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Philby's plan to solve the Palestine problem did not reach fruition because the differences between the Arabs and the Jews were irreconcilable, and neither the British nor the Americans really understood the Arab viewpoint. King Ibn Saud was consistently opposed to the establishment of any Jewish State and until 1945 he believed that the Great Powers would not violate the Arab trust.

H. ST. JOHN PHILBY, IBN SAUD AND PALESTINE

by

Jerald L. Thompson
B.S., United States Military Academy, 1971

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this work was to determine the policy of the founder of Saudi Arabia, King Ibn Saud, toward the establishment of a Jewish entity in Palestine - the "Palestine problem." H. St. John Philby was a British author, explorer and convert to Islam who had a very close association with Ibn Saud. Studying Philby's relationship with Ibn Saud and his attempts to get the King to negotiate with the Zionists provides a clear understanding of the original Saudi involvement in the Palestine problem.

The approach taken in this study was to first establish the historical context of St. John Philby (1885-1960) and Ibn Saud (1880-1953) and then focus on this involvement with the Palestine problem between 1936-1945. The Palestine study starts with the Arab revolt of 1936. It then traces the development of Philby's solution to the problem, its acceptance and advocacy by Zionists to the British and American governments, and ends with Ibn Saud's discussion on Palestine with President F. D. Roosevelt in 1945.

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INTRODUCTION

Saudi Arabia is the focal point of the Moslem world because it is both the birthplace of Islam and the site of the two Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina. As the repository of vast quantities of oil, it is also a focal point for the oil consuming nations of the world. Currently Saudi Arabia is attempting to assert a leading role in negotiating the major issue within the Middle East by presenting a comprehensive Arab peace plan for the Arab-Israeli conflict. The significance of this departure from past policies can be appreciated more with an understanding of the relationship between the founder of Saudi Arabia, King Ibn Saud, and the "Palestine problem" which preceded the current conflict.

St. John Philby (1885-1960) was the British author and explorer of Saudi Arabia who had a very close association with Ibn Saud (1880-1953). Studying Philby's relationship with Ibn Saud and his attempts to get the King to negotiate with the Zionists provides a clear understanding of the original Saudi involvement in the Palestine problem.

This study begins with a biographical sketch of the interrelated lives of St. John Philby and Ibn Saud, thereby establishing the historical context for an assessment of their relationship with the Palestine problem. In the second chapter, Philby's efforts to devise a solution will be presented as they relate to the complex interaction between the Arabs, the Zionists, the British and the Americans during the period 1936-1939. The third chapter will trace Philby's "plan" from 1940 to 1945 as he and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the

World Zionist Organization, advocated its acceptance by the British and American Governments and by Ibn Saud. The conclusion will address the contributing factors which precluded the acceptance of Philby's plan.

The major sources used in this study are:

- 1) Philby's papers from St. Anthony's, Oxford; his book on Ibn Saud, Arabian Jubilee (1953) and Elizabeth Monroe's biography, Philby of Arabia (1973).
- 2) Ibn Saud's public statements in interviews conducted by Philby and an editor from Life magazine.
- 3) Letters and messages between Ibn Saud and President F. D. Roosevelt that were published by the United States State Department in the Foreign Relations of the United States series (herein referred to as F.R.U.S. with the appropriate years and volume added).
- 4) Dr. Chaim Weizmann's autobiography, Trial and Error (1949), and a letter obtained from the Zionist Archives in Jerusalem.
- 5) Official British reports, letters, messages and attached minutes prepared by the Foreign Office (F.O.); the Colonial Office (C.O.); and Ministers and Officers in the Middle East and India. These documents were obtained from the British Public Record Office (P.R.O.) and Command Paper (Cmd).

Some of the most significant documents have been reproduced and are included in the appendices.

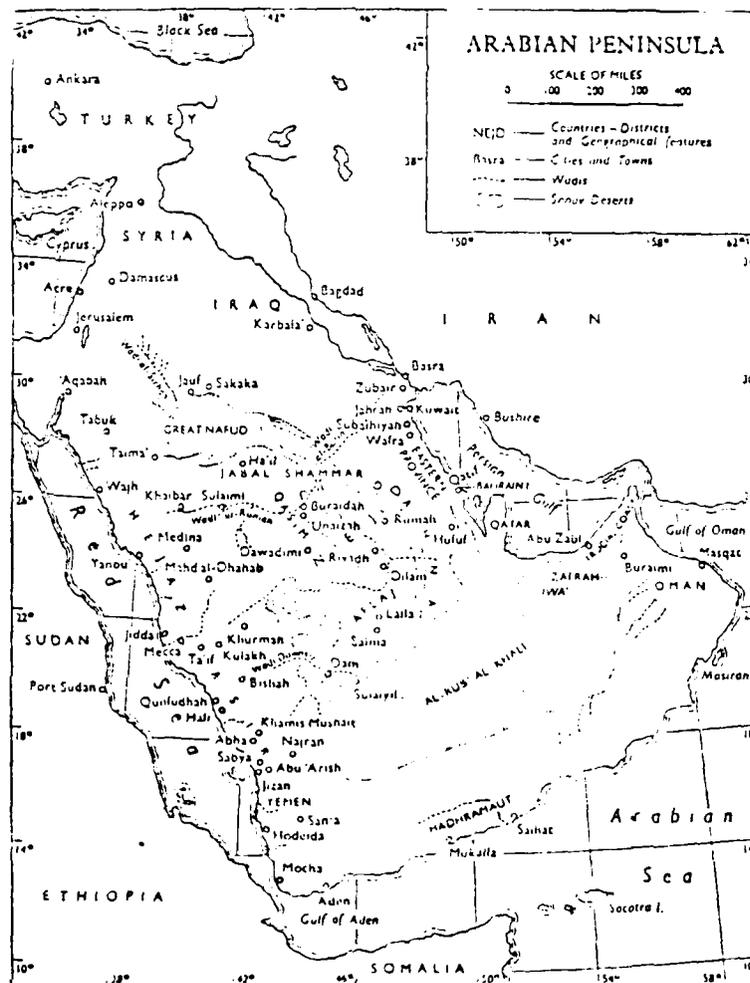


Figure 1: Arabian Peninsula

Source: Winder, R. Bayly. Saudi Arabia in the Nineteenth Century, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.

CHAPTER ONE

THE INTERRELATED LIVES OF ST. JOHN PHILBY AND IBN SAUD

This chapter will present biographical sketches of the Englishman St. John Philby and his Arab hero Ibn Saud. The purpose is to provide sufficient information to enable the reader to develop an appreciation of the two characters and their relative importance in the history of the Middle East.

Philby's Pre-Arabian Days (1885-1917)

Harry St. John Bridges Philby was born on April 3, 1885, in Ceylon. His father Henry M. Philby was trying to be a tea planter. His mother, May, was trying to endure Henry; but after bearing four children and innumerable heartaches, she left Ceylon to raise her children in England.

St. John Philby demonstrated a keen intellect as a young student and won a scholarship to Westminster. A scholarship was the only way he could have obtained a higher education owing to the financial problems of his mother. At the age of 13, St. John Philby became a Queen's scholar and did exceptionally well. He was elected Captain of his class during his senior year in 1903. In accordance with the school's tradition, his successor wrote a review of Philby's tenure in which Philby was accredited with raising the moral standards of conduct, order and general discipline but was criticized as being autocratic -- and not knowing how to conceal his iron hand in a velvet glove.¹ Tact would never be one of his strong points.

Philby studied modern languages at Trinity College, Cambridge, from 1904 to 1907. He took his vacations in Europe to practice his

French and German. He was accepted for the Indian Civil Service and spent an additional year at Cambridge in officer training and learning Persian and Urdu.²

In December 1908, St. John Philby arrived in India. While enroute to his first Civil Service post in Lahore a train accident nearly terminated his career. His diligence and ability to work with the people impressed his superiors. The pay for a junior civil service officer was only £30 a month, but Philby's cost of living in the Punjab was very little. He paid £1 for rent and £4 for food and was then able to send the majority of his pay to his mother. He found that developing proficiency in languages earned him bonuses and therefore he spent a good deal of effort picking up dialects of Urdu and Baluch.³

While on a leave to Rawalpindi, he met a beautiful young lady, Dora Johnson, the daughter of an officer of the Indian Public Works Department. Philby's superiors counseled him; stating that the general policy was that junior officers should not be married until they had at least four years in service. His mother was apprehensive about a loss of her allowance and thus opposed his marriage. Disregarding the opposition, Philby married Dora on September 20, 1910.⁴ During the next year his mother was not able to manage financially and Philby had her move to India. Kim Philby was born on New Year's Day, 1912.

As World War I developed, Philby resented being in a distant outpost. His brother, Paddy, was killed in 1914, two days after entering the trenches in France. Philby tried every means possible to get where the action was, but to no avail. In February 1915, he

went to Calcutta to take an honors examination in Urdu. Upon passing the exam, he received a promotion to become the head of the Language Board. With the position came a doubling of his pay. He had to move to Calcutta, but Dora would not join him. She could not take the environment there and stayed in Rawalpindi.⁵ He did not have to endure Calcutta long. British advances in Mesopotamia against the Turks were such that Sir Percy Cox, the political officer in charge of occupied territory, was short of linguists and administrators. Cox cabled to India for more linguists. St. John Philby was transferred to Mesopotamia.

In November 1915, Philby sailed for Basra. When he arrived Sir Percy Cox gave him a tough mission. He was to study the finances of the occupied territory and draw up a regular system of civil accounts. Since this was his best line of work he was delighted.⁶ The Turkish administrators had taken all of their records with them and the Indian civil servants who had preceded Philby had tried to impose the Indian system on the Arabs. Philby studied the situation in detail and then devised a system appropriate for local conditions. He also set up a tax and banking system using promissory notes which greatly reduced the burdensome problem of gold flow with England. Sir Percy Cox was greatly impressed but Philby's peers were disgruntled. He was hard to work with and would be high-handed in order to achieve his ends.⁷

By 1917 Philby was made a district officer in Amarra. Dora joined him for two months but then returned to India when Philby was transferred to Baghdad to be Sir Percy's secretary. While acting as secretary to Sir Percy, Philby tended to impose his thinking on

the functioning of various district offices. Arnold Wilson was the District Officer in Basra and in October he complained to Sir Percy about Philby's interference in his operations. As fate would have it, at this time Sir Percy needed to send a liaison officer to Ibn Saud. The British wanted Ibn Saud to stop the smuggling of supplies to the Turks in Syria that were passing through the Shammar region from Kuwait.⁸ Philby wanted to be the liaison officer to Ibn Saud and Wilson wanted to be Sir Percy's secretary.⁹ St. John Philby was soon enroute to meet the man who would become his hero.

The Emergence of the House of Saud

The Arab leader Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman ibn Faisal Al Sa'ud, known as Ibn Saud, was the man who through the force of his character and religious commitment established the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In order to understand how Ibn Saud accomplished this, it is necessary to review the history of the region in terms of the dominant forces. These forces were the major tribes, the Ottomans, the British, and Islam. One can not simply focus on Ibn Saud, but must view his efforts in conjunction with the role of the Wahhabi form of Sunni Islam. For that reason the first step is to review the advent of Muhammed ibn Abd al Wahhab and his relationship with the House of Saud.

Muhammed ibn Abd al Wahhab was born in Uyaynah in the Banu Sinan tribe in 1703. His family was very religious; his father was an expert in Islamic law and was a judge in Uyaynah. Wahhab was a precocious child. He memorized the Koran by the age of ten. His study of Islam took him to the theological centers in Medina,

Damascus, and Basra. Wahhab developed an interpretation of Islam which was drawn from the strict Hanbali scholar Taki al Din Ahmed ibn Taimiya.¹⁰

The Sunni sect of Islam has four schools of thought in the interpretation of the Koran and the Hadiths - the Hanbali, Shafii, Maliki, and Hanafi in descending order of conservatism. The founder of the Hanbali school was Ahmed ibn Muhammed ibn Hanbal (d. 855).¹¹ His was a strict view of the Koran as divine law and not in any way a creation of this earth. He therefore limited the principle of 'Kiyas', or reasoning by analogy. Taimiya's interpretation was even more severe in its literalness of interpretation. Wahhab based his religious teachings on the strictest interpretation of the Koran and the Hadiths.

The society in which Wahhab existed did not share his beliefs. There were many variations in religious practice. Some Muslims had reverted to pre-Islamic practices, combining them with Islam. There was tree and stone worship and there were some mystics.¹² Wahhab began to preach a return to the orthodox practices of Muhammad's day, and especially condemned any form of worship that detracted from the oneness of God. He was expelled from Basra for his extreme teachings and he returned home to Uyaynah. The Bani Khalid tribe, who were Shiites, did not appreciate his teachings either and forced him to leave his village in 1744. He moved his family to Dariyah (12 km northwest of Riyadh) which was ruled by Muhammed ibn Saud.¹³

Muhammed ibn Saud was Shaykh of a small emirate which his family had established in the early 17th century. He welcomed

Wahhab and they soon became allies. They concluded a pact stating that Muhammed ibn Saud would fight for and propagate Wahhabi doctrine in a jihad (holy war), to purify and conquer Arabia. To cement this relationship, Muhammed ibn Saud married Wahhab's daughter.¹⁴

When Muhammed ibn Saud died in 1765 most of the Najd followed Wahhab's teaching. Abd al Aziz succeeded his father and continued the jihad, taking Riyadh in 1773. The Bani Khalid in al Hasa were defeated by 1792. Wahhab died in 1792, but the force of his teachings continued and the Wahhabi movement spread throughout Arabia.

In 1801 the Wahhabis raided Karbala, a Shiite holy city (approximately 100 km southwest of Baghdad), and sacked the tomb of Hussein ibn Ali, the prophet's grandson. On April 3, 1801 Mecca was taken and the Wahhabis destroyed all symbols of idolatry and anything else that violated the precepts of Islam as taught by Wahhab. Shiites assassinated Abd al Aziz in November, 1803, in revenge for the 1801 attack on Karbala.¹⁵ His son Saud succeeded him, and, by April 1804 he took Medina. The expansion into the Hijaz (west coast area) brought the Saudis into direct conflict with the Ottomans. The Saudis had allowed Sharif Ghalib to continue administering the Hijaz area, but the Pasha in Baghdad had suffered a loss of prestige and income when they took the holy cities. The Ottoman Sultan in Constantinople asked his viceroy in Egypt, Muhammed Ali, to attack the Saudis and return the area to Ottoman control. In 1811, Muhammed Ali's son Tusan led expeditions against the Saudi and found them to be very able fighters. Mecca was recaptured by January 1813. Muhammed Ali took personal control of the fighting in 1813.¹⁶ Saud died in 1814 and his son, Abd Allah became his

successor. Muhammed Ali returned to Egypt in 1815 to address problems concerning his governorship. His son, Ibrahim, returned to press the Saudis in 1816. Abd Allah retreated to Dariya where he was captured, and the city was razed. In 1818 Muhammed Ali sent Abd Allah to Constantinople where he was beheaded.¹⁷ Thus the first Saudi dynasty came to an end.

After the destruction of Dariyah, Turki ibn Abd Allah, Abd Allah's uncle, moved the Saudi clan to Riyadh. He organized troops to oust the Egyptians and extended his control over all of the Najd, al Hasa, and south to the Buriami Oasis in Oman. A rival within the family assassinated Turki in 1834. Turki's son, Faisal, killed the assassin and became the ruler.¹⁸ Muhammed Ali, in an attempt to expand his influence within the Ottoman Empire, decided to bring Arabia into his sphere and brought forth a rival claimant to lead the Saudi. Khalid ibn Saud, Faisal's cousin had been in an Egyptian prison since 1816. In 1838, Muhammed Ali made Khalid the Egyptian vassal in Riyadh, while Faisal was made a prisoner in Cairo. Muhammed Ali's control extended over the Najd and al Hasa until 1840 when the British rebuffed his expansion toward Yemen, forcing him to withdraw from Arabia. Khalid continued in control until replaced by Abdullah II. Faisal escaped from Egypt in 1843, and resumed his position as leader until his death in 1865.¹⁹

The next twenty-four years were marked by a power struggle between Faisal's two sons, Abdullah III and Saud. Abdullah III ruled from 1865 to 1871 and then from 1875 until his death in 1889. Saud ruled from 1871 until his death in 1875. Feuds within the Saudi family allowed the Ottomans to repossess the Hejaz (in

1884); Muhammed ibn Rashid, in Hail, took this opportunity to increase his influence over the tribes in the northern province of Jabal Shammar. Abd al Rahman succeeded his brother, Abdullah III in 1889 but was soon under pressure from Ibn Rashid. In 1891 Ibn Rashid forced Abd al Rahman to leave Riyadh with his family, and they eventually found refuge in Kuwait.²⁰ Abd al Aziz II, his son, was then eleven years old.

Abdul-Aziz ibn Abdul-Rahman ibn Faisal Al Sa'ud (Ibn Saud) spent his time in Kuwait learning the Koran, horsemanship, and the ways of war. Mubarak, the ruler of Kuwait, was an enemy of Ibn Rashid and thus was willing to support a Saudi move against him. In 1901, Ibn Saud engaged the Rashidis in battle at Sarif but was repulsed. However, in 1902, with a force of approximately 40 men, he conducted a dawn raid into Riyadh and recaptured it.²¹ His father abdicated the secular title of Amir (Chieftain) to his son, but retained the title of Imam (after the death of Wahhab, the religious leadership position was, through marriage ties, kept within the Saud family lineage). Ibn Saud led his forces against the Rashidis and by 1906 re-established Saudi rule in the Najd. His expansion was held in check when one of his brothers, Sa'd, was held hostage by Hussein, a Hashemite who had been installed as Sharif of Mecca by the Ottomans in 1908. (Sharif was the Ottoman title for the governor of Mecca, who was a descendant of the Prophet Muhammed through his daughter Fatima.) When his brother was released, Saudi forces quickly eliminated the Turks in al-Hasa and established Saudi control of the region by 1913.

As Ibn Saud expanded his territory he needed additional forces to maintain his control. He was an ardent believer of the Wahhabi precepts and revived the movement by mobilizing the Ikhwan al Muslimin (Muslim Brethren). Agricultural oasis settlements (hijra) were formed throughout the Najd with Ikhwan at each one. The purpose was to breakdown tribal allegiances, inculcate Wahhabism, and provide ready reserves. By 1912 there were 11,000 Ikhwan al Muslimin.²²

During World War I Ibn Saud was a minor peripheral power in the eyes of the British government. The British gave him very limited aid to pursue his battles with Ibn Rashid. A treaty with Britain was negotiated in December 1915 which recognized Ibn Saud as Amir of the Najd and al Hasa.²³ Ibn Saud in turn was to continue fighting the Rashidis, thereby blocking the smuggling of supplies to the Turks through Kuwait. The British tried to convince Ibn Saud to participate in a coordinated Arab revolt against the Ottomans, but he would have had to be subordinate to Sharif Hussein, and that was unthinkable.²⁴ Also, Ibn Saud's forces were not adequately armed nor were they provisioned for such an offensive. So in 1916 Hussein and his British advisor, T.E. Lawrence, commenced their attacks on the Ottomans in the Hejaz, while Ibn Saud tried to build up his forces. In November 1917, Sir Percy Cox dispatched St. John Philby to be a liaison officer to Ibn Saud.²⁵

Philby and Ibn Saud (1917-1919)

Traveling by camel, St. John Philby arrived in Riyadh on November 30, 1917; his mission was three-fold. The first priority was to have Ibn Saud conduct a campaign against the Turks' ally Ibn

Rashid in Hail. Secondly, Philby was to convince Ibn Saud that he should improve his relations with his eastern neighbors adjacent to and in Kuwait. The intent was to improve the blockade of supplies to Turkish forces via caravans from the Persian Gulf. Finally, Philby was to try to facilitate an easing of tension between Ibn Saud and Sharif Hussein in the Hijaz.²⁶

To accomplish the first task Ibn Saud listed his requirements. He had the men but would need field guns; 10,000 rifles with ammunition; £20,000 (gold) for food and transport; and £50,000 per month to pay 10,000 men. He expected the campaign to take three months. Philby agreed to convey these requirements to Baghdad. Ibn Saud also agreed to improve his ties with the tribes in the east. However, he had doubts about the effectiveness of a blockade because business with the Turks in the north was a lucrative proposition for desert traders.

Philby found that his third task was the most difficult. Ibn Saud and Sharif Hussein were antagonists. Also, Ibn Saud was irked that his stipend was only £5,000 per month while Hussein received £200,000 a month.²⁷ (Hussein and T.E. Lawrence were achieving more results by forcing the Turks to withdraw from the Hijaz, whereas Ibn Saud was not contributing as much to the British effort). Philby talked Ibn Saud into allowing him to travel across to Jidda with the intention of returning via the same route with Dr. Ronald Storrs, then Oriental Secretary to the High Commissioner in Egypt. This exercise would prove that Ibn Saud controlled the vast desert and could protect British officials (Hussein depicted Ibn Saud as too weak to do this); and it would allow Ibn Saud direct contact

with a high official to whom he could present his request for more support. On December 9th, Philby proceeded on to Jidda, traversing the 450 miles without incident in fifteen days.²⁸ As he travelled he mapped the route and collected soil samples. This would be his practice whenever he travelled in Arabia.

His arrival was not expected and Sharif Hussein was very displeased. Hussein had been embarrassed by Philby's trip, as it was evidence of Ibn Saud's control of the desert. The local British officer reported Philby's arrival to Cairo and Commander D.G. Hogarth of the Arab Bureau was sent to help work out an agreement with Hussein. On 6 January 1918, Hogarth met Philby and the two men proceeded to talk with Sharif Hussein. When Philby spoke of Ibn Saud, Hussein lost his composure and proceeded to expound upon the threat that the Wahhabi movement posed to his territory. Philby failed to remain tactful and the two soon became irritated with one another and had an argument.²⁹ Having failed to achieve his objective in Jidda, Philby wanted to return to Riyadh the way he had come. Hussein refused, and on 14 January Philby had to return with Hogarth on a cruiser to Cairo. In Cairo Philby was the toast of the officer's club and the intelligence section, where the stories of his trip across Arabia were met with great interest. Hogarth, in an effort to broaden Philby's perspective of the overall British effort, took him to visit Allenby's headquarters in Jerusalem. Philby started looking at the prospects of a better job for himself in Syria as Allenby advanced, for he was not yet totally committed to Ibn Saud.

Philby returned to Riyadh via Bombay where he had a few days with his wife. Once back in Riyadh, he continued to press Ibn Saud

to attack Ibn Rashid in Hail and presented him with the necessary £20,000. The number of rifles to be issued had been reduced to 1,000. Ibn Saud did not want his people to believe that he was being supervised by the British, so he told Philby to depart from Riyadh while preparations for the attack were being made. This suited Philby because he wanted to explore the region south of Riyadh. On the 5th of May he started his mapping expedition, which would extend to Suliyil and cover over 600 miles before his return on the 24th of June.³⁰

Philby continually recorded his observations on the region's topography, demography, and people while at the same time gathering samples of soil and fossils. All of his experiences in Arabia up to this point are recorded in great detail in his two volume work, The Heart of Arabia (1922). The books are fairly readable. They are a combination of a travel-log, diary, and scientific notebook. Professor Newton of the British Museum wrote in his report summary, "We must congratulate Mr. Philby on his explorations, his palaeontological specimens having materially increased our knowledge of the geological structure of this hitherto unknown region of central Arabia."³¹ Philby does not consider himself to be an historian in this work. He is simply offering a record of his travels and explorations with the hope that it will be of use.

After returning from his southern exploration, Philby observed Ibn Saud's final preparations for his attack on Hail and Ibn Rashid. After what he felt were endless delays, the Army was finally assembled and Ibn Saud began his campaign. As they progressed north, Philby was required to wait near Anaiza, for Ibn Saud could not afford to

lose his liaison with the British. His first liaison officer, Captain Shakespear, had been killed while accompanying him on a foray in January, 1915.³² "The first attack on Hail in September, 1918, was a failure if not a fiasco, but it represented Ibn Saud's commitment to a policy of imperial expansion."³³ Philby was disappointed at the inconclusive results of the attack. While Philby had been waiting near Anaiza, he was not idle. He roamed the Qasin province and studied the people, their culture, and habitat, and developed genealogical records of Hijaz rulers, one local family, and the house of Saud. When the Army returned to Riyadh, Philby received notice from Baghdad that his mission was terminated. He and Ibn Saud were both very upset and could not understand why support was being taken away when so much was yet to be done. Philby at that time was not aware of Allenby's successful advance on Damascus which meant that the British no longer needed Ibn Saud. Also, Ibn Saud was an opponent of Britain's other ally, King Hussein. The British had recognized Hussein as King of the Hijaz after he turned against the Ottomans. On 4 October, Philby met with Ibn Saud before his departure. Ibn Saud expressed his regard for Philby and told him to convey to the British that he would continue his attack on Ibn Rashid. If the British were willing to support him, fine. If not, he would continue to do what he felt was needed for his people. Ibn Saud had been promised a gift of 1,000 modern rifles, and Philby was to try to get them shipped. Ibn Saud told Philby if he was not successful he could not return.³⁴ Philby went to Kuwait and was able to convince his superiors of the need to release the rifles. On 18 October, he boarded a steamer to return to Baghdad and then England.

Ibn Saud proved true to his word to Philby. By December 1918 he began moving his forces against King Hussein's territory. In May 1919 King Hussein told his son Abdullah to restore order in the Hijaz. On the night of 25-26 May, Abdullah's force was literally "caught sleeping" by the Ikhwan and was wiped out--except for Abdullah who escaped in his night clothes. The memory of this event was indelibly printed on Abdullah's mind. This threat to the Hashimite authority worried the British and Philby was chosen to be an arbitrator. T.E. Lawrence had been the first choice, but he was on leave and not available. The British feared that Ibn Saud was going to make the Pilgrimage to Mecca and then attack Hussein. Philby went to Jidda, but when he arrived his mission was negated. Ibn Saud had declared that he was returning to Riyadh; he would consolidate his gains and prepare for future operations. Philby returned to England to resume his long earned leave and his writing.

In October of 1919 Philby escorted Ibn Saud's son, Prince Amir Faisal, during the latter's visit to England. Faisal's cousin, Ahmed ibn Thunaiian, had been commissioned by Ibn Saud to present his desires to the British government. Ibn Saud wanted protection for the Najd's independence and non-interference in its affairs, a British commission to delineate boundaries; removal of the embargo on pilgrims; the granting of a subsidy; and the appointment of Philby as the British political agent in the Najd.³⁵ The Foreign Office balked and instead recommended negotiations with Hussein. Philby would not return to Arabia just yet.

Philby's Decline in the British Civil Service and Ibn Saud's
Ascendancy in Arabia (1920-1925)

Philby enjoyed a notoriety which put him in demand for speaking engagements; but his reputation also hindered him. In May 1920 he applied for a government position in Palestine and was not accepted. He had been recommended to Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, who passed his name to Herbert Samuel, the new High Commissioner. Samuel asked Herbert Young for a second opinion. Young who had served with Philby in Iraq, stated that although Philby was a glutton for work and clever, he was also argumentative and "liable to take a side and stick to it."³⁶ Based on this assessment, Samuel rejected Philby; however, events elsewhere created a demand for his talents.

By July 1920 King Hussein's son Faisal had been ousted from Damascus by the French; Mustafa Kemal was fighting to establish his independent Turkey; and rebellion was erupting in Iraq. The British were concerned about their hold on the region and the security of their routes to India. Cox picked Philby to be a member of his staff and they sailed from England at the end of August to go to Basra. Arnold Wilson had been left in charge in Iraq and his British officials had directed affairs similar to the way they were conducted in India. British officers made decisions while Arabs were "advisors." Cox was determined to turn that relationship around. Philby worked to identify appropriate Arab officials for the various offices. Sayyid Talib was selected for the position of Minister of Interior. Talib was a very ambitious native of Basra who had a reputation for unscrupulous behavior.³⁷ Cox had deported him in 1915, but now he

was the best man available. Philby became Talib's advisor. It was a well paying job and he was able to have Dora join him for what he thought would be the duration of his career.³⁸

The comfortable situation did not last long. At the Cairo Conference of March 1921 the British determined that the Hashimite sons of King Hussein were to rule Iraq and Trans-Jordan. Abdullah was to be a probationary ruler of Transjordan and Faisal would rule Iraq. When this became known, Talib and Philby fought it. Talib threatened to lead a rebellion. Faisal was of the Sunni sect of Islam and Iraq was predominately Shiite. Talib was arrested and deported to Ceylon and Philby became temporary Minister of Interior. He did not support Faisal's ascendancy to the throne and Cox had to release him.³⁹ Philby took a leave to Persia and returned to Baghdad in October.

British difficulties in Transjordan provided Philby with another opportunity to work with an Arab leader and for Arab independence. Faisal's brother Abdullah had been enthroned in Amman to establish an Hashimite government within the mandated territory of Palestine. Transjordan was to be part of the independent territory promised to the Arabs. Within a few months Abdullah spent his allowance in largesse to his favorite nomadic tribes. He was pressured by the French in Syria for providing sanctuary to Syrian rebels who were using Transjordan as a base for raids into Syria, and by local tribes out for money. Churchill dispatched T.E. Lawrence to assess the problem. It was determined that the situation called for a strong Englishman who knew how to build up an administration, control spending, and yet support Arab independence. Philby was recommended,

but he had to be interviewed and accepted by Abdullah, T.E. Lawrence, Sir Herbert Samuel (the High Commissioner in Palestine), and finally by Churchill.⁴⁰ Philby was assigned as the Chief British Representative to Transjordan in November, 1921.

When Philby accepted his new position, he assumed a very challenging mission which would have to be pursued in an inhospitable environment, and to his and Dora's surprise, at a lower salary. He thrived on the work and got along fairly well with Abdullah, but his wife and babies suffered in the unsanitary conditions of Amman. Dora and the children returned to England in April 1922. Philby participated in a two-month cross-desert railroad survey from Amman through Jauf (north-central Arabia) to Karbala which enraged his British superiors. He had exceeded his authority and negotiated an agreement with the Ruwala tribe in Jauf to become a part of Transjordan. With Ikhwan advances against Hail and to the north, Philby's superiors worried that his activities in Jauf threatened to pull Britain into a dispute between Abdullah and Ibn Saud.⁴¹ The latter continued his advances north regardless of Philby's activities. As Cox was to soon realize, only British intervention and negotiation would limit Ibn Saud's advances in Arabia.

Ibn Saud took Hail in November 1921 and disposed of the Rashidi threat. He had militarily defeated the Rashidis, whose leader had been assassinated by a cousin the year before.⁴² Ibn Saud was very magnanimous to those he defeated. He married the widow of Saud ibn Rashid and adopted her children, thus joining the Saudi and Rashidi houses. This was a technique he would use in the consolidation of his Kingdom.⁴³ The Ikhwan advances continued north into Iraq and Trans-

Jordan.

The Hashimite rulers were becoming very apprehensive about Ibn Saud's growing power in Arabia, and thus urged Sir Percy Cox to use British bombers to stop the Ikhwan. Bombers were used in March 1922.⁴⁴ Cox however did not want to destroy the Anglo-Saudi relations and so he pursued negotiations to settle the border disputes. In April the Treaty of Mohammera was concluded by representatives of Iraq and the Najd. Ibn Saud did not ratify the treaty because it gave tribal areas to Iraq that were claimed by him. Sir Percy Cox and representatives of Iraq and Kuwait met with Ibn Saud at the port of Ugair in late November 1922. Negotiations were extremely difficult but Cox resolved the arguments finally by dictating borders which gave Iraq and Ibn Saud enough territory to placate their demands. Ibn Saud gained the concession of Qoraiyat ul-Milh and the tribal area north of Jauf, while Iraq retained the disputed tribal areas along its border.⁴⁵ Cox also established the neutral zones between the Najd and its two neighbors, Iraq and Kuwait. Kuwait, the weakest of the three, lost the greatest amount of territory but was to share equally in any oil found in the neutral zone.⁴⁶ Also at this conference, Ibn Saud granted the Anglo-Persian Oil Company the first oil concession on his territory.⁴⁷ Peace was restored in Arabia, at least temporarily.

Philby seemed to enjoy a respite from conflict also, but that too was temporary. In October of 1922 he had escorted Abdullah to London. Abdullah was trying to establish the foundation for his eventual assumption of control of the Hijaz and Transjordan after his father passed from the scene. Philby favored the union of the

Hijaz with Transjordan but on the condition that it have a representative system.⁴⁸ The only promise Abdullah got from the British was for independence, subject to the mandate, after a peace treaty with Turkey was signed. Abdullah was granted a continuation of his grant-in-aid, additional funds for civil development, and British officers for his Reserve Force (later known as the Arab Legion). During these negotiations Philby had addressed his financial problems to the Colonial Office and had been promised a £200 raise. Philby and Abdullah returned to Amman in January 1923, both thinking that the future was secure.

Philby worked to prepare Transjordan for independence, but in a short while ended up severing his own relationship with the British government. He attempted to establish tourism in Transjordan and thereby provide additional income for Abdullah's government. His excursions to Petra resulted in the expansion of knowledge about the ancient Nabateans, but they did not then generate tourism or expand the royal treasury.⁴⁹ Sir Herbert Samuel, the High Commissioner of Palestine and the Mandate, spoke at an Amman celebration of the promised independence but failed to include recognition of Philby's efforts as the British representative. Philby felt snubbed. He had been trying to get Abdullah to curb his tribal ways and establish a representative government, but the leopard's spots were hard to change. He had a serious argument with Abdullah over the destruction of a Byzantine Basilica and Samuel began to bypass him in the conduct of British affairs. The final straw was put on Philby's back in April 1923 when Britain decided to reduce the salaries of Mandate officials. It was determined that the raise Philby was promised

in 1922 had not been approved and he had, therefore, been inadvertently overpaying himself as he managed the grant-in-aid funds. Samuel's accounts department in Palestine exchanged heated debates with Philby until they determined he "only" owed £567. On January 24, 1924, Philby submitted his resignation. He had worked hard, endured the privations and frustrations of working in Amman, his family suffered and he was not appreciated by his seniors. Philby left Transjordan in April 1924 to return to England to commence his thirteen months accrued leave and then to terminate his official British service in May 1925.⁵⁰

Just before Philby left Transjordan, events occurred which caused Ibn Saud to resume his fight with the Hashimites. Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) abolished the Caliphate in Turkey on March 3, 1924. King Hussein claimed the Caliphate on March 5, 1924. Although the Hashimites claimed to be able to trace their ancestry back to the Prophet, most Muslims did not support that claim.⁵¹ Ibn Saud and the Ikhwan became infuriated. In August the Ikhwan attacked Taif and massacred approximately 300 people. Ibn Saud maintained the pressure on the Hijaz, but only in the form of a seige. He did not want the Ikhwan to repeat in Jidda the same fervor they had shown in Taif. King Hussein abdicated to his son Ali and retired to Cyprus.⁵²

In the meantime, Philby, who was in England, contemplated working for a seat in Parliament but the Labor Party did not accept him. He wrote articles about the errors and injustice of British Mandate policies in the Middle East. The possibility of an academic post was remote. What he really looked for was anything that would lead back to Arabia. In October 1924 one of Ibn Saud's captains

advanced to Mecca and attacked King Ali. Philby saw this as an ideal situation which could bring him fame, if he could only mediate the crisis.⁵³ He went to Jidda on his own, and upon arriving he was reminded that legally he was still a serving British civil servant. If he pursued his efforts to contact Ibn Saud against the wishes of the British government, he could lose his pension. He wrote to Ibn Saud requesting an interview. Ibn Saud's reply, though snubbing, showed great wisdom:

If there is something personal you are welcome to discuss it with me personally. If however there is something that pertains to the Hijaz and you wish to act as mediator, I would suggest your holding aloof from it. As you will observe, it is a purely Islamic problem in which your mediation will be uncalled for.⁵⁴

King Ali asked him to stay but an attack of dysentery, compounded by an injection through a dirty needle which caused an abscess, resulted in Philby's evacuation to the hospital in Aden on January 3, 1925. Upon recovering he returned to England.

Philby and Ibn Saud (1925-1953)

The next trip Philby made to Jidda was not as a political mediator, but as a businessman. He had been hired by Remy Fisher, an entrepreneur who wanted to use Philby to establish concessions in Arabia. Philby, no longer a civil servant, arrived in Jidda in November 1925 and tried to contact Ibn Saud. The latter was in the process of negotiating a treaty with the British and did not reply until he had a first draft in hand. Ibn Saud arranged a clandestine meeting with Philby on November 28, 1925. Philby reported that he was representing a syndicate which wanted concessions for

a bank, a rail link between Mecca and Medina, and the development of minerals. Ibn Saud's reply was affirmative, but all of that would have to come in due time.⁵⁵ The wisdom of Ibn Saud was clear. He was coming to power because of the religious fervor of his Wahhabi faith and he was aware of the Ikhwan tribes' aversion to anyone or anything not truly Moslem. Modernization would have to come in carefully measured steps. Philby would be Ibn Saud's agent, but not officially. The two separated. Ibn Saud was proclaimed King of the Hijaz on January 8, 1926, and Philby set up his business in Jidda.⁵⁶

The next four years were not wholly satisfying for Philby. He operated the 'Company of Explorers and Merchants in the Near and Middle East.' His income was based on commissions earned selling his wares and on royalties from his books. He wrote articles for the Near East and India magazine in London, which continued to be very critical of the British Mandate policies. His view was that Ibn Saud had complete control over the Ikhwan and was capable of ruling the entire peninsula. This type of discourse caused the Foreign Office consternation, especially considering the fact that Philby was at the same time drawing a government pension. Government concern was lessened when it was perceived that even though Philby was close to Ibn Saud, the latter was not taking him too seriously.⁵⁷ Philby was able to achieve at least one form of gratification during this period, that being his affairs with English women. Of course, this caused his wife and mother anguish when, as part of his policy of frankness, he told them. He wanted to maintain his family base in England and Dora could be responsible for the mundane requirements

of a home. He wrote to her in 1928, "I am far too immersed in the pursuit of my ambitions, my chief aim being to secure the immortality to be gained by the accomplishment of some great work...."⁵⁸ He was soon to take a step which would certainly facilitate his efforts.

St. John Philby became a member of the Muslim world on 7 July 1930. That date, according to the Muslim calendar, was the twelfth day of Rabi'al Awwal, A.H. 1348; the birthday of the Prophet Muhammed. According to Philby, his decision to convert resulted from long contemplation on the philosophy of the Wahhabi creed and the unpleasant experience of a stroke during the hot summer of 1930.⁵⁹ Before taking that step alone, Philby invited David Van Der Meulen, the Minister from the Netherlands, to join him. "Let us become Muslims...you want to see more of the other side. We shall not lose anything and may gain by it."⁶⁰ Mr. Van Der Meulen declined. Ibn Saud made him an informal member of the Royal Court and bestowed on him the patronymic of Abdullah (Slave of God). In 1931 he made his first pilgrimage, and three years later he joined the royal family in the annual cleansing of the Ka'ba.⁶¹ As a Moslem, Philby could travel anywhere in Arabia.

An ambition close to Philby's heart ever since he made his first exploration south of Riyadh in 1918, was to be the first westerner to explore the Rub al Khali. This vast, unchartered 'Empty Quarter' of southern Arabia was a real challenge, which, if he were to explore it, would certainly insure his fame. To Philby's chagrin, Bertram Thomas made a rapid crossing of the eastern part of the Rub al Khali from Salada to Doha in February 1931.⁶² This trek was a surprise because Thomas had not received permission from Ibn Saud.

Philby was given permission to conduct his exploration in 1931 also, but was held back because of problems in the Asir-Yemen region (to be addressed below). He had to wait until December 1931 before he was again given permission.

The expedition began on January 7, 1932. The book which reports on the experience is The Empty Quarter (1933). The reader of this book will find that he is able to share nearly all of Philby's experiences and observations. There is a great amount of detail, with numerous Arabic names. Reading this work will provide knowledge which can only be surpassed by tracing Philby's trail. Through his scientific eyes the reader is exposed to the meteoric craters which were the basis for native lore of a city destroyed by God.⁶³ The physical composition and lay of the land is depicted without excessive scientific jargon. Annexes are provided for the scientific minded: there are the geological and palaeontological results which record his proof of previous water beds in the area; lists of the wide variety of animal specimens he brought back, and as he mapped his entire route, he included altitudes measured by his aneroid and hypsometer.⁶⁴

As he had in his Heart of Arabia, he included a geneological chart of the tribe which inhabited the area. Halfway through his trip he had to contend with a near mutiny by his guides. They were afraid they would not be able to make the most dangerous crossing with the slow baggage train with all of Philby's equipment. Philby conceded to return to an oasis (Naifa) to send back the bulk of his baggage. Continuing with a small party with minimal supplies, Philby made his crossing of the 375 mile Abu Bahr gravel plain in

9 days, arriving at Sulaiyil on March 14th. It is at this point that he ends his story about the 'Empty Quarter'. The remainder of his trip to Mecca was along a pilgrim route through the highlands, and was much easier. He left Mecca in April and returned to England to write his book and claim his glory.⁶⁵ The Royal Geographical Society was elated to hear his speeches. Life was pleasant for the Philby family, with many parties and lectures to attend. At this time events elsewhere caused an American to seek out the now famous St. John Philby.

The California Standard Oil Company (SOCAL), which had obtained an oil concession in Bahrain at the end of 1928, struck oil in considerable quantities in May of 1931. St. John Philby was approached by Francis B. Loomis, former Under Secretary of State of the United States, to inquire about the possibilities of an oil concession for SOCAL in Arabia.⁶⁶ Philby's account of how oil was discovered and developed in Arabia, and his role in it, are presented in great detail in Arabian Oil Ventures (published after his death). The story shows Philby as a loyal informal agent of Ibn Saud, with his intent being to negotiate the best deal possible for Saudi Arabia.⁶⁷ The book is very readable and enlightening about his dealings with the various competitors between 1932-1938. The three essays which comprise the book report on the two unsuccessful competitor's attempts, as well as SOCAL negotiations. Philby believed that he was facilitating the introduction of the West to Saudi Arabia.

By 1932 Philby was doing well in business: he sold Fords to the royal family and other Saudis; and he negotiated with the Marconi Company in Italy to establish wireless (radio) stations.⁶⁸

The introduction of the radio was initially resisted as a device of the devil. Ibn Saud demonstrated that it was acceptable by having portions of the Koran recited to the Ulema over the wireless-- thus proving that it was an acceptable means of conveying the message of the Prophet.⁶⁹ The wisdom and leadership skills of Ibn Saud were continually tested.

After Ibn Saud gained control of the Hijaz, he realized that the continued concentration of the Ikhwan as a military force would inhibit his establishment of an effective government. He dispersed the Ikhwan throughout his territories in an effort to stabilize them in agricultural settlements and also to spread the faith. However, the introduction of infidels and their strange new devices, and a desire to spiritually cleanse the tribes in Iraq, Kuwait, and Transjordan led the Ikhwan to resume their raiding practices. Ibn Saud personally led the forces which fought the rebels at the battle of Sibila in March 1929. The Ikhwan were severely defeated. Their leader, Duwish was wounded but survived to try and rebuild the Ikhwan forces to fight again. He attempted to establish ties with Britain and Kuwait but was unsuccessful. Ibn Saud convinced the British and Kuwaiti leaders that they should not support the rebel Ikhwan. The borders were thereafter closed and by the end of December the majority of the remaining forces had deserted to the Saudi forces. The last of the rebel Ikhwan leaders surrendered to the British on January 10, 1930.⁷⁰ The Ikhwan were resettled and became the core of the National Guard.

When Ibn Saud established his control over the Hijaz, he also claimed the Asir region (the most fertile region in southwestern

Arabia) as a protectorate.⁷¹ Hassan el-Idrisi, the ruler of the Asir, was forced out of the region. He sought support from the Imam Yehya, the ruler of Yemen. Border clashes escalated into major combat over the oasis of Najran, the key to Yemen's coffee trade with Arabia.⁷² Ikhwan forces established their control over Najran in the spring of 1932 and peace negotiations in the Yemeni Capital, San'a, were commenced. By the spring of 1934 nothing had been achieved through negotiation and on April 5th Ibn Saud had his sons, Crown Prince Saud and Amir Faisal, lead their forces into Yemen. Within three weeks Faisal had reached the port of Hudaida, the main source of supply for San'a, forcing the Imam to sue for peace. Ibn Saud displayed a great deal of wisdom and statesmanship in negotiating the peace. He declared that all he wanted was a firm agreement on boundaries in accordance with the status quo ante. The only cost to the Imam was an indemnity to cover the Saudi campaign expenses.⁷³ On June 23, 1932 the two parties signed the Treaty of Taif cementing a new relationship between Saudi Arabia and Yemen.⁷⁴ During the 1935 pilgrimage, three Yemanis from the Zaidi tribe, armed with daggers, tried to assassinate Ibn Saud and Crown Prince Saud but only inflicted slight wounds before they were shot. Although the assailants' passports had been signed by a son of the Imam, the incident caused no damage to Saudi-Yemen relations. Security measures for the King were, however, increased.⁷⁵

By September 1934, Philby started to become distressed at seeing what he thought to be a decline in Ibn Saud's effectiveness as a ruler. The King had led the oil concession negotiations in 1933 and concluded the war with Yemen, but had since become pre-

occupied with hunting, travel among the tribes, and his concubines. Philby observed huge debts accumulating from foreign creditors (his own company particularly), while the King gave money away to his favorites.⁷⁶ Despite these concerns, Philby refrained from publicly criticizing Ibn Saud, and busied himself with travel and exploration.

In February 1935, he explored the unmapped desert between Medina and Buraida. In April, St. John and Dora Philby drove their car from Mecca to England and returned in January 1936.⁷⁷ Ibn Saud then commissioned Philby to map the southwestern portion of his domain to aid in the delineation of boundaries with Yemen and the Aden Protectorates. Philby's expedition started in April 1936 and did not return until February 1937. The exploration was accomplished by automobile and donkey, depending upon the trafficability of the terrain. The record of the expedition was not published until 1952. Arabian Highlands provides the reader a wealth of information, which can best be appreciated by a student of the region. Philby identified his proposed audience when he wrote that the book was "for the expert and professional rather than the general reader."⁷⁸ E.A. Speiser writing for Yale Review, concisely listed the subjects covered: "Meteorological and geological observations; notes on birds, insects, and plants; details of local agriculture and economy, and, above all, studies of people, their customs and status, religion and government, interrelationships and genealogies."⁷⁹ Speiser commends the book because it is a study of a region just prior to the onset of modernizing influences; and because it reflects the calibre of its author. Philby classified the expedition as

"the greatest of all my Arabian journeys."⁸⁰ His expedition introduced the outside world to the demography of the region as well as the topography, but his archaeological finds were the most significant scientific aspect of his journey. There was, however, a political aspect to the trip which caused Ibn Saud some immediate embarrassment, and future political battles. Philby had extended his exploration beyond Arabian territory and travelled on through Yemen to Mukalla on the southern coast of the Aden Protectorates. He was escorted throughout his journey by an armed guard provided by Ibn Saud. Philby was not a favored individual in the eyes of the British officers in Aden, and his open disregard of their authority by extending Saudi arms into their territory caused a furor in diplomatic channels.⁸¹ As a result of Philby's expedition, however, the British and Yemeni governments obtained data which revealed that there were large, populated, areas not under anyone's control. The British in Aden and the Yemeni government, sent out forces to extend their boundaries. Before 1937 Aden claimed 42,000 square miles; after 1937, it claimed 112,000 square miles.⁸² Philby publicly opposed British claims and military actions in the area.

There was one subject on which Britain's and Philby's positions nearly coincided: the Palestine problem. This was an issue which caused Philby to question the worth of his relationship with Saudi Arabia. Between May 1937 and May 1940 he supported various British proposals for a solution to the question and set forth many of his own. As was stated in the Introduction, the evolution of his plans and the reactions of Ibn Saud and the Jewish, British, and American

governments are too complex and significant to present within this chapter. Therefore chapters two and three will address Philby's and Ibn Saud's involvement in the Palestine question. In 1939 and 1940 Philby assumed a political stance which caused him to be absented from Saudi Arabia until 1945.

When the Nazis moved on Prague, Philby advocated negotiations with Germany.⁸³ He opposed the war and spoke openly about the probability of Britain losing it. His proclamations were of serious concern to both the Saudi and British governments. When Philby told Ibn Saud that he was going to America, Ibn Saud informed the British government. Philby was to travel via Bombay to America. He set sail on August 3, 1940. Upon his arrival in Karachi, the British arrested Philby and shipped him to England. He was imprisoned under the Defense of the Realm Act, Sec. 18B. By March of 1941 he was released and considered a 'harmless fanatic'.⁸⁴ During the rest of the war years he tried politics, and writing, but had no luck. By mid 1945, his only hope for financial gain was to return to Arabia.

When Philby returned to Jidda in July 1945, he was summoned to Ibn Saud's court to resume his normal place. His services were still of value to the King, who gave him a 'jariya', a 16-year old beauty. Philby (60 years old) called her Rozy. In 1946, Mitchell Cotts bought the company Philby had run, and he was retained at a much higher salary. Rozy gave birth to two sons; one in 1947 and the other in 1948, but both died before they were a year old. In October 1950, Philby decided to explore the eastern part of the Rub al Khali. He was denied permission because there were disputes

with the British over oil rights, and the King did not want the problems he had had in Aden in 1936.⁸⁵ Philby then received permission to explore the Midian region in the northwest. With this expedition, he completed his coverage of every major region in Arabia. He was accompanied by a renowned epigraphist, Monseigneur Gonzaque Ryckmans. By February of 1952 they had covered 3,000 miles and had collected 13,000 new inscriptions.⁸⁶ During the next year he led a mining survey team in Midian which determined that there was a possibility of gold in the region. He also completed his mapping of the entire area. His book, The Land of Midian (1957) contained the same sort of detail as Arabian Highlands. Philby also wrote an earlier article of the same title for the Middle East Journal (Spring 1955). In just *fourteen pages* Philby presented a clear description of his explorations and major finds in the region. He contributed a great deal of scientific information to be added to the history of Arabia; but, for those of us interested in people and governments, his Arabian Jubilee was his greatest contribution.

St. John Philby was commissioned to write the history of Ibn Saud's rule for the occasion of the King's 50th (lunar) anniversary in July of 1950. Arabian Jubilee is his testimonial to Abdul-Aziz-ibn-Saud. St. John Philby considered his relationship with Ibn Saud to be parallel to that of his namesake, who also heralded the coming of a King.⁸⁷ He does not simply provide a chronicle, but a combination biography and personal narrative. His sources were official British records, the memories of Saudi family members, and Arabic manuscripts which are credited in his preface. He escorts the reader through time to trace Ibn Saud's rise to absolute rule

and assesses the impact of modernization and time on a great man. The religious and physical forces of the Ikhwan tribes provided the foundation for Ibn Saud's rule. Philby addresses Ibn Saud's battles with Ibn Rashid and King Hussein in the first six chapters, and provides a clear appreciation of the complex interactions of Arab families with the Turkish and British governments. The next few chapters deal with Ibn Saud's program for political stabilization and the introduction of western means for modernization. He devised and implemented a program which settled mixed communities drawn from different tribes and held together by a sense of religious brotherhood. By 1930, tribal raids had become a thing of the past.⁸⁸ Ibn Saud personally administered the introduction of modernizing influences such as schools, hospitals, better roads, the automobile, and oil exploration. Philby's only real criticism was that the patriarchal monarch had "never seemed to realize the necessity of equipping them (his people) with the administrative machinery required for their guidance amid the pitfalls of the future."⁸⁹ When it came to politics and handling his people, Ibn Saud had no peers.

Chapter XIV, 'The Miracle,' concerns the discovery and impact of oil. Philby describes the key personalities (including his own) participating in this most significant part of Arabian history. He again states his assessment of the excessive concentration of power and responsibility in the Ministry of Finance; and includes a solution: "The institution of collective ministerial responsibility would thus seem to be the only way of restoring equilibrium..." This, in fact was implemented in 1954 and strengthened in 1958.⁹⁰

Chapter XVII deals with 'The Palestine Problem.' According

to Philby, "the true basis of Arab hostility...is xenophobia, an instinctive perception of the fact that the vast majority of the central and eastern European Jews,...are not Semites at all."⁹¹

The positions taken by the Arabs are assessed, as is Philby's plan (to be discussed in greater detail below). He concludes this chapter by expressing his opinion that "the Jews have not a shadow of legal or historical right to go to Palestine;" and that the matter should be referred to the International Court of Justice for a ruling.

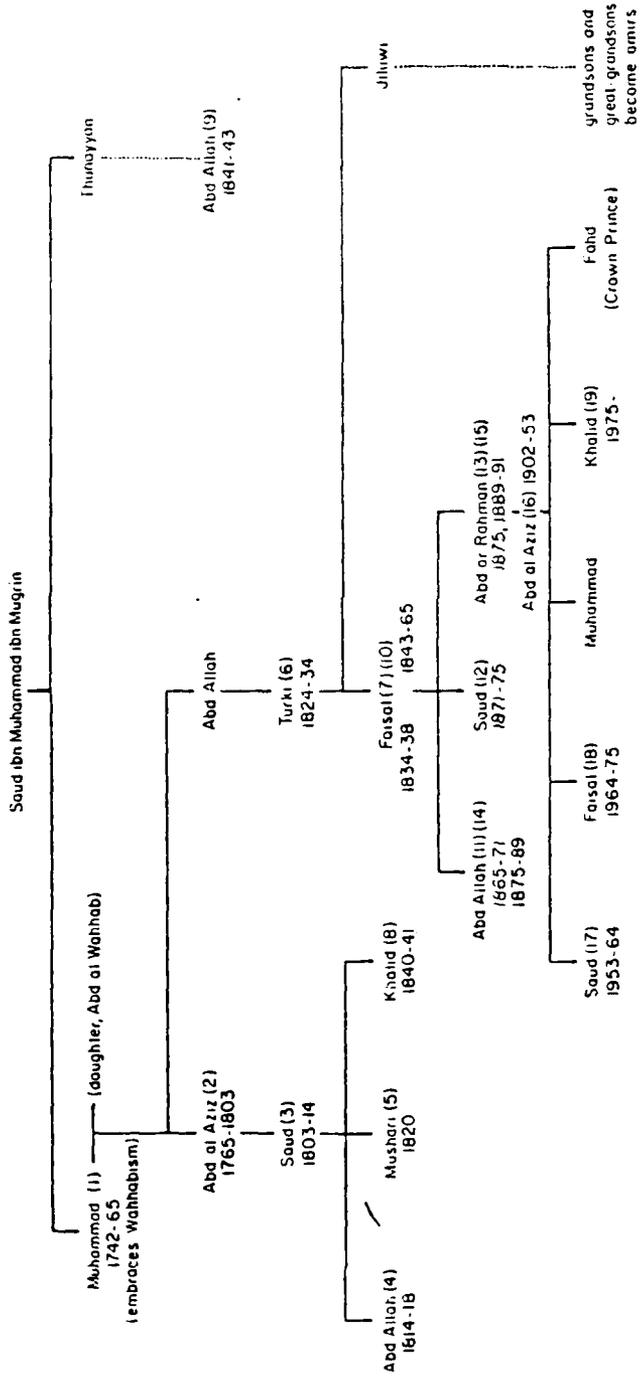
The final chapter, 'Sunset,' is a capstone review of the manner in which Ibn Saud ruled. Philby addressed the role of Abdullah Sulaimann, the Minister of Finance, in balance with the King's centralization of all control. The two worked closely together from the beginning when the wealth of the royal house was counted in sheep and rice. Ibn Saud ruled Arabia; while Sulaimann, more and more, assumed control of administration and finances. As the book ends, Ibn Saud is nearly seventy years old, is tired and worn down by the burden of rule, and fears the North Koreans as the yellow men of Gog and Magog who portend the approach of doomsday. Ibn Saud died on November 9, 1953 and Philby lost his patron.

Philby After Ibn Saud (1953-1960)

The last 'history' book Philby wrote was Saudi Arabia, published in 1955. It was a "chronicle of the acts and achievements of a great dynasty, which has ruled in Arabia for five centuries..." This history is extremely informative but may cause some consternation to those who want to trace his sources. In his introduction he identifies his major sources as Arab historians and even recommends some works by others; but there are no footnotes

and there is no bibliography. St. John Philby expected his readers to accept his work as truth...as seen by him. None of his European reviewers had any problems in doing just that.

After Ibn Saud's death, Philby fell from grace in the royal court. In his foreward to Saudi Arabia, he had pronounced a judgment on Ibn Saud's reign and the prospects for his successors. In April 1955 he was told that his continual criticisms of the royal family were not going to be tolerated, and he was told to leave. He moved to Beirut with Rozy and their two surviving sons. Dora knew of Rozy, but not of the four sons. There he stayed until May of 1956 when a reconciliation with the Saudi government was arranged on the condition that he stop his open criticism.⁹² He maintained his home in Beirut while alternating trips to Riyadh, England, and Lebanon. Dora died in England on June 25th 1957; she had last seen her husband in 1954. Philby was a visiting professor at the American University in Beirut and students recall that "he was lively, approachable, conversational." His last few years were spent writing his autobiography, Forty Years in the Wilderness and drafting his Arabian Oil Ventures. Derek Hopwood aptly concluded, "His tragedy was that of every man who lives to see his own familiar world crumble away and his return to a changed Arabia was a sadder fate than his exile."⁹³ St. John Philby, at the age of 75, and after a full night of being the life of many parties, succumbed to heart trouble and died on September 30, 1960. His last words were, "I am bored."⁹⁴



Note-- Numerous brothers of rulers have been omitted, including thirty-four brothers of King Khalid. Numbers indicate order of rule, and dates indicate period of rule.

Figure 2: House of Saud

Source: Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia. Washington, D.C.: American University Foreign Area Studies, 1977.

Chapter One Notes

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3. Ibid., p. 31.
4. Ibid., p. 34.
5. Ibid., p. 44.
6. Ibid., p. 49.
7. Ibid.
8. H. St. John Philby. Arabian Jubilee. (New York: The John Day Co., 1953), p. 52.
9. Monroe, p. 60.
10. Richard F. Nyrop, Area Handbook for Saudi Arabia, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977, p. 121.
11. Ibid., p. 120.
12. Ameen Rihani, Maker of Modern Arabia, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1928), p. 237.
13. Nyrop, p. 121.
14. Ibid., p. 25.
15. J. G. Lorimer, Gazetter of the Persian Gulf, Oman, and Central Arabia, (Shannon, Ireland; Irish University Press, 1970), Vol. 16, p. 1054.
16. Ibid., p. 1072.
17. Ibid., p. 1089.
18. Ibid., p. 1097.

19. Ibid., pp. 1109-1120.
20. Philby, Jubilee, p. 6.
21. Ibid., p. 11.
22. Nyrop, p. 30.
23. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 43.
24. Sharif Hussein turned on the Ottomans and agreed with the British to lead an Arab revolt in return for Arab independence after the war. See Elie Kedourie. In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpretations 1914-1939. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
25. Ibid., p. 53.
26. Monroe, p. 67.
27. Ibid., p. 70. For a more thorough discussion of why the British supported Hussein see Gary Troeller, The Birth of Saudi Arabia: Britain and the Rise of the House of Sa'ud, (London: CASS, 1976), pp. 75-83.
28. Ibid., p. 74.
29. Ibid., p. 80.
30. Ibid., pp. 84-87.
31. H. St. John Philby. The Heart of Arabia. Vol. II, (London: Constable, 1922) p. 307.
32. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, pp. 32-41.
33. Philby, Arabia of the Wahhabi, (London: Constable, 1928), Preface.
34. Ibid., p. 335.
35. Monroe, p. 102.
36. Ibid., p. 104.

37. Lorimer, Part 1B, p. 981.
38. Monroe, p. 106.
39. Ibid., p. 111.
40. Ibid., p. 116.
41. Ibid., p. 123.
42. Rihani, pp. 165-169.
43. H. C. Armstrong, Lord of Arabia. (London: Arthur Baker Ltd., 1934), p. 194.
44. Troeller, pp. 174-175.
45. Amin Rihani was Cox's translator. His diary records the observation: "We take from Ibn Sa'ud to satisfy Iraq, and we take from Trans-Jordan to placate Ibn Sa'ud." Rihani, p. 96.
46. Troeller, p. 181.
47. The British Company did not find oil and let the concession expire in 1928, owing Ibn Saud £6,000 in back rent. See Philby, Arabian Jubilee, pp. 68-69.
48. Monroe, p. 125.
49. Ibid., p. 128. Philby wrote a chapter in Sir Alexander Kennedy's book PETRA: Its History and Monuments. (London: Country Life, 1925).
50. Ibid., pp. 129-136.
51. Ibid., p. 135.
52. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 76. Also, Sir Reader Bullard, The Camels Must Go: An Autobiography. (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), pp. 138-139.
53. Monroe, p. 141.
54. Ibid., p. 143.

55. Ibid., p. 147.

56. Ibid.; Philby, Arabian Jubilee, pp. 72-78.

57. Ibid., p. 150 and P.R.O.F.O./371/13010, E484/484/91.

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61. Monroe, p. 167.

62. Ibid., p. 176.

63. Philby, The Empty Quarter. (London: Holt, 1933), p. 365.

64. Ibid., p. 407.

65. Monroe, p. 187.

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67. Ibid., Forward.

68. Monroe, p. 207.

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71. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 184.

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73. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 186.

74. George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 579.

75. Philby, Arabian Jubilee, p. 188-189.

76. Monroe, p. 212.
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78. Philby. Arabian Highlands. (Ithica: Cornell, 1952), p. X.
79. E. A. Speiser. Yale Review. December 1951, p. 620.
80. Philby. Highlands, p. 708.
81. Monroe, p. 217.
82. Ibid., p. 303.
83. Ibid., p. 219.
84. Ibid., p. 230.
85. Ibid., p. 251.
86. Ibid., p. 265.
87. Philby. Arabian Jubilee, p. 3.
88. Ibid., p. 95.
89. Ibid., p. 97.
90. Philby. "The New Statute of the Council of Ministers."
Middle East Journal. Vol. XII 1958, No. 3., p. 318.
91. Monroe, p. 204.
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George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972), p. 17.
94. Monroe, p. 295.

CHAPTER TWO

PHILBY, IBN SAUD AND PALESTINE, 1936-1939:

THE PROBLEM AND PHILBY'S SOLUTION

In 1925, St. John Philby divorced himself from the British Civil Service and assumed the role of liaison officer between Ibn Saud and the western world. His developing relationship with Ibn Saud was variously judged as indicated in the British legation's report in 1933:

He was for some time in and after 1924 a thorn in the side of British authorities and was described in 1925 as clinging tenaciously to his religion, "a simple dualism in which the spirit of darkness is represented by His Majesty's Government." Need now no longer be regarded as anti-British, except that he would still sympathise with Ibn Saud in any quarrel with His Majesty's Government, and will still rail on occasion against the British Empire as a system. He would as soon sell British goods as Standard Oil or Ford cars and he got Ibn Saud's wireless contract for Marconi's in 1931. His influence with the King has been exaggerated by some into a legend, while many still believe him to be a British political agent. He has much access to the King and the King values his advice on certain occasions, but he presents no appearance of being in Ibn Saud's confidence on major political occasions.¹

The King looked to Philby for advice on western means to materially improve the lives of his people. For Ibn Saud politics were mainly an Arab affair and Philby's advice was not needed. In 1930, Philby became a Muslim and an informal member of King Ibn Saud's Divan (privy council). He participated fully in the King's council meetings. Ibn Saud equated his council to the British Parliament and once said "we discuss everything here in complete democratic freedom, and we even have our official opposition. Philby is that!"² The Palestine prob-

lem proved the British legation report and Ibn Saud's observation to be correct. This chapter will address St. John Philby's efforts in the search for a solution to the seemingly irreconcilable conflict between the Zionists and the Arabs. In order to appreciate Philby's efforts, they must be considered within the context of the complex Zionist, Arab, British and American relations between 1936 and 1939.

The Problem, as seen by Arabs and Zionists

Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine started increasing rapidly after Hitler assumed power in March 1933. Jewish immigration into Palestine between 1933-1936 totaled (net) 163,098.³ In March 1936, Arab Nationalists in Egypt and Syria, after large demonstrations and strikes, were promised independence; the economy in Palestine was in a recession; Fascist radio broadcasts from Italy were full of anti-British propoganda aimed at the Arabs, and the Palestinian Arab nationalists began their own movement.

The Palestinian Arabs decided that the Jewish immigration and land acquisition in Palestine must stop. On April 24, 1936 the Arab Higher Committee was formed and Haj Amin el Husseni, the Mufti of Jerusalem, became its president. The Higher Committee announced that its objective was the prohibition of further Jewish immigration, forbiddance of land transfer from Arabs to Jews, and the replacement of the Mandate by a national government.⁴ It ordered a general Arab strike in hopes of coercing the British into meeting the demands. Partial success was achieved when the British approved only 4,500 of the 11,200 Jewish visa requests. The Colonial Secretary J. H. Thomas informed Parliament that a Royal Commission would investigate

the cause of unrest, but only after order was restored. The Commission's terms of reference for their investigation were such that the Mandate and its policies were not to be challenged. This inflamed the Arabs and the strike evolved into open guerrilla warfare. The Jewish community's economy was damaged somewhat, however, the Arabs were doing more harm to themselves. When the Palestinian Arabs stopped work the Jewish immigrants were able to replace them. Jewish farms increased production to make up for the reduced Arab production. The Arab port of Jaffa lost a great deal of its normal traffic to the Jewish operated facility at Tel-Aviv. The tourist trade was reduced and unemployment was raised. Britain sent more troops. By November the Arab Higher Committee began to feel the economic and British troop pressures. In October the Arab rulers of Iraq, Transjordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen issued notes calling for an end to the violence and to have faith in "the good intentions of our friend Great Britain, who had declared that she will do justice."⁵ Thus the Palestinian Arabs were able to stop fighting and save face and the Royal Commission was able to begin its investigation in November. The Commission was, with some hesitation on the part of the Arabs, able to conclude its investigation by the end of January, 1937.

While the Royal Commission was compiling its report, the Jewish Agency was trying to establish contacts with Arab leaders or their advisors in order to convey its views on the Palestinian situation to them. David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Zionist and Jewish Agency Executive, met first with Fuad Bey Hamzah in the latter's home in Beirut on April 13, 1937.⁶ Hamzah was a Druze of Lebanese

birth, who spoke fluent English, and had graduated from the American College of Beirut and the Jerusalem Law School. He was Ibn Saud's Director of Foreign Affairs. Ben-Gurion asked Hamzah how Saudi Arabia viewed the Palestinian problem. Stating that he was unauthorized to speak for anyone but himself, Hamzah wanted to discuss the issue in terms of Palestinian Arab claims and Jewish responses.⁷ Hamzah stated that the Palestinian Arabs considered the three key issues to be immigration, land and political rule. The economic prosperity gained by the influx of Jews would mean nothing if the Arabs became a minority and lost control of their country. It was impractical to believe the Jewish argument that it was possible to establish a government based on the non-domination of one group over another regardless of the population ratio. As long as the Jews constituted a minority in Palestine, they might support such a position. When they became a majority, Jews would certainly seek to dominate the Arabs. Ben-Gurion thought that too narrow a view. Any agreement reached by the Arabs and Jews would certainly be guaranteed by the much larger Arab states on Palestine's borders. In the larger context, the land in Palestine constituted less than two percent of all Arab lands, and the Arab population was only three percent of the world's Arabs. For the Jews on the other hand, "it was a question of their national past and future.....there was no comparing the value of Erez Israel for the Arabs with the importance it held for the Jewish people."⁸

Hamzah asked if Ben Gurion was trying to argue that Palestine should be opened to the seventeen million Jews of the world, thereby creating a desire for more territory. The reply was an historical

dissertation on the Zionist movement. Not all Jews wanted to leave their present homes, but for those who did, Israel was their only choice. It had been agreed that immigration would be limited by the economic absorptive capacity and the promise not to dispossess the Arabs. Jewish technology and industry were increasing the absorption and it was impossible to state a number for the ultimate limit. When pressed for a number by Hamzah, Ben-Gurion estimated that the coastal region could provide settlement for 100,000 families. When Hamzah expressed his belief that the Royal Commission would provide answers to the problem, Ben-Gurion voiced his doubts. He believed that the problem would remain unresolved until the Jews and Arabs came to an agreement. The Jews regretted that no Arab statesman had been found who could see the solution in terms of a mutually beneficial partnership.

Ben-Gurion asked whether Ibn Saud, who was a great statesman in his country, was also capable of penetrating to the heart of issues remote from his land and of expressing an opinion about how to solve the Jewish-Arab question in Erez Israel.⁹ He did not want Ibn Saud to be the judge in this issue, but he valued the opinion of such a great Arab figure and thought it beneficial for Ibn Saud to hear the Jewish position. Hamzah stated that Ibn Saud was capable of understanding the problem, but he would have to confer with the King before stating whether such a meeting could occur. Hamzah recommended that in the meantime the Jewish Agency representative should meet with Crown Prince Saud and Sheikh Yusuf Yasin (the King's private secretary) who were travelling to London for the coronation of King George VI. Hamzah promised that he would make

such a recommendation to the Prince. Also, he would report Ben-Gurion's remarks to Ibn Saud. Ben-Gurion went to London and arranged to meet with two Englishmen who were familiar with Ibn Saud: St. John Philby and Captain H. C. Armstrong.

It must be noted here that Philby had just returned to London from his mapping expedition in the southwestern region of Saudi Arabia. He had extended his travels into the Aden protectorate, and as he was escorted by some of Ibn Saud's armed men, he greatly perturbed the British officials who directed him to leave immediately. Philby chose to explore more of the protectorate and Yemen which further aggravated the British and the Imam of Yemen. Philby had caused Ibn Saud a good deal of diplomatic trouble with his southern neighbors, but he believed that the knowledge gained about the region was worth it.¹⁰

Ben-Gurion met Philby for lunch at the Athenaeum Club on May 18, 1937. As the two discussed the Palestine problem, Philby asserted that after the Royal Commission published its report the "war" would resume. The only reason there was a peace at the moment was because of Ibn Saud's intervention with the Mufti of Jerusalem. According to Philby: Ibn Saud was opposed to the Zionist policies and had stated that Jewish immigration was "talm" (an injustice).¹¹ Nevertheless, he wanted to give the Royal Commission a chance. Philby was of the opinion that England wanted to make Palestine a Crown Colony. His contention was that the English government was using the Jews to its advantage and that England should get out of the country which rightly belonged to the Arabs. Ben-Gurion argued that the Jews had a right to return to Palestine; they would fight for

that right if necessary, but would rather have a treaty agreement with the Arabs. Such a treaty would have three elements:

1. Jewish immigration unrestricted in numbers or for political reasons, with the exception of the non-eviction of Arabs;
2. The country's independence in internal affairs;
3. Ties with an Arab federation or confederation.¹²

Ben-Gurion believed that if the Jews and Arabs reached an agreement the British would then support it. Philby was very pessimistic about British willingness to relinquish control of Palestine. However he believed that if an agreement were based on complete realism with no possibility of English intervention, Ibn Saud would consent to it. He added that Ibn Saud was the only Arab leader who could head the Arab confederation to which Ben-Gurion had referred. In Philby's opinion, Palestine and Transjordan should be one state and under Ibn Saud's rule. Emir Abdullah of Transjordan was not a bad man, but he was not a real ruler. He was a British puppet. Philby based his opinion of Abdullah on his service with him between 1921 and 1924.

Ben-Gurion confessed that he had not considered Ibn Saud in such a role. In fact he did not believe any of the Jews or Arabs of the region would accept the rule of the Bedouin King.¹³ According to Ben-Gurion, Philby's response was, "Leave the Arabs to me, we'll manage with them." To say the least, Philby was very prideful. When asked if Ibn Saud would agree to Jewish immigration, Philby said that he would. If there were an Arab federation it would need development and for that Ibn Saud would see the Jews as an asset. Arabia made its meager living from pilgrims. Subsidies from England meant

subservience. Money was needed and the Jews could supply it.

As Philby presented the situation to Ben-Gurion, England was the real danger. Ibn Saud was concerned that England would turn his country into a British colony. There was British pressure to the north out of the Aden Protectorate. Ibn Saud would resist, of course, but Philby expressed the view that England would not be content with Aden. Philby then concluded his talk with Ben-Gurion suggesting that a meeting with "some of Ibn Saud's people" might be good. He would let Ben-Gurion know.¹⁴

As was mentioned earlier, Ben-Gurion had arranged to meet with two Englishmen. The second was Captain Harold Courtney Armstrong. He was an Orientalist who had written biographies on Mustafa Kemal and Ibn Saud. His book on the latter, Lord of Arabia (1934), was a collection of colorful tales which glorified Ibn Saud's exploits and portrayed him as an Islamic puritan with a divine mission.¹⁵

When Ben-Gurion left Philby, he went to the Royal Automobile Club for his second engagement. Captain H. C. Armstrong was described by Ben-Gurion as an Arabic speaking friend of Ibn Saud who "spoke like a British imperialist: he was not concerned either about the Arabs or the Jews, and he said so frankly."¹⁶ Ben-Gurion told Armstrong that inter-Arab quarreling was preventing any Arab from entering into treaty negotiations with the Jews for fear of being denounced as a traitor. The situation demanded an Arab with influence who would be willing to "delve deeply into the matter",¹⁷ i.e., listen to the Jewish position. He asked Armstrong if he believed that Ibn Saud was such a man. Armstrong replied that:

"Ibn Saud was a wise, cautious and honest man. He adopted a realistic approach to things, took the facts into account. Though he was a devout Moslem, he was not a fanatic. He smoked in private. He was a truly frank person. He never deceived anyone. If he was asked something he might refuse to answer, but if he said yes or no, his yes was a yes and his no was a no."

According to Armstrong, Ibn Saud decided everything on his own, and no one could act in his name.

Armstrong portrayed Philby in a very negative light. Although a friend of Ibn Saud's, Philby certainly was not his political advisor. Armstrong's observation of Philby's relationship with the King's entourage is particularly interesting.

"Philby was hated....because he was rude to them. He was given to cursing and abusing people. The Wahhabis were careful not to use profanity, and Ibn Saud himself would never curse anyone. He might slap a man in the face, or cut off his hands, but he would not curse him, and that is why Philby was disliked, since he was a Wahhabi Moslem."¹⁸

As for arranging a meeting with Ibn Saud, Armstrong did not believe it would be possible until after the Royal Commission published its report. However, he would contact Ibn Saud's representatives to determine whether a meeting would be worthwhile. Two weeks later Ben-Gurion received a letter from Armstrong stating that after repeated attempts he was unable to arrange a meeting, and that further attempts might be counter productive.¹⁹

On May 26th, before receiving Armstrong's negative reply, Ben-Gurion had a second meeting with St. John Philby at the Athenaeum. Philby told Ben-Gurion that he had tried to convince Yusuf Yasin that the three of them should meet. Yasin's reply was that Ibn Saud had directed him not to speak to anyone on political matters,

and therefore such a meeting was impossible. Philby was not willing to let such an opportunity pass. He proposed to Ben-Gurion that the two of them should pursue the subject, and, if an agreement were reached, it should be conveyed in writing to Ibn Saud, with a summary published in the newspapers. Ben-Gurion rejected the idea of publishing a letter. He was pursuing the subject as a private individual. If he were to publish anything it would be seen as a Jewish Agency commitment. Philby argued that because of his reputation as a supporter of the Arabs, any declaration he might make in favor of the Jews would make a great impression. Ben-Gurion agreed to look at Philby's draft of an agreement, stipulating that although they agreed on some points there were still some deep-seated differences. Philby produced his draft that afternoon.

The eleven points of the draft agreement (Appendix A) boil down to four key elements:

1. A denouncement of the British and their preferential position in Palestine;
2. The opening of Immigration to everyone, subject only to absorptive capacity as determined by a commission composed of Arabs and Jews acting under a League of Nations sanction;
3. The establishment of a Greater Palestine by joining Palestine with Transjordan and having a plebiscite to determine whether Abdullah, Ibn Saud or an elected President would head a monarchy or a republican government;
4. The guarantee of Jewish freedom in religious and cultural matters.²⁰

Ben-Gurion wrote a response to Philby on May 31 (Appendix B).

The only points on which they were in agreement were those which rejected the idea of partition, called for freedom of Jewish religious

and cultural expression, prohibited preferential treatment for external powers, and called for a combined Palestine and Transjordan. He believed that immigration had to be controlled by Jews and opened only to the Jews since it was their efforts which increased the absorptive capacity of the land. The Jews did not want to finance the immigration of other races.²¹ As for the form of government, the Jews wanted a guarantee of non-domination, i.e., complete parity in government between Jews and Arabs, irrespective of population ratios. Ben-Gurion hoped that a parity agreement would not be necessary for ever.

"the time will come when Arabs and Jews will work together in mutual confidence, and the lines of division will become other than racial ones. This consciousness of a common citizenship will develop gradually as a result of economic cooperation, but until it has developed, and until the present racial suspicionsness has disappeared, it is necessary to have some arrangement which will prevent either race from being dominated by the other."²²

According to Ben-Gurion, if the Mandate were to be abolished there would still be a need for a League of Nations guarantee in addition to that provided by the Arabs, although Ben-Gurion did not have much faith in the League of Nations. Ben-Gurion also took issue with Philby's attempt to exclude the British totally. He believed that Britain's vital interests would have to be considered in any Jewish-Arab agreement or England would not approve it.²³ Philby did not reply to Ben-Gurion.

Obviously Ben-Gurion and Philby viewed the situation from very different perspectives. Each had his own concept for a solution. Philby envisioned Ibn Saud as the guarantor, if not the ruler, of

a Greater Palestine which would allow the Jewish people to settle and help develop the economy. The Jews would have their representatives in government to protect their interests and recourse to the League of Nations or the International Court of Justice if they were not fairly governed. Ben-Gurion on the other hand, envisioned a free flow of Jews into Palestine, restricted only by an absorptive capacity defined by the Jewish Agency. Parity in government, economic cooperation and the spectre of Britain or the League of Nations were required to guarantee the peace until the two peoples learned to live together. The central point concerned who was going to govern, Arab or Jew. A mutual understanding was not attained at the Athenaeum Club in England, nor was there one in Palestine.

The Peel Commission

The Royal Commission, headed by William Robert Wellesley, Lord Peel, former Secretary of State for India, conducted their investigation in Palestine from early November, 1936, until the third week in January, 1937. The Commission had been instructed to determine what the "legitimate" Arab and Jewish grievances were and "to make recommendations for their removal and for the prevention of their recurrence."²⁴ The Royal Commission (Peel) Report on Palestine was released on July 7, 1937.²⁵ The report stated that Arab grievances about Jewish immigration and land acquisition were, under the terms of the Mandate, unjustified. However, meeting the obligations given to the Jews could only be accomplished by British repression of the Arabs. The Commission found that the Palestine Mandate had been premised on the assumption that the Arabs would

acquiesce in the establishment of the Jewish National Home because of the material advantages. Obviously the Arabs proved the assumption to be invalid. The Arabs were increasingly demanding their independence, and the Jews were adamant about the development of their National Home. The intensity of the relationship between the Arabs and Jews increased exponentially as the pressure mounted for the latter's co-religionists in Nazi territories. In the opinion of the Royal Commission there was no hope of establishing a representative government, and therefore the Palestine Mandate was unworkable.²⁶

The Commission assessed the three major proposals for a settlement that were put before it. The Arab Higher Committee recommended the establishment of an independent Arab State. This was dismissed because of the fear that the rights of the Jews might not be safeguarded. It was recalled that the Mufti had asserted that the 400,000 Jews in Palestine could not be assimilated and that their fate would have to be left "to the future".²⁷ That was the Palestinian Arab extremist view. The Jewish extremist or "Revisionist" proposal was the establishment of a Jewish government over Palestine and Transjordan. That too was rejected as not being feasible because the Arab world would not stand for it. The Jewish Agency proposal was for a parity scheme of government, whereby the seats of power would be split on a 50/50 basis...." the Jews would never claim more than that equal number, whatever the future ratio between Arab and Jewish population might become."²⁸ The Commission evaluated that proposal as not being feasible either because the Arabs and Jews would invariably find themselves in a deadlock on major issues. Also, the Arabs would never give up the advantage they enjoyed in

being the majority for a promise that the Jews would never assume control when they became the majority. Having rejected all of the proposals put before it, the Commission came up with its own.

Partition was the recommended answer. As soon as possible there should be established separate and sovereign Jewish and Arab States, and a British mandatory zone. (See map at Appendix C). The Jewish State would take about 20% of Palestine and would include Galilee, the Jezreel Valley, and the Coastal plain to a point midway between Gaza and Jaffa. The British mandate zone would encompass the Holy Places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and a corridor to the Mediterranean at Jaffa. The British would also maintain a mandate over the north-west corner of the Gulf of Aqabah. Temporary British control would be maintained in the towns of Safad, Tiberias, Acre, and Haifa. The Arabs would have the rest of Palestine, the port city of Jaffa, and would be united with Transjordan. Both Arabs and Jews were to have free access to the ports of Haifa and Aqabah. Britain was to have preferential treaties with both states. The Jews were to give subventions to the Arabs. Britain was to grant the Arabs £2,000,000 (£1=\$5 in 1937). Jewish land purchases in the Arab state were to be prohibited during the transition period. Jewish immigration was to be restricted to the absorptive capacity of the area designated for the Jewish state.

The Royal Commission concluded that "Half a loaf is better than no bread" (Appendix D). The major advantages to the drastic provisions were that neither group would dominate the other, the Arabs would achieve independence and the Jewish National Home would be an independent state. The British were to enjoy benefits also,

although they were not discussed in the report. England would be released from its commitment for troops to keep the peace, while it maintained its economic and strategic ties with the states.²⁹

The Royal Commission realized that there would be opposition to the plan and identified certain "palliatives" which were to ease the pain if partition was rejected. Jewish settlement was to be restricted to the coastal plains. Also, immigration was to be restricted for five years with a "political high level" of 12,000 a year. If violence erupted, martial law was to be enforced, the police system reorganized, and rigid press controls imposed.

The British government issued a Statement of Policy which generally agreed with the Royal Commission's conclusion.³⁰ Parliament had a heated debate which resulted in deferring the partition plan to the League of Nations as the overall responsible body. The League of Nations Mandate Commission favored further study and planned to dispatch an investigative commission of its own. It also reminded Britain that the Mandate was still in force, i.e., Britain could not drop the hot potato until the League approved any changes.³¹

American Interests

In the United States, the State Department was balancing on the diplomatic tight rope. On July 12th, Mr. J. A. Moffett, Chairman of the Board of the Bahrein Petroleum Company (a Standard Oil subsidiary), visited Mr. Wallace Murray, the Under Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. Mr. Moffett told Mr. Murray about the importance of his company's operations in the Persian Gulf region and its concern about Ibn Saud's reaction if there were any U.S. state-

ments in favor of the Jews. There were some disturbing indications that Ibn Saud was leaning towards the British, and there could be serious repercussions (possibly expulsion) if the U.S. angered him. Mr. Moffett was thanked for the information and was told that the U.S. Government was not officially concerned with the present Palestine dispute and had taken no position with respect thereto.³² England was the mandatory power responsible for Palestine. The American Ambassador in the United Kingdom (Bingham) advised the British Secretary of State (Eden) on August 4th, that America expected to be consulted on any proposed changes to the Mandate which impacted on American interests.³³

The State Department also monitored the reaction of the Zionist Congress, which met in Zurich on August 11th, and was advised that it had voted 300 to 158 in favor of negotiating with the British on the basis of the Partition Plan.³⁴ The revisionists had insisted on Jewish "inalienable rights" to all of Palestine and had not given up hopes for Transjordan. The moderates, led by Dr. Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion were willing to accept the concept. They wanted to negotiate for a larger area in order to have adequate land to reduce the refugee pool in Europe.³⁵ Although there was wide disagreement among the Jewish groups they met as a group and voted for an overall policy which would be pursued. In unity they had strength.

Arab Disunity

The Arabs had differences of opinion and disunity. The moderate National Defense Party (NDP) had disassociated itself from the Arab Higher Committee on July 3, 1937. The party's President, Raghib

al-Nashashibi, and the ruler of Transjordan, Amir Abdullah, were both suspected of favoring the partition plan in order to expand their powers.³⁶ The NDP wrote the League of Nations and the British Colonial Secretary and presented its position. The Partition Plan was not acceptable as proposed because it gave the Jews the best lands and it subjugated many Arabs to Jewish rule; the Holy Places and many Arab villages were to be under a permanent Mandate; and the port of Jaffa would be isolated. As an alternative, the NDP proposed a democratic state; with minority rights guaranteed; population ratios fixed as they were; and Jewish land purchases prohibited in the Arab areas as indicated in the Partition Plan.³⁷

The Arab Higher Committee rejected the plan entirely and tried to dissuade the United States Government from supporting the Jews. The Mufti of Jerusalem gave the American Consul a note from the Higher Committee on August 15, 1937. The note was issued in response to the communications exchanged between the American Ambassador (Bingham) and Mr. Eden regarding America's right to be consulted on possible changes to the Mandate. It was observed that the Americans "enjoyed great respect and affection and a moral standing" in the Arab world, as well as extensive business connections, both of which were:

"...worthy of being safeguarded and developed. It is our belief that these possess no less present and future value than what the United States is likely to reap from supporting the fallacious Jewish cause. In fact it exceeds it by far inasmuch as it embraces far-flung eastern countries."³⁸

The American response was very diplomatic. It assured the Mufti that the position taken was consistent with America's responsibility toward all of its citizens overseas, and was not based on racial

considerations. The majority of the Americans in Palestine were Jewish, but that did not alter their citizenship nor America's responsibility towards them. The Mufti was "pleased to discover that American action was not unique and designed against the Arabs."³⁹

The Arabs probably expected an evasive response from the United States, but they were surprised when they got one from Ibn Saud. When the Royal Commission Report was issued the Arab Higher Committee asked Ibn Saud for his advice on the plan to partition Palestine. His reply was issued on July 13, 1937. It said:

"The problem of our Arab brethren in Palestine was and still is the subject of our sympathy and our complete concern. You know we did not spare and will never spare anything in our power in order to solve it with justice and fairness with the help of Allah."⁴⁰

This avoidance of the partition plan caused the Arab and Jewish political circles in Jerusalem to wonder if the British were playing a game of some sort. The Premier of Iraq (Suleiman) was opposing the plan openly. It was assumed that if the British were serious about the plan Iraq would be quiet, not Saudi Arabia.⁴¹ There was one man who was considered close to Ibn Saud who was not quiet.

St. John Philby published an opinion and recommendations in the September issue of The Contemporary Review, London, 1937. He opened his article with the observation that the Jews were willing to negotiate and the Arabs were - "astonished at the concession of nine-tenths of their extremist demands, demand the whole pound of flesh promised by McMahon." He continued - "the friends of the Arabs [i.e., Philby]* counsel acceptance...subject to the discussion of

*my comment

details. To their friends they turn a deaf ear, pleading religious scruples to the recognition of a Jewish State in Arab territory."⁴²

Philby argued that although Jews existed in peace in other Arab territories such as Yemen, Iraq, Syria and Saudi Arabia; Palestine was different. Since the days of Moses there was conflict between Jews and Gentiles, and therefore partition or rule by a neutral power was required. As Philby saw it:

"Partition can scarcely be other than temporary, for that alone can compel the two parties to an agreed settlement on the basis of Arab sovereignty and Jewish privilege. From such a settlement both parties have everything to gain. Only the Jews can profit by the continuance of the existing Mandatory administration."⁴³

What Philby seems to imply is that neither state would be economically viable and that they would have to negotiate to achieve mutual benefits. He addressed the particulars of his proposed changes to the Partition plan only after he dropped a bombshell on the Arabs.

As he saw the issues, an understanding between the Arabs and Jews was feasible and had been partially attempted by Nashashibi (NDP leader). However, the real issue was "the old factor of Arab internal discord."⁴⁴ The Partition plan would give Abdullah of Transjordan a throne and control over a significantly greater territory than he had. Philby alluded to the old animosity between Abdullah and Ibn Saud, "the only Arabian King that matters." The Mufti too, according to Philby, was obviously opposed to Abdullah's benefitting from the plan. And so it seemed, Arab rivalry (particularly Saudi vs. Hashimite) precluded an agreement, or even negotiations along the lines proposed by the Commission. Philby followed up his chastisement of Arab

discord with some recommendations.

Either Abdullah must step aside and give up his dream or the rest of the Arabs must acquiesce. Philby believed that a round table conference could be convened to determine the outcome for Arab Palestine on the basis of the Partition plan. If the Arabs reached an agreement it would command attention and respect from the British and the League of Nations. Philby proposed that the Arabs start with the Partition plan as a basis for negotiations. The Jews wanted the Negeb (Negev) desert for development, but they certainly did not want the 225,000 Arabs in northern Palestine. And those Arabs did not want to be under Jewish rule. Philby added - "the suggestion of their voluntary or forced removal from their ancestral territories is too fantastic to require examination."⁴⁵ (This point has to be kept in mind for future consideration). Philby's argument for modifications of the Partition plan can be summarized as six issues:

1. The Arab tract of northern Palestine down to Acre on the coast should be reunited with Syria.

2. Acre should not be developed in rivalry to Haifa by Syria and Tel-Aviv's development should be abandoned in the interest of Jaffa. Thus the Arabs and Jews would each have a Palestinian port and there would be no need for Mandatory control of Jaffa.

3. With no Mandatory of Jaffa there would be no need for a corridor and the area designated as a corridor should be divided between the Arabs and the Jews.

4. The area around Rehovoth is significant to the Jews (Agricultural research center and home of Dr. Weizmann) and should

either be exchanged for an equally productive area contiguous to the Jewish zone or kept as a detached enclave. There could be no corridor, as they in Philby's view were unworkable. The link between the two areas would have to be by sea.

5. The Commission's proposal for a sacred enclave for Jerusalem and Bethlehem was valid. However, the League of Nations should release the British from the requirement and establish an international commission to administer the enclave. An international police force such as that used in Shanghai or Tangiers should keep the peace. External powers such as the League, the United States and the Governments of Arabia would guarantee the enclave's neutrality.

6. Aqabah rightly belonged to Saudi Arabia. If Britain could not concede it to Ibn Saud, it should at least be under Palestinian Arab control.

Recognizing the Jewish sentiment toward Jerusalem, Philby argued that that "dream" would have to be surrendered if Jews wanted to expand and develop. What he implied was that Arabs would accept Jewish economic expansion into Arab lands (to include Transjordan) if they came as guests.

Philby then pointed to the Arabs and assessed their attitude.

"To them [the Arabs] the creation of a Jewish State in a tiny fraction of Palestine seems infinitely worse than the abandonment of the whole country to foreign domination."⁴⁶

Compromise was necessary and inevitable in Philby's view. He offered the Arabs the fact that they could have full sovereignty over four-fifths of the area, while the Jews would be segregated in one-fifth of the land. The land was the Arab's negotiating lever. He warned

that if the Arabs did not accept the principles of the Partition plan--and the Mandatory was left in control, the Jews would inevitably become the majority population in Palestine.

The perceptiveness displayed by Philby was really quite striking. However, his lack of tact greatly reduced the effectiveness of his arguments. The Arabs, and especially Ibn Saud, wasted no time in expressing their displeasure with his exposure of their dirty laundry. Philby had had similar articles in the London newspapers earlier and Ibn Saud had informed them in July that his dealings with Philby were purely personal and commercial.

"Some may think that Philby's opinions reflect our own....As for his personal opinions, they are his own and do not reflect our thoughts at all."⁴⁷

Philby published his confirmation shortly thereafter:

"I want to make clear that I agree with all that has been publicly stated by the Saudi Arabian Embassy about me, and that I have never in the whole of the last twenty years (1917-1937)* expressed any but my personal opinion. I am pleased to have this opportunity to affirm that neither now nor in the past have I had any official or semi-official connection of any kind with His Majesty; my admiration for him is another matter."⁴⁸

What Philby failed to remember was his attempt to mediate between Ibn Saud and Sherif Ali in 1924, just before Ibn Saud took over the Hijaz. Philby was informed in a letter at that time that:

"If there is something personal you are welcome to discuss it with me personally. If however there is something that pertains to the Hijaz and you wish to act as a mediator, I would suggest your holding aloof from it. As you will observe, it is a purely Islamic problem in which your mediation will be uncalled for."⁴⁹

*inserted by me

Philby was never one to stay aloof if he believed he had something to say. He did however know how to adjust his opinion according to the circumstances of the moment.

Philby published another article in the October 1937 issue of Foreign Affairs. It was entitled "The Arabs and the Future of Palestine."⁵⁰ He began his article with a short history of the relationship between the British and the Arabs since 1913; the Hussein-McMahon correspondence; the Sykes-Picot Agreement; and the imposition of the Mandates. He described the recovery of Arab independence in Iraq and the favorable prospects for Syria, which left only Palestine and Transjordan under an indefinite Mandate control. The problem though (as Philby saw it) was that the Mandate "was framed mainly to realize the nationalist ideals of Zionism." And that was why the Mandate was unworkable. Philby applauded the Royal Commission's efforts and its call for Partition. There was only one alternative to Partition - the annexation of Palestine as a Crown Colony of the British Empire.⁵¹ Philby was obviously trying to get the Arab's attention and show them what could result from their intransigence.

In assessing the reason for Arab intransigence, Philby said nothing about internal discord. His opinion was that:

"the root-and-branch opposition of the Palestine Arabs and their supporters can only be regarded as manouvering for position. The Arabs are bad bargainers. In this case nine-tenths of their full demands have been conceded. They reject the concession in the hope of getting ten-tenths. It is inconceivable that they should get that. It is conceivable that they may lose what is now offered."⁵²

Again he called upon the Arabs to accept the Partition as a basis for further negotiations.

In the remainder of his October article he proposed the same modifications to the Royal Commission's Partition plan, except for two key points. He envisioned the Arab portion of Palestine being united with Syria.⁵³ Philby did not present his rationale so I will offer a possibility. The probability of Ibn Saud obtaining control did not seem to be too great; and there was obvious opposition from Ibn Saud to a Hashemite getting it; the next alternative for Arab control had to be Syria. The other key point pertained to the form of guarantee for the Partition and peace.

The Jews were not expected to rely upon the Arab promises, and it was realized that the British had regional interests that required protection. What Philby offered was the idea that the Jews would certainly be within their rights to negotiate with the British Government for a British garrison on Jewish soil.⁵⁴ Thus everyone would receive something they could live with. Philby stated that it was up to the Arabs to show statesmanship, and he believed that they would surely accept.⁵⁵ Philby was adjusting his position hoping that he could persuade the Arabs that they had to negotiate. Unfortunately, the Palestinian Arab extremists were making negotiations difficult.

As mentioned earlier, the Arab Higher Committee in Jerusalem had rejected the Partition plan. By January 1938 the Higher Committee was declared illegal by the Palestine (Mandatory) Government, and was in exile in Damascus, Syria. The Mufti published a manifesto which opposed the Partition plan and the British intention to send another commission for further investigation. According to the Mufti

the Arabs demanded:

- "1. Full independence for Palestine Arabs.
2. A definite end to the British experiment for a Jewish National Home.
3. Termination of the British Mandate, with a treaty similar to that between Britain and Iraq.
4. Complete stoppage of Jewish immigration and prohibition of the sale of land to Jews."⁵⁶

It was further declared that the Arabs were willing to negotiate to secure "reasonable interests of Britain" and for the protection of the Holy Places, including the legal rights of the Jews. However, no Arab was going to negotiate with the British Commission. And so, a substantial road block had been erected. Undaunted, Philby proposed yet another solution.

While enroute back to Saudi Arabia he stopped in Cairo and issued his fourth proposal. The Commission should defer its trip for six months while the Arabs conferred in Jeddah, under the auspices of Ibn Saud. The exiled Higher Committee leaders such as Haj Amin el Husseini (the Mufti of Jerusalem) should be granted amnesty and participate in the Arab conference. Once all possibilities were explored, and an Arab consensus established, the Jewish leaders should be invited to Jeddah for talks. If an agreement were reached then Partition would not be necessary (that should entice the Mufti), and if negotiations failed Partition was still available as a solution. The Arabs press in Cairo endorsed Philby's proposal but the Jews and the British did not seem to pay much attention to it.⁵⁷ There were at this time numerous proposals presented - and the moderate Jewish leaders indicated a willingness to meet with Arab leaders - but they never did.⁵⁸ Philby had accurately identified the problem in his September

1937 article - internal Arab discord made negotiations impossible.

Ibn Saud Gets Involved

Throughout 1938 the Arabs suffered from infighting while the Jews tried to strengthen their positions. When the British realized that nothing was being accomplished in Palestine, they announced in a White Paper (November 9, 1938) that they were calling the Arab and Jewish representatives to London to confer on a solution. Immediately the various factions began jockeying for position.⁵⁹ King Ibn Saud sought the support of the United States by sending a lengthy letter (Appendix E) to President F. D. Roosevelt (November 29, 1938). He provided the President with an historical account of the Arab and Jewish positions in Palestine, a review of the contradictory promises made by the British, and the establishment of the Mandate. He referred President Roosevelt to the findings of the 1919 King-Crane Commission which President Wilson had sponsored. If the President reviewed that Commission's findings he would appreciate the Arab position. Palestine had received more than its fair share of Jews. It was time some other countries opened their doors too.⁶⁰

President Roosevelt replied on January 17, 1939. His very brief note advised Ibn Saud that America would maintain a consistent policy as it had all along. American interests, spiritual and economic, would be protected in accordance with the provisions of the American-British Mandate Convention of December 3, 1924.⁶¹ I interpret that as saying that the official position was that Britain was responsible for the Mandate and America was neutral, unless U.S. interests were endangered. Ibn Saud had not gained an ally, but then he did not have a major opponent either.

Prior to receiving the President's reply, Ibn Saud authorized Philby to publish an interview he had given him earlier. The article was published in London, Milan and New York in December 1938, just prior to the forthcoming Arab-Jewish-British conference in London (Appendix F). It is obvious that Philby was trying to get Ibn Saud to expound on the Palestine problem, but the King was hesitant because of his respect for Britain's position. He believed that the British, if they considered the problem with their own and Arab interests in mind, would choose a reasonable course. If not, there was nothing he could say to change their minds. Philby asked what advice the King had for the Arabs. Ibn Saud's reply was that they should be unified in the pursuit of their objectives. The King regretted that they were not unified. (In so doing, he confirmed Philby's September article on Palestine). As he observed the multiple factions in disagreement, he decided to step back from the issue and express himself only to those who asked him questions on Arabia or Islam. When Philby asked the King about the Balfour declaration, the King exclaimed "The Balfour promise was indeed the greatest injustice of Great Britain." As for the possibility of a Jewish State - even if all the other Arabs recognized it - Ibn Saud would not. He said it would not be consistent with his religion or in the interests of his situation.⁶²

Ibn Saud dispatched his son, Emir Faisal, and Fuad Bey Hamza as his representatives to the Palestine Round Table Conference in January 1939. Also, asked to "be on hand" was St. John Philby.⁶³ It is evident from this fact that Ibn Saud must have considered Philby as an asset. If he were considered as a possibly disruptive or counter-productive agent he surely would not have been invited. Of

course there is the possibility that the Saudi delegation might benefit from having an "unofficial" Englishman who could make contacts with either the British or the Jews. If his activities became known to opponents, the Saudis could disavow him. He did have a clandestine meeting with the Jewish leaders - Dr. Weizmann and Ben-Gurion. They came to his house to meet with Fuad Hamza. As Philby recorded the meeting: he proposed that Emir Faisal should become the King of Palestine and that there be a quid pro quo on Jewish immigration, to the extent of 50,000 in five years.⁶⁴ Nothing came of that plan either. The whole Round Table Conference was a failure.

The Conference opened on February 7, 1939 at St. James Palace. It was obvious from the start that negotiations were going to be difficult. The Arabs refused to meet with the Jews face to face. The British had to do what would in later years be called "shuttle diplomacy", but it was done in London in the same building. The British presented three different proposals and none were accepted. On March 17, 1939 the Conference was terminated. And as the British had stated, they dictated the policy to be pursued since the Arabs and Jews refused to reach an agreement.⁶⁵

The British White Paper, 1939

The British White Paper on Palestine was issued on May 17, 1939. It reported that the Arabs and Jews had had an opportunity to reach an agreement but failed. As a result of the Conference it was appreciated that the concept of a Jewish National Home in Palestine was valid, but there was a limit to immigration which would not be exceeded. In reference to the Arab claims that the Hussein-McMahon

correspondence included Palestine, that was denied. Meetings had been held to clarify the language of that correspondence, and it was determined that the area west of the Jordan was excluded from Arab independence. It was regrettable that there was a misunderstanding.⁶⁷ As to the policy to be enacted, the White Paper stated that the British objective was to see an independent Palestinian State in 10 years.

In order to achieve that objective there was to be a transition from British to indigenous control once there was peace. The White Paper addressed the three major concerns of the two groups and stipulated how they were to be controlled.

1) Constitution. The Arabs and Jews would share in the governing of the State. As peace was established, they would be integrated into governmental positions. Five years after peace was restored a Constitution would be written by a representative body with Arabs, Jews and British participation. The interests of all concerned were to be embodied in and protected by the provisions of the Constitution.

2) Immigration. The concept of economic absorptive capacity was valid only to a finite point. Therefore, starting April 1, 1939 there would be controlled immigration for five years, with a total of 75,000 Jews admitted. That would result in one-third of the population being Jewish. After that limit was reached, further immigration would be dependent upon Arab acquiescence. The number of illegal immigrants would be counted against the total number authorized.

3) Land. A High Commissioner was to be empowered to prohibit and regulate land transfer to protect the interests of peace. The

British wanted the Arabs and Jews to work out their differences and find peace together; the British had a bigger conflict in Europe to worry about.

Philby Develops His "Plan"

As World War II broke out in Europe, St. John Philby assumed an anti-war posture. He joined the British People's Party and ran for Parliament. He lost receiving 576 of 22,169 votes.⁶⁸ Not deterred by this defeat, he continued his anti-war speeches and called for a recognition of "Germany as a principle factor in the shape of things to come."⁶⁹ He tried to get a government job as an Arabist, but was not accepted. Since he could not work for the British government, he decided to work for Ibn Saud. And so we come to Philby's *final plan for the solution to the Palestine problem.*

Philby wrote about his "plan" in his book Arabian Jubilee (1953). In presenting the background of the problem he presents the view that the European Jew and Judaism had "always been regarded in Islam with feelings akin to contempt..."⁷⁰ His contention was that if a real leader had declared a Jihad when the Jewish National Home project started, it would have been "stifled at birth."⁷¹ Unfortunately, Ibn Saud had not yet established himself in 1920. However, by 1939 Ibn Saud was powerful and respected. Philby believed that Ibn Saud was the only Arab leader who could secure a general acceptance of a formula for peace - Philby's formula.

Philby wrote that his view of the situation in 1939 was based on power and not the merits of the case. In his opinion the Arabs had a legal or moral right to go to Palestine.⁷²

However, the fact of the matter was that the Jews were in Palestine and Britain was going to protect them. When Britain realized the errors of the Mandate, Philby (as has been presented above) tried to get the Arabs to negotiate. He realized that the War would seriously restrict the Pilgrimage and Ibn Saud would be short of the funds he needed to keep his country going. Oil had been found in 1938, but its shipment and the royalties would be greatly reduced until the war was over and tankers could travel freely.⁷³ Philby devised a plan which he believed would satisfy the needs of all parties.

Once again Philby met with the Zionist leaders at the Athenaeum Club (September 28, 1939). During a lunch with Dr. Chaim Weizmann, Professor Lewis Namier, Professor of Modern History in the University of Manchester, and Philby proposed his plan:

"The whole of Palestine should be left to the Jews. All Arabs displaced therefrom should be resettled elsewhere at the expense of the Jews, who would place a sum of £20 millions at the disposal of King Ibn Saud for this purpose. All other Asiatic Arab countries, with the sole exception of Aden should be formally recognized as completely independent in the proper sense of the term."⁷⁴

The plan was to be proposed to Ibn Saud by Britain and America, and if accepted the two powers were to guarantee support.⁷⁵ Philby's record indicates that the Jewish leadership approved his plan on October 6, 1939.⁷⁶ Dr. Weizmann was to contact the British and American Governments and Philby was to inform Ibn Saud of the forthcoming official proposal.

Professor Namier's memorandum (Appendix G) on the meeting

indicates that the form of payment would have to be in Jewish goods:

"e.g., if Ibn Saud requires arms - and this was one of the main items talked of by Philby - we could, over a certain period of time, supply them from Jewish armament works in Palestine."⁷⁷

The Arabist and the Zionists had no difficulty reaching an agreement on Philby's plan. The next step was to present it to their benefactors.

Chapter Two Notes

1. P.R.C.F.O./371/16878. E3745/3745/25 Jedda to London, June 19, 1933, p. 27.
2. H. St. John Philby. Arabian Days: An Autobiography (London: Robert Hale Lim., 1948), p. 283.
3. Esco Foundation for Palestine Inc. Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab, and British Policies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 674.
4. J. C. Hurewitz. The Struggle for Palestine. (New York: Green Wood Press, 1968), p. 68.
5. Ibid., p. 68.
6. David Ben-Gurion. My Talks with Arab Leaders. (Jerusalem: Ketter Books, 1972), pp. 121-141.
7. Ibid., p. 123.
8. Ibid., p. 124.
9. Ibid., p. 126. "Eretz Israel" means literally "land of Israel". In 1951 Mr. Begin recalled that he had always been taught it was regarded "since Biblical times as the motherland of the children of Israel. It has always comprised what came subsequently to be called Palestine on both sides of the River Jordan, i.e., not only the present State of Israel (8100 square miles) in Western Palestine (10,429 square miles), but also Transjordan (34,700 square miles), once the habitat of the Hebrew tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe Menasseh." Menachem Begin. The Revolt: Story of the Irgun (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951), p. 3. Note.
10. Monroe., p. 196.

11. Ben-Gurion, Talks., p. 128.
12. Ibid., p. 129.
13. Ibid., p. 131. See also: Ben-Gurion's Letters to Paula.
(Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg Press, 1972), p. 116.
14. Ben-Gurion. Talks., p. 133.
15. H. C. Armstrong. Lord of Arabia (London: Baker, 1934).
16. Ben-Gurion. Talks., p. 127.
17. Ibid., p. 134.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid., pp. 140-141.
20. Ibid., p. 137.
21. Ibid., p. 139.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid., p. 140.
24. Hurewitz. Struggle., p. 72.
25. Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, 1936-37, Command Paper
(Cmd) 5479.
26. Hurewitz. Struggle., p. 73.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p. 74.
29. Ibid., p. 76.
30. Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, July 1937, Command Paper
(Cmd) 5513.
31. Hurewitz. Struggle., p. 77.
32. United States Department of State, Foreign Relations of the
United States (Hereafter FRUS), 1937, II, p. 893.
33. Ibid., p. 901.

34. Ibid., p. 904. Hurewitz, Struggle, indicates the vote was 298-160.
35. Hurewitz. Struggle., p. 77.
36. Ibid., p. 78.
37. Ibid., p. 79.
38. FRUS, 1937, II, p. 905.
39. Ibid.
40. New York Times, July 14, 1937, p. 11.
41. Ibid.
42. The Contemporary Review, September 1937, Vol. 153, No. 861, p. 265.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., p. 266.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., p. 269.
47. Monroe., p. 214.
48. Ibid., p. 215.
49. Ibid., p. 143.
50. Foreign Affairs, October 1937, pp. 156-166.
51. Ibid., p. 161.
52. Ibid., p. 162.
53. Ibid., p. 164.
54. Ibid., p. 165.
55. Ibid., p. 166.
56. New York Times, January 16, 1938, p. 31.
57. Ibid.

58. ESCO Foundation for Palestine, Inc. Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab, and British Policies. New Haven, 1947, pp. 881-886.
59. Ibid., pp. 887-889.
60. FRUS, 1938, I, p. 994
61. FRUS, 1939, IV, p. 696.
62. H. St. John Philby, "King Ibn Saud Speaks At Last". Asia, December 1938, p. 718.
63. Monroe, p. 219.
64. Ibid.
65. ESCO, pp. 891-900.
66. J. C. Hurewitz. Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East. A Documentary Record: 1914-1956. New York, 1956, pp. 218-226.
67. Great Britain, Parliamentary Papers, Command Paper (Cmd) 5974. See also Elie Kedouri, In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Husayn Correspondence and its Interpretations 1941-1939., (London: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
68. Monroe, p. 220.
69. Ibid.
70. H. St. John Philby. Arabian Jubilee. (New York: John Day Co., 1953), p. 205.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid., p. 209.
73. Monroe, p. 221.
74. Philby. Jubilee, pp. 212-213.
75. Ibid.
76. Philby's papers, St. Anthony's College, Oxford. Box X,
File 3.
77. Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE

PHILBY, IBN SAUD AND PALESTINE, 1940-1945:

WHAT HAPPENED WITH PHILBY'S PLAN?

St. John Philby developed a plan to solve the Palestine problem and the Zionist leadership approved it. But, the problem was not resolved. The question which naturally comes to mind is: what happened to Philby's plan? The short answer is that it was buried in the rubble created by conflicting interest groups and personalities during the period 1940-1945. This chapter will provide a more comprehensive reconstruction of what happened.

Dr. Weizmann and the British

In October 1939, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, discussed the Palestine problem and a possible solution to it with Brenden Bracken, Parliamentary Private Secretary for Winston Churchill. At that time Mr. Churchill was First Lord of the Admiralty and Mr. Bracken was one of his closest aides. On 31 October 1939 Mr. Bracken wrote a memorandum to Mr. Churchill regarding his discussion with Dr. Weizmann. He stated "I have great sympathy with the Zionists, but I am completely ignorant about Palestine,"... however he then added that "Palestine could obviously flourish as a Jewish State." He asked Mr. Churchill:

"Have you ever considered the idea of subsidising the Arabs to leave Palestine? Hitler's scheme for decanting German minorities is not without merit. You will remember what Max told you about President Roosevelt's anxiety about finding a home for the persecuted Jews. I imagine he would very willingly foster and help to finance a scheme to provide an alternative (and incidentally better) home for the Palestinian Arabs. Palestine can then provide a home for several million Jews. Weizmann was very much attracted by this idea, and has discussed it with one of the leading Arab representatives. He has just told me that the Emir of Trans-Jordan* has stated that in return for a subsidy of 20 million pounds he will offer Arabs a much better home than they have ever had in Palestine.+

I know this is a daring, not to say mad, scheme but we live in such an ill-contrived world that it might well work."

+This subsidy will be provided by Americans.¹

[*my emphasis]

It is impossible to confirm (at this time) whether Mr. Bracken mistakenly referred to the Emir of Transjordan as the Arab Leader Dr. Weizmann talked to, or not. Also, we do not know if the reference to "Americans" paying the 20 million pounds meant Jewish Americans, American donations or the American Government. It is interesting to note that a man of his influence admits complete ignorance about Palestine and yet is confident of its potential as a Jewish State. Mr. Churchill's immediate response is not known, but, as it will be shown below, he discussed the matter with Dr. Weizmann at a later date.

Philby and Ibn Saud

St. John Philby returned to Saudi Arabia and so on 8 January

1940 presented to Ibn Saud the plan for solving the Palestine problem. Ibn Saud did not reject Philby's proposed solution. Philby recorded that the King told him:

that some such arrangement might be possible in appropriate future circumstances, that he would keep the matter in mind, that he would give me a definite answer at the appropriate time, that meanwhile I should not breathe a word about the matter to anyone - least of all to any Arab and, finally, that if the proposals became the subject of public discussion with any suggestion of his approving them he would have no hesitation whatsoever in denouncing me as having no authority to commit him in the matter.²

Ibn Saud had to look at Philby's plan from his position as the ruler of Saudi Arabia. He was the King/Imam of a newly created theocratic state which was politically, but not yet financially, independent. As protector of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina he also had to be mindful of the entire Moslem world's interests in Palestine, e.g., the Moslem inhabitants and the Islamic holy places. Ibn Saud had consistently demonstrated to the British a willingness to find a moderate solution in Palestine and was in fact opposed to the extremist actions of the Mufti of Jerusalem.³ Ibn Saud was also very concerned about the expansion of Hashimite power in the region. Of particular concern was the possibility that Syria might be joined with either Hasimite Kingdom of Transjordan or Iraq and thereby make a Hashimite ruler powerful enough to threaten the Hijaz or the Najd.⁴ This rivalry between the two Houses complicated all efforts among the Arabs in search of a solution for the Palestine problem. The outbreak of World War II in September of 1939 introduced another major impediment in the search for a solution.

Ibn Saud secretly notified the British on September 3, 1939

that, "he would never give any undertaking or take any secret or open action with any Moslem or (other) foreign government which might damage British interests or affect his relations with His Majesty's Government."⁵

By avoiding public declarations in favor of either side, Ibn Saud was able to protect his political and economic interests as well as those of the British. Saudi Arabia could not contribute any significant fighting force to oppose the Italian Fascists in Ethiopia or North Africa; but Ibn Saud could suppress anti-British agitation within his country and be a moderating influence in the Moslem world. The British were grateful and evaluated Ibn Saud's position as "benevolent neutrality;" "he hated Hitler as a disturber of the peace, and the Soviet regime as a menace to Islam."⁶ It is probable that Ibn Saud was also mindful of the prospect that the war would reduce the flow of pilgrims to Mecca and the export of oil, thus making his financial dependence on Britain more pronounced.

With the above factors in mind, Ibn Saud's reaction to Philby's proposal may be evaluated. Ibn Saud could gain a great deal from the implementation of such a plan. If the Jews were to be allotted the whole of Palestine west of the Jordan river and the Palestinian Arabs, under his suzerainty, transferred elsewhere at Jewish expense, Ibn Saud would have to control that 'elsewhere'. The envisioned 'elsewhere' was Transjordan and Iraq. His suzerainty could be established if the British withdrew their support from the Hashimites. In 1939 Ibn Saud told the British that their power was the only reason Hussein's heirs were rulers. He added that he had no expansionist ambitions toward Iraq, Transjordan or Syria. He believed that the

will of the people should prevail.⁷ It is, however, unlikely that he would have rejected suzerainty if the British offered it. He would then be in a position to grant independence if the people in the region did not want him as their ruler.⁸ In either case the Hashimites would be out of power.

The major difficulty with Philby's plan was that Ibn Saud would have to concede to the establishment of a Jewish State. As the Imam of an Islamic, fundamentalist, theocratic state, Ibn Saud would require an irrefutable rationale in order to gain the support of his Ulema. In 1938 he had already stated in an interview published by Philby: "that such action would not be consistent with my religion nor would it be to the interests of the situation in which I find myself."⁹

Ibn Saud's religious views would never change, but the situation was changing. In 1939 the British had issued their White Paper, but they were not very successful in stemming the flow of Jewish immigrants. By the end of that year nearly 30,000 Jews had entered Palestine.¹⁰ Axis propaganda spoke of British plans to establish a Zionist state in Palestine.¹¹ The British had previously demonstrated their commitment to the Zionist portion of the Balfour declaration, and the Zionists were still very adamant about their objectives.¹² If a Jewish state seemed inevitable, Philby's plan might represent the least disastrous solution. At least the Jews would be made to pay for the land and finance the displaced Arabs in new territory. The alternative would be war.

The King had thus far maintained a moderate policy toward Palestine in support of the British promises for a just solution. On 2 December

1939, Sir Reader Bullard, prior to his departure from Jeddah to his new post in Tehran, submitted his final report on Ibn Saud.

"On the whole he has shown himself a great ruler. No man who had not had a firm hold over himself as well as over his people could have steered the course in regard to Palestine which he has steered for the last two or three years. It is not that he is cynical: the depths of his personal feelings could not be doubted by anyone who had heard him repeat some of the Quranic texts about the Jews or seen him trying to suppress his tears at the wireless announcement of the hanging of an Arab for participation in the armed movement in Palestine; but he is not led away by his feelings but keeps his eyes fixed steadfastly on the main lines of the policy which he has adopted. I do not think that the possession of a certain greatness of mind can be denied him."¹³

Ibn Saud's reaction to Philby's proposal was totally consistent with the philosophy he professed in his earlier interview. The King maintained faith in the words of the poet:

"Wisdom consists of acting only when the consequences of your act you clearly ken."¹⁴
(*ken: to have sight of; discern)

Before the King would enter any situation he would always make sure that he also had an exit. If there was anything to Philby's proposal, all Ibn Saud had to do was wait for the Americans and the British to come forward with the proposal.

In March Philby asked him to commit himself regarding the proposition. Ibn Saud had not been approached by the British so he told Philby that he found it difficult to collaborate with him.¹⁵ There is evidence that in April 1940 Ibn Saud tested the British to determine whether or not they were thinking along the same lines as Philby represented them to be. He sent a message to the British

Foreign Minister concerning the growing problem of Palestinian refugees. He said that Nuri Pasha, the Prime Minister of Iraq, had approached him and wanted the neighboring Arab states to agree on some means of solving the problem. Ibn Saud wanted the British to know that:

"personally he would prefer to leave the matter entirely in the hands of His Majesty's Government and Palestine authorities whom it primarily concerned but as a friend he felt obliged to point out that these refugees formed a dangerous nucleus of anti-British feeling and as an Arab ruler he would probably be unable to disassociate himself from the action proposed by Iraq and Egypt."¹⁶

If the British government supported Philby's plan, Ibn Saud had just presented them with a prime opportunity to broach the subject. They did not. It seems that in 1940, only two members of the British government knew of Philby's plan: Brenden Bracken and Winston Churchill.

The British Foreign Office was, however, very much concerned with Philby. Stonehewer-Bird, the new British Minister in Jedda, clearly expressed his perception of Philby in his February 1940 report to London:

"Among the less desirable British Moslems who performed the pilgrimage this year must be classed Haji Abdullah Philby. His defeatist attitude, his criticism of His Majesty's Government for entering on "an unnecessary war which was ruining Arabia," the scorn which he poured on the British news service, his accusation that figures of British shipping losses were deliberately falsified disgusted the legation and the British community and drove the French Minister to protest to His Majesty's Minister and to send a strongly worded telegram to the French Government. Philby is unrepentant, he is ready to admit that if he were a

German acting in this manner in war-time he would long since have been shot, but he is an Englishman entitled to free speech. He is the only man who knows the truth and has the courage to tell it. His influence with Ibn Saud is in the opinion of this legation most negligible, the King's counsellors hate him, the average Arab dislikes and despises him for his apostasy, but His Majesty's Minister nevertheless shares his French colleagues view that it is highly improper if not actually dangerous for him to talk as he does in mixed company of Syrians, Indians, Iraqis, Egyptians and Americans. A full report comprising a selection of Mr. Philby's more offensive utterances has been furnished to the Foreign Office in London."¹⁷

Stonehewer-Bird reported Philby's "offensive utterances" to London on February 12, 1940. Subsequently numerous messages were exchanged between the Foreign Office, the India Office, the Middle East Intelligence Center, and the Ministers in Cairo. Khartoum and Jedda. The main focus of all the messages was what to do about Philby. To ask Ibn Saud to throw him out would imply a lack of faith in the King's judgement. Threaten him with suspension of his pension? No, there were insufficient grounds to do that. By June it was determined that the only thing that could be done was wait for him to return to England, and then hold his passport.¹⁸ To the British, Philby was a "political menace" whose presence was "a thorn in the flesh."

According to Hafez Wahba, Foreign Minister in Jedda, "the King liked Philby (he is certainly Ibn Saud's best publicity agent) but laughed at his opinions." Hafez told Philby that "the only affect of his disloyalty to England was to arouse suspicion in the minds of his listeners that his anti-British talk was a cloak for pro-British

activities."¹⁹ Philby probably added credence to such suspicions when in May he approached two of Ibn Saud's secretaries with his plan for Palestine in the guise of an "academic proposition." Philby expected some hostility but he also believed they would keep their discussions confidential.²⁰ One was a Syrian and the other was a Palestinian. Naturally Ibn Saud heard of Philby's talk and summoned him immediately. The King rebuked Philby for disregarding his warning and told him not to repeat the error. Ibn Saud was still not willing to commit himself on the plan and Philby was again told to wait.²¹ In June 1940, the King, desirous to make Philby's waiting pleasant, gave him a new house in Riyadh. Thus Philby would be away from the European community in Jedda and under the watchful eye of Ibn Saud. That may have been Ibn Saud's intent but Philby did not stay in Riyadh long.

In mid-June 1940, Philby decided that he wanted to leave Arabia and go to America. Why he wanted to go is an interesting but incomplete puzzle. Philby cabled Weizmann in Washington D.C. on February 2nd, that he was "progressing slowly."²² Weizmann was visiting America and tentatively broached Philby's plan to the State Department and had a "theoretical" discussion with President Roosevelt.²³ Returning to England in March Weizmann planned to make another trip to America in May, but that had to be indefinitely postponed due to the military situation.²⁴ In mid-April, Philby's wife, Dora, relayed a status report to Weizmann:

"Ibn Saud...still won't say yes and won't say no. The truth is that he himself is quite favorably inclined towards the proposal and is just thinking out how it can be worked without producing a howl of anger among certain Arab elements....Dr. W. can go on with his idea and work up the American side of the scheme but we may have to wait for a bit for a favorable opportunity of putting it into practice. Of course he (Ibn Saud) doesn't want to be accused of sacrificing Arab interests to his own ambitions...."25

But Weizmann was stuck in England and could not go to America. According to Philby, "It was entirely on my own initiative that I decided....to leave Arabia for America."²⁶ He gave the King the feeble excuse that he wanted to go because communications with his family were cut off. Ibn Saud directed his Minister in London to send weekly bulletins about Philby's family. Philby, however, insisted that he must go, disregarding the King's warning that he could not protect him outside Arabia.

Ibn Saud notified Stonehewer-Bird in Jeddah of Philby's intentions. He asked the British Minister to facilitate Philby's journey. The Minister's telegram to London on July 12, 1940, reported that:

"Philby was, the King thought, mentally deranged; he never ceased heaping curses and insults and scorn on the British Government. He had told Ibn Saud that he wished to travel to India and the United States of America for the purpose of conducting anti-British propaganda. Ibn Saud has given orders to the Saudi authorities to keep close watch on him pending his departure and to inform him that if he indulges in anti-British talk he will be imprisoned."²⁷

The tenor of the above text is extremely derogatory toward Philby. Did Philby actually tell Ibn Saud that he was going to America to defame the King's benefactor? That is unlikely. Was Ibn Saud's

Arabic misrepresented? Stonehewer-Bird certainly did not like Philby, but he had nothing to gain from such a report. Errors in translation between an Arab King and a British Minister had occurred before, but the meaning of this message was not dependent on one word.²⁸ The message makes sense if its intent was to stop Philby from getting to America. If Philby could not keep his plan to himself in Saudi Arabia, he would probably try to pursue it in America (even if that were not his main reason for going). Ibn Saud was a ruler who wanted to protect his interests. Regardless of his intentions, a tactless Philby loose in America might do Ibn Saud more harm than good.

Philby never made it to America. The British monitored his every move. That was not difficult for he had submitted his itinerary and request for visas to them.²⁹ He left Jeddah for Bahrain on July 17th. When he arrived on July 29th, his luggage was searched for possible evidence of anti-British propaganda. Nothing was found and Philby was amused by the incident.³⁰ Philby sailed for Karachi four days later. The British Political Agent in Bahrain telegraphed Philby's expected arrival date to the Secretary of State for India and included the observation: "His behaviour here was harmless."³¹ Intending to keep him harmless for as long as possible, the British arrested Philby upon his arrival in Karachi and then sent him to England on the next ship. His journey was a long and slow one around the Cape, with his ship docking in Liverpool in October 1940. Philby was imprisoned. The charge against him was for, "Activities prejudicial to the safety of the realm," a serious offense in a time of war.³² He appealed his detention to the Home Office Advisory

Committee (HOAC). The HOAC requested Philby's file from the Foreign Office in order to judge the case. Minutes attached to the Foreign Office documents comment that, "On no account should they have the file." However, Stonehewer-Bird's telegrams were released as evidence.³³ Philby had his hearing before the HOAC on February 4, 1941. The decision was that he was a "harmless fanatic," and that he should be released. He regained his freedom on March 18th.³⁴ The war and Philby's own activities eclipsed his Palestine plan-- at least for a while.

Saudi Arabia Within a Regional Context, 1941

Ibn Saud was also experiencing an eclipse in 1941 as a result of the war. His problems were mainly economic and political. Revenues from the pilgrimage were the poorest since 1924, and Saudi Arabia was near bankruptcy. Britain added £500,000 to the previously promised £400,000 and, additionally, minted 10 million Riyals (£450,000) which were presented to Ibn Saud.³⁵ The King asked the American oil company, California Arabian Standard Oil, to provide additional advances on future oil royalties. The oil company advanced \$7 million and recommended to President Roosevelt in May, that the American Government also advance funds to aid Saudi Arabia. America asked Great Britain to handle the loans to Saudi Arabia, using part of the \$425 million America had just loaned her.³⁶ Thus America provided indirect aid. British and American aid enabled Ibn Saud to keep his country from bankruptcy, however, there was a year-end deficit of £1 million.

In the political arena of early 1941, Ibn Saud was one of the few Arabs with confidence in an eventual British victory in the war.

His own counsellors doubted Britain's ability to defeat Germany, especially after the H.M.S. Hood was lost and Britain's control of the sea was in jeopardy.³⁷ German-Italian forces were succeeding in their advance toward Egypt; Iraq was under the pro-Axis leader Rashid Ali; and Syria was under Vichy French control. Why should the Arabs listen to Ibn Saud and support a loser--especially one which allowed Zionists to continue entering Palestine? Ibn Saud advised the Arabs to have faith in Britain, she would keep her promises.³⁸

Relations with Iraq and Transjordan were strained during the first months of 1941. Rashid Ali favored the Axis and the age-old border disputes regarding the Sammar tribes' territorial limits continued. Emir Abdullah tried to advise Ibn Saud on how to handle the Shereefian family which had plotted to overthrow his regime. The leader of the group was Sherif Abdul Hamid Ibn Ohn, a relative of Emir Abdullah.³⁹ Ibn Saud did not believe that Abdullah was implicated in the plot, only that he was too sympathetic with the guilty.⁴⁰ Relations with neighbors improved as the British proved Ibn Saud's forecast of victory to be correct. In May the British, with help from the Arab Legion in Transjordan, forced Rashid Ali out of Iraq (along with the Mufti of Jerusalem who had been there in exile) and reestablished pro-British Hashimite control.⁴¹ When the British sank the Bismarck, Ibn Saud had his counsellors stand and applaud the news.

Dr. Weizmann As an Advocate

Having depicted Ibn Saud in perspective and the British attitude toward Philby, the next personality which must be addressed is that

of Dr. Chaim Weizmann. While Ibn Saud counselled the Arabs to wait for the war to end before pursuing the Palestine question, the Jewish efforts to secure a homeland continued. For reasons unknown to this writer, Dr. Weizmann attempted in his autobiography to disassociate himself from Philby's plan while in fact he was, next to Philby, its greatest advocate. Dr. Weizmann's account, Trial and Error, (1949) bears little resemblance to the facts at hand. Philby, in Arabian Jubilee (1958), took issue with the Zionist leader's representation of the plan. He was very emotional in his appraisal of Dr. Weizmann and the other characters associated with the plan. Thus, the arguments of the plan's author are not sufficiently credible to stand alone. As Philby's plan and Dr. Weizmann's activities are further pursued, the latter's version will be compared with evidence derived from American State Department and British Foreign Office documents.

Dr. Weizmann visited Mr. Churchill at the British Admiralty Office on December 17, 1939, three days before the Jewish leader was to depart for the United States of America. They discussed the progress of the war, pending land legislation in Palestine, and Dr. Weizmann's post-war objective of a Jewish State with three to four million Jews. Churchill was "mindful" of the Jews and their problems, and agreed with the idea of building a Jewish State after the war.⁴² Dr. Weizmann did not indicate in his autobiography whether or not he discussed Philby's plan with Mr. Churchill. However, it should be recalled that Brenden Bracken had informed Winston Churchill (a month and a half earlier) of Dr. Weizmann's enthusiasm for the plan.

The Jewish leader's account of his first trip to America noted that the country was "violently neutral" and that "one had to be careful of one's utterances."⁴³ He met with President Roosevelt and "tried to sound him out on the likelihood of American interest in a new departure in Palestine, away from the White Paper, when the War was over."⁴⁴ According to Dr. Weizmann the President kept the discussion "theoretical" but friendly. State Department documents record a meeting Dr. Weizmann had with Mr. Wallace Murray, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, on February 6, 1940.⁴⁵ During this meeting the President of the World Zionist Organization expressed the view that the best solution to the Palestine question was the federation of Palestine and Trans-Jordan into one state with Jewish and Arab cantons generally along the lines of the 1937 partition scheme. The Negev, however, was to remain outside the cantonization plan for subsequent disposition. Dr. Weizmann indicated that after the War one million refugees would need to be settled in Palestine.⁴⁶ One fourth of the refugees would settle on the land and the remainder would become part of the urban population and develop industries. Mr. Murray asked why the Jews and Arabs were unable to reach an agreement. Dr. Weizmann's reply was that both the Jews and Arabs had to accept blame for the difficulties in Palestine. He also indicated that when Feisal died (1933) the Arabs were left without a single spokesman with whom he could negotiate. He then brought up Philby's plan, but with a major revision of the financial arrangements.

Referring to his meeting with Philby in 1939, Dr. Weizmann stated that he told Ibn Saud's friend that the only thing the Jews had to offer the Arabs was money. If Ibn Saud wanted a million

pounds - that was too little; if the King wanted fifteen or twenty million pounds - that was beyond hope of realization by the Jews. If the price were three to four million pounds, the Jews could raise the sum.⁴⁷ This presentation is not consistent with what Dr. Weizmann told the British. According to Brenden Bracken's memo to Churchill, Dr. Weizmann indicated that the sum was twenty million pounds; and that "Americans" were going to pay all of it. It would seem then that Dr. Weizmann envisioned Jewish-Americans contributing up to four million pounds and other Americans providing approximately sixteen million pounds (\$80,000,000). The Jewish leader ended his meeting with Mr. Murray by stating that he felt Ibn Saud was an Arab with whom he could deal. Consequently, he was anxious to hear from Philby regarding Ibn Saud's response.⁴⁸ As was mentioned above, the only response from Philby at this time was, "Progressing slowly." Dr. Weizmann recorded in his autobiography that his first visit to America was not a satisfactory one.⁴⁹ He was not discouraged though.

The Jewish leader made another three month visit to America in the spring of 1941. His purpose was to tone down the Zionist's anti-British propaganda rife in America.⁵⁰ The British government was very concerned about the potential reactions in the Arab world to the news that Americans were supporting the Zionist cause. The State Department told the British Ambassador that it was difficult to deal with the propaganda, for the American government could not inhibit free speech.⁵¹ State Department officials advised Dr. Weizmann's representatives that they should consider the possible ramifications if the Arabs turned against the British and forced them out of the area. It was assumed by the State Department that the Jews did not

want to lose the protective screen between themselves and the Arabs in Palestine before a settlement was reached.⁵² Dr. Weizmann worked to lessen the American Zionist's anxieties, but found it difficult to calm their emotional demands for a Jewish fighting force.⁵³ He continued his efforts to achieve the Zionist aspirations by maintaining contacts within both the American and British governments.

According to Dr. Weizmann, although Zionist aspirations were viewed sympathetically in the White House and at No. 10 Downing Street, the trouble he encountered always came from the Middle East experts in the State Department and Foreign Office.⁵⁴ His observation was valid. It is evident that, while aspects of the plan were considered positively, the bureaucrats reacted to the personalities involved, and their perceptions of their countries interests and therefore worked against it. This was the key factor in the demise of Philby's plan.

Very little is known of what transpired concerning Philby's plan during 1941. According to Philby, the British Prime Minister (Winston Churchill) was interested in the scheme and in November Dr. Weizmann was to see Anthony Eden (Secretary of State) on the subject.⁵⁵ The British Foreign Office file, pertaining to Philby in 1941, entitled, ... "Conversation at No. 10 Downing Street; his relation with Dr. Weizmann" is missing.⁵⁶ Philby's plan, although for the most part dormant in 1941, resurfaced at No. 10 Downing Street within a year of its author's release from confinement.

Dr. Weizmann's account indicates that on March 11 he was en-route to the airport for his departure to America, and stopped by No. 10 Downing Street to say good-bye to Churchill's private

secretary, Mr. John Martin. As Weizmann was about to leave, Mr. Martin decided to take the Jewish leader to see Mr. Churchill. The Prime Minister wished him luck on his trip and then, to the complete surprise of Dr. Weizmann, stated:

"I want you to know that I have a plan, which of course can only be carried into effect when the war is over. I would like to see Ibn Saud made Lord of the Middle East - the boss of the bosses - provided he settles with you. It will be up to you to get the best possible conditions. Of course we shall help you. Keep this confidential, but you might talk it over with Roosevelt when you get to America. There's nothing he and I cannot do if we set our minds on it."

The "monologue" rendered by Churchill "dazed" Dr. Weizmann to the extent that there was no discussion of the Prime Minister's plan and the Jewish leader departed.⁵⁷ Dr. Weizmann then recalled an incomprehensible "offer" he had received a few months before from Ibn Saud's confidant - St. John Philby. According to Dr. Weizmann, Philby said that Churchill and Roosevelt "should tell Ibn Saud that they wished to see your program through" and that they would "support his overlordship of the Arab countries and raise a loan for him to enable him to develop his territories."⁵⁸ This representation, if believed, would absolve Dr. Weizmann from any responsibility for the furtherance of Philby's plan or its failure. Churchill and Philby would be viewed as the advocates and not Dr. Weizmann.

When Dr. Weizmann left No. 10 Downing Street he wrote a memorandum on his meeting with Churchill. He gave it to an aide for safekeeping. In the event that his plane crashed the Jewish leadership would receive this very important memo. The biographers of Dr. Weizmann state that he went to No. 10 Downing Street to visit Brenden Bracken,

not Mr. Martin. It was Bracken who first represented Dr. Weizmann's interest in the plan back in 1939. The statement attributed to Mr. Churchill is basically the same as that given above, but it does not refer to Ibn Saud as "Boss of Bosses" or "Lord of the Middle East" - only "Lord of the Arab countries."⁵⁹ The latter version is probably the correct one. Mr. Churchill was too familiar with the "Middle East" to make such a statement.

Philby's rebuttal of Dr. Weizmann's account took issue with latter's incorrect representation of his departure date and that they had discussed his plan in October 1939 as well as in 1942. The significance of this is that Philby met with Dr. Weizmann at lunch on March 9th and on March 17th.⁶⁰ Philby did not publish what the two discussed at those lunches. It is unlikely, however, that the Jewish leader would not have discussed his meeting with Mr. Churchill. The New York Times recorded Dr. Weizmann's arrival in the United States, via a Pan American flight, on April 15, 1942.⁶¹

Upon arriving in America, Dr. Weizmann paid a brief visit to President Roosevelt, but did not discuss "Churchill's plan."⁶² His visit was not as a Jewish leader but as a scientist who was to develop synthetic rubber for the war effort. In May he took some time away from his scientific efforts and participated in an American Zionist's conference at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City. The conference adopted a resolution which embodied the Zionist's objectives. The "Biltmore Program" of May 11, 1942 expressed: a readiness for full cooperation with Palestine's Arab neighbors; rejection of the 1939 White Paper as immoral and illegal; a demand for a Jewish

military force; a desire to have the Jewish Agency control immigration and land development; and finally, the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth.⁶³ Dr. Weizmann spoke effectively at the conference and thereafter supported the resolution.⁶⁴ The program was ineffectively opposed by moderate Zionists and the anti-Zionist Rabbis.⁶⁵ With a firm resolution the American-Jewish community launched a major lobbying effort to gather support for their cause.⁶⁶

Dr. Weizmann approached Sumner Welles (Under Secretary of State) with "secret information" on December 4, 1942. He informed Mr. Welles that Mr. Churchill wanted to make Ibn Saud the "boss of bosses" in the Arab World (not Middle East) if the King was willing to work out a sane solution of the Palestine question with Dr. Weizmann. Mr. Churchill was also reported to have stated that President Roosevelt was in agreement with the plan. This is interesting in that Dr. Weizmann's earlier account of Mr. Churchill's statement to him failed to mention President Roosevelt's knowledge and support of the plan. Mr. Welles noted that he had never heard the President express such an opinion. Dr. Weizmann was anxious to establish a contact with the State Department to discuss the future of Palestine. Mr. Welles sent a memo on the meeting to Mr. Wallace Murray (Advisor on Political Relations) for his comment.⁶⁷

Mr. Murray's reply of December 17, 1942, focused on three points. The first addressed the fact that Ibn Saud was, due to his own efforts, already the master of the heart of the Arab world, and probably would not relish the idea of being made "boss of the bosses" by the British. There was little likelihood that he would consider trying to control even the "fertile crescent" of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon

and Palestine; let alone all of the "Arab World" (which would include North Africa). Conceivably he might consider an extension to include Transjordan. Ibn Saud was considered an unsurpassed Bedouin King, but not qualified to govern the more settled and developed town Arabs.

The second point related to the condition that Ibn Saud agree to Dr. Weizmann's "sane" solution. Ibn Saud, as the temporal leader of the Wahhabis, would not likely, "under the present circumstances" acquiesce to the Zionists "in their present state of mind." The "circumstances" Mr. Murray referred to were that the British had reversed the Axis tide and seemed to be maintaining their position on the 1939 White Paper. Why then should the Arabs give up any territory to the Zionists? The Zionist "Biltmore Program" was a maximalist position from which the Arabs could see no definite gain. Mr. Murray thought that talks might be undertaken if Dr. Weizmann could provide Ibn Saud assurances which renounced political Zionism and the idea of Jewish control over any large section of Arabs resulting from immigration. Furthermore, the Arab leaders from Iraq, Syria and Egypt would have to be involved unless Ibn Saud was to be imposed on the Arab world. The modus vivendi Mr. Murray preferred was that recommended by Dr. Magnes of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem: a bi-national state with an Arab majority.

Mr. Murray's final point was that the State Department had very reliable information, from competent observers (unnamed) in Saudi Arabia, indicating that Ibn Saud wanted to lessen his dependency on Great Britain (which controlled all of the territories around Saudi Arabia) and establish a closer relationship with America. America's

interests in Arabia were growing. Oil concessions and projected air route requirements for American civilian aviation were already significant subjects of discussion within the State Department. Mr. Murray concluded his memo with the observation that any effort to facilitate an understanding between the Zionists and Arab leaders should be a joint American-British one.⁶⁸

Philby would have certainly agreed with Mr. Murray's last observation, since that is what he proposed three years earlier. However, Dr. Weizmann had not presented Philby's plan, in its entirety, to Mr. Murray in their February 1940 meeting. In that meeting the Jewish leader focused only on the monetary aspect of Philby's plan with no mention of British or American government guarantees. It can only be surmised that Dr. Weizmann, at that time, considered America's neutrality and aversion toward involvement and therefore sought only that form of contribution which was palatable, money. By the end of 1942 America's perspective of the Middle East had changed, and the United States was beginning to become more involved in the region.

Arab and Zionist Attitudes

At this time the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were becoming concerned that American troops might be needed to help the British in the Near East since Rommel was pushing hard toward El Alamein. If American troops were to go they did not want the Arabs to be anti-American. President Roosevelt decided to send a military/economic mission into the region to assess the situation and to reinforce America's political contacts. The head of the mission was Lieutenant Colonel (Ltc.) Harold B. Hoskins. He was born in Beirut

of American missionary parents and spoke Arabic, French, German and Spanish. During the inter-war period he had been a cotton goods businessman in southern Europe and the Near East. He returned to service and worked for the State Department as Middle East specialist, while maintaining his position as Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of the American University of Beirut. After a period of polite negotiations with the British to obtain their agreement, Ltc. Hoskins departed in November, 1942 on what would be a three and a half month trip.⁶⁹

On January 23, 1943 Ltc. Hoskins sent Under Secretary Welles an interim report which expressed great concern about the high probability of renewed fighting between the Arabs and Jews. He expected the fighting to erupt within a few months unless positive steps were taken. His assessment was based on the hardening attitudes on both sides. The Zionist officials of the Jewish Agency were outspoken in their determination for a Jewish State, despite the opposition of the Arabs. The Zionists were confident that they had the support of public opinion in Great Britain and the United States; and they believed their increase in population and arms would enable them militarily to defeat the Palestinian Arabs. The Arabs feared that the Great Powers were going to hand over Palestine to the Jews. Nazi propaganda (in Arabic) constantly played on the Arab fears and suspicions. Ltc. Hoskins recommended that the United States and Britain make a joint settlement which would rule out in advance any allied military support for either Arab or Zionist extreme positions. Also, the American public should be informed of both sides of the situation by inviting Emir Abdullah and several Arab moderates from Palestine,

Syria, Lebanon, and Trans-Jordan, as well as Jewish moderates such as Dr. J. L. Magnes, to visit the United States. In effect he proposed that America offer its "good offices" to facilitate a moderate solution.⁷⁰

Under Secretary Welles responded to Ltc. Hoskins on January 28, stating that the latter's report was being given careful thought. "Our present feeling is that it would be inadvisable to bring groups of Arabs and Jews to this country for a discussion of the Palestine problem. However, the suggestion has been made that Ibn Saud be asked to designate one of his three eldest sons to come here for a visit." It was realized that the King might not consider it advisable to make the trip himself.⁷¹ Evidently Dr. Weizmann's discussions with Mr. Welles had their affect.

Dr. Weizmann and his Political Advisor, Mr. Moshe Shertok, met with Mr. Murray on 3 March 1943 to discuss the future of Palestine.⁷² As a preface to the meeting, Dr. Weizmann tried to deprecate the unfavorable remarks of certain Army officers who had spent too little time in Palestine to gain a true understanding of the situation, a veiled reference to Ltc. Hoskins who had just returned to Washington in February. Mr. Shertok spoke of the many contributions the Jews had already made in Palestine. He then suggested that, if large numbers of Jews were allowed to settle there, they could make use of the enormous potential for development. The result would be economically advantageous to both the United States and Britain. The Arabs were an underdeveloped people who would benefit from the Jewish enterprises in Palestine and the neighboring states. Palestine, according to Mr. Shertok, was "an Arab country no longer."

When Mr. Murray doubted that the Arabs would agree with that statement, Mr. Shertok acknowledged that there would be resistance but that it could be overcome if large numbers of Jews were admitted to Palestine as quickly as possible.

The discussion then turned to how the Jews envisioned their future relationship with the Arabs. Mr. Shertok stated that Ibn Saud was the most important Arab alive, one who might serve as the head of a Pan-Arab Union, but not as a ruler of an Arab empire. Obviously the Zionists would not want a unified Arab power surrounding Palestine. Mr. Shertok thought that a meeting between Dr. Weizmann or a Jewish delegation and Ibn Saud was not possible. But he did believe that a British or American representative could discuss matters with Ibn Saud without it being known to others. It was assumed that the King's reply would be negative, but a perceptive interviewer could judge the degree of his negative reaction and interpret its true meaning. When Mr. Murray addressed the negative attitude of Ibn Saud's letter to the President in 1938 (Appendix E) Mr. Weizmann remarked that Ibn Saud wrote it because "no Arab could afford to speak less loudly than the other."⁷³ They then resumed their discussion on the future of Palestine.

Dr. Weizmann declared that "Palestine will never again be an Arab country."⁷⁴ He stated that the United States had a moral responsibility toward Palestine. The Jews had spent money on Palestine and would bring moral pressure to bear on the government in order to create a Jewish Palestine. Those Jews who feared expulsion from America if a Jewish State was created were considered foolish and few in number. Thus the Zionist's aspirations were obvious. They

envisioned a Jewish State as an economic center of the region and Ibn Saud as the Arab leader of the neighboring states.

Ibn Saud indeed saw himself as the leader of the Arabs, but he was also the leader of the Moslems. Alexander C. Kirk, the American Minister to Egypt and Saudi Arabia, visited Ibn Saud in early April to discuss lend-lease matters, but as he was about to depart the King delayed him for a confidential meeting concerning Palestine and Syria. He said that Palestine was of more concern to him than to any other Arab leader - because Jews had been hostile to Arabs from the time of Prophet Mohammed, and he (Ibn Saud) as the leading Arab and Moslem had a special interest in Palestine. The Jews because of their wealth were encroaching on Arabs. If this continued there would be conflict which would disrupt the Allied war effort. He said that other Arabs had asked him to make public declarations on the Palestine issue, but he refrained for two reasons: 1) He had previously written the President and received his "neutral" reply (1938); 2) He did not want to create a problem for the United States and divert its attention from the war. If he wrote to the President and the reply was favorable to only one side Jewish or Arab, the other would cause trouble.

Ibn Saud demonstrated an acute sense of statesmanship in this observation. In effect, he primed President Roosevelt for a forthcoming letter. He then told Kirk that if it were not for these conditions he would be obligated to act. He was additionally concerned that during his silence America might respond favorably to one of the other Arab leaders' proposals and thereby cause him to be perceived as an uninterested bystander. Ibn Saud asked that the President indicate whether or not he agreed with his policy of silence. If so, the

King wanted an assurance that he would be informed in advance of any steps America took with other Arabs, so he could consider adjusting his policy. If not, the King had a plan of action in mind.⁷⁵ He did not say what his plan was, but it subsequently became evident that he considered launching a strong public information program to counter the near monopoly enjoyed by the Zionists.⁷⁶

The King also stressed that he had no territorial ambitions and only wanted Palestine and Syria to be independent "alongside Saudi Arabia and Iraq in a balanced comity of Arab states."⁷⁷ He was very concerned that the Pan-Arab proposals then circulating were designed to create a Hashimite bloc. In view of the traditional hostility between the Hashimites and the House of Saud, the King was hopeful that the Allies would not allow such a serious threat to Saudi Arabia to develop. He concluded his conversation with Mr. Kirk by stressing the confidentiality of his statements and asked that they be revealed to no one, not even the British. Mr. Kirk conveyed the King's message to the President and added a personal observation:

"...it is difficult if not impossible without incurring the criticisms of hyperbole or even emotionalisms, adequately to reflect the sincerity of the King and the profound conviction in the virtue of his own judgment. He is simple, honest and decisive and these qualities transcend the limited formula of his special experience. He believes that we are his friends and to him friendship bespeaks complete confidence. Compromise is inadmissible. He truly feels that his problems are ours and ours are his and in giving this message for the President, he confirmed throughout an absolute faith in the justice of the democracies and a conviction that the order which is to follow their victory will justify that faith."⁷⁸

Thus the King, through confidential channels, conveyed his personal

position on Palestine. On April 30, 1943, King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud dispatched a formal letter to President Roosevelt expressing his concern about Palestine and Zionist activities. But before the King's letter arrived, President Roosevelt received two reports from his personal representatives to the Middle East.

Brigadier General (BG) Patrick J. Hurley sent a report from Cairo to the President on May 5, 1943.⁷⁹ He stated that, as he saw it, the Zionist organization was committed to: 1) a Jewish State which embraced Palestine and probably Transjordan, 2) eventual transfer of the Arab population to Iraq, 3) Jewish economic leadership for the whole Middle East. The General recounted a discussion with Mr. Ben-Gurion, the Zionist leader in Palestine, whose argument was that "the Government of the United States is committed and obligated, repeat obligated, to establish a Jewish Political State in Palestine."⁸⁰ The "obligation" was derived from Scriptural promises, historical logic, and the investment of Jewish-American capital. Not all Jews shared the Zionist position but their true position was hard to assess because the Jewish Agency controlled their livelihood. On the Arab side BG Hurley reported little or no anti-Jewish sentiment but strong opposition to a Jewish State. Some of the hostility was toward the "chosen people" concept which was regarded as kindred to Nazi doctrine. Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, leader of the Arab Moslem majority in Palestine, indicated that the United States was perceived as the main supporter of the Zionists, and was forcing the British to acquiesce in the establishment of a Jewish State.⁸¹ This was considered as a British attempt to bolster their position with the Arabs. BG Hurley reported that the Arab proposal which received

majority support in the region was that of Nuri Pasha es-Said, Prime Minister of Iraq. The Iraqi plan would establish an Arab Federation "embracing Palestine, Transjordan, the Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and such other Arab states as might desire." The Jews and Christians would have autonomous rights in those districts where they constituted a majority.⁸²

Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, submitted Lt. Hoskins' report of his three and one half month survey of the Near East to President Roosevelt on May 7th; indicating that the report summary (Appendix H) warranted careful reading.⁸³ Lt. Hoskins depicted in Part I of his report: the growing tension between the Arabs and Jews; the potential for problems in North Africa for American troops; the need to inform the American people of the Arab view; and the assessment that only military force could impose a Zionist State on the Arabs. Part II noted the disunity in America with increasing anti-Semitism due to an inappropriate mixing of the two separate issues of humanitarian support for the persecuted Jews in Europe, and the Zionist's aspirations. Part III suggested that the Arabs would continue supporting the Allies if the United States assured them that no final decisions regarding Palestine would be made until after the war and then only after full consultation with both Arabs and Jews. Part IV outlined a post-war solution which would: not transfer Arabs or Jews into new territories; form a binational state (with the Jews allowed to immigrate until parity was reached) within a Levant Federation (Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Transjordan); place the Holy Places under United Nations control; and provide territory for a Jewish State in the virtually uninhabited (but cultivable) northern

Cirenaica in Libya. The President read the report and, as it will be seen, implemented some of its recommendations.

The State Department received Ibn Saud's letter of April 30th on May 25th (Appendix J). In it the King expressed his alarm that while the Allies were engaged in a War to defend freedom and liberty, the Zionists were misleading the American public in order to gain support for the eviction of Arabs and the installation of Jews in Palestine. He referred to his November 1938 letter in which he had provided an historical argument against the Jewish claim. The King assumed that the President since he had not commented on the facts presented, understood the Arab position and would so inform the American public. As for the Jewish refugee problem, the King suggested that it would be solved if each of the Allied countries accepted just ten percent of the number that Palestine had. His specific request was that "you should hlep to stop the flow of migration by finding a place for the Jews to live in other than Palestine, and by preventing completely the sale of lands to them." The King was sure that the President and the American people were fighting "to ensure to every people its freedom and to grant it its rights. For if--God forbid!--Jews were to be granted their desire, Palestine would forever remain a hotbed of troubles and disturbances as in the past."⁸⁴ Ibn Saud's letter must have arrived as a message from President Roosevelt was being dispatched by Cordell Hull on May 26th.

It is obvious that President Roosevelt considered Ibn Saud's earlier confidential message as well as the reports from BG Hurley and Ltc. Hoskins when he drafted his response (Appendix K). The King had asked if he should maintain his policy of silence on the

Arab issues. The President agreed that "continued silence with respect to such matters would prove most helpful..." But he also told the King that it would be highly desirable if the Arabs and Jews could reach an agreement on Palestine before the War was over. He provided the King the assurance that he asked for, and that Lt. Hoskins recommended, by stating "that no decision altering the basic situation in Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews."⁸⁵ After the President received Ibn Saud's letter he sent another message on June 19th (Appendix L), reiterating the one he had just sent. He added that he "noted carefully" the King's letter of November 1938 as well as the recent oral message relayed by Kirk and his letter of April 30th. The President did not restate his desire that Ibn Saud remain silent on Arab issues. The King had already had an interview in Riyadh with Life Editor Noel Busch on March 21st. The President's message of May 26th asking the King to maintain silence was not given to Amir Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs, until June 6th.⁸⁶

The King's interview appeared in the May 31, 1943 issue of Life (Appendix M). He expressed his opinion on the Palestine problem in basically the same way he had to President Roosevelt one month earlier, but more briefly. He knew of nothing that justified Jewish claims. Their claims created problems between the Moslems and the Allies and served no good. Europe and America were larger, more fertile, and more suited to the Jewish interests than Palestine. He believed that the native Jews in Palestine would be safeguarded if they caused no trouble and if they guaranteed, with Allied endorsements, that they would buy no more Arab property.⁸⁷

If there ever was a chance for Philby's plan to be the bridge between the Jews and Ibn Saud, the King, in that interview burned it. Why? If we assume Ibn Saud considered Philby's proposal in January 1940, how might he have viewed it in May of 1943? It had been over three years since Philby told the King that the British and American heads of state were going to make their offers. During that time the only things that the King knew for sure was that Philby had been arrested by the British; that the British still professed adherence to the 1939 White Paper and continued their financial aid to him; that American interests in oil were growing and that his royalties should increase after the War; that the Zionists were growing in strength; that other Arab leaders were proposing solutions which were detrimental to his vital interests; and lastly, his continued silence was detrimental to his standing in the Moslim world. Ibn Saud's statements in Life were obviously for public consumption in America and in the Muslim world. They seemed to reflect his sincere personal convictions. His statement gained him a great deal of moral and political prestige throughout the Moslem world.⁸⁸ There certainly was no longer any chance that he might support Philby's plan.

The King's statements did not however stop Dr. Weizmann or Philby from continuing their efforts to implement the latter's plan. Their continued efforts reveal Philby's naive and myopic view of the political factors involved; and Dr. Weizmann's manipulative methods in the pursuit of his objectives.

Philby met with Gladwyn Jebb, head of the British Foreign Office, post-war planning section, at lunch on June 8, 1943, and presented his scheme.⁸⁹ Philby proposed that the British and French withdraw

from the region and give the Jews dominion status in Palestine up to the Jordan. Ibn Saud could then establish an Arab State (bloodlessly) from Aleppo to Oman. The Jews would then finance a gradual evacuation of all the Arabs from Palestine to Ibn Saud's territory. Mr. Jebb expressed doubt about the Shi'a inhabitants of Iraq or the Imam of Yemen accepting such a move; to which Philby stated that Ibn Saud could manage it with very little fighting. In his memo, Mr. Jebb evaluated Philby's scheme as "chimerical, but I wonder if there are a lot of points in it which we might conceivably explore further?" The idea of using money to obtain British bases in a Jewish country and to establish Ibn Saud as an ally was attractive. The four other officials who minuted Mr. Jebb's memo disagreed. They were not willing to buy Palestine for the Jews by withdrawing from everywhere else, nor did they believe British interests would be protected by the Zionists. "We should find a purely Jewish State far more nationalistic and far less ready to give us what we want than any Arab State."⁹⁰

Dr. Weizmann, accompanied by Sumner Welles, met with President Roosevelt on June 11, 1943. According to Dr. Weizmann's memo to the British Foreign Office, the President began the discussion by stating that he had persuaded Mr. Churchill to agree to calling together a meeting of the Jews and Arabs and to attending that meeting with him.⁹¹ Dr. Weizmann remarked that such a meeting would end as the 1939 St. James Conference in London had unless the Arabs were told beforehand that the Democracies meant to affirm Jewish rights to Palestine. He believed that action was required before the war was over. The President decided to send Lt. Hoskins, rather than Philby, to Ibn Saud to determine whether or not the King would enter into discussions

with Dr. Weizmann or any other Jewish Agency representative.⁹² In accordance with the President's instructions, Mr. Churchill's concurrence was obtained before Ltc. Hoskins was sent on his mission.⁹³

Ltc. Hoskins went to Saudi Arabia in August, and for eight days had daily conversations (in Arabic and often alone) with the King. He first asked the King whether or not he would meet with Dr. Weizmann to discuss the Palestine problem. Ibn Saud declined to answer until he considered the matter. After a few days Ltc. Hoskins presented an alternative question: would the King, if he would not meet Dr. Weizmann, appoint a representative to meet outside the country with Dr. Weizmann or his representative? At the end of the week Ibn Saud refused both propositions. The refusal was based on religious and patriotic principles. The King could not speak for the people of Palestine without consultation, much less "deliver" Palestine to the Jews. Ibn Saud said he hated Dr. Weizmann because of an attempted bribe in 1940. Philby had conveyed the Zionist's bribe offer of £20 million sterling, which was to be guaranteed by President Roosevelt. Ltc. Hoskins report indicated that the King's attitudes toward the Jewish question in Palestine had not changed from that which he expressed in his letters of November 1938 and April 1943, and his Life interview. He concluded that Dr. Weizmann and Philby misinterpreted the King's silence regarding the plan. He did not believe Ibn Saud would ever help the Zionists in Palestine.⁹⁴

On September 27th Ltc. Hoskins briefed President Roosevelt on his visit with Ibn Saud. The President was surprised and irritated that his name was falsely given as guarantor of payment for a bribe.

He said that the only suggestion he ever made, that even bordered the subject, was in a talk with Dr. Steven Wise, an American Zionist leader, several years earlier, in which he had suggested that if the Jews wished more land in Palestine they might think of buying arable land outside of Palestine and financially assist the Palestinian Arabs to move there. Ltc. Hoskins emphasized "that the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine [could] only be imposed by force and [could] only be maintained by force." The President stated that his own thinking on a solution was leaning toward a Holy Land trusteeship with Jews, Christians, and Moslems responsible for it. Ltc. Hoskins believed such a plan might be agreed to by the Arabs if they were guaranteed that Palestine would never become a Jewish State.⁹⁵ The President sent Ltc. Hoskins to London to brief Mr. Churchill and the British Foreign Office on his mission to Saudi Arabia and to inform Dr. Weizmann of Ibn Saud's position regarding Palestine.⁹⁶

The British Foreign Office was pleased to note that the Roosevelt Administration: "1) now understand and wish to avoid the danger of encouraging the Zionists, and 2) are beginning to understand that it is a Moslem as well as an Arab issue..."⁹⁷ It is not known by this writer whether or not Ltc. Hoskins ever briefed Mr. Churchill.

While in London, Ltc. Hoskins met with Dr. Weizmann and told him that Ibn Saud referred to him "in the angriest and most contemptuous manner" because of his attempt to bribe the King. Also, it was Ltc. Hoskins contention that the King would never permit Philby "to cross the frontiers of his Kingdom."⁹⁸ Dr. Weizmann arranged to have Philby visit Ltc. Hoskins on November 15, 1943. Philby wrote a lengthy memorandum on this meeting and gave it to Dr. Weizmann.

What the latter did with the memorandum will be addressed below. According to Dr. Weizmann's autobiography "nothing came of the plan" after Ltc. Hoskins returned from seeing Ibn Saud.⁹⁹ That is a fact, as an end result, but it does not reflect his efforts to revive the plan.

Final Efforts of Dr. Weizmann and Philby

It seems that Dr. Weizmann had a tendency, when communicating with someone, to adjust his arrangement of facts according to his objectives at the time. On August 31st Dr. Weizmann visited Colonel Oliver Stanley, British Colonial Secretary, to check on various matters of interest to him regarding Palestine. When he referred to Ibn Saud's role he said that the Prime Minister (Churchill) had originated the idea of making Ibn Saud the leader among Arab rulers in return for a scheme for Palestine acceptable to the Jews. Afterwards, he met Philby who told him that £20,000,000 promised to Ibn Saud would result in a satisfactory solution.¹⁰⁰ One can surmise, from the above, that either Weizmann decided that it would be beneficial to his cause to have a British subject believe that his Prime Minister originated the plan, or Stanley misunderstood. To infer that the former is probably the case is made easier when one recalls a similar approach used when Dr. Weizmann first spoke to Sumner Welles and said that President Roosevelt favored the plan, and when one looks at what Dr. Weizmann did in conjunction with Philby's monograph.

On December 13, 1943 Dr. Weizmann sent a letter to Mr. Welles asking him to pursue Philby's scheme with the President (Appendix N).

It is evident in paragraph 2 that he first discussed the plan with Philby in 1939, not 1942 as he indicates in Trial and Error. Also in paragraph 2 he presents a partial truth when he states that the Jews would finance the re-settlement of Arabs in the form of "goods." Mr. Namier's memo (Appendix G) reveals that a major form of "goods" was to be in arms, as well as land development. It is easily understandable why such an omission occurred.¹⁰¹ In the first sentence of paragraph 5 he disclaims the assertion of a United States guarantee of money, but in the last sentence he contradicts himself by suggesting that Philby's scheme "be offered to Ibn Saud on behalf of the President and Mr. Churchill." Dr. Weizmann then referred Mr. Welles to Mr. Philby's comments which were enclosed. Philby's original note is at Appendix O. It has been annotated to reflect those portions not included in Dr. Weizmann's "extracts" and those portions that were revised. It can not be determined precisely who made the revisions, but it is obvious that the original note would not have enhanced Dr. Weizmann's position. The exclusion of Philby's tactless and barbed comments directed at the British and American Governments is understandable. However, the editing of Philby's note also eliminated the fact that Philby believed that the two governments had been fully aware of his plan since 1939. Also eliminated was the fact that Philby could not fathom why Hoskins was not aware of his plan. Philby was so naive and myopic toward his plan that he could not conceive of anyone else manipulating him or his plan for their own purposes. Philby's personal file copy did not indicate that subsequent revisions or deletions were made.¹⁰² Mr. Welles' response to this correspondence is unknown. President Roosevelt did subsequently arrange a personal

meeting with Ibn Saud, which will be discussed below.

Dr. Weizmann sent a copy of his letter to Mr. Welles to Sir George Gater, Colonial Office Permanent Under-Secretary, on December 20, 1943. It was then sent to the Foreign Office. The minutes attached to the letter and its "extract" enclosure clearly reveal the official reactions. "It is evidence of Philby's pigheadedness...", "Anyone who thinks Ibn Saud will look at this hair-brained scheme after what he has said about it, must be quite cracked. This [correspondence] does Mr. Weizmann no credit." Sir Maurice Peterson, Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs sent a copy of the letter to Sir Ronald Campbell, British Minister in the United States, on January 25, 1944. He stated that "Weizmann is still trying to press Philby's fantastic plan for Palestine, involving the buying of Ibn Saud's consent...", furthermore it "takes no account at all of British interests in the Arab countries, which are all to be sacrificed for the sake of the Zionists..." His concluding opinion was that nothing but harm would come from further efforts to press the plan, and he hoped Sir Ronald would express that view if he heard the subject raised.¹⁰³ The subject, minus Ibn Saud's role, was raised again, but not in America.

In Trial and Error, Dr. Weizmann records the fact that he continued to press his case, in 1943 and 1944, with the British Laborites. But when he addressed the April 1944 report of the Labor Party National Executive Committee he disavowed the measures they recommended in support of a Jewish National Home. The report read in part:

"Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land, and their settlement elsewhere be carefully organized and generously financed."

Dr. Weizmann wrote that he and his Labor Zionist friends were greatly concerned about the proposal. "We had never contemplated the removal of the Arabs...", the Laborites went far beyond his intentions.¹⁰⁴

It is obvious that, in advocating Philby's plan to the British and American Governments, Dr. Weizmann did envision the transfer of Arabs outside of Palestine to facilitate the development of a Jewish entity. We also know that the Zionists agreed to finance the transfer, either in land development or goods. The Labor Party recommendation did have two drawbacks if one looks at it negatively. It only "encouraged" the Arabs to move out, and it also called for generously financed re-settlement after the Arabs were compensated handsomely. The words "handsomely" and "generously" would naturally cause an "impoverished" Jewry concern if the Labor Party's proposal were accepted as official policy. The proposal was effectively opposed by both Jews and Arabs.¹⁰⁵ Thus the last semblance of Philby's plan came to an end.

In his book, Arabian Jubilee (1953), Philby lamented the demise of his plan, attributing its failure to the impact of Ltc. Hoskin's report on President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill.¹⁰⁶ His criticism of the two heads of state typifies his extreme manner:

"The full blame for the bloodshed and misery that preceded the final settlement rests fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the two men who could have solved the problem peacefully, if they had set their minds to it."

He believed that all they had to do was try it. Philby had told Ibn

Saud that the "plan" was to be proposed by the highest authorities in the world, and he need not commit himself until they approached him. Philby was bitter that the two heads of state did not "condescend to seek elucidation of its (the plans) details and prospects from its author "because of pride and prejudice. And because they were not willing to try the unorthodox, or submit the Palestine question to the International Court, they played "the orthodox political game of trying to get as much as possible for the Jews after the war without committing themselves to any quid pro quo for the Arabs." Philby did not consider the fact that Dr. Weizmann was the communicator of his "plan" to both President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill.

Ibn Saud and F. D. Roosevelt

Although Philby wrote his severely critical remarks about President Roosevelt in 1953, he failed to address the President's meeting with Ibn Saud in 1945. In November 1944 Ibn Saud sent word to President Roosevelt that he would like to see him.¹⁰⁷ As President Roosevelt was preparing to depart the Yalta Conference Stalin asked him if he were going to make any concessions to Ibn Saud. The President replied that he intended to review the entire Palestine question with the King. Their rendezvous was arranged to be aboard the U.S.S. Murphy, in the Great Bitter Lake in the Suez Canal, on February 14, 1945.

At one of the King's desert encampments enroute to Jedda (where he was to secretly board an American destroyer) Ibn Saud received an unexpected visitor, David Van Der Meulen, the Minister from the Netherlands. Van Der Meulen was not aware of the King's forthcoming meeting and was enroute to meet the King in Riyadh. He was fluent

in Arabic and attended the King's afternoon meeting of his Court (tribal leaders and Ulema) and noted the King's attitude toward the Yahud - the Jews.

"He reminded his listeners of their (the Jews) history, full as it was of rebellion against Allah. He pointed to the role they had played in world history where they had been harmful to nearly every nation in whose midst they had lived. The Yahud are our arch-enemies...."

But the King did not advocate a Hitlerite policy. In the world the King envisioned...

"Even the Yahudis would be treated like guests in Arab countries but on one condition: that they should behave like guests. Not like the Zionists in Palestine who were driving a small, weak Arab people away from the soil of their fathers and who dared to refer to that land as¹⁰⁸ the land of THEIR fathers, may they be cursed!

The King proceeded to quote from the Koran those texts which recounted the bitterness of Muhammed's conflict with the Jews in Medina. As he recited the Koran Ibn Saud was not only the King, he was the Imam.¹⁰⁹ The next day Ibn Saud, the King and Imam, departed Saudi Arabia to meet President Roosevelt.

The two leaders met on the top deck of the U.S.S. Murphy, and exchanged the appropriate greetings. They then proceeded to a private conference room. According to Colonel William A. Eddy, the interpreter, the only attendees during the political discussion were the President, Ibn Saud, Yusuf Yassin (the King's political secretary) and himself. The meeting lasted "at least five very intense hours."¹¹⁰ President Roosevelt told Ibn Saud that he had committed himself to finding a solution for the Jewish victims of the Nazi horror, and asked if the King had any suggestions. Ibn Saud replied: "Given them and their decedents the choicest lands and homes of the Germans who had

oppressed them."¹¹¹ The President related that the Jews did not want to stay in Germany, but wanted to settle in Palestine. He was counting on Arab hospitality and the King's help to solve the problem of Zionism. Ibn Saud's reply was that one should, "Make the enemy and oppressor pay; that is how we Arabs wage war. Amends should be made by the criminal, not by the innocent bystander."¹¹² The King's position on the refugees was that they should be distributed among the Allies according to each country's ability to support them. Palestine had already been assigned more than its quota. Colonel Eddy noted that at no time did Ibn Saud even hint at economic or financial aid for Saudi Arabia. The King, as an Arab guest, initiated no topics. The only thing he asked of the President was his friendship and support for Saudi Arabia's continued independence. If Philby's plan was to be discussed, it would have had to be raised by the President. Colonel Eddy's account made no mention of anything resembling Philby's plan.

The only other evidence available which provides any basis for assessing the President's meeting with Ibn Saud is in his subsequent conversation with his acting Secretary of State, Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. According to Mr. Stettinius, the President:

"told me that he must have a conference with congressional leaders and re-examine our entire policy on Palestine. He was now convinced, he added, that if nature took its course there would be bloodshed between the Arabs and Jews. Some formula, not yet discovered, would have to be evolved to prevent this warfare, he concluded."¹¹³

It is evident that Philby's plan was not considered to be a possible solution. Either the President discounted it beforehand and did not broach it or, if it was discussed it was not accepted.

Dr. Weizmann's resubmission of Philby's plan to President Roosevelt probably provided the President a basis for thinking that a negotiated settlement was still possible. If in 1943 there were no chance that the Arabs would allow further immigration, the President would have then had to reconsider his policies toward Palestine. But it is obvious that he still thought there was a possibility that Ibn Saud would help him with his Zionist problem. Once President Roosevelt met Ibn Saud he had to face the irrefutable facts. After learning what the true Arab position was first hand, he planned to re-examine his Palestine policy. But as we know, he died shortly thereafter and America's Palestine policy was not changed. Neither was the Arabs.

Chapter 3 Notes

1. P.R.O. Premier 4/51/9, 31 October 1939, pp. 1278-1279.
2. H. St. John Philby. Note on Interview with Colonel Hoskins, November 11, 1943. Philby Papers, St. Anthony's College, Oxford, (Hereafter listed as 'Note on Hoskins')
3. British Legation (Jedda) reports for the months of February through December 1939, F.O. 371/24588.
4. Sir R. Bullard. Report on British Foreign Office, October 29, 1939. F.O. 371/24588 E 7604/2624/483/77.
5. Sir R. Bullard. Report to British Foreign Office, September 19, 1939. F.O. 371/24588.
6. Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax. Jedda, July 18, 1940, F.O. 371/24588.
7. Bullard. Jedda report for October 29, 1939.
8. Ibid. Ibn Saud declared he would give up his Kingdom if the people so desired.
9. Philby, "King Ibn Saud Speaks at Last", Asia. New York, Vol. 38, 1938, pp. 717-718.
10. United States, Department of State. Foreign Relations of the United States (Hereafter FRUS)., 1940, Vol. III, pp. 832-836.
11. Ibid., pp. 850-852.
12. V. Jabotinsky. The Jewish War Front. (London: 1940). Contains the "Jewish War Demands" of: a Jewish army, a world-Jewish civil authority, and a seat on any future Peace Conference; the Jewish State; a covenant on civic equality. States that Palestine must inevitably include Transjordan in order to absorb the Jewish exodus.

13. Sir R. Bullard. Report to British Foreign Office. December 2, 1939. F.O. 371/24588 E 8086/2924/483/84. See also. Sir Reader Bullard, The Camels Must Go: An Autobiography. (London: Faber and Faber, 1961), pp. 200-206.
14. Philby. Asia.
15. Philby. Arabian Jubilee, (New York: John Day Co., 1953), p. 214.
16. Mr. Stonehewer-Bird to Viscount Halifax. Jemma Report for April 1940. F.O. 371/24588 E 1734/482/25.
17. Jemma message No. 26, March 4, 1940. F.O. 371/24588.
18. "Activities of Mr. Philby in Saudi Arabia." February 12 - June 14, 1940. F.O. 371/24589.
19. Ibid.
20. Philby. Note on Hoskins.
21. Ibid.
22. Elizabeth Monroe. Philby of Arabia. (London: Faber and Faber, 1973), p. 222.
23. FRUS. 1940, Vol. III, p. 340; and Chaim Weizmann. Trial and Error, an Autobiography, (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), p. 420. Reprint of London: Weizmann Foundation, 1949.
24. Philby. Arabian Jubilee, p. 214.
25. Monroe, pp. 222-223.
26. Philby. Note on Hoskins.
27. Stonehewer-Bird telegram to the Foreign Office. P.R.O.F.O. 371/24587 E 1963/710/25, message no. 146. July 12, 1940.

28. Elie Kedourie. In the Anglo-Arab Labyrinth: The McMahon-Hussein Correspondence. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976).

A comprehensive study of the perceptions and misperceptions of intentions and promises exchanged in English and Arabic during World War I.

29. Stonehewer-Bird telegram, July 12, 1940.

30. Monroe, p. 228.

31. P.R.O.F.O. 371/24587. P.Z. 4310, 3 August 1940.

32. Monroe, p. 229.

33. P.R.O.F.O. 371/27270 E 269/269/25.

34. Monroe, p. 230.

35. Summary of Events in Saudi Arabia During 1941. Arabia.

July 22, 1942. F.O. 371/27278 E 4326/4326/25.

36. F.R.U.S., 1941, Vol. III, pp. 624-651. A great deal of discussion occurred between the State Department, the Defense Department, the Federal Loan Administrator, the head of Lend-Lease and the White House. Arabian oil was not useable in the Navy's Fleet and America was not yet at war. Arabia was considered too far afield for America, it was within Britain's sphere of influence. By 1943 that would all change however.

37. F.O. 371/27278.

38. Ibid.

39. New York Times. December 30, 1940, p. 10:5. The Sheriff's death sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. His chief aide, El Abet el Dib, was executed.

40. F.O. 371/27278. Ibn Saud sent his son, Abdul Aziz Sudairi, to Amman to clear the air. Gifts and expressions of mutual regard were exchanged.

41. Lenczowski., pp. 273-275. A more detailed account is presented by George Kirk. Survey of International Affairs 1939-1946: The Middle East in the War. (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 56-78.

42. Dr. Chaim Weizmann. Trial and Error, An Autobiography. (New York: Schocken Books, 1966), Reprint of London: Weizmann Foundation, 1949, p. 419.

43. Ibid.

44. Ibid., p. 420.

45. F.R.U.S., 1940. Vol. III, pp. 836-840. Dr. Weizmann met with President Roosevelt two days later.

46. He had previously spoken with Mr. Churchill and envisioned three to four million Jewish refugees in the future state.

47. F.R.U.S., 1940. Vol. III, p. 840.

48. Ibid.

49. Weizmann, p. 420.

50. Ibid., p. 425. He stated that he was sent by the British Government.

51. F.R.U.S., 1941. Vol. III, p. 600.

52. Ibid., pp. 598-599. The State Department wanted to speak with Dr. Weizmann personally but he was ill and a representative was sent. He was 68 years old at the time.

53. Weizmann, p. 425. A Jewish brigade was finally formed in the fall of 1944 and it joined the Allies in Italy in March 1945. Lenczowski, p. 398.

54. Ibid.

55. Philby, p. 215. Mention is made in a 1943 Foreign Office minute that indicated Philby had mentioned his plan to the Prime Minister's Private Secretary in 1941. Precise names and dates were not mentioned. F.O. 371/40139 E 3327/506/65, June 8, 1943.

56. E 7295/53/65.

57. Weizmann, p. 427.

58. Ibid., p. 428.

59. Meyer W. Weisgal, Ed., Chaim Weizmann: A Biography by Several Hands. (New York: Atheneum, 1963), p. 261. The biographers did not cite a specific source for their quote. The editor's note indicates that the Weizmann Archives in Rehovoth provided much of the source material.

60. Philby, p. 215.

61. New York Times, April 15, 1942, 6:5. There are no indications that his trip was delayed in any way.

62. Weizmann, p. 428.

63. J. C. Hurewitz. Diplomacy in the Near and Middle East. A Documentary Record: 1914-1956, Vol. II. (New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1956), pp. 234-235.

64. Weisgal, p. 264.

65. J. C. Hurewitz. The Struggle for Palestine. (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), pp. 159-164. The efforts of Dr. Judah L. Magnes, the American-born President of the Hebrew University, are

most notable. His opposition group formed the Union (Ihud) Association in September 44 and worked for a bi-national state which was to be part of a regional Federation of States. Under his plan the Arabs would have majority control. See his article in the January 1943 issue of Foreign Affairs. A detailed presentation of pro and con Jewish reactions may be found in the Esco Foundation for Palestine publication. Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab, and British Policies. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), pp. 1078-1120.

66. Thomas A. Bryson. Seeds of Mideast Crisis. (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland Co., 1981), p. 69.
67. Ibid., pp. 550-551.
68. Ibid., pp. 553-556.
69. F.R.U.S., 1942. Vol. IV., pp. 24-36. America also dispatched an irrigation and agricultural mission headed by Mr. K. S. Twitchell who was in Saudi Arabia from May 10 to December 5, 1942. Ibid., pp. 567-567. During the same period overflight permission was granted and discussions on possible American Air Defense systems around the oil fields were conducted. Ibid., pp. 568-585. For an appreciation of the military activities as they related to political events see: Robert Goralski, World War II Almanac: 1931-1945. A Political and Military Record. (New York: Putnam, 1981).
70. F.R.U.S., 1943. Vol. IV., pp. 747-751.
71. Ibid., p. 751. Amir Faisal and Amir Khalid visited America in November 1943.
72. Ibid., pp. 757-763.
73. Ibid., p. 761.
74. Ibid., p. 762.

75. Ibid., pp. 768-771.

76. Ibid., pp. 788-789. The King considered publishing his 1938 letter to President Roosevelt; granting an interview with the Associated Press Correspondent, Clyde Farnsworth; and his subsequent April 1943 letter to the President seemed to be designed for public consumption also. Cordell Hull sent a polite message indicating that publishing the 1938 letter was not "well suited to American conditions." Ibid., p. 786.

77. Ibid., p. 770.

78. Ibid., p. 771.

79. Ibid., pp. 776-780. BG Hurley visited; French Morocco, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq and Syria.

80. Ibid., p. 778.

81. Ibid., p. 779. This attitude was the result of comments from Sir Ronald Storrs, former High Commissioner to Palestine, who told Auni Bey that His Majesty's Government was opposed to a Jewish State and maintained its adherence to the Balfour Declaration and the White Paper position on a Jewish National Home in Palestine but the United States was forcing the British to acquiesce. A rumor that was prevalent in Palestine related to a private conversation in Cairo where Churchill was allegedly to have said, "I am committed to the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine and the President will accept nothing less.", Ibid.

82. Ibid., p. 778. See also Hurewitz, Diplomacy, pp. 236-237.

83. Ibid., pp. 781-785. I have included Lt. Hoskins "Plan for Peace in the Near East" following his summary. It was obtained from Professor R. L. Greaves' copies of F.O. 371/34976 dated 20 March 1943.

84. F.R.U.S., 1943. Vol. IV., pp. 773-775.

35. Ibid., pp. 786-787.

86. Ibid., p. 788.

87. Noel Busch, "Life Visits Arabia," Life, May 31, 1943, pp. 76-77.

88. Report by Ltc. Hoskins. "King Ibn Saud - Man Not Myth," October 18, 1943, F.O. 371/34976, p. 4. Also F.R.U.S., 1943. Vol. IV, p. 809.

89. Mr. Jebb's memo of their meeting of 8 June, with attached minutes for 11-17 June 1943. F.O. 371/40139 E 3327/506/65.

90. Ibid. Two sets of initials are unreadable; the others were R.M.A. Hankey and C.W. Baxter; both were Foreign Office officials.

91. F.R.U.S., 1943. Vol. IV., pp. 792-794. Memorandum by Dr. Weizmann to British Foreign Office dated 12 June, which Ltc. Hoskins brought back from England in September, 1943. F.O. 371/35035 E 3648/87/31 dated June 24, 1943.

92. Ibid., p. 794. Dr. Weizmann's memo simply indicated that Hoskins was to "prepare the ground." Dr. Weizmann tried to block Hoskins selection and wanted Philby to go. See Weizmann letter to Welles at Appendix N and compare it with his memo.

93. Ibid., pp. 795-797. Contains Secretary of State (Hull's) correspondence with the British (12-29 June) and his instructions to Ltc. Hoskins (July 7). The British asked that Ltc. Hoskins make no suggestions involving territorial alterations and in no way prejudice the interests of other Arabs. His visit should also be as unobtrusive as possible.

94. Ibid., pp. 807-810.

95. Ibid., pp. 811-814. Memorandum of conversation by Ltc. Hoskins. The President's Holy Land trusteeship idea was pursued until it was realized that the Jews and Arabs would not reach an agreement on any solution. See memo by Merriam: Ibid., pp. 816-822 and George Kirk.

96. Ibid., p. 815.

97. F.O. 371/34976 E 7115/2551/65.

98. Weizmann, p. 432.

99. Ibid., p. 433.

100. Oliver Stanley memo on Dr. Weizmann's visit, August 31, 1943. F.O. 371/35038.

101. Paragraph 2 is also evidence that his meeting with Mr. Murray in 1940 was also an exercise in manipulation.

102. The extracts and revisions were determined by comparing Philby's copy from his personal papers and the enclosure entitled, "Extracts from a statement sent to me by Mr. St. John Philby, 17.11.43." attached to Dr. Weizmann's letter. F.O. 371/40139 E 206/206/31.

103. Ibid. The minuted comments were made by an officer of the North American Department whose signature is not discernable and by R. M. A. Hankey of the Foreign Office.

104. Weizmann, p. 436.

105. Kirk, p. 317.

106. Philby, pp. 216-217.

107. Thomas M. Campbell, ed., The Diaries of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. 1943-1946. (New York: New Viewpoints, 1975), p. 174.

108. David Van Der Meulen. The Wells of Ibn Saud. (New York: Praeger, 1957), p. 157.
109. Ibid., p. 158.
110. Colonel William A. Eddy, F.D.R. Meets Ibn Saud. (New York: Middle East House, 1954), p. 30. Eddy was the first U.S. Minister to Saudi Arabia. His is the only record of the political discussion.
111. Ibid., p. 34.
112. Ibid.
113. Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference. (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1949), p. 299. The underlined words are my emphasis.

CONCLUSION

St. John Philby's plan for a solution to the Palestine problem was accepted by the Zionist leadership because it supported their objectives. Ibn Saud did not reject the plan in 1940. By the end of 1943 the conflicting interests of the various groups and personalities were such that it became a moot point. It continued to be an issue only because of the persistence of the Zionists and its author. St. John Philby and his plan were used as a means to achieve an end. The two enabled the Zionists to maintain a hope for a negotiated solution and they provided the basis for this study.

Philby's plan did not lead to a peaceful solution. Rather, it probably contributed to the perpetuation of President Roosevelt's false perception that Ibn Saud would help him to achieve the Zionist's objective. There is nothing to be gained by trying to surmise "what if" President Roosevelt came to the realization that America should have reviewed its Palestine policy in 1943, rather than shortly before his death in 1945. The purpose here is to summarize the conflicting interests and perceptions which precluded the acceptance of Philby's plan.

One of the major contributing factors to the failure of Philby's plan was Philby himself. St. John Philby saw himself as the herald of a King whose greatness was not yet recognized by the Great Powers. His motivation seems to have been simply a desire for fame. His plan was designed to place his King in the uppermost leadership position in the Arab world - with Philby at his side. Ambition and anti-British hostility, coupled with a total lack of tact, precluded

the egocentric Arabist from being an effective mediator. The political interests of the Zionists were supported but the interests of the other parties concerned were not.

From an overall Arab perspective it was a negative plan. It would have established a Jewish State in a traditionally Arab land. A fundamentalist Wahhabi monarch was to be the overseer of the transfer of settled Mediterranean Sunni Muslims into either the predominately nomadic regions of Transjordan or into Iraq with its large percentage of Shiites. The establishment of a fixed price of £20,000,000 served as a simple cost figure for the Zionists but it did not readily represent a concern for the long term social and economic interests of the displaced Arabs.

The Zionist's objective was to establish a Jewish State in Palestine which would have economic influence in the region. Providing compensation for Arab land in Palestine in the form of land development work and Jewish goods would have served Jewish interests. Philby's plan was an additional means used to keep the hope for negotiation alive and the immigration door open. The Zionists were understandably concerned about the tragic plight of their co-religionists in Europe and desired a more secure future for them. Unfortunately the Arabs were not able to discern in the Zionist's actions a similar concern for their future.

Philby's plan also conflicted with the British interests. The British were not yet willing to relinquish their control over the region which protected their routes to India. Philby's personality also clashed with those of the professionals in the British Civil Service. His credentials were no longer valid and therefore any plan

he was associated with would have been viewed with apprehension.

American interests were not yet clearly defined and the population/electorate was generally ignorant of all the facts associated with the Palestine problem. Therefore the approach taken was to look for a negotiated settlement which met as many of the demands from all parties as possible. The assessments given by BG Hurley and Ltc. Hopkins were not heeded while the prospect for a negotiated settlement was still believed to exist.

Ibn Saud was a wise ruler who maintained a consistent set of priorities and a moderate approach to the Palestine problem. His first concern was for the interests of his Kingdom and its people. He therefore avoided actions which would endanger the economic security he enjoyed with the British, while he developed alternative sources of income (oil) which would allow him greater latitude in regional politics. His main regional interest was the blocking of any growth in Hashimite power. His approach to the Palestine problem reflected his personal sincerity in believing that the Great Powers would not impose an unjust solution. When in 1945 the Zionist's progress portended fulfillment of their objective he contacted .resident Roosevelt and personally conveyed the Arab side of the problem. His position was consistently presented in his letters of 1938 and 1943, and in his Life interview. He believed that: the Jewish historical claim was fallacious, the Balfour Declaration was unjust because the British had no right to give away Arab land, Moslems could not accept the Jewish religious claim - they too were decendants of Abraham, Palestine was too small to accept the world Jewry and the Allies should accept their share of refugees. Further, he believed that

Zionist propaganda kept the world ignorant of the facts. His wisdom kept him from being fanatical in his opposition and he chose the moderate approach. To lead his people against the world's most powerful military forces would not have served their interests.

Philby's plan was one of the many being put forward in the course of World War II. None of the plans overcame the irreconcilable differences between the Arabs and the Jews. The search for a solution to the Palestine problem was moved to the battlefield - with inconclusive results.

Appendix A: Proposed draft of Philby - Ben-Gurian Agreement,
May 26, 1937.

"We, the undersigned, are agreed on the following points:

- 1) During the Great War the British Government made certain promises to the Arabs in respect of the independence of all Arab territories and also promised to the Jews all necessary assistance in their efforts to establish a National Home in Palestine.
- 2) Logically these two sets of promises are incompatible with each other, and in practice they have resulted in the reduction of Palestine to the status of a British Colony peopled by two equally dissatisfied races.
- 3) The existing impasse, resulting from the rebellion of 1936, is unlikely to be resolved by the recommendations of the Royal Commission, whose terms of reference debarred it from considering the Palestine problem from all angles.
- 4) Nothing indeed but a freely negotiated agreement between Arabs and Jews can provide a satisfactory or permanent solution of the problem.
- 5) The alternatives before the Jews are: a) to look to the West for support in the accomplishment of their dream; or b) to recognize their affinities with Arabia. From a) they have little to hope for, while b) is acceptable to them provided they can be guaranteed the position they seek in Palestine.
- 6) The Arabs demand the abrogation of the Mandate and the withdrawal of the Balfour Declaration. The Jews would not oppose this demand in return for a suitable agreement with the Arabs.
- 7) Both parties equally object to any partition of Palestine (as has been suggested) into Jewish, Arab and British spheres. Indeed, the Jews desire, and the Arabs favour, the extension of Palestine to form a single independent state with Transjordan, without internal religious barriers.
- 8) The Jews demand the unrestricted right of immigration for all persons of Jewish race who desire to become citizens of Palestine. The Arabs, subject to the acceptance of the principles stated in 6 and 7 above, would (or should) agree to allow immigration to all intending citizens of the Greater Palestine, without distinction of race or creed, subject only to the absorptive capacity of the country.

- 9) a) The capacity of the country to accept the resulting influx of new citizens, greatly increased by the inclusion of Transjordan, would be determined by a mixed ad hoc permanent commission, subject to i) the Government, and ii) arbitration by the Permanent Court of International Justice, if necessary.
- b) The Commission envisaged above might consist of a League of Nations President, two Jews nominated by the Jewish Agency, and two Arabs, together with a representative of the Arab State or States guaranteeing the agreement.
- 10) a) The Jews would require guarantees for the faithful observance of any such agreement arrived at between them and the Arabs.
- b) Assuming the union of Palestine and Transjordan to form a single political unit under an indigenous Government, the guarantee would be given by that Government. This guarantee would be confirmed by the countersignature i) of the League of Nations, ii) of one or all of the other independent Arab States, who would in the first instance be specially responsible to enforce the local Government's guarantee--a Commission representing these Arab States might in fact be the special immigration commission envisaged in 9. In the last resort, the League of Nations would be responsible to intervene.
- c) A possible solution would be to place the Greater Palestine under the protection of Ibn Saud alone, as the most likely Power to be able to enforce the guarantee, in which case the League of Nations would have no actual responsibility in practice.
- d) The form of the future Government of the Greater Palestine would be for a plebiscite to determine, e.g., monarchy under Emir Abdullah or some other monarch, or republic with a periodically elected President.
- e) No Power, other than the various Arab States of the Peninsula, would be allowed any kind of preferential treatment, in the Greater Palestine--whether strategic, commercial or economic.
- 11) The Jews would, of course, be guaranteed complete freedom to lead their religious and cultural lives according to their own principles."

Appendix B: Letter of Ben-Gurion to H. St. John Philby, May 31, 1937.

"Personal

London
31st May, 1937.

H. St. John Philby, Esq., C.I.E.
18 Acol Street, N.W.

Dear Mr. Philby,

As promised when we met, I am sending you my own personal observations on your draft agreement.

It seems that we are agreed that the recommendations of the Royal Commission may be expected to satisfy neither Jews nor Arabs, and that a satisfactory and enduring solution can best be reached by a free agreement between Jews and Arabs. There is also no difference of opinion between us with regard to the partition scheme: we both feel that we have to oppose not only the partition rumoured to be contemplated by the Royal Commission, but also to try and make good the mistake made by the separation of Palestine from Transjordan, and to re-unite the two halves of Palestine into a single economic and political unit. We are also agreed that Jewish immigration should be regulated in accordance with the economic absorptive capacity of the country, and that a guarantee of the League of Nations is necessary to ensure the rights of Jewish immigration. We agree, too, that Palestine should be completely independent, so far, at least, as her internal affairs are concerned. Jews and Arabs should be free to arrange for their cultural and religious needs in their own way.

The central idea of our proposals is a free agreement between Jews and Arabs for a united Palestine. But I feel bound to point out that in your proposals the essential condition of such an agreement is missing. Your opposition to the probable findings of the Royal Commission is based - and here I agree with you - on the assumption that they will satisfy neither side; but if we want to reach any agreement between Jews and Arabs, this is impossible unless both parties obtain the satisfaction of their principal rights and claims. While your suggestion would, I think, give complete satisfaction to the Arabs - abolition of the Balfour Declaration, termination of the Mandate, independence of Palestine, it ignores completely the rights and claims of the Jews. You recognise in practice, it is true, the principle of immigration, but only in the form of general immigration; you do not discriminate against Jewish immigration, but you show no recognition of the fact that Jewish immigration to Palestine is as of right, and is a result of the Jewish people's rights in Palestine, and of their historical connection with Palestine. No agreement is conceivable which does not explicitly recognise the right of the Jewish people to establish themselves in Palestine. The Jews coming to Palestine do not regard themselves as immigrants: they are returning as of right to their own historic homeland. This right is limited only by the condition that the Palestine Arabs shall

not be displaced. We are fully ready to admit this limitation; but you will not find a single Jew who would consent to the abolition of the Mandate in favour of an agreement with the Arabs which contained no clear recognition of the right of the Jews to enter Palestine and re-establish there their National Home. We are not intruders in Palestine, and our right to immigrate cannot be regarded as only a part of the general right of immigration into the country by "all intending citizens."

Moreover, there is in fact no immigration problem for any of the Arab peoples. The territories held by independent and semi-independent Arab States would provide for a much larger population than they at present possess. Palestine is not, essentially, a country of immigration; before the war thousands of Arabs emigrated annually from it. Palestine is not capable of absorbing large additional immigration except through the methods adopted by the Jews, i.e., the expenditure of large sums of capital and much enterprise on the improvement of the soil, irrigation, the creation of new industries, etc. It is unreasonable to expect this expenditure of capital and energy to continue if it is to provide for an immigration from all over the world - Italian, Slav, Arab, Turkish - in which possibly a few Jews may be included.

Thus, without this basis of recognition of the Jewish right to enter Palestine, there can be no agreement. And it is not only an abstract recognition of the principle which is necessary, but practical and effective guarantees that our immigration will not be interfered with so long as it does not exceed the economic absorptive capacity of the country.

In my view, this can only be done by the regulation of Jewish immigration by the Jewish Agency itself, subject to the supervision of the Palestine Government, and to the submission of any disputes arising between the Agency and the Government to arbitration and decision by the League of Nations. It will be for the Government to see that Jewish immigration does not exceed the absorptive capacity of the country, but the final decision must rest with the League of Nations, either through a special representative for this purpose in Palestine, or through some other suitable means.

Your proposal in para. 9 would in practice hand over the control of immigration to the Arabs, more especially since the Government itself, particularly after the re-integration of Transjordan into Palestine, will consist, in the great majority, of Arabs.

Another problem which is of vital importance for us is the question of the constitutional regime in Palestine itself. At our first meeting, you expressed apprehension that the continuation of Jewish immigration would in a short time make Palestine into a Jewish State, since the Jews would, in 10 or 12 years, become a majority there. I quite understand this apprehension. The Arabs are entitled to be guaranteed against domination by the Jews. But the Jews are also entitled to be guaranteed against domination by the Arabs. In

my views, the only way to achieve these guarantees is the establishment of complete parity, as between Jews and Arabs, irrespective of their numbers, in all central organs of the Palestine Government. I hope that this agreement will not be necessary for ever, because I believe that the time will come when Arabs and Jews will work together in mutual confidence, and the lines of division will become other than radical ones. This consciousness of a common citizenship will develop gradually as a result of economic cooperation, but until it has developed, and until the present racial suspiciousness has disappeared, it is necessary to have some arrangement which will prevent either race from being dominated by the other.

It now remains for me to add a few secondary observations.

- (a) The statement in para. 1 of your memorandum is not wholly in agreement with the facts, so far as they are known to me. The promises made to the Arabs did not include the independence of all Arab territories. Palestine and part of Syria were expressly excluded. I also do not believe that the promises made to the Arabs were incompatible with the promise made to the Jews. On the other hand, the Mandate expressly recognizes the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine, and whatever may be our different views on this point, I think it is unnecessary to include these controversial questions, which have a mainly historical value, in an agreement of this kind.
- (b) I cannot subscribe to para. 3 as it stands, although I too believe that the Commission will not succeed in satisfying either party, though my reasons may perhaps not be the same as your own.
- (c) In the phrasing of para. 5 I think "Jewish dream" is hardly the right word. There are now in Palestine more than 400,000 Jews, and with our achievements in the country, and a population of this size, it is hardly possible to speak of Zionism as a "dream".
- (d) As regards para. 10, I would observe that, if and when the Mandate is abolished, it will be necessary to replace it not only by a guarantee from the Arab peoples, but also by a guarantee from the League of Nations. I do not place too high hopes in the latter institution, but so far, there is no better instrument or organised world opinion. The League of Nations includes among its members two Arab States.

Finally, I also doubt whether the complete exclusion of Gt. Britain from this agreement would be desirable or feasible. The Jews will certainly do nothing behind the back of Gt. Britain. Palestine should be independent; but in my view, a Jewish-Arab agreement is in practice impossible without the consent and approval of Gt. Britain. And such consent is hardly imaginable without due recognition of the vital interests of Gt. Britain in Palestine - of course without

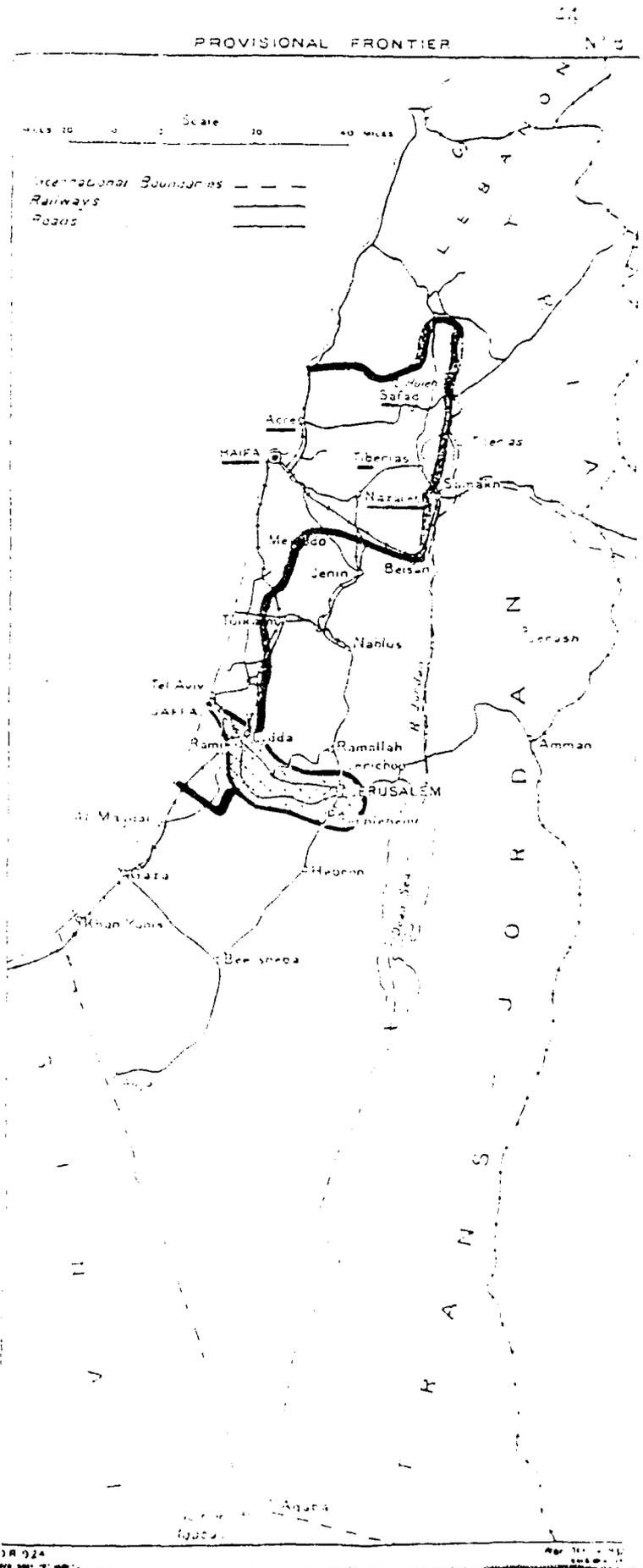
prejudice to the real independence of the Palestinian State.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

D.B.G."

Appendix C: Peel Commission Partition Plan



Source: Great Britain.
Parliamentary Papers.
Command (Cmd) 5479
Palestine Royal Commission Report, 1937.

Appendix D: Palestine Royal Commission (Peel) Report, Conclusion, 1937.

"1. "Half a loaf is better than no bread" is a peculiarly English proverb; and, considering the attitude which both the Arab and the Jewish representatives adopted in giving evidence before us, we think it improbable that either party will be satisfied at first sight with the proposals we have submitted for the adjustment of their rival claims. For Partition means that neither will get all it wants. It means that the Arabs must acquiesce in the exclusion from their sovereignty of a piece of territory, long occupied and once ruled by them. It means that the Jews must be content with less than the Land of Israel they once ruled and have hoped to rule again. But it seems to us possible that on reflection both parties will come to realize that the drawbacks of Partition are outweighed by its advantages. For, if it offers neither party all it wants, if offers each what it wants most, namely freedom and security.

2. The advantages to the Arabs of Partition on the lines we have proposed may be summarized as follows:--

- (i) They obtain their national independence and can cooperate on an equal footing with the Arabs of the neighbouring countries in the cause of Arab unity and progress.
- (ii) They are finally delivered from the fear of being "swamped" by the Jews and from the possibility of ultimate subjection to Jewish rule.
- (iii) In particular, the final limitation of the Jewish National Home within a fixed frontier and the enactment of a new Mandate for the protection of the Holy Places, solemnly guaranteed by the League of Nations, removes all anxiety lest the Holy Places should ever come under Jewish control.
- (iv) As a set-off to the loss of territory the Arabs regard as theirs, the Arab State will receive a subvention from the Jewish State. It will also, in view of the backwardness of Trans-Jordan, obtain a grant of £2,000,000 from the British Treasury; and, if an arrangement can be made for the exchange of land and population, a further grant will be made for the conversion, as far as may prove possible, of uncultivable land in the Arab State into productive land from which the cultivators and the State alike will profit.

3. The advantages of Partition to the Jews may be summarized as follows:--

- (i) Partition secures the establishment of the Jewish National Home and relieves it from the possibility of its being subjected in the future to Arab rule.

- (ii) Partition enables the Jews in the fullest sense to call their National Home their own: for it converts it into a Jewish State. Its citizens will be able to admit as many Jews into it as they themselves believe can be absorbed. They will attain the primary objective of Zionism--a Jewish nation, planted in Palestine, giving its nationals the same status in the world as other nations give theirs. They will cease at last to live a "minority life."

4. To both Arabs and the Jews Partition offers a prospect--and we see no such prospect in any other policy--of obtaining the inestimable boon of peace. It is surely worth some sacrifice on both sides if the quarrel which the Mandate started could be ended with its termination. It is not a natural or old-standing feud. An able Arab exponent of the Arab case told us that the Arabs throughout their history have not only been free from anti-Jewish sentiment but have also shown that the spirit of compromise is deeply rooted in their life. And he went on to express his sympathy with the fate of the Jews in Europe. "There is no decent-minded person," he said, "who would not want to do everything humanly possible to relieve the distress of those persons," provided that it was "not at the cost of inflicting a corresponding distress on another people." Considering what the possibility of finding a refuge in Palestine means to many thousands of suffering Jews, we cannot believe that the "distress" occasioned by Partition, great as it would be, is more than Arab generosity can bear. And in this, as in so much else connected with Palestine, it is not only the peoples of that country that have to be considered. The Jewish Problem is not the least of the many problems which are disturbing international relations at this critical time and obstructing the path to peace and prosperity. If the Arabs at some sacrifice could help to solve that problem, they would earn the gratitude not of the Jews alone but of all the Western World.

5. There was a time when Arab statesmen were willing to concede little Palestine to the Jews, provided that the rest of Arab Asia were free. That condition was not fulfilled then, but it is on the eve of fulfillment now. In less than three years' time all the wide Arab area outside Palestine between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean will be independent, and, if Partition is adopted, the greater part of Palestine will be independent too.

6. There is no need to stress the advantage to the British people of a settlement in Palestine. We are bound to honour to the utmost of our power the obligations we undertook in the exigencies of war towards the Arabs and the Jews. When those obligations were incorporated in the Mandate, we did not fully realize the difficulties of the task it laid on us. We have tried to overcome them, not always with success. They have steadily become greater till now they seem almost insuperable. Partition offers a possibility of finding a way through them, a possibility of obtaining a final solution of the problem which does justice to the rights and aspirations of both the Arabs and the Jews and discharges the obliga-

tions we undertook towards them twenty years ago to the fullest extent that is practicable in the circumstances of the present time.

7. Nor is it only the British people, nor only the nations which conferred the Mandate or approved it, who are troubled by what has happened and is happening in Palestine. Numberless men and women all over the world would feel a sense of deep relief if somehow an end could be put to strife and bloodshed in a thrice hallowed land.

ALL OF WHICH WE HUMBLY SUBMIT FOR YOUR
MAJESTY'S GRACIOUS CONSIDERATION

J. M. MARTIN,
Secretary.
22nd June, 1937.

PEEL.
HORACE RUMBOLD.
LAURIE HAMMOND.
Wm. MORRIS CARTER.
HAROLD MORRIS.
R. COUPLAND."

Appendix E: The King of Saudi Arabia (Abdul Es Saud) to President Roosevelt, November 29, 1938.

"Mr. President: We have been informed of what has been published regarding the position of the Government of the United States of America concerning support of the Jews in Palestine. In view of our confidence in your love of right and justice, and the attachment of the free American People to the fundamental democratic traditions based upon the maintenance of right and justice and succor for defeated peoples, and in view of the friendly relations existing between our Kingdom and the Government of the United States, we wish to draw your attention, Mr. President, to the cause of the Arabs in Palestine and their legitimate rights, and we have full confidence that our statement will make clear to you and the American People the just cause of the Arabs in those Holy Lands.

It has appeared to us from the account which has been published of the American position that the case of Palestine has been considered from a single point of view: the point of view of the Zionist Jews; and the Arab points of view have been neglected. We have observed as one of the effects of the widespread Jewish propaganda that the democratic American People has been grossly misled, and it has resulted in considering support for the Jews in crushing the Arabs in Palestine as an act of humanity. Although such an action is a wrong directed against a peaceful people dwelling in their country, they have not ceased to have confidence in the fairness of general democratic opinion in the world at large and in America particularly. I am confident that if the rights of the Arabs in Palestine were clear to you, Mr. President, and the the American People, you would give them full support.

The argument on which the Jews depend in their claims regarding Palestine is that they settled there for a time in the olden days and that they have wandered in various countries of the world, and that they wish to create a gathering-place for themselves in Palestine where they may live freely. And for their action they rely upon a promise they received from the British Government, namely: the Balfour Declaration.

As for the historical claim of the Jews, there is nothing to justify it, because Palestine was and has not ceased to be occupied by the Arabs through all the periods and progression of history, and its sovereign was their sovereign. If we except the interval when the Jews were established there, and a second period when the Roman Empire ruled there, the ruler of the Arabs has been the ruler of Palestine from the oldest times to our own day. The Arabs, through the entire course of their existence have been the keepers of the Holy Places, the magnifiers of their situation, the respecters of their sanctity, maintaining their affairs with all faithfulness and devotion. When the Ottoman Government extended over Palestine, Arab influence was dominant, and the Arabs never felt that the Turks were a colonizing power in their country, owing to:

1. The oneness of the religious bond;
2. The feeling of the Arabs that they were partners of the Turks in government;
3. The local administration of government being in the hands of the sons of the land itself.

From the foregoing it is seen that the Jewish claim of rights in Palestine in so far as it rests upon history has no reality, for if the Jews dwelt in Palestine for a certain period as possessors, surely the Arabs have dwelt there a far longer time, and it is impossible to consider the annexation of a country by a people as a natural right justifying their claim thereto. If this principle be now held in esteem, then it is the right of every people to reclaim the country it formerly occupied by force for a certain time. This would bring about astonishing changes in the map of the world, and would be irreconcilable with right, with justice, or with equity.

Now regarding the other claim of the Jews, they take unto themselves the sympathy of the world because they are scattered and persecuted in various countries, and they would like to find a place in which to take shelter in order to be safe from the injustice they encounter in many countries.

The important thing in this matter is to discriminate between the cause of Judaism and Islam [*anti-Semitism*] in the world, as contrasted with the cause of political Zionism. The intention was sympathy for scattered Jews. But Palestine is a small country. It has already received such a great number of them as to exceed comparison with any country in the world, taking account of the limited area of Palestine as compared with the lands of the earth where the Jews dwell. There is no power to remedy the straitness of Palestine in order to make room for all the Jews of the world, even supposing it were empty of its inhabitants, the Arabs (as Mr. Malcolm MacDonald said in a speech which he delivered recently in the British House of Commons). If the principle be accepted that the Jews now in Palestine are to remain there, then that little country has already performed a greater human justice than any other. You will see, Mr. President, that it is not just that the governments of the world--including the United States--have closed their doors against the immigration of the Jews and impose on Palestine, a small Arab country, the task of sustaining them.

But if we look at the matter from the standpoint of political Zionism this point of view resembles [*represents*] a wrong and unjust way. Its aim is to ruin a peaceable and tranquil people and to drive them from their country by various means, and to feed the political greed and personal ambition of a few Zionists. As to the reliance of the Jews upon the Balfour Declaration, surely that Declaration has brought the limit of oppression and iniquity to a peaceful and tranquil country. It was given by a government which at the time of the gift did not possess the right to impose it upon Palestine. Similarly, the opinion of the Arabs of Palestine was not taken in this regard nor with regard to the arrangement of the Mandate which

was imposed upon them, as has been made clear also by Malcolm MacDonald, British Minister of Colonies, and this in spite of promises given by the Allies, including America, that they would have the right of self-determination. It is important for us to mention that Balfour's promise was preceded by another promise from the British Government with the knowledge of the Allies regarding the rights of the Arabs in Palestine and in other Arab countries.

From this it will be clear to you, Mr. President, that the historical pretext of the Jews is unjust and it is impossible to consider it. Their plea from the standpoint of humanity has been fulfilled more by Palestine than by any other country, and Balfour's promise on which they depend is contrary to right and justice and inconsistent with the principle of self-determination. The ambition of the Zionists renders the Arabs in all countries apprehensive, and causes them to resist it.

The rights of the Arabs in Palestine do not admit of discussion because Palestine has been their country since the oldest times, and they did not leave it nor did others drive them out. Places flourished there, Arab in civilization, to an extent calling for admiration, for the reason that they were Arab in origin, in language, in situation, in culture; and of this there is no uncertainty or doubt. The history of the Arabs is full of just laws and useful works.

When the World War broke out, the Arabs sided with the Allies hoping to obtain their independence, and they were wholly confident that they would achieve it after the World War for the following reasons:

1. Because they participated in the War by action, and sacrificed their lives and property;
2. Because it was promised them by the British Government through notes exchanged between its representative at the time, Sir Henry McMahon, and the Sherif Hussein;
3. Because of your predecessor, the Great President Wilson who decided upon the participation of the United States of America in the War on the side of the Allies in support of high human principles, of which the most important was the right of self-determination;
4. Because the Allies declared in November 1919 [1918], following their occupation of the countries, that they entered them in order to free them and to give the people their liberty and independence.

Mr. President, if you will refer to the report submitted by the Commission of Investigation which your predecessor, President Wilson, sent to the Near East in 1919, you will find the demands which the Arabs in Palestine and Syria made when they were questioned as to what future they asked for themselves.

But unfortunately the Arabs found after the War that they were abandoned, and the assurances given did not materialize. Their lands have been divided and distributed unjustly. Artificial fron-

tiers resulted from these divisions which are not justified by the facts of geography, nationality, or religion. In addition to this, they found themselves facing a very great danger: the incursion upon them of the Zionists, who became the possessors of their best lands.

The Arabs protested strongly when they learned of the Balfour Declaration, and they protested against the organization of the Mandate. They announced their rejection and their non-acceptance from the first day. The stream of Jewish immigration from various countries to Palestine has caused the Arabs to fear for their lives and their destiny; consequently numerous outbreaks and disturbances in Palestine took place in 1920, 1921, and 1929, but the most important outbreak was that of 1936, and its fire has not ceased to blaze to this hour.

Mr. President, the Arabs of Palestine and behind them the rest of the Arabs--or rather, the rest of the Islamic World--demand their rights, and they defend their lands against those who intrude upon them and their territories. It is impossible to establish peace in Palestine unless the Arabs obtain their rights, and unless they are sure that their countries will not be given to an alien people whose principles, aims and customs differ from theirs in every way. Therefore we beseech and adjure you Mr. President, in the name of Justice and Freedom and help for weak peoples for which the noble American People is celebrated, to have the goodness to consider the cause of the Arabs in Palestine, and to support those who live in peace and quiet despite attack from these homeless groups from all parts of the world. For it is not just that the Jews be sent away from all the various countries of the world and that weak, conquered Palestine should, against its will, suffer this whole people. We do not doubt that the high principles to which the American People adhere, will cause them to yield to right and grant support for justice and fair play.

Written in our Palace at Ar Riad on the seventh day of the month of Shawal, in the year 1357 of the Hejira, corresponding to November 29, 1938, A.D."

ABDUL AZIZ ES SAUD

Appendix F: Philby's interview of Ibn Saud, December 1938.

"On Sunday, August 7, the Arab world was electrified by the broadcast announcement that the Secretary of State for the Colonies had paid a surprise visit by air to Jerusalem and had already departed on his return to England. During the bare twenty-four hours of his stay he had seen the sights of the Holy Land by air and by car, and had sat in conference with the High Commissioner, the General Officer commanding the troops in Palestine and other high officials. The dramatic appearance and disappearance of the *deus ex machina* portended good or evil--no one knew which.

A notice was issued by the Broadcasting Station at Ramallah that the High Commissioner would be on the air the next evening at eight o'clock. Arabia tuned in--every receiver in the country was listening in. The moment arrived. *Parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus*. Sir Harold MacMichael spoke--he sounded suitably emotional--for barely two minutes, and in those two minutes he delivered himself of platitude after platitude like a child repeating a lesson in class. At Riyadh the feeling was one of disappointment and of irritation that such an occasion had been used to repeat sentiments bordering on the burlesque.

I had had frequent opportunities of discussing Arab affairs in general and the present situation in particular with His Majesty King Ibn Saud, but His Majesty had in general evaded any statement of his sentiments for publication and I had refrained from any precise definition of his views and policy. I accordingly seized the opportunity of ascertaining something of his opinions with a view to publication--relying on my long-standing friendship with His Majesty and on his knowledge of my constant efforts in furthering Arab interests.

I began by explaining to His Majesty the sentiments I had heard expressed by various individuals and the trend of various articles I had read in the European and Arabic papers. I suggested the general astonishment of the public at the studied silence he had adopted in regard to the present situation and recent events in various Arab countries. His Majesty replied to all this in the following words: "I have considered that in present circumstances silence is the wisest course. In arriving at the conclusion I have put my trust in God and my reliance on the knowledge of all intelligent folk in Islam, and among the Arabs, of the deep sincerity of my religious and national convictions. That is one reason, and another is that I have not thought the circumstances suitable for the expression of my views.

"The present situation," I persisted, "demands an expression of your views so that the world may know them. Can your Majesty explain more clearly the reason of your silence and unwillingness to speak at the present time when every one concerned with the Arab cause is deeply concerned to know Your Majesty's opinion." I added: "Your Majesty is fully aware of your position in the Arab world and you

know also how the British government respects your sentiments and acknowledges your status in Islam and Arabia. As your friend, it would not be backward in according favorable consideration of your views if you explained matters and communicated your opinions to it. On the other hand, you see the Arabs and Islam greatly exercised by affairs in Palestine, while many of them regret and criticize your silence."

His Majesty replied: "There is no doubt indeed of the friendship of Great Britain. The policy we have adopted in our political discussions with Britain and other powers is to treat all our conversations as confidential until we have disposed of the difficulties under consideration. I am satisfied that I have never failed to offer advice when I believed that the advice I had to offer was in the mutual interests of the English and the Arabs. Now I have offered such advice in the clearest terms and expressed my opinions to Great Britain regarding the present situation and the consequences that may be expected from the present policy she is following."

"That," I interrupted, "is certainly praiseworthy, but what is more important is that the world should know your opinions and that you yourself should be informed as to the reaction of Great Britain to your advice and representations."

His Majesty replied: "There are three reasons which lead me to think that the time is not ripe for such a public utterance. Firstly, because England is the friend of the Arabs and of all nations the one most needful of conciliating the Arabs and according to them their rights in view of the need for protecting her own interests and communications. Secondly, because between England and the Arabs there exist covenants and agreements as everybody knows. And, thirdly, because the present state of affairs and its consequences are not concealed from Great Britain, while, if the British government is weighing the matter as it deserves to be weighed and is actively considering it, then there is still hope that it will reconsider its position and take action in a manner consonant with its own interests and the interests of its Muslim and Arab friends, thus returning to the more reasonable course. But, if Britain has other objectives in view, then it seems to me that the words are of no use whatever if she has made up her mind and has determined to pursue such a course."

After a request from me that he should express an opinion as regards the advisability of keeping at any rate the Arabs advised of his views, His Majesty pursued: "God be praised, the Arabs understand well enough where I stand. They know me as the champion of their faith and race, but of a truth I do not see much advantage in giving expression to my sentiments and advice under present conditions. I have no desire to speak more precisely on this subject. Nevertheless, in view of the subtlety of the problem and fearing that my words may be interpreted in a manner which does not represent my views, I will give you a partial answer to your question. My advice to the Arabs from the beginning of my reign--and you know the Arabs are naturally

intelligent as well as courageous and noble-minded--has been that they should be united both to defend their common interests and to give added weight to their status abroad. To this day, unfortunately, my hopes and wishes have in no way been realized. Most of the Arabs pursue their courses independently, though the aim and objective of all are identical. This plurality of ideas has certainly caused a setting-back of progress toward the desired goal. Talk without complete agreement and absolute confidence cannot produce the desired results. So when I saw this divergence of ideas I fell back upon myself and remained content to express my personal opinions only to those who referred to me or asked me my views on matters of concern to Arabia and Islam."

"I am given to understand," I said, "from the opinions I have heard expressed by Arabs and their chief leaders that Your Majesty's opinion is that which counts the highest in their view. I feel I am not far wrong in believing that they would in no way ignore your advice and guidance."

"That of course is true enough," replied His Majesty; "I myself do not doubt it for a moment, but all the same I have faith in the words of the poet,

'Wisdom consists of acting only when the consequences of your act you clearly ken.'

My instinctive nature is such that before entering upon any matter I always look round to make sure that there is an exit as well as an entrance."

I thanked His Majesty for his clear explanation of many matters regarding which I had been in the dark. I craved, however, his permission to put him a specific question regarding Palestine--namely, the Jews' justification of their position in that country. His Majesty replied that he preferred not to make any comment on that issue, but I insisted that England believed herself to have made promises to the Jews in the Balfour Declaration, just as she had also made promises to the Arabs. His Majesty laughed and was silent. "I do not wish," he said at last, "to answer you on that point." I insisted, "It is the point on which the English rely."

"Glory be to God," he said at last, "that did not appoint a distant mark for the marksman! The Balfour promise was indeed the greatest injustice of Great Britain. Is it possible to imagine a greater calamity than taking away the lands and dwellings of the Arabs forcibly and handing them over to others? Why does Europe criticize Germany and others for turning out the Jews from their countries in which they are a minority in German, or other, territory and not find fault with herself, Europe, for scheming to turn the Arabs out of their country in order that the Jews may dwell therein? Admitting the British promises to the Arabs and the British Covenant with them--after all they did not give the Arabs any new property, they did not give them anything more than their own lands, their dwellings and the dwellings of their fathers and forefathers before them. The Arabs have been domiciled in these territories, which they conquered from the Romans, for hundreds of years in unchallenged

proprietary right. So how can there be a question of comparing one set of promises with the other?"

"If this is then Your Majesty's opinion," I said, "Why do you not advise the English accordingly?"

"I can assure you," he replied, "that these matters are not hidden. England knows her own interests best. We have not failed to inform her of what is in our minds."

I asked His Majesty whether in his opinion the recent visit of the Colonial Secretary to Jerusalem portended any change or modification of policy. "I don't see anything strange in that," replied the King. "Why should he not visit a country for whose administration he is responsible, to see and satisfy himself about what is going on therein?"

I then asked His Majesty if he would tell me what would be his attitude if Great Britain decided in favor of partition and actually set up a Jewish State and invited him to accord recognition thereto. "The answer to that question," replied His Majesty, "is very simple and quite obvious. The Arabs are many, and Islam is multiple. Now, if the Arabs decline to recognize the Jewish State, then I would obviously be with them and of them. And, if they were united in agreeing to such recognition, then I would remain alone in my view. And everybody knows full well that such action would not be consistent with my religion nor would it be to the interests of the situation in which I find myself."

"One more question!" I pleaded as His Majesty showed signs of wishing to terminate the interview. "Can Your Majesty offer any suggestion for a solution of the Palestine problem?" And His Majesty answered: "I have already given you my views in the course of this talk. And, if there is anything new in what I have said from which the English and the Arabs may derive satisfaction, then the time for discussing it will arrive in due course."

The interview then terminated. So far as possible I have given the King's views in his own words. And I have his permission to make them public if I think they would be of interest to the world. The fact that His Majesty's views, already well known enough to the British government, have never yet been published gives added importance to the breaking of his studied silence at what is a supremely critical moment."

Appendix G: Memorandum by Professor L.B. Namier, October 6, 1939.

"On Friday, October 6th, 1939, Dr. Weizmann, Mr. Shertok, and myself lunched with Mr. Philby.

Mr. Philby's scheme for settling the Arab-Jewish problem was discussed on the previous lines, and in greater detail. Philby's idea was that Western Palestine should be handed over completely to the Jews, clear of Arab population except for a "Vatican City" in the old city of Jerusalem. In return, the Jews should try to secure for the Arabs national unity and independence as, according to him, was promised in the MacMahon-Hussein Correspondence; moreover, extensive financial help should be given to the Arabs by the Jews. Such unity could be achieved under Ibn Saud alone. Philby envisages in the first place the handing over to Saudi Arabia of Syria and various small states on the Red Sea. He and his friends seem to be haunted by the fear of further Turkish encroachments in Syria and possibly Mosul. He did not clearly define what the future relations should be of Ibn Saud to Transjordan and Iraq, but thought that if all Arab States were granted full independence, a proper settlement would be reached.

Dr. Weizmann clearly emphasized that while we could promise economic advantages which would merely depend on us ourselves, we could not give any valid promises in the political sphere where we had not the power "to deliver the goods"; moreover, that we could not do anything which might conflict with our loyalty towards Great Britain and France. Still there were three very important factors inherent in the situation, which would favour a real settlement:

1. British public opinion would certainly back a reasonable claim for a Jewish-Arab settlement, and even be prepared to make certain sacrifices to achieve it.
2. Very influential American support for such a settlement can be expected.
3. The world will be faced at the end of the war with a very serious Jewish problem - of Jewish populations being evacuated from East European countries; and the man who could supply a possible solution for this problem would have a considerable claim on the world for benefits in return.

Dr. Weizmann said that when in America he expected to see President Roosevelt and to gain his support for some big scheme of such a character. If Mr. Philby meantime gained Ibn Saud's assent and support for his ideas, he should send word to me through the Saudi Arabian Legation in London, and I would transmit the message to Dr. Weizmann in America.

Philby was quite frank about the financial difficulties of Ibn Saud, increased as they are by the stoppage of pilgrimages during the war. He suggested the sum of £20,000,000 for Ibn Saud in case the scheme was carried out in full. Shertok suggested that part at least of that sum should be used for development in connection with the transfer of the Palestine Arabs to other Arab countries; and I emphasised that such sums could not be expected in specie, but in goods; e.g. if Ibn Saud requires arms - and this was one of the main items talked of by Philby - we could, over a certain period of time, supply them from Jewish armament works in Palestine. Philby entirely agreed that such a subsidy would have to be distributed over a number of years, and paid, to a very large extent, in the form of goods.

After Weizmann and Shertok had left, I once more emphasised to Philby that while we were not in a position to make binding political promises about things not under our control, they and we alike had to put our faith in creating circumstances which would favour such a scheme; that in history it mattered most what it was "the stars worked for in their courses," and that any real settlement between the Jews and Arabs in the Near East making possible a settlement of the Jewish problem in Europe would start with quite exceptional advantages.

At the very end, Philby asked me, slightly embarrassed, and saying that he himself disliked such things, whether, if necessary, we would be prepared to give bribes to the Mufti and some people in Ibn Saud's _____ (illegible) so as to prevent a campaign against this proposed settlement. I said we too disliked bribing, but that if necessary we would supply the money provided we were sure that the recipients would do what they promised. I added that I did not know that the Mufti could be bribed. Philby laughed and said that the British Government had treated him in their own way. I agreed; they had left him the disposal of such great financial funds that at that time he did not need to take bribes.

Appendix H: Summary of Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Hoskins' Report
On The Near East.

"Part I gives the outstanding facts developed in the course of his three and one-half months' trip through the Near East and North Africa and may be summarized as follows:

(1) The most important and most serious fact is the danger that, unless definite steps are taken to prevent it, there may be a renewed outbreak of fighting between Arabs and Jews in Palestine before the end of the war and perhaps even during the next few months. Such fighting in Palestine is almost certain to lead to the massacre of Jews living in the neighboring states of Iraq and Syria as well as in other places in the Near East.

The tension is growing steadily and as a result the Arabs are likely to be goaded as their only effective means of protest into breaking the informal truce which has existed in Palestine since the outbreak of the war in 1939. The Arabs feel that the Zionists, by continuing a world-wide propoganda for a Jewish State in Palestine, have not kept their part of the bargain. There is therefore in the minds of the Arabs a growing fear that unless they do something, they will be faced, when the war is over, with a decision already taken by the Great Powers to turn Palestine over to the Jews. This fear is, of course, one on which Axis propoganda to this area has constantly and effectively harped.

(2) The Jews feel that with their increased numbers and with their increased stocks of arms they can more than hold their own in actual fighting with Palestinian Arabs. However, from previous experience the Jews realize that, whenever serious fighting with the Arabs starts in Palestine, assistance from neighboring Arab states will again pour in. It is this increased opposition that the Zionists admit they probably do not have the power to overcome without outside assistance from British or British and American military forces.

(3) There is an ever-present Arab fear of American support for political Zionism with its proposed Jewish State and Jewish Army in Palestine. This is now extending to the further fear of American support for the penetration of Jewish people into Syria and other neighboring Arab areas, once Palestine has been fully populated.

(4) There is also a growing Syrian fear of American support for, or at least acquiescence in, a continuation of French control in Syria after this war is over. The Syrians remember that, after the last war and despite an overwhelming preference for the United States and specific objection to France, the mandates for Syria and Lebanon were nevertheless given to France.

In fact, the fear that already haunts all of the Near East is that at the end of the present World War the United States may again return to isolationism. Even today this is the cause of such worry that reference is made to it in almost every conversation held with

private or official individuals.

(5) Tension and difficulties with the Arabs in North Africa have already been reported to the War Department by General Eisenhower. The unenthusiastic, and in some places uncooperative, attitude of the North African Arab populations reflects hostile propoganda that has claimed that American successes in North Africa would aid the Jewish cause in Palestine.

Obviously the security of American or United Nations troops in the Arab or Moslem world has not yet reached a critical stage. But the situation is definitely unhealthy. The experiences of British troops during their retreat in Burma are a grave and recent warning of the serious effects that a hostile, rather than friendly, native population can have on our military operations.

(6) Since Zionist propaganda in the United States is much greater than corresponding Arab pressure, it is important for the American people to realize that, in the Moslem world, Arab feelings remain uncompromisingly against the acceptance of a political Zionist State in Palestine.

It should be very clear to the American people, therefore, that only by military force can a Zionist State in Palestine be imposed upon the Arabs.

Part II notes some of the effects of the Arab-Jew conflict in Palestine on the United States.

Our domestic disunity is aggravated by dissension among American citizens of various foreign born groups and increasing conflicts among various Jewish groups, as well as increasing anti-Semitism.

An unfortunate effect for the Jews themselves has resulted from mixing together two problems that should be kept quite separate. Support for all-out aid to persecuted Jews in Europe, on which there can be no difference of opinion, should not be diminished by tying it up with the extremely controversial proposal to establish a Jewish political state in Palestine.

Part III suggests a specific step toward winning wartime support for our United Nations' cause of the 60 million Arabs in North Africa and the Near East.

(1) By the issuance now of a brief statement by the United Nations (or at least by the four major powers) giving assurances regarding the procedure that will be followed in arriving at a post-war settlement of Palestine. Such a statement need only restate as official policy of the United Nations, in regard to Palestine what the United States, Great Britain, and their Allies have already announced as their general policy in regard to territorial problems everywhere. This assurance can be very brief and need only consist of two points: (1) that no final decisions regarding Palestine will be

taken until after the war; (2) that any post-war decisions will be taken only after full consultation with both Arabs and Jews.

A statement along these lines issued as soon as possible would go far to relieve existing tension in the Near East and would, in the opinion of officials in that area, be the military equivalent of at least several extra divisions of troops.

Part IV outlines a post-war solution.

The existing population of one million Arabs and one-half million Jews in Palestine is not to be moved and is to form a bi-national state within a proposed Levant Federation. This independent Levant Federation would be formed by the re-uniting of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Trans-Jordan that, prior to their dismemberment after the last war, had for years been one natural economic and political unit. The Holy Places, including Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Bethlehem, are to be an enclave under United Nations' control. The cession of some specific territory other than Palestine for a Jewish State is proposed--possibly northern Cirenaica, which is now virtually uninhabited.

The Jewish refugee problem is met to the extent that, under the proposed plan, the Jews could put another half million in Palestine so as to reach parity with Arabs and up to a half million Jews in northern Cirenaica.

Appendix I: A Plan for Peace in the Near East, March 20, 1943.

"I. Dangers of Conflict before the End of War

As a result of my recent trip through the Near East, I have returned convinced that, unless definite steps are taken to prevent it, a renewed outbreak of fighting between Arabs and Jews in Palestine may occur before the end of the war and perhaps even during the next few months. Such fighting in Palestine is almost certain to lead to the massacre of Jews living in neighboring states such as Iraq and Syria as well as in other places in the Near and Middle East.

The outbreak of such internal conflict is obviously one of the major objectives of Nazi propoganda in this area and is aimed at precipitating Arab-Jewish fighting at a moment when combat troops can least readily be spared for putting down domestic insurrection.

A further sidelight on this Arab-Jewish problem developed during the course of my return to the United States via North Africa. In both the Eighth Army and the First Army I found American Army officers increasingly disturbed by the unenthusiastic and, in some places, hostile attitude on the part of the North African Arab populations to the United States. This attitude, they reported, reflected among other things the irritation of the Arabs at the behavior of the local Jewish populations as well as the effectiveness of hostile propoganda which continued to claim that United States' successes in North Africa would only give greater support to the Jewish claims in Palestine.

II. Background

It is hardly necessary to point out that the heart of the problem of the Near East centers in Palestine and the Jewish Zionist political aspiration for a Jewish Army and a Jewish State. Almost every question seems eventually to be determined, at least in part, by some reference to these Zionist claims. Furthermore, it is increasingly clear that the interest of Jews and Moslems in all parts of the world in the Palestine settlement is so large that it makes quite impossible any purely domestic or local solution that might otherwise be arrived at by the Arabs and Jews living in Palestine itself.

III. The United States and the Near East Problem

In view of the difficulties involved, the United States Government might well prefer not to meddle in the complicated problem of Palestine. However, our American effort at isolationism after the last war proved unsound and ineffectual and any further effort along these same lines is even less likely to succeed, if for no other reason than the tremendous wartime expansion of aviation and its obvious application to world-wide air transport after this war is over.

Another reason urged by some for a "hands off" policy by the United States Government in regard to the Near East is the claim that the Near East is far from the United States and not in an American "sphere of influence". Recent history has, however, increasingly indicated the unsoundness of the "sphere of influence" policy with its implication that the United States can afford to take no interest in certain parts of the world as if their mismanagement were not as likely in the long run to affect us as much as mismanagement in areas physically nearer the United States.

In addition, the United States in its domestic life is affected by the Zionist demand for a Jewish State in Palestine from two clearly defined angles. On the one hand there are five million Jews in this country who, along with the rest of the population, are being subjected to a steady stream of propoganda in favor of a Jewish Army and a Jewish State in Palestine. On the other hand there is the relatively inarticulate opposition of several hundred thousand American citizens of Syrian and Arab racial descent, as well as the considered opinion of the overwhelming majority of those Americans who have made a deep study of the Palestine problem and who feel that the Zionist solution is not a sound or correct one for this area. As far back as the report of the Crane-King Commission in 1919 there is the statement in their report that the Commissioners had reluctantly come to the conclusion that a Jewish State in Palestine was inadvisable, although they had "begun their study of Zionism with minds predisposed in its favor".

There is also the further fact that, for better or for worse, the United States is considered by many people all over the world as already deeply involved in the problem of Palestine. Although the State Department has taken no official position in the dispute as to the correct interpretation of the Balfour Declaration, the recurring petitions of members of both Houses of Congress have been interpreted both by Zionists and by Arabs as indicating clearly where American sympathies lie. Furthermore, every American statement in favor of Zionism has been widely broadcast by the Axis radio to support its main propoganda theme to the Arab World that a United Nations victory means for the Arabs the certain loss of Palestine to the Jews. The December 1942 petition supporting the Zionist position and signed by approximately two hundred Congressmen and Senators was widely broadcast and publicized throughout the Near East. It resulted in unprecedented demonstrations against the United States including the closing for several days of the bazaars in Damascus as a protest against the United States.

IV. Suggested Solution

From the above paragraphs it should, I believe, be clear that since the United States cannot wash its hands of this Near East problem, it had best contribute its influence to a sound solution.

A concrete plan for postwar peace in the Near East is offered below at least as a starting point for discussion and consideration.

It does not represent the opinion of any one group but is a composite of ideas and suggestions obtained by the writer from many varied sources during his three months' tour of the Near East between November 1942 and February 1943.

It must of course be borne in mind that any proposed solution does not start with a "tabula rasa," but must take into account the situation as it already exists. One primary fact, which any practical solution must assume, is the continuation in Palestine of the half million Jews and of the one million Arabs who are already there. The great majority of neither group wishes to be moved and can only by force be transferred elsewhere.

In the interests of brevity a knowledge of the basic facts is assumed and only conclusions, without the detailed reasoning back of each point, are therefore given:

(1) Reunion in a Levant Federation of the four existing states of Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Transjordan

Prior to the decisions of the Peace Conference in 1919 the territories of these four states formed one political and economic area. The efforts to split this area four ways have not been successful and have always been contrary to the basic interests of the people themselves. Since no single unit is large enough or economically capable of standing alone, these four areas must again be united in a full economic union; fundamentally this means at least no customs barriers and as many other joint government activities (such, for instance, as defense, currency and postal services) as can be agreed upon.

Politically, after almost 25 years of fragmentation there can and probably must be, at least to begin with, considerable local political autonomy for the various sections of the proposed federation, although Transjordan might be joined to existing Syria and thus reduce the number of political sections to three -- Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine. Suggestions on the practical details of such a federation have been worked out by several British officials long resident in this area, and a copy of one of these plans is attached as an annex to this report.

(2) Abolition of both French and British Mandates

In Syria and the Lebanon France has failed so completely and has lost so much prestige that she can only remain there by force. On the other hand, Britain has not been much more successful in Palestine where Arab-Jew conflicts have continued to break out at intervals and a large and expensive bureaucracy has been saddled on the country. It would not help the cause of the United Nations, not be fair to the people of these areas, nor in line with the promises

of the Atlantic Charter to transfer control of Syria and the Lebanon from France to Great Britain, or even to an Anglo-American control, were such a thing feasible.

(3) Complete independence for this area

The people of this area are as capable and perhaps more capable of self-government than some of the neighboring states that are already independent. Admittedly, independence will result in mistakes and mismanagement but from this experience in self-government, these peoples will learn better and more soundly than if they continue to be controlled in most of their activities by foreign powers. Furthermore, independence has been promised to them by France and Britain and these promises should be lived up to.

(4) Foreign Technical Assistance Only as Requested and Paid for by the Arab States Themselves

To the extent that any foreign technical assistance is given, this should come through whatever form of postwar organization is set up by the United Nations. Such technical assistants should not serve as watchdogs for the interests of the foreign power that urges their appointment, but they should be employed and paid by the local state and be responsible only to it, along the lines already adopted for the employment of Americans in Iran.

(5) Freedom for an Eventual Federation of Arab States If Desired

After the Levant Federation has been formed and the choice left to the people of that area both as to the extent of political federation and the form of government -- whether a monarchy or a republic -- then, and perhaps not even then, such a federated state might decide on economic and political collaboration with neighboring Arab states such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. It should be clear from the start that if any of these states eventually found it to their advantage to join or form such a federation of Arab states, they should be free to do so, even though the immediate prospects for the formation of such a federation may not appear very bright.

(6) External Boundaries to Remain as They Are

Fortunately no serious boundary disputes exist in this Near East area and no external boundary changes need be contemplated unless, perhaps, Turkey were willing to cede back to Syria the small but purely Arab area in the Hatay south of the Amanus Range, which includes the ancient city of Antioch. Such a cession would still leave Turkey the Amanus Range as a sound strategic frontier and give back to Syria an area racially and economically Arab.

Internal boundaries between Lebanon and Syria might also, at least to begin with, be left as they are. Greater Lebanon contains almost 50 percent Moslems, but this may prove an advantage rather than otherwise, since as a result there will be little likelihood of persecution of minorities. Furthermore, with the economic union that must be developed, the question of internal boundaries, where no customs barriers exist, becomes much less important.

(7) Palestine, a Bi-National State within the Levant Federation

The question of Palestine is, of course, the most difficult and the most controversial feature of this whole problem but is one the solution of which must be frankly and firmly undertaken. In order to clear away existing uncertainty, a statement by the United Nations should be issued as promptly as possible, stating that Palestine is not to become either a purely Arab or a purely Jewish state but a bi-national state to which Jews may migrate up to but not to exceed parity in numbers with the Arabs. Were such a policy to be established it would allow for the further settlement in Palestine of approximately half a million Jews. Any migrations of Jews into Lebanon, Syria or Transjordan should be subject to the consent of the people of those areas. Such a solution for Palestine will, of course, not have the support of either the extremist Arabs or the extremist Jews but can be justified as a necessary compromise to prevent Palestine remaining a festering sore capable of continuing to infect not only the Near East, but virtually all of the Moslem world from Casablanca to Calcutta.

(8) The Holy Places, including Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jaffa to be an Enclave under United Nations' Control

In the conflict between the Arab Moslems and the Jews, the even stronger numerical claim of the Christian peoples of the world to share in the administration of Jerusalem and the Holy Places has tended to be overlooked. Furthermore, there is good reason to believe that the Vatican with its world-wide influence will not favor any settlement that allots Jerusalem exclusively to either the Moslems or the Jews. An international administration for an enclave containing Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Jaffa under the United Nations will more nearly solve this long-standing problem since it will assure free access to Holy Places and particularly Jerusalem to the believers of all three great religions.

(9) The Proposed Settlement to Include an Offer of a Cession of Territory -- Possibly Northern Cyrenaica -- For a Jewish State

As part of a further effort to assist the Jews driven

from their homes in Europe and to satisfy the demands of that Jewish minority that favors the formation of a Jewish Army and a Jewish State, the United Nations should offer a definite piece of territory to the Jews in which a Jewish State may be formed. This offer might consist of the renewal of the previous British offer of land in Uganda or perhaps in some part of South America. There might at the same time be considered the possibility of ceding to such a proposed Jewish State the Jebel Achdar area of Northern Cyrenaica. Any area chosen will have difficulties, drawbacks and disadvantages, but, I believe, the Jebel Achdar more nearly fits all requirements, with less drawbacks, than any other area one can suggest. Its location in relation to Europe, its soil and climate so similar in many respects to Palestine and, most important of all, its present virtually uninhabited condition, make it worth careful consideration. The Italian colonists previously installed are gone but have left behind them farm lands and cleared areas that can almost immediately begin to support many thousands of Jews. Eventually this region might again support a half million inhabitants that history indicates at one time lived there. The question of the rights and claims of the Senussi to reacquire this norther portion of Cyrenaica would need to be studied and fairly met; however, even under the plan suggested, three-fourths of Cyrenaica would in any case remain to the Senussi. As nomadic people whom the Italians drove from the Jebel Achdar area, the claims of the Senussi to consideration might if necessary be more readily met elsewhere or definite minority rights in this area might be granted them by agreement with the proposed Jewish State. In any case, the total number of Senussi involved is far smaller (estimated at less than 200,000) than that of the million Arabs already inhabiting Palestine.

(10) Suggestion that Group of Arab Leaders and Moderate Jewish Leaders Meet in U.S. to Discuss and Attempt to Arrive at a Settlement of Palestine Problem

As a practical first step in an endeavor to have the Arab as well as the Zionist position presented to the American people, it is suggested that the Emir Abdullah of Transjordan and five or six moderate-minded Arab representatives from Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Transjordan be allowed to visit the United States, following the precedents set by the visits of George of Greece and Peter of Yugoslavia. Such a group could contain Christian as well as Moslem members.

At the same time certain moderate Jewish leaders from Palestine who recognize the necessity of arriving at a peaceful solution with the Arabs might also be allowed to visit the United States. This group should include among others Dr. Judah L. Magnes, President of the Hebrew

University in Jerusalem, who, in the January 1943 issue of Foreign Affairs, outlined a middle of the road program for a possible Arab-Jew settlement. While in the less heated atmosphere of this country, these two groups, together with representatives of various Christian Church groups, might be urged to meet and attempt to arrive at a settlement of the age-long conflicts over Palestine.

V. Proposed Solution and the Domestic Situation in the U.S.

Obviously in wartime every effort should be made not to stir up in the United States any unnecessary racial or religious issues. On the other hand certain problems must be faced even during the war in those instances where, on balance, their postponement would appear to be even more damaging than their consideration. Palestine is a case in point since failure to take any positive steps will unfavorably affect:

(1) The success of our war effort.

As already mentioned, our United Nations military efforts are being handicapped by a lack of support on the part of Moslem Arabs populations both in North Africa and throughout the Near East as well.

(2) Our domestic unity.

In the United States there is the importance of keeping the sympathy of the whole American Nation for the suffering of the Jews in Europe from being diminished by tying up this problem, on which there can be no difference of opinion, with the extremely controversial one in regard to the establishment of a Jewish political state in Palestine. These are two very different issues and should be kept apart since in mixing them there is the obvious danger that anti-Semitism in the United States will thereby be increased. If a small but vociferous minority of American Jews continues to agitate for a Jewish State in Palestine it will undoubtedly add fuel to anti-Semitic charges already rife that the primary loyalty of American Jews is to political Zionism, not to the United States.

There is the further important objective of bringing this whole question into the open and of allowing American Jews a free choice of the policy and the position which they individually may wish to adopt. At present this does not appear to be the case. Those American Jews that are political Zionists will be offered a chance to support a Jewish Army and a Jewish State and should be urged to migrate to Cyrenaica or whatever specific territory is offered to them. Those whose primary interest lies in spiritual Zionism can, if they wish, emigrate to Palestine or can assist the Jews already there to become good citizens of that country. At

the same time those American Jews who, while remaining Jews in religion, prefer to reside in the United States should, like any other American citizens, be allowed to do so. Furthermore in making this decision they should not be subjected to pressure with the implication that they are virtually forswearing their faith if they do not choose actively to support either political or spiritual Zionism.

(3) The prospect of post-war peace.

Under existing conditions, indefinite postponement of action will, at best, only aggravate a bad situation and will, like postponing a necessary operation, make a sound post-war settlement even more difficult of attainment. Obviously also a continuation of the conflicts that for centuries have plagued the Near East contains the seeds of a possible third World War which will in turn consume more American money, materials and, most valuable of all, American lives.

VI. A Clearer Understanding of the Seriousness of the Arab-Jew Problem and the Implications of American Support for Any Extreme Solution

Since Zionist propoganda and political pressure in the United States is much greater than the corresponding Arab pressure, it is important for the American people to realize that in the Moselm world Arab feelings are uncompromisingly against the acceptance of a political Zionist State in Palestine. The Arabs of Palestine have on many occasions fought both the Zionists and the British military forces sent against them and there is absolutely no basis for assuming that they will not again fight when the necessity arises.

In signing petitions or memorials favoring political Zionism, American political and religious leaders might not so readily sign such documents if they clearly realized that the policies which they advocate can only be imposed upon the Arabs by military force. When, therefore, the American Government is urged to support such a solution, it should be understood that, for all practical purposes it is being asked to commit itself to the use of American armed force in the Near East after the war. Based on British experience, this means that American soldiers will be killed in Palestine in the enforcement of such a policy. Whether the American people, if they realized the implication of this policy, would still favor its adoption may be a matter for debate. At least, however, the American people should be clearly informed that only by force can a political Zionist policy be made effective and, as a result, they should have a chance to express themselves on such an issue before they are committed to such a serious step."

Appendix J: King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud to President Roosevelt, April 30, 1943.

"EXCELLENCY: In this great world war in which nations are shedding their blood and expending their wealth in the defence of freedom and liberty, in this war in which the high principles for which the Allies are fighting have been proclaimed in the Atlantic Charter, in this struggle in which the leaders of every country are appealing to their countrymen, allies and friends to stand with them in their struggle for life, I have been alarmed, as have other Moslems and Arabs, because a group of Zionists are seizing the opportunity of this terrible crisis to make extensive propaganda by which they seek on the one hand to mislead American public opinion and, on the other hand, to bring pressure upon the Allied Governments in these critical times in order to force them to go against the principles of right, justice and equity which they have proclaimed and for which they are fighting, the principles of the freedom and liberty of peoples. By so doing the Jews seek to compel the Allies to help them exterminate the peaceful Arabs settled in Palestine for thousands of years. They hope to evict this noble nation from its home and to install Jews from every horizon in this sacred Moslem Arab country. What a calamitous and infamous miscarriage of justice would, God forbid, result from this world struggle if the Allies should, at the end of their struggle, crown their victory by evicting the Arabs from their home in Palestine, substituting in their place vagrant Jews who have no ties with this country except an imaginary claim which, from the point of view of right and justice, has no grounds except what they invent through fraud and deceit. They avail themselves of the Allies' critical situation and of the fact that the American nation is unaware of the truth about the Arabs in general and the Palestine question in particular.

On November 19 [29], 1938 (Shawal 7, 1357 H.) I wrote to Your Excellency a letter in which I set forth the true situation of the Arabs and Jews in Palestine. If Your Excellency would refer to that letter, you will find that the Jews have no right in Palestine and that their claim is an act of injustice unprecedented in the history of the human race. Palestine has from the earliest history belonged to the Arabs and is situated in the midst of Arab countries. The Jews only occupied it for a short period and the greater part of that period was full of massacres and tragedies. Subsequently they were driven out of the country and today it is proposed to re-install them in it. By so doing the Jews will do wrong to the quiet and peaceful Arabs. The Heavens will split, the earth will be rent asunder, and the mountains will tremble at what the Jews claim in Palestine, both materially and spiritually.

Having sent to Your Excellency my above-mentioned letter, I believed, and I still believe, that the Arab claim to Palestine had become clear to you, for in your kind letter to me dated January 9, 1939 you made no remark about any of the facts which I had mentioned in my previous letter. I would not have wasted Your Excellency's

time over this case nor the time of the men at the head of your government at this critical moment but the persistent news that these Zionists do not refrain from bringing forth their wrong and unjust claim induces me to remind Your Excellency of the rights of Moslems and Arabs in the Holy Land so that you may prevent this act of injustice and that my explanation to Your Excellency may convince the Americans of the Arabs' rights in Palestine, and that Americans whom Jewish Zionism intends to mislead by propaganda may know the real facts, help the oppressed Arabs, and crown their present efforts by setting up right and justice in all parts of the world.

If we leave aside the religious animosity between Moslems and Jews which dates back to the time when Islam appeared and which is due to the treacherous behavior of the Jews towards Moslems and their Prophet, if we leave aside all this and consider the case of the Jews from a purely humanitarian point of view, we would find, as I mentioned in my previous letter, that Palestine, as every human creature who knows that country admits, cannot solve the Jewish problem. Supposing that the country were subjected to injustice in all its forms, that all the Arabs of Palestine, men, women and children, were killed and their lands wrested from them and given to the Jews, the Jewish problem would not be solved and no sufficient lands would be available for the Jews. Why, therefore, should such an act of injustice, which is unique in the history of the human race, be tolerated, seeing that it would not satisfy the would-be murderers, i.e., the Jews?

In my previous letter to Your Excellency I stated that if we consider this matter from a humanitarian point of view, we would find that the small country we call Palestine was crammed at the beginning of the present war with nearly 400,000 Jews. At the end of the last Great War they only constituted 7% of the whole population but this proportion rose before the beginning of the present war to 29% and is still rising. We do not know where it will stop, but we know that a little before the present war the Jews possessed 1,000,332 donams out of 7,000,000 donams which is the sum total of all the cultivable land in Palestine.

We do not intend, nor demand, the destruction of the Jews but we demand that the Arabs should not be exterminated for the sake of the Jews. The world should not be too small to receive them. In fact, if each of the Allied countries would bear one tenth of what Palestine has borne, it would be possible to solve the Jewish problem and the problem of giving them a home to live in. All that we request at present is that you should help to stop the flow of migration by finding a place for the Jews to live in other than Palestine, and by preventing completely the sale of lands to them. Later on the Allies and Arabs can look into the matter of assuring the accommodation of those of the Jews residing in Palestine whom that country can support provided that they reside quietly and do not foment trouble between Arabs and the Allies.

In writing this to Your Excellency I am sure that you will respond to the appeal of a friend who feels that you appreciate friendship as you appreciate right, justice, and equity, and who is aware that the greatest hope of the American people is to come out of this world struggle, rejoicing in the triumph of the principles for which it is fighting, i.e., to ensure to every people its freedom and to grant it its right. For if--God forbid!--the Jews were to be granted their desire, Palestine would forever remain a hotbed of troubles and disturbances as in the past. This will create difficulties for the Allies in general and for our friend Great Britain in particular. In view of their financial power and learning the Jews can stir up enmity between the Arabs and the Allies at any moment. They have been the cause of many troubles in the past.

All that we are now anxious for is that right and justice should prevail in the solution of the various problems which will come to light after the war and that the relations between the Arabs and the Allies should always be of the best and strongest.

In closing, I beg you to accept my most cordial greetings.

Written at Our Camp at Roda Khareem on this the 25th day of Rabi' Tani, of the year 1362 Hegira corresponding to April 30, 1943.

Appendix K: The Secretary of State to the Minister in Egypt (Kirk),
Washington, May 26, 1943--6 p.m.

"714. Your 723, April 7 [17], 10 a.m. Please arrange for the transmission of the following message from the President to King Ibn Saud through the confidential media he indicated:

"The American Minister, Mr. Kirk, has communicated to me Your Majesty's expression of friendship for the United States and sympathy for the United Nations' cause, which I am most grateful to receive. He has informed me also how Your Majesty has manifested this friendship and sympathy by remaining silent in regard to issues affecting the Arab peoples among whom Your Majesty is revered as a distinguished leader.

In conveying my appreciation of Your Majesty's sympathetic understanding and helpful cooperation, I wish to express my thorough agreement with Your Majesty's considered opinion that continued silence with respect to such matters would prove most helpful to the United Nations in their bitter struggle to preserve the freedom of mankind. Nevertheless, if the interested Arabs and Jews should reach a friendly understanding in regard to matters affecting Palestine through their own efforts before the end of the war, such a development would be highly desirable. In any case, however, I assure Your Majesty that it is the view of the Government of the United States that no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews.

I take this opportunity to express my best wishes for Your Majesty's good health and for the well-being of your people. Franklin D. Roosevelt."

Appendix L: President Roosevelt to King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud,
June 19, 1943.

"GREAT AND GOOD FRIEND: I have received Your Majesty's communication of April 30, 1943, relating to matters affecting Palestine, and I appreciate the spirit of friendship you have mentioned in expressing these views to me.

I have noted carefully the statements made in this communication, as well as those contained in Your Majesty's letter of November 19 [29], 1938, and the oral message conveyed to Mr. Kirk, the American Minister, at the conclusion of his recent visit to Riyadh.

Your Majesty, no doubt, has received my message delivered by Mr. Moose to His Highness the Amir Faisal. As I stated therein, it appears to me highly desirable that the Arabs and Jews interested in the question should come to a friendly understanding with respect to matters affecting Palestine through their own efforts prior to the termination of the war. I am glad of this opportunity, however, to reiterate my assurance that it is the view of the Government of the United States that, in any case, no decision altering the basic situation of Palestine should be reached without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews.

I renew my expressions of best wishes for Your Majesty's good health and for the well-being of your people.

YOUR GOOD FRIEND,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Appendix M: Interview of His Majesty the King with LIFE Magazine's Representative, Mr. Busch, March 21, 1943.

"Q. *What is your Majesty's opinion concerning the Palestine problem?*

- A. I have withheld my opinion concerning the Palestine problem from the Arabs in order to avoid placing them in an embarrassing position with the Allies. But because you are one of our friends, I wish to acquaint you with my opinion so that it can be made known to the friendly American people, so that they may understand the truth of the matter.

First, I know nothing that justifies the Jewish claims in Palestine. Centuries before the advent of Mohammed, Palestine belonged to the Jews. But the Romans prevailed over them, killed some and dispersed the rest. No trace of their rule remained. Then the Arabs seized Palestine from the Romans, more than thirteen hundred years ago, and it has remained ever since in the possession of the Moslems. This shows that the Jews have no right to their claim, since all the countries of the world saw the succession of different peoples who conquered them. Those countries became their undisputed homelands. Were we to follow the Jewish theory, it would become necessary for many peoples of the world, including those of Palestine, to move out of the lands wherein they settled.

Secondly, I am not afraid of the Jews or of the possibility of their ever having a state of power, either in the land of the Arabs or elsewhere. This is in accordance with what God has revealed unto us through the mouth of His Prophet in His Holy Book. Thus I hold the demands of the Jews upon this land an error; first because it constitutes an injustice against the Arabs, and the Moslems in general; and secondly because it causes dissensions and disturbances between the Moslems and their friends the Allies; and in this I fail to see anything good. Furthermore, if the Jews are impelled to seek a place to live, Europe and America as well as other lands are larger and more fertile than Palestine, and more suitable to their welfare and interests. This would constitute justice, and there is no need to involve the Allies and the Moslems in a problem void of good.

As to the native Jewish population in Palestine, I suggest that the Arabs agree with their friends the Allies to safeguard the interests of those Jews, provided the Jews commit no action that might lead to strife and dissension, which would not be in the general interest, and provided the Jews give a guarantee, endorsed by the Allies, that they would not strive to buy Arab property, and would refrain from using their great financial power for that purpose. Such efforts would only bring to the people of Palestine loss and injury, and poverty and decay to their doors. Such efforts would inevitably lead to more trouble.

On the other hand the Arabs would recognize the rights of the Jews and would guarantee to safeguard them.

Q. *What does your Majesty think of Arab unity?*

A. There are no differences among the Arabs, and I believe that, with Allied aid, they will be united after the war.

(Signed) Head of the Royal Cabinet"

Appendix N: Dr. Weizmann's letter to Under Secretary Welles, December 13, 1943.

"77, Great Russell Street
London, W.C.1.

13th December, 1943.

Hon. Sumner Welles,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Sumner Welles,

It was with deep regret that I learned of your leaving the Department of State. I hope you will forgive me for troubling you, even now, with a matter discussed between us while you were in office; for I should like it to be brought to the attention of the President, and if you are willing to do me this great service, I feel that no one is as well acquainted with the subject as you are yourself.

2. You will doubtless remember that during my conversation with you I mentioned a scheme for a Jewish-Arab agreement, originally put to me by Mr. St. John Philby, the well-known Arabian traveller and scholar, who is a personal friend of King Ibn Sa'ud. This I briefly repeated to the President when I had the honour of seeing him. May I remind you of its main outline? The Arabs should relinquish Palestine west of the Jordan to the Jews if, at that price, complete independence is secured to them in all other Arab lands in Asia. Mr. Philby envisaged considerable transfers of Arab population, and a compensation of £20,000,000 was to be paid to Ibn Sa'ud. When Mr. Philby first discussed this scheme with me in the autumn of 1939, in the presence of my colleague Mr. Namier, we replied that Jewry, though impoverished, will be able to meet the financial burden, of which part would have to take the form of Palestinian goods, or work on land to be developed for re-settlement of Arabs. But the political part of the programme could only be implemented by Great Britain and the United States.

3. In the talk with the President you suggested sending Colonel Hoskins to King Ibn Sa'ud. I felt reluctant to express my doubts, but, after careful consideration, I wrote to you deprecating the proposed choice because I knew Colonel Hoskins to be in general out of sympathy with our cause. The position with regard to Ibn Sa'ud was extremely delicate. As you will see from the enclosed letter from Mr. Philby, he had put his scheme before Ibn Sa'ud on January 8th, 1940. Ibn Sa'ud replied that he would consider it, if it came to him as a firm offer, but that he would disavow Mr. Philby if this attitude was prematurely divulged. Clearly he feared opening himself to attack by rivals in the Arab world on account of a scheme which might never reach the stage of practical consideration.

4. After leaving America last June, I heard no more until the end of October, when Colonel Hoskins came to see me here three times in November. He told me that he had been to Arabia and had there heard for the first time about the Philby scheme. He reported King Ibn Sa'ud as having spoken with great bitterness about me, declaring that I had sent Mr. Philby to him with the offer of a bribe, which was contrary to his honour, patriotism, and religion; and that he had turned Mr. Philby out, and would not receive him in Arabia again. Colonel Hoskins also reported Ibn Sa'ud as saying that the £20,000,000 was to be guaranteed by the United States. Colonel Hoskins further informed me that Ibn Sa'ud had sent a written statement to the President in which Mr. Philby is alluded to, but not named.

5. The assertion about the United States guarantee for the money compensation was obviously based on a misconception somewhere (see above, paragraph 2). I should be profoundly distressed if the President thought I had used his name in this connection, which was never the case. Further, I was astonished by what Colonel Hoskins reported Ibn Sa'ud to have said about Mr. Philby, as I knew that Mr. Philby had remained a guest of the King for quite half a year after having put his scheme before him. I was therefore relieved the next time I met Colonel Hoskins to discover that the report of Mr. Philby's disgrace had been merely Colonel Hoskins' own deduction: he said he could not imagine that the King would welcome back a man who had suggested so distasteful a scheme. Mr. Namier and I discussed the matter frankly with Mr. Philby, who has also seen Colonel Hoskins alone. Mr. Philby's view (as you will see from the enclosure) is that Colonel Hoskins' mission left matters much as they stood, and that if the original scheme was offered to Ibn Sa'ud on behalf of the President and Mr. Churchill, it would be accepted.

6. When I was in America you were good enough to discuss with me at length the Palestine question. I hope that you have not lost the interest in Palestinian affairs which gave me so much encouragement and pleasure. May I put my view before you once more in special connection with Mr. Philby's scheme? It is conceived on big lines, large enough to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of Arabs and Jews, and the strategic and economic interests of the United States and Britain. In my belief, none of the problems of the Middle East can be effectively settled piecemeal, but only by treating them as a connected whole. The world is deeply interested in solving the Jewish problem, the overwhelming majority of the Jews themselves desire a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine, and expect its establishment to normalise the position of Jews in the Dispersion; the Arabs demand complete independence and freedom to achieve unity.

7. If the world supports the Jews in their demand for Palestine west of the Jordan, let the Arabs concede it as quid pro quo for fulfilment of their claims everywhere else. Our heritage in Palestine was cut down to the bone when Transjordan was separated in 1922. What is left, is clearly a unit, and further partition of it would deprive the settlement of finality. If the whole of western Palestine is left to us, we plan to carry out a Jordan Development Scheme suggested to us by American experts. This would also benefit the Arab

land on the western bank, and facilitate transfers of population. A scheme on such large lines would be greatly helped by the backing of an outstanding personality in the Arab world, such as Ibn Sa'ud. I therefore feel, in spite of Colonel Hoskins' adverse report, that, properly managed, Mr. Philby's scheme offers an approach which should not be abandoned without further exploration.

Yours very sincerely,

SIGNED.....CH. WEIZMANN."

Appendix 0: Philby's Note on Interview with Colonel Hoskins.

"At his request, made at the suggestion of Dr. Weizmann and Professor Namier, I called on Colonel Hoskins at his hotel on the morning of November 15th and had a talk of 1 1/2 hours with him about his recent visit to King Ibn Saud.

I understood from him that this visit was made in an official capacity on behalf of the United States Government for the purpose of discussing certain matters of mutual interest to both parties. The visit was made in August, 1943: Colonel Hoskins arrived at Jidda with a fleet of United States army cars and spent about 8 days at that port, seeing Yusuf Yasin (the King's political secretary) and other members of the Saudi Arabian Government. He then proceeded to Riyadh, where he spent another 8 days before continuing his journey to Kuwait and Iraq. At Riyadh, besides the King, he saw the Amir Saud, the Amir Faisal, Bashir Sa'dawi and other prominent officials of the Government. I understand that Colonel Hoskins speaks Arabic fluently and was thus well-equipped to discuss matters with the King personally and privately without the necessity of interpreters. His report and impressions on such conversations must therefore be regarded as of extreme importance; and I assumed that he had made detailed communications on the subject to his Government after his return from Arabia to Washington, whence he has come to London on a brief official visit. I understand that he is returning shortly to Washington.

My interest in seeing him arose out of his conversation with Dr. Weizmann on November 7th, on the course of which he made certain remarks on my own relations with King Ibn Saud and on the King's attitude towards a certain plan for the settlement of the Palestine problem, with which I have been associated and with the details of which, I understand, the British and American Governments are fully acquainted. Later in the week Colonel Hoskins had a further conversation on this subject with Dr. Weizmann and Professor Namier, in the course of which he appears to have modified to some extent his earlier remarks to Dr. Weizmann alone and as a result of which his meeting with me was arranged on the ground that it was only fair that I should be given an opportunity of hearing disparaging criticisms of myself which were being made under the cover of official privilege.

I may say at once that my interview with Colonel Hoskins was throughout of the most friendly character, and I am very grateful to him for having spared me so large an amount of his valuable time. I have no doubt that I was able to give him important information on certain points about which he does not seem to have been informed. He was of course aware of the fact that Dr. Weizmann had told me the gist of his remarks about myself and "the plan" of his first interview but he did not know - nor did I think it necessary to enlighten him - that I had seen Professor Namier after the second interview and heard his account of the appreciably-modified remarks of Colonel Hoskins on that occasion. Nevertheless Colonel Hoskins did assure me that he had substantially repeated to Dr. Weizmann and Professor Namier on

the second occasion the remarks made to Dr. Weizmann alone on the first. This assurance certainly surprised me, but the matter was not of vital importance as I was about to hear his own account at first hand. Incidentally he told me that he had not discussed these personal matters with the British Foreign Office, nor consulted it about the advisability of seeing me, nor indeed reported on this particular aspect of the case to his own Government. He did not tell me, as he appears to have told Dr. Weizmann and Professor Namier, that he had conveyed a personal letter from King Ibn Saud to President Roosevelt dealing with these important matters: and I did not think it necessary to ask him if the King had given him anything in writing. Indeed I expressed my sympathy with him on not being completely free to speak owing to his position as an official charged with a highly confidential mission.

I did however claim that, as he had been repeating remarks made by the King about me to third parties, I had at least a moral right to hear them at first hand from him. The position as I had understood it from Dr. Weizmann, I explained, was that the King was so horrified or disgusted at the dastardly proposals conveyed by me to him on behalf of Dr. Weizmann that he had turned me out of or sent me away from Arabia and would on no account ever allow me to return to the country again. I was naturally anxious, I said, to get to the bottom of the matter, and I think Colonel Hoskins fully appreciated my position. He discussed this subject at great length and I think the following fairly represents the gist of our talk.

Colonel Hoskins assured me as a fact that he had had no knowledge of the "Palestine plan" when he left Washington on his mission to Ibn Saud nor indeed until, on his arrival at Riyadh on some days later, he was apprised of its details by the King himself, with severe comments on its unacceptability. I remarked that I found it very difficult to believe that he should have been sent on such an important mission without being apprised of such an important issue of current Arabian politics by his Government, which was to my knowledge fully informed of the matter. Nevertheless, I said, I have no alternative but to accept your word for it - and I do accept it - that before seeing the King you had no knowledge of "the plan" or its details. I did not think it necessary to ask him why in such circumstances - according to the account apparently given by him to Dr. Weizmann on the first occasion - he had at his first (or an early) interview with the King asked him if he would be willing to see Dr. Weizmann or some other Jewish leader. Why indeed but to discuss "the plan" of which he was ignorant. We need not press this apparent discrepancy too far; but Dr. Weizmann was given to understand that the King had answered that he would give Colonel Hoskins a reply on a later occasion and that, when Colonel Hoskins reminded him of his promise some days later, the King had burst out in a spate of vituperation, and so forth.

Colonel Hoskins told me that my connection with "the plan" was not mentioned by the King until this later occasion, when the King had told him how I had come to him as an emissary of Dr. Weizmann

with a most improper bribe of money, which his honour forbade him even to think of accepting and had railed about the whole business in such a way as to create a certain impression regarding the King's attitude towards myself in Colonel Hoskins' mind. At this point I pressed him to recollect as exactly as he could exactly what the King had said regarding myself. Had he, for instance, said that he "had turned me out of the country" or "sent me away" or even "asked me to leave?" And had he said that he "would on no account ever allow me to return to Arabia?" Colonel Hoskins admitted quite candidly that the King had not used any of these phrases or any others of like import, but that His Majesty had railed so volubly and bitterly at the proposals submitted to him by me that he had created in his (Colonel Hoskins) mind the impression that the bearer of such proposals must be a persona non grata whose continued presence in the country could not be tolerated by His Majesty and whose return to the country would be extremely unwelcome.

Thus, in effect, Colonel Hoskins had withdrawn all the suggestions previously made by him to Dr. Weizmann and Professor Namier that the King in conversation with him had made certain highly disparaging remarks about me. At the same time he maintained his view that the King, to judge from his remarks, was uncompromisingly hostile to the plan. He is fully entitled to hold that view. But it may be an incorrect view for all that. At any rate it was at this stage of our talk that I thought it suitable to enlighten Colonel Hoskins on certain outstanding facts of the case.

(Extracts From a Statement Sent to Me by Mr. St. John Philby,
17.11.43.)

It was, I said, on January 8th, 1940 - a few days after my return to Arabia - that I communicated "the plan" to the King. There was nothing whatsoever to prevent him telling me then and there that it was an impossible and unacceptable proposition - in which case I should have informed Dr. Weizmann accordingly and dropped the whole thing. But the King did not tell me that. He told me on the contrary that some such arrangement might be possible in appropriate future circumstances, that he would keep the matter in mind, that he would give me a definite answer at the appropriate time, that meanwhile I should not breathe a word about the matter to anyone - least of all to any Arab and, finally, that if the proposals became the subject of public discussion with any suggestion of his approving them he would have no hesitation whatsoever in denouncing me as having no authority to commit him in the matter. I was perfectly prepared to accept that position, and the King knew that I would communicate his answer to Dr. Weizmann. He did not forbid me to do so!

So far from being a persona non grata to the King owing to my connection with this business, I remained in Arabia till July 21st of that year (1940) - 6 1/2 months after the fatal communication and practically all the time as the King's guest at Riyadh or in his desert camp. Indeed on June 1st His Majesty made me a gift of a newly built house on the assumption and in the hope that I should

live permanently in Arabia. Time dragged on with never a sign from the King, and on a certain occasion when Yusuf Yasin and I were alone together in the desert I ventured to broach the subject to him. As I expected he was hostile but, so far as I know, he kept my confidence and I heard no more of the incident. Still later under similar conditions of confidence I told Bashir Sa'dawi the general outline of the plan and found him unexpectedly favourable: but within the hour he had told the King of our conversation and, when I walked into the audience-chamber that afternoon, the King summoned me to his side. Didn't I tell you, he said, not to talk to anyone about that matter? I made some very lame excuse, saying that I thought he must have forgotten all about it and that there was no harm in talking about it as an academic proposition. Well, remember, he said, don't do it again. Meanwhile the European situation was having a gloomy effect on Arabia, and I imagined that appropriate conditions for the discussion of Palestine affairs would be long in establishing themselves. In May I decided to press the King for an answer, as I anticipated, he put me off again - though without one single word of reproach.

It was entirely on my own initiative that I decided about the middle of June to leave Arabia for America. Communications with my family in England had been cut off by the closing of the Mediterranean; but, when I gave this as my reason for going to America, the King telegraphed to the Arabian Minister in London to telegraph a weekly bulletin regarding my family. Nevertheless I insisted on going despite the efforts of the King and the Amir Sa'ud to dissuade me on the ground that I might get into trouble owing to my habit of free speech. I answered that England was a democratic country cherishing the right of free speech at all times. In the end, unable to dissuade me the King insisted on my recording in my diary that he himself had warned me not to leave Arabia lest I might get into trouble. On the very day of my departure the Crown Prince, who had come to the door to see me off, begged me to change my mind even at the last moment and begged me to record in my diary that he too had tried to prevent me leaving Arabia.

I explained all this in detail to Colonel Hoskins in order to disabuse him of the impression that I was at any time, after making "the plan" known to the Ibn Sa'ud, a persona non grata at his court. As regards the future I put it to Colonel Hoskins that the suggestion of my return to Arabia being unwelcome to the King was obviously susceptible of a very simple test. The very same suggestion had been officially made once before (in February, 1941) and I had applied the test with the result that I had been categorically assured by the Arabia Minister in London not only that I would be welcome back in Arabia but that he was ready at any time to give me the necessary visa for the purpose of returning thither. In view however of the withdrawal of Colonel Hoskins' original statement that the King himself had told him that my return would not be permitted and in view of the fact that the Foreign Office would certainly deny me the necessary facilities for leaving England - as it had done last year when I was invited by Chicago University to attend and lecture at a conference on Middle East Affairs, I did not think it necessary to

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take any specific action in the matter. I was, indeed, as I explained to Colonel Hoskins, completely satisfied with his explanation of the whole matter, and he readily accepted my suggestion that, as his remarks about the King's attitude to me had naturally shocked Dr. Weizmann and presumably also Professor Namier, he should seek an opportunity of explaining the real position to them as he had done to me. With that I brought the conversation back to "the plan". On his own showing, I said, he had known nothing of "the plan" until it had been mentioned to him by the King. It followed that he had not gone to the King with anything in the nature of a firm offer on the lines of "the plan" on behalf of the United States Government. A further fact, of which I was cognisant though it was not actually mentioned or discussed between us, was that he has asked the King, presumably with his Government's authority (but why?), whether he would be willing to meet Dr. Weizmann or some other Jewish leader (presumably to discuss the Palestine problem). The King had deferred his answer and, when asked for it some days later, had expressed himself in strongly unfavourable terms. He was now aware, I went on, from what I had said that the King had sworn us to complete secrecy and had warned me that he would if necessary denounce me. That was exactly what had happened, and the deduction I drew from the whole story was as follows:-

The King, on hearing that he was to be visited officially by a confident emissary of the American Government, naturally assumed that that emissary was coming to communicate to him a firm offer on the lines of "the plan". The emissary came with no such offer but merely with the suggestion that Ibn Sa'ud should meet Dr. Weizmann or some other Jewish leader, presumably for the purpose of further bargaining over Palestine. The King, fully accustomed to the tortuous ways of diplomacy, had deliberately refrained both from giving a definite answer and from expressing his opinion of Dr. Weizmann. He may well have thought that a few days of silent incubation would produce the firm offer which he had a right to expect if "the plan" reflected the desires of the British and American Governments. But Colonel Hoskins had no firm offer to make him; and, when some days later he merely asked for the King's reply to his original question about seeing Dr. Weizmann, His Majesty, realising that the American Government was concerned only to throw the whole matter open to further discussion, and realising further that "the plan" had obviously not won acceptance on the part of the two Governments concerned, allowed himself, as he occasionally does in moments of disappointment, to luxuriate in a fit of ill-temper at the expense of Dr. Weizmann, the Jews in general and myself. It was exactly what I would have expected in the circumstances. King Ibn Sa'ud is getting very weary of the ways of western diplomacy and he, perhaps rightly, suspects that the strategic, economic and political interests of certain Great Powers debar them from making any really acceptable offer to the Arabs.

Nevertheless, as I made clear to Colonel Hoskins after our very full talk over the whole business, his account of his controversy with King Ibn Sa'ud had not in the least shaken my conviction - my conviction on which I was prepared to stake my whole reputation - which was all that I had to stake as I had already said.

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career by my fight for Arab independence - that, had he gone out to Arabia with President Roosevelt's first offer, made on behalf of the American and British Governments, on the lines of "the plan" that offer would have been accepted. I could only draw the rather disappointing conclusion that the British and American Governments are not prepared to make the relatively light sacrifices involved in "the plan" even to save the Jews from persecution, torture and death. If, however, I am wrong on this point the opportunity presents itself for putting the matter to the test. If the two Governments are really desirous of an arrangement on the lines of "the plan" and are prepared to make to Ibn Sa'ud a firm offer in that sense I am convinced that the King will accept it - but it must be a firm offer on the lines of "the plan" to be accepted or rejected as it stands without modification or bargaining. If, on the other hand, the two Governments do not want to make the sacrifices involved and are at the same time satisfied that Colonel Hoskins' interpretation of Ibn Sa'ud's attitude is correct, let them at least make a gesture of goodwill to the Jews and confront Ibn Sa'ud with a firm offer (on the lines of "the plan") which he will, as they are advised, turn down. I have only my own conviction to pit against the views of Colonel Hoskins, but no harm can come of putting the matter to the test. Either "the plan" is accepted or the status quo remains intact without prejudice to anybody. For my part I guarantee (for what my guarantee is worth) that the suggested firm offer will be accepted if made by any reasonably intelligent person of indisputable goodwill on behalf of the two Governments concerned. It is for those Governments now to show the genuineness of the goodwill they are so fond of proclaiming towards the Arabs and the Jews.

H. St. J. PHILBY,

17.11.1943."

* omission

- ** substitution: 1. "would not permit my return,"
2. "statement, made by Colonel Hoskins to Dr. Weizmann (but not repeated to me) was that Colonel Hoskins started by asking the King whether he would see Dr. Weizmann; that the King replied that he would consider the matter but some days elapsed without his returning to the subject. Concluding from this that the answer was negative, Colonel Hoskins asked him whether he would meet one of Dr. Weizmann's colleagues? It was then that the King is reported to have broken out against Dr. Weizmann, and the Scheme. Colonel Hoskins"
3. "since"

Sources: St. John Philby's papers, St. Anthony's College, Oxford
Box X, File 3.
F.O. 371/40139 X/P 0976 E206/206/31 Dated 5 Jan. 1944.

Appendix P: Saudi Arabi Today



Source: Fouad Al-Farsy. Saudi Arabia. London: Stacey International, 1980.

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