

PATHFINDER

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Holy Land Unholiness

Last spring on his triumphant tour of Libya, Italy's North African colony, Premier Benito Mussolini proclaimed himself the "protector of all Islam," and made it plain he was anxious to ally himself with the Moslems. Last week many things fitting closely into the pattern of British worries in the Mediterranean pointed to the possibility (long suspected by the British) that Il Duce was back of much of the Holy Land's unrest.

In addition to heavy re-inforcements of Italian troops pouring into Libya (near British Egypt), London was troubled for these reasons: (1) a treaty of friendship between Italy and Yemen (independent Arabian state)



The Fleeing Grand Mufti Exhorted Arabs was announced at Rome; (2) Arabs in Palestine were told by agitators that they should not fear the British because the latter were themselves afraid of that "great man" Mussolini; (3) Moslem notables in Libya sent Mussolini a message reaffirming their solidarity with Arabs in Palestine; (4) Il Duce's newspaper, *Popolo D'Italia*, lead a campaign of criticism against Great Britain's Palestine policy, asserting that news from Palestine today shocked the "civilized world."

Meanwhile in Palestine, fresh outbreaks of violence continued to spread, despite stern measures taken by British authorities. Last week's terrorist campaign took the form of bombings, blowing up bridges, dynamiting trains and firing buildings. Rioting and killings occurred over virtually all Palestine. General A. P. Wavell, commander of 10,000 British troops, ordered the homes of Arab terrorists at Lydda, near Jerusalem, burned in retaliation after buildings at Kalandia Airport had been set afire.

During the height of the renewed violence Haj Amin Affendi el Husseini, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who had been in hiding in the sacred Mosque of Omar since he was deprived of several high offices three weeks ago (PATHFINDER, Oct. 16), fled to Damascus, Syria. The Mufti was the only member of the disbanded Arab High Committee who was not deported for being "morally responsible" for Palestine's long unrest. Before slipping out of his troubled country, however, he drafted a manifesto exhorting his Arabs to "continue the fight for inevitable liberation from oppression despite the great British forces and Jewish influence."