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Britain's policy towards Palestine 1907-1917 through the English press

سياسة بريطانيا تجاه فلسطين 1907- 1917 من خلال الصحافة الانجليزية

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Abstract:

Major newspapers in Britain played a critically important role in promoting and disseminating the ideas of the Zionist movement. Zionists also exploited non-Zionist broadsheets, which held clear influence over British society in general and the elite in particular, to publish Zionist news within Britain and abroad. They crafted influential Zionist articles that helped spread their ideas and attract supporters to their goals. This was clearly evident in these newspapers' support for British policy, specifically the Balfour Declaration, which served as the primary foundation for establishing a Zionist entity in Palestine.

Among these newspapers, I mention: *The Jewish Chronicle*, *The Jewish World*, in addition to *The Manchester Guardian*, *The Times*, and *The Spectator*. These publications played a significant role in spreading Zionist thought inside and outside Britain, and in persuading public opinion of the importance of extending a helping hand to Jews to immigrate to Palestine and establish a national home. This, inevitably, led to the realization of strategic goals for the British colonial project in Arab lands.

Keywords: English Press; Britain; Palestine; Balfour Declaration; Zionism.

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ملخص:

أدت الصحف الكبرى في بريطانيا دور بالغ الأهمية في الترويج لأفكار الحركة الصهيونية ونشرها، كما استغل الصهاينة الصحف اغير الصهيونية واسعة الانتشار، التي كان لها تأثير واضح على المجتمع البريطاني بشكل عام والنخبة بصفة خاصة ؛ لنشر الأخبار الصهيونية داخل بريطانيا وخارجها وصياغة المقالات الصهيونية المؤثرة التي تساعدهم على نشر أفكارهم وجذب المؤيدين حول أهدافهم، وظهر ذلك بجلاء في تأييدها لسياسة بريطانيا خاصة وعد بلفور الذي كان الأساس الأول لإنشاء كيان صهيوني في فلسطين .

وأذكر من تلك الصحف: صحيفة الجويش كرونيكل، صحيفة الجويش وورلد إضافة الى صحيفة مانشستر غارديان وصحيفة التايمز وصحيفة ذا سبيكتاتور. وقد كان لها دور كبير في نشر الفكر الصهيوني في بريطانيا وخارجها، وإقناع الرأي العام بأهمية بمد يد العون لليهود للقيام بالهجرة نحو فلسطين وإنشاء الوطن القومي، وهذا حتما يؤدي الى تحقيق أهداف استراتيجية للمشروع الاستعماري البريطاني في البلاد العربية .

الكلمات المفتاحية: الصحافة الإنجليزية؛ بريطانيا ؛ فلسطين؛ وعد بلفور؛ الصهيونية .

1. Introduction

Addressing this topic is of great importance, as the Balfour Declaration issued by the British government on November 2, 1917, marked the beginning of the catastrophe that befell the Palestinian people and continues to trouble security and stability in the Arab region. A number of English articles from renowned and influential newspapers were utilized in preparing this article. The general research problem was: How did the British press address the issue of the Balfour Declaration? And what was its impact on public opinion both inside and outside Britain?

The divisions of this research are presented as follows:

1. The Zionist movement's efforts to issue the Balfour Declaration.
2. The issuance of the Balfour Declaration.

2. The Zionist Movement's Efforts to Issue the Balfour Declaration:

After the death of Herzl, the voices of practical leaders at the Seventh Zionist Congress in 1905 rose, advocating for rights based on achievements. Thus, the Zionist argument aiming to acquire rights in Palestine through achievements and constructions was crystallized, which could be achieved by following a policy of economic infiltration. The constructive argument seeks to establish Jewish rights in Palestine based on the achievements realized

through Zionist settlement and colonization efforts. It does not hesitate to resort to various evidences and pretexts to support its logic and strengthen its persuasive power. Sometimes it speaks of the requirements of superior civilization, and at other times, it talks about the benefits and gains that would accrue to the Arabs of Palestine specifically and the Arab world in general in the fields of economy, construction, society, culture, and politics. The proponents of the constructive argument base their claim on the existence of a civilizational vacuum in Palestine and the Near East in general. Max Nordau expressed the readiness of Zionism to fulfill its civilizing mission and fill the civilizational vacuum in the Near East by stating in 1907: "We will do our utmost to achieve in the Near East what the English have achieved in India. By this, I mean cultural and civilizational activity, not control and domination. We intend to go to Palestine as a campaign of civilization and urbanization. Our mission is to expand moral boundaries until they reach the Euphrates" (Zureik, 1973, pp. 182-184). Lawrence made a statement to the press in late November 1919, saying: "I support Zionism, and I consider Jews to be the natural carriers of the Western yeast, which is very necessary for the countries of the Near East" (Al-Khouli, 1973, p. 473).

However, the unification of Zionism and its absolute assimilation into the disreputable cultural and racial attitudes of white Europeans were clearly and easily exhibited by Weizmann himself, who presented his movement as a representative of Western civilization to the dormant desert Bedouins: "Even today, we still hear people say things like: Yes, well, maybe what you have done is very good overall, but the Arabs of Palestine were used to a quiet life. They rode camels and were in harmony with nature. So why don't you preserve this as a museum, as a national park? You came from the West with your knowledge and Jewish perseverance. You are not Romans and are not in harmony with nature. You have drained the swamps and eradicated malaria, and you are doing it in a way that drives mosquitoes to the Arab villages. You still speak Hebrew with a bad accent and have not yet learned how to use the plow correctly. Instead of camels, you use cars. This reminds one of the eternal struggle between stagnation and progress, efficiency, health, and education. It is the struggle of the desert against civilization" (Sari, 1992, pp. 152-153). Shaftesbury later wrote an article for the newspapers, stating: "Syria, including Palestine, will be a particularly commercial country after its reconstruction. They are the greatest merchants in the world. Is

there really a more suitable place and a blessed area where the Jew can display his qualifications? It will be a blow to England if any of its competitors possess Syria" (Susa, 1983, p. 152).

The British press, especially the Manchester Guardian, played an important role in advocating for Jewish settlement in Palestine and highlighting its strategic and political benefits for Britain. Some newspapers took up the issue of Palestine after Turkey entered the war. For example, the deep interest shown by Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, made Palestine, Zionism, and the defense of the Suez Canal and Egypt interconnected and vital issues for Britain, stressing that Britain should place Palestine within its projects (H., 1973, pp. 188-189).

In addition to Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, Sayed Botam, a military expert for the newspaper, played a significant role in this regard. His ideas, later published in a book titled "England and Palestine," revolved around demonstrating the close connection between the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine and the interests of the British Empire (Guardian M., 1919). He consistently emphasized in his articles that the Jews are the only group prepared to colonize Palestine. They, unlike others, could establish new influence in the Eastern Mediterranean connected to Britain and serve as a shield to protect our interests in the East and as an intermediary between us and it. They will have a civilization distinct from ours, but it will be imbued with our ideas and political principles. The existence of this buffer state in southern Syria will allow it to play the role as effectively as happened in India, if not better. Establishing this buffer state in Syria will put an end to many of the common objections to expanding our military commitments. Whether the future of this buffer state is one of the dominions or a genuine colony, its existence will be a source of strength for us in the Eastern Mediterranean, both politically and militarily, because Jews are ultimately the only group likely to settle in Palestine on a large scale (Mahmoud, 1985, pp. 191-192).

During the war years, Chaim Weizmann emerged in London to play the role of the de facto leader of the Zionist movement, finding the British government to be the best ally for Zionism. Weizmann began to gather a group of assistants around him, indifferent to the consequences of his pro-British stance, which breached the neutrality of the Zionist organization. He established contacts with Charles Prestwich Scott, the editor of the Manchester Guardian, known for his strong sympathy towards Jewish national aspirations. Weizmann quickly arranged meetings with Mr. Balfour and other British officials who

expressed their readiness to support Zionist demands and consider them when partitioning and dividing the Ottoman Empire (Zureik, 1973, pp. 73-74).

Weizmann managed to gain the support of some prominent English figures of that time, such as Herbert Samuel and Lloyd George, who were convinced by his ideas. The enthusiasm of the former was so great that he once said to the latter, "I am very eager to see a Jewish state established in Palestine!" Similar sentiments were shared by Mark Sykes and Lord Robert Cecil, whom Weizmann himself acknowledged for their contributions to the Zionist movement, saying: "We cannot do justice to Sykes's services; he guided us in our work, leading us to more official avenues. Without the advice of men like Sykes and Lord Robert Cecil, at a time when we had no experience in delicate diplomatic negotiations, we would have undoubtedly made many mistakes" (Khammar, June 1966, pp. 44-45).

With this knowledge, Lord Rothschild wrote in The Times in May 1917: "We Zionists do not see how the establishment of a Jewish state, under the protection of one of the Allied powers, can prevent its Jewish citizens from maintaining their loyalty to the countries they came from... I assure you that in requesting the establishment of a chartered company, we do not seek any distinction from other nationalities. Instead, we want to align our destinies alongside those nationalities in self-governance under the sovereignty of one of the Allied powers." Similarly, Weizmann confirmed to the same newspaper, "The company does not seek a monopoly or injustice to others" (Al-Najjar, Zionism Between Two Histories, p. 83).

During World War I, British Zionists were highly active and established what became known as the Manchester Circle, led by Weizmann and included prominent members such as Scott, Stead, Sieff, and Simon Marks. This group believed that Jews should support Britain as it was the nation that could help realize their dream of establishing a state in Palestine. This group had a newspaper called Palestine, edited by Israel Sieff. When the British Zionists learned about the Hussein-McMahon Correspondence and the terms of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, they wrote numerous articles in this newspaper, criticizing British policy and attacking Sykes personally. The following excerpt highlights their stance: "There is no doubt that Sir Henry McMahon has reached an agreement with the Arabs, and he, as we know, does not consider the demands of Jews in Palestine. The Sykes-Picot Agreement is rejected because it includes Hauran and the Hejaz Railway within the Arab state. We Jews are certain that if Palestine is

stripped of the entire Hauran and the Hejaz Railway, it will become a doomed Palestine, as it would be too small to ensure our safety and security against the vast Arab regions. The Hejaz Railway must not be abandoned due to its immense importance to us" (Al-Samra, 1976, pp. 56-57).

The first to reveal this secret agreement was Trotsky, following the success of the Bolshevik Revolution, in November 1917. After exposing this secret agreement, he said, "We throw all secret treaties into the wastebasket." In Britain, the Manchester Guardian was the first to publish a summary of this treaty in its issues on November 26 and 28, 1917.

Mark Sykes, the War Office Secretary in the British government, had strong Zionist inclinations and was aware that the American Zionist Brandeis had significant influence over President Wilson. For this reason, it was crucial to involve the Zionist organization in British politics (as the United States had not yet entered the war).

On February 2, 1917, Britain officially began negotiations with the Zionists. Sykes did not hide his support for the idea of a Jewish Palestine but did not discuss with the Jews during negotiations the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement, which proposed making Palestine an international zone. As the idea of establishing a national homeland for the Jews matured within the British government, a memorandum was issued in April 1917, which included the following key points: Britain agreed to recognize Palestine as a national home for the Jews and to grant the Jews of Palestine all rights, as well as to open the door for Jewish immigration to Palestine without restriction, and to establish a Jewish chartered company with priority rights to land acquisition (Khammar, June 1966, pp. 50-51).

The organization, led by Weizmann, began using the available facilities to achieve its goals and faced strong opposition from some British Jews (including a letter to The Times from David Alexander and Claude Montgomerie) who were against a national state. One of their arguments was that such a state would create difficulties for Jews wishing to remain loyal to the countries they lived in. The Zionist plan was based on the necessity of the Allies' victory in the war and placing Palestine under British mandate, with the mandate administration facilitating Jewish immigration to Palestine. Weizmann had successfully obtained official approval from the British government for the Zionist plans.

Balfour's support for his viewpoint was based on a series of articles published by German newspapers, which were translated and summarized by The Jewish Chronicle in its issue of September 21, 1917. These articles, along with others published in English newspapers,

particularly The Times, collectively argued that Zionism had become an inexhaustible topic for German press of all inclinations. They reported that Zionist propaganda was vigorous in Germany, with the German government backing and intensifying this propaganda, pushing it toward extremism and exaggeration. The German demand was that peace treaties after the war should include a clause for establishing a national home for the Jews in Palestine, and that Palestine could only become a national home for the Jews with German assistance and propaganda. The British newspapers concluded that they should not miss the opportunity and allow Germany to take the initiative (Chronicle, 1917).

3. Issuance of the Balfour Declaration:

After numerous deliberations among British public opinion leaders from the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal parties, all of whom were involved with and enthusiastic about Zionism, and following extensive negotiations between Britain and America over the text of the declaration issued on November 2, 1917, which was the result of the Zionist-British alliance during the war, the British government announced its support for the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine. This was declared in an official letter sent by Arthur James Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, to Lord Walter Rothschild. The British government stated its support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine and its commitment to facilitating this process (Grullenberg, 2003, p. 59).

The declaration was approved by President Wilson before it was made public, and the French and Italian governments quickly announced their official and public support in February and May 1918, respectively (Khader, 1976, pp. 185-186).

Before Britain officially announced the declaration in Palestine, the Egyptian newspaper Al-Muqattam had received a telegram on November 9, 1917, from its correspondent in London containing the text of the declaration, as reported by The Jewish Chronicle. Four days later, Al-Muqattam described the reaction of the Jewish community in Alexandria to the announcement and their large celebrations. This led to increased Arab resentment against Britain and the Jews, which culminated in riots and demonstrations (Chronicle, 1917).

The prevailing belief is that Britain's approval of the Balfour Declaration was not only a result of conviction in the Jewish right but also driven by several political and military considerations. One of these considerations was closely related to the strategic importance

of the Suez Canal, adjacent to Palestine. Scott, editor of The Manchester Guardian and a supporter of the Zionist movement, commented, "The establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine will benefit Britain as it will protect the English Suez Canal from any external attack" (Lillienthal, 1954, pp. 33-34).

In 1917, the British magazine Bensons published a cartoon featuring the English Crusader King Richard I (1157-1199) saying, "At last my dream is fulfilled." Thus, Protestant religious myths and imperialist ambitions of seizing Jerusalem and Palestine were intertwined (Others, 2011, p. 26).

Ultimately, the decisive factor was British imperial interest, not just immediate but long-term. This was reflected in British press discussions before and after the declaration. Under the headline "Britain's Policy in Palestine: A British Zionist Necessity," the Sunday Chronicle wrote, "No other race in the world can provide these services to us other than the Jews... In the Zionist movement, we have the driving force that will make extending the British Empire to Palestine an indispensable necessity, a source of pride and a pillar of strength" (Sunday Chronicle, 1917). Other British newspapers urged their government to return Palestine to the Jews out of fear that it might fall into the hands of those harmful to the British Empire.

The Evening Standard commented, "British interests have long been clear in establishing a powerless state between Egypt and a hostile Turkish government, and Zionism provides us with the solution" (Standard, 1917). British newspapers reported on the issuance of the declaration on November 2, 1917, with the Glasgow Herald, for instance, stating that the declaration would have a direct political impact on America, Russia, Poland, and Hungary. It added, "From the British perspective, defending the Suez Canal is best achieved by establishing a people in Palestine closely aligned with us, and returning the Jews to Palestine under British supervision ensures this."

4.The Impact of the Balfour Declaration on the English Press

4.1: The Jewish Chronicle

The *Jewish Chronicle* is the oldest and most enduring Jewish newspaper in Britain. It began operations when the total Jewish population in London was about 40,000. The newspaper was established in London in 1841.

The first editors of the *Jewish Chronicle* were David Meldola (1797-1853), a rabbi of the Sephardic community in London and one of the founders of the newspaper. Meldola was known for his opposition to the Reform movement among British Jews.

Another notable editor was Moses Angel (1819-1898), a Jewish educator and writer born in London. Initially employed in a bank in Dublin from 1842 to 1867, Angel later became the principal of the Jewish elementary school in London, which under his leadership became the largest primary school in Britain. About one-third of Jewish children in London received their education there. Given that many of his students were foreign-born, Angel played a significant role in integrating them into Anglo-Jewish life.

Angel, along with Meldola, contributed to the editorial work of the *Jewish Chronicle*. He also wrote numerous articles on Christian-Jewish rapprochement in Jewish journalism. Over the years, several individuals and Jewish institutions took turns managing the newspaper. In 1875, shares of the newspaper were sold to the Anglo-Jewish Association, which then sold them to Asher Myers. Myers played a significant role in developing the newspaper and served as its editor for approximately 24 years.

The *Jewish Chronicle* focused on both local and international news relevant to the Jewish community in Britain. It provided its perspective on global events, which helped shape the identity of the British Jewish community. The newspaper not only reported news but also served as a platform for various opinions within the Jewish community. Additionally, it used its pages to promote its own views, representing the voice of the British Jewish community and facilitating its communication with the broader British society (Todorov, 1990, pp. 200-205).

The newspaper used English for publication, which meant it largely reflected the values and principles adopted by the Anglo-Jewish elite who had fully integrated into English life. By the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the *Jewish Chronicle* was one of the most influential newspapers in the British Jewish community. In fact, the British government postponed the official announcement of the Balfour Declaration by a whole week to ensure that the *Jewish Chronicle* would be the first to publish the news before other British daily newspapers. The official announcement of the Balfour Declaration was indeed published on November 9, 1917 (Chronicle J., 1917, p. 10).

This demonstrates the importance and status of the *Jewish Chronicle* among both Zionists and the British government, who were keen to publish the declaration in the most prominent and influential Jewish newspaper in Britain.

The *Jewish Chronicle* was the primary medium through which discussions among leaders of the British Jewish community regarding Zionism took place, especially since the emergence of Herzl. The newspaper played a central role in promoting Zionist ideas in Britain among both the Jewish public and non-Jewish Britons. It contributed to this promotion through various methods.

On April 20, 1917, the newspaper published an article titled "Say Palestine," in which it considered Palestine to be the key word that Jews, especially in Russia, were waiting to hear. The article suggested that if the Allies confirmed that Palestine would be the final result for the Jews, it would encourage them to participate more actively in the Allied war effort, including those Jews fighting in the German and Austrian armies (Chronicle J., 1917, p. 7).

The article seemed primarily aimed at the British public and government, enticing and encouraging them to utilize Jewish forces capable of swaying the war in favor of the Allies. The writer of the article claimed that Jews would change their loyalty from the armies they belonged to, but this would only happen if the Allies, and Britain in particular, adopted a supportive stance towards the Zionist movement by making promises to ensure Jewish control over Palestine after the war. Following the announcement of the Balfour Declaration, the newspaper declared its support for the declaration, considering it a Jewish victory representing the restoration of rights to their rightful owners.

The *Jewish Chronicle* expressed regret upon learning that some Jewish circles opposing Zionism were preparing a petition to protest the British government's declaration (Chronicle J., 1917, p. 10).

This illustrates that the *Jewish Chronicle* had become one of the most prominent proponents and promoters of Zionist ideas, as well as a critic of Jewish opposition that was once represented by the leaders of the Jewish community in Britain, whom the newspaper had previously spoken for and conveyed their ideas. The newspaper republished a long article by Israel Zangwill, which had been previously published in the United States via the *Cross-Atlantic* newspaper. The article, published on November 19, 1920, was titled "Unity of Palestine – The Mirage of the Jewish State" and discussed the historical progression of British-Jewish relations in achieving the dream of a Jewish state. Zangwill concluded that if the conditions for Jews in Central Europe or Russia remained unchanged, which seemed likely, the promised masses of Jews would never accept mere stones instead of bread, and it was inevitable for Western countries to provide a safe haven for Jewish refugees (Chronicle J.,

1920, pp. 18-21).

On April 29, 1921, Chaim Weizmann, in his capacity as President of the English Zionist Federation, published a message in the form of an appeal to English Zionists through the *Jewish Chronicle*, urging them to maintain their commitment to paying the shekel and renewing their loyalty to the common Zionist cause (Chronicle J., 1921, p. 13).

The publication of the article likely formed part of the newspaper's policy to promote the importance of the Zionist cause to Britain, placing responsibility on the British public and government to provide suitable solutions for the Jewish question, in a manner that satisfied the ambitions set by Zionism and raised its expectations.

On November 2, 1928, the *Jewish Chronicle* published an editorial marking the eleventh anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, stating that it was absurd for a people deprived of maintaining their national existence and whose land had been stolen and scattered across the globe, to expect to restore their national existence in just over a decade after receiving support from one of the major powers for their national aspirations (Jewish Chronicle, 2.11.1928, p. 7).

It is clear that the *Jewish Chronicle* was attempting to disseminate and promote traditional Zionist propaganda, which claims the historical right of Jews to Palestine. It used this as a means to reach and convert opposing Jews to the Zionist cause, as well as to garner sympathy from non-Jewish Britons.

On December 6, 1929, the newspaper republished an article by Herbert Sidebotham titled "What Great Britain Promised." The paper also published an editorial praising Sidebotham's vision of establishing a Jewish Commonwealth under British sovereignty in Palestine, noting regret that such words were not written by a Jewish author (Chronicle J., 1929, p. 7).

4.2 The Guardian:

Among the morning daily newspapers, it is important to mention *The Guardian*, which was founded in 1821 in Manchester under the name *Manchester Guardian* and changed to its current name in 1959. It moved to London in 1961, while continuing to be printed and published in Manchester at the same time (Todorov, 1990, pp. 168-170).

The Guardian reflects the viewpoint of the Liberal Party and does not have an extreme antagonistic stance against progress, liberation, or socialism. It advocates for close

cooperation with the United States, provided that British interests are preserved. The newspaper has a circulation of around 200,000 copies and is distributed throughout the country. It belongs to what is known as serious English journalism and represents the interests of the textile mills in Lancashire. Its readership is noted for its political flexibility. *The Guardian* supports the Labour Party government's policies, NATO, and calls for close relations with the United States, while also often taking pragmatic stances. The paper maintains confidentiality about its shareholder base, with editorial oversight by the Scott family (Gannon, 1974, p. 66).

The *Manchester Guardian* adopted Zionist views in several of its editorial articles. On June 25, 1915, it published an article titled "Jews and the War," which addressed Zionism and described it as the Jewish spirit aiming for development and survival in a changing world. It continued that the future of Palestine was a pressing issue for Zionism because the Jewish spirit needed tangible achievements to have value and to achieve its aspirations (Guardian T. M., 1915, p. 6).

In November 1915, the newspaper published an article by one of its editors, journalist Herbert Sidebotham, which considered the importance of having a friendly state adjacent to Egypt to protect British interests in the Suez Canal. It suggested that, similar to how the Jewish nation had previously acted as a buffer state separating major empires in the East from Egypt, Jews could be allowed to establish a Jewish state allied with Britain in Palestine to ensure the protection of the Suez Canal and secure British access to its colonies in India (The Manchester Guardian, 15.11.1915, 1915, p. 3).

This idea was later adopted by the British Foreign Office, which considered British support for Zionism as primarily aimed at advancing British interests.

Herbert Sidebotham, the military expert for the pro-Zionist *Manchester Guardian* and a figure with significant influence and extensive connections within the English ruling circles of that time, spoke openly about the imperial project in Palestine. In his article "Defending Egypt" (Manchester Guardian, 1915), he stated:

"We cannot make the main artery of transportation to India and the East a theater of battle, and we need a bastion for protection, which requires the capture of Gaza on the coastal route and the controlling Jewish hills. The regions and geography that influenced the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah during every war between the Nile and Mesopotamia empires are now defending Egypt against Turkey. But if Judaism is necessary or at least highly desirable for the

adequate defense of Egypt, why be content with merely capturing the Jewish hills? What Judaism can secure may be better achieved by Israel and Judaism combined. Why not revive ancient Palestine? It has been said that the Jewish hills are as barren as church land, and if they are to become merely a theater of military operations, there is no gain from them in times of peace, and they represent a financial burden at all times. However, if we could add to the Jewish hills the fertile plain of Samaria and the Galilee mountains, we would have the bones of a new country that only needs the right people to flesh it out and make ancient Palestine a new nation. This new Palestine, especially in its alliance with the nation that controls the seas—something that was never in service to ancient Palestine—could not only be an ideal bastion protecting Egypt but also a self-sufficient nation, stronger and more prosperous than ancient Palestine ever was."

Egypt is our main interest in the East, and this means that Palestine is also our main interest as it is now, as it always has been, the key to Egypt. Furthermore, Egypt is important to England not only because of what it represents in itself but also because it forms the main conduit in our communications with our Indian Empire. It is absolutely certain that if Palestine becomes part of the Empire, it will never be colonized in the true sense of the word by those types of Englishmen who built Canada and Australia. Only the Jews can establish a new dominion on the Mediterranean, linked from the beginning with this country in the imperial work, thus serving simultaneously as a protective element against the strange East, and as an intermediary between it and us, and as a civilization distinct from ours but imbued with our political ideas." (El-Nashashibi, 2001, p. 189).

It is clear that Weizmann was a devoted Zionist who used his goals to crystallize Herzl's vision of a state. Above all, he spent his life trying to convince the British government of the benefits it would gain from such a state. For example, during World War I, he, along with others including C.P. Scott, the influential editor of the Manchester Guardian (Guardian, 1915), and Judge Brandeis, a U.S. Supreme Court Justice who later persuaded President Wilson that Zionism was also in the interest of American imperialism, formed a British-Palestinian Committee that sponsored a weekly newspaper called "Palestine" to explain the benefits Britain would receive from supporting Zionism. Convinced that Zionist settlement in Palestine would be politically and militarily advantageous to the British Empire, these men

encouraged support for Weizmann. Herbert Sidebotham, the military expert for the Guardian who also contributed to the "Palestine" newspaper, listed these benefits as follows: "The only potential colonists for Palestine are the Jews. They alone can establish a new political authority that will participate with our country from the outset in imperial work, act as a defense against the strange East, and serve as an intermediary between it and us. A civilization different from ours, but imbued with our political ideas. We believe that a buffer state in southern Syria could be as effective as in India, and more smoothly. A buffer state in Syria would remove several objections to expanding our military responsibilities, and if it became a dominant political entity or a proper colony, it would be a source of strength for us in the Eastern Mediterranean both politically and militarily. Lastly, the only potential large-scale colonists in Palestine are the Jews." (Guardian, 1917)

The Manchester Guardian's defense and promotion of Zionist goals were evident, as it spoke on behalf of the Zionists, urging the British government to meet Zionist demands and encouraging it to do so by linking these demands to the colonial interests of the British Empire and the benefits it would gain. The newspaper published an article on November 9, 1917, following the announcement of the Balfour Declaration, stating that while Palestine was not yet a state, it would become a state for the Jews. It considered the Balfour Declaration as fulfilling Jewish aspirations and described Jewish settlement in Palestine as the beginning of a true civilization. Additionally, the newspaper praised the Balfour Declaration as a British governmental guarantee of a bright future for the Zionist movement and the Jewish race. It mentioned that if British victories continued and Britain managed to bring all of Palestine under its control, all possible steps would be taken to encourage Zionist immigration to Palestine and grant them complete security and self-governance, aiming to achieve the ultimate goal of establishing a Jewish state. (Guardian T. M., 1917, p. 4)

The press not only covered Zionist-related news about conferences or the Zionist Federation but also addressed international developments affecting Zionism, such as its coverage of the British occupation of Jerusalem in December 1917. The same column included a message from Chaim Weizmann noting that Jews would remember General Allenby's entry into Jerusalem. (Guardian T. M., 1917, p. 5)

In discussing Dr. Weizmann's vision for Palestine, the article praised the outcomes of the San Remo Conference and highlighted the focus of Zionist activities in the coming period. According to the article, Zionist efforts would concentrate on education, agricultural work,

and industrial development in Palestine. This reflects the strategic priorities of the Zionist movement to establish a solid foundation for the future state by investing in essential sectors that would contribute to the growth and sustainability of the Jewish community in Palestine. The emphasis on education aimed to ensure that Jewish immigrants were well-integrated and skilled, while agricultural and industrial work was intended to develop the land and economy, making the region more viable and prosperous. (Guardian T. M., 1920, p. 8)

4.3 The Times:

It is a daily morning newspaper with a circulation of over 250,000 copies. It represents what is known as serious journalism. As a newspaper of the elite and of the prevailing and ruling circles, it is the preferred and sought-after paper for advertisers.

Formally, The Times is an independent newspaper and, among all English newspapers, it possesses the largest network of foreign correspondents. It features a large number of renowned British journalists, writers, and artists, as well as prominent sports commentators, politicians, and diplomats. The Times is the most influential and well-informed British newspaper, with its voice heard not only within political circles in Britain but also in other capitalist countries. It maintains close ties with government circles, particularly the Foreign Office, the Church, and major monopolies. The Times has been able to exert significant influence on shaping public opinion in the country. Its editorial line is aligned with and loyal to the traditional conservative British mentality, supported by a series of financial and industrial monopolies, yet it adapts very flexibly to rapid changes on the international stage. It consistently demonstrates and asserts its credibility and trustworthiness. The phrase "Thus said The Times" remains, for many English readers, a statement of utmost importance and is very difficult to refute. Ownership of The Times now belongs to the Thomson family monopoly and the Astor and Walter families. The Times is published every morning with 16-20 pages, and although it has changed the layout of its front page, it still maintains its prestige, traditions, style, and language. Most of the material published by The Times does not carry any byline.

Following the publication of the famous letter by Claude Montefiore and David Alexander in The Times on May 24, 1917, criticizing plans for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the Zionists intensified their correspondence with The Times. The Chief Rabbi sent

a letter criticizing the aforementioned letter and stated that, in his religious capacity as the head of the United Hebrew Congregation, he could not leave The Times' readers in a state of confusion and announced that the letter did not represent the British Jewish community.

Both Chaim Weizmann and Lord Rothschild also sent their protest letters to the newspaper. Lord Rothschild expressed regret that the Rabbi's letter was published at that crucial time, describing the opponents of Zionism as a minority within the Jewish world. He also expressed surprise at the idea that the establishment of an independent Jewish state under the protection of the Allied powers could affect the position or loyalty of Jews in the countries where they had chosen to live. According to his view, Zionism would serve to build a spiritual and moral center for Jews nostalgic for their old homeland. (Times, 1917, p. 5)

In his letter to the newspaper, Weizmann stated that individuals have the right to renounce their existing citizenship and adopt Jewish citizenship, but they do not have the right to decide whether Jews as a whole constitute a nationality. This issue should be determined by facts, not individual opinions. He also claimed that Zionists are not interested in controlling Palestine for their own benefit but will work to ensure the rights and freedoms of everyone living in Palestine. (Times, 1917, p. 5)

Following the controversy stirred by Claude Montefiore and David Alexander, The Times published an article on May 29, 1917, titled "The Future of the Jews," which suggested that the issue of resettling Jews in Palestine would become a practical matter to address after the war. The article supported Weizmann's view that individuals do not have the authority to determine whether Judaism constitutes a nationality. It also argued that the letters published by prominent British Jews, such as the Chief Rabbi and Lord Rothschild, undermined the claims of Montefiore and Alexander to speak on behalf of British Jews or Jews in general. The newspaper expressed its belief that Zionism represented the sentiments of the vast majority of Jews worldwide. (Times, 1917, p. 5)

4.4The Spectator

The Spectator was established in 1828 as a weekly political newspaper with conservative leanings. Its main goal was to convey information, summarize important public news, analyze it, and present it to readers. (Spectator, 1828, p. 7)

The newspaper adopted Zionist orientations early on and was described as the most pro-Zionist newspaper before Herzl's death. It dedicated most of its pages to political and literary topics as well as anti-Semitism.

Following the Balfour Declaration, the newspaper published an editorial on Jewish settlement projects in Palestine. It began with a report on General Allenby's arrival in Gaza, considering it a prelude to implementing the government's declaration, i.e., the Balfour Declaration. The article then discussed Jewish settlement in Palestine throughout different eras, including the settlement project proposed by Palmerston and the activities of the members of the Society of Lovers of Zion. The newspaper also suggested the need to encourage Jews to migrate to Palestine, claiming that Palestine could only prosper by attracting large numbers of intelligent and devoted immigrants. It added that Russian settlers had demonstrated their ability to thrive in Palestine and that Jews in Palestine could bring peace to the region. (Spectator, 1917, pp. 21-22)

5.Conclusion:

What I can conclude is the significant influence of Zionism in the British press, which responded to Zionist ambitions and propagated biased propaganda for the occupation of Palestine. The Balfour Declaration, issued by Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour in the fall of 1917, aimed to establish a national home for Jews in Palestine, thereby aligning Western imperialist projects with the colonial plans of the Zionist movement.

This declaration marked a painful event that ignited the Arab-Zionist conflict, leading to bloody wars that continue to this day. I believe that this conflict will only end with the removal of the Zionist occupation of Palestine and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

The English press has provided substantial and reliable material for constructing and developing the research topic, and historians can refer to it for valuable historical research.

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