By the end of World War I, the idea of an “equitable” Near Eastern settlement had long been on the mind of Woodrow Wilson. The twelfth of President Wilson’s Fourteen Points favored popular sovereignty for resident subject nationalities within the Ottoman empire with appropriate opportunities for their development. There were, however, disturbing reports about certain portions of Ottoman Turkey. American observers reported the duplicity of Great Britain as an occupying power in Ottoman Palestine; it appeared that British officials were permitting Zionist propaganda to flourish, but at the same time were employing repressive measures to muzzle the Arab populace. It was rumored that Britain encouraged the situation “in order to attain certain political and military aims.” The United States Department of State received many communiqués suggesting that “in the Southern zone of Palestine, violent hatred of the Jews and Zionists and general dissatisfaction with British administration” would lead to civil war.¹

The other side of the coin was the Balfour Declaration. On November 2, 1917, the British Government, through Lord Arthur James Balfour, had expressed itself as looking with favor upon

¹ Initialed memorandum to the State Department, The William Yale Papers, Edward M. House Collection [hereafter WYP-EMHC], Yale University Library, No. 176, December 18, 1918, folder 122.
the "establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people. . . ." If promises had been made to the Arabs, they had certainly been made to the Jews as well. In most instances, however, the promises to the two peoples were regarded as unequal. To one American negotiator, the Balfour Declaration represented a change in British policy "granting" to the "insistent Zionists" the Palestinian homeland, but in the opinion of President Wilson and the various state legislatures which endorsed it, the Declaration was an "open covenant fought for in the open." Among


3 Pre-1917 British policy with regard to the Near East and Palestine is contained within two documents. The first was the Husain-McMahon correspondence, a series of exchanges between the Hejazi Sharif Husain and Sir Henry McMahon, High Commissioner for Egypt, between July, 1915, and January, 1916. Subsequently, the Arabs were to claim that this series of notes constituted their "declaration of independence." By this correspondence, the British recognized Arab independence both in the Levant and in the Hejaz, in exchange for an Arab revolt against the Turks. McMahon, however, stipulated that certain areas were to be exempted from Arab control. The exemptions were later destined to complicate the Near Eastern peace. The Arab portions of the Ottoman empire were divided into administrative units, known as vilayets and sanjaks. Palestine, for example, was divided into the sanjaks of Acre and Nablus, both of which belonged to the vilayet of Beirut and the independent sanjak of Jerusalem. The areas exempted from Arab control by the McMahon notes included "Syria, west of the Damascus, Homs, Hama and Aleppo." If, as the British later insisted, Damascus meant the vilayet and not the city, virtually all Palestine was excluded from Arab control. The Arabs claimed that "Damascus" meant the city of Damascus which left Palestine in their hands. The Arabs, however, did not question the British terms in 1916, and the tribes of Hejaz revolted in June: Howard M. Sachar, The Course of Modern Jewish History (New York, 1958), pp. 370-71; George Antonius, The Arab Awakening (New York, 1965), pp. 163-85, 413-27, especially pp. 419-20.

The second document was the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which stipulated a parceling out of the Ottoman empire among several nations. It provided for an independent Arab State or confederation of states, for British, Russian and French acquisitions and for international control of Palestine. Neither the Arabs nor the Zionists knew of the pact when it was concluded in May, 1916. Faisal learned of it at the end of 1916; Weizmann in April, 1917. Presumably the Americans knew nothing of it until the Near East was discussed at the Peace Conference: Cohen, p. 72; Antonius, pp. 248-54, 428-30; Sachar, pp. 373-74; Chambers, pp. 51-52.


5 Ibid.
knowledgeable Americans, then, there existed a difference of opinion on the Balfour Declaration. Each of the opposing views was to be represented at Versailles.

Dinner with Lawrence and Faisal

In January, 1919, the delegates of the Great Powers converged upon Paris. Among the first to begin work was an American, William Linn Westermann, who was to play a key role in the Near Eastern peace settlement. He was a regional specialist for Western Asia and a professor of ancient history at the University of Wisconsin. He had been attached to the Inquiry, an organization formed by Colonel Edward M. House in the autumn of 1917 to collect information about the future peace. In January, 1919, the Inquiry was absorbed by the American Commission to Negotiate the Peace. By then, Westermann was no longer associated with the Inquiry. A few days after his arrival in France, he assumed control of the West Asia Division of the American Commission to Negotiate the Peace. The Balfour Declaration aroused Westermann's pessimism. Writing to William C. Bullitt, Chief of the Intelligence Reports Section of the American Commission, Westermann conveyed his grave misgivings. He thought that the Near Eastern situation, as it was presently unfolding, denied Wilson's views on self-determination. Jewish national ambitions, he felt, were misguided. The Zionists were looking forward to the establishment of a Jewish state, and he was troubled, therefore, by the plight of the Arabs. He believed that if Palestine became a Jewish state, a promise of equal rights for the Arabs should be exacted. Finally, he averred that the Sykes-Picot Agreement ought to be scrapped in favor of the Commission proposal suggested by Howard Bliss, the American missionary and president of the Syrian Protestant College at Beirut. Bliss's plan called for the

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6The members of the Inquiry were Sidney Mezes of City College of New York, director; Walter Lippmann, secretary; Attorney David H. Miller, treasurer; Dr. Isaiah Bowman, then of the American Geographic Society, chief territorial specialist; James T. Shotwell, of Columbia University, librarian and specialist in history; and Westermann: Esco, I, 244.

sending of an inter-Allied commission to Syria to determine the actual desires of the people. In Westermann's estimation, the Bliss idea embodied the Wilsonian principle of self-determination. 8

Westermann had admired the "undoubted idealism" of the Zionist movement at its inception. At the Peace Conference, however, he came to deplore its descent into the realm of international politics. 9 Before formal negotiations began, he met and took an immediate personal dislike to Chaim Weizmann. 10 The following week, he dined with Colonel T. E. Lawrence and the Emir Faisal. He was so impressed with both men that he proclaimed his immediate conversion to the Arab cause. 11

Early in February, Westermann met William Yale, a man who probably knew more about the condition of the Near East than any other American at Paris. 12 Yale had recently been released from his duties as United States observer in Cairo, where he was attached to the British Expeditionary Force. In an atmosphere saturated with idealistic talk concerning America's postwar role as guardian of the Near East, Yale managed to remain immune. At Versailles, and again in Syria, Yale spoke against a proposed American mandate or political involvement in the Near East. After sixteen months in Egypt and Palestine, he had become anti-British and pro-French, and was optimistic as to the ultimate reconciliation and eventual cooperation between antagonistic Arab and Jewish nationalisms. 13 Later, Yale would disagree with Henry Churchill King and Charles R. Crane on these very points.

8 Ibid., pp. 222-23.
9 Westermann to Marvin M. Lowenthal, April 12, 1944, Westermann Papers [hereafter WLW], Butler Library, Columbia University, Box 2.
11 Ibid., January 20, 1919, pp. 19, 25.
12 Ibid., February 12, 1919, p. 35. In ensuing years, Yale was a history professor at Boston University, and at the outbreak of World War II held the same position at the University of New Hampshire.
13 Although Yale proved to be much more equitable in his judgment of the Zionists than King or Crane, it must be emphasized that he was consistently pro-Arab and, if not openly opposed to Zionism, always suspicious of its leaders: Westermann to Harry N. Howard, September 6, 1940, WLW, Box 1; PDWLW, February 12, 1919, p. 35; Yale to the State Department, "Zionism and the Arab Movement," Report No. 19, March 18, 1918,
Discussions began in earnest only when the President and his immediate staff were settled. The experts surrounding Wilson knew and cared little about Near Eastern affairs. Secretary of State Robert Lansing was convinced that America should remain aloof from European intrigue in the Near East. He feared that the Allies would attempt to ensnare the United States into assuming a protectorate in either Armenia or Palestine. Henry White, the designated but uninfluential Republican on the Commission, was opposed to Jewish autonomy in Palestine. General Tasker Bliss had little interest in Zionism, although the few allusions he made were hostile. The last of Wilson’s team, Colonel House, conducted an interview with the Emir Faisal two days before the Arab leader’s scheduled appearance before the Council of Ten. House, who had wide experience with American Zionists, noted in his diary that he felt kindly disposed toward the Arabs: “My influence will be thrown in their direction whenever they are right.”

On February 6th Faisal, officially heading the Hejazi delegation but in truth spokesman for the entire Arab people, appeared before the Conference. He demanded hegemony over Asia Minor, excluding Palestine. Lansing was entranced with his dignified appearance and forceful presentation. He was “swept off his feet” by Faisal’s bold affirmation “that one hundred thousand men had joined his revolt” during the war. Exactly three weeks later,


Formal deliberations were not held until January 12, 1919; the first plenary session convened on January 18th. Actually, Wilson arrived at Brest in December, 1918, but spent about three weeks touring France, England, and Italy before arriving at Paris to commence work there. Thomas A. Bailey, Woodrow Wilson and the Lost Peace (Chicago, 1963), pp. 110-14.


Manuel, p. 216.

Evans, p. 122.

Cited in Manuel, pp. 202, 227. However, “Yale . . . had estimated this glorious insurgent Army at 2000.” Cited in Evans, p. 125.
the Zionists advanced their case before the Council. The fact that there were no American Zionists on the Commission may have reenforced the idea in the minds of the American negotiators that the movement was essentially foreign. In any event, Lansing was exposed to two opposing philosophies: the political Zionism of Weizmann and the nonnationalist vision of the Franco-Jewish culturalist, Sylvain Lévi. The Secretary of State was aware of Jewish division on the Zionist issue in America, and sought to stay clear of what he believed to be purely Jewish concerns. He felt that the testimony he had heard at Paris vindicated his old position. 19

Not until March did the Great Powers decide to send a Commission to Syria. An investigation was not seriously considered until both sides had spoken. Besides, the thought of self-determination in an area whose fate had been secretly decided upon during the war was unacceptable to France and Great Britain. Neither of these nations had ever discussed the project with much enthusiasm.

**Wilson’s Misjudgment Was Nearly Total**

During February and March the peacemakers of the United States, including President Wilson, decided to take unilateral action. Wilson was close to the Zionist movement in America; he knew its leaders as well as its detractors. If he held Zionism in high esteem, a point about which there is little disagreement among historians, why did he authorize the selection of a group of men to question the Arab peoples concerning their desires? No scholar has shed any light on the subject. It appears that two ideas hard to reconcile existed simultaneously in the President’s mind: one dealing with Jewish redemption in Palestine, and the other with the self-determination of the Arab peoples. Perhaps in order to satisfy both requests and to justify his own sense of morality, he sent the Commission to ascertain the wishes of the indigenous peoples and, by employing a great deal of self-deception,

persuaded himself that their aspirations would coincide with his own unique vision.20

By mid-March, Wilson was accepting suggestions for commissioners. Ray Stannard Baker suggested Westermann, but Westermann declined.21 On March 20th, no commissioners had yet been designated, although Wilson had publicly acknowledged his sponsorship of an Allied, or mixed, commission.22 Nevertheless, the search for two qualified men, conducted only in Paris, was to bear fruit within a week. The President had precisely stated the requisite credentials for commission leadership. He wanted two men with liberal backgrounds and no previous contact with the Near East. He also desired that the choice be made from candidates then in Europe; hence, the preoccupation with haste narrowed the field considerably. As to the identities of the men, he had not a clue.23 On March 23rd, when discussing the inter-Allied commission, Westermann suggested that a thorough survey of the area would "take at least six months: that the men chosen must be of high political standing, whose positions will carry great weight." Westermann further proposed that Henry Cabot Lodge be one of those men.24

On March 27th, the final selection was announced. Senator Lodge was not one of those chosen. The President's ostensible choices were revealed by Henry White before a meeting of the American peace commissioners.25 Wilson thought that Henry Churchill King and Charles R. Crane were particularly qualified because "they knew nothing about" Syria; also, they were "ab-

21 Harry N. Howard; The King–Crane Commission; An American Inquiry in the Middle East (Beirut, 1963), p. 36 [hereafter King-Crane].
23 Esco, I, 215. It appears that the importance of "ready availability" among candidates was of greater moment than their abilities.
24 PDWLW, March 23, 1919, pp. 46-47. The person who made the suggestion to Westermann was Gertrude Bell. She had been attached to the British Intelligence Service in Egypt during the war. See Mousa, p. 8.
solutely disinterested." Crane, in particular, was "a very experienced and cosmopolitan man."26

Wilson's misjudgment of these two men, their backgrounds, abilities, and incentives, was nearly total. One explanation for this inexcusable lapse appears to refute previous scholarship which generally affirms that Wilson selected the commissioners for the reasons he gave.27 Another hypothesis, yet to be explored, is that Wilson, in fact, chose neither King nor Crane nor anyone else on the nine-man Commission. That they were actually selected by other highly interested individuals or groups and their appointment merely seconded by the President is not only plausible but provable. Finally, these two men were not, nor had they ever been, disinterested. Both had easily discernible prejudices—and it is, assuredly, because of these prejudices that they were chosen.

Henry Churchill King had three important sponsors: Ray Stannard Baker, Colonel House, and the State Department. In 1919,

26 PPC, 184. 00101/39, Minutes of Daily Meetings, Commissioners Plenipotentiary, March 27, 1919, USDSPRFRUS: PPC, XI, 133; PPC, 180. 03041/22 1/2, Minutes of Daily Meetings, Council of Four, May 22, 1919, USDSPRFRUS: PPC, V, 812. Woodrow Wilson later mentioned to Lloyd George that the Commission was unequivocally disinterested: Manuel, p. 245. M'Urrokh al-Thawret al-Arabiyyeh, historian of the Arab revolt, offers an interesting commentary on the part played by Mrs. Wilson in the President's final decision to send a commission to the Near East: "Mrs. Wilson was in Paris when Emir Faisal arrived for the first time. She met him there and admired him . . . and later wrote him several letters. She used to say that his face reflected the picture of Christ. . . . I believe that she was instrumental in bringing about the decision to send out the King-Crane Commission to Syria"; see Mousa, p. 226n.

27 The King-Crane Report was suppressed for three years before it was finally made public in 1922, with the aid of Ray Stannard Baker, who was a progressive, a muckraker during the administration of Theodore Roosevelt and the editor of American Magazine (1906-1915). The report became a national cause célèbre, a symbol of bankrupt American idealism. It received favorable, almost sensational coverage by the American press. Historiographically, until the present time, no publication unfavorable to it has been well documented. For an in-depth survey of the King-Crane Report and the commentary on it from 1919 to 1972, the following, among others, should be consulted: Baker, Woodrow Wilson and the World Settlement (New York, 1923), II, 213-16; "Against Palestine as a Jewish State," New York Times, August 20, 1922, Sec. 7, p. 4; Arthur S. Link, ed., Woodrow Wilson: A Profile (New York, 1968), p. 195; Robert J. Kern to Westermann, November 10, 1941, and Westermann to Kern, November 13, 1941, WLW, Box 2; Henry C. King and Charles R. Crane, Recommendations of the King-Crane Commission with Regard to Syria, Palestine and Iraq, in Antonius, pp. 443-58; Howard, King-Crane, and Howard, "An Experiment in Peacemaking: The King-Crane Commission," Moslem World (April, 1942), 122-46.
King was Director of Religious Work for the Paris-headquartered Y.M.C.A. division serving the needs of the American Expeditionary Force. The year before, while in Rome, he met Baker, who later recommended him to President Wilson for the Commission on Mandates in Turkey. Wilson's acquaintance with King seems to have been slight. It is also evident that Colonel House exercised some influence on King's behalf. House favored the sending of the Commission, and chafed at Wilson's lack of action. Felix Frankfurter's fears about the Commission stripping the Jews of Palestine, he believed, were utter nonsense. On March 23rd, the same day House saw Frankfurter, he interviewed King and apparently had the final say. The State Department "wired Oberlin, transmitting a cable from Colonel House which asked whether the College would release its President for a service which . . . would be . . . [of] uncertain duration." The College gave President King leave to act as he desired, and he accepted the nomination.

What were King's qualifications for this Near Eastern assignment? Was his knowledge of that area of the world and its peoples exceptional or was his mind particularly sensitive or responsive to its problems? Should he have attempted to shape the destiny of the Jewish and Arab peoples, or could he have done so, given the sum of his experiences and outlook before 1919? Prior to their selection, King and Crane had both been to the Near East. Obviously, then, Wilson's assertion that the men chosen should be novices was sidestepped. Furthermore, President King was unfamiliar with the Jewish national idea, and maintained friendships with the missionary Protestants who opposed it.

28 See Donald M. Love, Henry Churchill King of Oberlin (New Haven, 1956). King was a Congregationalist, a liberal theologian, president of Oberlin College (1902-1927). Oberlin had at least two anti-Zionists on its staff, Kemper Fullerton, professor of Semitics and a traveler in Palestine in 1917, and Albert Lybyer. The College also had a well-known missionary alumnus, James L. Barton. For Fullerton's insights, see his article "Zionism," American Hebrew, CIV (May 2 and 9, 1919), 657, 667-69, 692-93, 698-99; "Professor Fullerton on Zionism" (editorial), American Hebrew, CIV (May 2, 1919), 654-55.


30 Rabinowitz, p. 97.


32 Howard, p. 39.

33 Morton Tenzer, "The Jews," in Joseph P. O'Grady, ed., The Immigrants' Influence
Charles S. Crane
Member of the King-Crane Commission of 1919
Henry Churchill King
Member of the King-Crane Commission of 1919
fact that King was well-disposed to the missionary element at Versailles is understandable. In 1877, the year that he had been a freshman at Oberlin, the College still occupied a distinctive position for its missionary zeal. In February, 1884, Oberlin’s president wrote that the institution “represents not so much a kind of theology as a kind of aggressive Christianity.” President King’s “early religious life was of the intense, evangelical type,” and he maintained his deep faith until he died. In the early 1880’s, he was interested in doing missionary work in China, but then reconsidered and continued his studies at Oberlin. At the turn of the century, King was a major religious thinker and liberal theologian whose ideas were in harmony with post-Darwinian progressivism. He advocated not an unknowable God but a man-centered faith and emphasized a personal God rather than sterile ceremony. “Christian revelation was a progressive movement which could only gain by the new scholarship which might be added to it through fearless truth-seeking scholarship.” Donald M. Love, King’s biographer, further stresses the similarity in ethical thought between King and Oberlin’s first president, Charles Grandison Finney. Nor did King’s concern with missionary activities ever abate. In 1906 and 1907, he continued his membership on the American Board of Commissions for Foreign Missions. In 1909-1910, he took a leave of absence and, under the auspices of the American Board, spent four months observing missionary work in the Orient, including China, Burma, Ceylon, and Japan. In 1912 and 1913, King made twenty-three miscellaneous addresses, “educational and missionary . . .” In 1920, after his work in Palestine ended, he served as president of the American Missionary Association. When World War I began, neither President King nor Oberlin College was interested. King, probably regarding the hostilities as a strictly European affair, did not encourage his students to gain a better understanding of the issues. During the war, King evolved toward a position of internationalism “through


34 Love, pp. 3-4, 20.
35 King was partial to the writings of Paul and, for that matter, to the Gospels in general. See Love, pp. 27-28.
36 Ibid., pp. 169-70, 187-89.
37 Ibid., pp. 165-66, 228.
the universal application of moral principles,” and by 1917 had become an interventionist, but on purely moral grounds—that is, German culpability.38

Testimony in the Congressional Record suggests that the second Wilson appointee, Charles R. Crane, was a political choice of the Democratic Party.39 In the eyes of the Democrats, Crane’s past services merited his appointment. He was a progressive, an associate of Wilson’s rather than a personal friend, and vice-chairman of the Finance Committee of Wilson’s 1912 campaign.40 In 1909, Crane was appointed minister to China, “although the appointment was cancelled by Secretary of State Philander C. Knox because of an ‘indiscreet speech’ in which Crane had predicted war with Japan on the eve of his departure for China.”41 [Editor’s Note. Another version of Crane’s recall is referred to in Rabbi David Philipson’s memoir: “Another very interesting contact that I had with Mr. Taft took place in November, 1909, the fall after he had been elected President of the United States. . . . During the interview the President told me a most interesting story which had never been published. The name of a certain Charles Crane had been sent to the Senate as Minister to China. The Senate had confirmed the nomination. The gentleman had started for China, but when he reached California, he was recalled by the President. During our conversation the President asked me if I had noted the incident. Upon my answer in the affirmative, he asked me further whether I know the reason for the recall. When I told him of my utter ignorance of that reason, he told me without in any way binding me to silence that the reason for his rather unprecedented action was the following. After Crane had started to enter upon

41 Howard, King-Crane, p. 39.
his mission, the President had been told by a very reliable authority that after he had been elected to the presidency, Crane had said in a company of men, ‘Well, now that Taft is President, I suppose that Jake Schiff and his Jew crowd will have a great deal to say in our national affairs.’ Then, said the President to me: ‘I felt that a man who entertained such prejudices is not fitted to represent the United States as minister to a foreign country. Therefore, I recalled him.’ ”—My Life as an American Jew—An Autobiography, by David Philipson. (Cincinnati: John G. Kidd & Sons, Inc. pp. 173-74.) In 1920, he was once again nominated—and this time served—as minister to China. Early in the 1890’s, Crane had visited some of the Russian-held portions of the Ottoman empire.  

Before World War I, he had journeyed extensively throughout Turkey and had many Near Eastern interests. He was on the board of trustees of the Constantinople College for Women, and treasurer of the Armenian and Syrian Relief Committee, organized in the United States in November, 1915. Far more significant than his charitable works as a determinative factor of his state of mind was his lifelong devotion to Arab lore and the Arab people. Crane was of the Unitarian faith; in an undated letter to Mrs. August Belmont, he had admiringly called the Arabs “Unitarians of the desert.”

The Opportunity of the Zionist Commission

For days following Wilson’s announcement of his choices, the fate of the Commission was in jeopardy. It became increasingly apparent that France would not participate. Britain had already chosen her commissioners, but demurred at the last moment because of Clemenceau’s declination. The Inter-Allied Commission on Turkish Mandates thus became a purely American enterprise. Westermann, who had initially favored the sending

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42 Westermann to his wife, April 27, 1919, PDWLW, p. 68.
43 Barton, pp. 6, 381.
44 Charles R. Crane to Eleanor Robson Belmont, August 30 (n.y.), Belmont Collection, Special Mss., Butler Library, Columbia University. Little is known of Crane’s actual feelings toward the Jews prior to World War I. The only correspondence which I discovered antedated the Peace Conference.
45 The official name of the King-Crane Commission was the American Section of the Inter-Allied Commission on Turkish Mandates.
of an international commission, was now frankly opposed, probably because he disliked the possibility of identifying unilateral American participation with the European imperialist game.46 Another possibility is that his position toward Zionists, if not toward Zionism, had softened. He had always admired the romanticism of the agronomist Aaron Aaronsohn and, while at Paris, was interested in the thinking of the Italian Zionist, Bianchini, and in that of the American Zionists Felix Frankfurter and Julian W. Mack.47

Upon the selection of King and Crane, no immediate adverse response was forthcoming from the Zionists. Frankfurter had even wired Louis D. Brandeis to congratulate Crane officially, “assuming of course... that he will... consult with the United States in detail as to the Zionist bearings of the problem.”48 There is no record of Crane’s consulting with any Zionists or obtaining any Zionist opinion. On April 4th, Westermann noted that Crane “does not seem to be interested and is said to be loath to go because he is interested in the Bulgarian matters.”49 More than the Zionists, Westermann seemed to be cognizant of the Commission’s weaknesses. Within three weeks, he had proffered two names and both were approved for Commission membership.50 The first of these was George Montgomery, a Ph.D. from Yale and a Protestant missionary who had resided in the Near East for a number of years.51 The second was William Yale, whose views Westermann shared and whose experience with the Allied forces had very recently taken him to Egypt and Palestine for a long tour of duty. From 1915 to 1917, Yale was the Standard Oil Company representative in Palestine. On August 17, 1917, he was appointed a special agent of the State Department and ordered to Egypt,52 where he was attached to Allenby’s forces as an American observer

46 Westermann to Harry N. Howard, September 6, 1940, WLW, Box 1; Westermann to Robert J. Kerner, November 13, 1941, WLW, Box 2.
47 PDWLW, May 7 and 17, 1919, pp. 71, 76-78.
48 Frankfurter to Brandeis, and Brandeis to Crane, March 29, 1919, Brandeis Papers.
49 PDWLW, April 4, 1919, pp. 54-55.
50 Westermann to Howard, September 6, 1940, WLW, Box 1; PDWLW, April 23, 1919, p. 67; Howard, King-Crane, p. 40.
52 Lansing to Yale, August 17, 1917, WYP—EMHC, Drawer 52, Box 2, folder 82; Manuel, pp. 189-204.
and intelligence reporter in Cairo. In June, 1918, he was transferred to the British Egyptian Expeditionary Force in Palestine, where he served a like function. In January, 1919, he was transferred to Paris as technical adviser to the American delegation.

Yale had a consummate knowledge of British policy in the Near East. He witnessed adverse Arab reaction to the Balfour Declaration at first hand, was favorably impressed with T.E. Lawrence, and scrutinized the growth of Jewish settlements. Of all the commissioners, he was the only one to have had personal contact with Chaim Weizmann. He had been in Palestine when the Weizmann Commission arrived in April, 1918. His understanding of Near Eastern politics was shrewd, and his insights into Jewish and Arab nationalism were penetrating. Yale was no admirer of organized religious bodies; he excoriated both Jews and Christians for living off the bounty of their coreligionists. His religious views help explain why he diverged from the missionary-oriented King-Crane Commission. He was heavily influenced by the Cairo Syrians, who favored a French mandate, and was opposed to the British because of their intransigent response to Arab supplications after the promulgation of the Balfour Declaration. Yale believed that the Zionist Organization had, by 1914, carried out the major objectives of the 1897 Basle Program and that, consequently, the Balfour Declaration was simply the product of new Zionist ambitions. He also made some interesting observations on the nature of Jews in America, relating these to the dilemma of Palestine. He declared, with the assurance that it was a positive good, that "the melting pot in America," with its democratic influences, had "trampled" on Jewish particularism and had broken down the

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53 Byrne, WYP—EMHC, pp. 75, 84, 89; Yale's exact words were that "Major Lawrence knew his onions." See also O. J. Campbell, "A Report on Zionism," Addendum, p. 10, marginal note. WYP—EMHC, folder 143; Manuel, p. 189.

54 Yale to the State Department, Report No. 20, WYPLC.

55 Yale had said that "the Judaism of many of the Orthodox Jews of Eastern Europe is as intolerant as the Islamism of the fanatical Moslems, as the Christianity of the Middle Ages and the Puritanism of the Seventeenth Century. And the nationalism of the enthusiasts among the Eastern European Jews is tinged with wild socialism and anarchistic ideas and a fierce chauvinism." He also thought that if the Orthodox and nationalistic Jews were not held in check, Zionism would arouse a world-wide movement against it. See Manuel, pp. 199-200, 203.

56 Byrne, WYP—EMHC, pp. 75, 89-90.
barriers which had nourished the "Zionist hopes" of the Orthodox Jews of Europe. But, he implied, dark forces were at work in America: "Powerful agencies are at work to . . . intensify national consciousness of the Jews, to make them feel and realize they are a different race . . . set apart from the people among whom they live."57

Yale detected the taint of Bolshevism within young Zionist Jews from Russia "who have been arrogant in their treatment of the fellahen [in Palestine]."58 He feared that the Arabs would desert to the Turks over Zionism. Although he disliked the British, his dispatches were popular with British officials because, at least on this point, they thought identically.59 On the eve of the Weizmann visit, Yale wrote to the State Department of his concern for the native population and his suspicion of the Allies and the Zionists.60 Direct talks with Weizmann may have served to ameliorate his attitude toward some Zionists, but not to the movement as a whole. Weizmann he thought sincere in his desire to conciliate the Arabs, but he doubted the Jewish leader's ability to keep aggressive and belligerent subordinates in check. For a fleeting instant, Yale believed that the conflicting Arab and Jewish nationalisms could coalesce. Jewish nationalism, he commented, had direction; embryonic Arab nationalism was as yet directionless. "Herein lies the opportunity of the Zionist Commission to calm the fears of the Arabs and to create a feeling of confidence in the attitude of the Zionists and in the policy of Great Britain."61 He remarked that none of the Allied Powers, not even Britain with its Balfour pledge, was capable of calling the Jewish dream into existence. The Jews in concert with the Arabs must shape their own destiny. Although it seemed unjust to force a Jewish majority on the Arabs through immigration, he reasoned that the Jews could honorably request "the right to freely emigrate and

57 Yale to the State Department, "Zionism and Palestine," Report No. 24, April 22, 1918, WYPLC.
58 Byrne, WYP–EMHC, p. 84.
59 Manuel, p. 189.
60 Yale to the State Department, Report No. 19, WYPLC.
61 Yale to the State Department, "The Zionist Commission and the Syrians in Egypt," Report No. 22, April 8, 1918; Yale to the State Department, Report No. 20.
settle in Palestine, to acquire land and to be protected in their rights."

House Halted the Drifting

On his arrival at Paris, Yale was opposed to a Zionist state, but not to immigration. His anger was aroused by what he interpreted as a Zionist attempt to include within the boundaries of Palestine the purely Arab-inhabited territory of Transjordania. This, in addition to the Brandeisian features of public ownership of utilities and public works—which, to Yale, smacked of Russian socialism—resulted in the destructive attitude which he adopted toward a proposed mandate scheme drawn up by Frankfurter at the Peace Conference.

King and Crane secured the approval of some individuals they had suggested. King personally selected Captain Donald M. Brodie to serve as secretary-treasurer and Professor Albert Howe Lybyer whom King had labeled an "expert" in Balkan

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62 This was, in fact, the extent of the Zionist demands at Paris. Yale to the State Department, Report No. 24.

63 The Frankfurter mandate proposal, as conceived, was impressive because it had been "handled, perfected and amended by so many people." Yale red-penciled it until it was unrecognizable: (1) the words "historic title of the Jewish people" were questioned; (2) in a provision which read "it is the wish of the inhabitants of Palestine and of the Jews that the government be conferred upon Great Britain as mandatory," the words "of the inhabitants of Palestine" were deleted; (3) section II of the Frankfurter proposal began with the words, "The establishment of Palestine as the Jewish National Home..." Yale and his unnamed assistant rephrased it so that it would read precisely according to the Balfour Declaration phraseology, "a national home" for the Jews in Palestine; (4) section IIa, committing the mandatory power to promoting immigration, was cut out, presumably because of Yale's belief that Jewish immigration into Palestine should be the sole concern of the Jews; (5) sections Ie and f, relating to public ownership of utilities, public works, land and natural resources, all part of the Brandeis program adopted at Pittsburgh in 1918, was marked "socialization of land on the lines of Zionist social views"; (6) Yale wanted omitted an entire subsection which dealt with cooperation of a Jewish agency with the mandatory; (7) he underlined the section involving the introduction of Hebrew into Palestine as an official language; (8) he questioned the desirability of permitting Jews free access to certain Moslem holy places containing venerated, historic Jewish relics and remains. See Manuel, pp. 232-33; Howard, King-Crane, p. 101.

64 PPC, 184, 00101/58, Minutes of Daily Meetings, Commissioners Plenipotentiary, April 26, 1919, USDSPRFRUS: PPC, XI, 165.
affairs. Dr. Lybyer was in 1919 a history professor at the University of Illinois. Woodrow Wilson may have known of him because he was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary. There is reason to believe that he was not a random choice by King because Lybyer's teaching career included a stint at Oberlin. Lybyer had also been an instructor at an important missionary institution, Robert College in Constantinople. Before his appointment to the King-Crane Commission, he had served in Westermann's West Asia Division. Upon his selection, Westermann questioned the wisdom of King's choice of experts. Lybyer, he said, "did not know much about Syria." In any case, unlike Crane, King displayed an ardent interest in his assignment. He worked hard to increase his understanding of the Near East, and was a daily visitor at Westermann's office to receive additional material. Accumulation of data, however, is a poor substitute for experience. Prior to 1919, there is little evidence that King had any contact with Jews, although he had known American missionaries to the Arabs. At Paris, he was influenced by the highly persuasive but biased arguments of the anti-Zionist Henry Morgenthau, Sr. Eventually, King began to think that Morgenthau was what he had erroneously represented himself to be: spokesman for the overwhelming majority of America's Jews.

By April 23rd, it was certain that no one was going to Syria except the Americans. The King-Crane Commission might have left immediately if it had not been told to wait. "King said that the British stated openly that Faisal must have two weeks to prepare the ground in Syria." If Westermann's quotation of King is accurate, the meaning of Faisal's hasty departure is obvious: it was planned by the anti-Zionist British officers in Palestine and American missionaries at Versailles as soon as they were positive that the Commission would depart. It was expected that the Arab leader would activate Syrian nationalism for the benefit

65 PDWLW, April 15, 1919, p. 60; Love, p. 283.
66 PDWLW, April 15, 1919, p. 60; Adler in Jewish Social Studies, X, 325.
67 PDWLW, April 4, 1919, pp. 54-55.
68 On April 25th, King had "rather long talks with Mr. Morgenthau . . . and Mr. White. . . ." Quoted from the diary King kept while abroad in war service in 1918 and 1919, by Love, pp. 285-86.
69 PDWLW, April 23, 1919, p. 67.
of the Americans. The fact that the Allies would not be participating in the survey of Palestine precluded unanimity among the American peacemakers. The fear that Americans were going to be entrapped in the maze of European politics was pervasive. Tasker Bliss and Henry White felt it inadvisable to send an exclusively American body to Syria because it might create the idea of a special United States interest in that area.\(^7^0\) The Zionists, now better informed on the personalities and interests of King and Crane, sought personal reassurances from Wilson. Felix Frankfurter volunteered to go to Palestine to ease the apprehensions of the Jewish population. The President believed that Frankfurter’s misgivings were unfounded, but, nevertheless, reaffirmed his support for the creation of a Jewish National Home.\(^7^1\) It was also at this time that Wilson, unintentionally emphasizing his ambiguous position, conveyed assurances to the Emir Faisal that the Commission would definitely be sent.\(^7^2\) The confusion was heightened by Westermann’s assertion to Bliss that he thought the King-Crane Commission without British and French representation could only cause harm.\(^7^3\)

The drifting which preceded the Commission’s departure was dramatically halted by Colonel House. On May 20th, he advised the President that the Commission would depart the following week; the next day Wilson announced in the Council of Four that his men were leaving for Syria.\(^7^4\) Preparatory to his quitting Paris, King met with the Syrian Commission, which “instructed” him to fight against a Zionist state.\(^7^5\) It seems that King made no parallel

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\(^7^0\)Howard, *King-Crane*, p. 49.

\(^7^1\)Tenzer, p. 314; Howard, *King-Crane*, pp. 73-74.

\(^7^2\)Mousa, p. 226.


\(^7^4\)Evans, p. 146.

\(^7^5\)The exact citation is as follows: “Kg. [King] and advisers” met “with the Syrian Commission, less Rihbany [an American Arab] who went home. They do not want a Zionist State—no instructions beyond.” It seems that the Commission had been “instructed” to fight against a Zionist state; there is no other apparent interpretation for Lybyer’s strange but meaningful phrasing. It opens the possibility that by the time of their departure, the commissioners were nothing more than rubber stamps for Arab opinion and that their findings were predetermined days before they left. See Albert Lybyer diary [hereafter ALD], unpublished, University of Illinois Library, Urbana, Ill., May 28, 1919.
attempt to ascertain the wishes of the Zionists. At the time of its departure, the King-Crane Commission was staffed by a total of nine people. Aside from the leaders there were Dr. Albert Lybyer as technical adviser; Dr. George Montgomery as expert on the northern regions of the Ottoman Empire; William Yale as expert on the southern regions; Captain Donald M. Brodie of the U.S. Army, as secretary and treasurer; Dr. Sami Haddad, instructor at the School of Medicine of the Syrian Protestant College, as physician and interpreter; Laurence S. Moore as business manager; and Major Paul Toren as stenographer. The character of the Commission was thus established: three seminarians, an Arab, and a possible political appointee began a six-week journey which, by a conservative estimate made to Westermann in March, should have taken six months. Yale was the lone dissenter from the prevailing mood of the King-Crane Commission. Jews and Zionists were unrepresented.

A Great Arab Kingdom

On June 10, 1919, the King-Crane Commission landed at Jaffa. Crane’s enthusiasm for Islam provided some of the shipboard diversion, especially for Lybyer, who was apparently not so well versed on the subject. The evening they arrived, the group dined with the American consul in Jerusalem, the Reverend Otis Glazebrook, and a Red Cross official, Captain Logan. Glazebrook, a Protestant minister who had been won over to Wilsonian progressivism in 1910, outlined his own plan for the Turkish domain during the course of the meal. He favored unity of the Ottoman

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76 Manuel, p. 245; Howard, King-Crane, p. 40; Esco, I, 215; USDSPRFRUS: PPC, XII, 752.
77 Evans, p. 153; Howard, King-Crane, pp. 88-89.
78 ALD, June 6, 1919. Crane’s fascination for Islam is further elucidated in the next decade. For example see Crane to Mrs. Belmont, August 9, 1926, Belmont Collection, Special Mss.
79 Otis A. Glazebrook, born at Richmond, Virginia, in 1845, had participated in missionary work in Virginia before he finally settled in Elizabeth, New Jersey, as a church pastor. “It was while tending his flock in the latter city that he made . . . an impassioned prayer at the convention which nominated the President of Princeton as the Governor of New Jersey.” In 1914, Glazebrook was appointed consul at Jerusalem. See Adler in Jewish Social Studies, X, 331.
empire under a United States mandate, and decried the plans and capabilities of the Zionists. Glazebrook's project envisioned no national sovereignty for any people, but the transformation of the late Turkish empire into a vast theatre for American missionary enterprise; it was never undertaken or seriously considered by any of the chief negotiators at Versailles. What direct effect Glazebrook had on the findings of the Commission cannot be precisely determined. Some circumstantial evidence, however, including King's discussions with Morgenthau and with the Syrians, can be brought to bear in support of the contention that the consul had confirmed what had been believed by King and Crane before they ever sailed. After it was shown that they would meet no resistance, the two leading commissioners dropped the veneer of impartial inquiry and conducted an opinion poll which reflected the attitudes of neither Arabs nor Jews, but of the Christians resident in Palestine.

After a single day in the Holy Land, King and Crane dispatched to Paris a telegram which said that it would be impossible to carry out the Zionist program without the presence of a large army. It was hardly likely that the Commission had conducted a careful inquiry in twenty-four hours. The fact that until June 12th the only official they spoke to was Glazebrook casts a deep shadow of suspicion on their impartiality at the time of their arrival.

Yale, on hearing of the cablegram, instantly cabled Westermann to discount its alarming features. After June 13th, when the Commission spent the greater part of the day visiting Zionist agricultural settlements on the way to Jerusalem, almost nothing is recorded of further Jewish encounters. In Jerusalem, on June 16th, the King-Crane Commission interviewed a Zionist delegation. Among the American contingent were four important Zionists: Dr. Harry Friedenwald, a Baltimore ophthalmologist; Dr. David de Sola Pool, rabbi of Shearith Israel, the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in New York City; E. W. Lewin-Epstein, of New York; and a Brandeis lieutenant, Robert Szold, of Washington, D.C. The statement of Zionist aims presented to King and

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80 ALD, June 10, 1919.
81 Esco, I, 216; Howard, *King-Crane*, p. 92.
82 Howard, *King-Crane*, p. 93.
83 ALD, June 13, 1919.
Crane was essentially what the Zionist Commission had advanced at Versailles. The Commission's response to the Zionists is unknown.

Over a period of two weeks, the King-Crane Commission attended a number of anti-Zionist gatherings and, in an informal party-dinner atmosphere, socialized with anti-Zionist British officers, Arab nationalists, and resident Christians. After calling on King and Crane that morning, Glazebrook entertained them on the evening of June 14th at a "twelve course dinner, where the principal guests were a Frenchman who favored a unified Turkey" and two anti-Zionist British officials, Sir Ronald Storrs, the military governor of Jerusalem, and General Arthur Money, the military governor of Palestine. The sentiments they conveyed were implanted successfully in the minds of the commissioners. Albert Lybyer for one recorded his view of the Zionists; all of them were unscrupulous and "all Americans and Britons oppose them," he wrote after having been in Palestine only four days. In another six days, Lybyer approved of a constitution for Palestine prepared by a British colonel, a constitution which modified Zionist demands in the "direction of fairness." On June 20th, the first of three official reports to the American peace delegation was transmitted. It read, in part: "Here, the older inhabitants, both Moslem and Christian, take a united and... hostile attitude toward any exclusive Jewish immigration or toward any effort to establish Jewish sovereignty over them. We doubt if any British or American official believes that it is possible to carry out the Zionist program except through the support of a large army." On June 21st, King, Crane, and Lybyer dined with the British; Lybyer was seated near the anti-Zionist, anti-French Colonel Watson. The people at dinner were "nearly all Moslems. . . ." Indeed, there was no reason to suffer the Zionist entreaties if all of one's dinner companions and acquaintances were of an opposite persuasion.

84 Howard, King-Crane, p. 96.
85 ALD, June 14, 1919.
86 Ibid., June 20, 1919.
87 Crane and King to the Commission to Negotiate the Peace, PPC, 867N/91 telegram, June 20, 1919, USDSPRFRUS: PPC, XII, p. 748.
88 ALD, June 21, 1919.
Before departing the Holy Land, Charles Crane befriended General Money and the anti-Zionist John H. Finley, then supervisor of American Red Cross work in Palestine.\footnote{Arthur Money to John H. Finley, May 1, and August 5, 1920, John H. Finley Papers, New York Public Library, Box 75. Interesting reference is made to Crane and the members of "his" commission. The idea that Crane's influence on the Commission was predominant has also been advanced by Sir Ronald Storrs, the military official subordinate only to Money. See John Noble, "American Imperialism Turns to Zionism," \textit{Jewish Voice}, I (May, 1941), 15-16.} On June 27th, King and Crane held an informal interview with Frederick Bliss, son of the president of the American Protestant College.\footnote{ALD, June 27, 1919.} Having now concluded their business in Palestine; they sped to Damascus, reaching that city in time for the opening session of the Syrian National Congress—with whose resolutions they appeared to be in perfect accord. On July 11th they sent another telegram to Paris, describing the "unexpectedly strong expressions of national feeling in Syria opposing both a French mandate and Zionist plans in Palestine." Both King and Crane manifested outright sympathy for a Great Arab Kingdom ruled by Faisal as an American protectorate.\footnote{Crane and King to the Commission to Negotiate the Peace, \textit{PPC}, 181. 9102/3 telegram, July 10, 1919, \textit{USDSPRFRUS}: \textit{PPC}, XII, 750. Included in this telegram is a confirmation of their previous Zionist assessment. The people "vigorously oppose Zionist plan and Jewish immigration" and were protesting against the Balfour Declaration.} Faisal even seemed willing to allow the establishment of an American women's college in forbidden Mecca. No zealous missionaries could have asked for more. . . . With the French and Vatican beaten and the Jews out of the way, their missions would flower in the desert under American protection. The third and last of the reports to Paris demanded strong curbs on Jewish immigration, the erection of a unified Syrian state including Palestine, and the administration of the holy places by an international commission.\footnote{Manuel, p. 248.} Montgomery and Yale, however, disagreed with the majority report of King, Crane, and Lybyer. Montgomery suggested that Palestine be placed under a separate British mandate, that Mount Lebanon be autonomous under a French mandate, and that Syria be governed by a joint Anglo-French mandate with Faisal as king. He further claimed that, at least
with regard to Palestine, Arab antagonism was to be expected, but that eventually the development of Jewish industry would benefit the Near East. The Jews, however, should not be led to believe that a Palestinian homeland would solve the world-wide problem of anti-Semitism, an issue which was still being discussed at Paris by the Christian nations.93

**America Should Withdraw**

His experience with the King-Crane Commission profoundly altered Yale’s attitude.94 As the weeks passed, he became increasingly disillusioned with the Commission’s work and mode of inquiry. It must be remembered that the avowed purpose of the Commission had been to ascertain the political wishes of the Near Eastern peoples. Instead, the reverse occurred. By mid-July, 1919, King and Crane were not only accepting petitions, they were also “investigating certain industrial questions” in Syria.95 Thus, for the second time in a month, the commissioners had been unable to maintain Wilson’s high standard. In Palestine, they were traduced by a manipulative Anglo-American clique; in Syria, they were again diverted. It was at this time that Yale wrote his minority report, an attempt, on the one hand, to disengage himself from the findings of the King-Crane Commission and, on the other, to outline a plan that would effectively deal with the social and political realities of the Near East as he conceived them.

The arrival of the Commission in Palestine and Syria aroused a strong national sentiment.96 Yale was astounded by the inability of the King-Crane Commission to see the hand of Britain in the Arab uprising of 1919. Realizing that Britain did not want Syria to fall into the hands of the French, he perceived that Britain must have had a hand in encouraging the “spontaneous Arab nationalism” of 1919 for a unified Syria under a British rather

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94Westermann to Howard, September 6, 1940, WLW, Box 1.
95They had not been charged to do this either by Wilson or by any of the Allies. They had clearly overstepped the bounds of their investigation. See William T. Ellis, “Impossible to Give Palestine to the Jews,” *American Hebrew*, CV (July 18, 1919), 231.
96Yale, p. 336.
than a French mandate.\textsuperscript{97} It was Yale's impression that the Arabs did not want a national home for the Jews in Palestine, but that Arab nationalism was too recent to be anything but "artificially cultivated." The promise of the Balfour Declaration ought to be kept, he believed, since the entire Near East would benefit from Jewish enterprise. Great Britain, he concluded, would be the best mandatory for Palestine, which should be separated from Syria and developed in conformity with the wishes of the Zionists. He stated that there was no reason for United States participation because England, the nation most responsible for the Balfour Declaration, should now be charged with the obligation of carrying it out. Yale recommended the following divisions: to France, Lebanon; to a joint Anglo-French protectorate, Syria; to Britain, Palestine; and nothing for the United States. He believed that through his solution, everyone—Jews, Moslems, Christians, France, and England—had been taken into consideration. The wisest course for the United States was to withdraw, since assigning America a mandate would result for her in unnecessary strife with the European powers.\textsuperscript{98} Shortly after submitting his report, Yale resigned from the Commission.\textsuperscript{99} King and Crane, undaunted, moved on with the assistance of a grant from the State Department for additional salaries and expenses.\textsuperscript{100} By August 16th, however, their work had also been concluded.

\textsuperscript{97} Adler in \textit{Jewish Social Studies, X}, 328.
\textsuperscript{98} Eisner, p. 10; Esco, I, 216; Yale, "Recommendations as to the Future Disposition of Palestine, Syria and Mount Lebanon, July 26, 1919," WYP-EMHC, folder 130. Yale began to adopt a more sympathetic stand toward Zionism because he had become convinced that Palestine would be developed on a Western model, in accordance with American ideals. He thought that the biggest contributors toward the renascence of Palestine would be the American Jews, to whom he had recently taken an increased liking. \textit{See} Ben V. Cohen to Brandeis, September 12, 1919, Brandeis Papers. By October, 1919, Yale thought that Zionism's vital force was waning and, consequently, that the Jews would have to accept the idea of a "limited Palestine," less the Hauran, the valley of the Litany, and Transjordan. In the future, he felt, the fate of the Jews would be dependent on a British mandate under which Palestine would be established as a national home for the Jewish people. Zionism, he implied, no longer had the stature to self-determine its fate: Yale, "The Significance and Import of the Clemenceau-Lloyd George Agreement," October 21, 1919, WYP-EMHC, folder 125; Adler in \textit{Jewish Social Studies}; X, 329.
\textsuperscript{99} Howard, \textit{King-Crane}, p. 101; Manuel, p. 254.
\textsuperscript{100} American Commission to Negotiate the Peace, Minutes of Daily Meetings of
The findings of the King-Crane Commission were not shrouded in secrecy. On August 28th, its report was submitted to Undersecretary Polk, then head of the American peace delegation in Paris.\(^{101}\) Within forty-eight hours of his return to America, Charles R. Crane had personally cabled Wilson as to the contents of the report.\(^{102}\) By August 30th, both King and Crane had spoken to representatives of the *New York Tribune* and the *New York Herald*; they discussed their findings with Associated Press reporters—and mentioned the "overwhelming desire" of the Arabs "for the United States as mandatory in most of the Near East." The only portions of the report not discussed were specific mandate recommendations for certain areas of the Ottoman empire. Aside from that, the contents of the report were revealed entirely in 1919, including references to Syrian opposition to a Zionist state.\(^{103}\)

Donald M. Brodie arrived at the White House with the text of the King-Crane Report on September 27th. At the time, Wilson was stumping the country, trying to arouse support for the League of Nations; he fell ill before his return to Washington.\(^{104}\) The report's overt hostility to the French necessitated its deliberate exclusion from the Paris Peace Conference. There is a strong possibility that Wilson never saw the report. Except for personal correspondence and eyewitness accounts,\(^{105}\) it remained outside the public eye for three years. Crane, who was in the Near East at the time, wrote to Woodrow Wilson on January 23, 1923, that the report "is looked upon as a serious, careful and sympathetic effort to apply the principles you had enunciated and for which America went to war."\(^{106}\)

Commissioners Plenipotentiary, July 31, 1919, Henry White Papers, Butler Library, Columbia University. King and Crane were originally commissioned to examine the non-Arabic portions of the Ottoman empire as well. Before their return, they had taken surveys in Mesopotamia, Armenia, Cilicia, and Greece.

\(^{101}\) Evens, p. 153.

\(^{102}\) Zeine, p. 220, n. 3.


\(^{104}\) Howard, "An Experiment in Peacemaking: The King-Crane Commission," 136.


\(^{106}\) At the exercises in honor of President King at Oberlin on June 20, 1927, Brodie
idealism desired by both Wilson and its framers, or was it a grossly misleading, inaccurate tabulation of figures and data which would have served merely to discredit its authors had it only been publicized sooner?

The Irregularities Offset One Another

The Commission findings were no scientific survey, but pieces of political propaganda remarkably coinciding with the program of Howard Bliss and the Syrian nationalists. Some of the very obvious irregularities were apologized for at the outset. First, the number of petitions was not proportional to the respective populations. For example, in Palestine, the area designated as O. E. T. A. South, a total of two hundred sixty petitions were submitted, but in O. E. T. A. East—Syria—more than four times that number were submitted, although the latter population was only slightly greater than twice that of the former. Second, the number of petitions from different religious groups was not proportional to the numerical strength of the religious faith. In more precise terms, as will be seen shortly, this means that the total number of petitions received from Moslems fell far short of the total number received from Christians, although nearly three-quarters of the Near Eastern peoples under consideration by the Commission were of the Moslem faith. So inordinate a recognition of Christian primacy was tied to the missionary interests of the Commissioners, who were only casually committed to the fate of the Moslem majority. Third, a number of petitions displayed the influence

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107 Esco, I, 218.

108 The designation O. E. T. A. stands for Occupied Enemy Territory Administration. O. E. T. A. North was Cilicia, O. E. T. A. East was Syria, O. E. T. A. West was Lebanon, and O. E. T. A. South was Palestine, including Acre, Beersheba, Haifa, Jaffa, Jenin, Jerusalem, Nablus, Nazareth, Safed, Tiberias, Rishon Le-Zion and Tel Aviv. The South was under British military administration, the North and West were under the French, and the East was controlled by the Arabs. PPC, 181. 9102/9, “Report of the American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey,” August 28, 1919, USDSPRFRUS: PPC, XII, 756.
of organized propaganda through the similarity of their phrasing or their identical wording. Fourth, many of the petitions were fraudulent. Last, the value of a petition was not necessarily determined by the number of signatures. In terms of public opinion, King and Crane arbitrarily assumed that a petition signed by thousands of villagers may have had less value than one signed by a municipal council. With characteristic gloss, the commissioners asserted that the "great majority of the irregularities offset one another." 

The charts and tables presented by the Commission in support of its findings were deceptive. Under the first Roman numeral, political groups, no Jewish organizations were listed. Significantly, Jews were cited only under the third Roman numeral, religious groups. In addition, throughout the entire 118-page report, the Balfour Declaration was mentioned only five times. The reason behind this near omission is unclear: because of it one might assume that neither King nor Crane viewed Zionism in political terms, but this is untrue. No religious or social arguments were leveled against the Jews; although they were not represented as a political group, they were attacked in none other than political terms. They were, in the estimate of King and Crane, a people with a "Zionistic" scheme: an aggressive, imperialistic people "who would not be content with hegemony over Palestine." The manner of description in these pages was conspiratorial and probably received its inspiration from Crane, a man with previous knowledge of supposed Jewish "plots." The Jews were seen as subjecting the Arab population to Zionist immigration plans and "steady financial and social pressure to surrender the land. . . . The Zionists look forward to a complete dispossession of the . . . non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine." Furthermore, the Jews could not be trusted to guard the Christian and Moslem holy places because "these sites are not only not sacred to the Jews but abhorrent to them. . . ."

109 Ibid., 763-64.
110 There is also no listing for Jews under petitions received from economic groups. See tables, ibid., 756-57.
111 Ibid., 773, 792-94. The Zionist "scheme" was accurately enough delineated, but the phrasing of the report made it sound particularly unsavory, e.g., (1) " . . . Palestine . . . to be set aside at once as a 'national home for the Jews.' " (2) Sooner or later, the political rule of the land "will become organized as a 'Jewish Commonwealth.' " (3)
In O. E. T. A. South—Palestine—lived the fewest people, 79.4 percent of them Moslems, and it is worth noting that Jews outnumbered Christians by 2,500. Yet of all the petitions collected—they were given right into the hands of King and Crane by the interested parties—only fourteen (16.4 percent) were from Jewish delegations, while fifty-three (nearly 60 percent) were from Christian organizations. The Moslems, nearly four-fifths of the population, were represented in only eighteen (20.5 percent) of the total of eighty-eight petitions. The suggestion of Albert Lybyer, that “because of the numerous sub-divisions of the Christians . . . it was inevitable from the beginning the Commission would give a disproportionate number of interviews and amount of time to them,” is unsatisfactory. This is a bold admission of the overriding importance to King, Crane, and Lybyer of Christian opinion in the overall solution to the Near Eastern problem, an importance entirely out of proportion to the numerical population. The concern with Christian sensibilities was also paramount in O.E.T.A. East and O.E.T.A. West. In the former, a total of 56 percent of the petitions were from Christian sects, although they comprised but 8.3 percent of the population; 38.1 percent of the petitions were from Moslems, though they totaled five-sixths of the population, and only three petitions were collected from Jews. In the latter, where Christians totaled 36 percent of the population, they turned in 54 percent of the requests; Moslems were 54 percent of the population and submitted 35 percent of the total number. Of equal importance to the King-Crane Commission were the Jews and the Nusairiyeh religious sect: from both were collected five petitions.

A Pro-Christian Document

The outspoken missionary character of the document seems, in no small part, to have been lent by President King, especially the
assertion that the United States ought to be the recipient of a mandate because of the spirit of American educational institutions in Syria, notably "the College of Beirut." The report reflected the morality and rhetoric of Wilson, acquired by King when he became an interventionist:

In the first place... the Syrian people [recognize] that at the foundation of the common life of America were to be found certain great convictions. ... They saw that she had a passion for peace... and that to bring righteous peace nearer she entered the war. They saw she had a passion for democracy... they knew too that with a high religious idealism, America... combined a belief in the separation of Church and State... for the highest good... both of religion... [and] the State.

The Syrian people, continued the report, believed in the unselfish motives which the United States had espoused upon entering the war; America did not seek the spoils of war, but the fruit of peace. "It may be doubtful... if America could do anything so significant for the human race today as to prove she had not forgotten her own high ideals" by undertaking the Syrian mandate. 114

There was little left to be said for the Jews because only they "supported the Zionistic scheme. The Jews are distinctly for Britain as a mandatory power because of the Balfour Declaration, though many think that if the scheme goes ahead, American Jews will become its chief promoters...." The Commission's final recommendations on Zionism were predicated on the assumption that the historic claims of the Jews were invalid and that any influx of their coreligionists into Palestine would be granted to them as a privilege rather than a right. The idea of a Jewish state would have to be abandoned and immigration severely limited. The commissioners claimed that they had begun their study "as favorable to Zionism," but had been "driven to the reverse view." They were aware of Zionist achievements in Palestine, but, in accordance with the Balfour Declaration, the "extreme Zionist program" would have to be modified. The rights of the non-Jewish communities in Palestine, they concluded, should not be trampled upon. Credence was given to the idea of aroused Arab nationalism taking a sanguinary path against the Jews to amelior-

114 Ibid., 844-47.
ate its frustration. The petitions presented to the King-Crane Commission in reference to the implementation of the Zionist program are misleading, however. In O. E. T. A. South, 222 of the total of 260 petitions (or about 85.3 percent) were opposed to the Zionist program, but these figures do not necessarily reveal the climate of opinion of the majority Moslem population, since, as has already been observed, most of the petitions originated from Christian denominations. In O. E. T. A. East, 90 percent (1,040 petitions) were against Zionism, but 56 percent of the entreaties were from Christian sects and only 38 percent from Moslems. Again, it must be noted that Christians composed only 8 percent of the total Syrian population. Thus, to say that the wishes of the majority Moslem population were presented in the King-Crane Report is fallacious. There was also too little contact with Jews and Zionism to validate their contention that the movement was "pernicious" and that Jewish immigration ought to be "restricted."

Only the Christian population remains to be considered. A New York Times correspondent and critic of Zionism commented that "Palestine Christians are more bitterly against the mandate ... than the Moslems. ..." The accuracy of this statement would lead to the conclusion that King and Crane drew their anti-Zionist consensus from a vindictive minority population. Far from being an

115 Ibid., 779, 792-94. In a report written for the Inquiry at the close of 1918, Crosby Butler Howard claimed, as had William Yale, that Arab nationalism hardly existed. Butler had been to the Near East and averred that "it would be impossible to apply any theory of self-determination ... because it would be impossible to discover what any large number of these peoples desire and even if this were possible, it might easily turn out that they desired something which would be disastrous to their well-being." Excluding Syria proper, the Arab peoples "have no real national consciousness. Particularism ... takes the place of nationalism ...": Butler, "Report on the Proposals for an Independent Arab State or States," WYP—EMHC, folder 142, p. 37. Yale recounts an incident in which Crane asked the Arabs of Hebron whom they wished as mandatory. They replied that "all governments were evil." A moment later, they asked Crane to return to Paris and "tell the Peace Conference and your President we want Allah to rule over us." These replies fail to demonstrate the presence of a viable Arab nationalism; on the contrary, they serve to reinforce Butler's conclusion. See Yale, p. 337.


"experiment in peacemaking,"\textsuperscript{118} the King-Crane Report was a pro-Christian document. Its findings should never have been suppressed; had America known she had nothing to fear from France and Britain, they probably would not have been. As it developed the palpable tragedy of the King-Crane Commission was not its failure to cause an impact at Paris, but that the legendary aura surrounding its members and findings had no substance. Nevertheless, during the interwar period, the chimera of King and Crane continued to exercise its influence over those American interest groups which decried Zionism and its policies.

\textsuperscript{118} Howard, "An Experiment in Peacemaking: The King-Crane Commission," 122-46. In the 1930's, Howard was an Anglophobe and purveyor of the "international Jewry" mystique. See his The Partition of Turkey (New York, 1966), p. 197.

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