

Creation of the State

By Dr. Steven Derfler

“The Final Solution”—three words that, during World War II, would become the most horrific phrase in any language. The worst fears of humankind, that genocidal tendencies not only could be found within the human experience *but acted upon*, finally came to an end in 1945. With its demise, a glimmer of hope could be seen in the eyes of the surviving remnant of European Jewry. However, this hope of survival was predicated on the fact that a national safe-haven needed to be created. It was one thing to “promise” a homeland—another to deliver on that promise. Once again, the British would be pivotal in this drive to statehood. England had already made what it considered a magnanimous gesture in 1903, by offering British East Africa as a Jewish national home. Yet as Weizmann would so elegantly put it, the British offered nothing more than “earth for our graves.” If there is no emotional or spiritual connection to a land, then it truly is nothing more than a parcel of earth and rock.

Eventually came global recognition that the land nestled between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, the Biblical Land, would be the only satisfactory locale for a Jewish national home. In addition, to many, the suffering of Europe’s Jews would give them greater sympathy in their quest. Intense lobbying efforts would take place in the newly created step-child of the League of Nations, the United Nations. However, this fledgling agency would not consider this to be an urgent priority at first.

But on the ground, in British Mandated Palestine, the situation continued to deteriorate. A three-way civil war was intensifying — Jew vs. Arab vs. Brit vs. Arab vs. Jew vs. Brit.

To make matters worse, the distinct bias that had been seen coming from the British from the outset, tilted toward the Arab world, increased. Many newly retired British officers now took on roles as military advisors to Arab regimes, further putting the Jewish side in a position of disadvantage. Perhaps the

most famous was Sir John Glubb Pasha, who would shape the Jordanian Arab Legion. The only alternative many saw was to wage a war of terror aimed at British and Arab military targets with the intent of getting them to back down and ultimately withdraw — allowing for the creation of a Jewish state.

The goal may have seemed to be an honorable one — but one needs to remember that there was no umbrella para-military organization within the Jewish Palestinian community designed to coordinate and ensure the synchronization of theory and practice. At least a dozen para-military groups acted fairly independently one from another; each with their own leaders, tactics and philosophies. In other words, chaos reigned supreme in 1946-47. Military and civilian targets were struck.



On the other side, the newly arising Arab states sought to dominate and control the region of Palestine, and the Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and even Iraq all had a vested interest. They feigned sympathetic support for the Palestinians, all the while expecting that, after the dust settled, Palestine would be subsumed by the Arab states with no political Jewish presence at all.

At first, the British would develop a partition plan designed to give autonomy to the two sides. The Jewish Agency would endorse it; the Arab League would reject it out of hand. Eventually, the British would throw their hands up in surrender, and request that



the United Nations step in to find a way to relieve Britain of its rebellious mandate.

This would take the shape of UNSCOP — The UN Special Commission on Palestine. Its members were Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia. Their recommendation was to terminate the Mandate as soon as possible, to partition the area into a Jewish and Arab entities aiming toward independence. The end result was Resolution 181 that created the partition on Nov. 29, 1947.

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