The Two States Solution (1918-1922)

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THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Once the First World War was over, the League of Nations was created. It was the first international organization in history, created to maintain world peace and prevent the emergence of other armed conflicts.

This League was headed by the nations that triumphed in the First World War: Great Britain, France, Italy, etc.

On April 23, 1920, almost 100 years ago, the League of Nations met in the Italian city of San Remo to reorganize the “world order” and promote peace. One of the issues they discussed was the division and administration of Middle East lands. Until 1918 the Middle East was part of the Ottoman Empire, which gave the local mandate to different heads of ethic grupos, clans or Arab tribes. There were no states like Syria, Iraq, Jordan or Saudi Arabia. The League of Nations sought to establish a political order to replace the governing structure of the Ottoman Empire. The Middle East was divided into a few areas, like Syria and Lebanon, were under the french mandate; Mesopotamia (Iraq) and Palestine, what today is Israel and Jordan, were under the British mandate.

Why were the great superpowers interested in investing their efforts in the Middle East? Before the end of the First World War, no one had much interest in these deserted lands, with little water, and useless for agriculture.

However, towards the end of the War it was discovered that these lands were rich in oil reserves, and thus interest in

the Middle East increased.

SAN REMO AND THE TWO SIDES OF JORDAN RIVER

In the Balfour Declaration, 1917, England committed to the creation of a National Home for Jews in the Land of Israel, which back then was known as “Palestine”. The Balfour declaration was also legally validated by France (February 14, 1918), Italy (May 9, 1918), and the United States (August 31, 1918).

Now in San Remo the Balfour declaration was given its definitive international recognition.

I think the most remarkable thing of the San Remo resolution is that the Jewish Home in Palestine included what is now the state of Israel, with Gaza, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, etc. **and it also included the entire territory of what is today Jordan** (officially: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan).

As you can see in the map above, that was the territory conceived by the League of Nations in San Remo, 1921, to establish the Jewish State.

In San Remo, the nations also assigned to Great Britain the mandate to implementing the establishment of a Jewish Homeland. For this, England assigned a Jewish British High Commissioner for Palestine: Sir Herbert Samuel (1870-1963), who was also the first observant Jew to become a member of the British cabinet (see this)

CHURCHILL and THE WHITE PAPER

But the Arab leaders were not happy. They did not accept the decision of the League of Nations and began to attack and kill Jewish civilians in Tel Hai, Yerushalayim and Yafo, etc. This terrorist tactic unfortunately worked out for them: on June 3, 1922, Britain wrote the White Paper.

This document was signed by Winston Churchill, who visited

Jerusalem in 1921 and met with Arab and Jewish representatives (see video below). Churchill decided that "Palestine" was going to be divided into two states: one, on the Eastern side of the Jordan River, which would be ceded to the Hashemite Arab clan to establish its kingdom there, and rule over the Arabs of the region. And the other state, on the Western margin of the Jordan River, would be the territory destined for all the Jews of the world.

The Zionist Organization complained to the English authorities who had yielded to Arab violence, establishing a dangerous precedent (whose echoes continue to this day). One of the voices that denounced this betrayal was that of the famous Jewish leader Zeev Jabotisnky. In those days they sang the famous BETAR movement song : □□ □□ □□ □□□□ □□ ,□□□□□ □□□□ □□□ "The Jordan River has two banks (the eastern and western territories), one is ours and the other one too. "

This division that ceded to the Arabs **two thirds of the territory** promised to the Jews, was finally ratified by the League of Nations, as a way to reach a "peaceful compromise", which would allow the two peoples, the Arab and the Jews, to live peacefully next to each other.

The Jews had no choice but to accept "the two states solution", with the (naive!) hope that we would finally live in peace and harmony with our Arab neighbors ….

I hope we have learned the lesson!

To be continued…

[To clarify, "Palestine" is the name given at that time to the land of Israel and to the Jewish National Home under the British mandate. There never existed an Arab Palestinian State, a Palestinian nation or a Palestinian people, or anything like it. In any case, according to what we wrote today, "the designated land for Arabs in Palestine is 'Jordan'"].

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