

CONFLICT IN ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

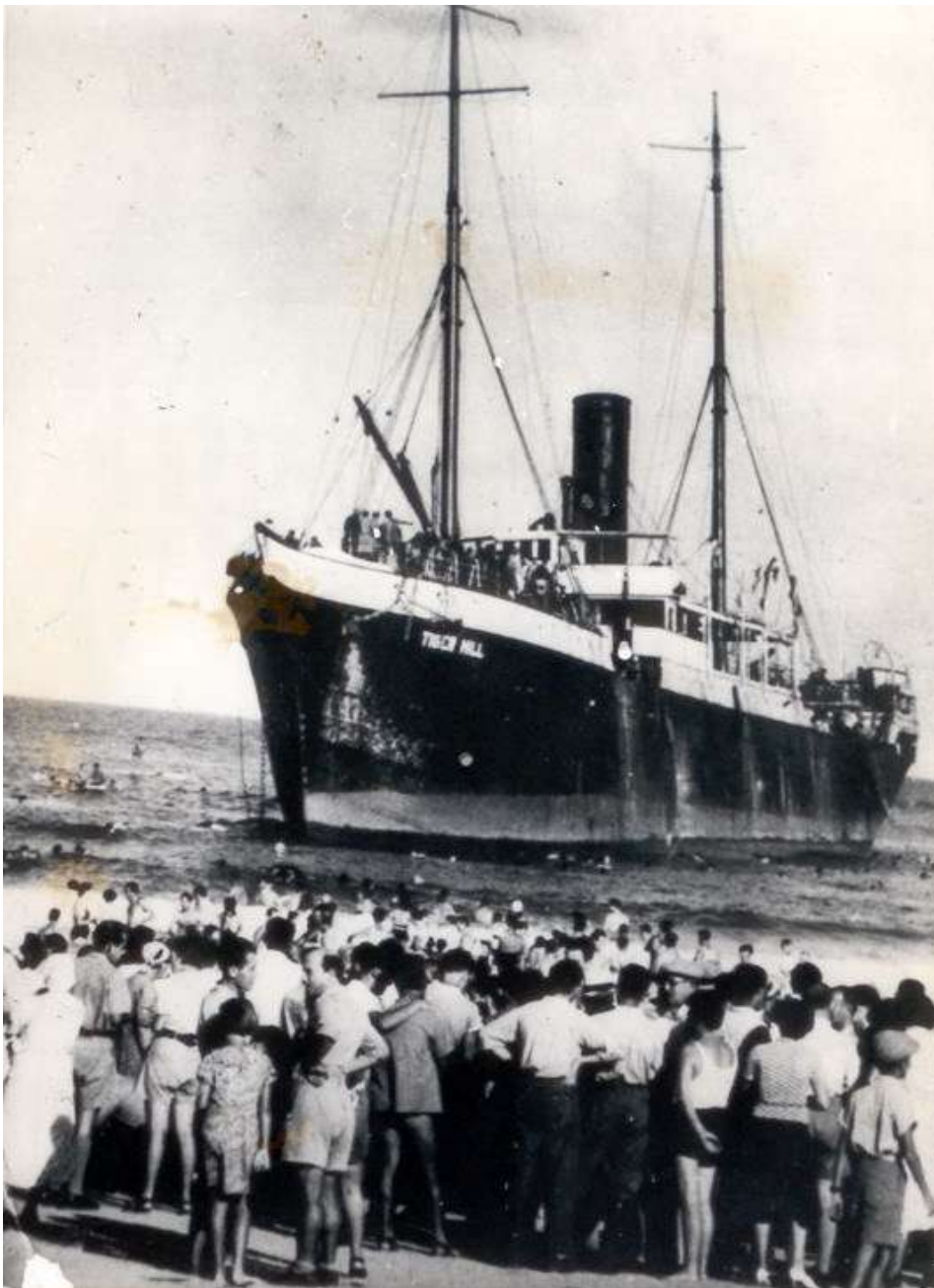
The British Mandate in Palestine

**SHOULD BRITAIN BE PRAISED OR BLAMED FOR ITS HANDLING
OF THE MANDATE IN PALESTINE?**





Britain helped Jews but kept immigration within limits



Source 1: The SS Tiger Hill carrying illegal Jewish immigrants was intercepted and fired on by Royal Navy gunboats off Tel Aviv in September 1939



Britain helped Jews but kept immigration within limits

Source 2: Document restricting the number of immigration passes to be issued into Palestine. Issued by the British government in 1939



Supplement No. 2

to

The Palestine Gazette No. 1506 of 15th July, 1946.

IMMIGRATION ORDINANCE, 1941.

ORDER BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.

IN VIRTUE of the powers conferred on the High Commissioner by section 5(3) of the Immigration Ordinance, 1941, His Excellency is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, as follows: No. 5 of 1941.

The maximum aggregate number of immigration certificates in all categories that may be granted during the period from the 15th July, 1946 to the 14th August, 1946, shall be 1,600.

No immigration certificate issued during this period shall be valid for the admission of more than one person.

By His Excellency's Command,

12th July, 1946.

J. V. W. SHAW
Chief Secretary.



The British left a civil war between Arabs and Jews

Source 3: Extract from Geoffrey Furlonge, 'Palestine is my Country - the Story of Musa Alami'. Alami recalled his childhood growing up in Palestine before the British mandate

Musa recalls that the child who became his own foster-brother was the son of the Jewish grocer down the street, and that for the next thirty years the two families used to visit each other, to exchange presents on each other's feast days, and to proffer congratulations or condolences as occasions demanded.'



The British left a civil war between Arabs and Jews

Source 4: Resolution of a meeting of Palestinians at Nablus on the 19th Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, 2 November 1935

'We consider every Jew to be armed...no Jewish individual, or home or settlement is free from such arms which are intended to fight the Arabs and destroy them. This situation suggests to every Arab that he must be ready to defend himself and should arm himself, and should not remain defenceless before his armed opponent.'



Neither Arabs nor Jews were willing to compromise



Source 5:

(Above) Jewish protest against the 1939 White Paper, (below) Palestinian Arabs at Abou Ghosh taking the oath of allegiance to the Arab cause including to fight Jewish immigration



Neither Arabs nor Jews were willing to compromise

Source 6: Extract from termination of the British Mandate, 15 May 1948

V.—The Problem Referred to the United Nations

After the failure of these discussions His Majesty's Government decided that the only course now open to them was to submit the problem to the judgment of the United Nations, asking that body to recommend a solution. The reasons for this decision were explained by His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in a speech to the House of Commons on 18th February, 1947, in which he said:—

“His Majesty's Government have been faced with an irreconcilable conflict of principles. There are in Palestine about 1,200,000 Arabs and 600,000 Jews. For the Jews the essential point of principle is the creation of a sovereign Jewish State. For the Arabs, the essential point of principle is to resist to the last the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in any part of Palestine. The discussions of the last month have quite clearly shown that there is no prospect of resolving this conflict by any settlement negotiated between the parties. But if the conflict has to be resolved by an arbitrary decision, that is not a decision which His Majesty's Government are empowered, as Mandatory, to take. His Majesty's Government have of themselves no power, under the terms of the Mandate, to award the country either to the Arabs or to the Jews, or even to partition it between them.”



British policy in Palestine always favoured the Jews

Source 7: Telegram of protest against Zionism from the Jaffa Muslim Christian Committee to Prime Minister Lloyd George at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference

Telegram to the General Peace Conference in Paris.

All the inhabitants of Palestine consisting of the Arab Districts of Jerusalem, Nablus and Acre, both Moslems and Christians, have assembled together and selected their delegates, who came and held a general meeting in Jerusalem to discuss the form of the Government suitable to their country.

They have decided before entering into any discussion on the subject, first of all to submit to your Supreme Conference their strong protest owing to what they have heard that the Zionists have been promised to have our own country as their own National one; that they intend to immigrate to this country and to colonize it.

Therefore we the assembled Moslems and Christians as delegates for an alive Arab Nation, included amongst the weak Nations liberated by the Allies, do hereby utterly refuse every decision which may be given in this connexion before taking our opinion.

We are submitting to the Conference a detailed statement of the prejudice which will be caused to the interests of the inhabitants of this country, both Moslem and Christian, who form the absolute majority, owing to the Zionists immigration and colonization in this country, and their making it their National abode.

We request your Supreme Conference not to give any decision regarding this country except after receiving our wishes and aspirations which shall be submitted.

Jerusalem,

3rd February, 1919.



British policy in Palestine always favoured the Jews

Source 8: John Martin, Assistant Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office writing to Sir Henry Gurney, Chief Secretary in Jerusalem, January 1947

'On the strength of our word the Jews have come to Palestine and established their national home there: it would surely be one of the greatest betrayals in history to abandon them now to their fate as a minority in an independent Arab state. Nor is it to be expected that the Jews, whose strength is already one third in population and predominant in wealth, will ever agree to subordinate their progressive modern "European" community to the domination of a relatively backward Arab majority whom (in some respects justly) they despise.'



British forces prevented a civil war

Source 9: A British military funeral in Palestine, 1946





British forces prevented a civil war

Source 10: Officers of The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) next to a railway wagon. They were engaged in rail protection duties against militant Arab groups opposed to the British Mandate and illegal Jewish immigration





Britain used colonial tactics to oppress Palestinians

Source 11: British soldiers on an armoured train car with two Palestinian hostages as human shields, 1936





Britain used colonial tactics to oppress Palestinians

Source 12: The Manchester Regiment force Arabs to 'run the gauntlet' during a village search in 1938





The British were forced to leave Palestine



Source 13: British propaganda poster designed to raise money from the public for the war effort through war savings, 1944



The British were forced to leave Palestine

Source 14: Letter from US President Truman to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, 31 August 1945

MY DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER:

...It appears that the available certificates for immigration to Palestine will be exhausted in the near future. It is suggested that the granting of an additional one hundred thousand of such certificates would contribute greatly to a sound solution for the future of Jews still in Germany and Austria, and for other Jewish refugees...the American people firmly believe that immigration into Palestine should not be closed...The main solution appears to lie in the quick evacuation of as many as possible of the non-repatriable Jews, who wish it, to Palestine. If it is to be effective, such action should not be long delayed.

Very sincerely yours,

Harry S. Truman



Britain gave up and handed the problem of Palestine to the UN

Source 15: Extract from the official termination of the British Mandate, 15 May 1948

IV.—The Obstacles which Frustrated the Efforts of His Majesty's Government to Establish Self-Governing Institutions in Palestine

The Government of Palestine were unable to make comparable progress towards the accomplishment of their third task, the preparation of the people for self-government, owing to the mutual hostility of Arabs and Jews. The existence of Arab opposition to the creation of a Jewish national home was apparent even before the Mandate began. The American King-Crane Commission sent out to the Middle East by President Wilson in 1919 had reported that:

“The Peace Conference should not shut its eyes to the fact that the anti-Zionist feeling in Palestine and Syria is intense and not lightly to be flouted. No British officer, consulted by the Commissioners, believed that the Zionist programme could be carried out except by force of arms.”



Britain gave up and handed the problem of Palestine to the UN

Source 16: The departure of the British from Haifa, 30 June 1948





Britain was unfairly portrayed as a villain

Source 17: Extract from 'Palestine Mission. A Personal Record', 1947 by British Labour MP Richard Crossman, member of the Anglo American Committee on Palestine

'...the average American supported immigration to Palestine simply because he did not want more Jews in America.....By shouting for a Jewish state, Americans satisfy many motives. They are attacking the Empire and British protectionism, they are espousing a moral cause, for whose fulfilment they will take no responsibility, and most important of all, they are diverting attention from the fact that their own immigration laws are one of the causes of the problem'



Britain was unfairly portrayed as a villain

Source 18: A lorry bearing the faces of past and current Soviet Communist leaders Lenin and Stalin parading through Tel Aviv on International Labour Day, 1 May 1949





Britain always prioritised British interests

Source 19: Extract from 'The Future of Palestine', also known as the Samuel memorandum, circulated by Jewish MP Herbert Samuel to the British Cabinet in January and March 1915

I am assured that the solution of the problem of Palestine which would be most welcome to the leaders and supporters of the Zionist movement throughout the world would be the annexation of the country to the British Empire...

It is hoped that under British rule facilities would be given to Jewish organisations to purchase land, to found colonies, to establish educational and religious institutions, and to spend usefully the funds that would be freely contributed for promoting the economic development of the country....

From the standpoint of British interests there are several arguments for this policy, if wider considerations should allow it to be pursued:-

1. It would enable England to fulfil in yet another sphere her historic part of civiliser of the backward countries....
2. The British Empire, with its present vastness and prosperity, has little addition to its greatness left to win. But Palestine, small as it is in area, bulks so large in the world's imagination, that no Empire is so great but its prestige would be raised by its possession. The inclusion of Palestine within the British Empire would add a lustre even to the British Crown....
3.if Great Britain can obtain the compensations, which public opinion will demand, in Mesopotamia and Palestine and not in German East Africa and West Africa, there is more likelihood of a lasting peace....'

Future of Palestine Herbert Samuel memorandum 1915 CAB 37 123 43.



Britain always prioritised British interests

Source 20: Speech on Palestine by Winston Churchill in the House of Commons, 31 January 1947

This is a lamentable situation. However we may differ, it is one of the most unhappy, unpleasant situations into which we have got, even in these troublous years. Here, we are expending hard earned money at an enormous rate in Palestine. Everyone knows what our financial difficulties are—how heavy the weight of taxation. We are spending a vast sum of money on this business. For 18 months we have been pouring out our wealth on this unhappy, unfortunate and discreditable business. Then there is the manpower of at least 100,000 men in Palestine, who might well be at home strengthening our depleted industry. What are they doing there? What good are we getting out of it?

We are told that there are a handful of terrorists on one side and 100,000 British troops on the other. How much does it cost? No doubt it is £300 a year per soldier in Palestine. That is apart from what I call a slice of the overheads, which is enormous, of the War Office and other Services. That is £30 million a year. It may be much more—between £30 million and £40 million a year—which is being poured out and which would do much to help to find employment in these islands, or could be allowed to return to fructify in the pockets of the people