CHAPTER II

One of the darkest chapters in world history is the persecution and slaughter of the Jews in Germany under the regime of Adolf Hitler. The world owes this suffering people much in partial payment for the frightful treatment they received throughout Central Europe before and during World War II. Whether the establishment of a national Jewish state is the answer to the Jewish problem in Central Europe, I seriously doubt.\(^1\)

I can understand how the Jewish people of the world, especially the Jews of America, in particular those who have recently immigrated here or whose ancestors are from the areas that came under the fury of the Nazis, feel toward the people of their faith that have been so cruelly persecuted in Central Europe. All informed Americans feel the same way. When I think of alternatives for world Judaism to a Jewish State, I feel there are several which would have been so much better from the standpoint of the Jews all over the world. A state means world segregation and such segregation will emphasize segregation for the Jews who do not go to Israel. Segregation, I fear, will bring about more rather than less anti-Semitism. Even if the Jews are a race rather than a religious community, which many Jews will not admit, extreme nationalism such as that represented by the State of Israel is reactionary in the kind of world we are trying to build. Irish, Polish or any kind
of extreme nationalism is, of course, equally a backward rather than a forward movement.

When I think of the extraordinarily great talents of the Jewish people in the fields of medicine, science, art, music and statesmanship, I can visualize a great world university in Palestine which would make possible the concentrated efforts of the Jews on research, particularly in the problems of the Middle East. These are multiple. In the field of public health alone so much is to be done. I feel that a great university would do more to raise the prestige of the Jews throughout the world than a Jewish state with ambitions to become a power and an active participant in world politics.

There is, it is true, a small Israeli university in Jerusalem, but it is a national university. I would wish to see a great international one into which the Jews of the world would pour their resources and make it a great monument to Jewish genius and to the Jewish spirit. Students from everywhere, especially from the Middle East, would be welcomed there and become part of a great undertaking. What could do more to bring Jews and Arabs together in happy unity?

I shall refer later to the efforts that were made by our Government and the British Government to find homes for all the refugees of Central Europe in various parts of the world, including the United States. There are many countries still available for the settlement of industrious, capable people who want to become citizens in a new homeland.

The problem of the European Jews left homeless as a result of Nazi persecution and the war was the principal stimulus behind the intensified Zionist movement which followed World War II. This destitute people were collected in the American and British zones of Germany, particularly in the former, and were given temporary housing and care by the Allied armies. The camps set up for these refugees, though reasonably well equipped, were soon crowded to the point where they were appallingly unsatisfactory for human beings. With regard to the large numbers of refugees
coming in by the underground railroad from the sections east of the Allied zones, the authorities could do little. These conditions intensified the already strong desire of the Jews to emigrate to Palestine. Thus there was given great impetus to the Zionist movement which had been growing in strength and influence throughout the Western world.

Palestine was a bitterly disputed land. The Jews based their claim to the right to go to Palestine on the Balfour Declaration of 1917 which said:

"His Majesty's Government view with favor 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..."

The French and Italian Governments endorsed the declaration in 1918 and a joint resolution of Congress in 1922 gave formal United States sanction to the idea of a Jewish national home. The Zionists put all the stress on the first part of the statement and very little on the latter part. When I speak of Zionists I do not mean this to be synonymous with Jews. The terms are not interchangeable. If I criticise Zionists I am not criticizing Jews, for whom as a group I have the highest admiration and respect.

The question of a "national" home could be subject to many interpretations. It is hard to believe that the British Government using the words "national home" in 1917, had any idea that there should be created a Jewish state in Palestine without regard to the rights of the large Arab majority living there.

The Arabs in Palestine, at the time of the Balfour Declaration, were a part of the Turkish Empire and believed that they had obtained from the British a wartime promise of independence in the McMahon Letters of 1915 and in any event, being about 90 per cent of the population at the time, felt they had a natural claim to the land. The Jews, however, had been buying up steadily the large estates of absentee Arab land owners and settling immigrants on these estates.
If the Arabs in Palestine had continued to be a backward, disorganized people, and if the Jews had never had more than cultural aspirations for their national home, the situation in Palestine might have developed peacefully. But that was not the case. The Arabs came out of the War with an intense nationalism and a burning desire for independence. Some of the Jewish leaders already had in the back of their mind a Jewish state in part or all of Palestine. The aspirations of the two peoples in this little land, the size of Vermont, were contradictory. That the two peoples themselves realized this fact sharply is shown by the fact which has grown between them in the three decades succeeding the Balfour Declaration.

After World War I Palestine became a Mandate under the League of Nations, with Great Britain as the administering Power. During the next few years Great Britain engaged in an unhappy effort to find a solution to the conflict between Jews (Mandates) and Arabs, always of course bearing in mind that she herself needed to retain bases in the strategic Middle East. During those few years, while their population increased through continued immigration from about 25% to 30% per cent of the total population, the Jews established a Western community with intensified farming and modern industries. The miracles they worked in this formerly wild country, the horrible persecution of their brethren in Europe, as well as the strong support they received from American Jewry, made their cause a strong one. The Arabs, on the other hand, being the long-time inhabitants who were now being displaced (the last independent Jewish state ended in 63 B.C.); naturally had many sympathizers, and Great Britain, with her eye on the many Arab countries in the Middle East, was attentive to the Arab position.

The conflict between the two peoples led to a continuing increase of friction, time to time to riots and violence. The British sent a number of investigating commissions whose reports led to a series of White Papers. Perhaps the most famous of the investigators was the Royal Commission of 1936, which concluded that the
the Mandate was unworkable and that the country should be partitioned between the two peoples. However, the Partition Commission which followed the Royal Commission was unable to work out a practicable partition within its terms of reference, and the British Government, having previously accepted the principle of partition, now rejected it. The Jews (Zionists) and Arabs both rejected partition as they had rejected all other solutions except their own.

With war coming on, the British Government issued its new famous White Paper of 1939 which declared that the British obligation to foster the national home had been fulfilled and announced the intention of preparing the country for self-government with its existing population. Out of consideration of the plight of the Jews of Europe, provision was made for a final immigration of 75,000 more refugees in the next five years. Further restrictions were also placed upon the purchase of land by Jews. The Jews unanimously condemned the Paper, while the Arabs slowly accepted it as fulfilling their main demand.

During the war the conflict in Palestine continued, but the problem was magnified by much larger world issues. However, the Nazi mass killing of the Jews during the war shocked the world and focused attention on the remnants of the people who had collected in the camps in Germany and demanded to go to Palestine.

In early 1946 the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, a group of twelve distinguished Britons and Americans, looked at the problem in Europe and Palestine and stated in their report that the hostility between Jews and Arabs precluded an independent state and that the country should be placed under the trusteeship of the United Nations. They rejected the idea of a Jewish state or an Arab state. They recommended, among nine other things, the immediate admission of 100,000 refugees, some form of further immigration, and removal of the restrictions on the sale of land to Jews. The recommendation for the immediate immigration of 100,000 Jews was singled out by the Zionists to be implemented at once without reference to the other nine recommendations the Committee of Inquiry had made, and there followed an active campaign to get this done at once.
In order to work out and carry through some plan of action with the British Government, President Truman, on June 15, 1946, appointed a Cabinet Committee under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State, and with the Secretaries of War and Treasury as members. The President stated in a release from the White House that:

"The Committee will be charged with assisting me in formulating and implementing such policy with respect to Palestine and related problems as may be adopted by this Government. The Committee will be authorized to negotiate with the British government and with other foreign governments and to maintain contact with private organizations relative to the various actions arising out of the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry." 16

On the same day the Secretary of State appointed me as his alternate with the personal rank of Ambassador; the Secretary of War appointed Mr. Goldsmith Gorry as his alternate. 17 The Board of Alternates, or Committee as it was called, selected a small staff and began to study intensively all the documents and material available on the subject. Having finished its preliminary investigations, the Committee, with its staff, flew to London in early July. In the meantime, the British had set up a similar committee under the chairmanship of Sir Norman Brook. 18

Goldsmith Gorry is one of the finest and most able men I have ever worked with. By association with him and Herbert Lenton was an extremely pleasant one. Herbert Lenton brought to our Committee an experience of many years in newspaper and government work. He later became president of the Export-Import Bank and did an outstanding job. 19 I was fortunate indeed to have these two men with me as the members of the Committee. We supplemented each other in the particular work we took up and were in complete agreement on our report when it was finished.

Before leaving for London, the Committee outlined a general program which it had decided to make the basis of negotiation with the British Committee. This program was based on nine points which the Committee took up with the President for his approval or disapproval. The British had been urging that the United
States should be prepared to give military assistance in the event of trouble with the Arabs over the immigration of the 100,000 Jews to Palestine (and with considerable urgency, because if 100,000 immigrants were to be forced on the Arabs under pressure of the Zionists in America and the American Government, we might well be expected to share the responsibility for the troubles which might ensue). However, the Committee felt that there were involvements to military participation on our part and therefore that American military forces should not be employed. The President agreed. The President, however, approved the other eight recommendations, and these were the basis for our negotiations with the Brook Committee and all were incorporated in the final joint report.

We believed that if, as a result of our conferences in London, it was decided that a trusteeship should replace the mandate and we were asked to be cotrustees, it would be preferable not to accept this responsibility. The President was willing to have the matter of co-trusteeship left open for later consideration.

We also agreed that the United States should support the Anglo-American Committee Report as a whole, including the third recommendation that Palestine should be neither a Jewish nor an Arab state. The President concurred.

We felt that we could not effectively urge renewal of immigration into Palestine with all that this would imply unless we were prepared to open our own doors to an increased number of victims of Nazi persecution. The President agreed to request Congress to provide an additional immigration quota for 50,000 refugees.

The fact that we could state that the President would make such a request strengthened our position in our discussions with the British.

We also felt that the United States should be in a position, if necessary, to give some assistance to Middle Eastern countries, including Palestine, in the form of loans and grants. The President concurred and stated that immediately upon the implementation of the plan to admit the 100,000 Jews into Palestine, the
would ask the Export-Import Bank and/or the International Bank to make loans up to $200,000,000 as a means of stimulating the economic life of the Middle East. The President was willing, also, as a part of the program for the 100,000 immigrants, to ask Congress for a grant-in-aid for Palestine of $25,000,000 to $50,000,000 to be spent for improving conditions of the Arabs there.

We also raised with President Truman the matter of the Jews who continued to come from Eastern Europe to the camps in our area at the rate of 200,000 per year. We could not ask for the easing of the borders in face of the conditions in Eastern Europe. To do so would be inhumane. Our Committee felt that while we should continue to offer our physical protection to the future refugees, we could not give them this preferential treatment over all other persons displaced by the war. The President concurred in this.

We also felt that it was necessary that it should be made clear that the measures we were endeavoring to take with regard to Palestine should not adversely affect our national position in the whole Middle East. The President agreed that in any future announcements of our policy, there should be some emphasis on our interest in the Palestine situation as part of our larger interest in the peoples of the Middle East, in their required political equality and their economic development. We felt strongly that we should at any rate indicate an understanding of the point of view of the peoples of the Middle East with regard to the Palestine question. Actually, the directive under which our Committee was working placed on us a responsibility for policy recommendations not only with regard to Palestine, but also with regard to related problems.\footnote{\textit{c.}}

The Anglo-American Committee's report, while very good in many respects, was quite general in form. This was perhaps due to the many compromises which had been necessary to arrive in order to obtain unanimity among twelve men. For example, though recognizing the difficulties involved in the British mandate over Palestine, which the Committee felt should be continued for the time being,
It recommended a trusteeship system for the future. Except for the negative statement "that Palestine should be neither a Jewish nor an Arab state," little concrete guidance was given for the future government of the country. And the problem which had always proved to be the stumbling block for governments of the past — the level of immigration or how the level should be decided — was left open.

We were aware that the British were unwilling to let the unsatisfactory governmental situation drag on and we therefore knew that we would have to be prepared to discuss proposals for a new form of government. On the question of specific types of government, we knew that the Anglo-American Committee had rejected partition, which was advocated by some of its members, and that a bi-national state had been favored by a strong element in the Committee, though a specific recommendation for such a state was not put into the report.23

Having only general guidance on the question of government, and in any event not being bound by the previous Committee's recommendations, we gave serious consideration to partition. Having been recommended by the Royal Commission of 1936, whose report was admittedly the most exhaustive and profound of all the studies of Palestine in the last 30 years,24 this solution continued to present itself as the most possible way for settling the problem, particularly in view of the continuation of strife between Arabs and Jews. Furthermore, the Jewish Agency unofficially presented us with a paper on partition, this plan having recently become their solution. Any compromise plan backed by at least one party to the dispute had a better chance of success than proposals opposed by both.

Whatever our views on partition, however, we went to London with a plan for a bi-national government under the Trusteeship of the United Nations. Our plan only partially answered the questions which the Anglo-American Committee Report had left unanswered, but we were hoping that there would be enough Arab-Jewish cooperation to make the bi-national scheme workable.
Much to our surprise, on our arrival in London, the British presented us with a proposal for a federal government in which there would be semi-autonomous Jewish and Arab provinces.²⁵

The plan was immediately recognized as the "Harrie Plan" by those of our staff who had also served on the previous Committee. It had been prepared some time before our recent efforts by a British civil servant and presented to the Anglo-American Committee without the backing of the British government. Official British support of the plan now was somewhat of a surprise to us since provincial autonomy was a step toward partition, a solution which we thought was not in consonance with the supposed British desire to retain Palestine as a military base. We were, nevertheless, considerably relieved that the British were presenting it, since we had never been fully convinced in our own minds that there was enough Jewish goodwill for the bi-national plan we had in our briefcases.

Furthermore, provincial autonomy seemed a solution which stayed within the Anglo-American Committee recommendations and yet moved toward a solution—partition—which would enlist the backing of at least one party to the dispute. Backing by two parties was considered almost unsustainable. The provincial autonomy plan we thought might ultimately result in an integrated Jewish-Arab state, which would be a most satisfactory alternative to partition.

The provincial autonomy plan provided for the division of the country into an Arab Province and a Jewish Province, each of which would have powers somewhat greater than those of an American state. Foreign Affairs, Defence, Transportation and some other powers were reserved to the Central Government, which was to be controlled by the Trustees. As to the two most crucial issues, the regulation of land purchase and immigration, both were left to the provincial governments, with the condition that on the latter question neither province could permit more immigration than it was able to absorb.

The districts of Jerusalem and the Negev were to be under control of the
Central Government. Jerusalem's population was about evenly divided between Jews and Arabs, and the international interest in the city was great. The Negeb District was largely an uninhabited desert; its future was to be settled at a later date.

In a statement of policy by our two delegations, the British and the American, it was said:

"The plan offers to the Jew an opportunity to exercise a wide measure of control over immigration like one part of Palestine and to forward in the Jewish Province the development of the Jewish National Home. At the same time it offers to the majority of the Arabs of Palestine their own political institutions in an Arab province and freedom from the fear of further Jewish immigration into the province without their consent. It makes it possible to give practical effect to the principles of government enunciated in Recommendation 3 of the Anglo-American Committee; and it offers a prospect of development towards self-government of which there is less hope in a unitary Palestine. It provides a means of segregating Jew and Arab to an extent which should substantially reduce the risk of a continuation of widespread violence and disorder in Palestine."

"In the long term the plan leaves the way open for constitutional development either towards partition or towards federal unity. The association of representatives of the two Provinces in the administration of central subjects may lead ultimately to a fully developed federal constitution. On the contrary, if the centrifugal forces prove too strong, the way is open towards partition. The Provisional Plan does not prejudice this issue either way. The administering authority will be prepared to hand over the government to the people of the country as soon as the two communities express a common desire to that end and present an agreed scheme which will ensure its stable administration."

The area proposed for the Jews was smaller than that proposed for the Arabs, but it was immeasurably richer. To the Jews would go 85 per cent of all the citrus lands, almost all the industries, the deep water port and the railway, most of the coasts, practically all the water resources and virtually all the lands inhabited by Jews. In the Arab province of 130,000 people, there were only 15,000 Jews whereas in the Jewish province of 750,000 there was an Arab minority of 300,000.

In addition to giving the Jews a large measure of control over immigration
the Plan provided for the early transportation of the 100,000 from Europe to Palestine. Responsibility for the $70,000,000 cost of immigration of the
100,000 in two years, including the capital investment to provide employment for them, was accepted by the Jewish Agency. The British Delegation was to
recommend to its Government that it accept responsibility for the $4,000,000 annual government deficit of the Arab province. The American Delegation was to
propose to the President that he seek legislation for a $30,000,000 loan for
development projects in the Arab province and for a $200,000,000 loan for
development of the Middle East, including Palestine. As mentioned above, the
President had already agreed to do this as a part of a solution to the prob-
lem of Palestine.

For obvious reasons, the London negotiations between the British and Amer-
ican representatives on this highly charged issue were being conducted in pri-
vate. The two Delegations were to formulate a plan for presentation to their
two Governments and to the Arabs and the Jews. The time for public discussion
was to come after that presentation. Nevertheless, news of the nature of the
plan being considered began to appear in the press midway through the negotiations.
The stories correctly stated that provincial autonomy was being discussed, but
their statements about the division of powers of the government and the division
of land were in most cases inaccurate speculations.27

When we arrived in London for our discussions with the representatives of
the British government, there at once followed me a number of representatives of
the Jewish Agency. I have had a good deal of experience with lobbies but this
group started where those of my experience had ended. They maintained extremely
close contact with our staff and got information from several experts on our
staff which they were not entitled to receive. They were frequently in our
headquarters and usually at the dining room where we took our meals. Two members
of our staff became very close to the lobby and made critical statements of our
report to the press when our report was finished but before it was submitted to

the President. These statements seemed to have been based on their assumption that the experts and not the Committee were to decide what our report should be. They indicated this to me and to Resseguie, Dorr and Guston in several of our staff meetings. I have heard a number of government officials but in no other have I ever experienced so much disloyalty.

The High Commissioner and his government's crusade in this struggle, were sorely disappointed that they were not consulted on the negotiations as they progressed, and evidently from what they were able to learn in the course of the negotiations they decided they did not like them.

In any event, without ever having seen the plan, they launched a campaign in the United States against it. And in the United States, since there is no political force to counterbalance the British, its campaign was apt to be decisive.

Legally enough, the High Commissioner's case had unofficially proposed complete partition a few weeks before, and this plan "shocked" them — set them off in a small portion of Palestine. In their effort to discredit the plan they had never seen, they depicted territorial separation of Arabs and Jews as something in itself wrong.

Actually, what the High Commissioner really disliked about the plan was the size of the area allocated to them. Land was the all-important factor to them — not the nature of the proposed government. Receiving all the land in which there was an appreciable number of Jewish settlers did not satisfy their demand for expansion. They insisted on the right to grow even if growth had to be at the direct expense of the Arabs on the land.

The atom of criticism raised by the British about the plan was peculiarly trying for my colleagues and me because we were not at liberty to defend it by disclosing it, and because any defense of the plan was directly a criticism of the President for not accepting it. Privately, the President has several times said to me that he thought the plan for provincial autonomy was the best
of all the solutions proposed for Palestine.

Secretary of State James Byrnes, who was in Paris for the Peace Conference at the time we submitted our report to the President by cable, endorsed provincial autonomy, but in the face of the concerted attack on the Plan in the United States, the President decided that he would not support it. Mr. Herbert Morrison, on behalf of the British Government, nevertheless, presented the Plan to the House of Commons and arranged to negotiate it with both the Jewish Agency and the Arab High Authority. But the failure to get American support, which greatly weakened the British position, as well as the traditional reluctance of the Jews and Arabs to negotiate, caused the attempted negotiations to come to naught.

The problem then went to the United Nations, which sent an International Commission to Palestine to once again search for a solution. The Commission recommended partition, and its recommendation having been accepted by the General Assembly, Palestine was partitioned and the State of Israel came into being on May 15, 1948.28

The problem is not settled today nor can one visualize its settlement in the foreseeable future. The military conflict which broke out resulted in the

pushing out of Palestine and making refugees, of about 800,000 people. The United Nations, through its Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees, has been attempting to solve this tragic problem, but with only moderate success because it is almost insurmountable. On the other hand, the Glaub Report, written under the auspices of the United Nations and released in January, 1950, found that Israel could not be a viable state without extraordinary capital investments.29

In the meantime, American Jewry is pouring vast sums of money into Israel and the American taxpayer is contributing to the development of the State of Israel through large Export-Import Bank loans and generous grants-in-aid. Moreover, contributions to Jewish Relief are deductible from income taxes, and so
the United States Treasury makes a large direct contribution to Israel. In the same degree that money is pouring in, Jewish immigrants from other countries in the Middle East are moving into Israel. Many have come from Yemen, where there is no refugee problem, and others from Arab states from which they have been driven out in retaliation for the driving of the Arabs out of Palestine. It seems no longer to be a question only of the Jews of Europe who were victims of Nazi persecution, but Jews from other areas who, until the Palestine question became a serious one, lived in peace and prosperity throughout many countries of the Middle East.

The years succeeding our mission, with their military conflicts, economic and political problems not only in Palestine but in the whole Near East, have confirmed in my mind the conviction that our Plan offered the best chance of a solution.

One must remember that our Plan called for increased immigration of Central European refugees to the United States, and despite the failure of our Plan, Congress later provided emergency quotas for displaced persons. Another special quota of 20,000 has just been provided by Congress.31 Also there was set up at the end of the war in the State Department a special section under an assistant secretary to endeavor to facilitate immigration of the homeless of Europe to South America. Our Plan also called for the British Government to request the dominions to aid in this regard.

But efforts of this kind do not fulfill the Zionist dream of a Jewish state in Palestine.

I have always felt that we rather badly let the British down by our Government not supporting the Joint Report. Our Committee had gone to London with the basic points of an agreement approved by the President and the British had every reason to assume that when and if both Delegations had agreed on a report that it would receive the support of both Governments. The British had hoped to
Advised the House of Commons that the report had been well received by the American Government. Instead, Herbert Morrison had to go before Commons and get its approval of the report, which he did, and then attempt to get acceptance of it by representatives of the Arabs and the Jewish Agency. It is easy to see how much stronger the position of the British Government would have been if the negotiations were based on a combined program of the British and Transjordan Governments. Prime Minister Clemenceau was in Paris at the time and undertook to tell Ali of the decision of the President. I was glad that he was willing to undertake it rather than I.

Some members of the British group that had negotiated with us were in Paris also at the time. I must say they took the decision in a fine spirit.

Our Committee was instructed to consider in the report not only Palestine but "related problems." These problems were, of course, the relationship of a settlement of the Palestine question to American foreign policy in the whole of the Middle East. We kept this in mind during all of our studies and conferences with the British. Had all our recommendations been accepted I feel sure that not only would the aspirations of the Mandates for a home for Jewish refugees have been realized, but we would not have had the situation that came later. Nor would we have had the ill-will of the Arab states, which are of such strategic importance to our "cold war" with the Soviets.