FAISAL, FRANCE, AND FANTASY

The Effect of the Allied Secret Treaties, the King-Crane Commission, and the San Remo Agreement on the Political Situation in Syria 1919 - 1920

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Art

by

Darlene J. Alberts, B.S.

The Ohio State University 1965

Approved by

[Signature]
Adviser
Department of History
PREFACE

The unstable political situation existing in the Middle East today cannot be adequately viewed apart from the historical circumstances surrounding it. It is hoped that the events offered here will further clarify and lend greater understanding to them. The reason for this paper is to discuss the solution advanced at Paris in 1919-1920 to the problems then happening in Syria.

The solution will be presented in a chronological sequence. First, there were the Allied secret treaties, letters, and agreements of 1915-17, and the various public pronouncements by responsible Allied political figures. These were followed by the negotiations, discussions, and debates of the Paris Peace Conference that gave rise to the King-Crane Commission and the San Remo Agreement. All of this culminated in the French mandate and the fall of the Faisal regime in Syria. The question of how and why the Syrian position was formed and finally settled as it was in 1919-1920 is the main problem considered by this study.
Partly due to misunderstanding and misinterpretation and partly due to the necessities of war and diplomacy, the Arab countries, including Syria, became mandates of the Allies.
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. SECRECY - ALLIED AGREEMENTS.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. SIX MONTHS OF WAITING.</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. ARAB LOSS - FRENCH GAIN.</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX I</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX II</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX III</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX IV</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX V</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

SECRECY - ALLIED AGREEMENTS

In order to gain the support of the Arabs against the Turks we, in common with our Allies, made during the war another series of promises to the Arabs of the reconstitution of the Arab nations, and, as far as possible, of the restoration of Arab influence and authority in the conquered provinces.

Sir Winston Churchill

The Arab countries following World War I received a blow to their newly emerging nationalism. On the basis of Allied promises and agreements as well as other encouraging factors, the country of Syria was led to believe that when the war ended there was to be an independent Arab State. To this end, she, like her leader Emir Faisal, placed her trust and faith in the Allied powers. Syria's mistake, however, was not in believing the Allies. It was in failing to see beyond and in misunderstanding their immediate intentions.

France had assumed the right to exert influence in the Middle East because of her historical relations. In the
twelfth and thirteenth centuries she had participated in the Crusades. From that time the French considered themselves as the protectors of the Holy Places. France enjoyed extensive commercial privileges in the Ottoman Empire, confirmed and augmented by the Treaty of 1740. When France entered the War, her purposes were disguised. Her real desires in Syria could only be seen in the secret treaties and negotiations. In addition, France was not alone in her covert designs on the Middle East. England's past interests in the Middle East extended from Egypt to Mesopotamia. During the War both France and England entered into a series of treaties and understandings. In respect to Syria, there appeared to be a dichotomy. How could a nation be expected to forego what was felt would be a decided benefit? Further, how could a nation suspect something about which nothing was known? Syria depended on the Allied countries to make her a sovereign nation and did not know of the Treaty of London, the Petrograd Treaty, or the Sykes-Picot Accord. They were all secret agreements between the Allies. Only after the Bolshevik Revolution were they revealed. And it was only after the
war that the negotiations were confirmed. So from 1915 until 1920 the Syrian government was falsely secure in the thought of an Arab State. The secret treaties were in direct conflict with the previous pledges for the disposal of the Middle East. Thus the outstanding feature of the Arabic scene following the War was the constant struggle against foreign rule by western Europe.¹

AN EMPIRE TOPPLED

World War I brought with it many unforeseen and undesired ramifications. In the instance of the former Ottoman Empire, political and geographical changes had the greatest impact. The Ottoman Empire had ruled supreme for six centuries in that part of the world. So for a long time, Turkish domination had been a seemingly permanent fact. From the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699, Europe witnessed slowly, but with real definiteness, the disintegration of the Empire.

By 1914, when the War came, Turkey found herself confronted not only with internal decline but with complete external collapse. The Empire was already being sliced and served up to the European powers. Desiring to recapture
Turkey's status in the Middle East, the Young Turks hope-
fully concluded a secret alliance with Germany on August 2, 1914, and joined the Central Powers.* Thus the Sublime Porte became involved in an initially sectional struggle that culminated in a global war. Had Turkey remained neutral, the Allies might have protected her status as an empire in the Middle East after the War.²

From about the middle of the nineteenth century the eastern Mediterranean had been a strategic center for the European-Asiatic world. Undoubtedly, many of the advances made in Turkey by Germany threatened to monopolize the trade control from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf. To the British this was a direct strike against her commercial lifeline to the Middle East. In addition it had cultural implications which England feared. Not only did England have much to lose. So did France. Long before the

---

*According to most sources, the Liman von Sanders military mission was the precipitating cause of the Turco-German Alliance of 1914. General Liman von Sanders, a German military strategist, was appointed with extensive authority to head a mission in Turkey. He was to revamp the Turkish military situation. Germany, realizing the control of the Turkish army meant control of the Porte, fashioned this mission to insure the Straits, her own prestige and influence and to guarantee her priority when the Empire was divided.
War, France had exhibited aspirations for the coast of Syria. and had championed religious organizations in the Lebanon. On the basis of those and economic, educational, social, and cultural ties with the Levant she claimed the political right to maintain domination in Syria.³

ALLIED PROMISES

As the war progressed, the Allies began to see the necessity, or at the very least the feasibility, of bringing the Arabs into the conflict. There was no need to induce a motive for the Arabs. Incited partly by Turkish rule and partly by a fervent desire to preserve Arab culture and tradition, Arab nationalism was rising. The Allies merely had to stimulate this newly awakened Arab movement. But first the allegiance of the Arabs had to be established.⁴

Fearing that the Porte would side with the Central Powers, England had instructed her agent in Cairo, Lord Kitchener, to appraise the Arab situation. On September 14, 1914, he telegraphed orders to Sir Ronald Storrs, a diplomatic attache in Cairo, to discover what the impact would be on the Arabs if Turkey allied herself with Germany. For even though the Treaty between the Germans and the
Turks was a fact, it was still a secret fact. Storrs' report to Kitchener after communicating with Abdullah, the eldest son of Sharif Hussein, was favorable to the Western powers. Messenger X, who Storrs employed as his liason, was told in a message by Hussein that if the Allies extended a hand to him and his people they would reciprocate and join the war on the Allied side. By this time, the British Government had learned of the Turco-German Treaty. So on October 31, 1914, Kitchener informed the Sharif that His Majesty's Government would guarantee that no intervention would occur in the Arab countries. Also Great Britain would give the Arabs every assistance to combat external foreign aggression. Lord Kitchener had laid the basis for the Anglo-Arab negotiations to follow.5

During the summer and fall of 1915 and into the winter of 1916 a series of notes were exchanged between the Arabs and the British. Known as the McMahon-Hussein correspondence, the letters were written by Sir (Arthur) Henry McMahon, the British agent in Cairo, who had replaced Kitchener, and King Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca and Prince of the Hedjaz. Basing his action on the assurances
of the former commissioner, the Sharif sent the first letter to McMahon. 6

The letter of July 14, 1915, carried in it the conditions upon which the Arabic people would support the Allied war effort. First, Hussein set out the geographical boundaries for an independent Arab nation:

Great Britain recognizes the independence of the Arab countries which are bounded: on the north by the line Mersin-Adana to parallel 37° N. and thence along the line Birejik-Urfa-Mardin-Midiat-Jizirat (ibn 'Umar) - Amadia to the Persian frontier; on the east by the Persian frontier down to the Persian Gulf; on the south, by the Indian Ocean (with the exclusion of Aden whose status will remain as at present); on the west, by the Red Sea and Mediterranean Sea back to Mersin.

Then, he listed five other items. There was to be a British proclamation recognizing an Arab caliph for Islam. The capitulation treaties* were to be abolished for England. Later England was to help abolish them completely. In exchange for these, Great Britain would be granted priority in any economic ventures of the Arab nations.

*Capitulations were treaties made with foreign countries by the Ottoman Empire before the 16th century. They became burdensome; for the treaties afforded financial and judicial privileges to foreigners not enjoyed by the Ottomans themselves.
In case of an attack by a third party, mutual aid would be given unless either contracting party was the aggressor. Then neutrality would be assumed. These provisions were to be unlimited in time except for the final one. It would last for 15 years. Actually, the only benefit for England was the commercial consideration Hussein offered.  

Sir Henry answered on August 30. As would be expected, the letter was written in a most official and somewhat non-committal manner. Lord Kitchener's pledge that England desired an independent Arab nation and caliphate was confirmed. McMahon related that it was too soon, however, for any boundaries to be settled. Instead of concurring with Hussein or counter proposing, the British commissioner circumvented the Sharif's demands. On September 9 the Sharif replied to this. Noting the "lukewarmth" and hesitant attitude of McMahon, Hussein said it could be endured along with the refusal to adopt any definite boundaries:

For our own aim, O respected Minister, is to ensure that the conditions which are essential to our future shall be secured on a foundation of reality.
How much clearer could he have been? Nevertheless, this did not prevent Hussein from pressing for McMahon's assent to the geographical conditions.8

Without a doubt, the most significant of the eight letters exchanged was the Commissioner's answer to the Arab leader on October 24. McMahon first explained his reason for not discussing the boundaries conclusively. He had considered the time as inopportune as well as too early. Then, he continued by making the following provisions and assurances: that the Holy Places would be guaranteed protection; that Great Britain willingly extended assistance in setting up an Arab government; that the Arabs were to seek British help and advice exclusively; that Great Britain's sphere of influence in Iraq was to be recognized by the Arabs. In a way these were almost incidental to the Arabs. Most importantly to them, he pledged, on behalf of the British government, recognition of an independent Arab State within the boundaries proposed by Hussein (notwithstanding what seemed like a few minor exceptions).

Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs within the territories included in the limits and boundaries proposed by the Sharif of Mecca.
This was the foundation of the entire relation between the Allies and Arabs from that time. It was upon this statement that the Arabs fastened their hopes.9

Needless to say, Hussein was delighted with this reply. He accepted the terms of the pledge almost in its entirety. However, he refused to recognize fully British interests in Iraq. He only agreed to acknowledgment wherever British troops were in occupation. By this reservation he hoped to maintain the right for an independent Baghdad-Basra area.10

The correspondence concluded in January, 1916. The Arab leader, assured by the promises made to him, entered into a series of exchanges once again with McMahon. This ended in the Arab revolt against the Turks. Sharif Hussein had earlier refused to countenance the fetva* issued by the Shaikh al-Islam, the supreme theologian in the Ottoman Empire, that all good Muslims must support the Central Powers in the jihad (Holy War). On June 27, 1916, Hussein announced that he was going to aid the Allied cause.

*A fetva or fatwa is an edict pronounced by the Caliphate concerning certain duties to be performed.
Continuing, he listed his grievances against the Turks, stating that the behavior of the Turks toward the Arab Muslims was no longer tolerable. Also, he insinuated a strong dislike for Jemal Pasha, Talat Rey, and Enver Pasha, the Young Turks who were the Triumvirate of the Turkish government. By this move there was a military shuffle in the Empire. The Porte was forced to send troops to Medina, to guard the railroad in the Medjaz from Damascus to Medina—a previously unnecessary and costly operation. Because of this invaluable diversion, the British and French were able to establish themselves in Palestine. Field Marshal Viscount Allenby, the Commander of the British Expeditionary Forces in the Middle East, later attested to this.\textsuperscript{11}

The importance of these letters is that they were to the Arabs a written testimonial as to the stand England would take. However, it was not on the strength of these letters alone that the Arabs believed their hopes would become a reality. There were pledges and promises made by Great Britain and France affirming their desires for Syrian independence.
Immediately after the Balfour Declaration in November, 1917, an angry cry arose in the Arab world.* Action was taken by an anonymous group of Arabs.** They sent a memorial to the British Foreign Office in which they asked for a clarification of England's policy toward Syria and her future government. In order to quell the Arabs' fears, England restated her position in the Declaration to the Seven, presented on June 16, 1918, and later communicated to Hussein. Stating that the contents of the statement sent by the Seven had been carefully read and assessed, it divided the aims of the government into categories. These depended upon the type of territory being considered. First, there were the areas that had been independent previous to the War and those freed by the Arabs from Turkish domination. These were the independent states on the Arabian Peninsula and the section of the Hedjaz almost to Akaba. To these sections the British promised recognition and sovereignty. There were other places liberated

*See page 23 of this chapter for further discussion.

**These were the following seven men involved: Abdul-Rahman Shahbendar, Rafiq al-Azm, Khaled al-Hakim, Shaikh Kamel al-Qassab, Mukhtar al-Suhl, Hasan Himadah, Fauzi al-Bakri.
by the Allies which included most of Iraq and the Baghdad-Basra area as well as lower Palestine. England's aims as to their future position had already been declared by Generals Stanley Maude and Allenby at Baghdad and Jerusalem, respectively. Lastly, there were the regions still ruled by Turkey. In reference to these, a desire that they would achieve sovereignty and independence, for which England would work, was expressed. Again, the British government committed itself to a definite policy toward certain parts of the Fertile Crescent.\textsuperscript{12}

Then, on July 4, 1918, at Mount Vernon, Virginia, President Wilson set forth these sentiments in his famous Four Points speech:

\begin{quote}
The settlement of every question, whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship [the emphasis is mine] upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not on the basis of material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery [the emphasis is mine].\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

The armistice with Turkey on October 30, 1918, signed at Mudros, halted the fighting in the Middle East. On
November 7, the French and British promised the Arab people in a Joint Declaration:

The aim which France and Great Britain have in view... is to insure the complete and final emancipation of all those peoples, so long oppressed by Turks, and to establish national governments and administrations which shall derive their authority from the initiative and free will of the peoples themselves.

Continuing, the pledge declared that it was not the wish of the British or French to impose their economic structure or their political system on these areas. Rather it was their duty to insure "the normal workings of such governments and administrations as the people shall themselves have adopted." By this France and England had proposed a plan which not only conformed with the Arabs' wants but those promulgated by President Wilson. In short, the Allies had agreed not to encroach upon the political organizations of these countries. They were voluntarily assigning themselves to a policy to assist and encourage the creation of an Arab nation. This program extended to the establishment of native governments whose authority would emanate from the people and their institutions—both religious and secular. Two days after the Declaration, it
was published in Palestine by Field Marshal Allenby. He also communicated it to Riza Rikaby Pasha, Governor of Damascus, in a letter on December 15.\textsuperscript{14}

This was not the only statement issued to the Arabs by a military man. Over a year and a half before, Lieutenant-General Sir Stanley Maude had captured Baghdad for the Allies. Upon entering the city on March 19, 1917, he publicly announced a proclamation which had been designed by Sir Mark Sykes, then a member of the British Foreign Office. This was not just to the people of Iraq but to all Arabs. In it, he reassured them that his government wanted only peace, prosperity, and independence for them. "It is the wish not only of my King and his peoples, but it is also the wish of the great nations with whom he is in alliance, that you should prosper." He continued that it also was not the desire of his country to thrust its government upon the Arabs.\textsuperscript{15}

TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP

In accepting these promises and pledges, the Sharif and the Arab people undoubtedly did not, and could not,
foresee certain opposing circumstances. While the British were making concessions to Hussein, they were conducting negotiations from the British office in India with Abdul Aziz ibn Saud of the Nedj. This led to discussions with Captain W. J. R. Shakespear, the British Consul at Kuwait, and Sir Percy Z. Cox, the Chief Political Officer in Mesopotamia. The result was the friendship treaty on December 26, 1915, between England and Ibn Saud. Up to this time Ibn Saud's main problem had been to gain recognition of his position in Central Arabia. By this treaty the British extended both de jure and de facto recognition, placing Ibn Saud on an almost equal basis with the other Arab chiefs including Ibn Rashid, his main rival in the Arabian Peninsula. In exchange for acknowledgment of his claims in the Nedj, al-Hasa, Qatif, Jubayl, and six other provinces, Ibn Saud agreed to stand by the Allies in the War. England obtained the right to exercise wide influence over Ibn Saud. There was only one problem. England appears to have promised the area of the Gulf States to both Hussein and Ibn Saud. Still, the Arabs should not have grieved. Even the French were uninformed as to these developments.
Perhaps it could be suggested that the English anticipated that neither the Arabs nor the French would ever reach a satisfactory territorial settlement and so just continued negotiations for both sides. But from the records of the British Parliament, it seems, there was reason for doubting the sincerity of the British. No record of any action taken on or about the Middle East would reflect positive conduct. There were two occasions on which Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith refused to accede to a demand in the House of Commons for a report on Lord Kitchener's mission in the Middle East. At numerous other junctures, Lord Asquith declined even to facilitate a discussion on the situation there. It then became apparent to the House members that the Arab problem was not open for deliberation. If Hussein had read the debates in Parliament on November 29, 1917, he would have doubted England's diplomacy toward the Arabs as being trustworthy. A member of the House asked Lord Robert Cecil, then the Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to explain the government's position concerning the Caliphate of Islam. Lord Cecil remarked: "His Majesty's Government has never departed from the attitude
that the question of the Khaliphate is one for the Moslem opinion alone to decide [this implies either a Turkish or an Arab Caliph]." But, on August 30, 1915, Sir Henry McMahon, writing to the Sharif, had related that his government was ready to agree to guarantee the proclamation of an Arab as Caliph. Is this not a contradiction? Without a guarantee of recognition, any attempt to establish an Arab Muslim as the Caliph would be futile.17

PANDORA'S BOX OPENED

When President Wilson asked for "open covenants openly arrived at" in his famous Fourteen Points, it is not unsure that the disclosure made in Petrograd was an influence. After the Bolshevik revolution in October, 1917, the Russian government opened its archives.* Then, the world viewed the first tangible proof of the Allied secret treaties. Even though there were rumors in 1916-17 that these treaties existed, it was not until after the war that all of them were revealed.18

*The reason for throwing open its archives was that the new Russian government no longer wished to be committed to any of its former allies. The Bolsheviks did not recognize the treaties or the former Czarist regime's part in the agreements.
Before the formal negotiations had begun with Hussein, England had completed two of the secret treaties—the Treaty of Petrograd and the London Treaty. On March 20, 1915, Russia and England signed an agreement by which Russia would annex the coveted Straits and Constantinople. The quid pro quo was recognition of England's sphere of influence in Iran, a neutral zone. Even on the surface this mutual pact is exceptional. For centuries Russia had attempted to control some part of Asia Minor and Iran as a trade outlet and strategical military point. England had fought the Crimean War in 1856 to prevent this. Suddenly, she was relenting! Why? Victory for the Allied cause was the prime objective at this juncture. Or was this another move that England would retract or reevaluate after the War? 19

The following month, the Treaty of London between England, France, Russia, and Italy was concluded. Its leading articles granted Italy parts of Asia Minor, the Southern Tyrol, and the Trentino as well as territory in Africa and Austro-Hungary. In exchange, Italy agreed to join the Allied Powers within a month of the agreement.
On May 23, 1915, one month later, Italy entered the War. Although these treaties had no direct bearing on the Syrian geography or political phase, they demonstrate Allied willingness to compromise secretly.  

Both of these treaties must be remembered in perspective. The first was executed four months before negotiations between Hussein and McMahon had begun. And it was commenced some five months after Lord Kitchener's pledge. The second agreement was completed only ten weeks prior to the commencement of the Hussein-McMahon letters. This would suggest that England had formulated her policy toward the Middle East.

"The rights of England and France in Asiatic Turkey to be defined by special agreement between France and England and Russia are recognized." This was part of Article II of the Petrograd Treaty. Then, Article IX of the Treaty of London reserved the possibility of expanding Allied acquisitions and spheres of influence in the Middle East. These heralded a new treaty.  

20

21
THE ANGLO-FRENCH PACT

In order to alleviate the strained relations between themselves and France, the British had created a Commission in 1915 headed by Sir Maurice de Bunsen for the purpose of partitioning Asiatic Turkey. This had been done because France was pressing England for an arrangement regarding Syria. On April 2, 1916, M. Briand, the French Foreign Minister, telegraphed instructions to M. F. Georges Picot, the French Commissary in Syria and Palestine, reflecting this. The orders also exhibited France's desire for consolidation of power in the Levant. Picot was to make certain France commanded at least a position that equaled England in all relations with the native peoples. Still, he was not to forget his primary objective—to prepare the way for the implementation of the secret treaties, including the one being drafted by himself and the British.22

In December, 1915, the British government instructed Sir Mark Sykes,* of the Foreign Office, to form a

---

*Sir Mark Sykes was chosen because of his vast experience in the Middle East. He, like Colonel T. E. Lawrence, had a love of and concern for the Arab people as well as a deep respect. The treaty that resulted was the best that could be accomplished. Nevertheless, he intensely disliked having his name connected with it.
satisfactory compromise with the French concerning the Fertile Crescent. England's policy toward Syria then became his responsibility. He found it was virtually impossible to maintain an idealistic approach to a Middle East solution and satisfy the Allies. Realizing that it was essential to have accordance between the Allies first, the British government yielded to the French and the result was the Sykes-Picot Treaty.\textsuperscript{23}

When Sykes went to Petrograd for Russian approval, the negotiations were in their preliminary stages. It was his intention only to create a French buffer state between the British and Russian areas in the Middle East. He was forced, however, to abandon this idea. The Treaty had already taken a definite course. This was partly because of the British Foreign Office and partly because the Sazonov-Paleologue Treaty between the Russian Foreign Minister and the French Ambassador to Russia had just been completed. The pact placed a vast Turkish territorial domain in Asia under Russian control. France gained land in the southern Mediterranean, the boundaries of which were later to be settled by France and England jointly. On the basis of this and Sir Maurice de Bunsen's
committee report, the Sykes-Picot Accord was signed on May 16, 1916, by Sir Edward Grey, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and M. Jules Cambon, representing the French Foreign Office, who confirmed the February through April negotiations. ²⁴

The Treaty had several parts. The Arab areas were divided into zones. Zone "A" (the blue zone) was French while the British had zone "B" (the red zone). Palestine was to be an international (brown) zone. The region from Tyre to Alexandretta around the coast to Cilicia and from Diarbekr to Sivas in southern Armenia was to be French administered. From the Persian Gulf north to Tekrit, Mesopotamia, and the ports of Haifa and Acre on the Mediterranean coast was a British zone. Roughly, this meant that the British had conceded several hundred square miles of territory that Sharif Hussein had been promised in 1915. And much to the consternation of Great Britain, the Mosul area went to France. Later, after Russia denounced these secret treaties as capitalist deceit, England did receive Mosul. ²⁵

A provision for an independent Arab State subject to certain influences (which practically negated any political
or economic freedom of action by the Arabs) was included. This was a region defined by a line through the four cities of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo eastward to Mesopotamia. The agreement further marked out other British and French spheres of influence extending from Akaba in a straight line to the Gulf as far north as Kurdistan. These divisions were to have indirect French and British administration. Also, it was agreed that only England and France would have rights in this area.* Even though this was a secret agreement, it clearly ended any doubts as to how Asiatic Turkey was to be apportioned after the War. 

PALESTINE RECLAIMED (?)

Although the Arab world was not apprised of the above events, there was one which was known. It served to strengthen Arab nationalism but partially destroyed Arab hopes for a sovereign and independent nation. This was the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917.

The Zionist Movement, begun in the late nineteenth

*This prompted the signing of another secret treaty on April 19-21, 1917—the St. Jean de Maurienne Treaty—between Italy, France, and England subject to Russian approval. Because the Kerensky government in Russia refused approbation, the Treaty was never implemented.
century by Theodore Herzl, found itself in need of Allied
support after Turkey entered the War.* Since Great Britain
had demonstrated sympathy for the Movement from its
inception, Dr. Chaim Weizmann (President of the Zion
Organization) proposed that the Jewish national home be
placed under British protection. He attracted some aid
in the British Parliament but failed to convince Prime
Minister Asquith. In early 1915, Herbert Samuel, a member
of the House of Commons, presented to Lord Asquith a
memorandum entitled "The Future of Palestine." The Prime
Minister was quite uninterested in the report. The most
important supporter Samuel found was Lloyd George. How-
ever, Asquith stated that it was not for the future of the
Jews that David Lloyd George cared. It was to prevent the
Holy Places from passing "into the possession or under the
protectorate of 'agnostic, atheistic France.'" Neverthe-
less, through the assistance of Lloyd George, as Prime
Minister replacing Lord Asquith, and C. P. Scott, editor

---

*The Zionist Movement had as its aim the creation and
establishment of a national home in Palestine for the
Jewish people. Before the War its mainstay had been the
Turks. But with the entry of Turkey on the side of the
Central Powers, the Zionists feared complete collapse for
their plans.
of the Manchester Guardian, the Zionist cause was greatly furthered. There were lengthy negotiations between the Zionist leaders and Sir Mark Sykes, who originally disliked the Zionist Movement. Unfortunately, he, like the government, did not recognize any distinction between the desires of the Arabs and the aims of the Zionists.* Even if they saw a difference, they did not see a conflict. These meetings in February, 1917, led to the Zionist proposal in July that Palestine be recognized as the Jewish national home. The reply of the British government constituted the basis of what came to be the Balfour Declaration.  

The Pledge was sent in a letter by Arthur James Balfour to Baron Edmond de Rothschild. The formal promise which had government sanction was later affirmed in the House of Commons. It stated:

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly

*This is probably why a year later the Joint Declaration could be announced. Also this affords a plausible explanation as to the reason that the Declaration to the Seven could be given.
understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.\textsuperscript{28}

**ASSESSMENT**

Viewing this in the light of the McMahon-Hussein letters or the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which internationalized Palestine, produced a definite conflict in terms. The Arabs had interpreted McMahon's letter of October 24 as including Palestine as part of an independent Arab nation. Later, the British argued that this area was excluded by the McMahon boundaries. The text of this letter pertinent to this was:

The districts of Mersin and Alexandretta, and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus [emphasis mine], Homs, Hama and Aleppo, cannot be said to be purely Arab, and must on that account be excepted from the proposed delimitation. Whether this can be read to include or exclude Palestine is still a point of contention.\textsuperscript{29}

It is not inconceivable that by "districts" McMahon meant the Arab term vilayet. If these terms were used interchangeably, then Palestine would be outside the
vilayet of Damascus. On the other hand, there was no vilayet of Damascus. The political division there, made by the Ottoman Empire, was the vilayet of Syria. Further evidence within the letter itself served to defeat England's argument. Sir Henry applied the term vilayet in the last part of the same letter. It would be correct to assume he probably understood the distinction. Thus if he correctly signified "districts", Palestine would clearly be part of the area promised to the Arab State. Even so, as previously noted, the British felt there was room in the Middle East for both Arabs and Jews.

It is difficult to assess the secret treaties and Allied intention in the Middle East. The first observation is that they are diametrically opposed to the promises and agreements with the Arabs. Partially, this is true as an attempt has been made to demonstrate. It must be remembered also that this was a situation which involved a neophyte in politics (the Arabs) and diplomatic professionals (the Allies). Despite this, the problem seems to be not one of dishonesty or deceit but one of misinterpretation. When the Allies spoke of the desire for an independent Arab State, they did not have the same concept as the Arabs.
Seemingly, the Allies meant by independence in Syria that it would become an ultimate reality under western guidance. For an example, this was manifested in the Sykes-Picot Treaty. It was agreed England and France should have definite zones of influence in the area set aside for the formation of an Arab State or confederation of states. Of course, when Sharif Hussein thought of an independent nation with full sovereignty, he did not envision this. He believed it would mean immediate freedom and recognition of his authority as well as that of his sons, Faisal and Abdullah. As to President Wilson's remarks, they were idealistic not realistic promises. A meeting of western and eastern minds is not strange, perhaps merely rare.
FOOTNOTES

1 Shibly Jemal, "The Arab Case in Palestine," Living Age, v. 313, pp. 77-83 (April 1, 1922); George Haddad, Fifty Years Of Syria and Lebanon, pp. 58-82.


6 Ibid., p. 166.

7 George Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 414.

8 Ibid., p. 417.

9 Ibid., p. 419; Loder, p. 21.

10 Antonius, pp. 421-22.


15The King of Hédjaz, pp. 12-5; Shane Leslie, Mark Sykes: His Life and Letters, p. 60.


20 Cocks, pp. 27-41; The Manchester Guardian, Jan. 19, 1918, p. 8:5; Temperley, v. VI, p. 5.

21 Cocks, pp. 20, 39.


27 Leonard Stein, Zionism, pp. 73-106 (on the Zionist Movement), 107-140; Loder, pp. 165-73; Howard, Turkey, pp. 197-8; Antonius, pp. 258-70; Leslie, pp. 269-71; Herbert Henry Asquith, Memories and Reflections, v. II, pp. 70, 71, 78; Kenneth Young, Arthur James Balfour, pp. 386-94.


29 Antonius, p. 419; Loder, p. 21; Editor and Publisher, v. LV (supplement), p. 3 (Dec. 2, 1922).

30 Congressional Record, v. LVI (part 1), Jan. 8, 1918, p. 690; Baker, v. I, p. 68; Cocks, p. 46.
CHAPTER II

SIX MONTHS OF WAITING


— Robert de Beauplan, Ou Va la Syrie, p. 20.

"'When President Wilson spoke of self-determination of peoples, a smile went through all Arabia.'" Before a Joint Session of Congress on January 8, 1918, Woodrow Wilson pronounced his Fourteen Points. He announced to the world that his views were contrary to accepting the secret agreements made during the War. He knew there would be a division of Asia Minor and the former Ottoman Empire. Even so, it should be on the basis of governments determined by the native populations:

The Turkish portions 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 was merely a repetition of his Foreign Relations Address delivered to the Senate the year before. At that time he stated unequivocally and just as idealistically that each peoples had the right and freedom to decide their own political path whether the nation be large or small.¹

There can be no doubt that since the Allies acceded to these statements and because of the promises and pledges to the Arabs, the Middle East countries merely awaited their formal release from foreign dominations. Ultimately, they were anticipating a united State. This process would first necessitate independent regions under separate rulers until the entire area could be linked by a common government under one leader. In October, 1918, the Syrian National Government was formed. It governed the area coming under the jurisdiction of the four towns of Aleppo, Homs, Hama, and Damascus. On January 3, 1919, the Syrian Congress convened in Damascus with a note of hope for the future Arab nation. As the Arabs continued their elaborate
planning, Emir Faisal, his emissaries, and Colonel Thomas E. Lawrence acted for Faisal's father, Sharif Hussein, at the Paris Peace Conference. 2

EARLY STAGES OF A PLEBISCITE

Respectively representing the Arab and Zionist claims to Palestine, the Emir Faisal and Dr. Chaim Weizmann signed a mutual pact on January 3, 1919. In effect it was an agreement that did little more than state the ambitions of both sides in this area. It could have been no more. For two days previous to this, Faisal had submitted a memorandum to the Council of Ten. This paper substantiated that his people had no intention of relinquishing Palestine to the Jews. He commenced by stating clearly and concisely that the aim of the Arab Nationalists was to unify all the Arab people into one nation and this included Palestine. The question of Palestine, he said, could be solved by the Arabs and Jews jointly occupying this region under the leadership of the Arabs. More than this, Faisal demanded that the Powers not make any arrangement for the Arabs that would prevent their ultimate union. He and the Arab people, generally, wanted assistance from the Allied
Powers; but they were willing to accept a guardianship in the form of a mandate, if necessary. Based on the Smuts Plan and Point Five of Wilson's Fourteen Points a resolution was passed by the Council on January 30, creating a mandate system under the guidance of the League of Nations.* This was no surprise or blow to the Arabs or their nationalism. It merely meant postponement, if necessary, so their goal could become a reality. The problem facing Syria and the adjoining regions was not to be a mandate so much as it was who was to become the mandatory power or powers.3

In all of the statements, both to the Arabs and the rest of the world, the Allied Powers had professed a self-determining factor as the fundamental ingredient to create a workable mandate. At a meeting of the Supreme Council

*General George Smuts submitted a proposal in December, 1918, stating the League's power and position and in part said: "In some cases the peoples concerned are perhaps sufficiently homogeneous and developed to govern themselves subject to some degree or other of external assistance or control. This will probably be the case also of Upper and Lower Mesopotamia, Lebanon, and Syria." For a discussion of the origin of the mandate concept see George Louis Beer, African Questions at the Peace Conference (p. 431) and also Baker, vol. I, pp. 261 ff.
at the Quai d'Orsay on January 20, it was obvious that the members were fixed in this approach to mandates. As for the former Turkish Empire, its components would be mandates only until such time as proper political organization had been accomplished. This was in concert, theoretically, with the thoughts of the Arabs.  

On February 16, five representatives from the Hedjaz presented themselves at the Quai d'Orsay before the Council of Ten. The leader of the group was the Emir Faisal. First, he explained his reasons for the memorandum of January 1 (read on January 29): homogeneity and natural boundaries made a unified Arab State more than just feasible; it was the duty of the Allies to fulfill their promises of independence. These were only a few. Continuing, he recalled that the Arabs had originally joined the Allied cause in order to free both themselves and their countries from the Turks not to be governed and/or dominated by another foreign power. When Faisal concluded, Wilson questioned him concerning his country's feeling toward becoming a mandate to either one or more mandatory power or powers. As for becoming a mandate, both Faisal
and his people were willing. However, he refused to decide upon whether Syria should be made into one or more mandates. He said this was a choice for Syria and the Arabs to make, not him. In order to decide equitably, he proposed an international inquiry as to whether a mandate was even desired or not. And if a mandate was acceptable to them, then it would be up to them whether Syria would be broken up into two or more mandates or remain one. No matter the decision, he thought it should be the product of a plebiscite.  

Dr. Howard Bliss had expressed this same idea a few days before.* His statement to the Peace Conference suggested that a commission be sent to Syria in order that the people be allowed to declare their wishes. After quoting the Joint Declaration of 1918, he remarked upon the stringent censorship which kept the true feelings of the people from being known. Definitely this was not in accord with the pledge made the previous winter. Continuing,

*Dr. Howard Sweester Bliss, son of Daniel Bliss founder of The Syrian College of Beirut, was born and lived in Lebanon. At that time he was President of the American University of Beirut. He later contracted diabetes and tuberculosis when he went to the United States to further his plan for a Commission. A year later he died in the States. See Stephen Penrose, That They May Live and Bayard Dodge, The American University of Beirut.
he said he believed that the people desired ultimate independence and were willing to accept being a mandate. They only wanted the right to designate a power to assume their mandate. 6

OPPOSITION BY SYRIANS

This was not quite the attitude assumed by those who spoke following him. The Syrian Commission, speaking for approximately one million Arabs and Syrians and headed by Emir Chekri Ganme, reiterated many of the same ideas and feeling of Faisal and Dr. Bliss.* Like Faisal and Dr. Bliss, the Committee and Ganem advocated a plebiscite. A month later, Ganem balked at the idea of a commission to Syria. However, there was one basic difference in the political thought of the Syrian Committee and the Arab prince. Faisal and Sharif Hussein had political aspirations for themselves as the center of the new Arab State when it was realized. Any political implications in Dr. Bliss' speech had no reference to Faisal or any particular

---

* Other members of the Committee were Anis Schehade, Dr. Georges Samne, Mejil Bey Maikarzel, Jamil Marjam Bey, Dr. Tewfik Farki; Ganem was the chairman of the Council of the Central Syrian Committee.
figure to lead a united Syria. On the contrary, Ganem made it very clear that the Syrians did not want an Arab at the helm. To Ganem and the Committee the notion that Faisal or any other Arab had a right to lead a consolidated Syrian people or state was the very antithesis of their culture. He left no doubt that there was a large group in the Middle East who would never sanction Faisal as their leader.** Not only did these men of the Committee refuse Arab leadership, they were inclined toward France as the mandatory power.

The absence of any Imperialist party in France, her relative proximity to our country, incline us to her with the more fervour. We know that France understands how to confine her activity to that of a guide or arbitrator. She, alone, in our opinion, is competent to obtain the whole effect for which we hope.

This was a complete reversal of the pro-British and American and anti-French sentiments that were being heard. Faisal had not committed a verbal or ouvert action against French protectorship. Nevertheless, it can be discerned that the Emir was not pleased with the prospect of French guardianship. As Dr. Bliss pointed out the majority of

**A further explanation of this can be seen in Chapter III.
the Arab publications, as well as the people, definitely favored the United States or Great Britain as the mandatory government. Of course, he did qualify this by adding that this may not have been accurate. For there was some restriction on any anti-British feeling because of the English military operations which remained active for about a year following the War.7

Less than a week after the Bliss proposal, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, part of the Wilson delegation at the Conference, informally suggested appointing an Inter-Allied Commission to Syria. The question was postponed until a future meeting. On March 20 at a meeting of the Council of Four in order to stop a rather heated debate developing between Clemenceau, Pichon, and Lloyd George over the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Hussein-McMahon letters, Wilson intervened.* Being an opportune moment, he proposed a Commission, formally. He recommended that an international group be sent to the Levant for the purpose

*As of March, 1919, the Supreme Council was composed of delegates from the United States, England, France and Italy; Japan was no longer involved. The Council of Ten ceased to exist.
of studying and reporting the conditions in these countries and the desires of the people. Lloyd George, Wilson and Orlando all agreed this should be done. Rather than commit himself and France, Clemenceau merely said that he approved in theory of the concept. Now that he felt he had both British and French approval, Wilson moved ahead with his part by designating two Americans for the Commission. In actuality, there were other considerations being made by England and France.*\(^8\)

**ANGLO-FRENCH PROBLEMS**

An uncomfortable, diplomatic situation between the English and the French governments over the Middle East had been evident for some time despite superficially cordial relations. As far back as 1912, Lord Edward Grey, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had assured M. Raymond Poincare, the Prime Minister of France, that His Majesty's Government would not make any political demands in Syria due to France's traditional interests.

---

*One of the other considerations was in late May when both were negotiating toward an agreement for the laying of an oil pipe line in a French zone in Syria from an English zone in Mesopotamia. For further discussion see Baker, vol. I, pp. 78-9.
From the first, the French government doubted England's sincerity. In 1919, the French were still as uncertain of British intentions as they had been before the War. To prove this, not only were British troops still in occupation, but the French felt that much of the anti-French feeling was being precipitated by the English. Only if British troops were evacuated and if Mesopotamia and Palestine were included in the investigations, would France formally appoint members to the Commission. It was finally for these reasons that Clemenceau refused to participate in the Commission to Syria.9

Because of these complications, a definite move to send the Commission appeared blocked; and the idea seemed abandoned. In early April, Wilson, under the assumption that the plan would materialize, appointed Dr. Henry Churchill King and Charles Richard Crane as the American representatives of the proposed Inter-Allied Commission to the Middle East. During the last week of April, England followed by designating Sir Henry McMahon and Commander David G. Hogarth as members. By May the French Prime Minister had informally assigned M. Robert de Caix
and M. Maurice Long as the French delegates.* But British reluctance to remove her troops, stationed in Syria, finally convinced Clemenceau that Great Britain's interests in Syria were far more than she declared. He believed the French-Arab situation could be solved if the British would co-operate. Also, he felt that an equitable settlement with Faisal could be reached without the aid of the Conference. More importantly, Clemenceau wished to achieve a warmer and more satisfactory relationship with Great Britain. But he lamented that the British had not carried through on her part of the bargain.

At first Lloyd George expressed himself entirely in favour of a French mandate for Syria and said that the only obstacle was Wilson. 'Agree with Wilson,' he added, 'and I will help you in every way, provided that you give up your claims to Cilicia, and that you leave Mosul in the British sphere.' All this I have done; but after I had agreed with Wilson and House, Lloyd George did nothing; and he has now allowed Allenby to send away to

*Mr. Crane, later the American Ambassador to China in 1920-21, was an Illinois (Chicago) industrialist and former member of America's Russian Diplomatic Commission. Dr. King, along with Crane, was a member of the Inter-Allied Commission on Mandates to Turkey. He was also President of Oberlin College. Commander Hogarth was an authority on the Middle East. De Caix was a member of the French delegation to the Paris Peace Conference and later High Commissioner to Syria. Long was of the French Foreign Office.
Cilicia the regiment of cavalry which the British had asked me to send to Beirut. I really cannot stand this sort of slap in the face. All we now want is that the British should agree with us and that instructions should be given to the local British officers not to stir up the population against us. Lloyd George has told me that he intends to demand a mandate for Great Britain in Palestine and Mesopotamia. I really cannot see why he should allow his people to contest our mandate for Syria.

As another instance of British refusal to fulfill pledges to France, Clemenceau pointed to Lord Milner who had promised to use his good offices to help settle the situation with Faisal. But this never happened. So Clemenceau ordered a memorandum to be sent to Lloyd George. M. de Caix claimed it was dispatched. But the British Minister said he never received it. Now whether either party actually intended to reach an agreement in this matter, at this time, is doubtful. 9

The French policy was to stand by the conditions of the Sykes-Picot Treaty. She was not going to lose Syria to the British or any other power. This is easily recognizable from these circumstances. When the Germans signed the Treaty of Peace, the French said they would send their representatives. Clemenceau then said he could not
possibly send his group since he had received very serious complaints from Syria regarding British actions there. It is certain from this attitude that Clemenceau was strongly opposed to the Conference relegating authority to a delegation to determine Syria's future. Outwardly, it might appear that both governments had every intention of being a part of the Commission. Nevertheless, all of the excuses could be viewed as merely contrivances to prevent participation. 10

AN AMERICAN ENDEAVOR

It had been decided that the Commission would leave to go to the Middle East at the end of May, although many desired to be there by May. Because of Anglo-French animosity over the Levant, it began to look as though there would be no Commission. Wilson became quite concerned. He was convinced the only way for a just and lasting peace was if the people themselves determined their own future. In addition, his group was ready and anxious to go, and he disliked keeping them waiting. Dr. King had an audience with Wilson on May 22. King asked whether the Commission was going and if so when. It was at this point that Wilson
decided to take action. If the other Allied Powers were not to be a part of this venture, it would not have a deterring effect upon sending the American delegation.

Dr. King remarked:

But the same night [May 31] I received word from the President that, whether the other national representatives on the Commission went or not, the President wanted the American Commission to go, and as soon as possible...ll

In addition to its political makeup, the King-Crane Commission, as it came to be called, had an impressive staff of technical advisors. Dr. Albert Howe Lybyer of the University of Illinois was named as the Commission's General Technical Advisor. Having been exposed to Middle Eastern problems from many years of residence in the area and from years of study of Middle Eastern affairs, and from close acquaintance of Central and Eastern European problems through association with Dr. Robert J. Kerner, well-known in those fields of study, Dr. Lybyer was a natural choice. The other two members of Dr. Lybyer's staff were Dr. George Redington Montgomery and Army Captain William Yale, advisers
for the Northern and Southern Regions of Turkey, respectively. Also there were others involved: Captain Donald M. Brodie, Sergeant Michael Dorizas, Dr. Sami Haddad, Laurence S. Moore, Private First Class Ross Lambing, Sergeant-Major Paul O. Toren. Their positions ranged from interpreters to stenographers. So the Commission was formed. They could have hardly known they would be its only members.\footnote{Dr. Montgomery, a theologian and Ph.D., was well acquainted with the Middle East since he had served in Istanbul as the protege of American Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr., in 1917. Captain Yale, a civil engineer, had been a representative in 1917 of the State Department in Cairo and later on duty in Palestine as part of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in 1918-19. Later he wrote a history of the Middle East—The Near East, a Modern History. None of these men, however, was as qualified as Dr. W. L. Westermann of the American delegation in Paris and Chief of Division of Western Asia. But Professor Westermann chose not to go.}

During May they had discussions not only among themselves but with other interested parties such as Professor W. L. Westermann and members of the British delegation. With the Zionists fearing the loss of the Jewish cause, the French fearing undue pressure and the loss of Syria, the British fearing the loss of commercial interests if a Commission was sent to the Middle East, President Wilson feared, first, the loss of the self-determination principle
and, then, a greedy, unjust disposition of the old Turkish Empire. After prodding from Prince Faisal, Colonel Edward House, Henry White, and the members themselves, Wilson informed the Conference the delegation would leave.

Thus, the Inter-Allied Commission became an American Commission. By June 1 all of the five men and the rest of the entourage had arrived in Constantinople. From there they went to Palestine arriving in Jaffa on June 10. Their stay in the Middle East lasted six weeks. They remained two weeks in Palestine visiting Jaffa, Acre, Jerusalem, Jenin, Nazareth, and Haifa. Spending three weeks in Cilicia and Syria, they went to Aleppo, Damascus, Amman, Homs, Hama, Dera, Baalbeck, Mersina, Tarsus, and Adana.

In Lebanon they travelled from Beirut to Alexandretta. At all of their stopping points they issued an official statement. In part it read:

The American people—having no political ambitions in Europe or the Near East; preferring if that were possible, to keep clear of all European, Asian, or African entanglements; . . . recognize that they cannot altogether avoid responsibility for just settlements among the nations following the war, and under the League of Nations. In that spirit they approach the problems of the Near East.
An International Commission was projected by the Council of Four of the Peace Conference to study conditions in the Turkish Empire with reference to possible mandates. The American Section of that Commission is in the Near East simply and solely to get as accurate and definite information as possible concerning the conditions, the relations, and the desires of all the peoples and classes concerned; in order that President Wilson and the American people may act with full knowledge of the facts in any policy they may be called upon hereafter to adopt concerning the problems of the Near East—whether in the Peace Conference or in the later League of Nations.

From this it can be seen that the American government had left some doubt as to the type of policy it would follow.\textsuperscript{13}

THE SUPPRESSED REPORT

The Arabs had been informed of the nature of the Commission well in advance. Therefore, they had prepared signed petitions, as to the choice of the peoples, in regard to specific matters. The petitions were then submitted to the Commission. This was done when the Commissioners interviewed representative groups as well as individuals throughout thirty-six towns, villages and cities in British, Arab, and French Occupied Enemy Territory
Administrations (O.E.T.A.).* This included some 1,520 villages surrounding the area. The Secretary, Captain Brodie, wrote the following qualifying remarks as to the value and validity of the petitions: 1) that the amount of petitions was not comparable to the population, 2) that the amount of religions represented was also not proportional to the strength of the religious group, 3) that there was definitely an influence of propaganda by both the French and the Arabs, 4) that some of the petitions were frauds, 5) and that the amount of persons signing the petitions did not always illustrate the number of people represented by just a few signatures. Continuing, he commented:

Yet despite these five qualifications, it is believed that the petitions as summarized present a fairly accurate analysis of present political opinion in Syria.14

From the 1,863 petitions received from locations in the O.E.T.A. (East), four definite programs emerged.

*There were four O.E.T.A. zones. The South zone was composed of Palestine to the eastern boundaries of Jordan. This was under British control. Lebanon and the coastal regions up to Alexandretta made up the French zone in the West. The French also administered the North zone comprised of Cilicia. The O.E.T.A. (East) referred to the Arab controlled areas of Syria east of Jordan and Lebanon.
First, there was the Independence Program. This contained as its platform a desire for Syria's political unity, her complete and absolute independence and definite opposition to Palestine as a Jewish homeland. Secondly, there was the Damascus Program which became the basic plan of the Syrian Congress when it met in June. It was opposed to Article Twenty-two of the Covenant of the League and the independence of the Lebanon.* It also protested the secret agreements and rejected the French claims to Syria as strongly as it advocated Emir Faisal as the head of the new government. This program differed from that of the Lebanon. The Lebanon had three different programs that ranged from complete independence from Syria under French guidance, to independence without France's supervision, to a Lebanon within the new Arab State. Needless to say, there was a Zionist Program which favored Palestine as the Jewish national home.15

---

*The reason for this was stated by the Syrian Congress at their meeting on July 2: "We protest against Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, placing us among the nations in their middle stage of development which stand in need of a mandatory power." Editor & Publisher, p. VII.
The Commission interviewed 139 groups in the O.E.T.A. (east) out of a total of 442 throughout the entire Levant. Of these over ninety per cent (evenly divided) were religious and political groups. The remainder represented economic and social interests. Over a million and a half persons in the Arab zone signed the petitions. This would seem contradictory to previous statements by Chekri Ganem [see above, page 39] who spoke for the same number of people. Those for whom Ganem spoke were Syrian Christian and Muslim. The above were almost totally Arab Muslim. Not only was the plebiscite to determine if the people wanted a mandate, but who should have the control. As the petitions demonstrated, very few favored a mandate at all. Those who did, wanted it to be French. But this was only fifteen percent of the total number of petitions. Approximately seventy percent were either for an American mandate, if necessary, or American "assistance." This desire merely for "assistance" was because these people first voted for complete independence. Of the petitions that expressed a desire for American protectorship, one hundred percent exhibited anti-French sentiments. It can,
therefore, be assumed safely that an American mandate was the most agreeable to most of the population if complete independence could not be attained at this time.¹⁶

The majority of the O.E.T.A. (East) region wanted Lebanon as part of the united Arab State either as an autonomous nation within the State or against an independent Lebanon altogether. But what was the view of the Lebanese? It was their future that was involved. The largest over-all group of petitions came from the Lebanon and the coastal regions. Unlike the Syrian population, the majority (sixty percent) of the petitions came from religious groups alone. These were comprised of Christian denominations. Also, unlike the O.E.T.A. (East), the O.E.T.A. (West) supported a French mandate. Why? Most of Lebanon's Christian population were Maronite Catholics and were closely tied to Roman Catholicism. Although France had not supported Catholicism in the Middle East exclusively, it remained a factor that France's own religion was Catholic.¹⁷

On the whole other facts can be seen from the Report.
There was an overwhelming vote against Zionism as there was for a united Syria. A desire for a democratic form of government was almost numerically tied with that of having Faisal as King. Thus most of the Arabs (as distinct from the Syrians) advanced the idea of Faisal as the head of a constitutional monarchy. It is also significant to note that not only was there extremely little desire for a French mandate, but there was a small percentage that feared England as the mandatory power. For she might favor the Muslims rather than the Christians. This was one of the reasons that England was the second choice as a mandatory power for Syria. Of course, some felt that if Great Britain controlled both Syria and Palestine, then a united Syria could be realized.

IMPACT OF THE COMMISSION ON SYRIA

For the first time, a major power was interested in an equitable settlement for the Middle East. The United States was desirous of the views of the Arab population. The news of a national plebiscite aroused the people to consider seriously their independence and wish for
unification. If it was obligatory, the people would accept a mandate. Probably the program presented to the Commissioners which most represented the wishes of the people was that adopted by the Syrian Congress.* Its planks, in essence, were the same as that of the Damascus Program. Contrary to the opinions of the Central Syrian National Committee, the Congress advocated Emir Faisal as their leader. By this plebiscite the Arab people had definitely stated what they wanted and what they did not want. It was up to the Allies to carry out their desires as best as they were able.18

IMPACT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE QUAI D'ORSAY

How could the Allies design a program for the Middle East in conformity with their desires when the King-Crane Report was not officially made known?

Le rapport de cette Americain commission, will be to tell to the Conseil des Quarte of these conditions, but it remained unpublished, til 1922, date a laquelle il fut publie par le gouvernement des Etats-Unis.

*Since there was little time, this legislative body of about 90 members had not been elected by popular vote with the exception of 20 who were. The others were former members of the C.U.P. (Party of Union and Progress) and the Damascus Congress of the former Ottoman Empire.
When the Commission returned in late July, 1919, Dr. King and Mr. Crane brought with them a complex report to the Conference as well as a confidential appendix to be used only by the United States. In their recommendations the Commissioners advised that there be "a general single mandate for the whole of Asia Minor" with America acting as the mandatory power. Since all of the areas in question in the Middle East had common boundaries, cultural, social, and economic ties, and other interrelations, it would be natural to assign this region as a whole. Then, the Report discussed reasons why the United States should assume the mandate. First of all, it was the desire of the people to have America as their guardian. The United States had shown an idealistic, peace-loving attitude to the world and a negative one toward imperialism. This was exhibited by her reluctance to enter the war and her selfless aims in Cuba and the Philippine Islands. Then, the Report queried whether the United States could refuse this responsibility:

She has believed perhaps more than any other people, in the high possibilities of the League of Nations; but if the League of
Nations is not to be a sham and a delusion, all nations must be willing to bear their share in resulting responsibilities. America, certainly, cannot be an exception.¹⁹

All of this leads to a question. Was the act of sending this Commission to the Middle East merely a gesture to prove the Allies supported self-determination? True, Wilson said he had every intention of upholding the outcome of the Report. But this was only in so far as it did not interfere with the traditional isolationism that the American people were unwilling to abandon. Thus the American government had to refuse to accept Asia Minor as a mandate. This would have led to more foreign entanglements for the United States. Conceivably this alone could have prevented this data from being made public.²⁰

From British documents it appears that the fate of the Middle East had been determined before the American Commission had left—in fact, before it was decided to send a Commission at all. There is also one other problem. Formally, the Report had not been published. However, the contents of it were generally known. In addition, it was known by the Allied governments just what the Arabs wanted. The plebiscite was only to confirm the information that
the Powers already had. The primary considerations for a lasting peace were the desires of the people involved. In the case of the Middle East these were to be overshadowed by other factors, such as France's long-standing interests in Syria, economic imperialism by the Allies, and agreements and understandings made before, during, and after the War.


13Lybyer Papers as quoted in Howard, King-Crane, pp. 39-40; Howard, King-Crane, p. 41.


15Ibid., p. IV.

16Ibid., pp. V-VI.

17Ibid., pp. IV, V, VII.

18Ibid., pp. IV, V, VII, IX.

19Ibid., pp. V, VII.

20Robert de Beauplan, Ou Va la Syrie, p. 20 (footnote); Editor & Publisher, pp. XVII-XX; Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939, First Series, v. IV, p. 263 (cited hereafter as British Documents).

CHAPTER III

ARAB LOSS - FRENCH GAIN

The Emir Feisul came to the Peace Conference with the purpose, and I believe with the expectation, of founding an Arab kingdom... While the British Government might have listened with a friendly ear to the proposals of the Emir except those in conflict with the promises made to the Zionists concerning Palestine, the French Government was unequivocally opposed to Arab control.

—Robert Lansing, The Big Four

In the eighth century the Franks were appointed "to be protectors of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre" by Harun al-Rashid. The French interests in Syria continued in the eleventh century during the First Crusade. From this period through the era of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, the French during the reigns of Louis XIV and XV to the twentieth century held both commercial priorities and cultural advantages in the Levant. As the Ottoman Empire became weaker, the European Powers established a stronger hold on the Middle East. By the nineteenth century the demise of the Turkish rule seemed only a matter
of time. Turkey's territorial integrity, however, was guaranteed more or less on paper by the Powers at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and the 1856 Paris Congress. But this was only so long as Turkey remained weak. The Powers were looking to the future when it would be easy to divide a disunified empire. By the present century, France saw an excellent opportunity to protect and consolidate her interests in the Levant as England had done in Egypt during the preceding century. What would be a better place than Syria? Syria would fulfill any commercial interests as well as any area of the Levant could. In addition, she would be a natural selection as a French colony. There was her proximity to France. Also, Syria already had schools and religious organizations that were French and French-supported. Even more important, French traditions had taken hold especially in the Lebanon. In this, lay the French claim to rights in the Middle East.\(^1\)

In spite of these long-standing relations, there were large elements within the Arab world which resented France's domination of any sort. It was true that France's prestige was high in the Lebanon region. However, "the
French Government did not realize how thin the veneer of French culture actually was in the case of the Muslim majority in Syria." It was not until 1925 and the Syrian Revolt* that this was manifested.2

THE EMIR FAISAL

Prince Faisal was the third son of the King of the Hedjaz, the Sharif of Mecca, Hussein. The Emir's brothers (Abdullah and Said or Zeid el-Jezairi) and he were princes in the territories of Iraq and Syria. On October 1, 1918, Faisal had marched into Syria with his forces and taken Damascus. From that time, Syria was under Arab control. It was the desire of these men to rule the areas as kings and later to unify the entire region under their father's hand. This was the reason for their participation at Paris. Faisal had been his father's personal emissary to the Paris Peace Conference, during which time he made several trips from the Middle East to Europe and back. Secretary of State Robert Lansing was one of many persons at the Conference who noted the distinguished and almost

---

*The Syrian Revolt began in 1925 but certainly festered during this earlier period as was evidenced by the isolated and numerous uprisings during 1919 and 1920.
omnipresent appearance of the Prince of the Hedjaz. Despite his capabilities, Faisal was unable to accomplish little more than making his presence known. Being anti-French in his feelings and realizing that England would never jeopardize Anglo-French relations to support the Arabs, Faisal was willing to compromise. By this, however, he did not mean to the point where there would be give and take, with all the taking by the French.  

ARABS AND SYRIANS

In order to understand the French-Arab situation at this time, it is necessary to present a certain concept. Heretofore a difference between the Arabs and the Syrians was only slightly mentioned. Yet because it caused trouble from a third side an explanation is required. There was to the Syrian people a distinction of culture and heredity between themselves and the Arabs. The Syrians felt that their background placed them in a far superior position to the Arabs. The Arabs were nomads. This created a feeling of personal irresponsibility and unsettlement. A people with this heritage of wandering was definitely questionable to those who were settled and had their freedom limited by the society in which they lived.
So naturally, the Syrians would object to the Emir Faisal of the Hedjaz or any Arab for that matter who would aspire to lead a unified Syria. Many times there really is no difference between peoples except in their own minds. However, is this not enough? It was to the Syrians after World War I. Unfortunately, the French did not recognize any distinction between the Syrians and Arabs. Thus, there was an animosity between the Syrians and the Arabs as well as between the Arabs and the French. Although this was only one of the factors involved here, it did constitute a point of friction from within the move to create a unified State. This does not mean that the Syrians objected to unification. This they wanted. But with a Syrian at the head. So another factor added itself to complicate an already difficult situation. ¹

EVACUATION

In early September, 1919, Faisal's brother, the Emir Said (Zeid) el-Jezairi was arrested by the British military authorities in command. The French were not informed, much to their dismay. This immediately brought
a vehement protest from the French government. To France, this act was another example of ill-will on the part of Great Britain. Any action taken in Syria was to be made known to the French beforehand. All of this just added one more to the conformation of the problems between France and England. The French claimed that this was an exercise by the British of undelegated authority. It served to support French remarks that the King-Crane Commission had been duped by the British into recommending the United States or England as the mandatory Power for Syria. The French also claimed that England had no intention of enforcing the Sykes-Picot Treaty. Evidence of this could be seen, they said, by the presence of British troops in Syria.5

In the midst of these bad relations between the two countries, Prime Minister Lloyd George gave Clemenceau an Aide-Memoire,* on September 13, 1919. Two days later, 

*The only part the French accepted was the following: "Steps will be taken immediately to prepare for the evacuation by the British military in Syria and Cilicia including the Taurus tunnel. 2. Notice is given both to the French Government and to the Emir Faisal of our intentions to commence the evacuation of Syria and Cilicia on November 1, 1919. . . the British Government will consent to the immediate dispatch of French troops via Alesandretta and Mersina for this purpose." British Documents, pp. 700-1.
Clemenceau accepted a limited version of the British proposal. The British agreed to evacuate their troops from Syria and Cilicia. The boundary that was set was subject to change by the Conference. The French troops would not occupy the four cities of Damascus, Hama, Homs, and Aleppo. Also the people there were to look to the French for any aid or support they might require. The French government refused to commit itself to any other part of the Aide-Memoire. Even though this was not permanent in some respects, its effects were. For example, this allowed France to go directly into Syria rather than just have her foot in the door. Now, by this action of the British, the French believed they were sincere in their relations toward France concerning the Middle East. There was an immediate change of tone both in government relations and press opinion following this re-pledging of faith between France and England. There was also a change in Emir Faisal's attitude, not in kind but degree. He became very worried about and more adverse to French policy. Before he had just been concerned about it. 6

Immediately after the signing of the Aide-Memoire,
Lloyd George summoned Faisal to Paris. Clemenceau refused to see him. Nevertheless, when he arrived on September 19, he proposed a four member military commission to discuss the evacuation with regard to the Syrian political status. Faisal seemed determined to settle this political question before he would accept French help. Evidently the Emir feared that an Arab State would not be — else why should he have needed a guarantee? But it was definite that the French had every intention of taking over. On October 8 General Henri J. E. Gouraud was appointed to the position of French High Commissioner in Syria as well as Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Levant. His second in command was Robert de Caix. Immediately Faisal warned the Allies, as he had done before, there would be bloodshed unless the French troops were stopped from entering Syria.* The

*By January of 1920, the British troops had been completely replaced by the French. And just as Faisal remarked there was bloodshed. The first demonstration or revolt against the French was at Baalbek in the Lebanon. Other incidents were reported at Margyun, Alexandretta and Talikalalik with heavy French casualties and some Syria volunteers. The Deir-ez-Zor raid was the death scene for many soldiers on both sides. The Emir denied having any knowledge of the raid. He had Ibrahim Pasha Milli and Ramadan ibn Shalash, the leaders, arrested and turned over to the military authorities. Later when Faisal became King, the Deir-ez-Zor became the launching place for a raid on Tel 'Afar, north-west of Mosul. This was a reaction of the Iraqis against the British. Faisal refused to aid Iraq. This may be an indication that the Emir was not willing to go against the British even privately. Or it might suggest Faisal was changing his attitude toward western domination.
French were not welcome either in a military or merely an advisory capacity on the political scene. Faisal was making this clear.7

**FALSE AGREEMENT OR NON-EXISTENT RELATIONS**

Yet in January of the following year (1920), the *Temps* published a story of complete agreement between Clemenceau and the Emir. On his way back to Syria, Faisal was not informed of this startling news:

The Emir agrees to a French mandate for the whole of Syria. In return, France consents to the formation of an Arab state to include the four towns of Damascus, Hama, Homs, and Aleppo, and to be administered by the Emir with the assistance of French advisors and inspectors [the emphasis is mine].

This announcement no doubt prompted much agitation from the Arabs, the Syrians, Faisal's father, and the Syrian Extremist Party, all of whom embraced complete independence as they believed Faisal did. Then the French Foreign Ministry denied there was any understanding. The French press, however, stated the reason for the denial was secrecy. Faisal was to convince his countrymen and more particularly the Extremists to accept French "assistance" before the agreement was made public. A few days after receiving the
news of the supposed settlement, one hundred and twenty thou-
sand Arabs demonstrated at Damascus for unification with
absolute and complete independence of Syria. As a denial
of any settlement with France, Faisal said he would be
satisfied only with complete independence. The truth or
untruth of these negotiations did not matter. What mattered
was that a shadow of doubt was cast on Faisal in the eyes
of the Arab people. Was he willing to compromise in order
to achieve a measure of personal power? Nevertheless, it
is difficult to believe that such an understanding could
be reached. For just a few months before, Faisal told
Lloyd George that he, Faisal, had a command from his people
and did not have the right "to accept a regime ruining their
hopes." 8

In February, 1920, there was a change of government
in France. M. Etienne-Alexandre Millerand became the
Prime Minister. But the real power was in former Prime
Minister Raymond Poincara. Quickly, Millerand denied that
France was threatening the sovereignty of Syria or ever
intended to do so. He once more assured the world that
France was not "pursuing a policy of conquest in Syria."
It was Arab insistence for protection that led France to go into Syria he said. M. Millerand's Foreign Office must have had poor communications with him. Why else would he have made such remarks?  

AN ARAB KING

Despite animosity from within towards Faisal, the General Syrian Congress convened on March 6, 1920. The Arab press on the following day contained the announcement of Faisal's election as King of Syria and Emir Abdullah the King of Mesopotamia with Emir Zeid as his regent.* A declaration of Syrian independence was proclaimed simultaneously.** By accepting the crown, Faisal became the first constitutional monarch in Syrian history.  

Reactions to Faisal's acceptance within Syria varied. Brigadier General J. Haddad, Faisal's chief foreign affairs adviser expressed the situation thusly: that Faisal was made king by "the will of the people."

*Although some of the British reports contradicted the date of his election, early letters from General Allenby prepared the British government for the event. It should be mentioned that Faisal had no choice but to accept the crown. It would have been offered to Shaikh Mahmud of the Fadl tribe.

**See the Appendix for the independence declaration.
That will was exprest [sic.] through the Syrian Congress. . . And the reason why the choice of the Syrian people lighted on the Emir Faysal is easy to understand. He has been throughout his public career the leader of the Arab National movement in Syria. . . It was not, therefore, due to the mere chance of war that the Emir Faysal. . . found himself at Damascus when the Turkish Power collapsed. . . True, King Faysal was not born in Syria, but Mr. Lloyd George was not born in England. . . King Faysal is an Arab, as is every Syrian, as every Welchman is also an Englishman.

In contradiction to these ideas, the Lebanese Council, meeting at Ba'abda formally announced itself under French protection in al-Ahwal, the Beirut liberal Christian paper. As for the declaration, ad-Difa, the Damascus Nationalist newspaper, made an appeal to the Allies for recognition.11

In answer to this appeal, on March 8, a statement was made by Prime Minister Lloyd George that French reinforcements were being dispatched to Gouraud for the purpose of protecting and re-establishing their position. The French undoubtedly would not condone either the declaration or Faisal's new position. As to any other Allied recognition they held the same opinion expressed by Lloyd George in the House of Commons:

The Emir Feisul was informed that the question of Syria would shortly be examined by the Peace
Conference with a view to arriving at a settlement in accord with the declarations that have been exchanged between the British, French and Arab Governments. It would not be desirable at the present moment to lay correspondence on the matter [referring to the issuance of a White Paper recognizing Faisal and an independent Syria].

Faisal's new position presented a problem for the Allies. He evidenced a trait with which the Allies feared they could not cope although they advocated it. He made a disturbing, direct move for self-determination.¹²

King Faisal, as a reaction to the Allies' refusal to recognize the validity of the decision of the Damascus Congress, declared a boycott. It was against any nation occupying Arab land. At the same time the Congress decreed that all foreigners leave Syria by April 6. This produced a counterreaction from the Allies. The Supreme Allied Council ordered Faisal to explain his crowning and the declaration. Before this Faisal had explained the events in Syria in this manner:

My intention is to establish a constitutional Government in Syria, but I am aware that the country is not in some parts especially ready for such a regime. We need advice and the aid of technical collaboration. It is to France that we would turn, happy if such association would contribute to the prosperity of
the two countries. France can ask anything except one thing—to compromise our independence, which is unthinkable.

In other words, he was having none of the French. By the first of April he had decided to visit Europe. This, however, never occurred.* At least not as King of Syria did he ever see Europe.13

SAN REMO

Faisal was having problems with the Central Syrian Committee, his father, the Arab extremists, and the Lebanon. But the Allies were resolving some of theirs. On April 19, 1920, the Supreme Allied Council, operating as the League of Nations, met at San Remo, Italy.** The week-long Conference produced some unusual, but not surprising, agreements.

Partially conforming to section four of Article Twenty-Two in the League Covenant, the Allies distributed

*See page 77 of this chapter for discussion of the reasons.

**By this time the United States had withdrawn from the Conference. Wilson refused to accept the reservations attached to the Treaty by the Senate. As a result, the United States never joined the League and after March 19, 1920, no longer participated in the peace negotiation. Later the United States signed separate peace treaties. For discussion of this see Creel, The War, the World and Wilson, pp. 328-58.
the so-called "A" mandates. The reason for only partial conformity can be seen in the section itself in the light of the American Commission.

Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development where existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the Mandatory [emphasis mine].

According to the San Remo Agreement, the mandates "chosen by the Principal Allied Powers are: France for Syria, and Great Britain for Mesopotamia and Palestine."

The Agreement was signed on April 25, 1920.* To tighten this understanding, an oil agreement was signed by the British and French governments. It recognized the mandated territories and the French and British spheres of influence in Asia Minor.¹⁴

*There were three classes of mandates: A, B, and C. "A" mandates were those that had "reached a stage of development where their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognised" etc.; for a discussion of this and of the mandatory supervision in Syria see Foreign Relations, v. XIII, p. 93, and Quincy Wright, Mandates under the League, pp. 196-203. Even though Syria and the Lebanon were given to France as mandates at this time, it was not until July 22, 1922, that the League gave its approval. Over one year after this, the League finally recognized the mandate as legally effective on September 29, 1923. See MacCallum, pp. 30-1.
The Allied solution to the Middle East problem was exactly as previously delineated in the Sykes-Picot Treaty. There was not much left for the Arabs but to accept it and hope the French would not infringe upon the promised independence of the four towns. However, this was too hopeful. Less than three months later even this was destroyed. By this time, French authorities assumed the administration of the whole of Syria.

THE ULTIMATUM

The main reason why King Faisal never reached Europe to explain his position to the Allies was the Gouraud ultimatum.* From January to July, 1920, the French government complained of the treatment afforded its military officials. Things became much worse when Faisal assumed command in March of that year. There had been no tangible proof that the Damascus government was not co-operating with the French authorities. For after the supposed agreement between

*There were other reasons why he did not go to Europe. As early as May, he told the Allies he would not go because of the San Remo Agreement. Then he see-sawed about this decision through June. Finally, in July, he announced he was going. This almost seems too coincidental that the announcement of his future departure for Europe was one day before the ultimatum. For information on this see The London Times of May 10, p. 12c, June 19, p. 16c, and July 13, p. 11f (1920). Also see Appendix for the Ultimatum.
Faisal and Clemenceau in December, 1919, the Syrian political situation looked hopeful for Arab-French co-operation. But, according to the French officials, Faisal had other ideas. In January, after his return to Syria, Faisal removed Jaffar Pasha, the Governor of Aleppo who was pro-French. General Rushdi Bey, a former Turkish officer with strong anti-French sentiments, replaced him. The General promptly closed the Ryak-Aleppo Railroad to French troops and supplies. The French complained also of crimes of aggression and protested the compulsory military draft which Faisal sanctioned on December 21, 1919. There was also the discontinuance of economic and financial relations with the French Lebanon and the arrest of Prince Mukhtar, a pro-French Arab.\textsuperscript{15}

As a result of French discontent, on July 14, 1920, General Gouraud sent a list of instructions and demands to Faisal. In order to remain on the throne, he had to comply with the conditions. In addition, he had to answer the terms within a twenty-four hour period. (Later this was expanded to forty-eight hours and then to four days.) The terms in short were: 1) the Ryak-Aleppo Railroad was to be placed under French control; 2) the Syrian army was to
be reduced and conscription abolished; 3) the French mandate in Syria, as set forth in the San Remo decision, was to be accepted and honored; 4) Syrian currency (based on the French franc) was to be used; 5) any person guilty of an act against France was to be punished. In effect, these demands, along with a statement discussing the Syrian government's violations against the French, negated what little power King Faisal possessed. Accepting these terms virtually meant that Syria would become a French colony. 16

Although he was very much against war with the French, at this point Faisal found himself unable to control the circumstances. Arab resistance to the French increased greatly, especially among the tribes who went to Faisal's aid in view of the French demands. So at first in answer to Gouraud's summons, the King refused to commit his government to a position that would divide Syria by recognizing the French mandate. In the meantime, King Hussein appealed to Great Britain through Lloyd George. Finally, Faisal accepted the situation and agreed to the French terms. Supposedly the King sent his reply to Gouraud approximately six and one-half hours before the time expired.
But the General claimed he never received it until the morning after. Nevertheless, Gouraud said he had given Faisal the benefit of the doubt and had ceased his military operations. His attacks on Damascus and Aleppo were for an entirely different reason he said. It was because a band of Faisal's troops attacked the French troops between Tripoli and Homs. In order to prevent a further attack, Gouraud's commander General Goybet and his forces stationed between Beirut and Damascus moved into Damascus. General Gouraud thus justified his march into Damascus as an act to grant liberty and re-establish order and peace.17

Even elements of the Arab population were against King Faisal. There was a conflict between the extremists, who refused to accede to the French demands, and Faisal and the moderates, who were willing to compromise. The extremists led a delegation demanding that Faisal dismiss the Damascus government or he would suffer the loss of his kingship. Faisal had them arrested. As a result, a mob demonstration was touched off. He had now alienated himself from many of his own people as well as the French. It
became apparent that unless Faisal stepped down the relationship between Syria and France would grow worse.\textsuperscript{18}

After appeals to the League and the Allied Powers failed, Faisal realized the situation was hopeless. On July 28, 1920, after only three months and twenty days, King Faisal of Syria became ex-King Faisal of Syria. The hopes of an independent Arab State were placed, unvoluntarily, in the hands of the French.\textsuperscript{19}

To evaluate what transpired in Syria from the summer of 1919 to the summer of 1920 requires no insight. It was apparent that no matter what was done or said by the Arabs that the French had no doubts about the future administration of Syria. It would be French. Had the French government merely given its assistance, economically and culturally (if desired), instead of attempting to channel the political scene, the outcome of the years after the War in Syria might have been altered.

In March, 1920, why did the French government send re-inforcements to Syria? It demonstrates almost conclusively that they anticipated trouble with the Arabs. Why after Faisal became King did the censorship of the Arab
press become more stringent? Also why did the French press express a definite lack of sympathy for the new regime in Syria unless this was the sentiment of the French government itself? There is also the question of why the Allies refused to recognize this government in Syria. All of these queries indicate one of two possibilities. Either the Allied Powers were perceptive enough to know that the Damascus government would fall of its own accord, or they knew it would crumble with outside "assistance." In any case it would be replaced with one that would satisfy, not Arab desires or even Allied ones, but those of France.
FOOTNOTES


2 MacCullum, p. 218.


4 Gabriel Baer, Population and Society in the Arab East, pp. 119-37, 177-203.


6 British Documents (Series I), v. I, pp. 690-3, 700-1; v. IV, p. 395; The London Times, September 19, p. 11b; September 17, 1919, p. 10d; Howard, King-Crane, p. 252.


8 British Documents (Series I), v. IV, pp. 611-12; The London Times, January 8, 1920, p. 10e; November 5, 1919, p. 11e; January 22, 1920, p. 9c.
9Lloyd George, Memoirs, p. 712; The London Times, February 7, p. 11a; February 12, 1920, p. 13d.


14Foreign Relations, v. XIII, pp. 93-4; MacCullum, pp. 30-1; Accounts and Papers, v. 51 (1920), Misc., no. 11, Cmd. 675; League of Nations Official Journal, August, 1922, (Third Year, no. 8), pp. 1013-7; British Documents (Series 1), v. VIII, pp. 172-84; Jean Pichon, Le Partage du Proche-Orient, p. 261.


19The London Times, August 2, 1920, p. 7c.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

"'There was a day when I wept -
And now I weep for that day.'"
—Chekri Ganem (Foreign Relations, v. III, p. 1038)

The role of the Allies in the Middle East is usually interpreted as dishonest and unjust to the Arabs. Seen from a different angle, as an attempt has been made here, this is not quite accurate. It must be remembered that the Allied Powers made promises during these critical times which they ultimately hoped would become realities. So it was in relation to Syria. This was the nature of the McMahon-Hussein correspondence. This was also why the British could negotiate with the Arabs and almost simultaneously sign the Sykes-Picot Agreement. In addition, because of the wartime conditions, it seemed to matter little at the time whether the French had knowledge of the British arrangements with the Arabs. Viewed in this 85
way the Arab and Allied relations did not conflict. For, when a country becomes involved in a war, it grasps at any possible means of helping itself. This was what the Allies did. The Allies saw an opportunity to alleviate, in part, the Turkish theater of the War by using Arab help. Many of the Arabs, in turn, recognized a chance for a dream to become fulfilled if they cooperated with the Allies. Unfortunately, neither party was aware of certain meanings assumed by the other party in the negotiations.

It would seem the Powers had no intention of immediate independence for the Arab countries. They believed these countries of the Middle East were not ready, at that time, for full independence. The Levantine countries, however, felt themselves capable of self-government directly after the War as the King-Crane Report illustrated. So a misunderstanding between the parties was inevitable.

This, nevertheless, does not completely exonerate the Allies. There is more to consider. Undoubtedly, the Arabs would not have been so free and uncautious in their relationship with the Powers had they known of the Allied
agreements and intentions. They would have been better prepared for what was to follow the War. They would not have so easily sacrificed their innate sense of pride and freedom.

Partly due to misunderstanding and misinterpretation and partly due to the necessities of war and diplomacy, the Arab countries became mandates. They remained as such until World War II with the exception of Iraq.

It was not so much, however, being a mandated territory that the Arabs were rejecting. Somehow, the people and their leaders sensed that if the French took over in Syria, they would become a colony of the French. Although the scope of this paper does not touch upon this aspect, except by implication, this is precisely what happened. Self-interest being the primary motivation of any country's policy, the Allied-Arab situation following the War is easily understandable but not so easily justified.

What the future holds for the Middle East depends largely on the past.
APPENDIX I

SYKES-PICOT AGREEMENT

The French and British Governments, having acquired from information at their disposal the conviction that the Arab populations of the Arab peninsula, as well as of the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, are strongly opposed to Turkish domination, and that it would be actually possible to establish an Arab State, or a confederation, both hostile to the Turkish Government and favorable to the Entente powers, have opened negotiations and have examined the question in common. As a result of these discussions they have agreed upon the following principles:

1. France and Great Britain are prepared to accord recognition and protection to an independent Arab State or a Confederation of Arab States in the Zones "A" and "B" marked on the annexed map, under the suzerainty of an Arab chief. In the Zone "A" France and in the Zone "B" Great Britain shall have a right of priority in regard to enterprises and local loans. In the Zone "A" France and in the Zone "B" Great Britain shall have the exclusive right to provide advisers or foreign officials at the request of the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States.

2. In the blue zone France and in the red zone Great Britain shall be authorized to establish such administration, direct or indirect, or such control as they desire or as they shall judge convenient to establish after agreement with the State or Confederation of Arab States.

3. There shall be established in the brown zone an international administration of which the form shall be
determined after consultation with Russia, and later in agreement with the other Allies and with representatives of the Sherif of Mecca.

4. There shall be accorded to Great Britain:
   (1) The ports of Haifa and Acre;

PLATE 6  Map showing the Sykes — Picot Agreement of 1916; reproduced from the coloured map attached to the original agreement.
APPENDIX III

[Translation]

Declaration to the Seven:

His Majesty's Gov't have considered the memorial of the Seven with great care. They fully appreciate the reasons for the desire of its authors to retain their anonymity, but the fact that the memorial is anonymous has in no way detracted from the value which His Majesty's Gov't assign to that document.

The territories mentioned in the memorial fall into four categories:—

(i) Territories which were free and independent before the outbreak of the War;
(ii) Territories liberated from Turkish rule by the action of the Arabs themselves;
(iii) Territories liberated from Turkish rule by the action of the Allied armies;
(iv) Territories still under Turkish rule.

With regard to the first two categories, His Majesty's Government recognize the complete and sovereign independence of the Arabs inhabiting those territories, and support them in their struggle for freedom.

With regard to the territories occupied by the Allied armies, His Majesty's Government invite the attention of the memorialists to the proclamations issued by the commander-in-chief on the occasions of the capture of Baghdad (March 19, 1917) and of the capture of Jerusalem (December 9, 1917). These proclamations define the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the inhabitants of those regions, which is that the future government of those
territories should be based upon the principle of the consent of the governed. This policy will always be that of His Majesty's Government.

With regard to the territories in the fourth category, it is the desire of His Majesty's Government that the oppressed peoples in those territories should obtain their freedom and independence. His Majesty's Government will continue to work for the achievement of that object. They are fully aware of the difficulties and perils which threaten those who are striving for the [liberation?] of the inhabitants of those territories.

In spite of those obstacles, however, His Majesty's Government believe that the difficulties can be overcome, and they are prepared to give every support to those who are striving to overcome them. They are ready to consider any scheme of co-operation which does not conflict with the military operations in hand or with the political principles proclaimed by His Majesty's Government and their allies.
APPENDIX IV

Syrian Declaration of Independence - March 7, 1920

The Arab nation entered the World War on the side of the Allies confiding in their official declarations and the personal and general promises of their statesmen and their Government, and taking advantage of the special engagements made by his Majesty, King Hussein, regarding the independence of the Arab countries and of the noble principles laid down by President Wilson that recognize the liberty of the peoples, great and small, and their independence upon a footing of equal rights, that disapprove the policy of conquest and of colonization, that abrogate the secret treaties which affect the rights of the people, and that give to the liberated nations the right to choose their own lot. These principles have been officially approved by the Allies in the declarations of M. Briand, President of the French Council, on November 3, 1918, before the Chamber of Deputies, and those of Lord Grey, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, on October 23, 1916, before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and those of the Allies in their answer to the note of the Central Governments transmitted by M. Briand through the Ambassador of the United States in Paris, under date of January 30, 1917, and in the declarations of M. Ribot, President of the French Cabinet, on March 22, 1917, before the Chamber of Deputies, and in the report of this Chamber made the night of June 4-5, 1917, and in that of the French Senate on the 6th of the month, and in the speech delivered by Mr. Lloyd George in Glasgow on June 29, 1917.

APPENDIX V

GOURAUD ULTIMATUM
(July 14, 1920)

1. Absolute control of the Bayak-Aleppo railroad. This control will be guaranteed by complete supervision of traffic in the stations of Rayak, Baalbek, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo by French military commissars, aided by an armed detachment intended to assure the policing of the station, and by occupation of the city of Aleppo, an important center of communication which we cannot permit to fall into the hands of Turkish troops.

2. Abolition of conscription, recruiting to cease and conscripts to be released, the Cherif's army being restored to its condition as of December 1 last.

3. Acceptance of the French mandate. The mandate will respect the independence of the Syrian people and will remain wholly compatible with the principle of government by Syrian authorities properly invested with powers by the popular will. It will entail, on the part of the mandatory Power, only aid and cooperation, and in no case will it involve annexation or direct administration.

4. Acceptance of Syrian currency. This will become the national currency in the East Zone, and all prohibitory decrees affecting the Bank of Syria in that zone will be revoked.

5. Punishment of the guilty—those compromised by acts hostile to France.

These conditions are presented en bloc, and they must be accepted en bloc within four days beginning July 14 at midnight, and ending July 18 at midnight. If before this latter date I am informed by Your Royal Highness that these conditions are accepted, orders must also have been
given to the authorities concerned not to interfere with my troops when they undertake to occupy territory as indicated. Official decrees should also have been issued prior to July 18 in accordance with conditions 2, 3, 4, and 5, and these conditions must have been carried into effect by July 31 at midnight.

If, on the other hand, Your Royal Highness does not inform me within the time limit set that the foregoing conditions have been accepted, I have the honor to inform you that the French Government will feel free to act as it sees fit. In that case I cannot say that the French Government will be satisfied with these guaranties.

France will not be responsible for the suffering which may come to the country. She has long evidenced her moderation and does so now. The Damascus Government will bear the entire responsibility for the extreme measures which I contemplate only with regret, but which I am prepared to carry out with firmness and resolution.

[Signed] General Gouraud
French High Commissioner in Syria and Cilicia,
Commander-in-Chief of the Army of the Levant.

July 14, 1920.

Source: The Nation, v. 112 (Jan. 12, 1921), p. 51
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources:

Documents

Congressional Record. Proceedings & Debates of the 2nd Session of the 64th Congress, vol. 54 (page 2), [Washington], 1917.

Great Britain, Foreign Office, British State Papers, Cmd. 675, Miscellaneous No. 11 [London], 1920.


The King of Hedjaz and Arab Independence [London], 1917.

League of Nations Official Journal No. 8 (page 1), August, 1922 (vol. 3 - part 2).


Books


Lansing, Robert. *The Big Four and Others of the Peace Conference* [Boston], 1921.


Zabotinsky, Vladimir. *Turkey and the War* [London], 1917.

**Periodicals**

*Asia Journal of the American Asiatic Association.*

*The Current History Magazine.*

*Journal of the Central Asian Society.*

*Moslem World.*

*The Nation.*

*The New Europe.*

*Oriente Moderno Rivista Mensile.*

*The Outlook.*

*The Slavonic Review.*

**Newspapers**

*The London Times.*

*The Manchester Guardian.*


**Secondary Sources:**

Abboud, Selim S. *Arab Nationalism Views French Execution of the Sykes-Picot Treaty*. Master's Thesis [The Ohio State University], 1935.


Baer, Gabriel (Hannah Szoke - transl.). *Population and Society in the Arab East* [London], 1964.

Beauplan, Robert de. *Où Va la Syrie (Le Mandat sous les Cèdres).* [Paris], 1929.


Cahen, Claude. *La Syrie du Nord à l'Epoque des Croisades* [Paris], 1940.


Haddad, George Merriman. *Fifty Years of Modern Syria and Lebanon* [Beirut], 1950.

Hitti, Philip K. *Syria A Short History* [New York], 1959.


Hourani, Albert H. *Syria and Lebanon* [London], 1946.

Howard, Harry N. *An American Inquiry in the Middle East, The King-Crane Commission* [Beirut], 1963.
The Partition of Turkey: A Diplomatic History, 1913-1923 [Oklahoma], 1931.


Leslie, Shane. Mark Sykes: His Life and Letters [London], 1923.

Loder, J. de V. The Truth About Mesopotamia Palestine and Syria [London], 1923.


Penrose, Stephen B. L. Jr. That They May Have Life [New York], 1941.

Pichon, Jean Maurice. Sur la Route des Indes un Siecle apres Bonaparte [Paris], 1932.


Toynbee, Arnold J. and Kirkwood, Kenneth P. *Turkey* [London], 1926.


Wright, Quincy. *Mandates under the League of Nations* [Chicago], 1930.


Zeine, Zeine N. *The Struggle for Arab Independence Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faisal's Kingdom in Syria* [Beirut], 1960.