

German advance in the summer of 1941 gained so much ground and threw the Soviets back on their own soil, this is due solely to the German mountain infantry. Added to the unexplored nature of these northern regions, there is the tundra, whose sea of undulating hills and cliffs places an almost insurmountable obstacle in the way of all movement, especially during the summer months. The lakes and rivers and, in the valleys, marshes and bogs, as well as a primeval wall of rock, lie like a vast barrier between the forested zone and the Arctic Ocean. It is only the winter, which levels out the country with ice and snow, solidifies the swamps, and throws bridges across the lakes, that enables large-scale movements.

A small group of soldiers was descending toward the valley with a burden, silently, like emissaries from another world. As they passed us, we saw that the heavy burden was a stretcher. "They got him up there," one of the men said and pointed up to the black mountain.

On the Fisher Isthmus, the fronts face each other with a minimum of distance, and from the elevated German positions one can look into the Soviet dugouts. One can look across the entire sector. Over here on the left wing the Varanger

coast in the distance forms the horizon. To the left lies the entrance to the Petsamo Fiord. Behind the Soviet positions the land rises again toward the flat plateau of the Fisher Peninsula. The terrain in front of us was strewn with obstacles. There was a deceptive silence in the cliffs covering a tension which every now and then exploded in sudden bursts of fire. Three or four Soviets were carrying wood across a slope. A machine gun barked. The figures disappeared.

By midnight the light seemed, if possible, to have become even brighter. The sun had been hidden for some time, but now it broke through the clouds again and shone with the penetrating force peculiar to the midnight sun. The bank of clouds, which came to a halt over the coast, covered half of the sun, and it seemed as if its whole illuminating force were concentrated in the other half. It blazed and glowed, flamed and flashed, burned and flared, as if it contained all the fires of the world. The edges of the clouds were torn open, and the sun cast its torches deep into the gray mass. The sky was aflame. The night was enchanted. Heaven, earth, and sea ran riot in an ecstasy of colors and reeled through every shade from burning red to palest blue and ethereal green.

## APRIL FOOL IN PALESTINE

*April 1, 1944, will go down in Palestine as one of the crucial dates in the history of that country. The significance and background of this date are explained in the following article from Ankara.—K.M.*

**"UNREST** in Palestine"—"In Palestine the extremists among the Arabs and the Jews are secretly preparing a war"—"In Palestine the smuggling of arms is flourishing; its underground channels reach as far as Cairo"—"In Haifa two torpedoes were stolen recently, probably because their content of explosives was needed for the manufacture of bombs."

This is a selection of news items sent out by British correspondents in Jeru-

salem, Haifa, and Cairo during the last few months. The reason for this unrest and increasing tension between Jews and Arabs was the approach of April 1, the date set by the British mandate authorities for the complete stoppage of Jewish immigration into Palestine.

### FAILURE IN 1938

In order to understand this situation with all its underlying causes it is necessary to throw a glance at the last five

years of British policy in Palestine. After the Arab revolt had been quelled by force, the British Government decided at the end of 1938 to convoke an Arab-Jewish conference in London, in order by means of common discussion to find a solution to the problem of Palestine, i.e., a final demarcation of Arab and Jewish claims in that country. This conference met in February 1939, with delegates from all Arab states participating. The British Government submitted to it proposals of arbitration which, after a period of transition under British supervision, provided for the creation of an independent Palestine state. The length of this period of transition was to depend on the functioning of the co-operation between Arabs and Jews. Jewish immigration was to be limited during the period of transition to the extent prevailing at that time, and supreme government authority was to remain in the hands of the British High Commission until the end of the period of transition.

These British proposals were turned down in March 1939 by the Jewish as well as Arab participants in the conference. Eight weeks later, the British Government published a White Book on its future policy in Palestine in which the principles for proposed political action were announced and declared as binding without recourse being taken to the opinion of the Jews and Arabs. These principles have since then actually been adhered to in the political course of the mandate government in Jerusalem.

#### THE WHITE BOOK

The White Book is divided into three chapters: constitution, immigration, and land regulations. In the first chapter, "Constitution," it was stated that the promise of the "establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Palestine" contained in the Balfour Declaration was by no means identical with the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine against the will of the Arab population. The words "national home," the chapter continued, only formed a basis for safeguarding and supporting the

Jewish community existing in Palestine and being increased by immigration. Moreover, the British Government could not agree with the Arab opinion according to which Palestine should be transformed into an Arab state on the basis of promises made during the Great War. It could only support the creation of an independent state if it proved possible to bring about friendly relations between Arabs and Jews.

In the chapter entitled "Immigration," it was proposed that the Jewish immigration during the next five years, i.e., up to April 1, 1944, should be permitted to an extent which would allow the Jewish population to increase to about one third of the total population of the country. In practice this meant admitting a further 75,000 persons during the years from 1939 to 1944. From April 1, 1944, onwards, the White Book provided for a definite cessation of Jewish immigration.

#### THE CRUCIAL DATE

After its publication, the White Book policy was at first repudiated in Jewish demonstrations of protest as being a violation of the Balfour Declaration. The Arab High Committee also expressed its disapproval. After an epoch during which the two races seemed to be living quietly side by side in Palestine, both Arabs and Jews then started preparing for April 1, 1944, the day on which, according to the White Book policy, Jewish immigration was finally to come to an end. The Arabs wanted to see this first decisive point of the White Book policy carried out, and the Jews wanted to sabotage it. The Jews mobilized all Jewish forces to exploit England's dependence on international Jewry in order to maintain immigration. The Arabs of Palestine sought contact with the Arab neighbor states.

While hitherto the illegal militant terrorist organizations of the Jews in Palestine were silently tolerated by the British administration, indeed, even supplied with arms by certain British military quarters, such serious material regarding Jewish intentions seems to have fallen

into the hands of the British authorities recently that the latter saw themselves forced for the first time to interfere. In Tel Aviv and a number of Jewish settlements in the environment of Tel Aviv, the mandate police instituted searches which brought to light not only arms and ammunition depots but, in addition, membership and organization lists of an illegal Jewish terrorist organization which represented a sort of covering organization for the various militant units and which seemed to extend all over the country. When arrests were made, this led to clashes between Jews and British mandate police; in this connection, some Jewish newspapers used such language that the High Commissioner suppressed all the Jewish newspapers of Tel Aviv.

To create a sort of balance for these British steps against the Jews, the British High Commissioner also ordered investigations among suspected Arab circles. This also led to disturbances. But this could not hide the fact that suspicion was growing among Arab circles that the British Government was trying to withdraw from the obligations of its White Book.

#### EXCUSES AND THE ARABS

Now these suspicions have been confirmed. On March 22 the British Colonial Secretary issued instructions to the British High Commissioner in Jerusalem that Jewish immigration into Palestine would *not* cease after April 1. The British give two excuses for not fulfilling the promise contained in their White Book. The first is that, after all, the White Book had at the time of its publication been rejected by the Jewish and Arab sides alike; the second is that not all of the expected 75,000 Jewish immigrants had entered Palestine yet. At the time of writing, the Arab reaction cannot yet be gauged, but it is to be assumed that they are not likely to be satisfied by these reasons. Even before the British decision was known, the Arab newspaper *Mod* wrote: "It is to be hoped that the Arabs' demand for the cessation of Jewish immigration will be fulfilled. If it is not, then relations between the

Arab states and the powers which are one-sidedly patronizing the Jews will assume a completely new aspect."

Some time ago, King ibn-Saud of Saudi Arabia, who enjoys great esteem among the Moslems, also made known his personal attitude in the question of the Jews in Palestine. His declaration, which he made in an interview granted to an American journalist and which he later published in his own country, starts with the words that the King had never yet informed his co-religionists of his attitude toward the question of Jewish immigration. But, since an American had come to see him, he thought it right to let the Americans, whom he regarded as friends of the Arabs, know his opinion. Ibn-Saud then went on to contest any claim to Palestine whatever on the part of the Jews. The Arabs, he said, had liberated it 1,300 years ago from the Romans, and since then it had been Arabian. If the Jews were seeking for a country of their own, there were countries that were bigger and more suited to their talents and interests in America and elsewhere in the world where they could settle without harming anyone. Their claim to Palestine, however, was unjust, and if they insisted on it nobody would profit; for it would only create distrust and conflicts between the Mohammedans and their friends the Allies.

#### "ARAB UNION" WITH A SAFETY BRAKE

Why did Britain decide on this step which antagonized her relations with the Arab world? Apart from her obvious desire to retain the sympathies of the Jews throughout the world, there is one other important point which has probably contributed to it.

It has caused a good deal of surprise that England seems lately to be supporting plans aimed at uniting the Arab peoples in an "Arab Commonwealth." But for England this solution may today be desirable in view of her alliance with the Soviet Union and the obligations resulting from it. An Arab federation—whose financial and economic dependence on England and America is already a

fact—might be the means of barring the Soviet Union from the Persian Gulf and the British Empire routes. On the other hand, such an Arab commonwealth would also threaten England's sea and land route to India, and thus in the last analysis the structure of the Empire. It is for the purpose of preventing this that the "national home of the Jews in Palestine" offers a favorable tool.

Indeed, London seems to consider the time ripe to apply the lever for the realization of much further-reaching plans. In 1936, when the mass influx of Jews from Europe led to serious fighting between Jews and Arabs, a new plan made its first appearance. This plan, supported by Lord Melchett, one of the most prominent Jews in England, was to open up Transjordan to Jewish immigration. Transjordan happens to be an artificial and poor state created by England, whose ruler was placed on his throne by England and has been able to hold his position solely through England's patronage and money. But the oil line of Mosul, coming from Iraq, was laid in a curve around Syria through Transjordanian territory. This oil line ends in Haifa, the chief port of Palestine, thus running exclusively across British-controlled territory. In addition to this, Transjordan has a port on the Red Sea; and, to the same extent to which

England must recede from her position of preponderance in Egypt, she has tried and will continue to try to extend her influence on the other side of the Suez Canal in Transjordan.

If England should now have definitely to give up her rights as a mandate power in Palestine, the Jews would remain so to speak as a foothold, and the expansion of their "national home" to Transjordan would become a necessity. In view of the Transjordanian Emir's submissive attitude toward England, this plan appears feasible, and the poor Transjordanians—who are mostly nomads—as well as the wealthy Jews may have no objection to an industrial opening up of this corner between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. On the other hand, this project hardly fits into the future plans of the Arabs: it represents a "thorn in the flesh" of a future Arab commonwealth.

The British point of view was recently aptly summarized by the *Manchester Guardian*: "Only a highly developed Jewish national home in Palestine can form the basis for England's authority, England's influence, and England's security in the Near East." This definition of the Balfour Declaration has never been recognized by the Arabs and never been dropped by England—P.S.P.V.

## "DANGEROUS BANK-NOTE CIRCULATION"

By WALTER SIEK

A few months ago the Finnish Government asked Parliament to pass a law which was to empower the Government to stamp the bank notes in circulation, and at the same time to reduce their nominal value by a certain percentage and compensate their owners with government loans to the same amount. The object of this measure, it was stated, was to reduce the note circulation — which had risen in Finland from

some 2.1 billion Finnish marks (100 Finnish marks=5 Reichsmarks) before the war to 10.4 billions in the spring of 1943—by about 20 per cent.

### CAMPAIGN AGAINST BANK NOTES

So far this law has not yet been passed, and perhaps it is not supposed to be passed. Perhaps the intention of the Government was only to scare the people. At any rate,

*A financial expert in Berlin analyzes one of the most striking features of present economic life throughout the world—the large increase in cash circulation.*