

## Lesson II: Broken Promises Made to Arabs and Jews during WWI

### Materials

Each student will need:

- 1) One of the following primary sources (students will be divided into groups, each group will examine a different document - see Topic 1 below):
  - a. *Sykes-Picot Agreement and Map*
  - b. *A Letter from British High Commissioner Sir Henry McMahon to Sharif Hussein of Mecca*
  - c. *Balfour Declaration, US Congress Endorsement of the Balfour Declaration, and Faisal-Weizmann Agreement*
  - d. *Excerpts from a Committee Considering the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence of 1915-1916*
  - e. *Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points*
- 2) The script for the *Who Drew the Map?: A Readers' Theater*

The teacher will need:

- 3) Overhead transparency of *Zionism and Arab Nationalism: Essential Information*
- 3) Role cards for the Readers' Theater (cut-out before class)

### Note

Please download the latest version of this lesson from [www.icsresources.org/curricula](http://www.icsresources.org/curricula). ICS frequently updates, revises, and strengthens its materials. The ICS website includes a variety of lesson plans, teacher's guides, maps, and primary source materials. Most maps and images are in color if accessed through the website. All materials may be downloaded and shared.

Sign up at [www.icsresources.org/register](http://www.icsresources.org/register) to be notified of major updates, new materials, and events in your area. Please send questions, suggestions, and requests about ICS educational materials to [bchaika@icsresources.org](mailto:bchaika@icsresources.org).

### Goals

- 1) Students will be able to describe Britain's promises to Arabs during World War I.
- 2) Students will be able to describe Britain's promises to Jews during World War I.
- 3) Students will be able to describe Britain's agreement with France to divide Ottoman lands in Southwest Asia.



## Instructional Design

### Anticipatory Set: How Does It Feel?

- 1) Ask students, “Has someone ever promised to do something that was very important to you and then broken their promise? How did that make you feel?”
- 2) If *Lesson 1* was used, ask students, “Why did the British make conflicting promises to Arab nationalists and Jewish nationalists (known as Zionists) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century? What were the goals of each of these movements (Zionism and Arab nationalism)?”
- 3) Project the transparency *Zionism and Arab Nationalism: Essential Information*. If *Lesson 1* was used, inform students that this transparency summarizes some of the key information from the previous lesson that they need to know for today’s lesson.
- 4) Have student volunteers read each paragraph.

### Topic 1: The Promises

- 1) Tell students that they will be divided into groups, each of which will examine a different set of primary sources. Their goal is to prepare a brief summary of the material for the class that explains what will happen to Ottoman lands in the Middle East following World War I according to their documents. Write this goal on the board.
- 2) Divide the class into 5 groups and give each group one of the following sets of primary sources:
  - *Sykes-Picot Agreement and Map*
  - *A Letter from British High Commissioner Sir Henry McMahon to Sharif Hussein of Mecca*
  - *Balfour Declaration, US Congress Endorsement of the Balfour Declaration, and Faisal-Weizmann Agreement*
  - *Excerpts from a Committee Considering the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence of 1915-1916*
  - *Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points*
- 3) Have groups share their summaries. Note for teachers: the title Sheriff is usually transliterated as Sharif today. It refers to a descendent of Muhammad and is unrelated to the English word *sheriff*. Emir Faisal was the son of Sharif Hussein. Original transliterations have been kept in primary source documents, but modern conventions are followed everywhere else, including document titles. For clarity, this should be mentioned to students. This occurs because names and words from other languages can be spelled in English, or transliterated, in a variety of ways.

### Topic 2: Who Drew the Map

- 1) Before class, cut out role cards from the sheet with the role cards.



- 2) Distribute each card to students, beginning with character roles and continuing with moderator roles. There are enough cards for 24 students. If there are cards left over, distribute each to a different moderator.
- 3) Distribute copies of the script for the Readers' Theater - "Who Drew the Map?"
- 4) Tell students that this Readers' Theater is an interactive experience of the events that surrounded the conflicting promises. They should follow along and read their part(s) at the appropriate time. Encourage students to read with emotion.
- 5) Have students read the script.

Closure: Justice for None

- 1) (Optional) Display the "What We Want to Know" transparency from the anticipatory set of *Lesson 1*. Have students identify questions that they can now answer or begin to answer. Have students provide answers to those questions.
- 2) Ask students:
  - a. What promises did the British make during World War I? Responses should mention the promise to give Hussein bin Ali independence for Arabs, the promise to create a Jewish national home in Palestine, and the promise to divide Ottoman lands with France.
  - b. Why did the British make conflicting promises? Which promises did they break? Responses should mention that the British wanted Jewish and Arab support during the war, but after the war they wanted to control Ottoman lands. So, they broke their promises to both groups.
  - c. In America, we believe in "justice for all." Was there justice for all in the Middle East after World War I? What does the word "justice" mean? Students should agree that there was not justice in the Middle East after WWI. Student definitions of justice might include the idea that justice is upholding what is right and fair.
  - d. Was justice possible in the Middle East after World War I? Why or why not? Responses will vary but students should be able to explain their opinions. Students who feel it was possible might say that the British could have given the area independence. Students who feel it was not possible might mention the fact that it was not possible for both Arab nationalists and Zionists to get what they felt the British promised them.
  - e. What do you think happened in the region because of broken promises and the lack of justice after World War I? Responses will vary but might mention conflict, anger, or resentment.



## Zionism and Arab Nationalism: Essential Information

Both Jewish nationalism (known as Zionism) and Arab nationalism were nationalist ideologies that emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Nationalism is the belief that nations should have their own states. A nation is a large group of people who are associated with a particular territory and believe that they share common attributes, such as a shared language, history, and culture that make them a distinct group. Nation is not a synonym for country or state. Country and state refer to a defined geographic area with political boundaries that has a sovereign (independent) government. Some countries, such as the United States of America, also use state to refer to smaller internal political units.

Zionism began in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe where nationalism had become popular. Zionists believed that the only solution to the horrific persecution that Jews faced was the re-establishment of a Jewish state in the ancient Jewish homeland. The Jewish state became the Roman province of Judea in 6 CE. When Jews tried to regain their independence in 135 CE, most were killed, exiled, or sold into slavery. However, Jews did not lose their connection to this land and to their capital, Jerusalem, where their temple had once stood. Jews expressed their connection to this land and their hope to be able to return in the future through prayer, the psalms they recited from the Bible, folktales, artwork, and song. Over time, small groups of Jews returned to the land and a small Jewish presence always remained. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the ancient Jewish homeland was part of the Ottoman Empire. Informally, the region was often called Palestine.

Arab nationalism also began in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. At this time, most Arabs lived in the Ottoman Empire, which was Turkish. The majority of Arabs shared the Muslim religion with the Turks. However, the Turks were not Arabs and nationalist ideas began to spread to Arabs in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Arab interest in nationalism began as a literary and cultural movement to re-establish the prominence of Arab culture and to promote a positive ethnic identity. As time passed, Arabs increasingly felt that they should have greater self-rule. During World War I, many Arabs felt greatly mistreated by the Ottoman government and Arab nationalists popularized the idea of independent Arab rule.

## The Sykes-Picot Agreement: 1916

It is accordingly understood between the French and British Governments---

1. That France and Great Britain are prepared to recognize and protect an independent Arab State or a Confederation of Arab States in the areas (A) and (B) marked on the annexed map, under the suzerainty of an Arab chief. That in area (A) France, and in area (B) Great Britain, shall have priority of right of enterprise and local loans. That in area (A) France, and in area (B) Great Britain, shall alone supply advisers or foreign functionaries at the request of the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States.

2. That in the blue area France, and in the red area Great Britain, shall be allowed to establish such direct or indirect administration or control as they desire and as they may think fit to arrange with the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States.

3. That in the brown area there shall be established an international administration, the form of which is to be decided upon after consultation with Russia, and subsequently in consultation with the other Allies, and the representatives of the Sheriff of Mecca.

4. That Great Britain be accorded (1) the ports of Haifa and Acre, (2) guarantee of a given supply of water from the Tigris and Euphrates in area (A) for area (B). His Majesty's Government, on their part, undertake that they will at no time enter into negotiations for the cession of Cyprus to any third Power without the previous consent of the French Government.

5. That Alexandretta shall be a free port as regards the trade of the British Empire, and that there shall be no discrimination in port charges or facilities as regards British shipping and British goods; that there shall be freedom of transit for British goods through Alexandretta and by railway through the blue area, whether those goods are intended for or originate in the red area, or (B) area, or area (A); and there shall be no discrimination, direct or indirect against British goods on any railway or against British goods or ships at any port serving the areas mentioned.

That Haifa shall be a free port as regards the trade of France, her dominions and protectorates, and there shall be no discrimination in port charges or facilities as regards French shipping and French goods. There shall be freedom of transit for French goods through Haifa and by the British railway through the brown area, whether those goods are intended for or originate in the blue area, area (A), or area (B), and there shall be no discrimination, direct or indirect, against French goods on any railway, or against French goods or ships at any port serving the areas mentioned.

6. That in area (A) the Baghdad Railway shall not be extended southwards beyond Mosul, and in area (B) northwards beyond Samarra, until a railway connecting Baghdad with Aleppo via the Euphrates Valley has been completed, and then only with the concurrence of the two Governments.

7. That Great Britain has the right to build, administer, and be sole owner of a railway connecting Haifa with area (B), and shall have a perpetual right to transport troops along such a line at all times.

It is to be understood by both Governments that this railway is to facilitate the connexion of Baghdad with Haifa by rail, and it is further understood that, if the engineering difficulties and expense entailed by keeping this connecting line in the brown area only make the project unfeasible, that the French Government shall be prepared to consider that the line in question may also traverse the polygon Baniyas-Keis Marib-Salkhab Tell Otsda-Mesmie before reaching area (B).

8. For a period of twenty years the existing Turkish customs tariff shall remain in force throughout the whole of the blue and red areas, as well as in areas (A) and (B), and no increase in the rates of duty or conversion from ad valorem to specific rates shall be made except by agreement between the two Powers.

There shall be no interior customs barriers between any of the above-mentioned areas. The customs duties leviable on goods destined for the interior shall be collected at the port of entry and handed over to the administration of the area of destination.

9. It shall be agreed that the French Government will at no time enter into any negotiations for the cession of their rights and will not cede such rights in the blue area to any third Power, except the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States without the previous agreement of His Majesty's Government, who, on their part, will give a similar undertaking to the French Government regarding the red area.

10. The British and French Governments, as the protectors of the Arab State, shall agree that they will not themselves acquire and will not consent to a third Power acquiring territorial possessions in the Arabian peninsula, nor consent to a third Power installing a naval base either on the east coast, or on the islands, of the Red Sea. This, however, shall not prevent such adjustment of the Aden frontier as may be necessary in consequence of recent Turkish aggression.

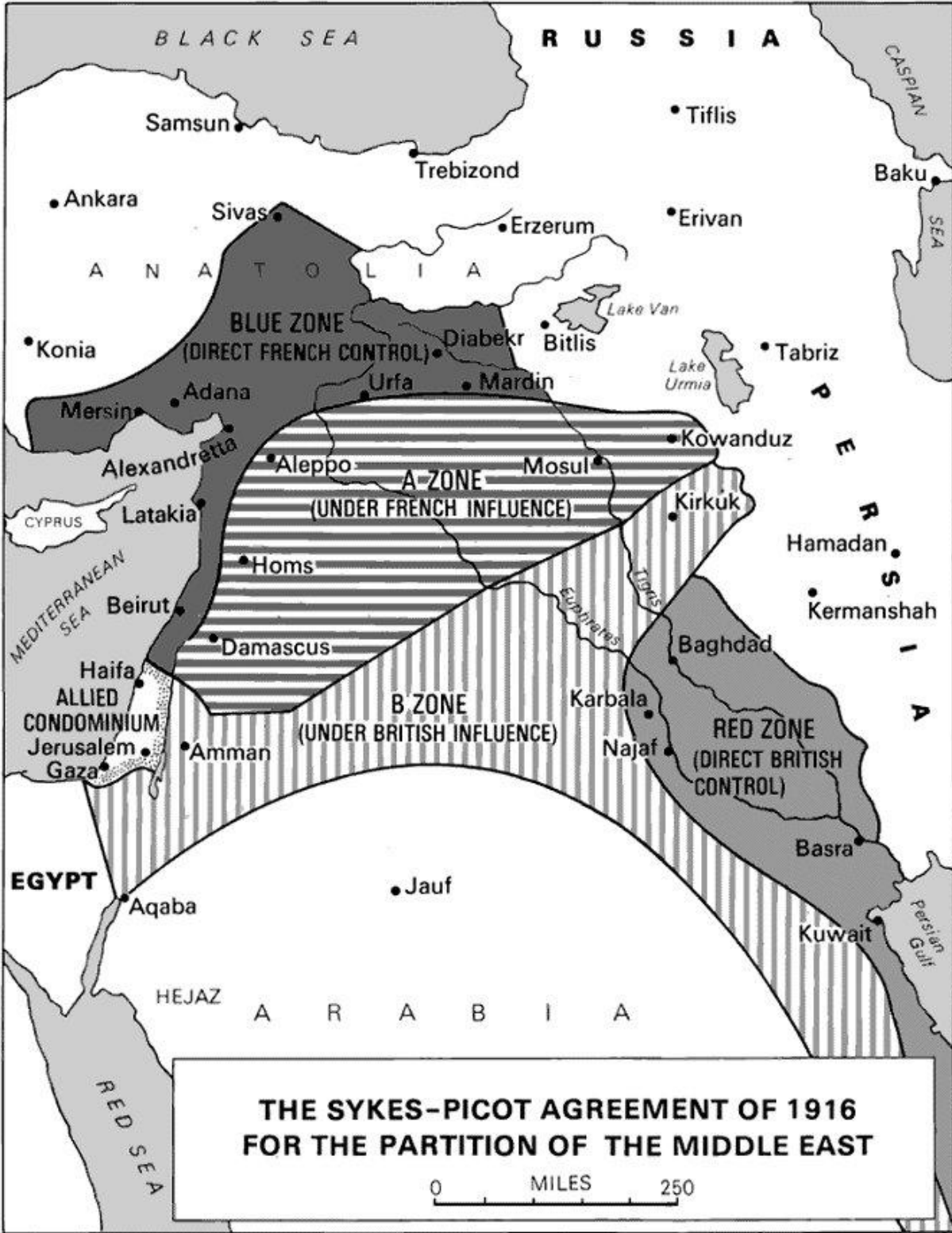
11. The negotiations with the Arabs as to the boundaries of the Arab State or Confederation of Arab States shall be continued through the same channel as heretofore on behalf of the two Powers.

12. It is agreed that measures to control the importation of arms into the Arab territories will be considered by the two Governments.

I have further the honour to state that, in order to make the agreement complete, His Majesty's Government are proposing to the Russian Government to exchange notes analogous to those exchanged by the latter and your Excellency's Government on the 26th April last. Copies of these notes will be communicated to your Excellency as soon as exchanged.

I would also venture to remind your Excellency that the conclusion of the present agreement raises, for practical consideration, the question of the claims of Italy to a share in any partition or rearrangement of Turkey in Asia, as formulated in article 9 of the agreement of the 26th April, 1915, between Italy and the Allies.

His Majesty's Government further consider that the Japanese Government should be informed of the arrangement now concluded.



**THE SYKES-PICOT AGREEMENT OF 1916  
FOR THE PARTITION OF THE MIDDLE EAST**

0 MILES 250

## **A Letter from British High Commissioner Sir Henry McMahon to Sharif Hussein of Mecca**

From Sir Henry McMahon, 24 October 1915

I have received your letter of the 29th Shawal, 1333, with much pleasure and your expressions of friendliness and sincerity have given me the greatest satisfaction.

I regret that you should have received from my last letter the impression that I regarded the question of the limits and boundaries with coldness and hesitation; such was not the case, but it appeared to me that the time had not yet come when that question could be discussed in a conclusive manner.

I have realised, however, from your last letter that you regard this question as one of vital and urgent importance. I have, therefore, lost no time in informing the Government of Great Britain of the contents of your letter, and it is with great pleasure that I communicate to you on their behalf the following statement, which I am confident you will receive with satisfaction.

The two districts of Mersina and Alexandretta and portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the limits demanded.

With the above modification, and without prejudice of our existing treaties with Arab chiefs, we accept those limits.

As for those regions lying within those frontiers wherein Great Britain is free to act without detriment to the interest of her ally, France, I am empowered in the name of the Government of Great Britain to give the following assurances and make the following reply to your letter:

1. Subject to the above modifications, Great Britain is prepared to recognize and support the independence of the Arabs in all the regions within the limits demanded by the Sherif of Mecca.
2. Great Britain will guarantee the Holy Places against all external aggression and will recognise their inviolability.
3. When the situation admits, Great Britain will give to the Arabs her advice and will assist them to establish what may appear to be the most suitable forms of government in those various territories.
4. On the other hand, it is understood that the Arabs have decided to seek the advice and guidance of Great Britain only, and that such European advisers and officials as may be required for the formation of a sound form of administration will be British.
5. With regard to the vilayets of Baghdad and Basra, the Arabs will recognise that the established position and interests of Great Britain necessitate special administrative arrangements in order to secure these territories from foreign aggression, to promote the welfare of the local populations and to safeguard our mutual economic interests.

I am convinced that this declaration will assure you beyond all possible doubt of the sympathy of Great Britain towards the aspirations of her friends the Arabs and will result in a firm and lasting alliance, the immediate results of which will be the expulsion of the Turks from the Arab countries and the freeing of the Arab peoples from the Turkish yoke, which for so many years has pressed heavily upon them.

I have confined myself in this letter to the more vital and important questions, and if there are any other matters dealt with in your letter which I have omitted to mention, we may discuss them at some convenient date in the future.

It was with very great relief and satisfaction that I heard of the safe arrival of the Holy Carpet and the accompanying offerings which, thanks to the clearness of your directions and the excellence of your arrangements, were landed without trouble or mishap in spite of the dangers and difficulties occasioned by the present sad war. May God soon bring a lasting peace and freedom to all peoples!

I am sending this letter by the hand of your trusted and excellent messenger, Sheikh Mohammed Ibn Arif Ibn Uraifan, and he will inform you of the various matters of interest, but of less vital importance, which I have not mentioned in this letter.

## **Balfour Declaration 1917**

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.

Yours sincerely,  
Arthur James Balfour

## **US Congress Endorsement of the Balfour Declaration**

September 21, 1922

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled.

That the United States of America favors the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which will prejudice the civil and religious rights of Christian and all other non-Jewish communities in Palestine, and that the holy places and religious buildings and sites in Palestine shall be adequately protected.

## **The Faisal-Weizmann Agreement (January 3, 1919)**

His Royal Highness the Emir Feisal, representing and acting on behalf of the Arab Kingdom of Hedjaz, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, representing and acting on behalf of the Zionist Organisation, mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people, and realising that the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine, and being desirous further of confirming the good understanding which exists between them, have agreed upon the following Articles:

### **ARTICLE I**

The Arab State and Palestine in all their relations and undertakings shall be controlled by the

most cordial goodwill and understanding, and to this end Arab and Jewish duly accredited agents shall be established and maintained in the respective territories.

#### ARTICLE II

Immediately following the completion of the deliberations of the Peace Conference, the definite boundaries between the Arab State and Palestine shall be determined by a Commission to be agreed upon by the parties hereto.

#### ARTICLE III

In the establishment of the Constitution and Administration of Palestine all such measures shall be adopted as will afford the fullest guarantees for carrying into effect the British Government's Declaration of the 2d of November, 1917.

#### ARTICLE IV

All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights, and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development.

#### ARTICLE V

No regulation nor law shall be made prohibiting or interfering in any way with the free exercise of religion; and further the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall ever be required for the exercise of civil or political rights.

#### ARTICLE VI

The Mohammedan Holy Places shall be under Mohammedan control.

#### ARTICLE VII

The Zionist Organisation proposes to send to Palestine a Commission of experts to make a survey of the economic possibilities of the country, and to report upon the best means for its development. The Zionist Organisation will place the aforementioned Commission at the disposal of the Arab State for the purpose of a survey of the economic possibilities of the Arab State and to report upon the best means for its development. The Zionist Organisation will use its best efforts to assist the Arab State in providing the means for developing the natural resources and economic possibilities thereof.

#### ARTICLE VIII

The parties hereto agree to act in complete accord and harmony on all matters embraced herein before the Peace Congress.

#### ARTICLE IX

Any matters of dispute which may arise between the contracting parties shall be referred to the British Government for arbitration. Given under our hand at London, England, the third day of January, one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

Chaim Weizmann  
Feisal Ibn al-Hussein.

## Excerpts from a Committee Considering the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence of 1915-1916

March 16, 1939

12. The argument of the Arab representatives, as set forth in their Memorandum dated the 23rd February, 1939, may be summarised as follows:—

(a) There is no room for doubt that Palestine was in fact and in intention included by both parties to the McMahon-Husain Correspondence in the area of Arab independence. This is abundantly plain from the terms of the Correspondence itself and is, moreover, borne out by the evidence of the historical background

(e) It cannot be (and it has never been) disputed that Palestine was included in the area demanded by the Sharif Husain as the area of future Arab independence. That area was accepted by Sir Henry McMahon *in toto*, save for certain reservations. Palestine was not mentioned in those reservations... The fact that he does not mention Palestine, either specifically or by paraphrase, makes it impossible for anyone to contend that Palestine was excluded from the area which Sir Henry McMahon had accepted as the area of future Arab independence.

(f) His Majesty's Government's contention that the phrase "the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo" included the whole of the Vilayet of Syria is untenable. It rests on the theory that *district* is equivalent to *vilayet*, which, in the light of the context as well as of common sense, is demonstrably false.

13. The contentions of the United Kingdom representatives were set forth at the second meeting and may be summarised as follows:—

(a) Palestine was in a very special position at the time of the Correspondence having in view its position as the Holy Land of three great religions, the interest which it held for Christians, as well as for Moslems and Jews, all over the world, the large number of religious and other buildings and institutions belonging to non-Arab persons, and the obvious practical interests of Great Britain in a territory so close to Egypt and the Suez Canal. The United Kingdom representatives also contend that Palestine was not a purely Arab country.

(b) The exclusion in Sir Henry McMahon's letter of the 24th October, 1915, of "portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo" from the area of Arab independence claimed by the Sharif of Mecca in his letter of the 14th July, 1915, excluded, and should reasonably have been understood to exclude, the part of southern Syria, consisting of portions of the former *vilayet* of Beirut and the former independent *Sanjaq* of Jerusalem, now known as Palestine. The United Kingdom representatives maintain on various grounds elaborated in the memorandum of the 24th February that this phrase covered an area stretching from the Cilician border to the Gulf of 'Aqaba, to the west of which lay what is now called Palestine.

(d) On the strength of this and other arguments based upon the letter of the 24th October, 1915, and other letters in the Correspondence the United Kingdom representatives contend that the effect of the Correspondence when read in the light of all the surrounding circumstances, including especially those set forth in sub-paragraph (a), was to exclude what is now called Palestine from the area in which Great Britain was to recognise and support the independence of the Arabs.

16. Both the Arab and the United Kingdom representatives have tried (as they hope with success) to understand the point of view of the other party, but they have been unable to reach agreement upon an interpretation of the Correspondence, and they feel obliged to report to the conference accordingly.

<http://domino.un.org/UNISPAL.NSF/c25aba03f1e079db85256cf40073bfe6/4c4f7515dc39195185256cf7006f878c!OpenDocument>

## President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points

(January 18, 1918)

It will be our wish and purpose that the processes of peace, when they are begun, shall be absolutely open and that they shall involve and permit henceforth no secret understandings of any kind. The day of conquest and aggrandizement is gone by; so is also the day of secret covenants entered into in the interest of particular governments and likely at some unlooked-for moment to upset the peace of the world. It is this happy fact, now clear to the view of every public man whose thoughts do not still linger in an age that is dead and gone, which makes it possible for every nation whose purposes are consistent with justice and the peace of the world to avow now or at any other time the objects it has in view.

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were corrected and the world secure once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are in effect partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The programme of the world's peace, therefore, is our programme; and that programme, the only possible programme, as we see it, is this:

- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.
- III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
- IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.
- V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.
- VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest cooperation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored, without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another.

Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

XI. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guarantees of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan states should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guarantees.

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the governments and peoples associated together against the Imperialists. We cannot be separated in interest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight and to continue to fight until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this programme does remove. We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this programme that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of pacific enterprise such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world--the new world in which we now live--instead of a place of mastery.

**Role Cards for the Readers' Theater**

<b>Selim</b>	<b>Suleiman</b>	<b>Mohammed Ali</b>
<b>Alfred Dreyfus</b>	<b>Theodor Herzl</b>	<b>Mark Sykes</b>
<b>Lord Herbert Kitchener</b>	<b>T.E. Lawrence</b>	<b>McMahon</b>
<b>Picot</b>	<b>Weizmann</b>	<b>Balfour</b>
<b>British Official</b>	<b>Sharif Hussein</b>	<b>Moderator 1</b>
<b>Moderator 2</b>	<b>Moderator 3</b>	<b>Moderator 4</b>
<b>Moderator 5</b>	<b>Moderator 6</b>	<b>Moderator 7</b>
<b>Moderator 8</b>	<b>Moderator 9</b>	<b>Moderator 10</b>

## Who Drew the Map?: A Readers' Theater

by Jackie Berman

**Moderator 1:** How did the map of the Middle East get to be the way it is today? Who drew the boundaries of the nations there and why did they draw them that way? Before we answer that question, let's go back in time.

**Selim I:** The year is 1517 and I am Selim I, ruler of the Ottoman Empire. I have conquered the lands from Turkey to Egypt; the holy cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem are under my rule.

**Suleiman:** The year is 1566. I am Suleiman the Magnificent. I am an old man, about to die. I look back on my life with satisfaction. I became the Ottoman leader after Selim and I extended the Ottoman Empire westward along the North African coast and southward to Yemen and Aden, from Algeria to the Persian Gulf, from Aleppo to the Indian Ocean.

**Moderator 2:** From the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most Arabs lived in the Ottoman Empire. The Arabs had not been united under a single Arab government since the 8<sup>th</sup> century but they were unified by the same language, Arabic, by similar cultures, and most were unified by the same religion, Islam. They were also separated by differences of laws, by differences of traditions, and by religious differences (Arab Muslims belonged to a variety of sects and there were also many non-Muslim Arabs).

**Mohammed Ali:** The year is 1840 and I, Mohammed Ali, just signed a peace treaty with the Ottoman Empire that gave my descendents hereditary rule of Egypt. I am the greatest! Just kidding, that was a quote from another famous Mohammed Ali. As the Ottoman governor of Egypt, I helped the sultan put down rebellions and fight battles across the empire. But when he did not give me control of Syria, I rebelled. I claimed to want to recreate an Arab empire, but really I just wanted my own empire. In fact, I tried to take control of the entire empire and I am not even ethnically Arab. Nonetheless, I made Arab Egypt effectively independent from the Ottoman Empire and reintroduced the idea of an Arab empire to the Arab world.

**Moderator 3:** Even after Mohammed Ali, most Arabs in the Ottoman lands continue to support the empire for a variety of reasons including support for the idea of a unified Islamic caliphate and concerns about being exploited by European imperialists. The Jews who were expelled from their land, Israel, in ancient times face continuing persecution throughout Europe. Although some were able to return to their homeland over the years, most have lived as strangers, sometimes welcome, sometimes driven out, in other peoples' lands. For example, in 1492 and 1497, the Jews of Spain and Portugal were forced either to convert to Christianity or leave. Even many who converted were later called heretics and burned alive. Many who left went to the Ottoman Empire where, although they were not treated as equals, they were allowed to practice their religion and live in relative safety.

**Alfred Dreyfus:** The year is 1894. I am Alfred Dreyfus. A great injustice has been done! I am an officer in the French Army and I have been accused of a crime, espionage. Everyone knows I am innocent. But I have been convicted because I am a Jew.

**Theodor Herzl:** I am Theodor Herzl, a newspaper reporter. Oh yes, by the way, I am Jewish, although I have never thought much about that because I live in a free country. The French government guaranteed everyone equality after the Revolution of 1789, so I believed we Jews didn't have to worry about antisemitism and discrimination against Jews. But I covered the trial of Alfred Dreyfus for my paper. It was outrageous! The man is clearly innocent, but he was found guilty because he is Jewish.

**Moderator 4:** Herzl now believes the only way to eliminate antisemitism is for the Jews to have a state just as other peoples do. He uses his writing skill to explain this idea to save the Jewish people from persecution and death. On January 19, 1896, Herzl writes his diary...

**Herzl:** "...concluded arrangements with the publisher...He grew enthusiastic when I read him a few passages from the text, which after hard labor is at last completed. I have changed the title; it is now *The Jewish State*. And I feel the relief that comes from finishing up a task."

**Moderator 5:** Herzl convinces some Jewish leaders and then others of the need for a Jewish state. The political movement to rebuild the ancient Jewish homeland, called *Zionism*, is born. It attracts Jews from all over the world who have known the fear of persecution and the yearning to live once again in the Land of Israel, now a region called Palestine in the Ottoman Empire. Jewish settlers begin to buy land in Palestine from Arab and Ottoman landowners and to settle and work the land.

**Mark Sykes:** The year is 1915. The Ottoman Turkish flag flies over Damascus, Bagdad, and Jerusalem. I am Sir Mark Sykes, a very important young person in the British Government. I have been asked by my government to come up with a plan for what should be done with what's left of the Ottoman Empire. We British already control Egypt and the Suez Canal, and we want to keep it that way. The Great War, which will later be called World War I, is in progress and we need a plan for the rest of the Middle East when the war is over.

**Herbert Lord Kitchener:** Listen, Sykes old chap, we need to get the Arabs to overthrow the Ottomans while we're fighting the Germans. This war is a nasty business, but now that America has joined our side, you can carry on with your plans.

**T.E. Lawrence:** Say, they don't call me Lawrence of Arabia for nothing! I hope my superiors in the British government understand that I promised old Sharif Hussein that if he joins our side and revolts against the Turks, we'll set him up as ruler of an Arab empire. I can't wait to go into battle with my good friend, Sharif Hussein's son, Faisal. Faisal and I are a great team and I love to ride across the desert with him on magnificent Arabian steeds.

**Sharif Hussein:** I think I can really trust the British. I have found them to be most honest. Sir Henry McMahon, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, has written me many letters and he has promised me that I will rule a great Arab empire. There will be lots of blood shed in our rebellion, but the prize is worth it!

**T.E. Lawrence:** McMahon, what are you writing to Hussein? Remember, I need him and his sons now, in 1915, to unify all the Arabs to rebel against the Turks. We must make it worth their while.

**McMahon:** Calm down, dear boy, I am writing the right things, not too specific. But, he should be in our pocket. By the way, we don't need to mention our little arrangement with Hussein to our French allies, if you know what I mean. (Picks up phone – ring, ring.) Hello, Kitchener? McMahon here. What is Sykes up to these days? Don't you think it's time for him and the French to come up with some plan for the Middle East once we have finished off the Germans and Turks? Sykes should get together with that French fellow - what's his name? Oh yes, Picot - rhymes with freak-o (ha, ha). Well, Kitchener, let's see what the two chaps will come up with. What? Lawrence? Yes, yes, he knows what to do. He can't wait, really. He actually enjoys riding around on that horse.

**Moderator 6:** The Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916.

**Sykes:** Now see here, Picot. You French can't have the whole thing, you know. We understand you want control of Lebanon on the west coast and in the north, and you want influence over the rest, but you can't have all of Syria. We British want to play a role in administering the region known as Palestine after the war. Maybe as part of an international group.

**Picot:** Ah, my dear Monsieur Sykes, with the Americans coming into the war, who knows what they might want? We'd better make this agreement right now. All right, France will take Syria, including Lebanon and Britain can have the railroad from Palestine to the east.

**Sykes:** Maybe we have a deal. Let's see, give me the map. We'll draw this border here, and this one here.

**Sharif Hussein:** Oh, excuse me Mr. Sykes and Mr. Picot, are you having a meeting? You aren't making any agreements, are you?

**Sykes and Picot:** Oh no, no, Sharif, we haven't made any agreements.

**Moderator 7:** Meanwhile, in England:

**Weizmann:** I am the Jewish scientist, Chaim Weizmann. I have gained respect for my work among the leaders in Britain, but I have a huge responsibility to help my people. Herzl's idea of a return to Zion has caught on. Every year more Jews join the movement. Many are fleeing persecution in Europe, buying land in Palestine and settling there. But we need official recognition of our right to return to Israel. The British government should make a public statement about a Jewish state. I must see what I can do. I'll call Lord Balfour.

**A.J. Balfour:** Weizmann, my dear fellow, how good of you to call. You know I admire you greatly and many of my colleagues, including Prime Minister Lloyd George and that Churchill fellow, believe in your cause. Jews have been persecuted throughout the ages. The least we can do is return their ancient homeland to them. They are working so hard to restore the land, and the conditions are so difficult.

**Weizmann:** I am overjoyed! The Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, has issued a declaration. It states that the British government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. They are calling me a great diplomat. But, I am not a diplomat. I went to Balfour as a man of the people and spoke to him of my people's cause. At last we Jews can rebuild our nation. Jews will have a home at last and the Arab people now living there will welcome us because we will make that barren land into a productive country. We can work side by side and live together in peace. I only wish Herzl could have lived to see this day.

**Moderator 8.** For a brief time, it seemed as though the goal of a Jewish national home in Palestine and the goal of a united Arab state might both be realized. Emir Faisal, the son of Sharif Hussein and friend of T.E. Lawrence, signed an agreement with Weizmann to support the Balfour Declaration's call for a Jewish national home in Palestine. However, the agreement was not supported by all Arabs and it depended on the British fulfilling their promise to create an Arab state. The British did not fulfill their promises.

**Sharif Hussein:** I have been betrayed! You British have broken your promise to me. My Syria has been cut into pieces. We no longer have a sea coast or a port. We are not independent. We will be under British and French rule now instead of Ottoman rule. And furthermore, many of my people are saying that the Jews must not have control of land in the Arab nation. Palestine is part of Greater Syria; it must remain under Muslim rule.

**British Official:** There, there, Sharif. We want to do the right thing. Since it didn't work out for your family in Syria, we'll make your son Faisal king of Iraq and your son Abdullah king of a new country we will create by giving him choice property east of the Jordan River. It will be called Transjordan. Of course, we British will help manage things there. We British will take control of the Palestine Mandate west of the Jordan River.

**Weizmann:** What? You're dividing Palestine? We thought the Balfour Declaration meant that all of Palestine could be a Jewish homeland!

**British Official:** Well, it just won't work. The Arabs are angry about allowing any Jews in the area and there are riots. From now on, no Jews can go east of the Jordan, and we will have to limit Jews coming into the Palestine Mandate if this unrest keeps up.

**Moderator 9:** And so the forces that created the new countries were set in motion right after World War I with the creation of British and French Mandates. Both the Arabs and Jews felt betrayed. Neither had yet achieved complete independence. The sons of Hussein shared power with the British. Both Arabs and Jews wanted independent states. But they had different ideas about where and how big their lands should be. The French ruled Syria by promoting divisions among various religious groups, such as the Sunnis, Shias, Druz, Christians, and Alawais. The Syrians hated the French administration, but it would be decades before the French would leave.

**Moderator 10:** In British Palestine, Jews continued to immigrate and purchase land. Arabs increasingly opposed the growth and success of Jewish settlements and Britain increasingly restricted Jewish immigration. But Jews continued to arrive and set up various agencies to provide services and infrastructure, such as schools, health care, protection, and road building. They were developing a way to govern themselves in anticipation that the British would leave. But that would not happen until after the Second World War and the effects of British and French rule would have a lasting impact on the map of the Middle East.

Sources:

*The Arab Awakening*, by George Antonius, Capricorn Books, New York, 1965.

"How the Modern Middle East Map Came to Be Drawn," by David Fromkin, May 1991.

"Blame Gulf Crisis on T.E. Lawrence," by Phillop Knightley, the San Francisco Chronicle, December 12, 1990.

*The Diaries of Theodor Herzl*, edited by Marbin Lowenthal, Dial Press, New York, 1956.

*The Siege*, by Conor Curise O'Brien, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1986.

*Asad*, by Patrick Seale, University of California Press, Berkeley