

British Deception Responsible for Palestinian Bloodshed Today

by Hussein Askary

Preface: The history of the British manipulation of Arabs and Jews is, as the incredible suffering of the people of Gaza attests to today, a sad story. It is a pathetic one too, because the world, and the involved parties, who have failed to understand the evil nature of the British Empire, and thus, failed to react decisively to its machinations, before, during, and after World War I, have failed even now to correct that mistake. The British Empire and its servants in the consecutive British governments have been masters of deception, as we will see in the brief report below. Can you imagine the “Butcher of Baghdad” Tony Blair as a peace broker in Southwest Asia now? How could the U.S.A., Europe, Russia, and the UN (the Quartet on the Middle East) be so collectively insane as to accept Blair as their guide through the dense underbrush of the British-created “Middle East”?

As was the case in 1919, before the British put their Sykes-Picot knives to use against the people of Southwest Asia with the help of the French imperialists, people in the region are pleading to, and giving the new U.S. Presidency another chance to help mend what has been broken. Although a lot of blood has been spilled, and although the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration cannot be reversed, there is still a chance for another Peace of Westphalia to preserve and promote the true nature of the human race, in place of the bestiality of the Brutish Empire which is being exhibited on the television screens every day.

Master Puppeteers

The British Empire, while fostering wild Zionist madness, simultaneously promoted Islamic fanaticism in order to play the two, not only against each other, but also against other legitimate nationalist and anti-imperialist forces. The case of the creation and manipulation of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and elsewhere is a

perfect example (see “British-Saudi Pan-Islamism: Britain’s Assault on the Muslim Nation-States and the World,” *EIR*, Dec. 26, 2008).

An interesting case, involving a Palestinian figure, is al-Haj Amin al-Husseini. Al-Husseini, who started as an opponent of the British occupation of Palestine after 1917, fled the British forces into exile in 1920, only to be pardoned by the British and brought back a year later, and even succeeded in becoming the Mufti of Jerusalem in 1921, with British approval, following the death of his brother, the previous Mufti. The purpose of this move was to create a fanatic Islamic countergang to the British-created Jabotinskyite fascist Jewish groups (see accompanying article). What was pushed aside with this orchestrated conflict, were the true anti-imperialist forces. One famous confrontation between Mufti Amin al-Husseini and the Palestinian nationalist leader Abdalqadir al-Hussein (from another distinguished Jerusalem family) who was leading the resistance against the British, tells it all. The Mufti is reported to have told al-Husseini: “Why don’t you go and fight the British, and leave me to fight the Jews!”

In Egypt, the British Commissioner, from 1883 to 1907, Lord Cromer (Evelyn Baring of the powerful Baring banking family), had used Islamic fundamentalists in a similar way to prevent the growth of anti-British nationalist movements. Sheikh Mohammed Abduh (1849-1905) had participated in the 1882 revolt led by Egyptian officer Ahmed Urabi against the British control of Egypt’s government. He was sent into exile in Lebanon, where he stayed until 1884, when he was invited to France by Jamal el-Din al-Afghani. The French, who were in conflict with the British over the Middle East, recruited the two to a French Freemasonic lodge, and paid them to launch anti-British propaganda. Abduh, like al-Husseini later, was pardoned by Cromer, and appointed as Grand Mufti of Egypt in 1889, after



Britain's T.E. Lawrence ("of Arabia"), third from right, manipulated Prince Faisal (center) to approve both the Sykes-Picot agreement and Balfour Declaration. Here, they are at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.

promising Cromer to collaborate with the British to make the relationship of the British bloodsuckers with their victims, the Egyptian farmers, more "civilized and orderly." Abduh's role was to "cool down" the nationalist aspiration for freedom. His biographers report that, despite his rabid racism, Cromer considered Abduh a close friend. Abduh's "political ideas" later had a great impact on the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hasan al-Banna, and his successor Sayid Qutb. What the Brotherhood learned from Abduh is to be "pragmatic," and to collaborate with whoever provides weapons and support. This way, it turned itself into a tool of the British Empire, from that day to this.

Interestingly, three leaders of the most active Brotherhood organization still live in exile in Britain today: Ali al-Bayanouni (Syria), Rashid al-Ghannoushi (Tunis), and Kamal al-Halabawi (Egypt). They are all still active in subversive activities against their own governments. The Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine (Hamas) was originally an outgrowth of the Muslim Brotherhood, and its founder, Sheikh Ahmad Yasin, was a prominent leader of the international Brotherhood. The purpose of Hamas, in the eyes of the Israeli leaders who facilitated its growth in the 1980s, was to undermine the legitimate anti-colonial forces of

the PLO and its leader, Yasser Arafat, in the occupied territories. This was a copy of the British policy.

Hope of American Intervention Against the British

When the Arab peoples learned of the secret Anglo-French Sykes-Picot agreement at the end of World War I, they reacted with anger and frustration. Arab tribal leaders had helped the British and the allies in the war against the Ottoman Turkish Empire which was in control of the greater part of the Arab Middle East, because Britain had promised to give them freedom and independence as Arab nations after the war. What followed was a two-pronged British-French policy of brutal repression and a masterly "divide-and-conquer" strategy.

Violent revolts took place between 1920 and 1925 throughout the region against the British and the French. But before that, regional leaders had looked forward to getting help from the United States, which they regarded as a true republic, with no imperialistic ambitions.

In Jan. 8, 1918, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson addressed a joint session of Congress: His speech included a "14-point declaration" of what he called the "only possible program" to achieve world peace and justice in the post-war era. That declaration included the demand of "affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." An Arabic copy of Wilson's declaration was secretly distributed in Arab countries in October of the same year. Point 12 received special attention: "The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development."

This point was regarded as an explicit American endorsement of the independence of the nations now occupied by the British and the French troops. The two imperial powers issued public statements reassuring the United States and the people of the region that this was their aim too. However, their intentions were quite the opposite. In spite of British assurances, people in the region did not trust these claims, and later reported to the

U.S., through the American King-Crane Commission (see article, this section) their disapproval of any British mandate to control their countries, and instead asked for the United States to protect their interests.

Betrayal

However, the King-Crane mission was betrayed, and its reports suppressed. The British orchestrated phony referenda in Iraq, showing that the Iraqi people were eager to have British masters run their lives! In the large area of what was then called Syria, the King-Crane Commission had found out that 80% of the population preferred an American mandate, if any, and only 20% were in favor of the British. In Iraq, the British colonial authorities prevented the King-Crane Commission from carrying out its surveys.

As the Paris Peace Conference was about to convene, in January 1919, Iraqi leaders opposed to British occupation started writing petitions to the major powers, especially to the President of the United States.

Sheikh Mohammed Taqi al-Shirazi, the spiritual leader of the Iraqi Shi'a sect, sent two letters dated Feb. 13, 1919, one to President Wilson, another to the U.S. ambassador in Iran. Al-Shirazi reminded the U.S. ambassador of the principles of self-determination to which the U.S. Administration had committed itself, and informed him that the Iraqi people were seeking the aid of the United States to establish an independent Arab-Islamic state. He alerted the ambassador to the fact that the Iraqi people were reluctant to express their views on the issue of the mandate, due to the "martial laws that have put them under siege from all sides," and that "people do not trust the alleged right to free expression of opinions," touted by the British. (See text of letter in "Lessons To Be Learned: Iraqi Resistance to British Occupation 80 Years Ago," *EIR*, Nov. 14, 2003.)

These petitions fell on deaf ears, and the British launched a massive military campaign against the Iraqis (Shi'a, Sunni, and Kurds), who rose in a revolt against British suppression and brutality. The revolt was crushed by August, leaving more than 10,000 Iraqis dead from bombings by British the Royal Air Force, which even used chemical weapons against Kurdish villages.

Between late 1919 and late 1920, revolts and acts of resistance against the British, French, and Italian colonialists spread from Afghanistan to Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and North Africa, and were all suppressed with mass murder and extreme brutality.

How the British Play the Game

The case of Syria is exemplary, because it shows how the British played this game, whose consequences we suffer still today.

While the British were dividing up the remains of Europe's "sick man," the Ottoman Empire, together with the French in 1916 (through the Sykes-Picot agreement), even though the war was still simmering, they promised the Jews of Britain a homeland in Palestine, the heart of the region, through the Balfour Declaration (a formal promise made by British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour in November 1917 to Lord Walter Rothschild and other Zionists such as Chaim Weizmann). They were, at the same time, nourishing their promises to the Sharif Hussein of Mecca, to help him establish a "great Arab" state throughout the region and the Arabian peninsula, if he continued to help Britain to drive the Ottomans out of Arabia. The promises were made to Sharif Hussein, the great-grandfather of the current King of Jordan, by the British High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon ("The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence"). The Sharif was regarded as a religious leader, a descendant of the family of Prophet Mohammed, and a guardian of the Holy Ka'aba in Mecca (the most sacred site in Islam), whose word is a letter of credit among Arab tribes and Muslims in many parts of the world.

When the war was over, and the Sharif and his sons came to cash the promissory note, they were led into a labyrinth of deceptive moves and lies. Not only that; the very ground the Sharif was standing on in western Arabia was promised by the British to their most important asset, Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, who had taken over most of eastern Arabia by the end of the war with British military and financial aid!

When the Arabian armies, under the leadership of Sharif Hussein's son Prince Faisal and T.E. Lawrence "of Arabia," finally arrived in Damascus, Syria in October 1918, and the people rejoiced for the removal of the Ottoman oppression, they did not think about the French colonial army advancing from the Mediterranean coast to take over the country, in accordance with the Sykes-Picot agreement.

From that point on, the British and Lawrence, who had befriended Faisal, took him through a smoke-and-mirrors game, in order to get him to approve both the Sykes-Picot agreement and the Balfour Declaration.

Lawrence accompanied his dupe Faisal to allegedly represent the Arab nations at the Paris Peace Confer-



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British troops march into Baghdad, March 11, 1917, wresting it away from the Ottoman Empire. In a proclamation that sounds familiar today, the British told the Iraqis: “Our armies do not come into your cities and lands as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators.”

ence in January 1919. But before going to Paris, Lawrence led the Prince to London, where the British government arranged for him to meet, on June 3, with Chaim Weizmann, the chairman of the Zionist Congress. Under pressure from Lawrence, Faisal, who was unable to contact his father, Sharif Hussein, capitulated to demands to sign an agreement with Weizmann, to facilitate the immigration of Jews from Europe to Palestine, and to accept the terms of the Balfour Declaration. Faisal made these concessions with an eye to the upcoming Paris Peace Conference, where he and his family would finally get the promised “Arab land.” Faisal was not allowed to get anywhere close to the conference halls, which were reserved for the European powers. Lawrence of Arabia suddenly was relieved of his duties, and Faisal returned to Syria empty-handed to find the French running the place.

Arab-Syrian officers and nationalist leaders founded an “independence party” in Damascus, most probably encouraged by the American King-Crane Commission. In November 1919, Faisal, now leader of Syria, reached a compromise solution with the French government of Georges Clemenceau, under pressure from the British, allowing the French to occupy the coastal areas and giving the French a monopoly over the economic affairs of the country. In March 1920, the Independence Party declared independence, and the first revolt was a

fact. A second revolt took place against the French army in June 1925. Both were crushed with merciless force.

The ‘Winston Hiccough’

By that time, 1925, Prince Faisal of Syria had already left the country and was now “King Faisal” of Iraq upon recommendation of Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill. Faisal was crowned King of Iraq in August 1921.

Churchill was sent to the region by the British government of David Lloyd George to devise a new strategy for the empire there, after the “expensive” armed revolts. The new strategy created by Churchill in the 1921 Cairo Conference was to move from the British East India Company’s direct imperial rule into the Foreign Office’s “indirect” imperial control, by installing puppet governments in the region bound by treaty agreements to

the British Empire. (An exemplary modern version of this type of treaty agreement is the British-Saudi multi-billion-dollar al-Yamamah arms deal.)

Faisal’s brother Abdullah was made king of the newly created Transjordan by Churchill. Faisal’s father was deposed from his Hashemite throne in al-Hijaz by the British-supported Ibn Saud in 1924, and sent into exile in Cyprus—aboard a British steamer! The French carved “Greater” Lebanon out of Syria. The absurdity of the Sykes-Picot engineering of borders between Arab countries reaches its peak with the “Winston hiccough.” Legend has it that Winston Churchill, after a huge dinner and many glasses of whisky, was drawing the borders between his new creation Transjordan and Saudi Arabia, with a pen. According to this tale, a hiccough caused the odd zigzag shape of the eastern border between Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

No war has been waged between Jordan and Saudi Arabia on this question, but fires are still burning in many parts of South Asia (India and Pakistan) and Southwest Asia due to the British imperial schemes. This is no “mere” history: It is a living tragedy today! If humankind manages to rise above this tragedy and bury what Lyndon LaRouche has termed the Brutish Empire, we will have many such stories and jokes to tell our children and grandchildren, and laugh heartily at the folly of our predecessors.