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Palestine

**TOWARDS BETTER UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE ARAB WORLD  
AND THE UNITED STATES**

**by**  
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**STATEMENT**

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## The Arab World Today



## F O R E W O R D

The good name of a country is more valuable to its citizens than the possession of the atom bomb. It is an asset which can be obtained, not by size, might and production, but by the adherence of the people to high principles and lofty ideals.

Until the year 1947, there was no country in the world which enjoyed the good name of the United States in the Arab world. This was made evident in the "King Crane Commission's Report" of 1920. by the number of people who asked for United States tutelage and advice. The overwhelming majority of the Arab people wanted the cooperation of the United States to help uplift them from a state of stagnation and decadence suffered for hundreds of year under the Ottoman Turks.

In 1947, something had happened and the prestige which the United States had enjoyed for decades was lost overnight.

In this statement, we have endeavored to explain how this American prestige was won and lost and how better understanding between the Arab and the American peoples could be achieved.

New York  
June, 1960

Izzat Tannous, M.D.

TOWARDS BETTER UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE ARAB WORLD AND THE UNITED STATES

THE ARAB WORLD

When we speak of the Arab world, we speak of the 86 million Arabs living in the Arab land extending from the Atlantic Ocean on the West to the Persian Gulf on the East; and from the borders of Turkey on the North to Central Africa on the South. It comprises an ancient people on a vast territory in the centre of the globe - a world by itself. And it is our sincere hope that this discussion will inspire in you the desire to know more about the Arab people, their aspirations and their problems. It is only by understanding these problems that better understanding between the American people and the Arab people can take place.

The Arab world forms the greater portion of what is known as the Middle East. If we add Turkey and Iran to the Arab territory, we have the whole area of the Middle East.

The Arab world, which of late, has attracted the attention of the world, is better known to the West today than it was after the Second World War. And yet, even now, after all what is happening in the Arab lands and despite the many crises the whole region has been going through which may precipitate not only a local war - but a more serious outcome, only a hazy idea of the Arab world is gathered by the average American.

The Arab world and indeed the whole Middle East has a great history behind it, a history worthwhile studying.

Spiritually, this part of the world gave mankind the three great religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. And I am sure you realize and appreciate what a great contribution this has been to the world during the ages.

Strategically, the Middle East has always been one of the most strategic spots in the world. It is the pivot joining the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa where central communications meet. It is the stepping stone between North and South, East and West.

The Arab world is predominantly Moslem and the Arab people form more than half of the population of the whole Middle East. Economically, it is extremely rich in oil.

\* This Statement, brought up to date, was delivered at a Panel Discussion sponsored by the New York City Chapter of the Organization of Arab Students in U.S.A. at the Carnegie Endowment International Center in New York on April 24th, 1960. Dr. Izzat Tannous, a refugee from Palestine, is Director of the Palestine Arab Refugee Office in New York.

## CONTRIBUTION OF THE ARAB WORLD TO CIVILIZATION

The Arab world is a meeting ground between the civilization of the East and the civilization of the West; and for thousands of years, the Middle East was the civilized world itself. History has it on record that civilization originated in the Middle East.

Not only is Western civilization the descent of Middle East civilization, but the technical and scientific mastery of Western civilization is the outcome of a development initiated in the Middle East hundreds and thousands of years ago. The Egyptians and the Arabs have given the foundation of mathematics, physics and medicine. You are now using the same mathematical figures invented by the Arabs more than a thousand years ago. The invention of the Zero has made it possible for the development of this great science of mathematics to travel millions of miles into the heavens and measure distances. The majestic pyramids of Egypt, the glorious temple of Baalbak in Lebanon, built thousands of years ago, are monuments of a civilization that makes man of today with all his electrical machinery, not only ponder but wonder. Al-Razi, an Arab doctor, described, one thousand years ago, the disease of Measles and many of the infectious diseases as it is described today in a modern text book on Internal Medicine. What was found in the tomb of Tut Anch Amon in Luxor, Egypt, speaks of a civilization at a time when Europe was drowned by marshes. The Golden Age of the great Caliph Haroon Al-Rashid of Bagdad, Iraq - so magnificent - that it has now become legendary. When the Arabs used their first telescope, the two American Continents were yet unknown.

I am not trying to belittle Western civilization. I do not want to reduce of the majesty of the Empire State Building, the glory of Versaille, the fascination of the music of Verdi, the wonder of television and the marvel of the atomic power. You have been very good students.

## WESTERN CIVILIZATION GOING EAST

However, the Middle East which gave light to the world in ancient time, became in total darkness in the Middle Ages. For hundreds of years, illiteracy and ignorance clouded the whole area. It was not much more than a century ago that light began to travel from West to East. American and European schools, colleges, universities, clinics and hospitals were opened in the different countries of the Middle East and the Arab world. The American University of Beirut, Lebanon, Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey and the American University of Cairo, Egypt (The United Arab Republic), have been torches of light radiating knowledge in the Middle East. The work done by these blessed institutions in the fields of education and health have been an achievement which we Middle Easterners appreciate to the highest degree.

Unfortunately, the events of the last four decades in the Middle East and in the Arab world in particular, have slowly changed the situation and have almost destroyed all the good work that the



**MEN OF INTEGRITY AND HIGH MORAL STANDARDS**

Original Faculty of the "Syrian Protestant College" (founded 1866), now "The American University of Beirut," Beirut - Lebanon.

Standing, from left to right: D. S. Dodge, George E. Post, Edwin R. Lewis, Harvey Porter.

Seated: C. V. A. Van Dyck, Daniel Bliss (President), John Wortabet.

West had done in the past. There has been a change in tide.

The policy of the West did not restrict itself in the Arab world to education and civilization but concentrated mainly on colonization, domination, exploitation and meddling with peoples own affairs. Imagine what has taken place in every Arab country since 1918. Ponder over what has occurred in Palestine during the last 40 years, and consider what is still going on in the Holy Land today. Think of what has been going on in Algeria for years.

### **AMERICAN - ARAB RELATIONS**

One of the main causes and perhaps the most important cause of the misunderstanding between the Arab people and the United States, is the Palestine Case and its offspring - the Palestine Arab refugee problem. It may correctly be said that before this problem came into existence, the prestige of the United States in the Arab world was higher than any other country in the world. No country has ever enjoyed such a good name. This is because:

1) The United States, unlike other Western Powers as Great Britain, France, Italy, etc., was not a colonial power with colonial ambitions, seeking the domination and exploitation of the Arab people and Arab territories.

2) American (U.S.) educational institutions as the American University of Beirut, American University of Cairo, Aleppo College in the Syrian territory of the United Arab Republic, had won for her great respect and esteem among the Arab people; and what helped this prestige all the more was, that the forerunners of such missions, such as the Blisses, the Van Dycks, the Jessups, the Dodges, the Dormans and the Badeaus, were men of great vision and foresight, possessed with integrity and high moral standards.

### **THE PALESTINE CASE AND ITS EFFECT ON THE WEST**

The question may be asked now, how did the Palestine Case affect the United States prestige in the Arab countries and why did it make this misunderstanding and bad feeling between the American and Arab peoples? A very brief history will show that, or as Dr. Berger of the American Council for Judaism puts it, "studious, thoughtful Arab recitals of the history can help create public opinion among Americans".

### **THE FALSE PROMISES OF THE WESTERN POWERS**

Although the United States did not engage herself in Colonialism after the First World War, her Allies, principally Great Britain and France, did on a large scale. During the First World War, to get Arab support, the Allies promised the Arab people, who at that time were part of the Ottoman Empire, independence. The Arabs responded to the call and they fought the Turks and the Germans. All during the War, the Allies were declaring freedom to all peoples. They were promising independence to all oppressed nations. On



November 7th, 1918, they made the following declaration:

“The goal envisaged by France and Great Britain in prosecuting in the East the war set in train by German ambition is the complete and final liberation of the peoples who have for so long been oppressed by the Turks, and the setting up of National Governments and administrations that shall derive their authority from the free exercise of the initiative and choice of the indigenous populations.”

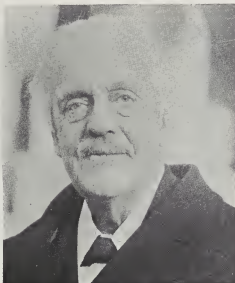
This declaration was posted on the walls in every Arabian town. But as soon as the war was over, Great Britain and France divided the Arab lands between them; they occupied them, they divided them, they dominated them and they exploited them. And this was not all. Worst of it all, Great Britain in 1917, clandestinely, gave the Balfour Declaration in which she undertook to facilitate Jewish immigration into Palestine in order to create a National Home for the Jewish people of the world in the Holy Land.

### **THE BALFOUR DECLARATION TRANSFORMED PALESTINE INTO A POOL OF BLOOD**

To the detriment of the world at large, Great Britain undertook to build a home for a people who had no right to it, in somebody else's home; a home she did not own and had no right to give away. Although there was a stipulation in the Balfour Declaration

#### **JAMES BALFOUR**

who in 1917, as British Foreign Secretary, proclaimed the immoral and unjust Declaration known by his name.



that Arab civil and religious rights were not to be prejudiced by this Jewish National Home Policy, the result was that after 20 years of British rule - 20 years of tears, sweat and blood - Palestine which was in 1918, 93% Arab, became in 1938 67% Arab; thus raising the Jewish population to 32%. Six Hundred Thousand Jews were brought into Palestine by the British bayonet.

Having, by force of arms and against the will of the Arab population, established the Jewish National Home, Great Britain in 1939, issued a new policy for the people of Palestine, promising them independence within 10 years. But this Jewish population of newcomers was not satisfied to live at peace with the Arab population, the people of the country but wanted all Palestine for themselves. They organized three illegal Jewish terrorist groups: the Hagana, the Irgun Zvei Leumi and the Stern Gangs to rage havoc in the Holy Land, asking, not for a Home in Palestine, but for the conversion of Palestine into a Jewish Zionist State in accordance with the Zionist policy. To achieve their objective, these gangs started a campaign of terror and massacre against the British Mandatory Government and against the inhabitants of Palestine. Their crimes in the Arab village of Deir Yassin, where the whole village population was massacred, and in other Arab towns and villages, are now well known. Such appalling atrocities compelled hundreds of thousands of peaceful Arab citizens to flee their homes for their lives.

The British Mandatory Government, frustrated by the results of her Jewish National Home Policy in Palestine, gave up her Mandate to the United Nations and left Palestine in chaos - a pool of blood.

#### **THE UNITED NATIONS INTIMIDATED BY PRESIDENT TRUMAN**

To the detriment of all concerned, the United Nations was not allowed to find a just solution to the Palestine problem created by Great Britain. Former President Truman, unfortunately, under great Zionist pressure and influence, decided the issue for the United Nations. By bringing pressure and coercion to bear on Member States, the former President influenced the General Assembly to vote for the partition of Palestine, a scheme which the Arab inhabitants categorically rejected, thus creating a problem from which not only the inhabitants of Palestine are now suffering, but the whole Near East as well. The sad story of how former President Truman intervened was told by Sumner Welles, former United States Assistant Secretary of State, in his book, "We Need Not Fail," and I quote:—

"By direct order of the White House, every form of pressure, direct or indirect, was brought to bear by American officials upon those countries outside the Moslem world that were known to be either uncertain or opposed to Partition. Representatives or intermediaries were employed by the White House to make sure that the necessary majority would at length be secured."

Also, the late James Forrestal, former United States Secretary of Defense, says in his Diaries”:

“The methods that had been used to bring coercion and duress on other nations in the General Assembly bordered closely onto scandal”.

The United Nations for the first time in its history, succumbed to President Truman's pressure and adopted a resolution of which most members were skeptical, many regarded it as unjust and quite a few warned of its serious consequences. The United Nations was put to the test and failed and because of this failure, one million innocent people are now homeless and destitute and the peace of the Near East is seriously threatened.

#### **FORMER PRESIDENT TRUMAN SUCCEUMBS TO ZIONIST PRESSURE**

Thus, former President Truman was the most important factor in the creation of the state of Israel. It could not have been accomplished without bringing coercion and duress on some member nations. In his "Memoirs," the former President makes a frank admission of this Zionist pressure. He says:

“I do not think I ever had as much pressure and propaganda aimed at the White House as I had in this instance. The persistence of a few of the extreme Zionist leaders, - actuated by political mo-



**PRESIDENT TRUMAN**

**who, to win the Jewish vote, sacrificed justice and American honor.**

# PALESTINE

ACCORDING TO U.N. PARTITION PLAN 1947

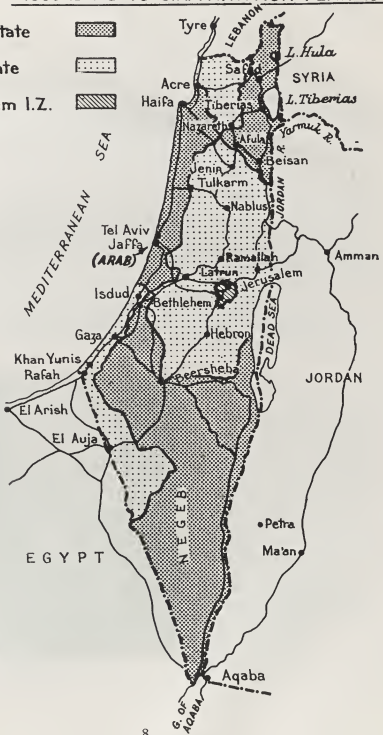
Jewish State



Arab State



Jerusalem I.Z.



tives and engaging in political threats - disturbed me and annoyed me. Individuals and groups asked me, usually in rather quarrelsome ways, to stop the Arabs, to keep the British from supporting the Arabs, to furnish American soldiers, to do this, that and the other”.

Finally, President Truman succumbed to Zionist pressure and threats. He was afraid of the Zionist vote not to do so. But this was un-American. This was unconstitutional. It was done against the spirit of the great American Constitution which he, as the first American citizen, was entrusted to protect.

The Arab people can never forget that ! ! !

## **THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES ITS AID TO ISRAEL**

But this is not the end of the tragedy. It is important to remember that since the creation of Israel, the United States Government has maintained its unwarranted financial and moral aid to Israel; at the same time ignoring the rights of the former inhabitants of Palestine who have become refugees - one million of them - living in misery and destitution on a U.N ration of 7 cents per person per day. For the last twelve years the United States has continually surrendered to Israeli demands and has given them everything they asked for, even reparations from Germany; and has failed to help the Arab refugees to return to their homes, an elemental justice and a human right. The United States has not yet moved a finger towards repatriating me but on the contrary, tried to keep me away from my home, despite United Nations resolutions decreeing my return and in spite of the great influence it has over the Israelis who solely depend on the United States for their existence.

## **I CANNOT GO HOME BECAUSE I AM NOT A JEW**

I happen to be a Christian Arab of Christian parents born in Palestine. My home is in Jerusalem where I lived all my life. I am not permitted to go back to my home by the Israelis, not because I declared war on any country, not for occupying other people's homes; and not for persecuting the Jews, but for the single reason that I was not born a Jew. While American Jews, Austrian Jews and even Arab Jews can go and occupy my home today, I cannot do so because I am a Christian. The Jewish faith is the only visa to go and live in Israel today. Did you ever conceive that this could take place in this twentieth century, the century of the Declaration of Human Rights, the era of religious tolerance? My home is only 300 yards away from the armistice line and my clinic is on the other side of the road. As a matter of fact, part of the building is in no-man's land, right in the heart of the Holy City. I see them both in front of me and I see people in them going in and out, but I cannot move one inch forward. If I do, I will be killed and my body will be labelled "Guilty of the criminal act of Arab infiltration". This infiltration into one's own home, into one's own land, into one's own farm, into one's own country,



### PALESTINE ARAB REFUGEES

**10%** of the refugees are Christians and the Church in the picture was built by the refugees themselves.

has been the cause of the death of hundreds of my countrymen by people who, only a few years ago, were total strangers to the land. Moreover, this home of mine is being offered to any Jew in the world, be he from Warsaw, Tokyo or the West Indies, if he will only condescend to go and take it.

### PERSECUTION OF THE ARAB MINORITY IN ISRAEL

And what judgment are we to pass on Israel that claims to be the "bulwark of democracy in the Middle East" for its treatment of the Arab minority in the Jewish State? Zionists urge tolerance in the United States, but how tolerant are they with the Arab minority in Israel whom they consider as second-class citizens? Moshe Smilansky, writing in "Ner", an Israeli monthly of September-October, 1953, says:

"Where are you Jews? Why do we not at least pay with a generous hand compensation to these miserable people? Where to take the money? But we build palaces, buy luxury cars, waste petrol like water, let our ministers and hundreds of delegates (schlochim) live a luxurious life, instead of paying a debt that crieth unto us from earth and heaven . . .

"And do we sin only against the refugees? Do we not treat the Arabs who remained with us as second-class citizens? Did a single Jewish farmer raise his hand in the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) in opposition to a law that deprives Arab peasants of their land? . . . How doth sit solitary, in the City of Jerusalem, the Jewish conscience".

Despite the lapse of more than twelve years since the creation of the State of Israel, the Arab minority continue to live under stringent military rule. An Arab living in Nazareth, for instance, cannot go to Haifa even for medical treatment, without a permit from the Military Governor. This permit is usually not easily acquired even in serious health circumstances, let alone normal conditions, such as work, trade, recreation, etc.

To "Legalize" the usurpation of hundreds of thousands of acres of the most fertile land belonging to the Arab minority in Israel, the Israeli Government enacted what is called the Land Acquisition Law which was passed by the Knesset on March 10, 1953. Bitterly criticizing this law, Professor Buber, Professor Simon and Dr. Shereshevsky wrote to the Speaker of the Knesset the following:

"As Jews and citizens of the state of Israel, we find it our duty to cry out against a proposed law which will add no honor to that which is Jewish".

Professor Simon again writes:

"The State of Israel, regarding itself as the champion of the people, who, everywhere except in Israel

itself, constitute a minority, is setting an outstandingly illustrious example how a minority must NOT be treated”.

### **DRASTIC CHANGE IN UNITED STATES POLICY URGED**

The Arab people do not yet believe that a change in the United States policy is forthcoming in the near future. Meanwhile, Soviet aid and friendship have been penetrating the Arab world in many spots. And unless a drastic change in the United States policy takes place in the Palestine Case, no one should expect that a better understanding will develop between the noble American and the noble Arab peoples.

And how are the Arab people to expect a change in the policy of the United States when the Senate, the highest law-making body in these United States, in the opinion of Senator Fulbright, is working for the interest of certain foreign states and groups and not in the interest of the United States. Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, in his speech before the Senate on April 29th, 1960, as found in the New York Times of April 30th, 1960, said:

“In recent years we have seen the rise of organizations dedicated apparently not to America, but to foreign states and groups. The conduct of a foreign policy for America has been seriously compromised by this development”.

“In what is probably the most delicate international situation which exists in the world today, (meaning the Israeli-Arab conflict) One Hundred and Eighty Million Americans find their foreign policy being whipsawed by an irresponsible maritime union and a minority pressure group (meaning the Jewish Zionist group).

“Foreign Policy was too important to our total national security for it to become the instrument of minorities whose lobbyists stand outside the chambers urging members to follow courses of action beneficial to special interest but with potentially catastrophic consequences for the nation as a whole”. (Within the parentheses are ours)

This drastic change in the policy of the United States cannot therefore occur as long as voting for the highest offices of the State is made - conditional to the satisfaction of certain demands and not exclusively in the interest of the United States.

Or, as long as the American Press, for material benefits, reports what pleases its readers and not the truth.

Or, if the American Zionist Jews do not place the interest of the United States above all other states.





### PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S REPLY TO KING IBN SAUD

April 5, 1945

Great and good friend:

. . . Your Majesty will recall that on previous occasions I communicated to you the attitude of the American Government toward Palestine and made clear our desire that no decision be taken with respect to the basic situation in that country without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews.

Your Majesty will also doubtless recall that during our recent conversation I assured you that I would take no action, in my capacity as Chief of the Executive Branch of this Government, which might prove hostile to the Arab people.

It gives me pleasure to renew to Your Majesty the assurances which you have previously received regarding the attitude of my Government and my own, as Chief Executive, with regard to the question of Palestine and to inform you that the policy of this Government in this respect is unchanged.

Editor: Compare this statement with what President Truman did two years later.

Or, if the individual American is still intimidated by words and slogans such as "Anti-Semitic" etc. and has not the courage to stand for truth and justice.

### THE UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES

To lead the Democratic World, the United States is under a unique responsibility which needs more than the atom bomb. It needs the highest moral principles to adhere to. It needs to have its constitution, not only in the White House and not only in the Congress building, but in the Heart of every American citizen. The Arab people once, and not very long ago, loved the American people. You were our ideal as was indicated by the King Crane Commission's Report. forty years ago. I want you now to know that we want to love you again.

### PUBLICATIONS OF THE PALESTINE ARAB REFUGEE OFFICE

1. "Tension and Peace in The Middle East," by Izzat Tannous.
2. "Persecution of the Arabs in Israel."
3. "Zionists and The Bible," by Prof. Alfred Guillaume.
4. "Land Ownership in Palestine," by Sami Hadawi.
5. "Official Documents, Pledges and Resolutions on Palestine—beginning with the Husain - McMahan Correspondence."
6. "Statements on The Palestine Arab Refugees before United Nations Special Political Committee," by Izzat Tannous.
7. "Statement of The Christian Church of all Denominations in Jerusalem Against Partition," (Historical Document).
8. Monthly Newsletter, "The Palestine Arab Refugee."
9. "The Policy that Invited Soviet Russia to the Middle East," by Izzat Tannous.
10. "Failures of The United Nations in the Palestine Tragedy," by Izzat Tannous.
11. "Map of Palestine" showing Arab and Jewish ownership.
12. "Map of Jerusalem" showing Arab and Jewish property.

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