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WISHING ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY PASSOVER

"On a hot Sunday afternoon, I created Transjordan" - Winston Churchill

The Cairo Conference of 1921

by Naim Dangoor

Ever since 2 November, 1917, when Lord Balfour, under Lloyd George, made his famous Declaration regarding the establishment of Palestine as a National Home for the Jews, the bureaucrats of the Foreign Office have been working hard to frustrate the implementation of that promise.

As was recently stated by Patrick Cosgrave, official biographer of Margaret Thatcher, the Foreign Office is a law unto itself, has had a free hand in shaping foreign policy and acts independently of Downing Street.

The Palestine mandate, awarded to Britain in 1920, covered the territory on both sides of the Jordan River and required the mandatory to facilitate the close settlement of Jews in the whole area. But first Transjordan was lopped off, then Jewish immigration was severely restricted and various partition plans were put forward as to make a Jewish State not viable. The Zionists in the end were ready to accept anything to save Jews from Nazi persecution but the Arabs were adamant.

The intrigues of Foreign Office agents in Middle Eastern affairs earned it the nickname of Abu-Naji. With the French finally driven out of the region and the Palestinians set against the Israelis, British interests can enjoy the special relationship with the Arab States which has been the long-standing aim of the Foreign Office. The anti-Israel pronouncements of Mellor and Waldegrave must be seen in this light.

We, Babylonian Jewry, maintain that Jewish rights in the Middle East do not stem from the Balfour Declaration, the terms of the mandate, UN Partition resolutions or even biblical promises. The Middle East has been our habitat since time immemorial and we want our rightful share of the region.

Three thousand years ago, the centre of world power was in the Near East, with Europe and the rest of the world almost unheard of. The ascendancy of Europe began with the discovery of extensive iron ore deposits in that continent. With the decline of the mighty empires of the Near East, the region became vulnerable to outside attack. It was Alexander the Great who came out of Europe to conquer most of the known world, while still in his twenties, made his headquarters in Babylon and died there in 323 BCE at the age of 33.

Six centuries later, Judaism, in the shape of Christianity, in turn, conquered Europe. The Roman and Persian empires were the superpowers in those days, confronting each other west of Mesopotamia, where Babylonian Jewry maintained a strong autonomous state and acted as a buffer between the two rival superpowers. On many occasions the Romans tried to sway Babylonian Jewry to their side. For example, in 363, the Roman emperor Julian, who renounced Christianity, vainly tried to win over the Jewish community to his side in anticipation of his contemplated attack on Persia. He wrote to the Babylonian Jews promising, "... when I have successfully concluded the war with Persia, I will rebuild with my own efforts the sacred city of Jerusalem, that you may glorify The Most High God therein." But the Jews remained steadfastly loyal to Persia.

However, around 500, the Mazdakites took over the Persian government and started persecuting the Jews on religious

grounds. Mazdak presented himself as a reformer, teaching that since men were born equal, private property and marriage were human inventions - God, in fact, required an equal division of property and prohibited marriage. Adultery, incest and theft were thus necessary steps to re-establish the true laws of nature. The Mazdakites, supported by the Persian masses, proceeded to carry out their doctrines, particularly by sharing the wealth and the women of the upper classes. This revolutionary programme produced vast looting, abduction of women and expropriation of land. All this was obnoxious to the Jews, who were also forbidden to practise their religion, carry out *shechita*, or light Sabbath candles. The Babylonian Exilarch proclaimed independence that lasted for seven years. But his revolt was finally crushed and the fortunes of Babylonian Jewry reached a low ebb. (It is noteworthy that the Babylonian Talmud had been terminated in the year 499).

In 528, King Kavad broke completely with the revolutionary movement and killed Mazdak. Kavad thus merely utilised the Mazdakite movement in order to weaken the power of the nobility. But the Jews had had enough. By that time, constant warfare between Rome and Persia had sapped their energies and the Jews of Babylon turned their attention to the Arabs in Arabia and helped them to emerge as a force to be reckoned with, united, in due course, under the banner of Islam, itself modelled on Judaism.

The Jews invited the Arabs to come over

and gave them immense help, both financial and military, in their conquest of Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria. They also helped in organising their administration and shaping their theological matters. Omar invited the Jews to rebuild the Temple but they declined the offer saying this should wait till the advent of the Messiah. Thereupon he went down on his knees to start clearing the site and threw a quantity of coins on the rubble to encourage others in the process. As an interim measure he ordered the building of the Mosque of Omar on the holy site. (It is noteworthy that Omar's title was *Al-Farouk* (The Deliverer) and acted in the role of a Jewish Redeemer).

The period of Arab ascendancy roughly coincides with the Middle Ages in Europe. In 1096, Christian rulers went to war to regain the Holy Land from the Moslems, but after over 150 years the Crusades ended in failure. In revenge, Western agents (precursors of David Mellor and William Waldegrave) incited and helped the Mongols under Hulagu, who had a Christian wife and who was aided by Georgian Christian troops, to overrun the Middle East. The Mongols destroyed the irrigation canal system and massacred millions of civilians. What a holocaust was the fall of Baghdad in 1258! 800,000 people were slaughtered in a few days, and the waters of the Tigris ran red with blood for days.

In June 1284, Argun was elected to succeed. Gradually the power in Baghdad fell into the hands of Saad al-Dawla, a

remarkable Jew, a doctor by profession, but also a skilful financier and administrator. He became governor of Baghdad, then Wazir of the province and, later, of the whole empire. He wielded his vast power considerably and well. Under his skilled and careful hand, the finances of the empire greatly improved. Saad tried to persuade Argun to found a new religion, with the idea of bringing to an end the constant feuds between the existing faiths. The imperial service was soon filled with his relatives and co-religionists; which led a Baghdad wit at the time to complain:

The Jews with this our time a rank attain
To which the heavens might aspire in vain.
Theirs is dominion, wealth to them doth cling,
To them belong both councillor and king.
O people, hear my words of counsel true;
Turn Jew, for Heaven itself hath turned a
Jew!

In 1291, Argun died, Saad was assassinated and an anti-Jewish pogrom followed.

The Mongol connection with Europe was close. Argun corresponded with Edward I of England and in 1290 sent an envoy to London. There was a proposal for a joint attack by the Pope, England and France, with the Mongols, on Syria and Egypt. In 1400, Timurlank completed the process of destruction and the region remained desolate until modern times.

Shortly after the departure of the Crusaders, the Ottoman Turks consolidated their control of Asia Minor, which remained for 600 years a barrier between Europe and Asia, and sealed the Middle East from European encroachment. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Ottoman empire still covered most of the Middle East, where immense oil reserves were being detected and which was assuming increasing strategic importance both for land and air routes.

The strategic importance of Mesopotamia was amply demonstrated in the Second World War when, in 1941, the revolt of Rashid Ali sought to give the Germans, through Vichy Syria, a cheap access to the Indian Ocean, enabling them to join hands with Japan and outflank both the British army in North Africa and the Russian army. The failure of Rashid Ali's revolt obliged the Germans to embark on the disastrous Russian campaign but, as a result of the epic defence at Stalingrad, they failed to reach Basra. When Germany invaded Russia my late uncle, Haron Khazama, told me to write on the map

طرح على الخارطة

i.e. "the Germans are caught in the quagmire."

It is not widely appreciated by historians that the battle for Iraq took place on the island of Crete, where the British army engaged and destroyed the only German airborne division and, at a great sacrifice in men, managed to delay the fall of Crete until the situation in Iraq was under control.

The Great War

The construction by the Germans of the Berlin-Bosphorus-Baghdad (BBB) railway alarmed Britain and was one of the main causes of the Great War of 1914-1918. The dismemberment of the Ottoman empire was one of the main objectives of that war.

After the war, England stood virtually unrivalled upon the ruins of the Ottoman empire. Under the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1916, Syria was allocated to France, and Palestine and Mesopotamia to Britain. The idea was to set up local administrations in the liberated territories.

But in an attempt to cheat France out of her prize, Lawrence of Arabia encouraged and helped Feisal to take Damascus, where Iraqi exiles proclaimed Abdulla king of Iraq. But later, the mandate system was preferred. As a result, by the battle of Maysalun, the French ousted Feisal from Syria on 24 July 1920 and Abdulla was not allowed by the British to go to Iraq.

As one French writer wrote at the time: "The Feisal comedy has gone far enough. Feisal has no right to be in Syria. A man of straw set up by England. If England wishes to give him a kingdom, let her set him up in Baghdad." When the French prime minister, Georges Clemenceau, was asked what part of Syria he intended to retain and for how long, he replied: "The whole of it and for ever."

Mesopotamia, not being predominantly Arab, enjoyed relative quiet. Arnold T. Wilson, who was responsible for the country, declared at the time: "Our best course is to declare Mesopotamia to be a British protectorate, under which all races and classes will be given the maximum possible degree of liberty and self-rule." He criticised his political secretary, Miss Gertrude Bell who, with Lawrence of Arabia, tried hard to introduce an Arab amir to rule the country.

The Press led a campaign against "Indianisation" of Mesopotamia and for setting up an Arab state. These campaigns were aided by Lawrence and his friend Churchill. (The campaign against the Indianisation of Mesopotamia resulted in its Arabisation).

Arabs Rebel

In the confusion following Maysalun, refugees from the Hijazi army crossed into Mesopotamia and sought to arouse emotions against the Europeans. By August a state of war existed with the tribes of the Euphrates. After the arrival of reinforcements, the uprising was finally put down at the cost of many casualties and an estimated £40 million. The rebellion transformed British policy in Mesopotamia. Sir Percy Cox was appointed high commissioner and in an attempt to affect savings he was instructed to change the system from a "British administration with Arab advisers to an Arab administration with British advisers." In that process, all promises to the Jewish and other minorities went by the board.

The Syrian *débaçle* had repercussions also in Palestine, where an outbreak of violence occurred on 4 April 1920, which was the Jewish Passover, the Christian Easter and the Moslem festival of Nabi Musa. Sir Herbert Samuel was appointed high commissioner. Because he was a Jew he felt he had to be even-handed and made the fatal mistake of being over-cautious in implementing the Zionist programme. He was weak and hesitant throughout. Weizmann wrote to a friend, "Britain is playing with us as a cat plays with a mouse."

Samuel's most controversial action was forbidding further Jewish immigration as of 14 May 1921 and also appointing Al-Husseini as Mufti of Jerusalem. What was denied by Churchill to the Arab delegation was now achieved by force and riots.

At that time Weizmann said: "Three years ago British public opinion was distinctly in our favour but now it is being systematically poisoned against us, chiefly

by the majority of British officials on the spot who side with the Arabs in opposition to the Balfour Declaration. There is sabotage by forces working in the dark; the sympathies of the army are with the Arabs."

Churchill wrote from Nice to the Prime Minister; "The problem is one . . . Feisal or Abdulla in Mesopotamia; King Hussein at Mecca; Bin Saud at Nejd . . . King Samuel in Jerusalem . . . are all interwoven."

A Conference in Cairo

After a policy of drift persisted in Britain's approach to Middle East problems until 1921, a conference of leading British authorities was convened in Cairo and Jerusalem from 12 to 30 March, under the direction of the newly appointed Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill, with responsibilities for the Middle East. Sir Percy Cox asked permission to bring Sasson Effendi and Ja'afar Pasha "both quite unexceptionable socially." The participants had before them three main objectives: first, to consolidate gains and to effect economies through administration at the local level; second, to reconcile the different perspectives held by British officials and government agencies involved in Middle Eastern affairs; and third, to arrive at a comprehensive framework, incorporating previous commitments and existing realities.

The first item regarding Mesopotamia (the name Iraq had not received currency) was whether there was to be an Arab ruler or not. Among those considered were Sheikh Khazaal of Mohammara, the Agha Khan, and the Turkish prince Burhan-al-Din. But under the influence of Lawrence of Arabia and Miss Gertrude Bell the decision was taken to instal an Arab ruler. That arbitrary decision, which was taken without regard to the interests of the important minorities of Mesopotamia, started a process which resulted thirty years later in the mass emigration of its ancient Jewish community.

Having decided on an Arab ruler, the field was narrowed down to three candidates: the Naqib of Baghdad Abdul Rahman al-Gailani, who was president of the council of state of Iraq; Sayyid Talib Pasha, minister of interior; and Sharif Feisal, who was the British favourite. Sasson Effendi and Jaafar Pasha, finance and defence ministers respectively, were then called in and asked for their views. As expected, both agreed that of the three candidates, Feisal would be most welcomed by the country at large. Churchill rejected the suggestion that the Iraqi National Assembly should decide on the ruler and favoured a referendum. But Lawrence pointed out that it was most undesirable that Feisal should in any way carry on an election campaign in person.

(At a meeting in London, Cornwallis hinted to Feisal that he might be offered the throne of Iraq but Feisal replied, "My father, who really wants Abdulla to go to Mesopotamia, would never approve, and he and all the people would believe that I am working for myself and not for my nation, in agreement with the British. My honour is my dearest possession, and I will never allow myself to be accused of self-interest." Feisal insisted that he would not become a candidate until the claims of Abdulla had been

disposed of. With Syria and Iraq beyond Abdulla's reach, it became imperative to find him a province across the Jordan river).

Trans-Jordan lopped off

The Balfour Declaration did not contain a definition of boundaries but was by no means confined to the area west of the Jordan River. Moreover, the draft Palestine mandate covered both sides of the river as there was no separate mandate for Trans-Jordan. So in order to satisfy Abdulla it was decided to instal him in Trans-Jordan and to administer it on different lines from Palestine. The Churchill-Abdulla agreement of Sunday 27 March 1921 provided for the permanent constitution of Transjordan as an Arab province within Palestine and Abdulla was to be installed there for a trial period of six months. By July it was clear that Abdulla's performance was not satisfactory and it was thought that union with Palestine was the best future for Transjordan. But when Lawrence went to see Abdulla in Amman he persuaded him to stay on and, in the absence of any other candidate, the British government accepted this arrangement out of expediency.

Betrayal of the Jews

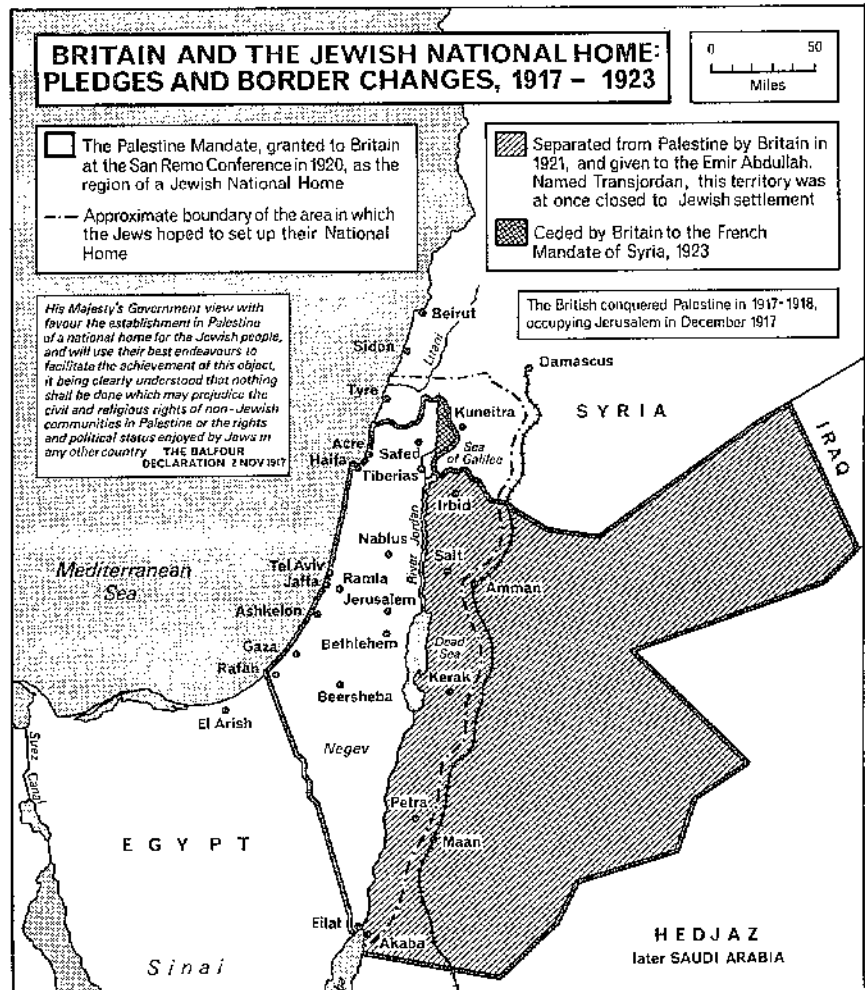
Immediately after the Cairo Conference, Britain added a new article 25 to the Palestine mandate which read: "In the territories lying between the Jordan river and the eastern boundary of Palestine as ultimately determined, the mandatory shall be entitled to postpone or withhold (*de retarder ou suspendre*) application of such provisions of this mandate as he may consider inapplicable to the existing local conditions, and to make such provision for the administration of the territories as he may consider suitable to those conditions . . ."

It is clear that Abdulla had been placated at the expense of the Jewish national home. This view was shared, for example, by Sir Alec Kirkbride (later ambassador to Jordan) who wrote: "In due course the remarkable discovery was made that the clauses of the mandate relating to the establishment of a National Home for the Jews had never been intended to apply to the mandatory territory east of the river." Even Abdulla recalled in his memoirs his success in creating the government of Transjordan "by having it separated from the Balfour Declaration."

Partition of Palestine

On 25 April 1921, Zionist leaders were informed of the addition of article 25 which they had to accept under the threat that otherwise Britain would not accept the mandate. In other words, this action was tantamount to a partition of mandated Palestine between Arabs and Jews. At a meeting on 22 July 1921, both Lloyd George and Balfour confirmed to Dr. Weizmann that by the Balfour declaration they had always meant the eventual founding of a Jewish state.

The fact that Transjordan was not included in British promises to Sherif Hussein was confirmed by Sir Henry McMahon who wrote on 12 March 1922 to the Colonial Office: "In my letter of 25 October 1915 to the Sherif of Mecca, it was my intention to exclude Palestine from independent Arabia



The boundaries of the Palestine Mandate. The Jewish State was intended to include part of Trans-Jordan. (Reproduced by kind permission of Dr. Martin Gilbert, author of "The Arab-Israeli Conflict - Its History in Maps", published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London).

. . . I did not make use of the Jordan river to define the limits of (Palestine) because I thought it might possibly be considered desirable at some later stage of negotiations to find some more suitable frontier line east of the Jordan river . . ."

The final draft of the Palestine mandate was approved by the League of Nations on 22 July 1922.

The fact that an exclusively Arab regime was constituted for Transjordan, where Jews were not allowed to immigrate or to reside, that by itself should give the Jews a reciprocal exclusivity in Palestine to the west of the Jordan.

Feisal in Iraq

After the Conference, events in Mesopotamia too were moving fast. On 17 April 1921, Sayyid Talib Pasha was exiled to Ceylon as he increasingly became a serious rival to Feisal, who landed at Basra 24 June and arrived in Baghdad 29 June. On 11 July, the Council of Ministers unanimously declared Feisal King of Iraq. On 18 August, the result of the referendum was announced, showing overwhelming support for Feisal and on 23 August, Feisal was enthroned to the strains of God Save the King.

No sooner was Feisal crowned than he started to ask for more independence. Churchill wrote in November: "I am getting tired of all these lengthy telegrams about Feisal. Six months ago we were paying his hotel bills in London; now I am forced to read 800-word messages day after

day on the question of his status. Has he no wives to keep him quiet? Let his country pay its own way before we can discuss constitutional changes."

Betrayal of the Kurds

The Conference discussed the future of Kurdistan and, despite opposition led by Miss Bell, it was decided to keep Kurdistan separate from Iraq. Hence it was decided to insert an additional article 16 in the Mesopotamian mandate to read:

"Nothing in this mandate shall prevent the mandatory from establishing such an autonomous system of administration for the predominantly Kurdish areas in the northern portions of Mesopotamia as he may consider suitable."

But the promises for Kurdish autonomy and eventual statehood which were strongly favoured by Churchill, were never implemented. Sir Percy Cox, under Miss Bell's influence, encouraged the new Iraqi government to maintain that the Kurdish provinces formed an integral part of the country. Barely two months after Feisal's coronation, Sir Hubert Young of the Colonial Office came to warn Feisal that "Britain wanted to encourage Arab nationalism but not Arab imperialism." The Arabs don't seem to know where to draw the line. In the twenties we were made to sing at our Jewish schools lamenting the frustration of the Arab nation:

"Woc to me over the fatherlands":

وَنَلَى عَلَى أَوْطَانِي مِنْ غَاةِ الْعُدُونِ
 قَدْ قَرَّمَتْ أَعْطَانِي حَوَائِلُ الدَّيَامِ
 أَلَيْ كَمْ يَا بَنِي قَدْ طَالَ الْعَصْرِ
 وَالْعِدَى لَقَدْ نَالِ مِنَ السَّعْدِيِّ
 سُورِيَا نَأَتْ وَالْمَرَاقُ بِيكِي
 أَوْ شَلِيمُ تَفَعَّى وَالْمَجَارُ يَشْكِي
 لَقَبْرَهَا شَارِي وَالنَّارُ فِي حُوَادِي
 هَلُمُوا يَا أَوْلَادِي لِنَسْفِ الْأَوْطَانِ

Syria moans, and Iraq bewails;
 Jerusalem groans, And Hijaz complains.
 Now, with 21 independent states and
 rich in oil wealth, they still don't seem to
 be satisfied. They want more - they want
 all.
**THUS THE TRUTH IS THAT THE
 PROBLEM IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS
 NOT ZIONISM BUT ARAB IMPERIAL-
 ISM.**

Gertrude Bell and T.E. Lawrence were
 freelance adventurers who were in love

with the Arabs and who allowed their
 hearts to rule their heads. In April 1916,
 when General Townsend and his army
 were trapped in Kut, Lawrence came and
 offered a bribe of £2 million to Khalil
 Pasha and General von Goltz for letting
 the prisoners go, but they refused. Law-
 rence carried out a few spectacular adven-
 tures with the Bedouin tribes, but his
 exploits were greatly exaggerated. How-
 ever, he and Miss Bell exerted great
 influence on the politics of the Middle East
 before, during and after the Cairo Confer-
 ence. The region was shaped mainly
 according to their wishes and designs.
 Churchill's fault was that he relied too
 heavily on Lawrence's advice. The Arabs
 were the main beneficiaries, who suc-
 ceeded beyond their wildest dreams and
 who are still bent on the full arabisation of
 the region and the elimination of Israel. In
 January 1919, when the Weizmann-Feisal
 accord was signed, the Arabs needed
 Zionist help in international lobbies. Now
 they look on the Jews as a threat to Arab
 hegemony.

As one Foreign Office assistant wrote in
 the 1950s: the world would be safer if Bell
 and Lawrence were not so persuasive with
 their superiors. (*The Times*, 5.7.86, in an

article by V.H.F. Winstone, biographer of
 Gertrude Bell).

Is it too late to undo the damage they
 have done?

The Ottoman empire was badly par-
 titioned after the 1914-18 war. It is
 necessary, therefore, to reorganise not
 only Palestine but the whole Middle
 East●

Arabs and Jews

Extracts from the letter dated
 3.3.1919 from Sherif Feisal, head of
 Arab Delegation at the Peace Confer-
 ence to Felix Frankfurter, legal adviser
 to the Zionist Delegation:

We feel that the Arabs and Jews are
 cousins in race, suffering similar oppres-
 sions at the hands of powers stronger
 than themselves, and by a happy coinci-
 dence have been able to take the first
 step towards the attainment of their
 national ideals together.

We Arabs, especially the educated
 among us, look with the deepest sym-
 pathy on the Zionist movement. Our
 deputation here in Paris is fully ac-
 quainted with the proposals submitted
 by the Zionist Organisation to the
 Peace Conference, and we regard them
 as moderate and proper.

We will do our best, insofar as we are
 concerned, to help them through; we
 will wish the Jews a most hearty wel-
 come home.

Dr. Weizmann has been a great
 helper of our cause, and I hope the
 Arabs may soon be in a position to
 make the Jews some return for their
 kindness. We are working together for a
 reformed and revived Near East, and
 our two movements complete one
 another. The Jewish movement is nation-
 al and not imperialistic. Our move-
 ment is national and not imperialistic;
 and there is room in Syria [which
 included Palestine] for us both. Indeed,
 I think that neither can be a real success
 without the other.

I look forward, and my people with
 me look forward, to a future in which
 we will help you and you will help us, so
 that the countries in which we are
 mutually interested may once again
 take their place in the community of
 civilised peoples of the world●

The Scribe: This remarkable letter
 shows clearly that the Zionists did not
 embark on their work in Palestine
 without being mindful of the wishes and
 welfare of the Arab world. The views
 expressed by Feisal, the then acknow-
 ledged leader of the Arabs and the
 bearer of their hopes, were the result of
 several discussions.

It is true that Feisal's co-operation
 with the Zionists was conditional on the
 Arabs obtaining their full demands, but
 the point is that the Arabs were not
 opposed *in principle* to Palestine be-
 coming a Jewish State. Now that the
 Arabs have prospered and succeeded
 beyond their wildest dreams, they want
 to deny the Jews their rightful share of
 the region●

Weizmann's Letter to Churchill Regarding Transjordan

1 March 1921

May I bring to your attention a matter of vital importance to the economic future of Palestine and the upbuilding of the Jewish National Home. It is the question of the eastern and southern frontiers. It was assumed that so far as the territory in the east was brought within the British sphere, the needs of the Jewish National Home would be fully satisfied.

However, certain parts of the address delivered to the Sheikhs assembled at Es Salt last August, by His Majesty's High Commissioner, which might perhaps be interpreted as suggesting the possible separation of Trans-Jordania from Cis-Jordania, were the cause of some misgiving, but it was taken for granted that those remarks were not intended to foreshadow a fundamental change in the policy of His Majesty's Government and that they were not meant to do more than adumbrate the possible division of the country for administrative purposes into two parts - Western and Eastern Palestine. It was, none the less, expected that even should this eventuate, Trans-Jordania would still fall under the general provisions of the Palestine Mandate. It is quite appreciated, however, that the administrative control of the mandatory might assume a looser form in Trans-Jordania than in Cis-Jordania, and that the local customs and institutions might be modified gradually as Zionist colonisation proceeded. The Jewish colonists, moreover, could not expect the same security for life and property in Eastern Palestine as in Western Palestine. They would, like pioneers in all countries, be expected to defend their settlements from raids and local disturbances. The opening of Eastern Palestine to Jewish colonisation would consequently, far from aggravating the military burden of the mandatory, offer the most promising prospect of its gradual reduction and ultimate surcease, for it is only through a permanent settlement of a peaceful population upon the Trans-Jordanian plateaux that the problem of the defence of the whole Jordan Valley can be satisfactorily solved.

But if it is thought advisable to provide a corridor (for the Hedjaz Railway) between Palestine and the desert, it should none the less be clearly recognised that the fields of Gilead, Moab and Edom, with the rivers Arnon and Jabbok, to say nothing of the Yarmuk, the use of which is guaranteed under the recently signed convention, are historically and economically linked to Palestine, and that it is upon these fields, now that the rich plains to the north have been taken from Palestine and given to France, that the success of the Jewish National Home must largely rest. Trans-Jordania has from earliest times been an integral and vital part of Palestine. There the tribes of Reuben, Gad and Manassah first pitched their tents and pastured their flocks. And while Eastern Palestine may probably never have the same religious and historic significance as Western Palestine, it may bulk much larger in the economic future of the Jewish National Home. Apart from the Negeb in the south, Western Palestine has no large stretches of unoccupied land where Jewish colonisation can take place on a large scale. The beautiful Trans-Jordanian plateaux, on the other hand, lie neglected and uninhabited save for a few scattered settlements and a few roaming Bedouin tribes.

The climate of Trans-Jordania is invigorating; the soil is rich; irrigation would be easy; and the hills are covered with forests. There Jewish settlement could proceed on a large scale without friction with the local population. The economic progress of Cis-Jordania itself is dependent upon the development of these Trans-Jordanian plains, for they form the natural granary of all Palestine and without them Palestine can never become a self-sustaining, economic unit and a real National Home. The aspirations of Arab nationalism centre about Damascus and Baghdad and do not lie in Trans-Jordania.

It is confidently hoped, therefore, that there will be no thought of any further diminution of the legitimate claims of Palestine when the eastern and southern frontiers come under discussion. The unsatisfactory character of the settlement in the north makes it all the more vital that the Jewish National Home be generously dealt with on the east and south.

LETTERS

From the Haham:

My dear Naim,

I have just received your February issue of *The Scribe* and I must congratulate you and your editor on this publication.

I consider your article on Arabs and the Holocaust to be of great importance. So much so that I have exhibited this article here at Yeshiva University so that the students could learn the truth about the Arabs. I am also very impressed by your letter about peace with the Arabs. You are quite right in saying that efforts to make peace with the Palestinians would be useless unless all Arabs subscribe to the agreement.

New York

Dr. Solomon Gaon

From Dr. Wiesenthal:

We received a copy of your journal from a London friend, and we would be happy to receive it regularly from you since it is a very interesting publication. I enclose our annual report of January 1988; the 1989 report will be mailed to you as soon as we get it from the printer.

With my best regards and wishes

Salztorgasse 6/IV/5

Vienna

Simon Wiesenthal

Documentation Centre

Percy Gourgey's article, "The Timbrel of Miriam", made interesting reading.

Unfortunately, education amongst the older generation of parents is so lacking and the involvement within the assimilated society so intense, that there is just no way parents in their middle years seem to want to find out a little more about our Jewish heritage. We are so comfortably off in Britain - no-one is forcing our Judaism on us, quite the reverse. All we want to do is be rid of any responsibilities towards Judaism; it becomes a cumbersome burden to carry.

I have only admiration for young people who have made a conscious commitment to their heritage and are trying to improve their level of Jewishness. In my own small way (I have two sons studying at Yeshiva) I think I have raised the timbrel just a little bit and made a small sound towards education and Torah study.

Montreux, Switzerland

Sheila Lyons

I would have thought that *The Scribe* would have been more precise than the *Jewish Chronicle* was, in reflecting in its report the solemn memorial service to commemorate the 9 Jews who were hanged in Baghdad 20 years ago.

The *Jewish Chronicle* omitted the participation in this service of Dayan Toledano, Rabbi Abraham Gabbay and myself. Your journal improved on this by omitting only my name.

Senior Hazan

Rev. Halfon Benarroch

of the Spanish & Portuguese

Jews' Congregation

Moshe Kahtan's article "Any more advice for Israel" in the March issue is excellent. The subject could not be treated more clearly and brightly.

Pinner

Shlomo Akerib

I am an American Jew of Sephardi lineage, and I have recently received a copy of *The Scribe*. First, I would like to congratulate you on having a publication which seeks to unify all the Jews of Babylonian heritage.

Secondly, I would like to alert you to some coming events of which your readership may not be fully familiar. 1992 marks the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of the New World by Christopher Columbus and his Spanish crew. Over 40 nations and many local and regional organisations will be celebrating the Quintcentennial. Of course, for us, the Jewish people, the anniversary is a double event as 1492 was not only the year of the first Columbus voyage, but also of our expulsion and exile from Spain.

These events were very much inter-related and intertwined. Sephardi Jews participated in the navigational work which Columbus did prior to his journey; provided the financing for the journey; and at least three of his total crew of 87 were of Jewish origin. There is substantial historical evidence that Columbus himself may have been born of a "Converso" or "Marrano" family. And while Columbus' origins are in doubt, there is no doubt that Jews and former Jews forcibly converted to Catholicism made up an important segment of the earliest European settlers to the Americas.

"Project Sepharad" is an attempt to establish a Jewish initiative and Jewish agenda for the Quincentennial. There is an international Committee under the leadership of Minister Yitzhak Navon to promote this idea, and to assure Israeli/Jewish participation in all of the events that the Quincentennial may spawn, including the 1992 World's Fair at Seville, Spain. Israel has already signed an agreement with the OAS for a photographic exhibit of the early Jewish Temples which were Sephardi, in the Americas and the Caribbean.

We are hopeful of having full Jewish participation in Project Sepharad, both in the United States and internationally. We want Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews all to mark 1992 as a special time for a reminder of the wonder of our heritage. The year is an important symbol of the durability of our people, and our willingness to overcome adversities of every kind, to adhere to our ritual, our love of God and the desire for Zion.

An article which appeared in your January edition caused me especially to write this message. In an unsigned report on The Shroud of Turin, the author points out that Christian anti-semitism is due to the fact that we do not wish to be converted. Never was that more obviously true than at the time of the Spanish Inquisition. Death was often the penalty for those who clung to their ideological beliefs.

1992 is a good time for us to lead the way, as you suggest, to ecumenism and the true fundamental values of Judaism and its spiritual heirs, Christianity and Mohammedanism.

D. David Cohen
515 Park Avenue American Sephardic
New York, N.Y. 10022 Federation

I should be grateful if you put my name on the mailing list for *The Scribe*.

It was at the JIP (Jordan is Palestine) meeting in the House of Commons on 1 March last that I met Gourgey and Elias from Iraq; and they told me to make the above request to you.

Please find herewith the translation of some Welsh verses of mine which were published last January in *The Welsh Weekly*. They are the tribute of a "goy" to his beloved Jewish friends. May the wings of THE ETERNAL ONE cover the House of Israel:

**Shall every kindred find a home on earth,
But none for Judah's Sons of Royal
Birth?**

**If ISRAEL hath no Land to call its own
Is there in Heav'n a place for God's Own
throne?**

**The dark design of evil men reprove,
The envy of The Nations now remove;
The wrongful woe 'gainst Zion, LORD,
rebuke:**

**On Israel's Ancient House Thy weal
invoke**

Swansea, Wales

Gruffydd Thomas

I come from one of the oldest families of Baghdad. My father, the late Dr Mirza Yacoob, was the first Jewish doctor in Baghdad and I was the first qualified engineer of Jewish faith in Iraq.

I was very interested in your Journal and would appreciate it if you could send me any past copies and future editions.

I own a house in London but am resident in Canada now with my family.

Hamilton, Ontario Naim Mirza Yacoob

I have been borrowing *The Scribe* from my sister-in-law; and I am enjoying reading it tremendously, because I think it is the nicest and the most comprehensive journal ever written about the Babylonian Jewry. So please could you be kind enough to put my name on your mailing list.

Wembley

Sion Shayek

What we need to protect is the right to tell the truth - not the right to say anything.

N.E.D.

BRIDGE

by bridge builder

Two wrongs do not make a right

Long before penicillin was discovered, we used to say in Baghdad: *enjassa teqla'a enjassa* - meaning, one kind of bacteria will kill off another kind of bacteria, and infections were often cured by the application of cheese or yogurt culture. But in Bridge this principle doesn't work and one mistake cannot be cured by committing another mistake.

The other day, G. was playing with L., who opened 1 diamond. Finding a fit in the suit, G. made the Blackwood slam enquiry of 4 no trumps. But because L. thought she had made a mistake by opening light, she made another mistake by passing 4 no trumps. In the end they made all 13 tricks, but missed bidding the grand slam.

I keep telling them one mistake doesn't cure another mistake, and two wrongs do not make a right.

Passover Fare

by Renée Dangoor

Chocolate Cake

- ½lb bitter or plain chocolate
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ¼lb ground almonds
- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 6 eggs, separated
- Caster sugar to decorate
- 1 tablespoon butter
- Potato flour

Melt the chocolate with the milk in a double saucepan over boiling water.

Mix the melted chocolate with the ground almonds, sugar and egg yolks, and beat well.

Fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites and pour into a buttered and floured cake tin, preferably one with a reasonable base.

Bake in preheated oven (Gas mark 4 = 350°F = 175°C) for ¾ to 1 hour.

When cake is cool, turn out, and sprinkle with caster sugar.

Almond Macaroons

- 1lb almonds
- 12oz sugar
- 3 whites of egg (or 2 whole eggs)

Knead at night, then next day shape into rounds with rosewater on hands.

Put onto greaseproof paper, and into oven Gas mark 5 = 375°F = 190°C

To remove paper use rosewater or water on back.

Peach Clafonti

Sprinkle a well-buttered 1½-quart shallow oval baking dish with 2 tablespoons sugar.

Distribute 3 cups sliced peeled peaches over the sugar.

In a blender, mix 1 cup each of milk and light cream, 3 eggs, ¼-cup flour and a pinch of salt for 2 minutes. Add 3 tablespoons sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla, blend for a few seconds and pour it over the fruit.

Bake the Clafonti in a preheated moderately hot oven (Gas mark 5 = 375°F = 190°C) for 45-50 minutes, or until it is well puffed and golden.

Sprinkle the Clafonti with sifted icing sugar or vanilla sugar, and serve it barely warm.

Years of Birth

- 1841 Georges Clemenceau
- 1848 Lord Balfour
- 1852 Lord Asquith
- 1856 Sherif Huscain
- 1859 Lord Curzon, Foreign Secretary
- 1861 Lord Allenby, High Commissioner for Egypt.
- 1862 Sir Henry McMahon
- 1863 Lloyd George, Prime Minister
- 1868 Gertrude Bell
- 1870 Sir Herbert Samuel
- 1874 Winston Churchill, Dr. Weizmann
- 1880 Abdul Aziz ibn Saud
- 1882 King Abdullah, Jaafar Al-Askari
- 1883 Sir Kinahan Cornwallis
- 1884 Sir Arnold Wilson
- 1885 King Feisal
- 1888 T. E. Lawrence, Nuri al-Said

Spot an Ancestor

FINAL LIST of military taxpayers of the Baghdad Community of 1892.

Meir Eliahu Shlomo Dawid
 Shaul Hakham Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Sasson Hakham Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Yisshaq Saleh Eliahu Shlomo Dawid
 Menashe Saleh Eliahu Shlomo Dawid
 Aboudi Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Dawid Rahamim Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Saleh Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Shalom Moshe Shlomo Dawid
 Rahamim Heskell Shlomo Dawid
 Shabethai Meir Shabethai
 Mordechai Heskell Shabethai
 Heskell Meir Hakham Shabethai
 Efrayem Meir Shabethai
 Shaul Heskell Shmuel Shennakha
 Mordechai Hougi Mordechai Shennakha
 Dawid Shlomo Abraham Shmuel
 Yisshaq Shlomo Abraham Shmuel
 Abraham Shlomo Shmuel
 Heskell Ezra Shmuel
 Yosef Ezra Shmuel
 Yisshaq Ezra Shmuel
 Menashe Abdulaziz Shmuel
 Heskell Yisshaq Shlayem
 Nahom Dawid Shkouri
 Rfael Muallem Shaul
 Heskell Moshe Shami
 Heskell Sasson Shembikhov
 Yacoub Sasson Shembikhov
 Yacoub Shlomo Shemash
 Heskell Shlomo Shemash
 Shaul Shlomo Shemash
 Heskell Dawid Shemash
 Saleh Sasson Shemash
 Reuben Yisshaq Eliahu Shemash
 Ezra Abdulla Shemash
 Shimeon Mordechai Shemash and Sons
 Heskell Elia Menahem Shemash
 Elia Abraham Menahem Shemash
 Ezra Mordechai Elia Menahem Shemash
 Aharon Sasson Saleh Shemash
 Yosef Reuben Saleh Shemash
 Yacoub Hakham Moshe Shemash
 Abraham Hakham Moshe Shemash
 Shaul Yisshaq Shemash
 Yacoub Yisshaq Eliahu Shemash
 Yosef Dawid Shemash
 Rahamim Dawid Shemash
 Heskell Dawid Shemash
 Shlomo Yamen Heskell Yamen Shemash
 Moshe Yamen Shemash and Sons
 Saleh Aharon Yamen Shemash
 Heskell Aslan Shemash
 Ezra Aslan Shemash
 Saleh Aharon Shemash
 Selman Aharon Shemash
 Shlomo Abd leEzer Shemash
 Ezra Eliahu Shemash
 Shua'a Ezra Shemash
 Dawid Abdulla Shemash
 Meir Yisshaq Nuriel Shemash
 Mordechai Dawid Mordechai Shemash
 Barukh Yehuda Shuwa'a
 Shaul Yehuda Shuwa'a
 Yosef Mordechai Yosef Shayeb
 Yacoub Reuben Shohet
 Yisshaq Reuben Shohet
 Menashe Reuben Shohet
 Abraham Eboudi Shohet
 Yehuda Eboudi Shohet
 Heskell Eboudi Shohet
 Yisshaq Eboudi Shohet
 Dawid Aharon Shalom H. Ezra Shohet
 Heskell Ezra Elisha'a Sasson (3 E's Sassoon)
 Eliahu Elisha'a Sheikh Sasson
 Eliahu Shimeon Sheikh Sasson
 Saleh Elisha'a Sheikh Sasson
 Benyamin Yehuda Sheikh Sasson
 Abraham Yehuda Sheikh Sasson
 Heskell Yehuda Sheikh Sasson

Yosef Heskell Shem Tob
 Menashe Yosef Yisshaq Shem Tob
 Mrad Reuben Shem Tob and brother
 Yosef Yisshaq Shem Tob
 Yisshaq Yosef Shem Tob
 Moshe Hayim Yisshaq Shem Tob
 Heskell Nessim Shasha
 Moshe Nessim Shasha
 Shalom Nessim Shasha
 Saleh Nessim Shasha
 Hayim Nessim Shasha
 Shuwa'a Heskell Nessim Shasha
 Shlomo Saleh Shasha
 Moshe Yosef Shasha
 Sasson Meir Shasha
 Shaul Menashe Shasha
 Aharon Saleh Mordechai Shasha
 Sasson Dawid Shasha
 Aharon Dawid Shasha
 Abraham Ezra Dawid Shasha
 Hayim Dawid Shasha
 Aharon Dawid Shasha
 Sasson Reuben Shasha
 Yacoub Yosef Shasha
 Dawid Moshe Shasha
 Shaul Moshe Shasha
 Shlomo Moshe Shasha
 Abraham Saleh Mordechai Shasha
 Yosef Yacoub Yisshaq Shirazi
 Saleh Yacoub Yisshaq Shirazi
 Menahem Shlomo Shirazi
 Aharon Shlomo Shirazi
 Rahamim Abraham Shina
 Shina Abraham Shina
 Ezra Abraham Shina
 Heskell Abraham Shina
 Yosef Shina Abraham Shina
 Menashe Shina Abraham Shina
 Abraham Shalom Shina
 Yosef Aslan Shina
 Menashe Saleh Shalom Shina
 Yisshaq Ezra Saleh Sharbani
 Yosef Hayim Saleh Sharbani
 Heskell Yosef Ezra Sharbani
 Dawid Rahamim Sharbani and Sons
 Hougui Elia Sharbani
 Ezra Matuq Sharbani
 Eliahu Matuq Shahrabani
 Heskell Matuq Shahrabani
 Efrayem Yosef Shahrabani
 Shimeon Yosef Shahrabani
 Selman Ezra Shahrabani
 Yisshaq Ezra Shahrabani
 Yacoub Ezra Shahrabani
 Menashe Abdulla Shahrabani
 Shaul Abraham Shahrabani
 Abdulla Abraham Shahrabani
 Heskell Abraham Shahrabani
 Aharon Yacoub Shater
 Abraham Yisshaq Tawfiq
 Hayim Shua'a Tawfiq
 Abraham Shua'a Tawfiq
 Nessim Saleh Tawfiq
 Reuben Moshe Taja
 Heskell Meir Hayim Tutunchi
 Abraham Shalom Shimeon Tukka

Abraham Sofaer in Baghdad

Judge Abraham Sofaer, legal advisor to the U.S. State Department, arrived in Baghdad last month on a week's visit at the head of an American delegation to find means of strengthening the ties and enhancing the cooperation between the two countries.

Judge Sofaer, who is of Iraqi origin, met various Iraqi leaders in the company of the U.S. Ambassador to Baghdad.

Thoughts on Passover

by Percy Gourgey

The 8-day festival of Pesach is so rich in significance and symbolism that it is not surprising it has such an appeal for adults and children alike. The writing and illustrating of Hagadoth, which tells the story of the Exodus from Egypt, *zeman herutenu*, or "the Season of our Freedom", have become a unique Jewish art-form.

One of the most important sentences in the Hagada is that which says that "in every generation every Jew must look upon himself as if he personally had come out of Egypt!" (Of course, Jew means Jewess as well, for, to use legal phraseology, "he embraces she"!)

This is because he would then appreciate the meaning of Freedom all the more. For over two centuries our Hebrew ancestors had been slaves in Egypt, labouring every day, without respite. That is why the Sabbath, which we were enjoined to observe in the Ten Commandments, is universally recognised as one of the greatest boons to labour ever conceived of. The Exodus is also recognised as the first well-organised national liberation in history.

What is often overlooked is that when Moses demanded of Pharaoh to "let my people go", *shelach et-ami*, he completed the sentence, as commanded by God, *ve-avdooni*, "that they may serve me". So Passover is not complete without the Festival of Shavuoth, seven weeks later, when our forefathers were given the Torah, including the Ten Commandments, on Mount Sinai. (In the same way scholars maintain, we should not think of the Holocaust, the greatest tragedy to befall the Jewish people, without also thinking of the rise of the State of Israel, three short years later, the greatest triumph of the Jewish people in nearly 2,000 years).

The great Rambam (Moses Maimonides) viewed the period between Pesach and Shavuoth, called the counting of the Omer, in a manner similar to that of a lover who counts the days till he meets his loved one!

Although Moses was the man who led the Hebrews out of Egypt, only once, indirectly, is he mentioned in the Hagada. For the real Hero of the Exodus is God Himself. (Indeed, Moses was known as the meek, the humble one). What a contrast is this view of the greatest prophet of Judaism when seen in the light of the greatest prophets of other religious faiths, as evident in current controversies!●

"From Baghdad to Jerusalem . . . with Miracles"

by Moshe Kahtan

After a low key, hardly publicised visit recently by the F.O. highly qualified Middle East expert to various Arab democracies in the region, where, because of his tact, he did not deem it fit to raise any minor issues with his worthy hosts such as use of chemical warfare, mass adult and child torture, Kurdish refugees and mass murder by chemicals by Kurds in their own country, etc . . . , Mr. William Waldegrave then proceeded to visit Israel. There, as expected, and upon arriving in the land of miracles, wisdom and vision descended. The flow of speech was resumed and unsolicited advice offered freely to the Israeli government and people on how best to conduct their internal and external affairs and what is good for them. No doubt, all this was offered by him "as a staunch friend of Israel" to quote a phrase used frequently by someone higher up at the F.O. whenever he wants to show Israel HOWE!

It was most interesting to hear Mr. Waldegrave express his view on television after his return that it would be impossible to give satisfaction by political means to all the terrorist factions of the I.R.A. Yet at the same time he considers Israel to be inflexible and unreasonable for, presumably, refusing to throw itself into the arms of Yasser Arafat. After all, so many dignitaries are experiencing the joys of his embrace these days.

It may well be noted and remembered by those who choose to conveniently forget, that after years of wanton murder and bestial crimes you do not ask the victim to make concessions and offer compromises: The Jews have run out of "other cheeks."

All this business of International Conferences, forums and endless discussions about discussions, is side-stepping the real issue and wasting time. In essence, the crucial point is not who to talk to but WHAT TO TALK ABOUT. The Arabs who want, and should be in, a state of their own, cannot, should not and will not have it in Israel. In fact that state (Jordan) already exists and calling it by a different name neither justifies nor gives grounds to the creation of another. Actually, this can work both ways: e.g. Israel will be named JUDAICA and a call is then made to establish an independent "ISRAEL" on the Arab-occupied east bank of the Jordan. And make no mistake: the Arabs have not got good title to the land by virtue of having been there for 15 centuries. When it comes to this, they should not forget that the Jewish presence in this part of the world has been continuing for even a greater number of centuries before the advent of Islam.

The day the problem will begin to be really tackled to be solved, will be when the question of settling the Arab refugees in their state, whichever name they choose to give it, will be seriously discussed and implemented. Israel, a poor country, settled all the Jewish refugees kicked out by the Arab countries. The Arabs, who do not lack the resources, should do the same and

Israel can be relied upon to help in every way it can.

Forty-two years ago, and again in 1967, the Arabs were given certain propositions which they refused and rejected. These were good at the time. They were not open-ended options to be taken up at their convenience and pleasure. Now they expect to reverse history but history cannot be reversed. Even the Super Powers know that●

Satanic Verses and free speech

by Meer S. Basri

The French Revolution proclaimed two hundred years ago the liberty of conscience and freedom of speech, influenced by the eighteenth century philosophers Montesquieu, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot and the Encyclopaedists. Voltaire is credited with the saying, "I greatly disapprove of your views, but I am prepared to give my life to allow you to express them."

But liberty, like other things, cannot be absolute and should be qualified by law and customs in civilised human societies. The principle is that individual liberty stops within the limit of the liberty of others. Otherwise there will be only chaos.

Salman Rushdie's *Satanic Verses* stirred up worldwide uproar. In Islamic countries it was denounced as sacrilegious and obscene. In the United Kingdom and the Western World, while understanding the Moslems' sense of dismay and distress, the book could not be banned and its author punished as this would be contrary to the freedom of speech.

The Satanic Verses, under the veil of fiction, offended the feelings of hundreds of thousands of Moslems and shocked well-thinking people all over the world. The Prophet Mohammed was one of the greatest men of history and Thomas Carlyle took him as the symbol of the hero-prophet. To treat him, his wives and companions in such a shabby and heinous manner is, without any doubt, distasteful and nefarious.

However, instead of inciting his death even outside "The Dar al-Islam" (Islamic world), rational people should rather protest against the author by all lawful means and refute his obnoxious writings. I am sure that, after a few years, *Satanic Verses* will be committed to oblivion with all other slanderous books●

Mr. Edward Hillel of Canada is planning to produce a photographic album to mark the 500th anniversary of the Spanish expulsion of 1492.

The album will depict a photographic journey of the Sephardi Jew through time and space, with an accompanying text, to be written by experts●

BOOKS

Communism and Agrarian Reform in Iraq by Professor Rony Gabbay. London: Croom Helm, pp. 240, £18.50.

It is the most definitive study of the Iraqi Communist Party, one of the most influential in the Arab world●



The Cairo Conference. *Front row:* Winston Churchill, Colonial Secretary, in centre. On his right, Sir Herbert Samuel, High Commissioner for Palestine; on his left, Sir Percy Cox, High Commissioner for Mesopotamia.

Second row: Sir Arnold T. Wilson, Anglo-Persian Oil Co., previously Civil Commissioner for Mesopotamia; Gertrude Bell, Political Secretary; Sasson Effendi Heskell, Finance Minister; in centre: Jaafar Pasha al Askari, Defence Minister; Lawrence of Arabia. First from right: Sir Hubert Young, Middle East Department, Colonial Office.

The Conference also included:

Air Marshal Sir Hugh Trenchard, Chief of Air Staff; Lieutenant-General Sir Walter Congreve, G.O.C. Egypt and Palestine, Chairman of the Military Committee; Sir George Barstow, H.M. Treasury; Major-General Sir P. P. de B. Radcliffe, Director of Military Operations; Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary to Winston Churchill and Secretary of Air WWII; Lieutenant-General Sir Aylmer Haldane, G.O.C. Mesopotamia; Major-General Sir Edmund Ironside, G.O.C. Persia; Major-General E. H. de V. Atkinson, Adviser of Works and Communications, Mesopotamia; Sir Edgar Bonham-Carter, the Judicial Adviser, Mesopotamia; S. H. Slater, Financial adviser, Mesopotamia; St. John Philby, Adviser to Ministry of Interior, Mesopotamia; Lieutenant-Colonel P. C. Joyce, Adviser to Ministry of Defence, Mesopotamia; Kinahan Cornwallis, Director of Arab Bureau, Cairo, later adviser to King Feisal and Ambassador to Iraq; Air Vice-Marshal Sir Geoffrey Salmond, R.A.F.; Sir Ronald Storrs, Civil Governor, Jerusalem & Judea; W. H. Deedes, Civil Secretary, Palestine; Major-General T. E. Scott, Resident and G.O.C. Aden; and Sir Geoffrey Archer, Governor of Somaliland.

Churchill also took:

Sir Reginald Wingate, Governor of the Sudan 1899-1916, High Commissioner for Egypt 1916-19; David Hogarth, noted Orientalist; Brigadier-General Sir Gilbert Clayton (later High Commissioner for Iraq); George (later Lord) Lloyd, High Commissioner for Egypt 1925-1929.

At hand were:

Field-Marshal Lord Allenby, High Commissioner for Egypt; Sir Alec Kirkbride, British Military Representative, Es Salt, Trans-Jordan, later Ambassador to Jordan; Sir Reader Bullard, formerly Governor of Baghdad; Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, Colonial Office●

Sir Philip Sassoon in Baghdad

In 1927 Sir Philip Sassoon, then Under-Secretary for Air, helped greatly to advance the cause of aviation. His tour of various countries of the Empire covered 17,000 miles by air. On his way to India, he flew to Baghdad to inspect air units in Iraq. In Baghdad he was welcomed by Government representatives and members of the Jewish community. My late father presented him with a box of manna and stressed how his family is honoured among the people of Iraq.

On arrival in India he must have shown the manna to a cousin of his and explained to her that these contain the same ingredients as the manna which sustained the Israelites in Sinai.

During the Second World War, when the son of Sir Philip's cousin joined the army and was drafted to Baghdad, his mother, Mrs. Sassoon, reminded him to acquire some manna. At the Tigris Palace Hotel he asked the barman, by the name of Jesus, to get him a box of manna. He found it so delicious that he rushed to his commanding officer and offered him a piece.

"What is that?" asked the general.

"Manna from heaven."

"Who gave it to you?" "Jesus", replied Sassoon.

The general was a bit dubious. "Sassoon," he yelled, "is this one of your jokes?"

"No, Sir, I am on the level," replied Sassoon.

When the general tasted the manna, he found it so tasty that he asked for a whole box to send to his wife in England●

Abdulla Sion Dangoor

Thirdly, it will mark the year when Europe will discover itself and become one market. But whereas America is the home of those who sought refuge from tyranny, Europe has been the home of bloodthirsty tyrants – of the Roman Popes, of Stalins and Hitlers. It is unwise, even dangerous, to let Europe become one political unit, for, as is shown by a computer projection, it would soon fall prey to the domination of a re-united Germany centrally poised between East and West, and might augur a new dark age for Europe and the whole world. The United States of Europe can wait another 500 years.

It is noteworthy that the New World was not named after Columbus but after Amerigo. As a result, all the Continents begin with the letter A – the first and most important letter of the alphabet: Asia, Africa, Auropa (original name), America, Australia, Arctica, Antarctica● **N.E.D.**

1992

1992 is an important date in Jewish, American and European history.

Firstly, it marks 500 years since the expulsion from Spain in 1492.

Secondly, it marks 500 years since the discovery of America by Columbus.