

President's Secretary's file
Diplomatic Correspondence
Iraq Box 40

1st Insp 2-10-45



Mr. President,

In you I greet the noble person who represents the ideals of humanity, and in you I greet the personality who enunciated those high principles for which this war is being waged - those principles which you embodied in the Atlantic Charter.

It gives me pleasure to address Your Excellency at a time when the banners of victory are rising over all the battle fields of the world, hoping, by the grace of God, that the day of final victory will not be long delayed, and that the noble ideals for which peace-loving and freedom-loving nations are struggling to win in this war will be fully gained.

I am proud that my country has stood, body and soul, on the side of the democratic nations in this war.

Excellency,

Your Excellency is quite aware that the first thing the world needs after this war is general security for all nations and individuals, a security which



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which will be the fruit of universal justice supported by force. No country or people, however small, should be deprived of the benefits of this justice. Any post-war settlement not based on justice will be a source of future trouble. The world need not have these troubles if its political problems are dealt with wisely and with a truth-seeking mind. One of these problems that needs wise treatment based on facts, reality, fairness, and recognition of the others' point of view, is the problem of Palestine.

Palestine is one of the Arab countries which was separated from the Ottoman Empire as a result of the first World War. In its Arabic character it is not different from the other Arab countries which are recognized as independent states such as Iraq, Syria, Egypt and Yeman. Palestine is as Arab as Devonshire is English or Virginia is American. From its early history down to the present time it has been Arab, in spite of the fact that it was a battlefield for many great conquerors.

On the grounds of history, the Zionist claims are inconsistent with logic and truth. If each people were to trace their historical connections to other parts of the world, and claim a territory they had once inhabited the result would be a change in the ethnographical map of the world which would lead many peoples to evacuate the countries in which they live. Even if we assume that it is possible to accept this principle of historical claims, there is still no ground

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for the Zionist claims since the Jews did not rule in Palestine for more than five centuries whereas the Arabs lived in Palestine before and after the Jews for nearly twenty centuries. Throughout this period they either directly ruled the country or participated in its administration. During the last fourteen centuries they have been continuously living in Palestine.

From the religious point of view Palestine is regarded as a holy land by Muslims, Christians and Jews alike. The Arabs of Palestine have always maintained a liberal religious tradition well-known in history. The celebrated address of Abu Bakr, the first Caliph of Islam, (may God be gracious to him) to the Arab expedition which was sent to Syria and Palestine is only one example of those liberal traditions. He declared :

" Stop, O people that I may give you ten rules to keep by heart : Do not commit treachery, nor depart from the right path. You must not mutilate, neither kill a child or aged man or woman. Do not destroy a palm-tree, nor burn it with fire and do not cut any fruitful tree. You must not slay any of the flocks or the herds or the camels, save for your subsistence. You are likely to meet people who have devoted their lives to monastic services; leave them to that to which they have devoted their lives..."

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These liberal instructions may be contrasted with those stated in Joshua at the time of the capture of Jericho. It is stated :

" And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city both men and woman, both young and old, and ox and sheep with the edge of the sword." again, " and they burned the city with fire and all that was therein.

It is to be noted from the above contrast that the Muslims and the Christians of Palestine have in common bonds of national unity owing to the liberalism of the Arabs. Owing to Arab liberalism each faith has for centuries practiced its own rites in its own places of worship without let or hindrance. It cannot be claimed, with any justice that the religious connections of the Jews with Palestine create any valid claim to the possession of that country, just as it is not possible for Spain to claim Rome on religious grounds or for the Muslim Indians to claim the Hijaz owing to their religious connections with Mecca. Moreover, political Zionism is to-day mainly a secular movement and many Zionists are not practising Jews. Therefore, the religious claims of Zionism are unfounded.

From the national point of view Palestine has been inhabited down to the first World War by a majority of Arabs who are entitled to their independence as other Arab peoples have already achieved theirs. To deprive the Arabs of Palestine of this right is inconsistent

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with the obvious aims for which this war is being fought. Never let us forget that Zionism is an aggressive national movement aiming at the elimination of all Arabs from Palestine. Such a movement must be denounced by all the Arabs, in all the Arab countries who will unite against any danger that the Arabs of Palestine may have to meet.

The persecution of the Jews in certain European countries is given as a reason for handing over Palestine to the Jews so that they can establish a Jewish state. Such an argument is untenable, for the defeat of Nazism in Europe will eliminate the cause of all the troubles of the Jews in Europe and the Jewish problem in Europe will be finally solved. Moreover, Palestine is too small a country to offer a solution for the Jewish problem in Europe or in the world at large. It has been demonstrated by experts, such Sir John Hope Simpson, that Jewish immigration into Palestine cannot be continued without making it exceedingly difficult for the inhabitants of Palestine to survive taking into consideration the normal increase of its Arab population. It is unfair to attempt to solve the Jewish problem by creating an Arab problem in Palestine, by compelling a million Muslim and Christian Arabs to feel that they are going to be foreigners in their country. Should that happen, the greatest tragedy of the twentieth century will take place in Palestine.

The Zionists may claim that the Jews should

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have a right to establish a state somewhere in this world. Should that right be conceded to any religious group, which is not practical in this modern age, such an experiment should be made in a country without population, and not at the expense of the inhabitants of a country already occupied by a peaceful law-abiding people.

The Zionist claim that their immigration into Palestine has definite economic, hygienic and social advantages for the Arabs is completely unfounded. Even if some Arabs have benefitted in any way the advantages are outbalanced by the great damage done to the moral, social and political life of the people. The Arabs do not want such material advantages if they are going to lead to the domination of Palestine by the Jews. The Zionist scheme for the colonization of Palestine is a grave danger of which all Arabs are constantly aware and which they are always watching with apprehension.

The inhabitants of the Arab world are in a ferment over the future of Palestine for the following reasons:

1. Since the last war immigration into Palestine was contrary to the wishes of its people and to their natural right to decide the number to be admitted to their own country. The number of Jews who entered Palestine since the last war is now more than tenfold the original number of Jews who were living there in 1919. All the

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and disturbances in Palestine and adjacent Arab countries are a natural reaction to their fear of the tragic future awaiting the Arabs of Palestine if this immigration of Jews continues.

2. The Jews acquired the best lands of Palestine and rendered thousands of Arabs homeless. Your Excellency is well aware that the Jews have prohibited the sale of lands from Jewish hands and they decline to employ Arab labourers on their lands. Thus the status of the Arab cultivators ejected from lands acquired by the Jews has become quite pitiable.

3. The Jews have been so far responsible for preventing the Palestine Arabs from exercising self-government and attaining independence when other Arab states have already achieved their independence. This is inconsistent with the spirit of democracy and with Arab national aspirations.

4. The Jews in Palestine have become well-armed and well-trained in military tactics. They have been able to train some fifty thousand young men in the most modern deadly methods of war. They have established, moreover, armament factories. These actions are evidence of their aggressive intentions. This has been shown quite clearly by the recent acts culminating in the attempt on the life of Sir Harold MacMichael and the assassination of Lord Moyne. We are inclined to believe that these acts of terrorism are but part of a much more comprehensive Zionist plan. This belief is fortified by the active
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intervention of Zionists from every quarter of the world to obtain the reprieve from the death sentence of two assassins of Lord Moyne. It was expected that all Zionists would have condemned the murderers and supported the death sentence in order to clear themselves of complicity in these outrages. Therefore the Arabs have every right to fear a latent policy of aggression on the part of the Zionists against the Arab world not merely Palestine.

5. The Arabs believe at present that the Jews want to have Palestine only as a means for their future domination of the whole Arab world economically as well as politically. Their future aim is no less than the colonization of all adjacent Arab countries. The Arabs naturally are opposed to such designs.

6. The Arabs maintain that they cannot unite unless Palestine is one of their constituent members. The geographical position of Palestine will obstruct Arab unity should it be in the hands of non-Arabs whose interests conflict with those of the Arabs. The Arabs who regarded their unity as of prime importance can never agree to leave out Palestine. The Arabs individually and collectively regard the future of Palestine as a matter of life and death for them.

Excellency,

These are only some of the most important reasons which induced the Arabs to defend their natural rights in Palestine. Such rights are undoubtedly

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supported by all humanitarian principles . It is the encroachment on such principles which is the main cause of all the wars and the troubles of the world. The world indeed needs the maintenance of peace and justice in order to achieve security and cooperation among the nations. Nothing that tends to promote discord and aggressiveness should be tolerated.

AS Your Excellency is one of the responsible men in high office who is endeavouring to realize such ideals and to shape the world of to-morrow, we appeal to you to support the natural rights of the Arabs in Palestine. In doing so you will eliminate one of the important factors which disturb peace and security not only in the Middle East but also throughout the entire world.

I avail myself of this opportunity to express to Your Excellency my hearty greetings and highest esteem.

Baghdad 26 Rabi'al Awal, 1364.
March 10th, 1945.

Abdullah

Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President of the United States of America,
Washington, D.C.