The Truth About Palestine

A Reply to the Palestine Arab Delegation

By

LEONARD STEIN

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ZIONIST ORGANISATION
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UNDER the title "The Holy Land—The Moslem-Christian Case Against Zionist Aggression," the Palestine Arab Delegation in London has issued what is described as an official statement.

CHARACTER OF ARAB DELEGATION.

It should be understood that though the Delegation doubtless speaks for a certain body of opinion in Palestine, it has no official standing and no representative character. The "Congress" by which the Delegation was "duly elected" was a Congress of the Moslem-Christian Society. The Society is a self-constituted body enjoying only a limited measure of support in the towns and possessing few branches, if any, in the villages, which contain more than half the Arab population. It is actively opposed by a rival organisation known as the Moslem Society, with branches at Haifa, Nablus, Tiberias, Nazareth and a number of other centres. It is so far from commanding the unqualified confidence of the public that it has failed to find a single whole-hearted supporter in the local Arab Press and has recently been compelled to found an organ of its own. It need only be added that of the seventy-six delegates (not ninety-six, as erroneously stated) attending the Moslem-Christian Congress which appointed the Delegation, no fewer than twenty-four came from the single district of Nablus. In these circumstances, the
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bald assertion that the Delegation is "truly representative of all the Arab inhabitants of the country" is gravely misleading. The members of the Delegation are fully entitled to a hearing; but it should be realised that they are in no sense the freely elected representatives of the Arab population.

ALLEGED PLEDGES TO THE ARABS.

The Delegation opens its case with the allegation that in carrying into effect the Balfour Declaration and the international engagements which embody it, Great Britain is violating pledges given to the Arabs of Palestine during the war.

It may be observed that even if these pledges were much more explicit than is alleged by the Delegates themselves, their existence could not in itself invalidate another set of pledges which are at least equally binding, which are wholly unambiguous, and which have deservedly secured for Great Britain the affectionate regard and the active sympathy of fourteen millions of Jews throughout the world.

In fact, however, there is no such inconsistency as is alleged. The pledge on which the Delegation relies is that which it contrives to read into a letter addressed by Sir H. McMahon in 1915, not to the Arabs of Palestine, but to the Sherif of Mecca. That letter, far from embodying any definite engagement even towards the Sherif, merely marked a stage and not the final stage, in what was recently described in the House of Commons by the representative of the Foreign Office as "a long and inconclusive correspondence." It expressly excluded from its scope the areas in which Great Britain was not free to act without detriment to the interests of France—a qualification which, as was well understood, applied (inter alia) to Palestine. It has been summarised by Colonel Lawrence, whom the Delega-

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1 Mr. Harmsworth, House of Commons, October 24th, 1921 (Official Report, column 461).
tion will hardly suspect of a desire to minimise Arab claims, as undertaking, subject to this proviso, to recognise the independence of the Arabs, "conditional on an Arab revolt." There was no such revolt in Palestine. The Arabs had, on the Delegation's own showing, not the smallest motive for rebelling against the Turks, who, if the Delegation is to be believed, allowed Palestine to be "practically self-governing so far as local affairs were concerned," freely appointed Arabs as "governors, judges, officials," and "considered the Arab as partner in the Government." As was only to be expected in such circumstances, Arab Palestine remained perfectly passive throughout the German-Turkish operations, while, on the other hand, Jewish colonists, whose services were afterwards publicly recognised by the military authorities, actively co-operated with the British forces at the risk of their lives, and three Jewish battalions served under Lord Allenby as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force. The statement that "the Arabs of Palestine were not only friendly to the British Army, but actually helped it in its arduous task" has no foundation in fact. The "help" referred to is purely imaginary. Animated by a whole-hearted desire to be on the winning side, the Arabs rushed to the aid of the victors when the victory had already been won.

Such is the pledge of which British policy in Palestine is declared to be a violation—a violation, it may be added, of which not a word has been heard from King Hussein, to whom the pledge, such as it was, was addressed.

It is on this shadowy statement of policy, qualified by conditions which the Arabs of Palestine failed to fulfil and embodied in a vague and inconclusive correspondence to which they were not parties, that the whole case of the Delegation under the head of broken pledges is built up. No other promise is even alleged to have been given to the Arabs of Palestine at a time when it could, in any event, have influenced their action during
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the war; nor is any other undertaking whatever produced in support of the charge of bad faith, with the sole exception of a proclamation stated to have been issued by Lord Allenby "on behalf of England, France and America" [sic] on October 14th, 1918—a date when the war with Turkey was at an end. The imaginary character of this proclamation is apparent on the face of it. "America" was not a party to the war with Turkey and Lord Allenby was not in a position to speak in its name. The alleged proclamation of October 14th, 1918, is, in fact, fictitious. The only "proclamation" that can conceivably be referred to is the Anglo-French Declaration of November 7th, 1918, which was issued by Lord Allenby in the Occupied Enemy Territories on November 14th. Of this document it is sufficient to observe that while it expressly speaks of Syria and Mesopotamia, it never mentions Palestine; nor could it in any case conceivably be interpreted as a silent annulment of the Balfour Declaration, which had already been publicly on record for more than a year and which, on the Delegation's own showing, was well known to the Arab population of Palestine at the time of Lord Allenby's pronouncement.

These are the "solemn pledges" with which the fulfilment of the British promise to the Jews is alleged to be incompatible. It is only necessary to analyse them as set forth by the Delegation itself to be satisfied that no such incompatibility exists. Were it otherwise, indeed, it is inconceivable that Viscount Grey, who was at the Foreign Office during the negotiations with King Hussein on which the Delegation relies, would have declared, as he did in December, 1917, that "he was entirely in sympathy with the Declaration made by Mr. Balfour, and was very glad that it had been publicly announced as the view of the British Government."

KING FEISUL AND ZIONIST PROPOSALS.

If the alleged breach of faith was imperceptible to so high-minded a statesman as Viscount Grey, it was
equally imperceptible to one far better qualified to speak for the Arab world than the members of the Palestine Arab Delegation. On March 1st, 1919, King Feisul, the son of King Hussein, who was then pleading the Arab cause at the Peace Conference, declared in a letter of which the immediate publication was authorised, that

"Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organisation to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best, in so far as we are concerned, to help them through; we will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home.

"With the chiefs of your movement, especially with Dr. Weizmann, we have had and continue to have the closest relations. He has been a great helper of our cause, and I hope the Arabs may soon be in a position to make the Jews some return for their kindness. We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is national and not imperialist. Our movement is national and not imperialist. There is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other.

"People less informed and less responsible than our leaders and yours, ignoring the need for cooperation of the Arabs and the Zionists, have been trying to exploit the local differences that must necessarily arise in Palestine during the early stages of our movement. Some of them have, I am afraid, misrepresented your aims to the Arab peasantry and our aims to the Jewish peasantry, with the result that interested parties have been able to make capital out of what they call our differences.

"I wish to give you my firm conviction that these differences are not on questions of principle, but on matters of detail such as must inevitably
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occur in every contact with the neighbouring peoples, and as are easily dissipated by mutual goodwill. Indeed, nearly all of them will disappear with fuller knowledge."

These expressions of goodwill were reiterated by King Feisul in a published letter addressed by him to Sir (then Mr.) Herbert Samuel under date December 10th, 1919. After referring to certain misunderstandings which Sir Herbert Samuel had taken occasion to dispel, King Feisul proceeded:—

"I am firmly convinced that the mutual confidence established between us, and the complete agreement of our point of view, which has made possible a perfect understanding between Dr. Weizmann and myself, will prevent in the future any similar misunderstanding, and will maintain between us that harmony so necessary for the success of our common cause."

The proposals which King Feisul and his colleagues regarded as "moderate and proper"—proposals in strict conformity with the Balfour Declaration—are in no respect exceeded by the Zionist provisions of the Palestine Mandate. If they commended themselves to King Feisul it may safely be assumed that they do no violence either to Arab rights or to British pledges.

BALFOUR DECLARATION SAFEGUARDS ARAB RIGHTS.

The only explicit pledge given to the Arabs of Palestine during the war is, in fact, that contained in the Balfour Declaration itself, which unreservedly guarantees their civil and religious rights. Safeguarded by the presence of the British Mandatory, and reinforced by the authority of the League of Nations to which the Mandatory is ultimately responsible, those rights have been, and will continue to be, most scrupulously respected. This would, indeed, be in any event a matter of course. It is not, nor does it purport to be, a concession. The express assurances which the Balfour Declaration
contains with regard to the non-Jewish population are no more than a formal acknowledgment of claims which are by common consent inherently valid, and which there is in no quarter the smallest disposition to question.

There is, on the other hand, no ground for suggesting that the civil or religious rights of the non-Jewish population have been in the slightest degree infringed. In order to make out anything approaching a plausible case, the Delegation has been obliged to resort to misrepresentations amounting in several instances to pure inventions.

GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL—THE FACTS.

It is alleged, for example, that the Administration is in Zionist hands, and that the "High Commissioner, the Legal Secretary, the Controller of Stores, the Director of Commerce and Industries, and the Chief of Immigration, are all Jews." The Controller of Stores and the Director of Commerce and Industries are one and the same person. The "Chief of Immigration" is not a Jew at all. The Legal Secretary is an English Jew, but the Civil and Financial Secretaries, both senior to him in rank, are English Christians, as is also the Chief Justice of Palestine, together with the whole of the District Governors, and indeed all but an inappreciable proportion of the entire body of superior officials. The official figures given in the High Commissioner's Interim Report (Cd. 1499, p. 25) show that in the Senior Service as a whole there are only 50 Jewish officials out of a total of 360. As for the Junior Service, the same Report, which was readily accessible to the Delegation, shows clearly how baseless is the complaint that "every department of the Government has been swamped by Jews." The actual facts are that of 2,130 members of the Junior Service, only 566 are Jews, while the Christians, who number about 11 per cent. of the population (see High Commissioner's Interim Report, p. 4) contribute 1,043, or 49 per cent., of the junior officials.
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MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN WAKF.

Equally baseless is the suggestion that the Government of Palestine is improperly interfering in the management of Moslem and Christian Wakf (Pious Foundations). So far is this from being the case that on the express recommendation of a representative Moslem Conference, which was actually in session when the Delegation's official statement was published, elaborate provision has been made for the administration of Moslem Wakf by purely Moslem Wakf Committees, acting in conjunction with a Supreme Moslem Religious Council. The full text of the material Ordinance can be read in No. 58 of the "Official Gazette" (pp. 2 ff.). As for the sale of the Wakf properties of the Greek Orthodox Church, the malicious calumnies circulated on this subject have been authoritatively exposed as the inventions they are in an official communiqué setting forth the actual facts. The sale was necessitated by the hopeless insolvency of the Orthodox Church, which possessed no other assets than its landed property; it was carried out under the direction of a Commission presided over by the Chief Justice of Ceylon, and consisting exclusively of Christians; it related solely to "building sites acquired in recent years as an investment," and possessing no ecclesiastical character; and had those sites been offered in smaller lots, "there is no probability that other small purchasers would have been forthcoming for many years to pay an amount equal to that which had been agreed." The sale was, in other words, effected under the authority of a purely Christian body in the exclusive interest of the Church itself. The whole of these facts, with which the Arab Delegation cannot but have been familiar, are clearly set forth in a statement communicated to the Press by the Colonial Office and published by "The Times" and other London newspapers on December 22nd, 1921.

If these misrepresentations have been dealt with in detail, it is only because they are typical of this part of
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the Delegation’s case, and illustrate the need for caution in accepting at their face value any of its statements of fact.

The remaining complaints are equally misleading.

THE HEBREW LANGUAGE.

The Hebrew tongue is the common medium of expression among the Jews of Palestine, and the language of instruction in almost the whole of the Jewish schools. It is only one of the three official languages, the others being English and Arabic, and its recognition as such cannot inflict the smallest injury on the Arabs or impose on them the least obligation to make use of it.

JEWISH IMMIGRATION.

The Delegation refers to the "tide of immigration which pours into Palestine, bringing in a mass of undesirable aliens." The actual number of Jewish immigrants from the British occupation up to June, 1921, was 15,079. A further 4,938 immigrants (of whom most, though not all, were Jews) entered Palestine up to the end of December, 1921. The "tide" which is "pouring in" thus amounts to a total, from first to last, of about 20,000 persons, of whom an appreciable proportion were refugees returning to their homes. For reasons best known to itself, the Delegation has chosen to ignore the authentic statistics published in the Official Interim Report, which puts the total population at "hardly 700,000," and the Jews at 76,000. The British Committee of the Palestine Arab Delegation itself only puts the Arab population at 665,000. The Delegation prefers to invent the statement that "the inhabitants of Palestine number about 800,000, of whom 60,000 are Jews." According to the official statistics published in

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3 Major Wood, House of Commons, August 8th, 1921 (Official Report, column 57).
5 Cmd. 1499, p. 4.
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the Estimates of the Occupied Enemy Territories Administration for 1919-1920, the population on March 31st, 1919, numbered 647,850, of whom 65,300 were Jews. It thus appears that if the Delegation is to be believed, the "tide of immigration" has actually increased the numbers of the Arabs and reduced those of the Jews.

HOW THE IMMIGRANTS ARE EMPLOYED.

Leaving aside these picturesque fictions, it remains the fact that Jewish immigration has been not only moderate in volume, but, on the whole, unexceptionable in quality. The Jewish immigrants who are courteously described as "undesirable aliens" are for the most part sturdy young pioneers who have added appreciably to the common stock of physical and moral energy. The statement that they are a "burden on the community" is wholly fictitious. The immigrants, if temporarily unemployed, are provided for exclusively from Jewish funds, and have not cost the country a piastre. It is equally untrue that they "deprive the Arab of his daily bread," that the "contracts for public works are in the majority of cases given to Jews, whose quotations are usually higher than those of Arabs," and that the "Jewish labourer is paid at a higher rate for half the amount of work which the Arab can accomplish." Of some 20,000 Jewish immigrants, only about 3,000 have been employed on public works at all, and the only labour they have displaced is that of the imported Egyptian gangs which formerly served the Army, and whose gradual replacement by Jews and others settled in the country is, by common consent, to the advantage of all parties concerned. The remainder—the vast majority—of the Jewish immigrants have found employment in a variety of Jewish enterprises, brought into existence by Jewish capital, and contributing substantially to the quickening of economic life in the country as a whole. There can here be no question of any displacement of Arab labour.
So far as public works are concerned, contracts are awarded by open tender under the authority of a Central Tenders Board, composed of British officials, on whose honour or efficiency the complaint that Jews are employed at higher wages than Arabs for half the work, is a gratuitous and baseless reflection.

Finally, it is not the case that contracts are almost invariably given to Jews. A glance at the list of contracts published periodically in the "Official Gazette" will show that this statement is untrue. Where contracts are, in fact, so awarded, there is not the smallest warrant for the offensive suggestion that it is for any but legitimate reasons.

FURTHER "COMPLAINTS" ANSWERED.

For the rest, the Delegation confines its complaints to nebulous generalities which it is careful not to support by a single concrete illustration. The unspecified "laws and regulations aiming at checking the liberty of the Arab" correspond to nothing that can be found on the Statute Book, unless indeed they be the laws—for the most part not "enacted," but inherited from the Ottoman Code—which check the liberty of the Arab to murder, assault, and outrage his fellow-countrymen of other races. The "muzzling of the Press" has a meaning only if it refers either to the military censorship enforced under the military régime before the present High Commissioner took office, or to the very occasional application in extreme cases and with complete impartiality as between the Jewish and the Arab Press of the milder provisions of the Ottoman Press Law. The Delegation, whose own organ, "El Sabah," has regularly appeared with gross misstatements of fact, as well as with very violent expressions of opinion, has the best reason for knowing how infinitely freer the Press is to-day than it ever was under the former régime. The "patriotic Arabs who are arrested and imprisoned" are not specified, nor is it possible to identify them, unless they be such patriots as the Arab policemen, whose enthusiasm
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during the May riots took the form of criminal offences against the civil population, including “homicide, theft, attempted rape, and unlawful wounding.”

As for the complaint that “farmers who for generations have owned lands and lived on them have been asked to sign leases,” what has actually occurred is precisely the opposite of what is suggested. Large tracts of land in the Jordan Valley, formerly treated by Abdul Hamid II as his private property, became State Domains (Mudawara) with the advent of the Constitutional Government in 1908, and after the war passed as such into the hands of the Government of Palestine. By an agreement made on November 19th, 1921, between the Government of Palestine and an Arab agent (a well-known anti-Zionist) selected by the cultivators as their representative, any head of a family who had cultivated land in this area, even though only as a tenant-at-will, for ten years or more, receives the freehold of all the land on which he has grown crops during the last two years, on undertaking to pay (in composition of the former rent) from P.T. 150 to P.T. 125 per dunam,9 in fifteen annual instalments. Not only so, but a family which has cultivated less than 150 dunams is, nevertheless, to have its holding brought up to that minimum, with an additional thirty dunams for every member of the family in excess of five. In other words, far from threatening the security of “farmers who have for generations owned lands and lived on them,” the Government has, on the contrary, given a freehold in exchange for a tenancy-at-will to every such farmer without exception, and has gone so far as to grant a minimum holding of nearly forty acres, even where the area actually cultivated is less. Such is the real character of the attempt “to establish the Government’s title to these lands so that in time they could be sold to the Jews.”

“This, and much more,” the Delegation declares,

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8 P.T.1. = 23d.
9 Dunam = ¼ acre.
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"the Arab sees daily passing before his eyes and his soul burns within him." The "much more" is not specified, and takes the case no further; but the completeness with which every charge actually made collapses on analysis is a measure of the value to be attached to the general indictment under the head of concrete grievances.

CAMPAIGN INSPIRED BY ANTI-SEMITISM.

Equally disingenuous is the suggestion that the campaign which the Arab Delegation is conducting is not inspired by anti-Semitism. It is no accident that the Delegation has secured as its mouthpiece in the London Press an organ which has long been notorious for anti-Semitic propaganda of the most virulent character. It is, again, no accident that foremost among the small body of its British patrons and advisers are gentlemen whose writings on subjects unconnected with Palestine breathe an anti-Semitism redolent of the best German tradition, and whose pronounced views on the Government of Egyptians, Indians, and other Eastern races suggest that in making a somewhat conspicuous exception in favour of Palestine, they are actuated by quite other motives than enthusiasm for the Arab cause.

THE ARAB DELEGATION AND "THE JEWISH PERIL."

The Delegation, indeed, can, as usual, be convicted out of its own mouth. In "The Case Against Zionism," a pamphlet which the Delegation is circulating, we are told that "the hatred of Arab to Jew is proverbial." The value to be attached to these protestations can still better be judged from the published memorandum submitted to the Colonial Secretary during his visit to Palestine in March, 1921 by the body for which the Delegation speaks, and bearing the signature of its President, Musa Kazim Pasha el Husseini. An entire section of that document is devoted to the vilification of Jews in general in the familiar language of Continental anti-Semitism, culminating in an impressive allusion to "the

10 "The Case against Zionism," p. 15.
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Jewish Peril"—an inept concoction conclusively exposed by "The Times" as a clumsy and malevolent forgery, and referred to by the Delegation as "a book which should be read by everyone who still doubts the pernicious motives of the Jews towards the Powers that be, and towards civilisation." After this it is less astonishing than it would otherwise be to read in the memorandum that "Palestine suffers from her Jewish colonies"—thrusting agricultural settlements to which British Consular reports have repeatedly referred as an invaluable stimulus to the economic life of the country as a whole; nor is it surprising to learn that Europe cannot reasonably "expect the Arab to live and work with such a neighbour"—a neighbour towards whom, it now appears from the "Official Statement," "there was never any hatred shown," and with whom the Arabs were accustomed to "live in peace and harmony" so complete that "things might have gone in this fashion and all would have been well."

FRIVOLOUS ACCUSATIONS AND PERVERSIONS OF FACTS.

The specific charges of aggression brought against the Jews by the Delegation are as disingenuous as its protestations of tolerance are, on its own showing, insincere. During the Jaffa riots in May, 1921, "it was stated by a British officer," the Delegation declares under the sensational heading "Explosives found with Jews during Jaffa Riots," "that a large quantity of explosives was discovered by him in a Jewish house." The Delegation is careful not to add that that statement, if made, was untrue. What were described at the time by Arab propagandists in Europe as three and a-half tons of explosives intended for nefarious objects, proved, when the matter was examined by the Haycraft Commission, to be "three and a-half tins of explosives and 100 detonators belonging to the (Kedem) Building Company, and used for blasting purposes. Undue importance has been attached to this episode, which has no significance of any sort."

11 Haycraft Report (Cmd. 1540) pp. 33-34.

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If, again, it be true that while "arms had been distributed to all Jewish colonies, Arabs, on the other hand, had been disarmed," it would be interesting to learn how it happened that during the Jaffa riots no less than 53 Jews were killed or wounded by bullets or bombs. A case supported by such evidence does not merit detailed analysis. It need only be added, with reference to the Haycraft Report, to which the Delegation makes a somewhat singular allusion, that the findings are that in Jaffa itself,

"We have no doubt that the Arabs were the first to turn this quarrel into a race conflict, and when once this issue was joined, they behaved with a savagery which cannot be condoned;" that in the case of Khedera, "It is clear that the colonists had done nothing whatsoever to provoke an attack;" and that as regards the attacks on the five Jewish colonies, "In none of these five cases can the conduct of the Arabs be excused or condoned. . . . The bloodthirsty attacks on these peaceful settlements, which had been guilty of no provocation whatever, are among the worst features of the disturbances."

The primary object of the foregoing statement is to expose the disingenuousness and the frivolity of the grave accusations to which currency is being given by the Palestine Arab Delegation. The British Cabinet is accused of bad faith, the British Administration in Palestine of gross misgovernment, and the Zionist Organisation of wanton aggression. Every specific complaint on which the Delegation has ventured collapses, as has been shown, immediately it is examined. An indictment based on the complete disregard or the gross perversion of readily ascertainable facts carries with it its own refutation.

12 Haycraft Report (Comd. 1540), pp. 29, 32, 34, 41.
13 Ib., p. 44.
15 Ib., p. 40.
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BRITISH PLEDGES IN FAVOUR OF JEWISH NATIONAL HOME.

This is not the place for a detailed presentation of the Zionist case. The "Official Statement" opens with an allusion to British pledges. It will be sufficient to remark that the British pledges in favour of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine were given publicly in the face of the world, that they are wholly unambiguous, and that they have been repeatedly, authoritatively, and unequivocally re-affirmed. They were renewed by Lord Curzon on assuming office as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in November, 1919; by Mr. Churchill during his official visit to Jerusalem in March, 1921; by His Majesty's Minister at Prague, representing the British Government at the Carlsbad Zionist Congress in September, 1921; and by Mr. Balfour at a Zionist reception at the British Embassy in Washington as recently as January, 1922. The list is by no means exhaustive, but it is sufficient to indicate the character of the engagements which the Palestine Arab Delegation invites the British people to repudiate.

PALESTINE AND THE BRITISH TAXPAYER.

For that repudiation the reward held out is the saving to the British taxpayer of "the huge amounts he is now spending in the country." The annual military expenditure involved (the Civil Administration is entirely self-supporting) is approximately £2,500,000, or about one-fourth of one per cent. of the national expenditure. With the opening of a new financial year there is every reason to anticipate that even this relatively small expenditure will be appreciably reduced. Such are the "huge amounts" which the British taxpayer is invited to save by the repudiation of an explicit British pledge—this on the wholly unwarranted assumption that if no such obligations had been contracted, Great Britain could, in any circumstances, contemplate an immediate and a complete evacuation.

16 Sir L. Worthington Evans, House of Commons, July 20th, 1921.
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If it be asked why that pledge was given, a partial answer is supplied by the Delegation itself. The Delegation is circulating a brochure entitled "The Case Against Zionism," which betrays by its tone the fact that it was prepared in New York for American consumption in circles disposed to be anti-British. It is there observed that:

"The Balfour Declaration is a bit of clever underhanded [sic] diplomacy, worthy of the shrewdest politician. During the world war it insured for the Allies the loyalty and financial support of the Jews all over the world, and assured England of a permanent suzerainty over the Southern portion of Syria for the protection of the Suez Canal, which is the spinal cord of England's colonistic [sic] Empire."

This is a small-minded and distorted account of what was, in fact, a great piece of imaginative statesmanship; but it is sufficient to show that the Arabs are themselves well aware that the Balfour Declaration was at any rate not a gratuitous lapse into ineptitude. Great Britain had and has in the Eastern Mediterranean strategic and political interests which make it impossible for her to regard the future of Palestine with indifference, and which give her every motive for desiring to see its empty spaces filled up by a stable and well-disposed population, able and anxious to co-operate in rendering it self-supporting.

But beyond these self-regarding considerations are other of a loftier character. For two thousand years Palestine has remained the lodestar of Jewish idealism. If the Jews now ask for an opportunity of rebuilding their National Home, they base their claim not merely on the existence of a Jewish State in remote antiquity, but on the unwavering concentration upon Palestine of Jewish hopes and prayers from the moment of the Dispersion to the present day. It is in the interests of the new world order that the discord in the Jewish soul should be
resolved and that the Hebrew genius, restored to Hebrew soil, should have an assured opportunity of once more making its characteristic contribution to the common stock.

JEWISH WORK IN PALESTINE.

On the faith of the pledges which Great Britain is so lightly being asked to dishonour, Jews throughout the world are already consecrating themselves to Palestine with an ardour and devotion which sufficiently bespeak the firmness of their resolve. Since the British Occupation, upwards of two million pounds have been poured into Palestine by Jewish public bodies, to say nothing of the large sums made available for Jewish colonisation by the munificence of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, and the still larger amounts of capital brought into the country by Jewish private enterprise. Neglected soil has been cleared, marshes have been drained, and the stony hilltops afforested. The establishment of model farms and agricultural experiment stations, the introduction of improved breeds of cattle, experiments in poultry-farming, tobacco-planting and the culture of the silk-worm—these are some of the forms assumed by 'Zionist aggression.' The Jews lead the way in education and alone possess a complete educational system from the kindergarten to the technical high-school—a system soon to be crowned by a University, of which the foundation-stone has already been laid. Of their total educational expenditure of £E.89,000 a year, all but £E.3,350 is provided from Jewish sources. With the exception of this trifling grant-in-aid, the Jews, while contributing to the revenue in the same proportion as the other inhabitants, leave free for the non-Jewish communities the whole of the £E.103,000 appropriated to education by the Government. Since the autumn of 1918, the American Zionist Medical Unit, maintained at a cost of some £E.100,000 a year from Jewish funds, has ministered to the sick without distinction of race.

The quickening of economic and social life to which
Jewish public bodies have so powerfully contributed has been materially accelerated by private enterprise. The revival of the building trade—the first sign of renewed economic vitality—is almost exclusively attributable to Jewish capital, which was invested in this industry last year to an estimated total of £E.140,000 in Jaffa alone. The only mortgage bank in the country—an institution which has long been in urgent demand—is that which has just been established under Zionist auspices. The orange-packing houses at Petach-Tikvah and Rehoboth, the silicate-bricks factory at Jaffa, the steam flour-mill, the cement-factory and the oil-factory at Haifa, the introduction of such industries as watch-making, furniture-making and weaving—all these enterprises, which are to the manifest advantage of the country as a whole, are due to the energy and zeal of the “mass of undesirable aliens who are a burden to the community.”

For nearly fourteen millions of Jews throughout the world the rebuilding of Palestine is the translation of spiritual values into terms of economic reconstruction. The Bolshevik régime in Russia and the economic collapse of Eastern Europe have reduced to ruins half the Jewish world. The long, though unavoidable, delay in the formal approval of the Mandate, the instability which has so long obstructed peaceful progress in Palestine, the sinister suggestions of an impending repudiation of British pledges, which have been assiduously put about in interested quarters, have added to the difficulties of the interim period which is happily approaching its end. In face of all this, the Jews have already to their credit concrete achievements in Palestine which are an earnest of what may be expected of them immediately the situation becomes normal. Assailed by malice and calumny, obstructed by ignorance and misunderstanding, buffeted by the cross-currents of an unstable political situation, cut off, for the time being, from those great communities which would, in normal circumstances, have been in the forefront of the Zionist movement, they have already shown that, mindful of the sacred associations which have
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never ceased to bind them to the soil of Palestine, they are firmly resolved to proceed on their appointed path.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE FUTURE.

Such is the spirit in which the Jews are turning to the task of reconstituting their National Home. They are confident that in doing so they will, if mischief-makers will but restrain themselves, come into no collision with the Arab inhabitants of Palestine, whose rights—expressly guaranteed as they are in the Balfour Declaration itself—they unreservedly acknowledge.

To the malicious calumnies and the grotesque perversions of the truth with which the Arab Delegation is doing its utmost to embitter the situation, Zionists are content to reply by re-affirming, in the words of their recent Congress at Carlsbad:

"Their determination to live with the Arabs 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."