

British Mandate

1920-1946

It was only after World War I, at the Paris Peace Conference(1), that the name "Palestine" was applied to a clearly defined piece of territory - the area which today comprises Israel and Jordan. It was agreed that "Palestine" was to become a League of Nations Mandate, entrusted to Great Britain.

Under the terms of the Mandate, Britain's principal obligation was to facilitate the implementation of the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, which pledged "**the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people.**"(2) No territorial restrictions whatsoever - neither east nor west of the Jordan River were placed on the Jewish



National Home. In fact, the Mandate stipulated that Britain was to "facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions and shall encourage close settlement by Jews on the land."⁽³⁾

1. The Paris Peace Conference was held in January-June 1919 and ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on June 28, 1919. For a survey of the Paris Peace Conference's treatment of Middle Eastern issues, see **Howard M. Sachar, *The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914-1924* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 252-290.**

2. The following is the text of the Balfour Declaration:

"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."

See **J. C. Hurewitz (ed.), *The Middle East and North Africa in World politics: a Documentary Record*, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979), pp. 101-106.**

3. For the full text of the British Mandate for Palestine, see **ibid.**, pp. 305-309.