government, in making this announcement, doubtless anticipated that opposition was possible only from the Arab side and that there were enough reasonable Arabs of standing from whom to select, if the need arose, acceptable representatives of the Arab population. The Jews had on the previous occasion willingly elected their representatives and it did not occur to the authorities that they would go back on their promise of the past. But the Administration was mistaken. In Palestine throughout the twenty-seven years of the Mandate it seems always to have been the rule never to consider any legislative proposal on its merits but invariably to oppose it with extravagant bitterness if it found or was suspected to find any favour with the opposite party. Any proposal that seemed to be acceptable to the Zionists was rejected automatically by the Arabs as harmful to their interests. And vice versa. The customary volume of Arab protest and denunciation was not on this occasion poured out on the publication by the Government of its statement of policy following the publication of the Report of the Shaw Commission, but it caused an outbreak of passionate anger and denunciation throughout the length and breadth of Zionist Jewry. Under the pressure of Zionist sympathizers on the Government benches in the House of Commons the British Prime Minister (Ramsay MacDonald) found himself forced to explain away much of its comments and decisions and among the proposals that foundered, not to be heard of again for years, was that for the constitution of a Legislative Assembly.

In the meanwhile a new High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wachope, **had taken** office. He, like all his predecessors, soon **realized the** justice of the demand of the population for some share in the administration of

the country on a democratic basis, and when he appeared before the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in 1932 to report on his administration he suddenly and unexpectedly announced the intention to take up the project again in the near future. In Sir Arthur Wauchope's opinion, however, the way had to be paved to the establishment of any kind of legislative council. First he wished for the introduction of unofficial members into the Administrative Committees of Government that had come into existence. Then he looked to the introduction or extension of municipal corporations, based on popular election. At the end of this programme came the institution of a legislative council. The Zionists, who had never been enamoured of any sort of democratic government unless they were in an assured majority, and whose strength increased year by year, denounced the proposal for a legislative council as 'a betrayal' and initiated a world-wide agitation against it. Even the institution of elected municipal councils met with difficulties. Nevertheless, at the end of the year 1935, the High Commissioner disclosed to the Arab and Jewish leaders the plans for the constitution of the long-deferred Legislative Council. The Council, still with limited powers, was to have consisted of twenty-eight members of whom seven were to have been Jews (four nominated), eleven Moslems (three nominated), three Christians (two nominated), two representatives of the neutral commercial community (to be nominated) and five officials. This would have potentially given an Arab representation of fourteen and a Jewish one of seven. There was to have been an independent President from outside and each community was itself to decide whether women were to vote or not. The electors were not limited to Palestine citizens but included others of two or three years residence. The minimum age of an elector was, however, to have been twenty-five and that of a candidate for election, who would have had to be a citizen of Palestine, thirty. The power of introducing money bills was withheld, but the right was given to discuss the budget and to propose reductions. All other subjects, except those considered by the High Commissioner to be likely to endanger public peace, could be discussed. Bills could be introduced with the permission of the High Commissioner and questions relating to the administration and policy could be asked. The right of the High Commissioner to pass bills over the head of the Council was reserved. The decision on immigration questions was left to him, but the Council had the right to discuss them. The validity or continuation of the Mandate could not be questioned. The Jews rejected the proposal on the spot without any consideration. It was in their opinion contrary to the terms of the Mandate, would fix a permanent minority

status on the Jews and would impede the progress and development of the country. The Arabs asked for time for consideration and a majority of them declared their willingness to accept the offer, at any rate as an interim payment, but the proposal foundered in the country-wide Arab revolt that broke out a few months later, and of which the many hesitations and disappointments on the subject of self-government were among the causes.

The foregoing is a brief summary of the several attempts made by the Mandatory to associate the people of Palestine in the administration of the country in the hope that gradually greater and greater powers could be conferred on them so that in accordance with British practice throughout the Empire self-government would ultimately pass into the hands of the people. The policy that had succeeded elsewhere, however, failed completely in Palestine. A sense of compromise, of realization of other points of view and of toleration of other opinions, the very foundation of any democratic form of government, was lacking, and without it no form of self-government which was not in effect an oppressive dictatorship was possible. In the realm of local government the Mandatory Administration was, however, more successful. There had been municipal councils during the Ottoman period. These, although nominated and not elected, and under close control from above, yet had some powers of action and were roughly representative of all sections of the local population. In the villages, where local administration was less complicated, the opportunities of the local residents were greater. The Mandatory Administration took over the Ottoman system, filled the many vacancies in office that had in the meanwhile occurred, and for the time being continued to work it.

The Municipal Franchise Ordinance of 1926, while preserving the framework of the Ottoman system, introduced some improvements. The range of electors was extended to include all males of twenty-five years and upwards who were Palestinian citizens. There was a property qualification but it was low—payment either of a tax of ten shillings a year on immovable property, or of twenty shillings a year on account of municipal rates. All electors of thirty years and upwards who paid a minimum tax of twenty shillings or rates of forty shillings per annum were eligible for election. Towns with a mixed population were divided into wards so that the principal communities could all be represented roughly proportionately. As it was the tendency throughout Palestine for the communities to concentrate in quarters of their own, this end was easily attainable. At the same time the powers of the municipalities were increased, although the Central Administration continued to retain considerable authority, especially in matters of finance. Further

provision was made for the mixed municipalities of which, however, advantage was never taken. This was the creation, within the municipal areas, of urban districts, whose inhabitants might elect local sub-councils and provide amenities additional to those provided by the Municipal Council for the whole of the district. From the beginning the Zionist Organization objected to most of these limitations. In addition they demanded women's suffrage which was alien to the whole of the Moslem civilization. To meet their wishes some concessions were made when a new Ordinance was promulgated in 1934. The qualifying age for electors was reduced to twenty-one and that for councillors to twenty-five in Tel Aviv and Petah Tikva, the two all-Jewish municipalities. Municipalities were authorized to introduce women's suffrage if the majority of their electors so desired and advantage of this provision was at once taken by these two municipalities. The new municipalities at first worked quite satisfactorily. Under the guidance of the local officers of the Central Administration they threw themselves into their work, almost competing with one another in their desire to raise the standing of the towns for whose administration they were responsible. The Councillors felt themselves servants or perhaps masters of the electorate—citizens of Jerusalem or of Haifa or of Tel Aviv. But after a not very long interval the poison of politics penetrated into the Councils also. The members began, to an increasing extent, to show themselves less interested in doing their work than in passing political resolutions. In the mixed municipalities differences, after a time chasms, between the two Palestine communities appeared. The method of the boycott and the strike, introduced from Central Europe, was eagerly taken up and often resorted to in municipal as in other matters on the most trivial pretexts. The example set by one party was followed by the other. The time arrived when the whole body of Jewish or Arab Councillors in a municipality taking umbrage on a matter which perhaps did not concern the local government at all would walk out of the Council Chamber and stay out for long intervals, probably repenting in due course but prevented by their 'sense of dignity' from reversing their act of folly. As a consequence occasionally the High Commissioner had to dissolve a council and appoint a commission in its place and it is probable that all of the mixed municipalities were at one time or another administered by Government-appointed commissions.

In the smaller-populated areas—too small to justify the creation of municipalities—local councils were constituted. The powers of these were necessarily less than those of the municipalities, but they provided some measure of self-government. There was no general definition of

these powers, which varied frequently. But they all included the right to levy rates. In the villages, however, the heads of the principal families, settled there for generations, as a rule exercised more influence than the elected councillors. In the smaller Jewish villages there were, as a rule, councils elected by the villagers, but sometimes the whole of the village was accustomed to sit in council. These bodies had no legal status. They had survived in the older villages from Ottoman times and the Government in effect recognized them. In 1944 the position of these local councils was regularized.

Under the Ottoman system 'the people' consisted in effect only of Moslems. They alone were citizens in the fullest sense. The other religious communities—Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish, etc.—which were in effect also nationalities, were organized in *millets* which enjoyed a considerable measure of self-government in matters of religion, personal status and internal affairs generally, but the civil and political rights of the members of these communities fell below those of the Moslems. The advent of the British did not abolish these *millets*, although the term passed out of use. But the privileged position of the Moslems was brought to an end. Complete equality in all matters between Palestinian citizens of all faiths was introduced. From the first days of the British Administration the Jewish community had chosen a representative body—apart from the Zionist Organization, the organ of the Zionists of the Dispersion, which had sent its representatives in the wake of the British Army, and which took to itself to some extent the role of representing and directing the Jewish community of Palestine—to manage its internal affairs. This had no official standing but it was nevertheless in effect recognized by the military and later the civil administrative authorities. The other communities continued as before under the direction in many matters of their religious leaders. After the lapse of five years, in 1926, a Religious Communities Ordinance was enacted. Under this legislation any of the religious communities could organize itself and draw up regulations, which had to be approved by the High Commissioner, for its government. The Jewish community was the only one to do so and its regulations, after much discussion and dispute, were promulgated two years later. These regulations provided for both religious and lay authorities—a rabbinical council with Chief Rabbis, subordinate Rabbis and courts to deal with religious matters and those of personal status, and a lay legislative and administrative system ranging from local councils in all the Jewish communities, through an elected assembly to a General Council or *Vaad Lcumi*. There were rules laid down for the election of these several bodies, but they were not as a rule observed.

Those in office preferred to remain there without the annoyance of re-election, and although there should have been, under the regulations, a new assembly every three years and a new council every year, the intervals between elections were as a rule longer. The disinclination for elections was, however, not shared by those who were not members of these bodies, and when an election was in sight the number of parties contesting seats often approximated to the number of seats to be filled. So great is the passion for contested elections on the part of those not already holding office.¹ In Tel Aviv and Petah Tikva, where the population is entirely Jewish, the members of the Municipal and Jewish Community Councils were identical.

The Moslems did not follow the example of the Jews in putting the Religious Communities Ordinance into force. They, of course, retained their independence in matters of religion, including their religious courts (the *Sharia*) and in those of personal status. The *Waqj* or administration of Moslem religious, educational and charitable endowments also remained in their hands. The props of the Ottoman system of government had, however, been removed and it was essential that some support should be set up in place of them. This support took the form of a Supreme Moslem Sharia Council which was set up by Ordinance in December 1921. This, a small representative body chosen on a necessarily very restricted franchise, had jurisdiction in most Moslem affairs. Over the appointment of the principal officials of all the religious communities the Government retained the right of veto, but not always of removal.

¹ In the 1931 elections for the General Assembly of the Jewish Community of all Palestine the 75,046 electors of whom 50,436 voted had the choice of candidates belonging to eighteen parties for the 71 seats. One party on that occasion polled one vote and two none at all. (Presumably the members of these parties, disapproving of the methods of election, abstained.) There were seven Labour parties, all opposing one another, in addition to one Communist and one * Artisan \ Apart from these there was a Mizrahi party, consisting of rigidly observant Jews, and also a party of Mizrahi workers and one of Yemenites, also extremely observant in the practice of their religion. Classified politically there were three Left Wing Labour parties and two Extreme Left Wing ones. The Jews of Asiatic origin were split into six parties—the Yemenites, the Sephardi Bloc, the Sephardi Workers, the Sephardi Poale Zion or Left Wing Labour, the Extreme Left Wing Sephardi Labour Party, and the Sephardi Revisionists. By far the largest party was the Labour, a Socialist party affiliated to the Second International, which polled 21,497 votes (27 members). Together with the other Labour or Worker's parties they polled 31,406 votes (39 members). In addition the Communist voters number 524. In the elections of 1944 twenty-five parties competed for 200,000 votes. Among the parties on that occasion were 'The Young Men of Aden', 'The Orthodox Female Workers' and the 'Maccabi Sports Club' \

CHAPTER TEN

THE FIRST DECADE

THE political history of Palestine under the Mandate, until the outbreak of war in 1939, may be divided into two periods. The earlier was one of growing Arab suspicion of the intentions of the Mandatory Power and fear of the visible increase of Jewish numbers and strength. The later was one of the translation to some extent of these suspicions into reality and of an intensification of the fears of the Arabs for their liberties and for their future. The turning point came in 1933. Before that year there had been a few Arab outbreaks of violence against the Jews, in the first instance directed against the newcomers, which, however, in course of time developed into something of the nature of a general anti-Jewish movement. The outbreak of the autumn of 1933, although small and easily suppressed, differed from its predecessors in that it was directed solely against the British. On that occasion, Jews were unmolested. Britain was the enemy. On later occasions Jews were also the victims of attack, as time passed serious, but henceforth the British were always the chief enemy. The shots fired in Jaffa in October 1933 were in effect the first in the Arab Rebellion, which culminated in 1936 in the country-wide outbreak against British rule.

The increasing hostility of the Arabs to the British did not, however, influence the Jews and their leaders in favour of the Mandatory Power. In the first year or two of the Mandatory period when Jews formed a negligible minority, dependent on the Administration not only for protection but also for assistance in other respects, no difficulties were created. It is true that in immigration and in all other matters, the Zionist Executive was always pressing for more, but yet they did so with some moderation and in a spirit of co-operation. As the numbers of the Jews in Palestine and their strength grew, however, their demands became more insistent. The outbreak of war in 1939 came as a great shock to the people of Palestine, Arab and Jew, and the fears that it aroused were intensified when, nine months later, Italy entered the War and with the landing and successful advance of German armies in North Africa, Palestine seemed for a time in great peril. With

the outbreak of war in 1939 the Arab Rebellion, which had already passed its zenith, came to an end. Fear of the Germans whom the Jews naturally hated with the greatest intensity and of the Italians, for whom the Arabs had also very good reason for hatred, was in possession of everyone and all energies were directed to strengthening the hands of the British in their struggle against the common enemy. With the final defeat of the German and Italian forces at Alamein in October 1942 the tension was relaxed. The Arabs had had their war with Britain and had lost it. The hostility of the Jews had, however, been growing for years. It had been latent during the earlier years of the greater war, but when the shadow of the ultimately inevitable armistice began to show above the horizon, Jewish demands, with the cries of their kinsmen undergoing tortures at the hands of the Nazis of Europe in their ears, again became vociferous, and the refusal to grant these demands led to an anti-British outbreak in Palestine by a small but the most active part of the Jewish population—of a nature different from that of its Arab predecessor, but perhaps more harmful, not only counted by British casualties, but to the welfare of Palestine as a whole.

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The political history of Palestine was chequered almost from the initiation of British civil rule. The status of the country should have been settled by the Treaty of Sèvres, which was negotiated between the victorious Allied Powers and Turkey, or more properly speaking, imposed on the Turkish representatives by the other parties to the negotiations, in August 1920. But Turkey was at that time in the throes of a revolution, with two rival governments in different parts of the Empire. There was for the time being no authoritative government to ratify the Treaty and by the time the situation was stabilized the position of the new Turkish Government had been so greatly strengthened that it was able to reject the proposed treaty and negotiations had commenced for a new one—that to be known as the Treaty of Lausanne. This was not signed until July 1923 and in the meanwhile, Palestine, in common with other parts of the Ottoman Empire, was in the anomalous position of being administered as a British protectorate, with a civil government for the most part on the lines of that of a British Crown Colony, while in law it was still Occupied Enemy Territory. An inevitable consequence was a feeling of un settlement, at any rate on the part of the people of the country who, objecting to the influence of the Zionist Organization on its affairs and later to the favoured position promised it under the terms of the Mandate, yet hoped that the decisions taken were only provisional and could and would be modified.

The population of Palestine on the British occupation was about 673,000, of whom less than 60,000 were Jews and the remainder, with few exceptions, Arabs.¹ The Mandate, although its terms were generally known, was still in draft. This draft recited that the duty of the Power to be entrusted with its implementation was to place 'the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home' and to recognize the Zionist Organization as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration in furthering that policy. These instructions at once aroused the suspicions of the articulate Arab inhabitants.

An Arab National Movement had been slowly coming into existence during the previous half-century. Its roots, however, were not in Palestine, but in Syria and Mesopotamia. In Palestine only a few individuals had been interested and of these several had, during the years of the First World War, been hanged in order to discourage others from following their example. Politics in Palestine, so far as they existed, had been merely a matter of personalities. Yet there were necessarily echoes, if only faint ones, from the north and the north-east and the encouragement repeatedly given by the Allies during the War to Arab nationalism, provided that it was anti-Turkish, gave strength to the Arab National Movement. Above all, the King-Crane Commission sent to Palestine by President Wilson to ascertain the wishes of the population regarding their political future stirred the political consciousness of every Arab in the country. The events and encouragement of the years since 1914 had awakened the Arab of Palestine from his long sleep and he realized that there was an Arab nation of which he was a part.

One of the earliest results of the rumour of the terms of the Mandate under which Palestine was to be governed was the coming together—in face of what they considered a common danger—of the heads of the several clans or principal families into which the people of Palestine had for generations been grouped. Petty and personal jealousies were put aside. Even the Christian and Moslem Arabs, separated for many centuries and hitherto never friendly, often hostile, to one another, found a common bond in their newly discovered nationality, which took the place of their respective religious communities, hitherto their only form of combination into a larger community. The leading Arabs of

¹ The term Arab is here taken to indicate a person whose mother tongue is Arabic and who considers himself Arab. Whether or not his ancestors had come from Arabia is ignored. Of the Arabs of Palestine most are probably descended from the population of Biblical times reinforced by subsequent waves of invasion.

the country came together and formed a Christian-Moslem Committee—the Arab Executive Committee—to represent the Arab people of Palestine vis-à-vis its rulers. This alliance, unique in the history of Palestine, despite all efforts from outside to break it, continued throughout the period of the Mandate as did also, despite occasional personal disputes, perhaps the more precarious co-operation of the mutually jealous combination of the heads of the principal Moslem families. The Arab Executive Committee, as soon as it was formed, made strong representations against the proposed pro-Zionist policy of the British Government. These representations were, however, brushed aside as of no consequence and then came, in May 1921, an Arab attack on the Jews of Jaffa and on some of the neighbouring Jewish settlements, arising in the first instance almost spontaneously out of some trivial incident but developing quickly into a protest against the swelling tide of Jewish immigration. This outbreak was quickly suppressed, but only after 47 Jews had been killed and 146 wounded and much Jewish property destroyed. However, the Arabs gained some advantage from the outbreak. As a sequel if not as a consequence, Jewish immigration was, as has been pointed out in an earlier chapter, more closely regulated and controlled and an official interpretation of the Balfour Declaration, far removed from that put on it by the Zionist extremists, was given. 'Unauthorized statements have been made to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine. Phrases have been used such as that Palestine is to become "as Jewish as England is English". His Majesty's Government regard any such expectation as impracticable and have no such aim in view. Nor have they at any time contemplated . . . the disappearance or the subordination of the Arabic population, language or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded *in Palestine*.'⁹ The Arab Executive Committee also obtained a kind of recognition. The Arab extremists were, however, still dissatisfied and they sent to London and other capitals a delegation instructed to press for the complete abrogation of the Balfour Declaration and the immediate setting up of a parliamentary government, from representation in which the recent Jewish immigrants were to be excluded. The successive offers of a Legislative Council, of an Arab Agency and of a re-established Advisory Council were, as has already been mentioned, made, but these were all rejected, and the first effort of the all-Arab political organization had little practical effect. After the return of the Arab delegation to Palestine a Palestinian Congress was

summoned and this decided on a political boycott of the Government and a commercial boycott of the Jews. But these resolutions proved to be mere empty threats. In the meanwhile Jewish immigration, which had not yet reached considerable dimensions, had been reduced of its own accord, partly in consequence of the unsatisfactory economic situation of the country which left Palestine an attraction only to enthusiasts and idealists, partly to the ebb in the fortunes of the Zionist Organization. At the same time the procedure for the adoption of the Mandate, without amendment, followed its normal course. Although its terms had been approved by the Council of the League of Nations in July 1922, the formal ratification was still delayed, so that it could be promulgated simultaneously with that for Syria, about the terms of which France and Italy were still disputing. But by general agreement of the Principal Powers the terms of the Mandate were considered effective and the Mandatory Power proceeded to govern the country on the lines there laid down. However, the Zionists had already begun to complain of the manner in which the country was being administered and of the alleged anti-Jewish prejudice, despite a Jewish head of the Government and the presence in it among his principal officers of several Jews, that was showing itself. The resolution of the Zionist Congress of August 1923: 'The Congress requests the Executive emphatically to draw the attention of the Mandatory Power to the fact that the practice of the Administration in Palestine in many decisive matters is incompatible with the obligations assumed by the Mandatory Power to create in Palestine such political, economic and administrative conditions as will assure the development of the National Home for the Jewish people', was but a mild expression of the feeling that was arising. The following year there had actually been a suggestion in certain responsible Zionist circles that Sir Herbert Samuel should be requested to resign.¹

In July 1925, Sir Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner of Palestine, retired. His period of office had been one of moderate although accumulatively substantial advance in prosperity. He had found on his arrival five years earlier, a country impoverished by centuries of misgovernment and devastated by war. The population had for long been stationary in numbers, a consequence of disease, poverty and conscription. An estimated population of 673,193 (66,574 Jews) in 1920 had grown to one of 756,594 (121,725 Jews) in 1925—an increase of almost 2·5 per cent per annum (16·6 for the Jewish section). The public revenue was small, but the most had been made of the resources available. Disease was being eradicated. Agriculture and plantations, the mainstay of the Palestinian economy, were assisted and

¹ *Palestine Diary* by Lieut Col. F. H. Kisch, p. 134.

advised, and the beginning of an industry, which was intended to be supplementary to the main supports of the population, was being established. At the same time the people were living under the perhaps too paternal protection of a sympathetic administration, for, despite the promise given in the Mandate, no practical steps had yet been taken for the introduction of self-government. There had been lean years during the period of Sir Herbert Samuel's Administration, but they were of the past. The year 1925 was one of relatively abounding prosperity which attracted and at the same time in part owed its existence to Jewish immigration unprecedented in magnitude—as large in that one year as it had been during the four previous years. It is not suggested that the prosperity that the country had reached by the year 1925 was due entirely to Sir Herbert Samuel's Administration. He had been ably assisted not so much by the Zionist Organization as by other foreign Jewish bodies, working on business principles, but with no desire to make a profit or at any rate to pay dividends, content with payment in the coin of realization that they were working for the rehabilitation of a land in whose welfare all, Jew and Gentile, were interested. Politically also, Sir Herbert Samuel's term of office had been relatively quiet. The Zionist Organization, accepting the policy laid down in the Churchill White Paper of 1922, had worked in accordance with it, even though it fell short of their wishes. They realized their weakness in the face of Arab hostility and the danger, if this became intense, to the whole of the Jewish community and its undertakings. They realized also how dependent they were in all matters on British protection. Those at the head of the Organization were still able to keep their extremists under control and made them realize the danger to them all if they broke loose. The volume of Jewish immigration was also as a rule kept down to reasonable figures without great difficulty, partly on account of lack of means of providing for larger numbers than those who arrived at the Palestine ports, partly on account of the absence of any desire on the part of the great majority of the Jews of the Dispersion to settle in Palestine. This moderation on the part of the Jews was reflected in a similar moderation on the part of the Arabs. The imminent invasion and conquest of Palestine that had been foretold had not eventuated. The flow of immigration, although continuous, had not seriously upset the proportions of the two elements in the population. It was patent that the new Jewish undertakings had brought benefit, direct or indirect, to the indigenous population. The relations between the members of the two communities were satisfactory, even in many cases friendly. The work of the Administration in health, sanitation, roads, railways, even education, had benefited

everybody, even though no one was satisfied that he had obtained all to which he was entitled. It looked that the administration of the Mandate would, despite criticisms, be a success; that a satisfied, contented, healthy people was growing up; that a Palestinian nation in which there would be room for a Jewish National Home and also for an Arab National Home was evolving. These were the conditions prevailing when Sir Herbert Samuel set sail from Palestine on the 30th of June, 1925.

In Sir Herbert Samuel, Palestine had had a statesman and administrator of wide experience, respected and trusted by all in public life, opponent as well as colleague and supporter. Among his qualities a steadfast sense of justice and of fairness stood out. He was a man who saw all sides of every question and who, after proper consideration, gave a decision that was patently fair in the eyes of all unprejudiced observers. Unfortunately in Palestine there were very few who wanted justice, or who were sufficiently clear-sighted to see what justice was. To the Arab, the fact that the High Commissioner was a member of the Jewish community prejudiced him at once in their sight. The Zionist, looking at Sir Herbert Samuel also as a Jew, considered that as such he should always be prejudiced in their favour. Sir Herbert Samuel was prejudiced neither in favour of nor against either Jews or Arabs. As a consequence both were dissatisfied. Neither party could be satisfied with anybody but a partisan: nevertheless no one but a man like Sir Herbert Samuel, whose whole being was possessed by a sense of justice, could deal fairly and justly with all the contending claimants.

For a successor to Sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner the choice fell on one of the generals of the Great War, but one who had shown himself to be more than a successful general. Field Marshal Lord (later Viscount) Plumer had, as a successful general, gained distinction in the field. He was also, not altogether a rarity among distinguished British generals, a man of strong humanitarian sympathies. In command of the British Army of Occupation in Germany after the First World War there is a foundation for the wide belief that, finding it impossible to tolerate the continued blockade and half-starvation of the German people who were under his charge for months after the signature of the Armistice, he sent in his resignation, which was withdrawn only after the Allied policy in this respect was reversed. Whether this was the case or not is, however, immaterial. The whole of Lord Plumer's attitude and actions in public, and also in private, showed a feeling of deep sympathy and understanding for all whose fortunes in any degree rested in his hands.

After leaving Germany he was for a time Governor of Malta, during

a period in which political feelings ran high and a movement for secession, largely artificial but with some roots in the island, was being persistently encouraged from the mainland. There his special qualities shone. He quickly gained the confidence of all parties and their public men. His patent sincerity, his sympathy with all in trouble, his abhorrence of the slightest suspicion of injustice and also the capacity for successful negotiations that his new responsibilities evoked—negotiations not only with local parties and local public men—gave him a quick success. He left the island at the end of his term of office with most of the difficulties that he had found on his arrival smoothed out, with the crisis in the relations between the British and the islanders, as subsequent history showed, passed. The choice of Lord Plumer as High Commissioner for Palestine was an ideal one. And in addition to his other qualifications, he had the advantage of being neither Jew nor Greek, of having no knowledge of the problems of Palestine and therefore no preconceived views, of being unknown even by name to most, if not all, of the innumerable politicians of Palestine.

Lord Plumer's term of office opened, if not in a period of overflowing prosperity, in one that to some extent resembled it and also in a period of political quietude. The latter condition continued throughout the three years, for which short period only had he accepted the office. The financial boom which was largely a consequence of, and for the most part coincided with, the increased flow of immigration in the midst of which he took up his duties soon spent itself. On top of the consequent depression came a devastating earthquake and a drought which imperilled the flocks and even the lives of the bedouin of Southern Palestine. The lesson had apparently been learnt both by the Zionist Organization and by the Administration and the severe curtailment of immigration that followed and continued until the end of the three years' period was, in view of the anxious situation, not resented. It had, moreover, the advantage of quieting any uneasiness that might have arisen among the Arabs. An immigration of two or three thousand Jews a year was clearly no threat to the political or civil rights of the indigenous population. In fact the time and thought of both the Administration and the Zionist Organization were largely absorbed by the anxieties and needs that arose out of the volume of immigration of the previous eighteen months, too large for the country immediately to digest. The difficulties that these caused were largely economic. For the Zionist Organization to solve them was admittedly beyond its power. First there was an appeal—solely on a basis of charity—to the wealthier Jewish philanthropists of all countries. These, always ready to assist suffering co-religionists anywhere, saw no reason

to refuse assistance because the sufferers had settled in Palestine. But the task, as time passed, showed itself to be too great even for the joint efforts of the Zionists and Jewish philanthropists. Under the terms on which many of the sufferers had been permitted to settle in Palestine the Zionist Organization or private individuals were under obligation to maintain them. The responsibilities they had accepted proved to be beyond their means. Lord Plumer, however, waved aside all technicalities. Some years earlier in Germany he had been unable to avert his gaze when the people around him starved. It was no easier for him to do so in Palestine. The Government's finances also had suffered from the widespread depression and were in deficit. Nevertheless Lord Plumer proposed and pressed the Colonial Office to accept the institution of relief works to deal with at least a part of the suffering. But he was not prepared to advocate such relief only for Jews. There were many Arabs also suffering from unemployment and hunger. They were in fact in a worse position than the Jews, for they had no foreign friends. Lord Plumer's recommendations were readily accepted. Despite the deficit in the public funds, relief works for both Jewish and Arab unemployed, on a roughly equal basis, were instituted, and incidentally the threat of collapse of all the Zionist schemes was removed. The Arab Executive Committee, a purely political organization, did not abandon its principles and continued to urge its demands. But deeds after all are effective. There was a noticeable softening in the general political situation. The Arab policy of non-co-operation with the Administration began to wear very thin, and the representations of the Arab spokesmen, before the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations and elsewhere, differed considerably in language and in the moderation of the accusations from those of their predecessors.

The virtual stoppage of immigration replaced by a flow outwards, the institution of relief works, and the unaffected belief in the future that could not diminish the determination of all workers for that future, British and Jewish, had their due effect. The intensity of the European depression also began to subside. A natural consequence was a modification of the strength of the blizzard against which Palestine had been struggling for nearly two years. The waters were calming and the ship was recovering her balance. The lesson that the High Commissioner and his advisers had learnt persisted, even though others may have failed to profit similarly, and the High Commissioner was determined, so far as it rested with him, not to risk a return of the anxieties and dangers that had followed the relatively great immigration boom of 1925. The Zionists also showed caution for a time. Some of the causes of the crisis in Palestine had affected them also in the Diaspora. The

fortunes of the Zionist Organization were at that time at a low ebb. The possibility of an arrangement with non-Zionist Jews in Europe and America had been under consideration for some years. These *Non-Zionists', while definitely opposed to anything of the nature of a political Judaism or of a Jewish political state, holding the view that Judaism is a religion and not a nationalism, were yet interested in the settlement of Jews in Palestine and anxious to help towards that end. The Zionists, of course, shared the hopes of the Non-Zionists but wanted to go much further. Nevertheless it seemed obvious that the first step was the planting securely in the soil of Palestine of a Jewish population, one that would in course of time become independent of nursing or other outside support and be able to develop out of its own strength. It was recognized that the attainment of this end must occupy some years, probably at least a generation, and it was beginning to be realized that during these years both Zionists and Non-Zionists could co-operate without, on either side, a sacrifice of principles. The patience and masterly persuasiveness of Dr. Weizmann, the President of the Zionist Organization, brought over most of the wealthy Non-Zionists to those views. It was in his own Organization that he met with greater difficulty. There, as in the time of the East African project, there was a party, mostly Russian, rigid in its determination to abide by its principles, without compromise, without diminution by an iota. Just as in the time of Herzl and Lord Lansdowne it was *aut Palestine aut nihil*, so a quarter of a century later it was the extreme Zionist Programme and the whole of the Programme undiluted. The money of the Non-Zionists would be accepted with thanks, but when it came to spending it they could not be allowed any voice in the decisions. Naturally the wealthy American and European Jewish philanthropists would not agree to this. If they had ever had any such inclination it would have been dissipated by the report of a commission of experts which they, in co-operation with the Zionist Organization, sent to Palestine to investigate the situation there, the economic and agricultural work already undertaken and the prospects of success. The persuasiveness of Dr. Weizmann, reinforced by the difficulties by which the Zionists were beset and the pressing need for Non-Zionist assistance, however, prevailed and, by the end of the year 1928, the preparations for the foundation of a Jewish Agency, representative of the whole of Jewry, foreshadowed in the Mandate, were well in train. The Mandate laid down that: 'An appropriate Jewish Agency shall be recognized as a public body for the purpose of advising and co-operating with the Administration of Palestine in such economic, social and other matters as may affect the establishment of the Jewish National

Home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine, and, subject always to the control of the Administration, to assist and take part in the development of the country/ Provisionally the Zionist Organization was accepted as such an Agency, but only pending the formation of a wider body representative ' of all Jews who are willing to assist in the establishment of the Jewish National Home \ It was, however, not until August 1929 that the Agency was formally constituted and recognized by the British Government. The governing body of the Agency was to have consisted of 224 members, of whom one-half were to have been Zionists and one-half Non-Zionists. There was to have been an Administrative Committee of 40 members, also one-half Zionist and one-half Non-Zionists, which should have met at intervals between the biennial meetings of the Council to receive reports from the Executive, to decide questions of policy and generally to supervise the Executive. The Executive also was to have consisted of Zionists and Non-Zionists in equal numbers. But almost from the first the agreement between the two parties failed to secure fulfilment in the spirit if not in the letter. The term Non-Zionist representative on this body was interpreted as one who did not at the time hold office in the Zionist Organization. There were instances consequently of men and women holding office in one of the Zionist institutions, resigning and appearing a week later as Non-Zionist members of the Agency. The representative body of the Jews in Palestine was given seats as Non-Zionists on the Council and other organs of the Jewish Agency on the ground that technically this body was not a Zionist institution. But these breaches of the spirit if not of the letter were, however, not sufficient. The proportion of Non-Zionists was gradually reduced until in the end the Executive of the Jewish Agency consisted of 17 Zionists and 3 Non-Zionists. Finally there was no election of Non-Zionists at all after 1937 and henceforth the Jewish Agency was an undisguised alias for the Zionist Organization.

In the meanwhile, the improvement in the relations between the Arabs and the Jews, which had been noticeable for some time, continued. The Arabs were regretting their former intransigence, and in particular their refusal to co-operate in a legislature when the opportunity was offered to them. A few days before his retirement, at the end of July 1928, Lord Plumer received the Arab Executive who presented a memorandum asking for parliamentary government based on the entire Palestinian population irrespective of race or creed. On this occasion, the first of such a one, there was no protest against the terms of the Mandate. There was a party in Palestinian Jewry also that shared the desire of the Arabs for a legislature and it seemed that a *rapprochc**

merit was becoming possible when an unfortunate incident at the end of September brought down the whole of the edifice that had been so patiently and laboriously erected.

The Jews were accustomed to pray at the Wailing Wall, the only surviving relic of Herod's Temple, and the most sacred of the Jewish Holy Places. It is, however, also the outer containing Wall of the *Haram esh Sharif*, the third holiest site of Islam. Thus one face of the Wall is a Jewish Holy Place and the other a Moslem one. The Jewish congregation meets in a public pathway which is Moslem ecclesiastical property. The purchase by the Jews of this pathway was almost effected during the military occupation period through the good offices of Colonel (later Sir) Ronald Storrs, then Military Governor of Jerusalem, with the knowledge and approval of Dr. Weizmann, the outstanding Zionist leader, and of the military heads of the British Administration, but parallel negotiations carried on at the same time by self-appointed Jewish authorities neutralized their efforts and the project had to be abandoned. The Moslems had never raised any objection to the Jews meeting at the Wailing Wall for public worship, which they had done continuously for many centuries. They had, however, always refused permission for the erection of impediments in the street and it had often happened that chairs, tables, etc., put there without authority, had had to be removed. On the occasion that has been reached a screen was placed across the road, to separate the men from the women at the Day of Atonement service. The local authorities, who had good reason to fear any departure from the *status quo*, at once ordered that the screen be removed and the Jewish Authorities at the Wall promised to do so. They did not, however, carry out their promise, and the Police on the spot, stationed there to prevent any disturbance, proceeded to remove the screen. Unfortunately, the time chosen for this was, inadvertently, at an exceptionally important part of the service and led, not unnaturally, to most emphatic protests on the part of the Zionist Organization, voicing the feelings of the entire Jewish population. The erection of the screen, even for the short time it was standing, brought equally emphatic protests by the Moslems against the encroachment on their property and, what they considered even more objectionable, the threat to their holiest site in Palestine. Of course, the removal of the screen should in ordinary circumstances have been postponed until the conclusion of the feast and the religious services in the evening, and elsewhere this would have met the needs of the case. But in Palestine the whole regimen of the very prickly subject of the Holy Places is governed by precedent. Had the authorities left the screen undisturbed for twenty-four hours such a precedent would

have been created, and the party benefited would have clung as determinedly to it as if one of the essentials of its faith were involved. Moreover, the overlooking of the trespass would have undoubtedly led to imitations, perhaps on the part of other of the numerous religious communities in Palestine, and no one could foresee the end. Similar trivialities had in the past led to bloodshed. On one occasion one had contributed to the outbreak of a European War. For a time the excitement among both Jews and Moslems was intense, but in due course it died away, although not completely. The Moslem authorities under the lead of Haj Amin al-Husseini, Mufti of Jerusalem, made the most of the incident in their anti-Zionist campaign. A year later an anti-Jewish outbreak in which the Jews suffered severely and with which the British found much difficulty in coping, derived part of its causes from the incident of the screen at the Wailing Wall in September 1928.

Lord Plumer had retired from office at the end of the previous July, a couple of months before this incident. During the latter half of his term, his health had been somewhat precarious and his officers had been warned that every effort must be made to shield him from avoidable worry. In the course of time this warning became known and the advantage taken of it by interested persons did not diminish the anxieties of those with whom the administration of the country in the circumstances largely rested. There was one other matter in which a decision taken during Lord Plumer's term of office had unhappy results, although only after his departure from Palestine. The maintenance of the armed forces in Palestine fell on the British Exchequer. Economy was at that time, as well as on many others, the sermon that was being preached insistently in Whitehall. The reduction of the forces stationed in Palestine, it was clear, would serve that policy. Lord Plumer was approached and agreed to a reduction of the already not very large forces to a single squadron of R.A.F. and two companies of armoured cars. At the same time the British and Palestinian *gendarmerie* were disbanded. So long as Lord Plumer was in Palestine there was peace in the land. His presence and reputation alone were perhaps equal to a regiment. But when he left this regiment went **with** him and his successor, who was not a distinguished British general, found a Palestine beginning to seethe once again, and this time denuded of troops.

Lord Plumer's successor was Sir John Chancellor, perhaps the most distinguished and successful of the administrators at that time serving in the British Colonial Empire. His experience had been wide, in the Committee of Imperial Defence and as Governor, successively of Mauritius, Trinidad and Southern Rhodesia, and everywhere he had

coped successfully with the problems that arose and had left his successive offices with an enhanced reputation. By this time Palestine was realized in official circles and elsewhere to be a country and people difficult to govern. The British Government therefore entrusted the task to the ablest of its available servants.

The period of relative tranquillity the country had enjoyed was, however, coming to an end. Incidents, none of them very serious in themselves, took the form of warnings of what might happen. This was, however, more obvious to those on the spot than to their superiors in Whitehall. One of the principal functions of the High Commissioner and his officers was to keep the peace, to prevent the increasing inter-communal hostility from bursting into flame. When the risk of fire is actual it is wise to have fire-fighting appliances close at hand. The most effective at that juncture was an adequate, although not large, armed force. Lord Plumer had, however, agreed to a token force of a couple of hundred men. In military matters Lord Plumer was an accepted authority and when later the suggestion of an increase in this was made, Downing Street could always shelter behind his opinion. This was the position when Sir John Chancellor arrived in Palestine in December 1928. And from the day of his arrival it may be said that the atmosphere began to get electric and the presages of the coming storm to increase. The spark that set the country on fire, generated at the Wailing Wall, perhaps one should say was but the reawakening of the flame that had burst forth momentarily a year earlier and then subsided. In the meanwhile the rumours, that had a year before made themselves heard among the Moslems, that the Jews intended to seize the Moslem Holy Place and rebuild their Temple there, had multiplied and become more threatening. Excitement grew until it seemed that the merest incident might lead to an outbreak and when an excitable Arab mob is aroused, especially in a matter in which their religious beliefs or practices are involved, no one can foresee the distance to which their fears and beliefs and excitement may carry them.

The attempt of the Jews in the previous September to secure a small advantage had upset the always uneasy balance and the relations between the two communities, first at the Wailing Wall, soon in a far wider sphere, were swaying. The success of the Moslems in securing the prevention of the threatened innovation led them to make claims for new advantages. These were, of course, rejected, if only on the ground that they would disturb the *status quo*. To some of the contentions of the Moslems there could, however, be no legal objection even though they might be considered undesirable. For instance they began to open an entrance from the far end of the pavement, that was the

centre of discord, into the Mosque enclosure, thereby transforming what had hitherto been a cul-de-sac available to the public into a thoroughfare. Jewish protests followed and the work was stopped while reference was made to London. The Law Officers there could find no objection in law to the proposed work and after a short delay it was permitted to proceed. This decision aroused a feeling of resentment among the Jewish population which was carefully cultivated by agitators in the Press and elsewhere, and the counter action of the Moslems by no means tended to alleviate the excitement. The culmination was reached at the end of August on the eve of a Jewish religious fast commemorating the destruction of the Temple in the year A.D. 70. A party of young Jews and Jewesses, members of the extreme wing of the Zionist Movement, who were far more interested in politics and nationalism than in religion, came to Jerusalem from the districts, with resolutions of protest. From the Government offices they marched to the Wailing Wall. The Government hesitated, for it was obvious that this was no religious proceeding, but yet it felt that it could not properly prohibit the access of any Jews to a Jewish Holy Place, especially on a religious occasion. It did not reckon, however, that this procession would, on arrival at the Wall, hold an anti-Arab demonstration, with loud demands for the ownership of the Wall and the taking of an oath to defend it at all costs. The result among an ignorant, superstitious oriental population may be imagined. If this manifestation were not sufficient in itself, there were not wanting professional agitators on their side also who made the most of the opportunity that was given them. The rumour soon spread throughout Palestine Islam that the long-threatened attempt of the Jews to seize the Mosque had commenced. The following day was a Moslem festival which brought Moslems into Jerusalem from all the surrounding villages. A mob of these invaded the Wailing Wall precincts, but finding only one man there, who was removed by the Police uninjured, satisfied itself with doing only a little damage. However, by now the whole of Jerusalem was boiling. The funeral of a Jew who had unfortunately been killed at this juncture in a private brawl with an Arab gave an opportunity for a Jewish demonstration. This naturally increased the tension. The Government worked its hardest to keep the mutually hostile forces under control, or at least apart from one another, but after a week of these efforts the situation boiled over. An unduly large number of Arabs came into Jerusalem for the customary Friday services and these, on leaving the Mosque, poured forth armed with knives and sticks and attacked every Jewish passer-by. The villagers around Jerusalem, on hearing what was happening, attacked the Jewish suburbs, in some cases

with rifles. In Hebron, Jaffa, Haifa, Safad and elsewhere there were similar anti-Jewish outbreaks. At Hebron an heroic young British police officer, without support—for his Arab police remained passive—held the mob at bay for hours and thus protected some 600 of the Jewish population—all in effect harmless and incapable of bearing arms—until more reliable Police reinforcements had arrived from elsewhere.¹ Almost the whole of Palestine was in such a condition of hysteria that few could be held responsible for their actions. Bloodshed was rife in a large part of the country but not everywhere, for the British authorities managed in some cases to keep control of the population.

The regular forces, including the British Section of the Police in Palestine and Transjordan, numbered two or three hundred. It was very doubtful whether in an inter-communal war the local Police could be trusted. The British police officers were not numerous and it was essential that they should remain with their men. The first step therefore was to enrol in a special Police Force every Englishman in the country, visitors as well as residents, capable of bearing arms. Troops and warships were at the same time summoned from Egypt and Malta and within a few days the outbreak had been suppressed and, apart from the feeling of panic on the part of the people which persisted for months, the number of troops and armed Police to be seen in the streets, and an obstinate and long-persisting trade boycott of Arabs and Jews mutually, the situation had become normal. In the course of the outbreak, 133 Jews had been murdered and 116 Arabs had been killed, with hardly an exception, by the military or Police. Four Christians, including two British officials—one of them while acting as a special constable—were also killed. There was a far greater number of injured and the theft and destruction of Jewish property was considerable.

This was the third anti-Jewish outbreak in Palestine since the end of the War. The first two were avowedly anti-Zionist, and although some of the old-established population suffered, the object of the attacks was undoubtedly the new Jewish immigrants and their supporters. The latest outbreak was of a different character. It was a Moslem outbreak in which all Jews were objects of attack, those of Hebron and Safad, who had been living in the country for centuries, had never had any serious differences with their neighbours and had little sympathy with the Zionist aims, equally with those of Talpith and Haifa who were all more or less Zionists. On this occasion also the Christians stood

¹ Nevertheless he was subject to sustained attack by the survivors and their friends for his failure to save the lives of the seventy victims of the Arab onslaught.

apart: those who were killed or injured suffered by accident. As a result of the outbreak seventeen Arabs and one Jew (a policeman) were convicted of murder of the first degree and sentenced to death. Seven of the Arabs were hanged. In the other cases the sentences were reduced to life imprisonment. A number of other Arabs were arrested and charged, but the difficulty in getting satisfactory evidence was so great that no court governed by British principles of justice could convict them. In a large number of instances collective punishments were imposed on Arab towns and villages whose inhabitants had been guilty of participation in concerted attacks on Jewish settlements. The Government also decided, as an act of grace, to grant relief to the sufferers and contributed £100,000 on account of an estimated damage amounting to £180,000. The remainder was made good by outside Jewish sources from a fund of nearly half a million pounds that was raised for that and related purposes.

The aftermath of these events was in some respects more serious than the events themselves. During the last few years the proximity of the two races in Palestine, the everyday contacts of members of both of them in many spheres, the gradual development of moderate parties among both the Arabs and the Jews, the realization that each was dependent on the other and the welfare of Palestine as a whole on both, and the influence of a sympathetic British Administration were noticeably creating a *rapprochement* between the two peoples. The events of August, however, destroyed all the progress of the previous years. What had at first appeared a religious movement quickly became a political one. Christian Arab, at first a neutral, moved to the side of his Moslem fellows. A chasm opened between Palestinian Jew and Palestinian Arab. For the time being all divisions of party among the Arabs, Christians as well as Moslems, were obliterated. A foolish boycott, originated by the Jews, was eagerly taken up by the Arabs, and Jewish commerce and industry were sorely stricken. The boycott and anti-Jewish movement spread throughout Moslem Western Asia, and those newly established Jewish industries that depended on exports to Syria, Transjordan and Iraq found their existence jeopardized. A Commission consisting of a member of each of the three parties in the House of Commons, under the chairmanship of Sir Walter Shaw, a retired Colonial Chief Justice, was sent to Palestine to investigate the causes of the outbreak and to recommend the steps that should be taken to avoid a new one. The Zionist Organization, however, preferred that the inquiry should take the form of a trial of the Palestine Administration and its officers, whom it held responsible for not having prevented the outbreak and for not having stopped it more quickly.

Some of the charges, for instance those against the Police as a body and individual police officers, were withdrawn almost as speedily as they were formulated, with the admission that they were unfounded. The remaining similar charges were, after a patient hearing, dismissed by the Commission as baseless. The recommendations of the Commission were unanimous. The principal ones were that the Government should, without delay, issue a clear statement of its policy, that the continued eviction of peasant proprietors whose lands were being sold should be suspended pending the results of an agricultural survey, that the League of Nations should be asked to appoint a Commission to examine the claims of the Jewish and Moslem communities regarding the Wailing Wall, that the Churchill statement of 1922 to the effect that the Zionist Organization had no title to share in the government of Palestine should be reaffirmed and that the relationship between the Organization and the Government should be more clearly defined, that the recent increases of troops in Palestine should be retained for the time being and that the Police organization should be examined. All of these recommendations, with the exception of that relating to the eviction of Arab peasants, were adopted without delay. The exception was kept back for further consideration.

These were the recommendations of the Commission. In addition there were findings. These included (*a*) that the outbreak was an attack by Arabs on Jews for which there was no justification, (*b*) the outbreak, however, was spontaneous and was not organized, nor was it directed against the Government, (*c*) some of the Arab leaders, and in particular the Mufti of Jerusalem, had not exercised as much influence as was at their disposal to keep the mob of Arab rioters under control—some of the Arab leaders had certainly helped to incite the mob, (*d*) the Government had discharged, to the best of their ability, the difficult task of maintaining a neutral and impartial attitude between two peoples whose leaders showed little capacity for compromise, (*e*) the British garrison had been too drastically reduced, (*f*) Jewish immigration had at times been larger than the economic absorptive capacity of the country could justify, but in normal times the Arabs had undoubtedly benefited from Jewish enterprise and Jewish industrial activity, (*g*) the Jewish land policy, for which the Jews could not in the circumstances be blamed, was undoubtedly leading to the creation of a landless and discontented class.

The fundamental cause of the outbreak was the Arab animosity and hostility towards the Jews due to the disappointment of Arab political and national aspirations and fear for the economic future. The immediate causes were the incidents regarding the Wailing Wall, inspired

by both Jews and Moslems. The secondary causes were intemperate articles in the Arab and Jewish newspapers, propaganda among the less-educated Arabs, the creation of the wider Jewish Agency with the campaign of propaganda that accompanied it, inadequate military and Police forces and the belief that decisions of the Palestine Government could be influenced by political considerations. Some of the vacillation and decisions of subsequent years gave some colour, even if *ex post facto*, to the last-mentioned belief. As has been stated the Report was unanimous, but the Labour Party Member, Mr. Henry (afterwards Lord) Snell, added a note of reservations. He attributed rather more blame to the Arab leaders than did his colleagues and also blamed the Government for not having, without delay, issued a denial of alleged Jewish designs on the Moslem Holy Places and not having prevented the Jewish march to the Wailing Wall. He acquitted the Jewish authorities of all blame in respect of Jewish immigration and land purchase. The greatest danger he foresaw was that Arab resentment might become permanent, and he considered that an improvement could be effected by Jewish leaders to remove Arab apprehensions. In fact this Commission, to a large extent, came to the same conclusions as those of the Haycraft Commission which investigated the causes of the outbreak of 1921.

Both Zionists and Arabs were disappointed by the Report—the Zionists the more so. The Arab desire, however, was still for a National Government with some measure of independence—a desire that had been aroused during the War and had been encouraged by the several statements made in the name of the Allies, and in the year 1929 they were perhaps even more devoted to it than they had been years earlier. To secure this end an Arab delegation, representative of all parties among the Palestinian Arabs, was sent to London in time for the publication of the Shaw Commission's Report. The delegation, however, met with no success. British opinion as a whole was still pro-Zionist and both Houses of Parliament were overwhelmingly in favour of assisting the Zionist cause almost to the very utmost. The Mandates Commission of the League of Nations held an extraordinary session to consider the Report of the Shaw Commission and the British Government's observations on it. This Commission showed itself critical of the British Government, holding that it should have done more to prevent the outbreak, not only on its eve but also during the years that led up to it. The Commission had, of course, far less responsibility than the Government that was administering the country, and also relied necessarily on information derived from secondary sources and being deluged by propaganda, on the promptings of interested parties. Its

strictures were deeply resented in England and its stature was certainly not increased by its periodical incursions into Palestinian affairs. The Council of the League did not, however, support its Commission and the British Government was invited to *adopt such measures as it thinks fit to give effect to the recommendations and conclusions \

The Shaw Commission had recommended further subsidiary inquiries on specific subjects. One was on the related subject of immigration and land purchase. Another on the rights of the two communities in respect of the Wailing Wall. A third was an inquiry into the organization of the Police. The further inquiry into immigration and land purchase had been entrusted by the British Government to a distinguished retired Anglo-Indian official, Sir John Hope-Simpson, who had had a large part in the successful work of resettling the million and a quarter refugees of Greek ancestry, who had fled from Turkey after the Greek debacle in 1922. Sir John Hope-Simpson, in the course of his inquiries, found that a very large proportion of the Arab rural population was living on the verge of destitution, and that its condition was getting worse year by year. Its great need was land which, in consequence of the natural growth of population coupled with the continuous loss of the use of land purchased by Jews from which Arab labour was excluded, was yearly becoming more scarce. The immediate need was to provide the existing rural population with the means of maintaining itself in some degree of comfort, but so small was the extent of cultivable land in Palestine that on the present basis not only could there be no question of increasing the rural population: there was not sufficient land to provide for the present numbers. The solution lay in the expenditure of a relatively large sum on land development, almost all of which should be recoverable. Then the existing population could be provided for, and a not inconsiderable immigration allowed. Until, however, such a development was undertaken, there was no room in Palestine for an increased rural population, except on the reserve lands which were in the possession of the Jewish organizations.

With the Hope-Simpson Report in its hands the Government published its long-awaited statement of policy. After yet another appeal for co-operation between Jew and Arab and between both and the Government, in the interests of the country as a whole, an earlier statement by the Prime Minister (Ramsay Macdonald) was repeated. 'A double undertaking is involved, to the Jewish people on the one hand and to the non-Jewish population of Palestine on the other', and the intention to continue to administer Palestine in accordance with the terms of the Mandate was reiterated. The statement then proceeded

to repeat verbatim the statement of policy laid down in the Churchill White Paper with regard to the meaning attached to the expression 'Jewish National Home', the principles which should govern immigration and the position of the Jewish Agency. The conclusion was that the obligations laid down by the Mandate, in regard to the two sections of the population, were of equal weight, and that the two obligations imposed on the Mandatory were in no sense irreconcilable. This was the view of the Permanent Mandates Commission which the British Government fully accepted. In fulfilment of this policy the Government intended, after making proper provision for securing the internal peace of the country, to bring into force a Legislative Council on the lines foreshadowed in 1922. The Hope-Simpson Report was accepted. And in particular the development scheme recommended therein would be adopted. In the meanwhile Jewish settlement would be confined to the land already in Jewish possession, but that did not mean that Jewish immigration would cease. The existing agricultural tenants must also be secured against ejection or greatly increased rents.

The storm in Jewish circles, even outside of that of the Zionists, that had been born of the disappointment caused by the Shaw Commission Report, however, continued to rage. The flow of Jewish immigration into Palestine went on, as had been promised, but had no apparent effect on the emotion and excitement that prevailed in the Jewish quarters of Europe and America. The exaggerations of the innumerable Zionist spokesmen had as usual their reaction on Arab opinion, where they were divided only by half. After all, there must be some basis for the extravagant denunciations and laments of the Zionists. It seemed that the threat of Jewish domination had been dissipated, that the Arabs need no longer fear that they would be driven from their homes. When, however, they discovered, as they soon did, that Jewish immigration was continuing unchecked, they on their part felt they had been betrayed. A very bitter feeling developed and another Arab outbreak seemed to be impending. Statements made in Parliament that the White Paper was to be neither withdrawn nor modified and that the policy there laid down was to be enforced, however, relieved the tension. A further announcement that the British Government proposed, in accordance with the recommendation of Sir John Hope-Simpson, to devote two and a half million pounds to the purchase of land for the settlement of Arabs whose lands had passed into Jewish possession and secondarily for other settlers, Jews as well as Arabs, and that this sum, although a loan, would be free of interest or sinking fund at any rate for its first years, still further appeased Arab opinion.

Another recommendation of the Shaw Commission had been for the

appointment of an independent Commission to examine the rights of Moslems and Jews in regard to the Wailing Wall. Such a Commission, on which neither the British, the Jews, nor the Moslems were represented, was appointed by the Council of the League of Nations and reported in June 1931. In the meanwhile ineffectual efforts had been made by the Government, with the approval of the Commission, to effect an agreement or compromise between the parties. The Commission in the end decided, for the greater part, in favour of the Moslem contentions. The rights of both parties were defined in detail and, with a few not very important exceptions, followed the provisional regulations that had been put in force pending the report of the Commission. Both parties in the end acquiesced, while continuing to protest, and the recommendations of the Commission were at once made effective.

The Wailing Wall was, however, after all only a side issue. The important matter, that dwarfed all others, was the political situation, which, together with internal peace, rested very largely on the action the Government intended to take as a consequence of the Passfield White Paper. On this both Arabs and Jews were resentful, dissatisfied and suspicious; the Jews more so than the Arabs. The Arabs demanded the withdrawal of the Balfour Declaration as being contrary to the promises made to them during the War and after and to Article 22 of the Mandate, and the abolition of the Mandate on the ground that it was contrary to the natural and national rights of the Arabs. The Arabs further demanded an elected parliament and a government responsible to it, the prohibition of the further alienation of Arab lands and of further Jewish immigration. The Zionists on their part approached the Government with a request for the elucidation of the apparent ambiguities in the Government statement of policy. The result was a letter from the Prime Minister (Ramsay MacDonald), smoothing away many of the rough edges of that document, and giving it on the whole a more pro-Zionist interpretation. He, however, stated emphatically that the future of Palestine and many other matters of consequence depended on an understanding between the Jews and Arabs. The Zionists, through the agency of Dr. Weizmann, expressed themselves satisfied with the explanations that had been given, and the relations between the British Government and Palestine Administration on the one hand and the Zionist Organization on the other became again tolerable if not altogether friendly.

Two matters of considerable importance were passed over in silence in the Prime Minister's letter. The one was the proposed Development Scheme; the other the institution of a Legislative Council. Discussions

were, however, initiated with the Zionist and Arab leaders on the former and a Director of Development was appointed.¹ The Zionists, however, objected to the instructions given to this officer. They held that no preference should be given to any class of Arabs and no claims for prior consideration on their part accepted. However, as has already been mentioned, with the indefinite postponement on account of the financial crisis in which Britain had in the meanwhile found herself, of the provision of funds, the practical value of the new appointment was very greatly diminished. When Sir John Chancellor retired at the conclusion of his term of office in the summer of 1931, he left a country at peace but with both sections of the population possessed of a very strong feeling of grievance and suffering from financial depression. The Arabs had hoped for much from the recent Government declaration of policy and had been disappointed. The Jews laboured under the cumulative effect of the series of set-backs from which they had suffered.

Since the outbreak of 1921 the outlying Jewish settlements had been supplied with sealed armouries for defence in case of emergency. Many of these had been withdrawn from time to time as the necessity for them seemed to have passed, but after the outbreak of 1929 some of them had been restored. This partial and very limited arming was interpreted by Arab spokesmen as the arming by the Government of Jews so that they might attack the Arabs. The agitation among the Arabs culminated in an unimportant disturbance in Nablus, an Arab centre, in which both British Police and Arabs were injured. The action that was there taken, however, nipped whatever was threatening in the bud. The Jews had learnt by experience and gave no excuse for provocation and it was to a quiet, if to some extent sullen, population that the new High Commissioner came in November 1931.

¹ See p. 89.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE SECOND DECADE (1931—1939)

THE new High Commissioner was again a soldier, General Sir Arthur Wauchope, K.C.B. (later G.C.B., G.C.M.G.). Perhaps it was thought that Palestine with its endless difficulties was the place for a soldier rather than a civilian. It may also have been remembered that of the three High Commissioners who had served in Palestine, only during the term of Field Marshal Lord Plumer was there unbroken peace in the land. Sir Arthur Wauchope was a soldier by profession and had laid down active command to take up his duties in Palestine. But he had had some experience outside of high military office. In 1923 he was the Military Member of the Overseas Settlement Delegation to Australia and New Zealand, and during the three following years he was Chief of the British Section of the Military Inter-Allied Commission of Control in Berlin.

Sir Arthur Wauchope arrived in Palestine at the end of 1931. He found a country superficially for the most part at peace but, beneath the surface, in a state of widespread uneasiness. Both Jew and Arab were deeply suspicious of one another, each fearful that in some way or other the other would attack. Of the Mandatory Power also neither was certain. The demands of the two parties were certainly incompatible. Neither could get all it sought with the agreement of the other and neither seemed prepared to accept less. It was in these circumstances that the new High Commissioner took over the responsibility for the Administration, with little more than his natural optimism and lack of acquaintance with the local conditions to sustain him. He had accepted a task of the difficulties of which he had been warned, but which, like his predecessors, he felt worth the performance. All the High Commissioners knew that Palestine was not like other countries nor its people 'as all the nations'. All felt that in being called on to reconcile Jew with Arab they were entrusted with a mission well worth carrying through and eagerly and enthusiastically did everyone of the line set about to fulfil that mission.

Sir Arthur Wauchope, despite his personal qualities and anxiety to

please everybody, did not succeed. This is no reflection on him, for no one could have succeeded in his office, nor could anyone have striven to this end more wholeheartedly than he. But hitherto the High Commissioner and his staff had been somewhat aloof from the contest. Although the British sometimes came in for attack from one side or the other, it was the Arabs or the Jews who were the principal target. The accession of the new High Commissioner, probably merely by coincidence, marked a change. For the Arabs the past year had in particular been one of disillusionment and disappointment. The hostility to the Jews was not thereby diminished but in addition the British were gradually coming to be held responsible. Economically Palestine was in a curious situation. An economic blizzard was raging throughout the world. With other countries in sore economic and financial straits, the situation in Palestine was in some respects favourable, in others unfavourable. Agriculture in Palestine had felt the pressure no less than in other countries, and in addition to extraneous misfortunes the crops had failed in several districts. As a consequence over two-thirds of the tithe had to be remitted, since the wretched peasants had no means of paying. Commerce and industry, outside of the Jewish town of Tel Aviv and some of the other Jewish settlements, was almost at a standstill. There was much suffering among the middle classes and bankruptcies were numerous. On the other hand the Government accounts showed a surplus, large for a small and poor country, which was due in the main to import duties levied on foreign goods consumed by the steadily increasing immigrant European population. There was also great activity in building and in land purchase for orange growing, especially in Jewish circles. This was accounted for by the transference of funds from America and Europe by immigrants and others, who, doubtful of the course of events elsewhere, thought their money safer in Palestine. There, in the absence of more satisfactory means of employment, it was invested in orange land or buildings or left on deposit in the banks, the owners living on capital while they looked around for means of employing it to greater advantage. Great building activity on the part of those born or long in the country, especially in Jerusalem, was attributed to fear of a prospective income-tax and belief that a tax on income derived from house property could be more easily avoided than that on bank interest.

The appointment of a Development Commissioner which had arisen out of a recommendation by Sir John Hope-Simpson unfortunately had no practical results in solving any of the problems. The financial blizzard that broke out in Europe and America at once blew away every prospect of the working capital required being placed at the

disposal of the Commissioner. He nevertheless proceeded in his investigations and presented a Report, succeeding for once in producing unanimity among Jews and Arabs, both of whose governing bodies denounced his recommendations wholeheartedly, not so much for their expected influence on the fortunes of their supporters, as on the ground that they would benefit their opponents. There was one other cause of great excitement during Sir Arthur Wauchope's first year of office for which he, as yet inexperienced in the currents that played on public opinion among those under his charge, was largely responsible. The proposed Legislative Council had been decently interred in 1922, but there had been a suggestion of a resurrection in the Passfield White Paper. Sir Arthur Wauchope, very anxious to show something concrete as a result of his strivings, also somewhat impetuous, and reckoning that no party that talked so loudly of democracy could continue to object to every step towards the attainment of that goal, perhaps somewhat lightheartedly, informed the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, before whom he appeared to be examined in 1932, that the project had by no means been abandoned and was a very actual one. The Jews at once hailed the announcement as a betrayal of their cause. A bitter agitation arose throughout Zionist circles everywhere and continued to boil well into the New Year. Simultaneously the Arab National Movement continued to grow and gather strength. New parties, dissatisfied by the lack of success of the existing Arab Executive, were formed and, impatient of the caution and other oriental characteristics of the older generation, pressed for greater activity and to secure which determined on displaying their own energy. A boycott of Jews in every field was proclaimed and made to some extent effective. Arabs even refused to serve on some of the Government committees on which Jewish members also were invited to sit.

At last the explosion that had long been expected came, in October 1933. And on this occasion there could be no doubt that the outbreak was anti-British. Only British officials and British property were attacked. If, in a few instances, harm befell a Jew that was accidental. To the Arabs the Zionists must be still the enemy, but not, for the time being at any rate, the principal one. It was the British who had betrayed the trusting Arabs and were responsible for all their misfortunes. The growth of Jewish immigration, the acquisition of land and the Government encouragement of and refusal to prohibit these alleged misfortunes were the ostensible causes of the outbreak. Jewish immigration had grown very considerably during the past year, but nevertheless fell below the dimensions advertised in the Arab Press and cafés. Jewish acquisition of land had not been considerable—most

purchases had been by Jews from fellow Jews—but it happened that relatively large areas that had been acquired earlier passed completely into the possession of the purchasers in the course of the year, and the consequent eviction of Arab tenants and squatters created a situation that worried the Government. The outbreak began in the middle of October with a demonstration in Jerusalem which was prohibited by the authorities. The crowd under the lead of prominent Christian and Moslem members of the Arab Executive was, however, determined and had to be broken up by the Police. There were on this occasion no serious casualties on either side. A fortnight later a similar proposed demonstration at Jaffa was also prohibited and persisted in. It followed the same course as that of Jerusalem, but here the struggle was more persistent and the casualties on both sides more serious. Among others, Musa Kazim Pasha, the widely respected octagenarian President of the Executive, was injured. He died a few months later, partly probably as a result of these injuries. The trouble quickly spread to other Arab centres in Palestine, but was suppressed, but only after some 250 casualties had been suffered by the rioters and the Police. The deaths numbered 25, all Arab; one a police constable. No Jew was touched anywhere. Parallel, however, with this Arab outbreak was an anti-Government movement among the Jews which culminated in a small riot in Tel Aviv in which both members of the Police and manifestants were injured. This movement was probably kept within narrow limits by a feeling, if only latent, of anxiety lest it might develop into an undesired attraction of the attention of the Arabs towards them. The Jews had no desire to fight on two fronts. The cause of this Jewish agitation was also the subject of immigration. From the arrival in the country of Sir Arthur Wauchope the rate of Jewish immigration had noticeably been rising. Compared with 4,075 Jewish immigrants in 1931 there were 9,553 in 1932, to become 30,327 in 1933, the first year of the Hitler regime in Germany, and 61,854 in 1935, the eve of the Arab Rebellion.¹ It was Sir Arthur Wauchope's almost avowed policy to approve as large an immigration as the country could possibly bear, trusting perhaps somewhat to Providence and the realization of the optimism of the Zionist leaders for the means of digesting the newcomers. But the Zionists were still not satisfied. Side by side with the great expansion of legal immigration there grew up a system of illegal immigration, mainly in the form of alleged visitors to the country who, once there, declined to leave and were readily concealed by their numerous sympathizers.

The end of January 1933 marked the beginning of the National-

¹ The total Jewish population at the census of November 1931 was 174,606.

Socialist regime in Germany under Hitler, a regime which did not come without warning and which was marked by a ruthlessness and a cruelty perhaps without precedent in history, certainly in modern history, of which the Jews of Germany, those who had been settled in Germany for two millennia in common with the descendants of more recent settlers, at once felt the full fury. The anti-Jewish policy of Hitler, which was well considered, had three sources—the one was the attribution to them of the role of scapegoat on which responsibility for all the sufferings and miseries of the German people and also for the mistakes made by the new regime could be cast; the second was plunder and the enrichment of the plunderers; the third was the disrupting of the economy of the neighbouring states into which hundreds of thousands of penniless or almost penniless fugitives could be driven. Incidentally the appearance of these crowds of Jewish fugitives in neighbouring states, whose territories were coveted, could serve also a political purpose. It was worth while to secure a dissatisfied and suspicious element among the thoughtless masses in those countries by an all-pervasive propaganda that preached at all times that the Jews were the enemies of the true Europeans and that Hitler and his gangsters had been divinely appointed to save Europe from them. Emigration of Jews from Germany led directly to immigration of Jews into Palestine, especially when the first waves were not completely impoverished—a very large number of German Jewish families retained sufficient of their property to qualify for inclusion in the £500 or £1,000 'capitalist' class, members of which were then permitted to settle in Palestine without limit of numbers. The total of the capital brought into Palestine by this wave of immigration was appreciable and not only hastened the economic recovery that was already in train, but went further and introduced an artificial prosperity, which was buoyed up only so long as the stream of capital continued.

In the middle of the year the story that was unfolding took a new turn. Hitherto the Arab section of the population had enjoyed a monopoly in political crime. On one solitary occasion in the summer of 1924, Dr. Jacob de Haan, a Dutch Jew, the leader of the extreme Orthodox Party which was bitterly opposed to the Zionist Executive in religious and other matters, was shot dead as he was leaving a synagogue one evening. The murderer was never discovered, but the belief was widely current in Palestine Jewry that he had been shot by some self-appointed executioner as a punishment for his campaign of opposition to the Zionist Executive. This crime was a solitary one and there was no repetition of it until June 1933 and then from a widely different quarter. Dr. Chaim Arlosoroff was one of the most promi-

nent of the members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency. In ability and also in character, he stood out high above his colleagues. Still a young man, Russian by birth, but largely German in education, he had become influential in the councils of the *Histadruth Ha Ovdim*, the powerful Socialist Party inside the Zionist Organization of the Executive, of which Organization at the time of his death he was the acting Chairman. A few days after his return from Germany, whither he had gone to see what could be done to relieve the terrible position of the Jews there, he also was shot dead. Despite the circumstances of his birth and training—perhaps there was no incongruity between them and his opinions, for in those days there were few Jews anywhere who did not, despite occasional bitter criticism of British Administrators, look up to the British character and the British system of government without admiration, influenced very often by a feeling of gratitude—Arlossoroff was a whole-hearted admirer of the British, of their ways and of their character. A sincere Zionist, a loyal Jew, he was at the same time a devoted disciple of British statesmen, British philosophers and British constitutionalists, and a sincere admirer of the British way of life. Earnest for the establishment of a Jewish National Home, he felt that such a Home could be established on sound lines only under British guidance and British protection. Success was possible, but only in sincere co-operation with the Mandatory Power. These views seem to have constituted his offence. There had for some years, from the time of the Churchill White Paper, been a party in Zionism, if not earlier, to whom no satisfaction could be given by anything less than a Jewish nationalist state 'on both sides of the Jordan', a state in which only Jews could be full citizens in the same sense that Moslems were the only full citizens of the Ottoman Empire.¹ The British policy was, as is known, the very opposite of that. Arlossoroff was hand in glove with the British and accepted their policy. To politicians who had been brought up under Russian influences, Czarist or Bolshevik, the conclusion was at once reached that Arlossoroff was a traitor. If any confirmation were required it was to be found in his unconcealed friendship with prominent British officials. The formulation of this charge was sufficient and Arlossoroff was murdered.

Two men, members of the extreme Nationalist Party in Zionism, were arrested and charged with the crime. There was much circumstantial evidence against them and in addition direct evidence in the case of one. He was arrested on the description given by Mrs. Arlossoroff in whose presence the crime was committed. Under the law

¹ Some of these politicians went further and took as boundaries the Euphrates and the River of Egypt,

of Palestine, however—a survival of the Ottoman code—two eye-witnesses were required for a conviction for murder. Only one was forthcoming and after three trials, in every case before British judges, the prisoners were discharged, the Chief Justice on the last occasion telling the prisoner against whom the weight of evidence was heaviest, ⁴ 'If this case had been heard in England, or in most of the British dependencies the conviction would stand.' Among the Jews in Palestine generally, there was little doubt of the identity of the murderers. A pen sketch is given of Arlossoroff in the diary of Colonel (later Brigadier) F. H. Kisch, a distinguished British Jew, who was, during the earlier years of the Mandate, very prominent in the councils of the Zionists in Palestine and also in England. He wrote at a time when he was about to propose that Arlossoroff should be put in charge of the Department of Arab-Jewish Relations in the Zionist Executive. * Although he is not an Arabic scholar, he has given much thought to the question of Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine and brings to the problem a broad and generous judgement, which is not the case with some of our local Arabists. At the same time his Zionist convictions are tempered by a freedom from chauvinism and an ability to see what is real and unalterable in Arab political aspirations.¹ Arlossoroff died a martyr for British-Zionist co-operation and served both peoples well. Kisch, also, who died on the battlefield in Tunisia in the last stage of the long-drawn-out battle that *inter alia*, saved the Jews of Palestine and the Zionist experiment from annihilation by the German hordes, gave his life to Britain and to Zionism jointly.

The divergence between the two wings of the Zionist Organization, that of the Socialists, to which Arlossoroff belonged, and that of the Revisionists or extreme Nationalists, to which the two men who had been tried for the murder belonged, had for years been growing. On the platform an increasingly violent struggle came out into the public hearing after the death of Arlossoroff and never passed back into silence. At times there were scuffles and bloodless fights between the supporters of the two parties, and until they both turned actively against the Mandatory Government the latter's Police had often to protect one gang from another.

On many matters there was a sharp division between the Socialist and the Revisionist Zionists. On one, however, they were in complete agreement. That was the subject of immigration. The year 1935 saw a total Jewish immigration, apart from unauthorized settlers, of 61,854, greater than the total of the Jewish population of Palestine when Britain first accepted responsibility for its administration, almost 20 per cent of

¹ *Palestine Diary*, p. 349.

the estimated Jewish population at the middle of that year. Still the Zionists were dissatisfied. One of them, in a moment of unprecedented frankness, admitted that 'whatever you give us, we shall demand more'. A correspondent in *The Times* in 1935 estimated, in passing, that the number of legal immigrants in that year was equalled in the history of Palestine only by the immigration under Joshua. Nevertheless the frequency and the vehemence of the Zionist protests against what they termed the restriction of Jewish immigration never diminished. By the side of this great volume of legal immigration there was also a substantial and growing one of illegal immigration, to assist which many subterfuges were adopted. The Government, which had in the past to a large extent closed its eyes to this systematic breach of the law, at length became alarmed by the volume to which it had grown. One step that was taken was the prosecution of illegal immigrants who were caught. The number of such cases increased noticeably and led not only to protests by the Zionists but also to a reaction among the Arabs who realized that but a small proportion of the offenders were caught and that consequently the number of illegal immigrants was appreciable. The younger Arabs then began to take matters into their own hands and formed a sort of unofficial coastguard to prevent surreptitious landings. To assist the newcomers the Zionists therefore organized their own bands. Scuffles between the two parties inevitably broke out and the Government intervened and suppressed both organizations. Another step taken at this time was the abandonment of the system in force from the first Immigration Regulations, of no limit to the number of immigrants who could be admitted outside the Labour Schedule and the substitution of an overriding maximum for all immigrants for each half-year.

The year 1935 saw the largest volume of immigration ever recorded. There was noticeable also, as a consequence of this immigration, a continuance and increase of the rapid economic development that had set in two or three years earlier, although the end of the year showed some signs of a slackening and unemployment among Jews began to rise to noticeable figures. Finally, the year was noteworthy for an increasing intransigence on the part of some sections of the Arab population. The discovery of the consignment, on a large scale, of arms, described as cement, addressed to a Jewish agent, who was never found, added also to the Arab anxiety and unsettlement. This manifested itself in part in an outbreak of political brigandage in Northern Palestine, which was quickly suppressed.

At length, however, the situation again boiled over and the long-expected Arab outbreak, which soon became a formal rebellion,

occurred. The Arabs had latterly, on the whole, shown some patience, but had received little but disappointment in return. Perhaps the breaking point was reached in the debates in Parliament in February and March when little sympathy was shown on either side of either House, apart from the Government benches, with Arab rights or wishes, and as a result the project for a Legislative Council in which Arab spokesmen had shown a somewhat lukewarm interest and to which the Zionists were fanatically opposed was virtually killed. The resulting outbreak commenced on the 19th April, 1936, with a sudden attack on Jewish passers-by who happened to be in the Arab town of Jaffa. Two or three days earlier an Arab-owned omnibus had been stopped by Arab robbers, the passengers plundered and two Jewish ones murdered. The following night two Arabs, sleeping in a hut in the neighbourhood, were murdered. The outbreak quickly spread throughout Palestine, taking the form at first of attacks on Jews and Jewish property in all parts of the country. But it soon developed into a rebellion in which »the Government and its forces, which were being continually increased, were the enemy. Accompanying the outbreak was a 'hartal', in the course of which practically all Arab places of business remained closed and Arab life in the towns was at a standstill. The strike, as it was called, lasted for exactly twenty-five weeks, at the end of which it was called off at the instance of the rulers of the Arab states, apparently in the expectation that some of the demands of the rebels would be granted. On the cessation of the strike and the slowing down of the rebellion, the Royal Commission, with Lord Peel as chairman, that had in the meanwhile been appointed to 'ascertain the underlying causes of the disturbances . . . to inquire into the manner in which the Mandate is being implemented . . . and to ascertain whether . . . either the Arabs or the Jews have any legitimate grievances' and if they have * to make recommendations for their removal and for the prevention of their recurrence', arrived in Palestine. The fighting was mainly between the Arab bands, in part recruited in the neighbouring states and under some sort of military direction, and the British forces. After the first few weeks the number of Jewish victims was on the whole small, although much Jewish property was destroyed. On the other hand a number of Arabs were killed, for the most part by the military and the Police, although an appreciable number of Arab victims were also murdered on account of their refusal to support the 'patriots'. The movement, while it was still only a strike or 'hartal', was under the control of the Arab Higher Committee, whose president was Haj Amin, the Mufti of Jerusalem, a body representative of all parties in the Arab population, but after a time it passed out of their control and

into that of the soldiers in the field. The Arab Higher Committee, however, struggled hard to retain some influence and it was by that body that the Arab demands were formulated. These were the old ones repeated—the stoppage of Jewish immigration pending the consideration by an *ad hoc* committee of the room for additional immigrants, the prohibition of the sale of land to Jews, and the formation of a representative Democratic 'National' Government in accordance with the terms of the Covenant of the League and Article 2 of the Mandate. Before the strike and disturbances were a month old the High Commissioner had offered, in the name of the British Government, a full inquiry into the Arab grievances as soon as the strike and outrages should cease. By then, however, the Arab leaders had lost all control and, even if they had been willing to do so, were quite powerless to pay the price required. The senior Arab officials, who were in a very difficult position, torn between their sympathy with the Arab cause and their loyalty to the Government of which they were servants, under very heavy pressure to join in the strike and in some instances mourning the loss or suffering of near relatives, at length, in July, presented a memorandum to the High Commissioner in which, in moderate terms, they put forward the Arab case. The Amir of Transjordan also made repeated efforts to establish a *modus vivendi* between the Arabs and the Government. A similar effort by Nuri Pasha es Said, the Foreign Minister of Iraq, almost reached success in August, but failed at the last moment. Throughout these disturbed and at times dangerous months the Jews acted with remarkable restraint. Leaders and followers equally were determined to give the Arabs no shadow of an excuse for attacking, nor did they wish to impede in the slightest the task of the Government.

When, at the end of the year 1936, the strike was formally brought to an end and the rebellion had to a large extent been suppressed, the Government, anxious that the Royal Commission should begin its inquiries, relaxed its pressure on the remaining armed bands which then dispersed and, although crime was still widespread and there was a general feeling of unsettlement, for the time being there was again peace in the land. Among other results of the outbreak was the awakening throughout the Arab world not only of a feeling of kinship with their brethren in Palestine but also of a suspicion and fear of the aims of militant Zionism everywhere. But it must be repeated that the war of 1936 was not a war with the Zionists. It was a war with the ally of the Zionists, the principal justification for which, in the eyes of the Arabs, was British support of the Zionist aims.

The Royal Commission arrived in Palestine in November 1936. The

Arabs, soured by repeated disappointments and distrustful of any promises, at first boycotted it and it was only in its last week in Palestine that they were persuaded by the rulers of the neighbouring Arab states to place their case before it. The Royal Commission reported without delay and its recommendations broke new ground. The Commission came to the conclusion not only that the Mandatory Power had failed in its mission but that the task that had been entrusted to it was impossible of fulfilment. The Royal Commission found that the underlying causes of the disturbances were the desire of the Arabs for national independence and their hatred and fear of the establishment of the Jewish National Home. The subsidiary factors were (a) the effect on Arab opinion of the attainment of Arab independence in the neighbouring countries, (b) the pressure on Palestine exerted by Jews throughout the world on account of the suffering of the Jews of Central and Eastern Europe, (c) the inequality of opportunity enjoyed by Arabs and Jews respectively in putting their case before the British Government and public opinion in Britain and the consequent Arab belief that the scales were always weighted in favour of the Zionists, (d) the growing Arab distrust of the British ability or desire to fulfil its promises, (e) alarm at the continuous alienation of Arab-owned land to Jews, (f) the intensive character of Jewish nationalism displayed in Palestine, the 'modernism' of many of the younger immigrants alien altogether to Arab traditions, the provocative language used by irresponsible Jews and the intemperate tone of the Jewish and also of the Arab Press, (g) the general uncertainty, accentuated by the ambiguity of certain phrases in the Mandate, regarding the ultimate intentions of the Mandatory Power. The three major directives given in the Mandate—the encouragement of a Jewish National Home, the safeguarding of the civil and religious rights of the existing population of the country and the introduction of a measure of self-government—were incompatible. There was therefore nothing to be done but to divide the country between the two major communities, giving to the Jews that portion in which a Jewish population predominated, the remainder to be attached to the Arab state of Transjordan. Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem, centres of Christian pilgrimage, however, and their surroundings, together with Haifa, the one port of Palestine of any consequence, were to be placed under a perpetual mandate, to be administered in the interests of Palestine as a whole. It was realized that such a truncated Arab Palestine, deprived of most of the cultivable land, could not live by itself and it was recommended that the British Government and the proposed Jewish state, whose economic stability was also a matter of doubt, should make annual contributions to the

revenues of the proposed Arab state. All of the recommendations were at once adopted by the British Government and immediately brought forth the most emphatic denunciations by both Jews and Arabs. Neither party could concede anything to the other. Both demanded the whole. In fact no one was in favour of the decision. Experienced administrators were of opinion that the proposed fragmentation of Palestine was impracticable, even if a case could be made out for the justice of a sort of Solomon's judgement. The furthest that Parliament would go was to refer the Report to the League of Nations to ascertain the views of that organization. The Mandates Commission of the League showed anything but enthusiasm for the proposals. It could see little in favour of the creation of three small states in place of one, and was by no means satisfied that the Mandate was unworkable, after, perhaps, some amendment. Further, it expressed doubts whether either proposed state would be fit for self-government. The Report of the Mandates Commission went to the Council of the League which granted the British request that it should be authorized to carry out the necessary inquiries to prepare the way for Partition, but decided, at the same time, that no scheme should be put into effect without its express approval.

In the meanwhile Zionist opinion which had at first been unanimously opposed to Partition underwent a partial change. A number of Zionists began to hesitate and were prepared to consider the proposed policy, subject to modifications. The proposed grant to the exchequer of the Arab state was, of course, rejected out of hand. It was laid down also that the proposed territorial limits were too narrow and that provision must be made at the expense of the existing Arab majority for the anticipated large expansion of the Jewish population. The subject of a strategic frontier was also raised. Under the Royal Commission's recommendations almost all of the fertile land in Palestine was to have been allotted to the Zionist state and the deserts and mountain tops left to the Arabs. Since half the territory of Palestine is desert, this left the greater part of the land, as it appears on the map, in Arab hands and superficially suggested that the Zionist share might be increased. Moreover under the provisional delimitation the population of the Jewish territory would have been only about 55 per cent Jewish and any increase of inhabited territory would, provided the existing population were left undisturbed, have created a state with a non-Jewish majority in the population. Still, the Zionists as a whole did not, despite all the efforts of their leaders, show themselves inclined to accept less than the whole. Some of them were dazzled by the prospect of the re-creation of a 'Jewish state' in Palestine after a lapse of almost two thousand years and considered the title of more impor-

tance than the substance. There was also always perhaps the more effective argument that a 'sovereign independent Jewish state', no matter how small, was only a first step, but the most important one. Other small states had increased in size and there was no reason why the 'Jewish state' should be an exception. The Zionist advocates and opponents of Partition fought out their differences at the Zionist Congress that was held in the summer of 1937. In a sense neither party won. The Zionist Executive was refused the permission for which it asked to accept Partition on the best terms obtainable. All that it could secure was permission to negotiate with the British Government on the basis of the Royal Commission's Report, without any authority, however, to commit the Zionist Organization or the Jews of Palestine. Even this moderate decision was secured only by 300 votes to 158 and even then 70 or 80 of those who had voted in this majority announced that their vote did not mean the acceptance of Partition. The Council of the Jewish Agency, on the last occasion on which it ever met, accepted the resolution of the Zionist Congress, but added to it a rider that before Partition was considered every effort for an agreement between Jews and Arabs should be made. Such a solution had also been strongly pressed for some time by influential Jews, among whom Dr. Judah Magnes, the President of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, took a leading place, outside of the Jewish Agency, in Palestine, England and elsewhere.

In the meanwhile, although the major disturbances came to an end in October 1936, isolated outrages and murders continued almost without cease, and at times it seemed that the rebellion was about to break out again. The attacks became more concentrated on British officials, military and Police, and among the victims were a British Acting District Commissioner and the senior Government Inspector of Jewish Schools, both of whom were murdered. The other victims included both Arabs and Jews, among the former innocent passers-by as well as politicians believed to be in opposition to the policy of the majority. In particular Arab police officers were struck down as a penalty for their loyalty to their Government. This recrudescence of violence led to swift action on the part of the Administration. The Arab Higher Committee was dissolved and those of its members who were caught were arrested and deported to the Seychelles. The others were ordered to be excluded from Palestine. Haj Amin el Husseini,¹ the Mufti of

¹ Haj Amin, a member of one of the most prominent of the Arab families in Palestine, had, after the British occupation of Jerusalem and Southern Palestine in 1917, taken a leading part in recruiting among the Arab prisoners of war in the hands of the British. His recruits were intended for the Army of the Amir Faisal which was fighting in co-operation with the British. At that time he looked, as a consequence of a British victory,

Jerusalem, the accepted political leader of the Arabs of Palestine, was deprived of all his non-ecclesiastical offices and shortly afterwards left Palestine surreptitiously and took refuge near Beirut. At the same time Palestine was placed under a modified form of martial law. These measures did not, however, stop the course of the outrages which continued with little if any abatement.

On September 8th, 1937, 400 delegates from all parts of the Arab world met in conference at Bloudan near Damascus to consider the Palestine question. All of the Arab states, with the exception of the Yemen, as well as Palestine, were represented. The President was a former Iraqi Prime Minister, and an Egyptian ex-Cabinet Minister also took part. The Conference resolved unanimously that Palestine was an integral part of the Arab fatherland, rejected all proposals for the alienation of any part of it and demanded the annulment of the Balfour Declaration, the abrogation of the Mandate and the conclusion of an

to the grant of some measure of independence and self-government to Palestine and its inhabitants. These hopes were gradually dispelled and in the anti-Jewish riots in Jerusalem of Easter 1920 Haj Amin took a leading part. On their suppression he fled to Transjordan and was sentenced *in absentia* by a military court to fifteen years imprisonment. Similar sentences were pronounced at the same time in the cases of Aref al Aref, who had shared with Haj Amin in the encouragement and direction of the Arab rioters and of Vladimir Jabotinsky, an extreme Russian Zionist, who, although at the time an officer in the British Army, had of his own accord organized Jewish elements in resistance to the Arabs. Jabotinsky did not escape and was imprisoned. A few months later Sir Herbert Samuel came out as High Commissioner and promptly pardoned all three, in the hope that he would thereby reconcile them to the Mandatory Administration. In the case of Aref effendi he was completely successful. Aref was given a minor appointment in the Administration to which in course of time much responsibility was attached, and proved himself over a period of a quarter of a century one of the most reliable and valuable Arab officers of the Government. About a year after the pardon of Haj Amin, his kinsman, the Mufti, or principal Moslem ecclesiastic and jurist, of Jerusalem died. It rested with the other Moslem ecclesiastics to nominate a successor, the election to be confirmed by the High Commissioner. Sir Herbert Samuel was anxious for the appointment to go to a member of the Husseini family, one of the Nashashibis, the other leading Moslem family of Jerusalem, having already been appointed Mayor of Jerusalem. The nomination of Haj Amin, as one of three prospective candidates for the office, having been secured, he was given the office. He was later also appointed by Sir Herbert Samuel President of the Supreme Moslem Council, the governing body of the Moslem Community of Palestine. Holding these two offices Haj Amin's influence and power grew rapidly and in course of time he became still more the political than the religious head of the Moslems of Palestine. After his flight to Beirut he lived for a time near that city, retaining a large measure of his influence over his co-religionists in Palestine. After the British invasion of the Lebanon Haj Amin fled to Baghdad where he was in close touch with Rashid Ali. On the suppression of the latter's revolt Haj Amin fled to Europe where he lived under Nazi protection, openly hostile to the British and other Allies, until the conclusion of the War, when he was detained for a time by the French. He was by then permitted to escape to Egypt, where he lived for a time, and, being refused by the British permission to return to Palestine, from one or other of the neighbouring countries continued to exercise a varying but diminishing measure of influence on events in Palestine,

Anglo-Palestine treaty establishing an independent Palestine with safeguards for the minorities.

At the end of October Sir Arthur Wauchope resigned and Sir Harold MacMichael, again one of the most brilliant of the administrators whom the Empire had produced, was appointed in his place. Sir Arthur Wauchope, throughout his six years of office, had, and showed on every occasion that he had, but one interest—the welfare of Palestine and its people. Any project for the benefit of any section of the population always had his warm support. A man of means, he was generous in the extreme, not only to projects and movements outside of the sphere of Government support, but also to Government projects for the welfare of Jew or Arab whose benefits he realized could be increased by extra Governmental support. Sir Arthur Wauchope also was the High Commissioner who came closest to the people. He was never happier than when, in the course of one of his frequent tours through the country, he came across an Arab village gathering or a Jewish festivity. He was always anxious to learn the wishes of the man in the street or in the field. In his own administration he often turned to junior clerks to learn their views with which he checked those of his more regular advisers. If one may say so, his great desire was to grant everyone's request or to let him think that he intended to do so. The inevitable happened. In the end he pleased and satisfied no one.

The year 1938, like its immediate predecessors, was one of disturbance. At first the campaign of murder and sabotage gathered strength. The Arab forces in the hills were more closely organized; the terrorism in the towns and villages was intensified. The economic and social life of the country was gravely affected. The campaign seems to have been largely organized and financed from outside of the country, especially from Arab refugee circles, which included most of the political leaders who had not been interned by the Palestine Administration. By July the Arab gangs had been fully organized and placed under one co-ordinating control. Rebel courts were set up and loyal Arabs and also some Jews tried by them and punished—in some instances executed. The old City of Jerusalem and other urban centres passed for a time entirely under the control of the rebels. By the end of the year conditions began to tend again towards normal. One cause of this was the more resolute policy of the new Administration to suppress the outbreak, regardless of political pressure, and to keep both parties in Palestine within the limits laid down by its constitution. Another and perhaps a stronger cause of the appeasement was the definite abandonment by the British Government of the policy of Partition. In pursuance of the intention that had been communicated

to the Mandates Commission of the League of Nations a small technical commission had been sent out to advise on the details of Partition. This Commission found that as far as they could see no system of Partition could work—economically, strategically, or from any other point of view. If, however, a policy of Partition was definitely decided on, in justice to the existing Arab population and to avoid endless friction, the territory of the proposed Zionist state would have to be considerably reduced and as a consequence the new state would be still less capable of maintaining itself than would the larger one proposed by the Royal Commission. In the meanwhile a new Colonial Secretary, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, had been appointed in London and his enthusiasm for Partition was far cooler than that of his predecessor, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, later Lord Harlech. The Report of the small expert Commission was at once accepted and the project of the Partition of Palestine was abandoned. In its place the British Government decided to make yet another attempt to get Arabs and Jews to meet and come to an agreement. It announced that representatives of the Jewish Agency, of the Arabs of Palestine and of the Arab states would be invited to meet representatives of the British Government, at first separately, but it was hoped ultimately in a three-party conference. In the event of the failure of such a conference the Government announced that it would enforce its own policy. The invitations to this conference were accepted by the Governments of the Arab states. Greater difficulties were raised on the part of the Arabs of Palestine, lesser ones on that of the Jewish Agency.

Nevertheless the proposed conference never eventuated. The representatives of the Arabs of Palestine resolutely refused to meet those of the Jewish Agency which they had consistently refused to recognize in the past and did not propose to do so now. The Jewish Agency representatives with whom on this occasion representatives of non-Zionist circles in Jewry associated themselves showed themselves equally determined not to reduce their demands by an iota. As a consequence, apart from the refusal of the Palestine Arab representatives to meet those of the Jewish Agency, the gulf between Jew and Arab proved unbridgeable. To both the maximum and the minimum proved identical and the two maxima could not exist in one world, still less in one small country of 10,000 square miles—half-desert. The only glimmer of reason or reality was shown by the experienced statesmen who came on behalf of the Arab states, but they found themselves powerless in front of the intractability of the other side. The endeavours of the British Authorities to bring the two parties together continued for six weeks, at the end of which, in despair of any kind of

agreement, Mr. MacDonald put forward his own plan for a settlement. On this Arab and Jew showed agreement. They both rejected it out of hand, emphatically and finally. The Jewish representatives actually refused to continue the talks in any circumstances, presumably short of granting their demands. The Arabs, however, on whom the Arab statesmen from outside began to obtain some influence, after a short interval of intransigence began to show themselves more reasonable. The more moderate party in fact accepted the British proposals with some minor modifications and they were then published as the scheme the British Government intended to put into force.

To a large extent this scheme of Government followed the alternative recommendations of the Royal Commission, suggested if their primary one of Partition were not adopted. A sovereign, independent Palestinian state was to be created at the end of a period of ten years, unless such a consummation was obviously impracticable, in which circumstance the British Government would consult with representatives of Palestine and the neighbouring states and with the Council of the League of Nations. Steps would be taken at once for the co-operation of Palestinians—Jews and Arabs—in the administration of the country. During the earlier half of the ten-year period a maximum of 75,000 further Jewish immigrants would be permitted to settle in the country, but further similar immigration would depend on the acquiescence of the Arab elements in the population. This immigration would raise the Jewish element in the population of Palestine to approximately a third. At the end of the period of five years a sort of constituent assembly, in which British representatives would take part, would meet to draw up a constitution. The country was to be divided into three zones. In one, purchase of further land by Jews was to be prohibited; in the second it was to be limited; in the third it was to be free. The Zionists remained bitterly hostile, the Arabs of Palestine, even the circle around the exiled Mufti of Jerusalem, showed themselves less so. The British scheme never came before the Council of the League of Nations as it should have done, for war intervened. The Mandates Commission of the League, however, expressed, by a majority of four to three, its disapproval.

In a sense the Arab Rebellion continued throughout the year 1939 until the outbreak of war, but it had few of the characteristics of a rebellion. It had already, in the latter part of 1938, become more a succession of isolated outrages, committed in some instances for political reasons but as, if not more, frequently acts of revenge or even brigandage. The military activities did much to bring the revolt to an end, but the announcement, in May, of the Government policy for the future

of Palestine undoubtedly helped towards pacification. In one direction, however, the area of disturbance was increased. The new policy, while it may have brought appeasement in some Arab quarters, brought to the greater part of the Jews intense disappointment. For the most part the Jews were satisfied with protests and non-violent opposition to the law, but a small number of hotheads went further, and believing that violence had secured for the Arabs what argument or persuasion could never have obtained, determined to follow their example in the hope of similar success. As a consequence the outrages attributed to Jews, which had in the past been very occasional although often very deadly, increased noticeably in number after the new policy of the Government was known. As in the case of the Arabs, arrests of the malefactors were very few. With the Jews also the acts of violence ceased on the outbreak of the War. Another form of anti-Government action by the Jews was in regard to immigration. The smuggling of Jews into Palestine had been prevalent for years, and shiploads of smuggled immigrants had occasionally been landed surreptitiously. During the last year of peace this traffic increased manifold. It was to a large extent due to the inhuman measures taken by the Government of Germany to expel its Jews. The Nazis, there is reason to believe, either directly or indirectly, chartered unseaworthy vessels, overloaded them with Jews, and sent their masters off with instructions to get rid of their passengers by any means they liked, so long as they were not brought back to Germany. But these German chartered vessels were not the only ones that landed or attempted to land Jews in Palestine. In fact, after the failure of the conference of the beginning of 1939 the *Histadruth Ha Ovdim* or Workers' Organization, whose influence in the Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency had by now become supreme, in a manifesto issued on April 17th, called on all Jews to join in a campaign of resistance to any limitation of the Jewish National Home, as it interpreted the phrase, and as a consequence to refuse that co-operation with the Government, on the basis of which the Jewish Agency itself had been constituted.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE WORLD WAR AND AFTER

THE outbreak of war brought something like a panic to the peoples of Palestine. The rumours that spread in all directions led to the hoarding of food and other necessities and to a run on the banks. At the same time there arose a widespread expectation of gas air raids and an equally widespread clamour for protection against them. The Government took immediate charge of the situation. By the control of supplies, the fixing of maximum prices and the heavy punishment of those who exceeded them, the wild purchase of necessities was stopped and prices brought down again to a reasonable level. For the last few days before the outbreak of war the banks were closed, and on their reopening restrictions were imposed for a few weeks. Three or four local banks, including one of the largest, did not reopen, but by the others the crisis was passed satisfactorily. The general economic position, which had been continually deteriorating since the shock given by the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, however, grew rapidly worse. Building, after citrus cultivation and agriculture, the main industry of Palestine, almost ceased. A very severe crisis overtook the orange production business, and it was estimated that at the end of the year about 50,000 Jews, not to mention Arabs, almost half of the working population, were in need of employment. Earlier in the year, before the outbreak of war, the whole banking system had been reorganized by legislation that laid down a minimum of £50,000 (£25,000 paid up) capital for a bank. A result of this was that the number of banks active in Palestine was very considerably reduced. Most of those that ceased activity, although bearing the title of bank, were merely money-lenders, trading on borrowed money, or lottery shops. The new legislation deprived them of the advantage of the title. Many had paid-up capital as small as £1,000. In one case the paid-up capital of a 'bank' was £17. Another contribution to the crisis was the great extension of production of oranges and other citrus fruits, rising from less than a million cases exported in 1921-2 to almost 15½ millions in the 1938-9 season. In this matter also the Government was compelled to inter-

vene, and after attempts to secure agreement between the growers to limit exports, by assuring the quality of the fruit exported, had failed, compulsory powers were taken. On the other hand, the year saw the beginning by the Iraq Petroleum Company of the refining of mineral oil in Palestine, and moreover the outbreak of war gave Palestine potash almost a monopoly in the market.

The history of Palestine during the War falls into two parts, with the decisive British victory at Alamein as the dividing line. In the earlier part, the Jews of Palestine were wholeheartedly with the British—volunteering at once almost to a man and woman for service in defence of their homes. The Arabs were more neutral, but they, like the Zionists, at once brought their campaign against the British to a close. Having not the insistent reason of the Jews to fear a German invasion and conquest and bitterly disappointed by what they considered the failure to fulfil promises and interpretations of promises of the past, to a large extent they at first stood aloof, trusting neither Germany nor Britain nor their promises. In consequence of its peculiar status as a Mandated territory Palestine was not formally at war. It was non-belligerent, in the sense of this term that has been accepted since the Spanish Civil War. As such, its intervention in the War took the form of providing a centre for the British forces and of recruiting at first some hundreds of Palestinians, mostly Jews, for the Pioneer Corps serving in France. Italy's entry into the War in July, however, effected a considerable change. In the interval the anti-British campaign of the Zionists had to some extent revived and in particular there were several cases of the arrest of bands of Jews engaged in secret drilling and of the discovery of concealed arms in Jewish centres in the course of searches by the military. The entry of Italy into the War was followed almost immediately by air raids on Haifa and Tel Aviv, in which there were a number of civilian casualties. *Post hoc*, if not *propter hoc*, serious recruiting for the armed forces commenced in Palestine and the recruits, among whom Jews were again in a majority, were posted to combatant as well as non-combatant units. The Jews and Arabs were segregated in separate companies, and once again, as in the First World War, there were all-Jewish companies and battalions on active service in the British Army. There had been a demand for Jewish regiments to be raised for the defence of Palestine even before the outbreak of war, and even for a Jewish army to fight in alliance with the British, but no encouragement had been given in Whitehall or Downing Street to these demands.

The Italians, if not the Germans, seem to have had some hope of obtaining support and assistance among the Arabs. But if this was so,

they were disappointed. The Arabs had not forgotten the atrocities committed by the Italians against their kinsmen in North Africa in the course of the war with the Senussi, nor were they encouraged by the later wanton Italian attack on Abyssinia. As if these were not enough, the massacre of inoffensive Arab civilians in Haifa and Alexandria by Italian aeroplanes still further alienated any Arab sympathy that there might have been. The Arabs had a long series of grievances against the British and had serious doubts of their intentions, but between the two there was no question but that the distrust of Italy was deeper than that of Britain. This matter did not concern only the Arabs of Palestine. It related to the Arabs of the entire Middle East. Iraq and Egypt carried out their treaty obligations and Iraq, after a quick suppression of an insurrection inspired for the most part from Germany, ultimately declared war on Germany and her Allies. But it cannot be said that there was any pro-British enthusiasm among Arabs anywhere. In Palestine the implementation of the new policy announced by the British Government on the eve of the outbreak of war proceeded, but very haltingly. Early in 1940 the British Government took steps to enforce the limitation of the acquisition of land by Jews, as had been foreshadowed. The Zionist Organization and the Jews had persuaded themselves that the outbreak of war had finally liquidated this policy to which they took such strong exception, and they became greatly excited when they found themselves mistaken. Protests, in Palestine and elsewhere, were numerous and emphatic, but the Government stood firm, gaining a considerable victory in the House of Commons after a debate on a vote of censure moved by the Opposition.

Another action on the part of the Government which aroused much Jewish feeling was that in respect of the shiploads of unauthorized immigrants, with few, if any, exceptions fugitives from the Nazi terror, which, despite the War, were still being sent to Palestine. The flagrant breaches of the law of Palestine and the gestures of contempt for that law would have been sufficient justification for the exclusion of these refugees. There were, however, two other reasons. The one was the difficult economic position in which Palestine found itself, dependent for its daily bread on imports from other countries in which the supplies available were not excessive, and furthermore the risk involved in the admission of large numbers of men and women from the Continent, for whom no one would accept responsibility and of whom, as far as was known, no one in Palestine had any previous knowledge. In the previous year (1939) the admission of immigrants had had to be suspended altogether, in view of the number of those who were gaining admittance to the country in these circumstances. This measure brought

the illegal practice to a temporary cessation, but as soon as the orderly admission of immigrants, within the numbers laid down by the Government, was resumed, it recommenced. Matters came to a head in November when two shiploads which had been intercepted off Haifa in unseaworthy and overcrowded vessels were brought into harbour. The Government decided not to let them enter Palestine, but on the other hand could not send them to sea again in vessels that were liable to sink before they reached their port of embarkation, and, furthermore, neither the Palestine nor the British Government had the heart to return these refugees to the Europe whence they had come. A large French ship was therefore requisitioned for the purpose of sending these wanderers to Mauritius, to await there a decision as to their future when the War was ended. But the organizers of this illegal immigration were not to be defeated so easily. On the evening before the intended sailing of the *Patria* an explosion occurred on board and the vessel sank in harbour with a loss of 252 lives, for the most part those of refugees. A commission of inquiry was appointed to ascertain the cause of the explosion. Its finding was that the explosion had been caused by persons on shore acting with the co-operation of at least one on board the vessel. Unfortunately, as was by now the rule, practically without exception, in connexion with 'political' crimes, no one was apprehended and no information given that might lead to the apprehension of any of the criminals. But their object was to some extent gained. The High Commissioner felt that in view of the terrible experiences the survivors had undergone, the order for their removal from Palestinian waters should be rescinded and they were permitted to land. By the organizers of the tragedy and their sympathizers the story of the *Patria*, twisted out of reality, was seized upon for propaganda which had by now become world-wide, for the blackening of the character of the Palestine Administration and the motives of its directors. One reaction to this propaganda was the bombing of the Government Immigration Office at Haifa. In the meanwhile another similar shipload of illegal immigrants had been intercepted and brought into Haifa harbour. All visitors from the shore were, on this occasion, excluded and in due course the passengers were transferred to a seaworthy vessel and sent to Mauritius, where they remained until they were brought to Palestine as a part of an authorized quota of immigrants five years later. No action taken by the Palestine Government to keep the volume and character of immigration under control, however, proved any deterrent. The traffic continued, at a varying rate, but never without cessation until the last days of the Mandate. Its organizers and their supporters had nothing to lose except for an

occasional calamity such as that of the *Struma*, to be mentioned later. The British Navy was always on the watch. This was the great safeguard, for it was known that no immigrant ship once seen would be left to sink with its human cargo. At the worst the prospective immigrants would be sent to Mauritius, later to Cyprus, to await there for an indefinite period permission to settle in Palestine. This in course of time became the routine. A ship would be loaded almost to the gunwale with men, women and children, chosen no one knew how or by whom, at a Continental port and sent off on a hazardous voyage towards the coast of Palestine. A short distance from that coast the ship would be detected and escorted into Haifa. Here ended the hazard of the journey. The passengers would be transferred, sometimes after a show of resistance, to a seaworthy vessel or vessels, which the Government of Palestine provided. It often happened that a few—the sick, pregnant women, perhaps orphan children—would be treated as exceptions and permitted to land. Resuming their journey under British control these victims would be landed in Cyprus and placed in camps where they awaited their turn to settle in Palestine as part of the approved quota. The inmates of these camps necessarily had their liberty to go outside restricted. Otherwise they were free to live their own lives. Men available for supervision were quite insufficient in number. In consequence drilling, in order to serve in a Palestine Jewish army, went on unhindered and political demonstrations took place from time to time.

After some seven years of this procedure the Government, in August 1947, attempted to introduce a new procedure and decided to return to the port of embarkation in France a shipload of these prospective unauthorized immigrants. This it was fully entitled to do under international practice. Its case for doing so was all the stronger for the almost unconcealed assistance French officials gave to the departure of these people, well knowing that their intention was to break the law in Palestine. Some four thousand prospective immigrants, who had arrived at Haifa on the *President Warfield*, renamed the *Exodus*, were transferred to seaworthy vessels manned by naval ratings and returned to France. There everyone adopted a passive attitude. The French said they would permit the passengers to land if they wished to do so. The British realized that they had no right to land them by force. The passengers themselves, played on by an overwhelming burst of propaganda from the shore—they may not have needed this support—refused to budge. After a week or two of fruitless waiting the ships left the French coast and sailed for the British-occupied Western Germany. There the passengers were landed, in a number of cases by

compulsion. The British Government was in a position of great difficulty throughout and it may be that it would have been wiser to have taken another course, although it is very difficult to suggest what this should have been. The Zionists seized on the incident for their propaganda and filled the Jewish world with denunciations of the callousness of sending victims of Hitlerism back to the hell from which they had escaped. Appeals by Britain to Continental Powers, Western as well as Eastern, to cease assisting or conniving at this traffic met with very little, if any, response.

In the meanwhile the diminishing 'boom' which the country had been enjoying before the outbreak of war had come to an end. The War alone was sufficient to effect this. Foreign trade was brought almost to a standstill: the importation of foreign capital ceased: other assistance from abroad was considerably reduced. On the other side of the balance sheet, however, was the great expansion of employment that, after an interval of about a year, the development of the War brought. Unemployment, which had at first been considerable, disappeared and the large number of troops stationed in the country, or visiting it on local leave, gave a great fillip to commerce and later to industry also. Nevertheless the Administration had to provide large sums for the relief of distress and for related purposes. The threatened collapse of the citrus industry, the backbone of the Palestine economy, already before the outbreak of war in a somewhat precarious state in consequence of overproduction and the high costs of land and labour,¹ was staved off by generous loans, for the most part ultimately gifts, from the same source. To meet these demands on the Palestine exchequer whose revenues simultaneously began to fall, the British Treasury, which had now for some years been supporting the Palestinian economy, almost doubled its contribution. As the War continued, land which for one reason or the other could not be economically utilized for the growing of citrus fruits was devoted to meeting more urgent needs. Throughout the period of the Mandate Palestine was dependent for the greater part of its food on imports. An economy devoted to the cultivation of vines or citrus fruits could support a larger population than could cabbages or olives and the provision for a larger population was always a primary consideration. Moreover the price of citrus and other land had risen phenomenally since 1920 and a purchaser of such land if dependent on it could not afford to grow the lower-paying crops. But the War, as it progressed, closed Palestine to imports as well as to exports and merely to secure sufficient food, agriculture there had to produce as much of necessities as it could. The

¹ The planting of new orange groves had ceased in the year 1936.

Administration on its part gave every assistance and encouragement to the agriculturist and with this assistance the gap between production and needs was narrowed. The narrower gap was the more easily bridged by imports from the neighbouring countries, organized by the Middle East Supply Centre in Cairo. Nevertheless the cost of living rose and the standard of living fell. As elsewhere the Administration took in hand the rationing of scarce necessities, but with an oriental population it is impossible even to attempt this except in the towns. In the Arab villages purchases were always few. There was in effect nothing to ration or nothing worth rationing. In the Jewish villages, with a higher standard of living, it was more practicable to introduce a system of rationing, but with almost the whole population doggedly opposed to any system of rationing, it would have been indefensible to treat Arab and Jewish villages differently.

In the successful invasion of Syria and expulsion of the pro-German Vichy regime, Palestine Jewish irregulars, serving as a part of the British forces, participated and did good service. Palestinians, for the most part Jews, had served in France in the first months of the War and also took their place in the British armies in Greece where, apart from other casualties, several hundreds were taken prisoner. In the course of 1942 the War moved closer to Palestine and there was deep anxiety on the part of all sections of the population as the fighting line on the west approached. The brilliant victories of General Montgomery, under whose command Palestinian Jews and Arabs also fought, dissipated these anxieties. Henceforth there was no need to fear the horrors of war in Palestine. The tension that had held the people relaxed and the air was now freed for nationalist exercises. To some extent this took the form of renewed pressure for the creation of a * Jewish ' army and in the end the War Office gave way to the extent of agreeing to the recruiting among Palestinian and stateless Jews, and among Arabs, of a Palestine Regiment of unlimited size, to be used primarily, though not necessarily, for service in and near Palestine. This last condition was a compromise with the Zionist Organization which had pressed for limitation of the service to the defence of Palestine. The Jewish members of this regiment with other Jewish members of the British Army were later formed into a Jewish Brigade Group. At the same time the numbers of the Palestine Volunteer Force, for home service, and of the Jewish rural police, a sort of Home Guard, were increased.

Earlier in that year (1942), in February, Palestine Jews and their kinsmen beyond the seas were deeply moved by a catastrophe in the Black Sea which led to the loss of some 760 lives of Jewish refugees from Europe, all on board with one exception, who had hoped to reach

Palestine and find safety there. Even in the period of seemingly endless horror in which this tragedy fell, the event touched the hearts of non-Jews as well as Jews everywhere. Whether the vessel, the *Struma*, had been sent on its last voyage by one of the enemy Governments or by one of the organizations that were by now openly boasting of their exploits in smuggling illegal immigrants into Palestine cannot be said. In either event she never got within a thousand miles of her goal. Being unseaworthy it is doubtful whether she could ever have done so. Sailing from Constanza in Rumania, after a relatively long interval she reached Istanbul where she was detained by the Turkish authorities and had to undergo considerable repairs. An attempt by the Zionist Organization to get permission from the Palestine Government for those of the passengers who were not qualified under the Immigration Regulations to be admitted to Palestine failed in respect of all on board except the children between eleven and sixteen years of age. The Turkish Government, however, refused permission for these children to land in Turkey *en route* for Palestine, and sent the vessel back into the Black Sea, where she was, a few hours later, sunk by a mine or torpedo, or fell to pieces. This is a brief account of the tragedy of the *Struma*. On an earlier page an account is given of that of the *Patria*. Nevertheless both tragedies were henceforth used consistently and persistently throughout the Jewish world in the campaign against the British and Palestine Governments. Practically no mention was, however, made of a similar threatened tragedy which was averted by the British fleet in 1946 when a similar vessel, grossly overloaded with prospective unauthorized immigrants for Palestine, was wrecked on a small, uninhabited island, little more than a rock, in the Greek Archipelago, and in response to the appeals of the Zionist Organization, British aeroplanes were sent to succour them and British torpedo boats to rescue them and bring them to Palestine.

The topic of greatest concern in the history of Palestine in the year 1943 was an economic one. At the beginning of the year the country was apparently at the height of prosperity. The requirements of the armed forces enabled every man who could turn a room into a workshop to make profits of which previously he could only dream. The presence of large armies, especially those whose pay was relatively high, flooded the country with money, and enabled the shopkeepers for the time being to gather a harvest.¹ Even those small agriculturists who, in normal times, lived on the verge of starvation, found their incomes rise. Scarcity caused by a fall in food imports placed them in a position

¹ The Treasurer of the Jewish Agency, speaking in January 1944, estimated that a third of the national income was derived from the armies.

to increase their prices to their own benefit if not to that of their customers.

Before the end of the year, however, there was a change. As the fighting front receded, the dependence of the armies of the Middle East on local supplies fell. So long as the Mediterranean was closed the armies were for many needs largely dependent on Palestine and neighbouring countries. But Algiers as the headquarters of the fighting forces instead of Cairo was much nearer the industrial resources of the West. The factories and workshops of Palestine and neighbouring countries began to lose their monopoly, and with the loss came loss of employment. However, the supply of the armies by no means ceased. Not much more than a warning was given, and the situation was eased by the thousands of Palestinians, men and women, withdrawn from the labour market by incorporation in the British and Allied Armies or employment in ancillary services.

One concomitant of the plethora of money was the inevitable one of inflation. The Government did its utmost to cope with the threat, but effective action in a country such as Palestine, with its several populations with different standards of living and of civilization, is very difficult. There was the added difficulty of the widespread contempt for the law and its administrators which seemed to cause almost instinctively the citizen or his wife to do the opposite of what their Government desired. 'Popular' loans did not bring much response: taxation touched hardly the fringe of the new profits. The inevitable consequence was a rise in the cost of living which, while perhaps of not much consequence to the more fortunate sections of the population, oppressed the large 'submerged' section very heavily. When an average is struck between Jews and Arabs, Europeans and Orientals, the cost of living rose to almost three times the normal figure. Sections of the working class and those with small fixed incomes suffered especially, and though, in many cases, they secured increases in wages, in no case did these increases give them full compensation.¹

In the meanwhile the smuggling of immigrants and of arms into Palestine continued. There were frequent searches, often successful, in Jewish centres, for hidden arms, and some successful prosecutions. British soldiers were also involved, and a theft by British soldiers of arms on a large scale and the sale or transfer of them to Jewish insti-

¹ It must not be thought that Palestine was the only one of the Middle East countries to suffer from inflation or the one to suffer most. The disease was universal in that region, but it was less virulent in Palestine and the other countries under the British Administration than * elsewhere. The comparative figures for September 1947 are **Palestine** 285, **Cyprus** 277, **Sudan** (August 1947) 245, **Lebanon** 495, **Egypt** 282, **Iraq** 616 (Dec. 715), **Iran** (April) 566.

gators was uncovered and attracted much attention. The soldiers concerned were convicted and severely punished.

The end of the first period of five years laid down in the British White Paper of 1939, which, according to that instrument, should have brought Jewish immigration into Palestine practically to an end and at the same time witnessed the laying of the foundations of far-reaching constitutional reforms in the direction of self-government, aroused expectations on the part of the Jews and corresponding alarm on that of the Arabs. The coincidence of the end of the period with the beginning of the United States Presidential election campaign—leading to resolutions of sympathy, each endeavouring to outbid the other, by the American political party conventions, and messages from the Presidential candidates—and the customary resolutions of sympathy by the British Labour Party and also messages from Field Marshal Smuts and other British and American sympathizers of less importance, aroused a certain amount of jubilation and optimism among the Jews and dismay among the Arabs. Proposals were also under consideration by the two Houses of the American Congress for resolutions in support of the Zionist aspirations, but these last were indefinitely postponed, at the instance of United States responsible statesmen in view of ' the delicate political situation in the Middle East and its influence on the conduct of the war \ The Arabs within and without Palestine, however, remained uneasy and Palestine and its future occupied a large part of the time of the Conference of Arab Powers held in Alexandria in September 1944. Jewish immigration into Palestine did not cease at the end of March as should have happened if the White Paper policy had been rigidly observed. It had been anticipated when this policy was laid down that a maximum of 75,000 additional immigrants would enter the country during the five-year period. The outbreak of war, however, dislocated this programme and the total at the end of March fell short of this figure by some 31,000. The Government thereupon decided that immigration should continue until the quota was exhausted. There were some mild Arab protests but no serious objection, and the necessity for dealing with the situation was consequently postponed. No steps were, however, taken to fulfil the promise of associating Palestinians of both nationalities in the administration of the country so that when the time was ripe it could be entrusted entirely to them. Only one precedent was created by the promotion of an Arab civil servant to the highest regular grade, without, however, any change in his duties. There had previously been several (English) Jewish members of the same grade but they had gradually retired and had not been replaced.

More disturbing was the rapid and alarming spread of terrorism among the Jewish section of the population. Until the year 1944, as has already been mentioned, there had been occasional sporadic acts of political crime on the part of Jews in Palestine, but these were very infrequent, even during the period of great tension in the years of the Arab Rebellion. Throughout the year 1944, however, there was evidence of the organization and extension of such crimes over a far wider field. In fact the existence of a Jewish organization for the commission of political crime was brazenly announced. The Jewish leaders in Palestine and Zionist leaders outside repeatedly denounced these criminals and their acts, but with no appreciable effect. Murders and other outrages continued, the victims being for the most part loyal members of the Police Force, principally British and Jewish, to a small extent Arab. After a number of daring attacks on Government offices, especially police stations, the culmination came in August in an attempt to murder Sir Harold MacMichael, the retiring High Commissioner. This was followed three months later (November 5th) by a successful attempt on the life of Lord Moyne, the British Minister-Resident in Cairo, whose policy regarding Palestine was supposed to fall short of the extremists' demands. It later transpired that he had put forward a plan for the partition of the country between Jews and Arabs, but it is not known whether this was known to or influenced the criminals responsible for the murder. Two men, Jews from Palestine, who admitted that they were members of one of the terror organizations, were caught red-handed, held for trial by court-martial, convicted and hanged.

There was some evidence towards the end of the year of a deflationary tendency in the country. The war years witnessed some remarkable industrial developments in Palestine, stimulated by the War needs, almost all of them on the part of the Jewish population. According to a statement by the Government Director of War Production, many articles in the engineering and chemical industries which had not previously been manufactured in Palestine were being produced on a large scale to meet military requirements. In some instances, even the machinery required for the purpose was being made in Palestine.

The long-expected British Government pronouncement of policy with regard to Palestine was made on November 13, 1945. The period that preceded it was one of considerable and growing excitement and of widespread rumours. At the same time the organized evasion of the Immigration Regulations and the campaign of crime directed against the Palestine Government and its officials were intensified. Outside of

Palestine a loud and irresponsible campaign for securing the extreme Zionist demands contributed towards a state of increasing excitement and expectancy in widespread Jewish circles, with a parallel reaction on the Arabs which showed itself in closer co-operation between them in a league of Arab states, and in Palestine in a hardening of the opposition to any concession to Zionist demands. The outstanding feature in the British Foreign Minister's statement was that the Government of the United States had agreed to co-operate with that of Great Britain in the search for a policy which would be fair to all parties and acceptable to all reasonable people. Hitherto, American opinion even in official circles had been very profuse in giving advice and directions and in issuing pompous and long-winded statements, but very chary of accepting any responsibility or of rendering any practical assistance. Both political parties there seemed to be frightened of the boggy of a Jewish vote, the protagonists of which exercised their influence by hints or threats to vote, in the elections that follow one another almost without cease in the United States of America, against any party that did not promise to comply with their demands.¹ The two Governments, Mr. Bevin announced, had decided to appoint a joint committee to examine both the position and the desires of the Jews of Europe and the situation of the Jews and Arabs in Palestine. In the meanwhile Jewish immigration into Palestine was to continue at the rate of 1,500 a month, somewhat above the normal rate before the great increase that followed the outbreak of the Nazi persecution.

Mr. Bevin's statement obtained practically universal acceptance in non-Jewish circles in England. The Arabs of Palestine and elsewhere were on the whole non-committal. The Zionists and those Jews who were under their influence at once denounced the proposals as unnecessary. On December 6th the General Council of the Jews of Palestine declared that the 'Jewish people's resistance cannot be conditioned by government-made laws or government consent' as they did 'not recognize the moral legality of laws preventing the rescue of those exposed to death and starvation'. Later in the month the heads of the Zionist Executive in Palestine refused, when asked by the High Commissioner, to appeal to the Jews of Palestine to end the terrorism. They

¹ It is worthy of mention that when this alleged 'Jewish vote' was put to the test at the 1948 Presidential Election it was found that, although it had been more or less promised by those who claimed to control it to President Truman the Democratic candidate, New York, the one state of the Union in which the Jewish population is sufficiently large as to be able to decide the election if cast solidly, previously Democratic, was won by the Republican Party by a small majority. In fact, as was to be anticipated, the Jewish voters on the whole followed their national predilections and all the candidates obtained support from them.

said that their ability to bring the outrages to an end had been nullified by the Government's 'violation of the fundamental laws of the country which was its Mandate \ Nearly three years earlier, in March 1943, Mr. David Ben Gurion, the Chairman of the Zionist Executive, said 'we wish to be frank and tell the Government that there will be no co-operation between us and the White Paper authorities neither at present nor after the War. We shall not give a hand in carrying out the plans revealed to us last night, for all those plans are based on the stoppage of Jewish immigration, on the seclusion of Jews in a special Jewish living space, on the realization of the White Paper policy, on the deprivation of the Jewish people of its homeland.' In response to Mr. Bevin's invitation the Zionists claimed that they had already provided the British Government with all the information it needed and there was nothing to be usefully added to this. All that was necessary was to concede their demands, and as a first and immediate instalment they asked for an immigration of 100,000 Jews, incidentally a figure quite arbitrarily chosen. This was, however, not the first occasion on which this figure had been put forward. It had been suggested earlier and in North America the Zionist pressure group had persuaded President Truman formally to ask the British Government to authorize this immigration.¹ The attitude of the two successive United States Presidents towards the Palestine question had during the previous year or two been somewhat tortuous. Both President Roosevelt and President Truman had been supposed to be friendly towards the Zionist claims and, as has been mentioned, encouraged them on occasion. They had been actively pressed during the Presidential Election of 1944 and their sponsors had obtained some promises in return. When President Roosevelt was in Egypt in February 1945 he, however, discussed the Palestine question with two or three of the Arab rulers and gave an undertaking, which was afterwards confirmed in writing, that Arabs as well as Jews would be consulted before any definite steps were entered on and that 'no action which might prove hostile to the Arab people' would be taken. So confidential were these conversations and undertakings considered that the President seems to have kept them even from his State Department and the first knowledge of them came from Arab sources. Nevertheless President Truman, as has already been mentioned, later in the year pressed the British Government to admit 100,000 Jewish immigrants forthwith, but when in reply

¹ It may be mentioned that in 1943, the last year for which official figures of immigration exist, the total immigration into the United States with its population of 139,682,000 and unlimited resources amounted to 23,725 of whom 4,705 were Jews. In 1945 the total immigration was 38,119 of whom, it is estimated, about 12,700 were Jews.

it was suggested that he and the United States Government should share the responsibility for the consequences, he seems to have been taken somewhat aback and quickly withdrew, or more properly speaking, suspended the request, stating that he had changed his opinion. Simultaneously Zionist pressure on both Houses of Congress or again, more properly speaking, on their members was kept up. There the influence of the State and War Departments was against them and in the end both Houses of Congress adopted a resolution of a far more moderate character than that desired. In the meanwhile the Arab League and also the All-India Moslem League had entered the discussions on the side of the Arabs of Palestine, and incidentally a boycott by them of the products of the Jewish-owned factories of Palestine was declared.

On the retirement of Sir Harold MacMichael in 1944 Viscount Gort, V.C., was appointed his successor. Hitherto, by accident or design, civilian and soldier had alternated in the office and by the appointment of Lord Gort, a distinguished general of the recent War and also a successful administrator, the alternation was not broken. Lord Gort was, however, in ill health already when he took up his office and had to resign it after little more than a year, to die shortly afterwards. His successor, the last British High Commissioner for Palestine, was Lieut.-General Sir Alan Cunningham, who had also gained distinction during the War.

The last two or three years of the Mandatory period showed an ever-increasing violence on the part of the criminal element among the Zionists which, profiting by lessons learnt elsewhere, succeeded in terrorizing the great majority of the Jewish population and in consequence escaped scot free. Englishmen and Palestine Government officials were murdered or maimed almost indiscriminately. On one occasion, in July 1946, by a supreme act of audacity a portion of the Government headquarters in Jerusalem was blown up and almost a hundred officials and members of the public who happened to be in the building murdered, and about as many others seriously injured, the criminals showing themselves indifferent as to whether their victims were British, Jew or Arab. On other occasions British officers or soldiers, occasionally a civilian, would be kidnapped and murdered or brutally treated. The culmination of this series of crimes was when two British sergeants, walking off-duty in a crowded street of Tel Aviv, were seized and taken away. A few days later their bodies were found hanging from trees a few miles distant. These brutal murders were supposed to be in retaliation for the execution of a terrorist who had been caught red-handed and convicted after trial. At length the

Government was forced to take more resolute action. The perpetrators of the crime when caught were, as a rule, found to be young people, little more than boys and girls, who had apparently undergone a training in terrorism and were acting under the direction of older persons who remained in the background. A number of these young people were caught, but with the refusal of most of the witnesses to give evidence—the fear that if they did so they would themselves be murdered was not unjustified—convictions were difficult to obtain. There were, however, some convictions and a number were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. A modified form of military jurisdiction had for some time been in force and in two or three cases in which there could be no doubt that murderers had been caught capital punishment was inflicted. (These sentences were passed by military courts. In no case throughout the period of the Mandate was a Jew hanged by the Civil Administration, whether the crime was political, domestic or of a normal character.) In no instance, however, was an instigator of any of these crimes apprehended or at any rate charged. There were, from time to time, widespread searches and arrests of men who had shown approval of the crimes, but no one under a British Government can be convicted merely for an expression of opinion. Those arrested in the course of these searches were in a number of cases placed in detention camps, at first in Palestine, later in Eritrea, and even farther afield in Kenya, but many were released after a not very lengthy period of detention. The most spectacular of these arrests was at the end of June 1946 when the headquarters of the Jewish Agency were raided and five of its prominent members arrested. The justification for these arrests was correspondence in which they were involved which had come into the possession of the Government and pointed to some connexion between them and some of the perpetrators of previous outrages. The matter was, however, not pursued and the detainees were released four months later 'in view of the condemnation of terrorism embodied in the resolutions announced at the meeting on October 29 of the Inner Zionist Council \

The Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry opened its sittings at the beginning of the year 1946 and made its report punctually, as it had been instructed, on May 1st. The period covered by its inquiries was brief, but throughout the Commission worked under constant American pressure to put forward its conclusions without delay. There was also a general desire for a unanimous report. This end was attained, but as the hearings of the Commission necessarily ended with more than one conclusion on the part of its members, it was reached only as a consequence of compromises on the part of members with different

views. Furthermore, for the same reason the Report rejected some of the most insistent demands of both contesting parties. So far as the investigation of conditions on the spot was concerned only three weeks were spent in Palestine and the neighbouring countries and these amid an almost impenetrable fog of propaganda in the manufacture of which all interested parties participated. Nevertheless the Commissioners saw through the cloud at times. The most outstanding of the recommendations was that it was neither just nor practicable that Palestine should become either a Jewish or an Arab state, that Arab should dominate Jew or Jew Arab. So far as the extreme claims of the Zionists under this head were concerned, it *expressly disapproves' the view that Palestine had in some way been ceded or granted as their state to the Jews of the world. Furthermore, any immediate attempt to establish an independent state or states in Palestine would result in civil strife which might threaten the peace of the world. The Commission therefore reached the conclusion that the only practicable source was to continue the existing Mandate pending the drafting of a new one by the appropriate organ of the United Nations. Then followed a number of recommendations for the economic and cultural development and organization of the country in which the interests of both Arabs and Jews should be given consideration. On the political side a system of communal autonomy within a unitary state, under which both Jews and Arabs would enjoy a large measure of autonomy, short of political independence, should be set up. Turning to the Jewish problem on the Continent of Europe the Commission took up the Zionist demand for the immediate admission of 100,000 refugees, to be selected by them, which had later been fathered for a time and then abandoned by President Truman, but modified it by the remark that the Government of Palestine must have the right to decide the number of immigrants actually to be admitted in any given period. It stated also that Palestine alone could not provide a home for all Jewish victims of persecution, and a general effort on the part of all countries was necessary to meet an emergency, by a temporary relaxation of immigration laws.¹ Finally: * It should be made clear beyond all doubt to both Jews and Arabs that any attempt from either side by threats of violence, by terrorism, or by the organization or use of illegal armies to prevent (the execution of the policy recommended) will be resolutely suppressed. Furthermore, we express the view that the Jewish Agency should at once resume active co-operation with the Mandatory in the suppression of terrorism and of illegal immigration and in the maintenance of that

¹ In effect all countries except Palestine had for long been closed to the immigration of indigent Jews. . .

law and order throughout Palestine which is essential for the good of all.'

As was to be expected of a Report of this description in which no point of view was fully accepted, no one, except perhaps its authors, had much good to say of it. The Arabs and the Zionists picked out the recommendations that met with their approval and rejected the others. The Zionists concentrated on that which would have brought 100,000 Jewish immigrants into Palestine immediately, as they read it, and as another election was impending in the United States brought all possible pressure to bear on the rival parties to get all the support they could for that recommendation. The British Government, although somewhat doubtful of the practicability of some of the proposals, was prepared to do its best to implement the Report, provided that the Government of the United States would share the responsibility and cost. That Government, however, while prepared to give unlimited advice and, if it could get Congress to agree, to contribute a share of the expense, had no intention of accepting any responsibility or of risking the life of a single United States soldier or civilian and, in effect, said so. There was some indefinite talk of paying the cost of transferring the 100,000 immediate immigrants and of maintaining them for a month or two in Palestine, but no more. With regard to the suggestion that other countries should share in providing for the resettlement of the displaced persons of Europe the American authorities were even more vague.¹ Something might be done in certain circumstances, but the only practical result was the admission to the United States of a few hundred Jewish refugees from Europe, neutralized by the threatened deportation, later cancelled except with regard to a few, of almost an equal number who had been admitted temporarily in the course of the War.

¹ Two years later Congress did enact a measure authorizing the immigration of 205,000 of these unfortunates in the course of two years, but its clauses were so drafted that, it was estimated, not more than about 10,000 of them can be Jews. These 205,000 immigrants will constitute 0.07 per cent per annum of the United States or a fourteenth of the proportion permitted to settle in Palestine between the end of the War and the termination of the Mandate. The United States Immigration Act of 1924 made a maximum of 153,929 immigrants of all religions per annum possible, but in the seventeen years 1930 to 1946 only 559,000 or 21.4 per cent of the total possible were admitted. During the War years, 1942-45, less than 10 per cent of the annual quotas was utilized. The great majority of Jewish prospective immigrants come from Poland, Lithuania and Rumania. Under the Immigration Act of 1924 of immigrants born in Poland, Jews and Christians, only 6,524 could be admitted in any one year, for the three Baltic States, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, in which Christian prospective emigrants exceed Jews in number, less than a thousand of both religions are admissible for all three. Of the millions of Russian birth, Jews and Christians, not more than 2,712 may be permitted to settle in the U.S.A. in any one year.

Refused the expected co-operation of the United States, the British Government found itself unable to proceed with the programme drawn up by the Anglo-American Commission. Having to act alone, it therefore decided to make yet another effort to bring the Jews and Arabs together, so as to secure agreement on a policy which would give consideration to the rights and interests of both parties. A round-table conference was called to meet in London, invitations to which were issued not only to the Zionist Organization and the Arab Higher Executive but also to the Governments of the several states that comprised the Arab League, to representative 'Non-Zionist' organizations in England and Palestine and to selected individuals, Jewish and Arab, who combined knowledge of the subject with moderation of views. The only acceptances came from the Arab states and the Secretary of the Arab League. The Zionist Organization and the Arab Higher Committee laid down conditions for acceptance which in practice meant the prior endorsement of their respective mutually exclusive policies. The Board of Deputies of British Jews, which was under Zionist influence, replied in terms practically identical with those of the Zionist Organization. The other Jewish organizations in effect, although not so definitely, ranged themselves also behind the Zionist Organization. They feared the reaction on expressed Jewish opinion, of which the Zionists had secured control if they did otherwise. Although opportunities were given to these several parties to change their minds they did not do so and the conference became one between representatives of the British Government and those of the Arab states.

As a basis of discussion Mr. Bevin, the British Foreign Minister, put forward the skeleton policy which had already been communicated to Parliament on his behalf by Mr. Herbert Morrison, often known as the Morrison Scheme. This provided for a wide measure of local and communal autonomy within a unitary Palestinian state, thereby adopting to some extent one of the principal recommendations of the Commission. In the midst of the consideration of these proposals the Zionist Congress met and, in the hope that that body would show some desire for a settlement which took into consideration other interests as well as its own, the Conference was adjourned for a time. The Congress, however, showed itself more intransigent than ever. The more extreme party, among whom the American delegates were prominent, called for a final break with the British Government and the fulfilment of the so-called Biltmore Programme,¹ to transform

¹ This was a programme adopted by the American Zionists, with the assent of Mr. David Ben Gurion, the Chairman of the Executive of 'The Jewish Agency', in New York as early as May 1942, in which the opening of the gates of Palestine to immediate

Palestine into a sovereign independent state under Zionist control. The only difference within their party was whether or not the Arab kingdom of Transjordan should or should not be included within the frontiers of the proposed Zionist state. The more 'moderate' party, led by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, and including the strongly organized socialist section, wished to defer a decision regarding the rupture of relations, but at the same time demanded for the time being the creation of a Zionist state in a part of Palestine, but in a larger area than that suggested by the Royal Commission. A small party at the Congress advocated a bi-national state in which Jews and Arabs would be equal partners. The American party gained the day and Dr. Weizmann ceased to be President of the Zionist Organization. All the hopes of the British Government of an agreement were thereby destroyed.

Before the London Conference ended, the Zionists, while still refusing to enter it, were engaged in conversations with the Colonial Office

unlimited immigration, partly to relieve the pressure on the Jews of Europe who remained in the clutches of the Nazis or were in grave risk of passing into their hands, partly to secure without delay a majority status for the Jews of Palestine who, despite the tens of thousands who had been allowed to settle in the country during the previous twenty years, still numbered less than a third of the total population. To secure this end the Zionists demanded 'that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country, including the development of its unoccupied and uncultivated lands', and that Palestine be established as a Jewish commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world. Furthermore the American Zionists demanded the formation and recognition of a Jewish military force fighting under its own flag. This programme was immediately adopted by the Zionist Organization as a whole. Later, in December 1944, the General Council of the Jews of Palestine and the Executive Committee of the Zionist Organization issued a joint proclamation asking for unrestricted immigration and threatening that, if this were not granted, steps would be taken to secure it without the consent of the Government of the country. A few months later a Zionist Conference, at which most of the more prominent members of the Zionist Organization were present, formally reiterated the Biltmore demands. The Zionists after all did not show themselves inconsistent in their demands, despite the undertakings given by them in 1922 when they accepted the Churchill White Paper, for the Zionist Commission which was sent to Palestine under British aegis in 1918, when the military were still in control of the country, included among their requests Jewish participation in the Military Administration, the appointment of a Land Commission, with experts nominated by the Zionist Organization, to ascertain the resources of the country, the right to nominate the Jewish members of the Police Force and to supplement their pay and the right to raise their own military defence force. Even earlier, in 1921, the Twelfth Zionist Congress, the first to be held after the issue of the Balfour Declaration, resolved that 'The Congress declares before the entire world that large immigration to Eretz Israel is an incontestable right of the Jewish people of which under no circumstances it may be deprived. The internal regulation of immigration into Eretz Israel, according to the economic capacity of the country, is a matter for the Jewish people, represented by the Zionist Organization, in agreement with the Administration of Palestine.' (*Eretz Israel*—The Land of Israel—is the name used consistently for Palestine. The mention in this resolution of 'economic capacity' is probably its first appearance in connexion with Jewish immigration into Palestine.)

authorities and thus in effect two parallel conferences were proceeding side by side. After an interval of less than a fortnight the Government announced its final decision. This followed largely the earlier scheme of local and communal autonomy for each of the two contestants, coupled with, however, an immigration of 4,000 Jews per month for two years, followed by an unstated rate of immigration to be fixed by the High Commissioner, and the promise of a constitution for an independent democratic Palestine after four years. This scheme was again rejected by both Arabs and Zionists and the British Government thereupon referred the whole matter to the United Nations, stating that, under the Mandate, they had no power to grant either the Zionist or the Arab demands. Britain had, however, not put forward these proposals without consulting the United States Government and in fact they had been worked out in co-operation with constitutional experts sent to London by that Government. Once again, however, the United States President had to give way to pressure and to disown his own experts. The United Nations thereupon appointed yet another committee on which none of the principal or interested Powers was represented to consider the problem. This, after a flying visit to Palestine, recommended the immediate partition of the country into two separate sovereign independent states, and an international zone comprising Jerusalem and its environs, all three linked together economically. The boundaries of the two states were roughly indicated, giving the Jews a larger area than had any previous scheme and in fact providing a population for the 'Jewish state' the majority of whom would not have been in any sense Jewish. Britain had already previously announced her intention in any event to relinquish the Mandate. The proposals of the United Nations Committee would unquestionably have to be imposed by force and Britain, feeling that they were not in accordance with justice, was unable to take any steps to implement them. In these circumstances, if the proposals were accepted by the Security Council of the United Nations an alternative force to the British Army would have to be found and that without delay, for the British intended to choose a not distant date (later fixed at May 15th, 1948) on which to lay down the Mandate. Both the Arabs and the Zionists were heard before further steps were taken. The former remained unmoved. They would not accept any partition of Palestine nor could they agree to any special rights to Jews above those granted to Moslem or Christian Palestinians. The Zionists on the other hand accepted the proposals, while pointing out that territorially and otherwise they fell far short of their 'rights'.

Much of the responsibility involved in a decision rested on the

Government of the United States, the strongest of all the Powers on whom the task of enforcing the proposals on Palestine should have rested. Mr. Truman, with the alleged Jewish vote behind him, continued to follow his tortuous policy. At first he gave his support to the recommendations of the Committee and very effective measures were taken to secure the votes of those smaller Powers, many of which were under obligations, or hoped to be, to the United States, so that the requisite two-thirds majority in the Assembly of the United Nations might be forthcoming. In this the United States Government was successful. Unexpectedly the Soviet Government which had always hitherto opposed Zionist aspirations and had for long been denounced by the Zionists as their most ruthless persecutor, came out by the side of the United States. The United States and Soviet Governments soon found themselves apparently in complete agreement, and they put forward a joint proposal -whereby the Mandate should terminate by the 1st of May, 1948, and the last of the British forces withdrawn by the 1st of August, the two proposed new states to come into existence on the 1st of July. A small committee was appointed to supervise the transition. The British representative again made it clear that British forces could not be used to enforce a settlement which the British Government did not consider either just or permanent. It could not accept the imposition of any date on which either its civil or military occupation should cease, but it was very anxious to lay down its responsibilities as soon as it could and it would endeavour to do so by the dates stated. Some definite authority to which to transfer its responsibilities was, however, essential and it was urged that this authority, supported by a military force, should be set up forthwith. It was obviously impossible for two Governments to function side by side and it was better for the United Nations Committee not to come to Palestine until two or three weeks before the termination of the Mandate, but there was no reason why some of its officers should not come earlier to make preparations. In the event the British Mandate was terminated on May 14th and the last British troops left on June 30th. The small committee appointed by the United Nations never came to Palestine and the few officials it sent left again after a very brief visit. As for international military or even police support for the new regime, all that materialized was an assurance by the United States authorities that no American life would be risked in Palestine.

The joint proposals of the United States and the Soviet Governments were submitted to two votes. In the first, in a committee representative of all the United Nations it secured 25 votes in favour and 13 against, with 17 abstentions. It then went to the General Assembly which was

identical in membership with the committee, in which, however, to make the resolution an effective recommendation a two-thirds majority was necessary. To attain this end a brief postponement was secured and the pressure on the smaller states intensified. As a result a majority of 33 to 13 was secured with 10 abstentions. In the interval some of those states whose representatives had actually spoken against the proposals were induced to vote in favour of them. The proposals were therefore referred to the Security Council which discussed them or related matters at intervals, but by the time of writing had never come to a decision. In the meanwhile, however, events marched.

The decision of the Assembly on the 29th of November led at once to an outbreak of fighting. The Arabs of Palestine to some extent took up arms: more serious was an invasion of irregulars from the north (Syria and the Lebanon), the east (Transjordan) and the south (Egypt). The Zionist armies on their part, * moderate ' and ' extreme ', came out into the open and showed that they had not only profited well by the training many of their men had obtained in the British and other Allied Armies, but also that all the rumours, that had been for years so persistent, of the smuggling of arms into Palestine fell far short of reality. The Zionists at once, as a defensive action and in the hope that the war would be kept from the thickly populated Jewish districts, invaded territory that had been allotted to the Arabs in the provisional recommendations of the United Nations Committee or was to have formed part of the proposed international zone of Jerusalem. The Arab invaders also at once entered the latter and the Negeb or southern desert allotted to the Zionists, as well as the territory provisionally allotted to the Arab state. The consequence was that none of the fighting that ensued was, apart from that in the city of Jerusalem, in a district in which there was a Jewish population of any size. Simultaneously, so long as the British forces remained in Palestine, attacks continued to be made on isolated individuals or groups of the British Army, Air Force and Police. The Zionist Organization continued to treat the Mandatory Government as an enemy, appealing to it, nevertheless, as a rule with success, when on occasion it believed some isolated Jewish settlement to be in danger from Arab attack.

There was one curious paradox in the situation. Most Zionists probably realized that no state, so far at any rate as the not distant future was concerned, would be able to keep its feet unaided. American and perhaps other Zionists for a time believed that the United States would take the place of protector and supporter of the Zionists, but by now they had probably realized that the American Republic was prepared to contribute little beyond advice and pressure on its Ally, and perhaps

a limited amount of money. The paradox showed itself in the apparently widespread belief both among Jews and Arabs that Britain, in pursuance of its * sinister imperialist' designs, had no intention of ever evacuating Palestine and that all that was necessary was the continuance of pressure on it by means of bombs and sten guns so that it would in the end agree to set up a Zionist state which, on its part, would promise to aid Britain when the necessity arose. But all who held these views found themselves mistaken. Britain, when she accepted responsibility for administering the Mandate, believed that it was workable. She now realized her mistake and of all prospective events one was certain, despite whatever motives others might attribute to her, and that was that she intended to lay down the Mandate and withdraw her forces as speedily as was possible. And this she did even in advance of the dates she had indicated.

The *Hagana*, for long the more or less secret army of the socialist wing of the Zionist Organization, now came out into the open, as the principal army of the embryonic Zionist state. It worked sometimes in co-operation with the two criminal gangs, the *Irgun Zvi Leumi* and the Stern Gang, which had been responsible for most of the crimes against the British and others. The *Hagana*, as an open force, was engaged mainly in action with the Arab armies, but all three bodies did not shrink from occasional acts of terrorization which succeeded in driving almost all the Arab population from the Zionist-held districts of Palestine, whose inhabitants in consequence, with the addition of the large number of Jewish immigrants who were entering the country, very quickly became overwhelmingly Jewish.

In the meanwhile the Mandatory Government was being wound up and the British troops gradually concentrated in a few centres and withdrawn from the country. In consequence of the failure of the United Nations to appoint a body capable of taking over the administration of the country during the period of interregnum, the Mandatory authority determined, despite suggestions that were made to it in the councils of the United Nations, not to prolong the period of its administration, and had to find other means of divesting itself of its responsibilities. This it did by devolving on the local authorities those of the functions of the Central Government that could be assumed by them. Municipal authorities were given increased powers of taxation, and hospitals, schools and other services were transferred to them. Municipal police services were organized for the maintenance of law and order within the local communities and licences issued to importers so that the purchase of essential commodities, hitherto under the control of the Government, could continue. Certain services, such as

posts and telegraphs, could, of course, not be so transferred, but all services and functions that could be transferred were. In these circumstances the country gradually passed out of British control and the warring parties found themselves with greater freedom. Whenever the fighting entered the contracting British-held districts the British forces intervened and on these occasions both Jews and Arabs still owed much to them for protection from attacks from the other side. Among the consequences of the freedom from control that the Zionists found for themselves in parts of the country was an intensification of Jewish immigration, still unauthorized according to the law, but with which the gradually weakening Mandatory Government was unable to interfere. Despite the legal position and without awaiting the end of the Mandate, more than one of the Governments of states included in the United Nations, indirectly, if not directly, supported this illegal immigration and also the arming of the Zionists which accompanied it. In the story of unending tragedy that marked the last months of the Mandate two outstanding horrors stand out. On April 9th armed gangs burst into the Arab village of Deir Yassin near Jerusalem during the night and massacred about 250 of the sleeping inhabitants, irrespective of age or sex. Many others were wounded and taken prisoner but soon released. The two terrorist gangs competed in their claims to responsibility for this horror. The Chief Rabbinate and the Zionist Organization showed their attitude by their denunciations of the perpetrators on whom they looked 'with horror and disgust'. Four days later it was the turn of the Arabs. A convoy consisting principally of doctors, nurses and other members of the staff, proceeding up Mount Scopus on the outskirts of Jerusalem to the Hebrew University and the principal Jewish hospital, was attacked at the turn of the road and 39 of the passengers were killed, some of them being apparently thrown into a fire which broke out. For neither crime was anyone brought to justice. The official record of casualties between November 30th, the day on which the recommendations of the Assembly of the United Nations became known in Palestine, and February 1st was 864 killed (427 Arabs, 381 Jews, 56 British) and 1,941 wounded (1,035 Arabs, 725 Jews, 181 British). A month later the total for the three months had risen to 1,378 killed and over 3,000 wounded.¹

In the meanwhile the Security Council of the United Nations hesitated to come to any decision on the recommendations of the Assembly. In fact, even President Truman began to have doubts regarding their wisdom. At first his Government supported consistently and with emphasis the recommendations for which it had so great a share of

¹ In the course of the Arab Rebellion of 1936 to 1938 some 4,000 people were killed.

responsibility, but suddenly and without warning, on March 19th, the United States representatives proposed to the Security Council that the scheme that was before it should be put aside, at any rate for the time being, and that the United Nations themselves should accept a trusteeship for the government of the country. Meanwhile the Palestine Commission of the United Nations, which had been appointed some time previously to take over the administration from the Mandatory Power but had not left the United States, should 'suspend its efforts'. A small advance party of this commission did proceed to Palestine but, when it had seen for itself the conditions prevailing there, it reported that it was powerless without the support of armed forces, which the Security Council declined to provide, and thereupon returned to New York. The Zionists, to whom the new move of the United States Government came as a shock, bitterly opposed the new proposal. The Russians objected to it on the ground that the recommendations of the Assembly should be accepted without alteration. The Arab states reiterated their opposition to Partition. The Security Council on its part advised both contesting parties to accept a truce. The United States view was expressed by President Truman on March 25th. * This country vigorously supported the plan for Partition recommended by the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine and by the General Assembly. We have explored every possibility consistent with the basic principles of the Charter for giving effect to that solution. Unfortunately, it has become clear that Partition cannot be carried out at this time by peaceful means. We could not undertake to impose this solution on the people of Palestine by the use of American troops, both on Charter grounds and as a matter of national policy.' The United States Government, however, was willing to take its share in the Trusteeship that it had proposed. Still the Zionists would have nothing of it. They formally announced their intention of proclaiming a * Jewish ' state as soon as the Mandate was terminated. The sole function of the United Nations, they said, was to recognize this state. The Arab states, while continuing to reject the suggestion of Partition, accepted a short period of Trusteeship. On one matter both Zionists and Arabs were in agreement, in attacking and abusing the British for alleged support of and assistance to the other side respectively, both in Palestine and at the United Nations. On April 20th the United States representative formally introduced the new proposals to the General Assembly of the United Nations. The United States Government was still prepared to take its share in the Trusteeship, short of providing any armed force, but would not act alone. The British Government warned the Assembly that time was running out and urged that some

United Nations organization should be created at once to take over what remained of the administrative machine from the retiring Mandatory Government. None of the other Powers, however, showed any inclination to share the responsibility. At length, on May 14th, on a United States motion, the General Assembly resolved to appoint a Mediator¹ whose function would be to keep the peace in Palestine and secure the essential public services. The United Nations Partition Commission was at the same time brought to an end. While the Assembly was still sitting, the Zionist Council, sitting in Tel Aviv, proclaimed an independent 'Jewish' state under the name of Israel. An hour or two later, as soon as President Truman heard of this proclamation, he announced the *de facto* recognition of this state by the United States Government, to be followed, after an interval of hours, by *de jure* recognition by the Soviet Government. The Mandatory regime was terminated at midnight and the last British High Commissioner left the country. Immediately afterwards the armies of the neighbouring Arab states openly crossed the frontiers and invaded Palestine.

¹ Count Folke Bernadotte, President of the Swedish Red Cross, was appointed Mediator and was after a short interval murdered in Jerusalem in cold blood after he had put forward his proposals for a settlement between the two contestants on the basis of a scheme for Partition, differing somewhat from that hitherto favoured by the General Assembly of **the United Nations**.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

INDUSTRY AND FINANCE

TIT is doubtful whether Palestine has ever, that is to say for many centuries, been self-supporting. During the Ottoman period it had no need to be so. It was not a self-contained entity but a part of a larger one and it was not necessary for Palestine by itself to be economically sound so long as the Arab lands as a whole or even the Empire was in that fortunate position. It is even doubtful whether the Latin Kingdom of the twelfth century was self-supporting. Militarily it certainly was not, for almost without cessation throughout its brief life it depended on a continuous flow of military assistance from Europe. As for the Jewish part of the population, from the national tragedy of the year 135, if not earlier, this was always dependent on financial assistance from the more prosperous Jewries of the Dispersion. Peter's Pence, to a large extent the financial basis of the Vatican, has its counterpart in the tribute that flowed to Jerusalem under one name or another from the time of pre-Imperial Rome until our own day. And for the greater part of that period the Jews of Palestine to a very large extent consisted of pilgrims who had come to pray and to die, not to work and to live. Support from outside was therefore essential if they were to survive. It is only within the past two or three generations that a change came, that a Jewish population grew up that had come to work rather than to pray, to live and not to die.

In considering the economic development of Palestine under the Mandate one other fact must be given consideration. Palestine, until the installation of a British Government in 1920, was one of the backward lands. Its population was small and poor, whose wants were few and whose standard of living low. The very great majority consisted of agriculturists, scraping with difficulty a living from the pockets of soil among the mountains, or toiling, eaten by disease, among the malaria-infested, marshy lands of the plains. Their needs were very little. For their food they relied almost entirely on what they produced. From abroad they needed cotton sufficient to renew their clothing perhaps **twice in a lifetime, tobacco for cigarettes and, another luxury, a**

little coffee. Even well in the Mandatory period, when the condition of the people had been appreciably raised, a survey showed that the average income of an Arab agriculturist and his family was about £26 per annum, and as late as the years immediately preceding the influx of the German refugees at the beginning of the thirties, a Jewish resident whose income amounted to £30 a month was considered a wealthy man, to be envied. A sample survey made in five Arab villages as recently as 1944 showed 705 separate holdings of which only 30 exceeded 120 dunams (30 acres) in size, the minimum of unirrigated land estimated to be necessary to support a family in reasonable comfort. The 1914 War and the Jewish immigration that followed raised appreciably the cost of living and the new European population introduced many new necessities. With the new immigrants also came a development of agriculture and commerce and the establishment of new industries. Charitable, religious and educational funds, that in one form or another had entered Palestine in a continuous stream for centuries, still continued, and had to continue after the advent of the Mandatory Administration. The cost of this Administration was very much greater than any had been at any previous period in the country's history and partly as a consequence the condition of all classes in the population was improved. But the improvements were never paid for fully out of the public revenues, nor was the support of the population of the country as a whole assured out of the earnings or other income of the people.

The economic balance of the country's affairs can be well illustrated by a consideration of the figures of imports and exports. The gap between these was always relatively considerable and always increasing. Imports fluctuated, but exports grew consistently. During the period 1922 until 1932, the last year before the commencement of the German-Jewish influx, imports rose from five-and-three-quarter millions to seven and-three-quarter millions. During the same period, exports which were at first £1,388,000 increased by less than a million pounds. The visible deficit in 1932 was £5,400,000. During the second period, 1933 to 1938, that of the great immigration, imports described a curve from £11,123,000 to £11,357,000, rising to the highest figure of £17,853,000 in 1935. During the same period exports rose from £2,592,000 to £5,020,000, the figure for 1935 being £4,215,000. In the later years, the altogether abnormal ones of the War and its aftermath, imports rose from £11,035,000 in 1940 (£14,633,000 in 1939) to £36,224,000 in 1944, £40,691,000 in 1945, £70,432,000 in 1946 and £75,591,000 in the first eleven months of 1947, and exports from £4,072,000 in 1940 (£5,118,000 in 1939 and £5,814,000, the highest

figure hitherto in 1937) to £14,638,000 in 1944, £20,396,000 in 1945, £24,485,000 in 1946 and £22,775,048 in the first eleven months of 1947.¹ These extraordinary increases were, of course, in part due to similar extraordinary rises in prices, a consequence of the inflation that the War brought to Palestine. Both imports and exports rose in response to the great development of Palestine during the war years as an industrial centre, in particular as a means of supply to the armies of the Middle East. Palestine also as a leave resort for the members of these armies and the new wealth brought by the War to a section of the population were reflected in the rapid growth of imports.

From the foregoing it will be seen that throughout the period of the Mandate the Balance of Trade has always been against Palestine and, year by year, despite a continuous growth in the value of exports, increasingly so. A gap amounting, in 1947, to approximately £57,618,000 had to be filled somehow or other and in Palestine it has been filled, even if somewhat precariously. Several factors have contributed to the bridging of the gap. Prominent among them has been the continuous and increasing flow, from the day on which the Balfour Declaration was proclaimed, of funds, mainly from Jewish sources, to a small extent from Christian ones, for charitable, religious and educational purposes and also for the support of the many-branched activities of the Zionist Organization. Related to these funds, but on a very much smaller scale, are the funds sent from Europe and America for the maintenance of dependent relatives settled in Palestine. There were similar sources during the Ottoman period, but during the past generation their volume has grown manifold. Another of the invisible exports that has helped to fill the gap is the income derived from investments, at first insignificant in size, but latterly, after the immigration from Central Europe in the thirties of people of means, and still later, during the War as a consequence of the investment abroad of part of the profits made in the growing Palestine industry, of some importance. On the other hand the balance has always been against Palestine and not in her favour under the heading insurance and also, somewhat surprisingly, under that of tourists. For a number of years the Government collected statistics—in every case voluntarily given—of the amounts spent in Palestine by visitors, and abroad by returning Palestinian residents who had been away on business or pleasure. From the information given it was found that, at any rate since 1930, when the flow of tourists from North America ceased, more money was spent, year by year, by Palestinian residents outside of Palestine than by foreign visitors in Palestine. The large purchases of land by the Zionist Organization in the early

¹ Exports of specie and re-exports are excluded from these figures.

years of the Mandate also proved of little benefit to Palestinian economy. These purchases were for the most part from absentee landlords. The payments were often not even made in Palestine, but in Paris or Cairo or Beirut. More recent purchases of land by the Zionist Organization were principally from Jewish owners. At one time there was a notable income derived from remittances from Palestinian Arabs who had settled permanently or temporarily in North and South America, but with the closing almost two decades ago of all the gates of the Western Continent to Eastern immigrants this source to a large extent ran dry. A number of Palestinian settlers, especially Christians from Bethlehem and Ramallah, have returned with small fortunes which, in so far as they were transferred to Palestine, have helped to fill the gap between imports and exports. Apart from charitable and other funds the main means of doing so have, however, undoubtedly been two—money, and goods brought by immigrants, and capital invested in the country by Zionists and Zionist sympathizers, and the expenditure of the British Government directly and indirectly by individual members of the forces in Palestine, not only during the war years but from the beginning of the Arab Rebellion in 1936 and after the War during the Jewish revolt. Related to this last-mentioned source during the last ten years was the British Treasury grant in aid, a regular feature in the Palestine budget, which averaged about two million pounds per annum. By all these means a balance of the two sides of the account was secured, but some of the items seemed somewhat precarious and it always seemed that the struggle to retain the average standard of living, at any rate of the European portion of the population, far higher than the average Asiatic one, but still lower than that previously enjoyed by many of the immigrants when in Europe, could not be continued indefinitely.

Palestine, originally a purely agricultural country, gradually, with the encouragement and assistance of the Mandatory Government, while developing its agricultural activities and in particular its citrus plantations, established industrial undertakings which extended especially during the War period. Before the advent of the British the only industries worthy of mention were soap and olive oil manufacture, both small and in the hands of Arabs, and wine making, mainly a Jewish undertaking, which was declining instead of advancing. The principal basis of the Palestine economy was citrus production, originally entirely an Arab undertaking into which Jewish settlers had entered some years before the First World War. This had been so largely extended as to raise the export from under a million cases in the season 1920-1 to more than 15¼ million cases in 1938-9. After the outbreak of war the export of citrus fruit inevitably dropped to insignificant figures,

and although after the conclusion of hostilities they rose again, they were still far below the figures of fifteen years earlier. Both Arab and Jewish planters shared in the extension, the latter to a greater extent, until at the end of the period of expansion the acreage of citrus groves owned by Jewish planters slightly exceeded that of the Arabs. This great expansion was, however, too rapid to be healthy. As production increased prices fell, until an industry that had in its first years of expansion brought generous profits in the end proved a source of loss instead of gain to very many of its undertakers. In this depression the Jewish planters—especially the post-1920 ones—suffered more seriously than did the Arab ones and the Jewish ones of longer standing. From the beginning of the period of expansion the prices of citrus-land began to rise and it had risen to uneconomic prices. Much of this land also had been purchased with borrowed money on which interest had to be paid. A further burden was the pressure, the insistence, on the more recent planters to employ only Jewish labour and of that often more than was necessary. This labour was, on the whole, more expensive and not more satisfactory. The depression, when it came, pressed less heavily on the longer-established planters, Jewish as well as of Arab. Of the others, however, many found orange growing no longer a remunerative undertaking; at any rate for the time being. The War, with its stoppage of all export of citrus fruit, was the final blow. The Government, as has already been mentioned, came to the assistance of the industry with loans and the remission of taxation, most of which were never repaid, but still many of the growers could not survive. The trees were uprooted and the land devoted generally to vegetables. The Arab-owned groves with very few, if any, exceptions survived the crisis and as a consequence the Arab share in the citrus industry once again exceeded in extent that of the Jews.

Before the recent War citrus fruit was far and away the principal export from Palestine, and of the importing countries Great Britain was not only the largest customer in all classes of goods, but took about 98 per cent of its imports in citrus fruit. Britain was, in fact, the only country of consequence with which the balance of trade was in favour of Palestine. In 1938 and 1939 almost 50 per cent of the total exports of Palestinian products went to the United Kingdom, whereas only 13.2 and 16.4 per cent respectively of the imports came from there. During the War years this tendency was reversed and the neighbouring countries became the best customers, but this was during the period in which the Middle East Supply Centre was in effect in control of the commerce and industry of all these lands. In the three or four years that preceded the outbreak of war exports from Palestine to those

countries fell appreciably—a consequence of the political boycott of Palestinian Jewish produce.

Until the outbreak of the Arab Rebellion in 1936 Palestine had never been a burden on the British Exchequer, occasionally in times of depression expenditure had exceeded revenue, but the deficit had always been made good out of the accumulated surplus. For a few years at the beginning there were small grants in aid to cover the cost of the British Section of the Palestine Gendarmerie, and from 1926 half of the cost of the Transjordan Frontier Force was defrayed from Imperial funds. The excellent road system built partly by the Palestine Administration, partly by the military authorities, and a railway system, the legacy of two wars which not only provided valuable facilities to the people of the country but also connected them by rail with both Europe and Africa, are also a part of the debt that Palestine owes to Britain.¹ The harbour at Haifa, the second largest in the Eastern Mediterranean, was constructed by the Palestine Government out of Palestine funds, but behind it was a loan that was obtainable only with the backing of a British Government guarantee. The year 1936, however, marked the change, with a total revenue only three-quarters of the expenditure, and henceforth there was every year an appreciable gap which, despite continually rising revenue, the British taxpayer had to fill. The costs of administration, of which by far the largest item was that of public security, except for the last two years of the Mandatory period, always kept well ahead of the growing revenues, for the most part derived from taxation. With the outbreak of war further very heavy expenditure fell on the Administration, not only for public security, but also for such services as the subsidization of necessities so as to keep down the cost of living (an expenditure of £3,353,525 in 1943-4 and £4,703,148 in 1944-5 out of total expenditures of £14,819,250 and £18,196,594 in the respective years), grants to the citrus industry and supplements to the salaries and wages of the staff and other employees of the Government. The total Government revenue, which had been £1,809,831 in 1922-3 and £5,452,633 in 1934-5, rose to £17,496,682² in 1944-5 and £25,716,636² in 1946-7. For the same years the total expenditure was £1,884,280, £3,230,010, £18,196,594 and £22,547,025 in 1946-7. During the period of 1937 to 1947 the total grants in aid from the British Exchequer to the Palestine Government amounted to £12,613,759.

¹ Payment was made for the public works and other capital assets that accrued in Palestine at the end of the First World War, but the total payment, a million pounds, was but a tithe of their value.

² Including grants in aid.

One of the main tasks of the Palestine Government during the war years was the control of inflation. With abounding industrial activity and the consequent plentitude of money, protection for the local agriculturist and manufacturer enforced by circumstances far beyond the dreams of the professional protectionist of normal times, the manufacturer grew rich, the agriculturist no longer went hungry. The town workers, skilled and unskilled, also found their incomes appreciably increased, but nevertheless found themselves in consequence of the rise in the cost of necessities, no better, if as well off as in pre-war days. The lowest rank of labourer and the recipients of fixed incomes fared worst. Salaries were increased but not in proportion to the rise in the cost of living. On the last-mentioned class also the rising burden of direct taxation fell most heavily. In all countries income-tax falls more heavily on the recipient of a salary than on a man engaged in business. In Palestine as in other Mediterranean lands much of the ingenuity of those who are liable for this taxation is devoted to evading it. He, however, whose taxation is deducted at the source has no means of doing so. The Government, by controls and subsidies, was able somewhat to keep down the cost of living and inflation. In Palestine the former rose to 281 at the end of 1947 as compared with 502 in the Lebanon, 405 in Iraq (December 1945) and 568 in Iran. Yet the volume of currency in circulation rose from less than £1,500,000 in 1927, on its introduction, to £5,500,000 in 1938, £41,500,000 in 1944, £47,250,000 in June 1946 and then gradually fell, with the occasional interruption of a rise, to £41,000,000 at the end of 1947. The Deposit Accounts at the banks and Credit Co-operative Societies, which had amounted to £16,250,000 at the end of 1937 and £18,000,000 a year later, dropped to £15,750,000 at the end of the first year of War and then rose rapidly to £100,250,000 in February 1947, falling to £95,000,000 at the end of the year.

In conclusion, a brief sketch of the broad fluctuations of Palestine economy during the latter half of the Mandatory period may be considered in place. After the serious setback of 1930 and 1931 a rapid recovery commenced in 1934 with the rising tide of Jewish settlers from Germany, most of them men of some means who, temporarily at any rate, enriched the country relatively appreciably. There was, for Palestine, a very large amount of money lying idle at the banks, and a great and growing gap between the totals of imports and exports. With two largely self-contained populations it is possible, and it happened, that while one mainly prospered the other largely suffered destitution. The difference between the economic state of the larger towns and the plantations on the one hand and the agricultural villages

and the small towns on the other was very noticeable, and on more than one occasion during the year the Government had to come to the assistance of the cultivators outside the orange groves, with few exceptions Arab, and not only remit their taxation but also institute relief works. At the same time, out of the prosperity of the towns and the orange-growers, the Government was able to build up a considerable surplus and a reserve fund. The economic and financial situation, though still prosperous at the end of 1935, showed some deterioration in the later months of that year as a result of the Italo-Abyssinian War. Thus while the year opened not merely without unemployment among the Jews, but with an actual scarcity of labour, it closed with a number of unemployed, which gave rise to some anxiety. The outbreak of the War in October led to a run on the smaller banks, to whose assistance the larger ones, and later the Government, had to come. The restrictions of credit that followed reacted at once on the building industry, a principal source of employment for Jewish labour, and the boom in this industry began to slacken. Furthermore, as the volume of citrus exports rose, prices fell and already in the 1934-5 season prices became unsatisfactory and the Jewish growers ceased to extend their holdings.

The following year the situation grew worse in all respects. The economic position in the citrus market, almost the sole support of Palestinian exports, became more threatening. Imports were three times the value of the exports. The Arab strike contributed to a worsening of the situation, and the increased public expenditure, a consequence of the Arab Rebellion, unbalanced the budget which had for many years, almost without exception, shown a surplus. This state of affairs continued until the outbreak of war late in 1939. Then for the time being building practically ceased. The export of citrus fruit also came to an end, and for a time some 40 per cent of the Jewish working population, not to mention Arabs, found itself in need of employment. On the other side of the account the opening of the Iraq Petroleum Company's refinery (the pipe-line from Iraq had been completed four years earlier, in January 1935) provided new employment and the War gave Palestine Potash almost a monopoly in the market.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SERVICES

PROMINENT among the social developments in Palestine is that of the co-operative movement. This is in its origin entirely Jewish and, except for very small beginnings, contemporary with the opening of the Mandatory period. It covers a very wide field in the Jewish economy and social life—buying and selling, communal settlements, communal quarters in the towns, trading, employment and manufacturing. The co-operative movement among the Jews has grown from year to year with the minimum of interference from the Government and a cordial co-operation between the Jewish organizations concerned and the Government Registrar of Co-operative Societies. In many of the branches of the movement, especially in all that concerns the communal settlements, the all-powerful *Histadruth Ha Ovdim* is practically in control. Thus the Jewish co-operative movement in Palestine is a part of the organization, more political than economic or trade union, that holds in its hands so much of the life of the Jewish community. In 1933, following a report by Mr. C. F. Strickland who had been appointed to investigate the subject of co-operation in all its aspects in Palestine, the powers and duties of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies were appreciably increased. The Jewish societies, however, retained their practical independence, but had available the advice and assistance of a greatly enlarged and experienced department whenever they needed them. On the Arab side, however, the Registrar had a virgin field. While a Government committee was considering the Co-operative Societies Ordinance from the point of view of possible improvements in its machinery, another Government committee was inquiring into the economic conditions of the agricultural population. That of the Arab section of the population was found to be far from satisfactory and this latter committee included in its recommendations grants to farmers through the media of village co-operative societies. The recommendations of both committees were accepted and the beginning of a co-operative movement among the Arab agriculturists followed. This movement, differing from its Jewish counterpart, was at first almost entirely under the guidance of the Registrar. It was

moreover solely economic, with no interests outside its immediate function. Quoting an authoritative summary of the Registrar's functions in relation to the Arab societies—* the task of the Department is to help in the reconstruction of the lives of the peasantry and of the labouring classes generally by exploring all forms of co-operative activities which might better their lot and inaugurating such activities whenever opportune. In effect this means that the department of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies has to undertake the technical organization of Arab societies, the education of members in the principles and meaning of co-operation, the guidance of the societies up to a point where the members are competent to assume responsibilities, and the supervision of the activities of such societies including the audit of their accounts.¹ The newly organized department was able to function for only three years of peace in Palestine. Yet at the end of the year 1945 there were 240 Arab societies on the Register, of which 135 were rural credit societies, 13 agricultural marketing societies, 30 general agricultural societies, 15 co-partnerships of labour and 39 consumers' societies. At the same date the Jewish societies numbered 1,209, of which 104 were provident fund societies, 148 collective agricultural settlements, 98 smallholders' settlements, 61 agricultural marketing societies, 73 general agricultural societies, 72 irrigation societies, 154 co-partnerships of labour, 209 housing societies and 140 consumers' societies. On the 31st of August, 1939, the total of the deposits in the Credit Co-operative Societies was £1,562,000 and the total credit granted and outstanding £2,182,123. On the 31st of October, 1945, these amounts had increased to £8,343,589 and £2,650,797 respectively.

Mention has already been made of the *Histadruth Ha Ovdim*. The English title is The General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine. This is primarily a federation of trade unions, but its activities have spread in so many directions and it has become so powerful, that it has for long been virtually in control of the Zionist Organization or Jewish Agency. The Jewish Agency has sometimes been described as an *Imperium in Imperio*. To a far greater extent may the relationship of the *Histadruth* to the Jewish Agency be so described. 75 per cent of the Jewish salary and wage earners in Palestine are members of the *Histadruth*. In addition there are some 38,000 wives of members, not themselves gainfully employed, and 8,500 youths. Of the remaining 25 per cent of Jewish workers many—oriental Jews—are not organized. The remainder are members of several small labour unions, limited

¹ A Survey of Palestine for the information of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry (1946), p. 359.

to members of political groups who **are** not in sympathy with the political views of the *Histadruth*.

The *Histadruth*, although primarily a federation of trade unions and even more influential as a political party organization, has a number of other activities. The co-operative societies already mentioned and other institutions are affiliated to it. It owns or controls a number of the larger factories. It is the largest, now almost the only, public works and building contracting organization. The Jewish public transport services throughout Palestine are included in the *Histadruth*. On the 1st of January, 1945, 150 collective communal agricultural settlements and 53 smallholders' settlements were enclosed within the *Histadruth*. The *Tnuva*, the *Histadruth's* agricultural producers' marketing co-operative, has in effect a monopoly for all the agricultural producers in Palestine, provided no non-Jewish labour is employed by them. In the distribution of milk it gives preferential prices to factory workers, school-children and pregnant women. Another of its co-operative subsidiaries supplies its settlements and town workers with a variety of necessities and for this purpose has its own flour mills and factories. The *Yashin* manages orange groves for absentee owners. The *Meloro*th supplies water for agriculture. The *Sold Boneh* accepts contracts for building and public works, not only in Palestine but also in the neighbouring countries. During the War 60 per cent of its undertakings were on behalf of the military authorities. The *Shi'un* is a housing association. The *Histadruth*, through the *Solel Boneh*, actually owns a hotel on Mount Carmel. The *Histadruth* has its own bank and life insurance company. It has its own educational system, independent of the control of the General Council of the Jews of Palestine from whom, however, it receives grants, and trains its own teachers. It owns two daily newspapers—including the one with the largest circulation in Palestine, and a publishing business, a theatre and a sports club in which training is given in all out-of-door games. The labour exchanges of the Jews of Palestine are in its hands. Through the Zionist Organization it had, before the outbreak of war, at any rate, much to say in the selection of immigrants for Palestine. Finally it had its private, more or less secret, army in the *Haganah* from which came most of the recruits enlisted by the British military authorities in Palestine during the recent War.

The Arab trade-union movement is a far smaller and weaker movement than that of the Jews. There were, of course, no Arab trade unions before the opening of the Mandatory period, but at the very beginning of it a mixed Arab and Jewish union of railway and post-office employees was formed under Jewish auspices and was active for several years. Later there were a few weak and short-lived other **mixed**

unions, and also societies of senior and junior civil servants, and the *Histadruth* has at times attempted to form Arab constituents. The Arab trade unions differ from their Jewish counterparts in more than one respect. Like the Jewish ones they are also political associations, but they differ from the Jewish ones in not being party organizations. The principal of the Arab trade unions is the Palestine Arab Workers' Society, founded in 1925. This is also a federation of trade unions but very much smaller than and with insignificant resources when compared with the *Histadruth*. The Arab Workers' Society also, following the example of its big Jewish brother, controls a number of co-operative societies and directs a savings and loan society and an employment exchange. A few other Arab trade unions were formed later and, in 1945, an Arab Workers' Congress, also a federation, but wider based than the Arab Workers' Society. This Congress was represented in that year at the Paris Conference of World Trade Unions.

In 1922 a small Labour Department was set up by the Palestine Government. It was merged in the Immigration Department two years later. With a very small staff its activities were limited almost entirely, apart from the preparation of the periodical Labour Immigration Schedules, to the study of the need for legislation on labour matters and the drafting of legislation when such need became apparent. In the two years of its existence it prepared and piloted to the statute book, a Workmen's Compensation Ordinance, an Ordinance regulating the employment of women and children and one for the regulation of picketing in labour disputes. All these Ordinances followed the lines of English legislation, but necessarily did not proceed as far. In the subsequent quarter of a century none of the lines laid down in this legislation was departed from. The extensions that were made from time to time were always extensions of the existing legislation. These three Ordinances were the beginning of a movement by the Administration for the protection of labour in Palestine, which ended in a code in advance of any other in Asia and in a considerable part of Europe, yet fitted to the two widely separated peoples for whom the legislation was required. In 1942 a new Labour Department, on a level with the other departments of Government, was constituted, with adequate means and a programme of advance. Full advantage was taken of its opportunities and the result was a body of legislation that gave consideration to the natural rights and interests of labour in all sections of the population.

One of the very noticeable results of the Labour legislation of Palestine has been the almost complete disappearance of child labour, once so prevalent there as in other oriental lands. Under the existing legisla-

tion no child under twelve may be employed in any undertaking and none under fourteen in industry. Unfortunately the legislation does not touch street trading, etc., and the streets of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv continued to be thronged with young boys anxious to secure a few mils by almost any occupation. This undesirable state of affairs is directly connected with the extreme form of poverty that has certain sections of the population in its grip. Early in 1942 an investigation by the Jerusalem Council for the Welfare of Children and Young Persons, an unofficial body, composed of representatives of all three communities, in which the British element predominated, made a limited survey of the state of affairs in Jerusalem. Its investigations were among members of all three major religious communities. It found that in the homes that it visited the average number of persons living in a room was 3-8 (among the Jews 5-3). And these, it was reported, were not the poorest families in Jerusalem. In parts of Tel Aviv, Haifa, Safad and Tiberias it was said that conditions were little if at all better. Investigations made at the end of 1945 showed some 13,000 Jews in Jerusalem living in the extreme of poverty. A large part of the Arabs of Jaffa were living four or five in a room. In Haifa 30,700 persons, of whom 3,700 were Jews, were living in slum areas and in the other Jewish quarters there was considerable overcrowding. Many lived in flimsy structures of mats and sacking on the roofs of houses already overfilled. In Haifa 2,000 persons were living in caves, three or four families to a cave. Others, Arab squatters, had erected habitations of tin, sacks and boards. In Haifa as in Jerusalem there were 'tin towns', groups of 'dwellings' made out of petrol tins, and Arabs were not the only occupiers. The responsibility for this state of affairs did not rest entirely on the Government although, by its very existence, it had a share of it. The appalling poverty of much of the town population was an inheritance from the previous regime. The Government might have greatly reduced it if any improvement it effected had not been neutralized by the flow of recruits to this submerged element in the population.

Britain took over a Palestine entirely devoid of any form of Government or other public social service. Such services as were afforded were entirely on a voluntary basis, the means and also the instruments for which were supplied from outside. These services, generously given, were still inadequate even for the Jewish and Christian sections. The Moslems benefited far less, relatively and absolutely. But within all sections of the population there was a remarkable community of feeling and the absence of assistance from without was to some extent made good by the tendency never, if that could be avoided, to let a fellow member of the community go hungry. The developments that

followed the initiation of the Mandatory period, however, made whatever assistance, that had hitherto been rendered, absurdly inadequate. The voluntary services of the Jewish community were extended, but it was soon realized that something more than voluntary service was required. Of the advances under the headings Health and Education a brief account has already been given. At the same time a Government Woman Welfare Officer was appointed and given two or three assistants. From this very small beginning a Government Social Welfare Department in course of time developed. This Department was in two main sections: probation and social work of the Law Courts, and welfare proper. The probation system and the treatment of delinquency were statutory obligations based on the English practice. Direct relief was given, mainly in Jerusalem, to the destitute, whose difficulties rose gradually during the War with the relative prosperity of the general population. There were Moslem endowments for the relief of the poor of this community, but as the difficulties increased these endowments found themselves less and less able to meet the needs. Direct Government subventions were, however, not limited to the Moslem community. For instance Miss Gaster's Home for Imbecile Children was indebted to it for very generous assistance and the Home for Crippled Children in Jerusalem, almost the only surviving charitable institution which gave no consideration to community, but only to need and had both Jewish and Arab children among its inmates, was supported by the Government and the British community, apart from a part of its budget which was contributed by Jewish well-wishers in North America. This institution, for which the need was always insistent, was founded by an American Jewish philanthropist physician who made frequent visits to Palestine in the interests of his institution. The Jerusalem Council of Social Service, which actually survived the Mandate although in a very attenuated form, was also non-communal, its members being drawn from the British, Jewish and Arab communities with a few others who were included in none of the three. To the social welfare budget of the *Vaad Leumi*, which took responsibility for social work among Jews, Government contributed 25 per cent and to the Tel Aviv Municipality and the Jewish local councils from 13 to 25 per cent of their expenditure. The total annual expenditure of the Jewish community on social welfare in the years after the War, apart from expenditure on immigrants, was estimated at £1,610,000. Of this sum £290,000 went to Jewish soldiers' dependants. The funds spent on Arab welfare services were far smaller, but among the Arabs there is an appreciable amount of personal charity. Most of the Christian Churches have relief societies and in addition

there were Arab welfare committees in all the principal Arab centres. These committees received assistance from the Government, but the tendency was to transfer responsibility to the Municipalities. The total expenditure of the Social Welfare Department was £221,000 in 1944-5 and £290,000 in the following year.

A central Town Planning Commission, with local commissions subsidiary to it, was set up in the first days of the Civil Administration. With Sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner and Colonel (later Sir) Ronald Storrs as Acting Civil Secretary, such a step was by no means surprising. Its function was to control building and to preserve and increase amenities in the principal centres of Palestine. In this matter Government was certainly in advance of public opinion and had in consequence to cope with many hindrances. Although its writ ran throughout the country it was only in the capital and in Haifa that its influence was appreciable. Jerusalem was from the first considered far more than the capital or chief town of Palestine. It was looked on and dealt with as a precious possession of the whole of Western civilization. Under the supervision of Sir Ronald Storrs, in his substantive office of Governor, later District Commissioner, of Jerusalem, a watchful eye was kept over the beauties and the treasures of the Holy City. In this he and his successors were wholeheartedly seconded for fifteen years by an active, devoted and cultured mayor, an Arab who had lived many years in Constantinople and who knew Western Europe well. The preservation of the especial beauty of the Old City was not so difficult. It was outside the walls that sleepless eyes had to watch so that the modern utilitarian developments, justified perhaps in lands in which the goal of materialism is the principal one, should not approach too near and endanger one of the priceless heirlooms that our generation has inherited. The devoted work and care given to the preservation of Jerusalem as a centre of delight to all cultured men and women is described in a volume of a character well worthy of its subject which the Government of Palestine published on the eve of its dissolution—*Jerusalem, the City Plan, Preservation and Development during the British Mandate, 1918-1948*, by Henry Kendall, Government Town Planner, Palestine.¹ I quote from the brief foreword by Sir Alan Cunningham, the last of the High Commissioners. * The City of Jerusalem, precious as an emblem of several faiths, a site of spiritual beauty lovingly preserved over the ages by many men's hands, has been in our care as a sacred trust for thirty years. In these pages will be found an important part of the story of the discharge of that trust, of the efforts made to conserve the old while adding the new in keeping

¹ London, His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948.

with it, of the process of marrying modern progress with treasured antiquity.*

In Haifa, a city set in beautiful natural surroundings, the Town Planning Adviser had also a Municipality responsive to informed advice. Here a great opportunity was given by the considerable reclamation scheme that was a part of the port development, and full advantage was taken of it. Elsewhere in Palestine special attention was given to the preservation and care of sites of archaeological, historical and aesthetic value. In this sphere the Department of Antiquities necessarily participated and in the work of excavation had the co-operation of archaeological societies centred in Palestine as well as those of Europe and Asia.

In the sphere of cultural activity a sketch of the educational system constructed under the Mandatory Administration has already been given. Although in theory open to all Palestinians, Arab as well as Jewish, the Hebrew University was in fact limited to the latter part of the population, if only on account of the employment of Hebrew as the language of instruction. Arab students had to be provided for elsewhere. A number, not a very large number, of them went to the American University at Beirut and with these were Palestinian Jews as well as Arabs. Still fewer Palestinian Moslems attended the courses at El Azhar University in Cairo, which is a theological institution. The students attended these two institutions for the most part at their own expense or that of Moslem institutions. A few of the students at the Beirut University were provided for by the Palestine Government, which also granted scholarships, increasing in number year by year, tenable at British universities and university colleges. For these latter, members of both sections of the population were eligible. Individuals, also from both communities, attended at their own expense some of the American and Continental universities. Furthermore the Government Department of Education arranged for those who were unable to study abroad University of London and other external examinations so that Palestinian residents could graduate at that University and obtain diplomas from other English professional examining bodies. A Palestine matriculation examination of a high standard was also introduced, for which several schools in Palestine prepared candidates. One of the purposes of all these steps was the building up of a Palestine Civil Service drawn from the country.

In the sphere of what is generally known as culture, however, less influence rests with Governments and institutions than with individuals and peoples. This is perhaps even more the case with the Jews than with other peoples. Jewish culture or culture among Jews, certainly in Palestine, is almost, if not quite, entirely spontaneous. It springs

from the people. Not that it is chaotic, but that the organizations that encourage and nurse it arise from below. **Whether the culture of the Jews** of Palestine is Jewish, apart from influencing and being **influenced by Jews, or European need** not be discussed here. Whichever may be the case, or perhaps in both cases, it is widespread among the Jews both in the gatherings which come to enjoy and the individuals who provide the enjoyment. Nowhere is this more evident than in music. For its size the Jewish community of Palestine, and Palestine as a whole, is probably the richest in the opportunities for the enjoyment of the best music. A symphony orchestra of the first rank and of international reputation has been firmly established and the concerts it gives are among the outstanding events in Palestinian life. Individual recitals are frequent. Throughout the period of the Mandate—with intervals—a Hebrew Opera Company of a high standard has been active. Schools of music are to be found in all the principal Jewish centres, and in no group of European Jews is not a violin, often a piano also, to be found. The drama, although not on as high a level as music, also practically permeates the Jewish community in Palestine. The *Habima* Dramatic Company, originally formed in Russia, settled in Palestine in its early years and although its medium of expression is Hebrew, in normal times it gives recitals not only in its land of domicile, but also in Egypt, Europe and America. There are also other Jewish dramatic companies, sprung up from the people, whose sphere is limited to Palestine. One of them, with a deserved country-wide reputation, is in a sense an amateur company, drawn from working men and women who devote their leisure to rehearsals and performances. Art exhibitions are frequent and artists are many, but the artistic level of the people as displayed by these falls short of the musical level. Sculpture is both small in scope and even lower in inspiration. Native Jewish architecture falls short of that of the Arabs who seem to have in this respect an innate sense of congruity. Most of the more important Jewish buildings have been erected under the inspiration of Central European architects who have introduced the packing-case style. The outstanding instances of modern architecture in Palestine, and there are some—Government House, the Rockefeller Archaeological Museum and above all the Jerusalem War Cemetery for instance—are the work of British architects and artists. Among the European Jews craftsmanship seems to have died out. It survives among the Jews from the Yemen—Arabized Jews or perhaps Arabs of the Jewish faith—and also among the Arabs of the villages. Unfortunately modern trends are all against them. All that was possible was done to encourage them and to assist them by that outstanding **patron of culture, Sir Ronald Storrs, who founded the Pro-**

Jerusalem Society for the purpose, and throughout his period of office in the country was always eager to encourage and assist both indigenous and imported culture in all their manifestations. He had with him others of the earlier members of the Palestinian Administration as well as prominent members of the communities. But the Pro-Jerusalem Society came to an end with his departure from Palestine at the end of 1926, for he left no one to don his mantle. The largest library in the Middle East is that of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. There are a few smaller ones, Arab as well as Jewish, and also some private libraries, also both Arabic and Jewish, of consequence.

As a country very rich in archaeological sites, Palestine is a centre of interest to archaeologists everywhere. Most European and American societies have conducted excavations and two or three of them have permanent establishments in Jerusalem. Of indigenous archaeological societies there the Department of Archaeology of the Hebrew University and the Palestine Jewish Exploration Society. The principal museum is the gift of an American benefactor, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., one of the outstanding buildings of the country. Endowed generously and with the support of the Palestine Government behind it, it has been able, despite the short period of its existence, to assemble a considerable collection illustrative of the life of the country from prehistoric times. The Museum has the first claim on all objects of archaeological interest found in Palestine. There is also a permanent archaeological exhibition, a part of the Hebrew University. A Government Department of Antiquities was ordained under the terms of the Mandate which dealt with the subject in some detail. After defining an antiquity as 'any construction or any product of human activity earlier than the year A.D. 1700', it continued: 'The law for the protection of antiquities shall proceed by encouragement rather than by threat/ The definition of antiquity was later extended to include 'human and animal remains of a date earlier than the year A.D. 600, and any building or construction of a date later than the year A.D. 1700 which the Director (of the Department) may . . . declare to be an antiquity'.

There was one other field in which the senior officers of the Government, from successive High Commissioners downwards, strove hard to bring the several communities together. Conscious of the mission laid down in the Mandate to create one Palestinian state in which all of the several communities which together were to form that state would have similar rights and similar opportunities to develop as communities, while remaining equal citizens in the larger state, every opportunity was taken to bring members of all the communities together. In those early days there was no official or semi-official func-

tion, social or more formal, to which members of all communities were not invited. The High Commissioner and the Governors of the Districts made it a rule to include Jewish and, if possible, Arab guests in the company even at their unofficial dinner-parties. At the larger gatherings or receptions this was, of course, easier, but no difficulty was allowed to stand in the way of including at least one or two Jewish guests in a private dinner-party, no matter how small it might be. And in these early days the efforts of the official element were heartily seconded. British and Jewish guests at the table of the Arab Mayor of Jerusalem were by no means infrequent: Jewish residents, especially of the circle of Judah Magnes, were always happy to welcome Arabs of their class, not to mention, of course, British members of the Administration, and to accept their hospitality in return. In the home of Annie Landau, the Headmistress of the Anglo-Jewish Evelina de Rothschild School for nearly fifty years and for the greater number of them a leader of Jerusalem society, all met and all were welcome. In her last few years her house had become, unfortunately, almost the only one in which Jews, Arabs and Englishmen or women could meet in appreciable numbers. Clubs were founded by British officials to admittance in which there was no thought of bar on account of race or religious community. The Sports Club, the very centre of British social life in Jerusalem as in other oriental and colonial lands, included from the first Arabs, Jews and other non-British not only among its members, but also on its governing body, although the British, who had founded the club, always predominated in numbers. At one time its chairman was the Chairman of the Zionist Executive, an English Jew, Colonel (later Brigadier) Kisch, and on another occasion an English Jew was pressed to accept the office of Honorary Treasurer. Other similar attempts were made in the formation of a Jerusalem Women's Club, a Universities Club and a University Women's Club, in all of which members of all three communities co-operated under the lead of British residents. The Rotary Club movement was more successful and perhaps through help from outside lasted longer. The Rotary rule of one representative only of a profession or calling was relaxed to meet the peculiar circumstances of Palestine and a trinity substituted in every case so as to satisfy the claims of all three communities. But even this was not sufficient and there is on record a dialogue between an aspirant for membership and the President of the Jerusalem club for the year, somewhat in the following form. P. 'So you would like to join our club. You know I suppose we are limited to one member of each profession, that is to say three, one for each of the communities.' A. 'Oh, yes, but I am a doctor.' P. 'A doctor

of medicine? ' A, 'Yes.' P. 'I am sorry, but we have already our three members from the medical profession. But perhaps I can help. We go further. Are you a specialist? We divide medicine into its branches and accept representatives from all the branches. Are you by chance a specialist? ' A. * Certainly.' P. ' And in what branch of medicine are you a specialist? ' A. ' I am a specialist in all diseases.' This attempt to draw together the three communities went even further. Among the lower ranks of the British officials marriages with Jewish and Christian Arab girls were sufficiently frequent no longer to attract attention. In the higher ranks, where eligible bachelors were not numerous, there were at least a dozen similar marriages, most of them with Jewesses. Marriages between Arabs and Jewesses of similar class were also not unknown in those earlier days. Unfortunately relations between the three communities gradually deteriorated and although not all friendships were broken, by the middle of the thirties the three communities had visibly drifted apart and become socially self-contained. The great effort to fulfil the purpose of the Mandate and to create one Palestinian people of different communities had failed.

Jews and Arabs continued to be invited to the High Commissioner's dinner table, but they were no longer invited to meet one another there. In the purely official sphere the Government struggled until the end to get Jew and Arab to co-operate, but with diminishing success. At one time Jews refused to sit with Arabs, at another Arabs refused to sit with Jews.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE HOLY PLACES

PALESTINE is a land *sui generis*, unfortunately in some respects, although not in all. Most states are composed of two or more religious or racial or national communities. But in none are there to be found so many as in Palestine. There these recognized separate communities can be counted by the score, many of them in perpetual, if not always, in open warfare against the others.¹ There were only three religious days of rest; there might have been more, but of festivals and saints days there are sufficient to cover the whole calendar. In one respect fortunately, in others sometimes unfortunately, they overlap. When intercommunal passion has, however, been suppressed, members of one often join in the joyful celebrations of another. Thus at the celebration of the Rejoicing of the Law in Jerusalem Moslem Arabs almost participate in the happiness of the oriental Jews. And in return when the time, comes for the Christian or Moslem pilgrimages to the sites connected traditionally with the Prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel, Moslem, Christian and Jew join together in the celebration of the memory of a prophet common to all three faiths. The traditional site of his victory over Baal on Mount Carmel is a place of pilgrimage, sometimes of miracle, to Jew, Christian and Moslem alike. On the other hand the coincidence of the Jewish Passover, the Orthodox Easter and the local Moslem festival of *Nebi Musa* (The Prophet Moses) used to make one week in the spring the most anxious of the year for the Police and other administrative authorities of Jerusalem. And the people of Palestine have very long memories. The age-long hatred of the Jews, apparently ineradicable among the people of Nablus, is said to go back to the massacre of the inhabitants of the neighbouring city of Shechem narrated in Genesis xxxiv. A few miles north of the Palestine-Lebanese frontier to-day, still, as for untold centuries going back before the beginning of history, the girls and women of the neighbourhood go to the banks of the Nahr Ibrahim whose waters by the end of the winter

¹ The census of 1931 showed communities or groups habitually speaking 60 different languages, and 41 distinct religious communities.

have turned blood-red with the soil brought down from the hills, to lament the tragic death of Adonis. The rock which is to-day sheltered by the so-called Mosque of Omar, the third holiest site in Islam, was earlier the altar of the Temples of the Israelites and the Jews, still earlier the traditional place for the proposed sacrifice of Isaac and even earlier, as archaeological discoveries show, a sacred place of peoples whose very names have been forgotten for millennia. The ancient City of Hebron is known to every Arab as *El Haiti*, The Friend. What friend, we may ask? Abraham, who was the Friend of God and is buried in Hebron—a prophet of Islam as well as of Judaism.

These and many other memories cannot be ignored when the present or the future of the country is under consideration. If they are it will be found that the assumed settlement is but a point in a cycle of disturbance.

During the Ottoman period the problems of the Holy Places were not matters of major concern, except between rival Christian sects. The Temple enclosure, now a Moslem Holy Place and for centuries in the possession of the Moslems, was supposed to be reserved for Moslem foot alone, but Europeans and Americans encountered little difficulty in securing admission in order to admire and enjoy the Eighth Wonder of the World. The second principal Moslem shrine in Palestine, the Haram at Hebron, the reputed burial place of the Hebrew Patriarchs, who are also Moslem saints, was far more difficult of access. All Christians, except members of royal houses, were for long resolutely excluded. Jews had been granted the concession of ascending the first seven or eight steps that led to the shrine, there to drop into an aperture in the wall prayers and petitions which it was hoped would be put on their course by the spirits of their ancestors who were buried within the building, but no farther. The Christian Holy Places of the first rank are more numerous. In Jerusalem there is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which shelters under its roof the reputed site of the Crucifixion and of several other outstanding incidents in the earliest phase of Christian history. The authenticity of this site has been contested and there is much negative evidence against it, but to the greater part of Christendom there is no question of its authenticity. A dozen Christian sects claim ownership and rights in different parts of the Church and these claims were regulated and reconciled by the Ottoman Government, but to secure their observance there had always to be a Moslem police guard within the building. Other Moslems had apparently no desire to enter, nor had Jews except an occasional inquisitive tourist. But until the advent of the British no known Jew had ever been admitted to the church and any who had the hardihood

to approach it during a period of religious excitement such as one of the major festivals virtually risked his life. The other principal Christian shrines are the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, built by the Empress Helena, and the oldest place of worship extant that has been in use continuously as a church, and the shrines in Nazareth connected with the life of Mary and Jesus there. In the church at Bethlehem the conflicts between the rival Christian communities have been especially acute. It was partly in consequence of a dispute between Latin and Orthodox monks there that the Crimean War broke out.

The Jewish Holy Places of relative importance are few. In fact, excluding the Tombs of the Patriarchs which have for centuries been inaccessible to Jews, there is only one, at the most two. This is the Western Wall in Jerusalem, commonly known as the Wailing Wall, among Jews the *Katel MaArati*, the last surviving relic of Herod's Temple. Its foundations and lower courses are, however, pre-Herodian and may go back even to Solomon's time. This Wall is a part of the boundary of the *Haram esh Sharif* in whose centre is the Moslem Holy Place of the Dome of the Rock. The inner face of the Wall is in another respect sacred to the Moslems, inasmuch as it was to this Wall that tradition says Mohammad's miraculous steed was tethered on the night of the Prophet's visit to heaven. At the foot of the outward face of the Wall are a courtyard and houses that are Moslem religio-charitable property. With all these impediments, however, Jews were free for centuries to congregate on every day at the foot of the Wall there to perform their devotions. The rights of the Jews in this matter and the limitations of these rights were carefully defined in a protocol and any threatened encroachment promptly repressed. This was necessary, for in these matters in the East the apparently most inoffensive deviation from traditional practice is at once seized on as a precedent and the thin end of a wedge, and every endeavour made henceforth to take advantage of it to the full.

Article XIII of the Mandate for Palestine laid down that 'all responsibility in connexion with the Holy Places and religious buildings or sites in Palestine, including that of preserving existing rights and of securing free access to the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites and the free exercise of Worship . . . is assumed by the Mandatory, who shall be responsible solely to the League of Nations in all matters connected herewith . . .' and Article XIV continues: 'A special Commission shall be appointed by the Mandatory to study, define and determine the rights and claims in connexion with the Holy Places and the rights and claims relating to the different religious communities in Palestine.' In consequence of the impossibility of reconciling the views and demands

of the several Powers this Commission was never constituted, and throughout the Mandatory period the Government administered the Holy Places on the basis of the *status quo* which had been defined in 1757. It was not until 1924, however, that the British Government abandoned all hope of the constitution of this Commission. Then, by the Palestine (Holy Places) Order in Council, all disputes or claims in regard to the Holy Places or religious buildings or sites in Palestine, or disputes or claims relating to the several religious communities were formally taken out of the jurisdiction of the courts of Palestine. Once, in 1930, after the mutual rights of the Jews and Moslems at the Western Wall had led to strife and bloodshed, the British Government asked the League of Nations to investigate the matter in dispute and to lay down rules for its guidance. An *ad hoc* Commission was therefore appointed. Its recommendations confirmed the views of the Mandatory Government, which were in accordance with the *status quo* that had been observed for almost two centuries, and, although neither party to the dispute was satisfied, the recognition of the Moslem ownership of the Wall and its approaches, together with the right of Jews of uninterrupted access to it for prayer, subject to clearly defined conditions, was henceforth strictly enforced.

If the Commission laid down in the Mandate had been constituted it would have had no easy task. Sir Harry Luke, at one time Chief Secretary to the Government, in commenting¹ on it, pointed out that the consideration of the Holy Sepulchre alone would involve 'not only a study of the countless works, both manuscript and printed, of the pilgrims and other travellers, who in the course of seven centuries have written accounts of the Holy Sepulchre; it will also necessitate a critical examination of many *firmans* in Arabic, in Turkish, and in the Tataro-Arabic jargon employed by some of the Caucasian Mamelukes of Egypt which the Moslem rulers of Palestine granted to the several communities of the Holy Sepulchre. The circumstance that these *firmans* are not infrequently in contradiction with one another will not lighten the difficulties of the Holy Places Commission.'

The situation came to a head so far as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was concerned in 1936 when repeated earthquake shocks and other causes having combined to undermine the fabric of the church, to safeguard the lives of the worshippers and others who were accustomed to frequent it, the church had to be closed. Repairs were urgent, but no one of the Christian communities would agree to another undertaking the work. There was a belief and a fear that such work would transfer the ownership of the church to the successful

¹ *Prophets, Priests and Patriarchs*, p. 38.

competitor. Furthermore, most of the communities had not the funds wherewith to do so. For the Government to undertake the work it would have to spend money obtained from taxation, and the use of taxes received from Moslem and Jewish taxpayers for the repairs of a church would, in a land such as Palestine, have been unthinkable. On the other hand if the church were to collapse while in the custody of the British it would probably be a score of centuries—not so very long a period in a region in which time is counted by millennia—before the British responsibility for the wrong done to Christendom would be forgotten or forgiven. The Mandatory Government in the circumstances apparently did nothing in the matter except to erect scaffolding in order to shore up the building. Yet somehow or other the fabric was made secure, the scaffolding removed and the church reopened—probably at the expense of the British grants in aid.

The quarrels of the several Christian communities over the Church of the Nativity were endemic and lasted for centuries, always with the seed of international strife within them. The dispute that was one of the causes of the Crimean War has already been mentioned. The right to keep the church clean was a cause of frequent dissension. The Report of the Mandatory Power to the League of Nations for the year 1932 may be quoted in this connexion. 'The cleaning of the Church of the Nativity, which is usually carried out on the 29th December every year, was postponed indefinitely owing to dissensions between the Orthodox and Latin communities on the subject of the cleaning and opening of the northern windows of the Church. An attempt by the Government to bring about agreement did not meet with success.' Similar dissensions in later years caused the deadlock to continue. At the same time frequent minor disputes broke out and Police had to be kept continuously in the church to prevent disturbances while the representatives of the Government were being urged, without intermission by one party or another, to intervene and bring out its forces to assure the demands of the party clamant at the moment.

Even within the communities there were disputes which would, failing the intervention of the Government, at times have led to bloodshed. The death of the Orthodox Patriarch in 1931 brought to a head at once the struggle between the Arabic-speaking and the Greek-speaking elements in the Orthodox Church. The procedure followed for centuries on the occasion of a vacancy in the Patriarchate was for the Synod, which was entirely Greek in race and speech, to select a list of twelve candidates for the approval of the Government. The parish priests, all Arab in race and speech, had the right to be present at the selection, however, but without that of voting. It then fell to the Govern-

ment to remove the names of any unacceptable candidates and the Synod and the parish priests then reduced the remaining names to three, one of whom was chosen by the Synod as Patriarch. The Arab community had always objected to this procedure and on this occasion refused to take its part in the election. A deadlock consequently ensued. The objectors appealed to the Supreme Court whose jurisdiction the Synod rejected. Judgement was, however, given in favour of the objectors and all proceedings towards an election that had already been taken were declared invalid. Nothing further happened until 1935, four years after the death of the Patriarch Damianos, when the Government made a new effort to break the deadlock and made some alterations in the Electoral Law. But the laity was still dissatisfied and no election was completed. After the lapse of another three years the draft of a new Ordinance governing the election of a Patriarch was introduced and, when that became law, the way was at length open to the appointment of a successor to the deceased Patriarch, after an interval of over seven years. This did not, however, dissipate the bitter hostility between the two parties in the Orthodox community.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

CONCLUSION

IN conclusion one may now direct attention once again to the obligations undertaken by Britain when she issued the Balfour Declaration and accepted the Mandate for Palestine, and reiterate briefly the extent to which those obligations were fulfilled. The Declaration laid down that Britain would use her 'best endeavours' to facilitate 'the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people', with the reservation that * nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities \ Practically simultaneously in another document an assurance was given to the Sherif of Mecca, on behalf of the Arabs of the then Ottoman Empire, reiterating this safeguard and extending it. 'Since the Jewish opinion of the world is in favour of the return of Jews to Palestine, and . . . as His Majesty's Government view with favour the realization of this aspiration, His Majesty's Government are determined that in so far as is compatible with that freedom of the existing population, both economic and political, no obstacle should be put in the way of the realization of this ideal.' In accepting the Mandate for Palestine Britain reaffirmed this undertaking: * 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 ' (i.e. as quoted from the Balfour Declaration). In neither of these documents was the term 'Jewish National Home' defined, but in one drafted by the British Government and accepted by the Zionist Organization, it was laid down somewhat negatively that 'unauthorized statements have been made to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine . . . nor have they (His Majesty's Government) at any time contemplated . . . the disappearance or the subordination of the Arabic population, language or culture in Palestine. They would draw attention to the fact that the terms of the Declaration referred to do not contemplate that Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in

Palestine." And then the Government proceeded to quote with satisfaction a recent resolution of a Zionist Congress (September 1921): 'the determination of the Jewish people to live with the Arab people on terms of unity and mutual respect, and together with them to make the common home into a flourishing community, the upbuilding of which may assure to each of its peoples an undisturbed national development/

In fulfilment of this British undertaking it may be stated that in the course of the twenty-eight years during which the Mandate ran about 400,000 Jewish immigrants were given permission to settle in Palestine and that a Jewish population of 66,574 in 1920 had increased to one of about 640,000 in May 1948.¹ By this growth the Jewish population of Palestine rose from 11 per cent of the total to slightly more than a third. Simultaneously an official Jewish community was created by legislation with wide powers in matters of personal status and in others which concerned its members alone and with the right to tax them within limits laid down. Palestinian Jews at the same time enjoyed all the privileges of citizenship and shared in the general development of the country. The Jewish sabbath and holy days were proclaimed official days of rest on which no Jew could be required to work or to appear in court or elsewhere in response to a Government summons: Hebrew was accepted as one of the official languages to be used if desired in communications with all Government departments and other public bodies. Genuine settlers in Palestine, almost all of them Jews, were enabled to secure Palestine citizenship at small cost and on very easy conditions.

In the economic field every encouragement was given to industrial development, which was almost entirely Jewish, and agricultural development in which the Jewish share was also considerable. Article 18 of the Mandate forbade the grant of any advantage in taxation, commerce, exercise of industries, etc., to any one member of the League of Nations above any other (Britain under this article ranked equally with other members of the League) and by a treaty with the United States of America, that state, although it had refused membership of the League and was consequently free of the obligations and responsibilities accepted by its members, was assured of the enjoyment of whatever rights or privileges might be granted to members of the League.

Under Article 11: 'The Administration may arrange with the Jewish Agency . . . to construct or operate, upon fair and equitable terms, any public works, services and utilities, and to develop any of the natural

¹ This figure is built up of births and immigrants less deaths and emigrants.

resources of the country, in so far as these matters are not directly undertaken 'by the Administration.' Concessions granted by the previous Administration were confirmed. At first this Article was interpreted as giving the Jewish Agency, that is to say the Zionist Organization, or its nominee, preference over all competitors in the award of new concessions. The principal concession granted under these conditions was one for the supply of electricity to the whole of Palestine from which, however, in view of an earlier one granted by the Ottoman Government, Jerusalem and district were excluded. This grant of public concessions to a privileged body was, of course, contrary to British practice and aroused some misgivings in British circles. Moreover some doubt arose whether the practice adopted was justified in view of Article XVIII to which reference has just been made, and after a brief interval public concessions were made available to all applicants on equal terms. Not many were granted, but in most cases the recipients were Jewish, or mainly Jewish, bodies.

In a summary given in the Annual Report to the League of Nations for 1930 of the steps taken by the Administration to carry out the obligations to the Jewish community, laid down in the Mandate in accordance with the explanatory memorandum adopted at the time, it was pointed out that the virtual prohibition of the immigration of non-Moslems, hitherto in force, had been abolished and as a consequence Jewish immigration was legalized. The Turkish embargo on the purchase of land had also been raised and a large number of unofficial transactions, previously effected, legalized.¹ In the course of ten years about 800,000 dunams (more than 200,000 acres) of new land had been acquired by Jews.² Long leases of state domain at nominal rents had been granted to the Council of Petah Tikvah, the Township of Tel Aviv and the*Palestine Jewish Colonization Association. Jewish Religious Courts had been given an official status, a Rabbinical Council established and regulations empowering the Jewish Community to organize itself for the management of its internal affairs, with powers of taxation, approved. The Jewish community had also benefited in many respects from general legislation. Import duties on raw materials and capital goods required for manufacturers and agriculture had been reduced or removed, and at the same time protective duties had been imposed on imports that competed with the products of their factories.

¹ The ban on land holding by foreign corporations and individuals was also removed and their position in this respect was assimilated to that of Palestinian citizens.

² At the time of the British withdrawal eighteen years later Jewish holdings had been increased to more than 1,600,000 dunams, despite considerable sales by Jews, as a rule to other Jews.

Commercial treaties that benefited Palestinian manufacturers had also been concluded. Other legislation of benefit to the industrial population, of which a large proportion was Jewish, included the right of compensation for injured workmen. The facilitation of naturalization, including the grant of voting powers in advance to a large number of prospective citizens, the reduction of direct taxation and the reorganization of that which remained also benefited the population of Palestine, new and old. Great improvements were made in the means of communication, in particular the connexion of remote Jewish settlements with the main roads, until the road system of Palestine became the finest in Asia and better than any to be found in half of Europe. Valuable concessions were granted to undertakings such as those for the provision of electricity and irrigation, for exploiting the mineral resources of the Dead Sea and the mineral waters of Tiberias, for all of which almost all the capital came from Jewish sources. Contributions were made to Jewish educational and medical services, and the expert services of the Government Department of Agriculture were at the disposal of all agriculturists. Sealed armouries were provided wherever they were considered necessary for the protection of the agricultural settlements. High Commissioners, Chief Secretaries and Heads of Departments were always accessible to representatives of the Jewish Agency, who did not fail to take full advantage of these opportunities.

The autonomous Jewish community in Palestine, with 'rights and advantages as just described, and at the same time a full share in the public life of the country, can well be termed a Jewish National Home, as foreshadowed in the Balfour Declaration. This promise of the British Government of 1917, as interpreted in the Churchill White Paper and with the safeguards for the indigenous population laid down there and elsewhere, can justly be considered to have been fulfilled if the contention that is obvious from the relative documents that there was no intention, at that time, to create a Jewish political state or to place Palestine under solely Jewish control is accepted. It follows therefore that all that was promised with regard to a * Jewish National Home' in the Balfour Declaration and in the later correspondence between Mr. Churchill and the Zionist Executive, at the time representative of all shades of political opinion in Zionism, was granted.

The second obligation laid down in Article II of the Mandate, bracketed with that which was intended to 'secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home', 'the development of self-governing institutions', was, however, not fulfilled. The British Government and the Palestine Administration made several efforts to do

so, but were always thwarted, first by the Arabs, later by the Zionists. And without the co-operation of both of these elements in the population, it is obvious that it was impossible to fulfil the undertaking.

The British laid down the thankless task, that they had assumed so hopefully and so enthusiastically twenty-eight years earlier, on the 14th of May, 1948. The failure was obvious and there was no attempt to conceal it. To fail in a task one has undertaken is invariably a reason for regret. But the failure on this occasion was not an ordinary one. It was not an ordinary task that Britain and her servants had undertaken. They had placed before their eyes an ideal whose clear, bright light beckoned them along the path which in their enthusiasm they thought was traversible. Experience showed, however, that the obstacles in the way were too great even for hope and enthusiasm. The task was one for supermen and supermen appear very few and far between, even if they ever appear at all in the world of reality. After all, not every undertaking is carried to a successful conclusion. Failures in all spheres are frequent. No one can command success, one can only deserve it. The record of the British in Palestine is not perfect. No one would claim that it was. Mistakes were made. But they were made in good faith and in the desire to fulfil the trust that had been undertaken. The British went to Palestine for the welfare of the country and its peoples and to those ends they devoted themselves wholeheartedly. Bitter as is the disappointment of those who shared in the mission and the effort in Palestine or in London, they need not fear the verdict of history. They did their utmost for the charges who were entrusted to their care, but found that they were striving towards the unattainable. That a realization of this will come, and perhaps at a not very distant date, is evident from the still small voice of tribute to Britain, which secured an occasional hearing in intervals of temporary exhaustion amidst the tumult that accompanied the departure of the guardians of Palestine.

'Melancholy as are the circumstances in which the Mandate has come to an end, Britain has not laboured in Palestine in vain. Those who remember the country at the time of the British Occupation can best appraise what it owes to thirty years of British rule. Impressive as has been the contribution of the Jews, it was the civilizing work of the British Administration which provided the indispensable background. The Jews of Palestine, and their supporters throughout the world, know and will not forget that, while others have been lavish with gestures costing them nothing, it was by British exertions that the Jewish National Home was brought into being and shielded while it struggled

to its feet.¹ So said one of the English organs of Jewish opinion, more sober in expression than the majority and in a better position than many of them to know the facts. As time passes this conclusion of one of the * Non-Zionist' organs of opinion will doubtless find wider-spread realization. Unfortunately, however, it will be the verdict of history, too belated to affect current events.

¹ *The Jewish Monthly*, May 1948.

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