



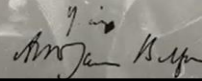
Foreign Office,
November 2nd, 1917.

Dear Lord Rothschild,


I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.



On the Centenary of the British Mandate in Palestine (1922-1948)



Dr Salman Abu Sitta's Address to Balfour at the University of Edinburgh

TUE 6:15 PM JERUSALEM
08 NOV 4:15 PM EDINBURGH

Usha Kaseera Lecture Theatre The University of Edinburgh (Old College) Room 1.264, First Floor, Old College Edinburgh EH8 9YL United Kingdom

In co-sponsorship with: Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power, Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities (IASH), Center for Research Collection (CRC), History, Sociology, Politics and International Relations Middle East Res.

Dr Salman Abu Sitta's Address to Balfour

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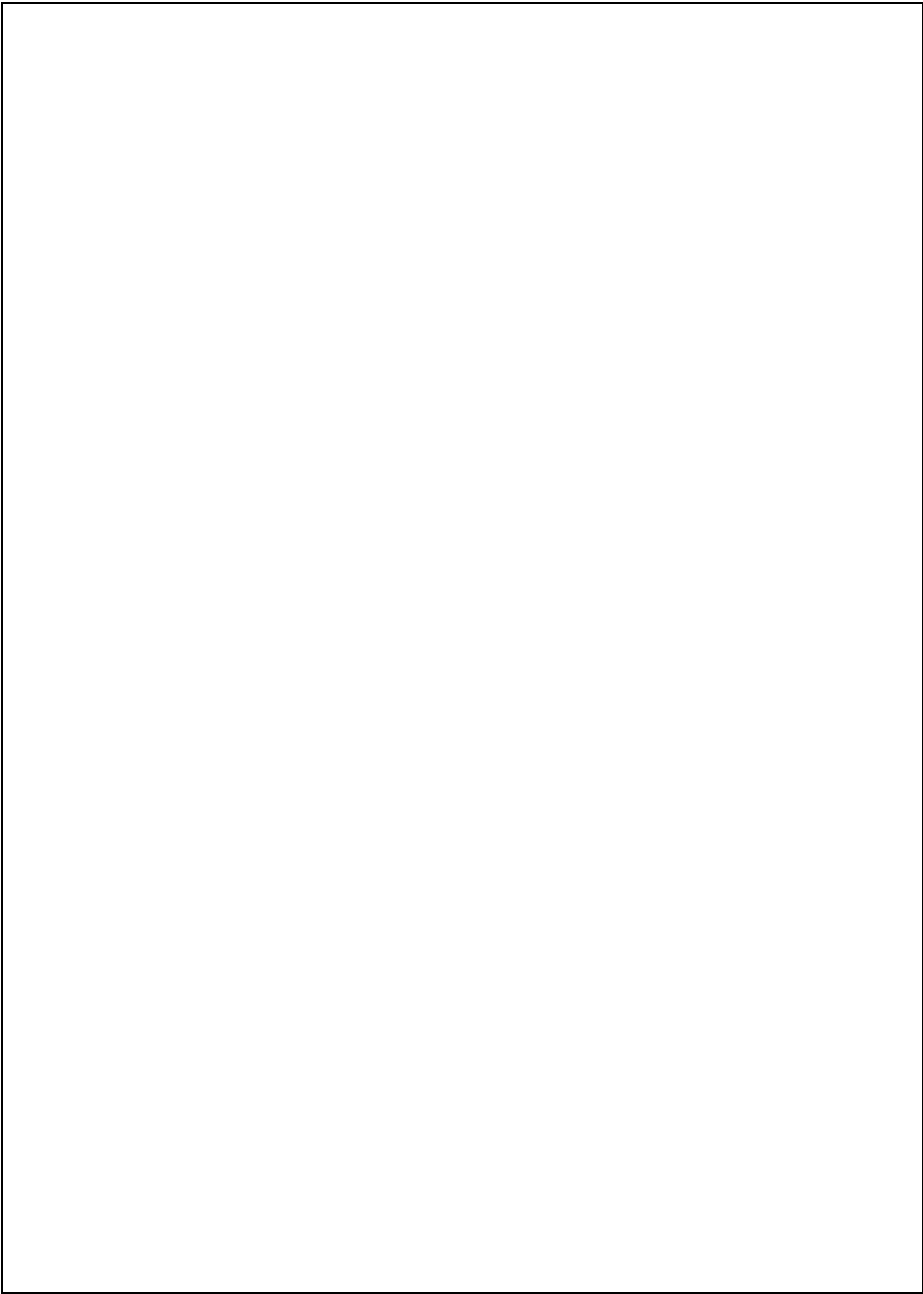
This year marks the centenary of the establishment of British Mandate in Palestine (1922-1948), as instituted under the League of Nations. In the five years leading up to the start of this era, Lord Arthur James Balfour, who at the time served as Britain's foreign secretary and the University of Edinburgh's chancellor (1891-1930), issued a sixty-seven-word letter of intent, which had seismic implications on the Arab world in general, and Palestine specifically. Balfour's promise was one that endorsed Britain's support for the establishment of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine, while simultaneously denying the recognition of Palestinian peoplehood with national rights to self-determination. This decision, though categorically challenged by Palestinian society and leadership, became juridically enshrined under British Mandate. The results of this decision would later come to sow death and destruction in Palestine through means of forced expulsion and colonial dispossession, setting into motion an on-going structure of settler-colonialism and displacement today.

The link for the full lecture is

<https://youtu.be/YRVMHNTeb58>

Duration:1:0 hour and 20 minutes

Dr.Salman Abu Sitta lecture starts at 27:00



Professor Hugh Goddard introduction to Dr. Salman Abu Sitta speech

Thank-you, Shaira (Dr Shaira Vadasaria, Lecturer in Race and Decolonial Studies/Associate Director of RACE.ED) and Toufic (Dr Toufic Haddad, Kenyon Institute and director of The Council for British Research in the Levant - CBRL) for giving us the background to this event, and also indicating the context of it taking place alongside events in other universities in different parts of the world. A huge thank-you to you both for setting up this event, and perhaps particularly to Shaira as the local organiser; these things do not just happen, but rather require a very considerable amount of preparatory work, so thank-you to you both, and also to everyone who has assisted behind the scenes, especially the ticket checkers and the technical team, so thank-you very much for all of that.

By way of background to this event, this year, as the publicity for the event made clear, is the centenary of the establishment, under the League of Nations, of the British Mandate in Palestine, on 22nd July 1922. The context within which this happened is interesting; indeed a good question for a pub quiz might be '*where* was the British Mandate for Palestine established?', to which many people might think the answer is obviously 'Geneva', as the home of the League of Nations; the correct answer, however, is 'St James' Palace in London', which is perhaps an interesting indication of how things were done in those days!

Granted the Mandate was, anyway, and that event marks in a sense the culmination of a process which began five years earlier, with the issuing of the Balfour Declaration, whose 105th anniversary took place just last week, on November 2nd; many of us here today may remember the event which was arranged five years ago by the Department of Islamic and Middle

Eastern Studies to mark the exact centenary of that event, in the Playfair Library, when Prof Nur Masalha of St Mary's University in Twickenham, West London, spoke on 'Powerful Symbols and the British-Zionist Alliance: from Balfour to the Nakba', that year's W.M. Watt Memorial Lecture in the Department.

It is very appropriate that these events are discussed *in Edinburgh* because of the close involvement in them of Arthur James Balfour, Lord Balfour, firstly because he was a local boy, born, and buried, in the village of Whittinghame out in East Lothian, just about 25 miles away from here; and secondly because, although he headed south for his education, to Eton and Trinity College Cambridge, he remained closely involved in Scottish affairs, including as Chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, a role which he fulfilled for almost forty years, from 1891-1930. He is, therefore, our longest-serving Chancellor until the late Duke of Edinburgh, and on that basis there is undoubtedly a particular reason for his Declaration, and the subsequent granting of the mandate for Palestine to Britain, to be critically assessed in Edinburgh. That is the genesis of, and reason for, this event.

To help us to do this, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome our speaker for the evening, Dr Salman Abu Sitta. Dr Abu Sitta was born in 1937 near Beersheba, in what was then Mandate Palestine, but which in 1948, the year of the end of the Mandate, in the process which Palestinians call the Nakba, the Catastrophe, became part of the State of Israel. With his family he therefore became a refugee, firstly to the Gaza Strip and then to Cairo. There, as part of the remarkable act of altruism by the government of Gamal 'Abd al-Nasir by which university education was made freely available to Palestinian refugees, he graduated from the Faculty of Engineering, and from there he continued to post-graduate studies, obtaining a doctorate in Civil Engineering from University College London.

From there he went on to establish a very successful engineering firm in Kuwait, and it is from there that Dr Abu Sitta has come to be with us today: welcome, therefore!

There are three reasons why Dr Abu Sitta is particularly well-qualified to address today's topic. Firstly, as someone born in 1937, and as someone who therefore lived through the ending of the Mandate, and the Nakba, he has invaluable *first-hand* experience of what happened, and, as with other terrible events of the 20th century, the value of this first-hand testimony is obviously incalculable.

Secondly, because in 2016 he published an autobiography, *Mapping My Return: a Palestinian Memoir*, which was published by the American University in Cairo Press. This was the lead book review in Volume 16 No 2 of the *Journal of Holy Land and Palestine Studies*, published by Edinburgh University Press, and the reviewer, Rosemary Sayigh of the American University of Beirut, commented that the majority of personal accounts of the Nakba focus on Galilee or central Palestine; part of the value of Dr Abu Sitta's testimony is therefore that it focuses on the story in the south, and the rather different dynamic there.

Thirdly, because alongside his work as an engineer, Dr Abu Sitta has devoted his life to the amassing of geographical data about Palestine, what Rosemary Sayegh describes as 'restorative cartography'. Based on the study of maps, photographs, administrative records and memos from different periods, before, during and after the British Mandate, Dr Abu Sitta has produced a formidably detailed account of what has happened to individual villages and settlements during the British Mandate and the subsequent decades, which has been published in his *Atlas of Palestine, 1917-1966*, produced by the Palestine Land Society in 2010. It is on the

basis of this work that Uri Avnery, an Israeli writer and peace activist with Gush Shalom (the Bloc of Peace), who had a very interesting correspondence with Dr Abu Sitta in *Counterpunch* in 2014, described him as 'the world's foremost expert on the Naqba'; and it is very good news that the future of Dr Abu Sitta's archive is now secure, it having been offered a permanent home at the American University of Beirut. I hope that we are going to see some extracts in the course of the talk.

It is a great pleasure to welcome Dr Abu Sitta to Edinburgh, therefore, to help us reflect on an aspect of our own history, and we look forward very much, on the occasion of the centenary of the establishment of the British Mandate in Palestine, to hearing Dr Salman Abu Sitta's address to Balfour.

Dr. Salman Abu Sitta speech:

Thank you very much. So many thanks that I cannot count.

Thank you very much Prof Goddard for the introduction and chairing this meeting.

Thank you to my friends Shaira and Toufic who in the last 100 days have been working very hard to arrange this event. They have been navigating rough waters, but they arrived at the destination safely, in spite of some noise here and there.

Why do I say that?

Because truth must be told

Who is afraid of truth? Only the criminal and the guilty. So there should be no hesitation in hearing about the truth.

I should also say thanks to the various departments in the University of Edinburgh who sponsored this event.

They have been mentioned in your [Prof. Goddard's introductory] remarks and on the invitation [on Eventbrite], so I'm not going to repeat that. But I'm going to thank people who are here today for coming. Some of you came from Edinburgh. Some took the train for hours to come from London. We have people here who came several hours from Europe. Others took the plane 10 hours to fly to be with us tonight. So I thank them all for being here tonight.

Now let us turn to our friend Balfour.

Lord Balfour. Arthur James Balfour.

In honour of truth, memory and justice, I am addressing you Lord Balfour.

Shall I call you Lord Balfour?

We will have a long journey together so I will call you Arthur James. From now on I'm going to call you Arthur.

Arthur, I wish you didn't die in 1930. I really want you to be alive today, and be judged before everybody in the world, now during your real life and during your imagined life.

If you did not die in 1930, you would be alive today and will be judged by people during your imagined life, so that we can hear firsthand what they say about your deeds.

But you would be 176 years [old] today. This is more than twice my age. I have a stake in this because the first half of your lifetime, you knew it, you lived it. So, I can address you and make you accountable for what you have done.

But in the second half of your imagined life, I lived through it and I am going to tell you about it. I am going to spread the sheet of your deeds, here, at

the University of Edinburgh, where you have been the Imperial Chancellor for 40 years. This is the appropriate place to address you, Arthur.

You came from this blessed land, Scotland, from among free and proud people in Scotland. You also came from a distinguished family, but you went to London to be brought up as a loyal English colonial servant. You did well. Some people say you have been a failure; others say that you have been an opportunist. Nevertheless, you held many positions of power, so that makes you accountable for your deeds.

It seems Arthur, you did not like the Jews. At least you thought you should protect England from their influx when they wanted to come here at the beginning of the 20th Century.

They were mostly Russian citizens of the Russian Empire, although they were accused of being disloyal citizens, but they were citizens of the Russian Empire. They were attacked in their ghettos and enclaves by the Cossacks. Their homes were destroyed, their property looted, their women violated, their young men were killed at random. It was a terrible human experience for the Jews. They called this “pogrom.”

Remember that word Arthur, “pogrom.” Because it will come back to haunt you, by another name, in another place. Not the same events, but much more fierce, with phosphorus bombs, tanks, and airplanes. Not sporadic, but a doctrine of regular policy. Not for a few nights or weeks. But for 74 years, and still counting. You have a lot to do with this Balfour.

Those poor Russian Jews wanted to escape from the pogroms, to find a safe haven in England. You refused. You refused to let them in. You passed the 1905 Aliens Act to prevent them from coming to England.

But they took revenge. They immigrated to the United States instead. One hundred years later, their AIPAC organization has been a strong lobby in US politics. The sons of those Russian immigrants took high up positions – from Kissinger to Blinken, and they became foreign ministers, the same position as yours in England, but for the United States.

Location of Palestine :

But Palestine was another story. It has a strategic position, important for your imperial interests. It is the heart of the Arab World. It is needed to cut down this heart of the Arab world.

In 1916, you were part of a big scheme to deceive the Arabs, by telling them



that they will be free from the Ottoman rule, if they join you in pushing the Turks out of Arab provinces. They believed you and they fought with you. To confirm your

promise, the allied planes dropped leaflets on the Arab territory, repeating your promises.

At the very same time when these promises were made Arthur, your man - Mark Sykes - and a French diplomat named George Picot, were huddled in a dark room, spreading a map of the Middle East between them. They were dividing the Arab pie between them. They were arguing about where the

borders of Palestine would be from the borders of Syria and Lebanon. You were dividing the Arab pie.

You - the British and French - were fighting over war spoils on the dead body of the Arab nation. At the same time, you were driven by Zionist ambitions who wanted to extract more land and more water in Palestine, provided there were no people in it. They will not be allowed to be there. They wanted Palestine empty.

But it was not empty.

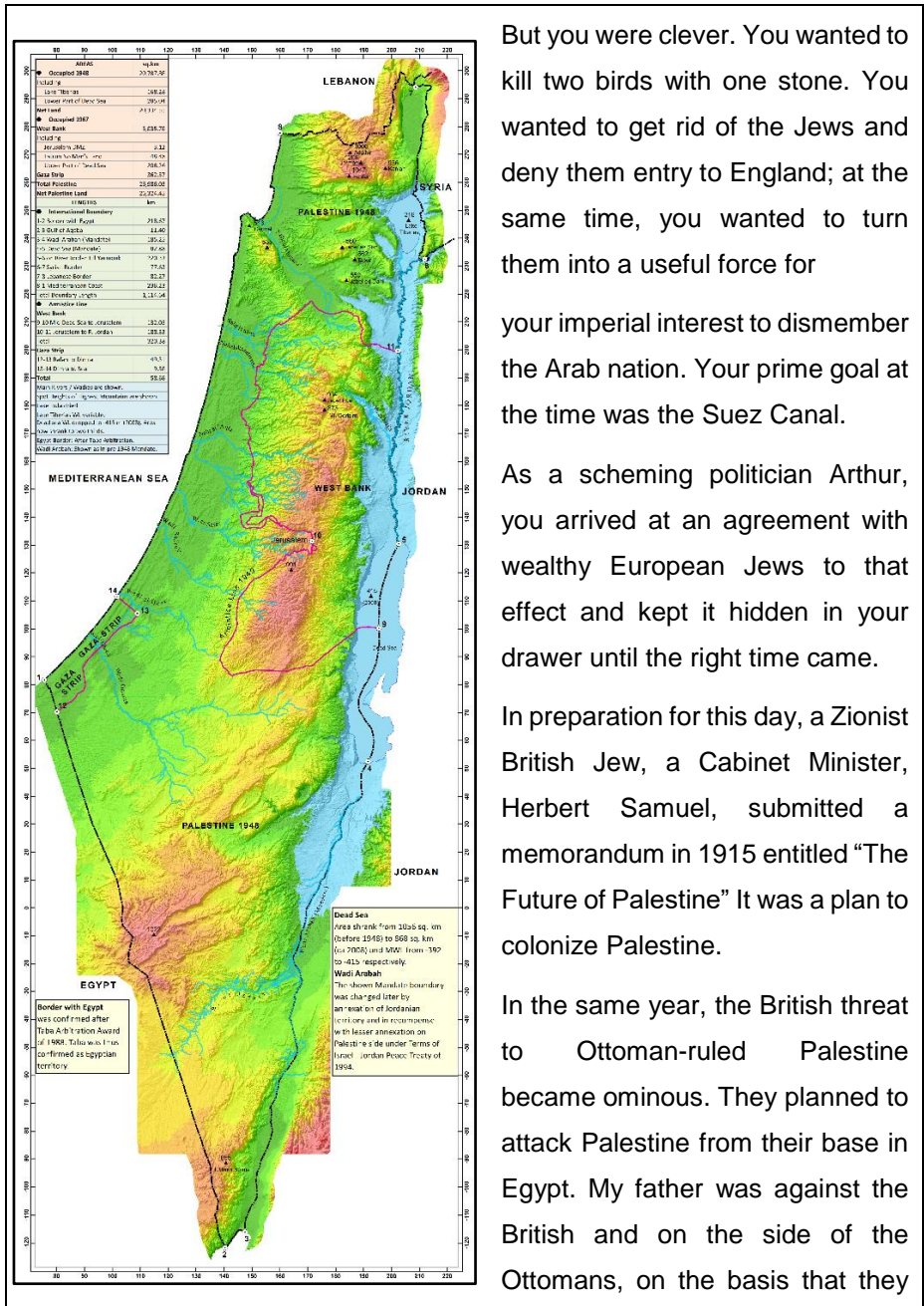
Geography Map of Palestine :

This is Palestine at the time, rich and fertile, with 1200 towns and villages. With rich land. With history over 4500 years. Not many people in Europe can claim that.

But you Arthur, the politician, befriended wealthy European Jews. They told you that if you gave them a foothold in Palestine, they would mobilise all the Jews in the world on Britain's side in the First World War. You knew, of course, or at least you should have known, this was a lie.

For one thing, the Zionists at the time did not number more than 5,000. Their new leader, Chaim Weizmann told you the opposite. He told you they were a world-wide force to be reckoned with. You knew it was not true. The Jews in many countries were silent citizens of the countries of their birth and residence.

You had in your government a witness to that, a British Jewish Minister - Edwin Montague. He was dead against your policies. He believed it was bad for the Jews, as it would strip them from their nationalities in other countries. He called Zionism "a mischievous political creed". That is what he said.



But you were clever. You wanted to kill two birds with one stone. You wanted to get rid of the Jews and deny them entry to England; at the same time, you wanted to turn them into a useful force for your imperial interest to dismember the Arab nation. Your prime goal at the time was the Suez Canal.

As a scheming politician Arthur, you arrived at an agreement with wealthy European Jews to that effect and kept it hidden in your drawer until the right time came.

In preparation for this day, a Zionist British Jew, a Cabinet Minister, Herbert Samuel, submitted a memorandum in 1915 entitled "The Future of Palestine" It was a plan to colonize Palestine.

In the same year, the British threat to Ottoman-ruled Palestine became ominous. They planned to attack Palestine from their base in Egypt. My father was against the British and on the side of the Ottomans, on the basis that they

were Muslim rulers for Muslim lands. He – my father - accompanied his uncle, Suleiman, who was a leader of 1500 horsemen from Beer Sheba, to fight the British garrison at the Suez Canal. My father saw his uncle in battle, galloping on his horse, waiving his sword, before he was gunned down by machine guns of the British.

The right time for you to reveal your secret agreement with the Jews took a little longer than you expected. Why? Because in January 1917, British forces entered Palestine from their base in Egypt.

The British had a hard time occupying Palestine. They were defeated at the gates of Gaza twice. Obviously Gaza has a history of resistance. The British lost thousands, killed and wounded, their soldiers coming from various parts of the British Empire.

It took them 6 months to lick their wounds and regroup. A new commander of the British forces was appointed. His name was General Allenby.

To recover from their defeat in Gaza, the British devised a new attack plan, to pretend to attack Gaza for the third time but actually wanting to attack Beer Sheba in the east, instead.

My family knew this [personally]. The British forces started [the third attack] from my land.

WWI Map British March to Beer Sheba :

This is a first World War map [referencing Slide 4] which says [the British] left from “Abu Sitta land”, and then proceeded to Beer Sheba to the East. And this rouse, this new attack, succeeded.

The British marched all night along this red light [featured in slide 4] and attacked Beer Sheba unexpectedly from the east.

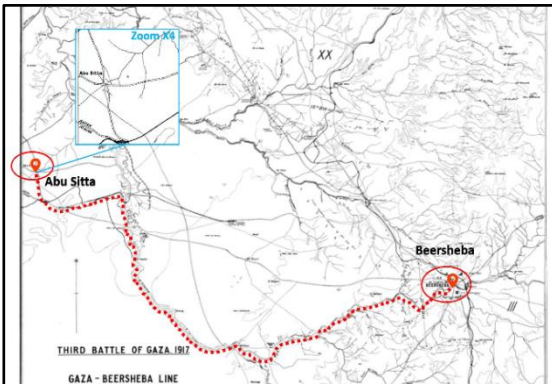
Why I am telling you this Balfour?

Because it shows how and when you made your Declaration.

At 7pm on Wednesday 31st of October 1917, the British forces took Beer Sheba. That was the first British victory in WWI. They had defeats in Gaza, as I said, twice; they had defeats in Kut in Iraq, and; they had defeats in Gallipoli in Turkey.

The next morning, the 1st of November, Allenby sent a telegram to London, saying: 'Beer Sheba is in our hands, Jerusalem will be your Christmas present.'

On the second day of November [1917], you, Arthur, received Allenby's telegram and you pulled out of your drawer a piece of paper you had already signed with the Jews and made your 'Balfour declaration' [public]. Before that you could not do that.



Now I don't need to recite for you the Balfour declaration¹ - its very clear. It was of course 105 years ago, this week.

Your Declaration was the promise of those who did not own, to those who have no title, giving away the

property of the absent lawful owners.

¹ His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment *in* Palestine of a national **home** for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the **civil and religious** rights of existing **non-Jewish** communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

Arthur, in today's world, what you have done will take you to jail, because you issued a false promissory note.

But the fraud of giving a title deed of a stolen property to foreigners was covered by the casual reference to the owners, we, the national majority of Palestine - 95% of the population. You did not mention them by name. You called them, the “others”, the “non- Jews”.

There is no point of being picky about the details of this 67-word infamous document, such as use of the word, “**home**” for Jews when you actually meant **a state**, [and that this state would not only] be **in** Palestine when you meant **on** Palestine.

However treacherous this document, you were not ashamed of it. You justified it by plainly saying this:

“For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes [– he did not say the rights -] of the present population of the county”.

Who were this population?

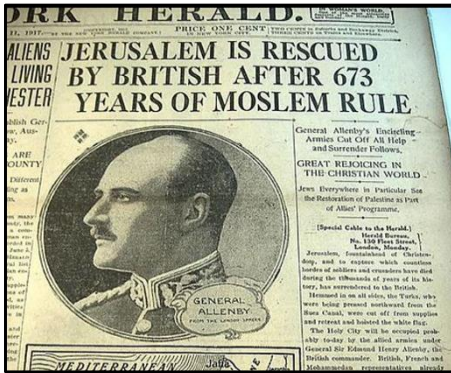
You described them....you described us, as:

“wholly barbarous, undeveloped and unorganized black tribes”.

Well, again, today, this is a racist remark – we could take you to court.

But as he promised, General Allenby took Jerusalem barely one month after your Declaration.

Newspaper on Allenby Victory :



The newspaper of Allenby taking Jerusalem was hailed in the newspaper. The headline says:

“Jerusalem is rescued by the British after 673 years of Moslem rule”.

“Great Rejoicing in the Christian World.”

And below that, **“Jews Everywhere See the Restoration of Palestine”.**

The irony is, the word Restoration is really against the Jews, because it was a code word in the 19th century to get rid of the Jews by “restoring them to Palestine.” So it was not a complement.

The newspaper figure of 637 years of Muslim rule is obviously wrong. It was 1300 years.

Yet the figure of 637 is relevant. It is near the year 673 when Umar Ibn al Khattab entered Jerusalem. He offered the population of Jerusalem the Umariyya Covenant, to assure them of peace and brotherhood.

Unlike you Arthur, Umar did not come to destroy the people or replace them. He came to make them his brothers.

Arthur, you wanted to give credence to your Declaration. And also the Jews wanted more formal recognition of your declaration. So you passed your declaration to the League of Nations in July 1922. This year is its centenary.

What is this League of Nations, which adopted and endorsed your Declaration?

It was only you and a handful of other colonial European countries. The rest of the world was absent in the League of Nations.

But the League had lofty ideas to justify its colonization. Article 22 of the League of Nations Charter proclaimed that it had a duty under “the sacred trust of civilization” to bring freedom and independence to the freed Arab provinces.

“The sacred trust of civilization”

I ask you Arthur, is giving away Palestine to foreigners a “sacred trust of civilization”?

Do you have an answer to that? Could you if you are alive?

Land and People 1917 :

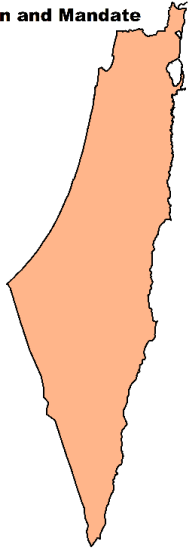
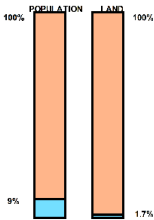
But does this map tell you that Palestine is an empty land to give away?

Does this map tell you that Palestine is an empty land [referencing the slide] where the brown colour shows the Arab population, and the blue is the Jews who were there at the time.

But in 1920, three years after your Declaration, you entrusted the administration of Palestine, to a Zionist Jew, by the name of Herbert Samuel - the same person who a few years back presented a paper to colonize Palestine. His mission was to implement the Zionist policy of taking over Palestine, under the protection of your Declaration.

Arthur by this time, you were 75. So you must have been frail. So you left the helm to a younger English colonial officer.

1917 British Occupation and Mandate



He was a thorough-bred Imperialist, a racist of the first order. His name was Winston Churchill. He followed your footsteps.

When the House of Lords rejected your Declaration by two thirds majority, Churchill, the orator – who was a very good orator - gave a resounding speech, reminding the members that your Declaration is good for British Imperial interests. And he won.

Like you, Churchill found Zionism and Jews useful for the purpose.

He, like you, derided the Arabs and scoffed at the British promises for their liberation and independence.

But for Palestinians, Churchill had special words. He dismissed their historical bond with their country altogether.

Dripping with racism, Churchill said of the Palestinian right in their country, this:

"I do not agree that the dog in a manger has the final right to the manger, even though he may have lain there for a very long time. I do not admit that right."

That is what he said about the Palestinian right to their country. We were like a dog in a manger. He does not own the manger.

That was the kind of man who followed your policy.

His protégé Herbert Samuel ran into difficulty in his first year of administration of Palestine.

I leafed through the correspondence between Samuel and Churchill in the British archives.

Reading that is astounding.

"Palestinians are protesting against the Bolsheviks (the Russian Jews) landing in Jaffa. Arabs and Jews are killed and wounded", Samuel sent a telegram to Churchill.

"Tell them we are sending a committee of Enquiry", Churchill replied.

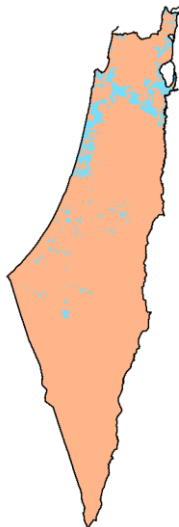
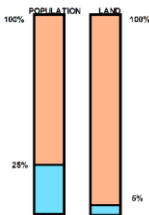
"They want Parliamentary representation" [Samuel].

"Do not mention the word representation. They are still the majority", came the reply from Churchill.

Naturally, the Palestinians revolted.

Revolts

1921
1929
1936 - 1939



Riots 1921- 1939 :

Churchill arrived in Palestine in the spring of 1921 to help Samuel. He met an assembly of Palestine dignitaries in Jerusalem, pacifying them, assuring them of Britain's honorable intentions. My father was one of them.

My father told me that Churchill assured him personally that Britain respected and affirmed their rights in Beer Sheba district, their land

ownership and traditional customs. Churchill asked him to resort to peace and not to raise a rebellion against the British. Churchill's statement to my father was confirmed by an official document from the British government.

This document was brought before an Israeli court many years later, in 2010; A Palestinian citizen of Israel in Beer Sheba, named Nuri Al Uqbi, protesting Israel's confiscation of his land, presented this document. The Israeli court dismissed it on the grounds that Beer Sheba was empty of people. Nobody lived there. Did you hear that?

But with support from Churchill, Samuel resumed his mission.

In his 5 years of tenure, from 1920 to 1925, he promulgated about 100 laws, essentially founding Israel, waiting to be announced 28 years later. Samuel created separate Jewish institutions for education, banking, power generation, public works, and particularly, a Jewish legislative council, and an embryonic Jewish army – the Haganah.

Palestinians the majority - were denied the right to do any of these things.

In 1925, you, Arthur, entered Palestine for the first time. You attended the inauguration of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, wearing the University of Edinburgh robes.

While you were honoured by grateful Jews, you did not hear the shouts and curses of Palestinians just outside, denouncing you, in Jerusalem and as far away as Damascus. Nor did it occur to you that the word "Hebrew" - which referred to a language - was a hidden [code] word for "Israel".

In fulfillment of your Declaration, Palestine's doors were now open to the influx of European Jewish settlers.

In August 1929, the Russian settlers, "the Bolsheviks", attempted to take over [the Burak (Western) Wall of] Al Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

This ignited the Great Palestinian Rebellion which lasted for three years.

Arthur, you must have heard about the Burak uprising in your final days. You must have heard about the British commission – yet another commission - sent to investigate.

In March 1930, you left our world. Arthur, I wish you had remained alive to see what happened next, and the suffering and all the death and destruction which is caused by you.

But I shall tell you what happened after that.

That is why I come here today, to haunt you and to bring your deeds to the notice of the whole world.

By mid 1930s, the number of Jewish European settlers, the “Bolsheviks”, climbed to 30% of the population of the country. Naturally, the Palestinian population rose against the threat to their existence in the country.

The Rebellion was met with utmost British brutality. The RAF bombed villages indiscriminately. People saw airplanes dropping bombs on them for the first time in history. British forces attacked the villages, destroyed their supplies and held the men captive in cages for two days on end without food and water. The art of British torture was refined: they forced villagers to walk barefooted on the thorns of the sabbar tree. Collective punishment was applied widely. Political parties were dissolved. Leaders were executed, imprisoned or deported.

The British executed the 80-year-old leader of the revolt, Sheikh Farhan al Sa'di. He was hanged while fasting in Ramadan on 22 November 1937.

That's the date of my birth.

Meanwhile, the British forces trained the Jewish militia, created elite units, known as Special Night Squad (SNS), gave them uniforms, shared intelligence with them. The British helped create the Haganah, the future army of Israel. The British brutality was copied and greatly refined by Israel today.

But the Palestinians resisted as much as they could. They had tiny means. In each village, a dozen or two young men joined the fighters in the uprising.

I know this personally. My brother Abdallah led the revolt in Beer Sheba district. With his comrades, they kicked the British out of the district for one year and set up a national government from 1938 to 1939.

But what could they do against the might of the British Empire?

The minimum estimate of Palestinian casualties was 5,000 killed, 15,000 wounded and probably 15,000 jailed. This is about 50% of the entire male adult population in the places where the revolt was [the mountainous region of Palestine], who were either wounded or jailed by the British.

That is why I always say – and will continue to say – **1939 is the British-inflicted Nakba on Palestine.**

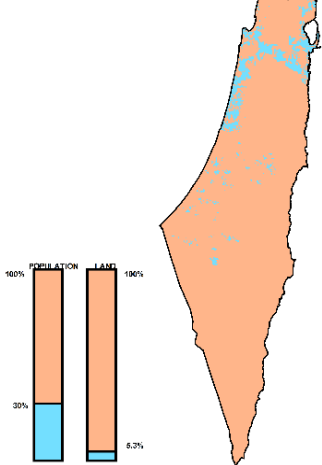
Six years later, in 1945, your country emerged from the Second World War victorious but very much exhausted. Those Jewish settlers you brought to my country decided they do not need you anymore. They wanted to get rid of you and take over Palestine for themselves.

1946 Towards the End of The Mandate :

They carried out a series of terrorist acts against you, their erstwhile benefactor. They hanged your soldiers, they blew up your buildings, and they kidnapped your judges.

1946

Towards End of Mandate



But you tolerated them. So very unlike what you did to us.

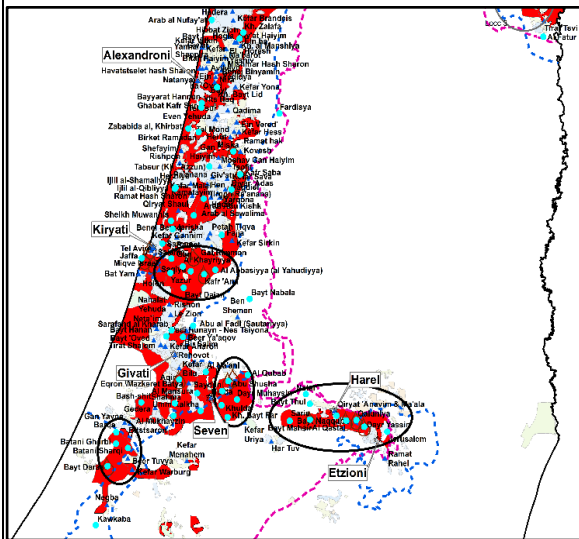
You saw them invading Palestine in April 1948. You did nothing.

The settlers' army you helped build, started the invasion of Palestine while the British were watching.

Here I give you a slide many people have not seen before.

Zionist Invasion before Nakba while Palestine under the British

Detailed map :



This is a map of Palestine in 1948. The red areas are Palestinian lands occupied by the Haganah before Israel was declared, before the British left, before any Arab regular soldier came to Palestine.

All the blue dots are villages which were

depopulated, with many of them having massacres.

[Referencing slide 9] In the squares are the names of the Brigades which did that.

120,000 soldiers in 9 Brigades, carried out 31 military operations, invading Palestine mostly while under the British rule.

Half of Palestinian refugees were expelled while the British were watching.

You watched 156 massacres in this period and you did nothing. Deir Yassin is one of them.

More than that, in April 1948, David Ben Gurion started a new kind of war. It was called biological war to pollute water resources of villages and towns with typhoid.

I wrote about this 20 years ago – nobody took notice. Last month, [Israeli historian] Benny Morris wrote about it, and everyone took notice.

We knew that firsthand.

The Haganah attacked us while your British forces were watching. They attacked and depopulated 12 major cities in Palestine and 200 villages and committed dozens of massacres while your forces were watching.

Sometimes the British forces helped the Haganah to expel people from Tiberias, Haifa and other places.

Your British forces failed to protect us against massacres in Deir Yassin, Ein Az Zaytoun, Sa'sa', Hunin, Mansurat el Kheir, Husseiniya and many others. Shamelessly, British forces failed to stop the depopulation of our main cities Jaffa, Haifa, Safad, Tiberias.

Half of all Palestinian refugees were expelled by the Haganah while Palestine was under the protection of British forces.

In April 1948, the last British civil servant rushed to leave Lydda airport in panic to catch the last civil plane out of Palestine. History has no mercy. The same scene has been repeated by the Americans in Vietnam in 1975 and in Kabul only last year. They rushed nervously, hurriedly to the last plane to take them out, leaving the people in devastation.

But there is nothing more indicative of this disgrace than the sight of Alan Cunningham, the last High Commissioner of Palestine, leaving Palestine. He left Palestine in a small boat with a British flag, fluttering at its tail, with no one saying goodbye to him, neither from the betrayed Palestinians, nor from the winning Jews.

Arthur, you owe Cunningham a big apology.

But on 14 May 1948, David Ben Gurion was busy. He addressed the Jewish settlers' council and declared his state [Israel] for the first time.

On the same day, 14 May, the Jewish militia, the Haganah - the army you trained, attacked us – in my land in Al Ma'in, the same place you saw in the map, called "Abu Sitta" .

The Jews came in force to my birthplace, in 24 armoured vehicles. We had about 10, maybe 15 rifles. They killed anyone they saw. They blew up and burnt every building and structure. They blew up my school which my father built in 1920, our mill where we make flour from wheat. They destroyed everything in sight.

I saw all this. I am an eyewitness to that. I was hiding in a ravine with women and children. I saw the smoldering remains, the debris, the ashes – I saw that, I saw that.

So, on that same day, [14 May], I became a refugee. I have been a refugee for 27,207 days.

I shall never forgive you Arthur, for this.

NAKBA- before, at Nakba, after

The Nakba is shown here briefly.



These red dots are Palestinian villages which have been depopulated by a series of massacres.

They were all expelled, so Palestine could become empty as the myth said.

The myth said that Palestine was an empty land. But it was a **plan** to make it empty. So it became empty.

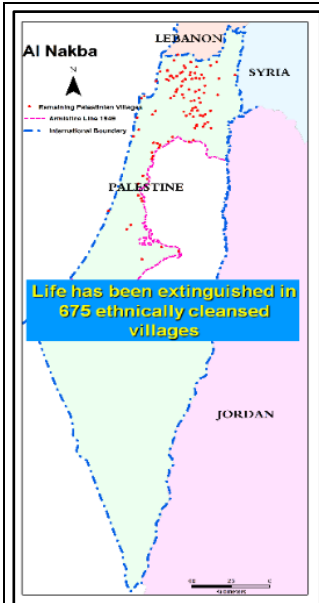
What happened to the people of these villages? They became refugees in these refugee camps [referencing third map of slide 10.]

These are the huge dimensions of Al Nakba - the depopulation of 560 Palestinian cities and villages, the entire destruction of a people who lived there for 4500 years, done by a foreign invasion of Palestine.

The remedy, naturally, would be to stop this crime and restore the refugees back to their homes. That's what we call the **Right of Return**, which we will never give up.

The [neighboring] Arab countries failed to save Palestinians in the first round. They should have tried again to erase the consequences of this Al Nakba

So, your government should encourage them to do so, or help them to do so. You are the cause of all this. It's natural that you should help them.

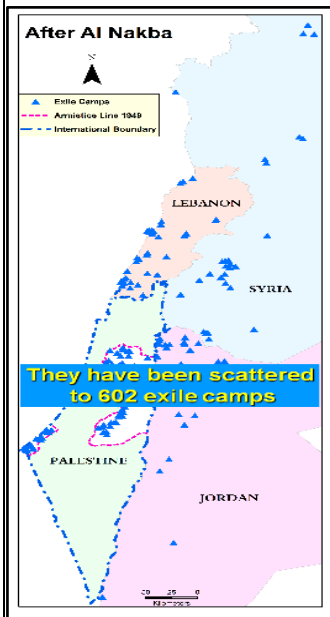


But your government reaction was just the opposite. In 1950, Britain ganged up with France and the United States and issued the Tripartite Declaration, warning the Arabs against any attempt to reverse this Nakba.

They actually ganged up against any attempt to restore people to their homes.

So then, where is the next war? Who waged the next war?

It was Britain led by the unstable Eden, in collusion with France and Israel. They attacked Egypt in 1956 to topple Nasser.



But the result was different. Eden vanished out of the political scene and Nasser became one of the three world leaders of the Non-Aligned Countries, representing three quarters of the world population.

In 1967, Israel attacked again. It occupied the remainder of Palestine, now called the West Bank and Gaza Strip; occupied Sinai in Egypt and the Golan in Syria and later south Lebanon. This occupation is now 55 years old.

1967- 2020:

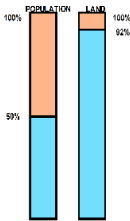
Every day since, the blood of the Palestinian people is spilled. Children and women are killed, houses are demolished, thousands are jailed, travel to families,

1967-2022

- 7,500,000 Refugees denied the right to return home.

- Two thirds of the Palestinian people are refugees.

- Over half the Palestinians are outside their homeland.



schools and hospitals are restricted. Just see the latest report by Francesca Albanese, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Palestine, which just came out. You can look also at the Amnesty [International] Report – it's the most detailed document. As students, don't miss it.

So Arthur, your legacy continues through your successors. Theresa May addressed Jews on your centenary by recalling your Declaration "with pride."

Then you have the Prime Minister with the unruly hair, Boris Johnson, declaring

himself to be "a passionate Zionist."

Now we have the newcomer, Elizabeth Truss who stated that she is "a huge Zionist". But the British people told her to get out, after 44 days.

Add to this list, the murderous legacy of the departed Ben Gurion, Rabin, Sharon and now Gantz, the Israeli war minister. He is now wanted by the International Criminal Court at the Hague, by the way.

Now, in the latest word that we get from the news, Israel has elected a most racist government – some call it fascist - and therefore they have just publicly declared their colours. We don't have to explain. They explain who they are.

Such a long criminal record is mired in the mud of your legacy Arthur.

But **we never lose hope**, just as we never lose our right to return home.

There remain righteous people among the British. Over recent years, they created a large constituency of support for Palestinian rights. And it is growing every day. Many are here today and I am proud to know many of them and work with them.

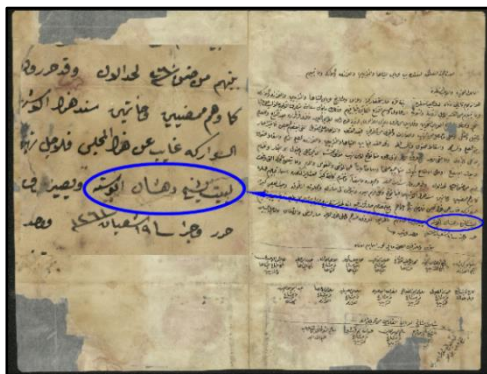
Here it is, Arthur. Arthur James Balfour, these pages of your legacy before your eyes. You have eternity to think about it, to regret it and to be punished for it.

We Palestinians lived in our country for thousands of years, before and during the invasion of many countries.

I, for one, could document my lineage in Palestine for almost 200 years.

This document [slide] dated 1845 shows the name of my great great grandfather, Sheikh Dahshan Abu Sitta,

My Great Great Grandfather:



He lived there in his country, long before the settlers from the cold hills of Russia were smuggled into my country, pretending to be the original Palestinians and we are not the original Palestinians.

The date of this document, [22 Aug 1845 which is equivalent to 19 Sha'ban 1261 Hijri featured in the slide]) is almost the same as the date of your birth, Arthur.

You were born at Whittingehame House, East Lothian, Scotland in 1848.



1848 Palestinians :

The irony is still with us. Add 100 years to this date, you get 1948 – al Nakba.

Your birth was the harbinger of death and destruction. The Holy Land became the land of blood,

destitution and a grave for humanity.

100 years after your birth, Al Nakba occurred.

Refugees of al Nakba :



Palestine was destroyed, Palestinians were depopulated. We became refugees.

Nevertheless, the Palestinians are still here. True, we are occupied, attacked, wounded, vilified,

forsaken - but we are still alive and defiant.

We were 700,000 when your infamous Declaration was made. Now we are 14 million, in and around Palestine, and scattered around the world.

Do you recall your statement [where you references us]:

“wholly barbarous, undeveloped and unorganized black tribes”.

You remember that statement about us?

Well, if you lived in our world, you would know about Edward Said, Ismail Shammout, Ghassan Kanafani, Naji al Aly and thousands of freedom fighters - known or silent heroes, defending their country.

You would know about the Nayfeh brothers, children of a small Palestinian farmer, who are now top scientists in the US. Or Bassam Dally, one of the top 2% of world scientists today – a friend of mine. You would know about the young man from the Gaza refugee camp who designed the helicopter which landed on the moon.

And the women you used to see carrying jars of water on their heads, walking from the spring to their homes. Do you know what happened to them? I'll tell you what happened to them.

Today you would meet Samah Sabawi, the playwright in Australia; Susan Abulhawa, the novelist with books in thirty languages; Noura Erakat, the eloquent Human Rights lawyer; Samia Halaby, the renowned painter. And, to top it all, Arthur – there is a new name for you - Nujoud Fahoum, a young woman who plans to be the first woman on the moon.

These are the people you made refugees.

In spite of you and your wicked promise, in spite of the crimes committed and are being committed today based on it, we Palestinians still believe that justice will triumph.

We look to a free and liberated future Palestine with the help of good people, and they are the majority.

The Future :



Today in front of this noble assembly, I remind you of the words of South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu. He said:

If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor.

A very simple rule.

But I am sure you will not be silent. That is why you are here tonight.

But only the criminal is afraid of truth

Only the criminal who wants you not to hear what we are talking about.

Therefore, I ask you to join me on this call:

I call on you, all present, to join me in this just demand:

We call on the British Government,

to apologize to the Palestinian people for their suffering.

to support the implementation of the inalienable **Right of Return** of Palestinians to their homes,

to pay full compensation for all losses and damages to the Palestinian people,

to help in the rebuilding of new Palestine and the repatriation of its people,

to teach the true Palestinian history in schools and in the media,

On all the above, we call on you present, here today, to stand by these demands,

to restore Palestine to its people in justice and freedom, as Allenby found it in 1917, and to liberate Palestine from all the ills of humanity, Zionism, racism, apartheid, occupation and war crimes.

Let Palestine be free, from the River to the Sea.

Thank you

